



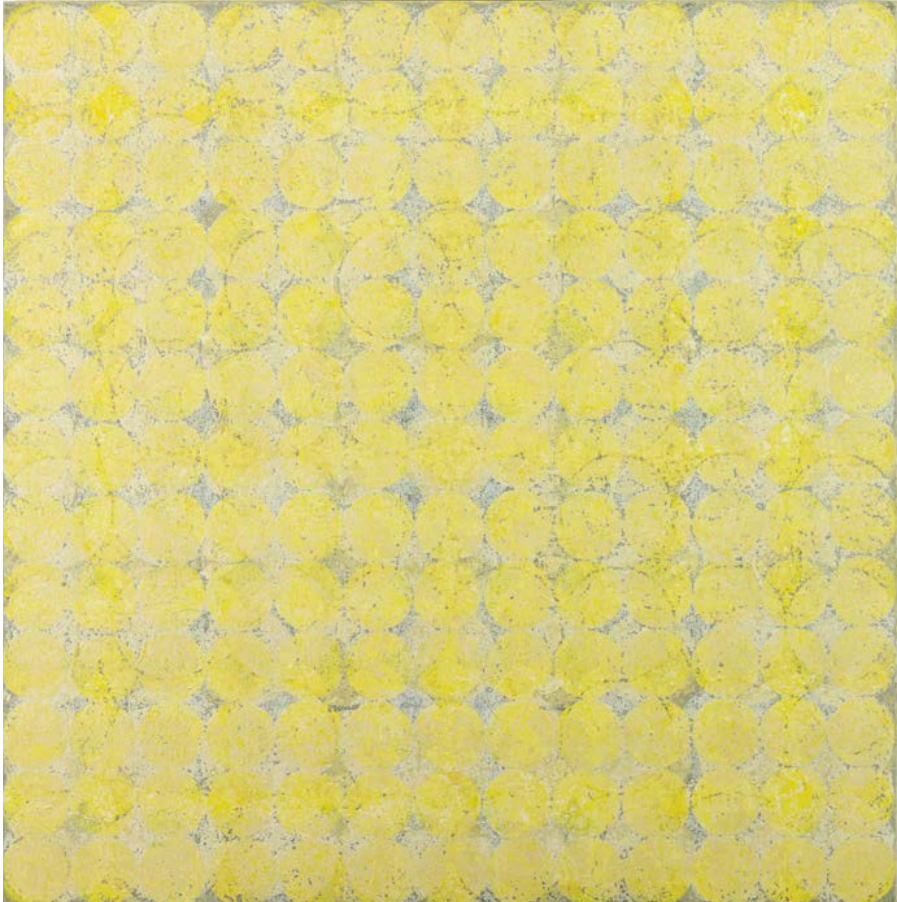
**Makiko Nakamura** Cassini's Journey

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Cassini's Journey

8 – 31 May 2019

John Martin Gallery

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*Moons of Saturn*

oil and metal leaf on canvas  
47¼ x 47¼ inches, 120 x 120 cms

## **Makiko Nakamura** | Cassini's Journey

In April 2017, after 13 years in orbit around Saturn, NASA's Cassini spacecraft began its final journey. The 'Grand Finale' took place over the next five months with the probe making 22 orbits through Saturn's rings which culminated in a dramatic final plunge into the planet's atmosphere; the probe's total incineration ensured that the planet's pristine moons would remain uncontaminated. Embodying the same spirit of courage and sacrifice that resonates through many of humanity's greatest stories, Cassini's journey and eventual destruction fascinated the artist, Makiko Nakamura. Inspired by the images beamed from Cassini as it made its final, solitary dance through the moons and rings of Saturn, Nakamura began to work on a new series of paintings inspired by its mission.

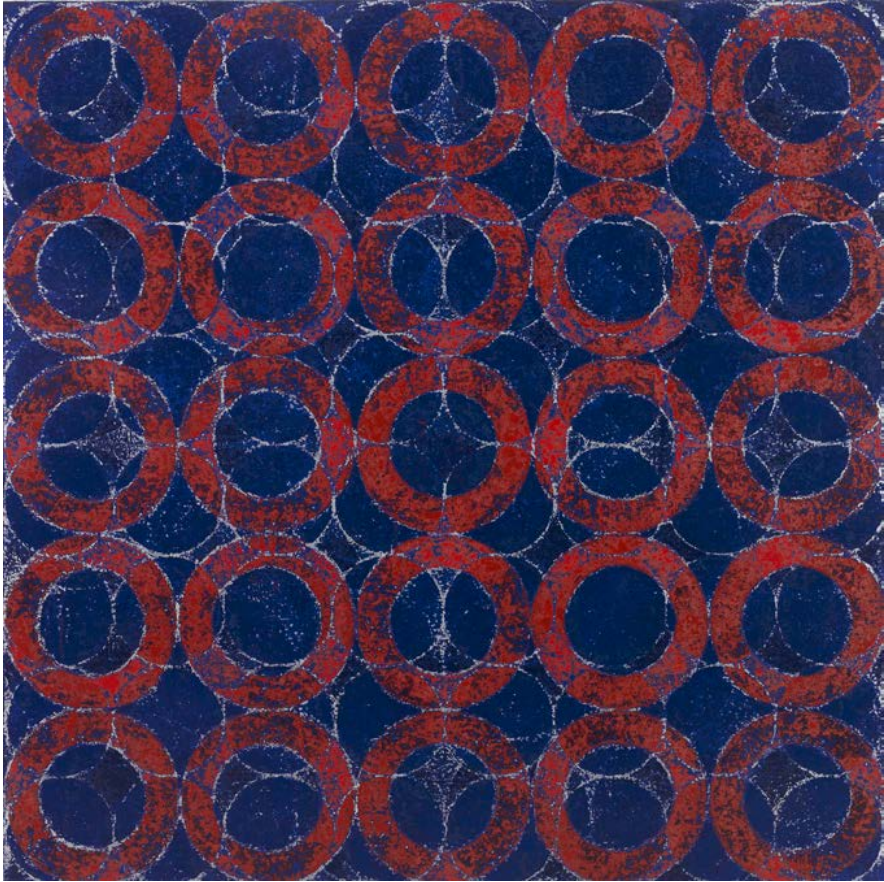
Makiko Nakamura was born in Japan in 1951. She was brought up by her Grandparents and started to paint at a very early age. Her Uncle, who had been killed in the war, was an artist like her Grandfather and the house was filled with his painting materials which she was given to use. During her childhood she learned the techniques of calligraphy and traditional Japanese painting and, as an only child, she described painting becoming her best friend and consuming her daily life.

In 1966 she went to art school in Kyoto to study printmaking, sculpture, film-making and painting. Later she worked as a film editor. In 1995, following the death of her parents she moved to Paris to continue her studies in painting and printmaking before heading to Philadelphia to study at the Graduate School of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania.

In 1999 she moved to Dublin where she lived and worked for fourteen years, taking Irish citizenship in 2011. During this time she developed the process which has directed her painting ever since. Nakamura begins with simple, repetitive geometric shapes or grids which gradually disappear as she builds up each layer of paint; when complete, she then reverses the process, slowly sanding away the paint surface to try and find the starting grid, on the way creating a new surface made up of scratches and traces of colour from every layer of the work. Nakamura talks of this process being a way to see through time, revisiting memories hidden in the work and from their simple, minimalist beginning each painting takes on a more organic and expressive character.

The fourteen years Nakamura spent in Ireland were immensely important in her development as a painter and when she returned to Japan she left behind one of her most important paintings with the Irish Museum of Modern Art and two major commissions for the Gate Theatre. Three years after her return to Kyoto, Nakamura continues to follow the same, highly disciplined routine, painting all day, every day. Having not lived in Japan for over twenty years she knows few people in Kyoto and has no distractions – the central importance of painting in her life that she first discovered as a child has now become a daily devotion.

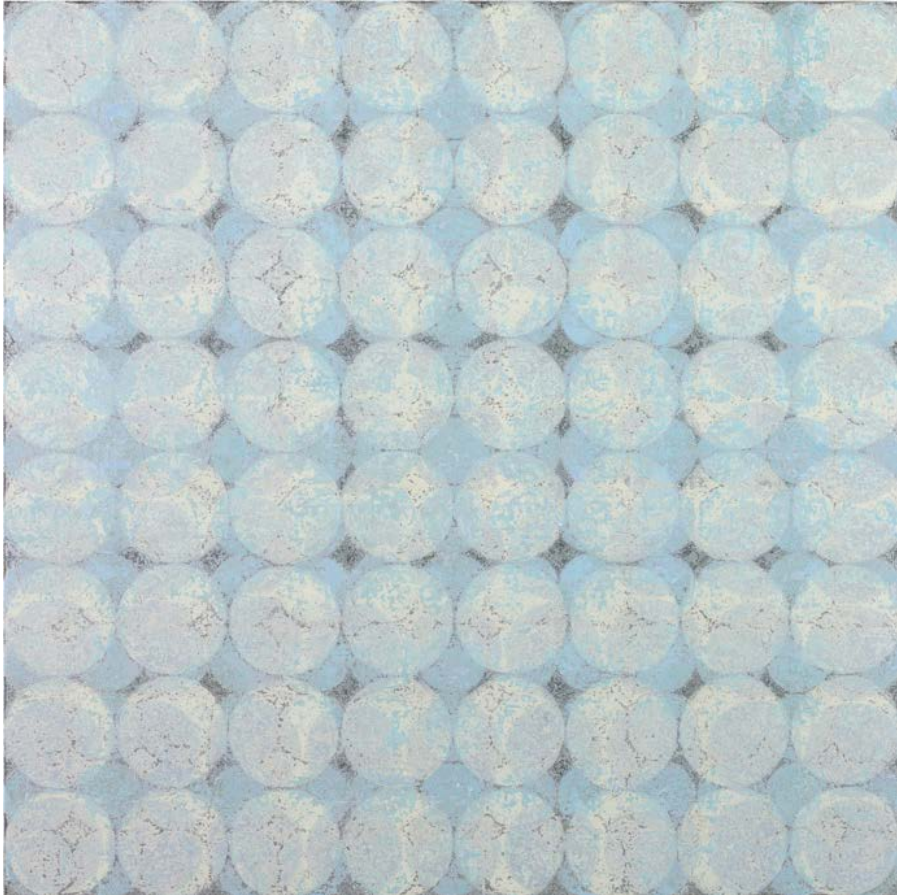
John Martin



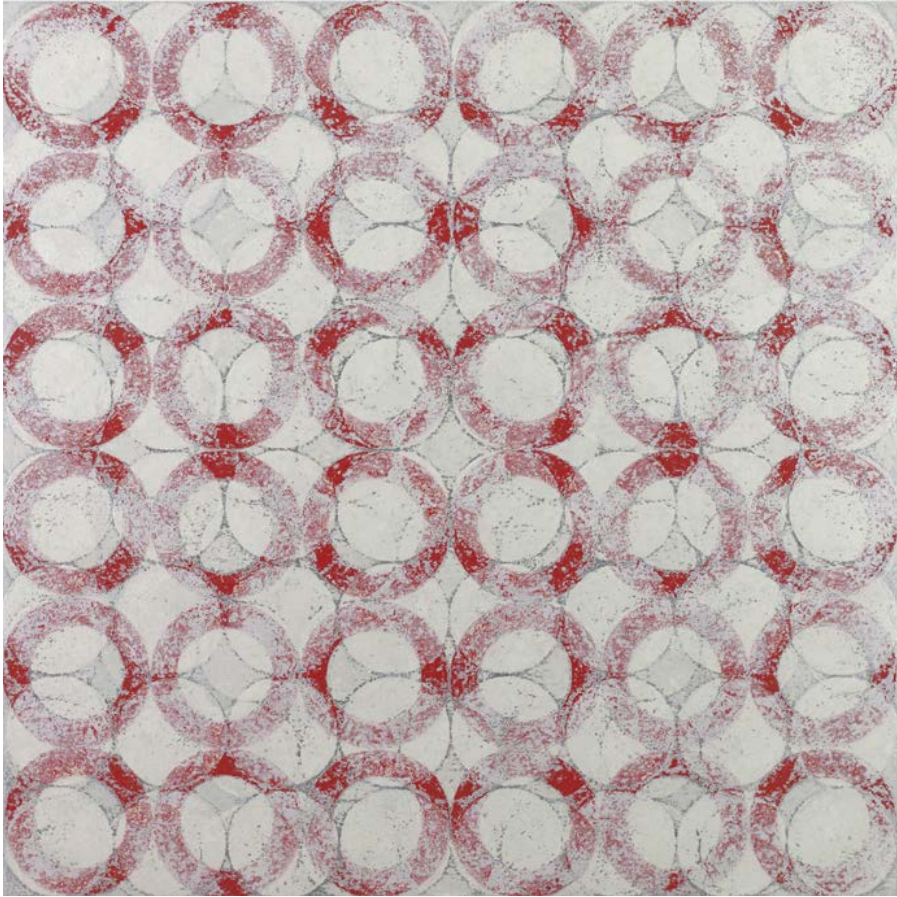
*Starry Carousel*

oil and metal leaf on canvas

47¼ x 47¼ inches, 120 x 120 cms



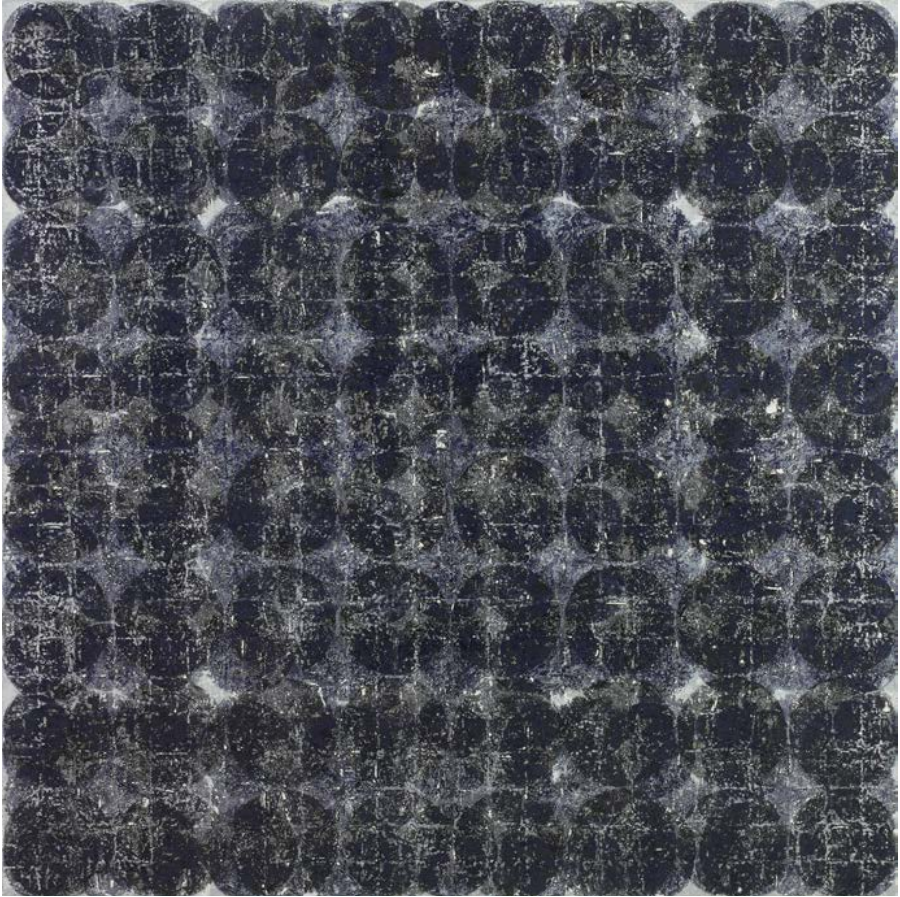
*Song from Titan*  
oil and metal leaf on canvas  
47¼ x 47¼ inches, 120 x 120 cms



*Waltz*

oil and metal leaf on canvas

47¼ x 47¼ inches, 120 x 120 cms



*Saturn's Ocean*

oil and metal leaf on canvas

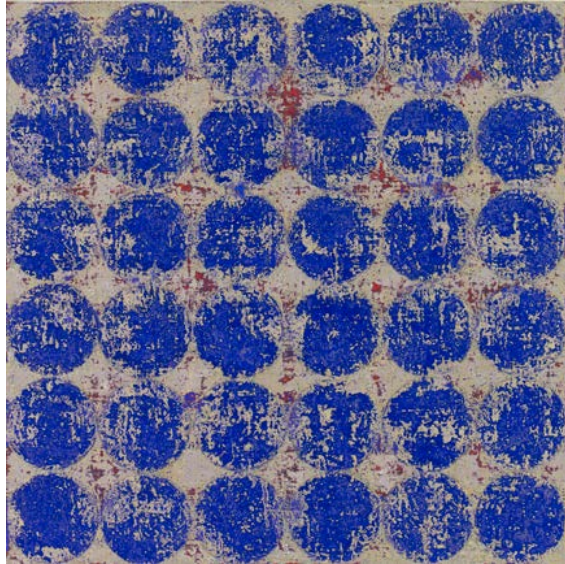
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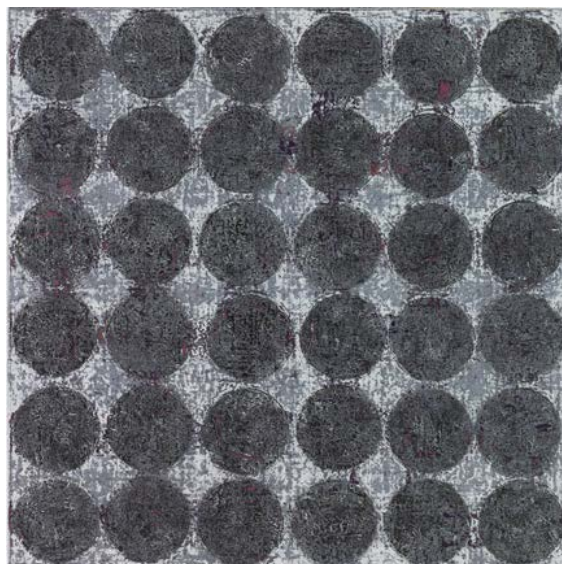
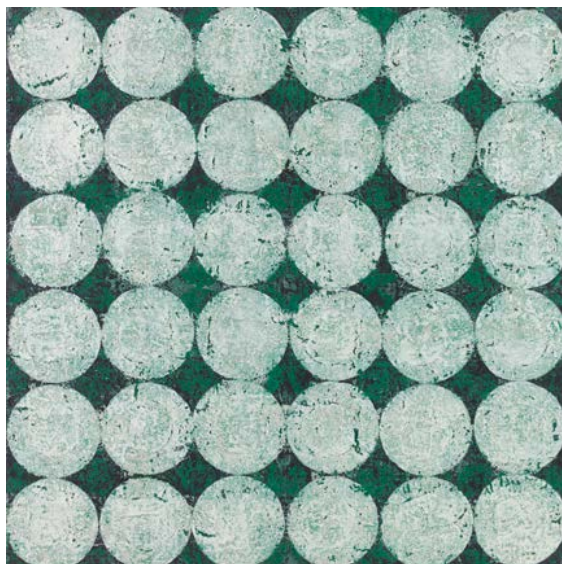


*Rings of Saturn*

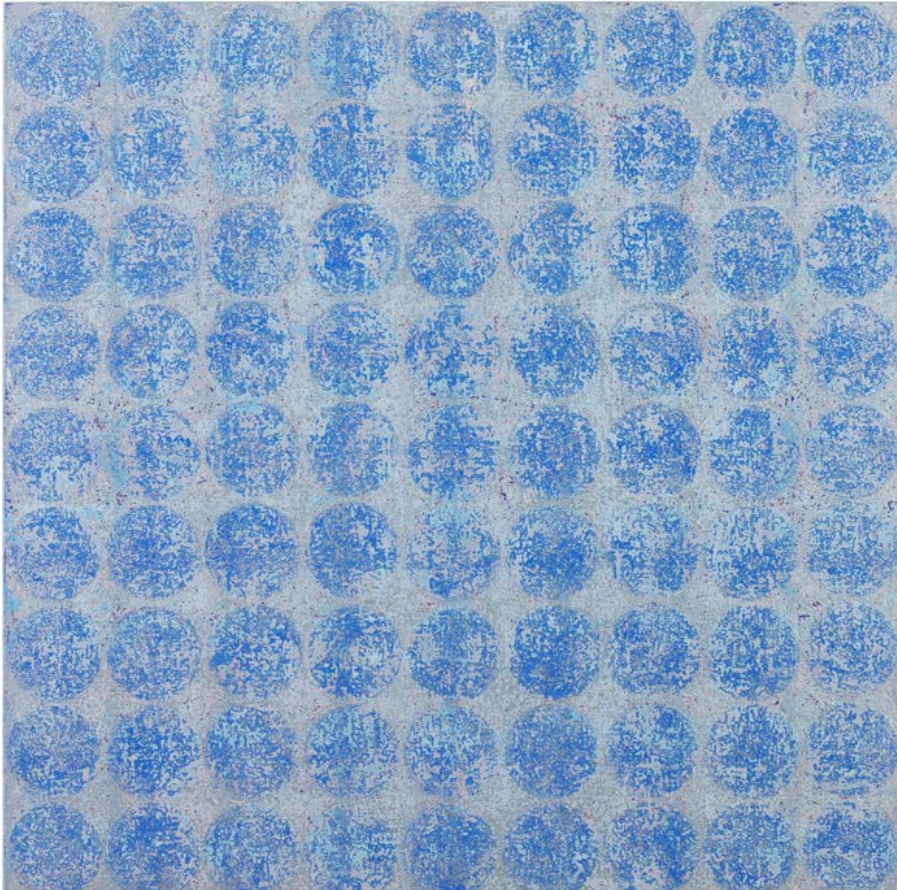
oil and metal leaf on canvas  
24 x 24 inches, 61 x 61 cms



*Space Jukebox* (TOP)  
*Faraway Home* (BELOW)  
oil and metal leaf on canvas  
24 x 24 inches, 61 x 61 cms



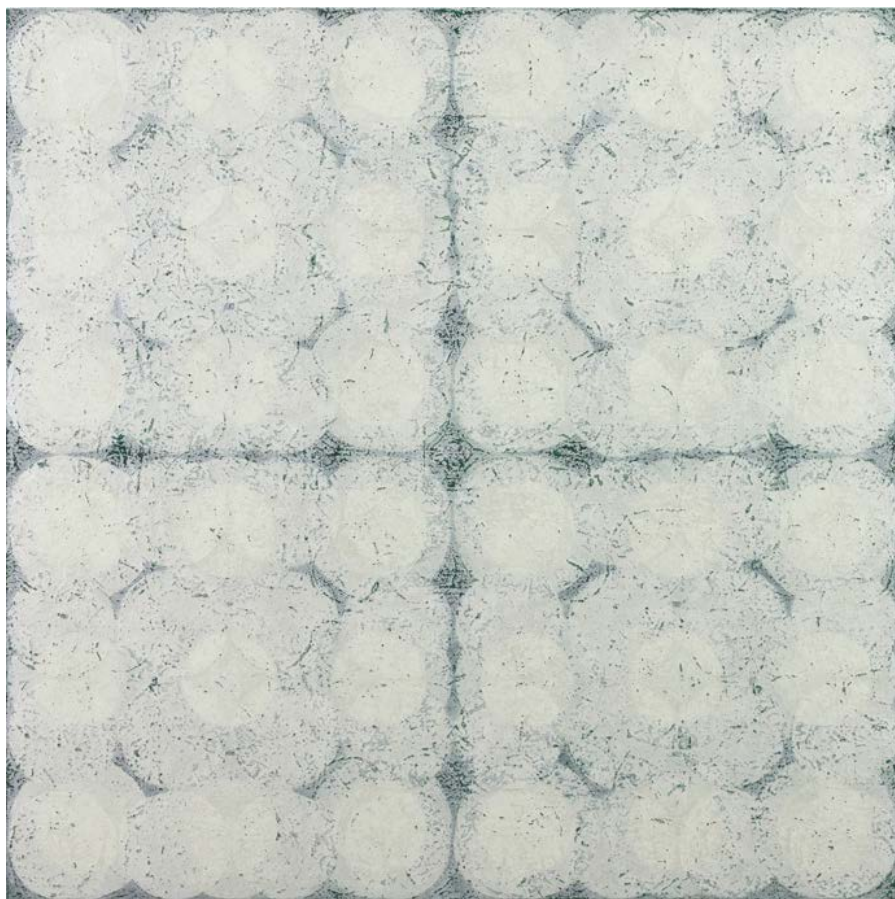
*Moonlight Angels* (TOP)  
*Signal* (BELOW)  
oil and metal leaf on canvas  
24 x 24 inches, 61 x 61 cms



*Blue Prelude*

oil and metal leaf on canvas

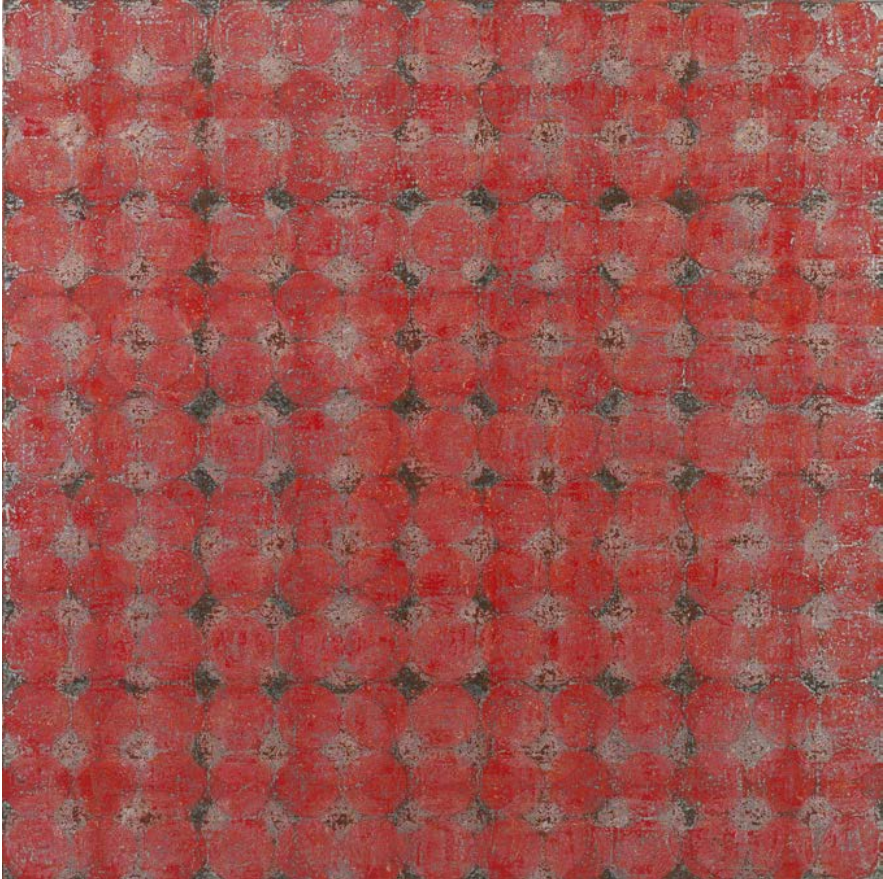
47¼ x 47¼ inches, 120 x 120 cms



*A Mission*

oil and metal leaf on canvas

47¼ x 47¼ inches, 120 x 120 cms



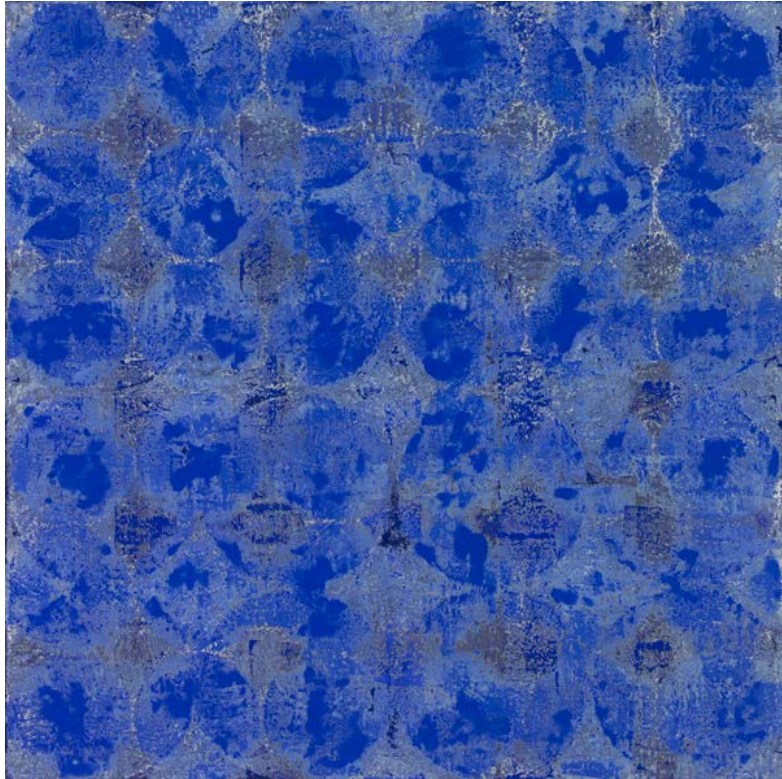
*Finale*

oil and metal leaf on canvas

47¼ x 47¼ inches, 120 x 120 cms

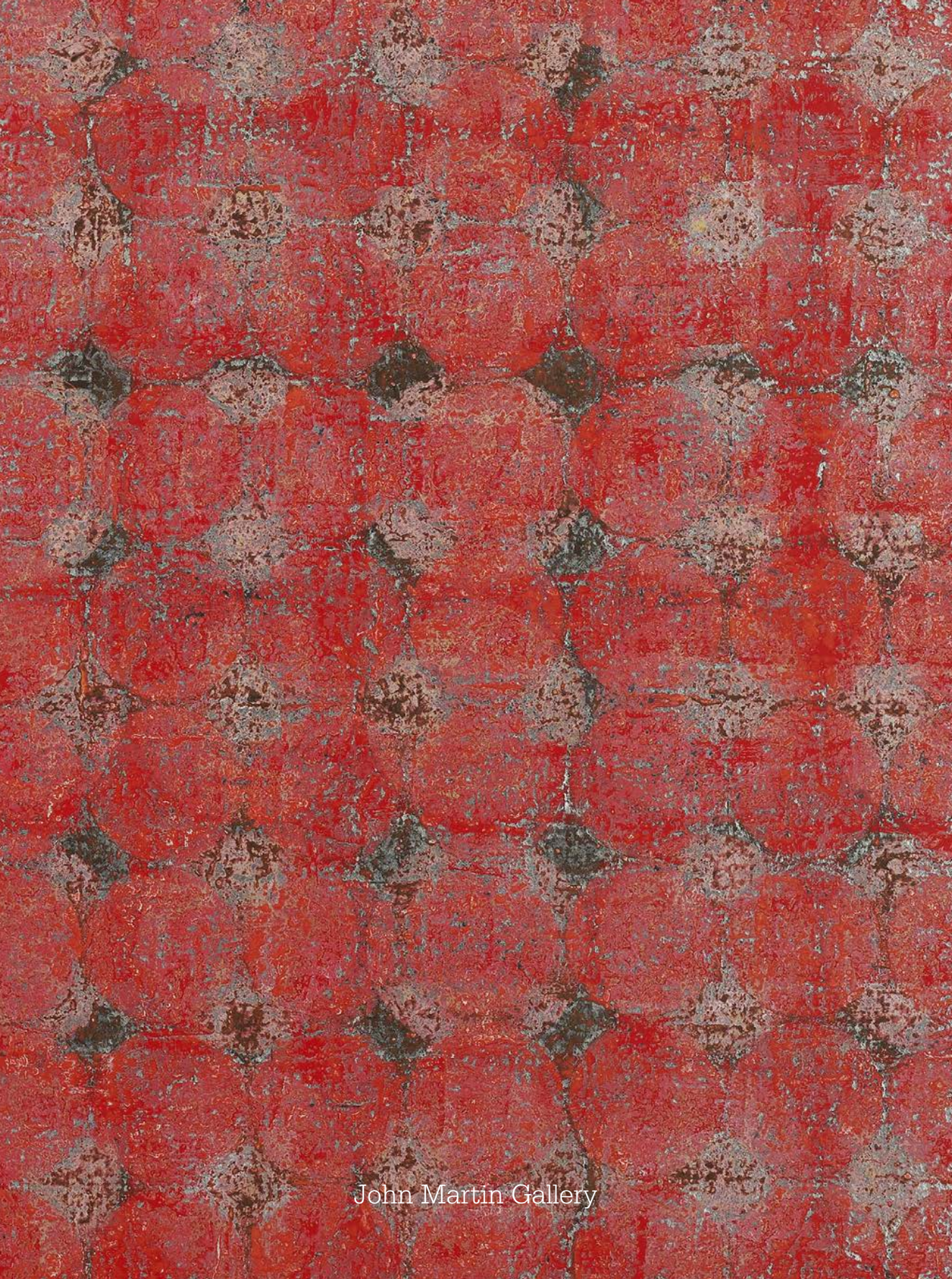


*Cassini's Journey*  
oil and metal leaf on canvas  
47¼ x 47¼ inches, 120 x 120 cms



*La Terra Blue Planet*  
oil and metal leaf on canvas  
24 x 24 inches, 61 x 61 cms





John Martin Gallery