

## COLOR FIELDS, CRAIG KAUFFMAN, JACOB HASHIMOTO

In "Color Fields" critic David Pagel makes a case for a new hyper-coloristic trend in abstract painting, connecting the emerging tendency with the once-prominent Color Field style but distinguishing that mostly male, mostly East Coast school with today's crop of largely Angelena colorationists. Judging from the surveylet Pagel has assembled, he's onto even more than he's claiming. The seven neo-color-field femmes in the show distance themselves from the ethereal acrylics of Morris Louis, Kenneth Noland, Jules Olitski, et al., not simply in their gender, but in their embrace of the overtly decorative (suggesting they are also inheritors of Pattern Painting) and of non-traditional formats and materials — which makes them descendants of L.A. Finish/Fetishism as well. The one original Color Fielder who seems their direct ancestor is the mother of it all, Helen Frankenthaler. This is not to argue for (or for that matter against) gender essentialism in Color Field work, but simply to highlight the new artists' optical and structural verve. Polly Apfelbaum (the one New Yorker here) and Pae White even put some of their paintings — fabric dye on cotton bedsheet in Apfelbaum's case, Plexiglas and solvent in White's — on the floor. Linda Besemer hangs her acrylics on towel rack-like bars, Ingrid Calame paints on huge transparent sheets, Monique Prieto uses a computer to devise her eccentric, candy-colored blobs, Laura Owens sneaks representational reference into her canvas, and Penelope Krebs' lock-step vertical color bars are more neo-Minimalist than neo-Color Field. The show, overflowing its already provocative premise, is a joyful eyeful.

Among the Finish/Fetish folks whom the neo-Color Fielders conjure is Craig Kauffman, best known for the luminous, voluptuous vacu-formed plastic wall reliefs he created in the '60s. Emphasizing line and contour as well as color, Kauffman has always straddled painterly and sculptural concerns, and even in these latest works, "Painted Drawings," torque and volume are powerfully suggested by the curves and loops of black lines. The half-erased lines that often shadow the bolder contours even impart a sense of movement. Counterweighing this vivacity are the alignments in which Kauffman quite deliberately sets his non-objective figures: Put in rows and columns, the vigorous shapes read like animated hieroglyphics or notations for choreography.

In an adjacent room, the young, newly Los Angelized Jacob Hashimoto has created a nearly space-filling air-pyramid of paper kites, all printed with the same stylized cloud image. Clearly drawing on his Japanese heritage, Seattle-born Hashimoto reverses the traditional effect of box kites in this beguiling installation: Instead of sending art into the sky, he brings the sky into an art gallery.

"Color Fields" at the Luckman Gallery, Cal State Los Angeles, 5151 State University Dr.; thru Jan. 9. (323) 343-6604. "Craig Kauffman: Painted Drawings" and Jacob Hashimoto at Patricia Faure Gallery, Bergamot Station, 2525 Michigan Ave., #B7, Santa Monica; thru Jan. 16. (310) 449-1479.

—Peter Frank