

Like a futuristic stage impresario, and seemingly without effort, Hempel choreographs figures and objects, matches disparate materials and techniques, and arranges geometric shapes, luminous colors, and sinuous organic lines into paintings and drawings of self-conscious aplomb. The artist applies acrylic, ink, oil, crayon, spray-paint, and pencil to primed, screen-printed aluminum sheets, often augmenting these panels with found objects such as coins or crystals, creating works that reveal a great sense of syncopated rhythm and temperament. Hempel's work displays a kind of sprezzatura, an "aristocratic cool," that in the past has related to frank amorality or illicit pleasures, but may still be understood as a metaphor for the freedom and release sought from the weight of artistic tradition and critical expectations.

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