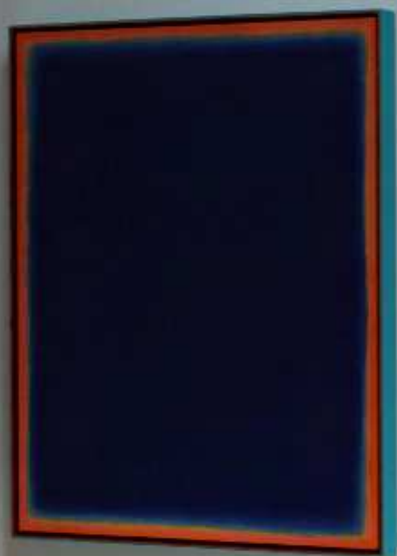



TOMISLAV NIKOLIC BORDERLINE

*You just keep on pushing my love over the borderline*  
Madonna





1: HEAR THE PASSION IN THEIR VOICES  
SEE THE HEAVEN IN THEIR EYES,  
2: THEIR HOPES AND SCHEMES ARE WAITING  
DREAMS FOR LESS THAN PARADISE  
2012, ACRYLIC AND MARBLE DUST ON CANVAS AND WOOD  
DIPTYCH: 190 X 220.5 X 10.5 CM EACH

PRIVATE COLLECTION SYDNEY, NSW, AUSTRALIA

*IN ARCADIA*

JENSEN GALLERY, SYDNEY NSW 2012

PREVIOUS PAGE:

6: DON'T REALLY WANT TO KNOW IT BETTER, WANT TO  
KEEP IT IN THE LAND OF FANTASY

2012 ACRYLIC, MARBLE DUST AND 22.5CT CHAMPAGNE LEAF  
ON CANVAS AND WOOD

104 X 85.5 X 6 CM

PRIVATE COLLECTION SYDNEY, NSW, AUSTRALIA



6: *THE INTUITIVES CONTINUE TO WORK*, 2013  
ACRYLIC, MARBLE DUST AND 22CT GOLD LEAF  
ON CANVAS AND WOOD  
137.5 X 180 X 7.5CM

PRIVATE COLLECTION SYDNEY, NSW, AUSTRALIA

*RIM: IMI KNOEBEL, WINSTON ROETH, TOMISLAV NIKOLIC*  
JENSEN GALLERY, SYDNEY NSW 2013





*SAFE NOT SOUND WHO MADE THESE RULES CROWD CONTROL FOR ENLIGHTENED FOOLS.*

2010-11 PAINTED PLINTH, TRAVERTINE, ACRYLIC AND MARBLE DUST ON RADIATA PINE,  
121 X 48 X 31CM

COLLECTION NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA





## BORDERLINE

the unruly paintings of Tomislav Nikolic

*Color is sensibility in material form, matter in its primordial state.*

Yves Klein

*It is not the form that dictates the color, but the color that brings out the form.*

Hans Hoffman

Tomislav Nikolic colludes with colour. This willing partnership draws upon philosophical notions that assert colours' centrality, not just to symbolism, but to belief systems whose structures and manifestos co-opt colours' extraordinary capacity to give form and carry meaning.

The soap-box fundamentalism that leaches life from much reductive painting, particularly the monochrome school has no place in Nikolic's practice. His interest in colour theories, their historical and philosophical utility might appear to frame his process, though however much each painting anticipates the implied structures of a theory, such as the *Seven Rays* for example, each work is ultimately driven by the insistence of colour itself and Nikolic's patience and finesse. He continues to investigate the properties of colour with a scrutiny that positions colour as both subject and content. Nikolic's work can shock with its unforeseen chromatic collisions, particularly at the numerous edges. The paintings in fact celebrate edge; internal, exterior, structural and chromatic. Each radiating zone is treated with specificity but is gloriously contaminated by the layers beneath, ultimately coalescing to form a cocktail of colour and form.

For Nikolic, colour is a wilful entity that at times folds beautifully into adjacent pigments but is also capable of being bolshie and obstreperous in its conjunctions. Whatever the behaviour of colour, the paintings resolve themselves through his handling of material and careful negotiation of relationships.

His paintings manage to be both joyful and introspective, aware of their own seductive irony and yet always push a disconcerting edge. The paintings flirt with the softer belly of popular culture and yet remain dignified and capable of carrying something of the responsibility it ought. Nikolic is making paintings that transcend the apparent complexity of their structure and process. Process, in and of itself is insufficient and the pursuit of an emanation or atmosphere gives his paintings a poetry that more formalist practice runs from and less capable practice renders sentimental.

Working from the centre of the canvas towards the edges Nikolic builds up multiple layers of pigment and marble dust in a slow and sensuous progression towards a body of paint that suffuses colour with light, opacity with translucence. It is in this interior space "...that colour brings out the form" - the gradations of material bend and shape the field of and the behaviour of vision. Though his paintings often take their cue from the chromatic DNA in his favoured historical paintings, this eulogy is heartfelt but brief as each work asserts its own character.

In Eidos....the work acknowledges *The Bathers* by Duncan Grant circa 1926-1933 a painting held in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria. The hues that describe the light and give form in the *Bathers*, aided by deliberate brushstrokes recalling Cezannes own *Bathers* (Chicago Art Museum?) is further diffused in Nikolic's beautiful abstraction.

The colour palette has a PH level that drifts either side of neutrality depending on the light available for the painting. At times the soft interior feels emptied out of almost all colour, certainly against the avidity of the frame but then with time, ones' eyes adjust and colour seems to seep back to the interior from the flanks and the central field swells with a luminescence, with a sensibility that is Nikolic's own.

The playful eroticism of Grant's nude bathers remains subtly in Nikolic's painting but it is implied through the sensuality of his touch and caress of pigments. The soft embrace of this wistful interior, the joyful drift it offers, is more than hinted at in the original.

Though the interior plane of Nikolic's paintings remains the primary field upon which his gentle accretions of colour are evident, especially in the tidal retreat where vestiges of earlier layers remain visible, each flanking element is treated with comparable consideration. Nikolic involves the structure of the stretcher and the frame in his attempt to 'hold' colour. This might include the sliver of space between folded linen and wooden support, the substrate of the frame itself, even the back of the work might be painted. Such is colours' volatility that each barricade and trough, each "borderline" succumbs to colour's inevitable tidal surge.

Nikolic's embrace of the entire object or rather his dissatisfaction with the notion of a contained pictorial space, allows colour's willfulness and his own mistrust of orthodoxy to continue in this complicity. Nikolic's robust frames can be visually startling, their scale and at times extravagant behavior is at odds with the delicate manners of much minimalist painting but then he is more maximalist than minimalist and his deep skepticism for the Calvinism that such austerity presents is a vital ingredient in his lush practice.

In Nikolic's newest works painted for his Sydney exhibition "*by an endeavour to understand, b & c*" he presents two suites of paintings. Each group comprises seven elements and the chromatic logic that applies in one is inverted in the other. Though modest in scale these works have a compression and density in each of their aspects.

The saturation of the colour is as intense as any paintings he has made. The physical presence of the painted frames is extreme. Their 'objectness' alters their relationship to both the wall and to us. The paintings of Imi Knoebel, especially those made of complex grids of aluminium refute paintings obligation to 'describe' space in favour of the possibility to being in it and though Nikolic's works adhere to a more orthodox structure, these paintings push out like magical "pop-out" books - two dimensional images jolted into dimension. It is as if they are simply discontent to stay on to the wall and prefer to join in.



ABOVE: 6: *TAINTED HEARTS HEAL WITH TIME*, 2013  
ACRYLIC, MARBLE DUST, 22CT MOON GOLD ON CANVAS AND WOOD  
153 X 140 X 7.5 CM

PRIVATE COLLECTION, SYDNEY, NSW AUSTRALIA  
GUNTER UMBERG

*UNTITLED*

PIGMENT, DAMMAR ON MDF  
000 X 000 MM

*BURMESE STANDING BUDDHA ON LOTUS BASE*

BRONZE CIRCA 1880

PRIVATE COLLECTION SYDNEY, NSW, AUSTRALIA

*PORTRAIT OF A COURT LADY*

JAPANESE WOOD BLOCK KUNASADA

PRIVATE COLLECTION SYDNEY, NSW, AUSTRALIA

BELOW: CALLUM INNES

*THREE IDENTIFIED FORMS*, 2009

OIL ON CANVAS 2075 X 2025 MM

*CHINESE SCHOLAR ROCK WITH CARVED ROSEWOOD BASE*

PRIVATE COLLECTION SYDNEY, NSW, AUSTRALIA

*JAPANESE WOODEN PLAQUE*

PRIVATE COLLECTION

6: *TAINTED HEARTS HEAL WITH TIME*, 2013

ACRYLIC, MARBLE DUST, 22CT MOON GOLD ON CANVAS AND WOOD  
153 x 140 x 7.5 CM

PRIVATE COLLECTION SYDNEY, NSW, AUSTRALIA

*POINTS OF ORIENTATION*

JENSEN GALLERY, SYDNEY NSW 2013







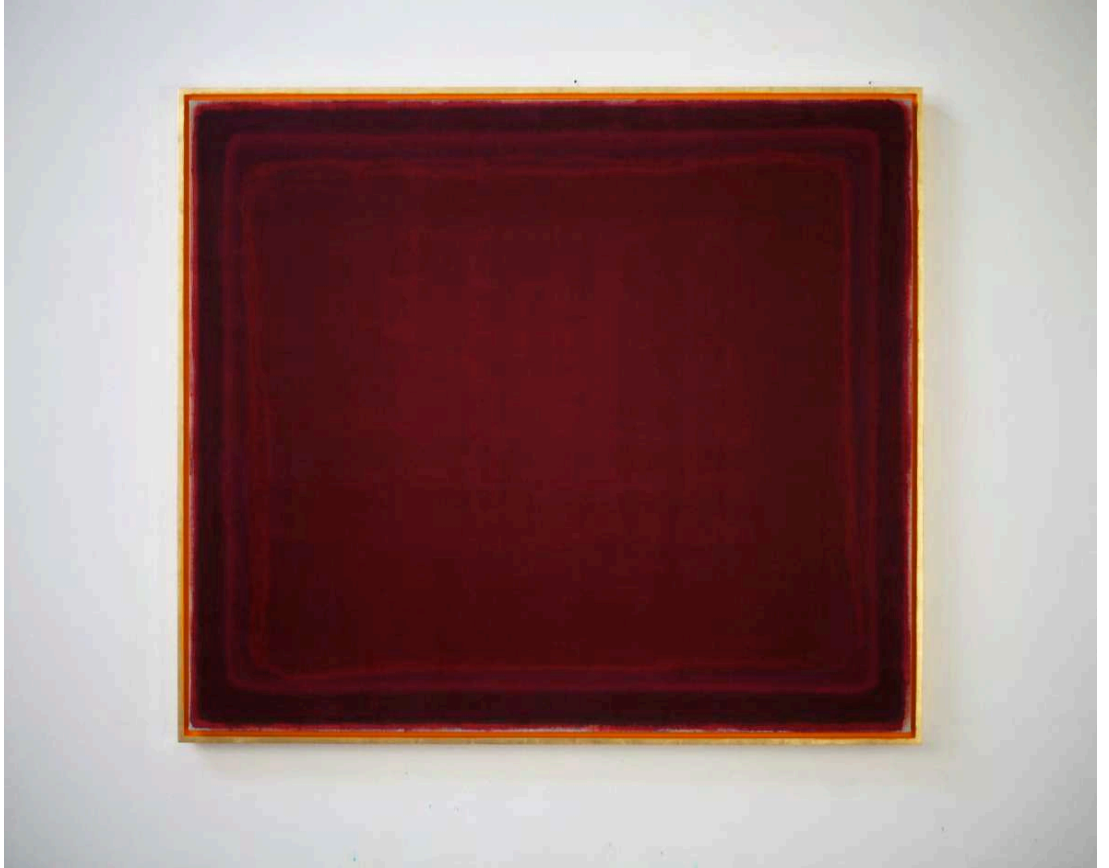
PREVIOUS PAGE: 6. *TAINTED HEARTS HEAL WITH TIME*, 2013 DETAIL

RIGHT: 7. *DO I FEEL LOVE LIKE ALL OF THE OTHERS OR IS FEELING ONLY MINE*

2013 ACRYLIC, MARBLE DUST AND 23.75CT PLATIN GOLD LEAF ON CANVAS AND WOOD  
97 X 113.5 X 6.5CM

PRIVATE COLLECTION SEOUL, KOREA







4: AND AS YOU'LL DISCOVER...GIVING AND AS YOU'LL  
DISCOVER...BEING, 2013  
ACRYLIC, MARBLE DUST AND 20CT CITRON GOLD LEAF ON CANVAS AND  
WOOD  
102 X 101 X 8.5CM  
PRIVATE COLLECTION SEOUL, KOREA

3: *WE ALL HAVE A DREAM OF A PLACE WE BELONG*, 2013  
ACRYLIC AND MARBLE DUST AND 16.9CT LEMON GOLD ON CANVAS AND WOOD  
207 X 187 X 8CM  
COLLECTION NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA



BELOW: JOHN ARMLEDER

*POUR PAINTING*, 1999,

300 X 190CM

*YOU FETISHIZE THE ARCHETYPE*, 2009-2011

GOLD LEAF, WOOD ACRYLIC AND MARBLE DUST ON CANVAS 101 X 83.5 X 7CM

PRIVATE COLLECTION, SYDNEY, NSW AUSTRALIA

*SATURATION*

JENSEN GALLERY, SYDNEY NSW 2013







*DAY DREAMERS PLEASE WAKE UP, WE CAN'T SLEEP NO MORE,*  
2009-2011 GOLD LEAF, ACRYLIC AND MARBLE DUST ON CANVAS  
AND WOOD  
112 X 133.5 X 6 CM EACH  
PRIVATE COLLECTION SYDNEY, NSW, AUSTRALIA









IMI KNOEBEL *ANIMA MUNDI* 49-5 ED 2010-2011  
ACRYLIC ON HAND-COLOURED PAPER 46 X 36CM EACH

PRIVATE COLLECTION, SYDNEY, NSW AUSTRALIA

*FIXED, POSITION TWO* 2010

ACRYLIC AND MARBLE DUST ON CANVAS AND WOOD  
232.5 X 178.5 X 6CMS

PRIVATE COLLECTION, SYDNEY, NSW AUSTRALIA

ROBERT RYMAN *UNTITLED* 1990 ED 12/80

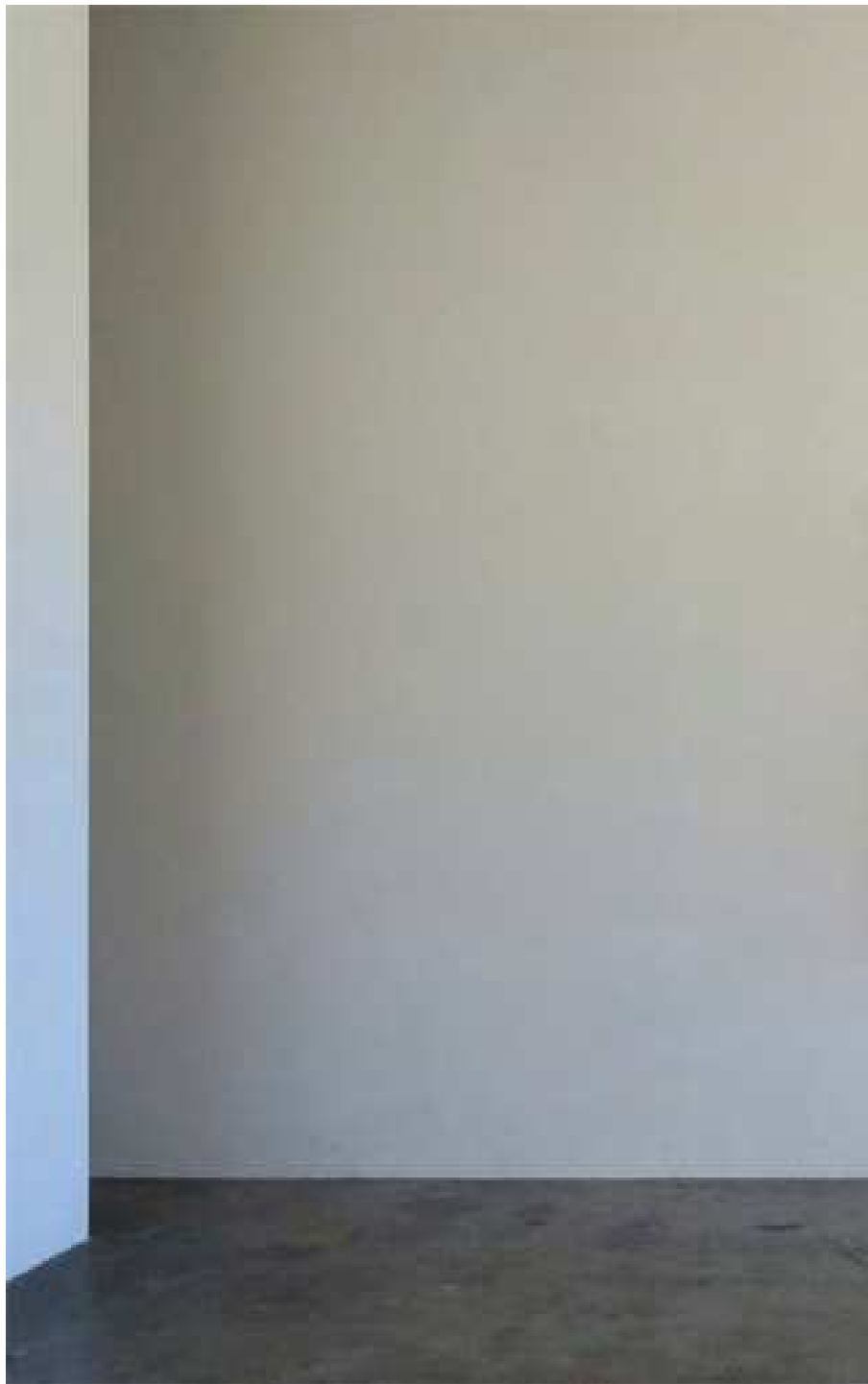
ACQUATINT 76.2 X 76.2CM

PRIVATE COLLECTION, SYDNEY, NSW AUSTRALIA

HELMUT FEDERLE *CORNER FIELD PAINTING II*

2001 OIL ON LINEN 50 X 60CM

*THE ARCHITECTURE OF COLOUR* JENSEN GALLERY SYDNEY, 2012





6: *THE INTUITIVES CONTINUE TO WORK*,  
2013 ACRYLIC, MARBLE DUST AND 22CT GOLD LEAF ON CANVAS AND WOOD  
137.5 X 180 X 7.5CM  
INSTALLATION: *UTOPIA: THE ENDING OF GLAMOUR* 2013 FOX/JENSEN, AUCKLAND, NZ

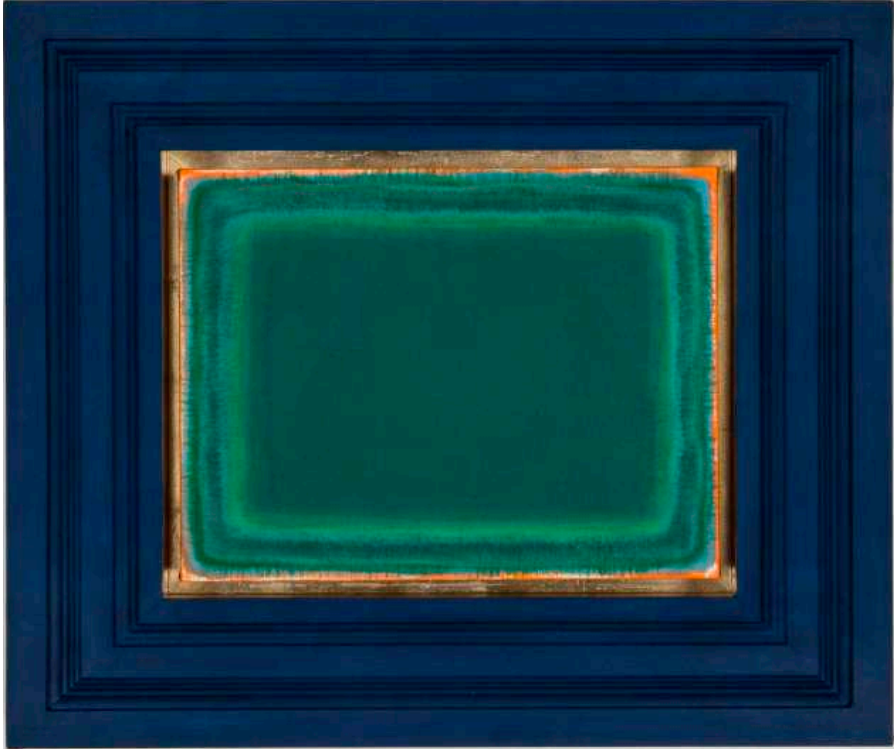














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