

Julian Hatton



# Julian Hatton

## FREE RANGE

April 20 - June 3, 2017

opening reception: Thursday, April 20, 6-8pm

elizabeth harris gallery

529 w20 st ny 10011

212 463 9666

[ehgallery.com](http://ehgallery.com)

Tuesday - Saturday, 11-6



*yard*, 2016-17

48 x 54 inches

oil, crayon and colored pencil on panel

At an 1896 exhibition in Moscow, a young Kandinsky misread a Monet Haystacks canvas as unreferenced form and embraced his confusion as a new source of poetic license. What followed was a century-long bout of anxiety among artists whose response to what became abstract painting was to form into movements of like-minded individuals, each seeking ideologies they hoped would provide a sense of order for this unprecedented expansion of painting's range. With a century of art movements now behind us, it seems most painters have no need for ideology. They feel at home in painting's unrestrained climate. They welcome a free range of possibilities.

Perhaps more than any other painter of his generation, Julian Hatton embodies this new open spirit. He does not just accede to an unrestricted atmosphere but enthusiastically embraces its potential for complexity. He revels in the struggle to calm the chaos of invention. The swiss-watch construction of each of his compositions testifies to his ability to riff without losing sight of the melody. Regardless of his starting point, usually a reference to landscape experience, and regardless of whether his paint manipulations remain fixed to the surface, whether they imply trees and lakes or suggest some vague figural presence, his talent for weaving together these often-contradictory optical events is remarkable.

Conventionally speaking each picture in this exhibition is a revelation of sophisticated visual thinking. In a more unconventional sense each is a metaphor for the visual opulence of nature itself.

Though there are many painters today doing compelling work in this uninhibited climate where illusion and surface event settle into tense juxtaposition, few have managed to achieve the intricacy, the nuance and the cohesion of Hatton's creations. Modest in scale but lavish in substance and inventiveness, each painting's elements build fugue-like along a purely visual narrative, accounting for much of their appeal.

Several small panels are included in the exhibition. Complete in themselves, these efforts often serve as provocations for the larger work, though the word prototype may be more accurate. The process by which they are transposed to a larger format is not one of mere copying but tends to continue in an unbroken deliberation on what inspired the initial imagery. In other words, improvisation continues. Though noticeably similar, both small work and larger painting each carry the logic of their own history.

Note too that the paintings in this exhibition do not rely on a predetermined value assigned to gestural expression. For Hatton, spontaneity is a tool, not a strategy. His managing of a painting's cohesion is a process reflective of a keenly analytical mind, a process that remains visible and endlessly intriguing to the attentive viewer.

Peter Malone  
March 2017



haven, 2016  
42 x 42 inches  
oil, wax pastel and colored pencil on panel





*point de capiton*, 2016

10 x 10 inches

oil, wax pastel and colored pencil on panel





*lollop*, 2016  
10 x 10 inches  
oil and colored pencil on panel

**overleaf:** *ransack*, 2016-17  
42 x 72 inches  
oil, wax crayon and colored pencil on panel

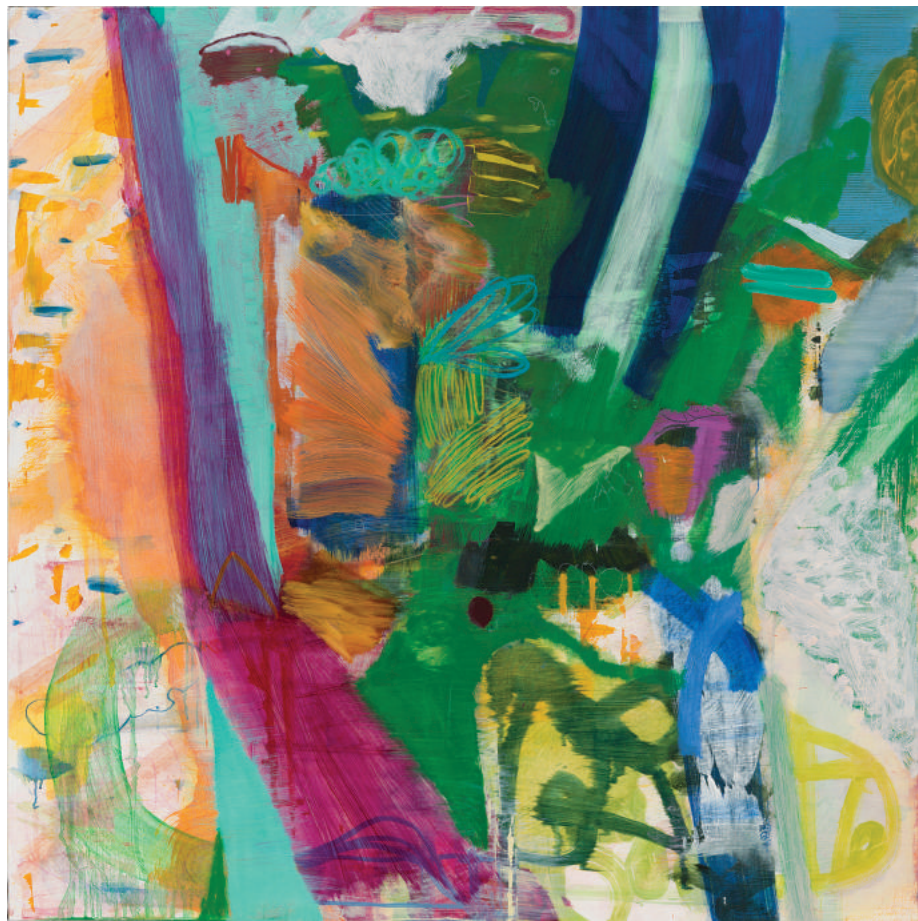








*elixir*, 2016-17  
42 x 42 inches  
oil on panel



*passion fruit*, 2016-17  
42 x 42 inches  
oil, wax crayon and colored pencil on panel



*tart*, 2016

10 x 10 inches

oil, wax crayon and colored pencil on panel





*another path, 2017*  
10 x 10 inches  
oil on panel





*crush*, 2016  
42 x 42 inches  
wax crayon and colored pencil on panel



*till*, 2016-17  
42 x 42 inches  
oil, wax crayon and colored pencil on panel

**Julian Hatton** was born in Grand Haven, Michigan in 1956 and received his B.A. from Harvard College. He lives and works in New York City and upstate New York. Hatton began his long association with the Elizabeth Harris Gallery with a solo show in 1994 and has gone on to show at other galleries around the country including Paul Thiebaud, San Francisco, and Gross McCleaf and Bridgette Mayer, both in Philadelphia. This will be his tenth solo show with Elizabeth Harris.

Hatton's work is in the contemporary collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and numerous corporate and private collections such as CitiGroup, Alliance Bernstein, and the Steve Wynn Collection. He has received awards including an Award in Art from the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2007, grants from the Pollock Krasner Foundation in 2001 and 2013, the New York Foundation for the Arts in 1998, and the National Endowment for the Arts in 1993. Hatton's painting exhibitions have been reviewed in *Art in America*, *Partisan Review*, *The Hudson Review*, *The New York Times*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, and *the Hartford Courant*. He has taught at the Rhode Island School of Design and has been a visiting artist/lecturer at Dartmouth, Swarthmore, The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts as well as other venues.



elizabeth harris gallery