

MARYLYN DINTENFASS, Babcock Galleries

In this selection of more than 50 paintings and works on paper (all 2009), temptingly titled "Good & Plenty Juicy," Marylyn Dintenfass made the most of her materials to elicit candy's contradictory connotations--- in her words, "enticing yet forbidden... beautiful but dangerous."

Dintenfass uses luscious colors, repetitive forms, and a gestural intensity that combines Abstract Expressionism and Pop art. But the way she paints is entirely her own. She creates unlikely textures and translucent, washy layers that suggest stickiness and fruitiness of the confections. Sometimes her surfaces resemble colored glass, or light beaming through hard-candy discs.

The primary shape in these works is a large elliptical doughnut, or cell-like form, usually rendered in a single soft, thick brushstroke. In a picture like Good & Plenty Fruity, the artist superimposes one layer of cells over another, creating a kind of scrim, so that the forms appear to be in motion, fading away. The effect calls to mind sugar pulsing through the bloodstream.

Sometimes Dintenfass lets the paint bleed a little and then dry, forming a crispy layer. Occasionally she uses bits of glitter in the paint; other times, as in Bit-O-Honey Bite, she creates a waffle effect. Her tactile effects go a long way toward conjuring candy's crunch and gooeyness.

The title work of the show is a portfolio of 15 works on paper, each 36 inches square, arranged on a grid. Here, Dintenfass mixes the cell forms with other motifs, like rows of thick dots or wavy lines.

The artist's hand is always visible in the brushstrokes and gestures of these paintings. The result is seductive and intense—not unlike the candy she pictures.