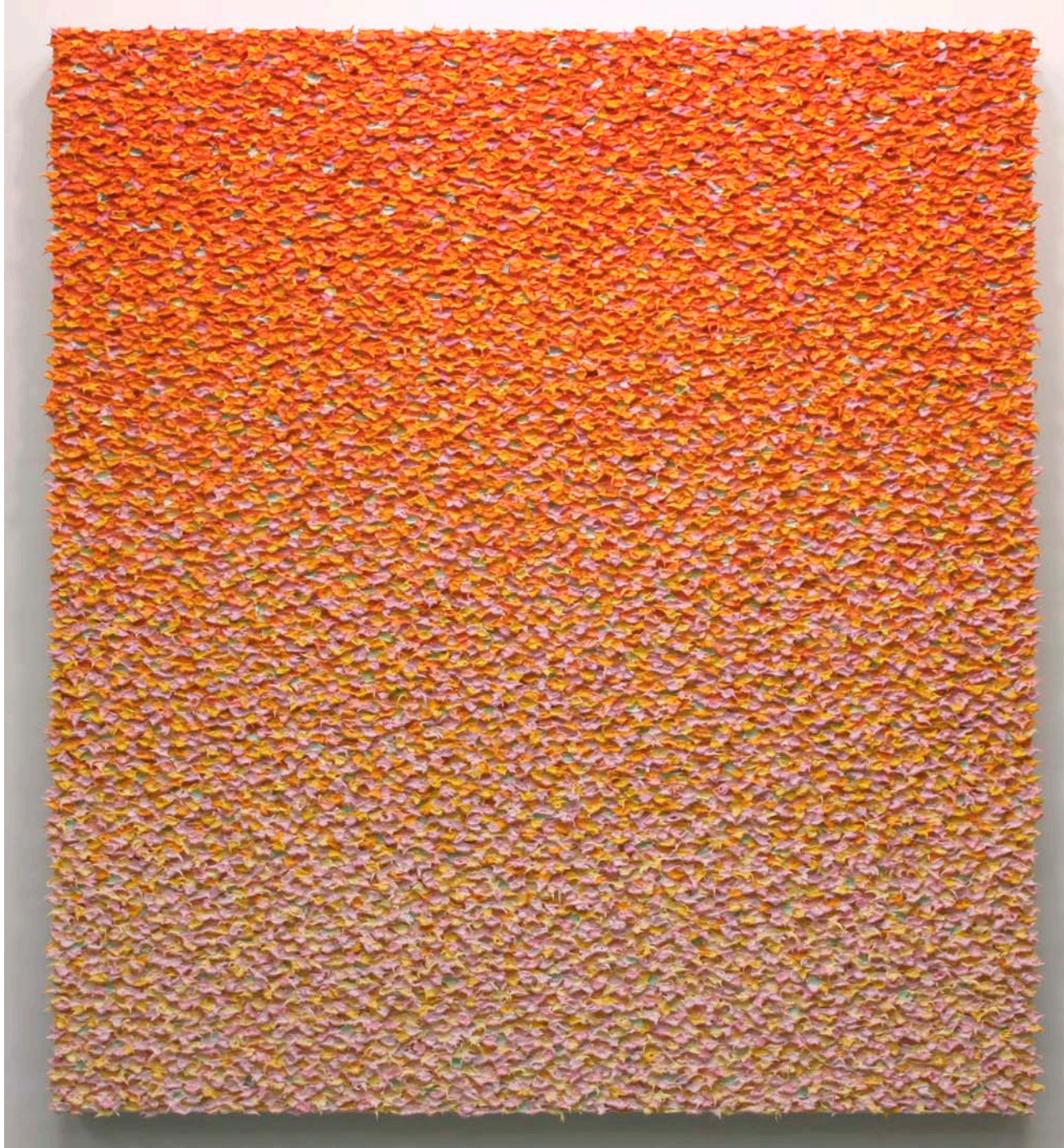


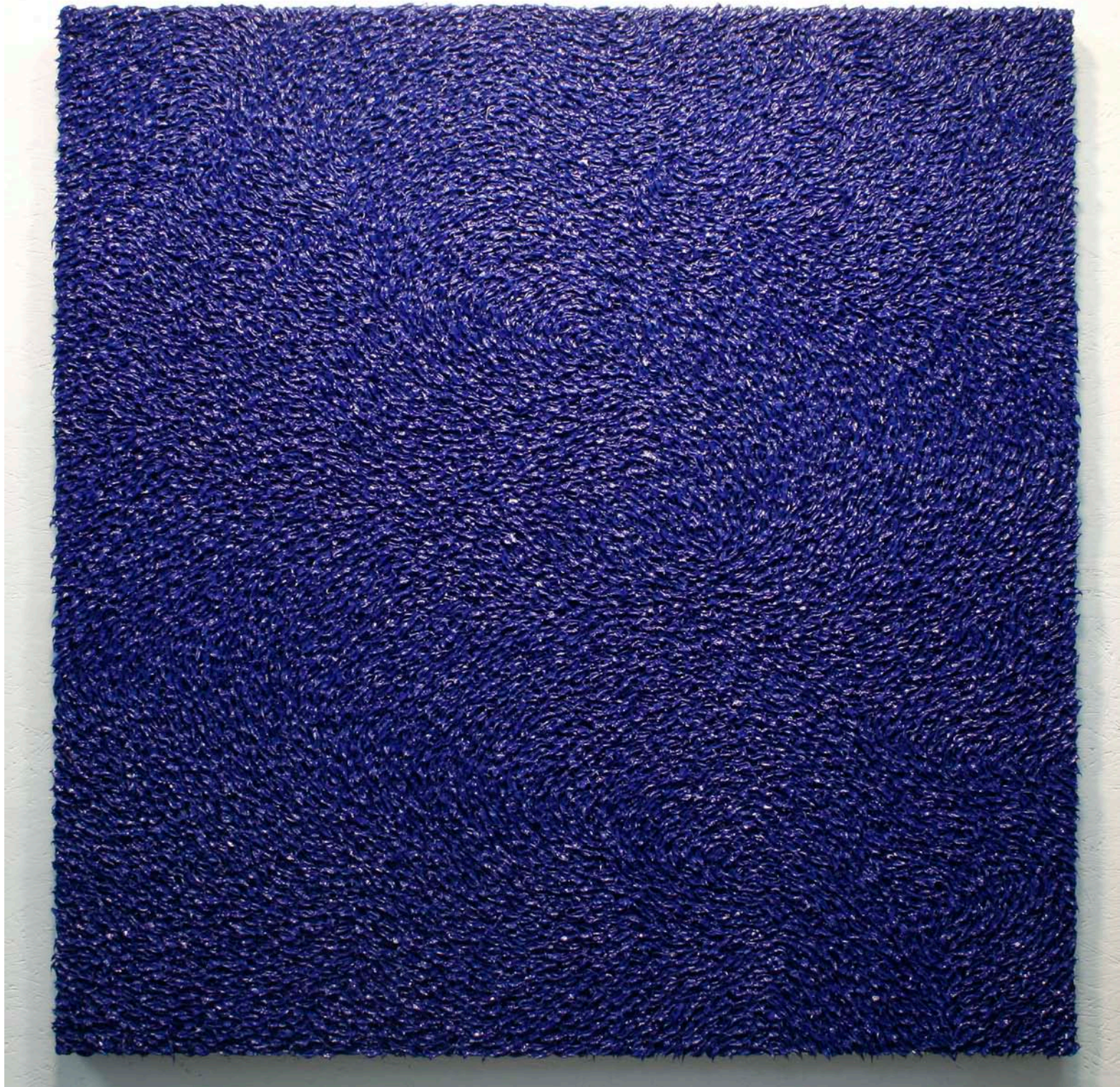


ROBERT SAGERMAN





Robert Sagerman, *12,655*
2014, Oil on linen
39 x 35 inches (90 x 89 cm)

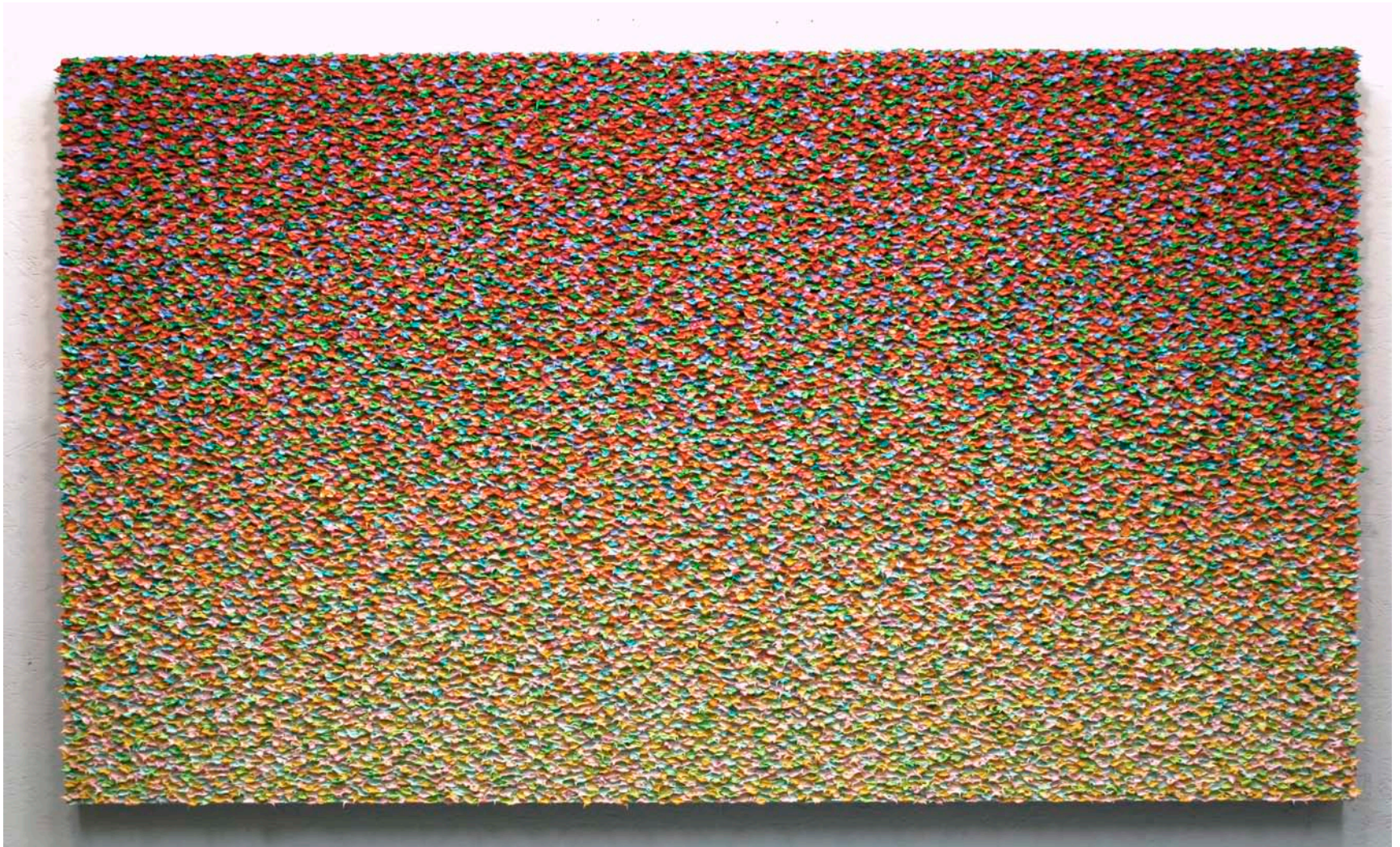


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Left:
Robert Sagerman, *25,069*
2014, Oil on linen
48 x 46 inches (122 x 117 cm)

Above:
25,069 (Detail)





Left:
Robert Sagerman, *23,607*
2014, Oil on linen
41 x 71 inches (104 x 180.5 cm)

Above:
23,607 (Detail)





Left:
Robert Sagerman, *17,167*
2014, Oil on linen
48 x 46 inches (122 x 117 cm)

Above:
17,167 (Detail)



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Left:
Robert Sagerman, *15,198*
2014, Oil on linen
39 x 35 inches (90 x 89 cm)

Above:
15,198 (Detail)





Left:
Robert Sagerman, 7,880
2014, Oil on linen
26.5 x 25.5 inches (67 x 65 cm)

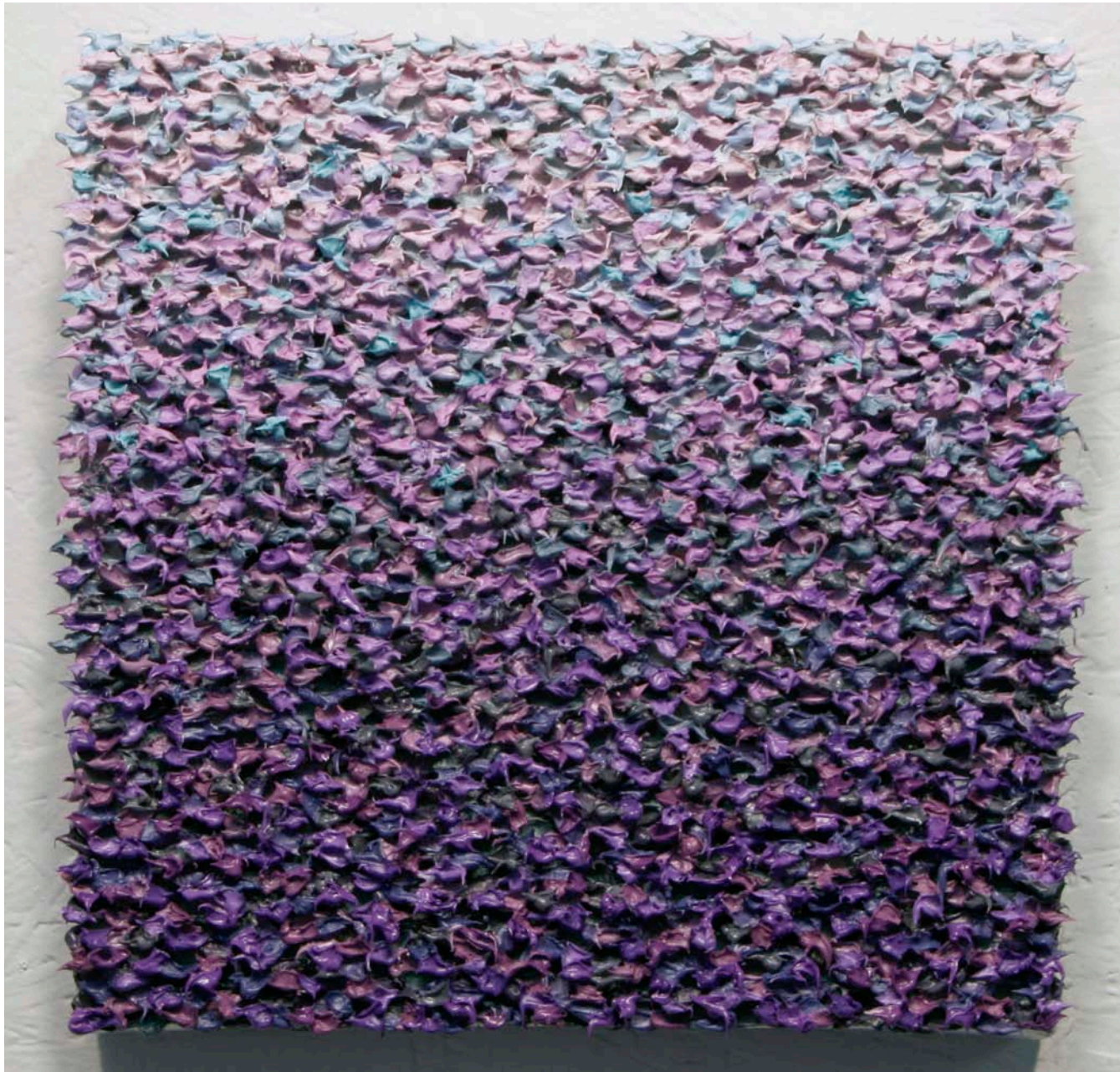
Above:
7,880 (Detail)



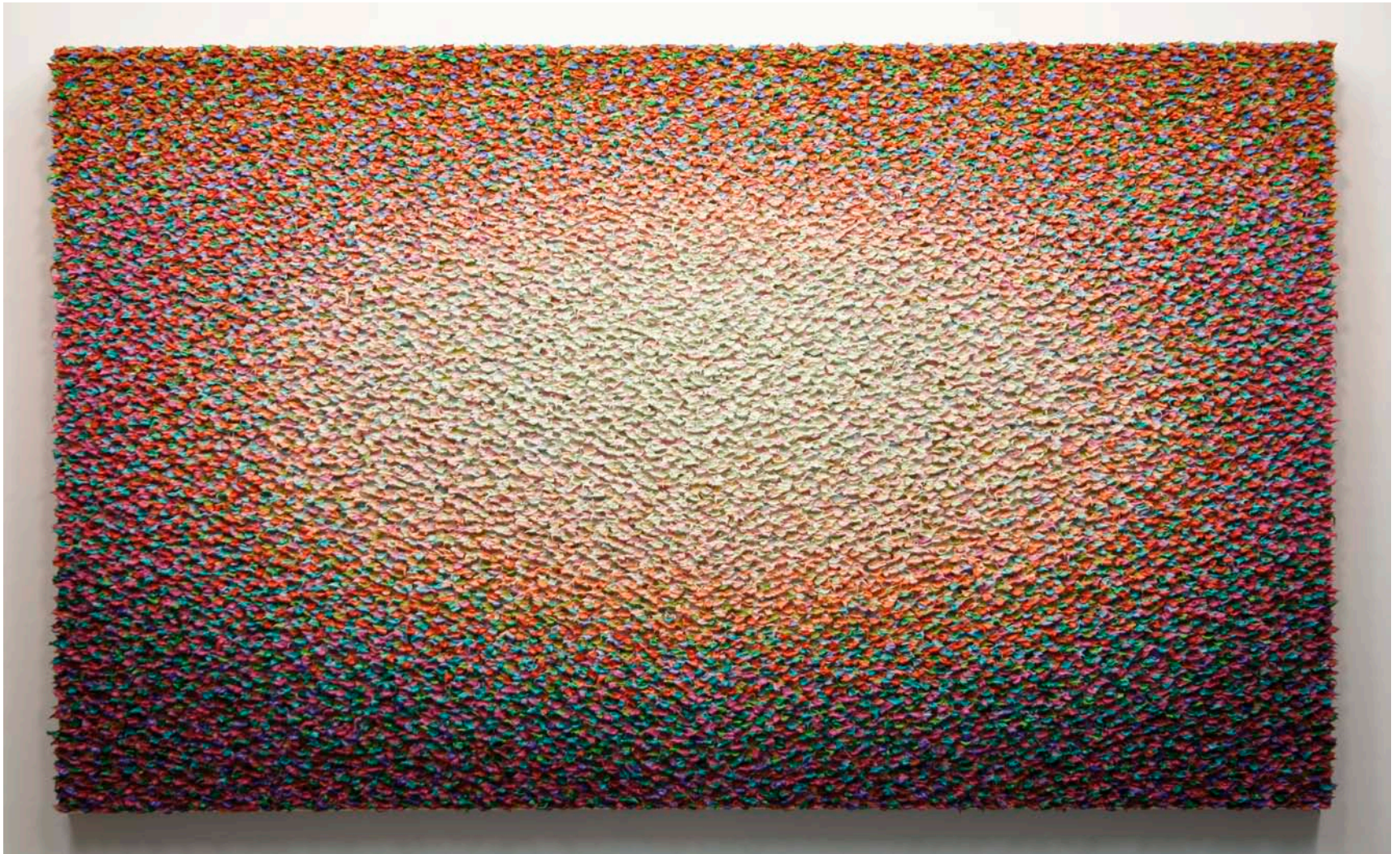
Robert Sagerman, *5,860*
2014, Oil on linen
21 x 20 inches (53 x 51 cm)



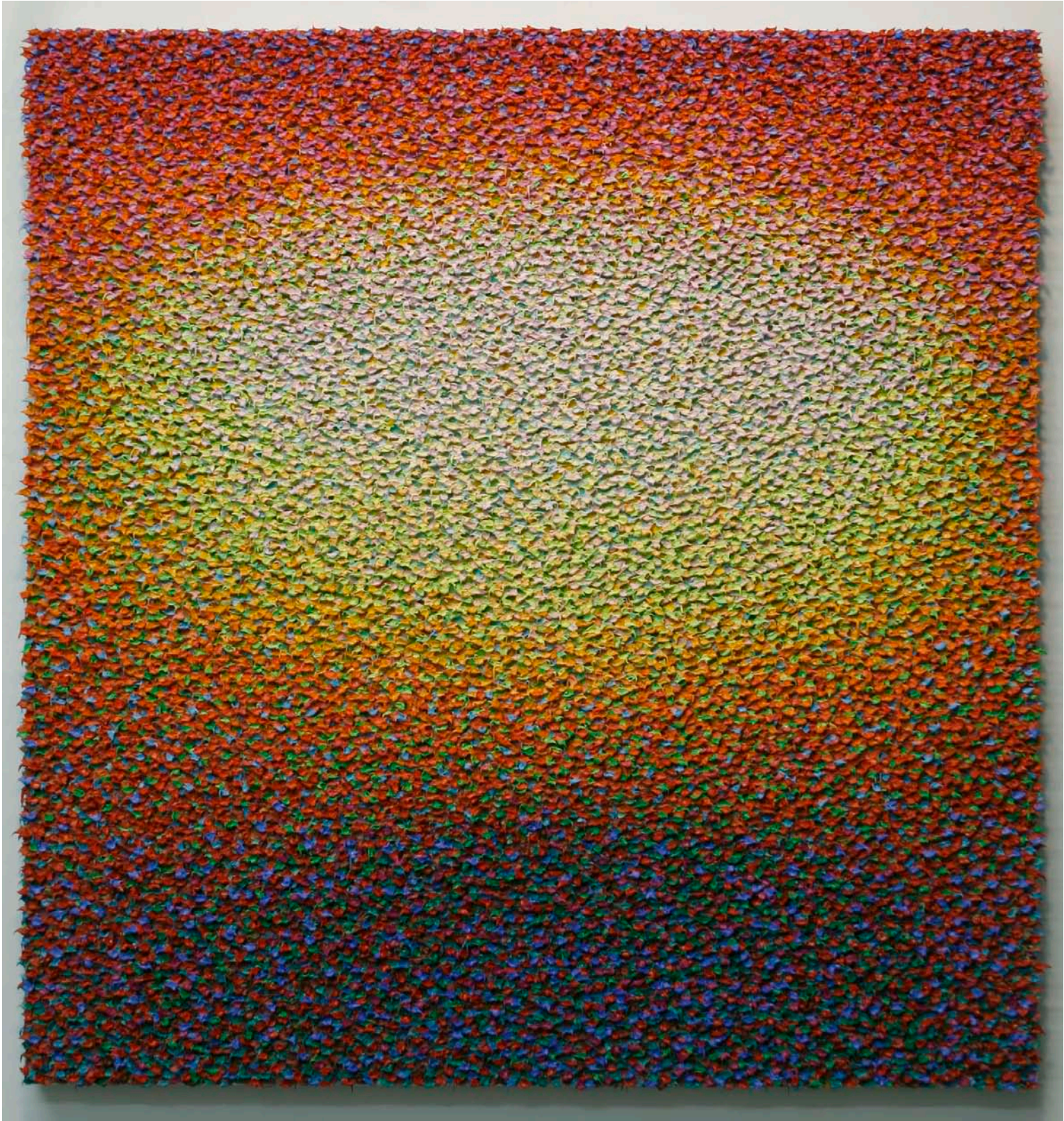
Robert Sagerman, *4,796*
2014, Oil on linen
21 x 20 inches (53 x 51 cm)



Robert Sagerman, 2,823
2014, Oil on linen
12 x 12 inches (30.5 x 30.5 cm)



Robert Sagerman,
27,930
2014, Oil on linen
36 x 60 inches (91.5 x
152.5 cm)





Left:
Robert Sagerman, 28,438
2014, Oil on linen
48 x 46 inches (122 x 117 cm)

Above:
28,438 (Detail)











Far Closer

Viewers of my work usually approach each painting to get a close view of its small gestural units and then move far back to take in the cumulative effect. Often they repeat this back and forth movement, sometimes a number of times. The same is true for me in the studio. I engage in a rhythmic activity of reaching in close to apply each mark and then standing back at a distance to observe the progression of the whole. This rhythm is at the core of my working, and operates within a still larger rhythm, which shifts from one piece to the next in succession. As one might expect, the more in tune with this rhythm I can be, the more smooth and effortless is the process, while the more out of step I am with the work's natural unfolding, the more arduous the work can become. There is for me an interrelated two-fold challenge here, first, to achieve a piece's resolution and, second, to work in what is really the only way to bring about this result, that is, fluidly and in an attuned, receptive mode.

Successful resolution is something of a formal, aesthetic idea, referring in my case to the arrival at an end point in terms of color, surface and composition, a feeling of visual completion. But my method of working evolved, from my first forays into abstraction almost thirty years ago, based on a sense of another goal, metaphysical in nature. This goal is more difficult to fathom. It arose out of an intuitive sense of a transcendent reality underlying the perceptible world, one which, I believed, I could approach through a devotional and rigorous approach to field painting. Over time, my perception of this project has shifted. My work more and more has moved toward an increased physicality and sensuality. My focus has come to rest on my own efforts – internal and external - and on my actual working practice. This has resulted from a new recognition that my earlier efforts were

geared toward a visual portrayal of that which is, in fact, unimagable. As I have become more skillful over the years as a painter, the goal that I had once envisioned, to which I would have expected to be drawing closer, has actually receded farther from reach. It is apparent to me now that goal-related thinking in the face of an objective that is limitless in nature is certainly misguided. Medieval Jewish mystics, the subjects of serious academic study for me in previous years, conceived of the apprehension of the divine in a very similar way, I now recognize. They referred to their spiritual project as directed to a sphere called the Infinite (the "*Ehn Sof*", in Hebrew). They spoke in the same breath of the possibility of attaining immersion in the Infinite and also of the endless nature of such a project. In this respect, close and far converge.

One ramification of the viewing experience of alternating between a full, distant view and a close view of a piece's surface intricacies is an inability to fully apprehend a given piece all at once. The work may also lead one into an oblique view, which yields other results. For me, the work has come to embody something of an enigma in this way, eluding full graspability. This tendency has been magnified over time, as my painting has increasingly sharply contrasted sensuality against the austerity of the field. This sensuality is to be contrasted all the more against my meditative counting activity. To be sure, the closer I can get to allowing the work to embody the enigmatic, the farther removed it is from knowability. My - and the viewer's - best option, ultimately, is simply to be with the work, to cultivate a receptiveness to individual responses to it and to relinquish the impulse to resolve it in some way. We tend, as a highly evolved mental reflex, to immediately seek to unpuzzle, to intellectually grasp (perhaps even to subjugate) that which we encounter. More and more, I seek an

encounter with the work that emphasizes immediacy and the holding of other impulses in suspension as an alternative to a goal-oriented effort toward apprehension, which my work seems intent on thwarting. This has become an important feature of the rhythmic modality that I described earlier, as my emphasis has come to rest on responding to, and not rationally overcoming, the challenges posed by a piece from moment to moment.

Medieval Jewish mystics often noted that the Hebrew form of the expression “The World to Come,” the anticipated time of redemption, to be realized in the messianic future, could also be grammatically parsed to read something like “The World that Comes.” By this, they sought to indicate that this redemptive state could be attained by the individual in the present. It is potentially here already, not something far off, but close at hand. They spoke of its attainability in the moment through the cultivation of a certain spiritual equanimity, a striking analogy, for me, to the attunement that I’ve been describing. In this way, through the very act of putting aside a focus upon a distant goal, the latter is allowed, paradoxically, to irrupt in the present. It is always far closer than one might expect.

Robert Sagerman

Born 1966 in Queens, New York

Lives and works in Jersey City, New Jersey

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EDUCATION

- 2008 PHD, Hebrew and Judaic Studies, New York University
- 2000 MA, Religious Studies, New York University
- 1998 MFA, Painting, Pratt Institute, New York
MS, Art History, Pratt Institute, New York
- 1990 BFA, Pratt Institute, New York

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2014 Far Closer, Margaret Thatcher Projects, New York, NY
Object Painting: Painting Object, with Bill Thompson, Galerie Renate Bender, Munich, Germany
- 2013 Peter Blake Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA
Openings, Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA
- 2012 t's Time, Margaret Thatcher Projects, New York, NY
Still Without Cessation, Brian Gross Fine Art, San Francisco, CA
- 2011 Galerie Renate Bender, Munich, Germany
Ermanno Tedeschi Gallery, Rome, Italy
- 2010 The Number Escapes Me, Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA
- 2009 On and On: Inquiries into Indeterminacy, Margaret Thatcher Projects, New York, NY
Workings, Brian Gross Fine Art, San Francisco, CA
Ermanno Tedeschi Gallery, Rome and Turin, Italy
- 2008 Never. Ever., Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA
Pathways to Presence, Galerie Renate Bender, Munich, Germany
- 2007 Activity, Margaret Thatcher Projects, New York, NY
dematerializations / interstices / permutations, Brian Gross Fine Art, San Francisco, CA
- 2006 Recent Paintings, Galerie Renate Bender, Munich, Germany
Innumerable Naught Nary, Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA
- 2005 Amassing Color, Margaret Thatcher Projects, New York, NY
Marking Time, Brian Gross Fine Art, San Francisco, CA
- 2004 Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA
- 2003 435, 546 Marks, Margaret Thatcher Projects, New York, NY

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2014 Pouring it On, The Herter Gallery, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Amherst, MA
Summer Formal, Peter Blake Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA
E Artists, Ermanno Tedeschi Gallery, Tel Aviv, Israel
Faszination FARBE, Kunsthauus Furstenfeldbruck, Germany

- 2013 New Year 2013, Margaret Thatcher Projects, New York, NY
Living Grey, Mies van der Rohe House, Berlin, Germany
Excavating Layers, Richmond Art Center, Richmond, CA
The Nature of Abstraction, Peter Blake Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA
- 2012 Ermanno Tedeschi Gallery, Turin, Italy
Peter Blake Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA
- 2011 World, Ermanno Tedeschi Gallery, Tel Aviv, Israel
- 2010 Elevazioni e Permutazioni, PaRDeS, Mirano, Italy
Gesture, Brian Gross Fine Art, San Francisco, CA
Monochrome II, Galerie Renate Bender, Munich, Germany
- 2009 Pure Paint, Henry Gregg Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
Common Ground: Color, Charlotte Jackson Fine Art, Santa Fe, NM
- 2008 Material Color, Hunterdon County Art Museum, Clinton, NJ
This Just In, Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA
The Fascination of the Color Red, Galerie Renate Bender, Munich, Germany
- 2007 Luxe, Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA
...das viereckige rot?, Galerie Albert Baumgarten, Freiburg, Germany
Farbe, Galerie Huebner, Hamburg, Germany
Surface Impressions, Islip Art Museum, Islip, NY
- 2006 Don't Touch, Renate Bender Gallery, Munich
Blue!, Karl Ernst Osthaus-Museum Hagen, Germany
- 2005 Summer Sensation, Margaret Thatcher Projects, New York, NY
About Paint, Westport Arts Center, Westport, CT
Living Gray, Karl-Ernst Osthaus-Museum, Hagen, Germany
- 2004 Exhibition for World Peace, Gallery Bijitsu-Sekai, Tokyo, Japan
ArtHouse, Margaret Thatcher Projects, New York, NY
Painting as Process: Re-evaluating Painting, La Salle SIA College of the Arts, Singapore
Die Farbe hat Mich II, Karl Ernst Osthaus-Museum, Hagen, Germany
Group Exhibition, M% Gallery, Cleveland, OH
Innovate, Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA
- 2003 Seeing Red: An International Exhibition of Non-Objective Painting, Part II, Hunter College/Times Square Gallery, New York, NY
Tickled Pink, Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA
- 2002 Breathing Room, Margaret Thatcher Projects, New York, NY
Blobs, Wiggles, Dots, Webs and Crustallations, The Work Space, New York, NY. Curated by Lucio Pozzi.
Group Exhibition, Roy Boyd Gallery, Chicago, IL
- 2001 Sharon Brant, Robert Sagerman, Don Voisine, Margaret Thatcher Projects, New York, NY
Items from the Permanent Collection, Williamsburg Art and Historical Center, Brooklyn, NY
- 2000 Ducesa Fine Arts, Brooklyn, NY
01.15.00, GALE GATES, et al, Brooklyn, NY
- 1999 Size Matters, GALE GATES, et al, Brooklyn, NY
Group Exhibition, GALE GATES, et al., Brooklyn, NY

- 1998 The Calculus of Transfiguration, Williamsburg Art and Historical Center, Brooklyn, NY
Higher Worlds, Pelham Art Center, Pelham, NY
- 1997 Downtown Arts Annual Group Exhibition, New York, NY. Juried by Fereshteh Daftari, Martin Eisenberg and Charlotta Kotik. Symposium Finalist, New York, NY. Work selected by Michael Brenson, critiqued by Janet Koplos, Donald Kuspit, Peter Schjeldahl and Simon Watson.
- 1993 Group Exhibition of Drawings, Alexander Gallery, New York, NY. Three Young Future Majors, Alexander Gallery, New York, NY.

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

The Karl Ernst Osthaus-Museum, Hagen, Germany
Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon
The Museum of Concrete Art, Ingolstadt, Germany.

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 2007 Kerry Weinberg Dissertation Fellowship, Dept. of Hebrew and Judaic Studies, New York University
- 2006 Marilyn Cohen Doctoral Dissertation Grant, Foundation for Jewish Culture
- 2000 MacCracken Fellowship, New York University
- 1998 Certificate of Excellence, Dept. of Art History, Pratt Institute
Certificate of Academic Excellence, Pratt Institute

PUBLICATIONS

The Serpent Kills or the Serpent Gives Life: the Kabbalist Abraham Abulafia's Response to Christianity. Boston: Brill, 2011.
"The Syncretic Esotericism of Egidio da Viterbo and the Development of the Sistine Chapel Ceiling Program." *Acta ad Archaeologiam et Artium Historiam Pertinentia* 19 (2005): 37-76.
"A Kabbalistic Reading of the Sistine Chapel Ceiling." *Acta ad Archaeologiam et Artium Historiam Pertinentia* 16 (2002): 93-177.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Mainly Grey (Hauptsache Grau), exhibition catalog by Michael Fehr, Mies van der Rohe House, Berlin, Germany, 2013.
"Robert Sagerman and the Process of Creation," by Jaap le Poole, *Colorobjects.com*, December 2, 2012.
"Interview with Art Miami Director Nick Korniloff," by Heike Dempster, *Miamiartzine.com*, November 29, 2013.
"Robert Sagerman at Marcia Wood Gallery," by Sara Riff, *Burnaway.org*, October 15, 2013.
"Transfer of Meaning: the Momentum of Abstract Painting," by Claire Lieberman, *Art Experience: New York City*, Spring, 2012.
"Robert Sagerman: 'It's Time,'" by Matthew Hassell, *NY Arts*, February,

2012.

"Robert Sagerman's 'It's Time' Exhibition Dazzles," by Mia Macfarlane, *Downtown*, January 16, 2012.
"Tactility as Mysticism; Robert Sagerman at Margaret Thatcher Projects," by Franklin Einspruch, *The New York Sun*, January 13, 2012.
"Robert Sagerman's scrumptious paintings and Claire Lieberman's piquant sculptures at Marcia Wood Gallery," by Catherine Fox, *ArtCriticATL.com*, April 19, 2010.
"Robert Sagerman," catalog essay by Michael Amy, Turin, 2009.
Material Color, Exhibition catalog, 2009. The Hunterdon County Art Museum, Clinton, NJ.
"What I Saw at Art Basel: Day 1," Emma Trelles, *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, December 5, 2007.
"Scratching the 'Surface' and teasing your senses," by Ariella Budick, *Newsday*, April 2007.
"Indeterminable Painting: Thoughts on the Work of Robert Sagerman," catalog essay by Michael Fehr, Munich, 2006.
Review of the exhibition "Living Gray" by Thomas W. Kuhn, *Kunstform International*, No. 176, June 2005.
Living Gray. Exhibition catalogue, 2005. The Karl Ernst Osthaus-Museum, Hagen, Germany.
K-West, April, 2005. Review of the exhibition *Living Gray*, by Stefanie Stadel.
SF Weekly, May 25, 2005. Review by Sharon Mizota.
Abstract Painting: Concepts and Techniques, by Vicky Perry, 2005.
About Paint, Exhibition catalog, 2005.
Art Festival for World Peace. Exhibition catalog, 2004. Gallery Bijitsu-Sekai, Tokyo, Japan
"Robert Sagerman at Marcia Wood Gallery," by Cathy Byrd, *Art in America*, December 2004.
Cullum, Jerry. "Review," *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*, February 1, 2004.
Fox, Catherine. "Review," *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*, May 6, 2004.
"The Intricate Precision of the Field The Kabbalistic Mysticism of Robert Sagerman," by Mark Daniel Cohen, *NY Arts*, September 2003.
Seeing Red: An International Exhibition of Non-Objective Painting. Exhibition catalog, 2003. The Karl-Ernst Osthaus-Museum, Hagen, Germany.
"Driven to Abstraction," by Amei Wallach, *Art News*, November 2003
"The Epistemological Movement in Late 20th Century Art: The Williamsburg Circle," by Terrence Lindall, *NY Arts Magazine*, February 2002.
"Ultimo indirizzo Brooklyn," by Enzo Siciliano, *La Repubblica*, June 14, 1999.

