

Paul Pagk's Sensitive Geometry at the Fernet-Branca Foundation

by *Suzi Vieira*,

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Immersion in the colorful abstractions of Paul Pagk brings to light the sensual lines of the New York artist.

Rectangles, straight lines, cubes, and parallelepipeds populate Paul Pagk's large abstract canvases; at times they seem to stroll from one canvas to the next, to slide across the raw concrete walls of the Fondation Fernet-Branca spaces, playing with the weary visitor and disorienting the eye. At first glance, the work of this fifty-nine-year-old New York painter is striking in its complex simplicity. The first thing that strikes one about the work of this 59-year-old painter is its complex simplicity. Both an artist and a craftsman, he makes his own paint using oil and pure pigments to achieve the precise and subtle nuance that he wants. In this poetic and philosophical mathematical game, the colors and shapes respond to each other, the lines and chromatic vibrations modulate the space of the canvas, at times appearing to extend beyond the frame (*Once Above Once Below, Untitled Yellow Pink and White*). Here, the overflowing abundance of color confronts the Pascalian vacuum of freehand-drawn, pared down forms (*Anaphore, Red Desert*). The lines are never as sharp as they seem. Animated by the minute sinuosity that is barely perceptible when viewed from afar, they subvert the primary rigor of the painting. They come forward, then recede... One has to find the right distance from which to really "see" Paul Pagk's works, to hear the colorful pulsation of their music, to physically absorb their delicate yet dazzling thrill.

Bringing together some fifty painting and a hundred drawings, *Rhythms & Structures* is a display of the riveting sensory constructions of a visual artist who regenerates the language of abstraction by contrasting the density and physical thickness of color with the illusory depth of geometric figures and perspectives (*Cuban Boxer*). As one moves along, echoes resonate between the works, weaving a long visual poem, while the viewer's perception is constantly questioned. In *Five 2 One*, the powerful pulsation of yellow puts the body in the state of tension and the mind on alert. Immediately, one is reassured by the forceful red of *3 Circles*, at once abyssal and enveloping. Further on, *Horus* raises his finely reticulated eye from the celestial blue of the sea merged with the sky, while the ocean night spreads between two polar disks in *TwoBetween*, and *Coney Island* grounds our disoriented senses in the gentle green seat of a carousel wheel spun into the brilliant pink of the evening.