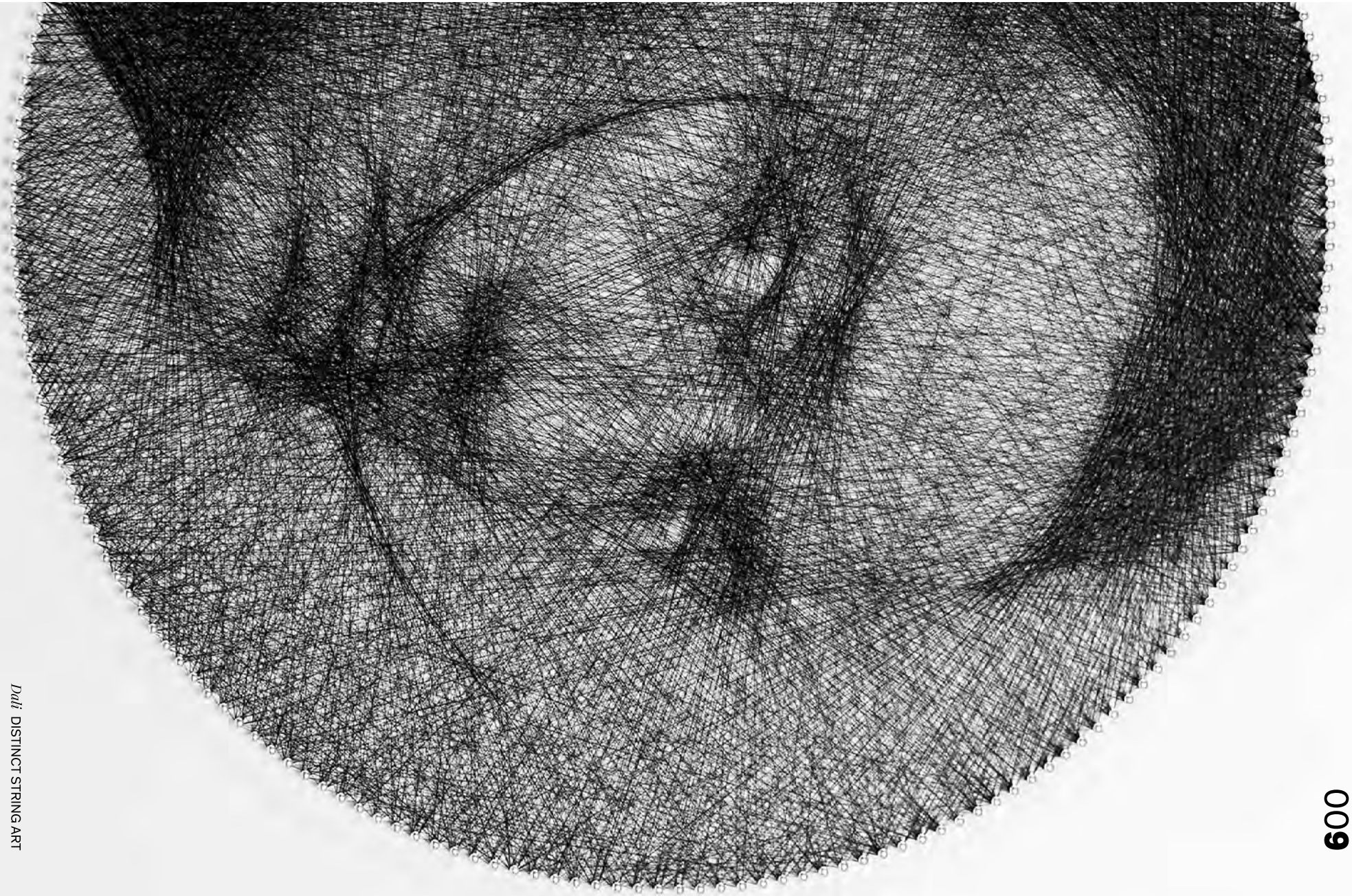

Dali DISTINCT STRING ART

NAE ZERKA

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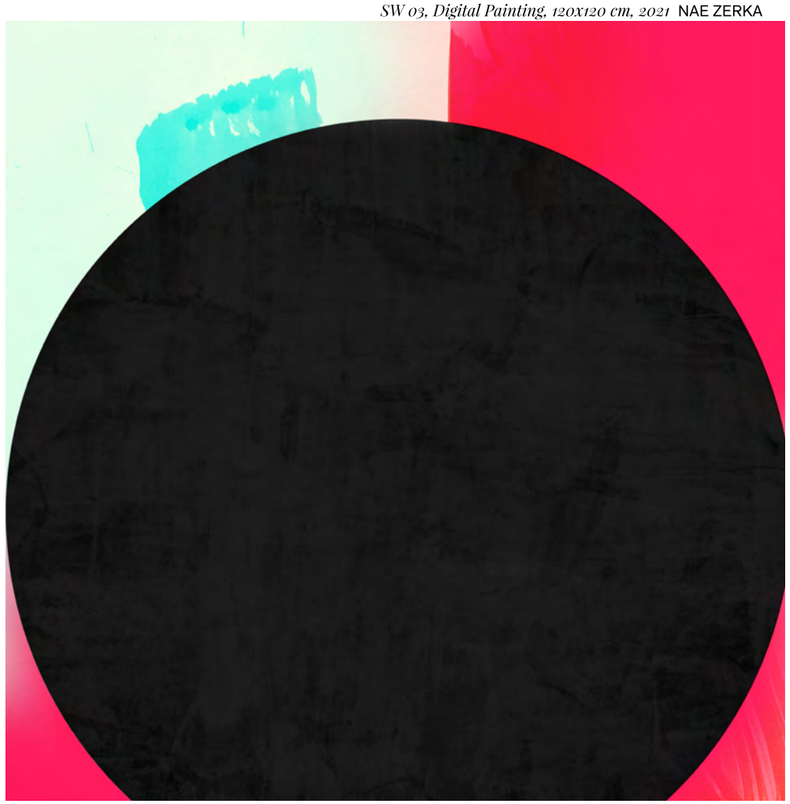
Salzburg, Austria

Nae Zerka, born in 1969, lives and works in Salzburg, Austria.

As a traveler of the analog-digital synthesis, talented visual artist Nae Zerka never stops exploring. The artist's inspiration for his work is from digitalization, along with graphic design and music. Himself, he produced electronic music and became a techno DJ in legendary clubs. His work blends the design element with technology, graphic design with a painterly finish. His dynamic paintings represent opposites, they polarize, and therefore they are rich in contrast. Things reflect each other, and the explosive composition gives an expansive richness of shapes and forms. Warmth, cool, frantic, quiet, dynamic lines and shapes are combined with colors and forms and finally merge into an overall composition.

His abstract works of art challenge the viewer, the respective thought building of the viewer counts. In his works, Nae creates a transformed atmosphere that should let the viewer feel, sense, and discover a new reality. His explosive and dynamic approach creates a kaleidoscopic reality.

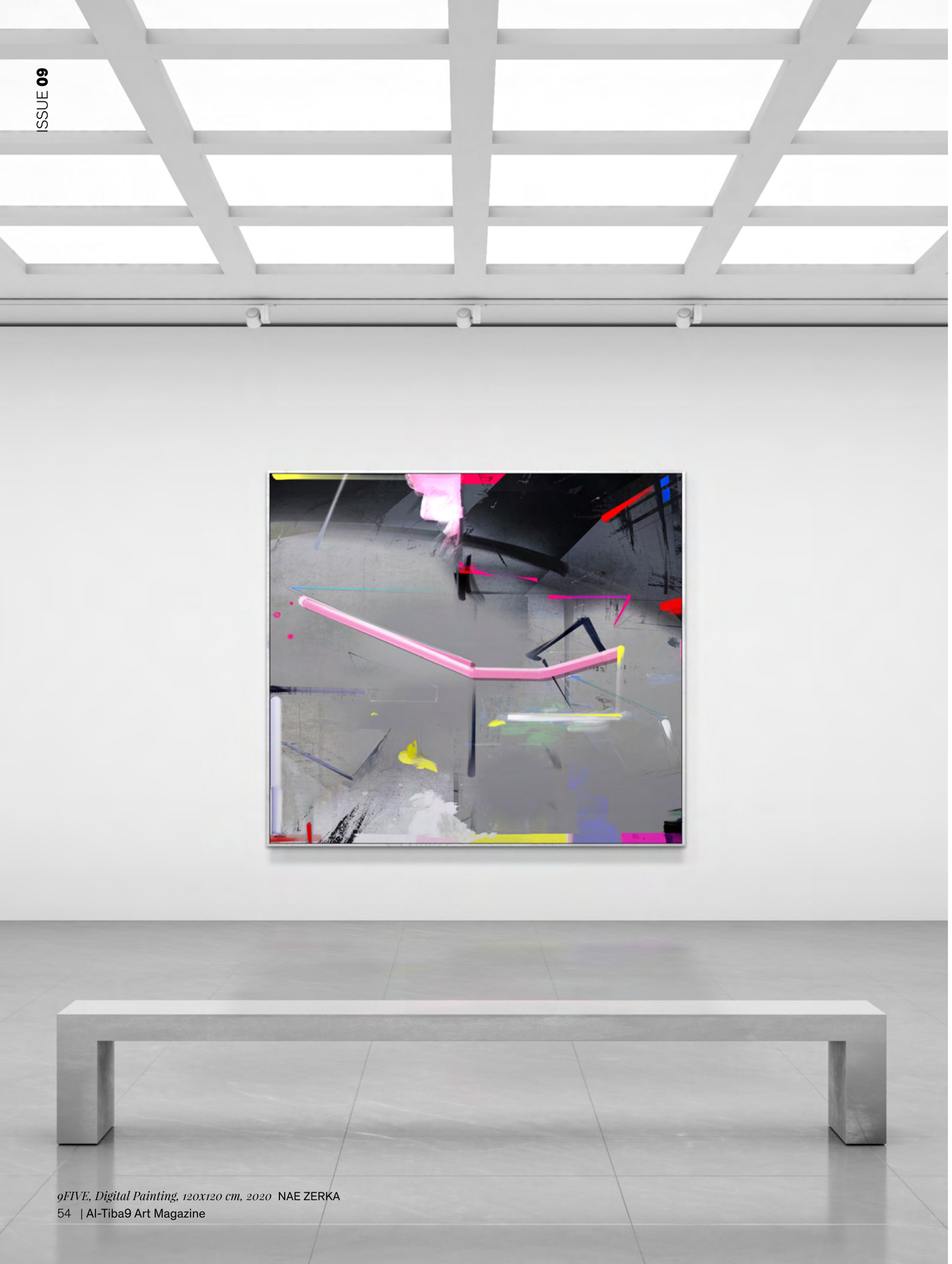
SW 03, Digital Painting, 120x120 cm, 2021 NAE ZERKA



"Since last year, his work and also the approach have changed seriously. He broke away entirely from the traditional materials of painting and began to paint purely digitally. A step that was ultimately necessary, however, in order to dive into digital painting with all consistency.

Abstract digital painting, supplemented by fragments of cyberspace and forms of design. He also deliberately does without a drawing tablet with a pen and instead uses the mouse to counteract the typical brush hand movements. Nae usually works on several works in parallel and sometimes combines them. Here, of course, the purely digital approach offers almost infinite possibilities.

With his works, he is impressively working on the fact that visual artists are also gaining importance in the digital realm, and thus a real change in the perception of collectors can also occur. Blockchain technology now makes it possible to sign and sell pure digital artworks as unique one-offs, he says. Christies auction house has just loudly ushered in a new era in the art world."



9FIVE, Digital Painting, 120x120 cm, 2020 NAE ZERKA

Dann Ist Es Halt So, Digital Painting, 50x50 cm, 2021 NAE ZERKA

First of all, introduce yourself to our readers. What is your background, and when did you start making art?

My name is Nae Zerka; I live and work in Salzburg, Austria. I started making art as a teenager but never really committed to a particular medium. However, as a child of the 80s, I have a natural affinity for computers, so these machines have always played a big role in my work. Through my activities in graphic design, I indirectly came to electronic music. I produced electronic music and became a techno DJ in legendary clubs in the early '90s. After that, I made a move more towards visual arts. The inspirations for my works, therefore, are from digitalization, along with graphic design and music. My work blends the design element with technology, graphic design with a painterly finish.

How has your artistic practice evolved over the years?

In this respect, I have experimented a lot with painting. In the end, however, I noticed that many paths had already been taken in traditional painting and I wasn't really happy without a computer. So I started to unite the two worlds. I painted and then digitized the result and processed it further. This is actually how I have been working for the last few years.

You are a digital artist, and, as you state, you recently "broke away completely from the traditional materials of painting and began to paint purely digitally." Why did you choose to make this shift?

I had to admit that my step of combining traditional painting with digital painting was not yet consistent enough. And so I took another step in my development last year. This means that my work and my approach have once again changed decisively. A step, however, that was ultimately necessary in order to pursue digital art with all consistency. I want to make visual art more important in the digital realm as well so that a real change in the perception of collectors can occur.

As a digital artist, what are the biggest challenges of your work? Do you think it is easier than traditional painting?

I think to take the beauty of painting to another level without disenchanting the history of painting in its entirety. But that is exactly the challenge, not to think in the patterns of traditional painting and only translate it into digital; that would be the wrong approach.

I don't even want to compare the two approaches, as they are naturally completely different in terms of technique. But what I can say is that our communication has changed in general. We communicate digitally, we consume digitally, so technology now plays a crucial role in our evolution as humans. So for me, it is a logical consequence that art and painting will also experience a certain disruption. For me, good art has one decisive characteristic, and that is quality. Where and how it was created is secondary.

What is your creative process like now? Could you walk us through a day in your studio?

I tend to work in the evening. It always begins with a critical analysis of the last works produced. Is the quality right? Am I on the right track? I then start with one of these works to see what kind of shape I'm in. However, most of the time, I need 2 hours to work my way in to warm up. After that, it is

a good time to experiment. I always work with headphones; music activates my impulses. Often I work on several works and layers in parallel and sometimes combine them. Here, of course, the digital approach offers almost infinite possibilities. Then I try to work out the details and correct mistakes. When things are going well, I usually lose the sense of time and work as productively as possible, going on for 12 hours. If it's not going well, I take a drink and turn to more administrative things.

Your works are a colorful abstraction. How do you choose your colors? Do they have any specific meaning to you?

In general, I never approach a work thematically but only follow my impulses. The color only emerges with the composition and can also change completely during the process. I basically use abstraction to have an open and informal dialogue between form, expression, material, and meaning. The meaning is, of course, encoded by the abstraction, which in turn opens up a dialogue with the viewer for me. And the color ultimately supports this dialogue.

Is there a piece you consider a "breakthrough" in your career?

Yes, that does seem to exist. At least some curators, but also a museum, confirm this to me through their recognition. I have to admit that it doesn't have that meaning for me because as someone who shapes the creative process, I always see something at the end that I could do even better. But I don't want to reveal which work it is because that would destroy its aura for good.

Over the past 12 months, we have witnessed a growing number of online exhibitions and live events. What do you think of the recent changes in the art world? Do you miss the art world as it was before the pandemic, or do you see more opportunity now?

On the one hand, of course, I miss the art world before the pandemic. And some things are difficult to represent online without virtual reality. I'm thinking of a work of art with diffuse daylight in a large room that surrounds us 360 degrees as viewers. On the other hand, completely new worlds have opened up, especially for artists who work digitally, because perception is now completely different. And the auction house Christies recently heralded a new era in the art world with a bang. So when high-quality art comes together with NFT, it will turn the art trade upside down.

Do you have any upcoming shows or collaborations you are looking forward to?

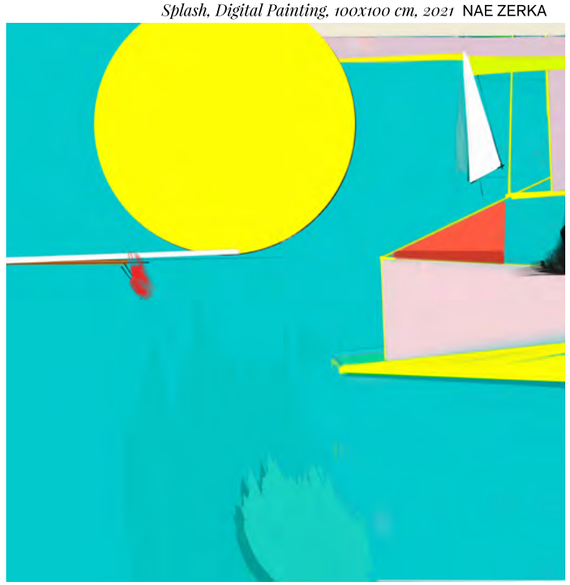
In preparation is exhibition participation for the CICA Museum in South Korea in September this year. Then I am currently working on the pictures for a solo exhibition, which is to take place towards the end of this year. Unfortunately, planning for this is rather difficult at the moment due to the pandemic. So it could well have to be postponed. On the other hand, I am working on a book, but I don't want to reveal anything about that yet. And in parallel, of course, I am working on the output of new compositions.

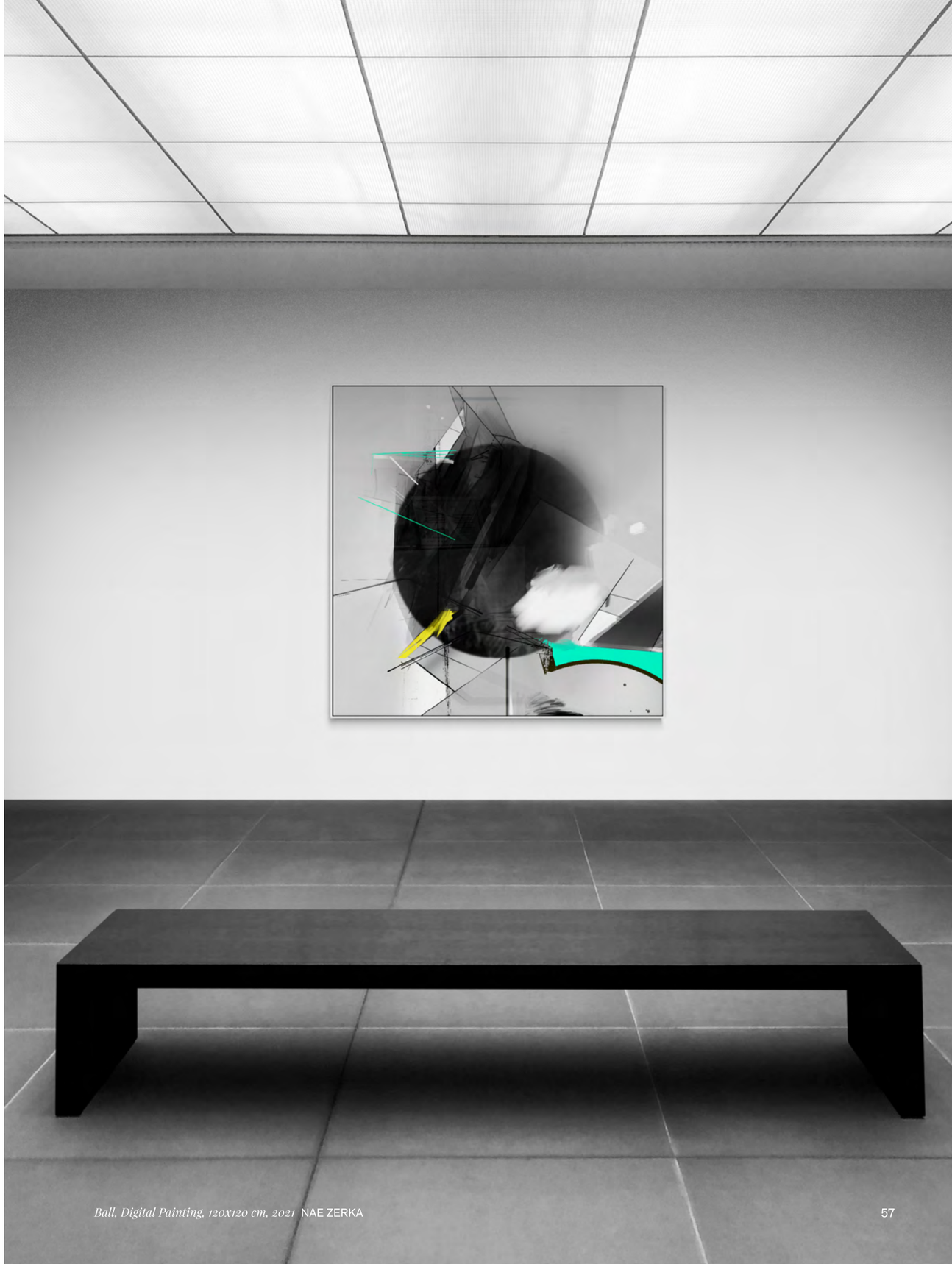
And lastly, what is one lesson you learned in the past year?

Light is the new ink. [learned from visual artist Krista Kim]

Splitter, Digital Painting, 100x100 cm, 2021 NAE ZERKA

Splash, Digital Painting, 100x100 cm, 2021 NAE ZERKA





Ball, Digital Painting, 120x120 cm, 2021 NAE ZERKA

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