



"IN THE BEGINNING", 2018, OIL ON CANVAS, 30 X 33 INCHES



Katy Mixon: Digging Deep

At first glance, Katy Mixon's oil-on-panel, *In the Beginning*, part of GreenHill's current *NC Women Abstract Painters*, resembles a mottled center of a sunflower, where its seeds are contained. But splotches of yellow in a lighter shade and the painting's title are obvious allusions to the sun and the act of creating.

Mixon, who trained at Davidson College, UNC-Chapel Hill and The School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, draws on the agricultural surroundings of her childhood. "My family is in farming," says the South Carolina native. "It's hard not to pay attention to the future of the planet." And the similarities of planting and harvesting with creating works of art. Keenly aware of what Mixon calls a "studio eco system," she explains how "one painting feeds into another."

The themes of *In the Beginning*, echo in others such as *Cloud Seed*, and reveal quite literally, more depth than meets the eye. That mottled look of the "sunflower" is not just paint applied to a flat surface, but rather layers applied and then carved out, and re-applied with paint chips. Mixon is replicating the act of tilling the soil — and asking the viewer to consider the vagaries of the natural world. Sunlight helps plants — such as sunflowers — grow. "But how do you relate to a heat wave?" the artist posits. Decide for yourself by taking a gander at Mixon's works and those of four other artists on view through April 11. — Nancy Oakley **OH**

Info: greenhillnc.org