

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – November 13, 2017

Merrill Mahaffey: ***Enduring Landscapes***

Exhibition Dates: December 29, 2017 – January 31

Artist Reception: Fri, December 29, 5 – 7 pm

Gallery Hours: Mon – Fri, 10-6
Sat, 10-5

LewAllen Galleries

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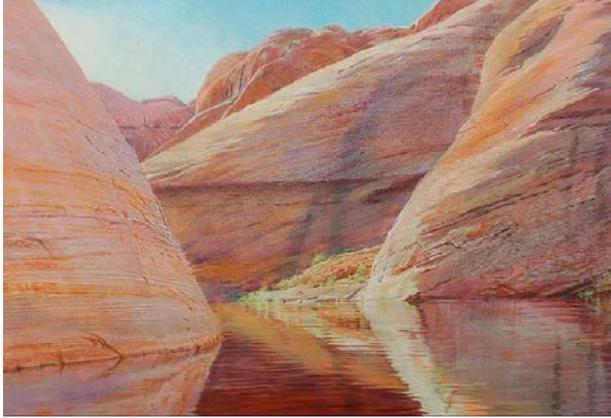
Deep Current, 2016, acrylic on canvas, 24 x 36 in

Santa Fe, NM – LewAllen Galleries is pleased to present its first solo exhibition of the majestic landscape paintings of Merrill Mahaffey. With a career spanning more than 50 years, Mahaffey creates art known for its valorization of the simple, time-chiseled details of Western America’s rocky terrain. *Enduring Landscapes* opens on Friday, December 29th with a reception that evening from 5:00-7:00 PM, *Enduring Landscapes* will be on view through January 31st.

Mahaffey’s paintings serve as modes of inquiry into the true nature of landscape, and the allegorical possibilities of their association with the myth of the American frontier. Avoiding the blandishments of saccharine sunsets, overly sentimental vistas and exaggerated skyscapes manifested in many romanticized Western landscapes, Mahaffey chooses as his subject the extraordinary within the ordinary: the simple, time-chiseled details of the land itself.

His paintings capture the powerful sunlight, cascading geological formations, and breathtaking sense of timeless grandeur long associated with the landscape of Western America. His images feature the literal bedrock of the west and, metaphorically, the solidity and strength of the American character associated with it. His cascading rock faces, slowly carved by ancient rivers, reference the immensity of time, far beyond the scale of human history and imagination. His art displays a mastery of color and light, referencing the prevailing and eternal forces of nature, time, and the intense radiant light in the American West. His treatment of rocks is as though they are prisms; reflecting a rainbow-like array of hues as though through glass.

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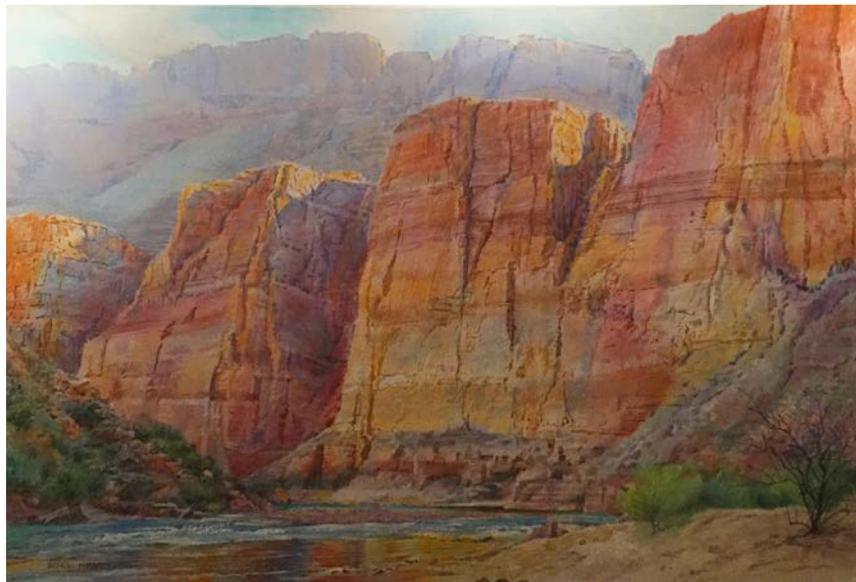


Oak Canyon, 2009, acrylic on canvas, 40 x 60 in

American Art in Washington DC writes. “Rather than the hokum of sharply raking dawns and sunsets, Mahaffey takes his cue from Manet.”

Mahaffey was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1937, and received his arts education from the University of Arizona and the California College of Arts and Crafts (now California College of Arts). His paintings reside in the permanent collections of esteemed museum collections across the country, including the Smithsonian Museum of American Art in Washington, DC, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Phoenix Art Museum, and the Denver Art Museum, among others.

Citing the abstract expressionists and color field painters as major influences, Mahaffey’s manner hints at an underlying abstraction. His art reflects an analytical eye with a clear interest in the nuances of geology and science; with it he searches for the abstract underlying structures and patterns that exist within the DNA of the land. “In his work is none of the easy iconography that typifies life in his part of the country. The facts of the condition in which he lives have proven sufficiently compelling to those who have bothered to look,” Harry Rand, former Curator at the National Museum of



Sunrise Cliffs, 2001, acrylic on canvas, 38 x 56 in