

ALMA THOMAS

1891 Georgia USA - 1978 Washington USA

PAINTER



"Creative art is for all time and is therefore independent of time. It is of all ages, of every land, and if by this we mean the creative spirit in man which produces a picture or a statue is common to the whole civilized world, independent of age, race and nationality; the statement may stand unchallenged."

-Alma Thomas, 1970

MINI BIO

Georgia, enjoyed making small pieces of artwork such as puppets, sculptures, and plates, mainly out of clay from the river behind her childhood home.^[7] Despite a growing interest in the arts, Thomas was "not allowed" to go into art museums as a child.^[8]

In 1907 when Thomas was 16, the family moved to the [Logan Circle](#) neighborhood of Washington, D.C., to escape [racial violence](#) in [Georgia](#)

1914 Kindergarden Teaching (although she had wanted to be an architect)

Thomas entered [Howard University](#) in 1921, as a [home economics](#) student, only to switch to [fine art](#) after studying under art department founder [James V. Herring](#).

Thomas would not be recognized as a professional artist until her retirement from teaching in 1960, when she enrolled in classes at American University.

In 1972, at the age of 81, Thomas was the first African-American woman to have a solo exhibition at the [Whitney Museum of American Art](#),

INFLUENCES

[New York School](#) and [Abstract Expressionism](#)

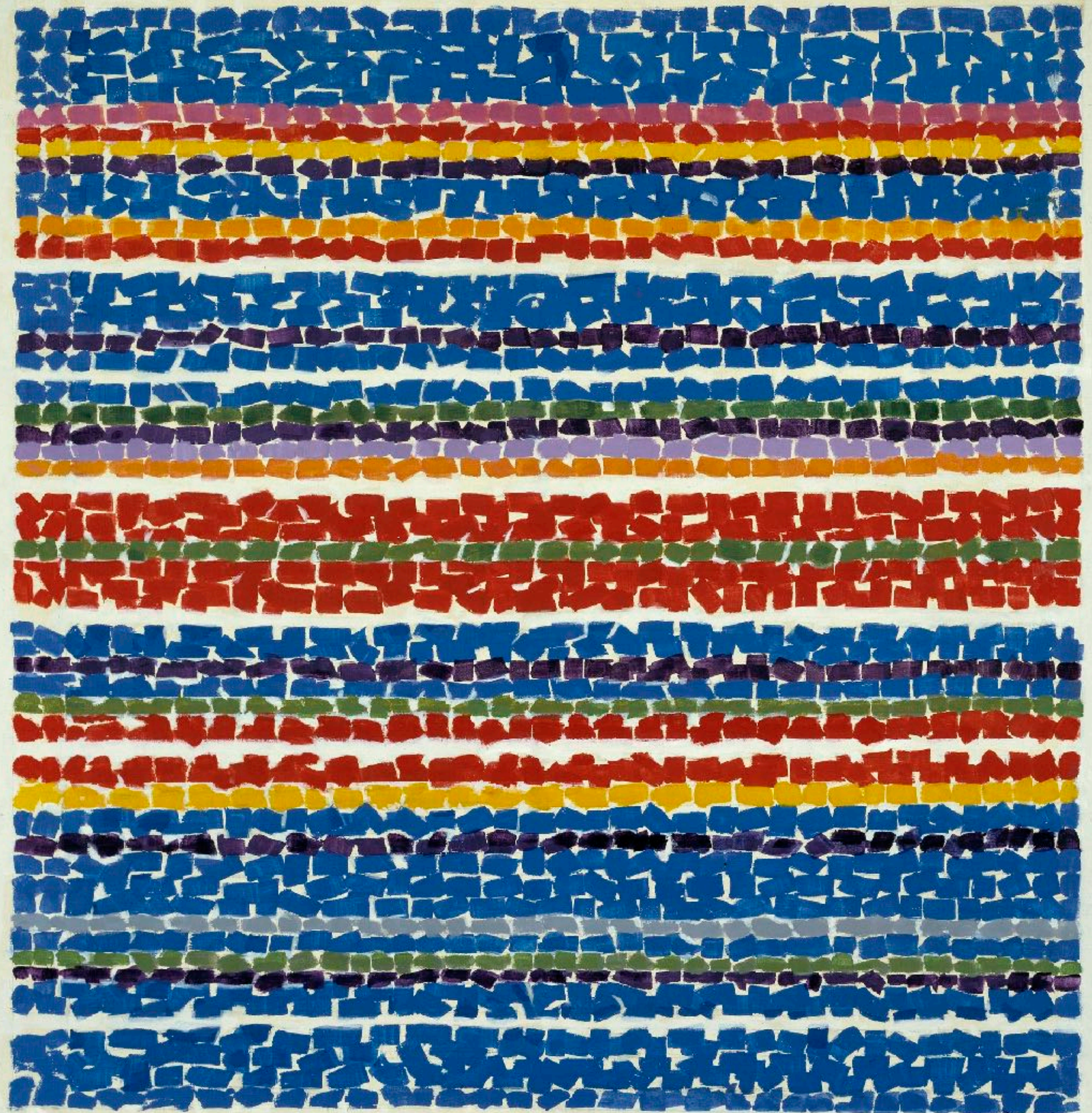
[Vasily Kandinsky](#) (who was interested in the emotional capabilities of color) and of the [Washington Color Field Painters](#)

[Byzantine mosaics](#)

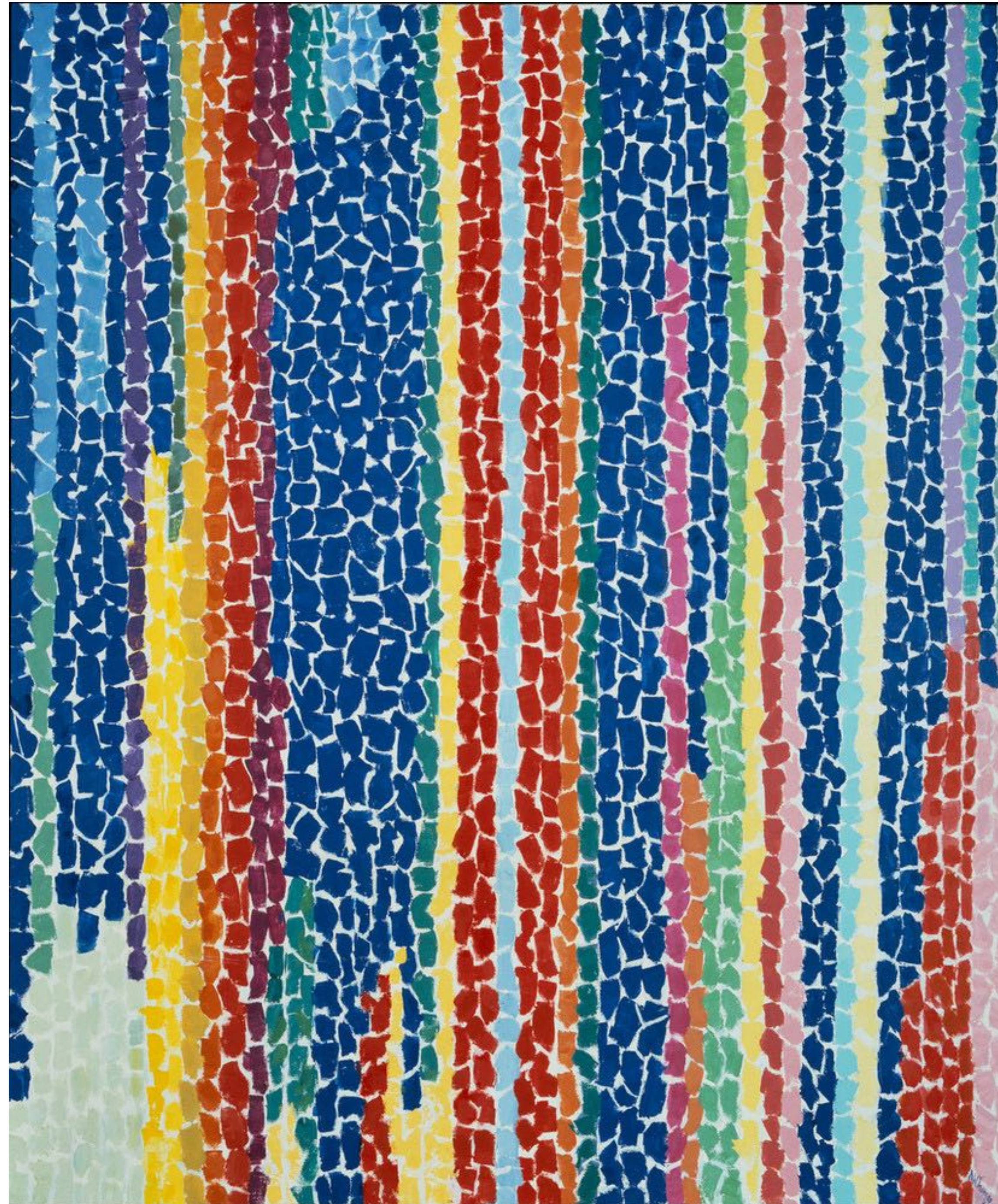
[Byzantine mosaics](#) and the [pointillist](#) paintings of [Georges-Pierre Seurat](#).



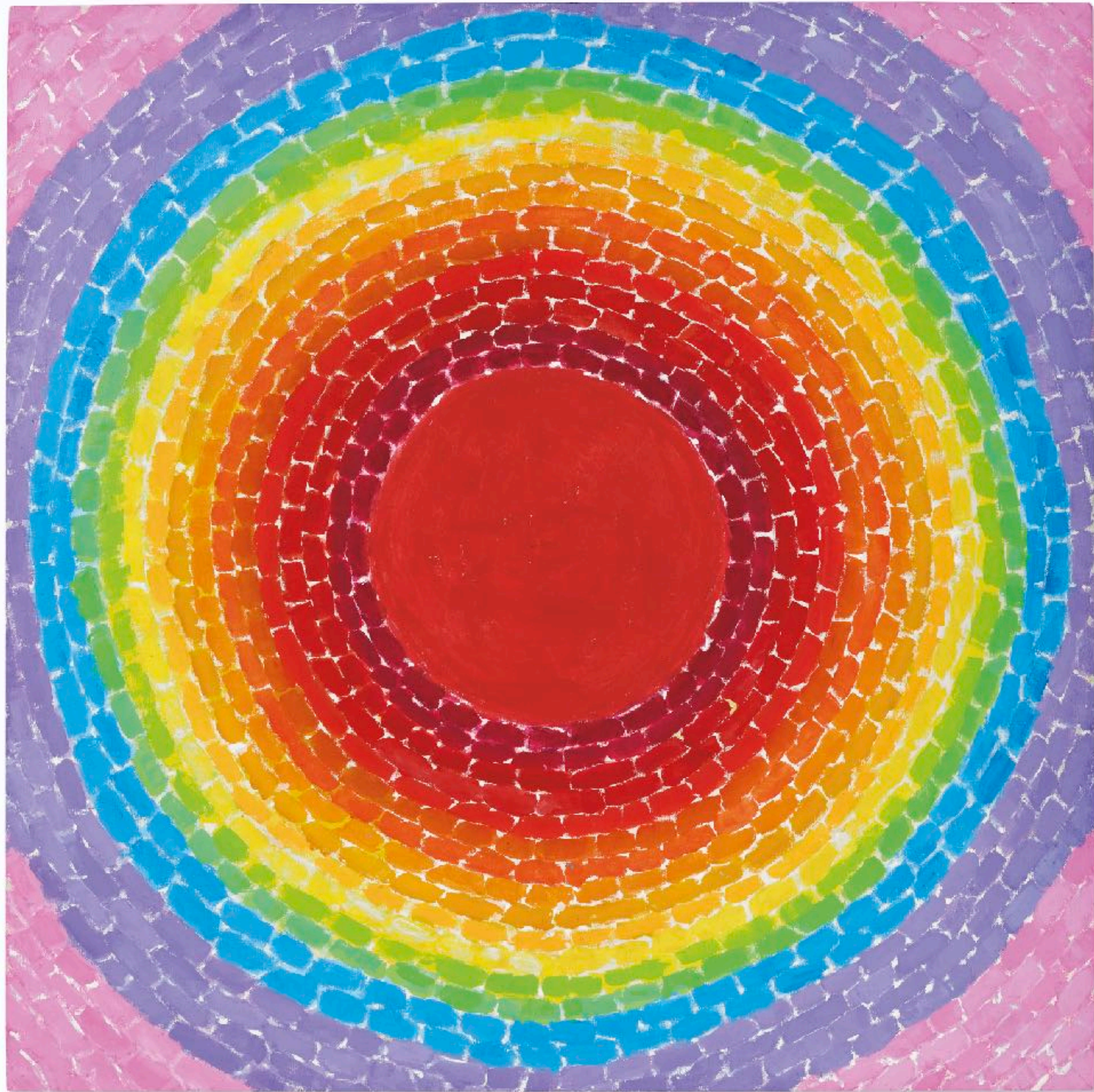
"The holly tree outside her living room intrigued Thomas with designs formed by its leaves against the window panes, and with patterns of light and shade cast on the floor and walls inside her home."



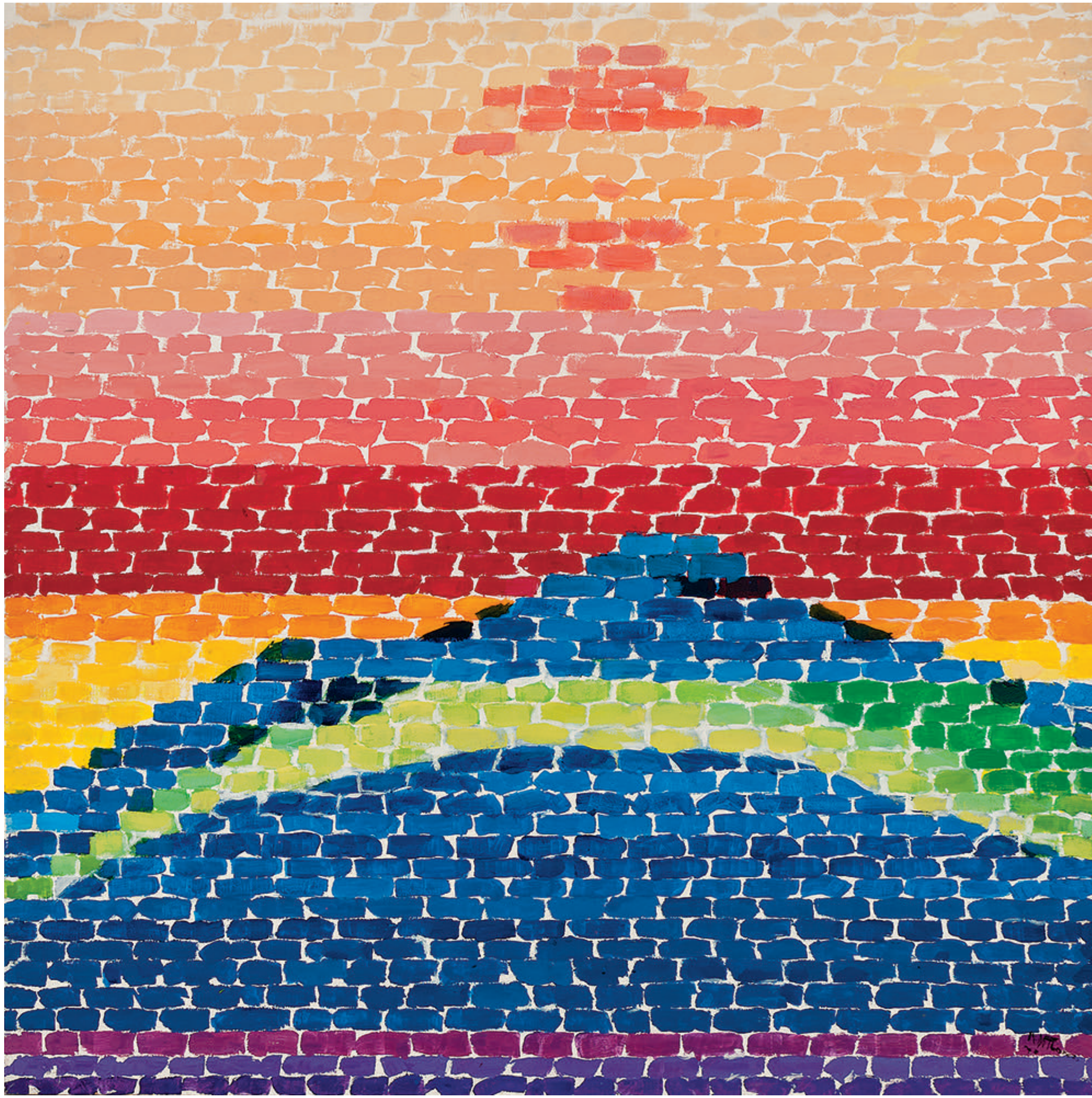
Alma Thomas, *Light Blue Nursery*, 1968, acrylic on canvas



Iris, Tulips, Jonquils, and Crocuses, 1969; Acrylic on canvas, 60 x 50 in

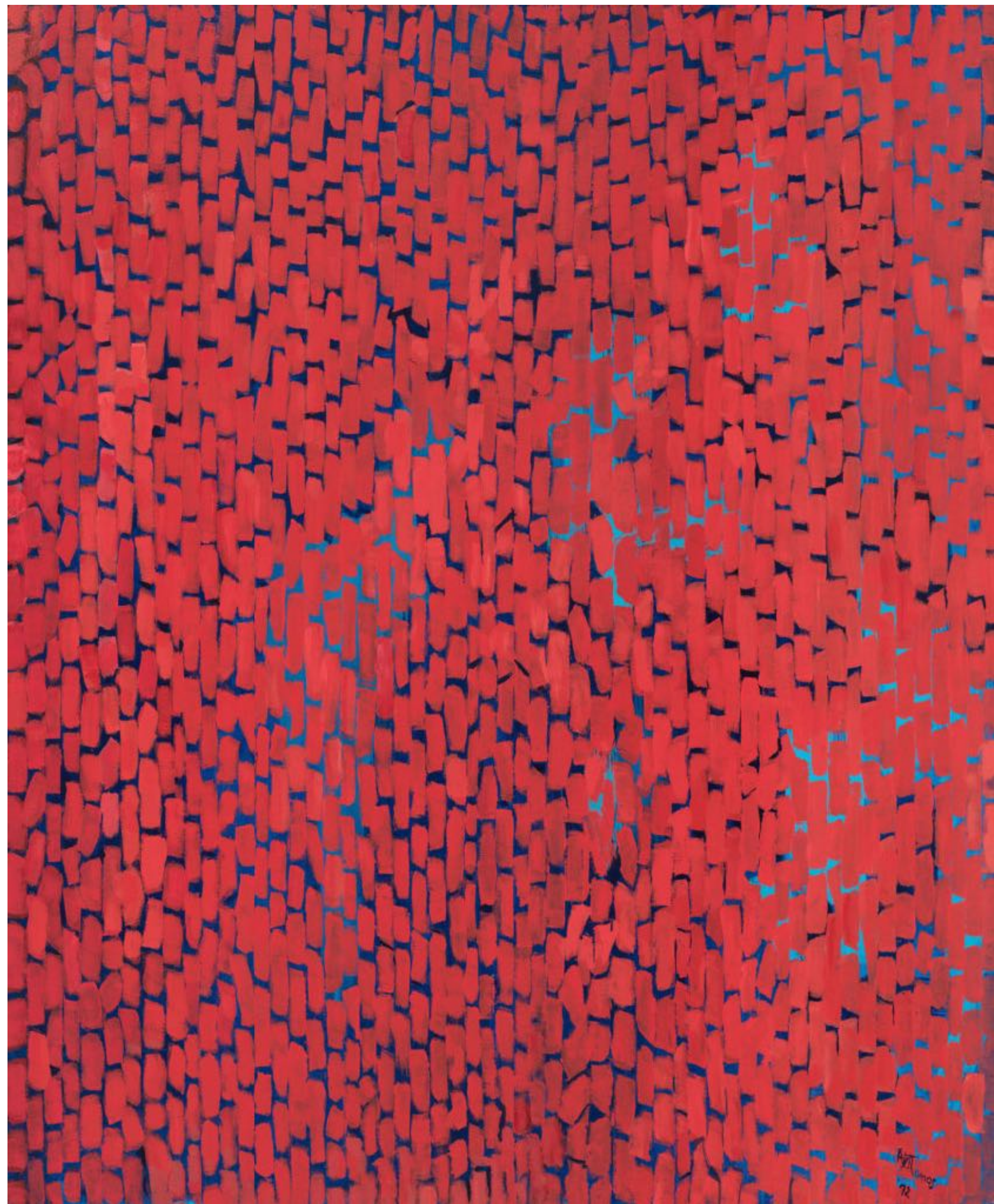


A Fantastic Sunset
signed, titled and dated "a Fantastic Sunset" Alma W. Thomas 70' (on the reverse)
acrylic on canvas
48 x 48 in. (121.9 x 121.9 cm.)
Painted in 1970.

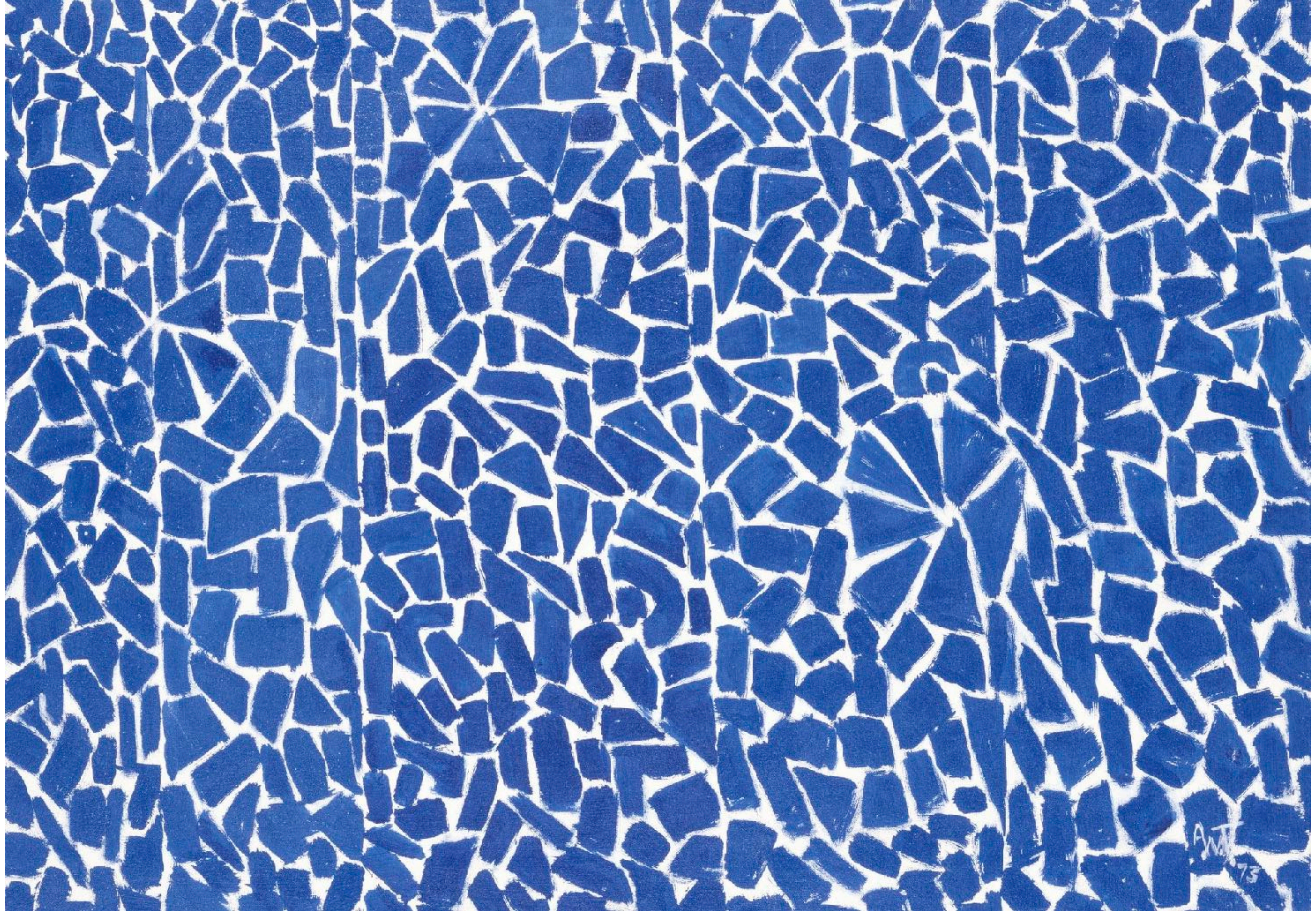


“I was born at the end of the 19th century, horse-and-
buggy days, and experienced the phenomenal changes
of the 20th century machine and space age. Today not
only can our great scientists send astronauts to and
from the moon to photograph its surface and bring back
samples of rocks and other materials, but through the
medium of color television all can actually see and
experience the thrill of these adventures,” Thomas said
in a 1972 artist statement, which is printed in the
exhibition catalog “Alma Thomas.” “These phenomena
set my creativity in motion.”

“Apollo 12 Splash Down,” 1970 (acrylic and graphite on canvas)



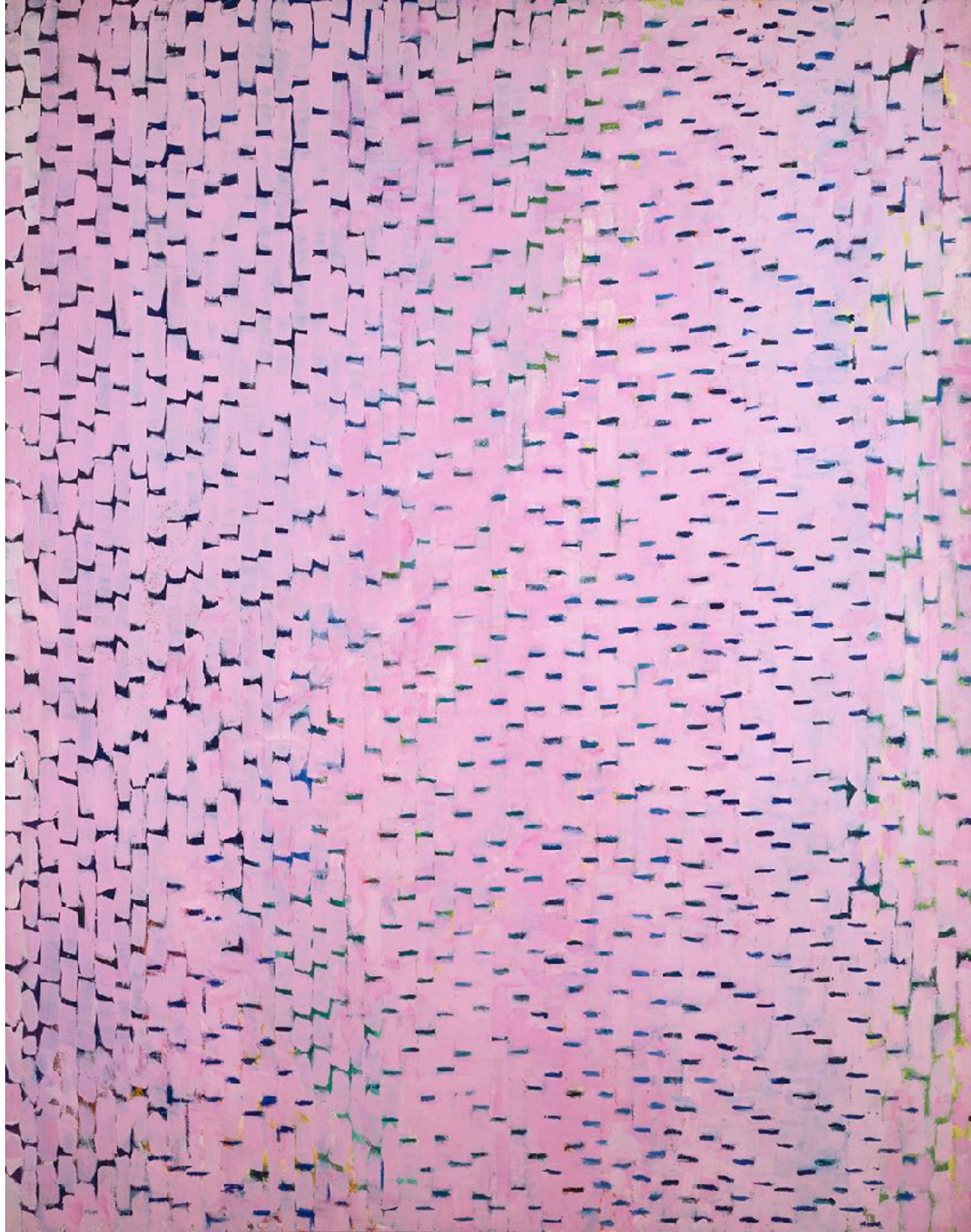
Mars Dust (1972)



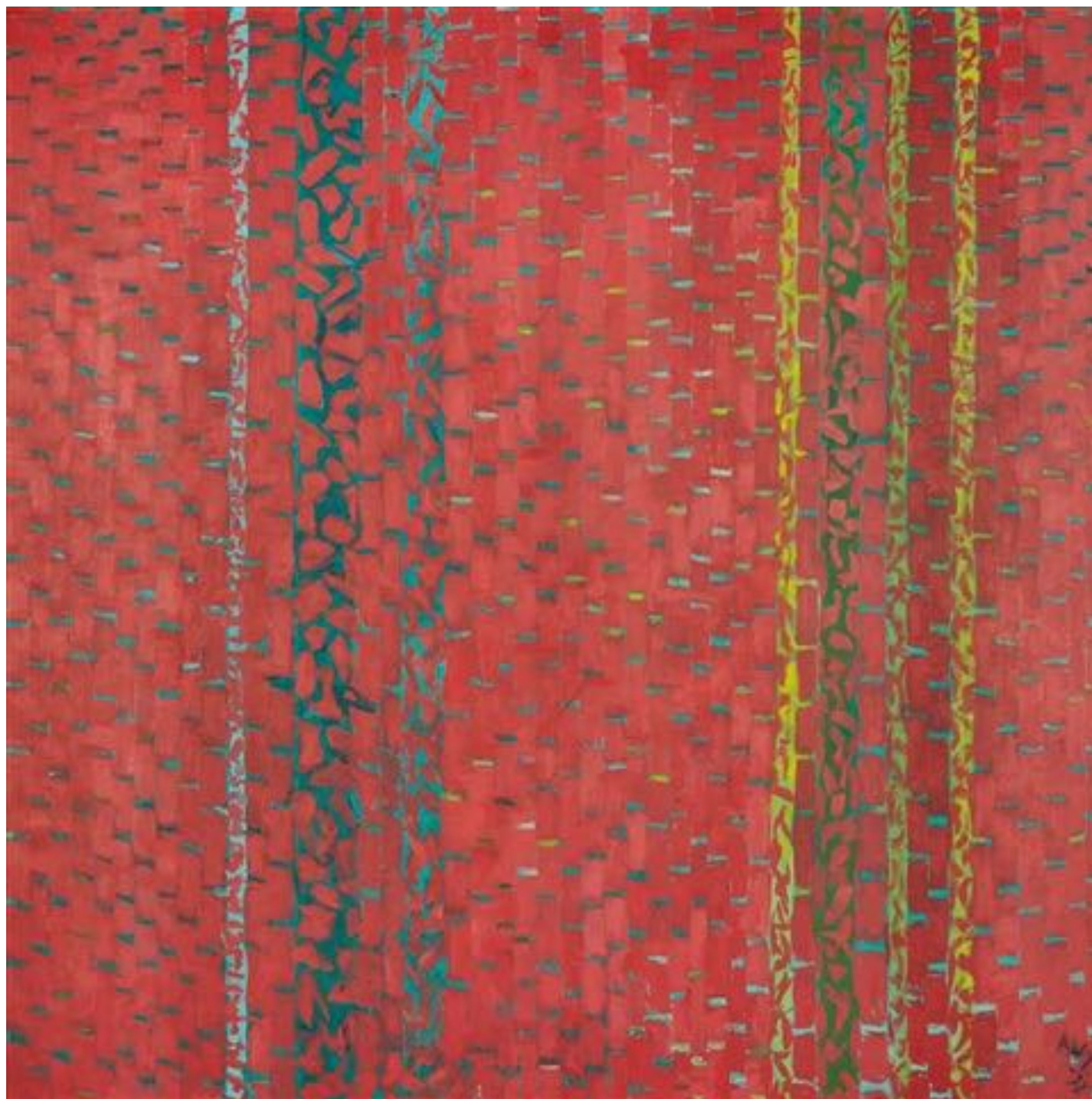
Alma Thomas, *Elysian Fields*, 1973, oil on canvas



Alma Thomas, *Wind and Crepe Myrtle Concerto*, 1973, acrylic on canvas



Cherry Blossom Symphony (1973)



Carnival of Autumn Leaves (1973)



White Roses (1976)