

Hanna Hur
Red Ecstatic

September 11–November 8, 2021

Hanna Hur serves at the pleasure of her paintings. Her paintings seem to possess a will of their own; their strict stipulations inscribed in ancient code of square and circle, lines horizontal and vertical, are their terrain. A spiral takes us down. They emerge slowly as a veil lifts and settle solidly as rock sediment. By way of stealthy inner vision, they seem discharged fully formed through a colossal space-time continuum, seeded by the titanic cosmic painting from which all arise. Hur is a bearer of messages, and we, her paintings' tessees. It's a struggle to keep our perceptual step in sync with the metronome of her enveloping canvases. For in all their relentless discipline, the artist's structures are fleeting; in continual opposition to stasis, they complement each other as much as they conflict.

In this mind-bending in-situ continuation of Hur's synthesizing of architectural space in her exhibitions: the checkerboard floor of the gallery mirrors the painting's internal grids, drawn tight across our field of vision. The swells of thin paint underlying ruled edges are a necessary blanket of touch to draw us deeper into barely visible nets. Reliefs of colored pencil sit smoothly, rigidly on the tooth of the canvas surface, their uniform width, a display of power. Whose power is this? Is it Hur's queered virtuosity, or does it reside in demands made of her by the painting? When positioned directly in front of the paintings, our instrument of sight shifts into high gear in an attempt to merge visual input with meaning. As familiar and foreign as our neurological response, the diagrams appear to picture the optic nerve as it transports its pulses to the industrial complex of the brain. Just as we seize on a tenuous resolution, the painting's key evaporates, reemerging again as a riddle to be solved. Mesmerizing and Sphinx-like, the artist's images fill a room with their curious authority and inexplicable agency, holding us in a zone of transcendental phenomenology—few paintings by Hur's contemporaries match.

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The climatic arc in *Red Ecstatic* resides in *Red Mirror* and *Nine* where the painter stations us within the forceful spinning of a dual or multi-focal vortex. These singular works become an endurance test; the measure taken is our desire to withstand the image to comprehend it. We wrongly imagine our strength to receive and interpret is greater than the power of the paintings. It's in these works, too, that Hur's absolute control is evident. We are helpless until we break away physically from these canvases. If our survival is tied to the capacity to perceive stability, vulnerability is made apparent at the root of--*caused* by our sense of sight. Hur compels us to acknowledge that to believe we manage the conditions of survival through vision is mistaken. Seeing becomes the apparatus of our undoing.

Quad i-iv act as the exhibition's compass, a resting point spatially in the overall architecture of the installation that orients us in a frontal, upright address. As reassuring as they are discomfiting, the four compositions allow a slight reprieve from the demands of experiential overload that define the large-scale disparate works. Still, they continue to unsettle us, albeit in a softer frequency. As if to picture a blind spot, the *Quad* compositions set up a perceptual trap door in silent black holes, which at once train our gaze and obscure it. *Quad i-iv* confirm Hur's harnessed the uncanny perceptual shell game that replays itself in various schemas to dramatic, disquieting effect in this commanding cycle of eleven paintings.

-- Monica Majoli, 2021

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Hanna Hur (b.1985, Toronto) lives and works in Los Angeles. She received her MFA from UCLA in 2019. Recent exhibitions include: *The Inconstant World*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2021); *Fortune Baby God's Eyes*, Feuilletton, Los Angeles (2020); and *Signal at the Wheel, Hover at the Gate, Bel Ami*, Los Angeles (2019). This is her first exhibition with the gallery.

Monica Majoli (b. 1963) is a Los Angeles–based artist whose practice examines the relationship between physicality and consciousness through the documentary sexual image, primarily through painting. Shifts in materiality mark bodies of work that investigate intimacy and power within the larger context of queer culture and history. Majoli received her MFA from UCLA in 1992 and is a professor of art at UC Irvine. Recent exhibitions include: *Made in LA* 2020, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles and the Huntington, Pasadena; *blueboys*, Galerie Buchholz, New York; and numerous group shows nationally and internationally. At the invitation of the Hammer Museum, *Houseguest: Shadows Fall Down*, Majoli's selection of works from the Grunwald Center for Graphic Arts, is on view through January 2, 2022.

Gallery hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 11am to 5pm. For images and additional information, please contact info@kristinakitegallery.la.