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Laudable Lahde

Geometric webs are clever if obvious





Witty collages by Kristiina Lahde create a kaleidoscopic effect.

KRISTIINA LAHDE at MKG127 (127 Ossington), to February 6. 647-435-7682. Rating: **NNNN**

Collage generally brings to mind an intuitive and abstract visual process or a surreal format that highlights social and political ironies.

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Kristiina Lahde gives us a gentler, more visually meticulous approach. Taking the kaleidoscope as a starting point, she explodes copies of the Globe and Mail into intricate and often dazzlingly complex geometric webs.

While the show's conceptual premise is a trifle blatant - mass media fragment and distort our reality, don't you know - Lahde's visual logic is impeccable, especially in her work on a more intimate scale. Some of the pieces in Double Take work on levels of complexity rarely seen in collage before. Triple take is more like it.

Caution, a yellow and black beehive of interlocking logos and black-and-white geometric patterns, scintillates like a perfectly balanced op art jewel. Crumbling Buildings is a cheeky visual pun: photographs of crumbling buildings have been reconfigured into a geometric pattern that suggests a sleek corporate logo.

There's even some philosophical humour. In *Everything And Nothing*, a complex pattern made up of the word "everything" deconstructs and morphs into a parallel structure patterned on the word "nothing." A Zen master couldn't have said it better.

Lahde occasionally lapses into broader statements with less success. Larger, more obvious works, like *Burning City*, which slices an entire first page of the *Globe* into a vortex of mirror-like fragments that programmatically echo the swirl of front-page flames, are less arresting.

Lahde is strongest when she uses her obsessive capacity for intricate patterns to convey the patterning of information, deftly weaving one form of complexity into another.

art@nowtoronto.com

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