

Quint Gallery In La Jolla, California Presents New Work By UCSD's Kim MacConnel

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A key figure in the West Coast Pattern and Decoration movement, University of California, San Diego professor Kim MacConnel is exhibiting new work at Quint Gallery in La Jolla, California until March 27, 2004. MacConnel uses a wide variety of media, from fabric to found objects, to question the place of decoration in contemporary art and society. The exhibition features new work, which treads the more familiar terrain of formal painted panels.

These new works revel in the juxtaposition of intricate patterns. Although they appear to be abstract, the work actually references the long and sophisticated history of non-Western design. Like Matisse and Picasso before him, MacConnel appreciates the visual wealth of these traditions, yet unlike his predecessors he aims for a more honest appropriation that deals with the historical and cultural context of pattern. Overall the effect is an ebullient, smart homage to the possibilities of line and color. As critic David Pagel noted in a recent article, "what marks MacConnel as an original is his shameless embrace of decoration and the messiness with which he maintains his vision of a world run riot with dots, dashes and zigzags."

In the fall of 2003 MacConnel was honored with a retrospective exhibition at the Santa Monica Museum of Art. The 30-year survey was described by Los Angeles Times writer Christopher Knight as "refreshing, challenging and succinct....MacConnel's paintings borrow cultural imagery from innumerable societies around the world, from Asia to Africa, but there is nothing colonial about it. Colonialism is about the powerful subjugating the weak and foreign; MacConnel's art is about the humanizing awe and delight that arises from worldly estrangement."

"Kim MacConnel's work ranges from psychedelic formalism to cubist ethnography," says Steve Fagin, chair of the UCSD visual art department. "He represents the healthy eclecticism we encourage in our faculty. MacConnel received his BA and MFA from UCSD and has taught in the visual art department since 1976. His work has been exhibited in the Whitney Museum of American Art Biennial Exhibition's in 1975, 1977, 1979, 1981, and 1985; The Museum of Modern Art's *An International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture*, 1984; The Venice Biennale, 1984; and is represented in the National Gallery of Art, in the Morton G. Neumann Family Collection, among others.

For more information about the exhibition, go to www.quintgallery.com.

For more information about UCSD's visual art department and faculty, go to <http://visarts.ucsd.edu/>.

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