




James Little  
*Affirmed/Actions*

November 7 – December 21, 2024

520 West 25th Street

Petzel



*Affirmed/Actions*

Petzel is pleased to present *Affirmed/Actions*, an exhibition of new abstract paintings by Memphis-born, New York-based artist James Little. The show marks Little's second solo exhibition at the gallery and will be on view from November 7 to December 21, 2024, at Petzel's Chelsea location at 520 W 25th Street. Little will unveil a new group of encaustic black paintings and white oil paintings, the latter featuring many apertures with swirling colors, both series that were featured in the 2022 Whitney Biennial. Little will also debut a new series of white encaustic paintings, imbued with his distinct treatment of line, light, and movement.



*Almost White*  
2023  
Oil and wax on linen  
73.94 x 73.94 inches  
187.8 x 187.8 cm  
(JL 23/240)



*Elvis 2024* Oil and  
wax on linen 73.94 x  
73.94 inches 187.8 x  
187.8 cm (JL  
23/295)



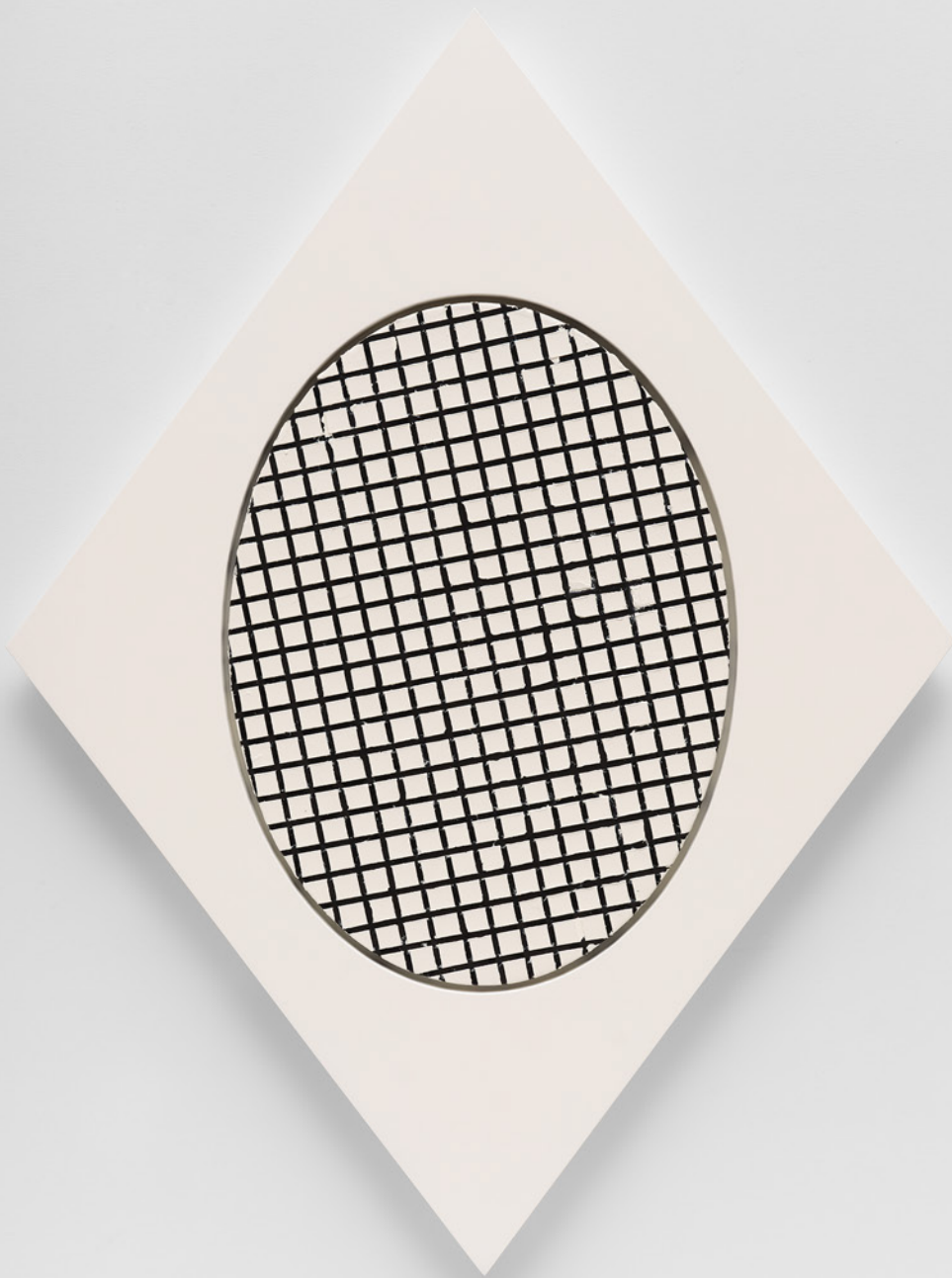
*Mr. Domino*  
2024  
Oil and wax on linen  
73.94 x 73.94 inches  
187.8 x 187.8 cm  
(JL 24/003)



*Don't Forget About Eddie Now!*  
2024  
Oil and wax on linen  
73.94 x 73.94 inches  
187.8 x 187.8 cm  
(JL 24/005)



*Josephine*  
2024  
Oil and wax on linen  
72.94 x 72.94 inches  
185.27 x 185.27 cm  
(JL 24/012)



*Segregated Squares*  
2024  
Oil on linen  
51 x 38.5 inches  
129.54 x 97.79 cm  
(JL 24/014)



*He Problem with Segregation*

2024

Oil on linen

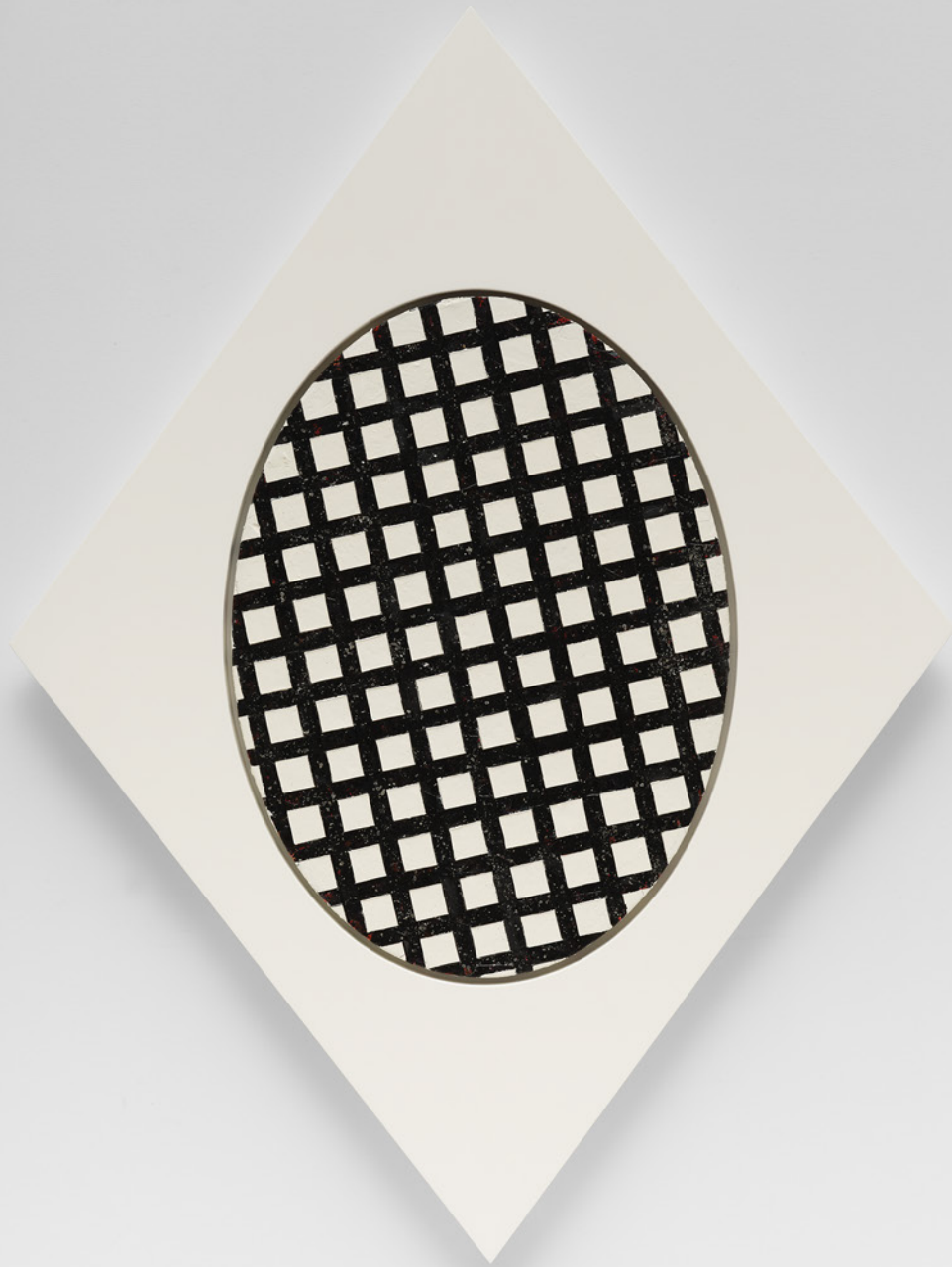
70.75 x 80.75 inches

179.71 x 205.11 cm

(JL 24/010)







*Labyrinth of Square*  
2024  
Oil on linen  
51 x 38.5 inches  
129.54 x 97.79 cm  
(JL 24/015)

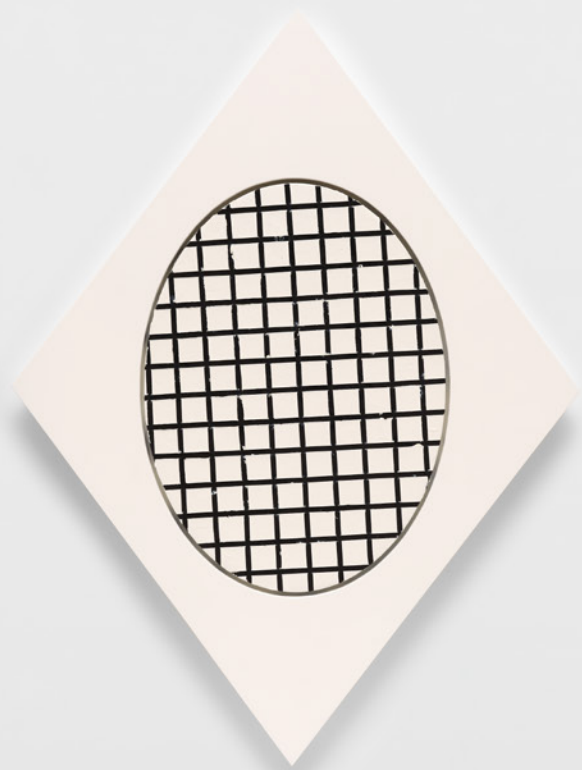


*Trophy Wives*  
2024  
Oil and wax on linen  
72.75 x 72.75 inches  
184.8 x 184.8 cm  
(JL 24/001)

Little's signature encaustic process, enabling him to compose matte, yet richly textured surfaces, began with experiments as a student in the early 70s. Combining wax and oil, Little has since refined his materials through custom, alchemical mixes and singular application methods. His works are labor-intensive, taking many months to create, and represent a decades-long inquiry into form, color, and composition. Little remarks, "My orbit is pretty much contained with that subject matter and decision making... it's a kind of step-by-step approach. It's always about a pictorial phenomenon and analytical thinking."



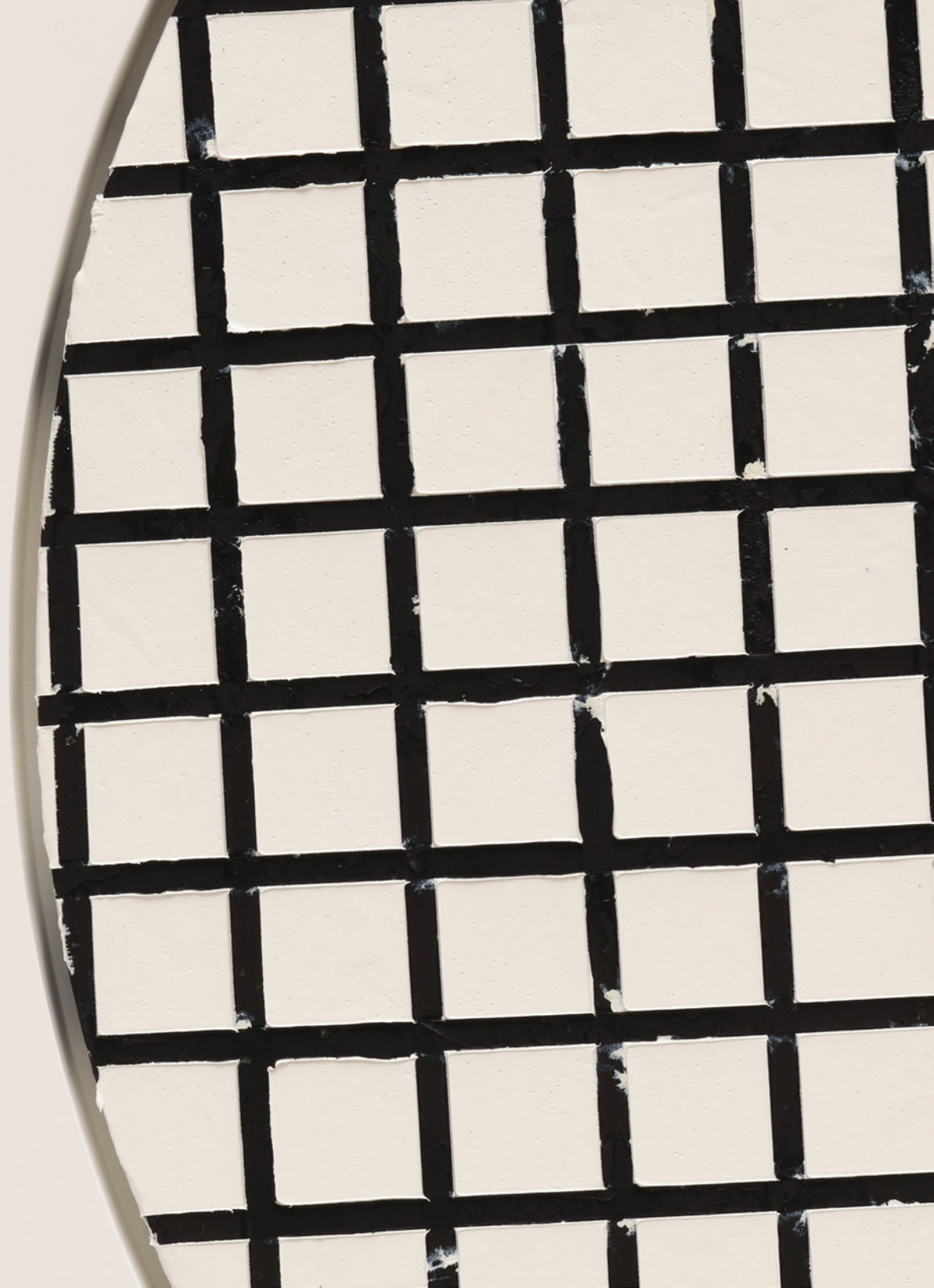




*Perfect Squares*  
2024 Oil on linen  
51 x 38.5 inches  
129.54 x 97.79 cm  
(JL 24/016)

*“James is carving a little niche for himself within that very long trajectory in the history of art. It’s familiar and yet it’s new territory. It extends what we understand as American modernism.”*

—Valerie Cassel Oliver, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art  
at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, *He New York Times*





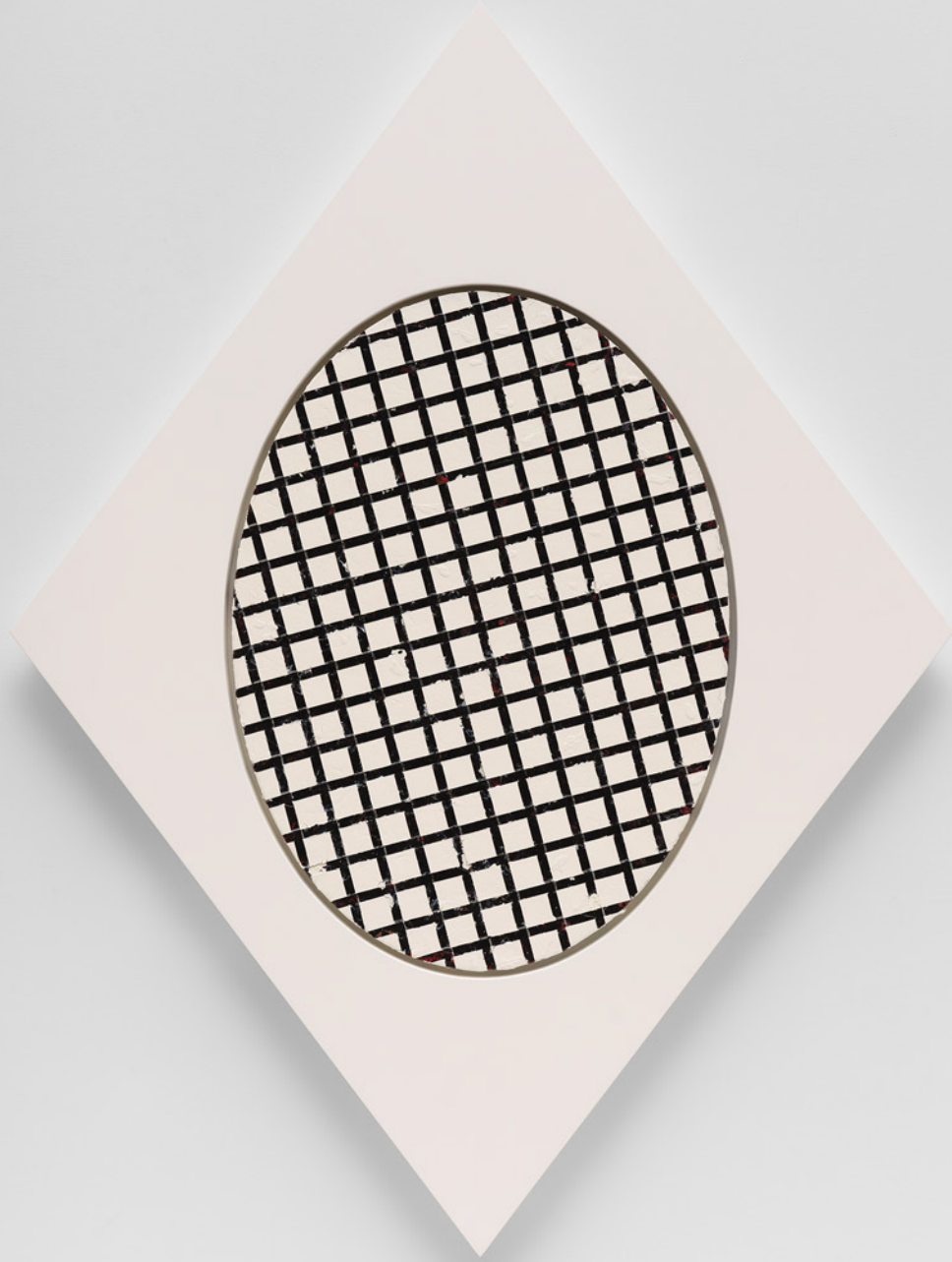
*He Glorious Legacy of  
Ruth Ann Smith  
2024*

Oil on linen  
70.75 x 80.75 inches  
179.71 x 205.11 cm  
(JL 24/011)

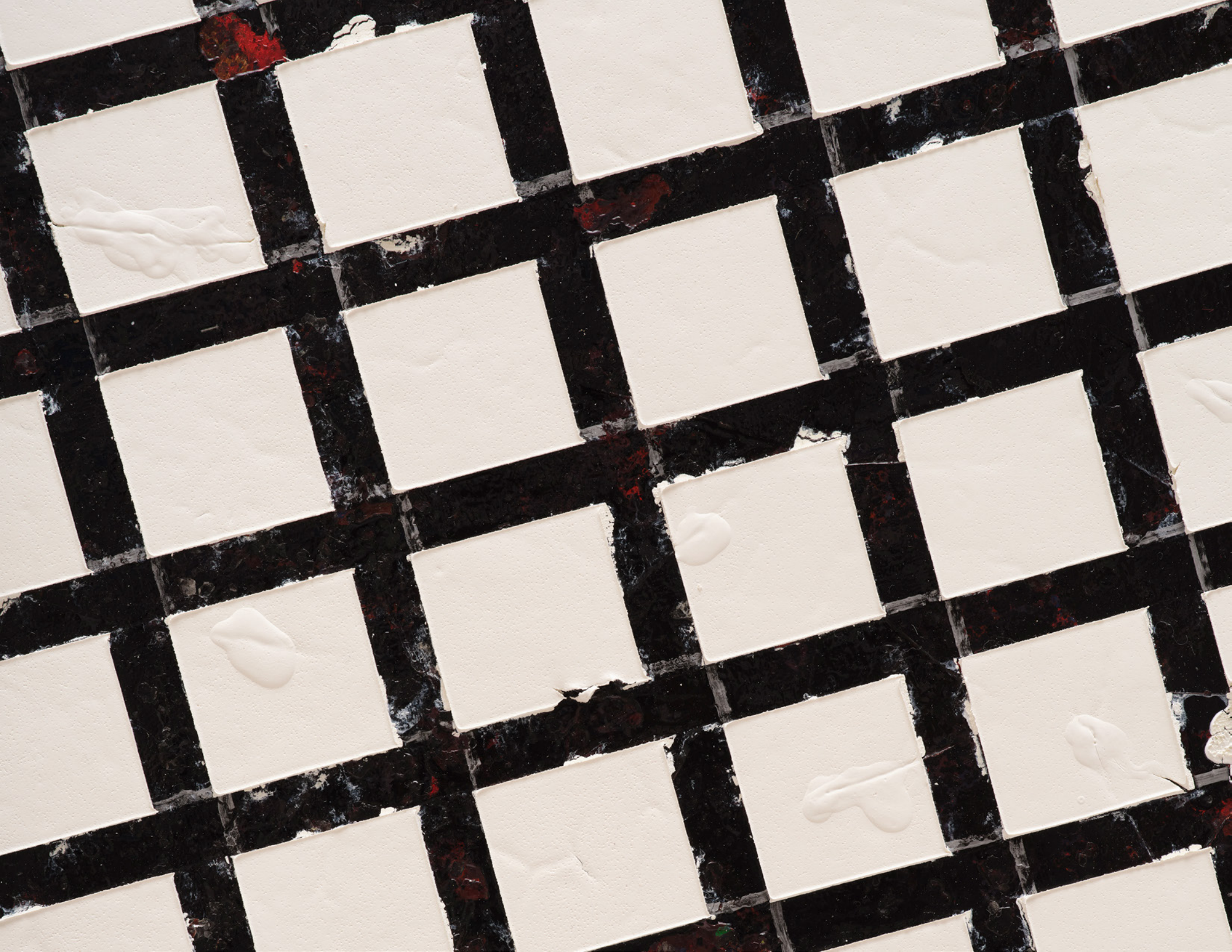
*Armed/Actions* also features new black paintings by the artist, and the debut of oil and wax white works, pushing his abiding study of “light as a medium” further: while Little’s black paintings absorb light, the artist’s white counterparts reflect it. Little’s former series, composed of black striped stars and diamonds, are both flat and expansive, imbued with geometric precision and power. Little’s white paintings band together rolling chevron patterns and pointed diamonds, achieving a spectrum of shifting shades, which Little has achieved by using only two tints of white.







*Imperfect Squares*  
2024  
Oil on linen  
51 x 38.5 inches  
129.54 x 97.79 cm  
(JL 24/017)





## About James Little

Little holds a BFA from the Memphis Academy of Art and an MFA from Syracuse University. He is a 2009 recipient of the Joan Mitchell Foundation Award for Painting. In addition to being featured prominently in the 2022 Whitney Biennial at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, his work has been exhibited extensively in solo and group exhibitions around the world, including at MoMA P.S.1, New York; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville; Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; St. Louis Art Museum, St. Louis; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond; and the Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C. In 2022, Little participated in a historic collaboration for Duke Ellington's conceptual Sacred Concerts series at the Lincoln Center, New York, with the New York Choral Society at the New School for Social Research and the Schomburg Center in New York. Recent solo exhibitions include: Petzel, New York (2024); Kavi Gupta, Chicago (2022); Dixon Gallery and Gardens, Memphis (2022); Louis Stern Fine Arts, West Hollywood (2020); and June Kelly Gallery, New York (2018).

Little's paintings are represented in the collections of numerous public and private collections, including:

The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York  
Virginia Museum of Fine Art, Richmond  
The Studio Museum, Harlem, New York  
The Menil Collection, Houston  
Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.  
Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis  
Maatschappij Arti Et Amicitiae, Amsterdam  
Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis  
Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse  
New Jersey State Museum, Trenton  
Tennessee State Museum, Nashville  
Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock  
The Newark Museum, Newark