

Peter Plagens, "Sonia Almeida: 'The Angle of the Sun's Rays,'" *Wall Street Journal*, March 3 2012, page: A22.

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Sonia Almeida/Simone Subal Gallery

'Diagonal Pathway' (2011) by Sonia Almeida

Sonia Almeida: 'The Angle of the Sun's Rays'

Simone Subal Gallery

131 Bowery, (917) 409-0612

Through March 25

There's a back-handedly twee brand of abstract painting making the gallery rounds. Perhaps fed up with—or simply not seduced by—the fashion for complex, theatrical works of installation art and high-definition video narratives, many painters are contentedly applying, without much fuss, a few incomplete layers of modestly colorful paint to very plain surfaces, sometimes even pieces of less-than-mint-condition plywood. That's what Sonia Almeida (b. 1978) does. But she does it extremely well; with her, easygoing painting isn't merely easy.

Ms. Almeida has a flair for offbeat shapes, particularly a negative space that looks like half a fleur-de-lis—which she repeats in a couple of paintings—and a silhouette of St. George killing the dragon. But what sets her apart from the informal-abstraction crowd is her color. She employs a salmon pink, for instance, to stunning effect in "Diagonal Pathway" (2011), and orchestrates a mostly muted palette to get a surprisingly strong graphic impact in a little picture called "Sunrise" (2011). Of course, I have quibbles: A lone tapestry could have been left out, and Ms. Almeida should either go whole-hog with her vertical stripes or leave them behind. But all in all, "Angle" is filled with some subtly tasty painting.