

Patterns of Growth

Curated by Susan Ross & Melissa Staiger

"I almost never work from nature: I want to work like nature, intuiting its process of harmonious growth, maturation, and generation."
- Francoise Gilot

Patterns of Growth highlights three generations of female artists who evoke growth through processes that create a heightened sense of materials and space. Each artist's work reveals an exploration of natural cycles as they manifest visually and experientially. Joined by an interest in personal and magical aspects of the creative process, their work remains grounded in the organic world.



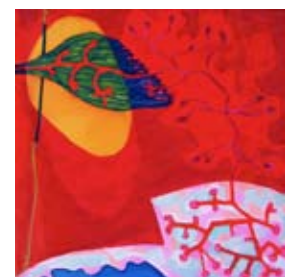
The artists in this exhibit carry on a dialogue that flourished during the feminist movement, when many artists pushed beyond the conventions of preceding *isms* to come into their own. During this time of great multiplicity, artist Lee Krasner said, "I believe in listening to cycles. I listen by not forcing." The work in *Patterns of Growth* signals the vital outgrowth of this seed.

In 1977, artist Jackie Winsor spoke of "a quality of internal energy: the potential for growth" and how this gave her "a glimpse of what I might do with my life." **Amy Kupferberg** had a similar experience when she discovered a process of making visible normally unseen electrode activity traces of arc welding. In *21*, a waxed paper structure ritualistically submitted to arc welding, a cell-like pattern multiplies and physically alters the surrounding space. The brain produces fresh neuropathways when when flooded with memories of a new habit for twenty-one consecutive days; thus *21* could be read as burning old patterns to create a new emergence.



Like Kupferberg, **Beatrice Wolert** transforms the ordinary into the mysterious. In her *Spliced Thread*, Wolert methodically cut tightly wound spools to imbue previously static objects with life. Every slice reveals texture; each layer unveils a curious evolution. In the end, the piece literally becomes more open and expansive.

Phyllis Goldberg also transforms seemingly simple forms into exquisite encounters. She employs color theory to create the sensation of biomorphic shapes growing within the picture plane. Very subtle modulations of two monochromatic areas of contrasting color create a further sense of expansion through optical vibration.



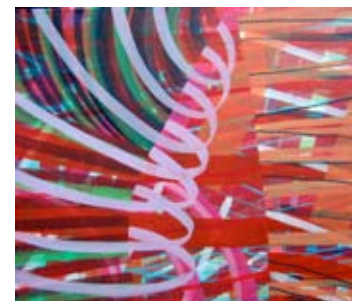
Sarah Dobkin explores interconnections in her paintings, incorporating microscopic and macrocosmic; biological and manmade elements. Within these networks, form, energy, and color have transformative effects. In *Ripe Return*, a red branching form grows out of an icy container into a world drenched with color.

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Also enticed by saturated color, **Laurie Close** creates luminous gouache paintings. In *Vertical Shift*, the naturalistic meets the fantastical. Richly-hued diagonals are the structured backdrop to the enigmatic blooming of a graceful plant. An orange zigzag appears to supply the flora with abundant energy. Layers of deep pink fan out in full-force color, revealing the strength and fragility of nature.



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Trance-like repetitions of linear elements grow in surprising rhythms in **Jackie Meier's** paintings. In her *Untitled (with Pink)*, space bends in a celebration of disparate planes coming together. Pink lines elegantly swoop like ribbons, increasing the painting's dynamism and tying it together. This play of pattern creates a sense of infinitely expanding space.

Elemental in character, **Jeanne Thomsen's** work depicts light, color, and movement in a continuous spatial field. Her color specificity and energetic brushwork suggest cycles of weather, time, and botanical life. Thomsen's paintings are torso-size, which bring them in relationship with the body. Immersed in the lush properties of paint, her images evoke boundless vitality, and capture a diary of heightened moments of awareness.



Like Thomsen, **Monique Ford** is engaged in the immediate physical qualities of painting. In *Wheel* she brings fluidity and structure in concert. Pronounced contrasts cause the painting's composition to pulsate rhythmically within and seemingly beyond the canvas, creating an expansive image. *Wheel* suggests natural cycles, stirring up the feeling of a heartbeat or a thriving plant.



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Cynthia Milionis' works begin on the printing press and after multiple runs, take final form as collages. In one, (see cover), repeating curves create a flow, which results in an atmosphere. Layered elements play off each other in dualities: taut vs. soft, sharp vs. round, stability vs. flux. In this world of varied movements, each shape maintains integrity. Shapes may pull, float, and slink, yet, with each interchange, they synchronize.

The artists in *Patterns of Growth* each uniquely reflect Krasner's statement, "all the doors are open." Each artist's work is a sign of her source of strength to persist with an aesthetic based on constant rejuvenation. In their work, we witness genuine exploration. As we are drawn into the vitality of each piece, we are reminded that growing is not quiet, and, like the creative process itself, demands care, time, and attention.

1. **Amy Kupferberg**, *21*, 2006, arc welding on waxed masa paper, 84" x 108"
2. **Beatrice Wolert**, *Spliced Thread #9 (White Triptych)*, 2008, spliced thread spools, dimensions variable
3. **Phyllis Goldberg**, *Untitled (Orange meets Green)*, 2008, oil on canvas, 12" x 12"
4. **Sarah Dobkin**, *Ripe Return*, 2008, oil on canvas 12" x 12"
5. **Laurie Close**, *Vertical Shift*, 2008, gouache on paper, 6.5" x 10"
6. **Jackie Meier**, *Untitled (with Pink)*, 2008, egg tempera on panel, 14" x 16"
7. **Jeanne Thomsen**, *Easter Wind*, 2008, oil on canvas, 20" x 16"
8. **Monique Ford**, *Wheel*, 2007 oil on canvas, 60" x 48"