

**Michael Alexis
and Jennifer Faist**
Ruth Bachofner Santa Monica
[April 23 - June 4]



(above left) Michel Alexis, Epigram 7, 2010, Oil on canvas, 54" x 41" (above right) Jennifer Faist Mingle, 2010, Resin, oil, alkyd, acrylic on wood, 46" x 14" x 1.5".



New York-based painter **Michel Alexis'** current body of work is an extension of a series he began some twenty years ago, in which he incorporated the notations and prose of Gertrude Stein. While the words themselves have left Alexis' canvases, remnants of the motion and form of the written word are suggested through sweeping, calligraphic markings. In the new work, as with the old, words and letters are drained of meaning, freed of origin and occupy a strictly formal space. Alexis adapts the physical act of writing, translating it as drawing, incising and gesturing to create his own distinct, complex visual vocabulary. Alexis' gestures are set off by jostling rectangles made of paper, burlap and other textured material, which fold, wrinkle and crease as they abut

one another, or shift to reveal fissures of substrate color. **Jennifer Faist** engages in a rigorous material process where color sets an emotional timbre and pattern anchors the conceptual and compositional core of the work. Faist begins her process on stacked plywood boards which are sanded, gessoed and then painted on with thick layers of paint. The patterns created in the first layer are then covered with thin applications of additional alkyd, oil and colored glazes which are sanded down to partially reveal portions of the subsequent layers. A clear epoxy resin serves as the final layer. Faist's perfectly smooth, reflective surfaces draw viewers into their vibrant, immeasurable depths. The meticulously crafted work recalls the Finish Fetish work of the 60's, but Faist curbs pure materiality and infuses her work with personal resonance. Within layers of paint, Faist appropriates patterns from her own clothing which she associates with specific memories, creating relics of her past that resonates with viewers.