

Brent Hallard

unfinished painter's business

[CHRISTOPHER HEATHCOTE](#)

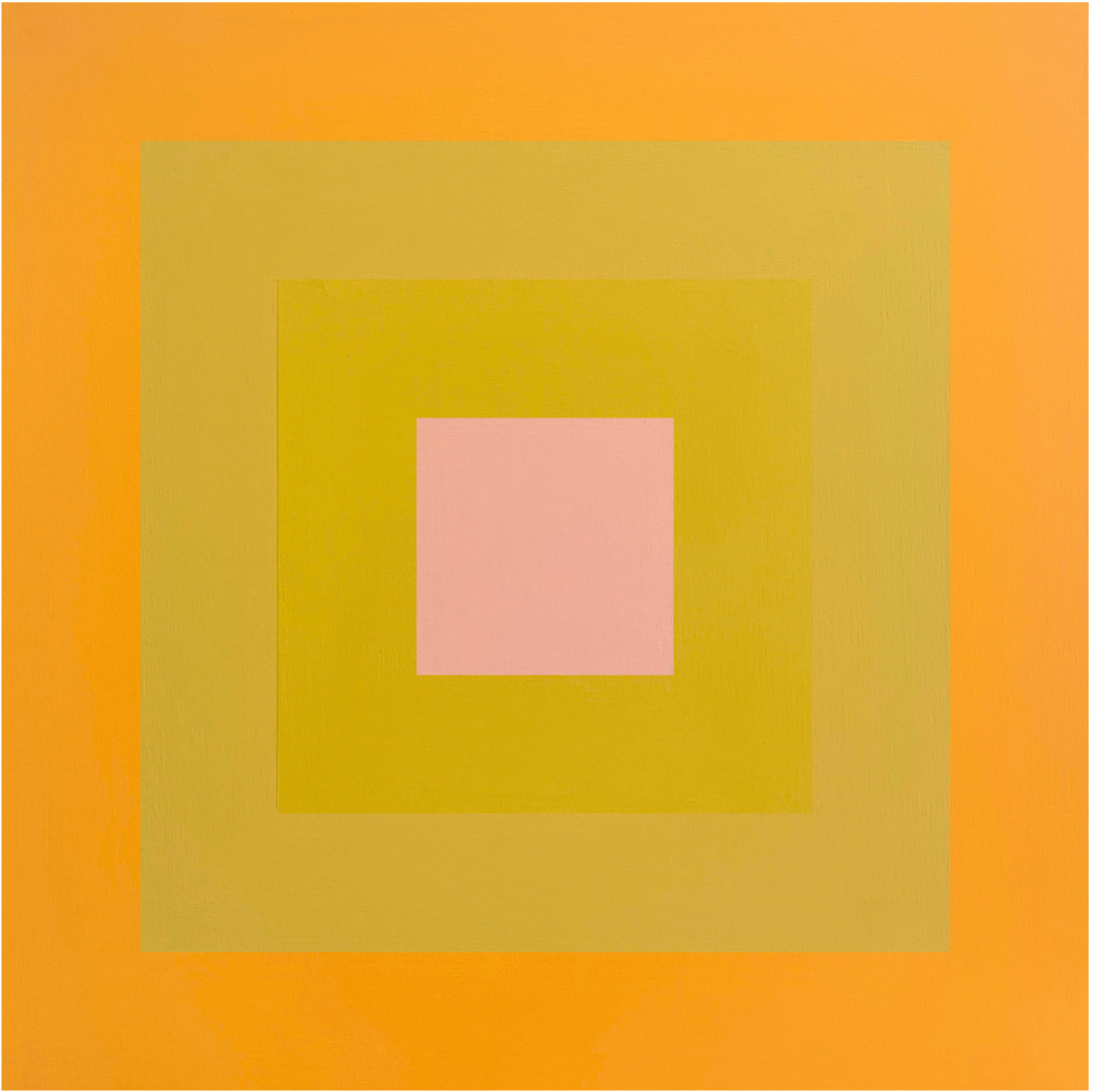
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(Five Walls, 1st Fl, 119 Hopkins St, Footscray, until Dec. 13; www.fivewalls.com.au)

Brent Hallard shows eight square-shaped geometric abstracts, in pairs, in a single room at Five Walls gallery. Each composition consists of four centrally nested squares of differing colours.

Measuring an imperial 24" x 24", and filled with intense, at times luminous colour, these up-dated Colour Field paintings move in similar aesthetic territory to the famed *Homage to the Square* serial abstracts (1949-76) of Josef Albers. Indeed, there are echoes of chromatic relations outlined in *Interaction of Colour* (1963), Albers's influential book on colour theory, but Hallard's exhibition notes do not indicate a debt to any colour theorist. He doesn't even admit to reading John Gage's lucid writings on modern art, science and colour theories which nearly every painter experimenting with colour seems to use nowadays.

What Hallard does mention is a fascination with how adjacent colours interact in his compositions, as well as colour from a phenomenological standpoint, and the broader psychology of visual perception. Whether this artist is keeping mum about source materials, or he is just improvising, *Colour Orb 8*, *Colour Orb 14* and *Colour Orb 9* are exquisite to behold. This is why I am frustrated—the decisions behind those satisfying colour compositions need a little explanation.



Brent Hallard, *Colour Orb 8*, 2025, acrylic on canvas, 24 × 24 in, 61 × 61 cm