

**OZYA**  
**AYSTREYH**



Olya Avstreyh is a Russian-Israeli artist who currently resides in Tel-Aviv. Born in 1988, Olya pursued her education in English studies before moving to the UK for a degree in media management. She returned to Russia in 2013 during the height of the protests and worked for the main opposition channel Dozhd (which has since been banned). Frustrated with the political reality, she pursued a degree in Fine Art in contemporary painting.

Her first serious breakthrough came during the Covid lockdown with her online project Videochat: send nudes in collaboration with artist Jenya Milyukos, which was extensively covered by DAZED and other international publications. Unfortunately, the same exhibition was censored and canceled in Russia. Since then Olya has been exploring the perception of the female body by patriarchal society and rethinking the taboo on nudity. She also examines the complexity and awkwardness of human behaviour and the sense of alienation that she believes defines her generation. Her work, driven by impulse and intuition, is an invitation to confront fears and desires through raw, physical and vulnerable images. The fragility of the human body and psyche is one of the main themes in her art.

Olya Avstreyh's practice as a whole – from painting style to the choice of subjects – is arguably driven by impulse and intuition, rather than by a structured narrative, and her paintings appear as accidental snapshots of reality. The characters she depicts look as if they were captured in candid moments without an opportunity to strike a pose or turn to their “good” side, making their expressively painted faces and figures look bold, sincere, and vulnerable.

While the emotions portrayed by Avstreyh can be easily followed by the viewer, the stories behind them are complex and not simply grasped. The semantic structures of her works are usually based on intricate assemblages of materials and references from a collection of “impressions” that she keeps, as well as her personal immediate experiences. The artist carefully records visual and textual quotations that strike her as uncanny and spark her senses, including film stills, social media screenshots, images of artworks, book quotes, or notes from conversations with friends.

Kate Savchenko

In 2010 Olya graduated from the Faculty of Foreign Languages at Lomonosov Moscow State University. After that moved to London, where she studied media management for two years at the University of Westminster. In 2021 she graduated from the HSE Art and Design School with a degree in Contemporary Painting under Vladimir Dubossarsky curation. In 2022 took part in Ivan Gorshkov's master class Find and Improve.

### Education

- 2019–2021 MA Contemporary Painting, curated by Vladimir Dubossarsky, HSE ART & DESIGN, Moscow
- 2011–2013 MA Media Management, University of Westminster, London
- 2005–2010 BA Foreign Languages and Area Studies (GB), Lomonosov Moscow State University

### Solo shows

2023 When We Poke It, the Blood Runs and We Find Ourselves in a Belly, Gathering x Voskhod Gallery, Basel

2022 Lights out, Lobby, Moscow

### Group exhibitions

- 2022 Light plumage, Seréne Gallery, Moscow
- 2022 Monsters under the bed, MAXart foundation x Third place, Saint-Petersburg
- 2021 Mixed Media, The New Wing Gogol House, Moscow
- 2021 The Tired Man, HSE Art gallery, Moscow
- 2021 Through The Eyes, Camden Image Gallery, London
- 2020 It's Going To Be Alright, White Room Foundation, Moscow

### Online exhibition

2020 Videochat: send nudes, HSE Online Gallery

### Art Fairs

- 2022 Cruel Optimism, scena x Cosmoscw, Moscow
- 2022 Disappear here, Seréne x Cosmoscw, Moscow
- 2020 Young Russian Artists (YRA): The Rite of Spring, Auction Collective, London

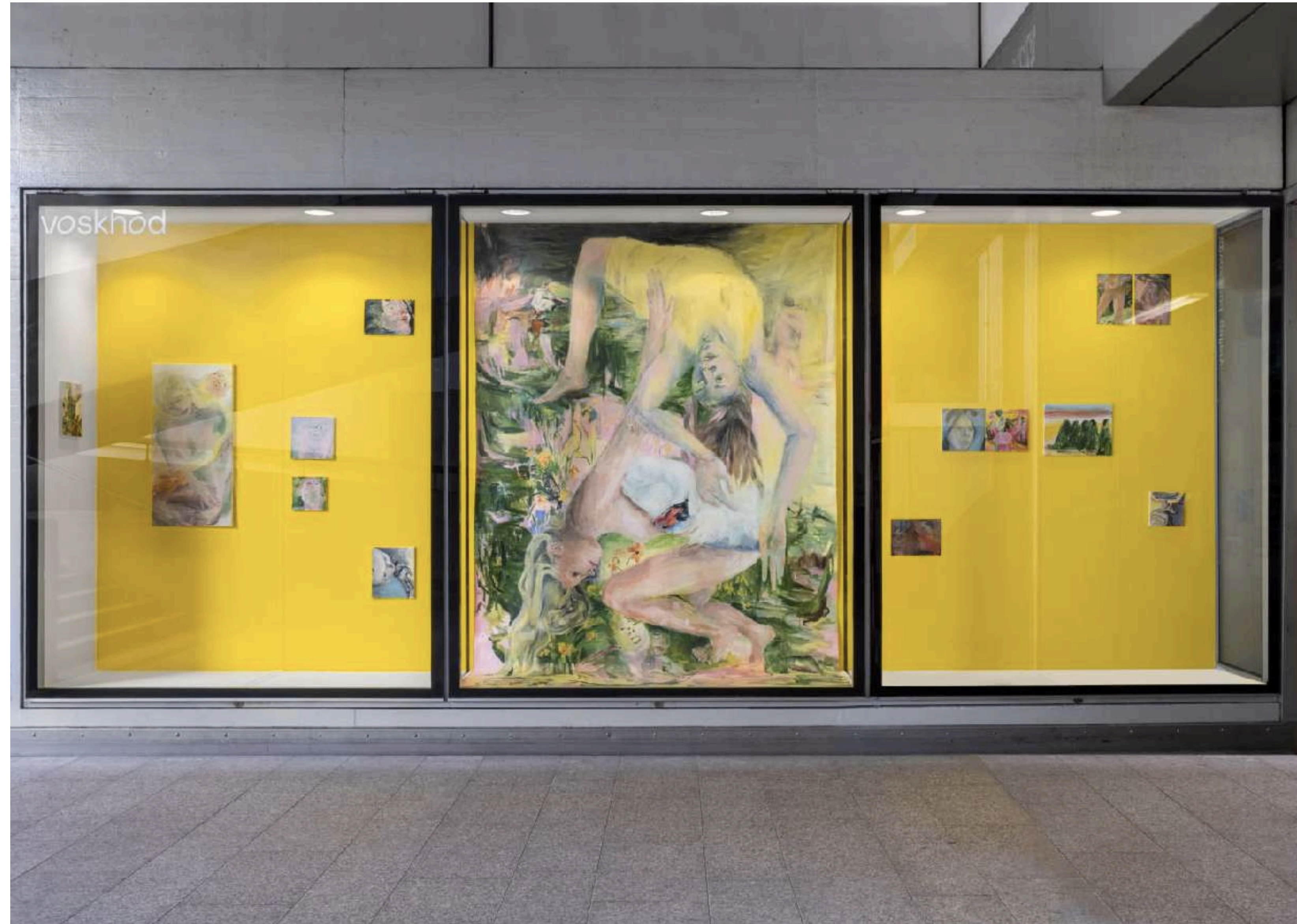
### Publications

[Dazed](#), [Blueprint](#), [RBK Style](#), [Gathering](#), [Seasons Project](#), [Wonderzine](#)

# When We Poke It, the Blood Runs and We Find Ourselves in a Belly

Solo show at Voskhod  
Gallery x Gathering, 2023

Basel, Switzerland

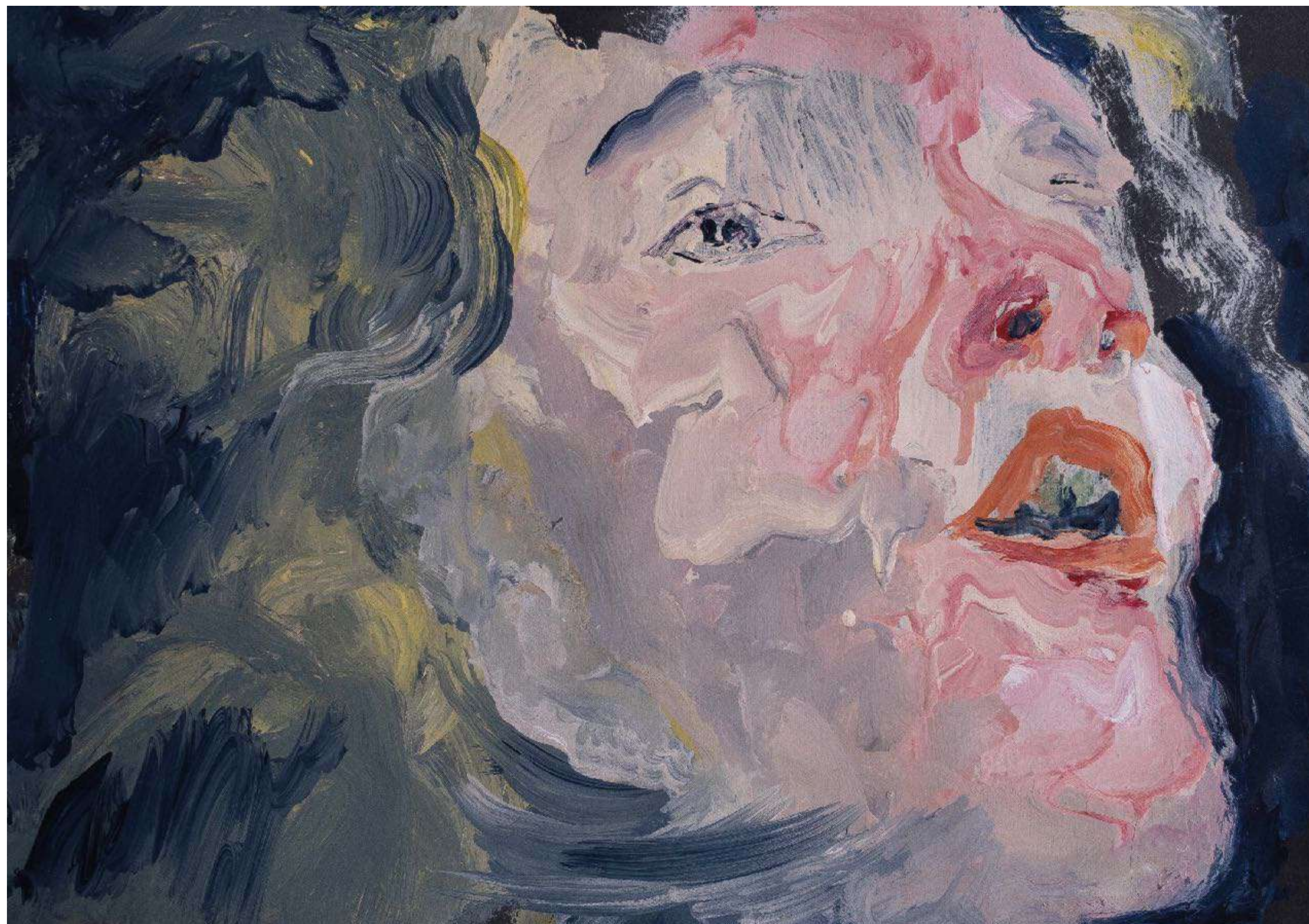


Full catalog [here](#)



In the recent project presented in the vitrines of Voshkod gallery, Olya Avstreyh creates an almost theatrical moment – with a huge intensely painted piece as its ecstatic center. We witness a certain scene – a dying swan or a crucifixion, surrounded by bright yellow, building an unsettling impression that forms a unified semantic entity together with a collection of smaller carefully spread canvases. While the emotions portrayed by Avstreyh can be easily followed by the viewer, the stories behind them are complex. Grotesque faces and shapes of bent and ‘broken’ bodies speak of anxiety, rage, pain, and trauma, but also ecstasy and excitement – the feelings she has experienced in the past year.

Full text by Ekaterina Savchenko – read [here](#).



Exploding beauty, 2023

Acrylic on paper  
21x30 cm

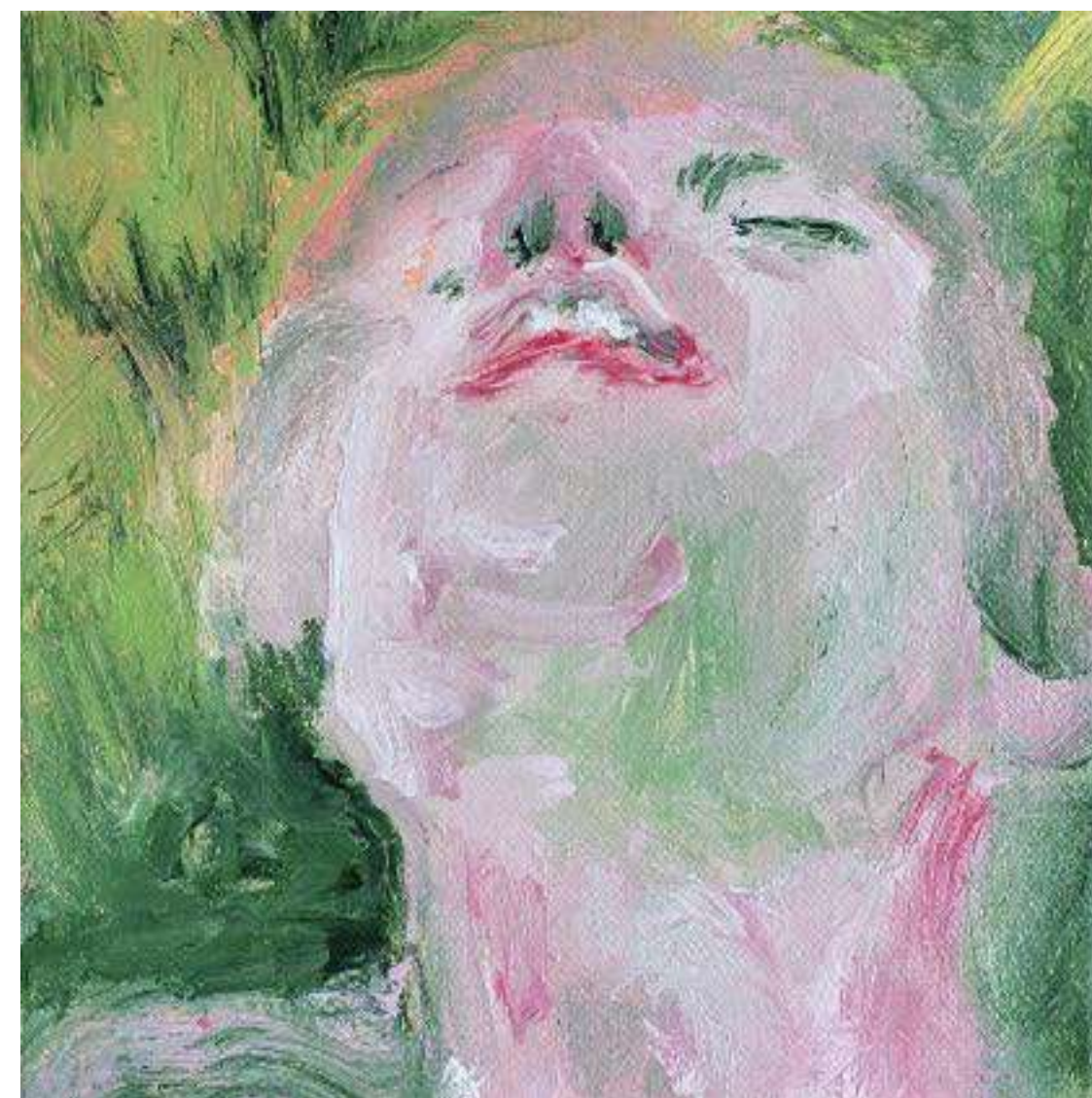


Rain of ashes, 2023. oil on canvas. 25x30 cm



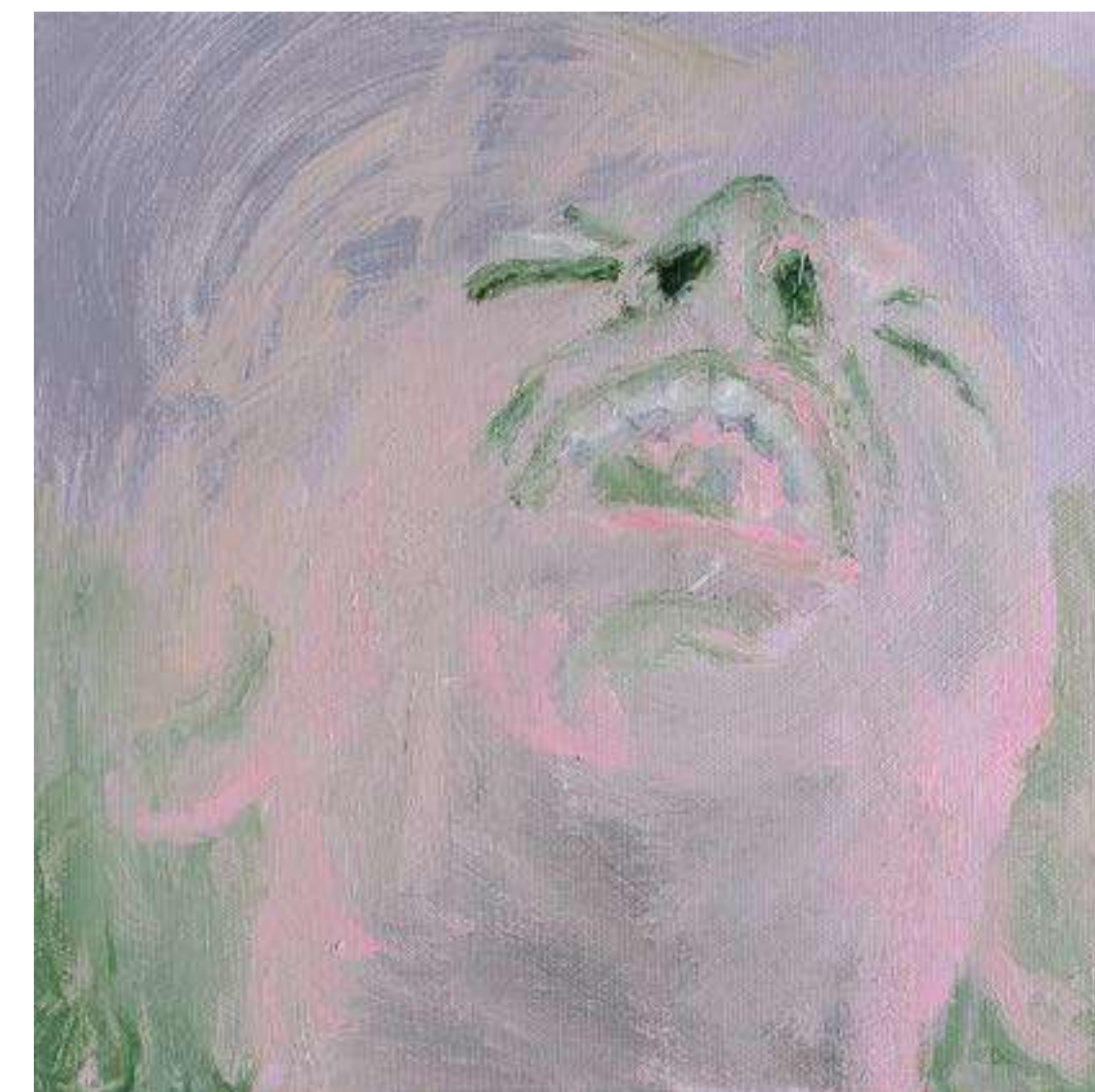
Swan dream, 2023. acrylic on canvas. 25x35 cm





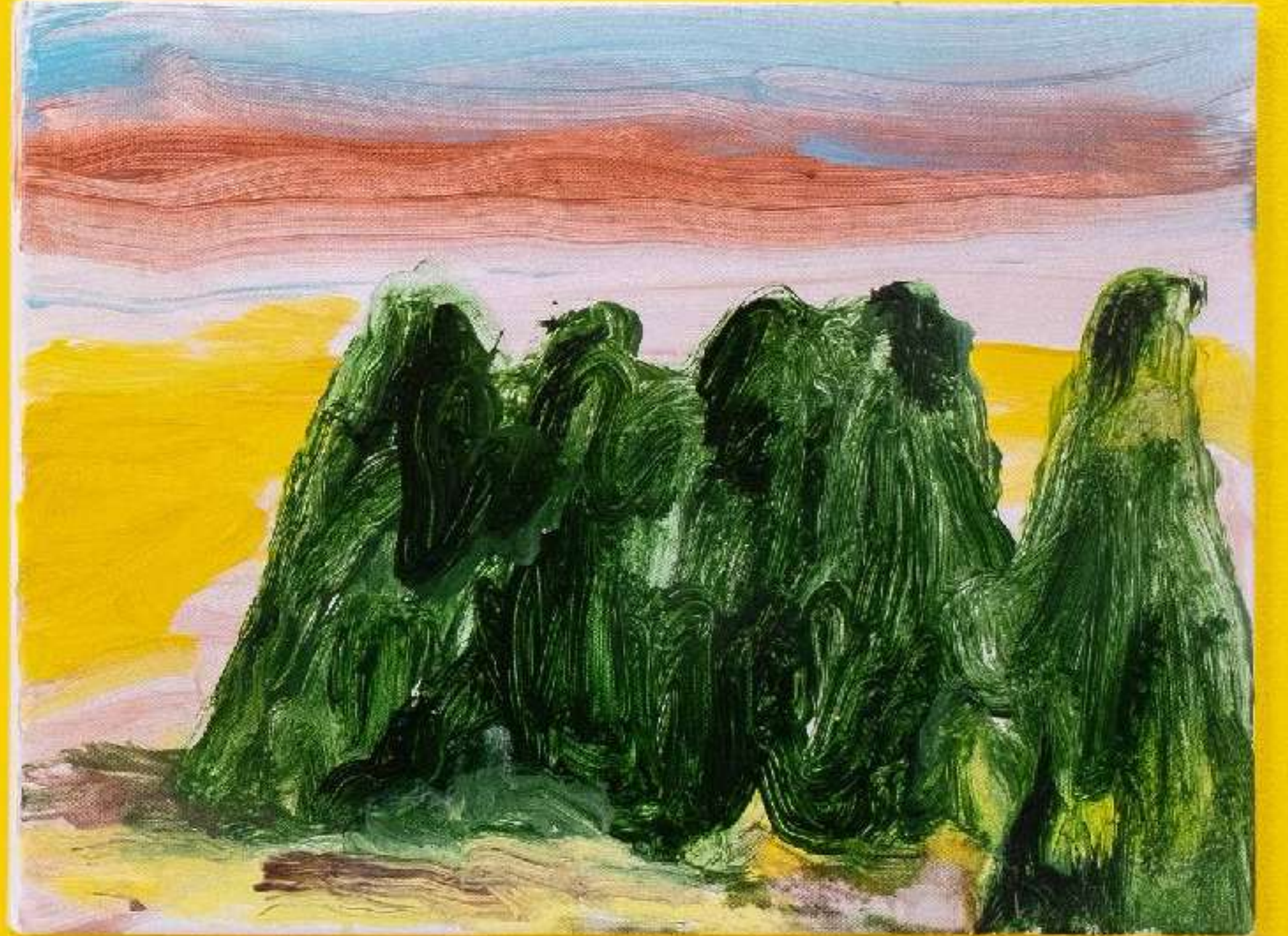
Freak of chance I, 2023

Acrylic on canvas  
20x20 cm



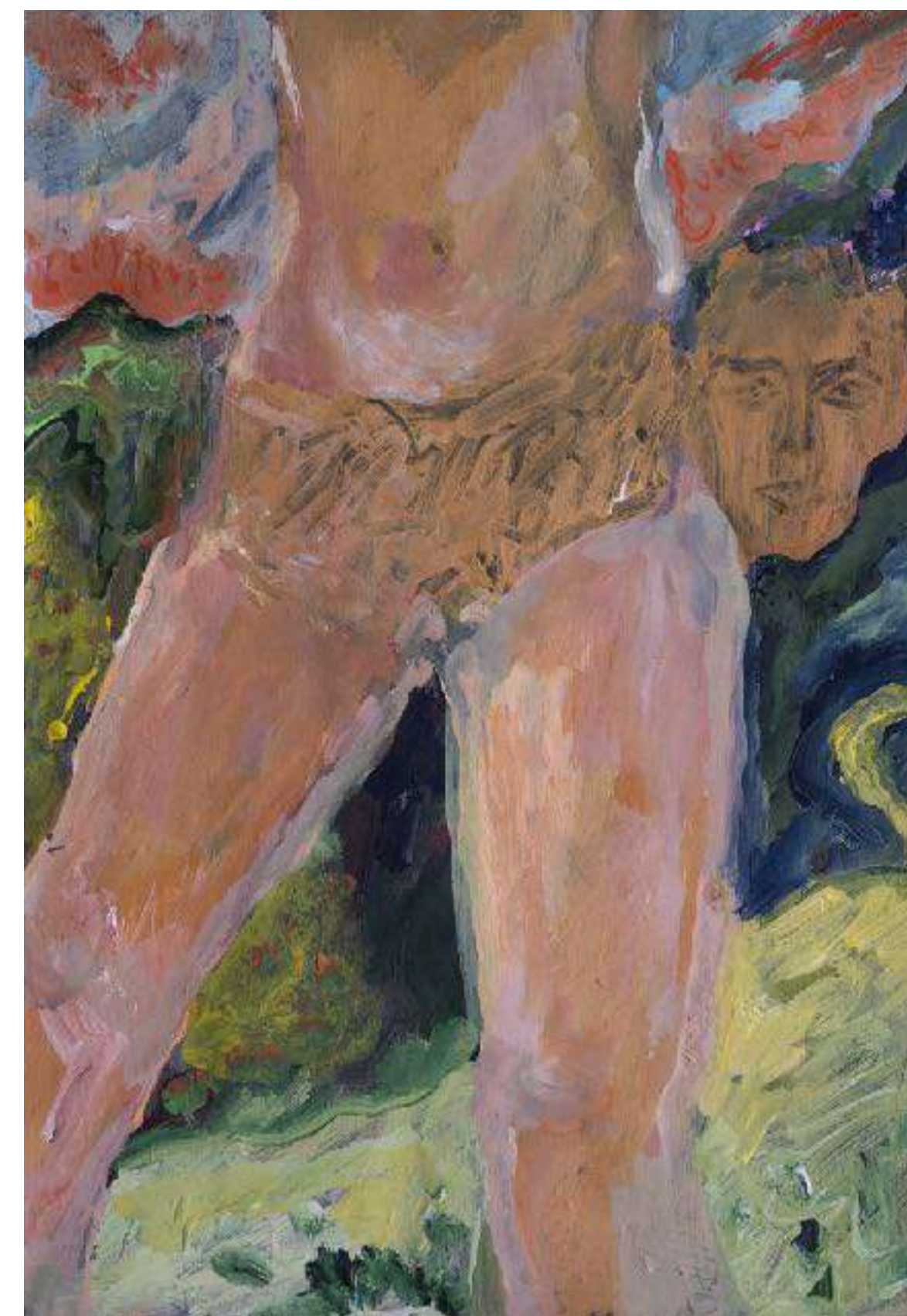
Freak of chance II, 2023

Acrylic on canvas  
25x25 cm

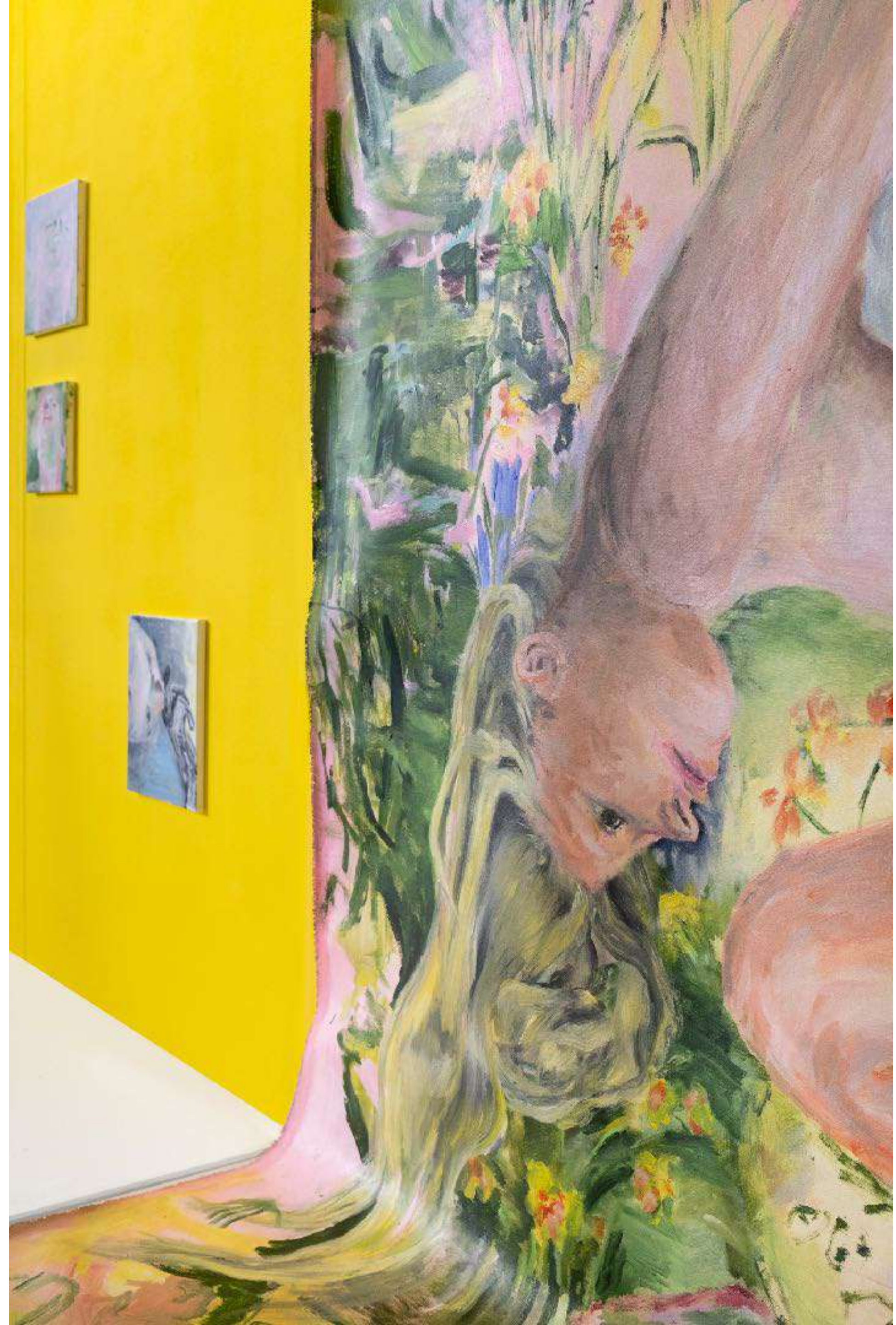
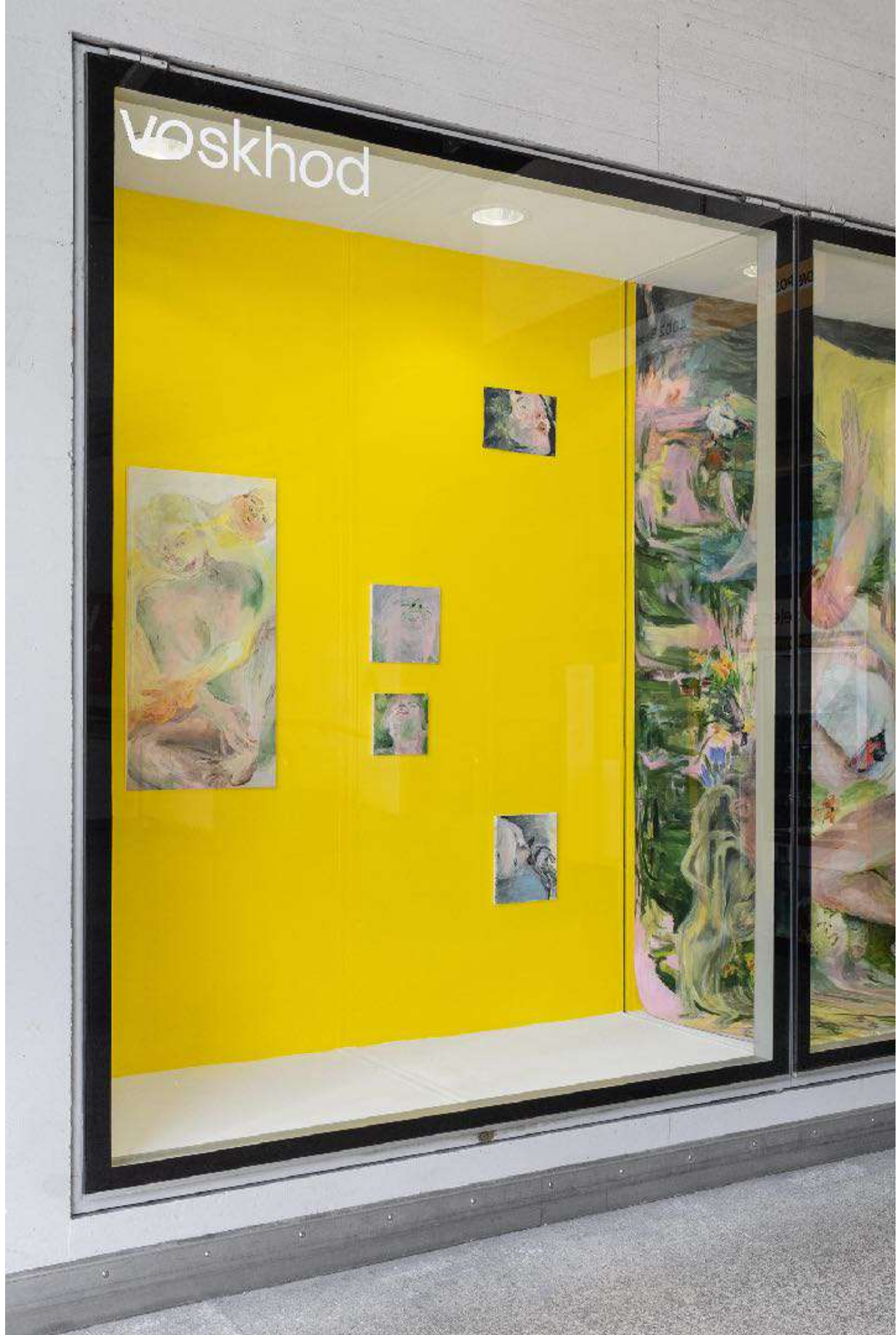


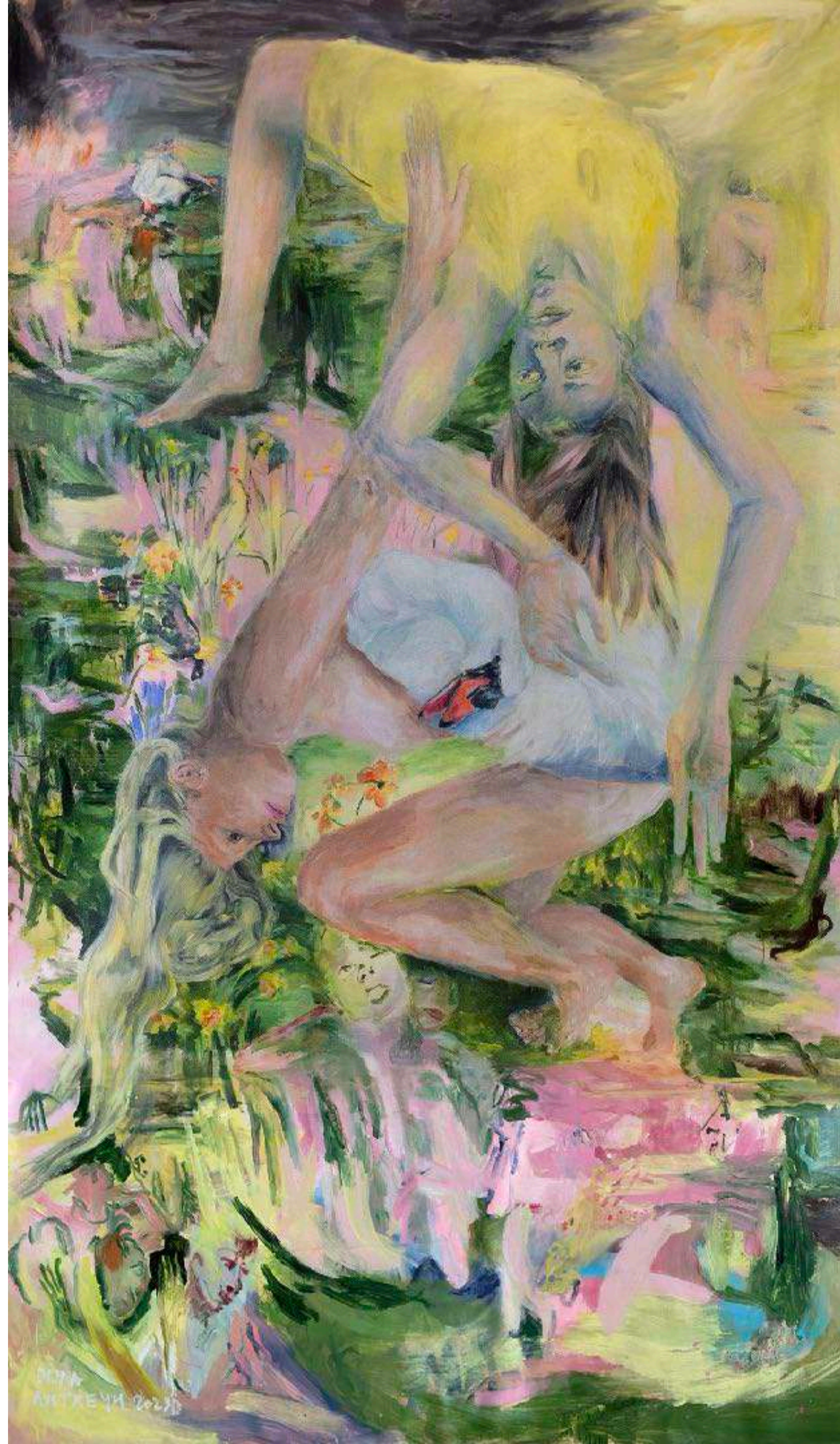


History's tragic glitter, 2023.  
Acrylic on canvas. 47x96 cm



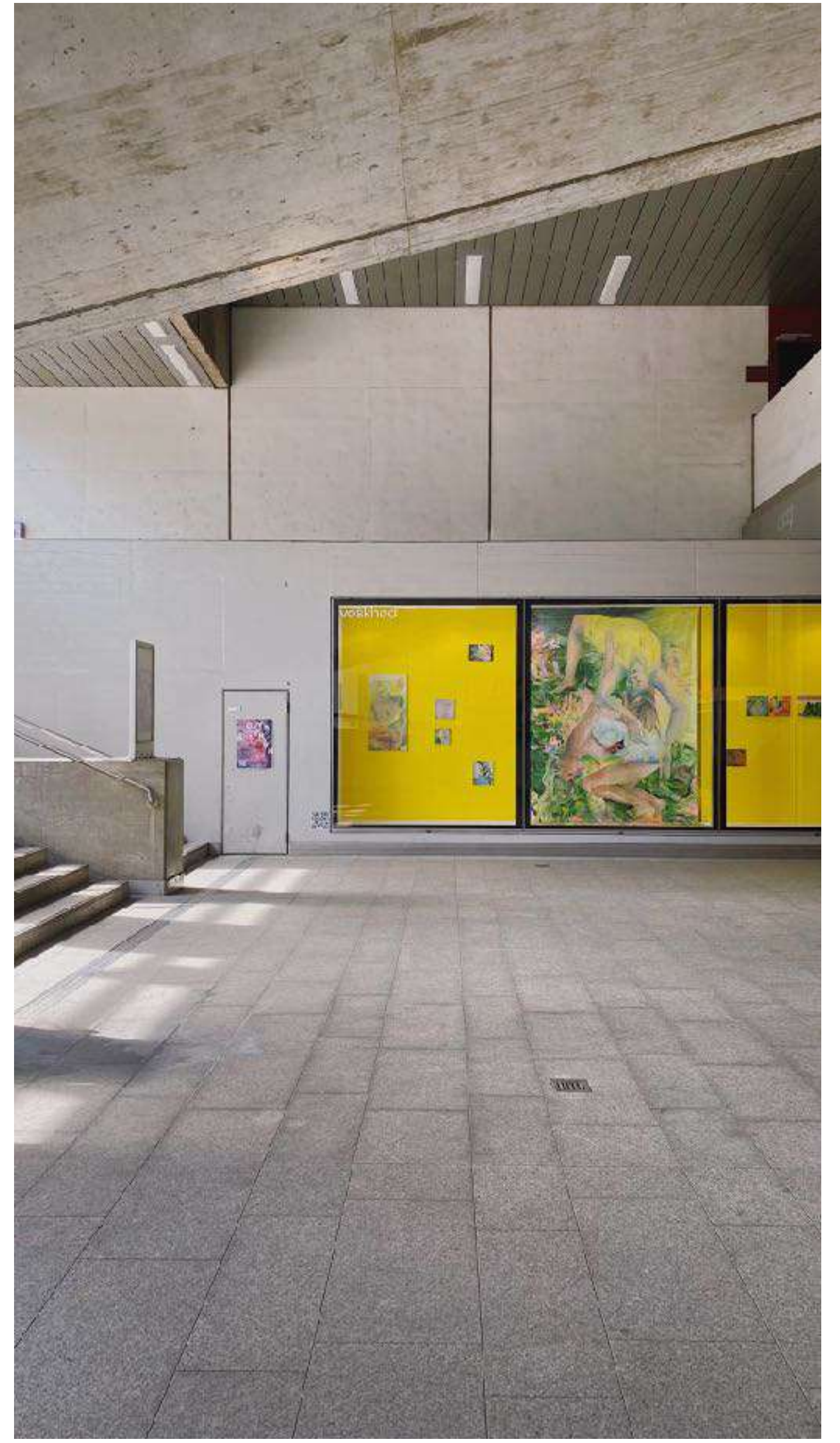
Heads we're dancing, 2023.  
Acrylic on paper. 21x30 cm





Swan song, 2023

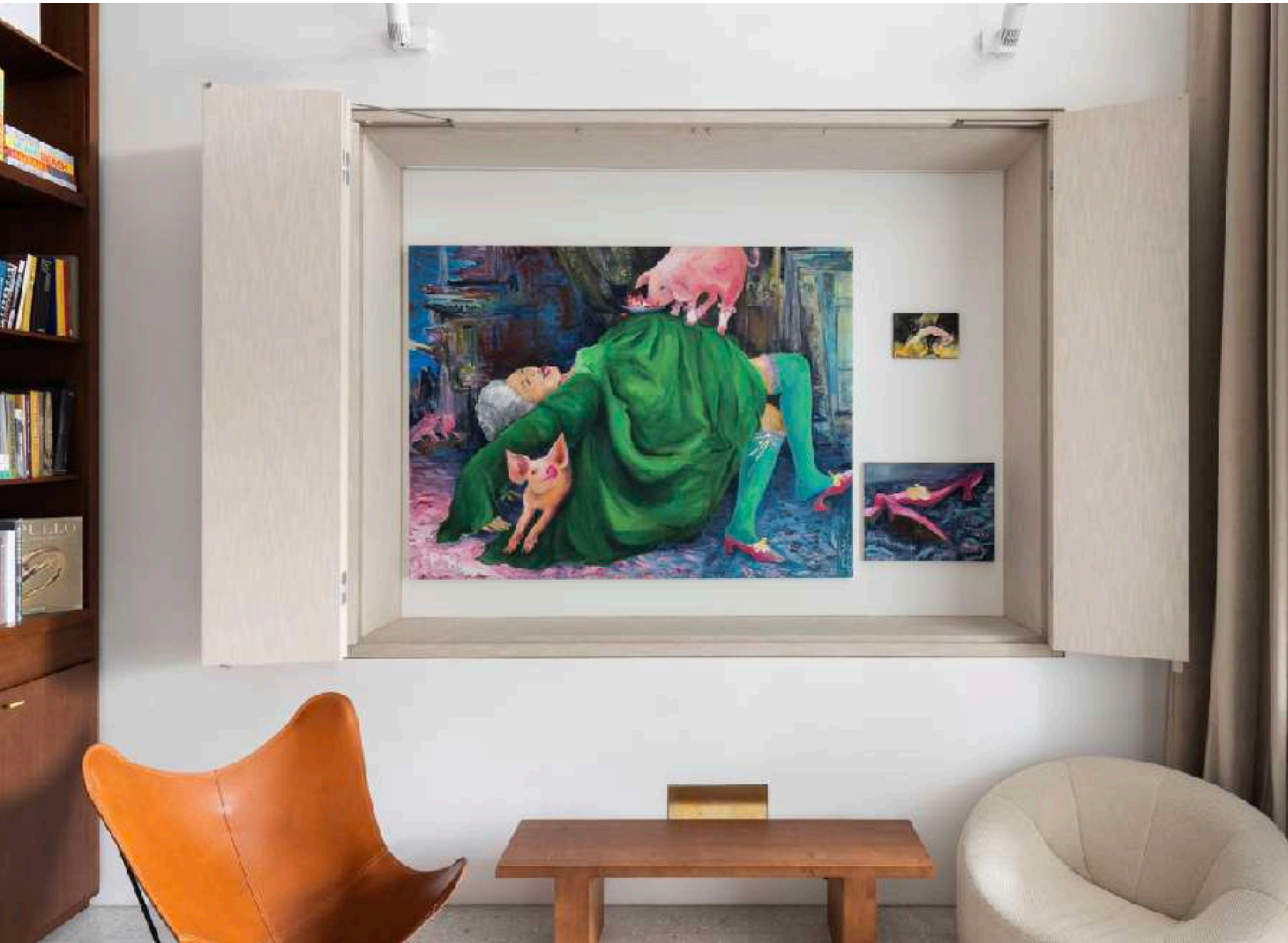
Acrylic on canvas  
350x212 cm



# Lights Out!

Solo show at Lobby, Moscow, 2022

Full catalog [here](#)



The 'Lights out!' project is a multi-level absurd fairy tale. In this strange carnival scenery, the artist reflects on the human and the inhuman. You can't hide your true nature behind a perfect dress and cover up claws in flirty shoes. Midnight strikes and beasts come out, whatever is left starts breaking. The marshmallow texture of the paintings, almost melting, hints an impending tragedy, marking an adieu to a former reality. Gothic horror hides behind this parade of elegance – we see beauty on the outside and bottomless pain on the inside.

The carnival culture is not as innocent as it may look – it harbours profanity, extravagance and excess. And if you cross that shaky line, you may lose yourself. Do you instantly become a monster, or merely someone else? Play and grotesque remind us that everything we see is 'theatrum mundi', just a shadow of what really happened.



Cherry on top, 2022

Acrylic on canvas  
150x200 cm



Old sins, 2022  
Acrylic on canvas  
130x100 cm





Wolf Lady, 2022.  
Acrylic on canvas. 20x30 cm



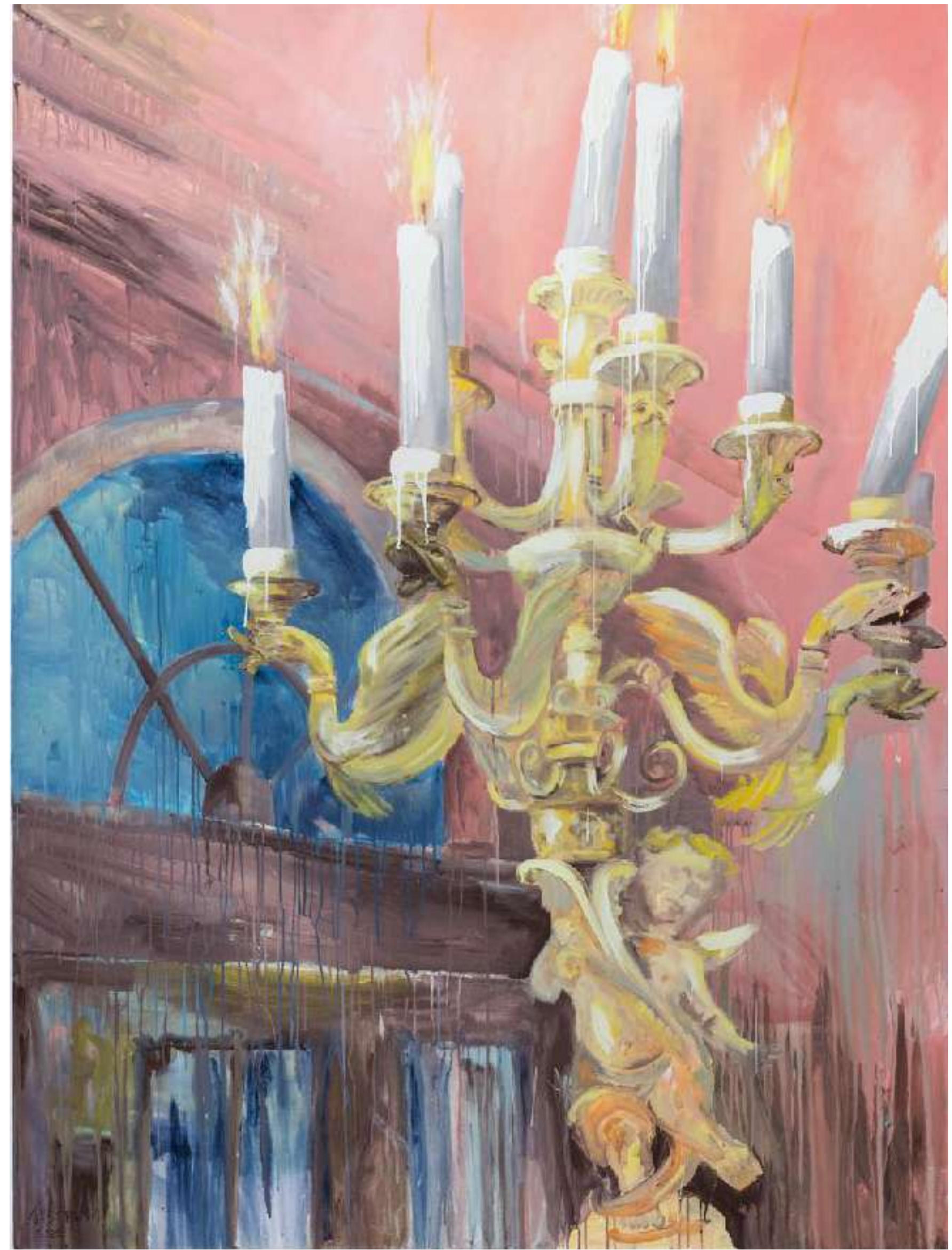
Shrimpy, 2022.  
Acrylic on canvas. 60x40 cm



Taming of the shrew, 2022.  
Acrylic on paper. 120x70 cm



Let them eat cake. 2022.  
Acrylic on canvas. 130x80 cm



Light on. 2022.  
Acrylic on canvas. 150x200 cm



Bubble bath. 2022.  
Acrylic on canvas. 90x60 cm



Pretty little claw for her. 2022.  
Acrylic on paper. 30x40 cm



Moon boy, 2022. Acrylic on canvas, 30x30  
Lights out, 2022. Acrylic on canvas. 130x90 cm

Broken, 2022  
Acrylic on canvas  
50x40 cm





# Kissing Inferno

szena x Cosmoscow  
Art Fair, 2022



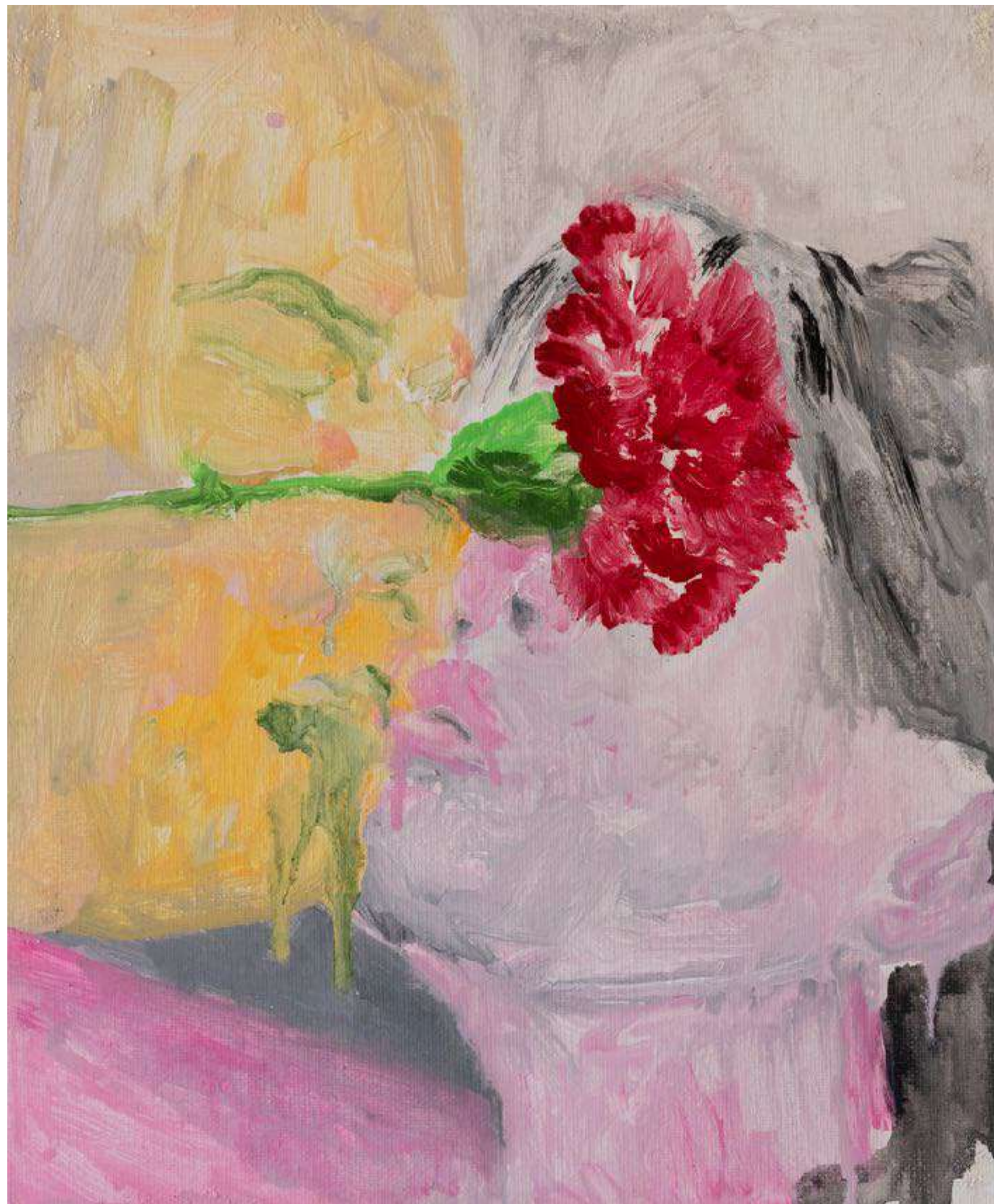
Оля Австрийх  
*Kissing inferno*

Full catalog [here](#)



'Kissing Inferno' is a project about deceitful feelings, false promises, and avoidance of a serious relationship with reality. The artist is trying to find a way to overcome frustration through sensual images, extreme intimacy, and closeness. A voracious kiss becomes a form of escape from oneself. And also a method of dissolving in another, a channel of aggression, a game, a method of approach and repulsion. Such a kiss manifests not so much love as codependency.

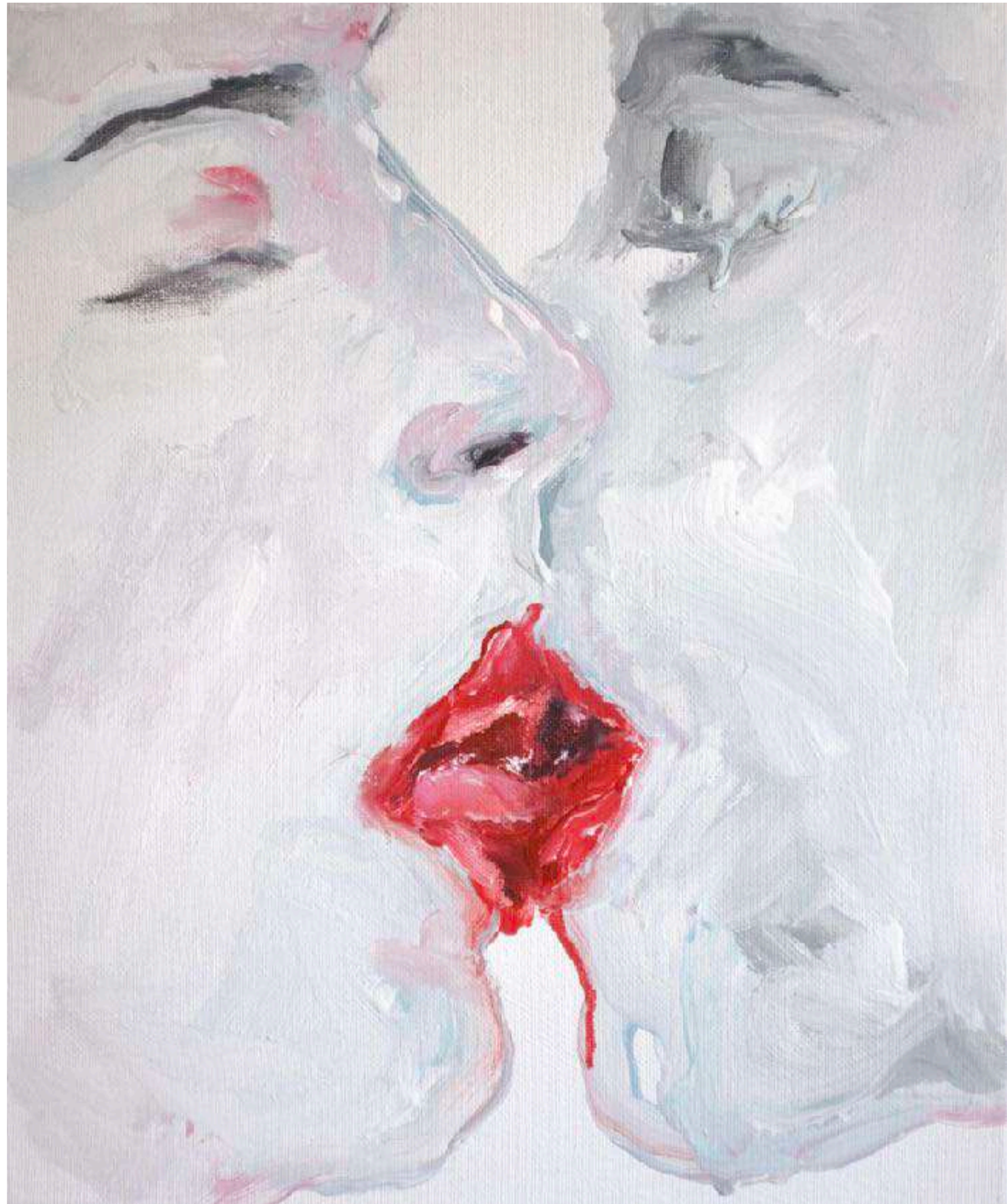
Solo stand / сцена x Cosmoscow, 2022



All love is dreams and ghosts, 2022.  
Acrylic on canvas. 35x25 cm



You have witchcraft on your lips, 2022.  
Acrylic on canvas. 35x25 cm



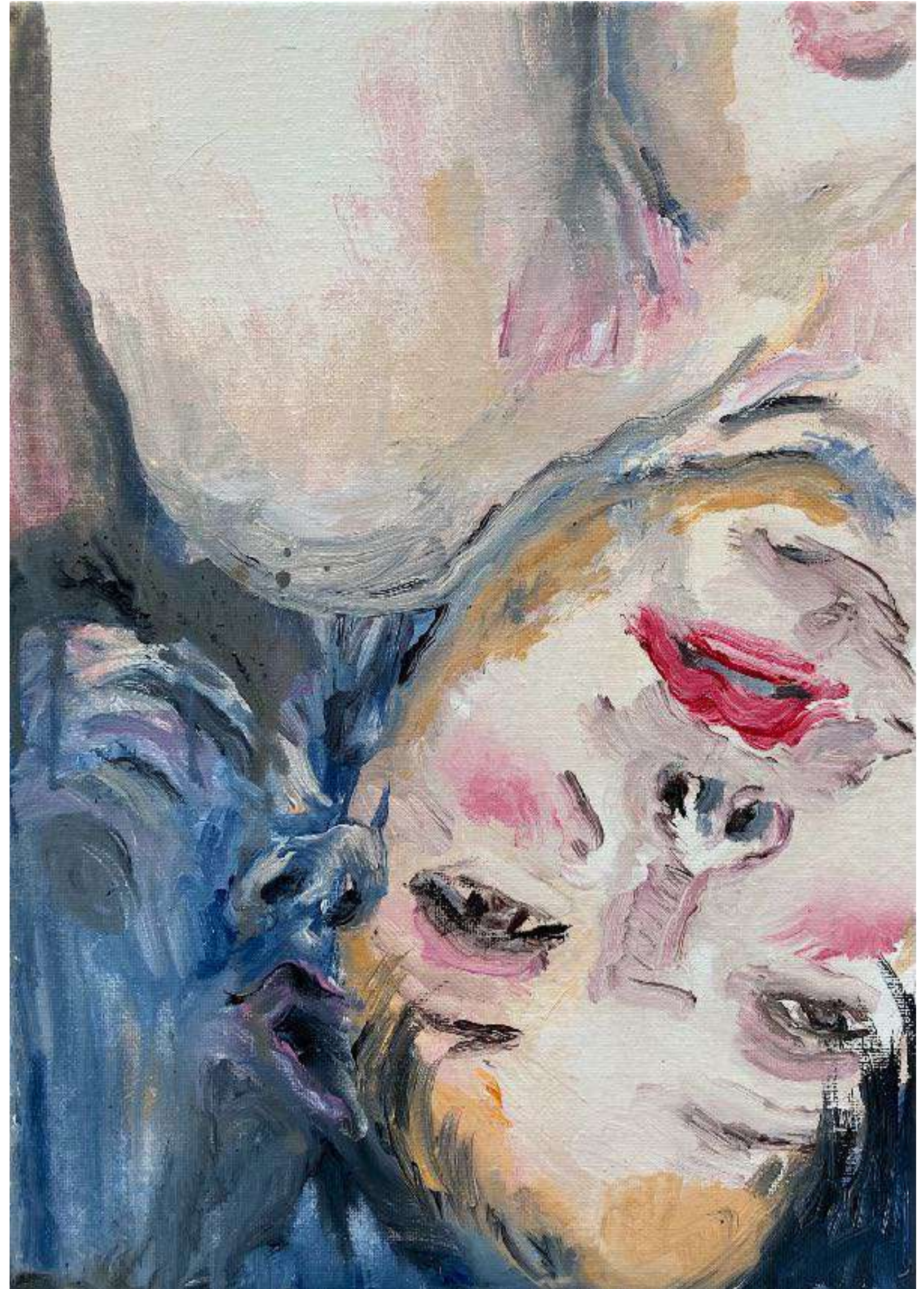
Dream baby dream, 2022.  
Acrylic on canvas. 25x30 cm



Intruders, 2022.  
Acrylic on canvas. 25x35 cm



Hungry for it, 2022.  
Acrylic on canvas. 53x40 cm



Blue, 2022.  
Acrylic on canvas. 25x35 cm

Push/Pull, 2021  
Acrylic on canvas  
285x212 cm





Fox eye, 2022.  
Acrylic on canvas. 220x168 cm



Red kiss, 2022.  
Acrylic on canvas. 160x105 cm

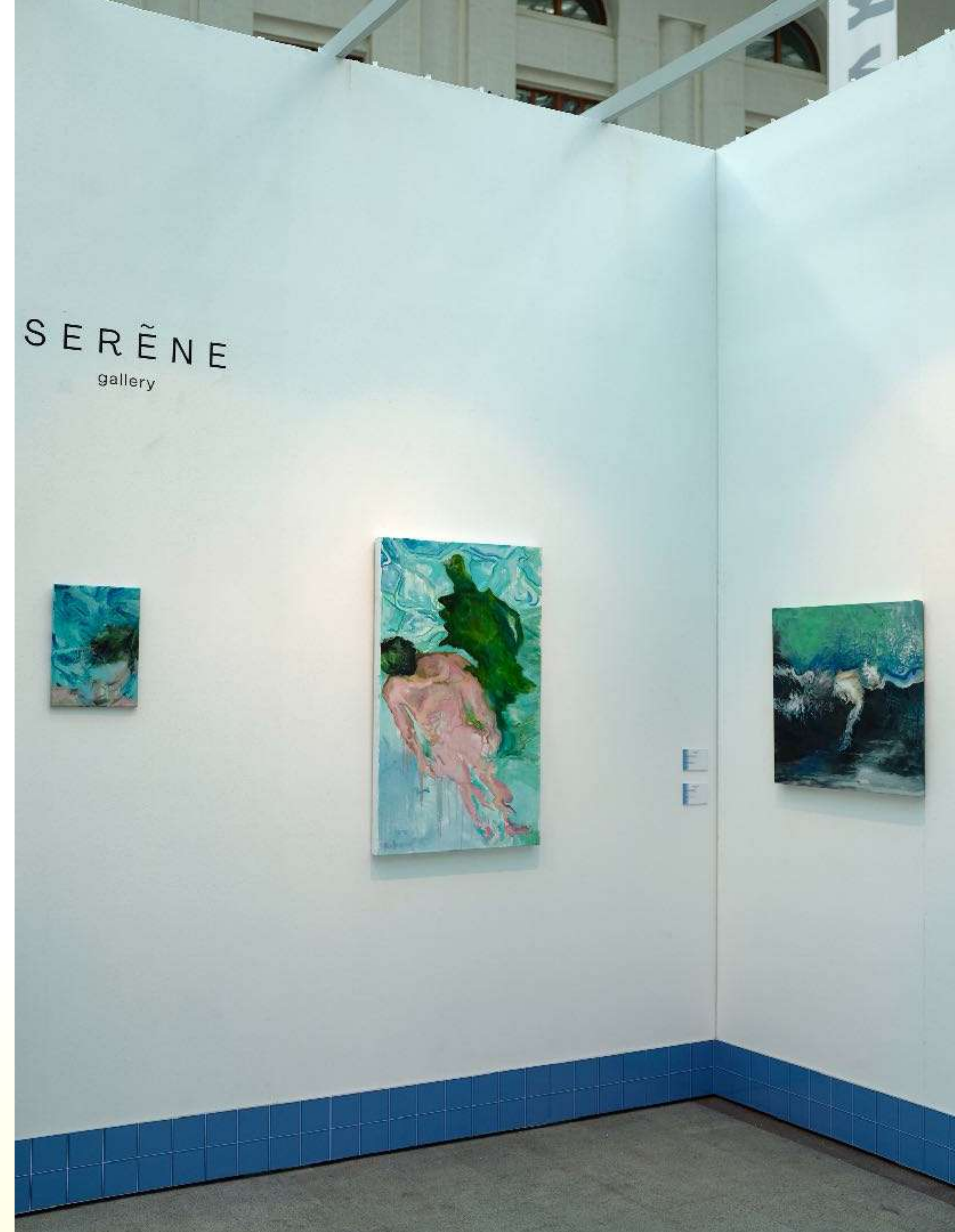
# Disappear here

Serene gallery x Cosmoscov Art Fair, 2022

In 'Disappear Here' – the title of which is inspired by Bret Easton Ellis' cult novel 'Less Than Zero' – the viewer peeks at the protagonist-swimmer, who is broken in both a literal and metaphorical sense. The dive and immersion into the water are portrayed as a form of escapism and dissolution in this world.

The swimmer's journey resembles a mystical path – he dissolves into the impersonal. The hero's fate is to swim, striving for liberation but never getting it. Water symbolises purification and seems to offer an illusory hope for a new beginning.

The artist conceived this series in 2020 at the height of the pandemic; it became a distinctive form of her personal escape from reality, and crystallised into an almost Christian image of the swimmer. Since then, with new shocks in the world, Olya Avstreyh returns to the series, where the swimmer is increasingly fractured, and the water becomes darker and more unexplored.





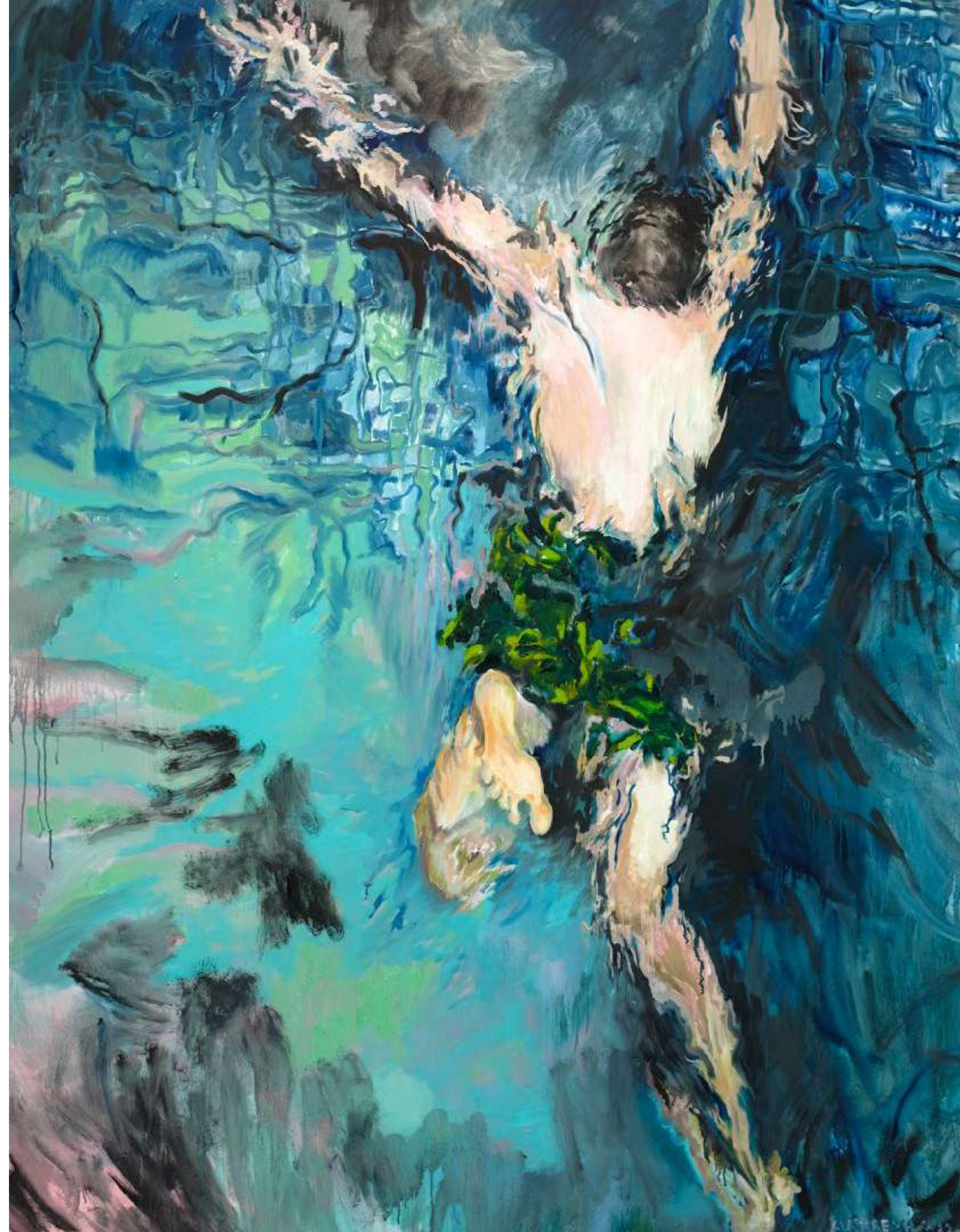
Disappear here I, 2022

Oil on canvas  
60x65 cm



Disappear here II, 2022

Oil on canvas  
170x130 cm



Disappear here III, 2022

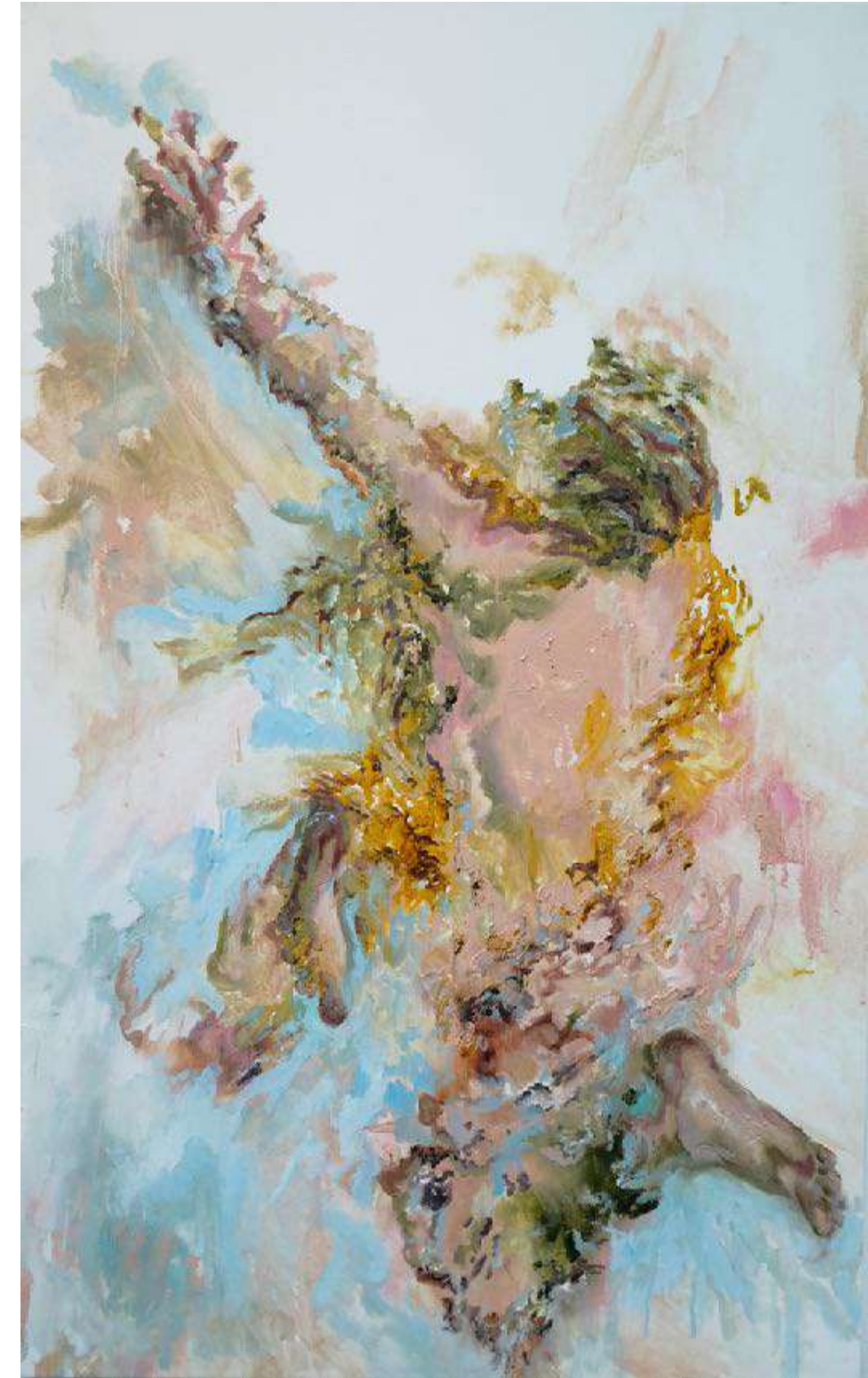
Oil on canvas  
170x130 cm





Disappear here IV, 2022

Oil on canvas  
60x100 cm



Disappear here V, 2022

Oil on canvas  
60x100 cm



# Lights strike and fade

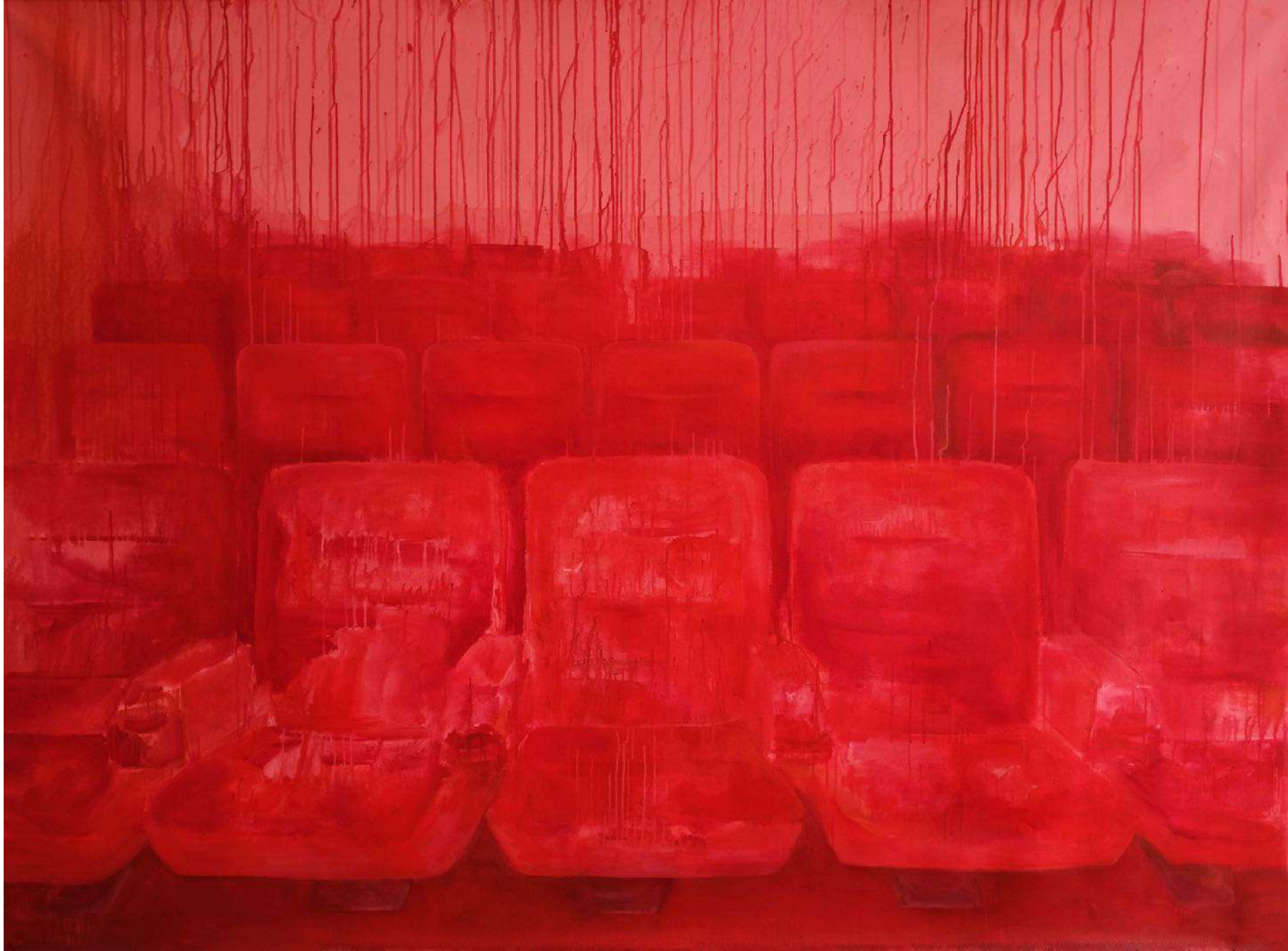
series 2021 – 2022

"I use the image of the cinema hall as a portal and a living organism, where time is perpetually suspended or paused. It materialises in front of us in various guises and cycles: the rows of chairs either become dark and cruel, like chthonic caves, or bright. They blind like the sun, and if you stare long enough, it drives you mad, like it did Van Gogh" – Olya Avstreyh

An empty cinema is an anomaly, a paradox. It undermines the fundamental idea of interaction with the viewer. You enter the cinema, the lights dim, and then nothing happens. Only hypnosis.

This parallel universe resembles a black lodge, with empty seats and an unsettling presence of voidness. The sense of reality is inverted, leaving us uncertain if re-synchronisation with the usual course of time is possible. We watch the life of the cinema like a strange film, yet we are left with an eerie feeling that we're being watched at in return.





Red, 2021

Acrylic, canvas  
225x165 cm



Grey, 2021

Acrylic, canvas  
225x165 cm





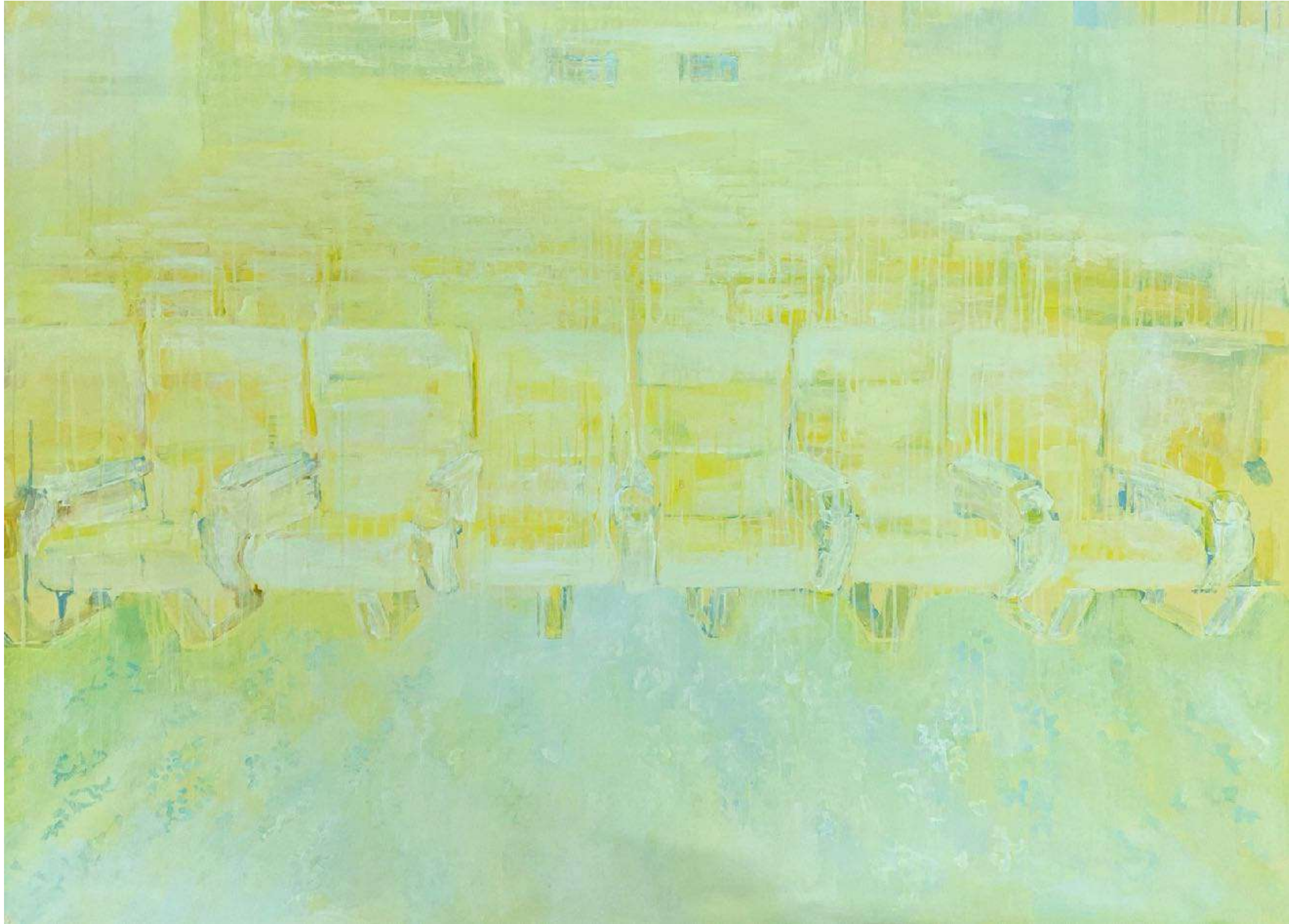
Indigo, 2021

Acrylic, canvas  
225x165 cm



Yellow, 2021

Acrylic, canvas  
220x205 cm



Yellow II, 2022

Acrylic, paper  
148x120 cm



Butterfly, 2021. Acrylic on canvas. 260x80 cm



Blue face, 2021. Acrylic on canvas.  
150x200 cm



The Hand That Holds You, 2021.  
Acrylic on canvas. 160x105 cm



Red, 2021. Acrylic on paper. 40x60 cm



Green, 2021. Acrylic on paper. 40x60 cm

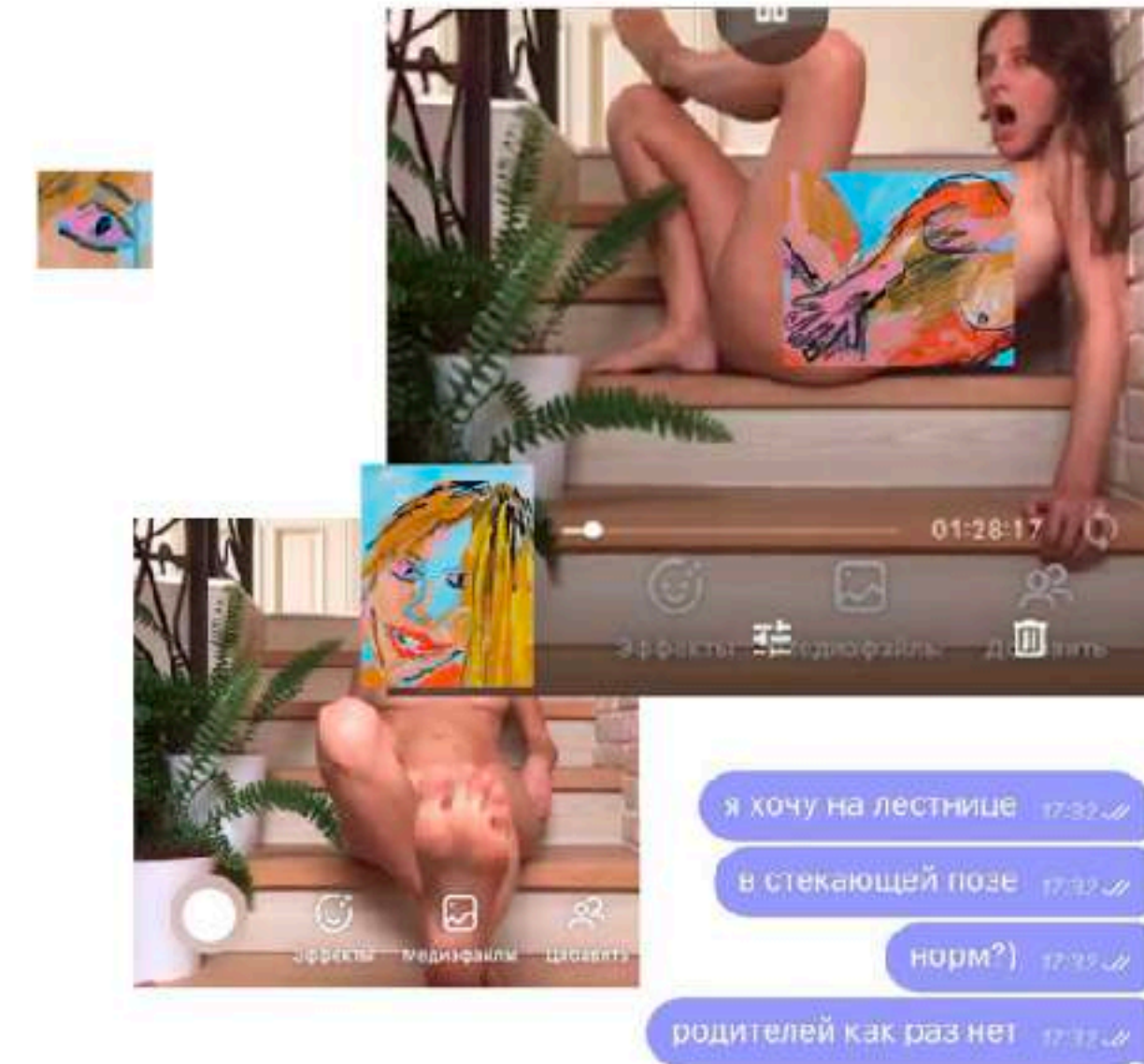
# Videochat: send nudes

online project, 2020

For two weeks, artists Olya Avstreyh and Zhenya Milyukos, being in different cities during covid, video called daily to draw each other naked and talk. In the course of the work, they focused on the perception of their own body, the process of expanding the boundaries of trust in each other and formed their new artistic language. The project has become not just a diary of sketches, but a whole joint study. Fueled by the current political situation (the case of Yulia Tsvetkova), it is built around the perception and image of the female body by patriarchal society and rethinking of the taboo on nudity.

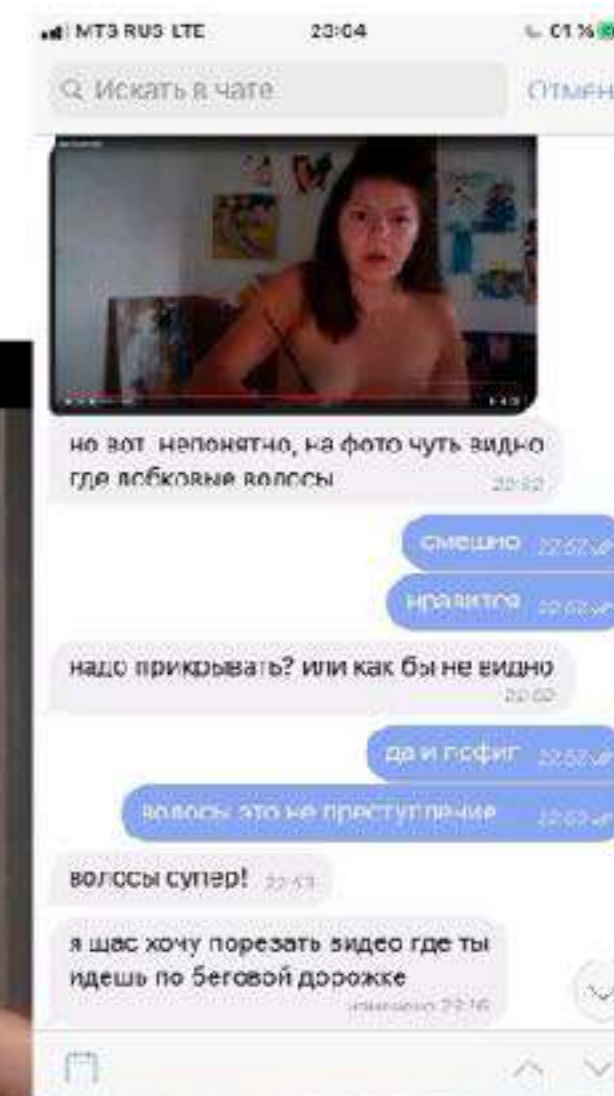
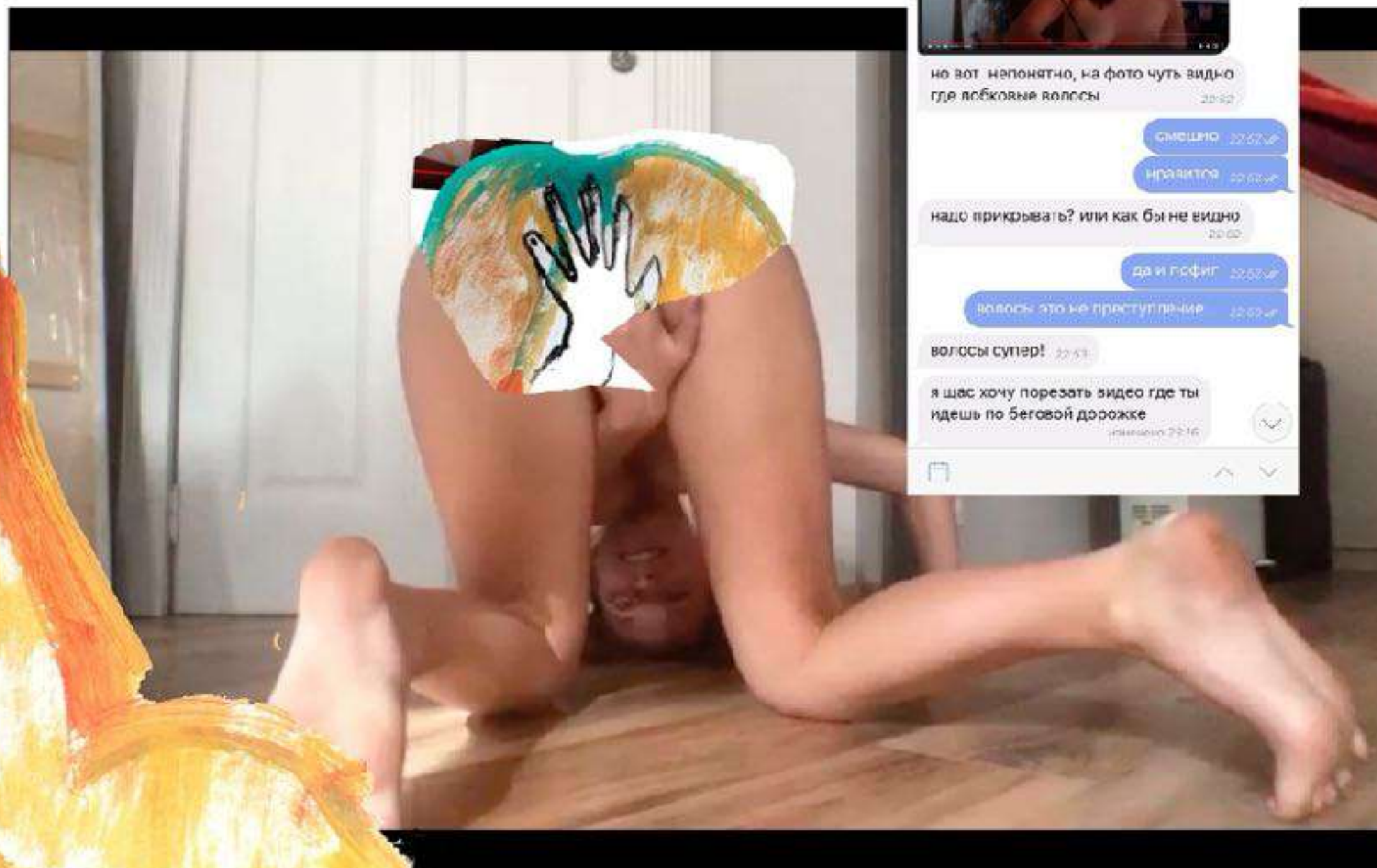
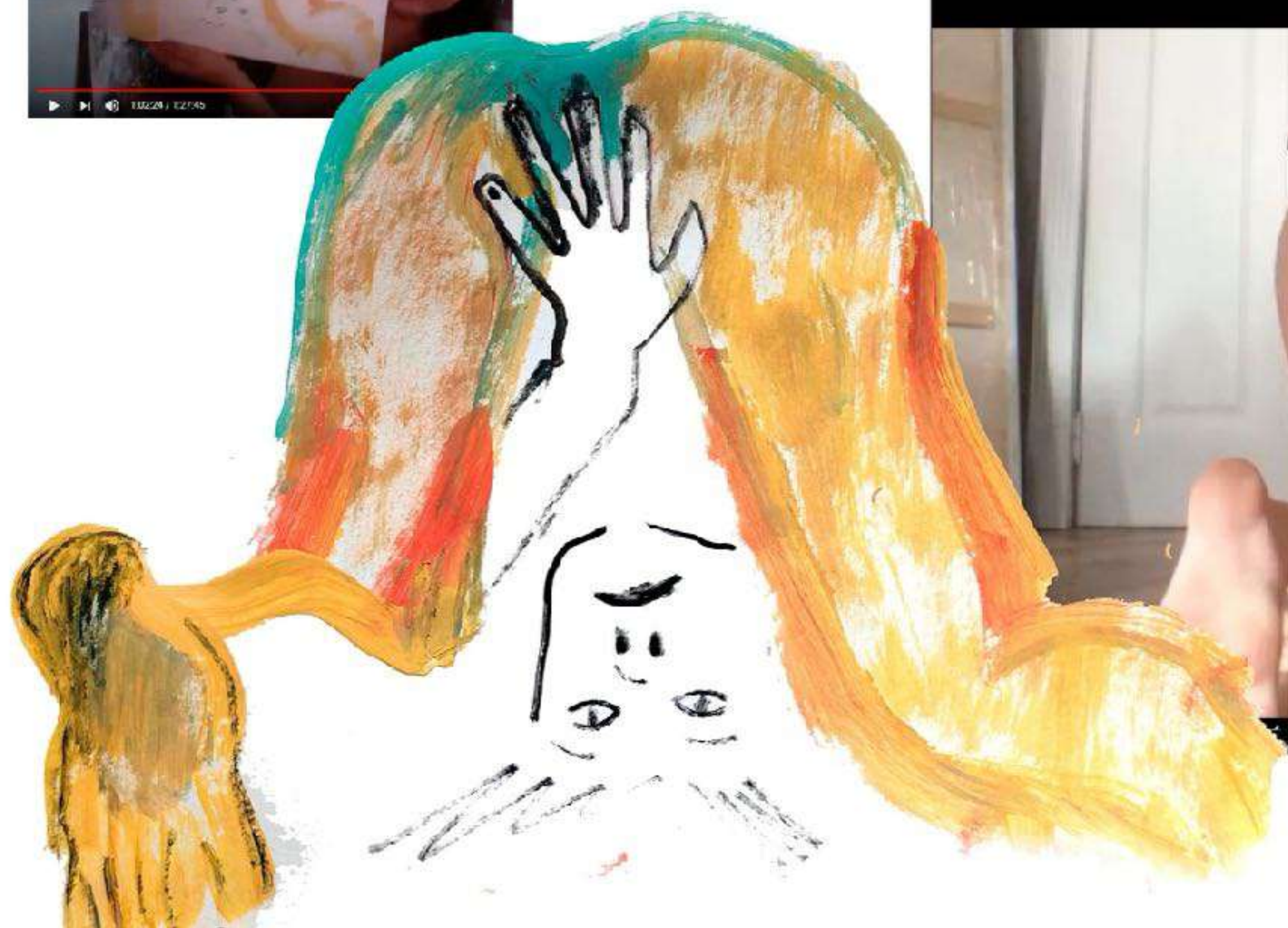
Full version of the project – [here](#)

Interview for DAZED – [here](#)









23 June, 6:02 PM



Video chat ended

You started a video chat

Video chat ended

milyukos started a video chat

milyukos took a photo of the video chat

milyukos took a photo of the video chat

Video chat ended

24 June, 5:54 PM

Message...   





SEND NUDES

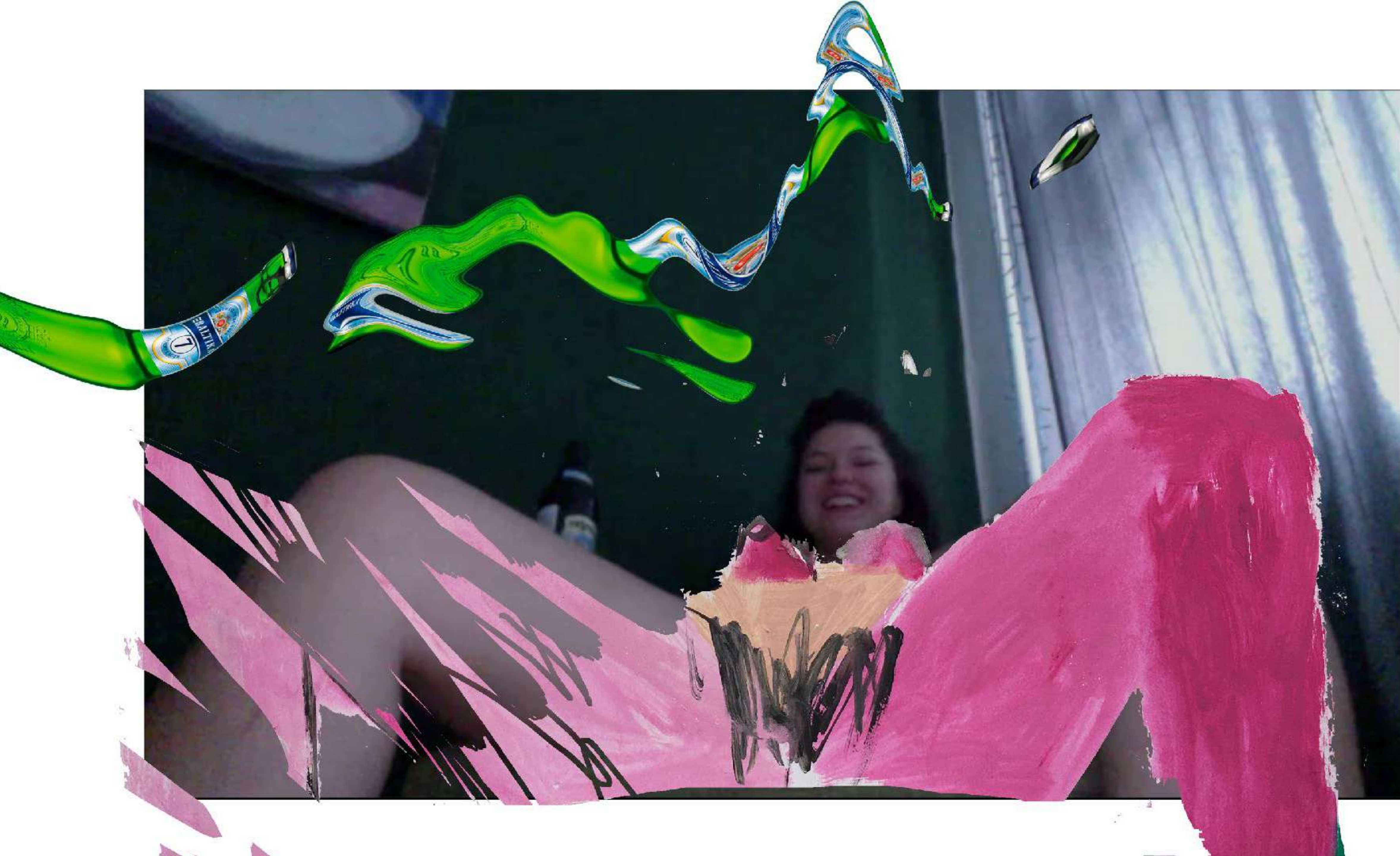


-0:50:20



-0:47:52

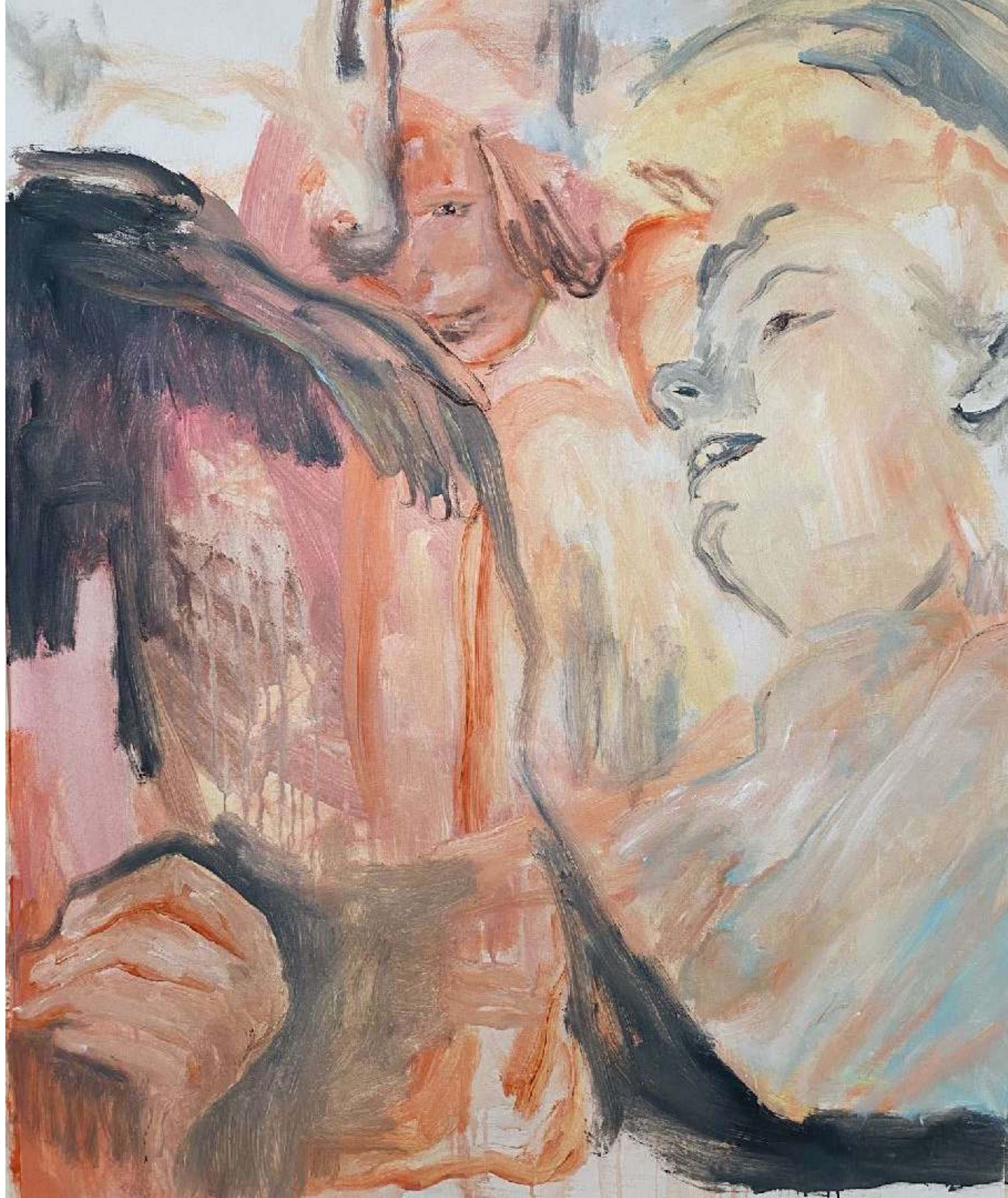






selected works

2021 – 2023



Too sad to tell you, 2023

Acrylic on canvas  
120x110 cm



chilly spell, 2023

Acrylic on canvas  
63x143 cm



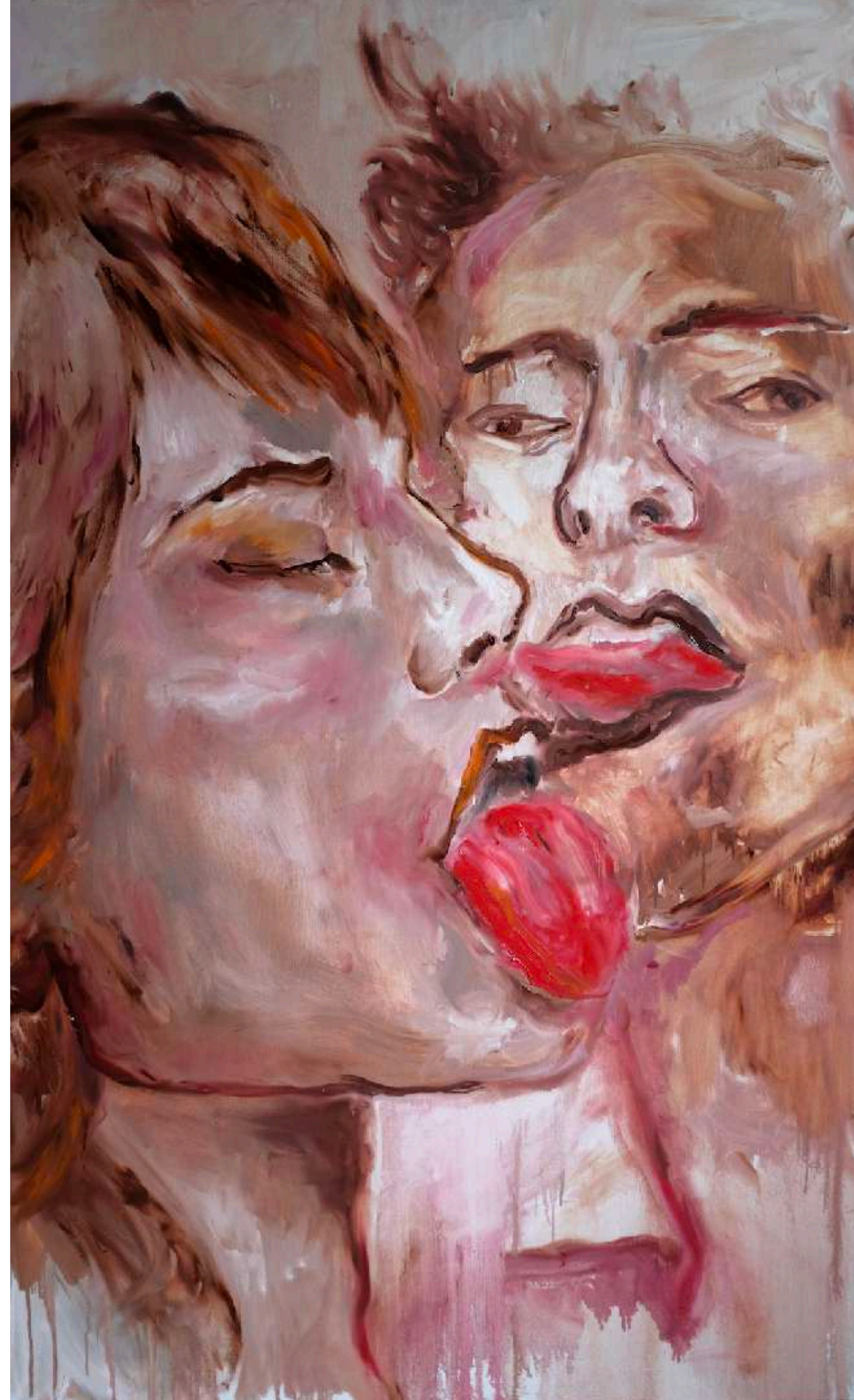
Heads will roll, 2022

Acrylic on canvas  
150x210 cm



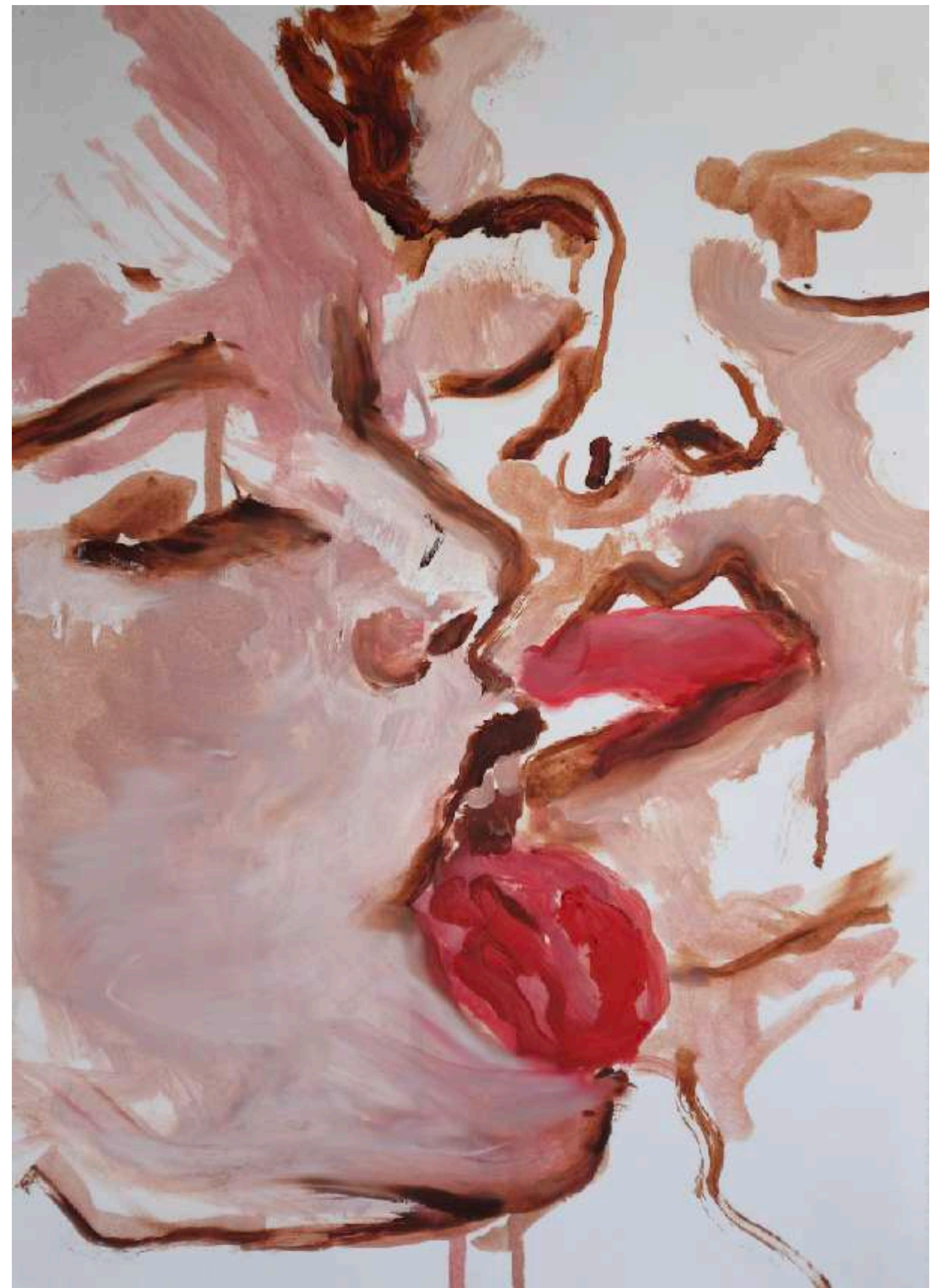
Kissing Inferno, 2022

Oil on canvas  
130x80 cm





Kissing Inferno, 2022  
Oil on paper, 60x40 cm



Kissing Inferno, 2022  
Oil on paper, 60x40 cm



kissing ghosts, 2022

Oil on paper, 60x40 cm



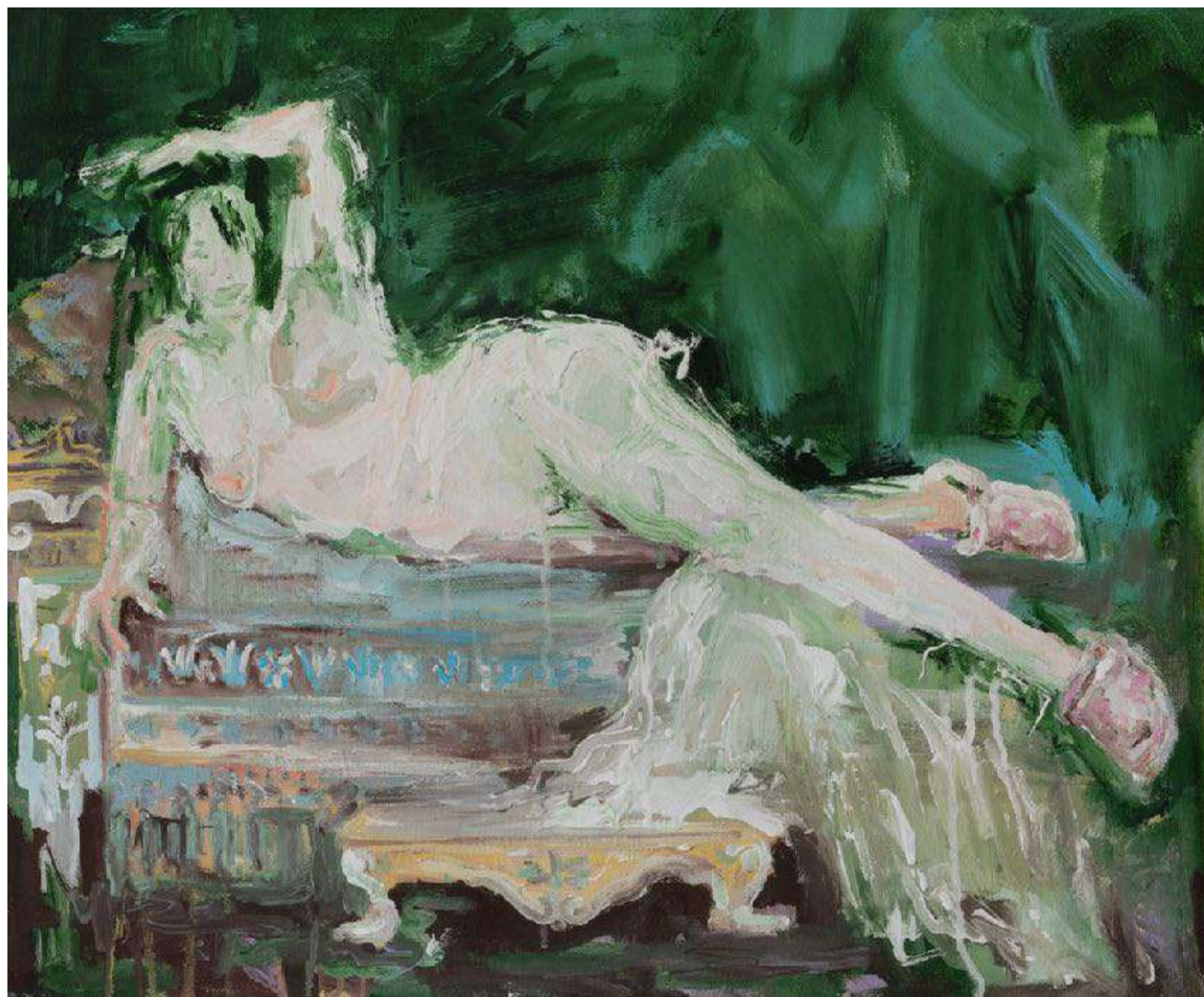
two steps, 2023

oil on canvas, 20x20 cm

Walking Shadows, 2022

Acrylic on canvas  
25x35 cm





She-wolf, 2022

Acrylic on paper, 60x52 cm



Roots, 2022

Acrylic on paper, 56x62 cm



Conversation, 2022  
acrylic on canvas, 85x100 cm



sharp toe, sharp spike, 2022  
acrylic on canvas, 60x110 cm

Stainless Steel SOPHIE  
acrylic, oil, canvas  
303x210 cm





selected press



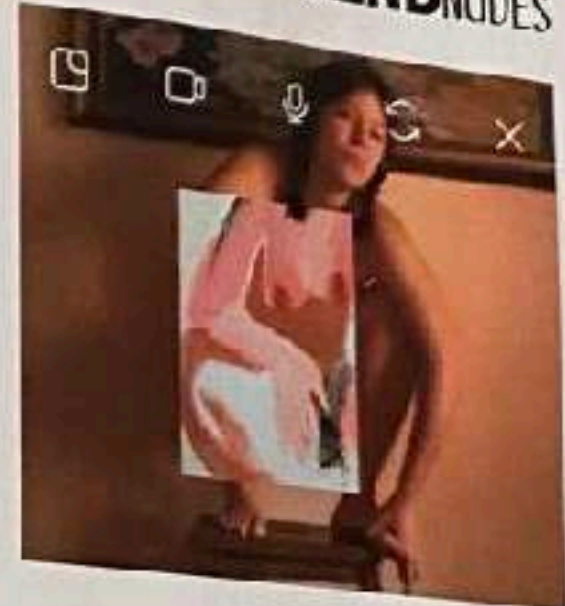
'MIJN LAND IS IN OORLOG.  
MIJN IDEEËN VOOR NIEUWE KUNST  
DOEN ER EVEN MET ME'

• geboren 26 juni 1988, Moskou  
• naam Olya Avstreyh

“Deze naaktportretten zijn afbeeldingen van mij en mijn vriendin Jelya Milyukova, ook kunstenaars”, aldus de 35-jarige Olya over haar project *Send Nudes*. “In de ochtend studeerde ik voor ochtendwerk te maken. Ik zei: ‘Laten we elkaar naakt schilderen.’ We kenden elkaar van onze studie, waren niet per se boezemvriendinnen, dus toen we voor het eerst voor elkaar uit de kleedkast gingen, was dat wel wennen. De crisis had op dat moment haar piek bereikt. ‘Alles was dicht. We zaten allemaal binnen. Bij mij thuis had ik een kleine studio gebouwd. Daar trokken we onze kleren uit deden we muziek aan, en ach! darden we erop los. Hiermee bezog zijn voert voor mij als therapie. Ik ben een neurotisch, heilsich persoon met energie voor velen. Ik zit veel in mijn hoofd, kan soms maanden brede op een kunstwerk. Maar als ik eenmaal de kwast in handen heb, is het alsof ik in een soort trance raak en gaat alles vanzelf. Soms is het een soort dans die ik voor het doek doe. Ik ga op in de kleuren en vormen. Uit het hoofd, in het lichaam. Ik ben niet emancipieer maar penseel steeds over hetzelfde stukje haai. Of uren in d'r studio staat. Daar heb ik het gevoel niet voor. Ik zou het een martel nu vindar als ik maandenlang over één kunstwerk zou durst. Mijn studio is ook een grote herzuol. Alles zit onder de veif, *but I fix it*. Ik ga liever snel te werk. Soms bor ik in een halfuur klaar. Een ‘inters proces’, noemt Olya het. “Daarna ben ik ook alijd uitgoput. Maar ik ga juist goed op het lange denkproces of het snelle maken. Het is mijn kracht. En ik hou van de imperfectie die daarbij komt kijken.” Met *Send Nudes* gingen Olya en Jelya hetzelfde te werk.

• studie Vreemde Talen, Universiteit van Moskou  
• Media management, Universiteit van Westminster, Contemporary Painting,  
• SE Art and Design School

SENDNUDES



• Janta Klavdnyh

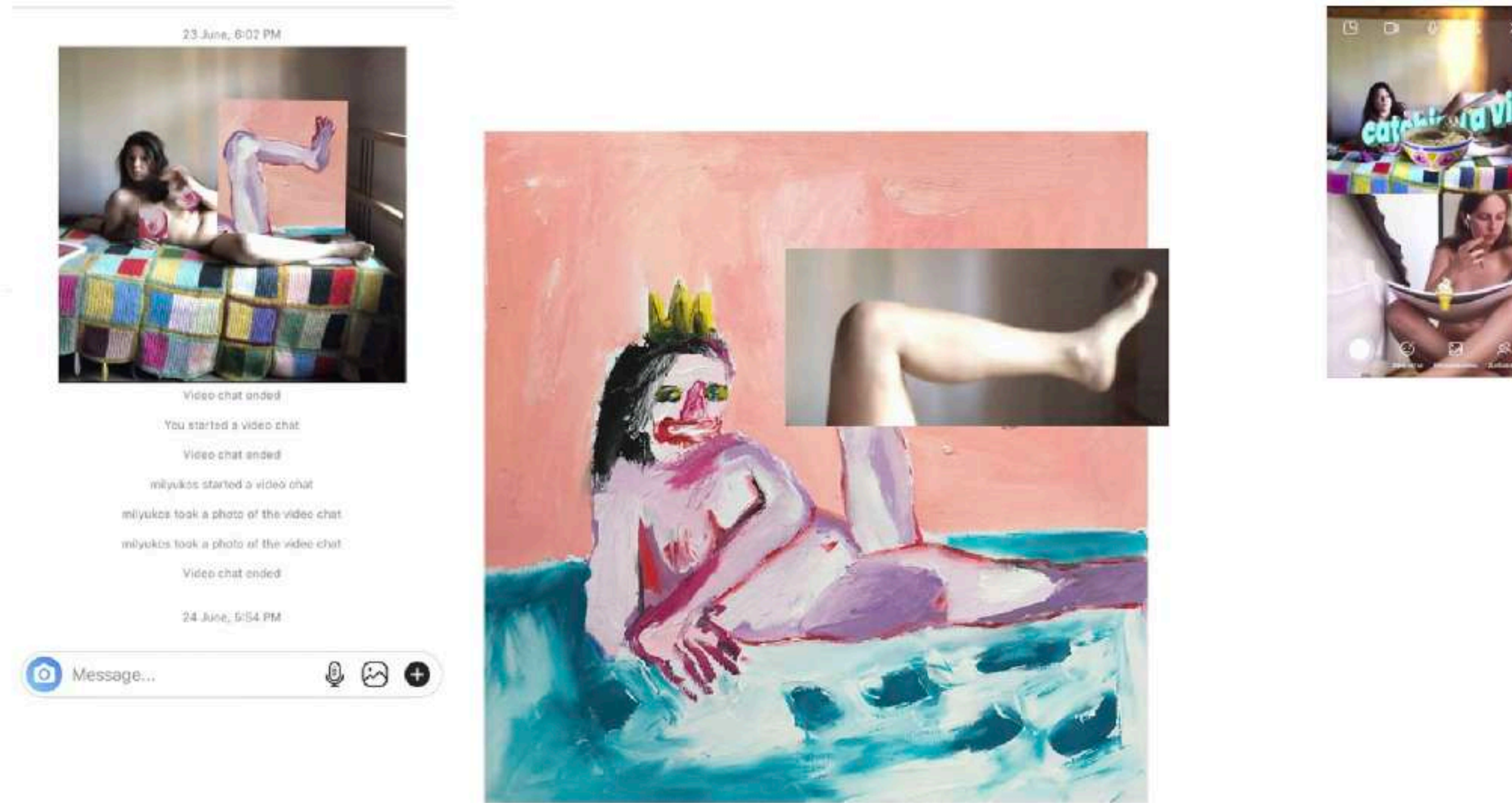
Snel naar doeltreffend. “Liek omdat we soms in de geweste positie liggen. We wilden het elkaar niet handben om lang in zo'n houding te moeten blijven staan of liggen. Soms zater we op haar en voeten, met onze konten naar het dak gekaard. Of lag ik op mijn rug met twee benen in de lucht. Wat was het ontzettend leuke of snel van af. Omdat we beide naakt en gefocust waren op het artistieke viden letterlijk en figuurlijk onze maskers af. Tijdens het schilderen begaven we te praten, uurslang over onze kwetsbaarheden. Onze opvoeding. De liefde. In een kort tijd zijn we als zuses geworden. En het anderszitaal was ook nog eens tucking amazing. We namen elkaars werklijze over. Van sommige doeken konden we niet eens meer heriden wie wat had geschilderd. Ik enver het als een sociaal experiment. Niet kwetsbaarder dan naakt. Wanneer als je in onfatloze houdingen zit, dat voelt zwaar. Maar tijdens dit experiment ontdekte ik dat het nog kwetsbaarder is om heel persoonlijke, intieme dingen over jezelf te delen. Zaken die je liever voor jezelf houdt, omdat je je schamen, omdat je bang bent wat de ander ervan vindt. Overigens zie ik niet alleen een naakt persoon op dat doek maar ook de energie, de acht- en oprechtheid waarmee het geschilderd is.” Olya heeft haar werkzaamheden nu tijdelijk etigelegt. “Rusland is een bende. Wd. Het is er vreselijk. Ik heb mijn spullen gepakt, wil mijn banden met mijn moederland embreken en ben naar Tel Aviv vertrokken. Dierde kan, zoals ook tijdens de pandemie, zorgen voor inspiratie voor monie nieuwe dingen, maar nu doe ik nika en dank ik na. Oudog is (x)ing. Mijn ideeën doen er even met toe.”



march 2023 issue, print  
LINDA.meiden (Netherlands)

## Художница Оля Австрийх — о хоррорах, карнавале и двоemiрии наших дней





From Videochat: send nudes by Olya Avstreyh and Jenya Milyukos (2020) Courtesy of the artists

## Send/make nudes: How artists are reframing the tradition of the nude

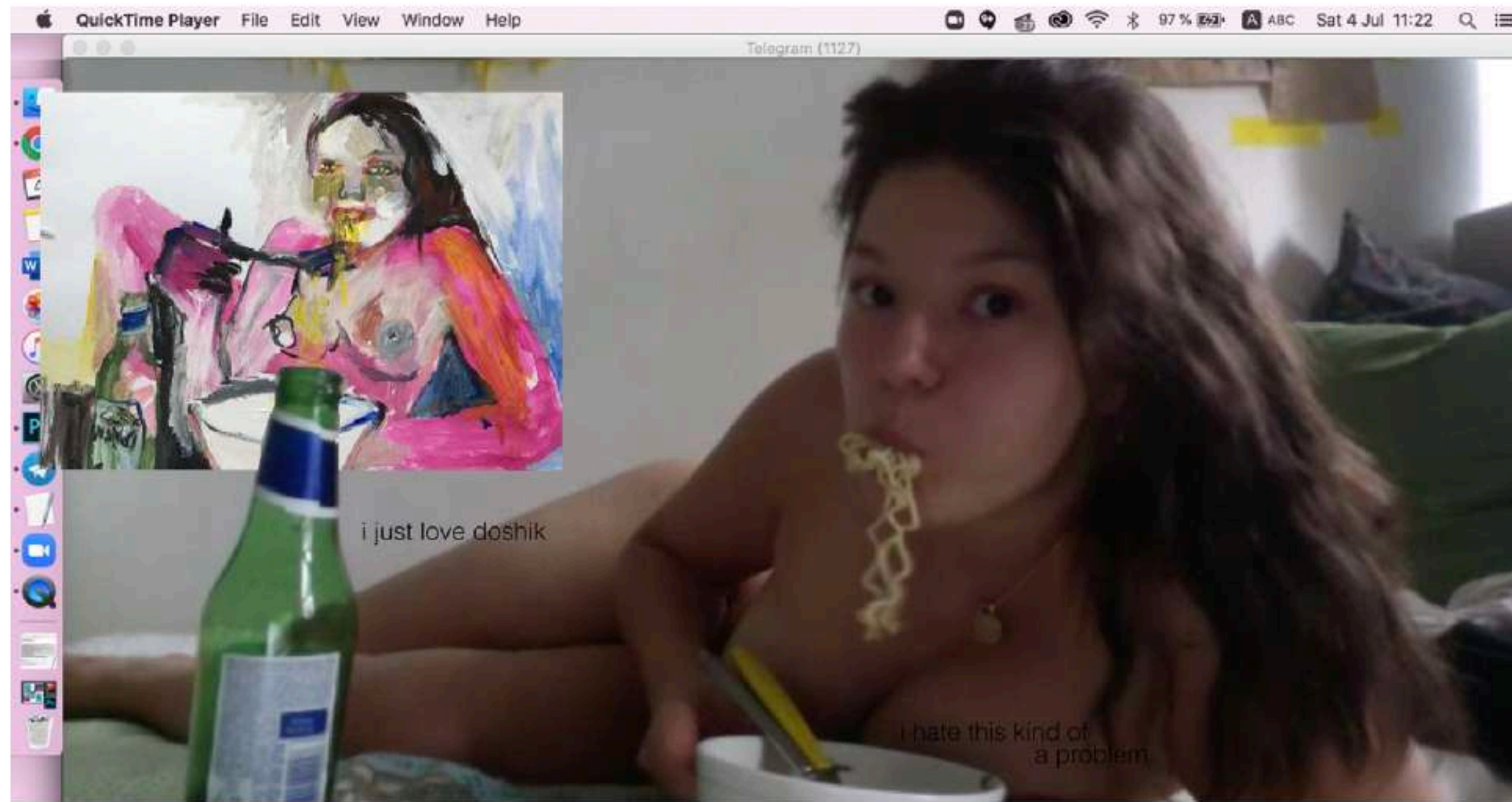
ART & PHOTOGRAPHY - LISTS

From the reinventing of classic Greek sculpture to grotesque augmented reality, artists are subverting our expectations of the naked body in art

26th March 2021

Text Emily Dinsdale

march 2021, online  
DAZED (UK)



From Videochat: send nudes by Olya Avstreyh and Jenya Milyukos (2020) Courtesy of the artists

## These Russian artists video-chatted daily to paint each other nude

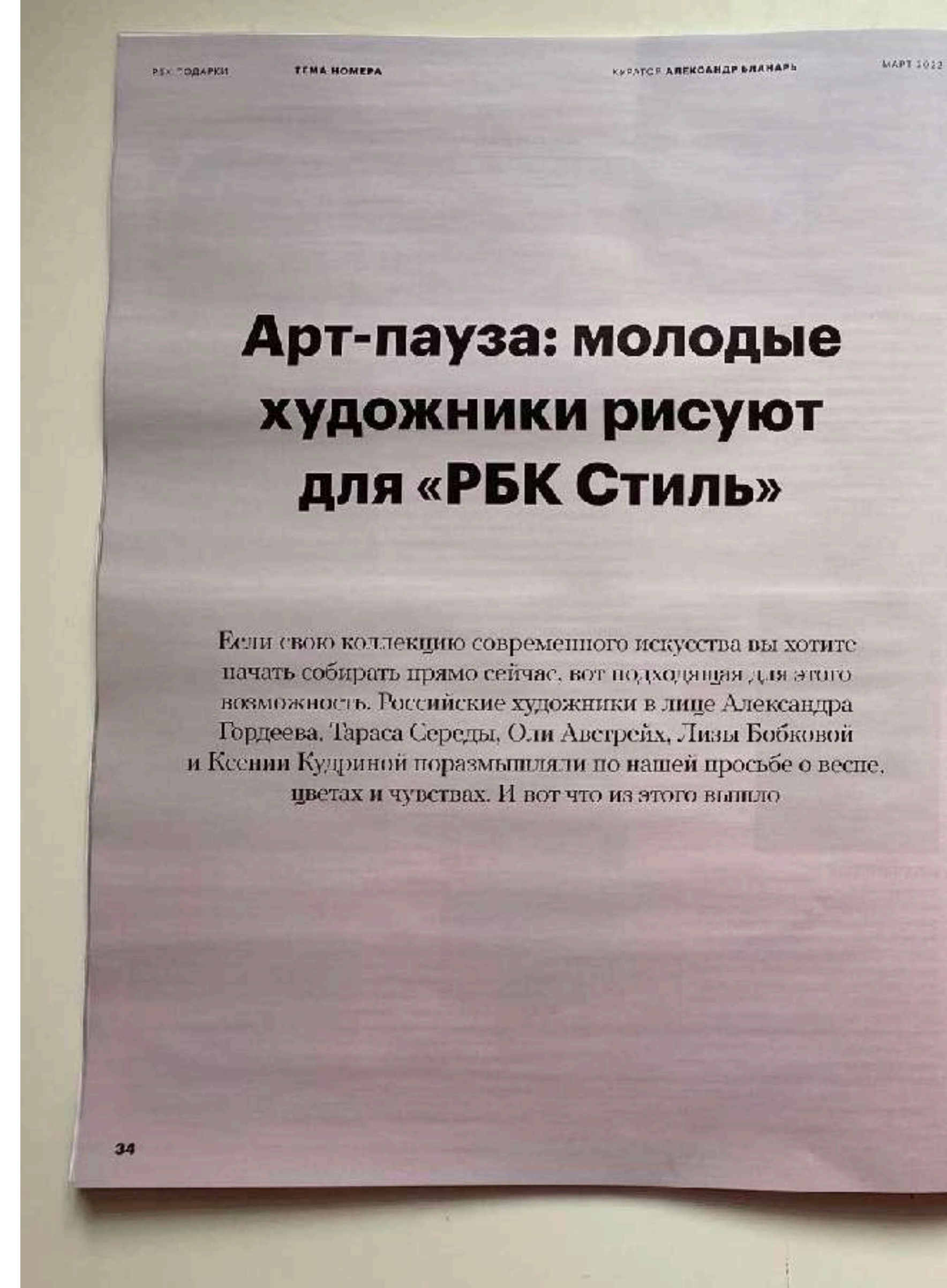
ART & PHOTOGRAPHY - Q+A

**Olya Avstreyh and Jenya Milyukos documented their daily lives with a series of intimate paintings made during lockdown**

28th August 2020

Text Emily Dinsdale

august 2020, online  
DAZED (UK)



## Арт-пауза: молодые художники рисуют для «РБК Стиль»

Если свою коллекцию современного искусства вы хотите пачать собирать прямо сейчас, вот подходящая для этого возможность. Российские художники в лице Александра Гордеева, Тараса Середы, Оли Австрих, Лизы Бобковой и Ксении Кудриной поразмыслили по нашей просьбе о весне, цветах и чувствах. И вот что из этого вышло

march 2022 issue, print  
RBK Style (Russia)

## ТУШИТЕ СВЕТ

9 июня в арт-пространстве Lobby в Гостином Дворе открывается первая персональная выставка Оли Австрийх — молодой художницы и ученицы Владимира Дубосарского (одну из ее работ только что забрала из галереи Segene колумнистка The Blueprint и коллекционерка Ксения Чилингарова). В Lobby, при кураторстве Марины Анциперовой, художница покажет совершенно новую серию Lights Out из 20 работ: ее любимый мотив карнавала здесь оборачивается абсурдистской зловещей сказкой, королевский пир заканчивается танцами с волками, а внешне благопристойный мир рушится на глазах. Для The Blueprint Оля Австрийх рассказала, откуда взялись эти образы — и при чем здесь Илья Кабаков, Билли Айлиш и София Коппола.

## УИЛЬЯМ ХОГАРТ

Огромный источник вдохновения — сатирические сценки Уильяма Хогарта с его комическими персонажами из всех слоев английского общества.



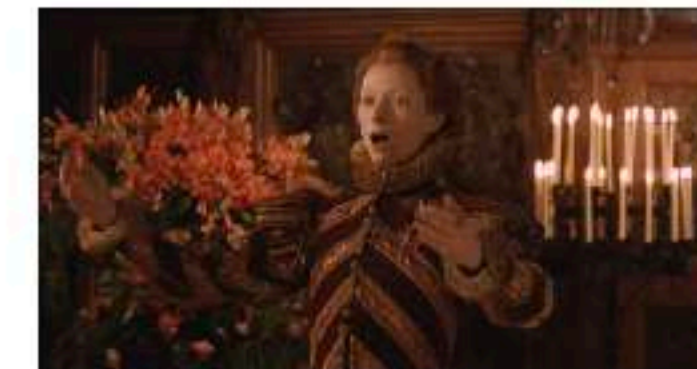
РАБОТЫ УИЛЬЯМА ХОГАРТА



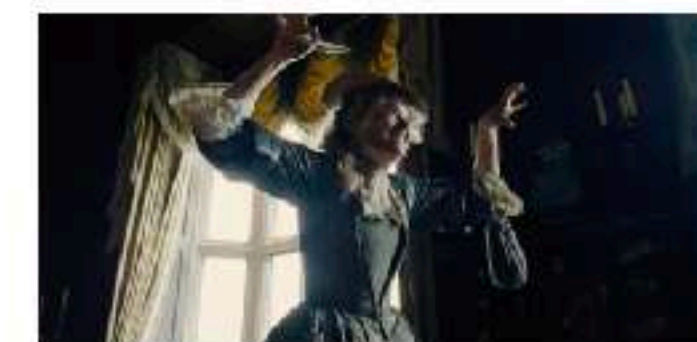
ОЛЯ АВСТРЕЙХ. MISERABLE SCENE, 2022

## КОСТЮМНЫЕ ДРАМЫ

В поисках референсов для декораций и костюмов я пересмотрела огромное количество исторических фильмов, вплоть до смешивая увиденное. Начала с «Орландо» как с настоящего гурмана по костюмам, как в духе «Фаворитки» Анникоси, сериал The Great (просто «клядем безумия») — отличные примеры волевого обращения с историческим костюмом: «Понир, впр, его жена и ее любовник» — образы призрачного запятого, шаурности и гедонистического разложения. Мне близки и «Маргаритки» Вери Хитлаевой — классика чешского авангарда, абсурдистская притча, которую за излишнее свободомыслие запретили на родине режиссерки, в Чехословакии. А самым неожиданным решением, пожалуй, было пересмотреть «Веселых ребят» советскую классику, о которой мне сразу напомнил Дубосарский, когда я ему рассказала про свою задачу.



«ОРАНДО», САЛЛИ ПОРТЕР, 1992

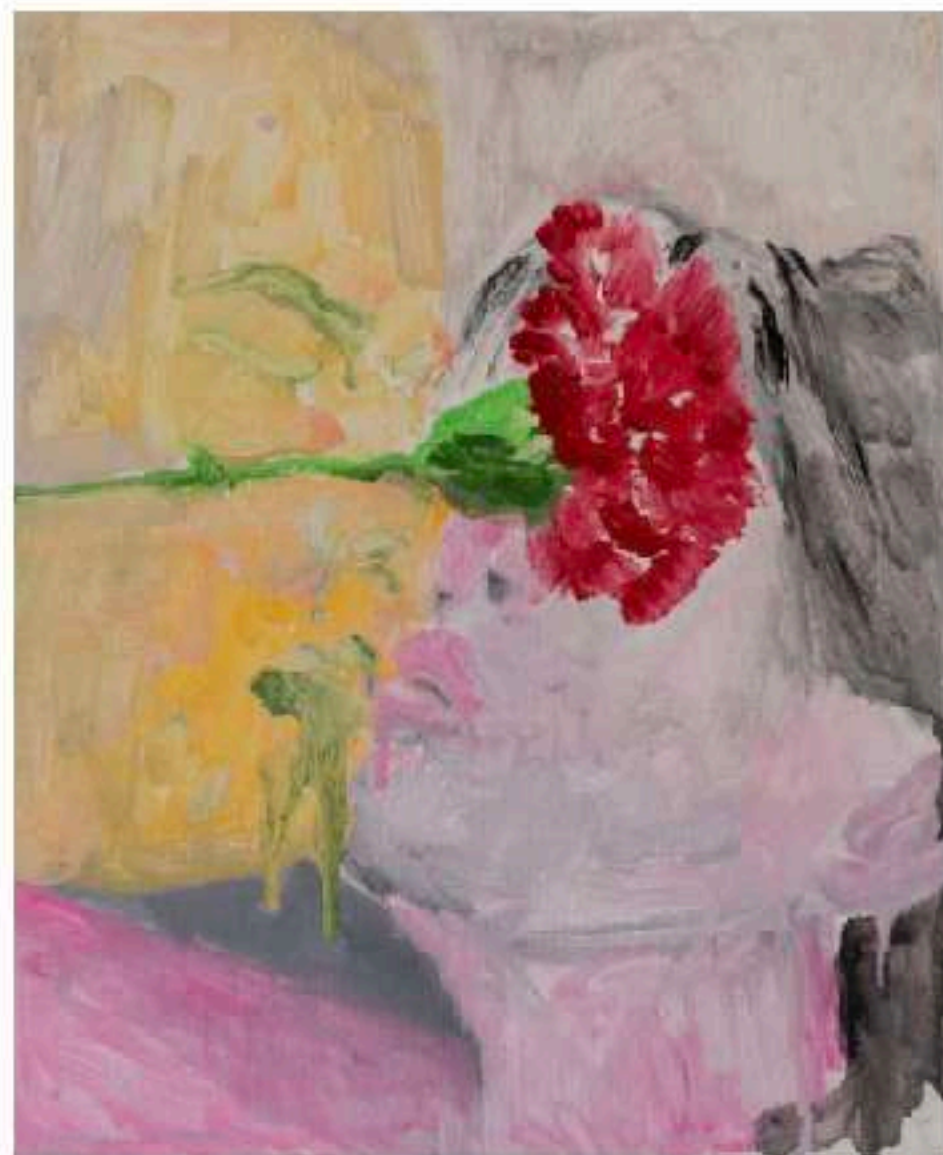


«ФАВОРИТКА», РОУС ОУЛАНТИМОУ, 2018



ОЛЯ  
АВСТРЕЙХ

До того как заняться живописью, Австрейх много лет работала в медиа. Но в 28 лет у нее случилась перезагрузка – и выиграли от этого, кажется, все. С тех пор она успела поучиться у Владимира Лубосарского, выработать собственный очень узнаваемый стиль и «отбиться» от сравнений с Хокни, которого при взгляде на жизнерадостные работы Австрейх не вспоминала только ленивый. В этом году в арт-пространстве Lobby в Гостином Дворе прошла ее первая персональная выставка (куратор – Марина Анниперова), после которой сравнивать ее ни с кем уже не надо. В Lobby показали 20 работ из серии Lights Out: любимый художницей мотив карнавала обернулся абсурдистской зловещей сказкой. Для любителей барочных историй вроде «Орландо» Салли Портер работы Австрейх – must see.



All love is dreams and ghosts

||| АРХИВ НОМЕРОВ

МОДА КРАСОТА КУЛЬТУРА НОВОСТИ КАРЬЕРА BLUE STORE КОЛЛАБОРАЦИИ



# ХУДОЖНИКИ, К РАБОТАМ КОТОРЫХ СТОИТ ПРИСМОТРЕТЬСЯ ПРЯМО СЕЙЧАС

ТЕКСТ:  
МАРИЯ БЕССМЕРТНАЯ

<https://theblueprint.ru/culture/art/mol-hudozniki-na-sosmoscow>

september 2022, online  
BLUEPRINT (Russia)





Self Russia Ideas & People Gender

# Send nudes: redefining naked women's bodies in art and video chats



25 September 2020

Text: [Anastasiia Fedorova](#)

Collages: [Olie Avstreyh](#) and [Jenya Milyukos](#)

Online nudity is a paradox. Porn is everywhere and easily accessible, while artistic or activist context often ends up censored. For female bodies – and especially queer, disabled, fat or other marginalised bodies – erasure often appears in the form of social judgement, or “community guidelines”, which see even faintly exposed nipples deleted from Instagram.

<https://www.new-east-archive.org/features/show/12170/videochat-send-nudes-russia-z>

september 2022, online  
The Calvert (UK)

## ГДЕ СОЗДАЕТСЯ КРАСОТА: В МАСТЕРСКОЙ У ОЛИ АВСТРЕЙХ

● МАСТЕРСКАЯ  
АВТОР: АНАСТАСИЯ ПОБАЧЁВА  
ФОТОГРАФИИ: ВАДИМ ШТЭЙН  
11 MAY, 2022

Пустой кинотеатр — символ замершей жизни и один из образов с картин художницы Оли Австрих. Побывали в мастерской и поговорили о том, как осознать себя художницей и все изменить, что дает художественное образование, и как зрители воспринимают телесность на картинах.

