

The New York Times

April 21, 2000, p. E40

Carl Fudge

Ronald Feldman Fine Arts

31 Mercer Street

SoHo

Through May 6

Japanese erotic prints and comic strips, a spreading influence on current art, are the basis of Carl Fudge's tech-y, highly processed paintings and large-scale prints. The most striking are a couple of acrylic paintings on canvas derived from a color woodblock print by Kuniyoshi (1797-1861). Its original elements are rearranged by a complex procedure, with colors matched to the original source.

In "A Live Cat Is Very Different From a Dead One," for instance, crisply painted rough horizontal bands march across the canvas in arresting mixes of shapes, symbols and colors — black, white, blue, rust red, yellow — in which the stylized cat's face can clearly be read.

A group of four big screenprints titled "Rhapsody Spray," sharing an identical composition varied only by color, have as their source an animation series, "Sailormoon Supers."

It is about young women with transformative powers. But Mr. Fudge has his way with *them*. He cuts them up and shuffles their elements by computer, then prints the results by means of hand-cut stencils and 14 screens.

The final products, with colors ranging from sweet to somber, bear some resemblance to a complex electrical diagram or mother board. Still, they manage to be slightly sexy.

The quietest of the works are the "Superpositions," a group of black-and-white paintings based on an 18th-century black-and-white woodcut.

Computerized fragments of line are recombined into networks of clusters and tangles that are silk-screened onto a white painted board.

The fractured compositions are said to evoke their Ukiyo-e source in subtle ways, but they suggest nothing so much as the product of a computer doodling away on its own.

Never mind. Process is paramount for Mr. Fudge, and in some of his works he translates it with visual impact.

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