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guitar hero | "All art aspires to the condition of music," declared Walter Pater in 1877. But could the aesthete have anticipated Tim Bavington's 2005 painting *Hey Joe (Double Diamond)*, below, which depicts, in a series of colorful lines, a guitar solo by Jimi Hendrix?

Hey Joe was one of eight works that appeared in a sold-out solo exhibition that ran through November 12 at Jack Shainman Gallery in New York. A painter of bright-colored abstractions, Bavington translates music into color and form, assembling airbrushed panels that have multicolored stripes ("guitar solos") or are monochromatic ("amplifiers"). He also makes large "stack" paintings with multiple striped sections that represent whole songs.

American collectors pounced on the works, which were priced at \$17,500 to \$36,000, and one is a promised and accepted gift to the Museum of Modern Art—*Physical S.E.X.*, from 2005, a guitar solo sandwiched between two pitch-black amps, perhaps a reference to the Darkness, the British rock band on whose song it is based. (Bavington has also covered classics by Jethro Tull and Led Zeppelin.) Shainman says MoMA's interest in Bavington's work has to do with the artist's strong relationship with postwar abstraction. Indeed, the painting was in the same room as a Mark Rothko in the recent exhibition "Extreme Abstraction" at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York.

Born and raised in the U.K., Bavington has lived in Las Vegas for seven years, having moved there to study with art critic Dave Hickey at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. Hickey, it is worth recalling, was once a music critic for the New York newspaper the *Village Voice*. SARAH DOUGLAS

