

Joseph Siddiqi

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ARTIST'S STATEMENT

STORIES FROM THE INNER CITY

Joseph Siddiqi makes city-inspired paintings that are built up through multiple layers of architectural drawing and rich tonal underpainting using slick strokes of oil colour on stretched Belgian linen. Siddiqi's work reveals layers of emotion and a suspension of time as well as the dissolution of any specific urban placement through a unique combination of art historical references, from the atmospheres of classical landscapes to the hard-edges of geometric abstraction. In his mysteriously ordered paintings, Siddiqi creates dynamic rhythms using abstracted images of cities, distant landscapes, words and signs wrought from a rebellious and capricious process that for the artist becomes a way of signifying the human condition as well as suggesting a personal narrative.

Siddiqi's points of departure are a synthesis of memory and imagination, fact and fiction, conversations and dreams, all revolving around an idealized vision of the city. His canvases overlay various urban motifs such as buildings, highways, electric lights and cars with symbols of personal desire and basic human needs such as love, sex, food and shelter. Presented from an aerial perspective, his paintings show vast skies, vibrant colour and dense urban geometry disintegrating into the light and distance of the horizon. He has described his paintings as 'inner cities', poetic interpretations of our urban experience. Through its mixture of contemporary and classical form, his work seems to represent the spirit of the modern man using the tools and the materials of the Renaissance.

Joseph Siddiqi was born in Montreal QC in 1972. He received his M.F.A. in Painting from Boston University in Boston MA and is currently teaching in the Faculty of Fine Arts at Concordia University in Montreal QC. His awards include grants from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation. His work has been exhibited at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax NS, the Maison de la Culture Mercier, Montreal QC, the Copley Society of Art, Boston MA, Spike Gallery, New York NY, Newzones Gallery, Calgary AB and Galerie St-Laurent + Hill, Ottawa ON.