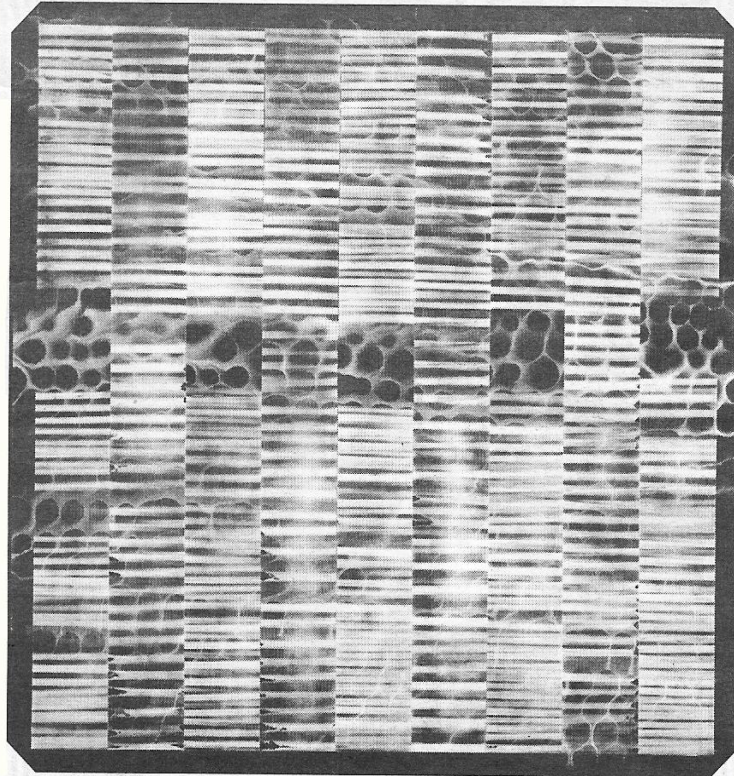


RECOMMENDED

**Order: New Paintings by Deborah Pelias**

New Orleans may be many things, but minimal it ain't. Given our local preference for organic clutter over stark simplicity, the Heriard-Cimino Gallery's longtime emphasis on minimalism may have been a bit of a gamble. If so, it seems to have paid off in the work of artists such as Deborah Pelias, whose abstract, near-monochromatic canvases come across as the opposite of the baroque flourishes that one might expect from a city that identifies itself so totally with the fleur de lis. But look again and there's a lot going on under those translucent surfaces with their mysterious covering and uncovering of repeated shapes in primarily muted tones. Seemingly stark when seen from a distance, their silky surfaces soon reveal a subtle patterning that somehow spans the gap between man and nature, East and West, the simple and the complex. — *D. Eric Bookhardt*

Through Feb. 10

Heriard-Cimino Gallery, 440 Julia St., 525-7300; www.heriardcimino.com