



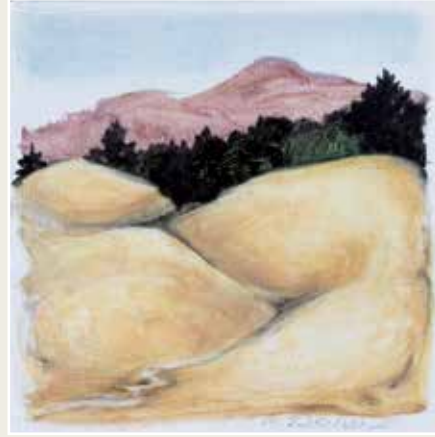
Marguerite Robichaux

A LOOK BACK

Pucker Gallery • Boston



April in Vermont II, 2015
Oil on birch panel
6 x 6"
MR285



April in Vermont IV, 2015
Oil on birch panel
6 x 6"
MR287

REMEMBERING THE PAST, LOOKING AHEAD

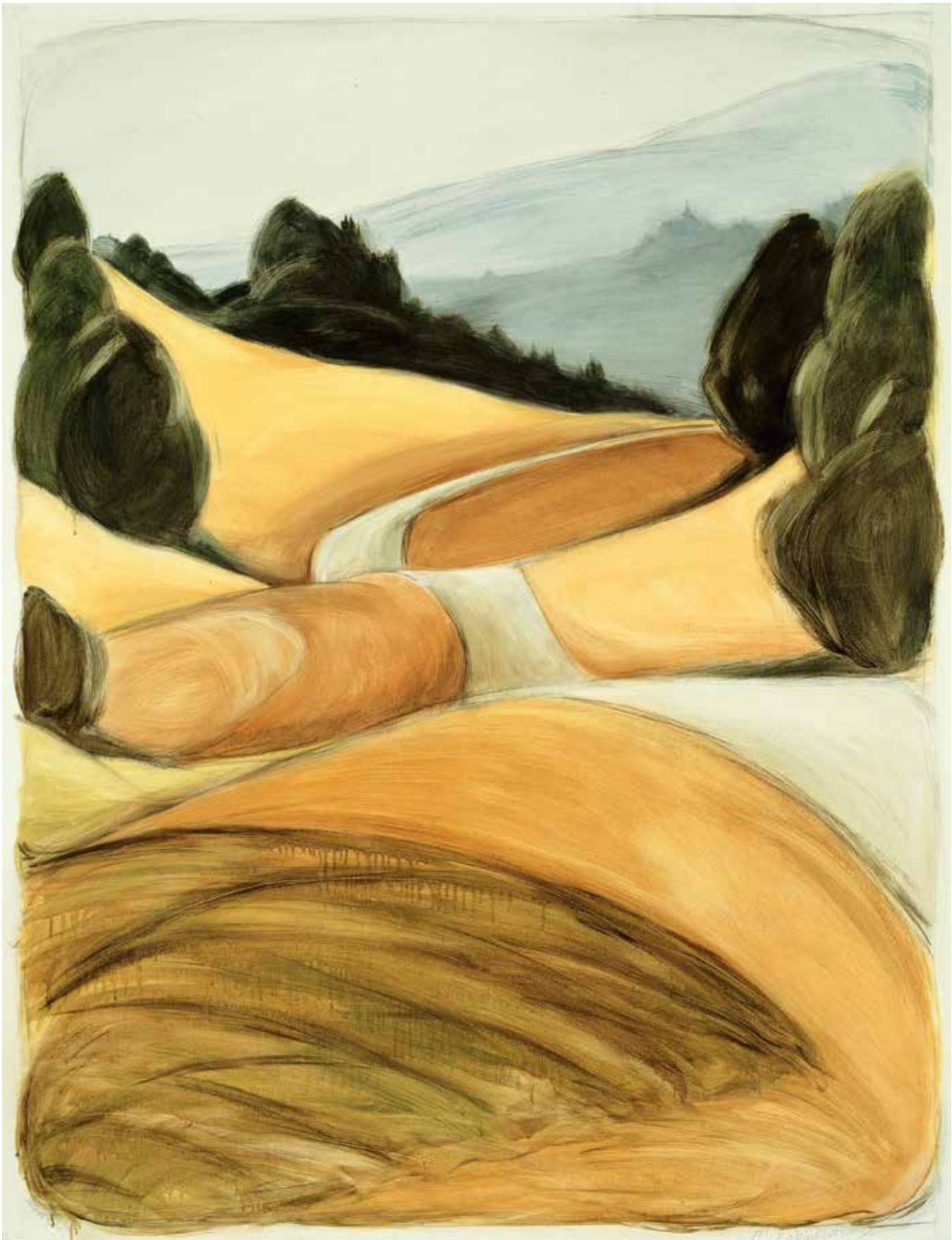
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I was recently reminded of a poem by my friend, the late Jud Strunk, a poet and musician, which begins:

*As I reflect a lot of things
In my erratic past
I find I've done some things too slow
And often much too fast*

The poem appears on the back cover of his 1977 vinyl LP, *A Semi-Reformed Tequila Crazyed Gypsy Looks Back*. I spent a few years being a gypsy alongside Jud and his band, crisscrossing the country where they performed in honky-tonks and concert halls. I also commuted to and from Louisiana, my ancestral home, and Maine, my adopted home. During this time, my art took the form of graphite drawings and watercolors—small and easily transportable. Eventually, I chose a somewhat more settled existence with Walter, my significant other for forty years now. I still travel and seek adventure in far-flung places, but I spend a lot more time making art in the studio.

In 1988 and 1990, I attended two artists' residencies—Vermont Studio Colony and Monhegan Island—which helped define my artistic method and practice. I continued to make watercolor landscapes *en plein air*. Using those small paintings as reference, I scaled up the images to large-format oil-on-paper pieces, such as *April 30, Maine* (MR367). Wide, sweeping brushstrokes of turpentine-thinned oil paint, translucent and drippy, replicated watercolor marks. With a fast-drying medium and the gessoed surface serving as white, the application of paint was quick and immediate. *April in Vermont II* (MR285) and *April in Vermont IV* (MR287) are smaller, later versions of this approach. Basically, I was using a watercolor technique writ large in oils.



April 30, Maine, 1989
Oil on paper on board
60 x 46"
MR367

A trip to Italy in 1989 inspired more oil-on-paper brushy landscapes. *La Vigna, San Benedetto* (MR369) employs dripping paint and exposed edges of the painting. By not correcting the drips or covering the edges, the hand of the artist and the integrity of the medium are obvious. In other words, I was emphasizing that this is oil paint on paper—a painting of a vineyard, not a vineyard. It is a concept that has been prevalent in my work ever since.



Spring, Belgrade, 2017
Oil and graphite on birch panel
6 x 8"
MR315



La Vigna, San Benedetto, 1990
Oil on paper
38 x 36"
MR369



Summer Field, 2019
Oil and graphite on canvas
30 x 48"
MR336



Hairpin Turn, 2004
Oil on linen
66 x 36"
MR25



Up the Road a Piece, 2004
Oil on linen
66 x 36"
MR27

Some themes of my early works include mountains, rolling hills, plowed or mown fields, and meandering roads. *Hairpin Turn* (MR25) and *Up the Road a Piece* (MR27) are examples of the evolving style of my work within these themes. There is more realistic detail, more extensive brushwork, an emphasis on perspective and a vanishing horizon—

all of which creates an illusion of deep space. A later version of this vista, *Spring, Belgrade* (MR315), returns to a flatter, pared down image. *Summer Field* (MR336) uses elements of both styles, with a road disappearing into a distant horizon, as well as foreground detail placing the image flat on the surface of the painting.



Carrabassett Backwater, 2018
Oil and graphite on canvas
12 x 16"
MR374



Flagstaff, October 14, 2004
Oil on canvas
4 x 4"
MR373



Study for Bigelow, 2005
Watercolor
3.5 x 6"
MR84



East, 2010
Watercolor on paper
5 x 9"
MR190



Katahdin, 2018
Oil and graphite on birch panel
6 x 8"
MR378

Dusk, July 17 (MR368) from 1989 foretells many years of future paintings of the mountains near my Maine home. *Flagstaff, October 14* (MR373); *East* (MR190); and *Study for Bigelow* (MR84) are all images I can observe from the end of my road. A little

farther away is *Katahdin* (MR378), even more iconic in Maine imagery. *Carrabassett Backwater* (MR374) incorporates more water and trees in the foreground of the mountains. These paintings could be an illustrated guide to an artist's trek across Maine.



Dusk, July 17, 1989
Oil on paper on board
52 x 46.5"
MR368



Poplar Stream Falls, February, 2009
Watercolor on paper
4.25 x 6.5"
MR160



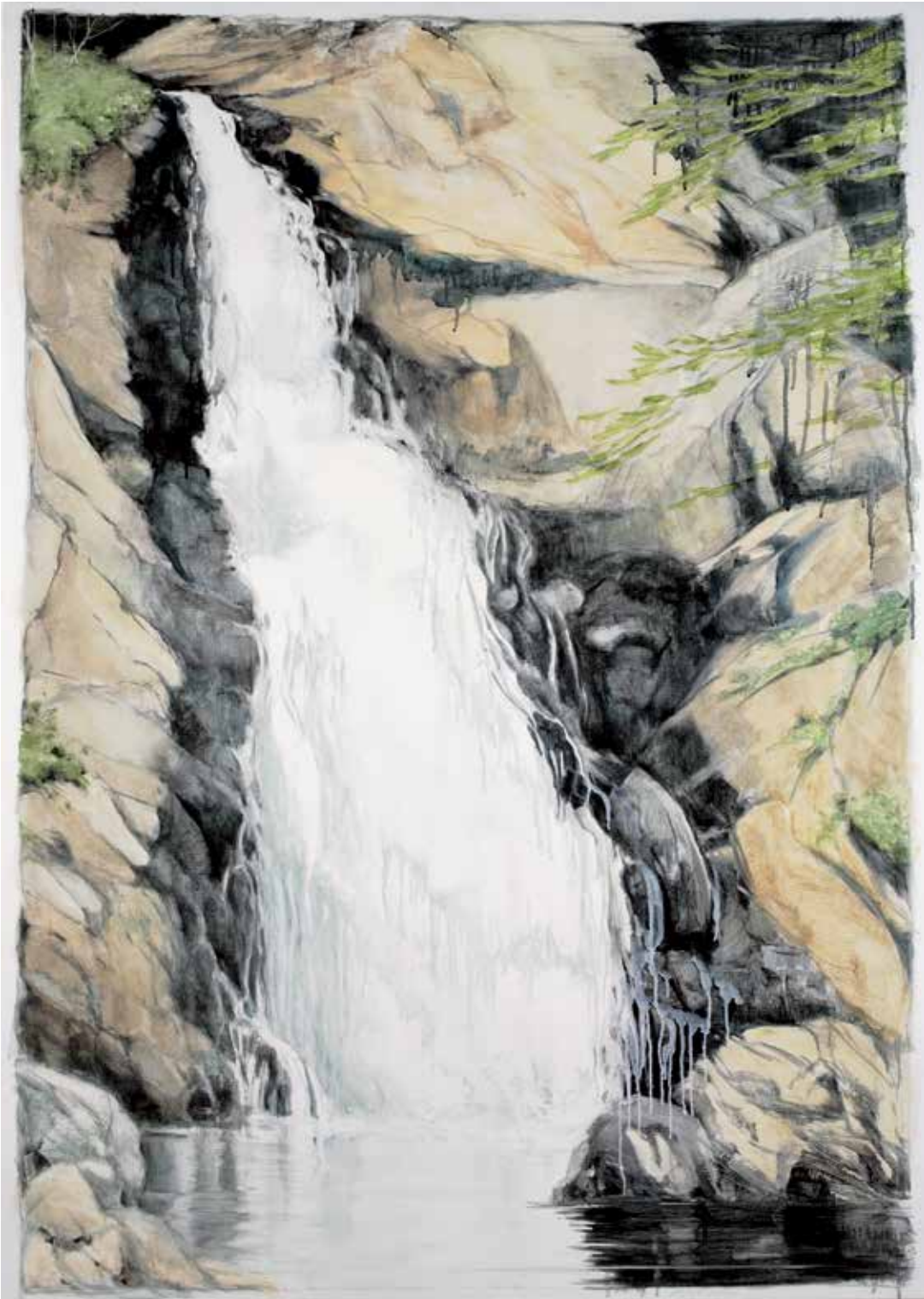
Study for Twin Falls, 2011
Watercolor on paper
5 x 8.75"
MR185



Dingle Falls, 2006–07
Oil on Yupo
26 x 20"
MR105

After two decades of painting mountains and forests reflected in still waters, I wanted to depict rushing water, and a favorite destination to set up my French easel became verdant Ireland. That country's waterfalls, cascading over rocks and fields or tumbling down steep mountains, inspired *Dingle Falls* (MR105) and *Kerry Falls* (MR104). I am partial to a vertical format—a slice of the landscape—and *Kerry Falls* is an extreme version. Compressing the landscape into a thin line heightens the drama

of the force of moving water. In my own neck of the Maine woods, I found *Poplar Stream Falls* (MR131) and *Spencer Gut* (MR165; back cover). The technique of using the white of gessoed linen as falling water, taking away applied paint with Q-tips to expose the white surface, and dripping opaque paint lends itself well to the waterfall series. In the watercolors *Poplar Stream Falls, February* (MR160) and *Study for Twin Falls* (MR185) the falling water is not painted but painted around.



Poplar Stream Falls, 2007
Oil on linen
50 x 36"
MR131



Kerry Falls, 2006
Oil on linen
38 x 8"
MR104

Morning Fog, 2005
Oil on linen
20 x 24"
MR64



In contrast, another recurring theme of mine is the quietness and stillness of fog-shrouded waters. *Elephant Mountain* (MR371) and *The Narrows* (MR372) are paintings I made *en plein air* while flyfishing and waiting for the trout to rise

and the morning mist to burn off. *Morning Fog* (MR64) uses a limited, almost monochromatic palette to evoke the quiet of early morning. *Ground Fog* (MR346) shows a bolder, more saturated palette.



The Narrows, 1998
Oil on birch panel
12 x 12"
MR372



Elephant Mountain, 1998
Oil on birch panel
12 x 12"
MR371

Assessing my work through the years I see subtle alterations in style. With a traditional and rigid drawing background in college, printmaking in graduate school, and work as a technical illustrator in the 1970s, I am an excellent draftsman. Used to my advantage, I often make complete graphite drawings on canvas before applying paint. However, to be more painterly, I sometimes must temper my impulse as a draftsman. This is shown by the more graphic *Sunset on the Lake* (MR70), as opposed to the later, more painterly *October Rain, Study* (MR382).



Sunset on the Lake, 2005
Watercolor
4 x 6"
MR70



October Rain, Study, 2023
Watercolor
6.5 x 9.5"
MR382



Ground Fog, 2021
Oil on canvas
18 x 24"
MR346

Bayou Manchac,
2017
Oil on canvas
24 x 36"
MR301



Back to my roots in Louisiana and continuing today as I spend more time there in the winter, much of my work depicts the southern landscape—dark, dense, and drippy. *Bayou Manchac* (MR301) is a perfect example, and *Mercy Moon* (MR370) represents an early rendition, more idealized than realistic. More recent paintings *Bamboo I* (MR379) and *Bamboo II* (MR380) utilize opaque white paint more thickly applied than my usual thinly painted surfaces, a newly adopted technique to illustrate a heavy atmosphere. *Storm Warning* (MR381), in its dark palette and hastily smeared paint application, represents a foreboding to be heeded.



Mercy Moon, 1997
Oil on linen
24 x 16"
MR370



Bamboo I, 2023
Oil on birch panel
12 x 12"
MR379



Bamboo II, 2023
Oil on birch panel
12 x 12"
MR380



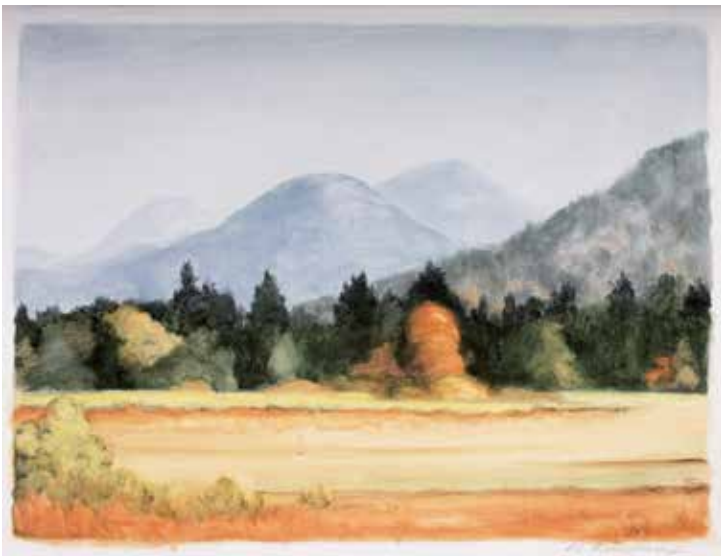
Storm Warning, 2023
Oil on birch panel
14 x 18"
MR381

A different palette and paint handling is used in some more recent Maine landscapes. *Sheepscot* (MR319), *Back Narrows* (MR376), and *Barter's Island Bog* (MR377) have a subtle autumnal palette, while *Flagstaff Flowage* (MR375) has stronger, more vibrant color. These paintings have lightly brushed paint application and transparent, glazed finishes. The most recent work, *October Rain* (MR383; front cover) employs opaque paint and many, many drips to depict rain. In that way, the image is brought to the surface of the painting. Rather than illustrate the illusion of deep space, this painting confirms the concept of the importance of the medium and the hand of the artist.

Surveying four decades of my art, I see highs and lows, ebbs and flows, successes and failures in the work. There are some great paintings that I am deeply satisfied to be by my hand. There are always some attempts that end up in the burn pile. I am gratified that my art hangs in homes, museums, and workplaces. That someone finds beauty, joy, or inspiration in my paintings is a fitting reward for my labor. We artists of a certain age have decades of our oeuvre behind us and, hopefully, many productive years ahead. To look back is to be critical, but to look ahead is a promise to create perhaps more slowly but with greater insight and purpose.

There is still some gypsy in my soul so I will explore new landscapes, try new techniques, and make more paintings. There will always be paint-covered Q-tips littering my studio floor. Looking back, I have done some things too fast, but I have enjoyed a lot of glorious slow going. And, although I am not tequila crazed, I do enjoy an occasional margarita.

MARGUERITE ROBICHAUX, *September 2023*



Flagstaff Flowage, 2018
Oil and graphite on canvas
12 x 16"
MR375



Back Narrows, 2018
Oil and graphite on canvas
12 x 12"
MR376



Sheepscot, 2018
Oil and graphite on canvas
30 x 40"
MR319



Barter's Island Bog, 2018
Oil and graphite on canvas
12 x 12"
MR377

Marguerite Robichaux lives in the woods of Maine where her studio lies in the shadow of the Bigelow Mountain Range—one of her favorite subjects. When she travels it is with a set of watercolors, a sketch pad or camera, and she spends part of each year painting in a small studio in southern Louisiana where she grew up. She received her M.F.A. from Louisiana State University and first came to Maine as a student, eventually settling in the western mountains. Her work is included in the collections of the Portland Museum of Art, the Farnsworth Museum, the Ogunquit Museum of American Art, Colby and Bates Colleges, and many private and corporate collections.

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617.267.9473
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Leslie Anne Feagly

Editors:

Jeanne Koles and Beth Plakidas

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and subscribe to the
Artwork of the Week
email list.

Cover:
October Rain, 2023
Oil on linen
30 x 44"
MR383

Marguerite Robichaux

A LOOK BACK

DATES: 9 December 2023 through 28 January 2024

PUBLIC OPENING RECEPTION: Saturday 9 December 2023
3PM to 6PM • The artist will be present.

ONLINE EVENTS: Please visit www.puckergallery.com for a list
of virtual gatherings and events accompanying *A Look Back*.



Spencer Gut, 2011
Oil on canvas
36 x 24"
MR165