

The Philadelphia Inquirer

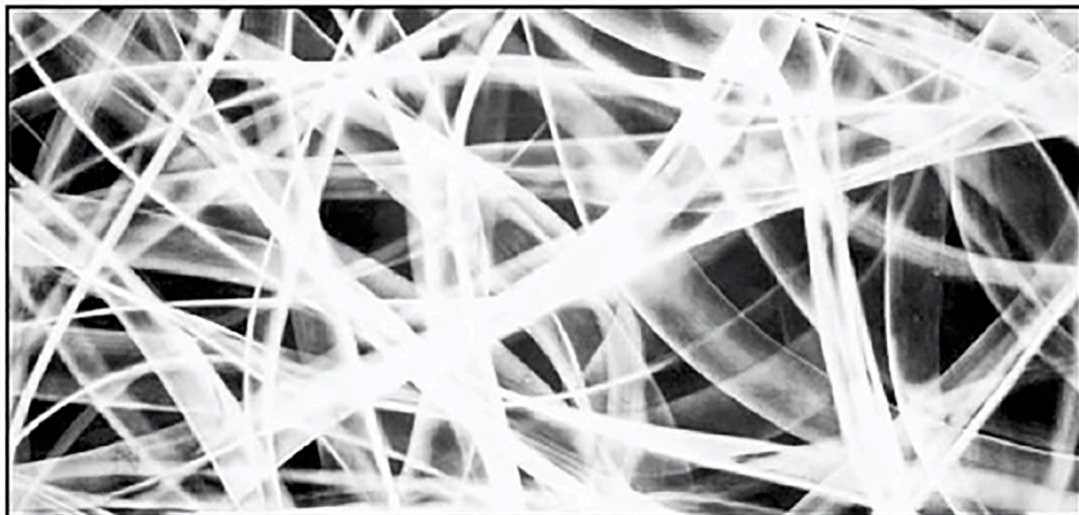
Gridlock minus road rage

Gallery Joe's "Gridlock" is not about rush-hour entropy, as its tabloid-like title suggests, but it does gather artworks that use the grid. None look like aerial views of Philadelphia or Manhattan, although two do in fact incorporate newspaper pages.

The watercolors by Nicole Phungrasamee Fein and colored-ink drawings by Xylor Jane hark back to Sol Lewitt, Agnes Martin, and other masters of the grid.

But the contributions of the 12 other artists in this exhibition take a fairly loose, even organic approach to the structure — if you can imagine anything remotely related to a grid being random.

Astrid Bowlby's stacked, outlined ink-on-paper accumula-



Gallery Joe's "Gridlock" show includes this pencil-on-paper drawing by Mark Sheinkman.

tions of forms and Jacob El Hanani's tiny, complex compositions, also in ink on paper, represent the obsessive doodle grid that takes its cues from charts,

logbooks and manuscripts. M. Ho's newspaper collages, in which columns of type have been blocked out with rectangles of colored paper, are the political

descendants of Hans Haacke.

Nicholas Santore's watercolors of real-life grids, such as one of a pizza parlor that depicts the intersection of a red-and-white checked tablecloth and a tile wall, are the grid as pun. They're smart, quirky fun, like New Yorker cartoons.

The most sublime work in the show, Laurie Reid's *Mouthful of Rain*, a 72-by-48-inch watercolor of scallopy lines of super-diluted burnt sienna, seems to have happened John Cage-style, by chance.

Gallery Joe, 302 Arch St., noon to 5:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. Information: 215-592-7752 or www.galleryjoe.com. Through July 29.