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HELEN MIRANDA WILSON: 'New Paintings'

By KEN JOHNSON

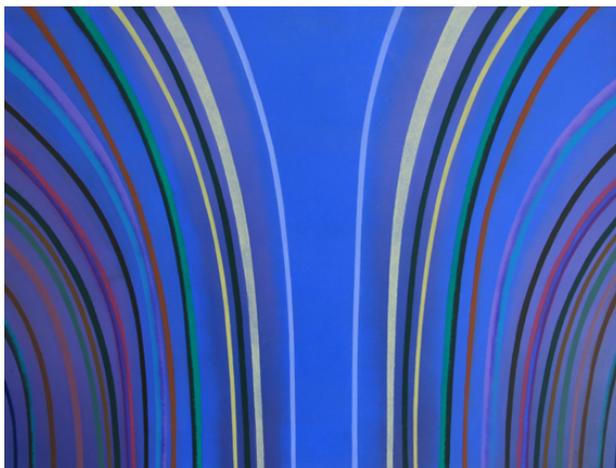
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Lori Bookstein

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Beauty may be in the eye of the beholder, but the great thing is that it doesn't appear that way. It seems rather to be entirely a property of the thing, or the person, observed. I may be naïve to think so, but I don't believe I am alone when I find Helen Miranda Wilson's small, abstract paintings beautiful. Painted with loving care on panels whose dimensions range from 6 inches to 14 inches, they have compositions mainly of thin stripes in lush, saturated colors. In most there are hypnotic optical effects, some in the form of concentric circles. If you gaze at their centers a bit, they start to pulse and spin. Others consist of horizontal bands that dip down toward the center so that the painted surfaces seem to bulge outward. In others, variously colored lines define shapes like bowling pins, vaguely suggestive of spectral human figures with radiating auras.



"Time of Night" a 2012 work of oil on a 9-by-12 inch panel by Helen Miranda Wilson, is at Lori Bookstein gallery.

Numerous art historical precedents can be cited, from early Modernists like Kandinsky, Mondrian and Klee to Color Field painters like Morris Louis and Kenneth Noland. But it is easy to imagine Ms. Wilson, too, as a kind of folk artist working out of metaphysical intuitions.

Ms. Wilson, who was born in 1948 and made small, Magic Realist-type representational paintings for many years, switched to abstraction in 2001. I once regretted the change; now I think it has paid off in full.

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