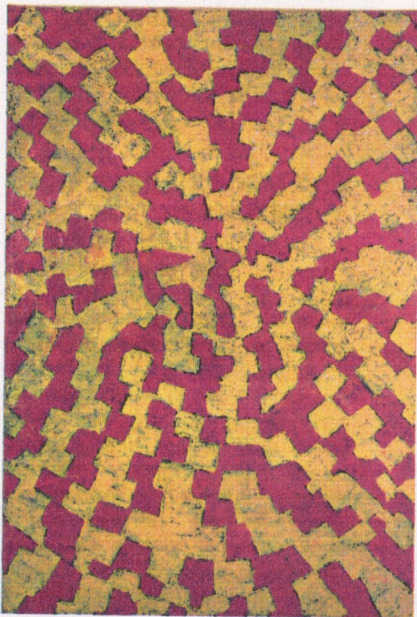


Art in America

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Louis Risoli: *Ten to the Negative Eleventh Power*, 1990, oil on canvas, 72 by 48 by 6 inches; at Zoe.

BOSTON

Louis Risoli at Zoe

Louis Risoli has been showing his vibrant, colorful, densely worked abstractions for 10 years. Aside from a brief early period when human torsos made a muscular appearance in his segmented geometries, his vision has been thoroughly and energetically abstract, his paint thick and crusty, his colors rich and bold. One might have thought that some of those canvases were stills from a complex, swirling animated film—a response that attests to the richness of the abstraction.

In his new works, the focus is tighter. If one misses the abundance and exuberance of the earlier work, one appreciates the taut balance between control and abandon he has now achieved. Risoli's shapes have the feel of being worked at and discovered; vistas of color, shape and pattern appear as if pulled from the hypnagogic ocean. He gives his imaginings flesh in columnar constructions or in canvases with a 6-inch skirting that pushes them out from the wall.

He often enriches his work with unexpected supplementary touches. In *Mirror* (1990), for example, there's a highly charged central ovoid in red, surrounded by a shower of red shards, within a field of yellow. The arrangement, which suggests the formation or disintegration of some elemental object, is interesting in itself, and Risoli could have stopped there. Yet along the edge of the oval there are small intrusions—thin, striped bands of completely different palettes, reminders of another order of things.

In *Ten to the Negative Eleventh Power* there's clearly a reference to the Fibonacci series, that mathematical formation of the spiral sequence behind many natural forms; this colorful explosion of red and yellow blocks might be an enormous magnification of, say, a sunflower head. It might also be simply a study of pattern or a painterly exploration of texture. Risoli refuses to be bound by a single scheme.

—Thomas Frick