

***THE MACHINE IN  
THE GARDEN***

**SHAUN KRUPA  
& BARBARA BLOOM**





**Shaun Krupa and Barbara Bloom**

***The Machine in the Garden***

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On a clay prism, an Akkadian inscription written by Sennacherib (King of Assyria, 705–681 BC) describes for the first time the use of the Archimedean Screw, a device designed to carry water to great heights from the rivers below to irrigate the Hanging Gardens of Babylon:

*...I created clay molds as if by divine intelligence for great cylinders and Alamittu Palms, tree of riches; twelve fierce lion-colossi together with twelve mighty bull-colossi which were perfect castings; twenty-two cow-colossi invested with joyous allure, plentifully endowed with sexual attraction; and I poured copper into them over and over again... In order to draw water up all day long I had ropes, bronze wires and bronze chains made... I set up the great cylinders and Alamittu Palms over cisterns... I raised the height of the surroundings of the palace to be a Wonder for all Peoples. I gave it the name: "Incomparable Palace." A park imitating the Amanus Mountains I laid out next to it, with all kinds of aromatic plants, orchard fruit trees...<sup>1</sup>*

Shaun Krupa's "Archimedean Screw" is trapped on an incline. The screw in motion moves material, both solid and liquid, as if to dispossess the natural landscape of its initial form in favor of the cylindrical pathway that the screw's body commands. The screw in its infinite mobility is a Sisyphean character. Its form and function are irreducible; the screw's boring labor is a quintessential activity for the reformation of the physical environment. Sennacherib's description of the ability for the screw to displace water is expressed as a sublime property and as an exploit. The experience of the geometric sublime in this case is the machine in the garden.<sup>2</sup>

The works of Barbara Bloom and Shaun Krupa suggest a world of objects embedded with content and function. A landscape without bodies.

Bloom's "Corner: Japanese Garden" depicts an interior corner of a room with glass walls that are surrounded by a manicured garden; nature qua artifice. The photo, which itself is in a corner, attracts its beholder to the corner. The architecture exceeds itself.

Similarly, Bloom's "Corner: Italian Garden" places the viewer in a corner at the intersection of two pathways with a view to an interior courtyard garden. Again, the architecture frames a constructed natural environment; repeating arches and columns give image to a nature that is defined by its geometric order.

*The geometric sublime was static and appeared to dominate nature through elegant design and sheer bulk... these structures expressed the triumph of reason in concrete form, proving that the world was becoming, in Emerson's words, 'a realized will'—'the double of man.'<sup>3</sup>*

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1 Translation by Stephanie Dalley. Dalley, Stephanie and Oleson, John Peter. Sennacherib, Archimedes, and the Water Screw: The Context of Invention in the Ancient World. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.

2 "The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America" is the title of a 1964 work of literary criticism written by Leo Marx and published by Oxford University Press.

3 Nye, David E. American Technological Sublime. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007.

## INTERNATIONAL WATERS



When architecture is understood as “a realized will”<sup>4</sup>, its remnants in the expanded field become an archive of past desires. Bloom’s gardens, perceived as desires, can only be seen through layers of architectural remediation—nature is trapped by architecture; the architecture frames the desire for a version of nature that is more perfect than itself.

Perhaps it is a fetishistic dispossession of nature that has led us to this point of ontological confusion. But just as the Archimedean Screw’s defiance of gravity was a conceptual leap technologically, it was also something that gave image to a world without labor; a world in which constructed forms represented a utopia akin to Macondo, the city of mirrors.<sup>5</sup>

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Shaun Krupa (b. South Salem, NY 1979) is a painter, sculptor and performance artist living and working in New York City. He received a BFA in Industrial Design from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2002.

He has exhibited and performed at Albus Greenspon Gallery (NYC), Klaus von Nichtssagend (NYC), Safe Gallery (BK), Marlborough Contemporary Viewing Room (NYC), Soloway Gallery (BK), and Essex Flowers (NYC) among others, and most recently at The McNay Museum in San Antonio, TX.

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4 Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *Nature*. Penguin Books, 2008.

5 Márquez García Gabriel. *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. London: Viking, 2014.

INTERNATIONAL WATERS



Installation view

INTERNATIONAL WATERS



Installation view

INTERNATIONAL WATERS



**Shaun Krupa**  
*Archimedean Screw*, 2022  
Acrylic on canvas  
78.5 x 262.63 inches



**Barbara Bloom**

*Corner: Japanese Garden, 1998*

Photograph on two-color matboard, hung bridging a corner

Framed Dimensions: 20 x 24 inches (50.8 x 61 cm)

AP2, Edition of 2







**Barbara Bloom**

*Corner: Italian Garden, 1998*

Photograph on two-color matboard, hung bridging a corner

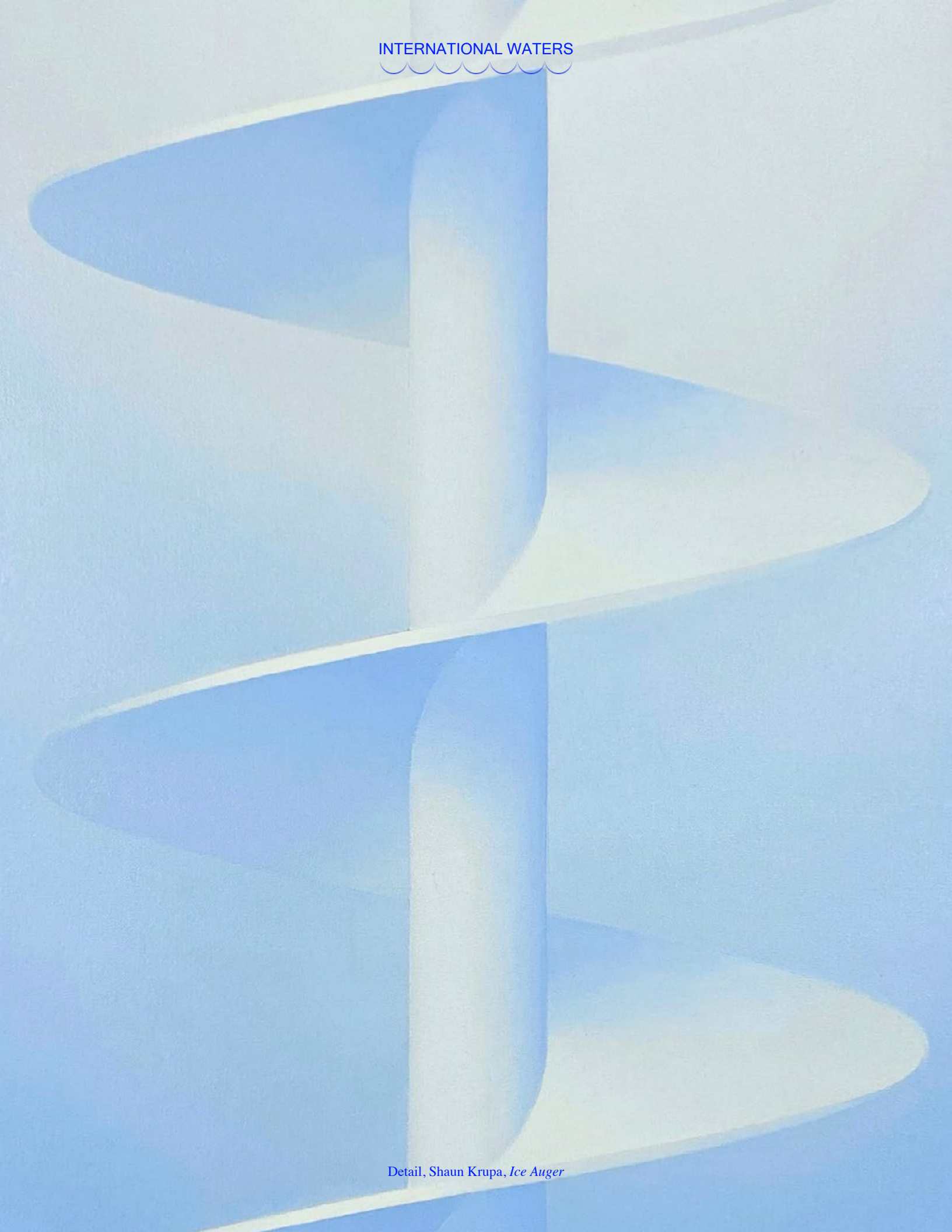
Framed Dimensions: 22 x 28 inches (55.9 x 71.1 cm)

Edition 1 of 2





**Shaun Krupa**  
*Ice Auger*, 2021  
Water Soluble Oil on Canvas  
15 x 32 inches





**Shaun Krupa**  
*Gold Auger, 2021*  
Water Soluble Oil on Canvas  
15 x 32 inches





**Shaun Krupa**  
*Archimedean Screw (Green)*, 2022  
Water Soluble Oil on Canvas  
46 x 36 inches







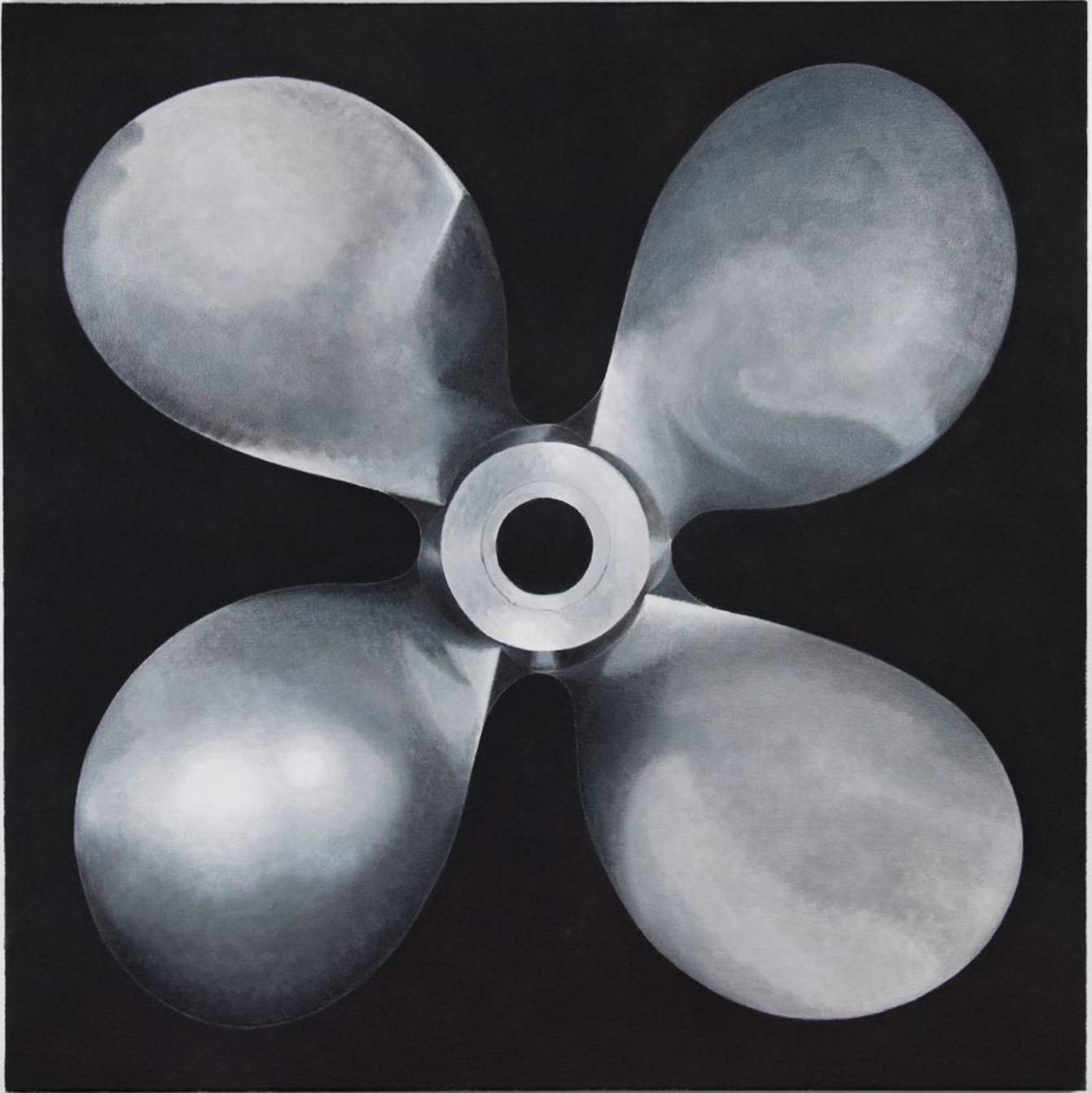
**Shaun Krupa**  
*Exhaust Fan, 2018*  
Water Soluble Oil on Canvas  
20 x 20 inches



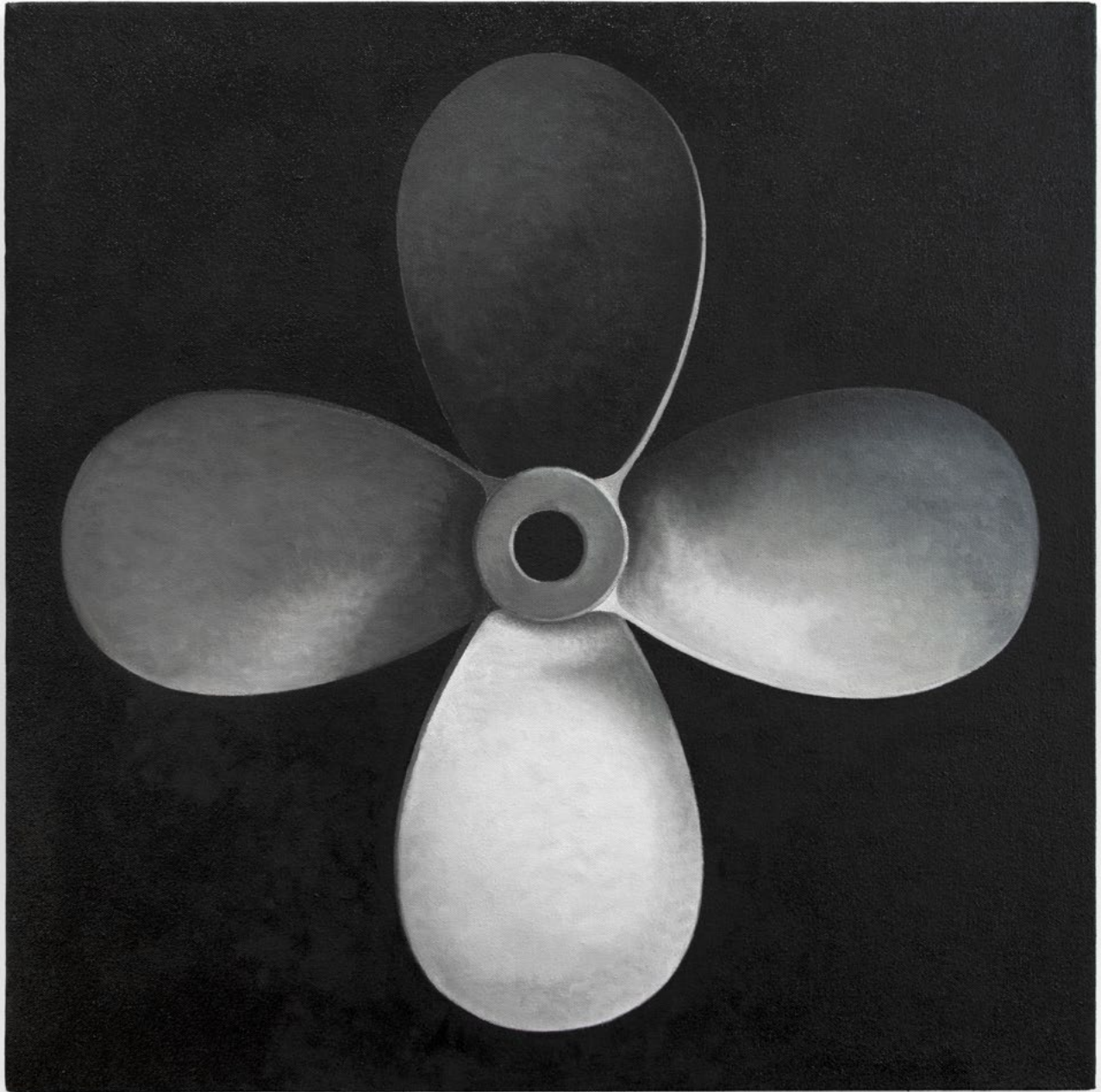


**Shaun Krupa**  
*Propeller for Imaginary Vehicle*, 2018  
Water Soluble Oil on Canvas  
34 x 34 inches





**Shaun Krupa**  
*Propeller for Large Ship, 2017*  
Water Soluble Oil on Canvas  
34 x 34 inches



**Shaun Krupa**  
*Propeller for Imaginary Vehicle, 2017*  
Water Soluble Oil on Canvas  
21 x 21 inches



**Shaun Krupa**  
*Lost Propellor, 2017*  
Water Soluble Oil on Canvas  
28 x 28 inches

INTERNATIONAL WATERS



**Shaun Krupa**  
*Untitled (airplane 1)*, 2018  
Water Soluble Oil on Canvas  
6 x 108 inches



INTERNATIONAL WATERS



**Shaun Krupa**  
*Untitled (airplane 2)*, 2018  
Water Soluble Oil on Canvas  
6 x 108 inches