

NY CULTURE

Pure Pigments, Geometric Paintings, Gold Lamé

A Calendar of Fine Art Exhibitions and Events in Greater New York

By PETER PLAGENS

Aug. 1, 2014 9:42 p.m. ET

Jeffrey Cortland Jones: Did I See You, See Me (In a New Light)

Kathryn Markel

529 W. 20th St.

(212) 366-5368

Through Aug. 29

I once asked John Coplans—the bull-in-a-china-shop museum director, art-magazine editor and merciless photographer of his own aging body, who thought any serious artist should get out there in the big city and directly tackle the art issues of the day—"What about the guy who just wants to paint profoundly beautiful pictures in his studio and hopes there's somebody out there who will appreciate them?"

Referring to the great Los Angeles assemblagist and fellow crockery-buster, Mr. Coplans answered: "Ed Kienholz goes out at night in his pickup truck to find them and run them down."

It's a good thing that Jeffrey Cortland Jones (b. 1974), a professor of art at the University of Dayton in Ohio, never walked the streets of Los Angeles at night. Otherwise, we might not have the sensitive, mostly white, delicately geometric paintings on paper and small panels—which incorporate rather than appropriate the combined aesthetics of Robert Ryman and Christopher Wilmarth—that constitute a touching, pretty, grows-on-you little show.

Note: Mr. Jones has on his website a series of photographs of doors, signs and corners of paintings, entitled "Of a Shyness That Is Criminally Vulgar." It's an instructive preview to this exhibition, which is the best thing in a back room I've seen in a long time.

—Mr. Plagens is an artist and writer in New York.