Wax Applications Showcasing the Depth and Breadth of Encaustic and Cold Wax Mediums

Curated by Jane Cornish Smith

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March 22-April 11, 2021

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT OF ART
PRIDE.TAMUC.EDU/ART

are one than ask whether the wax and the figure impressed on it are one."

"We must no more ask whether the soul and body

Aristotle

Curatorial Statement

When asked to curate an art exhibition with wax as its focus, I immediately thought of the incredibly versatile nature of the medium, and *Wax Applications: Showcasing the Depth and Breadth of Encaustic and Cold Wax Mediums* was conceived. The installation in the University Gallery at Texas A&M University-Commerce, 65 miles northeast of Dallas, provided the perfect venue for students, staff, and public alike to discover a burgeoning field of art, and to view the luminous scope by 38 artists from across North America.

An ancient material used to create Egyptian funerary portraits two thousand years ago, wax is embraced by many a contemporary artist for its formal and conceptual expressiveness. Encaustic, typically consisting of beeswax, resin, and pigment, requires heat to bring it to a molten state and to fuse its translucent layers. Cold wax medium, mixed with oil paint and myriad substances, flows without the use of heat, with solvent as an ingredient. Both yield stunning, inspired results. Wax Applications illuminates an emotive gamut of dimension and technique; intention and innovation.

My sincere appreciation goes to the generous collaboration of the A&M-Commerce Department of Art, to the wonderful exhibiting artists, and to Bonny Leibowitz for her essay and insight.

Jane Cornish Smith Guest Curator Wax Applications: Showcasing the Depth and Breadth of Encaustic and Cold Wax Mediums - an exhibition curated by Jane Cornish Smith, truly exemplifies just that; a depth and breadth of applications and concepts these versatile media exemplify.

The exhibition brings together 38 artists of diverse histories and vision, making it strikingly evident and foremost that this is work which speaks to concepts, imagery and material in exquisite and unique ways and defies categorization as "Encaustic Art" or "Cold Wax Art" alone. This exhibition focuses on what it means for artists to be working in these media now, within the canon of contemporary art.

When I first opened The Encaustic Center in 2009, painting with encaustic wax was unfamiliar to many and The Center was flooded with curious, adventuresome artists seeking to find out about this "new" material. Evidenced by the familiarity and acknowledgement the medium has now received by art markets, collectors and makers, works in encaustic are as widely accepted and cherished as any other medium – the playing field has been leveled. Cold wax, following suit, quickly became a medium and process widely used and easily accepted, perhaps due in part, to the conversation opening up around encaustic – and for its beautiful innate qualities.

Contemporary artists including Jasper Johns, Lynda Benglis, Anish Kapoor and Michael David have produced powerful, groundbreaking and important works in wax, contributing to the canon. One should note here, the immense contribution Joanne Mattera has made in bringing this medium and its value to the fore with the writing of her seminal book "The Art of Encaustic Painting" and the development of the International Encaustic Conference. Additionally, Rebecca Crowell and Jerry McLaughlin have produced the comprehensive book "Cold Wax Medium: Techniques, Concepts & Conversations".

Working in wax affords artists endless possibilities. This exhibition includes dynamic examples in both encaustic and cold wax which can produce sheer translucencies or dense, opaque qualities and textural surfaces, evoking visceral responses in ways no other media can.

The exhibition encompasses a number of materials and processes such as textiles, plaster, books, text, sewing, sculpture, found objects, ceramics, photography, collage, painting and printmaking techniques including silkscreen, collagraph and monotype.

I am struck by the deep investigation artists are engaged in here - their life's work, utilizing concepts which draw on history, memory, culture, nature, transformation, biology, architecture, form, color, abstraction, mark making, surface quality, representation, symbolism and literature. The exhibition is relevant and compelling.

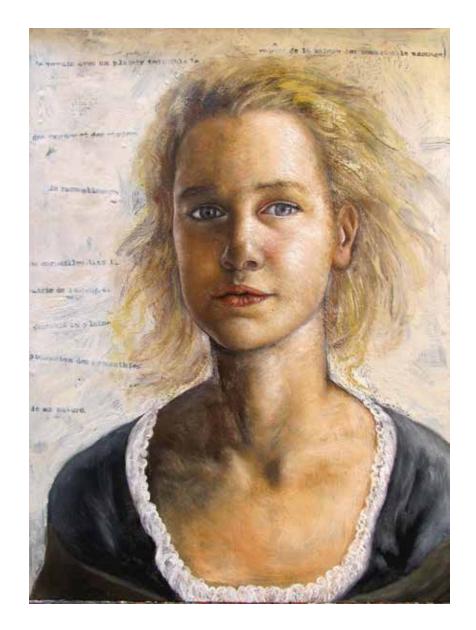
Bonny Leibowitz artist, educator, proprietor of The Encaustic Center

Participating artists:

Willow Bader, Francisco Benitez, Kara Brook Brown, Pamela Caughey, David A. Clark, Rebecca Crowell, Helen Dannelly, Michael David, Brad Ellis, Nancy Ferro, Milisa Galazzi, Lorraine Glessner, Angela Hansen, Stephanie Hargrave, Michelle Hayden, Ginny Herzog, Jeffrey Hirst, Trey Hoffman, Deborah Kapoor, Barry Katz, Erin Keane, Paul Kline, Ellen Koment, Leah Macdonald, Winston Lee Mascarenhas, Joanne Mattera, Jerry McLaughlin, Dale O. Roberts, Stephanie Roberts-Camello, Paula Roland, Lia Rothstein, Deanne Row, Elizabeth Schowachert, Kelly Wagner Steinke, Susan Stover, Elise Wagner, Anna Wagner-Ott, Jennifer Weigel



Leah Macdonald *Split*, 2019
Encaustic photo on wood panel 20x16x1.5 inches



Francisco Benitez *Marie-Aimée*, 2010-2016
Encaustic on cradled panel 24x18 inches



David A. Clark *Ancient Histories #175*, 2014

Encaustic on calf skin 32.5x44.5 inches



Michael David

The Judgement of the Moon and Stars 2
The Judgment of the Moon and Stars 3, 2020
Mixed Media on Wood
10x12 inches; 10.5x6 inches
Photo Credit: Brandon Hudson
On loan from private collection



Jerry McLaughlin macarthur station ii, 2016 oil, cold wax, sand, and grit on wood panel 36x36 inches



Jennifer Weigel

Icarus Washed Ashore, 2017 Used motor oil, cold wax, on found taxidermy duck 12x16x7 inches



Deborah Kapoor

Nest, 2020 Foam, silk, hair, wire, netting, string, and encaustic 19x27x7 inches



Barry Katz

led Attempt to Enforce Normality 2020

Failed Attempt to Enforce Normality, 2020 Encaustic over plaster 18x30x6 inches



Pamela Caughey
Walk in the Park, 2018
Oil and cold wax, mixed media
12x12 inches



Rebecca Crowell

Desert Lines, 2020
Oil/cold wax on panel
16x16 inches



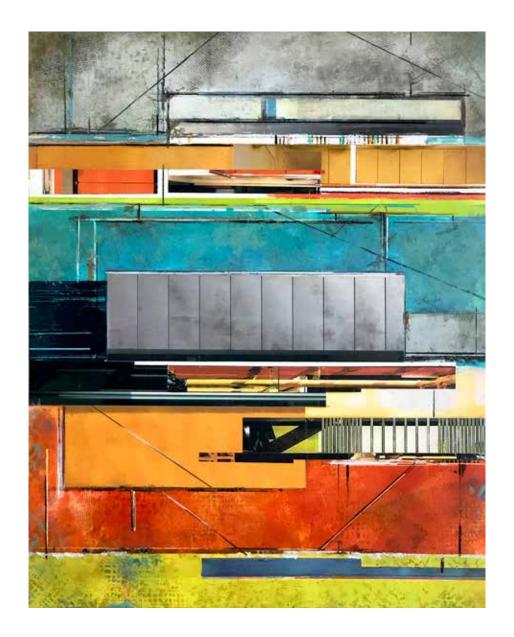
Erin Keane

Butterfly Book, 2020

Fallen butterfly wings, encaustic, decorative paper, wood panels, hand-torn pages, waxed linen thread, Coptic binding, artist-designed butterfly stitch 5x3x.75 inches closed



Joanne Mattera
Chromatic Geometry 18, 2014
Encaustic on panel
12x12 inches
On loan from private collection



Ginny Herzog

Layers 8-319, 2019

Oil/cold wax medium and collage 16x20x1.5 inches



Dale O. Roberts

Distant Light, 2016 Encaustic on cradled wood panel, Itallian gesso and string 40x42 inches



Jeffrey Hirst *Ribcage*, 2019
Encaustic and silkscreen on shaped panel
12x12 inches



Winston Lee Mascarenhas

 ${\it Melanin-17, 2018}$ Encaustic on reclaimed carboard on panel 10x10x4

Photo Credit: Brandon Hudson



Kelly Wagner Steinke $Les\ Signes\ II,\ 2015$ Wax, resin, pigment, found metal on birch panel 10x10x4.5 inches



Kara Brook Brown

Big Life, 2011
Encaustic
2x3x3 inches each
On loan from the Museum of Encaustic Art
Photo Credit: Brandon Hudson







Lorraine Glessner Swimming with Sharks, 2020 Encaustic, collage on panel 3.5x2.5 inches each panel; 51.5x2.5 inches installed



Lia Rothstein

Gloup 1, 2020

Pigment print on fabric, encaustic, brads, snaps

14x30x5 inches



Paula Roland *Optix 1*, 2019
Encaustic monotype on kitakata paper
20x16 inches



Ellen Koment The Lone Butte, 2015 Encaustic on paper 38x50 inches



Elizabeth Schowachert

Untitled, 2018
Alcohol ink on traditional Asian scroll paper and encaustic medium 53x13 inches



Stephanie Hargrave *El*, 2019

El, 2019 Stoneware, encaustic and steel wire 15x10x6.5 inches



Angela Hansen
Gaia Aquatica, 2019
Encaustic, twine, paper and wire
77x29x10 inches



Milisa Galazzi

String Theory.M.101.102.103, 2020
Paper, thread, encaustic
36x13x6 inches
Photo Credit: Dan Michel



Anna Wagner-Ott
Drawing with Threads, 2019
Cotton yarn and encaustic
59x23 inches



Trey Hoffman
Safe Passage, 2020
Found objects, encaustic, plaster, burlap,
pigment stick on cradled wood panel
20x13x2 inches



Elise Wagner Traces and Transits Plate 2 Traces and Transits Plate 1, 2012 Encaustic on plexiglass 30x30 inches each



Paul Kline
Genie, 2020
Encaustic, shellac, mica powders on wood panel
20x26 inches



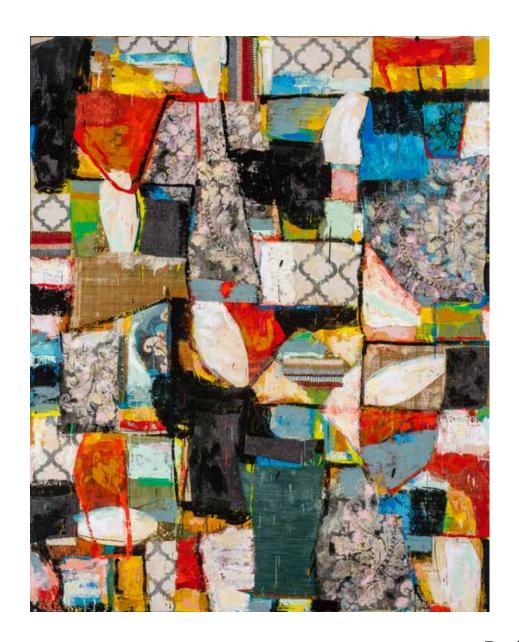
Stephanie Roberts-Camello

Love and War, 2020 Encaustic relief over old letters, rusted paper, graphite and ink on panel 14.5x14x4 inches



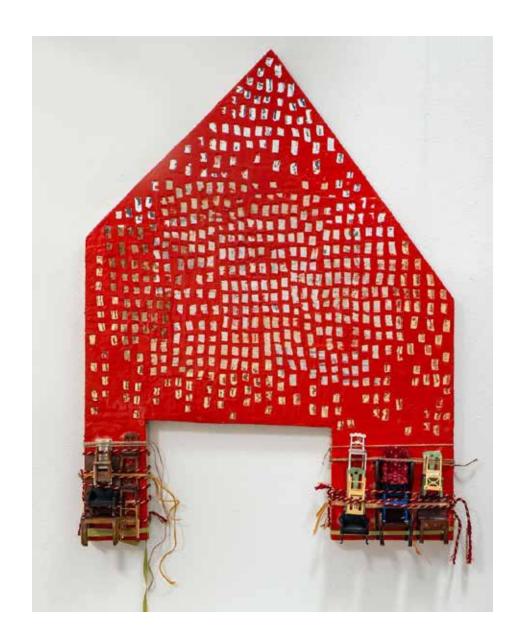
Michelle Hayden Sacred Mirrors, 2020

Sacred Mirrors, 2020 Encaustic and mixed media 24x21.5x4 inches



Brad Ellis

Secrets in the Garden #2, 2020 Encaustic and collage on board 60x48 inches



Nancy Ferro

Standing on My Own Two Feet, 2018 Beeswax, found objects and gold leaf on wood 52x36x5.5



Willow Bader You Might as Well, 2020 Encaustic on panel 20x18 inches



Susan Stover
Beacon, 2019
Fiber, encaustic and metal
9x14x9 inches



Helen Dannelly
Earth Pod, 2015
Encaustic, oil, raffia
9x6x9 inches



Deanne Row

Trickle Down Economics, 2020 Papier-mâché, stone, found metal, encaustic, cold wax medium 18x10x11





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DEPARTMENT OF ART (903) 886-5208
ART@TAMUC.EDU
PRIDE.TAMUC.EDU/ART



CATALOGUE DESIGN CHRISTINE BLACKHURST

COVER PHOTO CREDIT: JANE CORNISH SMITH

WATHENA TEMPLE FINE ARTS BUILDING PHOTO CREDIT: JARED HORN

