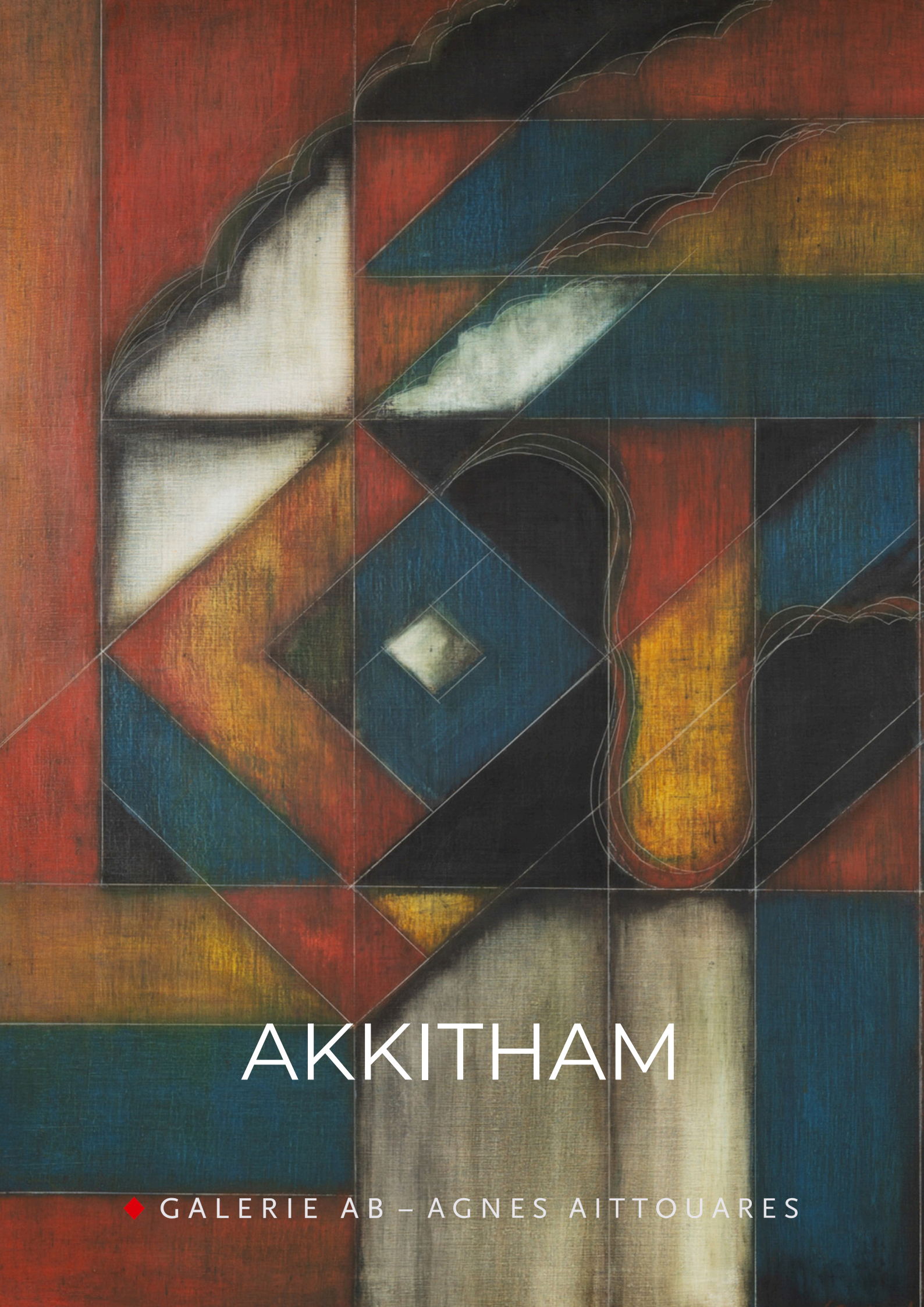

AKKITHAM

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AKKITHAM

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NARAYANAN AKKITHAM

Born in Kerala in 1939, Narayanan Akkitham was trained at the Government School of Arts and Crafts in Chennai, where he studied under K. C. S. Paniker and D. P. Roy Choudhury. In 1967, a French government scholarship enabled him to move to Paris, where he joined the studio of Jean Bertholle at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts.

After an early figurative period, Akkitham turned, at the end of the 1960s, toward a personal form of geometric abstraction.

His work never belongs to decorative formalism; rather, it constitutes a profound meditation on the invisible structures of the world. Triangles, circles, squares, lines, and calligraphic signs become the elements of a visual language inspired by Indian cosmologies, tantric diagrams, Vedic thought, and the mural painting traditions of ancient India.

In his work, geometry emerges as a universal script, capable of expressing the relationships between matter, energy, and spirituality. Colour plays an essential role in this inner quest. Layered in subtle veils, the hues appear to radiate from within the surface of the painting rather than simply rest upon it.

Narayanan Akkitham has created an oeuvre that continuously moves between India and France.

He has exhibited extensively in India, where he enjoys major institutional recognition, while his work has also been regularly presented in France, Japan, Germany, and Poland. His paintings have entered important public collections, including those of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, the French Ministry of Culture, and the National Museum in New Delhi. This dual presence, both European and Indian, has been further affirmed through numerous distinctions. He received the Lalit Kala Akademi Award three times (1963, 1965, and 1966), the highest official honour awarded to artists in India, as well as the K. C. S. Paniker Puraskaram and the Raja Ravi Varma Award, confirming the lasting significance of his contribution to the history of contemporary Indian art.

NARAYANAN AKKITHAM

Né au Kerala en 1939, Narayanan Akkitham est formé à la Government School of Arts and Crafts de Chennai, où il suit l'enseignement de K. C. S. Paniker et D. P. Roy Choudhury. En 1967, une bourse du gouvernement français lui permet de rejoindre Paris. Il entre alors à l'École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts dans l'atelier de Jean Bertholle.

Après une période figurative, Akkitham s'oriente à la fin des années 60 dans une abstraction géométrique personnelle.

Son œuvre ne relève jamais d'un formalisme décoratif : elle constitue une véritable méditation sur les structures invisibles du monde. Triangles, cercles, carrés, lignes et signes calligraphiques deviennent les éléments d'un vocabulaire plastique inspiré des cosmologies indiennes, des diagrammes tantriques, de la pensée védique et des traditions picturales murales de l'Inde ancienne.

La géométrie y apparaît comme une écriture universelle, capable de traduire les rapports entre matière, énergie et spiritualité. La couleur joue un rôle essentiel dans cette quête intérieure. Superposées en voiles subtils, les tonalités semblent irradier depuis la surface du tableau plutôt que s'y déposer.

Narayanan Akkitham a construit une œuvre qui voyage sans discontinuer entre l'Inde et la France.

Il a exposé à de nombreuses reprises en Inde, où il bénéficie d'une reconnaissance institutionnelle de premier plan, tout en étant régulièrement montré en France, au Japon, en Allemagne et en Pologne. Ses toiles sont entrées dans des collections publiques majeures, parmi lesquelles la Bibliothèque nationale de France, le ministère français de la Culture et le National Museum de New Delhi. Cette double implantation, à la fois européenne et indienne, est également consacrée par plusieurs distinctions. Il a reçu à trois reprises le Lalit Kala Akademi Award (1963, 1965, 1966), la plus haute récompense officielle décernée à un artiste en Inde, ainsi que le K. C. S. Paniker Puraskaram et le Raja Ravi Varma Award, qui viennent confirmer la place durable de son travail dans l'histoire de l'art contemporain indien.

BIOGRAPHY

• 1939 — Born in Kumaranallore, Kerala, India
• 1961 — Degree in painting, Madras School of Arts, India
•1966 — Founding member of the Artists Handicrafts Association and the Cholomandal artists' village in Chennai, India
• 1967–1970 — École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris, France
• 1972 — National Award of India, 4th International Painting Festival, Cagnes-sur-Mer, France
• 2009 — K.C.S. Panicker Award, Lalit Kala Akademi, Kerala, India
• 2015 — Raja Ravi Varma Award, Lalit Kala Akademi, Kerala, India
• 2022 — Solo exhibition at the Cochin Biennale, India

INSTITUTIONAL COLLECTIONS

• National Museum, New Delhi, India
• Government Museum of Chennai, India
• Ahmedabad Museum, India
• Bangalore Museum, India
• Ministry of Culture, France
• National Library of France
• Paris Prefecture, France
• Hyacinthe-Rigaud Museum, Perpignan, France
• Wilhelmshaven Museum, Germany
• Glenbarra Art Museum, Japan
• Museum of Asia and the Pacific, Warsaw, Poland
• Museum of Sacred Art (MOSA), Durbuy, Belgium

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Oil on canvas
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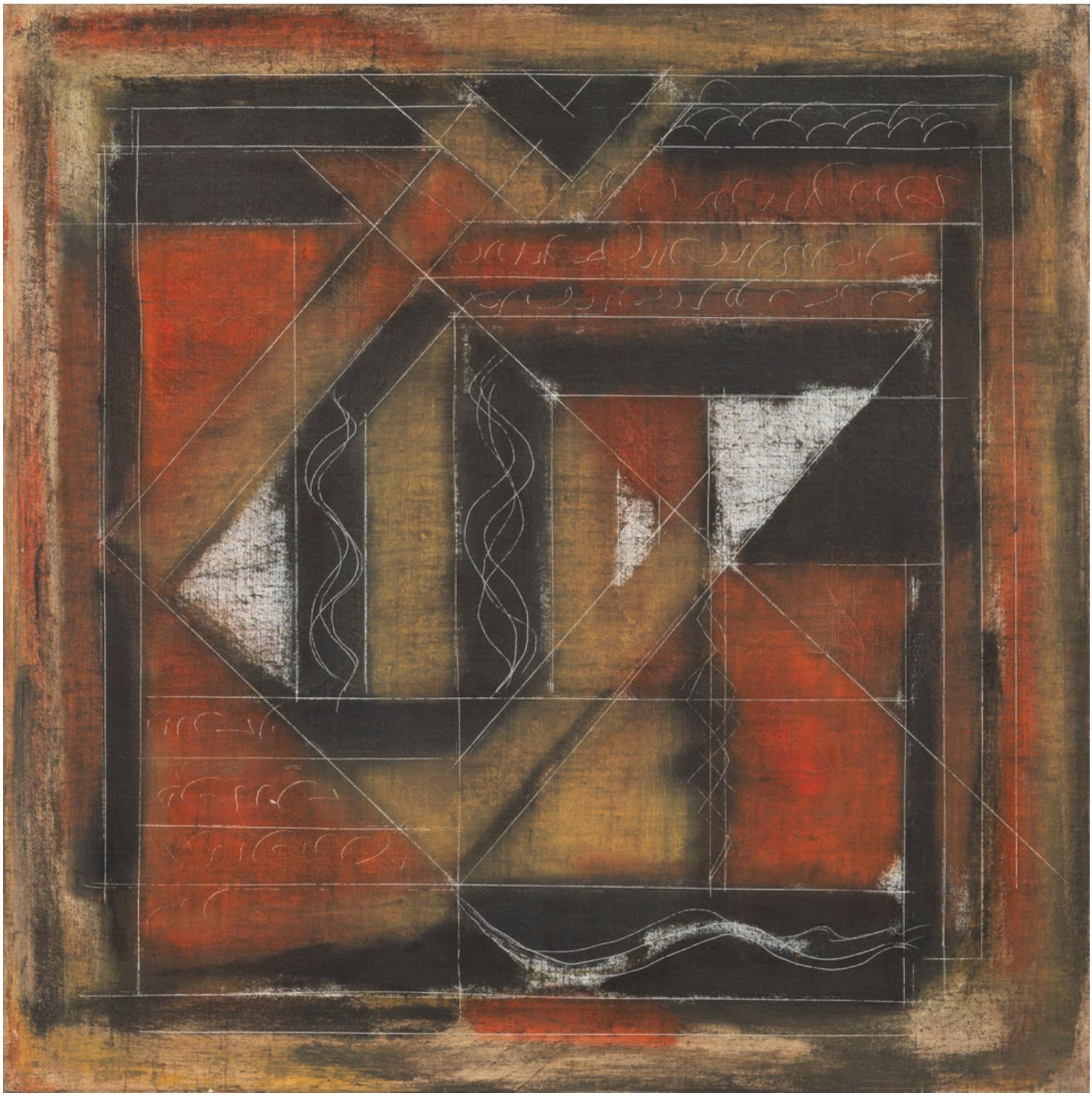
Signed and dated at the bottom right





Composition
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Oil on canvas
50 x 50 cm
Signed and dated at the back



Composition
1978
Oil on canvas
40 x 40 cm
Signed and dated at the bottom right



Composition
1979
Oil on canvas
40 x 40 cm
Signed at the bottom right



Composition
1979
Oil on canvas
40 x 40 cm
Signed and dated at the bottom right



Composition
1980
Oil on canvas
40 x 40 cm
Signed at the back



Composition
1980
Oil on canvas
46 x 61 cm
Signed and dated at the bottom right



Composition
1980
Oil on canvas
64 x 54 cm
Signed and dated at the bottom right



Composition
1984
Oil on canvas
27 x 22 cm
Signed and dated at the bottom right



Composition
1985
Oil on canvas
145 x 130 cm
Signed and dated at the bottom right



Composition
1987
Oil on canvas
60 x 73 cm
Signed and dated at the bottom right



Composition
1989
Oil on canvas
73 x 116 cm
Signed at the bottom right



Composition
1989
Oil on canvas
60 x 73 cm
Signed and dated at the bottom right



Composition
1989
Oil on canvas
40 x 40 cm
Signed and dated at the bottom right



Composition
1989
Oil on canvas
40 x 40 cm
Signed and dated at the bottom right



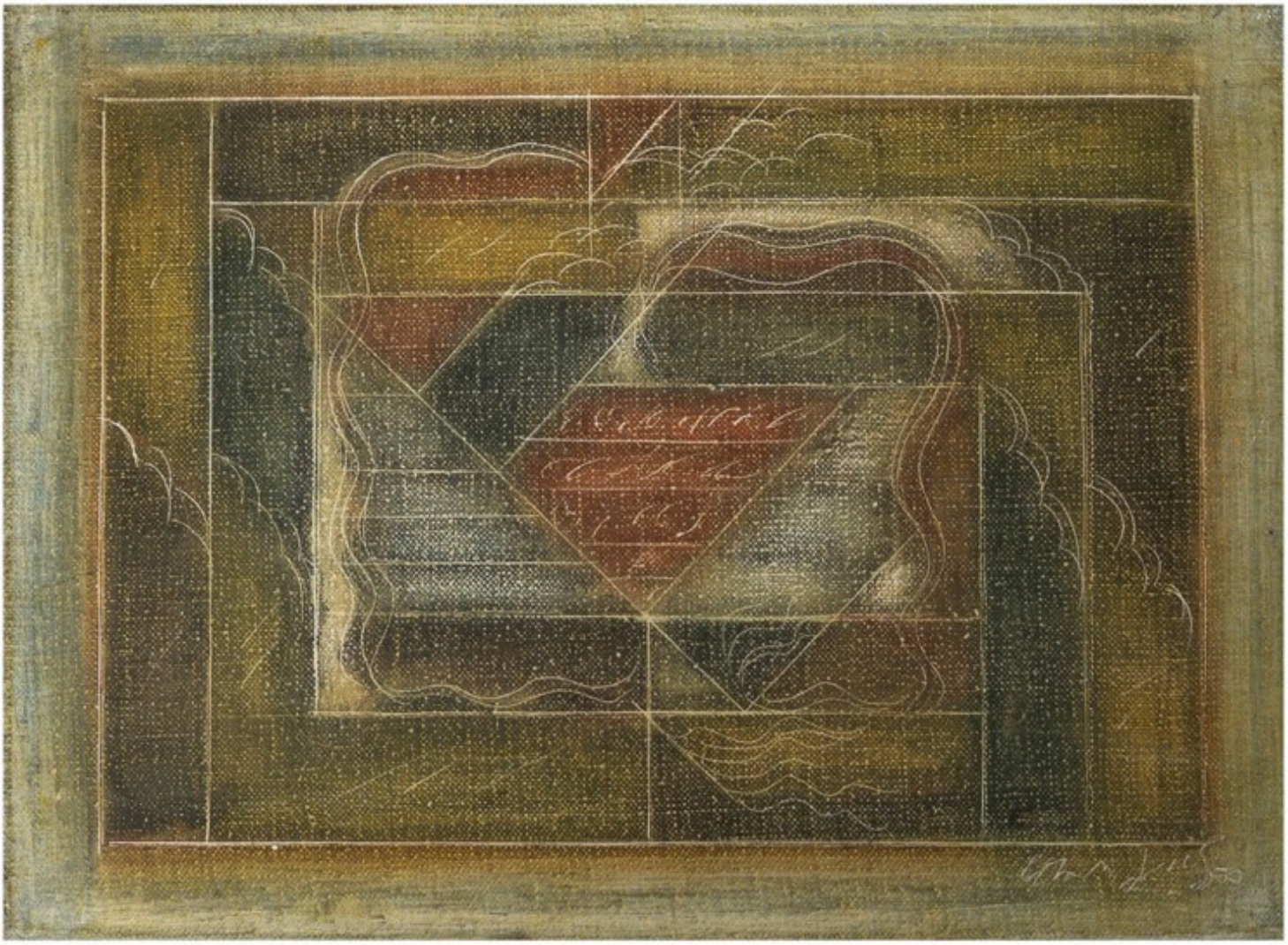
Composition
1989
Oil on canvas
40 x 40 cm
Signed and dated at the bottom right



Composition
1989
Oil on canvas
22 x 27 cm
Signed at the back



Composition
1989
Oil on canvas
60 x 50 cm
Signed at the bottom right



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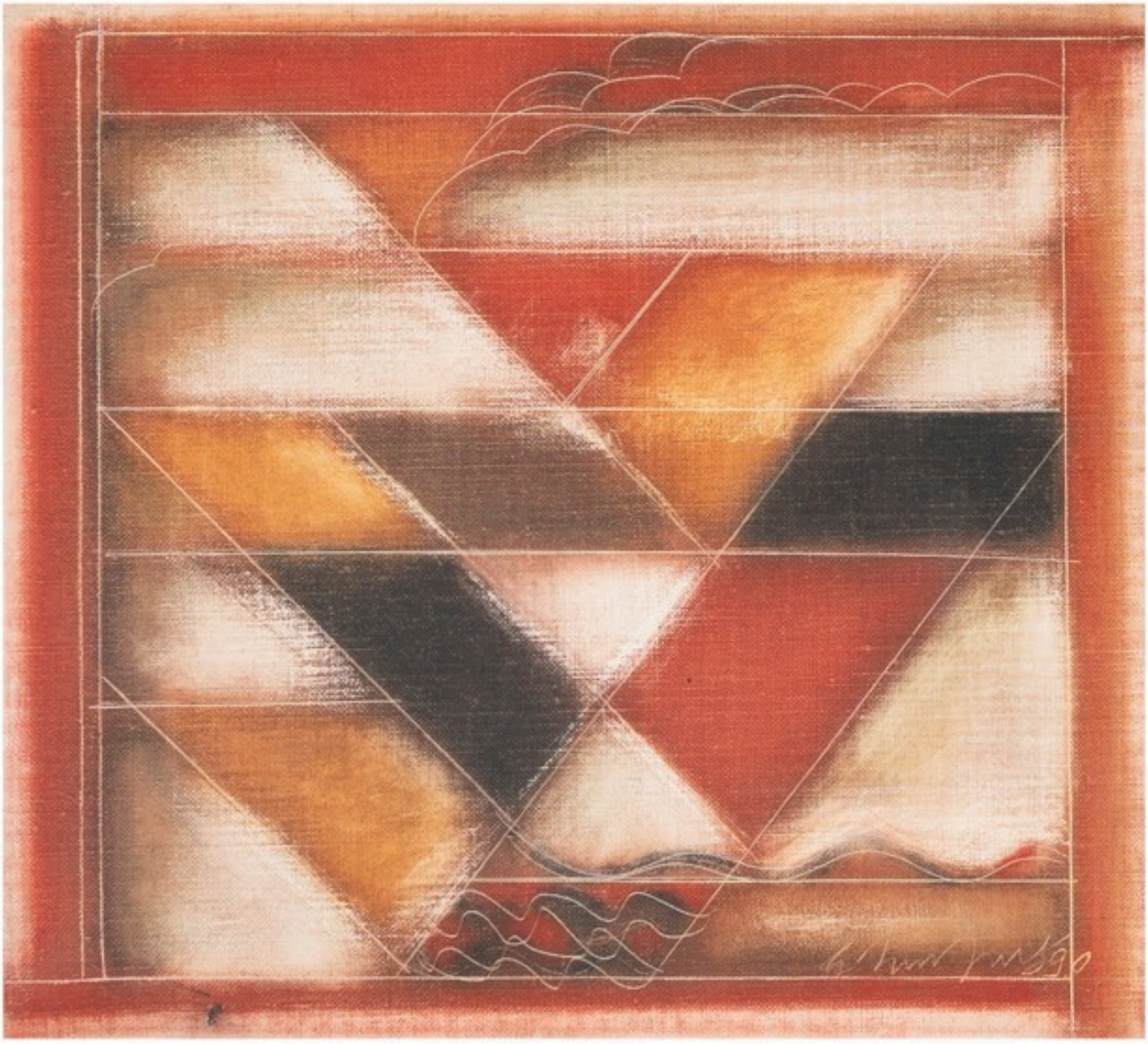

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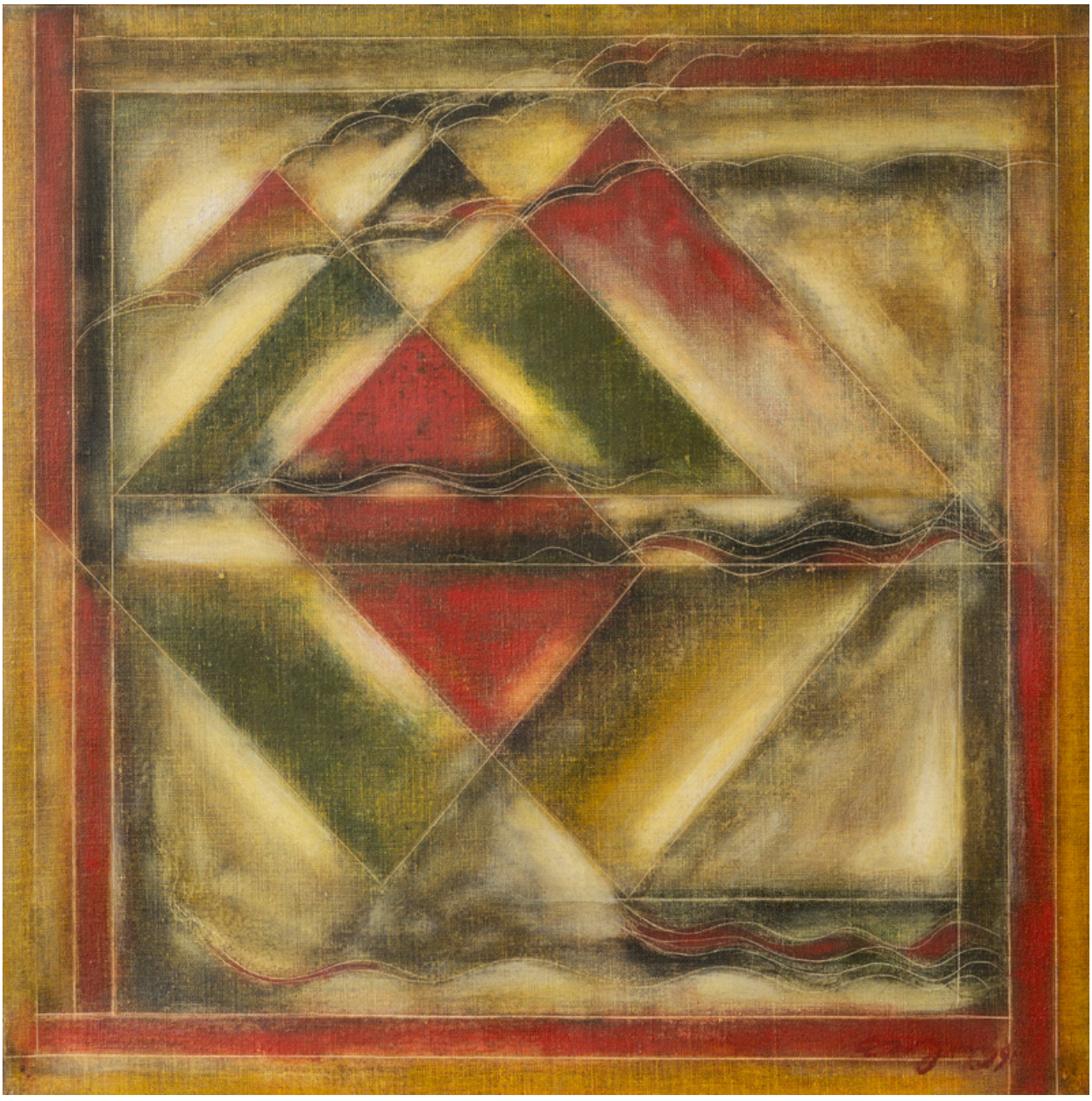

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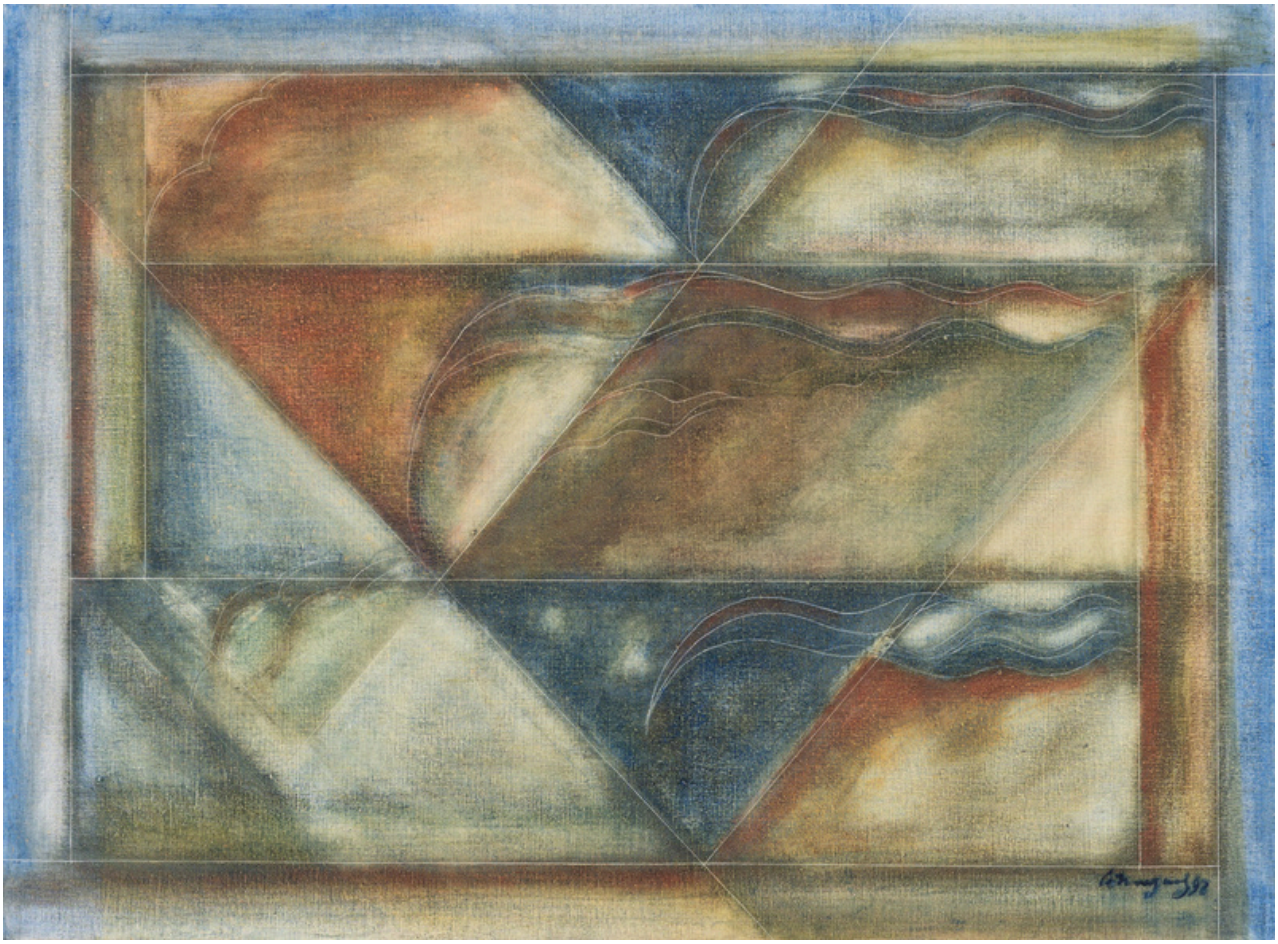

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54 x 73 cm
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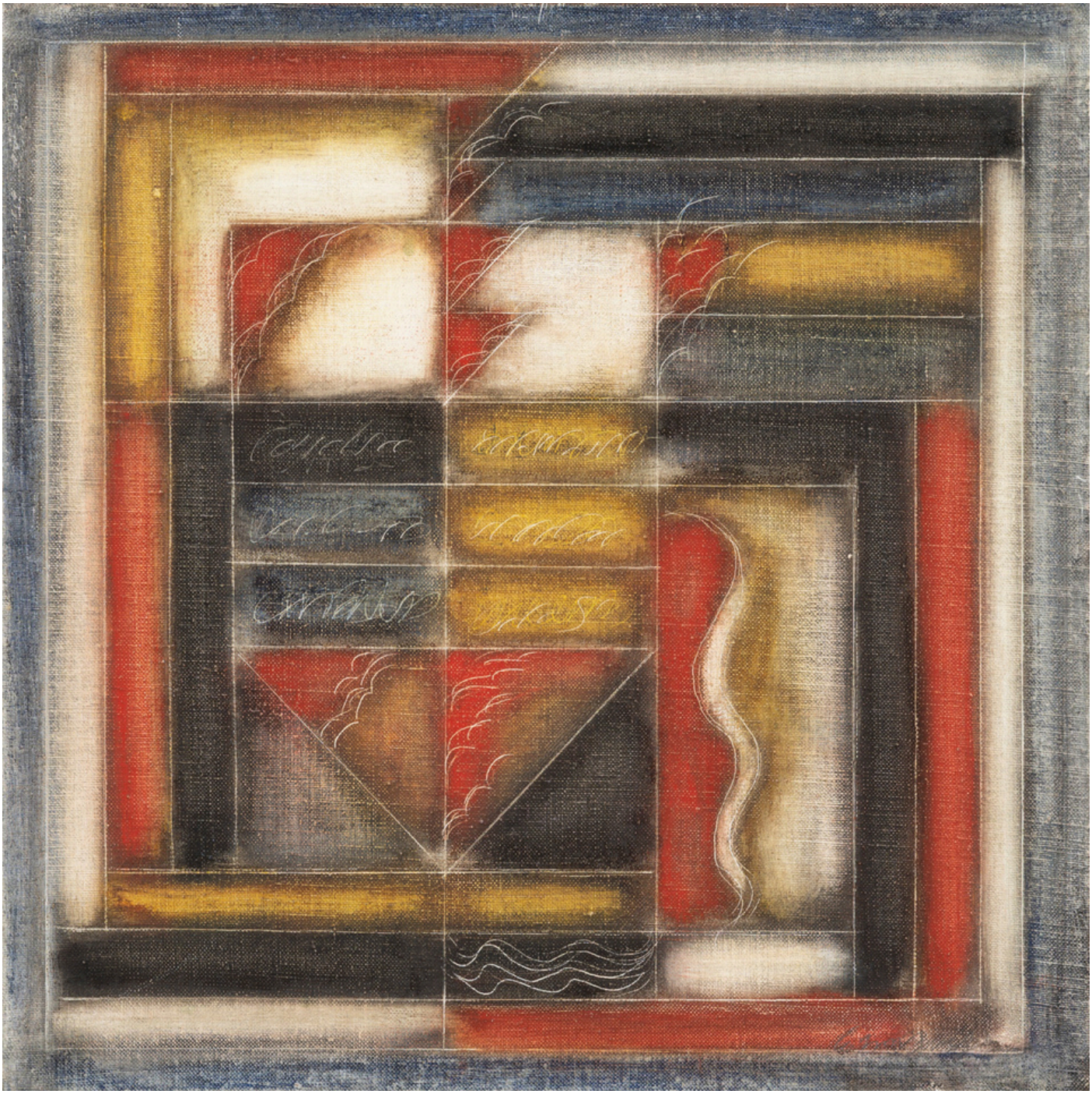

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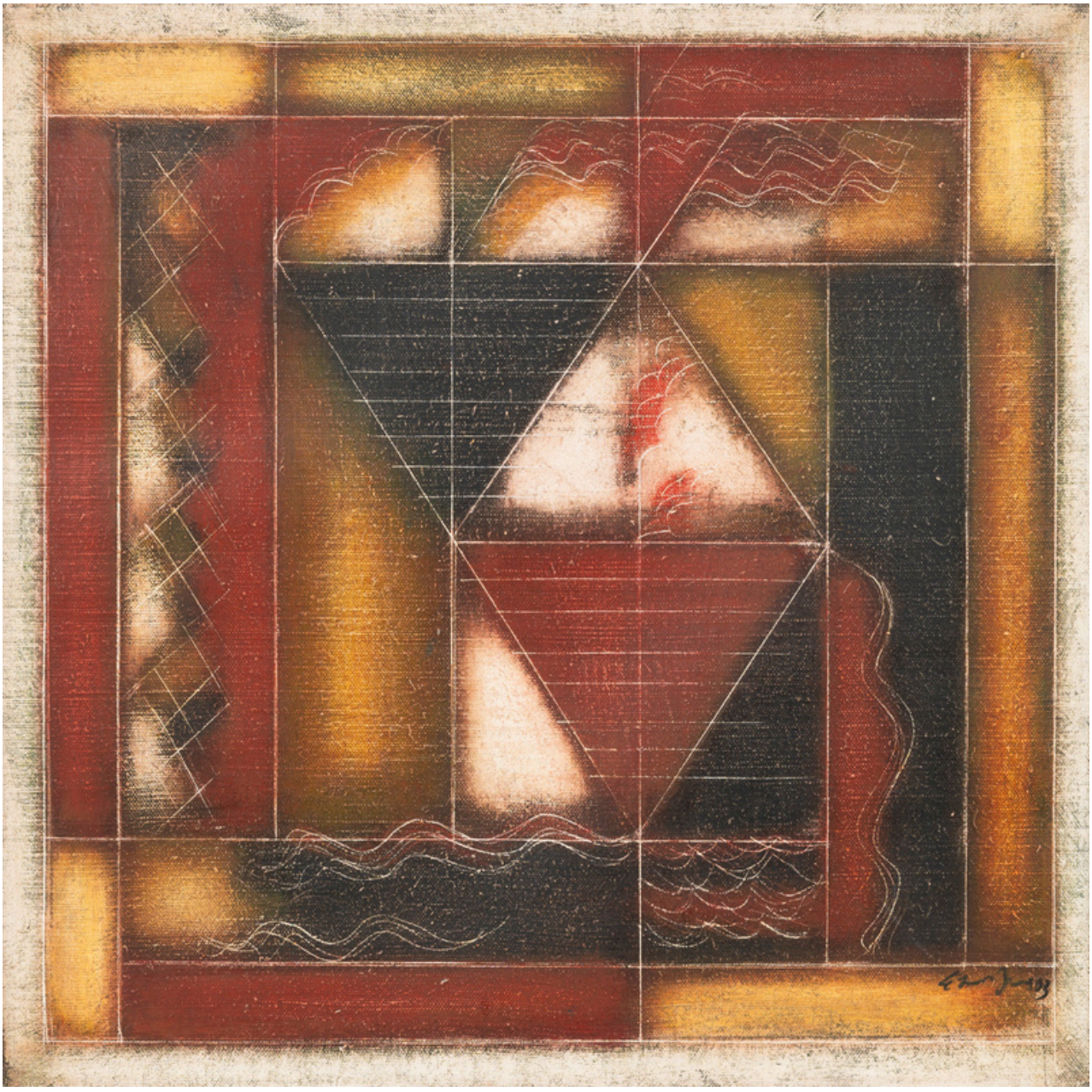

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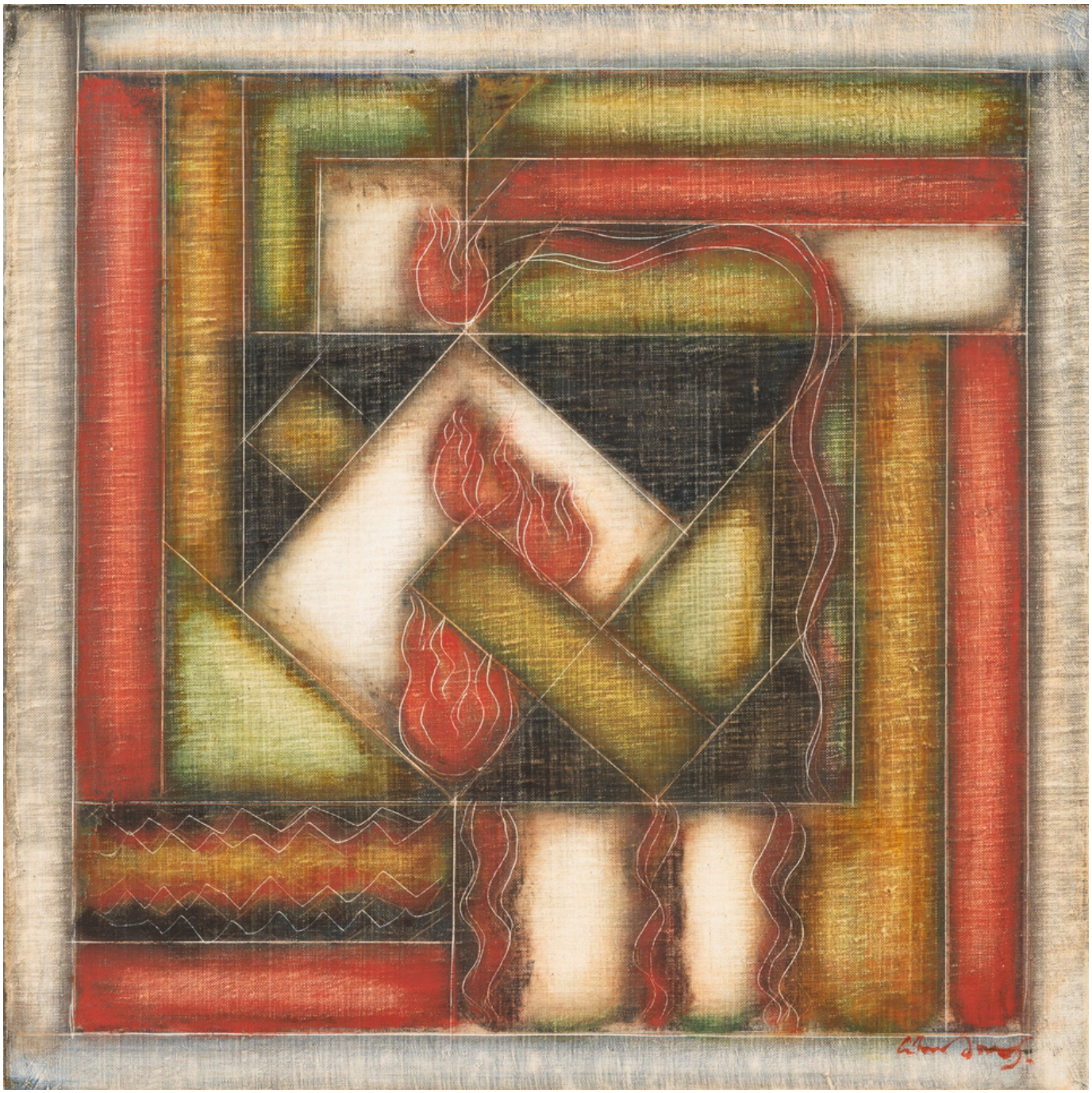

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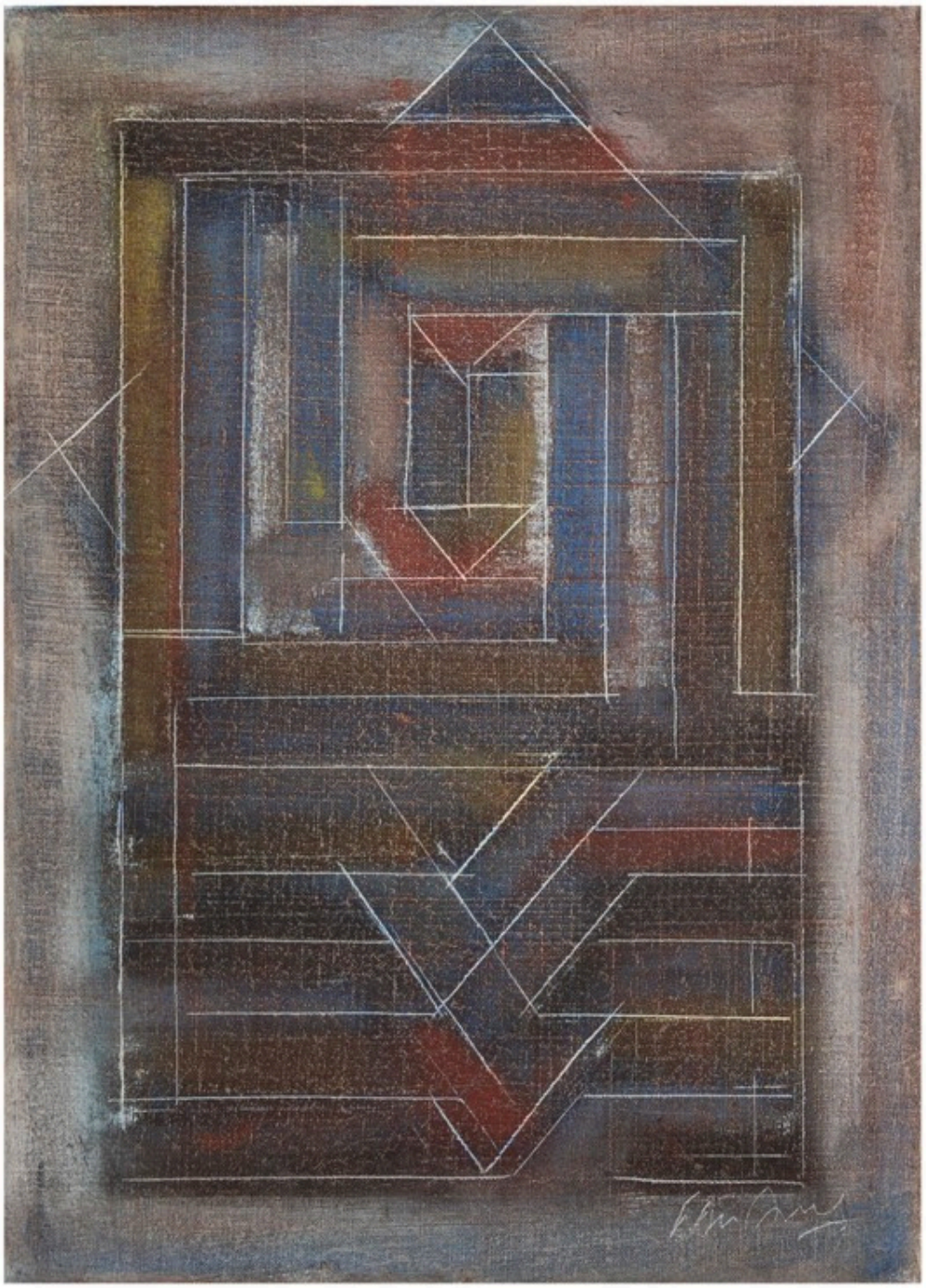
33,5 x 24 cm
Signed at the back



Composition
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Oil on canvas
33 x 24 cm
Signed at the bottom right



Composition
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46 x 55 cm
Signed and dated at the bottom right



Composition
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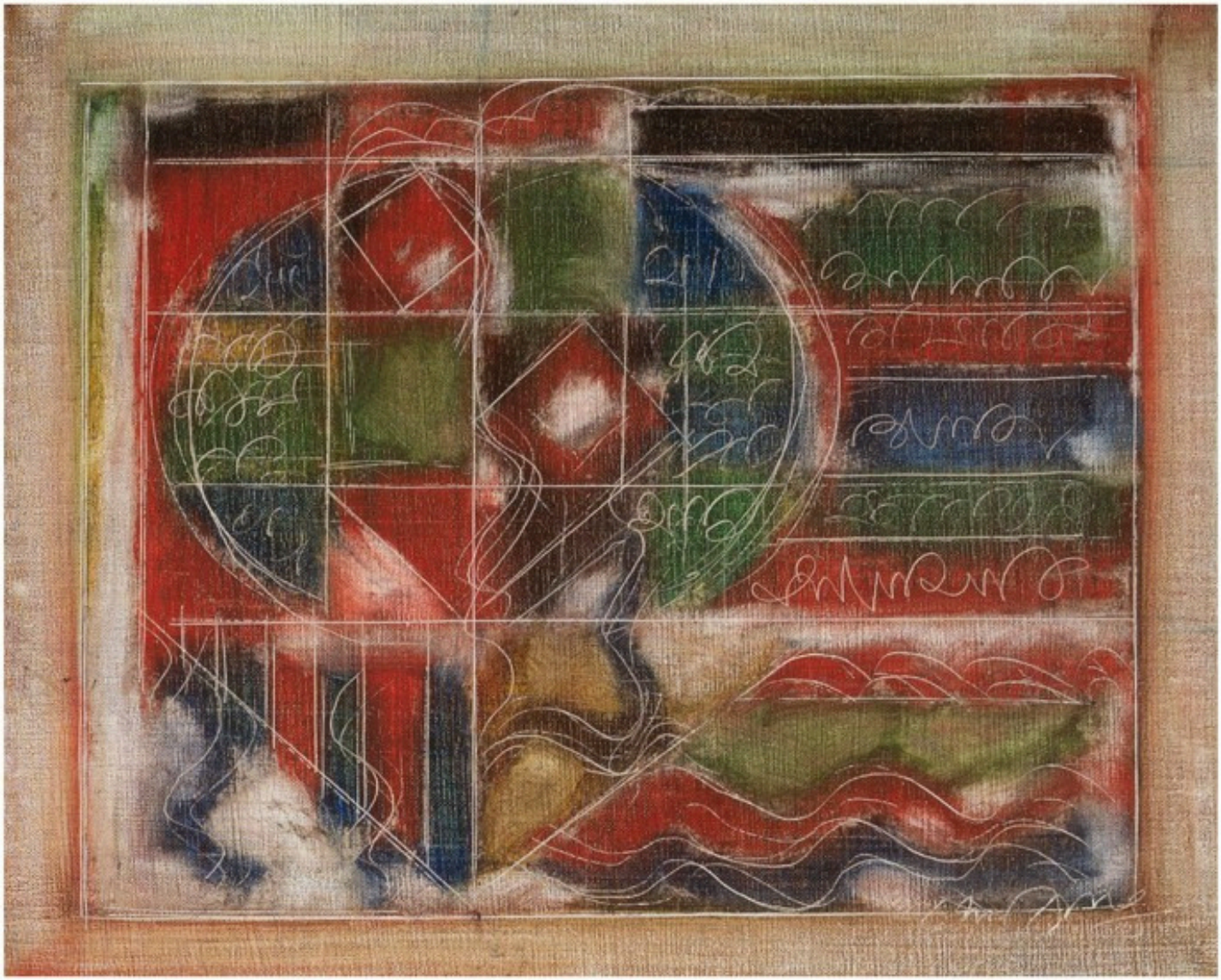
Signed and dated at the bottom right



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Composition
2016
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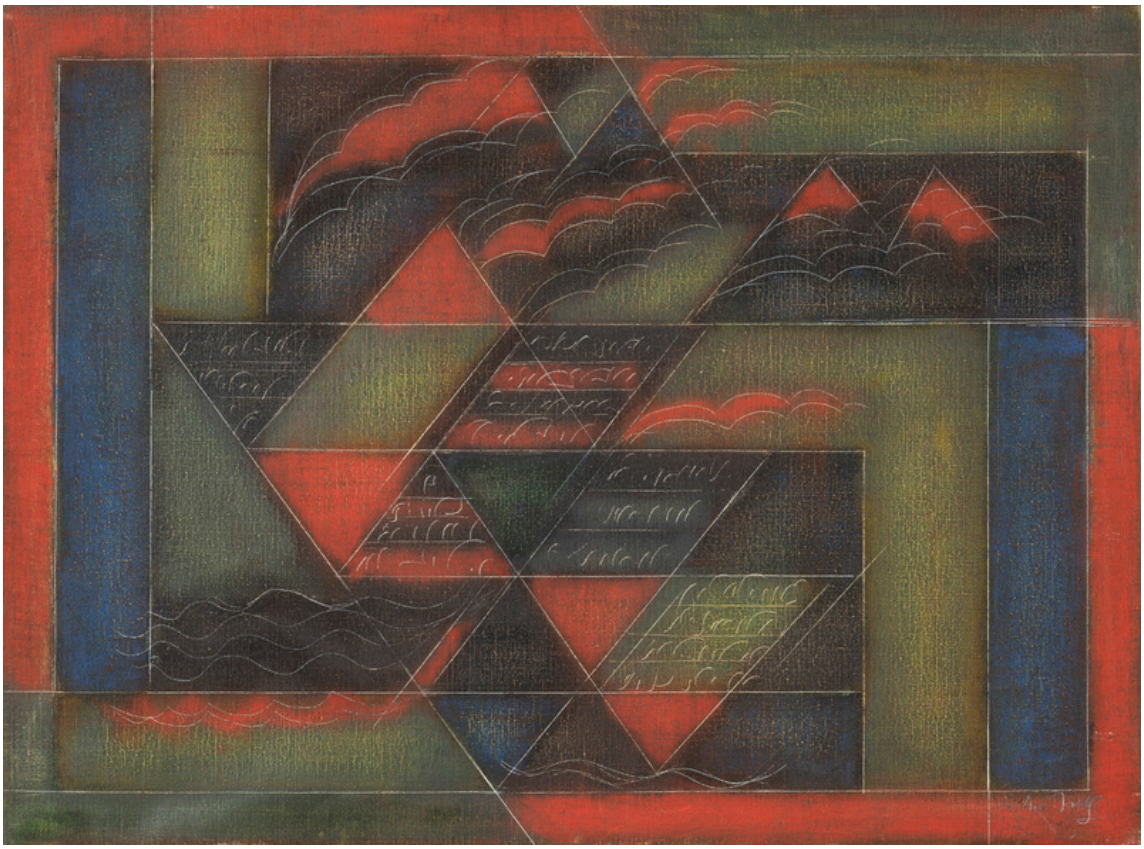
Signed and dated at the bottom right



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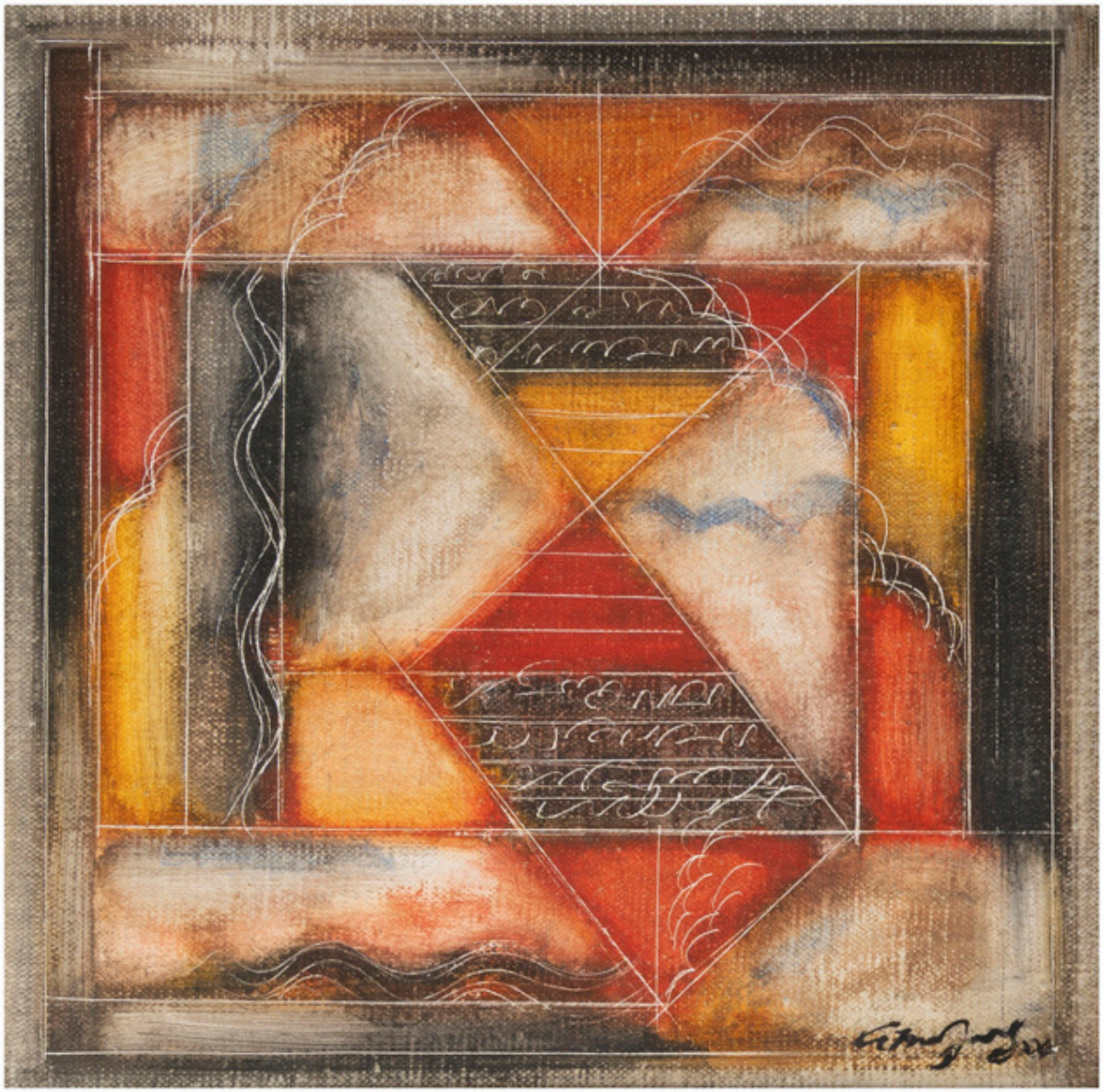

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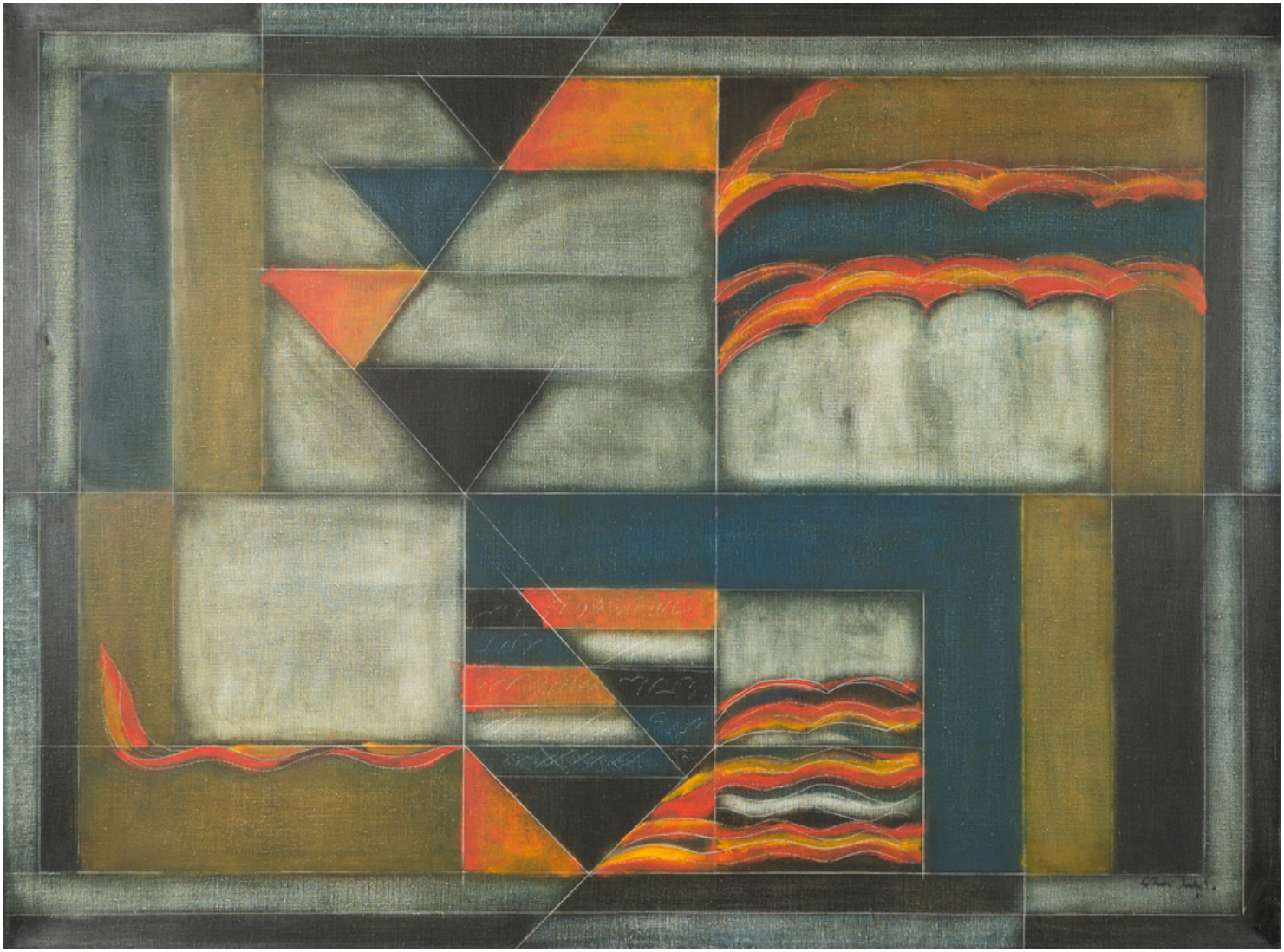

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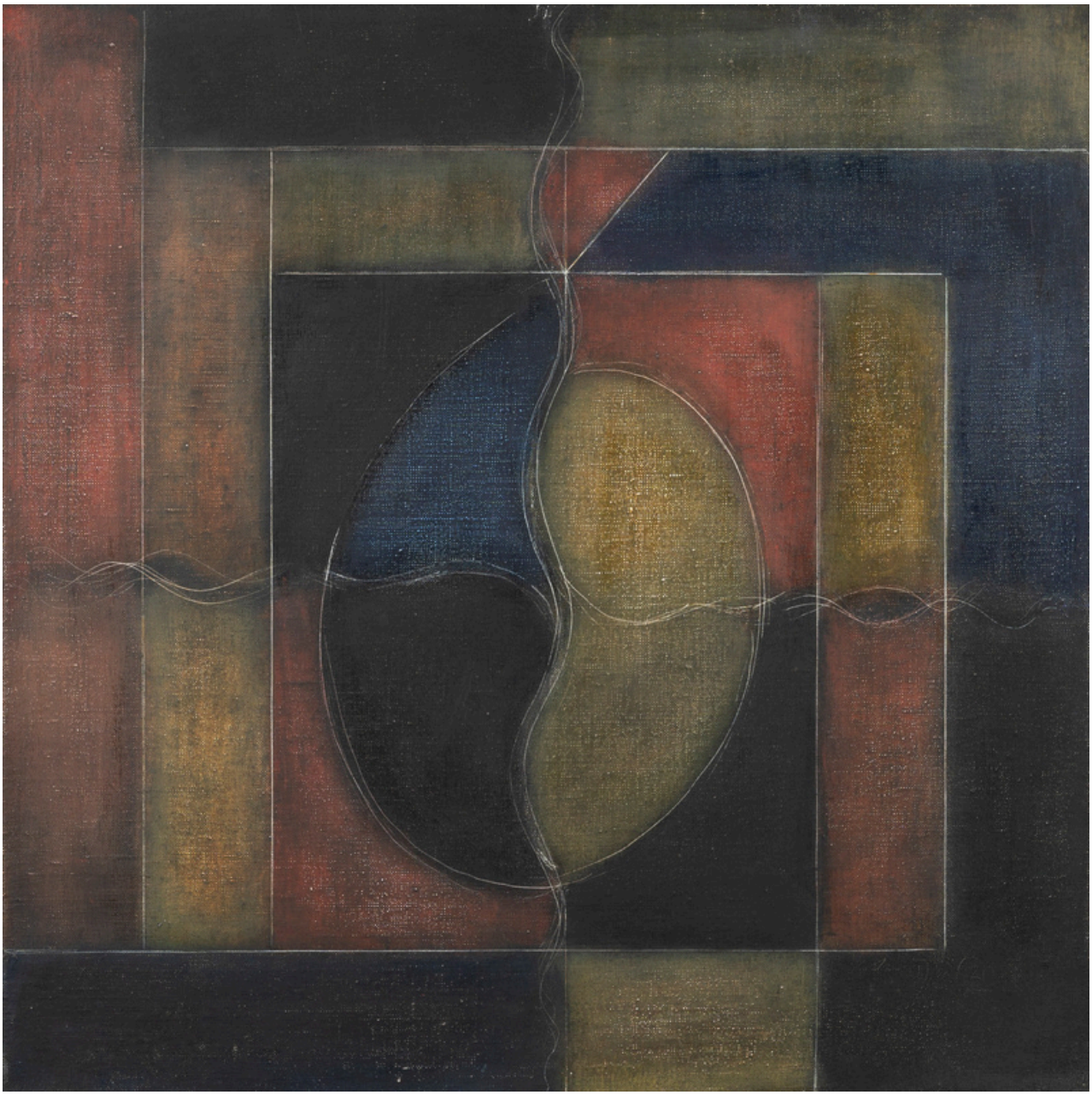

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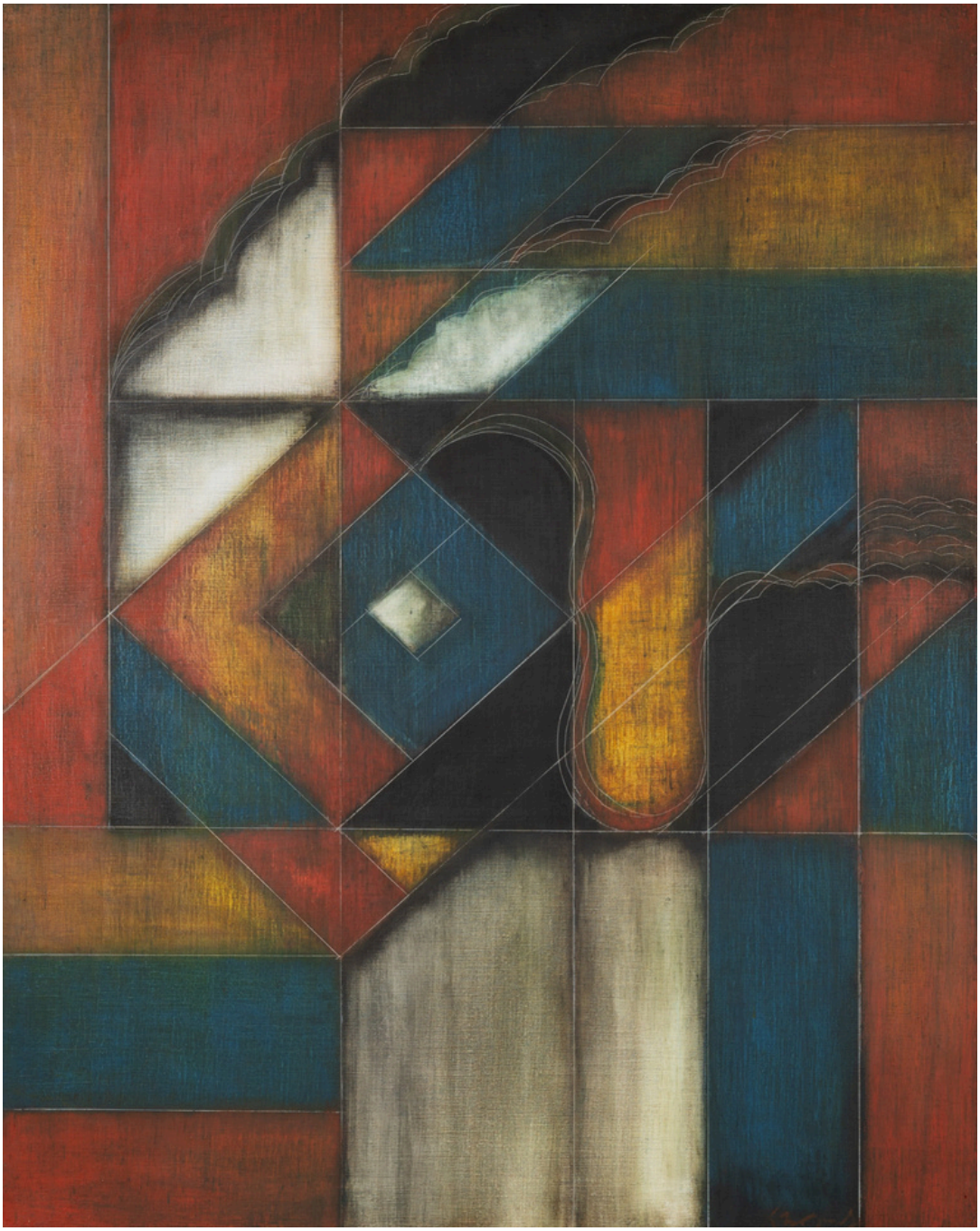

Composition
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92 x 73 cm
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Composition
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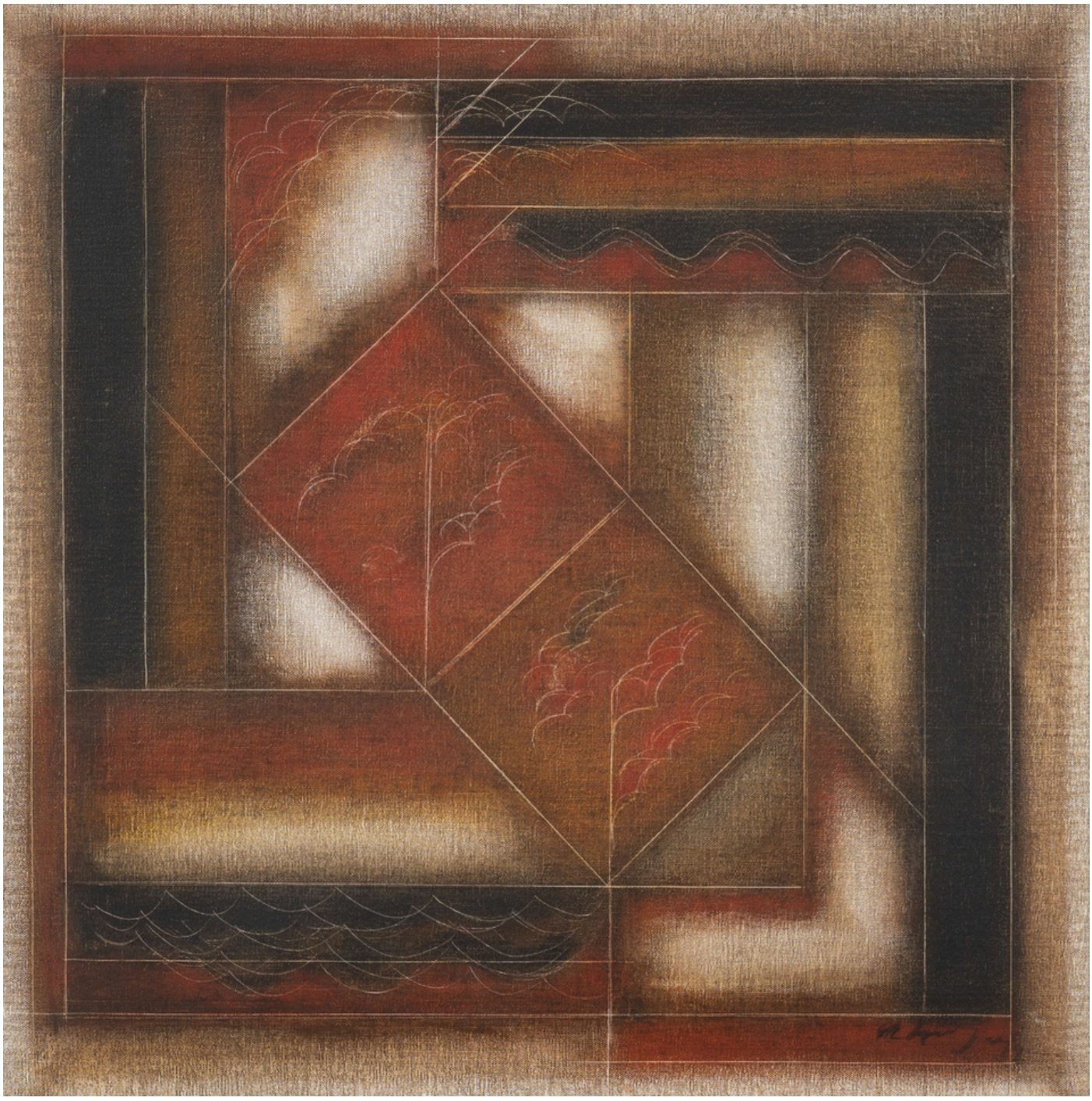

Composition
Oil on canvas
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Composition
2024
Oil on canvas
100 x 100 cm
Signed and dated at the bottom right

A selection of small formats



Composition
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Signed and dated on the back



Composition
2023
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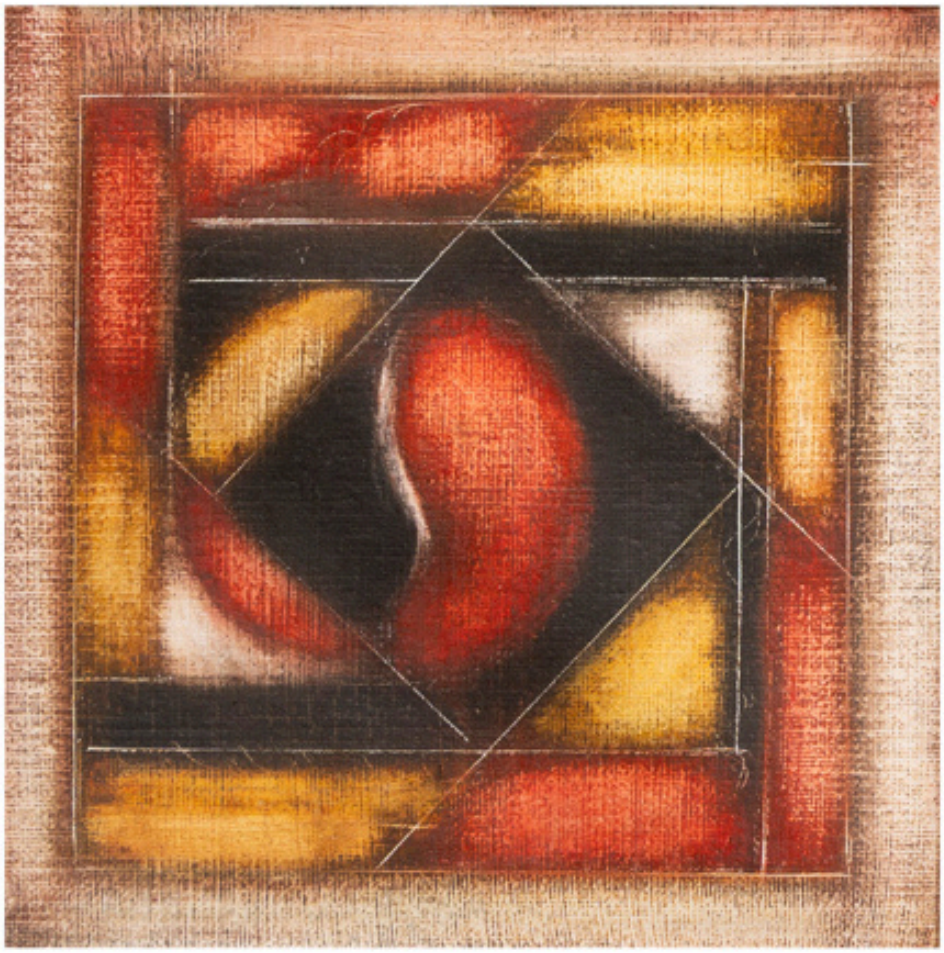
Signed on the bottom right



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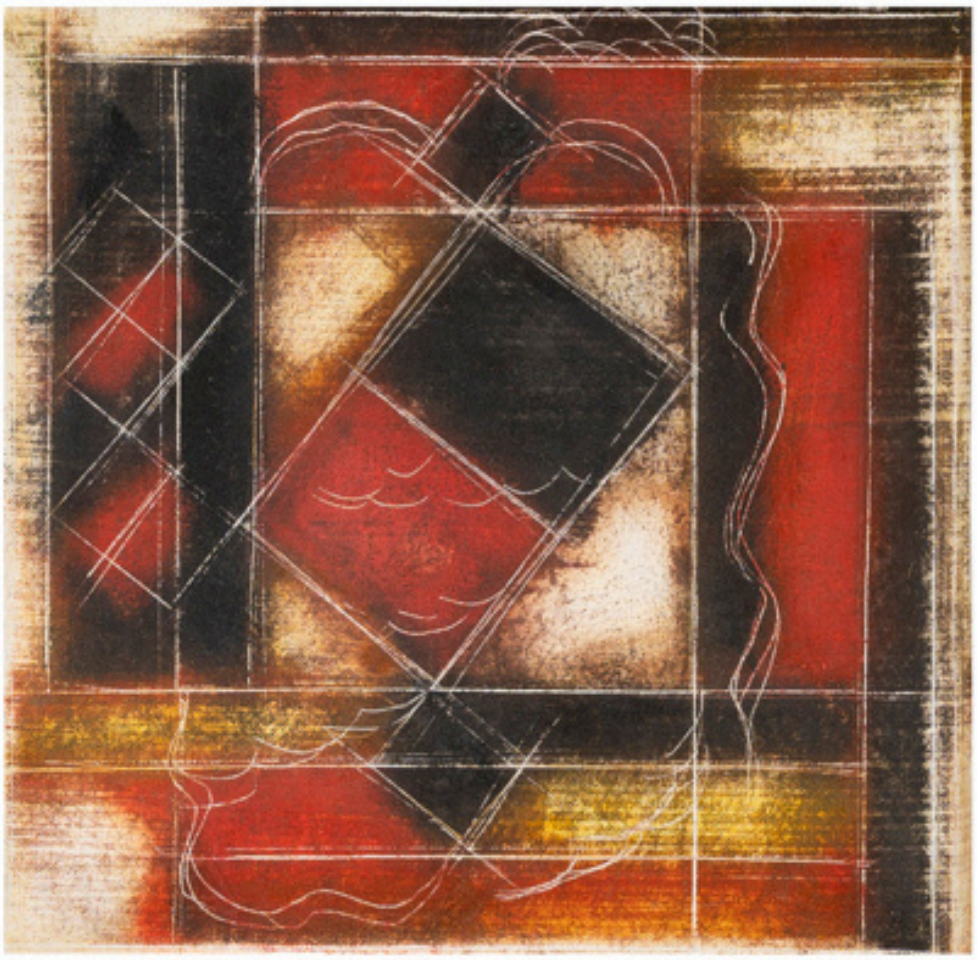

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Composition
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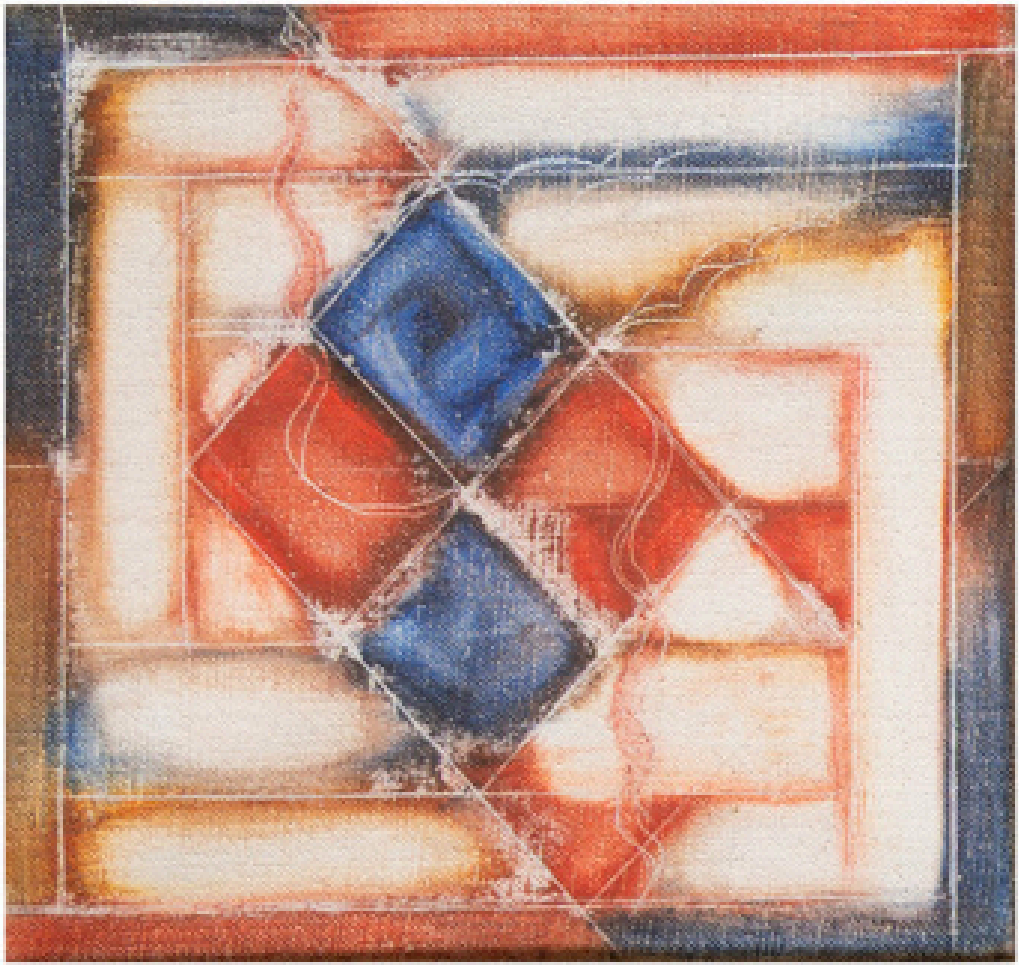

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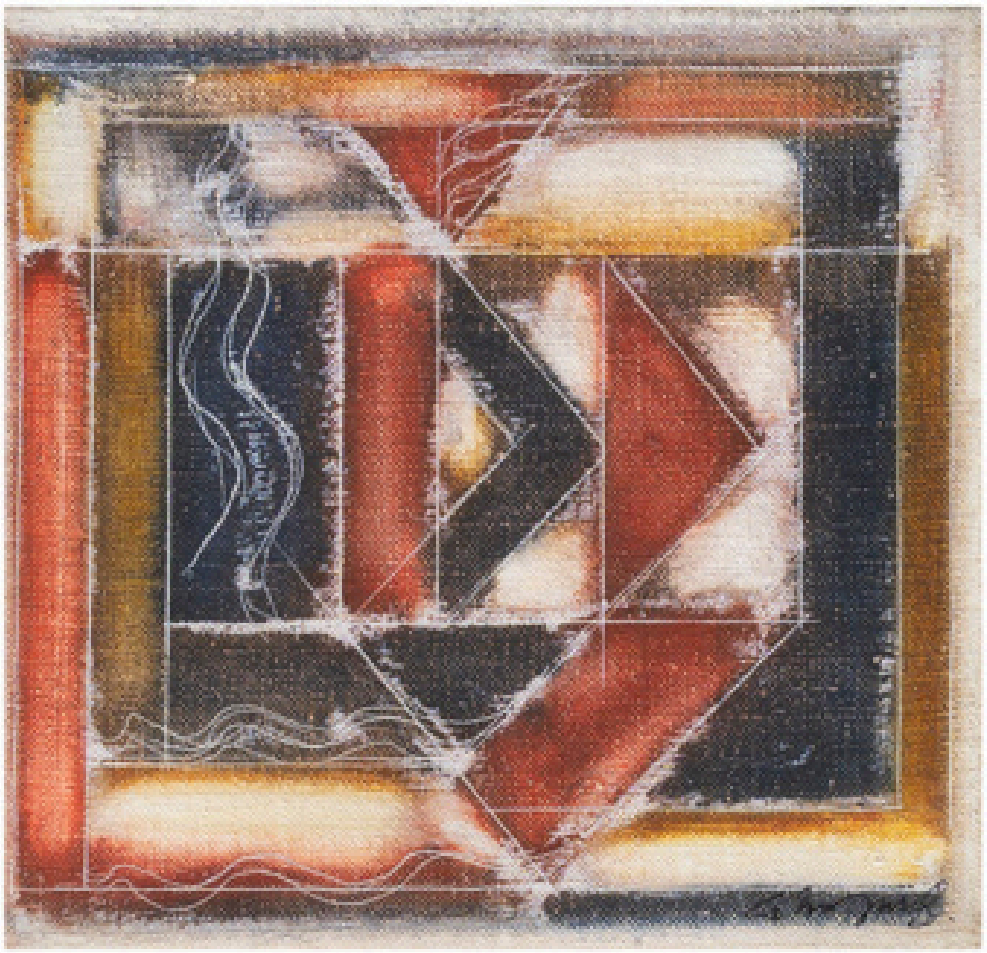
Signed adn dated at the back



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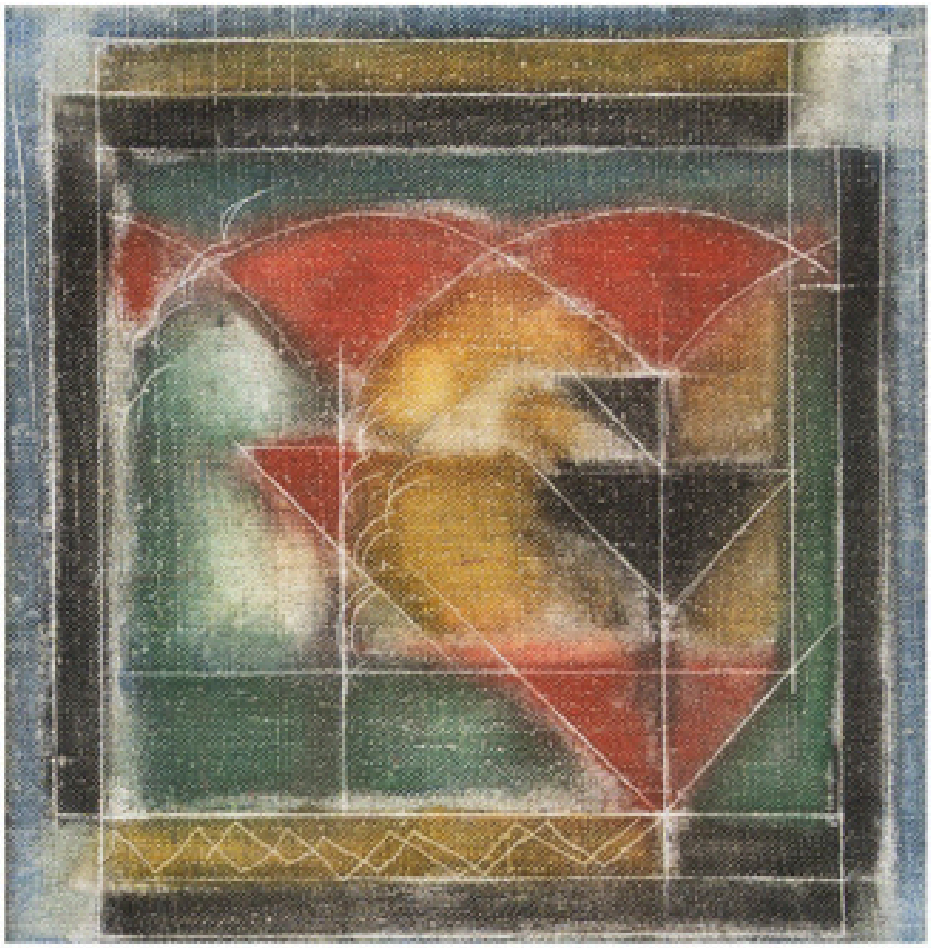

Composition
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Composition
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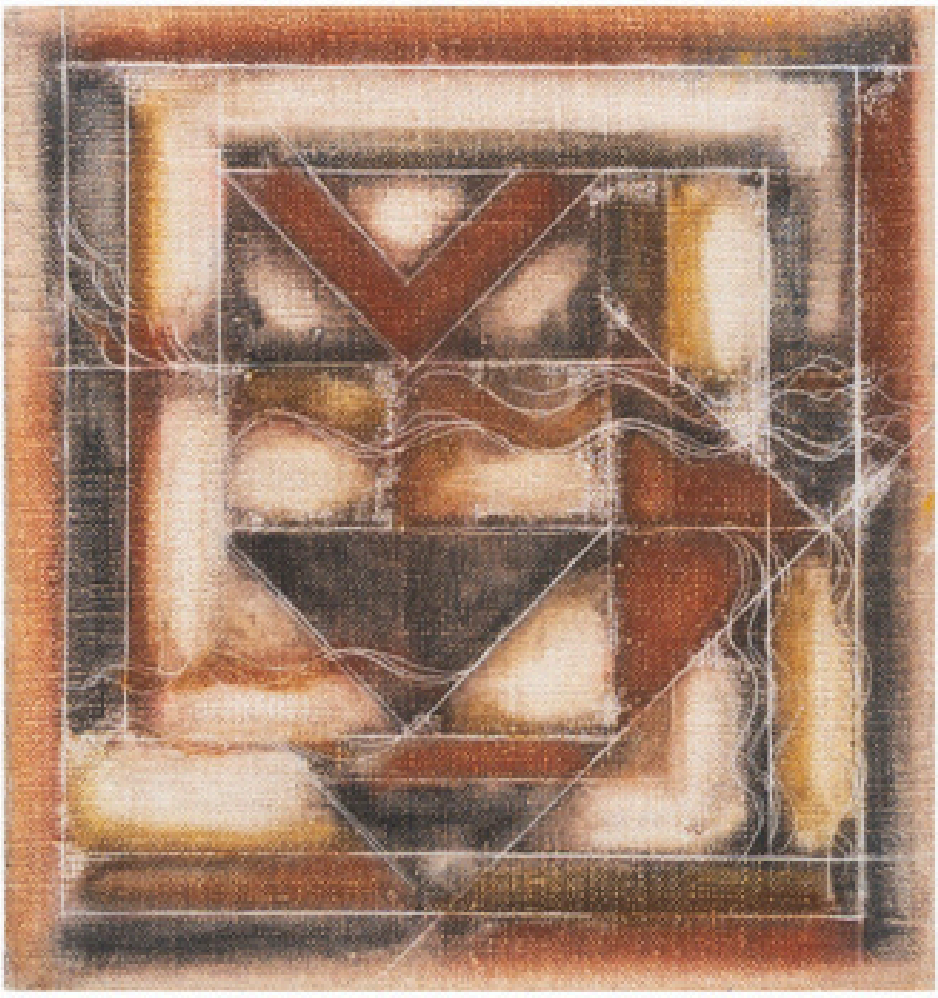

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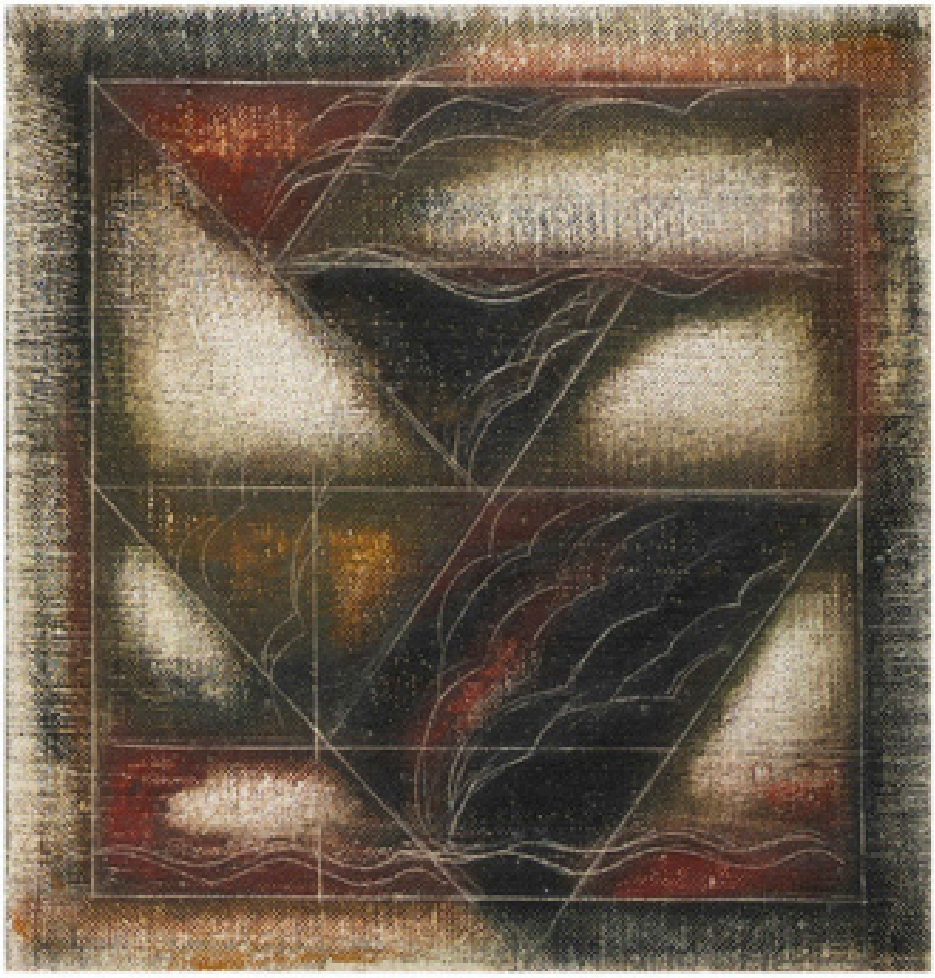
Signed and dated at the back



Composition
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19 x 20 cm
Signed and dated at the back



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