

# West Coast

## Jessie Homer French

MASSIMODECARLO is pleased to present *West Coast*, the exhibition debut of Jessie Homer French with the gallery. For her first solo exhibition with MASSIMODECARLO, London, *West Coast* brings together a vast range of works that encompasses a thorough investigation of the artist's long-time practice.

Jessie Homer French is a self-taught artist whose paintings emerge from a continuous analysis of places surrounding her and reveal the artist's personal and profound attitude to a local and transient type of composition. Homer French treats with delicate care existential issues related to death and personal loss, nature and climate changing, rural life and the beauty of wide-open outdoor spaces. In her work, humankind and nature are linked by an indissoluble bond, caught in a sardonic interplay in which humanity appears as a toxic intruder in a melancholic environment.

The exhibition features nineteen works that range from the late eighties until the present day, all speaking about the lands of the Pacific Northwest and Southern California, where the artist lives and works. The paintings appear as sensitive commentaries on the places surrounding her, and the narrative element of her work is made clear by the titles placed on the recto of the canvases and plywood.

In *High Country Brookies* (2020) three trout rhythmically swim in a flat stream, surrounded by a pristine landscape capable of instil an enveloping peace. However, Homer French also experienced up close the devastation of her environment due to global warming and wildfires, conveyed with acute immediacy in *Burning* (2020) and *Pine Forest Fire* (2019). Earthquakes also subtly emerge in the fabric works exhibited: two embroidered maps, based on both North and South California, made of a variety of threads, paint and fabrics, showing fault lines of those areas in a very accurate way. Inspired by the places she lives, the artist thought to this series as safe artworks to hang above beds in Seismic zones. In fact, a subtle sense of humour pervades the work of Jessie Homer French, and unmissable in this regard are the shape plywood from the late eighties and early nineties showing a skunk and a possum killed by two big dogs.

Through a simplified language - only apparently naïve - flat oil colours and calm brushstrokes, Homer French enduringly observes and paints for over 40 years the world surrounding her, applying layers of storytelling and meanings on existential questions, human condition and its enigmatic relationship with nature. Even the paintings with the darkest subjects, such as the cemeteries series, feature a formal vitality capable of giving extraordinary immediacy to her bittersweet and anti-pastoral compositions, in which creation and destruction coexist with exemplary candour, and in which nature seems to live and flourish despite human interference, giving a sense of remission and hope.

**Jessie Homer French**

Jessie Homer French was born in New York in 1940. She currently lives and works in Mountain Center, California, US.

Solo exhibitions include: *West Coast*, MASSIMODECARLO, London, UK (2021); *Chernobyl*, Various Small Fires, Los Angeles, CA, US (2020); *Paintings 1978-2018*, Mother's Tankstation, Dublin, IE (2019); *American Pastoral*, Art Basel Hong Kong, HK (2018); *Mapestries*, Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, CA, US (2015).

Group exhibitions include: *Materia Medica*, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles, CA, US (2020); *Life Still*, CLEARING, New York, NY, US (2020); *Eighty at Eighty: Recent Gifts to the Permanent Collection*, Palm Springs Art Museum, Palm Springs, CA, US (2018); Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, CA, US.

French's work is included in the collections of the Palm Springs Art Museum and the Smithsonian American Art Museum.