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There's a funny simplicity to **Kate Shepherd's** work that skirts the edges of the profound and the quirky. In her current show of oil paintings, sculptures of wax heads, drawings on paint-chip samples and dollar bills covered in wax, Shepherd feminizes the minimalist gesture. While the beautiful wax heads and the rainbow-hued dollar bills have an interesting quality that hovers between sentiment and irony, the drawings on paint-chip samples are the real attraction here. These tiny works (averaging around one-inch square), which are arranged in series, display a range of motifs, including ducks, bunnies, deer and daffodils, as well as the *Star Wars* sage Yoda and E.T., landscapes and geometric shapes. The simplicity of Shepherd's art is beguiling and slightly misleading, because her perception is quite complex. There's a certain rigor to these works: the precise harmony of color and shape, and the carefully modulated palette that sweeps from deep blue to the palest whisper of pink, green, yellow and white. In some, Shepherd softens the spare outline of a flag, a boat, a flower or the hint of a horizon line by dipping the paint chip in wax or using carbon paper. Particularly affecting are the landscapes: a swimming pool, a diving board or telephone wires are rendered with elegant economy. This mixture of seriousness and whimsy is one of Shepherd's great charms.

Boesky & Callery Fine Arts, 51 Greene St., through Mar. 15.

BY VICTORIA PEDERSEN