



## Julia Rommel

at Bureau,  
through Dec. 18  
178 Norfolk Street

Julia Rommel's first solo exhibition at Bureau, in 2012, featured diminutive monochromes perfectly scaled to the gallery's shoebox space. Bureau has since moved to more expansive digs, and Rommel's paintings have grown larger, their palettes more vibrant and complex. But geometric fields of faintly modulated color continue to play a central role in the artist's work. In *Future Pond* (2016) a bright green rectangle appears framed by loosely painted polygons in the same hue, as well as narrow strips of darker greens and grays. The compositional elements are both formal choices and material outcomes determined by Rommel's manual process of stretching and un-stretching the canvas as she works, opening up new areas to paint while folding over and creasing others. The six paintings here suggest depopulated versions of Matisse's stark geometric works of the 1910s and '20s. Far from process-driven formal exercises, Rommel's canvases feel warm and idiosyncratic, the visible marks of their production suggesting a kind of narrative of becoming. —*William S. Smith*

Pictured: Julia Rommel: *Hubble*, 2016, oil on linen, 81 by 86¾ inches.  
Courtesy Bureau, New York.