

**Letha Kelsey**

**FAR / NEAR**

**East Gallery**

**November 27 - February 12, 2022**

**ARTIST STATEMENT:**

**As an artist, I investigate how sensory phenomena and immediate surroundings translate into visual language. Paintings and drawings from the last decade have developed from two events: an experience of being away and the experience of returning home.**

**Supported by a 2010 University of Wisconsin Summer Research Grant, I hiked across Wisconsin—from Potawatomie State Park to Lodi—via the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. The paintings and drawings from this series convey the collective sensory experience of slowly moving through the landscape over the course of 37 days. This body of work is the On Foot series.**

**Following the births of my sons in 2013 and 2014, I returned focus to immediate surroundings, making paintings and drawings that investigate play, original impulse, and repetitions of the domestic realm. Daily acts, exchanges, and everyday fragments inform these new works. The paintings and collages here represent a return to what is most simply, close by. This body of work is the Homing series.**

**Selected works from the On Foot and Homing series are included in this exhibition. It is my hope that viewing them together may elicit fresh contemplation of the everyday, both far and near.**

**BIO: Letha Kelsey's research involves close examination of the everyday—observations of immediate surroundings, rooted in the elements, materials and actions of our daily lives. Kelsey grew up on a small family farm in Iowa, an experience that resonates in her observations of the Midwestern landscape and its sensory phenomena—its light, moisture, sound, aroma. She uses everyday forms as subject matter for her abstractions, distilling and translating sensory experiences through a visual language that is delicate, complex and inventive. Kelsey's paintings and drawings have been exhibited in group and solo exhibitions regionally and nationally, including the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art; Samson Projects, Boston; Gallery 19, Chicago and The Berkeley Art Center. She was an Artist-in-Residence at the Vermont Studio Center in 2003 and received a University of Wisconsin System Summer Research Grant in 2010. Kelsey earned her BFA in Painting and Drawing from Minnesota State University and MFA in Painting and Drawing from the University of Wisconsin-**

Madison. Currently, she serves as Professor in the Department of Performing and Visual Arts, University of Wisconsin-Platteville.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQv6paoY-m4>

