

## **JOHN KISSICK AT THE LEO KAMEN GALLERY**

By Gary Michael Dault

John Kissick's new paintings are precisely four times as large as the succulent little abstracts on copper he showed here last year -- and four times as fine. Which is, admittedly, saying a lot. These tasty, chromatically intoxicating new works are on thick plaques of laminated plywood, each 60 centimetres square and 15 centimetres thick. Kissick apparently paints them flat on the floor, and you can see where the drips and drizzles of excess pigment, refugees from the painterly fray, have dribbled over the edges. When the paintings are mounted on the gallery wall, these fugitive spatters -- so raw and thus so remote from the exploratory beauty of Kissick's pictures themselves -- serve to foreground even further the focused self-consciousness of the artist's pure painterly activity. And such activity! These new paintings are so impossibly rich in colour, complex in organization, subtle in attack, that words fail them -- or at least do them a deep disservice. Would it help to say that Kissick's ropes of burning-hot scarlet electrify his dark fens of brooding, sepulchral lead-greys and funereal blacks? Not much. How about musing on how Kissick's great serpent-like coils of jade-green spring from caves of cream and indigo and then fall back depleted onto navy-blue seas? Nah. The thing is, pictures this beautiful can destroy your mind. *\$2,400 each. Until Sept. 25. 80 Spadina Ave., suite 406. 416-504-9515.*

Gary Michael Dault, "John Kissick at the Leo Kamen Gallery." *Globe and Mail*,  
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