

ALL FIRED UP

Galerie SoNo showcases work of Cy



"Waterfall"



"Reaching"



"In the Light"

By Abby Luby

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Cynthia Packard's paintings have a certain "whoosh." The work exhales a brash emotion that radiates off the canvas, reverberating from the artist's touch. Packard's work, which can be seen in her solo show at Galerie Sono in South Norwalk, is bold and reckless, with a dark recoiling underside.

These works — all created in 2006 — fold into stormy, abstract squalls. They are created on boards, not canvases, on which Packard interjects tar, wax, shellac and plaster with a blow torch. The overall effect is the blending and congealing of some textures while others erupt to the surface.

ing to the floor while the other is tucked beneath in a plausible resting position. Light emanating from the center suspends perspective with flowers and nude hovering over planes of muted colors.

Similar, long-stemmed white flowers in "Blossoming" are vibrant blooms on two splayed branches bleeding off either side of the canvas. Up close, the flowers are playful white dabs rising from a monotoned background of tannish-pink. Brooding beneath are wide, dark, watery brush strokes that sashay down to the bottom.

The child in "Reaching" is pressed forward by a startling white swath into a mired storm of exploding browns, maroons, yellows and greens. Her extended arm stretches to a swirl of color conjured from a gust of painterly wind, a parallel universe of colliding light and color. Drips of white, green and taupe trail in opposite direction of the reach, creating a catapult-



"Blossoming"

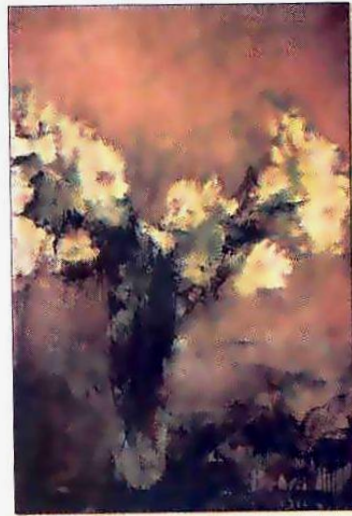
into stormy, abstract squalls. They are created on boards, not canvases, on which Packard interjects tar, wax, shellac and plaster with a blow torch. The overall effect is the blending and congealing of some textures while others erupt to the surface.

This duality is in "Girl With Flowers," a large work of thick, dark and light browns with a female nude frozen near a plume of white flowers that are alternately splashing onto the surface. The woman's face is featureless — as are all Packard's human forms — with a leg extend-

ing brows, maroon, yellow and greens. Her extended arm stretches to a swirl of color conjured from a gust of painterly wind, a parallel universe of colliding light and color. Drips of white, green and taupe trail in opposite direction of the reach, creating a catapulting tension. The gesture is one of futility; the inability to grab the unobtainable.

That Packard uses recognizable forms sometimes seems unnecessary. Certainly the almost ominous, contemplative nature of the women figures are reflected by dark, moody and abstract elements. Extrapolating the figures, the bold movement of colors and textures stand alone as mysteriously cerebral. For example, the bowl of fruit in "Apples" seems arbitrary, distracting, stuck in for familiarity. What's happening around it is much more interesting: A vague, red figure is woven into the painterly fabric of crusty browns and yellows with grooved, abraded marks. The forms here are secondary and seem to enter a curious molecular disruption, unveiled in the ether. Also, in "Clay Bowl," it's the bowl that momentarily draws the eye, then darts to a blended atmosphere of shimmering whites, burnt oranges and golds.

In "Waterfall" a woman integrates with the downward thrust of the water. You almost miss her, but she does register. Flesh tones



Contributed photos

"Blossoming"

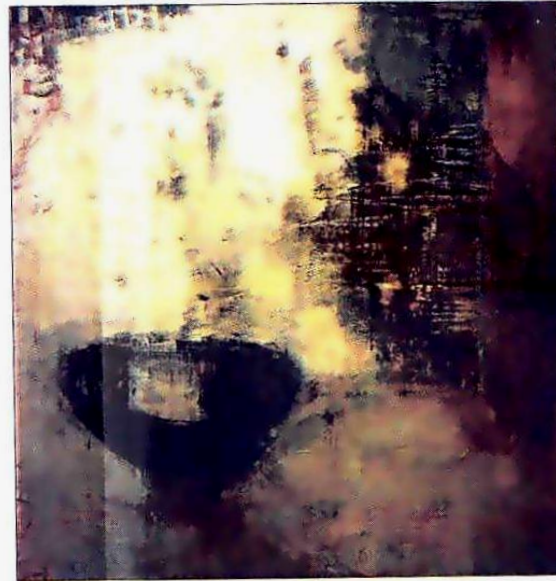
Please see **PACKARD**, Page D9



"Dance"



"Girl With Flowers"



"Blue Dawn"



"Angel"

Packard

■ Continued from Page D3

are reflected in the gray steely water, bordered by aquas and tawny yellows. Although the woman is key, the painterly textures and energetic movement around her are singularly compelling.

"Angel," the large rectangular work anchoring the show at the far end of the gallery, commands a pull-back view. Bursting, energetic splatters of orange and yellow plume out in front of the torso of a large androgynous form. Caked, ridged and colorful, the corpuscular auras zip around the placid form.

But there is human movement in "Dance," where three young girls are romping in a field of yellow. Rendered in a soft-focus haze, the muted pinks and blues of the children's dress have an impressionistic feel. Other paintings with children in this show are quietly endearing.

That Packard exorcises her anomie and deeper mood through her work is surprisingly not daunting because it is so accessible. The show is beautifully displayed in Sono's open, airy gallery and complements the work.

"That Packard exorcises her anomie and deeper mood through her work is surprisingly not daunting because it is so accessible."

Cynthia Packard's solo show runs through Nov. 26 at Galerie Sono, 135 Washington St., South Norwalk. Gallery hours are Tuesday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Friday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; and Sunday, noon-5 p.m. 831-8332 or www.sonogalerie.com.