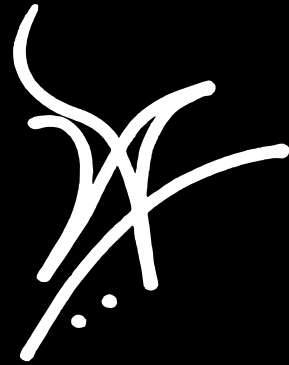


FLOW DREAMS

ANU MALHOTRA



www.anumalhotra.com





FLOW DREAMS

ANU MALHOTRA

CURATED BY
KISHORE SINGH

PRESENTED BY
ART & SOUL, MUMBAI



THE DRIVE TO CREATE TAKES ME INTO A TRANCE, A DREAM-LIKE STATE, AND THENCE STARTS A DANCE OF COLOURS ON CANVAS – SETTING ITS OWN RULES, MOVING TO ITS OWN MOTION, IT’S OWN PARTICULAR, CREATIVE PATTERN.

ARTIST’S NOTE

*I've dreamt in my life dreams
that have stayed with me ever after,
and changed my ideas;
they've gone through and through me,
like wine through water,
And altered the colour of my mind.*

Emily Bronte

A deep stirring within a primal cell gestates in my consciousness, deep in its recesses, and some night or dawn, a restless urge makes me reach out for a canvas, seek out colours... The drive to create takes me into a trance, a dream-like state, and thence starts a dance of colours on canvas – setting its own rules, moving to its own motion, it’s own particular, creative pattern.

The world, for me, is a kaleidoscope – a treasure-house of images tumbling into each other, colours spilling, merging, fading, gushing into infinite forms, revealing the infinite possibilities of life. Art for me is not a pursuit but a life-practice.

I am a visual person naturally drawn to the aesthetic, surrounding myself with beauty and colour. While people banter about big and small things, my eye wanders towards a luminous leaf, sunlit in the garden; or blushing bougainvillea, shot in blinding pink; or cascading amaltas blooms, a haze of exuberant yellow.

In reveries, I dream about images from my travels – the stunning vistas of the Canadian mountains and lakes, the impossible azure blues of its skies; the giddy vastness of Ladakh, the peculiar purple-mauve of its mountains; the amazing Amalfi coast and the magical turquoise of its blue lagoons in Capri; the jewelled undersea life in Maldives...

Colour attracts me instantaneously – the fluorescent *odhnis* of desert belles; the multicoloured village homes of Goa, colourful Naga jewellery, an array of temple flowers in Karnataka... Somehow, somewhere, these visual images and colours call for an alternate expression.

But painting, for me, is not a conscious, deliberate act. Mostly, I work during inspired moments and see myself as a co-creator, where the spirit of a moment and the colours together comprise a creative production.

I rely primarily on my intuitive creative instincts, never following the well-trodden path, always drawn to the unconventional, the unexplored, and the yet- to be-revealed. As a filmmaker, I am grounded enough in the concrete, the real and the collaborative processes of working. But art has forever been my hidden, uniquely private concern. When painting, I allow the blending of the metaphoric and the concrete, the symbolic and the real, the personal with the cosmic. Most of my work comes close to the abstract and follows the pattern of dreams and energy that flows and pushes – against boundaries, against limits.

What I create often surprises me, too, as if the work had been wrenched out of me, a flow of imagination demanding expression through my hands. That is why I am unable to replicate

my own work. Each work is unique, its own channel and its own master.

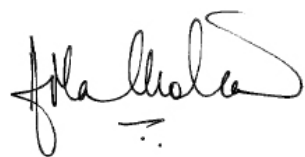
Though I am not guided by any strict rules while painting, one abiding technique is the way I allow colours to fall on the canvas. I pour paint on the empty surface and what emerges is a spontaneous, albeit layered, composition. I tilt the canvas to construct that composition, yet the angle, or pattern, of these tilts cannot be predicted, or replicated. My impetus is invariably instinctive, yet there is an underlying balance and skill that I rely on while the colours flow into each other to form patterns and shapes. Those who have seen my work often discover shapes and forms that arise out of their own impression of the work. The same work can evoke different projections that express the viewer's own understanding and desires: they see rivers and volcanoes, mountains and tree spirits, fire and avalanches, tigers and sea-horses, angels and seraphs, sunsets and twilight.

The process of creation is as important as its result. This has been my motto in all my creative pursuits. As a filmmaker, I believe that the journey is the destination. I cannot seem to invent unless I am deeply involved in the process and thereby fully enjoy that experience. My art comes to me from rapture, from a sense of wholesomeness, from the sense of magic that is life in flow. Perhaps

that is why those familiar with my work remember the visual experience as exuberant and joyous. Somewhere, somehow, the spirit of the energy that drives me to paint also touches those who see it and speaks to their own life-affirming potential.

We live in a time when perfection alone is valued, when a sophisticated finish becomes the desired ideal. To me, it is the raw energy of art that makes a work closest to life, where the technologies of perfection seem robotic. That is why I never try to add a deliberate finish to my work. The cycles of the day, the odd touch of a dry leaf, the breeze that wafts into my studio kissing my canvas – those traces I cherish and keep. To erase those would be to divorce my art from life. Since my paintings are sourced from the primal, the cracks and bubbles of paint, their cut and flow, and edges, are left to remain. I prefer not to frame my paintings, for to bind them would be to limit their energy, constrict their connections with life. They flow, to find their own tributaries, their ultimate oceans.

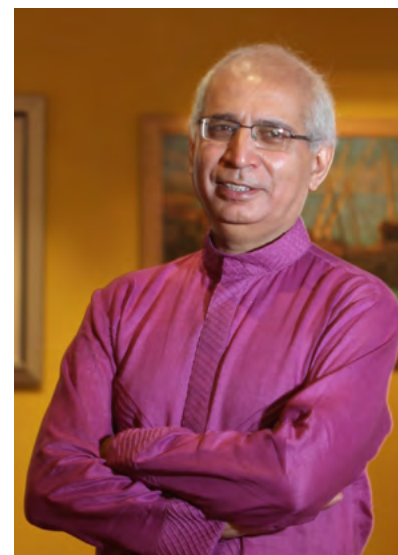
– Anu Malhotra



LOOK AT THE PAINTINGS... AND EXPERIENCE HER WORLD. REVEL IN THEM. FEEL THE ELECTRIC CHARGE OF THE COLOURS. BUT ALSO FEEL THEIR MEDITATIVE SUBLIMITY. THEY MIGHT OVERWHELM YOU. BUT THEY WILL NOT BETRAY YOU. OR DISAPPOINT YOU.

GODDESS OF COLOUR

KISHORE SINGH



Indulge me for a moment as I ask you to play a game. Let's say I blindfold you and stand you in front of one of Anu Malhotra's canvases – yes, the kind you see in this catalogue – and ask you to touch the painting. Now, I say to you, tell me what colour you can feel? That's right, feel. What would you say? You might laugh and say that colour cannot be felt. You might hazard a guess, but you'd probably be wrong, or, by some fluke, perhaps right. Or you might turn around and say, I can't feel the colour, but I can feel the painting, I can feel the passion, I can feel movement, I can feel the universe.

Let us put aside the assumption that there is colour at all, or that the colour we see is the colour that exists, for humans see colour in a way that in nature does not exist – or so science has told us. Is the sea really blue? Are leaves green? Or is all colour a primordial soup in which there are shades, but no tones?

The reason I suggest this to you is the way these paintings are made. Paint is poured, dribbled, thrown, squeezed, manipulated and abandoned on canvas with a disregard for 'colour', not as if there are two or three, thirteen or thirty colours colliding, mingling, repelling, attracting each other. Instead, Anu treats them almost with disdain, a healthy disrespect, taming it to her will like it was just one colour. It is a heathen's response to the

nuances the rest of us reserve for pigments and celebrate. Anu flings it, attacks it, devours it. It is a battle for victory in which she is the clear winner, vanquishing the reds and russets, flirting with the mauves and magentas, engulfing the yellows and ochres, overwhelming the indigos and blues, running riot with chromes and pales.

If this sounds less like painting, more like a gladiatorial contest, make no mistake, that's what it is. Artists previously have reacted similarly. F N Souza famously said, 'Painting for me is not beautiful. It is as ugly as a reptile. I attack it.' And Jeram Patel spoke of attacking wood too, gouging and burning it to arrive at a point when he thought something worthwhile had been created. Let me hasten to add, not for a moment am I comparing Anu with these worthy predecessors. Her work stands alone, and outside, in a space of its own, inviting neither comparisons, nor discriminations.

In the space of just a couple of years, Anu has proved she is no hobby artist – something that had been feared of a maverick filmmaker, photographer, writer and otherwise cultural impresario – who had come upon painting in her mid-life. Few know, though, that Anu has been painting for almost two score years, her early work kept secret because it was then a pastime, one of several, that she practiced

for herself. Her current body of work comes from a need to share, from a source within her channeled into an output that has its own merit. If the earlier was selfish, this is selfless. And in the interim between her exhibitions in New Delhi and Singapore to, now, in Mumbai, she has already matured. Her painting is no longer a diversion but a compulsion. She no longer directs it; it drives her. She sets out to create something, clear about the direction it will take, but it has its own volition that answers to some inner, primal call: the tide surging to a lunar possession. And so the two grapple. But the flows and lines now have a confidence she permits it; no longer is she being tentative, letting the paint find its own path, as she did earlier, around the thick impastos she placed in its path. Now, she is the mother goddess herself, rising to wrath if challenged, creating her worlds like an unstoppable force. (I could say she is like a profane demoness sullyng a sacred space, but I would be wrong, for she is in the thrall of creation, and any creation requires a goddess who makes sacrilegious spaces sacred.) Perhaps creativity is like lava after all. These paintings prove it.

How does one react to her work? This is not art for the weak of heart. It needs an inner strength to view it, for it has the capacity to draw you in and drown you. These works are

like fragments of our larger universe where mysterious Milky Ways and Black Holes exist, where there there are auroras, and mystery lights with strange colours (at least as we see them) exist, where there are subterranean and terrestrial explosions that we feel more than we see – for how could you ever describe such colours as are unknown to our language and our senses? In her world, air has colour and shape; water is liquid lava bubbling with sensations of secret colours and the memory of the deep earth from which it emerges. We could be gazing into the inscrutabilities of the deep blue in one, or separating the petals to gaze at stamens and sepals in another. Worlds are being created (and, perhaps, destroyed). Are these chemical blazes, or the very heart of the earth, fire and brimstone or the calm swell of the sea? A coming together or a going away?

But let us go back to the premise at the beginning of this note, that you are blindfolded and standing before a painting, sensing your way through it? What does that touch tell you? That there is texture; depths and heights; shapes and forms; modulations, curves (but no angles – as there are none in nature) and bends. There are stories here, perhaps easier to read with the touch of our fingers, than what our eyes see. For our eyes deceive us, but we know to find our way

IN HER WORLD, AIR HAS COLOUR AND SHAPE; WATER IS LIQUID LAVA BUBBLING WITH SENSATIONS OF SECRET COLOURS AND THE MEMORY OF THE DEEP EARTH FROM WHICH IT EMERGES.

when we shut them to fall back upon our muscle memory of the sensory. Then, we are alert to nuances. And, perhaps, we can tell the colour – tell it apart, feel its warmth and cool, understand its flow, become part of the merging, joining its story.

This is what Anu has set out to do. Take off that blindfold and experience her world. Look at the paintings. Revel in them. Feel the electric charge of the colours. But also feel their meditative sublimity. They might overwhelm you. But they will not betray you. Or disappoint you.

Anu Singh







Detail



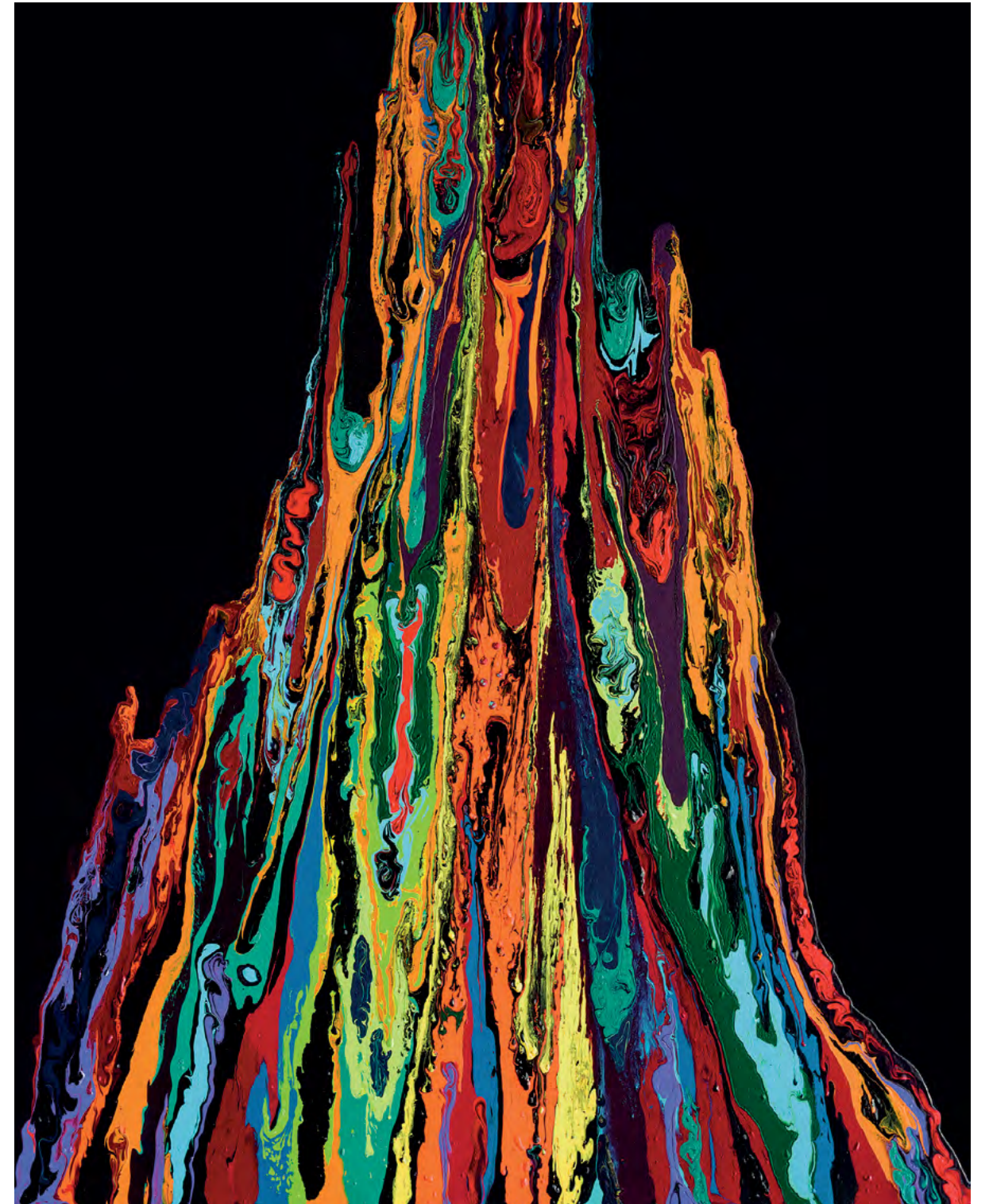




Genesis 60" x 84" Acrylic on Canvas 2014



Detail







Red Pandora 72"x 48" Acrylic on Canvas 2016





Detail



Enigma 60"x 42" Acrylic on Canvas 2016





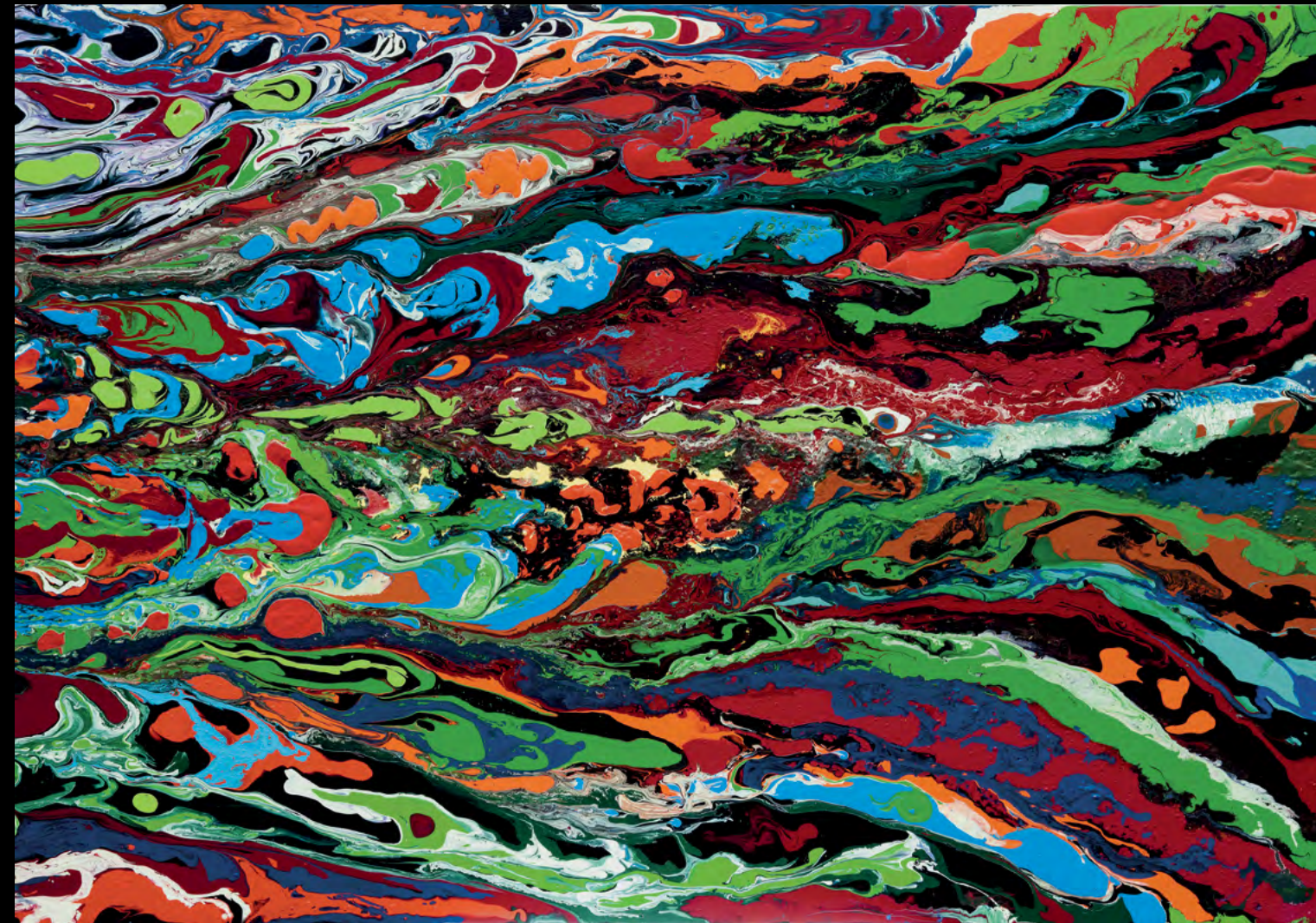
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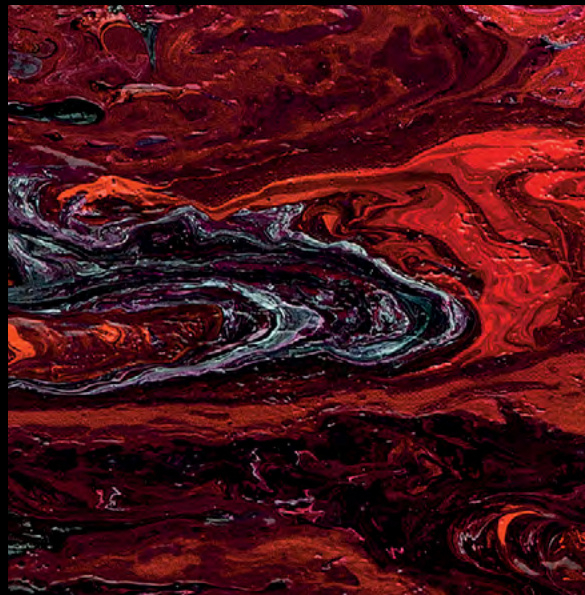
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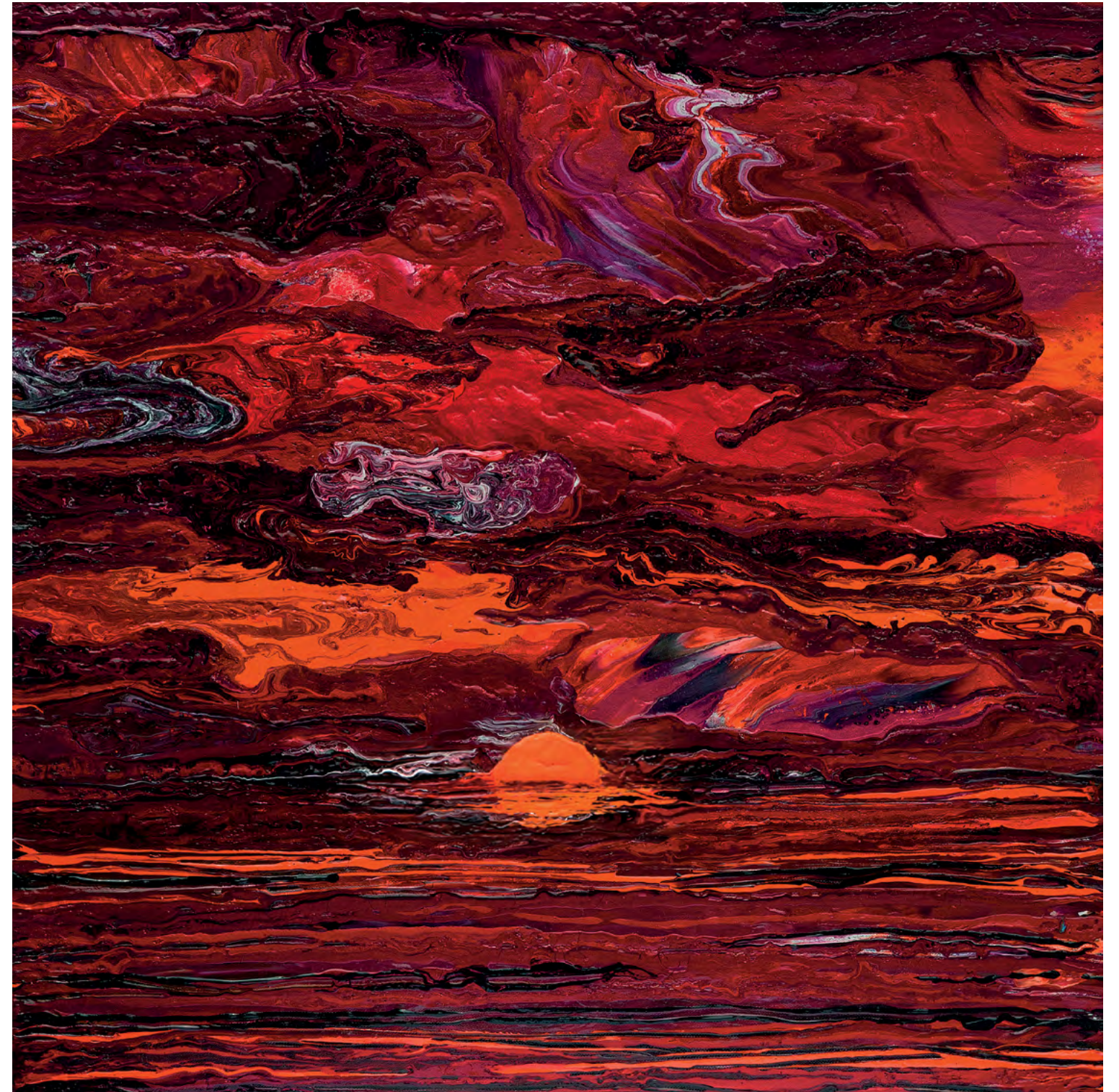


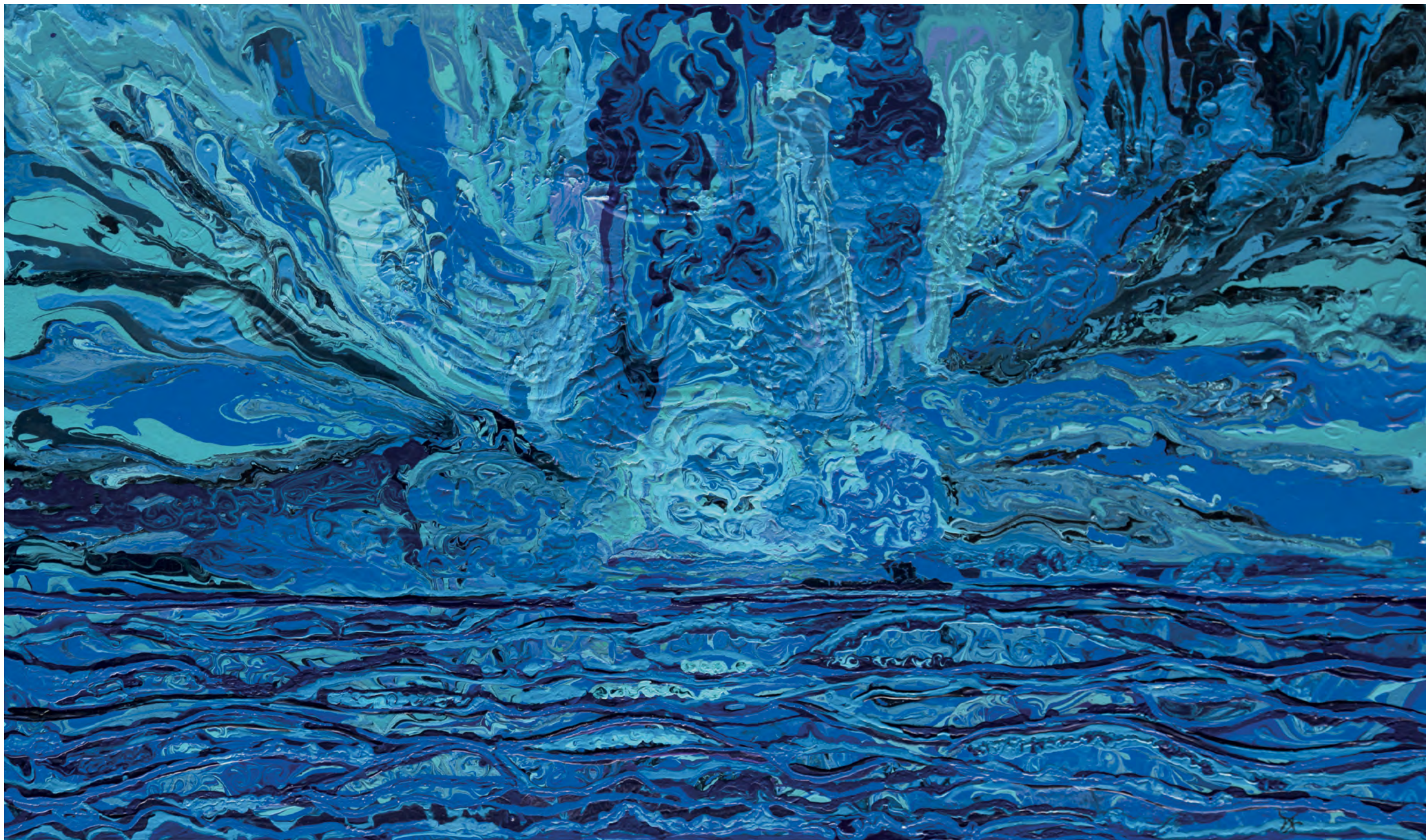


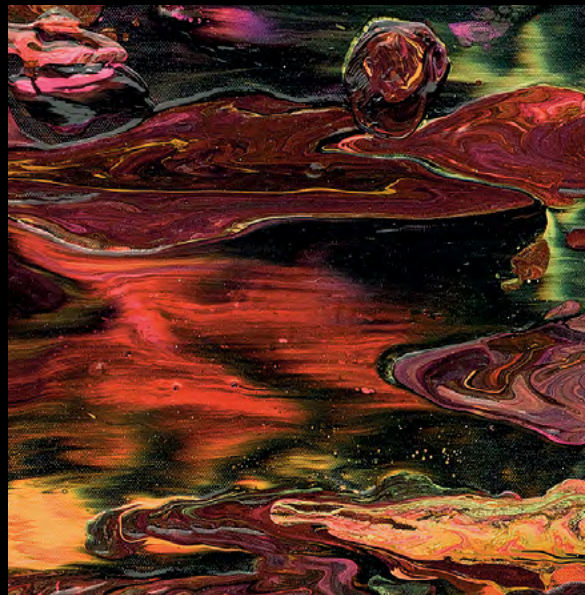
Vagator 72"x 48" Acrylic on Canvas 2015



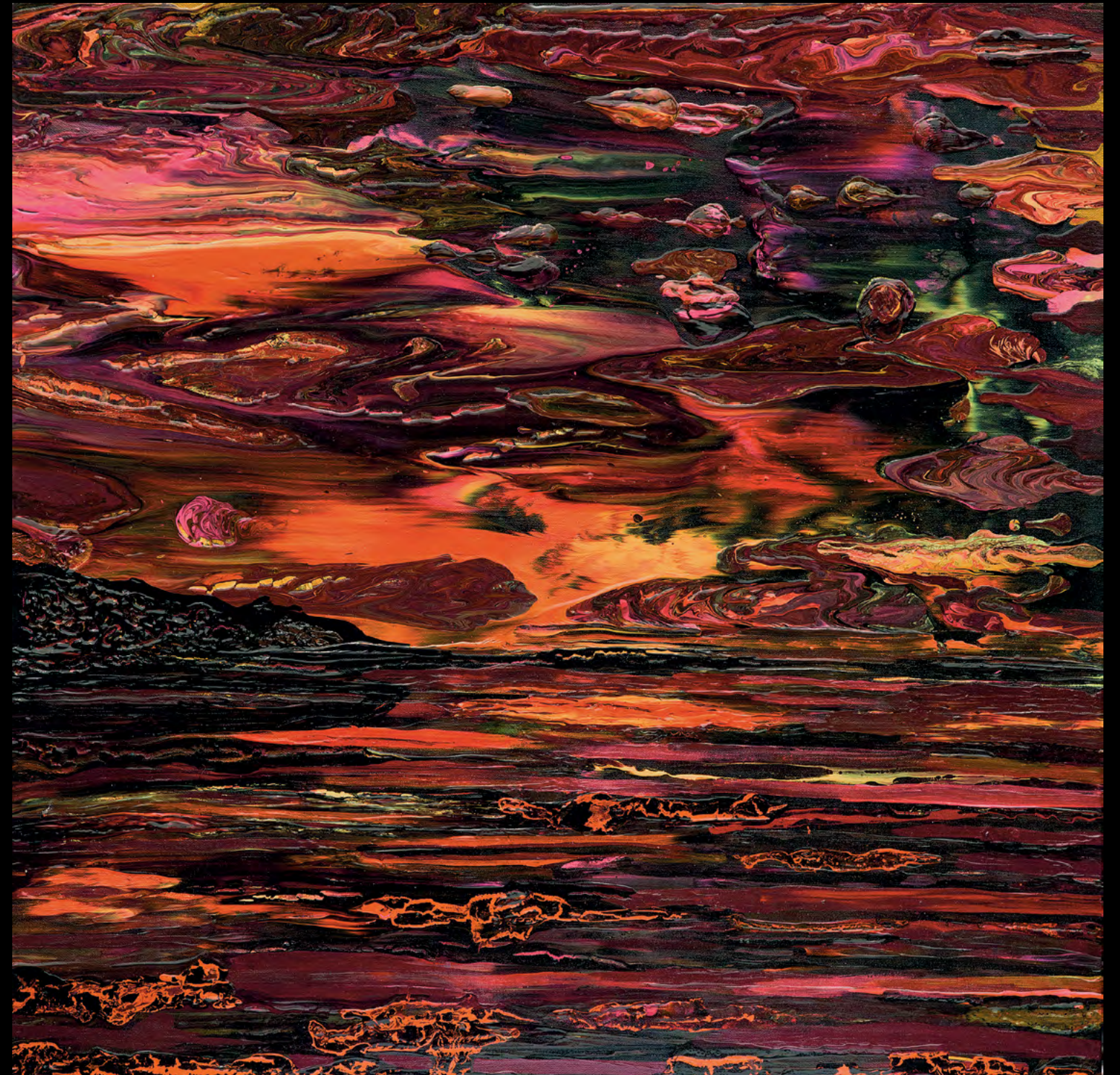
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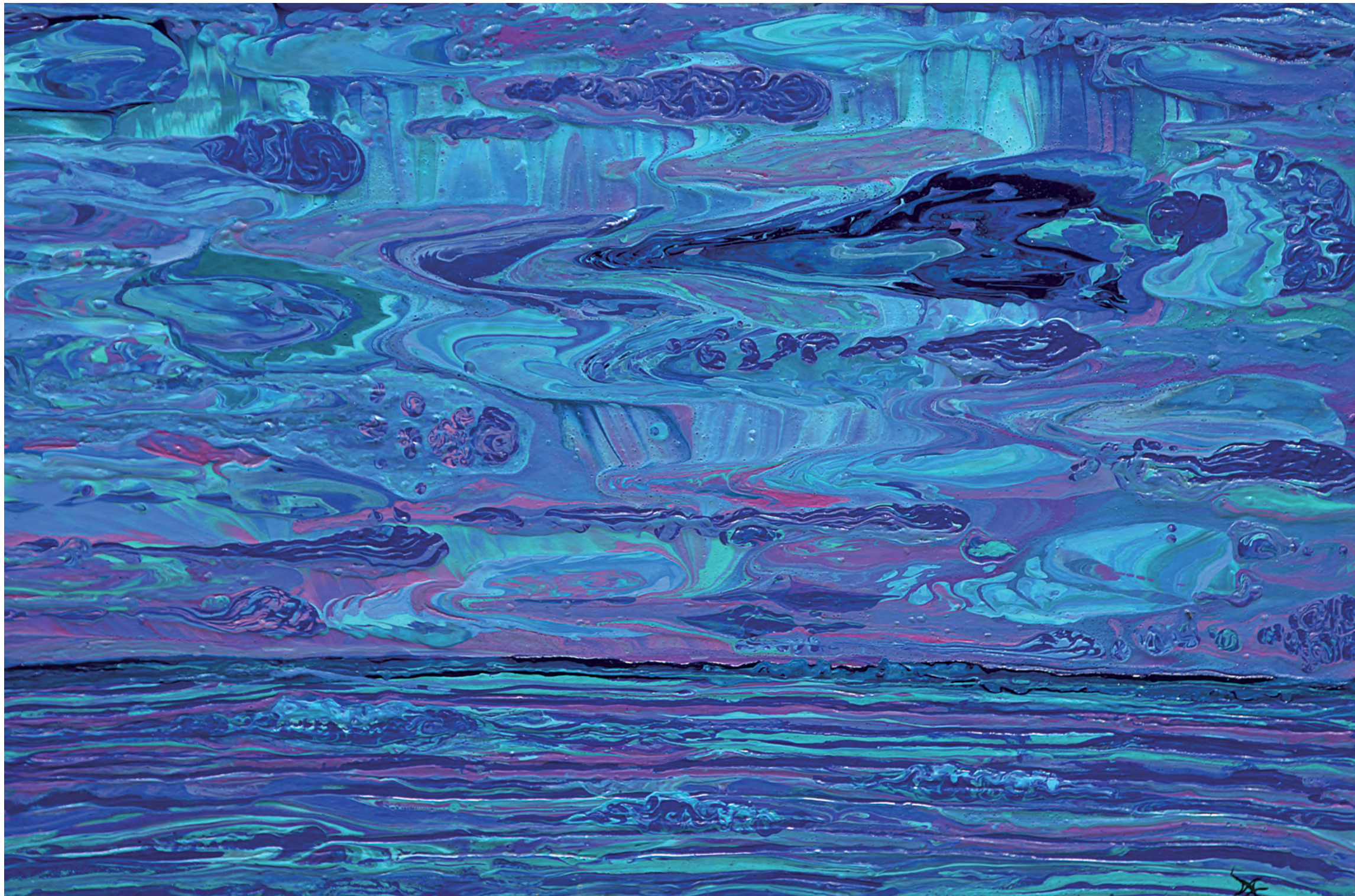


Detail





Arambol 72"x 48" Acrylic on Canvas 2015





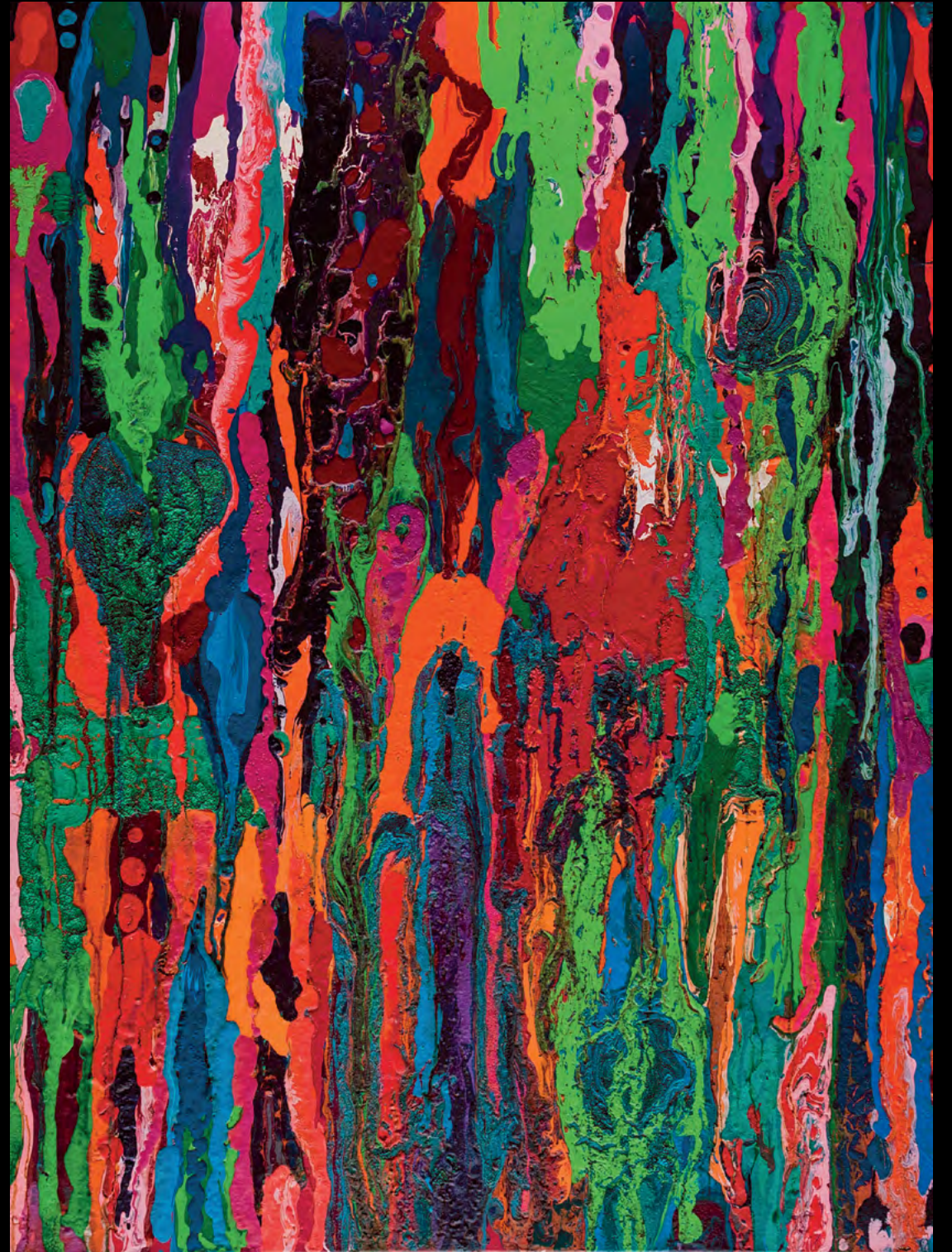


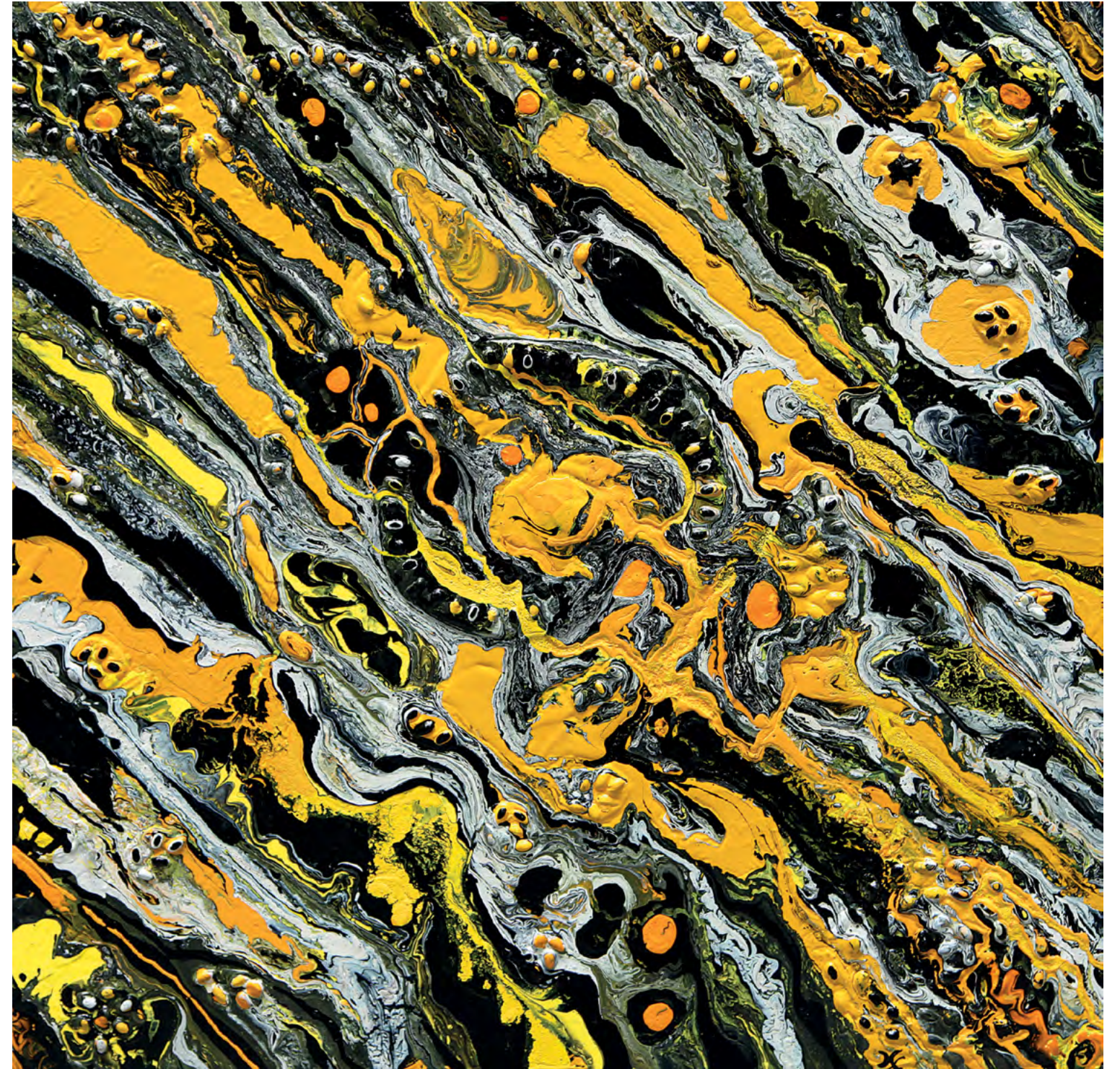




Detail









A BOLD EXPERIMENTALIST, SHE USES STRONG TONES WITH RARE CONFIDENCE TO CREATE WORKS THAT ARE REPLETE WITH VIGOUR AND VITALITY. ADRENALIN COURSES THROUGH HER CANVASES, AS THOUGH CAPTURING THE ESSENCE OF HER LIFE'S EXPERIENCES.



ARTIST PROFILE

"An intermittent painter in the early years, she's given herself over to the power of painting for the last few years. Using an unconventional palette, the self-taught artist has created an interesting technique of layering colours to create landscapes and still-lives that burst with colours. A bold experimentalist, she uses strong tones with rare confidence to create works that are replete with vigour and vitality. Adrenalin courses through her canvases, as though capturing the essence of her life's experiences. Her restless spirit finds a reflection in her paintings...and yet is difficult to pin down - a chimera moment, perhaps a cameo that provides a seductive glimpse before closing the doors on her world where the weak and anaemic has no place".

—By Kishore Singh

ART

2016

Art Konsult, Group Show, New Delhi
World Art Dubai

India Art Festival, New Delhi

2015

India Art Fair

Hongkong Art Fair

Solo Show, Bruno Art Gallery, Singapore

Singapore Art Fair

Cequin Charity Art Exhibition, New Delhi

2014

Solo Show, Hue Borne, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi

Solo Show, Hue Borne, Art Alive Gallery, New Delhi

Taj Black Tie Charity Art Exhibition, New Delhi
Charity art exhibition for the Mahatma Gandhi Statue to be installed in Parliament Square in London, UK Embassy, New Delhi

PHOTOTGRAPHY

2013

Trapezoid Gallery, New Delhi

2012

NDTV Good Times Show, Picture Perfect

2011

SOUL SURVIVORS, National Museum, New Delhi

Solo multimedia exhibition, Soul Survivors, Stainless Steel Gallery

“AS A FILMMAKER, I AM GROUNDED ENOUGH IN THE CONCRETE, THE REAL AND THE COLLABORATIVE PROCESSES OF WORKING. BUT ART HAS FOREVER BEEN MY HIDDEN, UNIQUELY PRIVATE CONCERN. WHEN PAINTING, I ALLOW THE BLENDING OF THE METAPHORIC AND THE CONCRETE, THE SYMBOLIC AND THE REAL, THE PERSONAL WITH THE COSMIC”

ABOUT ANU MALHOTRA

Anu Malhotra is one of India's top filmmakers, having won 15 National and 2 International awards, since she set up AIM Television in 1994.

Over the past decades, Anu has transformed the lives and minds of people across India and the world, through her **insightful documentaries, trend setting television programmes and revolutionary awareness campaigns.**

Anu practically redefined the landscape of documentary with her seminal docu-films, *The Apatani of Arunachal Pradesh*, *The Konyak of Nagaland* and *The Maharaja of Jodhpur, Shamans of the Himalayas*. She also turned her experiences into several captivating commercials and promotionals, for the Department of Tourism, including the first series of the *Incredible India* films - a slogan, that was coined by her!.

In 2011, Anu showcased her **first solo multimedia exhibition**, titled 'Soul Survivors' at the **National Museum, New Delhi**, for a month in May. This unique exhibition consisted of 80 large size photographs, 3 documentary films, installations and artefacts. This critically acclaimed exhibition was chosen by ICCR to be exhibited internationally.

Besides her excellence as a film maker and photographer, Anu is also a competent writer and writes all her own scripts as well as travel articles for newspapers and magazines. She was a columnist with Hindustan Times and wrote a column, *'Travels with my Camera'* in 2003.

Over the last decade, Anu Malhotra has nurtured another passion: **Painting!** Anu had her debut exhibition, *Hue Borne* in 2014. Anu surprised the art world with her distinctive style of painting and her celebration of colours. Since then her art has been showcased in several Exhibitions and Art Fairs across the world.



ABOUT ART & SOUL

Art & soul is an art space in the heart of Worli, and enjoys the privilege of working with a huge cross section of artists.

Art & soul is recognized by the artist community with uniquely conceptualized and well executed art events. This is reflected in their large database of artists and the gallery showcase of works of over 100 established artists, spanning 8 decades.

The artist relations are fostered through reputable tie ups in the domestic and international art scenarios.

Art and soul's responsibilities to their clients are met by raising art consciousness and awareness amongst primary investors, through consultations, workshops and dialogue with artists, art historians and art critics.



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NITASHA ARORA

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MCUBE

SHILPA SHETTY FOUNDATION

ABOUT US

Shilpa Shetty Foundation thrives to transform lives of the orphan children and contribute towards the development of the society. The aim of the foundation is to cover as many orphanages as possible and helping them fund their day to day running Uplifting and empowering the orphan children with basic facilities is something we look forward to. The foundation wants to nurture the orphan children by strengthening and reconstructing the existing structures which includes education, medical help, accommodation and entertainment as well.

VISION & MISSION

Shilpa Shetty Foundation strives to illuminate lives by giving care health and education and making an orphan child grow with education contributing towards development and a happier society. Our aim is to take over as many orphanages in India as possible and help fund their day to day running. We will renovate the existing structures and provide education, medical help, accommodation and entertainment for the underprivileged children.

VALUES

Shilpa Shetty Kundra has been an active social personality contributing towards the well-being of society in her own ways. With this foundation the effort is becoming more focused and organized than ever. SSF will focus on growth through touch points that are vital to human life.

In support of Shilpa Shetty Foundation
www.shilpashettyfoundation.com