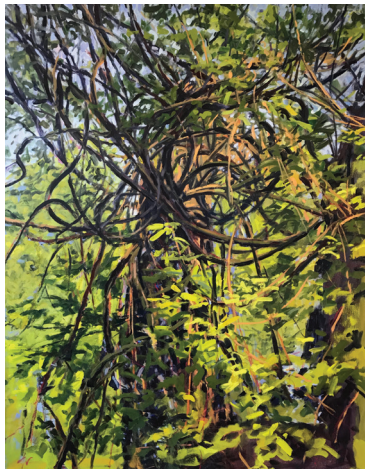


NINA JEROME: ENTANGLED SPACEElizabeth Moss Galleries • Falmouth, ME • elizabethmoss galleries.com • October 11–November 9, 2019

In the 30-plus years she has been painting landscape in Maine, Nina Jerome has roamed the coast and inland, finding herself drawn to a range of motifs, natural and constructed. Among them are Great Cranberry Island seascapes (she was a Heliker-LaHotan Foundation artist-in-residence there in 2016) and industrial scenes around Bangor where she maintains a studio.

On a walk during her residency at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts (VCCA) in April 2017, Jerome came across a mass of wild grape vines strangling a tree. Fascinated by the complexity and chaos of the scene, she made plein air sketches and paintings. The subject subsequently became the



Nina Jerome, *Entangled 4*, 2017, oil on canvas, 58 x 46". Courtesy of the artist.

focus of a full-blown series of oil paintings, ten of which make up her fourth solo show at Moss.

Six of the canvases, each with "Entangled" in the title, offer different views of the untamed circuitry of thick woody vines coiling around the tree. The vertical images, painted between 2017 and 2019, are complex and visually engaging thanks to Jerome's spirited brushwork and layering of color (an underpainting lends light to the overall image). The paintings capture the flux of nature—a native yet nonetheless invasive plant having its way with an unwilling host.

Jerome carries this entanglement idea into

the other pieces in the show. *Honeysuckle Spring* (2019) painted on a return trip to the VCCA, offers a thicket of this twining vine as it comes into leaf in the spring. It's a gorgeous interweaving, almost musical in its rhythms. Smaller studies of vines, some in acrylic, round out the display.

The show runs concurrently with, and is connected to, Jerome's solo exhibition *Entangled* at the University of Maine Museum of Art in Bangor (September 13–December 21, 2019). The work at the UMMA pushes the motif into more conceptual/abstract realms, focusing on the knot-like nucleus of vines to a point where they conjure barbed wire or a crown of thorns. The whole series, Jerome says, is about process: of starting in one place and, like the vines themselves, "meandering and letting the materials and idea take you somewhere." The place she takes us with her new work is at once remarkable and resonant.

—Carl Little