

# TERRA *nature* NOVA & *culture*



## *The World and the Wild*

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Eddie Meidav ♦ Evan Eisenberg

Michael Tobias ♦ Kathleen Harrison ♦ Jonathan Willard

# Fluid Dynamic

*Jonathan Willard*

A fluid is an unformed, indeterminate element, ready to receive definite form. As such, I have come to regard the fluid element as being the universal factor in both creativity and perception, and I have found fluidity to be a vehicle for exploring the fertile intersection between abstraction and signification. In these paintings, I have used waves of fluid medium both to dictate the arrangement of elements within the work and to provide unification of the visual field.

I call this approach to painting “fluid dynamic” because it allows wave systems and flow phenomena to use the information inherent in their rhythm and movement to create the painting’s forms. I let different areas of colors and textures converge and move through cascades of fluid medium and line, pulling together, suddenly flying apart, or remaining isolated. My goal is for the entire surface to come alive with movement, for forms to appear and disappear in a field of running possibilities. The fluid-dynamic approach creates vortices that form a circulatory system of light at the canvas’s surface. There is no beginning or end to a circulatory system, as everything is inwardly connected and reciprocally related. Visually speaking, an environment without beginnings and ends makes it challenging for the eye to interpret and retain fixed meanings. The nature of perception is thereby guided to flow.

The canvases are overrun with overlapping, intersecting, cascading currents to impress upon the surface an endless variety of shapes and forms. Initially, the movement of the medium dictates the texture that the paint and pigment will take. However, when areas of texture emerge, they in turn impose their will upon the inclination and drift of the current, thus creating areas on the canvas that are visually equivalent to high-pressure or low-pressure zones. When these relatively unstable areas arrive at a rhythmical balance, oftentimes a name will emerge that evokes the movement of imagination that is central to the work's essence. In between the universe of potentialities within the artwork and the universe of synthesized meaning in each word there exists an intermediate region where abstraction and signification meet. My work is directed toward this space where disassociation and association, dislocation and location, converge in our mind's eye.

Fluidity is creativity, and here the medium preserves the relevant values of the essentially opposing elements within a higher synthesis. The eye of the viewer is directed by distinct parts of the field at different times, while the meaning that the title evokes varies for each person and his or her singular frame of reference. There is no prearranged form or path to be found, except for those associated with color and the archetypal forms of movement encountered in all flowing media. Perhaps the appeal of fluid abstraction derives from a beauty or symmetry that is a remnant of some higher dimensional space or a truth embedded deep within the prehuman foundations of our evolving awareness. By their circulating nature, these environments on canvas are created and re-created countless times by each individual viewer. They are continually being born and exist in a state of constant becoming, as do we all.

**Jonathan Willard** is an artist and writer living in New York.



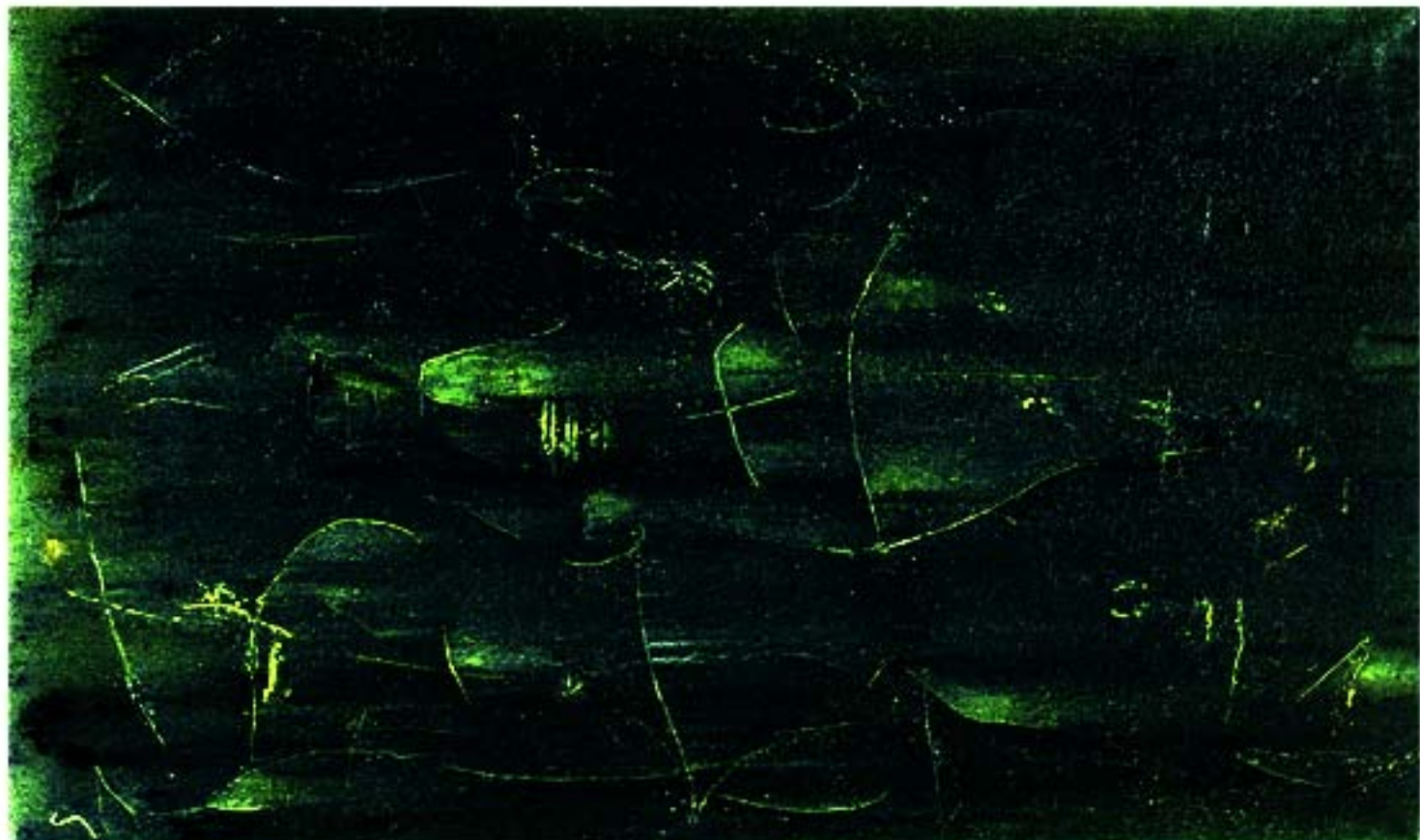
*The Depths of Immediacy, 1997, oil on canvas*



*Before Judges, 1997, oil on canvas*



*The Scattering of the light, 1997, oil on canvas*



*Windswept, 1997, oil on canvas*