

## Artist's Statement 2008

Susan Marie Dopp

In 1997 I became interested in translating the inner quiet and tranquility I was experiencing in my meditation practice into the language of painting. Beginning in 1995 I had tried to address these experiences figuratively, a means of expression I had used for more than a decade. This literal and objective approach proved unsatisfactory and I turned away from objective representation. I have since been attempting to reach beyond the boundaries of the dimensional world working with the geometry of pure form.

My practice is invigorated by the contradiction of endless possibilities available within a rigorous reductive process. Early explorations in this realm led to the body of work I refer to as "Tessallations" which employs geometric patterns that tessellate, and the optical effects manufactured by these relationships.

Contrasting colors and repetition of pattern act upon the brain, affecting its visual apparatus. By-products like haloes, ghosts and reversals appear to bounce and dance across the painting field. These effects activate the space between the painting and the viewer, transforming a static situation into an event filled with movement and rhythm. This vibration, which is initially a visual phenomenon, gives rise to rhythms, which can be felt, literally, in one's body. This feeling is analogous to the experience of deep meditation. Rather than illustrating this feeling/state, my work aims to trigger it, or at least direct one's attention toward it.

In 2004 I began a new series of work by extracting the basic components of the preceding work and employing only the most fundamental ingredients in order to activate the space within the picture plane. Through exacting compositional contingencies and relationships of color, I began to explore a balance between tension and "rest": a kind of "Dynamic Equilibrium," which is alive, vibrant and resilient while simultaneously peaceful and soothing. This hermetic work evolves from a contemplative internal and visual process. An investment of time is required of the viewer to allow for the color harmonies and compositional rhythms to become activated.

The work from the "Clusters" series is constructed methodically from the ground up. Beginning with the placement of a single geometric form within the picture plane, I then study its relationship within the surrounding space. The color of each shape energizes the space according to its weight and vibrancy. Through observation and contemplation I determine how each new element affects the movement and stasis within the piece. My project continues to involve only the most essential information, allowing the imposed constituents as much importance as the space they inhabit. I aim to create a visual event, which is at once vital, playful, and restful.

I am currently working on a series entitled "Ether." Inclusive of concerns with which I have been preoccupied in the last ten years these pieces involve forms based on geometric configurations placed in relational interactivity. Employing elements of compositional tensions, intricate color relationships, optical effects and geometric complexities I am reaching for a feeling of suspension and expansion, creating the 'illusion' of being liberated from the dimensions of time and space. I embrace the challenge of addressing these situations in a two dimensional format.

