



Galerie L'Atelier

Benjamin Dray
SOLARIS Catalogue
Fall 2021

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Benjamin Dray

About the Series:

For Dray, Philosophy deals in the abstract and abstraction is an indispensable tool in art and culture. Through his paintings, he reasserts that abstraction has been a part of humanity, all cultures in all ages. It's an indispensable tool, as we create symbols, vessels to fill with allusions and messages. The resulting artwork have a strong sense of purpose.

Each painting contains hundreds of hand coloured trapezoid shapes, hand drawn with a sharp blade onto silver or gold leaf. Each coloured shape can be interpreted to represent an 'atomic' element. On its own a block of colour is insignificant but seen as part of a whole it becomes dynamic and alive reflecting on how nature works. The phenomena of light is also important to the work. The light of the sun in a room illuminates and reflects off the paintings as they come alive and change through time.

About the Artist:

Benjamin Dray is an artist based in Sydney, Australia. He completed his formal art education in Australia and has painted continuously for the last 30 years living and working in his studio home on Scotland Island.

His current series of paintings are a poetic interpretation of the often contentious materialist atomist cosmology first proposed by Democritus and developed by Epicurus around the 3rd century BC in Ancient Greece. The concept that the universe is not divinely governed but is constructed from indivisible, unseen foundational elements, which they named 'Atoms', was an extraordinary advance and achievement in natural philosophy and are central to the origins and foundation of the scientific revolution and modernity. By default we are all now Epicureans, even if many people are unaware of the history.

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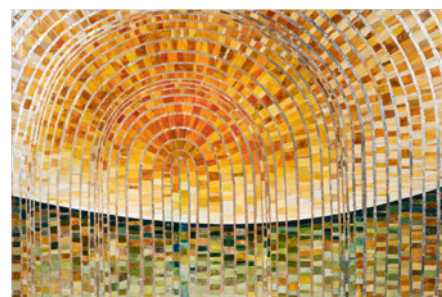
Index



EMANATION 102 x 60"



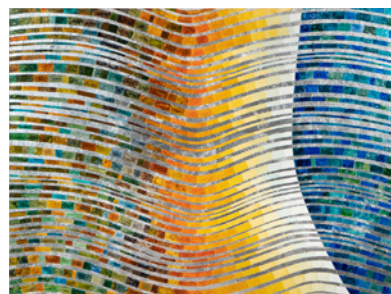
THE SOURCE OF ENERGY 60 x 40"



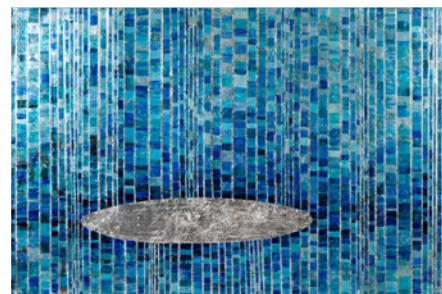
ARC OVERLAND 60 x 40"



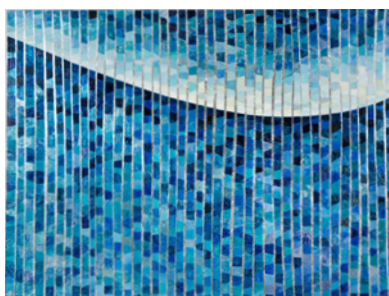
SOLARIS 60 x 40"



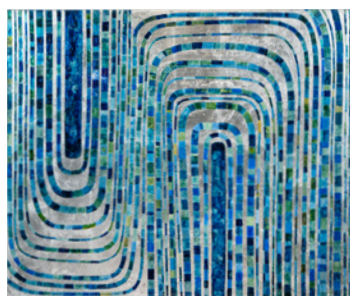
WHITE HEAT 48 x 40"



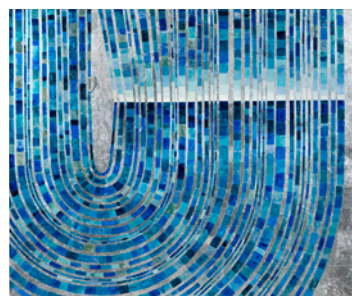
BLUE RIDER 60 x 40"



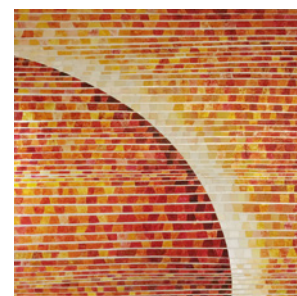
WATERFALL 36 x 48"



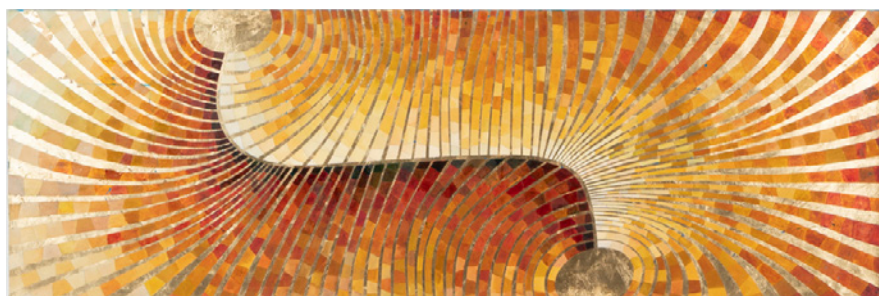
BLUE MAGNETIC 48 x 40"



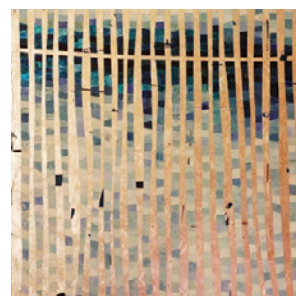
HORIZON MONOLITH 48" x 40"



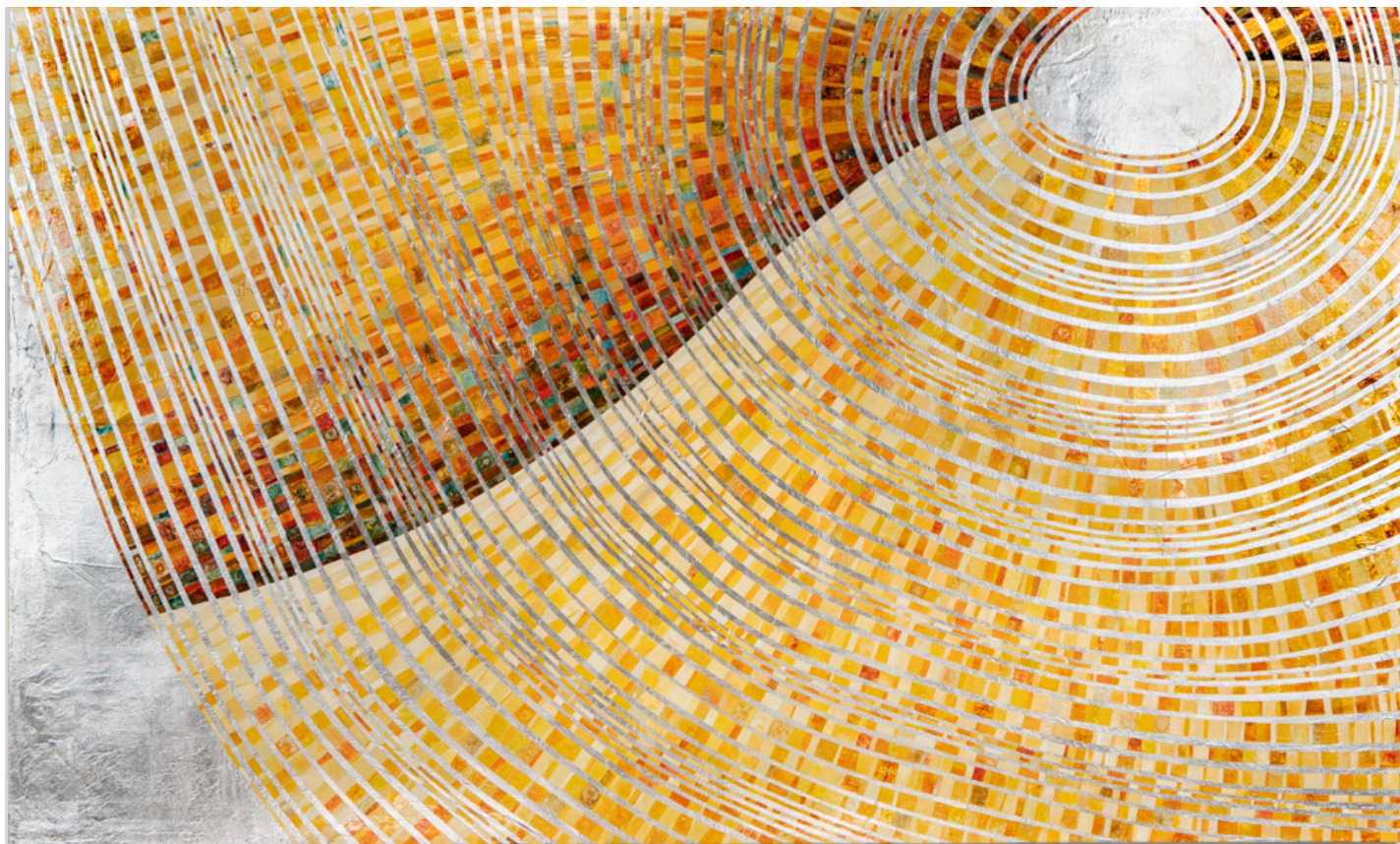
ECLIPSE-SOLAR EMANATION 44 x 44"



ATTRACTION-MAGNETIC FIELD OF TWO ATOMS 71 x 24"



COLOUR BANDS 44 x 44"



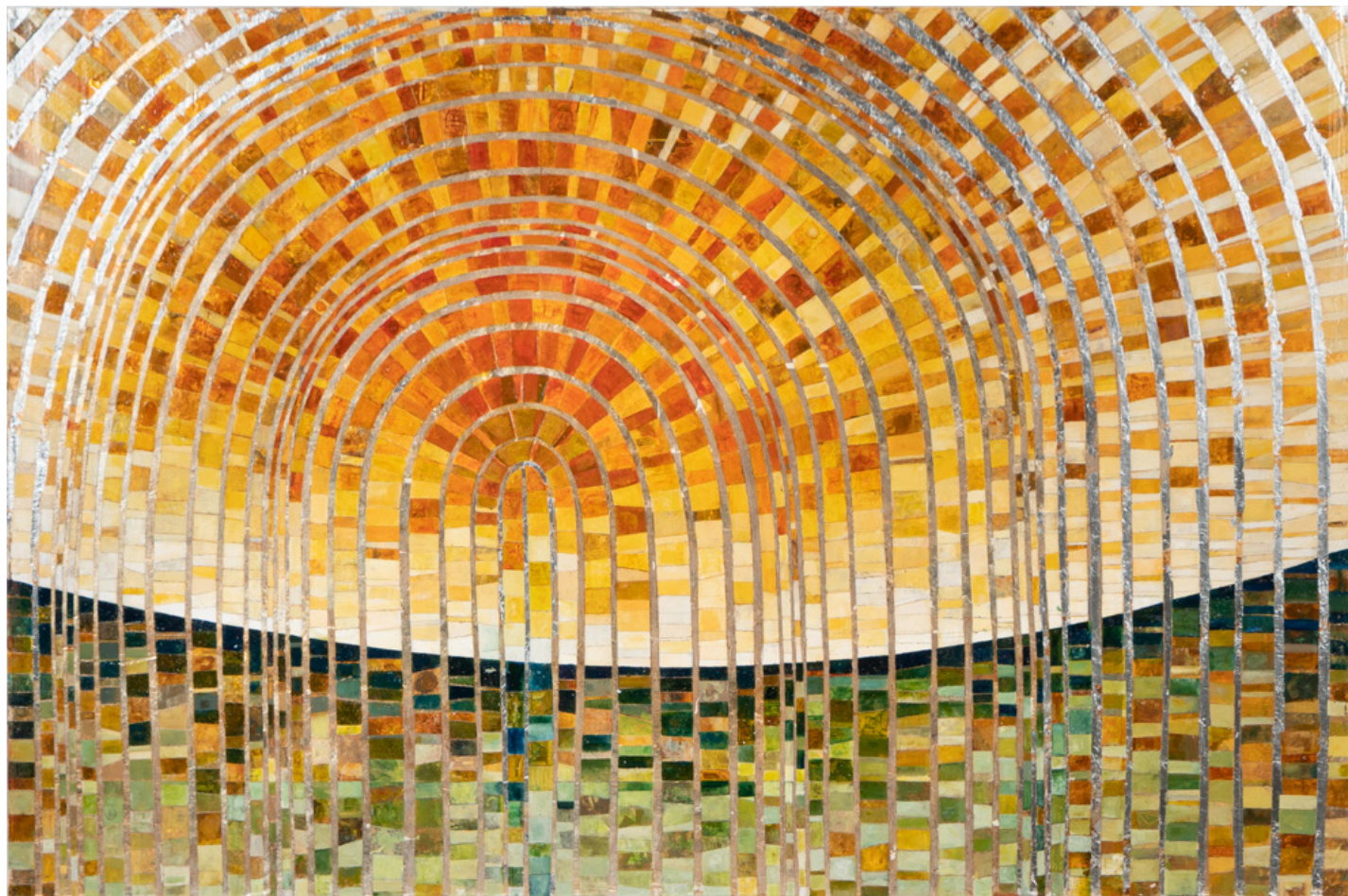
EMANATION 102 x 60"

Emanation begins from the central disc. The whole work is about movement and flow. The disc follows a path through space, like our sun predictably follows its course across the sky. Each band of colour is painted line by line, one after another over the gilded silver surface., drawn with a knife. It's a meditation, a mandala, a basic principle that a source of energy emanates out from its heart,



THE SOURCE OF ENERGY 60 x 40"

The most fundamental and most primal of questions. Where does all the energy come from in a universe which by simple reason alone should be empty, simply an infinite black expanse of space. The infinite void is disturbed by symphonies of cascading exploding stars. The abundance of countless galaxies continues to confound. Perhaps we will understand all this one day, perhaps never. The eye looks out to the light and



ARC OVERLAND 60 x 40"

Arc overland – Humans have a long history and primal urge to make monoliths. The design is abstract and spiritually connects the earth with the movements in the sky. Göbekli Tepe in south-east Turkey is some 12,000 years old and is thus far the oldest known circular stone construction. We cannot know the details of this monolith's lost religion. We can perhaps connect with some thoughts the individuals or mystics had. We sense their importance,



SOLARIS 60 x 40"

SOLARIS-, The radiant lines and the path that connect us to the centre.- Physics, chemistry, geometry, celestial cycles mathematics, the source of light, colour and texture, all are abstract and also our collective visceral material experience.



WHITE HEAT 48" x 40"

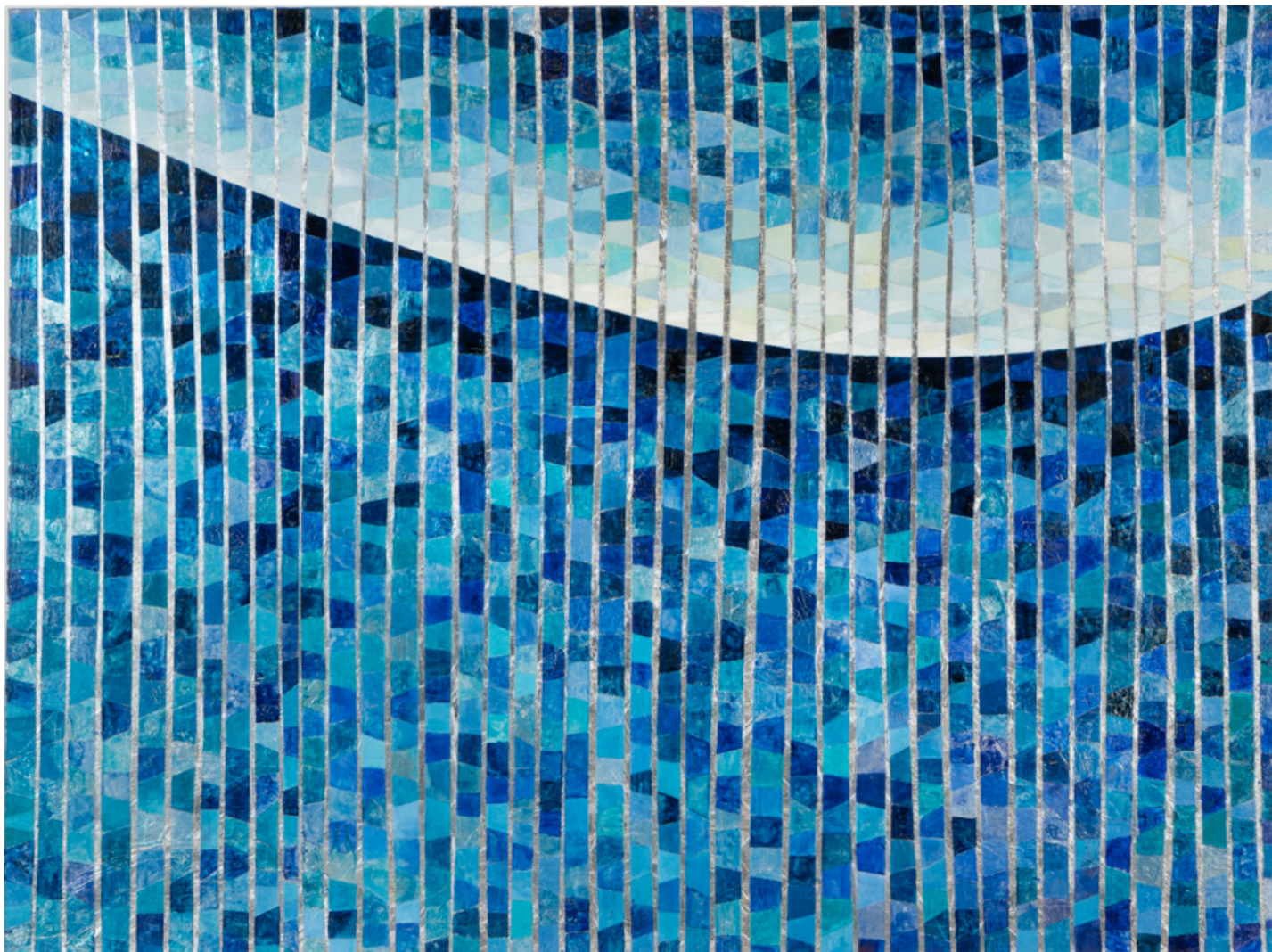
Looking into the heart of a flame from a candle or the sun there is ignition. White heat. A basic principle that the elements are volatile and react. Fission and Fusion naturally occurs and create light. Light is a wave of colour. The light of a star travels to the whole universe, expands diminishes and cools into the infinite. It also falls to earth and briefly into an eye.



BLUE RIDER 60" X 40"

There are two possible meanings to Blue Rider. One meaning to this work's title refers to the optical effect of the flat monolith shape appearing to float or hover the blue coloured waves. A blue rider can be an ocean swimmer or surfer... There is a meditative state one relaxes into, a silence waiting for a set of ocean waves. A sense of approaching from the horizon.

In terms of art history, this title also connects to the artists of the Blue Rider modern art movement Der Blaue Reiter (circa 1910-1914) in Germany led by Wassily Kandinsky. Kandinsky believed that blue is the colour of spirituality. The darker the blue the more it awakens human desire for the eternal, he said. He wrote a book 'on the spiritual in art.'



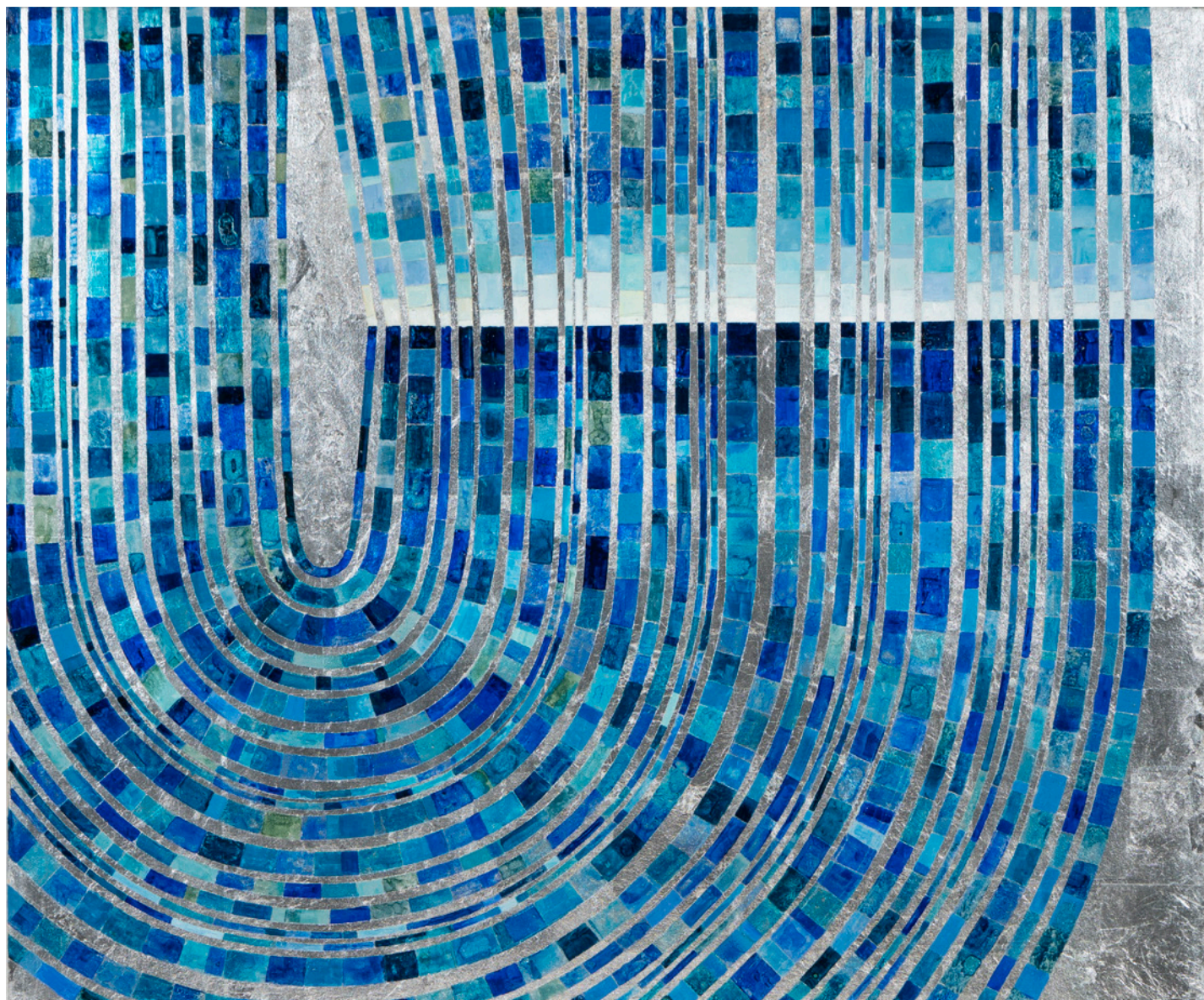
WATERFALL 36 x 48"



BLUE MAGNETIC 48" x 40"

Magnetism and light are both mysterious, The universe is saturated in this dynamic phenomenon. The word dynamic means a force that stimulates change or progress within a system or process.

When two magnetic energy sources approach each other, they repel, attract and interact. There is a positive -negative geometric logic we can see and manipulate readily, but we are still in the dark as to how and why it happens at all.



HORIZON MONOLITH 48" x 40"

Monolith Horizon – The Horizon is a line and the monolith rests suspended between what is above and below. Some expect an oil painting to be a 'picture', perhaps a representation or illustration of something else. A work is process, like carving stone or weaving a monolith emerges or grows in its own right. The Horizon is the point that defines where light arrives and leaves. Above is consciousness, below the dreams.



ECLIPSE-SOLAR EMANATION 44 x 44"



ATTRACTION-MAGNETIC FIELD OF TWO ATOMS 71 x 24"



COLOUR BANDS 44 x 44"

A presentation of Galerie l'Atelier

Galerie l'Atelier works with a selection of both established and emerging contemporary artists, with a main focus on photography. As artists ourselves, through our international travels for exhibitions, festivals and art fairs as well as with our involvement in the NY photographic community at the International Center of Photography NY, we have aligned with fellow artists around the globe and engaged peers with whom we feel a strong connection via their work, subjects and approach.

Galerie l'Atelier provides an active working platform for artists and a genuine opportunity to showcase their work in prestigious locations, affording them access to a select clientele from art fairs, private and public events, corporate clients, interior designers, art consultants as well as private collectors. At Galerie l'Atelier, connoisseurs and collectors are shown a broad selection of exciting artists allowing them to discover new talents.

Galerie l'Atelier aims to support and encourage the creation and development of the artists through the promotion of the work in fairs, institutions and private clients from the proceeds of the artwork sales.

We are drawn to work and artists for whom the physical relationship to the medium is central to the approach and we are passionate about the tangible and material aspect of the media itself. In addition to hand printed silver gelatin prints done in the darkroom, we have a selection of artists who use alternative printing methods such as chemigrams and palladium platinum artworks, as well as photograms where the relationship between the light and the paper is essential. We seek to represent the dynamic range of photographic creation today, from conceptual photography to the re-invented traditional approach.

One common thread that links all our artists is their relationship with primary elements. We look for connections with light, earth, minerals, air, water or heat. We represent work of the highest quality and look for artists with strong narrative of their personal vision in their photographs, either autobiographically as with Jehsong Baak's "one last goodbye" or by a study of their own social environment as we observe in Wendy Paton's "Visage de Nuit" or with the cosmologic research found in the work of Antonia Kuo. Founded by photographer, fine art printer and ICP member Nicolas Auvray, Galerie l'Atelier is based in New York.

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