

DAVID CARLSON

American, b. 1956, Champaign, IL
Lives and works in the Washington, DC metro area

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Understanding the natural world not as a realm differentiated from the human mind and body, but as a united field animated by the same vital energy, David Carlson makes abstract paintings where the external and internal kaleidoscope onto one another. By varying areas of thick, viscous paint with translucent passages, pulsing color with veiling whites, and cellular shapes with arterial networks, Carlson balances a dizzying variety of sensual form within the rectilinear boundaries of a painting.

For Carlson, there is an undeniable spiritual pursuit in his painting practice. As a longtime student of Tai Chi who has lectured on Western art in China, he tempers the Western notion of the sublime, or awe-inspiring, power of nature so influential to Romantic landscape painters of the late-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth-century (The Kreeger Museum's *On the River Meuse*, 1883, by Eugène Boudin gives a sense of European Romanticism), with a perspective informed by Chinese traditions of an integrated relationship between people and the environment around them. Notably, the visual vocabulary that Carlson uses to express this cross-cultural perspective is one that has roots in the abstract breakthroughs of artists in the Kreeger collection such as Arshile Gorky, Wassily Kandinsky, and Pablo Picasso.

David Carlson was born in Champaign, Illinois and grew up in Illinois, Ohio, and Kentucky. His work ranges from beautiful and complex abstract painting to equally deliberate and meditative video pieces. Carlson's art is represented in numerous collections, private and corporate, as well as national and international. He has also engaged in artist exchanges in Central Asia; Western, North, and South Africa; and Europe.

Carlson has had over twenty-five solo exhibitions including Riverviews Arts Space, Lynchburg, VA; Black Mountain Center for the Arts, Black Mountain, NC; Fred Schnider Gallery, Arlington, VA; McLean Project for the Arts, McLean, VA; Cohn Drennan Contemporary, Dallas, TX; VIAP Galerie, Heerlen, Netherlands; Korean Embassy Cultural Service, Washington, D.C.; Yunnan Art Institute, Kunming, China; and Dakar Bienale 2000 'the off' Dakar, Senegal. He has taught at Marymount University; MOCA Arlington; McLean Project for the Arts; and the Art League, Alexandria, and is a former member of the Arlington Commission for the Arts.



David Carlson, *Blood is the Root and Call*, 2020, acrylic and oil on canvas.



David Carlson, *Talking with a Bird*, 2023, acrylic on canvas.