

Parallel Universes

September 12 – October 10, 2009

Reception: Saturday, September 12, 7–10 pm

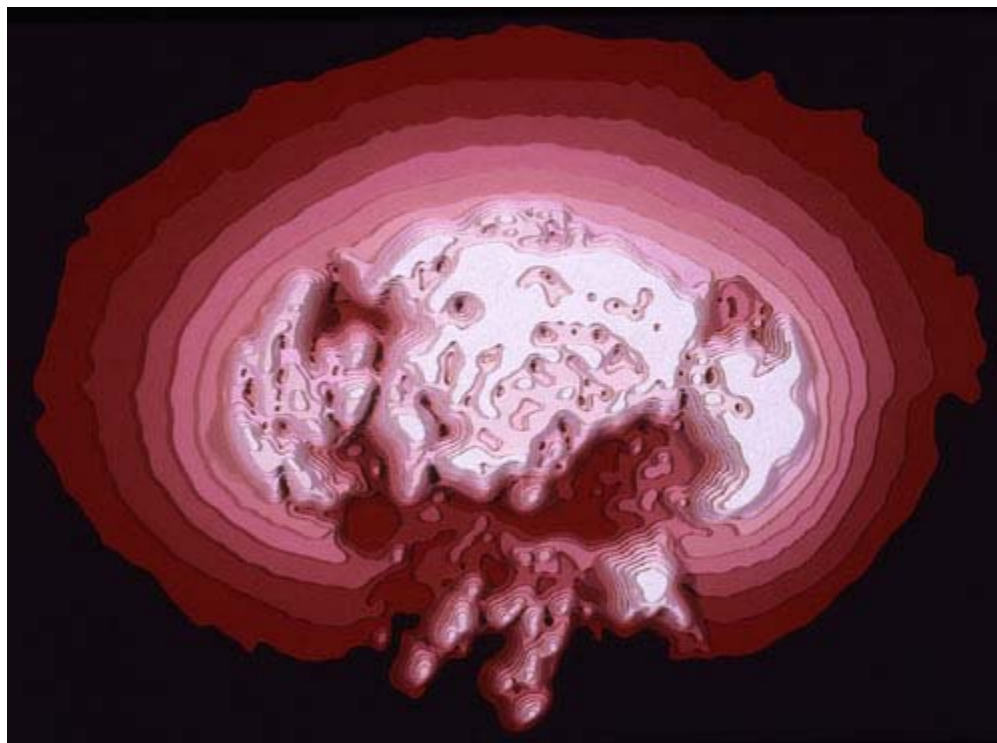


untitled ceramic 2009

Keiko Fukazawa

In her new body of work, Keiko Fukazawa contrasts China's rapid economic development against its human rights abuses. This is all set within the larger context of global consumption and environmental degradation. Fukazawa incorporates Beanie Babies, Chinese Scholar's Rock and Chinese traditional auspicious motifs in order to explore the cultural and social issues impacted by this rapid change. She uses these objects in a charmingly whimsical way that at the same time allows her to comment upon the growing commercialization, consumerism and globalization occurring in all societies.

The Beanie Babies represent contemporary China with its consumption and human rights abuses. The Chinese Scholar's Rock represents an older China and its relationship to nature, and traditional auspicious motifs represent the central Chinese desire for good fortune and happiness that has existed since the Han dynasty. Today, issues such as "Old vs. New," "Progress vs. Regress," "Nature vs. Industrialization," and "Community vs. the Individual" are challenging China. Through this project, Fukazawa attempts to find a balance and harmony of sorts between these issues. By fusing all these objects with the aesthetics of ceramics into a cohesive whole, it is her desire to learn how the world works, and to help define it for her audience.



Zucchini Teapot Blossom acrylic & glitter on foamboard & wood 2008

Edward Lightner

This series of works continues Edward Lightner's preoccupation with the visual and assorted symbolic relationships between the forces of life and death. In choosing to mix new flower motifs and his ongoing preoccupation with nuclear imagery, Lightner creates an immediate visual tension between the two sets of images. But concurrent with this polarization, an inherent attraction also exists within, and between, both groups of images. This is due, in part, to the methodology employed in the physical creation of each painting. But it is also because of the symbolic connections between the floral and nuclear images used, and the life/death states of being. The links with death are obvious in the instances of nuclear imagery, but there is also postulated a strange apocalyptic promise of life in a radioactively glowing world. The nuclear images themselves also contain an intrinsically beautiful yet deadly power to attract, and hold, attention. The floral images, on the other hand, have a much more direct and obvious connection with life. But here too death lurks just beneath the surface. In order for seeds to grow, the flower must die. The main flower at any funeral, it seems, is the rose. Or someone is "pushing up daisies." Lightner has created a visually lush world in which everything that has a life generates death, and everything must also die in order to create life. Parallel Universes.