



Habib Kheradyar, *Untitled (black with square)*, 2003, fabric and armature on panels, 11" x 15", at Miller Durazo Gallery, Los Angeles.

Habib Kheradyar at Miller Durazo Gallery

Habib Kheradyar continues to investigate visual perception and illusion with a strong metaphysical undercurrent. The twelve works here follow a well-established formula in which two vertical rectangles are paired to create a larger, horizontal one. The results are intriguing and sometimes mesmerizing. The artist stretches porous fabric over a wood panel with wire armatures to create undulations of color and pattern on the fabric. While the techniques may be simple, the effect is complex. The whirling visual moiré pattern suggests everything from botanicals to molecular structures, from the cosmos to burkas. At once striking in their simplicity and illusion, the works can engage the viewer indefinitely.

Some of the paintings use contrasting colors for each rectangle as in *Untitled* (orange and blue). The orange/blue combination keeps the eyes moving back and forth between the two sides but, ultimately, the palette is less important than the pattern. The contrasting colors work best when the armature is arranged such that the undulating moiré patterns connect from each side, producing a visual tension between coherence of design and chromatic opposition. In *Untitled* (black/yellow), the wire moves beneath the material across the underlying surface of the wood panel, making the pattern a continuous connection between the two otherwise separate sides. Fortunately, because each artwork is unique, no pattern is ever repeated. As the viewer moves, more patterns are revealed in a continuous rhythm. The interactive dimension casts the viewer into a creative role where the artworks become blank

receptacles for personal illusions.

The most successful and complex works are monochromatic. Neutral gray fabric omits the candy-colored sensuality and lets the viewer delve right into the shifting designs and all that they suggest. *Untitled* (black with square), when viewed head-on, has a perfectly symmetrical pattern that evokes

Edward Weston's modernist photographs of cabbage and artichokes. A slight movement to either side, though, shifts the patterns, creating a slow-motion movement suggesting cosmological swirls. When viewed up-close, the tiny perforations in the fabric and the wire armature create gentle shadows on the wooden panel underneath and their intricate design is as elaborate as the finest filigree.

This decorative effect is in contrast to the otherwise strict formality of the works and has a powerful impact. The combination of such disparate elements—undulating pattern within a repetitive format and contrasting color within a unified whole—makes them metaphors for the digital age where non-linear and multi-tasking lives are compressed into the repetitive pattern of daily life.

Kheradyar's last solo exhibition at the gallery included an installation that filled an entire room. The stretched fabric with the undulating patterns became an overwhelming physical experience, creating a whole body, psychedelic overload, shared with the other viewers in the gallery. These current gem-like works are an intimate, even macro compression of that earlier installation, provoking a personal meditation on the profound ideas of life and creation.

—Thomas McGovern

Habib Kheradyar: Fabric and Armature Paintings closed in February at Miller Durazo Gallery, Los Angeles.

Thomas McGovern is a contributing editor to *Artweek*.