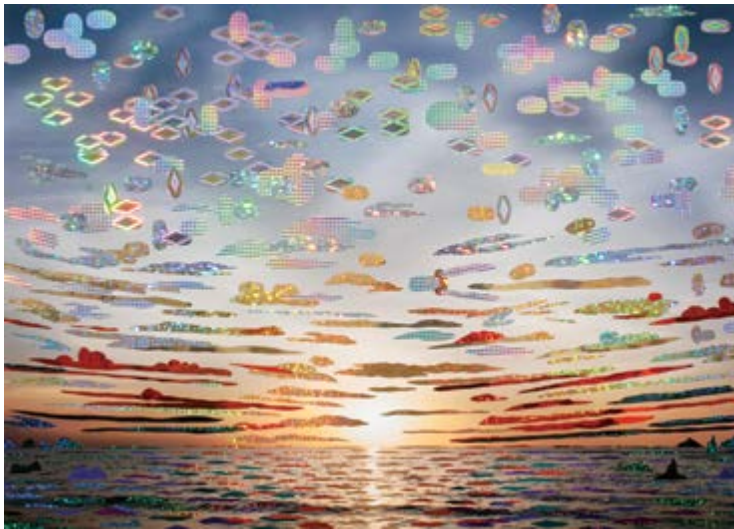


# photograph

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## Sarah Anne Johnson: Rosy Fingered Dawn at Julie Saul Gallery by Diana McClure

Sunset #2 (Bedazzled), 2018



In her latest body of work, on view at Julie Saul Gallery through June 23, Sarah Anne Johnson uses photographs as canvases to expose the ephemerality of innocence, adorning her sublime landscapes with unconventional materials, including cotton balls, artificial flowers or spray paint, that speak to both play and longing.

Several of the landscape photographs on view include

kaleidoscopic, colored stickers placed over images of water and sky. In two instances – *Sunset #2 (Bedazzled)*, 2018, and *Apocalypse*, 2018 – the collage-like additions, made from holographic tape, resemble clouds suspended over bodies of water at sunset. The holographic tape has a playful quality that gives evidence of human intervention and contrasts with the emptiness of the seascapes. An additional wash of black acrylic paint drips down the surface of *Apocalypse*, suggesting a dystopic take on contemporary environmental issues.

A disjointed playfulness, or perhaps an intentional disharmony in materials, overtakes several of the 3D works that include neon lights, or sunbeams and orbs made of epoxy. However, a triptych of images, *Pink Sky and Wind*, 2018; *Blue Sky and Birds*, 2018; and *Yellow Glow Sunset*, 2018; each of which suggests a flock of birds taking flight over the water, convey a formal sensibility in which symmetry, composition, and precision coalesce. These images feel resolved and sophisticated, despite their holographic embellishments, introducing different mediums into one visual field without allowing one to distract from the other.

*Golden Spike*, 2017, suggests an underlying narrative while also seeming to embrace the unknown. The photograph, of a vast mountainous desertscape, is overlaid with a gold leaf path that curves across the image. At the center of the image, at the point where the path ends, a narrow rectangular column made of gold leaf towers into a blue sky. The photograph

is minimalist and restrained, and the curved line of the path and the linearity of the totemic structure are simple elements. Overall Johnson's work does not aim to please. Instead, it encourages an unsettled reckoning with distinctions between high and low art, while alluding to the 21st-century environmental crisis.



*Apocalypse, 2018*