



NEW YORK

Kiboco

Lu Magnus Gallery // September 7–October 23

AMID THE EXPANDING number of artworks involving graffiti sprayed on gallery walls and primed canvases, there is a noticeable dearth of nonrepresentational pieces. The Brazilian artist Kiboco comes closest to filling this gap, although it would be a mistake to imagine his painting as purely abstract. Refined in the streets of Goiânia and later São Paulo, his style draws equally from pre-Columbian design and Arabic ornamentation, so some tribal figuration does occur. Simplified forms—a camel, a cup—dot his pieces like hieroglyphs, as do the occasional pasted paper scraps (a beer label, the envelope of a tea bag), which are frequently overpainted.

Kiboco is as interested in his process as its product. The title of this solo exhibition, “Efeito Esquimó,” refers to a technique he claims to have invented: whitewashing areas of applied paint so that they take on a matte flatness, giving the non-blached sections a dramatic visual pop. This is a subtle feature of Kiboco’s canvases, but it is prominent in the floor-to-ceiling mural he brushed and sprayed across the gallery’s walls. The eight paintings in the show hang directly on the mural, with which they

share a predominantly linear and geometric character. The work on the canvases is much more concentrated, however, the lines, constantly accruing, curling, and weaving, seeming to sprout out of them and covering the walls like a healthy polychromatic vine.

Of the paintings, *Lamas Brown*, 2011, roughly the size of a car hood, is particularly striking. Subdivided triangles squeeze between parallel bands running rod straight or twisting like tendrils. Sets of many-hued concentric rings add arcs to the uncountable sharp angles and hard edges in the midst of which Kiboco has nestled the head and shoulders of a humanoid. Here the Brazilian’s wonderful calligraphic geometry becomes subservient to an ambiguous image. This weakens his work to the degree that it detracts from the technique he wants to foreground, which may be why he refrained from such figuration in the mural; his heavily worked patterns are seriously hypnotic without any creaturely visages. A more aggressive deployment of his *efeito esquimó* might sink such distracting presences deeper into the quilt that Kiboco so skillfully creates.

—Charlie Schultz

FROM LEFT:

Keren Cyffer
Still from *Video Art Manual*, 2011.
HD video,
14 min. 42 sec.

Kiboco

Installation
view of “Efeito
Esquimó” at
Lu Magnus
Gallery, 2011.