



PRESS RELEASE

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**Exhibition Title:** *Anna Elise Johnson Earthworks – Mojave Desert*

**Exhibition Dates:** October 14 – November 11, 2023

**Opening reception (artist will be in attendance):** Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 5 – 8 pm

**Artist's Talk:** Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 7pm



Anna Elise Johnson  
*Barstow Highway II*, 2023  
dye, acrylic, oil pastel, watercolor, and plaster on canvas  
72 x 60 inches

**cris worley**  
FINE ARTS

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Cris Worley Fine Arts is pleased to announce *Earthworks – Mojave Desert*, a solo exhibition of new works by gallery artist Anna Elise Johnson. This is Johnson's fourth solo exhibition at the gallery.

Each piece in *Earthworks - Mojave Desert* begins with a purposeful journey from the urbanity of Los Angeles to the open vistas of the desert. As she traverses the landscape, Johnson intuitively searches for an isolated site where the earth tells a compelling geological story of the elements of time that formed it. In a deeply reverent and meditative process, soaked canvas is cut and laid on the ground where Johnson uses cold water dyes to flow and pool over it. Johnson then throws powdered dyes into the air allowing the wind to mark the surface. Dried by the sun, the piece returns to her studio where she paints and draws with a variety of mediums including oil pastel, watercolor, and acrylic to visually apply her memory of the place onto the canvas. The final complex piece is a joining of the land that sculpted it and Johnson's experience both past and present of the site.

This body of work continues Johnson's practice of painting and sculpting in collaboration with the natural landscape. This method began during the pandemic when lockdown forced Johnson to vacate her Los Angeles studio and drive cross-country to her parents' home. As evolution is a mainstay in Johnson's artistic approach, naturally, she modified her medium to best capture her experience in taking to and engaging with the land. Johnson's earthworks grapple with the psychological impact of living in the Anthropocene, the current geological era in which human activity is considered the dominant influence that affects the landscape, climate, and environment. Johnson believes understanding that humanity is a geological force unsettles long-held ideas of what it means to be human and disrupts the boundaries between person and nature.

Anna Elise Johnson lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. She received an MFA from the University of Chicago (2012) and a BFA from Washington University, St. Louis (2005). Johnson was a Core Fellow at the Glassell School of Art in Houston, TX from 2012-2014, and participated in the Tottenham Hale International Studio Residency Program in London in 2011. She has exhibited nationally and internationally in group and solo exhibitions, including Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Berlin, India, Slovenia, and Italy.