

Nola Zirin

Over the centuries, artists have explored and exploited the unique power of color. It still speaks to us in the ancient Pompeian wall frescoes, Byzantine mosaics and jewel-toned manuscript illuminations. Van Gogh's brilliant landscapes and Matisse's vibrant cut-outs, Bearden's electric collages and Rothko's meditative paintings have reacquainted generations of artists with color's freshening effect.

Nola Zirin readily acknowledges that the roots of her art are in Abstract Expressionism, citing the influence of Milton Resnick, one of her teachers at New York University, as well as of George McNeil (whom she recalls as one of Resnick's, constant reference points) and Hans Hofmann.

The June Kelly Gallery presents a one-person show of paintings by artist Nola Zirin whose works exemplify the magnetism of color. Her paintings are brilliantly colored abstractions that draw from the urban scene she experiences daily in her handling of pure paint, in the tonalities of her color choices and arrangements of forms. She has developed a command of color that serves as a personal language, at once exploratory and expressive. She uses rich colors in innovative, imaginative and seductive forms and combinations. The paintings manifest the artists' interest in inventing unique color relationships that explore and capture an intensely active and sensuous imagery. The colors sing while coalescing in a harmonious whole.

Zirin uses obsessive process, allusive shapes and enigmatic imagery with strokes of visual information drawn from many sources that are laden with meaning and metaphor and are richly colored. She uses colors to describe a sense of vast space, or perhaps awesome silence and serenity, then agitated rhythms. They create an atmosphere that teases and engages the mind and eye -- sometimes lulled into a meditative trance, then thrust into a pulsing swirl. This is abstract painting with a distinctly urban tone. As art writer Jill Conner says, "*Encountering one of Zirin's paintings is like falling into a boundless, unpredictable experience.*"

Zirin is a native of New York City. She received a bachelor's degree from New York University and studied printmaking with Robert Blackburn at the Printmaking Workshop in Manhattan. Zirin's work has been shown in many one-person and group exhibitions throughout the United States and abroad. She is represented in numerous public and corporate collections, including The Museum of Modern Art, The Brooklyn Museum, Heckscher Museum of Art, Huntington, NY, The Islip Art Museum, Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University, The National Museum of Taiwan, The Library of Congress, AT&T, IBM, Reader's Digest, PepsiCo and Bank of Tokyo.

Zirin was recently included in the group exhibition, *Sculpture Dimensions--Sino-USA Art Exchange Exhibition* in Jingdezhen, China. The exhibition featured works by seven American artists (Yaacov Agam, Serena Bocchino, Chakaia Booker, Elizabeth Murray, Thomas Nozkowski, Nancy Spero and Nola Zirin) and eight Chinese artists (Mu Boyan, Jin Feng, Cao Hui, Xiao Li, Sun Lu, Xiu Xiaonan, Li Zhan and Huang Zhen). The exhibition was organized by the Taoxichuang Art Museum of China Central Academy of Fine Art, the Sculpture Department of China Central Academy of Fine Art and Guarsh Art New York. It was curated by Lily Zhang Candler, Wang Chunchen and Richard Vine.