

# CHEIM & READ

## The New York Times

### What to See in N.Y.C. Galleries Right Now



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By **Roberta Smith, Max Lakin, John Vincler and Travis Diehl**

Dec. 22, 2022

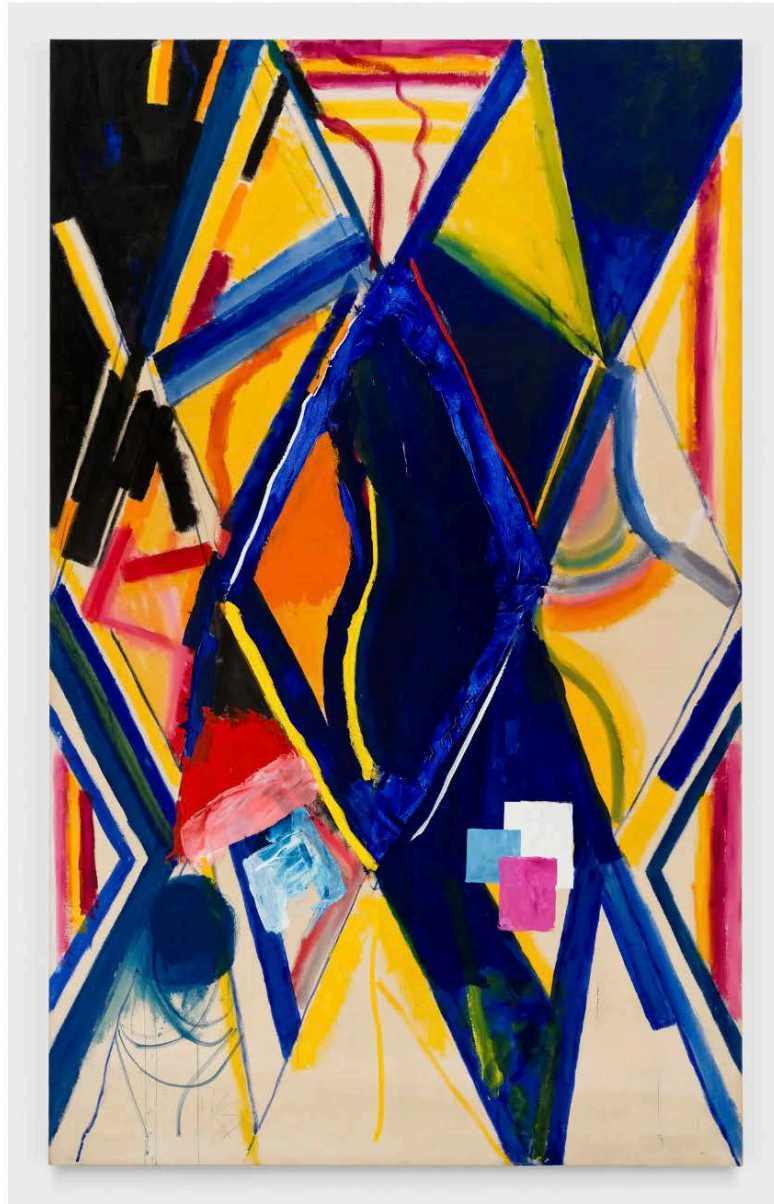
10 MIN READ

*Want to see new art in New York this weekend? Start in Chelsea with “Regarding Kimber” at Cheim & Read, and Beryl Cook’s rowdy tableaus at A Hug From the Art World. Then head to Chinatown for Covey Gong & Eli Ping’s comradely dialogue at Lubov, and Mathieu Malouf’s shiitake-studded composition at Jenny’s.*

CHELSEA

## Regarding Kimber

Through Jan. 7. Cheim & Read, 547 West 25th Street, Manhattan. 212-242-7727;  
[cheimread.com](http://cheimread.com).



Kimber Smith's painting "K's Mandolin" (1970), which combines hard and soft edges with intimations of graffiti. Kimber Smith Estate; via Cheim & Read, New York

The art dealer Jay Gorney has built a small invigorating group show around the work of the perennially overlooked American painter Kimber Smith (1922-1981), combining four of his works with those of seven living artists. Maybe it will finally secure permanent visibility for his art.

Smith worked with an air of buoyant, irreverent improvisation, by mixing styles and techniques, as in the bright, slightly demonic “K’s Mandolin” (1970), which combines hard and soft edges with intimations of graffiti, or by pushing painting to sketchy extremes like “June 13 (Gabrielle)” of 1979, which evokes children’s drawing. Smith is linked to second-generation Abstract Expressionism or Color Field painting. But he seems more a disrupter of both styles, part of an ongoing process of the contamination of abstract painting by real life that has been underway at least since early modernists like Miro.



Matt Connors’s “Flopist” (2022), in acrylic, oil and pencil on canvas. Matt Connors; via Ortuzar Projects and Cheim & Read

All the artists here pursue contamination. Joanne Greenbaum builds up dense networks of colorful lines that should break out in cartoons but never do. Joe Fyfe collages his spare painting with a second piece of canvas and what seems to be a scrap of a vinyl sign. Eric N. Mack reduces painting to thin veils of color stretched into real space. Marina Adams stays on canvas but also stretches her forms, distorting them like textiles. Matt Connors actually makes a patterned textile the half-hidden subject of his especially Kimber-like effort. The contemporary paintings — including those by the eminent Peter Shear and Monique Mouton — make Smith seem very much of our time, and so, ahead of his. *ROBERTA SMITH*