



"Red (Names)" MIXED MEDIA, BY SUZANNE SILVER

Call & Response

Curated by Gianna Commito

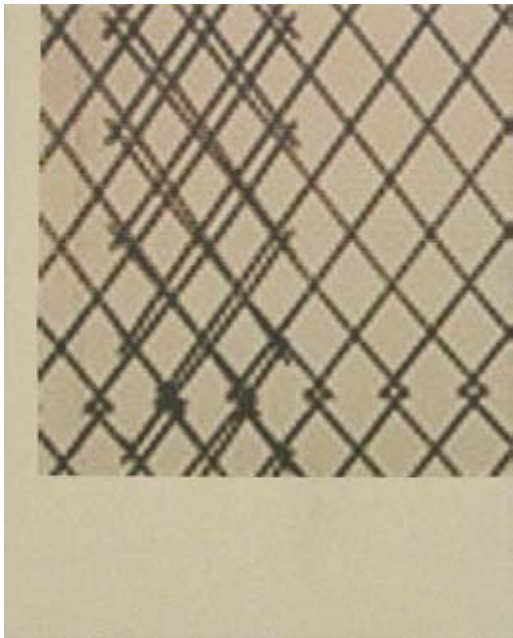
OCTOBER 17 – NOVEMBER 21, 2008
SCHOOL OF ART GALLERY

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Call and Response addresses the varied use and definition of language in visual art. The five artists in this exhibition utilize text, codes, and symbols to question our preconceived notions about the dispersion of information and the technical language of art making. Acknowledging that images are by nature communicative, their interests lie on the periphery of understanding: viewers do not simply read information, but rather they collect visual data that slowly fixes into meaning.



"DIAMONDS" DIGITAL PRINT ON CANVAS,
16 INCHES X 20 INCHES
BY CARRIE POLLACK.

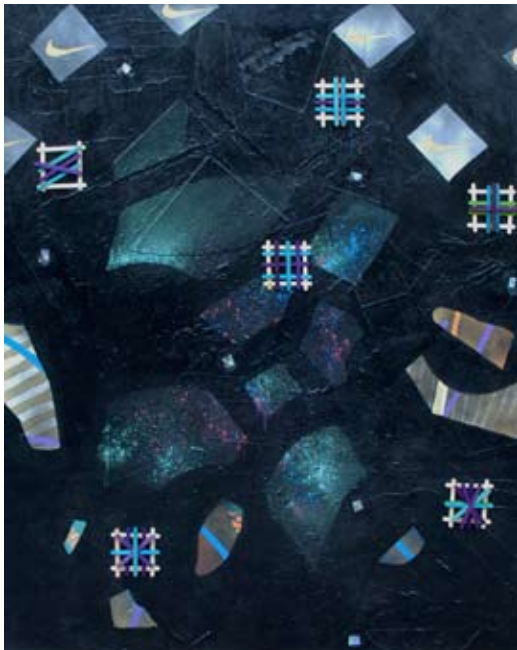
Exploring the role of language as written and oral culture, Suzanne Silver focuses on "language as a physical object." Influenced by the organizational strategies of the Talmud, the major book of Jewish law, Silver models her drawings, paintings, and sculptures on the system of cross-references, commentaries, embellishments, and amplifications found there. Silver says: "It is the physicality of the way the Talmud is organized and the relationship of oral to written which has influenced my art praxis. I do not address the actual content of the Talmud; rather, I make things that are evocative of reading and speaking." Thus, a specific religious text becomes universal as the viewer makes his or her own comparisons to everyday communication, whether written, verbal, or perhaps most similar, on the internet.

Carrie Pollack and J.D. Walsh both utilize principles of collage, though to differing ends. Pollack photographs quiet, often 'accidental' occurrences in her Brooklyn neighborhood: graffiti blotted out with paint that doesn't quite match, constellations of discarded chewing gum on the pavement. Her photos are then printed on canvas and responded to with paint. The complete collection of these found images adds up to a language of coded symbols, the key to which is suggested by the additive painted marks. Pollack's language is not meant to be decoded, per se. A pattern of recognition occurs instead, as the viewer becomes familiar with the type of mark (or character) that Pollack collects, assembles, and connects.

Alternately, J.D. Walsh allows a less deliberate accumulation of words and images to inform his collage-inspired video projections. Using text directly, Walsh relies heavily on chance procedures to generate groups of words that (he) can then sequence. This often requires normal language structures to be fractured in order to get the poetry that (he



"DOUBLE WALTZ-THREE" MIXED MEDIA,
BY J.D. WALSH



"UNTITLED (DEBRIS), 2008"
ACRYLIC, PAPER, CARDBOARD, RAW PIGMENT, SPRAY PAINT
AND CRAFT STICKS ON CANVAS,
72 INCHES X 60 INCHES, BY PATRICK BRENNAN.

is) looking for." Walsh writes simple computer programs to facilitate the "weaving" of random word combinations until they generate an editable composite text. His hope is that the work is interactive, that there is a tipping point in the viewers' comprehension of the text and images when "meaning just begins to come into focus, where it emerges from ambiguity."

Patrick Brennan's assemblages of collected materials and images question traditional notions of the language of painting, and because of their imposing size, "greet the viewer like a visual handshake." Combining craft materials such as popsicle sticks and spray paint with oils and acrylics, Brennan's paintings subvert the role of fine art materials and elevate the importance of arts and crafts supplies. His varied materials negotiate with each other on surfaces that provide similar tension: the canvas is often cut or torn to reveal the stretcher bars that support it. The viewer is left to parse the hierarchy of materials—high art versus low, surface versus support. It is unclear which role each element plays, which undermines the more familiar languages of brushstroke, modeling, and figure/ground relationship.

Based on found objects, Mary Lum's drawings, paintings, photographs and prints emerge from her "frequent unstructured, unmapped, wandering in various cities, looking around, not looking for anything in particular." The act of gathering and the resulting installations are representative of the relationship between words and images and are reminiscent of "the way we read: not reading words as individual elements, but reading the relationships between words, and the space between lines, for meaning." In this exhibition, Lum displays "Genial," a wall of silk-screened dots based on protective fruit wrappers she collected in a Parisian market. The overwhelming mass of dots evokes not only of the daily ritual of eating an orange and saving its wrapper, but also a journal or calendar entry, Morse code, or a dot matrix. Lum promotes these varied interpretations, so that as viewers our "own sensibilities act as a filter, and we see what we need to see, read what we need to read."

-Gianna Commito, Assistant Professor, School of Art, Kent State University

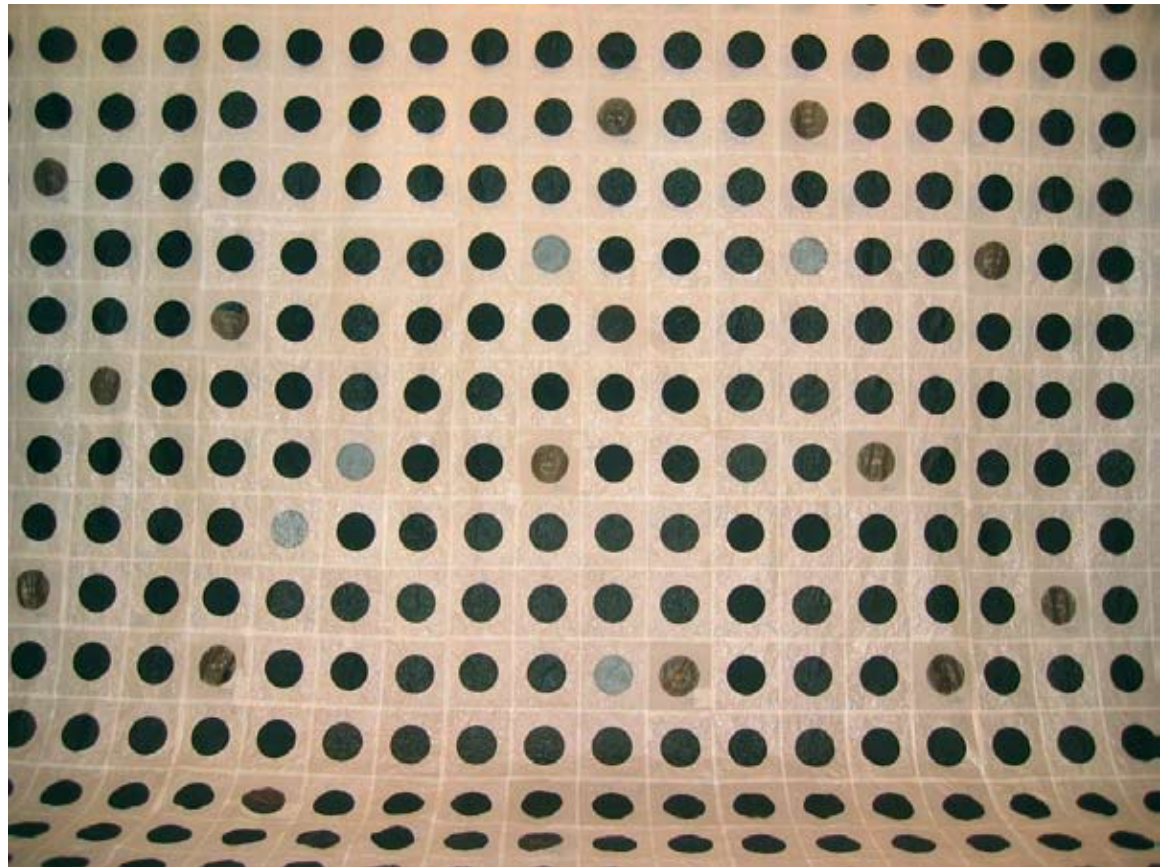
School of Art Gallery School of Art Galleries

Downtown Gallery

Student Galleries

Eells Gallery

Michener Gallery



"GENIAL" SILKSCREENED GLASINE, BY MARY LUM

<http://dept.kent.edu/art/galleries>

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