
By MICHAEL BRENSON

Also of interest:

Ron Gorchov (Marlborough Gallery, 40 West 57th Street): Ron Gorchov applies his increasingly lavish areas of abstract color to linen mounted on specially made curved stretchers. The shape of the canvases is important, not just because it is emblematic — the canvases resemble tribal shields — but because it provides the possibility of a strong spatial tension. With any rectangular or oval form that seems even remotely centered, the sides will invariably appear to come forward and the center to recede. Mr. Gorchov, however, has his canvases cut in the opposite way: the center comes forward and the sides are slightly scooped out.

The second important tension that keys this work is between painting and sculpture. The thick wood stretchers and the blocks of color within the paintings make the works seem like sculpture. Mr. Gorchov's obvious pleasure in weaving together compositions of pinks, blues and yellows, however, leaves no doubt that these are also paintings. What these works are, then, is as ambiguous as their space.

With these basic tensions, the artist sets in motion a great deal of movement and energy. Much of it is experienced in terms of the hieratic, tribal character of the canvas shape. The works can seem like animated screens or friezes. Sometimes the painted areas within the works suggest caryatids, or angels, or griffins. Mr. Gorchov has been described as a decorative artist, but there is nothing decorative about these works. On the contrary, his work is more and more confident of being able to fill a large and ritual function. (Through Nov. 1).