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**ANDREW MASULLO:
Recent Paintings**

At: Steven Zevitas Gallery,
450 Harrison Ave.,
through Dec. 3. 617-778-5265,
stevenzevitasgallery.com



Small revelations

Andrew Masullo paints on his lap. That explains the smallish scale and strange intimacy of his abstract paintings, up at Steven Zevitas Gallery. The artist has been painting for years and has developed something of a cult following, perhaps because he appears to disregard theory, trends, and concepts in order simply to paint.

Not that we cannot ascribe theories and apply the art world to Masullo. He uses candy colors and flat forms that sometimes deepen to suggest quite shallow space. His works are unassuming, yet focused and even weird — like Milton Avery's paintings, in mood, if not in imagery and tone.

Escher-like patterns appear, such as the conjoined diamond shapes undulating through "5266." Two forms square off across a bubblegum-pink ground in "5239," a jagged red shape cuffed in white and a royal blue cloud. And "5260" fills one red corner with a bevy of swelling bright shapes; it's like a high window looking in on a balloon-blowing contest.

The accumulation of 25 such canvases is even more riveting than a single piece. One is like a shy fellow at a cocktail party, fading into the background. With several, the party somehow becomes a shy person's paradise, and the conversation turns in wonderful directions. Masullo's paintings address and coax to life small, sometimes hidden things. When tended to, they thrive.