

ANNIE KAMMERER BUTRUS



FALLEN FRUIT

This series of paintings is based on interviews and oral stories collected from Alabama farmers with a connection to land at the edges of spreading suburban development, a project that extends prior meditations on changes in the contemporary Alabama landscape.

The paintings show abstracted fruit falling from branches above or caught mid-flight with a massing of fruit resting on the ground, uncollected and left to rot. The uncollected fruit symbolizes the psychological and emotional impact on aging farmers posed by current agricultural practices. The characteristics of landscape painting are either intentionally incorporated--trees, their fruit, and ground are depicted--or deliberately excluded-- horizon lines are absent, thereby obscuring the placement of the viewer and relating to the Japanese Ukiyo-e floating world pictures. Episodes of negative space punctuate the pictures, describing void and loss, and alternatively, light and hope.

A prior series of work, *Urban Density Series*, explored aerial views and dealt with sprawl and the relentless expansion of the city/suburb boundaries of Birmingham, Montgomery, Tuscaloosa and Dothan. The struggle between nature and progress was exaggerated by using silhouette forms of houses and "nature" in odd juxtapositions. Fallen Fruit stands on the other side of that boundary of metropolitan expansion and comes back to earth to contemplate personal experience of encroachment, loss, and change relating to land.