

## CHARLOTTE SMITH

By Todd Camplin

Another great show at the Galveston Art Center compels me to encourage you to make the drive down. The beach is nice, but I would first go see Charlotte Smith's painting show titled "dot, dot, dot." Few artists take such a simple concept as the "dot" and make such a wide series of work. The dots sometimes are used to create sculptural lines that change colors and shape. I often picture her work growing out of the ground and she harvests them for her paintings. In a short interview by Dallas Arts Revue, Charlotte Smith describes using squirts of paint that dry and are then reapplied and dried again until little towers are built on the surface of her work. This way you get to see many colors and the paint is so piled up that little shadows are cast by the paint. What I also find interesting about the work in this show is Smith seems to have taken the very dots she builds up and then squishes them into flat dots. Now, I know this is not possible, but I like how this work leads me to imagine this idea. The dots are layered like never before. Paint seems to jell and float on more layers of dots. You feel yourself almost swimming in these abstract organic shapes. I am reminded of a chemistry class experiment where we created layers of oils over water. The sensation of motion comes from the background, which seems to be flowing in a downward motion toward the floor. Though flatter than Smith's sculptural paintings, these works still have a topographical map look that still maintains powerful dimensionality. The paintings also remind me of galactic maps of stars. Large clusters of dots with smaller dots give a wide variety of circles. The overall effect leaves a really interesting surface, which leads me to see how Smith is still influenced by her former UNT professor Vincent Falsetta. I wish I could see a show of their works together; now that would be something to behold.

Galveston Art Center will be showing "dot, dot, dot," until February 26th. Another out of town opportunity is at "Obsessive Worlds," show at the Art Museum of Southeast Texas in Beaumont. Charlotte Smith creates wonderful paintings and if you get a chance, you must see her sculpture/paintings. The little towers of paint seem so delicate and beautiful, but these dot paintings also have so much charm.