

Victoria Lobregat
Artists' Statement
Gallery 4A, August 1997

The works on cardboard shoebox tops originated while I was living in Los Angeles and working at a clothes store, from which I would bring home the empty shoeboxes, and paint on the lids. I found the shoeboxes to be attractive objects in themselves, and also they seemed to manifest the excessive desire to consume in that culture and thus to find the possibility of transcendence in shopping (which affected me no less than anyone else).

Much later I attended a ceremony presided over by the Dalai Lama, and the major thing I discovered was that Buddhists use their particular symbols as focus points, or entry points into another level of reality. Thus by meditating on these symbols, one begins to find the core of oneself which is at peace, which is not affected by desire and materiality. It may be that the shoeboxes are the zone where consumer labels and Tantric symbols interplay, so how to give greater importance to one or another? Both are so appealing.

The works on canvas boards are extensions of my investigation of symbols, where I have mixed in icons from other areas (such as surf motifs, classical Greek statuary, suburban architecture, and embroidered handiwork) along with the Buddhists symbols that can be seen to exist as 'a world of signs without fault,' a phrase Derrida used in one of his essays on Buddhism.

Though there is a multiplicity of symbols in this series of work, where I have used not only my own paintings but also text and readymade cultural objects, they have in common that they are the focus of a contemplative memory, and hence a generator of a sense of love.