Since the spring of 2010, the artist Nina Katchadourian has traveled on over 100 commercial airline flights as necessitated by her exhibition projects, teaching engagements, residencies, and familial obligations. With a deep appreciation for the mundane reality of this peripatetic lifestyle shared by many passengers today, Katchadourian incorporated this experience in her practice and began the ongoing Seat Assignment project. Demonstrating her feisty sense of humor, the series transforms a single coach-class seat into an artist’s studio at thirty-thousand feet altitude. For this, the seat-back tray becomes a pedestal for miniature sculptures in the Provisional Sculpture series, while the reflective metal flap of the safety buckle becomes a mechanism to spy on her aisle mate in Buckleheads, among many other experiments. Documenting these photographically, the artist recovers the playful and generative aspects of routine episodes in everyday life.
Window Seat Suprematism, a suite of five etching and aquatints, joins this body of work. Derived from photographs taken on flights when she has a window seat over the wing, these compositions abide by the principles of abstraction as put forth by the Russian avant-garde in the early twentieth century. Katchadourian selected intaglio methods for the project, which is one of her first engagements with printmaking.

Achieving simple shapes in a range of gray tones through applications of acid on the plate, the artist directs one’s eye to the basic geometry of the markings on the airplane wing. As is characteristic of her practice, she eliminates the noisy distractions of one’s experience so to best enjoy and savor the lyrical elements hidden within the world we live. 

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