

ink is juxtaposed with the rigidity of the traced lines. Depending on the balance, some works are hits and others are near misses. In her best offerings, Huston lets go and allows the ink to have its way. *Fadeout 2* (2010) is a stately beauty, like an arrangement of calla lilies. The fretwork of overlapping inked forms is darkly dense at the base, and lightens as the horns rise to "bloom."

Huston introduces a sense of motion in *French Horn Dynamo* (2010). The centrifugal composition is a wild dance; space seems to be compressed in the center, and objects further out seem to be spinning. In *French Horn Dynamo (Silver)*, 2010, she goes even further, letting the instruments dissolve into each other. In *Blast* (2010) and *Scales* (2010) her technique falters, the trombone slides rendered in forced, stuttering strokes.

Huston's process is risky. Each layer is painted separately and must dry before



Katina Huston, *French Horn Dynamo*, 2010, ink on Mylar, 46" x 42".  
Dolby Chadwick.

the next overlay is added. The ink is unforgiving and the Mylar allows no erasures or reworking.

Huston's earlier series of bicycle drawings had great verve and subtlety. The arcs of the wheels, the overlapping lattices of the spokes, and the complexities of gears and sprockets were composed with great attention to transparency and the interplay of negative space. The horns in "Big Noise" don't translate as easily. Their bulky, opaque bells, when traced and filled in, seem flattened and smashed, like steamrollered instru-

ments. But at their best, they make a wonderful visual noise. —Lea Feinstein

## Laurie Fendrich

Ruth Chandler Williamson  
Gallery, Scripps College  
Claremont, California

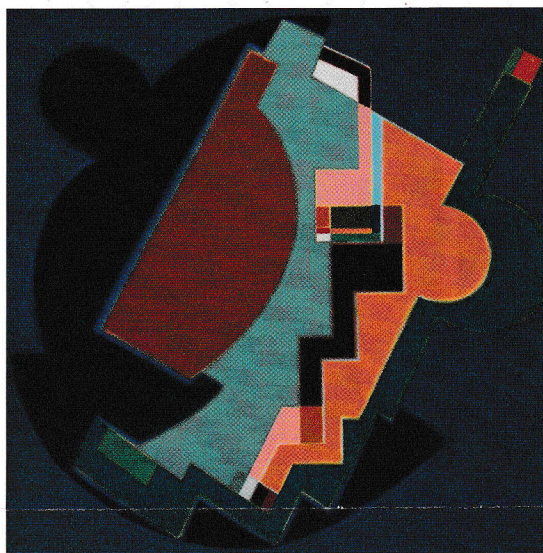
Laurie Fendrich's jigsaw-puzzle paintings combine the rigors of geometric abstraction with a loopy insouciance. This 20-year retrospective, titled "Sense and Sensation," included black-and-gray conté-crayon drawings of rectangular and oval shapes that document the careful planning behind each work. Yet the resultant paintings

seen nearby radiated spontaneity, albeit within a controlled context. Fendrich has said that as she paints she intends to follow a certain predetermined composition but generally winds up changing her mind at the last moment. The paintings convey this influx of spunky willfulness within their tidy arrangement of forms.

Fendrich paints in oil, and her work clearly owes a debt to modernism. She mixes her own colors and may apply as many as ten thin coats to achieve a particular tint. Although she plans the compositions in sketches, she works free-hand, and while her circles and squares appear perfectly executed, they retain an organic charm thanks to a

barely perceptible outline of each particular shape that comes off as a fuzzy glow.

It became clear in this show, which was organized by gallery director Mary MacNaughton, that Fendrich's painting has not changed dramatically over the past two decades. The canvases mostly are modest in size. There are no dramatic ups or downs, just a consistent attention to craft and an intelligent passion for the act of painting; painting as its own reward, so to speak. Her titles, sometimes drawn from Jane Austen, underscore the



Laurie Fendrich, *Works Like a Charm*, 2009, oil on canvas, 30" x 30".  
Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery, Scripps College.

humanity and personality of what could be called cookie-cutter compositions—if the cookies were both salty and sweet, and alive with all manner of arcs and jagged angles.

—Hunter Drohojaska Philp

### UP NOW

## 'Recovering Beauty'

Blanton Museum of Art  
Austin, Texas  
Through May 22

This exhibition on the burgeoning art scene in 1990s Buenos Aires posits a clear starting point—the opening of the Rojas Gallery under the direction of Jorge Gumier Maier in 1989, following Argentina's political liberalization. In the subsequent years, that space served as a home for a group of artists expressing a new sensibility, operating under the radar of the local and international establishments. Although critics dubbed this movement "arte light," the 70 works here, predominantly paintings and sculptures, manifest a lightness in a more positive sense, expressing sensitivity, elegance, and grace. This lightness is tempered, though, by the memory of dictatorship and the specter of AIDS, which would claim the life of two artists important to the movement.

Gumier Maier encouraged the Rojas artists to draw on Pop, Concrete art, and