

Olivia Hill

**Terraform**

February 24 - April 13, 2024

Opening reception Saturday, February 24 6-9pm

Presented in tandem with a group exhibition, *I Call it Home, My Hell*.

Bel Ami presents Olivia Hill's second solo show with the gallery, *Terraform*. "Terraform" or "earth-shaping" is the hypothetical process of deliberately modifying the atmosphere, temperature, surface topography or ecology of a planet, moon, or other body to be similar to the environment of Earth. Olivia Hill's alchemical painting process engages science and playful speculation to explore our planet's terrain and the outer limits, while capturing the tendency of humans to inscribe their initials on every surface, and leave no stone unturned.

From Olivia Hill:

In these paintings on canvas, I expand on my exploration of landscape, aiming to point out the intricate interplay between ourselves and our surroundings. The term "terraform" offers a framework for contemplating humanity's eternal gaze towards the heavens and distant planets in search of solutions to our earthly dilemmas while also referencing the use of the Southern California landscape as a proxy for other worlds in the genre of Science Fiction in film and television.

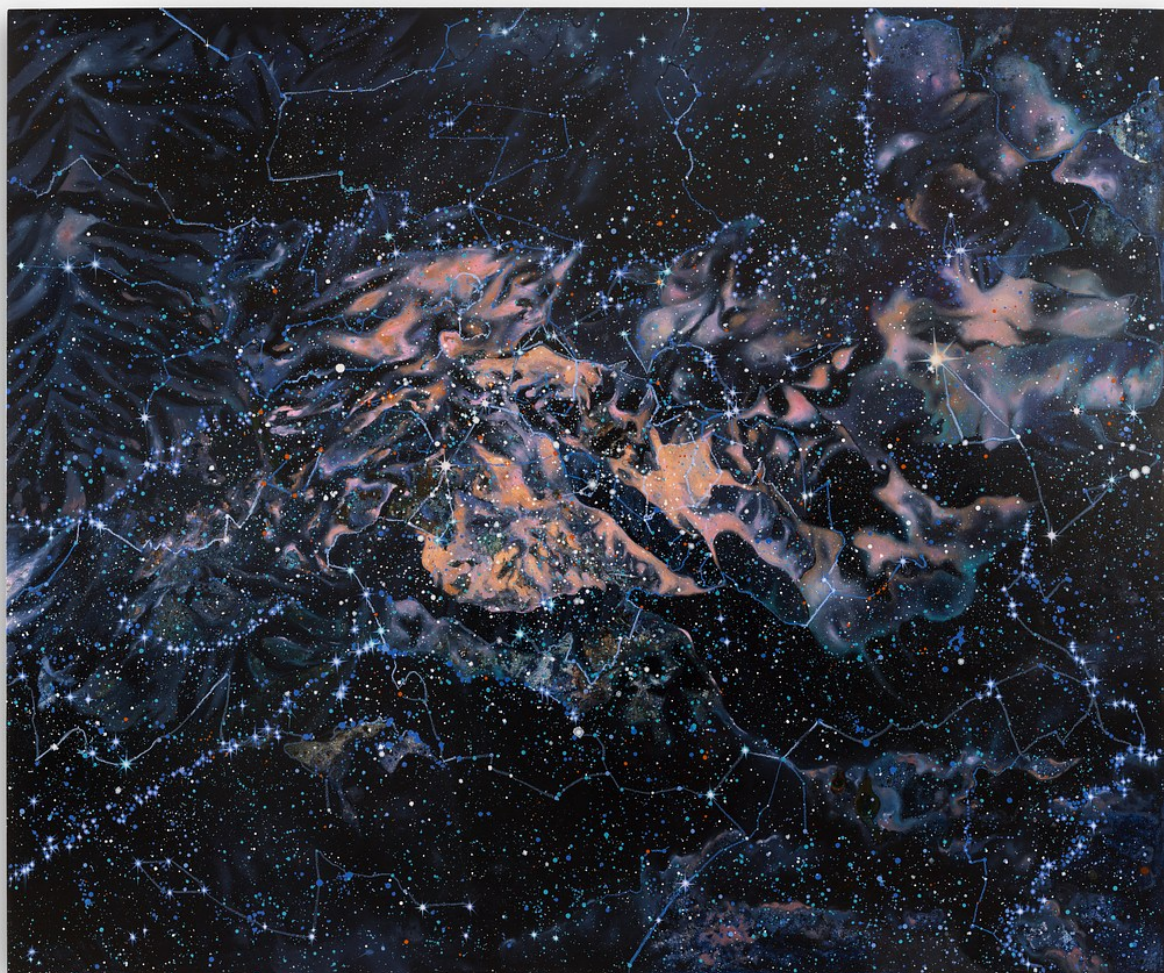
I use numerous painting techniques that both mimic and depict the geology and chemistry that makes up our habitat. I often pour and drip paint and use a splattering application creating a grainy texture that resonates with the particulate essence intrinsic to all elements. At times I use the familiar perspective of a human gazing down from atop a mountain, but more often I evoke the somewhat dizzying, disorienting, and humbling vantage point of satellite and drone footage captured from Google Earth. I scan the earth from my computer for the biosignatures that tell a story of the human epoch.

In my paintings the human intervention in the landscape is at once disruptive and inviting. A concrete picnic table in the painting *Picnic Table in Poppy Field*, violates an untrodden swath of delicate wildflowers, but it also beckons us to sit and be comfortable—to feel that no place is off limits to people. On a macroscopic scale, the painting *Poppies From Space* recalls an aerial view of a barren desert mountain range but roads and trails etch the landscape like a child's scribble, corrupting the untouched wilderness but also orienting us and providing access. Furthermore, the play on words in the title *Poppies From Space* invites the viewer to wonder if we're seeing a poppy field from the perspective of somewhere in outer space or if the poppies harken from space like extraterrestrial interlopers.

In *Play Space*, a candy-colored inflatable slide that resembles the space shuttle Discovery is placed amidst the mountain backdrop of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in La Cañada, California. This painting, along with one called *Playing with Space*, casts a playful but skeptical light on the private space industry that seems to be as much an exertion of power as a noble pursuit of knowledge and new frontiers. In the painting *Starfield* I show an imagined slice of the cosmos that looks as if an image of deep space was mapped onto an aerial view of Earth with constellations drawn into the cosmos like a road map alluding to the reality that even the deepest depths of outer space aren't immune to the influence of anthropogenic activities.

The notion of terraforming also underscores what I love about the tactile and transformative nature of art-making itself, offering a visceral connection to the act of shaping worlds, both real and imagined.

Olivia Hill (b. 1985, Hinsdale, IL) lives and works in Los Angeles. Recent exhibitions include *About Painting III* at Rolando Anselmi Gallery, Rome (2023); *A Particular Kind of Heaven* at Parrasch Heijnen, Los Angeles, curated by Ali Dipp (2023); *Storm Before the Calm* at Praz Delavallade, Los Angeles, curated by Michael Slenske (2022); *Drift*, a solo booth of paintings presented by Bel Ami at MIART, Milan (2023); and *Strike-Slip*, Hill's first solo exhibition at Bel Ami, Los Angeles (2022). Hill is a 2023 Foundwork Prize finalist. She received her MFA from the University of California, Riverside in 2019 and her BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2006.



Olivia Hill

*Star Field*, 2024

Oil and acrylic on canvas

60 x 72 in (152.4 x 182.9 cm)





Olivia Hill  
*Star Field*, 2024





Olivia Hill  
*Star Field*, 2024





Olivia Hill

*Poppies From Space 33°47'03.9N 117°25'17.5W*, 2024

Oil on canvas

60 x 72 in (152.4 x 182.9 cm)





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*Poppies From Space 33°47'03.9N 117°25'17.5W, 2024*





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*Poppies From Space* 33°47'03.9N 117°25'17.5W, 2024





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*Poppies From Space* 33°47'03.9N 117°25'17.5W, 2024





Olivia Hill

*Playing With Space 34°45'48.6N 120°37'22.1W*, 2024

Oil and acrylic on canvas

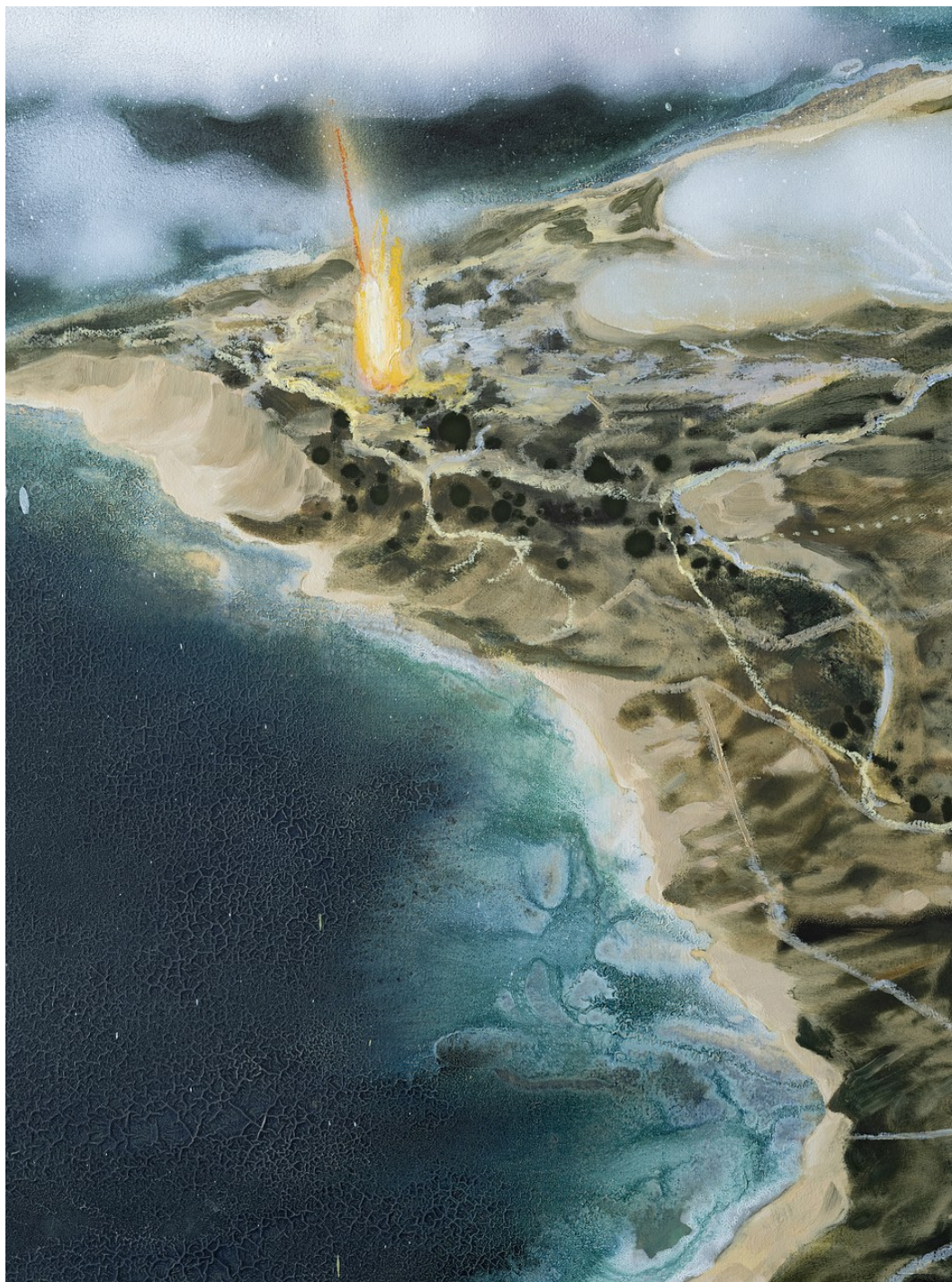
60 x 48 in (152.4 x 121.9 cm)





Olivia Hill  
*Playing With Space 34°45'48.6N 120°37'22.1W, 2024*

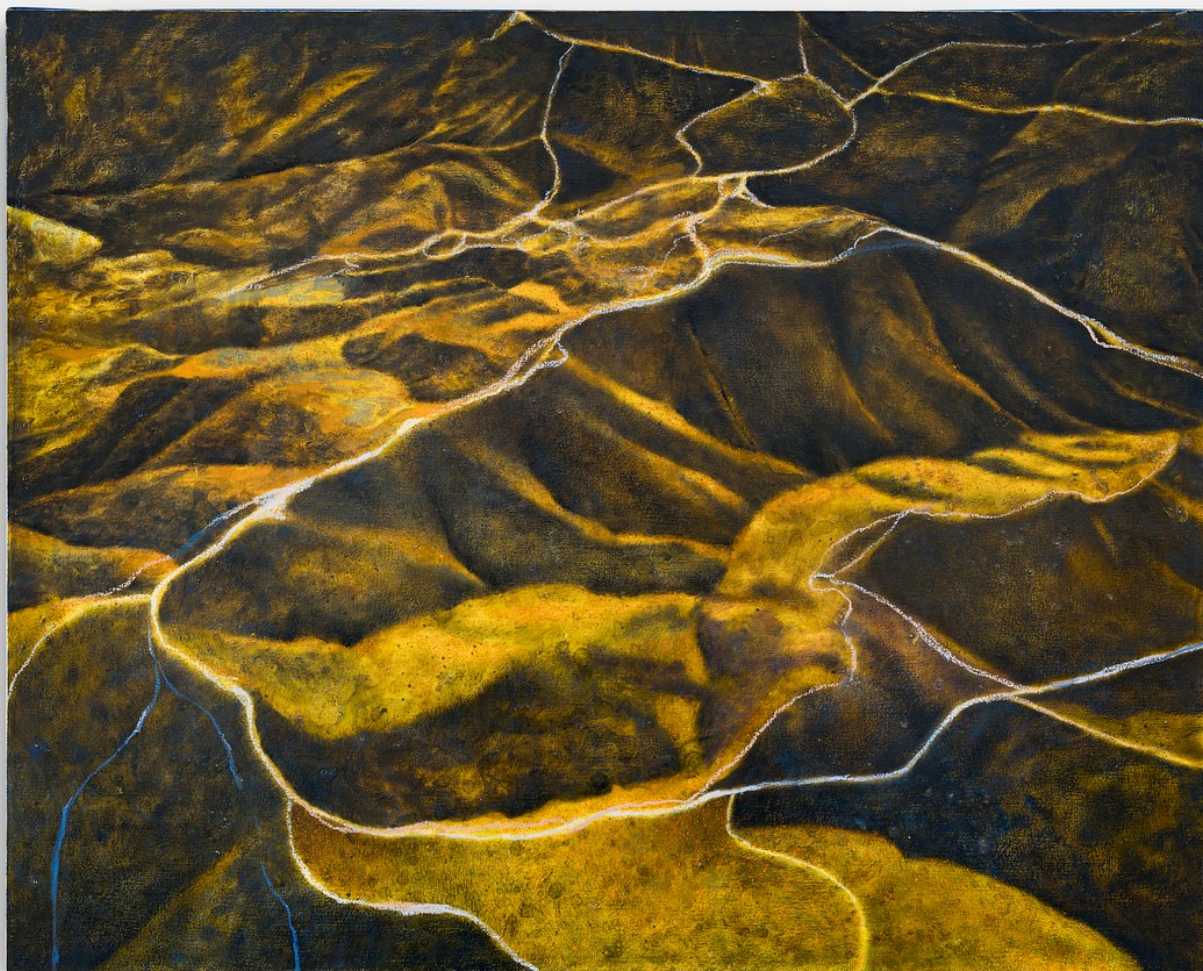




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*Playing With Space 34°45'48.6N 120°37'22.1W, 2024*





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*Hiking Trails in Walker Canyon 33°46'26.4N 117°25'11.6W, 2024*

Oil and acrylic on canvas

24 x 30 in (61 x 76.2 cm)





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*Hiking Trails in Walker Canyon 33°46'26.4N 117°25'11.6W, 2024*





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*Hiking Trails in Walker Canyon 33°46'26.4N 117°25'11.6W, 2024*





Olivia Hill

*Play Space*, 2024

Oil and acrylic on canvas

48 x 36 in (121.9 x 91.4 cm)





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*Play Space*, 2024





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*Play Space*, 2024





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*Play Space*, 2024





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*Stone Formation #1*, 2024

Oil and acrylic on canvas

18 x 24 in (45.7 x 61 cm)





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*Stone Formation #1, 2024*





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*Stone Formation #1, 2024*





Olivia Hill  
*Stone Formation #2*, 2024  
Oil and acrylic on canvas  
18 x 24 in (45.7 x 61 cm)





Olivia Hill  
*Stone Formation #2, 2024*





Olivia Hill  
*Stone Formation #2, 2024*





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*Dirt Bike Trails in Walker Canyon #1* 33°47'02.3N 117°25'43.4W, 2024

Oil and acrylic on canvas

24 x 30 in (61 x 76.2 cm)





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*Dirt Bike Trails in Walker Canyon #1* 33°47'02.3N 117°25'43.4W, 2024





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*Dirt Bike Trails in Walker Canyon #1 33°47'02.3N 117°25'43.4W, 2024*





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*Dirt Bike Trails in Walker Canyon #2* 33°47'02.3N 117°25'43.4W 24"x30", 2024

Oil and acrylic on canvas

24 x 30 in (61 x 76.2 cm)





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*Dirt Bike Trails in Walker Canyon #2* 33°47'02.3N 117°25'43.4W 24"x30", 2024





Olivia Hill

*Dirt Bike Trails in Walker Canyon #2* 33°47'02.3N 117°25'43.4W 24"x30", 2024





Olivia Hill  
*Sprinkler*, 2024  
Oil on canvas  
48 x 36 in (121.9 x 91.4 cm)





Olivia Hill  
*Sprinkler, 2024*





Olivia Hill  
*Sprinkler*, 2024





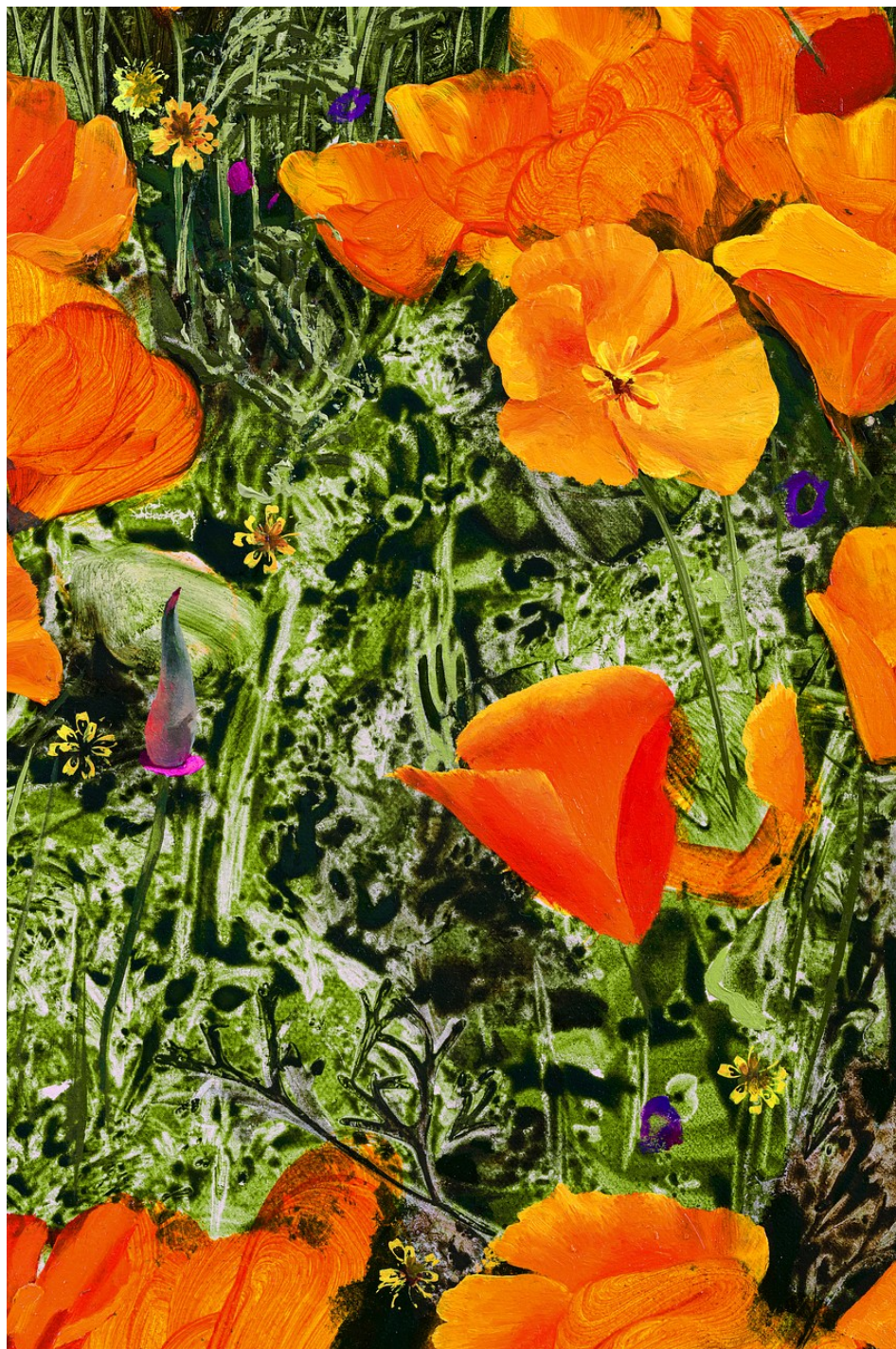
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*Picnic Table in Poppy Field*, 2024

Oil on canvas

60 x 48 in (152.4 x 121.9 cm)

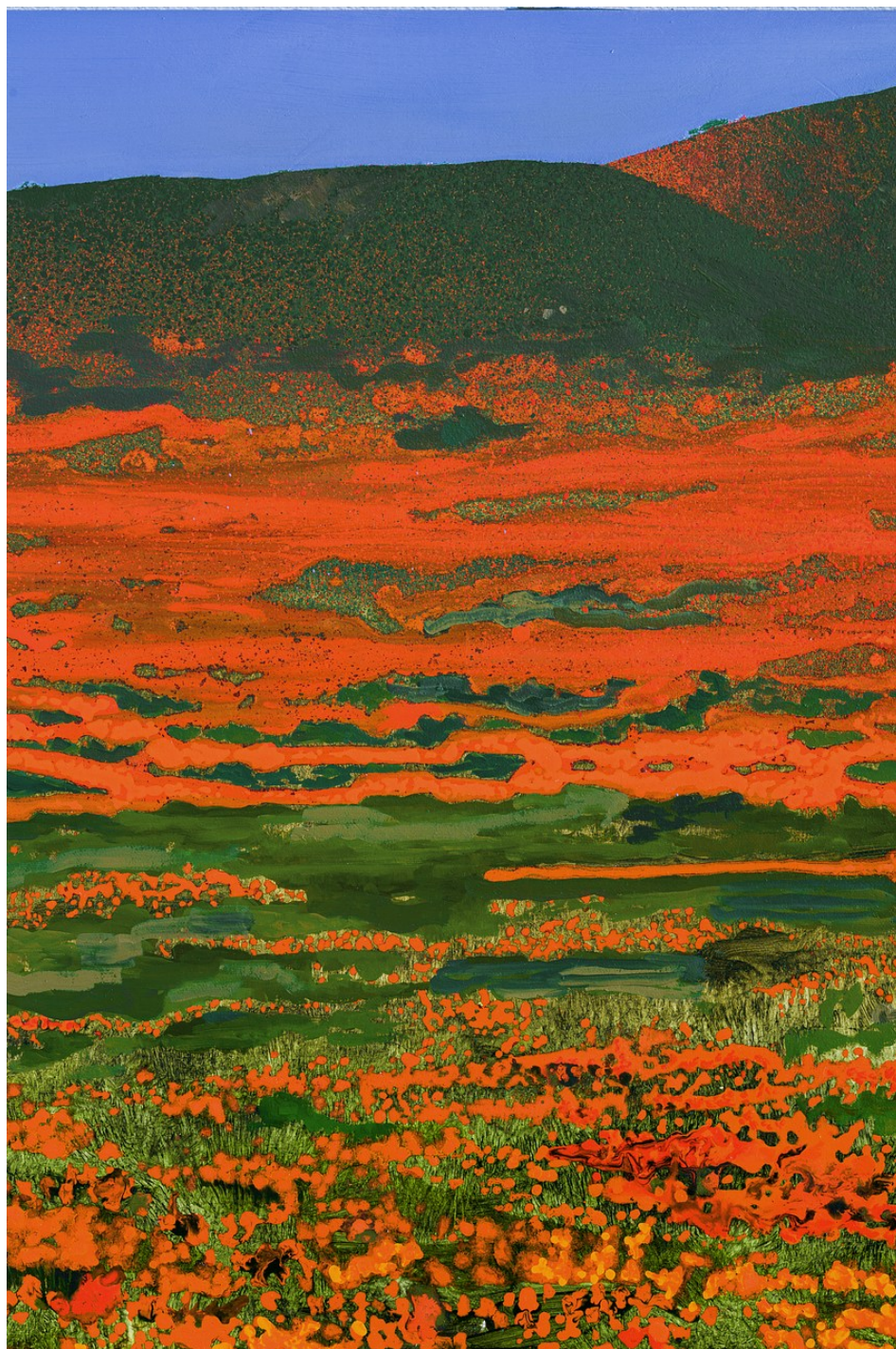




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*Picnic Table in Poppy Field, 2024*





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*Picnic Table in Poppy Field, 2024*





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*Picnic Table in Poppy Field, 2024*





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*Picnic Table in Poppy Field, 2024*





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*Picnic Table in Poppy Field, 2024*