

ARTnews

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Reviews: New York

Moe Brooker

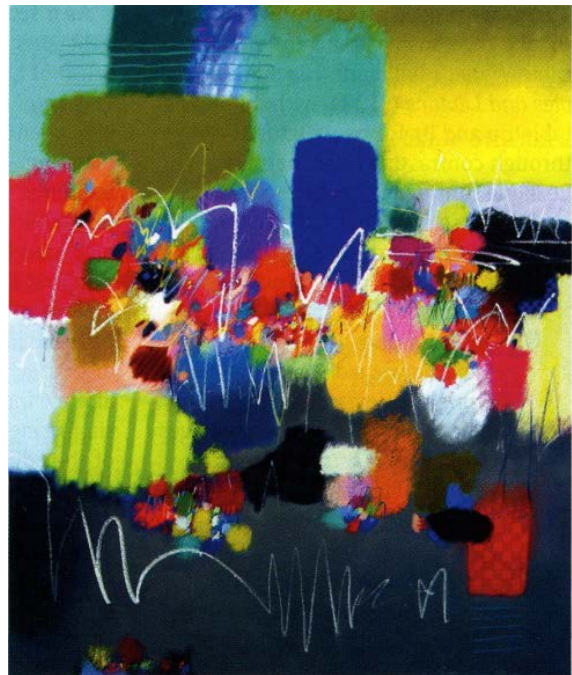
June Kelly Gallery

With their multicolor palette, assorted geometric shapes, and intermittent lines and markings, Moe Brooker's kinetic paintings emulate the spontaneity and excitement of jazz.

The largest paintings in this show proved to be the most visually engaging. Brooker's massive diptych *Everything Is On Its Way to Somehow #2* (2008-9), nearly eleven feet across, boasts layers of brightly colored forms that seem to dance across the picture plane. Striped and checkered patterns interconnect with small, spherical paint applications to create a composition that is at once chaotic and homogenous. In the 6-by-5-foot *For Trane & Parker* (2008-10), named after famed jazz musicians John Coltrane and Charlie Parker, the action is localized in the center of the canvas. Overlapping rectangles are covered with groupings of circular speckles. Wavy, white lines that resemble patterns formed by notes on sheet music seem to tie everything together, except for a few stray spots and lines that refuse to be contained.

Several of these pieces, with their energy and musicality, recall Kandinsky's "Composition" paintings, while others, with their gently blended blocks of color, seem to fall more under the influence of Rothko. In *Listen With Your Eyes* (2009), shades of olive green softly intersect with oranges, reds, and pinks, rendering the work somewhat subdued. The same holds true for *What is was, What was is* (2009), in which more of these intersecting color blocks—in shades of orange, pink, purple, green, and gray—dominate the canvas.

This exhibition of paintings ranged in intensity, volume, and rhythm, much as the music it alludes to does, and it was able to hold the attention of the audience throughout. —*Stephanie Strasnick*



Moe Brooker, *For Trane & Parker*, 2008-10, mixed media and oil on canvas, 72" x 60". June Kelly Gallery.