

# OCEAN DRIVE BETA

## Artist Odalis Valdivieso Shows Us Her Softer Side

By Brett Sokol | February 27, 2015 | [Culture](#)

The [MDC Museum of Art + Design](#) showcases a colorful turn for Odalis Valdivieso.



*Untitled #15*, 2014, by Odalis Valdivieso.

Call it a happy accident. Before spending a month in Berlin last year, Miami artist Odalis Valdivieso's work was known for its exploration of hard-edged geometric abstraction. That general approach still powers her latest paintings—part of her new solo exhibition, "Arrhythmic

Suite,” at the Miami Dade College Museum of Art + Design—but the sharp lines have been softened and suffused within warm multicolored hues.

The catalyst for this shift had little to do with an immersion into avant garde German culture, however. The original plan was to spend some time with the Berlin-based writer who is contributing an essay to a new artist’s book Valdivieso is producing, and then hunker down in solitude to focus on her painting.

Once overseas, though, Valdivieso stumbled upon a particular consistency of calligraphic inks used primarily for folkloric writing and hand-inscribed religious texts.

After some experimentation, she discovered the inks also offered a unique way to paint, moving Valdivieso to pile different colored blocks alongside and atop one another, fashioning a beguiling haze. “The ink creates soft and translucent layers that I find more fascinating than if I had used watercolors,” she says. “Watercolors give you a flat ending, whereas the ink is silky with a rainbow-like reflection when it dries.”

For an artist who has previously been as focused on art theory as on her art itself, the ink’s rapid drying time forced her to act in the moment and lose herself in the motions of painting: “It allows you to just react in an emotional way.” *Odalis Valdivieso’s “Arrhythmic Suite” is on display through April 26 at the Miami Dade County Museum of Art + Design, 600 Biscayne Blvd., Miami, 305-*

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