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In lockdown we all saw our worlds grow smaller and stranger: the front door became the limit, our household furniture, and ordinary things began to accrue extraordinary significance. Allison Miller, who presents a new body of work in "Upside Down Pyramid," at Susan Inglett Gallery, has been slowly incorporating symbols such as letters, arrows, and moons into her work for years, but 2020 saw an explosion of this practice. In May, the artist began photographing alphabet letters; now, this abstract lexicon seems to have taken over the work. Straightforward signs are jumbled, reconfigured, and rerouted. *Mirror*(2021)[pictured] suggests a word pyramid, an anagrammatic game which builds new words by successively removing letters from the base word—yet the letters don't spell anything. Even the title is misleading: though most layers of letters follow axial symmetry, one stubbornly subverts the rule.

The rule, across these paintings, might be that there isn't one. The shapes of the canvases are not pyramidal—as the exhibition's title might suggest—rather trapezoids. Typical rectangular canvas, tilted slightly inward at the top, are filled with rasterized shapes such as flowers, or pasted cut-cloth symbols. These mixed-media canvases are also striated by stuttering, comic book-like lines, straight seams of tape, and meandering outlines from oil stick. *Skyscraper*(2021) depicts a spiderweb made out of what looks like silly string. The viewer can't help but try to decode the work—is the diagonal tendril suspended between two "S" shapes in *Natural*(2021) just that, or rather the letter "J"? The cartoonish and vaguely vegetal figures on the left side of *Natural*(2021) on the bottom curled in a "J" shape implies one reading; the figure on the right, rendered in the same crisp red lines, rather twisting to the right in an unreadable cascade of drapery, suggest otherwise.