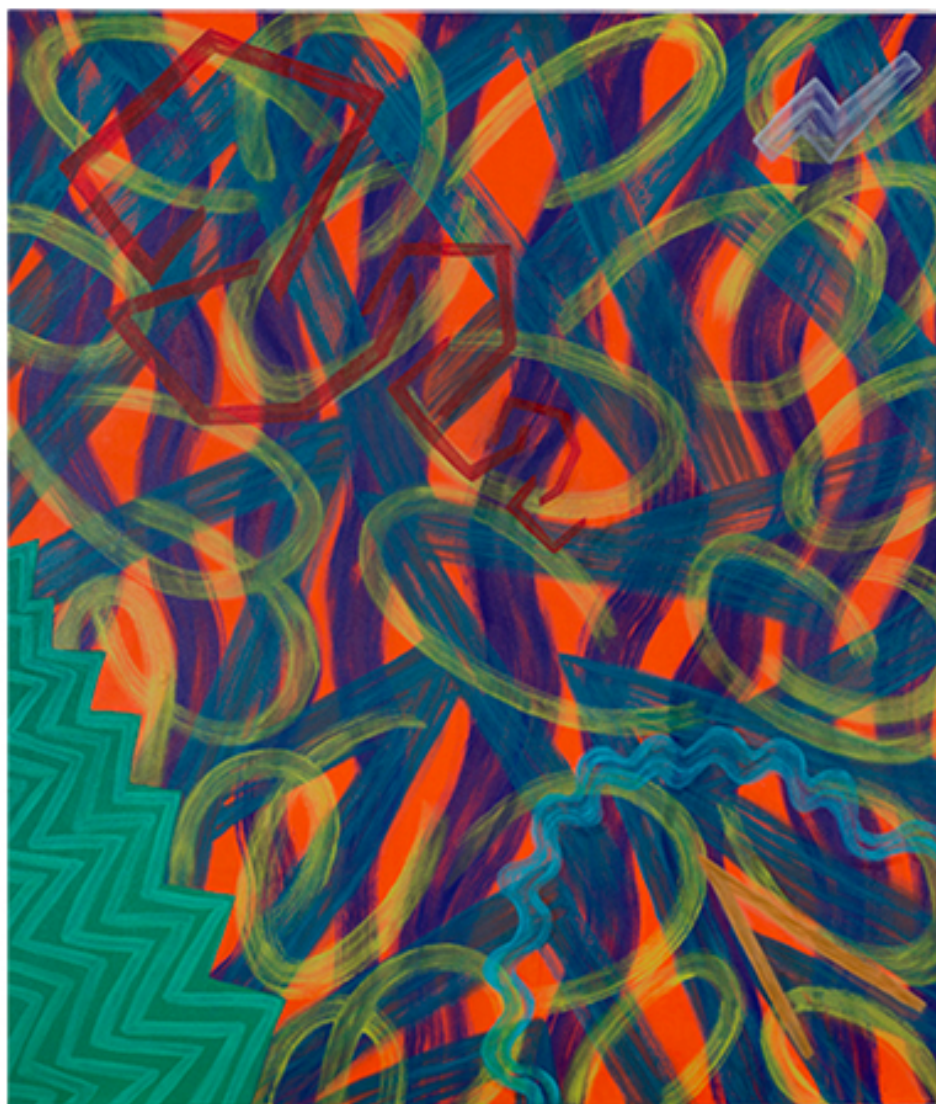


# The New Criterion

*Armavirumque, Nov 08, 2013 10:34 AM*

## Joan Thorne's musical paintings

*by James Panero*



*Joan Thorne, Anada, 2013; oil on canvas, 59 x 50"*

One of abstract painting's earliest interests was the depiction of sound. Now at [Sideshow](#) through Sunday, [Joan Thorne](#) explores this legacy with a finely tuned suite of work.

Like the recent sculptures of Frank Stella, which [visualized Scarlatti](#), Thorne's abstractions have an ear for form and color. Her paintings are composed of jagged percussions, swirling strings, and radiating winds. She then lays down a melody line

in the squiggles and shapes that whirl above these forms. It seems only appropriate that, some three decades ago, one of Thorne's paintings became a print and poster for a musical series at Lincoln Center.



*Joan Thorne, Orchia, 2013; oil on canvas, 55 x 63"*

Thorne's handling of the brush can be like a baton of color. She is a product of the Soho studio scene of the 1970s, and it shows in her layered approach to these canvases. This latest show is also a tribute to Richard Timperio, the owner of Sideshow, for reminding us of both the historical and contemporary achievements of this group of painters who continue to produce important work.

If there is a complaint in this latest series, however, it is that some of the arrangements can seem flat. The squiggles and jags can move from formula to formulaic. Several of the paintings here, such as *Ananda* and *Orchia*, are symphonic. Other variations, such as *Bagan* and *Naga*, are easy listening.

Coming off the successes of this latest show, Thorne should turn up the volume. Her paintings are ready to sing.

*"Joan Thorne: Recent Paintings" opened at Sideshow, Brooklyn, on October 12 and remains on view through November 10, 2013.*