

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEREDITH WARD FINE ART

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John Marin: The Edge of Abstraction

October 12 – December 16, 2006



Schooner and Sea, 1924
Watercolor on paper, 16 1/2 x 20 inches

John Marin: The Edge of Abstraction will be on view at Meredith Ward Fine Art from October 12 through December 16, 2006. The show will feature 19 oils and watercolors from all periods of Marin's career, dating from 1912 to 1952, and will include several works that have never before been exhibited. The works will be drawn from private collections, and largely from the artist's

estate, which is represented exclusively by Meredith Ward Fine Art.

The exhibition will focus on the ways in which Marin used abstraction to express the essence of his subject. Marin once wrote, "There is nothing but realism." Yet many of his works verge on the almost total abstraction of his subjects. This paradox – Marin's use of abstraction to convey the "realism" of his subject -- was among his greatest achievements as a painter, and was a significant contribution to the development of American art in the 20th century. Marin's paintings are more than just visual encounters. They convey the full force of his experience and imagination – what he called his "inner seeings."

Scholars have noted Marin's influence on the Abstract Expressionists in the generation that followed him, and indeed, Marin's work blazed a trail of possibilities for these younger artists. Marin had begun to explore the abstraction of forms as early as the 1910s, in works like *New York Fantasy*, c. 1912, in which a view of the New York skyline is reduced to a series of saturated bands of color that predate the classic paintings of Mark Rothko by about thirty-five years.

However, Marin never abandoned his insistence on the primacy of nature. Paintings like *The Sea*, 1923, demonstrate not only his mastery of watercolor, but also his intimate knowledge of the ocean's rhythms. Using expanses of richly layered pigments set against areas of bare sheet, Marin exploits the fluid transparency of the medium, yet honors his subject in a way that would be anathema to artists of the New York School.

In his late works, Marin continued to experiment with abstraction, though by the late 1940s and early 1950s his style became more calligraphic, relying on the use of line to convey, for example, the agitation of the sea or the brittleness of autumn leaves.

A fully illustrated, color catalogue, with an essay by John Sacret Young, will accompany the exhibition.

About the Gallery

Meredith Ward Fine Art opened in 2004 specializing in American art from the 19th century to the present. The gallery is the exclusive representative of the estate of John Marin. Meredith Ward Fine Art is located at 44 East 74th Street in New York City and is open to the public Monday through Friday, 10am to 5:30pm and Saturday noon to 5pm. For more information or images, contact Meredith Ward or Hilary Goldsmith at 212-744-7306.

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