

HESSE FLATOW



Emily Harter, *Fall*, 2025 (detail). Gouache and pencil on prepared paper, 23 1/2 x 32 inches (59 x 81 cm), 32 1/2 x 41 inches (framed), (82 x 104 cm (framed)), courtesy of the Artist and HESSE FLATOW, New York. Photo: Emily Harter.

Emily Harter: *Split the Rolling Year*

October 10 – November 8, 2025

HESSE FLATOW is pleased to present *Split the Rolling Year*, a solo exhibition of new works by Bay Area artist Emily Harter. The show will be on view from October 10th through November 8th 2025, and marks her second solo presentation with the gallery.

Drawing from Dutch genre painting and the Golden Age of American cartoons, Emily Harter creates a world that sits between allegory and comedy, where art historical tropes mirror current crises. Harter's scenes are characterized by dynamic character-filled tableaux composed of many small vignettes which focus in on individual actions or urges within the contexts of larger-scale concerns.

The body of work on view— four drawings and four accompanying paintings— centers on a common trope in Northern Renaissance art: the four seasons. Inspired by artists such as Bruegel, Arcimboldo, and van de Venne and spurred by her move to San Francisco in 2023, Harter engages the seasons as sites of collective affect and experience. The cycle of drawings deals with the effects of weather, complicated by climate change and its associated crisis events (flood, fire), which laces the idea of seasons with a sense of unrest and anxiety. Each drawing depicts a season bursting with confusion and chaos. In *Winter*, characters attempt to skate on melting islands of ice while onlookers huddle around fires to stay warm. *Spring* erupts into a rain-soaked cacophony of hedonism and violence while one man asks himself "What war is this?" In *Summer*, a scorching stinking lull of oppressive heat pits the leisurely in stark opposition to those who must work and suffer through the conditions. Finally *Fall*, wildfire season, rips flames through an already barren landscape. The traditional season of the harvest reaps only strife and disintegration. These scenes seem keenly aware of present-day anxieties and attitudes. While some characters flounder and struggle others laugh, lounge, and carry on with their activities as though nothing unusual were happening.

Contrasting the frenetic seasonal composition of the drawings, each painting depicts a single figure whose characteristics, actions, and props encapsulate a time of year. These characters are intensely human— sweating, urinating, drunk, and dripping snot. Harter follows a medieval framework that places the seasons in accord with the four humors, uniting weather with the body's moods and fluids via the four qualities of hot, cold, wet, and dry. In this understanding, any humor in excess causes illness; the importance of balance underlies the relationship between the human body and the environment. Winter is phlegmatic: cold, wet, slow, quiet, snotty. Spring is sanguine: warm, moist, high spirited and bloody. Summer is choleric: hot and dry, angry and pissing yellow bile. Fall is melancholic: cold, dry, catastrophizing, depressive and constipated. The figures

HESSE FLATOW

connect the seasons to moods, temperaments, and bodily functions to convey the affect of each season as intensely as the larger multi-figural scenes.

Like the cycle of the seasons, human concerns re-emerge throughout history; specters of moral questions that never seem to resolve. The Golden Age of Dutch art corresponded with a period of regional climate change known as the "Little Ice Age." This time saw the emergence of the winter landscape as a genre, often as part of a series of the seasons. These images contrast the visual and auditory blankness of the frozen landscape with bustling human activity, showing people determined to carry out a preexisting way of life by alternately adapting to and ignoring the changing conditions. As communities were forced to adapt their lives, agriculture, and traditions to a harsher climate, social unrest manifested in scapegoating. Those already seen as "others" were blamed for this inexplicable change in global temperatures. In particular, women and minorities bore the brunt of this persecution while others did everything they could to resume their normal habits—as if stubbornness alone would make the earth return to its normal temperature. We can glean how this is relevant and relatable in our moment, when global politics is engaged in what feels like a potentially apocalyptic tug of war. If history repeats itself, so does human nature.

Emily Harter (b.1997, Baltimore, MD) received her BA from Oberlin College and her MFA in Art Practice from Stanford University. Her work has been exhibited throughout the United States, including solo exhibitions at HESSE FLATOW (New York), OCHI Projects OVR (Los Angeles) and Cleaner Gallery (Chicago). She was the recipient of the AAF/Seebacher Prize for the Fine Arts, The Headlands Graduate Fellowship, and the 2020 MAPC Travel Grant and has been a resident artist at The Lighthouse Works (Fishers Island, NY), Arts, Letters, and Numbers (Averill Park, NY), and After 1920 (San Diego). She is a co-founder of Pigeon Hole Press in Chicago, IL, which produces and publishes fine art intaglio prints.

SALES

sales@hesseflatow.com

GENERAL

info@hesseflatow.com

PRESS

hello@alejassan.com

HESSE FLATOW is a gallery and curatorial platform founded by artist Karen Hesse Flatow in 2019. It had its start as "Crush Curatorial", where many artists we work with today had their debut solo show. Hesse Flatow has an MBA and an MFA from Columbia University and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. The program focuses on emerging and mid-career artists with diverse voices, presenting debut solo shows and focused presentations. We are located in an accessible ground floor space in Tribeca, New York City.