

EXHIBITION NEWSLETTER

*Pulse*

*Recent drawings by Filomena Coppola*

*Wednesday 29th May to Saturday 22 June 2002*

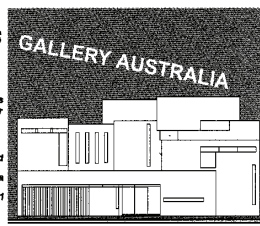
SMYRNIOS

GALLERY AUSTRALIA

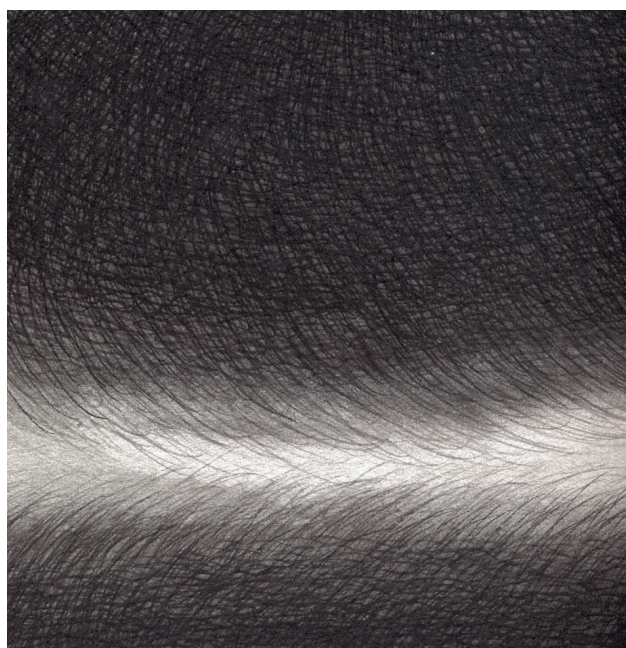
The Smyrnios  
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c o p p o l a



*Detail, Pulse  
Ink on paper  
12 panels, 30h x 30w cm each  
2001*

**Filomena Coppola**  
***Pulse***

In *Pulse* the title for this solo exhibition of Filomena Coppola's recent work, large-scale, figurative coloured pastels are presented alongside intricate black and white abstract drawings. Although the drawings and pastels may at first seem very different in character, they are intimately connected. The shadowy lines that weave their way through the pastels emerge again as loops within the black and white compositions. The wrapped forms in the pastels are echoed in the ovoid forms of the drawings.

But the connections between these works lie beyond these literal, visual associations. Ultimately, both pastels and drawings are united by a common concern with the 'seductive surface'. Inspired in part by the dynamic, evocative drapery of Bernini's figures and the sheer physicality of Richard Serra's sculptures, Coppola's recent works investigate the way in which artworks can draw in the viewer to physically engage in the work. The viewer is lured in by the desire to touch, to pry, to feel, to stroke, to slit apart the strands and expose what lies beyond, to explore what lies betwixt and between the shimmering forms.

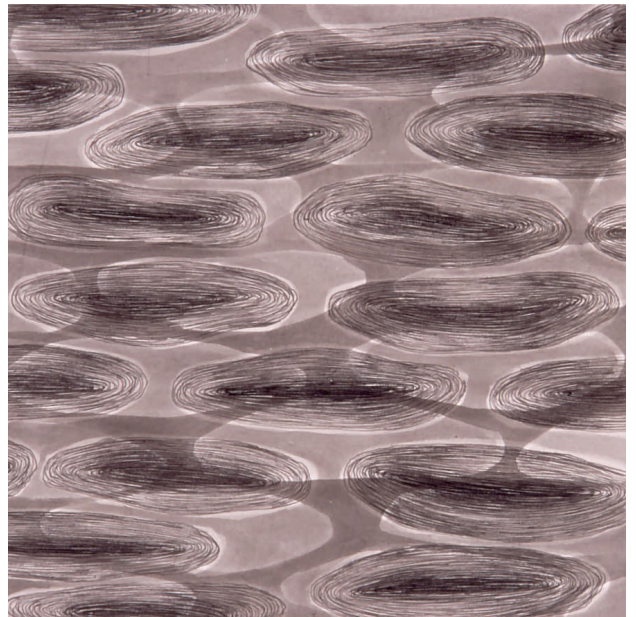
Ambiguous anthropomorphic associations within the works add to their seductive appeal. So too does their association with cloth and textile. In the title piece *Pulse* for example, each drawing is reminiscent of hair under which skin lies tender and exposed, so sensuous you wish to stroke the surface. At the same time the drawings within the series build up a deep woven surface of intersecting links laid upon layers of wash reminiscent of fine, tactile cloth.

Coppola's work, though, cannot be fully appreciated on this microcosmic level. A step backwards from the Pulse series and an utterly different experience of the work unfolds as a single drawing's unique identity merely becomes an element within the greater whole of the twelve-part composition. It is this dynamic tension between the macrocosm and the microcosm and experimentation with opposites juxtaposed that gives Coppola's work such pulsing life.

A brilliant energy is generated through the dynamic oppositions between dark/light, part/whole and microcosm/macrocosm both within and between the works. Vertical and horizontal forms pull against each other. Forms shimmer between two and three dimensions. Restless shapes seem to vibrate with movement. Rippling shadows, floating forms and dynamic colour combinations create an energised surface. All is in a constant flux and perpetual motion.

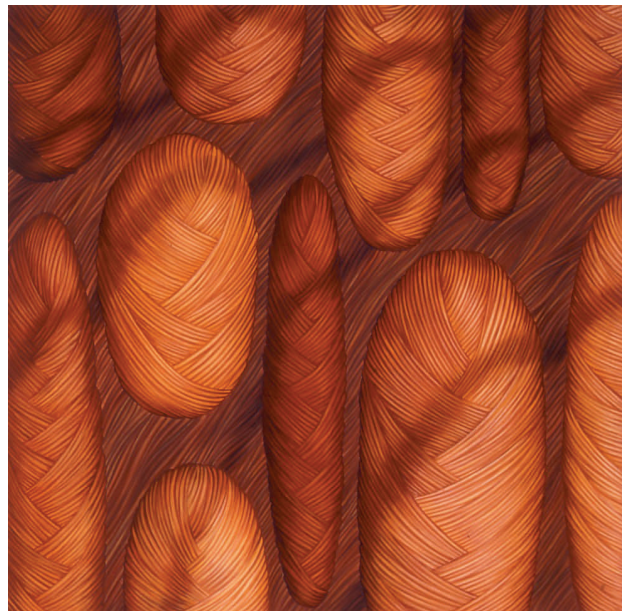
The works within this exhibition reveal themselves over time drawing upon an infinite number of combinations between forms, rich contrasting textures, shapes and surfaces.

**Sarah Scott  
Melbourne 2002**



*Striations II*  
Ink on paper  
30h x 30w cm each  
2002

*Bound*  
Pastel on paper  
108h x 108w cm each  
2001



#### **Acknowledgements.**

The artist would gratefully like to acknowledge the assistance of the Ian Potter Foundation.

Also, to the many people who have assisted me during the last year, Louise Tomlinson - for taking the spider outside and letting me turn the hallway into a makeshift studio, Martin Fortune - the best chauffeur in town, Geoff Ricardo - for his "exclusiveness", Peter Lancaster, Sarah Scott, Dick Bett and every one on Level 5, 11 Queens Road and especially to Janine Amenta - world's best researcher and Carl Davis for his unending support. And of course, to Margaret Taylor and Tina Smyrniotis.