



"MAJESTAD V," 2009
Betty Gold,
STEEL AND PAINT
96" x 48" x 36"
PHOTO: COURTESY OF GEBERT GALLERY

LOS ANGELES

Betty Gold: "Color'form" at Gebert Gallery, Venice

Painter and sculptor Betty Gold takes science as the starting point for her lush geometrical abstractions. As she herself often notes, geometry means the measuring of the earth, and her primary structural foundation is the human body. In her naturalism, laws being derived from nature must therefore be universally applicable. Her precision atmospherics describe a kind of bridge between art and science, exploring sensuality and unique experience, while never losing sight of science's basis in observed phenomena. Her paintings on canvas and paper tend to portray variations on a fluid choreography of translucent lily-pad-like slices, kaleidoscopic sound waves, and tidal cross-sections with very little spatial dimensions inside the picture plane in an explosion of scale a la "Fantastic Voyage." Then again, *Picos II* (acrylic on handmade paper, 50 x 36 inches) could almost be a pine forest, or a parsed agrarian landscape. That's the point of geometry—its conclusions can reliably be sustained across macro and micro matters.

The flatness of her compositional spaces keeps the attention on the vivacity of her surfaces and supersaturated pigments. The large acrylic on canvas paintings like *Rodrigo* (72 x 48 inches) combine the primordial biotic chaos of the warmly-textured and intimately scaled works on paper with the imposing mass of the large sculpture *Majestad V* (steel and paint, 96 x 48 x 36 inches), in turn reminiscent of Tatlin's *Monument to the Third International* in its ambition and activation of space, ambient light, and shadow. The manner in which the folds of its planes suggest the hidden architectural symmetries in the lines of her paintings likewise uses negative space and movement to define the contours of its anatomy. The unresolved yet elegant struggle between perfection and nature's infinite variability remains at issue. Geometry is itself an abstraction, a derivation of pattern-based standards that allows people to communicate but does not always account for the unpredictability of organic life—or an artist's hand. Gold's work succeeds by filling in the gaps with visual poetry.

—SHANA NYS DAMBROT