

# ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

MAY 2014

## INTO THE GROOVES

With richly layered, intricately textured surfaces, Garth Weiser's paintings are studies in the pleasures of process



For Brooklyn-based artist Garth Weiser, painting is an act not of pure spontaneity but of carefully calibrated cannibalization. To realize new works in his ongoing series of abstract canvases, he refers closely to previous ones, often consulting the step-by-step photographs he's taken during a piece's progression to document a given effect. No matter if he duplicates a technique or tweaks it, chance inevitably triumphs in the final image. "Even with this ordered routine, I am still surprised by the results," says Weiser, whose latest paintings are on view at San Francisco's Altman Siegel gallery from April 24 to May 31.

Over the past five years his creations have evolved from graphic compositions reminiscent of Russian Constructivism to thickly impastoed works with subtle striations—what he calls "interference patterns." To achieve them Weiser lays thin strips of tape over a canvas and then coats the surface with oil paint. By ripping the tape away and repeating the action (at different angles, in different hues), he conjures a nuanced interplay of color and texture that recalls everything from wood grain to snakeskin. Recently Weiser has experimented with copper leaf, applying sheets of the material to layers of paint and modeling paste and then making rhythmic slices into these strata with a customized crescent knife. "Anything that catches a shadow, I cut apart," the artist says.

Critics and collectors alike are enraptured. Since 2011 Weiser's offerings at art fairs have regularly sold out, as did his solo show at Manhattan's Casey Kaplan gallery last year. His increasingly sought-after work can be found in the permanent collections of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Dallas Museum of Art, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

To escape the distractions of city life, Weiser is building a new studio in upstate New York, on the same property as the retreat he shares with his wife, artist Francesca DiMattio. Once part of a Christmas-tree farm, their land reminds him of his childhood in Montana. The fresh air and extra space, no doubt, will only propel the evolution of his practice. "Any process that allows for a certain kind of openness, that's a success," he reflects. "When that stops, I will have to start making a new type of painting."

-BRIENNE WALSH