

An abstract painting by Emanuel Torres, featuring bold, expressive brushstrokes in vibrant colors like red, orange, yellow, blue, and green, set against a white background. The composition is dynamic and layered, with various textures and colors overlapping. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white rectangular area in the center of the painting.

EMANUEL TORRES

SOMBRAS FRACTURADAS | FRACTURED SHADOWS

November 5 - December 19, 2020

Emanuel Torres

Sombras Fracturadas | Fractured Shadows

November 5 - December 19, 2020

LatchKey Gallery

New York, NY

LKG

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Artworks © 2020 Emanuel Torres

Text by Rafael Trelles

Artwork Images by Meghan Schaetzle

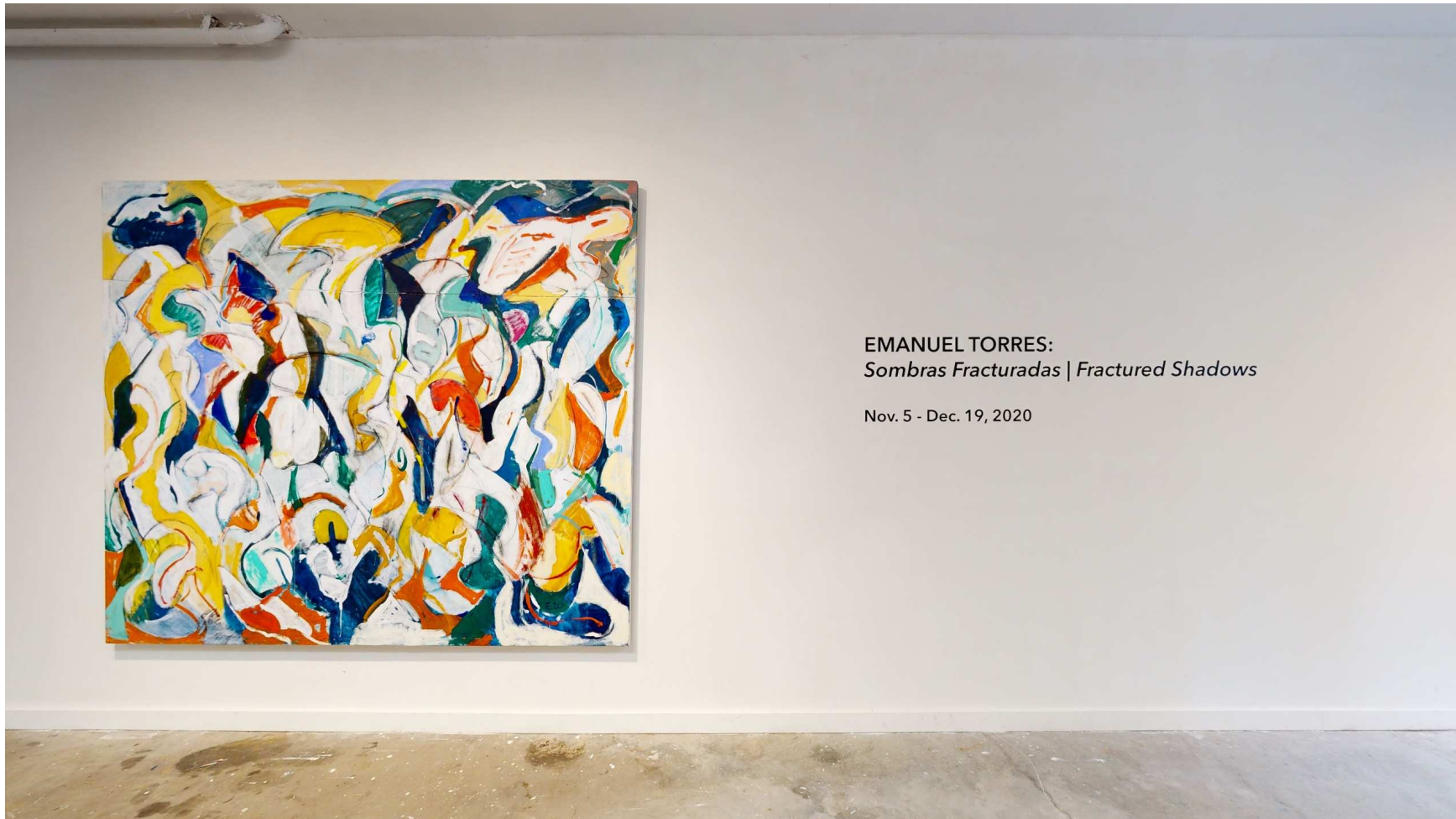
Installation Images by Artland

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Back/Cover: *Mar de Sombra* (detail), 2020

Opposite: *Mar de Sombra* (detail), 2020





Installation View, *Sombra Fracturadas | Fractured Shadows*, LatchKey Gallery

LatchKey Gallery is pleased to present *Sombras Fracturadas | Fractured Shadows*, the inaugural exhibition in New York of Puerto Rican based artist, Emanuel Torres. The exhibition will be on view from November 5 through December 19, 2020 at 323 Canal Street, NYC, with an artist's reception on December 5, 2020.

Sombras Fracturadas | Fractured Shadows consists of new paintings created during the spring and summer of 2020 while the artist was in quarantine. The exhibition explores the fractured relationship between Puerto Rico, the artist's home country, and the United States. Characterized by careful compositions of shapes and color, Torres' rhythmic paintings imbue a rich and complex history of painting informed by surrealism and abstract expressionism.

In this new body of work, Torres' creative process begins first with a gesture of blue – a color, historically perceived as “beyond dimension.” The artist then builds his canvases out with a somatic instinct, creating heavy markings and curved, oval shapes that appear reminiscent to fragmented figures. These anatomical configurations allude to the psychological repercussions of a colonized nation, legally and culturally “othered” in relation to its colonizer, the United States.

The exhibition culminates with the colossal *Mar de Sombra*, at its center. Measuring 7 feet by 8 feet, the painting is a cascade of dense, intricate shapes. Playful brushwork weaves through the canvas drawing the viewer's eye to the center of the piece before bursting outward, as if breaking apart.

Emanuel Torres was awarded with the Pollock-Krasner foundation grant in 2018. He has exhibited at the Museum of Art and Design, Miramar, and throughout Puerto Rico, California, Florida and Japan. Torres graduated from the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras with a BA in theatre and philosophy and continued his studies in video art, installation, and performance at the University of Puerto Rico, Cayey.

Emanuel Torres, art and context

By Rafael Trelles

Puerto Rican painter Emanuel Torres (1988) creates his current body of work over the accomplishments of a complex tradition shaped by Surrealism, Abstract Expressionism, and Informalism. Like the expressionist painters of the mid 20th century, Torres experiences some level of psychic automatism in his creative process. Often, he begins his canvases with a random gesture of blue paint and continues with a careful composition of shapes and colors led by a playful and rhythmic spirit. Arshile Gorky (1904-1948) figures are key to understanding Torres' formal semantics. In the same way, his and the Armenian's abstractions are present in the organic shapes and the biomorphic spots that give a sense of mystery and surprise to his paintings. In the case of Torres, the curved and oval shapes that appear are reminiscent of human anatomy, stylized by the painter's eye. The result of this practice is an abstraction of a surrealist tendency that, despite its autonomous visual language, can be read as a poetic celebration of the body. However, the main virtue of his paintings is the excellent management of his visual language. The spot, the graphism, the color and texture are wisely combined by the painter's spontaneous gesture and intelligence to accomplish chromatic atmospheres and great tonal effectiveness.

In the context of the history of Puerto Rican art we can also find other antecedents that are essential to understanding Torres's Fine Art practice. During the second post-world war in Puerto Rico, there were artists who excelled in the exercise of expressionist and lyrical abstraction: Olga Albizu (1924-2005), Rosado del Valle (1922-2008), Luis Hernández Cruz (1936) Carmelo Fontánez (1945), and Julio Suárez (1947) among others contributed to laying the foundations of the abstract movement on the island. For Emanuel Torres, the painting of Rosado del Valle has been exemplary, especially for the vigor of its color and brushstroke, the use of impasto, and the rhythmic complexity of its compositions.

However, as Torres himself admits, it was the work of Richard Pagán (1954-1989) that influenced his professional career the most. Pagán was a Puerto Rican artist who lived in Southampton, New York in the 1980s, there he drank from the Abstract Expressionist tradition, met Willem de Kooning, and connected with the neo-figurative artists of the moment. After receiving the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant he moved to Montichiari in Italy where he died in an accident at the age of 35. Torres learned about Pagán's paintings through an anthological exhibition organized by the Puerto Rico Museum of Contemporary Art in 2012. Pagán's powerful work and his method of creation, governed by absolute freedom, inspired the young artist. The interest in going deeper into the painter's work and life, motivated Torres to travel to Italy to get to know Pagan's studio, his friends, and experiences. In Montichiari he was able to verify the deep mark that Pagán left in the memory of his Italian friends and had the opportunity to see a good part of his work in the town's private collections.

The lessons he learned from Pagan's work were fruitful. Thanks to his knowledge of art history, Torres was able to assess the original way in which Pagán managed to integrate different artistic strategies in his painting, from the compositional rigor of Giotto and Balthus to the playfulness of Matisse's forms; from Monet's chromatic lyricism to de Kooning's unrestrained gestures. The model to follow was clear: an improbable mixture of spontaneity and discipline, of rigor and creative freedom. The feverish creative process that Torres undertook after that trip led him to gradually detach himself from the figurative elements that by then populated his paintings to fully enter the fascinating world of abstraction. In the current context of contemporary art dominated by Neo-Conceptual trends, betting on abstract painting as a means of expression is a courageous decision that shows that we are dealing with an artist with his own ideas. Emanuel Torres reminds us that painting is not an exhausted medium and that there is still much to explore in the world of brushes and pigments. Of course, today more than ever, painters need spectators with trained eyes predisposed to the exercise of active contemplation, to be co-creators of the paintings and to dare to discover new worlds in the magical and two-dimensional window of the canvas.

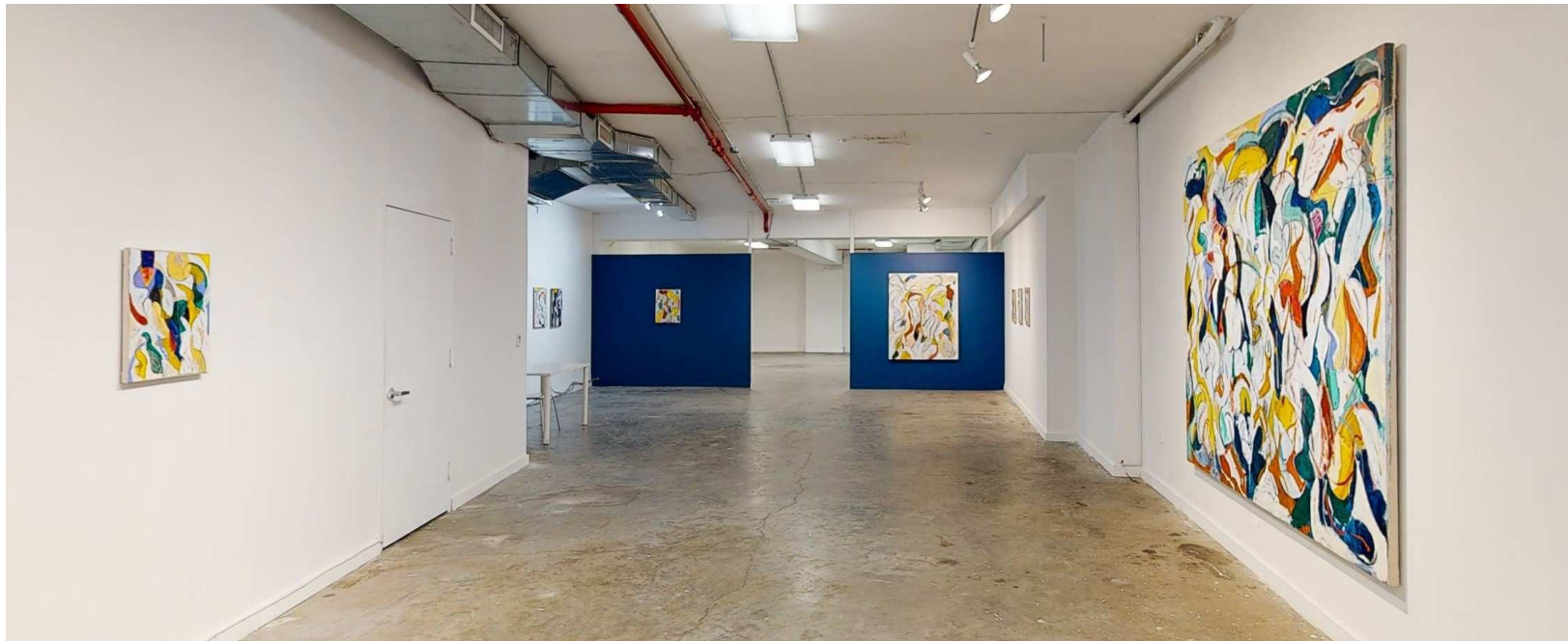
Emanuel Torres, arte y contexto

By Rafael Trelles

En el contexto de la historia del arte puertorriqueño también podemos encontrar otros antecedentes que son imprescindibles para comprender la propuesta plástica de Torres. En el Puerto Rico de la segunda posguerra mundial, también hubo artistas que se destacaron en el ejercicio de la abstracción expresionista y la abstracción lírica: Olga Albizu (1924-2005), Rosado del Valle (1922-2008), Luis Hernández Cruz (1936), Carmelo Fontáñez (1945) y Julio Suárez (1947), entre otros, contribuyeron a sentar las bases del movimiento abstracto en la isla. Para Emanuel Torres la pintura de Rosado del Valle, ha sido ejemplar, sobretodo por el vigor de su color y pincelada, el uso del impasto y la complejidad rítmica de sus composiciones.

Sin embargo, según admite el propio artista, fue la obra de Richard Pagán (1954-1989) la que influyó con mayor fuerza en su carrera profesional. Pagán fue un artista puertorriqueño que vivió en Southamptom, Nueva York en los años 80, allí bebió de la tradición expresionista abstracta, conoció a Willem de Kooning y conectó con las corrientes neofigurativas del momento. Luego de recibir el Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant se mudó para Montichiari en Italia en donde falleció en un accidente a los 35 años de edad. Emanuel Torres conoció la pintura de Pagán a través de una exposición antológica que organizó el Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Puerto Rico en el año 2012. La poderosa obra de Pagán y su método de creación, regido por una libertad absoluta, inspiraron al joven artista. El interés en profundizar más sobre el pintor, su obra y su vida, lo motivó a viajar a Italia para conocer su estudio en un molino abandonado, sus amistades y vivencias. En Montichiari pudo comprobar la profunda huella que dejó Pagán en la memoria de sus amigos italianos y tuvo la oportunidad de ver una buena parte de su obra en las colecciones privadas del pueblo.

Las lecciones que aprendió de la obra de Pagán fueron fecundas. Gracias a su conocimiento de la historia del arte, Torres pudo aquilatar la manera tan original en que Pagán logró integrar diferentes estrategias artísticas en su pintura, desde el rigor compositivo del Giotto y Balthus al juego lúdico de las formas de Matisse; desde el lirismo cromático de Monet a la gestualidad desatada de de Kooning. El modelo a seguir estaba claro: una mezcla improbable de espontaneidad y disciplina, de rigor y libertad creadora. El proceso de creación febril que Torres emprendió luego de ese viaje lo llevó a desprenderse poco a poco de los elementos figurativos que, para entonces, poblaban su pintura y a entrar de lleno al fascinante mundo de la abstracción. En el actual contexto del arte contemporáneo dominado por las corrientes neoconceptuales, apostar por la pintura abstracta como medio de expresión es una decisión valiente que demuestra que estamos ante un artista con ideas propias. Afirmando su vocación, Emanuel Torres nos recuerda que la pintura no es un medio agotado y que todavía hay mucho que explorar en el mundo de los pinceles y los pigmentos. Claro está, hoy más que nunca, los pintores necesitan de espectadores con ojos entrenados y predispuestos al ejercicio de la contemplación activa, a ser co-creadores de las pinturas y atreverse a descubrir mundos nuevos en la ventana mágica y bidimensional del lienzo.





Left: *Mar de Sombra (detail)*, 2020
Right: *Mar de Sombra*, 2020
Oil, acrylic, charcoal, oil bar, and pastel
84 x 96 in

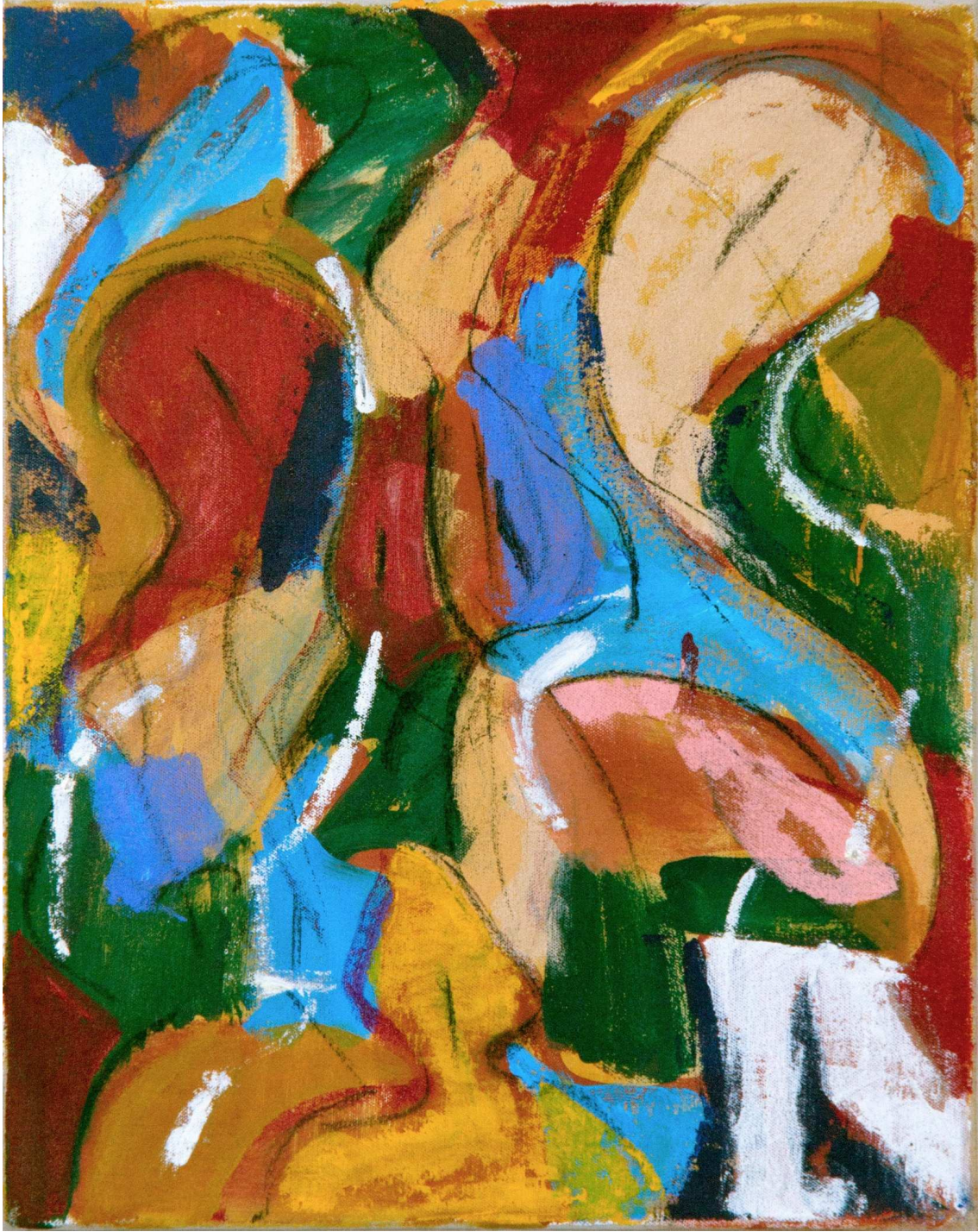


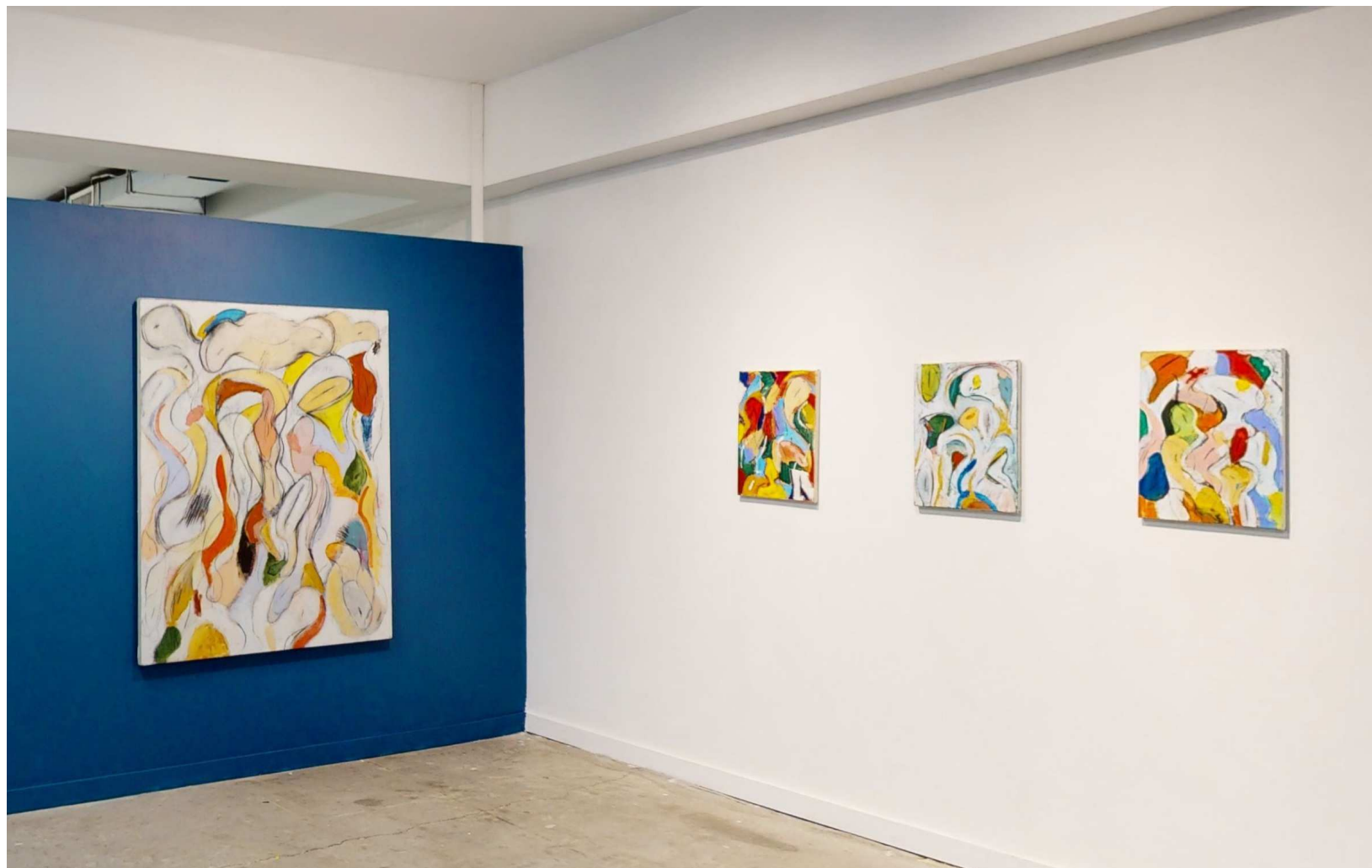
Previous: *Ruido de Barro* (detail), 2020

Right: *Ruido de Barro*, 2020

Oil, acrylic, charcoal on canvas

20 x 16 in



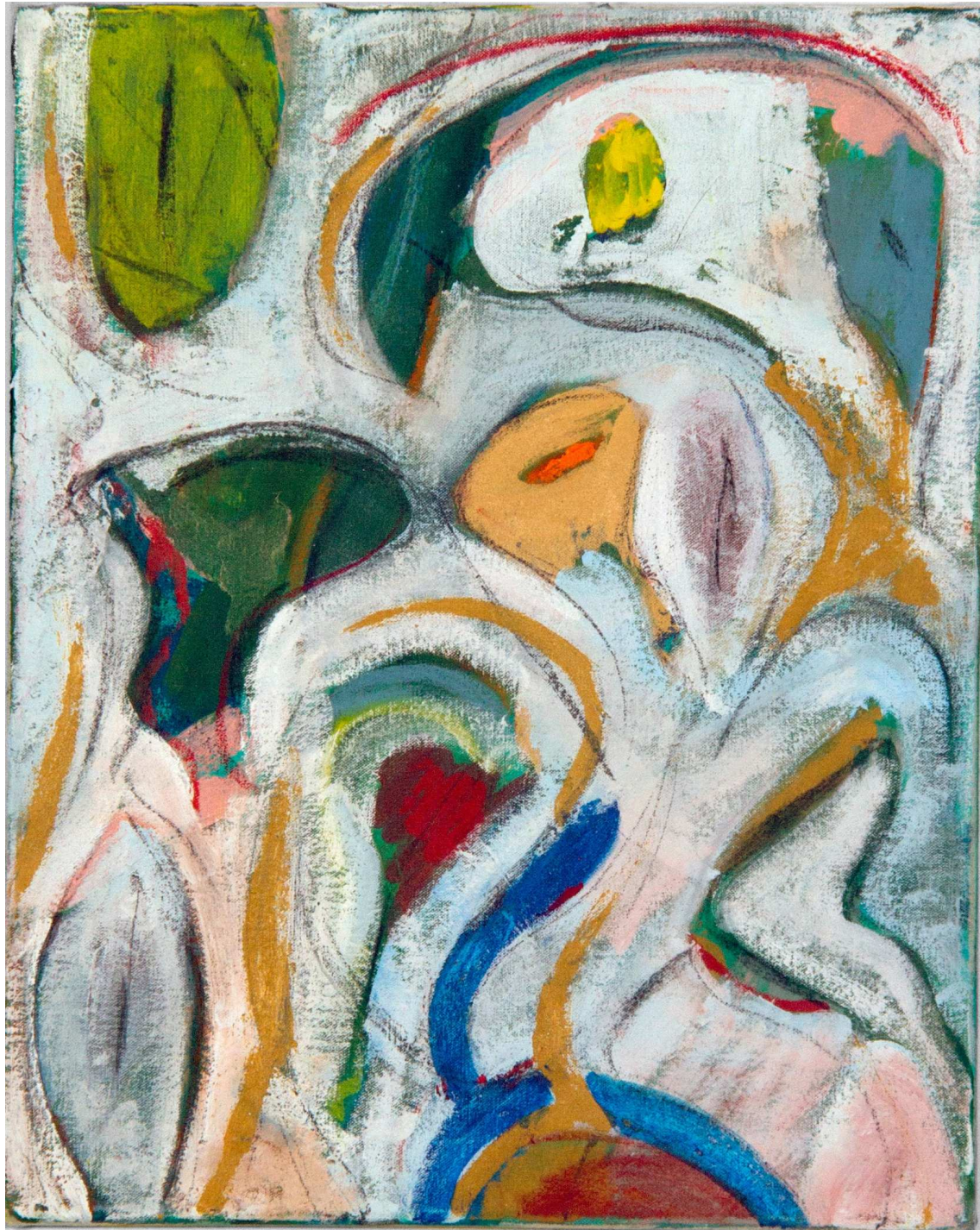


Left: Installation View, *Sombra Fracturadas* | *Fractured Shadows*, LatchKey Gallery

Right: *El insomnio de la sombra*, 2020

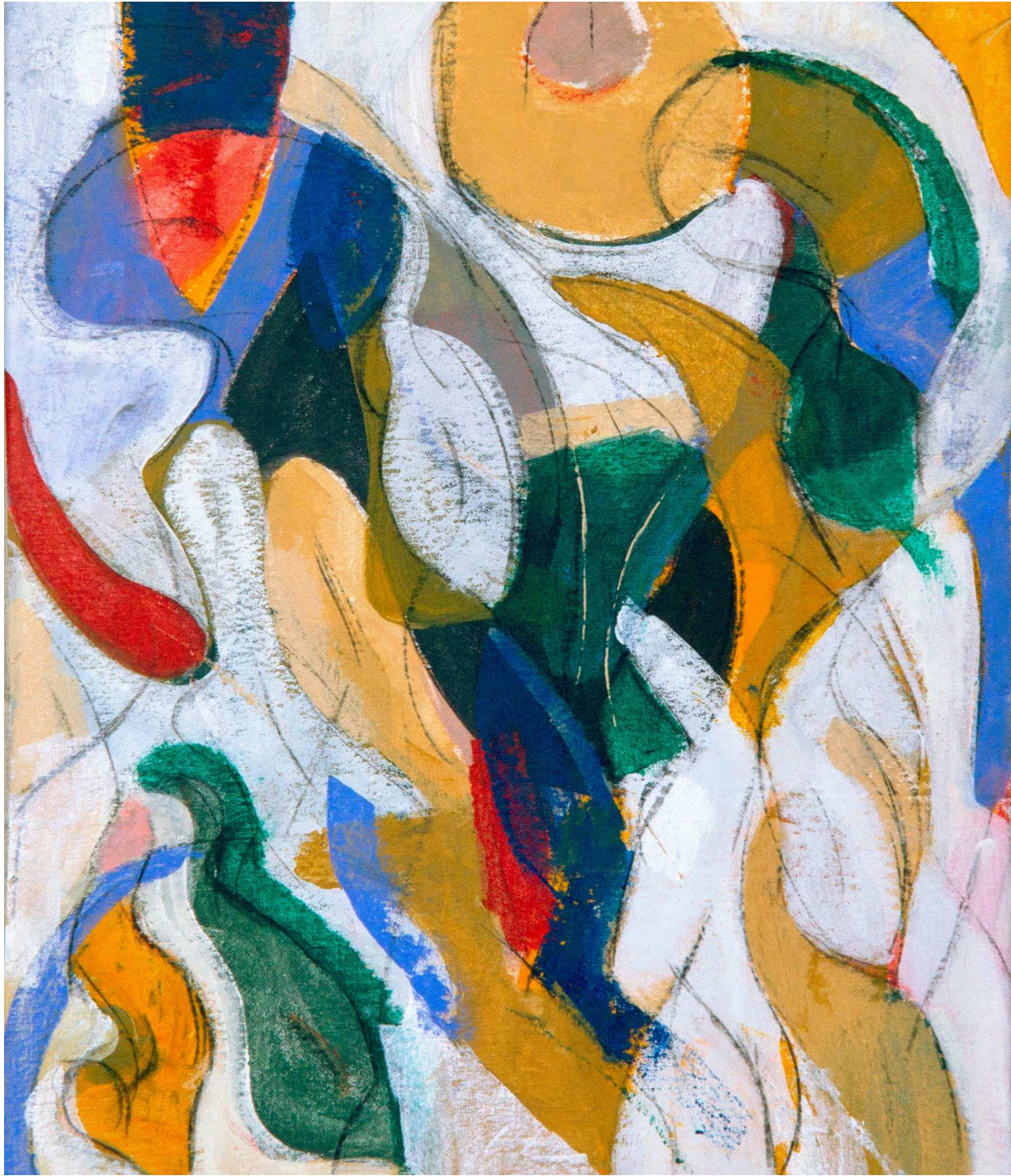
Oil, acrylic, charcoal on canvas

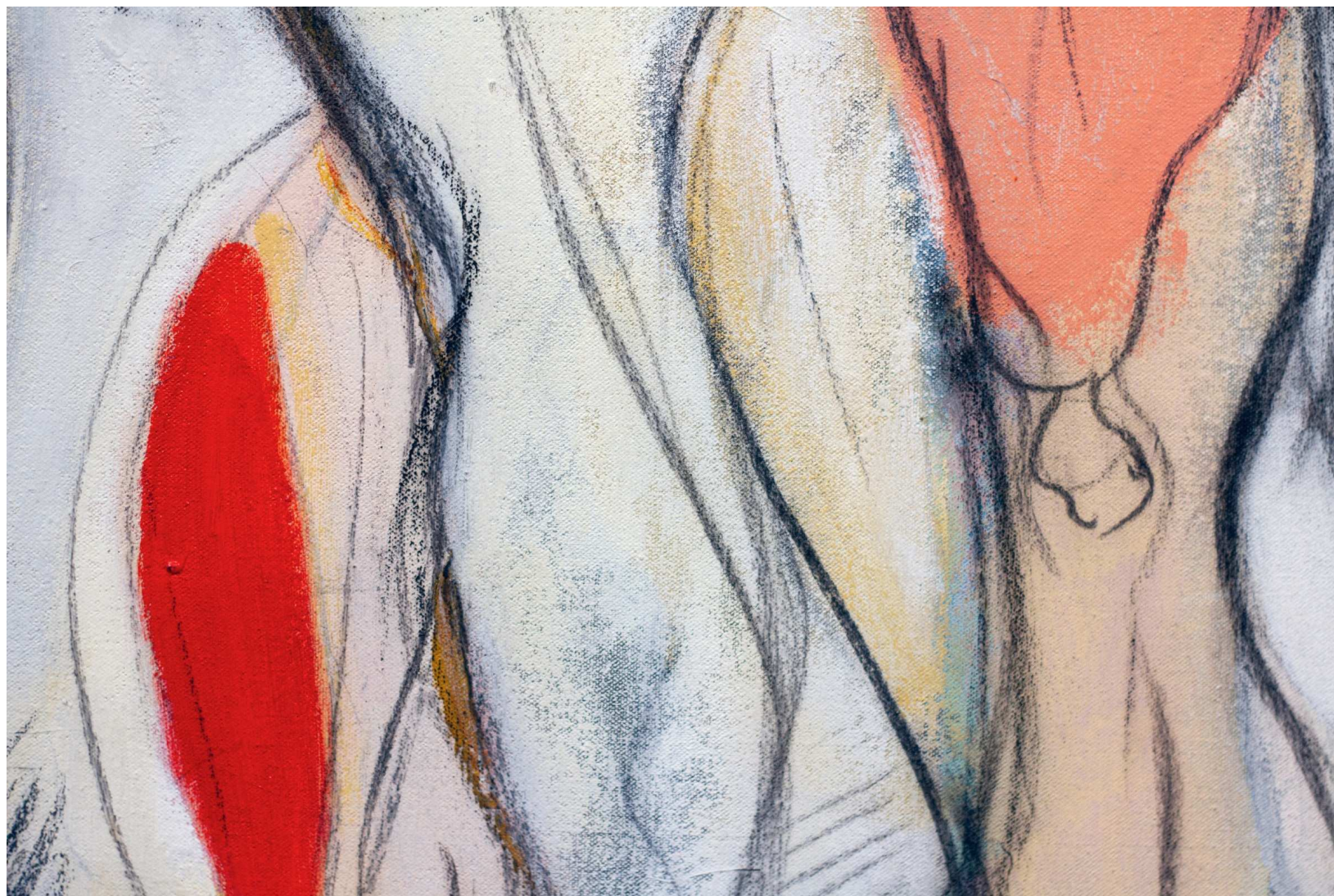
16 x 20 x 0.75 in



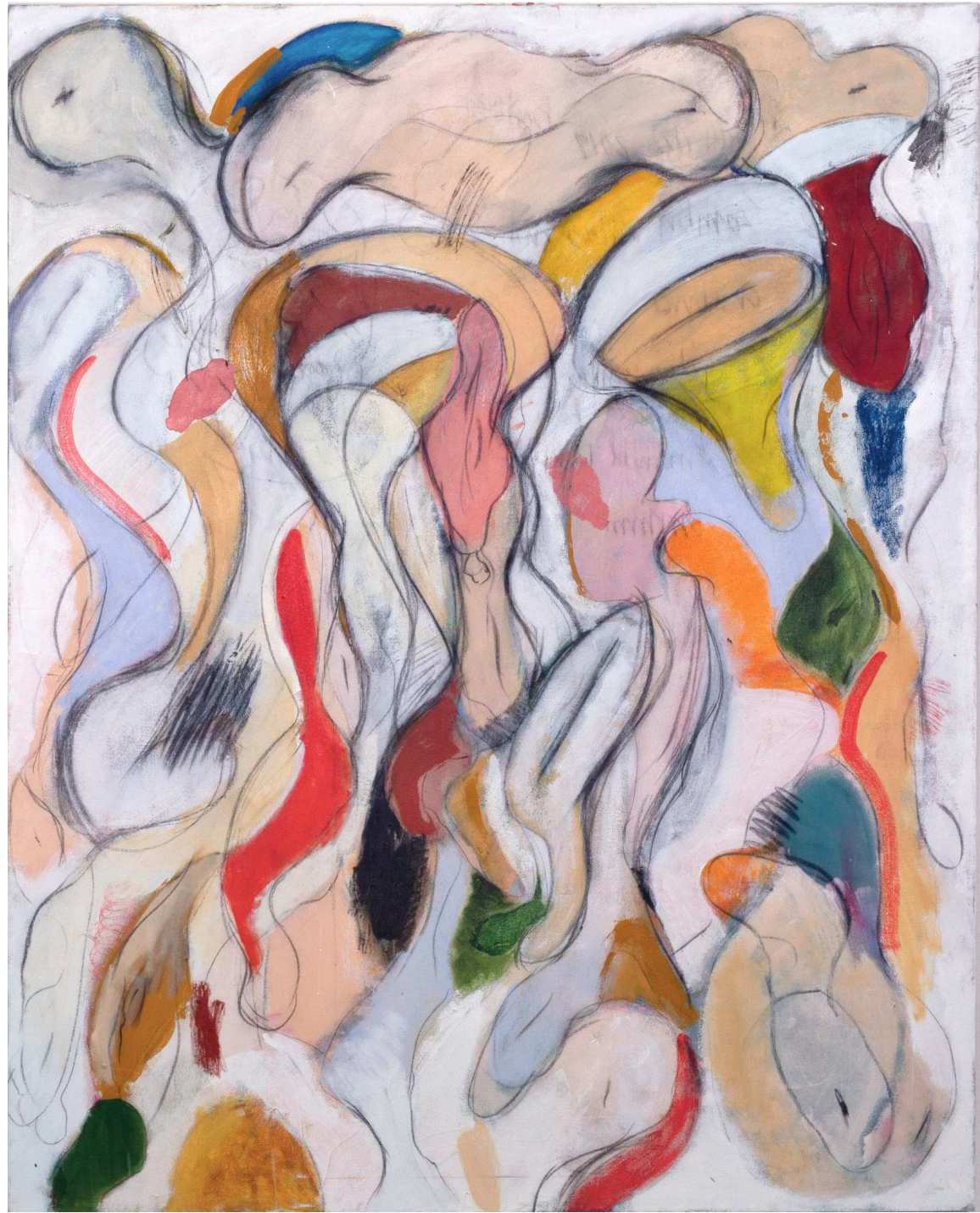


Sombra en la boca, 2020
Oil, acrylic, charcoal on canvas
20 x 16 in

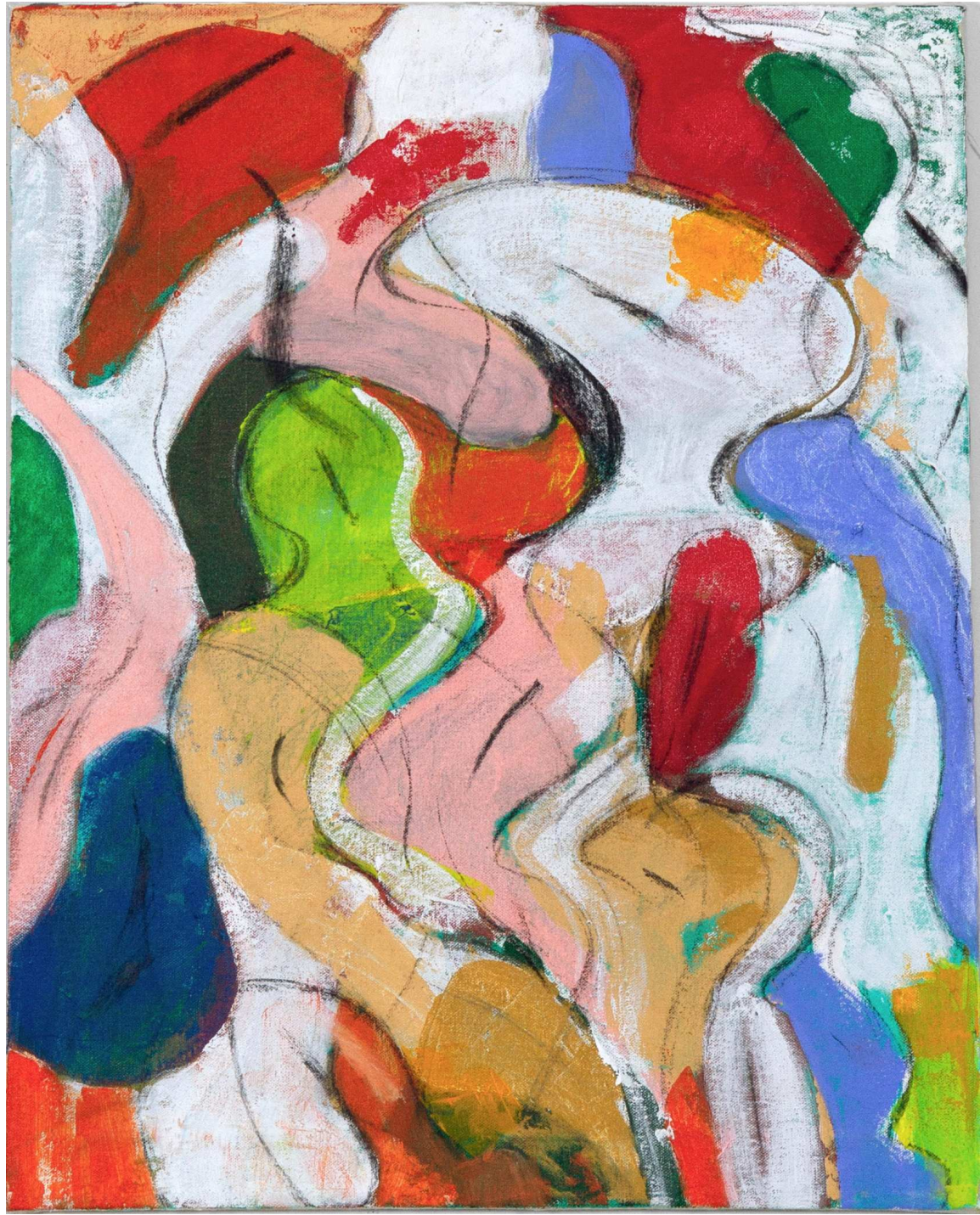




Cirrus Menor, (2020)
Oil, acrylic, charcoal on canvas
60 x 48in



El sueño ahuecado, (2020)
Oil, acrylic, charcoal on canvas
20 x 16 in

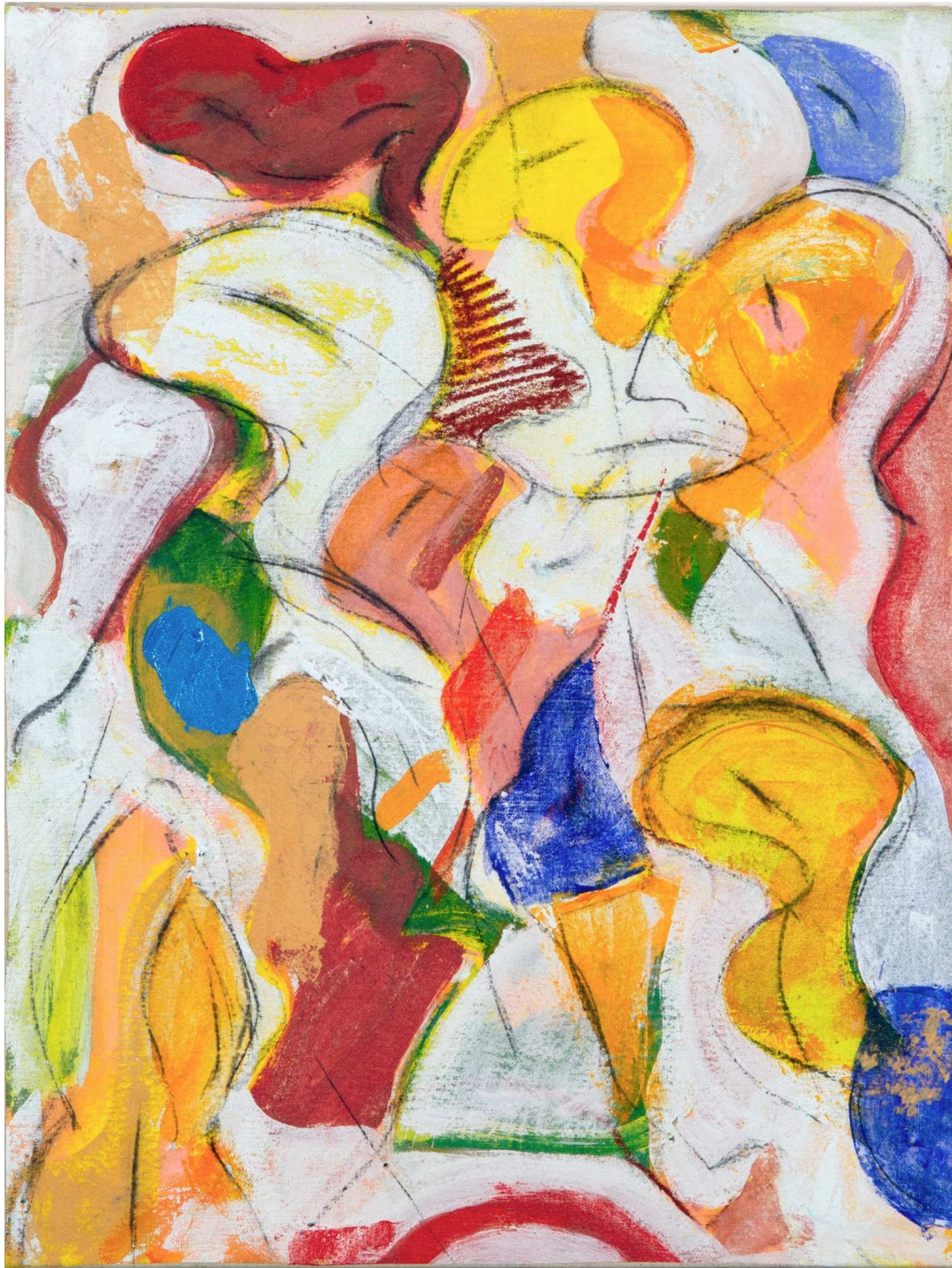


Previous: *Golpe de sombra* (detail), 2020

Left: *Golpe de sombra*, 2020

Oil, acrylic, charcoal on canvas

24 x 18 in





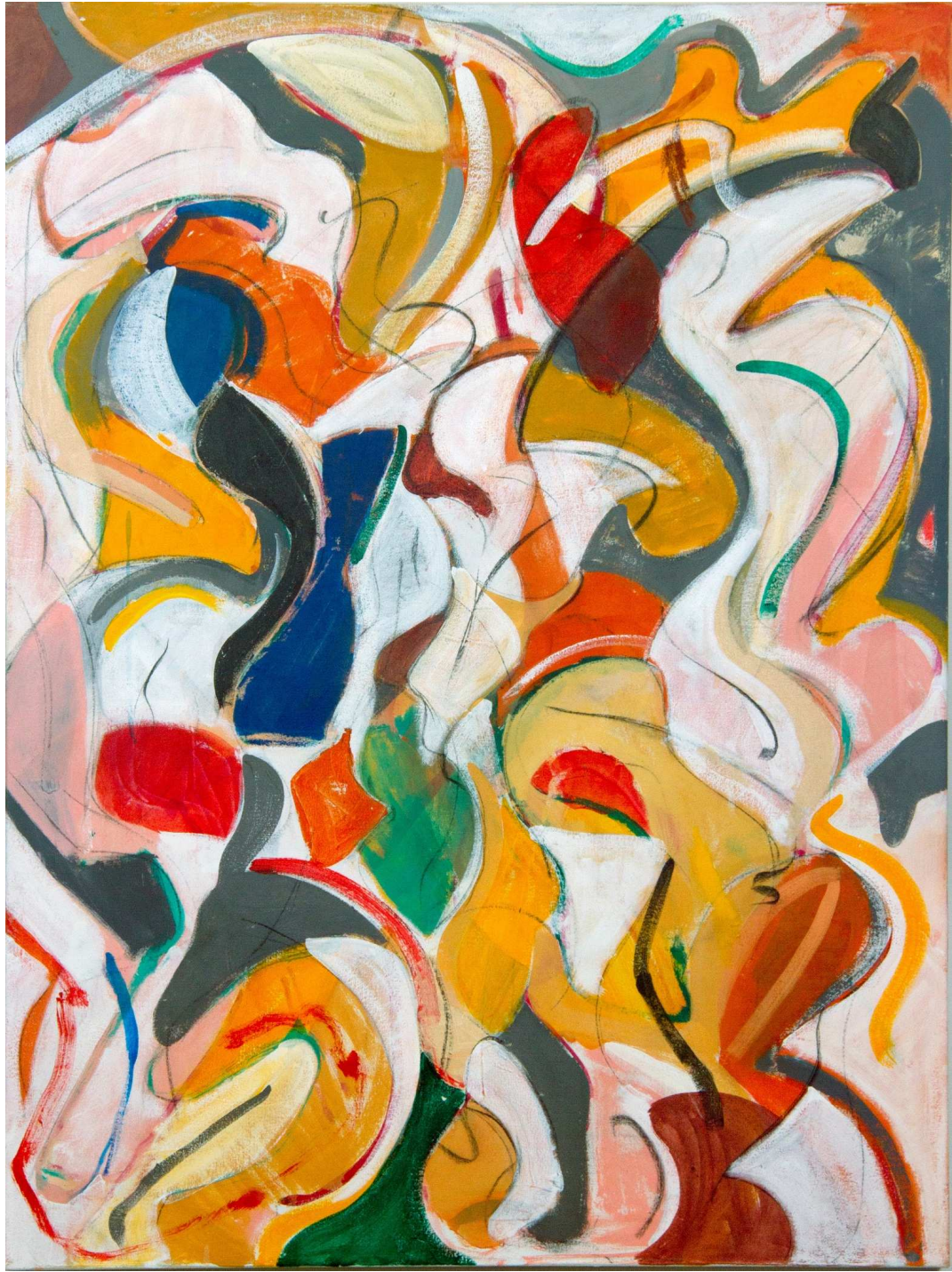
El peso de la sombra,
2020
Oil, acrylic, charcoal
on canvas
24 x 18 in

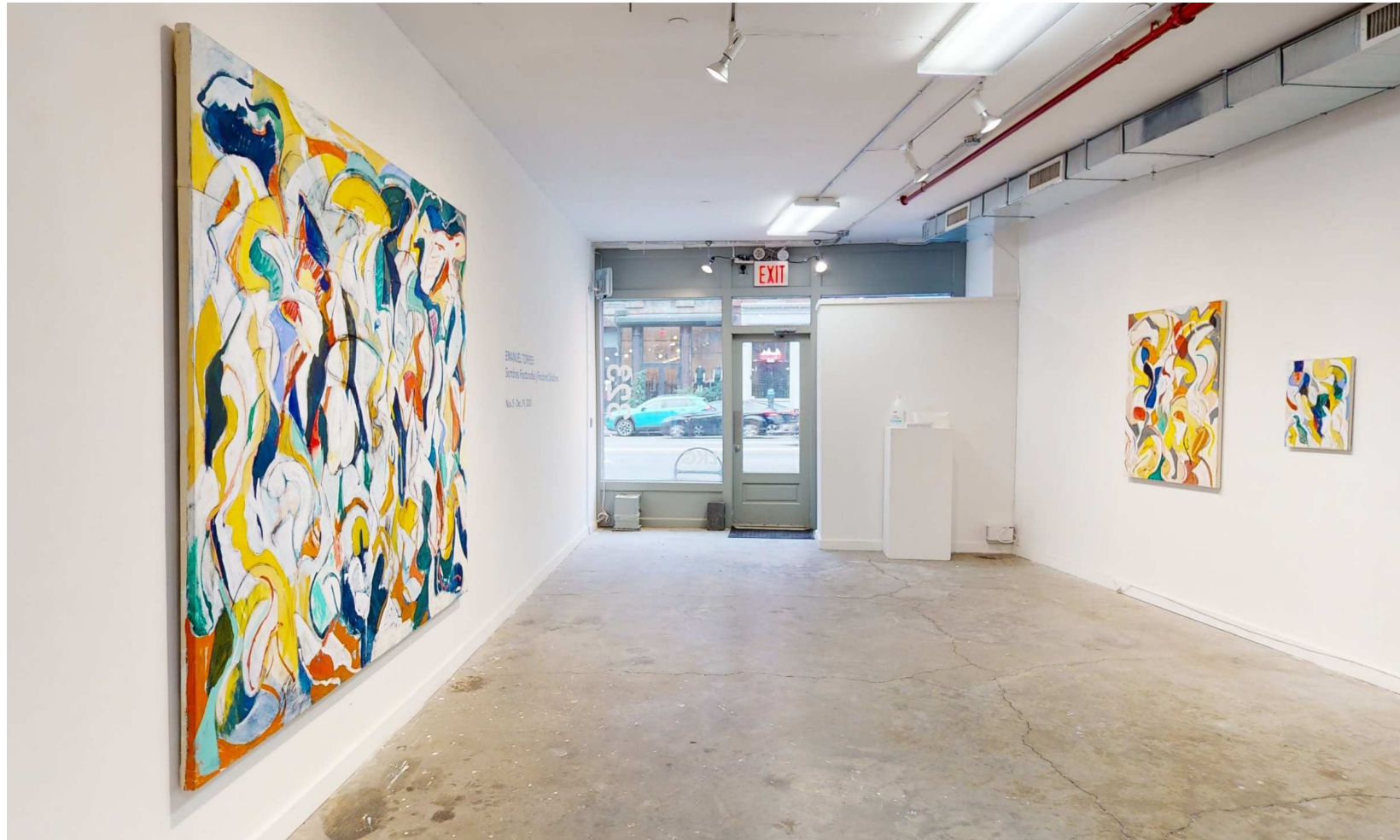


Sombra de la gota,
2020
Oil, acrylic, charcoal
on canvas
24 x 18 in



Hueco - Puente Azul, 2020
Acrylic, oil, charcoal on canvas
48 x 36 in



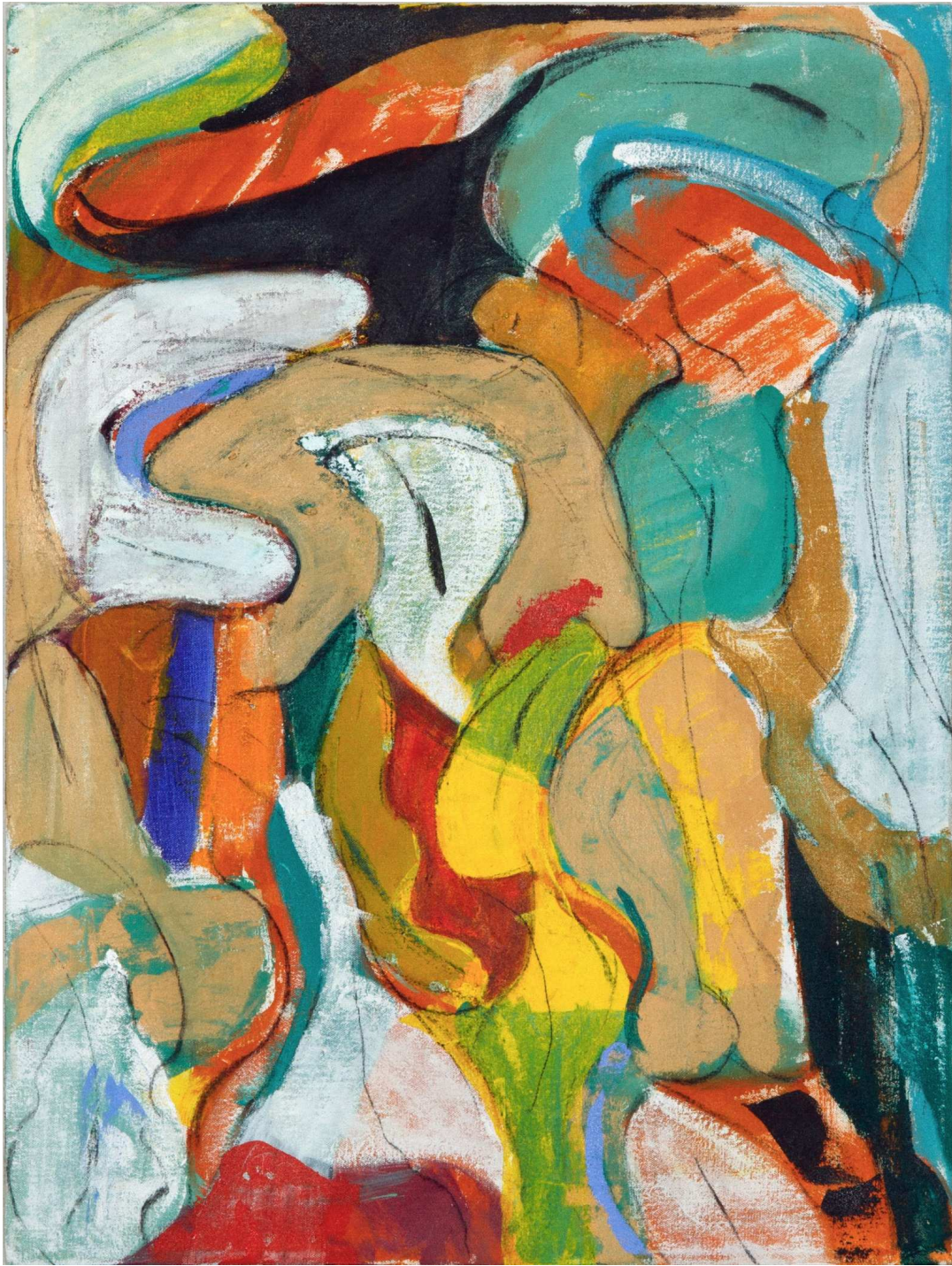


Left: Installation View, *Sombra Fracturadas | Fractured Shadows*, LatchKey Gallery

Right: *Hendidura de la sombra*, 2020

Oil, acrylic, charcoal on canvas

20x16 in



CURRICULUM VITAE

B. 1988, Aguas Buenas, Puerto Rico

EDUCATION:

University of Puerto Rico Cayey

University of Puerto Rico Río Piedras

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2020 Sombra Fractura | Fractured Shadows, Latchkey Gallery, NY, NY
- 2019 Río en la mano, Museo de Arte y Diseño de Miramar (MADMi)
- 2018 Metamorfosis de la forma, Casa Museo Ashford Condado SJ, Puerto Rico
- 2017 Distopía Augusta, Espacio Minerva, Santurce, Puerto Rico
- 2016 Anima Unveiled: Recent Works Emanuel Torres, FL, USA Thomas Center Galleries
- 2015 Noveno Círculo Cuadrado Gris, SJ Puerto Rico
- 2014 The Unkempt Head: Recent Works by Emanuel Torres-Pérez, San Francisco, CA (The Cranium Devices)
- 2013 Cabeza Descuidada Universidad de Puerto Rico en Río Piedras (Galería 209)
- 2011 Gloriosas Fantasías Revolucionarias Galería 778 San Juan, PR
- 2009 La Barriga de Calandrino Institute of Puerto Rican Culture in Cayey Centro Cultural Miguel Meléndez Muñoz en Cayey, PR

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2020: Latchkey Gallery, UNTITLED Art Fair, ART Online: Booth B5
- 2018 Left Bank Leeds Art Prize: Leeds, UK
- 2017 Línea Dura: Univerdidad de Puerto Rico: Mayagüez
PR & Universidad Interamericana: San Juan, PR
- 2016 Aging Coconut: Roberto Paradise, SJ Puerto Rico WOCA Gallery, SJ Puerto Rico
- 2014 Come Home University of Florida Yokosuka Peace Exhibition Yokosuka, Japan
- 2013 Homenaje a Lorenzo Homar (Jóvenes en las Artes Plásticas Gráficas) Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico. Santurce, PR
Santurce es Ley 4. Santurce, PR Osviarte (Commissioned Mural)
Feria de Arte y diseño Galería nacional (PR National Gallery)
- 2012 Polígrafos Galería 778 Guaynabo, PR
Afrolatinos Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caguas
- 2011 Caleidoscopio 2 Galería 778 Guaynabo, PR

RESIDENCY| FELLOWSHIP

Pollock - Krasner Foundation Grant: 2018 - 2019

BIOGRAPHY

Emanuel Torres (Aguas Buenas, Puerto Rico, 1988) creates abstract compositions where color is the main expression. Awarded with the Pollock-Krasner foundation grant in 2018, music and poetry are a constant source of inspiration in his work. as a result, rhythm constantly emanates from each composition, accompanying the viewers while they immerse themselves in the activity of deciphering these colorful shapes.

Inspired by Francisco Matos Paoli's Poem "Soy Un Rio Oscuro" the exhibition "Rio en la Mano" at the Art and Design Museum in Miramar, Puerto Rico asked the viewer to freely navigate through flowing forms full of color. some of these forms reveal elements from Taino, Maya, Aztec and Phoenicians cultures usually enhancing symbols of fertility and sexuality.

Torres graduated from the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras with a BA in theatre and philosophy and continued his studies in video art, installation and performance at the University of Puerto Rico, Cayey. He has participated in group and individual exhibitions across Puerto Rico, Japan, San Francisco and Florida.



