

Rachel Friedberg

DIARY

# **Diary**

**Stories and paintings by Rachel Friedberg**

**2008-2011**

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2008-2009





## Diary

It was 2009 when I turned 80, and it was 2009 when my husband died. I was “a couple” for 55 years. Now I am me. How did I become me before I was a couple? What were the beginning “seeds”? I couldn’t pick up the strands of my life until I could see a whole person going forward. I felt so fractured.

Studio work has always been my salvation. I tore five by five inch squares of black and white paper and piled them up on my drafting table next to my old reliable oilsticks. I wanted to vomit out the memories that were pushing their way up to my consciousness and the oilsticks were more conducive to vomiting than my usual medium of encaustic. The five inch squares became the stage for those images to resurrect.

I felt I was on a time machine. I always believed that time could be bent. Not just as a memory but actually re-experiencing the moment. While drawing the studies, I found myself back in the old haunts picking up every nuance and minute physical detail, long forgotten. I could actually feel the transformed space. It was a *trip!* Twenty-nine deeply felt trips! No drugs! No nothing!

Most of the occurrences affecting my life in a profound way all came during the first 10 years of my life. Those are sponge years. Good and bad sponge years and I was shaped by them.

So now, I found the “me.” Each one of these experiences taught me a lesson, not always the right one. Nevertheless they were compasses that guided my life. Why did these particular images stay with me and not others perhaps more exciting or dramatic?

I only know that all twenty-nine experiences put together in this Diary are me. It was a *trip*, and I never argue with the driver.





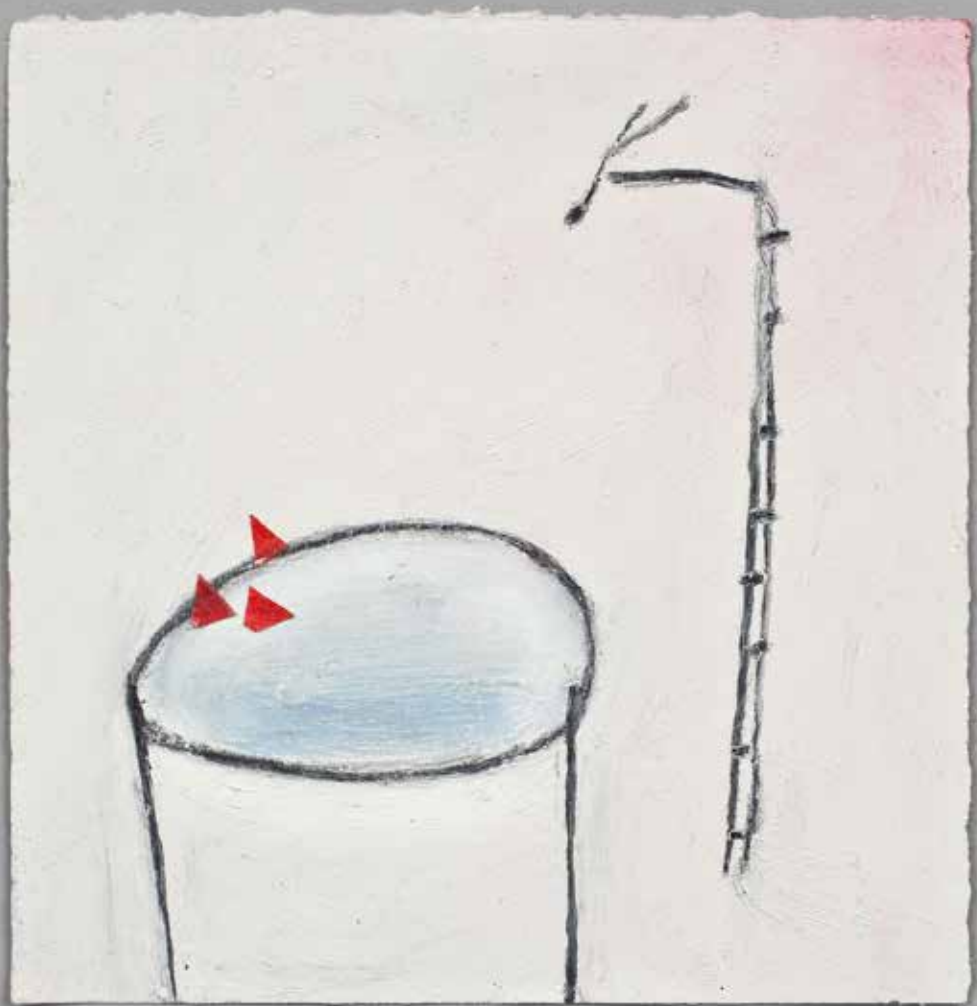
## The Divers

While my mother was in a sanitarium with tuberculosis, during the summer months I stayed with my aunt and uncle in South Hampton. We lived in a large rooming house with local workers.

One day my uncle took me to an outdoor festival. I was about 4 or 5 years old. The image that has stayed with me all these years was an act put on by a group of divers.

A large tank dominated the open space. Next to it was a narrow fragile-looking ladder that pierced the indigo sky. One diver would slowly climb the ladder to the very top and then, suddenly, dive from that precipitous perch, into the tank filled with water below. Sometimes they would put oil on the surface, throw in a match, and the diver would plunge through the flames.

The narrow fragile ladder with an indistinct black figure slowly climbing has metamorphosed in so many of my paintings. Maybe the image and the act encompassed that thin line between the threat of being and not being.



## The Candy Store

The store was on Linden Boulevard in the East New York section of Brooklyn. One stop before Canarsie.

The candy store was our version of the aluminum and Formica drug stores featured in the Andy Hardy Movies of the 1940's, except ours was a dump. We had a juke box, an occasional ice cream soda, and bobby socks, but we could never replicate the wholesome ambiance of those movies.

The juke box was at the far end of the store with its blinking lights and torn linoleum floor. It was there that we lindy-hopped to Glen Miller's "Tuxedo Junction" and to all the big bands under the disapproving eyes of the customers. I never did understand why they considered us bums, especially if you were a girl.

In the 1940's, home telephones were rare. The candy store's telephones became the neighborhood's party-line. The younger kids would hang around the telephone booths waiting for a call to come in and then they would run like hell to alert the neighbor, even if it meant

crossing the 4 lanes of the busy boulevard. They ended up with a couple of pennies and sometimes a nickel. A nickel was big deal then. You could buy a "Charlotte Russe," a small cylindrical piece of sponge cake, wrapped in a white paper mold, topped with real whipped cream and a cherry. It was worth the run.

The only time we were not allowed to stay in the store was when the bookies came and took over. Mr. Fried, the owner and father of my friend Marcia, had no say in the matter. He would stand near the counter in his white apron, ramrod, stone faced, with his arms folded tightly across his chest. The ringing of both telephones, the shouted instructions of the bookies to each other, created a chaos that fascinated us. We would purposely insist on a small purchase before we were shooed out just so we could take part in the excitement.

I have fond memories of the candy store despite the stigma imposed on me throughout my teens. In my mind it will always be Andy Hardy's corner drug store where the bobby-sock brigade met.



## **Gema and Me**

My grandmother fed me when I was hungry, nursed me when I was sick, and saved me from the shadow monsters on the bedroom walls.

We slept together in a double bed with her curled up body close to mine. I knew I was in the safest place in the world.

She was my surrogate mother, protector, and companion, and I still miss her.

I think of her often now, some seventy-odd years later.

After my husband died, I would wake up in the middle of the night feeling alone and disoriented, and for a moment I was sure she was in the other room getting ready to come to bed and curl up beside me.



## New Lots Avenue Station

The elevated platform of the New Lots Avenue station sat on top of a steep hill filled with stunted trees, tall weeds, and broken bottles.

On mild sunny days, when it was time for lunch, my grandmother and I would slowly climb up the embankment until we reached a flat rock overlooking Linden Boulevard. She would spread a colorful tablecloth over the grey stone and cover the cloth with traditional Sephardic (Judeo/Spanish) fare, kiftes (meat patties), boolemas (cheese-filled phyllo dough), yaprakes (stuffed grapevine leaves), and the ever present feta cheese. No sandwiches! That, she said, was only for Americans! She was small, wrinkled and

wiry, and no hill, no matter how difficult, was going to stop her from nourishing “a poor eater” whose chosen spot was beside the roaring trains of the B.M.T.

The same hill was navigated again when I was a teenager. Only this time it was to jump over the platform’s steel railing so that we could catch the train to Coney Island and save five cents. It was an escape from the brutally hot summer streets where an open hydrant was our only relief.

The five pennies were quickly exchanged for a tall vanilla ice cream cone, and the guilt of our illicit trip was forgotten with each successive lick.





## The Dresser

My parents' bedroom had twin beds and a communal dresser. Each member of the family was allocated a drawer for their underwear.

Late one night I went into their bedroom through an open archway in the living room.

I really was not that young.

The room was dark and velvety with a soft stream of light emanating from the lamppost directly in front of our house. It shone on the mirror over the dresser and bounced off the opposite wall. I sensed a quiet intimacy, interrupted. My father's bed was empty. Two still figures, intertwined like frozen shadows, were in the twin.

Did I really need my pajamas that night?



## The Porch

Hinsdale Street was not known for its manicured lawns. The yards were a dumping ground for old bottles and tricycle wheels. They were all two-family houses with an alley in between. Sometimes, a sweet sound of a violin would fill the space between the houses. We would wrap a few pennies in a piece of newspaper, run to the window and throw it down to what we thought was an old man. He wore a tattered grey coat and a bent brimmed hat. He would slowly pick up the wad of paper, bend slightly from the waist as he looked up, and leave.

My house was the only one that had a porch and both stories were completely covered with green shiny leaves. My mother's love for physical beauty shaped the hedges in front of the house into baskets and planted a deep red rose

bush in the center of the small garden. I was proud that our house was different.

The ivy created a garland around the porch. I don't know why I so clearly remember climbing into my carriage next to a window and feeling that the ivy surrounding the porch was a magical cover. I fell asleep.

My family thought I was lost until a policeman with a blue cap pulled me out of the best of dreams.



## Tar Beach

We lived on the top floor of a two family house bought by my father before the Depression and saved from foreclosure by the Home Owners Relief Act in 1935. Roosevelt was God in our house.

On the second floor landing there was a makeshift ladder attached to the banister at the far end of the hallway leading to the roof. The other end bridged the staircase and was attached to the wall next to the skylight with its pale yellow light suffusing the area. There was always a slight sway to the ladder as my sister and I would climb to get to the roof for our yearly pilgrimage to the sun.

I always anticipated that only one false step would send me hurling down the black hole. On the last rung, it was always a *Fragile Balance* between lifting the heavy wooden cover and climbing onto the asphalt roof.

All this precariousness for the sake of a summer tan!

\*Rachel Friedberg Monograph "Fragile Balance" 1997 E. Peterson Editions



## The Lamppost

Right in front of 704 Hinsdale Street, there was a lamppost that gave off a dim light and it was under that light that the neighborhood boys and I would play Kick the Can, Ring-a-Levio, Johnny on the Pony, May I? and countless other street games. An empty can of Coca-Cola was the sum total of our sports equipment. I remember it was cold and beginning to get dark, and the warm glow of light from my house was inviting, but the excitement of the street, the running, the hiding in the alleys, the tagging and touching, and the laughter, so much laughter, would keep me out there, sweating and stimulated. I forget all the rules of the games, but the image of Johnny on the Pony has stayed with me. We were all around 10 years old. I was not included in this game but was an avid observer. One boy would hold onto the pole of the lamppost and bend down.

Each successive boy would run and jump on his back until they would pile up in a heap and finally collapse, screaming and laughing while they struggled to untangle themselves.

I can still hear the sound of the empty Coca Cola can as it was kicked down the street and the pleading of "May I?" as I asked to be able to take a step off the sidewalk so that I could touch "home" (the lamppost) and be "safe."

There was always a slight sense of pre-pubescent sexuality attached to these games that I didn't quite understand at the time, but that attracted me enough to keep me on that street until the dark enveloped us all.





## Friday Nights

My bedroom was off our large kitchen with my bed near the door which made it seem so much a part of the heart of the apartment. Good and bad. All cooking, eating, entertaining, and, unfortunately, all the upsets between my mother and grandmother took place there too. Friday was the worst day. All the cooking for the Sabbath took place on that day and woe unto my mother if she interfered with the pots simmering on the stove. That was my grandmother's domain, and my mother was considered one of the children by her mother-in-law. All my mother had to do was lift the cover of one of the pots, question the salt content or the amount of *caldo* (broth). That was enough to start an upset, and one or the other would go into a faint on either end of the kitchen. Usually, my grandmother would go to the window and have a private conversation with God, unburdening all her trials and tribulations. I didn't know whom to go to first. My

loyalty tested, I would run from one to the other. Sometimes my grandmother would go down to the basement, and I would go after her, afraid of what harm she would do to herself. Obviously, my tendency for catastrophizing started at an early age!

But then, there were the Friday nights.

My grandmother would fashion a candlelight tableau in honor of the Sabbath on a white painted cupboard opposite my room. She would fill a glass bowl with oil, form small wicks out of paper and cotton, and place the bowl on the cupboard's porcelain table. From my bed I could see the wicks floating on the surface of the oil, and its glow filled the room with a soft golden ambience.

I felt safe and secure.



## Ziegfeld Follies Girl

Aunt Sylvia, a.k.a. Loretta Love, was 17 when she ran away from an arranged marriage. She left her husband and year-old son in exchange for the excitement and bright lights of Broadway. Aunt Sylvia was a natural platinum blond with deep set china blue eyes, Jean Harlow's looks, Marlene Dietrich's sultry voice, and perfect teeth. Ziegfeld took her on.

When she was not performing, she would come to visit us in Brooklyn. I remember the clicking of her heels as she ran up the stairs to our apartment. The distinctive perfume (Chanel #5) preceded her until her blond hair and silver fox jacket made it to the top of the stairs, and I would run and wrap my arms around her silky legs. She was glamour incarnate, and she was *my* aunt, and I adored her.

A large hand-tinted poster of her was made by the company. They had her perched on a stool with her legs crossed, scantily dressed, with her forefinger coyly dimpling her right cheek. The Ziegfeld Follies name was blazoned across the bottom of the poster in showgirl red.

I coveted that poster!

Her long time relationship with her “benefactor” ended when he arranged a meeting with his wealthy aristocratic family and her life borrowed a scene from “My Fair Lady” at the races. The drink she had to fortify herself blew the cover off her sophisticated clothes, and that was her last chance to join New York's high society.

With her youth fading, her sultry voice two octaves lower, letting go of the shabby clubs in Queens and Long Island and marrying Edie, the electrician, was her best bet. They

moved to an apartment on Collins Avenue in Miami, before South Beach became the Art Deco mecca for the baby boomers. The poster went with her.

When I was older and traveled on my own, I would visit her and my parents a couple of times a year. I hated South Beach. I found the pink and sea green stucco buildings with their narrow front porches depressing. The front porches were just wide enough to accommodate rocking chairs all set up in a row, with a senior sitting on each one under a blue fluorescent light. I always regretted not making a small assemblage of that scene. It haunted me for years.

My aunt's apartment was furnished with an ornate divan where she spent most of her days when she got old and sick. On the wall directly above the divan was the poster. I would sit in a chair next to the divan, and my eyes would dart from the poster to her and back. Aunt Sylvia's story and Chanel #5 filled the space between the poster with its young vibrant chorus girl and the tired sagging body clad in a lacy satin gown. She would spend afternoons telling me in detail all about the diamond jewelry she was going to leave me because I bore her mother's name. I would point to the poster and I would say, “I want that!” I told her that the jewelry did not interest me and any reference to it made me uncomfortable.

Somehow, the poster ended up with some grandniece or grandchild who didn't even know her or love her the way I did.

I got the diamonds.



## The Apache Dancers

While my mother was recuperating, I was sent to the Hamptons where my aunt and uncle ran a coat concession in one of the fancier nightclubs. In the Hamptons of the 1930's, potato fields painted the landscape where now fields of colonial style summer estates stand.

One night, my uncle took me with him to work, and I remember standing with him in front of the coat room, which had a direct view of the dance floor. A strong light beam cut across the smoke-filled blackness while two figures slowly and seductively moved to the center of the wood floor.

The man had on tight pants and a beret jauntily perched on his head. The women's skirt was short and above her knees. Her legs were encased in black stockings ending with what looked like

stiletto-heeled pumps. The man would hold her tight as they danced with her body molded to his, and then suddenly, he would throw her roughly away from him. She would fall to the floor, arms and legs abandoned. This sequence would repeat over and over again. The music got louder and more menacing, yet sensuous. I started to cry. The mixture of violence, pervasive sexuality, and excitement confused and frightened me.

"It's only a doll" my uncle said.

That was no doll and I never believed him again.



## The Cellar Door

"704" was a typical Brooklyn two family brick house bought by immigrants who had enough money for a down payment during the 1920's. These houses were originally built on open fields of brush, "cat-tails," and dairy farms. When I was about eight, I remember climbing the fields with a pail to get fresh milk and bringing it home for an early breakfast. Linden Boulevard was not built at the time my parents bought the property, but it was a bustling four-lane highway by the time I was born. Hinsdale Street was fully paved, and lampposts were erected. One was directly in front of our house.

The neighborhood was mostly Jewish, both Ashkenazim and Sephardim, with a section on DeWitt Avenue of Italian families. The older Italian women dressed in widow's black with matching head scarfs tied securely at the base of their necks. They cleared and worked the fields across their homes, growing much of their own vegetables in neatly constructed rows. I am sure their daily routine did not vary much from their native Italy. There was the usual friction between the different ethnic groups. No violence, unless you count the rocks that were thrown at us by the Italian kids on Sundays after they got out of church, shouting, "You killed Christ!" or the Ashkenazi Jews calling the Sephardic Jews "dumb Turks" because we spoke Ladino instead of Yiddish. But, after all, no one got killed!

In order to enter the house, you would first have to walk across the front porch, pass through the glass paneled door, and find yourself in a small vestibule with stucco walls and a hexagon tile floor. A hallway led to the downstairs rented apartment. At the end of that hallway, there was a small alcove with just enough room to be able to stand in front of a door. The cellar door. A hair's-breadth space was all that was left

when the door was actually opened. The door was made of old wood, painted a dark ochre. There was no light. The only illumination came from the front of the hallway where a lantern-like fixture with a 50 watt bulb hung at the base of the stairway leading up to our apartment. Some of the light from the fixture cast menacing shadows halfway into the alcove.

It was enough to just look at the closed door to imagine every sort of nightmare behind it. I dreaded when my parents or grandmother wanted me to fetch something from the store room. The wooden stairway leading down into the basement was made of old planks of wood, and the dank grayness of the cement floor and walls enveloped me to the point of suffocation. For some reason the room that housed the coal for the furnace filled me with the most dread, so much so that it appeared in my dreams long after I was an adult.

One day I found out that those large copper caldrons and pipes occasionally strewn around the basement floor like a sleeping serpent were a homemade distillery. Mom and Dad were bootleggers? "Raki" was an anise flavored spirit that was part of every Sephardic household and graciously offered to guests when they visited. My father was elected to make the raki for the entire extended family.

Despite the anxiety-ridden entrance fee for passing through that cellar door, I made the storage room my first studio and brought in some aesthetic sunlight into that tomb-like cavern.

The rest is history!







## Morning Insulin Shot

My brother Eli was a diabetic.

Every morning, I would watch him give himself his injection. He would carry on this banter of anecdotes, trying to distract me, as he boiled the syringe, filled the cylinder with a liquid, pulled back on a piston-like device, and plunged it into his arm while my heart would drop to the floor.

I loved him. More than anyone else.

He was my big brother, confidant, and my first love. He shaped my aesthetics and placed the early seeds of a world far away from Hinsdale Street, filled with beauty, intelligence, and unknown possibilities.

The smell of oil paint and turpentine are intertwined with my early memories of him. Although he was color blind, or maybe because he was, his arbitrary color choices were imbued with an unexpected

freshness and play. The odd combinations of color masses would edge into each other and metamorphose into a sea of otherworldliness. His interests were so varied that he would leap from painting to sculpture to flying an airplane. He knew he would not live long enough to follow each creative impulse, so he filled his life with as much variation and excitement as he could, even pushing the envelope at times.

He was right. My brother died at the age of forty seven.

Painting became my life's work. When I first started in my twenties, I felt it was his hand that was guiding me. Although our work was completely different, I felt I was continuing his creative impulse and it was that creative impulse that enriched my life for the next 60 years.



## The Red Dress

Aunt Vida, in a fit of generosity, decided to purchase dresses for my sister and me while my mother was on the mend in Liberty, New York. They were red dresses. Red, shiny taffeta dresses, and we hated them! It was not long before everyone in the neighborhood knew of those red taffeta dresses bought for those “poor motherless girls.” My mother was mortified.

I had one picture of myself in that dress. I don't know who took it or why. I was wearing old shoes with socks wrinkled and bunched up at the ankles. My eyes were dark and brooding. I didn't look more than 4 years old, and I am sure I did not understand the dynamics surrounding the gesture on my aunt's part, but my sister was five and a half years older, and I took my cue from her and would never wear the dress again.

What I found most difficult was, when my mother finally came home from the sanitarium, my grandmother, out of ignorance, did not allow my mother to kiss

or come too close to me, afraid that she could still pass on her infection. She did not realize or understand that my mother was totally cured of the tuberculosis and could not possibly infect me anymore. On the possibility that my grandmother was right, my mother stayed physically away from me all through my early childhood. The psychiatrists had a field day with that!

This physical separation from my mother became the subject of many of my early paintings and constructions and would raise its ugly head every once in a while (even in this series). A couple of years ago, I had an urge to do a drawing. With no thought in mind, I grabbed a sheet of Arches and had a young child reaching out for a figure floating in the skies with large white letters “MOM” blazoned along the top! I was in my 80's!

Enough already!



## Burn

I look back to when I was 9 years old and remember an occasion when I was filled with such violent anger that all my physical surroundings disappeared and I was enveloped in a vault of pure hatred. Had I told my aunt, at whose house I was staying, she would have said, "All this over nothing?"

Over "*nothing?*"

Not to a 9 year old! It was *something* to have your panties hanging on a clothes line for everyone to see. Especially if it was my own cousin shouting it to the rooftops while all the workmen were sitting around having their lunch! That is *something* and it was *something* when they all started to laugh at my agitation.

The next day, I met her out in the yard outside my aunt's rooming house where the clothes line and my humiliation was still strung out. My sweater was folded at the edge where I was holding as many kitchen matches I could find.

I thought I would just burn her.

It was only fair.



## Las Bruchas (The Witches)

One morning, I found a circle of missing hair at the base of my head. Smooth and perfectly round. A ten year old adolescent with "Alopecia Areata!" "Stress and anxiety," he said behind a large mahogany desk to my perplexed parents.

My mother lost no time rounding up her compatriots from Angora, who all now lived happily in a Sephardic enclave in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn. "Something frightened her," they concluded.

Early the next morning, four women appeared in my kitchen carrying a copper caldron, lead, and what looked like a frying pan. My mother supplied the obligatory white sheet and a kitchen chair. The sheet was draped over my head and down to the floor. I was lost in a white cotton cocoon that totally obliterated all that was going on in my kitchen except for my mother's best friend Rosa's commands in Ladino to the other women. Ladino was my first language, so I

had no trouble understanding that the lead was to be melted and the caldron was to be filled with cold water.

They apparently poured the molten lead into the ice cold water. A loud hissing sound exploded over my head. If I had not been frightened before, they certainly accomplished that now! The sheet was removed. The mass of lead was lifted out of the caldron with tongs. The solidified mass was now ready for interpretation. A Turkish version of the Rorschach test!

While in a circle, the women investigated every indentation, lump, and flat area, trying to read into each crevice a possible reason, cause, or occurrence causing my stress and loss of hair. Their associations were varied, but the conclusion stayed the same.

"Something frightened her."





## Gema Talking To God

My grandmother believed in God. She *really* believed in God. A personal God. One that she could talk to on an intimate basis. Whenever she was upset, usually after an altercation with her daughter-in-law (my mother), she would sit in a chair next to the window in the kitchen and have an animated conversation with God. She never doubted his existence, and she *knew* He heard every word.

Sometimes she would complain to Him that she was still alive. “Ya, bevi!” (I lived already) she would exclaim in exasperation. But then, there were the Saturdays when she sat in that same chair thanking God in her prayers for the gift of life.

Saturdays were her day of rest, and that was the only time she would not be running around the house in her black and white checkered apron, cleaning, cooking,

or caring for our many needs. I did a six by six foot encaustic grid painting for my 2008 exhibition at Kouros Gallery in New York entitled “Gema’s Aprons.” There were thirty-six iconic variations of her apron. Each one infused with her energy.

Misfortunes came and went, and she dealt with each one as though they were expected, and when they became too rough for her, she would go to her chair near the window and she would connect again with her “Señor Del Mundo.”



## Red

Red is what I saw. Wet glistening red, dripping on the floor, and flowing from my sister's hands. I was sitting on the hall steps leading to our apartment when my sister came bolting out of the cellar door with her right hand supporting her left, and the red glistening blood was spurting from her wrist.

Gema! Gema!

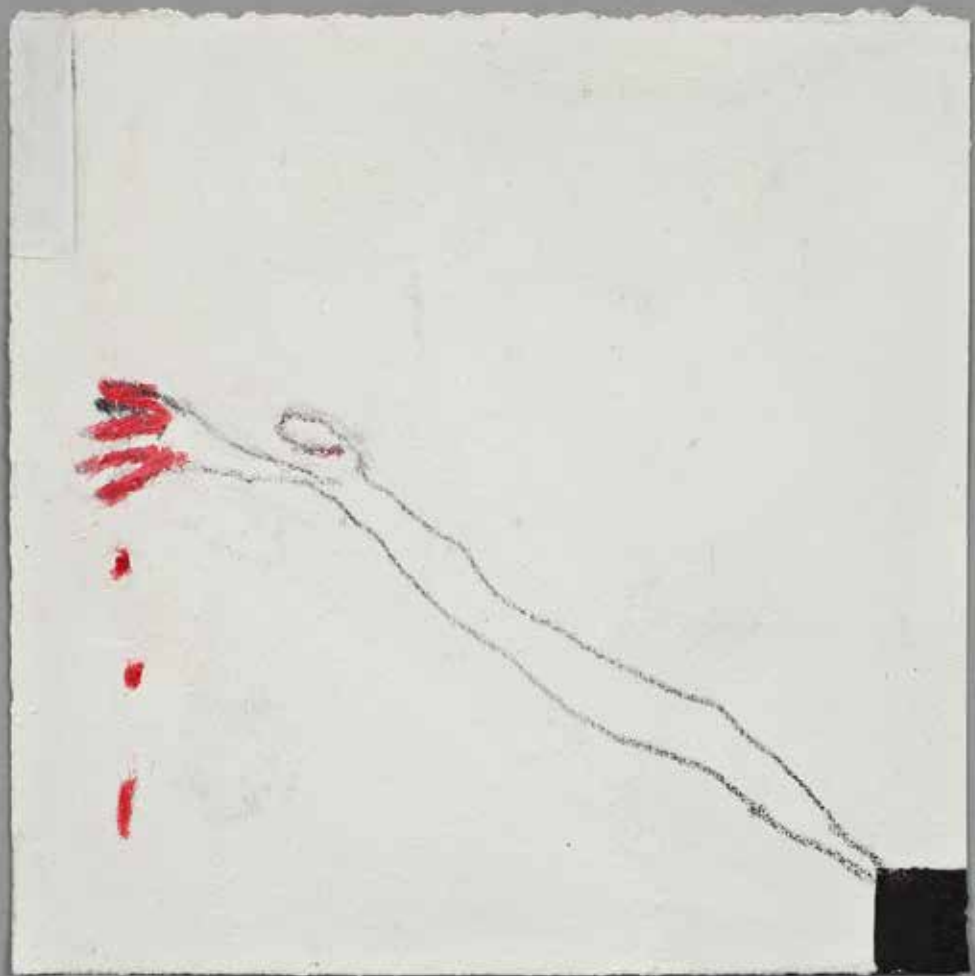
True to her folk ministering, my grandmother ran for the Turkish coffee. She staunched the wound by taking a handful of the fine powdery crushed seeds and packing it directly on the wound. She wrapped the wrist with a clean cloth. The bleeding stopped. "Yalla!" (Go!)

My grandmother told us that in Salonica (part of the Ottoman Empire before World War I), besides Turkish coffee, cobwebs were the antibiotic of choice. They would reach up to the ceiling, grab a handful of the wispy grey substance, and apply it directly to a wound. No complications. No infection. No nothing!

After my sister's accident (when her hand went through a glass globe in the storage room), trips to the cellar were kept at a minimum, except for one night before Halloween. We both went down to the cellar, rummaging through a trunk that my grandmother brought with her from Turkey on the hope that we would find something appropriate for Halloween costumes. What we did not expect to find was a box with a white skull and cross bones set in velvet!

My father, being the secretary of his Mason's Lodge, was entrusted with the box for safe keeping. The relics were returned, but the velvet box, approximately fifteen by fifteen inches square, was brought upstairs and became my grandmother's favorite seat for smoking her cigarette. A sight my friends never got used to.

My sister bore a keloid scar on her left wrist for the rest of her life, and the sight of it always brought back that bloody afternoon.



## Sea Shells

We all have repetitive dreams. Mine was of a child looking down from a great height to a lush green garden bordered with sea shells. I would wake up with a start, soaking wet, and with a pounding heart. Classic panic attack. This dream plagued me from early childhood until my late twenties.

A chance conversation with my mother during one of her visits put that recurring dream to rest.

“When are you going to train him?”

“When he’s ready, Mom.”

“He’s two years old .“

“I know.”

“Do you know how you were trained?”

“No.”

As she recounted my aunt’s unique training method, I found myself standing at an open window on the second floor of her house, looking down on beds of colorful flowers encircled with bright white sea shells. A sense of nausea suddenly overcame me as I remembered my aunt’s words.

“If you wet the bed again, I will throw you out the window!”

I never wet the bed again.



## Stage Fright

My mother wrote plays. They were written in Ladino using Hebrew script, and they were performed in theatres in Manhattan that could be rented for a weekend. Most of the theatres were empty during the depression, but by 1939 some would be available for weekend rentals.

By the late 1930's my mother was healthy and working with my father sewing "piece work" (trimmings for dresses done by workers in their homes). She would compose her plots for plays while she was sewing, borrowing heavily from local movies. Variations of Stella Dallas was a favorite. The neighborhood's misfortunes and gossip were also good sources, to the point where neighbors would say, "Don't tell Esther, it will end up on the stage!" Sephardic families from all over the city would come to attend plays written in their own language and which expressed many of their own experiences.

Because movies showed double features at the time, she thought that a night at the theatre would also demand two presentations. She would write one drama and one comedy, fulfilling the required double bill as she saw it.

My mother was a wonderful actress and had a beautiful voice, and my aunt Vida was an amazing comedian. My father was the director, and all the other players were neighborhood hopefuls. In accordance with my mother's vow, all the receipts for the performances went to local hospitals, and in particular, Montefiore Hospital, where she had been treated.

I loved peeking through the curtains as the people were coming in, hoping that all the seats would be filled. I once stood behind the curtain at one of the performances and was able to see the patrons in the first row crying while my mother was on stage during a particularly emotional scene.

It was all exciting and sometimes fun, but I never got over the fear that would grip me when I was on stage. All I could see was the oppressive blackness beyond the footlights and the occasional murmuring, like a hum, floating through that dark enveloping space.

What if I forget my lines?





## Piece Work

“Piece work” was against the law. Commercial work done at home, a boon to mothers with small children, was against the law. After losing his own dress factory that specialized in trimmings (collars, lace insets, piping and countless other embellishments), my father would try to pick up work from dress manufacturers he used to deal with and bring the work home to be sewn by my mother and, sometimes, local women. The law hung over his head and was always a source of anxiety.

“Never show them that you are in need,” my father would say. He would buy himself a five cent cigar (his carfare money) and jauntily walk in to their shops sporting the cigar. He would engage them in innocuous conversation for a while and, in the end, offhandedly ask them if there was any work they wanted to get off their hands.

One day, my mother got up early, singing. “Look out the window at 4:00 o’clock and you will see Deddy coming home with two big bundles, one in each hand. We have work! I dreamt it last night!” My mother’s dreams were known to be prophetic. Sure enough, not necessarily

at 4:00 o’clock, he *did* come home with two bundles of work in each hand. She lost no time going down into the cellar to the Singer sewing machine in the store room, and the roar of the “zig-zag” machine could be heard in our kitchen, two stories up.

There would be piles of three foot strips of paper with stenciled designs in makeshift baskets on the floor. She had to follow the design, sewing the selected trimming onto the paper itself. My parents were paid a haggled amount for each three foot strip. Delivery had to be the following day. Sometimes, she worked late into the night with my father at the cutting table.

There is a painting by Philip Evergood that I saw at the Aquavella Gallery many years ago. Sitting at a sewing machine in her home was a young mother with her son standing opposite her. The piece work was in a basket filling the emotional space between mother and son and isolating them both.

The only painting I ever wished to own.



## The Furnace

The furnace, an old asbestos monstrosity, had two important responsibilities. One was to keep the house warm (which was not easy, since it had no insulation), and the other was to supply us with charred baked potatoes on cold winter mornings.

It was my grandmother who would get up at dawn to fill pail after pail of shiny black coal into the mouth of that monstrosity. There was a small narrow door on the top part of the furnace. Opening it up was like opening the door on a Bosch painting of Hell. It was a hot steaming landscape with craters that glowed from the embers below. All that was missing were the tortured figures of the damned!

It was between those craters that my grandmother would place round potatoes.

By time we got up to get dressed for school, the potatoes, fully baked and charred, were removed from the furnace and placed on the heater in the kitchen. The black lumps were cut open, and butter oozed from their edges.

With the frost outside our window, those hot baked potatoes were the most warmly loved breakfast in the world.



## Movie Stars for a Day

That is what we wanted to be. Glamorous movie stars for a day. Camera in hand, my sister and I went into the backyard like producers looking for the proper location and ambience. We picked a cinder block wall bordering our neighbor's property. It stood about six foot off the accumulated rubble with a fence built behind it. The ledge on the wall sold us on the location. We thought it was conducive to striking glamorous poses.

I put on a two piece bathing suit and high heels and literally hung with one hand gripping the edge of a two-by-four. What made me think that was glamorous, I don't know.

My sister took the more seductive, insouciant pose, sitting on the ledge of the wall, looking beautiful with her gaze set on unknown shores. I still have both

photographs. We need physical reminders every once in a while so that we can be pleased we finally grew up.

That was the only day I remember being with my sister when she really seemed pleased to spend the day with me. She was five and a half years older than I, and she certainly did not welcome my addition to the family. They would shoo her away every time she would come close to me.

And she stayed shooed away until we were adults, and when her need came for me, it was too late.

It happens.



## Separation

How does a pocketbook become a mother? Especially pocketbooks that are made out of newspapers, folded like an envelope, and *voilà*, a pocketbook! My mother.

Over 100 paper “pocketbooks,” all shoved into a closet. Mother and the pocketbooks became one, and since I was separated from mine as a child, I brought her back into my life through this compulsive activity.

In my work, a square becomes the universe, an apron became my grandmother, and a tie becomes every man’s obsession. Each emotional and physical characteristic was clearly seen and felt by me in the icons I painted or drew. A concept, a memory, or philosophical thought changes into an image.

The simple box-like, child-like “houses” in my series *House Poems* were *home*, with all its joys and traumas packed into fourteen geometric “houses.” An icon is just a reductive story. The “Glass House” may be just a geometric square with a peak, but the fragility of life and the painful human relationships entrapped in them were there, embedded in the translucent encaustic.

The chairs in “Chosen One,” part of the series “The White Paintings” bring up a host of questions. One of the nine chairs has a red seat and is the chosen one. Was that choice for good or bad? To me all the chairs are living souls, and the chosen one is me.

So why can’t the paper pocketbooks be my mother?





## The Blind Tenant

They lived in the apartment downstairs of our two family house. Mother and son.

I remember Mrs. Weinstein was her name.

Better forgotten.

She had watery pale blue eyes and moved around her kitchen rather easily despite her impairment. She was a big woman with dimpled forearms which she wrapped around me whenever I would come downstairs to visit and dance. I told her I wanted to be a dancer.

She would listen to me: a four or five year old child with dreams of becoming a dancer. I would twirl and tap and she would encourage me with clapping and gave me her undivided attention. A thick slice of "Jewish bread" swathed in butter was my reward. That is what it was called in my house. Rye bread, with poppy seeds

was "Jewish bread" (more nomenclature to confuse me). Weren't we Jewish, and why was our bread different?

What did she *think* when her 20 plus son would call me into a small room next to the kitchen, or did I walk into that room myself to get more attention? There was no light in that small room, just a couch against the wall with her son lying prone waiting for me.

Father, sister, brother, grandmother, where were they? My mother was in the hospital, but where were they? My grandmother must have been home, but I was with a trusted neighbor, wasn't I?

Were her eyes not the only thing that was blind?



## The Clothes Line

Outside our kitchen window there was a pulley secured to the back wall of our house with a clothes line attached, stretching clear across our garden to a pole at the far end of our property.

We did not own a washing machine. No neighbor in my section of Brooklyn did either. Row upon row of laundry would be strung out straight across the back yards. The clothes would be washed on a “scrubbing board” in the bathtub with Octagon soap. Chock full of lye. If the sheets needed extra cleaning, according to my mother (a regular Craig’s wife), a huge pot would be put on the stove and the sheets were then boiled and strung out on the line with wooden, slotted clothespins. The sheets were heavy when wet, and it was very difficult to slide the clothespins over them and onto the line. During the cold winter months, the sheets

would freeze and stand out stiffly forming a stark white formation straight to the pole, like navy men in their dress whites.

One day, there was just one small towel clipped to the clothesline, frozen and isolated with a sense of quiet surrounding it as it cut the cerulean sky.

I identified with that defiant towel, and a peacefulness enveloped me. If that towel can survive the elements, so can I.



## The Coal Chute

Our street had its regulars.

The Ice Man with his blocks of ice, covered with burlap, came in a horse drawn wagon.

The Rag Man and his horse and wagon would come by and shake a cast metal bell calling out in Yiddish “alta zachen” (old things) or occasionally, “I cash clothes.”

These were frequent visitors to our neighborhood, but the huge truck that delivered coal for the furnace would only come in late fall in preparation for the cold winter. He would pull up in front of our alley, back in as far as he could go, and attach a chute from the back of his truck leading to a small basement window on the side of our house.

When the steel door that held the coal in the truck was lifted, there was a deafening roar of falling coal rolling down the chute as

coal poured into our bin through the window. The coal bin was a wooden partitioned lean-to with a door of wooden planks. It didn't seem possible that this fragile partition could hold all the contents that were poured into it. The shiny black faceted coal would completely fill the space up to the ceiling like a jeweled black mountain.

I felt the “room” was a claustrophobic black hole, and I never wanted to get too close to it.



## The Water Glass

Sleeping arrangements in our house were made according to the marital status of its members.

When we were all living at home, my brother had his own room off the upstairs hallway, with its own entrance. It had a single bed alongside the window facing the front of our house. The only other piece of furniture was a dresser with a long mirror in the middle and small drawers on either side. I am sure there were many other dressers exactly like this one, but I thought it was special and hoped some day it would be mine. In the built-in closet, besides clothing, there was a huge glass jug of *raki*, a home-made liqueur reserved for guests and occasional toothaches.

My parents had their own room with twin beds, and my grandmother, sister, and I shared a small bedroom off the kitchen. I slept with my grandmother in a double bed. Next to the bed was a closet with a small ledge and two long drawers beneath it. It was on that ledge that

my grandmother would place a glass of water in preparation for my nightly ritual.

I slept close to the wall and sometime during the night my childish voice would call, “Gema, dame awa,” and my grandmother would dutifully reach over and pass over the glass to me.

It wasn’t until my brother got married, my sister got his room, and I got my sister’s bed, that the water ritual stopped. I finally slept alone.

It wasn’t until I married that those words were again called out in the middle of the night. Having led a rather chaste life, having someone sharing my bed triggered off the old compulsion.

“Gema, dame awa” was uttered shortly after we were married, waking him out of a deep sleep, which should have given him second thoughts.

It didn’t.





## The Proposal

We were on the porch. Irv and I. We were on our fourth “date.” I didn’t feel like it was a date. I was too comfortable with him. I used to be a nervous wreck with a date. We did work together for two years. It wasn’t like I just met him. He was a good man. He asked me to marry him, and I said, “Yes.”

It was a still cold winter night, and, as usual, he drove me home from Manhattan to the ass-end of Brooklyn where I lived with my parents. He said it was a necessity, the proposal I mean. It was the only way he could stop these late night trips from Manhattan to the ends of Brooklyn and then back to his apartment on Bank Street. I loved his sense of humor.

While we were standing there trying to take in our momentous decision, we heard clopping coming from Linden Boulevard. As the clopping came closer, a horse *sans* rider turned into my street and rode past us into the night. The proposal felt surrealistic, the riderless horse at one in the morning didn’t help.

I left him and climbed up the stairs to my apartment. My father was in the kitchen standing between the two windows. When I was out at night, he was the only one that stayed up until I was safely home, and he was the one that always gave me five dollars before

a date so that I could take a cab in case there was any trouble.

As I saw him standing under the kitchen florescent light, I thought, “How can I leave?” It wasn’t that we were that close. I don’t remember one intimate conversation with him. His attention was on work and my mother, and yet the thought of my leaving him and my home left a heavy weight in my stomach. After informing my father of my decision, I went to bed. My mother woke me the next morning with Ladino bridal songs. I ran away.

After staying with my friend Margaret (she was in her fifties with teen-age kids), I called Irv and told him where I was. Margaret was wise and helped me clear my head. When he came, he told me he asked his mother what he should do, and she said to bring me flowers and a box of candy.

He handed me the flowers and said that he thought the box of candy was overdoing it!

We were married for fifty five years.





# Encaustics

2010-2011

*“There are no beautiful surfaces  
without a terrible depth.”*

—Friedrich Nietzsche

The Diary Series, encaustics





*Gema talking to God*, 30" x 30", 2010, encaustic on panel





*Blind Tenant*, 30" x 30", 2011, encaustic on panel



*Tar Beach*, 10" x 10", 2010, encaustic on panel



*Morning Insulin Shot*, 10" x 10", 2010, encaustic on panel



*Red*, 10' x 10', 2010, encaustic on panel



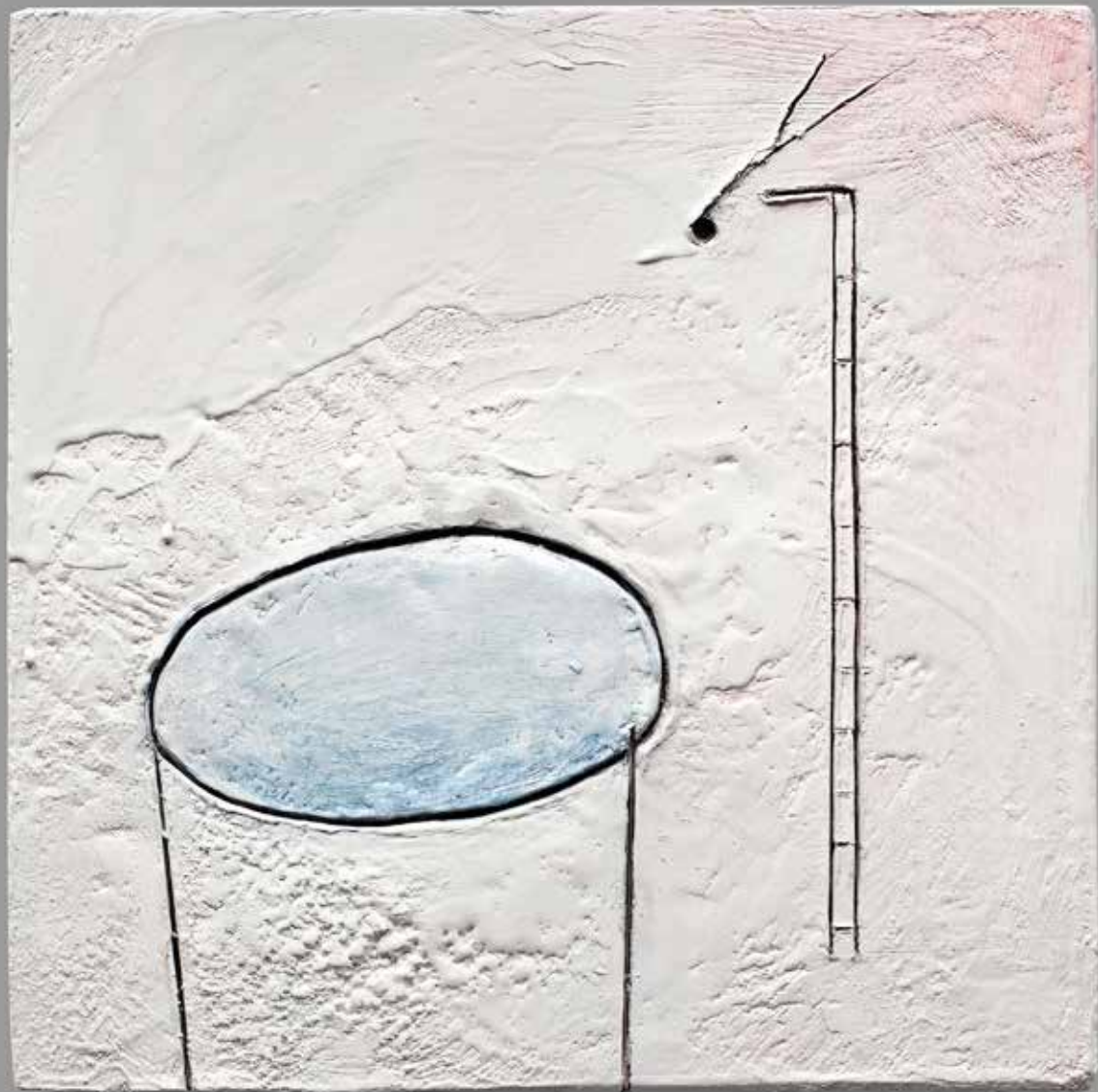




*Stage Fright*, 10" x 10", 2010, encaustic on panel



*The Divers*, 10" x 10", 2010, encaustic on panel



*The Lamppost*, 10" x 10", 2010, encaustic on panel



*Gema and Me*, 10" x 10", 2010, encaustic on panel





*Las Bruchas*, 10' x 10", 2010, encaustic on panel



*The Dresser*, 10' x 10', 2010, encaustic on panel

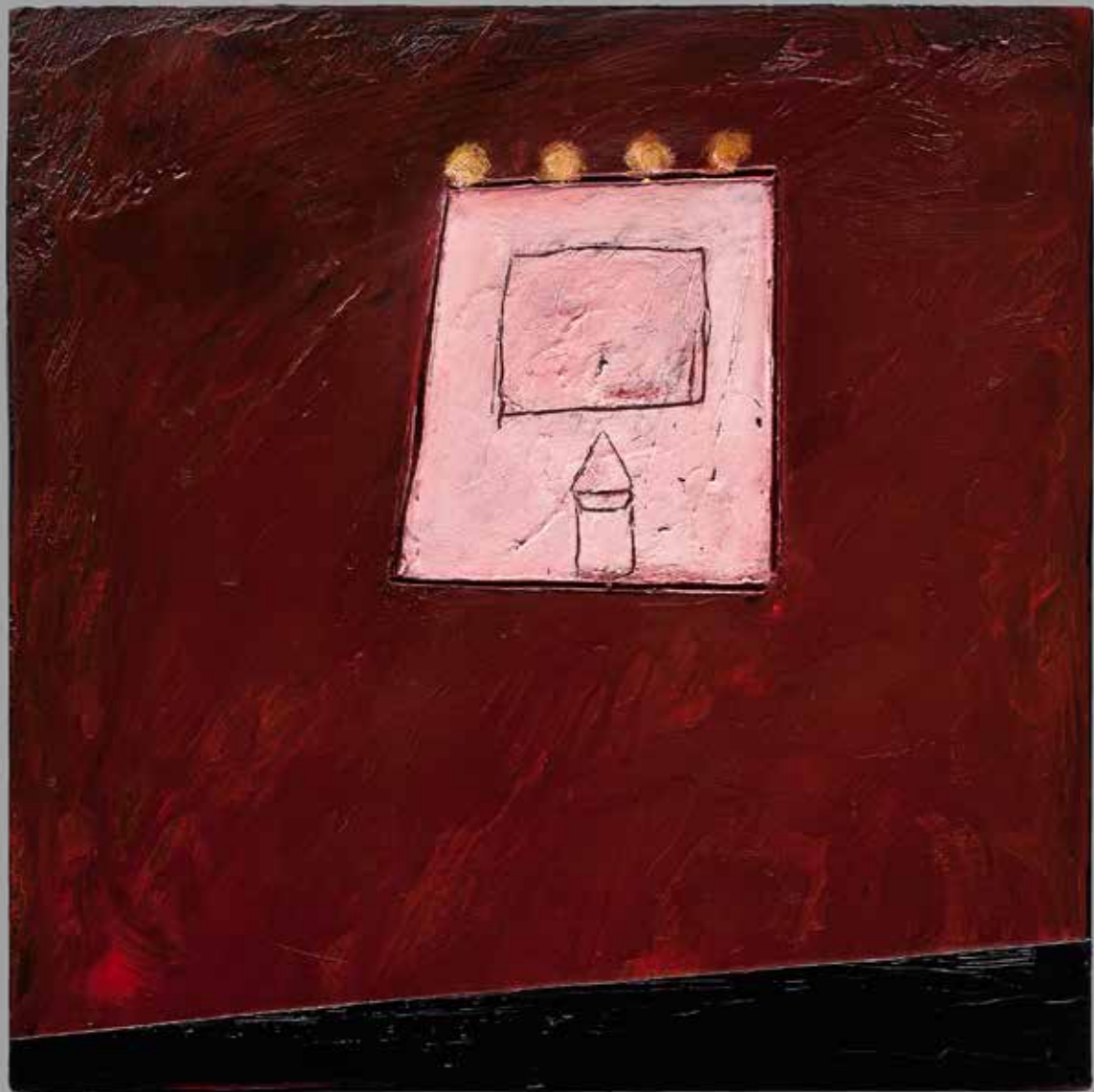


*Sea Shells*, 10" x 10", 2010, encaustic on panel





*Candy Store*, 10" x 10", 2011, encaustic on panel





*The Porch*, 10' x 10", 2011, encaustic on panel





# **Vintage Photographs**

**704 Hinsdale St, Brooklyn, New York**



Rachel (age 4), *"The Red Dress"*



Gema, "Gema and Me"



Bobby Sock Brigade, "Candy Store"



The guys and me, "Candy Store"



Fooling around, "Candy Store"



The group on Linden Boulevard.





Eli's prized 1940's Cadillac



Eli, "*Early Morning Insulin*"



Molly, *"Movie Stars for a Day"*



Rachel (age 16), *"Movie Stars for a Day"*



Mom, Dad and his mandolin, "*Stage Fright*"



My father in our garden, "*The Proposal*"



Molly, "Tar Beach"



Aunt Sylvia (at age 50; Eli's wedding day),  
*"Ziegfeld Follies Girl"*

## ONE PERSON & GROUP EXHIBITIONS

◆ - one person exhibition

- 2013 ◆ Sidetracks Art Gallery New Hope, N.Y. "*He/She Etc.*"
- 2009 ◆ The Abud Foundation for the Arts Lawrenceville, N.J. "*She*"
- 2008 ◆ Kouros Gallery, New York, NY, *He/She Series - Sequel* (catalogue)
- 2007 Kouros Gallery, New York, NY, "*Accrochage*"
- 2006 ◆ Kouros Gallery, New York, NY, *Selections from the He/She Series*
- 2006 Heidi Cho Gallery, New York, NY, *To the Moon Alice*
- 2006 ◆ New Hope Sidetracks Gallery, New Hope, N.Y. "*Absence.Remembrance.Presence*"
- 2006 William Paterson U. Galleries "*Luminous Depths*" (catalogue) Six Women Explore The Ancient Art of Encaustic Painting
- 2004-2005 R&F Art Gallery Kingston, NY, *Unbound Selected Artists from the Art of Encaustic Painting*
- 2004 D.J.T. Fine Art, New York, NY, *Celebrating 25 Years*
- 2004 Arlene Bujese Gallery, E. Hampton, NY 10
- 2003-2004 Montclair Museum of Art, Montclair NJ, *Growing Up*
- 2003 Cervini Haas Gallery, Scottsdale AZ, *Earth & Sky: Meditations*
- 2003 ◆ Denise Bibro Fine Art, New York, NY, *Suburbia Revisited & Eulogy Series in Encaustic*
- 2003 Arlene Bujese Gallery, East Hampton, NY, *Dealer's Choice*
- 2002 ◆ Laurel Tracey Gallery, Red Bank, NJ, *Two Decades of Encaustic*
- 2002 Cummings Art Center, Connecticut College, New London, CT, *Hot Wax*
- 2002 ◆ Melanee Cooper Gallery, Chicago, IL, Three Series: *Suburbia, Eulogy for Sonia, Summer of 99*
- 2002 Arlene Bujese Gallery, East Hampton, NY, *The Iconic Image*
- 2002 Denise Bibro Gallery, New York, NY, *Encaustic/Wax*
- 2001 Cervini Haas Gallery, Scottsdale, AZ, *The Art of Encaustic*
- 2001 Art Mecca Contemporary Fine Art, Chicago, IL, *Encaustic, Encaustic: Joanne Mattera and Friends*
- 2001 ◆ Arlene Bujese Gallery, East Hampton, NY, *Selections From a Fragile Balance*
- 2000-2001 ◆Abramson Raimondo Gallery, Edgewater, NJ, *Selections From a Fragile Balance*
- 2000 UFA Gallery, NY, NY, *Introduction*
- 2000 Arlene Bujese Gallery, East Hampton, NY, *Multiples*
- 2000 Arlene Bujese Gallery, East Hampton, NY, *Dealer's Choice*
- 1999 Montclair, NJ, Montclair Art Museum; Knoxville KY, Knoxville Museum of Art, *Waxing Poetic: Encaustic Art in America* (catalogue)
- 1999 ◆ Staten Island, NY, The Staten Island Museum of Art and Science, *Selections From a Fragile Balance* (catalogue)

- 1999 New York, NY, E. Peterson Gallery, *Marilyn*
- 1998 Chicago, IL, Guenda Jay Gallery, *Waxworks*
- 1998 ♦ New York, NY E. Peterson Gallery, *Rachel Friedberg: The White Paintings* (catalogue)
- 1998 ♦ Staten Island, NY, The Newhouse Gallery of Contemporary Art at Snug Harbor Cultural Center, *Encaustics*
- 1997 Houston, TX, Judy Youens Gallery, *The Figure in Contemporary Art*
- 1996-1997 New York, NY, Avanti Galleries, *Works on Paper*
- 1995 ♦ Amsterdam, Netherlands, Galerie Witteveen, *Overzicht: 1981-1984*
- 1995 ♦ New York, NY, Avanti Galleries, *From My Mother's Garden* (catalogue)
- 1995 Santiago, Chile, Museo dell' Arte Contemporanea, *Prints from the Frank Copello Print Shop*
- 1994 East Hampton, NY, Renee Fotouhi Fine Art East, *Signs & Symbols*, Two Person Exhibition
- 1994 East Hampton, NY, Vered Gallery
- 1994 Houston, TX, Judy Youens Gallery
- 1994 ♦ New York, NY, Avanti Galleries, *Early Encaustic Photocollages from 1980-1981* (catalogue)
- 1993 East Hampton, NY, Vered Gallery
- 1993 Houston, TX, Judy Youens Gallery
- 1993 ♦ New York, NY, Avanti Galleries, *Recent Encaustics & Drawings* (catalogue)
- 1993 New York, NY, Julie Saul Gallery
- 1993 San Francisco, CA, Michael Dunev Gallery
- 1993 West Paterson, NJ, Nathans Gallery, *New York Artists*
- 1992 Chicago, IL, Steppenwolf Theatre Company
- 1992 ♦ East Hampton, NY, Vered Gallery, *Recent Paintings*
- 1992 East Hampton, NY, Guild Hall Museum
- 1992 ♦ Houston, TX, Judy Youens Gallery, *Recent Paintings*
- 1992 New York, NY, Avanti Galleries
- 1992 New York, NY, Lieberman/Saul Gallery
- 1992 Palo Alto, CA, Palo Alto Cultural Center, *Contemporary Uses of Wax and Encaustic*
- 1992 San Francisco, CA, Michael Dunev Gallery
- 1991 Bridgehampton, NY, Elaine Benson Gallery
- 1991 ♦ East Hampton, NY, Vered Gallery, *Recent Paintings*
- 1991 Houston, TX, Judy Youens Gallery
- 1991 New York, NY, Avanti Galleries
- 1991 San Francisco, CA, Michael Dunev Gallery
- 1990 ♦ East Hampton, NY, Vered Gallery, *Houses*
- 1990 ♦ Houston, TX, Judy Youens Gallery, *Recent Encaustics*



- 1990 New York, NY, Hal Katzen Gallery
- 1990 ♦ San Francisco, CA, Michael Dunev Gallery Recent Paintings
- 1989 East Hampton, NY, Vered Gallery, *Nude or Naked*
- 1989 Houston, TX, Judy Youens Gallery
- 1989 ♦ San Francisco, CA, Michael Dunev Gallery, *Recent Paintings*
- 1989 Santa Fe, NM, LeWallen/Butler Fine Art
- 1988 ♦ East Hampton, NY, Vered Gallery, *New Works*
- 1988 ♦ Roslyn, NY, Nassau County Museum of Art, *Long Island Artists* (catalogue)
- 1988 San Francisco, CA, Michael Dunev Gallery
- 1987 ♦ East Hampton, NY, Vered Gallery, *New Works*
- 1987 ♦ Jersey City, NJ, Jersey City Museum, *New Works*
- 1987 San Francisco, CA, Michael Dunev Gallery, *Three from New York*
- 1987 San Francisco, CA, Michael Dunev Gallery, *Recent Acquisitions*
- 1986-1987 Williamsburg, VA, Muscarelli Museum of Art; Moscow, ID, Prichard Gallery, University of Idaho; Amarillo, TX, Amarillo Art Center; Tampa, FL, Tampa Museum; Cedar Falls, IA, University of Northern Iowa Gallery of Art; Toledo, OH, Toledo Museum of Art; Winston Salem, NC, Wake Forest University Gallery; Chattanooga, TN, Hunter Museum of Art; Salem, NC, Wake Forest University Gallery; Chattanooga, TN, Hunter Museum of Art; Portsmouth, OH, Southern Ohio Museum & Cultural Center; Lamont Gallery, Exeter, NH, Phillips Exeter Academy, *Adornments* (traveling exhibitions)
- 1986 East Hampton, NY, East Hampton Center For Contemporary Art, *Coming Together, Coming Apart*
- 1986 ♦ East Hampton, NY, Guild Hall Museum, *Eleven Painters* (catalogue)
- 1986 ♦ East Hampton, NY, Vered Gallery
- 1986 ♦ Morristown, NJ, The Morris Museum, *The Potent Image* (catalogue)
- 1986 New York, NY, Little John-Smith Gallery, *Dog Days of August*
- 1985-1986 New York, NY, Bernice Steinbaum Gallery, *Adornments*
- 1985 Newark, NJ, *New Jersey Artists 5th Biennial*, Newark Museum, Curators: Douglas Schultz, Albright Knox Gallery; Suzanne Delehanty, Neuberger Museum (catalogue)
- 1984-1985 ♦ Newark, NJ, Newark Museum, *Enigmatic Image*
- 1984 Jamaica, NY, Jamaica Art Center, *Situations* (catalogue)
- 1983-1984 ♦ New York, NY, 55 Mercer St. Gallery
- 1982 New York, NY, Bertha Urdang Gallery, Collection Room
- 1979 Newark, NJ, Newark Museum, *Women in Art*, Curator: Fern Thurlow, Newark Museum
- 1978 ♦ New York, NY, Gloria Cortella Gallery, Loan Exhibition
- 1977 ♦ New York, NY, Gloria Cortella Gallery, *Steel Works*

- 1977 New Brunswick, NJ, Rutgers University Art Gallery, Tri-State Art Show, Curator: Barbara Haskell, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
- 1976 New York, NY, Gloria Cortella Gallery
- 1976 ♦ Ridgefield, CT, Aldrich Museum, *Contemporary Reflections* (catalogue)
- 1975 Brooklyn, NY, The Brooklyn Museum, *Women in the Arts*
- 1972 Norwalk, CT, Silvermine Guild, *New England Exhibition*, Curator: Evan Hopkins, Philadelphia Museum of Art
- 1971 Trenton, NJ, Trenton Museum, *New Jersey Artists*, Curator Romare Bearden
- 1970 Norwalk, CT, Silvermine Guild, *New England Exhibition*, Curator: Gordon MacKintosh Smith, Albright-Knox Gallery
- 1967 Norwalk, CT, Silver Mine Guild, *New England Exhibition*, Curator: Will Barnett
- 1966 White Plains, NY, Westchester Art Society, Curator: Lawrence Alloway, Guggenheim Museum
- 1964 New York, NY, Henry Street Settlement House, *Gymnasium Show I*, Curators: Edward Bryant, Whitney Museum of American Art; Paul Moscani, New School; Van Weeren Griek, the Jewish Museum; Daniel Robbins, Guggenheim Museum

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- Lipton, Eunice. *Paintings by Rachel Friedberg: 'From My Mother's Garden,' in Rachel Friedberg: 'From My Mother's Garden'*, exhibition catalogue, New York, NY: Avanti Galleries, Inc., March 2-April 1, 1995.
- Lubar, Robert, *Rachel Friedberg: 'The Language of Memory*, in *Rachel Friedberg: Recent Encaustics & Works on Paper*, exhibition catalogue, New York, NY: Avanti Galleries, Inc., March 2-April 1, 1995.
- Nochlin, Linda. *Spaces of Mortality: Rachel Friedberg's 'White Paintings'* in *Rachel Friedberg: The 'White Paintings'* exhibition catalogue, New York NY: E. Peterson Gallery, October 15-December 1, 1998.

## EXHIBITION REVIEWS

*Chicago Tribune*, Alan Gartner, August 9, 2002

*Art in America*, Maura Reilly, April 1999

*The Underground National*, Cover Magazine, Jeanne C. Wilkinson, April 1995

*East Hampton Star*, Robert Long Feature Article An Artist on a Quest, January 2, 2003

*Sheridan Sanseqund*, June 14, 2001, Rose Slivka, September 29, 1994; July 9, 1992; September 17, 1990; March 30, 1989; October 11, 1987, August 21, 1986

*Houston Chronicle*, Patricia Johnson, July 13, 1989, Susan Chadwick, July 7, 1989

*New York Newsday*, Karin Lipson, January 29, 1988; August 22, 1986, Malcom Preson, January 27, 1981

*New York Times*, D.Dominick Lombardi, January 2, 2005, Phillis Braff, October 9, 1994; January 31, 1988;

October 4, 1987; September 14, 1986, Peri Halasz, April 29, 1973, Helen Harrison, October 11, 1987; October 26,

1986, Vivian Raynor, December 13, 1987; October 1, 1985; February 16, 1979, John Russell, November 1, 1975,

David Shirey, January 6, 1985, William Zimmer, November 9, 1986; May 12, 1985

*Newark Star Ledger*, Eileen Warkins, October 10, 1993; September 29, 1985; April 1, 1985; December 16, 1984;

December 14, 1984; January 29, 1978

*Southampton Press*, Darius Yektai, June 28, 2001, Robert Long, September 18, 1990; August 20, 1988;

September 18, 1986, William Henry, October 23, 1986

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## AWARDS

1991-1992 Guild Hall Museum Award, East Hampton, NY, Juror: Barbara Haskell, Curator,

Whitney Museum of American Art

1989 Guild Hall Museum Award, East Hampton, NY, Juror: Vivien Raynor, Art Critic, *New York Times*

1988 Guild Hall Museum Award, East Hampton, NY, Juror: Amei Wallach, Art Critic, *Newsday*

1983 New Jersey Council on the Arts Fellowship

1971 1st Prize - Mixed Media, Northshore Exhibition, Juror: Dorothy Miller, Museum of Modern Art,

New York, Juror: Dore Ashton, Critic

## **PERMANENT COLLECTIONS**

Columbia University - School of Social Research, New York, NY

The Newark Museum, Newark NJ

The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn NY

The Houston Museum of Fine Arts, Houston TX

The Montclair Museum of Fine Arts, Montclair, NJ

Heckscher Museum, Huntington, NY

University Gallery, University of Denver, Newark, DEL.

The Danforth Museum of Art, Framingham, MA

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Edward Williams College, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Teaneck, NJ, Artist in Residence, 1973-1980



Rachel in the studio, 2012

## Diary

Written and painted by Rachel Friedberg

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