

LEWIS ELLINGHAM

loquat

after so many years the loquat still bears, the tree seems not to have changed at all
for all this time, impossible of course, we change slowly

a sample, the sweet comes through just as the bitter edge does, a surprise again
after so many, what? a measurement of time

at the park's opposite corner, a middle-aged tennis instructor, talking a lot, teaches
an apparently beginning player, a woman younger by a lot, early moves, again the
language of time, age and time, tucked together, I think the lesson is over, others
are taking the court

between the loquat and the tennis players—two blocks—is a story, a Jewish
cemetery, a water course with resort, a sand dune, extinct mammals, dinosaurs,
crustaceans, fields of death

a woman races by on a single Rollerblade, fast, carrying a cup of take-out coffee,
she's already disappeared a block away

a Genentech bus lumbers in the opposite direction, people going to work, genetic
modification, maybe the biggest change in human food source since the invention
of agriculture, and then there was Prometheus who gave us fire

a dirty napkin, a crushed beer can on the ground, bipedalism and the trajectory of
Venus

or no, something farther, the loquat two blocks away, the sweet flowing with the
bitter

Lewis Ellingham moved to San Francisco when he was twenty-one years old, after living in Chicago and New York. With Kevin Killian, he wrote a biography of Jack Spicer, *Poet Be Like God* (1995). His *The Birds and Other Poems* was published in 2009. His new writing continues with a series of self-published books and his blog, *The Ellingham Digest*.

SARAH MCCOUBREY

Building Lot, 2008
oil on panel, 24 x 22 1/2 in.

