

## VAL M. COX

ANTHONY ALOFSIN, FAIA

Born in Waco, Texas, Val M. Cox began painting in his early teens and before college had successfully exhibited his work as far away as New York City. Around 1971 he encountered the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright, and in January 1972 he entered the Taliesin Fellowship. That moment was thirteen years after Wright's death and at a time when Mrs. Wright directed the Fellowship's future. Immersed in organic architecture, Val put painting aside. In 1985 he returned to painting, leaving the Fellowship, but staying associated with the organization while he maintained a residence in Scottsdale. Since 2000 Val has lived and worked in Pittsburgh where he continues to dedicate himself to his art.

It is fascinating to consider how the study of organic architecture can inflect the work of a painter. Avoiding literal translations of graphic images to the picture plane, Val has charted his own version of organic expression. Two factors have remained consistent in his work: the exploration of space and the creation of unified wholes in which color and form represent a single conception.

Val's work reveals controlled explorations of related themes. The object titled *form# 44.001*, previously exhibited at the Carnegie Museum, captures the basic metamorphic, primal shapes he works with. The resonance with ancient stone shimmers in others in the series with golds, blues, and reds overlaid in smooth multicolored iridescent layers. The latest object in the group, *form# 45.016*, is the artist's initial project for a form that has been digitally designed and will be produced for painting.

The increasing complexity of Val's subjects has prompted him to push forward with three-dimensional, free-standing sculpture and objects that are digitally fabricated. This turn from hand-crafted shapes to current technology reminds us how Frank Lloyd Wright continuously explored the latest technologies in a search for the essence of modern form. Val M. Cox, painter, exemplifies the best of the lineage that Wright inspired. ■

*Anthony Alofsin is author of "Wright and New York: The Making of America's Architect."*

All images courtesy Val M. Cox. [www.valmcox.com](http://www.valmcox.com)



*form# 57.004, oil/canvas/space, 36x95x4½"*

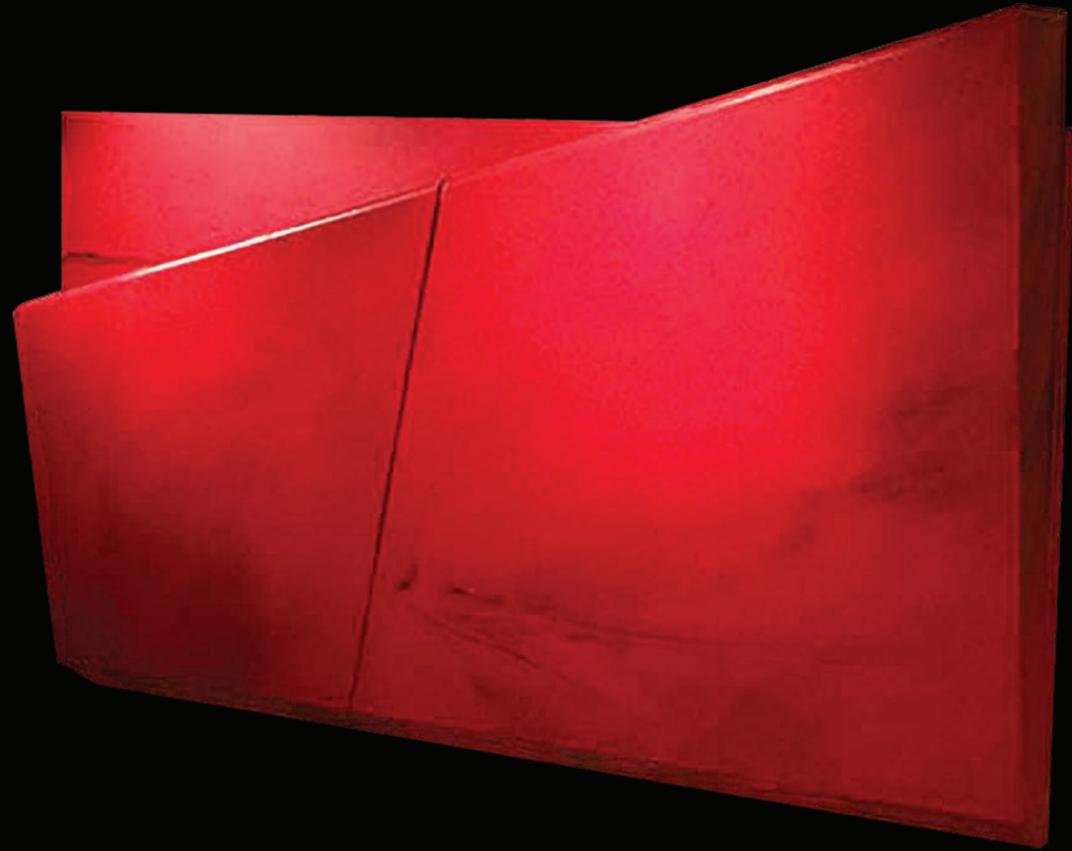


*form# 44.271, oil/canvas/space, 26x18½x5½"*

## HANDMADE BEAUTY



*form# 55.005, oil/canvas/space, 34x23x6"  
installation, private collection*



form# 26.012, oil/canvas/space, 41x63x9"



form# 44.001, oil/canvas/space, 122½x45½x15"  
installation, Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh

**HANDMADE BEAUTY**



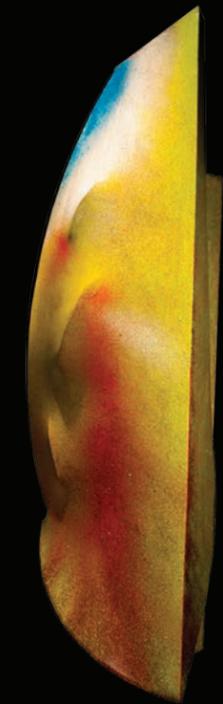
form# 33.012, oil/canvas/space, 65x44x12"



form# 28.001/02 (diptych), oil/canvas/space, 39x81x5"  
installation, private collection



form# 34.007, oil/canvas/space, 81x42x8½"



form# 52.001, oil/canvas/space, 69½x23x15"  
private collection



# TALIESIN FELLOWS

JOURNAL OF THE TALIESIN FELLOWS

ISSUE 59 | SUMMER 2021

## THE LIVING SKETCH

REFLECT, RECONNECT, RISE TOGETHER