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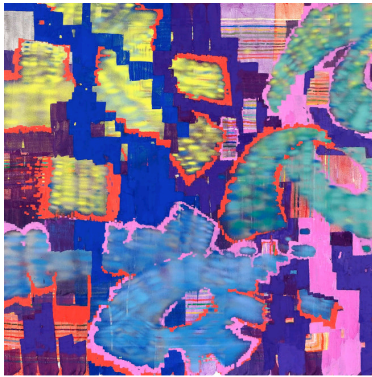
ART IN REVIEW

## Keltie Ferris

By KEN JOHNSON

Published: December 13, 2012

Mitchell-Innes & Nash  
534 West 26th Street  
Through Jan. 12



Keltie Ferris's big, scintillating paintings recall a time a half-century ago when the introduction of a new style in abstract painting could be regarded as an event of seismic significance. Yet they do not appear retrogressive. They feel fresh, direct and very much of this moment. That is partly because they seem to picture a kind of visual experience that did not exist before the advent of digital forms of communication. Made with lively immediacy on canvases up to nearly nine feet in their longest dimensions, they give the impression of computer-screen imagery breaking up into pixels and blurs.

Ms. Ferris's pictures mainly involve two layers of two kinds of paint application. The topmost consists of myriad small, squarish patches of high-key color gathered into raggedy edged, irregular shapes. These areas roughly conform to underlying fields of fuzzy, sprayed-on spots. In the most compelling works this creates illusions of near and far as if a surface membrane were disintegrating to reveal some luminous, uncertainly distant space. (In some cases there is another layer under the spots of parallel, rainbow-hue lines like circuitry on a chip.)

It is intriguing and perhaps paradoxical that someone would use the old-fashioned art of painting to evoke a kind of vision made possible by new electronic technology. Ms. Ferris was born in 1977 and so presumably grew up in the electric light of digital screens and sci-fi movies like "The Matrix." But then painters from Vermeer to Jack Goldstein have been imitating the effects of modern optical equipment for more than four centuries. So the beat goes on.