

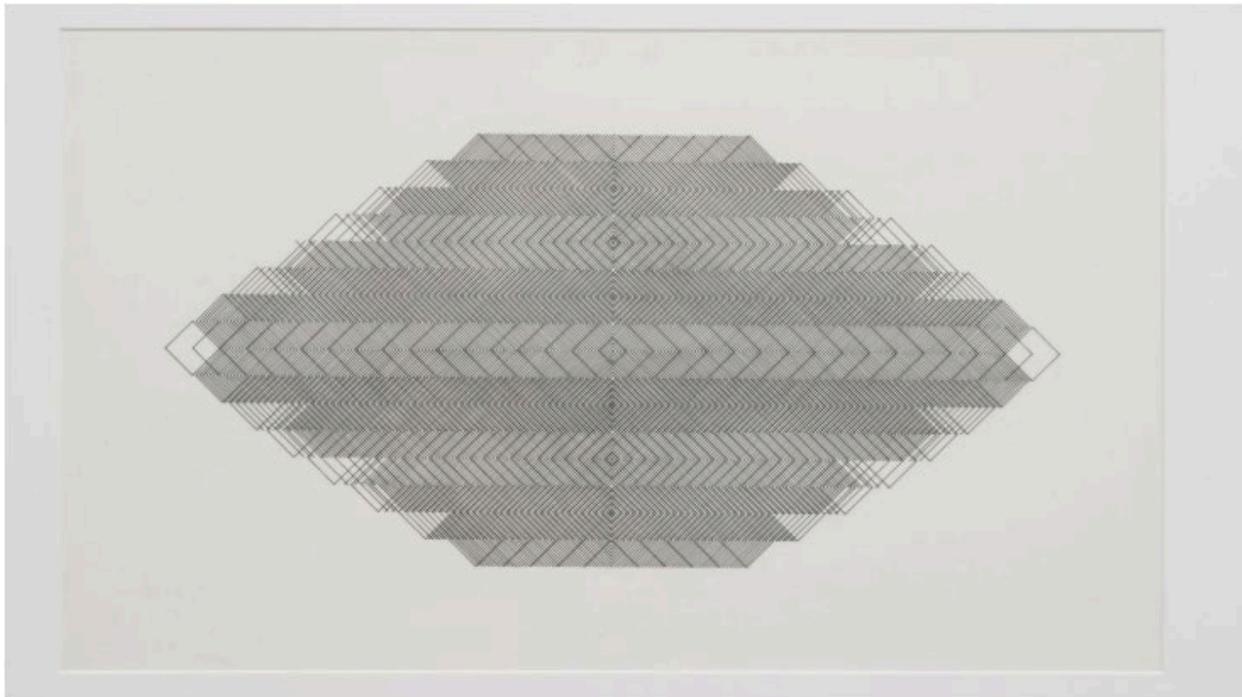
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ARTS & CULTURE ENTERTAINMENT

Review: Channa Horwitz's geometric abstractions show that nothing is truly random



By SHARON MIZOTA OCT 16, 2018 | 7:00 AM



Channa Horwitz, "Canon Series #10, Black White," 1982 (Jeff McLane / Photo by Jeff McLane)

“Structures,” an exhibition of works by Channa Horwitz at Ghebaly Gallery, shines a light on the process behind the late artist’s disciplined geometric abstractions. The works are composed of networks of delicate lines, often laid down on graph paper according to rigorous but arbitrary rules. They reflect the Process and Conceptual art of the 1960s and ’70s in which artists established parameters for making a work of art and then followed them to their logical conclusion, no matter what the aesthetic outcome.

The works on view date from the 1970s and 1980s and reflect Horwitz’s “Sonakinatography” process in which sound, motion, and space are translated into geometric shapes organized on a grid. Many look like studies or notes for larger pieces, and provide some insight into her decision-making. An inscription on “8 Shapes Exploration for Flowing and Numbers” from 1980 indicates that all parts of the drawing “are the result of a circular, linier [sic], sequential, logical, repetition.”

Below that are instructions for placing each element of the drawing according to numerical progressions.

If chance plays out long enough it will become structure.

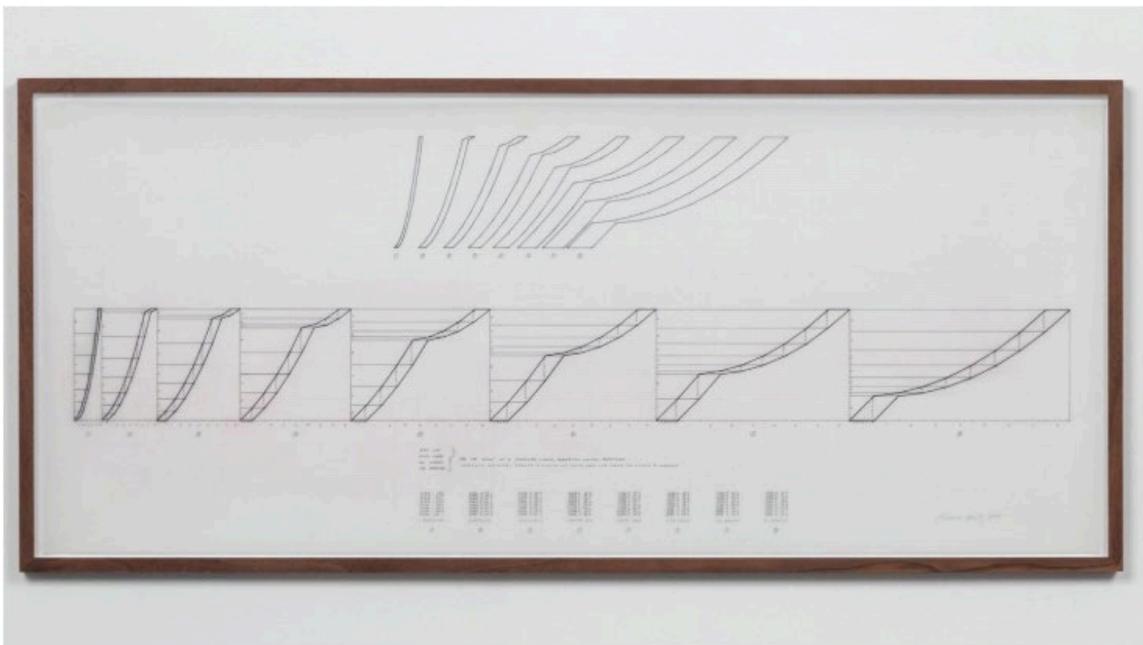
— CHANNA HORWITZ

Despite their rather circumscribed beginnings, the drawings are startlingly pleasing. Looking at a work like 1982's "Canon Series #10, Black/White" is like tracing a carefully orchestrated dance. We follow Horwitz's confident line from point to predetermined point; as lines cross, more points are created, generating still more connections.

Drawing is trusting that something remarkable will eventually emerge.

The works also evoke animation. "Variation and Inversion on a Rhythm 14 Parts #2" from 1975-2011 is a row of 14 small, sequential drawings that track a series of bars as they wave and twist through space. Although entirely created by hand, the drawings prefigure the vector-based meshes that gird today's 3-D computer graphics.

In a 2005 statement, the artist declared, "if chance plays out long enough it will become structure." Everything resolves into a system eventually; nothing is truly random. In this sense, Horwitz's works, despite their austere origins, ask us to take a leap of faith, to believe that following an intention will eventually take us to a place we could never predict.



Channa Horwitz, "8 Shapes Explanation for Flowing and Numbers," 1980 (Brica Wilcox)

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