

# BEN BROWN FINE ARTS



Ena Swansea, *stop sign*, 2017, oil and acrylic on cotton, 121.9 x 152.4 cm; (48 x 60 in.)

## ENA SWANSEA

**2 FEBRUARY – 7 APRIL 2018**

PRIVATE VIEW 1 FEBRUARY, 6-8PM

*Most paintings of Ena Swansea on one hand deny gravity, on the other they reinstate it in a way that they become unpredictable. Most paintings are underscored by a layer of graphite upon which she applies oil paint, which make them radiate a strange light through which the image gets a sort of frozen light quality, in a nearly monumental way...they balance between the fictional, the illusion and the reality of the day dream.*

– Luc Tuymans, 2008

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Ben Brown Fine Arts is honoured to present the first UK exhibition of American artist Ena Swansea, whose work has been widely exhibited in the United States and abroad. The exhibition is comprised of nine mesmerizing oil, acrylic and graphite paintings, monumental in size and typically void of any specific narrative.

In 2005, Swansea's works were first exhibited in the UK as part of the landmark exhibition, *The Triumph of Painting* at London's Saatchi Gallery, which was devoted to the primacy of painting at the root of artistic expression. Swansea's new paintings, produced over the course of the last year, allude to the artist's background in film and digital art, which has led her to continually introduce elements normally associated with these technologies to otherwise traditional painting techniques.

Using photographs of the world around her as source material, the city scenes, rural studies and atmospheric portraits she depicts have the evasiveness of dreams and intangible recollections. Swansea manipulates these familiar images, reducing and refining the specifics until the snow laden branches of *view from the country club*, the sea of uniforms in *Scottish marching band* and the almost familiar scene in *twilight snow in Central Park* (all 2017) become ambiguous; the images occupying the space on the edges of perception. Swansea has noted that, "certain images are flexible; they can be about different things depending on who is looking."

Many of Swansea's canvases are primed with a distinctive graphite mixture, which creates a reflective surface and gives her works a notably cinematic perspective. The layering of acrylic, oil and graphite allows her works to transfix space and time, the metallic ground changing with the light and imbuing her paintings with an ephemeral luminosity and transparency.

## ABOUT ENA SWANSEA

Ena Swansea was born in Charlotte, North Carolina in 1966 and lives and works in New York City.. Swansea's work has been exhibited throughout the United States and internationally at MoMA PS1; Saatchi Gallery, London; Sammlung Falckenberg; and the Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean (MUDAM), Luxembourg. Her work is included in numerous public collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Maramotti Collection, Reggio Emilia; Cornell University's Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Ithaca, NY; Colby College Museum, Waterville, ME; Boca Raton Museum of Art, Boca Raton, FL; Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Dresden; Deichtorhallen Sammlung Falckenberg, Hamburg; and the Olbricht Collection, Berlin.

**The artist will be at the Private View and is available for interviews.**

## FOR FURTHER PRESS INFORMATION AND IMAGES PLEASE CONTACT:

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Monday to Friday: 11am – 6pm

Saturdays: 10.30 – 2.30pm

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