gutter pop.

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Fine Art.

Michaelis School of Fine Art
Faculty of Humanities
University of Cape Town
2022

Student: Elize Vossgätter
Supervisor: Fritha Langerman

DECLARATION:
This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

I would like to express my gratitude to the MacIver Foundation for the financial support.

to sam. eve and the bees.

gutter pop.
elize vossgätter.

contents.

abstract.

This research project revolves around wax, an inherently mercurial and unstable medium, porous to contaminants, sensitive to temperature, and preservative by nature. In a series of artworks and a minor dissertation, I engage with wax as both material and metaphor; an analogy with which to explore the relationship between human and natural environments and the themes of temporality and disintegration within the context of the present climate crisis. Bees, the producers of natural wax, are attracted to my work and constitute an integral part of the project. Gradually removing wax from the studio to their hive, they have become co-producers. The resulting collaborative works gesture to a post-natural state where the unknown biodegradable effects of human production and waste — continuously synthesised materials and contagions that co-evolve with organic processes — create a hybrid ecosystem. In articulating my practice and its thematic resonances, I am guided by posthumanist theorists Timothy Morton, Jane Bennett, Karen Barad, and Elizabeth Grosz. My engagement with wax explores a mediated materiality shaped by haptic, synthetic, and digital interventions. These interventions extend reflections on the tentative co-existence of the human and non-human world, and question the capacity for protection and preservation. My work envisions precarious futuristic environments by creating tensions between process, form, material, and colour, and collapsing previously held boundaries of pictorial space and interdisciplinarity. In a presentation of my methodologies, I discuss how my chance collaboration with bees has further informed my understanding of posthumanist thinking and expanded the field of my painting practice.

introduction.

waste. biodeterioration. synthesis.

> In this world, new and strange natures are being called into being. Ecosystems have always shifted and changed as they are worked and reworked by the forces of climate, geology, and evolution. Now nature is increasingly having to adapt to the new conditions created by human action. Scientists have now developed the ability to edit the genes of living species and to create novel forms of life. The science, synthetic biology, allows nature to be reshaped more or less at will (Redford in Adams & Redford, 2021:9).

Humankind possesses an ingenious ability to shape and reshape nature — to iterate, deviate, and elaborate. We ceaselessly innovate and imitate, propelled forward by the forces of capitalism, aspiring to the ever-more, ever-new, and ever-better.[1] In so doing, we have manufactured synthetic materials and chemical polymers[2] far abstracted from nature[3], that are forced to integrate with the organic processes of biodeterioration, altering the natural mechanisms of recuperation and growth that the planet depends on. "The effects of this interference by the human contagions that integrate into the waste cycle are unknown, as they take hundreds of years to evolve" (Allsopp, Seal & Gaylarde, 2004:42). What we incontrovertibly *do* know is that the needs and functions of the natural world have become marginalised with the rate of human growth outstripping the time it takes for the natural world to adapt and recover. In this tug-of-war of innovation and degradation, humankind has systematically enforced the co-evolution of natural life forms alongside abstracted human 'things' with little to no understanding of the effects of this symbiosis.

As we begin to reckon with the legacy of abstracted waste in our future ecologies, we seek ways to restore a world that has been undone. Technological advancements like AI and gene editing[4] in synthetic biology are enabling new ways to preserve or mimic natural processes — iterate- deviate-elaborate — with the potential to accelerate conservation efforts. In the process of repairing what we have broken, by layering human intervention onto human interference, what strange natures are we making?

Gutter Pop refers to my intrigue in the things left behind in the wake of excess and the systems we put in place to control and preserve them in order to remake, recombine and redirect. Assemblages of our disposable detritus, methane mountains of stewing Styrofoam and poly-polymers, the liquid lubricants of sewage, dyes and detergents that are digested through the interlocking matrix of constipated gutters, drainpipes, ducts, and discharges where these toxic puddings translocate and assimilate — these are the vulgar reminders of our industrial effluvia. Within them lie the generative bacteria of emerging biomes, which ceaselessly continue the cycles and generate potential hybrid ecosystems such as the plastiglomerate islands in our oceans or the calcified fatbergs that clog our culverts. The stuff of gutters colonise each other and make something new: in this is both death and emergence.

Mehita Iqani, in *Garbage in Popular Culture: Consumption and the Aesthetic of Waste* (2020), describes the contemporary encounter with 'trashscapes' as 'the new sublime':

> In which we gain awareness of our own transformative power, our own awesome destructiveness, and the realities of what we have done and are doing to the planet. And trash […] is the evidence of that new sublime. Trash makes the sublime visible. Rubbish, in its materiality, is a devastating crystallization of awe, of that recognition of being subsumed entirely by a new beast of our own making (145).

This state of recognition, where we simultaneously both gawk at this gagged system and #marvel @persistence of the natural world, is where pop culture, consumerism and ecological awareness collide. This dynamic is described by Timothy Morton in their book *Dark Ecology,* which offers insight into the layered, complex emotional terrain of becoming environmentally aware, where we regard the damage and recognise our complicity in it, yet remain unmoved. This scratchy, odd, and oftentimes wild and ironic place is where I seek the sensibility of my visual aesthetic.

Jane Bennett, in her book Vibrant Matter, describes the vitality of objects as thing-power: "Thing-power gestures toward the strange ability of ordinary man-made items to exceed their status as objects and to manifest traces of independence or aliveness to animate: to act, to produce effects both dramatic and subtle" (2010: xvi). These ideas create a premise of interconnectivity where materials are dynamic *actants*[5], as opposed to the inert character that consumers give to the things that they throw 'away'. Bennett asks: "How would patterns of consumption change if we faced not litter, rubbish, trash, or 'the recycling', but an active pile of lively and potentially dangerous matter?" (Bennett, 2010: viii)

Morton and Bennett are my leading accomplices in this text. Both are aligned with the overarching philosophical perspective of posthumanism, an umbrella term that encompasses several contemporary discourses and disciplines.[6] At its core is the belief that the boundaries between human and non-human[7] are fluid and that they exist in a constant state of interaction and interdependence, thus decentering long-established Western Enlightenment ideas of what it means to be human. The emergence of posthumanism is attributed to advancements in technology (and computerised intelligence, like AI) and the increasing interactions between humans and machines. However, posthumanism also considers the changing relationship between humans and the natural environment that allows for the non-binary and anti-hierarchical interactions. Looking at the natural environment through the lens of posthumanism changes nature from being something fixed, categorised or represented to being dynamic, collective, and lived.[8] This relational aspect of posthumanism directs my focus in this research: from the matter in our gutters to the bees in my studio to the wax of my paintings.

Painting has transformed along with these posthumanist ideas, which

challenge the centrality of the artist and extend a re-evaluation of materials and their agency. This philosophical current has pervaded my shifting practice, which was previously rooted in the tradition of figurative oil painting.[9] Over time, I began to question the validity not just of painting the *human condition* but of oil paint itself as a medium of the artist's *anthropomorphic projection*.[10] Within the context of the unfolding climate crisis, I felt that our future was too ambivalent to be archived in a medium so hardened by history. I began to integrate beeswax into my paint, at first-a-little-and-then-a-lot, to the point that, by 2018, beeswax had become primary in my process. I was seduced by the mutability of the wax. A material always on the edge; its "state of instability" (Carless-Frost, 2020:2) and thermal sensitivity offer a vital metaphor for impermanence and nature-in-flux.[11] In 2019, I painted my last figurative painting, ***natural order***, which depicts a human body engulfed in a biomorphic mass. This painting marked a death in my practice, expunging the notion of humankind as a supposed singularity. From then on, I began to formulate my understanding of the human as being part of a greater-integrated-relational-collective.[12]

appendix 01

Following this, I began to paint abstracted landscapes, as seen in ***ceaseless metamorphosis***, playing with a paradox of materials. By splicing natural beeswax with synthetic pigments, I held fast to a binary logic, pointing towards what I called our 'unnatural relationship with the natural environment'. I was seeking the harmonious contradictions of artificial/natural, organic/inorganic, hot/cold, processed/mineral, synthetic/authentic, and human/non-human by identifying the polarities and pulling them into proximity. Yet, as my practice evolved, this leaning on binarity felt at odds with a growing posthumanist awareness of entanglement and interdependence. My approach felt perforated, and it was with this leaking ambivalence to my practice that I entered the MFA program, wielding beeswax as my unwavering constant.

appendix 02

Describing the contextual background of my changing attitude to my materials serves as the starting point from which this accompanying text proceeds. In the following sections, adopting a narrative style, I discuss how my practice has co-evolved with the terrain of my research. Part One recounts the events of an interaction with a colony of bees through which I began to grasp the porous boundaries between the human and the non-human, and was drawn toward a deeper understanding of posthumanist philosophies of coexistence, entanglement, and empathy. Part Two shows how this widening awareness expanded my field of painting, guided by a discussion of the materials and methods used to produce the artworks that comprise *Gutter Pop*.

endnotes.

1

Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg, in her PhD thesis entitled *Designing a better world* (2017), asks: “What is better? Who’s better? And who gets to decide?” In prioritising *making-better*, “What happens to the less-better thing?” This last question is from her lecture *Designing better* (Design Indaba, 2020) about her exhibition *Better Nature*.

2

The first plastic was invented by Leo Baekeland in 1907. Bakelite, as it was called, was the first completely synthetic polymer that was not in any way derived from existing polymers. Baekeland had engineered “a giant molecule unlike any in nature. From this initial understanding of polymers came an entirely new chemical industry. Since then, the effects of polymer chemistry and the mass production of synthetics have changed the world” (Mark, 1966:15).

3

“The chemicals to which life is asked to make its adjustments are […] the synthetic creations of man’s inventive mind, brewed in his laboratories, and having no counterpart in nature” (Carson, 1962:24).

4

“With ever more precise genomic editing techniques, such as Crispr-Cas9, we can move suites of genes between species, drive certain genes preferentially through natural populations – and even create wholly synthetic organisms. As such, bio-engineering represents a new form of genetic information transfer, creation, and inheritance” (Holt, 2019).

5

Bennett borrows the term *actant* from Bruno Latour and describes his conception of the word as “a source of action that can be either human or non-human; it is that which has efficacy, can do things, has sufficient coherence to make a difference, produce effects, alter the course of events” (Bennett, 2010: viii). Latour defines it as “something that acts or to which activity is granted by others. It implies no special motivation of human individual actors, nor of humans in general” (Latour, 2004:75).

6

“Posthuman has become an umbrella term to include (philosophical, cultural, and critical) posthumanism, transhumanism (in its variants as extropianism, liberal and democratic transhumanism, among other currents), new materialisms (a specific feminist development within the posthumanist frame), and the heterogeneous landscapes of antihumanism, posthumanities, and metahumanities” (Ferrando,2019:1).

7

Throughout posthumanist writings, various terms refer to the categorisation of organisms or matter that are *other than human*. They include more-than-human, less-than-human, unhuman. These terms rival an implied hierarchy. For the sake of continuity, I will be using the term non-human, in line with the writings of Bennett.

8

This distinction was made by Elizabeth Grosz, writing about zoologist Jakob von Uexküll, in her book *Chaos, Territory, Art: Deleuze and the Framing of the Earth*, 2008.

9

Painting is described here in the Greenbergian sense as a rectangular, flat surface covered with paint and either figurative or abstract in content (Ørskou, 2010:181).

10

Isabelle Graw talks about “the myth of the agency of painting,” suggesting that “art historians and theorists have given painting the vocabulary that holds it above all

other art forms. That the painting contains within its brush marks and materiality a kind of phantastic ‘anthropomorphic projection’ of the artist’s spirit.” She argues this myth is what holds up the art market price in our “new economy” where the “identity sells” (Graw, 2015).

11

The doctrine of flux by Heraclitus suggests that (1) everything is constantly changing and (2) opposite things are identical, so that (3) everything is and is not at the same time.

12

“At exactly the time when it has become clear that global warming is in every sense a collective predicament, humanity finds itself in the thrall of a dominant culture in which the idea of the collective has been exiled from politics, economics and literature alike […] The uncanniest effects of Climate Change, this renewed awareness of the elements of agency and consciousness that humans share with the many other beings and even the planet itself” (Ghosh, 2016: 80-87).

part one.
the story of the bees.

contamination. porous boundaries. co-existence.

> …then you notice that you are caught in the loop and you are the loop. (Morton, 2016:145)

Over the past few years, I developed my material methodology. Soaking bleached beeswax pellets in mineral turpentine overnight, I created a malleable cold wax with a texture akin to soft, *dirty butter*[13], which I easily impregnated with raw, synthetic pigment powders. Following this, I applied the mixture to the canvas in thin layers, ten-and-twenty-fold, with a wide palette knife. Guided by heat, I carved into these layers to create a surface texture reminiscent of a bas relief; my mark-making evoking microscopic organic structures. The stated aim for my MFA was to continue this technique whilst deepening my understanding of the materiality of wax.

The seductive, symbolic qualities of the material had superseded the 'bee-ness' of the wax in my early engagements with the medium[14]. Despite purporting a concern for nature and a desire to address ecological issues, I had not previously considered the bee a significant component of my practice. I had overlooked the original production of wax as an excretion by these living beings — "a vegetable material that bees have 'digested' in their bodies" (Didi-Huberman, 1999:67) — and had not considered the realities of human management of beeswax as an agricultural resource and as an additional cost-to-nature. I was suppressing my own ethical concerns about using an increasing amount of beeswax in an era of depleting resources and rising reports of bee extinction.[15] I realised that, in order to manifest a more truthful relationship to the material, I needed to shift my focus away from the metaphorical qualities of wax and focus on the attendant issues related to wax that had, until then, eluded me. I decided to trace the supply chain of beeswax from the hive to my studio. So began my research.

I use between 5-10kg of beeswax a month, or around 100kg a year. The beeswax I initially worked with is industrially farmed and imported from Germany. Before the 'pure A-Grade' beeswax reaches my studio, it is subject to a vast human chain of activity that includes extraction, filtration, purification, and bleaching before being melted in vats and moulded into small tear-shaped pellets that are then packaged, labelled, marketed, shipped, and delivered. All this constitutes the logistics of agriculture or *agrilogistics*.[16] This supply chain is far removed from the sustainable cycle of bees producing wax for their own hive. The human intervention necessary to harvest beeswax for personal gain has tainted my symbolic associations with the art medium from being *natural-organic-pure* to being *unnatural-managed-manufactured*. This simple awareness dissolved my foundational binary logic, blurring the boundaries of my own naïve construction and making me aware of the implausibility of a pure state, as everything is "*always-already contaminated*"[17] (Jamal, 2017:261).

This awareness was further compounded by my investigations into the soaring price of the beeswax I was sourcing, which had risen from R320 to R850 per kilogram between 2019 and 2021. Despite this being attributed to the natural fluctuating cycles of bee production, I discovered reports of a far more nefarious controversy: vast colonies of bees were being wiped out due to a pesticide. Farmers were directly lobbying against Bayer Germany[18], the producers of a new systemic pesticide called Neonicotinoid. Systemic pesticides are inserted directly into the GMO seed and are present in the entire plant, in leaves, flowers, roots and stems. Being water soluble, these pesticides can also spread far into the environment. "Because they are absorbed into the plant, neonicotinoids can be present in pollen and nectar, making them toxic to pollinators that feed on them" (Hopwood et al., 2016:5), as well as being carried into hives and affecting the colonies. Reactions from farmers were continuously silenced. Despite fraudulent cover-ups, neonicotinoids were eventually banned in the EU in 2018 (Carnie, 2020), with clear evidence of the hazardous effect on pollinator populations. I subsequently discovered that Bayer Germany had donated all the residual pesticide to South Africa (Bega, 2021). The government-owned company CropLife SA released a document arguing that there is no link between pollinator deaths and neonicotinoids[19], declaring them safe to use and distributing them to local farmers, despite independent research counter to their statement.[20] The existential harm of such chemicals is described by Rachel Carson in *Silent Spring*, in which she lays out the effect of pesticides on nature's regenerative cycles, "eliminating the last sanctuaries of these pollinating insects and thereby breaking the threads that bind life to life" (1962:77).

With an unsettling irony, my own contamination was becoming apparent. Not weeks into my studies, I was beset with an array of allergic symptoms when entering my studio: streaming eyes, itchy skin, headaches, and painful lymphatic swelling. This developed into mood swings and overwhelming fatigue. I was diagnosed with toxic poisoning; blood tests revealing high levels of turpentine as well as arsenic and cadmium from my pigments. Such poisoning is incremental — by the time the body shows symptoms, it has reached saturation point, and any further exposure will lead to toxemia. The analogy of my toxic body to the contaminated landscape (that I had until then objectified in my research) was inescapable. This setback became my greatest opportunity, as the ensuing process of de-toxification inadvertently invited a hive of bees into my studio and led me to my most important discoveries.

I had to eradicate turpentine and all synthetic chemicals from my practice and was forced to adjust my methods accordingly. I began to experiment with new ways of emulsifying the wax with less toxic additives, such as more 'natural' pine turpentine and 'purer' distilled orange-skin solvent. Even organic products, however, are toxic if overexposed, following the maxim 'the dose maketh the poison'. I remained stubbornly attached to finding a solution that would perfectly replicate my cold-wax medium. Many failed tinctures forced me to expand the variables of my experiments, and slowly, the new character of the medium found its form. I developed several successful mediums, more akin to modelling wax, that were impossible to apply in thin layers on my paintings but rather

demanded to be moulded and shaped, retaining the indentations of my hands-grasping and fingers-pushing — a sensual record of touch that became integral to this body of work.

The beeswax I then began sourcing locally arrived in large, pure chunks rather than the neat, bleached pellets I was accustomed to. This necessitated melting the wax in a double boiler before use. I learnt the more traditional techniques of encaustic painting, and as much as the modelling wax encouraged me to shape the wax with my hands, the encaustic method led me to lay my paintings horizontally and pour wax. The addition of gum resins raised the melting point from 60 to 90°C, setting the wax to a harder drying point and making it more difficult to carve. I began to use a blowtorch to reheat and manipulate the surface rather than the gentle heat of a hairdryer and fine palette knives I had previously used to carve, resulting in a bolder language of mark-making. I was increasingly allowing the material to generate its own forms, which became progressively more sculptural.

But within this cacophonous laboratory, as much as I was gaining technical knowledge and shifting in style, I was still unsure of my theoretical content and, most glaringly, I was still negating the fundamental connection between the wax and the bees. My production flatlined, and I found myself struggling to remember what I was trying to say and why. “Perhaps you ought to go and thank the bees,” was the scholarly advice I received.[21]

So, donning a beekeeping suit, I spent a day with a beekeeper named Brian Fanner at the ten hives he keeps in Hopefield. Of course, beekeeping is not a ‘natural process’, and even on this small scale, it reflects the structures of *agrilogistics* previously described. Yet my time spent with Fanner was instructive. I learnt that the bee endemic to the Western Cape is called *Apis capensis*, commonly known as the Cape honeybee, and is particularly prolific because it is one of the few bees that are able to reproduce asexually.[22] I learnt to attune my ear to the change in intensity of their buzzing when they turn aggressive, responding to a fear pheromone as their hives were smoked to make them more docile. I learnt how the bees comply with the templates of foundation wax set in frames within the Langstroth hive[23] when building the combs, while still retaining their protective inclination by concentrating the brood in the centre where the queen is kept. Fanner and I then set about harvesting honey, removing the frames, cutting the wax cap off the combs, and placing them in a metal drum, which uses centrifugal force to extract the honey. After emptying an entire hive, the small remnants of wax were no more than a small nugget — a low yield compared to the 2-5kg I use daily in my studio. Though the visit had taught me more about bees, it had not fulfilled my desire to commune with them.

But then something *weird*[24] happened in my studio that changed everything. I had accidentally left a honey-soaked comb on my desk before going away, and upon my return a few days later, found my studio was swarming with bees. They were busily extracting the honey from the comb and so doing, had discovered the abundance of multi-coloured

beeswax. At first, a few bees tentatively explored the wax surfaces, but as I continued with my encaustic experiments by heating the wax, their numbers multiplied. This was in the middle of the winter season, and bees are generally dormant at this time of year.[25] They remained a gentle presence. As the season changed and temperatures rose, so the bee numbers increased, to a point in the late summer when my studio was consistently filled with hundreds of bees from sunrise to sunset. By the height of summer, I had completely normalised the sensation of working amongst an estimated 200-300 bees.

The **bees** weren't just inspecting the wax but actively digging and gathering it. Observing them closely, I witnessed their method of walking on the surface while probing it with the sensory hairs on their mandibles. They searched for a suitable spot to easily access the wax, such as a corner or break in the surface, where they would pause and begin to knead the area, making it easier to work with.[26] They would then use their front legs to dig and scratch at the surface, in the style of a dog-digging-earth, so removing the wax. Using their front legs to pack the wax onto their hind legs (or into their pollen sacks), alternating between their left and right sides, they would load as much wax as they could carry, only to fly out the window, as the next bees flew in.

appendix 03

The bees seemed unperturbed by my presence, flying around my arms while I worked. It was rare to hear their aggravated buzzing. Not wanting to harm them, it became customary to tap every surface before starting work in order to move them.[27] Sometimes, I would hear little thuds on the floor and see two bees in a kind of rugby tackle — with one trying to steal the wax off the legs of another. They favoured the fresh wax I had recently applied rather than that on older works; focussing their attention on the easiest wax to extract. As soon as it became too hard, they would move to the next surface. Their mission was clear: mine as much wax as they could, using the least effort, return to the hive and then repeat. They arrived punctually at sunrise and departed when the sun passed over the mountain. Over time, perceptible areas of paintings were being picked off, revealing the layers below and creating a new type of **mark-making**. Even the waxed strings that I had begun using in my sculptures were being thinned and weakened. The bees no longer felt like visitors but rather as active participants in the art-making process. By returning the wax to the hive, the bees were expanding the surface of the paintings and challenging my constructed limits of the art space.

I began a more conscious collaboration with the bees that started with some loose experiments around colour preference, in the spirit (if without the discipline) of Karl von Frisch[28], to see if I could train the bees to focus on one area more than another. It didn't surprise me that they showed a preference for yellow, being as it is the colour of pollen[29], but I was surprised by their penchant for black. Learning that they are genetically primed to recognise the dark centre that marks the pistil of many flowers, I realised that it was less the colour that attracted them than the contrast.[30] This guided my strategies for the painting entitled ***porous boundaries***, in which I layered saturated black wax onto a previously resolved psychedelic painting. The bees became

increasingly interested in this work — so much so that I was forced to paint the additional layers at night, allowing them to work the surface during daylight hours. Applying hot wax with a paintbrush creates an interrupted dithering mark due to the quick drying time, with the brush snagging on the layers below. Repeated layering of black wax on bright ground resulted in an organic, dimpled texture that left small specks of colour from underneath exposed. In a timelapse video recorded in my studio, the bees are seen zoning into the areas where there are sparks of colour contrasted against the blackness. Over the following weeks, the bees enlarged these spots of brightness, removing the surrounding black to reveal more of the colour beneath. This process of 'collaboration' questioned the idea of authorship and revealed the degree to which the boundaries between human and non-human worlds are porous.

Though the wax had become an active conduit attuning me to our interspecies co-existence, I could not ignore the *weird weirdness* of this uncanny loop: the bees reclaiming the wax that had been taken from them and sold to me. This uncanny loop of human interference is described by Morton in *Dark Ecology* as *ecognosis*[31], a complex state of recognition spiked with powerlessness and ridicule when we, the human, turn to recognise our complicity in ecological damage. This layered emotional terrain so well describes the rising ambivalence that began to tarnish my initial excitement with burgeoning concerns about the potential for further damage resulting from this exchange. Bees are meant to produce their own wax, only foraging for nectar and pollen, so why were they mining the wax from my paintings? Furthermore, how would the pigments[32] and other experimental additives affect them? Were they taking the wax to an industrial hive or a wild hive? Were they using the coloured wax to cover their combs in which the eggs are laid? Could this heritably alter the hive? *What strange nature was I making?* Unable to answer these questions without deeper observation, I became preoccupied with finding the hive and sought out experts with a specialised interest in pollinators to advise me.

In my efforts, I was introduced to Mike Allsopp, head of the bee section at the ARC-Plant Health & Protection Institute in Stellenbosch, who explained:

> Bees generally do not collect beeswax (which they secrete themselves) — so I would imagine that they are collecting the pigments in your art, more than the wax. This is being collected to be used as 'propolis' in the hives — the material that bees normally collect from plant resins, which they use to 'antibiotic proof' the hive, as well as to stick everything together. It is not uncommon for bees to strip paint from walls to collect as propolis, and they often collect flaking paint, also things like tar. Hence, I am almost certain that your bees are mixing the bits of your art that they are collecting in with all the other propolis components and using them to paint the walls of their hives, or close gaps in the hive, or stick things together — and not in the combs per se (Personal communication: 20.01.2022).

As for bee-tracking, he told me there are ways to do this using expensive drones or by bar-coding bees and using a receptive radar. I also spoke with Prof Bruce Anderson of the Department of Botany & Zoology, University of Stellenbosch, who headed the team that used 'quantum dots' — fluorescent nanoparticles only visible under UV light — to track the movement of pollen grains and potentially insects too (ASSAf, 2020). Despite such far-reaching technologies, the only viable way to find the beehive was to track them by eye, following departing bees for as long as possible. As my studio was on the second floor and the bees leaving the studio flew high over the roof, there was little chance to follow their flight path and track them on foot. I climbed trees and roofs to better my vantage points and tried to observe their general flight path using binoculars, hoping that I would be able to join-the-dots and follow them incrementally. This ambition was difficult (if not impossible) to achieve, and my efforts proved ineffective.[33]

My luck changed when I found a discreet study published just a month prior by a group of Polish scientists, which described their observations of the 'rare' strategy of wax collection of *Apis mellifera*.[34] In this, they wrote: "There are still some unexpected behaviours of honeybees that have not yet been fully explained, [such as] the collection of wax in the pollen basket on the third pair of legs, which was observed in the apiary of the University of Life Sciences in Lublin. The collection of wax in this way has never been reported in literature" (Olszewski et al., 2022). The article included photographs of the bees collecting the wax in *exactly the same way* as I had observed in my studio. The paper cited an earlier study about the economics of comb wax salvage by the *Apis florea*[35], which applies a lengthy mathematical formula (using variables such as mass of bee, foraging distance, mass of wax load, flight speed, and wax salvage handling time among others) to support a hypothesis that wax salvage is a means of energy conservation. It was concluded that *Apis florea* is "only salvages wax from the old nest if the new nesting site is less than 100–200m away — energetically, it pays off to recycle." (Pirk et al.,2010: 353)

Despite these articles focussing on other species of honeybee, I felt it safe to assume that the Cape honeybee in my studio was displaying this same behaviour. Prof Bruce Anderson knew one of the co-authors of the aforementioned article: Prof Christian Pirk, from the Social Insect Research Group at the Department of Zoology and Entomology at the University of Pretoria. After sending him some photographic evidence of the bees at work in my studio, he encouraged me to follow the same logic of the formula in his paper to find the hive. He reminded me that, "only if the flight costs are low does it pay to collect."[36] The *Apis capensis* is smaller in mass than the *Apis florea*, so with a revised formula, and holding fast to his hypothesis that transporting wax is 'energetically expensive' and therefore it should be close.

Using the theory of maximum energy yield, I surmised that the bees leaving the studio would take the shortest route back to their hive. Fixing my attention on the most common exit direction of the bees, I observed that approximately two out of three chose an easterly flight path, directly

up and over the roof towards the Company's Garden.[37] I printed out a Google map and drew a series of lines radiating outwards 80–100m from their point of departure, which I hoped might be their literal bee-lines to the hive. Despite having searched the park extensively, my new research partner, Prof Bruce Anderson, and I headed eastwards in search of the hive, map in hand.

It took no more than ten minutes of scanning the trees that marked our invisible beelines before we saw the unmistakable activity of bees — an old oak tree with an opening about four metres up the trunk. Looking through binoculars, we could see a strange yellowish-blue-greenish smudge on the outside of an O-shaped hole the size of a coin. Continued observation showed the bees arriving from the west, laden with the bright yellow and neon pink wax in their pollen sacks. Seeing yellow on bees' legs is not unusual, as pollen is carried in the same baskets on their hind legs, but pollen has a darkish hue and is packed in neat oblong shapes. These bees were unmistakably ferrying the salvaged wax from my studio; the yellow was synthetically bright and carried in a more bundled manner, forming rounder, messier protrusions. The neon pink, of course, was unmissable. It was clear that we had found the **hive**. We measured the flight distance to be less than 80m, proving Pirk's hypothesis correct.

appendix 06

I was relieved to find the hive thriving and healthy, but its discovery hadn't answered all my questions as I had hoped, as the hive's interior was inaccessible. The most important question remained: how were the bees utilising the wax? Allsopp agreed: "It would be really interesting to 'dissect' the colony you have found, and to see if they have actually incorporated any of the coloured wax they have collected into the combs or cuppings, i.e., used it as wax; or if it is just present on the hive's surfaces, i.e., used it as propolis" (Personal communication: 21.03.2023). This act of curiosity would cause severe damage to the hive. I entertained the idea of sourcing a colonoscopy camera with a light and a microchip camera to enter the hole. But undoubtedly, it would aggravate the bees and could endanger the queen, causing the colony to attack and most likely abandon their hive. As a scientist, the impulse to investigate for the sake of data could be ethically condoned, but I felt no compulsion to respond to the cajoling of the scientists, academics, or friends to inspect the hive further. The journey within me had reached a point-of-shift.

Feminist cyborg scholar Donna Haraway speaks of multi-species co-existence and how, by becoming aware of our symbiosis, we begin to have greater empathy for other living organisms, a concept she calls *becoming worldly* (Haraway, 2010:53). In seeing existence as, one enmeshed with all other matter, it necessitates a new kind of curiosity in understanding how other organisms live and function, thus opening up a cross-pollination of disciplines and knowledge in order to gain a less anthropomorphic view of the world.

This cross-pollination has demanded that I read outside of my discipline and work with academics in different fields, which released the vacuum-seal of my enclosed terrain of thinking. By following the supply chain of

my wax, I witnessed the causal relationship between human management systems and the natural environment. By relating to the beeswax not simply as an art medium but as a potent substance excreted by the bees, extracted from the bees, and duly reclaimed by the bees, I begin to see the cyclical loops that entangle and connect “the animal, the vegetable, earthy and planetary forces that surround us” (Braidotti, 2013:32).

I reminded myself that, as-an-artist, I can allow the research to remain inconclusive and lean into the metaphor, letting my abstracted -thoughts[38] filter into my practical work. In the following chapter, I will speak about how this story with the bees became manifest in the changing dynamics between materials and making, and trace how this expansion of my philosophical perception is mirrored by the widening of pictorial space into an ever-expanding field in my work.

endnotes.

13

Reference to catalogue essay by Hedley Twidle, *Dirty Butter*, commissioned for my 2021 exhibition Artificial Selection at Everard Read, Cape Town.

14

Beside my interest in hive behavior as a functioning multi-facetted organism; a display of community that countered the human 'everyone for themselves' mentality of contemporary capitalist society.

15

"A recent survey of commercial beekeepers showed that 50 billion bees — more than seven times the world's human population — were wiped out in a few months during winter 2018-19. This is *more than one-third* of commercial US bee colonies, the highest number since the annual survey started in the mid-2000s" (McGivney, 2020).

16

A term coined by Morton to describe the intersection of agriculture and logistics. "Agrilogistics: an agricultural program so successful that it now dominates agricultural techniques planetwide" (Morton, 2016:42).

17

The term *always-already* is borrowed by Ashraf Jamal from Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in his essay on Paul Edmunds, *Plastiglomerate*, from his book of essays *In the World: Essays on Contemporary South African Art*, 2017.

18

Bayer is a chemical and pharmaceutical company that was founded in 1863. Recently, it expanded into agricultural products via the acquisition of Monsanto. "Monsanto's genetically modified, pesticide-coated seeds are causing Indian farmers to kill themselves and bees to die in their millions: the pesticides are fatal, but so is the modification of the plant structure itself, causing bees' intestinal walls to weaken" (Morton, 2016:49). For further reading on the vast numbers of farmers' suicides in India caused by unsustainable seed commodification, I recommend the writing of Vandana Shiva.

19

CropLife SA (CLSA) published the *Position statement on Neonicotinoids and bees* (December 2018), which states: "CLSA believes that most of the actions against CNIs are the result of anti-pesticide lobbying that is based on highly questionable and untested hypothesis and research."

20

Much has been said to counter this. "The results we have on neonics are in line with what was found in the EU. Bees exposed to sublethal levels show a lack of ability to thermos-regulate. It affects how they taste the sugar in nectar, how far they can fly and how they survive under heat stress." Professor Christian Pirk (Bega, 2021)

21

With gratitude to Virginia MacKenny, Emeritus Associate Professor of Painting, Michaelis School of Fine Art, UCT.

22

Unlike colonies of European honeybees, where worker bees are only able to lay unfertilised diploid (male) eggs, Cape honeybee workers are capable of laying unfertilised diploid eggs which can develop into a worker bee or a queen bee.

23

This familiar box-shaped hive has remained the leading mechanism with which to farm bees since it was designed in the mid-19th century by Lorenzo Langstroth.

He noticed that when his bees had less than 9mm but greater than 6mm of space available in which to move around, they would neither build comb into that space nor cement it closed with propolis. This measurement is called *bee space* (Johansson, 1964).

24

Morton follows the stem of the word 'weird' and realigns it to mean "a turn or twist or loop, a turn of events" (2016:5). He uses it in an ecological sense to describe the looping causality of ecological awareness.

25

Bees do not hibernate per se, but their proximity to the hive acts as an ingenious climate control system. The queen bee must be kept at a constant 32-36 degrees. In cold weather, the bees vibrate their wings to stimulate heat in the hive, and in the hot months, a certain percentage of the bees must leave the hive to cool it down.

26

"Probably, during wax collection, foraging bees add saliva to soften the wax fragments and to diminish its surface tension, which increases the adhesion strength of the wax to the pollen basket" (Olszewski, 2022:53).

27

The few times I forgot and grabbed something without first tapping and looking, I was stung. These three occasions were due to my own carelessness. The bees' constant presence necessitated that I work slowly and consciously, changing my rhythm of making quite significantly. Disclaimer: Sometimes a bee flew into a hot wax pot and drowned, sometimes into my torch flame.

28

A celebrated Austrian biologist, Karl von Frisch received a Nobel Prize in 1973 for his discovery of the language of bees (as described in his book, The Dancing Bees, 1927). He is famous for the detailed descriptions of his experiments, which used the standard behavioural method of food rewards.

29

"Bees are naturally triggered by bright yellow. They would be inspecting your sculpture for any potential nectar. They're going what strange and interesting flower is this!?" (Fanner, Personal communication: 20.5.2022).

30

"Many flowers look different when viewed through an ultraviolet filter. These display a bull's-eye pattern that seem to guide the bees, wasps and other pollinators to their target" (Raffles 2011:304).

31

In his book *Dark Ecology*, Morton writes about ecological awareness in three threads. He uses the term to describe the layered emotional phases experienced when becoming ecologically aware — from nihilism as the 'first darkness', the 'uncanny layer' in the middle, to the 'sweet-darkness' as an end phase. "*Ecognosis* is like knowing, but more like letting be known. It is something like coexisting. It is like becoming accustomed to something strange, yet it is also becoming accustomed to strangeness that doesn't become less strange through acclimation" (2016:5).

32

I use some naturally occurring colours like ultramarine, raw umber, sienna, and lead white: but even organic substances become toxic with too much exposure (take the cadmium and arsenic in my bloodstream as an example). But mostly I use artificial pigments, which are manufactured in the form of fluorescents, interference colours, metallic powders and glitters, with little or no knowledge of their chemical composition. I have been using the same suppliers of neon powder pigments from Berlin since 2011. When I inquired about the pigments chemical composition but the suppliers shrugged their shoulders in reply and said that their manufacturers

don’t disclose this information, offering only that their materials are all ‘non-toxic’.

33

I tried another approach by asking the municipal workers in the city and the groundsmen of the Company’s Gardens (close to my studio) to alert me to any active hives in the vicinity. I was called several times; twice, the bees were swarming but had passed by the following day. The other active hives were all found in the hulls of old oak trees within a 500m range from my studio, but after watching them closely, it was clear that there was nothing unusual about the hives. It did make me realise, however, how healthy the urban bee population is and how a trained eye can identify many wild hives in the city.

34

Apis mellifera, also known as the Western honeybee or European honeybee, is the most common species of honeybee worldwide.

35

Apis florea is one of two species of small, wild honeybees of southern and south-eastern Asia.

36

Personal communication: 03.03.3023. Pirk’s casual quip echoes the statement, “wax salvage would clearly be counter-productive unless the energy input/energy yield threshold was a profitable one” (Pirk et al., 2011:353).

37

The Company’s Garden is the oldest garden in South Africa, a park and heritage site located in central Cape Town. The garden was originally created in the 1650’s by the region’s first European settlers and provided fertile ground to grow fresh produce to replenish ships rounding the Cape. The garden is situated directly adjoining the Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town.

38

Allowing a network of abstracted philosophies to assimilate into my emotional and physical terrain, which is filtered through my physical context and, in turn, processed by the spontaneous external influences that interact with my work. Like a sieve, I react and tune into the world around me, trying to reflect back some kind of sensory impression.

part two.
painting as act of

hybridisation. expansion. enmeshing.

> Matter itself in its very materiality is differentially constituted as an implosion/explosion: a superposition of all possible histories constituting each bit […]
> How big is the infinitesimal? What is the measure of nothingness? (Barad, 2017:117)

In her essay *No Small Matter*, Karen Barad presents her premise that the very materiality of matter is entangled and diffracted across scales of space and time, and that this entanglement unlocks a paradigm of atemporal symbiosis that superimposes the human and the non-human with and within the materiality of objects. Within wax, for instance, there exist the traces of shared narratives, generating a constant relational interaction. This idea decentres the human, shifting the perspective from the anthropomorphic to the *hylomorphic*[39] — from the human-centred to the matter-centred — and implies a "dynamic process of intra-activity and materialization" (Barad, 2007:214). Barad's premise follows the logic that we interact with matter and thus become intrinsically *affected* by that-with-which-we-interact-with and *visa-versa*: an intra-action.[40]

This notion of perpetual *affect* offers a version of the human as being a non-fixed and mutable entity: an organism in a constant state of becoming. By destabilising the centrality of the human experience, we begin to see the vital potential of exchange between matter and materials — actively entangled within and throughout each other. Bennett's conception of 'vital materialism' speaks to the sense that "all bodies (and things) are kin in the sense of inextricably enmeshed in a dense network of relations" (2010:13). This porous en-mesh-ment is what I seek to enliven in my body of work by connecting materials with human and non-human narratives to create new affects "composed of blocks of materiality becoming-sensation" (Colebrook, 2006:94).

Through the mutable viscosity of wax, I explore this notion of *becoming-sensation*. The innate instability[41] of the material carries the conceptual weight in my work. "If stability is understood as a fixed character of qualities – wax presents a disconcerting multiplicity of physical properties. It seems to be a substance that is unconcerned with the contradiction of material qualities" (Didi-Huberman, 1999:64). In the essay *Plasticity: An Art History of the Mutable*, Dietmar Rübel equates his conception of *'Plastizität'* to metamorphosis and describes mutability as both a characteristic and subject matter, "the active agent in this art of becoming" (2012:94). And so wax, with its paradoxical ability of being both in stasis and in flux, becomes the conduit that explores both the notions of entanglement of matter — echoing Barad's sentiment of intra-activity — and the instability of boundaries between the human and the non-human.

Anish Kapoor foregrounds wax in his monumental installations that employ the material for its elemental and performative qualities. This is demonstrated in ***Svayambh*** (meaning 'self-generated' in Sanskrit) (2007), "a gigantic forty-ton blood-coloured block pushed forwards on [ten-meter-long] rails while smearing thick fat streaks on the museum's walls and floor" (Grootenboer, 2013:2). The pigmented wax is mixed with Vaseline, which retards its ability to harden and fix, ensuring an oozing viscosity ideal for this kinetic activation; the wax transformed into a messy-glutinous-medium volatile to the interference of outside elements. Adhering to its surroundings, the wax's aliveness is emphasised, as is its tendency to decay — its actant-ability. Exhibited in unison with this work in 2009 at the Royal Academy in London[42] was another activated sculpture, ***Shooting Into the Corner***, in which large chunks of the same crimson-coloured wax shot out of a cannon onto the stark white walls of the gallery. As described by Adrian Searle in The Guardian, Kapoor's "paint-bombing bombardment and this train are generative, fecund gestures, as well as scatological. They succeed by excess […] This is joyous but also horrible, an end-world of stupid matter and accident" (Searle, 2009). The slow destruction of Kapoor's forty-ton block and the theatrical drama of the canon firing showcases the abject quality of wax in a state of transition. By adding an element of aggression and performativity[43], the artist underscores with grand aplomb the perpetual state of disintegration of matter, of medium, of this messy facile thing called existence.

appendix 07

appendix 08

Kapoor's viscous allusion to the transience of beeswax as being active-organic-matter lends itself to a 'fundamental anthropomorphism' (Didi-Huberman, 1999:66). This aspect of the medium is also invoked by Berlinde de Bruyckere in her unsettling wax installation ***Kreupelhout – Cripplewood*** (2013). What appears at first as a giant reclining figure is revealed to be a wax cast of a gnarled and knotted, uprooted elm tree. The wax's indexical quality assumes the texture of the tree's bark, but the malleable warmth of the wax pulls the subject back towards the associations of human skin, tendons, and muscle. Seen in this close-up image — shown alongside the black wax in my work ***porous boundaries*** — the similitude between human skin and tree skin is made apparent. That wax permits (even invites) these associations further dismantles the binary construct of human/non-human.

appendix 09

pages 52 - 53

The use of wax by both Kapoor and de Bruyckere demonstrates its permissiveness to be formed, cast, reproduced and altered by the commingling of other additives whilst holding true to its essential waxiness. "Wax is always wax no matter what its particular state is, wax is not ice when it is solid, it is wax, and it is not water when it is liquid, it is wax. Yet it has no primary state, apart from the state of instability, and seems to constantly vacillate between form and formlessness" (Carless-Frost, 2020:2). This material flexibility is something I became attuned to during the experimentations that followed my toxic poisoning. I incorporated gum-resins, glycerine, a variety of oils, corn-starch, borax, glitters, and pigments. Some of these admixtures served simply to bulk up the wax; others increased its viscosity or decreased its fixability. The introduction of latex[44] proved to be the most important additive

for this body of work. By adding the slightest amount of natural latex sap — a ratio of 5:100 — the active temperature of the molten wax is dramatically raised and medium visibly elasticated so that the wax no longer drips in round blotches but falls like spider-webbing in long concentric arcs. The latex-wax hardens into a harder, more reflective surface reminiscent of rubber or plastic. I accentuated this sensibility by opting for a highly saturated colour palate, delighting in the suggestive mimicry of injection-moulded plastic referring to a sense of manufacture and commodification. In Roland Barthes's essay *Plastic* (1957), he discusses the alchemy of the transformational quality of plastic but then fastens to its insubstantiality: "It is a 'shaped' substance: whatever its final state, plastic keeps a flocculent appearance, something opaque, creamy and curdled, something powerless ever to achieve the triumphant smoothness of Nature. But what best reveals it for what it is […] are its colours, for it seems capable of retaining only the most chemical-looking ones. Of yellow, red and green, it keeps only the aggressive quality" (174).

I contrast this synthetic-colour-sensibility with a sensuality of organic form achieved by the record of my hands-grasping and fingers-poking in my sculptural work and by the organic vocabulary of the mark-making in my paintings. This contrast of colour and form creates a haptic-optic incongruence or synaesthesia, where the contrasting stimuli of touch -to-colour shift the associative reception of the artworks. As an example, the acrid-green-blue plasticine protrusions in *nested potential* and *plasti-sphere*, reminiscent of footholds in a climbing gym or chewed-chewing-gum, are superimposed on the structured mark-making of the carved marks below. This draws on synthetic and organic stimuli haphazardly in a kind of mnemonic cross-referencing, resulting in a plurality of associations. The work brings to mind Graham Harman's concept of the *sensual object*[45], relating to objects that exist only in experience. He refers to an imperceptible state, where the object invokes an unexpected and subjective *third realm* that moves beyond its physical space and time. This realm makes itself known through an openness-to-sense and the *vibration of sensation*.[46]

If sensation-is-vibration, I aim for the surfaces to optically vibrate through colour and their intra-action. I achieve this frequency by using vivid pigments impregnated into the wax, as well as the addition of metallic, neon, glitter, and other fugitive colours that together allow for visual-interference. This effect is heightened by the cold-hard-glare of fluorescent lighting in the exhibition space. With colour and lighting, I aim to create a feeling of over-stimulation akin to the dopamine spike I experience in highly abstracted human environments, like shopping malls or arcades. By upsetting colour and material associations through the contradiction of form and handling, I intend to flatten the binary distinctions of fake/real and natural/unnatural into a hybrid-field more aligned to posthumanist thought in which the associations become entangled.

These binary distinctions I refer to — fake/real, natural/unnatural, organic/inorganic — are, of course, anthro-normative, precluding a human perspective. Such binaries are particular only to our *Umwelt*. I

borrow this term from the Estonian bio-semiotician Jacob von Uexküll, who re-coined the German word to describe the *subjective* environment of an organism; the locus being the subject (referring not to an individual but a species) and its particular sensory organs through which it interacts with its given stimuli. This subjective reality affords it a unique reception and perception in relating to its ecosystem: each species has its own distinct 'sense-bubble'.[47] Thus, when I discuss associations of colour being artificial or organic, I am referring to the human-sense-bubble; its visual comprehension based on the trichromatic RGB colour spectrum. In trying to poetically explore the shared space of the bees in my studio, I wanted to envision their sense-bubbles. In the seemingly psychedelic-hued paintings, ***seeing through my feelers*** and ***pollen-polymer***, I imagine a bee-hued-vision of the landscape — a view into a tree or plants from above, respectively. Bees see in the UV spectrum[48]: ultraviolet, blue, green, and yellow. And so, though the paintings may be perceived as augmented to the human eye, they could be deemed more *natural* or *real* to the perception of a bee.[49] Such sensory speculations undo the neat distinction of binarity.

pages 60 - 65

This empathy for the distinct colour perception of bees is also key in the artwork ***Pollinator Pathmaker*** (2022) by Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg, in which she uses AI to create an algorithm that translates RGB colours into the UV colour spectrum, allowing humans to design and plant gardens for bees with a truer sense of what those gardens may look like to them. "I wanted to make art *for* pollinators, not *about* them," said Ginsberg in the podcast *Rewording* (Serpentine, 08.02.2023). "The algorithm would design the artwork or the garden for me so that my taste didn't get in the way. So, if we're making something for other species, we need empathy for them. And of course, I don't know what insects are thinking, but definitely my taste, my preferences of how I arrange plants is going to get in the way." In this way, she is "encoding empathy into an **algorithm**" (Aouf, 2022).

appendix 15

appendix 14

Through curiosity and empathy, we begin to see the mutual exchange of interaction and the symbiosis of life forms. Accepting the finitude of our singular perception collapses the self-imposed limitations[50] of what constitutes a boundary, opening up a vast, immanent plane of possibilities. This new perspective has altered my engagement with — and conception of — painting and resulted in a tentative reconsideration of the edges-and-boundaries in my own work, especially in regard to the boxed-edge confines of the canvas-space. The canvas format constrains and directs human vision and categorises the painting as a commodity that safely enters the consumer space of the art market. My first attempt at interrupting the edge was to divide the surface into parts where there was no formal necessity for a diptych or triptych. This gesture served to emphasise the 'object-hood' of the canvas.

A further strategy to extend the edge of my work is proposed by the integration of sculptural elements. I have previously worked sculpturally, but only ever treated the sculpted objects as forms to be painted. These 3D forms reappeared as content across my canvases, as in my painting *The Colony* (2019), a pictorial representation of sculptures made from

appendix 21

waste-paper-pulp. These **colonic shapes** continue to recur in this body of work in the form of wax. This time, however, rather than the sculpture preceding the painting, the two have co-evolved in my studio and are partially formed from excavated wax carved from the panels. This process ensures their chromatic likeness. With the sculptures suspended in front of the paintings, the compositional-stasis of the painting is transformed and challenged. I enjoyed the suggestion that these sculptures are like a singular strand or mark that have been lifted out of the painting and magnified. I continued their making alongside each painting. Soon, my studio became so full of suspended -orms, stacked-paintings, and — lest we forget — the buzzing-bees, that to engage with any one work meant constantly weaving and shifting positions. This performative experience of moving through the studio made me feel as though I had created my own eco-system. By paying attention to the spaces between and around the works, I was beginning to see the possibilities of expanding the field of the paintings into-and-through the sculptural forms.

The term 'expanded field' was introduced by Rosalind Krauss in the frequently cited essay *Sculpture in the expanded field* (1979) as a response to the opening freedom of materiality, site and space of the sculptors in the 1970s and 1980s. Anne Ring Peterson, in her essay *Painting Spaces* (2010), argues that the expansion into the genre of painting only occurred toward the late 1990s and is marked by a major shift in the spatial locality of painting: "A remarkable number of painters have begun to explore the possibility of developing painting in a *third direction* and redefining what 'space' is in relation to painting. […] They move beyond the framed surface and its bounded physicality. In many cases one can hardly say that the artist is painting pictures, he or she is rather painting or creating spaces. This expanded field also denotes a merging with […] photography, video, ready-made, installation and performance, but also with the older disciplines of sculpture, architecture and drawing" (Ring Peterson, 2010: 125). She describes this expansion of painting as a *hybridisation*.

Katharina Grosse is a painter whose large-scale *situational* works conflagrate the boundaries of the canvas by expanding the scope of painting beyond its conventional territories. Her saturated spray-gunned pigments lick over any surface, seemingly undiscerning. In this way, she expands the compositional and perspectival devices of painting into the architecture of the space. In an interview for *BOMB* Magazine (2011), Grosse states: "There are no limits to painting. I don't experience 'limits' as limits. There is no resistance when I am painting. The inside and the outside coexist. What appears in the image field is not subordinate to existing reality, it constitutes that reality. I don't interpret reality; I understand reality as a performative activity that generates itself newly and differently, again and again." This dissolution of the boundaries of space opens painting into the surrounding world and transforms it into a hybrid ***installational-painting*** (Ring Peterson, 2010:16).

appendix 11 & 12

The 'expanded field' of painting not only refers to a spatial expansion but also to a material interdisciplinarity. This is evident in the work of artist Liza Grobler, who creates what she calls *participatory environments*,

invoking the interaction between the viewer, the space, and the work. In her exhibition ***Inkommers, Laatkommers en Laatlammers*** (2023), she combines a multitude of media and sensibilities: gestural oil paintings and beadwork panels, linear cabled tapestries, and biomorphic, fuzzy pipe-cleaner forms are integrated with an aesthetic of technology in video projections, LED strip-lighting, and acridly artificial olfactory stimulation. She creates a sensorium that aims to "integrate inner and outer landscapes" (Grobler, 2022). Both Grobler and Grosse share a disregard for categorisation — their work being part sculpture, part painting, part installation — masticating media and matter into hybrid environments that expand into an implied *third-direction* of the sense-realm through the act of experiential viewing.

appendix 13

This realm of the senses is where I linger, envisioning my work as a *sense-bubble* with plural inter-connections, where paintings, sculptural-mass, video, and exhibition space cross-pollinate. In my own work, the expanded field is demonstrated by the co-installation of the works *Filtered Landscape* with the eleven sculptural works ***C, O, L, O, N, O, S, C, O, P*** and ***Y***. It invites a haptic-optic conversation between the expansive sculptural-paintings[52] — hung behind the series of suspended colonic pendulums-of-wax, or painterly-sculptures. The viewer weaves through the 'forest' of suspended forms, encouraging a side-step dance-like *ritual of involvement*[53], causing compositional and scale relationships to shift with each step. The painting and sculptures' proximity and shared colour spectrum cause them to visually bleed into one another, which, along with visual agitation created by the strong verticals in the foreground against the horizontal striations in the background, creates a sort of optical misalignment at their point-of-intersection. This visual glitch causes the eye to refocus and reattune as the surfaces seem to dematerialise-and-reassimilate.[54] The illusion is reminiscent of the '**magic eye**' phenomenon that trended in the 1990s, an illusory image that revealed — with eyes-a-squint — a 3D image. In this installation, I evoke a hybrid landscape by superimposing the various elements onto one plane, creating a poly-chromatic *mesh*.

page xv

appendix 16

I borrow the term *mesh* from Morton, who expands: "If everything is interconnected, then there is no definite background and therefore no definite foreground: a strange infinite network without inside or outside" (2010:267-269). Morton has devised the *Interdependence Theorem* based on the axioms: "Things are only what they are in relation to other things" and thus, "Nothing exists by itself and nothing comes from nothing." Morton envisions this deconstructive view as a mesh: infinite-and-beyond-concept — referencing both the mesh of a digital network and the threading of DNA, the cyber and the molecular. The infinitude of this concept in which there is no 'outside' is further described by Ashraf Jamal: "It is the Nietzschean cycle of the 'eternal return', mirrored in the cycle of consumption and waste, which reminds us that nothing — *no thing* — exists singularly or purely, that all things possess plural lives, all things are haunted by the ghost of their past and the specter of the future, that *everything becomes and recurs eternally — escape is impossible*!" (Jamal, 2017:274).[55]

But, if there is no escape, no 'outside' and no 'inside', then where-are-we-safe?[56] What constitutes a home, a habitat, a place of belonging? Where are the edges of our intra-eco-systems? And how do we draw the lines that border these transforming spaces? During the months of searching for *the* beehive, my eyes became trained to the many forms of nests-as-safety-vessels around me: from the giant-punctured-wombs of the **social weaver nests** and the phallic-protrusions that mark the termite colonies — both of which I observed on field trips to Namibia — to the semi-circular mud enclave of the **swallows' nest** in the eaves of my studio roof, to the stubborn box-shape of the Langstroth hives, and eventually the full-stop that marked the entrance to the beehive in the old-oak-tree in the Company's Garden. These convex-concave forms have become recurring motifs throughout my works.

appendix 17

appendix 18

Displayed in fluorescent Perspex boxes[57], which metaphorically act both as cage and home, are a series of wrapped-works that consider questions of protection and fortification in this era of potential-radical-conservation. The first, *Precarious Stranger*[58], came to me in a wind tunnel on campus in the form of a dry, woody plant that thwacked into my legs and lodged itself between my limbs. It could be seen simply as a dead-branch, but to me, it shimmered[59] with *thing-power* and by anthropomorphising it, it became a ridiculously forlorn creature; a displaced non-indigenous husk, likely spawned from a GMO seed in a garden of human design, dead from neglect — a never-wild-plant on its first free-flight. I wanted to preserve that moment, that flight. I found more woody plants in the gutters and, placed upside-down with their uprooted heads, they looked like an *army-of-things*. I began to wrap the twigs in yellow waxed-string. The choice of colour was an intuitive reminder of the **parasitic dodder weed**[60] that strangles the fauna on Table Mountain. The brittle roots demanded fine handiwork, and even then, breakage was inevitable, resulting in a bundled-overwrapped-repair, which created ganglion-like bulges at each break, serving to exaggerate these vulnerabilities. This process of shrouding was an exercise in restoring-yet-altering, caring-yet-smothering — like an over-protective mother. With these works, I contemplate the intrusive human management systems in conservation that are proposed with the advances in synthetic biology and geoengineering. Is it acceptable to change things in order to fix them?

appendix 19

Echoing the delicacy of this line of enquiry is the towering clay sculpture, ***persistence of nuance***. The only work included in the exhibition that is not made from wax, it is a convergence of visual associations of the aforementioned nests as well as the primordial shapes of the stalagmites that I witnessed in the caves of Oudtshoorn. The sculpture is modular, its parts stacked like interlocking-vertebrae, and leans precariously. The clay remains in a fragile-state, being only bisque-fired, and its arid, desaturated, chalky-whiteness stands in contrast to the sumptuous wax-impregnated surfaces that surround it. The porosity of the clay, unglazed and unprotected, remains sensitive to the pollutants it might encounter, welcoming the adhesion of smog/dust and/or other contaminants. Against this susceptible skin, the wax is robust, a distinction pulled into focus by the agitated, dense surfaces of the works

page 79

that surround it, as in the plastic-green painting ***THick-sKinned***. ***page 82***

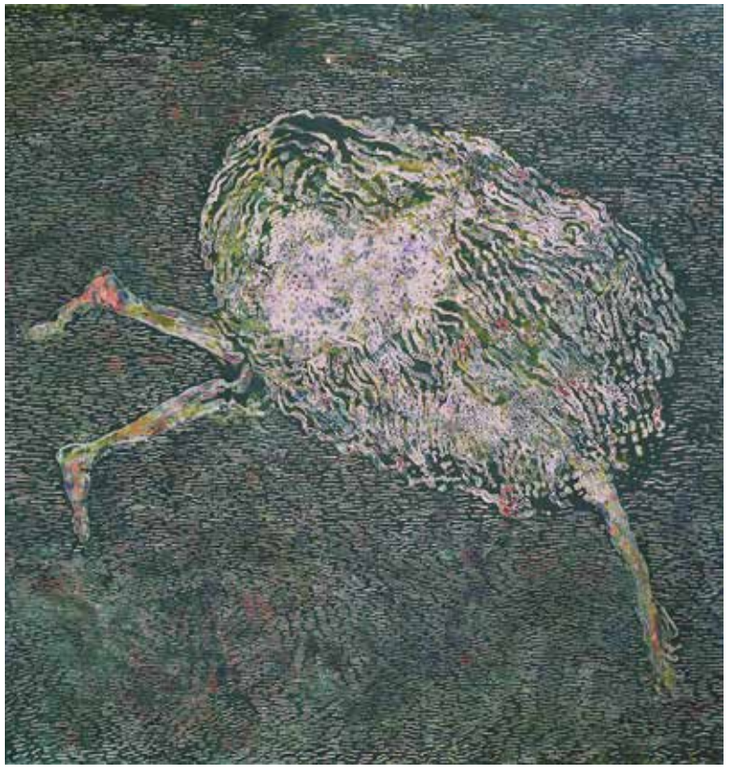
An ongoing artwork I began in 2017 is reimagined for this body of work: ***time immaterial*** is a collection of between two- and three-thousand pulped-paper balls made from my domestic waste between September 2017 and September 2018. I made no other works during this time but simply consumed paper, pulping and compressing it into balls.[61] In 2022, I was invited to donate the work to the permanent collection of *Gallerie Gänge*, situated in a garden allotment in Leipzig, Germany. Planted in this garden, the balls reintegrate with the cycles-of-decay-and-renewal and begin to biodegrade and change with the seasons. The artwork has now, in the words of Georges Monbiot in reference to the concept of rewilding[62], "become self-willed and governed not by human management but by their own processes, letting nature decide" (2013:10). This implies letting go of the idea- of-nature as pure-pristine and accepting the *always-already-contaminated* as a new-normal. ***appendix 21***

For *Gutter Pop*, I have reimagined this project in the floor-installation ***STICKS and STONES***[63], for which I made balls with the lost-wax from a bronze foundry. The wax has become a tainted compound with chemical and metal contagions, which I synthesize further with latex and ultra-marine-phyllo-blue pigment. This wax is far removed from the natural beeswax I use in my other works; it is rock-hard and acrid smelling with little to no-biodegrad-ability potential. I form the balls using the same action as I do in my sculptures — hands-grasping-and-fingers-pushing — creating an ergonomic morph-mould of the inside of my hand with finger-sized holes. These balls, as well as the wax sticks, are strewn across the floor, along with store-bought faux-moss-balls. Unlike *time immaterial*, where the balls are laid into the earth and remain malleable to the natural forces — *still-becoming* — these wax balls are sealed in synthetic-walls, a plastisphere, removed from any future transformation. Roving between and through them are several robotic vacuum cleaners, which serve to disrupt the balls, pushing them into an ever-changing composition. The balls' movement mimics natural transformation, but any change remains superficial. Robbed of their capability to disintegrate, they remain frozen in this state of passive-action: doing-something-yet-doing-nothing. ***page 84***

Our 'natural' world is littered with similar conglomerates of vacuum-sealed matter in a purgatory state of *non-biosis*, hooking into new superficial interactions and contaminating the natural processes of renewal and biodeterioration. Reaching towards the words of Elizabeth Grosz in her essay *The Thing*,

> We actively produce objects in the world, and in so doing, we make the world amenable to our actions but also render ourselves vulnerable to their reactions. […] What is left out in this process of making is all that it is in matter, all that is outside the things and outside technology: the flux of the real, duration, vibration, contractions and dilations, the multiplicity of the real, all that is not contained by the thing… (Grosz. 2001:148).

appendix.



01

natural order. 2019.
beeswax and pigment. 200 x 200cm

02

ceaseless metamorphosis. 2021.
beeswax and pigment. 135 x 135cm

03

bees in studio foraging for wax

04

by removing wax the bees create
a new type of mark-making

07
anish kapoor. *svayambh*. 2007.
wax. vaseline. oil-based paint.
dimensions variable

08
anish kapoor. *shooting into the corner*. 2008. wax. cannon.
projectiles. 31 x 24 x 24cm

09
berlinde de bruyckere.
kreupelhout – cripplewood. 2012.
wax. epoxy. iron. textile. rope.
paint. gypsum. roofing.
626 x 1002 x 1686 cm

10
detail of *kreupelhout – cripplewood*

11
katharina grosse. *it wasn't us*.
2020

12
katharina grosse. *infinite logic conference*. 2004

13
liza grobler. *inkommers, laatkommers en laatlammers*.
2023

page 86

The floor-installation sits in relation to a digital animation entitled ***second-Nature***, projected large with a scratchy-soundscape. The animation follows a solitary-ambulating-root creature stuck in an augmented-ascorbic-continuum of a landscape. The various elements in the animation are generated from the physical paintings and sculptures in the exhibition, 3D-captured with my cellphone using *Lidar* technology. The scanned paintings were fed through an AI generation engine, *Midjourney*, to create an artificial reconstruction of a topographical landscape. The character is one of the wrapped-works, a strange-stranger, laser-captured and later resurrected in its after-life using *Blendr*. Other recognisable sculptural elements (clay-tower and wax-balls) emerge as mnemonic traces in this polychromatic-landscape, created by 'capturing' the paintings and extruding them onto this intangible-digital-field, where their form cannot hold their own and begin to morph and dislocate. The character is digi-anthropomorphising the never-wild-branch as it is re-birthed from the landscape and journeys through a glitching-agitated-wasteland. Born from the world it is roaming in, the branch is essentially a stranger to it. It remains in constant discord with the changing-biome, the landscape disintegrating at too-fast-a-rate to attune to. This work merges my material investigations with artificial intelligence, allowing the production errors to feed the aesthetic of this novel ecosystem. The two works in conversation — STICKS and STONES and second-Nature — form a single-sensorium and offer a meditation on stasis-and-flux and the role that technology plays in the natural cycles of transformation. The animation ends-and-loops into and out of a pixelated disintegrated landscape beyond recognition: a *morton-esque-mesh*.

Ginsberg, who makes work about the changing ecology using digital means, states: "We see nature and technology as separate things. We make new technologies and decimate nature, but ultimately, we are part of it" (Ginsberg, 2009). Following this logic, the digital manifestation of objecthood in my exhibition loops to the intangibility of tangible *things*. Philosopher Byung-Chul Han writes in his book *Undinge*: "The digital order deobjectifies the world by rendering it information. It's not objects but information that rules the living world. We no longer inhabit heaven and earth, but the Cloud and Google Earth. The world is becoming progressively untouchable, foggy and ghostly" (B.C. Han, 2022:1). While *Gutter Pop* exalts in the sensual-capacity-of-materiality, the inclusion of technological interventions refers to the untouchability of the digital world. Bennett proffers that our relationship to consumer materialism, "which requires buying ever-increasing numbers of products purchased in ever-shorter cycles, is *anti*materiality" (2010:5). Thus, in the living trashscapes of our evolving ecology, where materiality and anti-materiality, cumulus clouds and iCloud enmesh, my exhibition offers a moment of reprieve to-make-sense of the intra-active-tangible-vibrant-*things*-around-us.

endnotes.

39

As a prefix, *hyle/hylo* (coined by Aristotle) refers to unformed matter. The suffix *morphe* refers to the shape and unifying principal (essence) of an entity. A term from the Ancient Greeks, *hylozoists*, is instructive here, defined as: "Those-who-think-matter-is-alive. That means that they did not think that life, or soul, came into the world from outside, but that what is called life, or soul, or the cause of motion in things, was inherent in matter, was just the way it behaved" (Farrington, 1944:37).

40

As described by Barad: "The notion of intra-action (in contrast to the usual "interaction", which presumes the prior existence of independent entities /relata) represents a profound conceptual shift. It is through specific agential intra-actions that the boundaries and properties of the 'components' of phenomena become determinate and that particular embodied concepts become meaningful" (Barad, 2007:214).

41

Dietmar Rübel distinguishes value in materials by their 'constancy, stability, dignity', implying that unstable, malleable materials, like wax, have an implied 'lesser' value (2012:94).

42

These works were reexhibited in tandem at the Venice Biennale 2022.

43

Barad, in *Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter* (2003), writes: "I have proposed a posthumanist materialist account of performativity that challenges the positioning of materiality as either a given or a mere effect of human agency. On an agential realist account, materiality is an active factor in processes of materialization. Nature is neither a passive surface awaiting the mark of culture nor the end product of cultural performances" (2003:827).

44

Rubber is derived from the natural latex sap tapped from rubber trees. Through a process of vulcanisation, it is hardened and made usable. Today, most rubbers are made from a synthetic polymer that is completely man-made and is called cis-polybutadiene (Mark, 1966).

45

Harman is best known for his field of object-oriented ontology. According to Harman, sensual objects are objects that exist independently of human perception that have a sensuous dimension that can only be accessed through perception. These objects have an inner essence or "withdrawn core" that is inaccessible to human perception but nevertheless influences the way they appear to us.

46

Grosz discusses the implications of sensation in art according to the writings of Deleuze & Guattari in her book *Chaos, Territory, Art*: "Sensation is that which is transmitted from the force of an event to the nervous system of a living being […] Art is the becoming-sensation of materiality, the transformation of matter into sensation, the becoming-more of the artistic subjects and objects that is bound up with the subject's cross-fertilization with the art object. Deleuze says it explicitly: 'Sensation is vibration'" (71-80). Grosz continues her argument by linking this vibrational force of sensation to a chaos element that mediates the becoming-sensation with the 'forces of the cosmos', collapsing the space between the human and the nonhuman.

47

'Sense bubble' is a term by Andy Clark that builds on the concept of *Umwelt*. It refers to the idea that each organism is surrounded by a bubble of information

that it uses to navigate and interact with its environment. This bubble is made up of the organism's sensory inputs, memory, and cognitive processing. The sense bubble is not fixed and can expand or contract based on the organism's needs and experiences (Yong, 2022:123).

48

"Bee colour vision is based on three photoreceptor types (S, M, L), which peak in the UV, blue, and green region of the spectrum" (Avarguès-Weber et al.,2012:244).

49

Inspired in part by the writings of Uexküll, who writes: "The theme of the music for the honeybee is the collection of nectar and pollen. To find them the path that leads to them has to be marked with perceptual cues. This explains the choice of properties of flowers that become form, color, smell, and taste perceptions of the bees. A honeybee meadow is something very different from a human meadow. It is a honeybee composition made up of bee notes." (Uexküll 2001: 120 in Grosz 2008:43)

50

Opposing articulations of the limited and limitlessness have resurfaced throughout my research in both the ecological and art disciplines. In the first instance, there is the sense that humankind has *reached the limit*; in the second, that the work of artists is to *push the limit*. "We know that there are limits to the burdens that the natural system and its components can bear, limits to the levels of toxic substances the human body can tolerate, limits to the amount of manipulation that man can exert upon natural balances without causing a break-down in the system and limits to the psychic shock we can absorb from social degradation" (Ward,1972:291).

51

I describe these shapes as 'colonic' because they were inspired by the visceral cringe I felt in response to the vulgar 'O' shape of my mother's mouth when she articulated the word 'co-lon-os-copy'. This shape is echoed by my hands sculpting the lubricated paste-covered paper pulp, the form of which is suggestive of the digestive tract as an internal pipeline or gutter.

52

The wall paintings are not two-dimensional but rather bas-reliefs, which I refer to as painterly sculptures. In the same spirit. I refer to the suspended forms as sculptural paintings because even though they are three-dimensional, I regard them as an extension to the paintings.

53

This phrase is borrowed from Brice Marden: "How you look at a painting physically is very important. A good way to approach a painting is to look at it from a distance roughly equivalent to its height, then double the distance, then go back and look at it in detail where you begin to answer the questions you've posed at each of these various viewing distances, it's like a little dance; it's almost a *ritual of involvement*" (Marden in Westgeest; 2022:56).

54

This idea is borrowed from Helen Westgeest: "In reaction to processes of de-materialization due to digitalization of visual media, particular paintings developed even more into a physical object by means of extending their three-dimensional appearance. As a result, some paintings entered the space of the spectator, rather than being confined to the conventional frame" (2022:5).

55

This quote is taken from Jamal's essay *Psychogeographer*, in reference to the materials used by artist Francois Knoetze.

56

"I remember damage. Then escape. Then adrift in a stranger's galaxy for a long time. But I'm safe now. I found it again. My home. My memories are the same as

yours. They mean nothing. There is no rescue mission. We are the same. We are safe." I was guided and moved by these words quoted from the series *Station Eleven*, adapted from the book (2014) of the same name, written by Emily St John Mandel.

57

These boxes reference Paul Thek's *Technological Reliquaries* or "meat pieces" — naturalistic beeswax replicas of hunks of meat and body parts displayed in bright neon Plexiglas boxes. In an interview with Gene Swenson in 1966, Paul Thek explained: "The dissonance of the two surfaces, glass and wax, pleases me: one is clear and shiny and hard, the other is soft and slimy. I try to harmonise them without relating them, or the other way around" (Lange-Berndt, 2015:122).

58

Here I am adapting Morton's term 'strange strangers', of which they write: "Our encounter with other beings — and with our being as other — is strange strangeness […] The *arrivant* is a being whose being we can't predict, whose arrival is utterly unexpected and unexpectedly unexpected to boot. The strange stranger is not only strange, but strangely so. They could be us. They are us" (2010:275).

59

Here I borrow Deborah Bird-Rose's definition of the word, as described in her essay *Shimmer: When all you love is being trashed*: "shimmer, the ancestral power of life, arises in relationship and encounter, so extinction cascades drag shimmer from the world. The loss is both devastating and barely comprehensible" (2017:52).

60

The Dodder or 'Devil's twine' is an invasive plant and works by wrapping itself around a host plant and suffocating it. It has no understood function but to destroy.

62

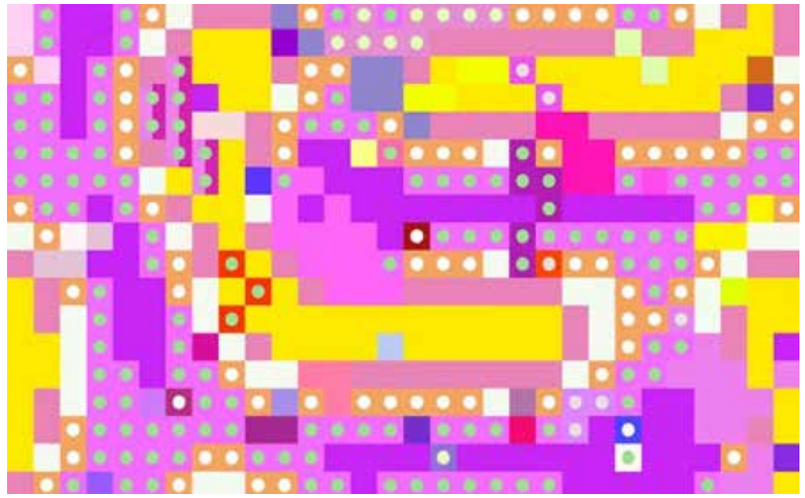
At the time, I had become particularly concerned by the mass of stuff in the world. I was struck by the words of artist Yoko Ono in her 1971 manifesto: "Artists must not create more objects. The world is full of everything it needs." I was exercising my environmental concerns through frugality.

63

This a less human-controlled approach to conservation in which the environment is simply left to its own devices.

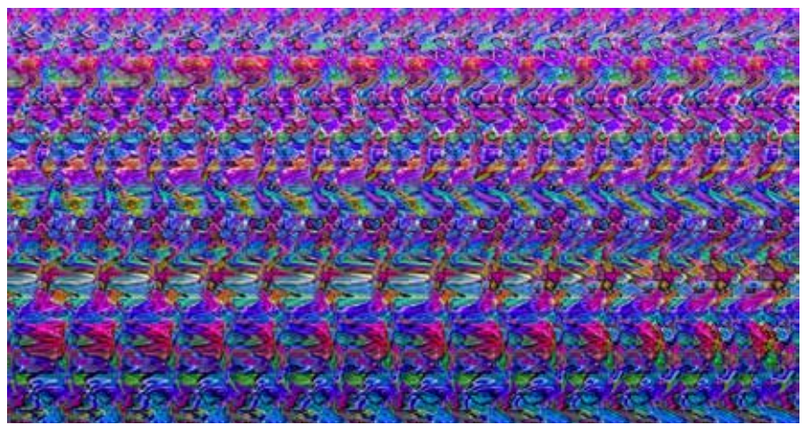
64

The work is titled for the familiar childhood rhyme: "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me" — and its (wishful) claim of remaining unaffected by taunt or insult.



14
alexandra daisy ginsberg. planting plan created by the pollinator pathmaker algorithm

15
alexandra daisy ginsberg. *AfyLb-wTriWhuR7PDkd77LZ. pollinator vision, midsummer*. 2023



16
magic-eye illusion or stereogram. an optical illusion, in which a 2-D image appears to be 3-D by parallel or cross-viewing

17
sociable weaver nests in namibia

18
swallow nest outside my studio

19
parasitic dodder-weed found on table mountain

05
the bees zone into the most contrasted areas

06
entry of the hive, coated with yellow and pink wax from my studio. showing bees arriving with bundles of yellow in their pollen sacks

20
left: waste-paper-pulp sculptural-matter
right: detail of *the colony*. 2019. beeswax and pigment. 200 x 200cm

21
time immaterial. 2018 – 2023. over the seasons

semi-end.

Things influence one
another such that they become entangled and smear together.
(Morton, 2016:150)

A smear, like the sullied-wax around the O-shaped bee-hole or a smudge of lipstick around wizened O-shaped-nicotine-stained lips — we persist despite the dents — entangled in a vibrant intra-active world pregnant with potential.

The tone of my work is waveringly optimistic. I aim to create the sensation-of-a-world in which we are standing on the brink. I observe the lust-of-innovation, the melancholia-of-waste, the comfort of possibilities and the ineptitude of holding on. I express the giddy discomfort of being in this liminal-space — looking to the past to see the scope of the damage, and looking ahead towards plausible futures.

Posthumanism presents an intoxicating shift in thinking, a recalibration-of-scales, from separateness to connectedness, wherein human and non-human agents can co-exist and cross-pollinate. Art acts as a conduit to this newfound freedom to expand beyond our knowledge-spheres, extending the realm of artmaking into a limitlessly intra-active philosophical-plenitude. The materials we use and the ideas we point to are vital agents of ecological awareness, making the recognition of the for-whom-what-for-ness significant.

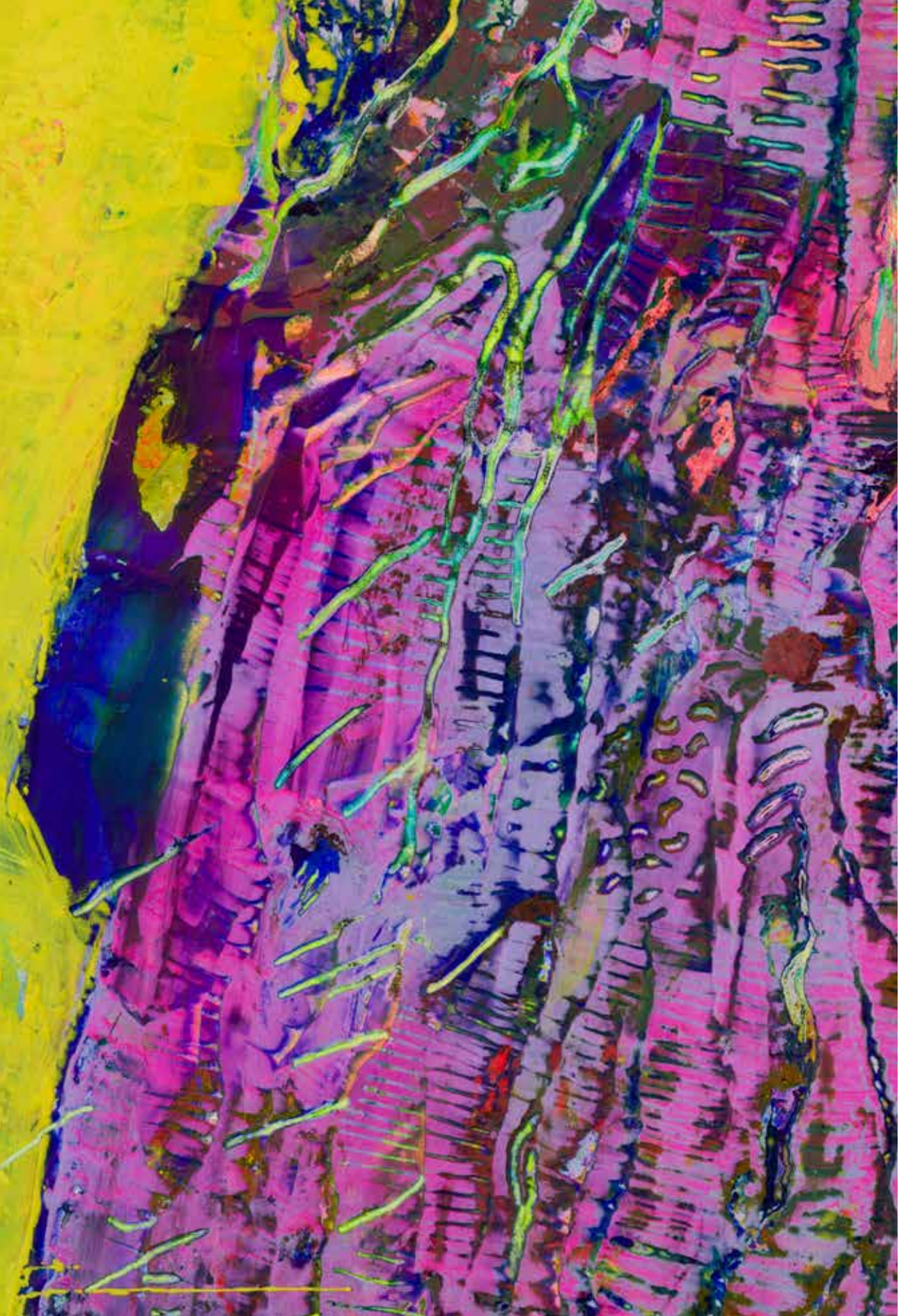
I invoke the bees in my studio to construct an analogy of possible coexistence, a code to relearn and readapt to this heterotopia — a world neither good nor bad, just different. The bees forage and salvage, economising-their-energy; they adapt, reuse and commune. The symbiotic exchange of this encounter with the bees recalls what Isabelle Stengers calls relations of *reciprocal capture*: “Transformative encounters, seductive moments that generate new entangled modes of coexistence, take place when two beings capture one another in a reciprocal embrace” (Kirksey, 2015:5). This embrace has expanded the limits of my human-centric conditioning by attuning to the *over-there*, rather than the *in-here*, and opening the shutters to a world no longer confined to my home, my body, or my canvas. We are enmeshed in a complex-and-dynamic relational network-of-exchange, and, unable to future-proof our present, we amass and roll-on.

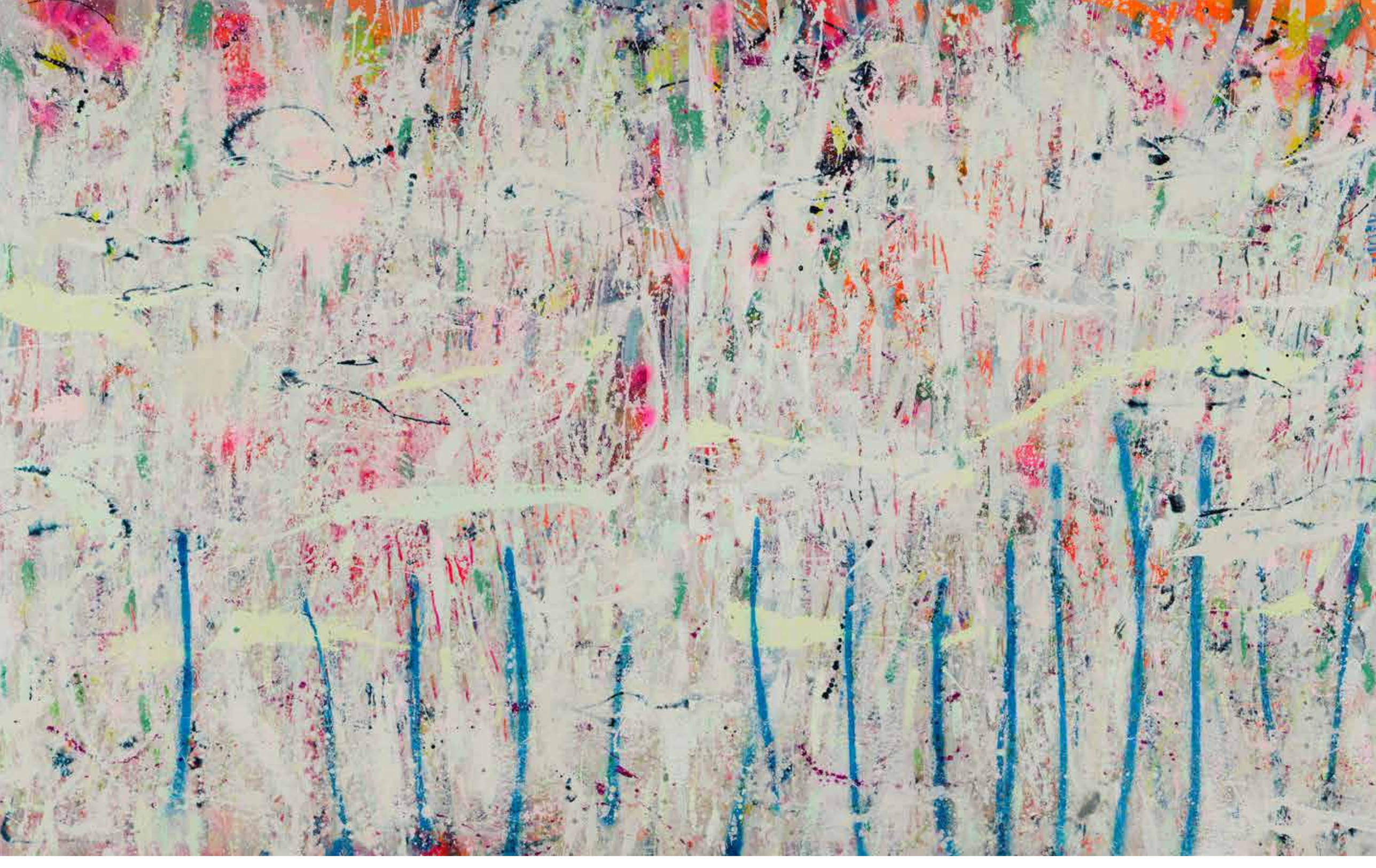
Gutter Pop imagines a hybrid landscape drawing on the synthesis of our mineral-digital-tactile fields. I exaggerate the ridiculous and superfluous, being drawn to the aesthetic of vulgar, vital, and kitsch-things: the collateral damage of mass-manufacturing, where materials-become-monstrosities; objects that point to an excess-of-time, resources, and innovation. Iterate-deviate-elaborate — a mantra on repeat. So, too, using the excess of natural beeswax to create things so fundamentally-useless is a vulgar act. With many of my techniques borrowed from child's play — black-magic drawings, waxy-string, papier-mâché — my work exudes a quality of gleeful-naivety, which belies a pervasive current of dis-ease and dis-orientation. Gutter pop performs a paradoxical-psychedelically-infused-apocalyptic-waggle-dance, a kind of haptic-optic-dopamine imploding/exploding within this hysterically loud time.

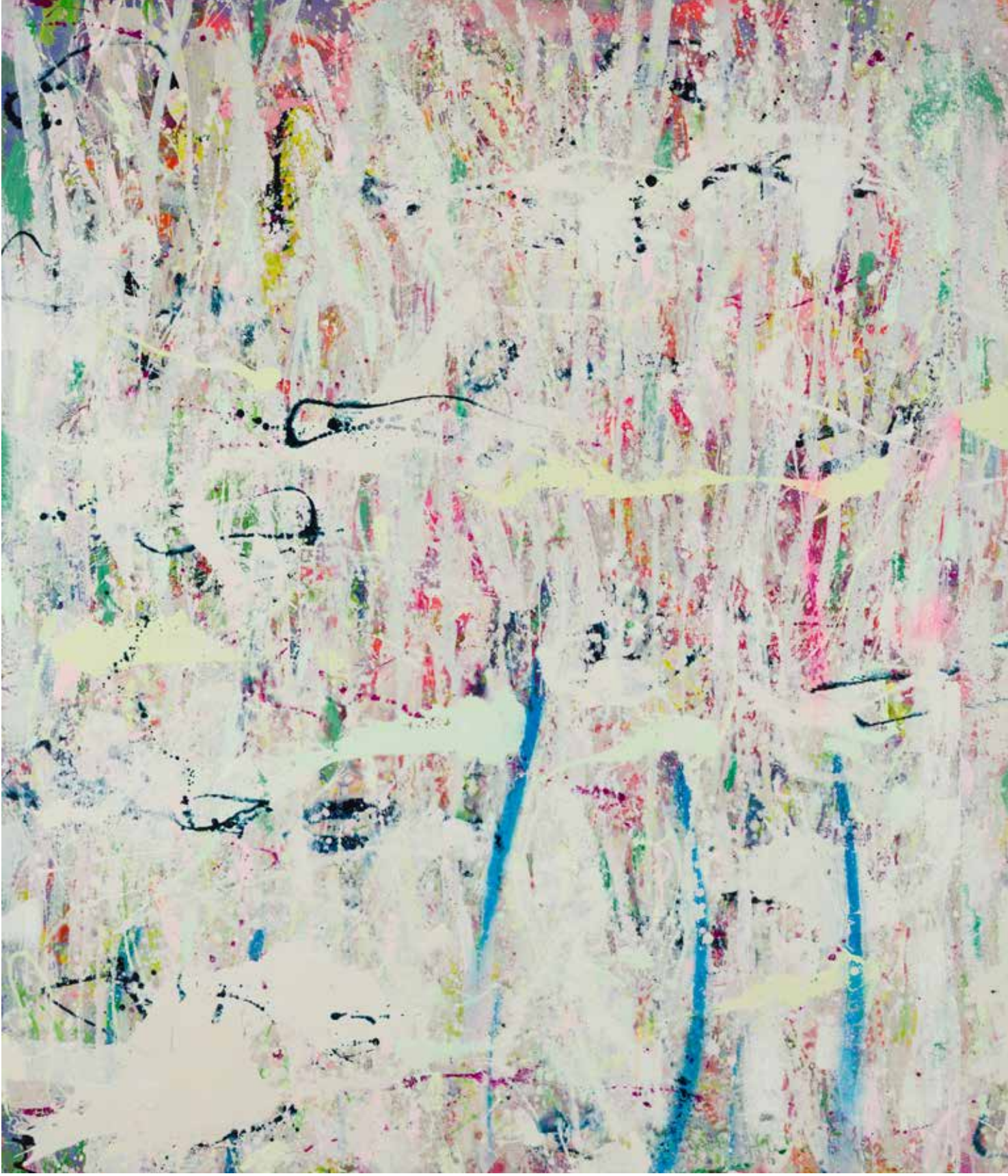
And so, in the words of Timothy Morton: Let's Disco (2016:162).

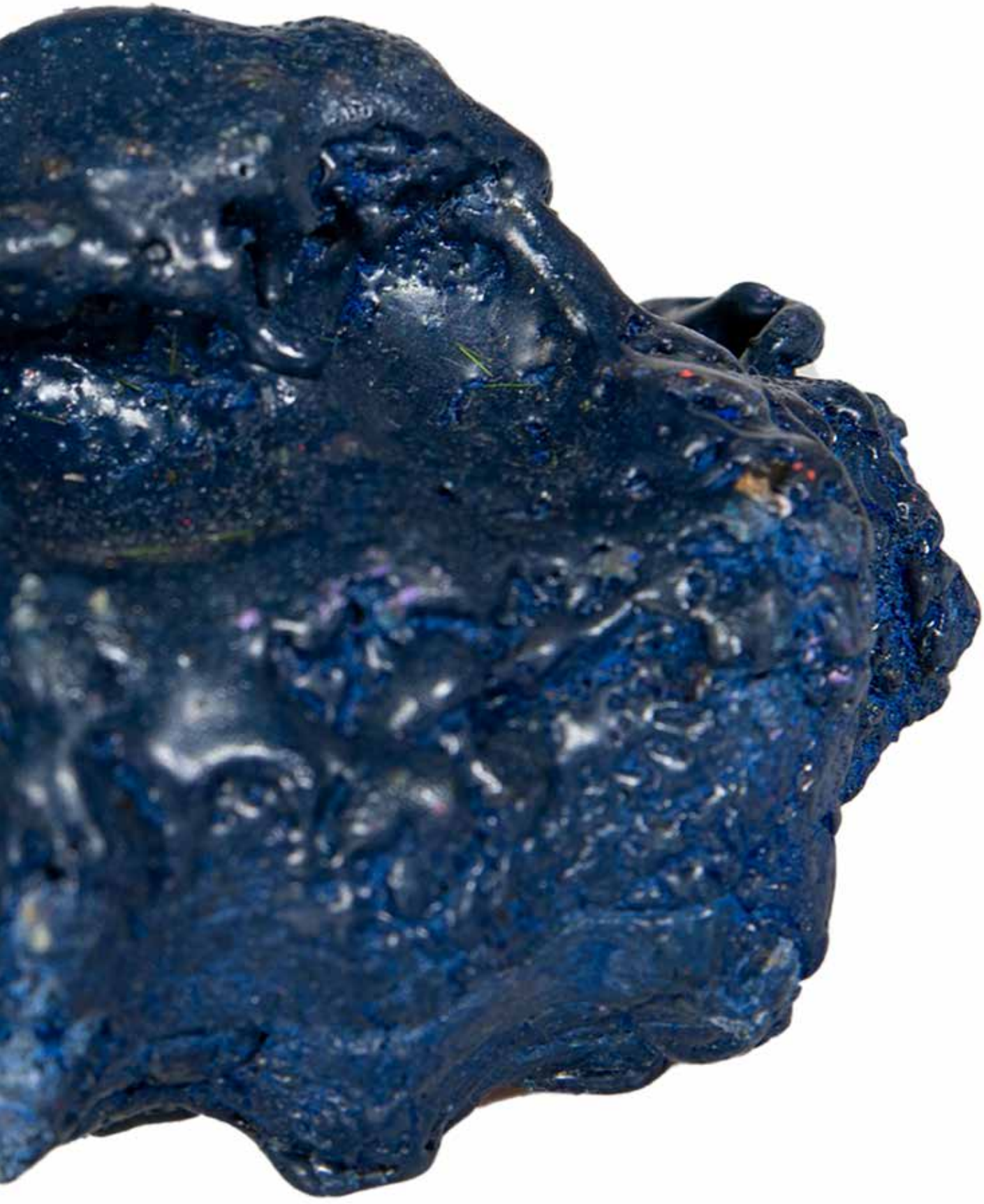
art.works.

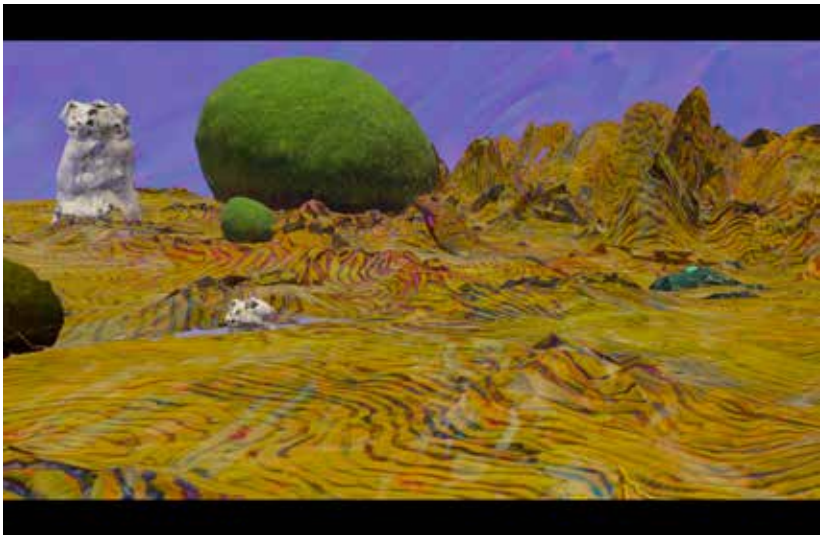
nested potential

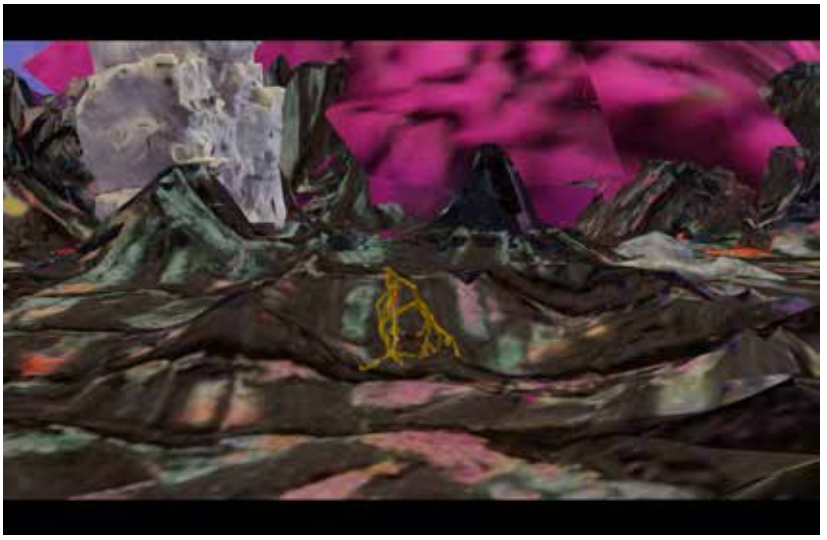


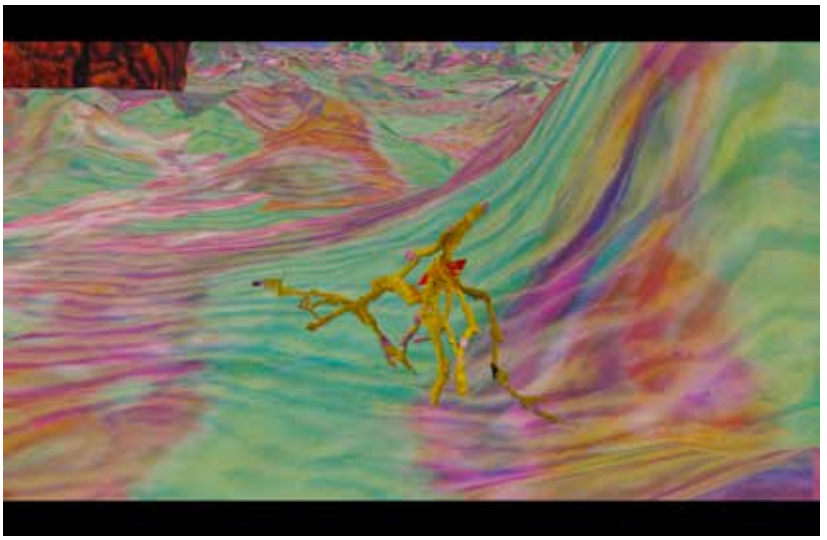


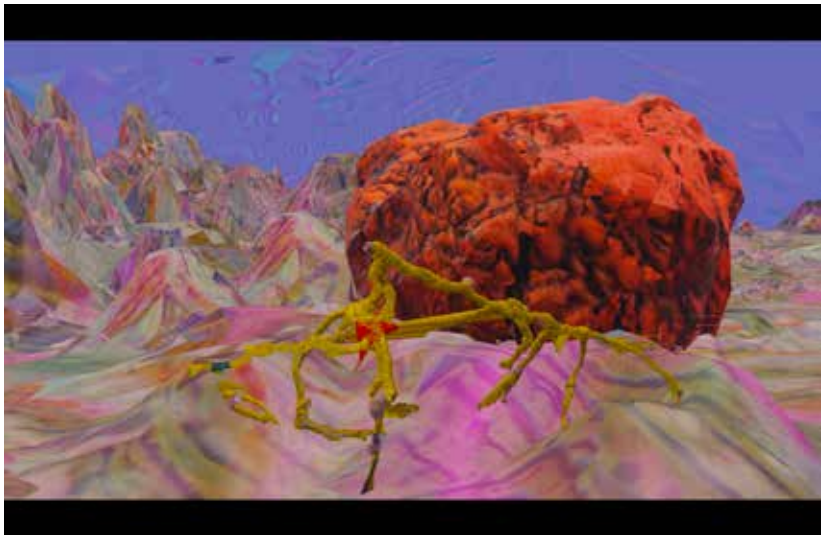


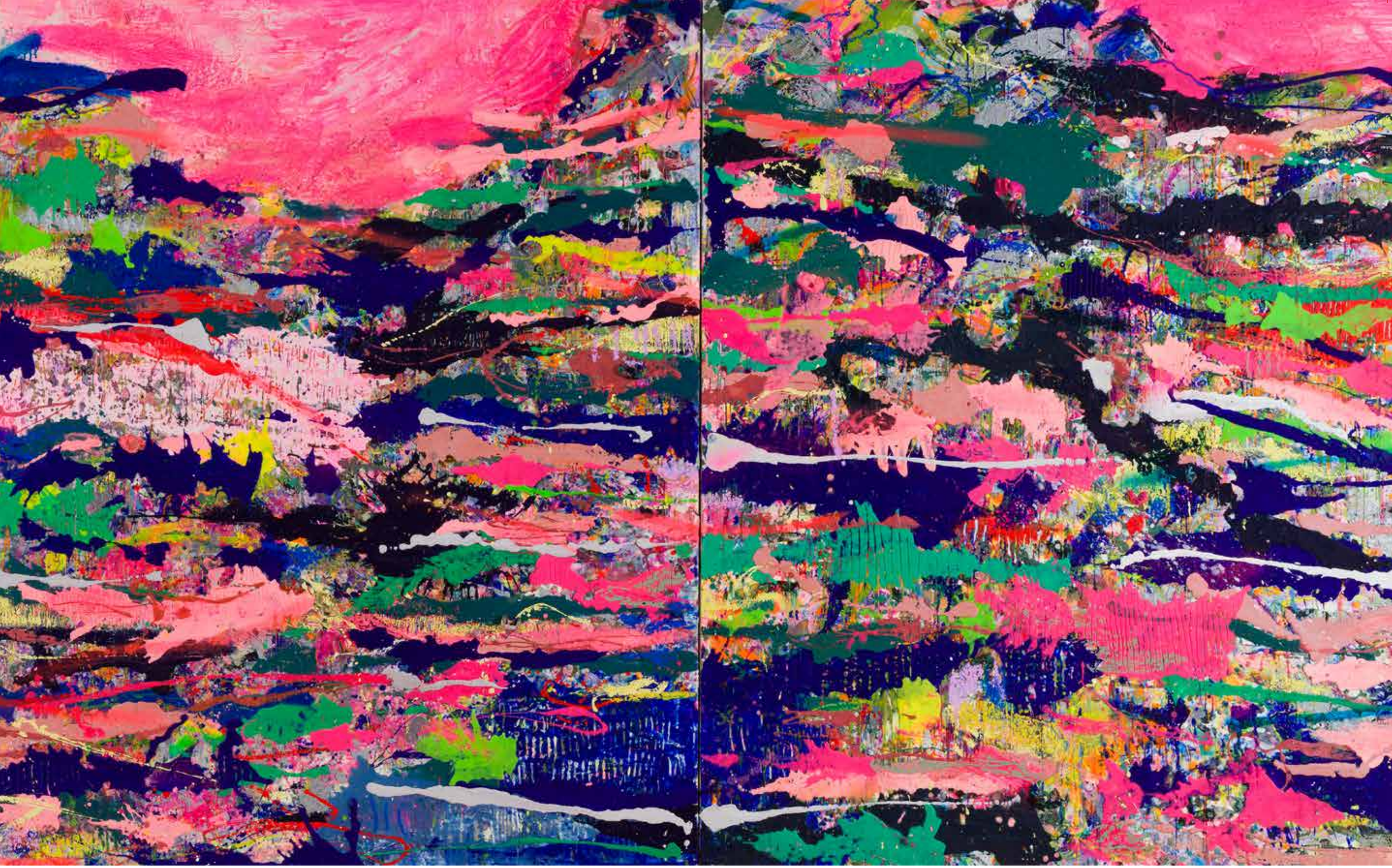












art.works list.

p. 50

porous boundaries
beeswax and pigment on canvas
260 x 135 cm (each panel 135 x 135 cm)
2022

p. 54

nested potential
beeswax, pigment, spray-paint and admixtures on canvas
160 x 130 cm (each panel 80 x 130 cm)
2022

p. 57

plasti-sphere
52 x 70 cm
beeswax, pigment and wire
2022

p. 58

The Great Seducer
beeswax and pigment on canvas
160 x 130 cm (each panel 80 x 130 cm)
2022

p. 60

pollen-pollymer
beeswax, pigment and spray-paint
200 x 130 cm (each panel 100 x 130 cm)
2022

p. 62

seeing with my feelers
beeswax, pigment and spray-paint on canvas
270 x 135 cm (each panel 135 x 135 cm)
2022

p. xi

surface-tension
Beeswax and pigment
540 x 200 cm (each panel 180 x 200 cm)
2023

p. 67

strange-stranger
beeswax and pigment on canvas
160 x 130cm (each panel 80 x 130 cm)
2022

p. 71

precarious stranger I
408 x 810 x 705 cm
wood, string, wax, perspex
2023

p. 73

precarious stranger II
407 x 708 x 600 cm
wood, string, wax, perspex
2023

p. 75

precarious stranger III
391 x 606 x 700 cm
wood, string, wax, perspex
2023

p. 79

persistence of nuance
bisque-fired clay
160 x 40 x 40 cm
2023

p. 82

THick-sKinned
beeswax and pigment on canvas
76 x 180 cm (each panel 76 x 90 cm)
2023

p. 84

STICKS and STONES
'lost'-wax and pigment
dimension variable
2023

p. 86

second-Nature
video-animation
generated using polycam, midjourney, blendr
5:00 min.
2023

p. xiii

Filtered Landscape
beeswax and pigment
540 x 200 cm (each panel 180 x 200 cm)
2023

p. xv

C, O, L, O, N, O, S, C, O, P and Y
beeswax, latex, pigment, metal and string
15 x 300 cm (variable)
2022-2023

bibliography.

Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf). 2020. Nanotechnology for pollination studies. Quest. 16(2):34-35.

Adams, W.M. & Redford, K.H. 2021. Editing the wild. Conservation Biology. 35(5):1701-1703. DOI:10.1111/cobi.13741.

Adams, W.M. & Redford, K.H. 2021. Strange Natures: Conservation in the Era of Synthetic Biology. New Haven & London: Yale University Press.

Allsopp, D., Seal, K.J. & Gaylarde, C.C. 2004. Introduction to Biodeterioration. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Aloi, G. & McHugh, S. 2021. Posthumanism in Art and Science: A Reader. New York: Columbia University Press.

Aouf, R.S. 2022. Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg creates “interspecies artwork” at Serpentine Galleries. dezeen. 7 July. Available: https://www.dezeen.com/2022/07/07/alexandra-daisy-ginsberg-art-interspecies-artwork-pollinator-pathmaker/

Aouf, R.S.2023. AI “raises all sorts of questions” for animals and the environment says Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg. dezeen. 4 July. Available: https://www.dezeen.com/2023/07/04/ai-alexandra-daisy-ginsberg-interview-aitopia/

Ardrey, R. 1972. The Social Contract. London: Collins.

Artists Space. 2018. The Love of Painting Isabelle Graw, David Joselit, Avery Singer Discussion Documentation. [Video file]. 21 May. Available: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BPA68918ODU.

Avarguès-Weber, A., Mota, T. & Giurfa, M. 2012. New vistas on honey bee vision. Apidologie. 43:244-268.

Barthes, R. 1957. Plastic. In Lange-Berndt, P. (ed.) 2015. Materiality. London: Whitechapel Gallery. Pp. 173-174.

Barad, K. 2003. Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter. Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society. 28(3):801-831. DOI:10.1086/345321.

Barad, K. 2007. Meeting the Universe Halfway. In Lange-Berndt, P. (ed.) 2015. Materiality. London: Whitechapel Gallery. Pp. 213-215.

Barad, K. 2017. No Small Matter: Mushroom Clouds, Ecologies of Nothingness, and Strange Topologies of Spacetimemattering. In Tsing, A.L., Swanson, H.A., Gan, E. & Bubandt, N. (ed.) Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Pp. 103-117

Bauman, Z. 2000. Liquid Modernity. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bega, S. 2021. EU ships banned bee-killing pesticides to South Africa and other countries. Mail and Guardian. 18 November. Available: https://mg.co.za/the-green-guardian/2021-11-18-eu-ships-banned-bee-killing-pesticides-to-south-africa-and-other-countries/

Bega. S. 2021. EU-banned pesticides are harming farmworkers in SA. Mail and Guardian. 9 May. Available: https://mg.co.za/the-green-guardian/2021-05-09-eu-banned-pesticides-are-harming-farmworkers-in-sa/

Bennett, J. 2010. Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things. Durham: Duke University Press.

Bennett, J. 2012. Systems and Things: A Response to Graham Harman and Timothy Morton. New Literary History. 43(2):225-233. DOI:10.1353/nlh.2012.0020.

Bird-Rose, D. 2017. Shimmer: When all you love is being trashed. In Tsing, A.L., Swanson, H.A., Gan, E. & Bubandt, N. (ed.) Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Pp. 51-64.

Boettger, S. 2021. Decolonizing Nature: Contemporary Art and the Politics of Ecology

and Beyond the World's End: Arts of Living at the Crossing, by T. J. Demos; and The Ecological Eye: Assembling an Ecocritical Art History, by Andrew Patrizio. The Art Bulletin. 103(2):162-166. DOI:10.1080/00043079.2021.1877971.

Bowman, M. 2010. Timing Wax, Timing Art History. Art History. 33(1):170-172. DOI:10.1111/j.1467-8365.2009.00723.

Boysen, B. 2018. The embarrassment of being human: A critique of new materialism and object-oriented ontology. Orbis Litterarum. 73(3):225-242. DOI:10.1111/oli.12174.

Braddock, A.C. 2009. Ecocritical Art History. American Art. 23(2):24-28. DOI:10.1086/605707.

Brady, J. 2016. Elemental: an arts and ecology reader. Manchester: Gaia Project Press.

Braidotti, R. 2013. The Posthuman. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Braidotti, R. 2021. From Nomadic Theory (2011). In Aloi, G. & McHugh, S. (ed.) Posthumanism in Art and Science: A Reader. New York: Columbia University Press. Pp. 40-42.

Bronowski, J. 1972. Science and Human Values. 1st ed. New York: Harper & Row.

Carless-Frost, T. 2020. Wax Resists Essay: A material history of wax's phenomenological resistance and challenge to established art historical practice. Available: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344320620_Wax_Resists_Essay_A_material_history_of_wax%27s_phenomenological_resistance_and_challenge_to_established_art_historical_practice

Carnie, T. 2020. Africa must act on pesticide 'double standards. Mail and Guardian. 5 March. Available: https://mg.co.za/article/2020-03-05-africa-must-act-on-pesticide-double-standards/

Carson, R. 1955. The Sea Around Us. 2nd ed. London: Staples.

Carson, R. 1965. Silent Spring. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Carson, R. 2021. Man's War Against Nature. London: Penguin Books.

Clarke, B. 2017. Rethinking Gaia: Stengers, Latour, Margulis. Theory, Culture & Society. 34(4):3-26. DOI:10.1177/0263276416686844.

Coles, D. 2019. Chromatopia: An Illustrated History of Colour. London: Thames and Hudson.

Cronon, W. 1996. The Trouble with Wilderness; Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature. Environmental History; Environmental History. 1(1):7-28. DOI:10.2307/3985059.

CropLife SA. 2018. 'Position statement on Neonicotinoids and bees', South Africa, December 2018.

Daston, L. & Park, K. 2001a. Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150-1750. New York: Zone Books.

Demos, T.J. 2016. Decolonizing Nature: Contemporary Art and the Politics of Ecology. Berlin: Sternberg Press.

Deutsche Welle (DW), 2020. Bayer and the Bees. [Video file]. 16 June. Available: https://www.dw.com/en/bayer-and-the-bees/video-53828523.

Didi-Huberman, G., 1999. Wax Flesh, Vicious Circles. Encyclopedia Anatomica: a complete collection of anatomical waxes, pp.64-74.

Donlan, Berger, Bock, Burney, Estes, Foreman, Martin, Roemer et al. 2006. Pleistocene Rewilding: An Optimistic Agenda for Twenty-First Century Conservation. The American Naturalist. 168(5):660. DOI:10.2307/3873461.

Evnine, S.J., 2016. Making Objects and Events: A Hylomorphic Theory of Artifacts, Actions, and Organisms. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Farr, I. 2012. Memory. London: Whitechapel Gallery.

Farrington, B. 1944. Greek Science: Its Meaning for Us (Thales to Aristotle). Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Ferrando, F. 2019. Post-Humanism, Transhumanism, Antihumanism, Metahumanism and New Materialisms: Differences and Relations. Revista De Filosofia Aurora = Journal of Philosophy Aurora. 31(54):958-971. DOI:10.7213/1980-5934.31.054.TD01.

Fogle, D. 2001. Painting at the Edge of the World. Minneapolis: Walker Art Centre.

Friedman, T.L. 2007. The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century. 1st ed. New York: Picador/Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Frisch, K.V. 1967. The dance language and orientation of bees. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Ghosh, A. 2021. Uncanny and Improbable Events. London: Penguin Books.

Ghosh, A. 2016. The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Grobler, L., Thom, J., Speakes, O., Krynauw, M. & Dreyer, T. 2023. Liza Grobler: never a full stop. Cape Town: Everard Read.

Grosz, E. 2008. Chaos, Territory, Art: Deleuze and the Framing of the Earth. New York: Columbia University Press.

Grosz, E. 2001. The Thing. In Lange-Berndt, P. (ed.) 2015. Materiality. London: Whitechapel Gallery. Pp. 147-149.

Han, B.C., 2022. Non-things: Upheaval in the Lifeworld. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Hannibal, M.E. 2021. A planet remade in our image: As Anthropocene impacts accumulate, a sometimes-unrecognizable Earth emerges. Science (American Association for the Advancement of Science). 371(6536):1318.

Holt. L. 2019. Why the 'post-natural' age could be strange and beautiful. BBC Future. 3 May. Available: https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20190502-why-the-post-natural-age-could-be-strange-and-beautiful

Haraway, D. 2010. When Species Meet: Staying with the Trouble. Environment and Planning D: Society and Space. 28(1):53-55.

Haraway, D.J. 2016. Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene. Durham: Duke University Press.

Harman, G. 2018. Object-Oriented Ontology: A New Theory of Everything. London: Pelican Random House.

Harman, G. 2020. Art + Objects. London: Polity Press.

Hepburn, H.R. 1986. Honeybees and Wax: An Experimental Natural History. Berlin: Springer-Verlag.

Holstrom, A. 2022. Feminism or Death: How the Women's Movement Can Save the Planet. New York: Verso.

Hopwood, J., Code, A., Vaughan, M., Biddinger, D., Shepherd, M., Black, S.H., Lee-Mäder, E. & Mazzacano, C., 2016. How neonicotinoids can kill bees. In The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservations. Pp. 90126-3.

Hudek, A. 2014. The Object. London: Whitechapel Gallery.

Iriarte, C.d.L.H. 2023. Sensation, spirituality, and Deleuze: Becoming colour through Katharina Grosse's explosive artworks. Area (London 1969). 55(1):142-149. DOI:10.1111/area.12827.

Iqani, M. 2020. Garbage in Popular Culture: Consumption and the Aesthetics of Waste. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Jamal, A. 2017. In the World: Essays on Contemporary South African Art. Milan: Skira editore S.p.A.

Johansson, T. & Johansson, M.P. 1967. Lorenzo L. Langstroth and the Bee Space. Bee World. 48(4):133-143.

Jones, S. 1994. The Language of the Genes: Biology, History and the Evolutionary Future. London: Flamingo.

Kirksey, E. 2015. Emergent Ecologies. Durham: Duke University Press.

Krcma, E. 2015. Eva Hesse's Wanton Duality: Liquidity and Compression in the Mechanical Drawings of 1965. Master Drawings. 53(3):365-384.

Krauss, R. 1979. Sculpture in the Expanded Field. October. 8:31-44. DOI:10.2307/778224 Available: http://www.jstor.org/stable/778224.

Kristeva, J. 1982. Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection. New York: Columbia University Press.

Latour, B. 2004. Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Lorenz, K. 1977. Behind the Mirror: A Search for a Natural History of Human Knowledge. London: Egmont Books.

Lorenz, K. 1988. The Waning of Humaneness. London: Unwin Hyman.

Lorimer, J. 2009. Posthumanism/Posthumanistic Geographies. In International Encyclopaedia of Human Geography. R. Kitchin & N. Thrift, Eds. Oxford: Elsevier. Pp. 344-354.

Loveless, N. 2019. How to Make Art at the End of the World: A Manifesto for Research-Creation. Durham: Duke University Press. DOI:10.1515/9781478004646.

Maier, A. 2011. Katharina Grosse by Ati Maier. BOMB Magazine. 1 April. Available: https://bombmagazine.org/articles/katharina-grosse/

Marais, E. 1970. The Soul of the White Ant. Cape Town: Human and Rousseau.

Marder, M. 2013. Plant-Thinking: A Philosophy of Vegetal Life. New York: Columbia University Press.

Mark, H.F. 1966. Giant molecules. New York: Time Incorporated.

Marris, E. 2013. Rambunctious Garden: Saving Nature in a Post-Wild World. New York: Bloomsbury.

Marris, E. & Metzgers, G. 2009. Q&A: Gustav Metzger on destruction. Nature (London).461(7264):598. DOI:10.1038/461598a.

McCallum, I. 2005. Ecological Intelligence: Rediscovering Ourselves in Nature. Cape Town: Africa Geographic.

McGivney, A. 2020. 'Like sending bees to war': the deadly truth behind your almond milk obsession. The Guardian. 8 January. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/jan/07/honeybees-deaths-almonds-hives-aoe

McKibben, B. 2006. The End of Nature. New York: Random House.

McKibben, B. 2019. Falter: Has the Human Game Begun to Play Itself Out? New York: Macmillan.

Merchant, C. 1989. The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution. New York: Harper & Row.

Monbiot, G. 2013. Feral: Searching for Enchantment on the Frontiers of Rewilding. London: Allen Lane.

Morton, T., 2010. Thinking Ecology: The Mesh, the Strange Stranger, and the Beautiful Soul. Collapse. 6:265-293.

Morton, T. 2013a. Poisoned Ground. Symplokē. 21(1-2):37-50. DOI:10.5250/symploke.21.1-2.0037.

Morton, T. 2013b. Realist Magic: Objects, Ontology, Causality. Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press.

Morton, T. 2013c. Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Morton, T. 2016. Dark Ecology: For a Logic of Future Coexistence. New York: Columbia University Press.

Morton, T. 2017. Humankind: Solidarity with Nonhuman People. London: Verso.

Morton, T. 2017b. Spectral Life: The Uncanny Valley Is in Fact a Gigantic Plain, Stretching as Far as the Eye Can See in Every Direction. In Weinstein, J. & Colebrook, C. (Eds.) Posthumous Life: Theorizing Beyond the Posthuman. Columbia University Press. 271-294.

Morton, T. 2019. Being Ecological. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Morton, T. 2021. All Art is Ecological. London: Penguin Books.

Myers, T.R. 2011. Painting. London: Whitechapel Gallery.

Olszewski, K., Dziechciarz, P., Trytek, M. & Borsuk, G. 2022. A scientific note on the strategy of wax collection as rare behavior of Apis mellifera. Apidologie. 53(4) DOI:10.1007/s13592-022-00948-z.

Oppermann, S. 2018. The Scale of the Anthropocene: Material Ecocritical Reflections. Mosaic (Winnipeg); Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal. 51(3):1-17.

Ørskau, G. 2010. The Longing for Order: Painting as the Gatekeeper for Harmony. In Anne, R.P. (ed.) 2022. Contemporary Painting in Context. Charlottenlund: Museum Tusculanum Press.

Oxman, O. 2021. Neri Oxman's Synthetic Apiary II shows how beehive construction "is a responsive and dynamic process". dezeen. 19 November. Available: https://www.dezeen.com/2021/11/19/neri-oxman-synthetic-apiary-two-honey-bees/

Pilcher, H. 2020. Life Changing: How Humans Are Altering Life on Earth. London: Bloomsbury Sigma.

Pirk, C.W., Crous, K.L., Duangphakdee, O., Radloff, S.E. & Hepburn, R. 2011. Economics of comb wax salvage by the red dwarf honeybee, Apis florea. Journal of Comparative Physiology, Biochemical, Systemic, and Environmental Physiology. 181(3):353-359. DOI:10.1007/s00360-010-0530-6.

Raffles, H. 2011. Insectopedia. New York: Vintage Books.

Rankin, L. 2010. Encaustic Art: The Complete Guide to Creating Fine Art with Wax. 1st ed. New York: Watson-Guptill Publications.

Redford, K. & William, A. 2021. Strange Natures: Conservation in the Era of Synthetic Biology. New Haven & London: Yale University Press.

Rees, T. 2018. After Ethnos. Durham: Duke University Press. DOI:10.1215/9781478002284.

Rich, N. 2021. Second Nature: Scenes from a World Remade. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Ring Peterson, A. 2010, Painting Spaces, Contemporary Painting in Context. In Ring Peterson (ed.) 2010. Contemporary Painting in Context. Charlottenlund: Museum Tusculanum Press.

Rübel, D. 2012. Plasticity: An Art History of the Mutable. In Lange-Berndt, P. (ed.)

2015. Materiality. London: Whitechapel Gallery. Pp 94-103.

Searle, A. 2009. Anish Kapoor: A very fine mess. The Guardian. 21 September. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2009/sep/21/anish-kapoor-royal-academy/

Seeley, T.D. 1985. Honeybee Ecology: A Study of Adaptation in Social Life. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Selam, O. 2006. Ecofeminism or Death: Humans, Identity, and the Environment. Atenea. 26(1):75.

Serpentine Gallery. 2023. Rewording: Episode 4: Regenerating. [Podcast, 8 February] Available: https://www.serpentinegalleries.org/art-and-ideas/reworlding/

Shiva, V. 2011. The Corporate Control of Life = Die Kontrolle von Konzernen über das Leben. Ostfildern: Hantje Cantz.

Shiva, V. 2016. Soil not Oil: Climate Change, Peak Oil and Food Insecurity. London: Zed Books Ltd.

Stacey, R.J., Dyer, J., Mussell, C., Lluveras-Tenorio, A., Colombini, M.P., Duce, C., La Nasa, J., Cantisani, E. et al. 2018a. Ancient encaustic: An experimental exploration of technology, ageing behaviour and approaches to analytical investigation. Microchemical Journal. 138:472-487. DOI: 10.1016/j.microc.2018.01.040.

Staff writer. 2013. Berlinda de Bruyckere Cripplewood at Venice Art Biennale. Designboom. 7 June. Available: https://www.designboom.com/art/berlinde-de-bruyckere-cripplewood-at venice-art-biennale/

Szita, J. 2013. Wax prolific. Frame (Amsterdam). (94):220-221.

Taan, Yu-Fi. 2012. Humanist Geography: An Individual's Search for Meaning. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

The Jewish Museum (NYC). 2015. Isabelle Graw: The Economy of Painting – Notes on the Vitality of a Success-Medium. [Video file]. 4 June. Available: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1JDthDEcmAs.

Tsing, A.L. 2015. The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Tsing, A.L., Swanson, H., Gan, E. & Bubandt, N. 2017. Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet: Ghosts of the Anthropocene. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Turpin, E. & Davis, H. 2015. Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters Among Aesthetics, Politics, Environments and Epistemologies. London: Open Humanities Press.

Twidle. H. 2021. Dirty Butter. Catalogue essay for Artificial Selection, an exhibition by Elize Vossgätter at Everard Read, Cape Town. (Unpublished).

Ward, B. & Dubos, René J. 1972. Only one Earth: the care and maintenance of a small planet: an unofficial report commissioned by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Warren, K.J. 1987. Feminism and Ecology: Making Connections. Environmental Ethics. 9(1):3-20. DOI:10.5840/enviroethics19879113.

Weintraub, L. 2016. Archetypes of material use and disuse: An art and ecology primer. Cogent Arts & Humanities. 3(1):1168910. DOI:10.1080/23311983.2016.1168910.

Westgeest, H. 2022. Slow Painting: Contemplation and Critique in the Digital Age. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts.

Woodcock, B.A., Bullock, J.M., Shore, R.F., Heard, M.S., Pereira, M.G., Redhead, J., Ridding, L., Dean, H. et al. 2017. Country-specific effects of neonicotinoid

pesticides on honey bees and wild bees. Science. 356(6345):1393-1395.

Worthy, K., Allison, E. & Bauman, W. 2019. After the Death of Nature: Carolyn Merchant and the Future of Human-Nature Relations. New York: Routledge.

Wylie, D. 2008. Toxic belonging? Identity and Ecology in Southern Africa. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars.

Yong, E. 2022. An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us. London: The Bodley Head.

appendix image references.

01

Natural Order. 2019.
Photographed by Mike Hall

02

Ceaseless Metamorphosis. 2021.
Photographed by David Southwood

05

Beehive in the Company's Garden
Photographed by Moeneeb Dalwai, March 2023

07

Anish Kapoor. Svayambh. 2007.
left: Crone, R., Stosch, A.v. & Kapoor, A. 2008. Svayambh. Munich; Prestel.

08

Anish Kapoor. Shooting into the Corner. 2008.
Anfam, D., Burton, J., Deacon, R. & De Salvo, D.M. 2009. Anish Kapoor. London; Phaidon. Pp 485

09-10

berlinde de bruyckere: kreupelhout – cripplewood, 2012 – 2013.
photographed by mirjam devriendt for designboom, in:
https://www.designboom.com/art/berlinde-de-bruyckere-cripplewood-at-venice-art-biennale/

11

Katharina Grosse. It Wasn't Us.
Installation at Hamburger Bahnhof. Museum für Gegenwart. Berlin 2020.
Courtesy KÖNIG GALERIE, Berlin
Photographed by Jens Ziehe in:
https://www.volkswagen-newsroom.com/en/images/detail/volkswagen-partnership-realises-katharina-grosse-exhibition-at-hamburger-bahnhof-museum-fur-gegenwart-berlin-33522

12

Katharina Grosse. Infinite Logic Conference. 2004.
Acrylic on wall, floor, ceiling, bed, canvas, books, and cot, 388 x 2500 x 820 cm.
Installation at Magasin 3, Stockholm: https://sculpturemagazine.art/katharina-grosse/

13

Liza Grobler. 2022.
Installation views of Inkommers, Laatkommers en Laatlammers
Festival Artist at the Klein Karoo Kunsfees. Oudtshoorn. April 2023.
Images courtesy of the artist.

14

Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg. 2022.
A planting plan created by the Pollinator Pathmaker algorithm.
https://pollinator.art/about/how-it-works (accessed 26 oct 16:43)

15

Digital rendering of Pollinator Pathmaker, at the Frankfurter Kunstverein. 2023.
https://www.fkv.de/en/alexandra-daisy-ginsberg/

16

magic-eye or stereogram (29.412)
In this image the numerical coordinates appear for geocaching
https://www.geocaching.com/geocache/GC56RXP

17-18

Artists' own images

19

Cassytha ciliolate
Photographed by Carina Lochner.
Observed. Sep 16, 2023. 14:56 SAST
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/183840344

20

time immaterial
Photographed by Maeshelle West-Davies for Gallerie Gänge. 2022

21

The Colony. 2019.
Photographed by Alfred Weidinger

acknowledgements.

> This much I have learned: Every relation one has, offers a singular possibility to actualize one's being — one no other relation can offer. The powerful implication of this observation is that it is through relations that one is in the world. No relations, no self. Acknowledgments, then, the maps of relations they are, are akin to a map of one's history of being, of being in the world.
>
> Tobias Rees, *After Ethnos*, 2018 p. XI

I am grateful for the privilege I have been afforded in spending the last two years as a student on Hiddingh campus again, with the extraordinary support of the academic community and the open-hearted, generous assistance of all the staff.

A big Thank You to my supervisor Fritha Langerman for her consistent bigger-picture-thinking and for showing such trust in my process.

The exceptionally hands-on technical support of Charlie van Rooyen, Stan Amon, Moeneeb Dalwai, Ben Orkin, Dan Tucker, Sitaara Stodel, Mark Miller, Shamiel Abrahams & Thomas Pienaar, who, with smiling eyes can solve any problem. What an asset you all are to this university!

Appreciation for the encouragement and insights from: Virginia MacKenny, Svea Josephy, Thabang Monoa, Kurt Campbell, Johan van der Schijff, Jane Alexander, Stephané Conradie and Jade Nair.

And to my fellow Masters peers and odd-kin: Diana Vives, Guy Moshayov, Sihle Sogaula, Tao Boerstra, Ayesha Price: I have come to love you all, it has been an honour working alongside you — Thank you!

The team at Everard Read: Emma, Lena, Charles, Claire, Jake, Faith, Wahieb: thank you for sticking with me through this two-year project and always being so warm and pragmatic, clear and professional.

My friends who have consistently jumped in the ocean with me and cheered me on:

Hedley Twidle, Sean Christie, Barbara Wildenboer, Simone Sittig and Ashraf Jamal.

My brothers Boris and Richard who always pull me back to centre, and their wives and children whom I love: Brenda, Tania, Roxanne, Ella, Lottie, Eli, Noa - you are all a marvel.

My son Sam for his light-heartedness and self-reliance as he enters his own studies in Berlin.

Eve, my daughter whose clear-headed insight, supreme clarity of aesthetic, flexible temperament and grounded perspective of life are an inspiration.

And thank you to the bees, for making me see beyond the tip of my nose.

Credits:

Photography:	Mia Thom (painting) Nicole Fraser (sculpture)
Animation:	Jonathan Durno
Sound:	Richard Vossgätter
Copy editor:	Lucienne Bestall
Canvas:	Stan Amor
Wax supply:	Marina Wilbraham – Encaustry
Bee support:	Bruce Anderson, Brian Fanner
Printing:	Zane Luther at ORMS Print Room
Catalogue Design:	Nicolas Tanner (INDEX Collective)

elize vossgätter.