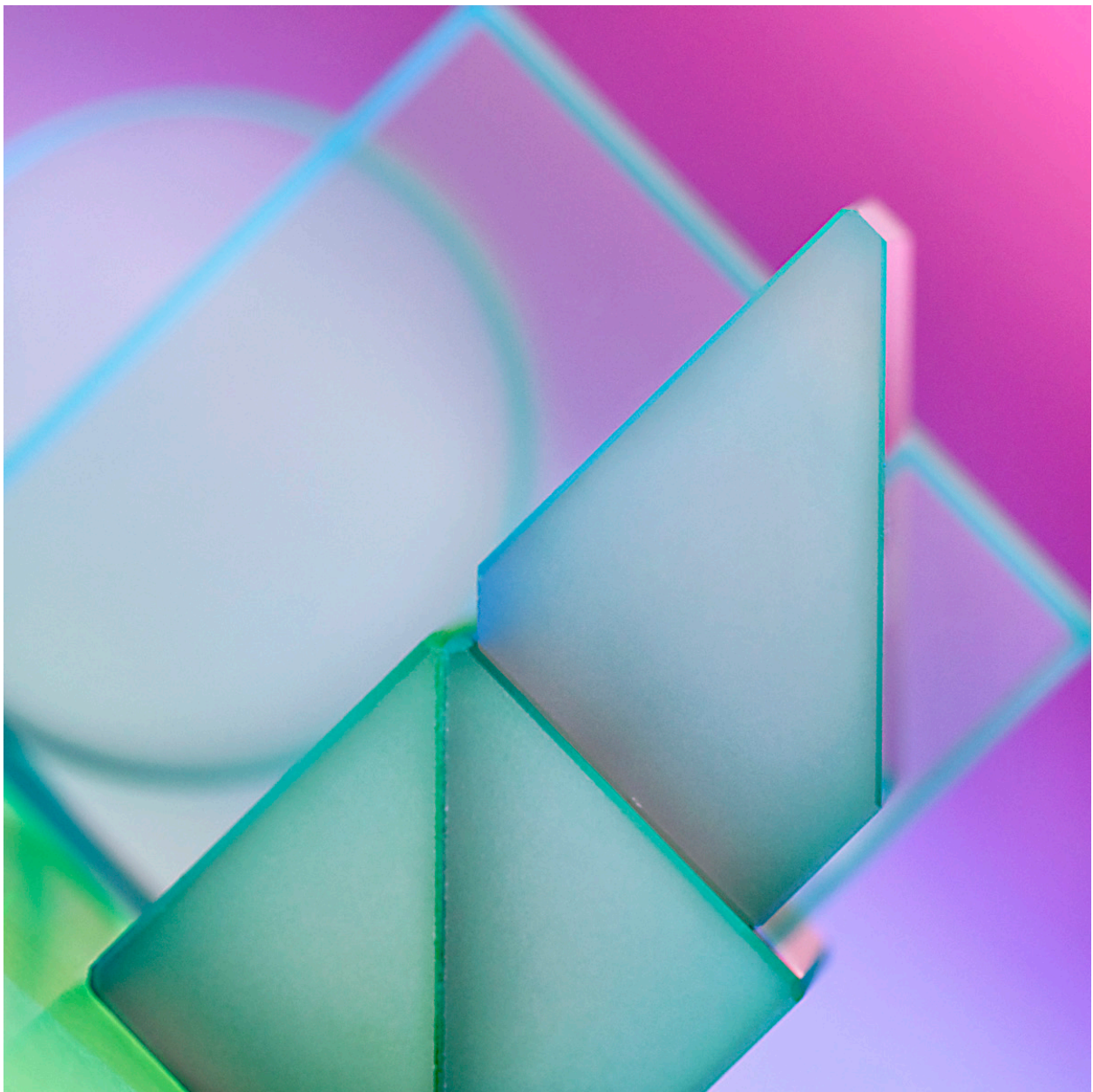


DEBORAH BAY



LIGHT FORMS

FOTO RELEVANCE HOUSTON TEXAS

MARCH 29-MAY 11, 2019



**Reflections on the Square**

20 x 20, edition of 10

30 x 30, edition of 7

40 x 40, edition of 3

**Probability Theory**

(cover image)

20 x 20, edition of 10

30 x 30, edition of 7

40 x 40, edition of 3

DEBORAH BAY

LIGHT FORMS

The images in *Light Forms* bring together an eclectic set of influences, ranging from the geometries of constructivism to color field. After collecting an assortment of prisms and lenses, I became interested in seeing how light and color traveled across optical materials. Lenses and prisms were layered and stacked at angles to capture light wrapping around form, while gels created washes of color in the background. Chromatic geometries emerged from the planes and lines of color. The images were produced in-camera and follow in the lineage of experimental studies exploring the most elemental components of photographic processes: light and lenses.

— Deborah Bay

*The artist retains two Artist Proofs of each image.  
Custom sizes also are available.*

# FROM DIRECT LIGHT

TRACY XAVIA KARNER

"The aim is to produce pictorial space from the elemental material of optical creation, from direct light."

— Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, *The New Vision*, 1947

*Light Forms* is a stunning culmination of artist Deborah Bay's ongoing experiments with light, color and perceptual illusions. In this series, Bay creates a visual realm that has both beauty and intellectual gravitas as she explores the nature of light and its elemental role in human vision as well as photography. Artfully, and playfully, Bay invites viewers to suspend disbelief as they visually enter her saturated pictorial spaces full of sensory delight. Drawing on her studies of vision science and various perceptual devices, Bay deftly constructs seemingly tangible forms in camera. On her work table, she arranges color gels, optical lenses, prisms and other pieces of glass that are less than a few inches in size, and would be hardly worthy of notice on their own. Yet through Bay's macro lens she forms them into mesmerizing vignettes of angles and planes. She juxtaposes various components, using light and perspective to achieve chromatic geometries of substance. In the resulting images, unabashedly joyous colors align into shapes and forms that jokingly pose visual riddles of geometry, probabilities, and other accepted ways of understanding space and time.

The sheer scale of the work is compelling. In *Reflections on the Square*, various sized rectangles appear to both melt into and stand apart from each other. Hard edges contrast with blurred within a striated color palette. *Angles of Pi*, like *The Geometry Lesson*, poses monochrome questions about the relationship between shapes as triangles intersect circles creating depth and shadows. Then, in *Triangle Theorem*, Bay seems to extrapolate on this theme in a resplendent multicolor array of accentuated planes and soft contours. Exploring further, Bay introduces dots that add an intense vibrancy in *Circular Thinking I* and *Circular Thinking II* where

spheres appear to be emerging from the image. With her diptychs, Bay offers a strong sense of motion as one's eye travels along lines that move from one image to the other. *Linear2Circular* has a landscape feel that harkens back to Bay's early series, *Adagio*, whereas in *Line of Beauty* waves and particles ebb and flow. With each piece, Bay demonstrates her skill in optical illusions and visual perception resulting in a jubilant play of *Light Forms* (2015-18).

In her early work, *Cyberia* (2005-06/2016), Bay joins her interests in metaphor and abstraction together. These images present the dystopic aspects of the digital world in dark hued scenes constructed on various internal computer parts. Arranging figures on memory chips and motherboards, Bay warps perception to pose humorous, yet insightful, commentary about virtual realities. In *Cyberia*, we see the foundations of Bay's process evolving as she arranges miniature elements that both fool and enlighten the viewer. Then, with *Metaphysics 10101* (2007-09), Bay turns her focus to the representational limits of photography by fashioning "warped concepts of time and distance, juxtapositions of scale and abstract geographies charted out of ether." A series of fantasy images, this series shows further development of Bay's interests in constructed worlds as metaphors for larger societal shifts. She follows this with *Adagio* (2010-11), where she uses movement to abstract time and space, creating "a personal interpretation of rural and urban geography." With *Adagio*, Bay employs the mechanics of the camera to reveal patterns of motion across the landscape as a reference to the complexity of human vision.

For her next series, *The Big Bang* (2011-14), Bay leaves her studio to explore a very different process for creating abstractions. Collaborating with law enforcement professionals, Bay asks them fire various types of bullets into bullet-proof Plexiglas. Photographing the resulting Plexiglas panels against a black background, allows Bay to "hint at the creation of new galaxies and stars in the nether reaches of the universe" from the destructive force of the shots fired. Again, Bay is giving the viewer an 'optical creation' that is far beyond a sum of its parts. By adjusting scale and light, key elements of Bay's artistic practice, the stunningly gorgeous images evoke starbursts, diamonds and gemstones floating in deep space.

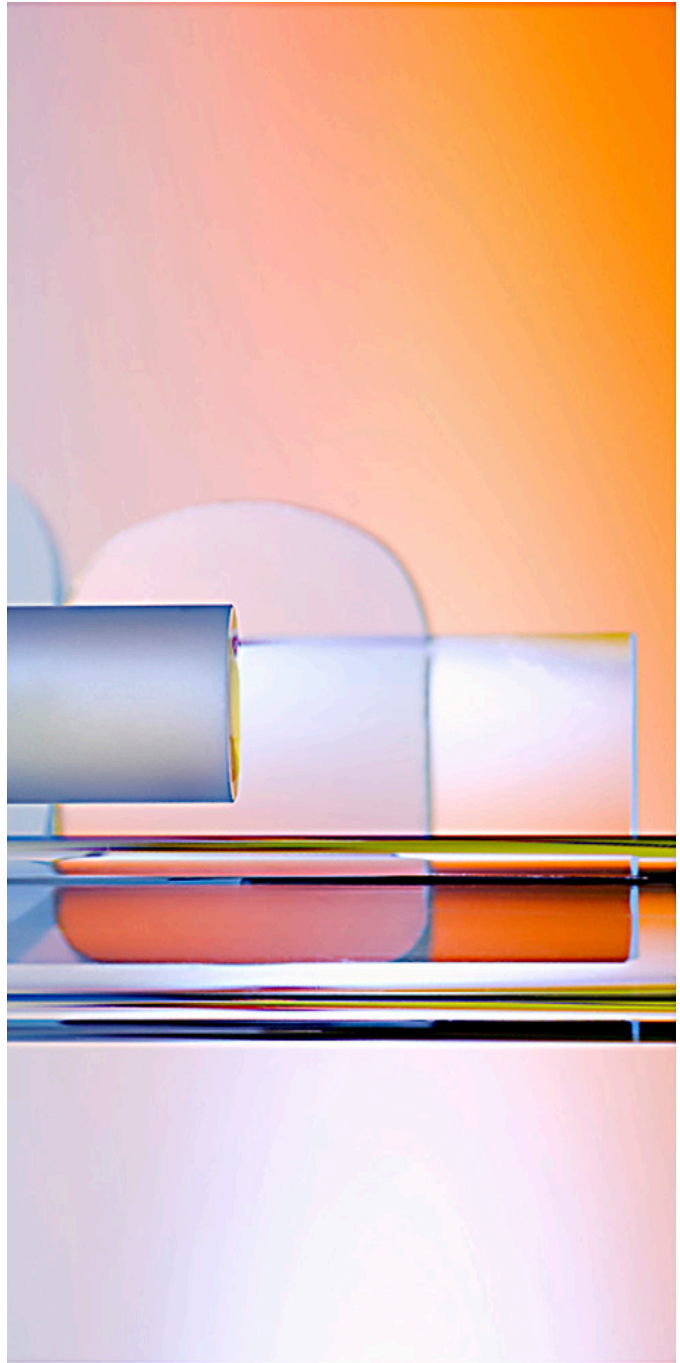
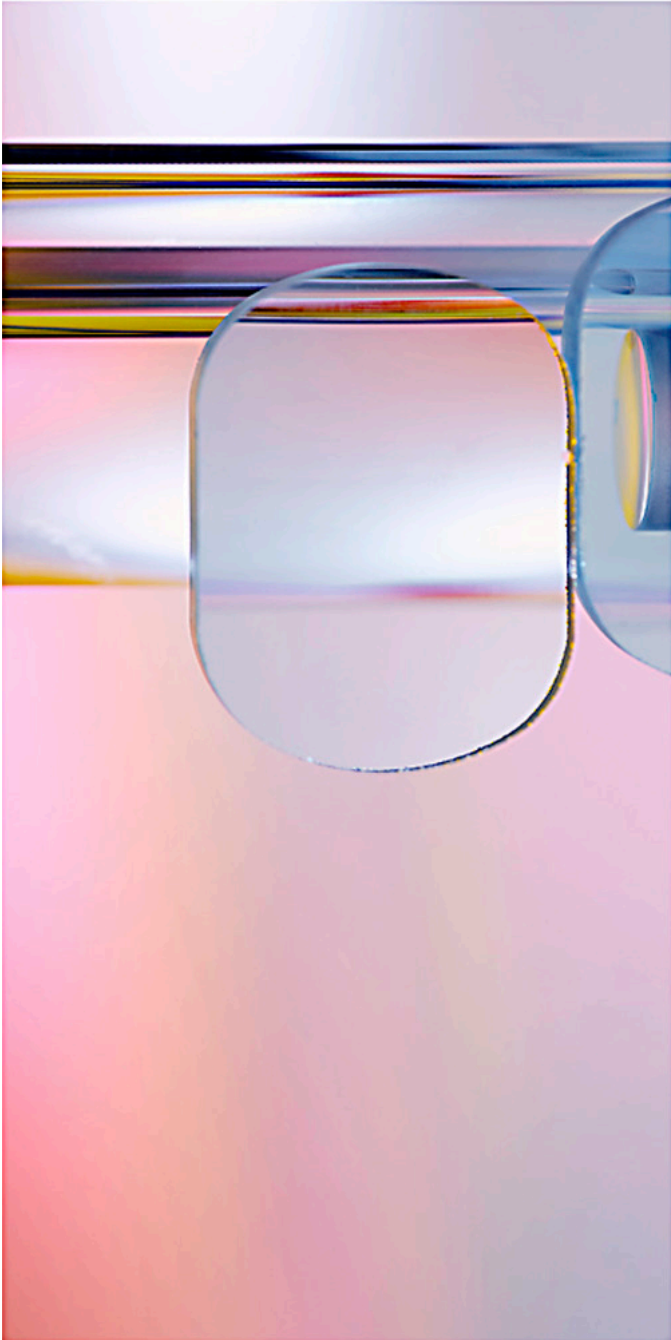
Throughout her artistic explorations, Bay has skillfully developed ingenious ways of using color, light and scale to create novel pictorial spaces from direct light. In contemplating larger social ideas of sight, movement, space, reality and destruction, Bay creates captivating and insightful visual fictions. In *Light Forms*, we see Bay's propensity to tease, delight and question fully developed. Deborah Bay shows herself to be a master of constructed abstractions, producing 'new vision' like her Bauhaus predecessors; her images sever the real from the visible providing both pleasure and enchantment.

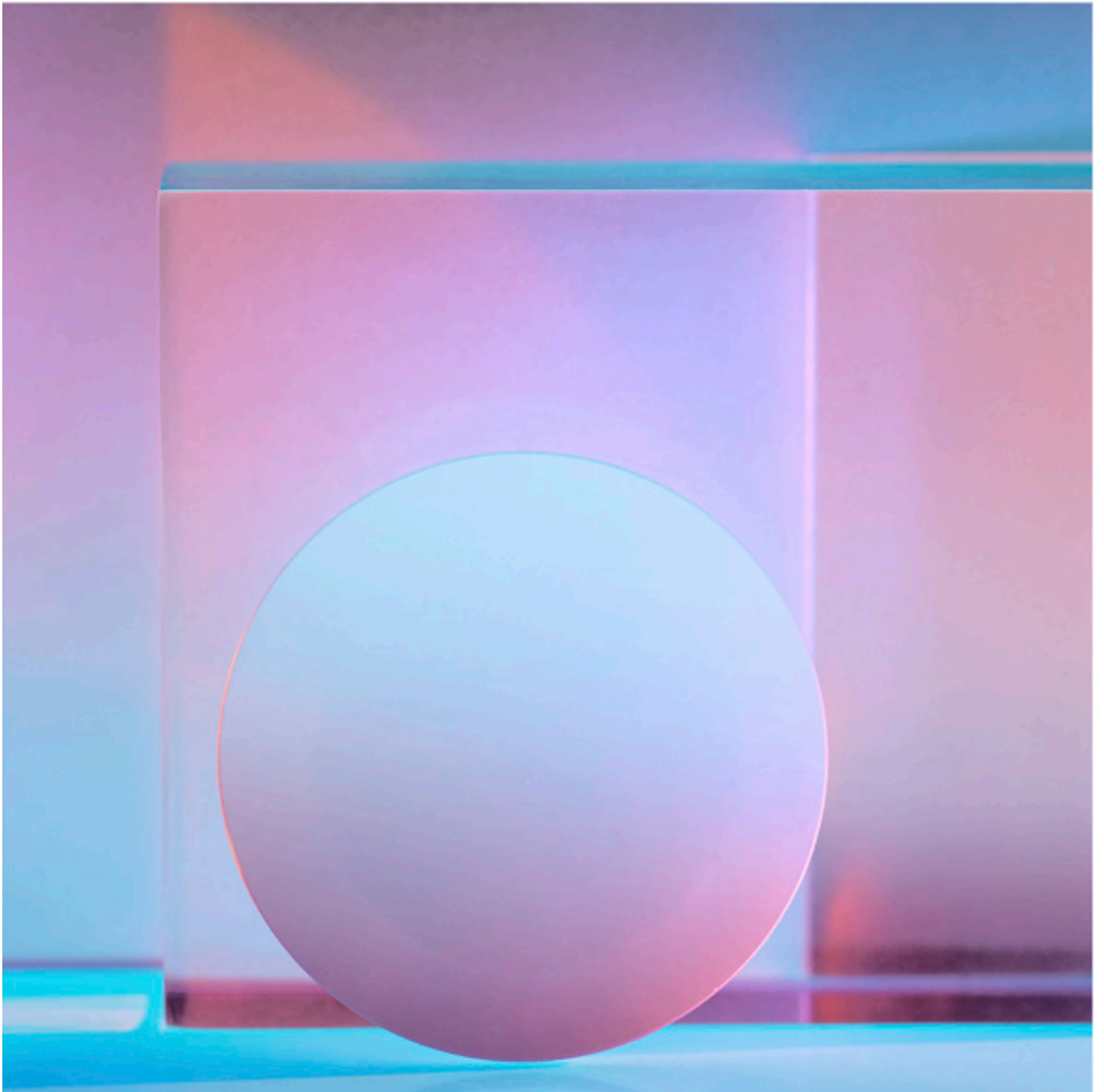


**The Hydraulics of Color**

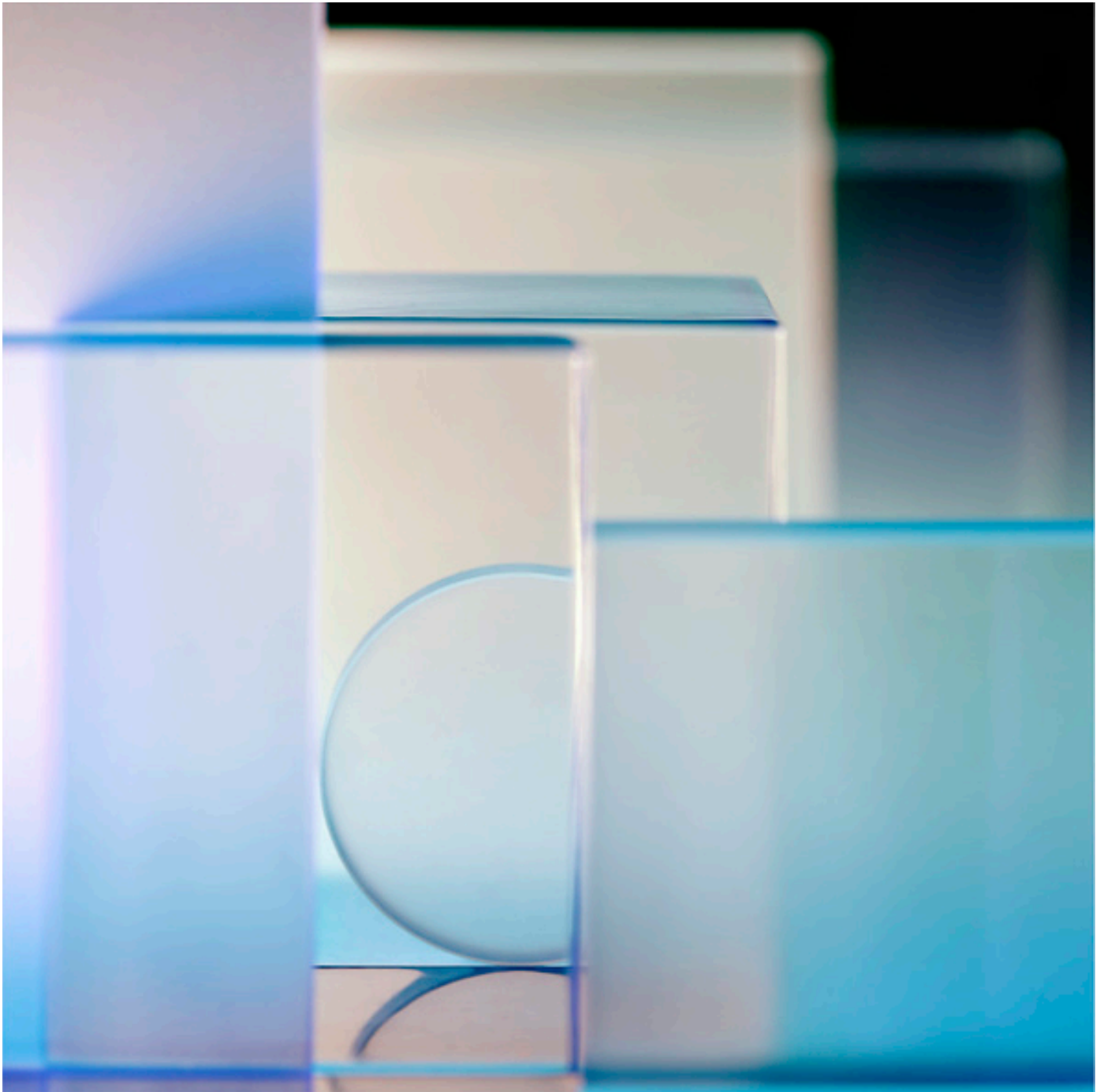
Triptych  
30 x 45, edition of 10  
50 x 75, edition of 5











**Plane Perspectives**

Diptych  
15 x 30, edition of 10  
24 x 48, edition of 7  
40 x 80, edition of 3

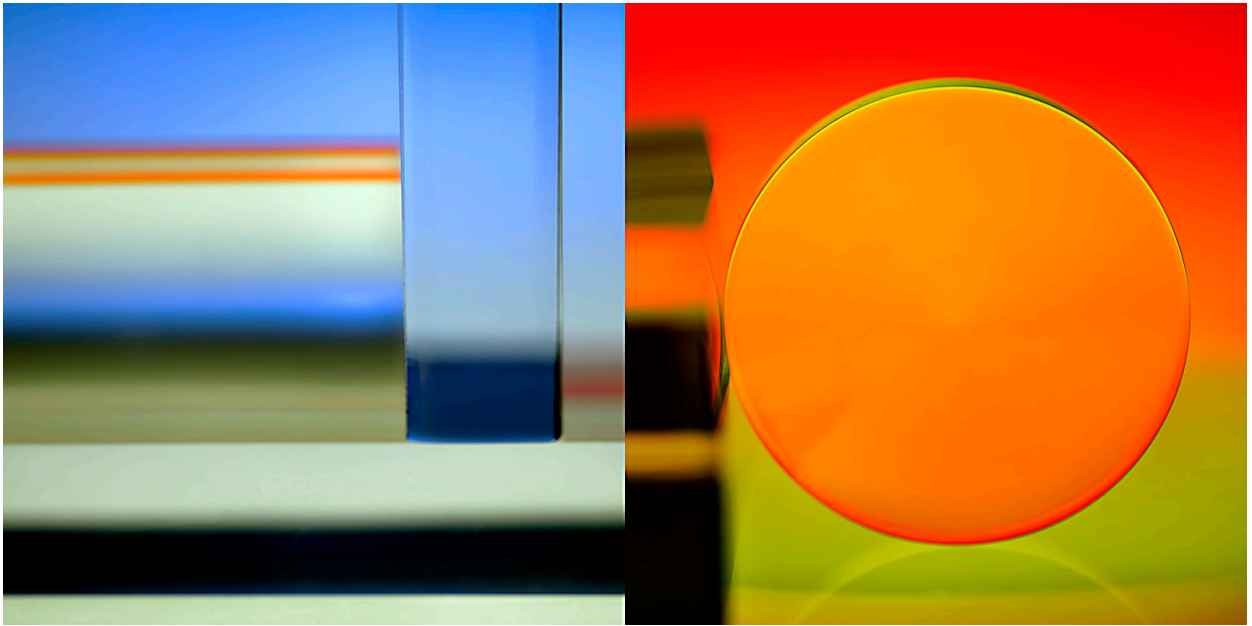


**Lean Out**

22.5 x 15, edition of 10

36 x 24, edition of 7

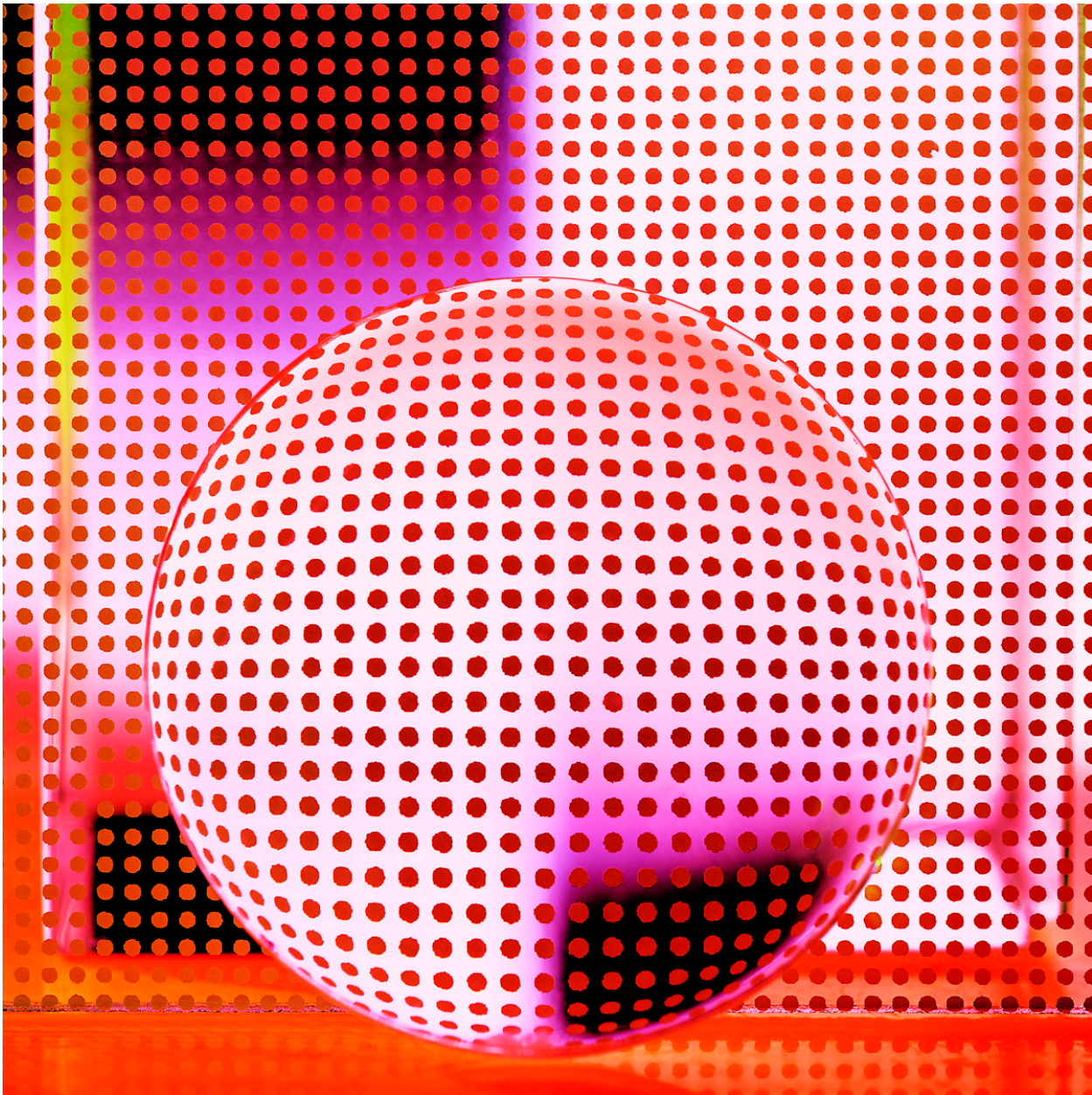
48 x 32, edition of 3



**Linear2Circular**

Diptych  
15 x 30, edition of 10  
24 x 48, edition of 7  
40 x 80, edition of 3





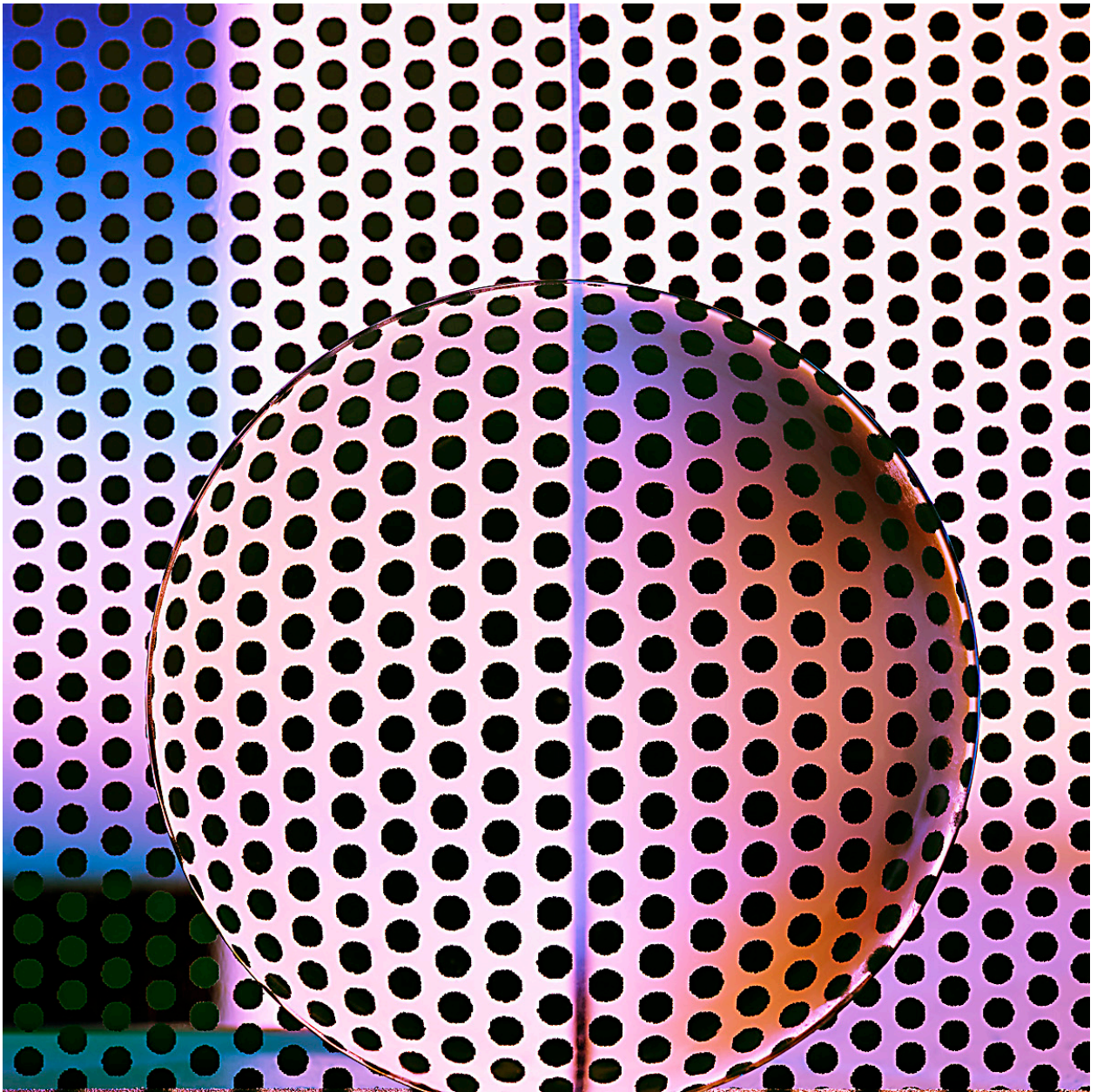
**Circular Thinking I**

15 x 15, edition of 10

24 x 24, edition of 7

40 x 40, edition of 3





**Circular Thinking II**

15 x 15, edition of 10

24 x 24, edition of 7

40 x 40, edition of 3



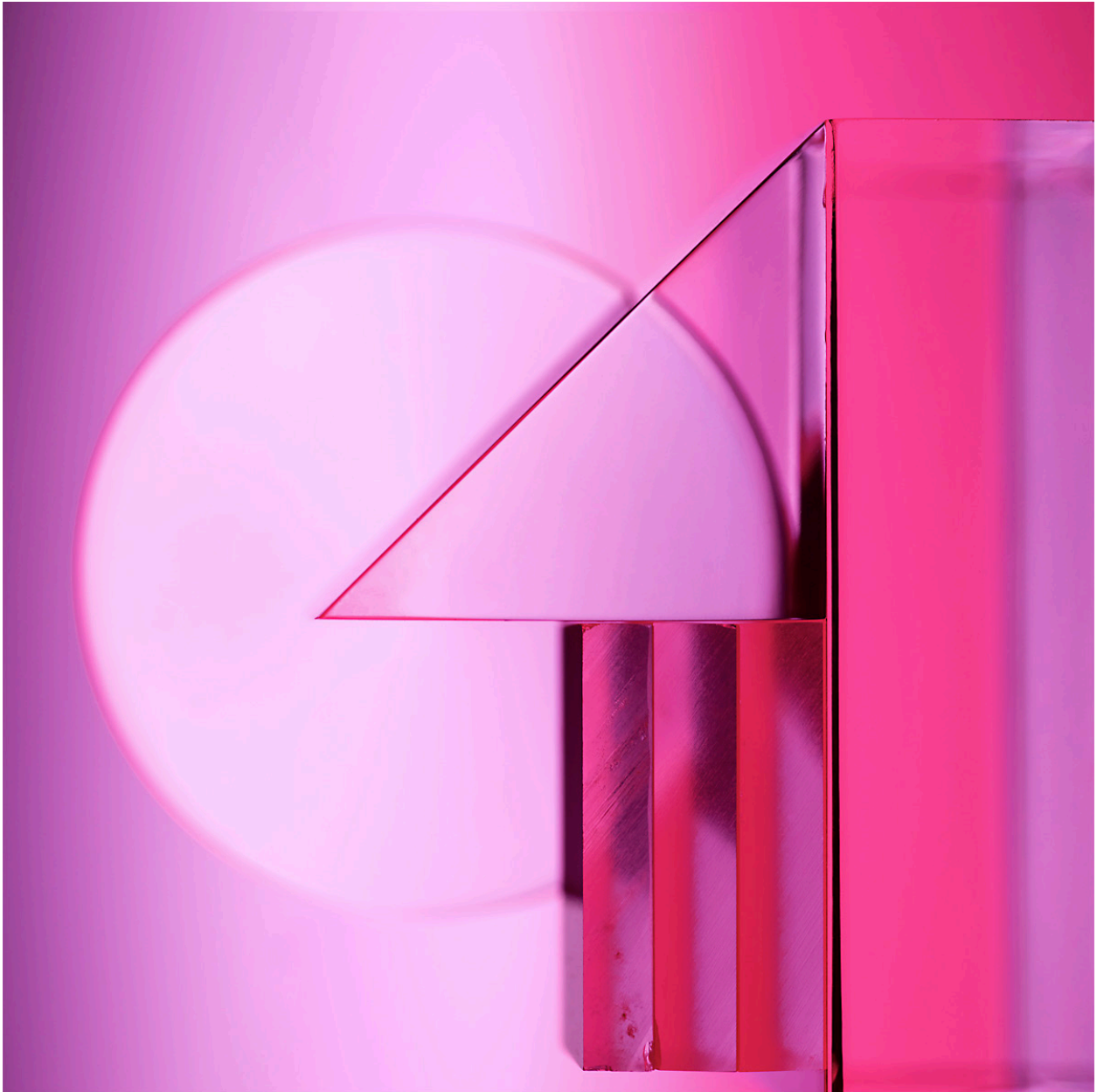
**The Geometry Lesson**

15 x 15, edition of 10

24 x 24, edition of 7

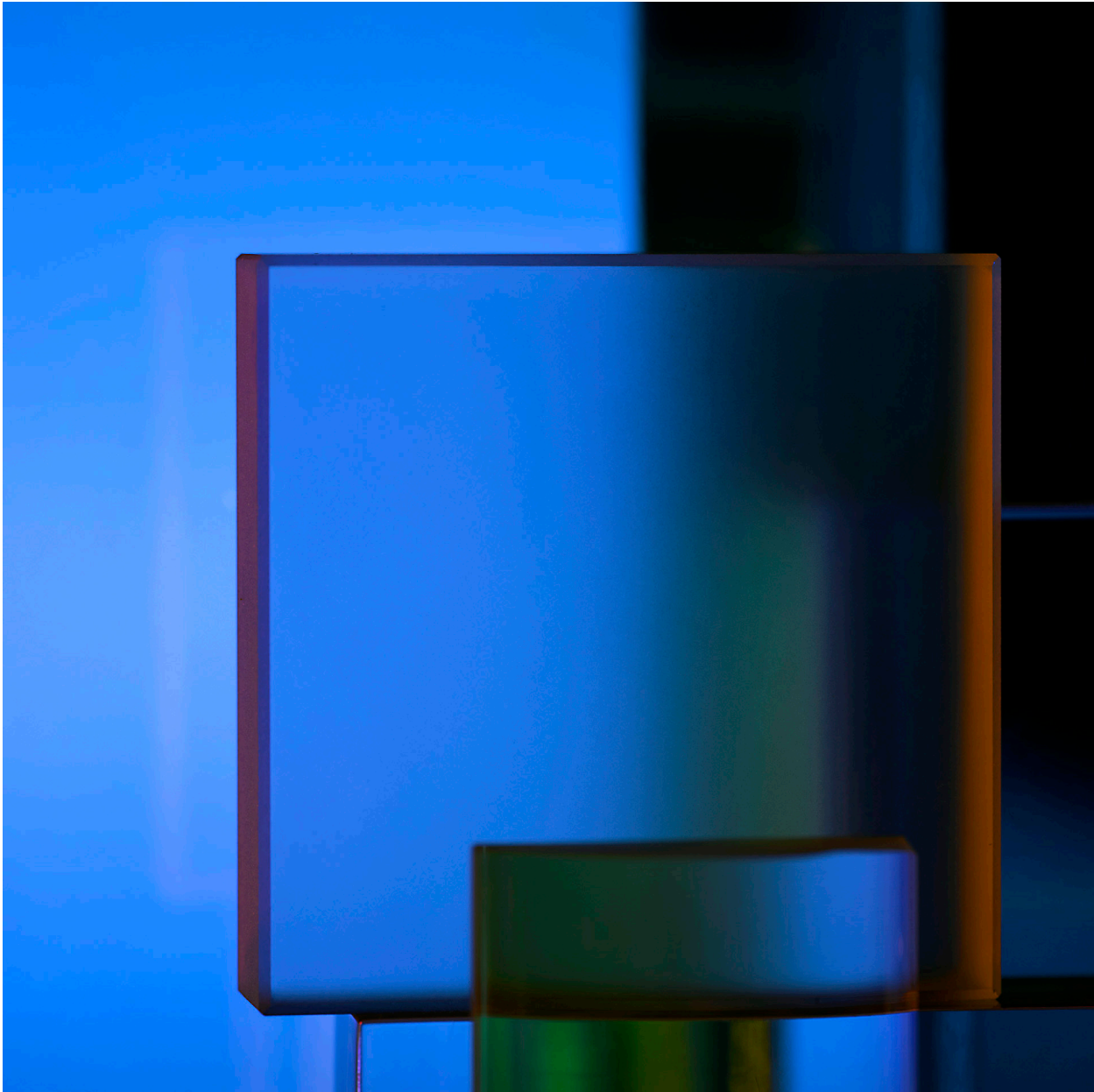
40 x 40, edition of 3





**Angles of Pi**

15 x 15, edition of 10  
24 x 24, edition of 7  
40 x 40, edition of 3

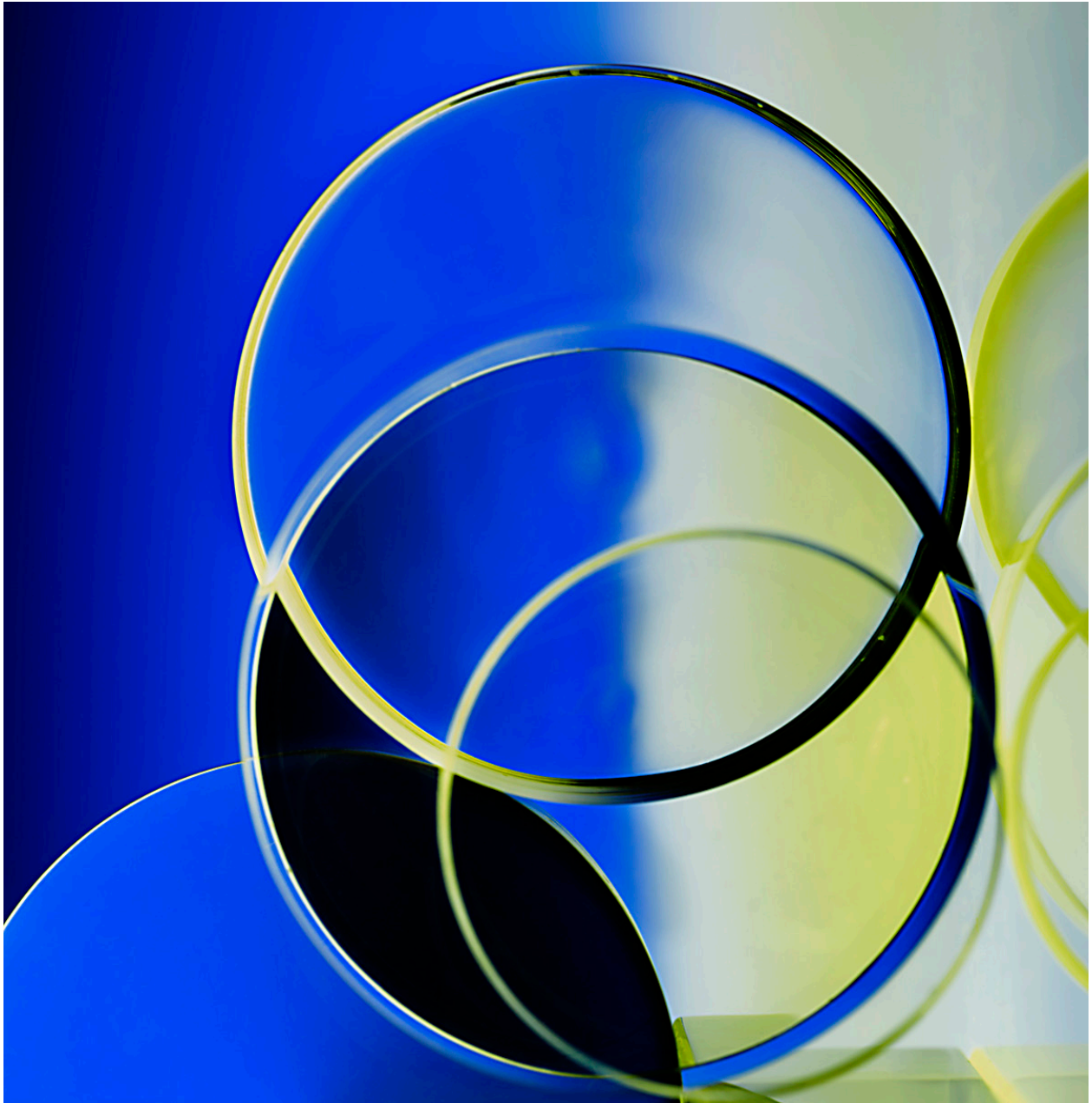


**Mondrian Dialectic**

15 x 15, edition of 10

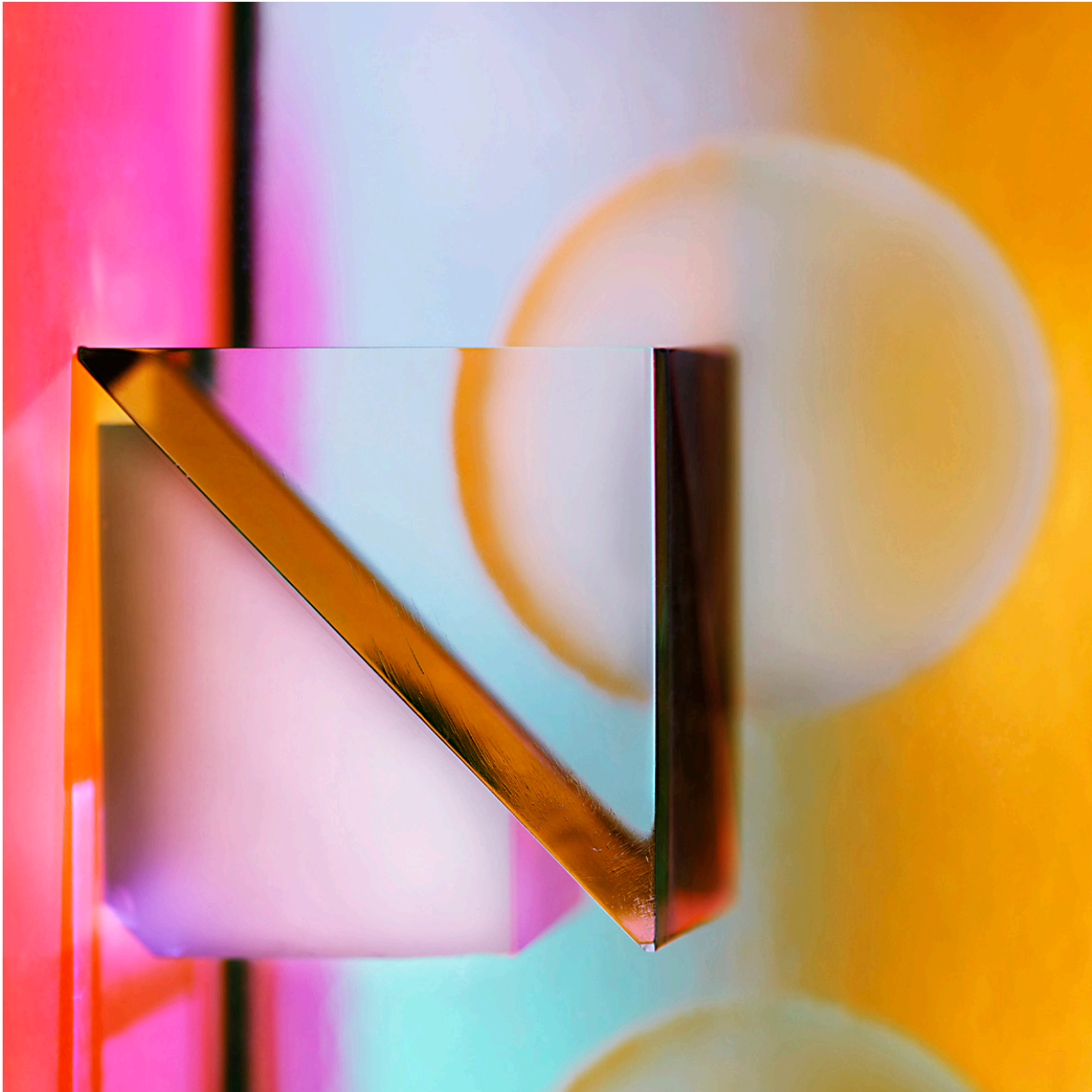
24 x 24, edition of 7

40 x 40, edition of 3



**Circular Domains**

15 x 15, edition of 10  
24 x 24, edition of 7  
40 x 40, edition of 3



**Triangle Theorem**

15 x 15, edition of 10

30 x 30, edition of 7

40 x 40, edition of 3



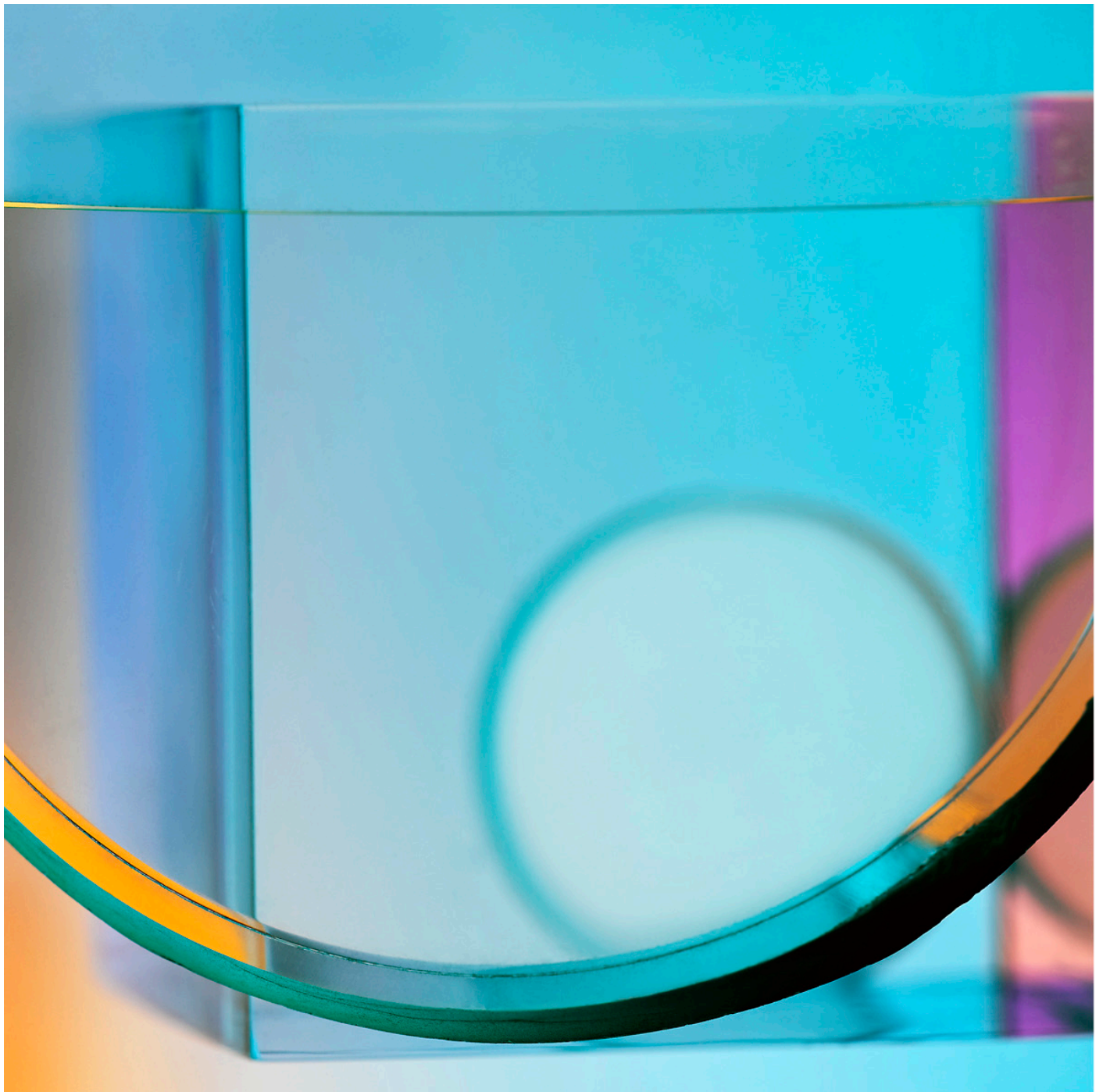


**Angular Velocity**

15 x 15, edition of 10

24 x 24, edition of 7

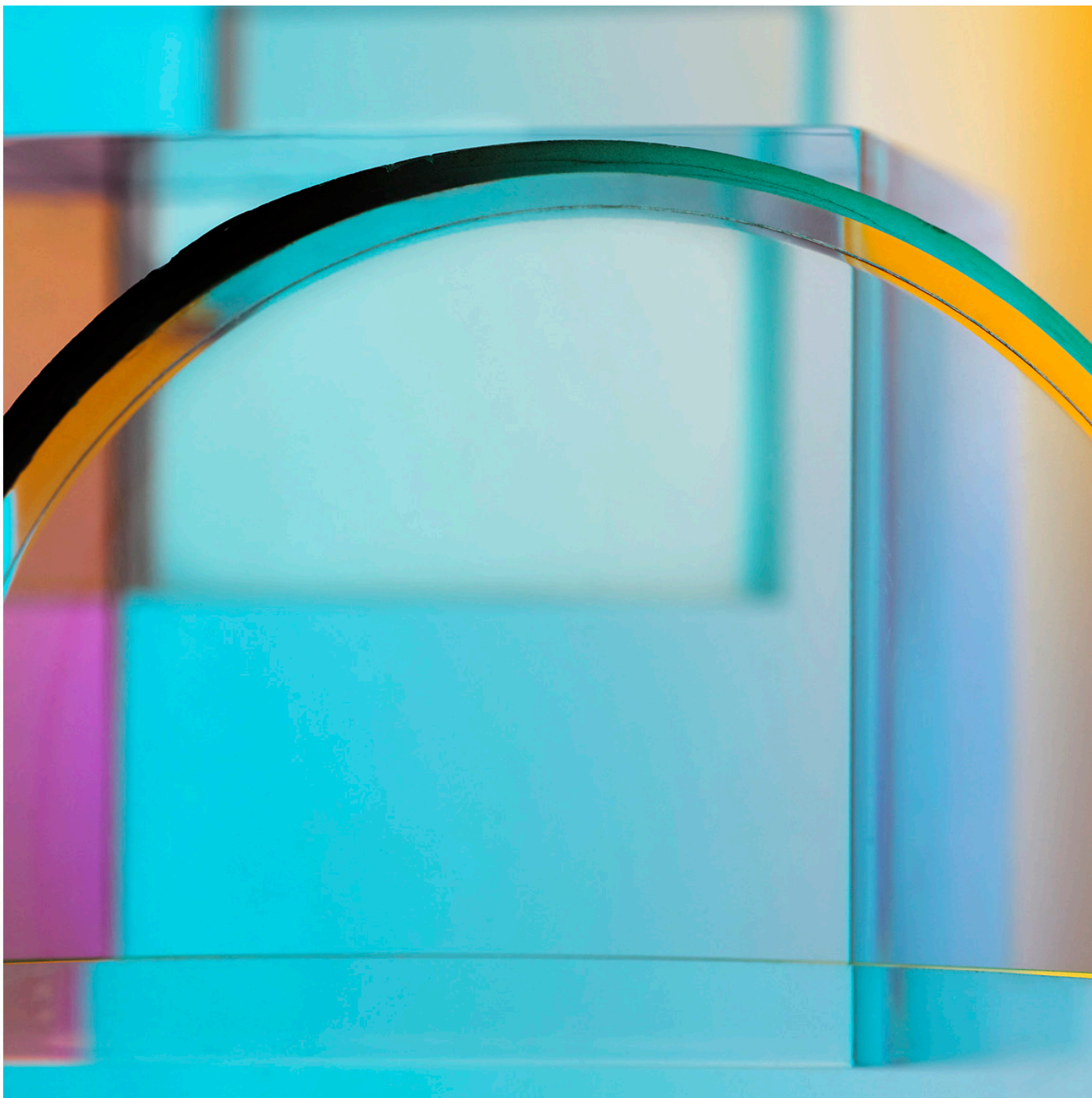
40 x 40, edition of 3

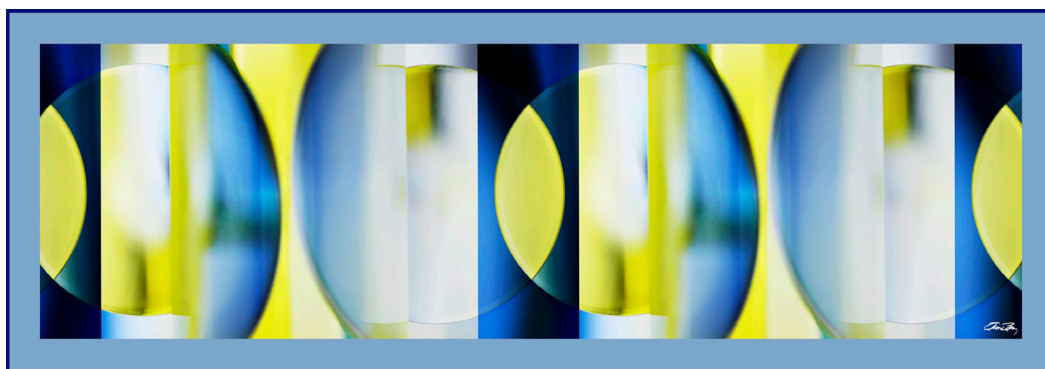


**Line of Beauty**

Diptych  
20 x 40, edition of 10  
30 x 60, edition of 7  
40 x 80, edition of 3







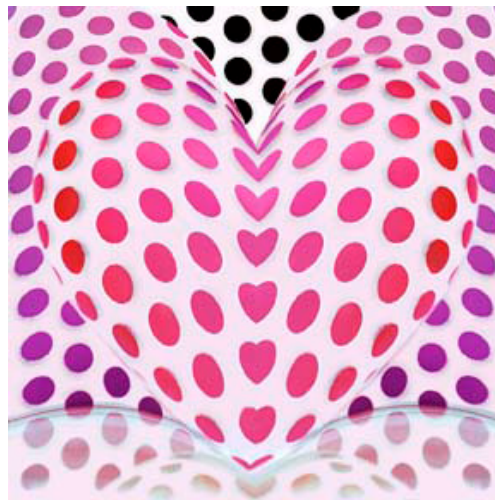
**Music of the Spheres Scarf**

100% silk, hand-finished in Lake Como, Italy  
Edition of 100  
26 x 75

# DEBORAH BAY

## THE ARTIST

Deborah Bay is an American artist who specializes in constructed studio photography. She has exhibited throughout the United States, most recently at Photoville Brooklyn and Texas Contemporary 2018. Her work is in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and the Dorsky Museum of Art at State University of New York at New Paltz. *The British Journal of Photography* has featured her work on its cover, and her images also have appeared in *Popular Photography*, *BBC Focus* and the *Oxford American*, among others. She lives in Houston, Texas, and holds graduate and undergraduate degrees from The University of Texas at Austin.



**Pop Heart**

10 x 10, edition of 25

# FOTO RELEVANCE

Since 2016, Foto Relevance cofounders Geoffrey C. Koslov and Bryn Larsen have focused on the exhibition and acquisition of museum quality contemporary fine art photography and photography-based work. Foto Relevance is dedicated to providing a platform for an innovative selection of American and international photographic artists pushing the boundaries of photography. The gallery has mounted monographic exhibitions as well as group shows to investigate current trends and themes in contemporary art, showcasing a broad range of both darkroom and digital photographic techniques. In addition to promoting the work of artists, Foto Relevance provides guidance, educating individual collectors and corporations in the acquisition and sale of art. Foto Relevance is a member of the Houston Art Gallery Association (HAGA). The gallery is located in the historic Audubon District of Montrose in Houston, Texas.



**FOTO RELEVANCE**

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