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Alexander Gray Associates features 1970s works by Jack Whitten, which embody a key moment in the formal development of Whitten’s work. Through the 1970s, Whitten’s aesthetic decisions turned toward abstraction and his process exemplified a desire to stretch the limits of paint as medium. Whitten’s non-relational abstract paintings of this period experiment with horizontality as an extension of gesture, with keen interest in exploring the potential for speed and automation, with acrylic as his muse. Working collaboratively with paint manufacturers and activating his knowledge in science and carpentry, Whitten developed new formulations of paint and new methods of painting—implementing tools like squeegees, rakes, and Afro combs—dragging large amounts of acrylic polymers across the canvas with a single gesture.

Whitten’s works on paper, particularly *Dispersal A #1* (1971), illustrate his process in formation, providing insight into the experimentation at the core of the larger-scale canvases. Jack Whitten’s innovative process resulted in dense surfaces of rich textures amplified by ghosted geometric forms. As in photography or printmaking, tools are employed to generate a transformative effect upon the surface in a matter of seconds. An enigmatic image of this process, Whitten’s paintings from this period capture the motion, immediacy, and fluidity of Whitten’s technique while remaining static, as if stalling time.