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*Also Showcasing
Glass, Ceramics & Wood*



RICHARD ORIENT

Beyond the trees

In a batch of 2013 work titled *Striations*, New York painter Richard Orient composed thick vertical bands of color, each band's edges cracking and breaking, succumbing to the slow osmosis of its neighboring hue. At first glance, those abstract pieces are far removed from Orient's newest works involving nature, landscapes and tall vertical images of trees, but in many ways it's a continuation of a theme that he is still discovering, one of vertical lines and the mysteries that lie beyond and between.

"If you look at the abstracts, those stripes and striations, and then look at the vastness of these wooded scenes, it's a natural progression" says Orient. "I'm attracted to the calmness and the serenity of nature, and it's fascinating what I see in those colors and scenes. Much of what I paint is directly from memory, of places I've visited and places that are important to me."

Orient's latest exhibition, *New Landscapes*, opens September 8 at George Billis Gallery in New York City, where the artist keeps a studio. He also keeps a studio

in Dutchess County, north of Manhattan along the Hudson River. It's here where he can take in the trees, their vertical reach into the sky and the inspiring qualities of nature that are spread out before him.

"I love the colors and nuances of nature. My sense of representation is not perfect, but I enjoy capturing that evocative feeling of these subjects," he says, referencing images such as *Winter Light Knotta Road* and two versions of *Light Through the Trees*. "With my colors, I let the cools sit back and the warmer colors up in the front."



1
Lake Walton Reflection 1,
oil on paper, 30 x 44"

2
Light Through the Trees 2,
acrylic on paper, 36 x 30"

3
Ucagz, Turkey, oil on
paper, 22 x 29"

4
Esen Cavi, Turkey, oil on
paper, 22 x 29"

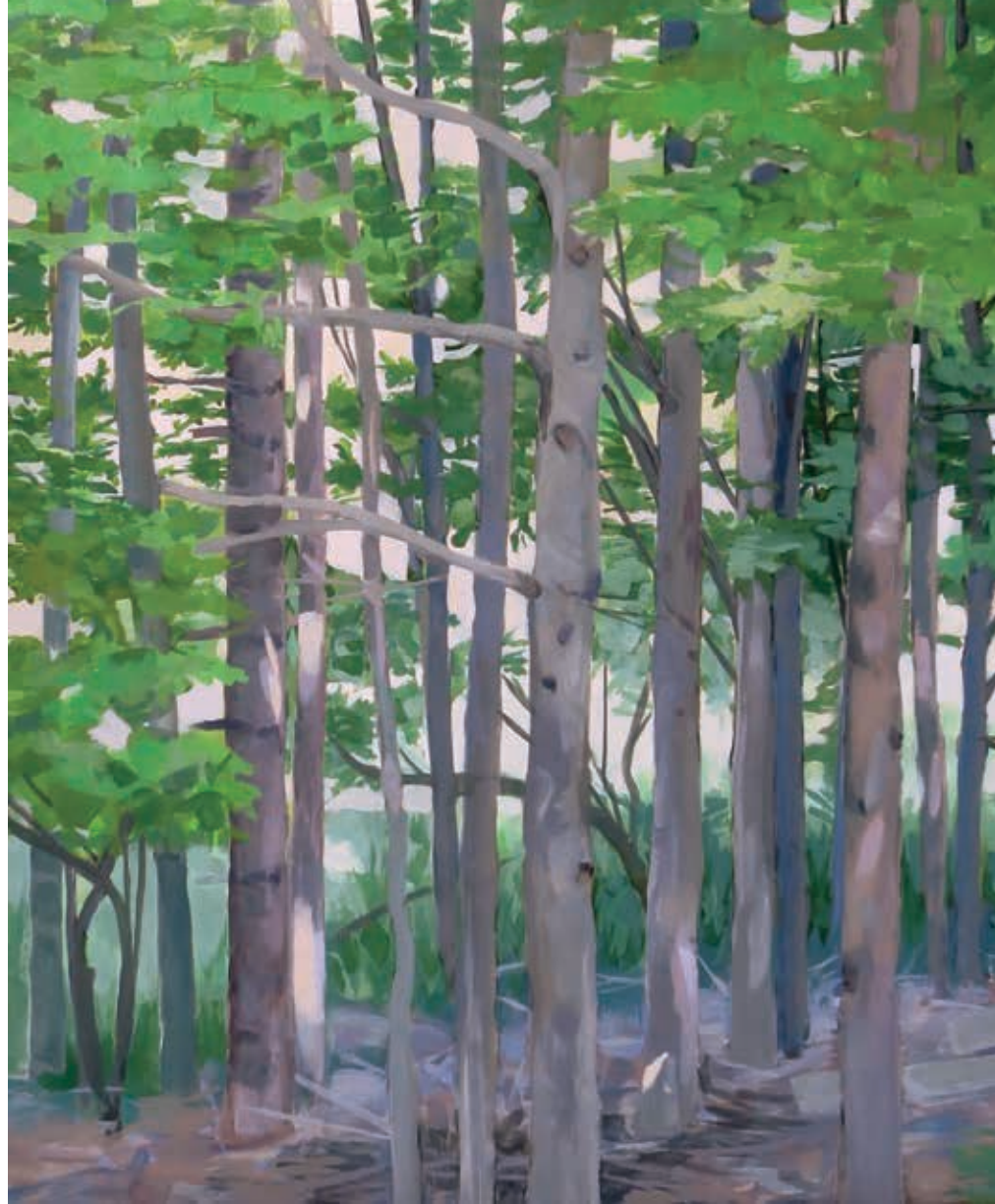
It's a learning process to teach myself what colors to use and how to use them because I'm depicting a real space, so you have to get that background to recede and the foreground to come up."

These layers of cool and warm, and foreground and background, are what interests New York collector Jonathan Lewis, who owns a number of Orient's works across a variety of genres—from the abstract striations and mounds, to more conventional landscapes and nature scenes.

"Through his abstract work, and now through these new pieces, Richard continues to examine distance and how it's perceived in his scenes. He paints these subjects and then he also paints the distance that's obscured behind his subjects," says Lewis. "I constantly try to see through the scene, to that mysterious space through the trees and beyond the painting. It's incredible."

Lewis is especially drawn to Orient's variety of work across many genres. "You can look at each painting, no matter the genre, and you can see Richard is working out these interesting problems with his paint," he adds. "Whether it's mound paintings, or stripes, or landscapes...they all have the same level of quality and skill."

Other images in the show include *Esen*



2

Cavi, Turkey and *Ucagz, Turkey*, images that were inspired by desert-like foothills in Turkey, and several images of another Orient staple, reflective surfaces, the kind represented in *Lake Walton Reflection*. "I'm

captivated by the transitory light within reflections," the artist says. "These works are a chronicle of my last year, whether it's trips I've taken or different aspects of nature that have caught my eye." ●



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