

The background is a solid pink color. A stylized tree trunk and branches are drawn in yellow and black. The trunk is vertical, with a horizontal branch extending to the right. This branch has several smaller, curved black branches. A thick yellow line forms a large loop on the left side of the trunk, resembling a stylized letter 'D'.

Breathing

Dov Talpaz

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February 10 - March 12, 2017

Slag Gallery, Brooklyn, NY



Slag Gallery, Installation view, 2017

Paintings of Breathing Energies

If every color of a painting was a tone, and every work of art a musical composition, what would the song sound like? This is a question that might occur to the casual exhibit goer and critic alike while taking in the paintings of Dov Talpaz, now on display at Slag Gallery. The series of colorful, graphic, and captivating paintings have a recurrent subject: the trumpet. In a majority of the works, this music instrument has been twisted and elongated, and by appearing in different forms and sizes, it becomes the main character in the tale of a composition that chants the energies through which it plays. The squared monochromatic backgrounds emphasize a mystic emptiness caused by the reduction of possible narrative elements, and there is evidence of a strong story and melody throughout each piece. Previously known for using a more traditional and figurative painting style, this new series investigates the power of reduction of narrative elements and color in search of a simpler emotional language that conveys only the intended essence of the piece. Inspired from his rich exposure to music since childhood, Talpaz amplifies the trumpet's image, using many different perspectives, and he projects humanlike characteristics on the instrument almost to the point of confusion with the characters on his stages.

Since early practice, Talpaz has painted scenes of life that he had encountered in novels and films. One of his favourite movies, for example, is Shawshank Redemption (1994), and he was inspired by the Russian literary greats, including Dostoyevsky, Checov, and Tolstoy. In the same way he was influenced by literature and film, he used the music of John Coltrane and Thelonious Monk to guide his artistry in his trumpet series.

Talpaz reduced and flattened the images of his stories to flat, colored areas, to the sum and substance of those stories. Isolated figures are represented through lines and shapes that follow a unique harmony of color and time. The arrangement of the elements of each painting is premeditated, and the colors are chosen in advance so that they are applied subsequently, in more of a rhythmic pattern than a melodic one. The pulse of the paintings emotes a certain kind of muted energy, while remaining respectful enough to refrain from overwhelming the viewer.

In Melodic Intimacy I, 2016, for example, a trumpet dominates the scene on a pinkish background. Its tubes have been stretched to an awkward length and are torched, assuming the form of two legs that touch a shadow on the bottom. An overarching question surfaces with this particular work: do we see the shadow of the trumpet or that of an elongated figure, standing outside of the painting? The different colors that compose the trumpet's tubes are applied in a simple way, but they invite the eye to follow the lines, and they convey the energy that hovers throughout the painting.

Red Corner (2016), on the other hand, is composed of flat colored areas and a small detail of a stylized face, potentially depicting a crude image of a clown. A peeping eye is discovered from the upper corner that slants towards the bottom of the painting, and although there is no other facial cue present, there is a certain melancholy to the face that is startlingly evident. The painting is composed by nothing more than large color fields and few signs, yet the message

(and to the literary enthusiasts, the source of inspiration, Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*) rings clear.

Music notes are fully realized when played in a time-based sequence, the audible composition. If one were to transpose one of Talpaz's paintings into a musical piece, one would most likely require a larger staff (more than the customary five lines). And even though the works themselves might represent a rhythmic exercise of different tones, played successively one right after the other, they continue to maintain the integrity of the existing elements, colors, and shapes that all collaborate together in a perfect harmony, creating a visual symphony brimming with emotion and feeling.

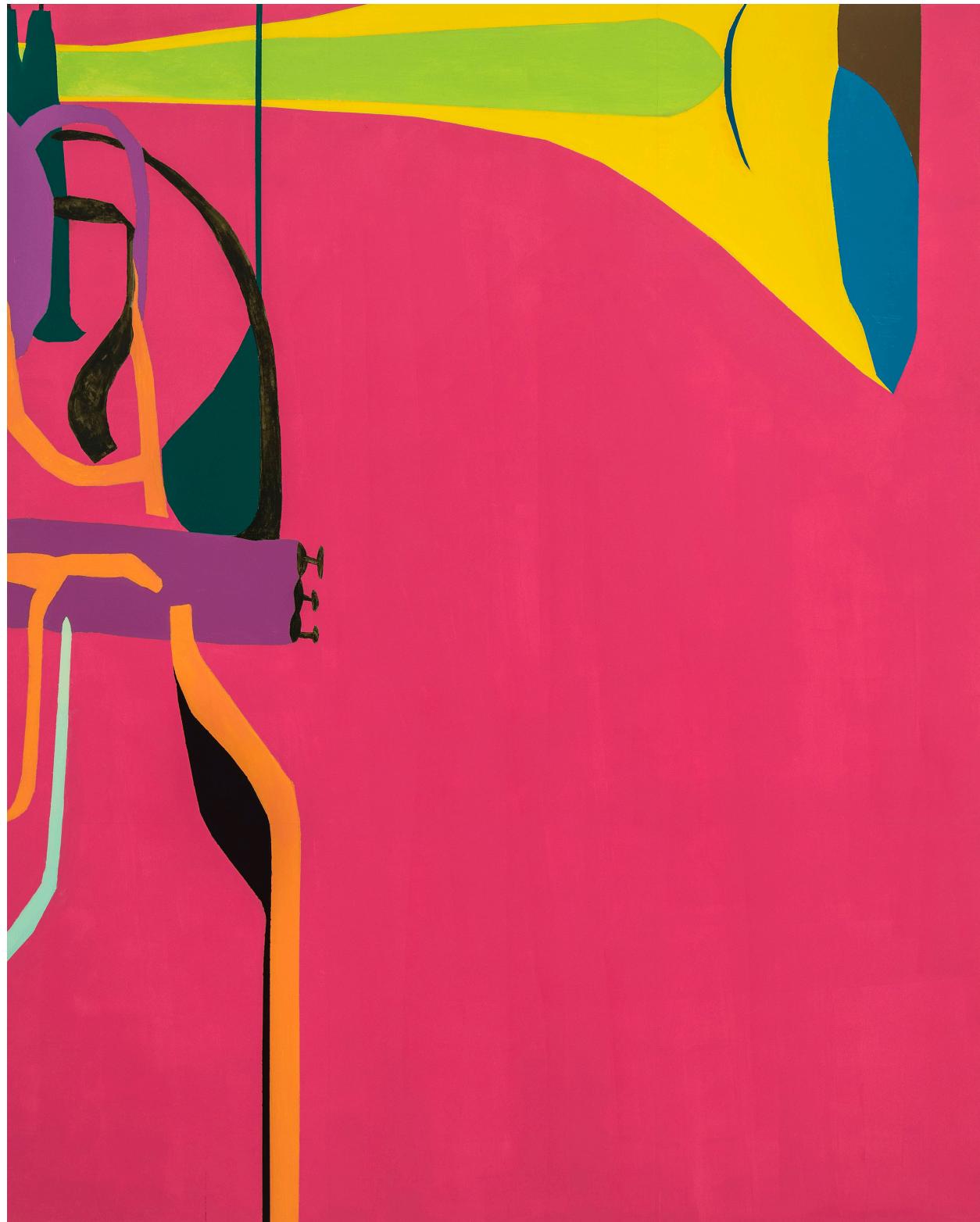
Sarah Corona

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Sarah Corona is an independent Curator and Art Historian based in New York. She holds a degree in Fine Art (with honors) and a Doctoral Degree in Art History (with honors) from Alma Mater University of Bologna, Italy, with both thesis about Chinese Contemporary Art. She obtained the Certificate of Art and Business at NYU New York in 2014. One of her main interests is to discover how technology affects art and culture and how social and political events are reflected in the arts. She investigates furthermore the cultural diversities between the societies of Europe, the United States and of countries of conflict and compares those aspects to our contemporary life and culture which become often subject of her writings, essays and exhibitions, published internationally. Sarah Corona has taught about curating and is lecturer and guest curator at European and New York based galleries and arts organizations.



Improvisation, 2014-16, Latex on wood, 60"x48"



Melodic Intimacy II, 2017, Latex on wood, 60"x48"



Voice, 2016-17, Latex on wood, 60"x60"



Choosing Path, 2016, Latex on Wood, 14"x11"



Melodic Intimacy I, 2016, Latex on wood, 60"x48"



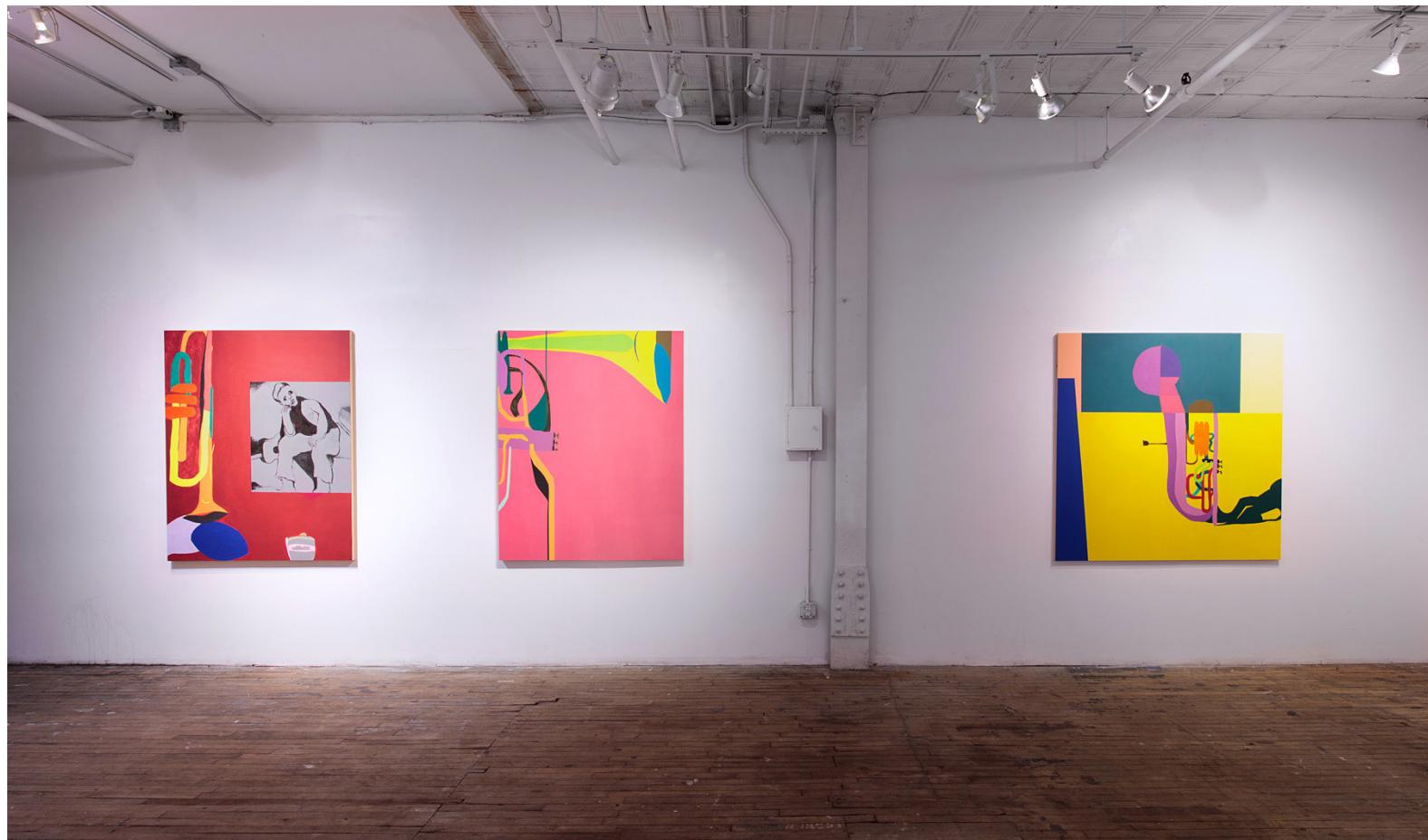
An Act of Giving, 2016, Latex on Wood, 24"x12"



Duet, 2017, Latex on wood, 60"x48"



Red Corner, 2014, Latex on wood, 60"x60"



Slag Gallery, Installation view II, 2017

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Work photographer: Cary Whitter

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