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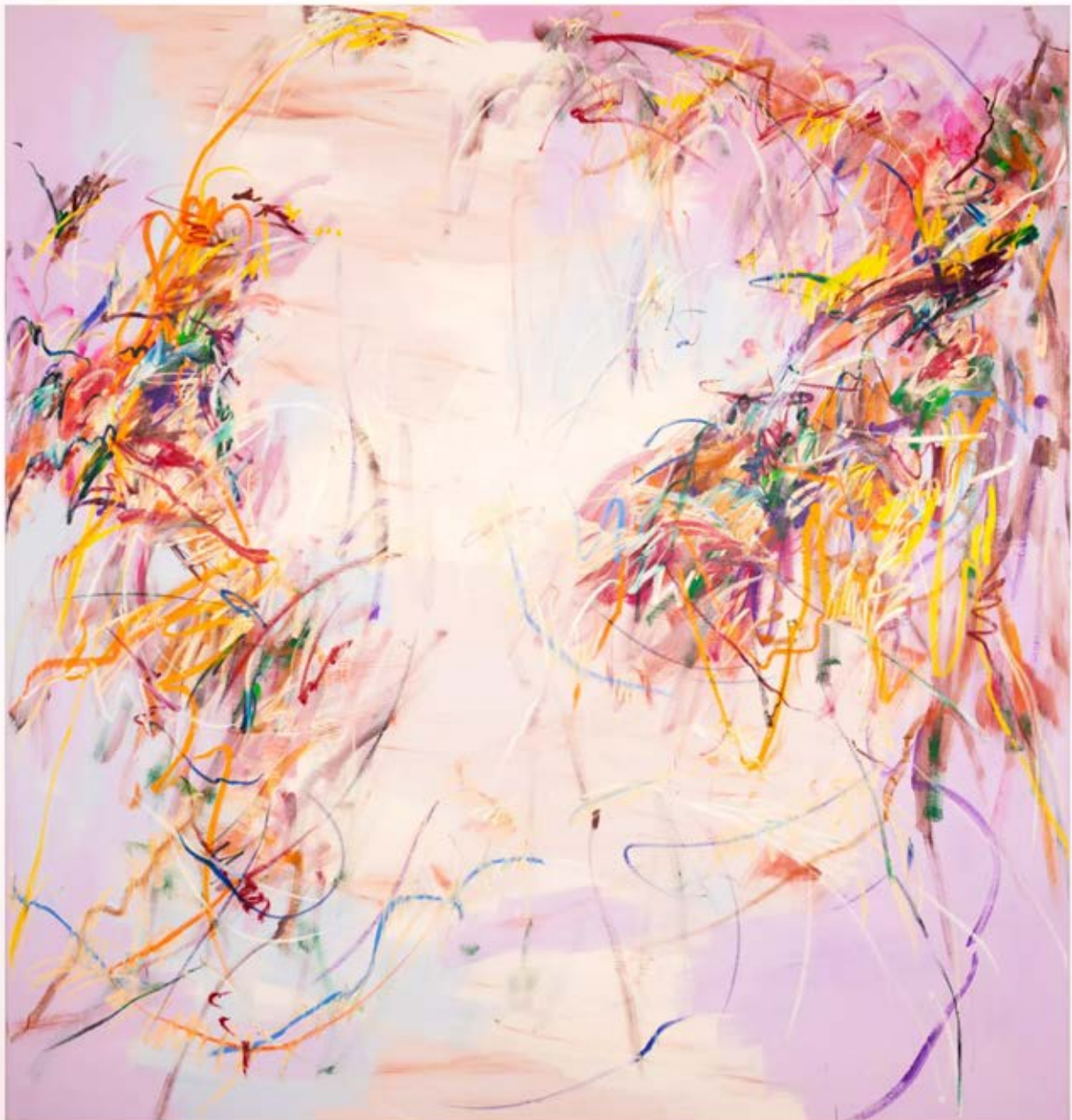


Art

10 Women Abstract Artists on the Rise

Ayanna Dozier

Jan 26, 2023 5:08PM



Xiyao Wang 王西瑶

Dawn Blossoms Plucked at Dusk No. 2, 2022

Tang Contemporary Art

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Across auctions, art fairs, and gallery exhibitions at the end of 2022, it became very clear that abstraction was back. Although painting in general will always dominate the art market, for the most part, figurative painting has maintained a greater prominence and captivated much of the general public's imagination in recent years. However, the tides of 2023 may swing us in the other direction yet again.

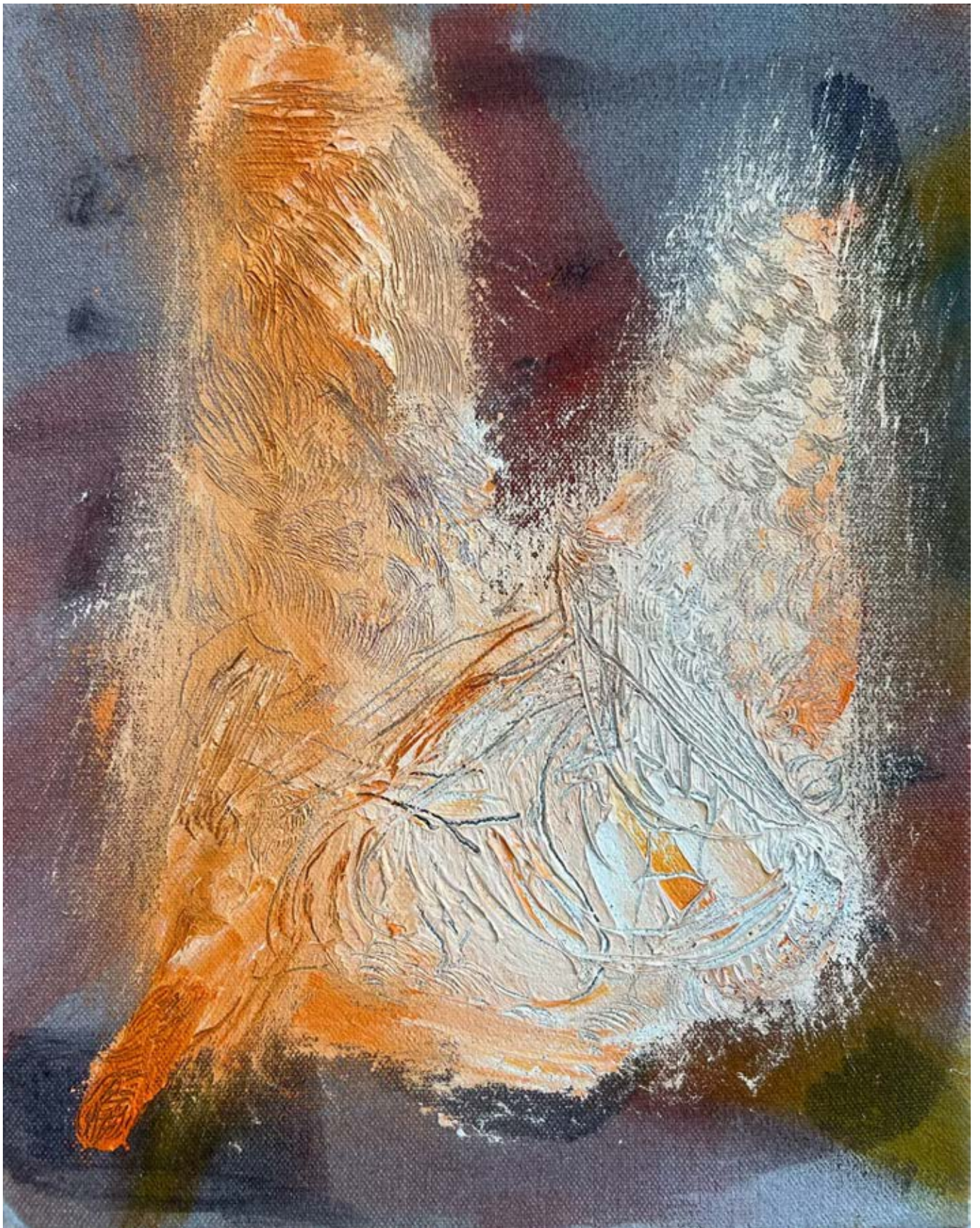
In particular, women artists working in abstraction are taking center stage. This renewed attention has revealed the form's inherent ability to emphasize accounts related to the body and women's history. Through abstraction, artists are able to viscerally communicate a torrent of emotions that may be stifled in figurative works.

Here, we feature 10 rising women abstractionists to watch.

Lauren Quin

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B. 1992, Los Angeles. Lives and works in Los Angeles.



Lauren Quin
Ink in the Current, 2018
Artsy Private Sales

Lauren Quin's paintings pulsate with vibrant colors and lines that overlap to create a cascading swirl. For the artist, who is represented by Blum & Poe,

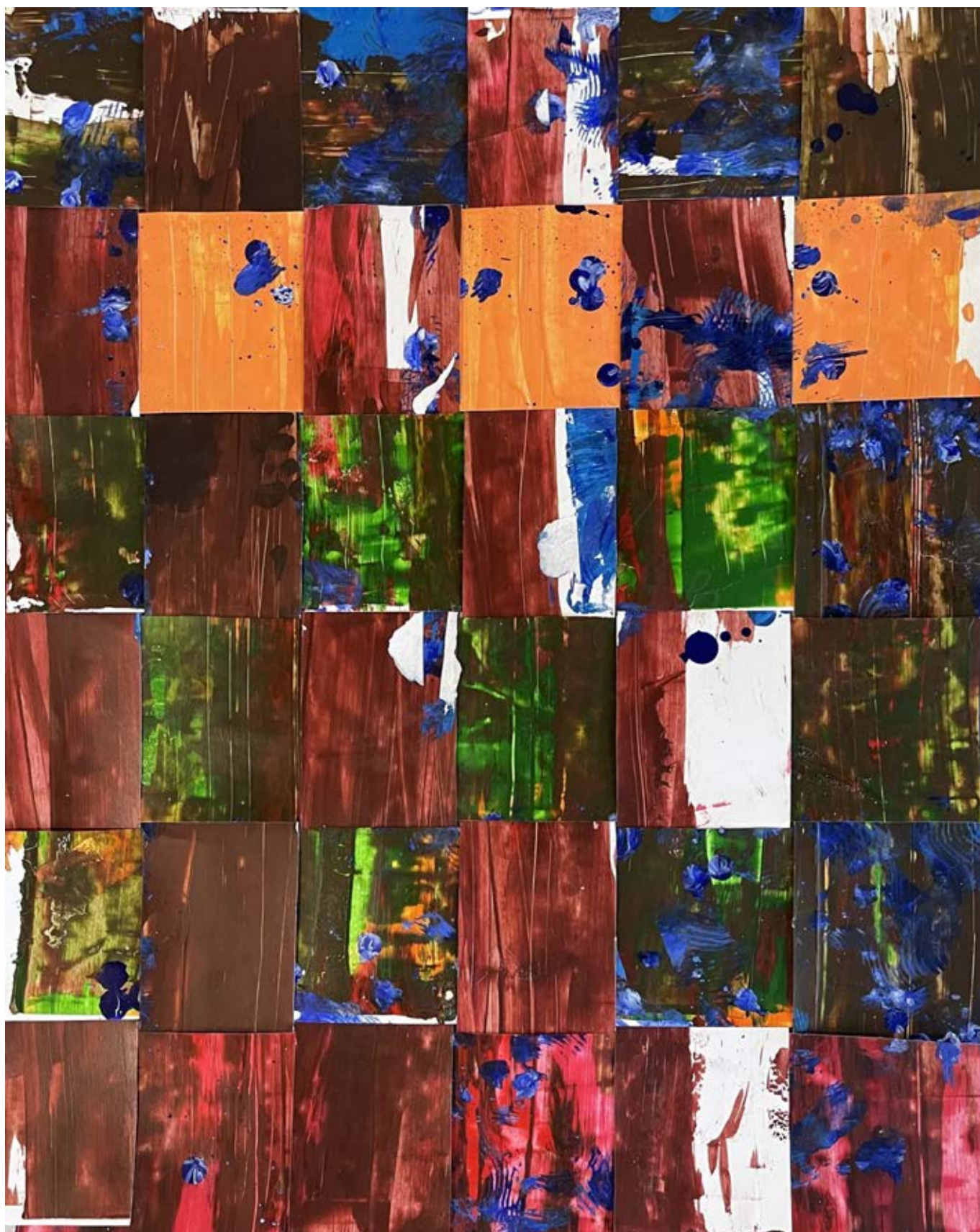
this collision of curves represents the ways communication can be layered.

Quin's dense compositions begin in her sketchbook, in which she collects and accumulates visual motifs before transferring them onto her canvases. There, they grow in both size and shape, eventually morphing into something new altogether. Quin's paintings reject the belief that abstraction should be hard and precise. Instead, she opens the door for a more fluid, vibrant, soft, and personal experience in her work.

Ryan Cosbert

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B. 1999, New York. Lives and works in New York.



Ryan Cosbert
Solstice, 2022
Bode Projects

Ryan Cosbert's lush sculptures and paintings reimagine abstract histories of the Black diaspora. Inspired by Sam Gilliam, Jack Whitten, Alma Thomas,

and Edward Clark, Cosbert uses color and geometry to express daily Black life. Her signature style features a grid format of tiles that evenly distribute texture and color across her large-scale surfaces. Represented by UTA Artist Space, Cosbert uses a process that is not dissimilar from the labor of a tiler, as she was inspired by the tiles in the bathroom and kitchen of her childhood home.

Cosbert's use of color, particularly muted earth tones, recall Southern Black American quilting patches and patterns seen across the diaspora. In *Solstice* (2022), the gridded abstraction evokes the work of Gee's Bend.

Donna Huanca

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B. 1980, Chicago. Lives and works in Berlin.

Donna Huanca
ANCHORING FIBRILS, 2022
Travesia Cuatro

Fresh off a 2022 solo presentation at Whitechapel Gallery are Donna Huanca's intensely blue paintings of bulbous shapes. A graduate of the esteemed Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Huanca is known for her ovoid forms that create a heavy center across her painting-, performance-, and mixed media-based practice.

Despite Huanca's use of abstraction, the body is never too far out of reach. This can largely be seen in her interactive performances where she paints

the bodies of nude models, who interact with and sometimes activate her paintings through dance.

Represented by Peres Projects, Huanca engages with the body to remind audiences that abstraction is not divorced from memory: Each nonrepresentational form can be traced back to a feeling or meaningful experience. In an interview with the *Seattle Times*, she explained her hope for her paintings to “facilitate a glitch in everyday life, to allow the viewer to take a breath,” she said. “My hope is that the impact this has on an audience is something that, on the one hand, they hopefully won’t forget, and on the other stimulates their own memory.”

Francesca Mollett

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B. 1991, Bristol, England. Lives and works in London.



Francesca Mollett
Scattered rest, 2022
GRIMM

Francesca Mollett, who recently had solo exhibitions at Taymour Grahne Projects in London and Baert Gallery in Los Angeles, approaches abstraction with literary, if not poetic, references. Some elements from the material world may at times appear across her practice, but ultimately, those representations are heavily buried beneath the layers of painted abstract gestures. This in and of itself becomes a metaphor for how representation, or specific likeness, gets lost over time.

Mollett's paintings, then, open a portal to the unknown—the buried thoughts and feelings of our subconscious. Open-ended and welcoming of each viewer's personalization, her works guide us to dig deep into our own well of memories to relive the feeling of something rather than see the details.

Xiyao Wang

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B. 1992, Chongqing, China. Lives and works in Berlin.



Wang Xiyao
The Tail of Summer no.2, 2021
Luce Gallery

Xiyao Wang's paintings are sparse. Her canvases are largely dominated by a white background that allows her painterly marks to become more pronounced. Her large-scale works create an immersive atmosphere that

evokes architectural landscapes through abstraction, not unlike the oeuvre of [Julie Mehretu](#).

Represented by [König Galerie](#) and [MASSIMODECARLO](#), Wang builds her gestural worlds by combining a variety of mediums, including oil, acrylic, chalk, and graphite. The physicality of her work, which will be on full display in Wang's debut solo at MASSIMODECARLO in London this February, reflects how landscapes affect our individual sense of place and space across time.

[Malin Gabriella Nordin](#)

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B. 1988, Stockholm. Lives and works in Stockholm.



Malin Gabriella Nordin

Flamman, 2022

GSB / Gallery Steinsland Berliner

Malin Gabriella Nordin's colorful paintings and works on paper invite audiences to consider life's shadow side—the unconscious or the unknown. For the artist, who is represented by [Gallery Steinsland Berliner](#), it is a free space to experiment with how to be in the world.

Nordin's vibrant abstractions are always on the move, shapeshifting to grow in the direction color and light take her. Speaking with [BOMB](#) magazine in 2022, she said, "I like everything that is not clear, that is not proven, or you don't know about, because it creates a space for me to let my imagination take over." Nordin's free-flowing process even had her working on a boat for a period of time.

Mandy El-Sayegh

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B. 1985, Selangor, Malaysia. Lives and works in London.



Mandy El-Sayegh
White Ground (Gulf, Zero), 2022
Lehmann Maupin

Throughout her installation, video, and painting practice, Mandy El-Sayegh — who is represented by ~~Lehmann Maupin~~ — introduces repeating motifs, allowing their interpretations to change when presented in a new context. Her impressive abstract paintings collage fragments of information together to metaphorically and literally convey how the whole of an object is

formed by its parts. The result, a series of densely layered grids, evokes a net.

Her paintings both challenge and are preoccupied with the tradition of modern Western abstraction, often pioneered by male artists, that has canonized sparse aesthetics as “neutral” or unburdened by cultural meaning. Her grids play into this visual history, only to demystify and complicate it. By overlaying the grid against itself, El-Sayegh changes its primacy as the neat object that has served as the foundation of Western art.

Daisy Parris

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B. 1993, Kent, England. Lives and works in London.



Daisy Parris
Untitled, 2018
Sim Smith

Daisy Parris's large-scale paintings are washed in pink, red, and flesh-toned colors. Emotionally and psychologically driven, their evocations of the body

consume and overwhelm the viewer, allowing audiences to reflect upon the fundamentals of human existence.

The emotive quality of Parris's work is not only felt through their expressive use of color, but through their titles as well. For example, *A Storm the Night You Went* (2021) captures the universal feeling of abandonment and alienation one feels when navigating romance and friendship. Its deep red hues tear away at the body, like your insides are coming apart. This visceral quality was captured in the title of Parris's solo show at Sim Smith in London last year, "I See You in Everyone I Love." Represented by Sim Smith, Parris captures the throes of love and affection without the need for representational likeness.

Adebunmi Gbadebo

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B. 1992, Livingston, New Jersey. Lives and works in Newark and Philadelphia.



Adebunmi Gbadebo
A Dilemma of Inheritance, page 8, 2020
Claire Oliver

Adebunmi Gbadebo's abstract works on paper reconfigure the history of her ancestors' labor on one of the two True Blue plantations in South Carolina. The artist, who is represented by Claire Oliver, pulls historical documents about her enslaved ancestors, including where they were buried and disinterred to create "luxury" areas like the golf course on the

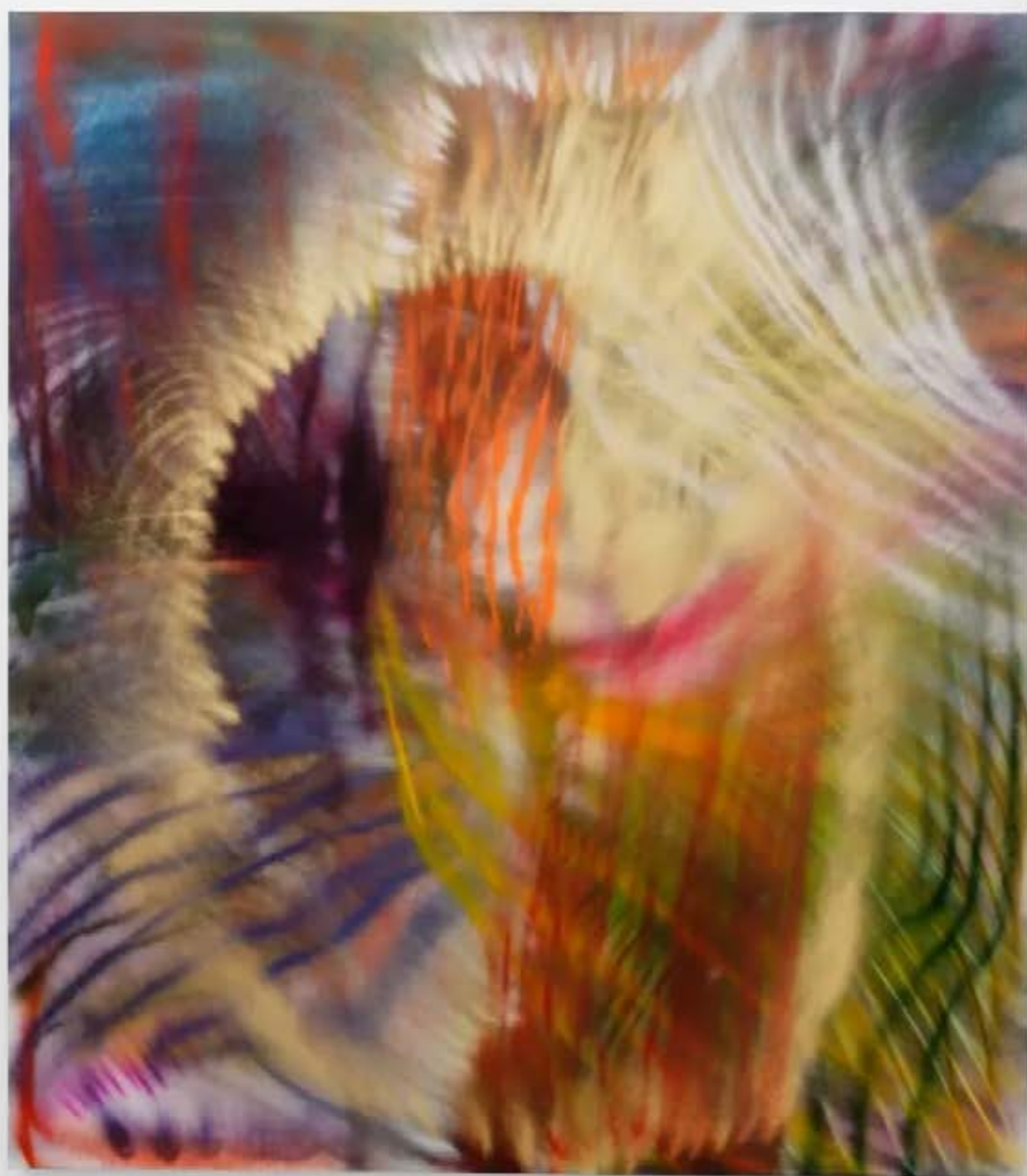
other True Blue plantation. Gbadebo literally weaves history into her work to demonstrate that abstraction is not void of politics nor culture.

Using materials as a way to index both a people and a history, Gbadebo mixes handmade indigo, human hair, and legal documents to create a pulpy paper for her work. Her incorporation of Afro-textured hair similarly embeds the body of the Black diaspora into her practice, rejecting, as she once described, “traditional art materials because of their association with Whiteness.”

Andrea Marie Breiling

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B. Phoenix. Lives and works in New York.



Andrea Marie Breiling
Not A Solid Stone, 2021
Almine Rech

Bristling with color, Andrea Marie Breiling's paintings evoke the cosmos. She achieves this hypnotic feat by primarily using neon colors and spray paint. Made without a brush, her paintings have a kineticism that lures audiences into their large-scale swirl of kaleidoscopic chaos.

Represented by [Almine Rech](#) and [Night Gallery](#), Breiling is engaged in the physicality of artmaking. Her process involves moving around the canvas rather than trying to fill in a predetermined area. Speaking to [Ocula](#) last summer, she described her approach as trying to stop time and create a safe space for viewers to leave their problems behind and be present in the moment. Fittingly, Breiling's abstract paintings carry an ethereal quality to them, seeming to not only change in the light but transcend the space they are in altogether. ■

Ayanna Dozier
Ayanna Dozier is Artsy's former staff writer.

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