



CARBON CAPTURE

Ken Van Rees

November 12 — January 15, 2022

About *Carbon Capture*

Ken Van Rees is member of the collective *Men Who Paint*. The Men are well known in Prince Albert and throughout Saskatchewan for their devotion to working *en plein air* and taking inspiration from the work and adventurous spirit of the early Canadian painters. Van Rees writes that he has “always been drawn to trees, water and rocks [...] and it is in these landscapes that [he feels] most at home.” However, it was as a soil scientist conducting research into the relationships between soils and vegetation in boreal forests that he first expressed his love and curiosity for forests. Painting came later and he started to incorporate art into his science field courses at the Emma Lake Kenderdine Campus.

In 2015, a forest fire burnt his research plots in northern Saskatchewan, and while inspecting the damage to his equipment, he became engrossed with the patterns inscribed on his clothes from the charcoal of the burnt trees. This planted the seeds for an entirely new

series of abstract works on canvas that take the form of rubbings and controlled imprints – produced by leaving canvases in the charred forest for extended periods.

These abstractions might be considered as collaborations with the landscape – due to the strong element of chance involved in their production. The directness of working *en plein air* is taken a step further when the actual stuff of the forest makes its mark on the canvas. In designing and experimenting with these burnt remnants, Ken Van Rees works as both artist and scientist.

Image: installation view of *Carbon Capture* in the Project Space