

ARCO MADRID

5 – 9.03.2025
Booth 9C13

P420

ADELAIDE CIONI

(1976, Bologna, IT)
- lives and works in Spoleto (PG), IT)

Adelaide Cioni studied drawing at UCLA, Los Angeles, and has a BA in Sculpture from the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome. With an MA in contemporary history and a master's degree in Literary Translation, for ten years she translated American literature (John Cheever, Lydia Davis, David Foster Wallace, amongst others). In 2012 she finished the translation of Cheever's journals and decided to quit translating literature, thereby she started her artistic practice.

Her work moves at the intersection of textile, painting, and performance. The constant elements at the core of her practice are drawing, an absence of narration and a feminist viewpoint. Over the past year she has been connecting her work to music and dance, in a multidisciplinary, collaborative approach. She lives and works between Spoleto (IT) and London.

Upcoming exhibitions

Di erbe e di fiori. Erbari d'autore. Da Besler a Penone, da De Pisis a Cage, Fondazione Cosso, San Secondo di Pinerolo, IT (2025).

Ongoing exhibitions

15 Years, P420, Bologna, IT (2025); *Il mondo*, Centro per l'arte contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato, IT (solo, 2023).

Recent exhibitions

Five Geometric Songs, Padiglione de l'Esprit Nouveau, Bologna, IT (performance, 2025); *Breasts*, ACP Palazzo Franchetti, Venezia, IT (2024); Archivio Aperto. *Kew. A Conversation in Green*, Fondazione Home Movies, Bologna IT (site-specific installation, 2024); *I Sibburchi*, Chiesetta della Madonna degli studenti, Lecce, IT (2024); *Touch Song*, Southwood Gardens, Piccadilly, London, UK (performance, 2024); *Editions from 30 Years of Gasworks: All the Lovers*, David Zwirner, London, UK (2024); *True Form*, The Approach, London, UK (solo, 2024); *Infinita infanzia*, Palazzo Collicola, Spoleto, IT (2024); *Drawings for Myself*, P420, Bologna, IT (solo, 2024); *Italian Painting Today*, Triennale Milano, Milano, IT (2023); *Teatrino*, Museo del Tessuto e del Costume, Spoleto (PG), IT (site-specific installation, 2023); *Ab ovo / On Patterns*, Mimosa House, London, UK (solo, 2023); *Recent Acquisitions and Eternal Loves - Part I*, Nicoletta Fiorucci Collection, Principality of Monaco, MC (2023); *Panorama*, curated by Vincenzo de Bellis, a project by Italics, Monopoli, IT (2022); *An Incomplete A to Z for Art and Poetry*, 30 Old Burlington Street, London, UK (2022); *Prayers to Jupiter*, with Typhaine Delaup and Dom Bouffard, Fondazione Memmo/Gasworks, London, UK (performance, 2022); *Dante. Gli occhi e la mente. Un'Epopoea POP*, MAR Museo d'Arte della città di Ravenna, Ravenna, IT (2021); *And the flowers too*, Fondazione Volume, Museo Orto Botanico, Roma, IT (2021); *Tout Court. Un aperçu de l'art contemporain italien*, l'Istituto Italiano di Cultura a Parigi, Paris, FR (2021); *Mirabilia*, Casa Italia - Olimpiadi di Tokyo 2021, Kihinkan Guest House, Tokyo, JP (2021); *The Feuilletton: I will bear witness*, Piggy-backing-from the Edicola, Mahler & LeWitt Studios, Spoleto; MACRO, Roma; Edicola, S.M.I.T., Roma, IT (2021); *Painting stone*, Villa Lontana, Roma, IT (2021); *Sol LeWitt Open studios*, Mahler & LeWitt Studios, Spoleto, IT (2021); *141 - Un secolo di disegno in Italia*, Fondazione del Monte di Bologna e Ravenna, Bologna, IT (2021); *Io dico io (I say I)*, Galleria Nazionale d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Roma, IT (2021); *E subito riprende il viaggio*, P420, Bologna, IT (2020); *Stasi frenetica*, GAM, Torino, IT (2020); *The empty project*, first installment at MAMbo, Museum



of Modern Art, Bologna, IT (2020); *Verso Sera*, *Ipercorpo XVII Festival Internazionale delle Arti dal Vivo*, Forlì, IT (2020); *Ab Ovo*, Artefiera, Bologna, IT (2020).

Selected residencies

Marea Art Project, Praiano (SA), IT (2024); CEAAC, Strasbourg, FR, in collaboration with IUNO, Roma, IT (2023); Residency at Gasworks, supported by Fondazione Memmo and Gasworks, London, UK (2022); Residency at Worliding, London, UK (2021); Development residency for

The Empty Project at Mahler & LeWitt Studios, Spoleto, IT (2021); *The Empty Project* workshop, Adelaide Cioni and Giuseppe De Mattia, with Lisa Andreani, Typhaine Delaup, Fabio Giorgi Alberti, Carlo Favero and Joana P.R. Neves, Mahler & LeWitt Studios, Spoleto, IT (2021); Residency at Mahler & LeWitt Studios, Spoleto, IT (2021).

Public collections

Voorlinden Museum, Wassenaar, NL; Centro per l'arte contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato, IT; A.R.M. Holding Art Collection, Dubai, AE.



P420 at ARCO Madrid, installation view, 2025, Madrid, ES

Saying almost the same thing

The sea, Cioni says, is “that thing you cannot paint.” In fact, painters have never stopped trying. This, too, leads us to experience approximation, in the face of which “abstracting” gives us the illusion of being less imprecise. It means, when faced with an object, attempting to extract its essence, or as Deleuze reading Bacon put it, the “diagram”: that is why “no art is figurative,” the philosopher writes in *The Logic of Sensation*. For the same reason, it could be said that no art is abstract: even the most geometric pattern ends up evoking a series, a rhythm that is already an ordering of the real. From the outset, Adelaide’s research – obsessed with what she calls “secondary images,” i.e. ornamental motifs that lie at the margins of all figuration, and orient, most often inadvertently, its perception on our part – is located in the *terrain vague* which in Klee’s words is not form, *Gestalt*, but the vibration of the forming, *Gestaltung*. Cioni’s research, Cecilia Canziani has written, always aims at the “degree zero of the composition.”

[...] according to Freud, the *oceanic feeling* is but the primary form of religious feeling: that which each of us – whether or not we believe in some form of transcendence – senses when faced with the boundlessness of the sea. In his diaries, Baudelaire calls the sea “a diminutive infinite,” although for him this is primarily a source of anguish (in a letter he declares that he finds “freely flowing water” unbearable: “I want it imprisoned in a straitjacket, between the geometrical walls of a river’s banks”). The same oscillation is also conveyed by Leopardi, who sees shipwreck as “sweet” in the conclusion of his most famous poem: that *Infinite* that symbolizes the boundlessness of the rhetorical vanishing of the subject in the *oceanic* dimension of “such a sea.”

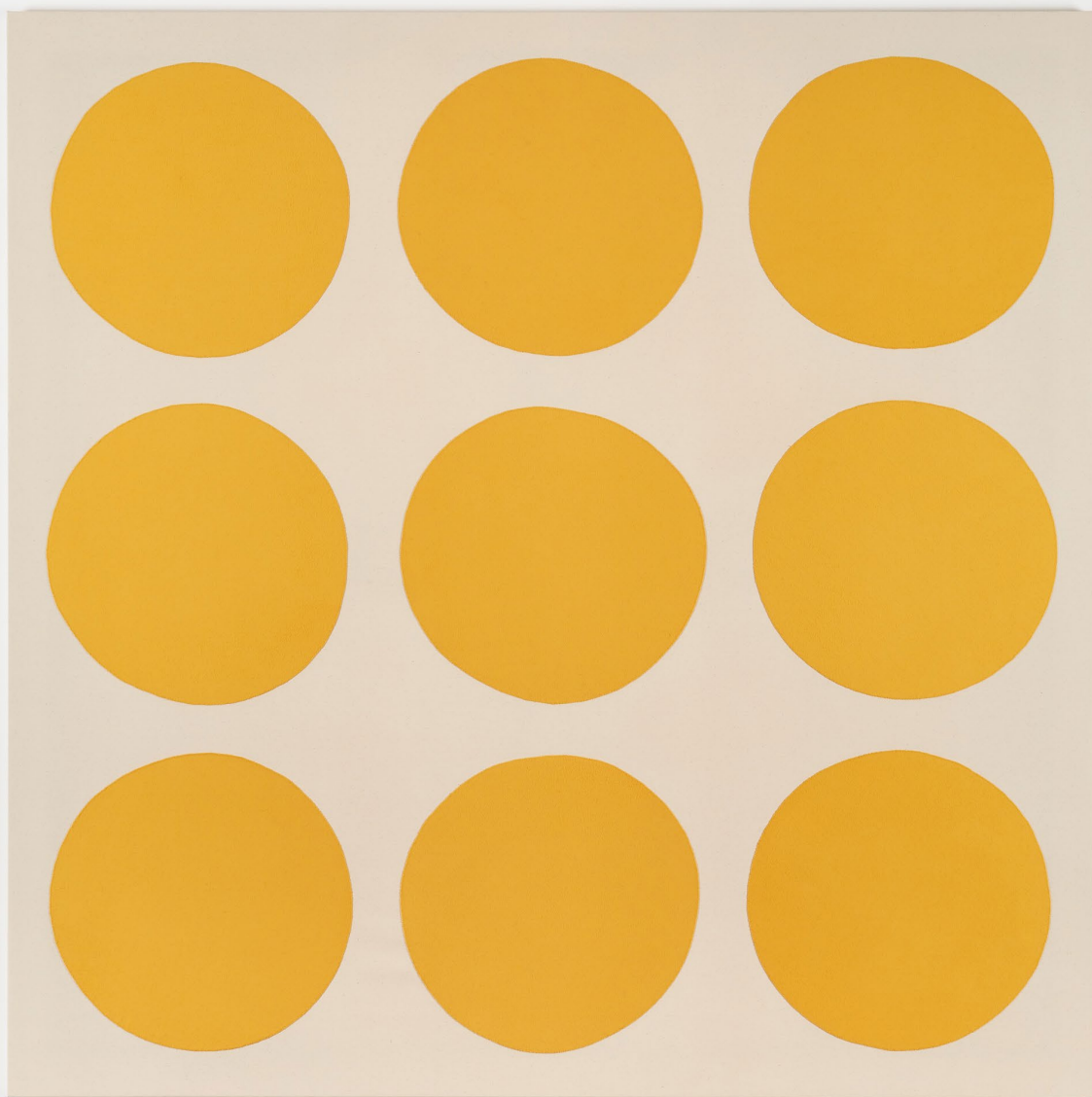
Well aware of the ambiguity of this feeling, it seems to me that Adelaide Cioni leans more towards the latter interpretation. If the sea suggests the infinite it is because whatever portion of it we try to “frame” (as Calvino’s *Reading of a Wave*, in *Mr. Palomar*, showed once and for all) refers back to its inexhaustible whole: but Adelaide – like Pino Pascali before her – appreciates the irony of this fate. “Any decorative motif alludes to the infinite,” she argues: for its precisely inexhaustible replicability.

The *Ab ovo** series focuses on decorative motifs discovered during travels, reading, visits to museums; motifs from prehistoric artifacts, Egyptian, Greek, Etruscan, Polynesian, Middle Eastern, Native American in origin, along with others that are artistic expressions from more recent centuries, all the way to the present. Some are botanical, others geometric and abstract, or celestial.

Ab ovo is therefore an investigation on the recurrence of certain decorations, from prehistory to the Renaissance to the present, and it springs to some extent from an interest in language: these images narrate nothing, there are no protagonists, no story, no words of reference or symbols to decipher. These decorations are a pure attempt to fill space with a repeated sign, to tame the material nature of the world, of objects, our everyday settings, taking them back to a code that entirely lives on a visual level. They are codes, but they have no meaning; for a former translator like me, this is interesting because it hints at an aspect of the mind that is capable of abstraction, but not verbal. An *all-visual* dimension where the mind simply wants to organize space, to dress it in signs, to take possession of it, prior to any language. Since some of these patterns – like the blocks or the stripes – are found in countless regions of the world, in all time periods, I go so far as to think that these are visual codes tacitly inscribed in each of us, which are universal like geometry, like abstraction.

Decorative motifs are also interesting as an attempt to come to terms with nature and to replicate its methods of proliferation: every pattern contains the idea of infinity, because it can ideally be repeated forever, just as nature multiplies itself infinitely in modules that are endowed with identical functional characteristics, but are incarnated in individual bodies, each with its own more or less marked variations with respect to the original canon. There are millions of leaves on a tree, but no two of them are precisely alike. Every incarnation has individual, unique characteristics, because becoming body means becoming matter, and matter inevitably implies accident. *Ab ovo* is therefore also an ode to diversity, a defense of the deviance of bodies.

**Ab ovo* is a Latin expression that literally means “from the egg” and indicates “from the beginning,” where beginning is seen as something very ancient, the origin of all history. In particular, the egg referred to is the one from which Helen of Troy was born, the egg laid by Leda after the intercourse with Zeus, who had taken on the guise of a swan.



Adelaide Cioni

Nine yellow ones

2025

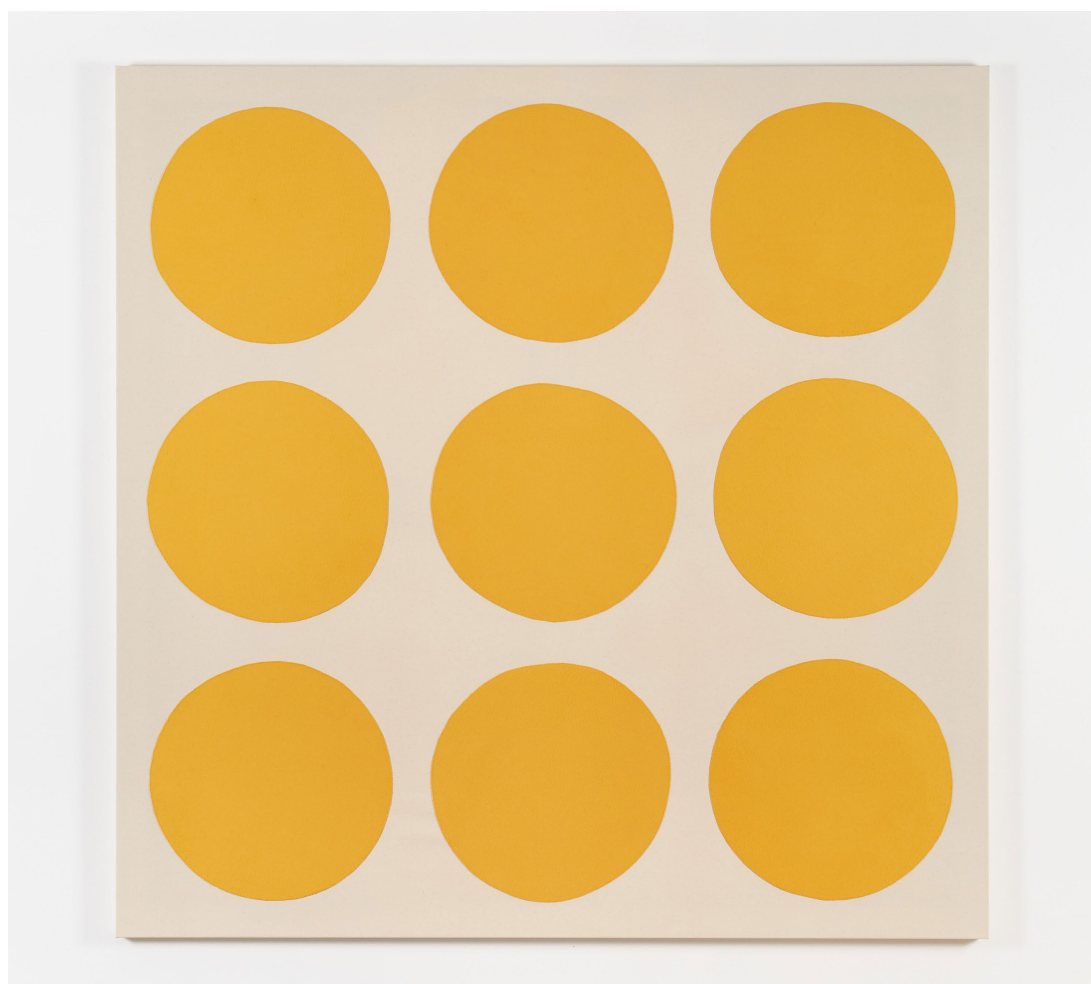
wool stitched on canvas

167 × 167 cm

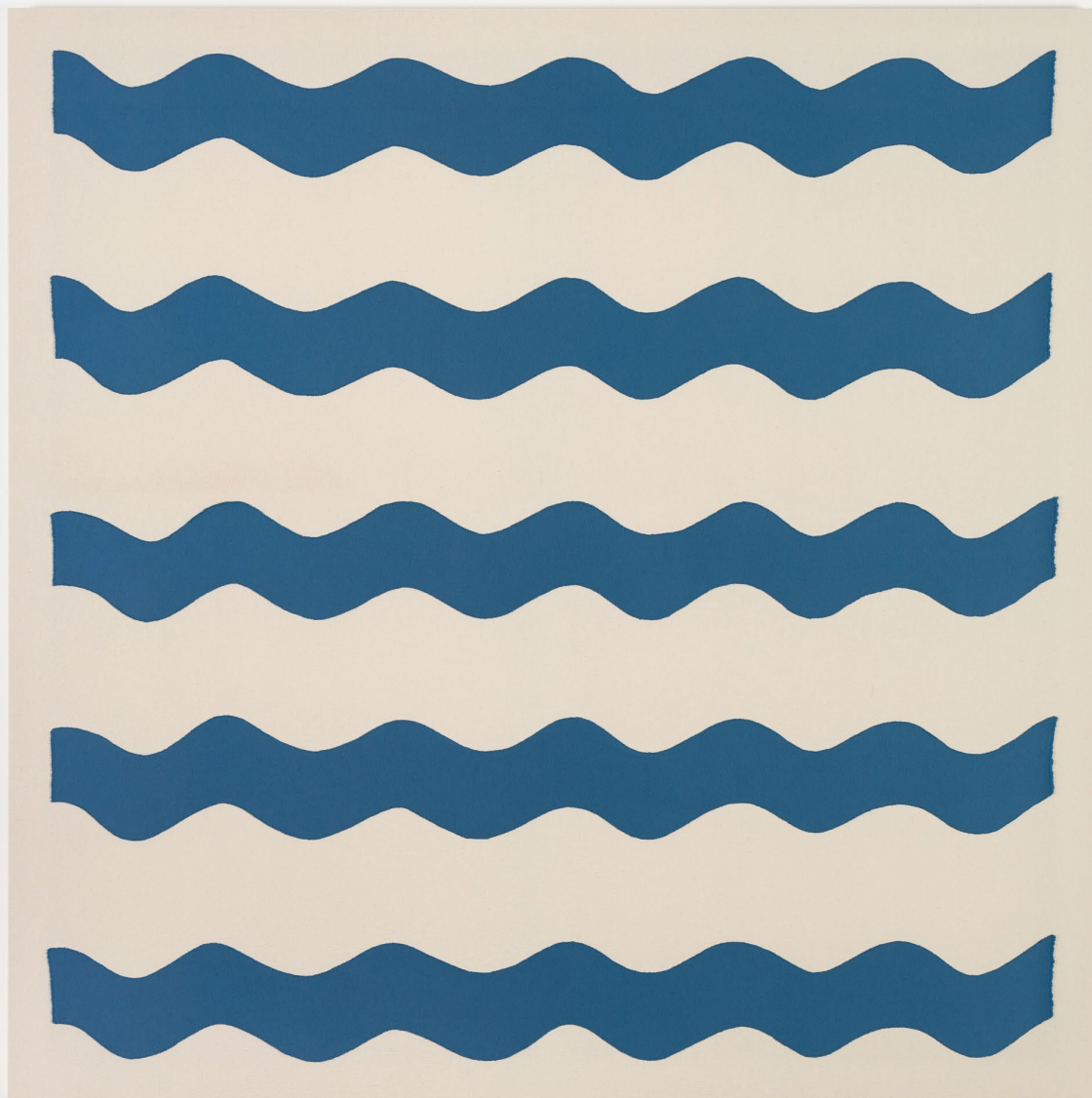
unique work

Inquire





other views



Adelaide Cioni

Il mare

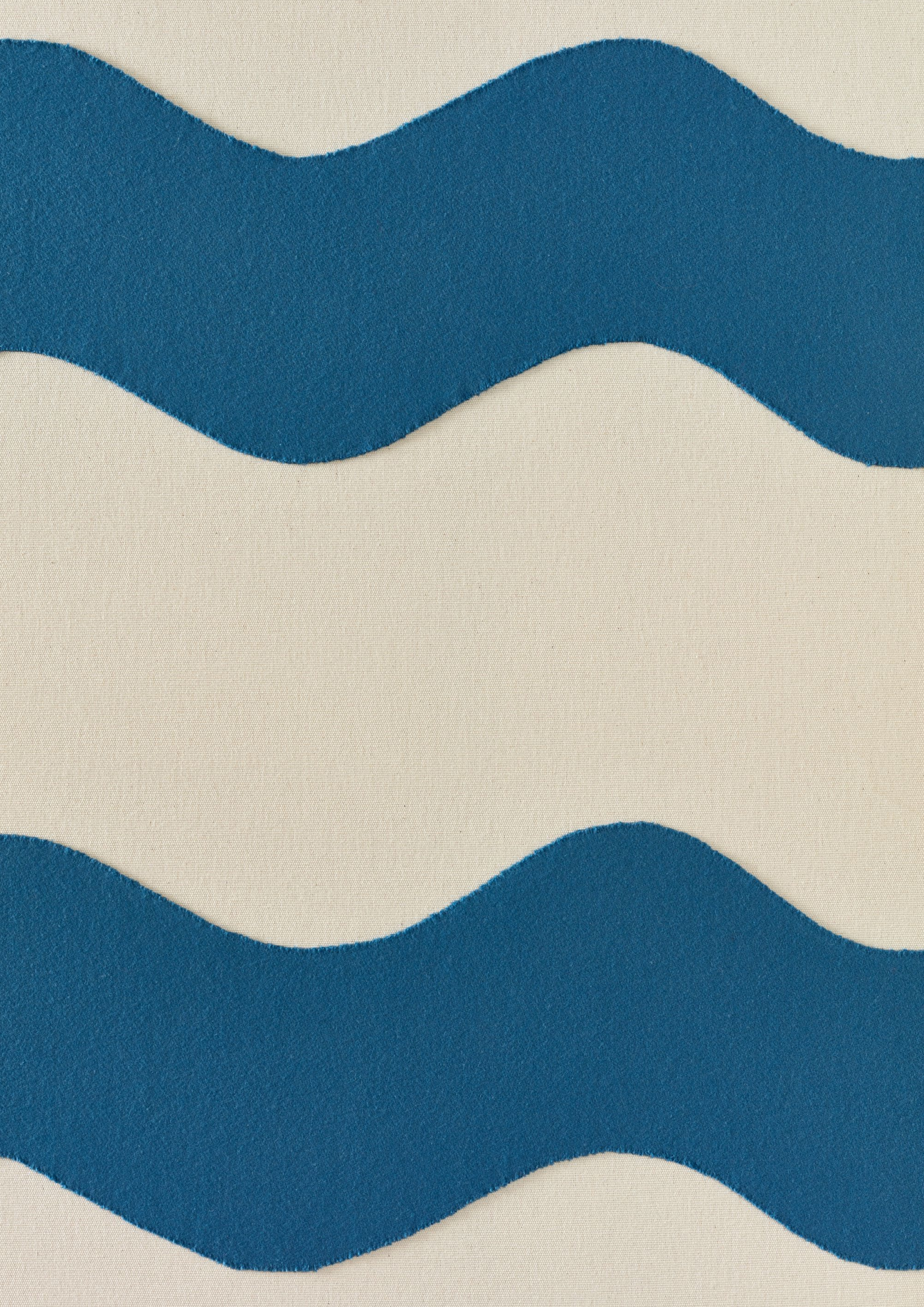
2025

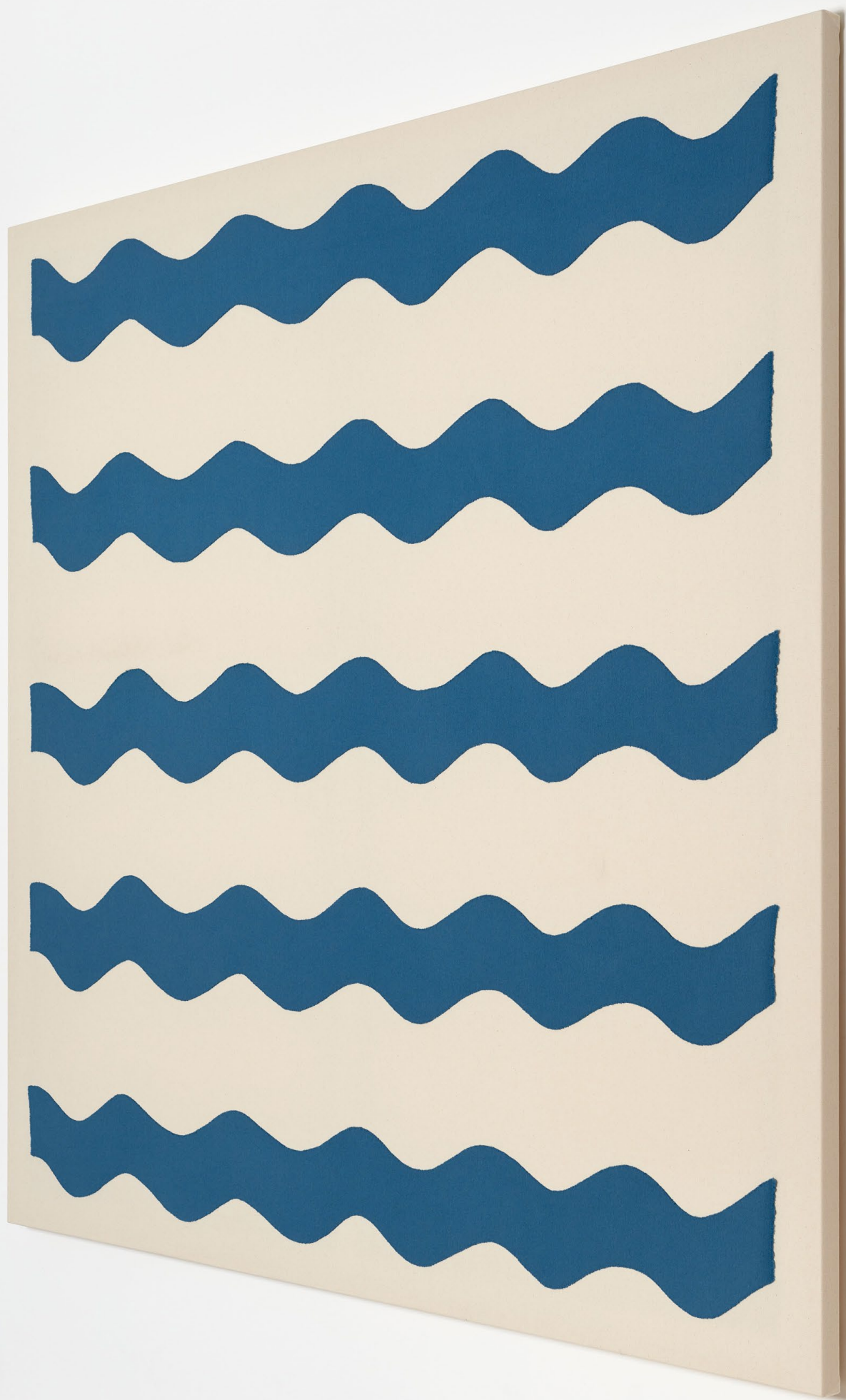
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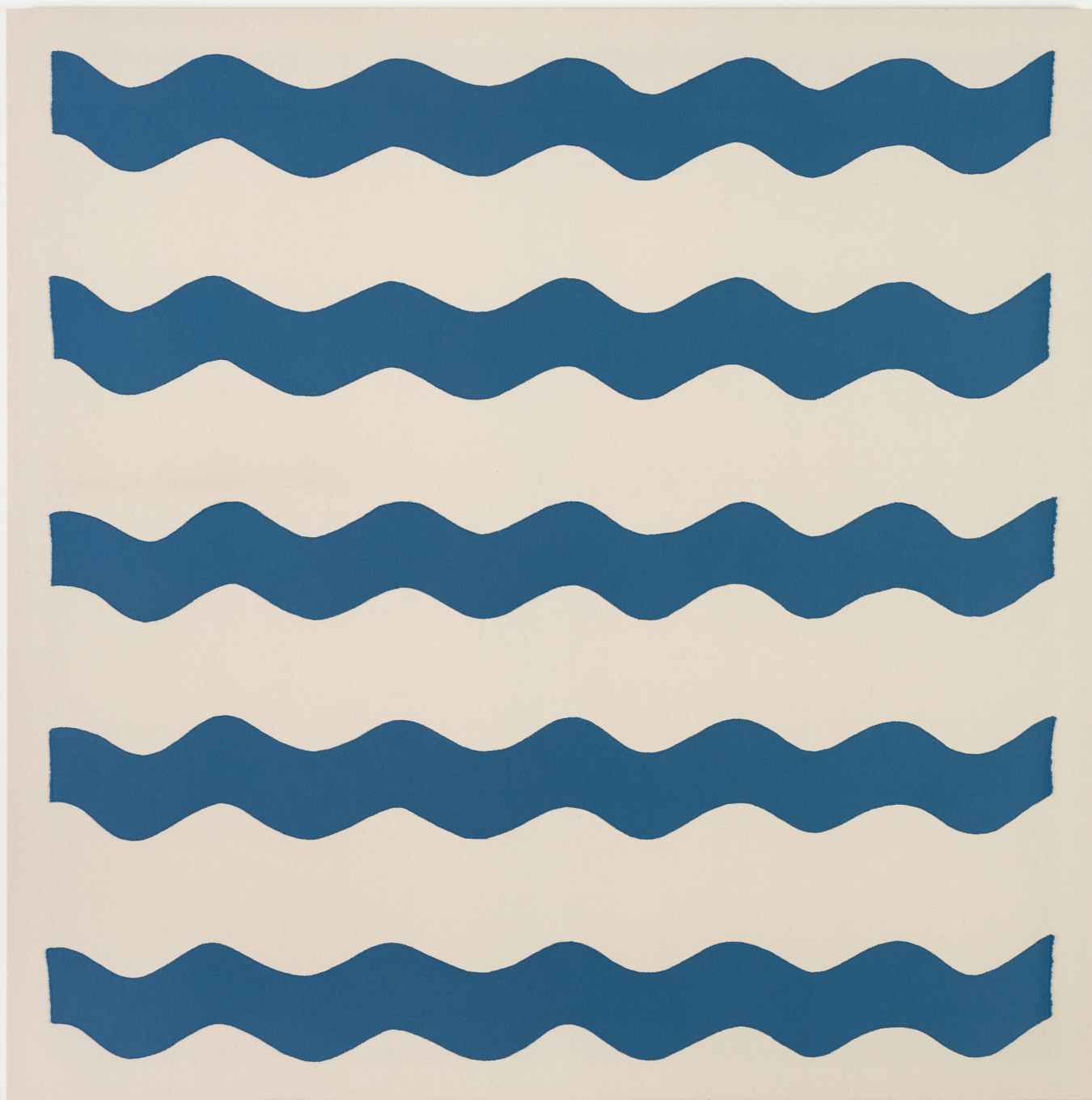
167 × 167 cm

unique work

Inquire









Adelaide Cioni

Green palm

2025

wool stitched on canvas

167 × 167 cm

unique work

Inquire







Adelaide Cioni

Stella nera

2025

wool stitched on canvas

167 × 167 cm

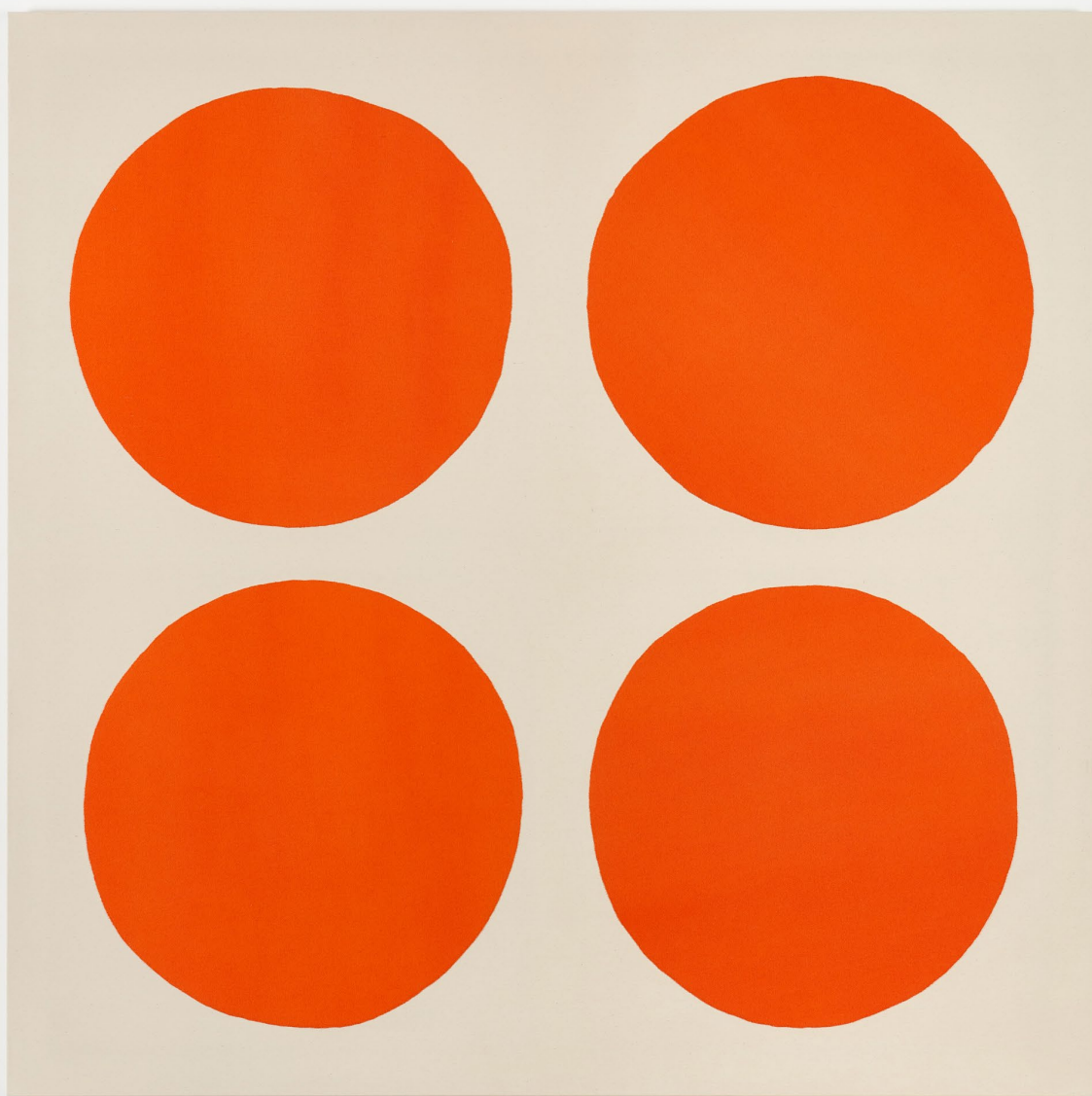
unique work

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Adelaide Cioni

Four orange ones

2025

wool stitched on canvas

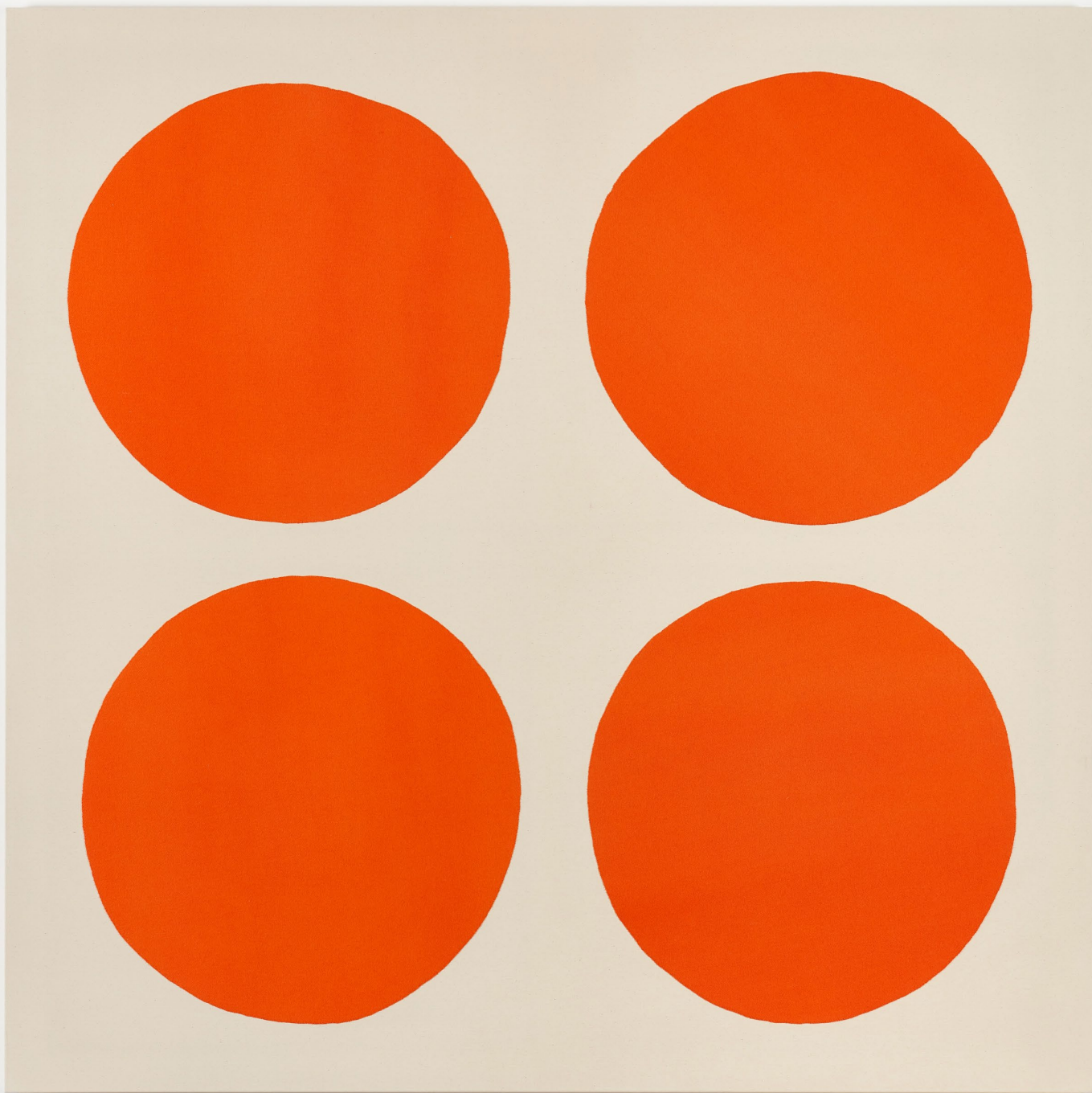
167 × 167 cm

unique work

Inquire









Adelaide Cioni

Red flower

2025

wool stitched on canvas

167 × 167 cm

unique work

Inquire





other views

Founded in Bologna in 2010 by Alessandro Pasotti and Fabrizio Padovani, P420 has always maintained a commitment to promoting creativity and pushing artistic boundaries. Born from the founders' initial experience in the world of art and artists' books, the gallery emerged with the aim of promoting an inclusive approach to contemporary art, embracing artists from diverse backgrounds, generations, and disciplines.

The name P420 is inspired by Pantone 420, a universally recognized shade of grey known for its ability to serve as the perfect background, enhancing whatever it accompanies. P420 thus emerges as a platform whose primary aim is to embrace and elevate artistic ideas and expressions, fostering their harmonious coexistence within a context that supports, encourages, and celebrates diversity and innovation. Here, every voice can resonate powerfully and distinctly, much like a work of art standing out against the backdrop of Pantone 420.

P420 has been instrumental in the rediscovery of artists such as Irma Blank, Laura Grisi, Ana Lupas, and Stephen Rosenthal, collaborating directly with the artists or, when necessary, with their heirs or the Estates representing them. Through exhibitions, off-site projects, fairs, and a strong online presence, the gallery also supports the evolving narratives of contemporary art, initiating and supporting the journey of many young emerging talents like Victor Fotso Nyie, Francis Offman, and Shafei Xia.

Over the years, P420 has expanded its program to encompass a diverse array of artists from around the globe. Despite this growth and its active engagement in international contexts, the gallery remains attentive to the local art scene. Recently, P420 has unveiled new spaces adjacent to the gallery, specifically dedicated to artists' studios, thus establishing a fresh hub for the artistic community in Bologna.