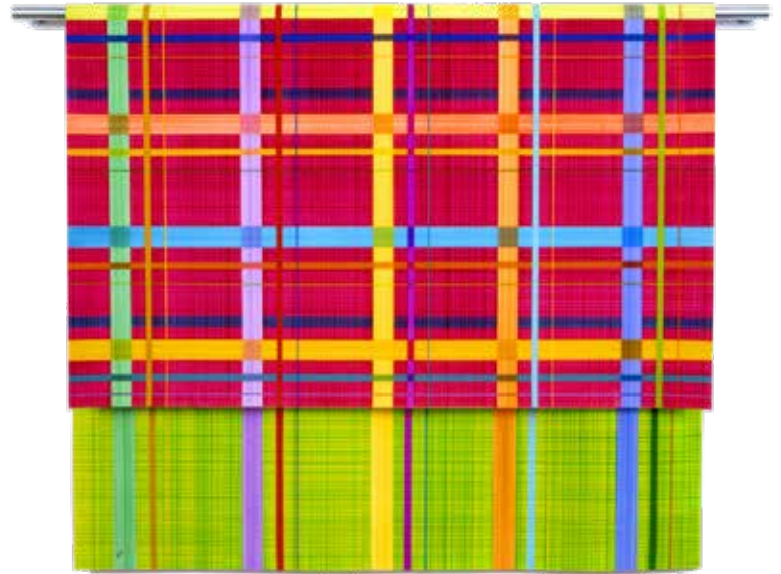


# The New York Times

## Art In Review: Linda Besemer

By **KEN JOHNSON** DEC. 3, 2004

Cohan and Leslie  
138 10th Avenue, at 18th Street,  
Chelsea Through Dec. 24



Linda Besemer, "Fold 73," Acrylic Paint on Aluminum Rod, 46" x 46", 2004

One of the holy grails of mid-20th-century Modernist painting was the fusion of paint and its support. The stain paintings of Helen Frankenthaler and Morris Louis were said to have achieved that mystical goal. Linda Besemer has done it with Post Modernist insouciance by making colorfully striped and gridded paintings consisting of nothing but acrylic paint.

Typically she has draped her smooth, rubbery sheets of paint over custom-made metal dowels, displaying them like bath mats at Ikea. Only one of Ms. Besemer's new works is on a rack. The others are still made entirely of many layers of paint, but they are attached flat to the wall, the better to show off their ravishing visual qualities. The paintings, whose dimensions range from 5 to 15 feet, are produced using digitally processed stencils. They have open plaids of primary colored bands layered over finely grained fields of single-color stripes or grids. They are further complicated by localized distortions, creating the illusion of convex bulges in the otherwise flat topography of the picture plane.

The wedding of optically entrancing design and sensuously supple material -- activated by a hint of 80's-style Neo Geo commodity fetishism -- results in an exceptionally satisfying exhibition.

**KEN JOHNSON**