

The New York Times

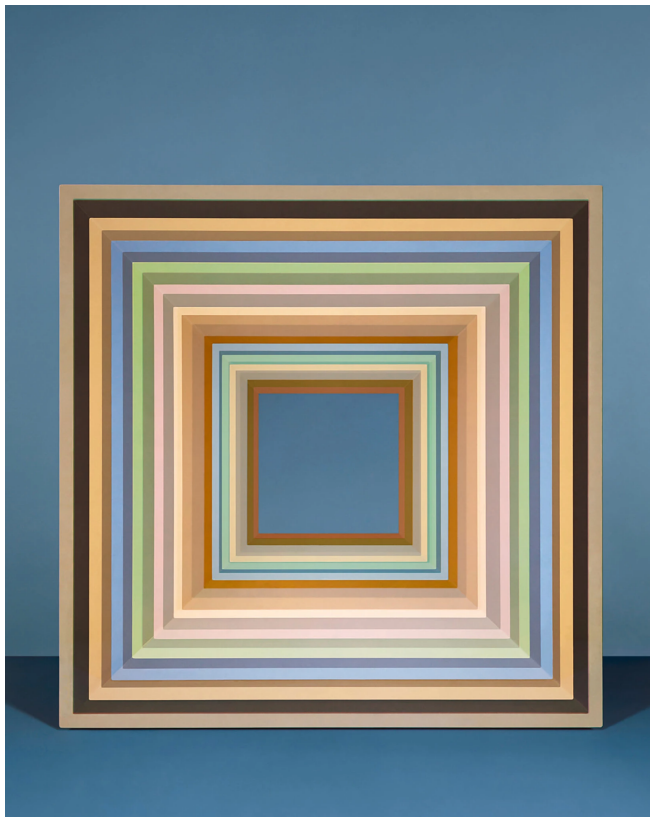
ART REVIEWS

New York Galleries: What to See Right Now

American Folk Art Museum hosts outsider art; Heidi Jahnke's offbeat paintings; a group show on contemporary Muslim art; and Jessica Eaton's mesmerizing photograph

Jessica Eaton

Through Nov. 30. Higher Pictures, 980 Madison Avenue, Manhattan;
212-249-6100, higherpictures.com.



Jessica Eaton's "cfaal 2353," from 2019, pigment print. Jessica Eaton and Higher Pictures

Jessica Eaton's abstract photographs are mesmerizing — a mash-up of Op Art and homage to artists like Josef Albers and Frank Stella. In "Iterations (III)," her exhibition at Higher Pictures, concentric squares of varying thicknesses and colors pulse and pop against monochrome backgrounds. They have a trippy visual rhythm.

Such compositions may look like relatively simple digital creations, but Ms. Eaton's process is painstakingly analog and experimental. The squares in the works are wooden cubes that have been painted gray. To make each picture, Ms. Eaton photographs them repeatedly on a single sheet of film, shifting their position and adding and removing red, blue and green filters as she goes, guided by mathematical equations she developed. In this way, she creates the hues we see in the final prints within the camera.

Those colors can end up electrically bright, as in "cfaal 2306" (2019), or strangely muted, as in "cfaal 2269" (2019); in either case, the palette feels retro, in contrast to imagery that conjures visions of sci-fi portals. The cubes also become flattened in places, so that one picture plane can seem alternately two- and three-dimensional. Ms. Eaton exploits photography's slippery relationship to reality by seeming to collapse time and space, reminding us that what we see is not always what it seems.

JILLIAN STEINHAUER