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ART & DESIGN

Matthew Ronay: 'Wavelength'

By **ROBERTA SMITH** AUG. 14, 2014

MATTHEW RONAY

'Wavelength'

Andrea Rosen Gallery 2

544 West 24th Street, Chelsea

Through Aug. 22

The 30 gouaches in Matthew Ronay's [latest show](#) compress the tableaux, natural forms and saturated colors of his sculptures and installations into buzzy, phosphorescent underworlds. Selected from 100 works that the artist made at the rate of nearly one per day for four months, the pieces in the show exhibit recurring motifs of a meditative, almost devotional quality.

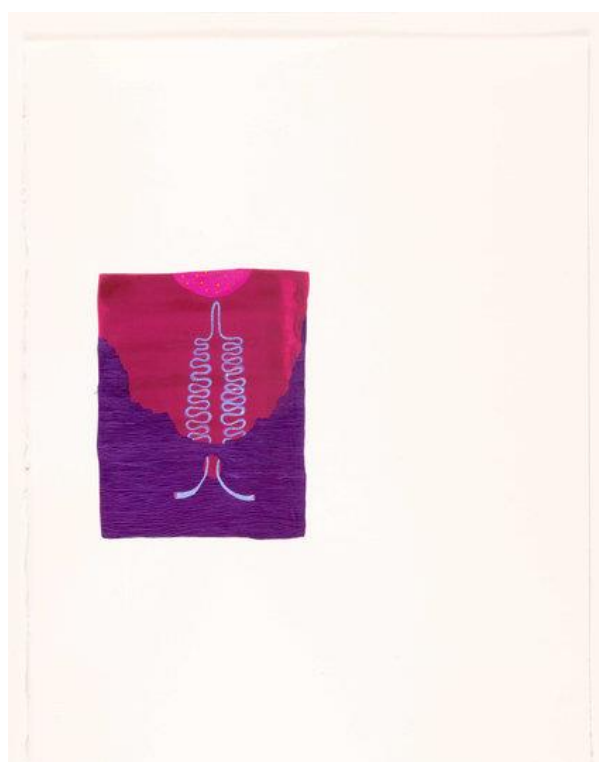
A small rectangle of deep purple or magenta that seems illuminated by black lights sets the scene. Against this, the action unfolds in brighter tones of yellow, blue, pink, red and light blue, so that many of the forms seem lighted from within.

The main protagonist is usually an ascending, undulant line — evocative of some exotic cactus, sea creature or internal organ — that may be delicately patterned or hoofed. It is sometimes superseded by large, finely dotted spheres, or it may be accompanied by smaller ones or delicate, wavy lines, along with intimations of waterfalls, fires, strange plants and magic carpets.

Paul Klee and Ken Price come to mind, as do New Age tantric mandalas and the intricate, opaque surfaces of Indian painting. But in his miniatures, Mr. Ronay creates the sensation of real light moving gently through the purpled space, as befits a show titled "Wavelength."

Each work is titled with the date it was made, and each invites concentration. Seeing the entire series would have been too much. Helpfully, Mr. Ronay has not only arranged them chronologically but spaced them accordingly. Rectangles of light gray are painted on the wall where intervening works would hang, creating room for the savoring of afterimages. **ROBERTA SMITH**

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Undulant lines: A 2014 gouache by Matthew Ronay.
Courtesy of the artist and Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York