



PSM  
Schöneberger Ufer 61  
10785 Berlin

PHONE +49 30 246 492 00  
EMAIL [office@psm-gallery.com](mailto:office@psm-gallery.com)  
WEB [www.psm-gallery.com](http://www.psm-gallery.com)  
OPEN Tue – Sat 12 – 6 pm

## Nazim Ünal Yılmaz

### Portfolio



Nazim Ünal Yılmaz (b. 1982 in Trabzon, Turkey) studied fine arts at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, Austria and painting at Anadolu University in Turkey. He is a painter whose work conjures up a highly dystopian world, where civic and patriotic acts and gestures take on malignant meanings. At times, Yılmaz's expressionistic work have a distinct diary-like quality to them, whereas in other paintings the place and time seem entirely fictional and the precise subject matter more dreamlike than real.

The works can appear disrespectful of the canon of painting while they at the same time use and work it; disrespectful of the self and its construction yet freeing as the artist cuts up both and then puts them back together. Yılmaz's brush strokes appear as though they were blown on the painting surface by a breeze, but are of course placed intentionally.



# Ball auf der Nase

PSM, Berlin, 2023





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**Ball auf der Nase**  
**Nazim Ünal Yilmaz**  
07.03. – 15.04.2023

Scenes reminiscent of Vienna's urban texture are almost unrecognisable, sinking into chaos; death is nearer than it has ever been, is more entangled to the idea of civilization and progress. Baroque architecture, a certain aesthetic which has stayed relevant and present for centuries, is crumbling down over the heads of rabbits, who rush around rubbles as if it is a playground. It might not be the end of the rabbit thanks to its sharp and quick manoeuvres; but the fate of humanity is surely as shaky as the buildings.

In his second solo show in Berlin, Nazim Ünal Yilmaz brings together paintings, most of which are new works presented for the first time, accompanied by older ones from different eras of his practice. The collection of works at PSM is like an attempt to narrate a science-fiction story, which might not associate itself to the medium of painting immediately, especially if it is a prophecy that is difficult to dismiss as pure fiction. As the catastrophes related to the climate crisis force themselves to an ever-growing proportion of the news, how can they stay out of paintings?

Some of the works are close-up scenes that one easily feels the threat of being swallowed by the canvas. As described above, in *White Rabbit!*, the animal that gives the name to the work is in a hurry, as if it tries to escape from the surface and break free as baroque ornaments and columns, which erected the imagery of nation-states and identities and we are too close to all that rambles down to ignore. As columns are shattered, one feels the danger thanks to angles Nazim relentlessly deploys in each painting. Yet, humans find a way to avoid the hard questions, even though they might have nowhere left to run, like it is depicted in *Polar Activity*.

And that avoidance is embodied by snowmen, another recurring figure in Nazim's practice. Rather than gloriously frozen and hand-crafted by the innocence of children, snowman becomes an archetype that can be considered as the personification of a class that manipulates the discourse around our shared crisis. A class that is not only the main responsible of all the crisis but also who profits from it. One that denies the existence of a crisis as long as it can, and then turns into one that offers cosmetic solutions to it and expects praise for their role. A class that is constantly at odds with what they promise, that hurts the most and heals the least. In Nazim's image- and world-making, the melting of snowmen is nothing less than joyous.

Nazim does not only go after the hypocrisy of the ruling elite of today; he delves deeper into the history and complicates the first of us who has fallen in love with himself: Narcissus. Leaning upon the water and seeing his face for the first time, Narcissus instantly becomes attracted to the face he sees on the water without knowing who it is. Like him, humanity is in the same track, burning by a desire to discover what they are capable of, how they can come on top in their struggle to rule nature.

Standing on their two feet might have been the curse that doomed humanity from the very start as hinted in *Reptile* and *Two Options for Narcissus*. This is also where the figure of a painter in the shape of Nazim comes to the picture; he does not shy away from reflecting on his own image, his own standing up, his positionality, and what his artistic practice would mean given the circumstances of today, both socially and politically.

Yet, the reflection does not occur by itself. A source of light is needed; an omnipotent one that can be our ultimate source of life: the sun. The source that can accommodate the conditions for all living things to be born; however, the sun can be just as deadly thanks to each narcissus among us and how we – snowmen the most – mistreat the irreplicable treasure. In *Dominating the Sun*, a pair of feet are reaching towards the star on what seems to be a summer day, framing the sun as if it is there only to heat and comfort them. The toes are pulling the mouth of the sun to each side of it, stretching it almost to its limits. Does the sun have to smile and join the crowd as if everything is fine? All these figures and their uses, along with others like horses, bring together a personal iconography that Nazim has accumulated, giving us points of reference to reflect on ourselves.

Then again, neither history nor referencing is a one-sided concern for the artist: he also tasks himself with tackling the issue of citing in another way. Trying to label his paintings with a certain style or school is as difficult as it is unnecessary: he paints scenes over scenes, one painting more often than now employing techniques that remind different schools of painting, from abstraction to surrealism and more. Hence it would be a mistake to try to pin him down to one of these in singularity but the paintings are an invitation to recognise the citations, find the playful shifts and transitions from one to the other not only from painting to the other, but also within the same surface.

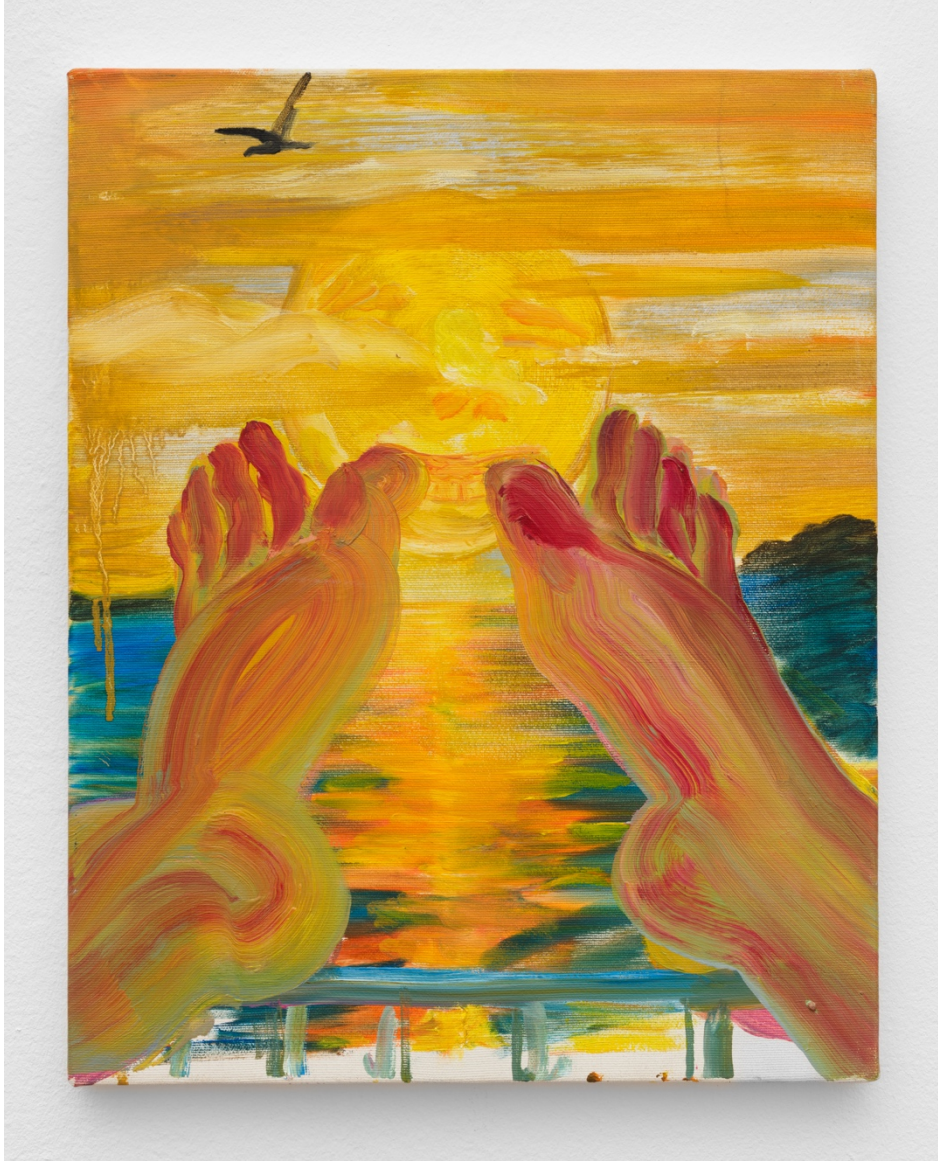
In a constellation of familiar figures, *Ball auf der Nase* weaves concepts and styles to urgent questions that are open-ended, rather than posing certain answers. Nazim's sense of humour still leaves us with some hope, a core feeling spreads across the exhibition. In the end, one cannot help but wonder: will I be able to shower my feet with the sunlight again without thinking about all of this?

Onur Çimen





Nazım Ünal Yılmaz White  
Rabbit!, 2021  
Oil on canvas  
160 x 135 cm / 63 x 53 1/4 in  
NY/P 37



Nazım Ünal Yılmaz  
Dominating the Sun, 2022  
Oil on canvas  
50 x 40 cm/19 2/3 x 15 3/4 in  
NY/P 34





Installation View

**Ball auf der Nase**

PSM, Berlin, 2023





Nazım Ünal Yılmaz  
Snowmen I, 2021  
Oil on canvas  
180 x 170 cm / 70 3/4 x 67 in



Nazım Ünal Yılmaz  
Polar Activity, 2022  
Oil on canvas  
180 x 170 cm / 70 3/4 x 67 in  
NY/P 35











Installation View

**Ball auf der Nase**

PSM, Berlin, 2023





Nazım Ünal Yılmaz  
Stump Soldier, 2021  
Oil on canvas  
160 x 130 cm / 63 x 51 1/4 in  
NY/P 52





Nazım Ünal Yılmaz  
Those in Balance, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
50 x 40 cm / 19 2/3 x 15 3/4 in  
NY/P 51



Nazım Ünal Yılmaz  
Tortois Kickers, 2022  
Oil on canvas  
50 x 40 cm / 19 2/3 x 15 3/4 in  
NY/P 49





Nazım Ünal Yılmaz  
Reptile, 2022  
Oil on canvas  
50 x 40 cm / 19 2/3 x 15 3/4 in  
NY/P 42



Nazım Ünal Yılmaz  
Three Options for Narcissus, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
50 x 40 cm/19 2/3 x 15 3/4 in  
NY/P 45





Installation View

**Ball auf der Nase**

PSM, Berlin, 2023



Nazım Ünal Yılmaz  
Commissioned Painting, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
200 x 160 cm / 78 3/4 x 63 in  
NY/P 60





Nazım Ünal Yılmaz  
Kick, 2022  
Oil on canvas  
50 x 40 cm/19 2/3 x 15 3/4 in  
NY/P 43



Nazım Ünal Yılmaz  
Disorganised/organised, 2022  
Oil on canvas  
50 x 40 cm / 19 2/3 x 15 3/4 in  
NY/P 50





**Always Forward**

Galerist, Istanbul, 2022





**Always Forward, 2022**

Oil on canvas

200 x 160 cm



## Always Forward

Galerist, Istanbul, 2022

Except from catalogue text *Looking Up and Down on 'Always Forward'* by Evrim Altug.  
Translation by Ecem Ümitli.

Nazim Ünal Yılmaz's approach in peinture that evidently leads the spectator 'always forward', carries the traces of the self-justification of an artists who is dizzy with his personal palette of colors and space.

In a time when the lifespan of an image is measured in milliseconds, and its value in virtual smiles and frowns, Yılmaz's paintings with the critical formation of the depicted universes, as well as the attention to the factualness of these fictions, salute the brushes of such veterans of painting history. With his single, self-exposing cabaret that gets more crowded as it undresses, the artist questions where honesty should begin and end, where the art market, reality and according to which values it determindes the index of sincerity.

Images by Kazhan Kaygusuz

**NAZIM ÜNAL  
YILMAZ**

**DAİMA İLERİ  
ALWAYS FORWARD**

27.10 | 10.12.2022



— JOTUN VE TEPE AYDINLATMA'NIN DESTEKLERİYLE  
— WITH THE KIND SUPPORT OF JOTUN AND TEPE LIGHTING

**GALERIST**

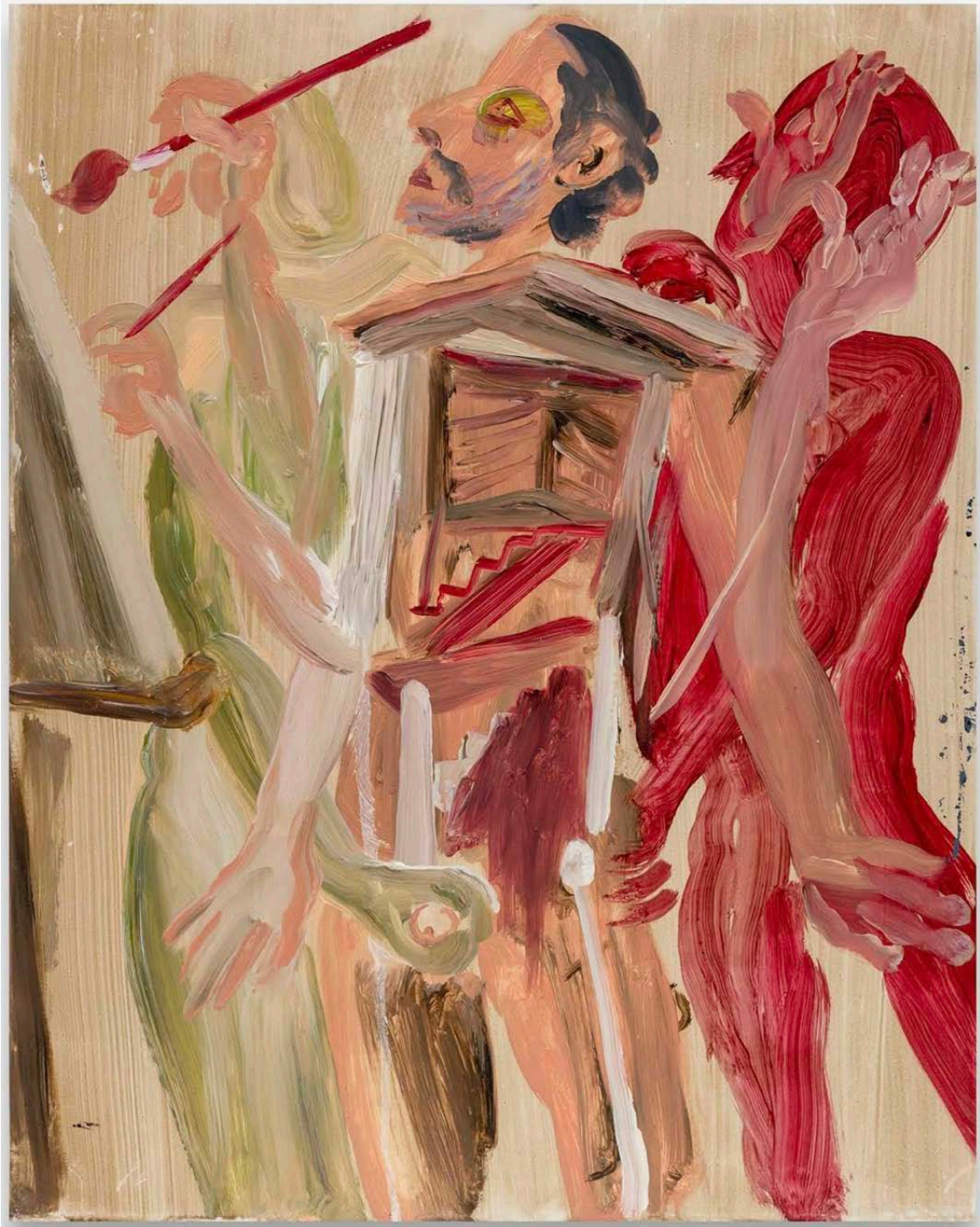


Installation View

**Always Forward**

Galerist, Istanbul, 2022

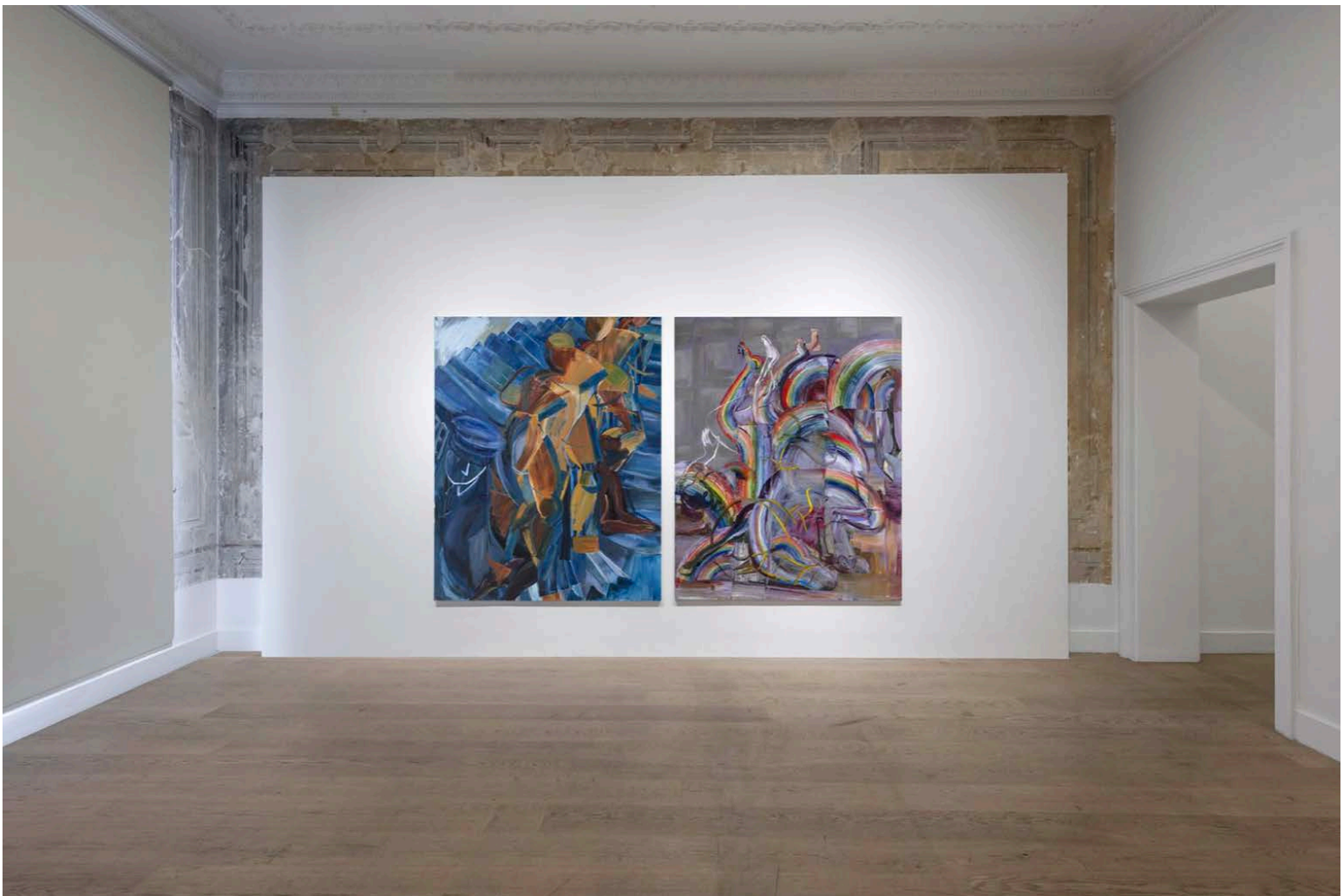




**Self-Portrait while painting, 2022**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm

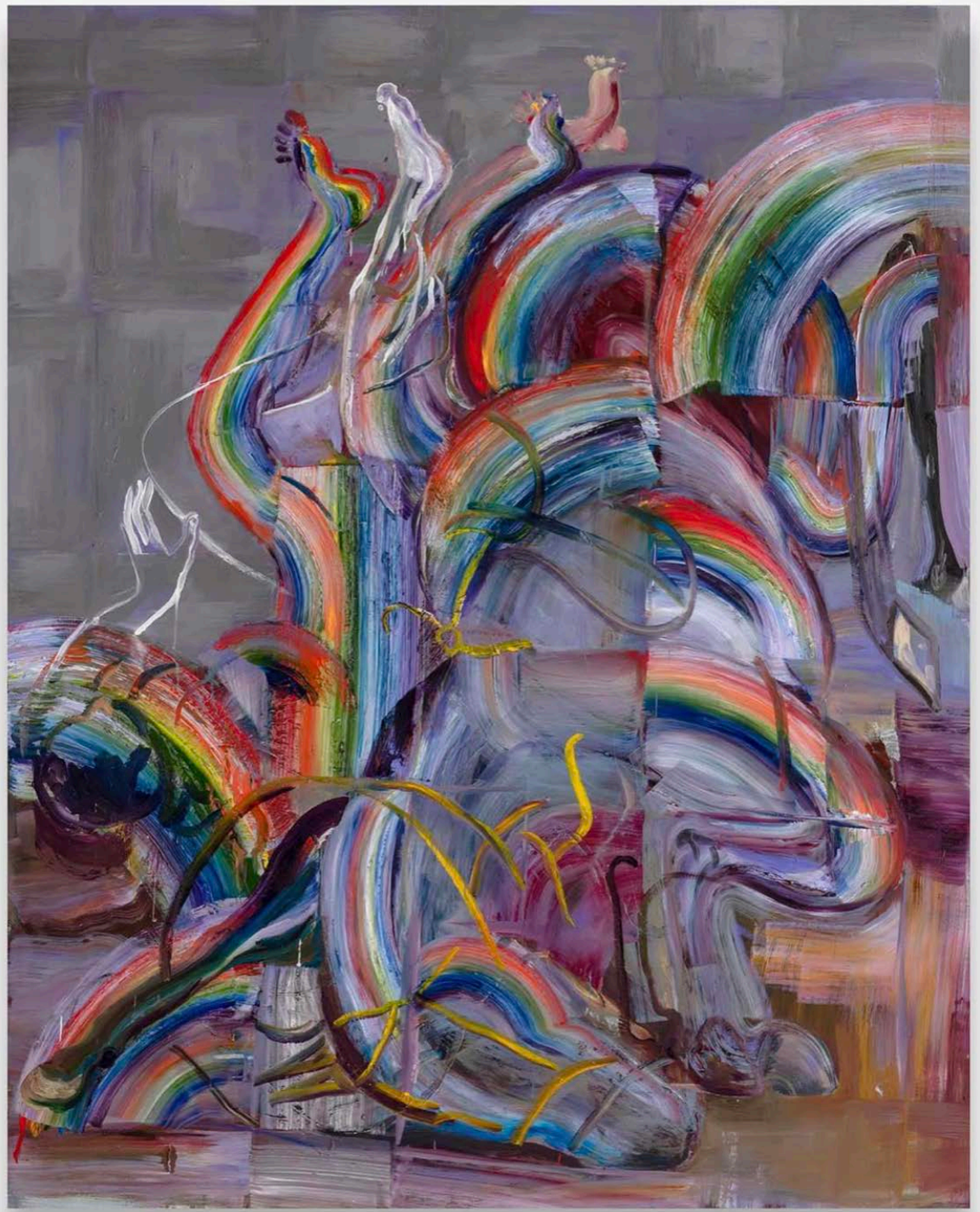


Installation View

**Always Forward**

Galerist, Istanbul, 2022





**Rainbow raid, 2022**

Oil on canvas

200 x 160 cm





**Police and the Avantgarde, 2022**

Oil on canvas

200 x 160 cm

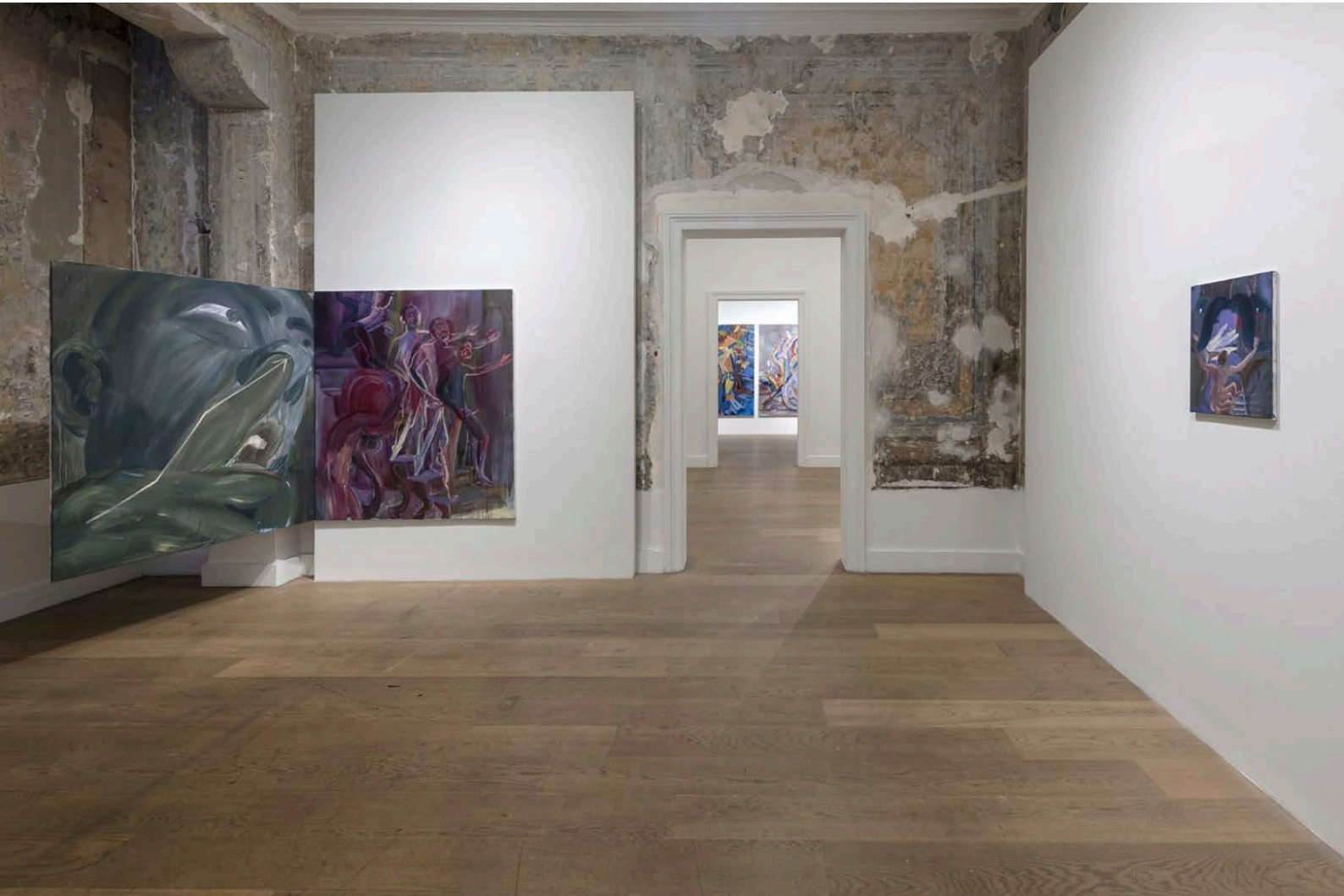




**No Longer His Mother's Sons, 2021**

Oil and clock engine on canvas

160 x 140 cm



Installation View

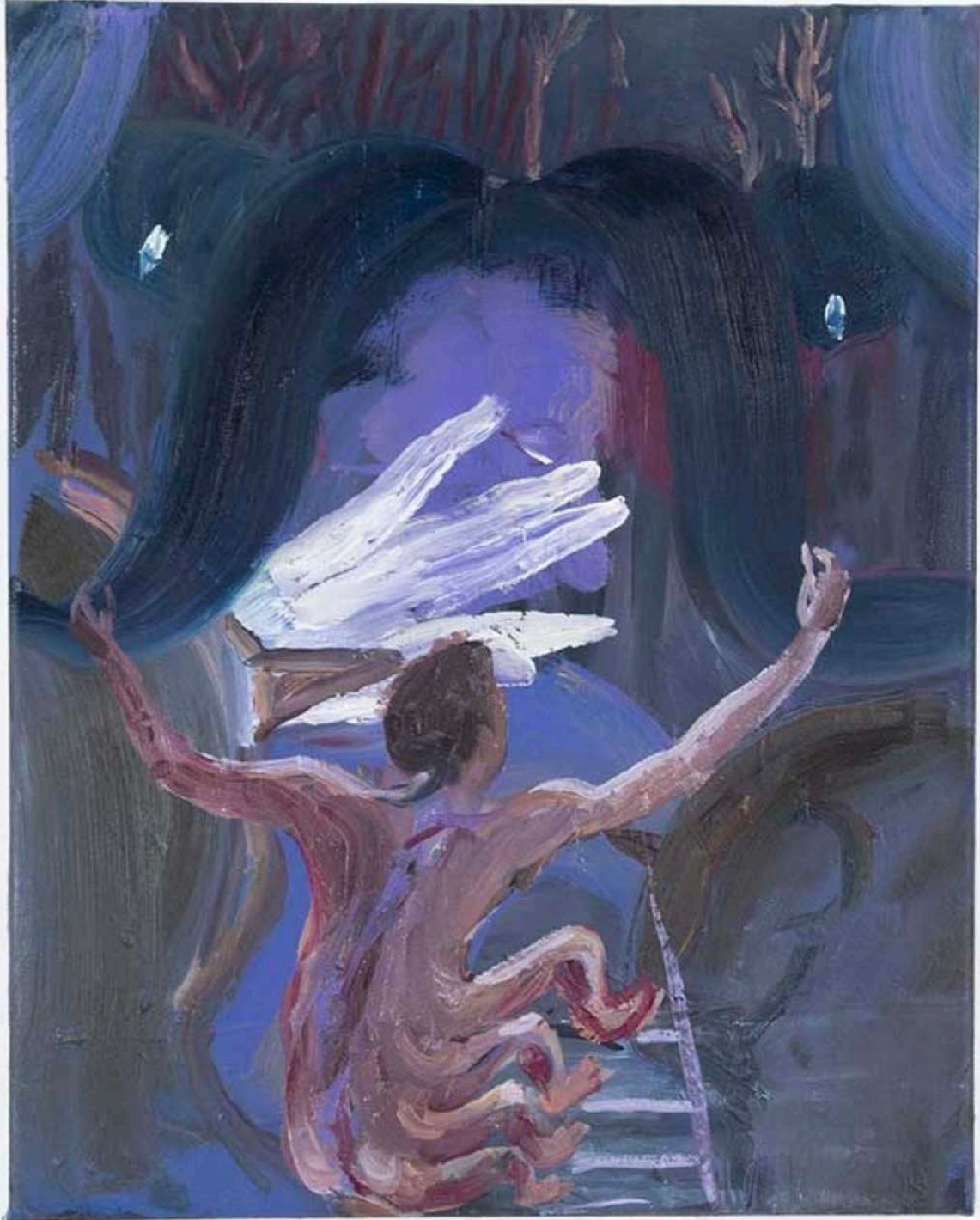
**Always Forward**

Galerist, Istanbul, 2022



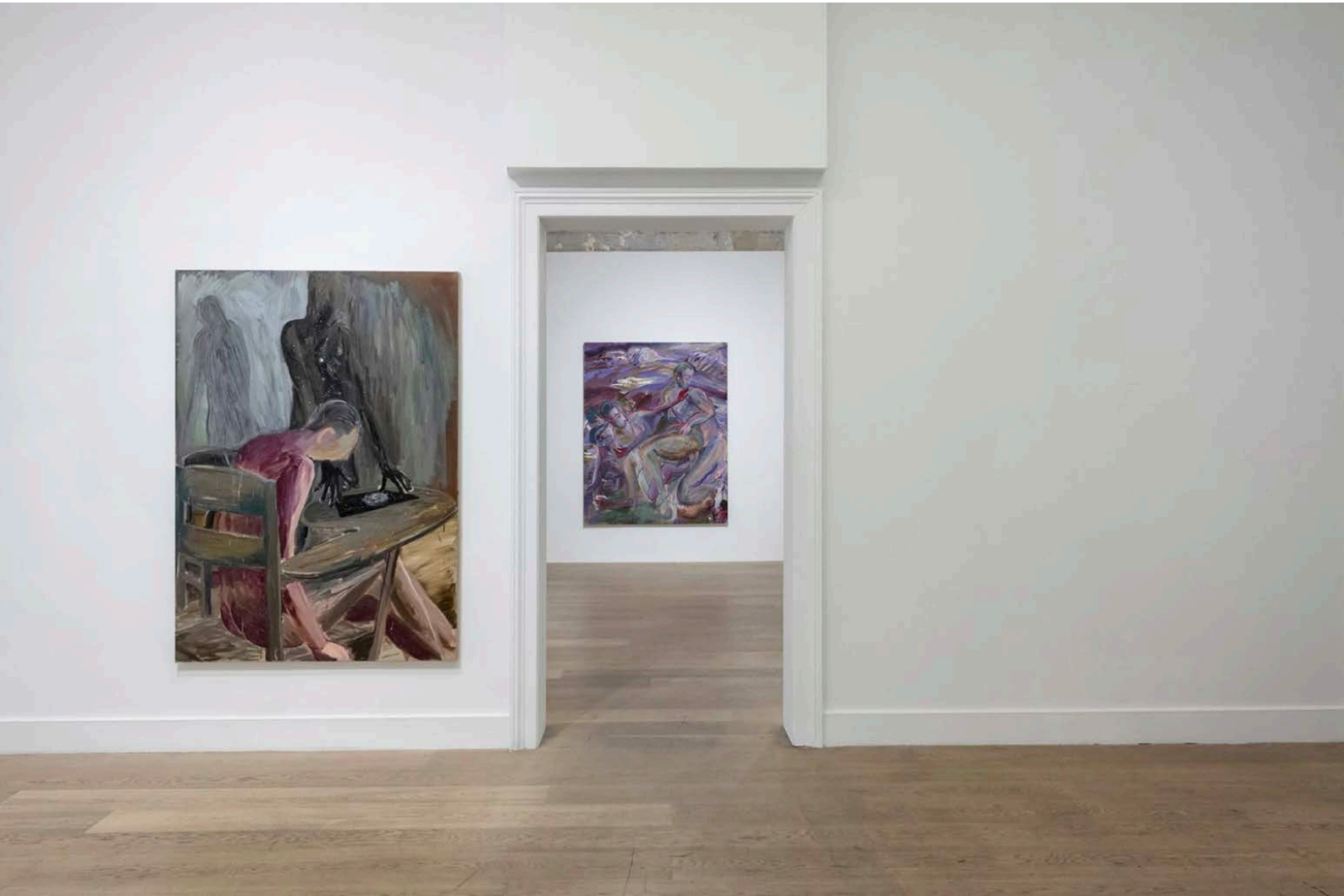


**Always forward (Self-portrait as a Pothead, Wanker and a Painter) Diptych, 2021**  
Oil on canvas  
160 x 280 cm



**Gate, 2022**  
Oil on canvas  
50 x40 cm





Installation View

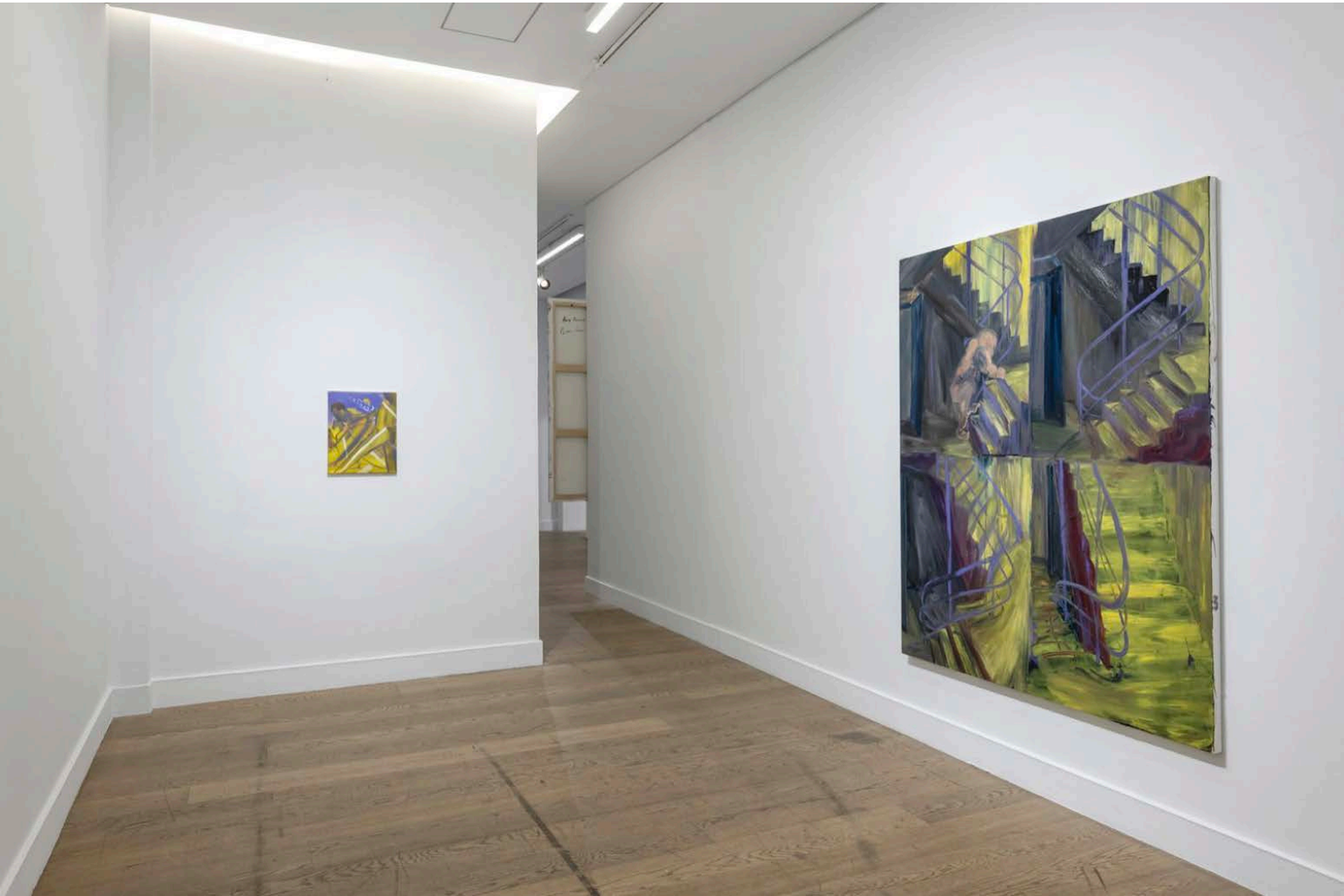
**Always Forward**

Galerist, Istanbul, 2022



**Versatile, 2021**  
Oil on canvas  
200 x 160 cm





Installation View

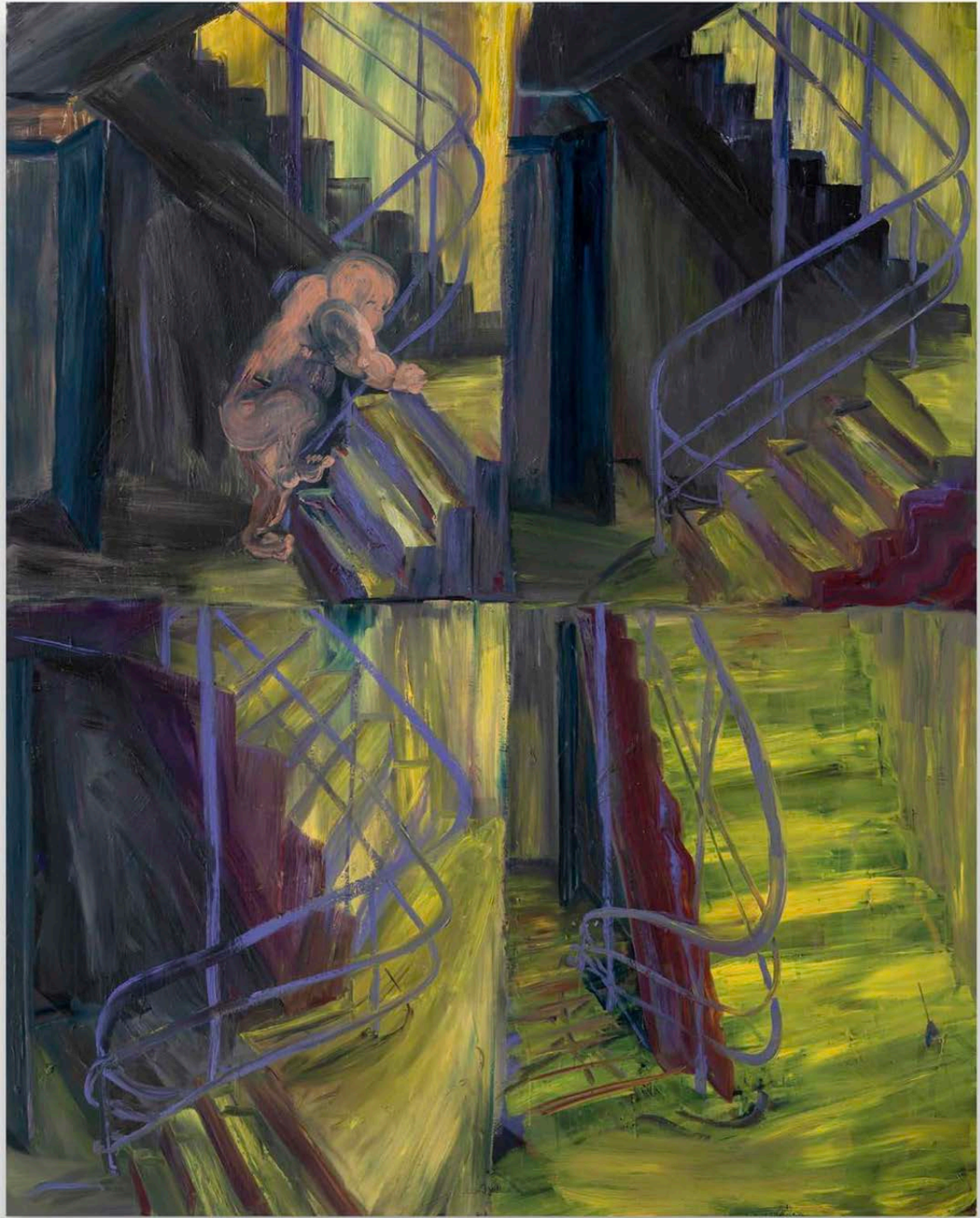
**Always Forward**

Galerist, Istanbul, 2022



**Squid Game, 2022**  
Oil on canvas  
50 x 40 cm





**Beast climbing the staircase, 2022**

Oil on canvas

200 x 160 cm



**Theological Time, Mean Landscape, Circumcision Throne,  
Burping Bird, Auto-censure, Nose as a Walking Stick, Tare,  
Nite Smoking, W15, Measuring the Corner, Dolphin with the  
Woman and The Big Fish, Small Fish\***

**Exile Gallery, Vienna, 2020**



**Theological Time, Middle Landscape, Circumcision Throne, Burping Bird, Self-Censorship, Nose as Walking Stick, Tara, Nite Smoking, W15, Surveying the Corner, Dolphin with Woman, and the Big Fish, Little Fish**

Exile Gallery, Vienna

Except from catalog text by Àngels Miralda, PamPam Publishing, 2021, Berlin.

These ambiguities, redundancies, and deficiencies recall those attributed by Dr. Franz Kuhn to a certain Chinese encyclopedia called *The Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge*. In its distant pages it is written that animals are divided into (a) those that belong to the emperor; (b) embalmed ones; (c) those that are trained; (d) suckling pigs; (e) mermaids; (f) fabulous ones; (g) stray dogs; (h) those that are included in this classification; (i) those that tremble as if they were mad; (j) innumerable ones; (k) those drawn with a very fine camel's-hair brush; (l) etcetera; (m) those that have just broken the flower vase; (n) those that at a distance resemble flies.<sup>1</sup>

Organized in lists, departments, definitions, dictionaries, meanings, boxes, crates, files, folders, encyclopedias, and memory drives lies everything you've ever described, known, felt, and seen. Borges' nod towards the tautological absurdity of analytic philosophy can be summarized by the serious joke of Wittgenstein's *The limits of my language mean the limits of my world*. In this vein, one recognizes that language is both access to the world as well as a prison.

It is in this spirit that Nazim Ünal Yılmaz paints a sharp critique of the analytical universe, and the awkward moment where it comes into contact with the physical world. The title of the exhibition replaces the absurd encyclopedic boxes for all the different types of animals quoted above. His subjects and colors, contours and shadowy purple hues continue the lineage of Borges' magical realism through the narrative construction of painting and installation. A wave of chaotic eruptions, ever-moving evolutionary changes, biological degradation, and the will to break out of the confines of definition give his compositions explosions of color - a proper parallel to the circular drama of a planetary society that lives from pain, survival, and death.

The relation of theology to everyday life is consistent in all of Yılmaz's works, and it is from where this void emerges. Although it is said we live in a secular world, traces of theology remained rooted all around us, and Yılmaz dissects and questions this lineage that still surrounds our every day.

<sup>1</sup> Jorge Louis Borges, *The Analytic Language of John Wilkins*, 1952.



Installation View

**Theological Time, Mean Landscape, Circumcision Throne, Burping Bird, Auto-censure, Nose as a Walking Stick, Tare, Nite Smoking, W15, Measuring the Corner, Dolphin with the Woman and The Big Fish, Small Fish\***

Exile Gallery, Vienna, 2020





**Untitled, 2020**  
Oil on carpet

160 x 230 cm

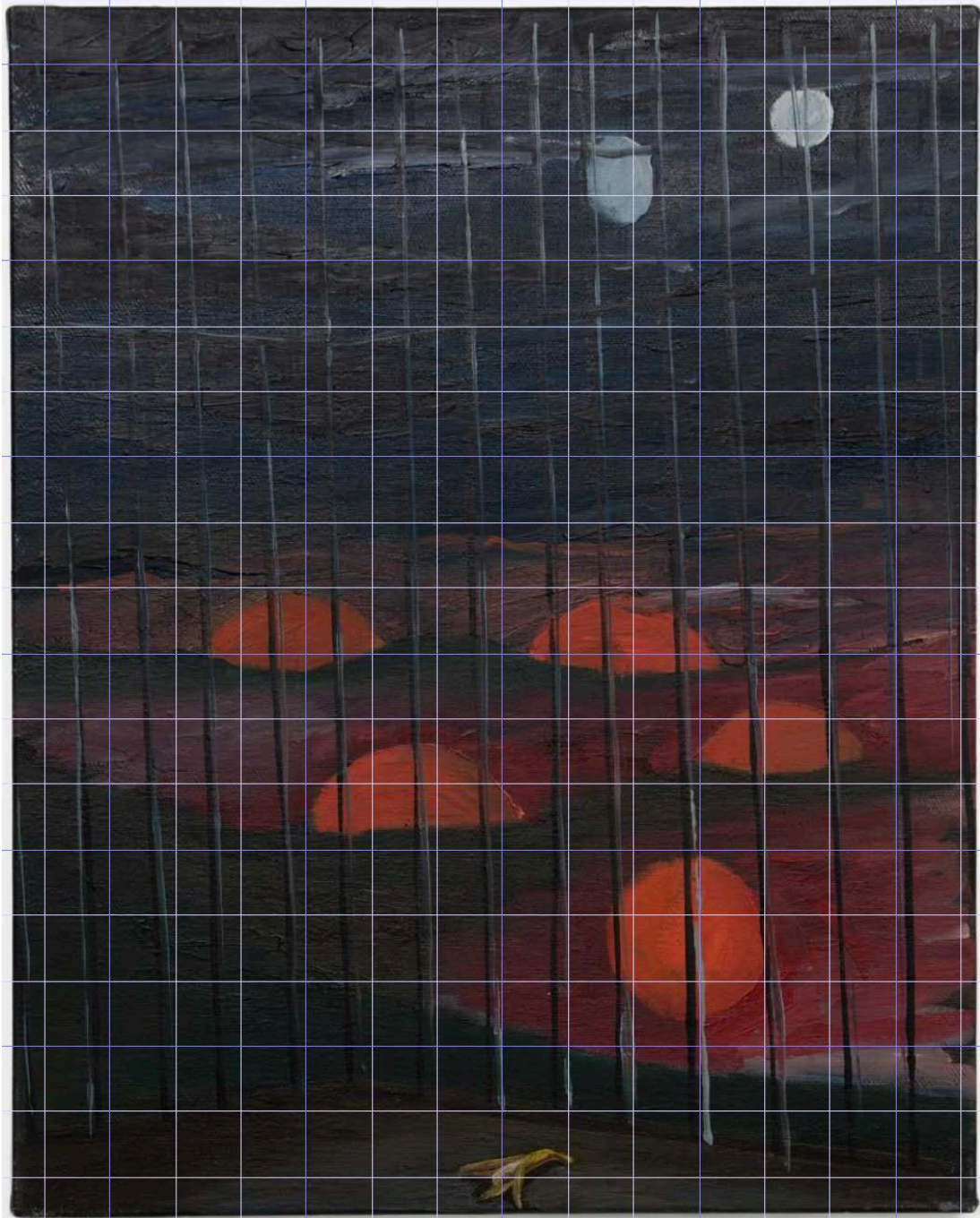


**Theological time, 2014**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm

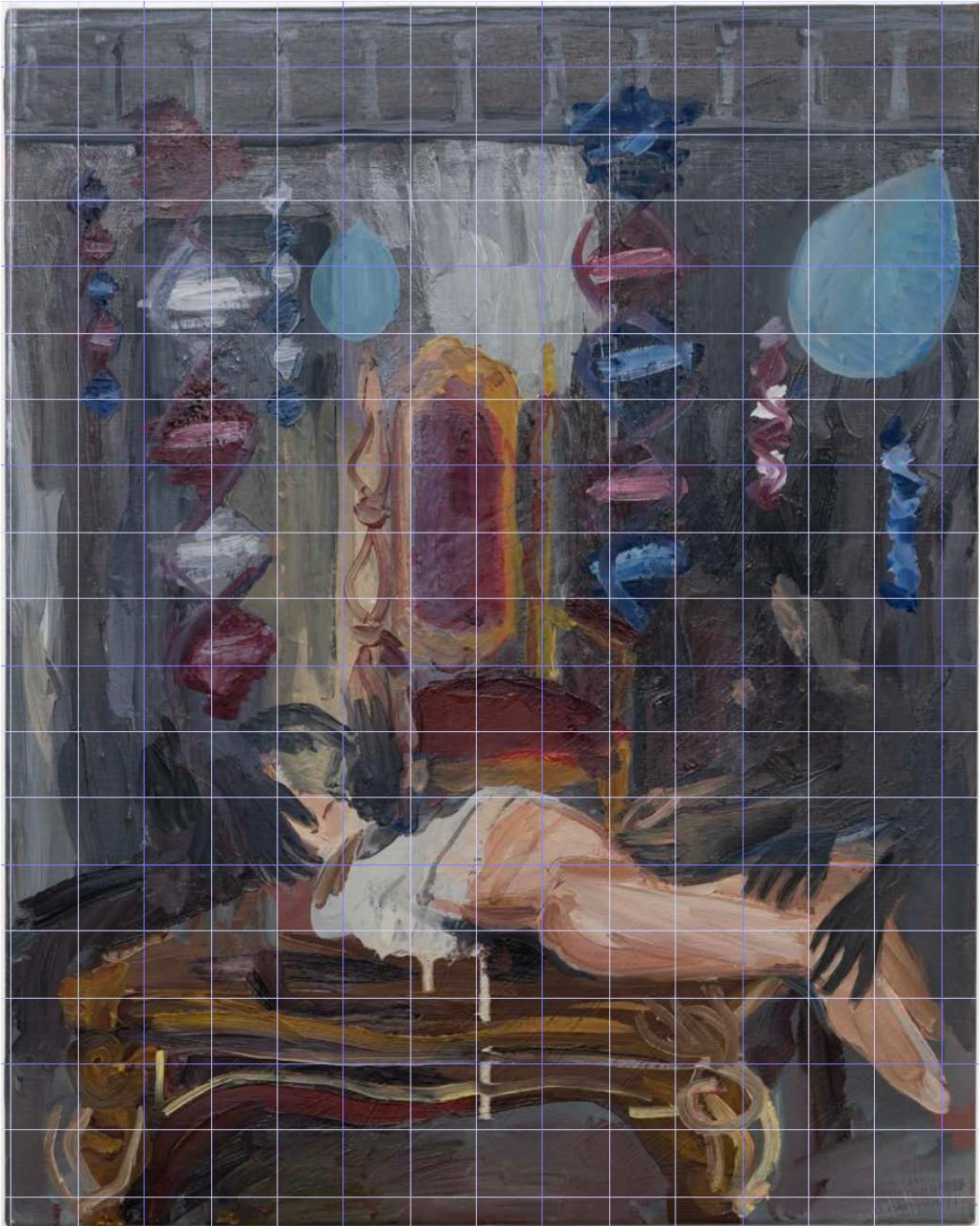




**Mean Landscape, 2014**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm

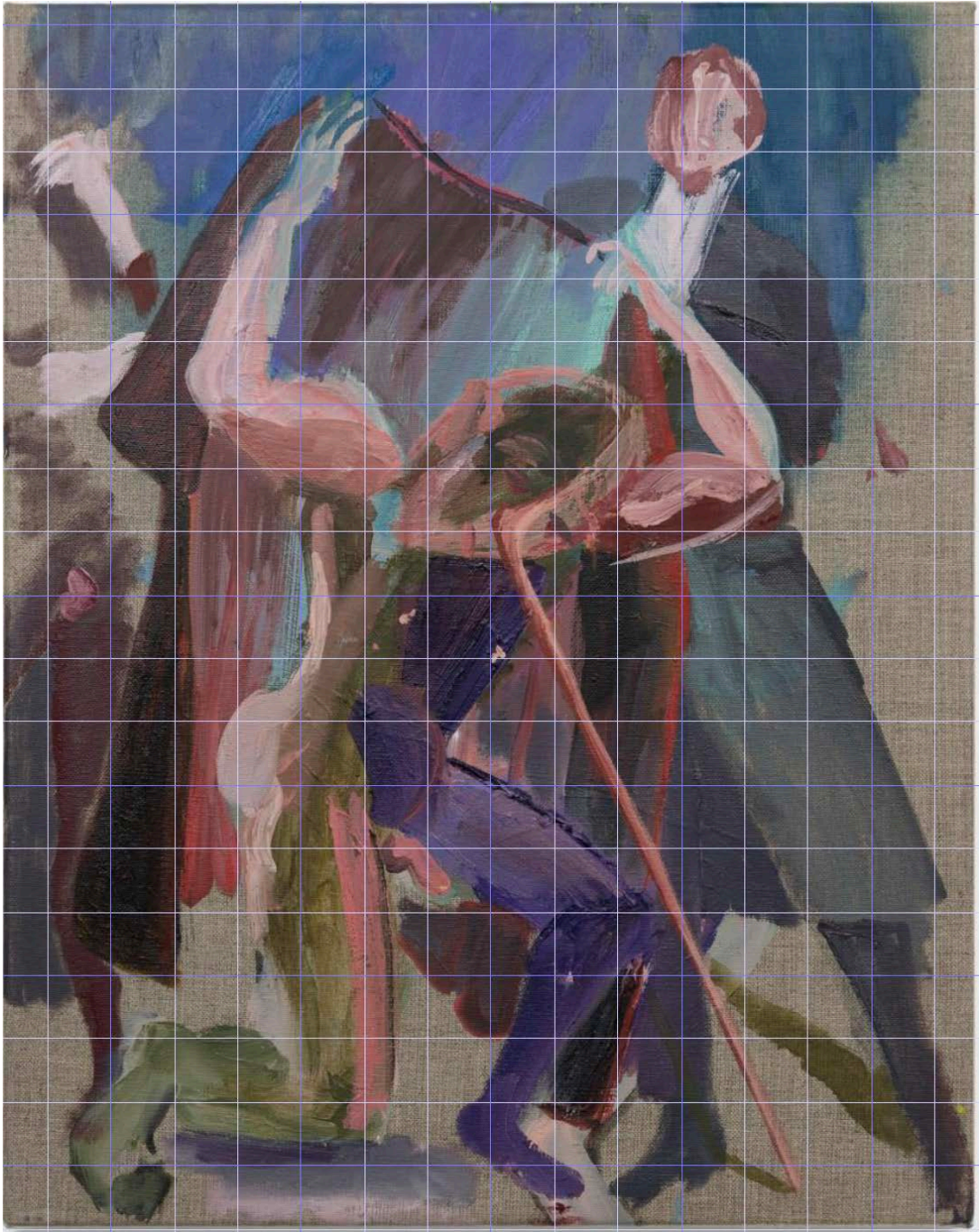


**Circumcision Throne, 2010**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm





**Nose as a Walking Stick, 2019**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm





**Online in Planet Romeo, 2020**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm





**Burping Bird, 2020**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm





**Auto-Censure, 2018**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm





**W15, 2020**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm

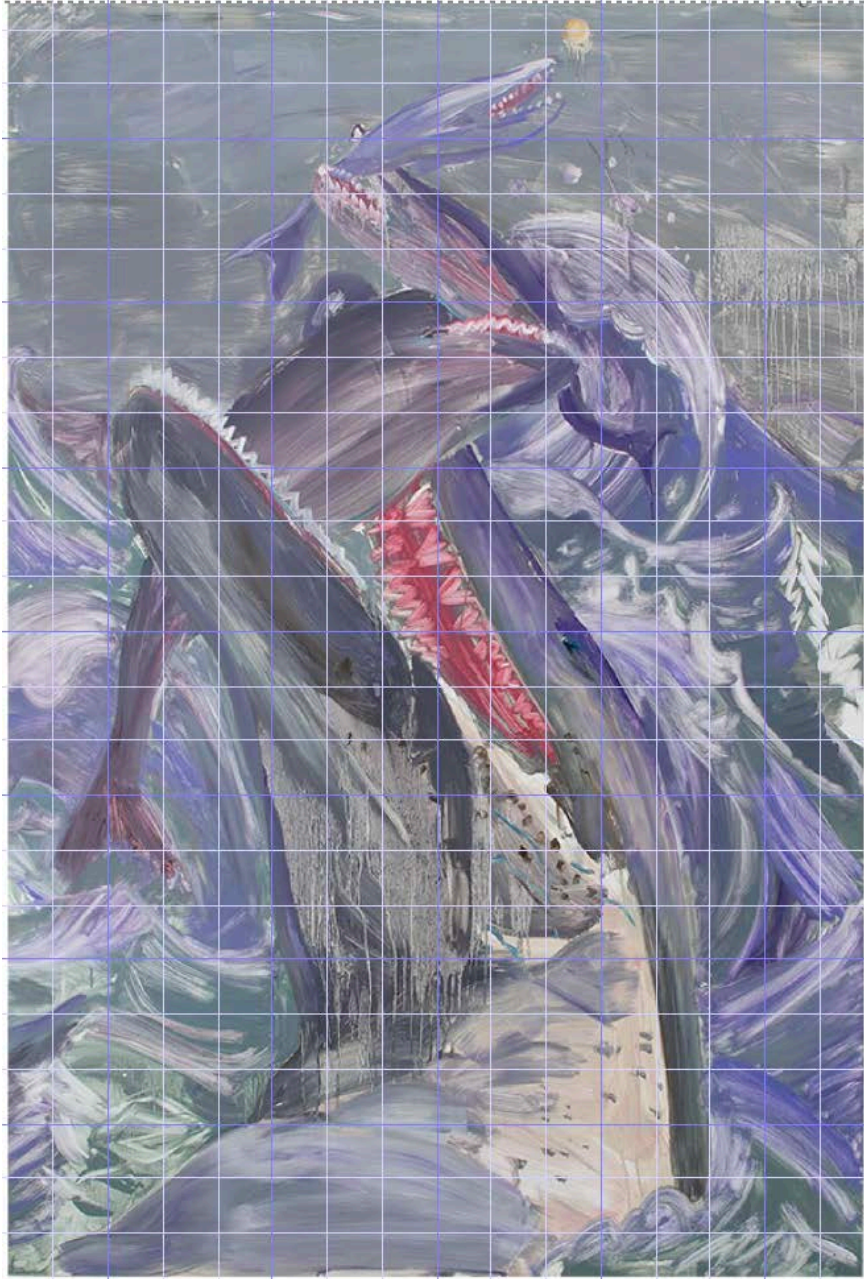


Installation View

**Theological Time, Mean Landscape, Circumcision Throne, Burping Bird, Auto-censure, Nose as a Walking Stick, Tare, Nite Smoking, W15, Measuring the Corner, Dolphin with the Woman and The Big Fish, Small Fish\***

Exile Gallery, Vienna, 2020

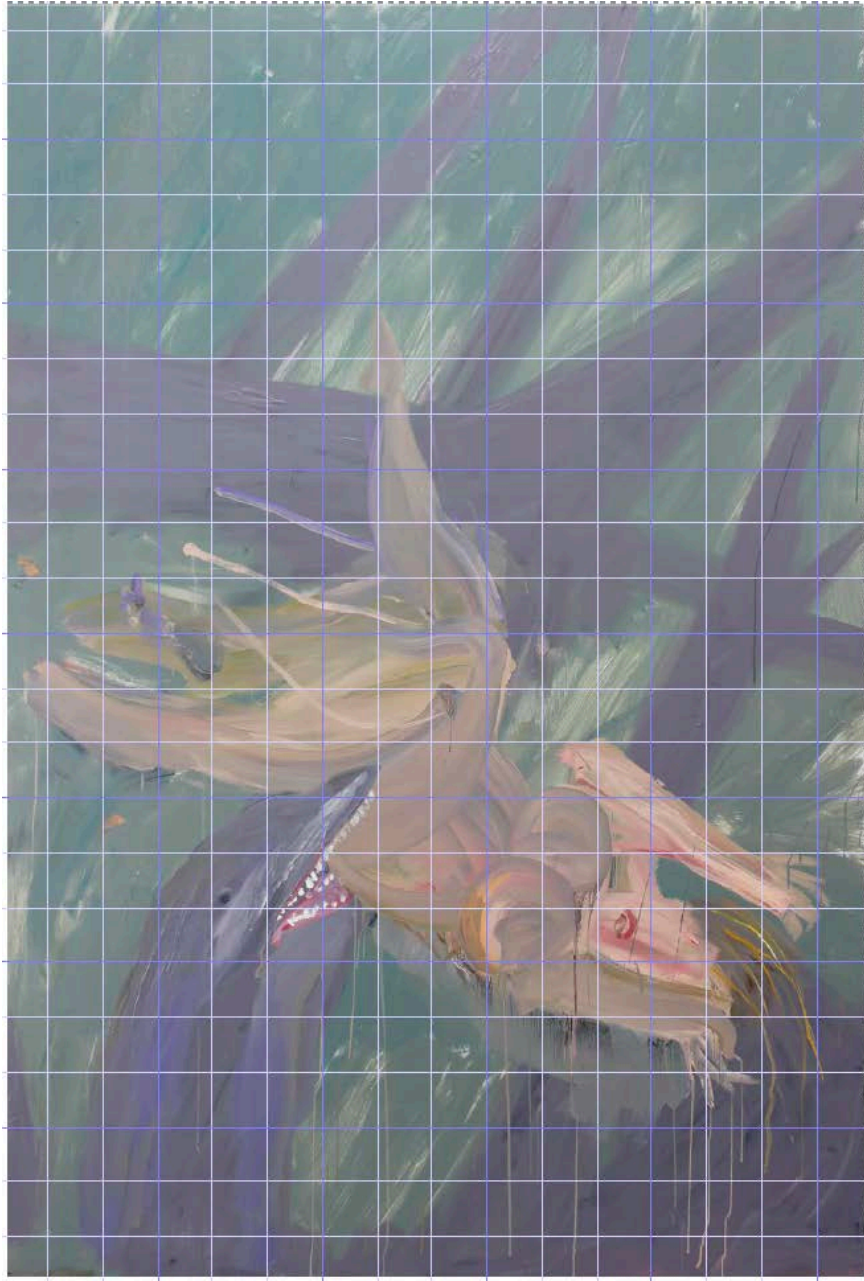




**Big Fish, Small Fish, 2019**

Oil on aluminum

180 x 123 cm



**Dolphin with a Woman, 2019**

Oil on aluminum

180 x 123 cm



# Fieberblasenmond

PSM, Berlin, 2018



## Fieberblasenmond

PSM, Berlin

Text by Nazim Ünal Yilmaz

"It is human to want what we need and it is human, too, to wish for what we don't need but what appears to be desirable. Whereas it is morbid to equally wish for what we need and what seems desirable and to then suffer from the lacking completeness as if we were lacking bread. Exactly that is the misery of romanticism: it wants to reach for the moon - as if it could be taken from the sky." - Fernando Pessoa

When the first human walked on the moon for the first time in 1969, it became clear that, except for the rivalry of the Cold War, there was not much to do for humanity other than to travel to the moon. Indeed, as far we know, a second trip to the moon has not taken place yet - it looks as though the moon has no lovers nowadays. It shones like the round white herpes left behind by lovers.

Disrespect for the cannon of painting while at the same time using and working with it, a certain disrespect for the self and its construction, a candor to cut up both and put them back together - these are features of the paintings in the show. The way I treat the surface of the canvas with a certain carelessness while at the same time being very aware of what I bring to it; even tastelessness, deliberate dilettantism, unpleasant colors, blurriness, are always intended. There is also the fact that I have an interest in dissecting the painterly space and to depict emotional spaces by letting the old clash with the new, the classical frameworks of painting, history and myths with the subjective and/or the contemporary political, and not without humor.





Installation View

**Fieberblasenmond**

PSM, Berlin, 2018



**Study, 2018**

Oil on canvas

180 x 130 cm





**Nite Smoking, 2017**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm





**Tare, 2012**  
Oil on canvas  
50 x 40 cm

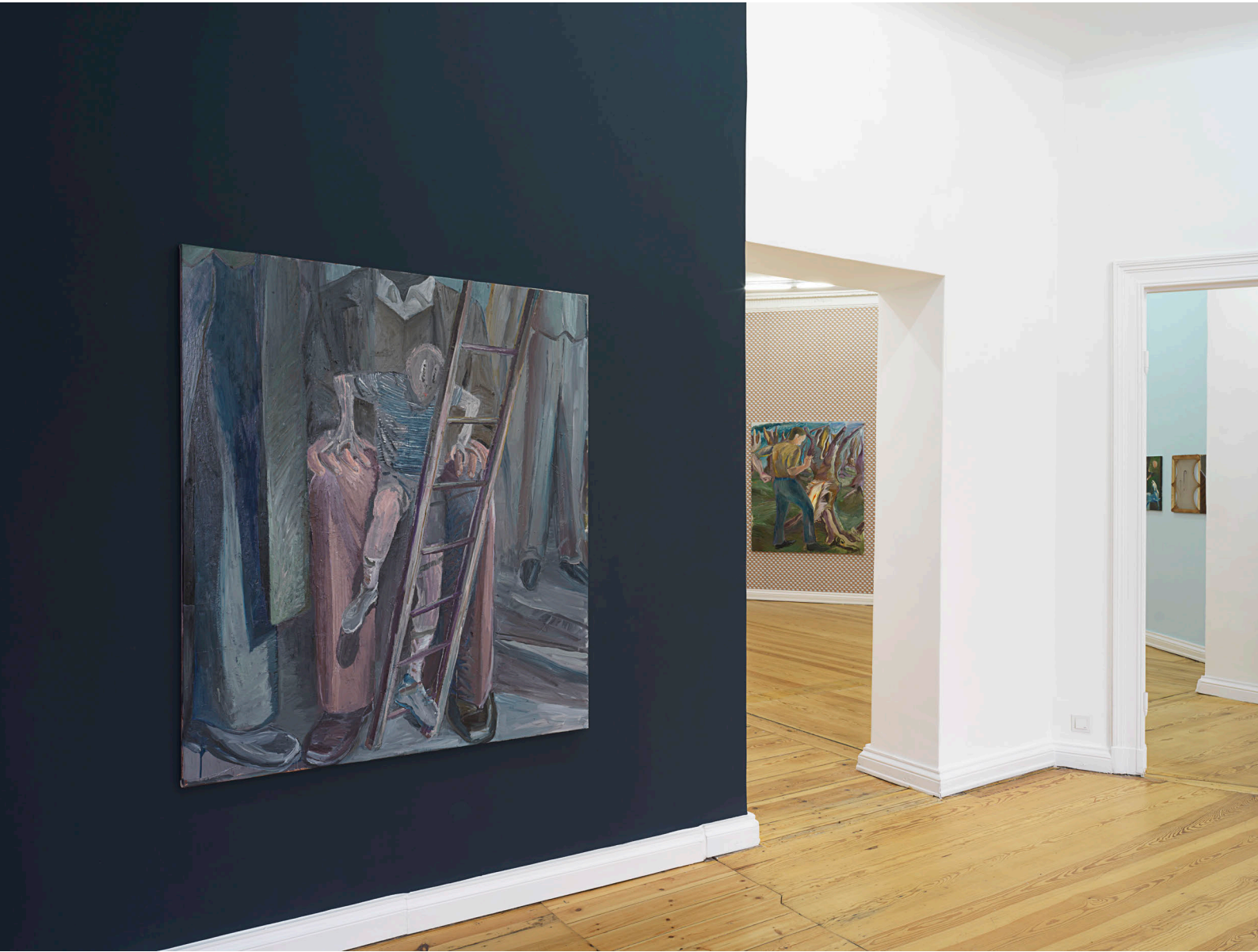




**Atlas, 2018**

Oil on canvas, nail lacquer on nylon

50 x 80 cm



Installation View

**Fieberblasenmond**

PSM, Berlin, 2018





**Leaving the Lap, 2017**

Oil on canvas

159 x 139 cm



Installation View

**Fieberblasenmond**

PSM, Berlin, 2018





**Cruising, 2017**

Oil on canvas

157 x 138 cm





**Moonlight Erosion, 2017**

Oil on canvas

169 x 139 cm





Installation View

**Fieberblasenmond**

PSM, Berlin, 2018





**Sea Horses, 2017**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm





**Confronting Daphne, 2017**

Oil on canvas

160 x 135 cm

## Sibel's Beauty Parlor

Gallery Sanatorium, Istanbul, 2017





## Sibel's Beauty Parlor

Gallery Sanatorium, Istanbul

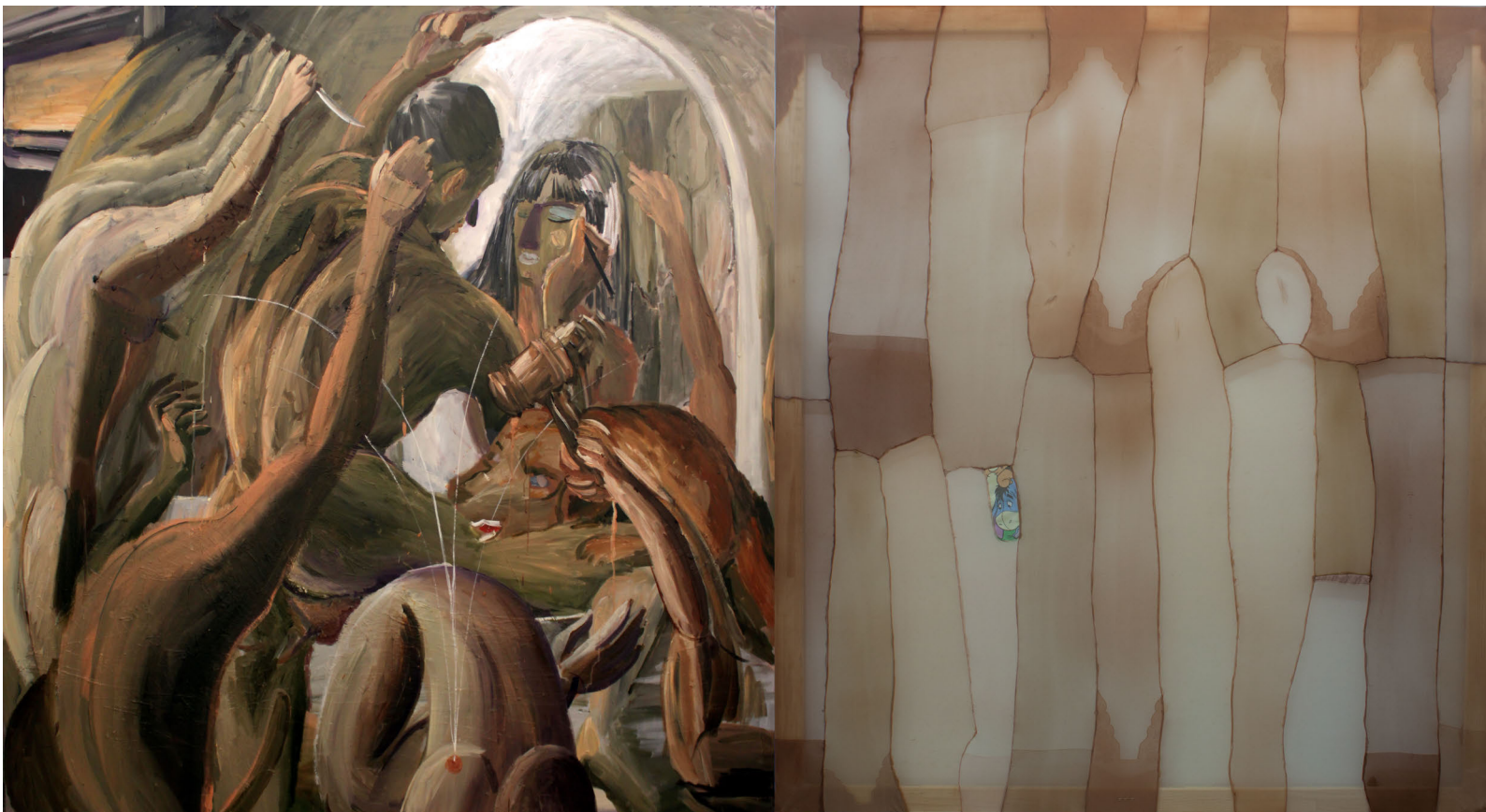
Excerpt from catalog text *Love is Colder than Death* by William J. Simmons, Sanatorium Publishing, 2017.

Sibel is a Turkish name that I use as a cross-dresser. Many paintings show my youthful feelings about my body and identity. However, a murder news story I read in the newspaper was the trigger for the main work in this exhibition. Her pimp stabbed a cross-dresser sex worker named Sibel in the back while she was putting on make-up. Turkey ranks second in the world and first in Europe for murders of transgender people, and no murder is considered a hate crime. However, many transgender people involved in sex and night life work say that after earning enough, they will open a beauty salon, but they are murdered long before that day.

"The essence of queer life is the missed connection, the misremembered reflection, the darkened back room that obscures identities, the alleyway where everyone and no one can see you. Our existence as queer people always thrives in spaces that are in a constant state of insecurity and renegotiation. Bodies intermingle and defy gender; sexual acts reject the notions of public and private. These reconfigured boundaries - the constant twists and turns of identity, and the constricting and expanding spaces between and within bodies - represent the essence of art history as well as queerness.

Nazim Ünal Yılmaz has created an art historically significant body of work in this regard, but it combines this critical and intellectual element with a deeply emotional register. This is a distillation, perhaps, of the experience of running eternally parallel to that stranger who catches your eye - never intersecting, but nevertheless sharing the same psychic and erotic space. It follows that his work always straddles the line between abstraction and figuration - a combination that makes his dream scapes at once known to us and estranged. In this vein, Yılmaz suggests, "even though I like telling stories, I prefer the viewer to not get the story all at once, but rather to spend time in front of the canvas to grip their appreciation of an entangled, fragmented composition." This multiplicity of meanings is central to the importance of Yılmaz' operation. Yılmaz makes sophisticated art historical references, only to complicate them with a personal approach to art-making that reworks accepted genres and histories.

Imagine a history too fraught to recount, a history that lies broken and battered on the floor. Imagine a history that has died a cruel death like the redheaded individual in *Lake Diptych*. Of course, it is the function of art history and the critic to resuscitate time, to check that everything ticks properly, to ensure that a discernible narrative can be created from disparate events. In this way, Yılmaz' work is the perfect antithesis to a normative art history. His paintings can be placed within and beside the most important moments of art history, and yet there is never a perfect match or a seamless transition. This is perhaps the most important contribution that an artist can make - to resist the very idea of art history and force critics and historians to examine their methodologies.



**Murder of Sibel, 2017**

Dyptich, oil on canvas, nylon socks

180 x 360 cm





Installation View

**Sibel's Beauty Parlor**

Gallery Sanatorium, Istanbul, 2017



**Ugly Duckling, 2016**

Oil on canvas

160 x 140 cm





**Make Up Desk I, 2017**

Oil on canvas

160 x 135 cm



**Make Up Desk II, 2017**

Oil on canvas

160 x 135 cm

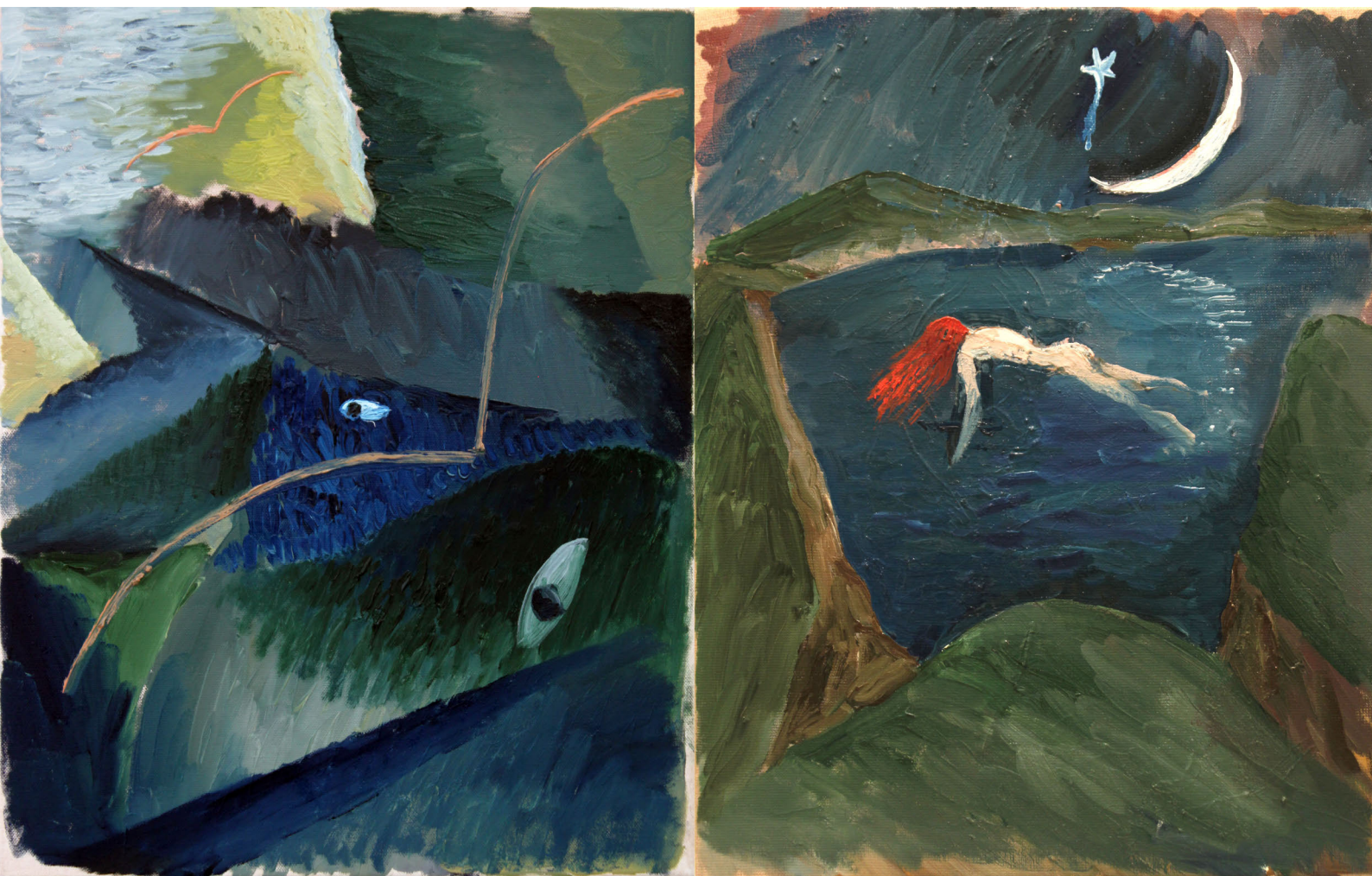




**New Furniture, 2013**

Installation, make up on towel, oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm



Lake Diptych, 2016

Oil on canvas

50 x 80 cm





Detail

**Elite Hands**

Performance with Ipek Hamzaogluat

Gallery Sanatorium, Istanbul, 2017

## Sibel's Beauty Parlor

### Elite Hands / Elite Eller (performance 13.05.2017)

Artists Ipek Hamzaoğlu and Nazım Ünal Yılmaz collaborated for the performance *Elite Eller*, which was an extension of a performance evening titled *Pansy Nail Salon* by Hamzaoğlu and Jessyca R. Hauser. Hamzaoğlu and Yılmaz both painted the nails of exhibition visitors in the off-space school in Vienna in July 2016 and were asked to change the scale, interaction and temporality of their medium whilst reflecting on what is considered 'feminine labor.' Their response is based on queer feminist theorist Sara Ahmed's *Strange Encounters* in which she examines the relationship between strangers, embodiment and community. The artists try to adopt her theories through the connection of hands, personal care, conversations and intimacy with the performance visitors.

Yılmaz and Hamzaoğlu developed the project for *Pansy Nail Salon* as an extension of Yılmaz's solo show *Sibel's Beauty Parlor*, where the works were created by his trans-alter-ego Sibel. Yılmaz's paintings function like a diary. They merge the autobiographical with stories seen in the newspaper, transforming the narratives into a broader social subtext. His works feature elements related to make-up and body prosthetics, which are associated with the opposite sex and nod to aspects of our identity that are negotiable or may 'slip.' *Sibel's Beauty Parlor* presents an installation consisting of performance, objects, and paintings and positions marginalized sexual identities next to masculine violence, whilst alluding to abstract and figurative traditions.

For the performance, the gallery setting was turned into a nail salon in which Yılmaz performed the nail artist and Hamzaoğlu the owner of the salon. The performance took place within the opening hours of the commercial art gallery Sanatorium in Istanbul, Turkey. For a day, gallery visitors functioned as guests of the salon, set in a pink color scheme. Yılmaz and Hamzaoğlu thereby challenged the relationship between the artist and the gallery as well as the consumer and their feminized labor tasks.

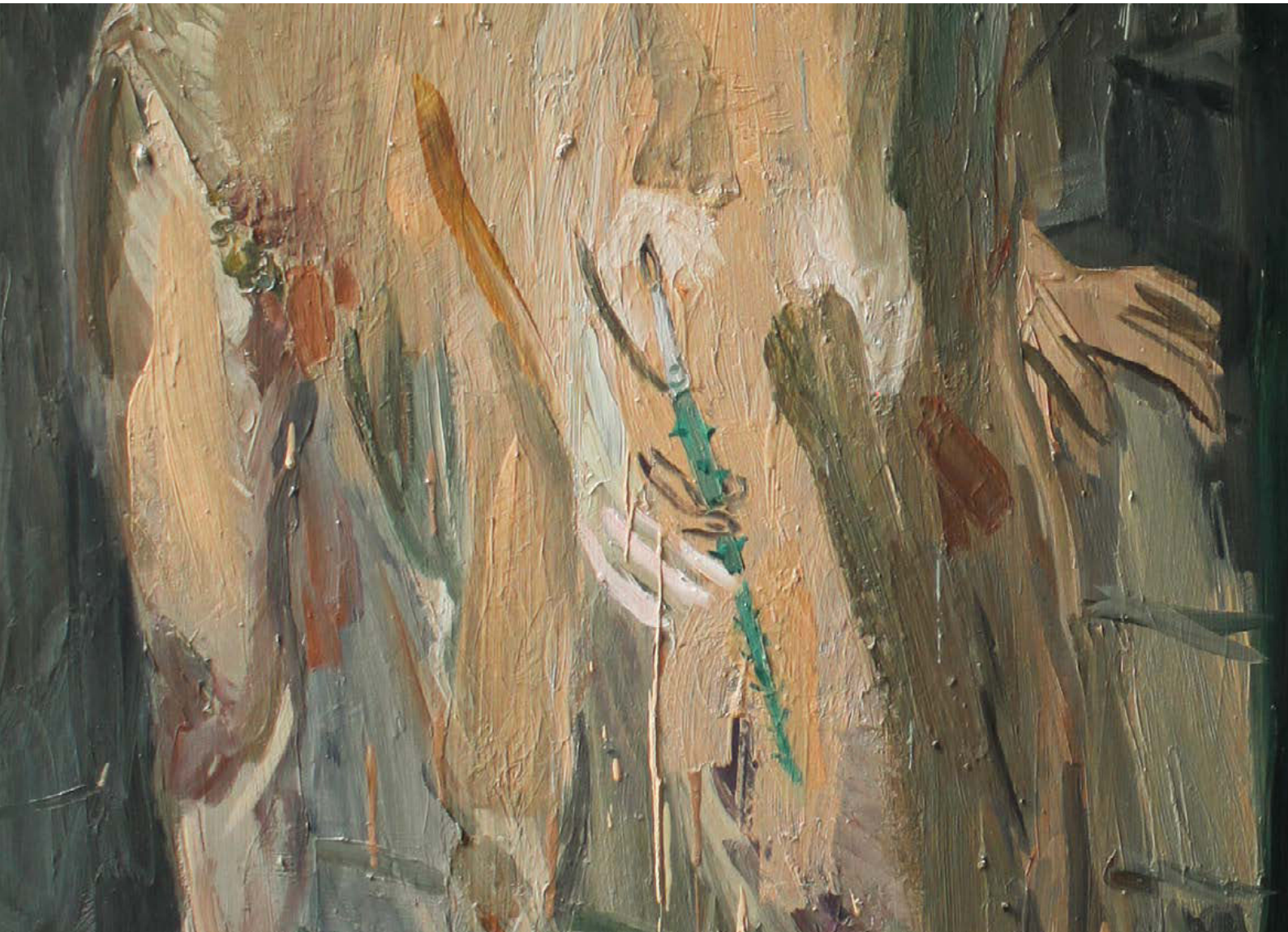
Upon entering, guests were seated in a waiting area at the entrance of the gallery where they could look at a small booklet featuring different nail designs that was created by the artists. While waiting, the guests were served tea and coffee to make them feel welcomed and comfortable. The table, where Yılmaz was painting their nails, stood hidden behind the show's folding screen *Birds*, changing its function within the performance setting and providing a private atmosphere in which intimate conversations could take place.

For the performance, Yılmaz and Hamzaoğlu embodied their transgender alter-egos and spoke to their guests about personal experiences, the news and characters from popular soap operas. They suggest that gossip and informal conversations can be feminist strategies that are shared in an intimate atmosphere, set within the real and fictional.



# Hotel Principles

The Function Room, London, 2015



## Hotel Principles

The Function Room, London, 2017

Excerpt from catalog text by Anthony Aurbach. Published by Vargas Organisation, 2016, London.

A staircase. After four treads, four risers, it splits to the right. Up a few steps, a corridor recedes into the distance under the chin of a looming, pale silhouette. Continuing its upward spiral, the stair is doubled by the rail looping over the shoulder of the same figure. The exits are vague, almost implausible. Up: to the left; ahead: down the corridor; right: through an arch; down: the empty, banister-wrapped shaft of the stairwell. A coil of rope hangs round the pale figure's neck, half-forming a noose. On the stair, where it divides, something lies abandoned, something indecisive, a disarticulated insect, an animate bra strewn in the steps of a nude descending a staircase. The cupped creature strives with halting gait, while a gull-like, pink braid contour points downward, and paint-drip traces assert the pull of gravity. The painting itself stems from a photograph of a staircase inside a derelict hotel. Yilmaz took the photograph in Bad Ems, the German spa town that is still celebrating the noble and notable visitors of the late Romantic era who went there for the cure.

Stairs, like hotels and cure resorts, are ambivalent and unheimlich \_ that is to say, places we are not at home, strangely familiar, possibly uncanny. They appear and reappear in Yilmaz's paintings as echoes of stairs the artist has known (or we might have known), and as ciphers of ambivalence.

While steps always seem to go up, to promise a higher, better situation, to symbolize progress, they remain in between and indifferent to the traffic. Going up with the hope of sex, sleep and forgetting; up further to the poet's attic of irrecoverable memory; down, with disappointment, to the mundane world; and lower, according to the bourgeois dreamer trapped in his parents' house, to the incoherent, metaphorical cellar where fear resides.

The image of the hooded prisoner that first came out in 2004 after it was submitted, among hundreds more, to the Criminal Investigation Command of the United States Army, quickly became the icon of a scandal without consequences. While the images that came out of Abu Ghraib were help up in protest all over the world, they seem resistant to the artistic detournement. Perhaps because, as Stephen Eisenman has suggested, they already belong to a forceful tradition. Eisenman claims an iconography of degradation links the Abu Ghraib images with a central motif in Western art (using Aby Warburg's term, a 'pathos formula') in which eroticized images of bodies bound, tortured and defeated are displayed for the glorification of the powerful. His point isn't that the Abu Ghraib images merit comparison with masterpieces of art, but that art is the vector of comparable ideologies and that art history pre-figures or pre-determines the reception of the Abu Ghraib images in the West.

Yilmaz touches on a reality that remains outside of painting. Yet, what enters into painting is not an empty reference to torture and violence in general and their exploitation in the media, but a parallel reality mediated by the painter himself, an invisible experience represented in images. Yilmaz's ambivalence is the distance that remain in the embrace. Without debt to father or fatherland, Yilmaz inhabits the unfamiliar. In painting, even as a boy, even as he keeps his own company, Yilmaz enters a tradition in which he confronts himself as other.





**Hotel Principles, 2015**

Oil on canvas

160 x 140 cm





**Landscape with an UFO, 2015**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm





**Don't Rise Up, Sun, 2015**

Oil on canvas

40 x 50 cm



**The Locomotive, 2015**

Oil on canvas

160 x 140 cm





**Butterflies Couldn't Help, 2015**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm





**Pawn, 2015**

Oil on canvas

160 x 125 cm

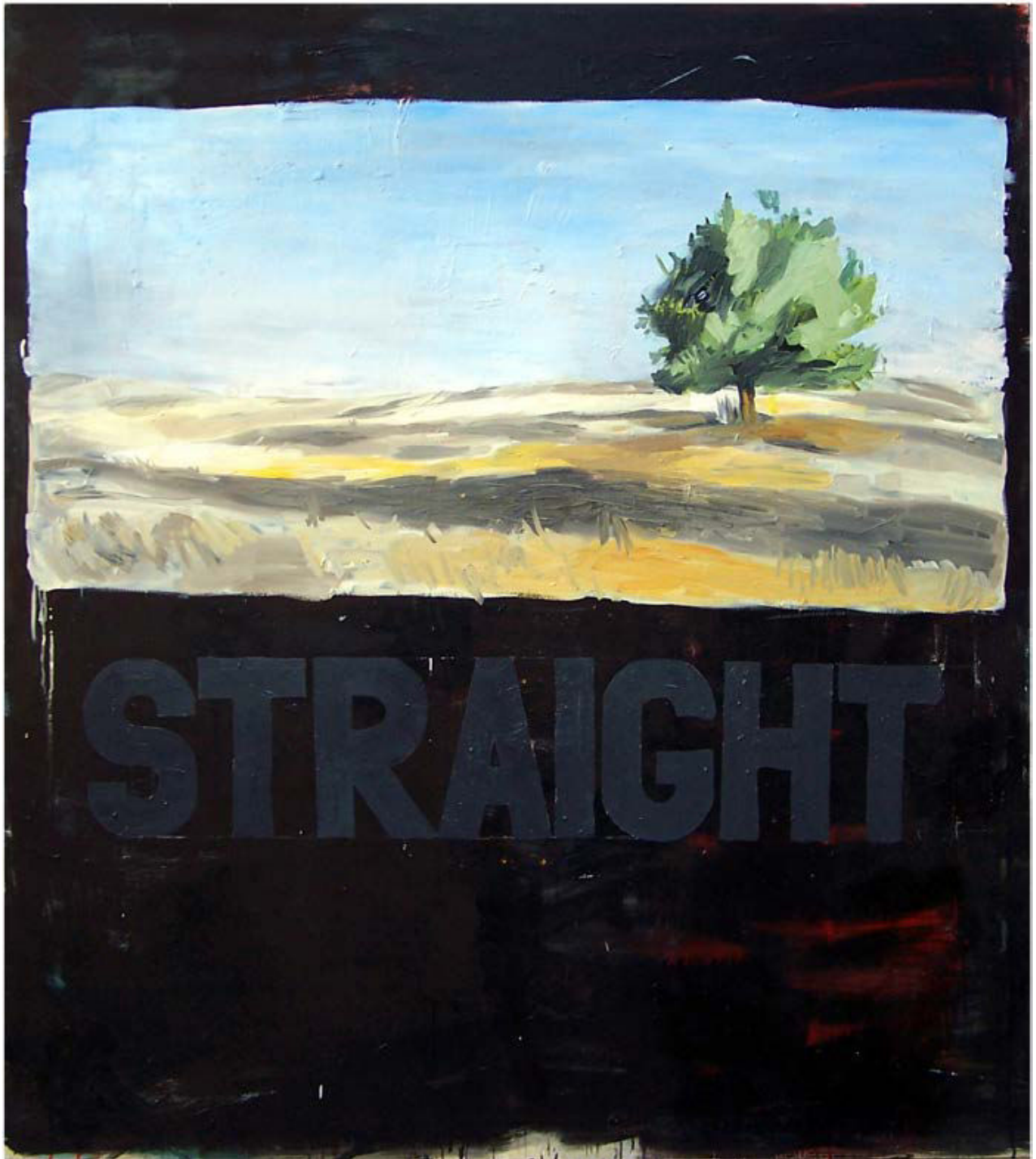




**Nudes on the Staircase, 2015**

Oil on canvas

160 x 125 cm

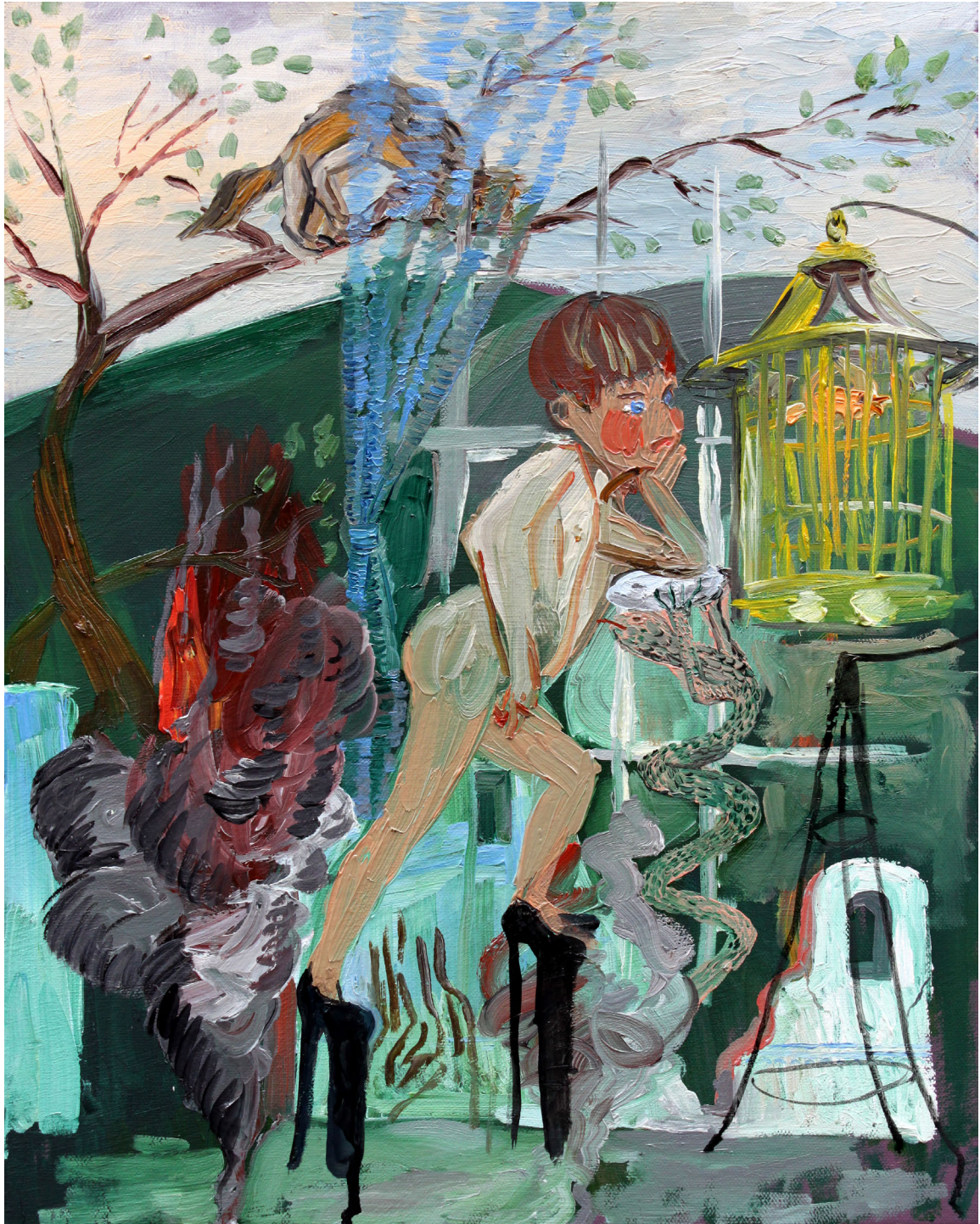


**Straight, 2015**

Oil on canvas

180 x 160 cm





**Melancholia, 2015**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm





**Childroom II, 2015**

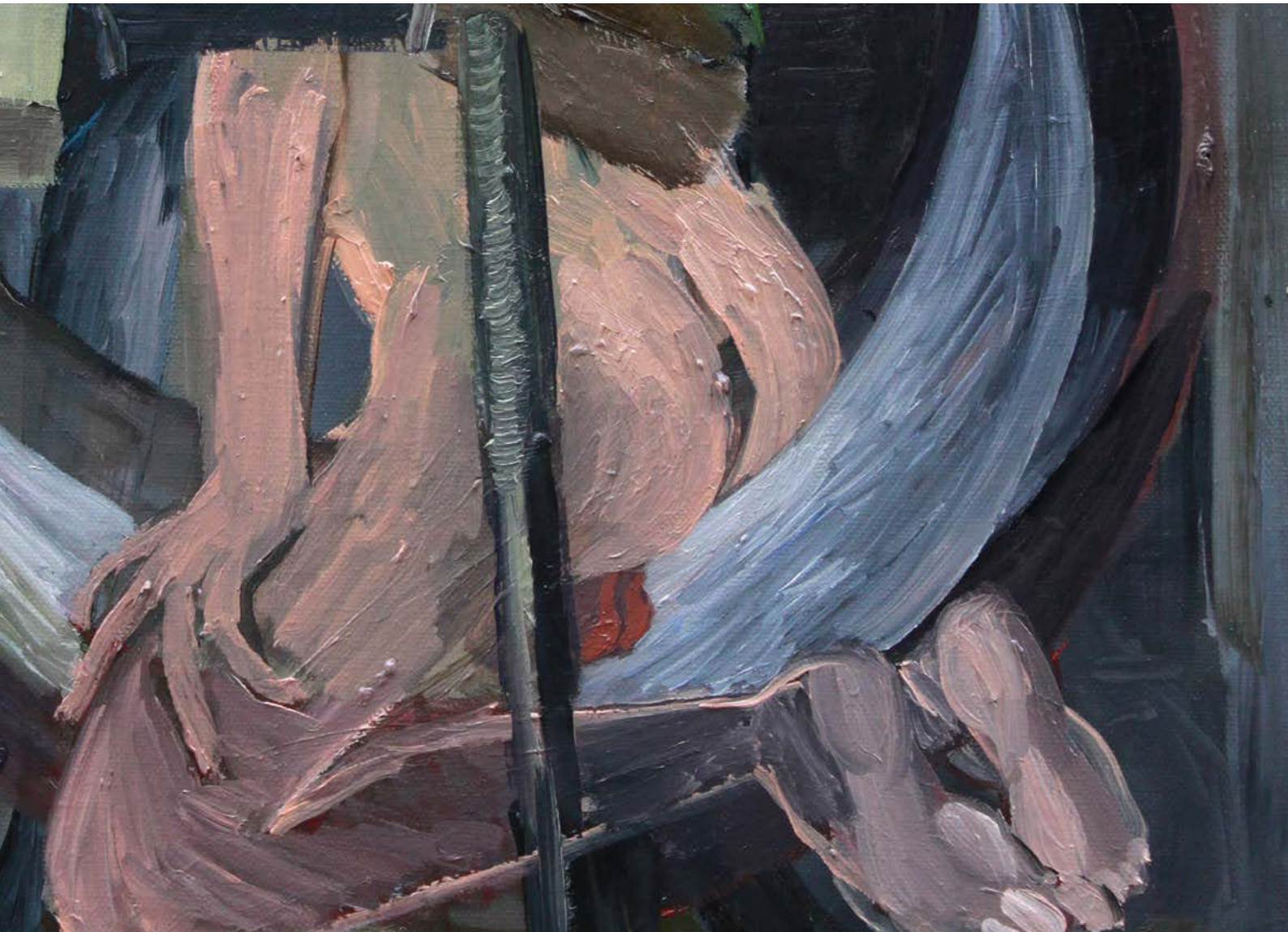
Oil on canvas

50 x 43 cm



# Waiting for the Barbarians

Pilevneli Project, Istanbul, 2012



## Waiting for the Barbarians

Pilevneli Project, Istanbul, 2012

Excerpt from exhibition text *Painting as a Field of Free Existence and Act of Resistance* by Markus Graf

Nazim Ünal Yılmaz' painting in his recent show *Waiting for the Barbarians* is a sensible balance between dealing with matters of the private and the public by merging personal story with social history. Their combination of poetics with politics as well as their ability to renew the language of expressive figurative painting gives his pieces strength and individuality. Although dealing with issues like identity and nationality as well as personal freedom, due to their fragmented character, the paintings are not didactic, polemic or pedagogic, but invite the spectator to actively participate in the decoding of the painting in order to free him from his usual role of being a passive receiver.

Instead of presenting coherent images, the spectator of Nazim Ünal Yılmaz's work faces a pluralistic and heterogeneous universe, in which he has to draw relations between its various formal and conceptual elements. Only then, the spectator can gain insight in Yılmaz's painterly world, which at the same time refers to the realities we live in.





**Landscape, 2010**

Oil on canvas

160 x 140 cm





**Flag, 2010**  
Oil on canvas  
120 x 170 cm



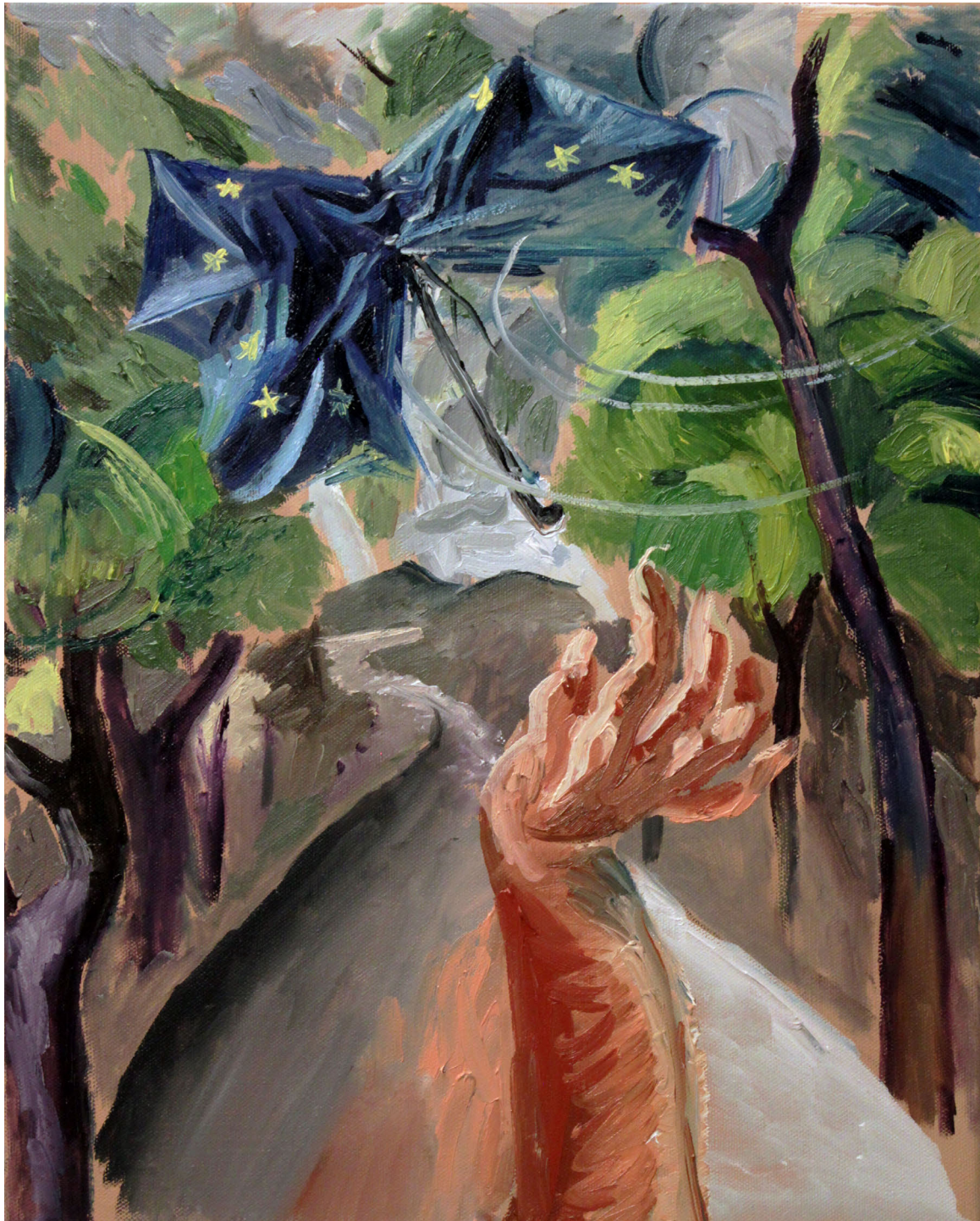


**Europe, 2007**

Oil on canvas

150 x 120 cm





**Wind took it away, 2012**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm





**Obama's Tool, 2011**

Oil on canvas

40 x 50 cm





**Cowboy, 2012**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm



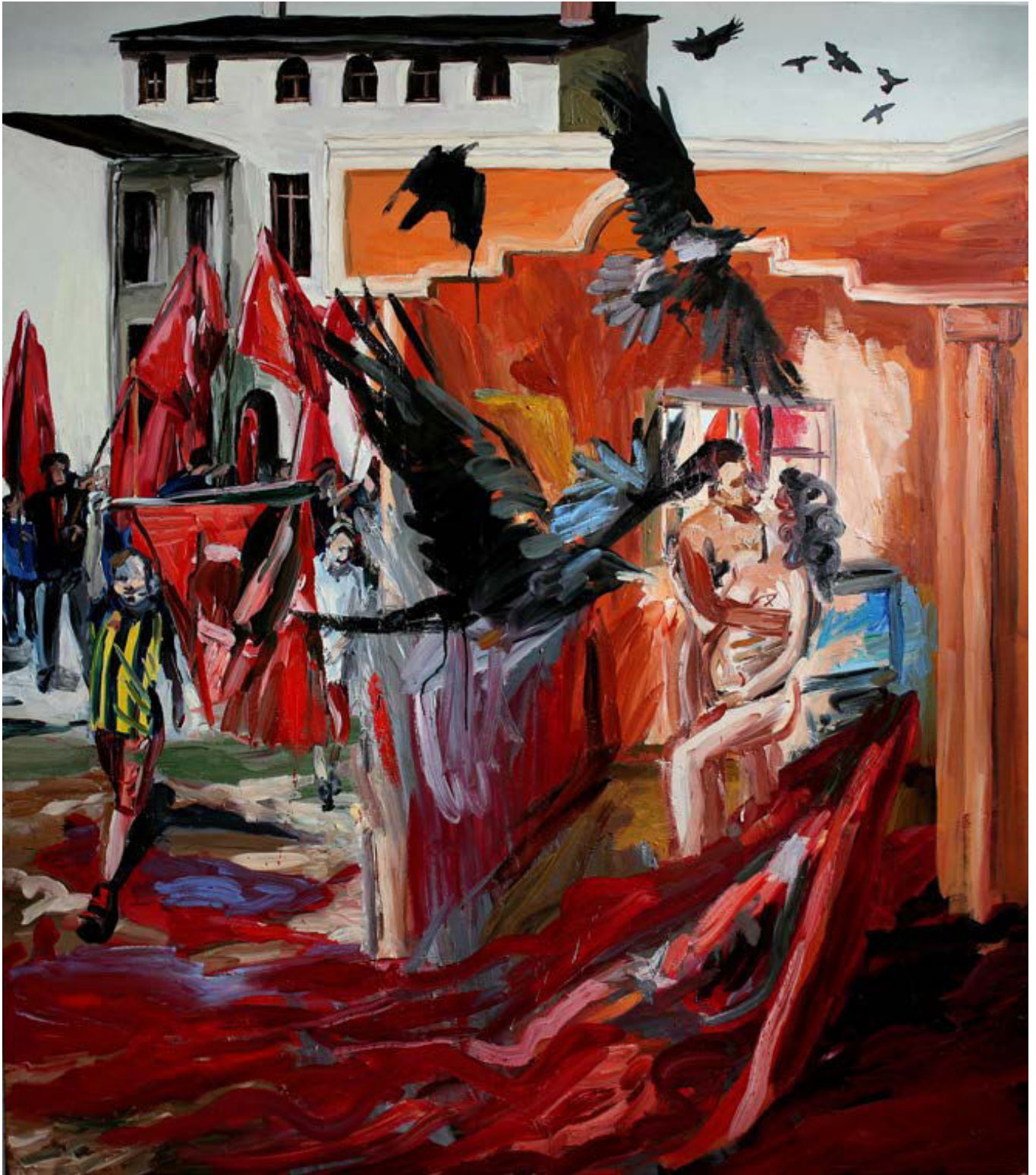


**Circus, 2012**

Oil on canvas

50 x 40 cm





**Birth of a Nation, 2011**

Oil on canvas

160 x 140 cm





## **NAZIM ÜNAL YILMAZ**

Born 1981 in Trabzon, Turkey. Lives and works in Vienna, Austria.

### **Education**

#### **2005-2010**

Diplom, Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien, Class of Daniel Richter

### **Solo exhibitions**

#### **2024**

Galleria Michela Rizzo, Venice, Italy.

#### **2023**

Ball auf der Nase, PSM, Berlin, Germany.

Nazim Ünal Yılmaz, Harkawik, New York, USA.

#### **2022**

Always Forward, Galerist, Istanbul, Turkey.

#### **2020**

Theological Time, Mean Landscape, Circumcision Throne, Burping Bird, Auto-censure, Nose as a Walking Stick, Tare, Nite Smoking, W15, Measuring the Corner, Dolphin with the Woman and The Big Fish, Small Fish, Exile Gallery, Vienna, Austria.

#### **2018**

Fieberblasenmond / Cold-sore Moon, PSM, Berlin, Germany.

#### **2017**

Sibel Beauty Parlor, Gallery Sanatorium, Istanbul, Turkey.

Ali the Albino, OJ, Istanbul, Turkey.

#### **2015**

Hotel Principles, The Function Room, London, UK.

Blue Justice, Mekan68, Vienna, Austria.

#### **2014**

Self-portrait with a Gorilla, The Function Room, London, UK.

#### **2012**

Waiting for the Barbarians, Pilevneli Project, Istanbul, Turkey.

#### **2007**

Straight, Gallery Kunstbüro, Vienna, Austria.

### **Selected two-person exhibitions**

#### **2017**

If I cannot fuck, it is not my tradition (with Özlem Ünlü), OJ, Istanbul, Turkey.

#### **2013**

Transtone (with Kay Walkowiak), Krokus Gallery, Bratislava, Slovakia.

#### **2011**

Pants on Fire (with Mäds Westrup), Ve.Sch Kunstverein, Vienna, Austria.

#### **2008**

Hier Bei Uns (with Marlene Haring), Forum Stadtpark, Graz, Austria.



## **Selected group exhibitions**

### **2024**

Vom Krafttier zum Angsttier? Kulturgeschichte des Wolfes, Schlossmuseum Linz, Austria.  
Half Silver, Half Foam, Museum of Painting and Sculpture (IMPS), Istanbul, Turkey.  
Unfair Game, curated by Pinar Öğrenci, Exile Gallery, Vienna, Austria.

### **2023**

Queer Art Spaces, Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Vienna, Austria.  
A:PRÉS D:ÉSSERT, A:D: Curatorial, Berlin, Germany.  
Über das Neue / Wiener Szenes und darüber hinaus – Teil 2, Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna, Austria.  
Persistent Dreams, Meteor Balat Cultural Centre, Bursa, Turkey

### **2022**

How Does The Body Take Shape, curated by Alper Turan, Queer Museum, Vienna, Austria.

### **2021**

Earthly Coil, Magenta Plain, New York, USA.

### **2020**

Coloring Quarantine, Exile Gallery, Vienna, Austria.  
Open Landscape, curated by Angels Miralda, Tallinn Art Hall, Tallinn, Estonia.  
Echo, Club Club, Vienna, Austria.

### **2019**

Zwei Alter: Jung, Galerie Crone, Berlin, Germany.  
Absurd, Art Week Akaretler, Istanbul, Turkey.  
Read my Lips, Club Club, Vienna, Austria.

### **2018**

I can bite the hand that feeds me, and gently caress it too, Carbon12, Dubai, UAE.  
From outside to inside, Galerie Crone, Vienna, Austria.  
A Fleshly School of Poetry, curated by Daniela Brunand, KunstraumD21, Leipzig, Germany.

### **2016**

Moment and Movement, Akademie der bildenden Künste, Vienna, Austria.

### **2015**

o.T (ohne Titel), curated by Arne Reiman, Arp Museum, Remagen, Germany.

### **2014**

Howl, curated by Rafet Arslan, Galerie 44A, Istanbul, Turkey.

### **2012**

Making Normative Orders, curated by Fanti Baum, Britta Peters and Dr. Sabina Witt, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Germany.

### **2011**

Double Crescent, curated by Dan Cameron, Gallery C24, New York, USA.  
Sieben Grenzgänge, Haus Wittgenstein, Vienna, Austria.  
Where Fire Has Struck, Depo, Istanbul, Turkey.  
Polis-Pollis-Politics, Das Weiße Haus, Vienna, Austria.

### **2010**

Painters On The Run, curated by Daniel Richter, Kunsthaus, Stade, Germany.  
Vienna-Ankara, Gallery Nev, Ankara, Turkey.

### **2009**

Made in Turkey, curated by Heike Steckhaus, Ernst Barlach Museum, Hamburg, Germany.





**2008**

Mit anderem Blick, Ausstellungshalle, Frankfurt, Germany.

Dear Anus, VKÖ, Vienna, Austria.

**2007**

Georg Eisler Preis, Kunstforum BACA, Vienna, Austria.

Real – Young Austrian Art, Kunsthalle Krems, Austria.

**2006**

Basecamp2, Kunsthaus Merano, Italy.

**2005**

New Suggestions – New Propositions, curated by Beral Madra, Gallery Borusan, Istanbul, Turkey.

**Selected Residencies**

**2014**

Künstlerhaus Balmoral, Bad Ems, Germany.

**2010**

School of Visual Arts , New York, USA.