

Dieter Balzer Knows His Color Blocking

BY MEREDITH DELISO

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"Papilio (sw2)" by Dieter Balzer

While looking at Dieter Balzer's meticulous, overlapping stripes and bold checkers, I couldn't help but think of the on-trend fashion equivalent – the mix-matched patterns and loud color blocking that have been everywhere this past summer. And now, so it seems, they've found their way to the walls of Gallery Sonja Roesch, where the Midtown space's current exhibition features the Berlin artist's newest works.

From either vantage point, both the fashion and the art are appealing for many of the same reasons -- the use of bright, vibrant colors, of blue against green against purple against orange, are cheery and attention-grabbing. Meanwhile, the different patterns are unexpected but have an innate logic and surprising order, even when the bars and squares that make up these sculptures overlap.

Dieter, of course, isn't copying some in-vogue style; the Sonja Gallery favorite been making reductive art like this for years, filling up the walls and floors here and in Europe with his colorful, linear sculptures. He has an exact system, too, creating his curiously named works ("Mesa," "Flic Flac," "Xeos," "Manga") based on a modular system of architecture and color. In this sense, every piece of adhesive foil-covered



A detail of "Papilio (sw2)."



"Xeos (12/1)" by Dieter Balzer

MDF has a place and a color and relates to other elements of the sculpture in a very specific way, making for works that are balanced despite their seeming disorder. Within all that spontaneity of color and pattern, there is a sense of logic, that Dieter is pulling the strings.

While fashions may come and go, and color blocking will inevitably ebb and be replaced by something else entirely, Dieter may have the edge in the end. There is a timelessness to the artist's objects, which elegantly cut through the white space. His clean, bright sculptures can hold up.

"Dieter Balzer: Objects" at Gallery Sonja Roesch, 2309 Caroline Street, runs now through October 27. For more information, call 713-659-5424 or visit www.gallerysonjaroesch.com.

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