

REVIEWS

Siri Berg ----- Phoenix

BY ANDREA MIKOTAJUK

Galleries

A more conceptual artist, SIRI BERG's first one woman show, entitled, *La Ronde*, is a series of paintings. Each set is a seven part continuing series of circles in color. She was inspired by Arthur Schnitzler's novel which has seven story episodes, complete in themselves, yet one character from each story passes on to the next, winding up in a circle when the last person meets the beginning. Ms. Berg's paintings share this idea, with each set beginning and ending in the same color. A series of a basic seven may add more (or less units, may run vertically, horizontally, turn corners, go from wall to ceiling or vice versa. There are really two sets, one in a large size, yet identical in color and form.

The flexibility of the pieces in the show are a part of their attraction, along with the way they are mounted, free floating from the wall. Their environments play an important part in the total effect. Also the space between each one is an integral part of each set, since it is the space that creates the circles; without the space between, there are no circles.

The larger square works, on the same principal, are seven vertical and seven horizontal units, with a position shift of one unit. The artist shows us how this one move, alters the entire square series. Thus, keeping the basic units in the works the same in color and form, a number of questions can be explored: how do they change in a larger size, how do they change in different arrangements, how do they look in a double run of the same set, how do they look with less or more across than down, what happens when one moves position. Colors can be arranged in spectrums from light to dark, starting from the middle outwards in equal directions, or any variety of ways on the color scale. This simplicity of form and color as constants make for intriguing combinations and designs with endless possibilities for patterns by moving just one up onto the ceiling, for example, and the entire movement and feeling changes.

Unlike other geometric patterns, an attraction of Ms. Berg's work is their emotional appeal. Her color selections harmonize, and move quietly from one place to the next. There is nothing sterile in her work. On the contrary, like the characters in the novel, they each have an individuality, slipping gently from one space to the next, with easy transitions.

Ms. Berg has been exploring the series for quite some time. She experiments with colors, are right and designs slowly evolve from the sets. Her talent is undeniable. The series are intriguing and the concept is one well worth exploring for the viewer. (Phoenix, Sept. 19-Oct. 7)