



SAN DIEGO

Ruth Pastine: "Interplay" at Scott White Contemporary Art

Born in New York, Ruth Pastine has been working in Ojai, California for just over a decade. Although she is a New York transplant, her colorful paintings, currently on view at Scott White Contemporary Art, seem to be a part of the art historical trajectory of this region as they share an affinity with Hard Edge painting and the Light and Space movement. However, as her new body of work, entitled "Interplay," indicates, Pastine carves out her own terrain with her exploration of abstraction, and her use of color that causes the viewer to reconsider the process of looking. At first glance, these works might appear to be optical illusions, as their depiction of volume suggests sculptural elements, as evident in *Blue Orange 4-S60 (Violet Blue)* and *Blue Orange 2-S48 (Yellow Orange)*; all works cited 2013). In particular, the central form in *Blue Orange 2-S48 (Yellow Orange)* seems to vibrate with intensity and leap off the surface of the canvas. The rich optical experience that these paintings inspire is magnified by Pastine's painstaking technique, in which she uses thousands of tiny brushstrokes to create a composition devoid of overt traces of the artist's hand, and wherein one color seemingly seamlessly absorbs into another.

In total, the exhibition includes four works on paper and seven paintings. One of the more ethereal paintings in the exhibition, *Red Green 3-V8445 (Magenta Violet)*, presents a long, vertical column of deep pink hues that recede into the deep purple background of the canvas.

This painting, more so than the others mentioned above, recalls Color Field painting. As the pink hues subside over the purple background, the visual experience feels transcendental. A majority of the works on view incorporates the square. Most of the paintings are square in format, while the works on paper present square shapes. This dedication to pure form shares an affinity with the pristine compositions that populate the exhibition and the controlled technique used to create the featured works. Although there is a precision to their creation and presentation, the strong bulges of light exuding from the depiction of the geometric shapes in Pastine's canvases rouse a dynamic process of optical perception and in so doing, awaken the viewer's consciousness.

—AMY GALPIN

"RED GREEN 3-V8445 (MAGENTA VIOLET)" INTERPLAY SERIES, 2013

Ruth Pastine

OIL ON CANVAS, 84" x 45"

PHOTO: COURTESY SCOTT WHITE CONTEMPORARY ART