

Elisabeth Condon

Dorsch Gallery

By Rachel Hoffman

It is easy to be seduced by Condon's paintings; otherworldly and dream-like, the structure of her work is rooted in natural forms that resonate with a summertime nostalgia for tropical environments. Her retro-psychedelic palette conjures up colors so palatable that they seem to have a taste. For example, in the painting, *Monkey Painting*, a flaccid "melting" monkey floats above a bed of lettuce, looking like a chocolate candy figurine that could have been inspired by an Alice in Wonderland character. Condon's expressive use of color hints at the tropical plants, birds of paradise and bougainvillea of childhood bliss, enhanced by the kindness of memory. But there is also something musical, rhythmic in the way she combines fluorescent green with duller greens that shift towards blue

or acid-yellows and then warm to a calm, muted violet. In the painting, *Psychedelic World*, colors splash and spark; embers in a gulf of darkness seem to have a physical presence. There is a burning glow between the borders of the color shifts in the rainbow pattern, and this vibrates against electrified green tropical foliage in the center of the painting.

Representational imagery mingles here with abstract forms; these paintings read like open narratives that rely heavily on intuition. Yuan Dynasty Chinese scrolls hugely influence her work. Condon is drawn to this particular genre because of the way in which different points of view are forged into one multi-layered and time-compressed experience. She builds puzzling and complex illusions of space, created with color and pattern. While many systems are at work in these paintings, clearly this artist's first language is color.

10/14 through 11/11



Elisabeth Condon: *Secret Room* 2006. Acrylic in linen 24 x 24 inches. Courtesy: Dorsch Gallery, Miami