

MARK KELNER

# SIGNS & WONDERS

AS A FULL-TIME, working artist in DC, it's important to recognize the history and aesthetics of the Washington Color School. I believe artists as varied as Thomas Downing,



Morris Louis, and Alma Thomas, among others, all contributed something wildly important to what is our community's indigenous creative visual landscape. Be it color field painting, hard edge abstractions, or

non-objective, non-representational work, there are physical gestures among these pieces that make them recognizable to a broader approach to art making going back to the 1950s through the late 70s.



For "Signs and Wonders," I too chose to actively engage painting into unprimed raw canvas – but to what end? Imitation isn't my goal, as these aren't abstract. Rather, purposeful design is where I begin to focus on what I believe to be landscapes – urban billboards



of sorts, advertising, say, Coca-Cola or 7-Eleven. By means of omissions of text among other isolating figurations, I take what's graphically readymade, modestly "twist" it, flatten it down, and then canonize them to pose as fine art. In effect, disguised as landscapes of

signage, these take on both familiar and alien characteristics. In their distortion, what "truths" are revealed about them? When isolated away from any context, what makes them perceptible, and, most importantly, how do we identify these objectified and commodified symbols of national identity as reflections of ourselves?



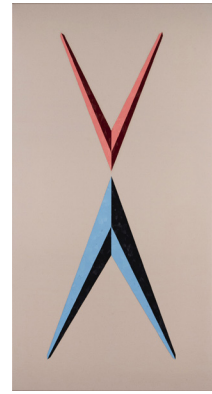
**SELECTED WORKS**



**Totem I**  
60 x 31 inches, 2015



**Totem II, (Doritos)**  
60 x 31 inches, 2017



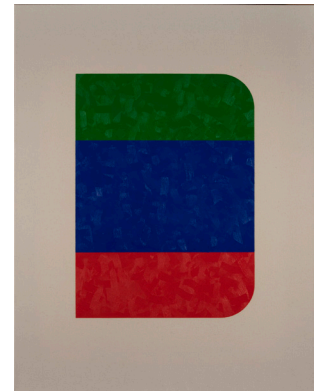
**Totem III, (Cadillac)**  
60 x 31 inches, 2019



**Two Stripes, (Shell)**  
47 x 33 inches, 2016



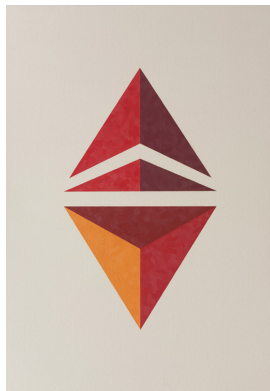
**Three Stripes, (7 Eleven)**  
47 x 33 inches, 2016



**Three Stripes, (Jif)**  
45 x 34 inches, 2017



**Three Triangles, (Budget)**  
38 x 23 inches, 2017



**Nine Triangles, (Citgo / Delta)**  
47 x 33 inches, 2016



**Two Trapezoids, (Kodak)**  
40 x 30 inches, 2017

**SELECTED WORKS**



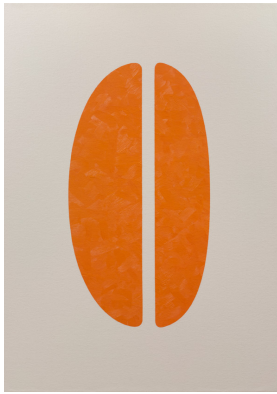
**Flag, (Zippo)**  
41 x 33 inches, 2017



**Go Go CDs**  
28 x 17 inches, 2018



**Soap, (Howard Johnsons)**  
41 x 31 inches, 2016



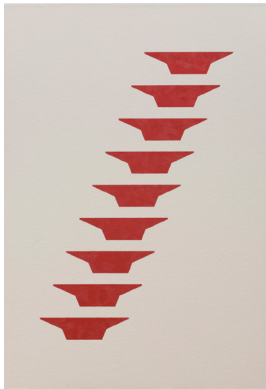
**Two Buns, (Burger King)**  
47 x 33 inches, 2016



**Six Stripes, (Polaroid)**  
40 x 40 inches, 2018



**Wave, (Coca Cola)**  
48 x 40 inches, 2016



**Nine Roofs, (Pizza Hut)**  
47 x 31.5 inches, 2016

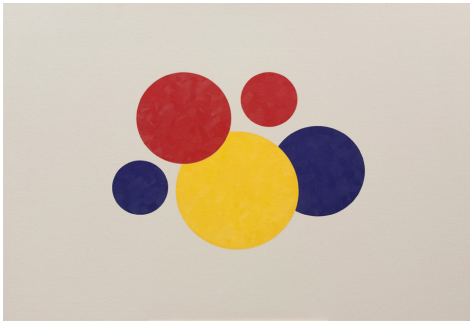


**Three Ovals, (Euro Auto Repair)**  
45 x 27 inches, 2019



**Three Stripes, (Jet Puffed)**  
42 x 32 inches, 2017

**SELECTED WORKS**



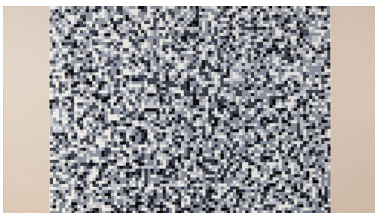
**Five Circles, (Wonder)**  
33 x 47 inches, 2016



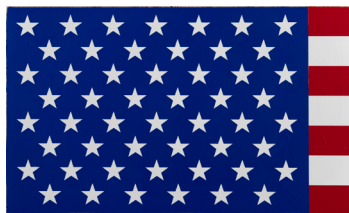
**Three Stripes, (True)**  
70 x 15 inches, 2017



**Three Stripes, (Public Storage)**  
32 x 47 inches, 2017



**Snow**  
36 x 64 inches, 2020



**52 Stars**  
17 x 28 inches, 2018



**Color Bars**  
36 x 64 inches, 2019



**Parallelogram, (Hertz)**  
29 x 39 inches, 2017



**Spotlight Triptych**  
120 x 40 inches, 2018

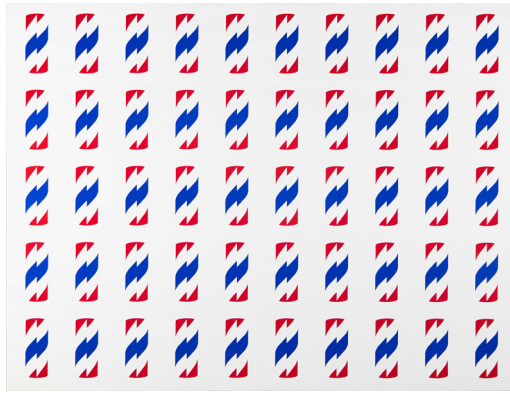


**Open, (Antique Flag)**  
24 x 36 inches, 2018

**SELECTED WORKS**



**Colors in the Raw**  
42 x 57 inches, 2016



**50 Still Barbershop Poles,  
(During Covid-19)**  
48 x 63 inches, 2020



**Fake**  
59 x 39 inches, 2019



**Pray**  
20 x 29 inches, 2022



**Fear**  
20 x 29 inches, 2022



**Heed**  
20 x 29 inches, 2022



**Champion by Brancusi**  
53.5 x 30 inches, 2019



**Sale Stickers**  
57 x 55 inches, 2022



**Oriole, (After Roy Lichtenstein)**  
26 x 19 inches, 2017