

Los Angeles Times

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ALL THE ARTS, ALL THE TIME



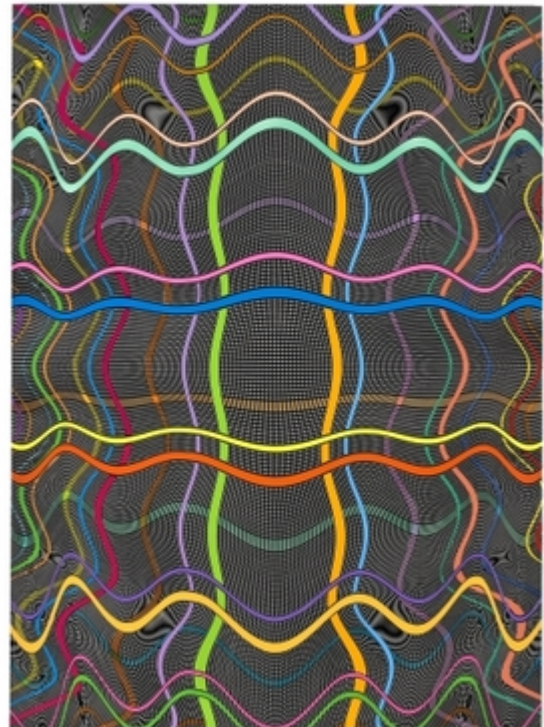
Linda Besemer at Angles Gallery

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It's hard to imagine a painting that makes the bold, eye-grabbing punch of Op Art look tentative. But that's exactly what Linda Besemer's new works do. At Angles Gallery (<http://www.anglesgallery.com/index.php>), her 11 abstract paintings crank up the visual dynamics of Bridget Riley's crisp graphics and the buzzing colors of Julian Stanczak's (https://latimesblogs.latimes.com/.shared/image.html?/photos/uncategorized/2008/11/19/linda_besemer_doublewave1.jpg) undulating grids in wall-size works of mind-blowing potency.

But instead of causing your optic nerves to go into spasms, Besemer's dazzling pieces hit you in the solar plexus. The initial visual wallop is stunning. And it's just the beginning.

The L.A. artist also shows herself to be a consummate colorist, her hard-edged bands of bright primary, secondary and tertiary colors so gently and deliberately playing off one another



that they soften the laser-sharp lines and wildly warped grids of her otherwise abrupt compositions. Harshness gives way to subtlety and suppleness, creating embracing spaces you can get lost in without losing your way.

Besemer paints the same way she has for the last 12 years, laying a skin-like layer of acrylic on a gigantic sheet of glass and then using pin-striper's tape to add hundreds, sometimes thousands, of lines. She then peels off the thick layer of acrylic before hanging it, like a bath towel, over a metal rod or affixing it to a panel or directly to the wall.

In the old days, her lines were all ruler-straight — vertical, horizontal and diagonal. Not so long ago, she added curved lines whose widths shifted to suggest space. Now, she throws sine waves into the mix, crisscrossing the undulating lines and bending them back into space as if each described the path of a soccer ball with so much spin on it that no one could stop it.

The result is an operatic extravaganza that has as much to do with the madcap physicality of Baroque painting, sculpture and architecture as it does with the two-dimensionality of Op designs and the flexibility of computer graphics.

In Besemer's hands, paint does not sit around like a wallflower: It leaps into your face and into your space, where it makes your eyes and heart race.

On Friday look for reviews of Yishai Jusidman at Angstrom, Krysten Cunningham at Cottage Home and Cole Case at Western Project.

-- David Pagel

Photo: Linda Besemer, "Double Wave #1;" Angels Gallery
