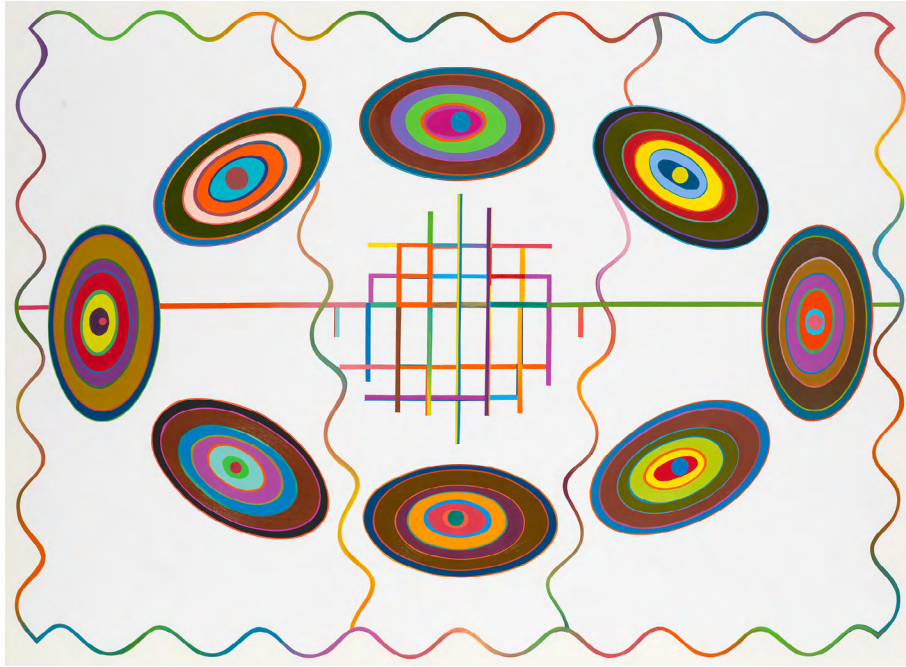


# ARTFORUM

**Critics' Picks: Marilyn Lerner at the Butler Gallery, The Castle, Kilkenny, Ireland**  
**Gemma Tipton**  
**September 15, 2014**



Marilyn Lerner, *Eight Ovals*, 2011, oil on wood, 22 x 30".

For anyone who's been harboring a sneaking suspicion that hard-edged geometric abstraction might be a little—how to put this?—passé, Marilyn Lerner demonstrates its enduring energy: She mines the full potential of this genre of painting with a series of explorations into color, form, and spatial harmonics.

The exhibition is cleverly developed. Beginning with the relative restraint of *Pink Center for S.M.*, 2012, a painting depicting a series of concentric circles, the show gathers energy through the galleries to break out into the full-on psychedelic exuberance of *Eight Ovals*, 2011, by the final room. There, the titular shapes seem to dance, connected by wavy lines, orbiting a colorful central grid like wild planets, held with a surety of perfect placement in a moment between stasis and frenetic energy.

Lerner's interest in music, non-Western cultures, and spiritualism is evident in the work, and the spirit of Hilma af Klint hovers over everything. So too does the legacy of Josef Albers. *Maze*, 2013, is perhaps the most Albers-like of the works, deploying nested rectangles, while *Door*, 2010, could be Albers on acid: There are frame-like regions of color at its core, but over this, Lerner has lain a riotous array of circles, each exploring Albers's own theses on how color shifts perception. The New York-based Lerner has been exhibiting since the 1960s, and while she's continued to make bold geometric abstractions, her latest work is nonetheless utterly fresh and thrilling.