

UC SANTA BARBARA

THE **Current**

September 29, 2011

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Art Museum Exhibition Features 'Container Love,' a Show of Recent Paintings by Phil Argent

Container Love, a solo show of recent paintings by Phil Argent, will be the first exhibition mounted by the Art, Design & Architecture Museum UC Santa Barbara, formerly known as the University Art Museum, in the Jane Deering Gallery.

The show, currently on view, will have an opening reception Thursday, October 6, at the Jane Deering Gallery, 128 East Canon Perdido St., Santa Barbara. The exhibition will run from October 6 to November 6. This exhibition marks the beginning of a unique collaboration between the gallery and the museum that will allow each to use the space for a set period each year.

The Jane Deering Gallery, which has been mounting contemporary art exhibitions in Santa Barbara since 2006, opened the new space in July. The gallery will schedule five exhibitions per year, from January to May, beginning in January 2012. During the remaining seven months of the year, Deering has made the space available to the museum, providing it with a much-needed downtown site.

"This generous donation of an intimate gallery space in the heart of Santa Barbara's commercial and arts district will allow us to reach a broader audience with small, thematic shows, exhibitions curated by students, and related performances by UCSB's arts departments," said Elyse Gonzales, the museum's curator of exhibitions.

Phil Argent's works are an ideal choice for the inaugural exhibition, Gonzales said, because, although he has lived in Santa Barbara for over 10 years and teaches painting in the university's Department of Art, this is his first solo show here. The six paintings on view in the 400-square-foot gallery were completed between 2002 and 2011.

Gonzales describes Argent's works as "hard-edged abstractions" that are rooted in digital information, combining flat planes of color with passages of paint that create three-dimensional spaces. He usually creates a study of his works on a computer and then transfers them to the canvas, repeatedly taping and painting sections of canvas. "Untitled (Pass), 2002" seems to take the viewer through the zig-zags of digital information as it moves through its virtual environment. More recent works, such as "Untitled, 2011" focus on individual moments that are pictured very abstractly.

An important part of the agreement between the museum and the gallery is that the museum will not sell the works on display. Argent is represented by the Shoshana Wayne Gallery in Santa Monica.

The next exhibition by the Art, Design & Architecture Museum at Jane Deering Gallery will be an installation by Los Angeles artist Isaac Resnikoff. It will open in mid-November and run through the end of the year.

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