

**A *Mysterious Clarity*** is an exhibition about nature. Featuring the paintings of three artists who live and work in Florida, *A Mysterious Clarity* explores a range of impressions inspired by the complexities of our natural environment. We are taken to landscapes of solace and beauty, ferocity and destruction. Our expectations of how nature should appear in representation are challenged. Recognizable shapes melt into abstraction. Abstractions somehow begin to take form.

**R**ay Burggraf, Mark Messersmith, and Lilian Garcia-Roig each came to Florida to teach painting in the art department at Florida State University in Tallahassee and for each the subject of the Florida landscape has since become central to their work. Their

approaches—both in their aesthetics and in their process—however, differ radically. When exhibited together, the works of Burggraf, Messersmith and Garcia-Roig, though so outwardly diverse, begin to interact. Colors and shapes intermingle, drawing the viewer from one painting to another. New patterns and textures begin to emerge. The result is, as the artists have termed it, “A Mysterious Clarity”, where we can begin to see beyond the limits of our own expectations.

**R**ay Burggraf arrived at Florida State University in 1970 from California, where he earned his MA and MFA from the University of California, Berkeley. In his nearly sculptural paintings, which he creates on wood boards he shapes into biomorphic forms, the



Ray Burggraf, *Jungle Arc*, 1998

landscape emerges as an underlying theme. Yet the landscapes are abstractions, impressions of color applied in graduated layers with seamless precision to the surface geometries of his wood forms. Yet in spite of the seemingly obscure relationship between the landscape and its representation in his work, nature’s essential elements remain visible. Burggraf’s structures are suggestive of forms found in nature, his colors remind us of atmospheric light—but do not mimic them.

**M**ark Messersmith began teaching at Florida State in 1985, having earned his MFA at the University of Indiana in Bloomington. In Messersmith’s vision virile beasts engage in struggles to the death, majestic birds feast amidst murky swamps, gators writhe between cypress roots, and all the while the

threat of human encroachment looms darkly. The already precarious balances of these unstable environments begin to unfold.

**L**ilian Garcia-Roig came to Florida State in 2001 from University of Texas, Austin where she was a tenured professor. She earned her MFA from the University of Pennsylvania in 1990. Her majestic, large-scale canvases painted on site in the forest, feature massive tree trunks, foliage in all shade of green, and dense weaves of branches. Up close, however, her compositions dissolve into surface detail. The woods are abstracted into brilliant patterns and shapes that engage the viewer on the canvas’s surface as intensely as the painting’s subject matter.



Mark Messersmith, *Verpertine Sacrifice*, 2006



Lilian Garcia-Roig, *Serpentine Nature*, 2007

# Mysterious Clarity



## Ray Burggraf

*Afterglow II*, 2005  
acrylic on wood  
66 x 69 inches

*Fresh Breeze*, 2006  
acrylic on wood  
32 x 84 inches

*Three Months of Sunsets I*  
2004  
acrylic on wood  
38 x 59 inches

*Dragon Breath*, 2000  
acrylic on wood  
77 x 78 inches

*In Search of Fresh Air*,  
alias *Dead Blue Parrot*, 2001  
acrylic on wood  
42 x 128 inches

*The Queen*, 1988  
acrylic on wood  
97 x 30 inches

*Jungle Arc*, 1998  
acrylic on wood  
53 x 58 inches

*Light Struck Stagger*, 1995  
acrylic on wood  
44 x 12 x 57 inches

## Lilian Garcia-Roig

*Fall Paths*, 2007  
oil on canvas  
60 x 144 inches (3 panels)

*Stained Glass Woods*, 2007  
oil on canvas  
48 x 132 inches (3 panels)

*St. Mark's Triptych*  
(*Fallen Tree*, *Charred Gateway*,  
*Fan Palm*), 2005  
oil on canvas  
48 x 36 inches (3 panels)

*Cadmium Carnival*, 2006  
oil on canvas  
48 x 36 inches

*Fluttery Maple Leaves*, 2005  
oil on canvas  
48 x 36 inches

*Serpentine Nature*, 2007  
oil on canvas  
48 x 108 inches

*MacDowell Pines*, 2007  
oil on canvas  
48 x 36 inches

*St. Marks Inlet*, 2007  
oil on canvas  
40 x 30 inches

# Gallery Guide

## Mark Messersmith

*Summer Solstice Morning*, 2007  
oil on canvas  
84 x 72 inches

*Strange Matters*, 2007  
oil on canvas  
84 x 72 inches

*Moonlight on the Wacissa*, 2007  
oil on canvas  
82 x 67 inches

*Vespertine Sacrifice*, 2006  
oil on canvas  
80 x 72 inches

*Paradise of Sacrifice*, 2007  
oil on canvas  
84 x 72 inches

*Wolfish Nature*, 2007  
oil on canvas  
75 x 72 inches

*Southeraire*, 2001  
oil on canvas  
80 x 67 inches

*The Collectors*, 2007  
oil on canvas  
87 x 82 inches



# A Myster

Programs of the Gulf Coast Museum of Art are sponsored in part by the members, the Fine Arts Society, and the Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs through the Florida Arts Council.



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