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ART REVIEWS/Phyllis Braff

A Wave of Abstraction in Painting and Sculpture

'Summer Selections 1999'

Nese Alpan Gallery, 1499 Old Northern Boulevard, Roslyn. Through Sept. 26. 484-7238.

Artists who seek to stretch perception form the core of this invitation-al group exhibition, the first in what is to be an annual event.

Some, like Nola Zirin, introduce depth-of-field shifts in their paintings. Others create ambiguities, nuances or patterned schemes that generate some sort of visual reorientation.

Most, but not all, examples are abstract. Roy Nicholson's garden-inspired "12 Months, No. 2 (Lifelines)," a pulsating swirl of expres-

sive paint, conveys a feeling of nature's spirituality and bridges the gap between direct sensation and abstraction. Using vinelike ribbons of color in a circular, almost cosmic way, Mr. Nicholson opens avenues of speculation about interconnectedness, natural phenomena and the universe.

Gently compelling linear configurations by Chris Coffin and Susan Kornblum incorporate wax. Blending subtle translucency and a sense of palpable substance, the medium can contribute much to the building of a visually engaging surface. By incorporating horizontal strips of rough dune fence into "Fire Island Fathoms," then covering the powerful design with a wax cloud, Mr. Coffin encourages conceptual readings of the work and also gives it the punch of blurred references to reality and illusion.

Hester Simpson's mesmerizing schematic canvases, polished and sophisticated, are some of the show's most successful pieces. "Loop-



"Us," by Chris Coffin, from "Summer Selections."

de-Loop," with its regularized but slightly tipsy rows of thin dark loops over a softly mottled yellow-gray field, establishes engaging vibrations. "Front Page News," seemingly a tightly strung grid, intrigues with its unpredictable small interruptions to the regimentation and suggests a metaphorical comment on real-life issues.

Misty, puffy forms gradually emerge in D. J. Kim's all-over abstraction. Its evocative qualities fit well with the show's general sensibility, although the approach requires a larger field to make a convincing impact.

Surface nuances help the exhibition's one sculpture, Mr. Coffin's "Us," seem at home. A rope-tied vertical bundle of textured driftwood, it seems to be a metaphor for close-knit humans. ■