

WANDA KOOP  
STANDING WITHSTANDING

1 May - 1 July 2018  
opening reception: Tuesday 1 May, 6-8pm

Arsenal Contemporary is pleased to present STANDING WITHSTANDING, the first major solo exhibition in New York of one of Canada's most distinguished painters, Wanda Koop. Koop has left an indelible mark on the canonical genre of landscape painting, ushering themes of globalization and technology into this tradition. Through blooms of color and quivering fluorescents, the artist offers sightlines of the world, all the while underscoring how one's view remains contingent on one's position.

Composed of a series of new paintings, STANDING WITHSTANDING looks to the primordial sign of fire as it occurs through time, positing a relationship to history that is expansive and non-static. Towering flames are indexes of energy concealed below the surfaces of water and land where oil is covertly transported. These flames also mark the place where the artist is born and from, Winnipeg, and the communal gathering of indigenous peoples at bonfires across its Red River. The resulting confluence of meanings below one sign yields the complex reality of the artist's 40 year career.

The current exhibition is a continuation of Koop's investigation into the contemporary understanding of landscape, in particular this genre as a vehicle for addressing cultural encroachment upon and destruction of the so-called natural world. With a concentration on the interrelationship between nature and human perception, canvases capture the minimal silhouette of various skylines, abstracted through positive and negative space, as a softly optical re-visitation of these sites through the estrangement of memory.

Wanda Koop (b. 1951, Vancouver) lives and works in Winnipeg, Canada. She has been awarded Canada's most esteemed honors including the Order of Canada in 2006 and the Governor's General Award in 2016. Koop founded Art City, a non-for-profit community art center dedicated to its diverse community in Winnipeg in 1996. In 2011, the National Gallery of Canada, together with the Winnipeg Art Gallery, organized a comprehensive survey of her work. She has exhibited at the Arsenale, Venice (Italy); The Shanghai Art Museum (China); Musée des Beaux Arts de Montréal (Canada); and The Fries Museum (Netherlands).