

BOOK #15

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Colin Goldberg and the Emotional Grammar of Technology

From augmented reality to Techspressionism, Colin Goldberg's hybrid practice fuses memory, code, and gesture into a visual language of our time.

Movement, 2020. Acrylic and pigment print on linen



Colin Goldberg is a quiet pioneer. Born to a Japanese American mother from Hawaii and a Jewish-American father from the Bronx, both Ph.D chemists, his work traverses digital media, traditional painting, and augmented reality. In his world, technology is not a tool but a mirror — one that reflects identity, emotion, and the trace of the hand.

In an art world often captivated by spectacle or theory, Colin Goldberg offers something different: a sense of presence. His works run the gamut from digitally-fueled paintings to augmented reality experiences and large-scale digital installations. They exist in a space where past and future converge. With roots in both Eastern and Western traditions, Goldberg draws from a culturally rich background to craft a practice that is both deeply personal and globally resonant. A Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant recipient, Goldberg combines gestural brushwork, intricate digital drawing, and large-format printing in his paintings and works on paper.

Image Above: Kneeling Icon, 2004-2022. Augmented reality digital monoprint on vinyl, 96 x 72 inches (243.8 cm x 182.8 cm) Collection of the Hearst Corporation, 2023 acquisition. Installation view, Hearst Tower NYC

In 2011, he coined the term Techspressionism, defining it as “an artistic approach in which technology is utilized as a means to express emotional experience.” Unlike the cold neutrality sometimes associated with digital art, Techspressionism insists on affect — on the messy, human side of creation. Goldberg doesn’t use software to escape the world, but to dive deeper into it. Whether painting on canvas or coding in pixels, his work reveals a constant tension between control and accident, between calculated structure and expressive release.



Nottingham, 2023 Acrylic and pigment print on linen

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Augmented brushstrokes – the AR dimension:

In collaboration with platforms like Artivive, Goldberg brings his static works to life. Through the lens of a smartphone or tablet, the viewer can witness a hidden dimension: animations, soundscapes, or layered narratives that hover over the canvas. This isn't a gimmick — it's an expansion. "Augmented reality lets me activate the painting," he says. "It adds a layer of time to the work — a fourth dimension." The result is a form of painting that feels alive, breathing with digital energy yet grounded in hand-made marks.

Goldberg's book *Metagraphs: Augmented Reality art* is the culmination of over 25 years of digital drawing and animation, and is the first augmented reality abstract art book on Amazon. When viewed through a mobile device, the works in this volume activate with motion

and sound directly on the book's pages. Selected works from Goldberg's *Metagraphs* series will form the basis for the artist's first solo museum exhibition at the Cape Cod Museum of Art in Massachusetts, opening in the Summer of 2027.

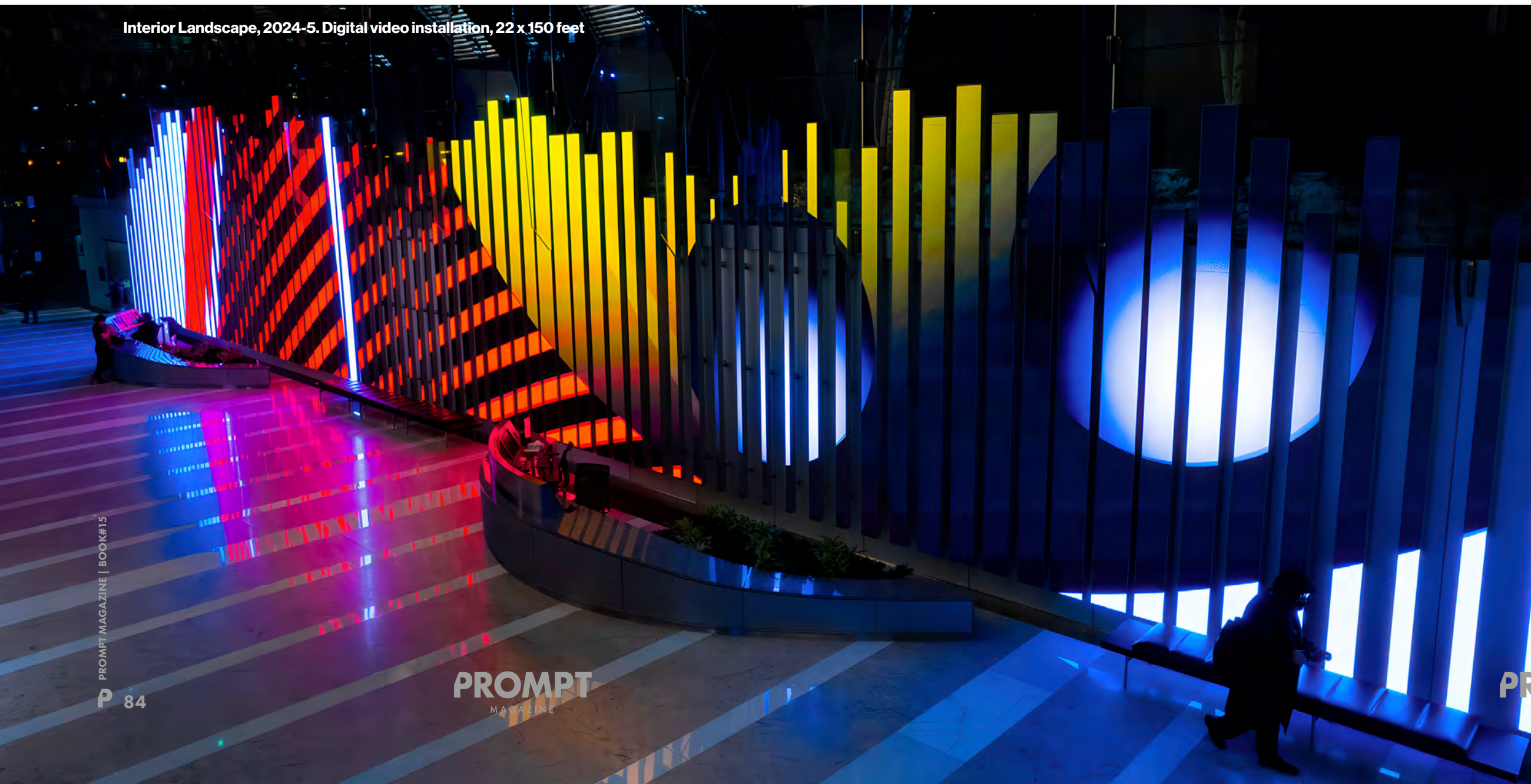
One of the most compelling aspects of Goldberg's work is its refusal to choose between analog and digital. He uses code like a brush and treats digital images as matter to be sculpted. In some works, bitmap distortions echo glitch aesthetics; in others, flowing brushstrokes retain the immediacy of ink or oil. His pieces are not simulations, but hybrid organisms — part algorithm, part intuition. This approach resonates with a generation of artists negotiating their own identity in a world increasingly mediated by screens and software.

The origins of Techspressionism:

Goldberg's term has since become a movement, bringing together a growing network of international artists who share his vision of technology as an expressive medium. Like Abstract Expressionism in the 20th century, Techspressionism challenges conventions — but instead of brushes alone, it uses tablets, AR filters, machine learning, and digital environments. Goldberg has described it as "not a style, but an approach," where the artist's intent and emotional core remain central, regardless of medium. Since its inception as an artist group in 2020, Techspressionism has grown to include artists from over 45 countries, connected through international Zoom salons and over

80,000 Instagram posts using the hashtag #techspressionism.

Interior Landscape, 2024-5. Digital video installation, 22 x 150 feet



Memesis, 1999-2022. Augmented reality artwork with original soundscape

Goldberg's practice is not about nostalgia for the handmade, nor fetishization of the new. It's about continuity — finding emotional resonance in both ancient materials and modern machines. As Techspressionism gains visibility, from exhibitions to online communities, Goldberg's vision stands as both a guidepost and a question mark: How do we make room for feeling in an age of automation?

More images and information are available at Goldberg.art