

Eliciting beautiful tonal nuances from black paint alone, Deeton uses symmetry not to riff on the legacy of Morris Louis, but to devise a new iconography and a new technique—despite appearances, his arcing bands are not poured à la Louis but laid down with a paintbrush. Evoking the mirroring structures that pervade the natural world as well as suggesting the more remote symmetries of particle physics, Deeton’s paintings unfold like butterfly wings and loom up like Gothic gates, at once pulling the viewer in ever deeper and marking the magical frontier between two realms. The latest in a long line of artist-chemists, he sees his paintings as the result of “discovery” rather than “invention”; they are, he says, “the physical manifestation of something that exists elsewhere.”

Raphael Rubinstein