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BY MICHAEL BRENSON

David Row

John Good Gallery
532 Broadway (near Spring Street)
Through April 8

David Row's uncluttered geometric abstractions are somewhat schematic, but they are the works of someone who seems to have something to say. Mr. Row builds around oppositions: black and white, glossy and matte, regular and irregular, architectural and organic. All the paintings in this show combine curved and straight lines. All raise the expectation of order, symmetry and completeness, but in all of them there is a sense of splitting, and nothing quite fits.

The paintings are hybrids. For example, a painting may be organized around rings that resemble wheels, and straight lines suggesting scaffoldings and fences. So there is a sense both of freewheeling movement and entrapment. The wheels also suggest the American West, and other lines the paths of Oriental diagrams and mazes. While these paintings seem to come out of the tradition of pure Western abstraction, there are other cultures playing around in them, too.

The same hybridization is reflected in the color. While the paintings seem black and white, the bottom edges are exposed to reveal the underpainting, which may be red, yellow or blue. The glow of the black and white therefore depends upon the chromatic range beneath. In such ways, Mr. Row tries to transform a simple-looking foundation into an evocative yet always self-conscious pictorial world.