



GALERIE QUYNH CONTEMPORARY ART

lunar breccia

29.05 - 25.07.2020



GALERIE QUYNH
118 Nguyen Van Thu, Dakao Ward
District 1, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

+84 28 3822 7218
info@galeriequynh.com
www.galeriequynh.com

lunar breccia

Galerie Quynh is thrilled to present *Lunar Breccia*, a group exhibition featuring new and previously unseen works by Hoàng Dương Cầm, Sandrine Llouquet, Keen Souhla, Võ Trần Châu, Đỗ Thanh Lãng, Hoàng Nam Việt and Nghĩa Đặng.

Like *Alluvium* in 2018, this unusual grouping of emerging and established artists, each with distinct working methodologies, thematic concerns and use of materials, highlights the artists' ongoing projects and serves as a preview of focused solo exhibitions to be presented at the gallery in the coming years.

The term *lunar breccia* refers to a classification of moon rocks created by meteorites colliding with the lunar surface. The debris from these impacts, comprising shattered pieces of ancient lunar rocks and meteoric fragments, are welded together in a fine-grained matrix – grains which seem to keep the motley of angular rocks floating in suspension.

As these fragments merge into a single breccia, the structure and its parts serve as an allegory for the collection of works on display – pieces which form part of ongoing projects, or are explorations for future bodies of work. Just as the lunar fragments raise questions of their lithic origins, the works on show invite viewers to consider the artists' practices beyond the scope of the exhibition. The breccial texture reflects how this contextual labour of art – the research, the influences, the planned encounters and chance discoveries – can be at

once structured and random (or perhaps serendipitous). Though lunar here has immediate associations with the moon and thus evokes the notion of site – of outer-space, of galaxies, of landscapes real or imagined – the word also brings to mind ideas of time. Using the lunar calendar as a point of departure, the exhibition looks to alternative ways and systems of perceiving time. Even in the artists' use of varied media there emerges a quiet ode to the idiomatic process of watching paint dry. As one waits for clay to fire, or for the pigment of young persimmons to seep and soak into each grain of fabric, the importance of time is denoted through the transformation of materials rather than productivity or output. In the shift away from linear timelines towards explorations of non-chronology, the exhibition and its artworks offer entry to heterotopia – a space that concurrently exists in time yet outside of time, both mirroring yet upsetting what occurs beyond its boundaries.

From this strangely humble moon rock stems alternate ideas of time and space. As one wanders through the gallery space, lunar breccias can lead one down new routes of interpretation. Indeed, the word *breccia* suggests openings, passageways, even breakthroughs. Much like lunar breccias, then, the coming together of these seemingly disparate works is as much a union of the old as it is a creation of the new.

Thái Hà

exhibition views















works

Hoàng Dương Cẩm



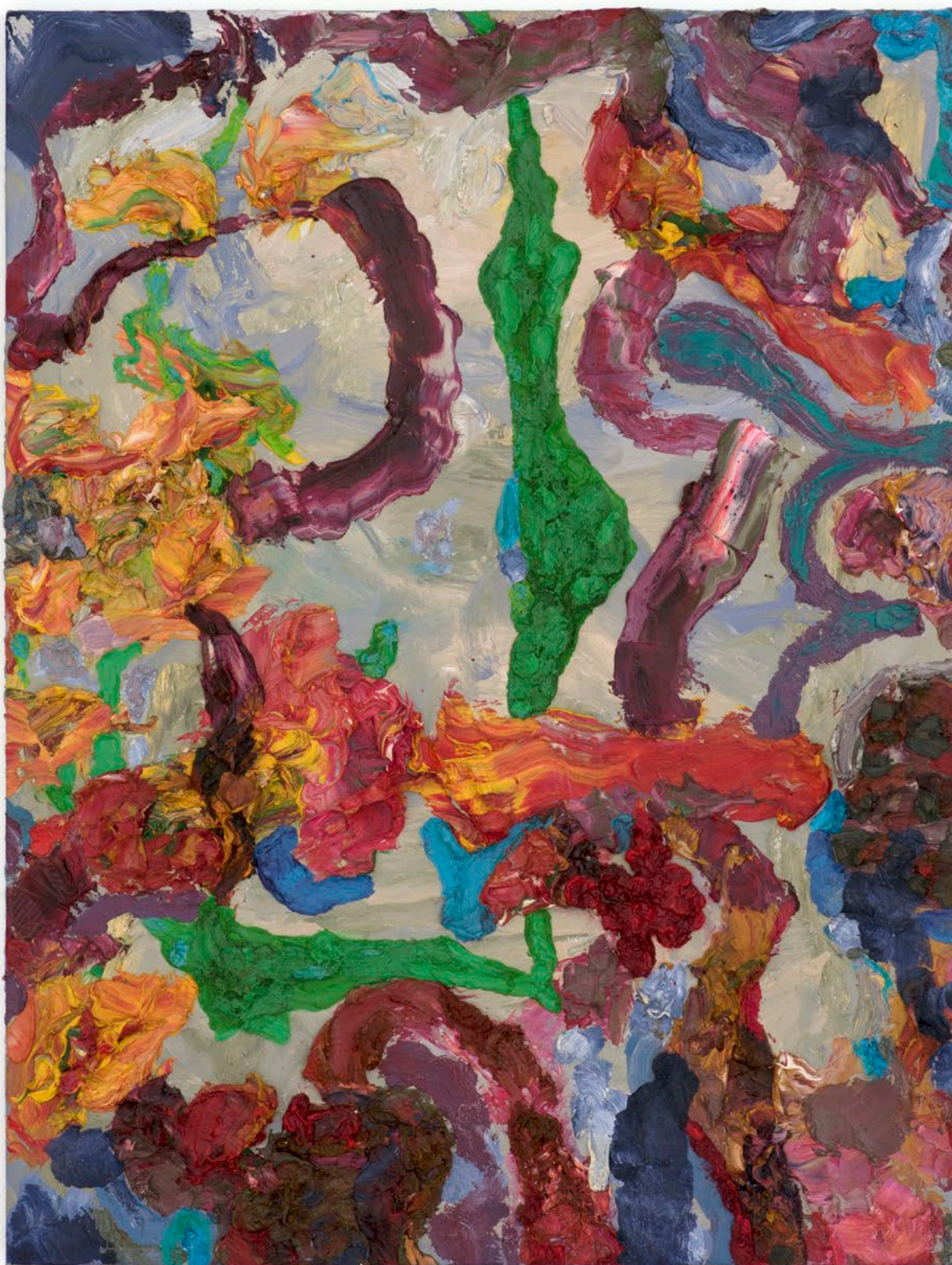
Hoàng Dương Cầm

Inhale exhale the spaces between galaxies (or The secret story between Haydn and his wig)

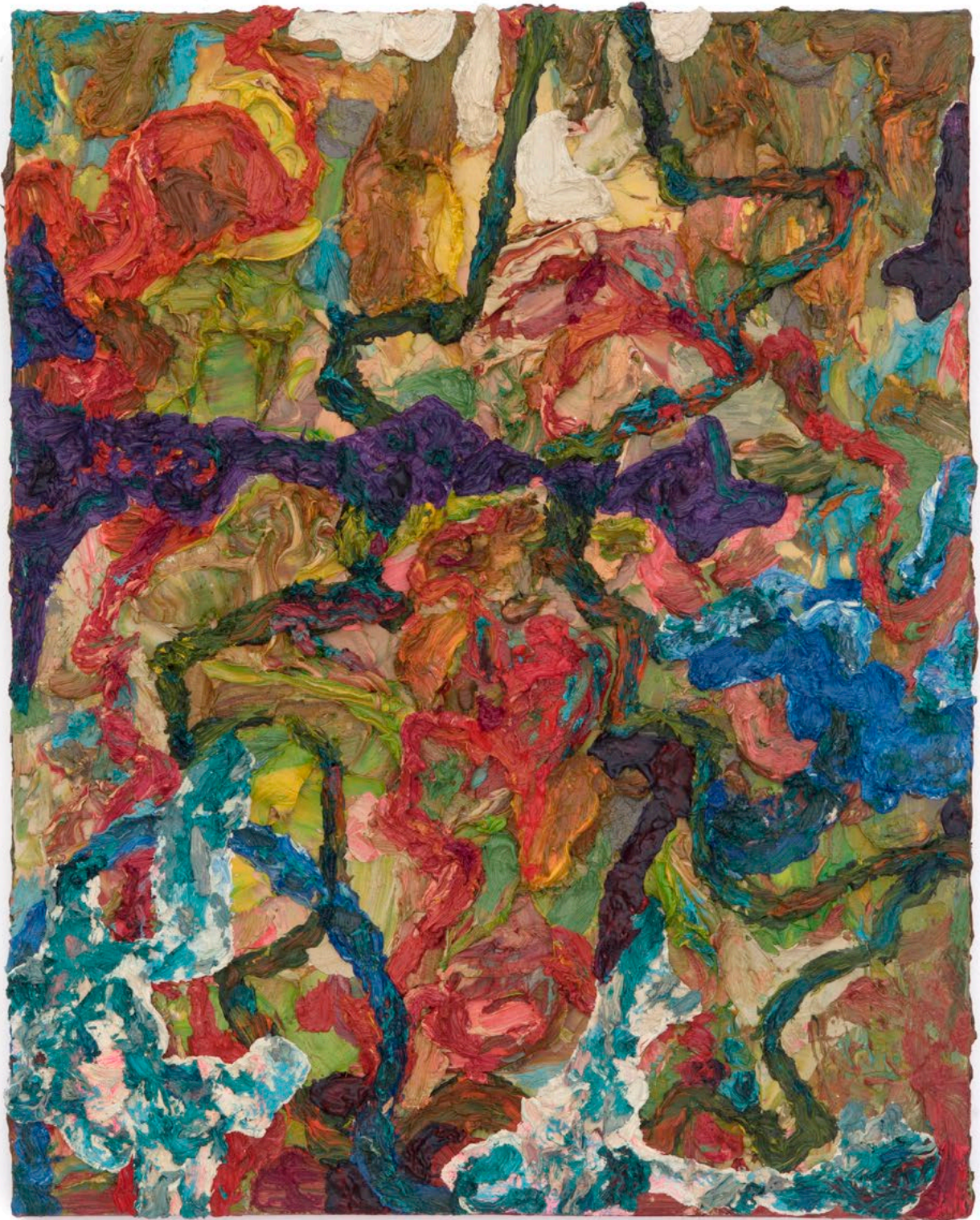
2019 | oil on canvas | 183 x 149 cm



Hoàng Dương Cầm
Row on row (or Release into history the superfluous)
2017-2019 | acrylic, acrylic medium, and oil on canvas | 61 x 52 cm



Hoàng Dương Cầm
The hundred-year stake and the kingfisher
2019 | oil on canvas | 80 x 60 cm



Hoàng Dương Cầm
Sơn Tây 1970 #2
2019 | oil on canvas | 50.5 x 41 cm



Hoàng Dương Cầm
Origin of the echoes of silence
2017-2019 | acrylic, acrylic medium, and oil on canvas | 70 x 52 cm

Hoàng Dương Cầm - Biography

In a career spanning over two decades, Hoàng Dương Cầm (b. 1974, Hanoi) dexterously alternates between painting, photography, video, installation, performance, and collaborative projects. Central to his artworks are the often humorous, sometimes absurdist explorations of the complex mechanisms that connect the self and its surroundings. The density of detail seen in much of Hoàng's oeuvre stems from his extensive pool of disparate references: from the Socratic dialogues to Edo-era prints to quantum physics. Collated from history and contemporary reality, the artist's fragmented narratives revel in confusion and uncertainty, laying bare the contradictions inherent in human thought and behaviour.

Hoàng's canvases, as layered with paint as they are with metaphors, are visual (re)constructions of liminal spaces, of distances irreconcilable. Though fascinated with historical and psychological boundaries, through his works the artist contends that boundaries are not a given but fluid and impermanent. When using media other than painting, Hoàng often presents subtle, amusing projects that catch the viewer off-guard in their seeming straightforwardness. In juxtaposing and filtering through his eclectic interests, Hoàng makes way for an unpremeditated sense of whimsy, or unease, or haunting melancholy to arise in his works.

A prolific artist since his graduation from the Hanoi Fine Arts University in 1996, Hoàng has exhibited in various institutions and biennales across Asia, North America and Europe. Notable exhibitions include *The Atlas of Clouds*, Francois Schneider Foundation, Wattwiller, France; *Sunshower: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now*, Mori Art Museum and The National Art Center, Tokyo, Japan; *Eagles Fly, Sheep Flock: Biographical Imprints – Artistic Practices in Southeast Asia*, curated by Khim Ong for Art Stage Singapore

2015: Southeast Asia Platform; *Electronic Pacific*, SOMArts, San Francisco; *36 Reasons Why We Still Need Superman*, video festival curated by Tim Crowley, Centro de Investigaciones Artísticas, Buenos Aires, Argentina; travelled to Casa Tres Patios, Medellín, Colombia and Instituto Superior de Arte, Havana, Cuba; *VideoZone 5*, the 5th International Video Art Biennial, Tel Aviv, Israel; Daegu Photo Biennale, Daegu, South Korea; *Arts and Cities*, Aichi Triennale, Nagoya, Japan; *Connect: Art Scene Vietnam*, ifa Galerie Berlin and Stuttgart, Germany; *Fluid Zone*, Jakarta Biennale, Indonesia; *Post-Doi Moi: Vietnamese Art After 1990*, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore; the 3rd Guangzhou Triennial, Guangdong Museum, Guangzhou, China; *Migration Addicts* (Mogas Station), a collateral event of the 52nd Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy; *Thermocline of Art. New Asian Waves*, ZKM | Museum of Contemporary Art, Karlsruhe, Germany; and *Belief* (Mogas Station), Singapore Biennale 2006. In 2009 he was an artist-in-residence at the acclaimed Tokyo Wonder Site, Japan.

In 2012, along with artists Quang Lâm, Phan Quang, Nguyễn Thanh Trúc and ƯuĐàm Trần Nguyễn, Hoàng co-founded *XEM*, a publication showcasing photography-based works by its founding members and invited artists.

Hoàng has been living and working in Ho Chi Minh City since 2001.

artwork notes

Inhale exhale the spaces between galaxies (or The secret story between Haydn and his wig)

Like the beats in a screenplay, *Inhale exhale the spaces between galaxies (or The secret story between Haydn and his wig)* offers pause as one leaves behind the frenetic city and steps into the gallery. Moving away from narration or representation, the painting draws one into a surrealist space where the weight of air and atmosphere are palpable – where the breath in our lungs function as wavelengths, ready to transmit a part of us into the ether and across the universe.

Row on row (or Release into history the superfluous)

Row on row (or Release into history the superfluous) visualises the bends and turns of history as though the peaks and troughs of mountain ranges. The impossibility of tracing a straight progression of time is not perceived as a frustration, but instead an opportunity to turn to “the superfluous” – the smudges and smears missing from official records that lie between the cracks.

The hundred-year stake and the kingfisher

Though the artist’s fascination with liminal spaces and constructed histories are still present, in this work one can begin to tease out Hoàng Dương Cầm’s allusions to loneliness from the title itself, with its emphasis on singular nouns. Directly referencing *Khúc Thủy Du*, a poem by the poet Du Tử Lê (and later set to music by Anh Bằng), the artist paints a verdant focal point that captures the nihilistic existence of that metaphoric stake. As he pastes on the canvas denser and denser layers of green, paradoxically the stake becomes more prominent, and yet more isolated from its surroundings.

That the stake can remain standing through the test of time while the plums of our flesh decay as earth speaks to the futility of human agency: the question not being whether we indeed have agency, but whether that agency, or lack thereof, truly matters in the “pond of life”¹.

Sơn Tây 1970 #2

The characteristic textures of Hoàng Dương Cầm’s paintings are here rendered in a palette of camouflage greens melding with the reds of soil. As the artist transports us to a Sơn Tây past – the viewer seems to be traversing through its landscapes – we become immersed in an abstract retelling of Operation Ivory Coast, the US military mission conducted in November 1970. As with his previous works, however, the specificities of the title and subject matter can be playfully misleading – a thematic *trompe-l’œil*.

Creeping into the artist’s re-imagining of this historical and geographical site are nebulous fields of azure and cobalt, along with streaks of deep purple that seem to compete with the earth tones in the composition. Though the aforementioned military operation has been well-documented, Cam’s use of colour instead turns our attention to the lore and myths absent from written history, yet still persist through generations of tellings and re-tellings. *Sơn Tây 1970 #2*, in dialogue with *Row on row* hung across the ground floor space, reminds us of the contrived linearity of history made possible through strategic erasures, and with the so-called benefit of hindsight.

¹ A line from the poem and lyric from the song *Khúc Thủy Du* – in Vietnamese: “vụng nước cuộc đời”

Origin of the echoes of silence

The brighter palette of *Origin of the echoes of silence* signals Hoàng Dương Cầm's gradual shift towards surrealist themes and ideas of the intangible – an indication of what is to come in his polymorphous practice. While the assertive colours of *Sơn Tây 1970 #2* ground the artwork in its titular terrain, the spacious composition of this painting emits a spirit of unrooted-ness. The free-floating pear-green shapes in the foreground, though resembling the jagged outlines of Đại Lải Lake where Hoàng Dương Cầm began painting this work, are represented here as seemingly animated figures caught amidst a dance. The art of movement as communication conveys how silence – the words unsaid, the sounds unheard – can carry meaning, as it does here through the ripples of water across lake sides.

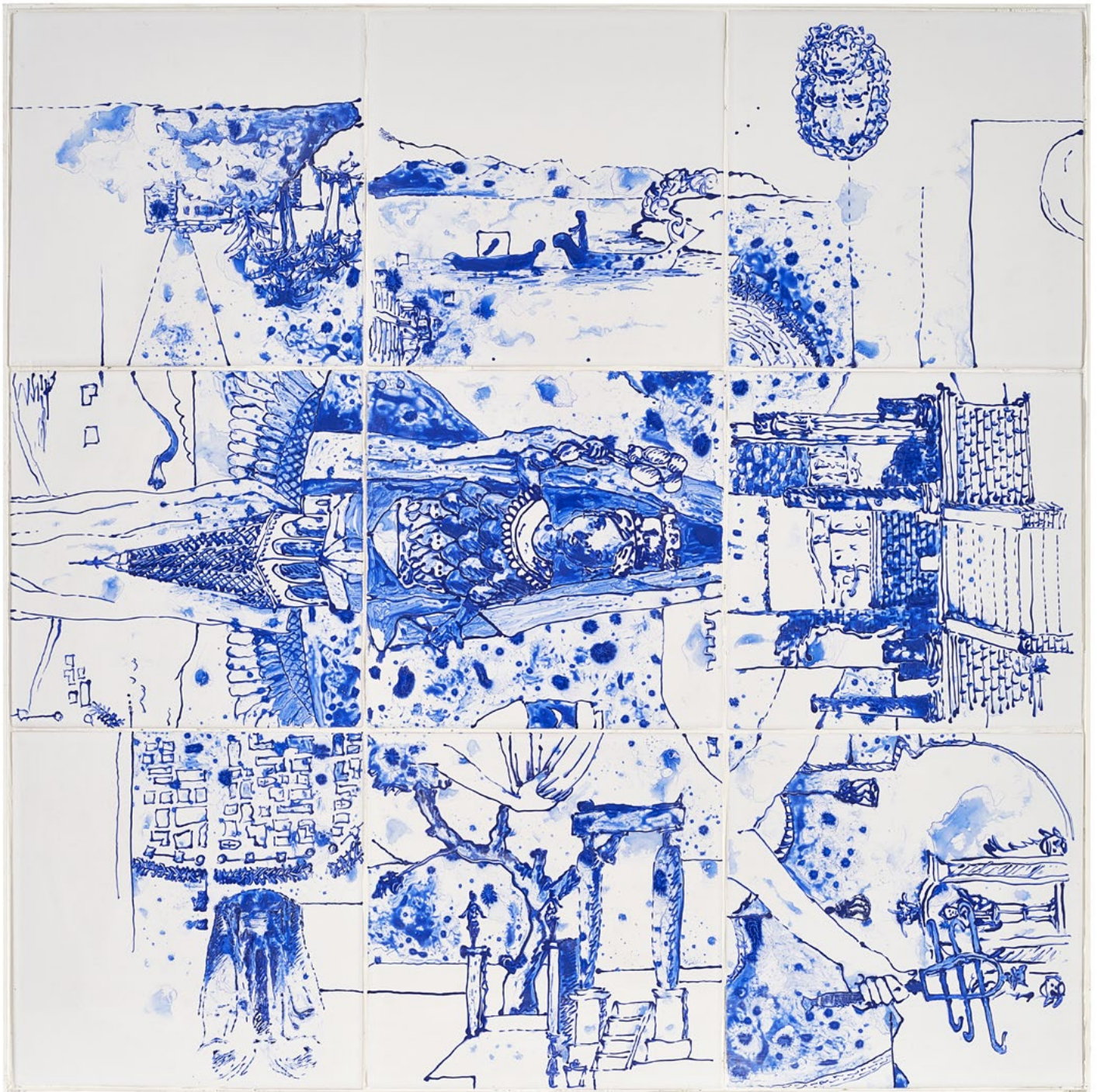
Sandrine Llouquet



Sandrine Llouquet

An-Najm

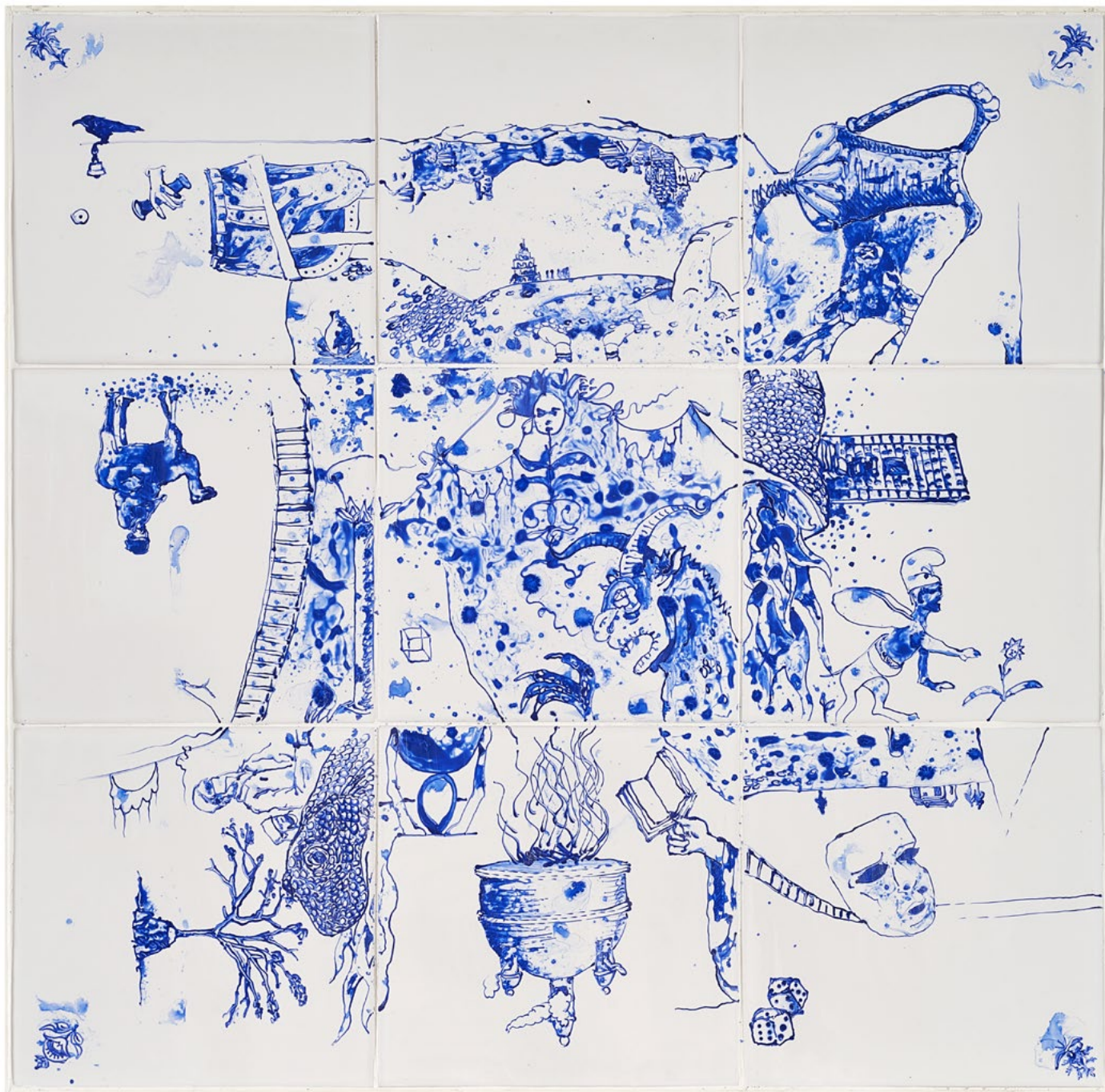
2019 | ceramic paint on ceramic tiles, silicone, plaster, metal frame | 61.5 x 61.5 cm



Sandrine Llouquet

Isiopolis

2019 | ceramic paint on ceramic tiles, silicone, plaster, metal frame | 61.5 x 61.5 cm



Sandrine Llouquet

Grotesquerie

2019 | ceramic paint on ceramic tiles, silicone, plaster, metal frame | 61.5 x 61.5 cm

Sandrine Llouquet - Biography

Ancient spiritual practices, esoteric rituals, re-imagined mythological imageries and religious behaviours are at the centre of Sandrine Llouquet's practice. Fascinated by the powerful influences that religions and beliefs have played in many aspects of human existence, Llouquet has been searching for common connections between them to try to understand their unshakable importance in the human psyche. Influenced by psychological and philosophical texts, Llouquet has been building an array of realms inhabited by magical, often esoteric creatures.

Llouquet's interest in religion lies in the evolution of its rituals, iconography and manifestations rather than from a theological perspective. Stemming from a personal curiosity in mythology and legends, the artist collects images, pictures and texts, which then, like in alchemy, are transmuted into esoteric worlds where eeriness and ethereal magic live side by side. Since the artist's move to Ho Chi Minh City in 2005, Caodaism (a southern Vietnamese monotheistic religion that incorporates teachings from Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism and Christianity) has been another inspiration for Llouquet, who sees it as an example of Vietnamese culture and its ability to freely absorb a variety of sources and merge them together without restrictions. This same principle is applied in her work where she creates her own universe of religious gestures, imageries, rituals and movements and through it, viewers can ascertain her personal creative collection and make it their own.

Born in 1975 in Montpellier, France, Llouquet graduated from École Pilote Internationale d'Art et de Recherche – Villa Arson in 1999. A major contributor to the development of contemporary art in Vietnam, she was a founding member of Wonderful District (2005-2011), a project that promoted contemporary art through exhibitions, concerts and theatre pieces, as well as a member of Mogas Station (2006-2007), a Vietnam-

based artist collective. Llouquet's work has been exhibited in numerous venues including the Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Tate Modern, London; Fondation Salomon, Annecy, France; ARKO Art Center, Seoul, South Korea; Ke Center for Contemporary Arts, Shanghai, China; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA; and The Mistake Room, Los Angeles, CA. In 2016 she presented a major project on the culture of Japan's Edo Period incorporating *yokai* (monsters), *misemono goya* (popular fair exhibitions) and *rangaku* (Dutch learning) at *KENPOKU Art* in Ibaraki, Japan (2016). She has also participated in a number of biennales with Mogas Station such as the Shenzhen Biennale (2007), the Singapore Biennale (2006) and in *Migration Addicts* – a collateral event of the 52nd Venice Biennale.

Llouquet is based in Lisbon, Portugal.

artwork notes

Sandrine Llouquet continues her project to substantiate the notion of syncretism – a fusion of heterogeneous elements stemming from different philosophical or religious doctrines, or visions of the world – not only through her choice of subject matter, but also by merging distinct tilework techniques: the *azulejos* prevalent in Portuguese architecture, where historical scenes, Persian patterns and pastoral motifs are painted on tin-glazed ceramic tiles, and *trencadís*, the centuries-old method of forming mosaics from tesserae that saw a revival in early 20th century Catalan modernism.

Llouquet's blue and white tiles, recalling varied technical influences from Ming dynasty porcelains to Delftware, detail a panoply of symbols, characters and objects, each imbued with its own spiritual and cultural significance. In addition to those techniques, which she borrows from and updates, the artist has also explored the presence of ceramics in Vietnam and re-discovered pictures of the City of Hue, where the citadel and some palaces are covered by mosaics made of broken ceramic tesserae.

Though differing in subject matter, the artworks foreground processes of metamorphosis – an image ever-warping, an idea in a state of flux. Rather than deciphering the narratives to which these fragmented squares belonged, it is perhaps more rewarding on the part of the viewer to imagine how the artwork as a syncretised whole came to be.

"Creating a back and forth between overview and a vision of details, this way of seeing has a meditative, almost hypnotic effect that gives unique depth to these works. It is why mosaics are a spiritual symbol of life – a metaphor for the various patterns in which we live." – Sandrine Llouquet

Keen Souhlal



Keen Souhlal

Rock'n Roller Coaster, silver

2020 | rattan baskets, tire wrapping, plastic ribbon, plastic cable ties | width 35 cm, diameter 82 cm



Keen Souhlal

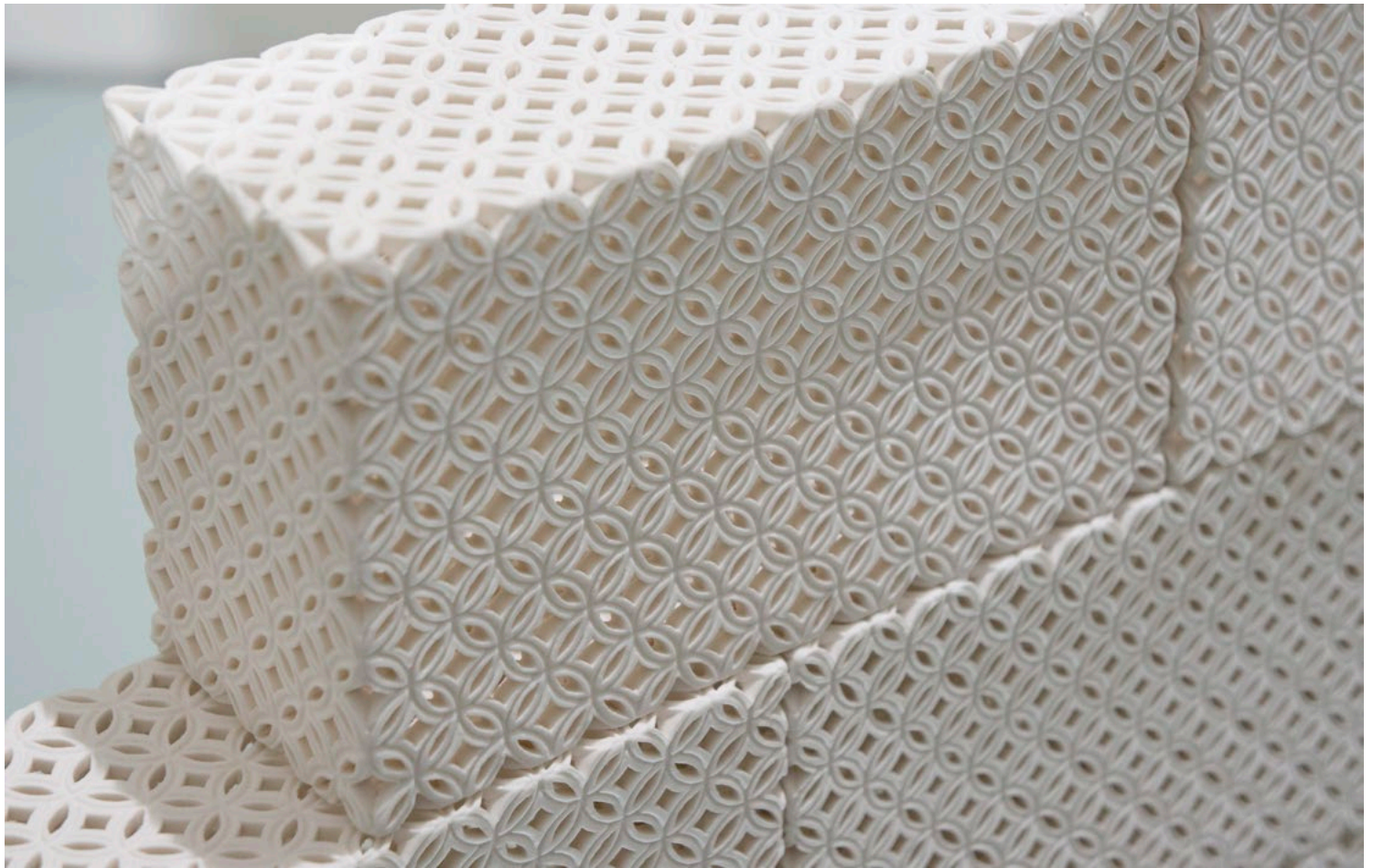
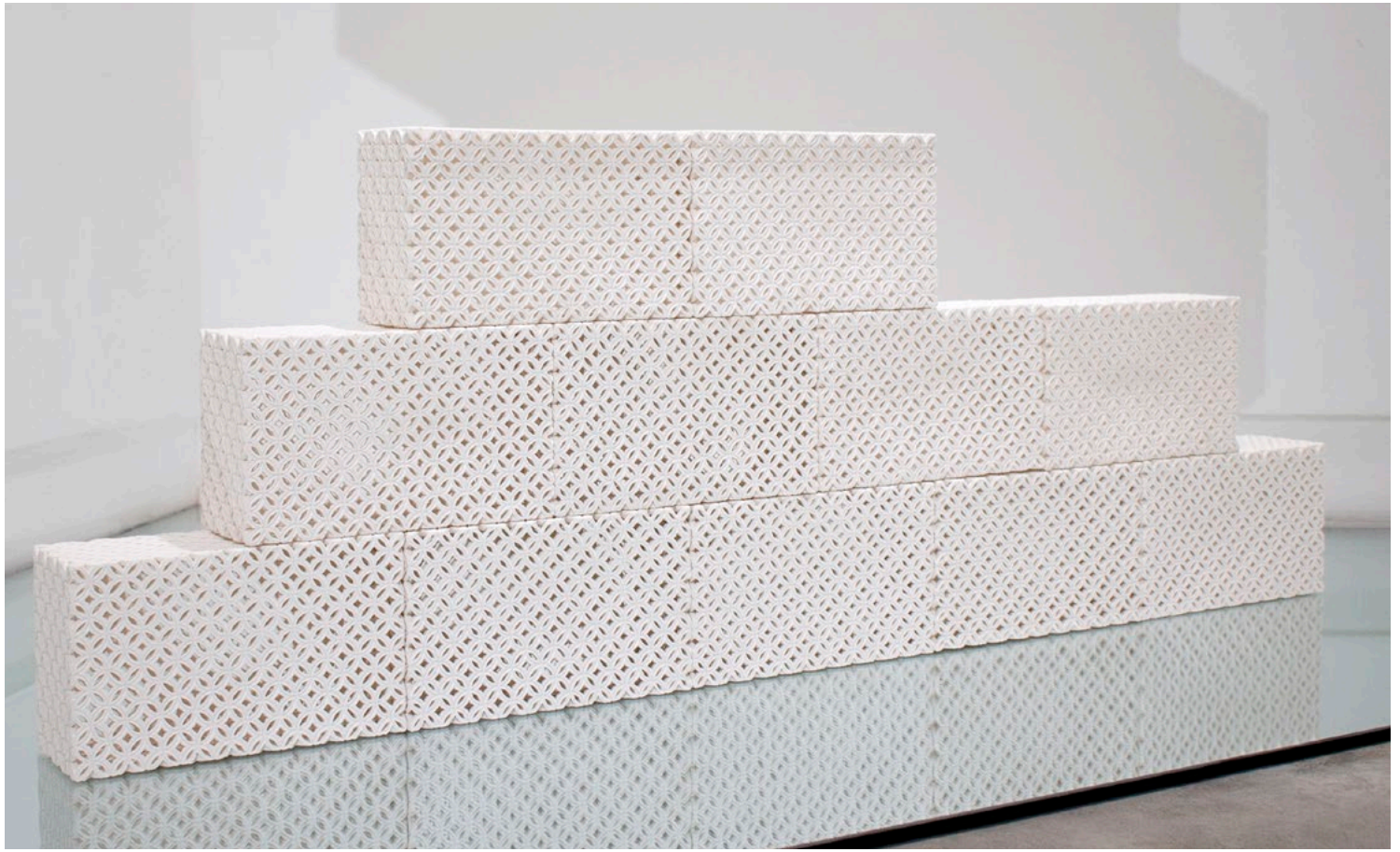
Rock'n Roller Coaster, blue

2020 | rattan baskets, tire wrapping, plastic ribbon, plastic cable ties | width 36 cm, diameter 80 cm



Keen Souhlal
Copper Tetra

2020 | bamboo fish traps, webbing, metal wire, copper leaf | height 72 cm, diameter 80 cm



Keen Souhlal

Reticulum

2020 | blanc de Chine | 10.5 x 17.5 x 7 cm each

Keen Souhlal - Biography

Through processes of melding, melting, carving, burning, Keen Souhlal reworks familiar materials to create sculptures with new and composite forms, presenting them in unexpected states of transience. Her detailed knowledge of materials, both natural and handcrafted, allows her artworks to display not just their physical properties, but also their symbolic significance grounded in the environments and cultures whence they came. The hands of the artist do not dominate or subdue materials, but instead reveal their plasticity and poetry. Led by the organic forms of her media, Souhlal's practice alternates between a wide range of disciplines, such as sculpture, installation, and photography.

The artist's latest explorations are rooted in the villages near B n Tre and the swift energy of Saigon. Her encounters of both a pastoral and urban Vietnam are reflected in how she juxtaposes materials, combining functional items with iridescent surfaces. Through repetitive and meditative gestures – stacking baskets, wrapping paper – Souhlal conveys an appreciation for the humble and the ubiquitous – a purposeful spotlighting of the quotidian moments that pass us by.

Keen Souhlal (b. 1982, Paris) received her Fine Arts training from the  cole Nationale Sup rieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris, and completed her vocational training certificate in marquetry at the  cole Boulle. She has held numerous exhibitions in galleries and institutions in Europe, including *La Ronde #5*, Natural History Museum, Rouen, France; *16E  dition*, curated by Fr d ric Bodet, St phanie Lefollic Hadida, and Laurence Crespin, C14-Paris, Paris, France; *In&Out*, Espace Culturel Franois-Mitterrand, Beauvais, France; *Alchimie des mat riaux*, Centre d'Art Hors-Cadre, Auxerre, France; *Itin rance 2017*, Mus e Dobr e, Nantes, France; *Politics of discontent*, Ir ne Laub Gallery, Brussels, Belgium; *Topographic 5*,  glise Notre-Dame des Forges, curated by Franois Loustau, Tarnos,

France; *Viva Villa!*, curated by C cile Debray and Federico Nicolao, Cit  des Arts, Paris, France; *La Amenaza Invisible*, curated by Nerea Ubieto, Sala Amad s, Madrid, Spain; *11th Biennale of Young Creation*, La Graineterie, Houilles, France; *Por Venir*, Casa de Vel zquez, Madrid, Spain; *Precarious Postures*, Museum and Gardens of the National Museum of Archives, Paris, France; *Intimate Cartography*, The 116 Contemporary Art Centre, Montreuil, France; *18th Biennale of Contemporary Ceramics*, Mus es de Ch teauroux, Ch teauroux, France; *Hand in Glove*, Galerie Virginie Louvet, Paris, France; *Art and Landscape*, curated by Matthew Corradino, Sologne Biennale, Chaumont-sur-Tharonne, France; *Conversation with contemporary vestiges*, Centre d'Art l'Attrappe Couleurs, Lyon, France; and *Myths & Legends*, 17th Biennial of Contemporary Ceramics, Mus es de Ch teauroux, Ch teauroux, France.

Keen Souhlal was selected for the Villa Saigon arts residency in 2020 and the Blanc de Chine residency in 2017, initiated by the Institut Franais in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and Dehua, China, respectively. Her work is held in a number of private and public collections, including the Contemporary Art Collection of the City of Montreuil, and the Collection of the French Academy of Fine Arts, Casa de Vel zquez.

Keen Souhlal lives and works in Paris, France.

artwork notes

Rock'n Roller Coaster

To follow the spirals of *Rock'n Roller Coaster* is to trace the cycle of basketry production in the villages near Bến Tre, where Keen Souhlal carried out her research and in-situ work process. Souhlal's humble act of arranging baskets, continuously stacking them one after the other, approximates the artisans' hands in cutting, whittling and braiding bamboo – repetitive gestures that fuel this micro-industry run by women. *Rock'n Roller Coaster*, accented by the metallic sheen of tire wrappings, is a celebration of feminised labour – of the gendered work that often goes unnoticed or is made invisible.

Copper Tetra

Explorations of routine and the everyday, seen as is and upside-down, are re-interpreted in *Copper Tetra* as observations of ritual. Souhlal use of copper not only evokes ideas of conductivity and connection, but also touches on its mysticism: copper is an integral part of alchemy and astrology not least due to its links with the planet Venus. This symbolic metal, in all its understated yet iridescent glory, almost acts as a conduit or portal, transforming the function of what were hitherto fish traps. As tetras, caught unawares, swim into the traps, they emerge on the other side into an imaginary realm – a parallel universe where spirituality and materiality are inextricable.

Reticulum

These porcelain bricks, pristine and deceptively fragile, blur the line between art object and building material, ornamentation and architecture. The curious construction is perfused with potential to at once divide – a delicately disguised feat to erect a barrier – and connect – through a lattice structure resembling the indistinguishable mesh of human relations. Remaining earthbound while slowly stacking skywards, *Reticulum* invites unlikely juxtapositions – an ode to the subtleties and nuances that could arise from a marriage of seeming opposites.

Đỗ Thanh Lãng



Đỗ Thanh Lãng

Untitled

2020 | oil, acrylic, and epoxy resin on canvas | 80 x 90 cm



Đỗ Thanh Lãng

Untitled

2020 | oil, acrylic, and epoxy resin on canvas | 80 x 90 cm



Đỗ Thanh Lãng

Untitled

2020 | oil, acrylic, and double component resin on canvas | 60 x 80 cm

Đỗ Thanh Lãng - Biography

In Đỗ Thanh Lãng's paintings there is a hidden force within the bright swathes of colours that intrigues and confuses. The performativity of his characters and heightened drama of the scenes act as a visual confidence trick, masking the dangers lying in wait beneath the superficial resin. The spectator takes the role of the dreamer, for like in dreams one is unsure how one arrived at this, or any particular instance. Navigating through the artist's perplexing, surrealist tableaux, the spectator-dreamer is but a character equipped with scripts and storylines, though acting as witness rather than participant. As his frantic brushmarks flit between the crude layers of plastic and resin, Đỗ Thanh Lãng seems to mimic that hypnagogic state of mind where darkness turns to dreams.

Approaching art practice with a rare instinct – visible through the craggy edges of his canvas, or the occasional insect fossilised by his resin pour – Đỗ Thanh Lãng is aptly positioned to extract humour from a dire situation. In all their hazy strangeness, his artworks are akin to pieces of a memory – a visual journal of altered consciousness.

Born in 1986 in Ho Chi Minh City, Đỗ Thanh Lãng studied painting at the Ho Chi Minh City Fine Arts University. His work has been shown in a number of group exhibitions in Vietnam and regionally such as *Salt of the Jungle*, Korea Foundation Gallery, Seoul, Korea; *Modern Wind*, HCMC Fine Arts Association; *My Eldest Sister*, San Art; *Fall*, Café Tram; *Out of Nowhere*, and *Out of Museum*, Sao La; *Art Walk*, numerous venues in HCMC; *Chung*, PongDang Gallery, and *Lunar Breccia*, *Alluvium*, *song of the cicada among the summer poppies*, *Hopscotch* and *NGUCHONOBAY* (curated by Sao La) at Galerie Quynh.

Đỗ has also participated in *Spot Art Singapore 2014* at ARTrium@MCI, Singapore, and undertaken the Brownian Movement residency programme at Heritage Space in Hanoi.

Đỗ lives and works between Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

artwork notes

With thin, overlapping fields of colour, Đỗ Thanh Lãng flattens the perspective in his paintings; the artist often blends the background into the foreground and intentionally removes visual depth. Yet, a different sense of depth is created by his uneven layering of resin – thick in parts, non-existent in others – that acts as a screen or a one-way mirror. The viewer is lured into a world that extends beyond the canvas, but the artist makes it clear we exist in a different dimension, unable to engage or partake. The electric scenes painted by Đỗ Thanh Lãng, set in the liminal realm between sleep and wake, allude to the paradox of the human condition where, within our own subconscious, the self becomes a character, equipped with scripts and storylines that predetermine our fate.

Hoàng Nam Việt



Hoàng Nam Việt
The second triangle
2020 | oil on canvas | 160 x 120 cm



Hoàng Nam Việt

Lan

2019 | oil on canvas | 30.5 x 30.5 cm



Hoàng Nam Việt

Ngọc

2019 | oil on canvas | 30.5 x 30.5 cm



Hoàng Nam Việt

Duy

2019 | oil on canvas | 30.5 x 30.5 cm



Hoàng Nam Việt
Bo and Bye-bye-Tracy
2020 | oil on canvas | 130 x 180 cm

Hoàng Nam Việt - Biography

Hoàng Nam Việt paints the friends around him with an affection that only comes with tender familiarity. His earlier works often place his characters in surreal settings and situations, or depict them front and centre, captured in a candid, uncontrived manner. The emotive blues and golds indicative of what he calls his “shattered summer” are slowly subsiding in his new works, though its remnants, akin to the traces of a forgotten memory, can still be felt. That his updated palette of brilliant blue, a colour often clouded by its associations with sadness, is used to convey the warmth of human connection speaks to a lack of cynicism on the part of the artist: an earnest portrayal without performance.

Hoàng Nam Việt’s latest works experiment with found images, diversifying his portfolio of paintings of friends, colleagues and the customers who frequent his café. Dug up from markets selling war memorabilia, or older issues of international publications such as *Life Magazine*, these faded photographs picture those whose stories have been or will be lost through the brutal treatment of time. Through his brushstrokes he reimagines their lives, their spirits, even their names – a hopeful act of grasping onto who they may have been.

A self-taught artist, Hoàng Nam Việt (born 1985, Ho Chi Minh City) has honed his practice across various disciplines. He has participated in comic book workshops and worked in advertising (Saatchi & Saatchi, Vietnam and Ogilvy & Mather, Hakuodo). He is the founder of Hoàng Thị Café which has become a popular gathering spot for creatives, and served as the venue for his first solo exhibition, *Cuffed in Freedom*. Hoàng has participated in several group exhibitions in Ho Chi Minh City, including *Password 0~1*, MoT+++; *Lunar Breccia*, Galerie Quynh; *Hopscotch*, Galerie Quynh; *Chung*, PongDang Gallery; *The Primacy of Drawing*, Dia Projects; and *Out of Nowhere*, Sao La.

Hoàng Nam Việt lives and works in Ho Chi Minh City.

artwork notes

Bo and Bye-bye-Tracy | The second triangle

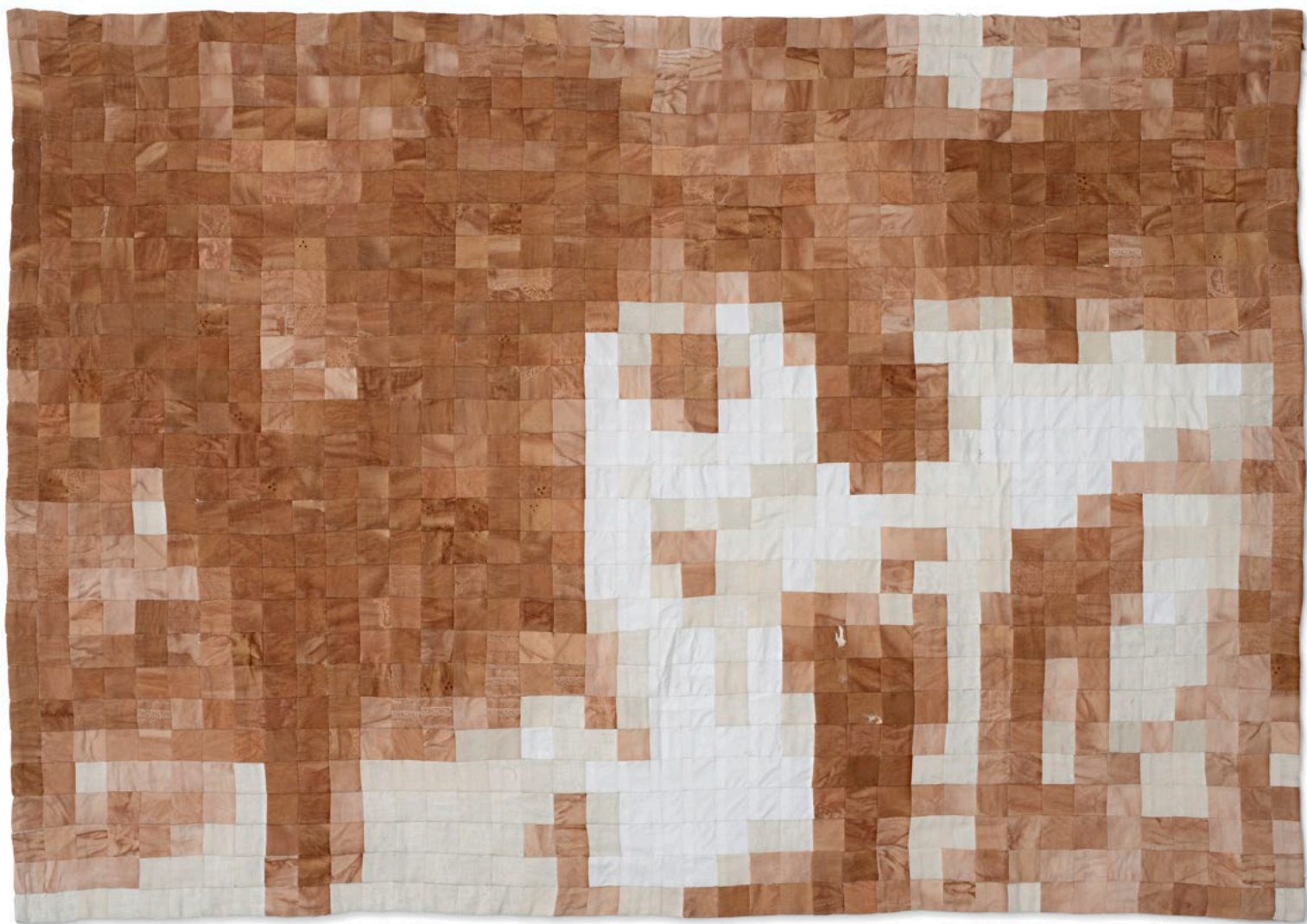
While Hoang Nam Viet retains his “shattered summer” palette to depict his sitters in *The second triangle* – they are very much active sitters rather than mere subjects here, with discernible attitude directed at the painter and viewer – the colours in *Bo and Bye-bye-Tracy* are far more distilled and minimal. Through his use of colour the artist makes room for the interaction between Bo and Bye-bye-Tracy to emerge as the focal point, and with it an immense tenderness visible in the slight smile, the relaxed postures, the loving gaze.

Lan | Ngọc | Duy

Hoàng Nam Việt paints these compact portraits from found images, some dug up from a market selling war memorabilia – pictures of people whose stories have been or will be lost through the brutal treatment of time. Through his brushstrokes he imagines their lives, their spirits, even their names – a hopeful act of grasping onto who they may have been.

“I enjoy looking at portraits of strangers. I have always thought there exists a connection between people who have never met, or people who do not even live in the same era as one another. I have a habit of buying old portraits from a market selling war memorabilia. As I begin to paint their portraits, I imagine them sitting in front of me. In my obfuscated state of mind, I try not to impose my assumptions about their fate in life, and instead look to the subtle characteristics that may distinguish them. Though the photographs have faded, I still imagine them sitting in front of me – the sitter gazing towards the painter without scrutiny.” – Hoàng Nam Việt

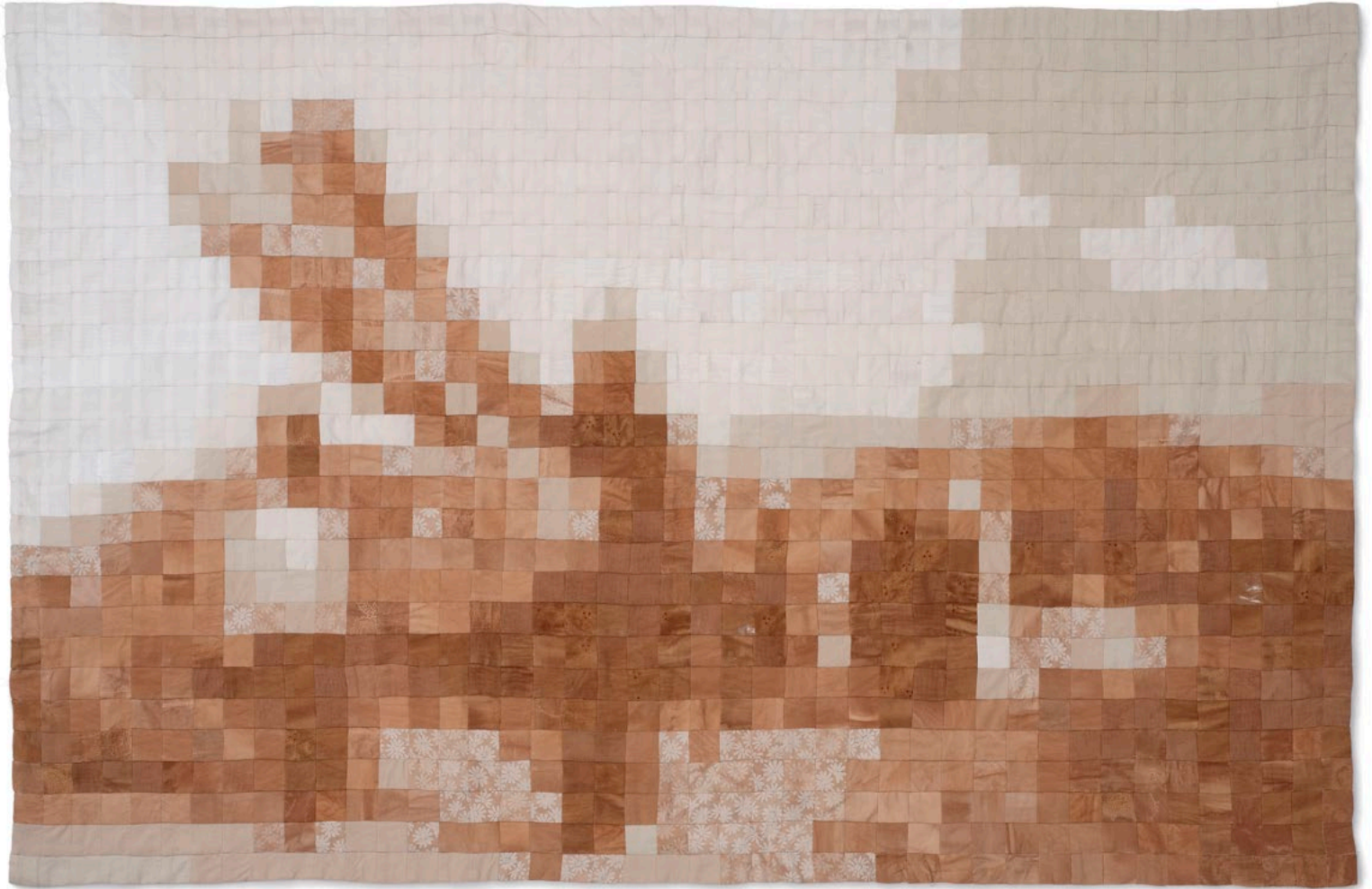
Võ Trần Châu



Võ Trần Châu

Where is the beginning?

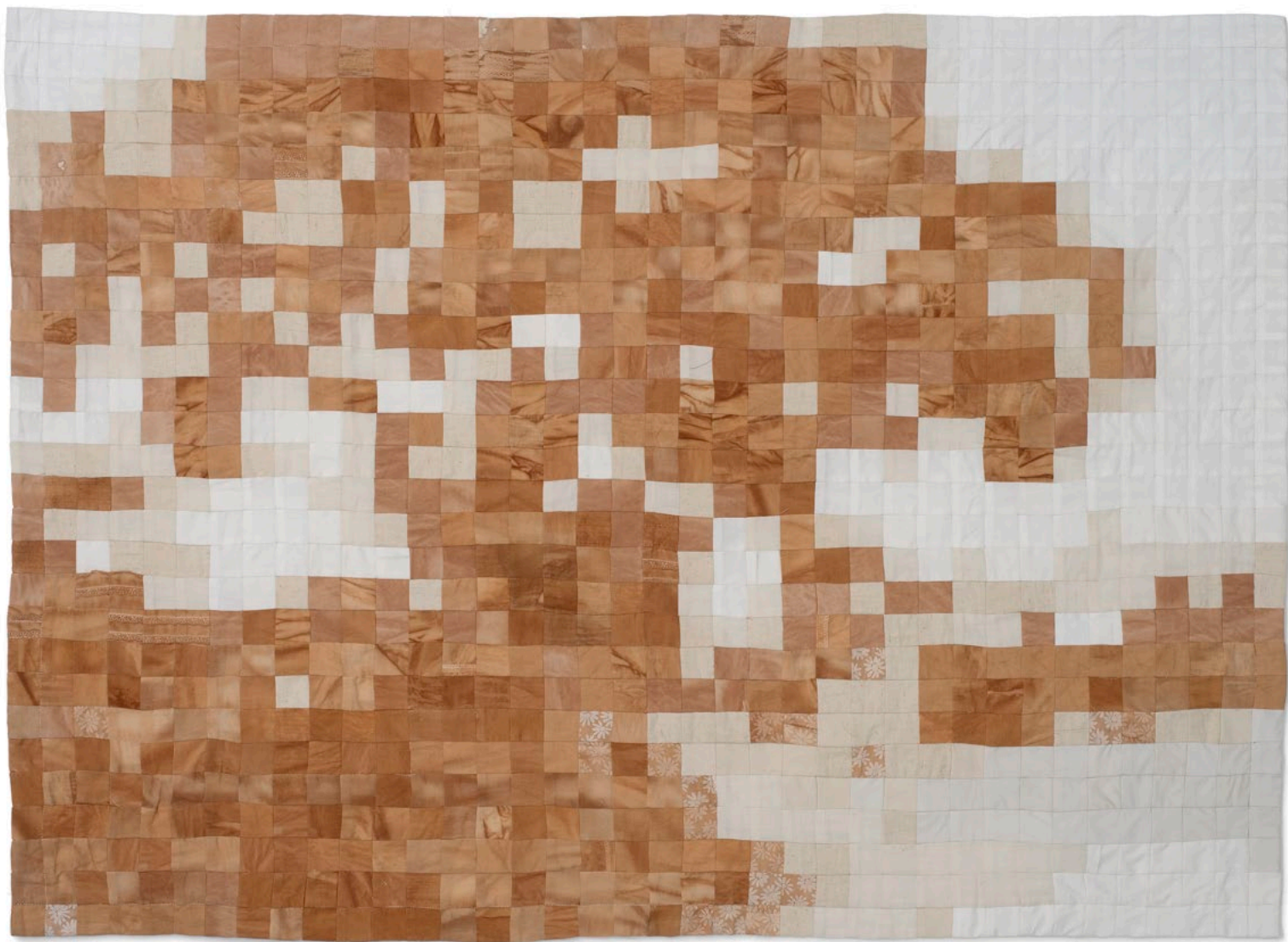
2019 | used clothes dyed with persimmon, thread | 94 x 133 cm



Võ Trần Châu

Where is the end?

2019 | used clothes dyed with persimmon, thread | 94 x 140 cm



Võ Trần Châu

The soul of trees

2019 | used clothes dyed with persimmon, thread | 94 x 126 cm

Võ Trân Châu - Biography

Woven into Võ Trân Châu's practice is the intrinsic emotionality of found fabrics and used clothes, retaining within them ambiguous, yet still pertinent histories. The act of threading together her squares of textile is as though a reconstruction of the stories lost in grand narratives. In her earlier works, Võ Trân Châu navigates various sites with cultural or personal significance, subjecting them to a pixelation that draws attention to the murky waters of history. The images, blurred from view, evade our attempts to see and point to the very nature of memory: hazy, and at times wilfully amnesic. In more recent works, the artist continues to explore the act of remembering, this time with those whose histories overlap her own. Her encounters with Jeju Island – its textile techniques, the personal stories, and the religious practice of Muism – inform her spiritually-charged works, asking further questions of life and death and reincarnation. Through her method of image-making, Võ Trân Châu recognises the depth of historical wounds passed down the generations, and stitches them back as a way to heal.

Võ Trân Châu (b. 1986, Binh Thuan) graduated from the Ho Chi Minh University of Fine Arts in 2011, and has since held prestigious exhibitions within the region and abroad. Selected shows include *Leaf picking in the ancient forest*, The Factory Contemporary Arts Centre, Ho Chi Minh City; *Where The Sea Remembers*, The Mistake Room, Los Angeles, CA, USA; *Unfolding: Fabric of Our Life*, Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile (CHAT), Hong Kong; *S.E.A. Focus - an STPI initiative*, Gillman Barracks, Singapore; *Lingering at the Peculiar Pavilion*, Manzi Art Space, Hanoi, travelled to Salon Saigon, Ho Chi Minh City; *The Foliage*, Vincom Center for Contemporary Art (VCCA), Hanoi; *Suzhou Documents*, curated by Zhang Qing and Roger M. Buerger, Suzhou Art Museum, Suzhou, China; *Still (the) Barbarians*, curated by Koyo Kouoh, EVA International: Ireland's Biennale of Contemporary Art,

Limerick, Ireland; *Tracing, Born from the Land*, and *My Sister*, San Art, Ho Chi Minh City; *Black Fog*, Nha San Collective, Hanoi; *Petit and Smooth*, Nha San Studio, Hanoi; and *Bolero*, Zero Station, Ho Chi Minh City.

In 2015, Võ Trân Châu undertook San Art Laboratory, an arts residency initiated by San Art. She received a grant from the Danish Vietnamese Cultural Development and Exchange Fund in 2011 for the exhibition *Born from the Land*.

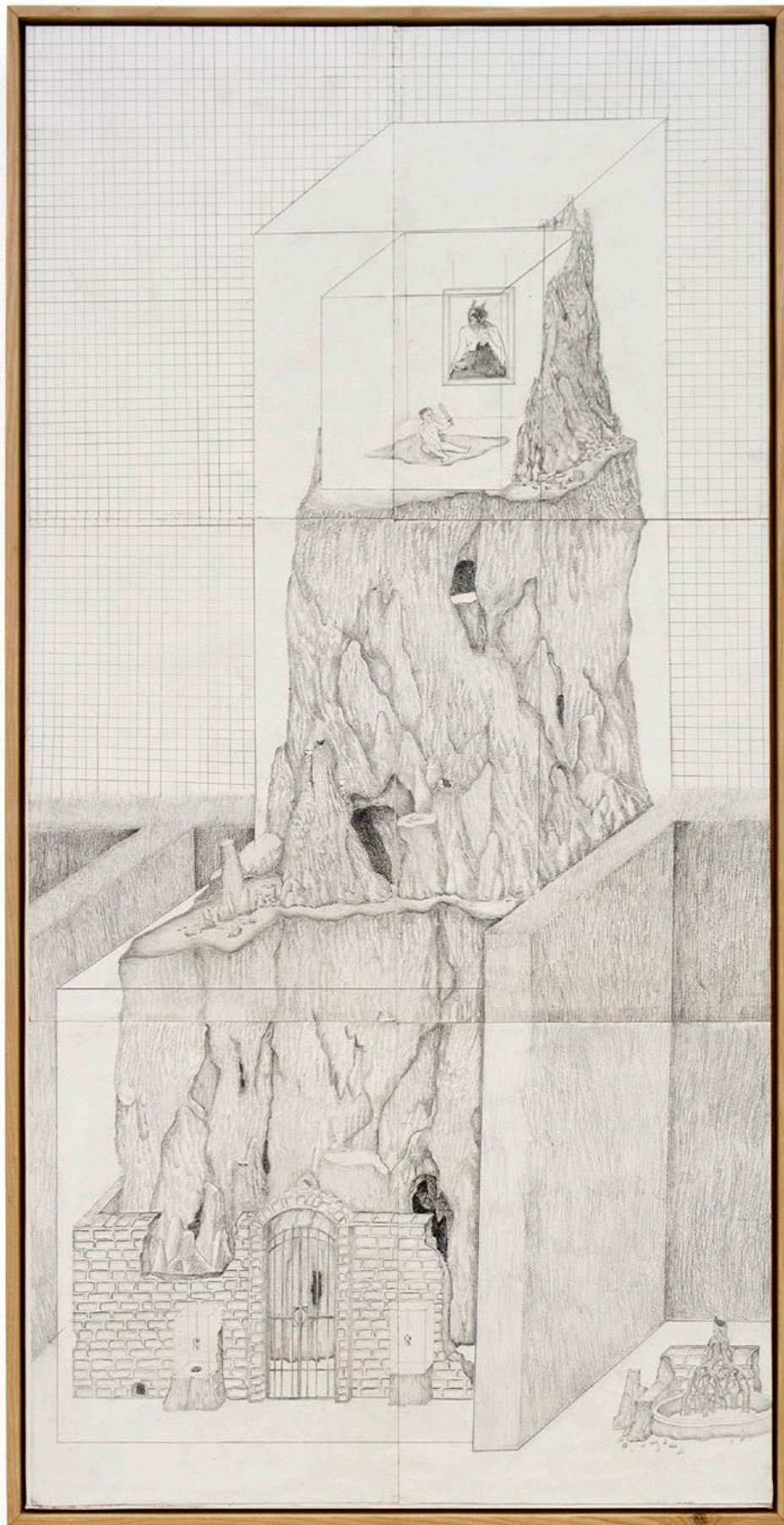
Võ Trân Châu lives and works in Ho Chi Minh City.

artwork notes

Shifting away from explorations of historical sites, Võ Trần Châu employs the time-honoured technique – encountered and engaged with during her residency on Jeju Island – of dyeing cloth with persimmon tannin to subtly transform her method of expression. The buildings and shipyards of earlier works now make way for scenes of celebration and mourning, as well as for questions on the perception of time seen through the milestones in a human life – a life that conversely begins at one's funeral and ends at one's wedding, to be hosted in the afterlife.

Dyeing every piece of textile herself, Võ Trần Châu finds quiet joy in seeing the gradual change in colour as the fabrics dry at the mercy of the sun. In her artworks as in her creative process, it is difficult to ascertain a trajectory – a beginning and end. As she crushes the persimmons or soaks her fabrics, she is not merely learning a technique, but rather re-living its heritage and sharing her own overlapping, intersecting histories.

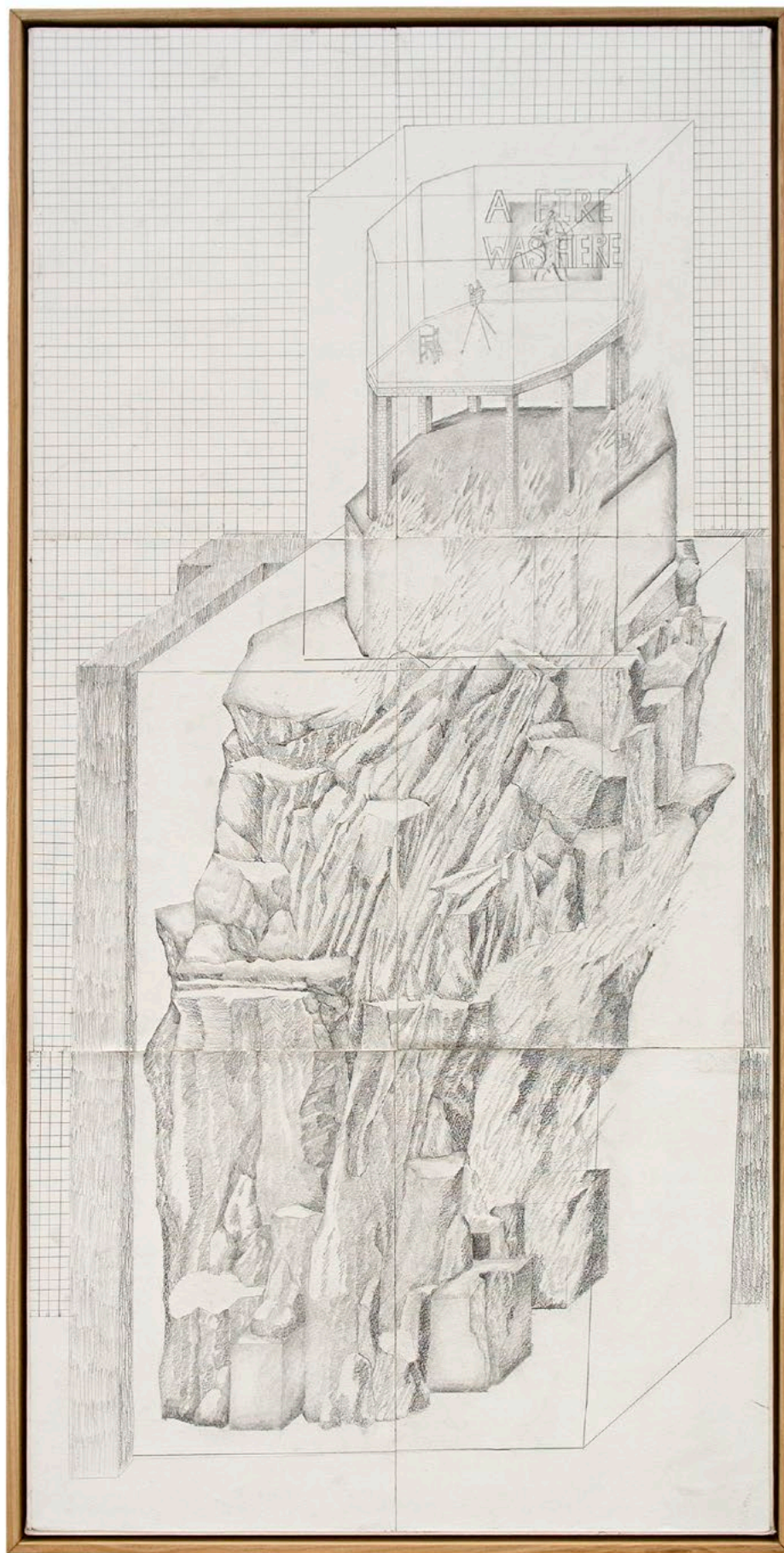
Nghĩa Đặng



Nghĩa Đặng

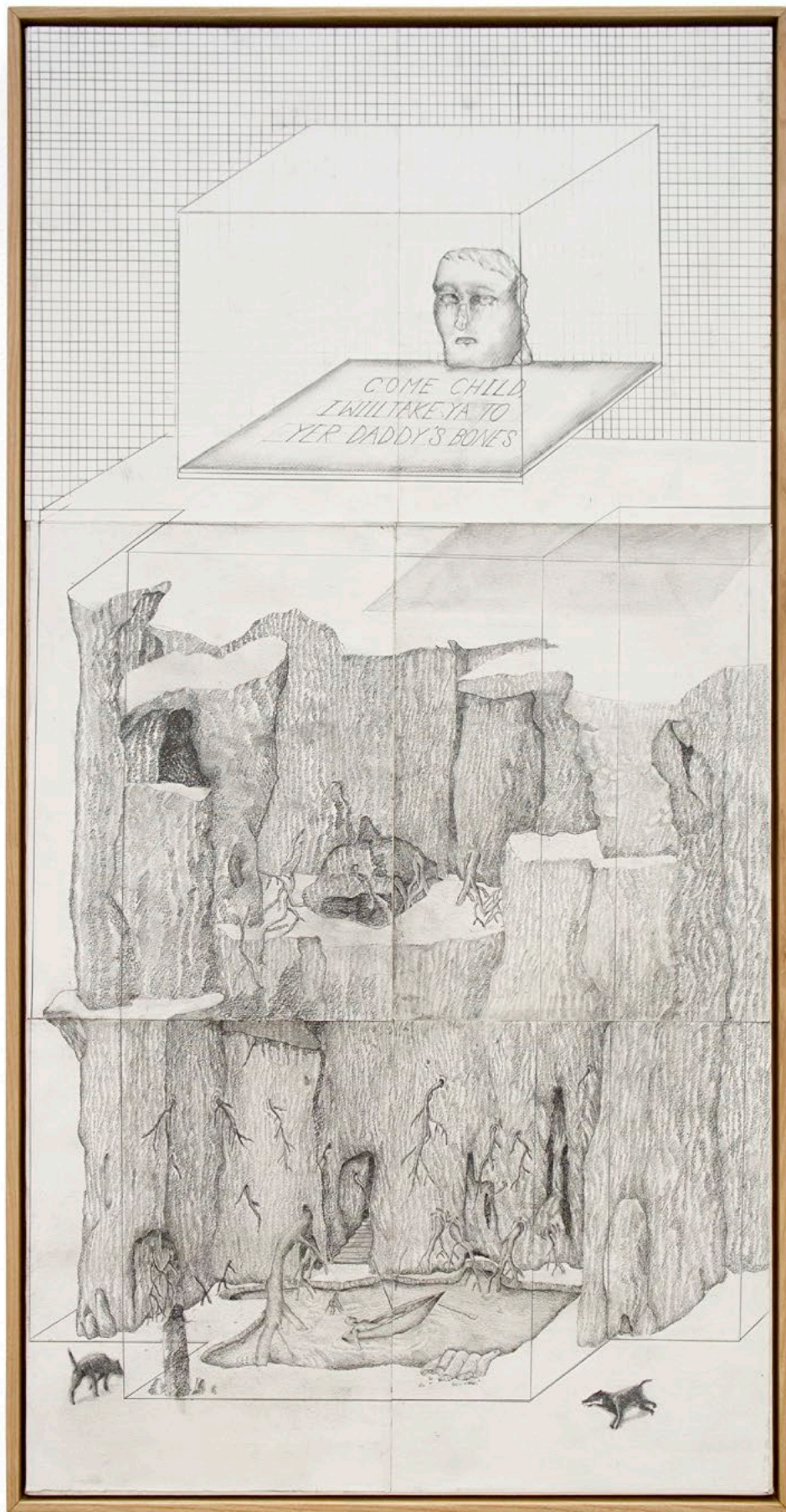
The Birth of Tragedy

2020 | graphite on paper, mounted on canvas and board | 120 x 60 cm



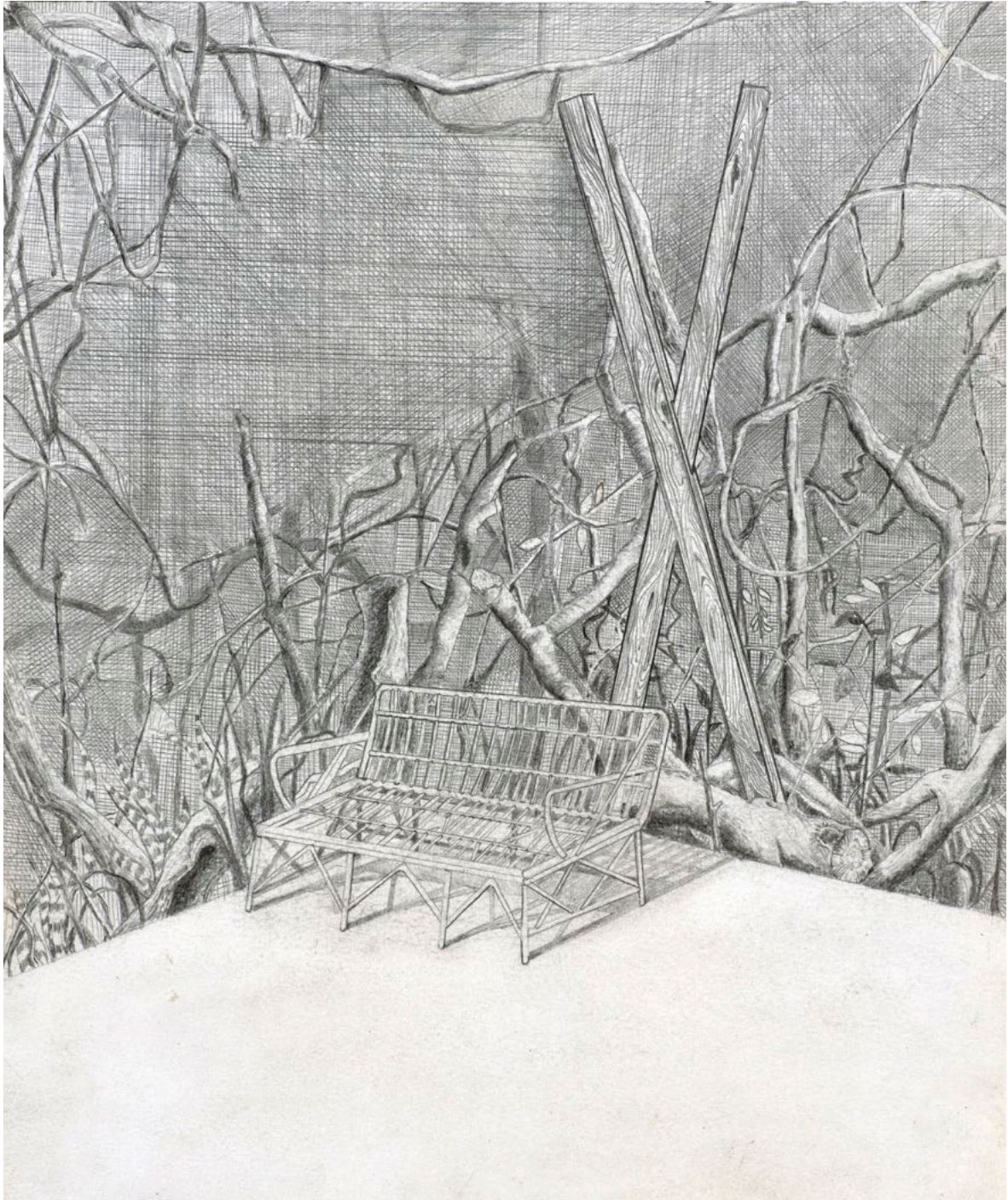
Ngĩa Đặng
The Fire

2020 | graphite on paper, mounted on canvas and board | 120 x 60 cm



Ngĩa Đặng
Winter's Bone

2020 | graphite on paper, mounted on canvas and board | 120 x 60 cm



Nghĩa Đặng

Entrance

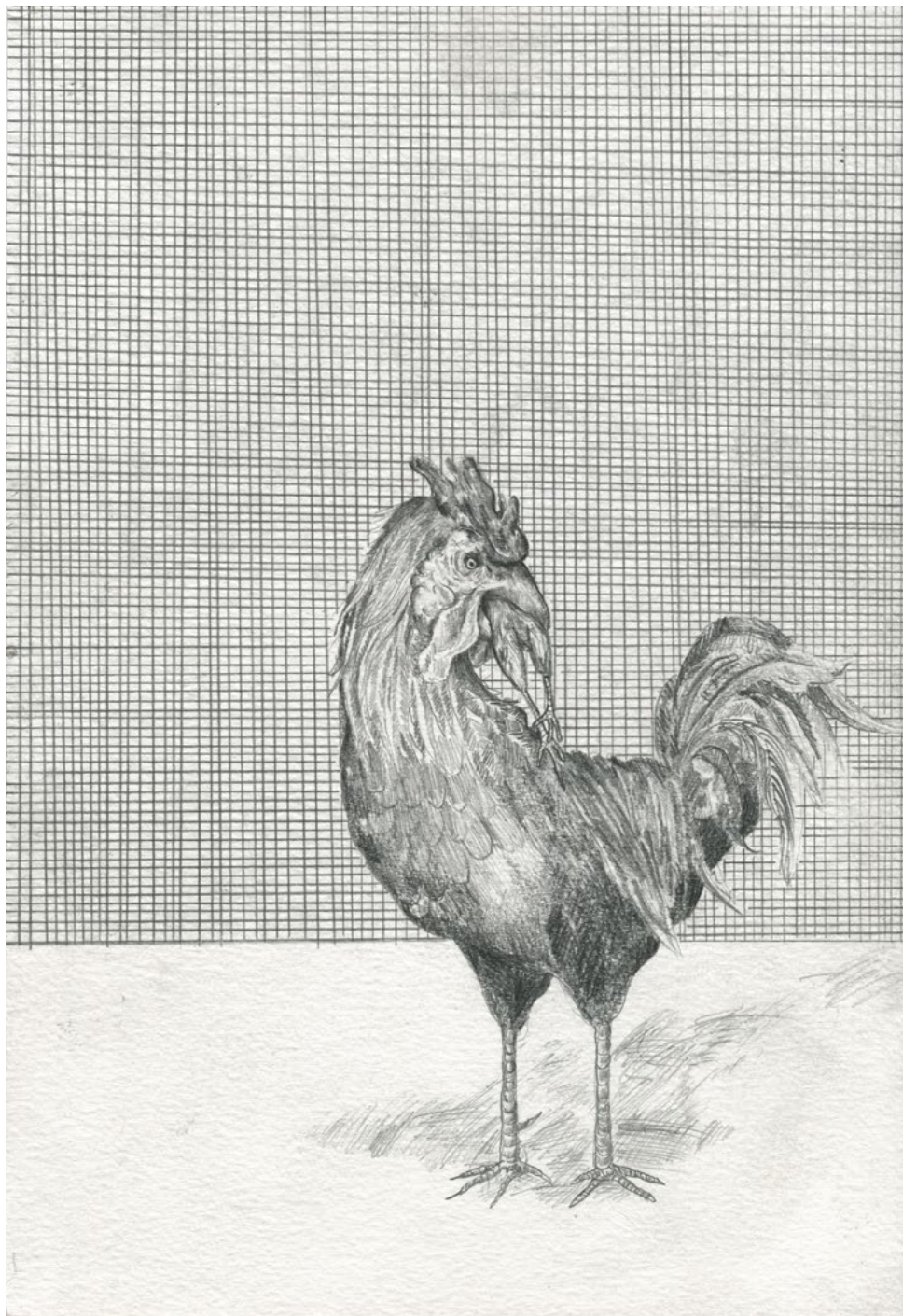
2019 | graphite on paper | 36 x 30 cm



Nghĩa Đặng

Father's Adagio #1

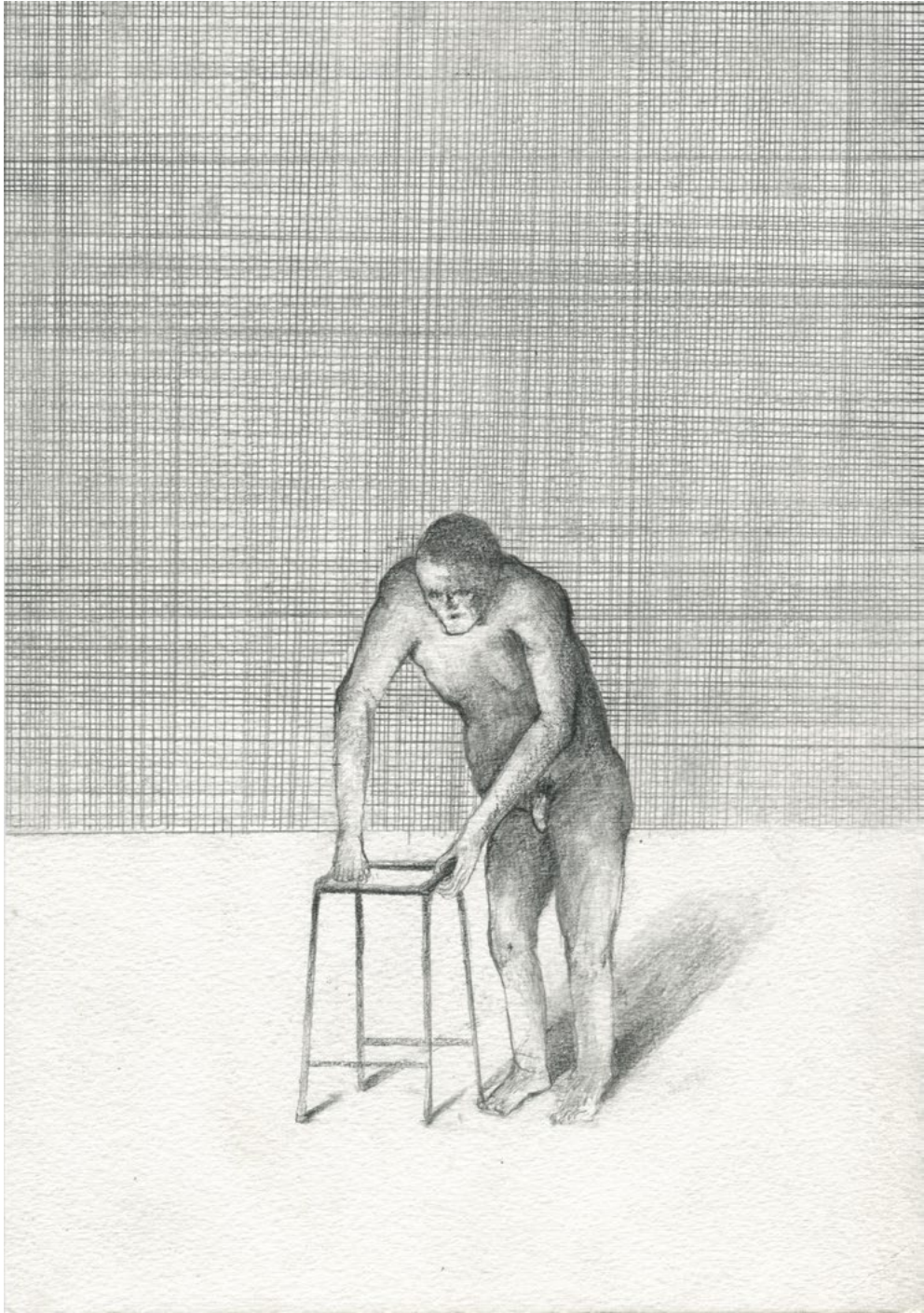
2019-2020 | graphite on paper | 29.5 x 20 cm



Nghĩa Đặng

Father's Adagio #2

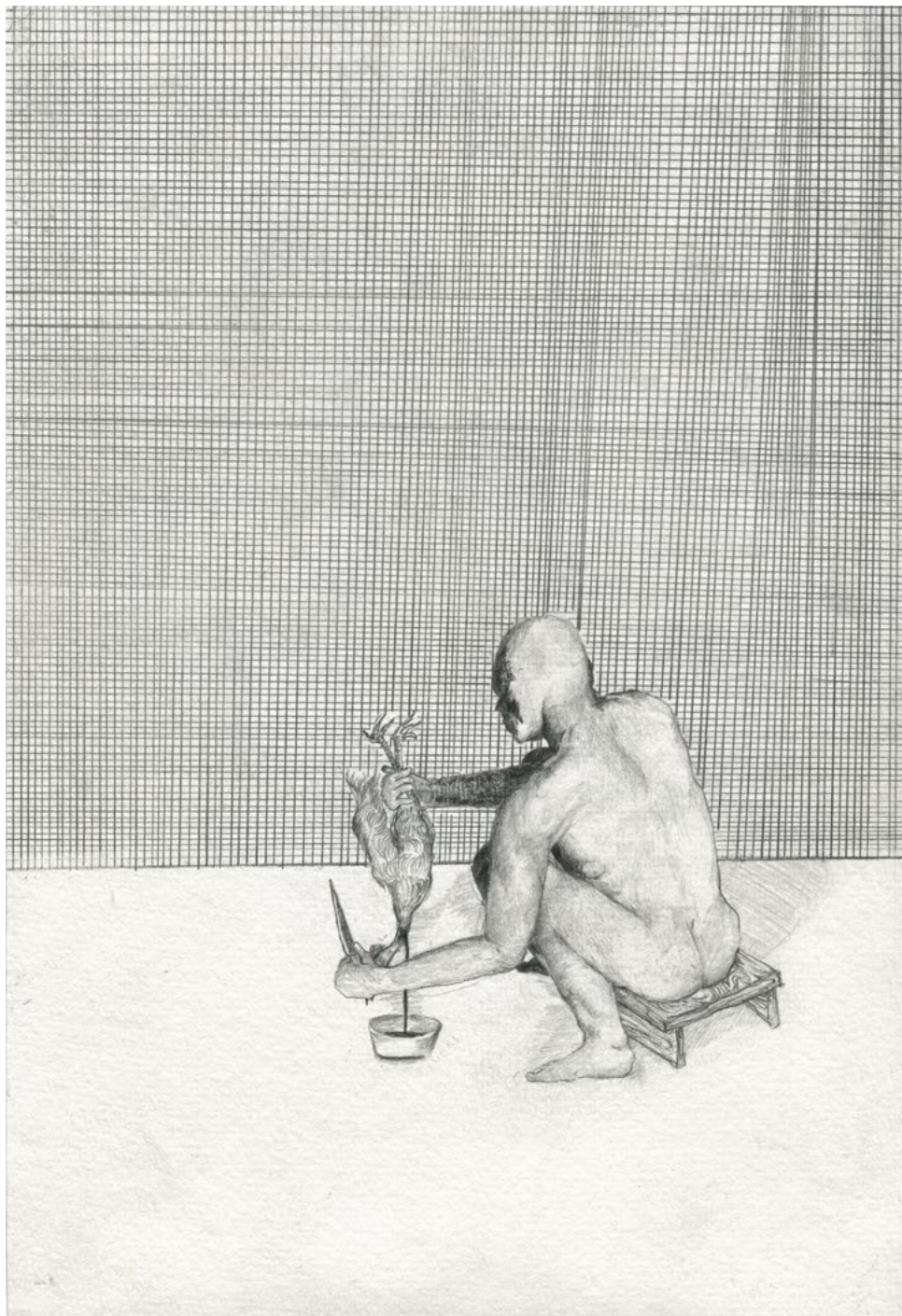
2019-2020 | graphite on paper | 29.5 x 20 cm



Nghĩa Đặng

Father's Adagio #3

2019-2020 | graphite on paper | 29.5 x 20 cm



Nghĩa Đặng

Father's Adagio #4

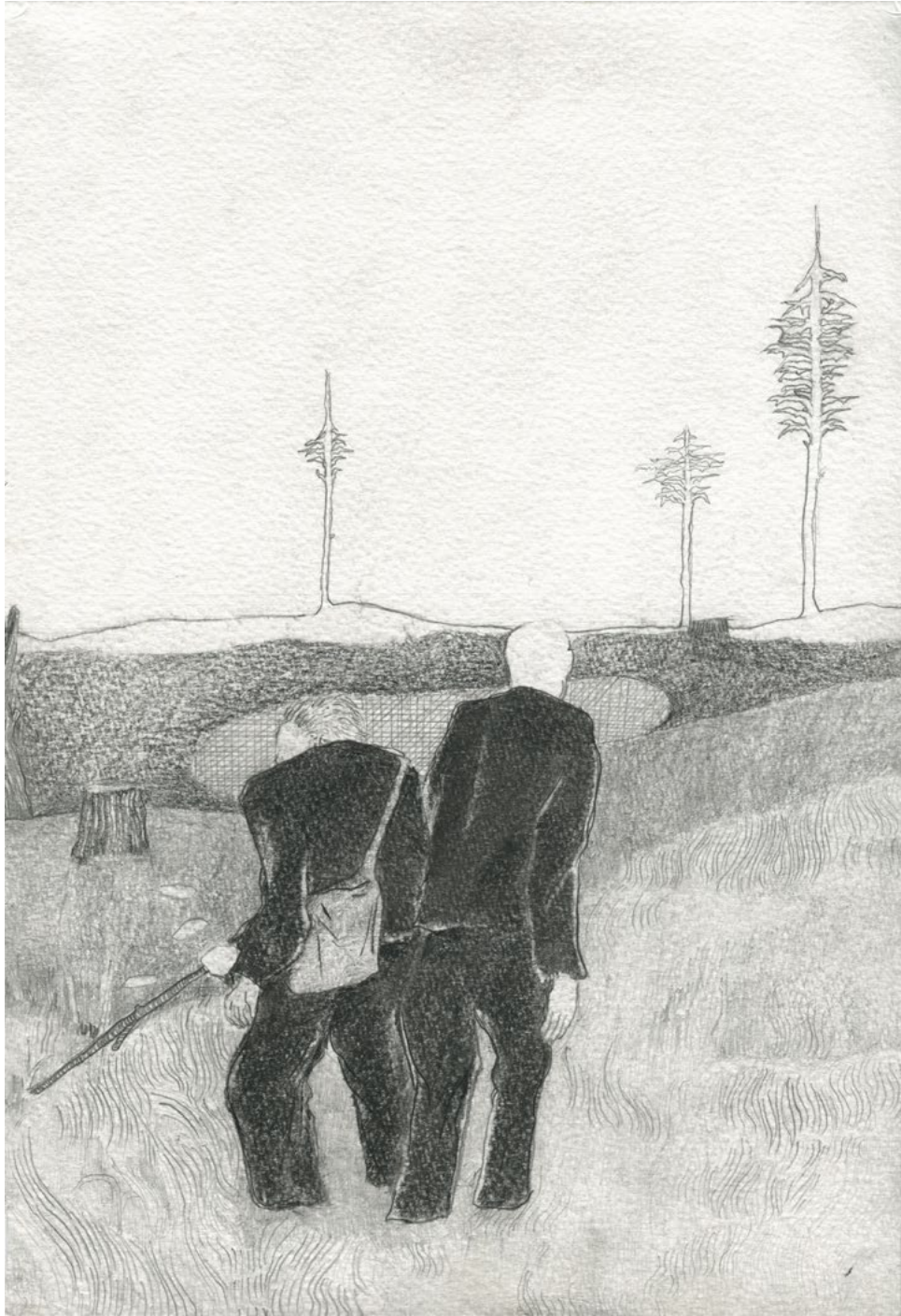
2019-2020 | graphite on paper | 29.5 x 20 cm



Nghĩa Đặng

Father's Adagio #5

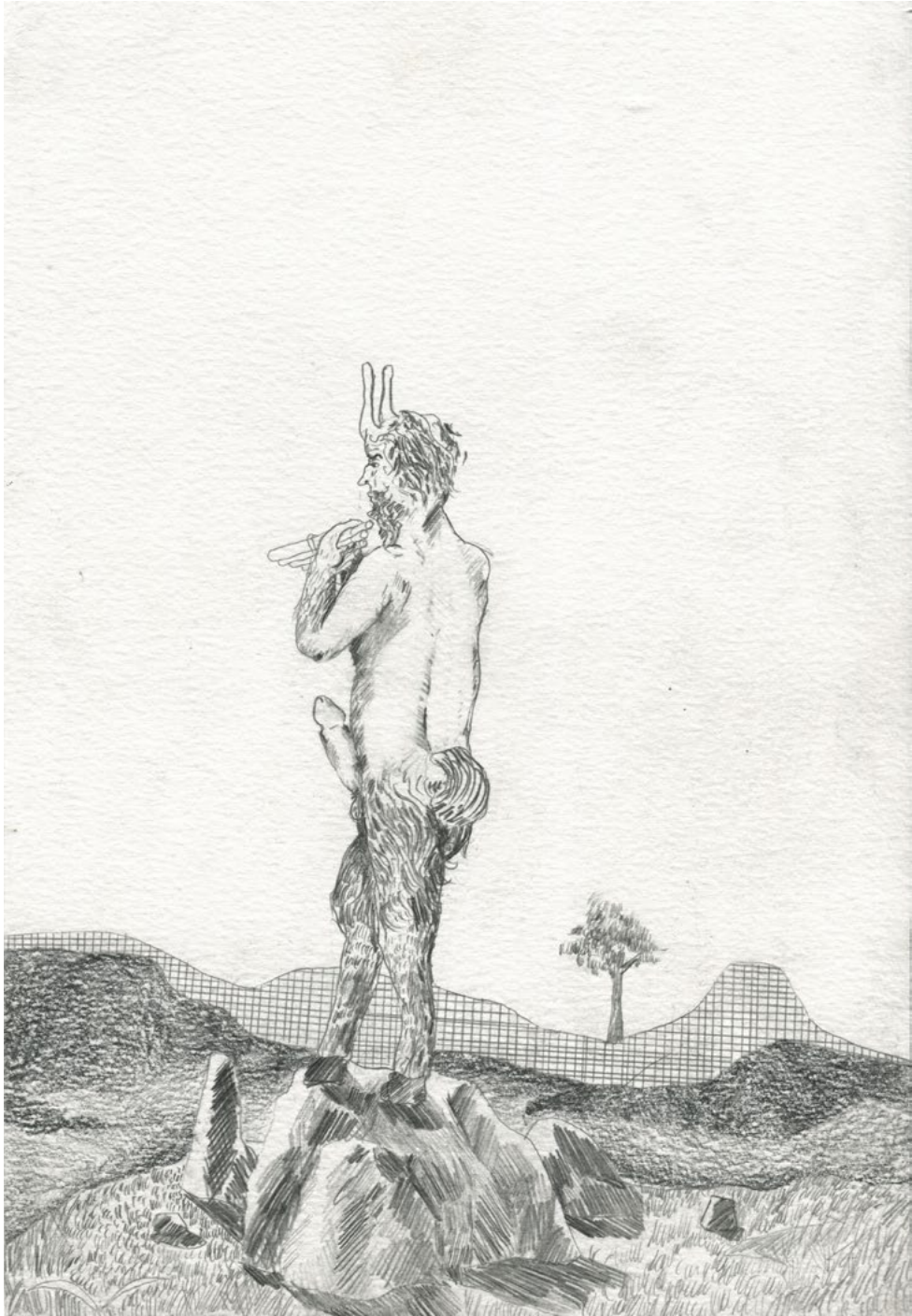
2019-2020 | graphite on paper | 29.5 x 20 cm



Nghĩa Đặng

Father's Adagio #6

2019-2020 | graphite on paper | 29.5 x 20 cm



Nghĩa Đặng

Father's Adagio #7

2019-2020 | graphite on paper | 29.5 x 20 cm



Nghĩa Đặng

Father's Adagio #8

2019-2020 | graphite on paper | 29.5 x 20 cm

Nghĩa Đặng - Biography

Nghĩa Đặng's multi-media practice conveys an inherent theatricality, though far from that of a boastful, spectacular kind. Understated in expression, Đặng's works draw the viewer into strange, disorientating scenes that compel one to rethink the familiar. The artist uses psychoanalytical ideas, and in particular the Lacanian approach, as a tool to traverse what he calls 'the ruin within himself', making sense of his experiences, relationships and, perhaps most salient of all, how the self is constructed. The artworks alternate between visceral iterations of reality and the imaginary realm to recount stories, often of emotional tumult.

His earlier works, made from objects and materials found in our daily lives and surrounding infrastructure, such as cardboard and chocolate, or concrete and steel, navigate the contradictions of the family home, and within it the tethers between father–mother–son. On his endless journey to unravel these ropes, he steers towards the immediacy of graphite on paper as if to forge a link with the subconscious. Yet, as his works delve deeper into the recesses of the mind, the artist refrains from dramatising the uncertainties, and instead presents them as a shared opportunity for introspection.

Nghĩa Đặng (b. 1994, Hanoi) was awarded the Distinguished Scholarship (2015-2018) from the Art Institute of Chicago, USA where he earned his BFA in Studio Art. He has participated in group exhibitions in Vietnam and the US, including *Lunar Breccia* and *Encounter*, Galerie Quynh, Ho Chi Minh City; *Spring Galeria*, The Factory Contemporary Arts Centre, Ho Chi Minh City; *Duc Rong/Lap Day*, Nha San Collective, Hanoi; *-Ology*, Sullivan Galleries, Chicago, IL, USA; and *Race Car, Race Car*, Z1 Gallery, Chicago, IL, USA. In 2018, the Đặng held a solo exhibition titled *Scenes of the Imago* at The Factory Contemporary Arts Centre, and in 2020 was selected as a Season 3 resident at A. Farm, an international art residency founded by San Art, MoT+++ and the Nguyen Art Foundation.

Đặng lives and works in Ho Chi Minh City.

artwork notes

Holy Mountain triptych

The precarity, or rather theatricality of Nghĩa Đăng's glass boxes balancing on mountain tops is an announcement: the actors are *en place*, will the spectators take their seats? Although the artist as director is trespassing into an unholy fantasy, the countless boxes and grids in the composition warns his audience against an embodied experience that flirts with the dangers of empathy.

Played out in the traditional three acts, the story is familiar: the latent rage, the power struggle, the catastrophe, the aftermath, the remorse, and, hopelessly, the search for redemption. In Nghĩa Đăng's relentless reckoning of the links between father and son, his "self" has to transform and mutate between the acts of this dramatic/traumatic play. Confronted with the father figure, the son's masculinity and humanity is threatened. Yet, as one returns to the glass boxes of this triptych, the son's error – of believing, resenting, and revolting against the paternal will – can be therein contained if only one does not mistake the act of seeing and being seen for omnipresence.

Father's Adagio series

From hand to graphite to paper, there is an immediacy with which Nghĩa Đăng expresses the motifs – permeating with an intrinsic sense of masculinity – that have come to define the father-son relationship. Having crossed the threshold that is *Entrance* and into the depths of memory and imagination, the viewer is invited to explore the artist's rough, uncharted terrains, and along the journey encounter his characters in their lonesome pursuits. As the scenes unfold – leisurely and unhurried, as in the tempo of an adagio – their endless twists and turns make it impossible to follow the thread of the story. Perhaps despite the medium's instantaneity, the artist's attempt to map the father-son relationship – the interactions, the struggle, the inheritance of knowledge and will – is but a distant mirage. Though he trudges through the heat with hopes of reaching that phantom oasis, the journey has no end.

Texts by Thái Hà.

Copyright © 2020 Galerie Quynh Contemporary Art.

No part of this publication may be reproduced without prior written permission from Galerie Quynh.

