

KAREN ANN MYERS

words: Stacy Huggins

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When I first met Karen Ann Myers, I was immediately taken with the passion and intensity this tiny lady emanated. Myers' unending pursuit of education and art only continues to strengthen her voice and her artwork.

Myers will unveil *Mouthful of Diamonds* this February, a technically drastic departure from her work that we've seen previously, usually based in organic, floral shapes, and flattened planes of color. This new work retains the focus on a single female figure in a room, but now features crisp geometric patterns, specifically diamonds, and a greater emphasis on perspective, rendering shapes with sharp, precise detail.

"I've gone back and forth between floral and geometric lately, but I'm also influenced by trends in fashion and art," she says. (Myers was even wearing a sweater with diamond patterning when we met for this interview!) The color effects she has been trying to achieve have been more dramatic in diamond shapes.

"The forms and composition, all lines in the pattern are also found in the human form...the two have a pretty serious conversation with each other," she says. "*Deco Diamonds*, with limbs that form triangles, the lighting creating dramatic shadows, and pattern chosen to mimic it all, that is probably the first time that happened."

"Successful art must have strong formal qualities AND strong conceptual background. Just as much as the work is about female sexuality and power, it's also about what the color blue looks like next to the color green," says



Myers. She wants the viewer to be both aesthetically pleased and psychologically moved by her portrayals of women.

The women are her friends, colleagues, peers, family. She views each painting as an autobiographical, psychological self-portrait; each individual Myers paints has helped to shape her personality, define a little bit of who she is.

She has high standards for those people. "The people that I most admire are making an impact. Everybody has an obligation to make a contribution to their community...it's really important," she says. Myers is a full time painter, assistant director of the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art, adjunct professor at College of Charleston, and printmaking instructor at Redux Contemporary Art Center. I'd say that Karen Ann Myers is certainly doing her part to make a contribution.