

Kaleidoscope: Abstraction in 10 Ways

September 8 – October 17, 2008

Opening reception: September 8, 4:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Artists' Talk: October 4, 3 p.m.

Kaleidoscope: Abstraction in 10 Ways, curated by Midori Yoshimoto, Ph.D. (NJCU Gallery Director and Associate Professor of Art History), will feature recent works in abstraction by 10 artists who have been actively exhibiting in the New Jersey – New York metropolitan area. The artists are: Takako Azami, Veronica Juyoun Byun, Zaun Lee, Beth Gilfilen, Elizabeth Onorato, Katsuhiko Saiki, Kyoko Sera, Soonnam Kim Singer, Charlee Swanson, and Katie Truk.

While there have been numerous exhibitions on abstraction in the past, this exhibition captures the current state of abstract art through relatively younger artists whose inspirations come from a variety of sources including; images on internet or TV (Sera), toys and video games (Lee), emotions/motions (Gilfilen), music (Singer), nature (Azami and Truk), New York skyscrapers (Saiki), found objects on street (Swanson), theories of physics and mathematics (Onorato), and Korean traditional arts and architecture (Byun). These inspirations, combined with artists' everyday experiences and aesthetic senses, have formed distinctive abstract languages that are uniquely their own.

These artists' choices of medium are also informed by contemporary studio practice and influenced by their current/past environments. For example, having brought up in Jersey City and neighboring inner cities, **Swanson** has created unexpectedly beautiful sculptures out of the street wreckages, such as, bent guard railings and broken glasses. Having moved from Japan to the United States, Katsuhiko **Saiki** chose New York skyscrapers as his new subject, taking photographs of them from diagonal angles and cutting them and reassembling them to cover origami-like geometric sculptures that seem to contain fourth dimension. Coming from South Korea, on the other hand, **Byun** carries within her, a memory of vivid colors and forms in Korean architecture and crafts, which she turns into installations of lustrous ceramic parts created from slipcast technique. For another New Jersey artist, Katie **Truk**, it was the gift of some old beach fencing that brought about her first airy microcosms built of pantyhose and wire.

As for painters, the process of abstraction is not so material-driven and seems more obscure. Because they synthesize wide ranging images around them within their minds or visualize what is not even visible in our environment. Zaun **Lee** inserts Lego blocks or geometric modules from video games into a flat landscape of land and sky, inspired by traditional East Asian paintings. Kyoko **Sera**'s cross formation of five paintings was informed by a cognitive psychology theory about storage of information in human brain and images range from a turning Ferris wheel to an abstract image she found on TV one day, and found patters on printed fabric, just as our brain is bombarded with loads of information everyday. Over a decade, Takako **Azami** has painted numerous impressions of trees pulsating with light and wind through layers of *sumi* ink dots applied from the back of rice paper. The tornado-like sweeping curves of various colors and lines of Elizabeth **Onorato**'s paintings express her interpretations of Quantum physics theories. Similarly concerned with physical dynamics within her own paintings, Beth **Gilfilen** builds lyrical fleeting worlds out of fluid lines of paint and washes. Soonnam Kim **Singer**'s sensual colors and lines, on the other hand, have been composed with a musical symphony in her mind.

For details on the Studio Tour, see

http://www.proartsjerseycity.org/tour_upcomingstudiotour.php

-----Artists' websites-----

www.bethgilfilen.com

www.katsuhirosaiki.com

www.charleeswanson.com

www.katietruk.com

http://www.loveedfinearts.com/thb_byun.html