

Josephine Taylor

MODERN PAINTERS

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JOSEPHINE TAYLOR

Catharine Clark Gallery

Josephine Taylor's latest works, large-scale, darkly beautiful scenes drawn in ink wash on paper, imagine a postapocalyptic world in which humans are forced underground, their pallid naked bodies huddled together in dark caves and animal dens. Her drawings, most of them slightly larger than life-size, are unframed and hung flush against the wall, which gives them the initial appearance of murals. With the force they garner from their bare-boned starkness, Taylor's images conjure a universe both delicate and perverse, wretched and tender, like scenes from some strange and savage fairy tale. Take *Bomb Landscape 5* (2008), which depicts a group of humans engaged in a cruel, joyless threesome while rabid-looking foxes claw and snarl at them from an adjacent cave. A second series remains within the same twisted netherworld, but the works are heliographs, their intricate patterns of browns and blacks produced by selectively exposing canvas to sunlight. The result underscores the apocalyptic theme of this exhibition: the scenes look as if they were burned onto canvas by a nuclear blast. According to the artist, her work examines the emotional and psychological residue of childhood and adolescence, and it is not hard to imagine these figures in caves as a metaphor for the ghostly dwellers of one's subconscious, or as the main characters in a particularly ominous nightmare; Taylor's world is as cryptic and feverishly primal as a recurring dream. —**Yasmine Van Pee**

Josephine Taylor, *Bomb Landscape 5*, 2008. Sumi ink, colored ink and white pencil on paper, 100 x 149 in.