

Charity Lynn Baker



Recommended by Karen Wilkin

Charity Baker's economically rendered figures inhabit a contemporary, vernacular Arcadia, a zone of idyllic landscapes and expanses of water, where people skinny dip or embrace. Some images seem to be dream-like evocations of a highly desirable state of existence, while others become disquieting, the longer we stay with them. A figure swimming in a shaft of golden light appears rapturous, but it's harder to read a half-length woman in the foreground, hands raised. Is she, too, ravished by the glorious light or disturbed by it? The occasional ambiguity complicates and enriches our conception of Baker's world. Mostly, however, we transport ourselves into her summery vision of camaraderie and pleasure, a present day version of Charles Baudelaire's *luxe, calme, et volupté*, presented in a pared-down modernist idiom inflected by such masters as Henri Matisse and Pierre Bonnard, spoken with an American accent and a highly personal vocabulary.

Karen Wilkin, Fall 2020

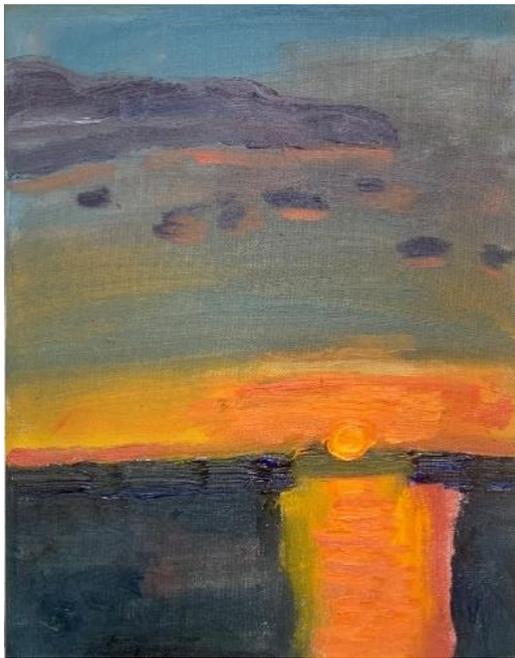
Bio

Charity Baker is a painter currently living and working in NYC. Formally trained in architecture at Pratt, Baker worked professionally in this field for several years. Simultaneously she painted the life surrounding her, slowly combining and elaborating on a unique idealized genre. Eventually Baker's love of painting brought her to abandon a career in architecture and to pursue painting full time. In 2019 she completed the MFA program at the New York Studio School in painting, where she was the recipient of several awards, among them the Mercedes Matter/Ambassador Middendorf prize and a Hohenberg Travel Grant, which she used to go to Tuscany. In 2018 she received a full scholarship to attend a summer residency at Chautauqua, NY where she explored

the greatness of night painting (and night swimming) near the Canadian border, experiences that had an impact on her treatment of light. Baker's work has been featured in a variety of Group and Solo shows: 2019 AXA Art Prize Exhibition; San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco; Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago; New York Academy of Art, NYC; The Fosnot Gallery, New London, CT; Force Gallery Projects in NYC; and The NY Studio School. In 2020 she was awarded First Runner up of the Wing Art Award from the Wing Art Gallery in the United Kingdom.

Artist Statement

Mostly I am captivated by an idealized view of humanity and landscape holding equal strength on the canvas. Geometry and light play a big role in this. Recent paintings have been seen as a return to a new romanticism and pastoral genre, but in a more enlightened, self-aware form to match our new age. My painting of figures is iconic rather than detailed or realistic in an attempt to capture the essence of humanity and relationships across settings. My body of work includes several large paintings of figures in the landscape and many small plein air landscapes from various locations; the work is partly autobiographical and follows my own engagement with people and places. In the summer of 2020, during the pandemic, I made a series of small sunset paintings on the Hudson River and that is serving my recent larger studio work.



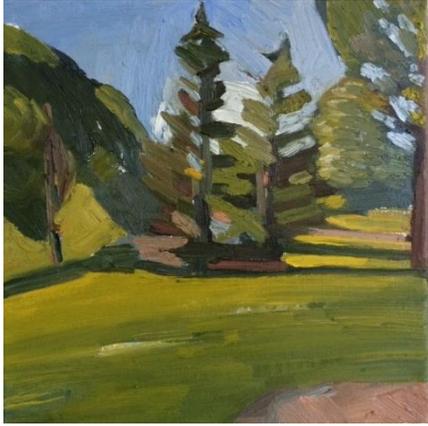
Charity Baker 2020, After Sunset 7-15-20 (left) and After Sunset 7-30-20 (right) 14"x 11" Oil on Canvas



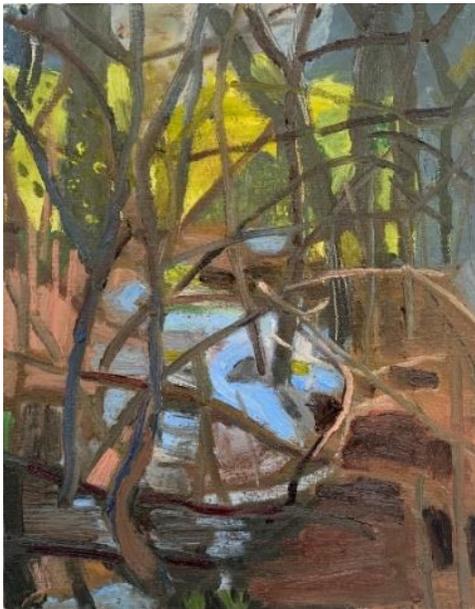
Charity Baker 2020, Casey Drawing, 36"x 36" Oil on Canvas



Charity Baker 2017, Erika, 16"x 20" Oil on Canvas



Charity Baker 2017, NY Landscapes, each 12"x 12" Oil on Canvas



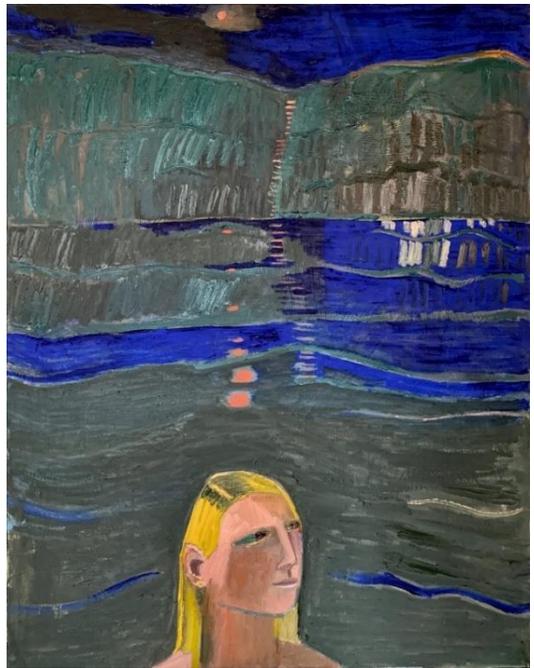
Charity Baker 2020. The Ramble. 11"x 14" Oil on Canvas



Charity Baker 2020. I Used to Be Shy. 48"x 60" Oil on Canvas



Charity Baker 2020, Reflection of Bathers 36"x 36" Oil on Canvas



Charity Baker 2020 (Left), Two Falling Stars in the Day Sky, 48x48" and Moonlight, 2018 (Right), 48x38" Oil on Canvas



Charity Baker 2020, The Red Passion Suite, 56x56" Oil on Canvas