

South Parade

Kin Ting Li

Pockets of Want and Need

21 November 2024–11 January 2025

South Parade

South Parade is pleased to present *Pockets of Want and Need*, Hong Kong born, London-based artist Kin Ting Li's second solo exhibition at the gallery.

Kin Ting Li's paintings traverse fiction and reality. Li floods space with a distinctive palette of chilling and otherworldly tones – charcoals, glowing silvers and pale pinks, petrol blues, rusted reds and burgundy, to greenish ochre swimming on the surface, as though alginate matter from planetary pools. Across his evolving practice, the gestural and more abstract shapes convey futuristic organic and figurative structures; micro-scale workings internal to the human body, intricate mycelial networks, or astronomical happenings beyond our universe. Moving from the vantage point of a being's entirety to the cellular focus of one isolated stem.

Science fiction in his practice acts as a foundation for reasoning, its nature enabling different logics to coexist and challenge one another. Each of Li's paintings – gradually growing bigger in their scale – shift and flow through expressive mark-making, making exact subject matter and location uncertain, and destabilising clear interpretation. Viewers draw close to the works, lose themselves in these changeable landscapes, seeking out a narrative of their own.

During the process of painting up densely layered surfaces - some stretching with foam-coat and wood extensions beyond the vignette's frame - working against friction brings unity to the painted subject and nature of the material. Canvases are worked on and stripped back continuously until Li feels ready to relinquish an enlivened form, revealing new insights via a deeper delve into new worlds/minds/bodies/feeling.

Imperfect textures across canvases could be read as skin, or spectral remains of meteor crust. The materiality of paint is crucial to his practice, each surface containing considered textural qualities. Paintings in fact are framed as objects themselves; 'alien' body parts offering closeups both muscular and skin-like – flesh giving beneath the eye's pointed gaze – or rigid and cellulose, augmented with qualities either celestial or more akin to body horror, grotesque notations of a mutated body. Characteristics that speak to a world desiring constant bodily enhancements, to one filled with aches and trauma. A world constantly pushing itself to evolve, healing over and over to become almost unrecognisable from its tender beginnings.

Across Li's proposed future-scape, some manipulated bionic states encompass all living forms and mutate to combine them, one work offering a suspended human digestive system that transfigures before the viewer into a chrysalis, one hazy cocoon waiting to birth a fleshy lepidopteran. Nearby, a cold bluish ear listens to the pulsing of the room. Upon a second gaze, the ear could be the wing of an archangel, its twisted tendons on show. From the centre of the ear, strands emerge, ending in a candelabra of flora – interpreted later as a fanned weathervane to navigate watery depths beyond. All these objects appear across the shifting terrain to almost levitate, haloed fragments of a bigger whole. One wonders whether these entities might all be housed in what appears as a white sacred heart with a window, an architected furnace of creation, its curlicue flame rising up - be that the twisting spire of a church-come-power-station soaring into blinding cloud cover. A sense of mortality and a greater power strikes, the presence of ophanim or cyborg demiurge. One continues to decipher where the sky meets the ground in Li's work, and where the viewer themselves are position in this expanding amalgamation of form.

Through such shifting perspectives and morphing shapes, one painting could be read as earthly matter meeting the sky above – a watchful eye through the fog stalking a shadowy cityscape – another conveying a wisp of light or a passing spirit emerging as a subtly warm, comforting presence. Li employs painting as a language for mining and depicting speculative existences, in which emotions switch back and forth, between a sense of being grounded – of sitting with what we have – and elevation, of being transported beyond what we know, beyond our current realm. Between confusion and reassurance, between murk and hopeful fulfilment.

Text by Lucy Rose Cunningham

South Parade

Kin Ting Li (b.1991, Hong Kong) lives and works in London. Li gained Bachelor of Science (Honour) in Applied Physics from City University of Hong Kong in 2013 and BA in Fine Arts from The Slade School of Fine Art in 2019.

Recent solo exhibitions include South Parade (London, 2021). Recent group exhibitions include Nova Contemporary (Bangkok, 2024), Podium Gallery (Hong Kong, 2024), South Parade x Sadie Coles HQ (London, 2022), Super Dakota (Brussels, 2022), The Artist Room (London, 2022), Pradiauto (Madrid, 2022) and VO Curations (London, 2020). Li's work can be found in the permanent collection of the X Museum in Beijing.



Installation View: Kin Ting Li, *Pockets of Want and Need*, 2024. South Parade, London, UK







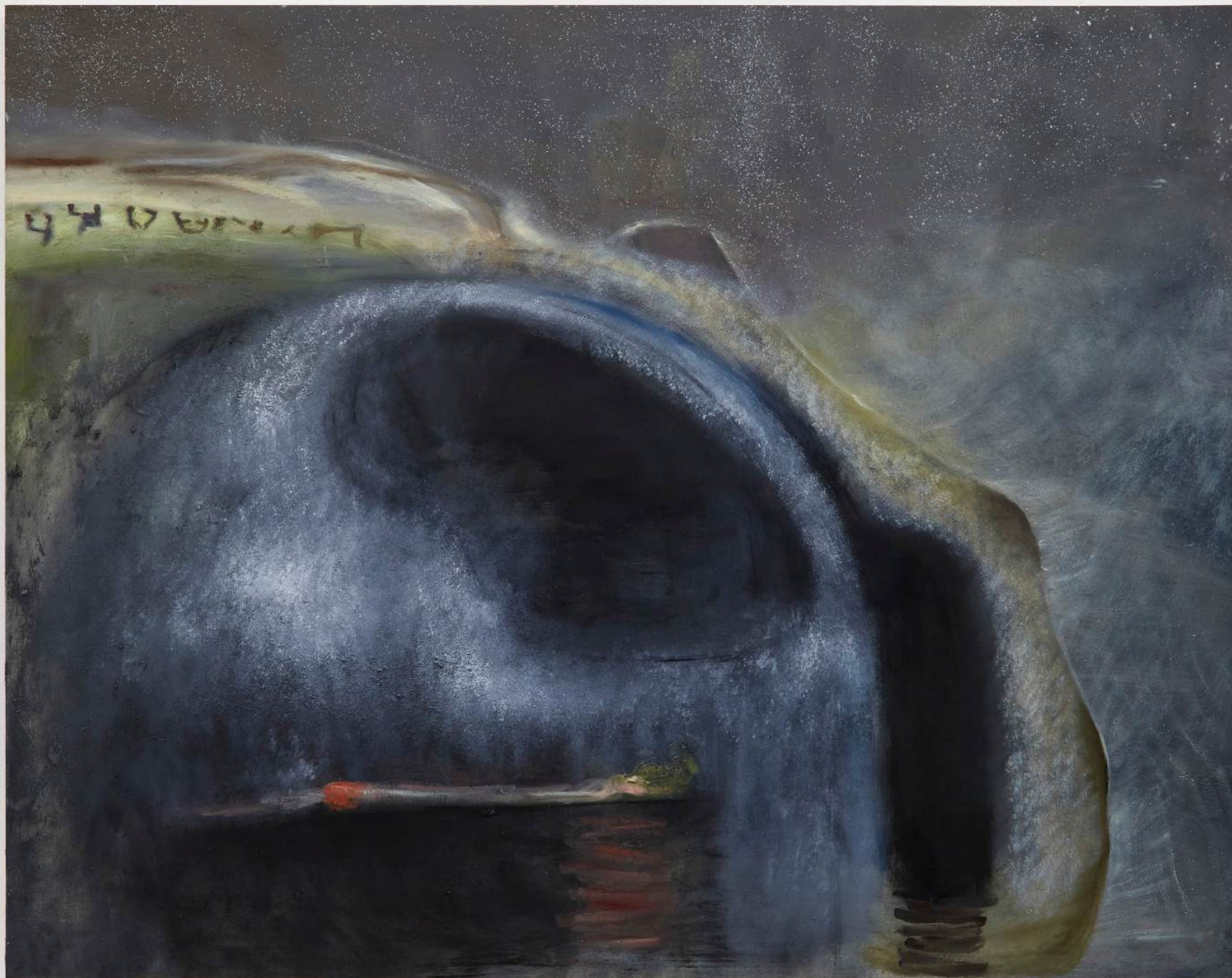




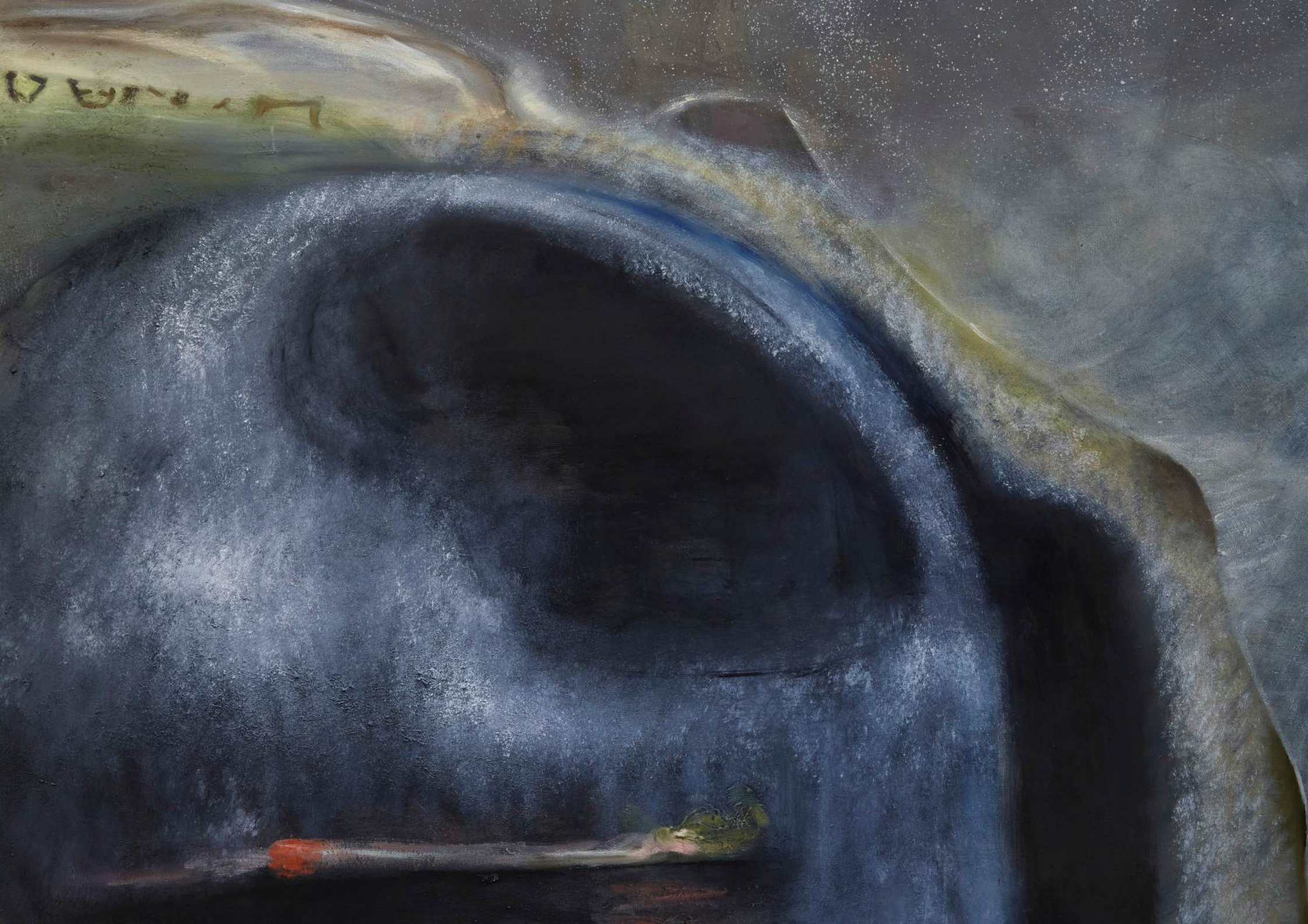


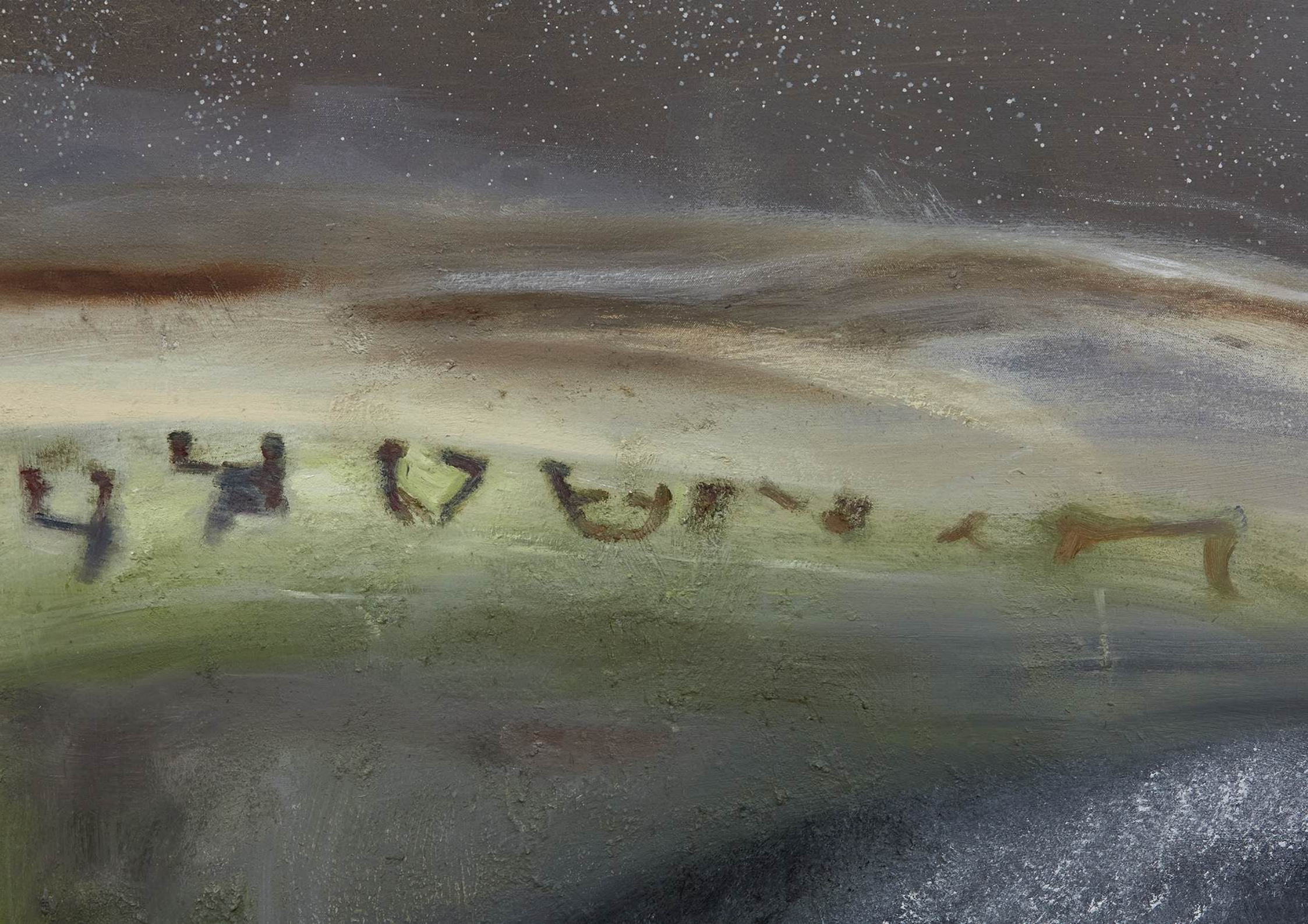






Kin Ting Li, *Safe Space*, 2024. Oil and mixed media on canvas, 150.5 x 190.5 cm













Kin Ting Li, *Insinuation*, 2022–2024. Oil and mixed media on canvas, 87 x 122 cm







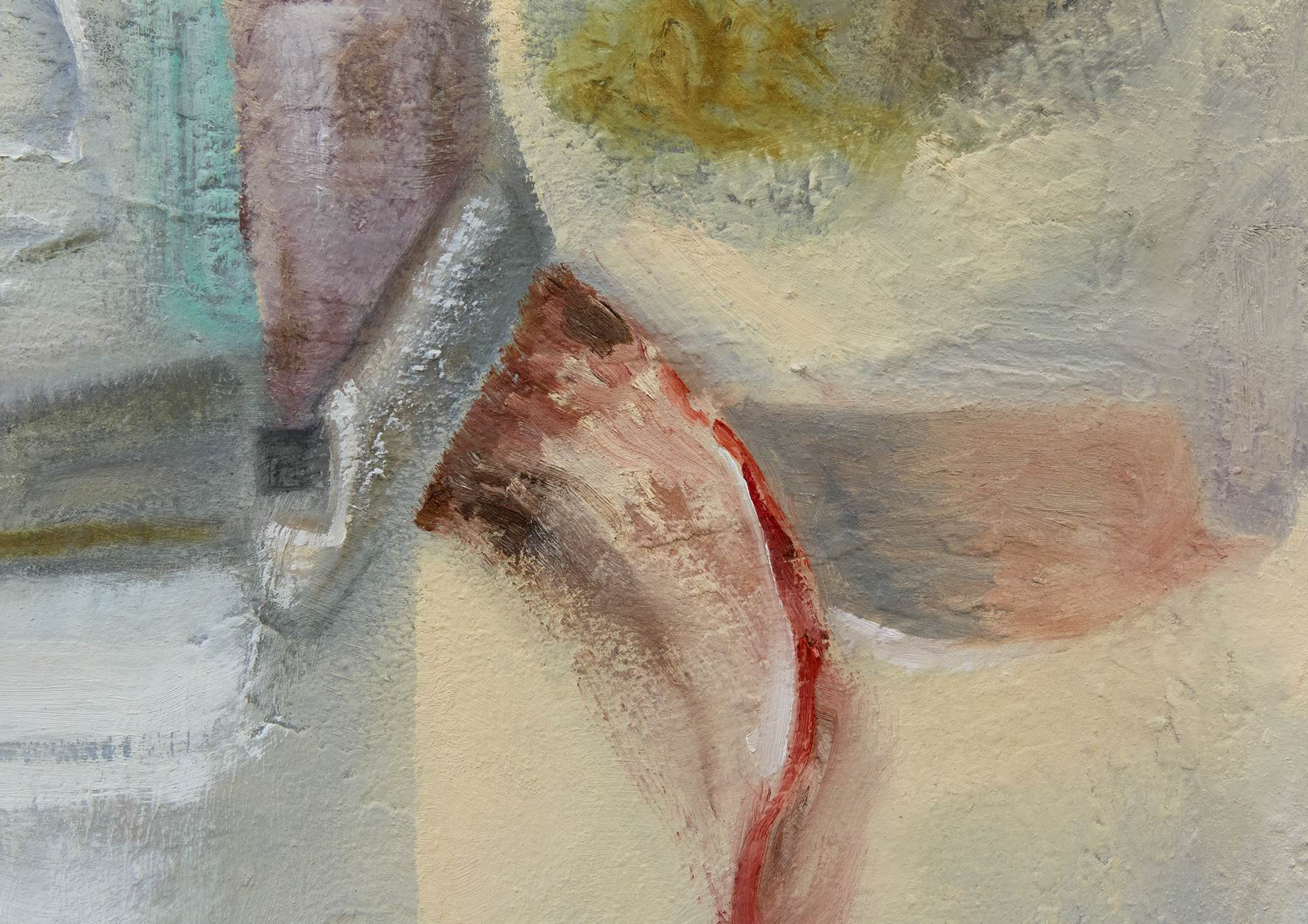






Kin Ting Li, *Fabric of Time*, 2024. Oil and mixed media on canvas, 91.5 x 101.5 cm

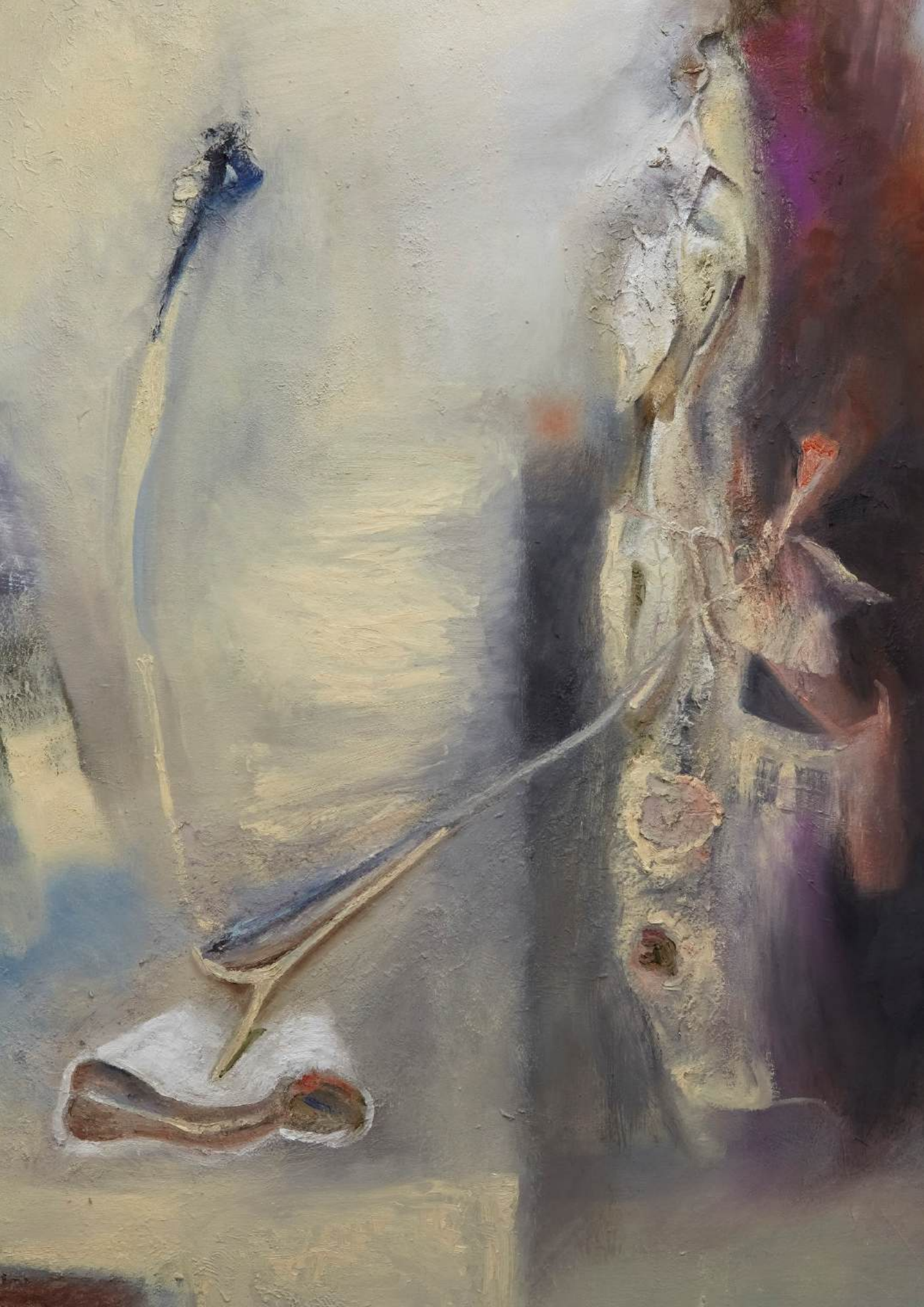


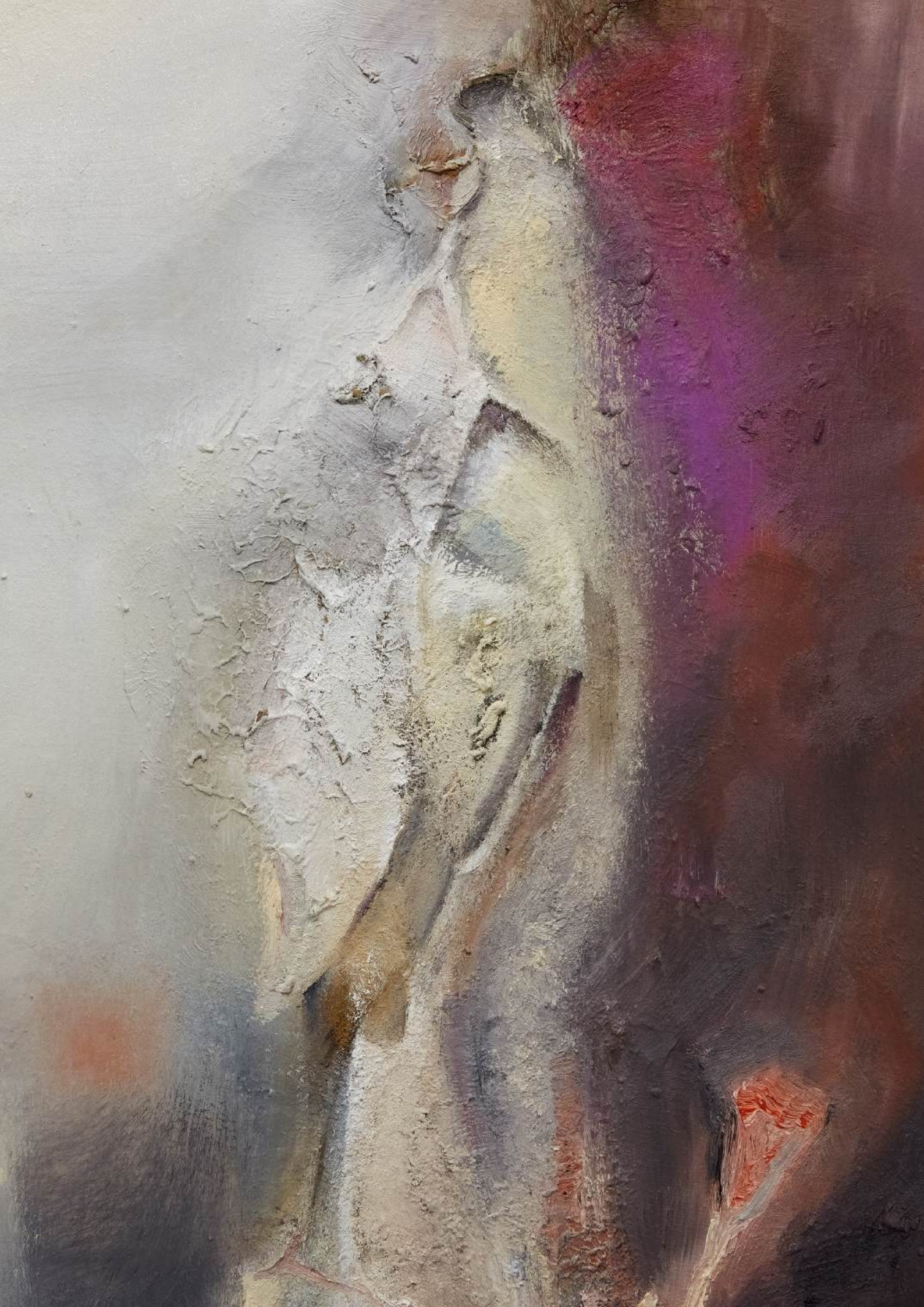






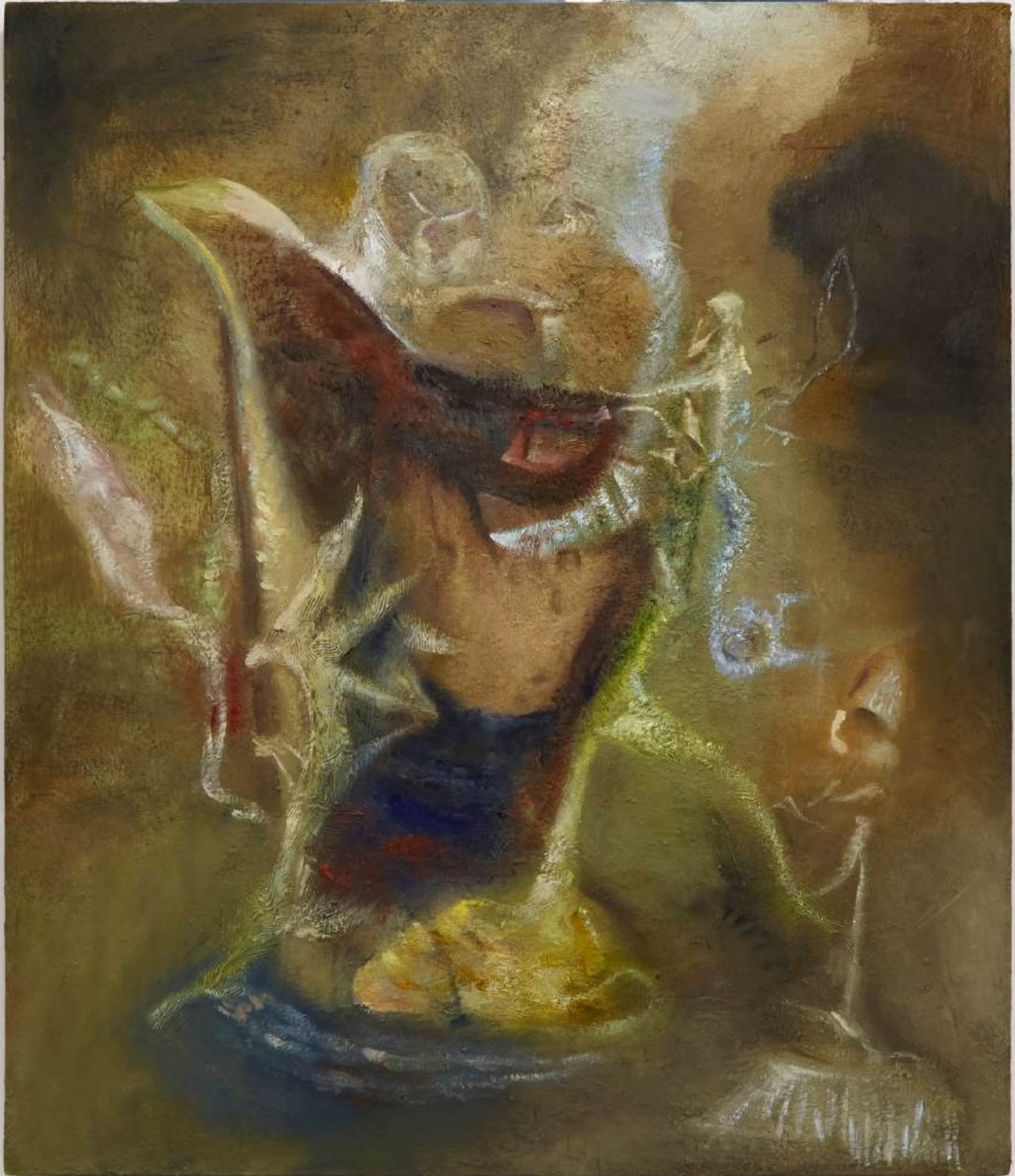
Kin Ting Li, *Being*, 2024. Oil on canvas, 163 x 125 cm



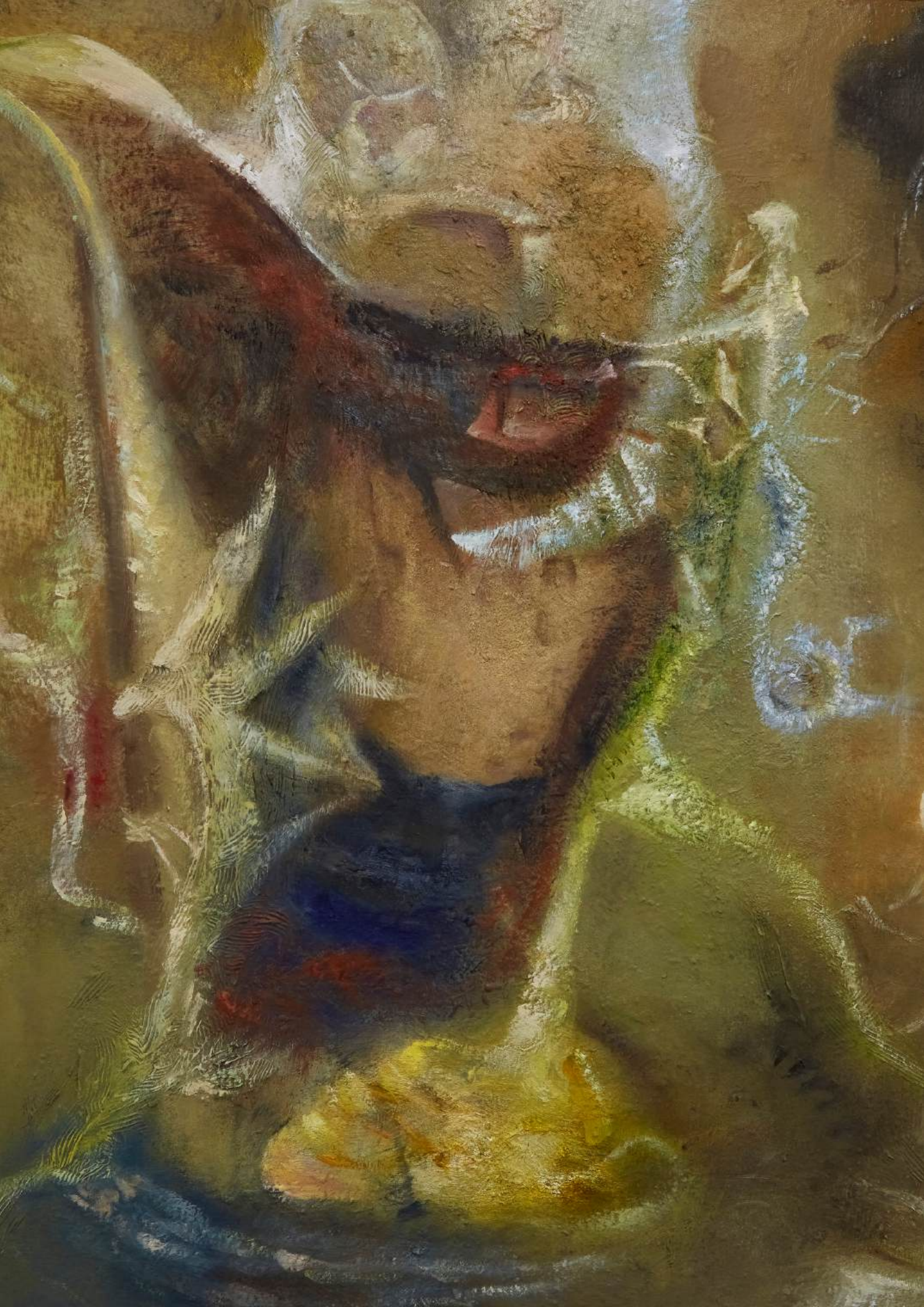




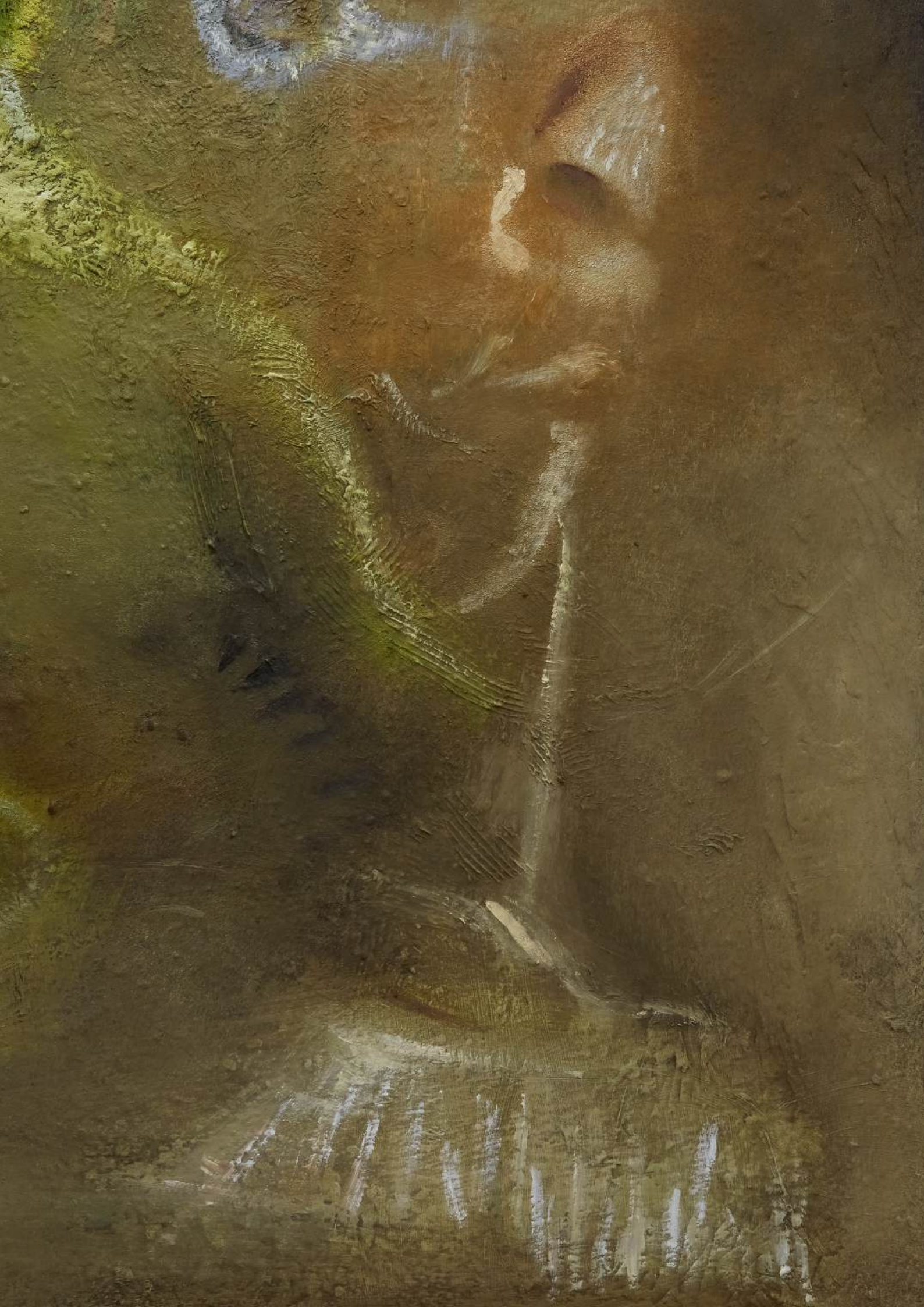




Kin Ting Li, *Attachments*, 2022–2024. Oil and mixed media on canvas, 141 x 120 cm









Kin Ting Li, *Pockets of Want and Need*, 2024. Oil and mixed media on canvas, 76.5 x 82 cm













Kin Ting Li, *Floaters*, 2024. Oil and mixed media on canvas, 64 x 61 cm









Kin Ting Li, *Reinvigoration*, 2024. Oil and mixed media on canvas, 37 x 35 cm





Zoë Carlon, *Sweet Peas*, 2024. Oil on Aluminium, 34 x 49 cm



