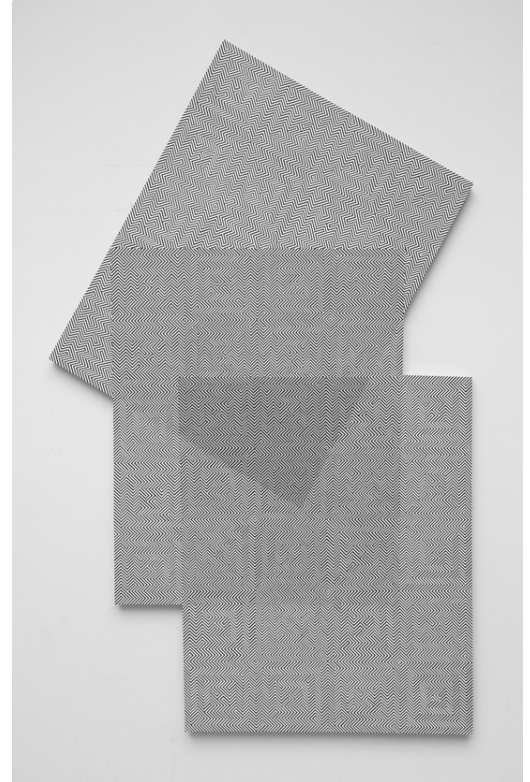


Johnny Abrahams' Maze Paintings

by **Ryan De La Hoz**

Johnny Abrahams' lives and works in New York. His latest body of work consists of painstakingly painted op-art pieces. Working exclusively in black and white these large patterns are absolutely disorienting. Once the viewers eyes become accustomed to each piece, elaborate mazes dazzle the senses. "Johnny Abrahams' panel paintings are made up of various relationships between pattern, shape, and composition, using only a single width of band in either black or white acrylic paint. A pattern is chosen for its impact on perception. Line is perceived where no line exists, and shape suggested by the termination of many "lines" along an implied edge. Light is broken into its constituent colors, which move in opposition across the surface. Approaching a work, a design may appear subtly constructed of two tones or tone gradations; passed a threshold, these reduced elements become vibratory, destabilizing the fixed gaze of the eye.

The creative impulse has no causal agency in the outcome of a work. Rather, Abrahams keeps to a disciplined process of ruled and restricted composition within the space of a panel. An experienced tabla player, Abrahams' exercise in mental and rhythmic concentration here manifests in a personal practice. In turn, viewer perception mirrors process, with the natural pulsing of one's own vision working as a player in the optical effect."



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