

Review

THE CRITICAL STATE OF VISUAL ART IN NEW YORK

October 15, 1997

Nola Zirin

Recent Paintings

June Kelly Gallery through November 4

BY JEANNE C. WILKINSON

THIS ARTIST HAS A sensual, practiced touch on the canvas. Her facility shows up in the small paintings in particular where a sweep of paint, a lyrical stroke becomes the focus of the composition. Each of the small works becomes a kind of showcase for a particularly lovely bit.

As the paintings get larger, they become more expansive, less precious. The painting style is abstract, yet references to landscape are unmistakable and obviously intentional. A sweep of black or blue, smears and spans of gray or gold become horizon, water, cloud, sky. The most striking works are also the most minimal – when the artist holds back some of the lushness and texture, the work solidifies itself. One painting, *YOU CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE*, is particularly memorable, featuring a dark foreground, a central streak of blueish-white running horizontally, fading into gray in the upper section. This simple abstract, yet evocative, format is profound, beautiful.

The largest painting, *FRAGILITY*, 1996, has no reference to horizon, and is more an abstract field, ghostlike and shimmering. The paintings are all refreshingly unlike each other; the artist has not fallen prey to a pat style. She seems to be using her skills to express beauty, and also to search for something that is beauty's source.