

LA WEEKLY



Charles Ross: Solar Burns, Prisms and Explosion Drawings

by Catherine Wagley

Charles Ross' Tapered Column (2004), made of clear acrylic, stands near the back of Parrasch Heijnen's largest gallery. Ross, who has been making such columns since the 1960s, filled this one with a liquid that affects a viewer's optical experience. Walk around the column while looking through it, and you'll experience the room in a few different ways. From one angle, the overhead lights turn into rainbows, and Ross' solar-burn paintings, made using sunlight and a lens to burn shapes into canvases, begin to blur. From another, all the work comes into perfect focus. It's sort of like viewing an exhibition through a specially crafted kaleidoscope, only more comical and unwieldy: walking in circles around a pristine object in a white-walled gallery, trying to get the best, weirdest glimpse.