



CICELY AIKMAN

From Friendship to Florida

February 13 - April 13, 2024

Opening Reception First Friday

March 1, 4-6 PM

CALDBECK GALLERY

12 Elm Street Rockland Maine 04841 (207)594-5935
email: info@caldbeck.com • www.caldbeck.com

CICELY AIKMAN (American 1923-2013) Born in Texas, where she lived until the age of six, Aikman spent her childhood in Los Angeles - a child of the west. She studied at The University of Chicago (1940-42) and then at the Art Students' League in N.Y (1942-46). "This was a serious art education", Aikman reflected years later, "our only regret as students was that due to World War II, we could not get to Europe, in particular to Paris, to see first hand the works of Picasso and Matisse".

After the war, Aikman did travel to Rome and Paris with her young son, Paul, living there for some time as part of the expatriate community drawn to the cultural life of Europe. Back in New York, Aikman began showing her work - starting at the Pyramid gallery, an artists' collective, along-side her downtown peers, among them Lois Dodd, Rudy Burkhardt, Edith Schloss and Gretna Campbell. In the forties and fifties she painted winters in New York and summers in Provincetown. She exhibited in New York at the Green Mountain Gallery, Blue Mountain Gallery, The Artists Gallery and at the Westbeth Gallery.

In 1973 Aikman moved to Friendship, Maine with her second husband, Fred Scherer - also a painter, whom she had met while working at the Museum of Natural History. She began showing her work with Caldbeck in 1987.

In a 2015 article for the Union of Maine Visual Artists, Natasha Meyers quoted Aikman, *"We live on a tidal cove in Friendship. Each morning a complete surprise awaits me as I walk around the corner of my studio down to the shore. What time and weather have done to stun me once again. This small spot of coastline, rocks, water, mud-flats and islands floating in the pristine air hold the essence of the world."*

On the occasion of an exhibition of her Florida paintings at the Center for Maine Contemporary Art, Aikman wrote, *"During my winters in Vero Beach, I worked out of doors in my open-air studio covered with a tarp. I drew and painted palm, banana and orange trees, birds and alligators, and the tides and reflections in the canal which surrounded our little house. After Maine's more somber landscape, this place, with its tropical plants and animals, was thrilling."*

This exhibition is a celebration and a moment for consideration. Aikman's connection to her environment is immediately evident - from the languid pleasure of a cat napping to an egret hunting small fish under a lush palm - there is a poetic clarity to her imagery. As viewers we can partake in the joy she found re-visiting the rocks and seaweed in her Friendship cove, and amongst the tropical profusion of her Indian River home. They provide needed refuge - still after all these years.



UNTITLED (Benny's Rock) 1987
oil on canvas 46 x 40 inches



THE EVERGLADES 1985
oil on canvas 39 x 42 inches



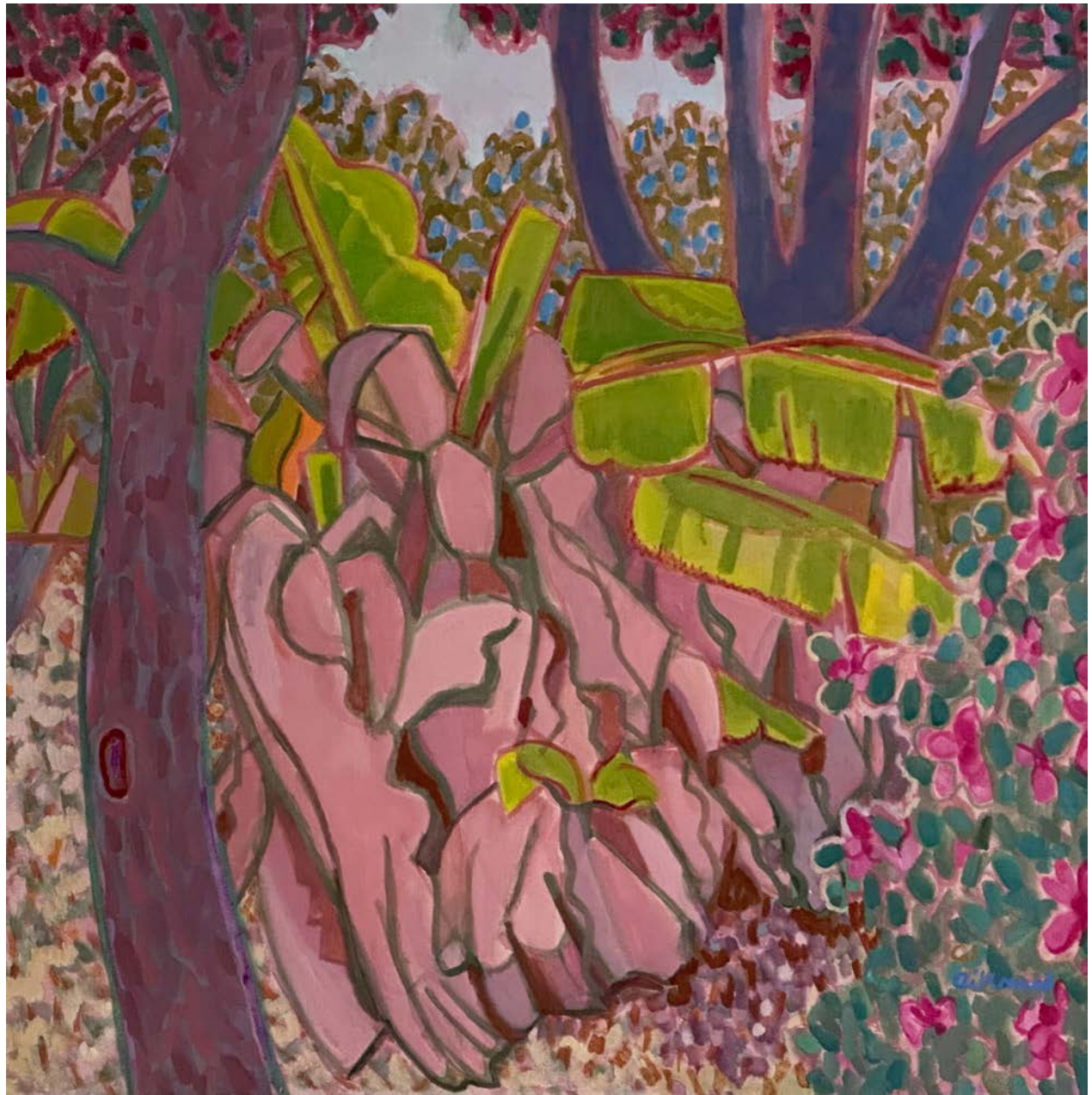
WINTER AT THE COVE 1985
oil on linen 46 x 36 inches



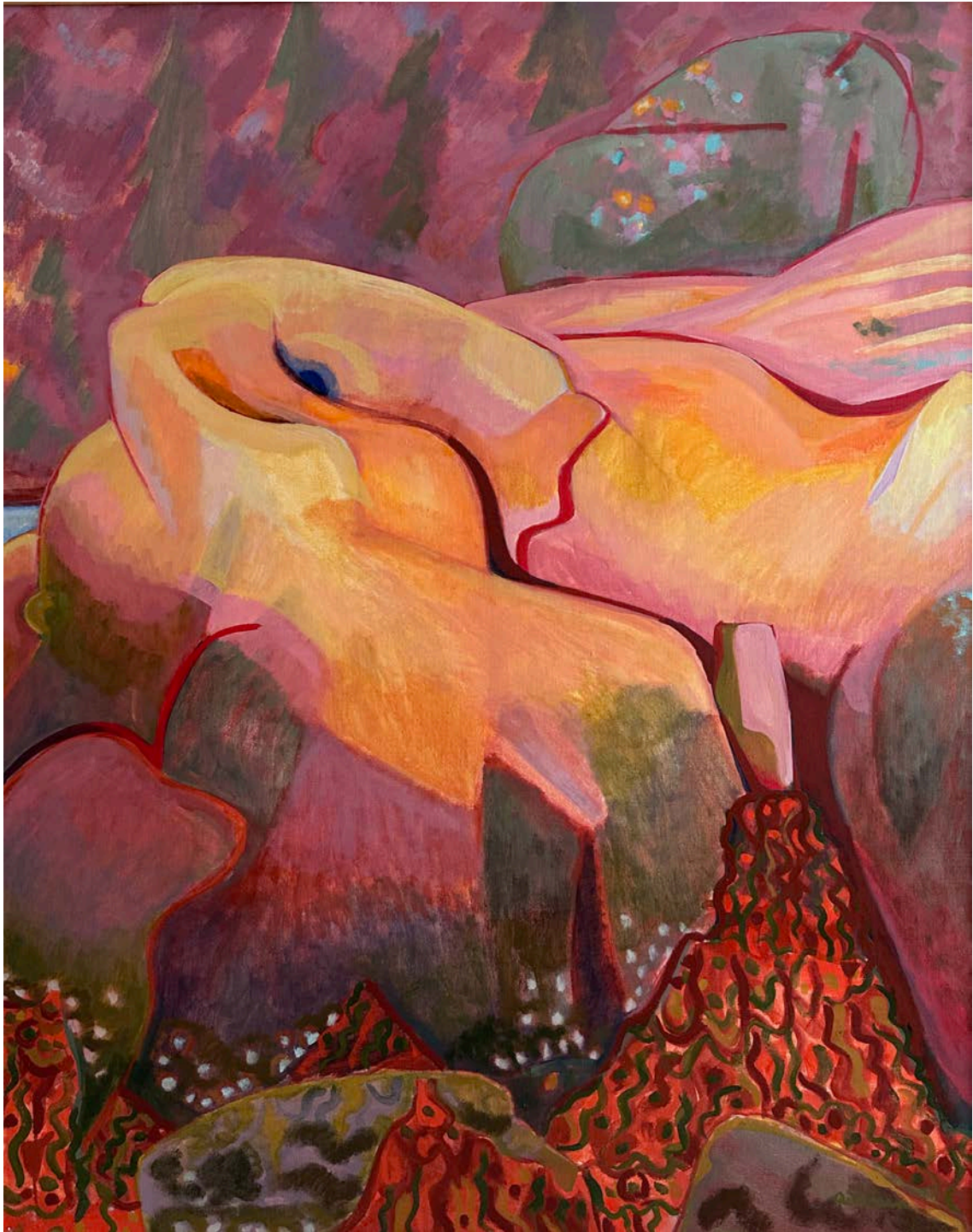
AFTERNOON NAP OF LADYBUG IN ROCKER 1974
oil on linen 32 x 32 inches



INDIAN RIVER 1998
oil on linen 34 x 38 inches



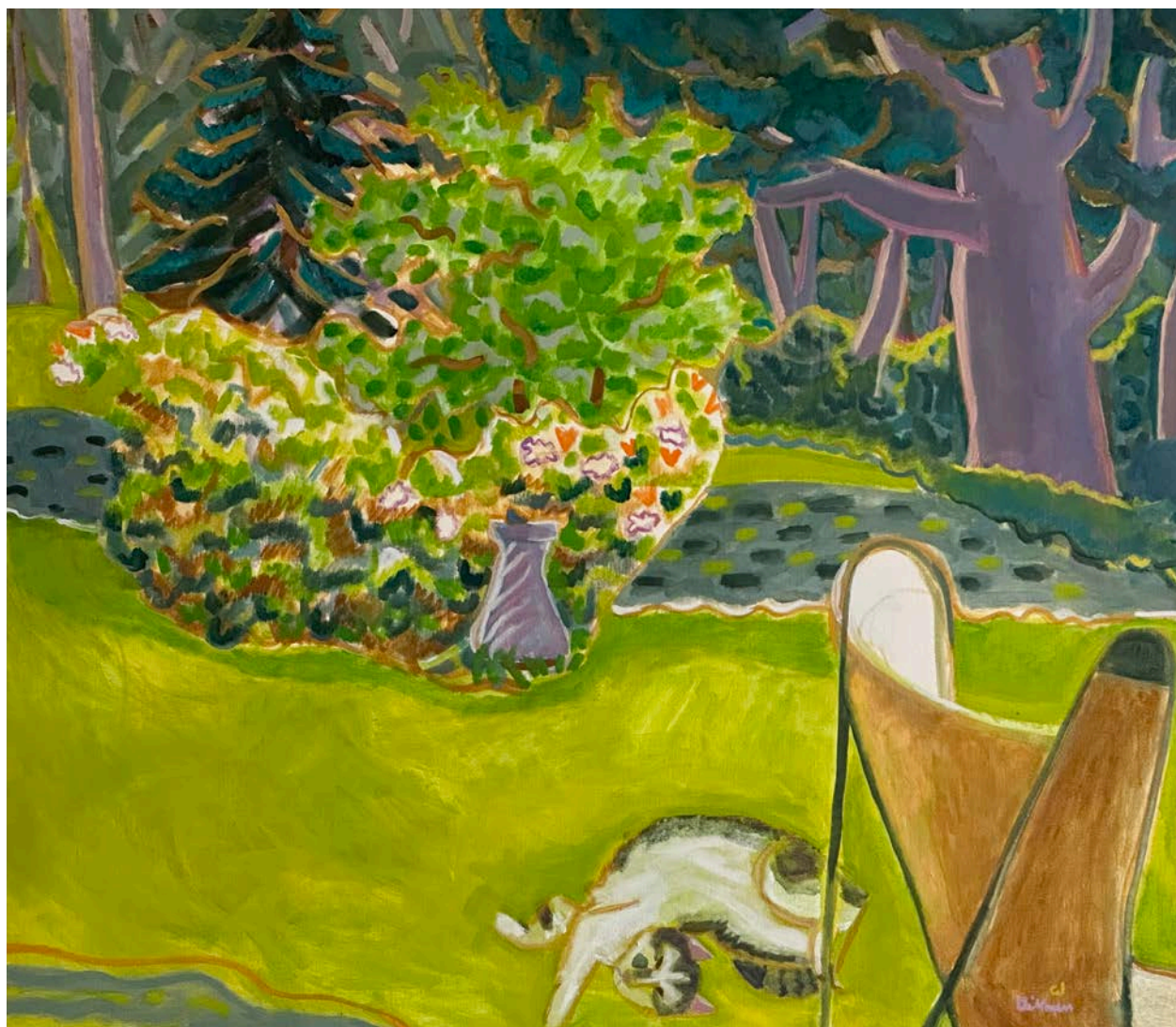
FLORIDA BACKYARD 1996
oil on linen 40 x 40 inches



HOT ROCKS II ca. 1989
oil on canvas 50 x 50 inches



DANCING PALM 1990
oil on canvas 36 X 24 inches



AUGUST 2000
oil on linen 42 X 48 inches