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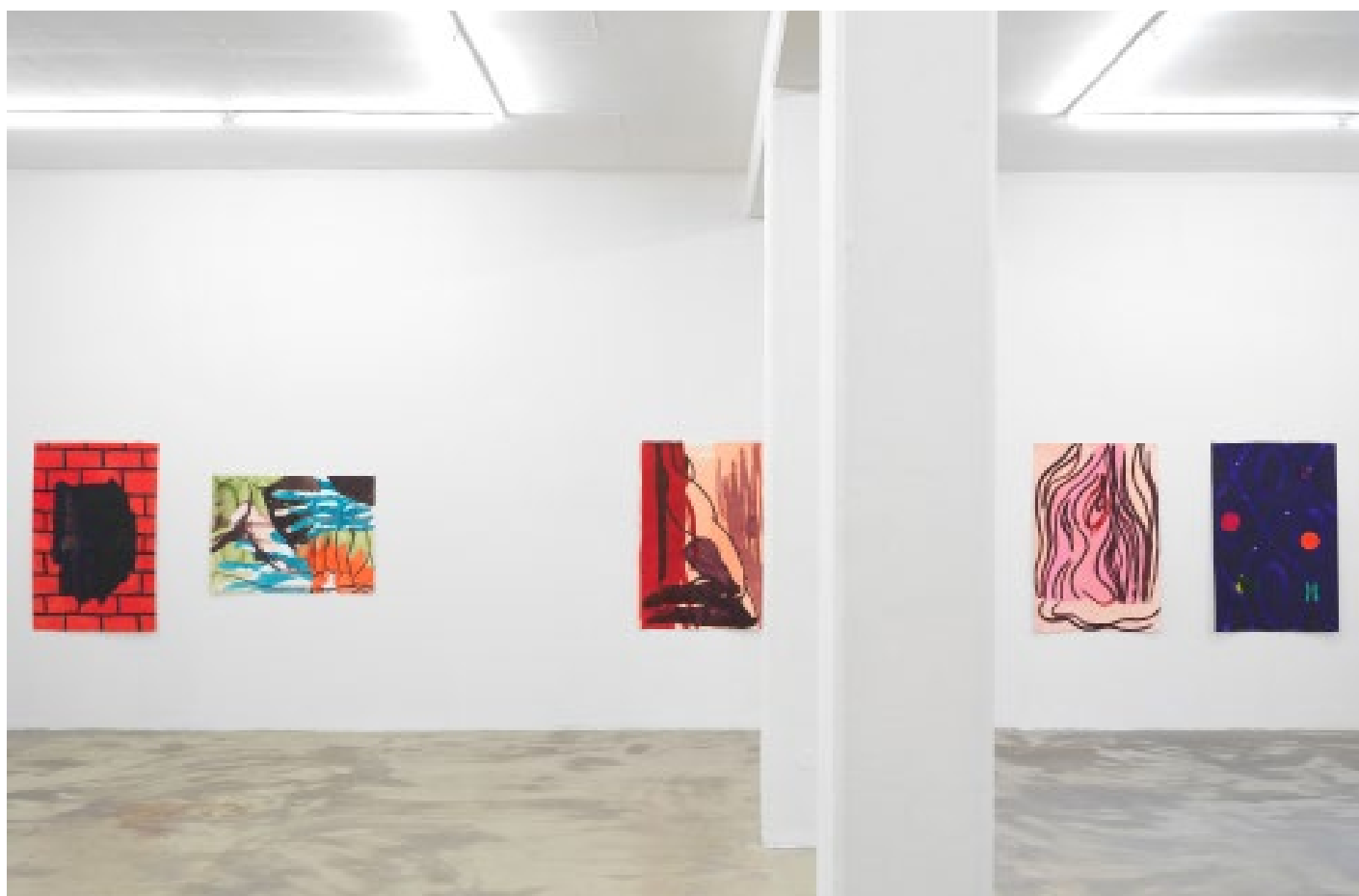
**Fiona Mackay**

**KLEMM'S**

One can approach the work by Fiona Mackay best by envisioning a possibly but not necessarily connected sequence of 'events with painterly means'. These undertakings evolve in the realm of an exhibition or in relation to a given place or space. The beginnings lie between personal narration and the commonly used sign-systems or associative terms, words and objects as 'roots'. In a blunt gesture, without a sketch but intuitively, Mackay applies directly onto the canvas individual cycles between figuration and abstraction.

"My work has always been concerned with opposites, whether in regard to medium, imagery, or application, in an attempt to confess a personal narrative, versus a public system of signs always in potential flux" (Fiona Mackay, 2020). The artist develops syntactic bodies of work that reverberate in the exhibition space like sound waves – being radically open to subjective perception. The works, intense and luminescent, reveal an uncommon marriage of solidity and fluidity, monumentality and domesticity, the earnest and the whimsical, achieving a maximum impact with limited means.

Her heterogeneous images purposefully disrupt the viewers' and artist's own expectations of painting, contradicting or totally evading any fixed meaning to instead interrogate denigrated aesthetic styles, and embrace or distort notions of cliché, bad taste and naivety. Mackay's paintings are perhaps most accurately understood as self-conscious critiques of the form, playfully experimenting with gestural mark marking and word play to create slippages between her colloquial titles and the images they purportedly describe.





dreams.

„I was in the winter of my life, And the men that I met along the road were my only summer.”

– Lana Del Rey

dreams. A fragment of time from 2017 to 2019, from the North to the South and back again where repetitions recur as hallucinations in both day and in night, awake or asleep. Leaving dreams to continue endlessly, where dreaming generally is forbidden. Fiona Mackay showcases a glimpse into the painter's world of hallucinatory imagery, manifested as paintings on paper. Like reoccurring dreams, gestures, motifs and colors repeat throughout her works. The everydayness of paper as a supporting material is tied to the world of tactile reality, while its fragility and lightness – an innate quality of paper – is symbiotic to the sublime, whimsical world of dreams.

“Who belonged to no one - who belonged to everyone.  
Who had nothing, who wanted everything,  
With a fire for every experience And an obsession for freedom  
That terrified me to the point that I couldn't even talk about it –  
And pushed me to a nomadic point  
Of madness that both dazzled and dizzied me.”

– Lana Del Rey





*lovers & yes, actually no sir* 2017; fabric dye on 300g, 100% cotton-paper; each 80x 120 cm,



*Universe*; 2017; fabric dye on 300g, 100% cotton-paper; 120 x 80 cm



*From the North to the South*, 2017; fabric dye on 300g, 100% cotton-paper; 120 x 80 cm



*Blind*; 2017; fabric dye on 300g, 100% cotton-paper; 120 x 80 cm





*La Lune*, 2017; fabric dye on 300g, 100% cotton-paper, 120 x 80 cm



*Loneliness*; 2017; fabric dye on 300g, 100% cotton-paper; 120 x 80 cm



....so in through the entrance cutting the corner of Jägerstraße and Pappenheimgasse, you might see a black dick, or a purple something that has a whiff of rhino, this all depends on your height (or your mind). Two steps in and you literally have to click the neck back because there is nothing on the walls below 284cm, (lazy bitches). Past this golden line, is a troupe of 7 fillies, cantering around the maximum wall height, in various states and flavours. Two less and we could have the equestrian version of the Spice Girls. Its too bad that the angles of the room get in the way, because some of these creatures could be real hotties - flowing hair, flashing eyes; shoved in corners where features distort and stomachs sag. What a pity. (....) The pace seems to stop at the gate of a room guarded by a brown and black stallion. Stiff and austere (a bit realistic), he's got one of those eyes that follows you. Yeah you. Peeking between his legs, this second room appears to be empty except for a door, a door that is slightly open leading to something of a fantasy. A puffy dream. Upon reaching the handle, you realise that this pure illusion, a door made from the head, a trick of the eye. (...)

Running Away (with Manuela Gernedel), New Joerg,, Vienna 2018



Manuela Gernedel and Fiona Mackay met at Glasgow School of Art. They have been collaborating since 2007 and painting together since 2009. For their European Painting Tour they spread themselves over walls, ceilings, windows and floors, merging separate individual ideas into one, for one moment of time.



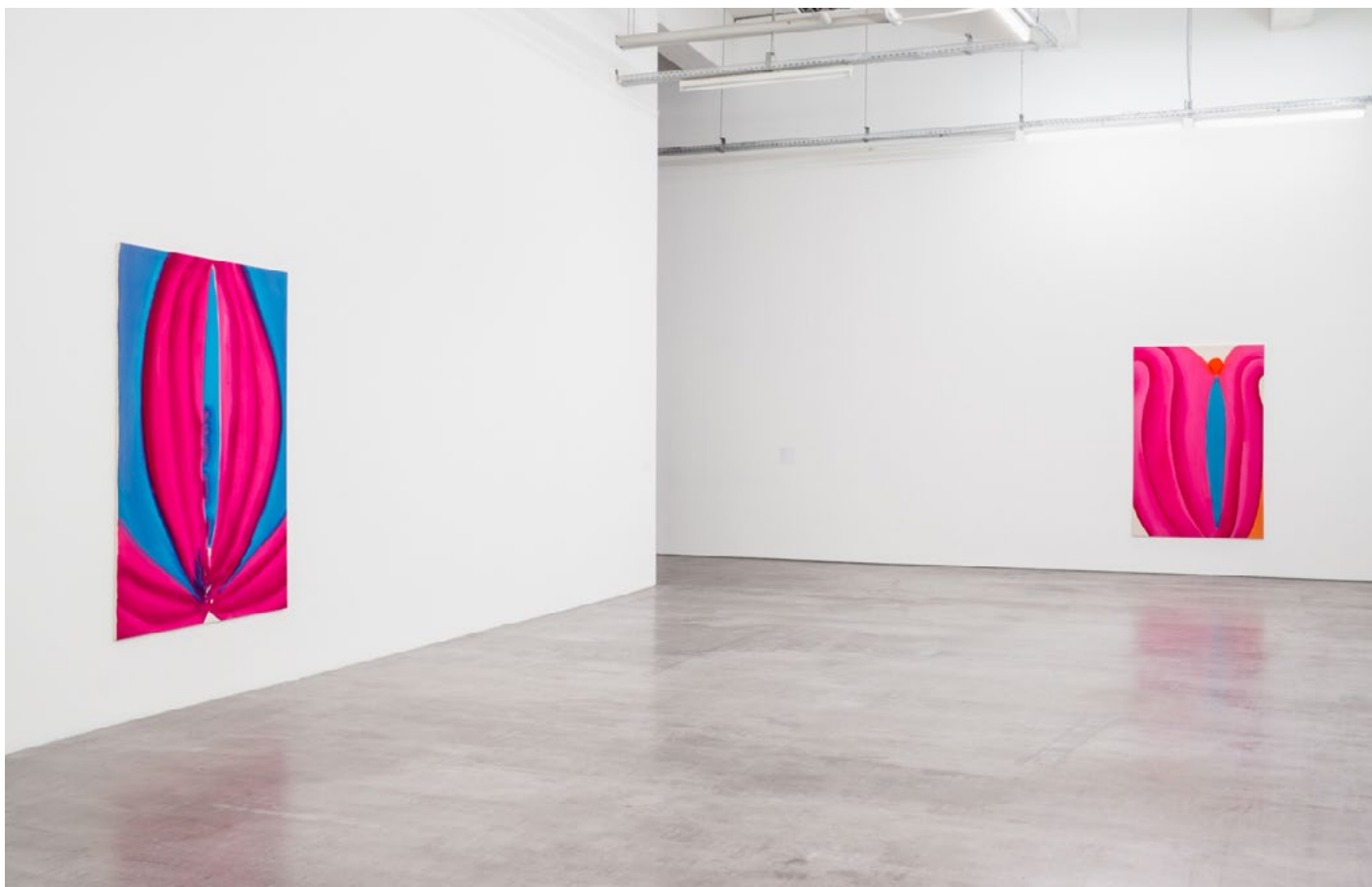
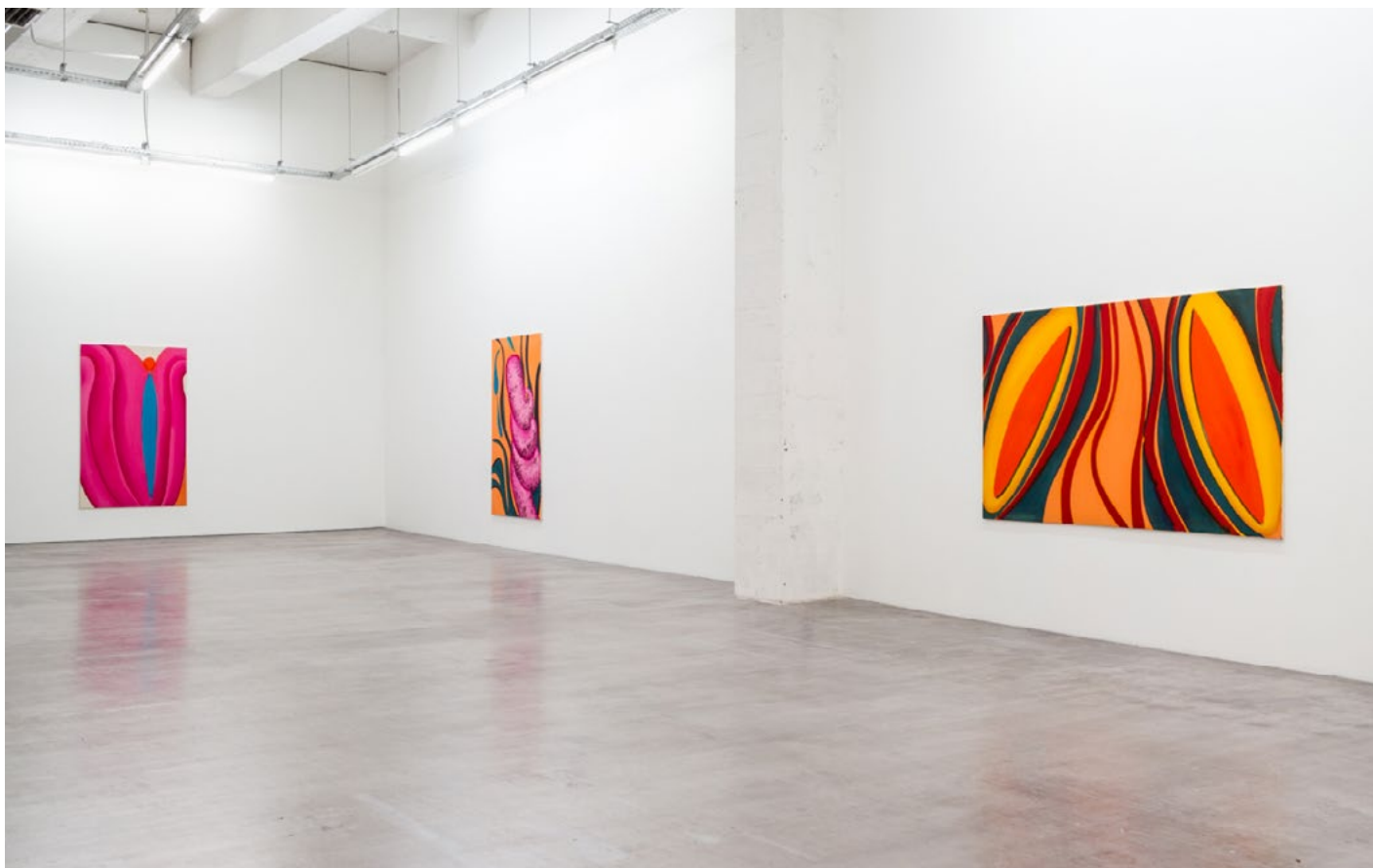


„Running Away“, New Joerg, Vienna (with Manuela Gernedel), 2018

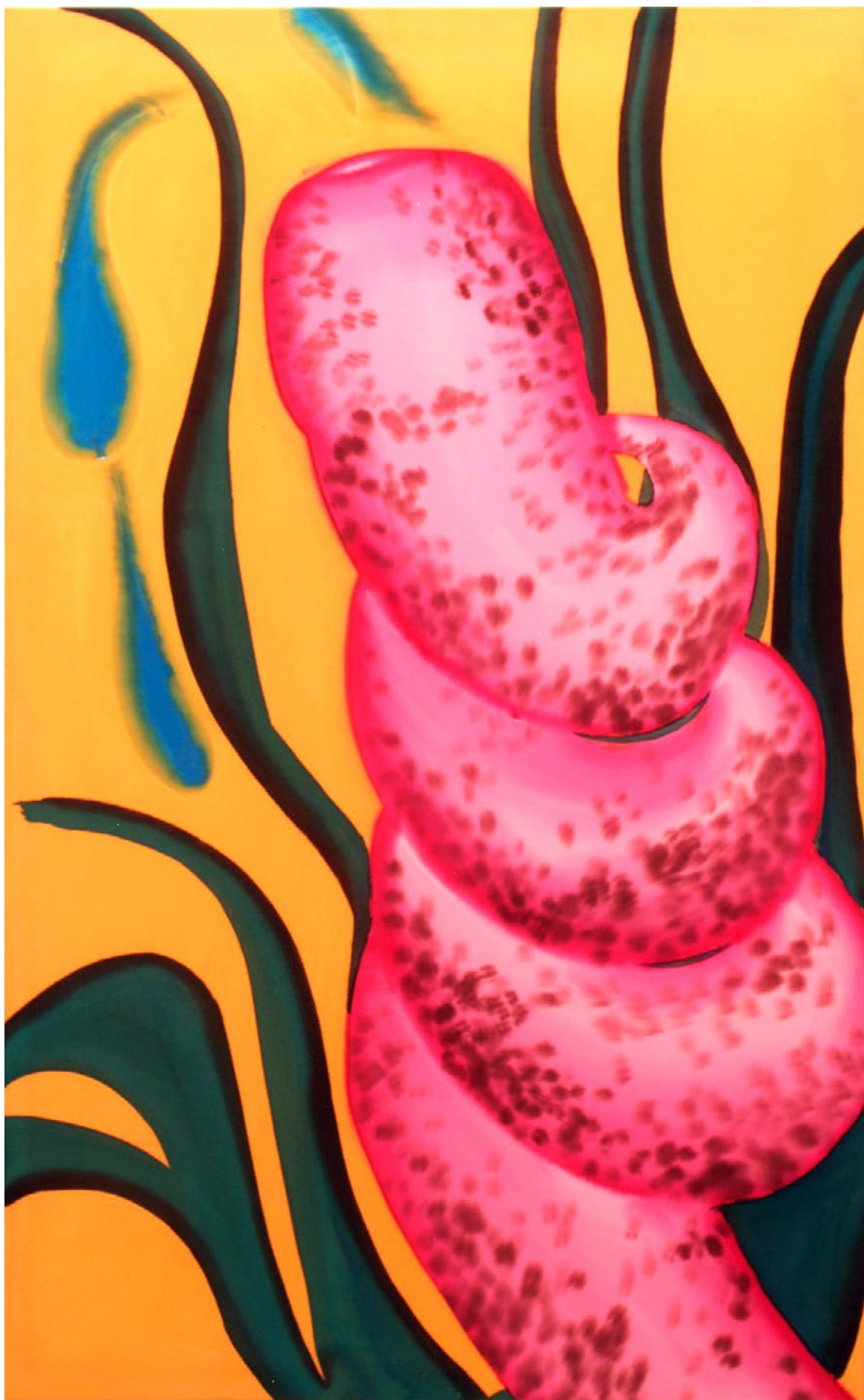




„Coma“, VIS, Hamburg (with Manuela Gernedel), 2018







*Snake*; 2016; fabric dye and acrylic binder on canvas; 200 x 125 cm



exhibition view ,LUI', Real Positive, Cologne (with Manuela Gernedel), 2016





Close to, 2015, exhibition view at Klemm's, Berlin



„...they are ‚situations with painting‘; sounds weird, but Fiona seems to be on the trail of an underlying idea, an original order in her exhibits; less in the sense of the project itself, but with the ‚result‘ of the final viewing experience in the back of her head“

„Without hesitation it hits me directly in the eye with full force. I am in the middle of it immediately. But, other than expected, the sight does not overpower me, does not pummel me. Quite the opposite: I feel safe and secure. At first sight, in love. Therefore, when I look again it hits me all the harder. Lets me doubt. Leaves me behind, lost.... Too fast, too much, too physical...“

„Count-in. Density. Emptiness. Repeat. Rhythm and language are also appropriate associations: jazzy and free, but with a determination and a goal...“

„...a filter has surely had an effect: personal stories, or some sort of code language, associative terms...the pictures always look abstract at first, but probably for Fiona they are all figurative works in the end.“

„...also the color spectrum. So many skin tones and gradients, almost tone on tone. In the disc-paintings then the overkill with paint and immediacy...large formats, but painted lightly. ‚Soft Monuments‘ maybe...“

„Curtain! The view through the keyhole: antique columns, bases, arches --theater somehow -- and the ‚irises‘ of the discs as eternal observers...“

„Outside in front of the gallery. Smoking. And looking through the big window at the paintings. We're silent to one another, but I still want to talk about the works with her. About the feelings one gets. I'm a little embarrassed about what I am saying and trying to express. We hardly know each other...“

„The paintings are related to one another, sometimes almost comment on and quote from each other, can stand on their own -- although they are one and all family members.“

„Together we are looking for a word. A word that says everything, but of course we don't find one. We play ping pong with words, semantic sheaths: masculine and feminine, formal and gestural, figure and abstract... What for, anyway? I am annoyed; with defining and limiting, with vocabulary, and reflect back on the thing that it is. An image. And an image is an image is an image. Resign myself to this. And still, I am happy because I realize: I was, I am, very close.“

Silvia, Anna & Sebastian



*Untitled*, 2015, fabric dye on calico, 230 x 153 cm





*Untitled*, 2015, fabric dye on calico, 230 x 153 cm

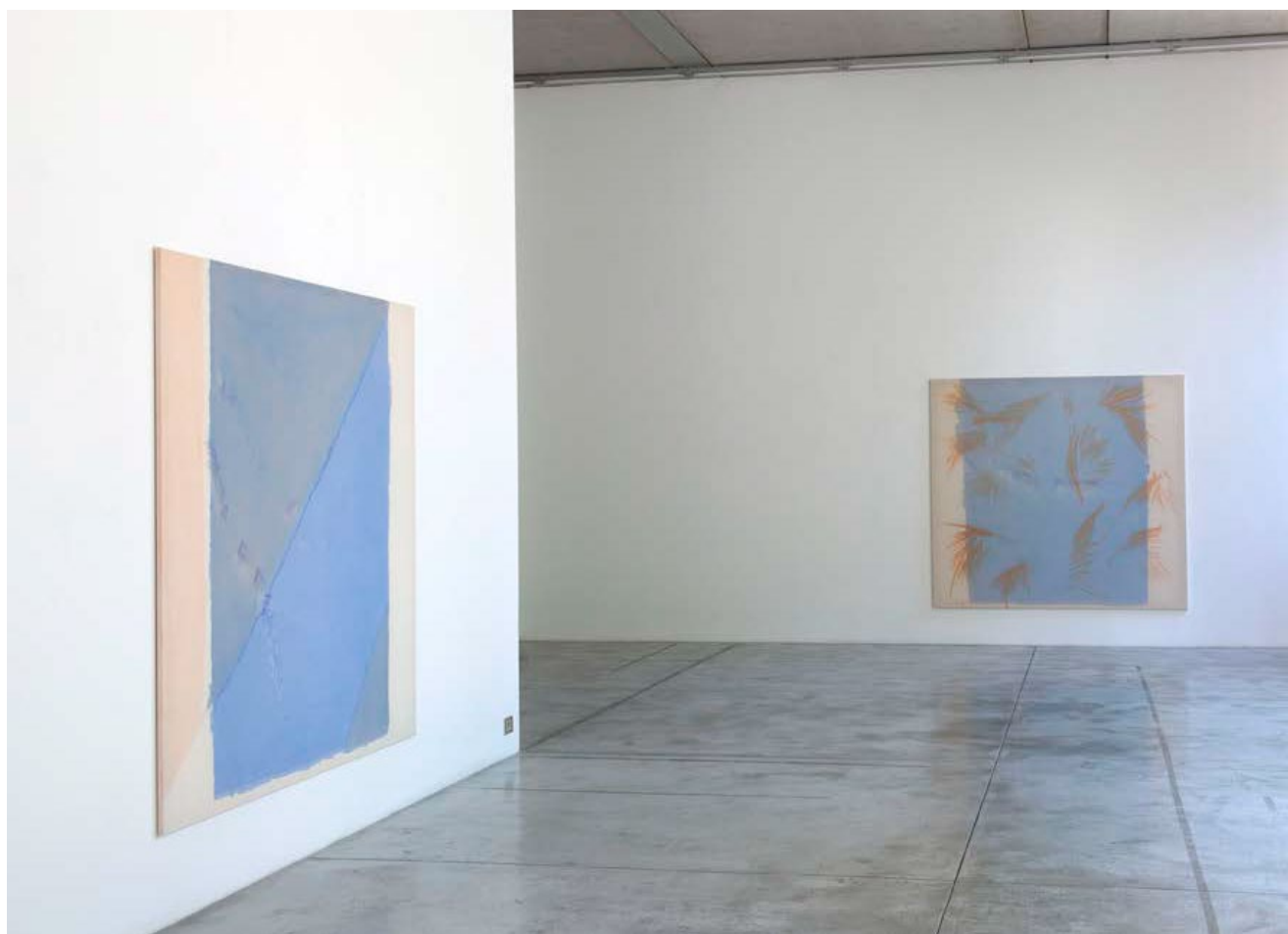




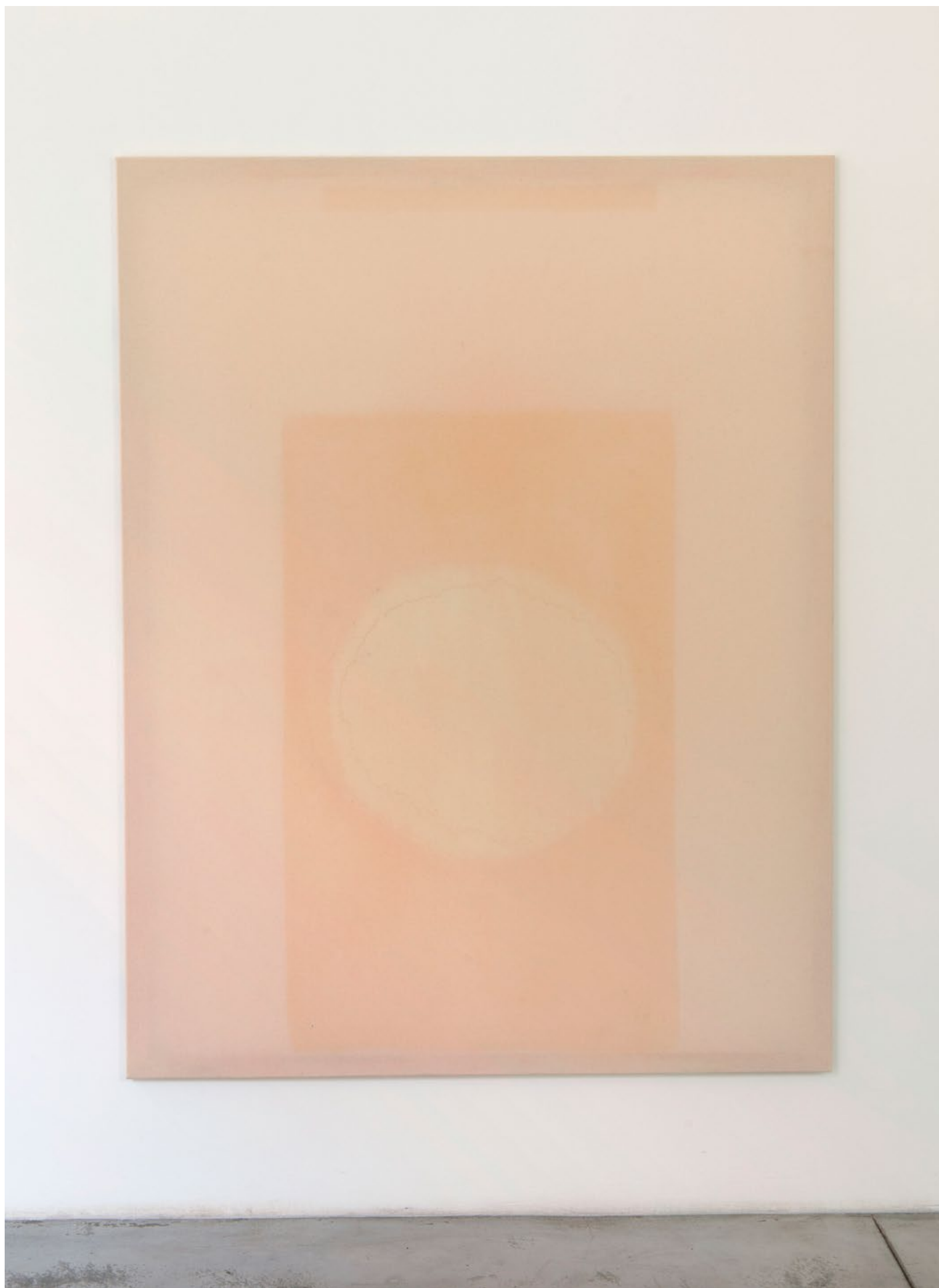
*Untitled*, 2015, fabric dye on calico, 230 x 160 cm



*Untitled*, 2015, fabric dye on calico, 230 x 153 cm



Sisters, 2014, exhibition view at Albert Baronian, Brussels



*Morning*, 2014, fabric dye on canvas, 135 x 175 cm



*Untitled*, 2014, fabric dye on canvas, 190 x 175 cm





*Free Parrots*, 2014, fabric dye on canvas, 195 x 175 cm

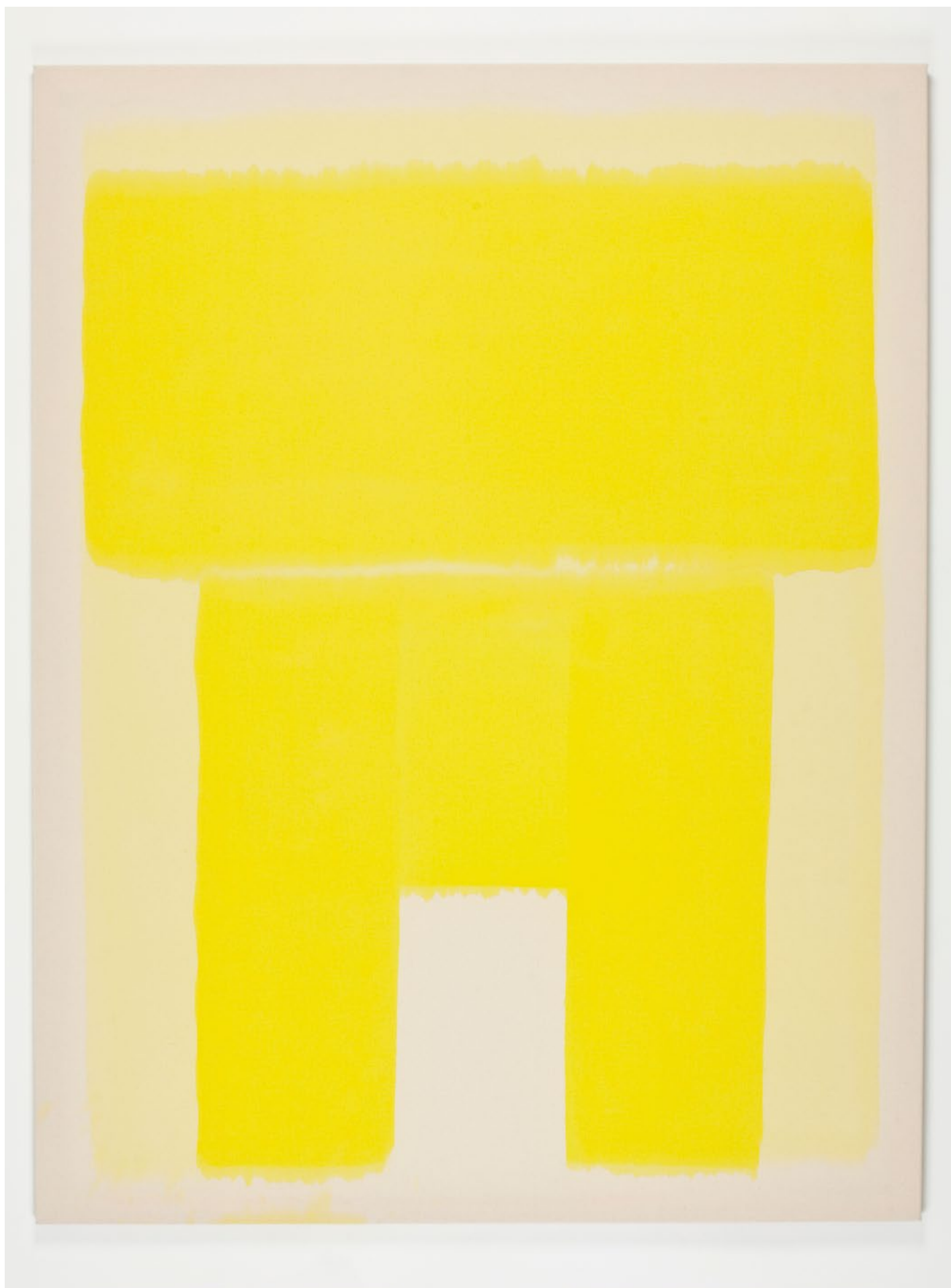




Sisters, 2014, exhibition view at Albert Baronian, Brussels



*Autumn In A*, 2013, fabric dye on canvas, 135 x 175cm



*Monument*, 2013, fabric dye on canvas, 135 x 175 cm



1

I've got all the money in the world but here the coffee is only half the price. This must be the place. And it's twice as good as home. It's great with borders vast. I could spend a whole year traveling within, from summer to summer and then back home again. Monumental postcards written, dated and signed as if I would be the man on that horse. Back in the saddle again, I'm lying on a towel on a beach. While high poplars sway in the backdrop scene to a gentle breeze, I see myself from the glare of too young locals passing by. Passively in action, I feel popular even though no one knows who I am. Washed on the surf of the sea to an unknown shore, I now enjoy. Who cares when sipping on local refreshments with wide blue eyes, off-piste when it's at best. Touring during the autumn in a country I don't know, I learn to know the inner fields, being what others call a tourist among other tourists, I fill out the land. All of it for sale, open on Sunday, closed on Monday, available during the other days, like ripe fruits in an orchard stolen by my foreign hands.

Andreas



Tourist, 2013, exhibition view at Martin van Zomeren, Amsterdam



2

Here I am. Lying on a bed that is mine for the night and watching swaying curtains with shades that reveal what is real outside, on the floor a late sunbeam slowly stretches out to follow steps that went off to bed before. I now see what I earlier was looking at, me under a monument of a high horse and cast in the saddle a frozen man, from right below, tiny and so twisted in perspective that he now is difficult to understand. Underneath the minimal cast shadow of metal skin, I see myself standing with my half drunken glass, and I start walking from place to place to find the difference in between, the ice on a stick moves me like a tall poplar tree in a gentle summer breeze. Melting away and dripping down to places no one ever goes, if not just ending as stains on shirts, short hot pants, naked legs or shoes. Leaving drop marks and forming patterns under all those touring soles, patterns of steps that wash out like waves hitting the beach or reaching a shore. To this I am returning night after night, addicted to impressions and shivering under my burning tan. Waiting for the shutters and my lids to close for the day and the thoughts to take me home, I look for one last local refreshment with wide lakes of blue eyes. Going, leaving, traveling but never to arrive, I slowly move towards a bed that is mine for the night and close the curtains in front of the window where upon I rest my sight and travel on during night.

Arndt



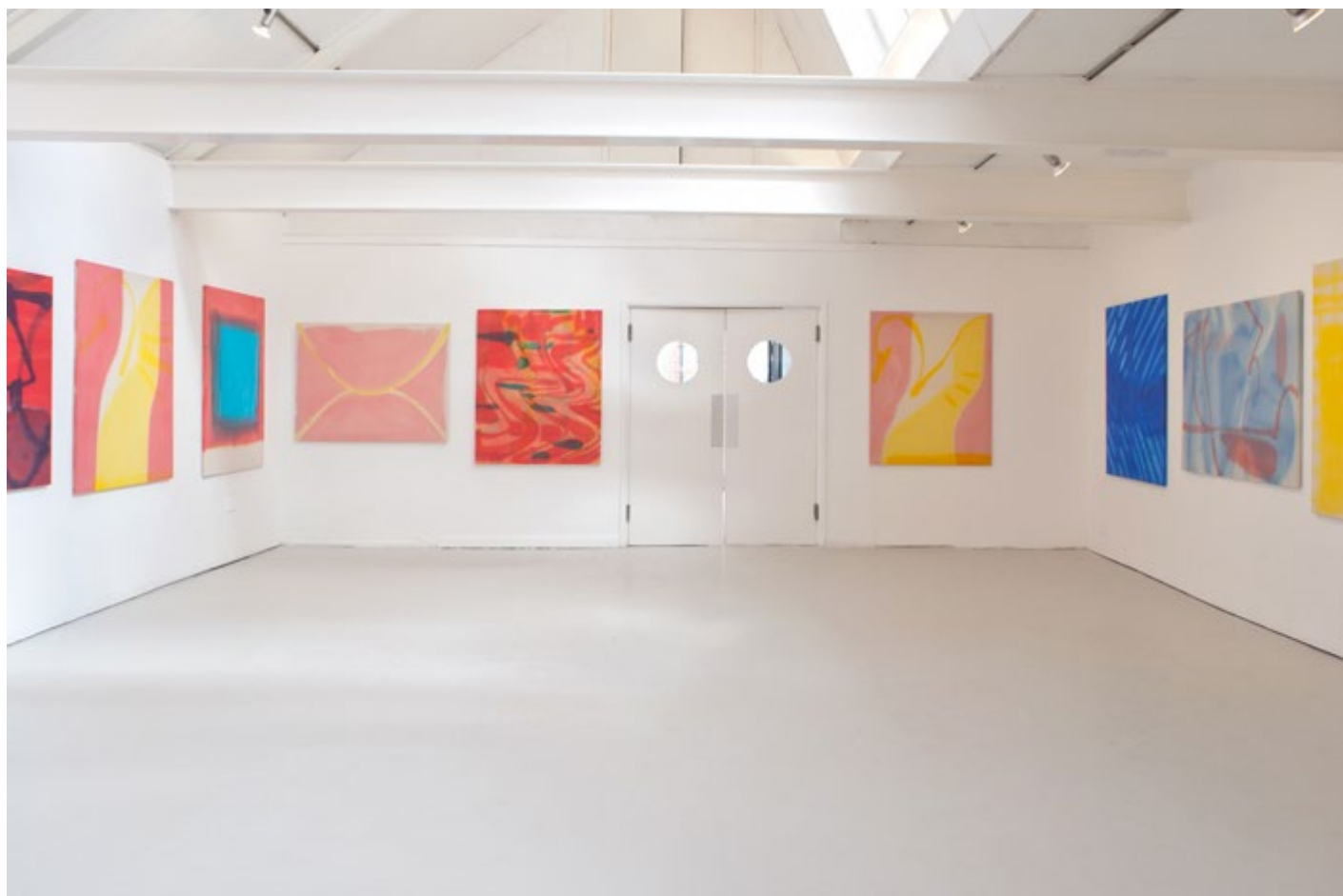
Tourist, 2013, exhibition view at Martin van Zomeren, Amsterdam



*Piste*, 2013, fabric dye on canvas, 235 x 175cm







Syntax, 2013, exhibition view at OUTPOST, Norwich, UK



*Scented Letter*, 2013, fabric dye on canvas, 100 x 135 cm

Everyone tells stories. Humanity tells itself stories about itself and its place through science, history, philosophy etc...

When these stories are completed we can say with some conviction 'these are facts'. But what about the stories we as individuals tell ourselves to interpret our reality and our place? Are these stories completable?... When we examine our private stories do we find facts? Or do Identities emerge by the recognition of a process which mediates between stories, always fluctuating due to our own fallibility and proximity to the subject?

Emerging from the gaps caused by the conflict between purity of intention and the impossibility the work to represent fully that which is incomplete, comes a story which is always tentative, ephemeral and transitive = whimsical. Through obtuse symbolism, line, lines, repetition, layering; these stories are open yet obscured, and perhaps the more illuminated for that.



*Postcard* 2013, fabric dye on canvas, 135 x 100 cm





Syntax, 2013, exhibition view at OUTPOST, Norwich, UK

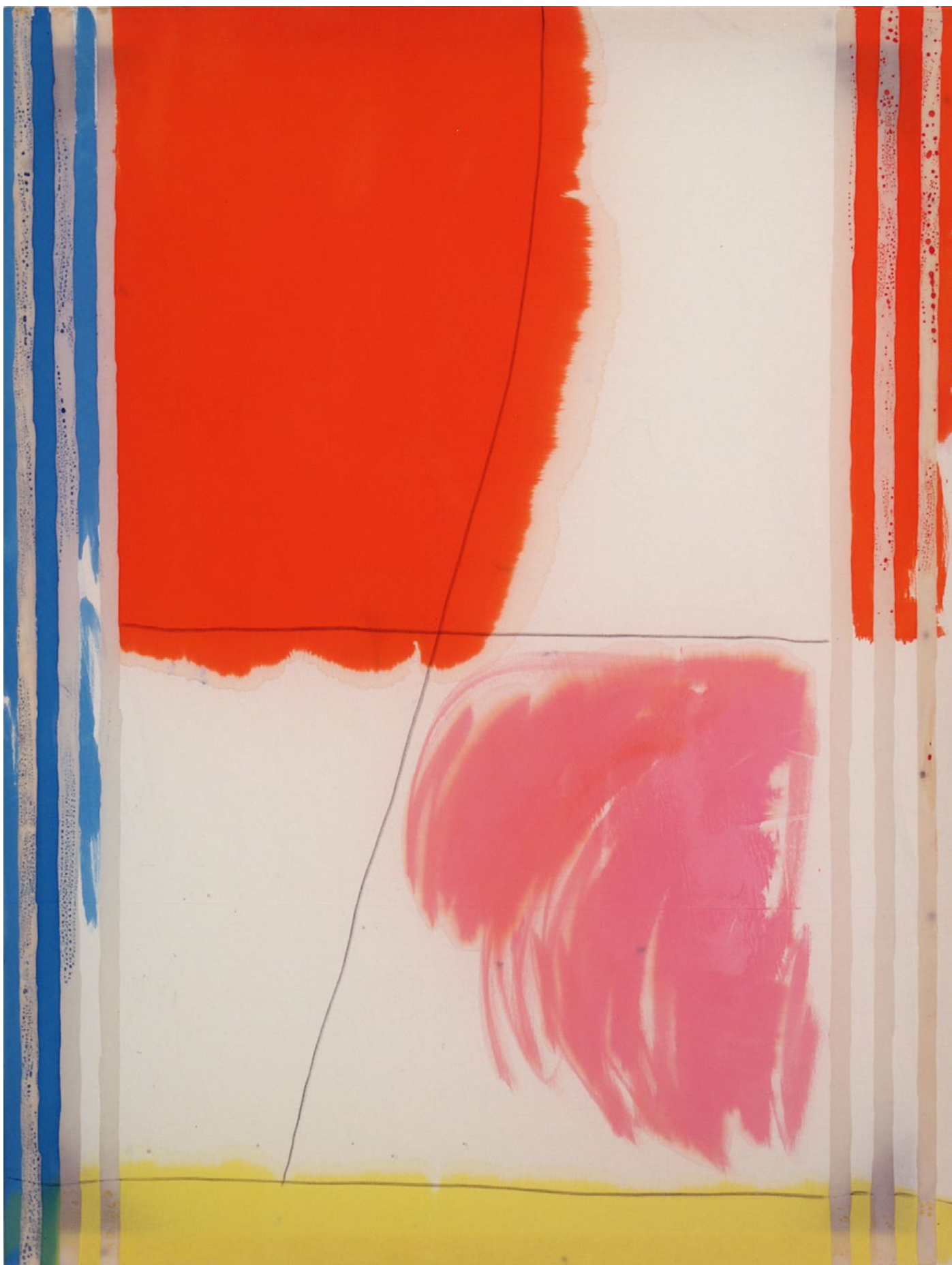


Intentional Stance, 2012, exhibition view at De Ateliers, Amsterdam



Over the Amstel 2012, batik and wax on canvas, 152 x 115 cm





Mixed Drinks 2012, Batik dye, wax and charcoal on canvas, 152 x 115 cm





Sonnata 2012, Batik dye and wax on canvas, 152 x 115 cm

## Biography

### 1984

born in Aberdeen, Scotland, lives and works between Marseille, France and Antwerp, Belgium

## Scholarships and Awards

### 2012

Schloss Plüschow, Plüschow, Germany

### 2010

De Ateliers, Amsterdam, Netherlands Locaal 01, Antwerp, Belgium

### 2009

Wiels Residency Program, Brussels, Belgium Donald Dewar Visual Art Award

### 2006

Emmy Sacs Prize

### 2001

Donald Parton Painting Prize

## Exhibitions (selection)

### 2022

realness (duo with Manuela Gernedel, Pli, Munich, DE

### 2021

Babes, La Salle de bains, Lyon, FR (s) / Opium, Belsunce Projects, Marseille, FR (s) / Sugaar, Cibrian Gallery, San Sebastian, ES

### 2020

la psychologie des serrures, CAN Centre d'art Neuchâtel, Neuchâtel, CH / Sur pierres brûlantes, Friche la Belle de Mai, Marseille, FR / natürlich! {sic!}, KLEMM'S, Berlin, DE

### 2019

blow, (duo with Manuela Gernedel), V8, Karlsruhe, DE / PORTIKO, (duo with Manuela Gernedel), Antwerp Art Pavillon, Antwerp, BE / Every Loft needs a sink, (group show including a duo with Manuel Gernedel) Vleeshal, Middelburg, NL / Le petit cercle Bruxellois, A-V-VE-DE-JET-TE Institut de Carton, Brussels, BE / Under the sun, over the moon and down to earth, (duo with Manuela Gernedel), Tor Art Space, Frankfurt, DE / dreams., KLEMM'S, Berlin, DE (s)

### 2018

FRIDAY NIGHT\*, (duo with Manuela Gernedel), Belsunce Projects, Marseille, FR (s) / Ether, (duo with Manuela Gernedel), Une, une, une, Perpignan, FR / Coma, (duo with Manuela Gernedel), VIS, Hamburg, DE / Running Away, (duo with Manuela Gernedel), New Joerg, Vienna, AT

### 2017

Artemisia, Albert Baronian, Brussels, BE / The Painting Show. Recent Painting from the United Kingdom, AramArt Gallery, Goyang AramNuri Arts Centre, KR / Prologue, Apes&Castles, Brussels, BE

### 2016

Foreign Places, WIELS, Brussels, BE / LUI, (duo with Manuela Gernedel), Real Positive, Cologne, DE / Andy Boot, Sam Falls, Erik Frydenborg, Larissa Lockshin, Fiona Mackay, Albert Baronian, Brussels, BE / The Painting Show. Recent Painting from the United Kingdom,

Contemporary Art Center, Vilnius, LT / Le jeu de l'oie, Sic, Brussels, BE

### 2015

Close to, KLEMM'S, Berlin, DE (s) / Gust, Global Committee, New York, US / Perroquet, Loods12, Wetteren, BE / Summer Show (duo with Cornelius Quabeck), Martin Van Zomeren, Amsterdam, NL

### 2014

Sisters, Albert Baronian, Brussels, Belgium (s) / Ritomando, CIAC, Ghent, Belgium / Painting, Poetry and Pottery, Tobias Naehring, Leipzig (Germany) / Toute la Forêt, Apes and Castles, Brussels, Belgium / Wan ton Mobility, KLEMM'S, Berlin, Germany / June, Galerie Samy Abraham, Paris, France / Vensters, Kunsthal Amersfoort, The Netherlands / Elevator Pitch, Base Alpha Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium / Bande à Part, CAB Art Center, Brussels, Belgium

### 2013

TOURIST, Martin Van Zomeren, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (s) / SOLO, Croxhapox, Gent, Belgium (s) / Syntax, OUTPOST, Norwich, England (s) / Ghosts, S.I.C, Brussels, Belgium / Works on paper, Tobias Naehring, Berlin, Germany / Curated by Vienna, Why Painting Now?, Galerie Emanuel Layr, Vienna, Austria / Paradise, Gallery Conrads, Düsseldorf, Germany

### 2012

84 Paintings IN THE BANK, De Nederlandsche Bank, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (s) / MILAN, Cite Des Arts, Paris, France (s) / Albert Baronian (THE ROOM), Brussels, Belgium (s) / Krummes Ding, V8, Karlsruhe, Germany / Salon, 34 Rue Des Fabriques, Brussels, Belgium / Is there life on Mars? Martin Van Zomeren, Amsterdam, The Netherlands / Intentional Stance, De Ateliers, Amsterdam, The Netherlands / Arrives in Starting, The Lighthouse, Glasgow International Festival with the Duchy Gallery, Great Britain

### 2011

Where Language Stops, Wilkinson Gallery, London, Great Britain / Outrageous Fortune, Focal point Gallery, Southend-on-sea (touring), Great Britain / JOY AXE, Embassy Gallery, Edinburgh, Great Britain

### 2010

3.5 weeks, Lokaal 01, Antwerp, Belgium (s) / PICALDI, Forgotten Bar, Berlin, Germany / There's a Tear in My Beer, West Germany, Berlin / Characters Make Stories, Croxhapox, Ghent, Belgium / 84 Paintings, Wilkinson Gallery, London, Great Britain

### 2009

84 Paintings, Wiels, Centre for Contemporary Art, Brussels, Belgium / Summer Show, Wilkinson Gallery, London, Great Britain / Concrete Galley, Reset Your Life, Wilkinson Gallery (project space), London, Great Britain / The Ventriloquist, Timothy Taylor, London, Great Britain / A Moveable Feast, Glasgow Studio Warehouse, Glasgow, Great Britain / Last Tango in Partick, The Now Museum, Glasgow, Great Britain / FUCK YOU HUMAN, Maribel Lopez Gallery, Berlin, Germany

### 2007

New Contemporaries 2007, New Art Gallery Walsall, Rochelle School, Cornerhouse Walsall, London, Manchester, Great Britain / Post Stuckism is The New Black, Glasgow Studio Warehouse, Glasgow, Great Britain / The Subjective Object, Gallery Conrads, Düsseldorf, Germany