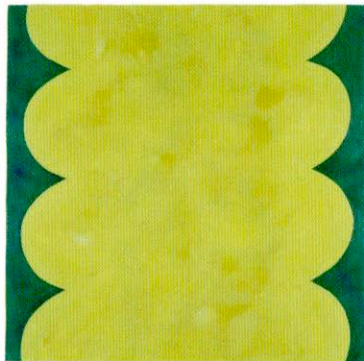


An abstract artwork featuring a large, vibrant yellow shape at the top, which curves downwards into a dark blue, textured shape that fills the lower portion of the frame. The yellow shape has a slightly irregular, organic edge, and the blue shape has a fine, woven texture. The overall composition is minimalist and high-contrast.

Carol **Padberg**



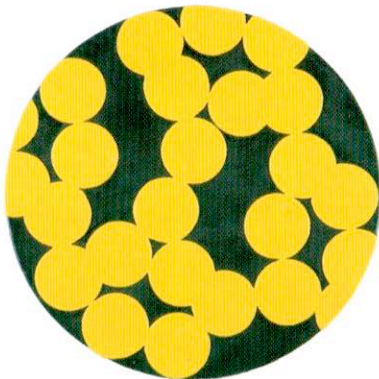
Cryoslice 1, 2005, 36 x 36" encaustic on panel

Glide, 2004, 9 x 9" encaustic on panel

Agnes and Ad, 2005, 9" round, encaustic on panel



Installation view, Gallery on the Green, 2005



SEEING THROUGH THE EYE'S MIND Carol Padberg has a love-hate relationship with minimalism. Though her abstract paintings rigorously investigate line, form, and space, her practice is determinedly off the grid—less an heir to LeWitt, Judd, and Martin than a cousin of Reinhardt, Kelly, and Lichtenstein. Padberg's line and edge are found in comic books, cereal-box logos, and other sources of popular visual culture. She liberally quotes visual fragments from this ubiquitous stew, boiling them down to their most elemental traces.

"I'm interested in the phenomenology of perception—how we read, decode, and organize visual information," says Padberg. "But I've always wanted a mixture of the austere and the slightly goofy. An intersection between minimalism and The Powerpuff Girls feels about right."

This two-ness—a formal interrogation combined with an appetite for visual pleasure—guides Padberg's exacting practice. Concentrating on primary visual elements—lines, circles, contrasting colors, positive and negative space—the artist activates dynamic, binary compositions. The *Cryoslice* and *Vice Versa* series pulse with tension as interior and outer fields are



Vespers, 2005, 9" round, encaustic on panel

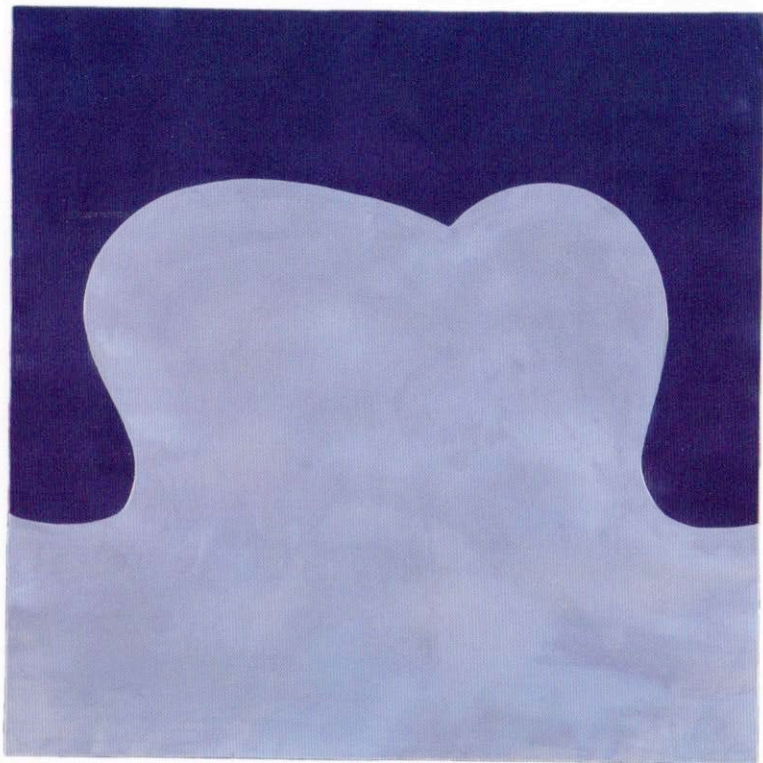
placed in opposition through simple, decorative patterns and pairs of complementary hues. *Glide* and *Spot* add the sensation of movement as circles appear to bounce along a trajectory set by jagged and irregular edge patterns.

Padberg's careful cropping allows her images to operate as excerpts from an implied larger field of information. This extra dimension tugs at the edges of her works. Again, this strategy alludes to Pop and Op art concerns as well as commercial graphic design. Like a contemporary form of alchemy, Padberg urges a complex experience from the collision of a few, simple ingredients.

Yet getting there is anything but simple. Working exclusively with encaustic, Padberg melts, applies, and scrapes untold layers of pigmented wax to build her meticulous compositions, selectively introducing relief to force visual contrasts into greater opposition. Encaustic also allows for unusually deep, rich color whose subtle variations are an effective foil to the flatter, graphic aspects of her images.

This deliberate and labored construction does not dispel an equally intentional ambiguity. Padberg's works are resolute in their lack of resolution. They initially resist the eye, coaxing an awareness of how perception operates in order to make sense of images. In so doing, Padberg playfully demonstrates that our understanding of visual communication is highly subjective and never complete. —JE

John Ewing is a New York-based writer for *Modern Painters* and *ArtNexus*.



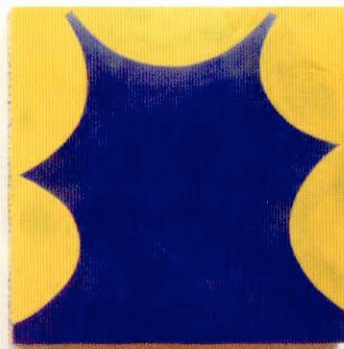
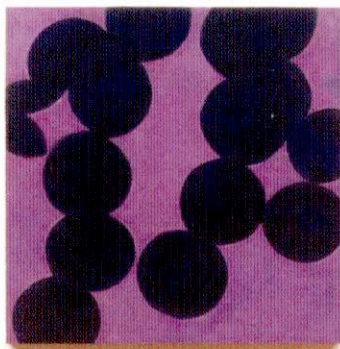
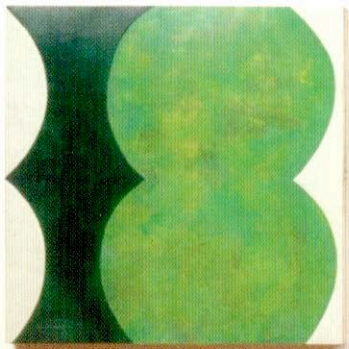
Gupta, 2005, 24 x 24" encaustic on panel

Vice Versa Series (right):

Vice Versa 1, 2004, 24 x 24" encaustic on panel

Vice Versa 2, 2004, 24 x 24" encaustic on panel

Vice Versa 3, 2004, 24 x 24" encaustic on panel



BIOGRAPHY CAROL PADBERG'S WORK HAS BEEN EXHIBITED IN GALLERIES, ALTERNATIVE SPACES AND MUSEUMS IN THE US AND ABROAD. EXHIBITIONS INCLUDE THE CHARTER OAK CULTURAL CENTER, HARTFORD CT, THE SOAP FACTORY IN MINNEAPOLIS MN; THE MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS, THE LIVING ART MUSEUM, REYKJAVIK, ICELAND; KUNSTLERHAUS, HAMBURG, GERMANY; AND GALLERY WOONG IN SEOUL, KOREA. AWARDS INCLUDE A SKOWHEGAN FELLOWSHIP, TWO GRANTS FROM THE MINNESOTA STATE ARTS BOARD, AND NUMEROUS RESIDENCIES. IN ADDITION, PADBERG HAS BEEN A VISITING LECTURER AT THE WALKER ART CENTER IN MINNEAPOLIS, THE MARYLAND INSTITUTE COLLEGE OF ART IN BALTIMORE, AND THE STUDIO ART CENTERS INTERNATIONAL IN FLORENCE.

Carol Padberg

1186 BROADWAY no. 933 NEW YORK, NY 10001

CPADBERG@SBCGLOBAL.NET | 917 617.6789

CPADBERG.COM

CAROL PADBERG'S WORK IS REPRESENTED BY:

Fenn Gallery, LLC
fenngallery.com
345 Main Street
Woodbury, CT 06798
203-263-3449

