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Abstract Revival



Aesthetica Magazine

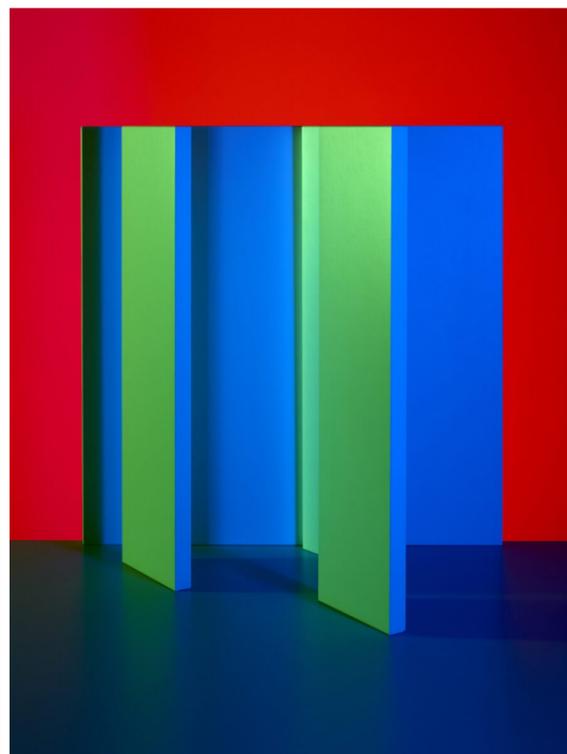
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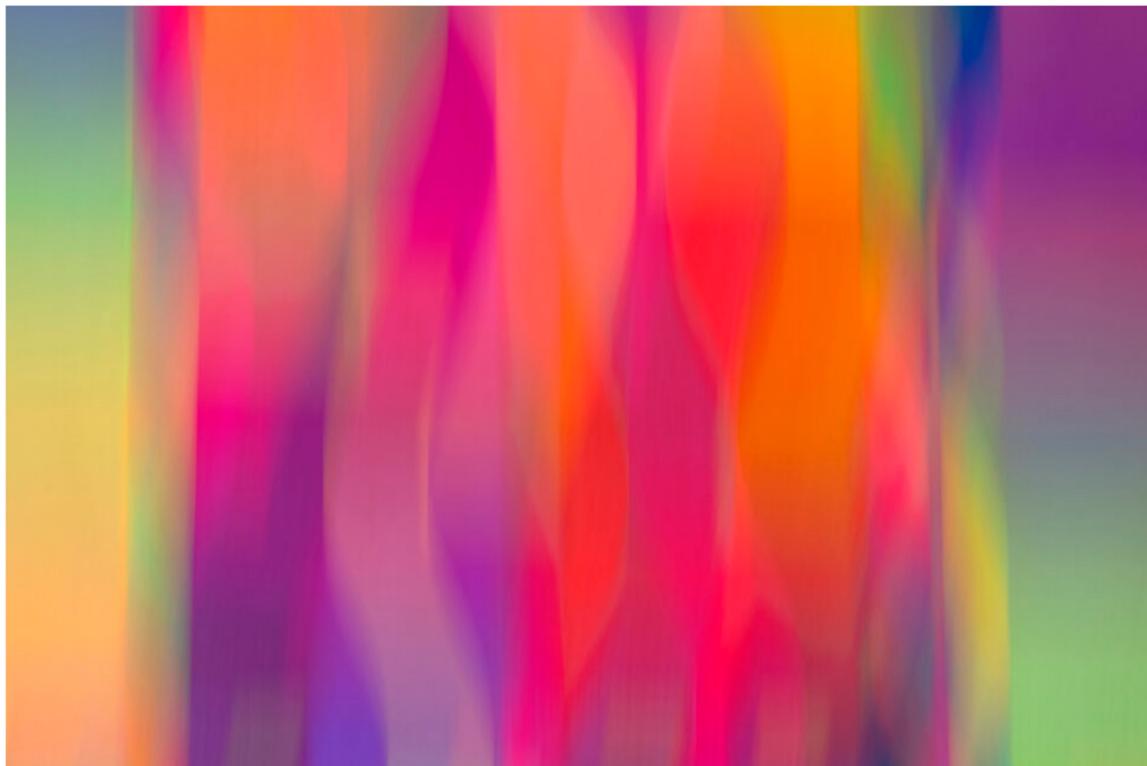
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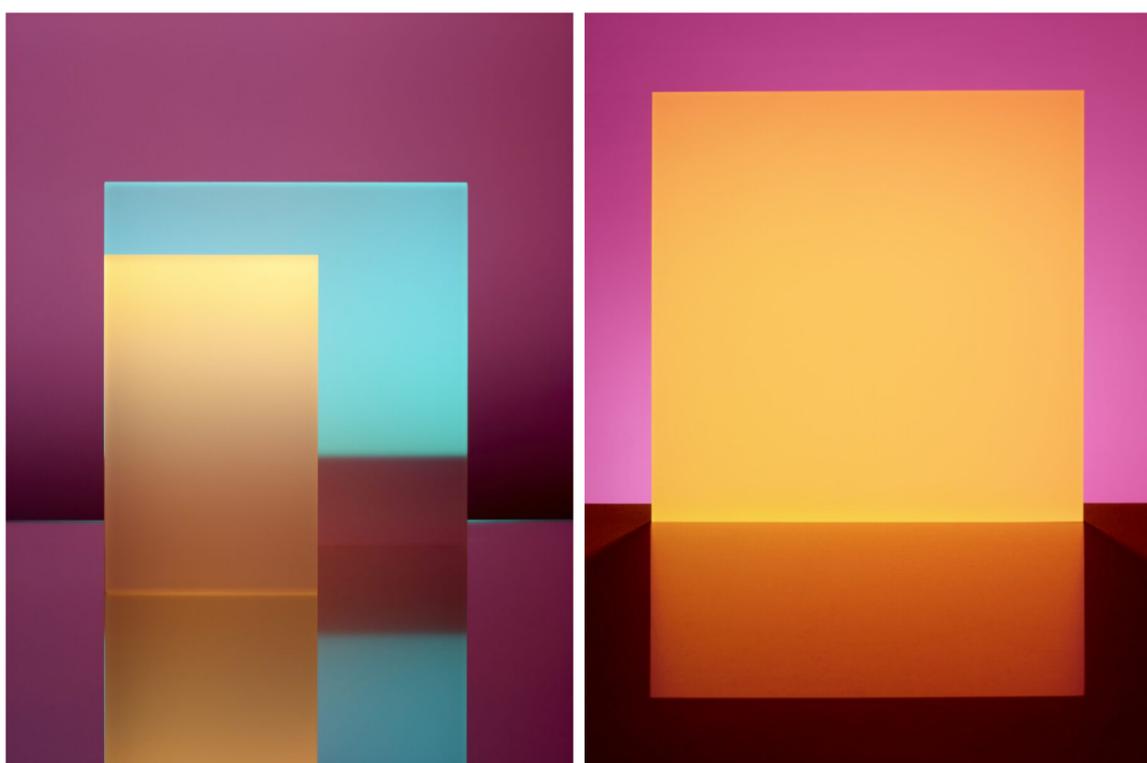
“Border” is a word that comes with several possible associations, depending on context. In geopolitics, it refers to the boundaries dividing one country from another. In design, meanwhile, it might refer to a decorative frame or edging. “The theme of borders is strongly linked to the current events of our era,” writes Yves Ullens (b. 1960), a Brussels-based abstract image-maker captivated by light and colour. He is referring to a moment in time “marked by the fragmentation of the world through territorial disputes, strengthening or closing borders and significant migration.” What unites these definitions is the idea of limitation: a start and end between two different things. This is the driving force behind Ullens’ *The Borders*, a group show – and growing movement – that brings together artists working between photography and painting. It follows in the experimental tradition of 20th century Bauhaus pioneers like László Moholy-Nagy and his cameraless photograms. The exhibition is now open at MOB Art Studio in Luxembourg.



“The goal is to question and test the limits of abstract photography with other forms of art: play with these limits, cross them, transgress them, experiment with them, make a link with painting and sculpture,” Ullens continues. Amongst those featured is Rotterdam-based Sebastiaan Knot (b. 1970), whose illusory geometric works are created without any digital manipulation. Crisply folded sheets of card pop out from red and pink walls – casting sharp lines of light and shadow. All the colour you see here is light; every object in Knot’s compositions is, in fact, white and grey. The artist explains the process: “A composition of simple shapes is placed in the studio, surrounded by studio lamps with different colour filters. When shooting, the composition is illuminated simultaneously. This creates a unique shot with scattered light, shadows and mixed colours. The use of a lens adds optical illusion and causes us to question what we see.”



Other featured artists include Finnish creative Niko Luoma, who creates analogue adaptations of famous paintings like Van Gogh’s *Chair* (1888). Shapes collide, overlap and merge. Elsewhere are contributions by Richard Caldicott, Luuk De Haan, Liz Nielsen and Hanno Otten. Caldicott transforms tupperware and kitchen implements into Colour Field compositions reminiscent of Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman and Helen Frankenthaler. Elsewhere, Nielsen harnesses light with increasingly avant-garde results. Each artist demonstrates their own approach to the challenge of abstraction: working with objects, photographic chemicals and palettes in distinct – yet connected – ways. What’s perhaps most striking here is the absence of digitisation. In a world where colours and filters are only a click or tap away, *The Borders* shows us what can be achieved by stripping photography back to the core elements of light, space and timing.



Until 17 June | mob-artstudio.lu

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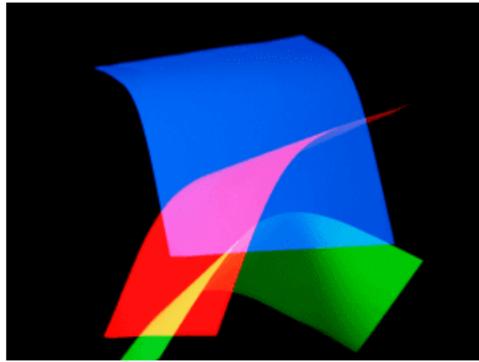
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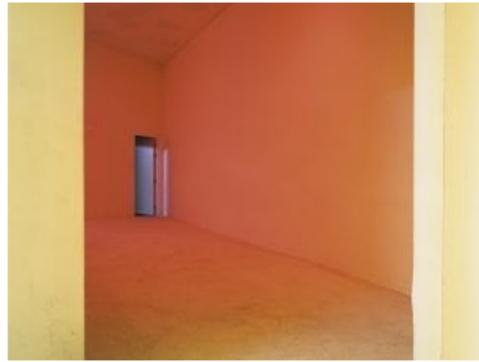
Spatial Experiments

The renowned Dutch fair returns, providing a space for photographers that are testing uneven ground through bold, abstracted compositions.



Unrecognised Methods

The Finnish Museum of Photography celebrates a centenary of controversial and subversive photographic abstraction.



Experimental Forms

Photography and Form foregrounds abstraction and exploits the technical abilities of the medium, investigating the use of geometry and form.

Aesthetica Magazine
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York
YO1 8RA
United Kingdom

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