

MITCHELL-INNES & NASH

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What to See in N.Y.C. Galleries in November

By John Vincler, Max Lakin, Travis Diehl, Jillian Steinhauer, Will Heinrich, Blake Gopnik, Dawn Chan and Roberta Smith
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Want to see new art in New York this weekend? Check out Keltie Ferris’s scintillating body prints in Chelsea; “Wild Style” memorabilia in SoHo; Joseph J. Greer’s laser-cut steel sculptures in Chinatown; and Qualeasha Wood’s Jacquard tapestries on the Lower East Side.

Newly Reviewed: CHELSEA – KELTIE FERRIS

Through Dec. 9. Mitchell-Innes & Nash, 534 West 26th Street, Manhattan; 212-744-7400



Keltie Ferris, “The Traumatatics,” 2023, oil, powdered pigment and vinyl paint on canvas. via Keltie Ferris and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York

The ecstasy that the Brooklyn-based painter Keltie Ferris finds in color recalls Matisse. His willingness to explore the possibilities of a particular tool through painting mirrors Jasper Johns. His nods to digital culture and use of the grid suggest an affinity with Albert Oehlen and, more so, Laura Owens, as in “sWISHes” (2023), a loose tangle of squiggles — a not-quite calligraphy

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of yellow and aqua spray paint — that dances atop a field of squares in a variety of contrasting colors predominated by blue on pink. The resulting painting strikes a delicate harmonious cohesion, cleverly creating a sense of depth and motion, with no real-world referent, except maybe pixels and graffiti. If “sWISHes” is a painting of anything it may be this: a dogged belief that painting at this late stage still has a future.

Three of the strongest paintings incorporate the body-print method Ferris has adapted from Johns and David Hammons — a technique of oiling the body, impressing it on canvas and then using powdered pigments to create an image. In “The Traumatics” (2023), the artist’s imprinted body moves rhythmically across the canvas from warm reds and yellows to cool blues on a black ground. A pair of jeans pops legibly at the center, as iconic as any of Richard Prince’s cowboys.

In the dozen paintings on view, Ferris uses spray guns, oil sticks and brushes, palette knives for building up and scraping away, as well as his body in paintings that explore what possibilities the medium may yet yield.

JOHN VINCLER