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ART GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Julia Rommel

From afar, the large geometric abstractions by this New York painter look energetically nonchalant. But get close and you'll discover that they are actually the products of a laborious ritual of folding and unfolding, painting and repainting, who knows how many times. The show's title, "Candy Jail," suggests both the frustration of painting oneself into a corner and the pleasures of Rommel's palette of SweetTart pastels and Jolly Rancher jewel tones. An accompanying statement from the artist strikes a confessional note: she writes that she had hoped to keep the paint application thin, but instead had to "pull life from its thickness." She succeeded—especially with the tangle of racing stripes in "Fredson," and in the lavender "Great White Shark," which looks and feels like a big open window.

—*Johanna Fateman*