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REVIEW/Helen A. Harrison

'Weaving With Color'

Omni Gallery, 333 Earle Ovington Boulevard, Uniondale, (516) 396-0031. Through Oct. 3.

In this three-artist exhibition, Robert Mielenhausen and Nancy Olivier use paint to develop woven or layered effects, while Sally Shore, whose medium is colored ribbon, approaches the theme literally.

Mr. Mielenhausen's canvases are essentially trompe l'oeil landscapes, in which overlapping textures and geometric elements create a sense of depth. A distant horizon of hills provides a stabilizing landmark, but the view is complicated by apparent multiple surfaces.

There is an ethereal, other-worldly quality to these vistas, with their floating forms and veils of translucent color. This strategy becomes overly decorative in "Autumn," with its stenciled leaf patterns and screen designs, but works better in "Visitation," where an image suggesting an incipient tornado energizes the otherwise static surroundings.

The impact of Ms. Olivier's paintings on wood panels relies on the interactive qualities of various paint layers. Like loosely woven threads, her horizontal and vertical bands of color sometimes stand out and sometimes merge to make linear grids. By dragging or scraping these layers, Ms. Olivier creates sensuous surfaces that simultaneously reveal and mask the components of the overall patterns and underlying tones. "Rate of Exchange" is an example, in which green and white perform a pas de deux of positive and negative color.



Nancy Olivier, RATE OF EXCHANGE, 2002, acrylic on wood, 24" x 18"

Using ribbon woven in triaxial patterns, Ms. Shore creates three-dimensional effects that resemble boxy patchwork designs. Like Op Art paintings, these pieces alternate between flatness and depth, engaging the eye with their lively rhythmic dance.

The basic geometry is complicated by added strips of contrasting color, as in "Scatter," with its radiant dashes of black animating the gray background. In "Curaçao," the insistent diagonal movement is countered by a strong green and white horizontal band near the top. Other small anomalies add to the complexity, delightfully confounding the piece's formal regularity.