

# ANTONIA SELLBACH



## SOME WAY, SHAPE OR FORM

NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY

2 TO 19 OCTOBER 2024

## SOME WAY, SHAPE OR FORM

Antonia Sellbach is, like all of us, figuring out how to live in such an unsteady world. More and more insistently, Sellbach is asking herself what it means to fixate on form when all around there is ruin.

For many years Sellbach has worked with line; constructing and deconstructing paintings out of long ‘beams’ of colour. Throughout her long-running *Unstable Object* series (2013-2022), Sellbach built new paintings out of these beams, testing the limits of internal logics she had developed from her concept of ‘building through painting’. What can we create if we follow this set of rules? Or this one?

In last year’s *Dots and Arcs (The Monochromes)* and now here again in *Some Way, Shape or Form*, Sellbach has continued to move beyond the rules and lines of her earlier practice. The beams are (mostly) gone in favor of sweeping circles and arches. These shapes are painted free-hand, following the curve of Sellbach’s own arm—matching the span of her forearm as it pivots at the elbow, brush in hand.

Shifting from her earlier, rule-based processes, Sellbach is now embracing more intuitive and embodied ways of exploring the internal geometries of the canvas. The curves mark the starting point of the painting, with Sellbach adding new shapes, and overpainting earlier forms. Continuing her rebuttal of the mythologies of hard-edged abstraction, the forms are ‘bleeding, blurry or messy, just because I’m a painter with a paint brush and sometimes a mark is a mark.’

In *Some Way, Shape or Form*, the generative, open-ended notion of *play* has become a key part of her process. ‘The word “play” opens up a radical space for making. It exists outside of the idea of “mastery” which I find limiting and outdated,’ Sellbach explains, ‘Play is political because it’s inclusive. It operates from non hierarchical stand-points.’

Play as pedagogy has always been present in Sellbach's work—from the game-logics of her beam paintings, to the building block simplicity of *Dots and Arcs*—but here it takes on a new urgency. The curves and circles in this series are carved, pushed to the edges of the canvas, flipped, folded, inverted and painted over again and again.

The paint varies in its opacity, sometimes applied thick and opaque at other times stained and luminous. Like the forms themselves, the paint is layered, removed, rearranged dynamically on the canvas. In some works, the crescents, curves and columns are overpainted in soft pastel blue and eggshell. In others, heavy black paint masks and reveals forms.

'Abstraction is an incredibly generative field. It trades on the emergence and interpretation of forms, of states of knowing and not knowing, of logic and anti logic. The world of abstraction is filled with communicative possibilities. It is magnetic. I have not been able to look away, because there is always something to explore.'

Reflecting on her process, Sellbach says 'through painting I allow myself to reveal strategies, different ways of being and doing. I paint in parallel to uncertainty, because it's leading towards a certain kind of "unfoldment" and I paint myself through those states of unknowing-ness. I paint with the knowledge that there are always meanings to be uncovered that seem to relate to the present moment—to life and living.'

The abstract forms Sellbach is working with here are in flux. They are mutable, fragile, impermanent. Shapes and the spaces between them grow and narrow and grow again, objects bump and drift, they emerge and unfold and unfurl. Through this play, Sellbach encourages the forms to reveal new dimensions of themselves. *Some Way, Shape or Form* offers us unexpected glimpses of new ways of being; tentative, unfolding, hopeful, visions of alternative possibilities.

Maura Edmond and Antonia Sellbach, 2024

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**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Some way, shape or form 2*

2024

acrylic on linen

160 x 160 cm

\$7,500

NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Some way, shape or form 11*

2024

acrylic on linen

160 x 160 cm

\$7,500

NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Some way, shape or form 6*

2024

acrylic on linen

150 x 150 cm

\$6,500

NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Some way, shape or form 7*

2024

acrylic on linen

150 x 150 cm

\$6,500

NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Some way, shape or form 8*

2024

acrylic on linen

150 x 150 cm

\$6,500



NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Some way, shape or form 9*

2024

acrylic on linen

150 x 150 cm

\$6,500

NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Some way, shape or form 13*

2024

acrylic on linen

150 x 150 cm

\$6,500

NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Some way, shape or form 14*

2024

acrylic on linen

150 x 150 cm

\$6,500

NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Some way, shape or form 5*

2024

acrylic on linen

150 x 130 cm

\$6,200

NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Some way, shape or form 15*

2024

acrylic on linen

150 x 130 cm

\$6,200



NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Some way, shape or form 1*

2024

acrylic on linen

150 x 117 cm

\$4,900

NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Some way, shape or form 3*

2024

acrylic on linen

150 x 117 cm

\$4,900

NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Some way, shape or form 4*

2024

acrylic on linen

150 x 117 cm

\$4,900



NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Some way, shape or form 10*

2024

acrylic on linen

150 x 117 cm

\$4,900

NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Some way, shape or form 12*

2024

acrylic on linen

150 x 117 cm

\$4,900

NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Stick work 20*

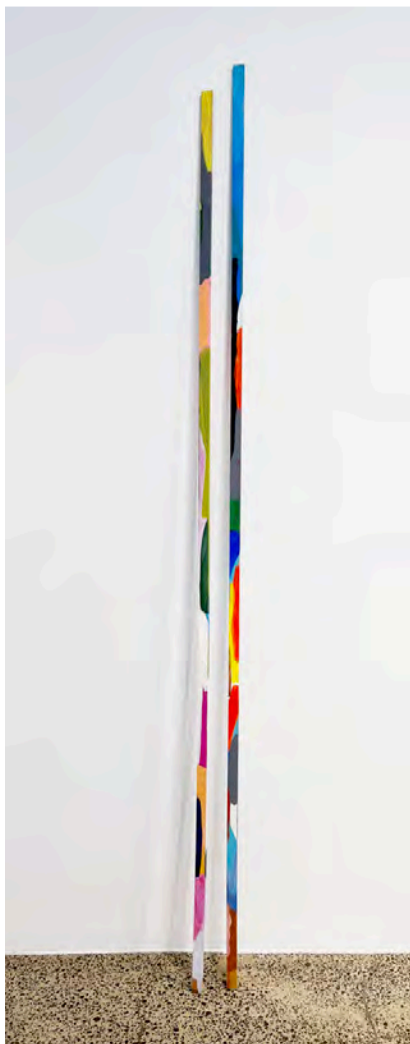
2023

acrylic on wood

310 x 6 x 1 cm

\$1,250

NICHOLAS  
THOMPSON  
GALLERY



**ANTONIA SELLBACH**

*Stick work 22*

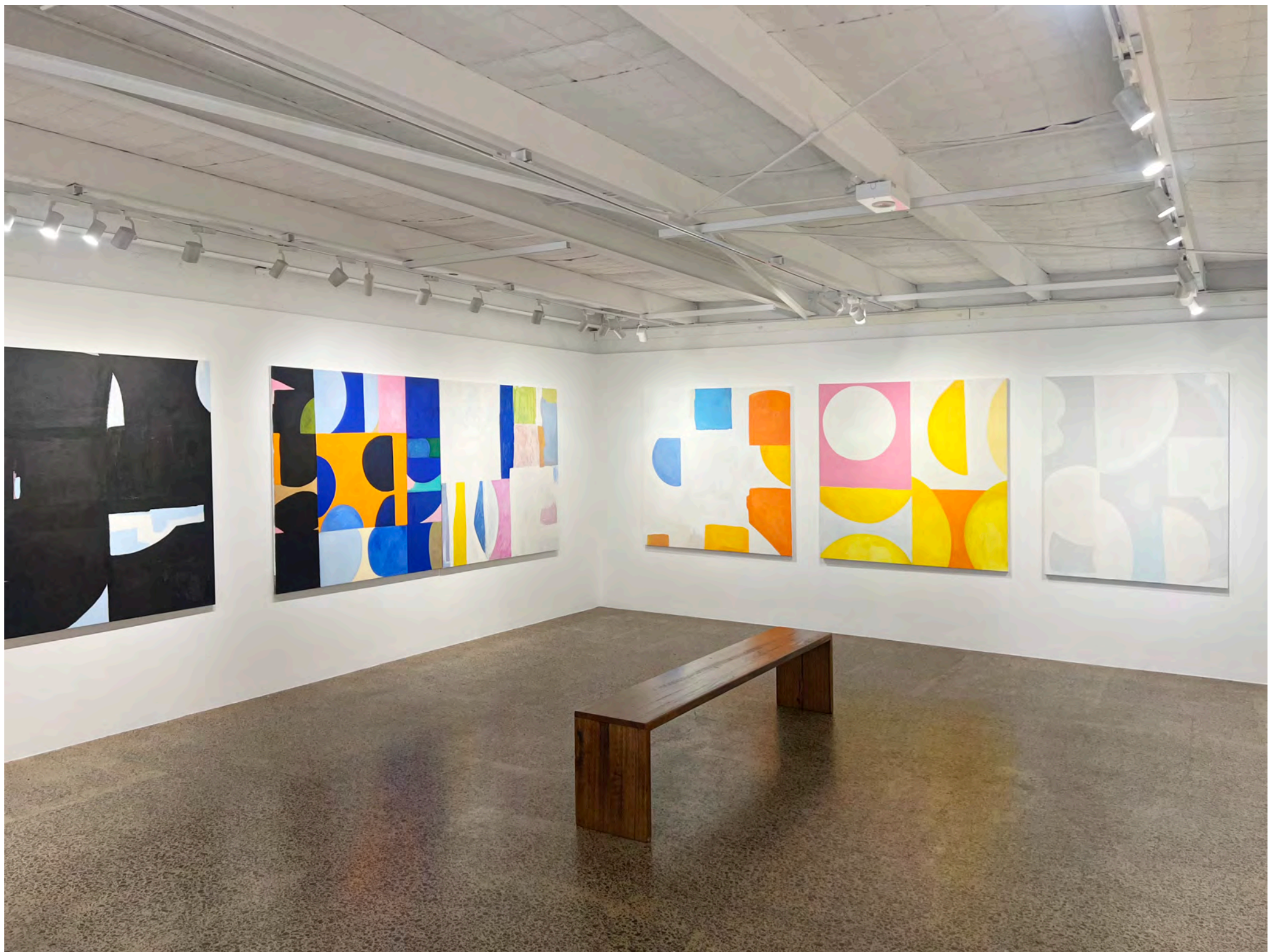
2023

acrylic on wood

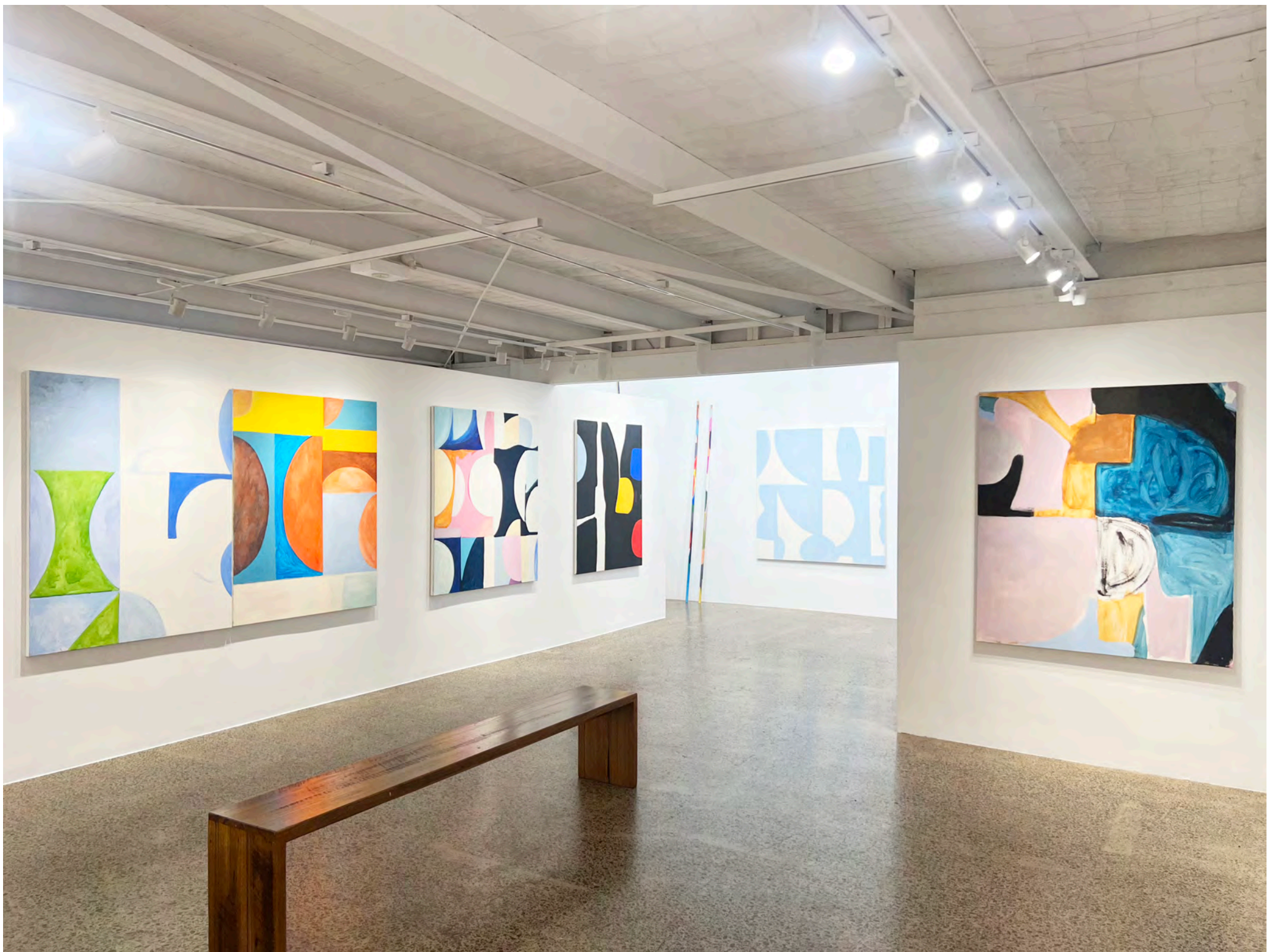
262 x 6 x 1 cm

\$1,250

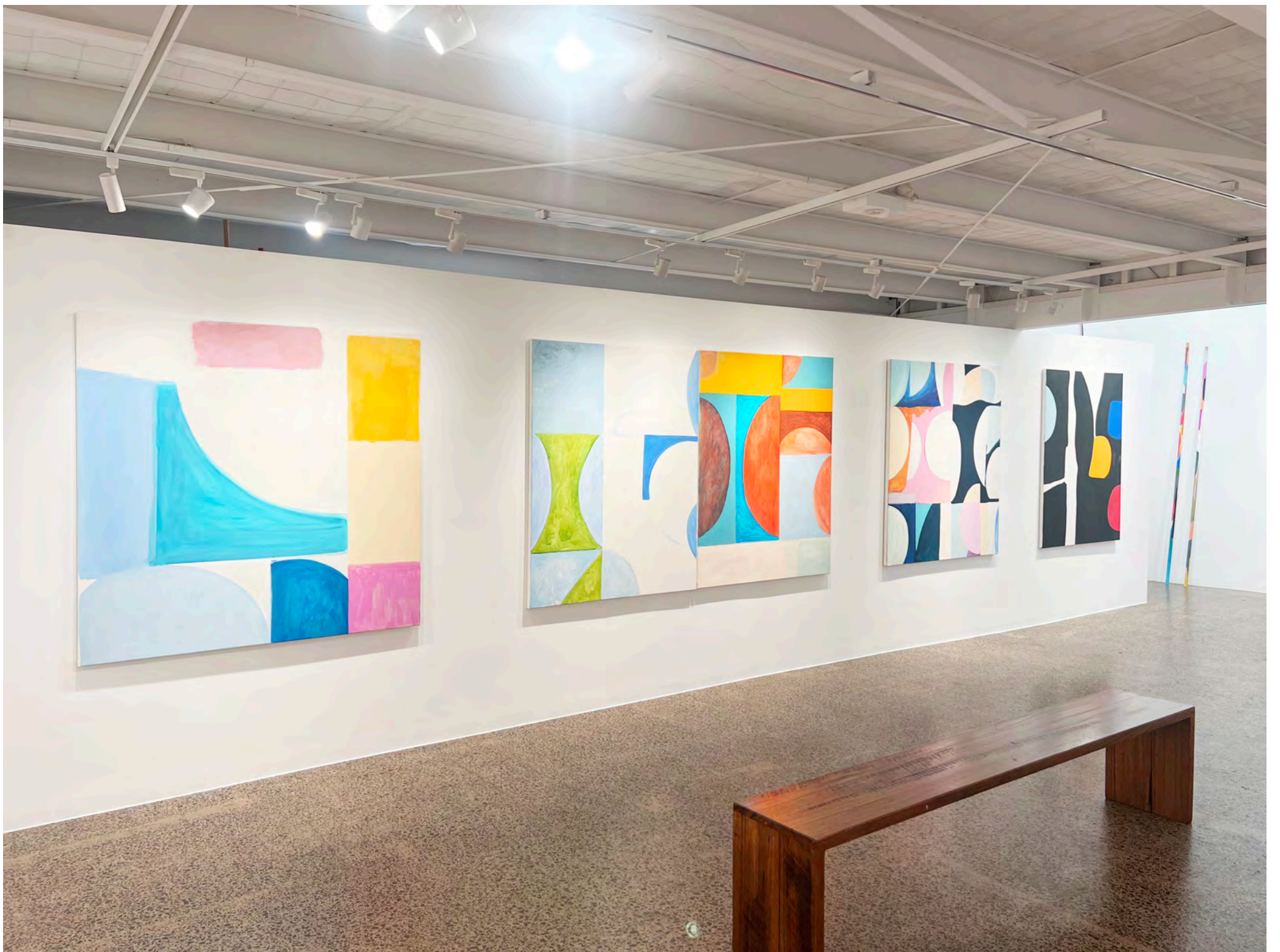




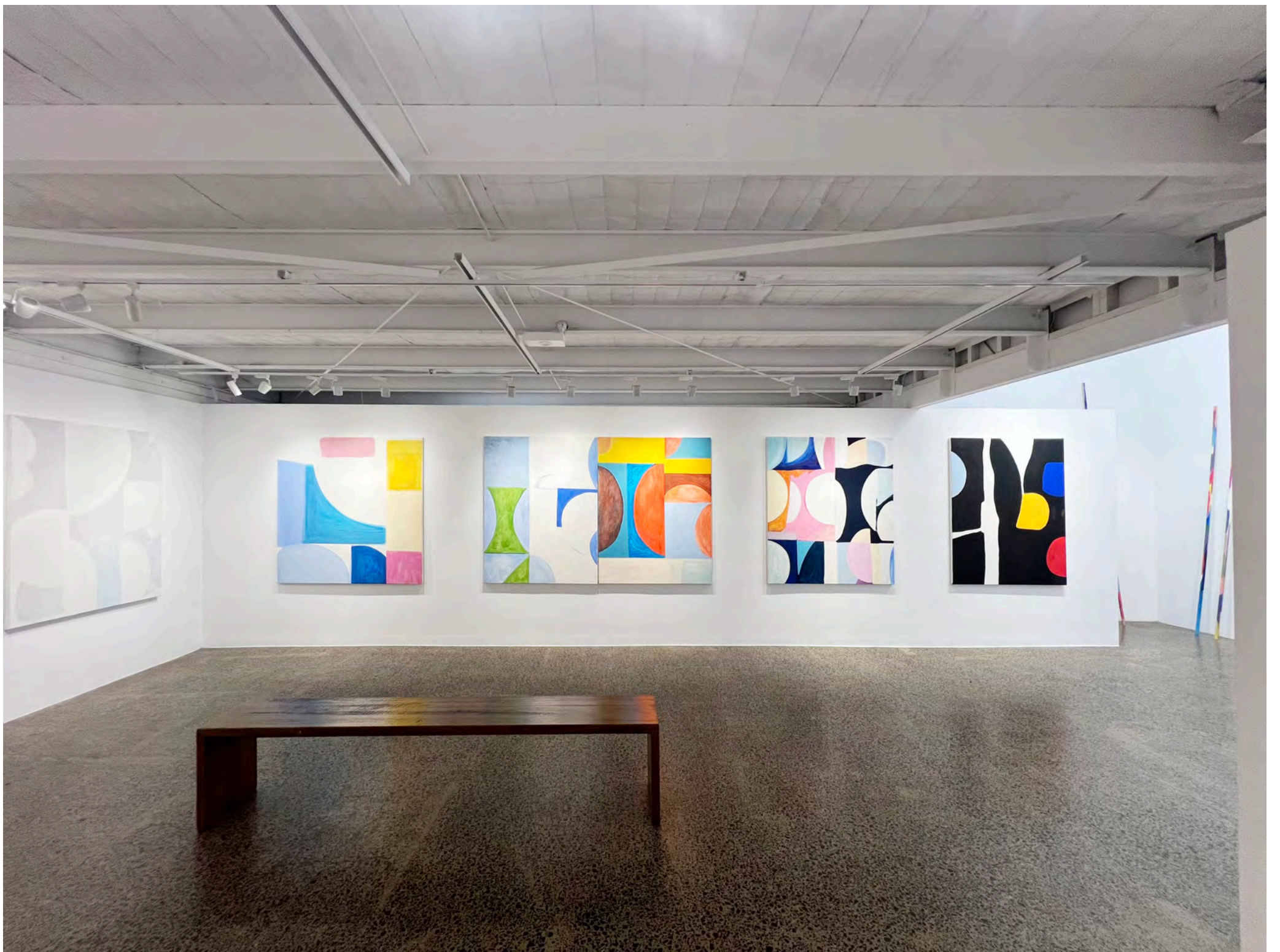
















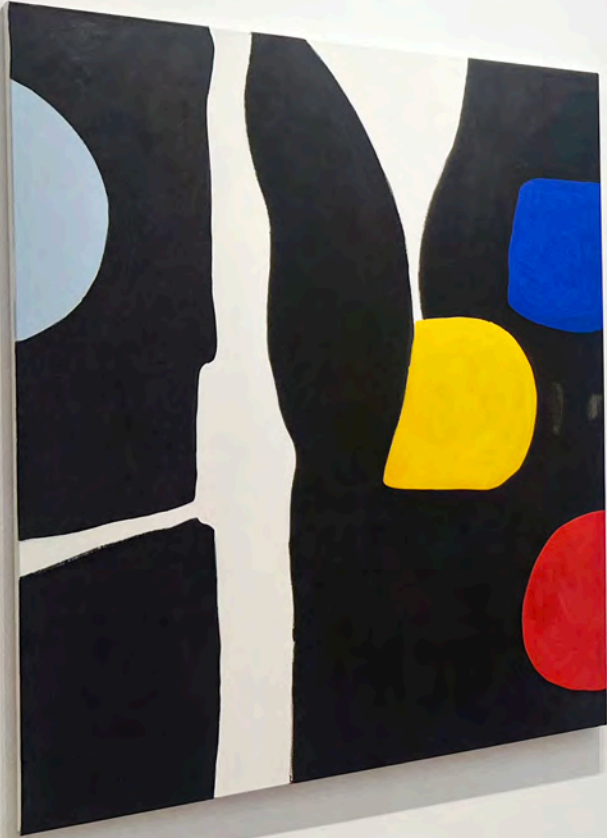












Antonia Sellbach has held exhibitions in Victoria and Tasmania since 2010, including solo exhibitions at Heide Museum of Modern Art (2016-17), Schoolhouse Gallery (2022), BUS Projects (2015), C3 Contemporary Art Space (2014) and Faculty Gallery, RMIT (2011). Her work has been included in group exhibitions at the National Gallery of Victoria; RMIT Gallery, Melbourne; La Trobe Art Institute, Bendigo; SVPA Gallery, University of Tasmania, Launceston; M16 Artspace, Canberra; Counihan Gallery, Melbourne and Bundoora Homestead Art Gallery, Bundoora. Sellbach's work is held in prominent private and institutional collections including Artbank, RMIT University and La Trobe University.

Sellbach has a practice-led PhD from University of Tasmania, an MA (Research) Fine Art and a BA (Hons 1) Fine Art from RMIT University, Melbourne. She has taught at RMIT and Melbourne Polytechnic and has led workshops at the National Gallery of Victoria (2018) and Heide Museum of Modern Art (2016-17). Sellbach's work has been featured in *The Age*, *Art Collector*, *Vault*, *Belle*, *Vogue Italia*, *Inside*, *Est Magazine* and *Primer Magazine*.

## ANTONIA SELLBACH

### EDUCATION

PhD, Architecture and Design, UTAS (Dr Karen Hall) UTAS, (Dr Stephen Loo) UNSW, (Dr Marie Sierra) UNSW,  
2012 – 2020

MA (Research) Fine Art, RMIT 2008 -2011

BA Fine Art, (1st class Hons), RMIT 2003 -2007 Dip Visual Art, RMIT, 2001 -2002

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

*Some Way, Shape or Form*, Nicholas Thompson Gallery, Melbourne, 2024

*Conversations with Form*, Five Walls, Melbourne, 2024

*Dots and Arcs (The Monochromes)*, Nicholas Thompson Gallery, Melbourne, 2023

*Peering through the Ellipse, New Paintings and Structures*, Schoolhouse Gallery, Melbourne, 2022

*To Build and Dismantle*, Nicholas Thompson Gallery, Melbourne, 2021

*Frame Works*, Nicholas Thompson Gallery, Melbourne, 2019

*Antonia Sellbach*, NKN, Melbourne, 2018

*Open Fields*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, September 2016 - Feb 2017

*This, That, Here, There, Yes, No, Maybe*, BUS Projects, Melbourne, 2015

*Forms of Life*, Daine Singer, Melbourne, 2015

*AAANZ GeoCritical Exhibition*, Sawtooth ARI, Launceston, 2014

*Unstable Objects and Other Paintings*, C3 Contemporary Art Space, Melbourne, 2014

*Part and Piece*, Mr Kitly, Melbourne, 2012

*Impossible Prisms*, Faculty Gallery, RMIT, Melbourne, 2011

*Tessellation: Finding Visual Pathways*, Gossard Project Space, RMIT, Melbourne, 2011

*Structure Patterns*, Bus Gallery, Melbourne 2010

### GROUP EXHIBITIONS

*Nicholas Thompson Gallery at Spring 1883*, Windsor Hotel, Melbourne, 2023

*Cosmotechinic Telepathics in the Age of Neuro Capitalism*, M16 Artspace, Canberra, 2023

*Nicholas Thompson Gallery at Spring 1883*, @14 Langridge Street, Collingwood, 2021

*Of Colour and Light – Women Abstract Artists Biennial*, West End Art Space, Melbourne, 16 Dec 20 – 28 Feb 2021

*m\_othering the perceptual ars poetica*, Counihan Gallery 30 August 2019 to Sunday 29 September 2019

*Melbourne Modern: European art & design at RMIT since 1945*, RMIT Gallery, Melbourne 2019

*C3 Faux Fair*, C3 Contemporary Art Space, 2016

*Elastic Field*, curated by Laura Skerlj, Strange Neighbour, Melbourne, 2016  
*Faux Fair*, C3 Contemporary Art Space, Melbourne, 2015  
*Un Educated*, curated by Kym Maxwell, Counihan Gallery, Melbourne, 2014  
*Tangible*, curated by Louise Blyton and Ian Wells, Trocadero Artspace, 2014  
*Wired for Melbourne Sound*, National Gallery of Victoria, 2013  
*Small Protests Against Forgetting*, SVPA Gallery, University of Tasmania, 2013  
*Frames of Reference*, curated by Irene Barberis and Wilma Tobacco, Langford 120, Melbourne 2012  
*Understanding Infinity*, Kings ARI, Melbourne 2012  
*GROUPWORK 001: Something to hold onto*, Mr Kitly, Melbourne 2012  
*House me with a geometric quality*, Platform, Melbourne, 2011  
*Cluster and Connect*, curated by Helen Hughes and Genevieve Osbourne, Sutton Project Sapce, Melbourne, 2010  
*Opening night*, Mr. Kitly, Melbourne 2010  
*Siemens Scholarship*, RMIT Gallery, Storey Hall, Melbourne 2010  
*Dark Moon*, Anytime Place, Melbourne 2010  
*Split View*, Passage Gallery, RMIT 2009  
*Verisimilitude*, Jackman Gallery, Melbourne, 2007  
*RMIT Graduate Exhibition*, First Site, Melbourne 2006

#### **RESIDENCIES**

Sculpture Co / Fundere Foundry, Melbourne 2022  
Salamanca Arts Centre, Hobart, 2022

#### **WORKSHOPS**

*Studio Dax Online*, The Dax Centre, University of Melbourne, 2020  
*Geo Forms* (in support of The Field Revisited), National Gallery of Victoria, 2018  
*Colour Play 2*, Children's workshop, Heide Museum of Modern Art, 2017  
*Colour Play 1*, Children's workshop, Heide Museum of Modern Art, 2016

#### **AWARDS & GRANTS**

Creative Victoria Grant, 2022  
Moreland Council, Community Creator Grant, 2021  
Creative Victoria, New Work, 2021  
Australia Council, New Work, 2017

## PUBLIC COMMISSIONS

**Combination H** -Wall piece, Neurosciences QLD office, Brisbane 2010

## COLLECTIONS

Artbank

LaTrobe University

RMIT University

## PUBLICATIONS

Edmond, Maura and Sellbach, Antonia. **Some Way, Shape or Form**, essay for Nicholas Thompson Gallery exhibition, Melbourne 2024

Perin, Vicki. **To Build and dismantle**, essay for Nicholas Thompson Gallery exhibition, Melbourne, 2021

Prince, Sophie (ed). 'Upfront: Antonia Sellbach' in **Vault**, Issue 33, 2021 p 19

Sellbach, Antonia. **Productive Limitation: Painting Abstract Emergent Languages through Serial Form** (Phd Dissertation), UTAS, 2020

Butler, Rex. 'One Sentence Reviews: Frame works' in **Art Collector** issue 90, 2019, p 206

Cox, Will. 'In the Galleries: Five Shows to See Right Now - Melbourne Modern: European Art and Design at RMIT Since 1945' on **Broadsheet** (online), 18 July 2019

Connaughton, Maddison (ed). 'Arts Diary: Visual Art – Antonia Sellbach: Frame Works' in **The Saturday Paper**, July 6 – 12, 2019

Kotlarczyk, Abbra. **[FRAME. MID. CRUX] - Frame Works by Antonia Sellbach**, essay for Nicholas Thompson Gallery exhibition, Melbourne, 2019

Eckett, Jane and Edquist, Harriet. **Melbourne Modern: European Art & Design since 1945** (exhibition catalogue), RMIT Gallery, Melbourne 2019, p 105, 110 - 112

Cox, Steve. **Antonia Sellbach**, essay for NKN exhibition, Melbourne, 2018

Short, Dr Linda. **Open Fields** catalogue and essay for Heide Museum of Modern Art exhibition, Melbourne, 2016

Edmond, Maura. **Forms of Life** (review) Primer Magazine, Melbourne, 2015

McQualter, Andrew. **Words Don't Mean Anything**, essay for 'Forms of Life' exhibition at Daine Singer, Melbourne, 2015

Rule, Dan. 'In the galleries: Antonia Sellbach- Forms of Life' (review), **The Saturday Age**, 2015, p 15 (Spectrum)

Maxwell, Kym. **Un Educated**, 2014

Loo, Dr Stephen. **Protests Against Forgetting**, 2012

Sellbach, Antonia. **Tessellation: Exploring pathways and partitions**, RMIT research repository, Melbourne 2011

**Understanding Infinity**, Kings ARI, Melbourne, 2011



Hughes, Helen and Osbourne, Genevieve. *Cluster and Connect* Melbourne, 2010

Ross, Phoebe. *Antonia Sellbach - Wall Combination #22: an archival investigation* Melbourne, 2010

Sozzani, Franca (ed). 'Arts' ('Combination M' illustrated ) *Vogue Italia* (Sublime issue), 2008