

NOVEMBER 18, 2023 - FEBRUARY 14, 2024

**Wojciech Fangor
and his contemporaries,
1960- - 1995**

OPENING: NOVEMBER 18, 2023, 5-8 PM
GNYP GALLERY ANTWERP

Wojciech Fangor and his contemporaries, 1960 - 1995

NOVEMBER 18, 2023 - FEBRUARY 14, 2024

During his life as artist, Wojciech Fangor (1922 - 2015) was part of significant international movements that had profoundly changed the course of Western art

history. The depth of Fangor's art, the openness of his artistic approach and his search for the New resulted in a significant oeuvre that has kept its relevancy till today. This exhibition is an attempt to show Fangor in relation to his peer artists fascinated by the same issues at the same moment in time, and to understand his work from a broader perspective of the changing socio-cultural context. Four selected areas defined by Fangor's specific works structure this exhibition: Abstraction, Interfacial Spaces, Television Paintings and Chair series. Needless to say, these four selected blocks highlight only a part of artist's rich and ever-changing oeuvre.

ABSTRACTION: Fangor's interest in space that manifested itself already in the revolutionary environment *Study in Space* in 1958 paved the way to a major body of work that was often categorized as optical abstraction. Op-Art, as this it is known now, was an artistic endeavor to understand working of vision, perception, and visual experience. Fangor had never considered himself an op-artist really, although he participated in the movement's defining exhibition "The Responsive Eye" at MOMA in New York in 1965 and was working in this territory for many years.

How to reinvent the medium painting was a subject of artistic investigations in Europe during the 1960, when Fangor was moving between West-Germany, UK and France. Günther Uecker, the leading figure of the German Zero Movement used nails as 'paint' for his monochrome paintings, extending the picture's surface into the space with play of light and shadow. Jan Hendrikse, one of the founders of the Dutch Null Group worked with all sorts of industrial waste as painting material, stressing the idea of the new begin and trying to eliminate the personal signature of the artist in the work. Fangor found these experiments thought-provoking but stayed focused on his own study of space glued to painting's surface engaging the viewer.

His ideas were more connected to the work of the German-American Josef Albers whom he met after his arrival in USA in 1966. Applying a matrix of geometrical abstraction, Albers studied the behavior of colors and hues that culminated in his acclaimed *Homage to the Square* series (1950-1976). He met Fangor and admired him for adding to the pictorial surface the dimension of space extending beyond the canvas.

Geometrical abstraction was also of interest for Al Loving, the first African-American artist that got a solo exhibition at Whitney Museum in 1969. His hard-edge abstractions

as opposed to Fangor's soft contoured shapes shows again the variety of approached within the medium of abstract painting of that time.

INTERFACES: In 1973 Fangor collaborated with the renowned American ballet company of Martha Graham, who had asked him to design stage sets for her ballet "Mendicants of Evening". The collaboration might have triggered Fangor's interest in investigating the complex psychological and formal relationships between people, where space, again, plays a main role as a connecting and dividing element. In the series *Interfaces* Fangor reintroduced traces of figuration in order to combine "the rational blocks with emotional demons", when focusing on human encounters.

The 1970s were characterized by discovery of the physical human body as artistic medium, which resulted in the proliferation of performance art. The emotional and physical interaction between the bodies in the real physical space was also a subject addressed by the pioneers of the performance art, Ulay and Marina Abramovic in their legendary *Relational Works* in the period between 1976 and 1981.

TELEVISION PAINTINGS: In this unique series that started at the end of the 1970s, Fangor's fascination with the medium television goes hand in hand with his analyzes of its overpowering impact on culture and society at large. The omnipresence of TV, its strong influence on people's but also its aesthetics captivated interest of many artists, who had analyzed simultaneous realities offered by the TV and the possible dangers of electronic communication. Over the years Barkley Hendriks made photographic series of television screens that documented the changing popular visual culture, news, and making of public figures. Andy Warhol is perhaps the most famous artist to be captivated by American consumerism and celebrity cult accelerated by the media and TV. The idea and the object-television were central to the work of Nam June Paik, who in his sculptures conveyed the importance of this medium and its close relation to the human body.

CHAIR: Fangor seems to be intrigued by the chair throughout his whole life. Looking at his studio photos the chair had always taken a prominent place next to his works. Perhaps the chair stands in for the absent artist. In the 1980s and 1990s Fangor painted several portraits of a chair placing himself in a tradition of other artists enthralled by this form, such as Vincent van Gogh and David Hockney. The chair has been an object that offered possibilities to experiment with the pictorial plane and perspectival space, in order to, again, reflect on perception, but also on art history and social conventions.

Fangor's good artist friend Richard Artschwager, also someone who didn't

want to be pinned down to one school, investigated the chair and other objects in their many appearances, as furniture, sculpture, and image all at once. For Sigmar Polke the chair serves as a simple object loaded with social references.



Installation View: Wojciech Fangor and his contemporaries 1960 - 1995 exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023



previous page:

Wojciech Fangor

IS34

1976

oil on canvas, collage

168 x 168 cm

66 1/4 x 66 1/4 in



previous page:

Wojciech Fangor

IS10

1975

oil on canvas

152 x 152 cm

59 3/4 x 59 3/4 in



previous page:

Wojciech Fangor

IS13

1975

oil on canvas, collage (stretchers glued on stretchers)

153 x 153 cm

60 1/4 x 60 1/4 in



previous page:

Wojciech Fangor

IS37

1976

oil on canvas, collage

168 x 168 cm

66 1/4 x 66 1/4 in

Wojciech Fangor

IS

1975

oil stick and marker on paper

42 x 32 cm - 72 x 52.5 cm (framed)

16 1/2 x 12 2/3 in - 28 1/3 x 20 2/3 in (framed)





Installation View: Wojciech Fangor and his contemporaries 1960 - 1995 exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023



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Martha Graham
Mendicants of Evening
1973

[video](#)



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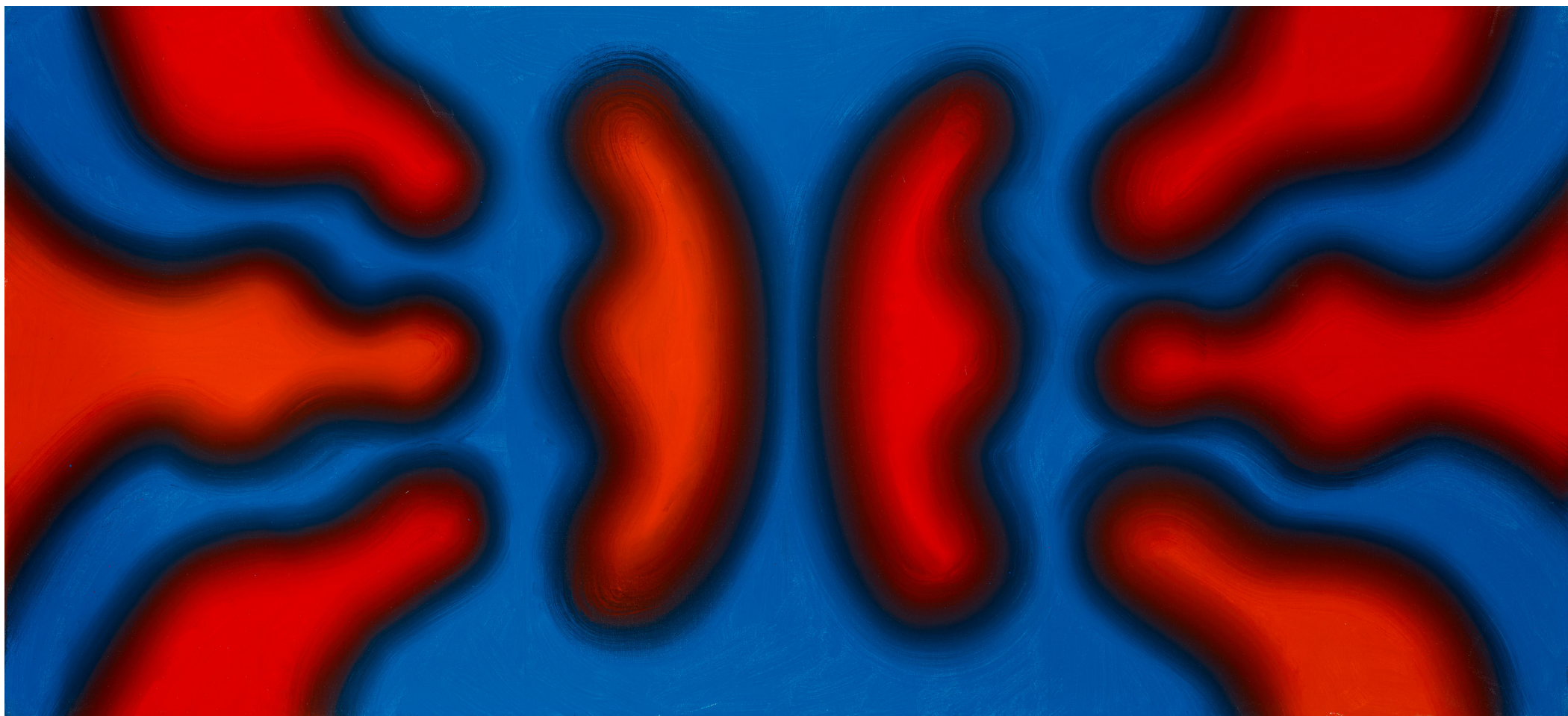
**Ulay Abramovic and Marina Abramovic
AAA-AAA (Liège)**

1987

[video](#)



Installation View: Wojciech Fangor and his contemporaries 1960 - 1995 exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023

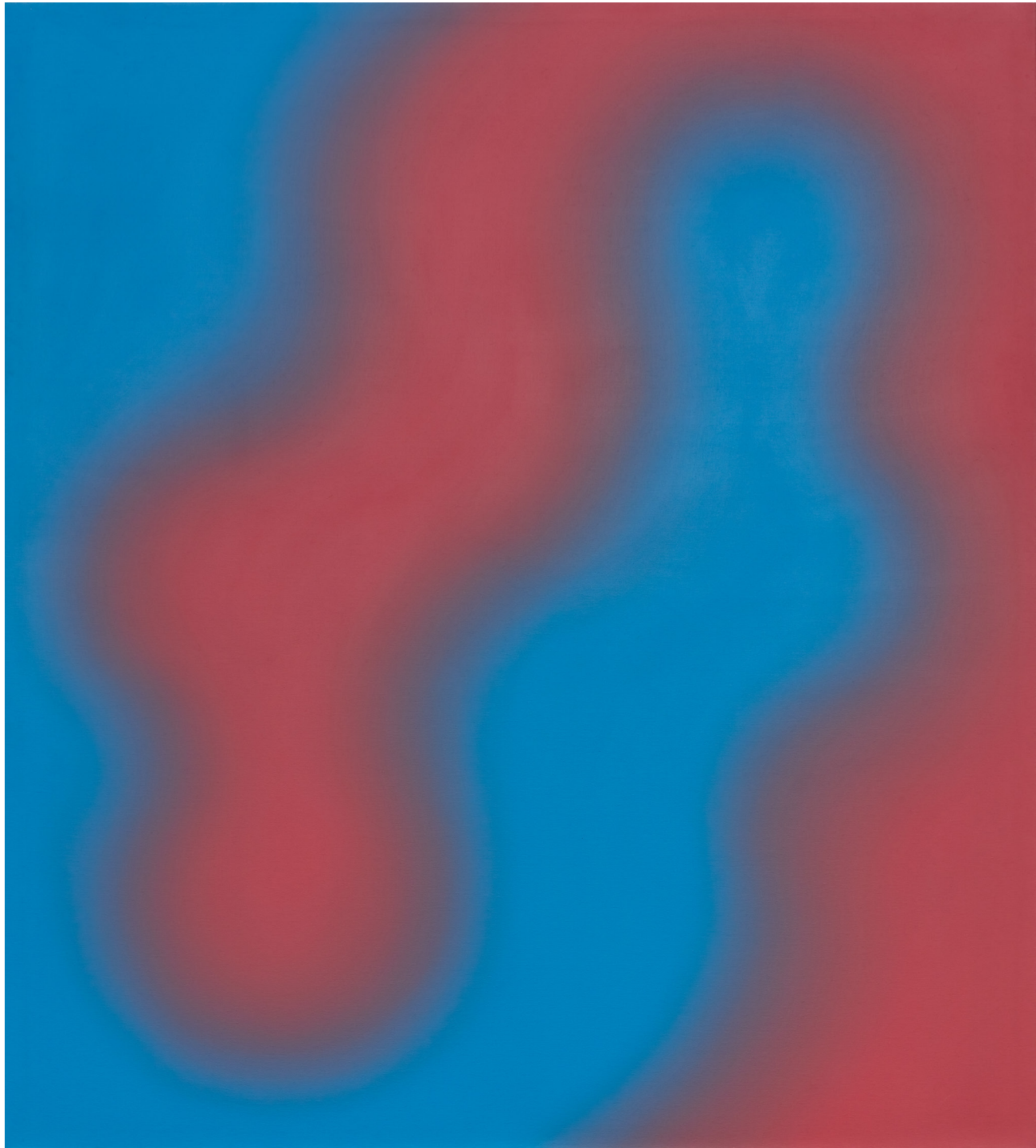


previous page:

Wojciech Fangor
Untitled
1970

oil on canvas

45.5 x 100 cm
18 x 39 1/3 in



previous page:

Wojciech Fangor

MA3

1973

oil on canvas

202 x 182 cm

79 1/2 x 71 2/3 in



previous page:

Wojciech Fangor

M24

1970

oil on canvas

173 x 203 cm

68 x 80 in



Wojciech Fangor

SU19

1972

oil on canvas

210 x 140 cm

82 2/3 x 55 in



previous page:

Wojciech Fangor

SU22B

1973

oil on canvas

153 x 153 cm

60 1/4 x 60 1/4 in

Wojciech Fangor

SM17

1975

oil on canvas

213 x 142 cm

83 3/4 x 56 in





previous page:

Wojciech Fangor

E41

1966

oil on canvas

72 x 72 cm

28 1/3 x 28 1/3 in



previous page:

Wojciech Fangor

SU3

1972

oil on canvas

152 x 152 cm

59 3/4 x 59 3/4 in



previous page:

Wojciech Fangor

SU33B

1973

oil on canvas

51 x 69 cm

20 x 27 1/4 in



previous page:

Wojciech Fangor

SM35

1973

oil on canvas

101 x 101 cm

39 3/4 x 39 3/4 in



previous page:

Wojciech Fangor

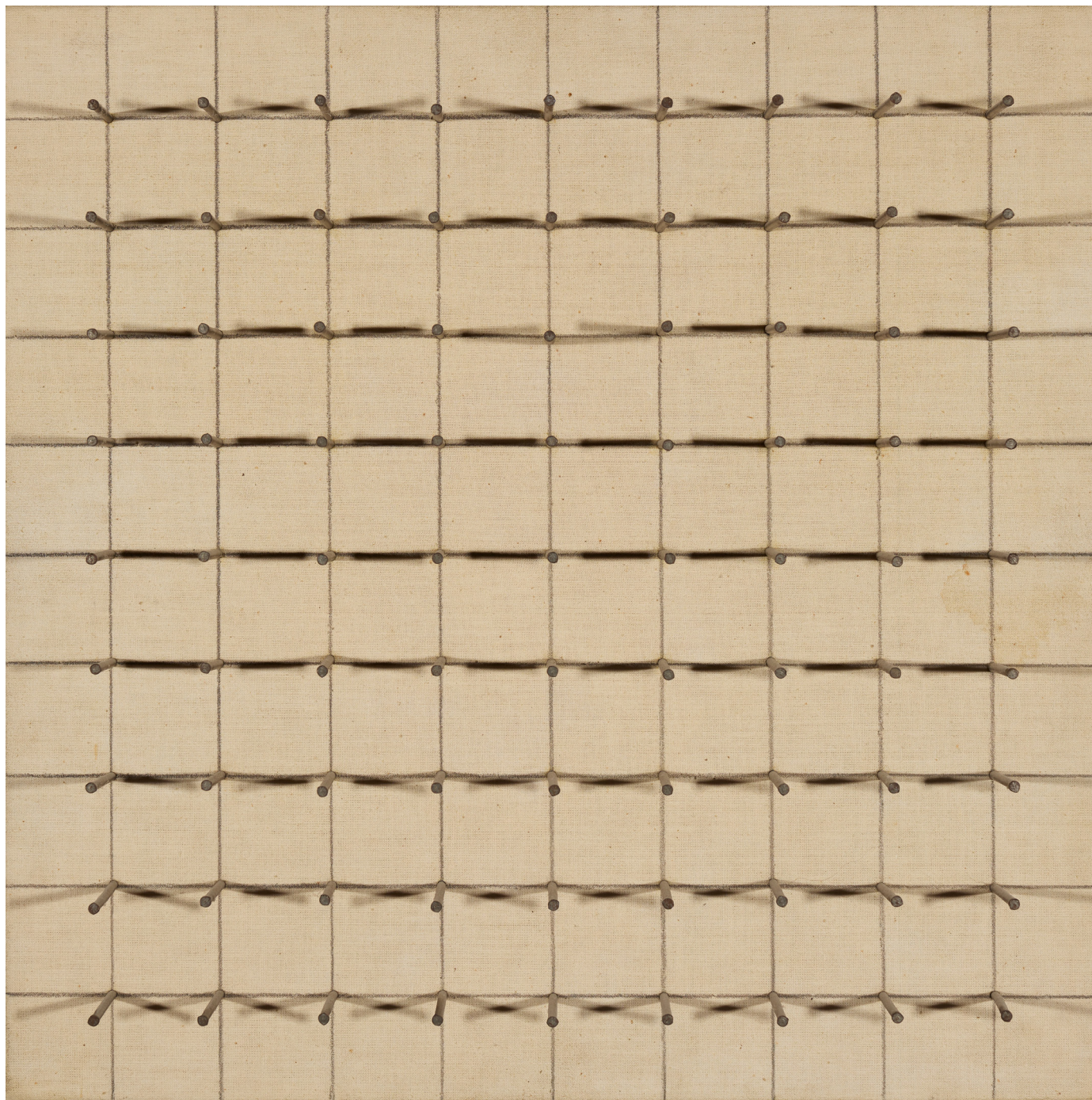
M61

1968

oil on canvas

61.5 x 61.5 cm

24 1/4 x 24 1/4 in

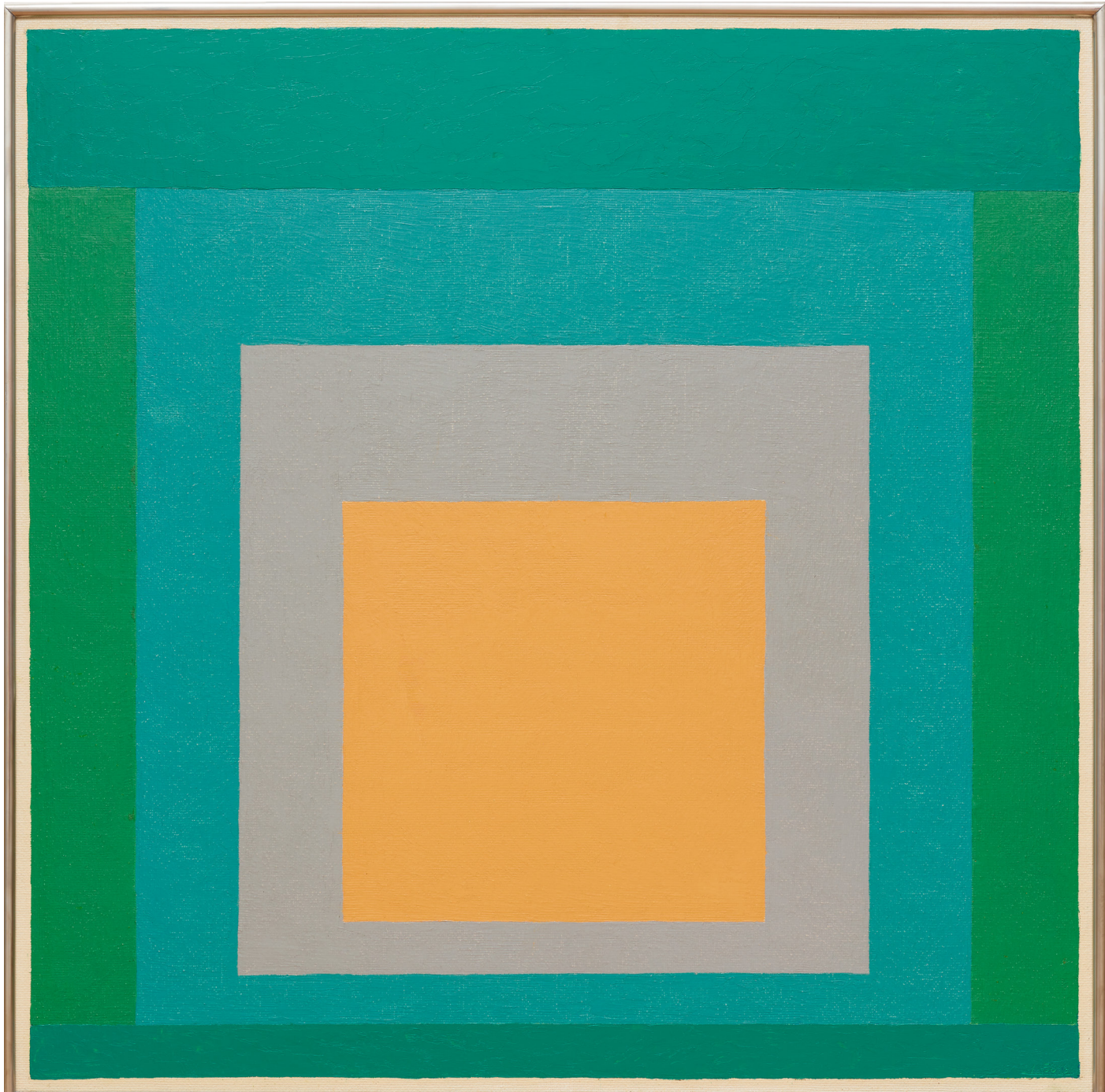


previous page:

Günther Uecker
Aggressive Reihung
1965 - 1975

nails and graphite, on canvas, mounted on wood

40 x 40 cm
15 3/4 x 15 3/4 in



previous page:

Josef Albers
Study for homage to the Square
“Friendly Sky“
1958 - 1961

oil on masonite

76.20 x 76.20 cm
30 x 30 in



Al Loving

Untitled

c. 1969 - 1970

acrylic on canvas

121 x 91 cm

47 2/3 x 35 3/4 in

Jan Henderikse

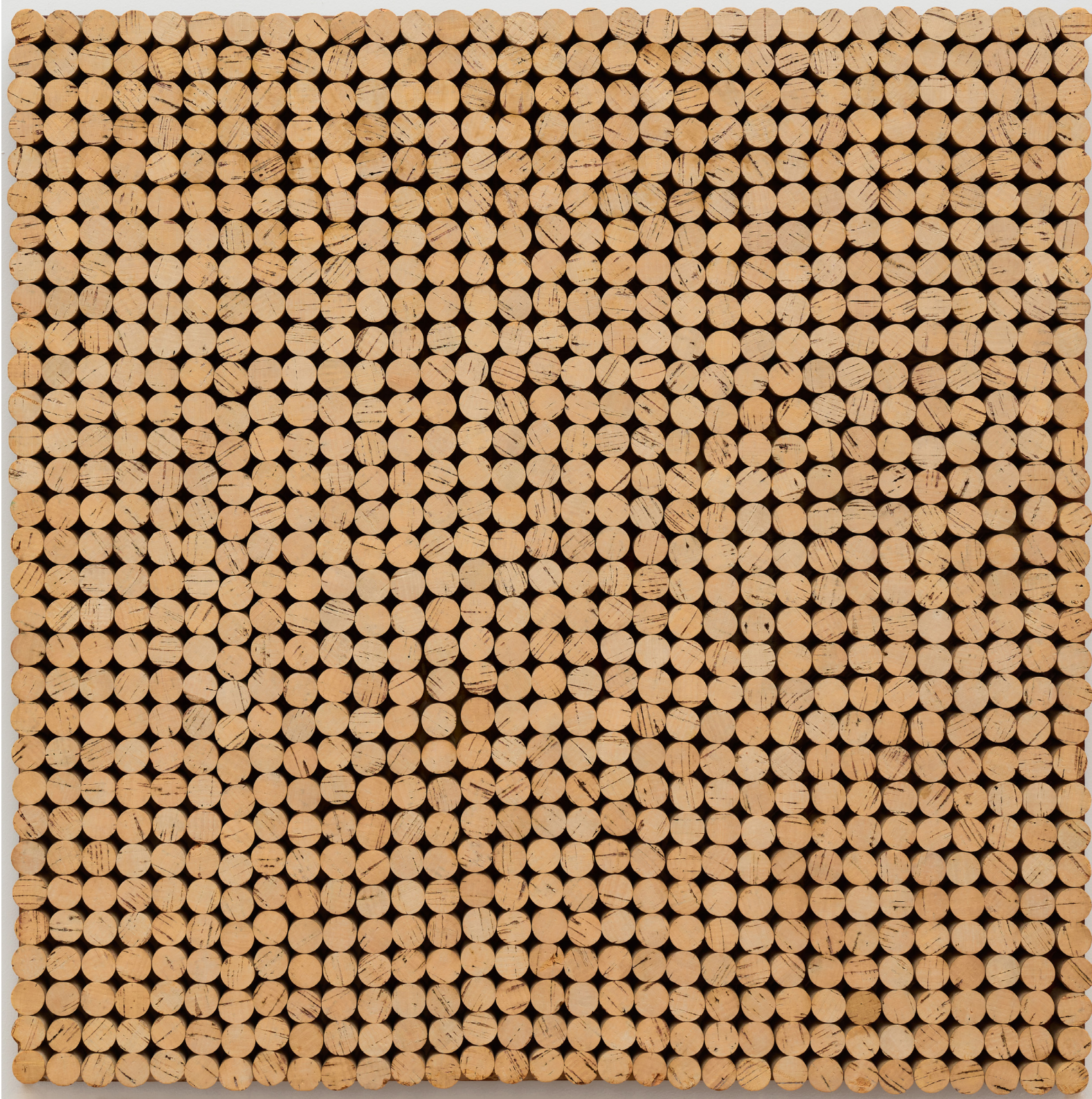
Untitled

1969

cork on panel

76 x 76 cm

30 x 30 in



Installation View: Wojciech Fangor and his contemporaries 1960 - 1995 exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023





previous page:

Wojciech Fangor

The Show

1984

oil on canvas

97 x 123 cm - 131 x 157 cm (framed)

38 1/4 x 48 1/2 in - 51 1/2 x 61 3/4 (framed)

Wojciech Fangor

Panocek

1977

oil on canvas

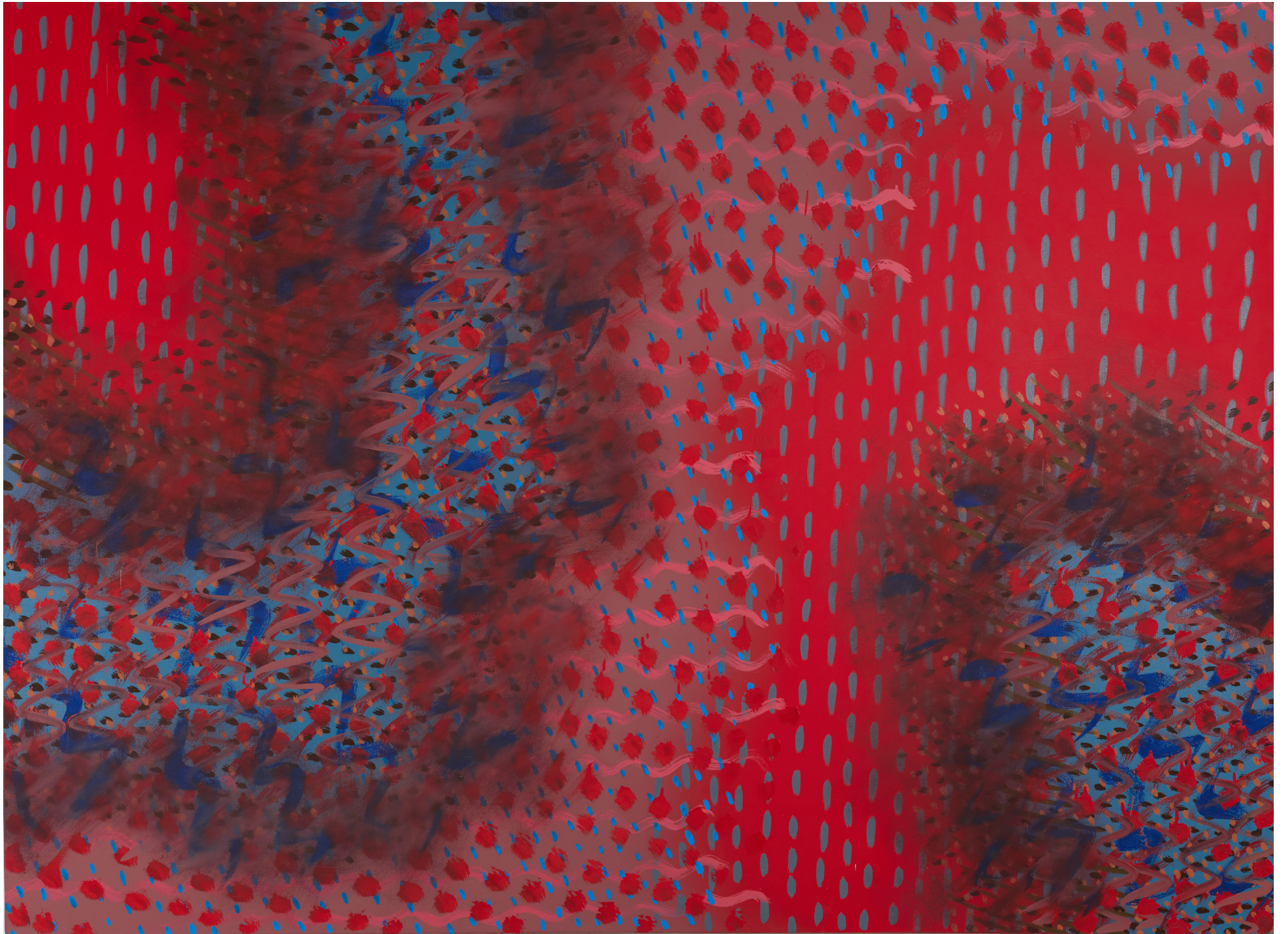
203 x 178 cm

80 x 70 in





Installation View: Wojciech Fangor and his contemporaries 1960 - 1995 exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023



previous page:

Wojciech Fangor

SU3

1975

oil on canvas, collage

129.5 x 175.5 cm

51 x 69 in

Wojciech Fangor

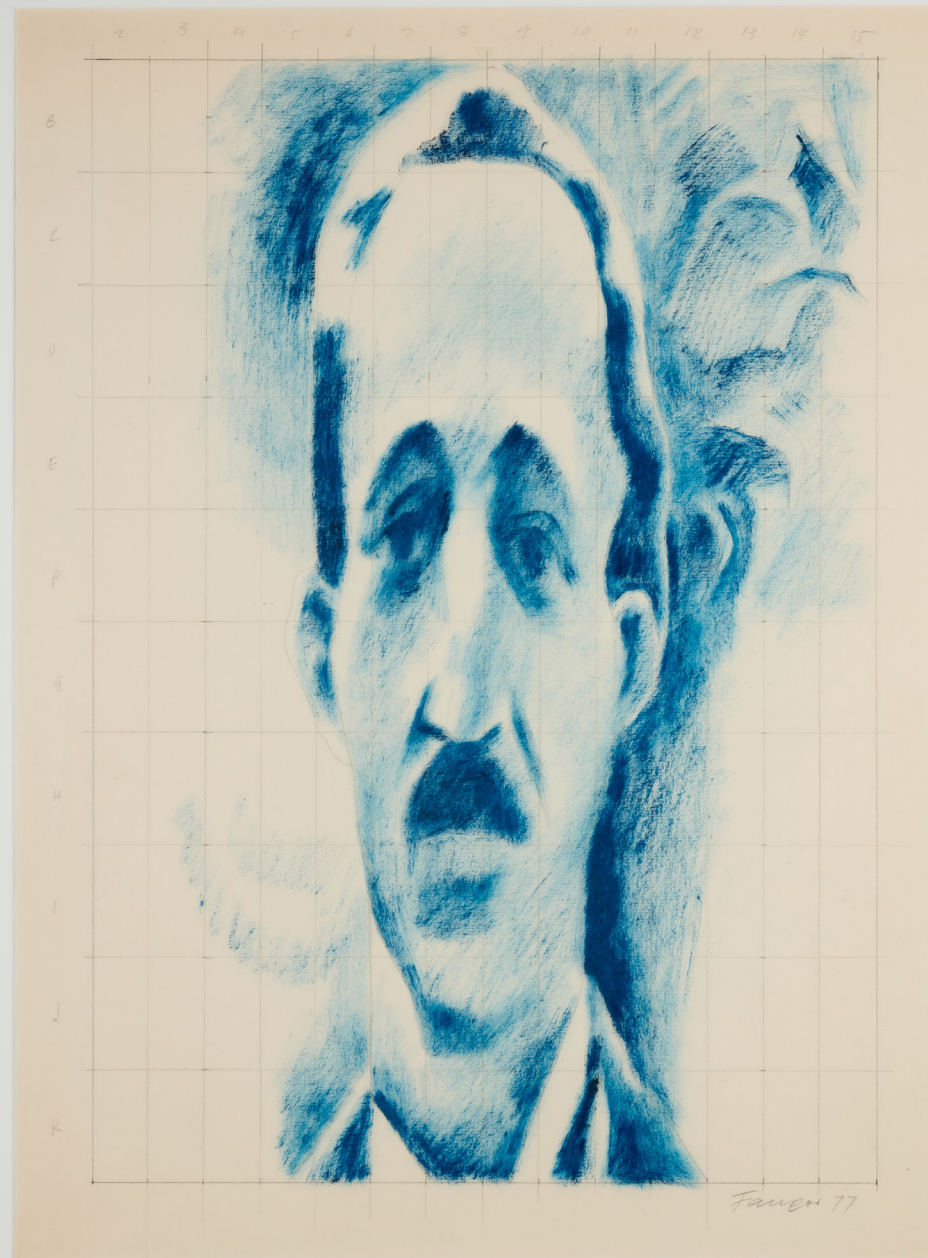
Panocek

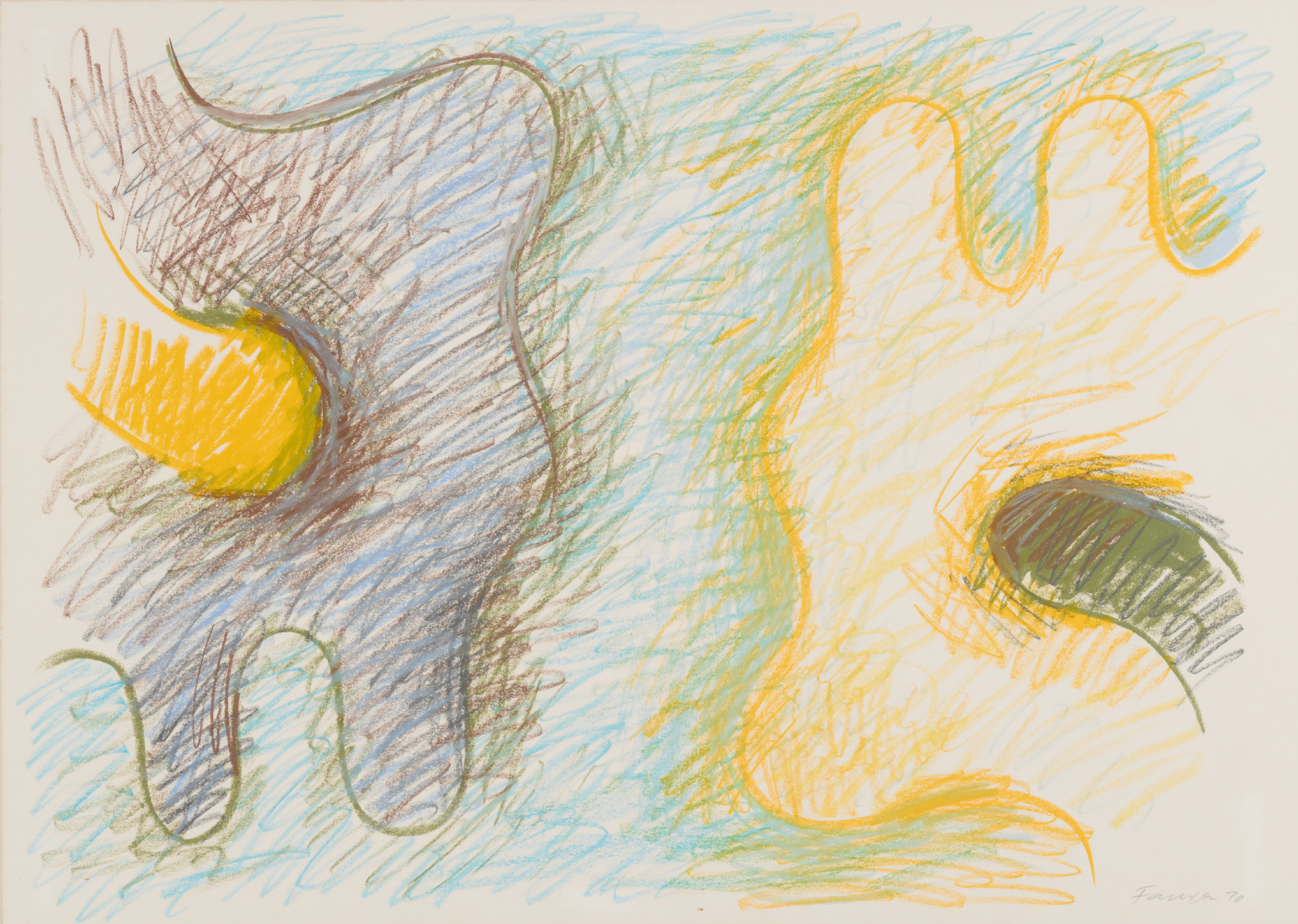
1977

oil stick and marker on paper

56 x 42 cm - 71.5 x 57 cm (framed)

22 x 16 1/2 in - 28 1/4 x 22 1/2 in (framed)





Fauva 70

previous page:

Wojciech Fangor
3370 Composition
Amebas
1970

oil stick and marker on paper

50 x 70 cm - 61.5 x 82 cm (framed)
19 2/3 x 27 1/2 in - 24 1/4 x 32 1/2 in (framed)



FANCY 73

previous page:

Wojciech Fangor

18373B

Abstract Composition

1974

oil stick and marker on paper

50 x 70 cm - 61.5 x 82 cm (framed)

19 2/3 x 27 1/2 in - 24 1/4 x 32 1/2 in (framed)



previous page:

Andy Warhol
Nathalie Sparber
1984

acrylic and silkscreen ink on canvas

102 x 102 cm
40 1/4 x 40 1/4 in



previous page:

Nam June Paik

Untitled

1984

TV case, plastic plants and light bulb

50.50 x 76.50 x 70 cm

20 x 30 x 27 1/2 in



Installation View: Wojciech Fangor and his contemporaries 1960 - 1995 exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023



previous page:

Barkley L. Hendricks
Untitled (New london, CT)
1994

archival inkjet print

40.64 x 60.96 cm
16 x 24 in

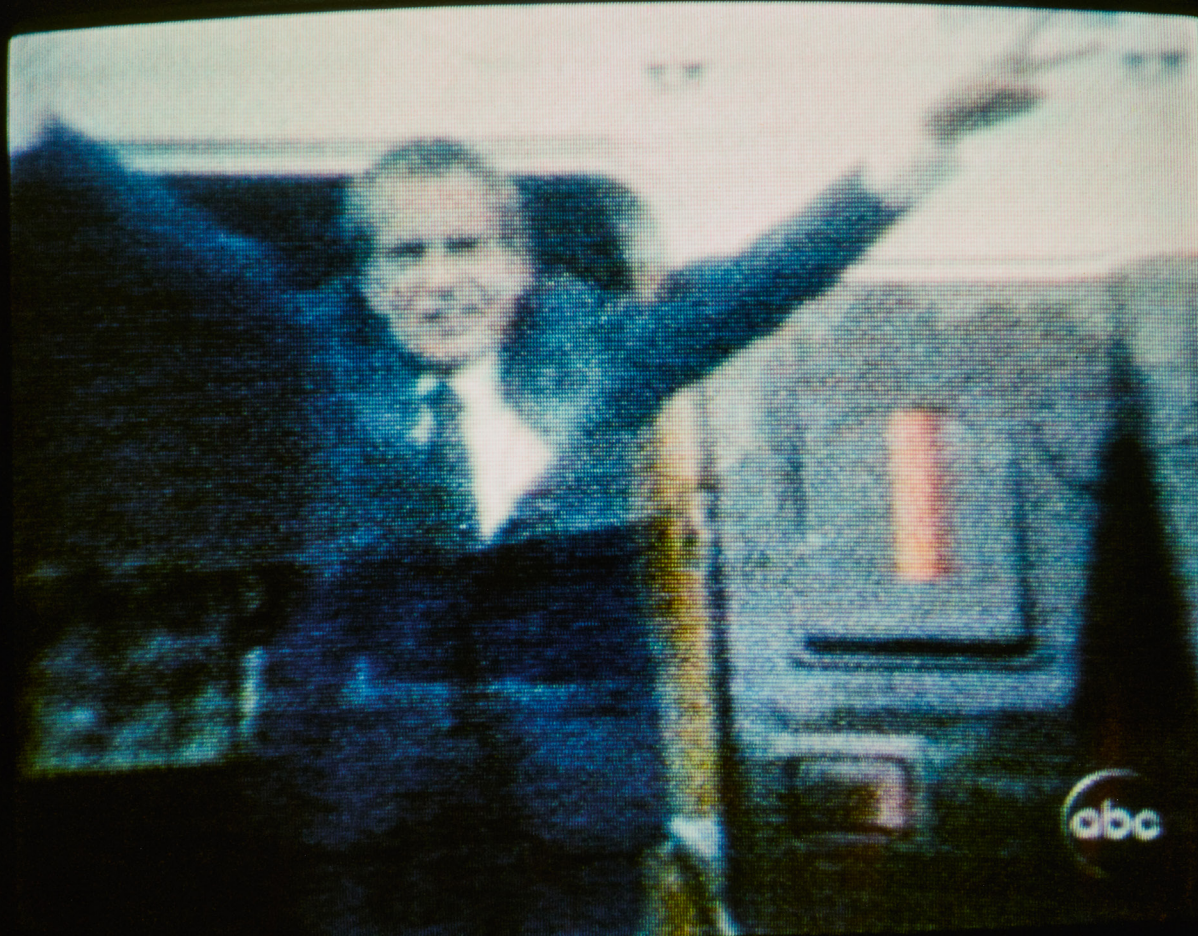


previous page:

Barkley L. Hendricks
Untitled (New london, CT)
1992

archival inkjet print

40.64 x 60.96 cm
16 x 24 in



previous page:

Barkley L. Hendricks
Untitled (New london, CT)
1994

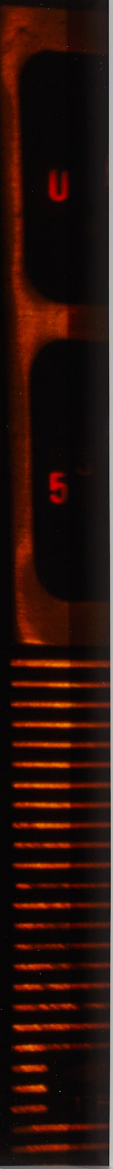
archival inkjet print

40.64 x 60.96 cm
16 x 24 in



I enjoy tremendously every single
moment of my life...

| SONY |



previous page:

Barkley L. Hendricks
Untitled (New london, CT)
1989

archival inkjet print

40.64 x 60.96 cm
16 x 24 in



previous page:

Barkley L. Hendricks
Untitled (New london, CT)
1980

silver gelatin LE print

16 x 24 in
40.64 x 60.96 cm



Installation View: Wojciech Fangor and his contemporaries 1960 - 1995 exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023

Wojciech Fangor
Czerwone krzesło
1993

oil on canvas

137 x 96 cm - 165 x 123 cm (framed)

54 x 37 3/4 in - 55 x 48 1/2 in (framed)





Wojciech Fangor
Krzesło z fontanną
1994

oil on canvas

137 x 91.5 cm - 164 x 108 cm (framed)
54 x 36 in - 64 1/2 x 42 1/2 in (framed)

Wojciech Fangor

Stółek

1993

oil on canvas

137.5 x 102 cm - 164 x 129 cm (framed)

54 1/4 x 40 3/4 in - 65 x 51 in (framed)





previous page:

Richard Artschwagger

Brush Blp

1988

wood and brush bristles

30 x 40 x 30 cm

11 3/4 x 15 3/4 x 11 3/4 in

Sigmar Polke

Patentamt

1982

mixed media on paper

100 x 70 cm - 123 x 93 cm (framed)

39 1/3 x 27 1/2 in - 48 1/2 x 36 1/2 (framed)



Installation View: Wojciech Fangor and his contemporaries 1960 - 1995 exhibition at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2023



Wojciech Fangor

Wojciech Fangor was born in 1922 in Warsaw. His artistic education was disrupted by the Second World War, which later on pushed him into practicing socialist realism as a painter. Between 1953 and 1961 he was employed as assistant professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. At the same time, he was also active as a designer of posters using collages, texts, drawings and photography, and became one of the founders of the Polish School of Posters. Although successful in these fields, Fangor decided to shift his attention to spatial experiments. In 1958 he constructed the first “environment” ever made, A Study of Space. These experiments gradually resulted in his abstract illusionist paintings with diffused edges of color and shape. After short stays in Vienna, Paris, Bath, London and Berlin, Fangor moved to the US in 1966, where he participated in important exhibitions such as ‘The Responsive Eye’ at MoMA in 1965, and had a solo exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum in 1970. After his retirement as professor of art at the Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey, he returned to Poland in 1999. He continued to make art and in 2014 designed murals for the station walls of the Warsaw Underground. He died in 2015 near Warsaw.

Wojciech Fangor

Solo Exhibitions

2023

Wojciech Fangor and his contemporaries 1960 - 1995, GNYP Gallery, Antwerp (Belgium)

2022

WYSTAWA / FANGOR, Centrum Sztuki Współczesnej Znaki w Toruniu, Torun (Poland)

Wojciech Fangor: Television Paintings 1977-1984, GNYP Gallery, Berlin (Germany)

2017

Wojciech Fangor: A Portrait of the Artist, GNYP Gallery, Berlin (Germany)

2015

Color Light Space, Simon de Pury, London (UK)

Wojciech Fangor: Recollection of the Present, National Museum, Wrocław (Poland)

2003

Centre for Contemporary Art, Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw (Poland)

1994

The Museum of Art, Radom (Poland)

1990

Retrospective Exhibition - 50 years of painting, Zachęta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw (Poland)

1975

Springer Gallery, Berlin (Germany)

1970

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, New York (USA)

1963

Hokin Gallery, Chicago, Illinois (USA)

1962

Institute of Contemporary Art, Washington DC (USA)

1959

Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (Netherlands)

1959

'A Study of Space', The New Culture Salon, Warsaw (Poland)

Group Exhibitions

1994

The National Museum, Warsaw (Poland)

1974

Aldrich Museum of Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut (USA)

1968

Venice Biennale of Art, Venice (Italy)

1967

Pittsburgh International, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (USA)

1965

The Responsive Eye, Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York (USA)

1964

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, New York (USA)

1964

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, New York (USA)

1961

15 Polish Painters, Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York (USA)

1959

Polish Painting Now, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (Netherlands)

CONTACT & INQUIRIES

GNYP Gallery
Jan Van Rijswijcklaan 112
2018 Antwerp

+32 (0)3 297 22 88
officeantwerp@gnypgallery.com
www.gnypgallery.com