

Mystical

- An Exhibition of Paintings by Henry Callahan



"My paintings make a point of using drips and splatters in a manner somewhat reminiscent of Jackson Pollack, but contrasting those spontaneous elements with carefully controlled grids and surfaces."

After a career as a successful brand and marketing executive in the northeast and mid-Atlantic, Henry Callahan made a dramatic decision and left the corporate world to return full time to his pursuit of fine art. For the past twenty-five years, he has worked as an artist, achieving a high level of accomplishment and skill. His orderly metro Atlanta studio belies the passion and physicality of his painting technique.

Henry Callahan is first and foremost a 21st Century Abstract Expressionist, but he has expanded that milieu. His paint flows freely as he shapes his feelings and thoughts onto a canvas. Emotion and intellect converge as his imagination and life-experience present a rich tableau of vibrant color and patterns in paint to tantalize the viewer.

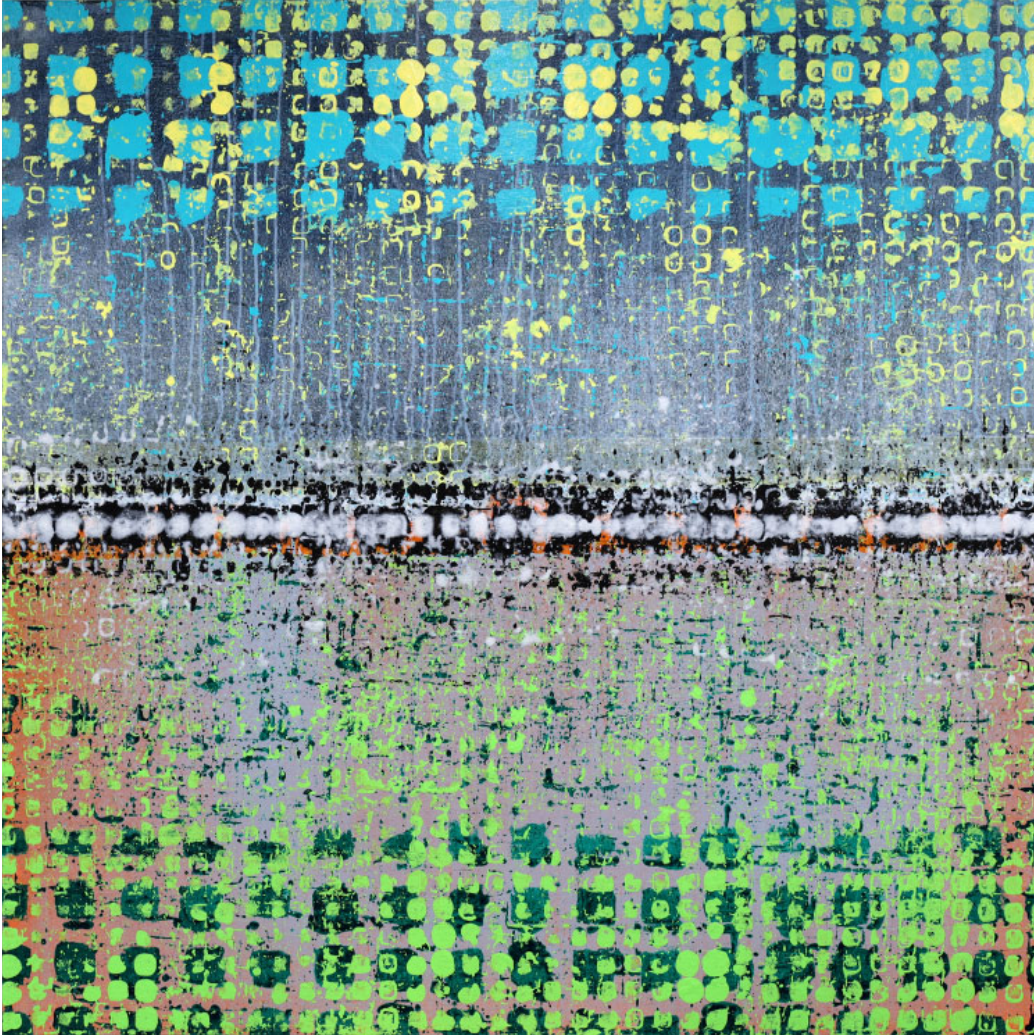
His work may be found in numerous corporate and private collections worldwide.

Callahan is a Georgia native and studied painting at Auburn University and Maryland Institute College of Art.



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Matrix — 48" x 48"
Acrylic on Canvas

Henry Callahan is known for his paintings consisting of drops and splatters of color. In *Matrix*, he adds the organization of grids to contrast with the seeming randomness of the dots of paint as he expands the meaning of Expressionism.

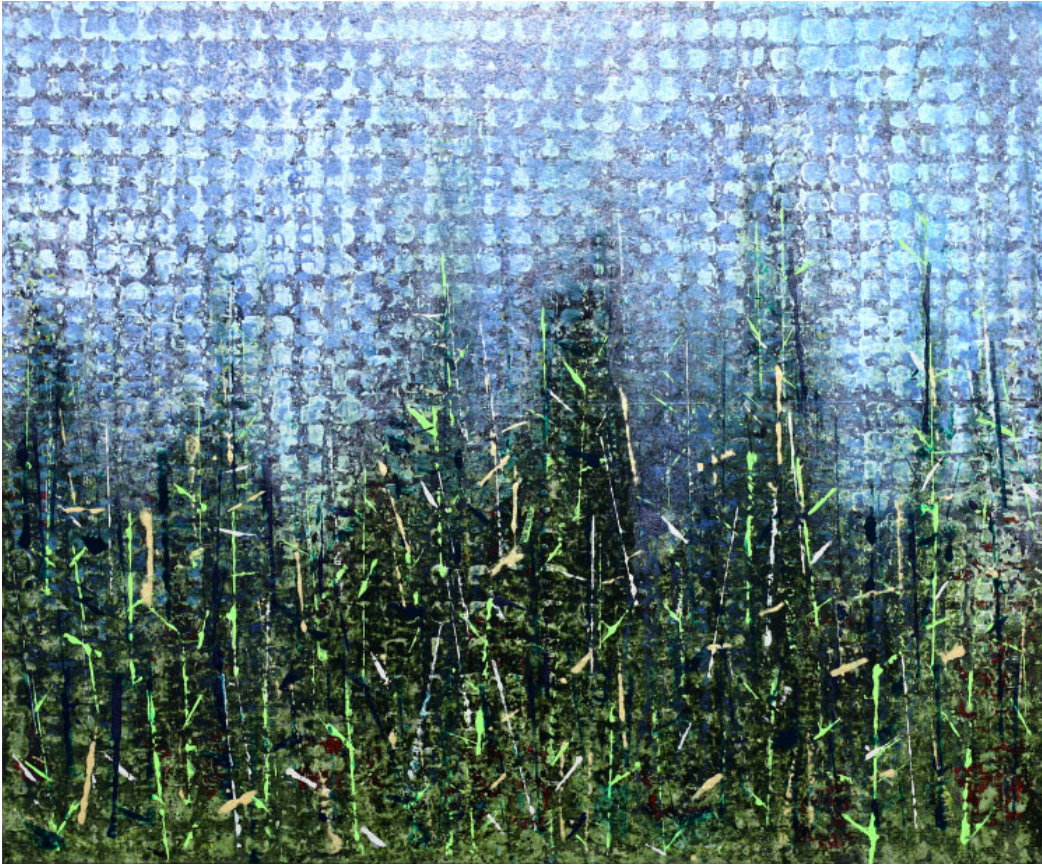
As his grid paintings have developed, he has subtly begun to introduce subliminal figures while keeping abstraction as the groundwork.

Mystical is an exhibition of paintings that begins with a purely abstract grid painting and progresses to paintings that reveal figures which suggest legendary or cultural icons.

The titles usually come after completion of the paintings when he gives the viewer an entree into his thoughts when creating the works.

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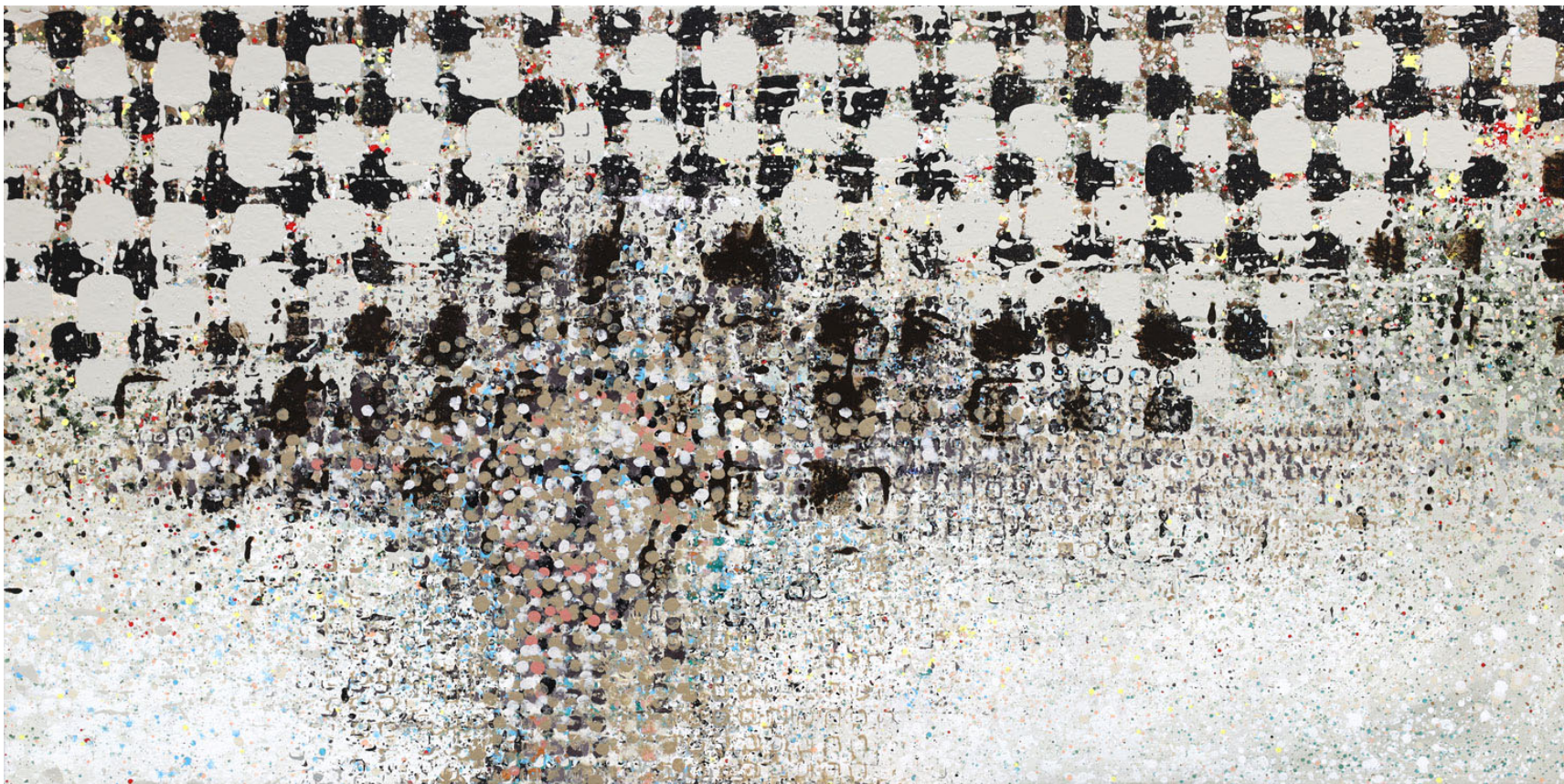
“My early grid paintings were primarily abstract creations, moving gradually over years to reflect nature and landscapes.”

A hint of landscape appears in this painting but it is still essentially a grid. The green lines come together to suggest tree forms using the magic of the viewer's imagination.

Alleghenie — 30" x 36"
Acrylic on Canvas

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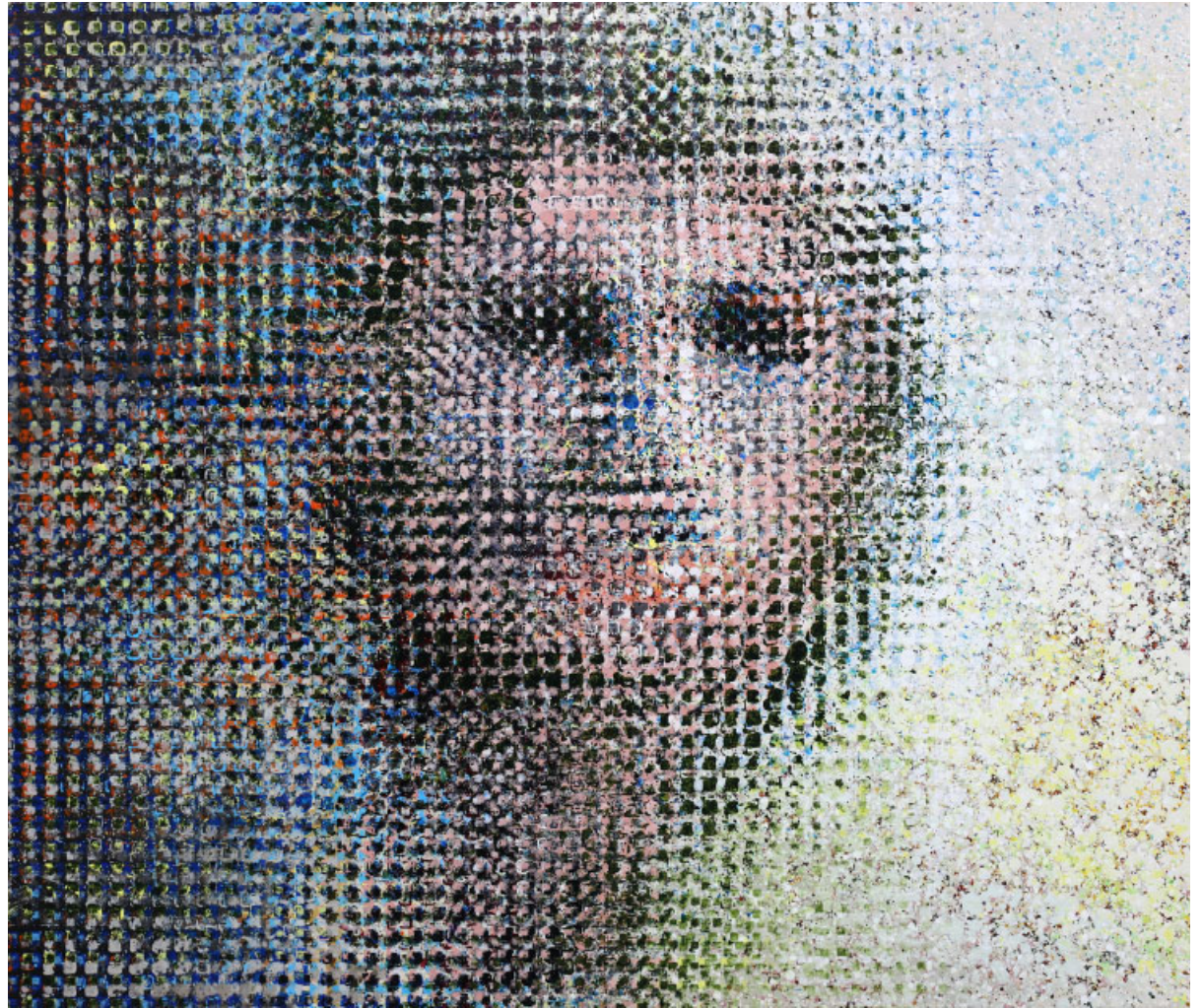
At some point, Callahan's grids develop into imagery with lost and found colors creating emerging figures.

The Arrival — 30" x 60"
Acrylic on Canvas

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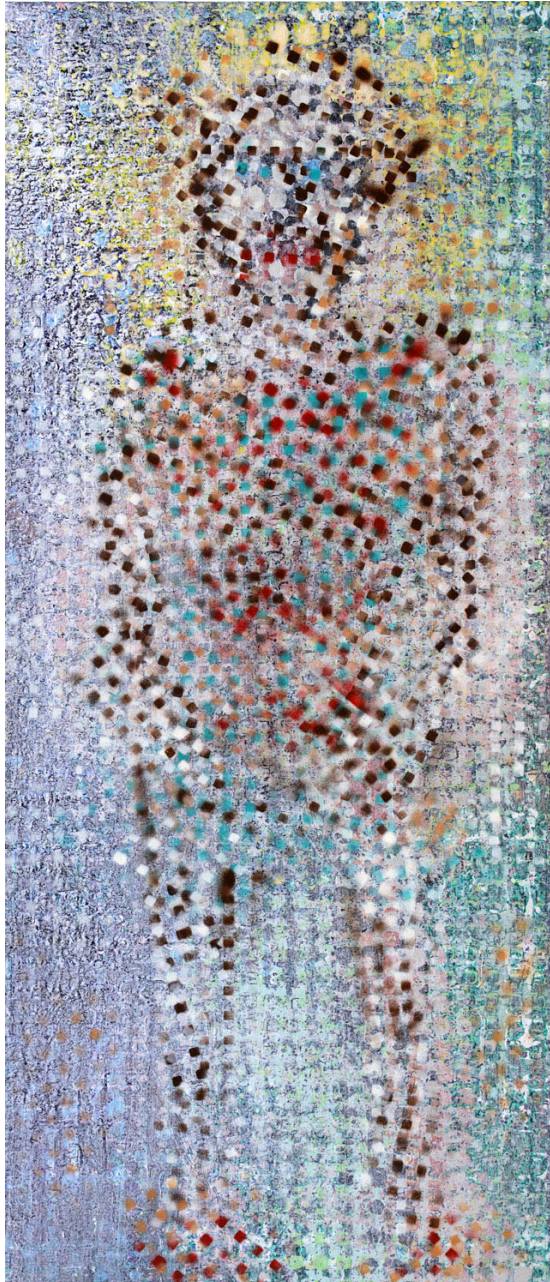
“Thick layers of paint contrast with thinly applied glazes to create depth and shadows. The work is painted flat and worked around the surface, allowing paint to flow freely as the painting emerges.”



Vignette — 46" x 54"
Acrylic on Canvas

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Most recently the grid paintings have evolved into figurative works that beg the viewer to discover human forms.

“The image in the painting appears as though it is becoming, or appearing out of the mists of time, a specter of things to come.”

Nigh — 56" x 24"
Acrylic on Canvas

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A row of color patterns emerge that appears to be five figures all standing neatly in a row - each one unique, yet uniform.



Quints — 48" x 60"
Acrylic on Canvas

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Callahan partially contains this image with a suggestion of a frame. The figure escapes the formality of the container and becomes a modern abstraction. **Dude!** transforms the word “Dude” from the description of a fastidious person to being a contemporary casual greeting.



Dude! — 48" x 32"
Acrylic on Canvas

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Masque is one of the paintings in this show that begins to suggest that all is not as it appears on the surface. The figure hides its true appearance behind the mask.

Masque — 48" x 36"
Acrylic on Canvas



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Veruschka is a very specifically named piece referring to a high fashion model who invented herself and created her own striking persona.

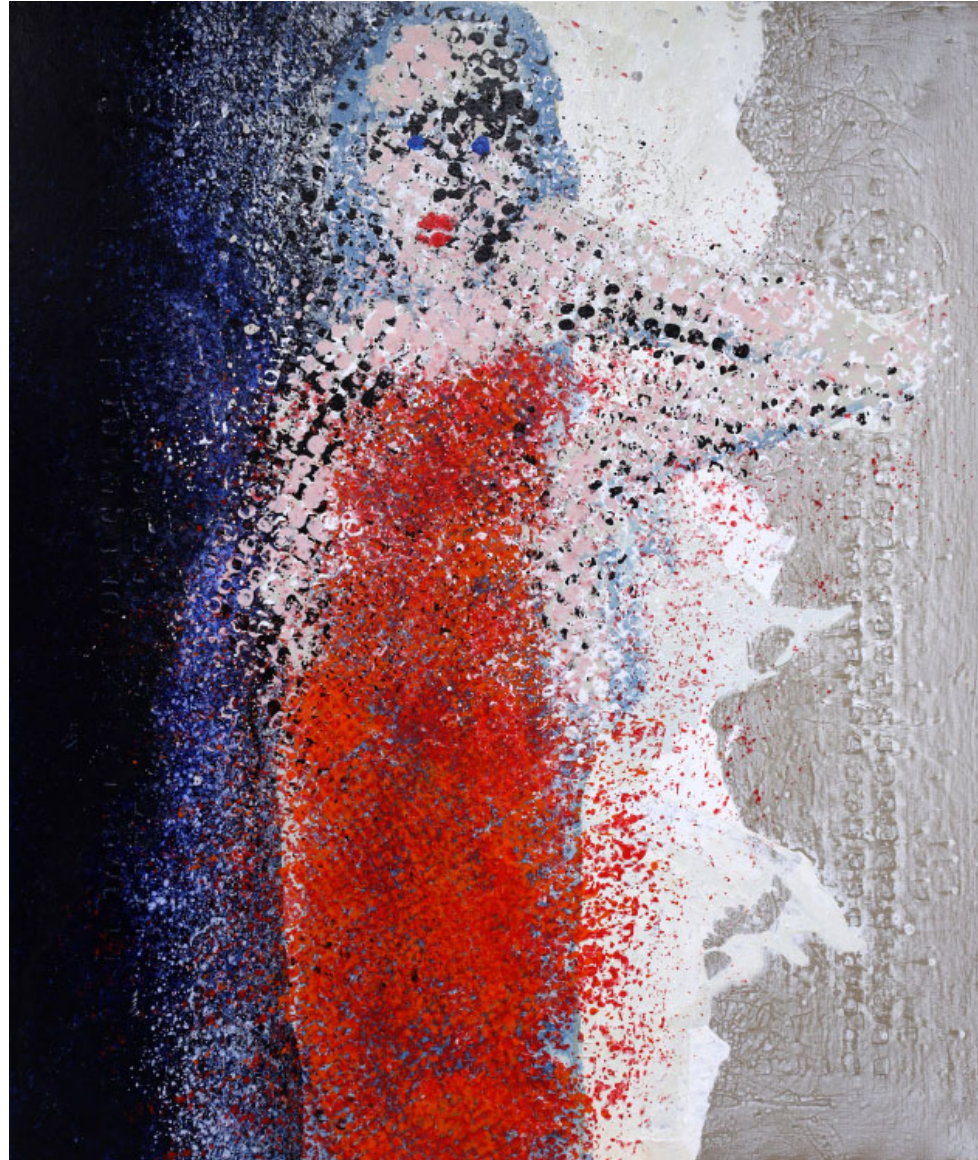
Callahan's handling of the dramatic pose channels the work of Gustav Klimt.

Veruschka — 72" x 50"
Acrylic on Canvas

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Rocket is high drama! But the figure is ambiguous - forceful or self-protective?



Rocket — 50" x 42"
Acrylic on Canvas

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This figure shields herself with her cultural dress. She appears to be exiting the canvas as she seeks her privacy and leaves behind only her essence of dissolving colors.



Kansai — 48" x 36"
Acrylic on Canvas

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Life, like art, is an ever-changing experience with many possible outcomes - a circus. The ambiguous figure suggests mystery of intention which is often hidden by makeup and dress.

Circus — 65" X 54"
Acrylic on Canvas



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Although a messenger can be a prophet or a person of great courage, he may be unrecognized. The artist has used a small canvas to subtly hint that a messenger isn't always imposing, unlike the information he brings.



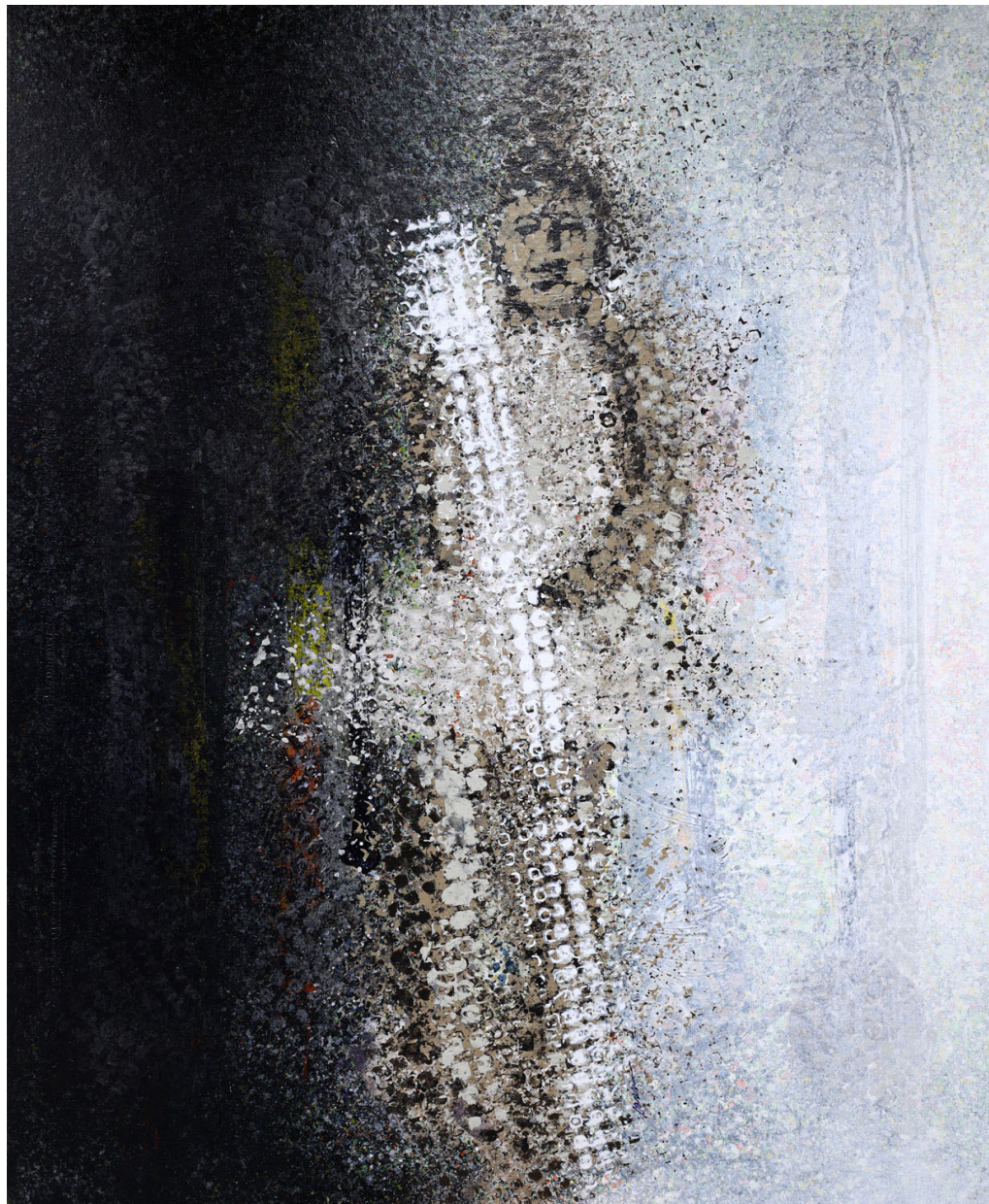
Messenger — 30" x 24"
Acrylic on Canvas

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Is this a lovely delicate ballet dancer or a brave Dahomey West African warrior? The suggestion is in the title.

Nanisca — 58" x 48"
Acrylic on Canvas

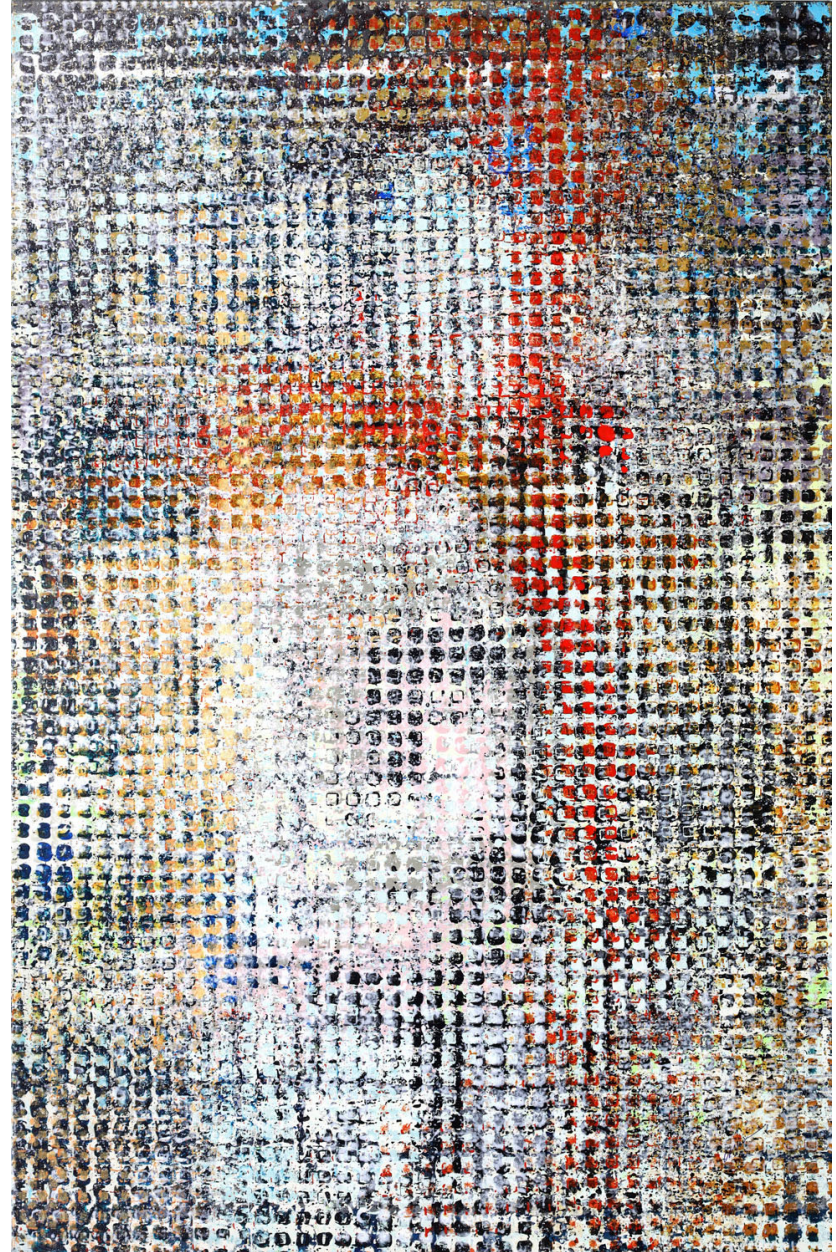


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The colors and patterns in *Magua* hint at Callahan's reference to a character in *The Last of the Mohicians*. The "sly fox" moves in and out of the grids as a timeless reminder of the complexity of another culture.

Magua — 61" x 40"
Acrylic on Canvas

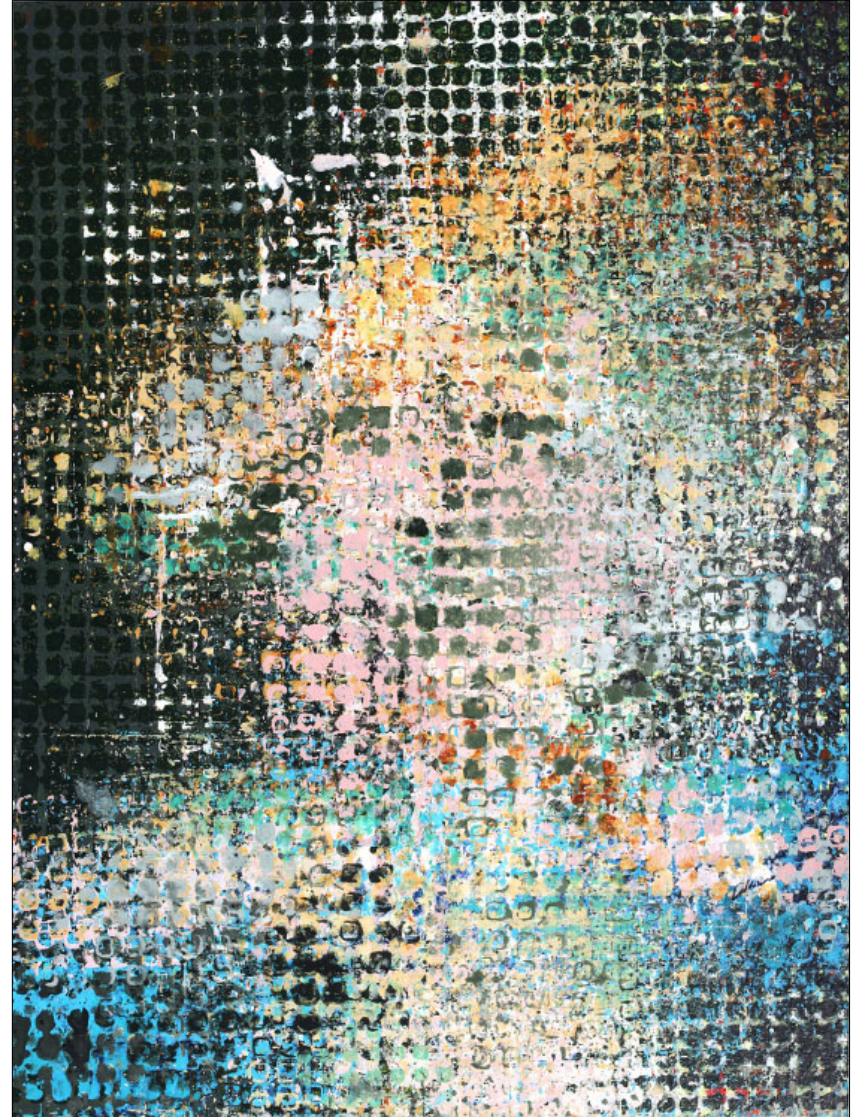


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“Painting is a physical activity and my whole body becomes part of the process, relying on intuition to fuel next steps. Reflecting a passionate love of the process, and an intense appreciation of color depth and texture bring unexpected combinations to life. The result is a blend of light and shadow, color and transparency creating a new portal for viewing.”

Oracle— 48" x 36"
Acrylic on Canvas



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When seen in ambient light, the viewer will discover the background squares in this painting are reflective gold paint. The saffron colors and the gilt suggest a reference to someone who was one of the most powerful women in the modern world.

Indira — 54" x 29"
Acrylic on Canvas

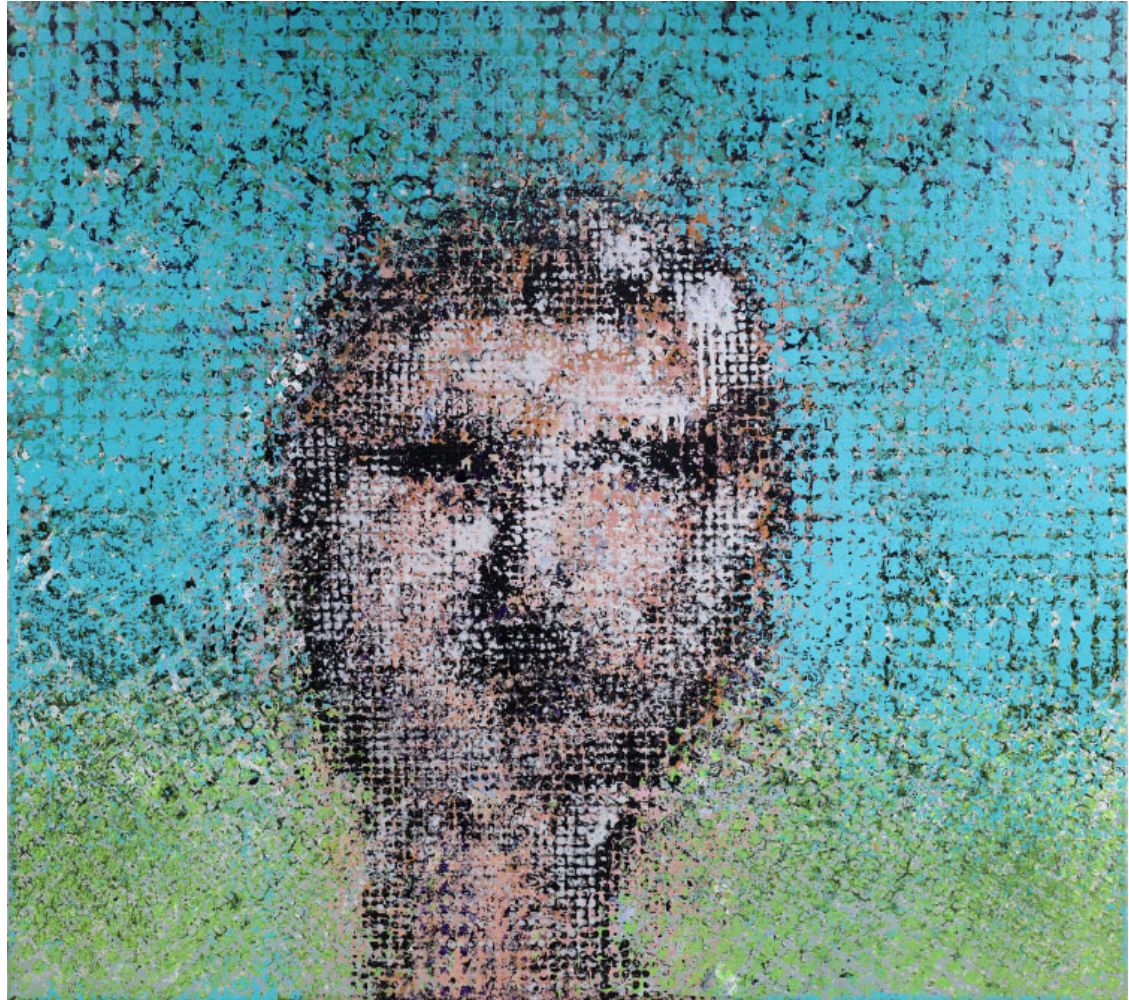


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A steely gaze and simple straightforward position on the canvas suggests a powerful figure. Is this the Joseph whose interpretation of dreams enchanted the Pharaoh, or a modern Joseph known to the artist?

Joseph — 48" x 54"
Acrylic on Canvas



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The Easter Island statues come to mind when viewing this mystical figure. An interesting palette choice brings the face forward, appearing out of time and place.

Moai — 54" x 29"
Acrylic on Canvas

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United by a common destination, this group of figures moves together. Is this a pilgrimage, a dance or merely a social group? The answer is up to the viewer.



Caravan — 52" x 68"
Acrylic on Canvas

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“A fascination with multiple ways of applying paint to canvas led to my exploration of the use of uniquely created grid patterns.

Creating work by overlaying different colors applied with grids brought texture into a whole new perspective.

Having been trained as a graphic designer working with halftone photography for print purposes, gave me an understanding of how paint could be applied to canvas using grids, creating paintings that are worked and re-worked, adding layers and intrigue.

Building upon previously applied paint with new color creates surfaces that go beyond other application processes including with brushes. Layers of acrylic paint varying in saturation and density create a history in certain areas—a history the viewer can see through to grid levels beneath the surfaces, activated and resulting in a saturation of color and texture.”

