



In a year of strangling restrictions enforced by caution, fear, social pressure, and government mandates, an artistic practice embracing self-containment has a peculiar attraction. The trio of Erin Reid, Karen Reid, and Don Munson, principals of EKD Gallery (currently a digital presence only), have collaborated on a show that brings their disparate work together under the umbrella *Triangle, Circle, Square*, each artist offering three works in each of the three formats.

Renaissance artists used tondos to foreground their subjects, and notable mid-20th-century artists -- Elizabeth Murray, Helen Frankenthaler, Kenneth Noland, Ellsworth Kelly, and others -- worked with shape and color to defy pictorial limits, lifting paint from support and into our common three-dimensional world.

The EKD artists have other goals, and none seem to have focused on shape for intensive or long-

term exploration. Karen Reid notes that they began working on *Triangle, Circle, Square* pre-pandemic, yet the influence of its imposed isolation shows. Despite being joined by the single theme, the artists speak distinctly different languages in confronting the prescribed, rigidly geometric and foundational shapes.

Munson seems to look through them, like windows. The work, surprisingly airy despite the constraining formats, offers rich-toned structural elements, distantly evoking Richard Diebenkorn's *Ocean Park* series, or in the triangular *Red Sash*, an otherworldly figural metamorphosis of the organicism of Matisse's cutouts.

Karen Reid investigates the shapes' potential through Frankenthaler-inflected slashes of dense, compressed color, cutting through expanses of billowing ethereal formlessness, horizons in a spinning void. The shapes serve as frames: not ornamental, but inevitable.

Erin Reid enlists pictorial compression in the struggle against suppressive force. The tonal patterns of her agonistic imagery suggest the entwined figures of muralists like Siquieros, social injustice, witness and warrior. Erin Reid does not ignore the shapes, she strains against them.

Some incontrovertible benefits of understanding, seeing, and feeling come only from an artwork's physical presence. The abstract, transactional and mechanical nature of digital space renders inaccessible effects of light, juxtaposition, texture, and scale, among others. Shows like this can, however, serve as important reminders. Artists continue their work, and art's communicative power remains, waiting for the restrictions to lift.

-Susan Boulanger

