

ART NEW ENGLAND

Genovese/Sullivan Gallery, Boston, MA

FRAN SIEGEL: NEW PAINTINGS: PACIFIC GLOW

Fran Siegel investigates the dualities of light and darkness and revelation and concealment in her cohesive exhibit of drawings, steel mesh paintings, and installations. Playing with our expectations of color, materials, and scale, she takes us to a trippy alternate reality.

In the *Stratification* series of suspended, vertically oriented drawings, all-over patterns of psychedelic fluorescent pigment sprayed over scattered rice or beans form a surprisingly successful partnership with traditional rice paper. Strings of jagged graphite marks punctuate the surface, recalling the stratification in the eroded rock on the California beaches Siegel frequents. More complex, multilayered drawings such as *Open Path* invite us to journey beyond the surface, with a dense pattern of punctures in the rice paper revealing a layer of reflective Mylar beneath. The staccato pattern of light, seemingly below the drawing, creates a sense of excitement and anticipation as one moves through the gallery.

The installations and paintings reiterate and expand the vocabulary developed in the drawings. The ovoid paper forms of the installation *Glow* echo the stenciled marks of the drawings, greatly enlarged. Mounted a few inches from the wall, each form is surrounded by a soft glow of the same fluorescent colors; pigment on the back of the ovals reflects onto the wall.

The *Interference* series explores the layered concept of the drawings through different materials; layers of punctured or stenciled steel mesh and mirrored Plexiglas create a darker, more complex pictorial space. Light, color, and mirrored surfaces are all more elusive, and we catch fleeting, fragmented glimpses of our reflection in the depths of the pieces. Like the drawings and installations, the *Interference* pieces are seductively mesmerizing. To fully inhabit Siegel's world we are required to stay active and agile; there is no time to be complacent.

Mary Bucci McCoy



Fran Siegel, *Untitled*, nylon chord, rice paper, dye, and encaustic, 150 x 8 x 120", 2002.