

No Straight Lines

FEBRUARY 13 – APRIL 30, 2024

HERBERT BAYER

KENNETH NOLAND

RICHARD CARTER

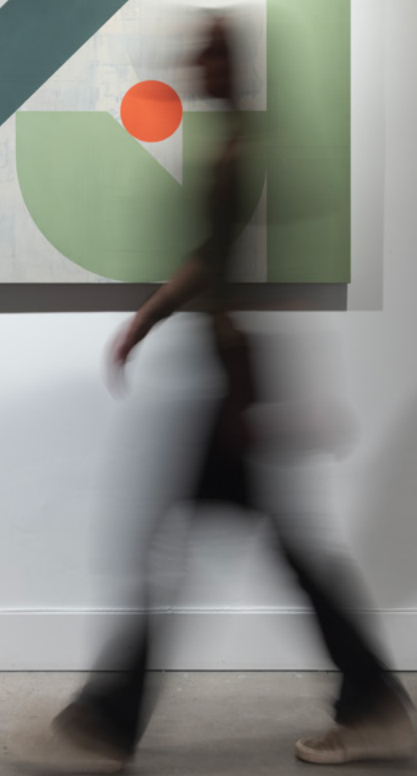
EVAN HECOX

PHILLIP K. SMITH III

ANDREW HUFFMAN

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February 13 – April 30. 2024



No Straight Lines, the second exhibition in Hexton Gallery's ongoing exploration of Aspen's historic impact on the visual arts, celebrates the curving and nonlinear pathways that lead renegade and established artists to this mountain enclave. The exhibition explores how chance and improvisation have shaped their work and lives and formed this ever-evolving creative community in juxtaposition to the formal and rigid abstraction present in their artistic output.

In the late 1940's, Walter and Elizabeth Paepcke imagined building a utopia in Aspen to cultivate the mind, body and spirit, a vision that would manifest itself as the Aspen Institute and "The Aspen Idea." The result was a town that became an unlikely outpost for the avant-garde postwar modern and contemporary art movements.

Herbert Bayer, the Bauhaus-trained polymath, arrived here in 1946 after being lured to the sleepy former mining town by The Paepcke's. Artists, thinkers, performers and envelope-pushers have been trekking here ever since. They have come for short and long stays, to make work here or to show it or to talk about it, and have kept Aspen a hub of creative innovation despite its distance from the art world's urban centers.

Leading painters, sculptors, photographers, architects and visual artists came for the international Design Conference, founded in 1952, and to Anderson Ranch, opened in 1966. The collectors John and Kimiko Powers spearheaded the Aspen Center for Contemporary Art in 1967 and brought the likes of Jasper Johns, Roy Lichtenstein, Donald Judd, Robert Indiana, and Christo here to create and to be inspired, alongside

their deep collecting passion for such luminary talent as Kenneth Noland, Frank Stella, and James Rosenquist, among many others (The permanent Powers Art Center in Carbondale, just down the road from Aspen, now hosts rotating exhibitions from their vast collection).



Image Credit: Walter and Elizabeth Paepcke, 1948, Aspen Historical Society, Duke Collection



Aspen Historical Society

Image Credit: John Powers in his home with Kenneth Noland painting, 1968, Aspen Historical Society, Hiser Collection

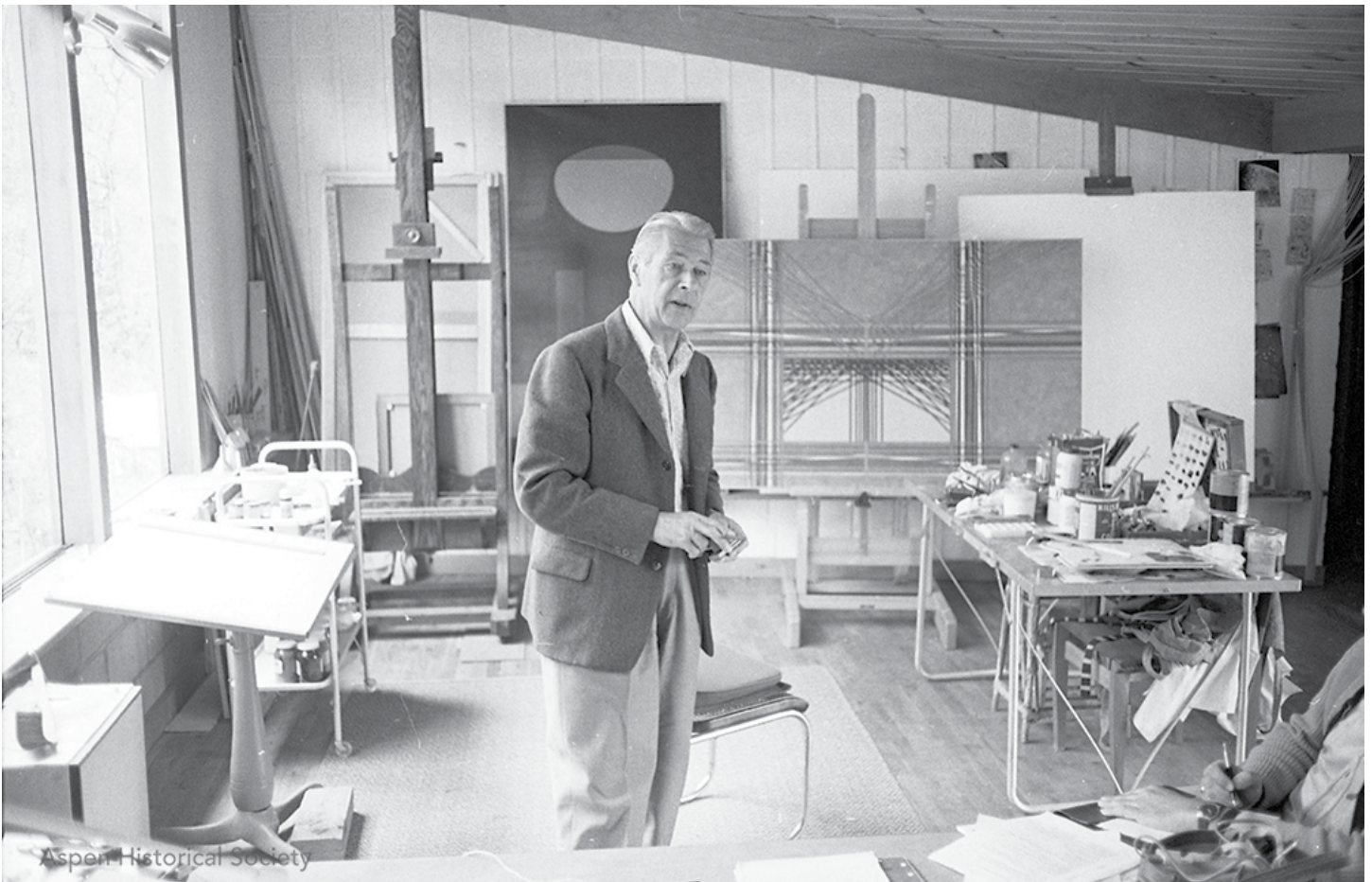


Image Credit: Herbert Bayer in his studio, 1965, Aspen Historical Society, Aspen Illustrated News Collection

No Straight Lines, the second exhibition in Hexton Gallery's ongoing exploration of Aspen's historic impact on the visual arts, celebrates the curving and nonlinear pathways that lead renegade and established artists to this mountain enclave. The exhibition explores how chance and improvisation have shaped their work and lives and formed this ever-evolving creative community in juxtaposition to the formal and rigid abstraction present in their artistic output.

Bayer, reflecting in 1962 on his move from the center of the art world in New York to Aspen, said "I was never happy in New York;

I grew up in the mountains and so I decided to do this thing. It was an adventure." And thus Aspen's aesthetic as we know it was born. The three Bayer works in this show are exemplary of Bayer's range in both form and content—his experimentation with geometric constructions, an example of his "linear structures" series, his decades-long exploration of abstract lunar and celestial imagery and the fertile possibilities he discovered working in tapestry (a move that originated in a simple practical choice as he sought to create works for Atlantic Ritchfield's corporate offices that would be more easily transported than his paintings).



Kenneth Noland, Missus, 1962, Magna on Canvas, 69 x 69 in, 175.3 x 175.3 cm

Kenneth Noland's work landed in Aspen in the 1960s through the transformative support of John and Kimiko Powers who collected and championed his color field paintings. Noland's work also brushes up against Bayer's in the slipstream of mid-century movements: Noland studied at Black Mountain College in the 1940s, under Bayer's Bauhaus colleague Josef Albers and alongside other Bauhaus emigres (Bayer himself considered taking a post at Black Mountain in the late 1930s). Their works sit comfortably beside one another in *No Straight Lines*, their geometries and color progressions in conversation as if the artists could have been on campus in North Carolina or Aspen had a chance decision or two gone the other way.

Richard Carter serves as a critical bridge between Aspen's avant-garde past through to its robust contemporary presence.

Carter's formative years working as Bayer's studio assistant began with a chance encounter: running into a friend downtown in 1972 who informed the young and ambitious painter that the Bauhaus master was hiring. A door opened, a life changed. Carter spent six years in Bayer's studio, as he embarked on his own renowned Aspen-based painting practice, which continues today. The two Carter pieces in *No Straight Lines* demonstrate a progression of his abstracted geological studies and landscapes (Carter made the very straight lines here with a ruling pen, an engineer's drafting tool that he learned to use under Bayer).

Carter and his generation of artists, in a post-hippie ski bum era Aspen, picked up where Bayer and John Powers left off to create another institution, the Aspen Art Museum, in 1979. The museum's birth was a centerpiece of a second cultural flowering of Aspen, an artist-driven movement that also created the Aspen Writers' Conference and Aspen Filmfest in the late 1970s.



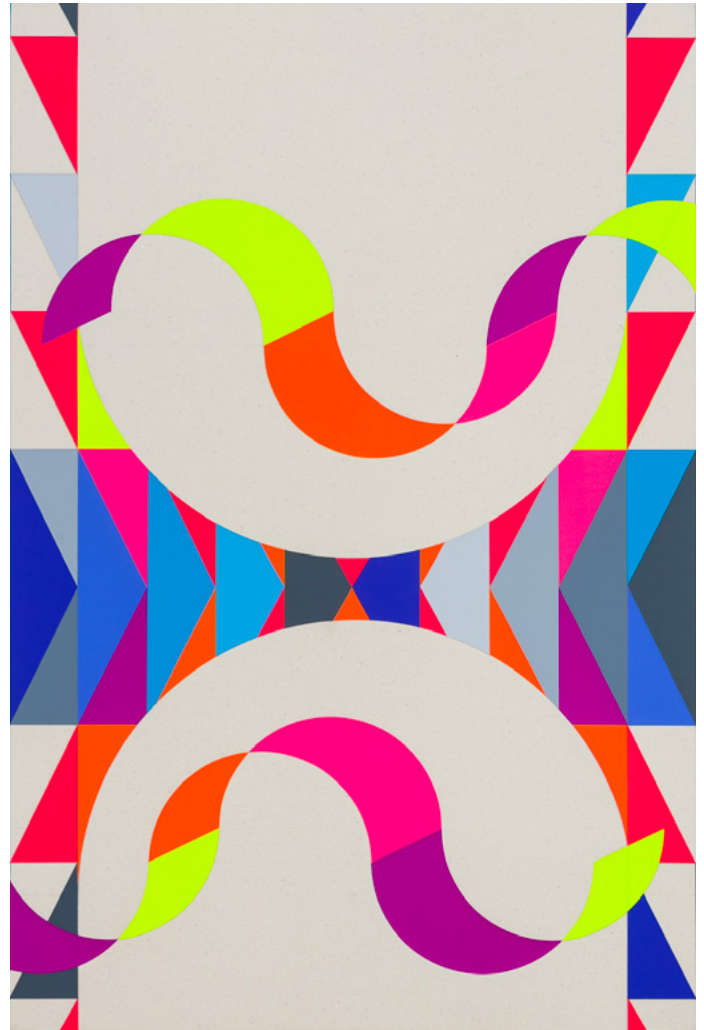
Image Credit: Co-Founders of the Aspen Center For Visual Arts (now the Aspen Art Museum), 1978. Richard Carter, top row, second from the left. Aspen Historical Society, Duke Collection

Aspen remains a vital incubator and showcase for contemporary artists. If Bayer and the Paepckes created a first wave movement here, and Carter's young instigators represented a second wave, today's moment may be a third. Hexton is looking forward by hanging new work by Evan Hecox, Andrew Huffman and Phillip K. Smith III beside the Bayers, Nolands, and Carters, adding their voices to the ever-growing creative chorus of a community that is never satisfied with the ordinary and is always eyeing the future.

Evan Hecox and his family spent summers throughout the 1970s and '80s in a small mining cabin near the Ashcroft ghost town, as his artist parents attended the Aspen Institute's Design Conference. The cabin is gone now, like the once-vital conference, elements of a bygone era hinted at by Hecox's use of vintage newspapers. Steeped in Bauhaus tradition, these new works nod at typography and the written word, evoking an ephemeral record of times past while looking ahead toward what might be. Hecox works are slightly more abstracted than those in his 2022 Hexton solo exhibition, yet still honor the creative roots that have now born fruit here.



Evan Hecox designed a Hermès silk scarf featuring the original Paris store address, later expanding into a Spring 2024 apparel collection. The original painting now resides in the Hermès permanent collection at the Paris design office.



Andrew Huffman, *International Orange #2*, 2023, Acrylic on Canvas
30 x 20 in, 76.2 x 50.8 cm

Andrew Huffman's work is new to Aspen and to Hexton, though he appears to share creative DNA with Bayer. Like Bayer, he is discovering new expressions with geometric language as exemplified in "Clearcreek Swallowfalls," and like Bayer he balances an intimate painting practice with an ambitious and growing portfolio of successful public art installations and murals, exploring interactive, temporary and permanent works for all to see. Having called Colorado his home for the past decade, Huffman's time spent in Denver and the surrounding mountains informs a pioneering spirit, one that seems a palpable thread throughout the works exhibited in *No Straight Lines*.



Phillip K. Smith, *Lucid Steed*, 2013, Joshua Tree, CA, Image Credit: Steven King Photography

Phillip K. Smith III walks a similar line, creating the monumental and experiential public installations that have made his reputation, but also exploring more intimate light art and wall sculptures as shown here in *No Straight Lines* and his 2023 Hexton solo exhibition *Outside In/Inside Out*. There is a tethering here to Noland's striped paintings of the late 60's, with Smith freeing his vision from the canvas by harnessing time, light and shadow as his materials of choice. The works change in color at an

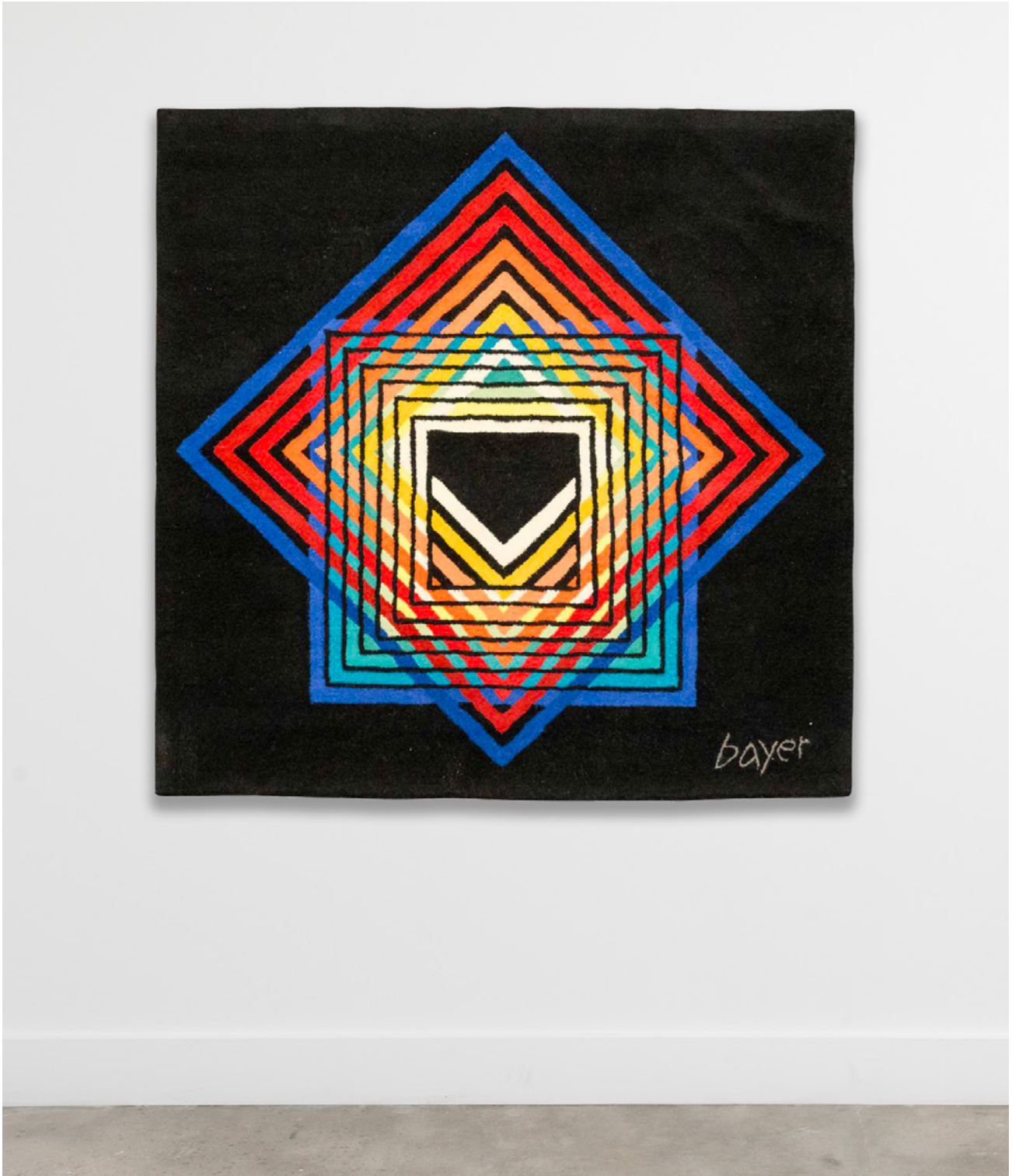
imperceptible and meticulously designed pace. The effect is an unmooring from the linear, into a space where the works in *No Straight Lines* — spanning the eight-decade swath of modern Aspen, from Bayer's moment to ours — engage in a timeless dialogue.

Andrew Travers

Andrew Travers is an Aspen based journalist and Penner Manager of Educational Programs at The Resnick Center for Herbert Bayer Studies

HERBERT BAYER

1900-1985



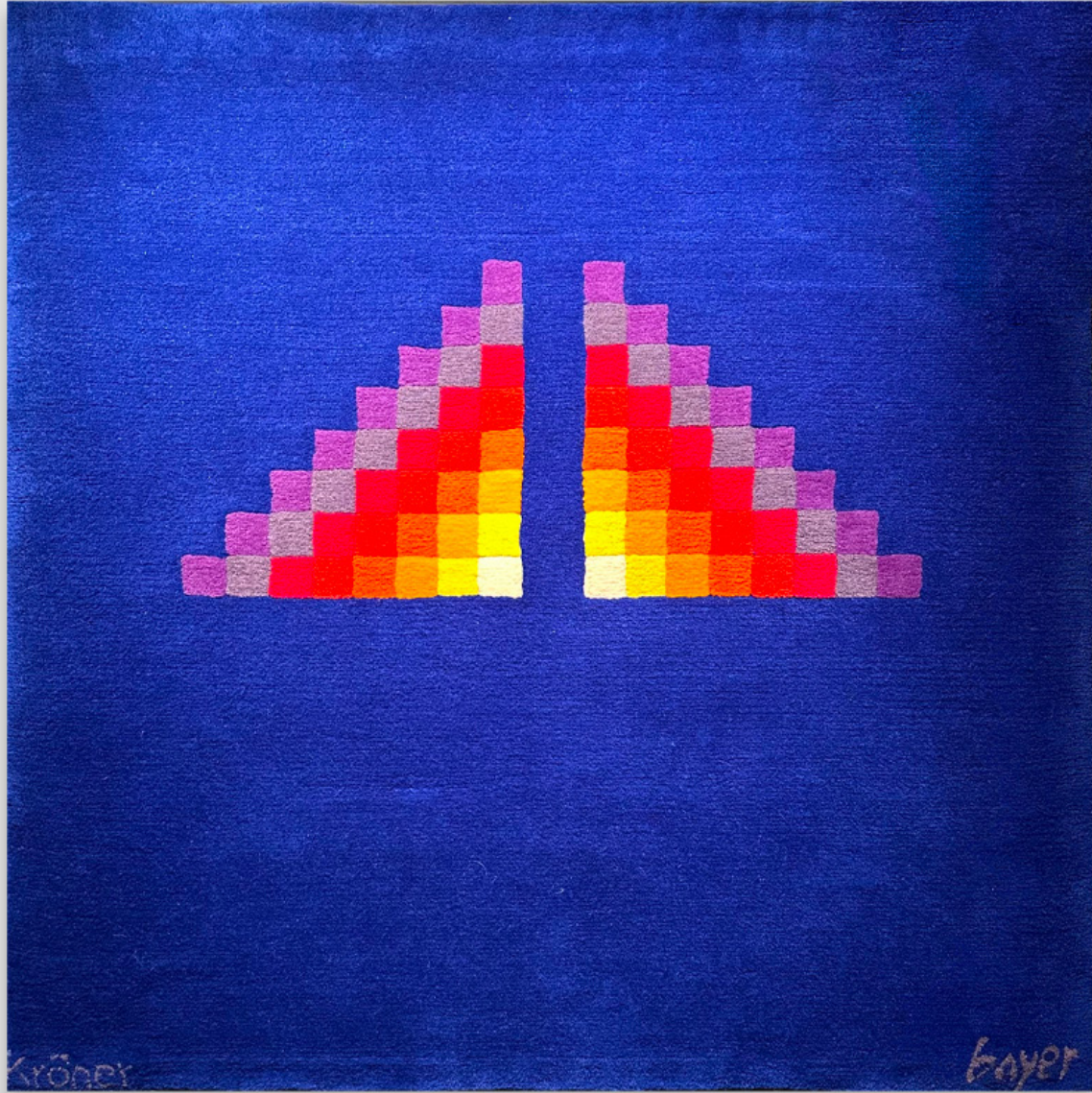
HERBERT BAYER

Chromatic Penetration, 1966 / 1986

Wool tapestry

63 x 64 in

160 x 162.6 cm



HERBERT BAYER

Untitled, circa 1969
Wool tapestry
69 x 69 in
175.3 x 175.3 cm



HERBERT BAYER

Light of Hope (1961/29), 1961
Acrylic on canvas
20 1/4 x 14 in
51.4 x 35.6 cm



HERBERT BAYER

Growing in Size (1971/49), 1971
Acrylic on paper
8 x 8 in
20.3 x 20.3 cm

HERBERT BAYER 1900-1985

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Herbert Bayer was an Austrian-American graphic artist, painter, and architect, influential in spreading European principles of art and advertising in the United States. Bayer was first trained as an architect, but from 1921 to 1923 he studied typography and mural painting at the Bauhaus, then Germany's most advanced school of design. He became a master of typography and advertising at the Bauhaus and simultaneously was an art director with Vogue. In 1928 he moved to Berlin, where he worked in advertising, painting, exhibition design, typography, and photography. Although never formally connected with Surrealism, Bayer was fascinated by dream imagery and embraced photomontage as a means of visualizing the psychological realities of modernity. He moved to New York City in 1938 where he concentrated on advertising design.

His story developing Aspen, CO into a major cultural center began in 1946. Bayer became chairman of the department of design of the Container Corporation of America and design consultant for Aspen Development, a corporation that staged an annual festival of the arts. In the latter capacity he designed many architectural projects, such as the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies and the Music Tent used during the annual music festival. He also experimented in environmental sculpture, such as Marble Garden and Beyond the Wall, while continuing his work in painting and the graphic arts. His footprint remains very much alive in Aspen today, as demonstrated by the recent opening of the Resnick Center for

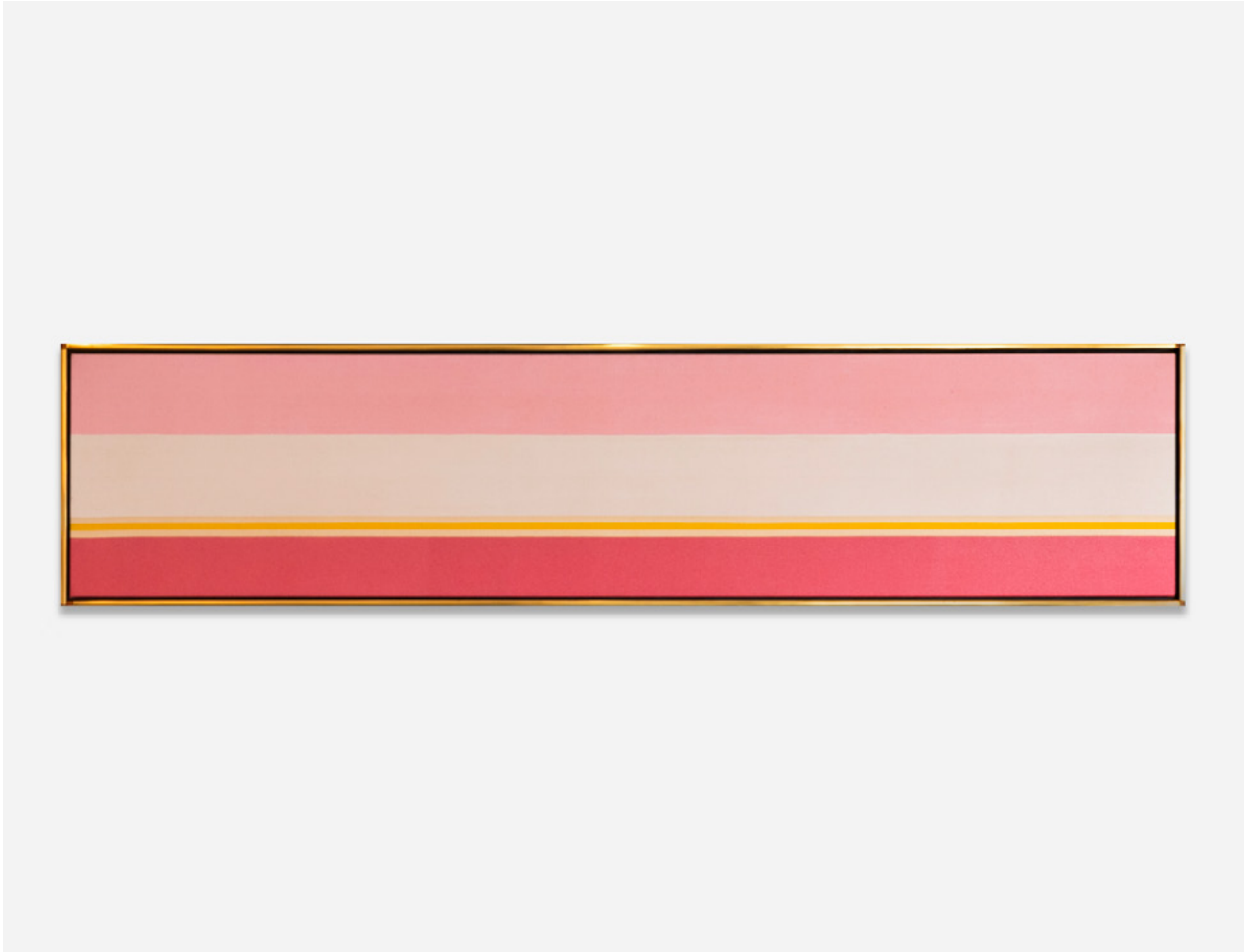


Herbert Bayer Studies on the campus of the Aspen Institute. His driving force here has inspired artists from around the world for generations.

He received a gold medal from the American Institute of Graphic Arts in 1970. Bayer is featured in many important museum collections including: Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum, New York City; Museum of Modern Art, New York City; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City; National Gallery of Art, Washington DC; Tate Britain, London, UK; Guggenheim Museum, New York City and the Denver Art Museum among others.

KENNETH NOLAND

1924-2010



KENNETH NOLAND

Western Set, 1967
Acrylic on Canvas
18 x 82 in
45.7 x 208.3 cm







KENNETH NOLAND

Missus, 1962
Magna on Canvas
69 x 69 in
175.3 x 175.3 cm





KENNETH NOLAND

1924–2010

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

A major contributor to both Color Field Painting movement and the Washington Color School, Kenneth Noland, along with Helen Frankenthaler and Morris Louis, was an early pioneer of the stain-painting technique. Noland was born in 1924 in Asheville, South Carolina, and was introduced to painting early by his father, who was an amateur artist. Following high school, Noland in 1942 enlisted in the US Air Force, serving for almost four years. After his tour of duty, he took advantage of the G.I. Bill to enroll at the acclaimed Black Mountain College, near his hometown.

Noland benefited from the college's diverse and accomplished faculty, but was particularly influenced by Ilya Bolotowsky and Josef Albers, who together introduced him to such current artistic modes as geometric abstraction and Neo-Plasticism. After two years at Black Mountain, Noland went to Paris, France, to study with sculptor Ossip Zadkine before settling in the Washington, DC, area. There he supported himself by teaching while he situated himself in the greater DC art scene. He soon met Morris Louis, with whom in 1953, under the auspices of critic Clement Greenberg, he visited the New York studio of Helen Frankenthaler. Frankenthaler's revolutionary method of using thinned pigment on raw canvas inspired Noland, and he adopted the technique in his own work.

Noland first began making and exhibiting his iconic "Circle" series—square canvases featuring concentric circles in various saturated colors—during the late 1950s, and in the early 1960s he expanded his image repertoire to include centrally positioned chevrons. His work attracted international attention in 1964, when it was included in Greenberg's Post-Painterly Abstraction exhibition at the Los Angeles County



Museum of Art, and his paintings also appeared in the Venice Biennale, where they were shown alongside contributions by Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns.

During the 1960s Noland spent an increasing amount of time in rural Vermont, where he was in touch with the artistic community of Bennington College. Fellow artists Jules Olitski and Anthony Caro both taught there, and he formed close friendships with them. Noland continued experimenting with color and composition in his work until his death in 2010. His importance to postwar American painting, as well as his preference for highly recognizable motifs, has led many important collections to acquire his work, among them the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; the Kunstmuseum, Basel; and the Tate Gallery, London.

RICHARD CARTER

b. 1946



RICHARD CARTER

Ancient Boundry II, 2022
Mixed media on paper
30 x 22 in
76.2 x 55.9 cm



RICHARD CARTER

Ancient Boundry I, 2022
Mixed media on paper
30 x 22 in
76.2 x 55.9 cm



RICHARD CARTER

b. 1946

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Richard Carter arrived in the Roaring Fork Valley in 1971 from New Jersey after graduating from Villanova University in 1969. From 1972 to 1978, the self-taught painter worked as the studio assistant to former Bauhaus master Herbert Bayer in Bayer's Red Mountain studio. Carter spent the next six years working on Bayer projects, including painting, printmaking, tapestry design, architectural models, interior design, and exhibition design. Meanwhile, Carter was working on his own series of paintings and began exhibiting around the United States.

Heavily influenced by his time under Bayer, Carter's geometric paintings synthesize a constructivist vision with an organic connection to nature and its processes. His work explores ideas related to the natural sciences, geology, weather, cosmology, and the natural sciences such as icebergs, lightning, water, particle physics, and atmosphere. While a prolific painter, Carter also produced a great number of drawings in graphite that complement his work on these various subjects. His drawings have been shown widely in museums, galleries, and university shows. He has had enumerable one-person and group exhibitions in museums and galleries nationwide and maintains a robust exhibition schedule.



Additionally, he was the primary founder and a board member of what is now the Aspen Art Museum. Stints on the boards of the Aspen Foundation for the Arts, Aspen Community School, The Anderson Ranch, The ArtBase, and currently The Arts Campus at Willits and the Aspen Institute have demonstrated his commitment to improving the Cultural climate for the community in the Roaring Fork Valley. Carter lives and maintains his studio in Basalt, CO.

EVAN HECOX

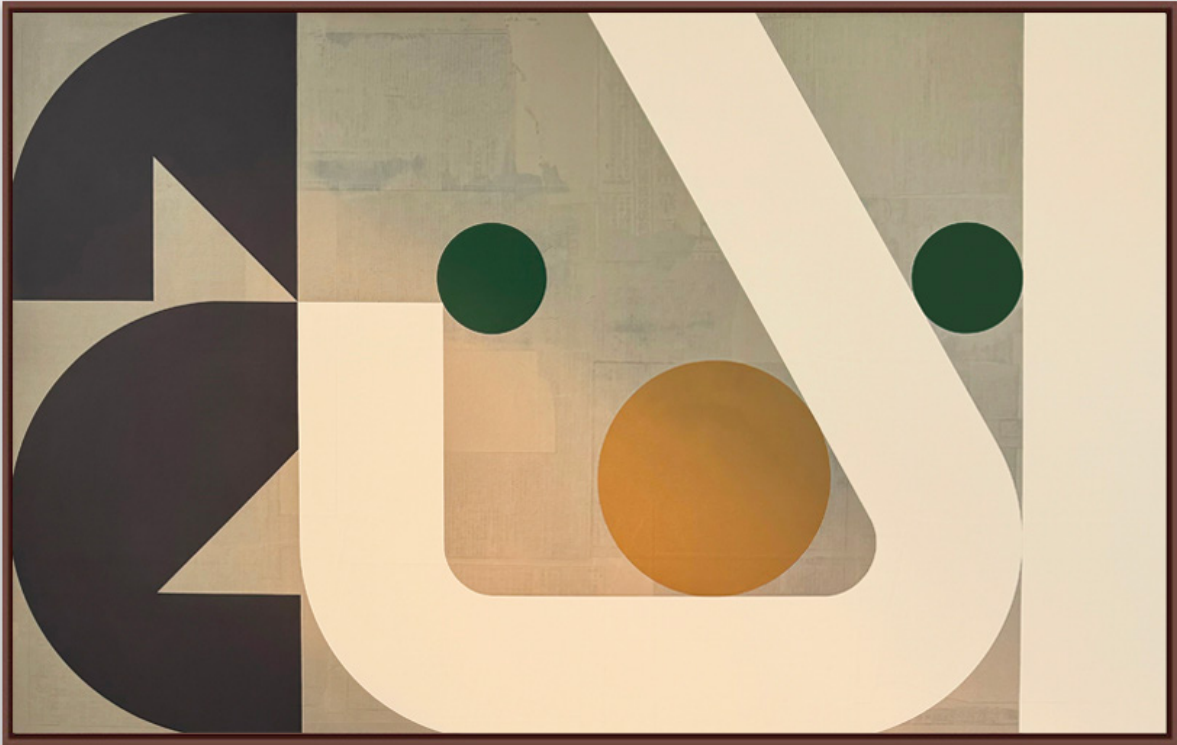
b. 1970



EVAN HECOX

*USUI rain moistens the soil, grass sprouts,
trees bud, 2024*

Acrylic, vintage newspaper on panel
40 x 60 in



EVAN HECOX

Composition 04, 2024
Acrylic, vintage newspaper on panel
40 x 60 in
101.6 x 152.4 cm

EVAN HECOX b. 1970

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Evan Hecox is a multi-disciplinary artist and designer. Over the past two decades, Hecox's work has included drawing, painting, printmaking, graphic design, and illustration. The media of his work extends from small drawings to gallery installations and large murals. Much of his work takes inspiration from travel, with imagery ranging from major cities to remote desert scenes, all united by a keen eye for the mood and feeling of a particular place or moment in time.

Hecox and his family spent summers throughout the '70s and '80s in a small mining cabin near the deserted town of Ashcroft, Colorado. His mother was a weaver, and his father an artist; together, they would attend the Aspen Institute's International Design Conference each year. The mining cabin no longer exists, and the design conference ended nearly twenty years ago. However, like the ghost town of Ashcroft itself, the nostalgia of bygone eras feels alive and well within Hecox's decidedly modern images. His reinterpretation of iconic elements from urban and natural settings embodies the Aspen Idea through the lens of passing time. Both precise in his compositions yet ethereal in his narratives, Hecox is able to pull us in just enough to set the wheels of mystery, nostalgia, and intrigue in motion.

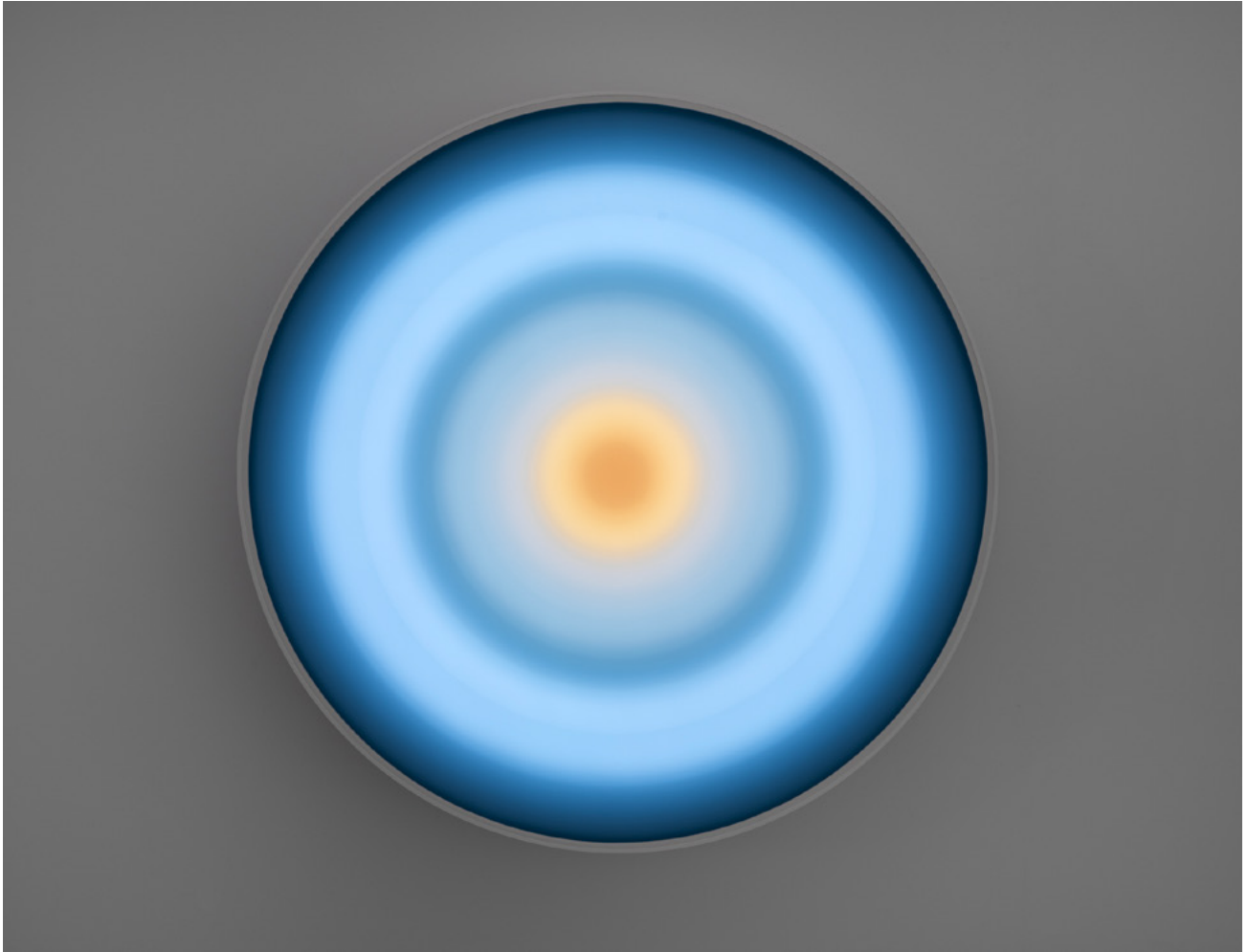
He has shown his work in solo and group exhibitions throughout the United States, Europe, Australia, Japan, and Hong Kong. His work in the realm of design has references from Japanese



prints, European poster design, 1960's era illustration, Bauhaus typography, and folk art. For more than twenty years, he has created graphics for the brand Chocolate Skateboards, with hundreds of his designs in use on streets and skateparks, as well as in many private collections. Projects also include collaborations with clients such as Hermes, Herschel, Vans, Yardbird, Burton Snowboards, Monster Children, Nike, Volkswagen, and the State of Colorado. He currently lives and works in Denver, Colorado.

PHILLIP K. SMITH III

b. 1972



PHILLIP K. SMITH III

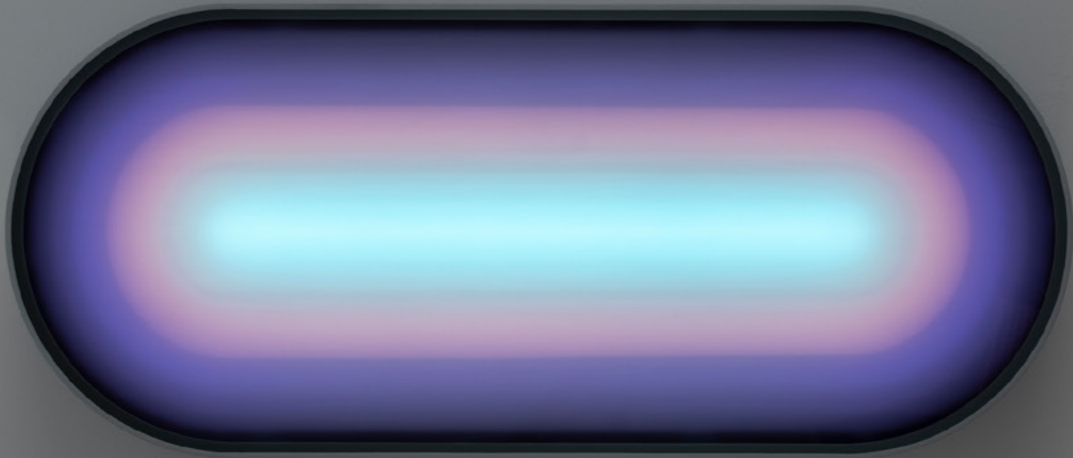
Sky Torus - Variant 1:2, 2023
Aluminum, glass, automotive paint,
electronic components, unique color
choreography
45 x 45 x 6 1/4 in
114.3 x 114.3 x 15.9 cm





PHILLIP K. SMITH III

Sky Lozenge - Variant 2:1, 2023
Aluminum, glass, automotive paint,
electronic components, unique color
choreography
42 x 18 x 6 1/4 in
106.7 x 45.7 x 15.9 cm





PHILLIP K. SMITH III

b. 1972

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

American artist Phillip K. Smith III (b. Calif., 1972) uses light as a medium to create optically shifting sculptures and site-specific installations. His minimal but imposing interventions into vast outdoor landscapes and more discretely scaled sculptures are nuanced perceptual encounters in response to the unique conditions of site and context. Expansile and living Smith's boundary-dissolving sculptures alter the interplay of light, color, and surface in an expanded field, proposing shifts in experiential pace to modify the viewer's physical encounter. Trained as an artist and an architect at Rhode Island School of Design, Smith incorporates the sitespecificity of architecture, with its reliance on scale and its capacity to physically impact the human interaction it supports to create immersive viewing experiences.

Recent projects include *The Cube*, an 18' high reflective toroid cube sited as the new icon of a Skidmore, Owings & Merrill designed project in La Jolla, CA (2024); *Parallel Perpendicular* (2021), a series of 5 freestanding reflective and color-based volumes for West Hollywood Park in Los Angeles, CA; *Three Half Lozenges* (2021), a permanent acquisition activating the three two-story high windows on the 1920s façade of the Newark Museum of Art in Newark, NJ; *Open Sky* (2018), commissioned by Scandinavian fashion house COS for Italy's Salone del Mobile, Milan; *Detroit Skybridge* (2018), a 100-foot-long LED installation commissioned as part of Detroit's Library Street Collective city-wide revitalization effort, and *The Circle of Land and Sky* (2017), part of the inaugural Desert X, the critically acclaimed Coachella Valley desert-wide, site-specific exhibition. Upcoming public projects include a 50' high all-white, torqued light and shadow work in North Scottsdale, AZ (Spring 2024), and *Four*



Comers Extruded, a 42' high reflective and light-based work for Seattle Sound Transit (February 2024).

In 2022-2023, Smith had two concurring solo museum exhibitions: *Three Parallels* at Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art and *Light+ Change* at Palm Springs Art Museum. He has been the subject of solo exhibitions at the Toledo Art Museum, Laguna Art Museum, and Sonoma Valley Museum of Art. His work is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, Toledo Museum of Art, Palm Springs Art Museum, Denver Art Museum, and Newark Museum of Art, and has been featured in hundreds of print and online publications, including *Architectural Digest*, *artnet*, *ARTnews*, *Forbes*, *The Guardian*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Wallpaper**, *Yatzer*, and *Whitehot Magazine*, among others.

ANDREW HUFFMAN

b. 1986



ANDREW HUFFMAN

Clearcreek Swallowtails, 2022
Acrylic on Canvas
60 x 40 in
152.4 x 101.6 cm





ANDREW HUFFMAN

b. 1986

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Huffman was born in Newton, Kansas, in 1986 and received his BFA in painting and printmaking in 2008 from the Columbus College of Art and Design in Columbus, Ohio. In 2012, he earned an MFA in painting with honors from the University of Kansas. He has taught courses in drawing and painting at the University of Kansas, KS; the Metropolitan State University, CO; and the Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design, CO. He currently lives and works in Denver, Colorado.

The Pardon Collection acquired Huffman's work recently and is featured in a group exhibition drawn from the collection entitled *Subtle Shifts* at The Vault in Denver, CO, that ran concurrently with his solo show *Spaces and Places* in Los Angeles at the Edward Cella Gallery. He is represented by the David Richard Gallery in New York City and is preparing for his third solo exhibition with the gallery in 2024.

Huffman presented a site-specific interactive multi-media installation entitled *Domino Projection* at the Denver Art Museum in 2020 and previously has made temporary site-specific installations at the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art (2019), the Marie Sharpe Gallery of the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs (2019), and the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver (2018). In 2020, Huffman completed two permanent public art installations for Continuum Partners entitled *Modulated 32 (#1 & #2)* in downtown Denver.



The artist was awarded a two-year artist in residency at the RedLine Contemporary Art Center in Denver (2016-2018) and with the Facebook Artists in Residency Program in Denver (2018), during which he created a permanent mural and installation for their offices. Recently, Huffman was awarded another two-year artist studio with RedLine's Satellite Studio Program (2023-2024) in Denver.

His work has been exhibited internationally at the Neurotitan Gallery in Berlin, Germany, as well as the Sluice Exchange Berlin at the Kuehlhaus in Berlin, Germany, and in a public mural in the Old Dali City in Yunnan, China.

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