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'Summer Group Show' at David Nolan

ROBERT SHUSTER

Slick, digitized graphics clutter our days with such meaningless insistence that even a short visit with the rudiments of picture-making—line and mass—gives pleasures that feel almost revelatory. Viewing this elegant, no-frills show (whose plain title suggests its reductive spirit) is a little like rereading Plato's discussion of forms.

The venerable Richard Artschwager, whose inclinations often run toward minimalism, provides the starting point in charcoal homages to the power of the pure line—like fluorescent tubes in the negative, his two black bars radiate a grayish glow. Sculptor Mel Kendrick brings a similar austerity into three dimensions with *Double Core*, a rough-hewn macquette; two halves of a wooden cube, each with an interior cone, whimsically balance atop the other with the appeal of a child's puzzle.

Other artists apply their geometric studies to the construction of systems. Barry Le Va's arrangements of heavily inked ovals, triangles, and connecting lengths are like diagrams for his better known floor sculptures, while Steve DiBenedetto's odd-angled enclosures, sketched with densely criss-crossing stanchions, create a kind of dream-state architecture. Elsewhere, gallerist David Nolan has perfectly positioned John Duff's marvelous plant-like towers—investigations, actually, into Kepler's conjecture about packing spheres—opposite the crowded cellular patterns, rendered in graphite, of Alexander Ross.

The most complex works belong to the mathematically inclined Jorinde Voigt. Her *Symphonic Area* variations, transforming musical ideas into visual elements, are masterpieces of imagination; penciled waves of parallel lines, resembling contorted staves, sweep across the paper under an array of symbols and annotations, all carefully constructed from a rich visual language of her own invention.