

The Highlights - Suzanne Song at Michael Steinberg Fine Art

Installation views, Suzanne Song, *Replica*, Michael Steinberg Fine Art

In her debut solo show, *Replica*, Suzanne Song uses a pared-down vocabulary of colors and repeating forms to create a series of paintings that assert their presence as both objects and illusions. In each of these works Song emphasizes the materiality of the paintings, exposing and employing the wooden panel or canvas support to create a powerful optical experience that speaks to the illusionistic potential of painting. Eschewing color and anything extraneous, Song uses white paint and airbrushed shadows to create different types of spatial illusions that are viscerally engaging.

Situated between Minimalism and Op art, Song's paintings resist the notion that optical phenomena is the antithesis of thought. Though many of the works employ visual effects that are 'Op-y' in appearance, the paintings seem to be as concerned with the subject of illusion as they are with creating a specific perceptual experience.

Unlike her Op art predecessors, Song does not create one seamless effect that elicits a physiological response from the eye. Instead she intentionally disrupts the illusion by leaving out an expected shadow here and there or confusing a visual logic by adding shadows in places where they don't belong. In many of the works, Song creates one illusion only to dispel another, making you conscious of the visual sleight of hand and bringing you back to the material reality of the object.

As perceptually engaging as they are cerebral, these works simultaneously create and deconstruct illusions that allow you to delight in the optical experience and still walk away thinking.