

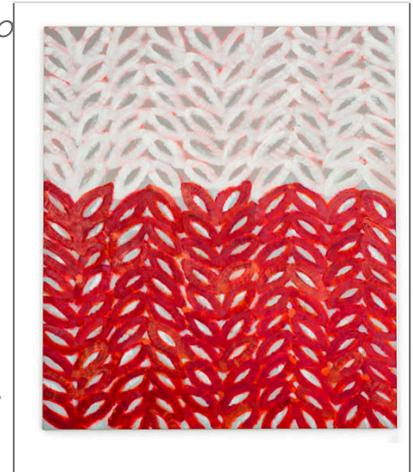
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Amy Kaufman @ Traywick

FEBRUARY 29, 2016

If there were a soundtrack to this exhibition, it would be *adagio* and sonorously *basso* — a rich ode to the measured, embedded lines of Kaufman's paintings and drawings. Kaufman's ninth solo show at Traywick continues her long-standing meditations on the material substance of paint, charcoal and chalk pastel. Densely rubbed or softly brushed, Kaufman's marks weave pigment into ropes and ribbons lyrically evoking leaves, textiles and unraveling skeins of wool.

Without embellishment or ideological rhetoric, Kaufman sustains a rigorous gaze on the facture of her marks, calling to mind the work of P&D artist [Valerie Jaudon](#). Kaufman uses intensely labored practices of rubbing, erasing, and repetitive smudging to form soft-focus minimalist abstractions that evoke geometry, botany, and linear magnifications. Irregularities serve to emphasize her dedication to the performative acts of painting and drawing. Arguably a critique of digital culture, Kaufman's material deliberations manifest potent evocations of time.



Fragaria Vesca, 2015, oil on
linen 62 x 54"

Stripes, linear entanglements, and columns of stacked elongated ovals comprise Kaufman's go-to motifs. Simple, yes, but the references are legion. From African batiks to plant life to architecture, her iconography riffs on metamorphosis and leaves to the viewer multiple possibilities of meaning. The gorgeous *Fragaria Vesca* suggests the unfolding of luminous red buds, or the methodical knitting of thread into a panel of a greatly magnified decorative textile. The image and the material are locked together in a lush colonization of the picture



Shark's Teeth 2, 2015.

plane. Using bruise-y purples and a milky beige, the aptly titled *Plummy* offers a similar scenario of vertical rows of stacked ovals, also suggesting seeds or fabric. Although the forms are deliberately executed, they also implicate movement — rising, falling, or expanding to the periphery of the canvas.

Possessing a monumental presence, three large charcoal drawings, *Shark's Teeth I, II and III*, amplify this motif of stacked pods and sequential observations. The drawings retain the traces of their making. Markings, erasures, smudges, and charcoal on paper 47 x 40" revisions accrue surface richness, and implicate Kaufman's digressions and second thoughts. Like all of her works, these drawings connote the passage of time. They possess the perfect congruence of form and idea, motion and equilibrium.

With their subdued palette of sour yellows and ashen blues, the plowed rows of line in *Infusion* and *Mme. Cezanne* suggest both externally ordered and interior, psychological structures. Looser brushstrokes flick light around and through the paintings, unpacking illusionistic possibilities. Speculative and minimal, the rhythm and movement of Kaufman's hand carries concentration, deep feeling and an abiding commitment to paint.

Amy Kaufman: "Recent Work" @ Traywick Contemporary through March 19, 2016.

About the Author:

[Julia Couzens](#) is a Sacramento-based artist and writer whose work has been widely shown, most recently at the di Rosa Preserve. Her drawings and hybrid objects are in museum and public collections throughout the U.S. These include the Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts; Berkeley Art Museum; Oakland Museum; Weatherspoon Art

Gallery, University of North Carolina; and Yale University. She lives and works on Merritt Island in the Sacramento River delta.

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