

Curatorial statement excerpt, from the 2011 exhibition “Expand and Conflate” at the General Electric Cultural Fine Art Gallery, Stamford CT, courtesy Picture That LLC.

With a particular focus on the cultures of the eastern Asian continent, the artists selected for “Expand and Conflate” explore visual culture, tradition, and globalization through color and form to arrive at conclusions about their own changing environments. Against a backdrop of classical Asian art history—from scrolls of calligraphy, to Buddhist and Taoist narrative paintings, to the numerous iterations of China’s misty sacred mountains—these artists borrow from traditional aesthetics to create new work in a way that in itself is a metaphor for the global information exchange at play in our world today.

The paintings of Deanna Lee present [an] opportunity for interpretation when we take into consideration specifically the line quality of her pieces. In one sense, the thick, black strokes that define Lee’s artistic signature in this show very strongly reference the calligraphic strokes of traditional Chinese scrolls and painting. In a separate context, however, they could very well be the line work yielded from a linoleum-cut print, both results being defined by an uneven thinning and thickening line that is more natural and amorphous than it is straight and rigid. The similar properties of a calligraphic line, the line produced by a linoleum-cut print and Lee’s painted line create a relational hierarchy in which understanding the physical form of a shape is the priority and categorical understanding of the shape is secondary. Only after we come to understand the shape in front of us—Circle? Square? Amorphous?—are we then encouraged to surmise an ancillary interpretation of what the shape could mean.