

Judith Lauand
Booth S2
Spotlight, curated by Valerie Cassel Oliver
Frieze Masters 2023



Acervo 124, 1965, tempera on canvas, 60 x 60 cm, 23 5/8 x 23 5/8 in

Judith Lauand (1922-2022) is a central figure in the development of Brazilian art, and her extensive career has reflected the course of rapid cultural changes that shaped post-war Latin America. She is renowned in Brazil as the 'Dama do Concretismo' or 'First Lady of Concretism,' being the sole female member of Grupo Ruptura, the artist group who defined in their manifesto a rational and cerebral approach to geometric abstraction that would set in motion a distinctly Brazilian course of avant-garde art.

Born in Pontal, São Paulo, Lauand graduated from the Escola de Belas Artes de Araraquara in 1950, and moved to the city of São Paulo as the influence of European Concrete artists such as Max Bill and Josef Albers was taking hold. It was while working as a gallery monitor at the 2nd São Paulo Biennial (1953-54) that she came into direct contact with this art. She returned to the 3rd Biennial in 1955 as an exhibiting artist, now working alongside other pioneering figures such as Waldemar Cordeiro and Luiz Sacilotto, as a member of Grupo Ruptura.



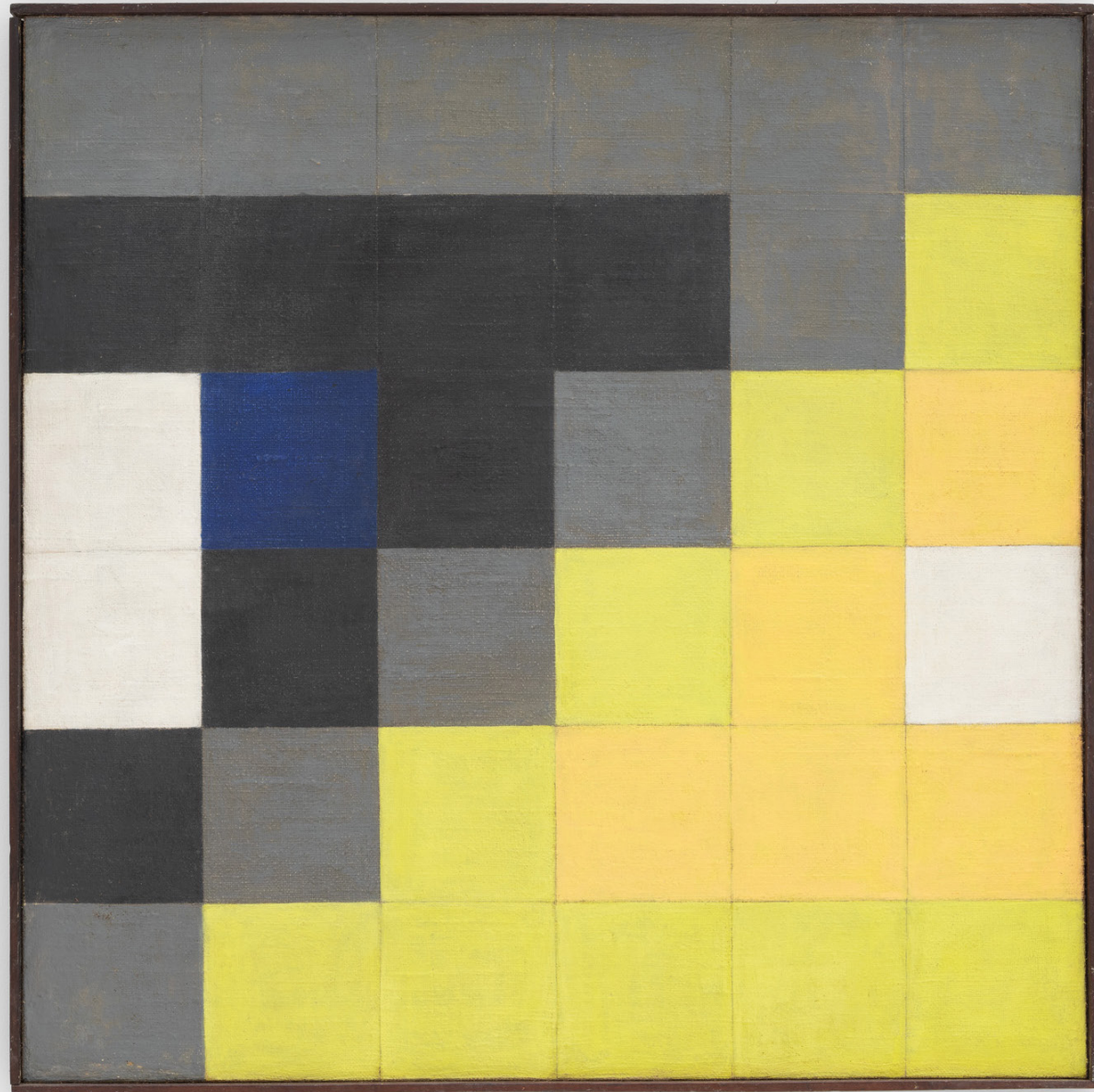
Concrete Painting

1950s-60s

Joining Grupo Ruptura in 1955, Lauand developed her practice within the bounds of their geometric language, working with precise sequences and mechanical order. Her early concrete paintings reflect the group's rational and cerebral approach, though this is offset by her embrace of material textures and brushstrokes that allow the calculated compositions to retain a human touch.

Amongst the key figures of Brazilian Concretism, Lauand's work is often uniquely characterised by a sensibility towards contradiction and poetic deviation. Forms are held in tension across the picture plane within mathematical linear structures, frequently destabilised and animated by decisive ruptures to her pattern.

Lauand's centrality in the Brazilian art scene during this period is reflected in her inclusion and the 1st Exposição Nacional de Arte Concreta in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (1956-57), and the 1960 group exhibition *Contribuição da Mulher às Artes Plásticas do País* at Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, celebrating women artists in Brazil. Meanwhile, her international importance as a Concrete painter is cemented by her inclusion in Max Bill's 1960 Zürich retrospective *Konkrete Kunst: 50 Years of Development*.



Untitled, 1957/61, gouache and acrylic on canvas, 60 x 60 cm, 23 5/8 x 23 5/8 in



Untitled, 1967, tempera on canvas, 75 x 75 cm, 29 1/2 x 29 1/2 in



Judith Lawand
1967

Untitled, 1967, oil on canvas, 30.5 x 30.5 cm, 12 x 12 in



Concreto 66, 1957, enamel on chipboard, 40 cm diameter, 15 3/4 in diameter

Concreto 66 (1957) is a rare example of Lauand's celebrated tondo works. The circular form lends itself to Lauand's focus on mathematical structures and continuity of pattern. A sense of energy emanates from the negative space of a circle at the centre of the work, the jagged black forms expanding and contracting from this point, seeming to pull apart from each other.

This piece demonstrates Lauand's interest in tactility and the play of light on her surfaces. With the polished finish of the enamel paints, the directional brushstrokes catch the light and enhance the sense of a continual, spiralling motion.





Assemblages

1960s

In 1963, Lauand co-founded the Galeria Novas Tendências in São Paulo with fellow Ruptura members. Here, she exhibited her assemblages, a movement away from the polished canvases of Concretism to incorporate domestic and often traditionally feminine materials, puncturing the surface with clothespins or thumbtacks and applying textured fabrics.

In the illustrated example, the surface is impressed by paperclips, using texture rather than colour to delineate rhythmic pattern. The corporeal effect of this offers a counterpoint to the seemingly impersonal grid of Grupo Ruptura's early Concrete works. Meanwhile, the asymmetrical composition suggests a continuity beyond the edge of the canvas of a wave rippling outwards, part of a larger image.



Untitled, 1965, paperclips and tempera on plaster, 30.5 x 30.5 cm, 12 x 12 in



Popcreto Painting

Late 1960s

While the status of artists was harshly affected by the censorship and persecution of intellectuals by the military regime installed in 1964, members of Grupo Ruptura continually sought to position themselves within an international art dialogue. Lauand's association in the late 1960s with a movement termed 'Popcreto' by the São Paulo artists, identifying an exchange between international Pop and local Concretism, reflects her responsiveness to international directions in art. Her figurative and text-based works from this period utilise the wordplay of Concrete poetry and a new visual language of Pop art, offering an avenue to explore themes of gender and political violence.

Até a morte [Until Death] (1969) is an essential example from this period. It incorporates the wordplay of Concrete poetry; the suspended text can be reconfigured into multiple phrases around the words 'amor [love]' and 'morte [death].' In an image both sinister and passionate, the female figure is radiant, her hair like a flame, held by the strong grip of her male counterpart.

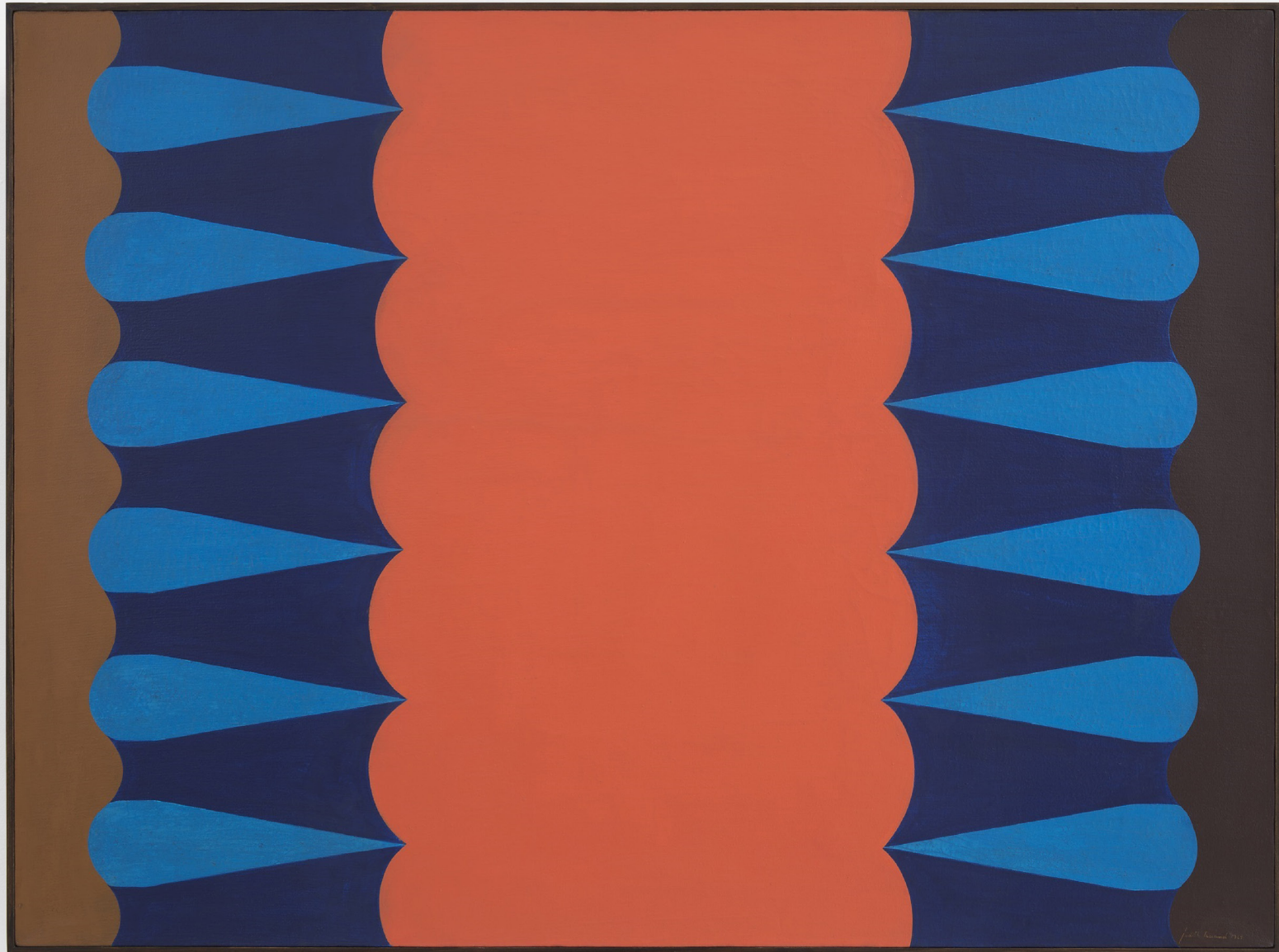
This piece was first exhibited at the 10th São Paulo Biennial (1969), boycotted by many countries opposed to Brazil's military dictatorship. In choosing to exhibit on this occasion, Lauand positioned herself amongst a younger generation of female artists encouraging conversations on censorship and on the social conditions of women in Latin America. This period of Lauand's work also reflects a perpetual revision of the visual language of Concretism that continued to define her work throughout her lengthy career.



Até a morte [Until death], 1969, acrylic on canvas, 70 x 105 cm, 27 1/2 x 41 3/8 in

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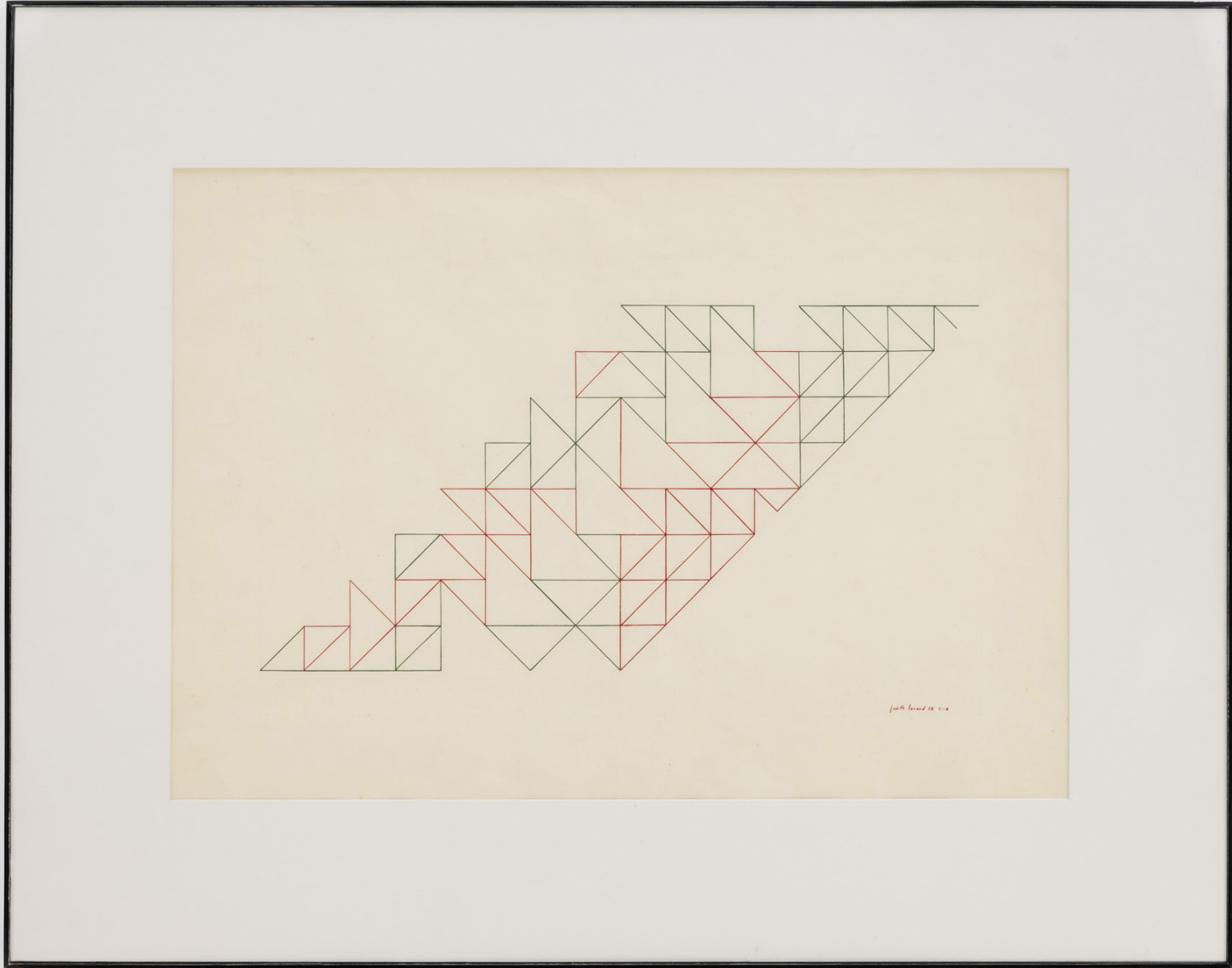




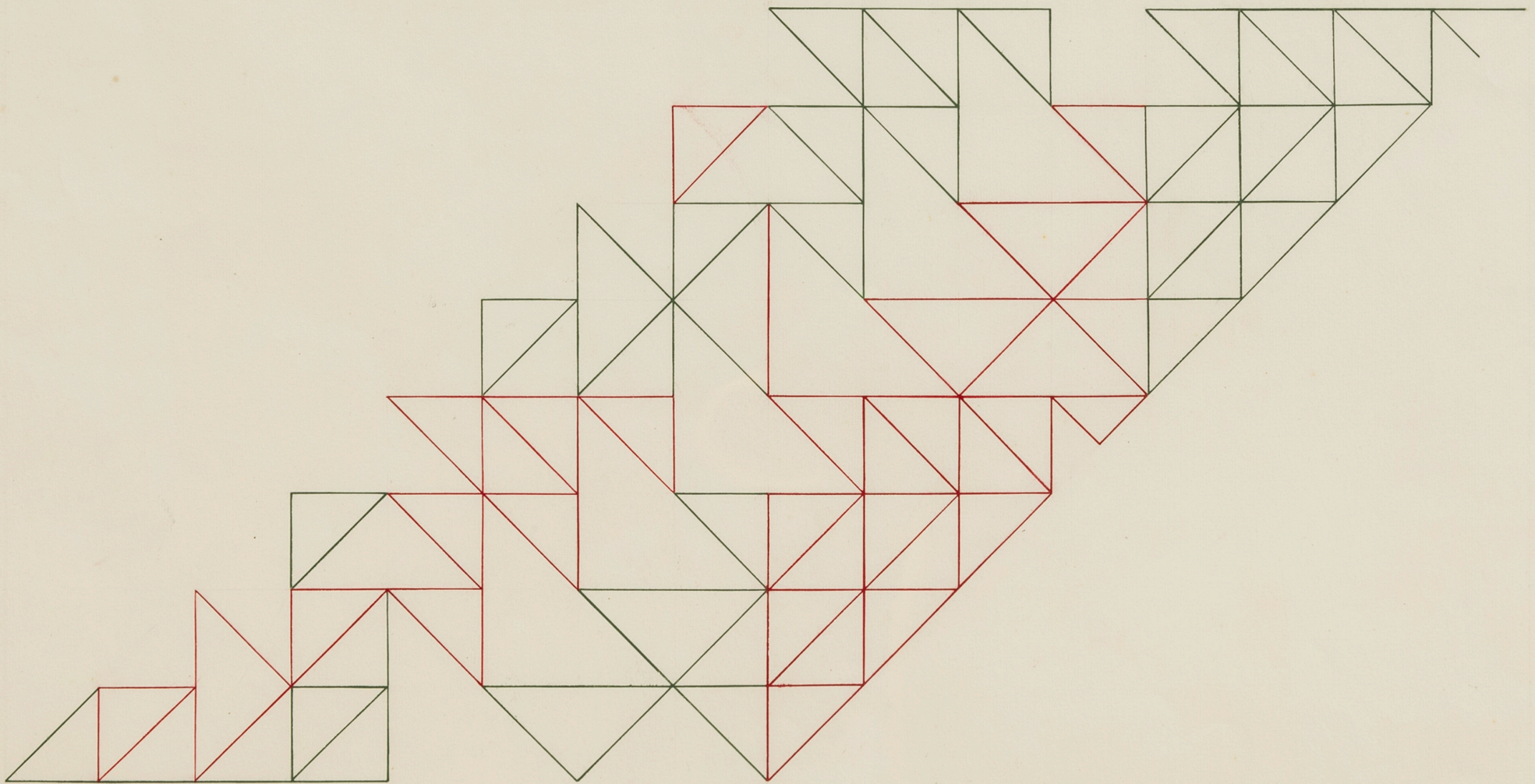
Untitled, 1969, oil on canvas, 76 x 103 cm, 29 7/8 x 40 1/2 in

Works on Paper

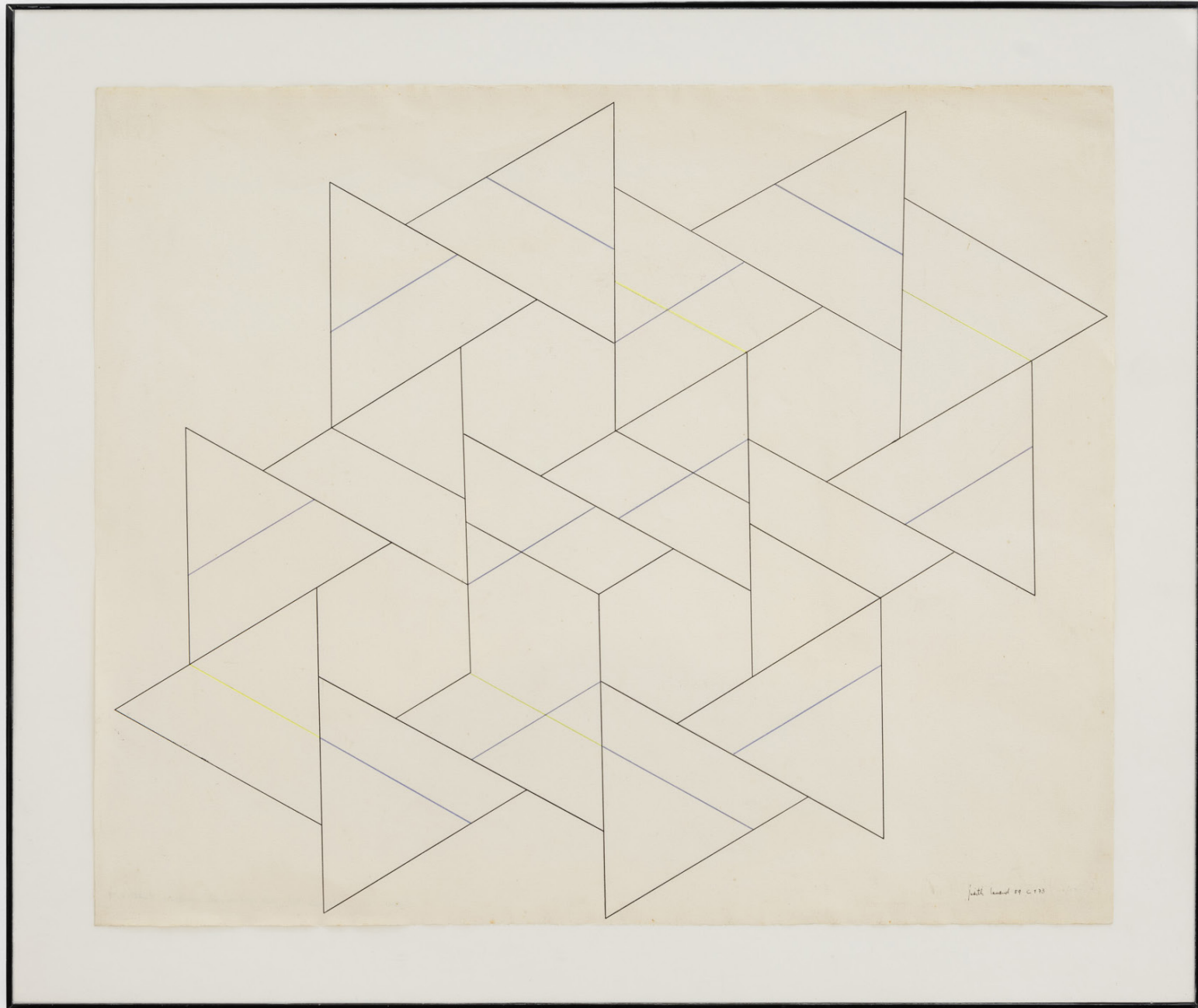
Lauand's early ink drawings, produced in the 1950s, clearly reflect the influence of the artists she was working and exhibiting alongside. The mathematical rigour and clarity in her line drawings is aligned with the desire to break free from a reliance on naturalism, and to promote truth and rationality in art, laid out by Waldemar Cordeiro in the 1952 Grupo Ruptura manifesto. Meanwhile, these drawings demonstrate Lauand's precise and deliberate ruptures to pattern and sequence; geometries are offset by subtle alterations of colour and absent lines that cause the structures to seem to pulsate and to lift from the paper at points.



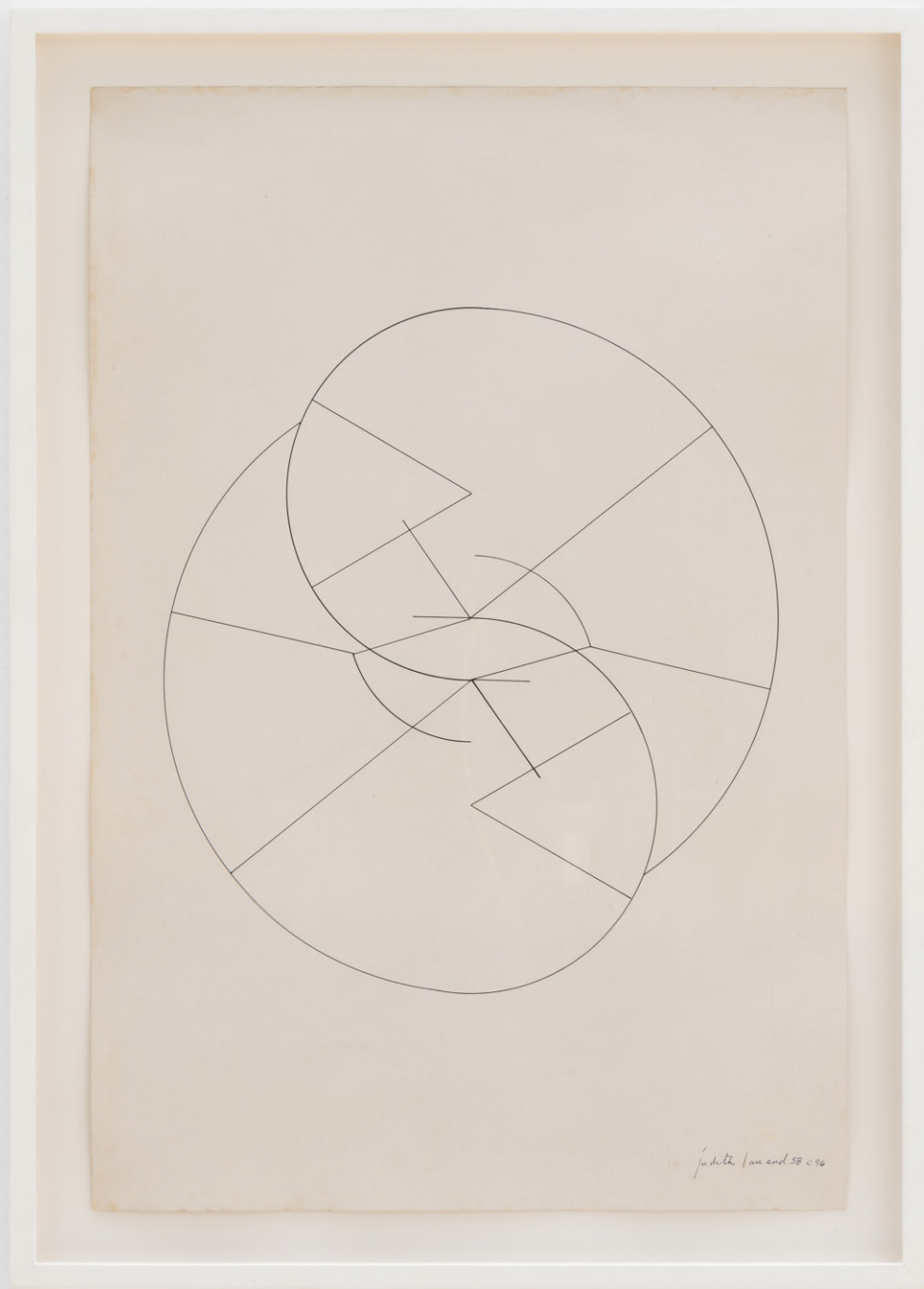
Concreto 118, 1958, India ink on card, 64 x 82 cm, 25 1/4 x 32 1/4 in (framed dimensions)



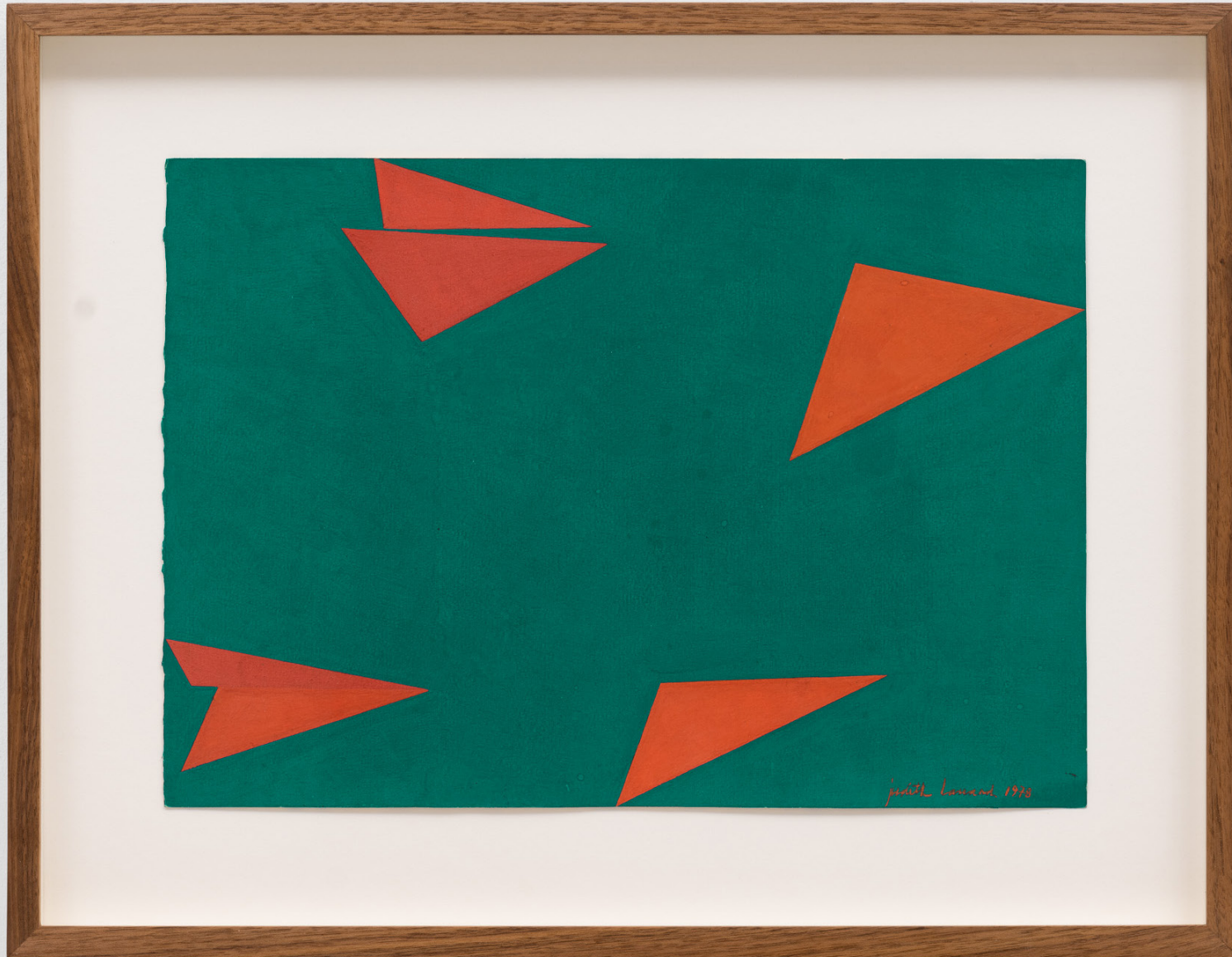
Judith Land SB C118



Concreto 173, 1959, India ink on card, 58 x 69 cm, 22 7/8 x 27 1/8 in (framed dimensions)



Concreto 96, 1958
India ink on paper
64 x 46 cm
25 1/4 x 18 1/8 in
(framed dimensions)



Untitled, 1978, gouache on paper, 36.5 x 47 cm, 23 5/8 x 23 5/8 in (framed dimensions)



Untitled, 1957
Gouache on card
52 x 48 cm
20 1/2 x 18 7/8 in

Later Works

1990s-2000s

Lauand's career spanned six decades, continuing into the 21st century. The illustrated works, produced when the artist was in her 70s, reflect a coherence with her early paintings and a loyalty to the basic principles of Concretism, as well as a sense of spontaneity in composition and expressive use of colour honed over an extensive career.

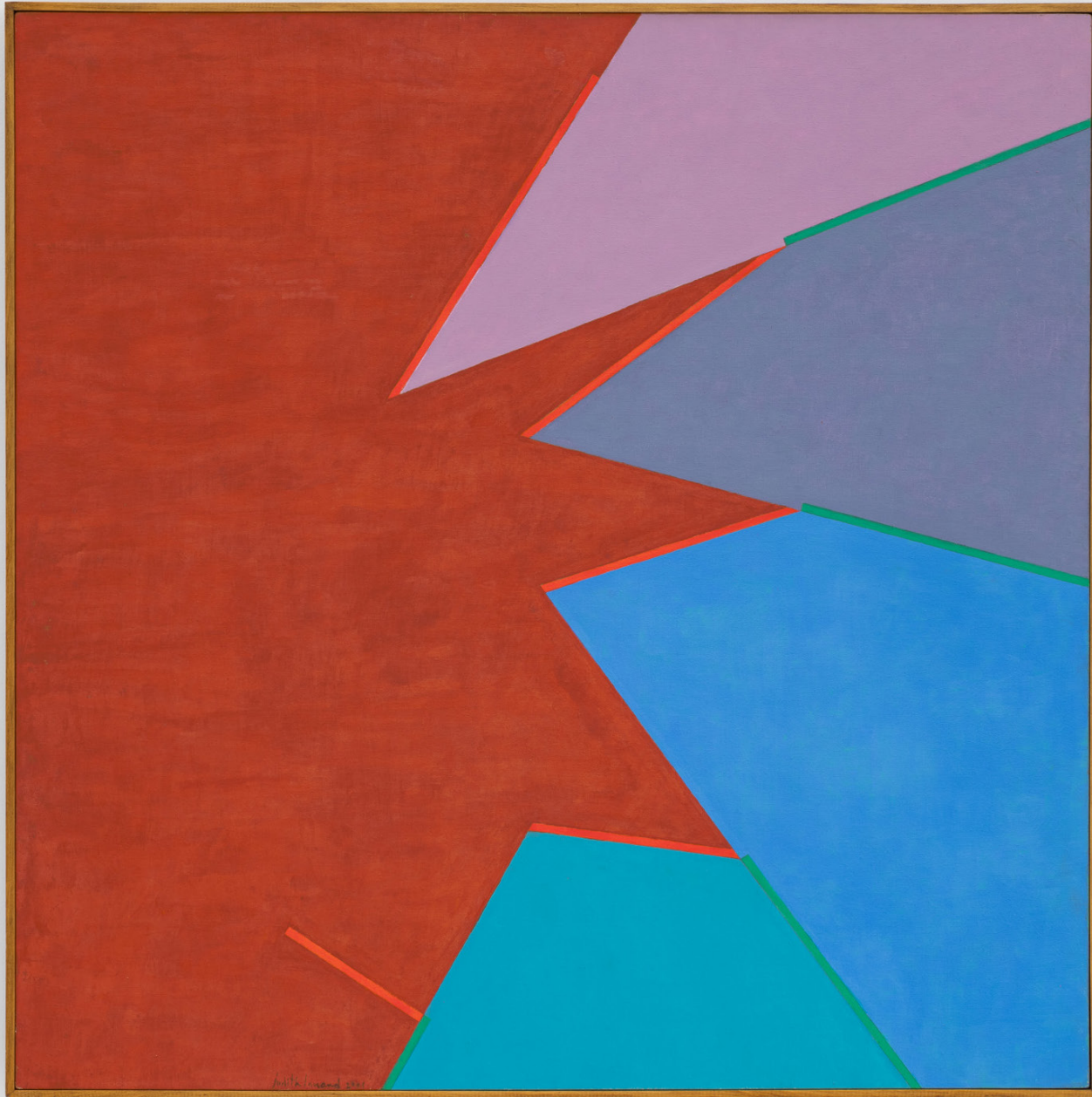
Lauand maintained a stylistic continuity from her first solo exhibition at Galeria Ambiente, São Paulo in 1954, to her final paintings produced in her 90s. We are delighted to present these works at a time of renewed celebration for the artist, who passed away in 2022 at the age of one hundred. We are especially pleased to offer a number of works featured in her major retrospective at the Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand (MASP) in Brazil in 2022-23.



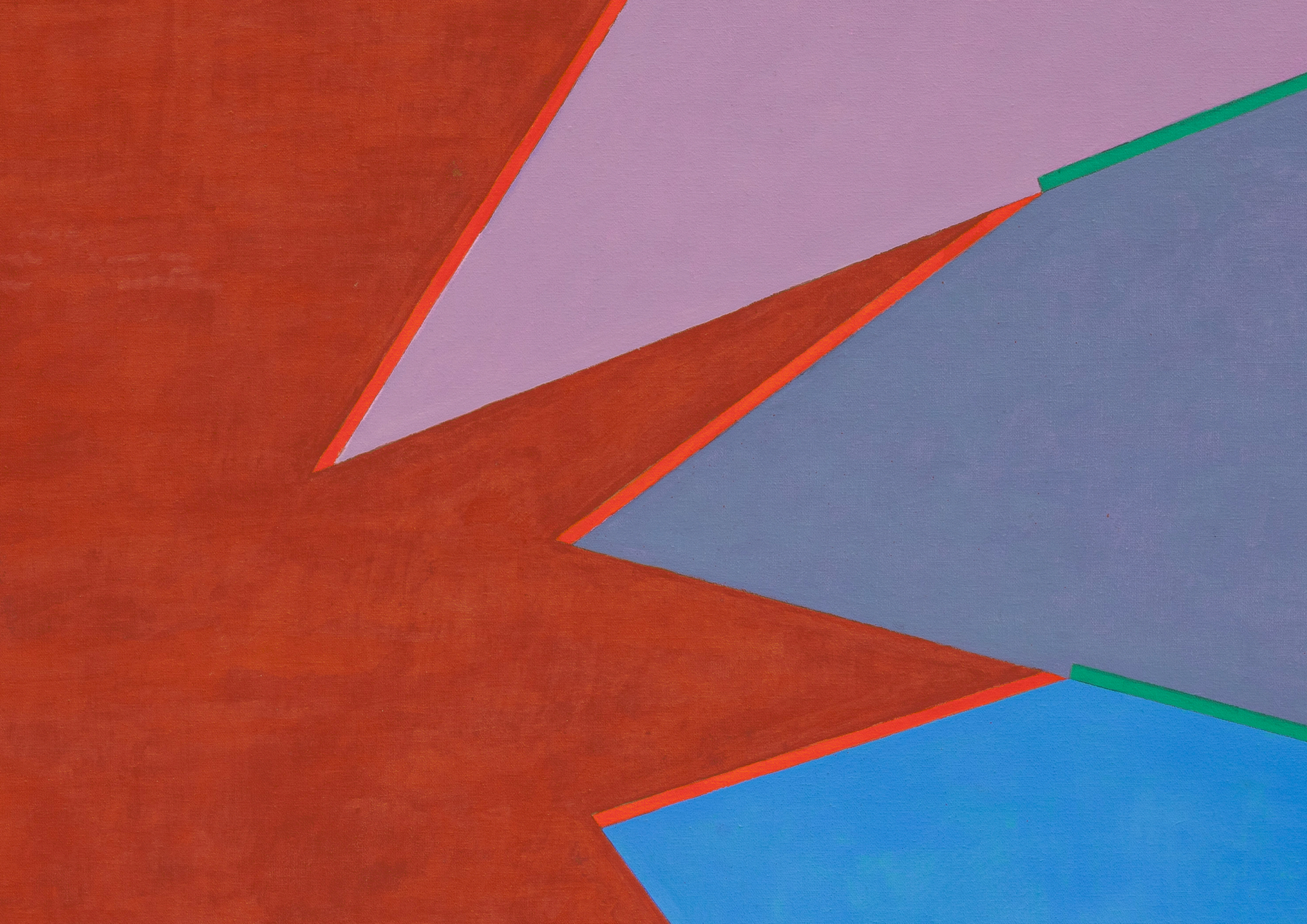
Untitled, 1993, oil on canvas, 80 x 80 cm, 31 1/2 x 31 1/2 in



Acervo 361, 1993, oil on canvas, 80 x 80 cm, 31 1/2 x 31 1/2 in



Acervo 390, 2001, oil on canvas, 80 x 80 cm, 31 1/2 x 31 1/2 in



Judith Lauand

1922-2022

Born in Pontal, São Paulo, Brazil

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

- 2022-3 *Judith Lauand: Desvio Concreto*, Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand (MASP), São Paulo, Brazil
- 2015 *Judith Lauand: os anos 50 e a construção da geometria*, Instituto de Arte Contemporânea, São Paulo, Brazil
- 2011 *Judith Lauand: Experiências*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil
- 2008 *Judith Lauand – 65 Anos de Arte – Xilogravuras*, Galeria Berenice Arvani, São Paulo, Brazil and Palacete da Esplanada das Rosas, Araraquara, São Paulo, Brazil
- 1992 Museu de Arte Contemporânea, University of São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
- 1977 Museu de Arte Contemporânea, University of São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Selected Group Exhibitions:

- 2017-18 *Making Art Concrete: Works from Argentina and Brazil in the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, The Getty Center, Los Angeles, US
- 2014 *Vontade Construtiva na Coleção Fadel*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil
- 2009-11 *The Sites of Latin American Abstraction: Selections from the Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection*, Museum of Latin American Art, Long Beach, California; Es Baluard Museu d'Art Modern i Contemporani de Palma, Palma de Mallorca, Spain; and Kunst und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn, Germany
- 2006 *Concreta 56: A Raiz da Forma*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil
- 2002 *Caminho do Contemporâneo 1952-2002*, Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- 2000 *Un Siècle d'Art Concret*, Centre d'Art Contemporain, Mouans-Sartoux, France
- 1997 1º Bienal do Mercosul, Porto Alegre, Brazil
- 1994 20º Bienal Internacional de São Paulo, Brazil
- 1984 *Tradição e Ruptura*, Pavilhão da Bienal, São Paulo, Brazil
- 1969 10º Bienal Internacional de São Paulo, Brazil

- 1968 *Os Concretistas*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil
- 1960 *Konkrete Kunst: 50 Jahre Entwicklung*, curated by Max Bill, Helmaus Zürich, Switzerland
- 1960 *Contribuição da Mulher às Artes Plásticas do País*, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, Brazil
- 1959 *Mostra Arte Brasileira Atual*, Munich, Germany; The Hague, Netherlands, and Vienna, Austria
- 1956 *Exposição Nacional de Arte Concreta*, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo and Museum de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- 1956 *Prêmio de Arte Contemporânea*, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, Brazil
- 1955 3° Bienal Internacional de São Paulo, Brazil

Selected Public Collections

Denver Art Museum, Denver, Colorado
Fundação do Livro do Cego no Brasil
Getty Museum, Los Angeles
Itaú Cultural Collection, São Paulo
Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Niterói
Museu de Arte Contemporânea de São Paulo
Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand (MASP), São Paulo
Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM), São Paulo
Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro
Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York
Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection, Miami; New York
Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo