



DAVID AYLSWORTH
The Sun is as Big as a Yellow Balloon
September 7 - November 9, 2024

Opening Reception
Saturday, September 7, 5 - 7 pm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Holly Johnson Gallery is pleased to present *The Sun is as Big as a Yellow Balloon*, an exhibition of new paintings by David Aylsworth, while also marking the artist's seventh solo show with the gallery. The exhibit opens Saturday, September 7, with a reception from 5 - 7 pm and will continue through November 9.

David Aylsworth is an abstract painter who, throughout his career, has deftly embraced ambiguity in the painterly process. However, characterizing Aylsworth's painting as purely nonobjective is not exactly right. In this new body of work, the artist captures the awe of bearing witness to environments both real and imagined through the sensory experience of the picture plane. Overlapping forms and wide expanses hint at the landscape with vast horizon lines to suggest receding space. His choice of color - noticeably not naturalistic - plucks the viewer from the landscape and returns them squarely to the formalist qualities of oil on canvas.

The artist has spent years cultivating his process - approaching his paintings with instinct and curiosity. His compositions unfold without a premeditated study as a continuous cycle of actions and reactions. The seeming nonchalance radiating from his shapes and palette is in fact a purposeful irreverence. Imperfection is embedded in his method, as edges are never quite smooth, colors are scumbled or applied wet-on-wet, and surfaces expose thinly veiled revisions.

Regarding the exhibition's title and many of his painting's titles, Aylsworth recently elaborated, "My titles are mostly from show tunes which have meant something personal to me. Most people I know do not listen to this kind of music as often as I do, so I feel in a way that I have personal ownership of it. I admire how lyricists craft words to match the music, and I make spaces in the paintings that in my mind are largely theatrical. The lyrics allow me to express emotions that I cannot express in another way. Words frame images in my paintings in the way that they give form to the music that I enjoy. I also like it when the lyrics seem to not have a direct relationship to the painting, so the title can add another dimension beyond the painting itself."

Art historian Sandra Zalman, Ph.D. writes about Aylsworth's work, "Where there are brushstrokes, drips, clotting, and scraping, this process is foregrounded. But it is also evident in the most discursive way that shapes coalesce to articulate a larger story of mediation - the fine line between form and figure, or plane and ground, which speaks to the very human quality of finding opportunity in uncertainty, near connections, qualifications, and do-overs. The painting may play, and tease, and flirt, but their force derives from the quiet, unassuming way they confront these larger concerns."

Aylsworth earned a BFA from Kent State University (1989) and was a Core Fellow Resident of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (1989-1991). His paintings are included in the permanent collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Dallas Museum of Art; the El Paso Museum of Art; and the Museum of South Texas, Corpus Christi. Aylsworth was the subject of a ten-year survey, *Either/And*, organized by the Art Museum of Southeast Texas, Beaumont, TX, and traveled to the Galveston Arts Center (2017). His paintings were also included in *Painting: A Love Story* at the Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston (2014) and *Working in the Abstract: Rethinking the Literal*, Glassell School of Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (2011). Additionally, many articles about his work have been published in noteworthy publications such as ArtLies, Art in America, The Dallas Morning News, and Fort Worth Star-Telegram. Aylsworth lives and works in Houston, Texas.

Holly Johnson Gallery is located at 1845 East Levee Street; Suite #100; Dallas, Texas 75207. Gallery hours are 11 am to 5 pm, Tuesday through Saturday. For information, call 214-369-0169, or email info@hollyjohnsongallery.com, or visit www.hollyjohnsongallery.com.

Image: David Aylsworth, *The Sun is as Big as a Yellow Balloon*, 2024, Oil on canvas, 50 x 76 inches