

Susan Eley

Fine Art

JULY 2010

We are pleased to announce the opening of **SPLASHED SPOTTED & STRIPED**, a group exhibition of abstract art by seven women. **SPLASHED** opens on July 7 and remains on view through September 5, 2010. There will be a **Gallery Reception on Wednesday, July 14, 6-8 pm.**

The exhibition features 29 paintings and photographs by **Rose Frisenda, Amber George, Ellen Hermanos, Kim Luttrell, Zana Markelson, Nancy Rubens** and **Joyce Siegel** that explore the power of repetition of form and color in abstract art.

**ON PATTERN, REPETITION AND THE EARLY
ABSTRACTIONISTS**

Repetition is psychologically soothing and intellectually edifying. We learn through repetition and find pleasure and ease in pattern and routine. The desire for routine is present from birth. Children reread books and enjoy the same lullabies day after day; we commit information to knowledge and memory by reading passages from texts repeatedly.

We are creatures of habit. We make sense of our chaotic, frenetic world by engaging in daily routines that give our lives structure, form and comfort. Our predilection for grouping objects in categories and organizing our physical world results in collections of like objects and tidy spaces.

Thus, we relate to abstract art, often built on repetition, through our need to group and collect forms as we scan a surface of a canvas. The eye moves around a canvas in a circular fashion, up and down or back and forth, never resting on a focal point, (i.e., a figure or landscape), but dancing across a canvas, buoyed simply by repeating color and shape.

The seven women featured in **SPLASHED SPOTTED & STRIPED** are a part of a long tradition of abstract artists, beginning with the Impressionists of the late 19th century, progressing through the Cubists of the early 20th century and Abstract Expressionists of the 1940s and 50s. While indebted to the male artists who pioneered these abstract movements—Picasso, Kandinsky, Pollack, Rothko, Kline and others—we dedicate this exhibition to the great women abstractionists of the 20th century, Joan Mitchell, Elaine de Kooning, Georgia O'Keefe, Helen Frankenthaler and others.

ARTISTS IN SPLASHED SPOTTED & STRIPED

Works on view include four photo chemical paintings of cascading shapes and monolithic forms by **Rose Frisenda**, rendered in a painterly style and with tones of sepia, grey and black. **Frisenda** has devised her own technique of using photo chemistry, but without negatives or other photography processes.

Amber George, an encaustic artist from San Diego, is represented by five recent paintings, created with multiple layers of beeswax mixed with pigment. **George's** repeating geometric forms—striped, braided and woven—are reminiscent of patterns in nature as well as in woven textiles.

Subtle gradations of tone wash across the canvas in **Ellen Hermanos'** three paintings, rich with hidden layers. Based in Boston, **Hermanos** renders her color field paintings with brush, palette knife and sponge roller, at once revealing and taking away color to create strong, balanced images.

Kim Luttrell's large swirled painting in pink, lavender and yellow conjures the Pop Art aesthetic of the psychedelic 1960s. The curved forms pull the eye around the canvas as if it were caught in a whirlpool with no beginning and no end.

Zana Markelson is represented by two paintings of whimsical forms in black against a white background on one and purple on the other. Resembling flowers, splotches or blobs from a Rorschach test, no two forms are the same, yet the multiplicity of them floating across the canvas creates a powerful rhythm.

Made with acrylic paint, gauze, fabric and vintage papers, **Nancy Rubens'** recent series of collaged paintings evoke cord grass swaying in the sea or waving wheat in a field. An unseen force seems to set everything in motion. **Rubens** builds her paintings blade by blade, collaging each strip onto linen in colors of azure, aqua and surprising hints of red.

Joyce Siegel favors a palette of black and white for her obsessive-compulsive compositions of repeating dots, spots, letters and stripes of tape. Both the large bleeding splotches on paper, as well as the symmetrical regular rows of dots and letters have a hypnotic effect as the repeating forms pulsate.