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Laster, Paul. "Emil Lukas." *Time Out New York*, 23-29 January 2014, p. 26.

Art

Emil Lukas

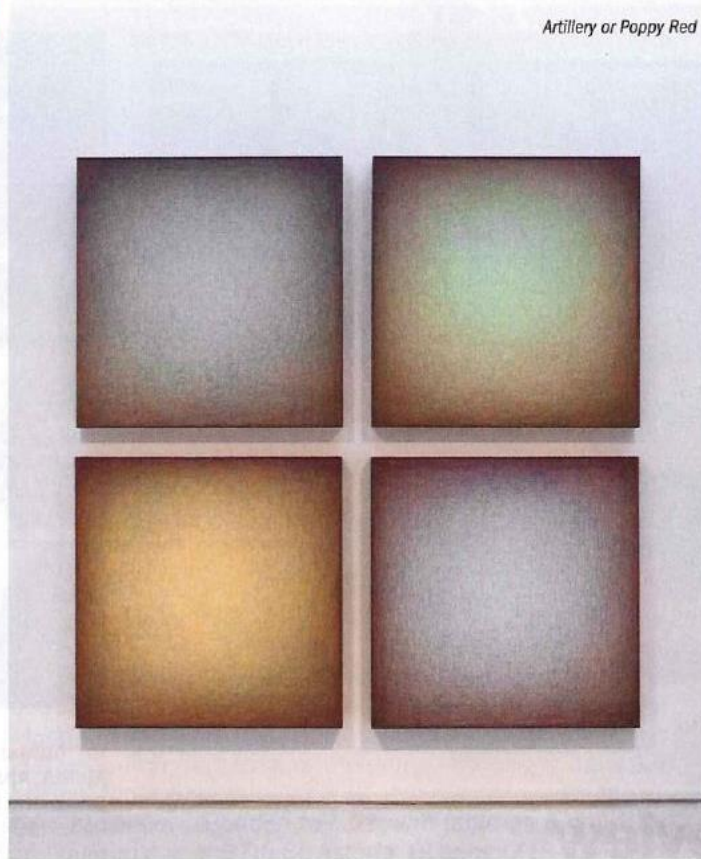
★★★★

Sperone Westwater, through Feb 22
(see Lower East Side)

A process-oriented artist, Emil Lukas has a history of making abstract, accumulative works out of unusual materials. In Europe his reputation was boosted by one of the world's leading collectors, the late Count Giuseppe Panza, who acquired 67 of Lukas's pieces. Now the artist returns to Sperone Westwater with two series created during the past five years: the "Larvae Paintings" and the "Thread Paintings." In each, he pushes his pursuit of the sublime in ambitiously new directions.

The former group consists of luminous, large-scale abstractions that are "painted" by maggots under the artist's control. He dips the grubs in ink, places them on the canvas, and directs them with lights and tilting motions, creating patterns that no hand could replicate. He then layers the surface with washes of pinks and blues, letting loose the larvae once again to leave ghostly networks of lines.

The works in the second series are created by stretching thousands of feet of multicolored thread across wooden frames backed with reflective film. Lukas employs two distinct patterns: webs that radiate from an airy center to a denser



Artillery or Poppy Red

perimeter, and vertical spectra that seem to vibrate as your gaze traverses them from end to end. Compelling and energetic, Lukas's efforts open portals to a realm where

line, color and the mind's eye collide.—Paul Laster

THE BOTTOM LINE The artist finds odd paths to the sublime.