Text to accompany “After Olle #1”, a knock-off of a “well-known” work of art by Olle Baertling

This image was created in the Rectangle World of the Gargoyle program, version Beta.

Biography of the artist  Every word of this text was taken straight from the Web sites indicated.

Olle Baertling was born in Halmstad, Sweden in 1911. In 1928 his family moved to Stockholm. Baertling was trained as a banker and later became a currency trader at Skandinaviska Banken, maintaining this position throughout his early artistic career. [www.chinati.org] Art historians first mention him as a 'self-taught painter', a 'hobby-painter' and a 'Sunday painter' who left his position as a currency trader at Stockholm’s Skandinaviska Banken to pursue life as a modern artist. His work, naive to Swedish eyes, was frequently patronized: 'pictures by the banker', critics said. By the time he died in 1981, on the eve of his first retrospective at the Moderna Museet, this one time hobby-painter had been given 17 solo exhibitions in the USA alone. [www.frieze.com]

In the years 1953-4 he discovered what would become the essential components of his work: rich fields of single, unmodulated color, outlined in black and formed into triangles which neither originate nor end within the space of the painting itself. For almost thirty years, these simple-seeming devices generated a rich field of possibilities for Baertling as he experimented with different configurations of line, shape, and color. These “Open Forms,” as Baertling called them, give the impression of shooting off the painting in different directions and at different speeds. The color of the triangles is applied flatly, with no trace of the artist’s hand, and the hue is always richly, almost garishly synthetic, as Baertling wanted to avoid fostering any associations with “nature.” Baertling worked hard to achieve the proper “temperature” for his color, so as to control the relative dynamics, the “tempos” of his restless, mobile forms. [www.chinati.org]

Description of the image  The image consists of six triangles which meet at a point just off the canvas on the bottom right part. Interestingly, the focal point of the painting appears not to be in the painting! Most of the rectangles are separated by thin black lines. The colors are, for the most part, “garishly synthetic” – colors not typically found in nature.

Abstract description of the process of image generation  To create the painting I experimentally found the focal point, just off the bottom of the “canvas” toward the right hand side. I then determined to decompose the painting problem into two sub-painting-problems, to the right and to the left of the vertical line running through the focal point. For the right side I first painted a large blue rectangle. I then turned the painter to the right just one degree and painted a large pinkish rectangle. I then turned the painter to its right three degrees and painted a large black rectangle. Then I moved the painter to the right and painted a large green rectangle. I then did the necessary turning and moving to the painters left in order to get back to vertical on the focal point. I realized the part of the painting to the left of the vertical line of partition by similar turns and movements and rectangular painting to the painter’s left.