

SAM LEE | GALLERY

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Darren Hostetter's candy colored acrylic on aircraft aluminum paintings of military jets, weapons and helicopters are contradictory visions. While fighter jets and weapons are swallowed up in the overall pattern of a luminous afterglow, their deadliness remains intact. Growing up with a father who worked for the classified sector of the aerospace industry, Hostetter takes the streamlined shapes of these magnificent machines and turns the tables; instead of twisting their way to targets, his aircraft and weapons become decorative patterns as they multiply and divide against backgrounds of glowing red, blue, pink and orange.

An earlier, subtle painting of "Circling Hawks" remains an inspiration for Hostetter as his jets, drones and helicopters emulate the intricate formations and precision flying of flocks of birds. Natural phenomenon also appears in the painting "In The Deep," where cruise missiles dive like schools of fish into a midnight blue realm. In "Omnipotence" he portrays a military satellite as shimmering blue plates being juggled through space in an elegant dance, instead of an unseen eye constantly relaying secret and terrifying information. Particularly strong is the lovely pink painting, "Forest," where multiple silver cruise missiles fly low over a thicket of bristling antennae and satellite receivers, as is "Green Black Hawks," where dramatic black helicopters with spinning blades vibrate against a lime green background. The military industrial complex becomes an ironic thing of beauty, not of death and destruction (Sam Lee Gallery, Chinatown).

-----Kathy Zimmerer-McKelvie