

# LIFE IN COLOUR

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**CURATED BY HALEIGH MITCHELL  
MCINTOSH GALLERY**

*Life in Colour* welcomes you to indulge in the delight and experience the joy of colour. How does colour make you feel? Do you associate the colour yellow with feelings of happiness? And orange with positive energy?

As a powerful communication tool, colour can be used to evoke emotion, create meaning, challenge perception, and even provoke physiological responses. With an astonishing one million colours visible to the human eye, it is no surprise that colour has a great impact on our everyday lives. Recognized as a form of visual language, colour shapes the human experience — uniting and engaging communities across the globe.

Colour harnesses our attention and shapes our understanding of the world around us. Inextricably linked to emotion, colour harmony, the aesthetic combination of colours, touches the soul and raises feelings of the sublime.

**“ Colour is a power  
which directly  
influences the soul.**

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**Wassily Kandinsky**

*Life in Colour* explores the communicative potential of colour and its multiple manifestations in Canadian art.

Featuring artwork from William Perehudoff, Noni Kaur, Patryk Tom, and Burton Kramer, *Life in Colour* investigates the profound power of colour in art. Working across media including painting, sculpture, and photography, each artist celebrates the splendour of colour through chromatic inventiveness and thoughtful design.

From vibrant hues to subdued tones and expressive to calculated forms, the featured artists adopt a range of artistic techniques and styles to highlight the transformative power of colour in art.

# Curator Biography

Haleigh Mitchell is a graduate student at Parsons School of Design where she is pursuing a Master of Professional Studies in Fashion Management.

She recently graduated from The University of Western Ontario with an Honours Double Major in Art History and in Media, Information, and Technoculture. Passionate about the intersection of art, media, fashion, and technology, Haleigh is eager to pursue a career in digital storytelling.

Following a lifelong fascination with the transformative power of colour, in 2021, Haleigh participated in the course Colour Theory for Digital Design with the Ontario College of Art & Design University (OCAD). Her experience studying Art History, Media, Information, and Technoculture and the communicative potential of colour inspired her to curate an exhibition for McIntosh Gallery that highlights the evocative power of colour in Canadian art. Haleigh is thrilled to share her passion for colour with you in Life in Colour.



**WILLIAM**

**PEREHUDOFF**

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Celebrated for his iconic colour field paintings, William Perehudoff's artwork enhances our understanding of the limitless expressive and compositional potentials of colour.

Carrying "no other message but the surprise, spontaneity, and optimism of colour" Perehudoff's enthralling abstract paintings demonstrate the profound evocative power of colour. The dynamic interplay between colour and form have great emotional resonance in Perehudoff's pure abstractions.

The selected artworks reveal the pulsating colours and forms that came to define Perehudoff's distinctive style.



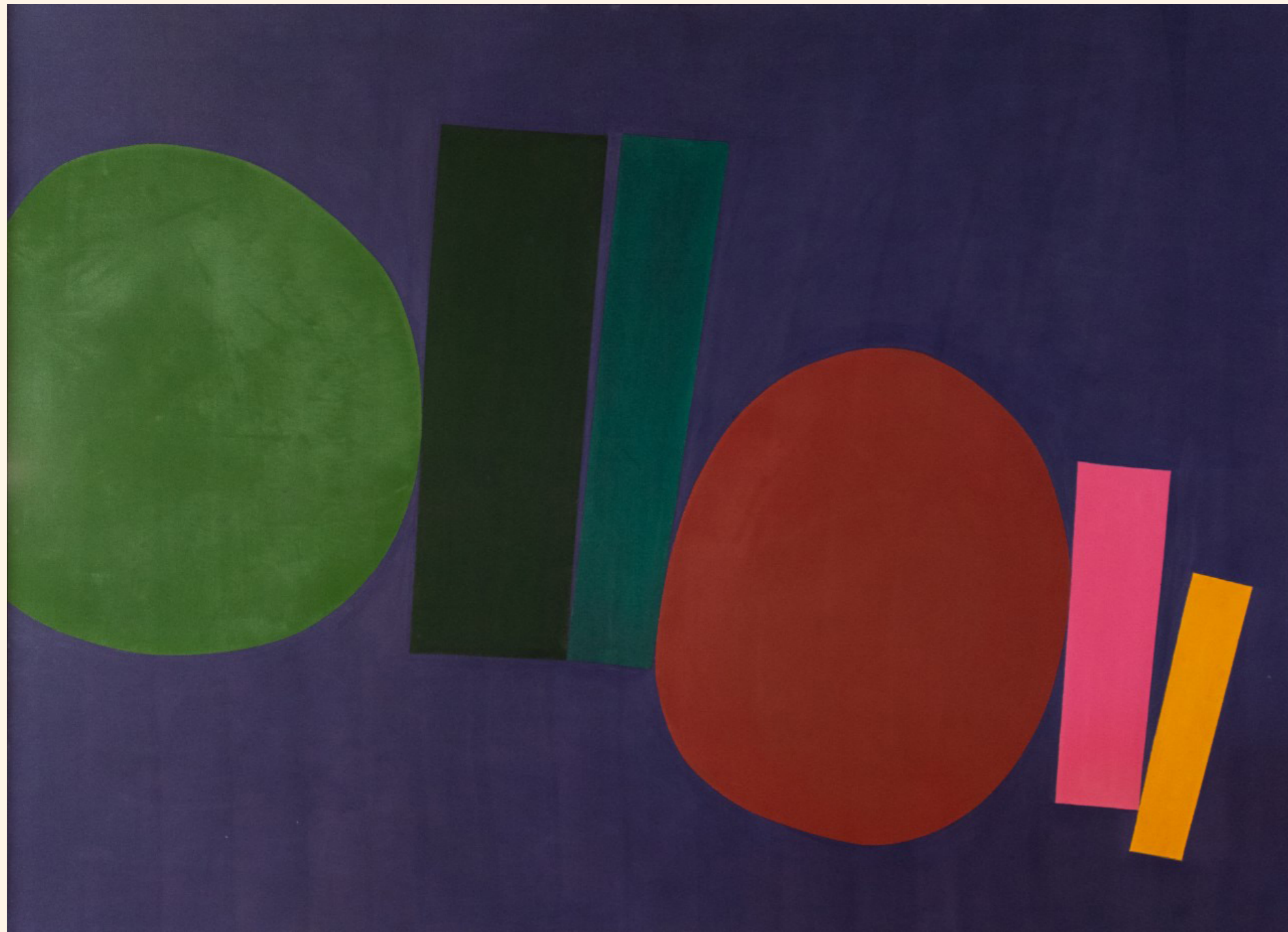
William Pehudoff  
AC-85-088, 1985  
Acrylic on canvas, 167 x 167 cm.  
Berry Campbell Gallery  
Courtesy of Catherine Fowler, Rebecca Minton, and Carol Pehudoff

A series of colourful gestural brushstrokes sweep across the canvas in all directions, interrupting a rich orange background in Pehudoff's painting *AC-85-088* (1985). With the brushstrokes thickest at the heart of the canvas and the expressive lines drawn out to the edges, energy emanates from the centre outward, similar to the luminosity of the sun.

Attesting to Pehudoff's interest in colour and its interaction within the limits of a canvas, the juxtaposition between the energetic movement of the brushstrokes and the nuanced background creates dialogue and surface tensions.

In addition to the energizing brushstrokes, Pehudoff's selection of colour also plays a role in creating a sense of pleasure. Painted with primarily warm colours, the radiant composition evokes feelings of happiness and optimism. The joyful work is symbolic of Pehudoff's iconic use of colour as a means of expression and driver of aesthetic feeling.





William Pehudoff  
Thalia #10, AC-70-010, 1970  
Acrylic on canvas, 182.2 x 250.2 cm.  
Nikola Rukaj Gallery  
Courtesy of Catherine Fowler, Rebecca Minton, and Carol Pehudoff

Dominated by a chain of levitating discs and blocks, in *Thalia #10, AC-70-010* (1970) Pehudoff conveys a sense of movement through the use of contrasting forms, colour, and scale.

Composed of a set of shapes painted in various shades of green, and another in the warm colours of red, pink, and orange, the figures progressively decrease in size, brighten in colour, and lower in position as they move across the face of the canvas.

This juxtaposition between the formal elements of the painting reflects Pehudoff's desire to employ delicate imbalances in the intensity of colour and ordering of space to create paintings "with a kind of pulse."

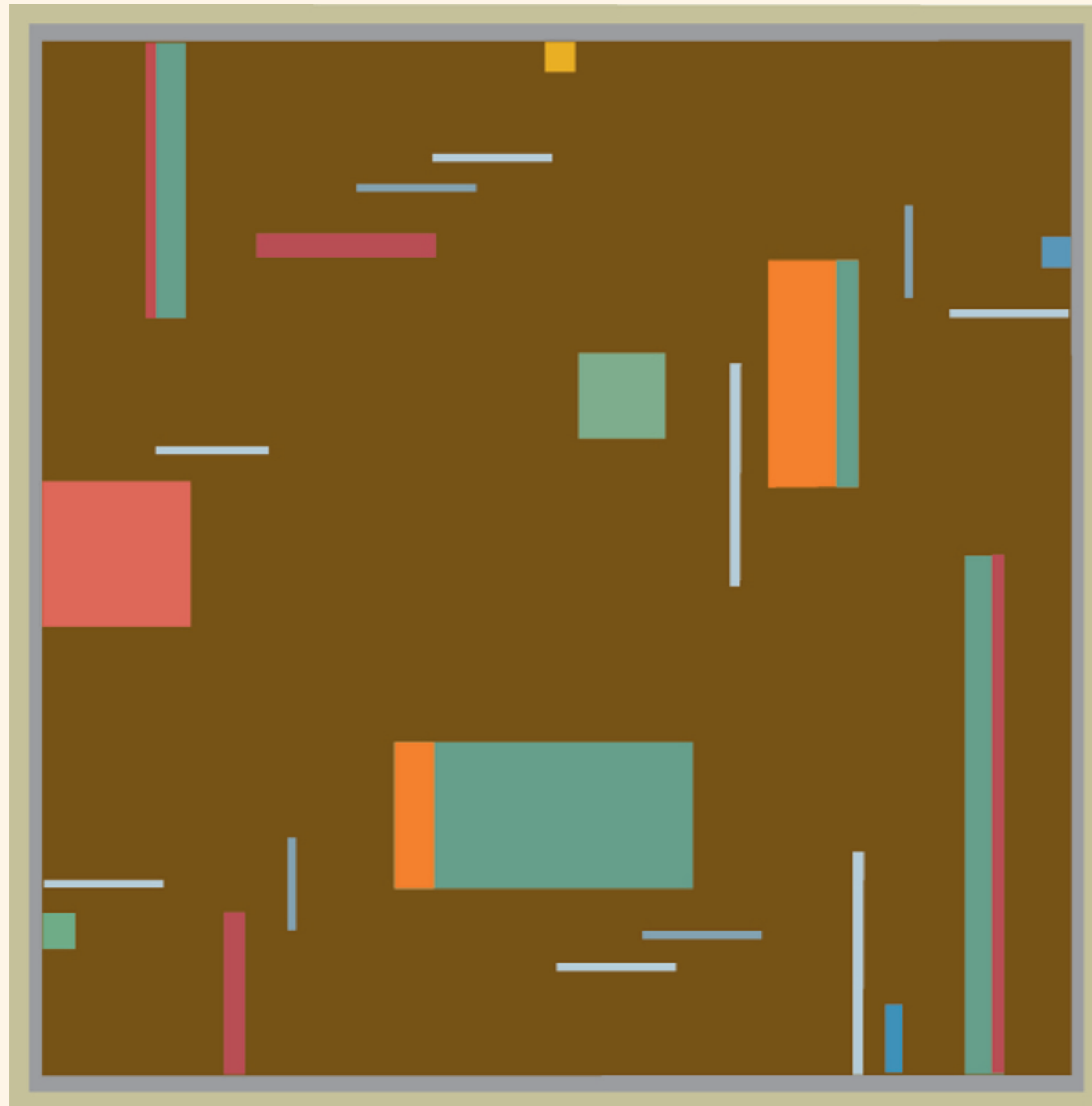
# Burton Kramer

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Lyrical and rhythmic — Burton Kramer highlights the harmonious relationship between music and colour. Similar to the famed colourist, Kandinsky, the rhythm and pulsating energy of music inspires Kramer's compositions.

Through uniting strategic design, colour harmony, and powerful geometry, Kramer translates the sensory pleasures activated when listening to music to the visual experience and language of painting.

Expressing that the primary message of his paintings are sensory, and not literal, Kramer's poetic compositions do not "abstract the experience of reality, but rather provide the viewer with an alternate form of reality, just as music often does."

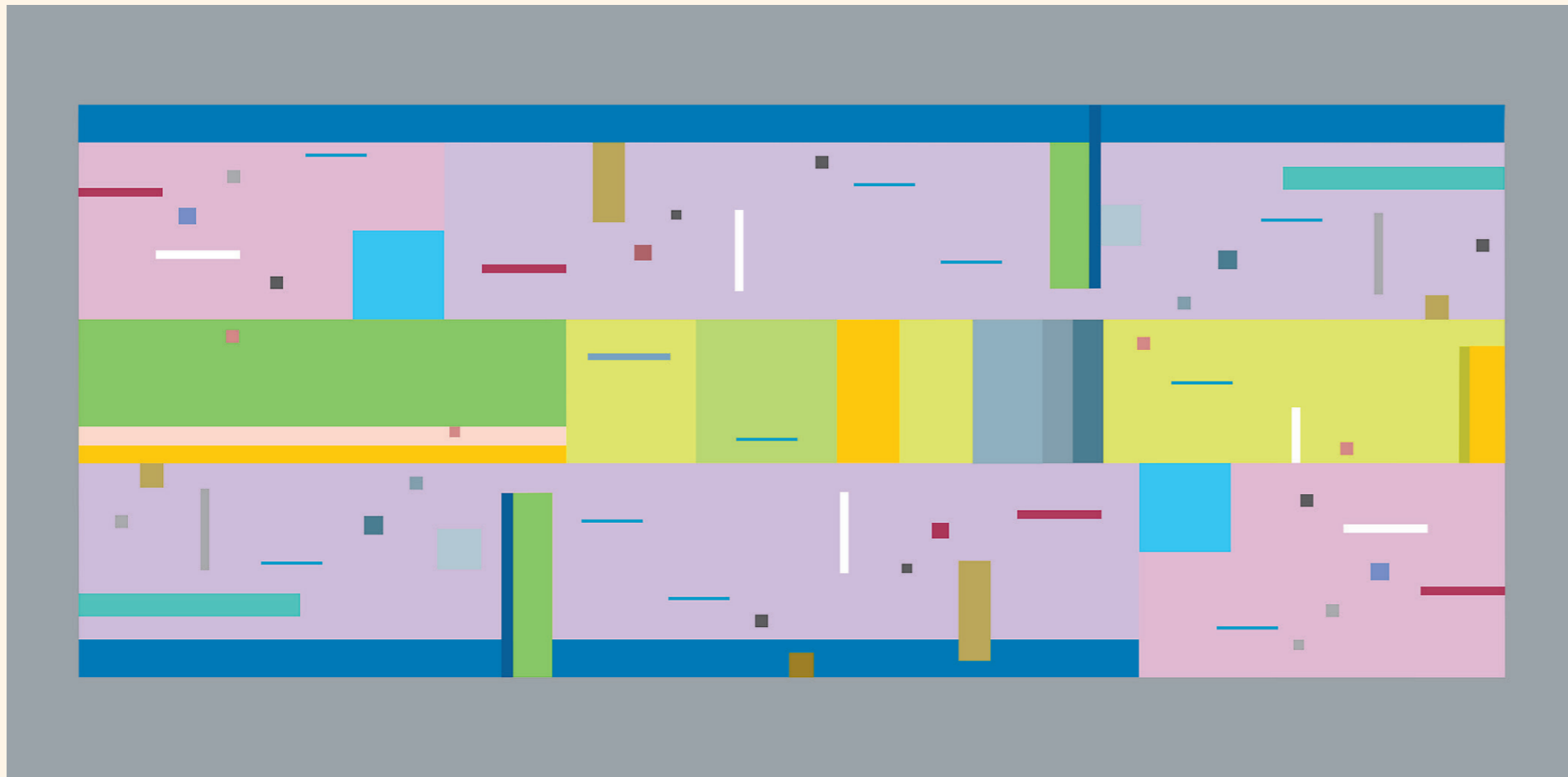


Burton Kramer  
Epiphany 6, 2005  
Oil on canvas board, 45.72 x 45.72 cm.  
Oeno Gallery  
Courtesy of Burton Kramer

Kramer's passion for creating "visual music" is revealed in *Epiphany 6* (2005). Blocks and dashes of blue, orange, pink, yellow, white, and teal are thoughtfully positioned against a pure black background appearing like notes on a musical scale.

When viewing the composition, the eye naturally floats from colour to colour, as it might when reading a sheet of music.

The harmonious relationship between the colours and forms in Kramer's composition elicits a similar set of uplifting emotions to those felt when listening to upbeat music, ultimately demonstrating the expressive potential of colour.



Kramer further draws parallels between music and colour in *Garden Music* (2017), a serene yet dynamic composition.

Framed by a slate blue border, a staccato of multicoloured blocks and dashes stand against a soft purple and pink background.

Kramer's thoughtful use of colour, line and form creates visual rhythm and elicits joy.

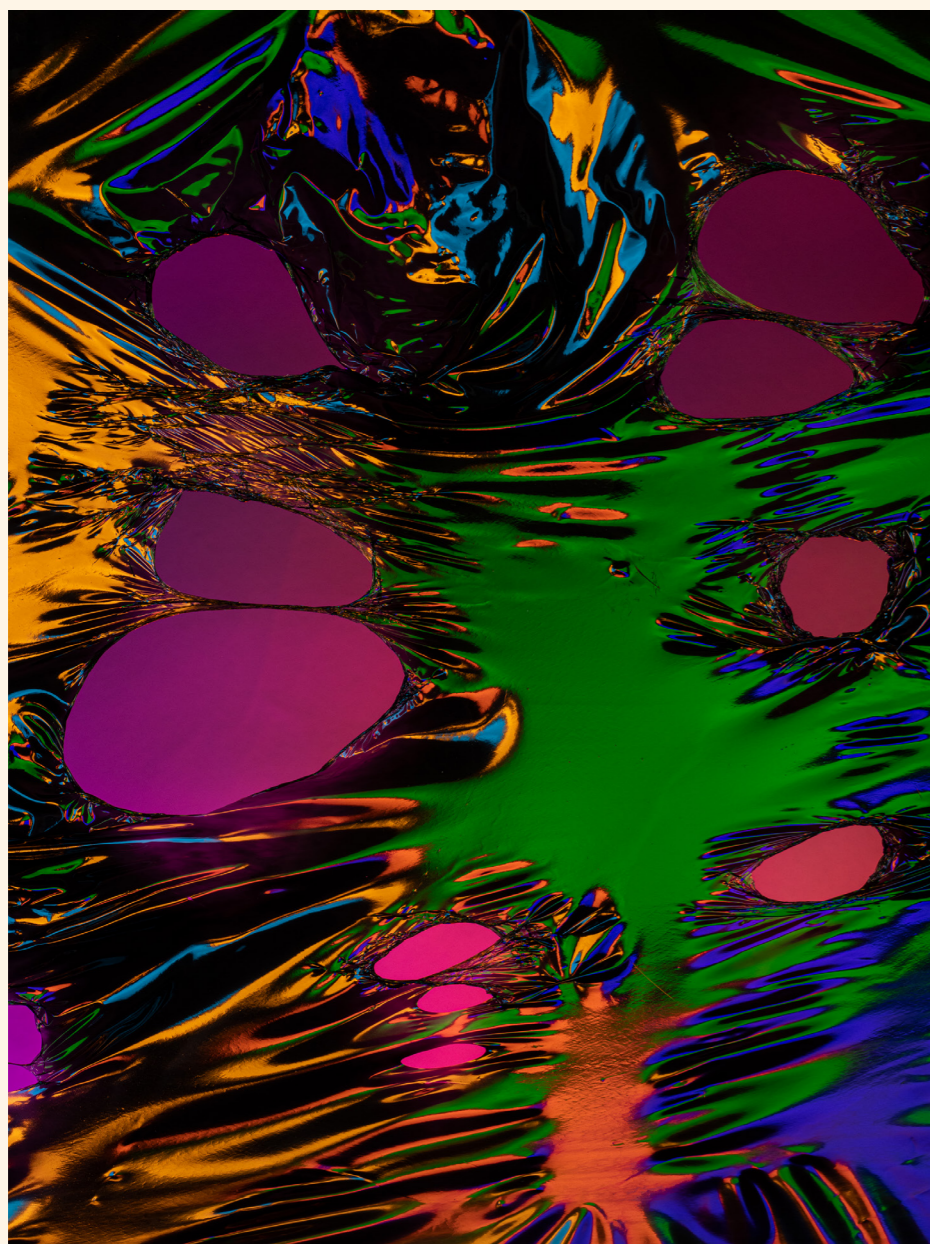
Burton Kramer,  
*Garden Music*, 2017  
Acrylic on panel, 76.2 152.4 cm.  
Oeno Gallery  
Courtesy of Burton Kramer

**Patryk**

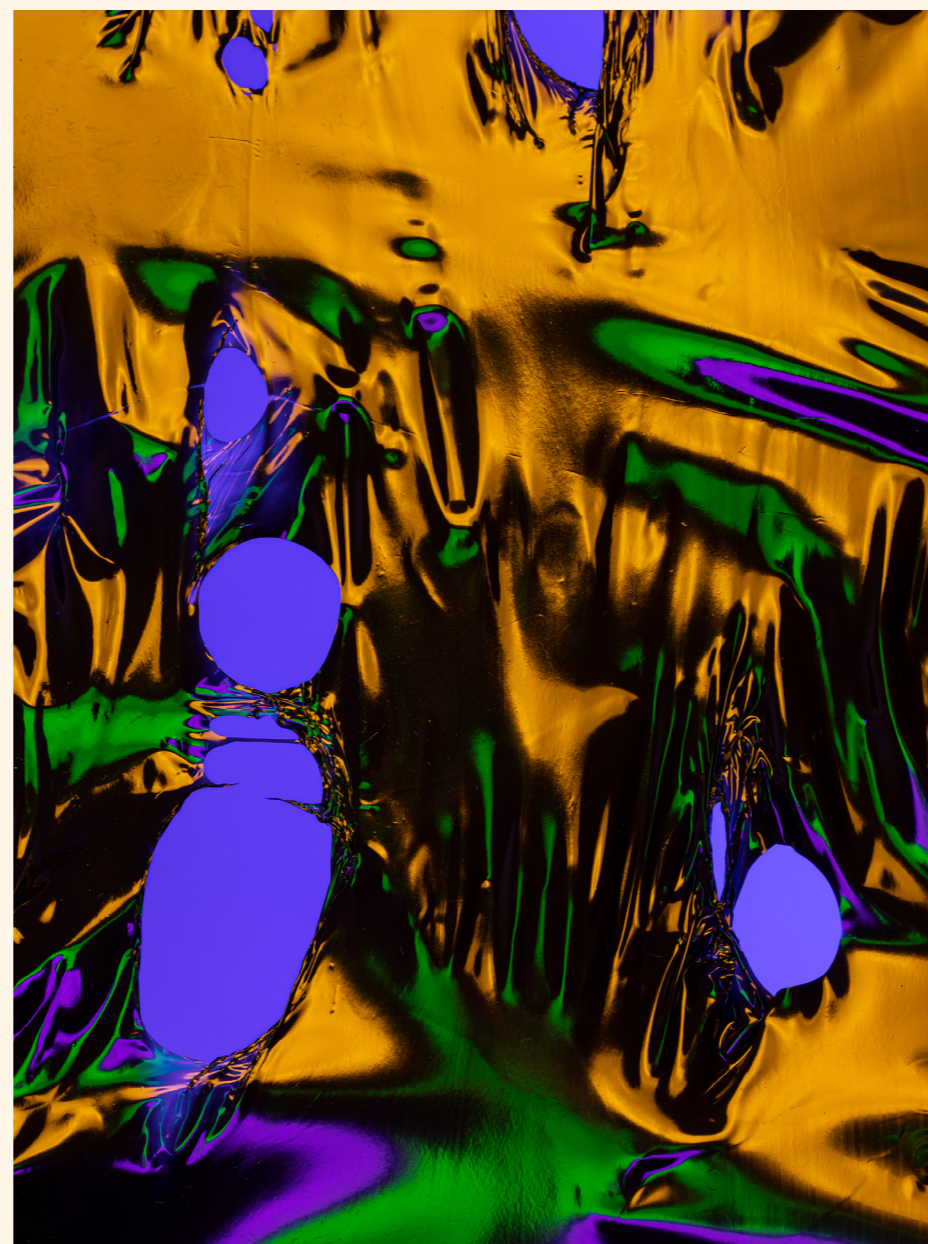
**Tom**

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Fascinated with the visual spectrum, the exploration of light and colour is at the heart of Patryk Tom's artistic practice. Embracing the multiplicity of colour, Tom seeks to create artwork that stimulates viewers, noting that "Colour is vitality, it is an emotional space that informs feeling."



Patryk Tom,  
The negativity directed at you is inspired, your  
crystals can't help you, you are nothing, 2020  
Archival inkjet print, 60.96 x 91.44 cm.  
Courtesy of Patryk Tom



Patryk Tom,  
In collusion with a history of non-verbal cues that  
reinforced a destructive narcissism, 2020  
Archival inkjet print, 60.96 x 91.44 cm.  
Courtesy of Patryk Tom

*The negativity directed at you is inspired, your crystals can't help you, you are nothing* (2020) and *In collusion with a history of non-verbal cues that reinforced a destructive narcissism* (2020) are archival inkjet prints that draw parallels between photography and painting. By use of this innovative technique, Tom deconstructs the photographic process and concentrates on the foundational elements of light, colour, and form.

The prints capture the kinetic energy of the material techniques of image making. Tom disrupts traditional notions of photography and offers a unique, and innovative perspective of image making in contemporary art.

With both compositions featuring an array of complementary colours, the juxtaposition between the formal elements of the prints work together to create an engaging dynamic as the colours are at once in conflict and harmony with one another. This tension between colour can be interpreted as symbolizing internal conflict while entwined with a glimpse of “hope, redemption, endurance, resilience, and persistence.”



**Noni  
Kaur**

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Immersive, vibrant, and multi-sensory—Noni Kaur unites and explores the concepts of culture, gender, the body, and the non-human world in her work.

As a Singaporean woman of Punjabi heritage, Kaur's cultural history inspires her creative practice and informs her choice of colours, materials, and forms. Using a kaleidoscope of colours to express the celebratory nature of ritualistic practices in South Asian culture, Kaur embraces colour as a carrier of cultural meaning.

Drawing on the principles of colour theory in her work, Kaur notes that “each colour is symbolic in its own way.”

Against a deep, slate-grey concrete background, Kaur's floor sculpture *Of Earth She Becomes* (2018) lays in all its grandeur. Built upon the South Asian tradition of rangoli, Kaur thoughtfully arranged saturated hues of hand-dyed desiccated coconut to form a landscape of the female body. Represented by the use of colours and imagery, an exploration of female identity is at the heart of Kaur's installation. Kaur embraces colour as a symbolic carrier of meaning, emphasizing colours that represent energy, passion, and fertility.

Additionally, through her use of innovative materials, Kaur creates a multi-sensory experience that draws connections between the cycles of life and death. As the desiccated coconut slowly decays and transforms over time, the installation emits a rich aroma and engages all senses.



Noni Kaur  
*Of Earth She Becomes*, 2018  
Hand-dyed, desiccated coconut and mixed media installation, 457.2 x 685.8 x 15.24 cm.  
Courtesy of Noni Kaur



Detail shot.



Noni Kaur  
They call me a wild rose, 2014  
Mixed media on mylar, 40.64 x 60.96 x 5 cm.  
Courtesy of Noni Kaur

*They call me a wild rose* (2014) references Kaur's ephemeral sculptural practice and highlights how her desiccated coconut installations serve as a repository of energy for the microbial systems that live within.

Demonstrating the synergy between art, life, and science, *They call me a wild rose* (2014) is a series of visceral collages framed to resemble Petri dishes.

Rhythmically balancing forms and colour, Kaur captures the energizing beauty of the often-overlooked microorganisms that sustain everyday life.

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