

Art in America
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Sonita Singwi at LiebmanMagnan
reviewed by Jonathan Goodman

with a brush containing only a few hairs. The works reward close looking: what begins as a trick of the eye is revealed as a trick of the hand. Singwi is taken with the miniature effect because of the visual demands it makes. The marks yield their complexity and distinctiveness over time.

For this recent exhibition, Singwi offered new skein paintings and another group of works made up of individual, squared brushmarks in translucent reds, yellows and blues. The small strokes, which look like confetti, are arranged in simple patterns. In one moderate-sized work, an untitled piece from 2000, you see small, rectangular daubs of color in spirals that are placed evenly throughout. There is more than a passing resemblance to the double helix of DNA, as these flecks look like they are recombining in the ladderlike form. As they assemble, in both small knots and extended linear forms, it is easy to respond to them in terms of a play of colors and associative shapes. The circular patterns suggest galaxies or the movement of stars.

In the paintings most akin to previous work, the threads of color result in yarnlike arrangements. The overall configuration in a striking diptych from 1999 suggests a nervous system, with thin lines moving this way and that. In another untitled oil from 2000, three filaments of color seem to hang like the branches of a weeping willow tree. The artist activates space with the smallest of means in these finely rendered paintings. Singwi's subtlety and sensitivity make her art new.

—Jonathan Goodman

Sonita Singwi at LiebmanMagnan

Sonita Singwi makes paintings consisting of groupings of subtle colors—mostly yellows, reds and greens—which assert themselves against large planes of a creamy white ground. Studied carefully, the paintings are seen to consist of threads of color that intertwine in strands that can be differentiated despite their small size. These skeins are painted

Sonita Singwi: Untitled, 2000, oil on linen,
23 by 24½ inches; at LiebmanMagnan.

