

# WASHBURN

## Art in Review

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2009

### Jack Youngerman

'Triads/Quadrads'

*Washburn*

20 West 57th Street, Manhattan

Through June 26

Not that younger is necessarily better, but Jack Youngerman, 83, is living up to his name. His new paintings have an exhilarating, youthful-seeming punch. In bright, Playskool colors and with a direct, slightly brushy touch, Mr. Youngerman has been creating centered, hard-edged compositions on star, diamond, three-leaf clover and oval-shaped plywood panels. Based on drawings he has been making since the 1970s, his designs feature Celtic knots, Russian Constructivist motifs, abstracted floral patterns, radiating stripes and a generally Pop-psychedelic vividness.

It is the tension between compression and expansion that makes the paintings so gripping. There is also a certain numinous vibe to them. They are like altar paintings for a pagan cult or heraldic emblems for a mystical knighthood. As mandala compositions, they invite meditation on a holistic reconciliation of opposites, the containment of chaos by order.

Yet, for all that, they remain just paintings — sensuous, hand-made artifacts of a culture pining for the miraculous.

KEN JOHNSON

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