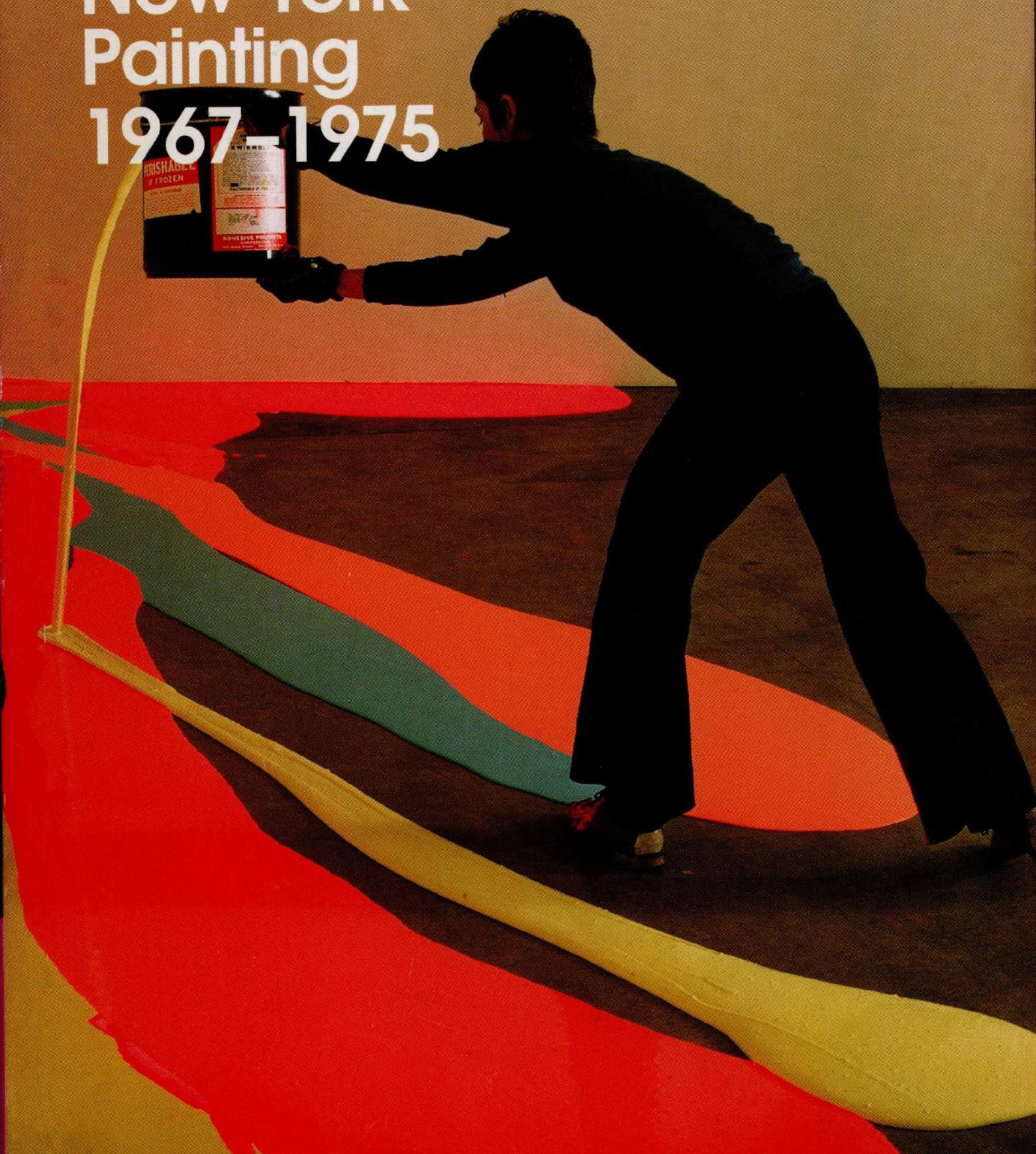


High Times Hard Times New York Painting 1967-1975





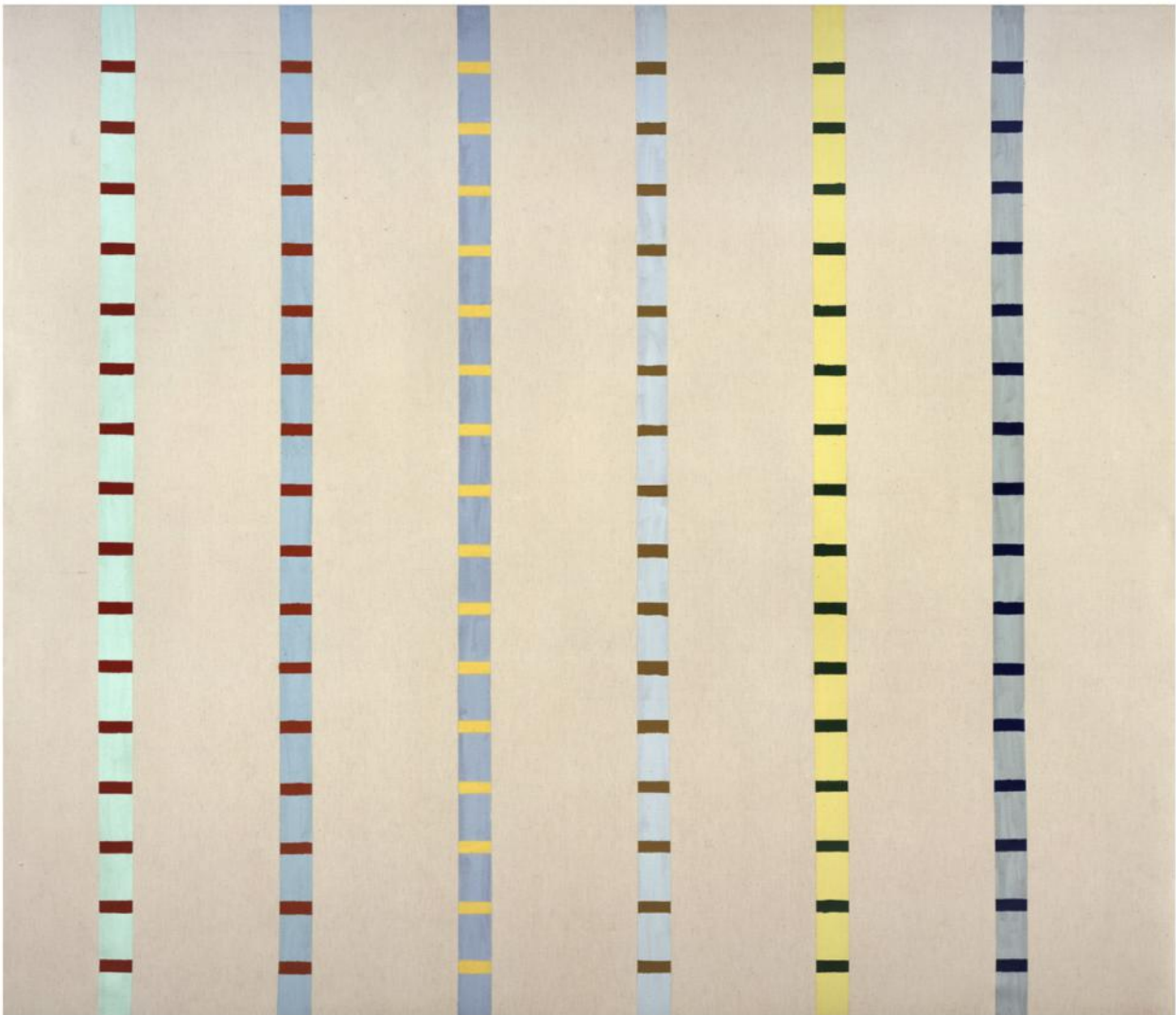
Bringing It All Back Home

Guy (Goodwin) and Elizabeth (Murray) also paint in rectangles and I think they do it almost contemptuously. They're not doing it for or against rectangle painting—it just happens to be there.

—Ron Gorchov⁵¹

By the mid-1970s, it seemed clear that painting, once again, was contracting in certain ways. Some artists, such as Colmer, Schneemann, and Benglis, were concentrating on photographic and video work, while others, like Bochner and Lozano, focused on their conceptual practice. Younger painters emerging at the time seemed more willing to accept the familiar format of the rectangular canvas as a given, as painter Ron Gorchov implies. And yet this return to the rectangle did not represent an obviously conservative retrenchment to past painting traditions like Color Field or Abstract Expressionism. Instead, painters working within the conventional format incorporated the achievements of the previous few years, from experiments with structure to the gestural movement of performance.

Harriet Korman had been making paintings that consisted of widely spaced strips of wood, joined in a structure and painted, as well as individual pieces of canvas sewn together. Increasingly, she worked



Harriet Korman, *Untitled*, 1971.
Acrylic on unprimed canvas,
72 × 84 in. (182.9 × 213.4 cm).
Collection of the artist; courtesy
Lennon, Weinberg, Inc., New York

with rectangular or square canvases, which were sometimes raw, depending on composition to create internal structures. Her straight lines and horizontal stripes retained the interest in process and unusual compositions, but within the easel painting format. Guy Goodwin used more massive, less precise brushstrokes to structure his compositions, and paintings like *C-Swing* (1974) carry the impression of a curved structure that contradicts, and even overwhelms, their rectangular format. Despite the delicacy of Korman's work and the roughness of Goodwin's, the artists (as well as Gorchov) share a directness and immediacy, an interest in getting the painting, the marks, right the first time.⁵²

There was, to a certain degree, an element of rebelliousness and humor in some of the artists' decisions to keep painting at this moment. Heilmann, who had worked with sculpture in art school in California, decided to paint in part as a contrarian gesture made in the direction of