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At first viewing, Gary Komarin's recent show of mixed-medium works on canvas and paper seemed preoccupied with overt references to the paintings and imagistic lexicon of his influential teacher Philip Guston, for whom he also worked as a studio assistant. Like Guston, Komarin deploys a set of singular motifs and cartoonish silhouettes that appear frequently in his works. These include a 60s-style flip-hairdo wig, stacked cakes, lopsided vessels and an array of diagrammatic forms and geometric volumes. In contrast to Guston's work, however, Komarin's compositions, which rely on a broader range of colors, are elementally abstract, eschewing narrative components. Painted in an energetic Abstract-Expressionist vein, the work seems primarily concerned with interactions of light and color, as well as depictions of movement and surface textures achieved through diverse mediums and painterly techniques. These compositions, which frequently feature patchworks of color within larger faceted planes of complementary colors, are also instantly suggestive of Richard Diebenkorn's abstractions. Their heavily worked-over surfaces, generally done in oil and enamel, remain effectively flat, placing emphasis on painterly gesture often accentuated by the creases and joins in the recycled paper and paper bags that the artist frequently uses as his support. (Komarin also incorporates small bits of found materials, such as plaster, metal wiring and fabric, into his works.) *What She Said* (1999), for instance, depicts a basketlike vessel with an olive-green rim and white-and-gray striped interior that floats above a grid of blocks delineated in red. Cut off at the canvas's edge, a blood-red box in the lower left corner of the picture oozes a white biomorphic form. These elements are set against a large field in shades of pink, swept with arabesques of grays and dashes of white, sometimes with light impasto in the brushwork. Komarin's most successful works are serial - such as the Pop-artish "cake" images - in which versions of a crudely outlined central image are repeated against a succession of subtle lyrical backgrounds. This strategy deftly turns the viewer's attention to the spontaneous, sometimes enigmatic relationships between line and color within the raw graphic contours of these emblematic motifs. In *Cake Stacked Blue* (2001), for instance, the thick royal blue rivulets of paint suggestive of gooey icing outline the top half of a multitiered cake. They also serve to isolate segments of the background's intricate tonal and gestural orchestrations, which are rendered in both frenetic patches and translucent washes of eggshell browns, pale pinks, ochres and cream whites. Here Komarin's poetic sensibility and versatile technique show themselves to best advantage, and his stylistic influences become less distracting.