



# Art walk

BY MARY SHUSTACK  
PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY  
OF SUSAN STILLMAN



***Susan Stillman is causing a bit of a stir at Congregation Emanu-El of Westchester. Actually, it's the White Plains artist's work that's been getting all the attention.***

As Rabbi Howard J. Goldsmith says when WAG stops by on a recent afternoon, "I have to tell you, every single person who walks through this hall-way stops and looks."

Goldsmith is referring to "The Quotidian Landscape," the inviting collection of Stillman paintings filling The Gallery at the Harrison temple through Nov. 28.

It's even had an effect on his work – he tells us with a playful laugh that more than once he's heard, "Rabbi, I'm sorry I'm late. I had to look at the paintings."



Left, artist Susan Stillman. Photograph by Eve Prime, Poppy Studio. Above, from top, "Studio View" and "Over the Fence," by Susan Stillman, are featured in "The Quotidian Landscape," an exhibition that continues through Nov. 28 at The Gallery at Congregation Emanu-El of Westchester in Harrison.

And we certainly can't find fault in that.

We're here to walk the show – and catch up – with Stillman, profiled on these pages back in December of 2014.

It was then that we spotlighted her 25-plus years of creating commissioned work through Home Portraits by Susan Stillman, a business devoted to heirloom-quality paintings that commemorate a family home in a most personal way.

And while that segment of her work continues to thrive, this exhibition turns the spotlight on the fine-art efforts of Stillman, who earned bachelor's and master's degrees in fine art and spent 15 years as an illustrator.

The collection, it's soon clear, takes us along on a virtual walk through her home turf.

"It's totally my neighborhood," she says.

And yes, her neighbors may see some familiar views.

"Every once in a while, someone will come out of the home that I've painted, and I'll say, 'I want to show you something,'" and she'll pull out her phone to share a photo showing how she's translated that person's home into a work of art.

Each painting – the bulk of this show features acrylic on wood panels – is filled with views culled

from countless evening walks and glimpses from her attic-studio window.

They are, she notes, observations made over time, "every time of day, all the different weather."

Subjects are realistic and deceptively simple. She keys in on how the light plays on a rooftop, how a home is seemingly nestled within a collection of trees or how pink buds add a vivid touch to a front yard.

These images fill paintings called "Rooftops," "Nestled" and "Pink."

Clearly, giving works elaborate titles imbued with layers of meaning isn't Stillman's way.

"I'm very bad at that," she says with a laugh.

Perhaps it's because Stillman is busy focusing on the work itself.

"I like color. I like color a lot," she says, also adding, "I like light."

Light is integral to what she captures.

"It's the moment. It's a little flicker."

Architectural elements, she adds, give her "the building blocks" for her compositions, and she relishes "contrasting the shapes with the foliage."

For Stillman, seeing the work in a gallery setting is rewarding.

"It's so nice to see something out of the stu-

dio," she says. "When you do a series, you do the one. You put it in the corner. You do one. You put it in the corner..."

Here, Stillman is able to look back over works completed in the last few years, created in time carved out of a busy schedule that, since 1983, has included teaching at Parsons The New School for Design.

She is, though, looking forward to a breather of sorts.

"I'm going on sabbatical next semester, so I'm going to be doing this..." she says, extending her arm to the paintings. She's also set to show work at the Anderson Chase Gallery at the Katonah Art Center in February.

Stillman says she's looking forward to tackling some large-scale works or "big paintings."

Her enthusiasm is palpable, confirmed as she pauses to take a sweeping view of the exhibition.

"I don't know," she says. "I don't get tired of it."

Lucky for us. ■

***"The Quotidian Landscape" continues through Nov. 28 in The Gallery at Congregation Emanu-El of Westchester in Harrison. For more, visit [susanstillmanfineart.com](http://susanstillmanfineart.com) or [susanstillman.com](http://susanstillman.com).***