

THE PACE GALLERY

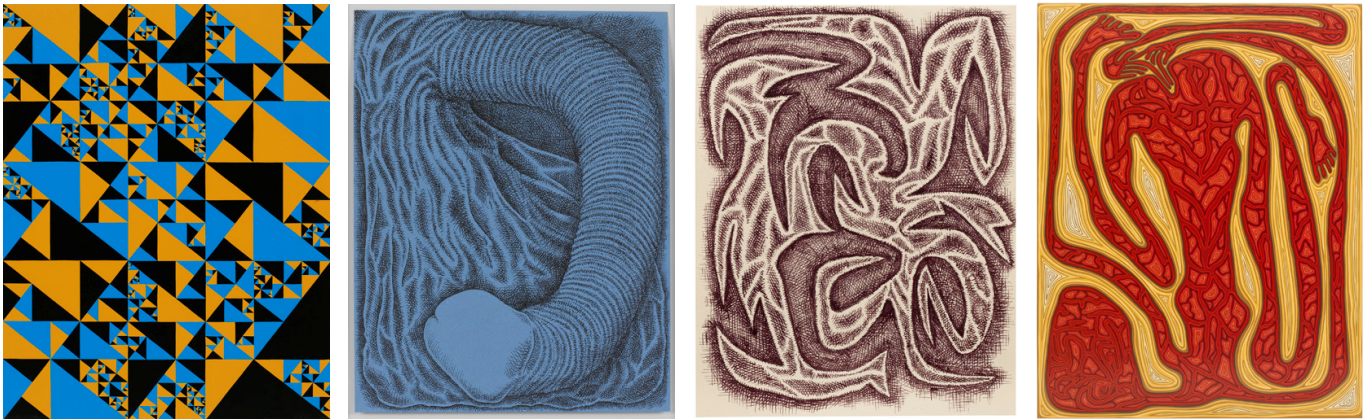
PRESS RELEASE

Press Contacts

Jennifer Joy / Sarah Goulet / Lauren Staub
jjoy / sgoulet / lstaub@thepacegallery.com
212.421.8987

NEW PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS, AND PRINTS BY JAMES SIENA

MARCH 25–APRIL 30, 2011



Untitled (iterative grid, second version), 2009, enamel on aluminum, 19-1/4" x 15-1/8"; *member, second version*, 2009, ink on paper 8" x 6-1/4"; *Angry Form*, 2009, ink on paper, 8" x 6-1/4"; *Flat Red Girl*, 2008, enamel on aluminum 19-1/4" x 15-1/8". All works © James Siena, courtesy The Pace Gallery

NEW YORK, MARCH 8, 2011—The Pace Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of paintings, drawings, and prints by James Siena, featuring new works created by the artist over the past three years. The exhibition focuses on the artist's methodology, from his use of repeated systems to figurative drawings that explore alternate means of creating an image. **The show will be on view at 510 West 25th Street from March 25 through April 30, 2011. The artist will be present at an opening reception on Thursday, March 24 from 6 to 8 p.m.**

James Siena is known for his unique process, creating intricate geometric abstractions driven by predetermined self-imposed sets of rules, or "visual algorithms." By establishing a basic unit and action and repeating it *ad infinitum*, Siena allows the unpredictability of his self-generated system to govern the final outcome of his complex picture plane, while still maintaining the presence of the artist's hand. The exhibition features twenty-three new glossy enamel on aluminum paintings, and thirty works on paper; together, the painstakingly crafted works demonstrate that even a small change to an initial variable produces vastly different end results.

Sequence I (2009), an unbound artist's proof for a limited edition, hand-printed, double-sided accordion book that stretches seventeen-feet long, will also be mounted in the gallery. The double-sided book follows a linear, geometric pattern as it coalesces and unwinds through thirty-six pages, black intertwining with red, and in reverse. The abstraction climaxes on two final frames (back and front), where the sequence reaches its full realization and the rule is maximized, having gone through seventeen "moves." The book, published by Flying Horse Editions, is scheduled to be released in April 2011. The artist created the original woodcut on which the book is based during a residency at the Atlantic Center for the Arts in 2009. A bound version will be viewable upon request.

As Siena's repeating patterns, sequences, curves, loops, and interlocking combs entwine and unwind, his abstractions become matrices for investigations into liminality and mutate into biomorphic forms. The artist identifies works such as *Pharynx Dentata* (2010), *Angry Form* (2009) and *Slab* (2008) as "biomorphic crossovers," transitioning into new ways of building an image, which expand upon the stylistic experiments that he introduced in his 2008 gallery show. The flattened primitive-like figures and heads, orifices with sharp teeth, and genitalia that Siena's abstractions give way to demonstrate what the artist calls the "interplay between materiality and life," allowing for the juxtaposition of "randomness against order." Unlike Siena's algorithmic abstractions, in these figurative (and often erotic) drawings pictorial composition is no longer determined by the will of the pre-established rule; rather, the artist defines the forms at the outset, asserting his own boundaries for the repeating elements and meticulous cross-hatching. Ultimately the expansive, outward growth of Siena's algorithmically-derived abstractions turns inwards and genesis becomes not only process, but subject. Siena once explained that "all work is an affirmation of being human, of being in this particular container [the body] with locomotion and holes for intake and output [...]; motif and variation are placeholders, in part for the architecture of my consciousness, and ideally they are on a steadily rolling feedback loop."

James Siena (b. 1957, Oceanside, California) received his BFA from Cornell University, New York in 1979. His work has been featured in over 110 solo and group exhibitions, including the 2004 Whitney Museum of American Art Biennial. In 2009 Siena received the Eissner Artist of the Year Award from the Cornell Council for the Arts, Cornell University. The artist was elected to the Board of Directors at Yaddo in 2008, where he completed an artist-in-residency program in 2004. His many honors also include the Award in Art from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York (2000); the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Biennial Competition Award (1999), and The New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Painting (1994), among others. Siena has lectured and held teaching positions at institutions throughout the United States, including most recently in New York at The Museum of Modern Art, in addition to Cooper Union School of Art, Cornell University, Pratt Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, and School of Visual Arts.

Siena's work is held in many prestigious public collections, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, among others.

James Siena lives and works in New York City. He has been represented by The Pace Gallery since 2004.

For more information about **James Siena**, please contact the Public Relations department of The Pace Gallery at 212.421.8987. For general inquiries, please email info2@thepacegallery.com; for reproduction requests, email reprorequest@thepacegallery.com.

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