

Jaime Gili : *Loop*

17 February - 18 March 2022





Loop 1 (A578), 2021

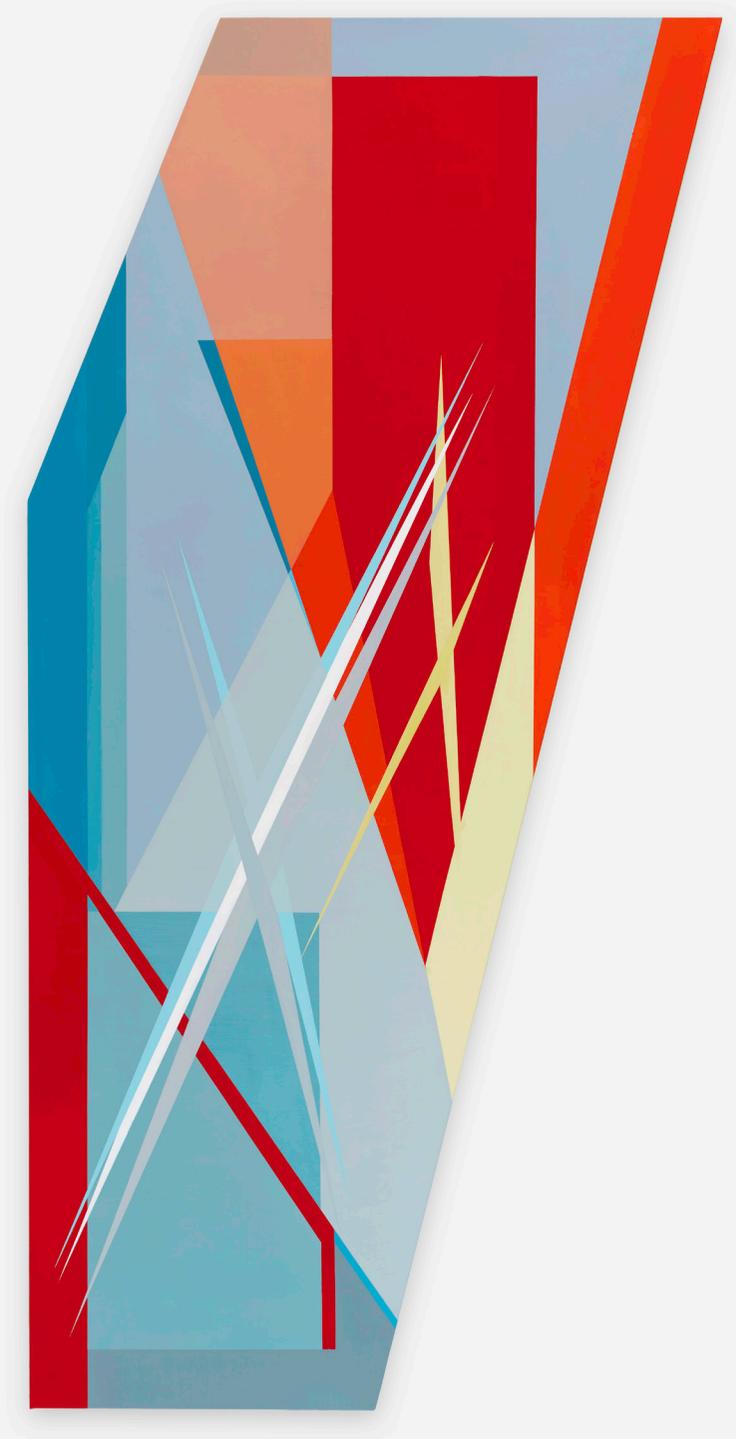
Acrylic on canvas
130 x 250 cm
51 1/8 x 98 3/8 in



Loop 3 (A582), 2021

Acrylic on shaped canvas
290 x 130 cm
114 1/8 x 51 1/8 in





Loop 4 (A579), 2021

Acrylic on shaped canvas
260 x 130 cm
102 3/8 x 51 1/8 in



Loop 2 (A587), 2021

Acrylic on shaped canvas
230 x 220 cm
90 1/2 x 86 5/8 in

Jaime Gili's *Loop* is demonstrative of the importance of repetition within the artist's practice; with these new paintings he revisits old designs and sharp geometric constructions with a focus on colour. The title of the show refers to various recurring elements of Gili's painting practice; the paintings stem from designs made by the artist up to two decades ago, ideas that have not been realised until now. The title also references looping narratives in Gili's personal and family history - his father's diaries from the 1960s were fundamental to the conception of this exhibition. Jaime Gili Snr fled from Francoist Spain and ended up in Venezuela in 1968, a time in which Venezuela was a very rich nation. Today, half a century later, Venezuela is one of the poorest nations in Latin America and since 2014, it is estimated that over 6 million Venezuelans have emigrated. With this exhibition Gili is attempting to make sense of this downward spiral and subsequent diaspora. There is a mirroring (or looping) in this family story: Gili's father crossed the Atlantic from Europe to Venezuela and eventually his son would make the reverse journey, settling in London.

Gili Snr's arrival in Venezuela coincided with a celebration of the 400th anniversary of Caracas as a city. As part of these celebrations, the local authorities funded an ambitious public project, entitled *Imagen de Caracas*. A team, assembled by painter Jacobo Borges, was granted intellectual and artistic freedom to represent the history of Caracas in a technologically ambitious environment. The show took place within a purpose-built pavilion, and consisted of films, a recorded script, a musical score, and actors performing in the space during the screenings. Ultimately, the authorities were not happy with the show and despite its vast budget *Imagen de Caracas* was closed prematurely. This fleeting (and somewhat poorly documented) event represented a significant point in the history of Venezuelan arts.

These contextual narratives have been combined with Gili's studio practice both to create the paintings and to conceptualise the installation of the show. For this exhibition Gili has painted four shaped canvases which are suspended in the middle of the space, forming an irregular 'cube' or parallelepiped. The 'cube' was designed to emulate the shapes that were hung within the pavilion at *Imagen de Caracas* as part of its internal design. Furthermore, Gili's colourful, shaped canvases and carpeted gallery floor reference the aesthetic of 20th century international fairs and Expos, in which Venezuela often participated.

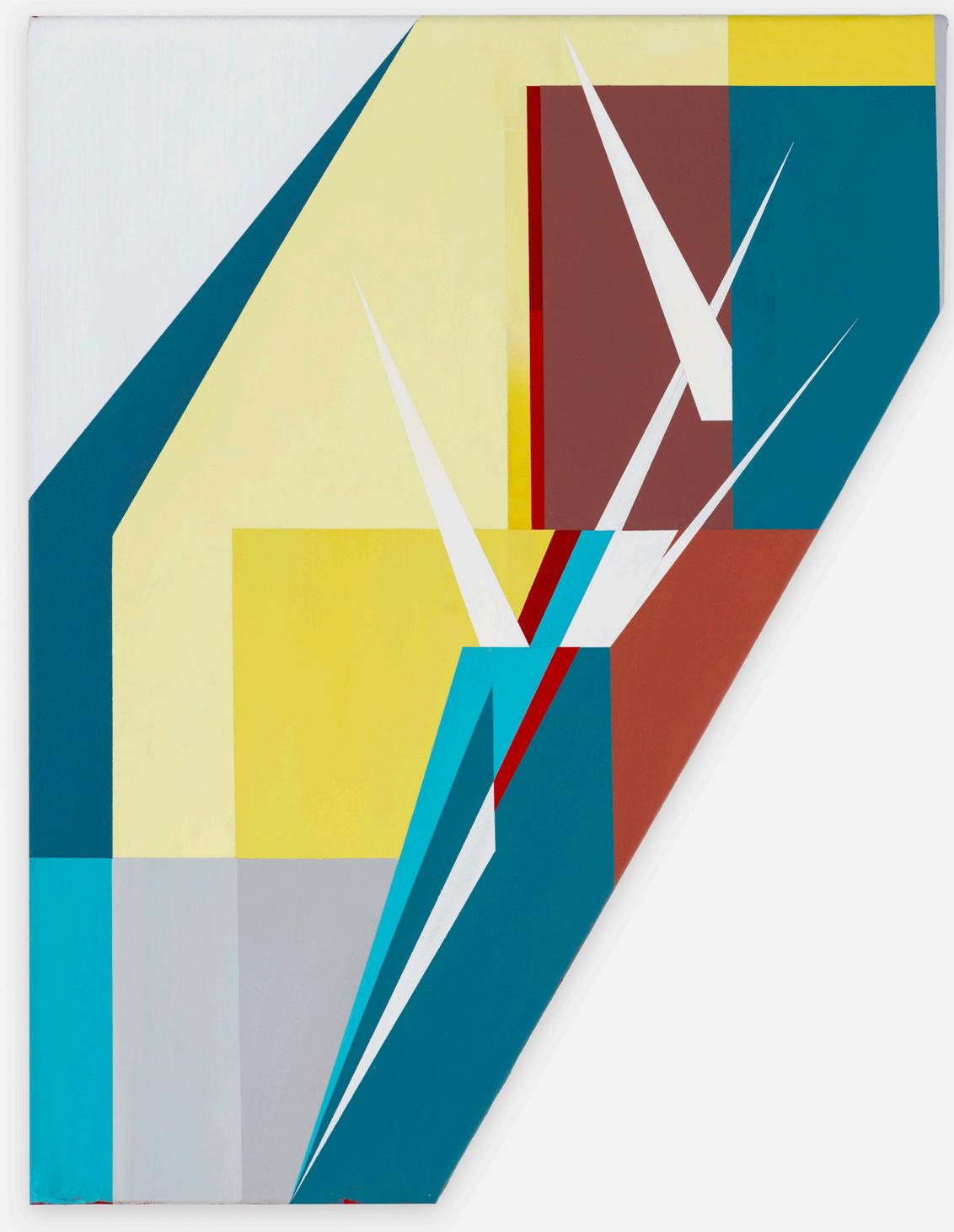
On February 25th, as an extension of the exhibition, there will be an audio-visual presentation in the gallery space. Titled *Loop Pavilion*, this event will present both archival and new content edited by Jaime Gili, in collaboration with three generations of Venezuelan artists, including Jacobo Borges. *Loop Pavilion* will mirror the ambitious framework of the 1968 event, immersing the gallery space in music, recorded speech, and video footage. While *Imagen de Caracas* possibly represented a conscious movement away from the current of geometric abstraction, Jaime Gili brings the tradition back to the fore for this exhibition. *Loop* marks a significant moment in the archival afterlife of this pivotal event, presenting a contemporary response, centred around abstraction, and anchored in a vastly different context, both temporally and geographically.

A booklet with an essay by Adrian Locke, Chief Curator of the Royal Academy of Arts, will be published alongside the exhibition.



Small Loop (A590), 2021

Acrylic on shaped linen canvas
103 x 61 cm
40 1/2 x 24 1/8 in



Small Loop (A588), 2021

Acrylic on shaped canvas
80 x 60 cm
31 1/2 x 23 5/8 in



Chances are (A581), 2021

Acrylic on canvas
115 x 90 cm
45 1/4 x 35 3/8 in



A435D, 2017

Acrylic on wood
6 x 4.5 cm
2 3/8 x 1 3/4 in





A434B millennial cuadrante , 2017

Acrylic on laminated MDF
8.5 x 7 cm
3 3/8 x 2 3/4 in



A437C millennial quadrant variation, 2017

Acrylic on laminated MDF
8 x 7 cm
3 1/8 x 2 3/4 in





A431 millennial cuadrante, 2017

Acrylic on laminated MDF
12 x 10 cm
4 3/4 x 4 in

Jaime Gili

Born in 1972 in Caracas, Venezuela
Lives and works in London, UK

Jaime Gili has been living and working in the United Kingdom since 1996. In 1998, Gili obtained his MA from the Royal College of Art in London, and, in 2001, completed a PhD in Fine Arts at the University of Barcelona, Spain.

Gili belongs to a generation of Venezuelan artists who necessarily continue to examine the place of their practice within their inheritance of one of the most interesting Modernist movements in Latin America. In the 1950s, architects like Carlos Raúl Villanueva encouraged Venezuelan artists to redefine public space by integrating modern architecture and visual arts. The following generations of artists grew in the midst of this coalescence. In the words of Adrian Locke, Chief Curator of the Royal Academy of Arts in London, “Like Alejandro Otero (1921-1990), Carlos Cruz-Diez (1923-2019) and César Paternosto (b.1931) before him, Gili responds to the space in which he places his work. The surrounding architecture, whether internal and external, is a fundamental consideration.”

Gili has developed a unique style that represents a highly distinctive point of convergence between a specific inherited European modernism interlaced with Venezuela's past historical modernism, and the current affairs. Aware that abstract painting cannot place current reality as such on to the canvas - for instance, the reality of protests and the disintegration of democracy - Gili takes on these issues through their tempo and the painting's own slow process of becoming. Thus, gradually—and looking within its own limitations, Gili's abstract paintings attempt to bridge the voids of time and space, the final message being one of a positive future.

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