

SHAUN ELLISON

Islanders

November 19 – December 24, 2015

Opening Reception: Thursday, November 19, 6-8PM

Anna Zorina Gallery is pleased to present the solo exhibition, *Islanders*, featuring the paintings and drawings of Shaun Ellison. The works within the exhibition were inspired by a trip to the Caribbean island of Tobago. The intent of travelling was to get lost physically and spiritually in a new, more primal location. By withdrawing from routine and immersing himself in the alien destination, the artist was able to explore the psychological depth of the foreign landscape and to discover a fresh spiritual essence.

The new surroundings provoke for Ellison an exaltation of the senses. This manifests in a unique artistic vocabulary that transcends into a realm of seemingly musical expression. His paintings feature powerful harmonies of bold color that instill the works with a distinctive optical vibration. This exploration of vivid tonal relationships intends to capture the feeling and energy particular to the Caribbean. The locals welcomed Ellison into their daily rhythm and thus you encounter their routine consisting of activities such as sailing, fishing and preparing of meals. Shaun observed that the islanders were notably in touch with nature and acted on an instinctual level that resulted in a profound connection with their environment. Ellison was inspired by this immersive quality. "Painting for me is a primitive act so what's better than to go and get myself closer to nature, towards something that is more organic than living in a big city." By disconnecting himself from his typical setting, Ellison was more dependent on an intuitive approach to capturing the island landscape views. This organic representation of the scenery is translated through his specific emotion and subjectivity resulting in a reality instilled with an energetic sensory character.

As a visitor, Shaun Ellison was never able to achieve a feeling of being completely engaged in the setting. The artist imbues into the works his feeling of being an outsider by depicting his scenes with candid and loose generalizing strokes of tones often layered to create a distorted perception. However, as said by John Donne, "No man is an island" and although Shaun sought disconnection and isolation from the influential force of artistic culture notable in his current home of New York City, in an unfamiliar territory he ultimately found a universal creative spirit and drive that was innately recognizable.

For further information, please contact Marie Nyquist at 212-243-2100 or via email at marie@annazorinagallery.com.