

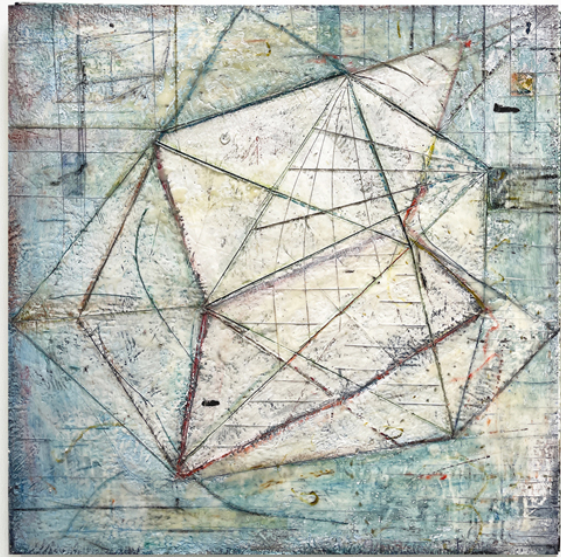
Mark Perlman

A Study in Contrasts

Nancy Toomey Fine Art | 1275 Minnesota Street, San Francisco

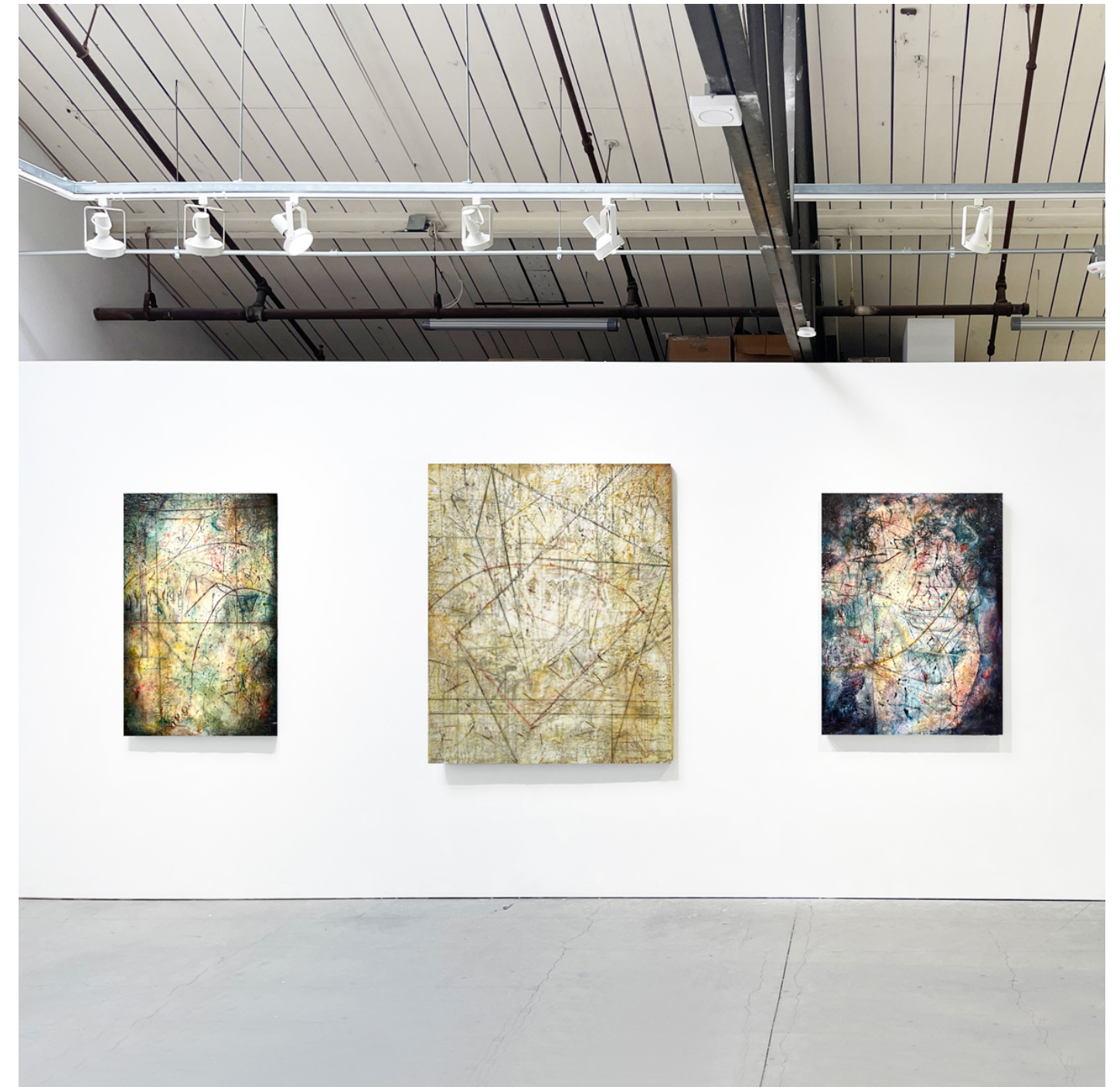
Exhibition Catalog | May 1 to June 15, 2024





Mark Perlman's *A Study in Contrasts* is the first time the artist has exhibited two separate bodies of his encaustic works together. For most of his career Perlman has been equally interested in working with both the contrasts of light and surface—metaphorically and with respect to the physicality of the paintings. For the past 12 months he has worked simultaneously on both bodies of art, moving from wall to wall, shifting from light to dark, primarily concerned with illumination and how the pieces interact. In these works, Perlman is pursuing the contrasting elements of flatness and atmosphere, texture and smoothness, color and monochrome, large and small, to explore the circular nature of how opposites support each other.

Perlman works in the medium of encaustic: pigment mixed with hot wax, the oldest form of painting in civilization dating back to Egyptian Old Kingdom tombs. The paintings are built up layer over layer to create what the artist calls the under belly, a luminous field of mid-tone color upon which he composes and builds his imagery. Panel, rather than canvas, has long been Perlman's medium of choice. Thickened by encaustic, the surfaces are distressed and layered, records of covering and uncovering, image and field, dark and light, rough and smooth. Working on many paintings at once, he develops a surface with the wax while inscribing a general form based on informed instinct that develops over the time of the painting. He spends hours with a small razor and eliminates all the unnecessary marks and noise that might appear to compete with the gestalt of each painting. This editing is paramount in making a final decision as to when a work is complete. The viewer is then invited to make their own discoveries hidden in the deep views of color and line, scrapes and scratches, that energize the surface of each painting. "Each painting seems to have arrived at its condition more through natural process than the mark-making of a human hand," says art writer Kathleen Shields. "Like aging skin, they bear the physical signs of their life's circumstances and gain depth and subtlety because of it."





Art critic Peter Frank writes, “Perlman’s encaustic paintings emphasize the sense of notation in an antique way, evincing the apparent act of inscription as a process as much of incising as a drawing or writing. These paintings are tablets, conjuring ancient wisdom as well as modern research... Perlman writes that he tries to ‘convey the contradictions of flatness with atmosphere and solitude with energy,’ and he directs our attention to contradictions he inherited from abstract expressionism, color field painting, hard edge painting and even minimalism.”

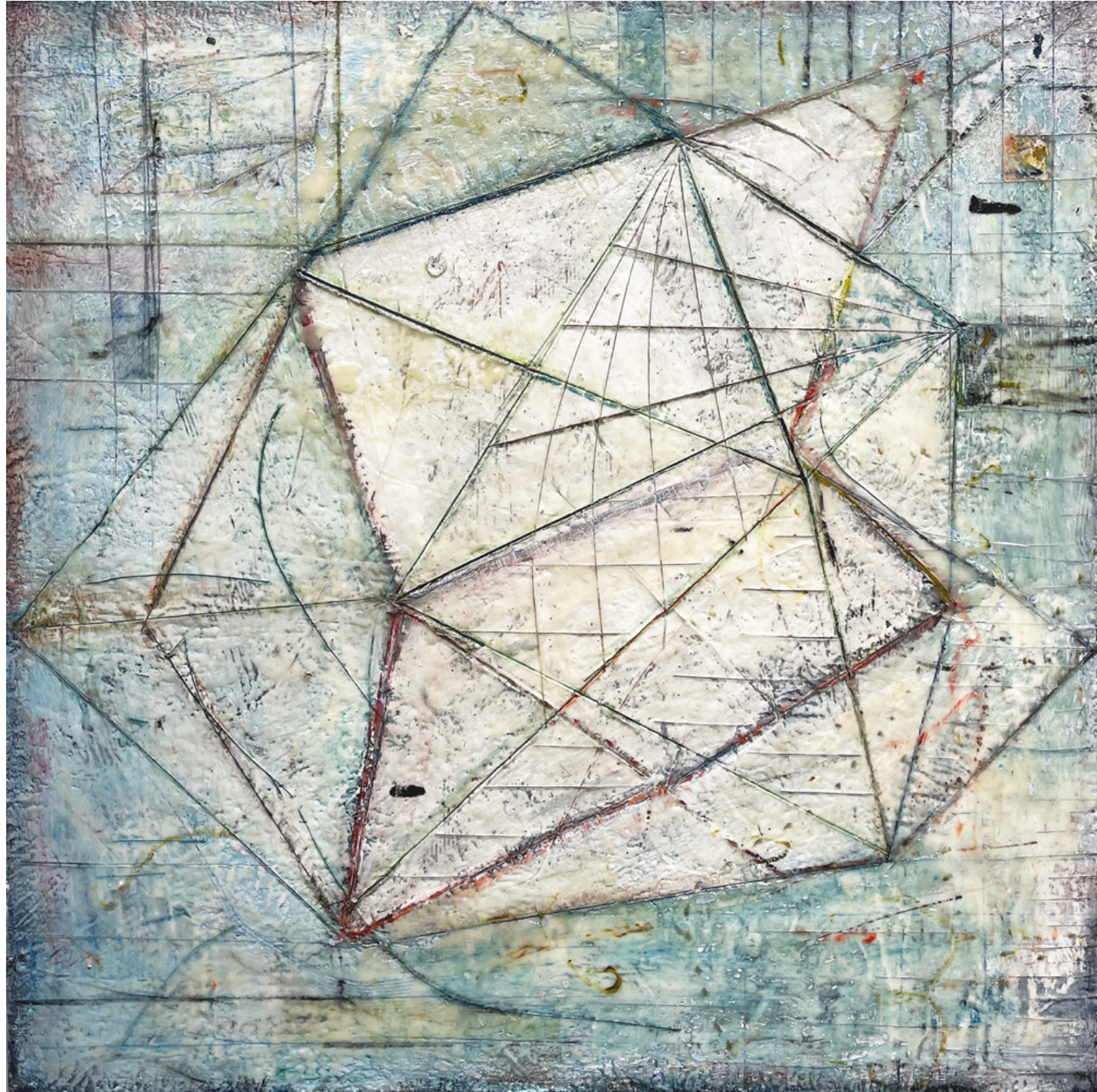
“Inspiration comes through many sources,” says artist Mark Perlman, “including music, books, nature, films, history and political news. I am an avid surveyor of museums and galleries and attempt to take my time in deciding what and when to incorporate outside influences into my work. I maintain that the body has a memory of it’s own when it has been working constantly for many years and at times it is essential to just allow the mind to follow the acts performed while resisting judgment until the work has time to rest. I further believe that formal and structural decisions can then be made with the willingness to change by adding or subtracting from one’s original impulse. I hope to be able to challenge myself in the coming years and discover new ways to maintain passion and curiosity.”





Mark Perlman was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and lives and works in Sebastopol, California. A former professor of art at California State University, Sonoma, Perlman has exhibited his luminous encaustic paintings in the Bay Area as well as throughout the United States over the last 40 years. He has also exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art Beijing, China, the Manage Central Exhibition Hall in St. Petersburg, Russia, and the Moscow Central House of the Artists in Moscow, Russia. His works are in many important private and public collections including the Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, D.C., Charleston Museum, Charleston, South Carolina, and Minneapolis Museum of Art, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

A Study in Contrasts is Mark Perlman's third show with Nancy Toomey Fine Art.



Mark Perlman
Shine On, 2024
Encaustic on panel
48 x 48 inches



Mark Perlman

Lightfest, 2024

Encaustic on panel

48 x 48 inches



Mark Perlman

Kaia, 2023

Encaustic on panel

48 x 36 inches



Mark Perlman
Carthage, 2023
Encaustic on panel
60 x 48 inches

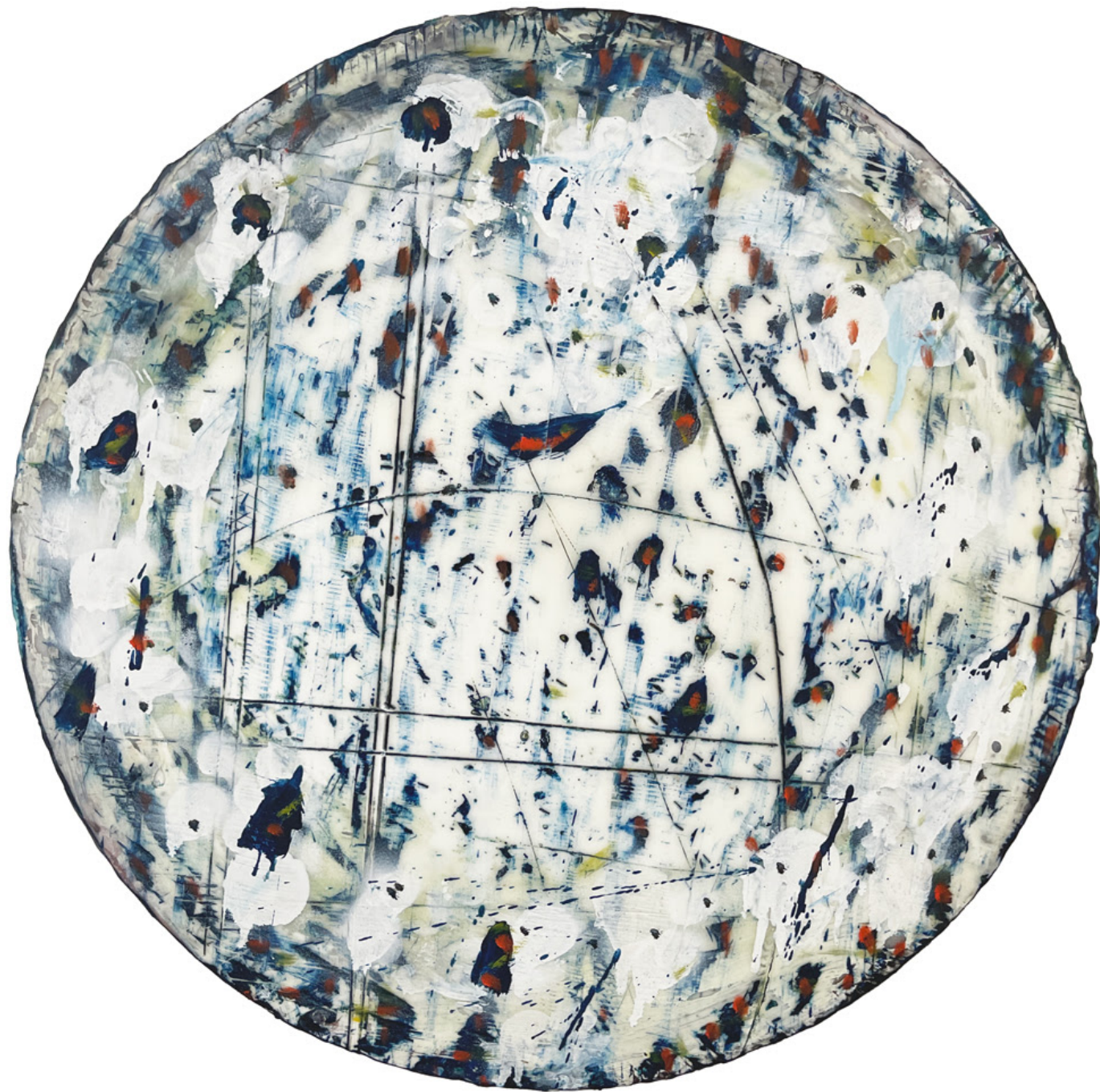


Mark Perlman

Nightly, 2023

Encaustic on panel

48 x 36 inches

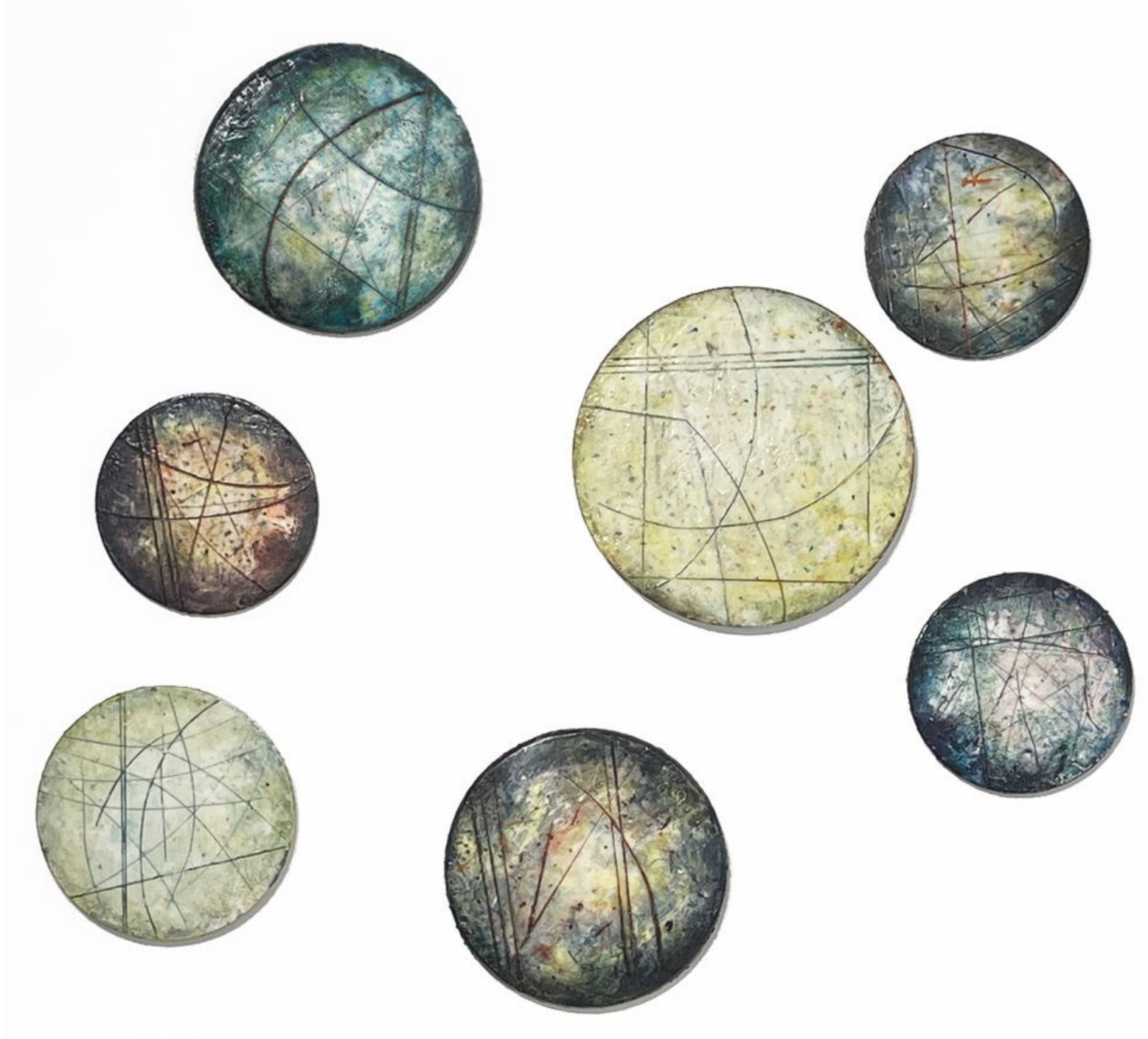


Mark Perlman

Splash, 2024

Encaustic on panel

18 inches diameter



Mark Perlman

Parcel, 15 inches

Globe, 12 inches

Yonder, 12 inches

Mapping, 18 inches

Dune, 14 inches

Dipper, 15 inches

Beam, 12 inches

Encaustic on Panel

52 x 57 inches (all)



Mark Perlman

Rigor, 2024

Encaustic on panel

72 x 48 inches



Mark Perlman
Fanfare, 2023
Encaustic on panel
48 x 48 inches



Mark Perlman

*Ghost, Nourish, Relaunch, Pepper,
Pointer, Windup, Gone, Launch, 2023*

Encaustic on panel

16 x 11 inches (each), 38 x 66 inches (all)



Mark Perlman

Bound, Shores, 2023

Encaustic on panel

16 x 11 inches (each), 16 x 31 (both)

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