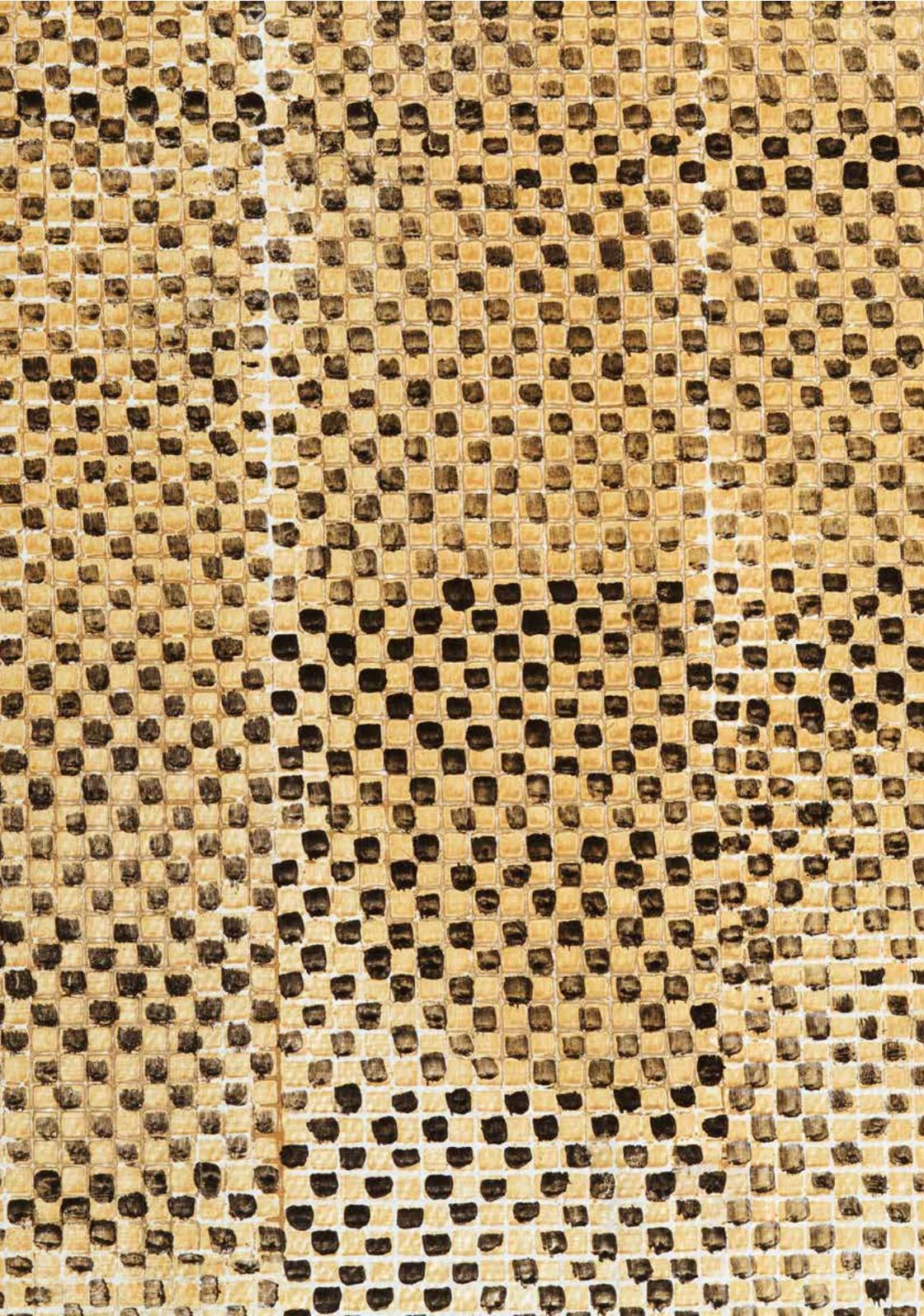


ADIA WAHID

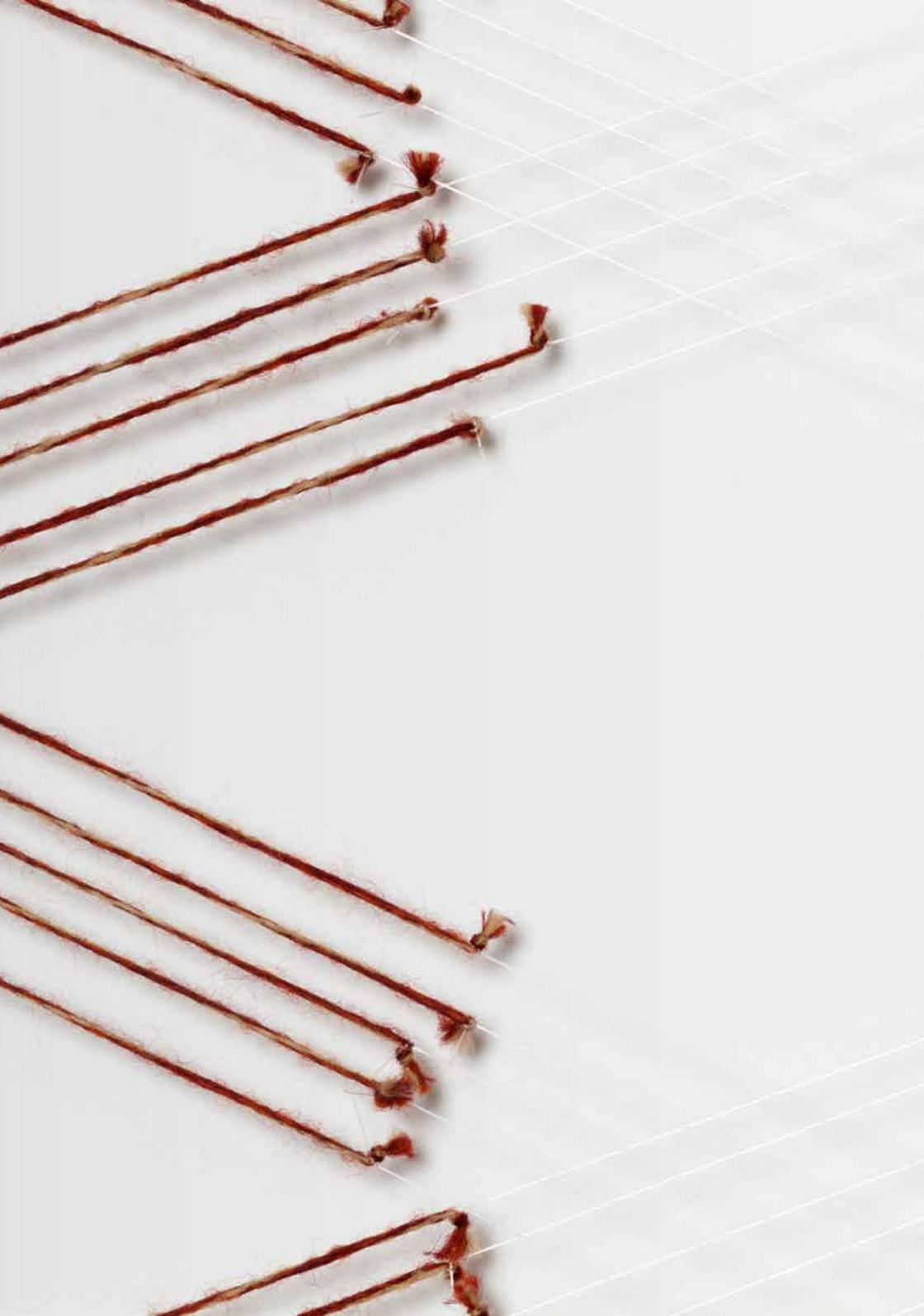
ALICEBLACK



Adia Wahid

ALICE**BLACK**

1 December 2016 – 26 January 2017



Adia Wahid: The Everyday Practices of Life

by John Slyce

Lives and the practices that structure them are always already meandering, if not indeed wholly given over to migration. Adia Wahid's practice of painting, drawing, working with textiles and print embraces this too often concealed logic and brings its pattern, frame of reference and architecture into the foreground of her work and life. Painting is an everyday practice for Wahid, but so too is mothering a daily occupation, and importantly, both take place under forces at work that emanate from far beyond the studio, home, neighbourhood or even city where one lives and is based.

Trained originally as an economist, Adia Wahid brings such a context and consciousness to the work she makes and the life she lives. Wahid left Pakistan at eighteen, spent much of the 1990s in the USA, UK and Singapore before moving on to South Korea for nearly a decade and has worked and lived in London since the early 2000s. Her approach to making and, in particular, constructing a painting explores traditions located in both the east and west and she inflects each by her experiences of uneven development along economic, political and socio-cultural axes drawn from the places she has lived and worked.

The past decade and a half has made perfectly clear that characteristics we once gathered under a rubric of postmodernism – fragmentation, a schizophrenic consciousness that conflates the past and future into a perpetual present, the waning of affect, and

on – all this radical dedifferentiation was surely symptomatic of late-capitalism, but is now apprehended as something more and is taken, later perhaps than should, to be in fact the announcement of that which we have come to know as globalisation. We work and live under politico-economic forces enacted by globalisation whether we are a woman garment worker in the southern hemisphere, a boy sewing together the panels of a football that will be kicked on another continent, or a painter working in her London studio. The question is, as ever, what do we make of this consciousness and how to communicate something of this to others?

One might consider Adia Wahid's practice from a perspective where making is centred on drawing. Wahid has fashioned drawing tools, which are repurposed and deployed in the making of her paintings. These same tools may find another life as objects presented in their own right. A similar approach is brought to the grid, which can be said to reside in any painting made, or perhaps even unmade. To use, misuse, reuse is a position which recognises things move and do have a life of their own. There is an ecology—even an economy of making—implied here as Wahid assumes such a position, but the inspiration is as much driven by the type of re-adaptation of tools and structures in a new manner, use and context one finds in the films *Mad Max*, or even *Brazil*.

In most works, a solidly ruminative grid organises fiercely delicate materialities of line. Plasterboard joint tape may be cut and arranged to produce both line and grid, all the while acting as a supporting object to receive paint. The same may be used to transfer pigment and line onto another support. The paintings *No Strings Attached*, 2012, and *Netting Disrupted* and *Summer*, the later both from 2016, are examples of these techniques. Wahid works through set formats – 130 x 150, 160 x 180, or 30 x 40 cm – none of these dimensions are obviously a square but each relates to the square to organise its identity. The activities invested in making are broken down between taping, sewing, painting. The materials are

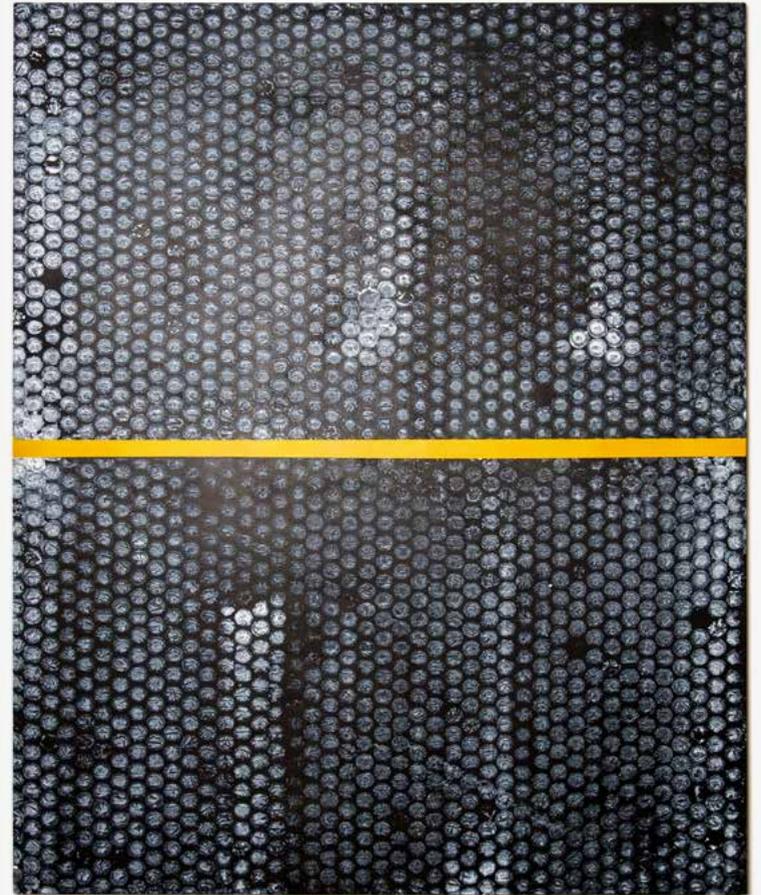
the aforementioned joint tape, embroidery thread, and pigments – importantly, these later are made and mixed by Wahid herself. The red of a painting is her own. A white may start with buff titanium to which is added white, or burnt umber with ratios alternating between white and grey. Each colour is specific to a given painting. Wahid's palette is generally binary: two colours will be made and negotiated in relation to the other and then built up and developed through successive coats and layering. There is also a strong instalational aspect to how Wahid presents her work; the wall need not be white, or the space a cube.

In her first London solo, Adia Wahid will show some twenty paintings and the work will span five years of making, from 2012–2017. The process she has followed across this work is open rather than closed. This may surprise a viewer given their solid structure and firm composition. Wahid embraces chance and fluidity in the making of a painting, with the rigidity of the grid offering ultimate freedom, if not indeed chaos to find a means of organising a pattern. Above all, she aims for the process to be represented. She does not really look at or engage with figurative works in painting, except, at times, in devotional paintings. Her approach to abstraction is related to mediating between figurative and non-figurative rather than being set in opposition to its presumed other. A good many young painters are thrown by an anachronistic and moribund choice between 'abstraction and figuration'. And Wahid has forged an intelligent and transcultural approach to renegotiate such a false conundrum and tired consideration. The training of an economist here is perhaps instructive when the very 'real' and 'solid' figural representations of money and value we carry with us through our everyday in the form of currency are amongst the greatest of abstractions.

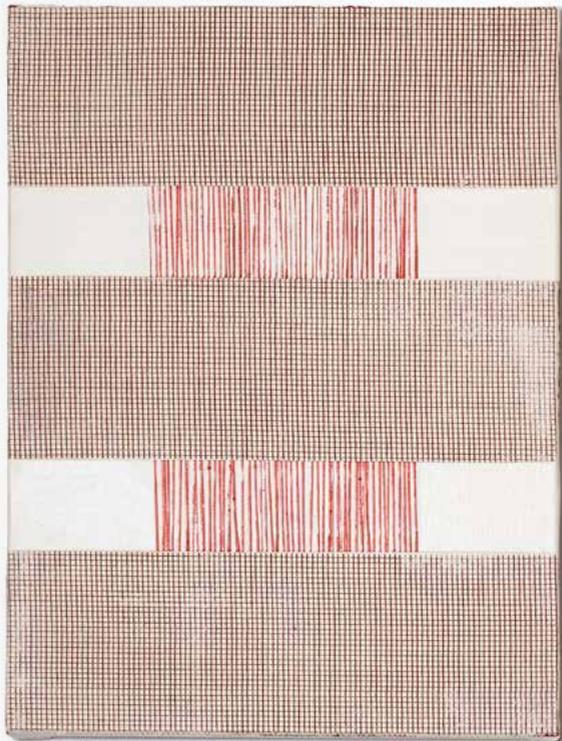
Adia Wahid is a reader and Ann Truitt's *Daybook* has helped her to define how one might place their practice in a life and, vice versa. We each have different and divergent means with which to sustain

our practices. Just how one might sustain a practice over time stretches far beyond questions of what material base is available to draw down from. For Wahid, the potential liquidity of a drawing on a post-it note or graph paper made at the kitchen table may fund the conceptual organization and production of a painting some years later. So too, the migratory image may move from paint to print, or print to painting and fuse, inform and invest in the other's realisation. Really existing capital is always on the move, just as we each are. Wherever we land, we are each always outsiders in some way. We do find a place, even if it is only ever provisional and migratory. Adia Wahid has found such a home in her paintings, drawings, work and practice. That is what life asks of us as it suggests, through its everyday practice, just how to live it, even and especially under the forces of a globalising age.

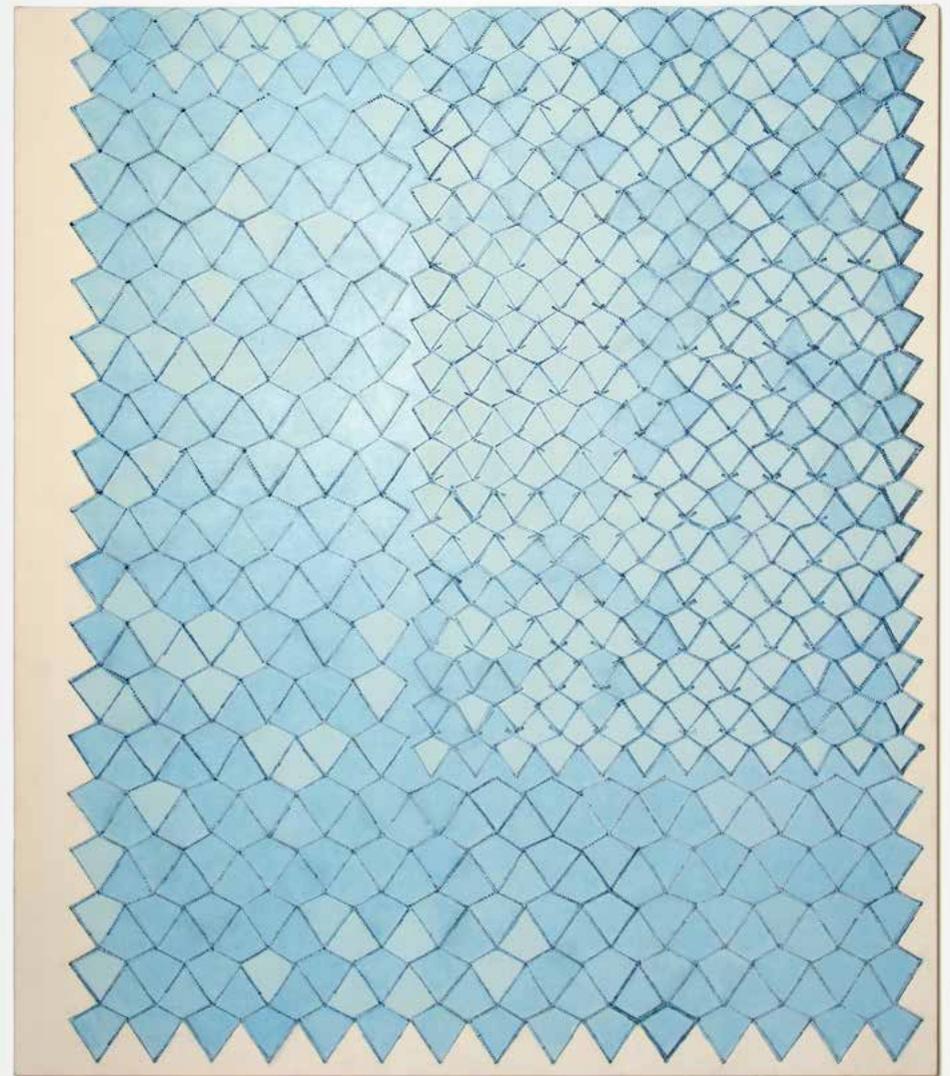
John Slyce is a writer and critic based in London. Slyce is a tutor at the Royal College of Art and is located in the painting programme in the school of arts and humanities. His research interests include the legacy of conceptualism and the trajectory of practices centred on the move from studio to a post-studio condition and contemporary modes of art production, circulation and display.



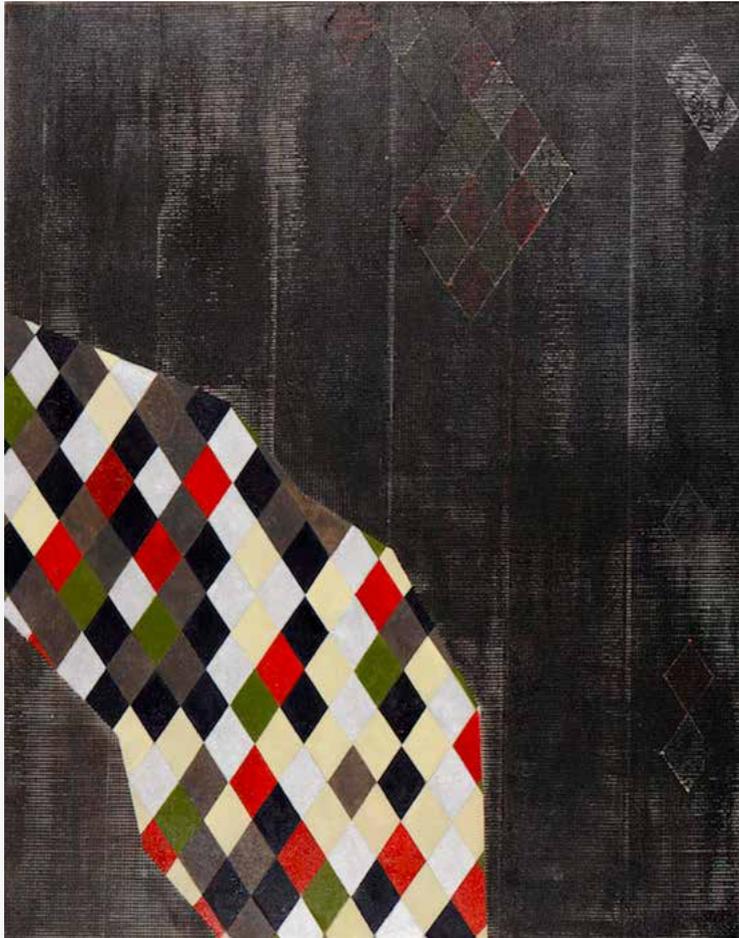
Reflection, 2012
Oil and Acrylic on Board
100cm x 120cm



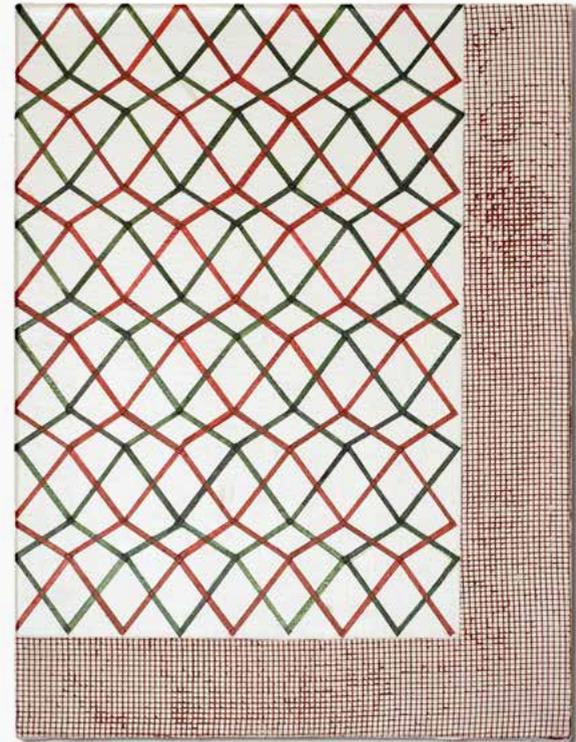
Bunch Logic, 2017
Acrylic on Canvas
30cm x 40cm



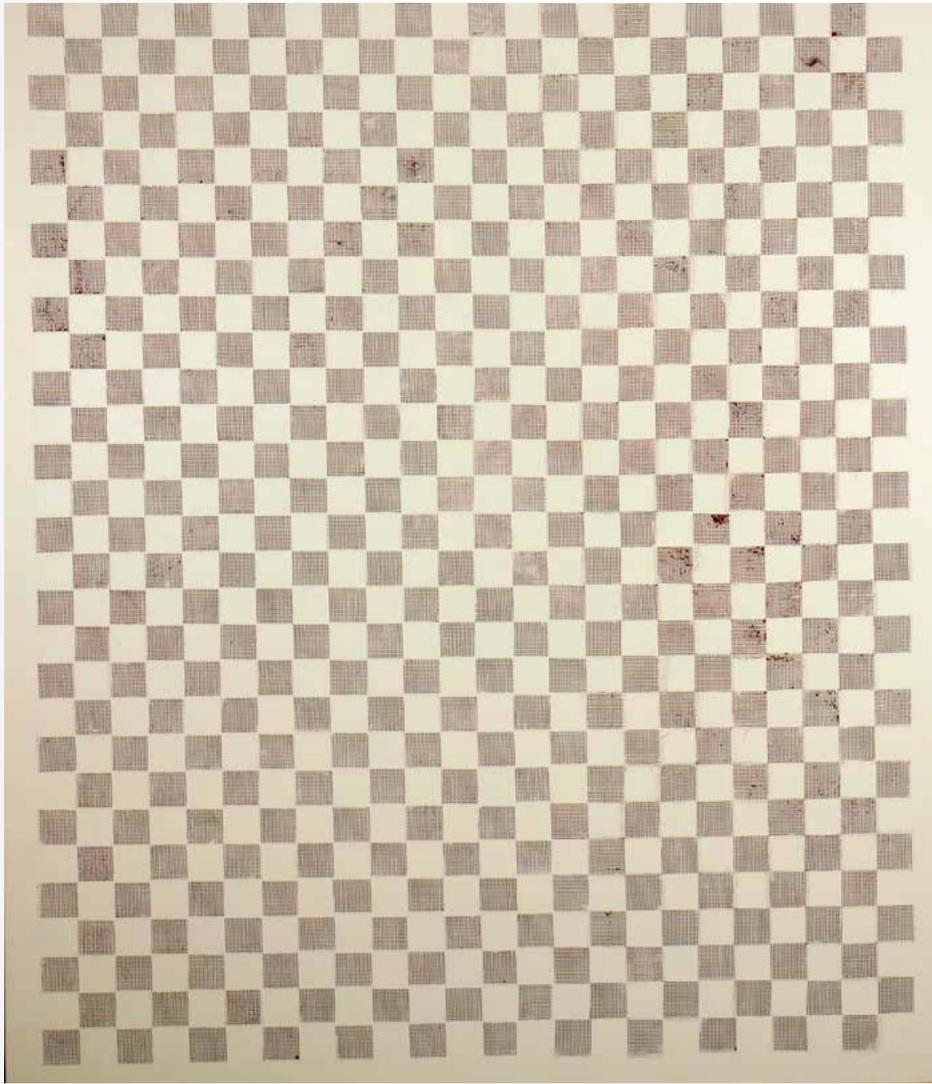
Netting Disrupted, 2016
Oil on Canvas
130cm x 150cm



Diamonds on a Stroll, 2015
Oil on Canvas
61cm x 77cm



Background Noise, 2017
Acrylic on Canvas
30cm x 40cm



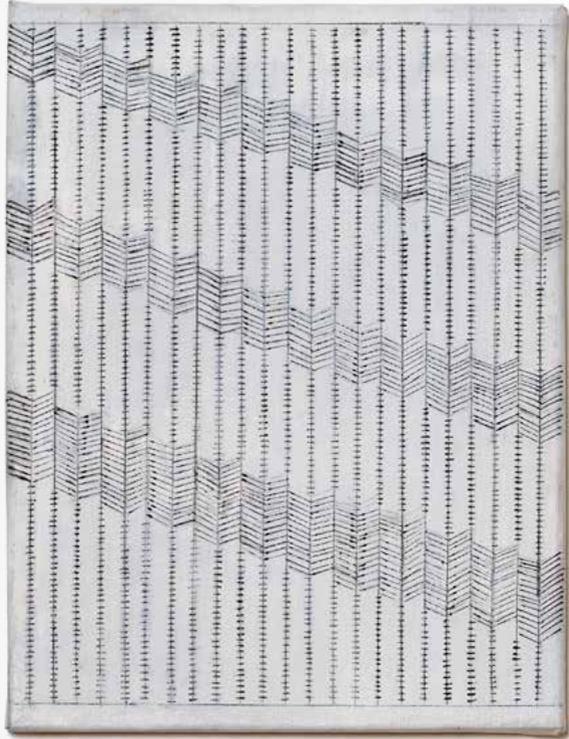
A Shiftier Shift, 2017
Acrylic on Canvas
130cm x 150cm



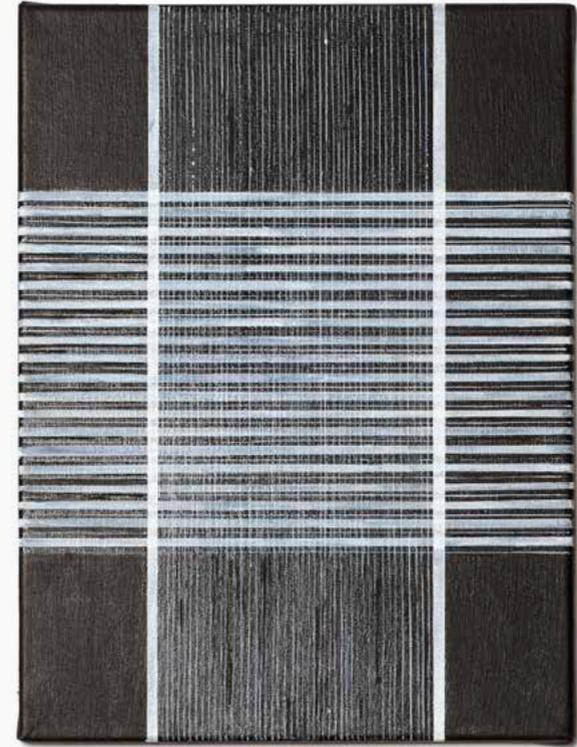
Not a Square, 2017
Oil on Canvas
23cm x 24cm



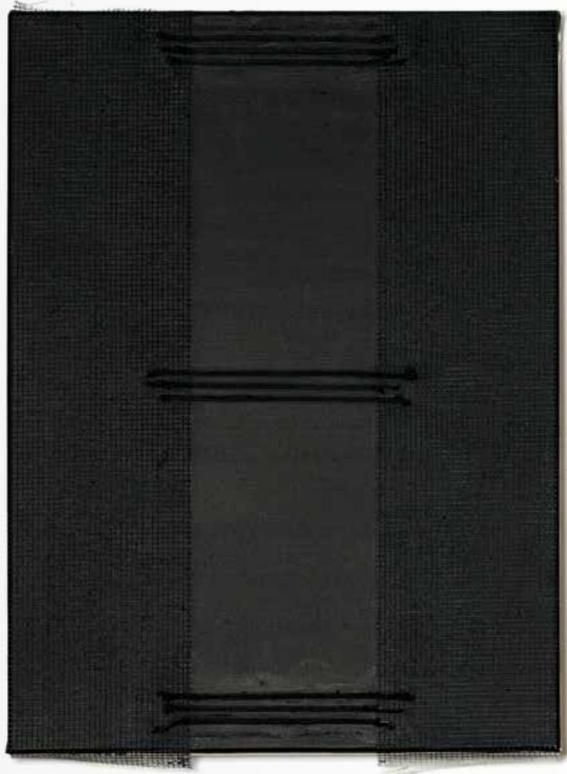
Summer, 2016
Oil on Canvas
58cm x 68cm



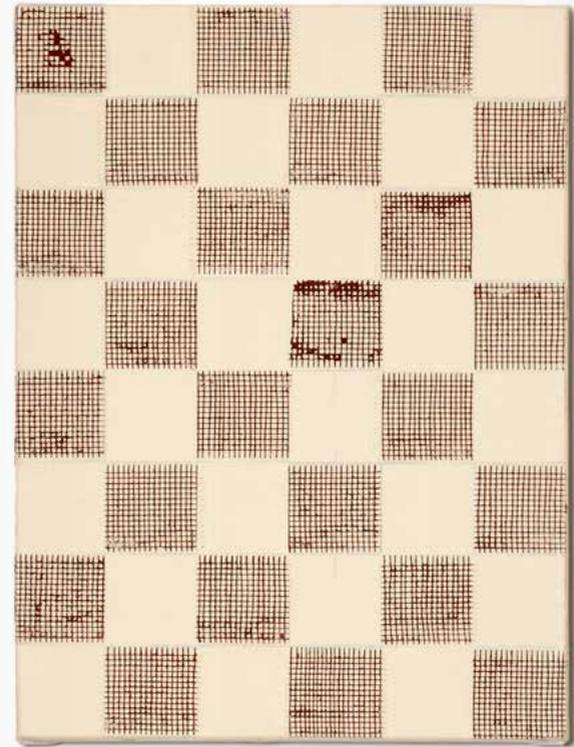
Black Over White III, 2015
Oil on Canvas
40 cm x 30 cm



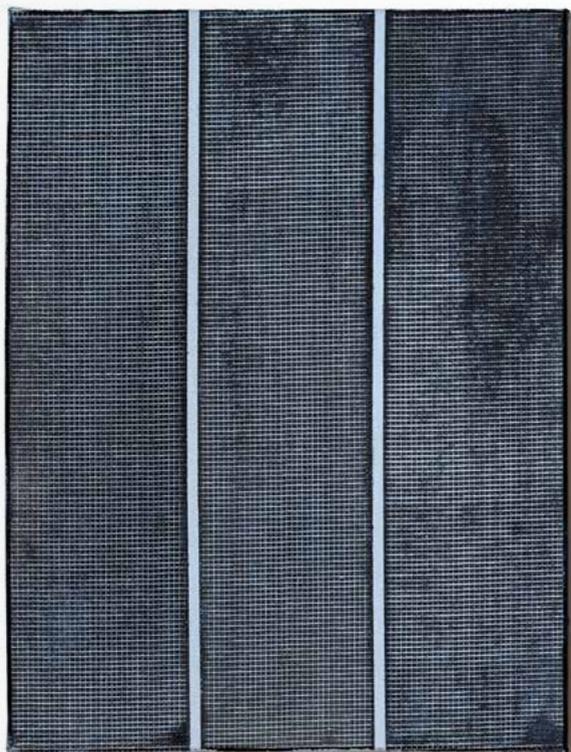
White Over Black, 2015
Oil on Canvas
30cm x 40cm



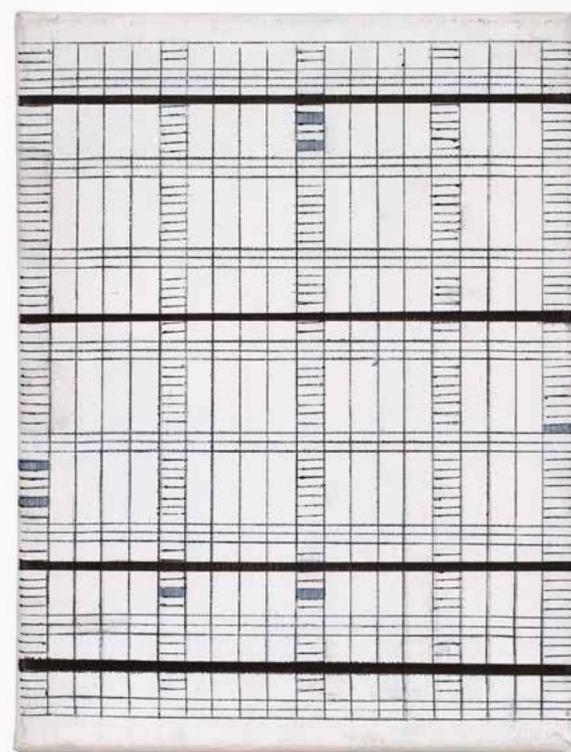
Untitled, 2017
Polyester String and Scrim Tape on Canvas
30cm x 40cm



Shifted, 2017
Acrylic on Canvas
30cm x 40cm



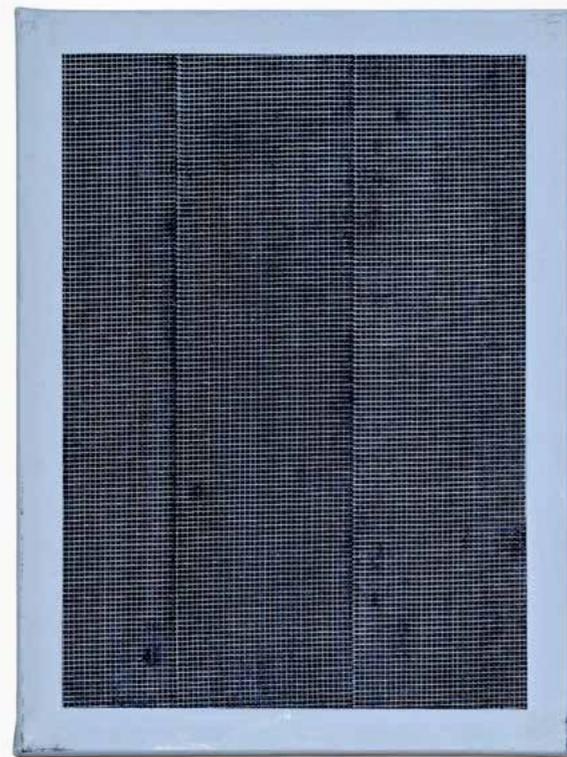
Untitled, 2016
Acrylic on Canvas
30cm x 40cm



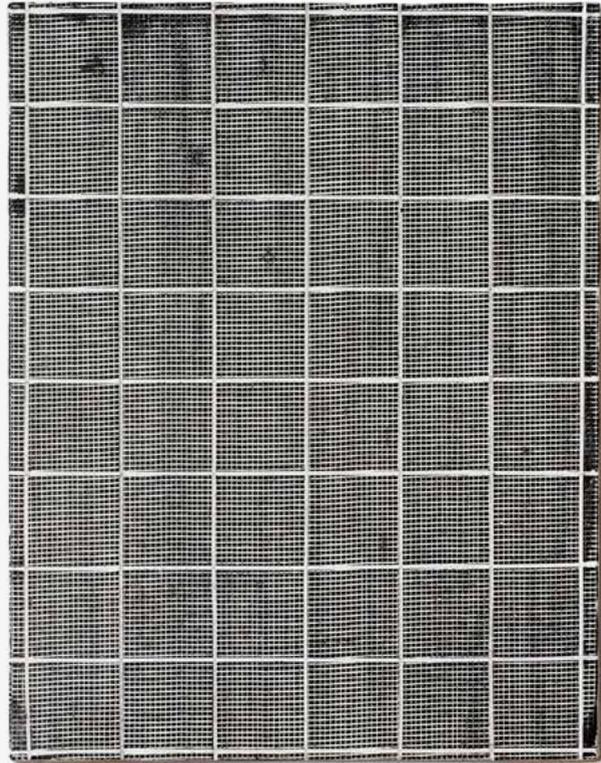
Black Over White II, 2015
Oil on Canvas
30cm x 40cm



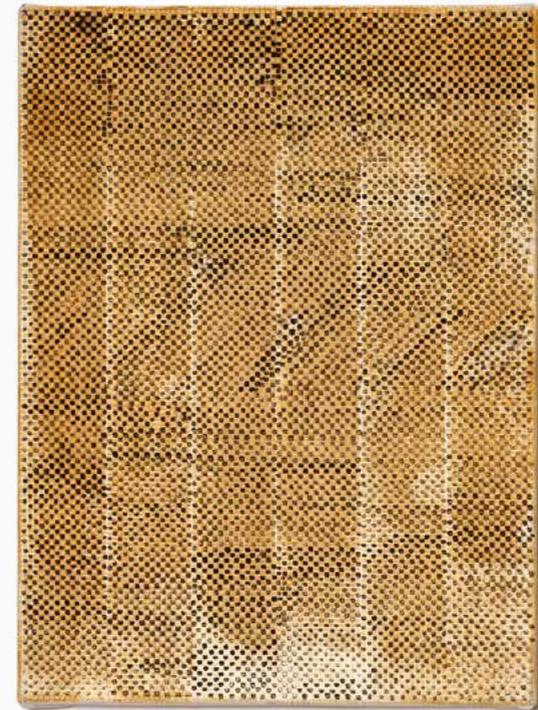
Walking on Jupiter's Moon, 2017
Acrylic on Canvas
130cm x 150cm



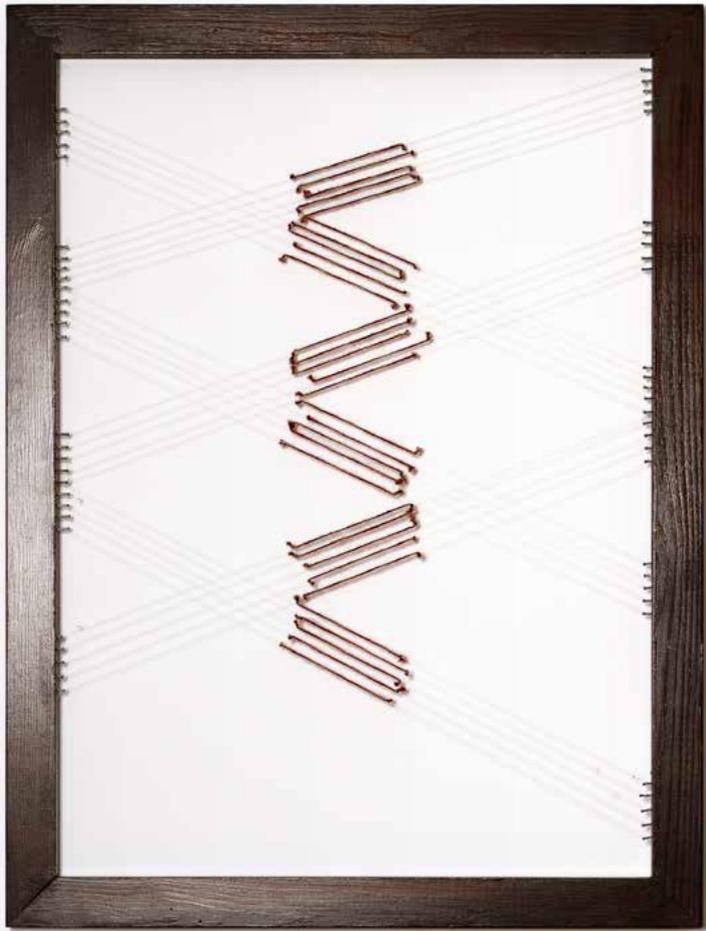
Untitled II, 2016
Acrylic on Canvas
30cm x 40cm



White Over Black III, 2015
Acrylic on Canvas
32cm x 41cm



Golden Haze, 2015
Oil on Canvas
28cm x 38cm



Drawing with Thread II, 2012
Wooden Frame, Yarn, Plastic Thread, Nails
60cm x 80cm



Drawing with Thread I, 2012
Wooden Frame, Yarn, Plastic Thread, Nails
60cm x 80cm



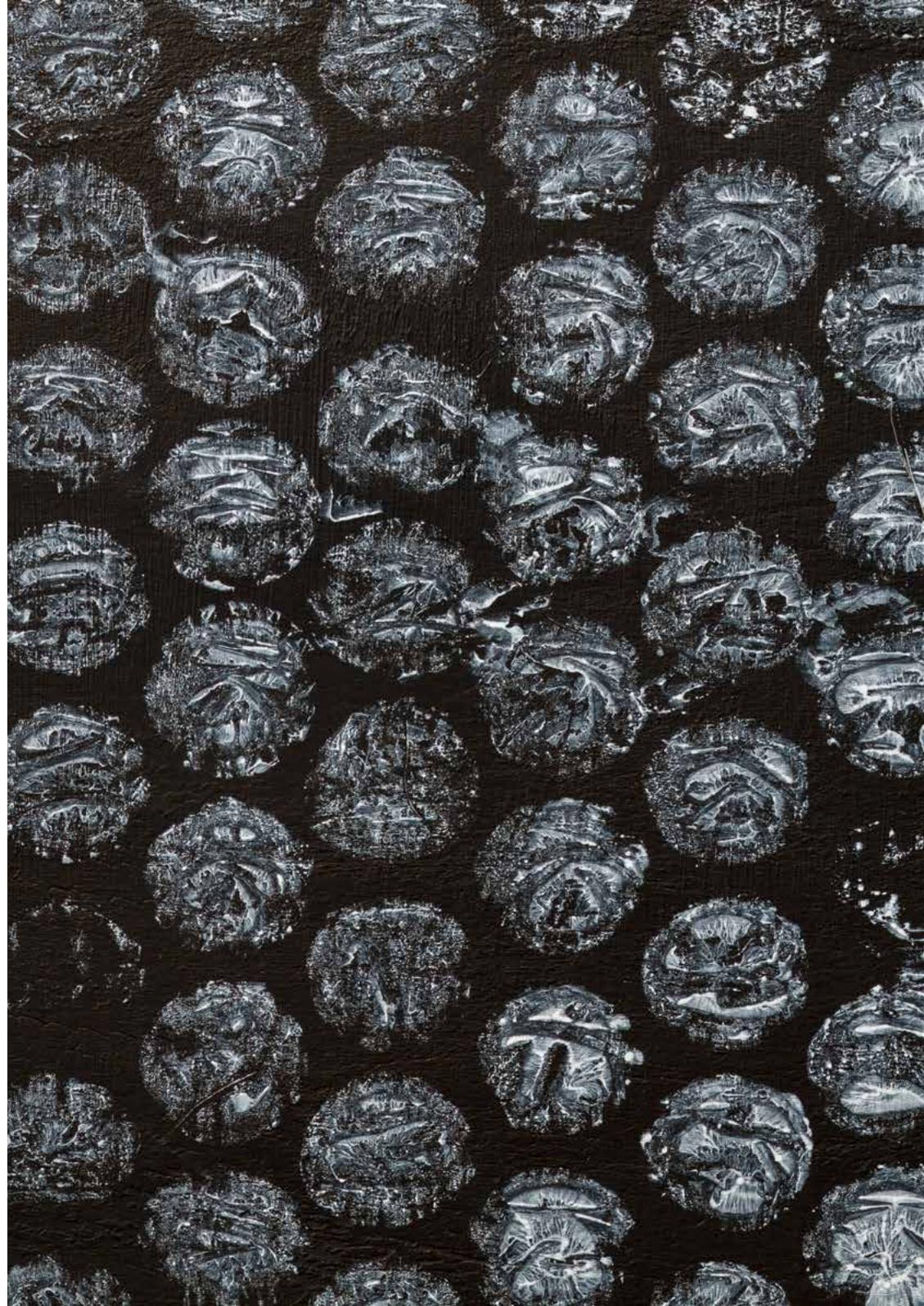
Drawing with Thread III, 2012
Wooden Frame, Yarn, Plastic Thread, Nails
60cm x 80cm



No Strings Attached, 2012
Embroidery
Thread on Canvas
30cm x 40cm

Published on the occasion of
the exhibition *Adia Wahid*
1 December 2016 – 26 January 2017

ALICE BLACK
47 Berwick Street (1st Fl)
London W1F 8SQ
aliceblackart.com





ALICEBLACK