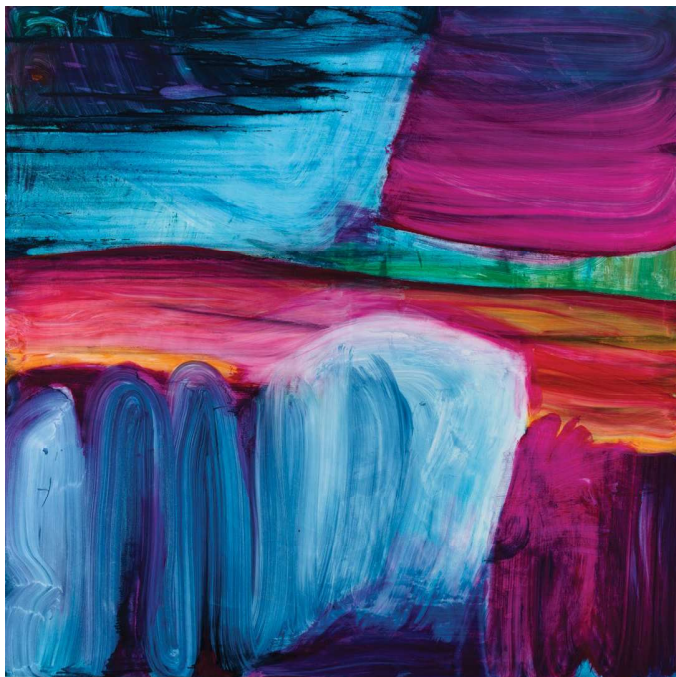


FRAN O'NEILL

cutting through, 2014
Oil on Canvas, 70 x 70 in



NILS MICHALS

Boxes of
Stucco and
Terracotta

And so here come the boxes of stucco and terracotta, Asiatic lilies and gardeners' pickups, leaf-blower windows of operation. Gates within inaccessible faux marble gates, rent-a-cops on squawkboxes surveilling emerald lawns and inoffensive mailboxes. Here come the lipstick moms and dadbods in counterfeit boxer briefs, drowsy princesses and superheroes lost in the adrenaline gazes of cereal box characters. Lunch box, sandbox, inbox, news of a black box most certainly silent by now. Here come the tricked Suburbans drifting through electric grids, the late-night stoplight Jack-in-the-Boxes, emptied Redboxes and dead malls abounding with big, indifferent cats. Here come the pillboxes, and accordingly, the chatterboxes, the sauceboxes. Here come the girls gone wild on deleted screens, the platinum skyboxes, the midlife crisis glass cases jammed with snuffboxes, pepperboxes, Matchbox Bentleys. Have you ever been elected president of someone else's terrible error? It is akin to a disinterested majority all at once looking wistfully at a far line of hills. One can see why the men of this country get a box. Why they empty it, refuse to leave it empty, then repeat. *Whatever you do, you have a friend* loops endlessly on the megachurch marquees. Even Jesus has gone electronic, a strange consolation, the one week in spring when everything's turned New Zealand green.