

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Driscoll Babcock Galleries
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Tuesday – Friday: 10:00am – 6:00pm

Saturday: 12:00pm – 6:00pm

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Alan Gussow: Cold Elation

March 19 – May 2, 2015

Opening Reception: Thursday, March 19, 6-8 pm



Alan Gussow, *Cold Elation*, 1976, Oil on canvas,
48 x 44 inches

DRISCOLL BABCOCK GALLERIES presents *Alan Gussow: Cold Elation* – works from the 1970s, a pivotal moment in the formal development of Gussow’s nearly 50 year career. Embracing the two dimensional surface plane of the canvas, Gussow applied paint in thin stitch-like strokes. These calligraphic marks register his personal sensations, elegantly reducing natural forms to a basic visual abstraction.

Gussow reflected that “prior to 1972, I was looking at scenery. Now I am in the environment, part of it. Scenery is a convention. I’m not painting objects, I’m describing a process. I have stepped through the scene to go inside it.” Works such as STEPS IN SNOW emphasize this – the rhythmic markings do not portray actual footsteps, rather they conjure the texture, sounds and sensations experienced during a winter’s day walk. In the painting COLD ELATION, the canvas vibrates with a crisp energy, a remarkable expression of exultation emanating from energetic abstract lines.

Beginning in the early 1970’s Gussow utilized works on paper to both experiment with linear expression and to create calligraphic works derived from nature. Monochromatic works on paper such as THE FAR FIELD demonstrated his quick confidence with hard edge horizontal mark making, and allowed him to work and play with the effects of differing lengths of strokes. The results are graphically striking as the eye first feels, then perceives order and patterns within his cogent images.

While graphic and geometric in scope, these works continue to connect with the artist’s very personal and life-long interest in the natural environment. An avid environmental activist until his death, Gussow played an integral role in preventing a proposed Con Edison plant from destroying Storm King Mountain in the Hudson River Valley. He advised Robert F. Kennedy and George McGovern on key environmental issues and as a consultant for the National Park Service, he conceived of and inaugurated the first Artist in Residence program for the National Park Service.

Gussow was instrumental in focusing on painted perceptual experiences of nature rather than representations. The geometry of his imagery is enlivened by his organic sense of linear arrangements.

ABOUT ALAN GUSSOW

Driscoll Babcock Galleries has handled the work of Alan Gussow since 2001. The gallery has staged three previous solo exhibitions of his work: *Alan Gussow: Interrupted Spring* (2012), *Alan Gussow: A Painter's Nature* (2009) and *Alan Gussow: Oils* (2006). Additionally, Gussow's work has been the subject of more than a dozen solo museum exhibitions, including the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; The National Arts Club, New York; Flint Institute of Arts, MI; Arkansas Art Center, Little Rock, AK; Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson, MS; and the Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME.

Gussow's work can be found in public collections throughout the United States and in Europe, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO; Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Arkansas Art Center, Little Rock, AK; Flint Institute of Arts, MI; Palmer Museum of Art, University Park, PA; Montgomery Museum of Art, AL; Greenville County Museum of Art, SC; and the National Museum, Udine, Italy.

In addition to being recognized as an artist, Gussow was an avid environmentalist and activist. He advised Senators Robert F. Kennedy and George McGovern on key environmental issues, served on the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Earth, and had a strong national presence, serving as an expert witness on environmental conservation issues before Congress and several legislative committees. He served as a Consultant in the Arts for the National Park Service, and was an active teacher for 40 years. His many written works include the books, "A Sense of Place: The Artist and the American Landscape" and "The Artist as Native: Reinventing Regionalism."

ABOUT DRISCOLL BABCOCK GALLERIES

Driscoll Babcock Galleries, founded in 1852, is the oldest gallery in New York City, and the nation's oldest gallery which from its inception has focused on American art. During the tenure of current president Dr. John Driscoll, the gallery has helped to secure numerous prized works for major private collectors and museums across the country including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the National Portrait Gallery, all in Washington, D.C.; The Cleveland Museum; The Detroit Institute of Arts; Minneapolis Institute of Arts; Greenville County Museum of Art, South Carolina; Crystal Bridges Museum in Bentonville Arkansas; The Kemper in Kansas City; The Museum of Fine Arts-Houston and dozens of other museums.

For additional information and images, please contact Tess Schwab, Director
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