

*The wildest generalization of all that exists*  
Chus Martínez

Many still find it difficult to connect the act of painting, or the practice of art in general, with thinking. This lies in the fact that many do not understand thinking and, therefore, find it difficult to understand painting. When I say that many do not understand thinking, it is not because I want to undermine anyone, but simply because thinking is a substance difficult to understand. Thinking implies consciousness and consciousness is epiphenomenal. It happens on the occasion of an event, or a feeling, or an encounter with an object, but it is something radically different from these things. One could claim that, historically, the role of abstract painting has had a lot to do with the development of consciousness, with understanding that perception is separate from what we actually see, or feel or even “think.” In this sense, the consciousness that painting brings about involves a great deal of transformation, of corruption even, of what is real, or what it looks like, or how it reads or smells. Abstract painting today, which is no longer and can no longer be preoccupied with representation, is a way of understanding how—through color, form, and all the substance it creates—the mind produces a new variation of the world in consciousness. In other words, one could say that abstraction is the wildest generalization of all that exists.

Flora Klein’s work could be defined as very motivated painting. Motivated in the sense that she is aiming to produce a dynamic energy among all the elements at play, provoking in the viewer the need to respond. Paradoxically, by being abstract, the paintings may provoke viewers to ask themselves “what exactly am I reacting to?” And the answer may simply lie in the very nature of experience, played out through a series of decision making processes involving matter, pigment, line, form, surface, frame, dimension, proportion, seriality, and composition in a way that forces us to remain abstract or conscious. “Conscious” here is not meant as the opposite of unconscious, but rather as the same thing with a differing intensity. We call something conscious if we can articulate it linguistically, and when we are unable to do so we call it unconscious. With “conscious,” however, I mean the very state of the mind perceiving, independently of how we are able to project language upon it. It is this immensely complex variety of conscious states that abstract painting in Flora Klein’s hands tries to conceptualize and enact. Like a painting, a conscious mental state inevitably offers a partial rendering of what experience is. Limited by its size, by its nature, but also by the way in which we put works in relation to one another, the force that drives painting, in Flora’s case, is a desire to motivate itself, and us, to continue along this path.