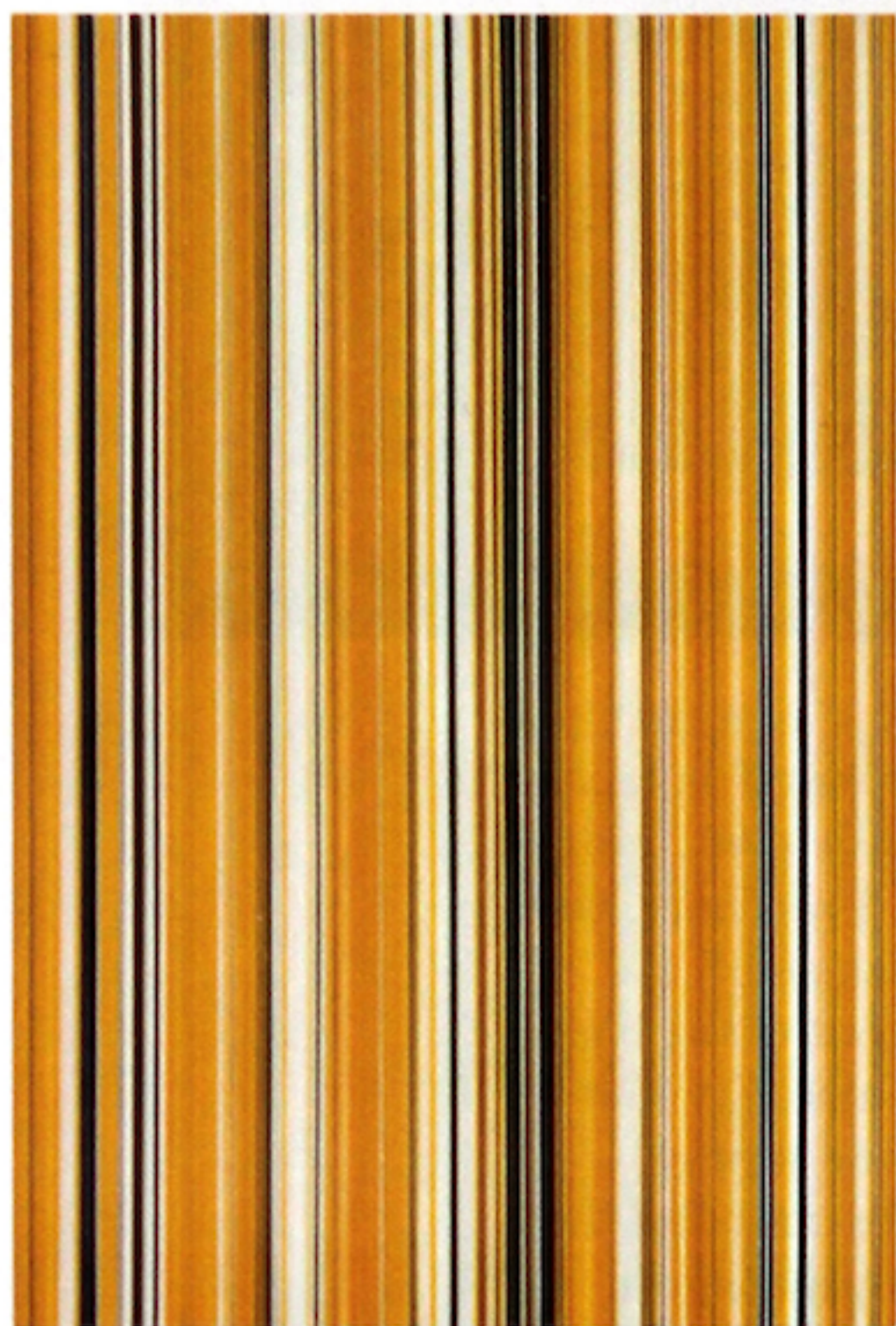


REVIEWS

NEW YORK

Cornelia Thomsen

Leslie Feely // September 10–October 25



FOR SHEER OPTICAL impact generated by an abstract painting, Barnett Newman's *Vir Heroicus Sublimis*, 1950–51, is hard to beat. Photographs fail to capture the buzzing sensation behind one's eyeballs when standing in front of the canvas, whose rich red field is punctuated with the Abstract Expressionist's signature vertical zips. While Newman's heavy, metaphorical

language hasn't withstood the test of time, his perceptual legacy is evergreen: From Op art to Scottish bad boy Jim Lambie's psychedelic neon-tape floor patterns, artists have attempted new ways to trick viewers' eyes.

The best of Thomsen's "Stripes" series—the stronger half of "Stripes and Structures," her debut show at this gallery—deliver a similarly dizzying punch up close. In these works, myriad vertical bands of blue and gold overlap across the canvas. Some stripes have crisp edges, while others are blurred; the fuzzy lines suggest roundness, causing the eye to jump. The artist began the series by attempting to paint beachy horizons, and retains the sand-and-surf palette and the horizontal strokes. (She rotates her paintings 90 degrees when finished.) Her choice of relatively small canvases and a diptych format, however, leave all but the largest works with the appearance of upholstery when viewed from more than a few feet back.

Thomsen, born in 1970 in East Germany, trained first as a precise ceramics painter. "Structures," a series of ink-on-paper works composed of many fastidiously executed hatch marks, exemplifies a different, more personal control. Hung close together, *Structures Nr. 11, 15, and 12*, all 2011, create a striking group. Each work exhibits another kind of mark making, from tiny dots to longer dashes. The resulting 12-by-12-inch compositions read as overall gray fields in three subtly different saturations, testifying to Thomsen's steady hand and perceptual acuity. —Wendy Vogel

FROM LEFT:
Cornelia Thomsen
Stripes No. 71,
2013. Oil
on canvas,
48 x 32 in.

Deana Lawson
*As Above, So
Below*, 2014.
Pigment print,
44¼ x 35 in.