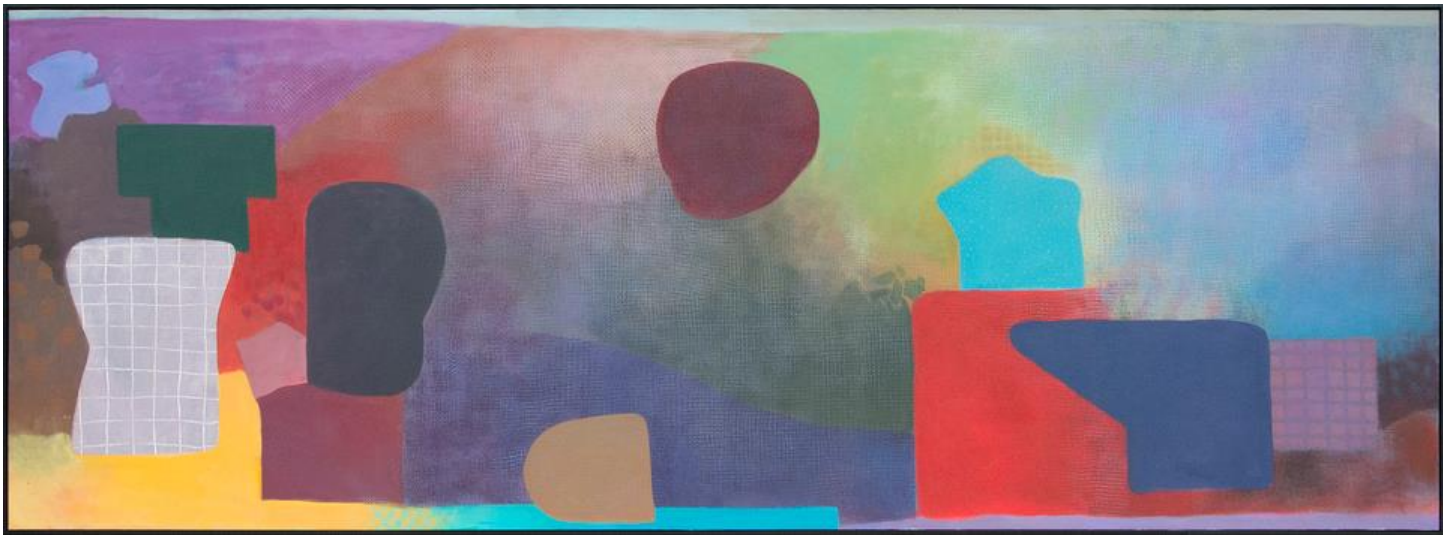
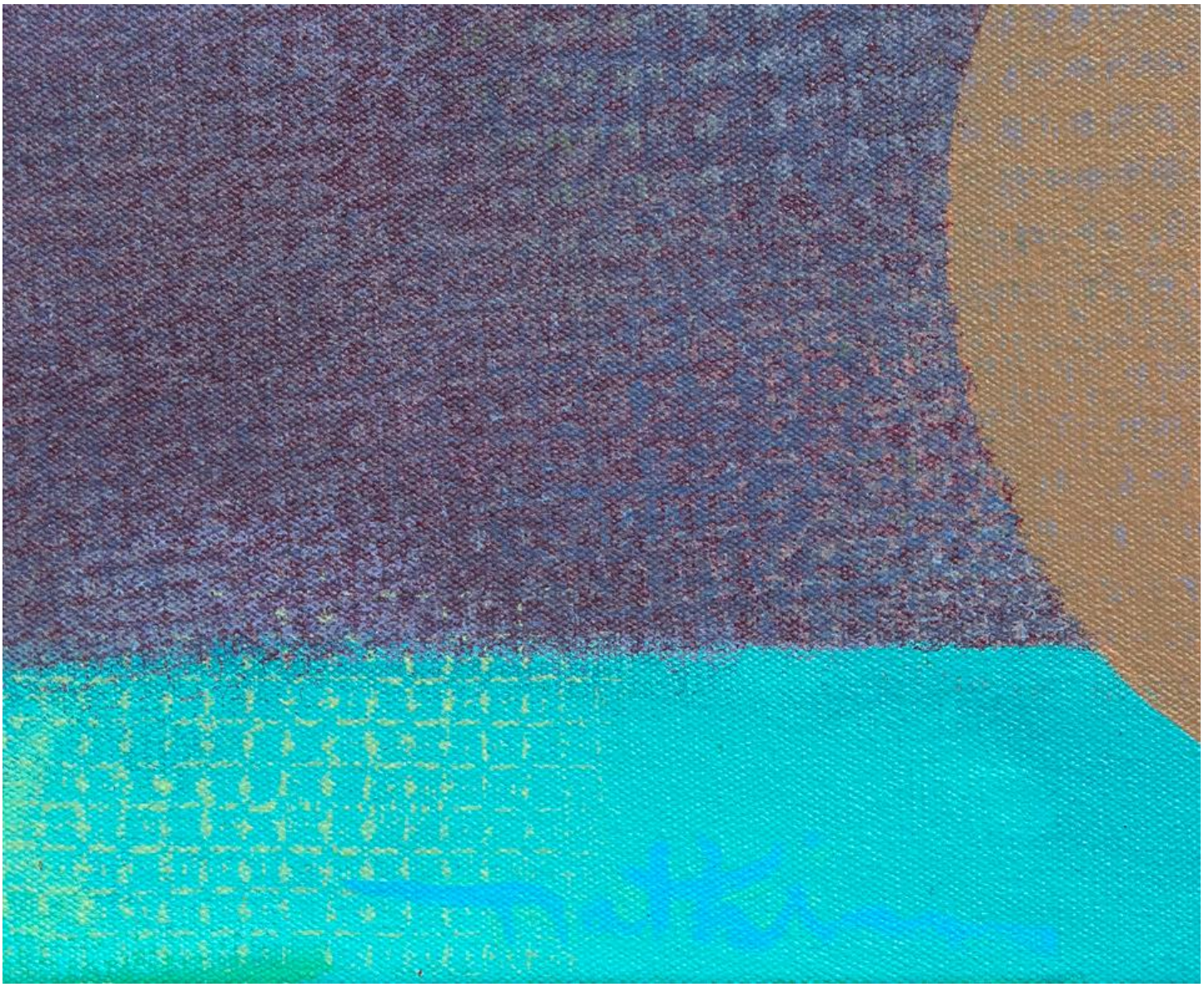
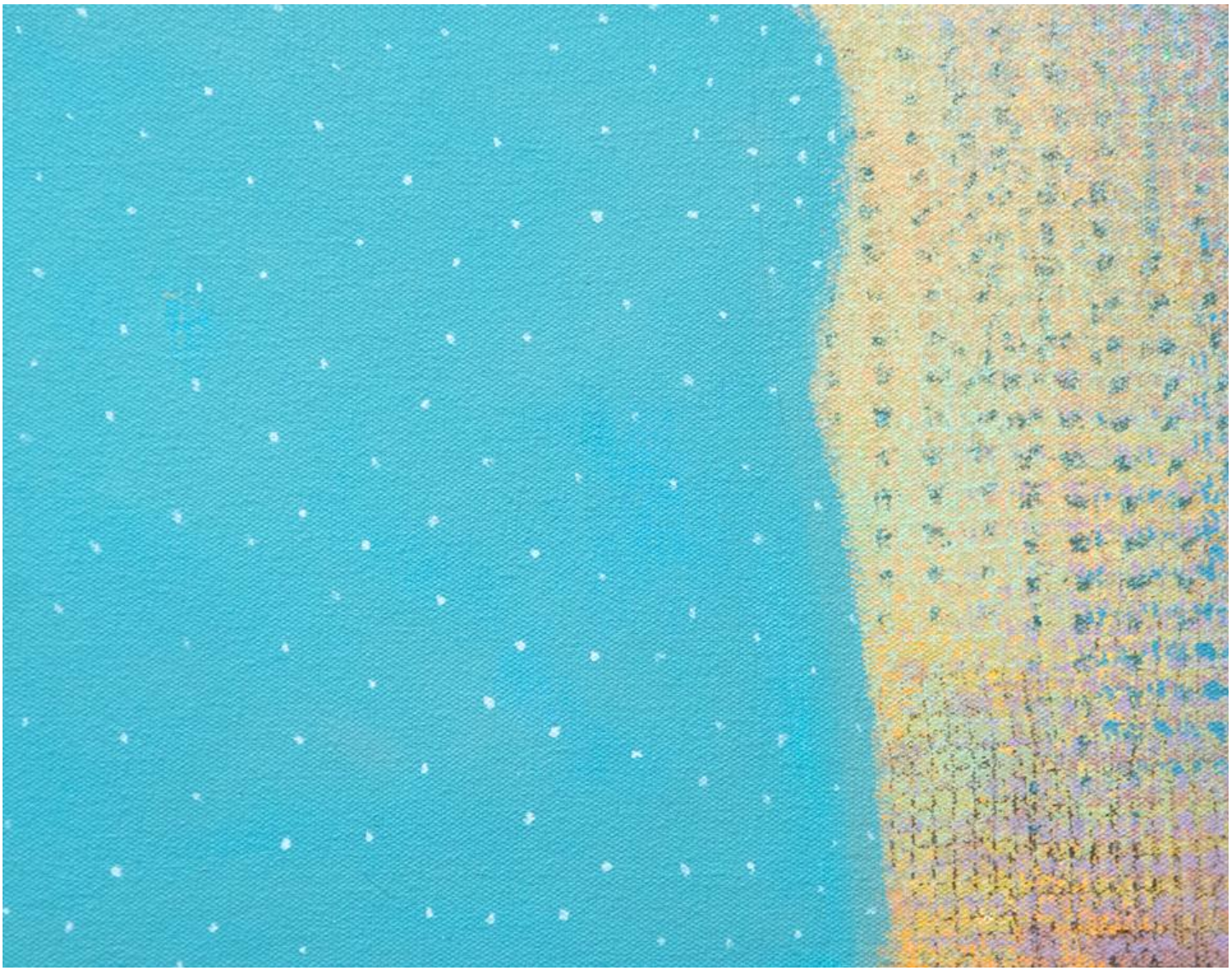
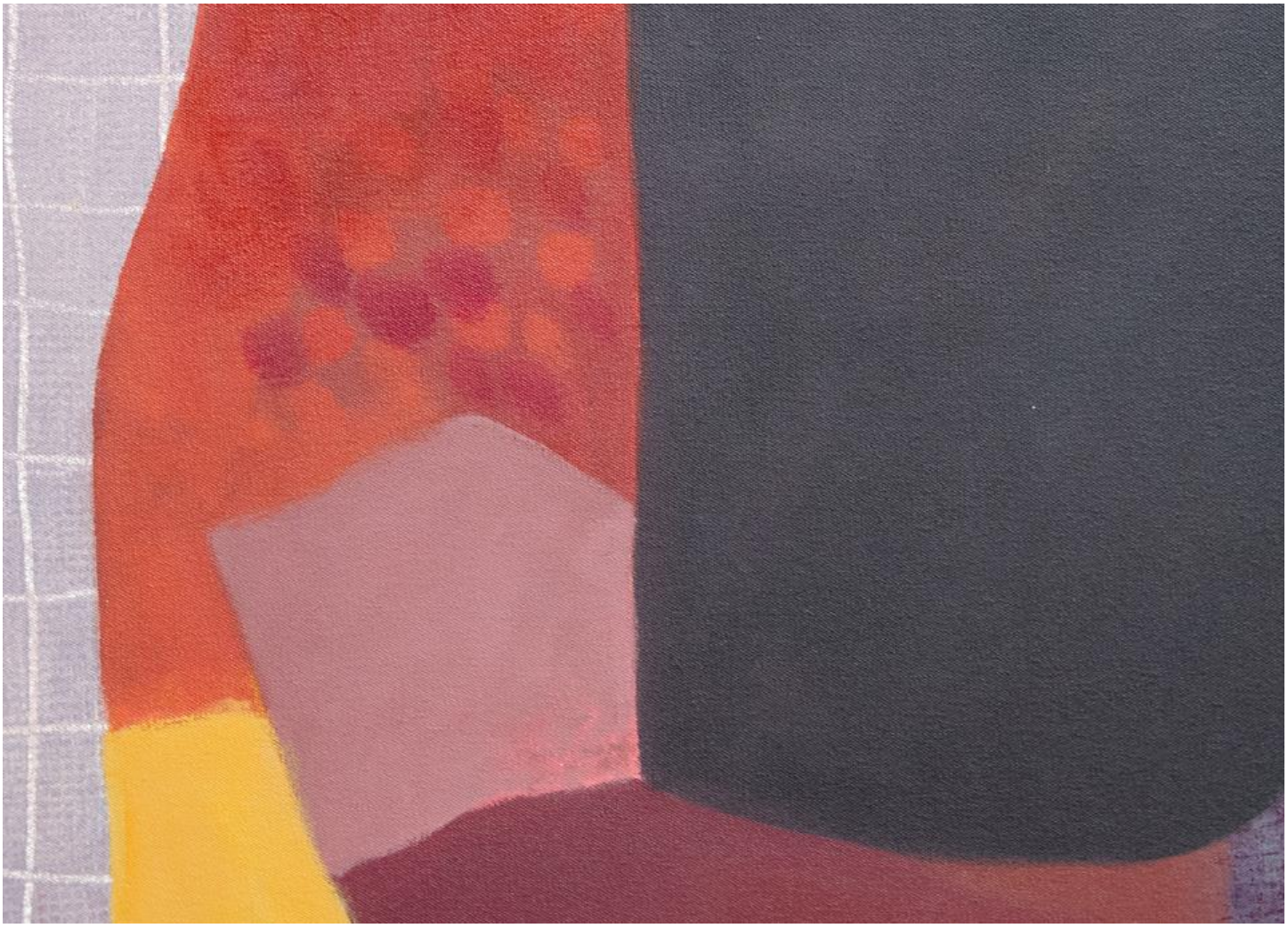
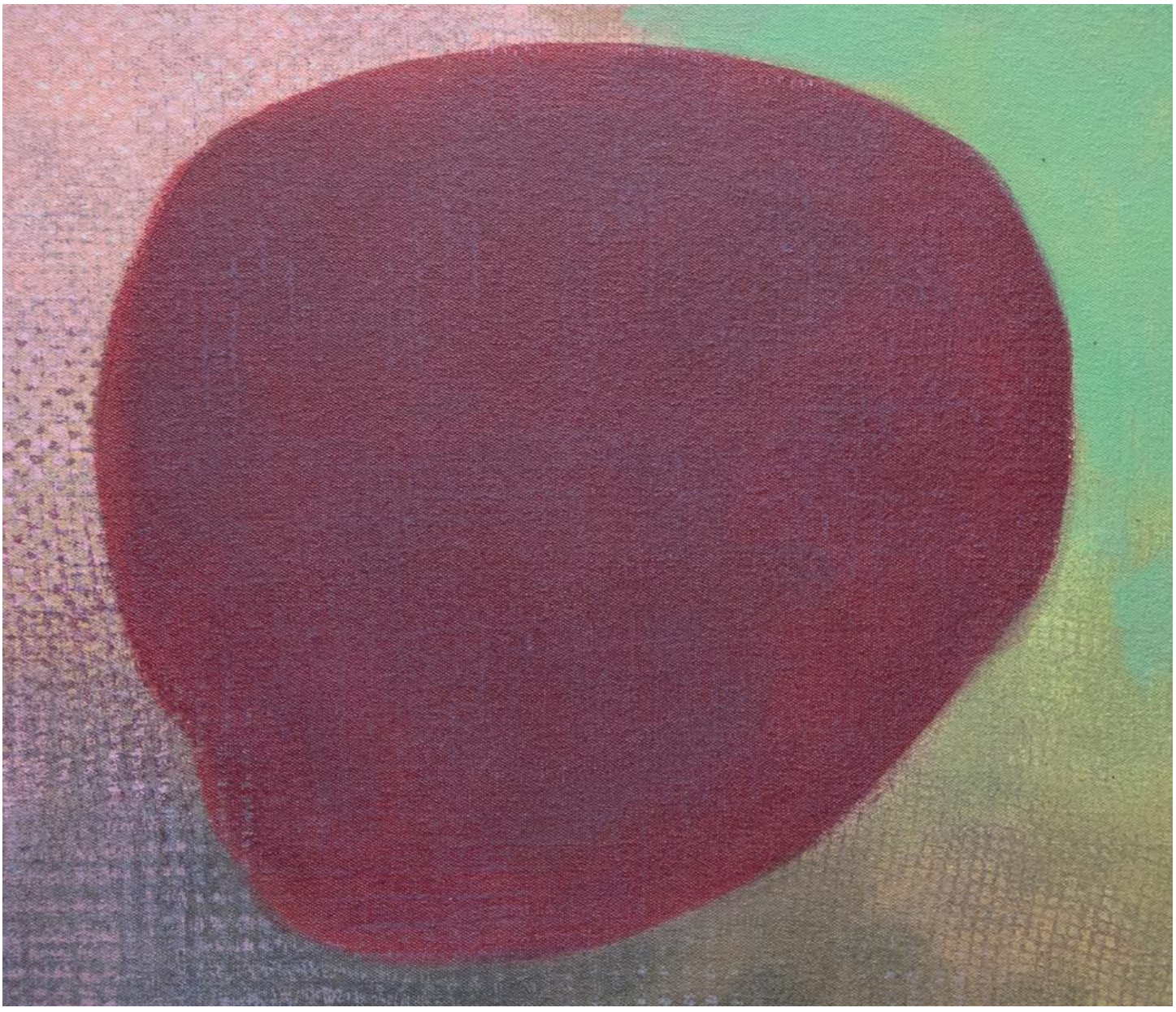
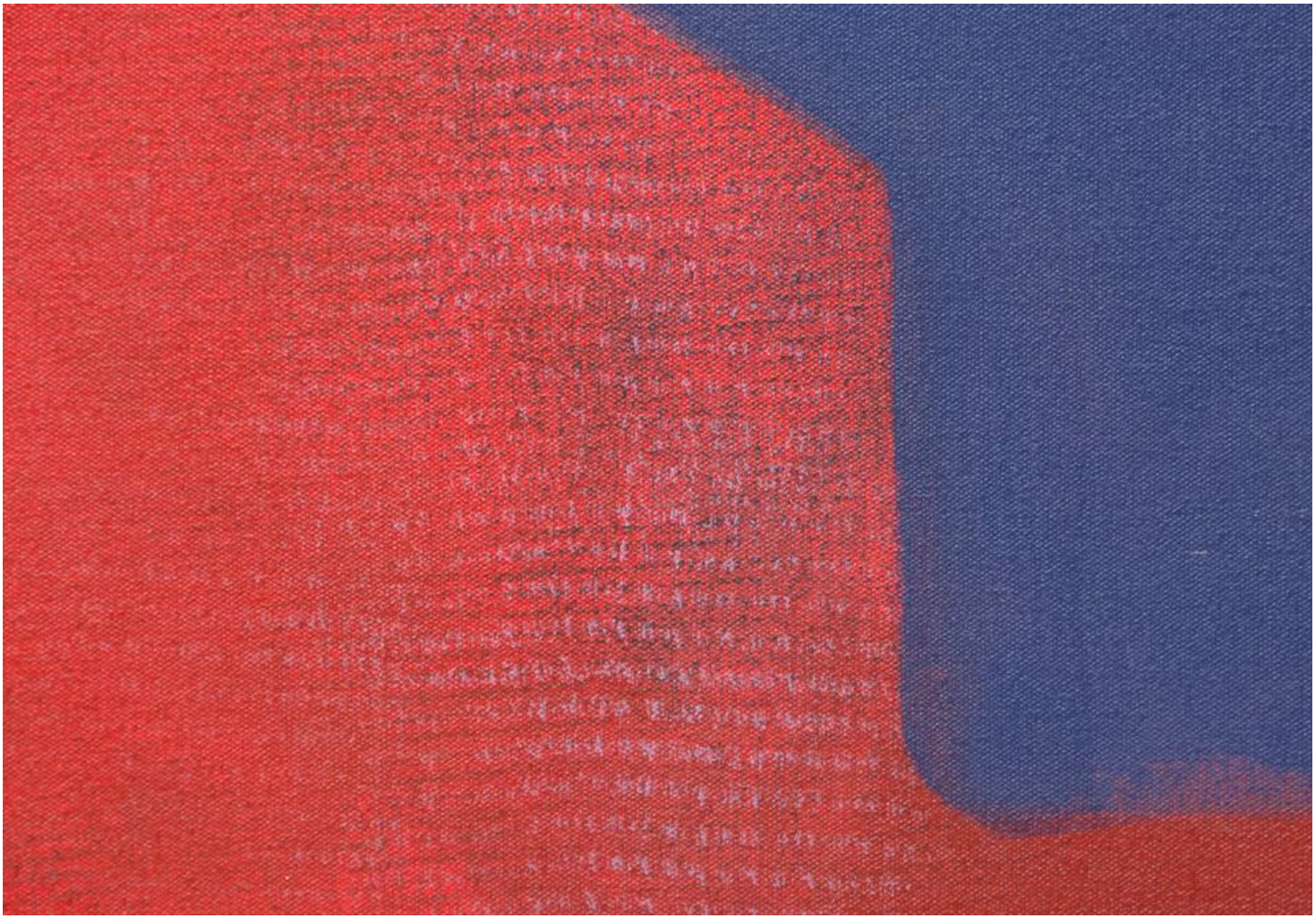
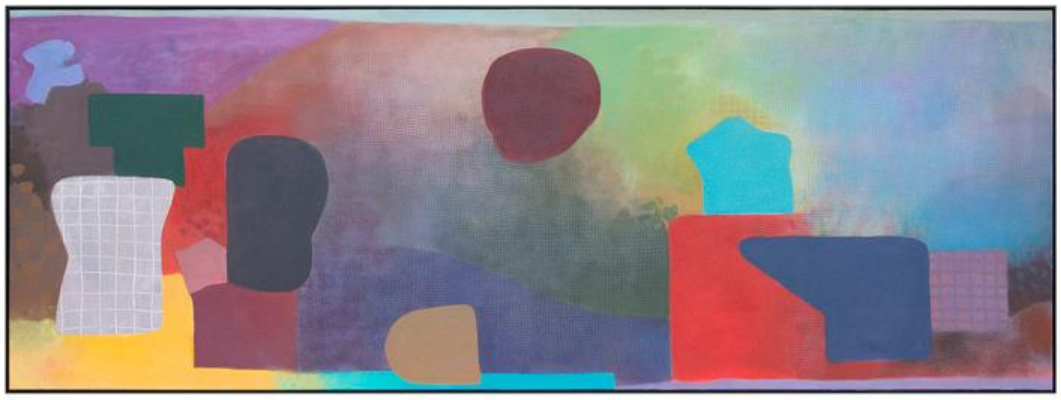
ROBERT NATKIN (1930-2010)
Young Acrobat
Signed lower middle, "Natkin"
acrylic on canvas
47 1/2 x 113 in. (49 x 132 7/8 x 2 1/8 in)
1984

25404

PROVENANCE:
Peter Fuller, gift from the artist to his friend and noted art critic, 1984
Private Collection, by descent

Natkin's Young Acrobat was a gift from the artist to his friend and noted art critic, Peter Fuller, upon the occasion of his wedding in 1984. Fuller literally wrote the book on Natkin, (Robert Natkin, 1981, published by Harry N. Abrams) and lived with him and his family at his Connecticut property during the '70s in order to better write the biography. The two developed quite the friendship, and this setting makes another appearance in Fuller's own autobiography "Marches Past," detailing the significance of their relationship. "Young Acrobat" was the centerpiece of the lounge in Fuller's home in Bath, Sommerset, where he and his wife entertained the titans of the art world during the '80s. Since Peter's tragic and untimely passing, this has stayed with the family, as a cherished reminder of that golden period of their lives with Peter and Bob.

Robert Natkin (1930-2010) was born in Chicago and graduated from the Art Institute of Chicago in 1952. Natkin's art blends Abstract Expressionism with Post-Impressionist colors. His work often runs in series he created using columns, grids and shifting planes. These works, with vertical stripes alternating between thick and thin, decorative and textured, are cheerful and light, invoking a specific lyricism. His painting is inspired by the color used by Henri Matisse and Pierre Bonnard, and the Cubism of Paul Klee. In 1959, Natkin joined a group of other artists from Chicago in an exodus to New York, where he began teaching and exhibiting his paintings.

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