



Hanabi 5

SURFACE TREATMENT

Gloria Garfinkel: Origami Interpretations

Where: International Museum of Art & Science, 1900 Nolana

When: Through April 2, 2017

Hours: 9am-3pm Tuesday-Wednesday, 9am-8pm

Thursday, 9am-5pm Friday, 10am-5pm Saturday, 1-5pm

Sunday

Contact: 956-682-0123 or www.imasonline.org

General admission is charged.

The Japanese Muse

BY NANCY MOYER

SPECIAL TO THE MONITOR

This exhibit even offers viewer participation; try it out.

Gloria Garfinkel: Origami Interpretations, an exhibit currently on display at the IMAS Clark Gallery, is a lighthearted foray into the classic geometric shapes of origami and visions of the never-ending patterns found in Japanese Obi sashes. This exhibition draws together four different kinds of Garfinkel's wide ranging work: her Obi paintings, her multi-patterned prints in several techniques, interactive paintings on aluminum, and the Hanabi maquettes,

Throughout this body of work we see the influence of Japanese culture recast into American abstract art. To produce these works, Garfinkel drew inspiration from her international travels and her interest in science and mathematics. *Origami Interpretations* furthered her experimentation in color relationships and juxtapositions of vivid

patterns and textures through the muse of Japanese textiles. Although origami (the Japanese art of folding paper) shapes are an important component of this exhibit, the dominating element is really the artist's willful use of patterns most prevalent in the prints, paintings, and maquettes.

The oddly shaped Obi paintings that take their name from the patterned sash worn around the kimono in a series of folds, fully exemplify Garfinkel's multiple use of patterns within individual works. Her interest in fabrics can be traced to her degree from the Fashion Institute of Technology, which preceded her twenty-year long career in the New York garment district. The painting, "Obi #2", combines a hodge-podge of Obi-styled patterns created from simple blockprint repetitions and brushstrokes.

The prints are grouped according to theme and technique. There are the Kyoto color etchings that reflect chromatic relationships played against sections of diagonal grids. "Kyoto Orange" is comprised of subtle orange hued Obi-pattern-filled-rectangles bound by a diagonal purple grid. A small lime-green rectangle jumps out at us as though it were a Josef Albers color experiment. "Kimono Hanabi #6" is one of a series of collaged etchings where Garfinkel has printed a series of color etchings, then cut them into origami-influenced shapes, and collaged them into a new image. Her Kiku series looks like bunched patterns against black and white diagonals. "The *Kiku* series (monoprints) were sitting there waiting to be found," stated Garfinkel. "I was working with Mohammad Khalil (master printer and my teacher) when a shadow entered the studio and an image was born. From that visual experience, I made a set of 12 monoprints - a shadow on paper.

Her 3-dimensional works both relate to the prints and diverge from them. A set of maquettes, the Hanabi series - meaning celebration, are aluminum structures comprised of triangles and near triangles, all of which could easily be found in basic origami folds. These vibrant visual statements reach upward in a collective "hurrah" moment; all sides of their sectional planes offer different patterns in joyous rushes of color. The interactive aluminum Flip paintings are far less interesting, although fun to flip; yes, the viewer can play with them. But with the exception of the "Seven Circles", the right-angular geometric formats seem too minimal after the visual stimulation of the Obi experiences.

Origami Interpretations offers a friendly and non-confrontational viewing experience. It is a pleasant show to visit with no philosophical undercurrents or topical points of view to have to think about.

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