

CHEIM & READ

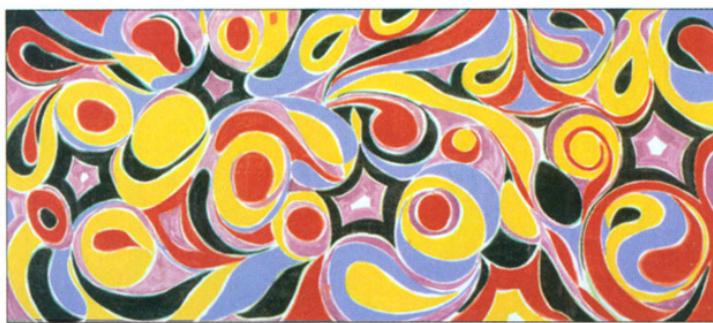
ARTnews

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Richmond Burton

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Richmond Burton's recent works were full of allusions, both historical and personal. The suggestions of Islamic mo-



Richmond Burton, *Freak Out*, 2004, oil on canvas, 48" x 108".

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saic patterns and of Klimt's decorative style were still evident in the artist's large grid-based paintings, such as *Ting* (2004), with its triangular shapes painted in colorful lines against a black background. These paintings included drips of pigment that might be seen as nods to Jackson Pollock or Morris Louis. Yet the works also refer to Burton's own black monochromatic canvases of the late 1980s and to his pre-painter career, working for I. M. Pei making architectural drawings for the Louvre's pyramids.

In the front gallery there were vibrant works that strayed from the grid concept, yet possessed the same stylistic or technical elements that characterize all Burton's work. In *Idioasis* (2004), for example, his fluid, rounded, and delicate abstract shapes seem to have aesthetic affinities with Georgia O'Keeffe's, yet Burton keeps his signature drips and smudges, alluding to the more muscular Abstract Expressionists. Another piece, *Unflower* (2003), actually resembles a mosaic rendering of a blossom, suggesting the way in which some of Burton's paintings might be considered the antithesis of O'Keeffe's.

The works in the back gallery were of yet another style—slightly psychedelic but more polished and ordered and lacking the drips and smudges. Among this group, the energetic *Freak Out* (2004), composed of an intense palette of reds and an array of rounded forms that recall cartoon eyes or ripe fruit, punctuated by Burton's black, evoked at once the fabric designs of Emilio Pucci and the paintings and objects of Takashi Murakami.

Grouping the paintings by subgenre was a wise decision, as it showed Burton's evolution while giving a new understanding of his signature style.

—Reena Jana