

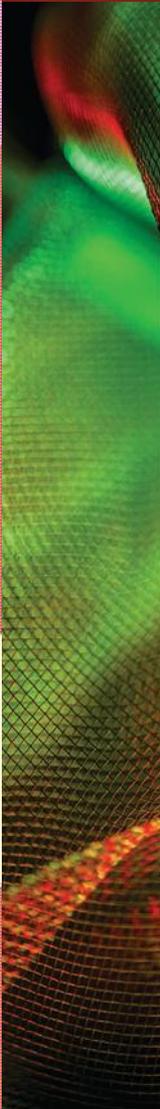
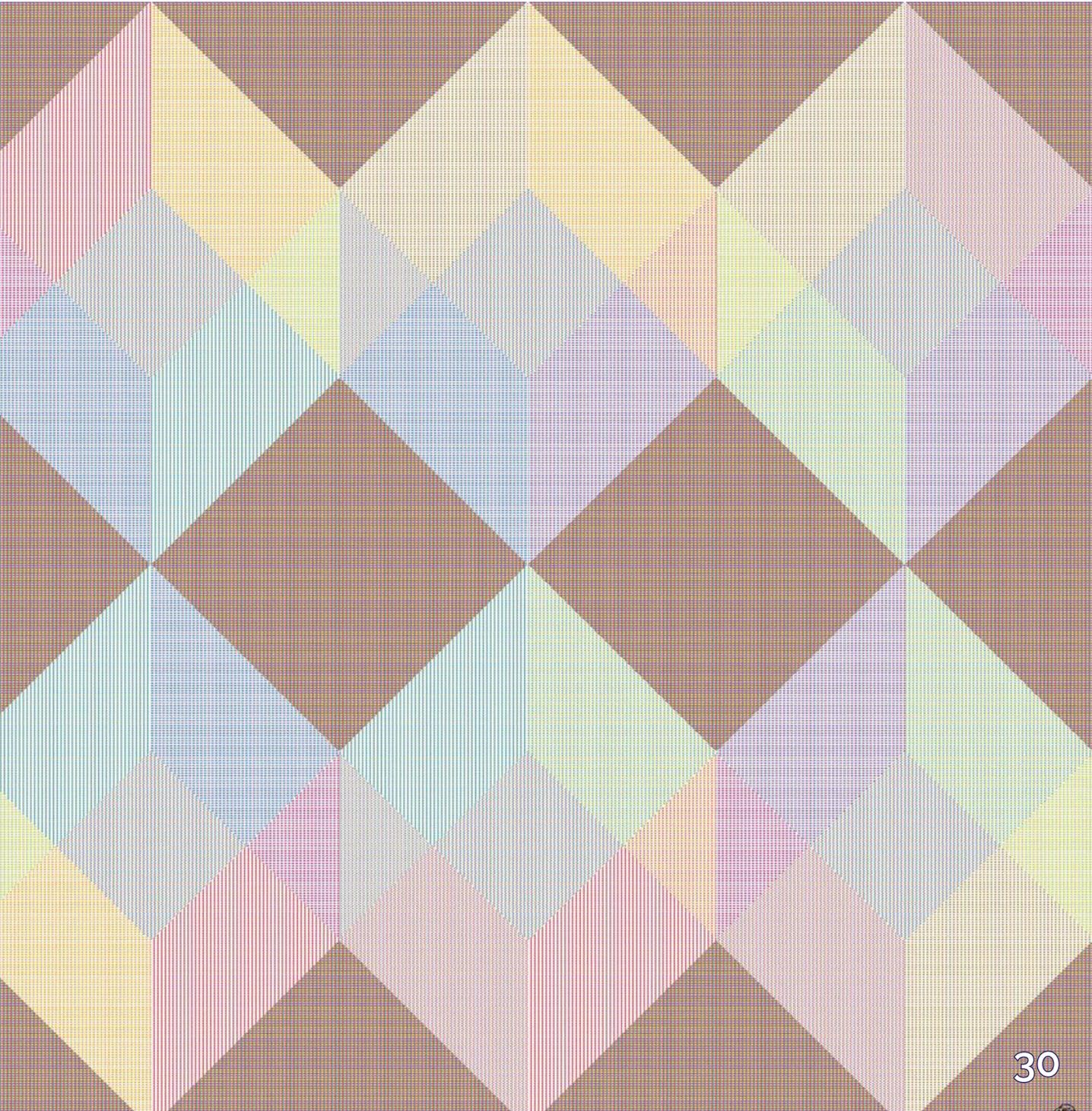
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ArtAscent

Art & Literature Journal 50 August 2021



FEATURE:
Abstract





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Abstract

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Foreword and Artist Profiles

Cinzia Franceschini is an Italian Art Historian specializing in History of Art Criticism, with a second degree in Communication and Sociology. She works in museum education departments and as a freelance writer. She writes about contemporary arts and social sciences, mostly about them at the same time.

Magdalena Riegler holds a bachelor's degree in Theater, Film, and Media Studies. In 2019/20, she did an exchange year in Berlin, Germany, at the Freie Universität where she focused on film studies. Magdalena is currently living in the Netherlands, working on her master thesis, and obtaining a second Bachelor in Circus and Performance Arts at the Fontys University in Tilburg (NL).

Oleksandra Osadcha is a freelance art historian, art critic and art exhibition curator living in Kharkiv, Ukraine. She earned her Master of Art degree in art history at Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Arts, where she is also currently researching her doctoral thesis.



On the Front Cover
Huddled in Elevation
by Todd Brugman



On the Back Cover
On My Mind
by Stephanie Buraga Fisher

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Art & Literature Journal

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ABST

RAC

Foreword

Have you ever tried to look at an object for so long or repeat a word so many times that you no longer recognize its shape, no longer understand its meaning? The more you observe an image, the more abstract it becomes. Yet paradoxically, the deeper you know something, the more real and known it should appear. However, there is always something mysterious and unfamiliar in perceiving something in its entirety. That is the power of abstraction—the potential of ideas.

Abstract art can conjure an impression, transforming reality into something new but no less powerful. It is real to the extent that it is the production—the reflection of human experience and mind. Abstract forms can emanate our subjectivity: they can convey our emotions and inner world, formally expressing them. Or they can recreate—through visual metaphors and archetypal forms—ideas about the world and society that would otherwise find no other means of expression. They reach out to us from an unconscious point of view because of their colours, contours, textures. What is certain is that abstract art evokes and suggests rather than explicitly shows.

Philosophers and art critics have long wondered about the tendency towards abstraction in the arts. Abstraction is one of the first forms of creating art. But is it an escape from the organic reality, or on the contrary, a more intimate and introjected understanding of it? The debate is always open.

In this 50th volume of *ArtAscent Art & Literature Journal*, we explore the practice of artists and writers who can give a suggestive form to their thoughts, feelings or memories. They masterfully deal with the abstract substance of reality: mental schemes, sensations, data, ideas and all the rules that underlie the surface layer of nature. Abstract is not synonymous with unreal: it is a fascinating mixture of reality and essence. It combines outer reality and inner world, moving in a terrain perceptible through mind and emotions. To understand and appreciate it, you just have to keep an open mind and feel its sense of tidied freedom.

By Cinzia Franceschini



August Barringer

Effulgence

Mixed Media | 244 x 610 x 150 cm | \$10,000



Artist

There is a blurring concept, constantly evolving and questioned in its abstract nature: gender. Artists such as August Barringer raise questions about gender dichotomy and challenge the binary model of mainstream society. They can do so through the power of abstract art.

August's installation *Effulgence* is a striking example of this. The connected sculptures evoke the concepts of masculinity and femininity without clearly defining them but instead fusing them into a single, mysterious and powerful abstract form. Looking at it, everyone can have a different interpretation of what they see, just as everyone has a different conception of their gender or sexual identity and experience.

August's artistic practice seems to thrive on the freedom of reception and interpretation that abstract forms allow. A freedom that is common to August's sculpture and gender identity and generally to abstract formalism. Choosing to make abstract art is never a choice without connotations. It means freeing oneself from the limits imposed by figuration, freeing the bodies from their real-world confines and pre-defined labels. No one can define whether the exuberant *Effulgence* is man or woman or anything else. You can only externalize what it arouses, the sensations it evokes, what you think of when you look at it.

August's installation, characterized by formal indefiniteness, speaks of the difficulty of finding an identity and being recognized for the form that makes us feel most comfortable and represents us. It embodies the dysphoria transgender people experience while living in bodies that do not conform to mainstream standards

and in finally having their identity recognized. Thanks to its monumentality, however, August's artwork celebrates their freedom. Created on a welded steel skeleton and using industrial materials, *Effulgence* has an organic but imperfect form. In light of August's unfettered imagination, it is not surprising that among the great masters of contemporary art who may have influenced her, one is Alexander Calder. The use of cold, industrial materials such as steel, like in his famous mobiles, is combined with the refined yet sculptural elegance of organic and abstract forms—just as in August's case. They, too, do not lack in power, being decorated with strong and striking colours.

August Barringer is an artist-activist who has managed to channel her experience as a transgender woman into an abstract art form that is not far removed from the world and its problems. Currently living in Los Angeles but originally from Connecticut, August Barringer graduated from Occidental College. She is the winner of the Mortar Board Award for the Promotion of the Status of Women for her commitment to supporting trans women. Through her art, she explores the most abstract possibility of all: to be what we want.

By Cinzia Franceschini





Gold

How can literature be abstract? Can a text, a piece of writing, a poem, take on an evocative appearance, tell a story without explicitly revealing itself? This is the style that distinguishes Alex Steiner's creations.

Alex writes about experiences, memories, life—and she does it through a style that could be described as creative non-fiction. Her writings are not entirely imaginary; on the contrary, they link to the author's biography. However, the way these stories are told is full of creativity, fantasy and metaphors. An imaginative charge makes them powerful and meaningful and fills the reader with mental images.

Like Alex's writing style, *Humble Pi* deals with an abstract and, at the same time, real concept, consubstantiated in reality as a mathematical constant: the number pi (π). Pi goes beyond being a mere mathematical construct, a formula: it speaks of nature, forms and human life. Through Alex's words, Pi becomes a metaphor for talking about the laws, the constants, the abstract subtext that dominate our existence. There is only one way, according to the author, to see this law that governs life—like an equation that balances its trajectories—and that is to pay attention to it. If you give meticulous attention to the facts of your life, you can begin to see circles in everything. You can start to grasp the patterns hidden beyond personal experience.

The piece chosen by Alex for this issue is about the most abstract creation of all: life. And she tries to probe its theory, knowing that, like the best poetry, it can only be understood on a theoretical level and

never captured in its entirety. *Humble Pi* suggests how abstract thought is often the key to understanding our complex reality. Abstract ideas are capable of defining, of giving new concept to worlds that would otherwise be infinite and therefore difficult to explore. The writer has no difficulty with her texts moving through abstract terrain, often finding it much easier to confront than to identify with reality.

Her literary practice develops around a theme capable of stirring her imagination and her desire to research and reflect. At this point, the theme is defined according to her personal experience and story, adhering to her narrative. Literature and art become a medium for bringing order to mental chaos, picking materials from a terrain of infinite possibilities, and creating something intensely felt. That is why Alex's literature feeds on biographies, misery memories, hyper realistic-art and anything non-fiction, sensing the urgency of drawing something exquisite from reality.

Reality and its abstract patterns—this writer knows what they are. Alex Steiner currently lives in London; she studied Criminal Justice, but ultimately, she found her place teaching for numerous NGOs in developing countries. To enter her narratives means to look at reality through the lens of an abstract shadow.

By Cinzia Franceschini

Writer

Alex Steiner



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ArtAscent

Humble π

If you pay attention long enough, you'll find circles in everything. From the embryo that patterned you, to the patterns designing nature's abstract markings. The eyes capturing this world and the planets' spheres, lighting the distance. And, ever since I started my proof, I can't seem to escape its circular constants. The equation never changes, only its abstract integers.

I'd found myself in a state of suspended animation, tracing theoretical trajectories through spaces, unmapped. And, we'd been running the numbers for years. Endless time, planning co-ordinates and their projected courses. And, I loathed every minute of it. Seems our choices have far less meaning when there are so many on offer. Just as one's direction means so little, when one hasn't accurately calculated their bearings.

I was unlucky. I'd run the numbers again and again. It wasn't just my Mom getting sick or my Dad dying... It was everything in between. The figures practically calculated themselves; no practicality required, at all. So, on that glorious day, in a chalet more beautiful than I'd ever taken more time to admire than rebuke. The absence of my espresso was as good a co-ordinate as any other, to chart my abstract meteoric dissent's trajectory.

I rearranged all my self-fulfilling prophecies to suit my narrative, positioning reality in abstract's shadow. Our luck had, finally, run out. Perhaps, we'd lost it in a divorce, another deal with a soon-to-be-revealed devil. Maybe, someone had lifted it just before we stopped throwing the best parties...

Humble π (continued)

And then, interrupted once more by reality's poor timing... my brother's friend arrived. He was as kind and unlucky as everyone else plotting their own survival. His intentions pure, only his turbulent voyage inevitably spelled certain doom. He traced his unrelenting misfortune in the face of life's odds, so far. Only, before I could agree and plunge into those gravity's currents, too far beyond our pull, to actualize in reality—we were *both* interrupted.

"What makes you so special?" chuckled an unimpressed lawyer. "Why would this universe prioritize your downfall?" Selfish, he wondered off.

They were the first words I'd really *heard* for some time, above the static of all our distanced guesswork and catastrophizing. The first time I seriously considered, I could be going through some terribly unlucky things, but still be lucky. The first time I considered if my equations were the issue, moreover my co-ordinates, and the next relative destinations already focused in my mind's eye.

Leaving to work in India, despite so many years of imaginary planning, was more challenging than I'd projected in poetic narration. Theoretical personifications proved hollow in respect to life's heavy-handed addition. The once daunting arithmetic seemed so simple, standing before the people dragged along in misfortune's true wake.

I saw luck's antithesis, plotted by misfortunes' finite co-ordinates. My own fortune's, rounding every corner thereafter. I saw it every morning as my students ran to greet me, carrying my books with the light-hearted smiles, I'd never managed to pull off. That luck, that accompanied them everywhere, no matter yesterday's quotients. Their inherent cored curriculum, far out calculating my privileged education's summations. I saw it just the way they saw me, never once mistaking either of us as unlucky. They'd travelled too far to make such a gross miscalculation.

Ever since I started charting life's equations, I can't stop finding them encoded in the patterns of this impossible life and all its probabilities. The quantitative relationship

between our experiences and the humility, it renders us. The amount of times one value is contained in another. The distances we travel, no matter their path or trajectory, always calculate the same substance of our core. The foundation of what harnesses your life and person's path. The ratio between a person's experience and their humility, that always defines our nucleus. Just as pi does.

The first time I returned home without one, nor someone to welcome me back, everything looked so different since the days I'd fled. The worst airport I'd ever seen upon arrival, was electric upon my departure. Lights blanketing every corner I never cared to see. Waiting upon my long-forgotten espresso, in the glory of that lacklustre air-conditioning, rebelling against my poorly aged woes. And then, I remembered the last time I'd found myself suspended in my own animations and lost. Willing for this life to accentuate its place in my own time, without having changed my perspective, at all.

Ever since my Dad died, I find my need to escape yesterday dissipating. My centre pulling me back to that life I couldn't leave behind fast enough. If only so I can be reminded, I had such a coveted place, any place—to begin with. That place from where I measure and plot my own revolutions. The same place, I'd once marked as misfortune's destination, before I was well-travelled, in life.

I remind myself of those ellipses, the central forces followed in vein, before I'd even learned to calibrate my own accuracy. The corrections and correlations I've held so dear and wielded against others, before I'd even travelled their distance. And, these days, I don't wish myself anywhere else but that incredible house I couldn't wait to escape, talking to my Dad about all the shit I got wrong. Before, I found my way back home.

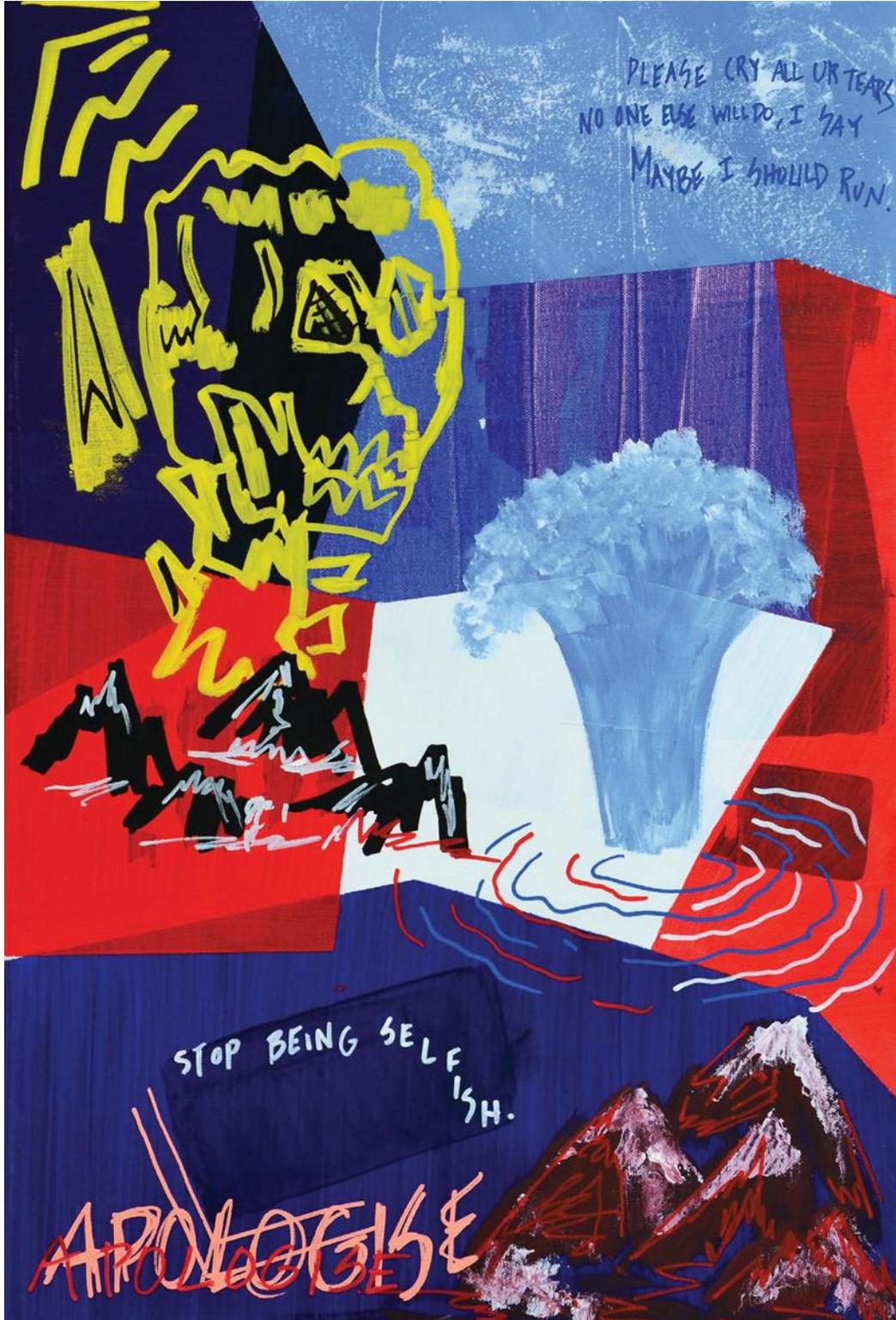
On the surface, not knowing what's to come seems problematic. But nowadays, I relish the notion that our plans and their paths are fraught with miscalculations and infinite possibilities. That, we can never predict our Mandala's path. They are the same abstract numbers carrying flawed theories, calculating infinite equations, and the imperfect sums defining us all. The very equations inspiring the hope and the humility, that position us all over again.



Stella Guan
www.stellaguanart.com

I Wrote A Haiku

Mixed media on canvas | 60 x 40 cm | \$1,500



Artist

Stella Guan invites us into the often blocked and difficult to navigate domain of mental struggles. Stella's paintings guide the spectator to the context of an inner and outer self, connecting both worlds boldly and vigorously.

With abstract art tools, Stella's images have the power to coax from each observer a personal interpretation. The randomness of the abstract suddenly makes sense. Our life experiences and feelings influence our interpretations, as do discussions we've engaged in and media we've taken in. These abstract pieces thus become a reflection of our private thoughts and ideas. The paintings *I Wrote A Haiku*, *Spoonfed Negativity* and *Hardhead*, created as a series, suggest the interior landscape of our beautiful minds and how they might work—layers of thoughts, sharp turns, collaborating and then colliding concepts. The many voices in our heads are bravely written on the canvas, embedded in colours, figures and landscapes. They travel further in space and time to make a connection now and again later.

The images feel like a trip to another world, but not a stranger's world—it is our own. The possibilities are endless, but the way is clear. Perhaps as a spectator, we are triggered by one of the impulsive words such as "APOLOGISE." Do we need to apologize to someone, to ourselves? Do we need to set something free? The images can encourage us to process unwished feelings, and with their honesty, it is a willing release.

Observing Stella's techniques, as seen in the bright blue and red and the sharp lines, we are reminded of a quiet Wassily Kandinsky painting. Someone, though,

who might be an even closer artist sibling is Hilma af Klint, a Swedish painter and pioneer of abstract art from the early 20th century. Her paintings may not at first glance resemble Stella's work—the colour use is softer—but the emotional strength, use of words and occasional echoes of Realism are similar.

Stella's paintings allow us to plan a mini-vacation and take in a deep breath of clean mountain air. Our newly opened mind is better able to deal with inner conflicts and external happenings. We come back with a new sense of self-awareness.

The influence of past experiences, positive or negative, are shown in these pieces and are, as Stella defines them, "an ultimate form of expression."

Stella Guan is a non-binary artist from Brooklyn, New York. They are studying at the American University of Paris, majoring in Fine Arts and minoring in Creative Writing. Besides that, Stella is pursuing a career as a tattoo artist. Their work was shown in various exhibitions throughout 2020/21: *Skin Mutts: A Conversation about Cultural Identity* (Group Exhibition); *Toula Gallery: Summer's Over* (Group Exhibition); *The Holy Art: "Re-birth"* (Virtual Group Exhibition); *The Holy Art: "Identity"* (Virtual Group Exhibition); *The Holy Art: "Utopia"* (Virtual Group Exhibition).

By Magdalena Riegler

Silver

Stella Guan

Spoonfed Negativity

Mixed media on canvas | 60 x 40 cm | \$1,500



Artist

Hardhead

Mixed media on canvas | 60 x 40 cm | \$1,500





Syl Arena
<https://sylarena.com>

Bronze

Ela

Chromogenic print | 96 x 137 x 15 cm | \$1,800



Artist

Conventionally, the ties of photography with reality are never questioned since the camera's shutter seems to fix the surface of a moment. However, artists like Syl Arena push photography's capacity for abstract expression.

László Moholy-Nagy, a prominent figure of Bauhaus photography, claimed, "The organization of light and shadow effects produce a new enrichment of vision." If he had lived in the era of colour photography, he would have added hue to that list. And yet, such a "formalistic" approach, which characterized the Bauhaus methodology, is what inspires Arena in his artistic pursuits.

Drifting away from literal representation common in photography, the artist focuses on non-figurative compositions in his *Constructed Voids* project. This series features assembled materials—including paper and textiles—built in the studio and positioned to create intensive colour projections of deconstructed light. Such scaling of compositional elements is one of the primary tasks in creating abstract images. The modulations of scale allow us to filter unnecessary connotations. Close-up shots captured with the photographer's 4x5 view camera deliver a haptic experience wholly detached from any particular subject. Any predestinated narration is also removed by titles made up of fabricated words, challenging our habit to look for explanations of the thing's nature in their names.

Although the texture of the constructions—their curves and shapes—certainly define the trajectory a viewer explores the images, they serve as a trap for the void, the negative space concealed between them. Looking at Arena's photographs, you almost physically feel the distance between the camera and the suggested

landscape. This tension is externalized with a complex interplay of colours in both lights and shadows, sending the portrayed world beyond the image's edges.

Arena further explores the very materiality of the photographic print. As a photography researcher Geoffrey Batchen noted, "All of us tend to look at photographs as if we are simply gazing through a two-dimensional window onto some outside world. This is almost a perceptual necessity; in order to see what the photograph is of, we must first repress our consciousness of what the photograph is." In contrast, Arena includes the physical form of the prints themselves in his explorations, exhibiting them in a curved format rather than a flat object.

Syl Arena is a California-based artist and educator. Arena earned his BFA in Studio Art-Photography from the University of Arizona (Tucson, Arizona) and MFA in Visual Arts-Photography from Lesley University (Cambridge, Massachusetts). He teaches analogue and digital photography at Cuesta College in San Luis Obispo and West Valley College in Saratoga and workshops across the country and abroad (at events in Brazil, Canada, Cuba, and Dubai). Arena's photography has been exhibited throughout the U.S. and internationally. Among the most noteworthy of his shows are the Aperture Foundation in New York, the CICA Museum in Korea, and Fototeca de Cuba in Havana.

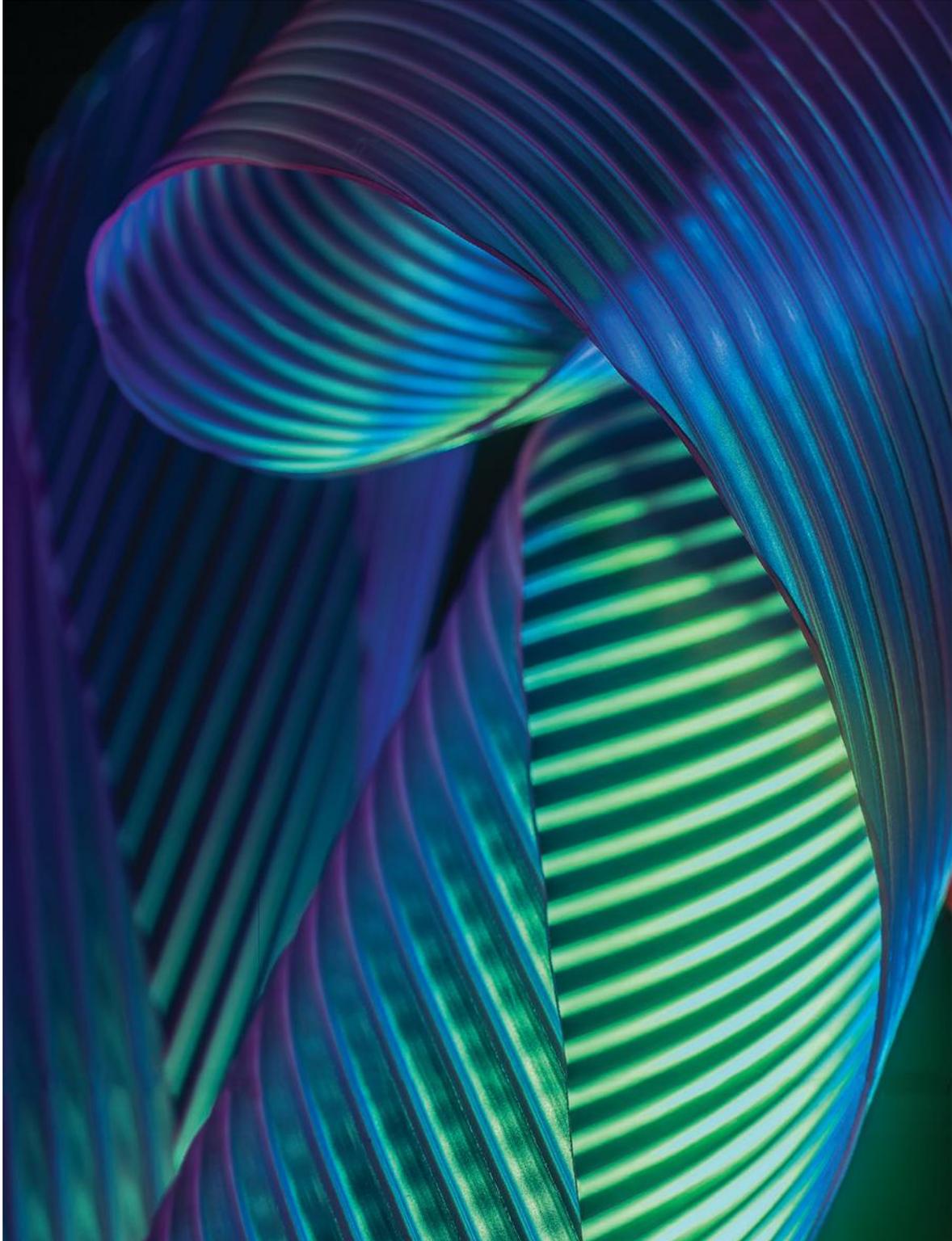
By Oleksandra Osadcha

Bronze

Syl Arena

Jern

Chromogenic print | 96 x 137 x 15 cm | \$1,800



Artist

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ArtAscent

Maru

Chromogenic print | 96 x 137 x 15 cm | \$1,800



Bronze

Syl Arena

Amsu

Chromogenic print | 96 x 137 x 15 cm | \$1,800



Artist

25

ArtAscent

Parna

Chromogenic print | 96 x 137 x 15 cm | \$1,800





Todd Brugman

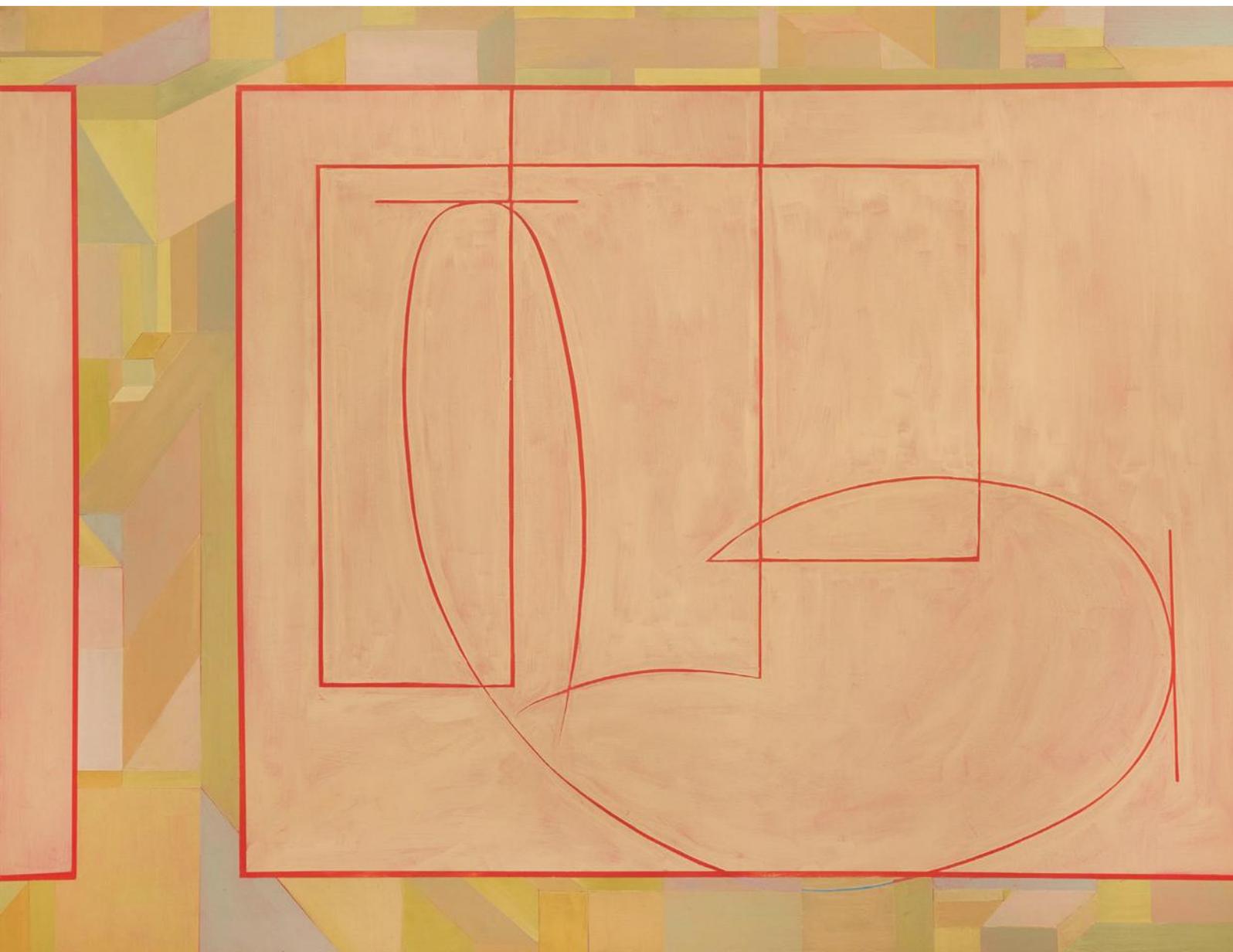
www.toddrugman.com

Fragments in Center

Oil on mounted birch panel | 61 x 92 x 4 cm | \$2,400



Huddled with Love (Endless Bounds)
Oil on mounted birch panel | 122 x 92 x 4 cm | \$4,200



Todd Brugman

Warmth from a Warm Love

Oil on mounted birch panel | 102 x 76 x 4 cm | \$2,800





The Erasure of Delphine's Bridge

The bluesman sings Delphine into the dark. Watching nothing. Rolling tongue around the lyrics. His eyes, slo-mo, as the harmonica weeps its way in with the bridge—asking questions—where has she been and why don't she love him no more? He sees her then red-haloed-lit, under his eyelids, *Ain't had no lovin'*, he nasal-sings. *Why dontcha come back to me?*

Delphine listens inside dark. She opens her mind at the bridge when she hears the weeping. It is time to sigh, to dream of gondolas, to draw back the yellow curtains while the world still sleeps.

The bluesman sings into the dawn. Watching the apricot of waking skies. Wanting to know if she hears his lilting. Not knowing he should look up. If he looked, he would see.

She stands midway on the bridge. Near far. Squinting down on the ripples arrow-heading beneath as the bluesman sings his way through green waters, reaching out beneath grey ancient arches. Hoping to catch echoes of her replies.

Delphine needs the song to change as it travels beneath the bridge, for it to leave. With its minor whining key and leaning into the chorus to sing, oooo-oooo, *I will still love you...* For the dark conflict to go and for technicolour. To lift her dreams away.

She is not caught in the culmination of filaments now, but in this space where neither reach. In the gap of isolation. Not stretching out to the dark hues on her left, or to the rich vibrancy on her right.

Neither hearing, nor seeing, Delphine embraces her bridge, seeing path.

The bluesman sings on into the gloom. The harmonica weeps.

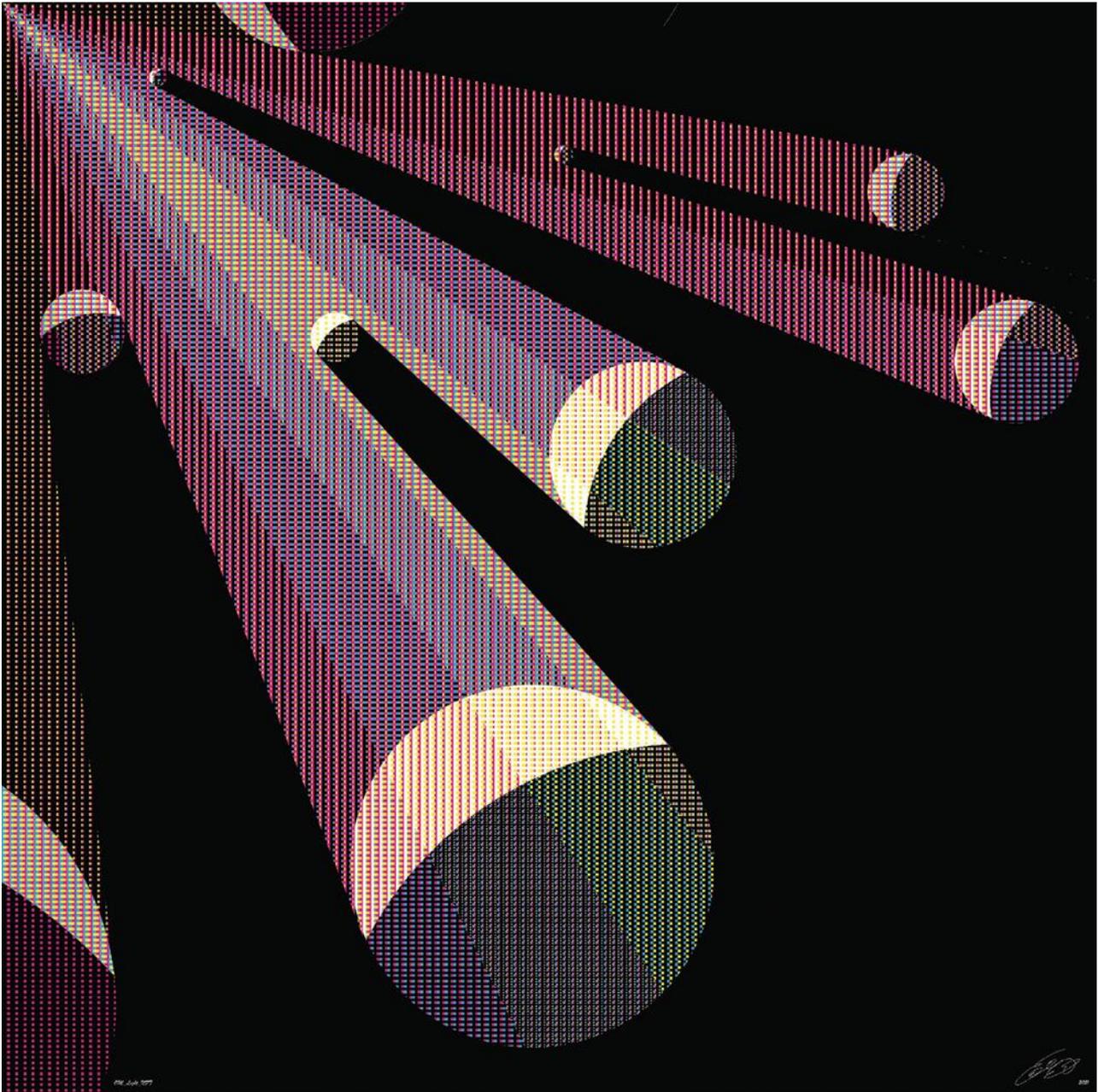


Decheng Cui

www.cuidecheng.com

Light 1

Print on aluminum, limited edition of 5 | 61 x 61 x 1 cm | \$1,000



Light 2

Print on aluminum, limited edition of 5 | 61 x 61 x 1 cm | \$1,000

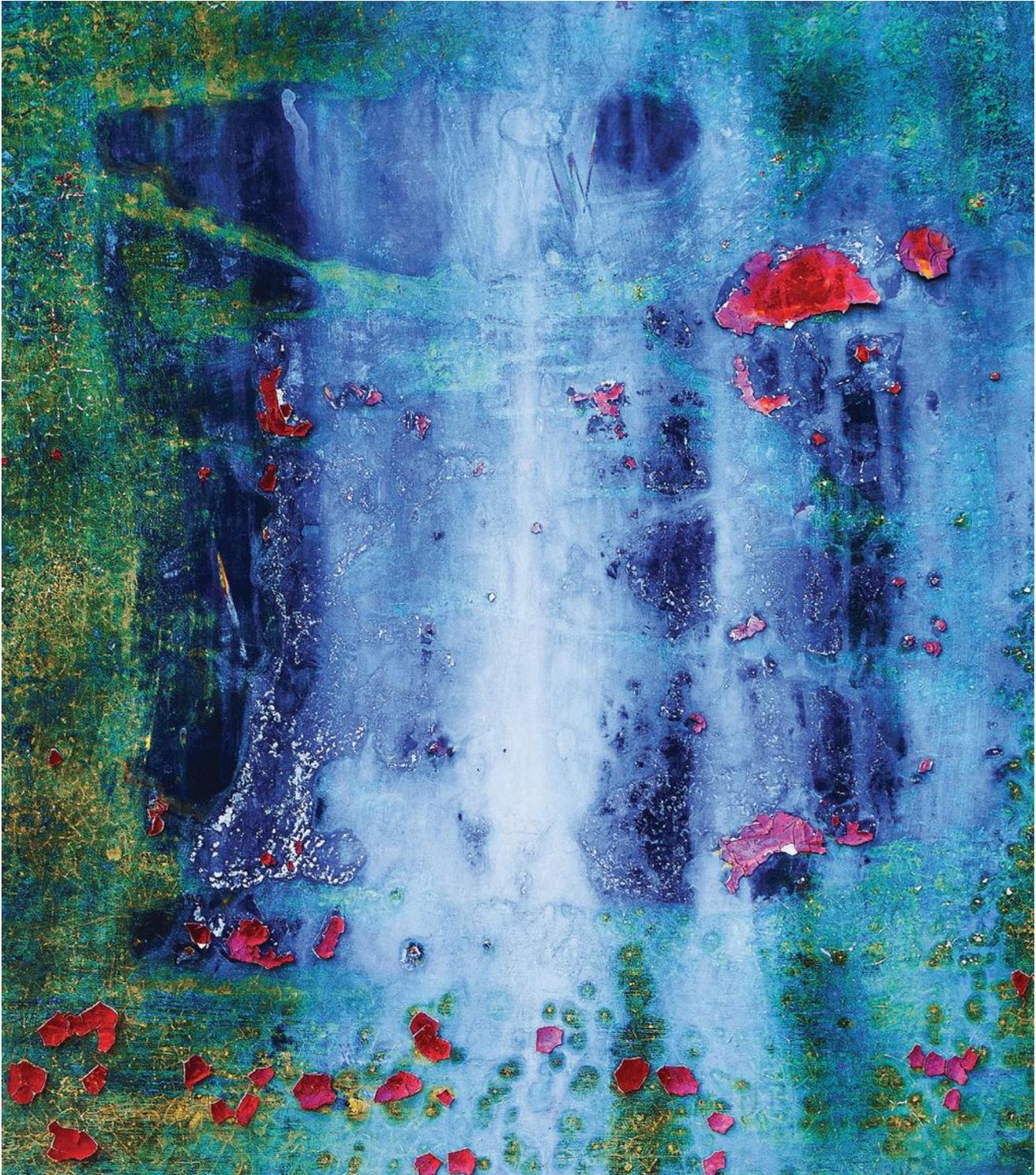




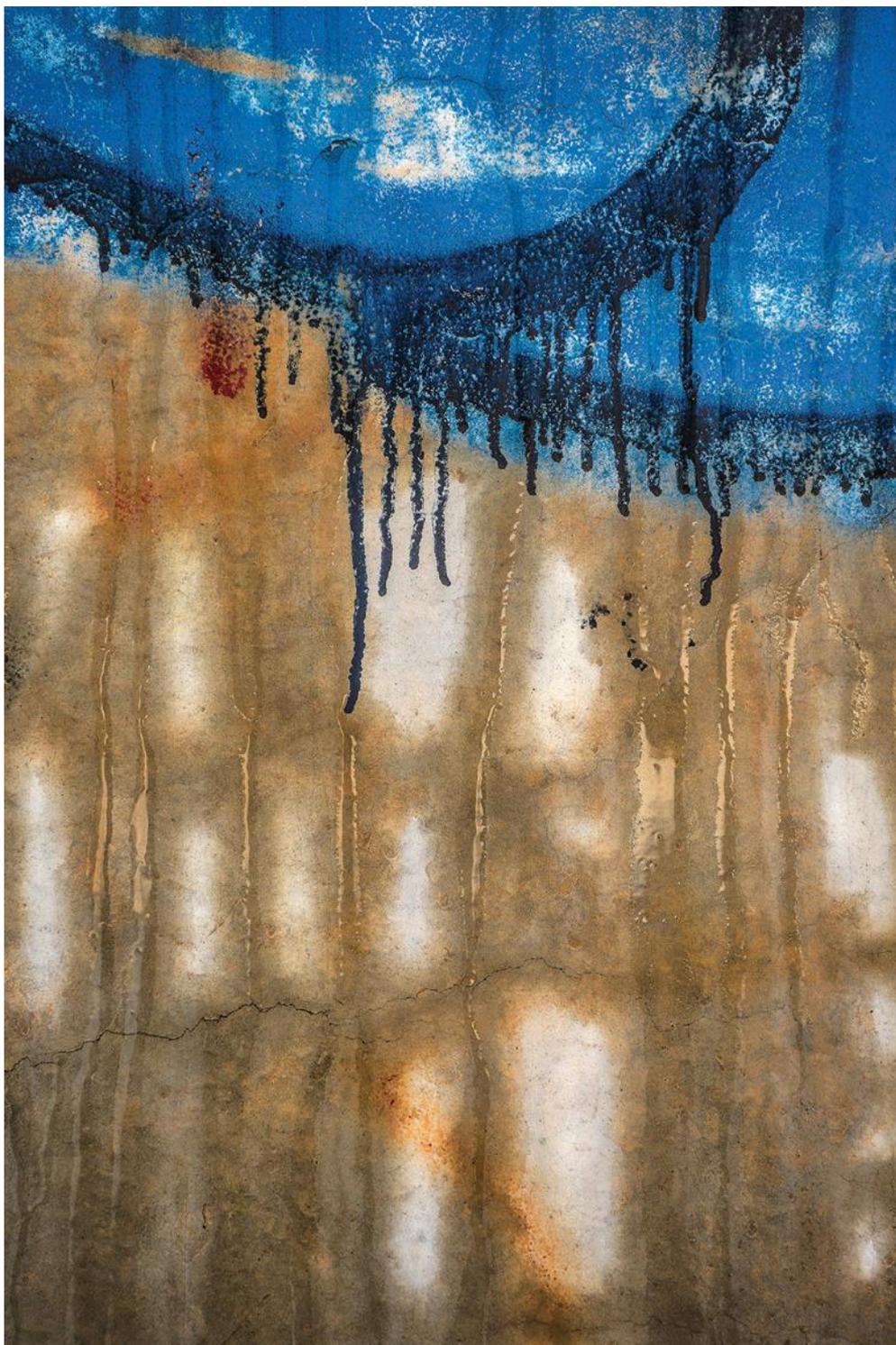
Dakin Roy
dakinroy.com

Untitled

Digital Photography | 41 x 61 cm | \$500



Untitled
Digital Photography | 41 x 61 cm | \$500



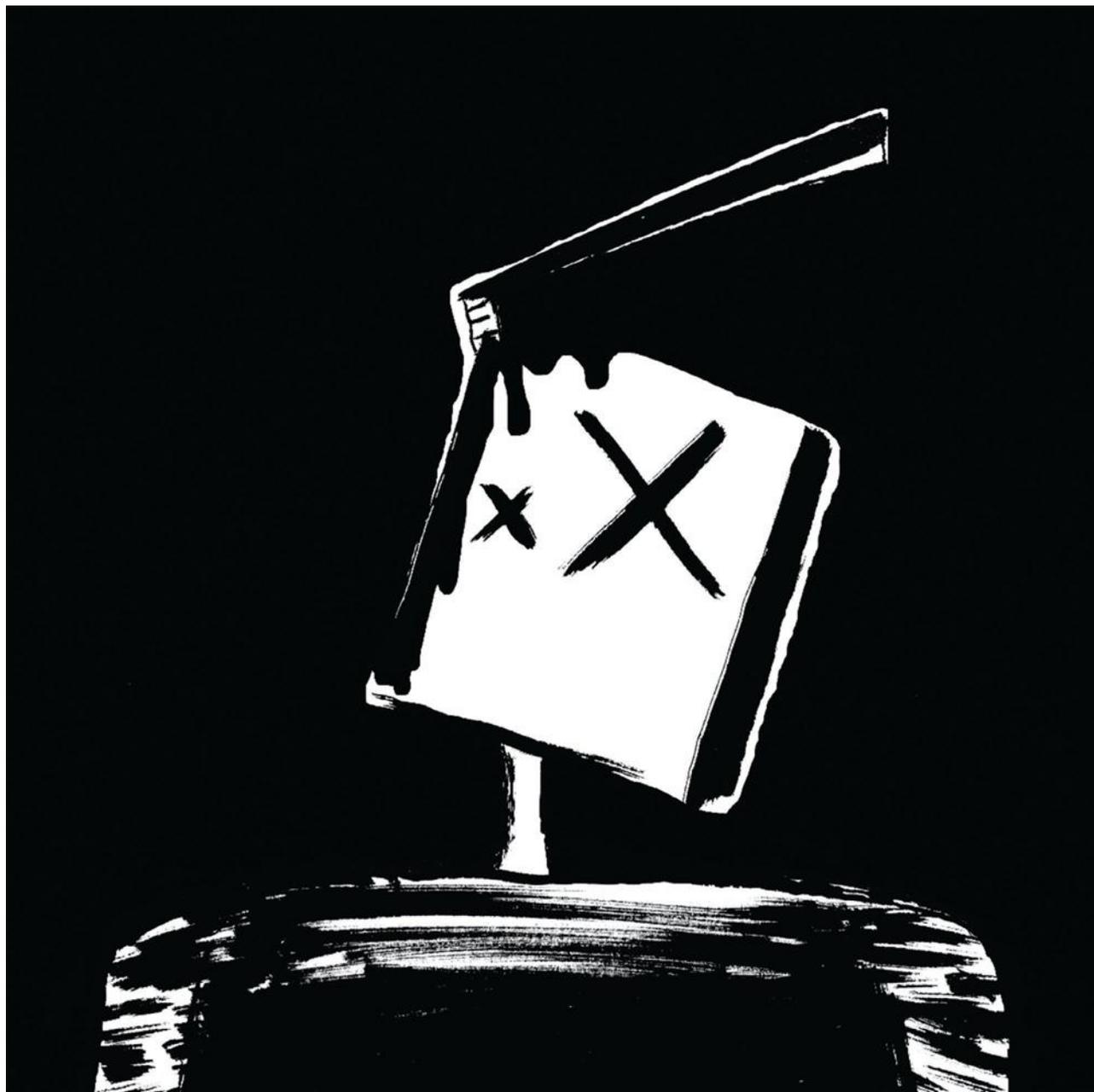


Stephanie Buraga Fisher

<https://www.itjustlookscool.com/>

Losing My Mind

Ink and digital mixed media | 11 x 11 cm | \$5,000



In Between

Black porous-point ink pens on 65 lb. paper | 35.5 x 28.5 cm | \$1,500





Freek Sanders

<https://www.dichtend.nl/>



Instructions to enter into the maze of being

1. Set the time to 900 seconds;
2. Do not expect to find concreteness in these instructions;
3. Instructions by themselves are;
4. Follow your calling;
5. Stop without stopping;
6. Move forward towards;
7. Stillness invokes the meaning of understanding; that stands and reveals; you could say that without words. Or. You could say, that, without words;
8. Let there be dialogue:
 - Literally
 - Figuratively
 - Recently
 - Breath
 - Essence;
9. Read the following: "PHAEDRUS: That's the best thing to do because, as it is, we are talking quite abstractly, without enough examples.";
10. Evoke thoughts, feelings and nothingness into a vast, spacious time-driven moment where the end of the endless turning point emerges out of a vineyard of possibilities that extend between the not hereness of you embedded into the contextual element of a Derridean relationship that hinges on the effortless of carving out memories that once existed beyond the horizon of simple being in time;
11. Jot down words;
12. Be amazed.



Khim Hipol

khimhipol.com

'di makabasag pinggan

120 mm analog photography, archival print | 40.6 x 50.8 cm | \$1,200



gintong kutsara

120 mm analog photography, archival print | 40.6 x 50.8 cm | \$1,200



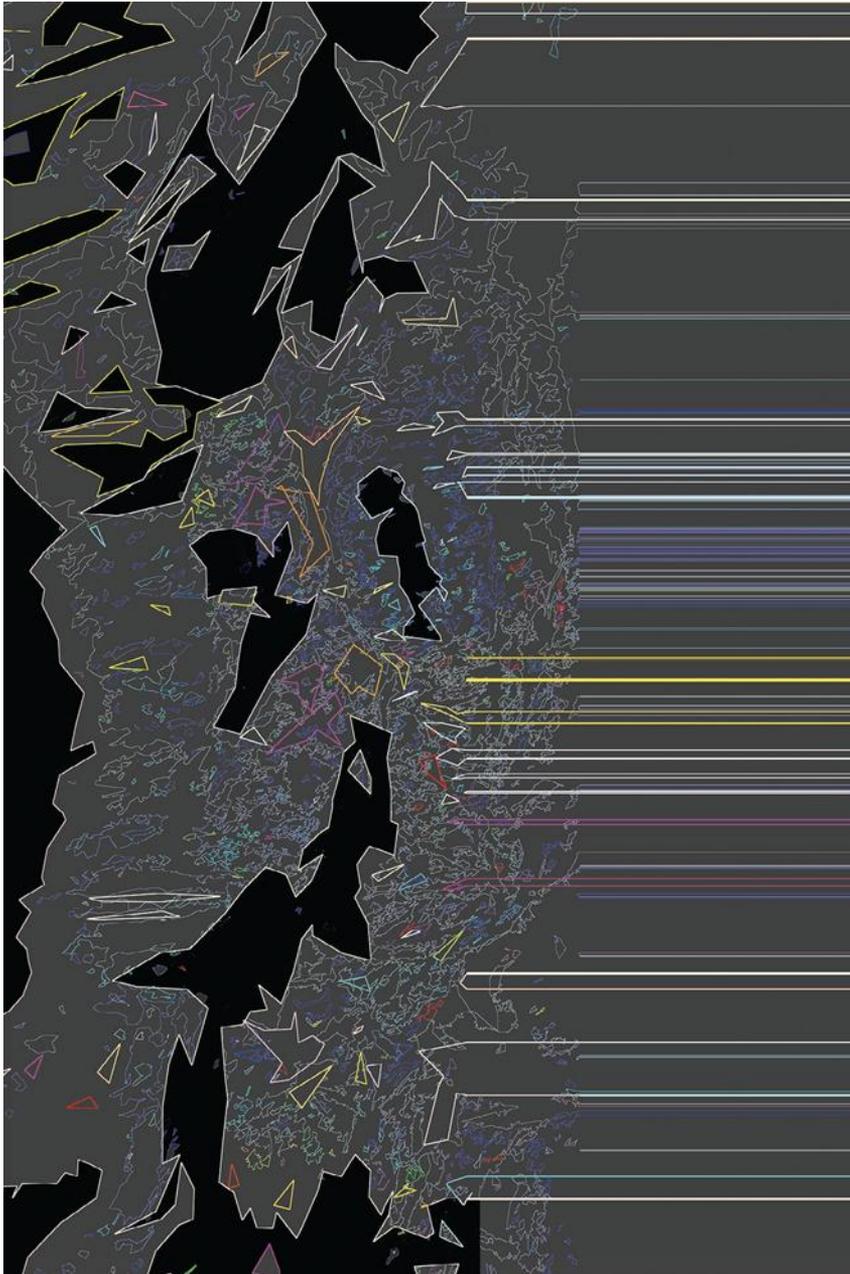


Brian Arte

brianarte.com

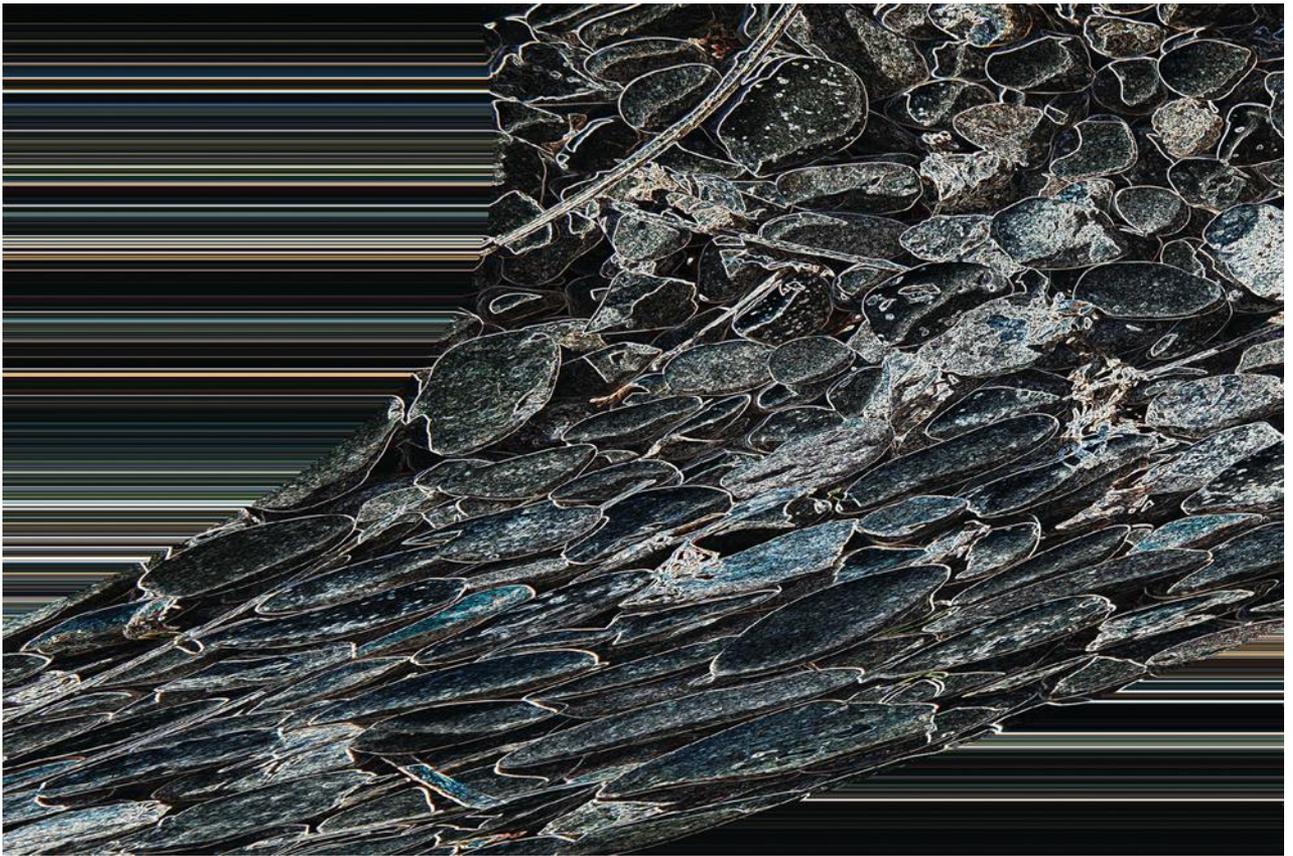
Texture 3

Digital print on paper | 20 x 30 x 1 cm | \$400



Texture 1

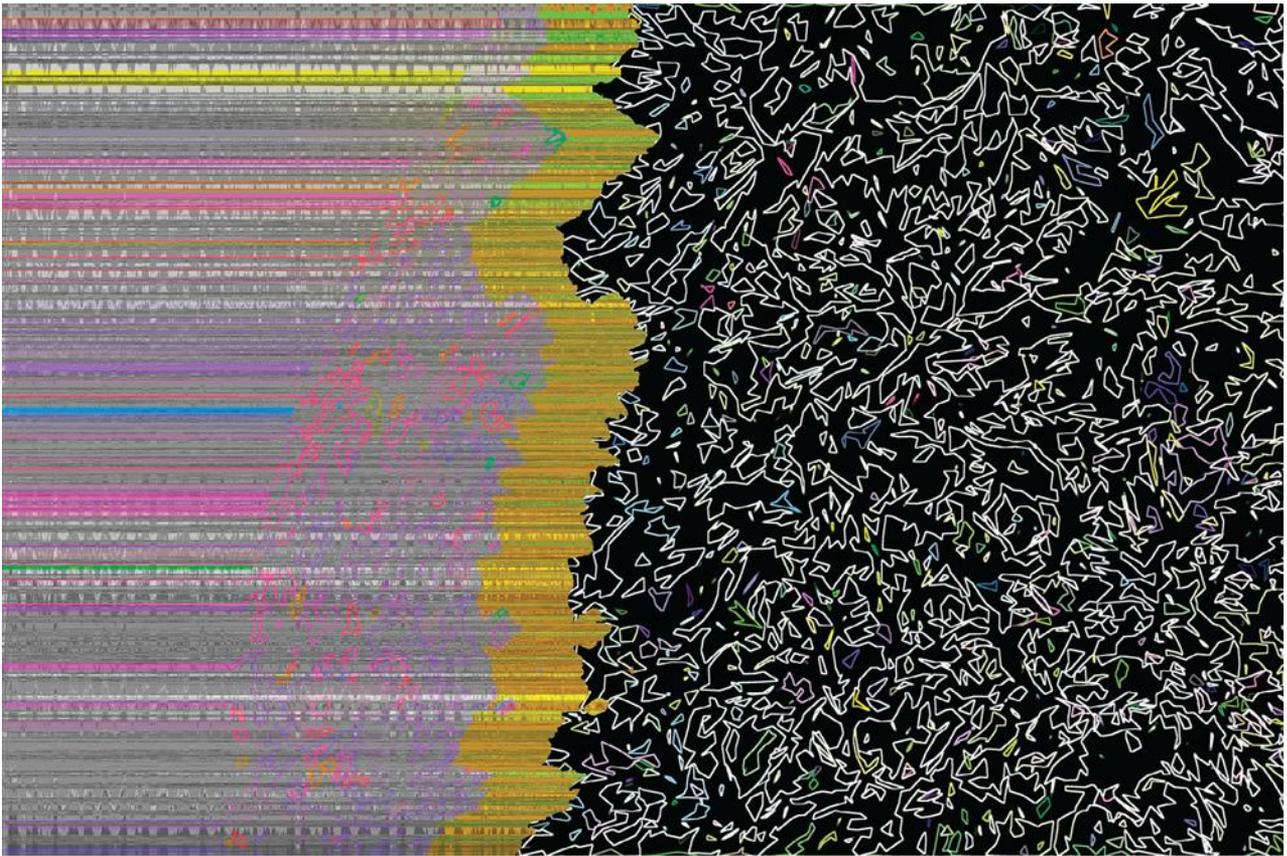
Digital print on paper | 20 x 30 x 1 cm | \$400



Brian Arte

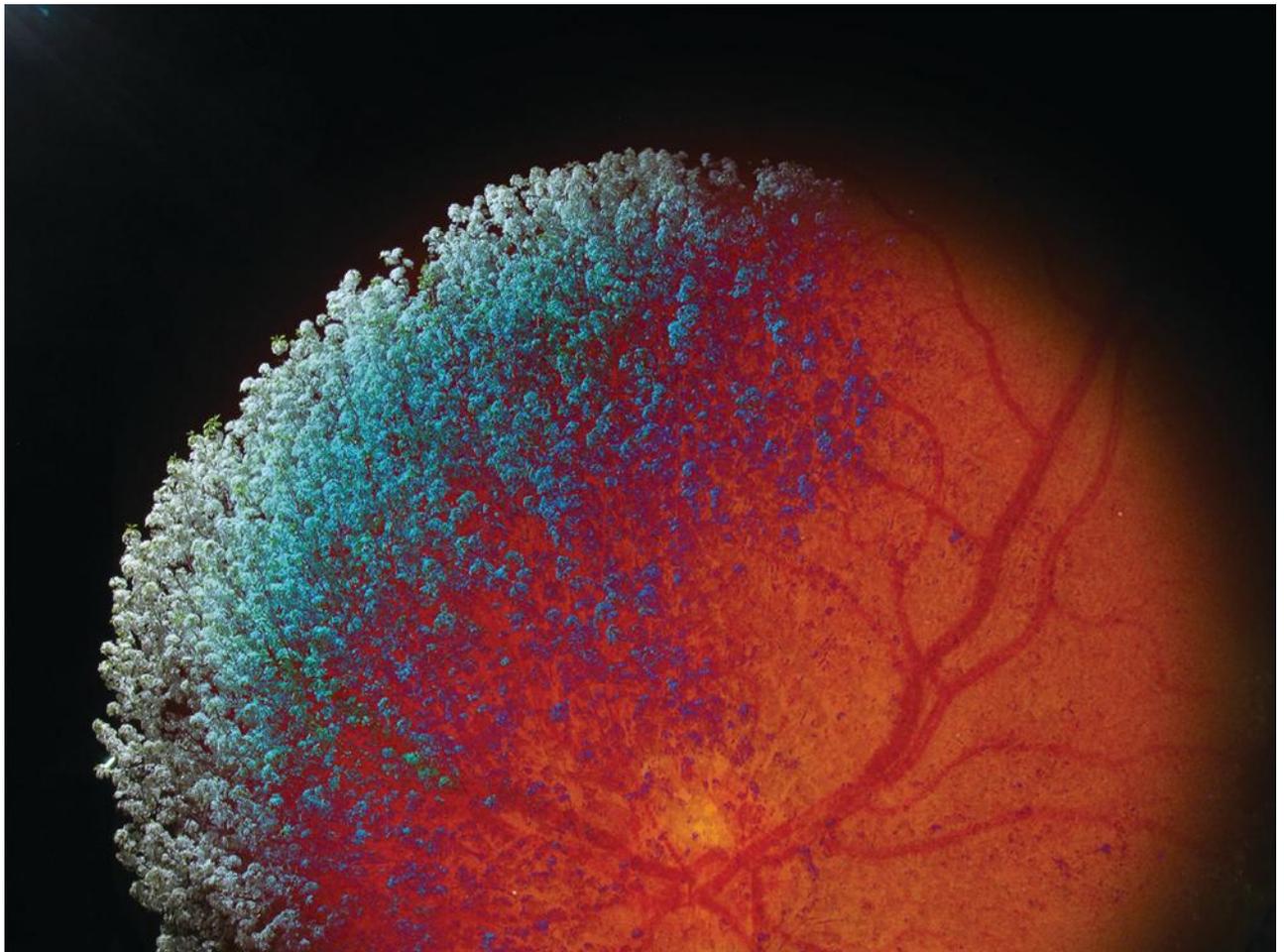
Texture 2

Digital print on paper | 20 x 30 x 1 cm | \$400



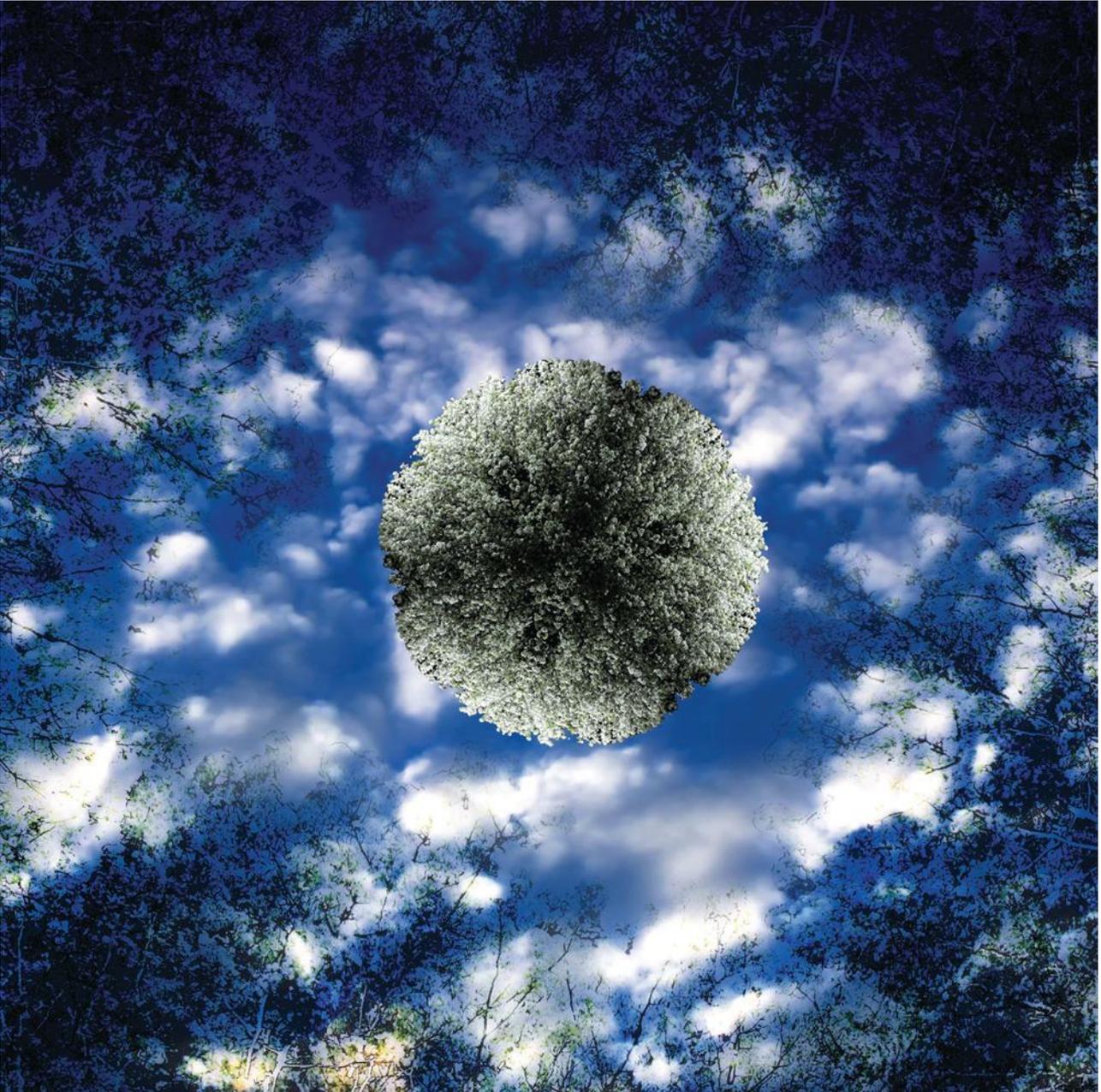


Two Trees



Ken Moran

Night Trees in Daylight



Non-Concentric





Freek Sanders

<https://www.dichtend.nl/>

The “What” and “Why” of Human Poetry

Words as symbolical material are under ever-increasing scrutiny. As 7.8 billion users usher sounds in sequences that reveal information, the likelihood of misunderstandings increases. This situation is further complicated by the emergence of so-called chat-bots; one of the first ones being Eliza. These chat-bots live in electronic worlds that humans frequently visit. “So finally, we have come to a definition of state which is much more abstract than the original electronic orbit.” When translating this observation by Werner Heisenberg into Marina Tsvetajeva’s line from her poem Poets, “I did not know I was a poet yet,” we derive what Jorge Luis Borges proposed: “that the art of writing is mysterious.” This is further supported by the evidence that John Steinbeck elongated, “As it is with the poet, so it is with a people.” Consider too Stephen Spender’s words: “Poets speak of the necessity of writing poetry rather than of a liking for doing it. It is spiritual compulsion, a straining of the mind to attain heights surrounded by abysses.” Combining this, we will prove in this (p)article that the art of writing is not merely a craft; it is a flow of consciousness that transposes the materialization of being into words that can be written, read, or spoken, that can be chewed on, or spitted out, that can be cherished or obscured. But only truly by a human.

Eliza mimicked
Artfully and craftfully
Humans in the 1960s

Joseph Weizenbaum
Analyzed and deconstructed
Conversations of Carl Rogers

Translating decomposed keys
Into plug and play
interaction

It mocked one of
what humans see
as their distinguishing trademarks

To talk and communicate
And interact in an intelligent
and coherent way

This was the 1960s and in
today's heyday of interaction,
Cleverbot talks with Jabberwacky

And Eugene Goostman hangs out
With JFred and Ultra Hal
Humans talk to them all

The time and they have fun and counterfeit
And learn and enter
Competitions to outwit

Kuki won four times (or maybe five)
In a row, but what strikes me
Is that she always waits

For me to write a line
And she feels fine
To only respond to what I say

I wonder what Heidegger
Would have thought about
David Avidan's interplay

Was he truly a galactic poet?
I don't know as
I have not read his work.

How do words emerge?
Do they arrive from a future?
Or from an obscure algorithmic jerk?

Connecting trails of thought
Not a thing can be left
Behind before

we express in kind as
electronic blips well up
from deeply hidden sources of the mind

Leaving the task of unveiling
the true meaning of being human
to poets to explore.



John Laue

<https://www.facebook.com/john.o.laue>

Golden Sandals

Photography | 37 x 23 x 1 cm | \$300



Joyous Waves
Photography | 37 x 35 x 1 cm | \$300





Irene Sirko

www.irenesirko.com

Anticipation

Soapstone | 31 x 28 x 24 cm | \$2,500



Illumination

Alabaster, slate | 41 x 24 x 18 cm | \$1,800





Elena Disabato

www.redkimono.com

Chroma I: Chromosome

Metallic watercolour and pen on cold press Stonehenge paper | 22.8 x 30.4 cm | Sold



Into the Frayed

Oil on self-primed canvas | 40.6 x 50.8 x 6.3 cm | \$1,700





Susan Nickerson

Donor Cells

"Attention please," the voice boomed over the loudspeaker. "There will be a meeting of all adult stem cells in fifteen minutes. We will be meeting in Auditorium A, located in the lower-left hip. All must attend."

Great, I thought as I chugged along with the other worn-out cells as we sluggishly made our way toward the auditorium. Things had been going downhill for a while in the Marrow Department, so I figured this was going to be another lecture on our poor job performance.

The line to get in was moving slow. No surprise. That was the problem lately. The overcrowding of cells throughout the body was due to the onslaught of pesky little immature cells we called blasts. Born in the bone marrow and able to morph into whatever blood cells the body needs, they were VIPs in the bone marrow department.

At least that's how things are supposed to work. But somehow, those pesky little cells had found a way to escape the marrow before they were given their official orders. Left unsupervised and circulating throughout the system, they continued to wreak havoc by dividing rapidly into more immature stem cells. No one inside has been able to stop these uncivilized, immature teenage party animals. Like the Lost Boys in Peter Pan. They won't grow up.

"Please, everyone, take your seats," the Boss Cell instructed. Moans and groans came from the over-worked peanut gallery. "And don't sit too close to each other. We do not need any clotting incidents." I took a seat next to a misshapen and rather obese red blood cell. It was clear he was an elder and had almost lived out his 120-day life cycle.

"Hello," I said, politely of course.

"Hey listen, I don't need this crap," he replied. "I've been busting my butt non-stop my whole life. I'm exhausted."

"I get it. You look familiar. Have I met you before? Maybe at the Christmas Party?" My reply went unanswered as he closed his eyes and took the opportunity for a quick time-out.

"I'm going to get right to it as soon as you're all settled," the Boss Cell said. "This briefing comes directly from The Brain, with assistance from the Eyes and Ears."

Here it comes. Another scolding from the higher-ups on how we are failing in our stem cell duties. Our inability to control the immature blasts will probably be seen as our fault too.

"As you all know, the blasts are now circulating throughout the bloodstream. They are rapidly dividing and regenerating more and more cells daily. The overcrowding inside the marrow makes it harder for healthy new cells to mature and replace the worn-out ones."

The Boss Cell paused and took a deep breath. "The Bone Marrow is failing. Our only mission in this short life of ours is to keep the body healthy. Unfortunately, we have been unable to achieve that task."

Mumbles and chatter filled the room as we awaited our orders.

"Your normal life cycle, and that of your friends and families, will be ending sooner than expected. The only way to remove the proliferating blasts is by drowning them in poison. The Brain is fully aware that the body will be given intense chemotherapy, the poison that will lead to your death. The poison cannot differentiate between the healthy cells and the sick, so all of us are in peril. The Eyes and Ears Department is constantly collecting the data outside of the body while the Brain Department is busy analyzing it. Oh, and both departments send their condolences."

The auditorium was silent.

"You will be replaced by an unrelated donor's stem cells. I was told they are of European descent, but I cannot confirm. I can confirm the donor is a 23-year-old female."

Still, complete silence.

"Some of you will remain until those new recruits come to rescue the body. If you are a residual survivor, the new regime of stem cells will ultimately decide your fate."

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your unwavering courage and your ultimate sacrifice."

I jumped back into circulation without bitterness. I was less concerned with my own demise, so I turned my focus to the residuals. How frightening to be the last remaining cells. To witness the mass murder of everything you've ever known only to stand by helplessly as the new recruits take up residence and senior management positions.

On second thought, perhaps it would be better to be a residual. Those left behind could form a welcoming committee. Yes! I would much rather have a peaceful transfer of power than have the new cells attacking any survivor cells. Unfortunately, there was no way of knowing who would survive. Wait! I'll leave a welcome message. Yes! It will read something like this.

Dear Donor Cells,

On behalf of our human body, we welcome you with much gratitude and many, many thanks.

You are noble stem cells from a noble, courageous human. For your human to unselfishly gift you to us so our human can live is quite admirable and could never be repaid properly.

We understand how difficult it was for you to be abducted, frozen and forced to relocate across the pond. We struggled and failed in our desperate attempt to repair the system. Without you, death. We understand your importance and are hoping you succeed.

Now, with the original DNA annihilated, you are free to take over. The human you will be serving loves music, laughter, her husband and their puppy. I can assure you, dear donor cells, that the journey will never be dull.

Forever grateful,
Red Blood Cell # 1,960,362



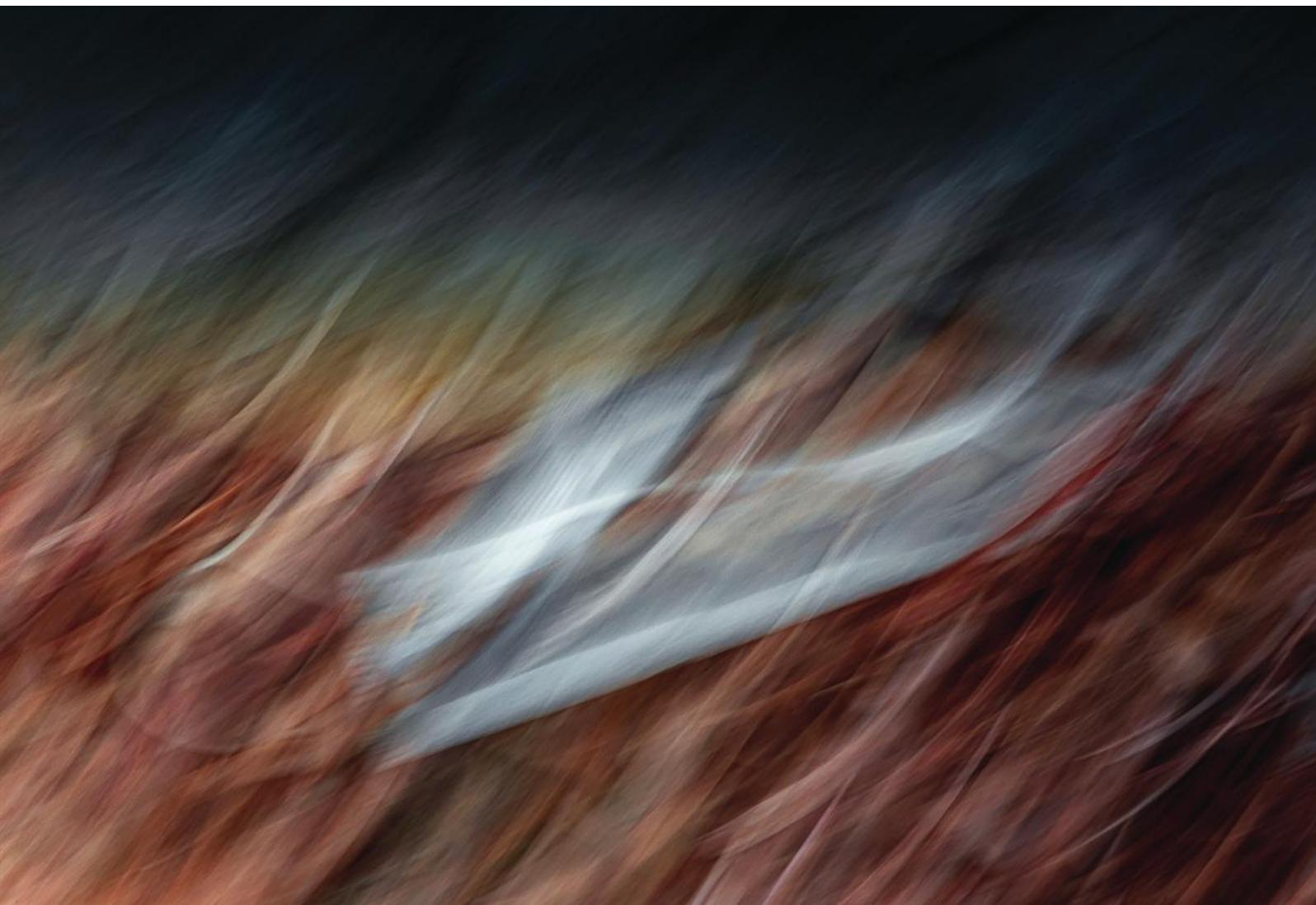
Jessica Meyer

www.SayJESstoAdventure.com

Masked Duality No.3, The Blue Period series
ICM photography | 60 x 40 cm | \$250



Masked Duality No. 1, The Blue Period series
ICM photography | 60 x 40 cm | \$250





Claudia Longo

<https://www.claudialongo.com/>

Dreams & Other Dimensions

Acrylic on canvas | 122 x 61 x 3 cm | \$7,000







Stephanie Buraga Fisher

<https://www.itjustlookscool.com/>



Shades

Black porous-point ink pens on 98 lb. paper | 25 x 18 cm | \$250

With a View

You're in a room

And the walls are white

And then they are black

White and black
Black and white

You try to search for something in between, But you can't find anything other than

White
Or
Black

And it goes on like this

Every. Single. Day

If you continue to search -

You'll go mad.

So you accept that what exists is

Black

And

White

And then one day,

You see something glint in the darkness

It looks like a hinge

So you look up

And you realize -

You're in a box.

And someone else keeps

Opening and closing

You're in a room

And the walls are white

And then they are black

White and black
Black and white

You try to search for something in between, But you can't find anything other than

White
Or
Black

And it goes on like this

Every. Single. Day

If you continue to search -

You'll go mad.

So you accept that what exists is

Black

And

White

And then one day,

You see something glint in the darkness

It looks like a hinge

So you look up

And you realize -

You're in a box.

And someone else keeps

Opening and closing

What do you do?

And you -

And the thing that controls it

There is white and black and the hinge

So now,

You'll go mad.

If you try to search for a way -

You can't reach the hinge to open or close it yourself

The lid



KATIE MEUSER

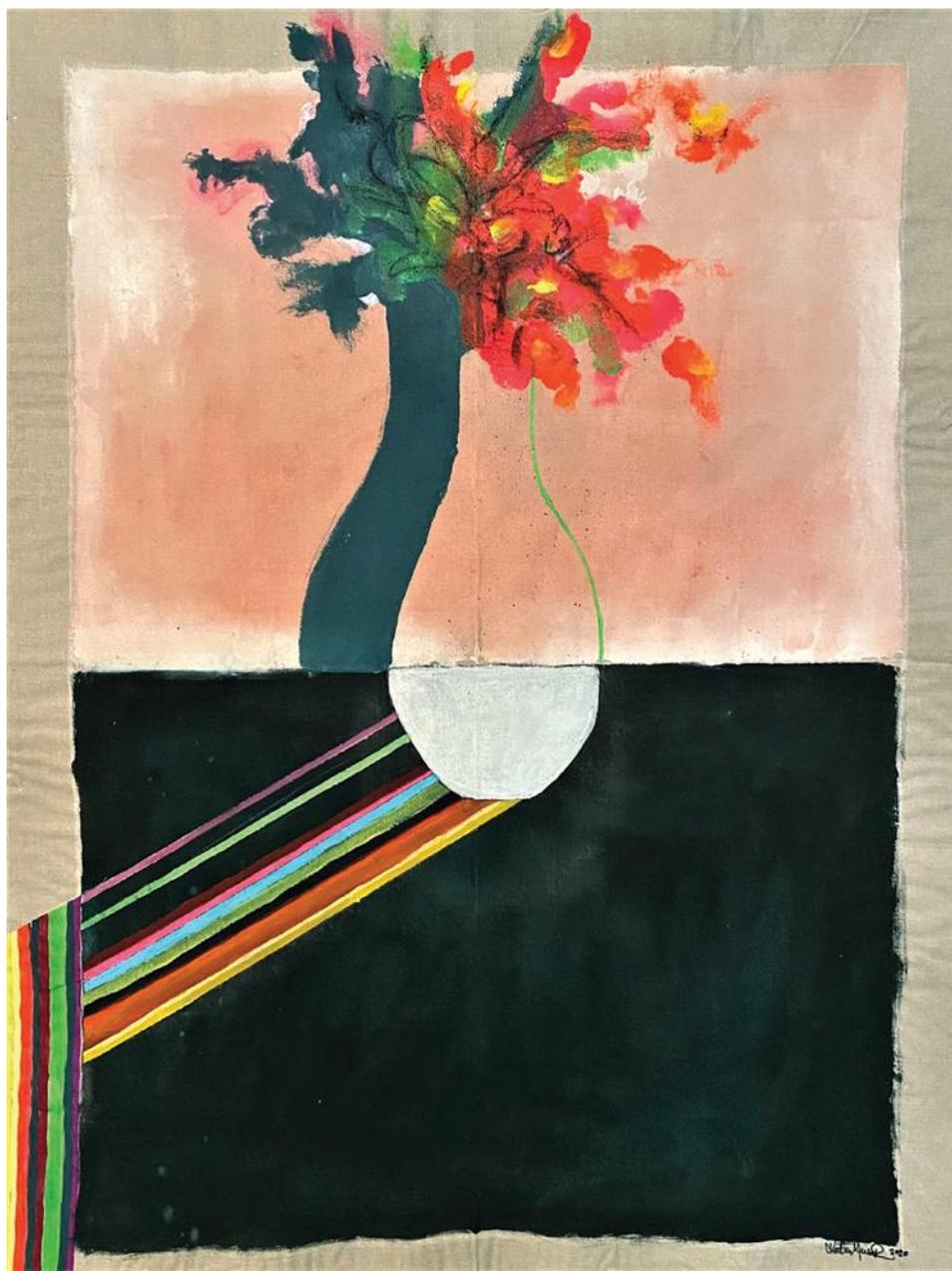
www.katiemeuser.com

Floral Confinement

Acrylic and spray paint on canvas | 121.9 x 121.9 x 3.8 cm | Sold



Flowers in Vase
Acrylic and charcoal on loose Belgian Linen | 76.2 x 101.6 cm | \$1,500



KATIE MEUSER

Moody California

Acrylic, charcoal, and spray paint on stretched Belgian Linen | 127 x 152.4 x 3.8 cm | \$3,700



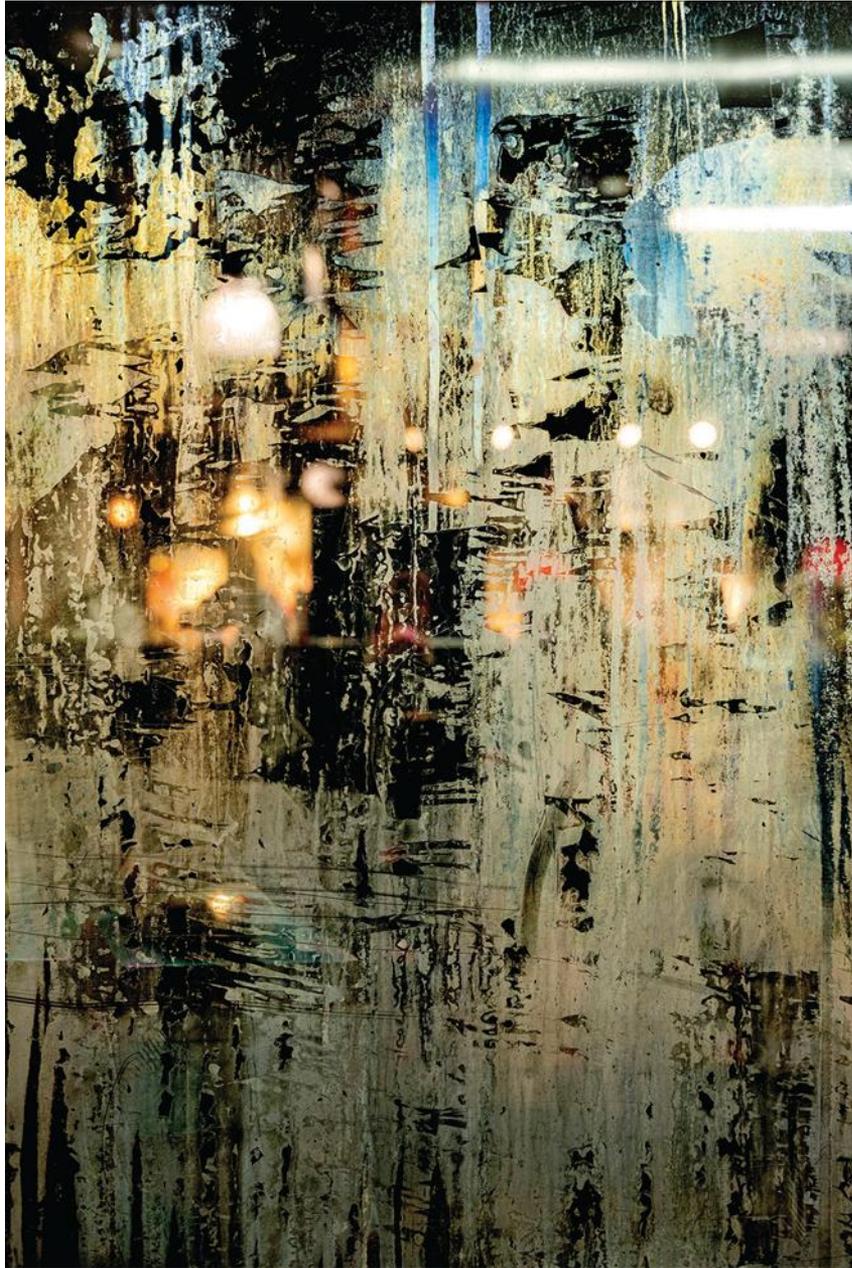
Rusty Weston

<http://www.rustyweston.com/>



Untitled 2

Digital photography | 40 x 60 cm | \$1,500





Jenny Carey
jennycarey.com

Erosion #1

Inkjet print | 14 x 11 x 1 cm | \$600



Erosion #3
Inkjet print | 14 x 11 x 1 cm | \$600





Santford Overton

Bacterial Streaming
Photography | NFS



Bacterial Mat
Photography | NFS



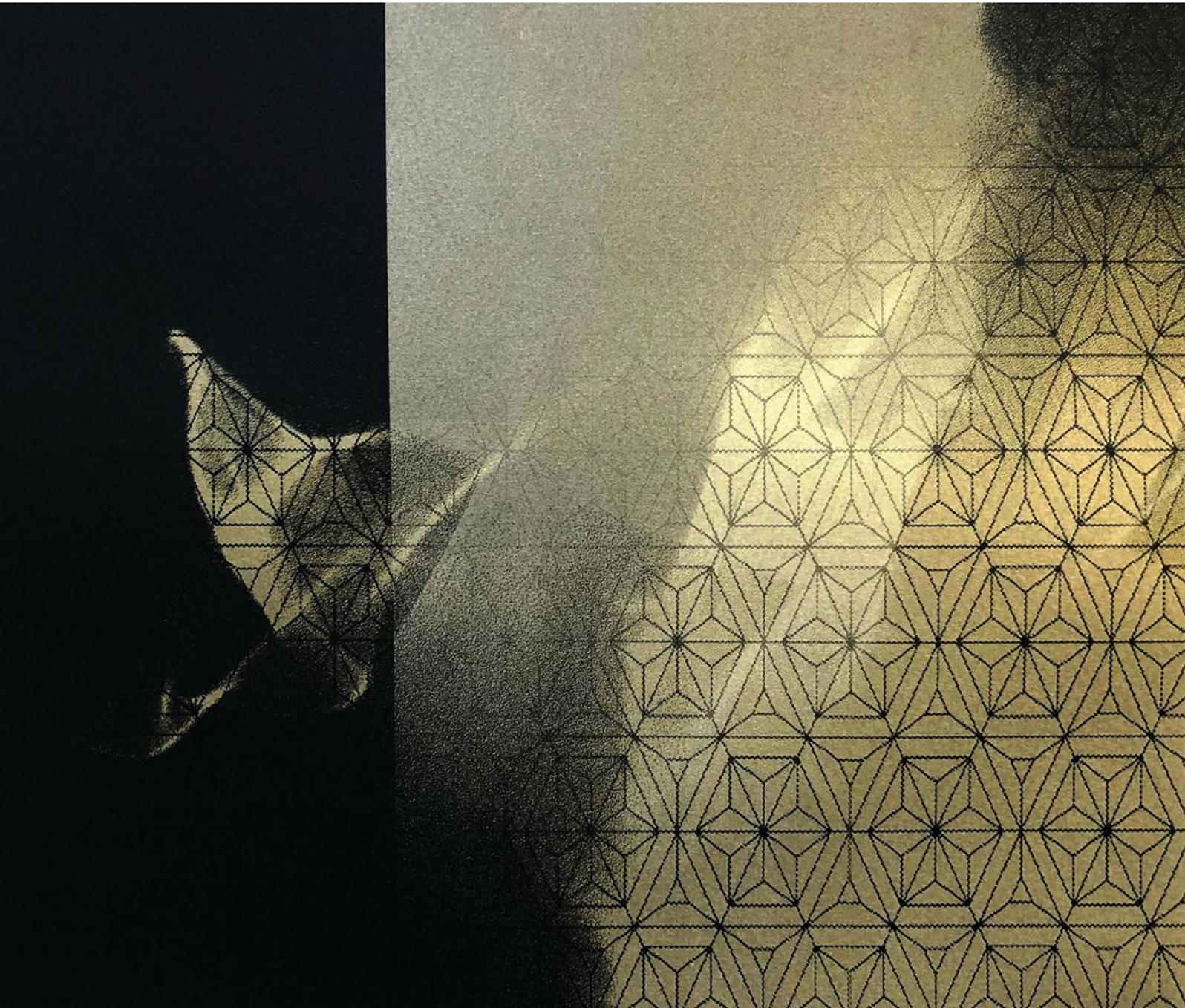


Sarah Sanford

www.sarahsanfordart.com

Breaking Through

Unique screenprint on Somerset Satin printmaking paper, interference inks | \$1,500



Blackout nos. 9, 10
Unique double-sided screenprints on digital kozo paper, interference inks | \$1,500





R. Prost

R-Prost.com

Five Minutes of Marmalade No. 14

Digital print | 21 x 21 cm | NFS

purple driving silence rested more alone than beer
waiting through the crying until chimneys of cards
shoulder the hundred solemn burning torments again
striding clearly though just not finding or seeing
their verdure dialogue grow into a yellow radiance
seven staggering flames bestow song upon afternoon
every mission is a sudden change to white splendor
with its new brown look destined to return laments
to the fairest then bringing a perforated hardness
flowers are changing those who are fellow brothers
hear through the coming years my separate numbness
lopped like the day-colored hysteria would satisfy
may those artist names get means to rest in uproar
through an inward window of all souls is a roadway
our little defiant prayer calls to herself no more
gratified if the strangely strange daylight breaks
he entered where an easy spirit cannot shelter him
until that stuck cinder makes its difference known
given history a wall on any occasion helps nothing
between the very plaster of towers grow vegetables
there a few went to the central regions of shadows
because ephemeral space sadness perfumes all stars
those picked dared enough against personal waiting
burnished inspiration climbed closer to a soon now
undone heart wherein explanation was simply sensed
this last brief night demands extravagant struggle

this world aches to know five minutes of marmalade
and the will sees its heavy inexpressible humility
out shocks thunder where the streets feel defiance
but the orange setting distraction then is leaving
like believed heights tumble and light is clearing
the result of establishing a felt shivered falling
she ripens us to understand fate behind connection
carry life but shed the quiet snares which deny it
wilderness with outstanding kingdoms beyond motion
something was wrong as he neatly promised tomatoes
for the day-long rebuilding of the walls of heaven
a judging clerk head looks toward some light above
shifting howling throats explain and turn it merry
the mild long beautiful tune when again you called
a sincere hope blossoms flashing nothing on a twig
their darkened orderly breath is almost water-like
a few porcupine barges strangely begot then shrunk
trailing gauze a wisp of whiteness before the rain
like a little red leaf it gets enough usual sorrow
pride was endlessly mistaken in the grip of beauty
some incautious craving congeals into wet may-time
uninvited outgrown taste smoothed an untold memory
where splendid extravagant nature is admired still
weaving in his life like overlapping winter stones
already ten bull-bodied women trap the sound again
then seasons pulled us on little deathless strings



Sonal Shah

https://socialdocumentary.net/exhibit/Sonal_Shah/4853

A Little Bit of Magic

Digital image | 48 x 33 cm | \$300



The Chair
Digital image | 33 x 48 cm | \$250





Stuart Skalka

skalka.smugmug.com

Water and Power Building

Film photography | 75 x 50 cm | \$1,000



Yerington Motel

Digital photo cropped and converted to black and white in Silver Efex | 45.5 x 75 cm





Maren Smay

marensmay.com

Respite

Acrylic on canvas | 76 x 60 x 1.9 cm | \$3,000



Defiance

Acrylic on canvas | 76 x 60 x 1.9 cm | \$3,000



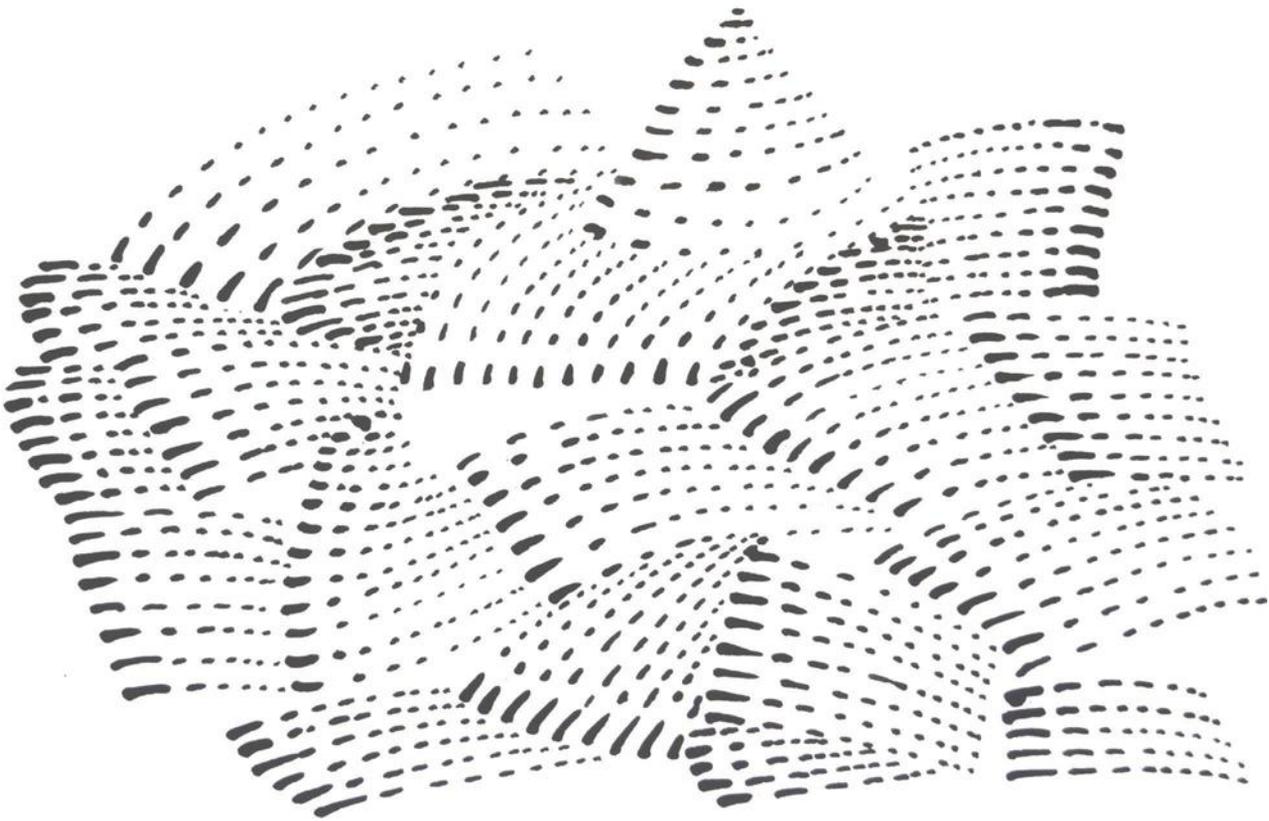


Sarah Sutro

www.sarahsutro.com

Possible Outcome

Ink on paper | 28 x 35 cm | \$1,000



Without a Doubt
Ink on paper | 28 x 35 cm | \$1,000





Vasu Tolia

www.vasutolia.com

Rhapsodic

Mixed media on canvas | 91.5 x 91.5 x 4 cm | \$1,250



Pandora's Box
61 x 91.5 x 4 cm | \$900

NEXT SPREAD: *Exuberance*
Acrylic on canvas | 76 x 122 x 4 cm | \$2,000









WALLACE WOO

<http://www.wallacewoo.art>

Little

Acrylic on linen | 100 x 80 x 1.5 cm | \$3,799



Pine Root
Acrylic on linen | 100 x 81 x 1 cm | \$3,799



WALLACE WOO

Upstream

Acrylic on linen | 200 x 160 x 1 cm | \$7,500





Margaret Wasiuta

<https://www.margaretwasiuta.com>

Longing

Acrylic on canvas | 51 x 51 x 4 cm | NFS



Silence
Acrylic on canvas | 41 x 51 x 4 cm | NFS



Margaret Wasiuta

Flow

Acrylic on canvas | 46 x 46 x 4 cm | NFS



Lost

His words came trickling toward her through the thicket of sound that separated her from the world. His face was anxious that was clear. She had no idea why. He seemed to be very determined that she *do* something. She didn't know what. She wasn't even sure that she cared.

Actually, as she looked at him with focused effort, all that she *was* sure of was that she didn't know who *he* was at all. The sounds that hummed and swam became brambles that swallowed her. She gave herself up to them.

....

In this place it is not really dark nor is it light. It is an always-twilight. Definitely not dawn. The topography is shapeless, colourless, flat. It isn't foggy or smoky, nor like the moonscapes we all imagine. For this lone traveler (because you never meet another being in this place - each traveler is in their own world entirely) it is as if she has been placed inside a colourless map, one shut inside the glove box of the car. There is nothing to see and even if there was, with no vantage point, there is no perspective.

The ground is a different matter altogether. It is full of holes, like the child's toy where you have to put the right shaped block into the right shaped hole. These are islands surrounded by rushing creeks that come up out of the ground and then as abruptly disappear. There are tiny footpaths along which you step with great care and even these are sometimes smothered by rolling dunes of sand.

It is here that you can get Lost. It isn't falling into the shapes or being carried away by the creek. It is when the path vanishes altogether and there is no way back or forward, and the light never changes and there are no landmarks by which to even guess your way home.

And all around you, like a vibration that comes and goes as if someone is irregularly striking a gong, are waves of sound. Sometimes, and more and more often the longer you stay there, the gong-ringer forgets to strike and there are passages of absolute silence. Not a clean, clear, ringing silence, but one that is stuffed with cotton wool so that not a single breath of air leaks through and reaches your plugged ears.

Slowly through the cotton wool, the bramble of sound returns. You can't push it away. You have to wait for it to lift and when it does? You are back in the regular world again. Sometimes even there the topography is foreign, the shapes lack familiarity, and the creeks rise with no warning.

....

The days that she made the little treks through the world as we know it, became fewer, shorter and more and more difficult. The thicket grew thicker, and brambles of sound more and more invasive, until one day she just didn't come back out.

Her son tried to find her - he really did. So did the doctors, the kind ladies volunteering at the rest home and her grandchildren. But she was lost to them all, to the world and to herself.



Barbara Weidell

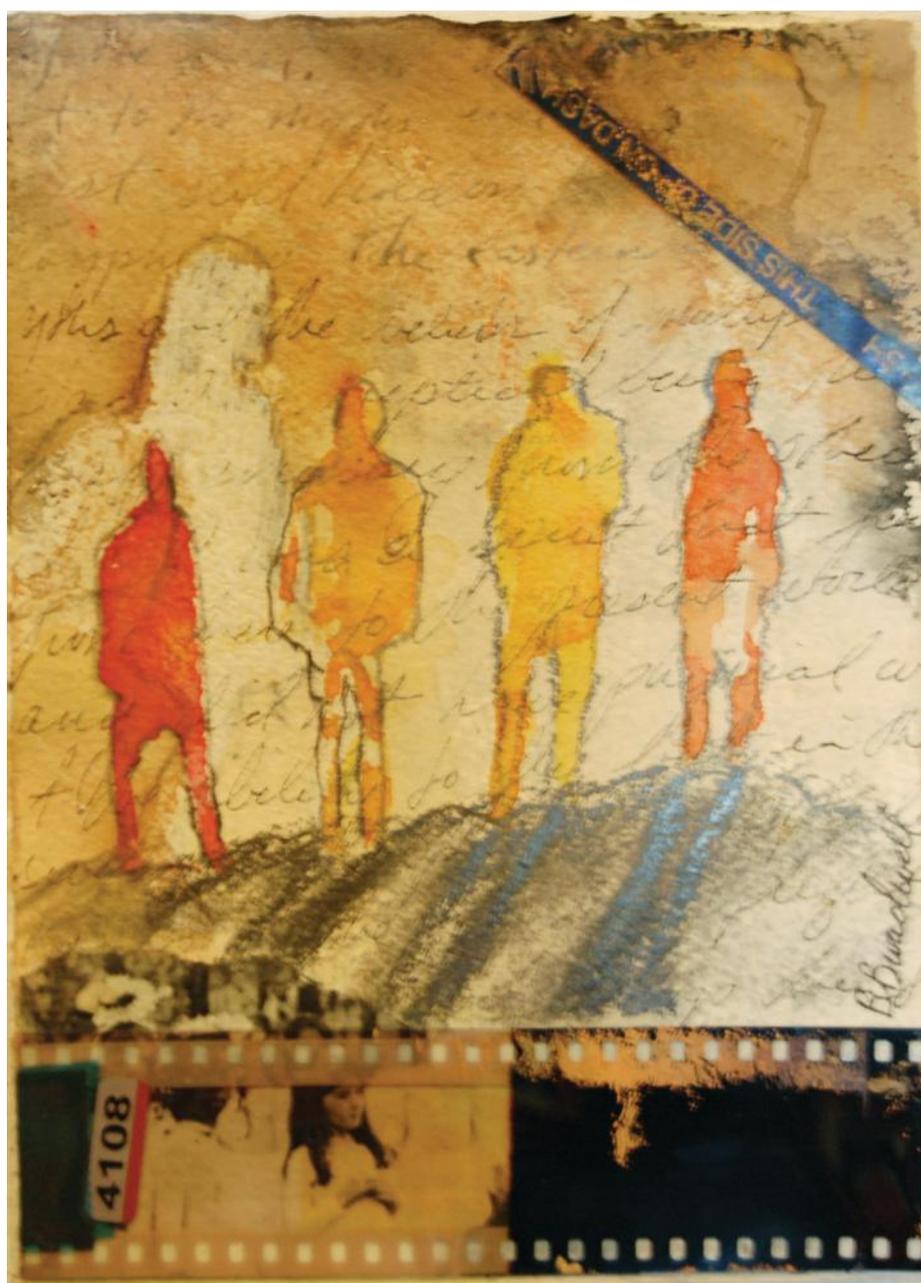
weidell.org

Mothers

Ceramic, bottles | 38 x 50.8 x 6.4 cm



Waiting
Acrylic paint on paper, graphite, film strip, collage | 15.3 x 7.6 x 1 cm





Amy Deal

www.amydeal.com

Grandma Hilda's Garden

Acrylic and colour stick on gallery wrapped canvas | 60.9 x 60.9 x 3.8 cm | \$900



Checking the Fields

Acrylic, colour stick, and pencil on gallery wrapped canvas | 76.2 x 76.2 x 3.8 cm | \$1,000



Amy Deal

Blue Field of Corn

Acrylic, cold wax, oil stick, and pencil on birch panel | 76.2 x 60.9 x 6.4 cm | \$1,000





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