

Susan Eley

Fine Art

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Suspending
New Work by FRANCIE HESTER

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April 18-May 31, 2019

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Opening Reception: Thursday April 18, 6-8pm

Susan Eley Fine Art is pleased to present ***Suspending: New Work by Francie Hester***, opening on Thursday, April 18, with a reception for the artist from 6-8 pm, and remaining on view through May 31.

This exhibition is Hester's second with SEFA, following the success of ***Materialize***, a two-person show with Amber George (2014). In addition to her exhibitions at the gallery, Hester's work has been featured extensively through SEFA at art fairs in the US and Canada, including Art on Paper, NY (2019); REVEAL Art Fair, Saratoga Springs, NY (2018); Art Toronto (2015-2018); Art Miami CONTEXT (2013-2017); Art Silicon Valley San Francisco (2014); and Aqua Art Fair, Miami (2012).

A highlight of ***Suspending*** will be the debut showing of forty Daily Drawings, created as a sort of visual diary while on sabbatical in NYC in 2018. Each work on paper, 21 x 17 inches, rendered with acrylic and gold leaf, was a response to her immersion in New York's art world during the busy spring season. Together, the cycle makes a powerful visual impact, as seemingly random patterns overlap between the 40 individual drawings.

Hester is most widely known for her paintings on aluminum panels in a variety of shapes and sizes. Living somewhere between painting and sculpture, these works are generally installed several inches off the wall, as if floating.

Hester came across the aluminum material in 1999, after receiving an individual grant to create sculpted painting. The aluminum, hollow, light-weight and unbendable, proved to be the ideal substrate for her work and has been her medium of choice for nearly 20 years.

This aluminum appeals to Hester because its smooth, rigid surface invites her to scrape, drill or gouge into it with a variety of tools and sanders. The paint can fill the holes or sit on the surface, which Hester can work and rework, applying and removing paint. The results are textured surfaces, rippled, dimpling effects, cross-hatching, bumps and linear patterns, all in her current palette of denim, bright blue, hot yellow, chartreuse, fiery red and contrasting white and black.

After many years of working with aluminum, Hester has expanded the variety of shapes from simple squares and rectangles to six-foot tall strips, to circles that are flat, curved like shallow bowls, or segmented into three parts.

This current body of work, called “Suspending,” plays on elements of visual contrast: order and disorder, chaos and calm, pattern and randomness. Reflecting on how pattern emerges from random events, how random events form memory, and how the passage of time shapes a life, her work evokes the unknown or unknowable and draws on the ordering principles of mathematics and science to contemplate how order, sequence and memory are created from random events.

Using geometric circles, fragmented or whole, intermingled and intersected with other forms, curvilinear or straight edged, Hester creates spaces where these visual opposites meet, where our eye can rest, where our hearts and minds find visual fulfillment, equilibrium—where we can suspend.

ARTIST BIO

Hester has exhibited her work both nationally and internationally. She has received honorary grants from the District of Columbia, from the Arts Council of Montgomery County, MD and from the Maryland State Arts Counsel. Hester’s commissioned works include a 2016 sculpture for Memorial Sloan Kettering In New York City and an 18-foot atrium piece for the Chicago Kent College of Law. Her work is represented in numerous private and corporate collections including the World Bank, Airbus, Capital One, KPMG, and the International Monetary Fund. She received her M.F.A. in painting from the University of Maryland, College Park, and a B.F.A. in painting from the University of Michigan. She is represented by Susan Eley Fine Art in New York City.