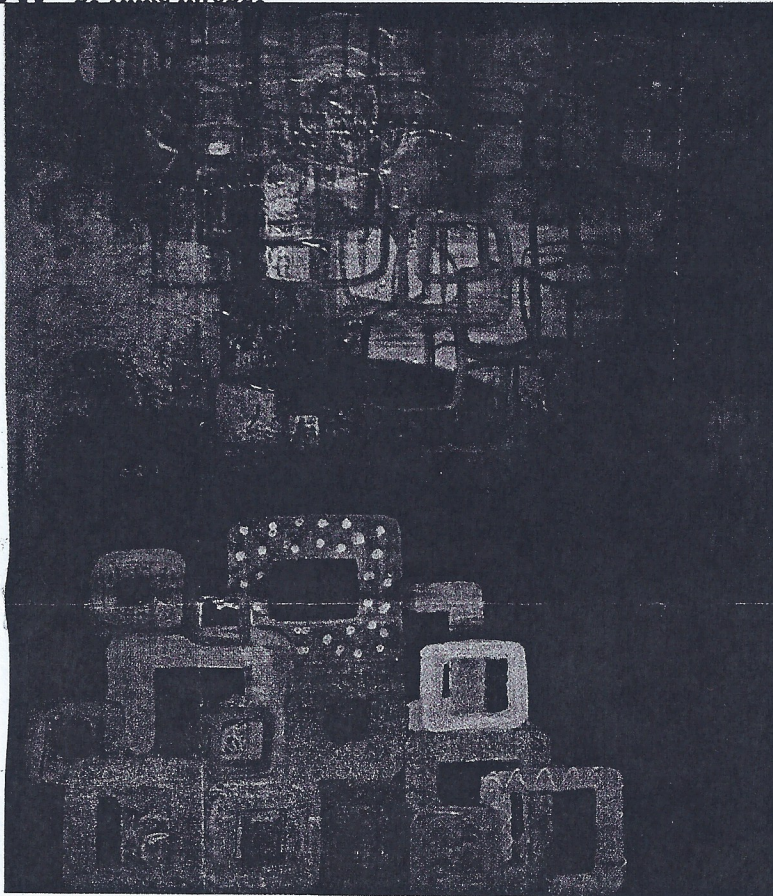


EXHIBITIONS :: ART REVIEW :: SPOTLIGHTS

<art>

art review BY MARC AWODEY

Shape
Changes

Sarah Lutz paints circles on circles and squares piled onto squares. Anne Russinof paints circles over circles. Casual viewers might have trouble telling the two Manhattan-based artists apart as they are juxtaposed in an exhibit at the Phoenix Gallery in Burlington. But do their superficial geometric similarities suggest the paintings are curatorially related?

Not exactly. Russinof's 16 paintings on canvas and paper are a highly decorative schtick, while Lutz's 15 oils on panel or paper. The 9-by-7-inch "Splinter" is a good example, with some circles translucent and others more opaque. Russinof creates contrapuntal rhythms by varying the intensity of the colors and the weights of line in the circles. The chro-

matic harmony is like a Wonder Bread wrapper, with black circles instead of red, blue and yellow ones.

"Calligraphic" is a 14-by-11-inch conglomeration of yellow, white and green circles. The yellow circles are fat; the green circles are thin. The white ones are in between. There's not much more to say about it.

"Particulate" is a more dynamic design of crimson, cerulean blue and pink on a white background. The masses of the circles are nicely varied, and Russinof achieves movement in this piece. Graphic designers would love her motifs, and that's really what the images are: motifs rather than paintings.

Russinof's oils lack the rudimentary subtleties of her aqua-media works; in fact, they're just plain awful. "Baubles," for example, is an 11-by-9-inch bagatelle consisting of powder blue, milky white and brown circles on a "PeptoBismol" background. Russinof got her MFA from Pratt Institute, one of the finest programs in the country.

But she should keep practicing her circles on paper before she starts playing with canvas.

Lutz, who could be called a "painter's painter," redeems the show. Her works feature some of the finest surfaces that have been seen in our area in quite some time. The interlocking squares and spheres often rest on horizon lines, making for deeply dimensional spaces. Her stuff has the angst that Russinof seems to avoid.

Lutz's works are from her "Suspended Gravity Series" — referred to as "SG" — and the series appears to be directly influenced by Philip Guston's works from the late 1970s. Whereas Guston was examining the cruelties of the 20th century with tenebrous skies and piles of boots with hob-nailed soles, Lutz's works are less concrete and less tragic.

Nevertheless, 14-by-17-inch "SG (Black Ribbon)" certainly looks like a village bordered by smog. Pink and orange squares sit on a horizon separating background from gray heavens. The squares resemble a color-

black column of smoke rises from it.

"S.G.XVII" has a lavender sky with a wide pall of black smoke trailing into the low clouds. If the smoke of "SG (Black Ribbon)" comes from a smokestack, this cloud comes from a burning village.

"S.G.XVI" is the largest and perhaps most complex of Lutz's paintings. It's a 30-by-26-inch oil on linen with a matrix of colorful squares at the lower edge and dark, colorless squares above. The dark squares are like umber and gray ghosts floating in a foggy, pea-soup sky. Many of Lutz's squares are smears of light tonalities pushed forward in fat strokes of orange, red and green. They are often decorated wet-on-wet with dots, like the nails in Guston's heels, or have squiggles that seem to have been squeezed directly from small tubes.

Russinof and Lutz produce shapes of similar scale. Both artists cut their hues with a lot of white, making congruent lines with pale pinks and orange. But that's where the

<exhibitions>

CALL TO
ARTISTS

E1 STUDIO COLLECTIVE: The E1 Studio Collective in Burlington is seeking ornaments or holiday decorations, no larger than 6-by-6-by-6 inches, for a December exhibit. Artwork should be dropped off December 1, with \$1 entry fee, at 416 Pine St. Info, e1studiocollective@yahoo.com

LOCAL POTTERS WANTED to donate bowls for a soup dinner to benefit the Sudanese refugees in Vermont, to be held at the Mountain Top Film Festival in Waitsfield in January. Info, email Kim at lead@riseup.net or call 862-5509.

OPENINGS

GAYLEEN AIKEN: The renowned Vermont folk artist shows her paintings. Supreme Court Building, Montpelier, 828-3278. Reception December 1, 4:30-6:30 p.m. Through January 7.

TALKS/
EVENTS

JANE HORNER: "Art en Vivo," a studio warming and sale. 2 Howard St., Burlington, 660-4335. November 26, 4-8 p.m. & November 27, noon - 4 p.m.

RANDY GAETANO: The Firehouse artist-in-residence hosts open studios to show his works in progress. Firehouse Gallery, Burlington, 865-7165.

December 4, 11 and 18, noon - 5 p.m.
THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF LANDSCAPES: A lunchtime talk by naturalist Walter Poleman, in conjunction with a current exhibit. Fleming Museum, Burlington, 656-0750, December 1, 12:15 p.m.

FINE ARTS FOR GOOD CAUSES: The 3rd annual holiday fair features a huge selection of Vermont crafts and fine arts. Bryan Memorial Gallery, Jeffersonville, 644-5100. November 27 & 28, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

HOLIDAY ARTISANS MARKET: Jewelry, pottery, glass, ornaments, paintings and clothing are featured at this holiday sale. Grapevine Studio, Quechee, 295-2332. November 26, noon - 4 p.m.

ONGOING

:: burlington area

AMANDA FRIEDMAN: Art Is Everywhere," acrylic paintings. Stella, 73 Church St., Burlington, 324-1038. Through November.

MATTHEW THORSEN: Photographs of Burlington-area bands. Metropolitan Gallery, Burlington City Hall, 865-7166. Through November 29.

CARLOS JACKSON: New paintings and drawings by the visiting California artist. Francis Colburn Gallery, UVM, Burlington, 656-2014. Through December 3.

ONGOING >> 04B

PLEASE NOTE: Art listings are written by Pamela Polston; spotlights written by Marc Awodey. Listings are restricted to exhibits in truly public places; exceptions may be made at the discretion of the editor. Send listings, by Thursday at 5 p.m., including info phone number, to galleries@sevenandseven.com. Also see art