

For Immediate Release:

Contact White Walls – Justin Giarla

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**White Walls Presents:
*It Finds You, New Works by Jessica Hess***



White Walls is pleased to present *It Finds You*, a selection of skillful, highly detailed realist paintings by San Francisco-based artist Jessica Hess. This will be Hess' first solo project with White Walls, after inclusions of her work in several previous group exhibitions – both at White Walls and sister space 941 Geary. The opening reception is Saturday, September 3, from 7-11 pm, and the exhibition is free and open to the public for viewing through September 24.

Hess' work explores structure, simplicity, and decay, rather than the elegant, almost decadent subjects that usually tend to take precedence within traditional oil landscape painting. She seeks out abandoned, derelict structures and overlooked sections of civil infrastructure – armed with only a camera – as part of her research process. She has described some of these spaces as almost “having found her,” rather than the other way around. Through her investigations of these forgotten places, Hess aims to recreate her own interpretations of the spaces she's visited, and the images she's collected. Some of her paintings are made with fidelity to the original source, while others are products of Hess' subconscious compilation of sites visited, photographs taken, and remembrances of her urban wandering.

She is attracted primarily to sites where utility takes precedence over aesthetics. Many of her subjects are neglected or abandoned, and Hess strives to bring forward the beauty she finds in these discarded urban spaces by rendering them in luscious, colorful oil paint. The scenes depicted are absent of human figures, but leave the viewer with the undeniable imprint of human impact: the lasting effect of infrastructure on the urban landscape, struggling to maintain its imposing facade in the face of the fervent splashes of graffiti and quietly shifting natural elements that seek to reclaim them.

From the artist: "My inclusion of street art documents and makes permanent these otherwise transitory public works. By painting graffiti-laden sites, I am participating in an anonymous collaboration with other artists and giving a nod of appreciation to street art. All street art evidences creative traffic and the time invested by others on my otherwise lonely subjects, adding color and excitement to otherwise dull locations. In reworking and transforming these locations my paintings further this collaboration of time, structure, and surface."

Hess will be presenting more than 25 ambitious new works in the exhibition, the majority of which are her signature oil-on-canvas pieces. To further expand upon this body of work, she is also including several small gouache-on-paper works, in addition to sculptures from her new series of hand-painted ceramic spray paint cans with her collaborator, Christa Assad. Hess' subject matter continues to focus on graffiti-soaked landscapes, the references for which are drawn primarily from actual spaces in both San Francisco and New York.

Jessica Hess grew up in the conservative American South and escaped north to attend art school as soon as possible. She lived in Providence, R.I., for five years and received her BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2003. After brief stints living in the Berkshires, and later Boston, she relocated to San Francisco in 2010, in order to immerse herself in West coast street art culture – and found a new home within both the city, and at White Walls Gallery. Hess travels frequently to seek out inspiration and new subject matter, and has enjoyed photographing the country coast to coast.

White Walls Gallery has worked for nearly a decade to exist as the premiere destination for urban art in the Bay Area. Combined with the Shooting Gallery just next door, this 4,000 sq ft space is one of the largest galleries on the west coast. Justin Giarla founded the gallery in 2005 with a commitment to furthering the urban art movement, drawing directly from street art and graffiti culture. Named for its plain white walls, the gallery takes a backseat to the real focus: the work of our artists.

Media Opportunities:

Interview with artist Jessica Hess
Interview with owner/founder/curator Justin Giarla
High-resolution images available upon request

Event Information:

It Finds You, New Works by Jessica Hess
Opening Reception – September 3, 7-11 pm
On View Through September 24, 2011,
@ White Walls (www.whitewallssf.com)
835 Larkin St,
San Francisco, CA