

## CRITICS' PICKS

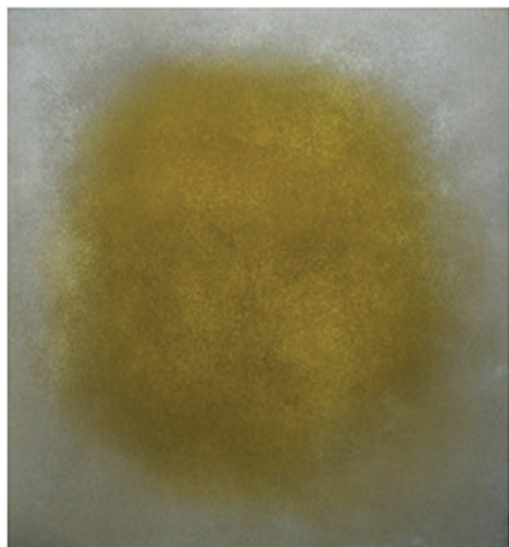
## Hong Kong

## Natvar Bhavsar

SUNDARAM TAGORE GALLERY  
57-59 Hollywood Road,  
February 24–March 28

Natvar Bhavsar continues to push the boundaries of what is possible with pure color pigment in his solo exhibition "Rang," which consists of twenty-two paintings created during a twenty-year span, with many made in the past two years. Each piece comprises anywhere from eighty to two hundred layers of pigment sifted onto acrylic gel. The oldest work in the show is *Veebha*, 1989; its inclusion allows viewers to see how the artist's technique has evolved over the years. Here, a textured swirl of red, yellow, and blue atop black pigment surrounds a luminous green center, giving the impression of an entire galaxy encapsulated on the canvas. The effect is a grand gesture, with broad strokes hinting at a vast number of ideas. Two smaller canvases from 2008, *Akal I* and *Akal V*, provide a counterpoint, narrowing the focus to the microscopic level without reducing the complexity in approach. Bhavsar's mastery of color and light makes clear how he has broadened the scope of late 1960s Color Field painting. In these two paintings, for instance, the liberal use of acrylic gel gives the surfaces a smooth, glossy look, bringing attention to how subtle changes in the quantity of materials can completely alter the visual experience.

There is a need for the viewer to commit fully to the act of looking when viewing these paintings. The payoff is seeing how Bhavsar's technique has become more refined and exacting over time—essentially, in this exhibition, we witness the history of an artistic practice unfold on canvases.



Natvar Bhavsar, *Akal I*, 2008, pure pigment on canvas, 23 x 21".