



GEOFFREY JOHNSON

# City Memories

A metropolis is often associated with a lively and chaotic atmosphere, but when it is stripped down to its essence the powerful, towering buildings can take on a different perspective. Geoffrey Johnson's paintings hint at the vibrancy of cities through their inhabitants, but primarily they have a calmness that comes with a focus on the man-made beauty. He further cuts the noise by using a mostly monochromatic color palette that unifies the city rather than highlights its myriad distractions—billboards, cars, flashing lights and more.

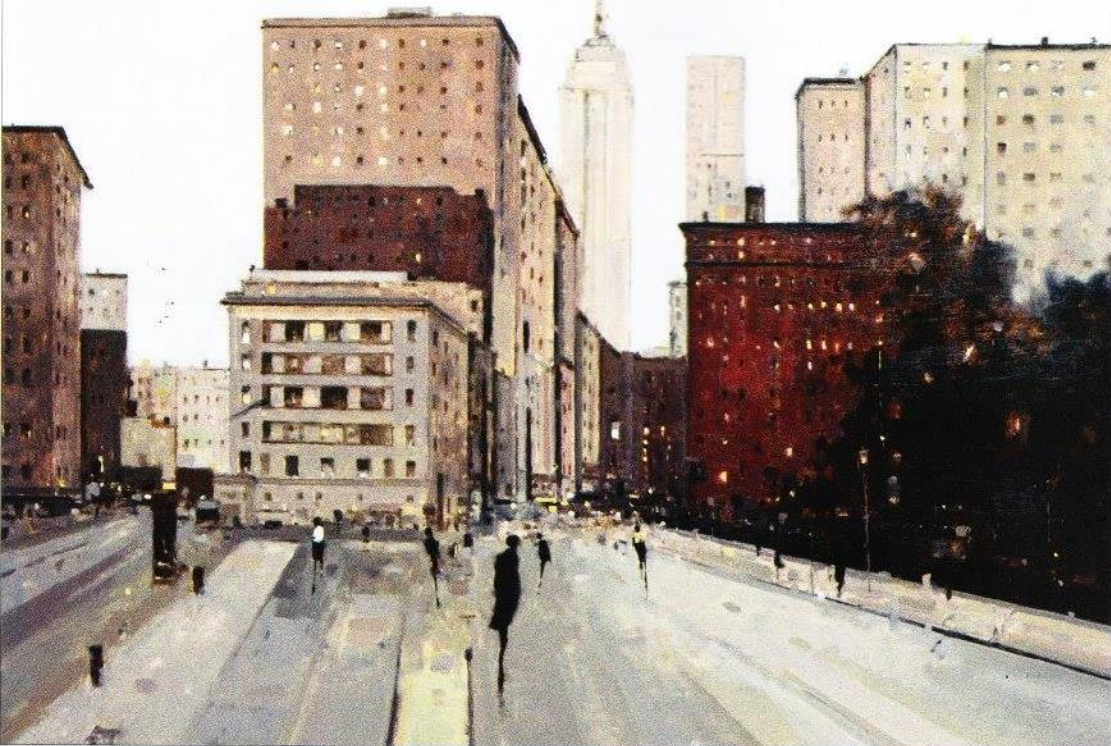
Much of Johnson's artwork is derived from his travels, with New York City being one of his most common muses. He also turns to Europe in some of his newest pieces after traveling to several countries with his sons. The works, however, are not replicas of the place, but rather his interpretation of what he experienced. He

elaborates, "It's more just liking that space [and painting] what it felt like, what it looked like and what I remember of it. I don't work from photographs; it's more of my memory of the place."

Johnson's works are impressionistic in nature—recognizable but with minimal details. Some are of real places, while others are amalgamations of multiple locales. "For me, it's the idea of how little detail I can put down and still keep intact the universal language," he says, adding, "I want the viewer to recognize that's a bridge, maybe a building, that there are some recognizable things."

*Gallery District* is a scene from where he stayed with one of his sons in Paris. "I didn't know we were staying in a gallery district, but we stopped in a couple of openings one night," he says. "It was nice to see what was being shown there." A different painting, *City Square*, shows a fountain in an open courtyard in front of a skyline.





1  
*City Square*, oil on  
board, 11 x 15"

2  
*NYC I*, oil on panel,  
36 x 48"

3  
*Gallery District*,  
oil on board, 24 x 16"

4  
*Bridge – Paris II*,  
oil on panel, 48 x 48"

2



3



4

"That's a more made-up painting," he says. "These are interesting spaces to me; typically in New York and over in London, these places are really kind of almost public gathering places, but there are always a lot of people."

These city scenes, and several interior works, will be included in Johnson's upcoming exhibition at Principle Gallery in Alexandria, Virginia, which happens May 17 through June 4. ●

**Principle Gallery** 208 King Street • Alexandria, VA 22314 •  
(703) 739-9326 • [www.principlegallery.com](http://www.principlegallery.com)