



Wall of the Forlorn

Date
2022

Primary Maker
Renée Stout

Medium
Oil and acrylic on wood panel

Description
Per the artist via Marc Straus, New York: This is a very personal painting inspired by the reuniting of my 84- and 87-year-old parents who divorced when I was in my 30s, then remarried when I was in my 40s but would never live together again in our family

home for the next 30 years, until May of 2022. For the last 16 of those 30 years they had lived on opposite coasts and had not physically seen each other. In April of 2022 I returned to my hometown of Pittsburgh to attend the funeral of my father's companion of 10 years and at that time I went to my family home, which I had not been in for over a decade. Upon entering I realized that our home was in serious disrepair and that my father had become a hoarder. Upon returning home to Washington DC, I called my mother and informed her about the passing of my father's "lady friend" and the state of the house, which was shocking. I knew that he was most likely going to have a rough time processing his friend's death, especially since her cozy home had been his escape from the environment that had clearly become a reflection of his inner turmoil or "demons." I knew that it would not be good for him to be there alone. My parents had recently expressed to me separately that they did not want to die without seeing the other. Once I told my mother about the situation, she was back in Pittsburgh within two weeks, having traveled across the country by train from California, even though she's an agoraphobe with a fear of traveling by herself. My mom has always been a nurturer in search of someone to rescue and I knew that her coming home to "fix" the situation would give her purpose. She is pulling it all together and so proud of what she's accomplishing, even though she complains. Wall of the Forlorn was created out of the simultaneously overwhelming, bittersweet, sad and humorous feelings that this dysfunctional love story evoked within me. I knew that all kinds of emotions were swirling for everybody, including my sister who my mom had been living with in Stockton for the 16 years she'd been away from Pittsburgh. The painting reflects the family home's state of disrepair. The young man represents my father, while the stains and tears in the "photograph" represent the time that has passed and his regrets. The florals on the stained and water-damaged wallpaper represent my mother's feminine, healing touch and the hope within the story that continues to be written. Additional information provided by Aniko Erdosi from Marc Straus gallery, from Renee's written notes on the the painting (1/7/23): "Love/Mystery/Attraction...this refers to the idea that love has always seemed like an elusive, undefinable and unpredictable "situation" to me personally and watching the evolution and arc of my parent's relationship is what has generated the text and the overall work. The words "partial ingredients" refers to some materials used in the making of perfumes which are often used in the art of seduction. I collect perfume materials, along with healing herbs and these are often hidden within some of the three-dimensional works I create. The text is there to lead the viewer to the idea that a romance has or is taking place, but the title also suggests that this romance is not without some tension or sorrow."

Dimensions
Overall: 36 × 48 in. (91.4 × 121.9 cm)