



Ian M. Cage

Ian M. Cage is a contemporary American painter whose practice is rooted in abstraction and the visual elements of language. Working from his base in the American South, Cage has spent more than three decades exploring the fundamental constituents of painting — line, form, color, composition, and semiotics — building a body of work that is at once intellectually rigorous and viscerally direct.

His paintings draw on a broad range of twentieth-century movements: expressionism, pop art, conceptualism, minimalism, and at times postmodernism have all informed his thinking, while never fully containing it. Cage’s particular interest lies in what he describes as the intersection of intellectual construct and intuitive gesture — the tension between planned structure and spontaneous mark-making that drives his work toward what he calls “reasoned intuition.” He works primarily on stretched canvas, and has also developed a distinctive body of work on sewn canvas with grommets, a material innovation that extends the formal possibilities of the painted surface.

His Inference Series — bold, colorful, and intellectually structured large-scale works — represents one of the defining bodies of his career, and exemplifies his commitment to process as the primary driver of artistic decision-making. David Horowitz of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York has remarked that Cage’s works “thoughtfully engage the history of abstraction, while offering a distinct view on the relevance of art to the individual.” Oliver Pippen of the Asheville Area Arts Council has noted that “Cage brings new art ideas into the world.”

Cage began exhibiting publicly in the late 1980s, building a sustained presence in the regional art world of the American South. By the mid-2000s he was mounting solo exhibitions at significant venues including the Black Mountain Center for the Arts, Upstairs Artspace, the Asheville Area Arts Council, the UNCA Blowers Gallery, Elder Gallery, The Art House, Weizenblatt Gallery, T.L. Norris Gallery, and Lee Hansley Gallery. He has also served as a juror for regional exhibitions. His paintings are held by arts organizations across the Southeast and Midwest, and by private collectors in the United States and abroad.

“My life’s work remains a quest for reasoned intuition — the synthesis of intellectual construct and intuitive gesture to produce power and insight.” — Ian M. Cage
