



# THE GRID

In her seminal essay 'Grids', the art historian Rosalind Krauss claimed that *'the grid functions to declare the modernity of modern art'*. 'By "discovering" the grid', Krauss continues, *'cubism, de Stijl, Mondrian, Malevich ... landed in a place that was out of reach of everything that went before. Which is to say, they landed in the present, and everything else was declared to be the past'*.

Growing up between Rome and New York I became passionate about making art. Living in two cities where decorative flourish is always supported by simple geometry inspired me to paint my first Grid: a structuring of abstract color blocks stacked upon one another, evocative of the ancient brickwork one can find in Roman landmarks such as the Coliseum; but also the geometrical clean shapes of urban maps that come to define an industrial modern city like New York.

Fascinated with geometry from a young age, it was only later, in New York, that I became acquainted and inspired by the Color Field Painting movement and the ability of color to convey and trigger feelings and emotions, in particular by artists like Agnes Martin, Ad Reinhardt, Donald Judd, Frank Stella and Mark Rothko.

One day in my studio -exploring the endless possibilities and nuances of purple and how to paint with tape- I accidentally created a geometric sequence that felt in perfect harmony with my state of mind. This geometric sequence, I named "The Grid", and The Grid became my signature style through which to explore feelings and memory through color blocks.

After graduating from NYU, I lived and painted briefly in Barcelona, before moving to Malibu, California, where I opened my own studio. The spirited colours and natural lush of Malibu, in contrast with the rigidity and man-made symmetry of more industrial cities like New York and Barcelona challenged me to continue to explore architecture, colour and form through my "Grid" paintings, which by then had become a survey of the feelings evoked by the architectural and natural surroundings of the places in which I had lived.

From the streets in Rome, to the skyscrapers of New York City; the whimsical buildings of Gaudi in Barcelona or the mid-century modern architecture in LA, from Richard Neutra to Frank Lloyd Wright; I had by then understood the paramount role that architecture and nature play not only in defining the aesthetics of a city, but also the collective psyche of its citizens.

In 2020 I moved to Mexico City, inspired by its vibrant artistic scene as much as the colourful buildings from masters such as Luis Barragán. For the past three years, I have been painting in an artist residency at the heart of the city, where I have begun to develop an interest in natural dyes while continuing my explorations on architecture and Color-Field painting through my Grid.

Over the years, my Grid has enabled me to expand the possibilities of form, color and composition, re-conceptualizing the modernist grid of artists such as Piet Mondrian or Malevich for an effect that is both architectural and emotive, and hence unravelling a trajectory of the function of the grid in Contemporary art through new techniques and Color-Field painting.





Luia Corsini  
*Violet*, October 2017  
120 x 120 cm  
Oil and acrylic on canvas

*"I am interested in expressing the basic human emotions – tragedy, ecstasy, doom and so on – and the fact that lots of people break down and cry when confronted with my pictures shows that I communicate with those basic human emotions",* quotes Rothko as saying. *"If you... are moved only by their colour relationships, then you miss the point."*

Inspired by Mark Rothko's late purple and maroon paintings and their ability to encourage meditation amongst viewers, the concept of this painting came from my curiosity and passion to explore the color purple on a deeper level. Historically, purple has been closely associated with Catholicism and nobility, symbolising both high rank and spirituality. Nevertheless, many atheist artists have favoured this pigment for its deep spiritual resonance. Indeed, when commissioned to create one final series of spiritual paintings, the Color-Field master and non believer Mark Rothko reached for the colour purple.

Similarly, in this painting I was trying to reach for a meditative, almost spiritual effect, stemming from my Catholic upbringing in Rome, where Churches for me became more of meditative temples of historical beauty rather than places of worship.



Luia Corsini  
*Turquoise/Brown*, December 2018  
120 x 120 cm  
Oil and acrylic on canvas

The concept of this painting came from a curiosity to explore the relationship between two colors, turquoise and brown. Using the geometrical sequences of my grid, I was able to juxtapose and explore all the different contrasts and possibilities between the two colors in their different tonalities.

For this purpose, I strived to apply my own interpretations of Josef Albers' theories as explained in his book "the interaction of colors", which studies the relationships between contrasting or complementary colors. Painted in rather opaque and bold layers, each color block in this painting reveals its characteristic weight, density, and transparency.

Chaotic and dense, the terracotta tonalities and the chaotic structure in this painting evoke a certain sense of nostalgia stemming from my memories growing up in Rome, summoning the monumental solidity of buildings like the Coliseum, here we see densely saturated brownish blocks stacked upon one another like ancient brickwork.





Luia Corsini  
*Momentum*, November 2019  
120 x 120 cm  
Acrylic and spray paint on canvas

In the 20th century, Color Field Painting was the pioneering style to deviously greet figure and ground as one, conceived as “field” and almost spreading out beyond the edges of the canvas. The paintings of the artist Helen Frankenthaler, marked by airy compositions that celebrated the joys of pure color whilst giving an entirely new look and feel to the surface of the canvas, have been a great inspiration in my work.

Likewise, the themes explored in this painting came from my desire to explore my grid outside of its original comforts. Since I had first adopted my style, I was comfortable painting geometric shapes across the canvas in a repetitive way, while using the same materials for the past two years. This painting was a breaking point for me. The use of spray paint helped me expand yet maintain my geometrical sequences whilst allowing for a more ethereal finish.

In this way, the grid in *Momentum* seeks to expand both itself and the Color Field Painting tradition, from the middle of the canvas, all the way to the edges.



Luia Corsini  
*Michelle*, April 2020  
150 x 180 cm  
Acrylic and spray paint on canvas

The concept of this painting came from the curiosity and passion to deconstruct an image of a flower and explore its colors through my grid.

The themes explored in this painting come from an emotional wound, as I started it after my mother's passing. I used color and the symbol of flowers as a way to explore my deepened emotions. The light and vibrant colors represent hope and rebirth of spring. A personal reflection on life and death - on how everything dies and is reborn in a different form or energy. This painting conveys my sense of peace and perhaps resignation.

It was created during my time spent at home with my family, in Malibu, California, when I started reaching for nature to find solace and meaning in life. I used my grid as a way to deconstruct and explore the colors of the flowers. Like many artists before me such as Georgia O'Keeffe I was inspired as well by their colors and forms. O'Keeffe herself often commented that the colour and form of the flowers was more important than the subject matter, suggesting that she was interested in the natural form and capturing its beauty.



Luia Corsini  
*Moon, April 2020*  
150 x 180 cm  
Acrylic and spray paint on canvas

*“Both before and after the invention of the telescope, artists and amateur astronomers were looking at the moon, interpreting what they saw, and trying to reconcile this with religious and philosophical beliefs at the time,”* says David Bardeen, art historian at the University of California, Los Angeles. *“Art helped negotiate all of the questions that were being raised.”*

This painting was created during the Covid 19 pandemic, a time when I reached to the natural world to negotiate all the questions that the lockdowns had raised upon us. Moreover, the passing of my mother challenged me to look at the sky and search for divinity. Life and death, illness, isolation.., but also, the joy and solace one finds in the complexity, yet attainable beauty of nature.

Hence, the concept of this painting strives to deconstruct a picture of the full moon, in a quest to explore its divinity through my grid. The image of the moon became symbolic to me, acting as a portal to contemplate and communicate with the beyond.



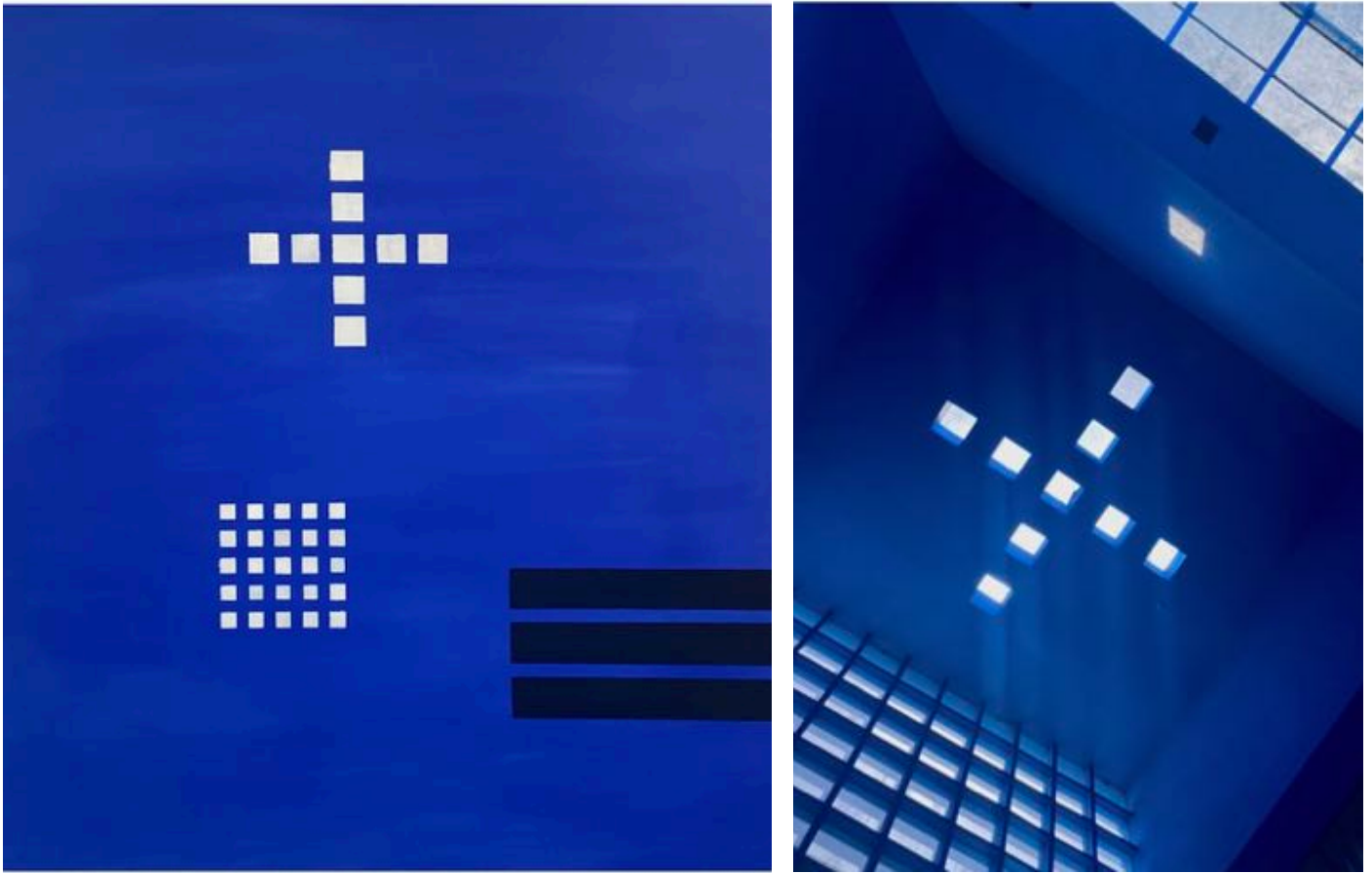
Luia Corsini  
*Casa Museo Frida Kahlo*, September 2020  
152 x 182 cm  
Acrylic on canvas

When I moved to Mexico City, I was in awe by the colorful architecture of the city, and the juxtaposition of highly saturated colors throughout the buildings that populate the streets. The culture in Mexico City is uplifting and creative, a clear reflection of its modernist, colorful architecture. I had by then understood the paramount role that architecture plays not only in defining the aesthetics of a city, but also the collective psyche of its citizens.

The concept of the painting *Casa Museo Frida Kahlo* came from the desire to deconstruct an image taken from the famous Frida Kahlo Museum and explore its colors through my grid. In a way, striving to understand and depict the collective nature of the society that I encountered in this magnificent city.

Moreover, the museum use to be a house, where Frida and her father lived. Altogether, this painting is a personal tribute for the melting pot of creativity that defines Mexico City.





Luia Corsini  
*Hotel Camino Real*, September 2021  
152 x 182 cm  
Acrylic on canvas

The concept of the painting *Hotel Camino Real*, came from the curiosity to deconstruct an image taken from the iconic *Hotel Camino Real* and explore through geometrical sequences.

The themes in this painting come from the need and curiosity to view and explore the different forms and colors of the *Hotel Camino Real*. Designed by the Mexican architect Ricardo Legorreta, who sought to imbue his design with the vibrant colors of Mexican culture.



Luia Corsini  
*Capilla de las Capuchinas*, September 2021  
152 x 182 cm  
Acrylic on canvas

The concept of this painting, came from the curiosity to deconstruct an image taken from the iconic chapel called Capilla de las Capuchinas and explore its colors together with my grid.

The themes in this painting come from the need to research and view the different forms and colors of this specific Chapel, designed by Luis Barragan, the master mexican architect known for his unique minimalistic and contemporary choice of color and use of light in his projects.



Luia Corsini  
*Casa Pedregal*, November 2021  
152 x 182 cm  
Acrylic on canvas

The concept of this painting, came from the curiosity and passion to deconstruct an image taken from the beautiful Casa Pedregal and explore its colors together with my grid.

The themes in this painting come from the need and curiosity to research and view the different forms and colors of the house. Casa Pedregal is also designed by the famous Mexican architect Luis Barragan, it is now privately owned, but it is considered one of the great modernist masterpieces of Mexico. I will be showing this painting along with the rest of the series dedicated to Mexican modern architecture in Casa Pedregal, during Zona Maco 2023, the art fair which occurs in February, as a homage to Mexico.









Luia Corsini  
*Hibiscus*, October 2022  
120 x 120 cm  
Natural dyes on canvas

The concept of this painting, came from the idea to experiment with natural dyes together with my grid. This specific painting is made with a mix of natural dyes, such as hibiscus, avocado seed, indigo, turmeric, cochinitilla and eucalyptus.

In this painting I wanted to research other forms of creating color as a way to push the boundaries of painting or go back to the natural ways of creating paint through nature.

Inspired by Henri Matisse's cut outs, I was eager to explore the possibility of expanding my geometrical sequences in the grid through this technique. Matisse would cut painted sheets into forms of varying shapes and sizes, to then arrange them into beautiful compositions, interesting for their play with color and contrast. Similarly, the cut-outs reflect both a renewed commitment to form and color and an inventiveness directed to the surface "field" of the canvas, continuing to explore its endless possibilities.



Luia Corsini

*Mexico City Architecture*, October 2022

N/A

Table book, front cover made of natural dyes on canvas

The concept of this book, came from the curiosity and passion to show the series of paintings I made inspired by Mexican modern architecture, in a simpler and more honest way. In the book There is a picture of my painting and after it a picture I took of the iconic house that inspired me. Next to the picture of the house there is a small description about it as well as some interesting facts. At the end of the book there is a description about me and my journey as an artist until today. This book was created as a research project for myself and for Mexico.

The themes for this book came from the need and curiosity to research all the most iconic houses in Mexico City, designed by famous Mexican architects, in the post war era.