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GALLERY BIENVENU
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Artist: Michael Kessler

“Woven Gestures”

August 1 through September 30, 2009

Artist's Reception: Saturday, August 1, 5-7pm.

Inspired, virtuosic, and deeply allusive, the paintings of Michael Kessler explore the continuum between gesture and geometry, jubilant improvisation and rigorous architectonic forms. Kessler lavishes his panels with as many as 50 micro-thin layers of translucent and transparent acrylic, imparting a limpid, 3-dimensional quality. Suspended within the layers, biomorphic tendrils branch to and fro, while arcs of line and color slip over and under matrices, balancing nature's sinuous curves with the mindfulness of structure. With this exhibition, the artist debuts a new series of small-format pieces, which incorporate the signature elements that distinguish his medium- and large-scale paintings. Immaculate and jewel-like individually, they are particularly stunning when grouped together.

A winner of the *Prix de Rome* and the Pollock/Krasner Award, the Santa Fe-based Kessler has exhibited widely throughout the Americas and Europe. He has been profiled and rapturously reviewed in publications including *Art in*

America, *ARTFORUM*, and *ARTnews*. As an artist and thinker, he is keenly interested in the integrity of the built surface, the meandering line, and the joyous invention of deconstruction and reconstruction. He likens the gestural freedom in his works to a kind of painterly *tai chi*—a visible expression of a line of energy—and imbues his structural motifs with a sense of play and buoyance.

Another development that can be seen in this exhibition is the artist's increasing use of dramatically horizontal compositions, in which a continuous line weaves and wanders across the panel, inviting the viewer to walk alongside and experience the gesture peripatetically. Like a piece of film on an editing table or a succession of musical notes across a staff, these panels have a linear and temporal presence that is more spatial and sculptural than more traditionally scaled paintings. In these and other works across richly diverse scales and color palettes, Kessler enables the viewer to connect with the power of contrast, balance, and harmony. Like the yin and yang, the organic and geometric elements in his paintings speak not of dichotomy, but of integration.

By Richard Speer

Gallery Bienvenu hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Please contact Borislava Kharalampiev, Gallery Director or Cathy Bienvenu, for additional information or visit the gallery website at www.gallerybienvenu.com.