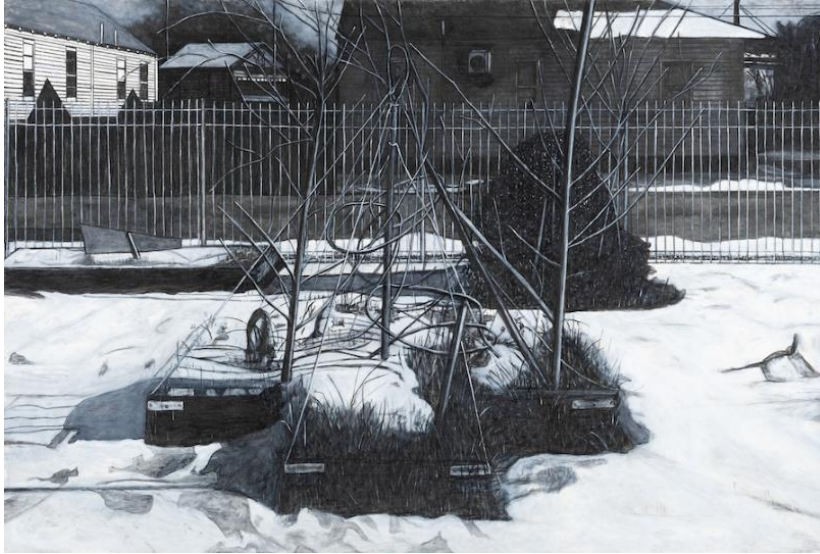


FORT GANSEVOORT

Artlyst

New York Art Exhibition Insights Autumn 2025

Ilka Scobie – September 28, 2025



Willie Birch Up On the Roof Fort Gansevoort Nov 8

“All art is abstract... an interpretation of the real,” Willie Birch muses at the press opening of his powerful monochromatic show. For the past twenty years, Birch has worked in a chiaroscuro palette that pays homage to his native city, New Orleans. References leap from jazz and blues to the African Diaspora, from Birch’s well-tended backyard garden to Sun Rah and Rembrandt. Birch’s realism is rooted in emotion and history; his lines are always beguiling and beautiful.

“Procession for Kidd Jordan,” a monumental twelve-piece work, commands the second floor. Created for the beloved jazz saxophonist, educator, and Birch’s close friend, the piece portrays the uniquely New Orleans tradition of a jazz funeral procession, featuring a brass band followed by friends and family. As the day was drenched by rain, Birch’s shorthand of a deluge is brilliant... random grey orbs capturing the torrential energy.

“Melting Snow” is Birch’s garden after a historic snowstorm, “the second time in my life I saw snow in New Orleans.” The still-pristine snow blankets the yard, while a trellis-like construction could be mistaken for barren branches, with tufts of grass rising above the frozen ground.