



James Barron Art

*Solitary Waves*

The Art Show 2021  
November 3 - 7, 2021  
Booth A8

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Ellen Cantor  
Vija Celmins  
Anthony Caro  
Moira Dryer  
Sidival Fila  
Vera Girivi  
Pam Glick  
Norman Lewis  
Sol LeWitt  
Sally Michel Avery  
Dan Miller  
Jules Olitski  
Beverly Pepper  
Richard Pousette-Dart  
Alexis Rockman  
Laura de Santillana  
Leopold Strobl  
Wolfgang Tillmans  
Bob Thompson  
Elisabetta Zangrandi

# SOLITARY WAVES

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In 1834, Scottish shipbuilder and engineer John Scott Russell watched a boat being drawn along the Union Canal by horses. When the horses and the boat suddenly stopped moving, Russell observed that the wave formed by the boat continued traveling with consistent speed, size, and form. Russell followed the wave on horseback, finally losing it after one or two miles. Wanting to study the phenomenon further, he later reproduced the wave in a wave tank and called it the “Wave of Translation.”

This is now referred to as a solitary wave: a self-reinforcing wave that maintains its shape while moving at a constant speed.

“The wave was traveling along the channel of water for a long period of time while still retaining its original identity.”

Abdul-Majid Wazwaz, *Solitary Waves Theory*

A century later, waves were particularly important to Moira Dryer’s family, which included her aunt Cathleen Synge Morawetz, who also lived in New York, and John L. Synge, her grandfather. Both were celebrated mathematicians contributing to wave theory. In 1990, Dryer painted *The Mathematicians*, a work where waves figure prominently.

Wavelike forms recur throughout Dryer's body of work, along with references to fingerprints, medical tests (EKG), and other concepts involving the mathematics of waves. The energy in these forms builds across Dryer's paintings, pushing at the edges of her signature wood panels.

“EKG and [Dryer's] *Fingerprint* paintings of 1988 [feature] subjects associated with scientific data and investigative medical protocol, yet are visually aqueous and life affirming.”

Valerie Smith

Also featured prominently in *Solitary Waves* are LeWitt gouaches from the 1990s and early 2000s. The undulating, wavelike forms that fill many of these works suggest and defy the grids and other geometric forms that provided the conceptual and aesthetic framework to his earlier pieces. The suggestion of an underlying structure in works like *Irregular Grid* (2000) serves to contain the energetic, wavelike lines of LeWitt's gouaches.

Other artists highlighted in *Solitary Waves* explore mathematics, science, and natural processes through photography. Wolfgang Tillmans' *Freischwimmer 71* directly engages with the physical and chemical properties of photography. Created without a camera, the *Freischwimmer* series records the interactions of light and darkroom chemistry on the surface of color photographic paper. The resulting works are abstract, yet simultaneously representative, as they depict traces of the movements of light and liquid.



André Kertész made his iconic early photograph *Underwater Swimmer* while recovering from a gunshot wound received in World War I. The refraction of light and the motion of the water in *Underwater Swimmer* distort the image, a precursor to his signature mirror distortion photographs.

When Jules Olitski first conceived of his spray paintings in 1964, he remarked, “What I would like in my painting is simply a spray of color that hangs like a cloud, but does not lose its shape.” *Small Blue Painting* vividly illustrates what Olitski meant by this: clouds of blue and red paint appear to hover over each other, continuously both moving forward and receding in the space delineated by the canvas. Solitary waves maintain their shape and energy over time, much like the forms captured by Olitski’s paint, and works by Anthony Caro and Beverly Pepper record wavelike motion in sculpted metal forms.

Pepper’s work in particular speaks to the tension inherent to a solitary wave: dynamic yet contained movement and energy. *Solitary Waves* includes one of Pepper’s earliest sculptures (*Senza Titolo*, 1963) and one her late Cor-Ten works (*Medium Ascension*, 2008), highlighting her lifelong exploration of dichotomies like movement/stillness and gravitational/anti-gravitational. Pepper’s daughter, poet Jorie Graham, notes how Pepper’s forms “appear to lift the earth as if against gravity into the sky in ways that often seem to defy the weight of materiality itself,” echoing the way that the energy of a solitary wave pushes against its own contained form. *Medium Ascension* demonstrates engagement with curved, soaring forms, which dominated her late works.

“Everything else on the canvas is movement, but then there is this flat space where everything quiets down. It’s a transition from one side to the other. Color-wise, that can be very powerful. It’s so loaded with possibilities.”

Pam Glick

Drawing inspiration from the movement of Niagara Falls, Pam Glick’s painting *Heliotrope-Niagara-USA-Canada* is filled with dynamic mark-making, a lively visual language developed by the artist over decades. On either side of the work, these forms are contained by the edges of the canvas, a suggestion of a grid, and a powerful zip down the center of the painting. Glick notes how this zip arises from the boundary between river and fall in Niagara Falls: the spot where the energy and flow of the Niagara River occupies two dimensions in space.

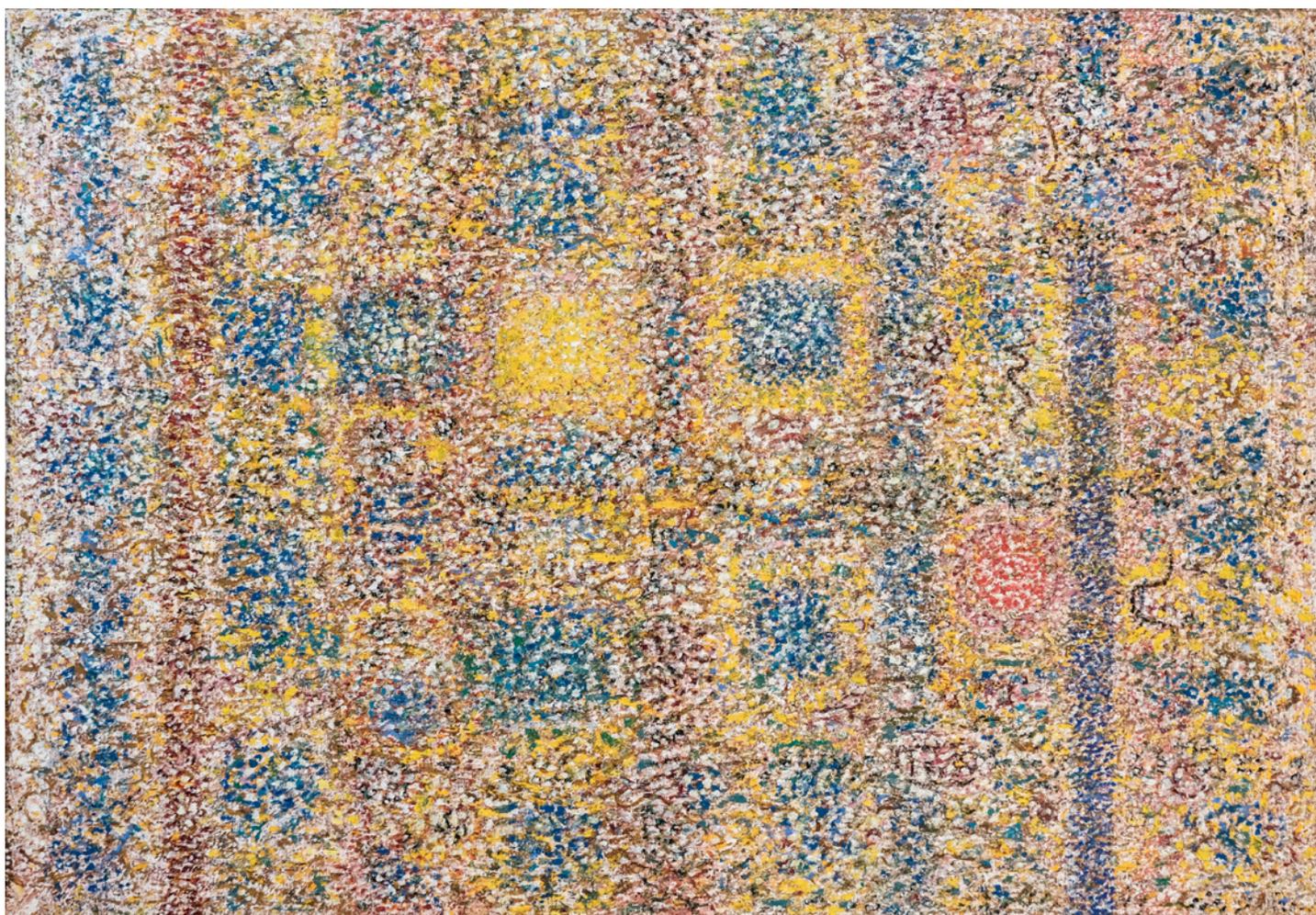
RICHARD POUSETTE-DART

*Untitled from Strata series, 1977*

oil on canvas

50 x 72 inches

(127 x 177.8 cm)



“Art is energy, impulse. It is the question and the answer.”

Richard Pousette-Dart

Known as an early New York School artist, Pousette-Dart experimented with a broad range of forms, symbolism, and mark-making over the course of his career and across multiple mediums. Throughout the 1960s and 70s, Pousette-Dart worked with vibrant dots of paint, transforming Pointillist dots into abstraction.

Pousette-Dart once noted that “photography was how I got to the point.” Early in his career, he worked as an assistant to a photography studio. He admired the magnified film grain of photographs he retouched, realizing how “all form is made up of so many points of light and that everything has a molecular structure.” Pousette-Dart was also a radio enthusiast and amateur ham-radio operator with practical knowledge of electronic circuits. His interest in light, energy, and radio waves manifested themselves in paintings such as *Untitled* (1977). Rather than creating harmonious impressions of color like nineteenth-century Pointillist paintings, Pousette-Dart’s dots serve to generate dynamic, vibrating energy across the canvas.

“The analogies made between his work and natural phenomena arise from his obsession with the energies generated between expansive fields and focal points, centripetal and centrifugal forces, as well as from the color-light sensations which recall Impressionism.”

Lucy Lippard



PAM GLICK

*Heliotrope-Niagara-USA-Canada*, 2021  
enamel, acrylic, and graphite on canvas  
60 x 60 inches  
(152.4 x 152.4 cm)



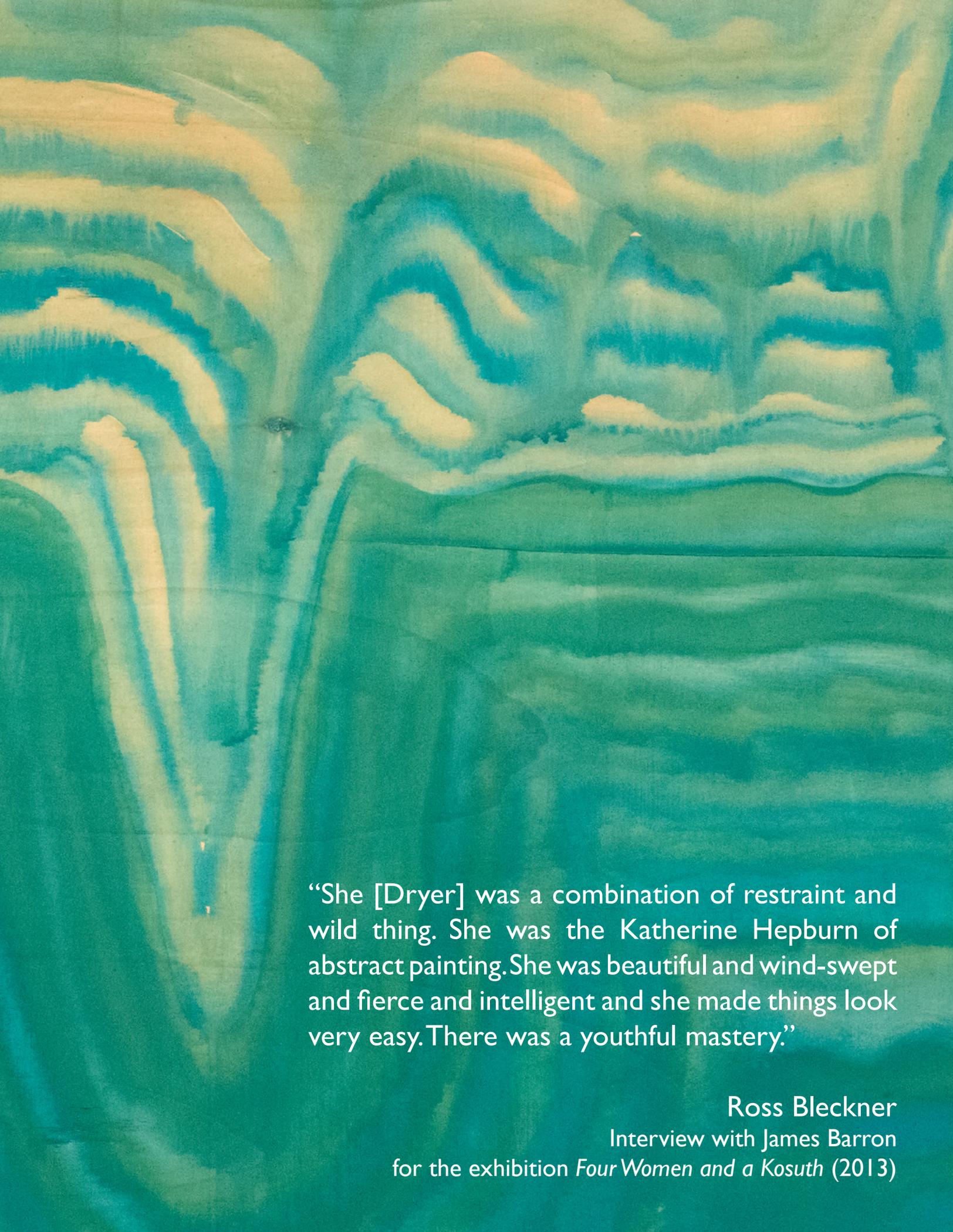
Courtesy of the artist and Tennis Elbow at The Journal Gallery, New York, New York



MOIRA DRYER

EKG, 1988  
casein on wood  
48 x 48 inches  
(121.9 x 121.9 cm)



An abstract painting featuring a complex, layered composition of wavy, organic shapes. The color palette is dominated by various shades of teal and green, with prominent streaks and patches of bright yellow and light blue. The brushwork is visible, creating a sense of movement and depth. The overall effect is reminiscent of a landscape or perhaps a close-up of a natural texture like stone or wood, rendered in a non-representational style.

“She [Dryer] was a combination of restraint and wild thing. She was the Katherine Hepburn of abstract painting. She was beautiful and wind-swept and fierce and intelligent and she made things look very easy. There was a youthful mastery.”

Ross Bleckner  
Interview with James Barron  
for the exhibition *Four Women and a Kosuth* (2013)

ALEXIS ROCKMAN

*Niovgroyok*, 2021  
oil and cold wax on wood  
48 x 40 inches  
(121.9 x 101.6 cm)





“The waves in these paintings have to do with the idea that not only is the energy released, but it’s the outcome of the release of this piece of geology.”

Alexis Rockman

SOL LEWITT

*Untitled*, 1999  
gouache on paper  
29 1/3 x 22 2/3 inches  
(74.5 x 57.5 cm)



ANTHONY CARO

*Table Piece XXXVIII*, 1967  
steel blued and varnished  
10 x 6 x 12 inches  
(25.4 x 15.24 x 30.48 cm)





WOLFGANG TILLMANS

*Freischwimmer 71*, 2004  
light on photo paper, unique  
12 x 16 inches  
(30.5 x 40.6 cm)

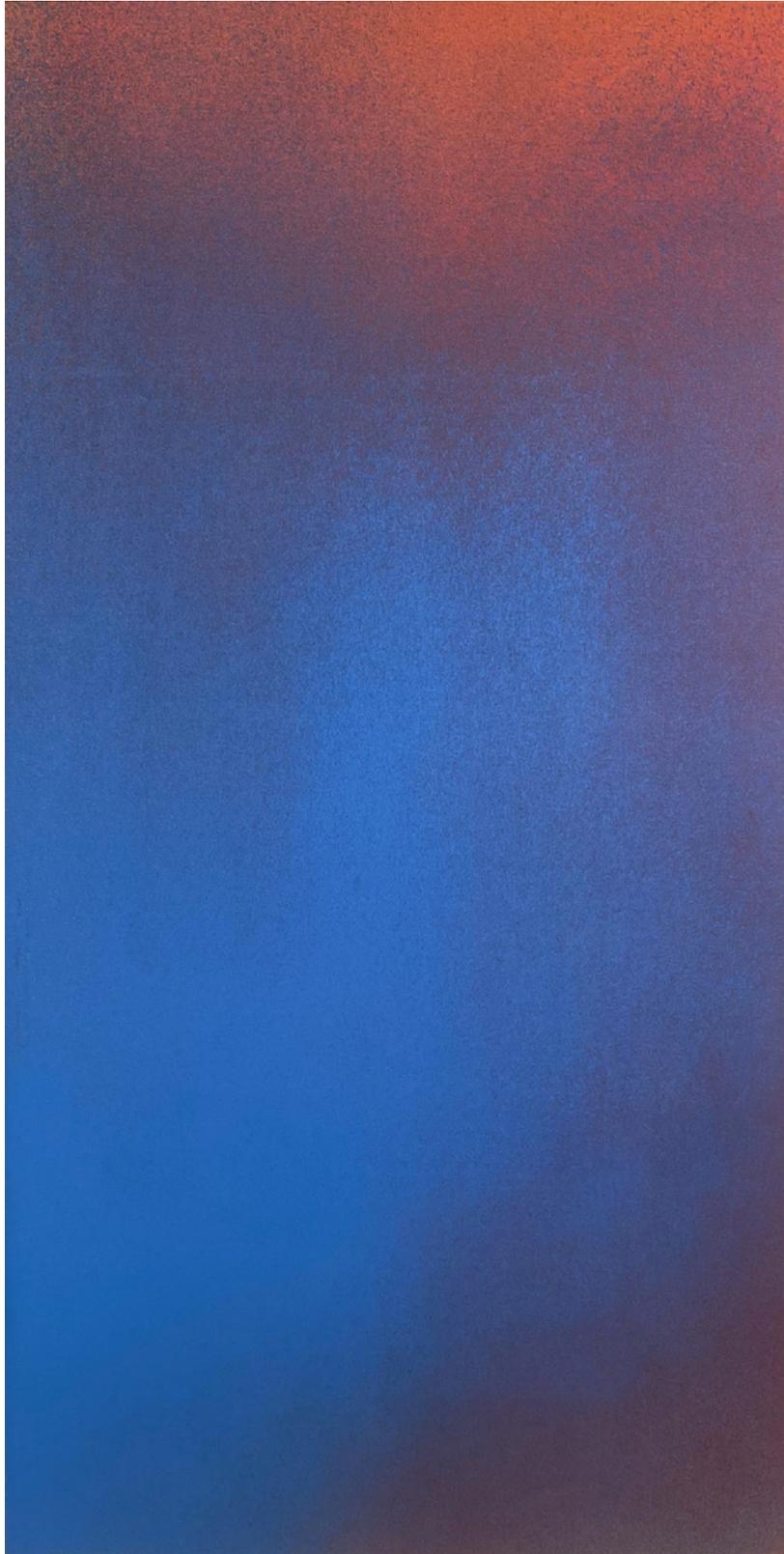


“They [the *Freischwimmer* series] are photographs made without a camera, purely with light... they evoke all sorts of associations, like skin, or astronomy, or chemicals dissolving, and it’s all done by the brain. It’s what your ‘brain association tool’ creates.”

Wolfgang Tillmans

JULES OLITSKI

*Small Blue Painting*, 1966  
acrylic on canvas  
65 x 33 1/2 inches  
(165.1 x 85.1 cm)

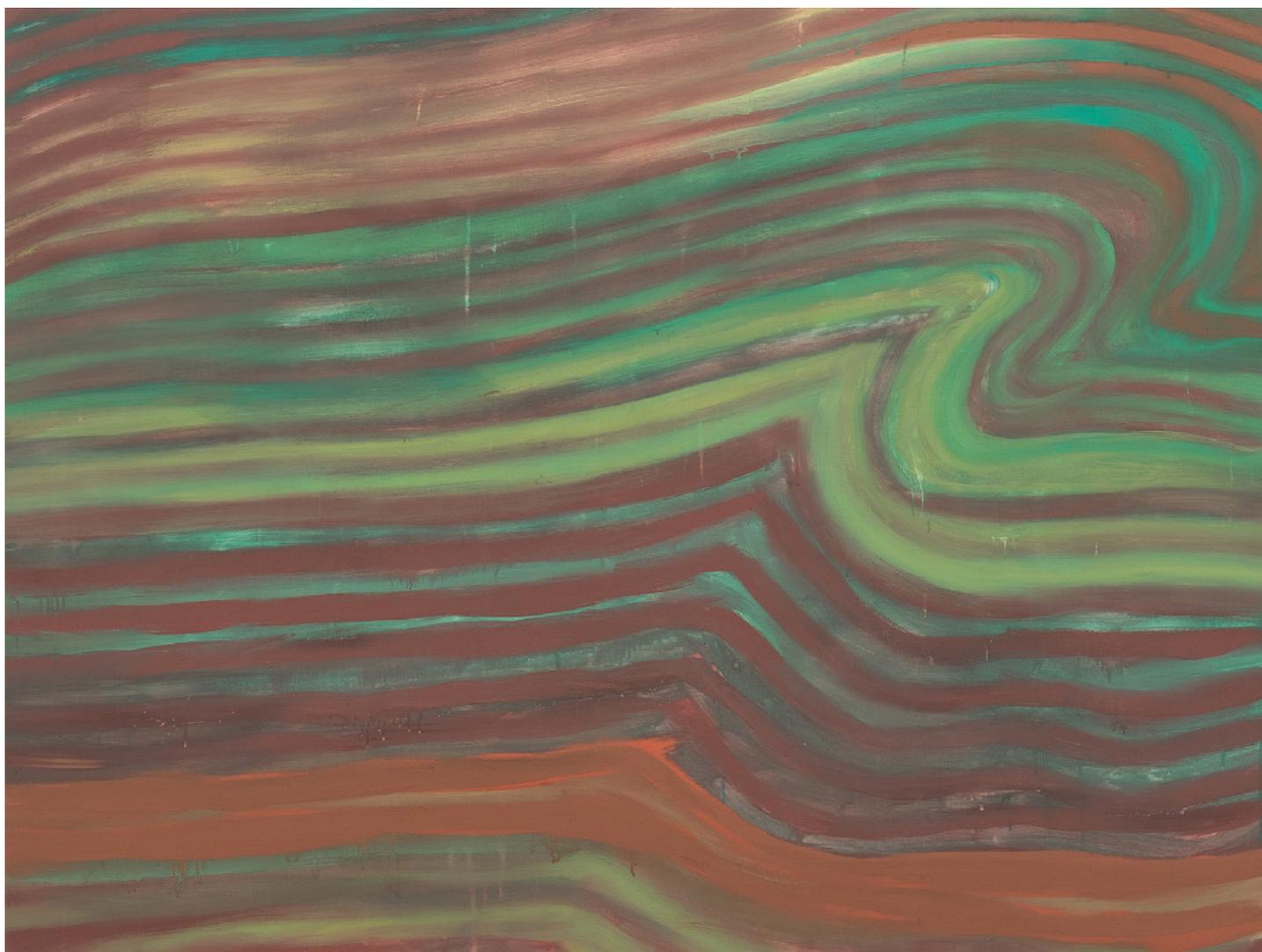


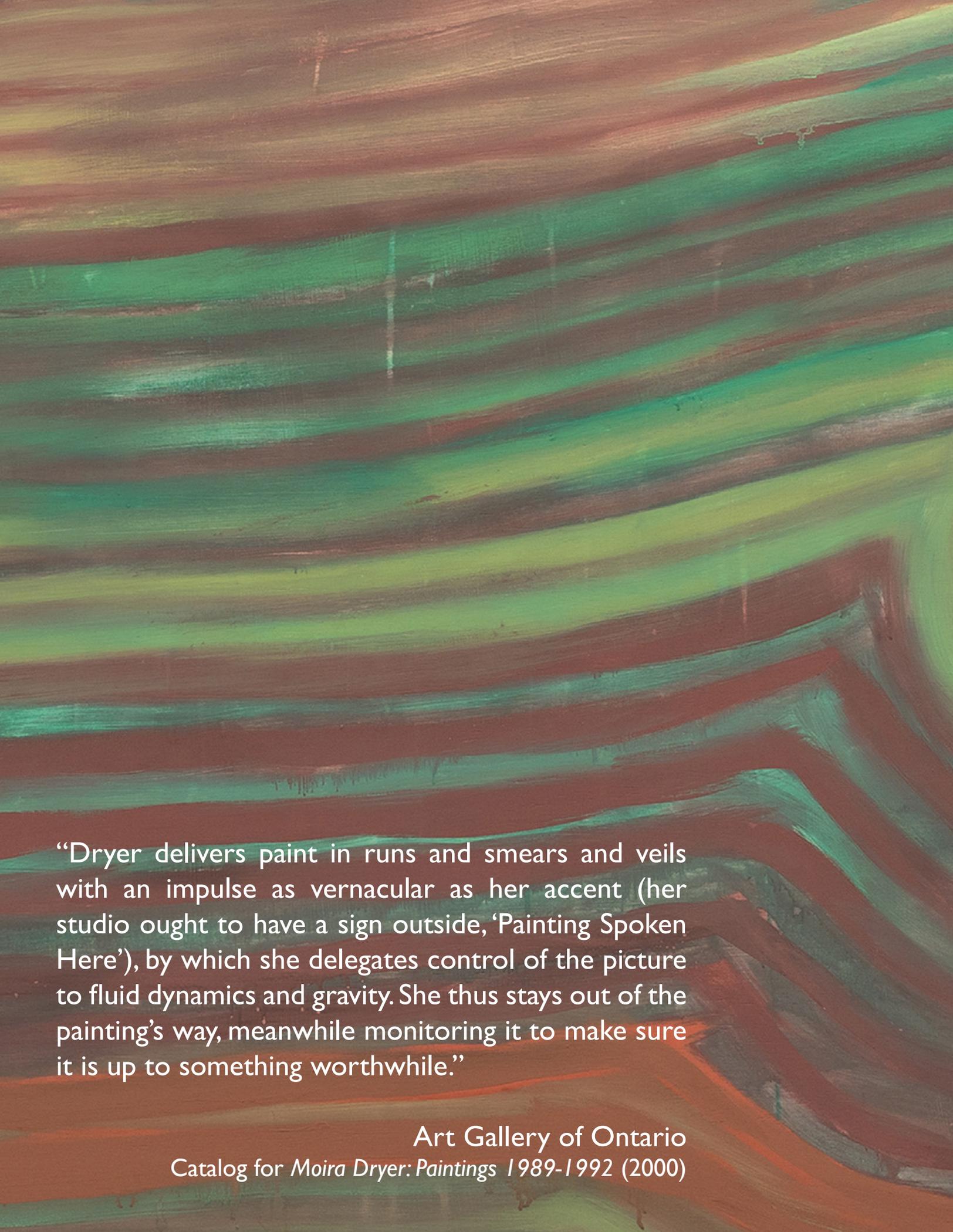
“What I would like in my painting is simply a spray of color that hangs like a cloud, but does not lose its shape.”

Jules Olitski

MOIRA DRYER

*Fingerprint Landscape*, 1988  
casein on plywood laid down on panel  
48 x 62 x 3 inches  
(121.9 x 157.5 x 7.6 cm)



An abstract painting featuring broad, horizontal, wavy bands of color. The palette is dominated by earthy tones: various shades of green (from teal to olive), brown, and red. The brushwork is visible, with thick, textured strokes that create a sense of movement and depth. The overall effect is reminiscent of a landscape or a geological formation, with the colors blending and overlapping in a non-representational way.

“Dryer delivers paint in runs and smears and veils with an impulse as vernacular as her accent (her studio ought to have a sign outside, ‘Painting Spoken Here’), by which she delegates control of the picture to fluid dynamics and gravity. She thus stays out of the painting’s way, meanwhile monitoring it to make sure it is up to something worthwhile.”

Art Gallery of Ontario  
Catalog for *Moira Dryer: Paintings 1989-1992* (2000)

MOIRA DRYER

*Untitled*, 1991  
casein on wood  
14 x 18 inches  
(35.6 x 45.7 cm)

NFS



Collection of John S. Morawetz

BEVERLY PEPPER

*Senza Titolo*, 1963

bronze

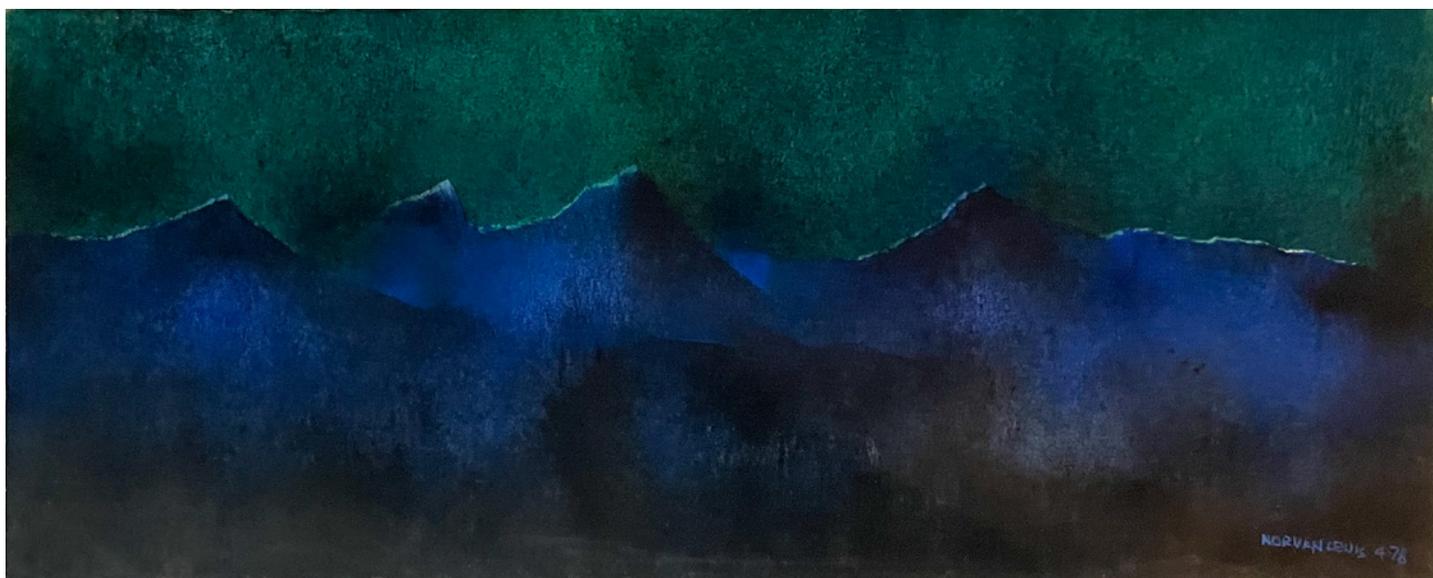
24 1/2 x 11 x 14 inches

(62 x 28 x 35.5 cm)



NORMAN LEWIS

*Untitled, 1978*  
oil on paper  
10 x 26 inches  
(25.4 x 66 cm)



NORMAN LEWIS 4-78

SOL LEWITT

*Irregular Grid*, 2000  
gouache on paper  
8 1/2 x 55 inches  
(21.6 x 139.7 cm)

Sold

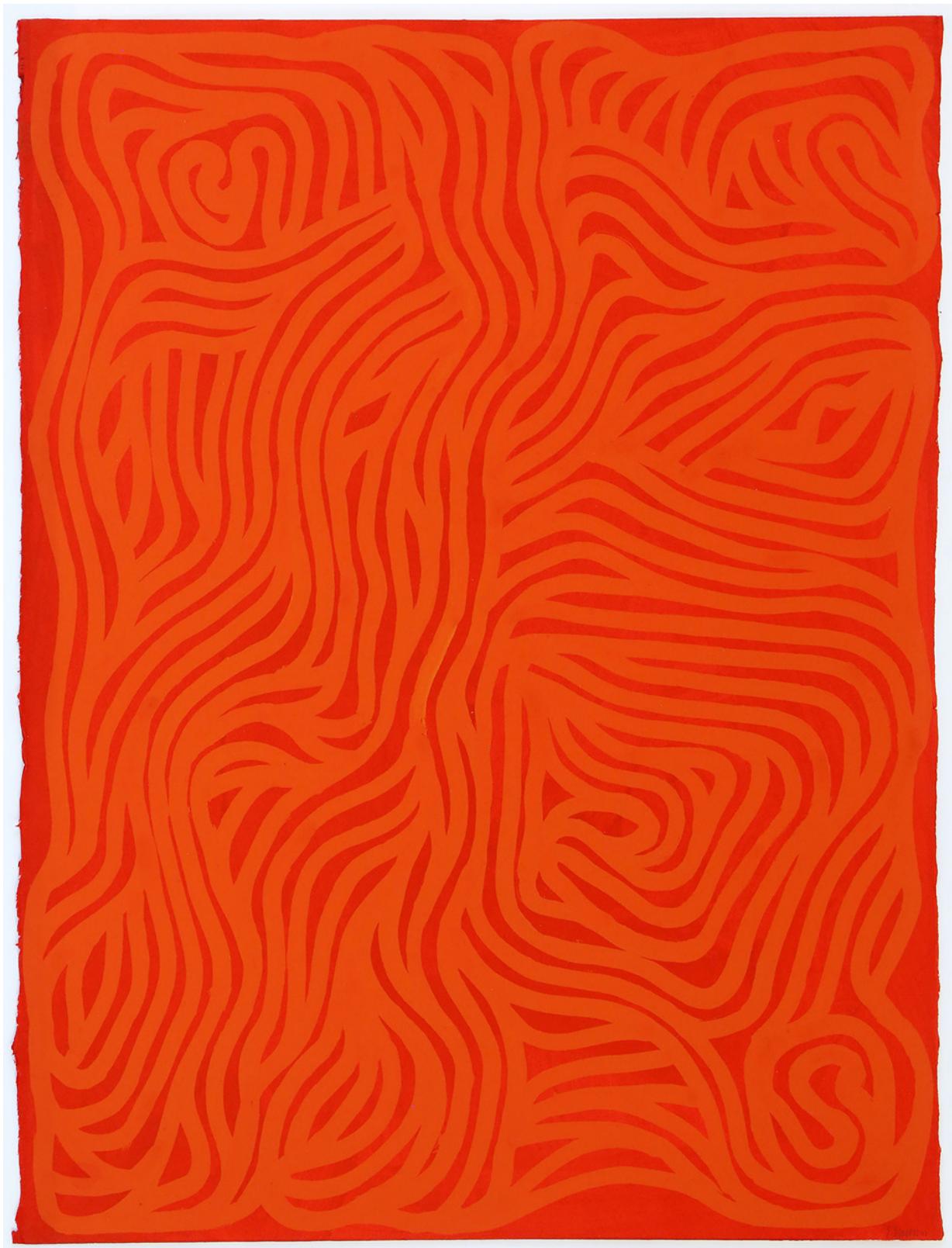


Detail



SOL LEWITT

*Irregular Grid*, 2001  
gouache on paper  
29 1/2 x 22 3/4 inches  
(75 x 57.8 cm)



SOL LEWITT

*Horizontal Lines, Black and Gray, 2004*

gouache on paper

15 1/4 x 44 3/4 inches

(38.7 x 113.6 cm)



SOL LEWITT

*Wavy Brushstrokes*, 1995  
gouache on paper  
41 1/2 x 8 inches  
(105.4 x 20.3 cm)





VIJA CELMINS

*Drypoint – Ocean Surface (Second State), 1985*

drypoint

24 x 19 inches

(61 x 48.3 cm)

Edition 47 of 55



*V. Celmins*

BOB THOMPSON

*Landscape (Abstraction)*, 1959  
oil on wood panel  
7 x 19 inches  
(17.8 x 48.3 cm)



BOB THOMPSON

*Untitled (figures in a landscape)*, 1960  
oil on plywood  
6 x 22 inches  
(15.2 x 55.9 cm)



BEVERLY PEPPER

*Medium Ascension*, 2008

steel

30 3/8 x 28 3/4 x 13 inches

(77.2 x 73 x 33 cm)





BEVERLY PEPPER

*Longo (tabletop)*, 2008  
steel  
10 3/4 x 4 1/2 x 3 inches  
(27.3 x 11.4 x 7.6 cm)





SIDIVAL FILA

*Metafora Blu Cobalto 48, 2021*  
acrylic on sewn canvas  
24 x 19 1/3 inches  
(61 x 49 cm)



SALLY MICHEL AVERY

*Blue Seascape*, 1960  
oil on board  
11 5/8 x 23 7/8 inches  
(29.5 x 60.6 cm)



ROMARE BEARDEN

*Untitled (Collage)*, 1958  
color paper collage on board  
5 x 20 inches  
(12.7 x 50.8 cm)



LEOPOLD STROBL



*Untitled (2016-069), 2016*  
pencil and colored pencil on newsprint,  
cut and mounted on paper  
4 1/2 x 2 3/8 inches  
(11.4 x 6 cm)



*Untitled (2016-128), 2016*  
pencil and colored pencils on newsprint,  
cut and mounted on paper  
3 7/8 x 5 3/8 inches  
(9.8 x 13.7 cm)

ANDRÉ KERTÉSZ

*Underwater Swimmer*, 1917  
gelatin silver print  
11 x 14 inches  
(28 x 35.5 cm)

NFS



LAURA DE SANTILLANA

*Tokyo-Ga (Sky Blue - Warm Brown)*, 2018  
hand-blown compressed glass  
12 1/5 x 8 2/3 x 1 1/2 inches  
(31 x 22 x 3.8 cm)





“My work is about refracted light,  
low water and the horizon line.”

Laura de Santillana

VERA GIRIVI

*Untitled*, 2021  
acrylic on canvas  
27 1/2 x 27 1/2 inches  
(70 x 70 cm)  
VG227



VERA GIRIVI

*Untitled*, 2021  
acrylic on canvas  
19 1/2 x 19 1/2 inches  
(50 x 50 cm)  
VG228

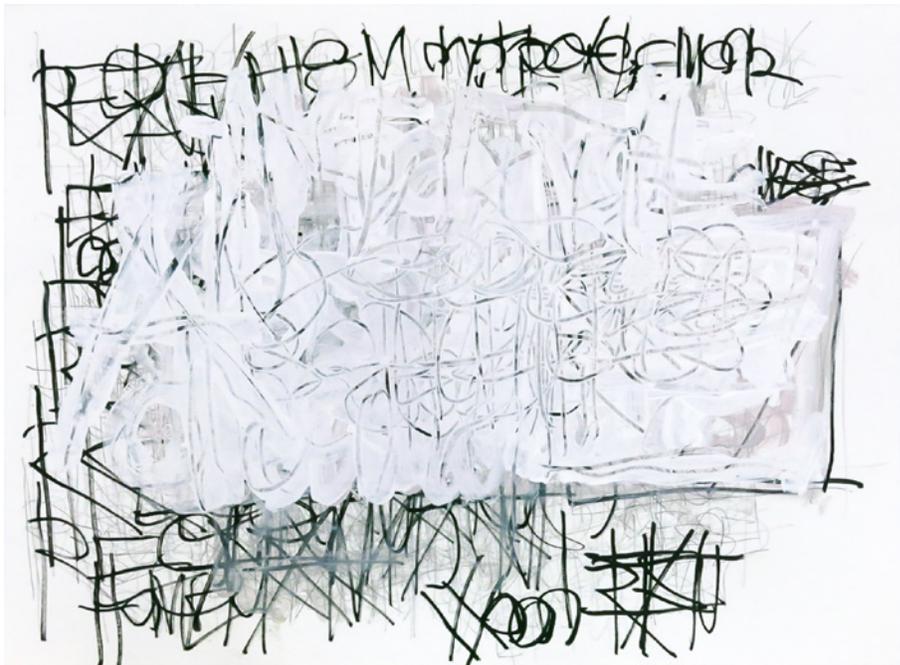


ELISABETTA ZANGRANDI

2021  
31 1/2 x 31 1/2 inches  
(80 x 80 cm)



DAN MILLER



*Untitled, 2011*  
acrylic and ink on paper  
22 x 30 inches  
(55.9 x 76.2 cm)



*Untitled, 2020*  
acrylic and ink on paper  
22 x 30 inches  
(55.9 x 76.2 cm)

SOL LEWITT

*Horizontal Brushstrokes*, 1994  
gouache on paper  
24 x 16 inches  
(60.9 x 40.6 cm)



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