For Immediate Release

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Lily Kuonen:
PLAYNTINGSSGNITNALP

Flagler College and the Crisp-Ellert Art Museum are pleased to announce a forthcoming exhibition of recent work by Jacksonville-based artist Lily Kuonen. The exhibition, entitled PLAYNTINGSSGNITNALP, opens to the public with a reception on Friday, May 16, from 6 to 9pm and will continue through June 20. The artist will give an informal artist talk at 5pm on May 16, prior to the reception.

Kuonen upends conventional notions of painting by synthesizing canvas, gesso, paint with additional forms and actions (PLAY + PAINTING). Her body of work occupies an intermediary space, "where wood, canvas, paint, and all the scraps and tools of the studio can combine to explore beyond categorical structures."

She embraces a variety of approaches that include drawing and text, the manipulation of found objects in her studio, a subtle punching technique that she uses on walls and hand-made paper. However, Kuonen is never far from the fundamental materials of painting. A mirror with a thick layer of sawdust (perhaps made of ground up stretcher bar) on the floor, dissected by a glass wall, inscribed with the words “THOUGH DIVIDED PART OF THE ORIGINAL STILL REMAINS,” (Though Divided, 2014). Two bare, stretched canvasses suspended by grids of paint coated canvas thread, each painstakingly freed from the whole cloth (Two Have, 2013). Kuonen relies on a standard language of form, text, and familiar material, the materials of painting, in particular, in a manner that averts their customary hierarchical relationships, equalizing them in the process.

With this as a point of departure, Kuonen will offer both past and recent works that together form an idea of lineage in her studio practice. This is a process in which the artist re-uses and repurposes materials, sometimes-cannibalizing entire pieces to envision new ones. This continuous cycle of discovery and rediscovery results in works that are open-ended in nature, which in turn allow greater room for interaction and multiple interpretations.

A limited edition publication will be for sale, designed and produced by independent curator Staci Bu Shea, will accompany the exhibition. Each book will include individualized artist renderings, as well as contributions by Staci Bu Shea and Julie Dickover and a silk-screen collaborative cover between the artist and Tony Rodrigues.

Lily Kuonen received her M.F.A. in Painting from Savannah College of Art and Design and her B.F.A. from the University of Central Arkansas. Solo exhibitions of her work have been on view at venues including Bogard Storefront, Charleston, SC; Fahm Gallery, Savannah, GA; and Historic Arkansas Museum, Little Rock, AR. Her work has been exhibited in numerous group exhibitions including; McCormick Gallery, TX; Alexander Brest Gallery, FL; BOCA Museum of Art, FL; The Arlington Arts Center, VA; The Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens, FL; and Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art, SC, amongst others. In addition to receiving numerous grants, most recently the Individual Artist Grant (Art Ventures Grant) from The Community Foundation for Northeast
Florida (2013) and an artist residency from the Vermont Studio Center (2011), she is a regular contributor to regional publications including BURNAWAY Magazine in Atlanta, GA. Kuonen lives and works in Jacksonville, Florida, where she is Assistant Professor of Foundations at Jacksonville University.

This exhibition was funded in part by the Individual Artist Grant (Art Ventures Grant) from The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida.

For further information on the exhibition and related programs, please visit the website at www.flagler.edu/crispellert, or contact Julie Dickover at 904-826-8530 or crispellert@flagler.edu. The museum’s hours during hours are Monday through Friday, 10 am to 4pm, and Saturday, 12 to 4pm.