

group was reacting against—those of Minimalism and Conceptualism—are clearly manifested in her paintings. More than anything, her works suggest Frank Stella's iconic black paintings taken to a convoluted extreme, especially when one notices the fine, seemingly incised outlines of her curving bands, which, like Stella's "pinstripes," are not painted but are glimpses of the raw support. Conceptualism's emphasis on systems and repetition is as much a part of Jaudon's work as it is of Sol LeWitt's, while her disciplined practice, with its barely measurable progress, is reminiscent of the way the late German Conceptualist Hanne Darboven used her "daily arithmetic" to try to bring order to an unruly world.

Jaudon's latest work, however, shows an appreciable shift. Previously, her imagery could be easily traced to precedents such as Gothic stonework, Celtic interlace, Islamic ornament and calligraphy, all of which employ repetition, intertwined or radiating structures, and rhythmic patterns. While these evocations are still evident in the paintings on view (all 2011 or 2012), they are now tightly woven into a language that is more specific to Jaudon, arising from her recent determination to compose her motifs with a single, continuous band. This has the effect of simultaneously unifying and activating the images, as well as making them more labyrinthine and serpentine, like an elaborately stylized scribble.

Circa is comprised of a single ribbon of white whose complex journey from one side of the canvas to the other fills the surface to its edges with an eye-boggling arabesque of razor-sharp corners, sweeping arcs, circles, half moons, zigzags, folds and dagger-sharp points, while the negative space of natural linen contributes its own fractal-like dance. In *Essay* and *Glyph*, the tangles of meandering white bands are clustered together in 3-by-3 arrangements of blocks. Even though the compositions offer the grid's promise of comforting predictability, each of their columns is made up of a single, winding line, imbuing the works with an exciting new energy.

With their ability to engage the eye in movement, Jaudon's paintings mimic the spontaneous and improvisational feel of Abstract Expressionism, while remaining steadfastly hard-edged and geometric. Whether the artist is attempting to bring order to chaos or chaos to order cannot be determined, but whatever she is doing, it works.

—Carol Diehl

PAOLA FERRARIO

RWFA

Can a photograph be a poem? There are essential aspects of Paola Ferrario's work that remind me very strongly of the poetry of William Carlos Williams. She shares with the author of "The Red Wheelbarrow" a knack for isolating details of the world to highlight both their shabbiness and their beauty. Also like WCW, Ferrario employs an economy of means and a refreshing unfussiness, evident in the snapshotlike informality of her images and their presentation as unframed, modestly sized inkjet prints pinned to the wall. But just as Williams's apparent simplicity of observation incorporated exquisite artistry (greatly



informed, by the way, by modernist art), so, too, does Ferrario's casual look conceal great visual precision and artistic ambition.

Titled "Signs & Remains," this show of recent photographs centered on multi-image works, some of them arranged in horizontal sequences, others in large grids. *Portici* (2012) is a 12-print grid of dilapidated black-and-white tiled sidewalks or floors that Ferrario, who lives and works in Massachusetts, spotted on a visit to her native Italy. The ensemble is at once a spirited riff on the history of grid painting, from Mondrian to Agnes Martin, and a documentary record of shoddy workmanship and poor maintenance. While it's immediately obvious what links the images in *Portici*, the connection in other works, particularly the horizontal compositions, can be more oblique. A four-print work titled *Love* (2012) offers images of party balloons caught in a leafless tree, some drawings on a blackboard, a weathered wooden sign and a partly torn away poster on which the word "love" can still be made out. Each forlorn image could be a metaphor for the vicissitudes of human relationships, but at the same time the piece seems to be about Ferrario's boundless curiosity for the effects of entropy and for formal visual correspondences.

She also has an eye for comic effects. *Adam and Eve* (2012) discovers male and female sexual symbols on a variety of surfaces; in another four-panel work, one image frames a discarded sofa cushion where the creases and upholstery buttons have accidentally made a smiley face. This is not exactly an apparition of the Virgin Mary, but it does suggest a similar faith in the miraculous nature of images. Despite this interest in accidental icons, Ferrario pays careful attention to abstract shapes. The largest work in the show, the 36-photo-grid *Modern Highrise with View of the Acropolis* (2010) chronicles the artist's stay in a run-down Athens apartment building where she found a wealth of formal relationships and interesting surfaces.

People are most often evoked via traces, but we do get a partial glimpse of the artist herself when her left hand intrudes into the frame to present isolated objects to the camera lens. This series of single prints titled "Hands" (2011-12) features, among other things, a hard-boiled egg, a bar of soap, a child's toy, a mushroom, a decaying dead mouse. It is a visual poem about life, death, sustenance and time. As Williams advised: "No ideas but in things."

—Raphael Rubinstein