



surface

ART

Border Control

Long Island City artist Linda Bradford draws fine lines between two and three-dimensional space

surveillance

✂ Linda Bradford's living room is a Pantone chart come to life: solid blue carpet, purple chair, pink flowers on a turquoise saucer. "I consider myself a colorist," she says, flipping through prints of her equally multi-hued Strata Mandala series. On view now at San Francisco's LIMN Gallery, the digitally created works consist of thin stratified lines, identical but with varying color schemes.

She pauses on a particularly bright iteration. () "I call it 'Cantata' because it has various lines of melody. I love color, I want to enable people to enter a realm where they associate their feelings with their perception of it."

Despite her current work's strikingly computerized aesthetic -- each set of stripes is refracted at the edges, creating an unmistakably virtual-reality look

- Bradford spent much of her career as a painter. Like Mark Rothko and fellow stripe-artist Agnes Martin, she practiced using hues and sheens to wash viewers into a contemplative state.

As she was stripping her paintings down to simple elements like stripes ("I've also worked with dots," she notes, attributing her gravitation toward rigid forms to her strict Calvinist upbringing), Photoshop emerged as a viable artistic tool to allow her to focus on and explore color even further. "I go for a certain tonality, and Photoshop gives me even more than I've defined," she explains. "I set up a system in which any accidents that happen serve my purpose. I like to work within systems, then break rules and experiment."

The latest result of her digital immersion is "Harmonic Progression," a five-minute

loop in which Photoshop "tweens" the palettes of eight Strata Mandala works into a seamless performance of shifting colors. Bradford spent months engineering the quality of each face from green to brown or from "cool blue plum" to "blue plum beige, so that the transitions were beautiful, too," she says.

Though Bradford hasn't decided whether to project it or show it on a plasma screen, she's orchestrated the work's impact as finely as she has its appearance. "It will fill the wall of a dark room," she says. "that way the entire field of vision will be taken up by a color symphony." ()

MONICA KHEMSUROV

Earning her stripes: Like a Paul Smith forcefield, Linda Bradford's seamless color bands appear to envelop the viewer as if to pull them into the picture. Pictured: "Venezia," 2003



Warped vision: from Linda Bradford's Strata Mandala series, "Flamingo," 2004; below, "Clarion," 2003

