



Shape, color, plane

It is nice to see paintings that are obviously born of lifelong involvement with that medium. Neil Anderson's recent explorations, at Bridgette Mayer Gallery, of circular forms set within square ones, and ovoid shapes with rectangular ones, all traversed by meandering lines, suggest aerial maps, scaffolding and lattices, and a forest as seen head-on. Occasionally, the silhouette of a head comes into focus, but it's a fleeting vision.

The colors, few of which you might ordinarily assemble in close proximity, work beautifully in Anderson's abstractions. Pale greens and yellows might be intersected by orange, red, violet and pale lavender; fields of crimson and red lie behind a fence of dark blue over which snakes a ribbon of orange.

At first glance, Anderson's ribbon line might evoke Brice Marden's recent paintings and De Kooning's late ones, but his use of line to divide and create space is more austere, like Mondrian's in his late New York paint-



"Apollo" (2007), oil on linen, by Neil Anderson, at Bridgette Mayer.

ings of the early 1940s.

The paintings look as if they were created to allow surprise within certain self-imposed rules, and they achieve that sublimely.

Bridgette Mayer Gallery, 709 Walnut St., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays. 215-413-8893. Through March 1.