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Lloyd Martin's 2011 painting *Peak*

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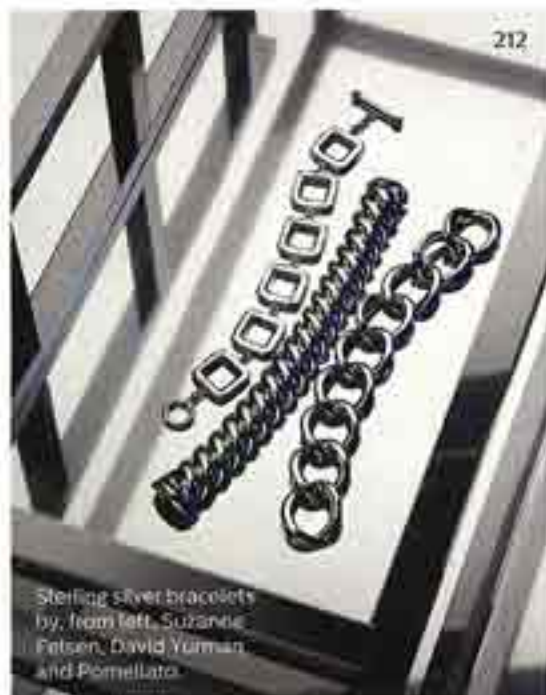
STAR POWER

Intrigued by the personal styles of Ralph Lauren and Ellen DeGeneres, as revealed in *Shortlist*? Revisit their homes that have been featured in our pages, starting with Lauren's Manhattan bath, above (elledecor.com/shortlisthomes).



SHINING THROUGH

Silver has long been a favorite of designers, who use it in innovative ways. See their stunning ideas in our roundup of the best silver rooms, including this kitchen by Jean-Louis Deniot (elledecor.com/silver).



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Sterling silver bracelets by, from left, Suzanne Felsen, David Yurman and Pomellato

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A Manhattan couple look to London—and to designer Steven Gambrel—to bring classical glamour to their Upper East Side apartment. *By Kathleen Hackett*

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In Mexico City, architect Miguel Ángel Aragonés creates a gleaming white home for his family that is a study in clarity and composition. *By Ingrid Abramovitch*

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For his Paris pied-à-terre, Brazilian designer Sig Bergamin prefers a palette as deep, rich, and evocative as the city. *By Celia Barbour*



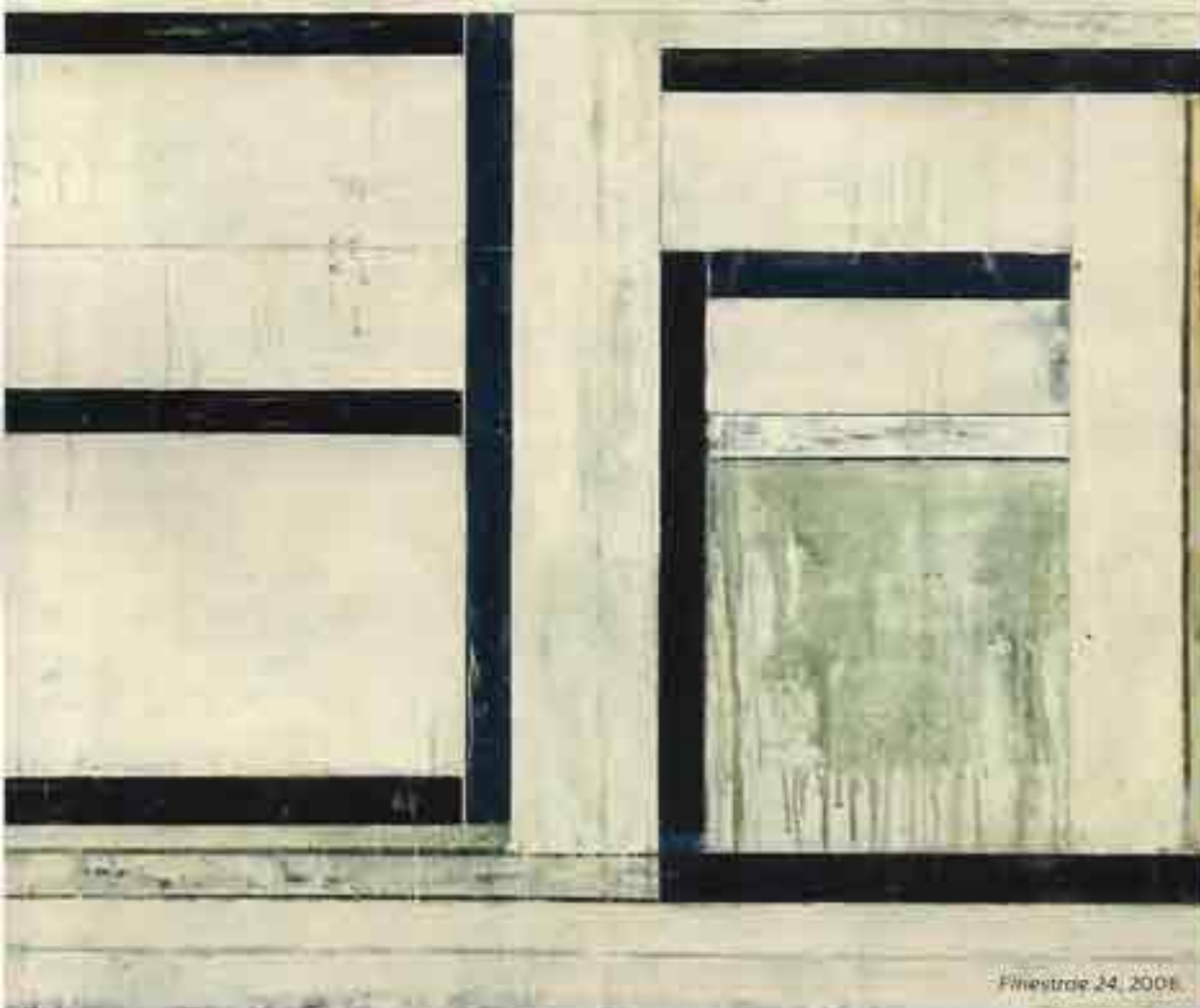
LLOYD MARTIN

This Providence-based artist looks to derelict buildings and urban infrastructure to inspire his colorful abstract paintings.

BY DAVID COLMAN

Most of us do our fair share of maneuvering between reason and intuition, left brain and right brain, broccoli and chocolate. But few of us can transform that tricky act of navigation into artwork as skillfully as Lloyd Martin, who over the past decade has created a series of colorfully gridded paintings. His latest body of work suggests neat walls of once-plain wood planks now vibrating with intense hues.

When Martin was a student at the Rhode Island School of Design in the late 1970s, he found himself torn between the two sides of one of modern art's greatest aesthetic face-offs: the expansive canvases of the Abstract Expressionists versus the reductivist sensibilities of the minimalists who had swept into fashion in the 1960s. "There's definitely that tension in the work," says Martin. "I build the paint up, and dismantle it, and paint over it. A lot of the evidence >



Finestra 24, 2008



Quad, 2004



Skirt, 2013

left behind is what ends up being the finished piece. I work toward something and then circumvent it intentionally, just to keep some kind of dialogue going."

Settling in Providence after college, Martin built his practice and his following with paintings that evoke a hybrid of landscape and abstraction, adapting the shapes and colors he saw in his daily life into moody canvases. Over time, the abstractions began to grow increasingly orderly, with more straight lines and blocky shapes, which came to resemble windowpanes, tennis courts, or parking-lot layouts.

Nearly a decade ago, Martin was searching for fresh inspiration in his studio, which is housed in one of Providence's old factory buildings. "As a painter, you're always looking for subjects, and sometimes they're right in front of you," he says. "I remember an instructor of mine saying, 'When you're stumped, just look out a window and paint what you see.'" Martin saw compositions of right angles and tried his hand at painting them. At the time, he didn't think of it as

a major change, but the architectural geometry he observed around him began to take over his paintings. Employing simple verticals and horizontals reminiscent of partly framed houses provided a template on which Martin could explore paint and color the way a creative child might play with Legos.

He also drew inspiration from the ghosts of buildings past their prime. "You have all these structures that are geometric and man-made, but then there are residual layers of history and visual information—all the people who occupied them, all the times they were painted over. That's really beautiful," he says. He has an affinity for construction sites and "things that aren't finished," he continues. "For me, the best sculptures of the 20th century were buildings going up, or a highway overpass that's still under construction, just hanging in space."

Martin's explorations into the seemingly limitless universe of color bring to mind the palettes of the artists he cites as his precursors: Manet, Vuillard, Klee, de Kooning, Diebenkorn, and Arthur Dove. "Lloyd's work is never cold, like minimalism," says curator Stephen Bennett Phillips, who has acquired Martin's paintings for the Federal Reserve Board in Washington, D.C. "It feels as though the way the paint is applied comes right from the gut. His most recent pieces, which are so bright and full of color, show his love for the great masters like Matisse."

Ultimately, that is what comes across in Martin's work: a fascination with the building blocks of painting. In Martin's hands, both the act of painting and its history are taken—as they say in the construction business—down to the studs. ■



Scan the top left image to view more of the artist's work



Red Still, 2010