

artist

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Dalia Amara, *Survive*, 2012

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YOAV FRIEDLÄNDER

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In this project I've used photography to infuse violent memories into the space I live in or onto places I've seen. There is a kind of urgency inside me to recreate and experience again what I think I remember from Israel. As time passes the distance from the place I grew creates doubts. What was real, what was fictive? It is impossible for me to distinguish. I build a world of memories into the photographs, one that is artificial but is made out of the real matter. There is a need to share what I saw, but at the same time to question everything about the possibility that it actually happened.





TAC: The use of miniatures in photography has been beautifully displayed in the works of Paolo Ventura, Lori Nix, Frank Kunert, and so on. Tell us a bit about the artists you look to for inspiration and what you've learned from them.

YF: Well, the list above is of impressive and very inspiring artists, and I will add David Levinthal and Thomas Demand as two major inspiring artists to this chapter in my practice. I found something intriguing that is related to all of these artists above and to my work as well. I get a feeling that the scale modeling made for these images as well as mine are in a sense a rebuild of a memory, only this memory is well influenced by photographs or drawings rather than the experience itself. Maybe it is just me and this is how I see it, but what inspired me to try and make scale models to articulate my memories in photographs is the fact that they in a sense imitate photographs that were used as a document of an event or a place. I would call it "organized memories."

TAC: Your work is dramatic, violent, and even political. What is your process in going from idea to final image?

YF: Violence is so normal in Israel that if you are born into it it is hard to notice how surreal it is when it becomes a normalcy. When I moved to New York a great hole opened where violence once was a part of everyday life, but I could not and still cannot avoid seeing possible horrors in buses, planes, and cars. Cold mornings remind me of the army service, and the sun penetrating through





the window in the morning reminds me of endless army routines, like standing before dawn in a guard post. Every time that I have one of these flashbacks I force them into ideas of photographs—how will I photograph them, where, how will I make them feel real and vivid as my daydreams? From the moment I have an inspiration for a photograph that I want to make I feel an urgency to make it as long as I believe in it, both because it is still fresh and vivid, and because I still believe in it completely. Time only creates doubts. About the political part of it, it is an aspect I can't avoid even if I would rather avoid it. The only political ambition I have with these images is mirroring how surreal and not normal this violence is. It is not normal to see a bus as a ticking time bomb. I am not taking a side in the conflict, I just wish for its end. I hope that my images will help my people (Israelis) see the conflict in a negative way without pointing any blaming finger.

TAC: What does photography offer you as a means of communicating your ideas that other art forms cannot?

YF: Photography allows me to extend my daydreams. I feel that it is the closest medium or tool I have that is like perception (how I see). For me perception is something that I doubt and question since I cannot distinguish between what I have experienced myself and what are photographs that behave as my memories. I work on ratio angle of view and light using the camera until I can believe in what I see. Sometimes I feel I am deceiving myself and it is hard for me to believe that what I photographed was actually a scale model. I hope to communicate this kind of feeling to the viewer, and I find it unique to photography.

TAC: What is next for you as an artist?

YF: I am actually now digressing from violence to the nature of illusion itself. I have felt for a while now that I am using tools that I cannot name to create the illusion of the real. There is a feeling lately that we accept a blend of real and artificial as part of augmented reality. This new kind of instrumental base experience of reality inspires me to create images with "bare illusions," to achieve an image that has the illusion of the real while it is quite obvious it is nothing but real. By that I hope to emphasize some of the essence of the illusion itself.

As an artist I try to capture the personality of my subject whether it be human or animal, or in the case of a landscape create a scene that draws the viewer into the painting. I have focused on painting, but I also love to draw and have sculpted, designed/painted furniture, painted murals, faux and tromp l'oeil work, painted on glass, worked with fiber arts, theatrical backdrops (the largest being 18 ft. tall and 50 ft. long). Although I have primarily worked with photographs that I have taken or have permission to use, I am working more and more with live models and using photography as a tool to work on the details. My hope is to leave the viewer with a smile on their face—most recently I have been working on a painting of a cow that visitors to my studio love. I have heard “I know that cow!” more than once. Many times when I have been consigned to paint a portrait for a client from a photograph, I feel a “connection” to the subject that can create emotions in me that sometimes bring me to tears. The reward for me, then, is to have that client tell me that I have “captured their personality”—that is the payoff for me.



HEIDI

THALDORF BACON

PAOLA, KANSAS





TAC: Tell us a bit about the transformation your images undergo from photographs to paintings.

HTB: I take a lot of photographs in preparation for a painting. I select a subject or place that generates a fond memory or produces something meaningful to me. It is with this series of photographs that I then decide which elements are to be used in my final painting. In the past I would freehand the images onto the canvas prior to painting; however, today I prefer to utilize a "sight/size" method of drawing the subject material onto the canvas before painting. I find it important to only draw the outlines of images, shadows, and the color breaks and not shade in or fill any area prior to painting. Once I have the base drawing on the canvas completed and the first layer of colors on, I then focus on a small area of the painting at a time. These areas might be as small as one inch or less. I find it fascinating how areas, with their shapes and shadows, contribute and transpose themselves into the end result of my paintings.

TAC: How are your memories of an event relived when you paint from your pictures?

HTB: When I paint from my photographs I cannot help but return to the moment in time that each image was taken. I am always drawn back to the sounds of that place, the warmth of the sun, the feel of the wind, and, more importantly, the reason I was there. The paintings of my son, Luke, and my daughter, Laura (both now in their early 20s), I can still hear the seagulls along the shoreline and see the tide of the ocean come up on the beach as it slowly melted the sand castle they built together. More recently, I just completed a painting of a

herd of cattle near my home. While taking the series of photographs for this piece, my seventeen-year-old son Daniel begged repeatedly for me to not stop yet again to photograph cows. On that day the sun was setting on that quiet field beside the road that was host to the cattle, who briefly paused to glance at me. I will always remember that when I see my painting.

TAC: When it comes to photorealism in your art, is there a moment where you pull back to ensure the work still speaks of painting and not photography?

HTB: When it comes to using photographic images as a reference for my paintings, I believe it is important to take a measure of restraint and stop short of making the completed work too photographic upon its completion. If this restraint was not used, then why bother painting it? It is never my intended goal to make a painting a perfect match to the photographs used. Once I have completed a piece I believe any casual viewer would be hard-pressed to know that a photograph was used for reference.

TAC: What other artists with a similar approach do you look to for inspiration and why?

HTB: I loved how Norman Rockwell created his own scenes, using friends and family members to stage his paintings and then photographing them to use for reference. The ability to capture the emotions of his subjects and the common scenes that Rockwell used has inspired me as well. Other artists whose works I am fascinated by are Andrew Wyeth and, more recently, Frederic Remington. I am currently mentored by a neoclassical artist, Russell, who is helping me to hone and shape my abilities into what you see today.

In *Stay Angry* I respond to the illustrated album covers of extreme metal groups from the '80s era, whose aesthetics attracted me to metal music at the age of 13. It was the dramatic and defiant illustrations that compelled me to buy thrash albums without even knowing the sound of the bands' music. From thrash I came to listen and was equally attracted to the imagery associated with death metal and black metal, each of them musical subgenres defined by their extreme lyrics, sound, and visual symbolism. In my response I recreate illustrated album covers of extreme metal groups using the conventions of photographic representation, and borrow from both commercial photography and highbrow art, in particular the still life. Each photograph in the short series is a reinterpretation of a specific album cover in which I arrange props typical to both metal music imagery and/or the traditional still life. Once arranged, the props are illuminated using highly controlled studio lighting, and then shot with a view camera that offers me further control. While the text on the albums is removed, the photographs themselves are titled after the names of the original albums. Through my reinterpretation I play off elements of the visual language of highbrow art against the lowbrow art of metal. The contrast is meant to be humorous in its absurdity as I try to push the boundaries of high art by bringing the culture of lowbrow metal into a "higher" cultural context.

In *Death As If* I stage photographs that explore death anxiety and link the human desire to control nature and environments to our lack of control over our mortality. Building on personal experiences, I incorporate various influences from death and black metal culture's symbols and lyrical themes to explore the notion of death on a personal and everyday scale. The metaphorical scenes in these images are influenced by my own death anxiety following the untimely death of my mother. For me photography, as well as extreme metal music, becomes a controlled space in which to explore the vulnerability of human mortality. While the photographs are a conceptual investigation of control, they are ultimately about attempting to come to terms with human mortality.

DALIA

AMARA

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK







TAC: What was it about metal culture that attracted you to it in the first place?

DA: My initial attraction to extreme metal music was its aesthetics. When I was 13 years old I'd browse music aisles and pick out what to buy based on the album covers. Many of the albums happened to be of thrash metal bands. The covers were dramatic, campy, defiant, and featured death-related imagery. Once I heard them I was also sold on the sound and lyrical subject matter. Through thrash metal I discovered black metal and death metal, each of them extreme metal subgenres.

TAC: How would you describe the shared aesthetic of typical metal album covers?

DA: Thrash album covers from the '80s were detailed with colorful illustrations depicting politics, nuclear annihilation, skulls, demons, violence, power relations, pollution, and so on. Death and black metal imagery evolved out of thrash in different directions. Death metal focuses more on the physical body through references to violence, disease, gore, and decay. Its album cover illustrations are detailed, colorful, and more heavily reliant on horror imagery. The lyrical themes in black metal focus on the spiritual body and mind through references to Satanism, paganism, atheism, war, nature (mountains, snow, and forests in particular), misanthropy, psychology (depression and/or suicidal ideation), the occult, or mythology. Black metal album covers are typically high-contrast black and white, and minimal.

TAC: Until the recent embrace of digital photography within the span of photographic history, the majority of commercial still lifes were done in studio on either 4x5 or 8x10. Do you feel your method of working is referencing these decades of selling ideas?

DA: Absolutely; my photographs in *Stay Angry* were created using a 4x5 in a studio. The '80s illustrations I was referencing were used to sell album covers, and are therefore commercial. In order to translate these covers into photography I pulled from the conventions of the commercial photographic still life, alongside conventions of "highbrow" art. My approach in *Death As If* has changed to a more personal take on the visualization of death and extreme metal's lyrical themes. My goal is to be less controlled and slick than a commercial studio photograph, and I've embraced the use of a digital camera in order to help accomplish that.

TAC: The theme of death and mortality is as old as art itself, yet it seldom finds its way into photography compared to other forms of art making. What photographers do you find yourself looking to that have explored this subject matter?

DA: I don't think death is a seldom-represented

subject in photography in comparison to other mediums. Some of the early uses of photography in the nineteenth century involved capturing images of death, both the body (postmortem photography) and the spiritual manifestation (spirit photography). Duane Michals is known for photographs that resemble a contemporary take on spirit photography. Then there are the countless photographs documenting or referencing human mortality in wars dating from the Crimean War to today, or journalistic photographs of suicides, murders, or fatal accidents. These photographers have also made their way into the "art world" (Weegee, W. Eugene Smith, Robert Capa, James Nachtwey, and Enrique Metinides are some examples). On the lowbrow end, there's shock websites that display both historical and contemporary photographs of disease or death, often taken from medical or forensic sources. One of the first art photographers I was interested in as a teenager was Joel-Peter Witkin, particularly for his use of human cadavers arranged into tableaux. Following Witkin, an entire genre of formaldehyde photography came about in the mid '80s and continued into the '90s. Mark Dery highlights some of the work in his 1999 essay "Nature Morte: Formaldehyde Photography and the New Grotesque." Currently, I often look at Andres Serrano's 1992 series *The Morgue*. I also enjoyed (via the Internet) a 2011 exhibit centered on black metal, *Black Thorns in the White Cube*, curated by Amelia Ishmael and displayed at Western Exhibitions in Chicago, IL and Paragraph Gallery in Kansas City, MO. The exhibition featured photographs from Aaron Mette's *Afterlife* and Tereza Zelenkova's *Supreme Vice* series, both of which deal with human mortality.



DENISE WEAVERROSS

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My current work plays with layers of archetypes pulled from Egyptian tomb paintings, Tarot cards, and my own personal experience, and combines them in the structure offered by the suit of hearts in traditional playing cards. This allows me to push and pull the images through the combined layers using color, transparency, texture, and contrast, and speak visually about the multicultural/cross-cultural world in which I live while I reflect on my own personal life experience as wife, widow, mother, lover, sister, and friend.





TAC: Tell us a bit about your practice going from concept to final image.

DWR: This series started with a poem that grew out of a discussion with a friend who was despairing about recovery from a great loss. The poem then led to my thinking about how I recovered from the grief and loss of my late husband, and that led to the "Queen of Heart Transplants," which in turn gave me the idea for a series. At first I was going to do only the court cards (king, queen, and jack), but I was enjoying the format so much I have decided to do the whole suit of heart cards. Once I have the idea (for example, thinking to myself that I must be the queen of heart transplants) - I look for images related to the idea. Thus the queen led to the playing card, which led to the tarot card with the heart and the three swords. Then I found a diagram of an actual heart transplant and an Egyptian tomb painting showing the transplant of a tree. I then download the images and make a layered file in Photoshop, overlaying the images and crating the general composition. Then I print out the layers and cut out sections that I like and trace them on heavy watercolor paper. Next I start filling in the layers with color, using water-soluble oil pastels and pencils. While I add the color I am defining the shapes, pushing or pulling images out of the layers, adding or deleting lines. This final step is my favorite part and the most time consuming. It allows me to be completely intuitive within the structure I've created.

TAC: What first interested you in using painting and illustration to convey your ideas?

DWR: My undergraduate degree is in English Literature and Studio Art, and I have a MFA in printmaking. I have also worked as a graphic designer for many years. I have a great interest in myth, words, and archetypal images, which comes from my study of literature. The printmaking and the graphic design both lend themselves to working with concrete ideas and also working on paper and using

layers. The layers allow me to layer meaning as well as images; I love the complexity it produces because it most closely reflects the complexity and conflicts of my own thoughts and feelings about the human experience.

TAC: Tell us how you decided to apply hieroglyphics to the theme of playing cards.

DWR: The playing card idea came by accident when I was looking for images about heart transplants. I have also been interested in tarot cards for a long time because of the archetypes they display. This interest is not about trying to predict the future as some people

view tarot, but as a kind of meditation on what is happening in my life and the world around me. As a visual person, I find the images very compelling.

Ancient Egyptian art has long been an interest of mine, though not in a scholarly way. I find the images as well as the mythology behind the images compelling, for example the weighing of the heart and the need for it to be lighter than a feather in order to proceed to a more favorable afterlife. To me it speaks of the need to forgive and the letting go of material things in life, to be unburdened. Also, I love the multihued figures in Egyptian art. My life is filled with people of many cultures and skin tones, and ancient Egyptian art, more than most Western art that we study, displays a wonderful variety.

TAC: As an artist, where do you look for inspiration?

DWR: Inspiration comes from the most unexpected places. For the past year I have begun a regular practice of trying to find fifteen minutes in the morning to breathe

and meditate and listen to what is floating around in my mind, which I would have normally ignored because I am too busy getting on with the practical necessities of life. I found this to have grown into a great gift because the thoughts have taken form in both poetry and art. I find I am suddenly producing creative works at a pace that I didn't believe would be possible when still having to dedicate so much of my life to just making ends meet.



KIM

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A large-scale art installation in a white room, featuring a grid of small, colorful photographs and drawings pinned to the walls. The photographs depict various scenes, including people, landscapes, and abstract forms. The drawings are simple line art, some resembling stylized faces or figures. The installation is organized into a grid pattern across the walls.





TAC: Tell us about your use of multimedia and what it lends you.

JAK: I like to use what's around me, what I'm exposed to in daily life. Accordingly, a lot of what I use for my work are various mundane objects such as grocery store coupons from where I shop, pamphlets from events I attend, and plywood boards from all over the city. I also use my own personal stuff like old photographs or journals. It may seem random, but actually is not. I use only "leftovers." They were previously produced for certain purposes, either commercial or personal, but are no longer useful because they have expired or are unwanted as life takes a turn at some point. I find working on these "leftovers" makes me feel that I genuinely interact with the world that I am currently living in. Working with different materials helps keep my eyes fresh and perceive things sensitively. Although sometimes I

find it's hard to resist, I try to refrain from getting used to one particular medium or technique.

TAC: Several of your images exhibit various means of defacing the subject: scribbling over, etching out, cutting in, etc. Tell us a bit about this trend in your work.

JAK: I use that method a lot, especially when I work with my personal belongings from the past. I've started working in that style in the photography series that evolved after I accidentally found a pile of my old photographs. It's sort of my attempt to process what happened at that time and move on, although there really isn't a way to know if I understand things better now. When I cut/scratch/erase the images on pictures the action requires a certain amount of strength, both mentally and physically. It subtracts and evens out the weight of memories in pictures and seems to help me understand the idea of time and the absence of what I used to have.

TAC: How does the installation aspect come into play when you develop a body of work?

JAK: I think showing artworks is similar to telling stories, even when the work itself is not narrative. I have mainly made 2D works and each piece is somewhat contained in size, but they make good and stronger stories once they are placed together in the right way, and that's when I consider one body of work is done. I still play around and try different ways of installing them afterward, though.

TAC: What direction do you see your art going from here?

JAK: That is hard for me to answer because I normally don't plan out new projects. When one body of work is coming to a close I tend to get nervous because I don't know what I'm going to work on next. However, surprisingly and fortunately, every day is full of big and small accidents that inspire me. It's like old ideas (therefore more mature) arise from those accidents and turn into new inspirations. Currently I'm working on two projects. One is still developing, and I have been working on the other one for a year and a half. It's a blue painting series that I am making with only five shades of blue acrylic color, which a friend of mine selected for fun when he visited my studio. I am painting all different styles of paintings with the five blues. I started this project as a farewell to painting. I decided to paint until I used up all of the paints that I have and then stop making paintings. Ironically, I'm falling for painting again as I discover different sides to it. Not having the freedom to use any other color makes the painting process a lot more interesting for me because it brings more problems and challenges that I have to resolve.

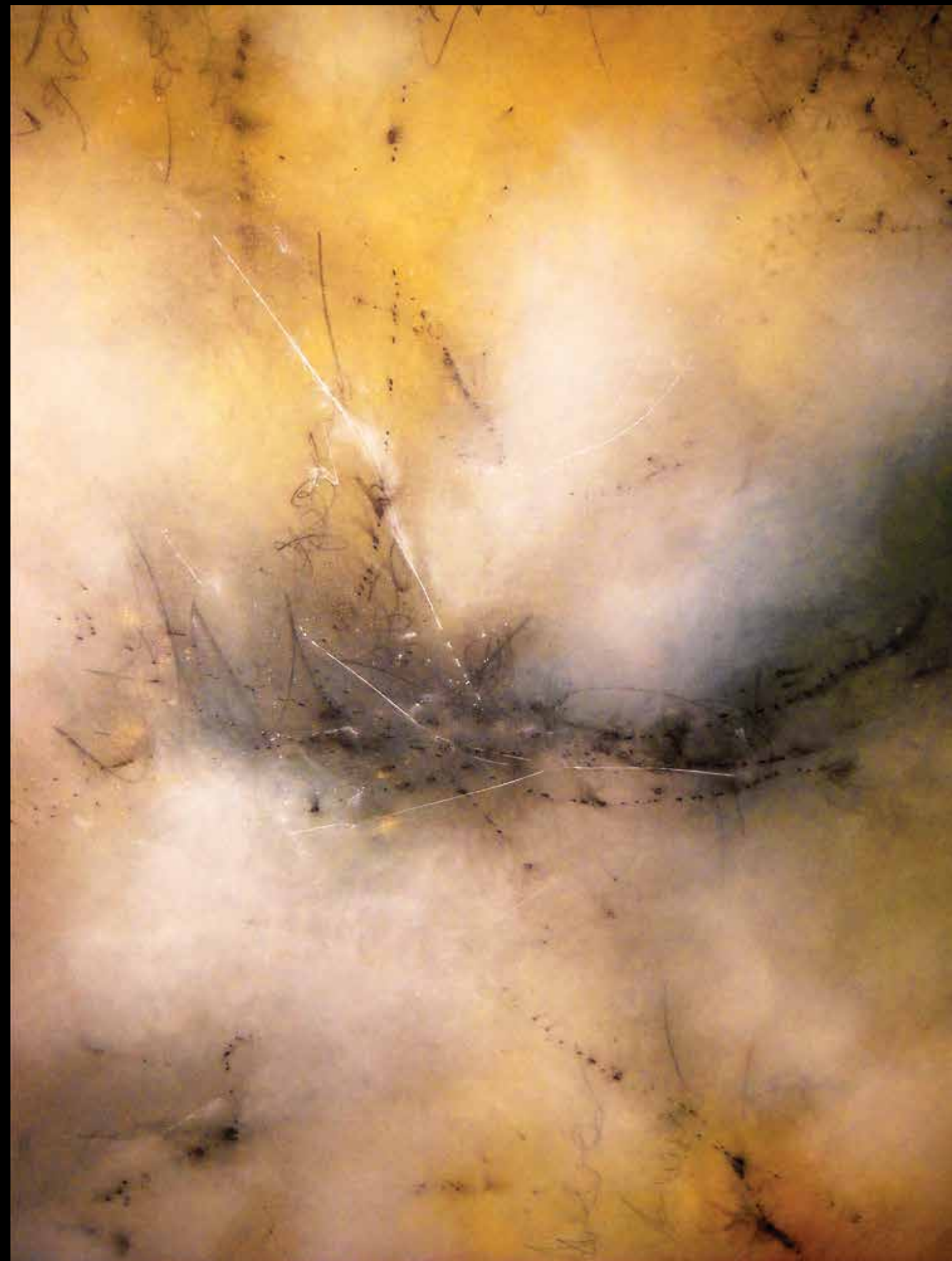


LORRAINE M. THOMSON

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

My work integrates a long-standing pursuit of both cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary experience. My creative life has taken me from choreographer to painter. The dialogue between these two disciplines is deeply embedded in my creative process and synthesized in the resulting work. The still point, the subtle space between the viewer and the painting, is crucial for the painting to come alive. I want my paintings to move and vibrate, to invite the viewer toward a deeper dialogue with the work. What I'm pursuing creatively is the "alchemy" of colour. I'm working with the idea of ambiguity, where each colour is unsettled and in the process of "becoming." I'm interested in colliding colours on the canvas ... seeing how they intersect or interact, or turn from one into another. It's the transitions between distinct colours or the space between one colour and the next that excites me. I'm exploring how colour can function as movement in a painting. I'm really playing with how the painting moves.





TAC: Tell us a bit about your transition from dance choreographer to painter.

LT: At a certain point in my choreographic process I began to be more interested in the internal nuanced moments between movements rather than in a more external physical expression. I wanted to explore the interval between not moving and moving. Studying both Javanese and Butoh dance forms, where movement is often slowed down almost to a physical impossibility, supported and furthered these explorations. I felt a creative connection to the films of Andre Tarkovsky with their slow-motion, textural images that seem to hang in the air rather than move through time. My choreographic palette became increasingly filled with slow, subtle, still moments. Eventually I came to tableau ... a physical, vibrating painting, as it were. Dance and painting are not separate careers for me; instead, they have simply worked as different chapters in one continuously unfolding creative process.

TAC: Within everyday living, where do you look for reference points for your paintings?

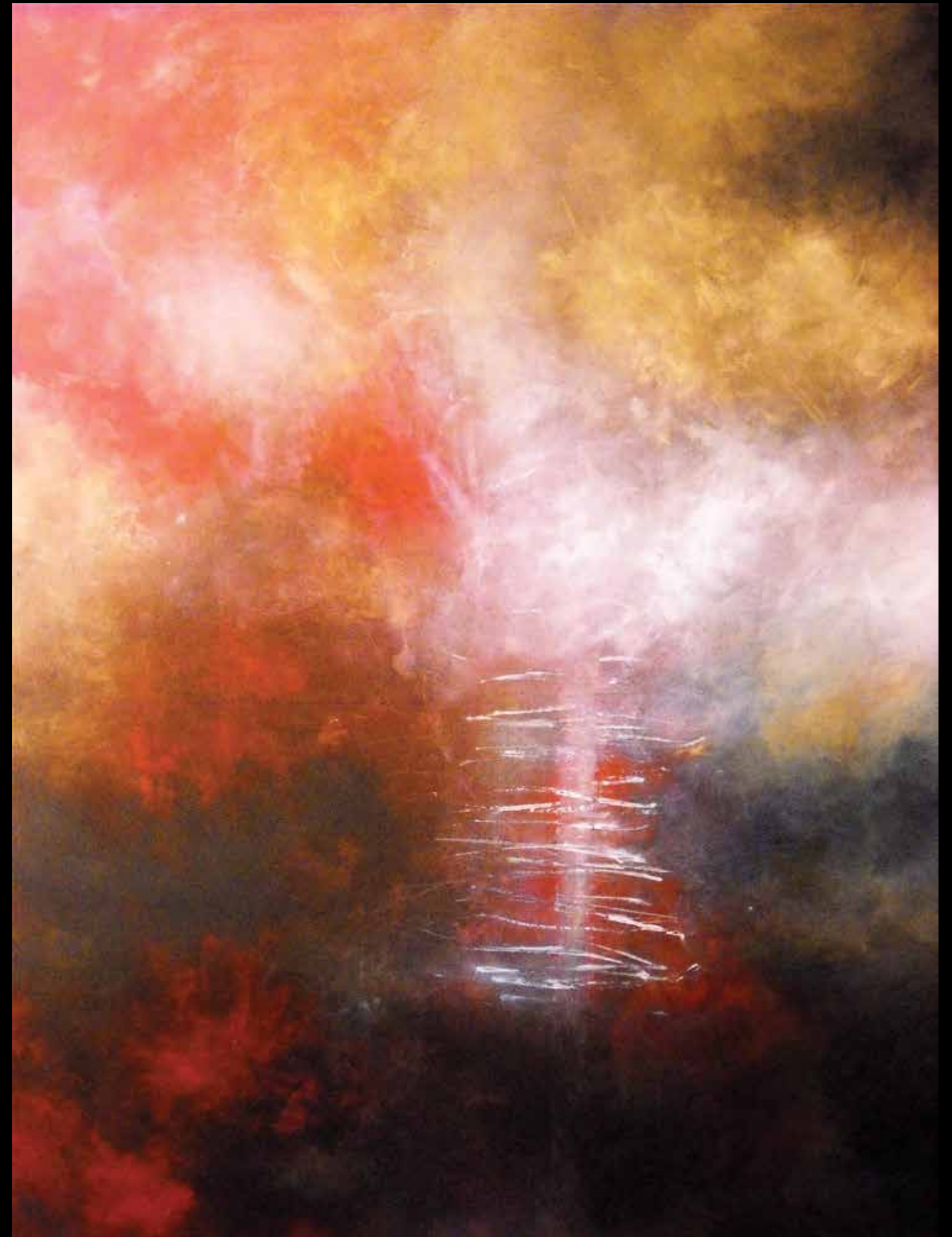
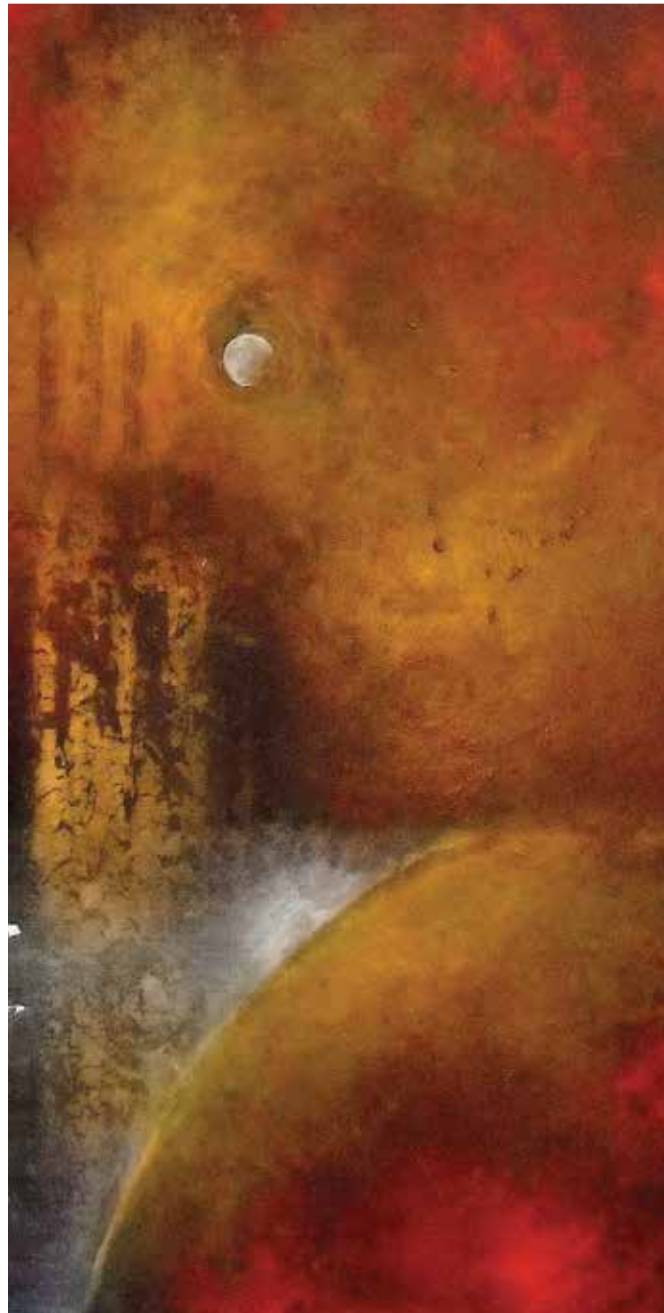
LT: I'm at a place in my life where life, art, and creativity have become entwined. Through painting I engage with subtle detail, texture, colour, mysterious interaction, control, juxtaposition, frustration, abandon, surprise, nuanced mystery, and transition, just as in everyday life I witness these qualities and aspects in the elemental world (people, weather, light, animals, and the sea) and in my own internal state.

TAC: How does your use of color and line vary depending on a particular mood or emotion?

LT: Colour and gestural choices within my creative process are certainly influenced by mood and emotion, as everything in life is ... but what I'm really after, what directs colour and line for me, is something that lies beneath the emotional landscape. In the initial stages of my process I'm more interested in unconscious choices and impulses that I may not readily understand. Part of the fascination for me is discovering what emerges separately from my awareness. Interpretation and understanding and shaping of these choices come later.

TAC: What artists with a similar approach do you look to for inspiration and why?

LT: I have long been inspired and influenced by Turner, for his rich and voluminous skies that seem to become entire worlds in and of themselves, and for his use of colour and movement, especially in his late pieces that veer so surprisingly toward the abstract. I take inspiration from Redon, mostly for his bold, textured, and unique palette in his backgrounds. His mythic themes and figures are held so powerfully by what is behind them. Mark Rothko has made me believe that colour detail and texture can become its own form and content. And Tarkovsky (already mentioned) really inspired the idea within me that a barely moving image is like a living painting. His synthesis of movement and image spoke to me and has engaged my process ever since.



MAGDALENA NIZIOL

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I have been taking photos professionally for one year, altogether two years. I have recently really started to love the fashion world and photographing all aspects of it. My love for photography is new and ever growing. Every day is full of visual inspiration coming to life. I have a love for anything sharp, emotional, and colorful, and that provokes a feeling. Although I primarily photograph people, I try to capture the landscapes that inspire my fashion work as I travel. To me, being able to photograph a moment and make it still forever is the single best feeling in the world.







TAC: When did you first become interested in the fashion industry, and how did that translate to your photography?

MN: I think my love for fashion photography came from wanting to experience something new and unfamiliar. Everything about Maine is so old fashioned and familiar, including the fashion—even styles of photographs. My purpose isn't to push the borderline, but rather to have people stop when they see my photo because maybe it isn't a style they are used to or because it evokes an emotion they don't usually get from looking at a piece of art.

TAC: Several of your images have a mysterious or ominous tone to them. Tell us a bit about leaning toward this particular aesthetic.

MN: Even with my commercial work I want people to feel the fun and excitement in the photo. In my fashion and editorial I tend to prefer the more serious/concentrated/dreamy photos, partly because I think that it's something new for a lot of people, but also because at the end of these shoots I often have an overwhelming feeling of the mood that continues through the editing process.

TAC: Tell us about the landscape photography you do alongside your fashion work, and how you feel the two are related.

MN: I love shooting landscapes while traveling. I love having empty space in photos, and this is noticeable in all aspects of my work. With my landscapes I pick a subject to focus on, then find the right place when I compose the photo. I apply these same composition rules to my fashion work.

TAC: What fashion photographers do you find yourself returning to for inspiration and why?

MN: I honestly have just recently started following and admiring other fashion photographers. My desire to photograph fashion came from within myself, but the desire to expand my knowledge has introduced me to some great work. Some photographers that I follow are Lara Jade (love the soft look she adds to fashion, as well as texture), Paolo Roversi (I love the intense eye contact, the emotion it evokes, and the black-and-white edits), and lastly Victor Demarchelier (his images are so perfect without being overprocessed, so simple with little distraction).

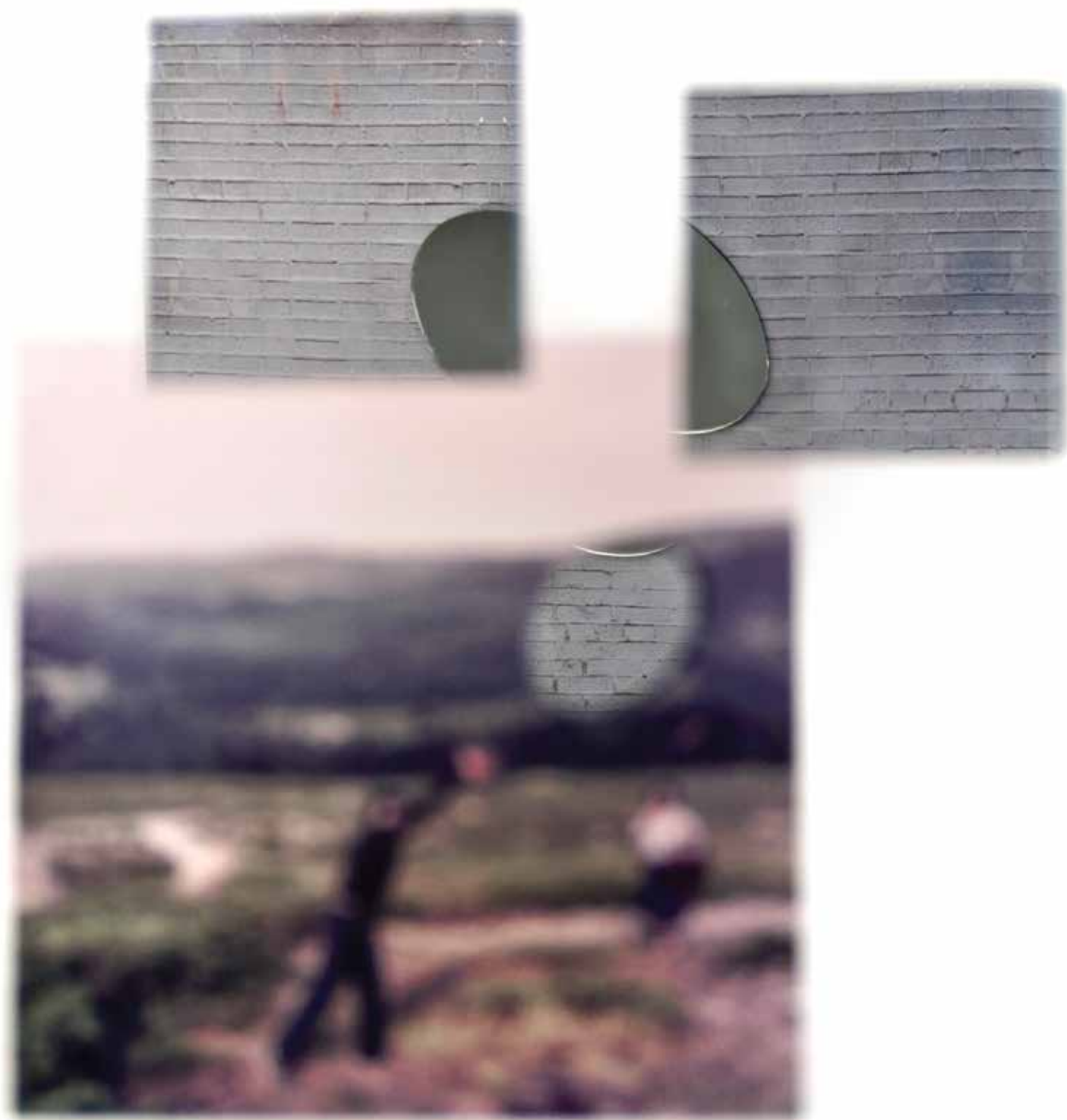
REHAN MISKCI

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

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I am imagining alternative abstract spaces for my own memories and other moments that I was not even part of. My aim is to convey the idea of relativity in our perception of memory. I therefore collect architectural and urban details, and isolate them without any reference to their environment. By using these as source material I aim to create new and abstract spaces and realities out of existing ones, which can be interpreted as new spatial representations of single memories. The exploration of my past in the three-dimensional field enables me to place myself in the work on a personal level. While questioning the visual quality of memory in relation to time and space, my past becomes like a series of infinite rooms attached to each other.





TAC: Tell us about beginning with a memory of yours and transforming it into one of your images.

RM: My process of transforming memories into images is a personal exploration. The memories can be from photographs from my childhood; they can also be family photographs that I wasn't even a part of but they still feel like my own because of the many stories I have heard about them. I think the way we look at family photographs and the information we get from them mainly depends on how much we know about the family secrets and the hidden dynamics. My aim is to show these different variations and possibilities of perception.

TAC: What first interested you in using memories as a device for picture taking?

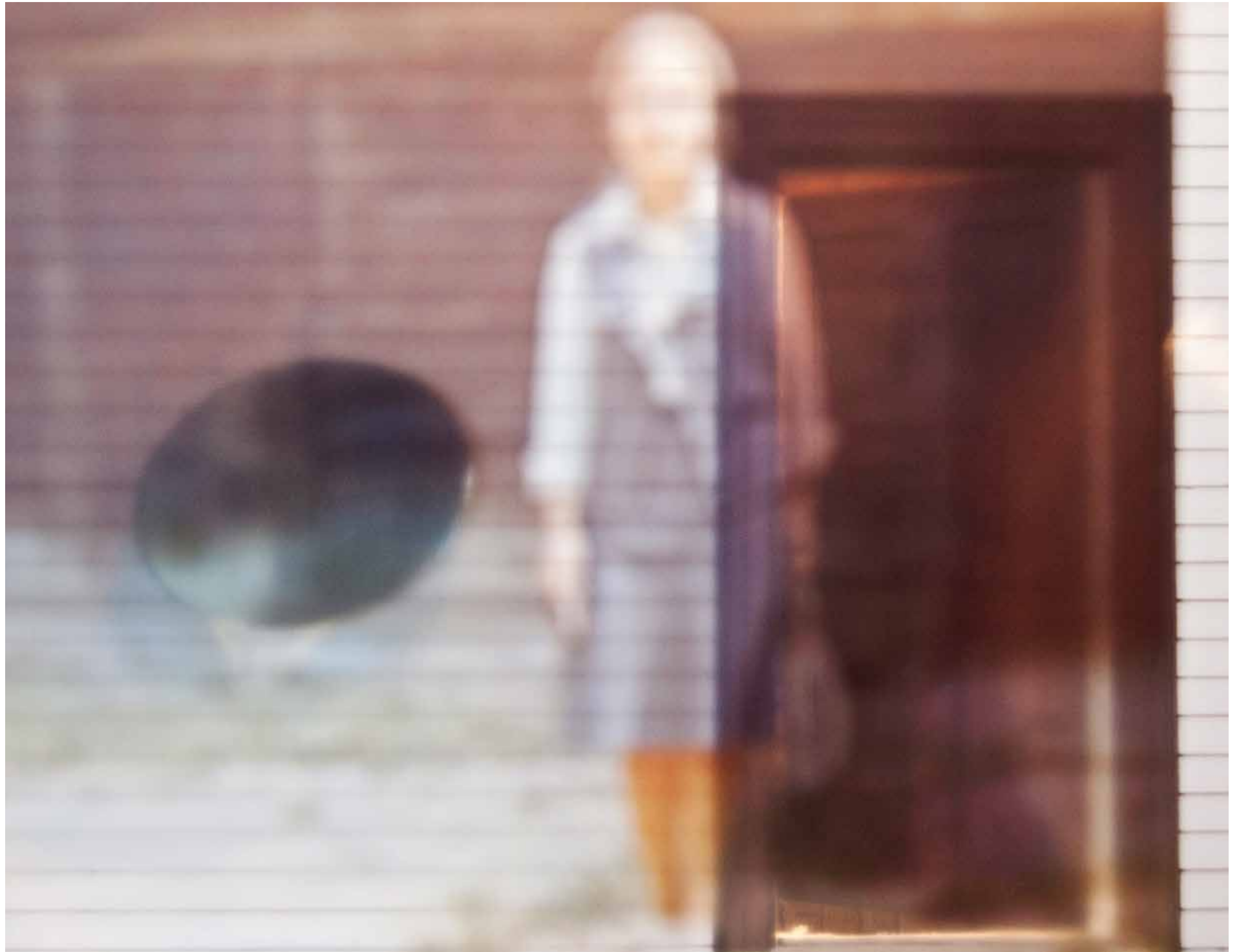
RM: I have always been interested in old family photographs and the stories behind them. To me they seemed like they were hiding and (or) revealing certain family secrets. In my head I was trying to combine the photographs with my own perception and create different stories with them. First I started making collages and visualizing these stories; later on I continued to do the same thing by taking photographs of photographs with the addition of other layers, mirrors, voids, etc. My drive is to alter the image in terms of the information it's giving to the viewer and find different variations for the presentation of that particular moment in my personal history.

TAC: Some of your images use the mirror as a means of adding substance or subject matter, and others use the mirror as a hole or void. Tell us a bit about your use of the mirror as a new dimension within the photograph.

RM: I use the mirror as a tool for adding another time layer to the image, either to the past or to the future. While mirrors become like portals to other dimensions, they also enable me to reach the collage quality within the photograph. The perfectly elliptical-shaped mirrors and the images inside them present my own thoughts and comments on that particular moment. Sometimes they become black holes and swallow the whole scene, and sometimes the same image is repeated in them, which creates an infinite feeling of being stuck within that moment.

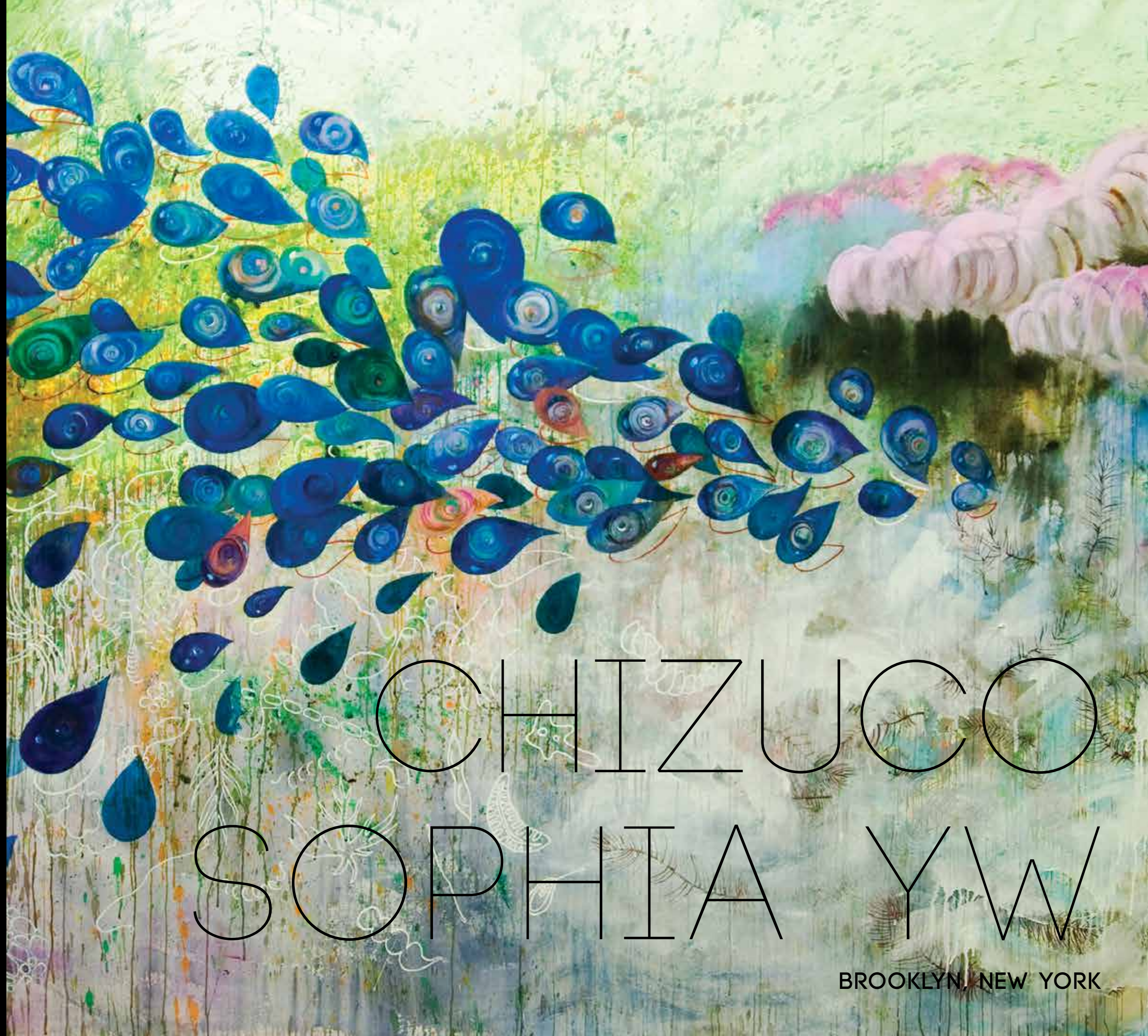
TAC: Where do you view your photography going in the future after this body of work?

RM: I'm always trying to achieve an emotive stage in my photography, even if it's a simple daily-life scene. This body of work is important in terms of conveying my attempt to switch from the collage technique to photography while trying to tell the same stories. Memory and personal history are and always will be the main drive and elements in my work. My aim is to use that drive to talk about broader subject matter and also include pieces of the collective memory that I'm a part of in my own country, Istanbul – Turkey.



WWW.C-SOPHIA.COM

My inspiration is from nature that I saw and experienced in my childhood. When I draw/paint, I penetrate my inner self, its realms of consciousness, subconsciousness and unconsciousness. In the process of the exploration of my inner self I find the idea or vision. I transfer emerging reflections onto work with simple lines, shapes, and colors, connecting with the ultimate beauty.



CHIZUO
SOPHIA YW

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK





TAC: When did painting first interest you as a medium and what did it offer you?

CSY: When I was five years old my family traveled to Europe. We visited the Louvre Museum. I was walking around and touched the Mona Lisa (maybe just the frame, can't remember exactly). I was drawn to touch this painting, it was like the painting spoke to me. Unfortunately, the security guy gently kept me away. That was my first interest in painting.

TAC: Several of your images hint at architectural spaces, or perhaps even Andreas Gursky's large-scale photographs. Tell us about what you like to use as jumping-off points for your work.

CSY: My inspiration is from nature that I saw and experienced in my childhood. I keep searching the possibilities of space in a 2-D surface. Sometimes I leave the canvas blank for weeks – or even months. Once I find the idea or vision, I start to draw.

TAC: Many of your paintings exhibit multiple layers

through the use of drips, repeated lines or circles, and varying angles. How do you like to use these motifs to direct the viewer through your imagery?

CSY: First, I guide the viewer visually by drips, lines, or circles. Then those give them ideas of something that they perhaps try to find out/match in their memory. I use lines, shapes, and colors to simplify my images. This is like music; to me, simple lines and shapes can be analogous to notes and colors, like instruments. Both make a harmony.

TAC: The paintings of Malevich and Mondrian, two pioneers of the geometric abstraction movement, are perhaps most related to your work. What artists do you turn to for inspiration and why?

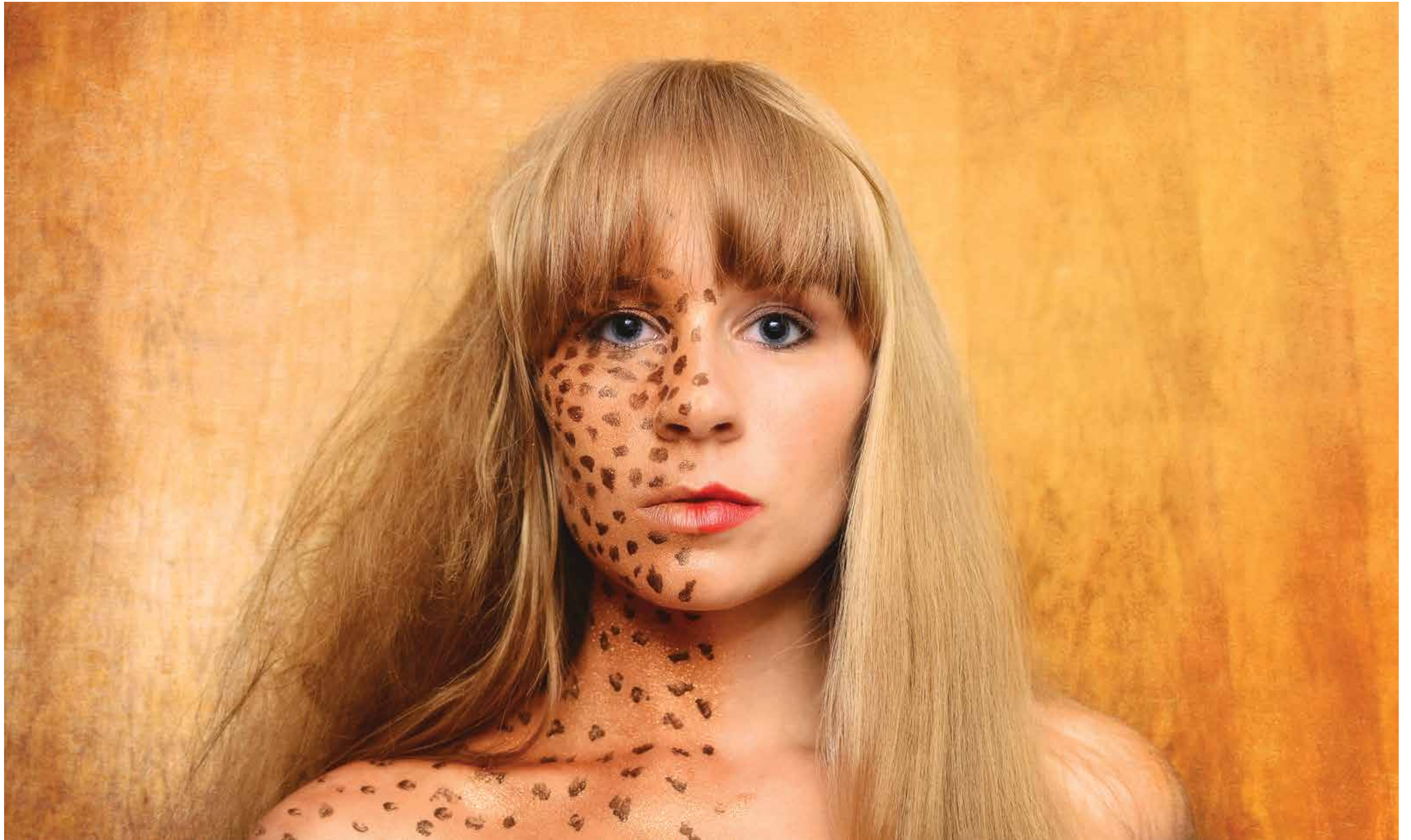
CSY: I don't necessarily use the art of others for inspiration; I like to aim for originality, bringing subject matter out from within. Nevertheless, I do enjoy looking at art and learning techniques from artists such as Hans Hofmann, Mark Rothko, Yayoi Kusama, and Larry Poons.

AUTUMN PARTINGTON

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

My photography is about creating something that was once only an image in my head. I love my client work, and capturing the love and fun in each image is something that I truly enjoy. When I create a conceptual piece I use my imagination and emotions to make something that speaks to what is in my mind. I write ideas down every day for photos I want to create. Sometimes I work on those, or just walk around and when an idea hits I set up and take the photo there. I strongly believe in going with the flow, so when I have a photo idea if something else is coming to my mind I often go with that. I hope that viewers feel something when they see an image of mine. When they relate to what I have created I am filled with excitement, and when they feel something different than what I had felt I am proud that my image could do that. I hope my photography leaves them thinking.





TAC: When did you first get interested in pursuing photography?

AP: As long as I can remember I have had a love for photography. Before I had a digital camera I bought disposable cameras weekly, taking photos of everything and everyone! When I first got a digital camera, a gift from my husband Josh, I started really getting into nature photography. Nature is so timeless and pure; I loved its effortless beauty! I also slowly became the family photographer, capturing every event with my first camera. Once I got my first DSLR I started gathering gear as quickly as I could and doing photographs of friends as well. Once I had my son Isaiah I had a reason to really master the art of photographing fast-moving subjects! Then I started with strangers and getting paid for my client work. Still taking photos of nature, I was also spending countless hours each night learning as much about photography, editing programs, and my camera as I could. Once I was confident with the camera it truly became an extension of myself, and I began to trust in my own artistic ability. I started doing conceptual self-portraits, which have become one of my favorite parts of my photography!

TAC: Several of your images have a fairytale aspect to them. What sort of narrative do you like to develop in an image or group of images?

AP: I feel that at one point every child, and many artists still, are wrapped up in fairytales. The magical aspect of them is liberating! One of my favorite things about my photography is the ability to create using my imagination, to create something you can only dream of! Almost like playing a part in a play, I allow myself to really get into the character I am portraying. While real life is amazing and constantly intriguing, inventing an idea is like making a whole new realm of possibilities. I keep a notebook beside my bed; when an idea pops into my head it is immediately written down. Suddenly a story is written about the scene I've created in my mind. Sometimes I just walk and an idea comes to me. As I am taking the photo, a story about the character arises. The girl walking in the street barefoot, where is she going? Where did she come from? What is she feeling? All of these questions help me create a more realistic portrayal of what is in my mind. To become someone else allows you to really explore your inner dreams and feelings.

TAC: Your work often has a color palette that affects

the mood of the pictures. How do you use color to create a distinct emotion in the viewer?

AP: I strongly believe that color and lighting can affect someone's mood and bring out thoughts and emotions. I let my feelings and the meanings of the photo guide how it will be edited. When a photo of mine is about something frustrating or a strong emotion the colors are often hard and vivid. When the photo is conveying a more desperate or lonely emotion the colors match by being faded, cold, or weak in the sense that they are hazy and soft.

TAC: Much like Cindy Sherman's work, you are using photography as a means of playing different characters in front of the lens. Tell us a bit about your practice.

AP: A lot of my photography comes from feelings and emotions. Sometimes I start out with a concept and allow my mind to bring me to a different idea. I feel that almost every emotion can be portrayed somehow. If you are feeling broken, betrayed, and maybe lonely, chances are you feel lost, like you are alone in the dark, and if you've been betrayed you may wonder how you ever trusted that person to start with. This was partly how I create my "Blind Eye" photo. I take my feelings and turn them into something I can share. It is almost an emotional release because I feel better after. Not every feeling can be easily translated into something that can be visibly seen, but allowing emotions to help create a personality and living it through means of a photo is a really liberating opportunity.



JEN RAVSTEN

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/JENNIFER.RAVSTEN

I am a recovering artist. My family is established and on their way on their own paths of life. This allows my soul to revert back to what I love most - BEAUTY. My pen name is Jen 2010. The reasoning is that my "eyes" opened to this new form of art that is so satisfying for me. My current favorite visual format is digital art. The freedom is exciting and allows me to channel the creative universe with beauty. I have been teaching myself the digital art medium, and I have found a lot of freedom to express my inner creativity through it. Graphic art also allows me to project what I perceive is a wanted result from any prospective client. I am really an artist of all genres, from visual to writing to music, and try to incorporate them all in my works. I've done CD covers, band logos, web pages, videos, advertisements/promotions, magazine covers, and personal consignments.

CATALDO, IDAHO



Jen 2010



Jen 2010



TAC: Tell us a bit about your process of art making.

JR: In a nutshell, my creative process usually begins in my dreams. I've always felt like I was learning how to create in my sleep, a sort of osmosis. Then I give it a few days, and voila! out it comes. I like to say that while creating I am actually meditating. It seems to be when my "dream school" comes out. I try to be concise, personable, and palpable, and have been told I resonate very well with people. While my art style reaches and

touches people at their own personal perspective, it opens them to a broader universal experience they may not have considered.

TAC: Your images all exhibit a circular movement that leads the viewer around and through the work. What does this approach lend you?

JR: I tend to see the flow naturally occurring when the viewer follows a path, like a labyrinth. I also believe that all observers have in them a sense



of connectedness, which is the ancient meaning of circle, and other incorporated "sacred geometry." I tend to work in a meditative state, and love to travel and incorporate other natural aspects into my body of work.

TAC: Where does the psychedelic aspect of the work come from and how did you develop it?

JR: I love color ... lots of beautiful color. I'm self-

taught in digital art and tend to keep on learning new techniques every time I sit down to create. That prompts me to find every possible variation, and settle with the one that POPS out at me.

TAC: What is next for you as an artist?

JR: What's next ... hmmm. Keeping it open for more art, travel, teaching, life. Or you could say what I always say ... my answer is yes!

WWW.FLICKR.COM/PHOTOS/JOANNA_WHITING

JOANNA

WHITING

TAMPA, FLORIDA

The purpose of my photographs is to capture the essence of my subject; whether it be a certain feeling, person, nature, etc. I try to show the beauty that is so often overlooked. My work is simple, but I try to evoke a bigger, more universal meaning that everyone can connect with. I am inspired by everything in the world—there is nothing that one cannot learn from. I hope to inspire others to look more deeply at their lives and realize how much they have been blessed with, and how much they have to offer.





TAC: Tell us about when your interest in photography began, and how you went about developing a style.

JW: My interest in photography began about four years ago when my mom bought a Canon Rebel XSi, the first really nice camera that I had ever come into contact with. I began shooting our backyard; the flowers damp with morning dew, the moon surrounded with clouds, the caterpillars that were enjoying their stay in our garden, and other simple things that people usually miss. I then began to focus on that idea of capturing the moments others miss or often cast off as unimportant. This grew into my current photographic obsession of capturing those moments in people's lives; the universal feelings that are so small and seemingly insignificant but have the greater effect on our lives. The more important ones, the scenes that express our true selves and attributes—our vulnerability, delicacy, dependency, and the constant desire of always wanting something greater.

TAC: Your images tend to highlight or isolate a specific moment. Tell us how you go about this.

JW: I'm the type of person that likes to think a lot and feel a lot; it makes me feel more alive. So when I get into my head and begin sorting out all of the emotions and memories, there are certain feelings that I cannot express. Words are far too finite, and only imagery and imagination can really understand what the heart is feeling. I try to capture these in the simplest way, but have it evoke something far greater. There is beauty in simplicity; one just has to open oneself up to it.

TAC: Your use of color is very targeted in each picture. How do you like to use color in your images?

JW: I believe color plays a great role when trying to evoke a certain mood or idea, similar to a silent film where all of the emotion stems from the music being played. The color, or even lack of color, speaks for itself. For example, if I'm trying to show a soft idea I like to play with warmer tones because they aren't harsh and don't expose too much. Warm yellows and browns show exactly what the picture was intended to show and nothing more.

TAC: As a viewer there is a sense of experiencing the work firsthand. How do you want the work to be read and what do you want the viewer to take away?

JW: To me, all art is an expression of the artist's soul. There is much truth to be found because it is the artist's catharsis. I feel that if my work is to be understood the viewers should feel that sense of intimacy with the artist, the subject, the colors, the feelings, everything within the piece. As an artist I'm not only trying to express my own feelings, but help people realize their own.



