

Artillery Magazine Gallery Rounds
September 29, 2021

Hanna Hur
Red Ecstatic
Kristina Kite Gallery
September 11 - November 8, 2021

by Jody Zellen



It is hard not to wonder if Hanna Hur's paintings were made explicitly for Kristina Kite's gallery space or if it is pure coincidence that the black and white checkerboard floor so perfectly complements the geometric patterns within the paintings. The way the space recedes in the room parallels the sense of depth in the paintings. While at first glance the large-scale acrylic paintings appear to be bold shapes, upon closer examination the gridded structure that comprises the backgrounds becomes apparent. The installation has a formal elegance as the placement of the works is dictated by both color and spatial relationships.

Jupiter and Saturn (all works 2020-21) faces the door and is the first painting viewers see. Black triangular shaped shards emanate from a small green circle made with malachite pigment at the center of the work. The tan canvas background has been gridded out with thin white lines. Though static, it is easy to imagine this work coming to life as a spinning pinwheel or hallucination device. There is an implied sense of movement in many of the paintings as if Hur is using geometry to take us to another world. Each meticulously rendered work layers circles and rectangles in subtle colors as if to say I am transporting you from something predictable into the unknown. In *Muse*, Hur fills in a small grid with graphite squares that appear to be a floor in a vacant room topped with a black ceiling. Four small, light red amoeba-like forms are centered in the corners. The ambiguous organic shapes are a surprising interruption to Hur's precise geometry.

The pattern in *Quad*, *Quad ii*, *Quad iii* and *Quad iv* is essentially the same, yet rendered in different hues. *Quad* is flesh toned, *Quad ii* yellow, *Quad iii* green and *Quad iv* gray. In each work, the spaces within the 26 x 30 grid are blank or filled with a circle that slightly extends beyond the gridlines to create an oscillation or vibration within the mind's eye. Toward the center of each painting are four circular shapes comprised of seven dots each that are situated on top of four squares from the grid that divert the gaze and cause a disjuncture in the pattern and shift our perception to a different plane.

Depending on where one stands in the gallery — moving between natural and artificial light — different aspects of the works are apparent. What seems to be an even grid in *Red Mirror* reveals a glowing starburst that shimmers when seen from a specific vantage point. Hur's works are seductive and sly. While they relate to Neo Geo, they are softer and more subtle. She plays with spatial illusions both within the individual works as well as within the gallery. While highlighted by the specifics of Kite's gallery, her paintings have an architectural grandeur that also extends beyond this space. She is an exceptionally accomplished painter who manipulates formal geometry to transcend expectations.

<https://artillerymag.com/gallery-rounds-hanna-hur/>