

Trace Elements

INAUGURAL EXHIBITION AT FORM + CONTENT GALLERY

March 1 – April 5, 2007

WORKS FOR THE EXHIBITION SELECTED BY DORYUN CHONG, ASSISTANT CURATOR OF VISUAL ART AT WALKER ART CENTER

Opening Reception

Saturday, March 3 5:00 – 9:00 pm

Trace Elements, the inaugural exhibition at Form + Content Gallery opens to the public on March 1, 2007. The opening reception will be on Saturday, March 3, from 5:00 – 9:00 pm. Doryun Chong, Assistant Curator of Visual Art at Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, has selected the works for the exhibition.

The exhibition includes the founding members of Form + Content Gallery: Christine Baeumler, Jim Dryden, Jil Evans, Camille J. Gage, Leah Golberstein, Jay Isenberg, Joyce Lyon, Lynda Monick-Isenberg, Howard Oransky, Robyn Stoller, and Jeff Wetzig and special guests Arlene Burke-Morgan and Clarence Morgan.

Nature and the Natural Environment

Nature and the natural environment inspire and inform the work of Baeumler, Evans, Lyon, and Monick-Isenberg. *Morning in the Daintree*, a large painting by Christine Baeumler, explores the diminishment of an ecosystem and with it a part of human understanding. A bouquet of snapdragons has been transformed into a visceral fusion of gesture and color that evokes bodily experiences by Jil Evans in her abstract painting *Natural Parable Number 4*. In works such as *Contessa's Garden III*, Joyce Lyon translates her experience of living near historic gardens in Italy into a language of introspection and pictorial space. Lynda Monick-Isenberg, in a series of small, delicate drawings, has unraveled the mystery of a bird's nest and then re-coded the information into a grid.

The Inner Self

The matrix of one's inner self gives shape to the works by Burke-Morgan, Dryden, Golberstein, and Stoller. The unfolding of spiritual awareness provides the light of *Beyond*, an acrylic on watercolor paper by Arlene Burke-Morgan. Jim Dryden presents the human mind as a chaotic room, crowded with a jumbled swirl of shapes, objects, thoughts, and memories in his painting *Beautiful Room*. An installation of lightweight torso-like fiber sculptures, entitled *Witness* by Leah Golberstein, symbolically represents the inner feelings of three individuals bound together by shared experience. Robyn Stoller's elegant letterpress prints reference the biological and cultural identities of the self by combining the Hebrew alphabet, cellular imagery, and strands of D.N.A.

Repetition and Variation

Repetition and variation – the building blocks of visual discourse – are at the heart of works seen here by Morgan and Wetzig. Clarence Morgan's *New Science* is a deceptively small abstract painting on notebook paper that expands in the viewer's mind and gently opens a door into uncharted territory. Physical scale is given its due in *'tis the season*, a humorous woodblock print by Jeff Wetzig depicting a fence that spans the gallery's mezzanine level and is crowned with actual holiday lights.

Politics and Memory

A political landscape littered with the artifacts of memory finds expression in the vision of Gage, Isenberg, and Oransky. *War, Redacted* is an arresting image by Camille J. Gage in which the carnage in Iraq has been distilled down to a stunning detail: the built-in handles observed at the bottom of a flag-draped military casket. *Niche for a Charity Box* by Jay Isenberg is a small, yet paradoxically, architectural mixed-media construction that suggests a monument in miniature to the Holocaust. This subject is echoed in the little *Shards* of glass, stone and image fragments on transparent fabric by Howard Oransky that feel like relics of an archeological dig.

About Doryun Chong

Doryun Chong, guest selector for the gallery's opening exhibition, was curator with Philippe Vergne of the exhibition *House of Oracles, A Huang Yong Ping Retrospective* and co-edited the exhibition catalogue. Doryun Chong's other recent projects at Walker Art Center include *Ordinary Culture: Heikes/Helms/McMillian* and *OPEN-ENDED (the art of engagement)*.