

ARTnews

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Teo González

Irvine Contemporary
Washington, D.C.

Teo González's paintings start out looking static and then get very busy. He takes the idea of the grid painting bequeathed by Agnes Martin, with its icy repetition, and creates opulent, shimmering surfaces that move in waves across the canvas. Built from long, parallel strings of tiny cells, some of his paintings recall a reptile's scaly skin, while others look like loosely knitted textiles.

González uses a fine brush to mix a pigmented polymer emulsion within the confines of one cell at a time, usually on paper or cotton. A miniature painting in and of itself, each element is an experiment in controlled chaos. Combining thousands of these, the paintings coalesce into a single pictorial system. Movement and life seem to ripple along the surfaces, their sensuality heightened by a limited palette of turquoise, gold, Prussian blue, and yellow. On a large scale—the paintings here ranged from two feet square to ten feet square—the effect can be quite hypnotic.

The title of this show was "226,085 Drops," hinting at the mathematical sensibility of González's work. It has an almost obsessive feel, as if each element were meticulously counted by the artist, who now invites viewers, too, to add up the parts that make the whole.

—Roger Atwood



Teo González, *Untitled #411 (10,000 gold and 22 karat gold on copper blue direct 100 gauge)*, 2006, mixed media, 24" x 24". Irvine Contemporary.