Seven years after her death, Helen Lundeberg was paid an extraordinary homage. The legendary band Sonic Youth dedicated a song to her on their 2006 album *Rather Ripped* in which they listed all the titles of the paintings in the exhibition *Helen Lundeberg and the Illusory Landscape*, which was shown posthumously at the Louis Stern Fine Arts gallery in Los Angeles. This was not by chance. Sonic Youth, whose album covers are adorned with works by Gerhard Richter and the West Coast artists Mike Kelley and Raymond Pettibon, is also an established name in the U.S. art scene. With their song, they immortalize a pioneer of 1960s Hard-edge painting. Lundeberg, whose works were also represented in the major survey show Pacific Standard Time, had a strong impact on West Coast painting. Born in Chicago in 1908, she moved with her family to Pasadena, where she attended art school. At the art college, she met her later husband Lorser Feitelson, with whom she studied. In the mid-1930s, they jointly founded Subjective Classicism, which was strongly influenced by Surrealism, Renaissance painting, and artists such as Giorgio de Chirico. While in the 1940s Lundeberg created dreamlike paintings in which she combines figures or objects with geometrically reduced spatial elements, at the end of the 1950s her painting approached pure abstraction. “My work has been concerned ... with the effort to embody, and to evoke states of mind, moods and emotions,” says Lundeberg. She distilled pure surfaces, glowing colors, and pure forms from her former lyrical interiors...
and landscapes. Lundeberg became one of the most important protagonists of a Californian kind of abstract art that was inspired more by Malevich, Mondrian, and Albers than by the New York School Abstract Expressionism that was taking the world by storm at the time. And unlike her male contemporaries such as de Kooning and Pollock, Lundeberg never made an international breakthrough.

*Her California Continuum* is the title of an exhibition at 60 Wall Gallery that juxtaposes Lundeberg with four other women abstract painters. The show focuses on a specifically female formal idiom that has manifested itself in various ways and been used in West Coast painterly abstraction from the 1950s up to the present day. The exhibition resulted from exchanges between Liz Christensen, Senior Curator of Deutsche Bank in New York, and the Los Angeles-based painter Katy Crowe, who is represented in the Deutsche Bank Collection. *Her California Continuum* is part of an ongoing series for which artists in the corporate collection are invited to co-curate thematic exhibitions featuring works from the collection as well as loans. Crowe, who was born in 1952, was interested in creating a formal dialogue between the different artists, as well as promoting the visibility of female artists, which is often lacking. Apart from Lundeberg, another Hard-edge woman artist is on view at the Wall Street 60 gallery: June Harwood. Born in 1933, Harwood actually belongs to the generation after Lundeberg’s. But both women painted abstract geometric works in the 1960s, and like Lundeberg, who imbued her compositions with associative and lyrical elements, Harwood was not content with merely reducing the canvas to flat color surfaces that contrast positively and negatively. By developing open, interwoven forms and kinetic effects, she added dynamism and movement to static Hard-edge painting.

The link between formal precision, intuition, as well as an experimental and playful dimension, unites all of the artists in the exhibition. They are all talented colorists. Virginia Holt started painting in the 1960s. Her expressive abstractions are
inspired by music and pop culture, especially by the sound of Captain Beefheart. She was friends with Don Van Vliet, who painted himself. Just as Captain Beefheart created his own unique psychedelic style from the classic music genres rock and blues, Holt used quotations from modernism and the history of geometric abstraction to develop new expressive possibilities. Katy Crowe began painting in the 1970s, and the two artists have maintained a lively exchange since the 2000s. From the very beginning, Crowe felt drawn in her painting to fundamental architectonic forms, to which she later added organic structures, which she also reduced and broke down to explore the effects of color and surface. The youngest artist in the exhibition, Pamela Jorden went to California in 1994 to study at Cal Arts, an art school famous for its conceptual and institution-critical orientation. In the mid-1990s, painting was regarded as a conservative medium with little promise. But Jordan managed to combine conceptual thinking with the vocabulary of modern abstraction. Her paintings recall geological cross-sections of layers of the earth or tectonic plates sliding past one another. Thus, Her California Continuum draws a line that connects the postwar period with the present. On this line, manifold painterly approaches, discourses, and biographies cross, showing the strong impact women artists have had on California painting of the last decades and how underestimated female artists have been.
Pamela Jorden, Intervals of Still Water, 2011. Courtesy of Artist and Artist Pension Trust Los Angeles collection