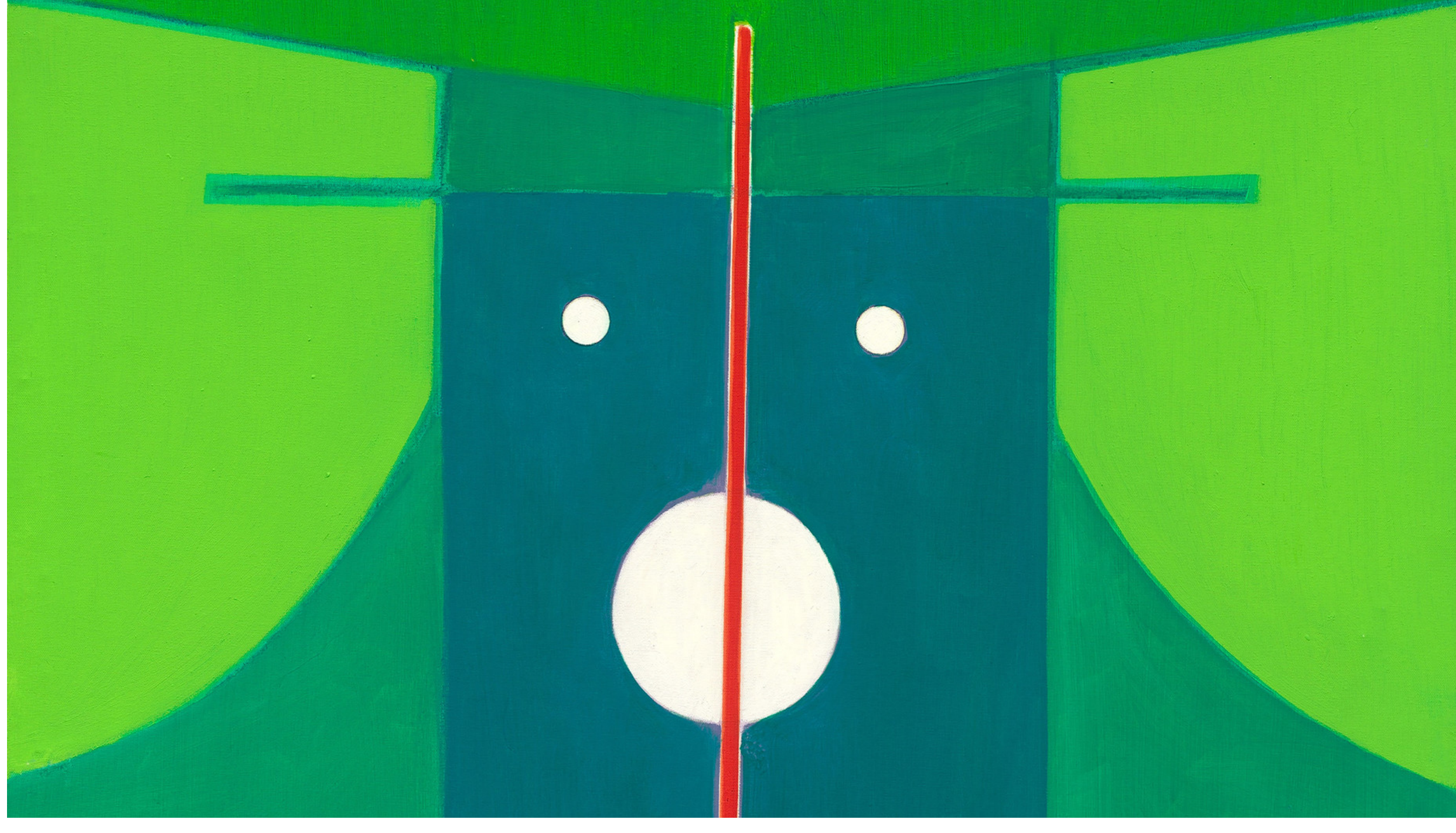


Ho Kan. Geometric Calligraphy

2 Oct – 16 Dec 2021 at Eli Klein Gallery in New York, United States

14 OCTOBER 2021



Ho Kan, Abstract, 2013, Oil on canvas, 70x50cm. Courtesy of Eli Klein Gallery

Eli Klein Gallery is honored to present “Geometric Calligraphy” - Taiwanese abstraction master Ho Kan’s first ever solo exhibition in the United States. Ho is regarded as one of the most prominent figures in Taiwan’s history of art whose influence spans over five decades. This exhibition surveys 38 works in abstraction across a variety of disciplines including oil on canvas, charcoal on paper, ink on rice paper and silkscreen print. The works on display which were done from 2006 and 2019 exemplify Ho Kan’s unique lexicon of treating geometric abstraction (commonly referred to as ‘cold abstraction’) with the warmth of calligraphy and Eastern thoughts.

Ho Kan was a founding member of the pivotal “Ton Fan Art Group,” where he was instrumental in the development of modern art in Taiwan. Ho was born in Nanjing, China in 1932, and graduated from Taipei Teacher’s School Department of Art in 1953. He then studied extensively in Milan, during which time he established his unique approach towards geometric abstraction in which Eastern calligraphy and seal-carving are poetically integrated. He started from the most simple but universal elements of □, △, and ○ to create his own lexicon in the arrangement of image and shape -- embedding Eastern philosophy in the Western framework of abstraction, resulting in a forward-looking and universal aesthetic.

Minimalism and geometric abstraction were responses in formulating our aesthetics in accordance with standardized production in the post-industrial era. This perspective is designed to be appreciated without a focal point or center of gravity; any color fields are to be treated as plains of absolute unity and formality. Within these contexts, the “human factors” became mere imperfections and were clearly de-focused. Ho Kan, on the other hand, reintroduces the “human factor” into his geometric abstractions in which all color fields seem different and “imperfect”.

This style developed naturally from his deep roots in calligraphy and Chinese traditional paintings where “ink encompasses all the five colors” (墨分五色) when black is progressively washed down. Regardless of the tint, Ho’s color fields carry a hand-made warmth that is inviting and inclusive, separating him from his Western counterparts in geometric abstractions. Not limited to color fields, these key characteristics are clearly detectable in his approach towards lines and color-separators as well.

“Action through inaction” has always been one of Ho Kan’s favorite Taoist concepts. The execution of “inaction” and not “over-doing” is exhibited in Ho Kan’s symmetry-breaking slanted lines. In Abstract 2013-005 (2013), Abstract 2017-037 (2017) and many other works on view, a slanted line is inserted with emphasis to unbalance the images - like an initiation or a trigger. Nonetheless, this seemingly intrusive line doesn’t overthrow the entire structure. It perfectly exemplifies Ho Kan’s stance on how human maneuvers can organically co-exist with our natural and social environment.

Whereas Eastern styles of abstraction have historically been overshadowed by Western masters grouped by “schools” and “isms,” Ho Kan’s calligraphic approach towards geometric abstraction carries such warmth, highlighting the human factors in our increasingly rigid and mechanical world.

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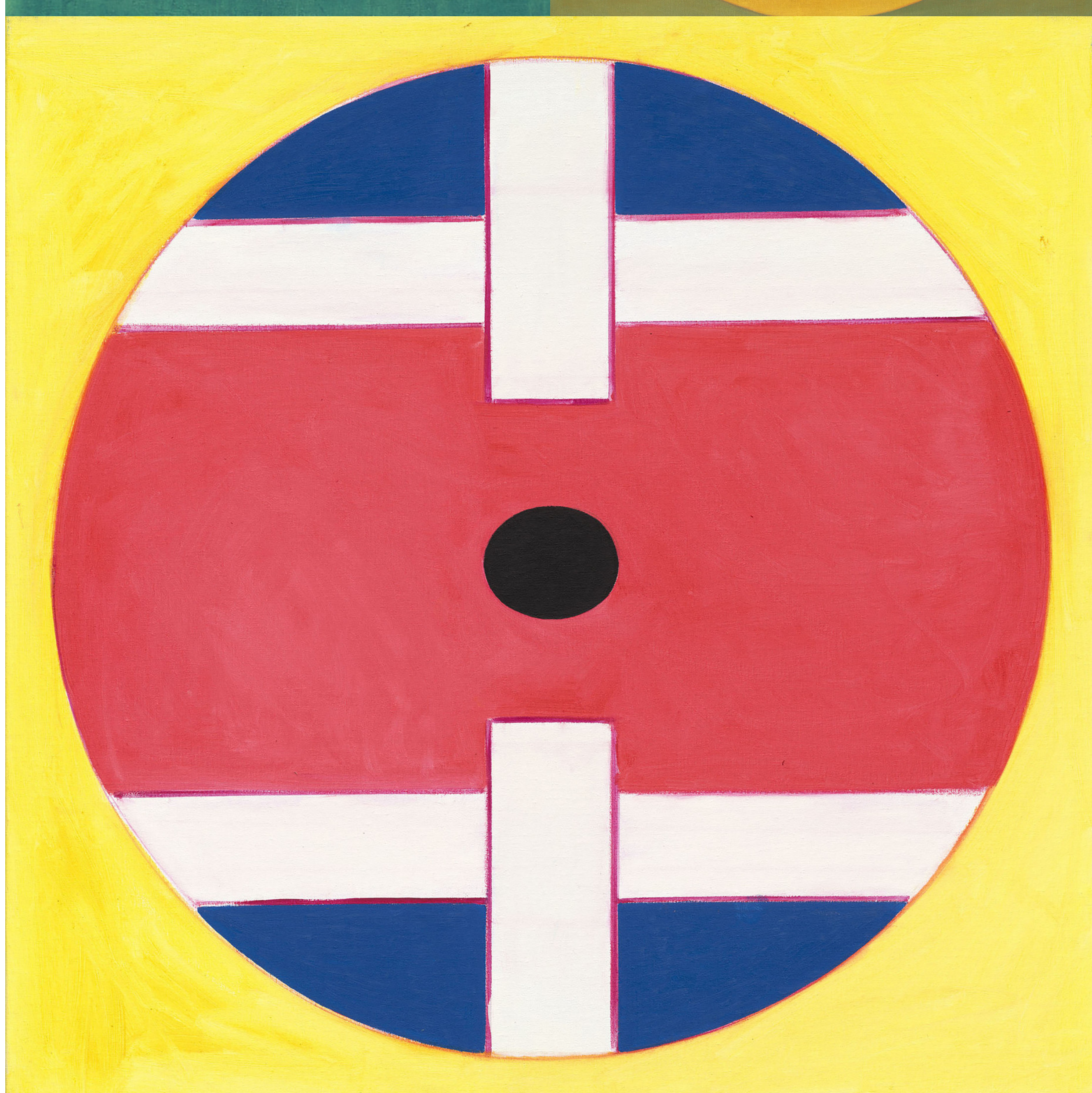
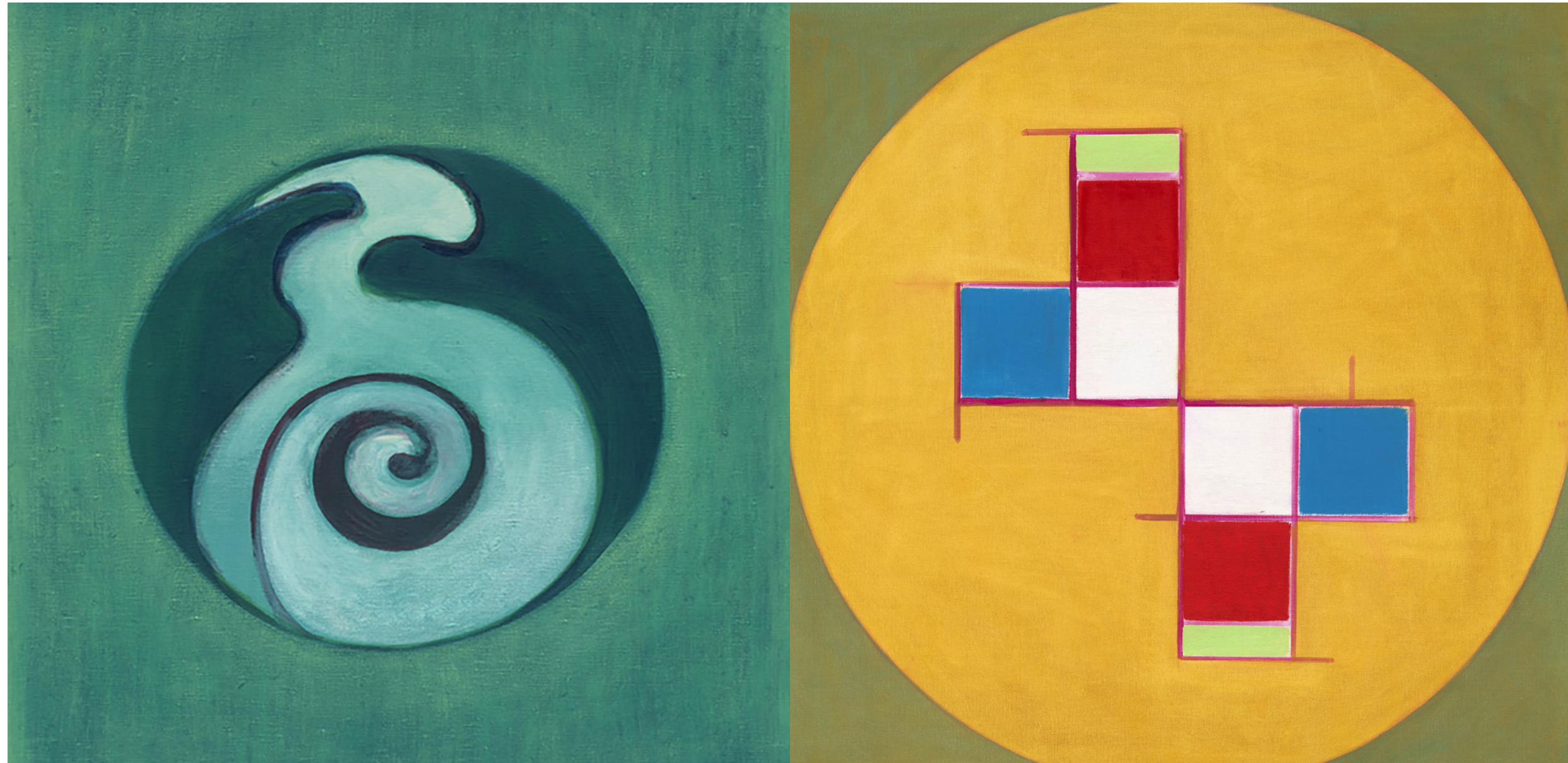


Eli Klein Gallery

Eli Klein Gallery has an international reputation as one of the foremost galleries specializing in contemporary Chinese art and continues to advance the careers of its represented artists and hundreds of other Chinese artists with whom it has collaborated.

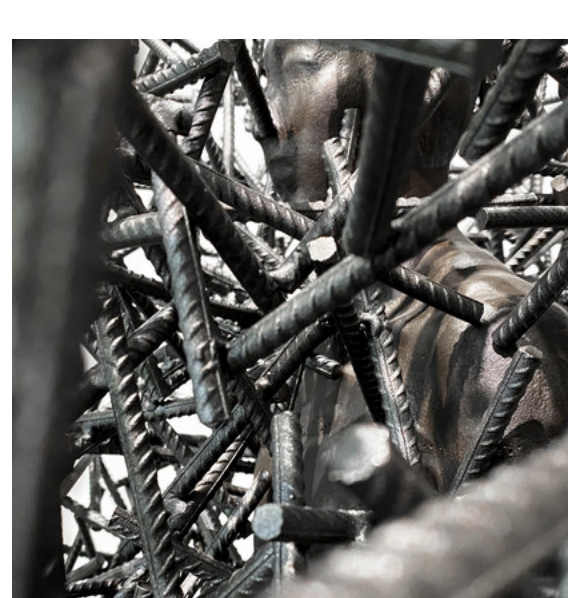
[Gallery profile](#)

Location: New York, United States | Founded in: 2007



- Ho Kan, Origin, 2010, Oil on canvas, 50x50cm. Courtesy of Eli Klein Gallery
- Ho Kan, Abstract, 2015, Oil on canvas, 100x100cm. Courtesy of Eli Klein Gallery
- Ho Kan, Abstract, 2015, Oil on canvas, 100x100cm. Courtesy of Eli Klein Gallery

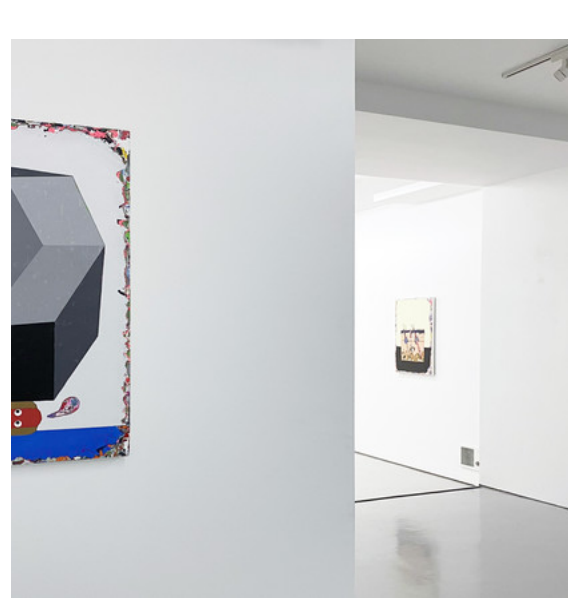
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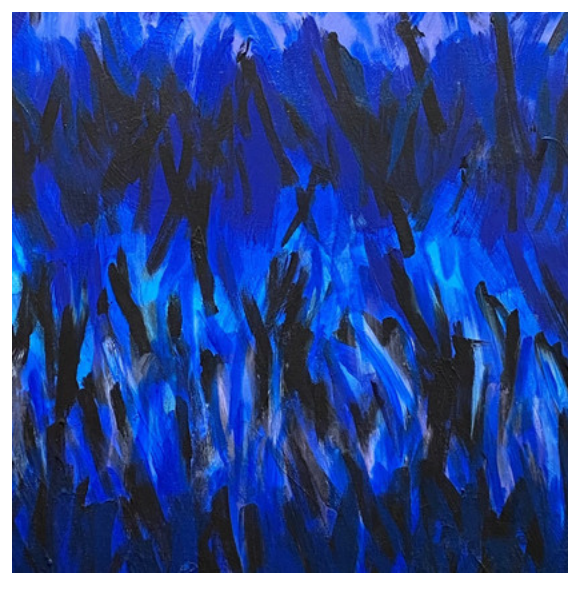


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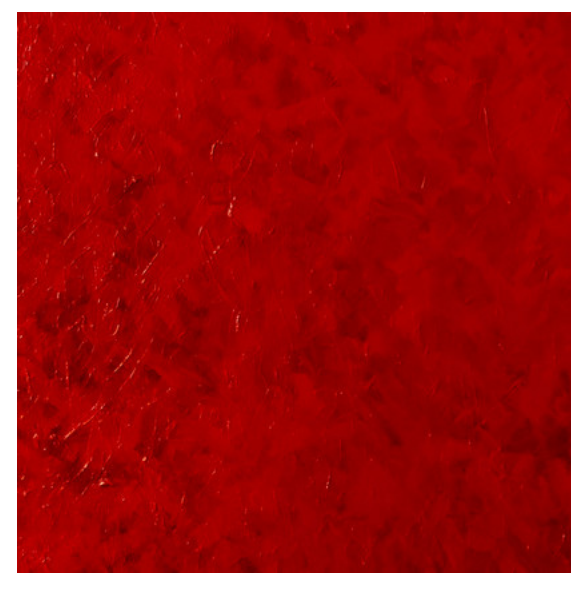


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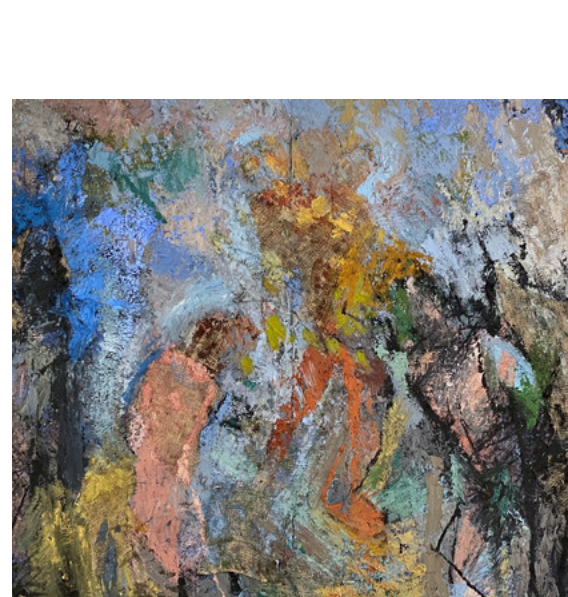


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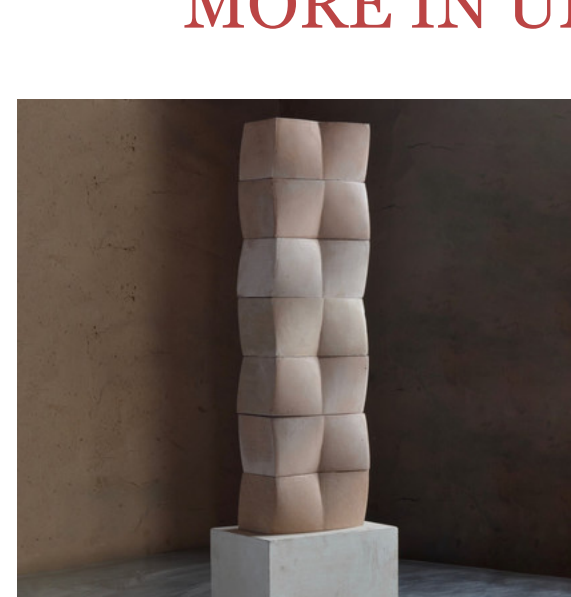


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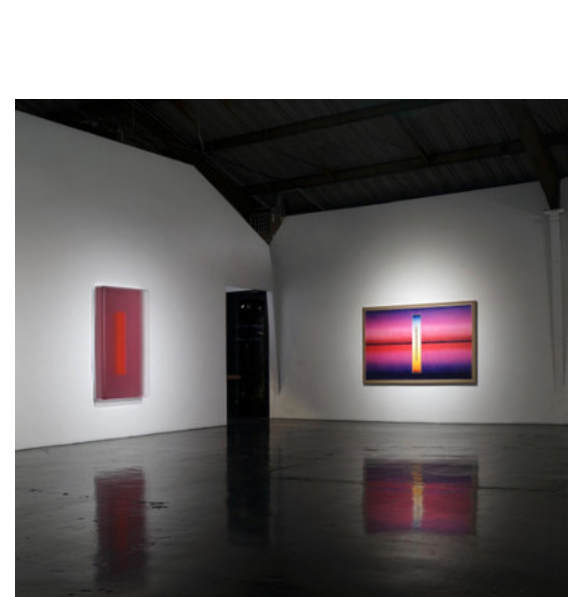
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