



[Peter Wayne Lewis](#) @ Rosenberg + Kaufman, 115 Wooster St., closed April 22.  
[Rebecca Purdum](#) @ Jack Tilton, 49 Greene Street, closed April 22.

### Peter Wayne Lewis

These paintings are concerned with the illusory aspects of visual space. Lewis achieves this in two ways. The first is through an active treatment of forms and color, which, among other things, includes the suggestion of a classical rendering of space. This is found within the "inside" painting as opposed to what surrounds them. Here he weaves color, texture and form in a complex and controlled chaos. In so doing he creates a sense of motion that destabilizes the space. The combination produces a visual cacophony of forms that pits traditional landscape painting against something far more funky and loose. A useful metaphor might be to imagine an exhibition of wild AbEx paintings held in one of the classic galleries of the Met.



**Peter Wayne Lewis**, *Field # 9*, 1999, Oil on Panel, 48 x 48 in

Lewis' other method for dealing with space is to frame the inside imagery with a high gloss, painted surface. The forms they suggest are minimal and the color is monochromatically reductive. This has the effect of isolating the active inside painting and furthering its treatment of space. The inside painting, then, becomes an illusory portal of reality - the idea of a painting within a painting within a painting. It makes for an interesting conceptual exercise but it can get to be a bit repetitive as well. Still, the outside painted surfaces are equally engaging and one recalls, in their heavily painted textures, the suggestion of waves or a pattern of scalloped shells.



**Peter Wayne Lewis**, *Field # 15*, 1999, Oil on Panel, 48 x 48 in



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In a conversation with the artist he mentioned the importance of music in his life and how he tries to articulate this in his paintings. He is successful in this with both approaches; first, by aggressively modulating the forms and second, by presenting evenly tempered patterns of rhythm. The two treatments also conspire to give this work a



**Rebecca Purdum, *Around*, 1999, Oil on Canvas, 9 x 6 ft**



**Peter Wayne Lewis, *Field # 2*, 1999, Oil on Panel, 48 x 48 in**

surrealistic quality. Lewis does vary his forms, color and proportions of the work a great deal, which keeps it all compelling. But it might be interesting to see what would happen if some of these paintings were totally unconstrained by the painted frame or open to addressing it in other ways.

**Rebecca Purdum**

This artist has been creating atmospheric abstract paintings with varied success for several years. The primary difficulty has been incorporating large forms into the more ethereal sensibility of the work. But there is nothing varied about the success of the current work and here Purdum gets it just right, striking a perfect balance between the two.

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