

RICARDO MAZAL

Pilgrimages

Exhibition Dates: March 22 - April 26, 2025

Opening Reception: Saturday, March 22, 12:00PM - 3:00PM

Haines proudly presents *Pilgrimages*, the gallery's first solo exhibition of new and recent works by Mexican artist Ricardo Mazal (b. 1950). Based between Mexico City, Santa Fe, and New York City, Mazal is well-known for his expansive painting practice that uses the language of abstraction to explore themes of transformation, impermanence, renewal, and return. *Pilgrimages* brings together paintings from five interrelated bodies of work created over the last five years, including a selection from his two latest series, *Ba Zasa* and *White Mountain*.

Pilgrimages invites viewers into Mazal's investigations of spiritual sites and cultural traditions across the globe, from the Old Jewish Cemetery in Prague, one of the oldest Jewish burial grounds in the world; to the Zapotec communities in Sierra Norte of Oaxaca, Southern Mexico; and to Tibet and Bhutan in the Himalayas. His process often begins with careful photographic documentation, which he ultimately translates into lush, abstract paintings that evoke aspects of the places he has experienced.

White Mountain is the latest installment of a series that first began over a decade ago, when Mazal first visited Mount Kailash, Tibet's holiest summit. Completing the *Kora*, a 33-mile trek around the mountain performed by Buddhist, Hindu, Jain, and Bonpo pilgrims, Mazal notes he was "struck by the convergence of the material and invisible worlds." His observations from this 21-day journey emerge in his new *White Mountain* paintings. In some works, diagonal compositions evoke the powerful winds that lash through the region, and Mount Kailash's snow-streaked, distinctively striated face. In others, sinuous bands of color billow across stark white canvases, calling to mind the lines of prayer flags along the *Kora* path and their associations with hope and possibility. In Tibetan belief, the wind carries prayers not to the gods above, but out into the world around us.

Other works explore terrain closer to home, both metaphorically and physically. In 2021, Mazal returned to his birthplace of Mexico City, where he reestablished a studio after living and working abroad for over three decades. *Ba Zasa*, a series he began shortly after this homecoming, comprises paintings filled with lightness and freedom.



Ricardo Mazal, *White Mountain PF 2*, 2025
Oil on linen
30 x 40 inches



Ricardo Mazal, *White Mountain 10*, 2024
Oil on linen
48 x 50 inches

Flurries of white brushstrokes applied over rich expanses of color suggest migratory birds making their way across the sky—echoing the artist’s own migration home.

These same motifs recur in Mazal’s latest series of smaller-scale paintings made on handmade silk panels. Mazal created these works in collaboration with artisans from the Zapotec community of San Pedro Cajonos, a remote mountain village in Oaxaca where, for hundreds of years, the Zapotec have reared silkworms for silk production. The panels are woven from hand-spun fibers and dyed with pigments derived from flowers, tree bark, and insects—skills passed down through generations. Celebrating this traditional craftsmanship and community, each work is titled after the Zapotec word for the silk’s color (*gashe* for “yellow,” *yaba* for “blue,” *gaa* for “green”).

These new works are complemented by earlier works such as Mazal’s *Prague* paintings, in which intersecting geometric elements and ridged, rippling paint recall the thousands of overlapping gravestones contained within the city’s Old Jewish Cemetery. Like the countless prayer flags circumscribing Mount Kailash, a mark of previous journeys, and the weaving traditions of the Zapotec, these forms point to layers of history and community. Throughout *Pilgrimages*, Mazal revisits forms, colors, and textures of his travels, drawing commonalities between diverse places and rituals. His painterly meditations reveal a longstanding concern with how we experience both the material world and the ineffable, and the profound experiences found in the everyday.

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ABOUT THE ARTIST

Ricardo Mazal has exhibited widely in galleries and museums throughout the Americas, Asia, and Europe, including solo exhibitions at the Center for Contemporary Arts, Santa Fe, NM; Mexican Cultural Institute, Washington, D.C; Museo de Arte Contemporaneo de Monterrey (MARCO), Mexico (2000); Museo de Moderno, Mexico City, Mexico; Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City, Mexico; and Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, AZ, among many others. His work is held by such institutions as Fondation Maeght, Paris, France; Minneapolis Institute of Art, MN; Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City, Mexico; Museum of Contemporary Art of Monterrey, Mexico; and Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, AZ.

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Ricardo Mazal, *Ba Zasa Red Lake 5*, 2024
Oil on linen
45 x 60 inches



Ricardo Mazal, *Gashe 5 (Yellow)*, 2025 and *Gaa 5 (Green)*, 2025
Acrylic on silk on aluminum panel
25 x 21.5 inches each, framed



Ricardo Mazal, *SP Black 21*, 2019
Oil on linen
50 x 55 inches