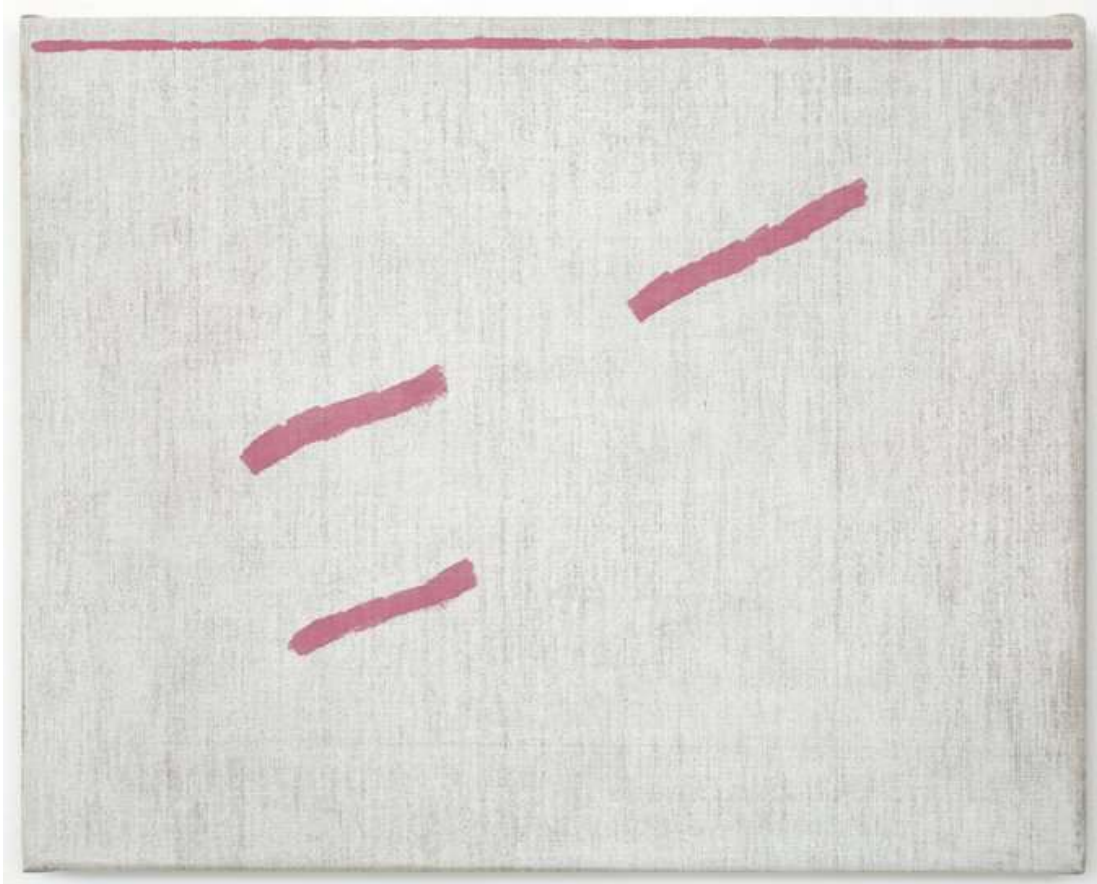


The New York Times



John Zurier's "Far (For Hreinn Fridfinnsson)," from 2016.

John Zurier

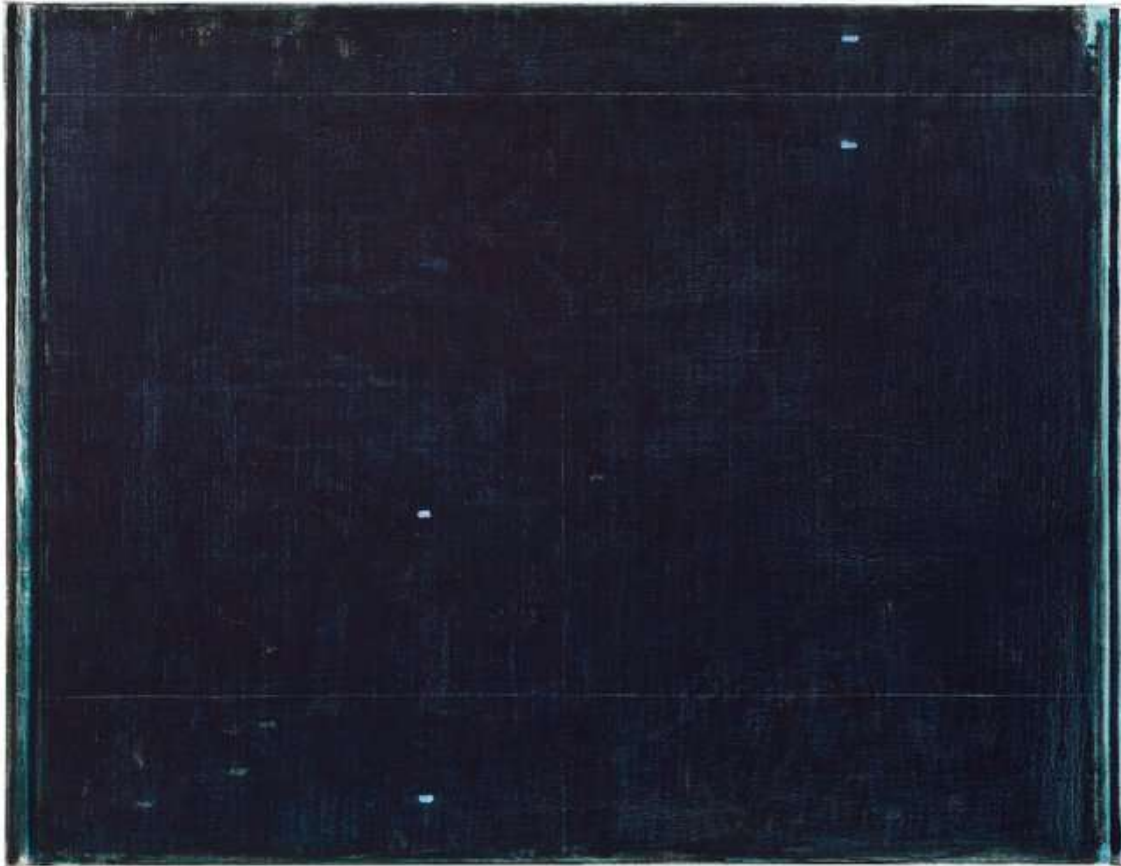
By Roberta Smith

Through Nov. 11. Peter Blum Gallery, 176 Grand Street, Manhattan; 212-244-6055, peterblumgallery.com

The Peter Blum Gallery has moved to a space on the Lower East Side that is so much like its previous one, on 57th Street, that it seems simply to have slightly expanded its space in all directions. The architectural resemblance can make you laugh, but "Stars Without Distance," John Zurier's show of new paintings here, may take your breath away.

Mr. Zurier has devoted over two decades to making increasingly engaging monochromatic paintings that are not quite monochromes. Their delicate fields of blue, mint green, pink, yellow or smudgy white are airy and semitransparent. Their brushwork is thin-skinned, and

there is much else going on: thin lines often border these fields or cut through them. Small boxy marks — dabs from a narrow brush — pace off distances at the sides or sneak into the fields where they sometimes resemble stars in the firmament. The paint moves into corners, creating irregularities that reveal other colors. These elements are especially clear in “Taktur,” a deep blue surface edged in lighter blue, with a wire-thin line crossing the field top and bottom. Each line has a white mark above and below it. These arrangements add intimations of quietly sparkling moonlit views at sea.



Mr. Zurier's "Taktur," from 2017.

Mr. Zurier's paintings are acts of full disclosure; you see every decision, gesture and mark that went into their making. This is true of many foundational postwar painters, especially Jackson Pollock and Robert Rauschenberg. But Mr. Zurier's process is more intuitive and personal. No detail of a painting determines any other; you absorb each, oddity by oddity, fitting them into the whole, and into the experience of really looking.