

## Circular Spin

Kāryn Taylor's works do what art does best. Subtle and worthy of contemplation, they call on the viewer to bring all their faculties to fully attend to the works in depth. The minimal, finely tuned compositions are reticent, as within their quietude lies an expansive abstraction born out of the artist's quest for understanding the workings of the world.

It has been said that Taylor's practice is an exploration of reality, one that spans material and immaterial phenomena. Our physical senses determine the initial experience of a work like *Circular Spin*, as we take in its shape, colour, image and eminence. With great facility, Taylor deploys acrylic to create a geometric composition within a larger form, an image that appears to hover just behind the synthetic surface, and to have depth and luminosity. *Circular Spin* is dynamic rather than static.

We experience the work as visually active, able to generate a configuration of glowing lines that delineate an existence in time as well as in space. Are our eyes and mind playing tricks? *Circular Spin*, like other works by the artist, influences the space around and in front of it, and is affected by its environment. It is a container of expression that escapes its boundaries, its physical and sensual experience suggesting it contains similarly expansive conceptual content.

I have called Taylor's works reticent because she asks the viewer to bring their own curiosity to venture beyond the visually haptic experience. Knowledgeable about the history of abstract art, Taylor hints at her own wider concerns and inquiry through her descriptive titles. Each of these attributes offers a starting point for the viewer's engagement beyond expressive physical qualities. Taylor's methodology is based in an investigation of the spatial and perceptual possibilities of forms and materials, especially in the interaction of light and matter. Yet a by-product of her inquiry into the behaviour of properties is the metaphysics of human experience, consciousness and what cannot, or cannot yet, be explained in language.

Taylor's practice concurrently highlights the mysteries of experience. The relationship between knowledge and other forms of consciousness is heightened today, as science and technology generate 'breakthroughs' that include machine and artificial intelligence, autonomous technologies and virtual services. These lead to questions such as, how should we understand the ramifications of cognitive and technological developments, from space plasma physics to neural computation? And how are life



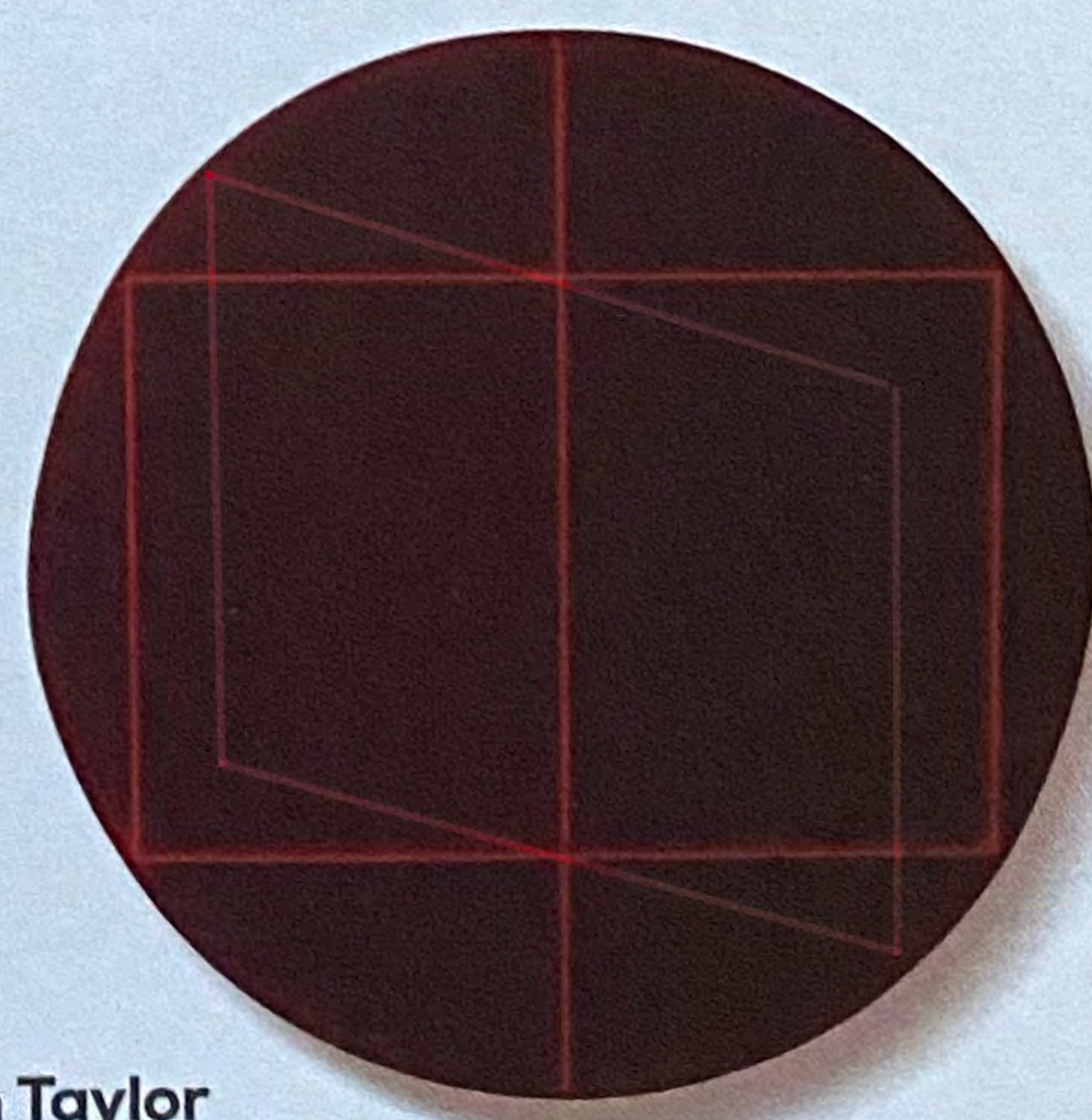


forms—natural and artificial—being influenced? An awareness of how we discriminate between rational, conscious and subjective natures intersects, in part, with Taylor's concerns.

The visual dynamism in a work such as *Circular Spin* is a hook into concepts beyond the visual. While we can describe the experience of *Circular Spin*, few of us know how to put its operation into scientific language, yet we recognise it is equally possible to describe it mathematically. Some might deny that acrylic could give such effects, while others will empirically describe the qualities of refraction and the dilution of light. Responses to the work's potentiality are based in a mix of experience, belief, theories and systems, and symbolic languages.

At the core of *Circular Spin* is an activation of subjective and objective realms, encouraging a mutual awareness. Such are the intersections that artists explore, investigating unknowns in ways that are distinct from but related to other disciplines, considering connections, contradictions and paradoxes. Taylor talks of her interest in the 'fuzziness' of current knowledge of quantum physics, but clearly human understanding itself is a fuzzy process based on speculation and intuition as much as evidence. In a world where economic worth has become the driver for political ideology and social value, *Circular Spin* reminds how conscious and unconscious subjectivity jointly play a part in what would otherwise be overtly rational and fallible ways of being.

**Zara Stanhope**



**Kāryn Taylor**

Born 1969, New Zealand  
*Circular Spin*, 2018  
acrylic, edition of 5  
Diam. 79 x D 6 cm  
Acquired 2018  
Courtesy the artist and  
Sanderson Contemporary,  
Auckland, NZ