The artwork features a dark, textured background with a prominent vertical crease. On the left, a cluster of three red and white, bulbous objects hangs from a thin, fibrous stem. In the center, a single, larger red and white bulbous object hangs from a thin stem. On the right, a long, red and white, elongated object hangs from a thin stem. The bottom right corner shows a light blue, textured surface with some red and white splatters. The overall composition is abstract and evocative of natural forms.

Sally Egbert
DUST OF SUMMER

SEPTEMBER 13 - OCTOBER 30, 2018

Dust of Summer

2018

branches, glass,
fabric, paper mache,
wire, ink, ribbon

dimensions variable,
approximately
8 feet high x 8 feet diameter



Sally Egbert's Virtual Abstraction

NATHAN KERNAN

Full fathom five thy father lies
Of his bones are coral made
Those are pearls that were his eyes
Nothing of him that doth fade
But does suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.

SHAKESPEARE, THE TEMPEST

Painting is an accommodating medium, embracing infinite possibilities and seeming impossibilities. Did Eva Hesse ever really cease to be the painter she started out to be, however much her paintings lunged, sagged, leapt, crept from the wall and finally freed themselves entirely? Sam Gilliam's stained unstretched canvases drape and flow without benefit of stretcher or frame. Jackson Pollock's *Full Fathom Five* (1947) incorporates studio detritus such as cigarette butts, nails, thumbtacks, buttons, coins, and a key embedded in the paint. Colored light projected onto Rothko's faded Harvard Murals in Cambridge has "restored" their original hues. I thought of all of these things, and more, during a recent visit to Sally Egbert's studio.

Egbert's work in the 90s was characterized by bright, acidic or pastel colors and casual, self-contained forms in dialogue with meandering lines exquisitely balanced on open white fields. With a playfulness and a "gendered" palette that belied its underlying formal stringency – or astringency – the work presented a knowing and witty challenge to classic Abstract Expressionist solemnities it was nonetheless in the direct lineage of.

In recent years Egbert's painting has undergone a sea-change. Painterly washes, seemingly casual in execution, ground her canvases and may suggest ambiguous landscapes, undersea realms, or dark voids lit with surprising radiances. Onto these surfaces, alternately negating and participating in their spatial illusion, such as it is, are imposed blunt painted marks, or collaged scraps of torn cloth or paper, or drawn images: delicately limned flowers, stems or branches. Flowers? More like abstract indications of flowers such as a child, or Paul Klee, might draw. »



The free underpainting and torn collage elements convey a sense of risk or abandon, providing a foil to the fragile floral notations; the combination gives rise to poignant feelings of transience. Egbert will tell you frankly that these paintings followed a devastating personal loss several years ago, the kind one never completely gets over. (Writing this I think of Wolfgang Tillmans's photograph, "I Don't Want to Get Over You," (2000) in which a huge snakey green abstract "flaw" interrupts an expansive skyscape.) "I like edges," Egbert says, speaking about the way her drawings and collages are often executed on irregularly torn paper, emphasizing their edges; while the collage elements on both paintings and drawings are often narrow strips, little more than "edges" themselves. Such torn shards might suggest rends in the placid fabric of daily life, through which one suddenly perceives a shockingly changed reality. Of one particularly radiant work she says, "It's like a spirit." Of another: "It's a kind of message." The work is edgy and restless, for sure, flipping between representation and abstraction; depth and surface; darkness and light; preciosity and rigor. The notion of balance, internalized now, remains a touchstone. The paintings are slow; they change and deepen and reveal more, but never all of themselves, as one looks. They have the force of necessity.

In some of her newest work, Egbert ups the ante by suspending objects from strings and wires in front of the painting, to dangle mobile-fashion in counterpoint to the two-dimensional images on the canvas behind them, which itself may be neither rectangular nor stretched. She has also been experimenting with lighting the work, or parts of it, with colored filters, which turn the strings and wires into lines of color, and call into question the now mutable colors on the canvas. It is not new for a painter to wish to engage sculptural elements or move off the surface of the picture plane, but Egbert's concerns could not be farther from feats of engineering or material excess. Instead, with a beguiling lo-tech simplicity and wit, slightly reminiscent of Eva Hesse, Egbert brings collage elements out into real space, our space. If one stands, as one might, between the suspended objects and the work on the wall one finds oneself literally in the space of the painting, encompassed by it, moving within it as the objects move in one's wake. »



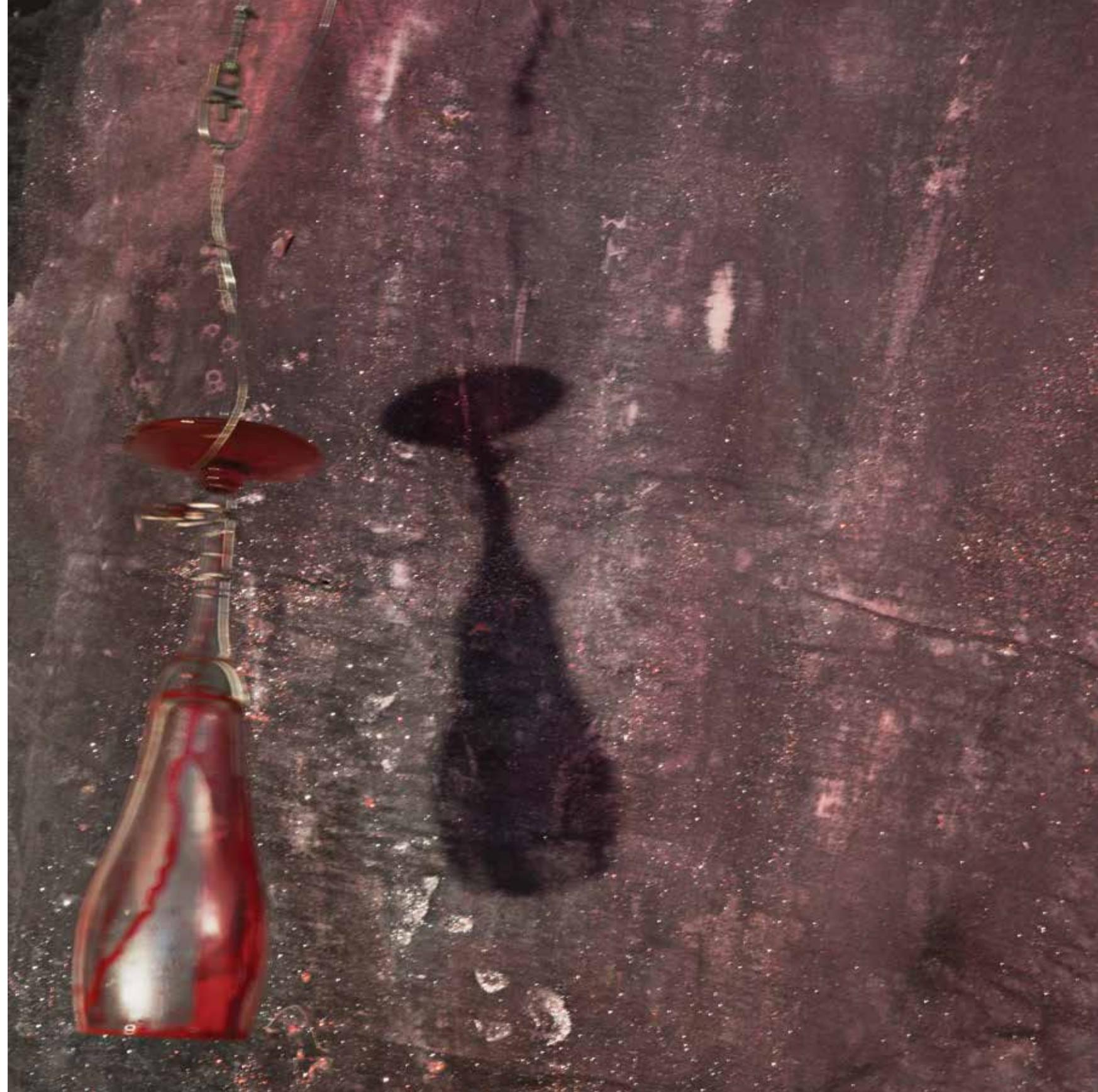
Air has long been felt as a presence in Sally Egbert's paintings, breezing through and between painted gestures, lofting and turning the inventions of her brush and hand. Now air is literally a participant, hosting and activating the sculptural elements. Egbert describes the multifarious suspended objects as "things I've just picked up along the way," and many have incidental connections to earlier or current aspects of her life. They include: bulbous, gourd-like shapes made of papier-maché formed over balloons in the time-honored manner, painted and cut in half or cut open, to become almost suggestive of cartoon body parts and organs ("I never made sculpture before, but it's fun to wrap my hands around objects"); studio relics, such as a fragment of a broken wineglass retaining dried blue paint from when it was used as a palette ("I mixed paint in there and then it became so beautiful"); a special stick from the country ("I don't know how I got it home on the bus without breaking it"); scraps and strips of colored cloth salvaged from her day-job at a fabric-cutting company ("That red strip looks kind of scary, like somebody killed somebody's doll"); old picture wire with a D-clip still attached, from when she worked for a framer. Swaying like flotsam amid swells of color, these humble talismans of daily existence, precious but valueless, are transmuted into pure gesture, heightening the suggestion of metamorphosis present in all Egbert's work.

Egbert recently recalled her impressions of a long-ago ride at Disney World, "Space Mountain." It was "A roller coaster in the dark with these pinpoints of light. I felt like a pencil making a mark in space, I didn't feel like a person I felt like a line in a painting whizzing through space." Entering into the imaginative and physical space of Sally Egbert's new paintings is to become part of them and of their making. By the act of seeing we ourselves become "like a line in a painting," creating a world before us as we go.

Nathan Kernan is a writer and a poet who lives in New York. He is currently serving as President of the Milton Resnick and Pat Passlof Foundation.







Flowers with Vase

2018

oil on canvas

24 × 28 inches



Flowers in White Vase

2018

oil on canvas

24 × 28 inches



SALLY EGBERT

Education

1977-1981

State University of New York at New Paltz
Bachelor of Science in Visual Arts,
Emphasis in Painting

Collections

Alex Katz Foundation
Hewitt
Price Waterhouse Cooper
Progressive Insurance
Tucson Museum of Art, Tucson AZ

Awards

2012, Pollock-Krasner Foundation
2012, Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts
2009, Gottlieb Foundation
2003, Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts
2000, Pollock-Krasner Foundation
1998, Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts
1996, Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts
1994, New York Foundation for the Arts
1992, New York State Council on the Arts

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2018, Dust of Summer, Goya Contemporary,
Baltimore, MD

2015, Places to Be, Goya Contemporary,
Baltimore, MD

2007, Salomon Contemporary,
East Hampton, NY

2005, Sally Egbert: New Works,
Goya Contemporary, Baltimore, MD

2004, Kenise Barnes Fine Art,
Larchmont, NY

2004, Goya Contemporary,
Baltimore, MD

Selected Group Exhibitions

2015, Art Am 3,
Galleria Spazio Soncino, Soncino, Italy

2014, Material Matters,
Goya Contemporary, Baltimore, MD

2013, Silent Partner, Imogen Holloway
Gallery, Saugerties, NY

2013, Open Studios 2013,
The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts,
New York, NY

2013, The Big Show,
Silas Marder Gallery, Bridgehampton, NY

2012, EFA Open Studios,
EFA Studios, New York, NY

2011, Halsey McKay Gallery,
Easthampton, NY

2011, Galleri Spazio Soncino,
Soncino, Italy

2011, Chromesethia,
Tribeca Project Space, New York, NY

2011, Baby It's Cold Outside,
Kenise Barnes Fine Art Larchmont, NY

2010, Women,
Silas Marder Gallery, Bridgehampton, NY

2010, Plank Road,
Salomon Contemporary, New York, NY

2010, As You Like It,
Heidi Cho Gallery, New York, NY

2008, Spanierman Gallery,
East Hampton, NY

2007, East and Artist, Past and Present,
Telfair Museum of Art, Savannah, GA

2007, An Electric Eye; Selections from the
Dan Leach Collection, Tucson Museum of Art,
Tucson, AZ

2007, Edsel Williams Curates, The Fireplace
Project, East Hampton, NY

2007, Women and Abstraction: Then and Now,
Spanierman Gallery, New York, NY

This catalogue was published
by Goya Contemporary
on the occasion of the exhibition:

Sally Egbert: Dust of Summer

© 2018 Goya Contemporary

All rights reserved. No part of this
publication may be used or reproduced in
any manner whatsoever without written
permission from the copyright holder.

Acknowledgments

The artist would like to thank
Martha Macks, Amy Raehse, and
Nathan Kernan

Photography

Rose Frisenda and Jeanette May

Design

Glenn Dellon, Dellon Design

3000 Chestnut Ave, Mill Centre 214
Baltimore, Maryland 21211

goyacontemporary.com
410 366 2001

GOYA CONTEMPORARY
GOYA-GIRL PRESS