

# BARBARA MATHES GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

KAREN WILBERDING DIEFENBACH

## *La Costanza*

February 27 - April 26, 2014

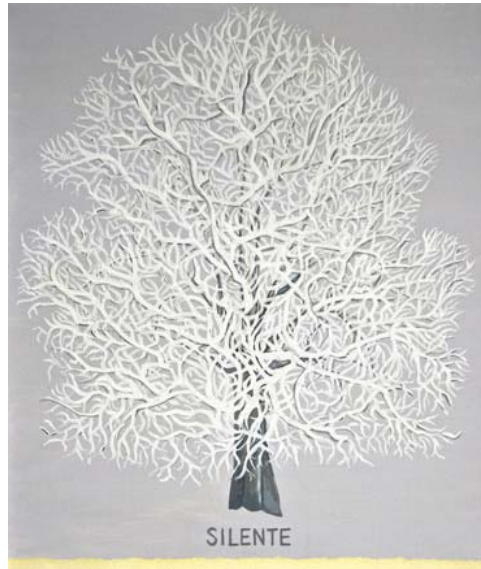


**Armoniosa**, 2013, bronze, 33 x 43 x 21 in; 84 x 109 x 53 cm

Barbara Mathes Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of new works by Karen Wilberding Diefenbach. Inspired by the harsh, ancient beauty of the Tuscan landscape, Diefenbach's paintings, sculptures and works on paper are imbued with an inner poetry yet suggest an intimate connection between human, animal and natural worlds.

Diefenbach's bronze sculptures are based on the endangered Pecore Massese sheep that she first encountered in the ancient Roman town of Camaiore in the Tuscan foothills of the Alps, and they evoke the quiet presence of an earthbound way of life increasingly threatened with disappearance. With their downward-sloping elongated necks, distinctive horns and spindly legs, bronze sculptures such as **Armoniosa** (2013) serve as monuments to the past, yet their abstract, scarred surfaces anchor them in the tradition of Modernist sculpture.

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**Silente #1**, 2010-2013, oil on linen, 28 x 24 in; 71 x 61 cm

Diefenbach's paintings of trees in oil on linen have a similar connection with the land, and an equally complex temporality. Works such as **Silente #1** and **Nebbia #3** (both 2013) are based on the olive and walnut trees that anchor the Tuscan soil throughout the passing of the seasons, and their restrained palate and expressive linearity conjure Symbolist motifs; at the same time Diefenbach's addition of text derived from musical notation or passages from Dante resonates with the word/image explorations of Conceptual art. Works on paper such as **Mattino** (2010) and **Sera** (2013) display Diefenbach's sensitive use of color and tone situating the Pecore Massese within abstracted landscapes.

The works in this exhibition are connected by their ability to conjure the nature and culture of the place that inspired them, and by their remarkable sensitivity to form and materials. Through its evocative power and consistent mood, Diefenbach's art becomes a meditation on time and endurance.

## **Contact information:**

Barbara Mathes Gallery is located at 22 East 80th Street. The gallery is open Monday through Friday, 10 am to 6 pm; and Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm. For more information or images, please contact Marie Kim at (212) 570-4190 or at [art@barbaramathesgallery.com](mailto:art@barbaramathesgallery.com).