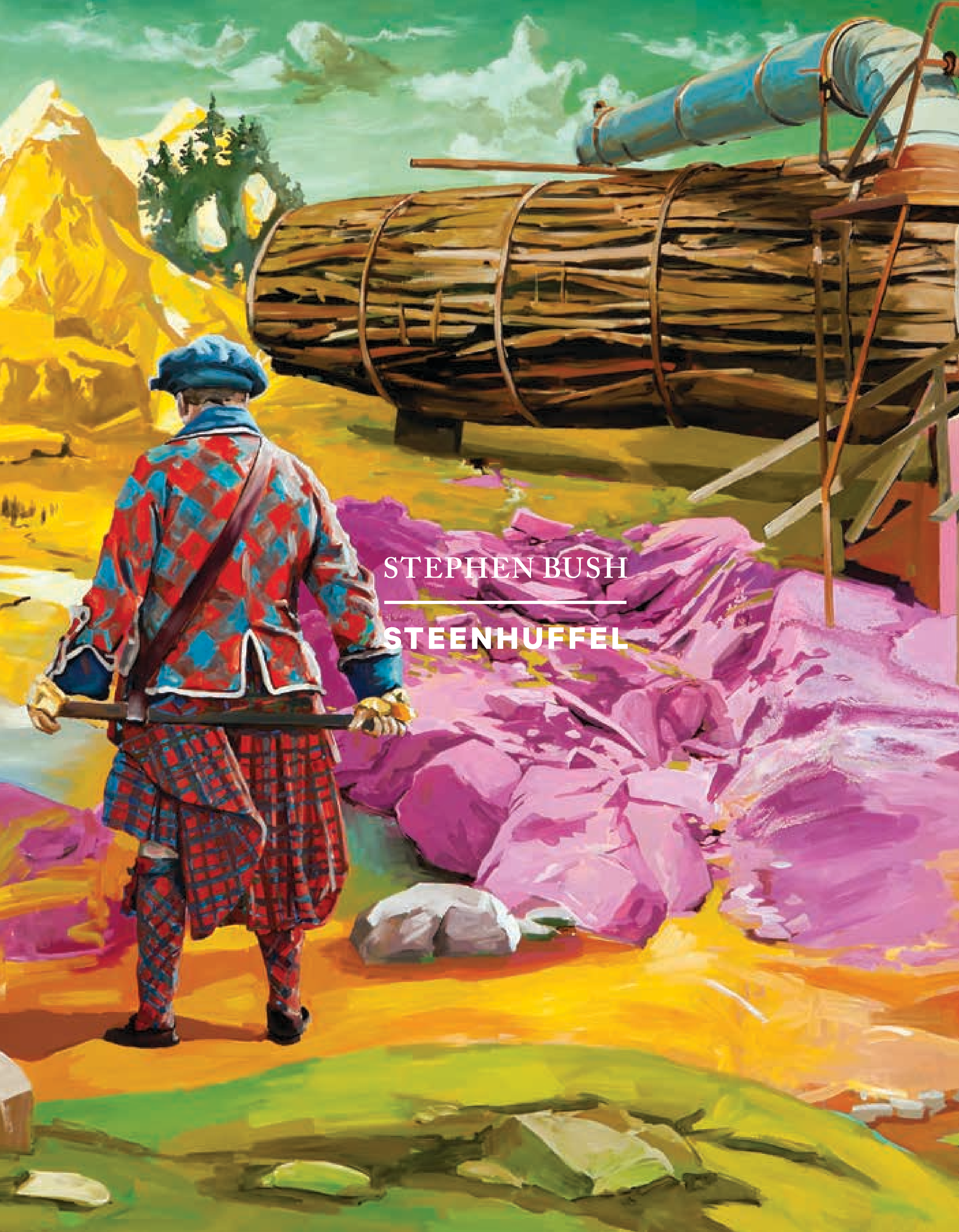

STEPHEN BUSH

STEENHUFFEL

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Stephen Bush: Steenhuffel
The Vizard Foundation Contemporary Artist Project 2014

Curator Kelly Gellatly

Published by the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne, on the occasion of the exhibition *Stephen Bush: Steenhuffel*, 27 March to 6 July 2014.

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ISBN: 978-0-7340-4910-0

Design by 5678 Design
Printed by Bambra Press, Melbourne

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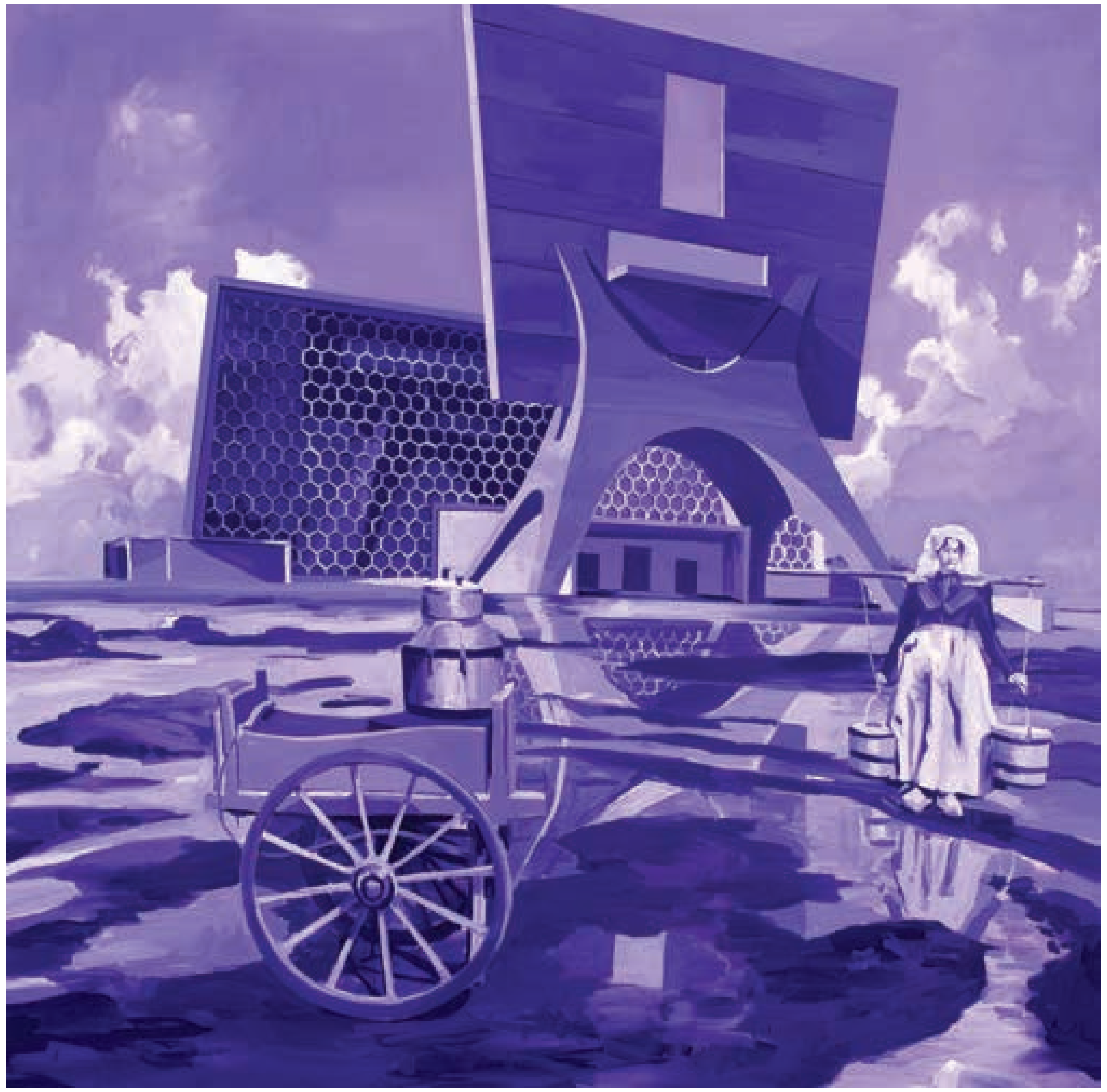
FOREWORD

The Ian Potter Museum of Art is delighted to present *Stephen Bush: Steenhuffel*, a major exhibition of the work of acclaimed Australian painter Stephen Bush. *Steenhuffel* is the fourth in the Potter's series of Vizard Foundation Contemporary Artist Projects, a creative initiative of the Vizard Foundation which offers mid-career and senior artists a significant grant to produce new work. Following on from previous exhibitions by Jenny Watson (2011), Geoff Lowe / A Constructed World (2012) and Philip Brophy (2013), Bush's unique iteration of the project has not only enabled him to both make and exhibit new paintings, but to also shape a very particular viewing experience that allows audiences to see his work from across the decades outside of the linear and largely narrative framework of the traditional survey exhibition. As a result, *Steenhuffel* becomes both a powerful and playful meditation on the role and contribution of the artist in contemporary society. I have no doubt that visitors familiar with Stephen Bush's impressive oeuvre, as well as those new to the artist's work, will thoroughly enjoy this journey.

This beautiful publication includes new writing on Stephen Bush's practice by curator and writer Liza Statton and the Potter's Director, Kelly Gellatly, and I thank them both for their contributions and the insights they contain. *Steenhuffel* is the first curatorial project undertaken by Kelly at the Potter, and I congratulate her on her efforts. Thanks are also due to the Vizard Foundation for their ongoing support of the Potter, this exhibition, and the Contemporary Artist Project series as a whole. The invaluable acknowledgement and encouragement that the Foundation provides mid-career and senior artists is unique within Australia and the Potter is pleased to be able to exhibit the exciting new work that develops from their very direct support. We are also indebted to Bernard Shafer for his assistance with the freight of his monumental painting included in the exhibition.

Thanks are due to the Potter's Assistant Curator, Suzette Wearne, and Collections and Exhibitions Officer Steve Martin for their invaluable assistance as well as to all of the Potter staff for helping to ensure the exhibition's success. We also owe a debt of gratitude to Kate Daw, Head of the Victorian College of the Arts' Painting program and to Darren Munce for their help in coordinating a group of VCA students to execute a wall mural, under Stephen Bush's direction, within the exhibition. Finally, we congratulate Stephen Bush and warmly thank him for his work, the exhibition, and his enthusiastic collaboration with the entire Potter team.

Julie Ann Cox
Chairman, Ian Potter Museum of Art Board



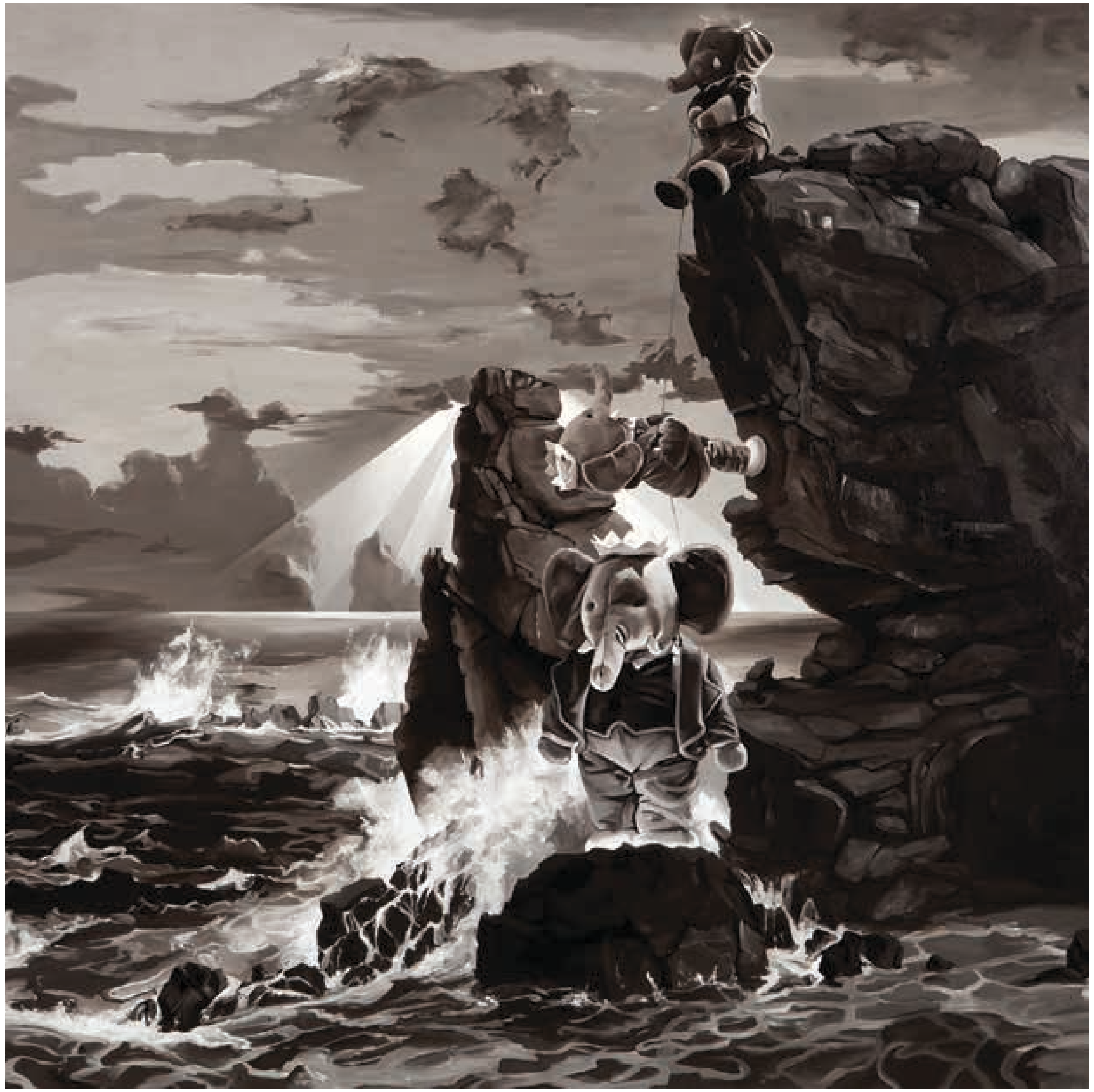


Fig. 1
The lure of Paris #30 2013
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

STEPHEN BUSH:
UNCONDITIONAL REINVENTION

LIZA STATTON

Before I knew Stephen Bush as a person, I knew him as a painter. Like many admirers, I became familiar with his work by way of his monochrome painting series, *The lure of Paris* [fig. 1] (1992–). Witty and cryptic, these serialised depictions of Jean de Brunhoff's portly Babar the Elephant exploring a Turner-esque landscape read as wry send-ups of European academic painting and a metaphor for the postcolonial condition in Australia. In de Brunhoff's 1931 children's story, *L'Histoire de Babar*, Babar travels to Paris from Africa, where he is 'civilised' by Western society. Having adopted Western cultural dress, customs, and behaviors, Babar returns to the jungle in Africa to 'civilise' his fellow elephants. The British did the same to the Aboriginal Australians when they claimed the land for the monarchy, and the legacy of postcolonialism is part and parcel of contemporary Australian visual culture.

Yet to consider the works only within the purview of postcolonial discourse, or solely as signifiers of Australian identity, is to limit their discursiveness. Spanning twenty-one years, and now thirty paintings strong, Bush's *The lure of Paris* paintings do more than make allusions to the maladies and injustices of History. The paintings index the variety of influences that inform Bush's work, while revealing the artist's paradoxical attitude toward painting, which is both quixotic and pragmatic.

Although Bush might best be described as a figurative painter, it doesn't tell the whole story about an artist whose exuberant eclecticism defies easy categorisation. For the past three decades, Bush's painting style and choice of subject matter has been vast and varied. In addition to costumed elephants, Bush has painted farm equipment, potatoes, rubbish bins, humble cabins, and beekeepers, to name a few. And despite his catholic interests, what remains consistent is the artist's commitment to representational painting, which has been steadfast since the late 1970s. This was a decidedly unfashionable choice, as the flamboyant figuration and gestural brushstrokes of the Neo-Expressionists had become painting's *lingua franca* at the time. Bush turned his attention to the landscapes of nineteenth-century European and American painters, the mannered figuration of American Regionalist painters, and the iconography of Pop Art, among others. Though seemingly curious and incongruous, such an assortment of interests reveals a fascination with the ordinary, contempt for the notion of progress, and a view that paintings are constructed things that question both the subjectivity of the artist and the viewer.

In *The lure of Paris*, Bush's overt blend of high and low subject matter lends the work an air of visual slap-stick that belies its technical virtuosity. Using classical techniques such as *grisaille* and *chiaroscuro*, Bush creates a pictorial space that looks visibly plausible. Babar is painted so convincingly, we believe he occupies the space Bush depicts. With its portentous skies, ethereal light, surging tides, and monumental, rocky bluffs, *The lure of Paris* bares the stylistic hallmarks of nineteenth-century Romantic painters such as Caspar David Friedrich, Eugène Delacroix, Thomas Cole, and Frederic Edwin Church, among others. Broadly speaking, landscapes by these artists often reflected a view of nature as dramatic and unforgiving; yet, man remained at the center of it all. Travel and exploration were key themes; the individual beholding nature was another.

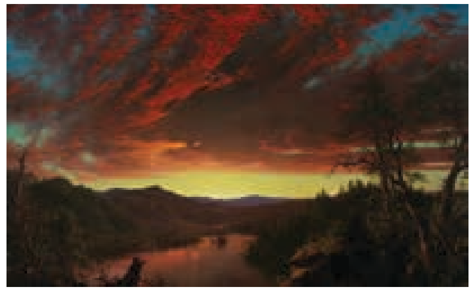


Fig. 2
Frederic Edwin Church
Twilight in the wilderness 1860
oil on canvas
101.6 x 162.6 cm
Collection Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio
Courtesy the Bridgeman Art Library Ltd.

These contemplative scenes, particularly those by the American painters like Cole and Church, carried moralising and nationalistic messages that spoke particularly to the American viewer. As American art scholar Barbara Novak writes:

> The emphasis on the moral value of the aesthetic experience, and in particular, on the moral benefits to be derived from contemplating landscape is vital to an understanding of landscape taste in nineteenth-century America. In its deepest sense, this morality encompassed not only the simpler ethical virtue 'love of good' but an awareness of landscape…as God's sensuous image of revelation.[1]

Twilight in the wilderness (1860) [fig. 2] by Frederic Edwin Church is emblematic of the symbolism that underscores such American romanticism. The painting presents a spectacular view of Mount Katahdin, in Maine, seen at dusk. The sky, streaked with vermillion, contrasts with the sulfurous light that hovers over the purple mountain. Church directs our gaze inward toward the rapidly dissolving radiant light. Framed by the gnarled, barren trees and a rocky outcrop, we find ourselves at the center of the composition, beholding the placid bay and serpentine river that winds through the wilderness. While Church is literally taking us 'toward the light', his view of nature, though stunning and harmonious, is ominous. Painted on the eve of the Civil War, the painting, with its dramatic sky, foreshadows the ensuing conflict and rapid industrialisation that will forever alter the idyllic landscape.

Despite the '"painted" romanticism' of *The lure of Paris*, Bush appropriates such landscape conventions to achieve markedly different effects.[2] Unlike the landscapes of Cole and Church, whose spectacular views of the Catskills and the Hudson Valley, for example, would be known to their viewing public, Bush's are not. In each of the paintings, the landscape is familiar yet unspecific, remote, yet somehow accessible. Like a stage set, the landscape is simply a theatrical prop, an artificial backdrop that frames the action. Babar appears threefold: he sits atop the cliff holding the climbing rope; rappels down the facade; and, stands motionless on a ledge amidst a surging tide. Are we to assume that it is the same toy elephant caught in three different acts? Or, are these three costumed figures enacting a scene? Bush's silence on the subject is as telling as the Babar in the foreground: his blank visage reveals nothing of his possible discoveries.

Standing alone at the edge of the world, the expressionless Babar is almost totemic—an emblem of the artist's peculiar, intimate universe in which such culturally mediated imagery acquires new relevance. Born of the interwar, the now fashionably old-fashioned figure of Babar conjures up nostalgia for the innocence of childhood and an era of renewed optimism. Yet, Bush tempers such sentiments with absurdity and ambivalence: trapped in an ill-fitting suit, Babar has nowhere to go from here. The journey is over, the story ends. Exit stage right, right?

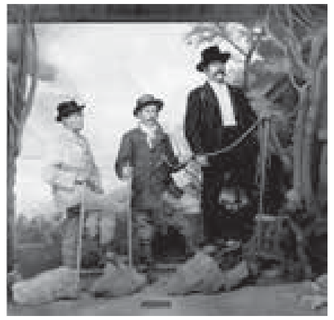
For Bush, the expedition never really ends. It just segues from one painting to the next, and then doubles back on itself. Hints at such reversals, or advancements, can be located in works such as *From the field to figuration* (1987) [fig. 3], *Looking for a prospect* (1989) [fig. 4] *Plains of promise #1* (1990) [fig. 5], and *Bluff* (1990–1991) [cat. no. 2, p. 27], which predate Bush's first *The lure of Paris* of 1992. In these landscape-based works, Bush's folksy protagonists—including the artist himself in costume dress are caught in the act of observing, searching, and contemplating. They gesticulate, as in *Plains of promise #1*, where the contemporary Bush, in ripped jeans and cowboy boots, extends his arm outward in the classical orator pose, as if to reveal a great discovery to the group. The artist appears solo in *Looking for a prospect*, in which he depicts himself as a nineteenth-century amateur explorer.
In *Bluff*, two costumed Bushes hover over a seated one, who balances pencil and paper on one knee. They look with rapt attention, seemingly unaware of their location in the idealised wilderness or the strange green 'exit' sign that stands upon the ridge below them.

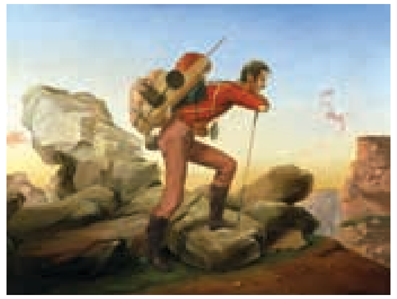
There is a sense of almost continuous performance that belongs to the language of theatre and film in these works. Bush's consciously posed figures occupy stage-like settings that emphasise the artificial over the natural and the flamboyant over the restrained. Painting is a physical act to be performed, and Bush presents this literally.[3] Consider *Looking for a prospect*, where the artist paints a representation of himself as a prospector of painting. Moreover, by appearing as both subject and object of the work, Bush undermines any notion of an authoritative narrator. Such subtle negation also occurs in *Plains of promise #1,* where Bush's multiple appearances in effect cancel each other out, rendering him, the artist, as a blank figure who imparts nothing. And, while his plainspoken titles reinforce the idea of painting as a performative representation, they also connect him to the deep-rooted tradition of naturalism in art—which Bush simultaneously embraces yet rejects.

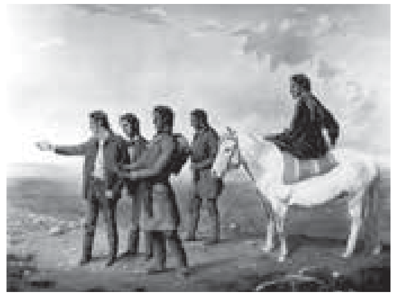
The emphasis on artifice and theatricality is perhaps most literal in *From the field to figuration*. In this monochrome work, derived from a found photograph, three gentlemen-mountaineers pose before a painted alpine backdrop.[4] The men clutch guide poles and a climbing rope; each places one foot on top of a rock, a gesture conveying the action they will undertake. Two realistically rendered fake trees frame the edge of the painting as well as the scenic backdrop set before a stage curtain. Bush arranges the figures parallel to the picture plane, and they occupy the shallow space in the foreground of the painting. A dark shadow line running along the bottom of the painted screen reinforces this lack of depth, while also articulating the screen as an object within the painting. These compositional designs compress the visual space into foreground and background, creating an emphasis on the figures' pictorial space, which is continuous with ours—an effect realised by pre-Renaissance Italian painters such as Giotto.

While the painting may echo the reduction of forms and schematised space consistent with Giotto, the frontality of the figures, strong use of contour lines, and overall flatness, also recall the pictorial sensibility of Édouard Manet.

Broadly speaking, Manet's paintings are pictures of pictures [fig. 6]. His nineteenth-century modern translations of Titian, Goya, Velázquez, and Hals, among others, challenged the relentless classicism of the French academy and embraced the spontaneity of photography, which by the 1860s, was embedded in visual culture. Manet's works convey a sense of detachment and alienation, conditions described by the poet Charles Baudelaire as endemic to modern, urban life. In a sense, Bush's *From the field to figuration*, a picture of a picture, is a conceptual conceit to Manet, whose painting simultaneously absorbed photography's narrative possibilities while rejecting its representational accuracy.







From top

Fig. 3
From the field to figuration 1987
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm
Cruthers Collection, Perth

Fig. 4
Looking for a prospect 1989
oil on canvas
46 x 66 cm
Private collection

Fig. 5
Plains of promise #1 1990
oil on canvas
150 x 200 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

The photographic sensibility of *From the field to figuration* is tempered by a painterly illusionism that is indebted to another nineteenth-century phenomenon: the diorama. In essence, dioramas are forms of model making that represent scenes using three-dimensional figures. Most of us have come to know the type of historical diorama Bush is referencing through their inclusion in natural history museums. These elaborate large-scale constructions are engineered modes of pre-cinematic virtual reality encased in glass that incorporate painting and sculpture (primarily embellished, taxidermy animals) in ways meant to mimic scenes from the natural world. The artist's painted backdrops simulate the environments in which the animals are found. The success of the illusion depends upon the painter's ability to create a scene that integrates the three-dimensional objects seamlessly. When effective, the illusion compels, and viewers are transported to the Alps, the Amazon, or the Sahara.

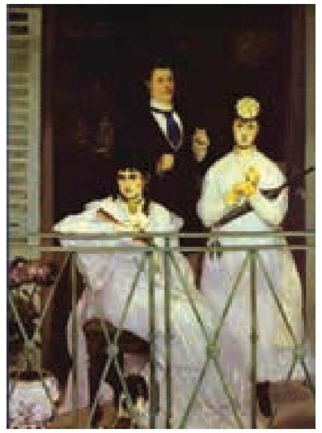


Fig. 6
Edouard Manet
The Balcony 1868-9
oil on canvas
170 x 124.5 cm
Collection Musee d'Orsay, Paris
Courtesy the Bridgeman Art Library Ltd.

If dioramas are meant to simulate reality, they are also meant to preserve it. Sheltered in glass, these little worlds are theatrical presentations and pictorial containers of reality as we imagine and desire it to be. Time is materialised, the external becomes internal, and viewers step out of their present time into another. Bush translates these effects into his paintings, which, like the diorama, are theatrical representations of the ways we claim to know and understand the world. Moreover, as cultural artifacts, they also say something about how we present what we value—a concept that is fundamental to Bush's artistic practice.

Consider *Type cast* from 1998 [cat. no. 5, p. 28]. In this diorama-styled painting, Bush presents an idealised view of two anonymous figures wearing elephant costumes before a majestic, alpine landscape. They stand in a classical orator, adoration-type pose. The upright elephant in the yellow toga faces frontally, gesturing skyward, or possibly toward the summit behind him, with his right hand. The other elephant, on bent knee, grasps the cloth, in a sign of deference. Bush creates a sense of elevation by positioning the figures higher in the shallow foreground, creating a lower perspective. Thus, the figures appear above our eye-level, as if we were looking up at them.

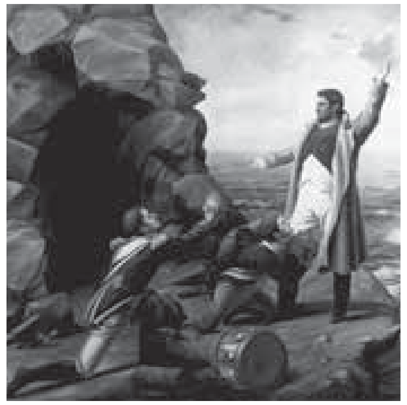
Artists have employed these compositional devices to convey ideas about power and worship to viewers for centuries, and Bush uses such conventions to subvert the authority we assign to such historical representations. In effect, his dressed up elephant sermonising on the mountaintop is a form of pantomime—a gestural exaggeration of the reverential and the heroic that amuses while it critiques. As with much of his work, Bush employs humor to circumvent any singular notion of meaning that might be ascribed to *Type cast*. In this way, the painting provokes rather than explains. What are we to make of an artist who paints people dressed up in elephant costumes performing in the landscape? Is the painting simply the artist's folly? Or, does the work complicate the ideals and values that we place upon art and artists? By establishing a tension between the absurdity displayed and the implications of such a presentation, Bush subjects us to our own self-awareness.

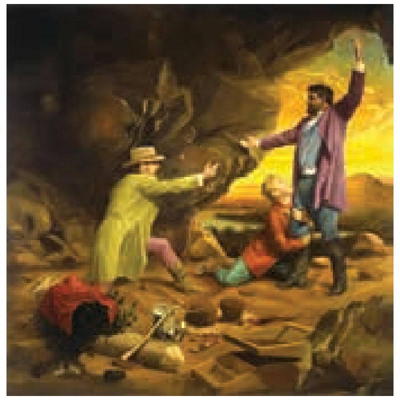
If *Type cast* is an example of Bush's whimsical and irreverent sensibilities employed for aesthetic means, it also reflects his use of parody as a form of questioning. Parody relies on the deliberate exaggeration of a known genre, and good parody requires a command of the form being parodied. One of the principle devices of parody is incongruity, which is achieved through the juxtaposition between form, which is followed faithfully, and content, which is foreign to the form in which it is inserted.[5] With *Type cast*, Bush appropriates and emulates the formal conventions of 'high art' classicism—ranging from Piero della Francesca to Nicolas Poussin—and juxtaposes them with humorous cartoon-inspired imagery, creating a psychological tension between the two that is not easily reconcilable.

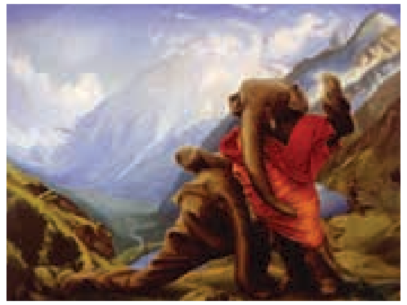
Quotation and appropriation are integral to parody, and despite Bush's informed art historical borrowings, his references often lead him back to himself. The posed elephants in *Type cast* for example, 'talk back' to earlier works, such as *This big in the Afterlife* (1990) [fig. 7] and *This big in the Afterlife, too* (1992) [fig. 8]—two landscape-based, historical genre paintings depicting costumed figures in similar poses.[6] While the compositional formula is the same for both paintings, Bush's use of color, change in setting, and costume details distinguish the two from one another.

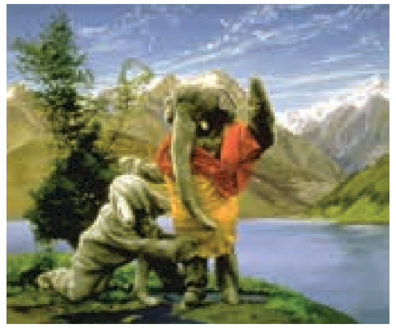
Type cast echoes the conscious theatricality of these works, yet speaks directly to the subject matter depicted in paintings such as, *When I was here I wanted to be there* (1994) [fig. 9], and *Just wait till now becomes then* (1996) [fig. 10]. With its pairing of elephants in an alpine landscape, Bush employs the same composition for both works, yet differentiates between the two with his depiction of the elephants and the landscapes they inhabit. In *When I was here I wanted to be there*, the costumed elephants appear on a bluff framed by views of a valley, a glacial lake, and snow-capped mountain peaks. The orator figure wears a classical crimson toga. The drapery folds read as soft and fluid against the elephant's hide, which appears rubbery and synthetic. In *Just wait till now becomes then*, the costumed figures appear on a bluff before an alpine lake. They wear coarse, woolly costumes that contrast in style to those found in *When I was here I wanted to be there*.

With *Type cast*, Bush adapts pictorial elements previously displayed and recontextualises them. He reverses the elephants' pose; the crimson toga is now golden; the snow-covered peaks have given way to a majestic waterfall. The effect is one of subtle change over time. It involves analysing and following an established convention but evolving or deviating from it in order to see something anew. For example, the contrasting textures of the elephant costumes in *When I was here I wanted to be there*, *Just wait till now becomes then*, and *Type cast* draw our attention to the differences between the figures' volumetric forms and how those forms occupy space in varying ways.









From top

Fig. 7
This big in the Afterlife 1990
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm
Private collection

Fig. 8
This big in the Afterlife, too 1992
oil on canvas
240.5 x 240.5 cm
State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia.
Purchased 1992

Fig. 9
When I was here I wanted to be there 1994
198.3 x 239 cm
oil on canvas
Deakin University Art Collection
Reproduced with permission from the artist and assistance from the Deakin University Art Collection and Galleries Unit

Fig. 10
Just wait till now becomes then 1996
198 x 240 cm
oil on canvas
Private Collection, Melbourne

Moreover, the self-referencing evident in *Type cast* is a form of visual reiteration, which involves re-stating something for emphasis or clarity rather than simply an act of repetition. Bush's *The lure of Paris* paintings embody this kind of process of revision. Despite the constancy of the subject depicted, each *The lure of Paris* is a new version of itself produced by the artist at a distinct moment. Bush's serialisiation of his own work is not unique to the artist. Consider Gilbert Stuart's iconic portraits of George Washington. Stuart re-painted Washington over one hundred times; each version was a variation of another. The figure of Ariadne in the piazza was a constant subject for Giorgio de Chirico; he painted different versions of this pairing throughout his career. Water-lilies forever compelled Claude Monet. Andy Warhol painted versions of Campbell soup cans, Brillo Boxes, and Marilyn. Ed Ruscha revised his Standard gas stations, and Jeff Koons encased Hoover vacuum cleaners and basketballs in multiple variations. Despite the differences in their historical and cultural contexts, these artists, like so many others, reconsidered and revised their own works in order to illuminate different pictorial possibilities.

The parodistic sensibility that underscores Bush's work leads him to create paintings that often feel nostalgic, yet reveal themselves to be anything but.[7] The historicising nature of paintings such as *Bluff*, *This big in the Afterlife, too*, and *Type cast*, for example, are grand tableaux filled with frustrated narratives that speak as much to the present and future as they do to the past. The pictures neither explain themselves nor Bush's possible intentions. Yet, they reveal the conceit of style as an artifact, which suggests that the pictorial reality Bush presents is a matter of historical record even though our logic tells us it cannot be.

The philosopher and art critic Arthur C Danto addresses this kind of temporal confusion as it relates to contemporary representational painting in his writing about the American painter Mark Tansey [fig. 11]—a painter with whom Bush is often compared. Tansey's monochromatic figural works of the 1980s and 90s employed narrative painting styles to question the philosophy of picture making. Danto describes the perceived datedness of Tansey's work as an aspect of 'style retro', which leads us to read the represented image as, 'belonging to the same historical moment as the style of the representation itself'. He elaborates, 'So if we think of the images as dating from sometime between, say, 1905 and 1930, at the latest, the reality shown takes on a certain historical patination, as if whatever is shown took place in the first third of the twentieth century'.[8] This, Danto remarks, is the result of 'living in an *age* of images' that allows us to project new meaning and historical relevance onto images that previously had no such connotations.[9]

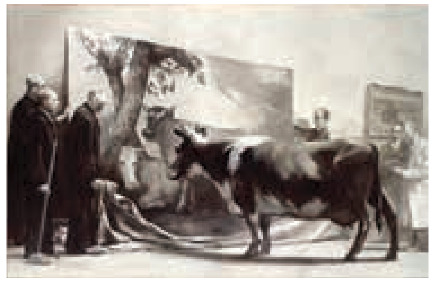


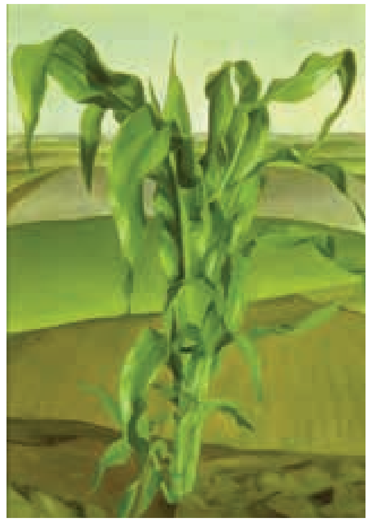
Fig. 11
Mark Tansey
The innocent eye test 1981
oil on canvas
198.1 x 304.8 cm
Collection Metropolitan Museum of Art
Courtesy the artist and Gagosian Gallery, New York

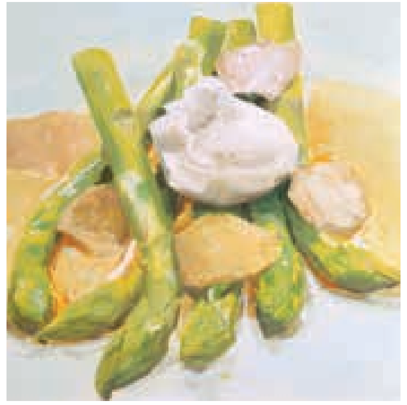
Like Tansey, Bush embraces a perceived retrograde style in order to explore how history becomes consumed and re-interpreted in fluid rather than monolithic ways. And, *Woodstock* (1996) [cat. no. 18, p. 29] is emblematic of this idea. In this painting, Bush depicts a monumental view of a 1920s Woodstock typewriter on a table in varying shades of purple. Devoid of overt narrative and costumed figures in an idealised landscape, *Woodstock* presents nostalgia—for a bygone music festival and an obsolete technology—as a self-consciously realised product to be consumed. We see similar notions of the past packaged as consumable goods in earlier paintings such as, *Corn scene* (1997) [Fig. 12] and *Rubbing doesn't help* (1997) [Fig. 13]. In these works, Bush blends stylistic elements of American Regionalist painters such as John Steuart Curry with the Pop sensibility of Claes Oldenburg to create paintings imbued with the type of 'historical patination' Danto describes.

A similar kind of patination occurs in later works such as, *My name is the great went* (2001) [cat. no. 6, p. 30–31] and *Lampre* (2003) [cat. no. 22, p. 32]. In these paintings, whose images feel as though they have emerged as a result of chemical oxidation, Bush uses jarring, lustrous greens and violets to transform formerly generic views of an alpine vista and snow-covered trees into dramatic scenes filled with ambiguity and wonder. His conscious inclusion of the lens flare further complicates such straightforward images. An optical effect of photography and cinema, in which a too-bright light source creates a halo on the camera lens, the lens flare is an artifact of the camera rather than an observed phenomenon. Filmmakers of the late 1960s and 1970s embraced the formerly accidental intrusion of light for its narrative effects. It became an expressive cinematographic technique that placed an emphasis on naturalism, rather than seamless technical perfection, which heightened the illusion of the reality being depicted.[10] With *My name is the great went* and *Lampre*, Bush recontextualises a stylistic element from the vernacular of cinema in order to defamiliiarise and exoticise ordinary images.

While paintings such as *Woodstock*, *My name is the great went*, and *Lampre* speak to Bush's exploration of style as an artifact, they also reveal a greater emphasis on technique and experimentation with the materiality of paint. In *Col du Galibier* (2003) [cat. no. 7, p. 33], Bush presents a monumental view of paint as a physical and conceptual material waiting to be manipulated. Set within a viscous pool of white enamel, blobs of harsh green and purple oil paint form a mountainous mass of gaudy color. This amorphous mound of garishness presents paint as an inert material with the capacity to transform banal vulgarity into genuine elegance. Bush employs a similarly lurid palette of acidic purples and pinks in *I have come to the creek* (2003) [cat. no. 20, pp. 34–35], which depicts a forest of highly rendered tentacle-like clay forms set against a background of poured, dripped, and spilled paint. Neither purely abstract nor wholly representational, *I have come to the creek* reflects Bush's conscientious shift in painting style. By allowing the medium to direct the content of the work, Bush enables chance and spontaneity to determine the pictorial forms that emerge.

The figures that appear in the canvas are familiar ones. Beekeepers, farm equipment, horse and riders, humble cabins, and figures in costume dress, to name a few, emerge from Bush's alchemic mixture of enamel and oil paint. Yet, rather than occupying elaborately constructed, illusionistic spaces, they appear within vibrant fields of poured color that become alpine views, aqueous pools, rocky outcrops, and luminous valleys. In *Lauterbrunnental* (2004) [cat. no. 8, p. 37], for example, skeins of magenta leach into a spill of milky enamel, creating wobbly vertical lines, to which Bush adds loose, brushy strokes of color that suggest tree branches. Set against a mountainous backdrop of cadmium green, the spindly, Nordic trees read as surviving artifacts of a volcanic eruption.





From top

Fig. 12
Cat. 3
Corn scene 1997
oil on primed paper
62 x 44 cm

Fig. 13
Cat. 4
Rubbing doesn't help 1997
oil on canvas
67 x 67 cm

Bush creates a similar sense of volatility in *Goat willow* (2005) [cat. no. 9, p. 38], where a viscous stew of brown ochre, black, bright green, and white enamel determines the mountainous topography. Situated within these eddies of color are fragments of our built environment. A timber suspension bridge spans an implied cliff; wooden scaffolding extends upward and outward; and, two modernist buildings occupy the center of the composition. In this strange assemblage of imagery, we find a confluence of languages and ideas at odds with one another. The linearity of the rickety timber scaffolding and sleek minimalist buildings contrast with the amorphous forms and flamboyant fields of color that define the atmospheric landscape. The bridge becomes symbolic in effect; it reconciles the organic with the man-made; the old with the new; and, conscious with intuitive mark making.

With *Lauterbrunnental* and *Goat willow*, Bush employs a single perspective to construct the pictorial space. In later spill works such as *Road with such intent* (2007) [cat. no. 10, p. 39], *Shout on the hills of glory* (2008) [cat. no. 11, p. 41], and *Alabaster welcome* (2008) [cat. no. 58, pp. 42–43], the space becomes more complex through his use of multiple perspectives and dense layering of fragmented imagery. In *Shout on the hills of glory*, a familiar alpine view dissolves into flows of color that form vague plateaus and marshes. A handful of spare trees surround a hollowed out log dwelling that dominates the composition. Nestled within a field of yellow paint that conceals bands of color below, the dwelling hints at the unknown internal, domestic life contained within. The purple ornamental frame and rubber plant appear to hover on the surface of the painting, as if in the process of pouring, they'd been caught in a sieve.

Bush seems to move counter-clockwise to any sort of expected spin, and the spill, which has become a prominent feature of his work, has visibly receded in more recent paintings. Remnants of a green-and-yellow-infused spill surface in the opaque puddles in the foreground, and above the blue sky in the background, of *Rhodamine Mabel Bungaara* (2011) [cat. no. 68, p. 45]. In *Bassell hunter* (2012) [cat. no. 13, p. 46], Bush covers portions of the spill with loose, sketchy brushstrokes that form the mountains and valleys behind the horse and rider and laborers in the foreground. And a pool of undisturbed marbleised blues and greens remains in the upper-right hand corner of *The recliners were only the beginning* (2012) [cat. no. 14, p. 47], where a tartan-clad figure stands beholding a strange and beguiling landscape.

Concealed in the guise of a highland clansman, the tartan figure is emblematic of the artist as an aesthetic itinerant in search of pure visual experiences that defy temporal boundaries. Seemingly removed from time and place, Bush's subjects, ranging from toy elephants and explorers, to farm equipment, beekeepers, and modernist architecture, among others, are inherently reflective of our contemporary cultural mindset, one which is trapped in a nostalgic gaze. Over the past three decades, Bush has created figurative paintings that follow no linear trajectory. He conforms to established pictorial conventions only to deviate from them. And while he embraces a multitude of representational painting styles, he rejects outright any stylistic consistency. There is a constant interplay between image and technique, and form and content in Bush's work, and these elements are often at odds with one another. This kind of painting enthralls, yet refuses easy explanation. It uses familiar imagery and situational ambiguity to question the kinds of subjects and images we value. In doing so, Bush allows us to consider his paintings through the context of our own experiences, giving us the freedom to see what we desire.

NOTES

1. Barbara Novak, *American Painting of the Nineteenth Century: Realism, Idealism, and the American Experience*, 2nd edition (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 62.
2. Juliana Engberg in *Signs of Life: Melbourne International Biennial 1999* (City of Melbourne, 1999), 80.
3. Natasha Bullock, "Stephen Bush: When I was here I wanted to be there," *Art & Australia* Vol. 49 no. 21 (Summer 2011), 281.
4. As related to the author by the artist, November 2013.
5. Shari Klein, *Art and Laughter* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006), 14.
6. Ibid.
7. Curator Marcia Tucker relates this sensibility to many of the figurative painters in her 1978 "'Bad' Painting" exhibition at the New Museum. She discusses the importance of humour and self-mockery to these artists, whose works confront traditional notions of "high" art and "good" taste. See Marcia Tucker, *"Bad" Painting* (New York: New Museum, 1978), 19.
8. Arthur C. Danto, "Mark Tansey: The Picture Within the Picture," in *Mark Tansey: Visions and Revisions*, ed., Christopher Sweeting (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1992), 16.
9. Ibid.
10. *Encyclopedia of the Sixties: A Decade of Culture and Counterculture*, eds., James S. Baugess and Abbe Allen DeBolt (Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2012), 192.

Liza Statton is an independent curator based in Australia. Previously, she was the Director/Curator at Artspace in New Haven, Connecticut, and served as the first Eugene V. Thaw Fellow at SITE Santa Fe in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where she helped organise Stephen Bush's solo exhibition in 2007. She worked as a curatorial assistant at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA) while receiving her MA from the Williams College Graduate Program in the History of Art. **edsprojects.com**

STEPHEN BUSH:
STEENHUFFEL

KELLY GELLATLY

Stephen Bush's painting *Col du Galibier* (2003) [cat. no. 7, p. 33] assumes an almost talismanic presence in this exhibition. Spare, and somehow singular in the company of a gallery of paintings seemingly brought together because of a consistent yet loose interest in both the expressive and narrative possibilities of landscape that plays out across them, *Col du Galibier* is at once related to this quest but not of it. The glossy purple, blue and green globules in the work certainly resemble a mountainous mass, but this mass is formed by a rather precarious looking pile of paint that literally bears the physical marks of it being squeezed from the tube. Like the expectant blank screen that faces the twenty-first century author, Bush has captured the precious and anxious moment of beginning, the daunting task of making a start; painting a painting about the act of painting at the moment before the brush is loaded and that first mark is made.

At the heart of Stephen Bush's practice is the constant, almost nagging question of what it means to be an artist and particularly, what it means to work in the most anachronistic of mediums: paint. Bush's oeuvre is tantalisingly playful and confounding in its embrace of circularity and repetition, and never ceases to surprise in its creative re-use of an expansive back catalogue of subject matter and motifs. His paintings continue to be made within a variety of self-imposed and at times, performative frameworks—whether it be painting Babar the Elephant from memory in his ongoing *The lure of Paris series* (1992–); working monochromatically with a particular colour (sienna red, green, purple); introducing the use of paint as viscous liquid as a way of embracing chance and the accidental and as a means by which to interrupt an over-reliance on figuration; or populating the combination of 'straight' landscapes and psychedelic high-keyed vistas that have appeared across the years with the ever-stoic, hard-working presence of the beekeeper. However, the push-pull that reverberates across his work like a refrain is an ongoing fascination with the artist's desire, or indeed, need to create, and a constant (almost self-deprecating) inquiry into just what this achieves. Through the tasks, tests, or games (it is never quite clear) that Stephen Bush sets himself, the act of painting is re-invigorated and remains a challenge; notions of the original and copy, high and low culture, authenticity and value become part of the conversation, and any sense of 'progress' or a clear trajectory informing the artist's oeuvre is happily thwarted. The questions may be apparent here, but there are never straightforward answers. Indeed, the answers seem to throw up more questions, and we are somehow back at the beginning ... sort of, but not really.

This exhibition, *Steenhuffel*, is itself an astute embodiment of and response to the challenges and expectations inherent in making 'new' work. Commissioned as part of the Potter's ongoing series of Vizard Foundation Contemporary Artist Projects designed to encourage artists to take risks and explore new directions in their practice, just what does this opportunity mean when you are Stephen Bush, a painter who will continue to paint? Falling somewhere between a project show and survey exhibition, the Vizard Foundation commission has enabled Bush to not only make new paintings to the brief, but through the creation of *Steenhuffel*, explore this notion within the context of the exhibition itself. As a result, the artist has pushed the parameters of both the display of his work and the exhibition experience, presenting three distinct but interrelated aspects of his practice across the different gallery spaces that comprise the exhibition: the landscape (with accompanying overlays of the sublime, the taming of nature, or of pioneering endeavour[1]); the use of purple (which speaks, through their absence, of the other hues that have preoccupied him over time), and the recurring motif of the beekeeper. However, these 'groups' of works are in no way contained by the walls of the spaces that house them, and continue to remain in dialogue through the (re)appearance of various shared attributes—wonkily constructed log cabins, sweeping alpine vistas, modernist structures, and a cast of animals (often, the goat), to name but a few—that hover incongruously within swirling, apocalyptic landscapes of oil and enamel paint whose pooled surfaces and acidic palette are like the stuff of toxic waste; bringing in turn a new, more insidious inflection to the hooded figure of the beekeeper.

Created over extended periods and returned to and re-worked time and again, these paintings, drawn from across the decades, similarly embody a respect for process and hard work that is ultimately subsumed by both the 'doing' and the end result. Many of Bush's paintings are replete with the 'stuff' of making art and of things in progress—landscapes formed from clay squeezed and moulded by the artist's hands (*I have come to the creek* and *Lampre*, both 2003 [cat. no. 20, pp. 34–35; cat. no. 22, p. 32]); the introduction of lens flare as otherworldly incursion within these strange environments, and even the appearance of the artist as performer, in a constant state of willing adaptation. Bush's lingering interest in 'the journey' also resonates in his decades-long engagement with the 'persistent redundancy' of life on the land[2]—think of the role assumed by the humble tractor in his work of 1980s; the heroic elevation of produce in *Corn scene* or *Rubbing doesn't help* (both 1997) [figs. 12 and 13]; or the recurrence of the twee 'country idyll' in works such as *Lady Campbell Weed: William of Orange* (2011) [cat. no. 32, p. 8] and *Quino Lichthafel* (2009) [cat. no. 24, p. 8]—which is, like painting, built on a core of repetitive labour at once seemingly futile, yet fundamental to the final product. Bush however, knowingly short-circuits these immediate connections through a continuous re-mix of technique, subject matter and approach. The 'Lady Campbell Weed' of various titles for example, is another name for Paterson's Curse, celebrated by apiarists, but the scourge of Australian farming; its resplendent purple flower similarly reflected in the nauseatingly sumptuous palette in which these paintings are made. But where does this lead us? Such correspondences between works wriggle from one's grasp when almost caught—becoming, as a result, all the more circuitous and difficult to pin down. While the paintings brought together in the 'purple gallery' in *Steenhuffel* showcase a continuation 'in some conceptual form' of the *Venetian red* paintings from 1995 and the later use of green in Bush's *Pomme de terre* series (1998), they also point more tangentially to the fluctuations of fashion and taste throughout European and American history, as well as, on a more prosaic level, those of the art world itself. As Bush expounds:

> … Purple has several roles in history. Originally due to its rarity and expense, it was reserved for royalty and held an air of opulence and ceremony. But mixed with this, is how colour (like the work of particular artists) flows in and out of currency with time. Purple had a big hit in the 20s and 30s and then again in the late 60s and early 70s, only to fall into cliché and parody years later. When painting *I have come to the creek*, several tubes of purple were purchased in the attempt to find the most vibrant possible; with all that purple, it was bound to re-occur in other works years later.
>
> … Rather than pinpoint any particular source, I will say these works [*Lady Campbell Weed: William of Orange* and *Groninger Koek* (2009) [cat. no. 23]] come from an interest in fluctuations in European and American history that relate to cultural shifts; more specifically, how artists' careers ebb and flow with time. Once-successful salon painters in their day can, in the eyes of the art world, almost disappear (some not without reason). A good example is Clement Greenberg naming Jules Olitski the greatest painter of our time. History as it runs out hasn't revered Olitski in that light, not at this stage anyway.[3]

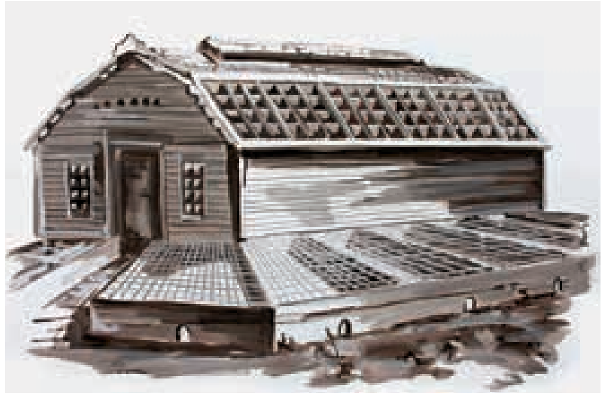
As an artist who has lived and continued to paint through the endless 'deaths' and revivals of painting decried across the decades, Bush remains ever-conscious of the irony of his own position. On one level, the perilous pick-up-sticks wooden structures, strange heraldic forms, and vast array of log cabins that float within Bush's paintings are an ode to the unknown maker, raising questions of authorship, taste, value and 'signature style' that play against and within his own instantly recognisable images. The artist's recent body of gouaches, *Saunders Cuthbert* (2013–14) [figs. 1 and 2], for example, both depict and venerate the chook shed. Encompassing a catalogue of different shed styles—from simple wooden enclosures, shrunken replicas of North American farmhouses to streamlined modernist factories—this series presents the viewer with a suite of extraordinary structures whose imaginative design extends far beyond the everyday practicalities and demands of their use. Disconcertingly 'out of time'—neither of the present or the past—their sepia palette nevertheless evokes a sense of history and of memory (with all its 'tricks' of accuracy, re-writing and subsequent fabrication).

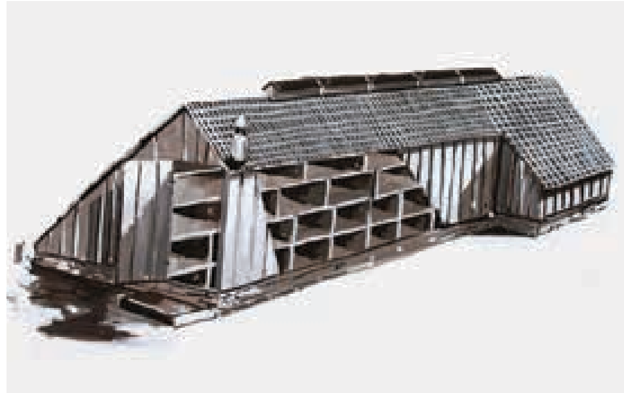
This interest in the traditional use of images as recording tools, instruments of learning and as conveyors of information is also apparent in the, it must be said, rather whacky group of works from the University Art Collection that Stephen Bush has included within the exhibition. Described by the artist as a kind of 'mad uncle art'[4], the selection of objects ranges from prints by celebrated colonial artists such as Nicholas Chevalier, ST Gill and John Gould's work (one cannot help but imagine that Bush's selection of Gould was at least partly informed by childhood memories of the ubiquitous Gould League of Victoria's flora and fauna posters of the 1960s and 70s); watercolours and botanical illustrations by unknown artists; drawings by Melbourne-based architect Lloyd Orton; a pair of carved wooden panels, and a wonderfully naïve and charming series of ink drawings of birds on wooden panels from a grand Victorian house in Melbourne's eastern suburbs [figs. 1–5]. Displayed in the same gallery as the artist's purple paintings, these works together raise often unspoken questions about the politics, hidden stories and idiosyncrasies of institutional collecting, just as their very presence within the exhibition space cannot help but suggest a relationship to Stephen Bush's own practice (possible areas of influence, confluence and interest?). True to historical form however, this sense of possible connection to Bush's work remains nothing but a whisper; a cheeky and indeterminate suggestion that oscillates, and ultimately, refuses to settle.

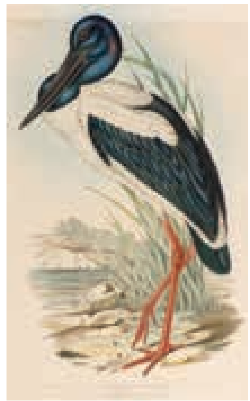
Related issues of authority, authorship and intent similarly ripple around *Coppersmith* (2014) [cat. no. 69], the painted wall mural adjacent to the large group of beekeeper works that are displayed *en masse* in the Potter's level one gallery. A deliberate translation or schematic of an intricate (and mass produced) paisley design sourced by Bush, the execution of *Coppersmith* by a group of students from the Victorian College of the Arts' Painting program informally mirrors the traditional atelier model, in which the artist assumes the position of both mentor and director. While its explosive areas of bold, clashing colour gleefully amplifies the celebratory chorus of Bush's own work, its presence, along with the collection works displayed in the gallery below, similarly encourages us to ponder the complex web of issues and value judgements that separate the artist from the artisan, and the craft of simply making something well, from art. In the end, this exhibition is, of course, both an acknowledgement and celebration of the ongoing contribution and work of Stephen Bush, painter; but the work itself, with all its twists, turns and dead ends, never allows us to assume this position easily or lightly.

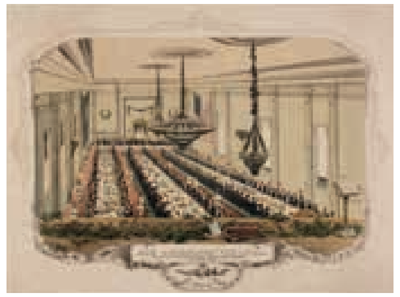
NOTES

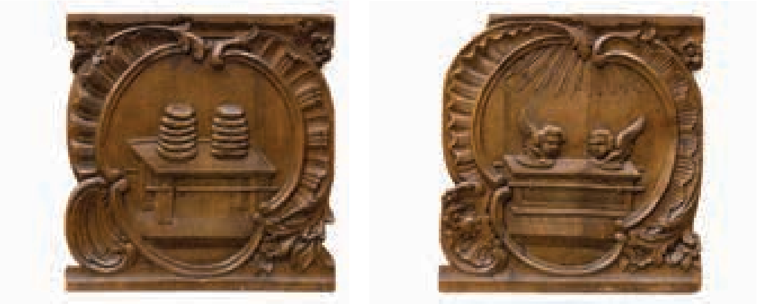
1. With its related notions of 'ownership' and, within an Australian context, the ongoing legacy of colonisation.
2. Liza Statton, 'No consolation prizes', *Stephen Bush: Gelderland* (Santa Fe: SITE Santa Fe, 2007), 17. Statton also notes a biographical connection here, as Bush grew up on his family's farm in Pennyroyal, near Colac, in rural Victoria.
3. Email correspondence with the author, 17 February 2014.
4. Stephen Bush in conversation with the author, 23 October 2013.











From top

Figs. 1 and 2
Cat. 17
Saunders Cuthbert (detail) 2013–14
gouache on paper
each 56 x 76 cm

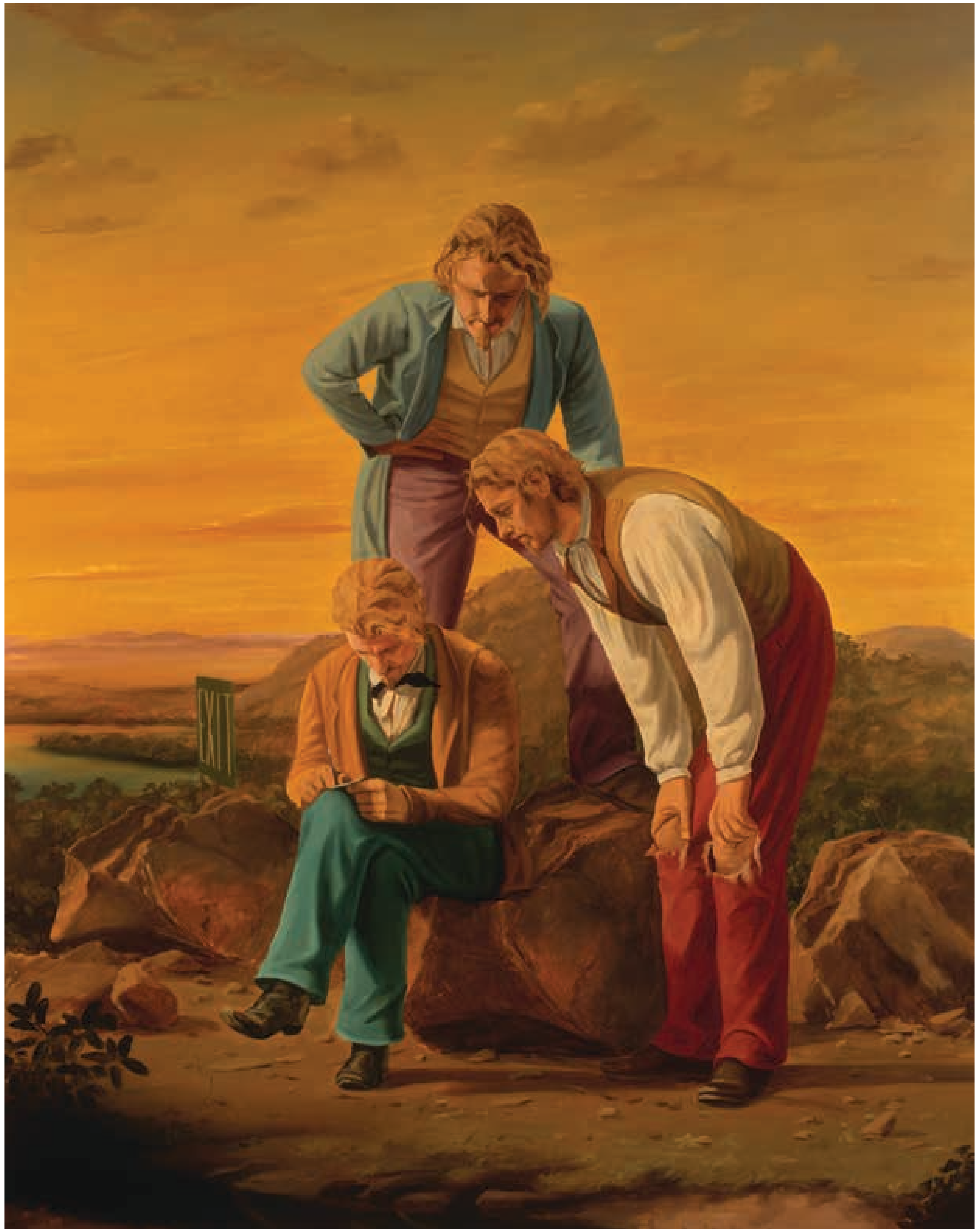
Fig. 3
Cat. 37
John Gould
Mycteria Australis c.1840s
lithograph
56.5 x 38.5 cm

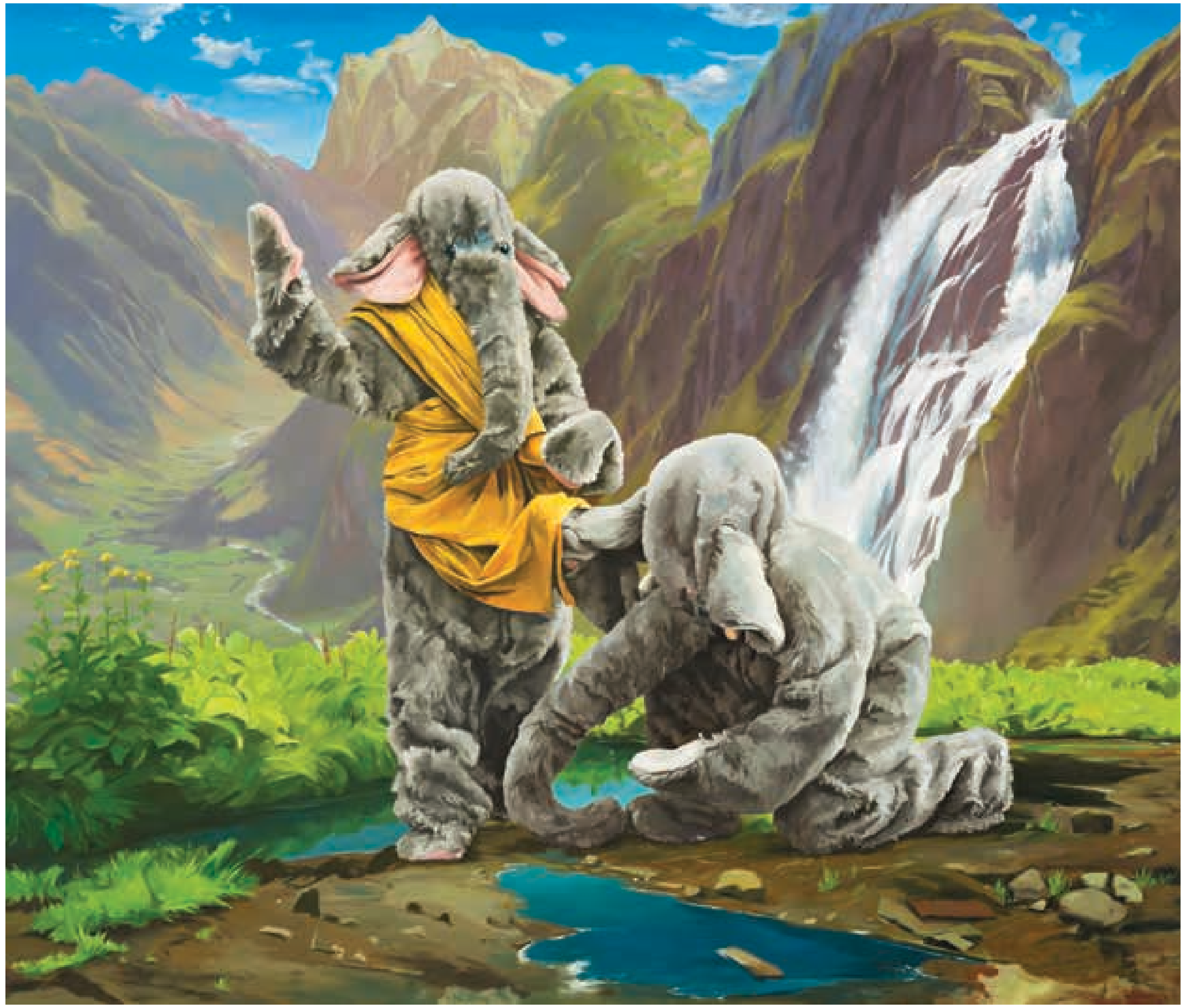
Fig. 4
Cat. 36
Samuel Thomas (ST) Gill
Old colonists' festival, held in the Criterion Hotel, Melbourne 14th September 1853 c.1853
lithograph and watercolour
33.5 x 45.5 cm

Fig. 5
Cat. 48
Artist unknown
Untitled (decorative panels) date unknown
wood
53 x 52.1 x 2.1 cm; 53 x 50.4 x 2.3 cm

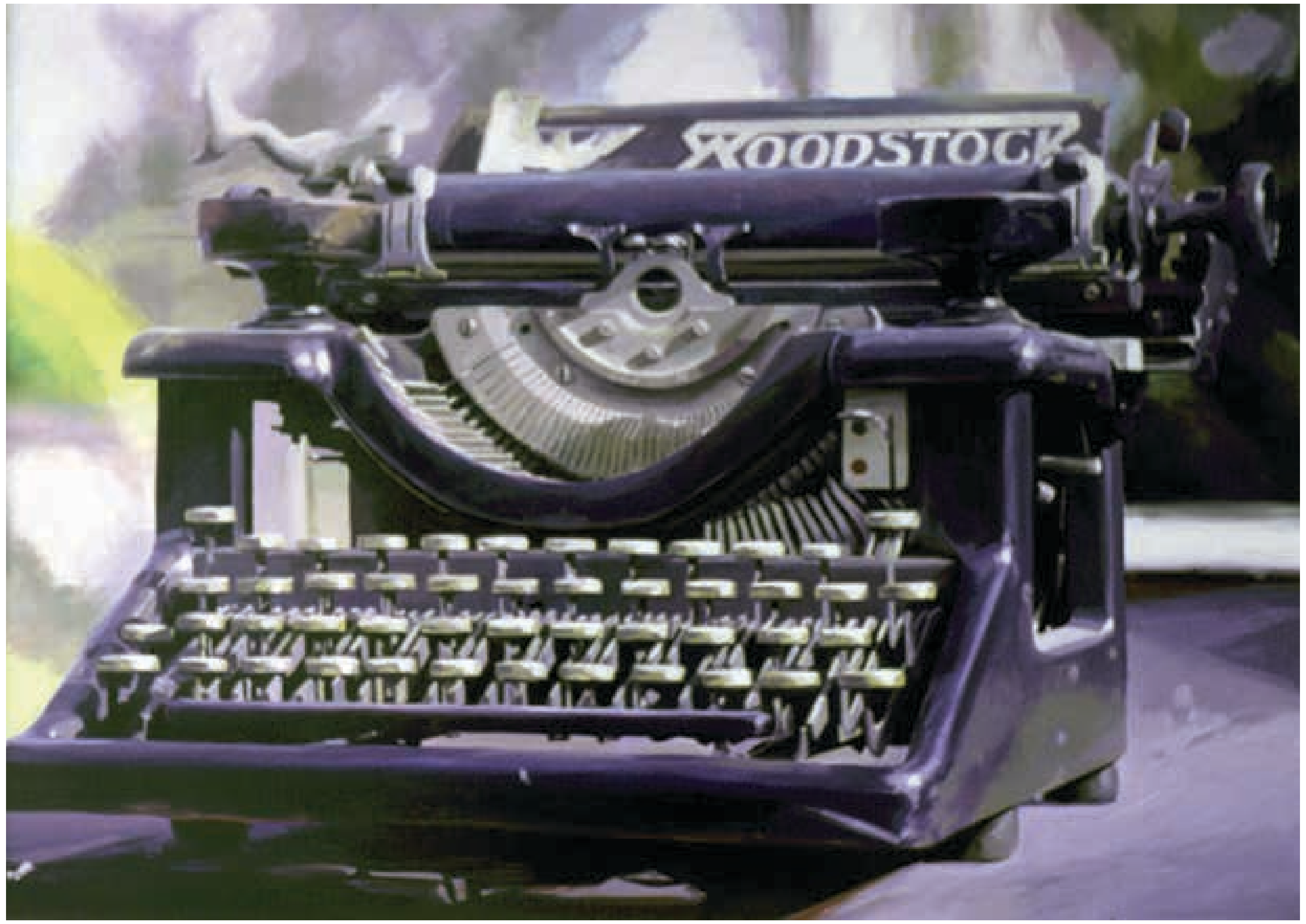
PLATES

Cat. 2
Bluff, 1990–91
oil on canvas
171.5 x 141 cm

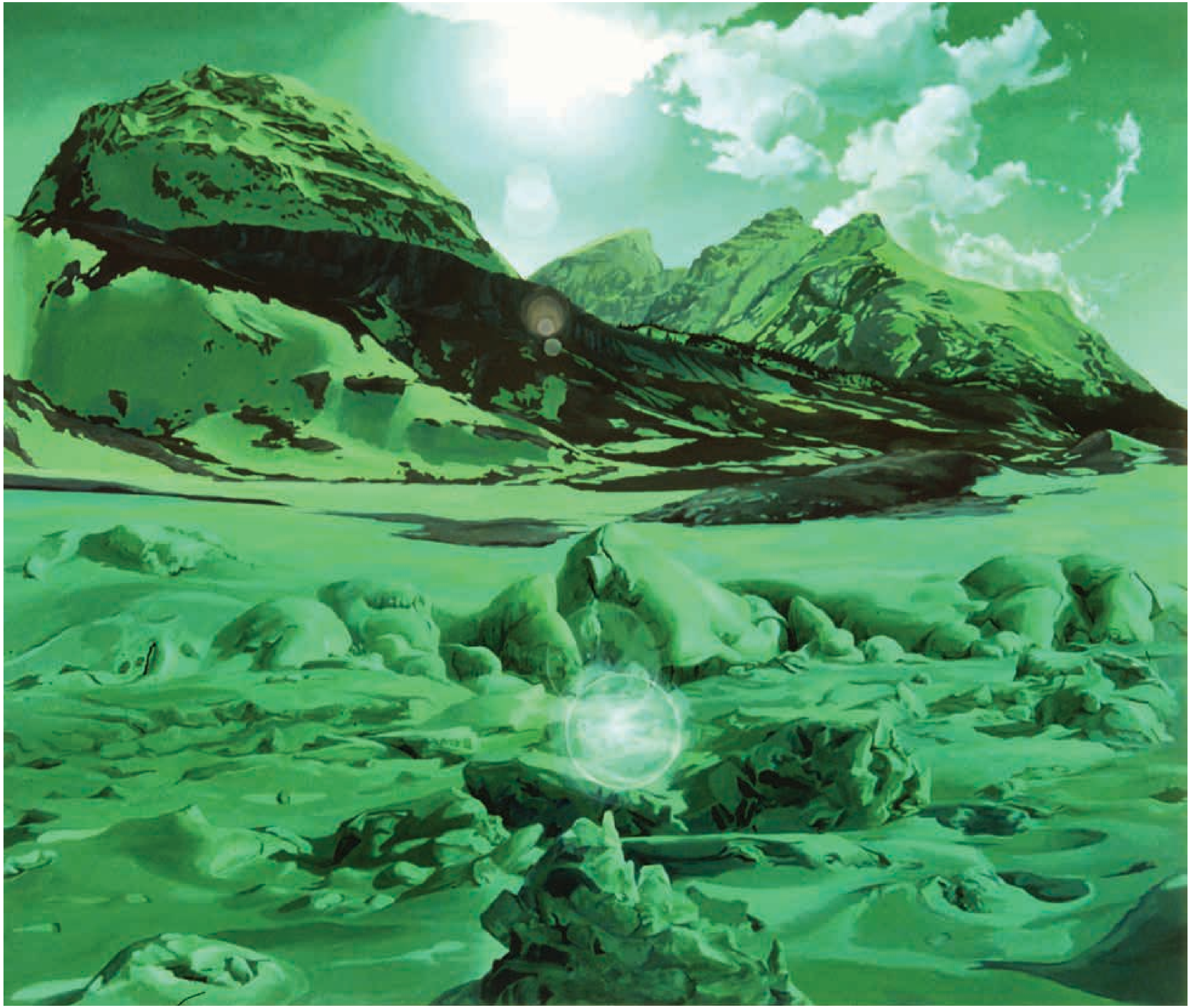




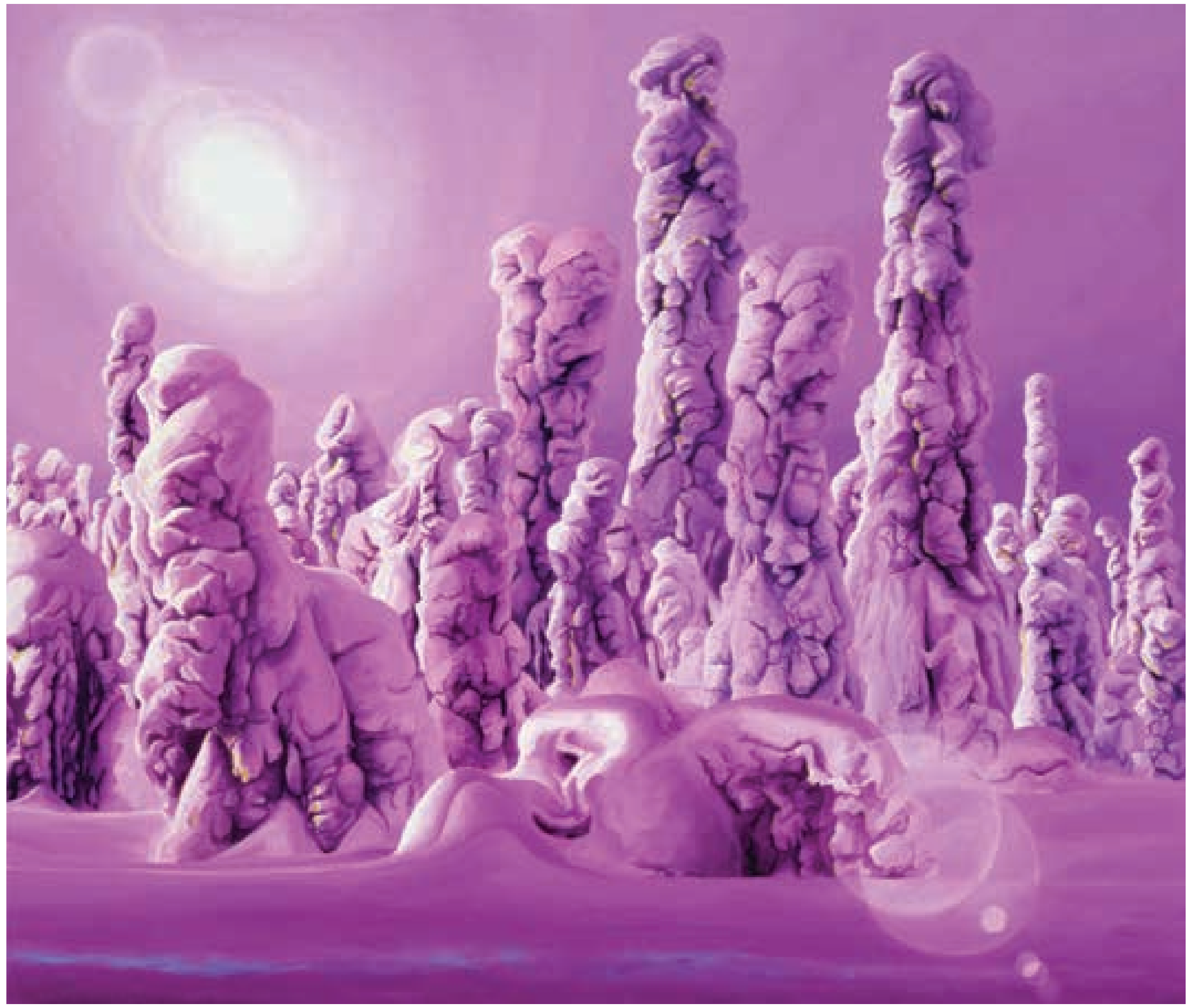
Cat. 5
Type cast 1998
oil on canvas
198 x 233.5 cm



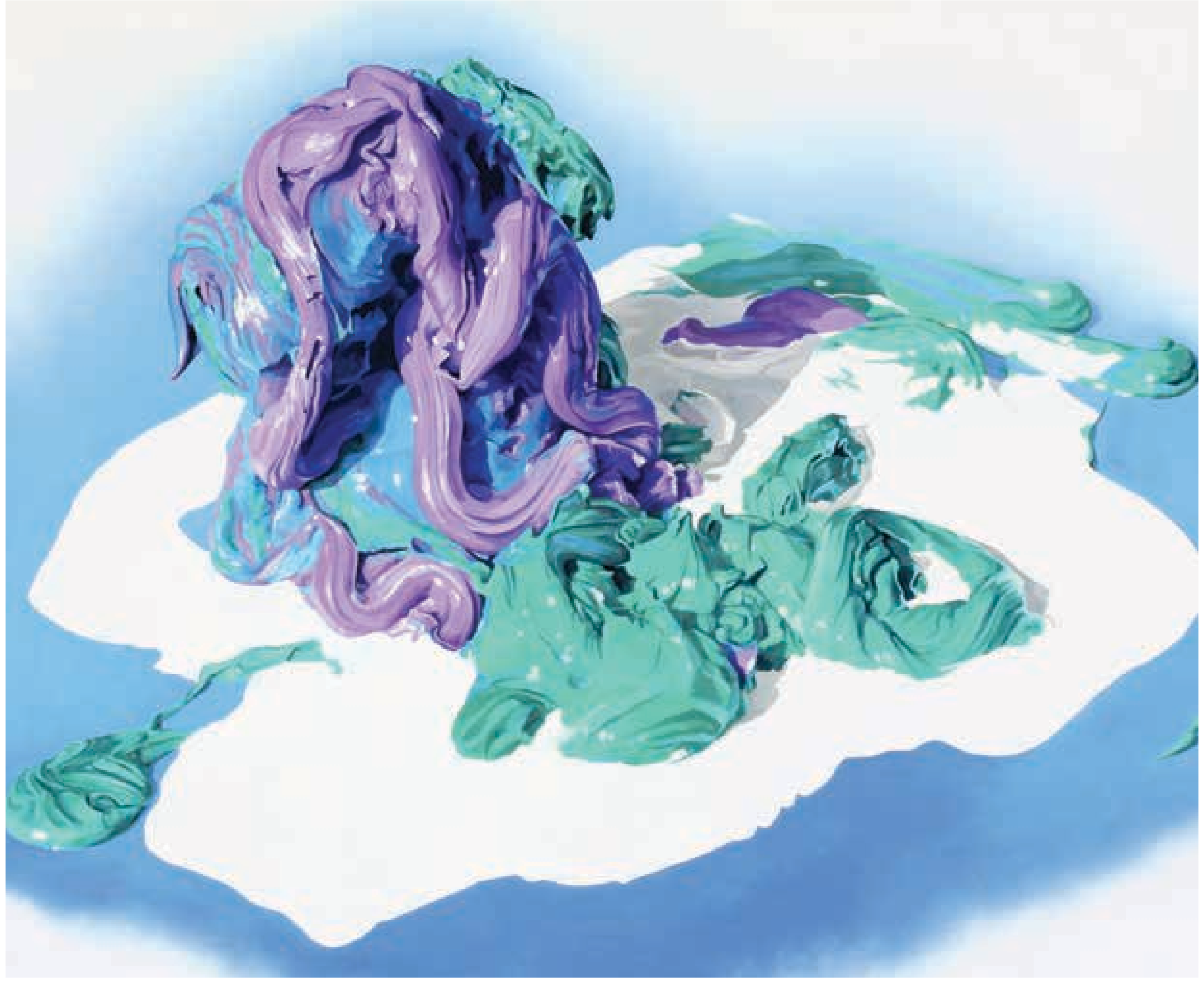
Cat. 18
Woodstock 1996
oil on canvas
134 x 187 cm



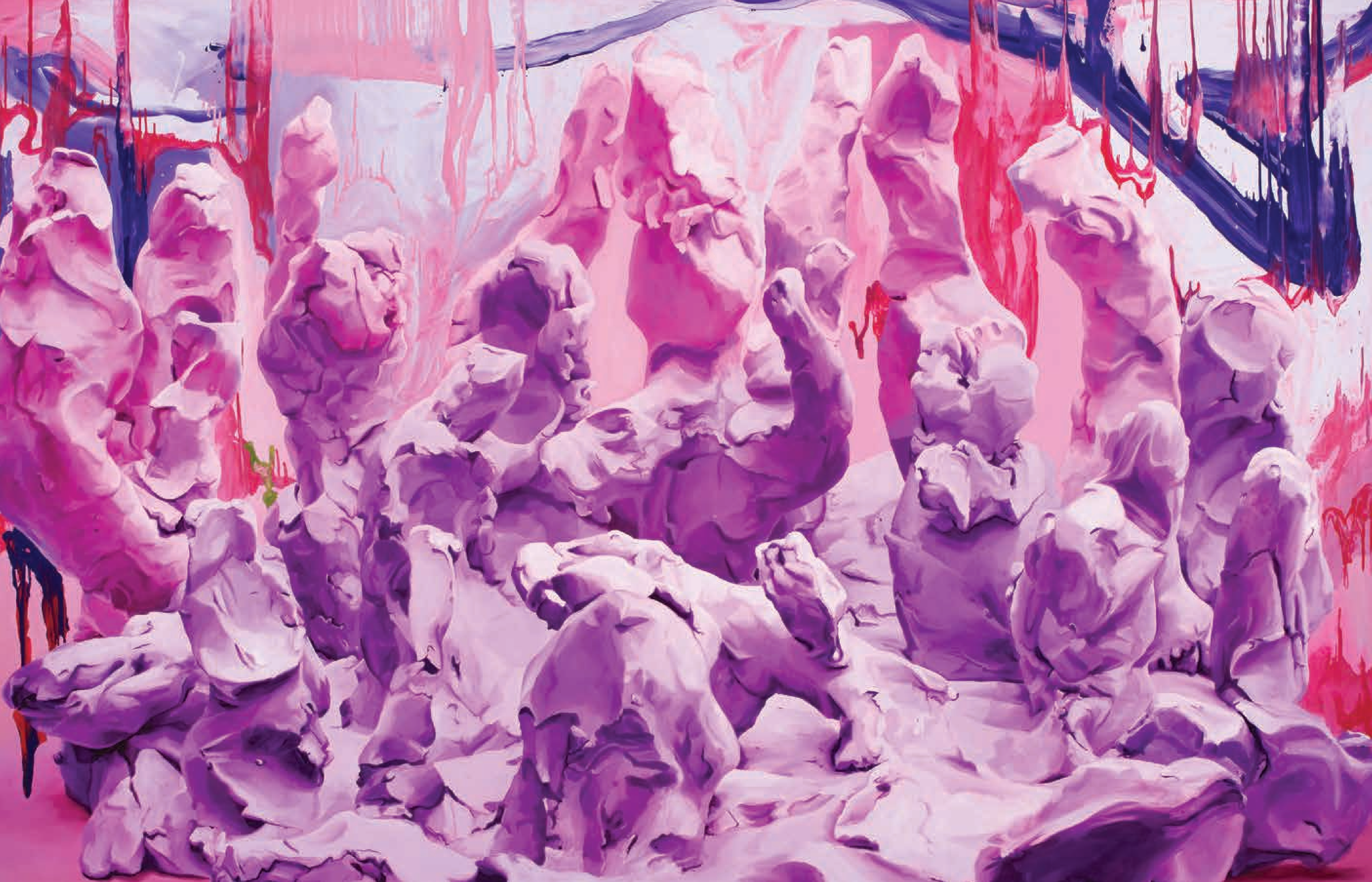
Cat. 6
My name is the great went 2001
oil on canvas
200 x 235.5 cm



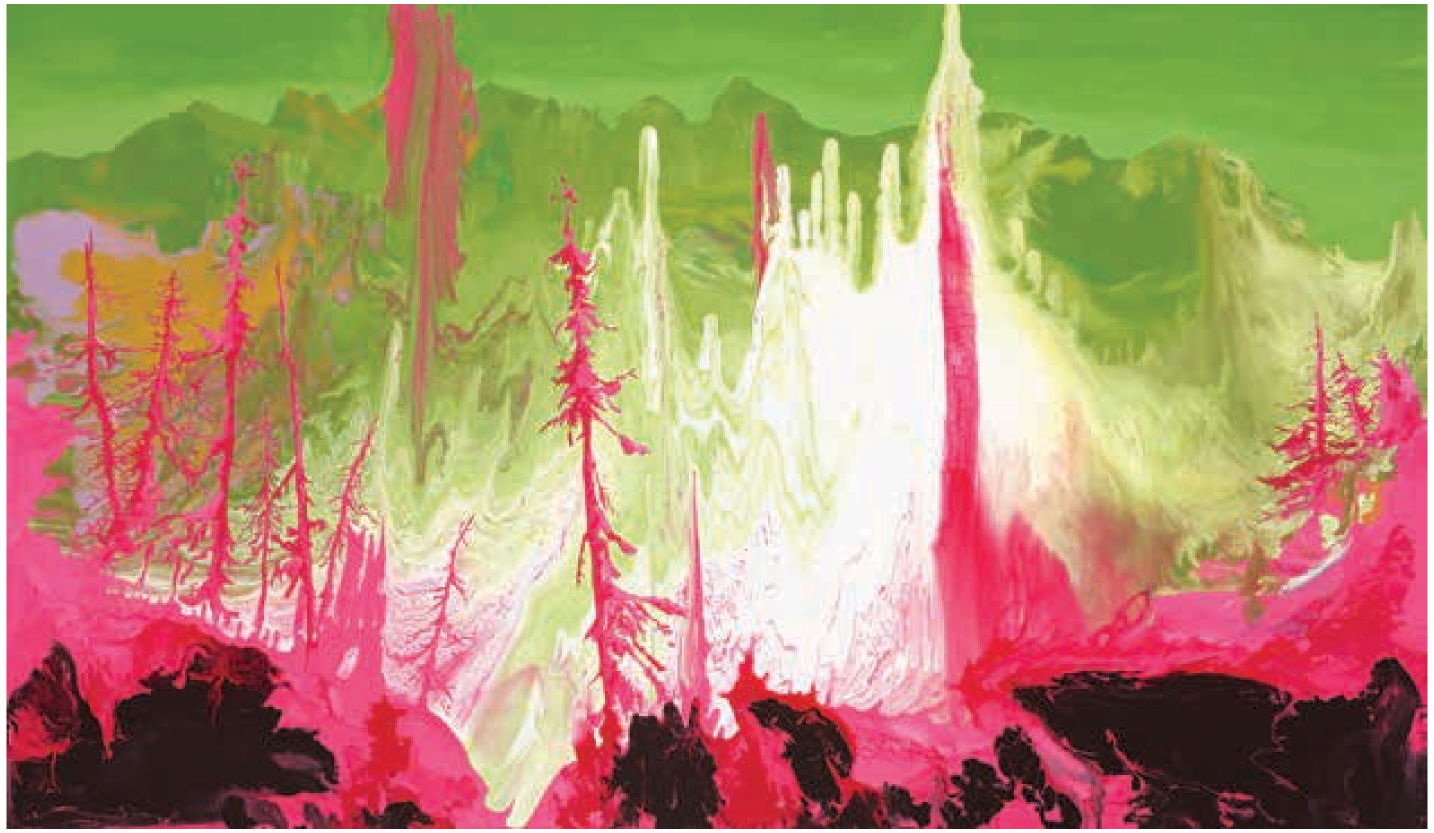
Cat. 22
Lampre 2003
oil on canvas
198 x 234 cm



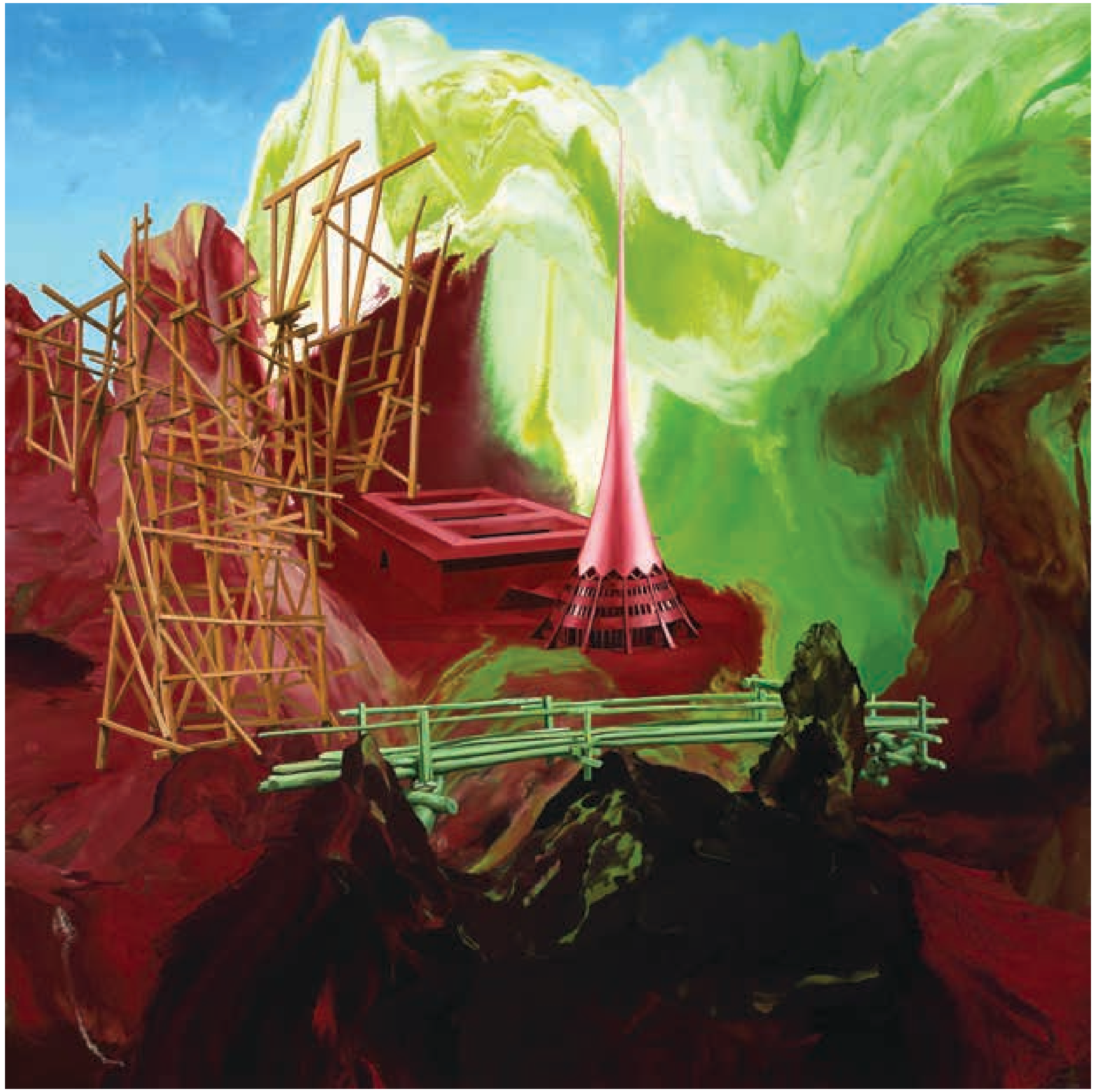
Cat. 7
Col du Galibier 2003
oil on canvas
201 x 244 cm



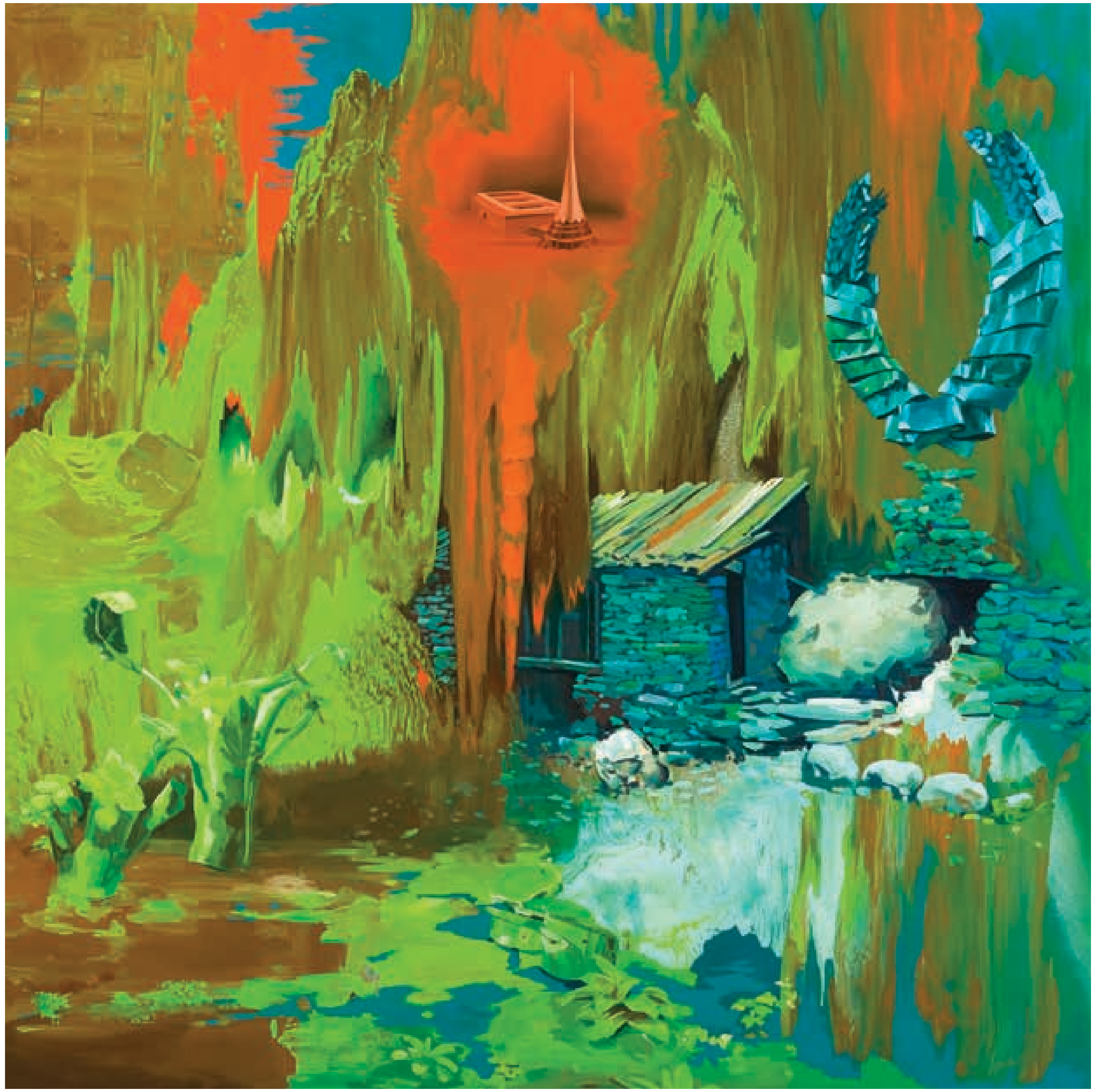
Cat. 20
I have come to the creek 2003
oil on canvas
201 x 295 cm



Cat. 8
Lauterbrunnental 2004
oil on canvas
107 x 183 cm

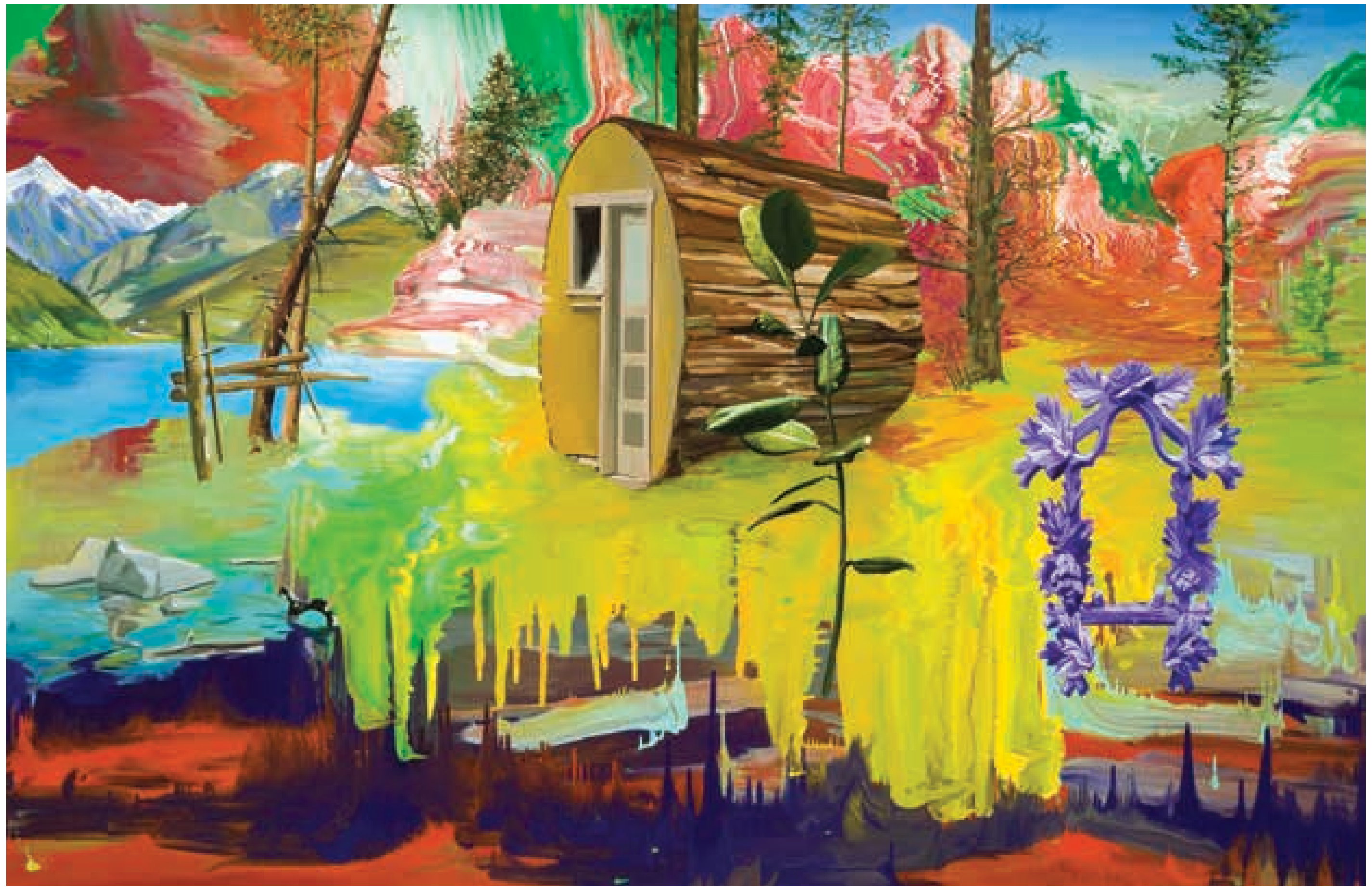


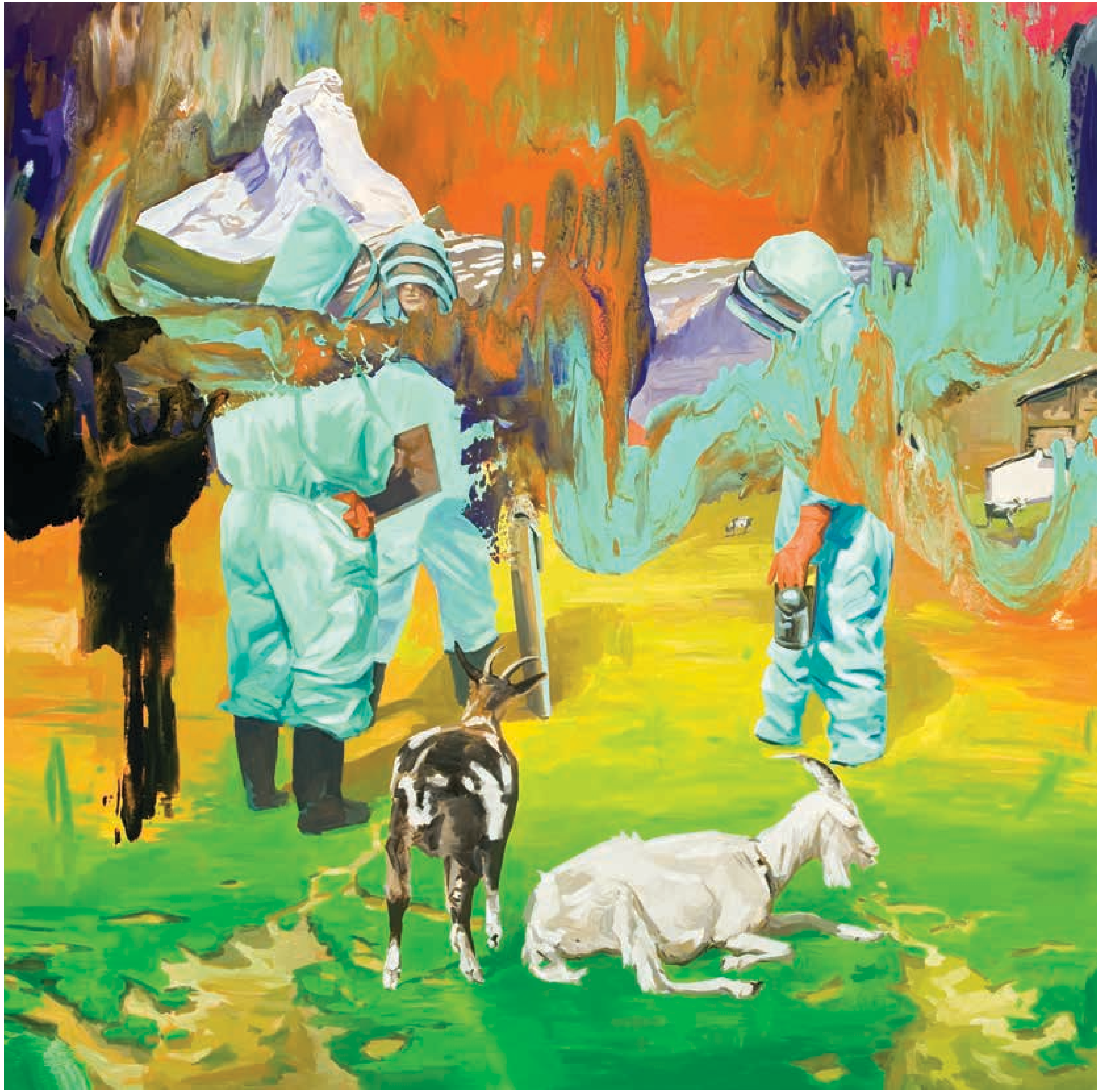
Cat. 9
Goat willow 2005
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm



Cat. 10
Road with such intent 2007
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm

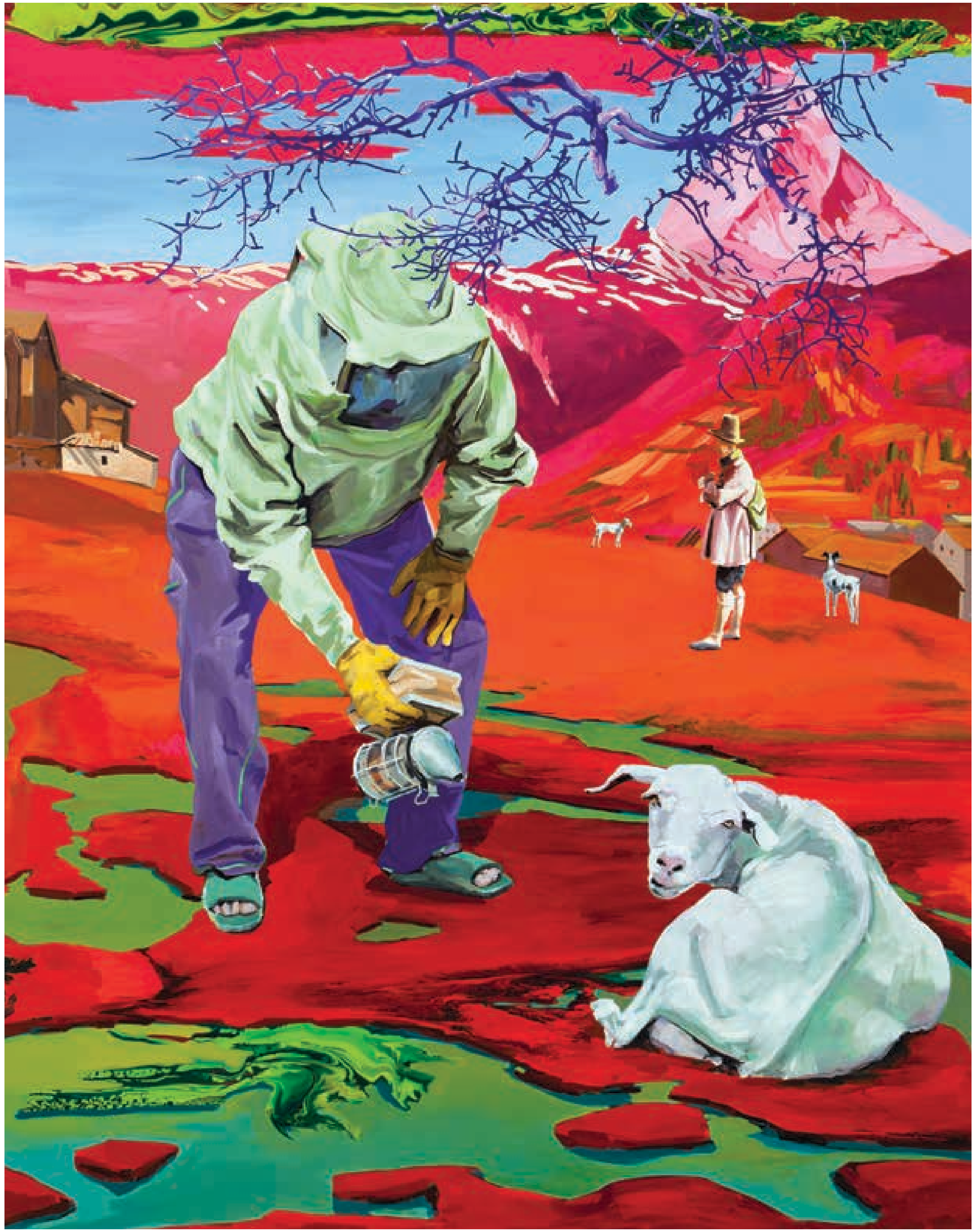
Cat. 11
Shout on the hills of glory 2008
oil on canvas
200 x 300 cm

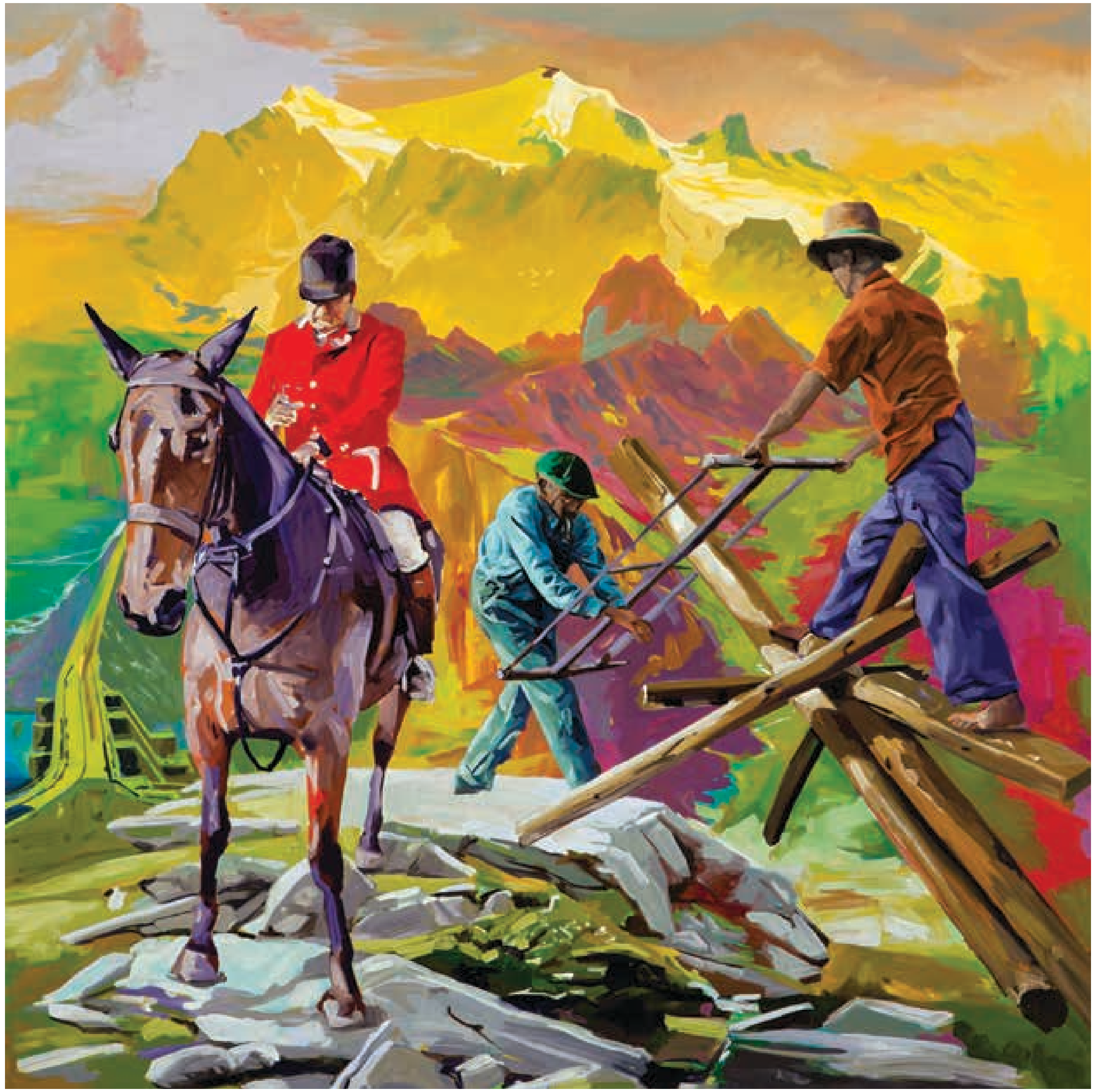




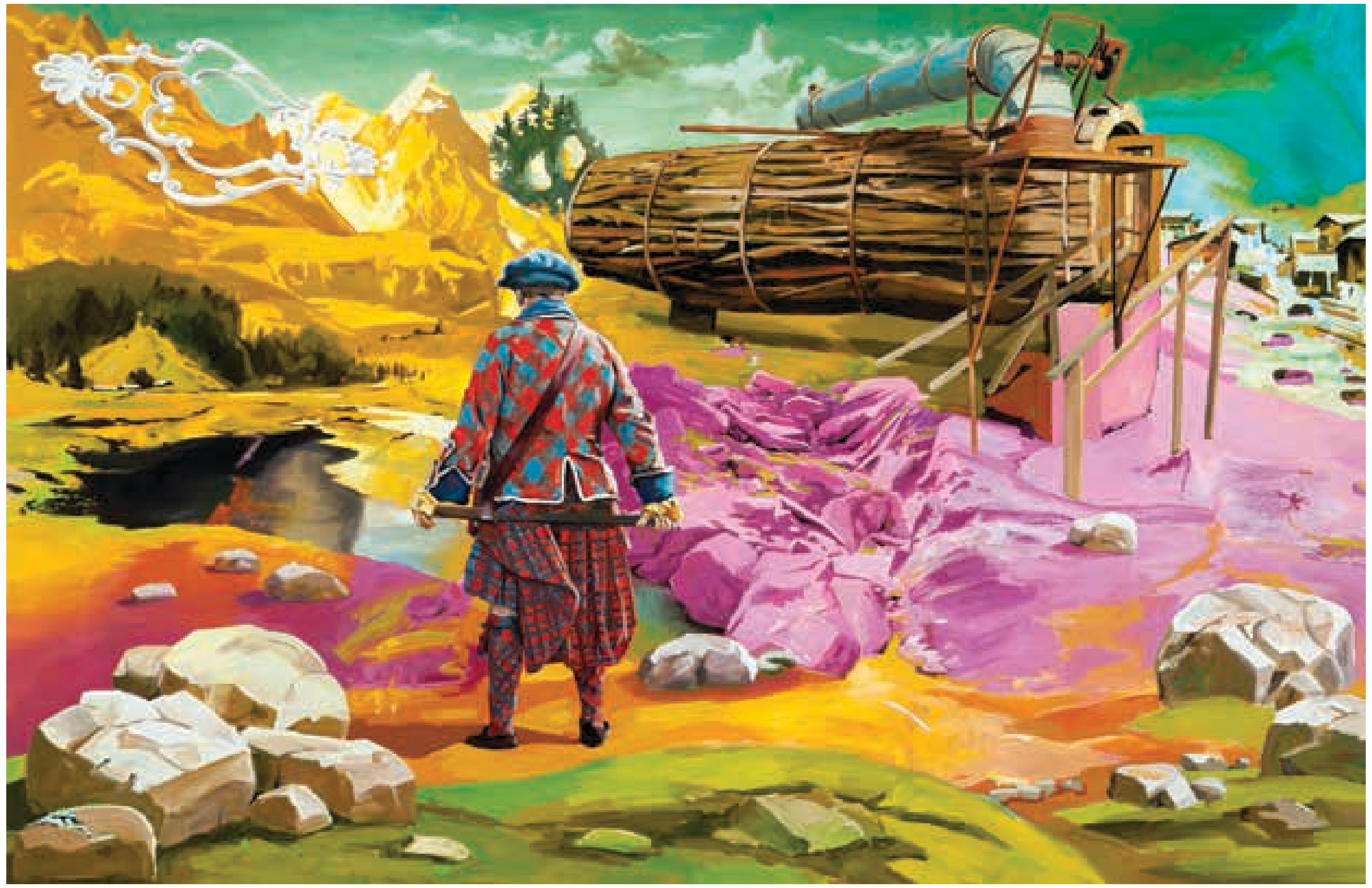
Cat. 58
Alabaster welcome 2008
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm

Cat. 68
Rhodamine Mabel Bungaara 2011
oil on canvas
121 x 96 cm

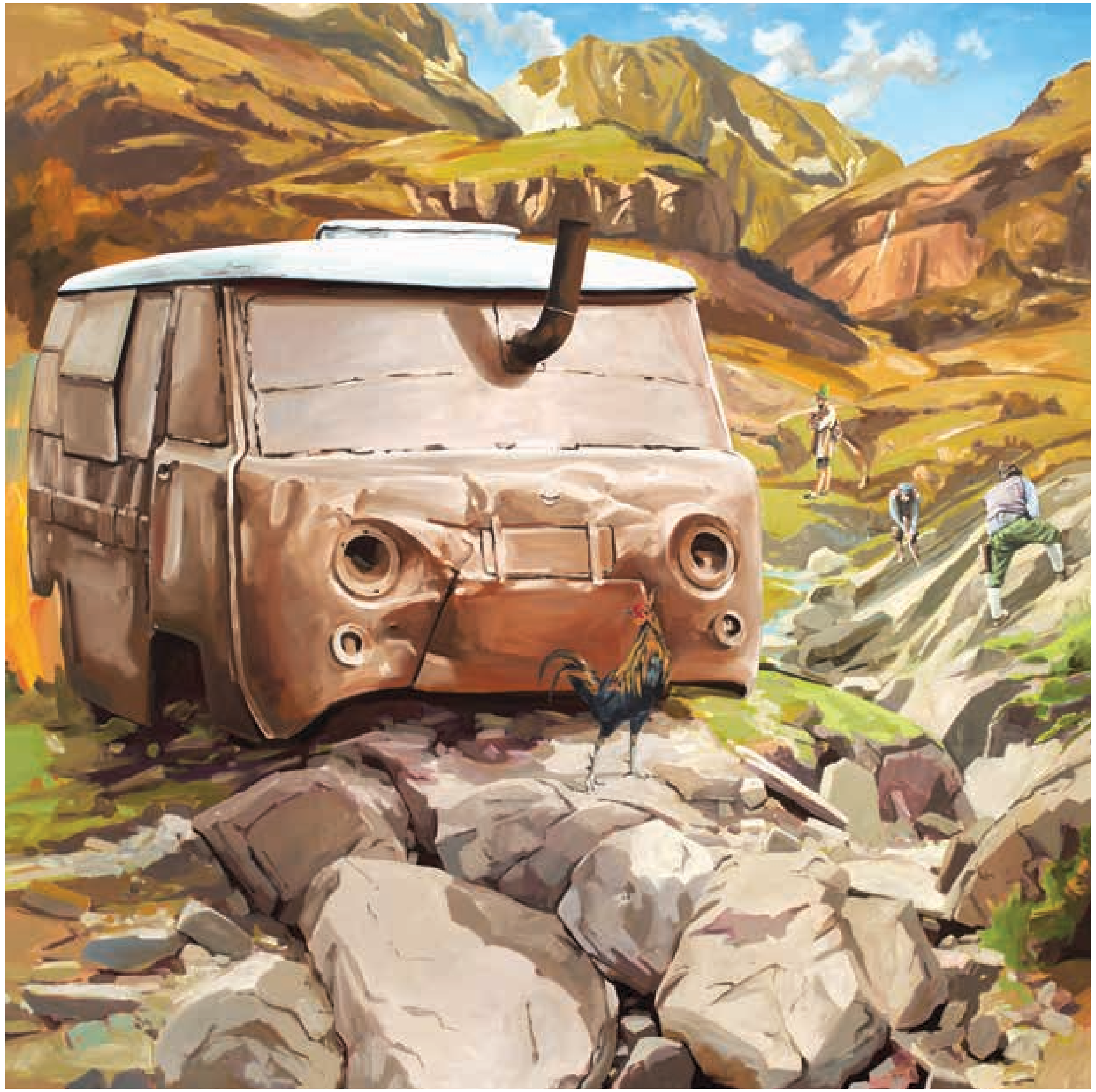




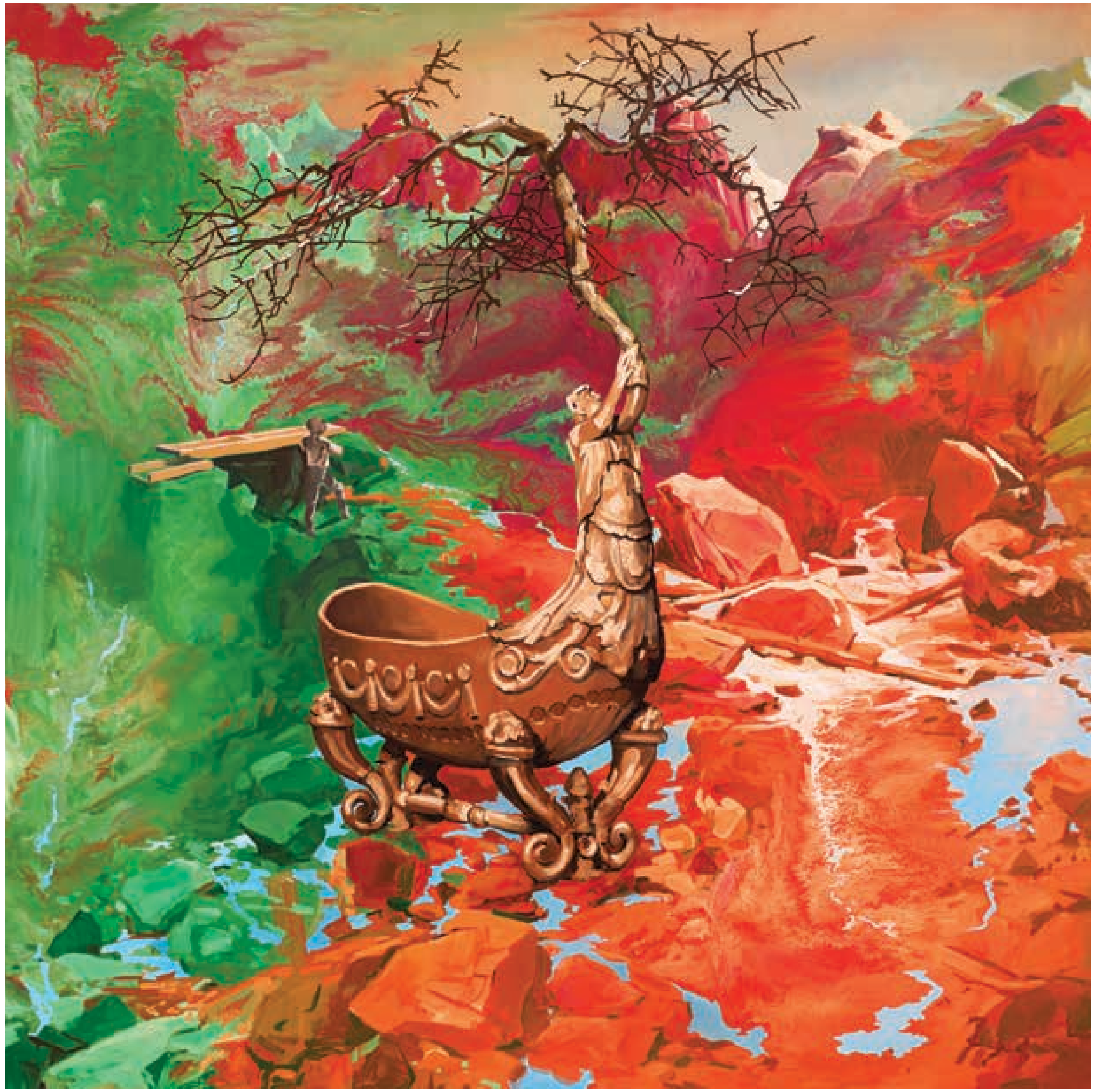
Cat. 13
Bassell hunter 2012
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm



Cat. 14
The recliners were only the beginning 2012
oil on canvas
200 x 300 cm

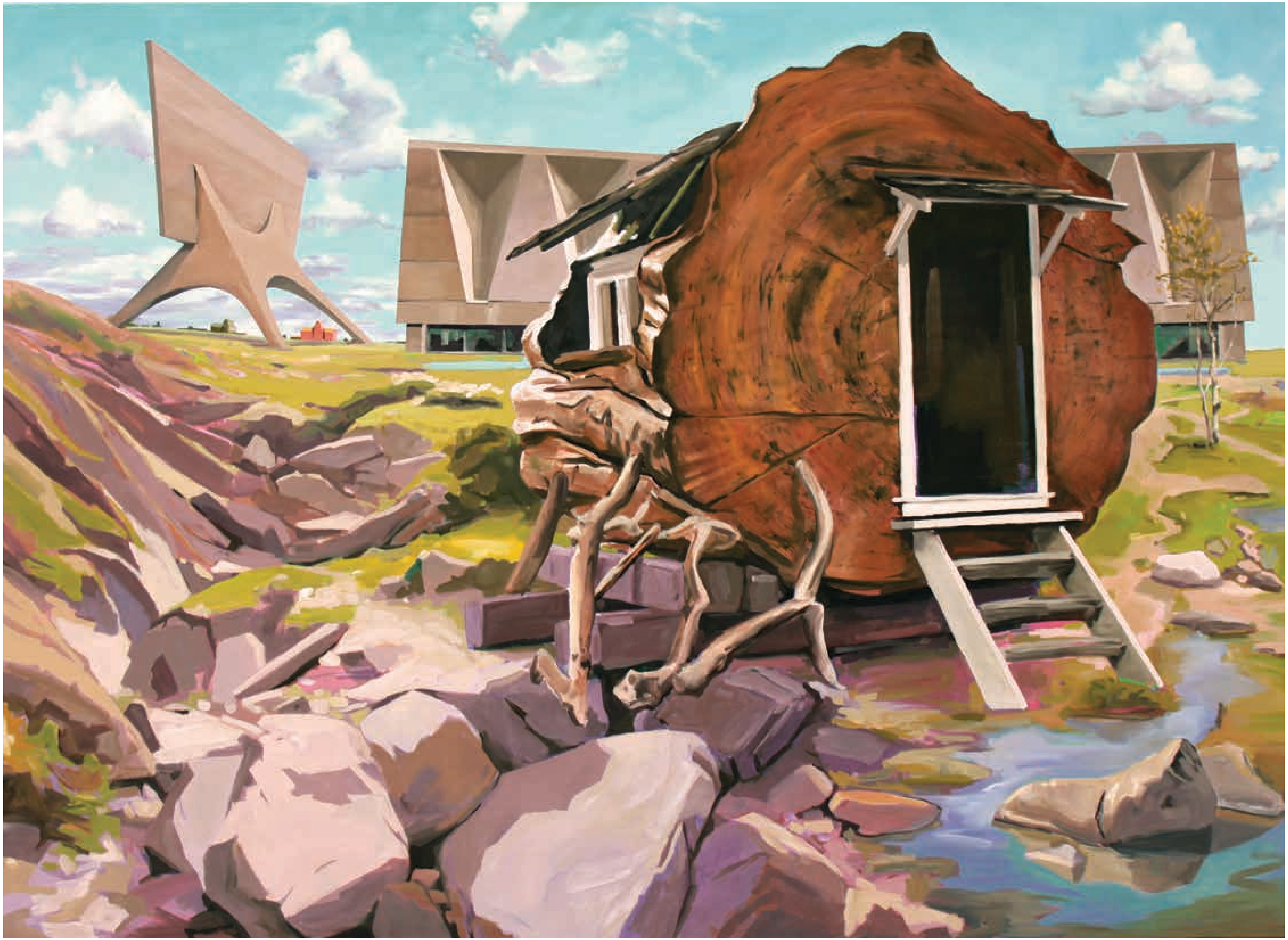


Cat. 15
Ingleby 2013
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm



Cat. 16
Moonmoote 2013–14
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm

Cat. 33
Tomintoul 2013
oil on canvas
145 x 198 cm



CATALOGUE OF WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Stephen Bush
born 1958, Victoria;
lives and works in the Otways, Victoria

The Vizard Foundation Gallery

1
Rooftop washing 1980
oil on canvas
124 x 337.5 cm
City of Port Phillip Collection, Melbourne

2
Bluff 1990–91
oil on canvas
171.5 x 141 cm
The Cbus Collection of Australian Art

3
Corn scene 1997
oil on primed paper
62 x 44 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

4
Rubbing doesn't help 1997
oil on canvas
67 x 67 cm
The Collection of David and Kathy Montgomery, Sydney

5
Type cast 1998
oil on canvas
198 x 233.5 cm
Private collection, Sydney

6
My name is the great went 2001
oil on canvas
200 x 235.5 cm
Artbank Collection

7
Col du Galibier 2003
oil on canvas
201 x 244 cm
Courtesy the artist and Sutton Gallery, Melbourne

8
Lauterbrunnental 2004
oil on canvas
107 x 183 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

9
Goat willow 2005
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

10
Road with such intent 2007
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm
The Michael Buxton Collection, Melbourne

11
Shout on the hills of glory 2008
oil on canvas
200 x 300 cm
The Michael Buxton Collection, Melbourne

12
Starlite walker 2010
oil on canvas
94.5 x 106.9 cm
The University of Melbourne Art Collection
2010.0073

13
Bassell hunter 2012
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm
La Trobe University Museum of Art Collection. Purchased 2012

14
The recliners were only the beginning 2012
oil on canvas
200 x 300 cm
Collection of Michael Schwarz and David Clouston, Melbourne

15
Ingleby 2013
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm
Courtesy the artist and Sutton Gallery, Melbourne

16
Moonmoote 2013–14
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm
Courtesy the artist and Sutton Gallery, Melbourne

17
Saunders Cuthbert 2013–14
gouache on paper
20 sheets, each 56 x 76 cm
Courtesy the artist and Sutton Gallery, Melbourne

Ground floor south gallery

18
Woodstock 1996
oil on canvas
134 x 187 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

19
I could have been someone 2003
oil on canvas
77 x 77 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

20
I have come to the creek 2003
oil on canvas
201 x 295 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

21
I have not been feeling myself the same 2003
oil on canvas
96.5 x 96.5 cm
Collection of Jonathan and Sophie MacMillan, Melbourne

22
Lampre 2003
oil on canvas
198 x 234 cm
Collection of Goldman Sachs Australia

23
Groninger koek 2009
oil on canvas
46 x 51 cm
Collection of GRANTPIRRIE Private, Sydney

24
Quino Lichthafel 2009
oil on canvas
46 x 51 cm
Collection of Michael Schwarz and David Clouston, Melbourne

25
Lady Campbell Weed: Ballyregan 2010
oil on canvas
50 x 50 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

26
Lady Campbell Weed: Grossglockner 2010
oil on canvas
49.5 x 51.5 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

27
Lady Campbell Weed: Hagelsag 2010
oil on canvas
76 x 102 cm
Collection of Richard and Fiona East, Melbourne

28
Lady Campbell Weed: Kenley Lass 2010
oil on canvas
100 x 99 cm
Collection of Mr and Mrs D McKee, Adelaide

29
Lady Campbell Weed: Lord Adelaide 2011
oil on canvas
76.5 x 71.5 cm
Private collection, Victoria

30
Lady Campbell Weed: Mary of Exeter 2011
oil on canvas
76.5 x 71.5 cm
Courtesy the artist and Sutton Gallery, Melbourne

31
Lady Campbell Weed: Mocker 2011
oil on canvas
76.5 x 71.5 cm
Collection of Lisa and Egil Paulsen, Sydney

32
Lady Campbell Weed: William of Orange 2011
oil on canvas
76.5 x 71.5 cm
Courtesy the artist and Sutton Gallery, Melbourne

33
Tomintoul 2013
oil on canvas
145 x 198 cm
Courtesy the artist and Sutton Gallery, Melbourne

34
Lady Campbell Weed: Black Halligan 2014
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm
Courtesy the artist and Sutton Gallery, Melbourne

Works from the University of Melbourne Art Collection

Nicholas Chevalier Artist
born St Petersburg, Russia, 1828;
died London 1902
Cyrus Mason Lithographer
born London 1829; died Melbourne 1915
Calvert Brothers Publisher
active 1854–58

35
Houses of Parliament, Melbourne. Legislative Assembly Hall, designed under the direction of Captain Pasley, R.E. Commissioner of Public Works. Architects, Messrs. Knight and Kerr, 1856
lithograph and watercolour
40.2 x 31.6 cm (image); 49.7 x 39.6 cm (sheet)
The University of Melbourne Art Collection. Gift of the Russell and Mab Grimwade Bequest 1973
1973.0689

Samuel Thomas (ST) Gill
Artist
born Perriton, Devonshire, England, 1818;
died Melbourne 1880
J.S Campbell & Co. Printer
active c. 1850s

36
Old colonists' festival, held in the Criterion Hotel, Melbourne 14th September 1853 c. 1853
lithograph and watercolour
33.5 x 45.5 cm (image, irreg.); 45 x 56.4 cm (sheet, irreg.)
The University of Melbourne Art Collection. Gift of the Russell and Mab Grimwade Bequest 1973
1973.0657

John Gould Artist
born Lyme Regis, Dorset, 1804; arrived Hobart 1838; departed Sydney 1840;
died London 1881
Henry Constantine Richter
Lithographer
born Brompton, England, 1821;
died 1902
Hullmandel and Walton
Printer
active c. 1840s–60s

37
Mycteria Australis c. 1840s
lithograph
56.5 x 38.5 cm (sheet)
The University of Melbourne Art Collection. Gift of the Society of Collectors 1951
1951.0008

Lloyd Orton
born Victoria 1918; died 1996

38
Design of a monument to a famous explorer 1938
gouache and pencil on paper
56 x 40.4 cm (sight)
The University of Melbourne Art Collection. Gift to the Department of Architecture
0000.0570

39
A snow hut date unknown
gouache, charcoal and pencil on paper
52 x 38 cm (sight)
The University of Melbourne Art Collection. Gift to the Department of Architecture
0000.0553

Artist unknown

40
Chemical works, Sandridge; Be sulphide of carbon works, Sandridge c. 1884
watercolour and gold ink
39.7 x 30.6 cm (sight); 16.7 x 24.1 cm each image (oval)
The University of Melbourne Art Collection. Purchased 1994, the Russell and Mab Grimwade Miegunyah Fund
1994.0033A, 1994.0033B

Artist unknown

41
Untitled (Heron at waters' edge) c. 1900
ink on wood
30.4 x 25.4 cm (sight)
The University of Melbourne Art Collection
0000.0205

Artist unknown

42
Untitled (Hornbill on branch)
c. 1900
ink on wood
30.4 x 25.4 cm (sight)
The University of Melbourne
Art Collection
0000.0202

Artist unknown

43
Untitled (Kookaburra in tree)
c. 1900
ink on wood
30.4 x 25.4 cm (sight)
The University of Melbourne
Art Collection
0000.0201

Artist unknown

44
Untitled (Owl on branch) c.
1900
ink on wood
31.8 x 25.4 cm (sight)
The University of Melbourne
Art Collection
0000.0204

Artist unknown

45
Untitled (Parrot on branch)
c. 1900
ink on wood
31.7 x 25.5 cm (sight)
The University of Melbourne
Art Collection
0000.0203

Artist unknown

46
Citrus Aurantium
date unknown
lithograph on paper
39.2 x 29 cm (image);
49 x 29.5cm (sheet, irreg.)
The University of Melbourne
Art Collection
0000.1301

Artist unknown

47
Laurus Cinnamomum
date unknown
lithograph on paper
28.7 cm x 20.5 cm
(sheet, irreg.)
The University of Melbourne
Art Collection
0000.1300

Artist unknown

48
Untitled (Two decorative panels) date unknown
wood
53 x 52.1 x 2.1 cm,
53 x 50.4 x 2.3 cm
The University of Melbourne
Art Collection. Gift of the
Russell and Mab Grimwade
Bequest 1973
1973.0744.001,
1973.0744.002

Level 1 south gallery

49
The caretaker 1988
oil on canvas
71 x 61 cm
HOLLBRAND Collection,
Melbourne

50
A caretaker #1 1988
oil on canvas
60 x 71 cm
The John L Stewart
Collection, New York

51
A caretaker #3 1988
oil on canvas
71 x 60 cm
Collection of Michael
Schwarz and David
Clouston, Melbourne

52
Jaune de nickel 2003
oil on canvas
56 x 66.5 cm
HOLLBRAND Collection,
Melbourne

53
Jean 2003
oil on canvas
35 x 38 cm
Collection of Fred and Mary
Schepisi, Melbourne

54
Lacque rose 2003
oil on canvas
50 x 66 cm
Collection of Annabelle and
Rupert Myer, Melbourne

55
Vert Or 2003
oil on canvas
56 x 66.5 cm
Collection of Melinda Cain,
Melbourne

56
Committed to Parkview 2
2007
oil on canvas
51 x 41 cm
Collection of Fayen d'Evie,
Melbourne

57
Committed to Parkview 3
2007
oil on canvas
51 x 41 cm
Private collection,
Melbourne

58
Alabaster welcome 2008
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm
Collection of Museum of
Old and New Art (MONA),
Hobart

59
Billbrae South 1 2008
oil on canvas
18 x 12.5 cm
Private collection, Dallas,
Texas

60
Billbrae South 2 2008
oil on canvas
18 x 12.5 cm
Private collection, Dallas,
Texas

61
Come that done autumn 2008
oil on canvas
66 x 86 cm
Private collection,
Melbourne

62
Gravenhurst 2008
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm
Private collection,
Melbourne

63
Light in the valley 2008
oil on canvas
46 x 46 cm
Private collection,
Melbourne

64
Prepared to do whatever it takes… 2008
oil on canvas
69 x 88 cm
The collection of Mr CJ
Clague, Melbourne

65
Wall-a-ree, I can hear the river call 2008
oil on canvas
66 x 86 cm
The Michael Buxton
Collection, Melbourne

66
Applestroop 2009
oil on canvas
56 x 51 cm
Private collection,
Melbourne

67
I am a giant, I am an eagle
2009
oil on canvas
94.5 x 102 cm
Private collection,
Melbourne

68
Rhodamine Mabel Bungaara
2011
oil on canvas
121 x 96 cm
Collection of Dr Clinton
Ng, Sydney

69
Coppersmith 2014
synthetic polymer paint
353 x 539 cm
executed by Kirsty Budge,
Jack Halls, Kendall Mantz
and Gervaise Netherway
from the Painting program
of the Victorian College
of the Arts, University of
Melbourne

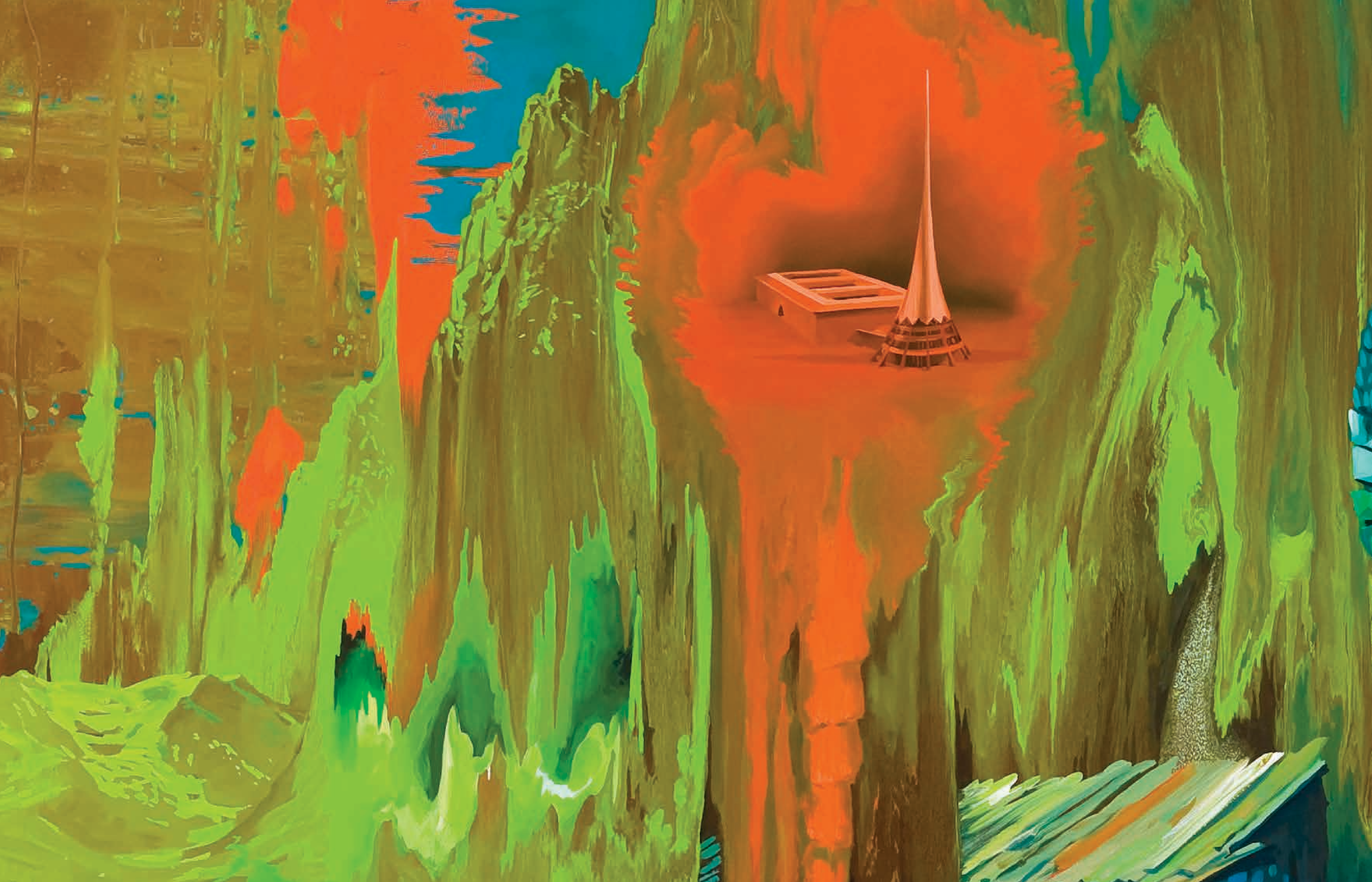
Stephen Bush is represented by Sutton Gallery, Melbourne, www.suttongallery.com.au

For an exhibition and publication history see www.stephenjbush.com

ARTIST'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

END PAPERS
Details from
Shout on the hills of glory 2008 and
Road with such intent 2007

The artist wishes to thank Irene Sutton and her staff at Sutton Gallery for their time and generous support. Many thanks to Director Kelly Gellatly, the staff at the Ian Potter Museum of Art at Melbourne University, and the Vizard Foundation for enabling and endorsing this project. I am also deeply grateful to all of the collectors who have made *Steenhuffel* possible.



potter

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