

## Arts &amp; Reviews

## A touch with abstraction

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Before painter Jennifer Riley moved from Boston to New York five years ago, she was painting lush, ethereal abstract canvases strapped with atmospheric bands of color. Her smart and lovely new show at OH+T Gallery is completely different — except for her unerring eye for tone.

It's as if she's taken a microscope to those stripes and focused us on the hard-edged patterns that make up their very structure, like the ice crystals in cirrus clouds. Her canvases crawl with abutting trapezoid forms that accumulate into jagged expanses with faceted surfaces. These paintings stretch out beyond repetitive pattern into the suggestion of landscape, with delicately modulated skies hovering in the background.

In "Do You Remember Mount Vesuvius?" Riley has touched the pale, luminous sky with peach, creating a Fitz Henry Lane-style backdrop for her abstraction. The trapezoids tilt into one another like the planes in a sheet of used origami paper, a rising hill of flat, bold tones mixed with passages of blue stripes. Though many of Riley's titles reference natural disasters, there's no sense of imminent eruption here. It's more the peaceful aftermath, the sun sweet above the rubble.

"Do You Remember Teahupo?" refers to the huge, curling waves in the tourist mecca of the southeast of Tahiti. Here the sky is lemon-cream, and the surging form below it is rendered in several shades of blue and green, looking more like a crumbling ice floe than a powerful wave. Riley's message is all about subtle tones and patterns, the collision of geometry's clarity with the more organic and mystical qualities of color and space. It's all about painting.



The trapezoids in Jennifer Riley's "Do You Remember Mount Vesuvius?" tilt into one another like the planes in a sheet of used origami paper.