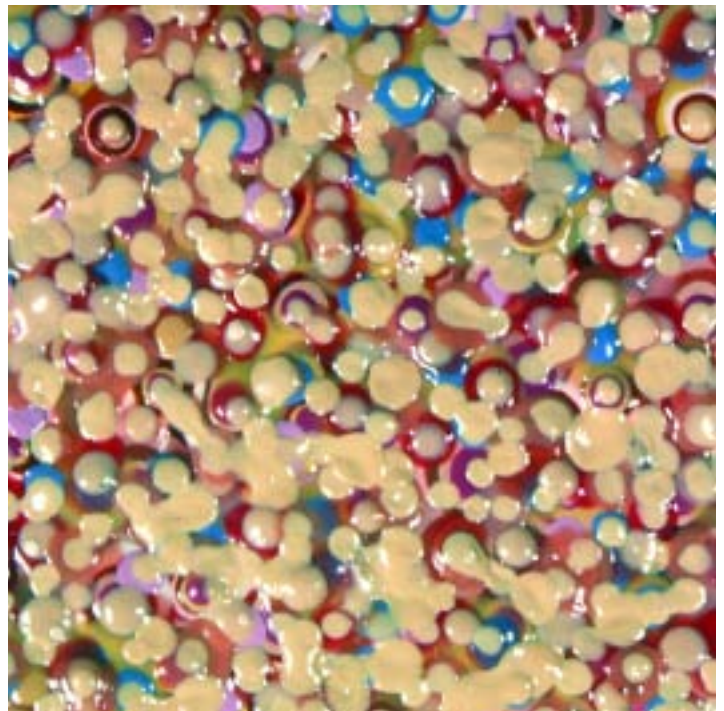
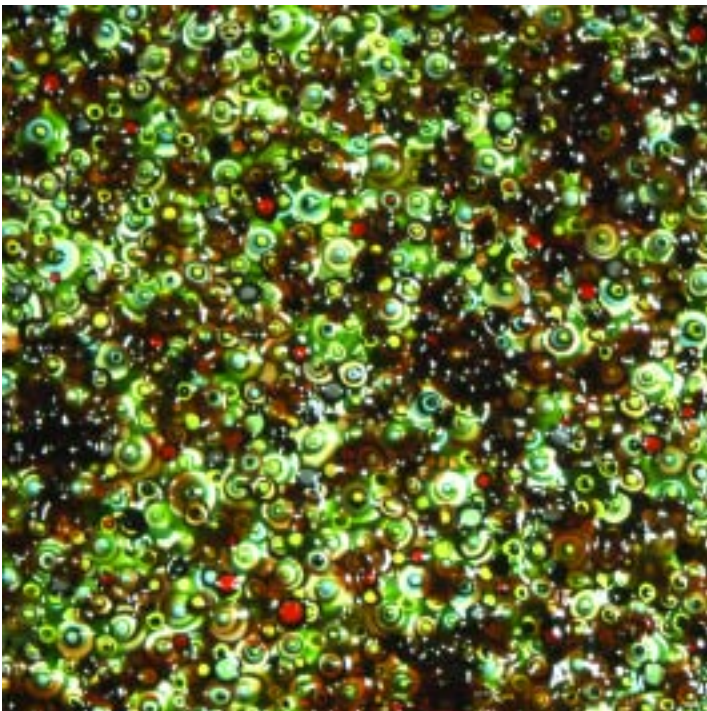
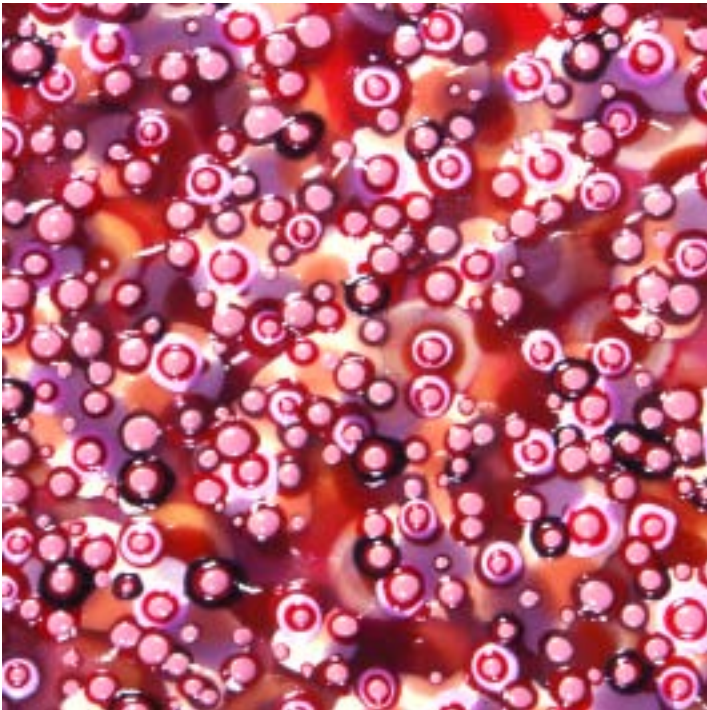


Felice Koenig: Color Crush

January 31 - May 23, 2010

Opening reception with artist talk, Sunday, January 31, 2:00-4:00 p.m.



felicekoenig

A spirit of ingenious optimism and unbridled enthusiasm radiates from the recent work of Felice Koenig. Her work emits a warm vivacity absorbing the viewer into the lush tactile surfaces of her paintings. Koenig says, "The exhibition Color Crush explores the relationship of being an abstract painter and the formal links of my love and fascination with color."

Koenig says her works can take up to twelve months to complete. Surfaces are built up one layer of color at a time. Without any preconceived notion of when a piece is "finished", Koenig builds what she calls "paint mountains" which are dots...upon dots...upon dots. This process becomes very meditative for the artist, reflecting facets of her personal beliefs as well as a visual record of the time-based process of creation.

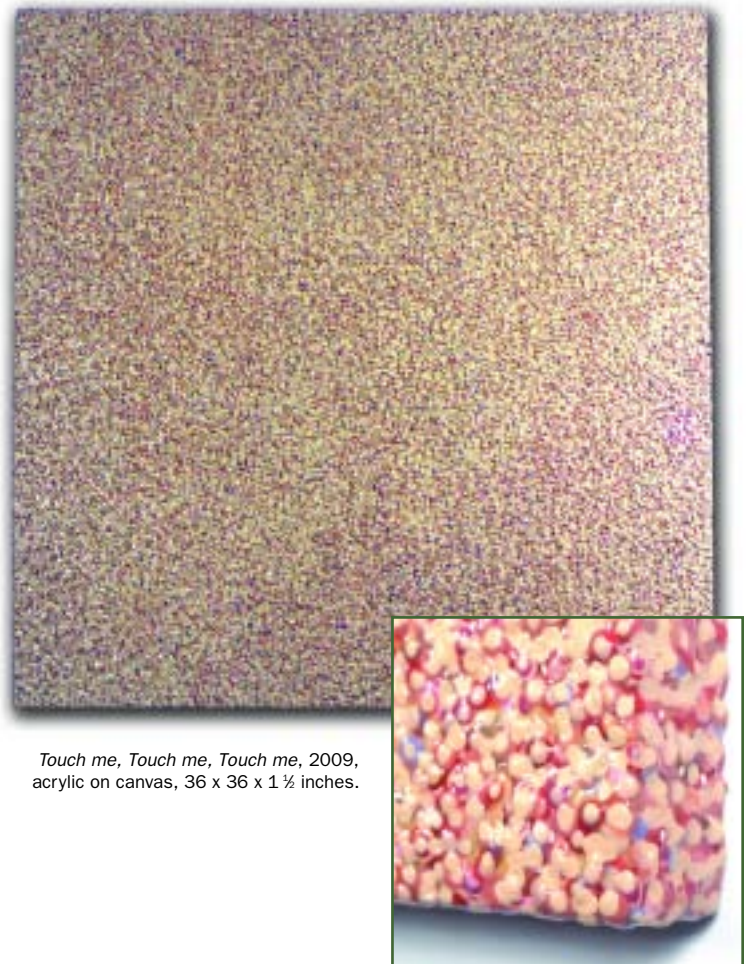
Each layer of paint completely changes the painting. It sublimates the previous layers and in a way crushes them. The layer upon layer process is a record of color exploration yet much of it is not obvious in the final piece because of the process. "I think that knowing that aspect of the process can add to the viewer's experience. It is something that I think about/ contend with as I add each layer. A kind of a pressure knowing that so much of the previous layer will be in a sense lost when I add a layer." If someone were to cut into one of Koenig's paintings they would see a compressed record of the layering of paint, akin to that of a stratified geological record.

Her work skirts the line between abstraction and formal refinement. "Formally a crush is a kind of obsession," says Koenig, which is reflected in the repetitive process. A significant part of her creative method is driven by a "crush" on color that inspires her to push the limits of the materials. Conceptually, the works are about physical sensation or personal relation on some level. "Each piece has to do with something that interests me that I want to explore at length."

"In *Sweet Cakes* (2007) I really wanted to explore that highly saturated warm palette. At the same time, *Sweet Cakes* can be a love endearment—the size of the triptych, about the scale of confectioneries, in a way looks like an artificial yummy thing—like processed sugar to the extreme." *Touch Me, Touch Me, Touch Me* (2009) is specifically about the impulse of making a work. At the same time, the painting suggests the experience of literally being touched by another human being.



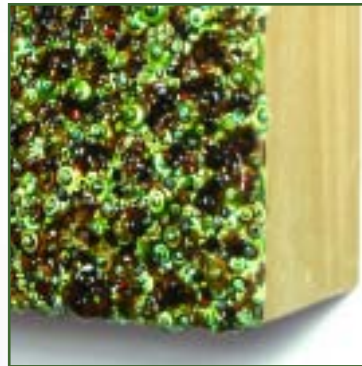
Once Upon a Time..., 2009, acrylic on canvas, 12 x 12 x 1 ½ inches.



Touch me, Touch me, Touch me, 2009, acrylic on canvas, 36 x 36 x 1 ½ inches.



Little Friends, 2007-2008, acrylic on ceramic and mixed media, 12 x 6 x 5 inches.



Gardening, Garden, 2008-2009, acrylic on panel, 45½ x 40 x 3 inches.

Koenig's passions in life are painting and literature; she develops the titles of her works from the "layering of thoughts and intentions in each painting." Literally—the physical experience of making the painting—becomes the painting.

Describing people as having their own "personal universe," Koenig continues, "when people meet, develop friendships and sometimes move on; realities overlap and each person's personal universe expands a bit more." These levels of overlapping are reflected in Koenig's painting process. Colors overlap on the surface of her works, much like a person's life experience from interaction. Some elements may become hidden, while other elements are exposed.

The artist alluded to a component of her "artistic manifesto" as to what makes painting so amazing, "...it is touched over and over with the intention of making something only to be looked at." From a distance these works appear to be fields of color existing on a flat plane. Upon closer inspection, viewers become aware of the exorbitant amount of time it has taken to create each work, built layer upon layer. We find ourselves being visually cuddled, in a trance of sorts, by the infinite beauty of each individual placement of pigment upon the next.

Michael Beam, Curator of Collections and Exhibitions

Artist Statement

In its 'utopian' aspirations, my work seeks to explore the mystical nature of creation in contrast to and in concert with a mechanical study of biology. At its very core, my work is a meditation on obsessive gesture and malleable response. Within these themes the work also engages in a formal and process-oriented examination of the hypnotic and contemplative potentials of painting. Each piece forms and conforms through more than a hundred layers of paint producing seductive, tactile surfaces that swell between two and three dimensions. Despite the intrinsic, artificial nature of the static surface, the resulting patterns of this process enact a sense of organic growth and physical movement.

Within these overall fields of undulating color are the layers of "noise" that surround us; I paint in a way that both reflects and rejects such overloading stimuli inherent in our mediated society. And yet, simultaneously my painting practice is very much about a simple meditative gesture, a repetition of touching a surface that seeks to build into it a document of contemplation. For each painting is a place—a site of record, a tracing of possibility. As they develop, materially and temporally, they become dialogues between the gesture of pure, applied color and the narrative of their reflective constitution. **Felice Koenig, December 2009**

Born in 1976 in Highland Park, IL, Felice Koenig has been painting ever since she can remember. Her nascent desire and talent enabled her to develop a more rigorous practice early on at the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan where she also studied writing, and literature remains an integral layer and inspiration in her work. Inspired by community and place, Koenig studied painting at Southern Oregon University in Ashland where she pushed narrativity and figuration to extremes receiving her Bachelors of Fine Arts in 1999 with highest honors. She was awarded her Masters of Fine Arts in 2003 from the University of Texas at San Antonio during the course of which she developed an intimate and meditative abstract painting practice.

Koenig's commitment and enthusiasm to painting is infectious and demanding as evidenced in both her exhibitions and her experience. She began teaching drawing and painting in Oregon before relocating to Buffalo where she is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Visual and Performing Arts at Daemen College. She has exhibited widely with a national exhibition record including shows in New York, Chicago, San Antonio, and Portland. The breadth of Koenig's experience and experimentation is made visible in her evolving bodies of work that continue to penetrate the bounds and boundaries of painting. For Koenig, painting has always been about exploration and reflection; it has and continues to be the way she seeks to understand the world. She is currently living and working in Buffalo, NY.

EDUCATION

2003 Master of Fine Arts, University of Texas at San Antonio, TX

1999 Bachelor of Fine Art, Southern Oregon University, Ashland, OR

RECENT EXHIBITIONS

**Indicates solo exhibitions*

2009

"Shoot Out," Olean Public Library, Olean, NY*

"Intersecting Currents," South China University of Technology, Guangzhou, China

"Invitational Salon Exhibition of Small Works," New Arts Program, Kutztown, PA

"Status Update," Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center," Buffalo, NY

"Chromaccord," Fanette Goldman and Carolyn Greenfield Art Gallery, Daemen College, Amherst, NY*

2008

"Whipped Up," The Contemporary Arts Collective, Las Vegas, NV

"Icons," Woman Made Gallery, Chicago, IL

"Evolutionary Girls Club," Central Gallery, East Syracuse, NY

2007

"Wish You Were Here," A.I.R. Gallery, New York, NY

"Essence of Asia: Eastern Influences on Western Art," Asian Fusion Gallery at Asian Cultural Center, New York, NY

"Alpan International," Alpan Gallery, Huntington, NY

2006

"Alliteration," New American Art Union, Portland, OR*

"Stretched Tight," Torpedo Factory Art Center, Alexandria, VA

"Faculty Art Exhibition," Fanette Goldman and Carolyn Greenfield Art Gallery, Daemen College, Amherst, NY

"Faculty Art Exhibition," Library Rotunda Gallery, Central Oregon Community College, Bend, OR

2005

"Influx," New American Art Union, Portland, OR*

"Paint Things," Grants Pass Museum, Grants Pass, OR*

"Northern National Art Competition," Nicolet College Gallery, Rhinelander, WI

"48th Annual National Juried Art Exhibition," Rocky Mountain Arts Center, Rocky Mountain, NC

"Landscapes of the Mind," Caladan Gallery, Beverly, MA

2004

"Soho-Chelsea International Art Competition," Agora Gallery, New York, NY

"Generation 04," A.I.R. Gallery, New York, NY

"Women in the Middle: Borders, Barriers, Intersections," National Women's Studies Association Conference, Milwaukee, WI

2003

"Push," Cactus Bra Space, San Antonio, TX*

"16th Annual McNeese National Works on Paper Exhibition," Abercrombie Gallery, McNeese State University, Lake Charles, LA

"73rd Annual San Antonio Artists Exhibition," San Antonio Art League Museum, San Antonio, TX

"Encounters," University of Texas at San Antonio, Satellite Space, San Antonio, TX

"Prickly Sweet," University of Texas at San Antonio, Satellite Space, San Antonio, TX*

2002

"The Princess and the Pea (Melanoma 0.25mm Deep)," Gallery E, University of Texas at San Antonio TX*

"Works on Works," San Antonio Museum of Art, San Antonio, TX

"FUSE," University of Texas at San Antonio, Satellite Space, San Antonio, TX

2001

"New Paintings," Gusfield-Glimmer Galleries, Ltd., Northbrook, IL*

"12th National Juried Exhibition," Viridian Artists Inc., New York, NY

"Above and Below," Marilyn Philby Gallery, Evanston, IL

"51st Annual Quad-State Juried Exhibition," Quincy Art Center, Quincy, IL

SELECTED COMMISSIONED WORKS

2006 Burnside Rocket Project, Public Art Project, Portland, OR

2001 David Kelley Private Commission, Des Plaines, IL

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

2009

Dabkowski, Collin. "Process Piece," *The Buffalo News*, July 3, 2009, Gusto, p.34

2007

"Alpan International," *Village Connection*, September 2007, pp. 38-39

2005

"Sunbird Hosts Big Five," *Cascade Arts & Entertainment*, Volume 11, Issue 4, April 2005, p. 24

2003

Tambasis, Georgia. "Push: Felice Koenig." *VOA: Voices of Art Magazine*, 2003 Volume 11 Issue 3, p. 17

Goddard, Dan R., "Prickly Sweet," *San Antonio Express-News*, 16 November 2003, 3J

2002

Curry, Julie. *Fuse: Abstraction x 4. Department of Art and Art History*, University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Roswell Park Cancer Institute, Buffalo, NY

Daniel Deutsche, Portland, OR

Dan and Linda Pinkham, The Pinkham Press, Medford, OR

Patricia Ruiz-Healy, San Antonio, TX

Lilly Wei, New York, NY

TOPSPIN

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TopSpin features a broad range of visual expressions, varied in media as well as message, and focuses mainly on new and emerging artists.

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EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

Sweet Cakes, 2007, acrylic on canvas, 5 x 16 x 1 1/2 inches.

Warm Rain, Cool Rain, 2007-2008, acrylic on canvas, 10 x 22 x 1 1/2 inches.

Gardening Study, 2008, acrylic on panel, 6 x 6 x 4 inches.

Four Eyes Wandering, 2009, acrylic on canvas, 19 x 4 x 1 1/2 inches.

Once Upon a Time..., 2009, acrylic on canvas, 12 x 12 x 1 1/2 inches.

Snow Cone, 2009, acrylic on canvas, 1 x 14 x 1 1/2 inches.

Gardening, Garden, 2008-2009, acrylic on panel, 45 1/2 x 40 x 3 inches.

Little Friends, 2007-2008, acrylic on ceramic and mixed media, 12 x 6 x 5 inches.

Cool on the Outside, Warm on the Inside, Warm on the Outside, Cool on the Inside, 2007-2008, acrylic on ceramic and mixed media, 26 x 6 x 5 inches.

Touch me, Touch me, Touch me, 2009 acrylic on canvas, 36 x 36 x 1 1/2 inches.

Cherry Fizz, 2009, acrylic on canvas, 36 x 36 x 1 1/2 inches.

I Glow for You, 2009, acrylic on canvas, 36 x 36 x 1 1/2 inches.

Pharmakon, 2009, acrylic on polystyrene, 23 x 23 x 4 1/2 inches.

Under the Skin Study, 2009, acrylic on panel, 6 x 6 x 4 inches.