

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

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## The New York Times

# What to See in Art Galleries Right Now

Jordan Belson, the filmmaker-mystic as painter; Pedro Almodóvar, the director as photographer; and three artists as disrupters of textiles.

June 12, 2019

## Jordan Belson

Through June 29. Matthew Marks, 523 West 24th Street, Manhattan; 212-243-0200, matthewmarks.com.

The San Francisco artist Jordan Belson (1926-2011) was ahead of the curve on meditation and yoga, which he supplemented with hallucinogens to experience expanded consciousness and later translated into gorgeously sensuous, abstract 16-millimeter films. The revelation in “Jordan Belson: Paintings 1950-1965” at Matthew Marks is that he achieved similar effects with his paintings.



Jordan Belson's "Great Nebula," circa 1965, in the show "Jordan Belson: Paintings 1950-1965." Estate of Jordan Belson, via Matthew Marks Gallery

This shouldn't come as a shock. Mr. Belson exhibited his paintings in New York in the 1940s and was included in two shows at the Guggenheim Museum (then called the Museum of Non-Objective Painting). He stopped showing these after 1950 though, and most of the 23 works here have never been exhibited publicly.

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Using electric pinks, oranges, green or gold, Mr. Belson's paintings are generally structured as spirals, spheres, or concentric rings that focus the viewer's attention and conjure cosmic auras, or the dharmic third eye. The paintings are "abstract," although Mr. Belson didn't think in these terms, but rather of painting as aiding or representing heightened states. Four of his iconic films, like "Samadhi" (1967), are also on view, although in digital form, which diminishes their impact, since the hypnotic whirring of the projector and deep colors of the chemical film stock were crucial in creating an atmosphere of psychic liftoff.

MARTHA SCHWENDENER