

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.



WASSEF BOUTROS-GHALI

*A Retrospective*



# WASSEF BOUTROS-GHALI

## *A Retrospective*

Published on the occasion of the exhibition of  
Wassef Boutros-Ghali: A Retrospective  
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**LEILA HELLER GALLERY.**

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Marvin Doctor, Registrar and Preparator

Catalogue Designed by Marvin Doctor

Cover Image: *Le Troupeau (The Heard)*, 2002  
Back Cover Image: *Untitled*, 2014

Wassef Boutros-Ghali's compositions convey a vivid sense of movement, their tensions and harmonies evoking shifting light, landscapes, and the cultural influences that informed his vision. Moving away from the conventions of figuration, he embraces abstraction as a modernist form of self-expression. Boutros-Ghali's paintings demonstrate a refined balance between architectural precision and painterly sensitivity, transforming geometry into a contemplative language marked by constant visual flux.

Spanning his distinct creative phases, the works in this exhibition reflect an enduring artistic legacy shaped across Cairo, Paris, and New York City. Boutros-Ghali's practice was informed by both cultural hybridity and political upheaval, and his paintings mirror this duality, balancing a sense of instability with the order of architectural form. By uniting these works, the exhibition presents a cohesive narrative of his artistic development. The artist's catalogue raisonné, prepared by Skira, was published in May 2026.



*Diamond*, 1978  
Acrylic on canvas  
44h x 36w in. / 111.7h x 91.4w cm



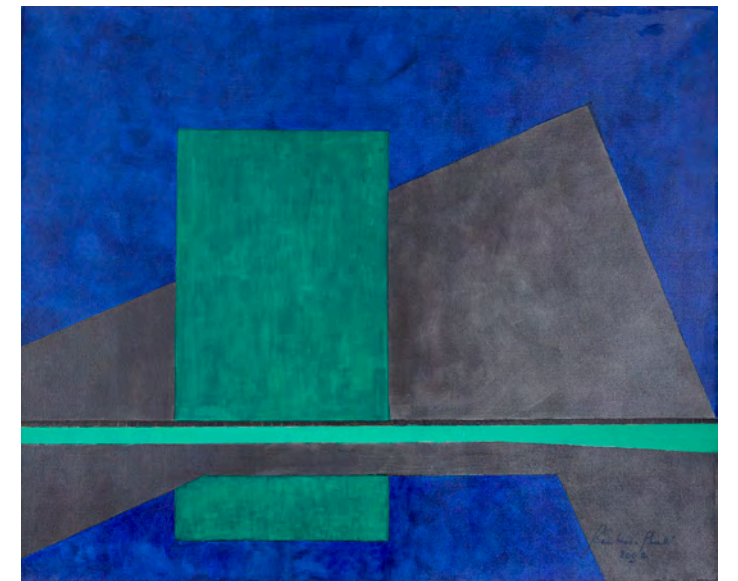
*Untitled*, 1994  
Acrylic on canvas  
22h x 26w in. / 55.8h x 66w cm



*The Chinese Spoon*, 2002  
Acrylic on canvas  
46h x 46w in. / 116.8h x 116.8w cm



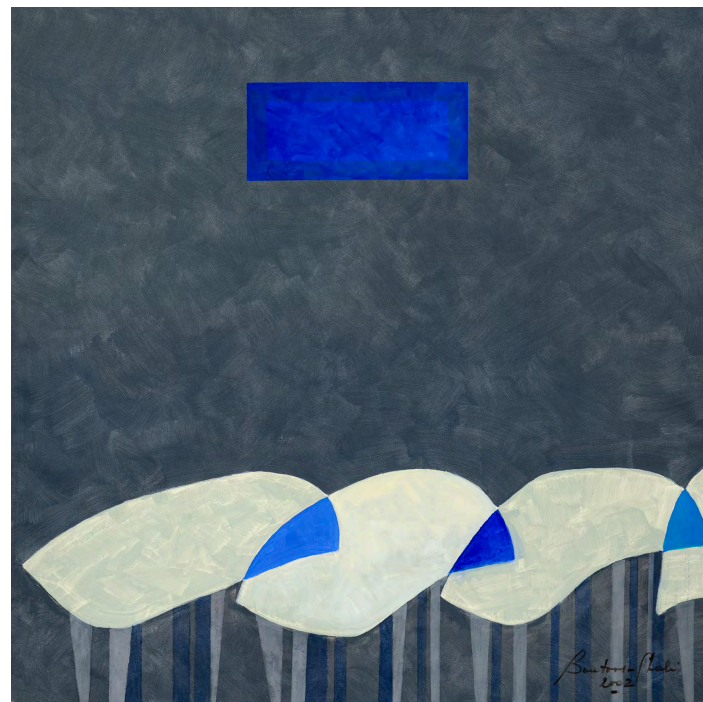
*Eruption*, 2002  
Acrylic on canvas  
30h x 30w in. / 76.2h x 76.2w cm



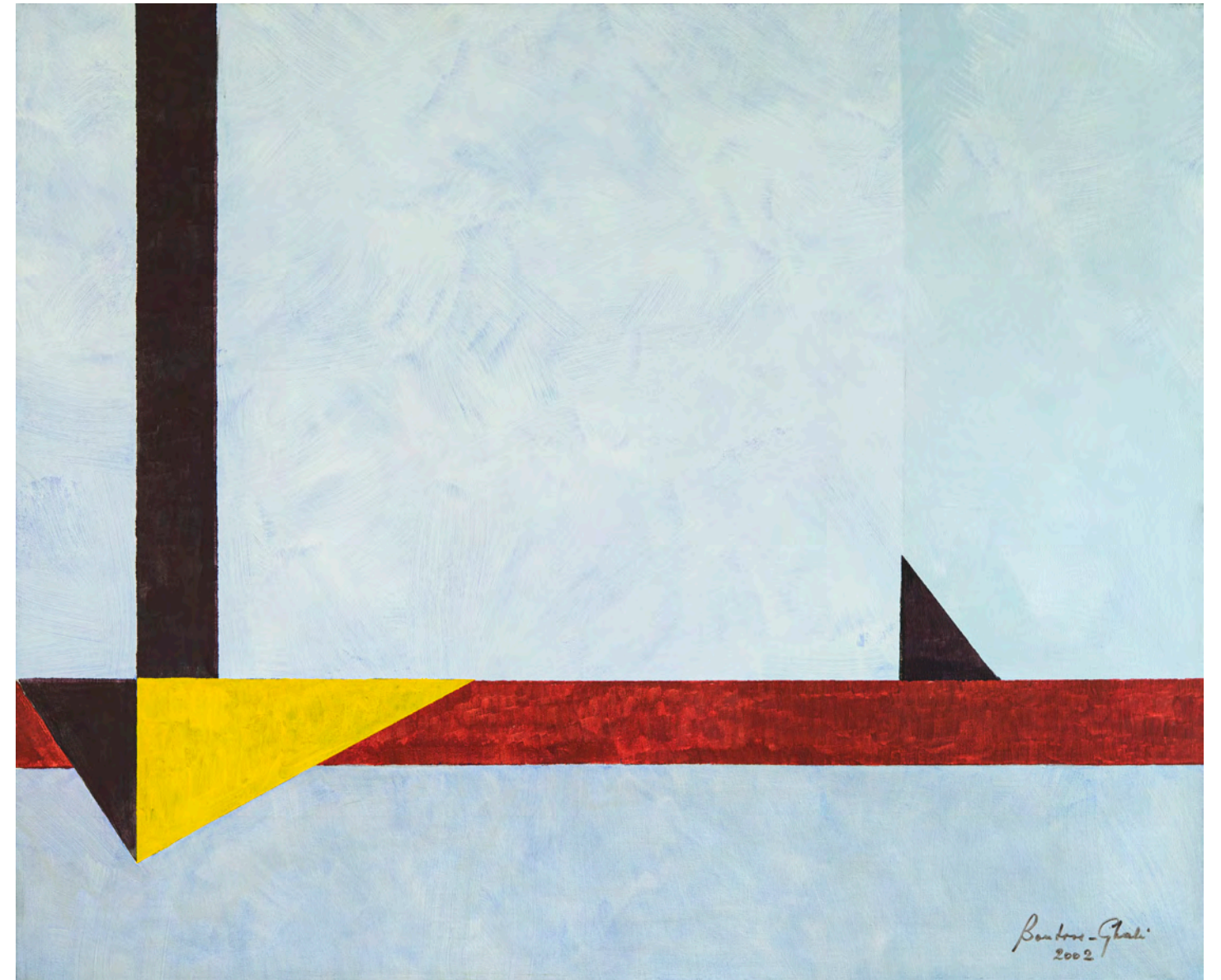
*Horizon XII*, 2002  
Acrylic on canvas  
38h x 46w in. / 96.5h x 116.8w cm



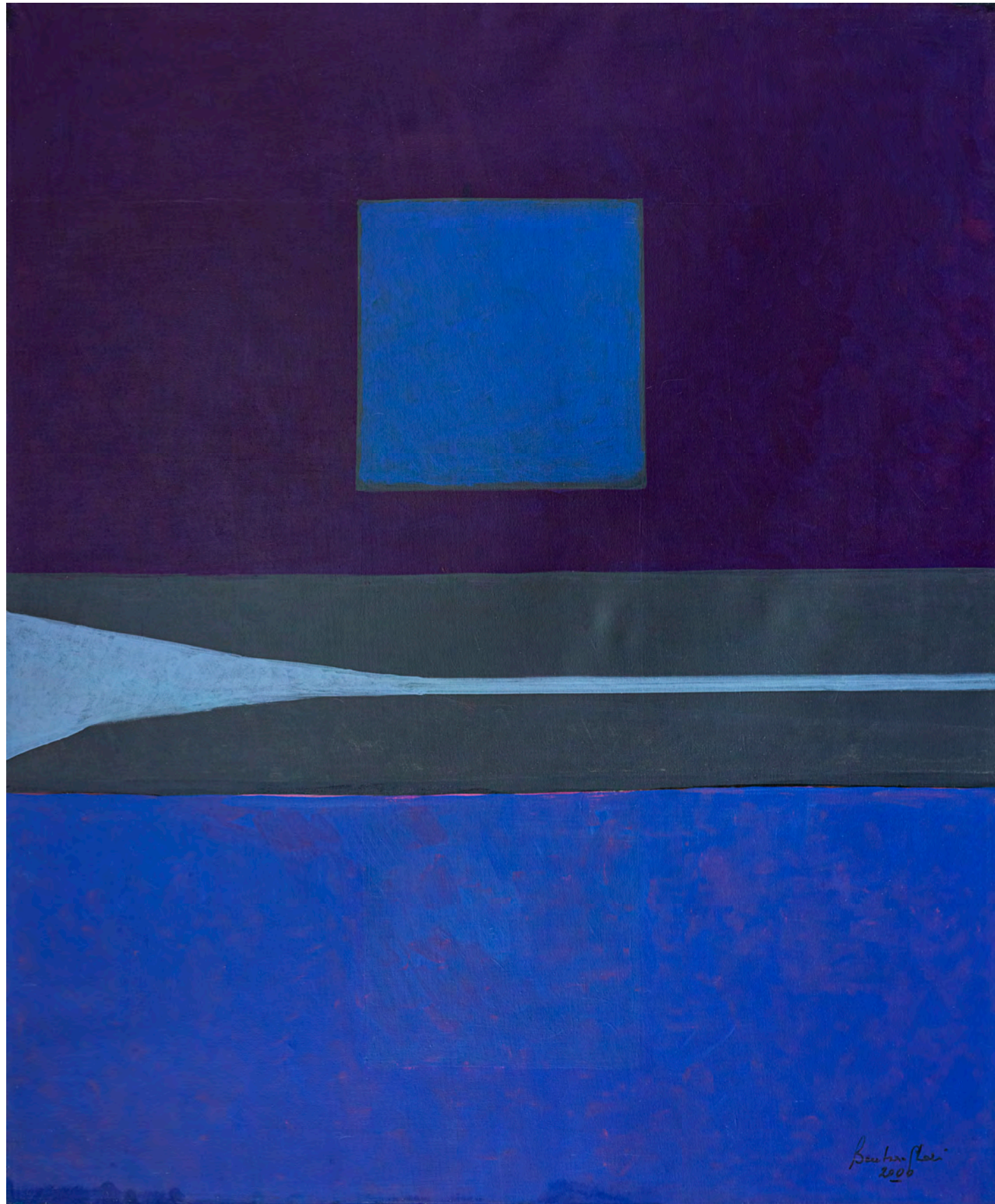
*Last Spring*, 2021  
Acrylic on canvas  
54h x 54w in. / 137.1h x 131.7w cm



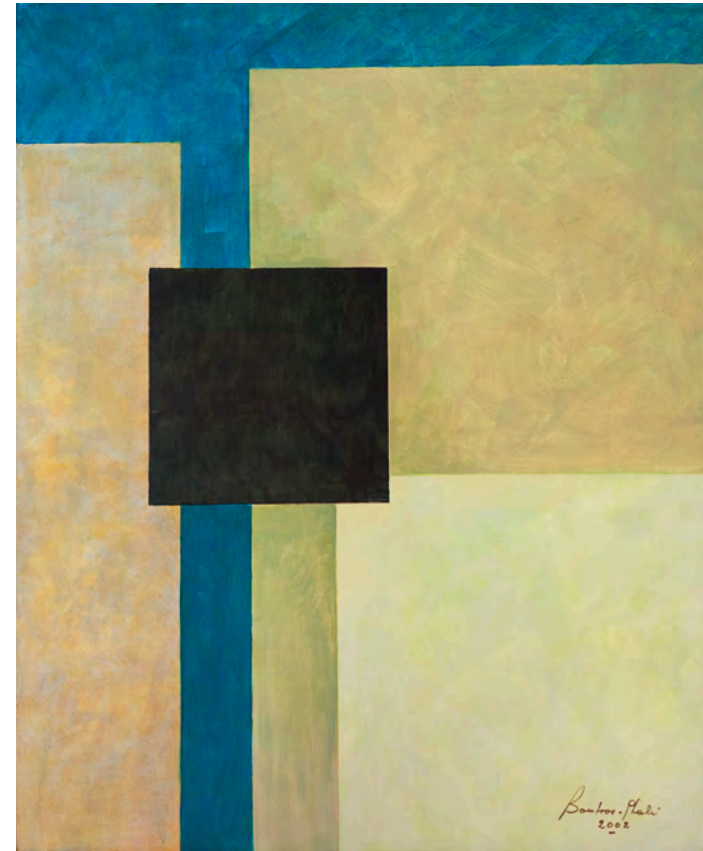
*Le Troupeau (The Heard)*, 2002  
Acrylic on canvas  
46h x 46w in. / 116.8h x 116.8w cm



*Summer*, 2002  
Acrylic on canvas  
38h x 46w in. / 96.5h x 116.8w cm



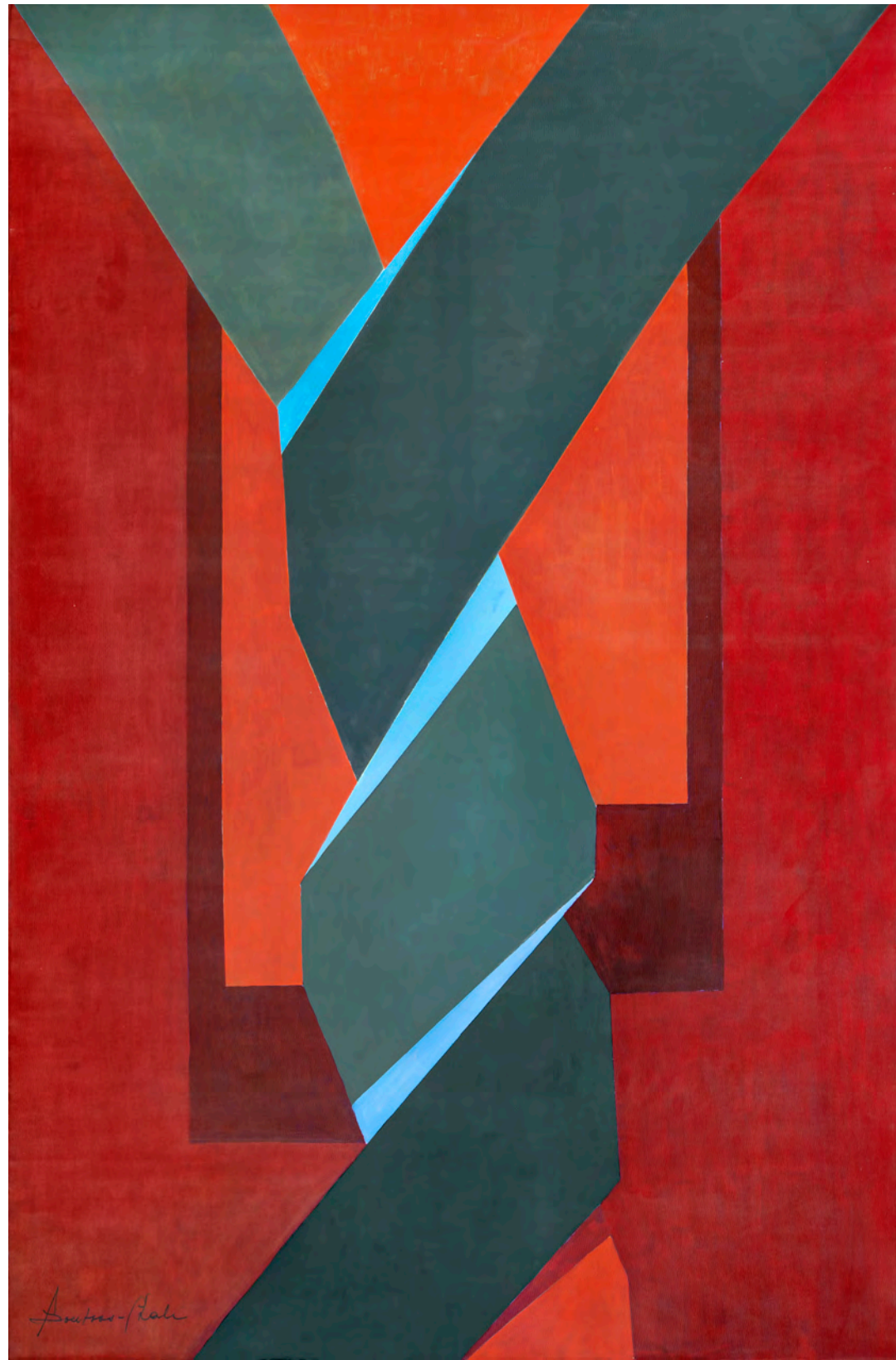
*Night, 2000*  
Acrylic on canvas  
46h x 38w in. / 116.8h x 96.5w cm



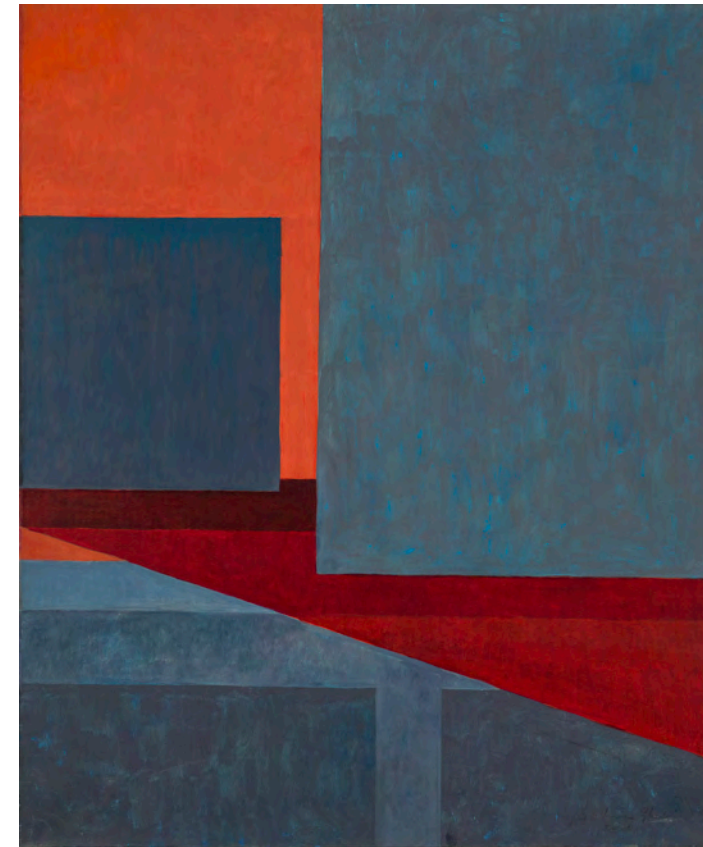
*The Black Square, 2002*  
Acrylic on canvas  
46h x 38w in. / 116.8h x 96.5w cm



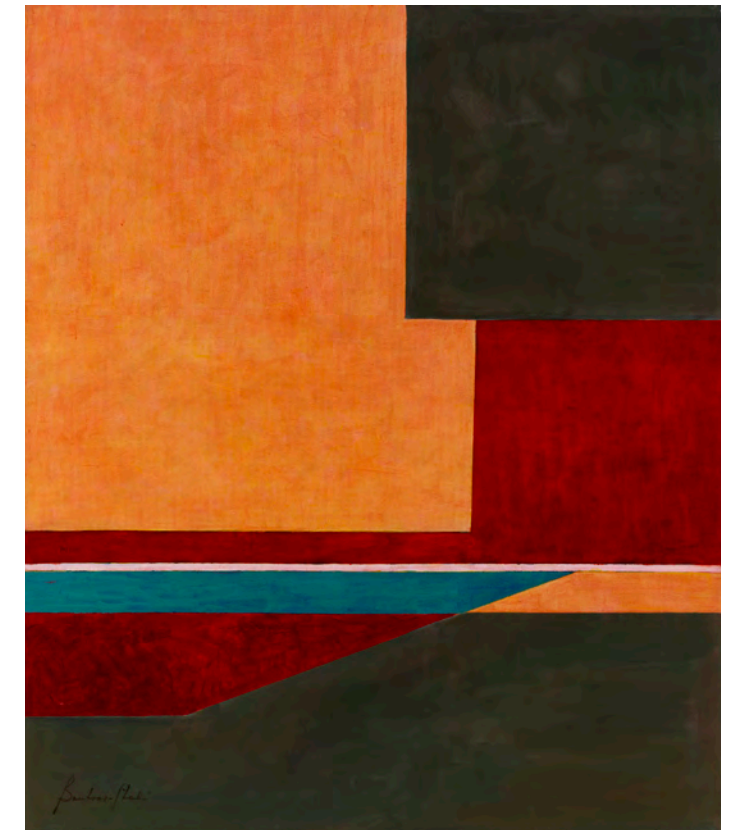
*Red Shape, 2013*  
Acrylic on canvas  
65h x 55w in. / 165.1h x 139.7w cm



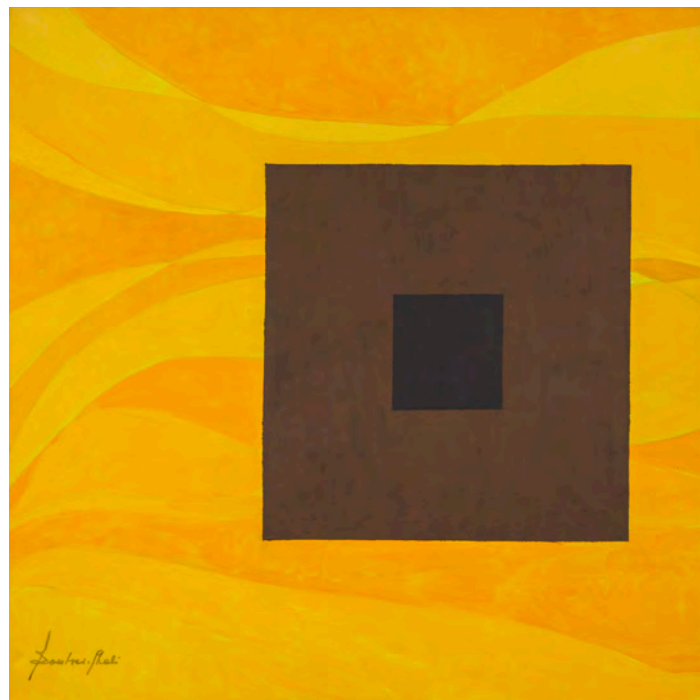
*Love, 2010*  
Acrylic on canvas  
79h x 52w in. / 200.6h x 132w cm



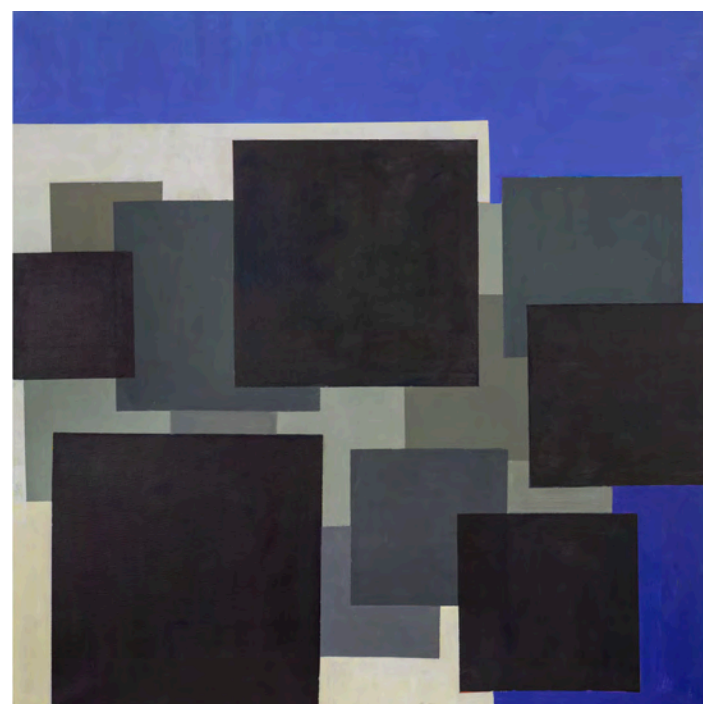
*The Maze, 2001*  
Acrylic on canvas  
46h x 38w in. / 116.8h x 96.5w cm



*Untitled, 2011*  
Acrylic on canvas  
46h x 38w in. / 116.8h x 96.5w cm



*Square in a Square*, 2015  
Acrylic on canvas  
38h x 38w in. / 96.5h x 96.5w cm



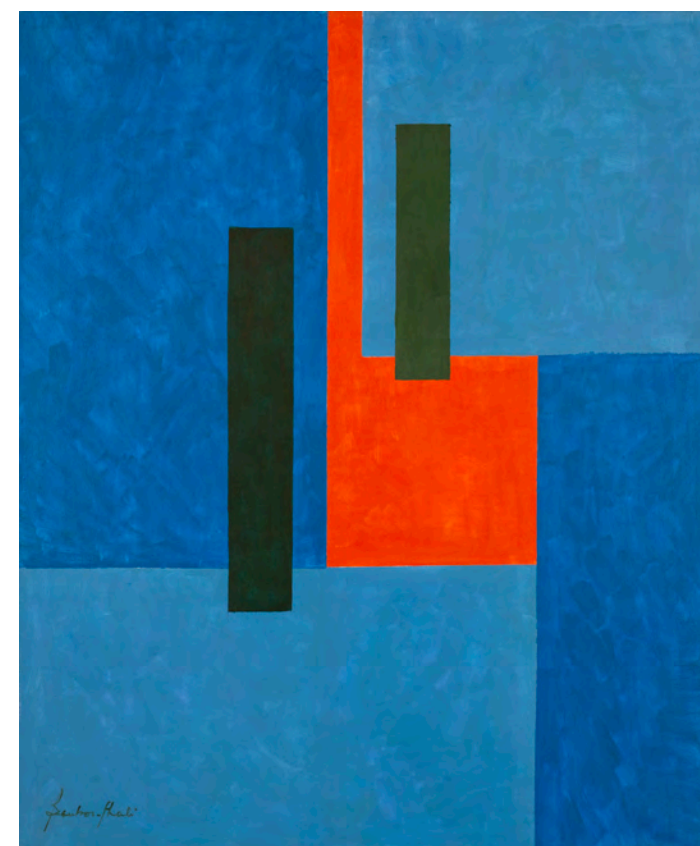
*Square Rain*, 2021  
Acrylic on canvas  
54h x 54w in. / 137.1h x 137.1w cm



*Shadow of the Red*, 2019  
Acrylic on canvas  
27.6h x 27.6w in. / 70.1h x 70.1w cm



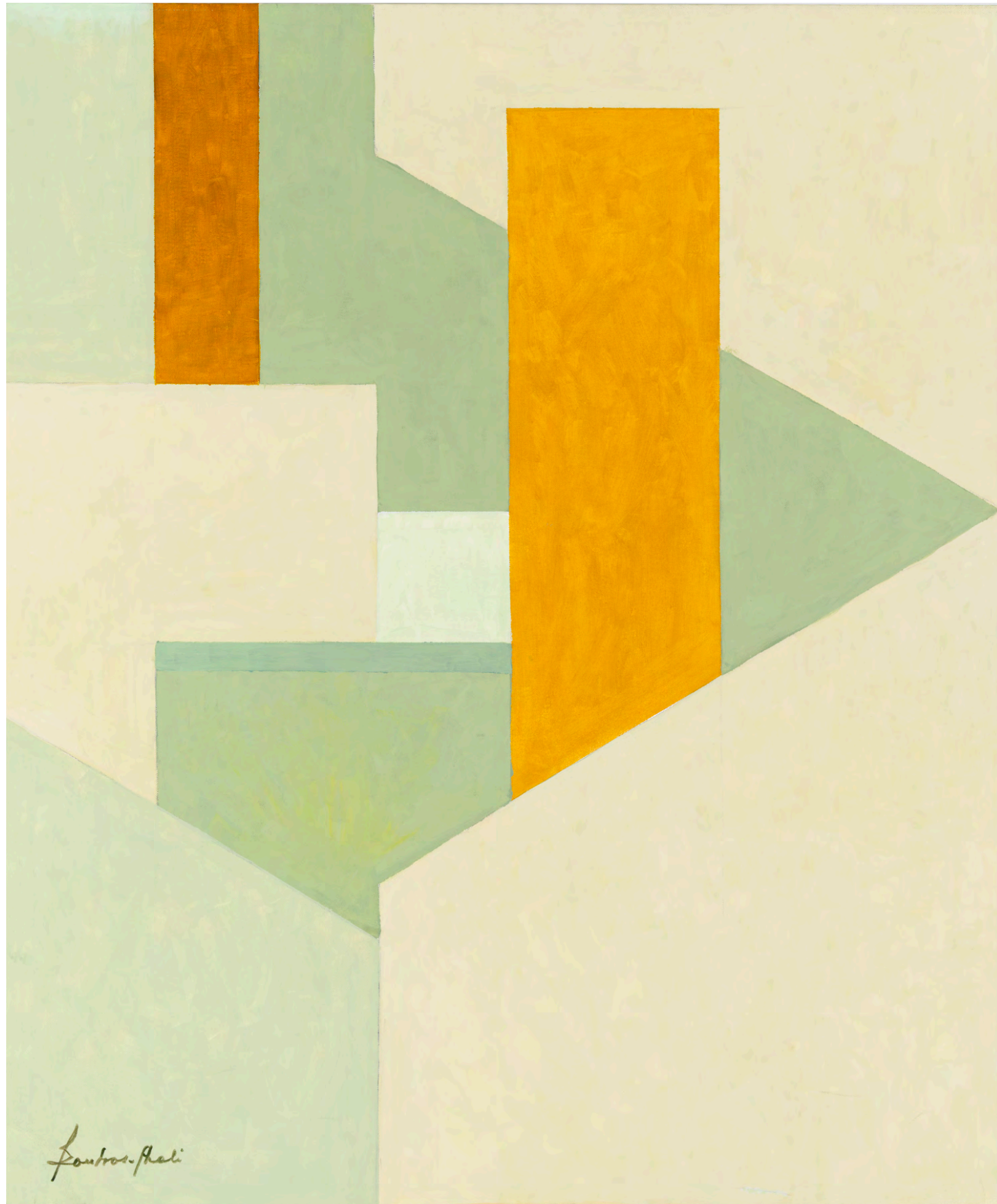
*The King, 2021*  
Acrylic on canvas  
54h x 54w in. / 137.1h x 137.1w cm



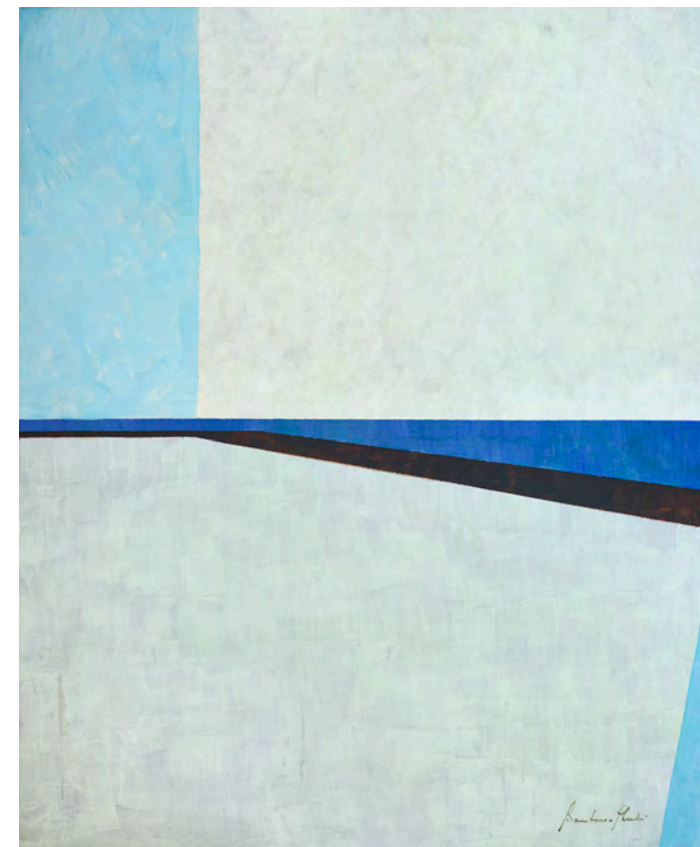
*Untitled, 2014*  
Acrylic on canvas  
46h x 38w in. / 116.8h x 96.5w cm



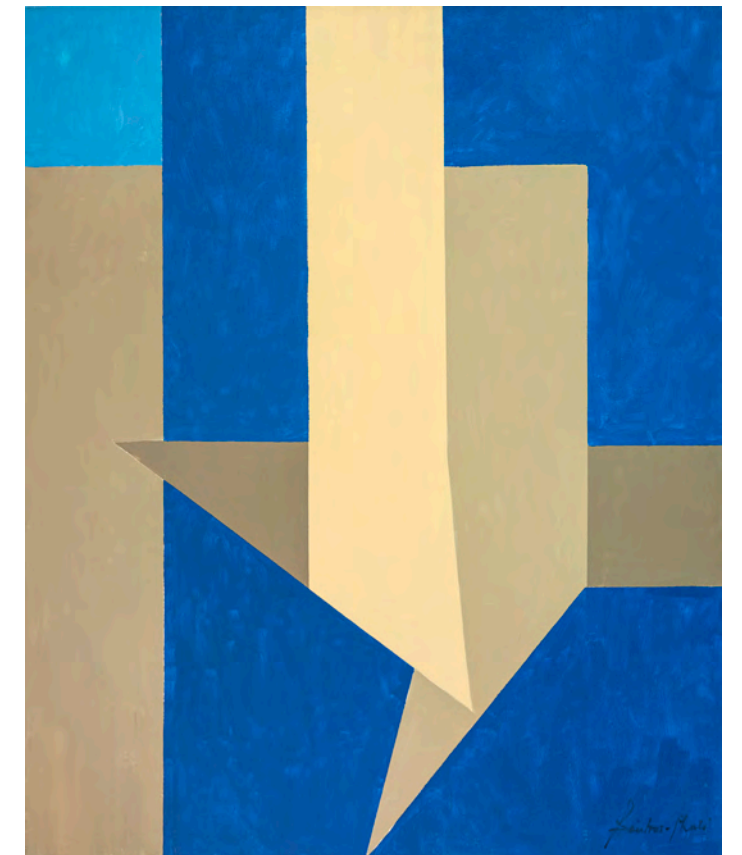
*Untitled, 2020*  
Acrylic on canvas  
46h x 46w in. / 116.8h x 116.8w cm



*Untitled, 2014*  
Acrylic on canvas  
46h x 38w in. / 116.8h x 96.5w cm



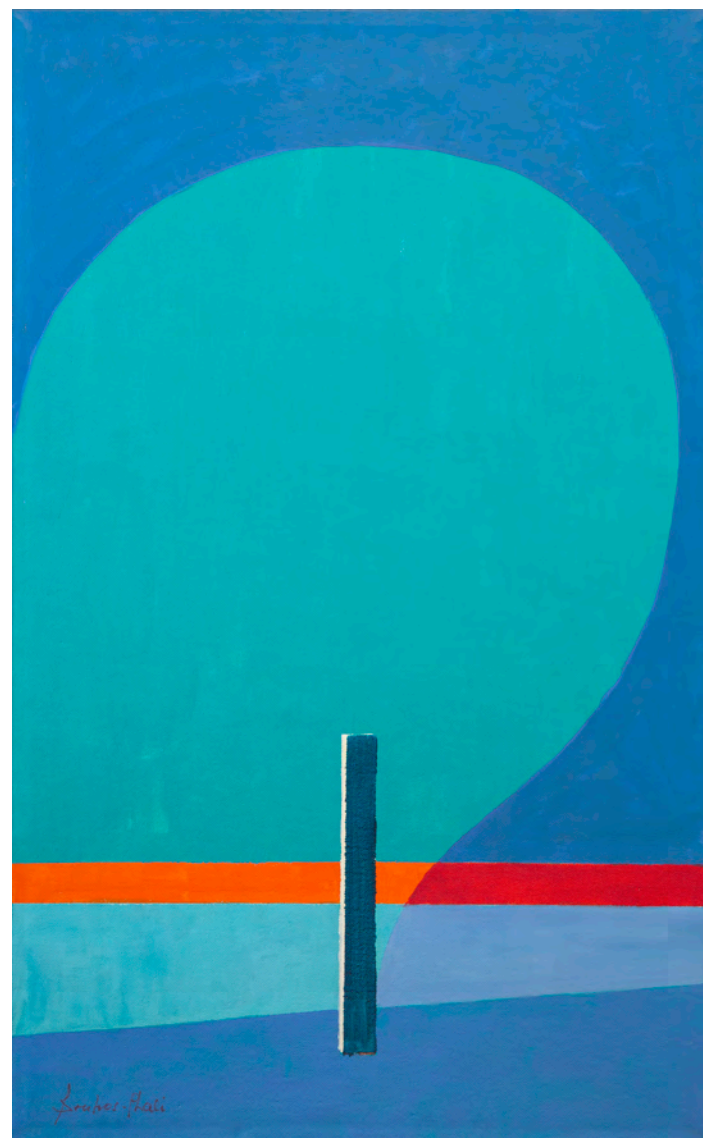
*Untitled, 2009*  
Acrylic on canvas  
46h x 38w in. / 116.8h x 96.5w cm



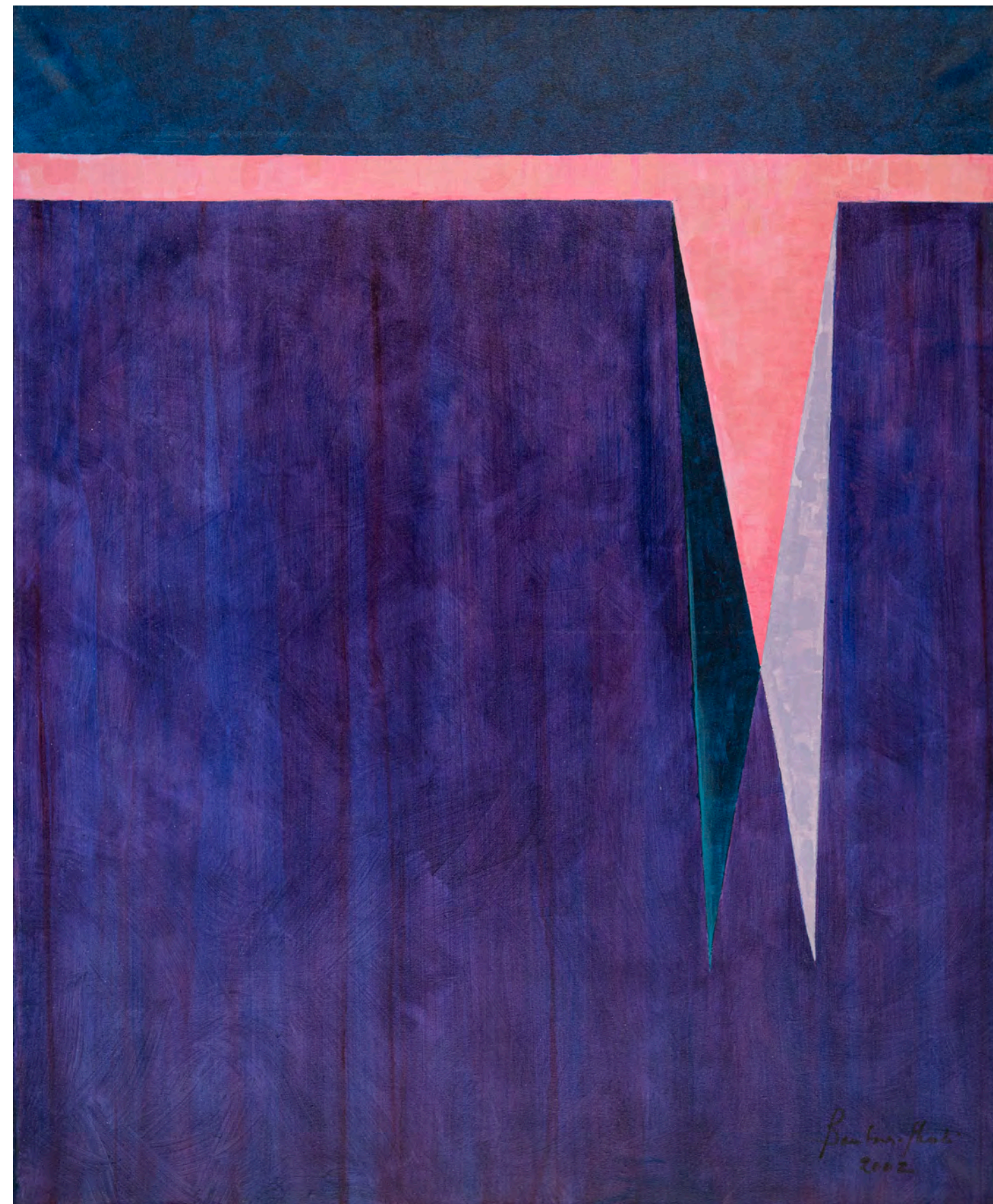
*Untitled, 2014*  
Acrylic on canvas  
46h x 38w in. / 116.8h x 96.5w cm



*Untitled*, 2013  
Acrylic on canvas  
28h x 22w in. / 71.1h x 55.8w cm



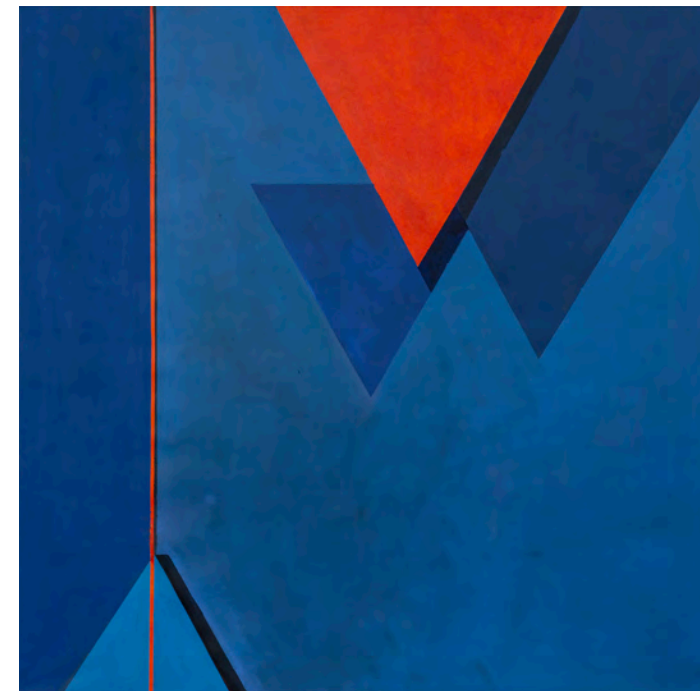
*Untitled*, 2015  
Acrylic on canvas  
32h x 20w in. / 81.2h x 50.8w cm



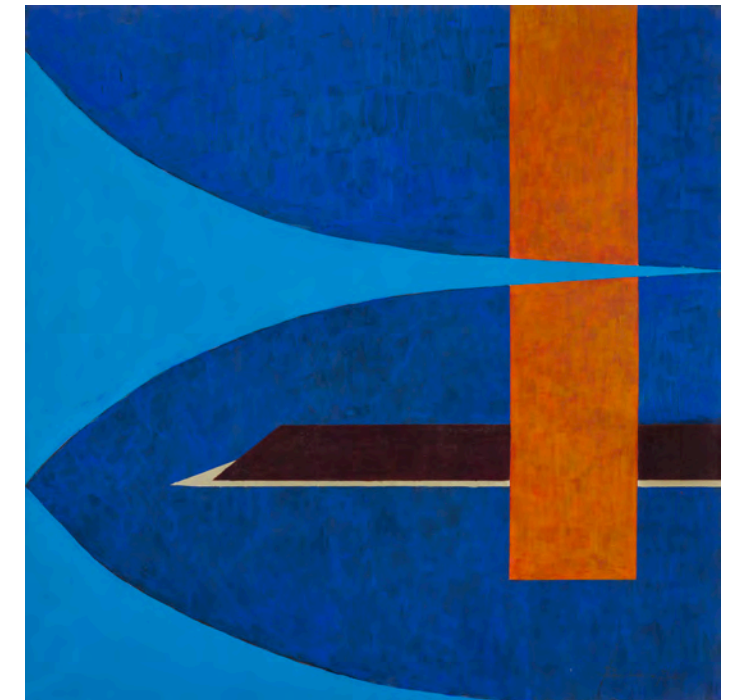
*Untitled*, 2002  
Acrylic on canvas  
46h x 38w in. / 116.8h x 96.5w cm



*Untitled, 2016*  
Acrylic on canvas  
33.5h x 27.5w in. / 85h x 69.8w cm



*Untitled, 2020*  
Acrylic on canvas  
46h x 46w in. / 116.8h x 116.8w cm



*Untitled, 2012*  
Acrylic on canvas  
46h x 46w in. / 116.8h x 116.8w cm



*Untitled, 2016*  
Acrylic on canvas  
46h x 38w in. / 116.8h x 96.5w cm



*Untitled, 2014*  
Acrylic on canvas  
38h x 38w in. / 96.5h x 96.5w cm



*Black Shadow*, 2013  
Acrylic on canvas  
65h x 55w in. / 165.1h x 139.7w cm

## WASSEF BOUTROS GHALI

1924 - 2023

Born in Cairo (1924–2023) to a political family, Boutros-Ghali pursued art from a young age, training under Jaro Hilbert. He initially chose architecture but later dedicated himself to painting, merging structural precision with lyrical color harmonies.

As a U.N. consultant, he worked on urban projects across the Middle East and Africa while deepening his artistic practice. Political upheaval in 1963 forced him to experiment with Chinese ink drawings, shaping his later style.

Moving to New York in 1971 revitalized his approach, shifting his focus from figurative improvisations to bold abstraction influenced by Rothko and Reinhardt. Larger canvases and vibrant acrylics became his signature. A return to Cairo in 1985 provided uninterrupted freedom to refine his meticulous yet expressive compositions.

Boutros-Ghali continued to paint until his passing on March 15, 2023, at the age of 98.

## CV

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 Wassef Boutros-Ghali: A Retrospective and Catalogue Raisonné launch; Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai
- 2023 Wassef Boutros-Ghali: Echoes of Creativity; albertz benda gallery, Los Angeles
- 2023 Wassef Boutros-Ghali; Arts Club London; curated by Wedel Art, London
- 2021 Wassef Boutros-Ghali /LEVANTE; Christine König Galerie, Vienna
- 2021 Wassef Boutros-Ghali: Paintings 2000 - 2016; Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago
- 2020 Wassef Boutros-Ghali: A Retrospective; albertz benda gallery, New York

### GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 Expansive Change: Distortion as Dialogue in Modern and Contemporary Art; Leila Heller Gallery, New York
- 2024 World Builders: Artist as Architect; Leila Heller Gallery, New York
- 2022 Exhibition N°120 (maybe); Galerie Balice Hertling, Paris

### ART FAIRS

- 2026 Art Basel Doha; Leila Heller Gallery, Doha
- 2025 Abu Dhabi Art Fair: Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai
- 2024 Abu Dhabi Art Fair: Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai
- 2021 The Armory Show; albertz benda gallery, New York
- 2021 The Armory Show; Rhona Hoffman Gallery, New York
- 2021 Frieze Masters: Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Albertz Benda Gallery, London
- 2020 The Armory Show: Rhona Hoffman Gallery, New York
- 2019 Art Basel Miami; Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Miami

### PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Barjeel Art Foundation, Shariah, UAE  
Boca Raton Museum of Art, Boca Raton, FL

### SELECTED PRESS & BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 2025 Al Qassemi, Sultan Sooud, Introduction, Catalogue Raisonné
- 2025 Vally, Sumayya. "Abstraction is an Ancient Technology," Catalogue Raisonné
- 2025 Adamson, Glenn. "A Conversation with the Artist," Catalogue Raisonné
- 2025 Honarpisheh, Donna. Title TBD, Catalogue Raisonné
- 2021 Gyimesi, Jenna. "These Retirees Were Just Artists in Waiting," AARP, July, 2021
- 2020 Hawa, Kaleem. "Wassef Boutros-Ghali: A Retrospective," Brooklyn Rail, December 20, 2020
- 2020 Clavarino, Elena. "Wassef Boutros-Ghali: A Retrospective," Graydon Carter's Air Mail
- 2020 MacAdam, Barbara. "Imaginary Geometry: Wassef Boutros Ghali's Art," New York, NY
- 2019 Grosso, Caroline. "Art Basel Miami Beach 2019: The Ultimate Guide to What to Do and What to See," L'Officiel USA. December 7, 2019
- 2003 El Chiaty, Wafika. "Wassef Boutros-Ghali: A Retrospective," Cairo, Egypt.