

For over 50 years, Raimer Jochims has remained committed to painting contemplative, process-based abstractions. His mature work has evolved from his participation in monochromatic and optical painting movements in the 1960s and 70s. Started in 1973, his uniquely shaped paintings originate from studied observations of shapes found within wide ranging source materials such as Buddha statues, Polynesian ancestor figures, Aztec pottery vessels, Egyptian sculptures, and Chinese paintings. He deftly uses small traces of the sources' forms to make new autonomous works without any obvious references to their origins. Ignoring their historical and geographical differences, his approach assimilates the resulting shapes into innovative abstract statements.

Jochims manipulates his painting supports as much as the surface itself. He contemplates each shape and selectively activates its edges by chipping the wood with tongs. Jochims then patiently chooses color gradations that seem to belong to the shape's demand: some shift quickly and dramatically, while others dissolve slowly and subtly. He later adds an open-ended title that does not necessarily relate back directly to his source material but may trigger other associations such as cities, ancient cultures, influential artists, and mythical beings. Finally, he selectively chooses the placement and hanging height of each individual work according to their color, visual weight, and direction. With a distinctive methodology, Jochims creates new autonomous pictorial forms with their own intricacies and self-reflexive logic.

Text: John McKinnon, The Art Institute of Chicago, 2015

*(This document was automatically generated by Contemporary Art Library.)*