The Coconut Internet
Dani Arnica
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When stranded on a deserted island, it is required that occupants communicate to viewers above in bold language. H-E-L-P and S-O-S written in stones relay an urgent need coming from below. In Morse code, "SOS" is constituted by an unbroken dot and slash sequence, signaling maritime distress. The words communicated in the sand must compete with the plane's speed above; there is no space for ornamentation.

Conventionally the painting brush stroke is thought to reflect a psychic state by its maker (expressionism). Today, within the hypertextual canvas, mark making can be serialized, categorized, repeated, and recycled. How would users interact on the Coconut Internet? I imagine there would be a network of fruit attached by string, like speaking through a plastic cup connected by a wire. Made almost exclusively with raw umber, it is difficult to write about these paintings without acknowledging a scatological association. The reference catches one off guard, and adds an uneasy, self-conscious sensation when viewing the work. For all intents and purposes the content is familiar, yet an ew factor lingers in the background.

Employing a limited tool set is familiar to painting, think Martin Barré's approach; mapping active and (residual) space by using spray paint. Unlike M. Barré these paintings are less French? Dani Arnica personalizes her abstraction with a series of repeated motifs. Arnica's palimpsests feature moons, crabs, and stars with bow ties that conjure up claw machine prizes. Detritus washed ashore, amongst its geometric abstraction counterparts. Being trapped on an island, I would assume, involves a lot of digging. Designating an ad hoc map of where one is at, or out of sheer desperation due to abject loneliness. The candid brush work in Arnica's paintings communicates a similar state - somewhere between formal system building, and unbridled instinct.

Ian Miller