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JUDY LEDGERWOOD: 'April Showers'

By ROBERTA SMITH

Tracy Williams Ltd.

521 West 23rd Street, Chelsea

Through July 1

Judy Ledgerwood's single-handed revival of 1970s Pattern and Decoration art — which has been going for nearly a decade — is gaining critical mass. Her latest efforts evade nostalgia with a combination of humor, severity and formal boisterousness, along with healthy doses of process.

The main attraction is a series of boldly colored paintings of corpulent, schematized flowers that build on Andy Warhol's fluorescent blossoms; Elizabeth Murray's buoyant, thick-surfaced shapes; Mary Heilmann's loosely tended geometries; and Nancy Davidson's broad-hipped balloon sculptures.

Ms. Ledgerwood's blooms consist of four large circles whose vaguely figurative cruciform arrangement seems squeezed onto a field of contrasting color. This background in turn suggests a flimsy textile tacked to the wall; that it is hardly commensurate with the hefty circles is part of the paintings' humor.

The colors burn. "Summer Shade" offers orange circles on a hot pink ground around a blank white center that might almost be infinity. The thickly painted turquoise circles of "May Day" all but congeal around an orange center; behind them a thinly painted ground of searing greens holds firm. Occasionally color drips from the central gaps or from the circles themselves, adding to the wry sense of female fecundity.

In a small second gallery two wall paintings confirm Ms. Ledgerwood's interest in textiles and evoke her true inspiration, Matisse. The flower motif turns linear and — enmeshed in a diagonal grid — forms offhandedly Persian patterns that are tellingly modulated by different color contrasts. The flowers, grids and circles take further liberties in a group of large ceramic vases hand built by the artist Nancy Gardner and radiantly decorated by Ms. Ledgerwood.