

Brochure

Halsey Gallery School of the Arts
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Dividing her canvases horizontally into four bands, Martha Keller creates an elegant armature for her rich color. These simple structures capture our attention with their quiet sensuous presence. Within this stable format, Keller works her surfaces to form arresting juxtapositions of space and

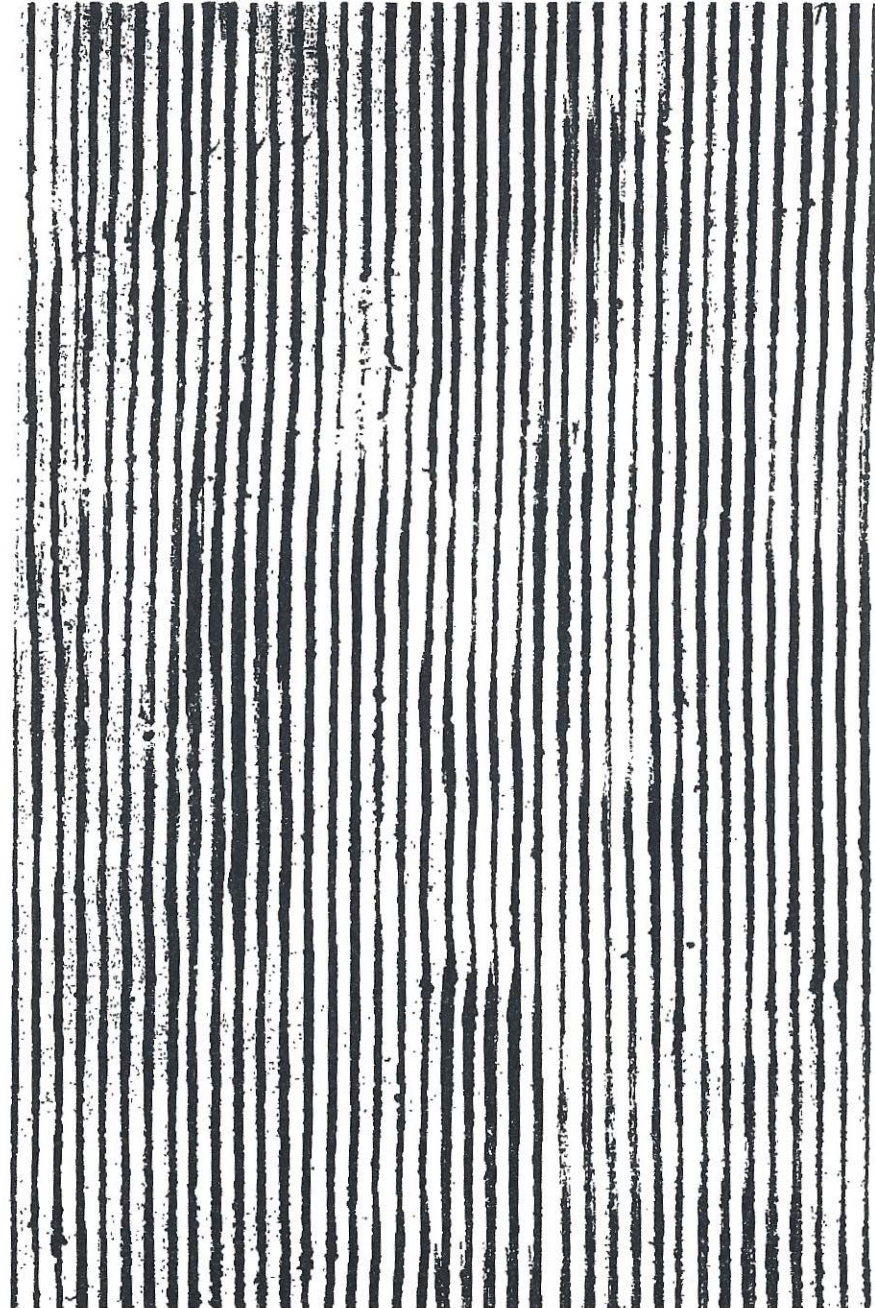
plane, stroke and void. She deftly calibrates zones of color using alkyd, wax, heavy metals and oil to control density or translucency. By equalizing color values and pictorial weight Keller's paintings destabilize expected meaning. In *Native Declension*, for example, traditional color association is blurred when industrial black graphite is made equivalent to natural Sienna earth.

Summer Dispersion #64 refers to the 64th hexagram of the *I Ching* which describes seasonal change as the "exhaustion of the masculine." In this eloquent restatement of dispersion and change, Keller challenges the void of the picture plane with the spatial illusion of the brush mark. Broad strokes alternately reveal and conceal the light below, declaring themselves as both gesture and image.

Keller's critique of the tenets of modernism may seem detached and cool, yet the artist thinks of her painting as empathetic object/space through which we confront real needs, desires, losses and the unknowable. For her there is deeply felt content in the pure matter of paint.

In conjunction with the exhibition of her paintings, Keller will create a large wall drawing. Her thin free-hand strokes of india ink wash filling an entire wall provide the only structure for the work. The mechanized immediacy and inevitable erasure of the wall drawing suggest an ephemeral visual choreography.

Both Keller's wall drawing and her paintings possess an antifocal quality which posits contradictory parts in perfect balance, making subject inseparable from the whole. Visual mastery becomes impossible. Viewing becomes global. Her works both challenge and seduce the viewer through a continuous learning and unlearning of the painting's surface.



Void and Stroke by Paige Turner