

ARTFORUM

New York

Keltie Ferris

MITCHELL-INNES & NASH | CHELSEA
534 West 26th Street
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La Estrella, [P]y[X]i[S], oRiOn: We're caught up in the jumbled syntax of the heavens in Keltie Ferris's dazzling show of ten paintings and six body prints, all from 2015. The constellations that lend their name to some of these canvases trace distinct forms but are composed of flickering stars whose boundaries are less clear to us down on Earth. And this is a central aspect of Ferris's paintings, whose thin airbrushed oil layers and dragged acrylic strokes build a rich color space (here, moving beyond the loose neon graffiti of her 2012–13 gallery show into deep purples, reds, ochers) that shifts in and out of focus. Are these shapes or are they impressions?

This, of course, is also a key query for Ferris's body prints, which for the first time are shown alongside her paintings. In these prints, the artist, dressed in jeans and a denim shirt, like Elvis in Warhol's screen prints, pressed her oiled figure against paper and then sprinkled powdered pigment over its ground, revealing a wrinkled, indexical presence. Yves Klein, Jasper Johns, and David Hammons come to mind. Their complicated relationships to body and identity are not lost on Ferris.

The mix of prints and paintings on view underscores the surface-to-air oscillations in her deft touch. On one wall, a particularly strong progression of material and atmosphere moves from the obscured, wildfire landscape narrative of *Story to Marksman*, which looks like a pixelated Pollock or Brice Marden made with the airbrush tool in Photoshop, to an untitled work that appears to be a collection of Ferris's toes melting into a Gustonesque abstract field. These are followed by two body prints, with boxy lines painted around their impressions as if marking new astrological forms.

— Prudence Peiffer



Keltie Ferris, *oRiOn*, 2015, acrylic and oil on canvas, 72 x 60".