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MONIKA STRICKER
ANATOMIC BOTTLENECK
6 November – 18 December, 2021

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Press Release

Transition-knob

Those who are familiar with Monika Stricker's practice are aware of the male crotch as a recurring subject in her paintings. But it is the scrotum, not the penis, that lies at the centre. Unlike the penis, the soft, wobbly scrotum does not connote phallic potency. Punching it is synonymous with pain. The fact that it should actually be resting inside the body, makes it the most vulnerable organ. Because the temperature there is too high for the sperm, it hangs outside. This focus on vulnerability is crucial. It is the feminist perspective. Similarly to the female sex organ, self-observation without a mirror is impossible when it comes to the testicles.

We are all heavily influenced by narratives that compel us to define masculine and feminine. They trigger feelings from disappointment to desire, or a lust for revenge. In Monika's paintings, the dual juxtaposition is dissolved, and yet these feelings are neither concealed nor appeased.

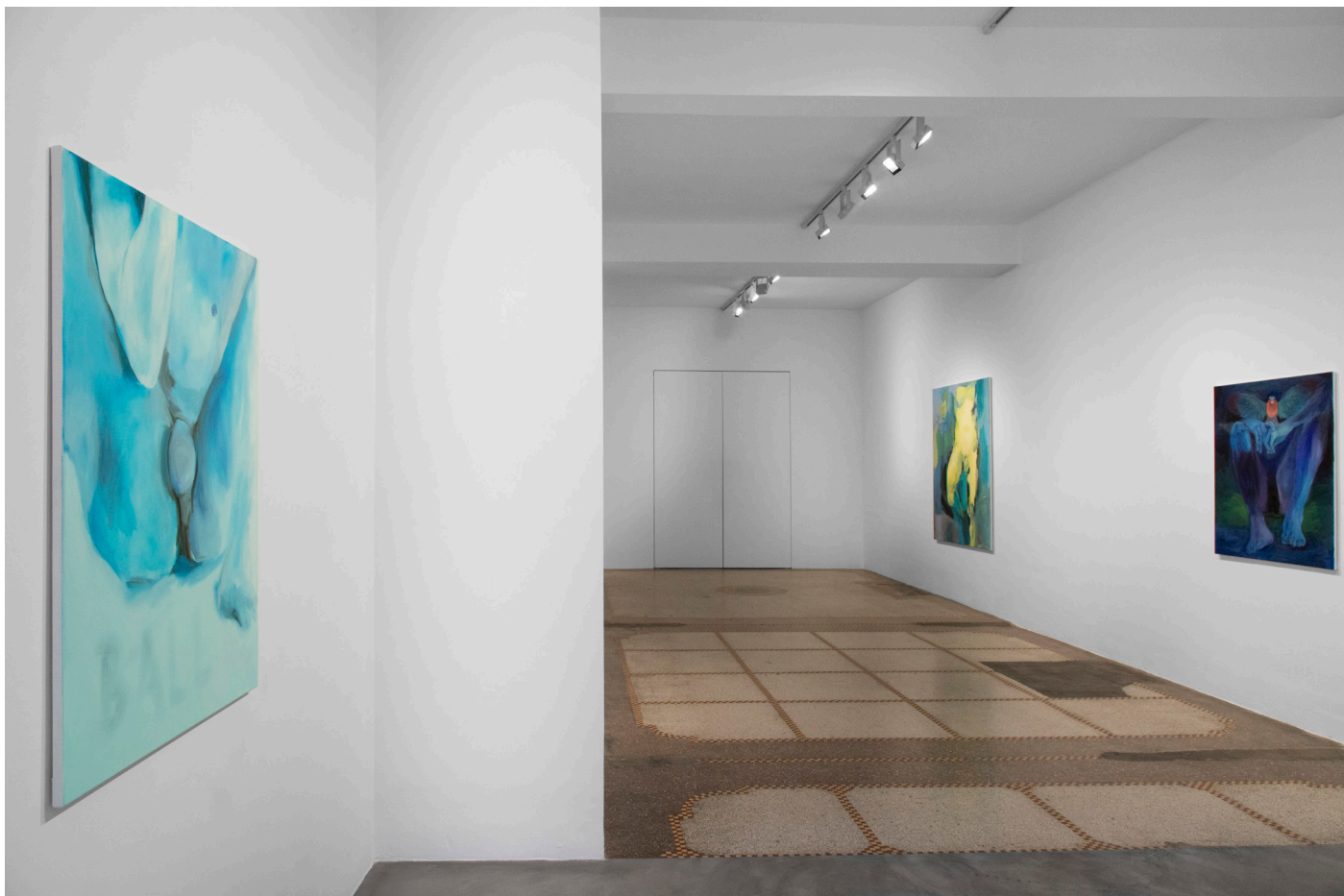
Her own fascination is clearly perceptible in all of the repetitions and variations. It makes you wonder what kind of fascination it is when genitals are associated with birds and nipples replace the penis. In part, her paintings resemble academic nude studies, they are sketch-like, and yet carefully observed. Her painting is tentative. She adds brushstroke upon brushstroke, overwriting, correcting. Tentative is not the same as hesitant. Swift gestures also break out to fill entire parts of the painting. She is a sculptor too, and I recognise formations in her paintings that are similar to those seen in her plaster and clay sculptures. The methods of working bear witness to the sensual tracing of the forms of the motifs, thereby establishing an intimacy. This closeness can be both tender and aggressive.

I am aware that it is risky to unquestioningly ascribe such connectedness with the object to pictorial formulation. In one of the stories in Max Liebermann's book 'Die Phantasie in der Malerei' (Imagination in Painting), a young painter asks the teacher whether one has to have faith in order to paint the Mother of God, to which the teacher replies that it is more important to feel joy when painting. While contemplating the relationship between painter and motif, a picture suddenly comes to my mind: Francisco de Goya's 'Saturn Devouring His Son'. Am I making this comparison now because Monika's pictures inevitably resonate with a certain fierceness? When I look at Goya's painting, I am unable to think of him being detached and controlled. Everything in his painting expresses the devotional imagination of what is depicted, so that when I look at it, I can even feel the temperature and the texture of the small fragmented (bitten) body at the centre of the painting. Fear and disgust. Liebermann's teacher, conversely, does not demand stark objectivity, but a certain distance from the motif. Maybe because he thinks that love, like hate, proverbially blinds you; that emotions cloud perception.

Monika Stricker's expressions bring to life her probings into closeness and distance. She presents paintings as performances of a transfer. She questions how precarious this is and how much the fragile transgression can exhibit its own vulnerability. The setting and protagonist of this performance is the human genital, whereby stable attributions dissolve due to gender markers mixing and blending into one another. The paintings revolve around their centre. Instead of emerging ever more clearly and distinctly through the encircling, each image transpires as a further destabilisation of the subject.

The protruding organ, which, as described above, expresses something internal, is more than a pictorial object. It proves to be a synecdoche for the risky transition between outside and inside, a transfer in both directions.

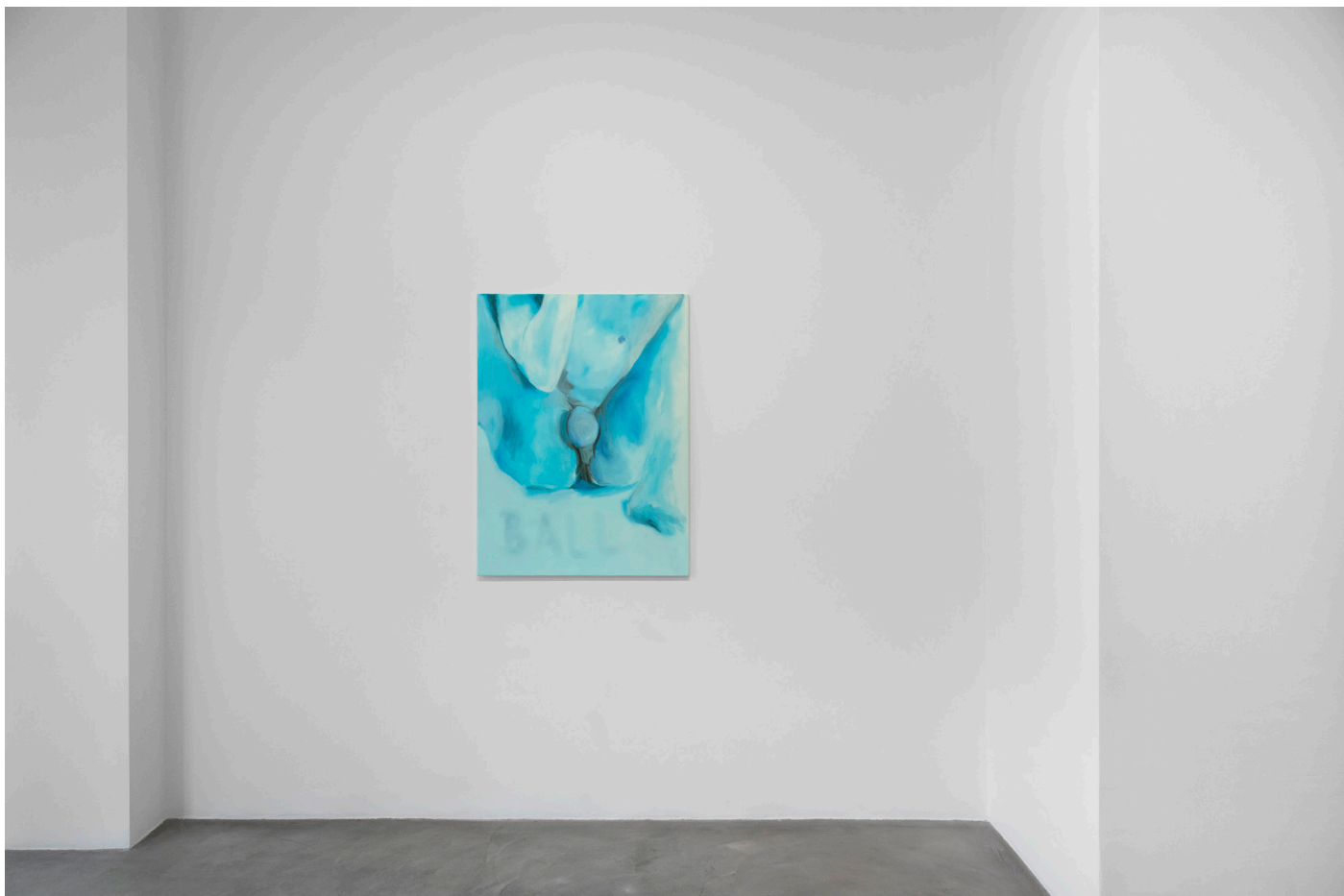
Text by Tobias Hantmann



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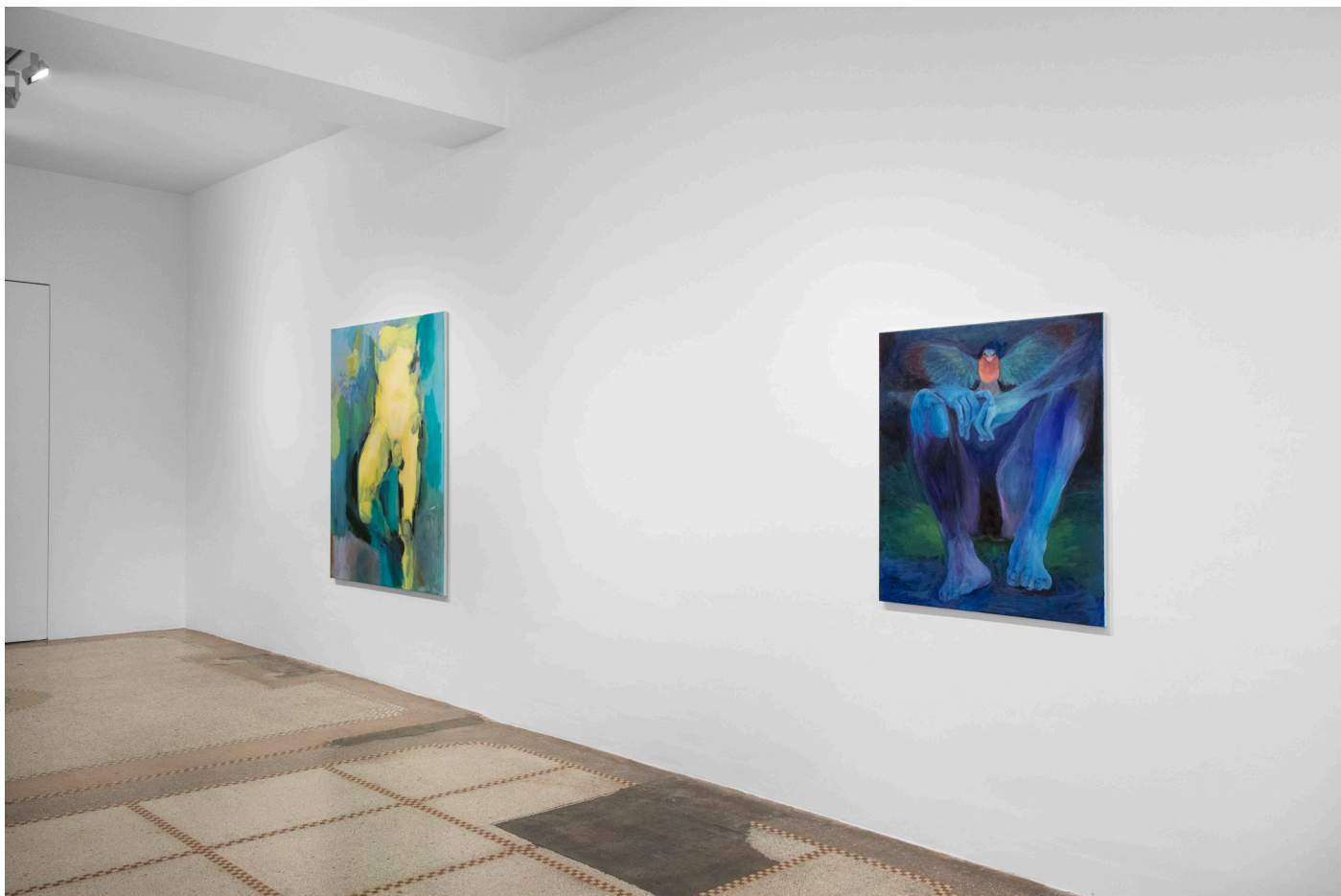
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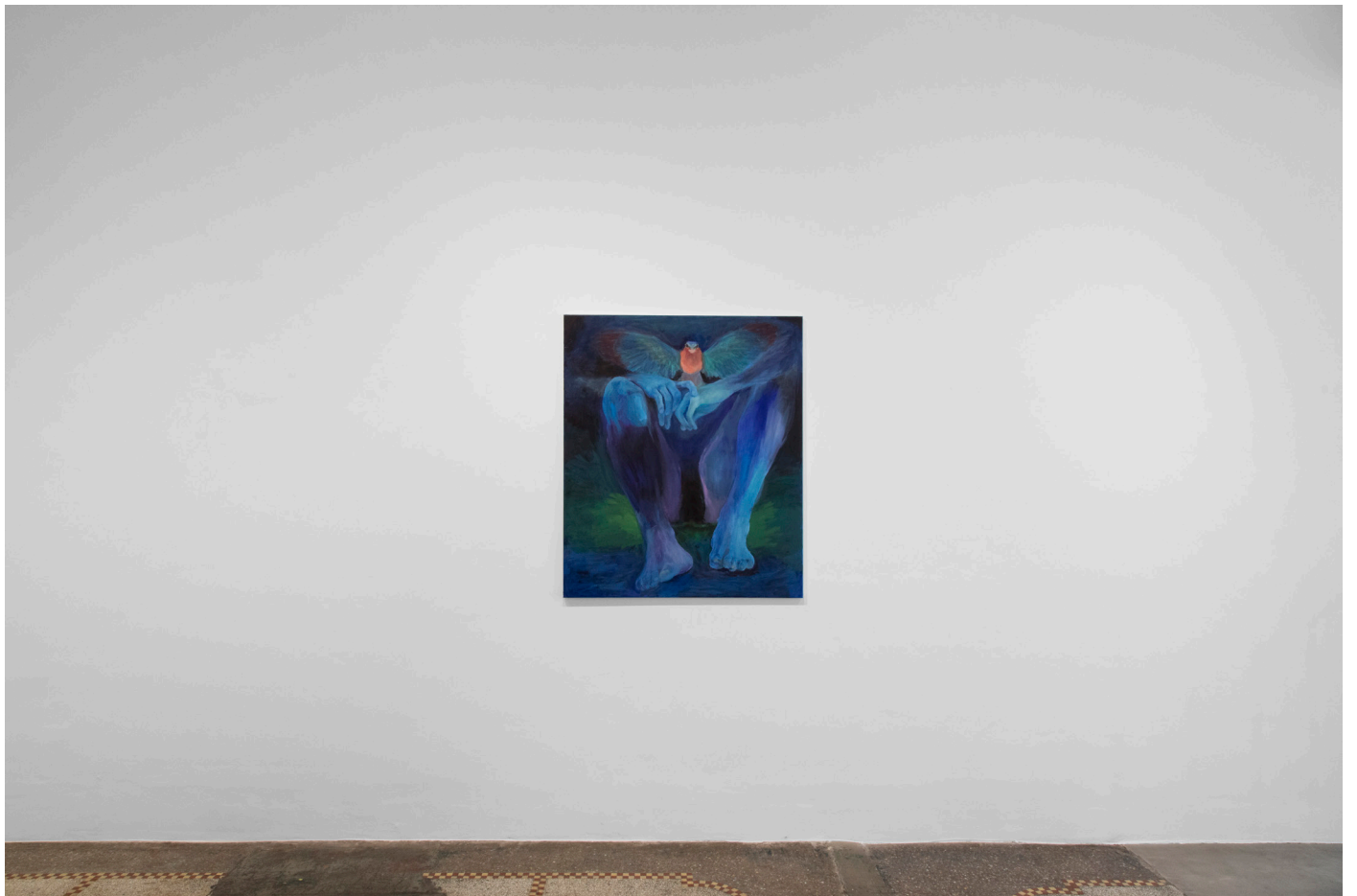
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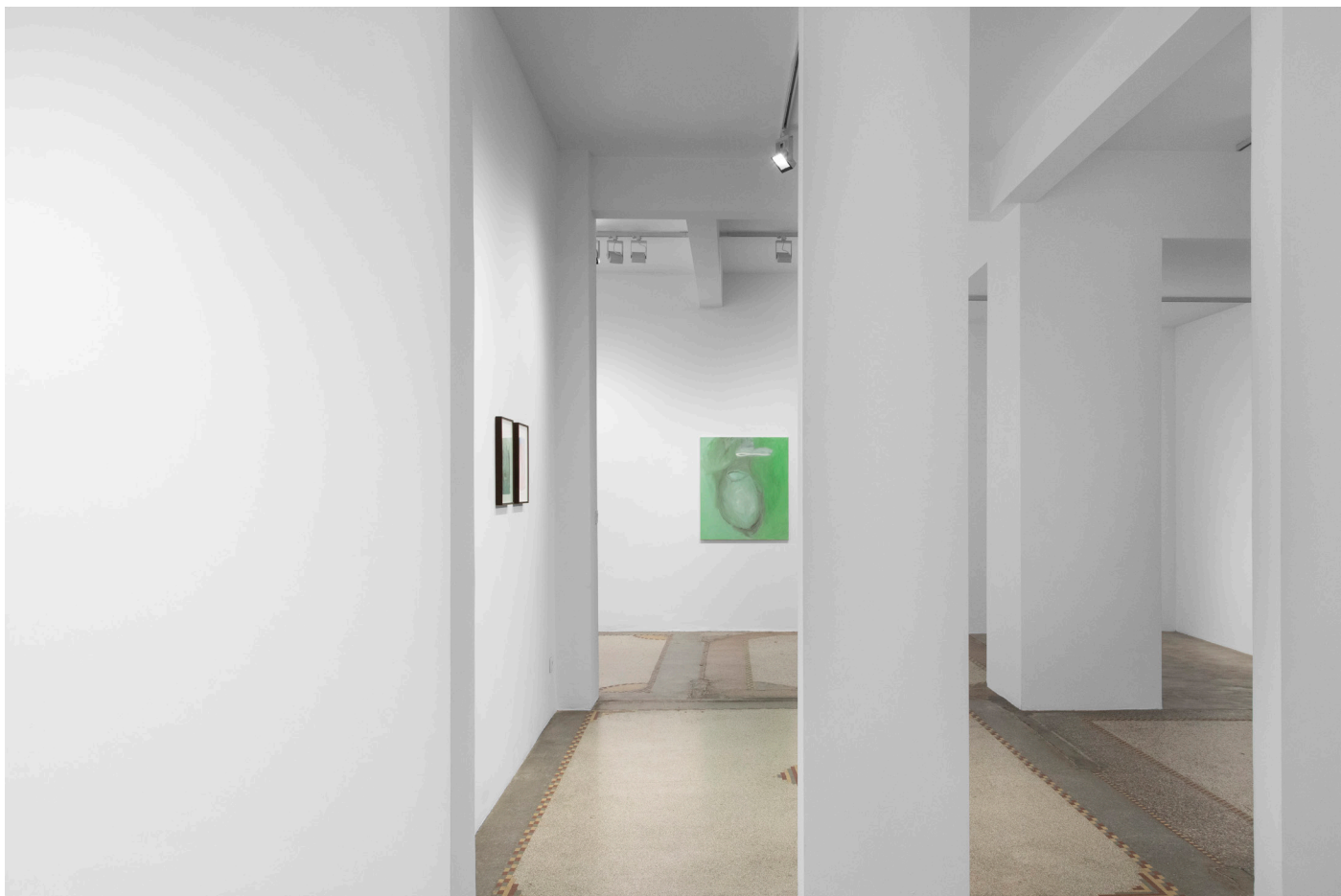
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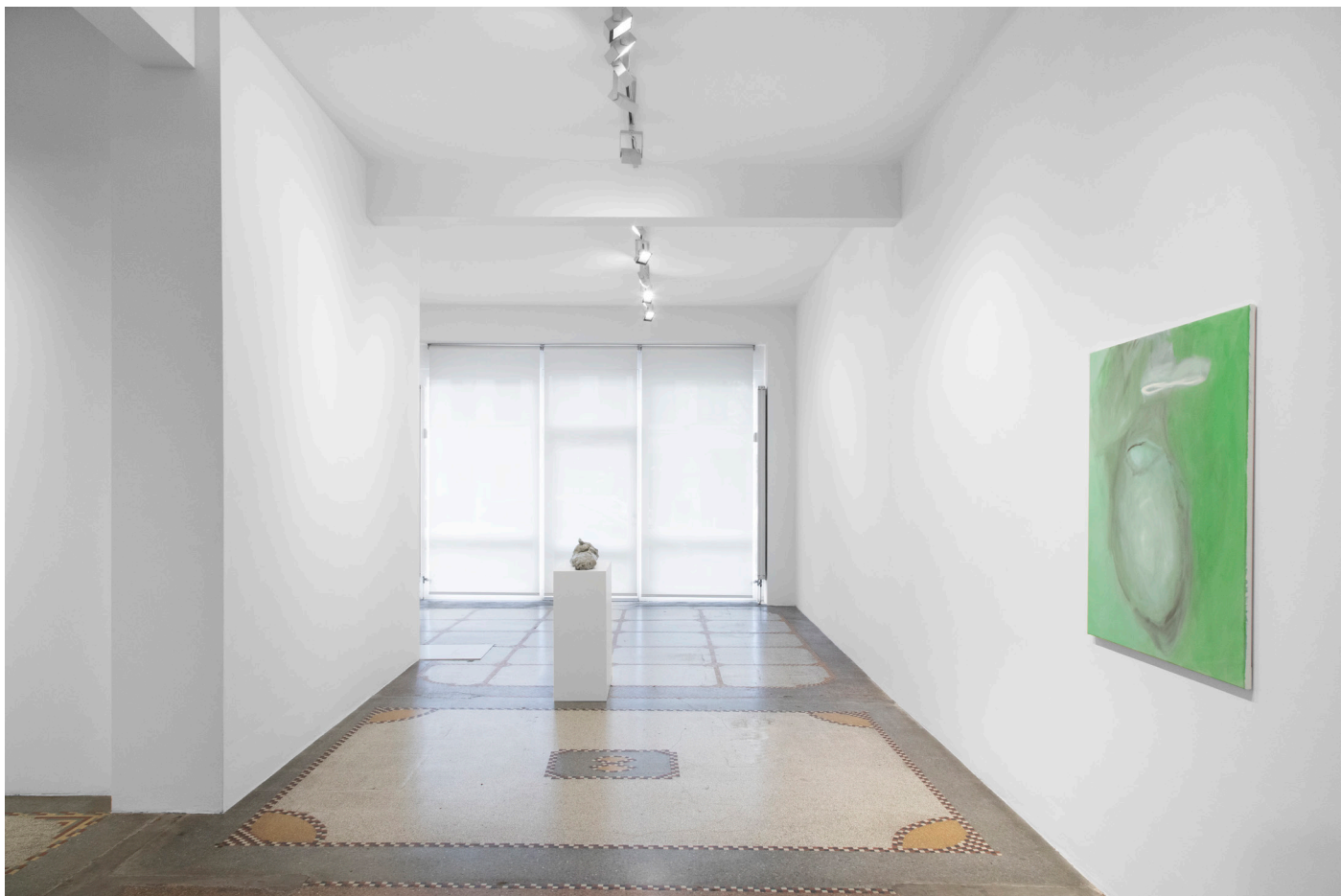
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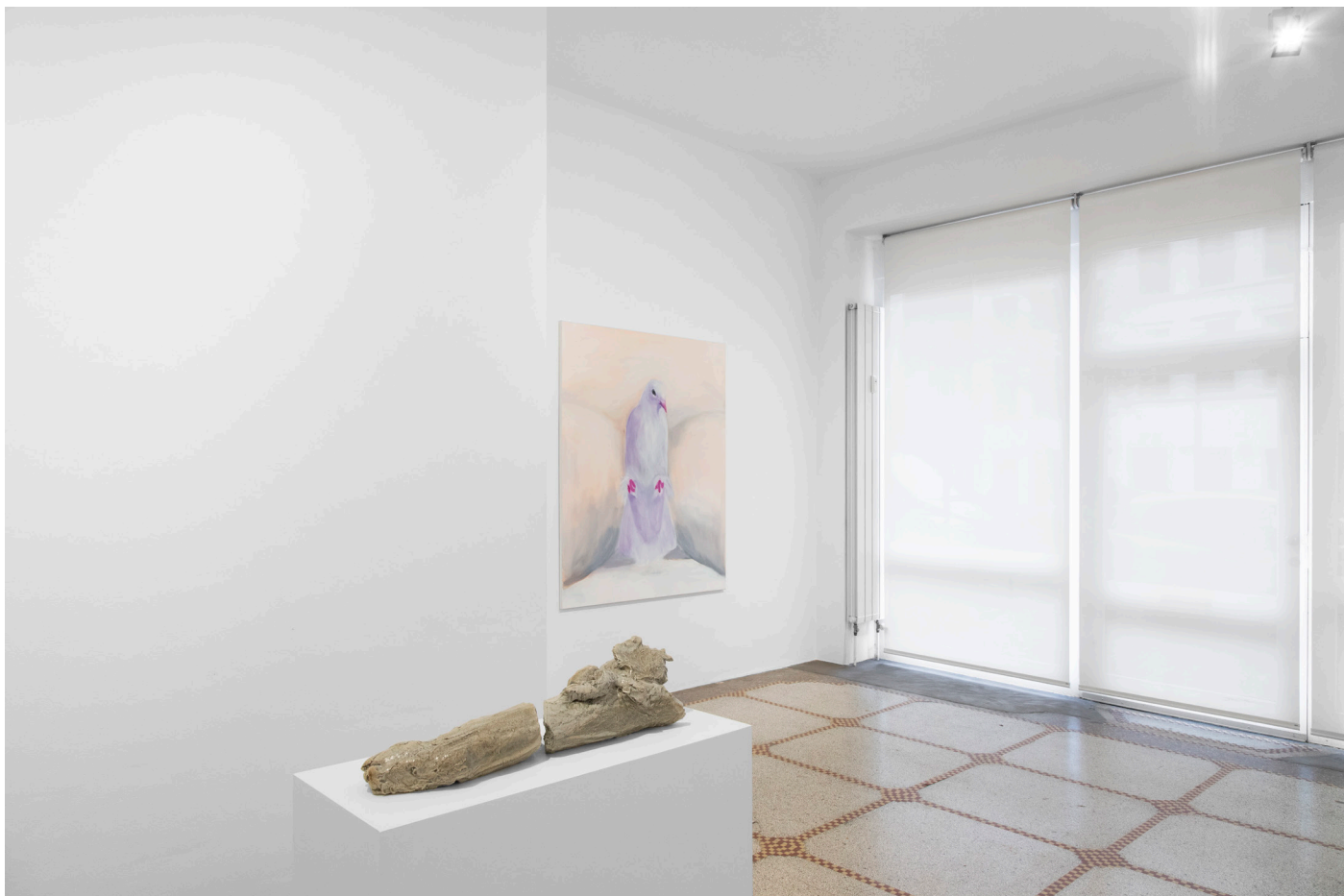
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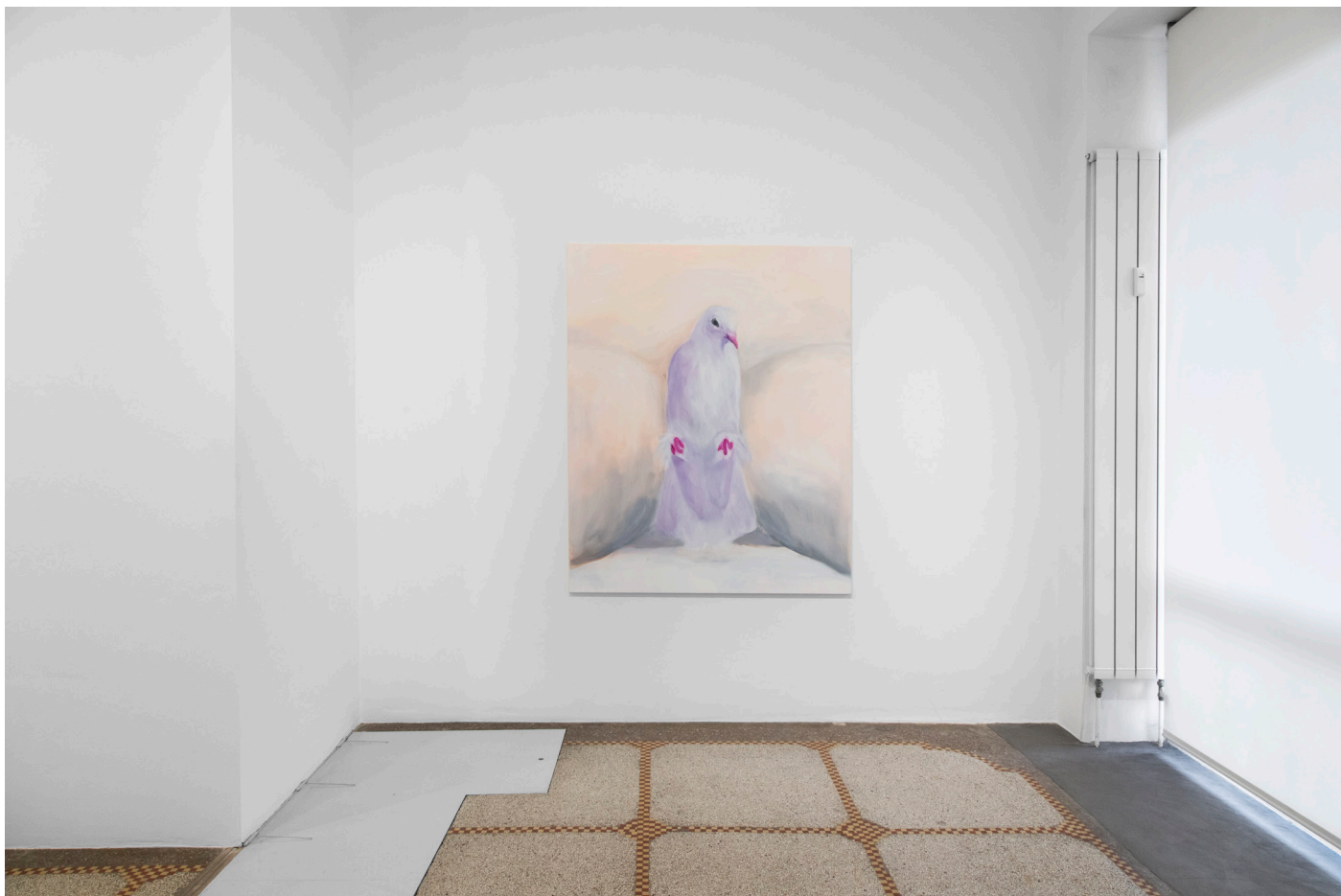
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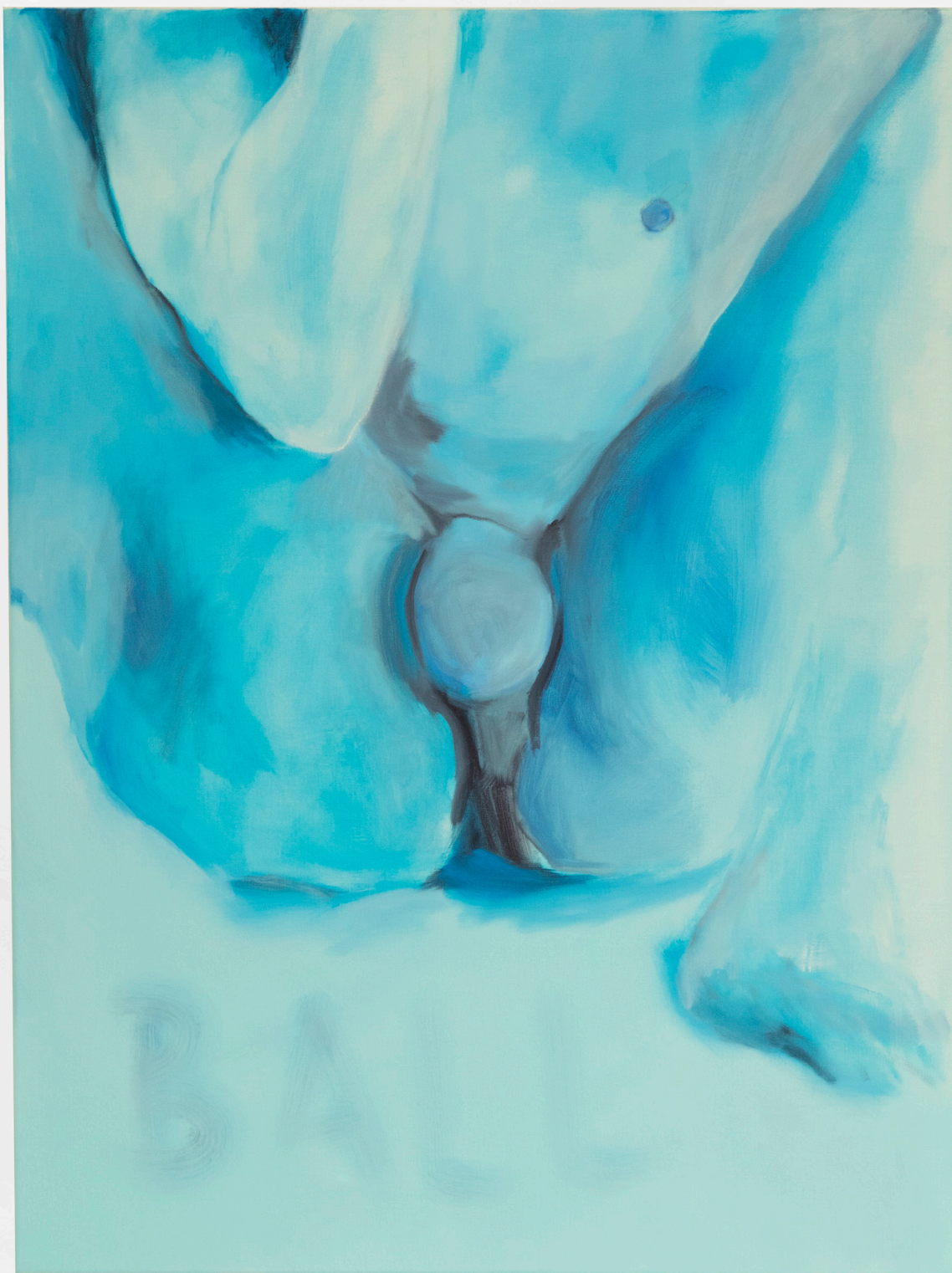
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Monika Stricker
Introspection
2021
oil on canvas
100 x 75 cm
39,37 x 29,53 in
DEP-MS-0010

HR Image:
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/1uffpdt8x7agtrq/DEP-MS-0010.tif?dl=0>



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Monika Stricker
Vogelperspektive
2021
oil on canvas
100 x 85 cm
39,37 x 33,46 in
DEP-MS-0009

HR Image:
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/1nznw5ym97xnetb/DEP-MS-0009.tif?dl=0>



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Monika Stricker
Nicht landen
2021
oil on canvas
160 x 130 cm
63 x 51,18 in
DEP-MS-0007

HR Image:
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/n2bft6yusf0mrbt/DEP-MS-0007.tif?dl=0>



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Monika Stricker
Hicktown
2021
oil on canvas
99 x 85 cm
38,98 x 33,46 in
DEP-MS-0011

HR Image:
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Monika Stricker
Nie landen
2021
oil on canvas
160 x 130 cm
63 x 51,18 in
DEP-MS-0008

HR Image:

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Monika Stricker
Love amulet

2021
nail polish on paper
39,5 x 30,8 x 2,8 cm (framed)
15,55 x 12,13 x 1,10 in (framed)
DEP-MS-0004

HR Image:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/4ii67yqxye5klq7/AAAVIMOBeadDNgS-iAXqzFg-a?dl=0>



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Monika Stricker
Infancy and Adulthood
2021

oil and oil pastels on paper
39,5 x 30,8 x 2,8 cm (framed)
15,55 x 12,13 x 1,10 in (framed)
DEP-MS-0005

HR Image:

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Monika Stricker

Hotbed

2021

gouache and nail polish on paper

39,5 x 30,8 x 2,8 cm (framed)

15,55 x 12,13 x 1,10 in (framed)

DEP-MS-0006

HR Image:

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Monika Stricker
Anatomic Bottleneck
2021
ceramics
18 x 70 x 20 cm
7,09 x 27,56 x 7,87 in
DEP-MS-0012

HR Image:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/xeyodm7s78sbhi2/AAD88_WgKPyhc1SZnHk_blk9a?dl=0



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