

14.

TOMISLAV NIKOLIC >

Given that **Tomislav Nikolic** is, by his own admission, an artist who actively avoids talking about his work, it's lucky that his wonderfully complex, idiosyncratic abstract works have plenty to say.

As gallerist **Andrew Jensen** noted in the exhibition text for *HERE*, Nikolic's recent sell-out exhibition, these are paintings that eschew a puritanical, stylish minimalism but, in their substance and spirit they well and truly revitalise the possibilities for abstraction.

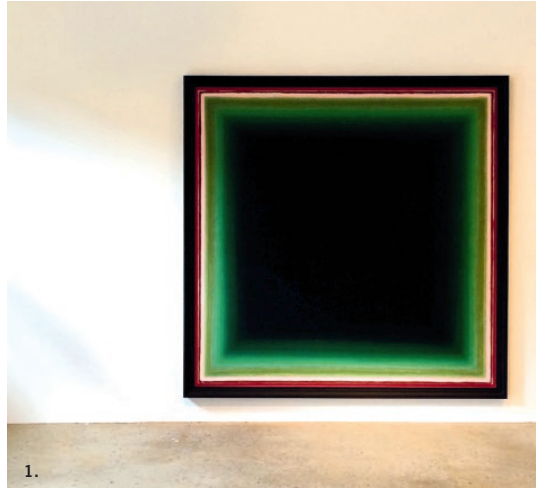
Jensen Gallery has represented Nikolic since 2011 and in that time has placed his work in a number of public and private collections both in Australia and abroad. For Nikolic though, the critical reception of *HERE*, "has many layers and they sustain me in different ways. Clearly being able to place the works allows me to continue to paint full-time and to enjoy the opportunities that this time allows... perhaps I am still too close to it to know what other positive implications there will be in this success but I already feel that the response to scale gives me a certain confidence."

The largest of the four works in *HERE*, *The awaiting conception of reality* (4, 5, 6, 7), 2016 is over two square metres in size. While each series of works in last few years have been tied together through Nikolic's interest in colour theory, each has required a different response. With *HERE*, "the same conceptual platform exists as in previous exhibitions but the ambition with which I approached each work feels even bolder."

The success of the show for Jensen is simple. "It was very, very good. The complexity of the objects that Tomislav makes - the structure, the scale, the surfaces, the chromatic relationships - in each of these works it was held in perfect balance... *HERE* seems to have been regarded by the many that saw it, as the most intense, the most beautiful, the most refined he has made to date. What I would say it that it was the most ambitious."

Looking forward to being back in his studio, Nikolic has a busy 2017 ahead, with a solo exhibition at Xavier Fiol Gallery, Madrid; a presentation at Art Basel Hong Kong with Jensen Gallery in March; and his first solo exhibition in Melbourne since 2002.

Jo Higgins

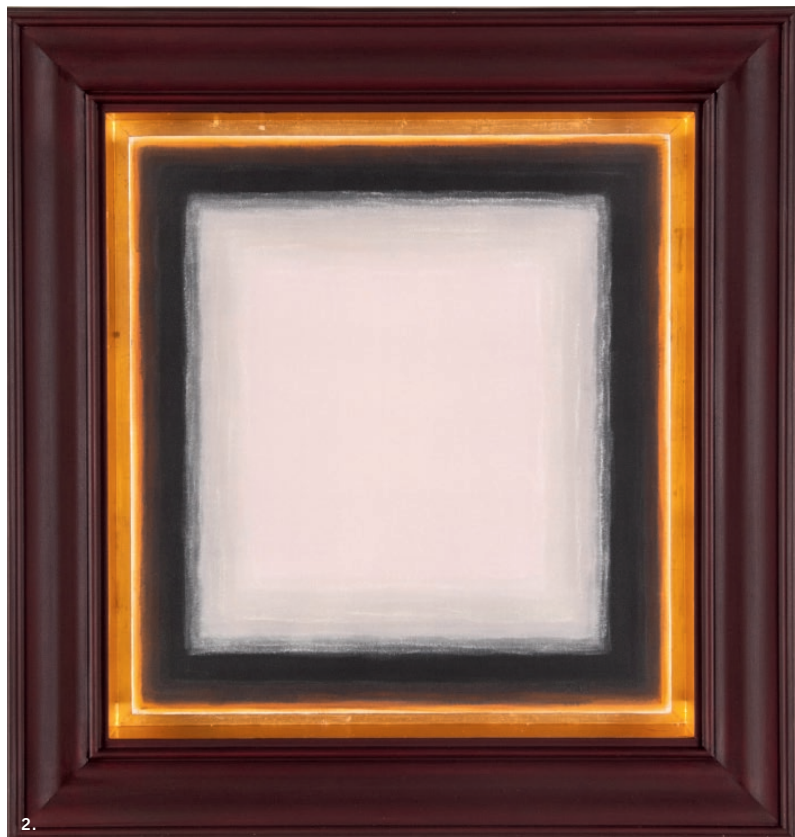


1.

1. // Tomislav Nikolic, *The awaiting conception of reality*, (4,5,6,7), 2016. Acrylic, marble dust, 24ct gold leaf on linen and wood, 227 x 230 x 10.5cm. Private Collection Sydney, Australia.

2. // Tomislav Nikolic, *The abdication of free will to trust*, (3), 2016. Acrylic, marble dust, 24ct gold leaf, 12ct white gold leaf on plywood panel and wood 66 x 63 x 10.5cm. Private Collection.

COURTESY: THE ARTIST AND JENSEN GALLERY, SYDNEY



2.