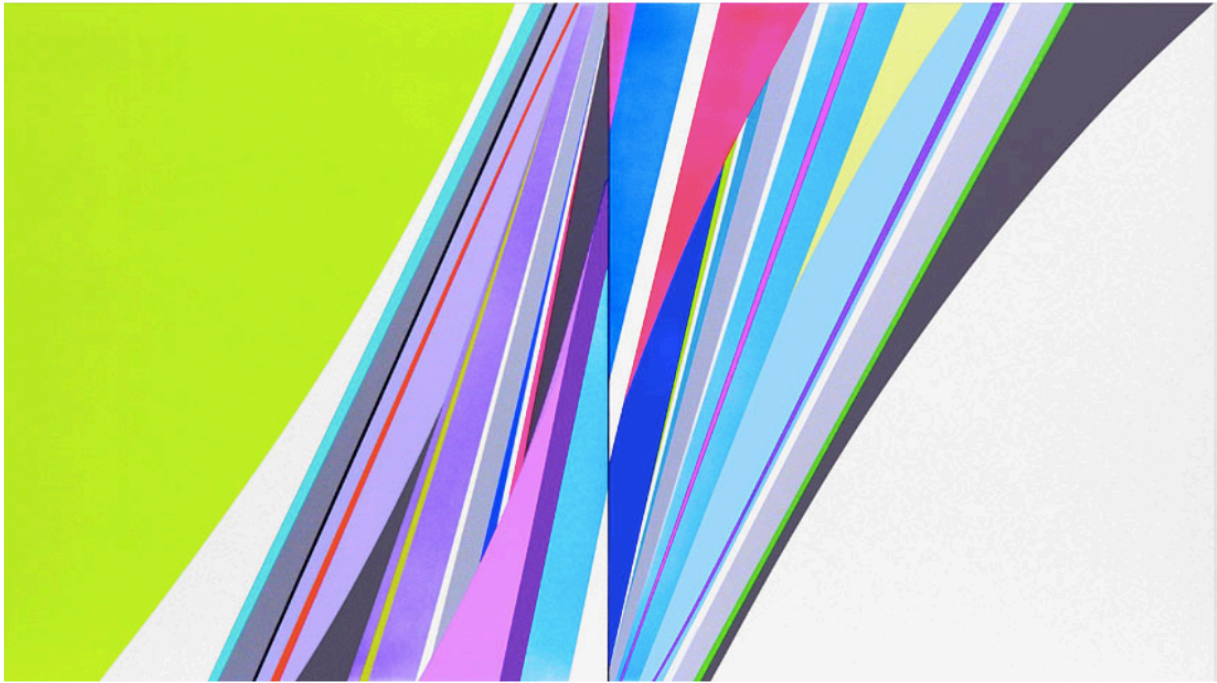




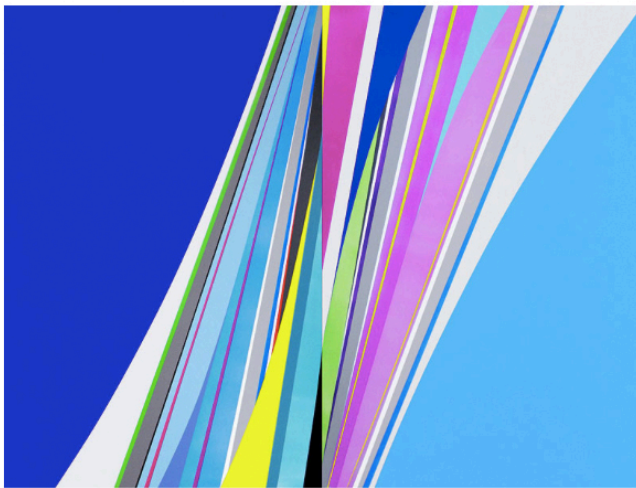
# Dion Johnson Channels L.A. Life into Crisp, Vibrant Abstractions

ARTSY EDITORIAL  
BY BRIDGET GLEESON  
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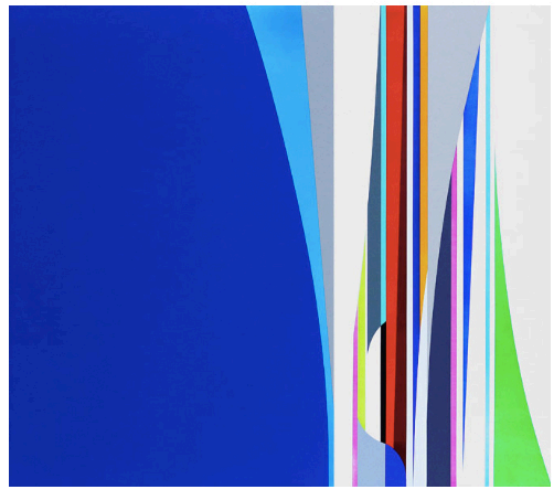


Dion Johnson  
*City Girl*, 2014

Looking at the rows of hard-edge lines and pulsating colors in [Dion Johnson's](#) recent series of paintings on view in "[Luminous Trajectories](#)" at Bentley Gallery in Phoenix, it's not surprising to learn that the artist lives in Los Angeles. The city has a rich mid-century history in colorful, hard-edge geometric abstraction, but Johnson's works also evoke characteristics of Los Angeles itself.

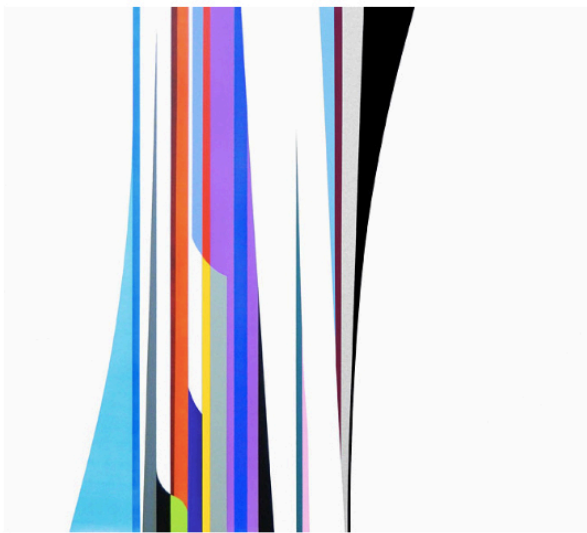


Dion Johnson  
*Helicopter*, 2013

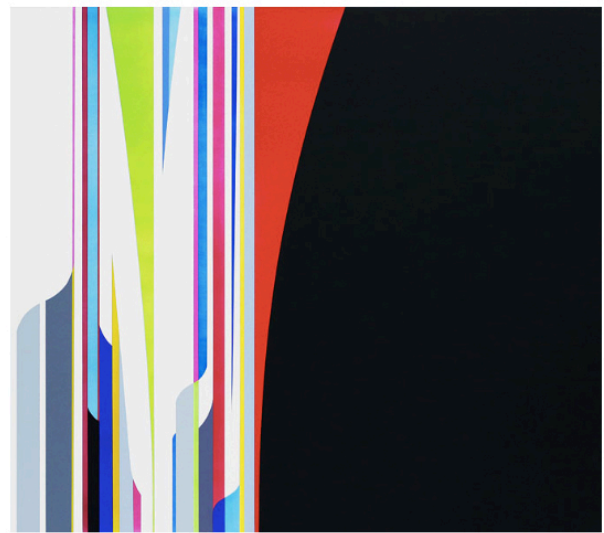


Dion Johnson  
*Sky Diver*, 2015

In *City Girl* (2014) and *Helicopter* (2013), for instance, the region's infamous freeways come to mind, their arteries filled with candy-colored sports cars weaving through traffic, streams of headlights, and the hypnotizing hum of engines. *Sky Diver* (2015) could be a road map of the city's coast, with the pane of vibrant blue on the left representing the Pacific Ocean and the colorful streams on the right traffic rushing along L.A.'s coastal freeways and beachfront boulevards.



Dion Johnson  
*Ice Skate*, 2014

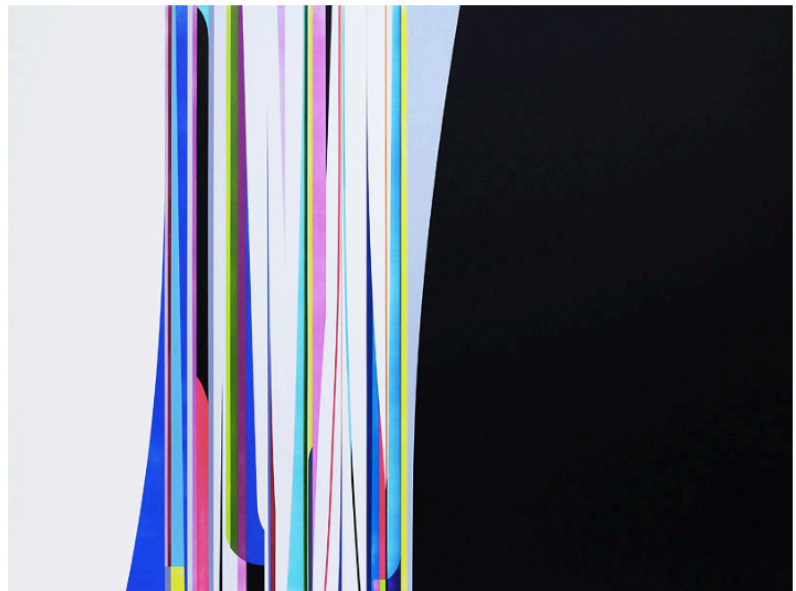


Dion Johnson  
*Night Light*, 2015

Johnson's paintings, all acrylic on canvas, aren't just reflections of the region's physical topography, but its cultural and commercial identities as well. The overwhelming presence of the entertainment industry also comes to mind, with all of its technicolor appeal, its dazzling hopes and dashed dreams, and its emphasis on surface. There is a digital sensibility to his perfectly flat, graphic swaths of saturated color and linear angles, and they are full of energy even while lacking physical depth.



Dion Johnson  
*Cathedral*, 2014



Dion Johnson  
*Turnstile*, 2015

The paintings are ultimately abstract, and open to a wide variety of interpretations. The broad swath of black in *Turnstile* (2015), for instance, could be a night sky, the ocean at night, or symbolic of a void. In some cases, his titles provide substantial clues. *Cathedral* (2014), with its vertical shape, might read literally, or it might be a comment on cultural values—the modern-day places we frequent in order to carry out some form of worship. Regardless, these works are intensely seductive, like the city where they were conceived.

—Bridget Gleeson

*"Dion Johnson: Luminous Trajectories"* is on view at Bentley Gallery, Phoenix, Dec. 4th, 2015 – Jan. 5th, 2016.