



Thresholds

Review

John F. Simon Jr., “Winds Across the Inner Sea”

Gering & López, through Nov 3

John F. Simon Jr. is what you might call an ambidextrous talent. He creates software that perpetually generates new permutations of basic patterns, resulting in animations that are wondrous in their variations. He also builds constructions made from laser-cut Formica, a technique that likewise allows for a wide range of forms. In his current show, the two approaches meet in a series of wall reliefs embedded with LCD screens. In them, technology and craftsmanship are wedded to contrast the finite nature of the material world with the endless possibilities of the digital one.

Spiral, for example, evokes the life cycle by placing cut-relief images of a leaf and a cocoon on either side of a computer animation that begins as a pool of water before morphing into a whirl of tiny rectangles. Chip does the same for computer circuitry, with wires and Plexiglas flowing into and out of a porthole that shows a globe studded with monoliths, turning in place. In each, the animations evolve over time, creating unexpected effects.

The most elegant piece in the show, Crown, features curlicues and jewel-toned colors that seem straight out of an ancient imperial court. Displayed behind a grillwork of golden bars, two animated sequences show the sharp black lines twirling like gyroscopes against a yellow backdrop. The work recalls Ming furniture design and Islamic mosaics even as it celebrates technology. But it also makes you consider how many hours must have gone into making the seven works here, all of which are complex and thoughtful without ever feeling gimmicky.

— Barbara Pollack

Time Out New York / Issue 630 : October 25, 2007 – October 31, 2007