



SHADI YOUSEFIAN

OBSCURED
by COLORS

an exhibition in collaboration with
LUCAS RISE

April 11 - May 11, 2024

ABOUT

SHADI YOUSEFIAN



Shadi Yousefian was born in Tehran, Iran in 1978 and moved to the United States when she was sixteen. At a time when she lacked the language skills in English to express herself, she felt drawn to art to express her longing, her vision, and her experiences. She received both her Bachelor's (2003) and Master's (2006) of Fine Arts from San Francisco State University. Yousefian's work engages personal and social issues of contemporary life, particularly, cultural identity and the immigrant experience. As an Iranian immigrant, her work reflects and addresses issues that touch on universal themes such as loss, dislocation, alienation, and reinvention. All of Yousefian's work to date reflects the desire to capture and distill some of the essence of her own life as an immigrant, but to also connect it to a more universal experience. Her work suggests and builds upon a kind of fragmentation and dissolution, but also the endeavor to reinvent and reconstruct a self in a new social and cultural context.

In each of the series, Yousefian uses techniques that appear to destroy and distort something of the whole—cutting up letters, using only specific features of a photograph, scratching a negative, etc., and reassembles them as parts of a new image that captures both memory as passage of time, and memory as the willful looking again at something anew. This process conveys a mirroring effect of the past and present, articulating both a distortion as well as a reconstruction.

ABOUT LUCAS RISE

A Visionary in Art and Design Born in 1978 in the enchanting city of 25 de Mayo, Buenos Aires, Argentina, Lucas Rise is a trailblazing artist and designer whose work seamlessly transcends the boundaries of conventional art and fashion. Rise's artistic odyssey commenced in the streets of Buenos Aires, where, as a teenager, he lent his creative flair to street signs. He later pursued formal education in Graphic Design at the esteemed Faculty of Design and Urbanism of the University of Buenos Aires, laying the foundation for a distinguished career marked by exceptional innovation and creativity.

Rise's deep connection to his immigrant heritage and a relentless search for a place to encapsulate the soul infuses his work with a sense of purpose and passion. He draws inspiration from the fluidity and discontinuity in art, ushering in new dimensions of creativity through the freedom of artistic expression. This connection to nature, pencils, and brushes from his childhood evolved into creating murals first within his own home and then throughout the city. The foundation of his artistic journey was influenced by the cultural events he frequented in his youth, such as fairs and circuses, igniting his fascination with moving images and shows.

Rise's unique artistic style matured as he embarked on journeys across South America, Africa, the United States, and Europe. Drawing from these experiences, he masterfully blends the non-conformity of Russian art, the vibrancy of Fauvism, the experimental spirit of Dadaism, geometric design elements of Art Deco, and the festive essence of South American art and music.

In 2006, Rise garnered distinction as a finalist in the illustrious National Art Awards in Buenos Aires, a testament to his exceptional talent and vision. His artwork is coveted by discerning collectors around the globe, adorning numerous international private collections. His creative journey has been celebrated through features in renowned publications such as Vogue, Elle, Harper's Bazaar, and Departures, reflecting the universal appeal of his work.



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SERIES STATEMENT

In this body of work, Shadi Yousefian continues to explore the concept of memory and nostalgia, manipulating and reworking old photographs from her parents and grandparent's family albums to reveal the intricacies of how we process the passage of time. Nostalgia comes from the Greek roots of nostos, meaning home, and algos, meaning pain. This "home pain" implies one is searching for something in the past which no longer exists, but can only be constructed through our memories. Yousefian plumbs the depths of her family's archive of memories, yet obscures these snapshots just enough to highlight the sense of inevitable loss that occurs over generations, and a new sense of reverence for our constructed pasts.

Using various techniques and media, Yousefian manipulated old photographs of her family and relatives to amplify the sense of distance and detachment that these photographs already carry with their dull, fading colors. She partially dipped each photo in black ink to obscure part of the image. Then, for six of the pieces in the series, she pasted the original ink-dipped photos on wood panels, coated them with paraffin wax and poured epoxy resin over them. For another six pieces, she rephotographed the manipulated photos and printed them as archival inkjet prints and dipped them in trays of acrylic wash, pasted them on wood panels and finally poured epoxy resin over them. For the remaining eleven pieces, she made large laser prints of the photos and transferred them onto archival printmaking paper on a printing press.

Up to this point in the process, through obscuring, rephotographing and reprinting, Yousefian separates and detaches herself (and, as a result, the viewer) layer by layer from those distant memories. In a way, she is simulating the way in which memory loses its clarity through the passage of time. In Yousefian's act of ruining and obscuring these photographs that have become mere memories, she highlights the residues of the past while also making it inaccessible, giving us a physical manifestation of this nostalgia, or "home pain." This act of defacing memories past shows us the ravages of time and the equally painful limitations of the present.

As the final step in her process, Yousefian collaborated with Lucas Rise, an Argentinian artist, whose artistic style differs drastically from that of Yousefian's, with his use of bright and dynamic patterns.

Going through Rise's decorative compositions, Yousefian chose fragments and elements of some of his colorful patterns and arranged them over the obscured parts of each piece, onto which Rise then painted these arrangements. These colorful and glossy patterns do not serve as decorations and in no way have a secondary function in the series. Rise's seductive and hypnotic colorful patterns demand the viewer's attention, keeping them anchored in the present, while the contrast of Yousefian's faded and manipulated photographs push the viewer into the past. The colors interact directly with Yousefian's manipulated photographs and memories to further exaggerate the contrast between the vibrant present and the fading past and to help achieve the intended sense of detachment.

Yousefian's work aims to reclaim the past in an effort to realize an alternative future; a negotiation between past and present. Her process revolves around absence and obfuscation; in manipulating old photographs and memories, Yousefian's work meditates on what is gained through being lost. She only allows the viewer to have fragments of the past, yearning for something whole and knowable, when in reality that doesn't exist. We turn to nostalgia to fill in the blanks of what is left out, to create our own utopias of the past, inserting ourselves into partial memories that Yousefian has so carefully crafted for us.

Obscured by Colors 1, 2024

Printmaking and Oil Paint on Archival Paper

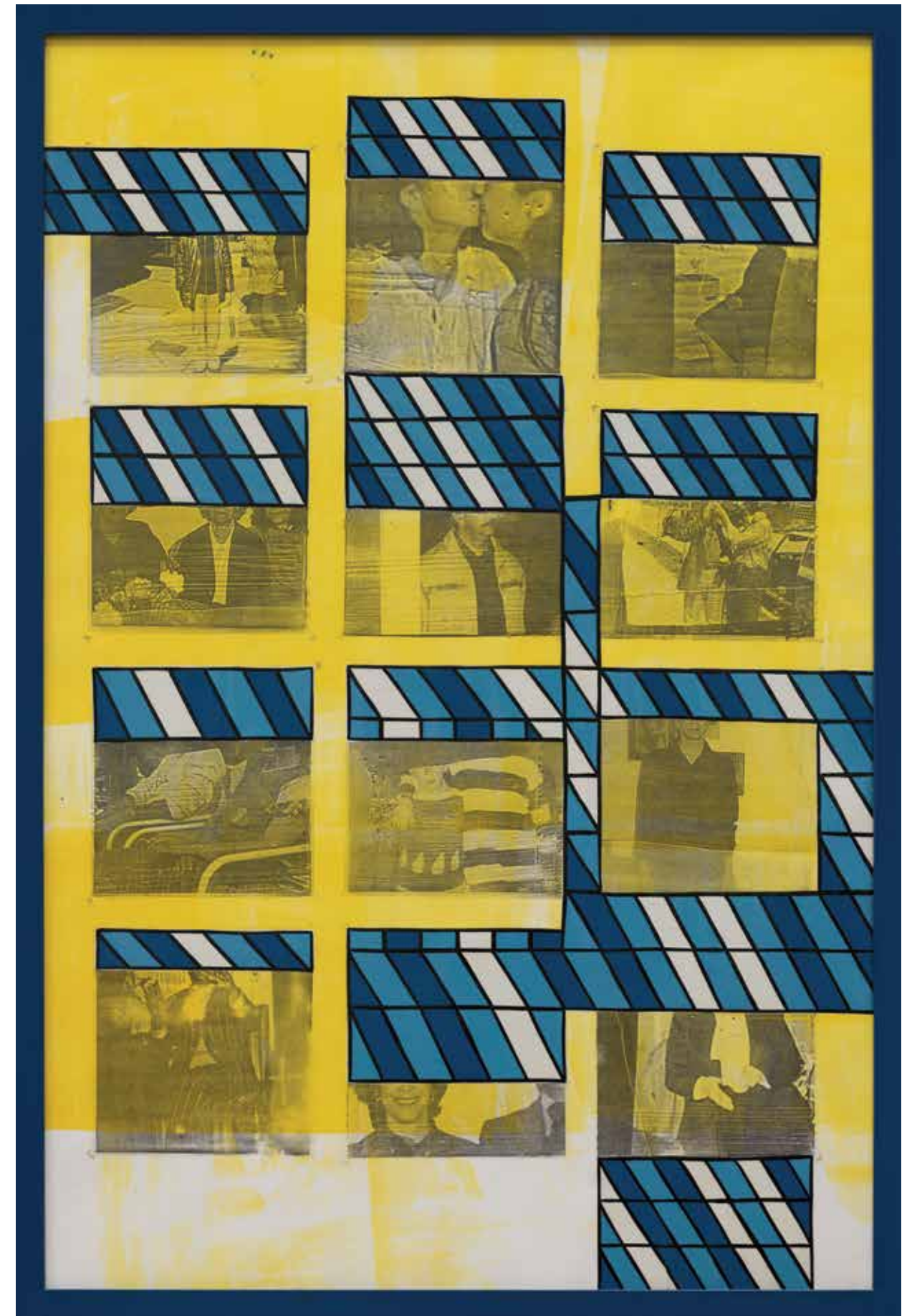
32 in x 46 in



Obscured by Colors 2, 2024

Printmaking and Oil Paint on Archival Paper

32 in x 46 in



Obscured by Colors 3, 2024

Printmaking and Oil Paint on Archival Paper

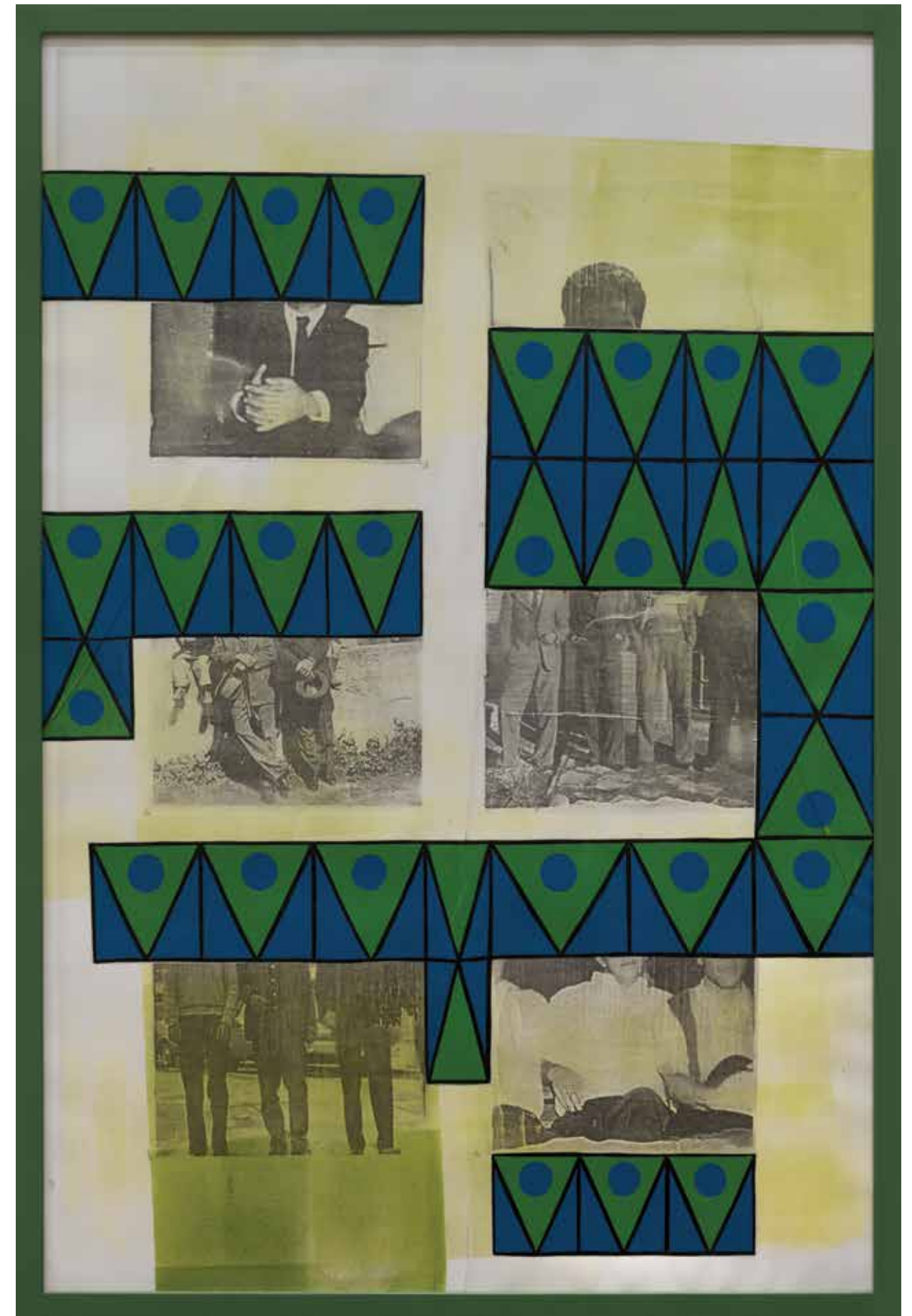
32 in x 46 in



Obscured by Colors 4, 2024

Printmaking and Oil Paint on Archival Paper

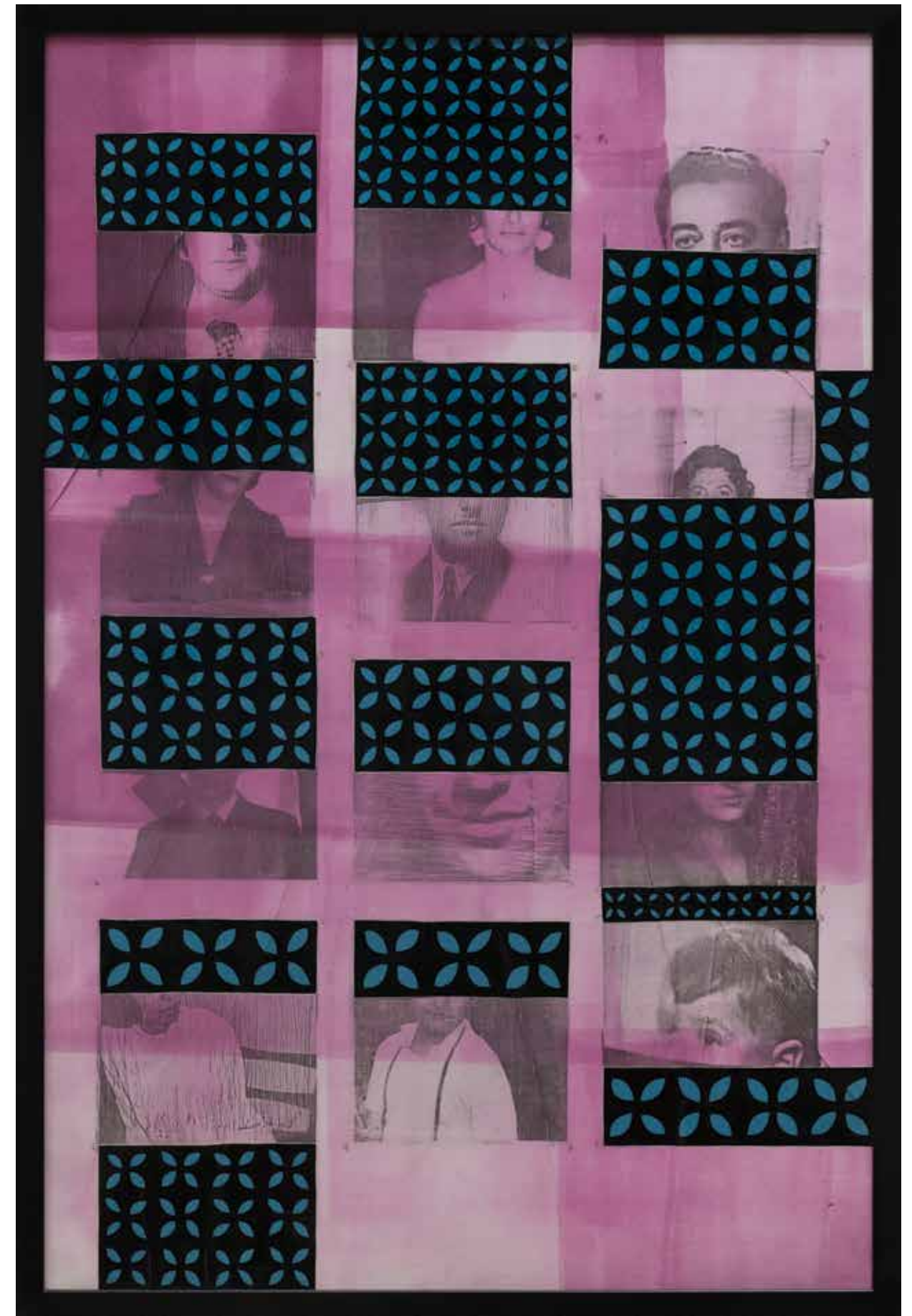
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Obscured by Colors 5, 2024

Printmaking and Oil Paint on Archival Paper

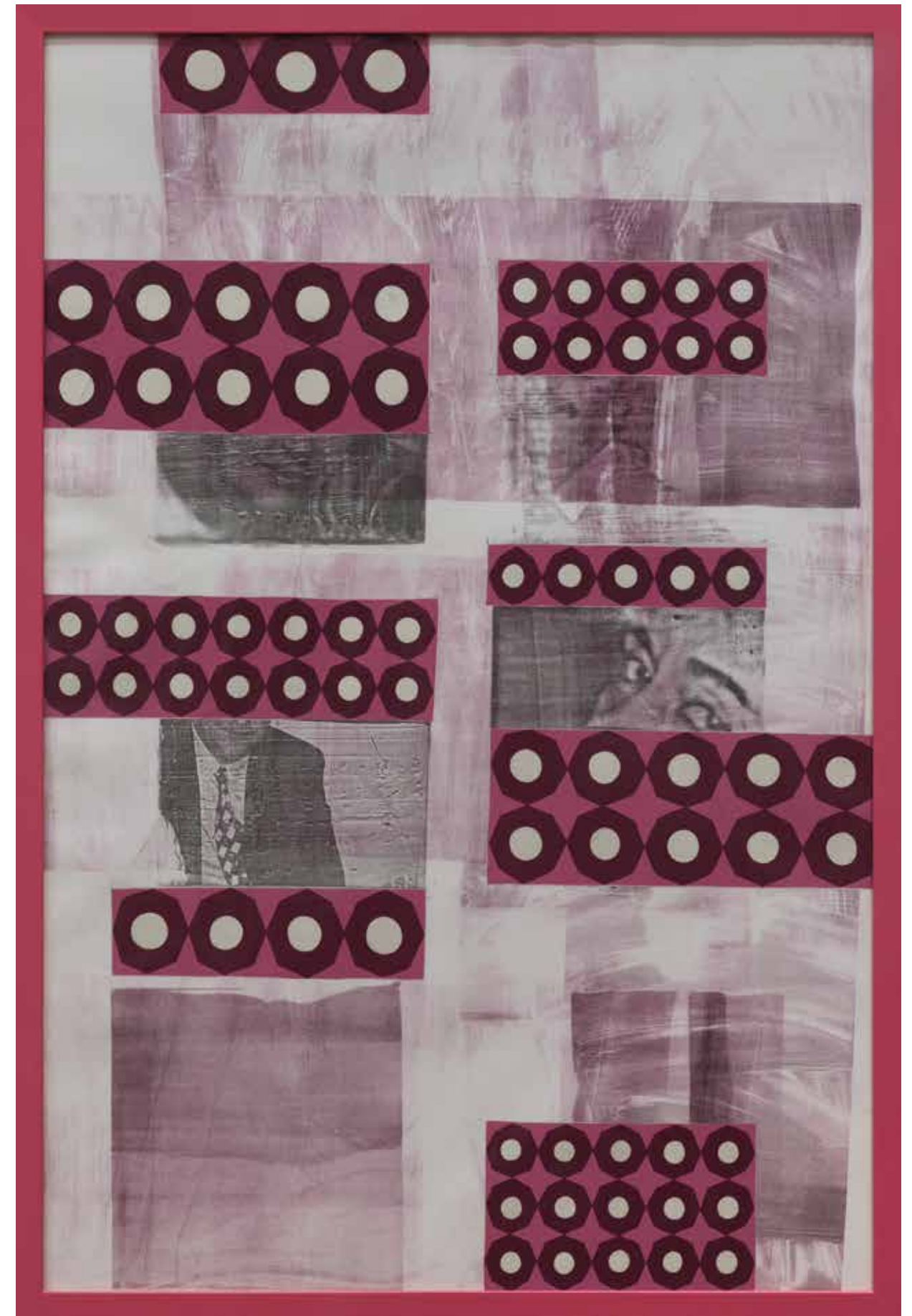
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Obscured by Colors 6, 2024

Printmaking and Oil Paint on Archival Paper

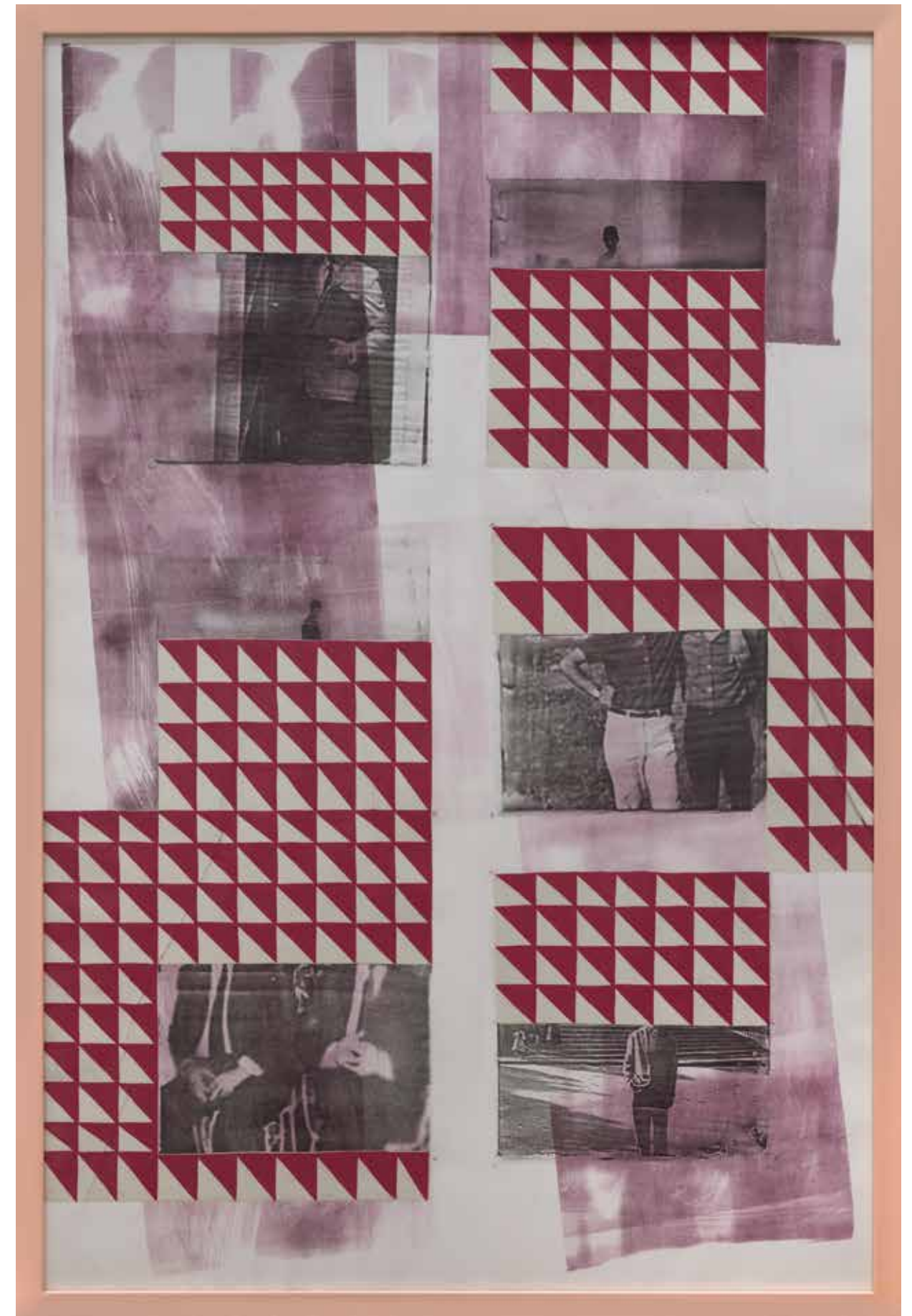
32 in x 46 in



Obscured by Colors 7, 2024

Printmaking and Oil Paint on Archival Paper

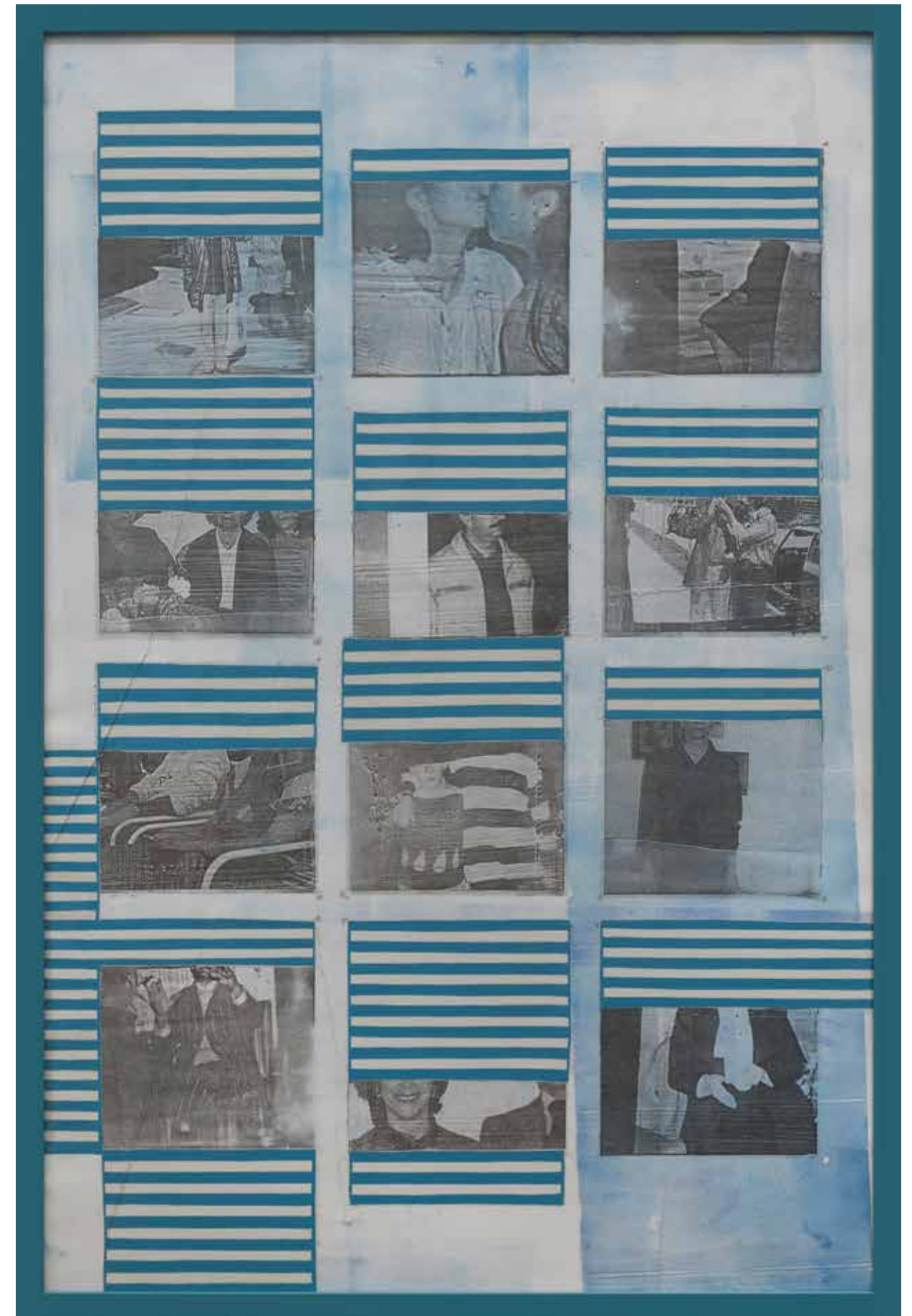
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Obscured by Colors 8, 2024

Printmaking and Oil Paint on Archival Paper

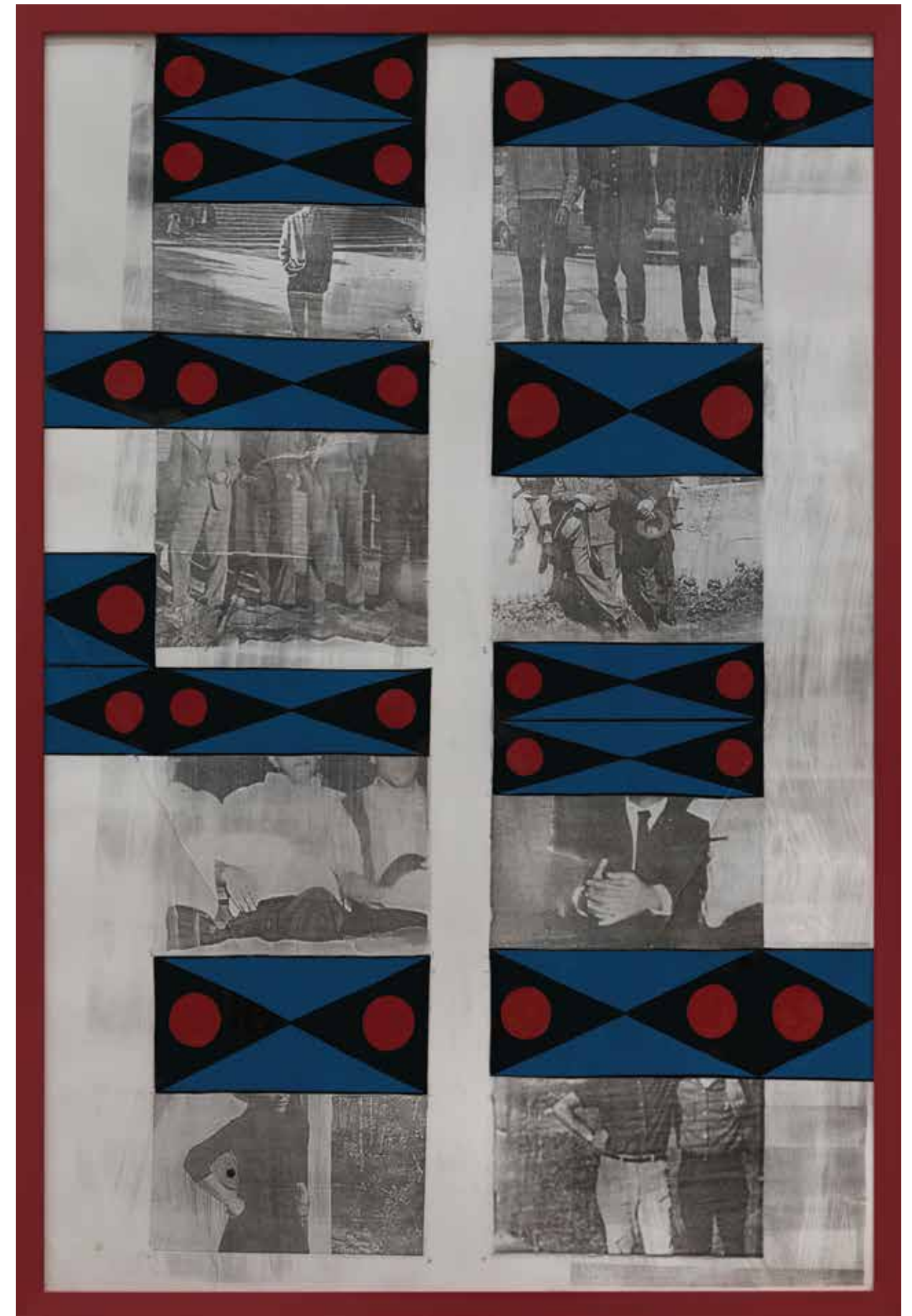
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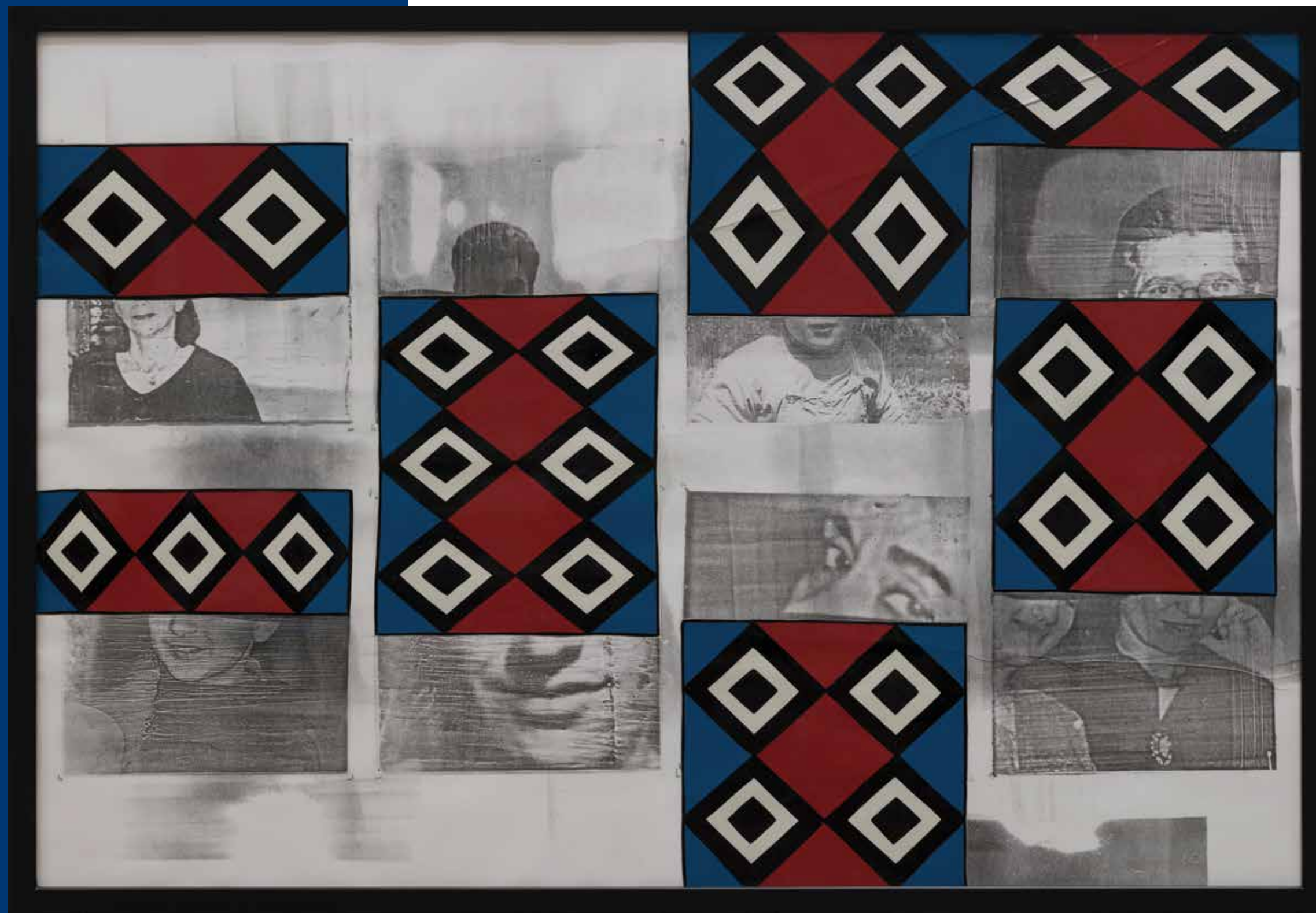


Obscured by Colors 9, 2024

Printmaking and Oil Paint on Archival Paper

32 in x 46 in





Obscured by Colors 10, 2024

Printmaking and Oil Paint on Archival Paper

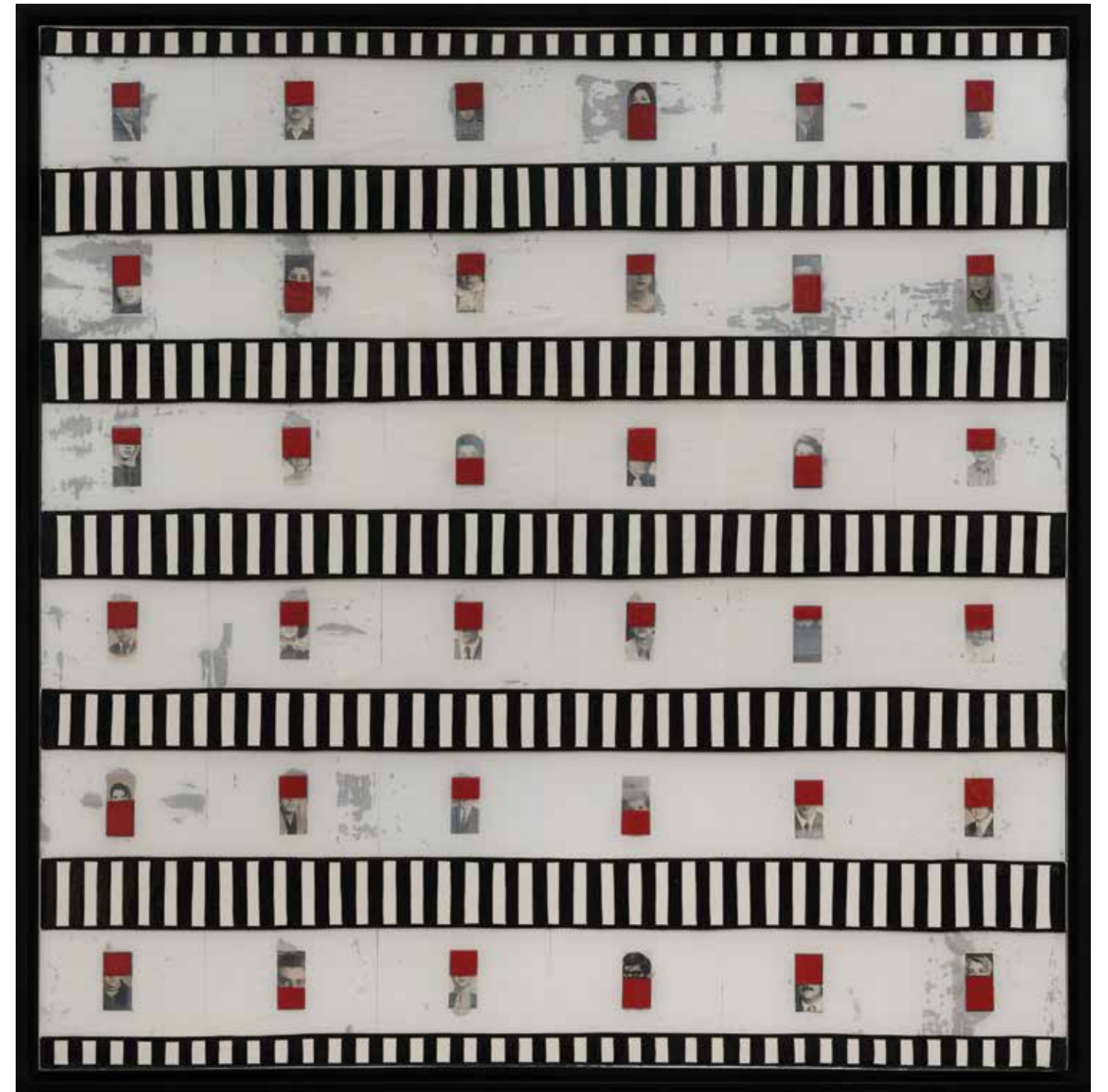
32 in x 46 in



Obscured by Colors 11, 2024

Printmaking and Oil Paint on Archival Paper

32 in x 46 in



Obscured by Colors 12, 2024

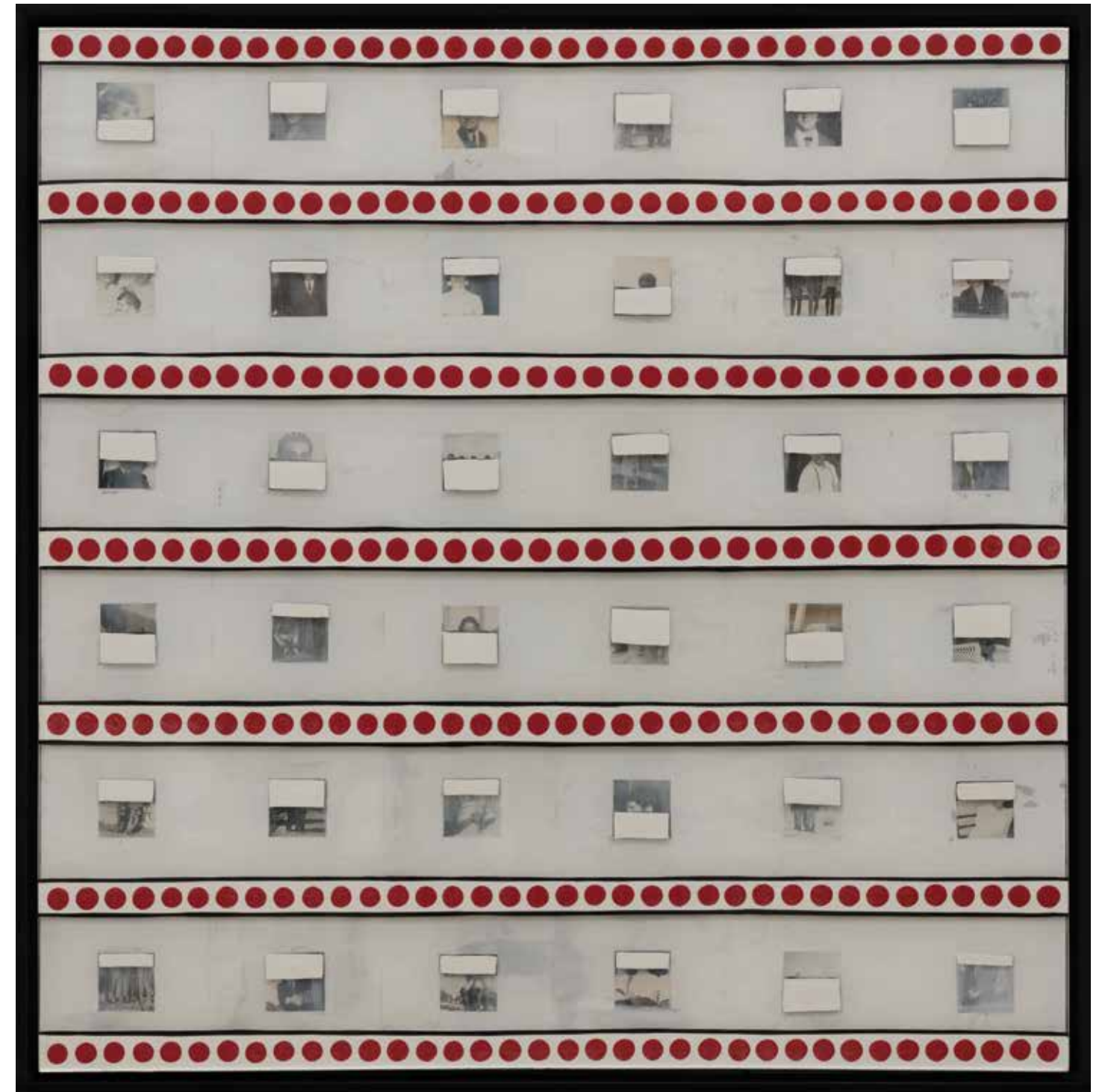
Original Photos, Parafin Wax, Resin and Oil Paint on Wood

38 in x 38 in

Obscured by Colors 13, 2024

Original Photos, Parafin Wax, Resin and Oil Paint on Wood

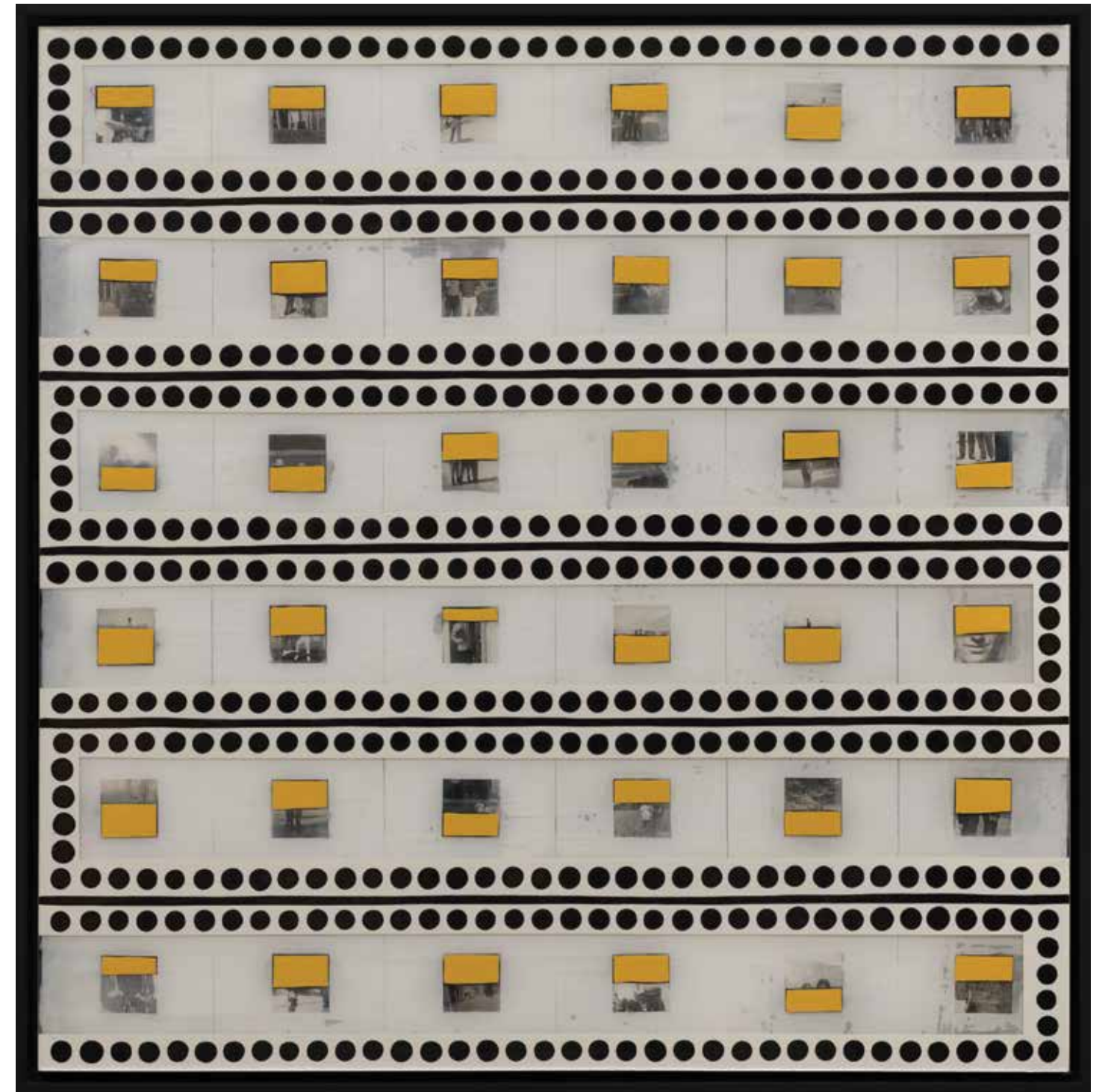
38 in x 38 in



Obscured by Colors 14, 2024

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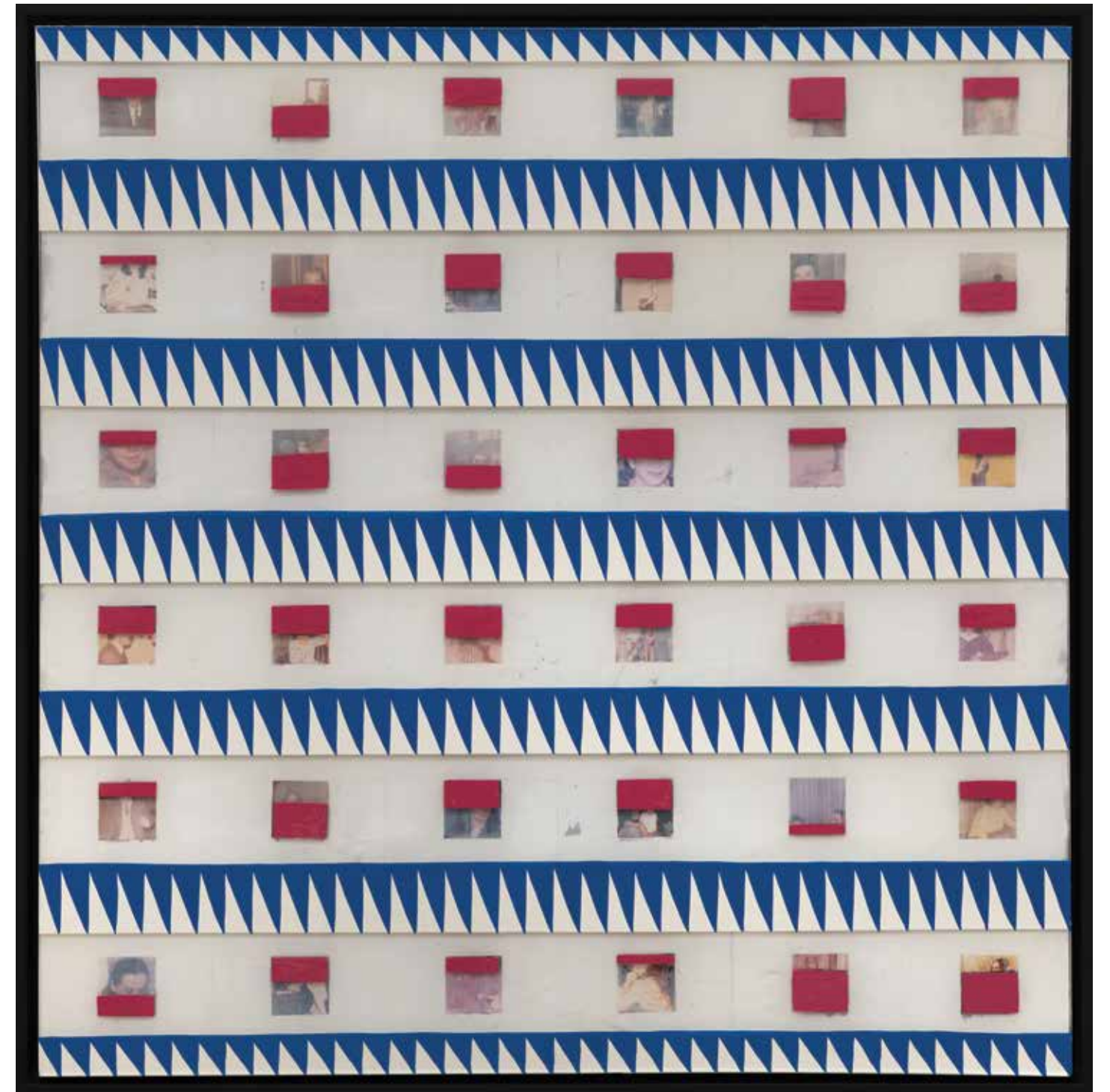
38 in x 38 in



Obscured by Colors 15, 2024

Original Photos, Parafin Wax, Resin and Oil Paint on Wood

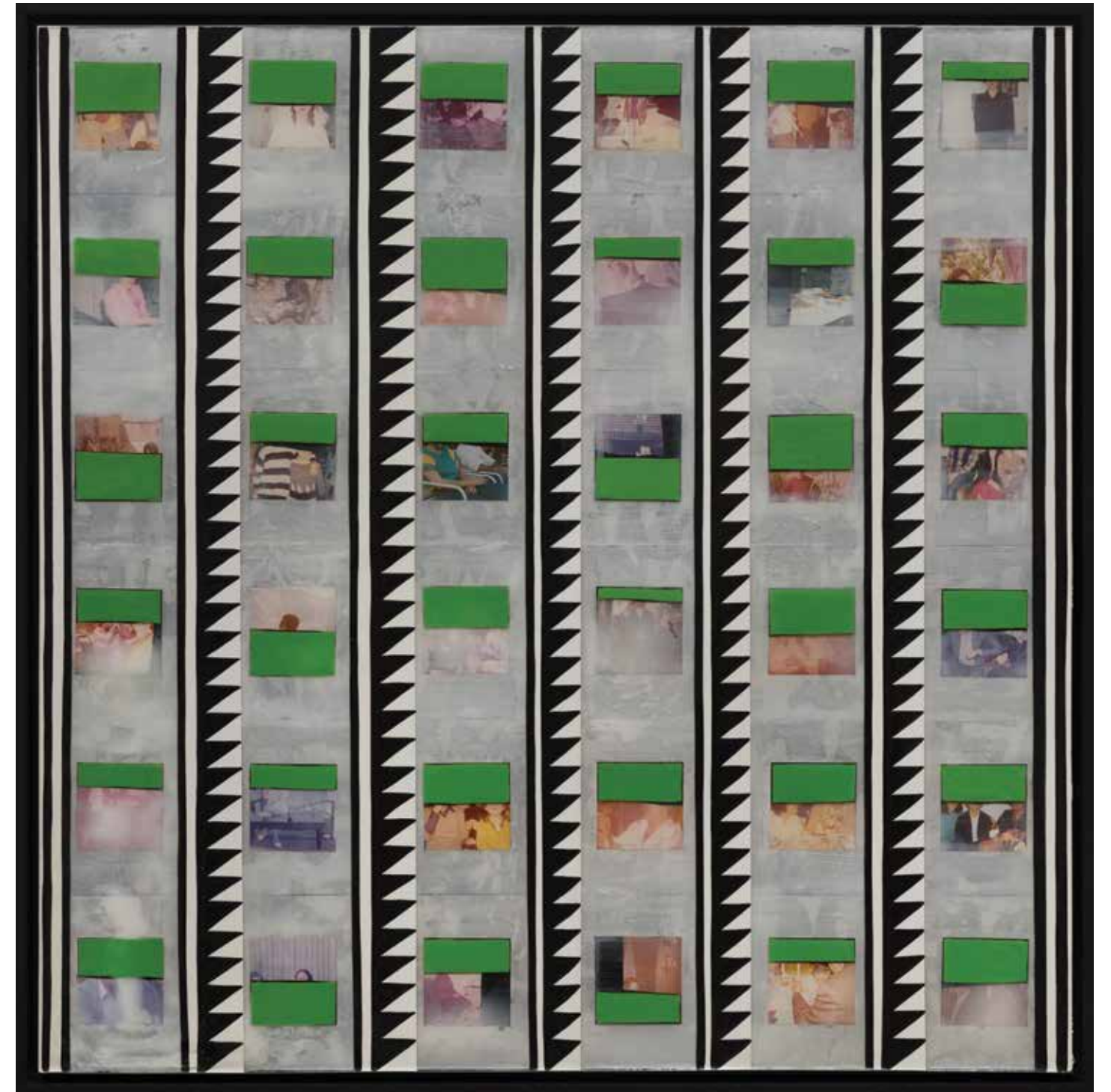
38 in x 38 in

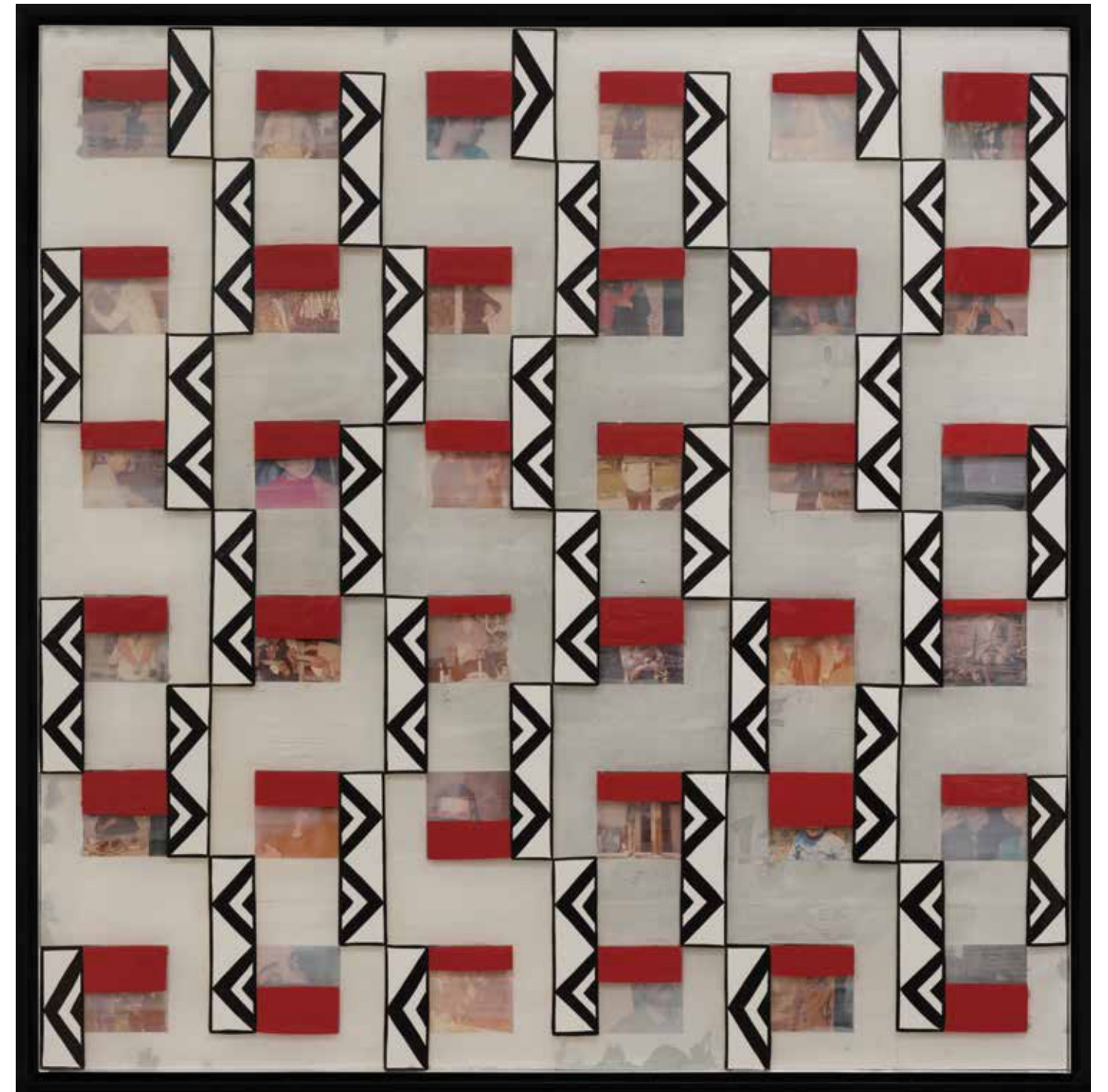


Obscured by Colors 16, 2024

Original Photos, Parafin Wax, Resin and Oil Paint on Wood

38 in x 38 in





Obscured by Colors 17, 2024

Original Photos, Parafin Wax, Resin and Oil Paint on Wood

38 in x 38 in



Obscured by Colors 18, 2024

Archival Inkjet Print, Resin and Oil Paint on Wood

38 in x 38 in



Obscured by Colors 19, 2024

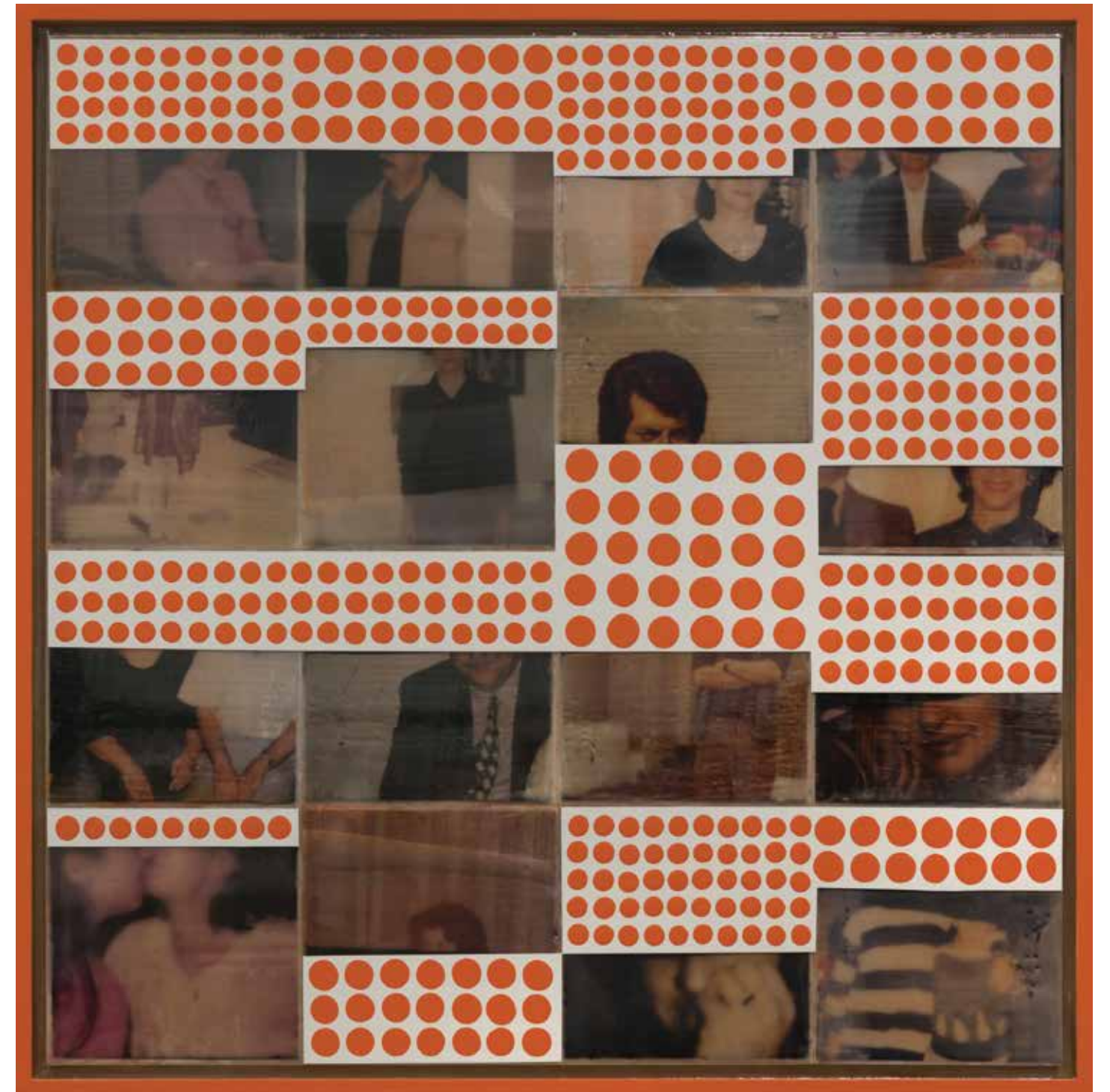
Archival Inkjet Print, Resin and Oil Paint on Wood

38 in x 38 in

Obscured by Colors 20, 2024

Archival Inkjet Print, Resin and Oil Paint on Wood

38 in x 38 in





Obscured by Colors 21, 2024

Archival Inkjet Print, Resin and Oil Paint on Wood

38 in x 38 in



Obscured by Colors 22, 2024

Archival Inkjet Print, Resin and Oil Paint on Wood

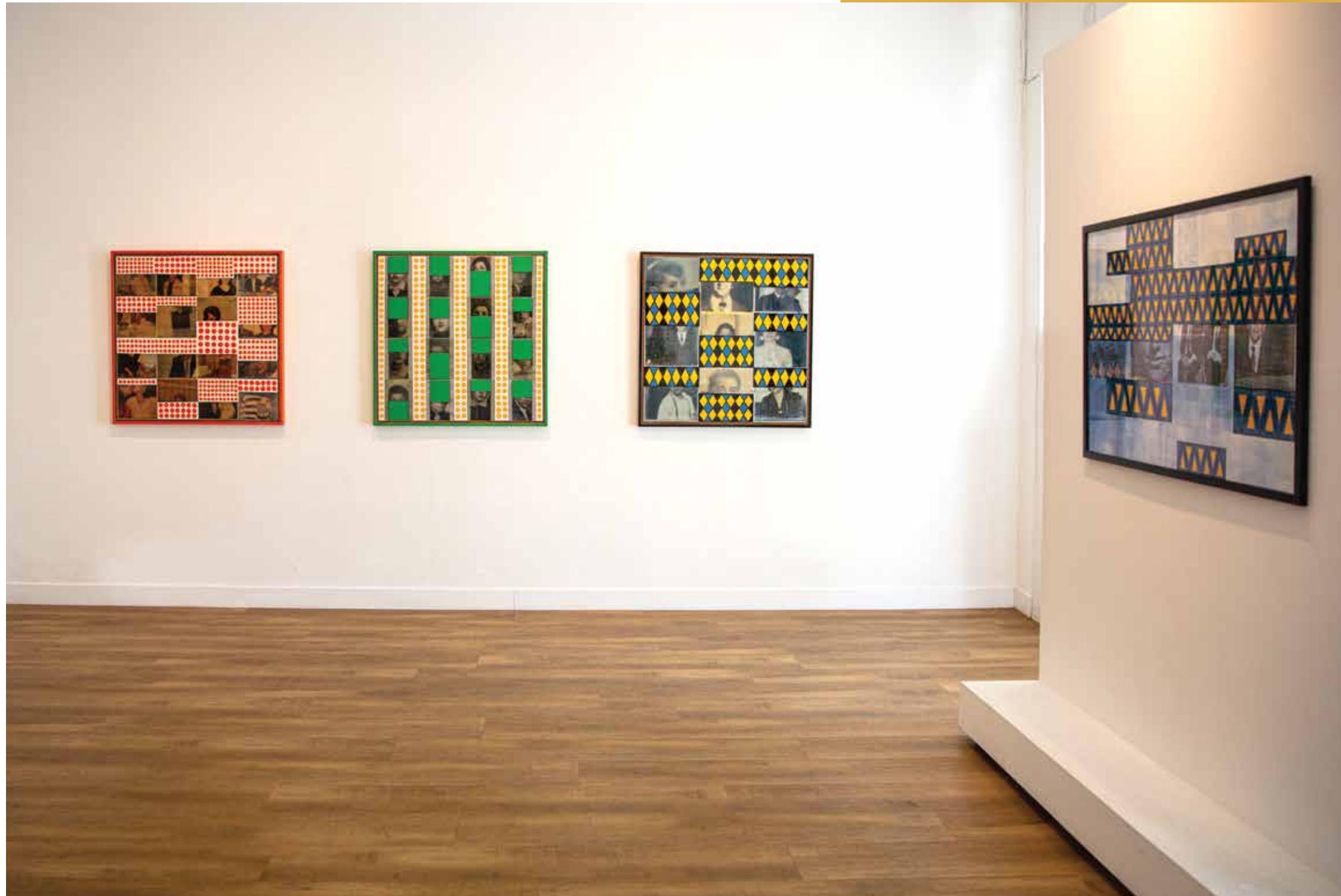
38 in x 38 in

Obscured by Colors 23, 2024

Archival Inkjet Print, Resin and Oil Paint on Wood

38 in x 38 in

















WATE
YOUR
EYES
←

SHADI YOUSEFIAN

CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATION

2006 \ MFA, SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY, San Francisco, CA (MFA)

2003 \ BFA, SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY, San Francisco, CA

EXHIBITIONS

Winter 2024 \ ABSENT STRUCTURE \ Queretaro Museum of Art, Queretaro, (Mexico)

Winter 2024 \ ART IRAN: FALLING INTO LANGUAGE \ Craft Contemporary, Los Angeles, CA (USA)

Spring 2022 to Present \ ART OF IRAN \ San Diego Museum of Arts, San Diego, CA (USA)

Summer 2021 \ TRANSFORMATION: A SOLO EXHIBITION \ Advocartsy Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (USA)

Fall 2020 \ IMAGINE FREEDOM: ART WORKS FOR ABOLITION \ Critical Resistance's Virtual Benefit Auction

Winter 2020 \ PHOTO LA \ The Historic Barker Hanger, Los Angeles, CA (USA)

Spring 2019 \ ONCE AT PRESENT \ Minnesota Street Project Galleries, San Francisco, CA (USA)

Fall 2018 \ ART BRIEF IV: IRANIAN CONTEMPORARY, SAN FRANCISCO \ SomArts Cultural Center, San Francisco, CA (USA)

Fall 2018 \ RE:HOME: A FOR FREEDOMS EXHIBITION \ Minnesota Street Project (Gallery 200), San Francisco, CA (USA)

Fall 2017 \ SOLO EXHIBITIONx \ The Space Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (USA)

Winter 2017 \ ART BRIEF III: THE (UN)DRAPED WOMAN \ Arena 1 Gallery, Santa Monica, CA (USA)

Fall 2016 \ NUMBER SIX \ MIM Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (USA)

Summer 2016 \ ART BRIEF II: IRANIAN CONTEMPORARY NORTH AMERICA \ Arena 1 Gallery, Santa Monica, CA (USA)

Fall 2014 \ THE PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW \ Site 109/AKArt, New York, NY (USA)

Fall 2014 \ VIENNA FAIR 2014 \ Vienna (Austria)

Summer 2014 \ ALWAN \ Shirin Gallery, New York, NY (USA)

Winter 2014 \ LONDON'S GLOBAL ART FAIR 2014 \ Olympia, London (UK)

Fall 2013 \ VIENNA FAIR 2013 \ Vienna (Austria)

Fall 2013 \ ART BASEL 2013 \ Miami, FL (USA)

Fall 2013 \ LETTERS \ Shirin Gallery, New York, NY (USA)

Fall 2011 \ OVERRULED (Performance in Shirin Neshat's play commissioned by Performa 11) \ Cedar Lake, New York, NY (USA)

Spring 2008 \ EAST OF THE WEST \ Somarts Gallery, San Francisco, CA (USA)

Spring 2008 \ AFTER THE REVOLUTION: Contemporary Photography from California and Tehran \ San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery (USA)

Spring 2008 \ THEORY OF SURVIVAL \ The Lab, San Francisco, CA (USA)

Summer 2007 \ CELLULOID: FILM & PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION \ Gallery One, San Francisco, CA (USA)

Fall 2006 \ MOVING MOUNTAINS \ Red Ink Studios, San Francisco, CA (USA)

Spring 2006 \ MASTER OF FINE ARTS EXHIBITION 2006 \ Fine Arts Gallery (SFSU), San Francisco, CA (USA)

Fall 2005 \ MURPHY & CADOGAN FELLOWSHIP AWARD EXHIBITION \ San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery, San Francisco, CA (USA)

Summer 2005 \ rePRESENT \ Oliver Arts Center, California College of Arts, Oakland, CA (USA)

Spring 2005 \ OF PAST AND PRESENT: A COLLABORATIVE EXCHANGE \ Intersection for the Arts, San Francisco, CA (USA)

Winter 2005 \ CELEBRATING THE WORKS OF COURBET \ Legion of Honor (The 11th Annual College Day Event), San Francisco, CA (USA)

Fall 2004 \ 15th ANNUAL STILLWELL SHOW \ Fine Arts Gallery (SFSU), San Francisco, CA (USA)

Fall 2004 \ THE BEGINNING \ Art People Gallery, San Francisco, CA (USA)

Winter 2004 \ SELF-PORTRAITS \ SOAS Library (School of Oriental & African Studies), London (UK)

Winter 2004 \ THE 30TH ANNUAL JURIED COMPETITION \ Masur Museum of Art, Monroe, LA (USA)

Winter 2004 \ EMERGENCE 2004 \ Student Center Art Gallery (SFSU), San Francisco, CA (USA)

Winter 2004 \ ONE WORLD, MANY FAITHS \ SomArts Bay Gallery, San Francisco, CA (USA)

Fall 2003 \ FIGURATIVELY SPEAKING \ Fulton Street Gallery, Troy, NY (USA)

Spring 2003 \ ZYDECO, "TRIBUTOA: JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT" \ Art-Cubic, Barcelona (Spain)

Fall 2002 \ INTERVENTION: A CAUSE FOR ACTION \ Student Center Art Gallery (SFSU), San Francisco, CA (USA)

Fall 2002 \ 13th ANNUAL STILLWELL SHOW \ Fine Arts Gallery (SFSU), San Francisco, CA (USA)

AWARDS

Spring 2005 \ MURPHY & CADOGAN FELLOWSHIP IN THE FINE ARTS

Fall 2005 \ INTERNATIONAL PHOTO AWARDS (THE LUCIE AWARD 2005) \ Third Place Nude Category, New York, New York (USA)

Fall 2004 \ INTERNATIONAL PHOTO AWARDS (THE LUCIE AWARD 2004) \ Third Place Portrait Category, New York, New York (USA)

Fall 2002 \ 13th ANNUAL STILLWELL SHOW \ Best of Photography Award, San Francisco, California (USA)

CREDITS

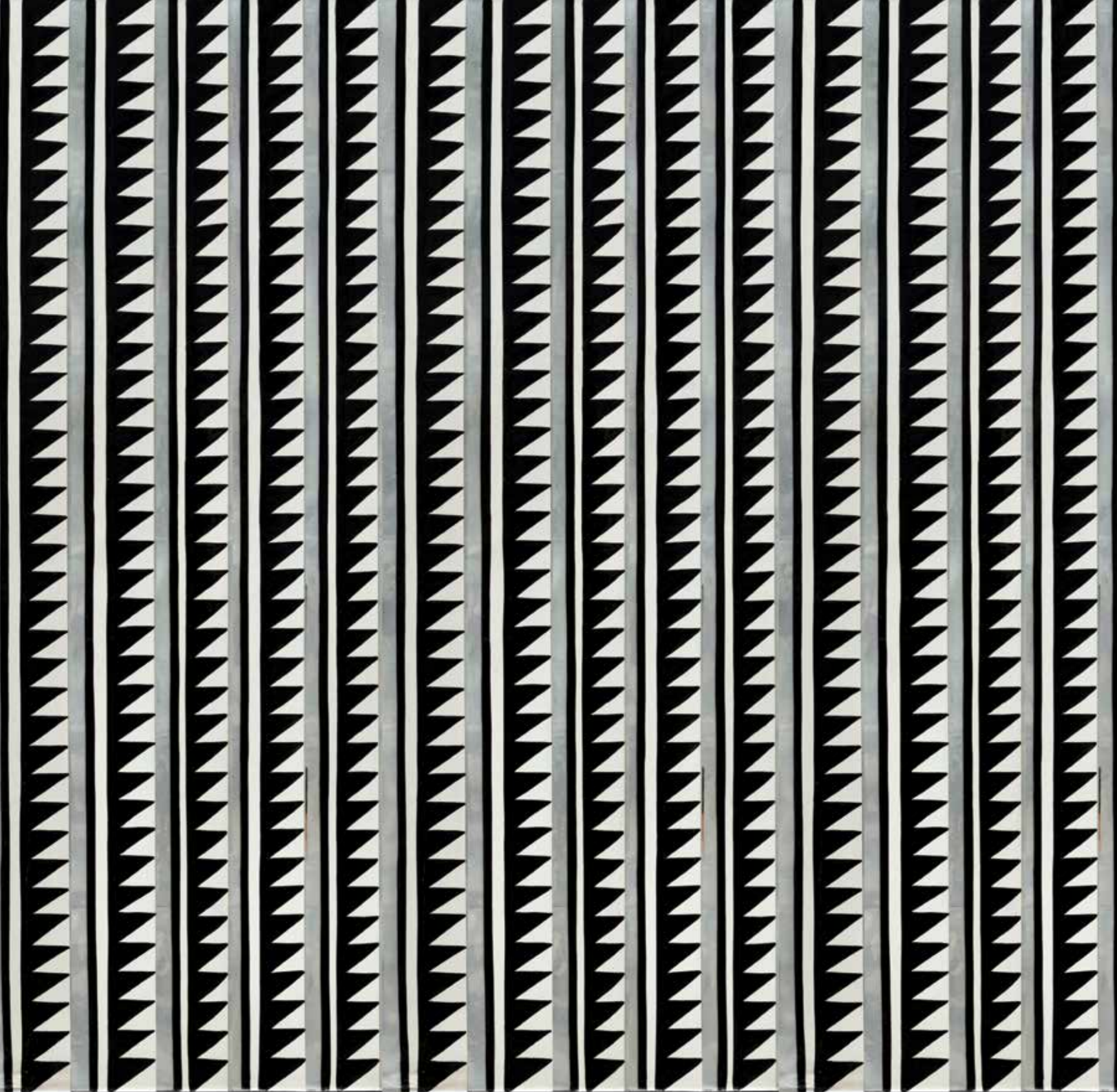
Sulyman Qardash // Headshot photography

René Torres Escoto // Artwork photography of individual pieces

Manoosh Nabavi // Artwork photography of installations

Ardalan Payvar // Graphic design

Hannah Eshaghian // Copy editing of series statement



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