



*The Living Landscape: Bets Cole's Oregon*

May 20 - July 11, 2026

Opening Reception: Friday, May 22nd, 5:30 - 7:30 pm

*Remarks by Bets at 6:00 pm*

Karin Clarke Gallery is pleased to present a large solo exhibition by Oregon artist, Bets Cole. As we welcome the warmer weather of spring and summer, this exhibit is like taking an extensive road trip around our state! Viewers can enjoy more than 40 new paintings and drawings that explore the beauty and diversity of the state she loves and calls home. “The landscape has given us a gift,” Cole says, “this new work celebrates where we live!”

Cole works primarily in the plein air tradition. She paints using water-based media, including acrylics, gouache, and watercolor. In addition, many of her paintings incorporate her strong line of work in charcoal, so many of the finished pieces are a pleasing and distinctive combination of painting and drawing. She will also show three large finished drawings.

These are all new pieces, completed over the last two years. Locations include the Siskiyou in Southern Oregon (elk country!); the farmland around Corvallis and Philomath; the dramatic Oregon Coast; sweeping views from Oregon wineries, such as King Estate; the glorious McKenzie river; the High Desert; Hood River; and her own property in Elmira.

One fun memory Cole shared was in Diamond, near Frenchglen, where she got stuck behind a cowboy herding his cattle. He said, “you can either follow us, or be bold and go through the herd!” She chose the latter, and drove through the cattle, taking photos she would later work from in her studio, resulting in some wonderful and surprising compositions!

Another special painting location was the Summer Lake area, where she attended an artist residency at Playa. She shared the experience with her daughter, McKenzie, who is featured in one of the paintings in the exhibit. Together, they braved dramatic and changing weather conditions, a reminder of the rigors of plein air painting. She describes the experience as “so gorgeous!”

Bets Cole earned her undergraduate degree at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, and her Master of Fine Arts at the University of Oregon in Eugene, OR. Her work is included in the following permanent collections: M & T Investment Group (Baltimore, MD), Marathon Coach (Eugene, OR), Oregon State University (Corvallis, OR), and the University of Oregon.

Please join us for an opening reception on Friday, May 22nd, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. The artist will give remarks at 6:00 pm. The gallery will also be open for the First Friday Artwalks on June 5th and July 3rd.