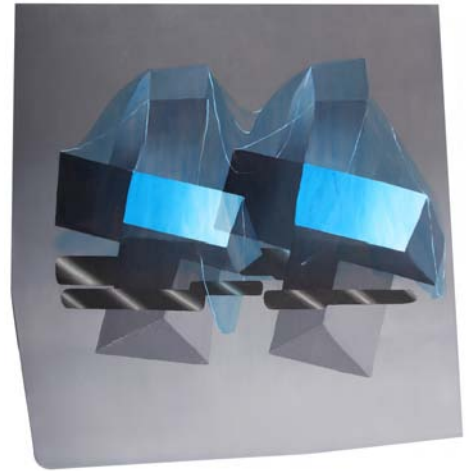


Leslie Smith III

As I Remembered

February 21 – March 21, 2014

opening reception FRIDAY, February 21, 6-9pm



beta pictoris gallery is honored to present *As I Remembered*, Smith's first solo exhibition with the gallery. An abstract painter, Smith explores both the complexity of the non-representational and the expansiveness created by working on non-traditional supports. Not content with being confined by the linearity of the rectangle or the square, Smith explodes the confines of geometry with custom designed shaped canvas supports that would seem accidental were they not so absolutely intentional, their soft edges falling away, drifting, challenging viewers' expectations and creating tensions that are almost unimaginable. Smith uses this tactic in works of varying scales. *Night Twitch* and *Night Baptism* seem like an inverted mirrored pair, each set in tension with the other, their surfaces arrayed with the gestures of Smith's markmaking, their curved edges rolling away from and under the other. Although black at first glance, they are in fact studies in tone and texture, filled with chiaroscuro, subtle plays of both stillness and motion.



Smith's brand new *Night Mass* (shown on left), an intimate 27 by 27 inch work, continues this exploration, its surface filled with subtle geometric shapes that emerge at the top and the hint of a horizon line lower. This oscillation between abstraction and the use of concrete forms creates and even more discernable tension within each work.

Smith's understandings of pictorial space in abstraction come roaring forward in another new work, *Night at the Orchestra*, which takes the depths of *Night Mass* and adds a spatial geometry, pushing forward and into the viewers' space. *Copy Cat* (shown on top), a new 48 x 48 inch painting, literally feels as if it could leap off the wall. Its forms seem as if they could reflect, veil and reveal at precisely the same moment as Smith pushes viewers away, holds them close and pulls them through in the same moment. Smith understands the complexities of abstraction and he uses both the surfaces and the structures of his works to create tensions that are palpable. His works are filled with suggestions of the familiar. They are both wondrous and comforting. They are, in his words, *As I Remembered*.

beta pictoris gallery / Maus Contemporary is a contemporary art gallery and space dedicated to supporting creativity with a focus on experimental and issue driven works. Through representing emerging, established, and internationally recognized artists, the gallery is committed to bringing a global perspective to contemporary issues and practices across the visual arts. The program consists of exhibitions, print publications, and media outreach.

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