Joshua Aster follows a very simple formula, one that allows – indeed, requires – him to enliven his paintings with some sort of mojo that makes them dance off the wall. Aster repeats a particular unit myriad times within a small space (nothing in this show exceeded two feet), organizing the repeated forms into a dense and rather irregular skein, less a pattern than an accumulation. He renders these dense, obsessive fields with breathtaking luminosity, thinning his oils halfway to gouache and allowing them a certain – but not total – degree of saturation. The compactness of the paintings themselves, the engaging eccentricity of the schemata the colors’ restrained vividness, add up exponentially resulting in paintings with a gemlike intensity and the tang of hard candy, they fairly explode in your eye. (Sam Lee, 990 N Hill St., LA, closed. www.samleegallery.com)

- Peter Frank

Image: Joshua Aster, wovenscript, 2012, Oil on linen, 17 x 16 inches