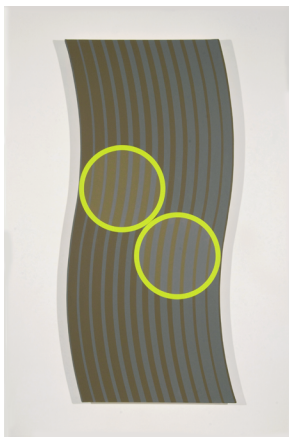


## Los Angeles Times

**Around the Galleries**  
**Friday, October 21, 2011**

***John Pearson 'Color Rise' at Sam Lee Gallery***  
**David Pagel**



Not every exhibition in Los Angeles is part of Pacific Standard Time, the Getty-sponsored extravaganza that features just about every kind of art made in Southern California from 1945 to 1980.

At Sam Lee Gallery, six human-size paintings by John Pearson are a breath of fresh air. Worlds away from the high-powered drive to turn art into history, the gentle weirdness and go-it-alone integrity of the 71-year-old, British-born, Ohio-based painter's quirky works capture the atmosphere of the old days, when artists did their own thing and expected to be ignored for it.

Pearson's paintings, on beveled, S-shaped canvases, coax loads of nuance from modest means. Each consists of two basic elements: sinuous stripes that run vertically and the outlines of geometric shapes, which appear to hover above the stripes. Rather than casting shadows, these circular, oval and elliptical components lighten the stripes behind them.

This simple shift downplays the drama of spectacular theatrics in favor of the modesty of see-for-yourself discoveries. Think Bridget Riley by way of Robert Mangold, Jim Isermann without the mind-bending discipline or Tim Bavington without a spray gun.

The pleasures of Pearson's paintings in "Color Rise" have everything to do with the way he juxtaposes colors, mixing and matching precisely shaded grays, pinks, mints and olives to set up whispering rhythms punctuated by decisive silences.

Sam Lee Gallery, 990 North Hill Street, No. 190, Los Angeles, (323) 227-0275, through October 29. Closed Sundays – Tuesdays. [www.samleegallery.com](http://www.samleegallery.com)