

New American Paintings

Shannon Finley: "Paintings for the Future"

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If you get up close to Shannon Finley's paintings, on view at Jessica Silverman Gallery through October 29, you'll catch a glimpse of the warp and weft of the canvas beneath all that color. It's there, visible along the very edges of the work where the stretcher bars made tight contact with Finley's palette knife and squeezed out all the paint. But from the distance of your monitor you may not even realize that the slick compositions are paintings at all -- they originate on Finley's computer, all polygons and symmetry and speaking a kind of digital language. Take one step closer and they're unmistakably beautiful paintings, as engrossing and aesthetically wrought as large beautiful paintings tend to be. One step closer still and they performatively reveal their material processes -- scrapes from the palette knife trace the artist's path, and dried globules of paint point to a temporal kind of accumulation. And the support, that canvas I mentioned earlier, begins to allude to that postmodernist bent of turning painting inside out, of making paintings that reveal themselves via their own constitution. But that's not quite what's happening here. At least not exactly.