

Art Now LA
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Jen Stark: 'Multiplicity'
Pulsating Concentric Shapes and Colors

Wilding Cran Gallery
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by Jody Zellen



Jen Stark's frenetic installation, ***Multiplicity*** is an immersive animated projection of pulsating concentric shapes and colors coupled with sound by **Jamie Vance**. While Stark has created large scale public artworks —both painted murals and sculptures— this is her first projection. In her pieces, Stark layers brightly colored geometric shapes to create complex patterns and forms. Her two and three-dimensional works have the implied movement of “**Op Art**” as they reference undulating arrays and mandalas. Stark's segue into animation is not a surprise as her static work implicitly generates movement in the mind's eye.

Within the rectangles, sunbursts and stars projected on the gallery wall, subtle shifts in grayscale and color gradients ebb and flow. This motion is reflected in a large intricately shaped mirror placed on the floor at the base of the projection, creating the illusion that the work fills the room. As viewers criss-cross the gallery, their pathways are tracked by a motion sensor which triggers the shapes to spin and transition from black and white to color. While *Multiplicity* has an immediate appeal and is delightful to interact with, it falls into the conundrum that plagues many interactive installations. How does the interactivity enhance the experience? Is it enough that the shapes and colors change as a viewer moves through the space?

The interaction— shapes transitioning from black and white to color and following the viewer— is a short-lived thrill, though the animation is enticing on its own. The reverberating shapes are mesmerizing and hypnotic, filling the darkened space with abstract imagery, becoming a psychedelic experience. The way they move, independently and together, is spellbinding: The shapes enlarge and contract, the individual layers change color, while their geometric configuration simultaneously transitions from circles to multi-pointed stars.

Although Stark references designs from the natural and spiritual world —fractals, wormholes, topographic maps— her animated, as well as static pieces, do not transcend their formal qualities. Like many of her other projects, *Multiplicity* is based on a cycle of repetition— similarly shaped forms change size and color to create a dizzying effect. The result is captivating, but leaves this viewer wanting more.

<https://artnowla.com/2018/12/24/jen-stark-multiplicity/>