



Peder

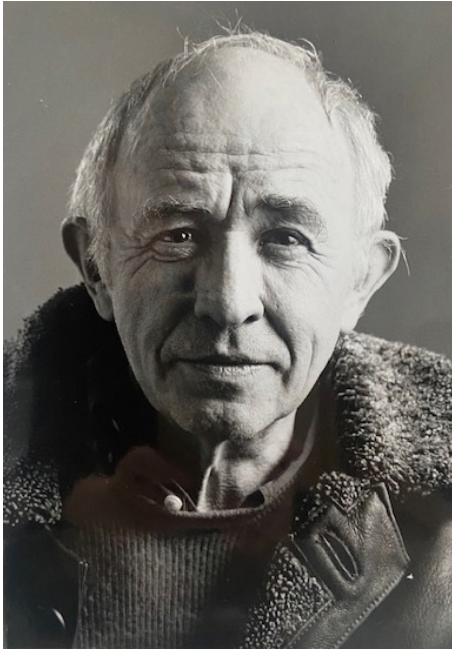
Jens
Johannessen

Porten

Peder Lund

November 15, 2024 – January 18, 2025

Lund



Peder Lund is delighted to announce a forthcoming exhibition with the exceptional Norwegian artist Jens Johannessen (1934-). To celebrate the artist's 90th birthday, the gallery will open a new presentation of Johannessen's work on November 15, 2024, from 12-4 p.m. Titled *Porten* (trans. *The Gate*), this exhibition celebrates this central artist's monumental career with eight new, vibrant works which delight in abstraction and painterly techniques.

Jens Johannessen is a significant figure in Norwegian contemporary art, born on November 15, 1934, in Orkdal, Norway. His career spans over several decades, during which he established himself as one of the most influential painters in the country. Working in a variety of media, including painting, collage, and photography, Johannessen is renowned for his abstract expressionist works, marked by bold colors, dynamic compositions, and intricate layering techniques. His art reflects a continuous exploration of abstraction, symbolism, and the natural world, making him a central figure in Norway's post-war modernist movement.

Johannessen's early years were shaped by the rural landscapes of his hometown, which later influenced his artistic vision. He initially trained as a craftsman, studying at the Art Academy in Trondheim (Kunstskolen i Trondheim) under Roar Wold. Later, he shifted his focus to fine arts, attending the prestigious Norwegian





National Academy of Fine Arts (Statens kunstakademi), studying under under Reidar Aulie. This formal education, combined with a deep-rooted connection to Norwegian nature and culture, informed his artistic development.

In the 1960s, Johannessen began gaining recognition for his distinctive abstract style, which set him apart from his contemporaries. His early works often featured figurative elements, but he soon transitioned to pure abstraction, where he found his artistic voice. Johannessen's style evolved into what is known as abstract expressionism, where the emphasis is on the emotional impact of color, form, and texture. His use of vibrant colors and geometric shapes often layered in complex compositions, creates a sense of movement and depth that captivates viewers. This ability to combine spontaneity with a controlled, almost architectural approach to painting became one of his trademarks.



Nature plays a crucial role in Johannessen's work. Although his paintings are abstract, they often evoke natural forms and landscapes, reflecting his deep connection to the Norwegian environment. He explores the tension between order and chaos, using the interplay of shapes and colors to convey emotions, moods, and ideas. His works are often described as a fusion of the natural and the abstract, where organic shapes emerge from seemingly chaotic brushstrokes.



Throughout his career, Johannessen has been associated with significant art movements in Norway, particularly during the post-war period when modernism was gaining ground. His art was seen as a fresh, innovative response to traditional Norwegian art forms, and he played a key role in pushing the boundaries of contemporary painting in Norway. His influence on Norwegian art cannot be overstated, as he helped bridge the gap between tradition and modernity, inspiring subsequent generations of artists.

Peder Lund is thrilled to showcase eight works from the artist's latest production to recognize and celebrate this momentous marker in the artist's distinguished career. Due to his advancing age, Johannessen has been limited in the scale of his work, however, these oil pastel on paper works lose none of their visual grandeur or power. By scaling his production to a more intimate size, Johannessen is able to focus on pure abstraction as it relates to emotional states. While in some works, repeated cross-hatched patterning channels the viewer to a meditative viewing experience, others indulge in a beautiful interplay of expressive colors and semi-abstract forms, producing pieces that conjure images of local Norwegian flora or exuberant dancers.

It is well documented that, over the course of a 70-year career, Johannessen has demonstrated exceptional technical mastery in painting. His works from the 1970s when he perfected his renowned cutting and collage technique and the 1980s, when he focused on watercolor and pastel on paper, particularly stand out. These pieces are the result of the artist's dedication to form, composition, and technique. Although Johannessen's advanced age has led to smaller-scale works, his remarkable compositions and technical brilliance continue to shine through with great strength and luminosity.

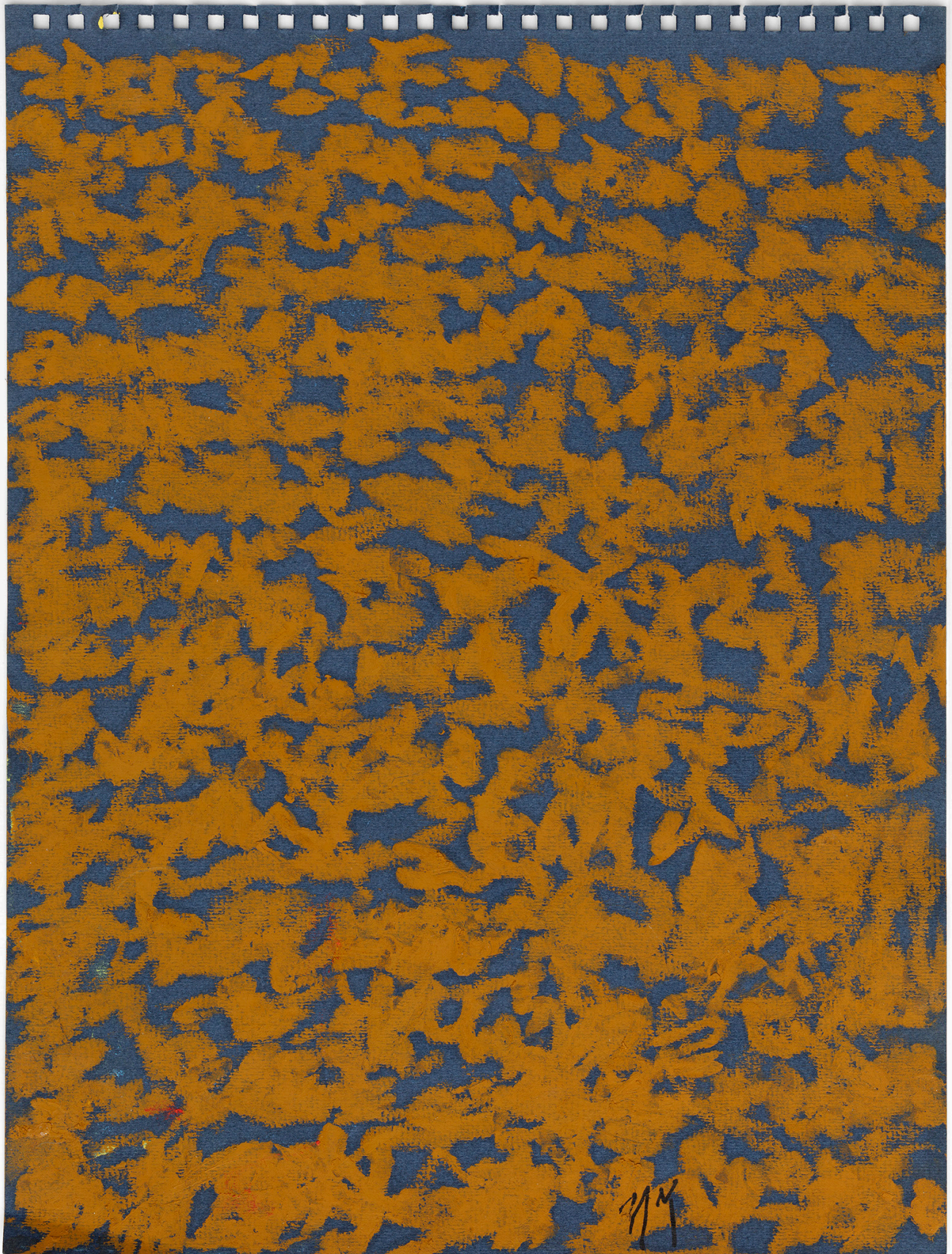
Jens Johannessen's work has been widely exhibited in Norway and internationally. Major institutions, including Taipei Fine Arts Museum, the National Museum of Art, Architecture, and Design, Oslo, the Astrup Fearnley Collection, Oslo, Trondheim Art Museum, and the Lillehammer Art Museum hold his paintings in their collections. He has also received several awards and honors for his contributions to the art world, cementing his legacy as one of Norway's leading modern artists. In 1993, Johannessen was honored with a major solo retrospective at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Oslo; at that time, Peder Lund was Johannessen's studio assistant and had the pleasure of working closely with the artist on this defining exhibition. In 2014, the Astrup Fearnley Museum dedicated a major solo exhibition to the artist, asserting that Johannessen is a central artist to the whole of the collection.

List of illustrations:

- 1 Portrait of Jens Johannessen.
- 2 Jens Johannessen, *Blå maskerade*, 1964. National Museum of Art, Architecture, and Design, Oslo.
- 3 Jens Johannessen, *Figur i rom*, 1971. National Museum of Art, Architecture, and Design, Oslo.
- 4 Jens Johannessen, *Fra Hallingdal-suiten I*, 1976. National Museum of Art, Architecture, and Design, Oslo.
- 5 Jens Johannessen, *Pergola I*, 2002. Astrup Fearnley Museum of Art, Oslo.



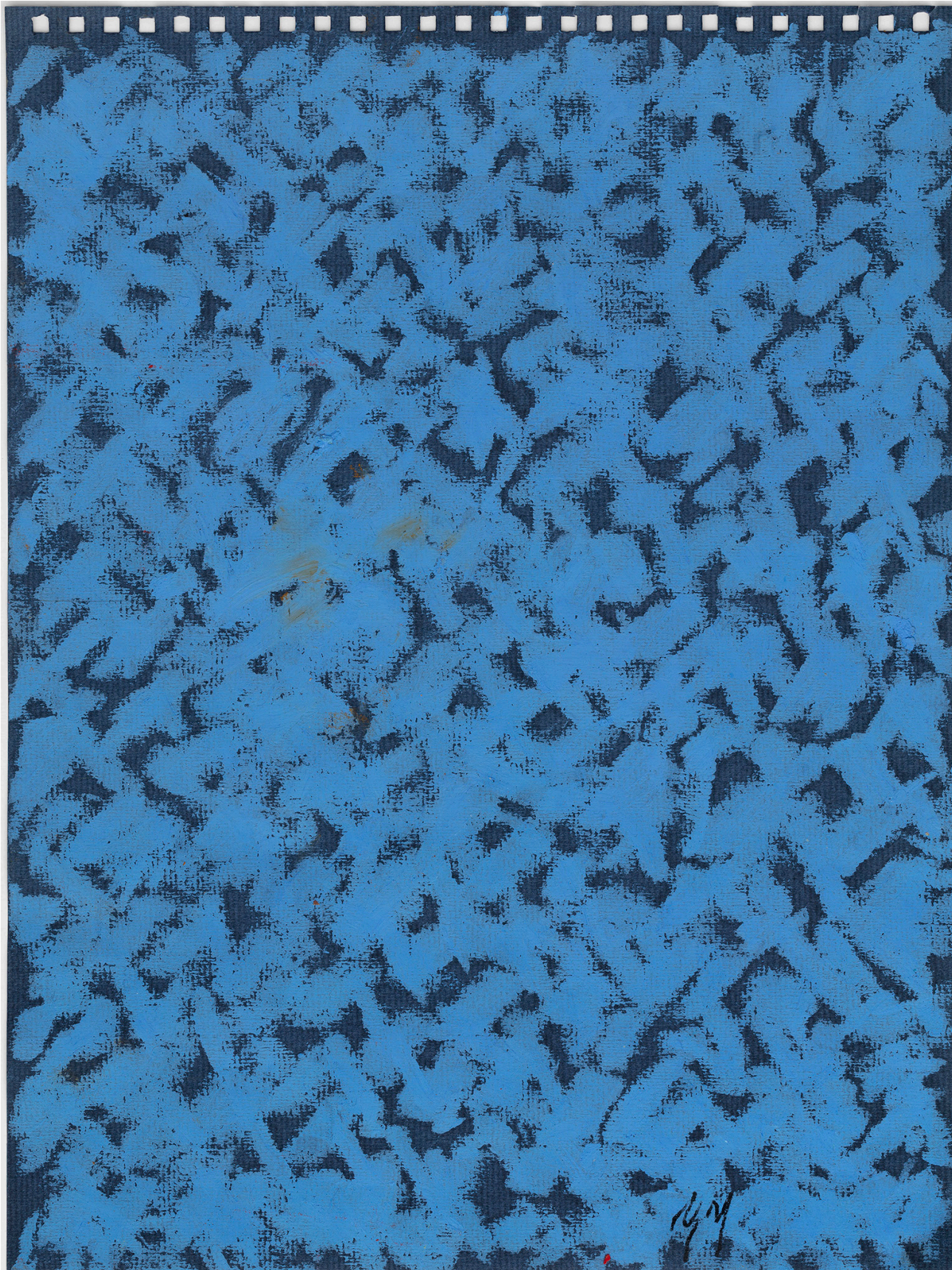
Jens Johannessen (1934-)
Untitled
2024
Oil pastel on paper
12 × 9 in./ 30.5 × 23 cm



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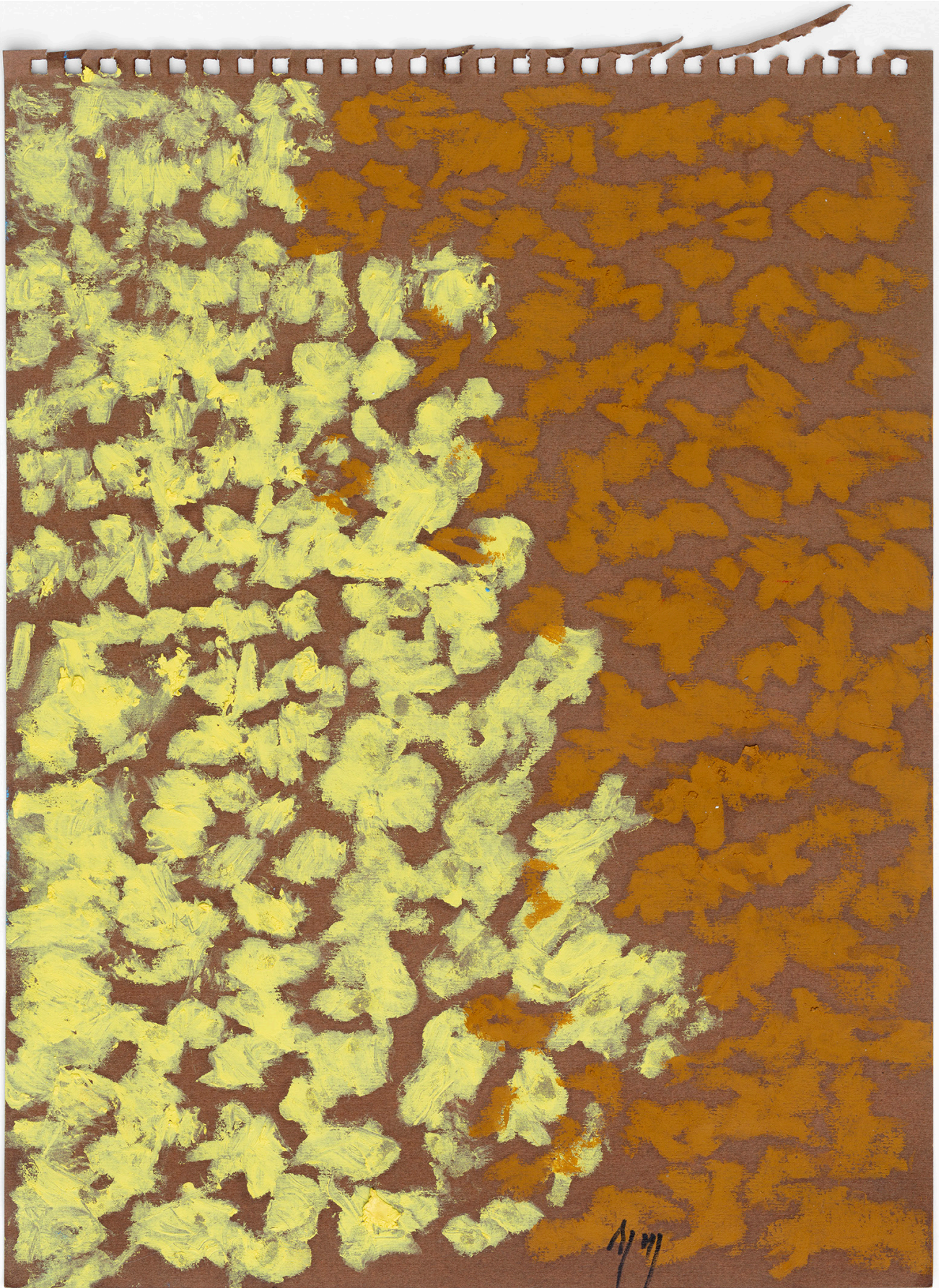
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