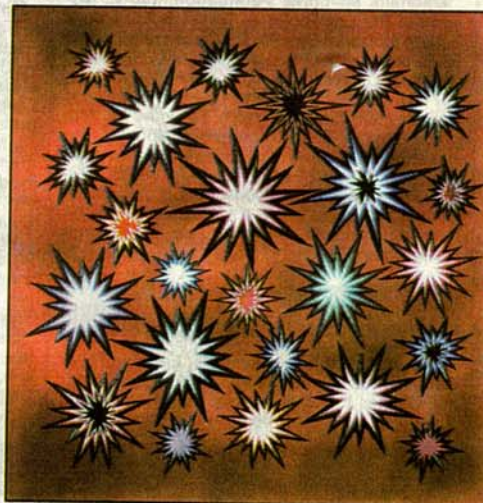


Self Portrait in Rings of Saturn by Juliet Karelsen



Be Bright, Be Bright #8 by Jason Eoff

Painters exemplify playfulness at work

By Jeanne Fryer Kohles
For The Dispatch

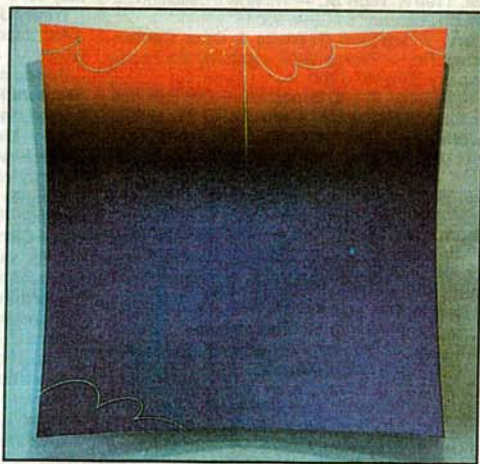
Any young sophisticate looking for an adrenalin rush should head for the Rebecca Ibel Gallery. Three painters of disparate persuasions — Jason Eoff, Juliet Karelsen and Yek — are bonded by a spirit of playfulness and cool wit that leaves room for some serious interpretive undercurrents.

One of Eoff's mantra pieces, *Be Bright,*

Be Bright #8, offers a brash welcome to the gallery visitor. A squarish work of star bursts scattered over a deep red resin ground shows its energy in the particulars of its making. The star-burst figures are painted in oil in such a way that drips and other "errors" are visible. Stenciled and layered to create a modest dimension, they glow confidently against their sleek resin foil. Their energy comes also from the kaleidoscopic associational shifts that span the sensory spectrum — from cymbal crashes to flash bulbs to Roy Lichtenstein's POW! paintings.

In contrast, Yek's gently concave wooden panels appear serene and self-possessed. They are air-brushed (deep values predominate, then lighten as they move toward the opposite edge of the painting) and are embellished with wisps of calligraphic lines. The works of both Yek and Eoff share a pseudo-commercial, "lounge-life" look that is echoed by their fanciful titles. Both artists' paintings also show glimpses of an otherworldly aspect.

Because Yek's works are dimensional — protruding from the wall and casting deep shadows — they appear as perfect, celestial kites about to alight on the gallery walls. This slippage of meaning expands the life of the works immeasurably.



Almost Euroboy by Yek

REBECCA IBEL GALLERY

■ Works by Jason Eoff, Juliet Karelsen and Yek are on view through Saturday in Rebecca Ibel Gallery, 1055 N. High St. Hours: 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. Call 614-291-2555.

Karelsen's delicate oil-wash paintings on canvas also embody a celestial theme. In her self-portrait series, she puts herself in a starring, but not saintly, role as she interacts with heavenly phenomena.

In her most ambitious piece, *Self Portrait in Rings of Saturn*, her face is distorted — squeezed into a spindle shape that floats against an elevated view of Saturn's rings. The colors are acidic and jarring: thalo greens, starchy rose madders and chartreuse.

She uses color more pleasingly in *Self Portrait Partially Inside Nebula*, an eloquent and altogether charming work. In it, Karelsen presents herself in full figure, rear view, floating upright in white space, her head penetrating a nebula that could just as well be a primal pool or an ovum.

Her pieces thrive in the company of Eoff's and Yek's works, whose studied opacity somehow heightens Karelsen's quirky literalness and guileless spontaneity.