

BAKER IV

**OPEN**

CALDWELL

CUSHNER

GARON

**on**

JANTZEN

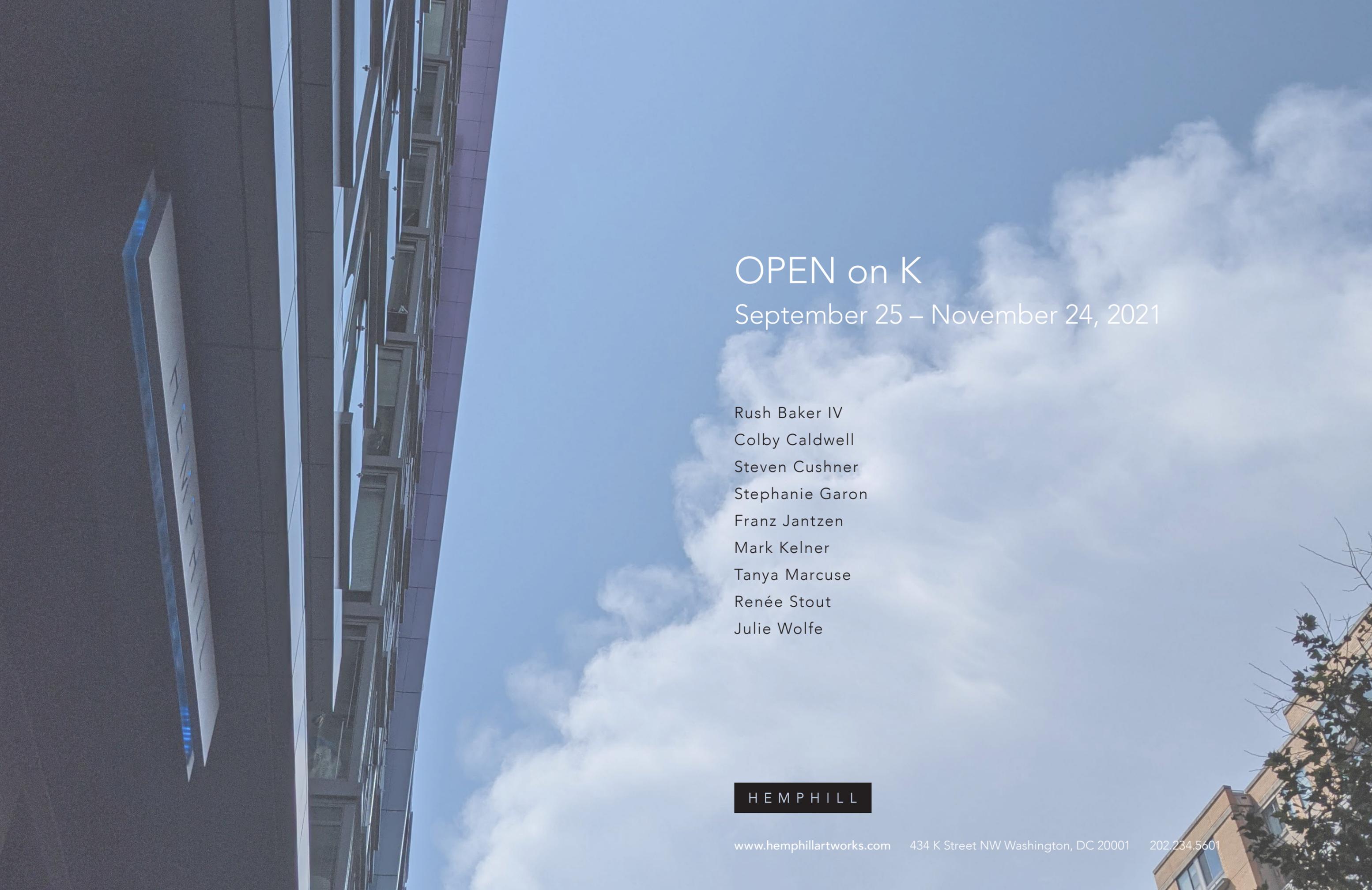
KELNER

MARCUSE

**K**

STOUT

WOLFE



# OPEN on K

September 25 – November 24, 2021

Rush Baker IV  
Colby Caldwell  
Steven Cushner  
Stephanie Garon  
Franz Jantzen  
Mark Kelner  
Tanya Marcuse  
Renée Stout  
Julie Wolfe

HEMPHILL

**LAUNDRY**

빨래방



**748-7774**

**PURE WATER**

LANGLEY PARK BEER & WINE	RESTAURANTE EL QUETZAL
MARIFE SPORTS y TIENDA MARIFE	CYBERGYM LATINO
PAN y PASTELES CHAPINA	JULITO'S DISCOTEC-DETRAS
R+R ELECTRONICS	JENNIFER LATINO MARKET
UTS CORP/BANRURAL CORP.	CITY FURNITURE
J&M JEWELRY	@Cyber Cafe
TIENDA LATINA DE MODA G-28	PERFUMANIA CRISTAL
Giron Tax Services 301-445-5468	Tax & Travel Agency Vicente Rosario 301-445-1027 Ste. G-123
THREADING SALON 202-480-1152 G-34B	<b>Bancomercio</b> Miembro del Grupo Scotiabank
Senoritas Ropa de Moda	AMADO BARBERSHOP Ste G126
HALAL MEAT MARKET	TARMAC LOUNGE & RESTAURANT MAIN ENTRANCE IN THE BACK

**VOYAGES SAIGON**

**WEST FRAMES**

**INSURANCE**

**MATTRESS & FURNITURE**

**Minh's TAILOR**

**CELL PHONE REPAIR**

**FADE IT BARBER SHOP**

**Red HAIR SALON**

MARK KELNER

*Strip Mall Landscape I (Los Angeles, CA)*

2021

acrylic on canvas

66 x 46 inches

*Email from Mark Kelner to George Hemphill*

Hi George,

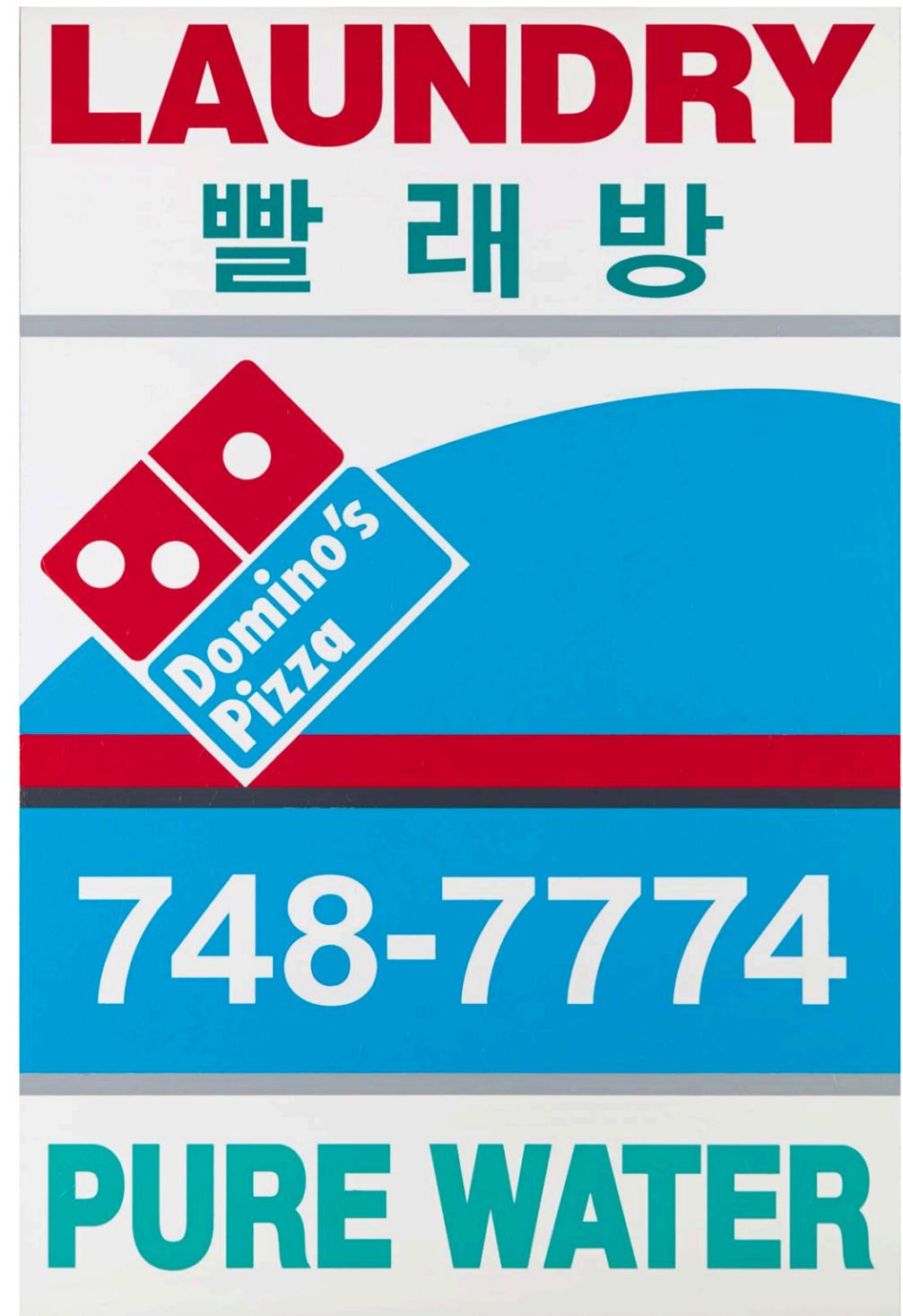
What these three works have in common is that they are representations of true-to-life strip mall signage. The *\*idea\** that unites them is that I see them as “trees,” still-lives, and urban/suburban landscapes.

Growing in the ‘burbs, these type of signs were/remain ubiquitous, everywhere, and all-at-once. I know nothing of streams, mountains, clouds, etc. But what I do know is that signs like this, along with logos such as McDonald’s, Wendy’s, and KFC were a large part of *\*my\** environment and nature. And just because they are artificial and man-made, doesn’t make them any less of the natural world to me.

We talked about what American slogans are right now — meaningless drivel that advertises “Going Out of Business!,” “No Money Down,” or “Everything Must Go!” Yet, the saturation of color, the texture of painting, and the quality of the actual art making, attempt to exaggerate the importance and meaning of what is being sold. I like that contradiction in these three still-lives. However ironic, the paintings remain sincere and rooted in simplicity. Each of these signs are designed to be modular.

Businesses come and go. The impermanence of all things, like a sunrise or sunset, ring true here — as does the motion of time as referenced by the changes in typography.

More to come,  
Mark



MARK KELNER

*Strip Mall Landscape I (Los Angeles, CA)*

2021

acrylic on canvas

66 x 46 inches

LANGLEY PARK BEER & WINE	RESTAURANTE EL QUETZAL
MARIFE SPORTS y TIENDA MARIFE	CYBERGYM LATINO
PAN y PASTELES CHAPINA	JULITO'S DISCOTEC-DETRAS
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HALAL MEAT MARKET	TARMAC LOUNGE & RESTAURANT MAIN ENTRANCE IN THE BACK

MARK KELNER  
Strip Mall Landscape II (Langley Park, MD)  
2021  
acrylic on canvas  
69 x 70 inches

<b>VOYAGES SAIGON</b>
<b>WEST FRAMES</b>
<b>INSURANCE</b>
<b>MATTRESS &amp; FURNITURE</b>
<b>Minh's TAILOR</b>
<b>CELL PHONE REPAIR</b>
<b>FADE  T BARBER SHOP</b>
<b>Red HAIR SALON</b>

MARK KELNER  
Strip Mall Landscape III (Westminster, California)  
2021  
acrylic on canvas  
67 x 56 inches

## JULIE WOLFE

### *Magnitude of Equality 7*

2021

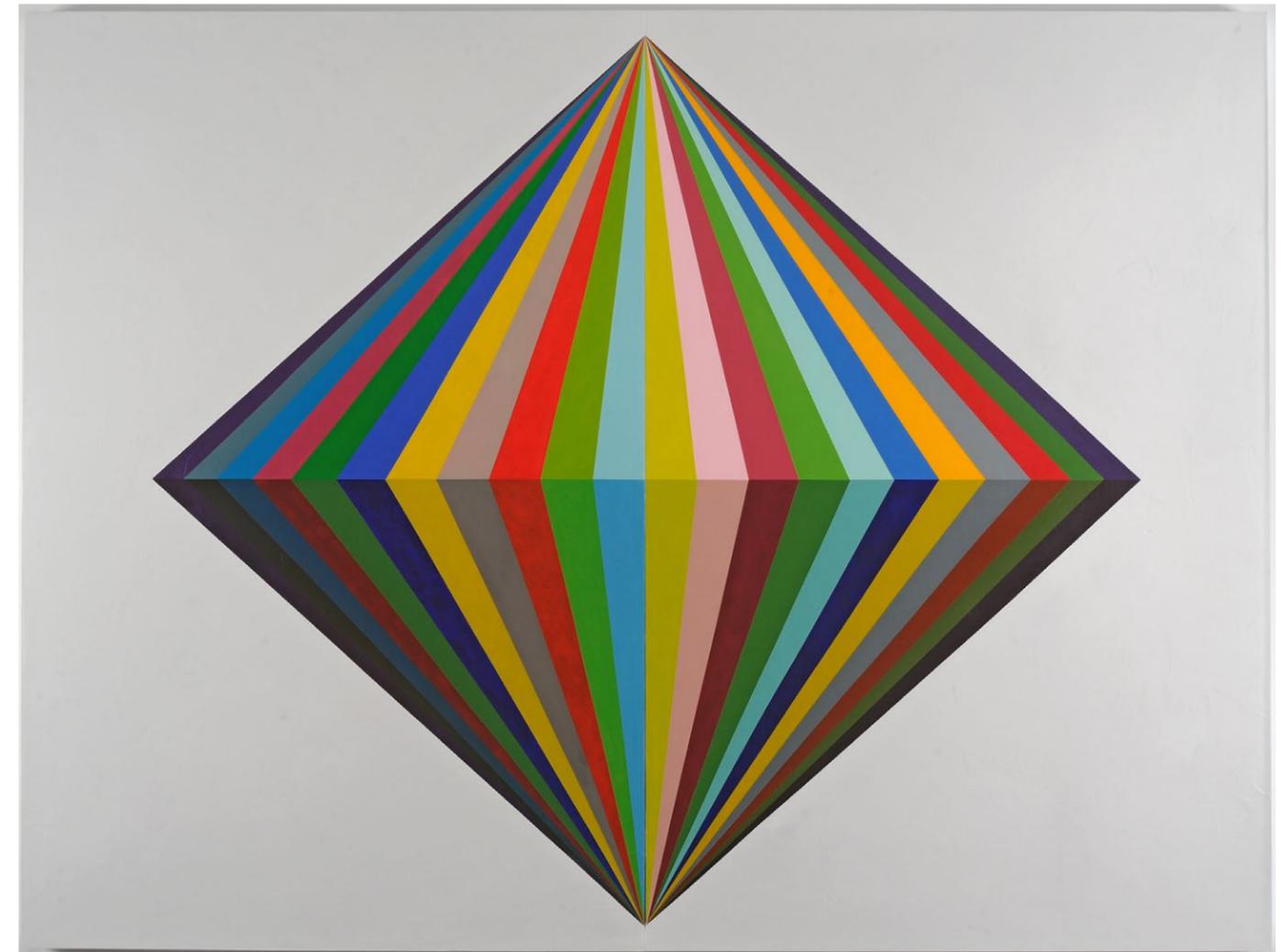
acrylic and mixed media on wood panel

72 x 96 inches

If we have learned anything from the events of the past year and a half, it is that humans have the distinct ability to perceive the world in vastly different ways when presented with the same set of information. Historically, this need to find unique meaning in the data available to us has been a tool for growth and discovery. Yet, as our society continues to be shaped by technological advances, namely digital media platforms, those differences can create chasms in communication which draw us further from each other. Acknowledging that in 2021 language can fail to provide understanding, we ask ourselves, "where do we find truth?"

Julie Wolfe proposes a way through this loss of meaning in language by expanding our minds through the visual realm. As she explains, "In *Magnitude of Equality*, I am reassembling the building blocks of geometry, illusionary art and color theory to probe us, provoke us, and propose that images can teach us about ourselves and the world around us in ways that words cannot." Where words have fallen on deafened ears, perhaps imagery can tap into our collective souls, as the adage goes, and revitalize the discourse we all need to continue to progress and grow?

By painting each color equally, side by side, Wolfe shows that the sum of these parts creates strength and presence in the prominent shape. This spinning top, set on its axis by the gravity of these bands of color and forever in motion, helps to illustrate that we, the collective, are spinning through time and space together. Its spectrum, made of equal parts light and dark, beckons us to accept and embrace the balancing act humanity continues to perform with ourselves and the Universe. The beauty in this painting lies not only on its surface, but in the questions we are prompted to ask by seeing what stands before us and refusing to turn away.



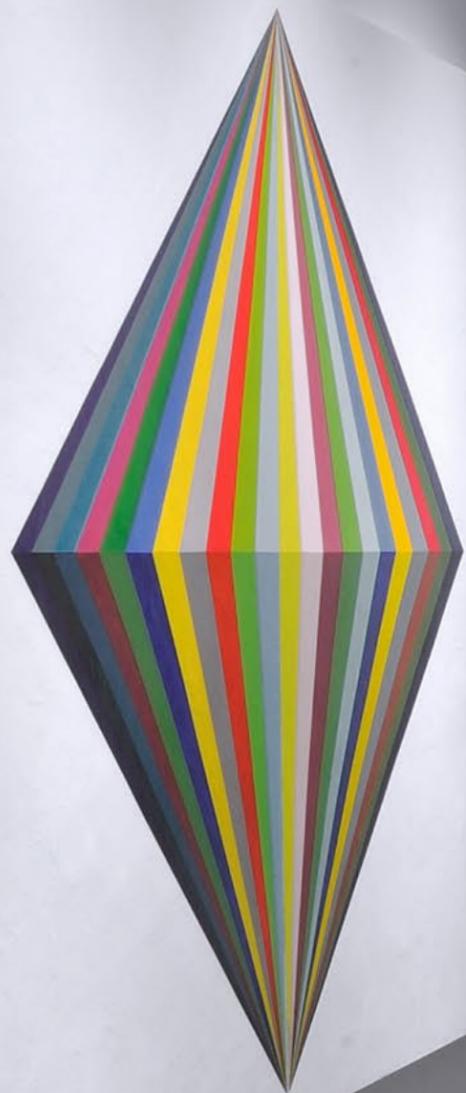
## JULIE WOLFE

*Magnitude of Equality 7*

2021

acrylic and mixed media on wood panel

72 x 96 inches





COLBY CALDWELL  
otff\_(3/21)  
2021  
archival pigment mounted to dibond and waxed  
72 x 52 1/4 inches  
Edition 1 of 3

## COLBY CALDWELL

*otff (3/21)*

2021

archival pigment mounted to dibond and waxed

72 x 52 1/4 x 2 1/8 inches

Edition 1 of 3

*Just as a memory originates as a tangible experience, - an actuality - a photograph begins in a similar manner, as tangible evidence of an event – of a transaction between the photographer and the subject.*

– Colby Caldwell

Colby Caldwell believes in the transactional nature of photography and the evolutionary relationship between subject and final artwork. There is a clear relationship between photographer and subject that is often mediated by a camera or some other form of technology. Each time an image is transferred, altered or tampered with, more information is added rather than taken away. Caldwell sees this course as losing the supposed truth but gaining another kind of truth grounded in the process itself; the photograph becomes new evidence of something that happened in our relation to nature.

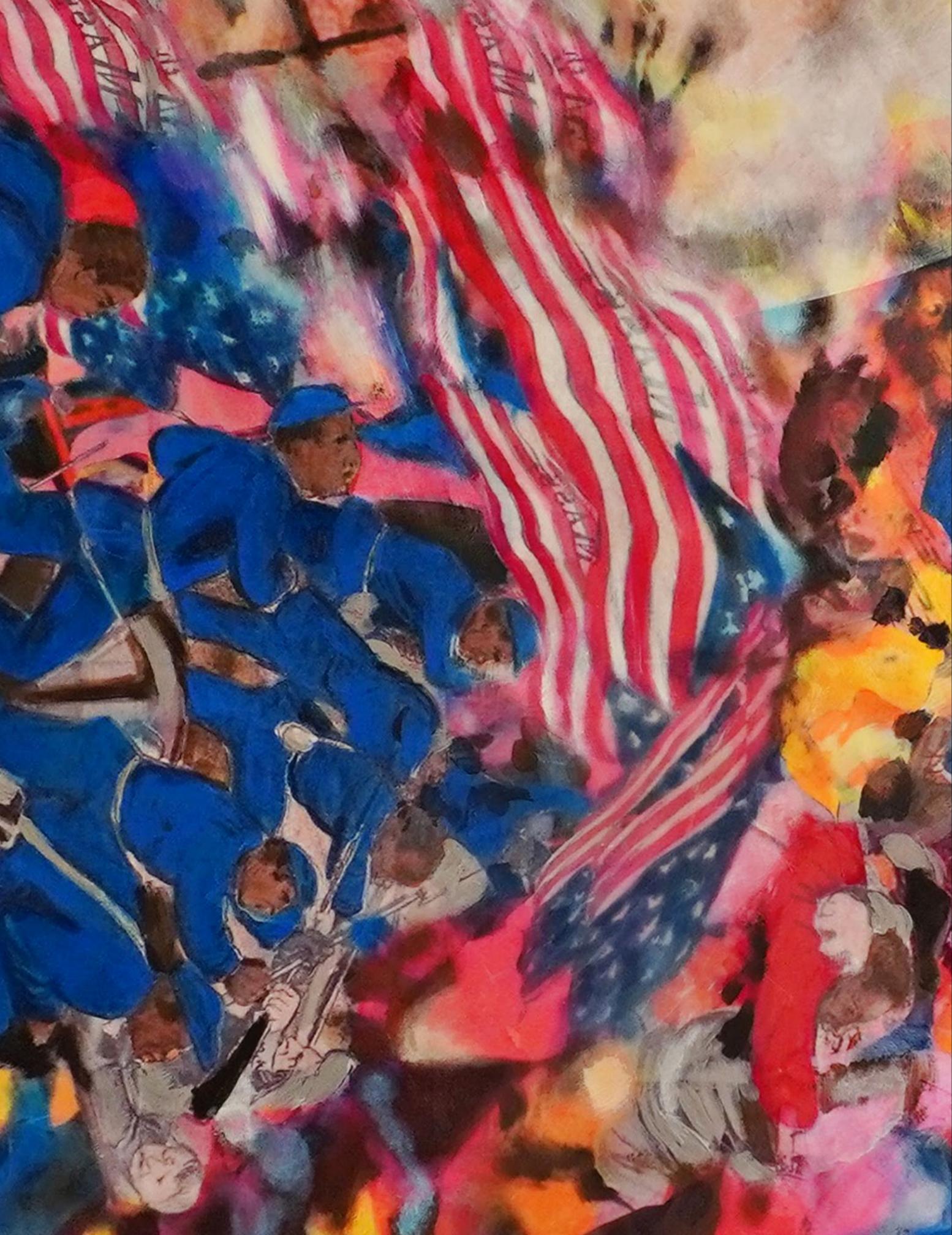
After the success of the *How to Survive Your Own Death* series, Caldwell worked through the long process of discovering his own relation to nature, resulting in the *From the Forest Floor* series. Previously, he had brought nature into the studio; this time, he brought the studio into nature. Using a flatbed scanner, Caldwell traces tree lines to create distorted, abstracted, but uniquely true, readings of his surroundings. He sees the work as field recordings which allow for listening to and seeing nature in a fuller form than that of a typical transfer between subject, camera, and the viewer. Caldwell is fluid, constantly in flux, shifting perspective and ideas as his scanner interacts with the environment.



RUSH BAKER IV  
Fort Wagner  
2021  
acrylic, paper, resin, and ceramic tile adhesive on canvas  
54 x 72 inches



RUSH BAKER IV  
Angels Descending II  
2020  
acrylic, paper, resin, and ceramic tile adhesive on canvas  
54 x 72 inches



## RUSH BAKER IV

*Angels Descending II*

2020

Acrylic, paper, resin, and ceramic tile adhesive on canvas

54 x 72 inches

*Fort Wagner*

2021

Acrylic, paper, resin, and ceramic tile adhesive on canvas

54 x 72 inches

*The current body of work evolved from a series of prints I made over the summer of 2020. The image depicts the moment the Union's Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment stormed the walls of a military installation and engaged in hand-to-hand combat with Confederate soldiers during the American Civil War. In both *Angels Descending II* and *Fort Wagner*, I intentionally place the focus on the Black people sacrificing their lives for the American Flag and defending the ideals of freedom and democracy not yet afforded to them. My work is often influenced by current events, but over the past few years, I couldn't help but look at our current sociopolitical climate without thinking about the more ominous moments in our history. I believe the future is abstract, but the past is very clear. The paintings on view emphasize my belief in the cyclical nature of historic events and how the past always shines light on the present. When looking at both the year 2020, and subsequently the events of the January 6th insurrection at the U.S. Capitol through the lens of 1850's and 60s U.S. history, arguably the most violent and schismatic, it is tragically clear that we have not truly come to grips with the lingering ramifications of our nation's split and tenuous reunification.*

– Rush Baker IV



FRANZ JANTZEN

*Up at Night*  
2016-2018, printed 2021  
Pigment ink on Photo Tex  
107 x 158 inches

*Imagine that you are a giant scanner an entire block wide—the width of Madison Square in Savannah, Georgia. You can lie on the ground looking up and be able to record in infinite detail. While effortlessly disregarding things attached to the ground like tree trunks, park benches, and shrubbery. Then you make a scan looking directly up, into the night, into the languid canopy of live oaks and Spanish moss, illuminated by lampposts here and there throughout the park.*

– Franz Jantzen

As war is conducted, as streets are secured, and our individual identities are verified, more and more images are created without human assistance. Today the number of photographs taken by artificial intelligence dwarfs the number of pictures taken by fingers pressing sensors on mobile phones. One fears the human aspect in the process of making photographs is disappearing. In the world of constant image production and consumption, the single isolated photographic image with its pretense of capturing reality, its “decisive moment,” feels less real, less decisive, less trustworthy. As we experience the continuous flow of images, it is increasingly impossible to expect one image not to merge with another. The isolated single viewpoint photograph has become conservative, inhibiting the capabilities of new photographic technologies and mediums of distribution. The challenge facing today’s photographer is how to employ the advances in new image-making, positing the meaningful qualities of humanity at its center such that the medium adds to who we are, rather than reducing us to mere objects.

“Up at Night” is composed of 305 digital exposures made over the course of six hours on the night of March 31 to April 1, 2016. The process of mending the images into the whole night view of the canopy of trees, stars, and moons was a time-consuming process of fantastic intensity. Jantzen began assembling the images on April 2, 2016, delaying work “until my head can catch up,” beginning again on April 13, 2018, completing the artwork on August 10, 2018.



FRANZ JANTZEN  
*Up at Night*  
2016-2018, printed 2021  
pigment ink on smooth cotton rag paper mounted on aluminum panel  
43 x 63 inches  
Edition 1 of 15

## RENÉE STOUT

*My Parallel Universe*

2016-2020

acrylic, latex, amber shellac, colored pencil, spray paint and oil on wood panel  
24 x 30 inches

*That cosmic swirl is my parallel universe, a metaphor for my personal mind space. The darkness to its right alludes to universal mysteries, possibilities, and the unknown or unknowable or perhaps other parallel universes within the infinity of actual space or my mind. In other words, the darkness represents expansiveness. It gives me great comfort to know that the men who think they control this planet have no control over other possible universes, either in actual space or in my mind. Their importance, influence, and reach are infinitesimal. Ultimately, this painting represents the process of self-actualization and an act of mental resistance.*

– Renée Stout

All the works in OPEN on K are large by physical measurement, except “My Parallel Universe” by Renée Stout. Yet it may be the biggest picture in the exhibition. Stout’s painting pushes the viewer into outer space, looking into a turbulent and placid swirling cosmos. This is a vantage point where we all stand connected, not by tribe or conflict, but by our shared common condition of being subject to forces much more significant and powerful. From this viewpoint, we can measure the political failures of our time and the ambivalence to everyday life. The painting suggests we are always standing before the immeasurable, challenging us to conjure greater possibilities.



## RENÉE STOUT

*My Parallel Universe*

2016-2020

acrylic, latex, amber shellac, colored pencil, spray paint and oil on wood panel  
24 x 30 inches

## STEVEN CUSHNER

*Back and Forth and Back and Forth 11*

2021

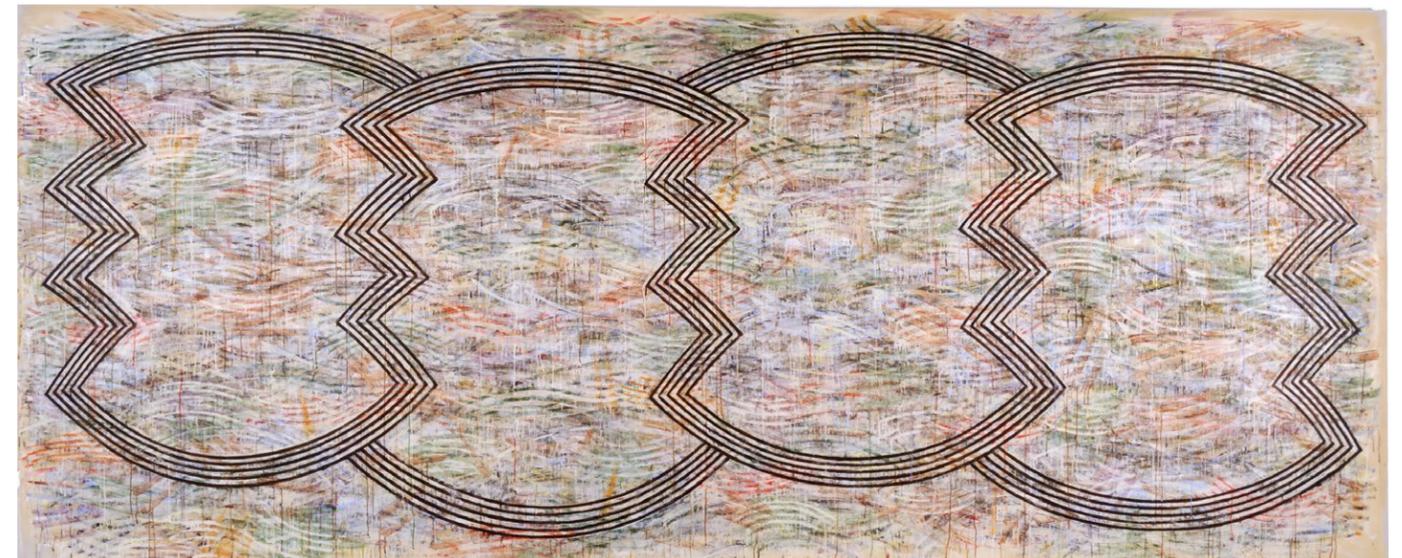
acrylic on canvas

74 1/2 x 184 1/2 inches

While Cushner's work is undeniably abstract, when asked to define what this means, he explains that the abstraction lies more in, *"the gesture the body makes, curves and arcs; repetition (of shape, line and movement, and things I love to do again and again and again, not just in painting but in daily activity); and abstracted from things I see or feel in the natural world (the flow of water, the pattern of waves in the ocean)."* This non-objectivity in his paintings provides the viewer an opportunity to enjoy the work for what it is, a pleasure to behold and something to ignite the imagination.

There is a tendency in human nature to develop rituals that provide a sense of order to the rhythms of our daily lives. With this yearning for structure in mind, one feels they can perhaps, decode the gestures that repeat, and repeat in Cushner's work. We may even believe it is possible to discover meaning in the iconographic quality of his forms, and to derive a deeper understanding of the artist's intent or even ourselves. However, it can be said that Cushner's paintings are more about the action and not the thing itself, which can ameliorate the viewer's impulse to define what should be understood.

Rather than imposing our own expectations or assumptions about what the painting means to us, the viewer, it is better to accept that it can represent no thing at all. That this monumental canvas, which has been painted by a practiced hand, is guiding us to a space in our mind and body that feels *just right*.



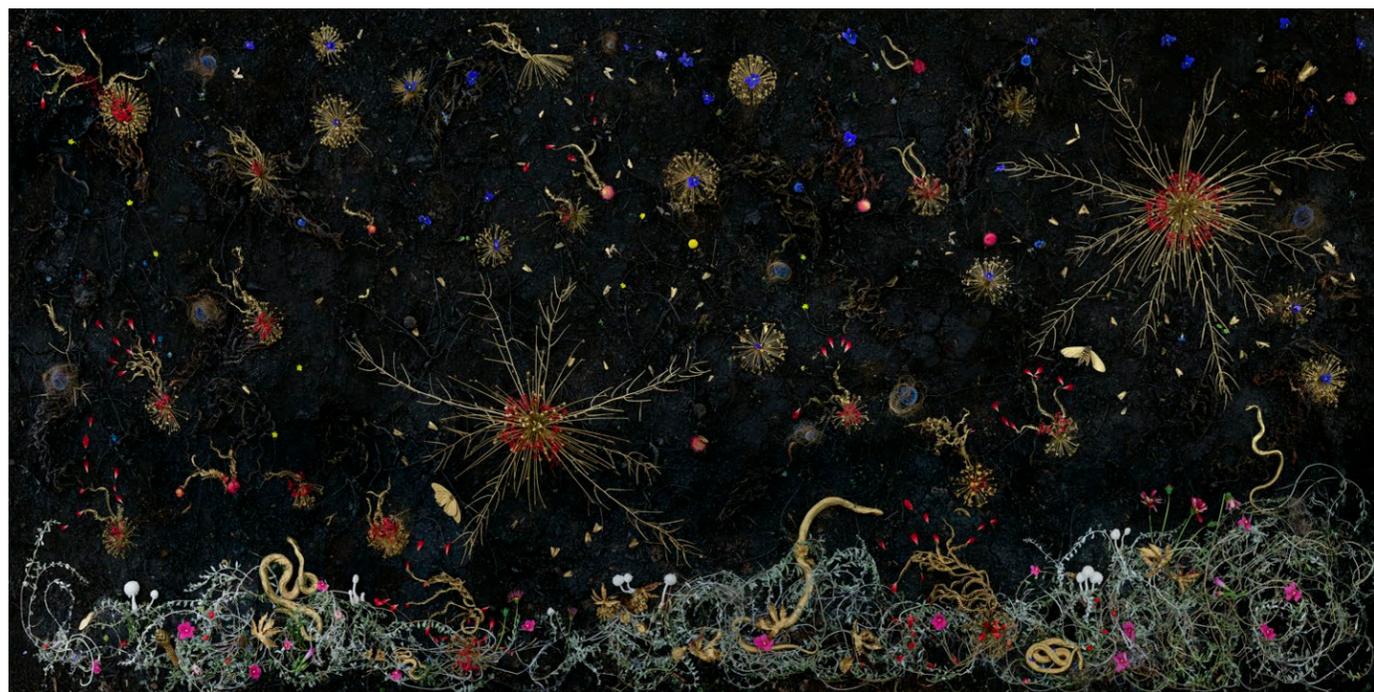
STEVEN CUSHNER

*Back and Forth and Back and Forth 11*

2021

acrylic on canvas

74 1/2 x 184 1/2 inches



TANYA MARCUSE  
N° 2 (from the Book of Miracles), 2021  
UV pigment print on dibond  
62 x 124 inches  
Edition 1 of 3

## TANYA MARCUSE

N° 2 (from the Book of Miracles)

2021

UV pigment print on dibond

62 x 124 inches

Edition 1 of 3

Notes on N° 2 from the Book of Miracles:

*For the first time in maybe 10 years a horizon of sorts appeared and I feel like a child drawing with crayons of real things. Two suns with rays and fiery centers. Meteors bursting into flames (of dahlia petals) crash into the ground. Golden snakes, white mushrooms (angels of death) and golden leaves and pine cones in the swirly white ground.*

*I began this series during the lockdown at the beginning of the pandemic; it has unfolded during wildfires, extreme temperatures, and other climate nightmares. The project is in conversation with the 16th century Book of Miracles -- a compendium of biblical, astronomical, and apocalyptic miracles. Photography often walks a thin line between fact and fiction, or dwells in a realm where the two cannot be distinguished; my work takes part in this pendulum swing between belief and doubt.*

*Book of Miracles consists of several parts, done at different scales, and employing distinct methods. The large works (a bit larger than 5' x 10') are composed on a wooden frame using found flora and fauna, augmented by paint, glitter or glue and sometimes by fire. The frame is tilted up at a 45 degree angle --part garden bed, part canvas, part diorama-- and then photographed from a scaffold. These larger pieces can take weeks or months to make, while the smaller works (as small as 5" x 7") are more immediate. Another part of the project is comprised of fantastical scenes that I stage in swamps, rivers and orchards.*

– Tanya Marcuse



STEPHANIE GARON

*Impalpable*

2021

steel, felled red oak, enamel

96 x 72 x 36 inches

Stephanie Garon's work ranges from temporary works created from leaves, soil, and grasses to hardened objects of steel and wood. Her practice brings the raw materials of the environment into the gallery space, reassessing their forms, and calling for an acute and urgent recognition of the calamity caused by human action upon the environment.

*While the impact of climate change and wildfires has been felt coast to coast, regional strategies towards construction impact deforestation. "Impalpable" was created in response to the 2020 and 2021 wildfires in California which have burned more than 5 million acres of land. By focusing on the tension between industrial elements and the wood, which was gathered from a felled tree off a construction site in Vermont's Green Mountains, Impalpable investigates themes of claim, labor, and impermanence.*

Impalpable juts forcefully into the physical space while simultaneously reaching up to trap a crescent slice of red oak against the wall, visually connecting the specimen of the environment with the manufactured interior space of the gallery.



STEPHANIE GARON

*Impalpable*

2021

steel, felled red oak, enamel

96 x 72 x 36 inches



For further information, please contact [gallery@hemphillartworks.com](mailto:gallery@hemphillartworks.com)

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[www.hemphillartworks.com](http://www.hemphillartworks.com) 434 K Street NW Washington, DC 20001 202.234.5601