

ART & DESIGN

# Polly Apfelbaum: ‘A Handweaver’s Pattern Book’

Art in Review

By KAREN ROSENBERG    JULY 24, 2014

With their lush, multicolored scraps of stained velvet, Polly Apfelbaum’s fabric installations have always been a kind of painting-by-other-means. In her latest show, she keeps that connection alive while also delving into the history of handmade textiles.

Inspired by a tattered copy of Marguerite Porter Davison’s “A Handweaver’s Pattern Book,” from 1950 (available for perusing at the gallery), Ms. Apfelbaum translated designs from the book to rectangular panels of synthetic velvet. She used a plastic punch card as a kind of stencil, poking marker tips through the holes to make shimmering fields of evenly spaced dots.

Draped loosely along the gallery walls, the panels sample many different colors and patterns: jaunty stripes, squares arranged seemingly at random and the small triangles of “flying geese” quilts, to name a few. They are punctuated by ceramic beads on strings that hang from the ceiling at regular intervals.

As in the Sigmar Polke exhibition now at the Museum of Modern Art, the combination of art and craft processes results in a rich and slippery visual field — one that might be painted, woven or simply hallucinated.

*Clifton Benevento*

*515 Broadway, between Spring and Broome Streets, SoHo*

*Through Aug. 8*

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