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### Élan Vital

Sharon Mealey

*Claremont Graduate University*

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Artist Statement for Élan Vital  
Sharon Mealey  
11/16/2010

My art explores the inner qualities of life, focusing on adaptability and resiliency. I am interested in the mysterious vital force philosophers call *élan vital* that animates human beings. I investigate the transitory nature of life where it intersects with *élan vital*. My paintings accommodate the ephemeral and the perpetual.

The larger than life size square canvases have an intense yet tranquil presence. The paintings create an aura that envelops the viewer. Distilled elements of color and form denote the essence of strength. Luscious, luminous surfaces seduce the viewer with rich vibrant colors. Each painting presents a different and intimate quality with its hue variation and close value range. Viewed together, the paintings form a melodic line, a visual counterpoint to the world's dissonance. Their tone is quiet yet sure.

The various soft sumptuous organic forms feel atmospheric. These serene floating shapes speak of the fleeting nature of time. The delicate visual textures allow the eye to easily explore both the overall painting and portions of it. The highly abstracted pictorial space signals vulnerability and intimacy while simultaneously supplying a meditative framework. Time seems elastic to the viewer lost in looking. I use beauty to lure and hold the viewer's attention to this contemplative expanse.