



LILIAN GARCIA-ROIG



Rather than finding order by simplifying, I desire to grow comfortable with complexity. I want the viewer to feel the tension of a chaotic representation, harnessed by a recognizable formal coherence. In contrast to minimalism, I adhere to a “maximalist” aesthetic. I want my respect for illusionistic representation, my love of the materiality of paint, and my passion for intensity of process to intersect in one complex, cohesive image.

The artist wishes to acknowledge generous support from the MacDowell Colony during her residency in fall 2006 when the New Hampshire paintings were made. Special thanks to all the people at the MacDowell Colony who helped make my residency a truly inspirational month of freedom with 450 acres of full-blown northeastern autumn.

front cover:

Hemlock Portrait: Profile (WA) 2005

oil on canvas
48 x 36 inches

above:

Lilian Garcia-Roig painting at the MacDowell Colony, Peterborough, New Hampshire, October 2006.

Photograph credit: Joanna E. Morrissey

LILIAN GARCIA-ROIG

Painted Woods

2007

Essay by

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When Lilian Garcia-Roig writes about her own work, she often refers to this quote from Paul Cezanne:

I cannot attain the intensity that is unfolded before my senses.

Like Cezanne, Garcia-Roig is a *plein air* painter, an artist who works directly from nature. It is a tradition that has been in steady decline since Cezanne, and today is thought the domain of Sunday painters or those artists who still erect an easel along the bank of the Seine and probably receive a stipend from the French Department of Tourism. But Garcia-Roig embraces this seemingly outmoded approach for a contemporary investigation of landscape and the nature of paint.

Cezanne set up his easel in Provence with a view toward Mont Sainte-Victoire. The intensity he sought to convey was the beauty of the south of France. Garcia-Roig positions herself in locations much less promising from a traditional point of view. She has gone to the end of the field where the woods begin, or possibly she has stepped just off the side of the road. Perhaps she has hiked a ways into the wild, transporting her paints, easel, and, for this sort of project, awkwardly large canvases of either 48" x 36" or 60" x 48". But "wild" seems too grand a concept for her locations. She has gone into the brush. She is surrounded, often, by what is little more than scrub. In any event, she is off the path and nature in all its unruliness has closed in around her.

And yet you never feel lost in the woods with these paintings. You always have a sense of where you are, although not necessarily in terms of geography. Garcia-Roig has recently shown paintings executed at the base of the Cascades in Washington, on the grounds of The MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire, and in Florida where she currently resides. The occasional palm tree distinguishes the Florida paintings, and possibly someone immersed in the regions could distinguish from these limited views the Pacific Northwest from New England, but Garcia-Roig's sense of place is specific to the few feet surrounding her easel and therefore only by default to the region.

Within those few dozen feet of territory she becomes very specific. Anyone who knows trees or plants in general will identify the life that crowds her canvas. For the rest of us, her titles often help by identifying species – blue hemlock, alder wood, devil's club, maple, and so forth. She shows mature growth encrusted with heavy bark, dead stumps, new sprouts from old growth, vines, and underbrush. At times she puts us in a sort of clearing or offers a hint of what might be a path. There is often the barest glimpse of sky through the upper branches, and in the Florida paintings water becomes an important element. This is nature at a level that is accessible to us all, but that we often pass by on the way to somewhere else, either wilder and grander or more settled.

Garcia-Roig scouts her locations and carefully prepares for what will be a one or possibly two-day painting session. She arrives with a gessoed canvas and oil paints premixed for the colors she has found

on her exploratory trips, as well as a large palette for mixing color on the spot. She mixes her greens with varying amounts of blue, yellow and gray. Her browns contain red and gray and may turn almost purple. Unlike landscape painters who make repeated trips to capture a particular moment of light and shadow, Garcia-Roig arrives expecting to spend the day, and her canvases record the passing of light across the scene she has chosen. This approach allows her to focus on different elements of the scene as they come to her attention in different light. The result is subtly different from a more traditional approach, but viewers re-enact it as they move from one element in the painting to another with equal attention and an ongoing sense of discovery.

Garcia-Roig describes her approach as “maximalism,” doing more with more. Along with her premixed colors, she brings to each sitting an arsenal of techniques for getting her paint onto the canvas. Examine a painting and you can see that she has used a variety of brush sizes, along with her fingers, the brush handles, and the tubes of paint themselves. Each tool suits what it depicts. The bark of a fully grown tree has been brushed and manipulated by hand. Long smeared strokes create vines and smaller branches. Ferns arise from a series of quick, short strokes, and long, deliberate strokes with a heavily loaded brush make each spiny frond of a palmetto. In one painting, a birch tree is depicted by a brushed trunk of whitened brown with darker bars of paint to depict the peeling bark. Elsewhere, another birch is a strip of bare canvas with splotches of black. Each technique produces a recognizable image. Although she never fully abandons representation, she squeezes paint directly from her tubes and creates tangles of color and gesture that both depict dense growth and work as pure gestural abstraction. There can be a prodigious build-up of paint, but in almost every work what we read first as the deepest space turns out to be brief passages of bare canvas.

Her *plein air* technique connects her to the Impressionist generation, who have been described as the last painters to sit rapt before nature. Garcia-Roig is not conveying awe. I think her attitude, with its blend of fascination, respect, and analysis, is something more like passionate enjoyment. She has determined to show us that these commonplace scenes are anything but commonplace, and, as her quote from Cezanne implies, she is somewhat humbled by the task, but she finds great joy in the process. She invites us to wander off the path of traditional landscape, and she replaces vistas and grand views with snarled vines and tangled undergrowth. These paintings do not transport us anywhere other than their own marvelous surfaces where we find the same unexpected beauty that Garcia-Roig finds in the woods.

Charles Dee Mitchell
Freelance writer based in Dallas

right:

Devil's Club Highlight (WA) 2006
oil on canvas
60 x 48 inches

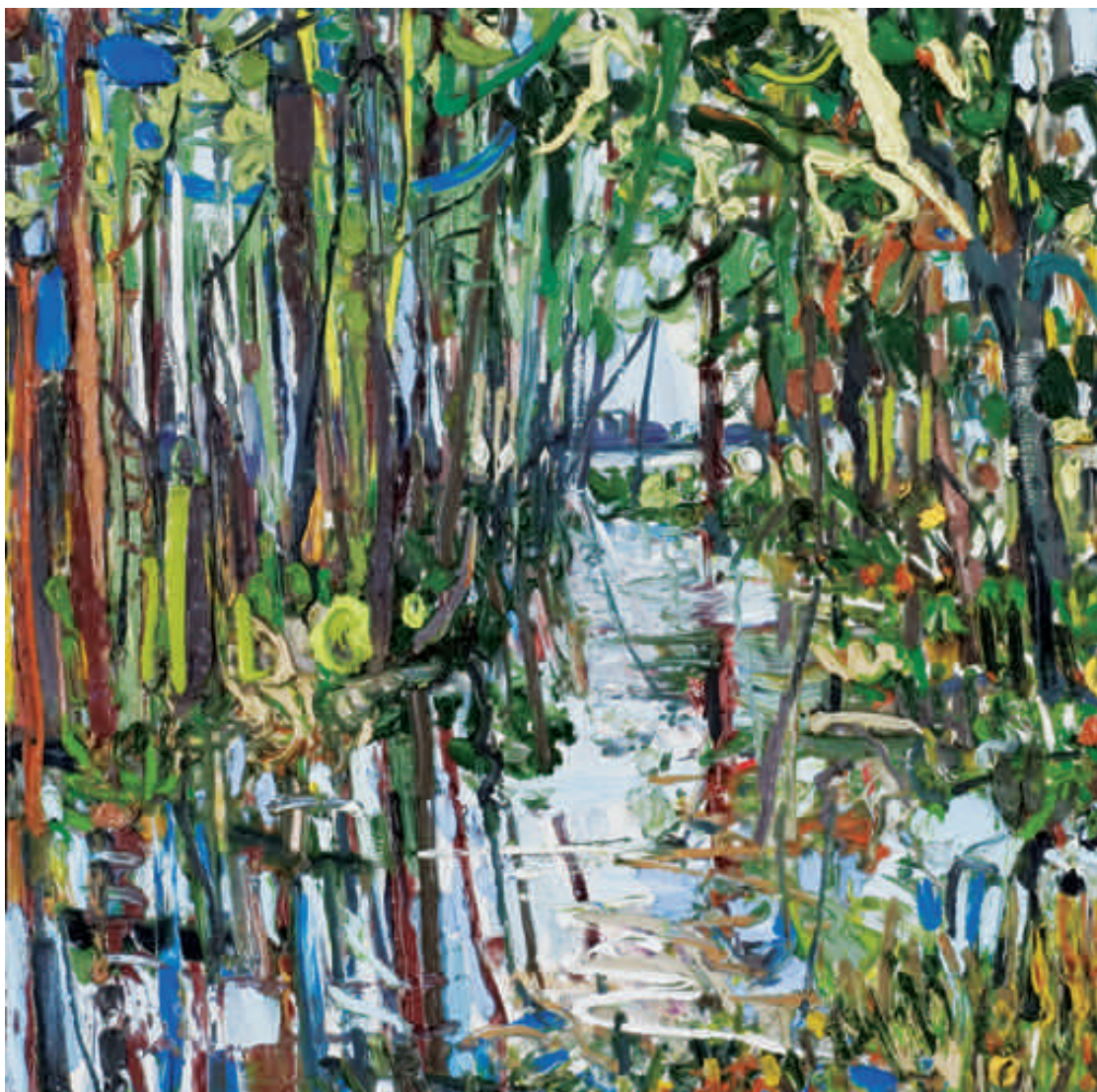




Installation photograph:
Lilian Garcia-Roig: Thick Brush Painting Installation,
The McKinney Avenue Contemporary, Dallas, Texas,
Nov. 4 – Dec. 16, 2006
Photograph credit: Fernando Rojas



These paintings were made directly from life in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains of Washington State in the July months of 2004 - 2006. In this exhibition, my individually conceived paintings were installed as one large closely hung and formally connected work to create a sense of compelling overwhelmingness in the viewer. All in all, I want the viewer to come away believing that more information, more square footage, more complexity, more time, more abstraction, more representation, more paint, et cetera, even in a single image, can add up to a more powerful and rewarding visual experience. I believe that one can do more with more and I hope to show how relevant and exciting on-site landscape can be in the world of contemporary painting.



By creating the illusion of recognizable trees, I draw the viewers into what they first perceive will be a conventional space. Up close, however, the images break down; the lush, gestural paint marks and occasional patches of raw canvas help to reinforce the two-dimensional character of abstract painting as an activity as much as an end product.

above:

Wetland Creek, St. Marks (FL) 2006

oil on canvas

30 x 30 inches

right:

Charred Palms (FL) 2005

oil on canvas

60 x 48 inches





Lines and areas of color are best when they refer not only to literal shadows, highlights and physical edges, but also stand as signs of force and displacement within the idiom of the painting's formal structure. All this results in a perceptual tension in the work in which the qualities of landscape are rolled back into the qualities of paint.

above:

Fall Squared (NH) 2006

oil on canvas
48 x 48 inches

right:

Gray Column Cathedral (NH) 2006

oil on canvas
48 x 36 inches



LILIAN GARCIA-ROIG

Born: 1966, Havana, Cuba

Citizenship: United States

Education:

1990 M.F.A., University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
1988 B.F.A., Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

2007 *Painted Woods*, Valley House Gallery, Dallas, TX (catalogue)
2006 *Lilian Garcia-Roig: Thick Brush Painting Installation*, New Works Space, The McKinney Avenue Contemporary, Dallas, TX
2006 *Lilian Garcia-Roig: A Visual Transculturation*, International Center Gallery, Tallahassee, FL
2004 *Lilian Garcia Roig: An Overview*, Capital Rotunda Gallery, Tallahassee, FL
2004 *Lilian Garcia-Roig: Sight on Site*, Valley House Gallery, Dallas, TX
2002 *Abstracted Landscapes: Two Views: Lilian Garcia-Roig*, City Hall Gallery, Tallahassee, FL
1999 *Lilian Garcia-Roig: Arranging Paint and Flowers*, Valley House Gallery, Dallas, TX
1999 *Lilian Garcia-Roig: Seeing & Painting*, Inaugural Exhibit, San Angelo Museum of Art, San Angelo, TX
1997 *Lilian Garcia-Roig: Recent Paintings*, Valley House Gallery, Dallas, TX
1995 *Lilian Garcia-Roig: Of Paint and Land* (Selected paintings from 1991-1995), The Jung Center, Houston, TX, curated by Michael Collins
1995 *Full Spectacle of Colors*, Galeria Sin Fronteras, Austin, TX
1994 *Lilian Garcia-Roig: On Site*, Valley House Gallery, Dallas, TX
1993 *Invited Artist: Monoprints*, Flatbed Gallery, Austin, TX
1992 *LandEscapes*, Galeria Sin Fronteras, Austin, TX
1990 *Maine Series*, Lowell Collins Gallery, Houston, TX
1988 *Hispanic Undercurrents*, Intercultural Resource Center, Dallas, TX
1988 *Recent Works*, Extremes Gallery, Dallas, TX

Selected Group Exhibitions:

2007 *More as More: Maximalist Tendencies in Contemporary American Painting*, Florida State University Museum of Art, Tallahassee, FL, curated by Tatiana Flores (catalogue)
2007 *Mysterious Clarity VII*, Albany Museum of Art, Albany, Georgia
2006 *Mysterious Clarity VI: Garcia-Roig, Messersmith, Burgraff*, Wynwood Art Complex, Miami, FL
2006 *Transitory Patterns: Florida Women Artists*, Art Center, Pensacola, FL; and Mary Brogan Museum of Art, Tallahassee, FL
2006 *Mysterious Clarity V*, Sam Houston State University Art Gallery, Huntsville, TX
2006 *FSU Faculty Exhibition*, FSU Museum of Art, FL (catalogue), also 2003, 2004, 2005
2006 *Annual International*, University of Texas at Tyler, TX, juror: Andrea Karnes
2006 *underCURRENT/overVIEW 8*, Tampa Museum of Art, Tampa, FL, curated by Jeffery Grove
2005 *Intense Landscapes* (three person show), Breston Museum Gallery, Jacksonville University, Jacksonville, FL
2005 *Mysterious Clarity III*, Okaloosa-Walton College Arts Center Gallery, Niceville, FL, curated by Karen Valdez
2005 *Transitory Patterns: Florida Women Artists*, Ft. Lauderdale Museum of Art, Ft. Lauderdale, FL; and Deland Museum of Art, FL
2005 *Bowery Gallery National Competition*, New York, NY, juror: Bill Jensen

2005 *Viridian Artists Sixteenth National Juried Exhibition*, New York, NY, juror: Robert Rosenblum
2005 *Florida Focus: Northern Tropics*, Gulf Coast Museum of Art, Clearwater, FL, curated by Rena Blades
2005 *Cintas Fellowships in the Visual Arts Finalists*, The Americas Society Art Gallery, New York, NY, curated by Gabriela Rangel
2005 *Valley House Gallery Exhibition*, Masur Museum, Monroe, LA
2004 *Florida by Florida Artists*, LeMoyné Art Foundation, Center for the Visual Arts, Tallahassee, FL, curated by Sam Fleeger
2004 *50th Anniversary*, Valley House Gallery, Dallas, TX (catalogue)
2004 *Rogue Nations: Cuban and Chinese Artist*, MACLA, San Jose, CA, curated by TONEL (Antonio E. Fernandez)
2004 *Mysterious Clarity II*, Valdosta State University Gallery, Valdosta, GA, curated by Julie Bowland
2004 *Mysterious Clarity (Garcia-Roig, Messersmith and Burgraff)*, 62I Gallery, Tallahassee, FL
2004 *Transitory Patterns: Florida Women Artists*, Women's Museum, Washington D.C., curated by Joyce Swartz (catalogue)
2003 *Coronado Studios Series Tenth Anniversary Exhibition*, Mexic-Arte Museum, Austin, TX
2003 *American Additions*, Havana, Cuba, curated by Cynthia Hollis
2002 *Tejano Artists: Prints from Coronado Studios*, O'Kane Gallery, Houston, TX
2002 *Time/Frame*, Blanton Museum of Art, University of Texas at Austin, curated by Annette Carozzi (catalogue)
2002 *Flora: Art & Ecology in Florida*, Mary Brogan Museum of Arts, Tallahassee, FL, curated by Cynthia Hollis (catalogue)
2001 *Sussman Memorial Exhibit*, Worth-Ryder Gallery, Berkeley, CA
2000 *The Appropriated Image*, Rudolf Projects, Houston, TX
2000 *62nd Annual U.T. Faculty Show*, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, TX, also in 1999
1999 *New Visions: Introductions '99*, Pro Arts Gallery, Oakland, CA
1999 *Invited Artist ('99)*, Ludwig Foundation of Cuba, Havana, Cuba
1999 *Annual Juried Show*, Women and Their Work Gallery, Austin, TX, juror: Suzanne Weaver
1998 *Naturaleza Evocativa* (three person show), Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, San Antonio, TX, curated by Kathy Vargas
1998 *New Works*, Women & Their Work Gallery, Austin, TX, curated by Lynn Herbert
1998 *Fresh Paint*, Rudolph-Poissant Gallery, Houston, TX
1998 *Drawing: The Basis for all Arts*, Helms Fine Arts Center, Austin, TX
1998 *60th Annual U.T. Faculty Show*, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, TX (catalogue)
1998 *Shared Vision: Texas Artists Then and Now*, Arlington Museum of Art, Arlington, TX, curated by Murray Smither
1998 *A Showbegan Decade*, David Beitzel Gallery, New York, NY
1997 *A Natural Element* (regional invitational), Rudolph-Poissant Gallery, Houston, TX
1997 *Texas Wonders* (invitational), Valley House Gallery, Dallas, TX
1997 *59th Annual U.T. Faculty Exhibition*, Huntington Art Gallery, Austin, TX, also in 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996
1997 *Landscapes: Changing Perspectives of the Western Eye*, El Paso Museum of Art, El Paso, TX
1997 *Paper Dreams Show*, McAllen International Museum, McAllen, TX
1997 *Hecho en Tejas*, Galeria Otra Vez, Los Angeles, CA
1997 *Fresh Ink: A Historical and Contemporary Overview of Prints Produced in Austin Print Workshops*, Austin Museum of Art, Austin, TX, curated by Mark Smith (catalogue)
1996 *Juried Members' Show*, Women and Their Work Gallery, Austin, TX, juror: Annette Carozzi
1996 *The New Eden*, Slover McCuchean Gallery, Houston, TX
1996 *Tenth Anniversary Group Show*, Galeria Sin Fronteras, Austin, TX
1996 *Images of Nature V*, Martin Rathburn Gallery, San Antonio, TX
1996 *Six Contemporary Texas Artists*, Tyler Museum of Art, TX, curated by Wendell Ott

- 1996 *Twelfth Annual Festival de la Raza Invitational Monotype Workshop Exhibit: Border Identities*, Organized by El Programa Cultural de las Fronteras (Mexico) and Galeria Sin Fronteras (Texas), Touring Exhibition in Tijuana, Cd. Juarez, and Nuevo Laredo, Mexico also in 1994 and 1995.
- 1996 *Close to the Border VI* (biennial juried exhibition), New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM, juror: Thomas Sokolosky
- 1996 *With Respect to Painting*, 1203 Art Space, San Antonio, TX, curated by Roxi McCloskey and Mark Semmes
- 1995 *10th Annual December Competition*, The Lubbock Fine Arts Center, TX, juror: Jeffrey Moore
- 1995 *1995 Portfolio: Latino Artists from Texas*, Sam Coronado Studios, Austin, TX
- 1995 *Those Who Can Teach: U.T. Faculty Exhibit*, Meredith Long & Company, Houston, TX
- 1995 *Images of Nature III* (invitational), Martin-Rathburn Gallery, San Antonio, TX
- 1995 *Works on Paper*, Invitational Exhibition, Hahnemann Gallery, Philadelphia, PA
- 1994 *Transformations* (bi-annual invitational), Women and Their Work, Austin, TX, jurors: Advisory Council for Women and Their Work
- 1994 *Tenth Annual Juried Women's Art Exhibit: Latina Artists*, Guadalupe Cultural Art Center, San Antonio, TX, juror: Inverna Lockpez (Juror's Award)
- 1993 *New Directions '93*, Barrett House Galleries, Poughkeepsie, NY, juror: Adam Weinberg
- 1993 *Texas Biennial Exhibition*, Dallas Artists Research and Exhibition, Dallas, TX, jurors: Chris Cowden, Al Harris, Benito Huerta, Marti Mayo (catalogue)
- 1993 *National Competition*, First Street Gallery, New York, NY, juror: Janet Fish
- 1993 *Amarillo Competition*, Amarillo Art Center, TX, juror: Jim Edwards
- 1993 *ArtStravaganza*, Chattanooga, TN, juror: Michael G. Auping
- 1993 *Tri-State Plus '93*, Beaumont Art League, Beaumont, TX, juror: Janet Landay (First Prize)
- 1993 *New American Talent: The Ninth Exhibition*, Laguna Gloria Art Museum, Austin, TX, juror: Kerry Brougher (catalogue)
- 1993 *Chance Operations*, Mexic-Arte Museum, Austin, TX, juror and organizer: Jackie May (catalogue)
- 1993 *Expo '93*, 500 Exposition Gallery, Dallas, TX, juror: Dr. Annegreth Nil (Juror's Award)
- 1993 *Combined Talents: The Florida National 1993*, Florida State University Gallery & Museum, Tallahassee, FL, Jurors: faculty from FSU School of Visual Arts and Dance (catalogue)
- 1992 *1992 Central Texas Competition*, The Art Center, Waco, TX, juror: Lynn Castle
- 1992 *Seventh Annual Main Street Fine Art Exhibition*, Fort Worth, TX, juror: Dianne Vanderlip (Juror's Award)
- 1992 *48th Annual Museums of Abilene Competition*, Abilene, TX, juror: Kevin Donovan
- 1991 *New Directions 1991*, Poughkeepsie, New York, NY, juror: Richard Armstrong (Juror's Award)
- 1991 *MFA Exhibition*, Meyerson Gallery, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

Awards and Fellowships:

- 2006 Joan Mitchell Foundation Award in Painting
- 2006 MacDowell Colony Residency Fellow
- 2006 State of Florida Artists Enhancement Grant
- 2004 Featured Artist for the State of Florida during National Hispanic Heritage Month
- 1999 Ludwig Foundation, Havana, Cuba, Invited Visiting Artist
- 1994 Vermont Studio Center, Artist in Residency Fellowship

- 1994 Mid-America Arts Alliance/NEA Fellowship Award in Painting
- 1994 John D. Murchison Fellowship in Fine Arts, University of Texas
- 1992 Kimbrough Award, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, Texas
- 1990 Charles Addams Memorial Prize in Fine Art, University of Pennsylvania
- 1990 Skowhegan Fellowship, Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture

Selected Collections:

American Airlines Admirals Club Gallery, Austin-Bergstrom Airport, Austin, Texas

Arizona State University Art Museum, Tempe, Arizona

Austin-Bergstrom Airport, Austin, Texas

Austin Museum of Art, Austin, Texas

Brackenridge Hospital, Austin, Texas

Center for Hispanic Arts, Corpus Christi, Texas

Center for Latin American Studies, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas

Center for Mexican American Studies, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas

Center for Women's Studies, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas

Dallas Arboretum, Dallas, Texas

El Paso Museum of Art, El Paso, Texas

Inter-Cultural Resource Center, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas

McAllen International Museum, McAllen, Texas

McKinney Avenue Contemporary, Dallas, Texas

Mexic-Arte Museum, Austin, Texas

Museum of South Texas, Corpus Christi, Texas

Polk Museum, Lakeland, Florida

San Angelo Museum of Art, San Angelo, Texas

Seay Biomedical Building, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, Texas

Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi, Texas

Tyler Museum of Art, Tyler, Texas

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Maple Bouquet (NH) 2006
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