



NOLA ZIRIN
Stardust



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JUNE KELLY GALLERY

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www.junekellygallery.com

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www.nolazirin.com

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Voyager 2013 oil, enamel and glitter on canvas 60 x 60 inches

DREAMLAND

The skillful combination of atmospheric effects and crystalline forms in the recent paintings of Nola Zirin suggests a destabilized space in which structures seem to become disjointed, begin to dissolve, and hint at how they might again reconstitute themselves. Each of these commanding works draws the viewer into an endlessly self-reconfiguring environment where spatial relationships are not fixed, no form is without its qualifiers, and even the shadows have shadows. Despite the decisiveness with which the artist subdivides the surfaces of her paintings, curtails her palette and lays down her oil paint, spray enamel and glitter, she nevertheless achieves a sense of restlessness. Syncopated, urban rhythms and metropolitan light, both long present in Zirin's work and the subjects of previous commentary, have by no means faded. But now a certain otherworldly quality has been brought into play, and the new work luxuriates in this heightened strangeness.

A crucial means to this end is Zirin's use of the spray gun in conjunction with stencils both fabricated and found. The technique allows for drifting, soft-focus clouds of tone that terminate at clear, unequivocal edges. In the chromatically restrained *Inventions #23* (page 3), the grid, which Zirin often relies upon as a compositional starting point, is pried apart and broken into dissimilar sections—glyphs made of right-angled bars, shaped like H, L, F and some non-alphabetical variants thereon—that seem to drift in and out of focus, dispersed in a grayish haze along with an intermittent zigzag motif that reads as accordion folds or two-way arrows. But their behavior is complex; fugue-like, these shards of pattern and theme seem bound by an internal law of attraction that will eventually unite them in some unforeseen way.



Inventions #23 2013 oil, enamel and glitter on canvas 72 x 52 inches

Zirin is committed to abstraction, but her finesse at achieving vast pictorial spaces through geometric means can lead to a reading of her pictures that relies on the genre of cityscape to find its bearings. With shafts of yellowish light that pierce the surrounding gloom, *Voyager* (page 1) implies a nocturnal world of hidden identities, veiled motives and even a distortion of time itself. “Before” and “after” is but one way to interpret the left/right bifurcation of this painting, in which ornate arabesques and a liberal application of glitter face off against a region of taped lines suggesting fantastic architecture, a futuristic city. The emotional scale of this physically smallish painting is operatic.

A strategic use of color is also present in *Suspension* (page 6), in which an aggregation of vigorous, parallel edges, dramatic angles and gently curving drips is anchored in the lower right corner by a vertical green-gray band flanked by magenta; it sizzles. The painting’s title may refer equally to bridges and disbelief; the painting’s primary demand is that the viewer sufficiently trust the structural integrity of this speculative edifice to venture into its hybrid of reticulate forms and plunging vertical space.

The title of *Super-8* (page 8) evokes an altered state of consciousness—that reverie particular to the experience of the cinema—as does as a dominant, central shape approximating the profile of a reel-to-reel film projector. Near the bottom right corner of this canvas is a tiny, flaring flood of white light like such a projector might make. An homage to the film format often associated with both home movie-makers and auteurs, *Super-8* refers to the image-producing technology that has provided many of Zirin’s generation with a vivid waking dream life.

Shifting degrees of clarity characterize memories as well as images. When she was a young girl growing up in Brooklyn, Zirin would go with her family to Coney Island on her birthday, and then have dinner in Chinatown. The artist has a small but treasured cache of picture postcards of New York’s seaside playground, published in the early years of the previous century. *Luna Park* and *Dreamland, Surf Avenue* (pages 13 & 14), the elephant ride, the Ferris wheel and Harry Houdini appear in these postcards, which Zirin identifies as her greatest inspiration.

Following in the tradition of geometric abstraction, to which she makes a personal and idiosyncratic contribution, Zirin finds ample space to operate between the valences of “pure plastic art” that was the object of Mondrian’s pursuit, and of Malevich’s, where “nothing is real except feeling.” She knows her materials, but she also knows that mastering them is merely an exercise unless in so doing she transports the viewer—and herself—to a place both familiar and strange. Like the Coney Island of her childhood memories, her paintings are simultaneously in sharp focus and elusive, just beyond the reach of rationality.

Stephen Maine

My new paintings are comprised of linear, geometric elements and horizontal bands that create architectural patterns, merging abstraction with apparition. Departing from my previous work, I've used glitter in some of these paintings which further enhances the surfaces of the painting and reflective light, thereby creating illusions of space within the work. These hybrid surfaces alter the perspective of the viewer causing the intensity of the colors to change and to vibrate. The paintings are complex, mirroring the complexity of the physical and virtual worlds as I perceive them.

Nola Zirin – 2013



Suspension 2013 oil, enamel and glitter on canvas 72 x 52 inches



Untitled 2013 ink and spray on paper 22 x 30 inches
Untitled 2013 ink and spray on paper 30 x 22 inches



Super 8 2013 oil, enamel and glitter on canvas 72 x 52 inches



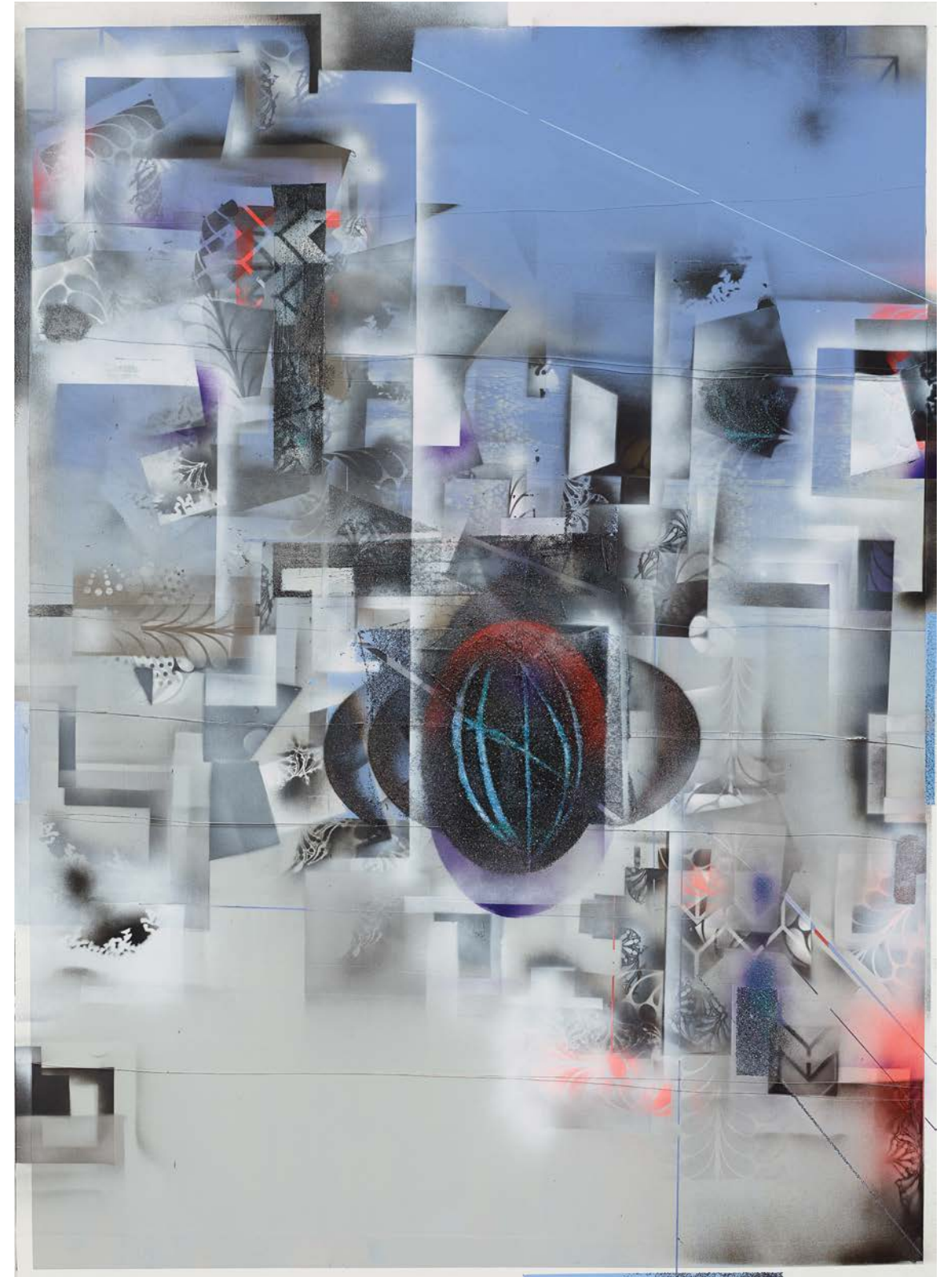
Eliptical Variations 2013 oil, enamel and glitter on panel 23 1/2 x 18 inches



The Big H 2013 oil and enamel on canvas 24 x 18 inches



Suspension Study 2013 oil, enamel and glitter on panel 24 1/2 x 18 inches

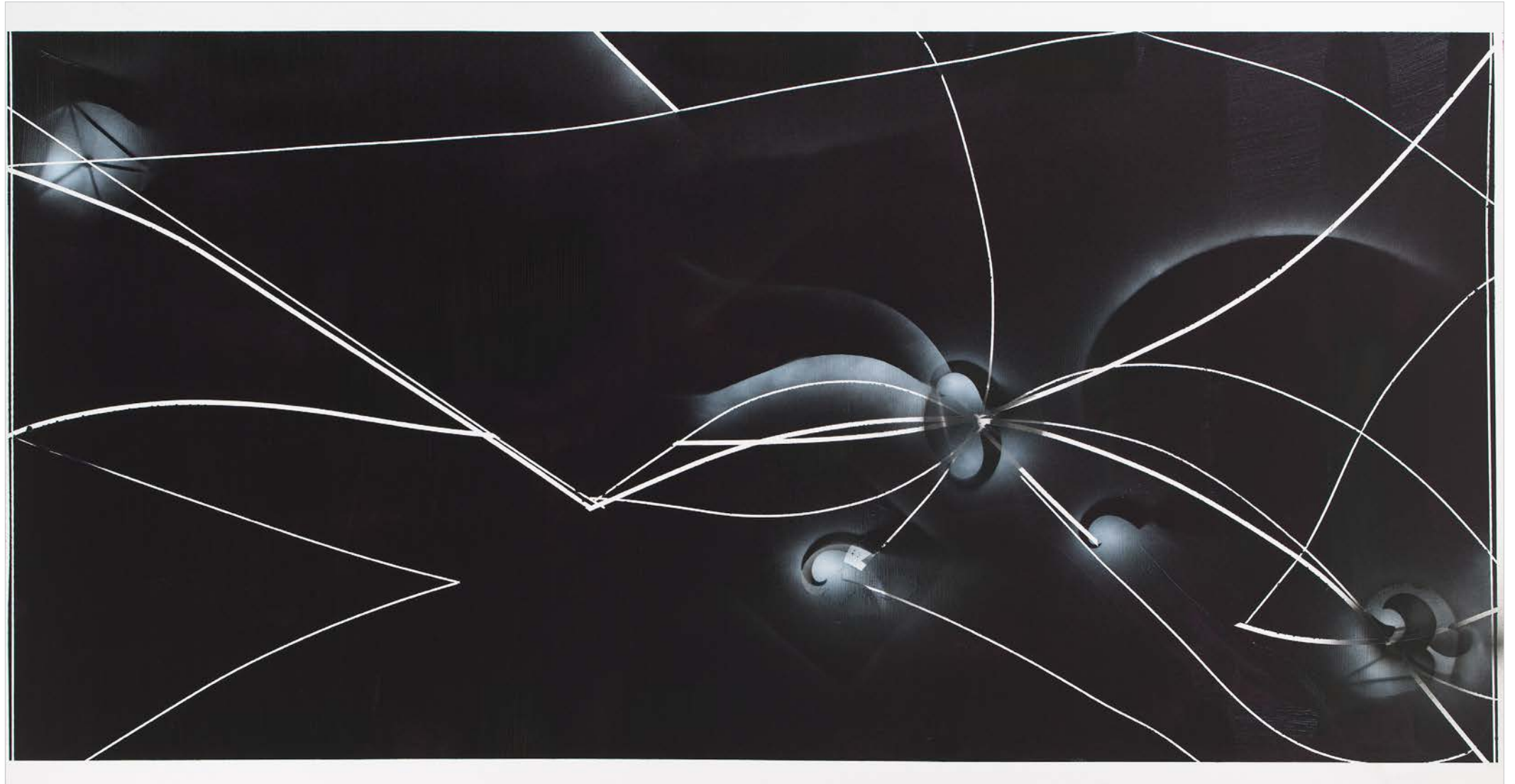


Orbit 2013 oil, enamel and glitter on canvas 72 x 52 inches



Turrets and Towers at Luna Park 2013 mixed media collages on canvas and silk 12 x 17 inches
 Waiting for the Train to Dreamland 2013 mixed media collages on canvas and silk 12 x 17 inches

Angel Over Surf Avenue 2013 mixed media collages on canvas and silk 12 x 17 inches
 Tilyou's Ferris Wheel 2013 mixed media collages on canvas and silk 12 x 17 inches



Nocturne #1
2013
oil and enamel on canvas
38 x 72 inches

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BIOGRAPHY

Nola Zirin is a New York native and maintains a studio in Dumbo, Brooklyn. She received a bachelor's degree from New York University, where she studied painting with Milton Resnick and George Ortman. She also studied printmaking with Bob Blackburn and Donn Steward. Her work has been shown in many one person and group shows throughout the United States and abroad, most recently with her 8th solo exhibition at June Kelly Gallery in New York City. Zirin is represented in numerous public and corporate collections, including MOMA, the Brooklyn Museum of Art, the Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University, the National Museum of Taiwan and the Library of Congress. Zirin's shows have been reviewed in Artnews (Cynthia Nadelman), Art in America (Cathy Lebowitz), Art News (Ruth Bass), Philadelphia Inquire (Miriam Seidel), The New York Times (Helen Harrison and Phylis Braff) among others. Zirin is a member of the American Abstract Artist Association.

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