



KING'S LEAP

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Eli Bornowsky

$3.3671984954 \times 10^{6391}$

June 1 to July 12, 2024

The gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition by Eli Bornowsky. This is Bornowsky's second exhibition with King's Leap, following his two-person debut with Yu Nishimura at the inauguration of the gallery's 105 Henry Street location in 2021. This marks his first solo presentation with the gallery.

Bornowsky's show, $3.3671984954 \times 10^{6391}$, continues his experiments using mathematics and computer programs to derive unique combinations of shapes and optical rhythms. A departure from the modernist and minimalist projects of abstraction, Bornowsky uses geometry *without* the infamous grid. Here the paintings exhibited are images of the Penrose tiling (or tessellation), perhaps the most famous mathematical object from the class of aperiodic tilings of the plane: geometric patterns that do not repeat and lack translational symmetry. Bornowsky starts by writing programs that generate Delannoy number arrays, wherein specific movements across a lattice are numerated into rhythmic sequences. Numbers from these sequences are translated onto each tile of the Penrose tiling, and each number is used to reference a color from the Ostwald color system¹. In one sense the works are extremely elaborate paint-by-numbers. The final images present a visual phasing, creating a multi-stable picture that is never fixed.

Complicating Bornowsky's process is his use of egg tempera, a medium historically used for painting during the Medieval and early Renaissance periods. On panels with layers of traditional gesso, Bornowsky meticulously renders his computer-assisted tiles, cutting into the gesso to incise an exact outline of the geometric form. Egg tempera is then added, a time-consuming and meditative activity rendering many transparent layers of paint with a small brush. The inside of each tile shape becomes a world of visibly scribbled and entangled strokes of unique and rare pigments. The finished works glow with tempera's characteristic luminosity, a quality shared with historical tempera works, especially religious icon painting.

¹ The Ostwald color system, developed in Germany in the early 20th century, is a limited set of 672 colors. It was an attempt to systematize color in a way similar to notes of musical pitch and was influential on the De Stijl and Bauhaus groups.

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The exhibition title, $3.3671984954 \times 10^{6391}$, illustrates the total number of possible images that could be generated based on Bornowsky's computer-coded set of variables: color, shape, axis rotation, scaling, and cropping. This number is incomprehensibly larger than the estimated number of particles in the known universe, 10^{82} . Though there are seven paintings in the exhibition, Bornowsky suggests a practically limitless number of unique solutions to his compositions. By relinquishing his expressive decision-making and foregrounding a set of rigid and overlapping rules, Bornowsky's paintings exhibit both harmonic and discordant properties, a kind of musical polyphony in visual form. Bornowsky bridges the de-personalized subject of geometry into a sacred process, collapsing the scientific and the spiritual.

Eli Bornowsky (b. 1980) is a Alberta, CA born artist based in New York. Select solo and two-person exhibitions include Eli Bornowsky & Yu Nishimura at King's Leap (New York, NY), Canton-Sardine (Vancouver, CA), Unit 17 (Vancouver, CA), Burnaby Art Gallery (Burnaby, CA). Selected group exhibitions include a three person show in 2024 at Catriona Jeffries (Vancouver, CA), and Kayokoyuki (Tokyo, JP).