



LYNN PAROTTI

INHERIT THE EARTH

Catalogue texts by

Amanda Coulson
Natalie Willis
Tatiana Flores
Allison Thompson

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The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas (NAGB)

This exhibition was scheduled for 2020 however due to COVID-19 it was postponed to 2021. Thus, all information in these essays reflect data of 2020.

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Director's Forward

Amanda Coulson

Much debate has been made over the last decade—and rightly so—as to why almost every Bahamian schoolchild can trot out a list of all-male Bahamian “Master Artists” but is hard pressed to name a single woman that would qualify as such.

Partially, this situation came about due to a well-known series of documentaries, by American filmmakers Karen Arthur and Tom Neuwirth, which play regularly on ZNS public television at home. These include biographical films on Brent Malone (2010), Amos Ferguson (2011), and Jackson Burnside (2012), as well as a larger look at *Artists of The Bahamas* (2008), which featured all the aforementioned artists, plus John Beadle, Stan Burnside, John Cox, Kendal Hanna, Eddie Minnis, Antonius Roberts, Dave Smith and Max Taylor. These films caught the attention of curators in the States, and in October 2011, shortly before my tenure at the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas (NAGB), an exhibition was held at the Waterloo Center for the Arts in Iowa (WCA), entitled *Master Artists of The Bahamas*, curated by Kent Shankle, featuring these eleven male artists, who were ostensibly representing the best of Bahamian art.

In 2012, this event elicited much discussion in the local art scene about the lack of recognition for female artists in general, within the film series and in that particular exhibition, which went on a short US tour before returning to The Bahamas to be hosted at the NAGB for its final stop.

The “conventional wisdom” seems to have been that in the 1950s, ‘60s and ‘70s there were no “serious” women artists though it is far more likely that women artists existed but remained in the shadows, bound to home life or retained in secondary roles as helpmeets, from where they were unable to exhibit their talents and become recognised. They likely escaped the eye of fledging collectors and writers and are therefore lost to history or remain as hearsay and anecdotes. This narrative, however, is really only potentially the case for a specific, older generation of artists and where it appears the filmmakers may have blundered was in including younger artists to the roster—namely Beadle and Cox—from whose generation there were certainly extremely talented female artists, including Lynn Parotti.

LYNN PAROTTI

While Beadle and Cox were attending Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) in the early '90s to secure their Bachelors' Degrees in painting and illustration respectively, Parotti left Nassau for New York, thanks to a scholarship from the Lyford Cay Foundation and Exxon Oil, to attend the State University of New York at Purchase where she earned a Bachelors in Painting. While Beadle and Cox secured their MFAs (at Tyler School of Art and RISD '95, respectively), Parotti completed hers, in Painting and Printmaking, at Virginia Commonwealth University in 1993, and as Beadle attended a residency in Rome, Parotti was awarded a scholarship at the prestigious Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine and completed her Masters of Fine Arts Degree in Painting and Printmaking at Virginia Commonwealth University in 1993.

From 1993-98, Parotti was largely exhibiting in her new home in the UK, while her contemporaries like Beadle and Cox returned home where they were both extremely active in the local art scene, which is, perhaps, what fixed them in the local view of the Bahamian art scene. Parotti did exhibit, however, in the Spring Open at Lyford Cay Gallery in both 1999 and 2000 and in 2002 secured a solo exhibition "Parotti Views" at the prestigious Central Bank Art Gallery which, until the NAGB opened in 2003, was the lead exhibition space for serious artists in The Bahamas. In 2008, she participated in the Fourth National Exhibition at the NAGB and her exhibited work, a series of small oil paintings illustrating her struggle with IVF treatment, entitled the "Blastocyst Ball Series," were purchased for the National Collection. In 2010, she was selected for the Fifth National Exhibition, "What is Your Carbon Footprint?," by an international jury consisting of artists Janine Antoni and Alfredo Jaar, as well as Alessio Antonioli (Director of Gasworks and Triangle Arts Trust, London), among others.

Indeed, when I asked fellow artist and contemporary John Beadle to name a woman from his own generation that could wear the "master artist" moniker, without a moment's hesitation he cited Parotti, who has long been a staple on the Bahamian art scene, among many other talented women. She was also, alongside Beadle and three other male artists—Blue Curry, Lavar Munroe and Heino Schmid—the sole female artist representing The Bahamas at the exhibition, *The Space Between Want: Liverpool Biennial*, (Theme: City States

Title: *Three Moments*), presented during the 2010 Liverpool Biennial. The exhibition examined the connections between Liverpool and the Caribbean, and was organised by a group of regional curators, including Alissandra Cummins (Barbados), Dominique Brebion (Martinique), Allison Thompson (Barbados) and then-NAGB interim Director, David Bailey, with the Bahamian contingent curated by local artist and curator, Holly Parotti.

Over the last decade, the NAGB has done much to correct the invisibility of women artists and Parotti's current show is only one of a series of exhibitions—group and solo—which brought the complexity of our artistic scene to the forefront. In November 2012, in the National Exhibition "NE6: Kingdom Come" (the "NE" is a biannual group show reflecting the "state of the art" in The Bahamas) which was curated by John Cox, we addressed the situation and it was the first NE to have 50/50 gender representation. Later, when the "Master Artists" show returned in April 2013, a pendant show entitled "SingleSex" was organized to run concurrently and highlighted the women working successfully in the arts. While "Master Artists" showcased eleven artists, "SingleSex" included more than twenty.

Parotti's work is often meaty oil painting, extremely gestural with layers of impasto and a texture which is as enticing as a thick layer of luscious cake icing; you are compelled to draw your fingers through and revel in its succulence. Her colours are saturated and she often uses them to depict natural flora and fauna in both her native Bahamas and her adopted home of the UK, where she lives close to Kew Gardens. Surrounded by such natural beauty, it is not uncommon for observers to linger on the surface of her work—literally and metaphorically—and to see merely her observation and brilliant execution of nature's drama. The work is, however, deeper, both in technique and meaning—with layers of paint and glaze and of hidden references to social or natural ills.

Many of her painting cycles refer to environmental or societal crises as can be inferred from the titles of each body of work: "2 Degrees C," "Hotspot," "Thirst," "Tar Baby," and "The Space Between Want" all refer to issues such as warming oceans resulting in extinct species and rising tides, the price of clean drinking water globally, the destructive processes of industrial excavation

whether for oil or salt, immigration, and how all of these affect nature and its organisms, both macro and micro.

Her work is often heavily research-based, drawing on data that reflects the plight of humanity, the animal kingdom and our planet and, while she is known largely as an oil painter on canvas, she also experiments with other media in these endeavours, finding that which suits her topic of research. The “Slave House” series, for example, produced and exhibited at the NE8 in 2016, was based on photographs Parotti took, while visiting a former plantation house on the island of Exuma, that documented the ruined and rotting forms of abandoned slave quarters. The lush images used a double negative transfer to blend the desolate ruins of the homes of the formerly enslaved with a baroque and elegant stately home. The latter is still maintained in all its extravagance by the UK’s National Trust, and it belongs to the Rothschild family, who loaned the British Government the 20 million pounds necessary to secure the freedom of the enslaved in 1833. This series speaks to what the former coloniser still values, or cares to remember, questioning why these slave quarters are not also lovingly maintained to tell the story of how most of the stately homes in Britain were financed and maintained. “Inheritance” continued this research in a series of twelve aluminium panels, upon which the elegant handwriting from various ledgers, which accorded a monetary value to living beings, was etched by the artist. It should be noted while John Austin, received £20,511 for his 415 slaves (a sum worth nearly £17 million today), the enslaved were not even given their “40 acres and a mule” to begin a new life, with many ending up as sharecroppers for former masters.

While she is, therefore, comfortable using other media to explore the many uncomfortable themes facing humanity today, for “Inherit the Earth”, the solo exhibition we are now opening at the NAGB, Parotti has returned to her signature medium of oil painting. With a series of 32 stunning canvases she delves back into her great passion: that state of the planet and the detrimental effects of humans upon it, asking us, the viewer, what will be left? Titles such as *Memento Mori*, *Consumption*, and *Bleaching*, indicate how, despite the gorgeousness of each work, she is still casting an extremely critical eye on how mankind is using and abusing the waters that sustain life on our planet.



Slave House XXVII, Breakfast Room with Sèvres Formal Service
2016
archival pigment print
17x22 inches



Consumption
2019
oil on linen
22x31 inches

For this show we thank Natalie Willis, the NAGB's Associate Curator, for her eye, curation and essay; the scholars and curators, Tatiana Flores and Allison Thompson, for providing insightful essays to the catalogue and to the whole NAGB #teamninja (i.e. the staff members), both the highly visible and the less visible (see listing for all team members), all of whose work is essential and who always come together in the most incredible way to pull off each exhibition. We also thank the NAGB Board and the Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture, Lanisha Rolle, the only woman minister currently serving our Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

While the NAGB strives to correct the imbalances of yesteryear by ensuring that women artists are always supported and celebrated on our platform together with their male counterparts, we may still have some work ahead of us to see that such balance is brought to leadership, governments and the natural world, ensuring a healthy and stable future for The Bahamas and the world.

Inherit The Earth

Natalie Willis

"Our task is to make trouble, to stir up potent response to devastating events, as well as to settle troubled waters and rebuild quiet places."

- Donna J. Haraway (2016, p. 1)

Over her decades-long career, Lynn Parotti has depicted the increasingly precarious and troubled ecologies we live in, realities that we are no stranger to in The Bahamas. The vibrant, immersive environments are depicted in brutal honesty, with an alluring roster of blues, sometimes obscured by luminous, startling reds and yellows that call to mind industrial contaminants. Parotti's work immerses us in the phenomenology of the environment rather than just the representation of it. In this way, the work renders the sentience of the natural world as we know it, deepening our understanding of environmental degradation. We are but children inheriting the Anthropocene, the geological epoch defined by irreversible human impact on the earth. With this knowledge, Parotti's work seems to say, it is on us to do the work our forebears have not, and abate, as much as we can, the oncoming climate disaster.

The aesthetic of Parotti's oeuvre resists time: as primordial as the natural world and as old as time itself, it also depicts our present struggles and crises to come. Parotti's work reflects on the recent regressions in environmental policy around the world, especially in the US where President Trump had worked assiduously to reverse over a hundred core protective environmental policies (Popovich, Albeck-Ripka, & Pierre-Louis, 2021). Though the Biden/Harris administration promises and projects greater environmental care by re-joining the Paris Agreement for example, Parotti's works, with their immersive, epic imagery remind us of the grandeur of the natural world and global scale of the challenge facing us. The work overwhelms the viewer in the same way that the fallout of environmental neglect overwhelms history and logical recourse; we will be suffering from the effects of this negligence for long to come. The canvases place The Bahamas and the Caribbean at the centre of the discourse, as if to say: this is what is at stake for us.

LYNN PAROTTI



And There Followed Hail And Fire Mingled With Blood
2020
oil and wax on canvas
54x91 inches

The works in *Inherit the Earth* (2021) are simultaneously a warning, an illustration, and an imagining of an increasingly frightening reality. They are all the more poignant in the context of a post-Dorian Bahamas, and the ever-increasing threat of sea level rise (Scott, 2020). Even in apocalyptic fires and floodwaters, we are all of us water, fluid, and indefinitely interconnected to each other. We are also irrevocably connected to the spaces we inhabit and abuse. Our humanity and mortality are inescapably fickle and fragile things; we all return to dust, but the glistening, insidious beacon of a melting glacier in Parotti's *Memento Mori* (2019) begs of us, "not like this."

The landscape we see burning in *And There Followed Hail And Fire Mingled With Blood* (2020) radiates with a ferocity reminiscent of the fires seen in Australia and America's West Coast. According to the Worldwide Fund for Nature (2020) billions of animals were displaced or died in the New South Wales bushfires that burned for months during 2019-2020. These fires compelled Parotti to reference a verse from The Book of Revelation 8:7 for the title of the work, aptly capturing our current dystopian reality, and the not-too-distant future that will result if human avarice and interference remain unchecked.

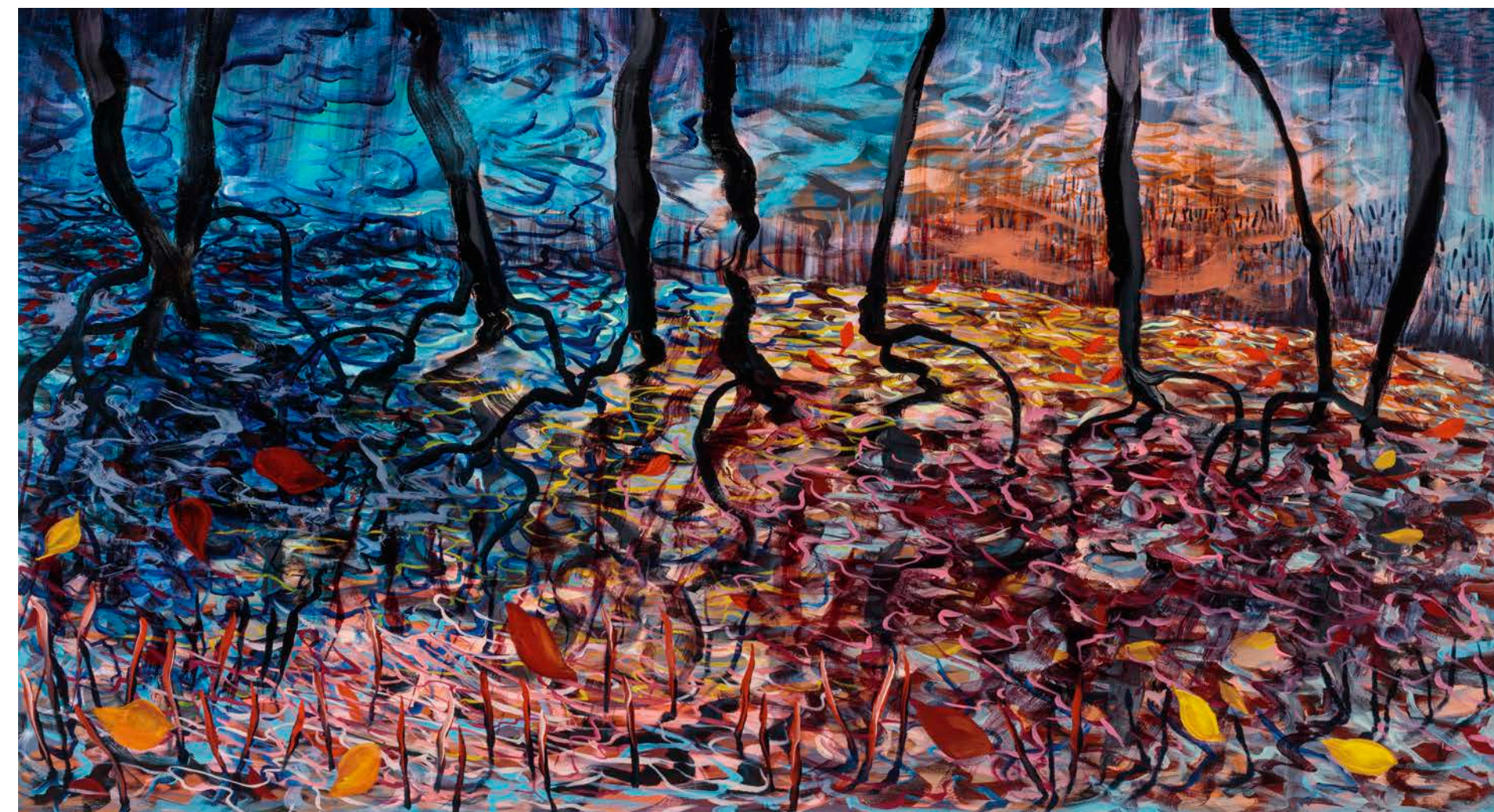
Threads of Zooxanthallae (2019) similarly evokes ongoing environmental concerns, especially for island nations like The Bahamas by capturing in stunning detail the process of coral bleaching. The colors in this piece are reminiscent of dying leaves, and are made up of many thin washes of oil paint. Parotti asks us to attend to the increasing mortality of the earth's corals and reefs due to warming seas. On the canvas, tiny perfect cadmium yellow dots exit the hard structures rising to the surface as the coral perishes. Without corals and reefs nourishing underwater ecosystems, millions of people living in the Caribbean who depend on seafood for their livelihoods will find it more and more difficult to survive-- not to mention billions of people worldwide who depend on seafood for their sustenance (Marine Stewardship Council, 2017). Countries like The Bahamas are particularly at risk given our government's heavy reliance on the tourist economy, which includes the reefs and the sea life they sustain. The status of our national delicacy the Queen Conch is already threatened and the impact of its scarcity will become increasingly apparent.

Parotti's work arrives as activism around the environmental sustainability of the country continue to intensify. For example, grassroots organizations have been rallying global entities against The Bahamian government's recent decision to allow the British-owned Bahamas Petroleum Company to do exploratory drilling within Bahamian territory (Eyewitness News, 2020). The necessity for works like Parotti's in this time is paramount. Now more than ever, we need to recognize what exactly is at stake.

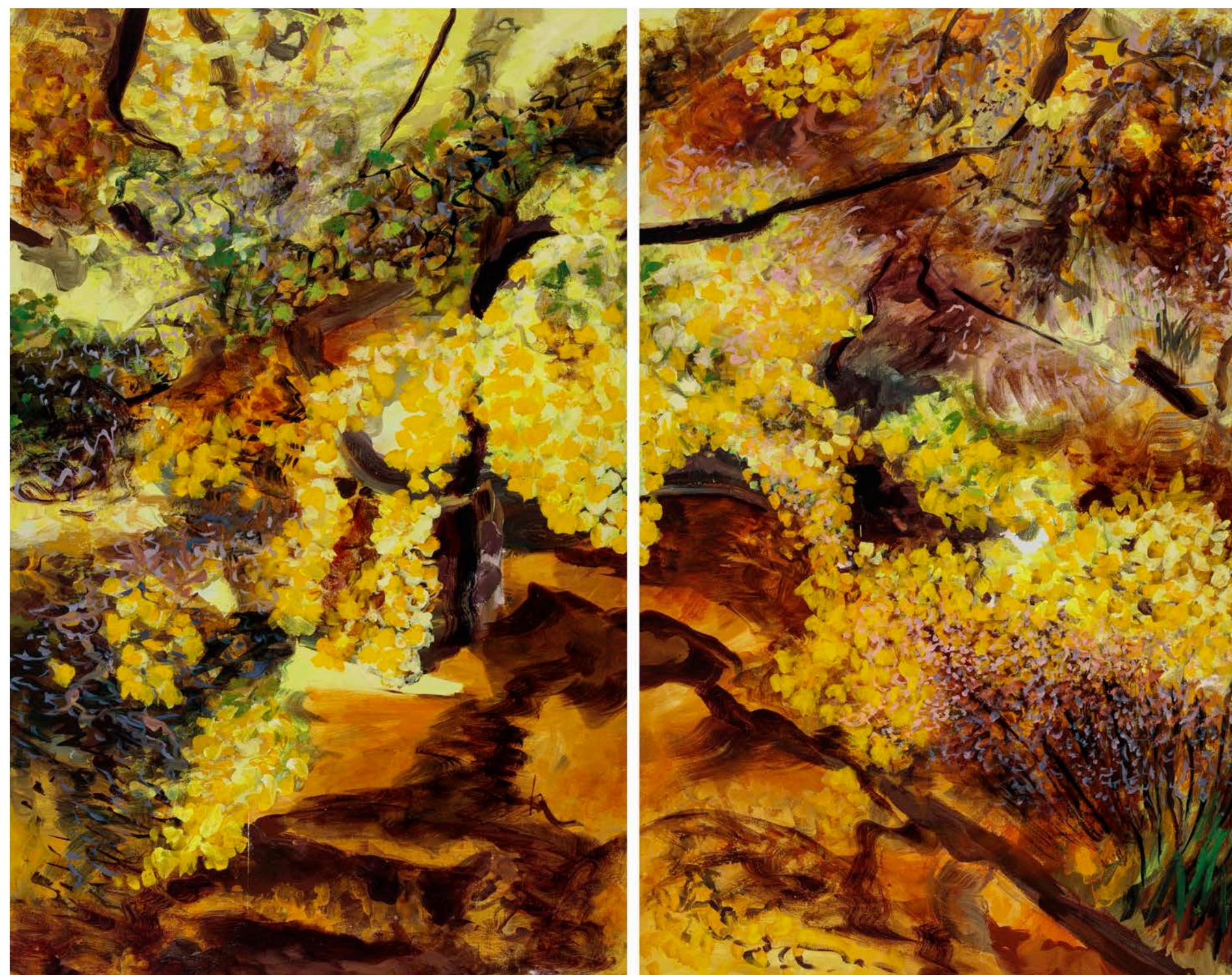
Parotti also offers a vision of hope. Her sprawling canvases *Waves Continuously Touching Forest* (2020) and *Song of Moses* (2016-2020) show us nature's resilience and power of regeneration respectively, signaling the potential of salvation. After all, the prophet Moses, led by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, parted the Red Sea so that the Israelites could escape to safety. In both oil paintings, the viewer can orient themselves using Parotti's vigorous and varied brushstrokes, settling into Caribbean mangrove swampland or Middle Eastern seabed. These pieces show Parotti's deft versatility and employment of texture while emphasizing her call to action.

One notable symbol present in two major works, *From Water We Came* (2017-2020) and *Ginkgo Tree Investment* (2017-2019) is the Ginkgo tree. Drawing on the influence of Japanese decorative art, Parotti uses the ginkgo's distinctive fan-shaped leaf to invoke its centuries-long symbolism and singular beauty to inspire in viewers a hopeful sense of the environment's longevity and profound endurance. Some of the most famous examples of their longevity are the six ginkgo trees in Hiroshima that survived the 1945 nuclear attack (Tsuchida, Hiromi & Del Tredici, 1993). Even today, the six trees remain alive, marked by commemorative plaques.

Yet, as in much of Parotti's work, there is a hidden agenda. *Ginkgo Tree Investment* (2017-2019) shares a name with a Chinese-owned investment company that invests in real estate, individual private property, and other related industries. In fact, it too somewhat ironically uses the symbolism of the ginkgo in the company's logo. Parotti's intention here is to remind us that every resource on our earth will become a commodity, including the very water on which we depend. For example, the seemingly innocent painting *Lithium*



Waves Continuously Touching Forest
2020
oil on canvas
50x91 inches



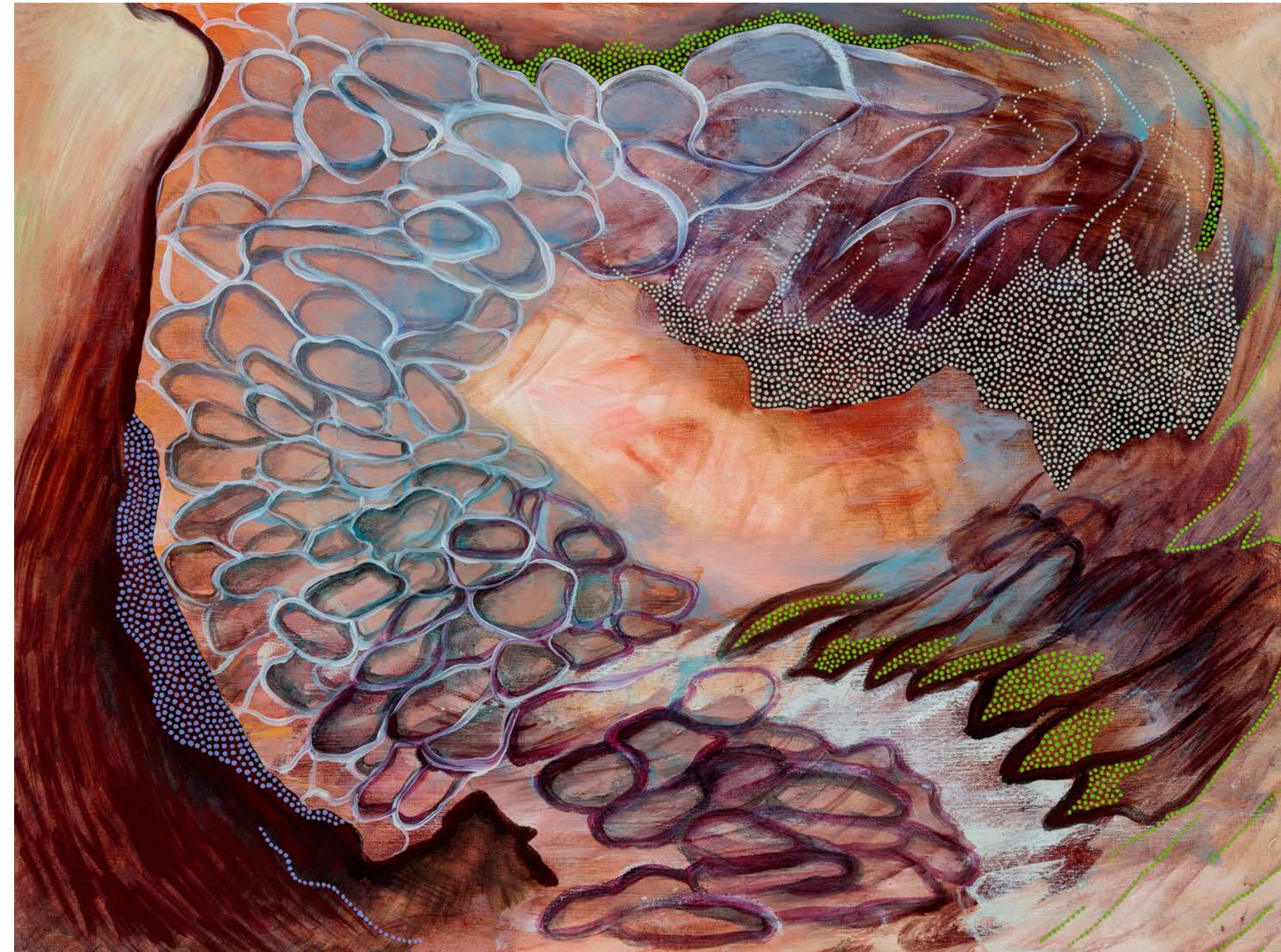
Ginkgo Tree Investment
2017-2019
oil on linen (diptych)
66x86 inches

Pool (2019) references our increasing dependence on lithium, presenting with an aerial view of what is becoming our new gold as we increasingly power up our laptops, vehicles, pace makers, and mobile phones.

Notably, Parotti's investigations into the Anthropocene give us the eerie absence of human life. With just a few exceptions, Parotti's oeuvre subtracts the human figure from the natural environment. Even when human figures appear in relationship to the natural landscape, like in *Human I-VI* (2020), *To Dust We Return* (2017-2020), and *From Water We Came* (2017-2020), they are abstracted, and barely recognizable from the natural environment. Like the ancient Ginkgo, they too are absorbed by the surroundings of air, water, dirt, seeds, foliage, and flora. The very surfaces of these works speak to us about the land and sea as Parotti mixes wood chips, bitumen, and wax into the oil to dramatically add a fluid, pyroclastic element to the paintings' surfaces.

This disorientation, present in all of Parotti's work, calls into question the taken-for-granted assumption of self as separate from the environment. Notably, *Human I-VI* (2020), invokes the embryonic stage of human development using the same colors, depth, and layered brush strokes as the environmental pieces. Without the prompting of the name, we might not recognize these as humans at all, but on second glance one sees the stages of development gesturally suspended in embryonic fluid. This decision is intentional; above all, Parotti reflects on the fact that, at the time of birth, we become part and parcel of that which we destroy by way of our consumption, lifestyle, and societal structures. At the same time, *Human I-VI* (2020) also reminds us that destruction is not the rule; we all have the power to change our behaviours, and that power begins at birth.

All species engage in a process of diversification. They adapt, evolve, and diversify in order to survive. In her comparatively small works *Variation* (2019), *Speciation* (2019), and *Diversification* (2019), Parotti reflects on this process within the environment. The brushstrokes are rapid, the textures multiple, and the colors organic and layered. They may appear haphazard and even heterogeneous, yet harmony is achieved as we realize that this is an ongoing process. In these works, the artist draws imaginary snippets of evolutionary change within the natural world at the microscopic level. The empathy we feel for the habitats under undue stress and duress are perhaps projections of our own concerns over our uncertain futures. As Haraway (2016) invites us to reconsider relationships of all kinds in the Anthropocene--our relationship to kin, landscape, seascape, and environment, Parotti's palpable and purposeful way of depicting environmental life and human life presents an appeal to consider our deepest empathy for the natural world and the generations to come. The clarion call of the planet will not be ignored. The mantle we leave behind is heavy enough as it is.



Speciation
2019
oil on canvas
24x32 inches

Endnotes:

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Transitory Nature: Reflections on Water and Clouds

Allison Thompson

"Blessed are the meek," Matthew 5:5

This New Testament passage is regarded as one of the most famous of the Beatitudes. While the word 'meek' can be translated as mild or humble or modest or gentle or even powerless, it is really only an approximation of the original Greek word 'praus' which does not suggest weakness as much as infer the way power is handled: strength under control, and without undue harshness. That seems like particularly wise counsel as I write this in March 2020, isolated in my home during the COVID-19 pandemic; we need strong and measured action as our world accelerates into an uncertain future.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

Biblical scholars note that the passage reflects a view of the 'end times', a future time-period described variously in the eschatologies of several world religions which teach that global events will reach an apocalyptic climax. The title of Lynn Parotti's exhibition, *Inherit the Earth* was chosen not in response to a global health crisis but rather an environmental one; nevertheless it hangs as an ever-more pressing challenge, an imperative and a lament, extolling us to take up responsibility for our shared Earth and our shared future. We teeter on the brink of seemingly irrevocable peril that has seen the shrinking of bio-diversity, extinction of species, global warming and unprecedented climate change: the Anthropocene. Ironically, as we all withdraw into isolation and quarantine, various news agencies report that fish are returning to murky waterways, and air quality is improving with the drop in carbon emissions. We have done this planet a monumental and catastrophic disservice; but apparently it is not beyond some measure of redemption.



Landfall I
2013-2019
oil and wax on canvas
21x26 inches

Inherit the Earth is Lynn Parotti's impassioned call to action. She presents us with a body of richly painted, seductive landscapes and seascapes but the underlying message is the fragility and compromised health of our environment and our obligation to do all in our powers to tend to the urgent needs of our planet before we destroy it. Global warming, water shortages, toxic pollution, catastrophic storms, out-of-control fires: how much of this is the result of human excess, greed, hubris and folly? We have abused this planet and the consequences are mounting. Through her painting process, Lynn takes on nothing less than the urgency of the planet Earth under threat, our own knowing complicity in this precarious circumstance and the dire need for response. What will there be left for our children to inherit?

Lynn grew up in the Bahamas, an archipelagic nation state of unique beauty: consisting of more than 700 islands, cays and islets, the sea is integral. As her father was a marine mechanic, her childhood was spent in and on the water, enjoying a life, she recalls, that was completely joined to nature. But the Bahamas is also a place where the force of climate change has been felt with particularly devastating consequences. While Lynn was brought up in a Catholic household, she describes herself as affirmatively "not religious." And yet she suggests that as environmental disasters accumulate and the future looms with greater threats, we are confronted with deluges and plagues that seem biblical in proportion. Her passion for environmental issues is fuelled by extensive research. As a result, her interests and subjects are global. But it is evident that her sensibility is informed by her love for the natural environment of the Bahamas, particularly the intoxicating world of the ocean, as well as the acute vulnerability of the low-lying, small island developing nations of the Caribbean.

Landfall I and *Landfall II* (2013-2019) are good examples of this. A hurricane makes landfall when the centre of the storm moves across a body of water and reaches the coast. This is when most of the damage occurs: along with the peaking of the storm surge, strong winds come ashore, bringing heavy flooding rains. When the sea washes over the land, whether by rising sea levels, torrential rains or tsunami, the deluge can be catastrophic and transformative. While the artist does not intend the works in this exhibition to be specific to one location,

several of them are inspired by particular experiences and in preparing for this important solo show in her birthplace, Hurricane Dorian can't be far from her mind.

In an opinion piece written for the *New York Times* following Hurricane Dorian's devastating impact in the first days of September 2019, art historian Erica Moiah James noted that while the Bahamas has a tiny carbon footprint, "it carries the burden of being ground zero for our climate crisis."¹ Small islands in particular are affected by climate change in ways that are unfamiliar, unprecedented and urgent, according to Dr. Michael Taylor, a Caribbean climate scientist based at the University of the West Indies. "Cumulatively, the science of projections suggests that the region's climate will be altered beyond recognition. This is to say, it will be outside the bounds of our lived experience to date. It will not just be unfamiliar at times, it may be unprecedented all the time."²

Here in these two canvases, the light-infused aquamarine of the Caribbean Sea and the glistening pink of the sand are washed over by great swaths of darkness rendered with agitated and forceful brushwork, suggesting the destructive force of surging water. The dates for both *Landfall* paintings are 2013-2019, a span of six years. For a number of works in this exhibition, Lynn has returned to earlier canvases to paint over and rework the surfaces, building up texture, developing colour relations, focusing on the push and pull of the imagery. They have evolved and grown almost as if guided by a natural process of maturation itself, as if the artist comes to a more informed relationship with the painting, as well as the place or event it represents over time. We have all had the experience in nature of returning to a place we know well and yet recognizing it has changed. It is different now. And so are we. That process enables us to more fully immerse ourselves in nature and makes us more attuned to its nuances. But catastrophic and unprecedented events can render a landscape unrecognizable.

The full force of the deluge is presented in *Floodwater* of 2010-2020. Darkness and turbulence overtake this canvas that was begun a decade earlier. The viewer has a disorienting sense of shifting perspectives, influenced by the aerial views experienced while flying over water but there is also a sense of being swallowed



Landfall II
2013-2019
oil and wax on canvas
21x26 inches



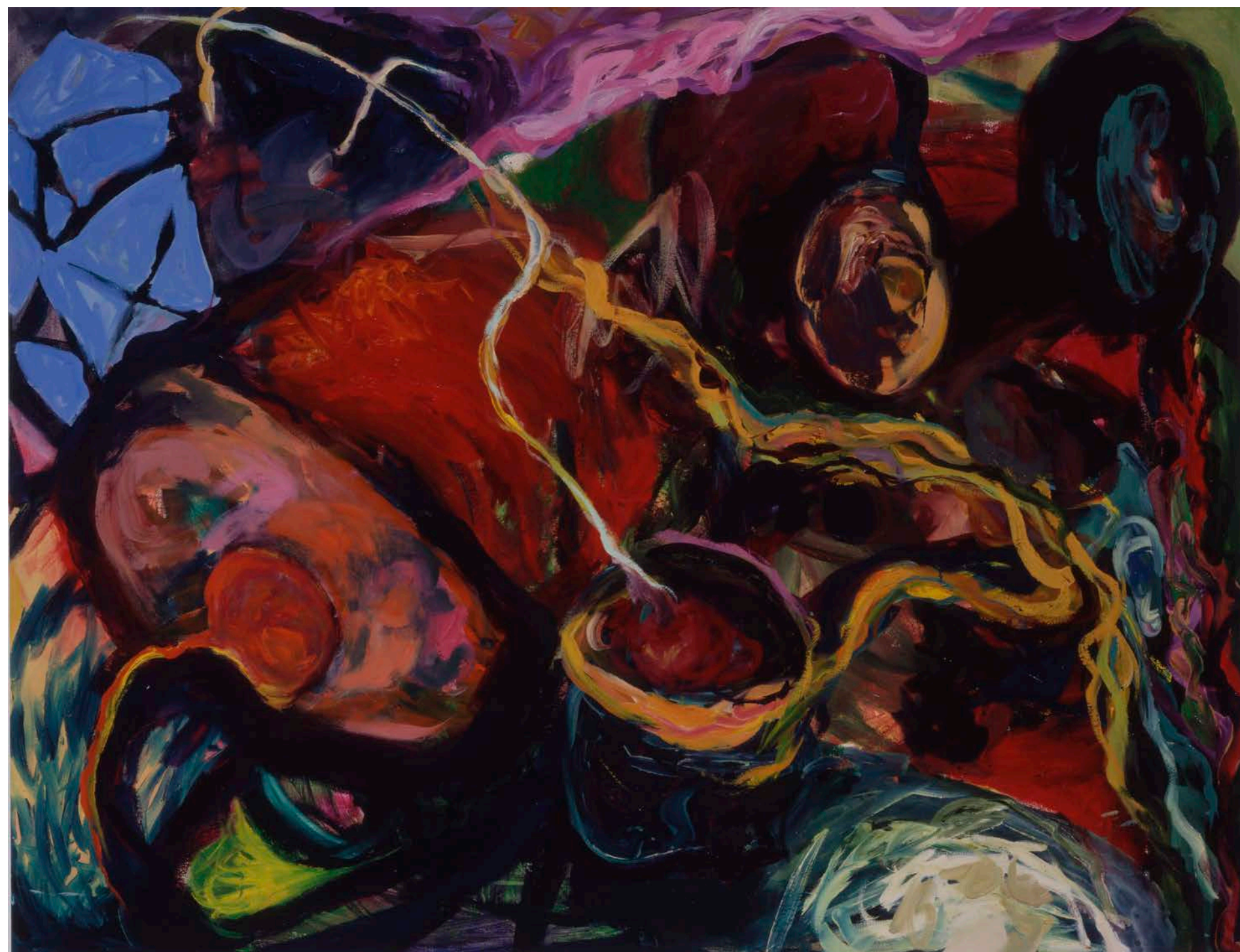
Song of Moses
2016-2020
oil and wax on canvas
65x90 inches

up within the ocean's choppy waves. Parotti's expressionistic handling of her medium conjures the restless and evolving life-force as well as the destructive power that exists in nature. Process is integral to the final work. The malleable and viscous properties of the oil paint and intense colour relations convey an energy which is both sensuous and unsettling, a duality which references the uncertain condition of our contemporary existence in this world.

In response to the threatening surge of *Floodwater*, *Song of Moses* may at first suggest deliverance. This is a much larger canvas suffused with light and colour and energy. This is one of a number of works in the exhibition with titles that directly reference biblical passages and stories. In the Book of Exodus, the Song of the Moses, also known as the Song of the Sea, celebrates the safe deliverance of the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt and into the land of Canaan. To escape the pursuing Egyptians, Moses holds out his staff and the Red Sea is parted by God, thereby allowing the Israelites to cross safely before the sea closes and the Egyptians are drowned. As the turbulent waters rush towards a central horizon in the painting, a parting is suggested by the rising diagonals on both sides. But a yellow film spreads out over the surface, a mustard gas, a poison or toxicity. *Song of Moses* is also the name given to the poem which appears in Deuteronomy 32:1-43, delivered just prior to Moses' death on Mount Nebo. God told Moses to write down the words of a song and teach it to the community so that it would be a "witness for Me against the children of Israel." The poem recounts how God had conducted Israel safely through the wilderness and gave the people a rich and fertile land but that the Israelites were unfaithful and lapsed into idolatry:

"They have acted corruptly toward Him, They are not His children, because of their defect; But are a perverse and crooked generation. Do you thus repay the Lord, O foolish and unwise people?"

The acid yellows and greens found in a number of these works reference the contaminants that have seeped into the landscape due to fertilizer runoffs or harmful mining practices. The webbed red patches that float across the surface reference harmful algae that emerge during unusual rises in water temperature. What at first appears as a colourful display of varied textures and



Haywire
1992
oil on canvas
45x57 inches

movements is instead an indicator of a landscape under threat. In connection with a recent exhibition of paintings, *To the Rising Sun, Bahamaland*, which focused on the deterioration of coral reefs and mangroves, Parotti states, “We have done this. Our memento will become that of a former observation of the vibrancy, differentiation and spectacle of nature from which we disassociated ourselves and pillaged.”³ “Inherit the Earth” continues to confront the viewer with these most urgent issues of our time and holds each of us accountable.

As the artist deliberately returns to earlier paintings to further mine and develop their expressive potential, it is interesting to look at Lynn’s previous work to chart the new directions in this current show. The artist started painting landscapes in the late 1980’s, responding to her arrival in New York and the sudden dehumanisation of city dwelling. *Haywire* is a painting dating back to 1992 that still resides in Parotti’s studio, completed after returning from a residency at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture during her Master’s Degree at Virginia Commonwealth University. *Haywire* is a response to the chaos she encountered in the urban centre: the bright lights of the stop signals, the network of railway lines, large water towers in the distance. But what is most impactful is the aggressive physicality of the expressionistic painting which is almost five feet wide, the building up of layers and the bold colour combinations: a large area of red in the centre of the composition framed by a clashing area of pink at the top and a range of complimentary greens at the bottom. The painting is evidence of the centrality of Abstract Expressionist influences ingrained during her early training in New York which she has retained.

The contrast but also the complex ties between the environments of large urban industrial spaces and that of the Caribbean is perhaps most clearly juxtaposed in the installation, *The Space Between Want*, which was produced in 2010 as part of the *Caribbean Pavilion*, an exhibition featuring work from Barbados, Martinique and the Bahamas, organized as part of the *City-States* project in collaboration with the *Liverpool Biennial*. Three large oil paintings on canvas depict scenes the artist observed in the Bahamas: the abandoned structure of an Anglican church with the skeletal roof open to the sky above; large Valentine gift baskets displayed along the roadside, wrapped in cellophane revealing cheap stuffed teddy bears along with sex toys, body oils and condoms; and a young



From the Installation *The Space Between Want: Roadside Valentine Gift Baskets*, Nassau, The Bahamas
2010
oil on canvas
65x90 inches

migrant, a solitary Haitian boy cleaning his flip-flops after having just arrived in Inagua. In all three scenarios - the vestiges of an outpost of the Church of England, American consumerism, and regional poverty-induced migration - the unusual perspectives, the distorting reflections and shadows, the predominant intense red contrasted with touches of marine blue, all combine to emphasize the unease of a subject that defies the viewer's expectations of the Caribbean landscape which has in diverse ways always been a globalized space. These works are then contrasted with two scenes painted on glass of industrial dock quays in the UK where Lynn currently lives: London (Canary Wharf, formerly the West India Docks) and Liverpool (Seaforth Dock). These large industrial and commercial sites are rendered only as slick inverted reflections on the ephemeral surface of the water, the basis of their wealth with their ties to sugar production and slavery, as suggested by the logo of Tate & Lyle reflected in the water. The long imbricated stories of globalization have resulted in landscapes of gaping disparity.

Lynn's relationship to place is informed by a social conscience fuelled by research. It is not just the human interaction with nature, but increasingly our impact on nature. Her landscapes function as social geographies, exhibiting the footprints – carbon and otherwise - of our impact. The scenes contain the tracks and traces of our responsibility. Water, in particular, has remained an ever-present force in Lynn's work – its visual beauty, its fluid movement, its life-sustaining essence; but also its erosive force, its destructive capabilities and its endangered state. For Parotti, water is connectivity: not only in the networked systems of oceans, rivers and lakes; in its capacity to foster and protect unique micro-environments such as mangroves and coral reefs; its potential to create new land masses and bridge gaps; but also as an elemental part of the human body. It is the essential element on which all life depends and its growing scarcity threatens our very existence.

Two paintings from Lynn's *Bahamaland* series were included in *Arrivants: Art and Migration in the Anglophone Caribbean World*, an exhibition which opened at the Barbados Museum in late 2018, which I curated in collaboration with Jamaica based art historian, Veerle Poupeye. Lynn's small canvases presented closely observed studies of coral reefs as viewed through crystalline waters.

While acknowledging that these brightly coloured images are alluring, the artist notes that they are devoid of fish, throwing into question the health of these marine ecosystems. The decorative patches of tiny dots represent coral bleaching, a process by which the algae, known as zooxanthellae, are released by the corals resulting in their inability to photosynthesize. An increase of only one or two degrees in the oceans' temperatures is enough to trigger this process, resulting in the death of much of the world's coral.

It is interesting to look at Parotti's work within this exhibition which focused on the Anglophone Caribbean and the wider diaspora, particularly in the context of other contemporary reflections on the landscape, and our relationship to the sea in particular. I have long been interested in the synergy between Lynn's paintings of water and coral formations with the work of Barbadian artist, Winston Kellman. Both artists are intimately drawn to the sea as a source of inspiration, using the viscous nature of paint to convey the endless expressive potential of its movement and colour. For several years, Kellman has committed to a daily practice of recording the rugged terrain of Bathsheba on the eastern-most edge of the Caribbean, Paul Gilroy's *Black Atlantic*, a churning sea of historical and personal trauma but also a place of sublime beauty; an iconic site of monumental rock formations in the midst of crashing waves and theatrical light effects captured in the paint's impasto. For both Kellman and Parotti, the expressionistic handling conveys the subjective experience that is our bond with nature but also the relationship between transient effects of light and tides with history – time as both fleeting and haunting. Both artists are invested in a methodical return: Kellman re-visits the same site every day, producing a diaristic archive of the 'changing same'; Parotti re-visits earlier canvases, searching through the painting process to arrive at a truer representation of nature's transformations.

Lynn's *Human Series*, produced for the *Inherit the Earth* exhibition, like Kellman's *Bathsheba Series*, allows her to investigate the subtle yet infinite variations within nature. The smaller works may at first seem to be preparatory studies for the larger canvases – a common practice for landscape painters – but these often emerge in response to the larger paintings. Her *Human Series* suggest a zooming in, a kind of microscopic revelation of activities not always evident



From the Installation *The Space Between Want: Abandoned Anglican Church, Long Island, The Bahamas*
2010
oil on canvas
65x90 inches



To Dust We Return
2017-2020
oil, wood chips and wax on canvas
88x78 inches

to the naked eye. The works also suggest different vantage points – looking through water as a deep-sea diver, looking across its surface from the shoreline or from above as experienced from a plane. But the shifting perspective is not just a change in vantage point; there is also a shifting between micro and macrocosms, a more focused re-presentation of the processes that are happening in the larger event itself. Pool-like in their form, they suggest sites of generation or origin, growth, genesis. There is a recurring reference to process, regeneration, adaptation, change – the essential energy or force of all living things. The circular forms can also suggest an opening or a void – not in a negative sense but as a field of possibility.

The fascination with the intimate intricacies of nature links Lynn's work to the small sculptures of Veronica Ryan. The *Arrivants* exhibition, which focused on the theme of migration, also proposed relationships between Parotti's paintings and Ryan's surreal constructions assembled together in her installation, *Shack Shack*. This included dried mango seeds sewn into small blankets, flamboyant tree pods bound together with twine and pieces of coral stone wrapped in tensor bandages – all scavenged artefacts of nature lovingly encased, sutured, and preserved. Ryan, who was born in Montserrat, grew up in the UK and now divides her time between studios in London and New York. Kellman spent the 1980s studying and working in London before returning to his native Barbados. Like Lynn, their investigations into the forms of nature are invested with a symbolic import that is heightened by a deeply internalized attachment to place as informed by distance and memory which transcends subjective experience.

Nadia Huggins, employing photography and video, has also explored the sea as a separate yet parallel world conveyed through shifting perspectives and inversions. But whereas the body is usually absent in Parotti's work, for Huggins it is often central. For Huggins, below the surface of the water is an embodied, experiential realm of buoyancy, weightlessness, of slowed time and muted sound. A three-minute video from the series, *Circa no Future* of 2014 presents disorienting perspectives captured both from above and below the waterline, as well at times reversing or rewinding the footage. Focusing on a small group of adolescent boys, Huggins positions the camera underwater so that its surface appears like a glassy border penetrated by shafts of light that illuminate the

obscured bodies of the swimmers who move in slow motion through opaque clouds of bubbles, until they are pulled upwards – supernaturally, apotheosis-like - out of this soupy echoing womb towards the silent sky.

As if acknowledging the inevitable need to locate an embodied presence in the landscape, or the seascape, Lynn does in fact present us with two figurative paintings which form the central focus of the show: *From Water We Came* and *To Dust We Return*. Both canvases were started in 2017 but only finally brought into realization very late in the process of finishing this current body of work. The artist explains that while it was not her original intention, a figurative element emerged intuitively first in the blue undersea realm of *From Water We Came*. A large looming presence with a golden crown hovers in the upper part of the canvas. With arms outspread, a shaft of light pours from the figure's right side, followed by a shower of yellow heart-shaped leaves of the ancient ginkgo tree sprinkled across areas of the agitated brushwork, thick impasto and textured surfaces.

Lynn explains: "this head started to emerge and I couldn't get rid of it and I thought, maybe this is a good thing."⁴ Her intent has been to focus on our collective responsibility for the Earth and so a human, or perhaps divine presence seems fitting. The second work, *To Dust We Return*, is more terrestrial and a deliberate counterpart and balance to the first. Here a female figure gestures downwards toward the earth as nature prevails, vines and pods springing out from around her.

One final reflection on a work that shares Parotti's enduring fascination with the forces of the Caribbean sea. Bahamian artist Kishan Munroe produced an ambitious nine-screen video installation entitled *Drifter in Residence* for the *Arrivants* exhibition. Like Lynn, Munroe work is fortified by extensive research and underpinned by social consciousness. The work is a continuation of *The Universal Human Experience*, which examines plights, conflicts and resolutions that affect various contemporary cultures in an attempt to identify connections throughout humanity. Seeking to understand why many people had lost their lives at the hands of the sea, particularly through forced migration, Munroe concluded that a partial explanation was that they were poorly prepared.

The artist undertook a long regime of survivalist training and constructed a raft which took him out into the Atlantic Ocean for several weeks as a sort of unorthodox artist research residency during the peak months of the 2018 hurricane season. "With this phase of the project I literally plunge into the foreign world of the ocean, seeking to tap into the narratives, realities and histories of man's precarious relationship with the sea and his never-ending quest for 'home'."⁵ Live footage of his journey was shown in the central monitor surrounded by recorded images of the research and preparation process. The adventure summons up comparisons with a long tradition of epic and heroic expeditions where humans in seeking to conquer nature are reminded of their smallness. Blessed are the meek.

Lynn Parotti shares with many artists in the region, and of course globally, a commitment to exploring our relationship with nature, and most recently the precarious condition of our own existence as we have consumed and wasted and abused our environment with reckless abandon. It is an ambitious gesture to think that artists can disabuse our leaders, our industrialists of the hubris that has brought us to this point. But if they accomplish little more than causing us to reflect on our own actions and responsibilities, that can be no small or insignificant thing.

It is April now. I am sitting on my veranda, isolated by Barbados' enforced Stage Three of an island-wide COVID-19 shut-down. It is dusk; my favourite time of day. I can't help but marvel at the colour of the clouds as the setting sun throws up its last rays of orange-pink light. This is an Earth of infinite wonder. And I wonder what tomorrow might bring.

Allison Thompson
Barbados

Note: I would like to extend my thanks to Jessica Taylor who facilitated a FaceTime visit to Lynn Parotti's studio and provided many insightful observations about Lynn's practice.

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- 3 Lynn Parotti, "To the Rising Sun, Bahamaland," The Island House, Nassau, Bahamas, October 9-11, 2019. <https://www.parotti.com/to-the-rising-sun-bahamaland/>.
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At the Threshold of the Unknown: The Ecofeminism of Lynn Parotti

Tatiana Flores

As Lynn Parotti was finalizing the paintings for *Inherit the Earth*, calamity struck, again. This time it was not a hurricane, earthquake, or other natural event of the kind that have become all too common in the Caribbean. The disaster was instead one that was felt on a global scale—the coronavirus COVID-19. After a career of painting deteriorating and threatened ecosystems that warn of impending catastrophe, Parotti, along with her fellow humans, became acutely aware of what it feels like to be the ones threatened with imminent extinction. As of this writing, over 150,000 people have died from the virus in 2020. Uncertainty and anxiety have become the norm.

Perhaps the silver lining of this crisis is that despite its devastating consequences for humanity, COVID-19 has improved environmental conditions. The reduction in air pollution over China is expected to save more lives than those that were cut short by the virus itself.¹ In Venice, the water in the canals became clear, and marine wildlife—including fish, swans, and dolphins—returned.² That is just a small consolation given that the emergence of the disease and its spread is attributed to human activity. Scientists believe that the virus was transmitted to humans by bats, but it is the destruction of habitats and the intermixing of species in unprecedented ways that likely enabled it.³ If COVID-19 is not a wake-up call to change our ways, it is hard to imagine an even starker lesson. But there is, nevertheless, the fear that the zeal to jumpstart ravaged economies could have a severe environmental impact, a phenomenon that has been described as “revenge pollution.”⁴ What might we do to prevent this? Let us heed Lynn Parotti’s warnings as visualized in her paintings and use them as inspiration to envision a new beginning for the sake of our planet and ourselves.

For a number of years, Parotti’s primary subject matter has been water—not the expansive vistas experienced from the beach or the air, described by Stacy Alaimo as “the transcendent visions of an Anthropocene planet where neither the homo sapiens as an embodied creature nor all the rest of the species are rendered visible.”⁵

LYNN PAROTTI

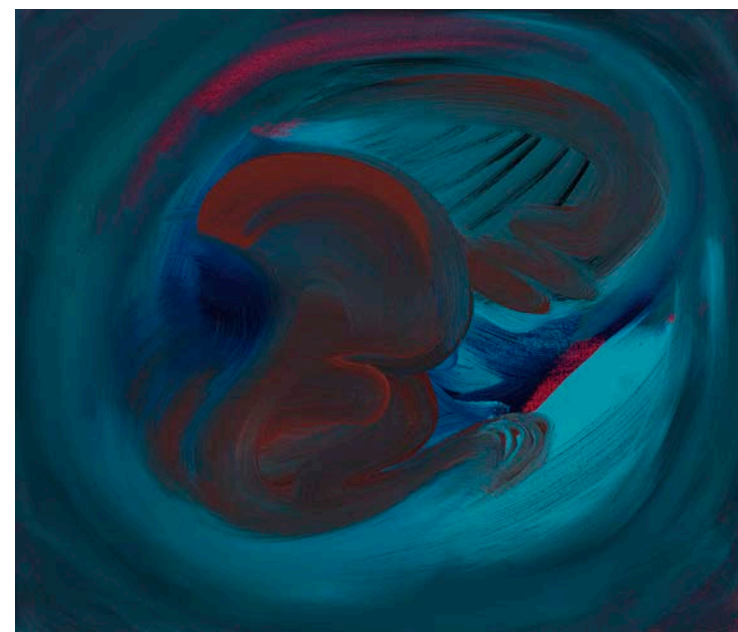
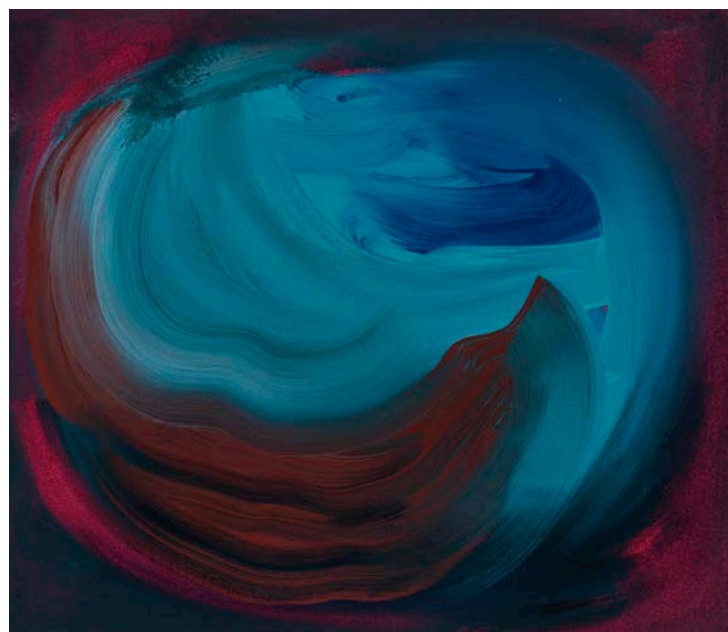
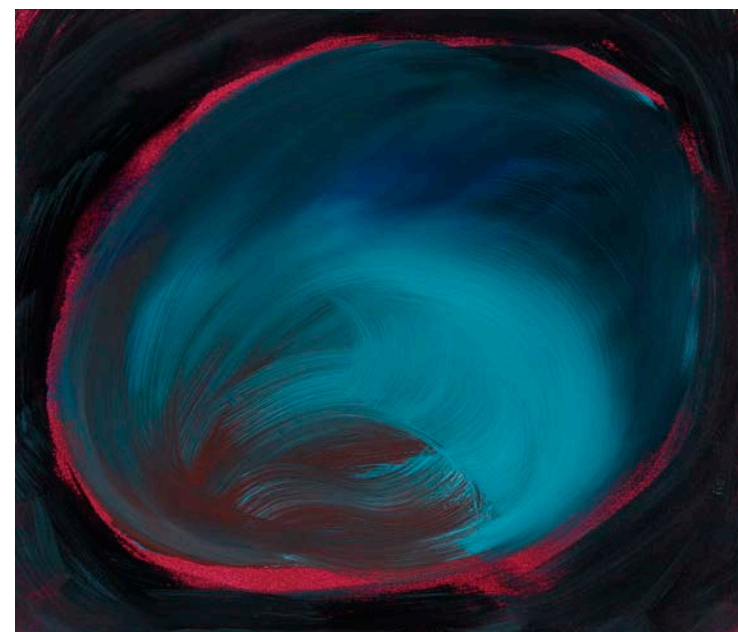
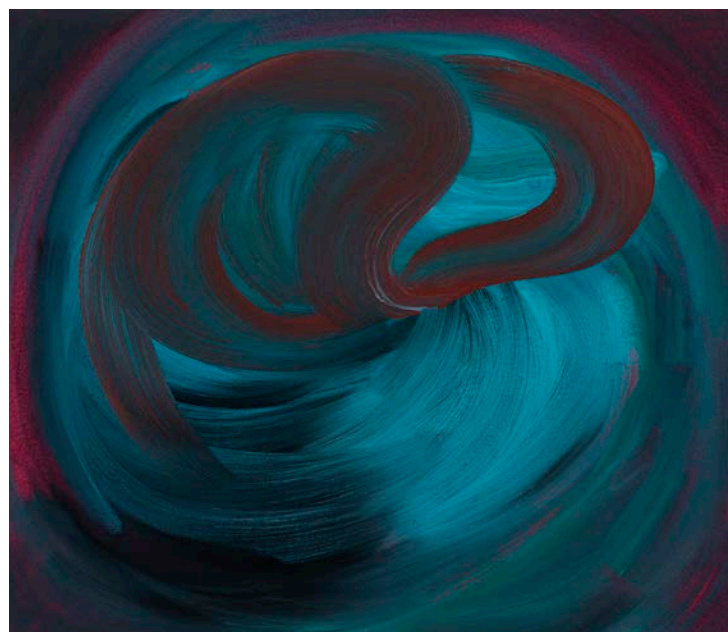
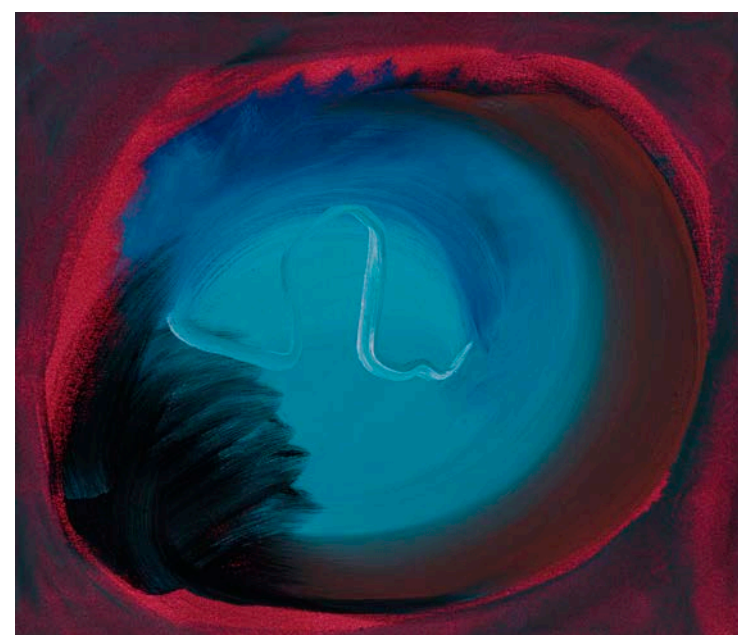
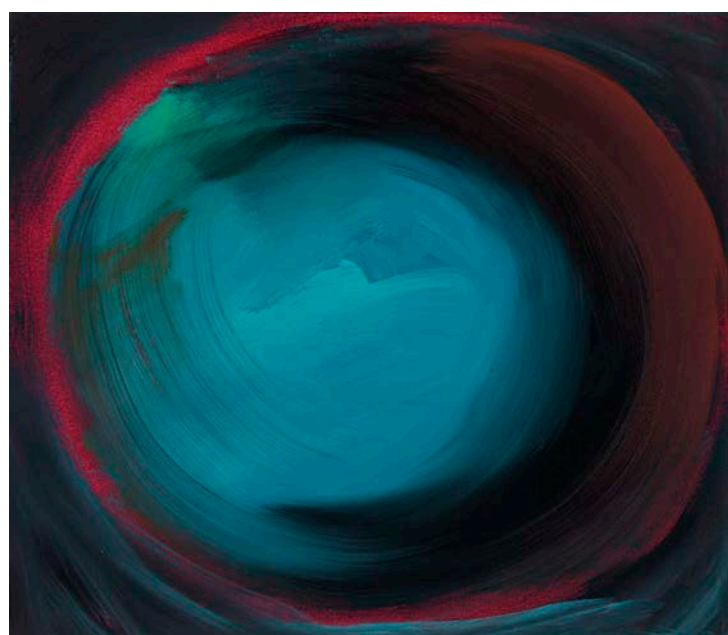


From Water We Came
2017-2020
oil, wood chips and wax on canvas
88x78 inches

Parotti, rather, immerses herself and the viewer into oceanic depths, reminding us, as Astrida Neimanis does, that “[w]e are all bodies of water.”⁶ Often the waterscapes that the artist depicts—of sickened coral and polluted seas—are drawn from underwater photographs that she takes herself. Others are imagined or derived from images taken by others. What she has been trying to make visible is the interconnection between humans and their environment. What befalls the ocean and its creatures is of consequence to us. The painting *From Water We Came* (2017-20) drives this point home. A large, almost square, canvas of multiple tonalities of blues and varying textures, the painting’s forms suggest water in various states but also seeds, leaves, and flowers. An abstracted feminine figure appears to be overseeing the act of creation. The relation of the painting to Neimanis’ essay on “hydrofeminism” is uncanny. It is almost as though Parotti had set out to illustrate the following passage:

As a facilitator, water is the milieu, or the gestational element, for other watery bodies as well. Mammal, reptile, or fish; sapling or seed; river delta or backyard pond—all of these bodies are necessarily brought into being by another body of water that dissolves, partially or completely, to water the bodies that will follow.... Gestational waters are also themselves (in) a body of water, and participate in the greater element of planetary water that continues to sustain us, protect us, and nurture us, both extra- and intercorporeally, beyond these amniotic beginnings. Water connects the human scale to other scales of life, both unfathomable and imperceptible. We are all bodies of water, in the constitutional, the genealogical, and the geographical sense.⁷

The connection between human life and water is foregrounded in the series *Human* (2020), where a sequence of small square paintings titled *I* to *VI* visualize a coming into being. The first canvas suggests a blue vortex with a red circumference that appears simultaneously to represent emptiness and expanse—a void that is also the infinite. As the series progresses, the red frame becomes more active, and its contours begin to merge with the elements within the circle, so that the final painting depicts a brown “body” that now fills the space. The series is masterfully executed with the sparsest of means. Calligraphic brushstrokes give the impression of utter spontaneity, as though



Human I-VI
2020
oil on canvas
17x20 inches

a few flicks of the wrist had engendered this creation. Here, Parotti is the progenitor, the feminine force. The work meshes well with feminist theory, but it also recalls observations made by Édouard Glissant, linking the aesthetic act to relation and reciprocity:

If, thus, we allow that an aesthetics is an act of conceiving, imagining, and acting, the other of Thought is the aesthetics implemented by me and by you to join the dynamic to which we are to contribute. This is the part fallen to me in an aesthetics of chaos, the work I am to undertake, the road I am to travel....The other of Thought is always set in motion by its confluences as a whole, in which each is changed by and changes the other.⁸

For Glissant, this Other is, presumably, another human being. For Parotti, the entanglement that she repeatedly enacts is between humans and nature.⁹

Valérie Loichot discusses the representation of nature in Caribbean literature: "There is a common function of landscape in Glissant's work and generally in post-slavery cultures where trees and plants act as witness to a past with no written archive."¹⁰ In the era of the Anthropocene, it is humanity who is the onlooker of a nature that is disappearing. Parotti takes seriously this role of witness, although the notion of the Anthropocene is an uncomfortable one for her. She references it in only one of her paintings *Anthropocene Pool*, which depicts a strange amorphous form that occupies the entire picture plane within which are irregular shapes of unnatural colors. Although there are some earth tones, the view does not resemble a recognizable body of water. Instead, it is as though oil runoff, lithium byproducts, tailings, rust, and other contaminants all converged to create something repulsive. Thankfully, the viewer is positioned above the scene, rather than immersed within. Resembling a human brain, the painting does establish an unsettling analogy with the human body.

Stacy Alaimo critiques the concept of the Anthropocene in terms that resonate with the themes of Parotti's paintings. In addition to pointing out that the Anthropocene reinstall[s] rather familiar versions of man...[as] disembodied, rational subject,"¹¹ she also writes, "the proposed geologic epoch of the



From the Installation *The Space Between Want: Haitian Migrant Worker Cleaning his Flip-Flops, Inagua, The Bahamas*
 2010
 oil on canvas
 65x90 inches

Anthropocene renders the homo sapiens and the planet more abstract, obscuring even the most entrenched systems of oppression.”¹² As an artist with roots in the Caribbean, Parotti is no stranger to these systems. Colonialism, the slave trade, and contemporary intra-Caribbean migration have all been subjects of her artwork, but it is rare for her to depict humans themselves. A notable exception is the painting *Haitian Migrant Worker Cleaning his Flip-Flops, Inagua, The Bahamas* from the installation *The Space Between Want* (2010). Here, a young man positioned within a boat is shown in the act of cleaning his rubber sandals. An item that for many Bahamians is a disposable commodity is for him a precious possession. The painting puts a face on the primary victims of the climate crisis. Almost a decade later, an unknown number of Haitian migrants estimated in the hundreds perished as a result of Hurricane Dorian. Today, it is historically disenfranchised peoples who are disproportionately the victims of COVID-19.¹³

People are always implied despite their (or, rather, our) absence in the majority of Parotti’s paintings. The installation *Tar Baby* (2010) warns of sea level rise and contains no human subjects, but the title references the Uncle Remus Plantation stories, which relate to slavery in the American South and its aftermath. Parotti’s statement about the series reminds us that “[n]early a quarter of the world’s 7+ billion population live within 100 km of the shoreline and within 100 m of sea level elevation.”¹⁴ Indeed, the artist’s environmental consciousness rejects what Alaimo critiques about mainstream environmentalism, whose “implicit addressee...is universalized, unmarked, and unnamed.”¹⁵ Her work instead meshes with feminist theory and other critical approaches with “a long history of critiquing this universalized, unmarked subject.”¹⁶ It is impossible to view paintings like *Floodwater* (2010-2020), *Landfall I*, and *Landfall II* (2013-2019) and not relate them to the devastating hurricanes that pummel the Caribbean on a terrifyingly regular basis. *Floodwater* drowns the viewer in dark, turbulent waters, with no horizon in sight to offer the solace of potential rescue. The *Landfall* paintings are similarly disorienting. The viewer cannot make out where the sky, water, and earth meet. The water is everywhere, taking many forms and trajectories; survival does not seem like even a remote possibility.

Parotti's paintings are immersive in various ways. For one, they frequently portray underwater scenes. When they do not, they tend to zoom the viewer in in a manner that is often disorienting. And this emphasis on submergence signals time and time again the interdependence between humans and nature.¹⁷ Works like *Memento Mori*, of a melting glacier; *Mine*; *Consumption*; *Speciation*; *Variation*; and *Diversification*, though stylistically different, do not function at any moment like traditional landscapes—the most prevalent pictorial model for visualizing the environment—but instead offer new imaginings of environmental futures, heeding the call made by Stacy Alaimo when she writes that

the warming and acidifying oceans...cannot be directly portrayed in images but must be scientifically captured and creatively depicted. The depths of the ocean resist flat terrestrial maps that position humans as disengaged spectators. Marine scientists must, through modes of mediation, become submerged, even as persistent Western models of objectivity and mastery pull us in the opposite direction.¹⁸

Among Parotti's earlier paintings, *Souvenir* (2019), stands apart in offering an ironic commentary on conventions of depicting nature. It portrays a frontal view of a coral reef, posed in the manner of a traditional still life. Frozen in time and space, the scene resembles what a viewer might see inside a tropical fish tank, not in the actual ocean. Here, Parotti's painting intersects with Alaimo's observation that "[t]o ignore the invisible threats of acidity or toxins or radioactivity is to imagine that we are less permeable than we are and to take refuge in an epistemological and ontological zone that is somehow outside the time and space of the Anthropocene."¹⁹ That comfort zone is the space from the outside looking in, as though behind the glass at the aquarium that safely holds in the water on the other side. Now, as victims of the COVID-19 crisis, we know that there is no refuge when our way of life is threatened. As we wait for circumstances to change, wondering what awaits us on the other side, hopefully we will cease to take our planet for granted and propel the change of consciousness Lynn Parotti has been trying valiantly for years to call forth.



Souvenir
2019
oil on canvas
55x99 inches

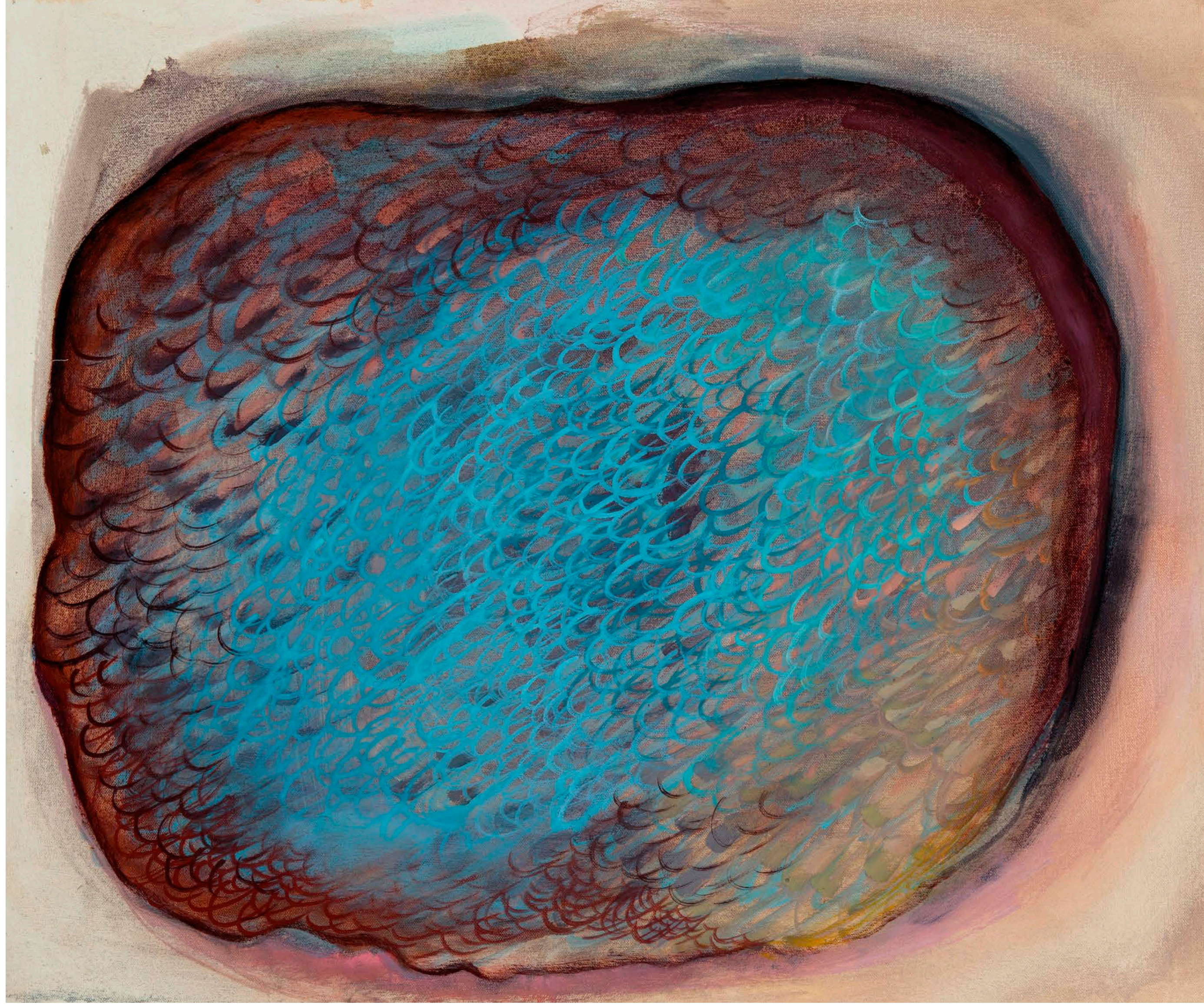
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- 5 Stacy Alaimo, "Wanting All the Species to Be: Extinction, Environmental Visions, and Intimate Aesthetics," Australian Feminist Studies 34:102, 405, DOI: 10.1080/08164649.2019.1698284.
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- 7 Neimanis, "Hydrofeminism," 87.
- 8 Édouard Glissant, Poetics of Relation, trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2010), 155. Earlier, Glissant makes establishes the concept of chaos-monde which he defines as "the immeasurable intermixing of cultures" (138).
- 9 While entanglement is very much a Glissantian concept, I reference it here through the writings of Astrida Neimanis and Karen Barad. See Astrida Neimanis, "No Representation without Colonisation? (Or Nature Represents Itself)," Somatechnics 5:2 (September 2015), 145.
- 10 Valérie Loichot, Water Graves: The Art of the Unritual in the Greater Caribbean (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2020), 29.
- 11 Stacy Alaimo, "Your Shell on Acid: Material Immersion, Anthropocene Dissolve" in Richard Grusin, ed., Anthropocene Feminism (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 89.
- 12 Stacy Alaimo, "Wanting All the Species to Be: Extinction, Environmental Visions, and Intimate Aesthetics," 402.
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- 14 Lynn Parotti, "Tar Baby," 2010. url: <https://www.parotti.com/tar-baby/>. Accessed April 19, 2020.
- 15 Stacy Alaimo, "Wanting All the Species to Be: Extinction, Environmental Visions, and Intimate Aesthetics," 403.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 I am indebted to Elizabeth DeLoughrey for having introduced me to the rich body of literature on submergence. See our essay Elizabeth M. DeLoughrey and Tatiana Flores, "Submerged Bodies: The Tidalectics of Representability and the Sea in Caribbean Art," Environmental Humanities 12:1 (May 2020): 132-166.
- 18 Stacy Alaimo, "Your Shell on Acid," 107.
- 19 Ibid., 114.

List of Works

<i>Lithium Pool</i> 2019 oil on canvas 20x24 inches	<i>Tailings of the Everglades</i> 2020 oil on linen 22x31 inches	<i>Landfall II</i> 2013-2019 oil and wax on canvas 21x26 inches	<i>Runoff</i> 2020 oil on linen 24x32 inches
<i>Anthropocene Pools</i> 2019 oil on canvas 20x24 inches	<i>Consumption</i> 2019 oil on linen 22x31 inches	<i>Speciation</i> 2019 oil on canvas 24x32 inches	<i>Threads of Zooxanthellae</i> 2019 oil on canvas 65x90 inches
<i>Waves Continuously Touching Forest</i> 2020 oil on canvas 49x91inches	<i>And There Followed Hail And Fire Mingled With Blood</i> 2020 oil and wax on canvas 54x91 inches	<i>Variation</i> 2019 oil on canvas 24x32 inches	<i>Birdsnests' Ensemble</i> 2019 oil on canvas 29x35 inches
<i>Enchanted Bough</i> 2018-2020 oil on canvas 34x40 inches	<i>Floodwater</i> 2010-2020 oil and bitumen on canvas 35x40inches	<i>Diversification</i> 2019 oil on canvas 24x32 inches	<i>Bleaching II</i> 2020 oil on canvas 17x20 inches
<i>Natural Indemnity II</i> 2020 oil and wax on canvas 35x40 inches	<i>Memento Mori</i> 2019 oil on canvas 55x99 inches	<i>Human I-VI</i> 2020 oil on canvas 17x20 inches	<i>To Dust We Return</i> 2017-2020 oil, wood chips and wax on canvas 88x78 inches
<i>Ginkgo Tree Investment</i> 2017-2019 oil on linen (diptych) 66x84 inches	<i>Landfall I</i> 2013-2019 oil and wax on canvas 21x26 inches	<i>Song of Moses</i> 2016-2020 oil and wax on canvas 65x90 inches	<i>From Water We Came</i> 2017-2020 oil, wood chips and wax on canvas 88x78inches

Lithium Pool
2019
oil on canvas
20x24 inches



LYNN PAROTTI

Anthropocene Pools
2019
oil on canvas
20x24 inches



LYNN PAROTTI



Waves Continuously Touching Forest
2020
oil on canvas
49x91 inches

Enchanted Bough
2018-2020
oil on canvas
34x40 inches



Natural Indemnity II
2020
oil and wax on canvas
35x40 inches

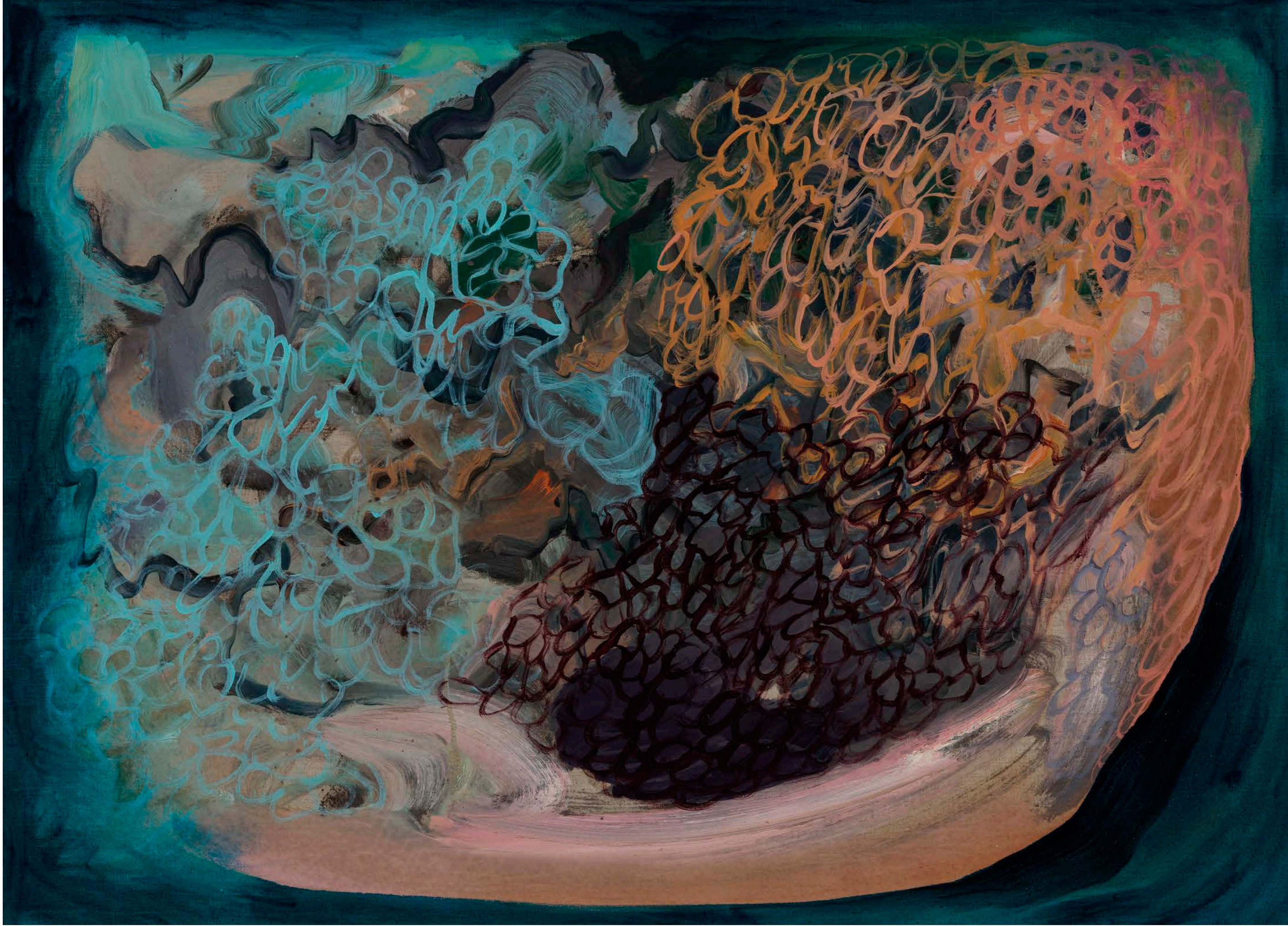


LYNN PAROTTI

Ginkgo Tree Investment
2017-2020
oil on linen (diptych)
66x84 inches



Tailings of the Everglades
2020
oil on linen
22x31 inches



LYNN PAROTTI

Consumption
2019
oil on linen
22x31 inches





And There Followed Hail And Fire Mingled With Blood
2020
oil and wax on canvas
54x91 inches

Floodwater
2010-2020
oil and bitumen on canvas
35x40inches



LYNN PAROTTI

Memento Mori
2019
oil on canvas
55x99 inches



Landfall I
2013-2019
oil and wax on canvas
21x26 inches

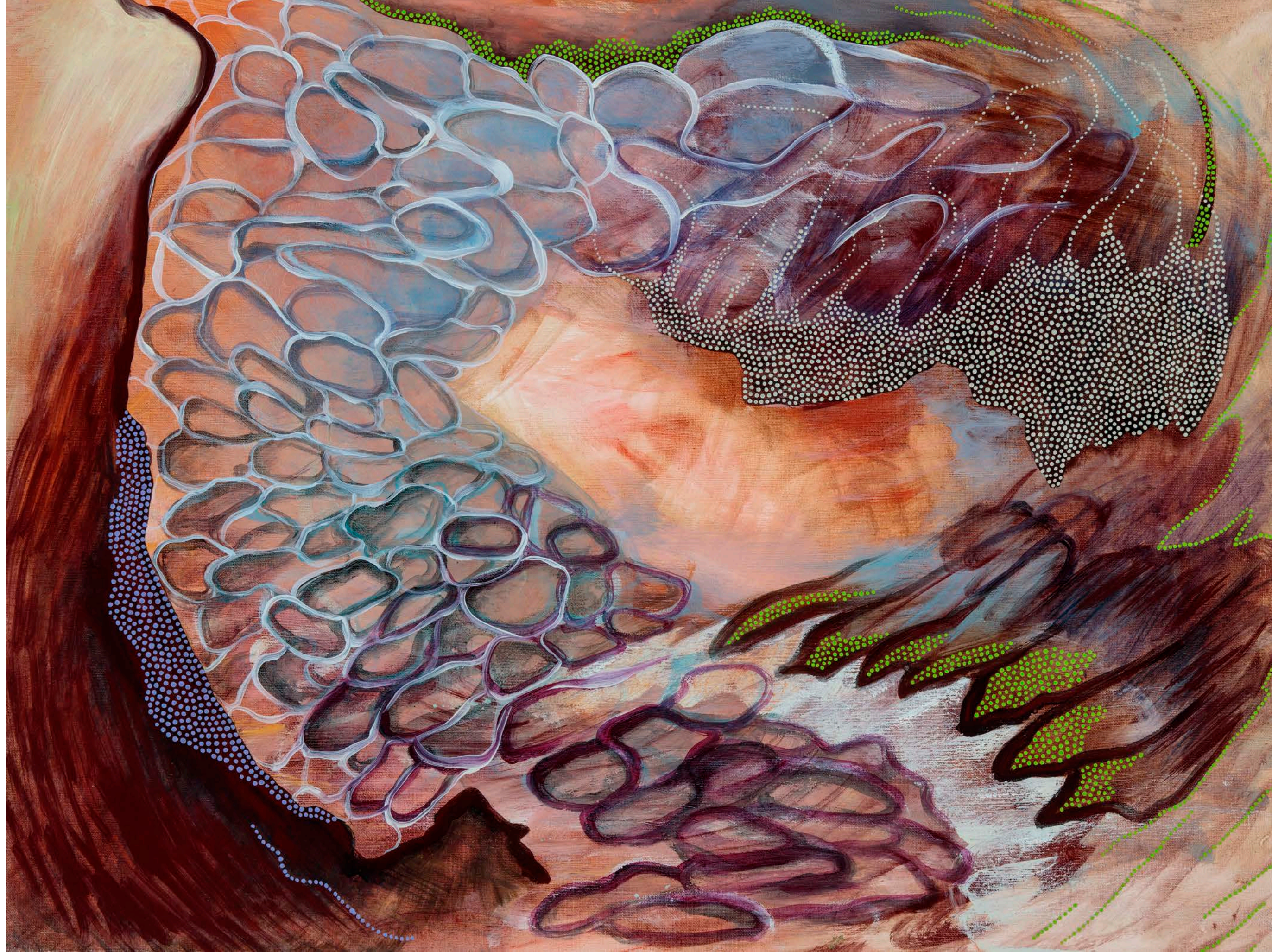


LYNN PAROTTI

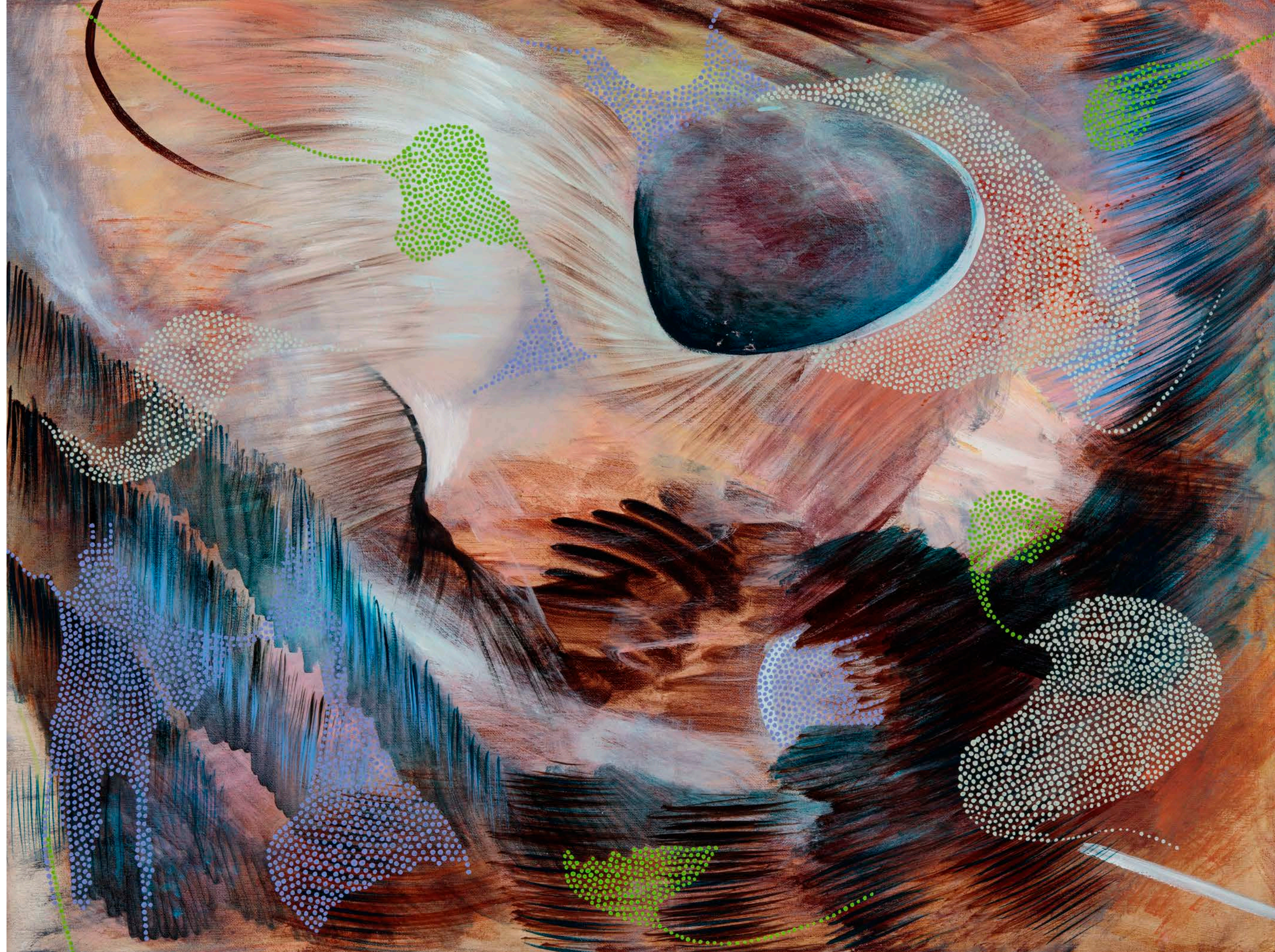
Landfall II
2013-2019
oil and wax on canvas
21x26 inches



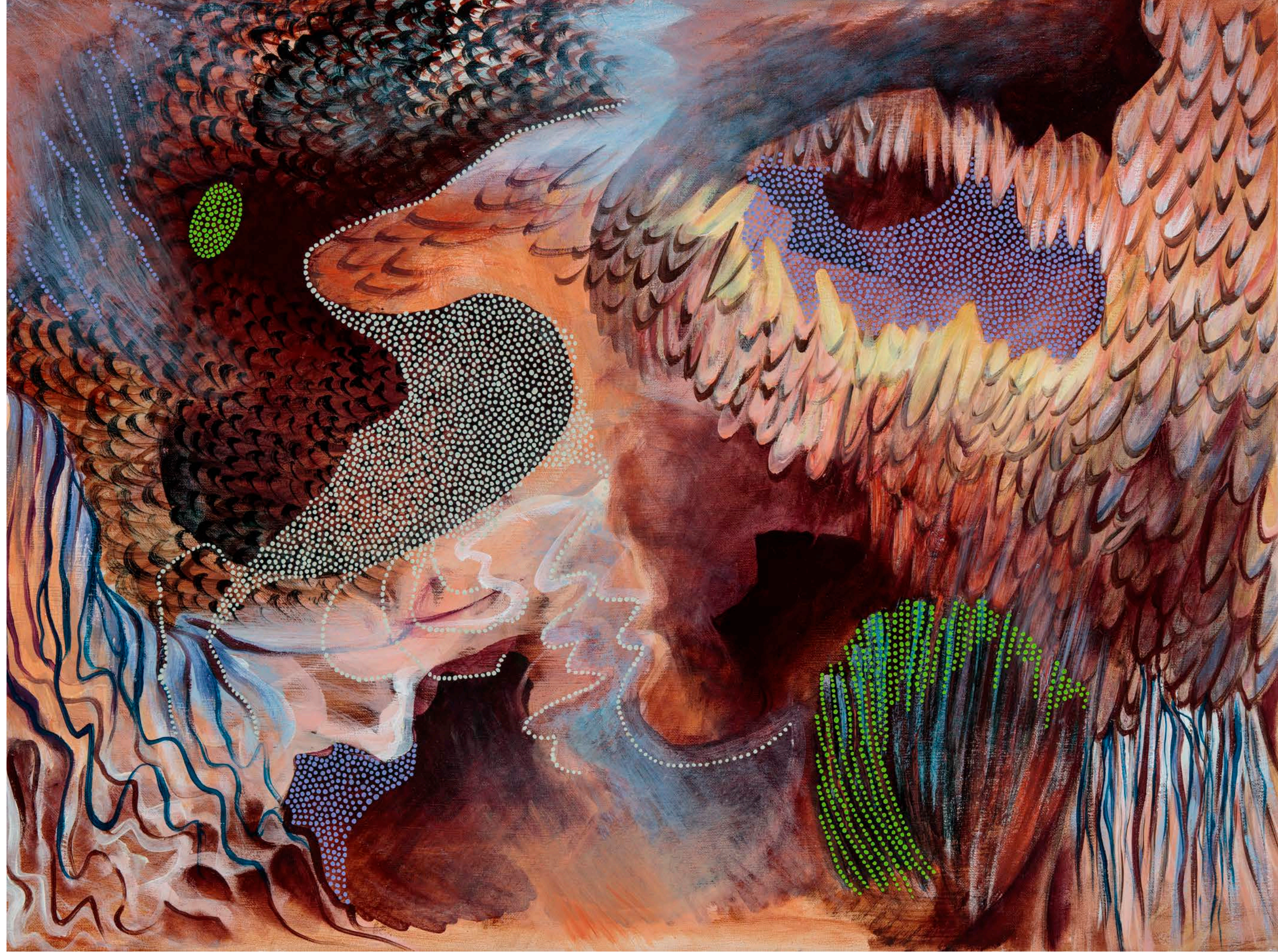
Speciation
2019
oil on canvas
24x32 inches



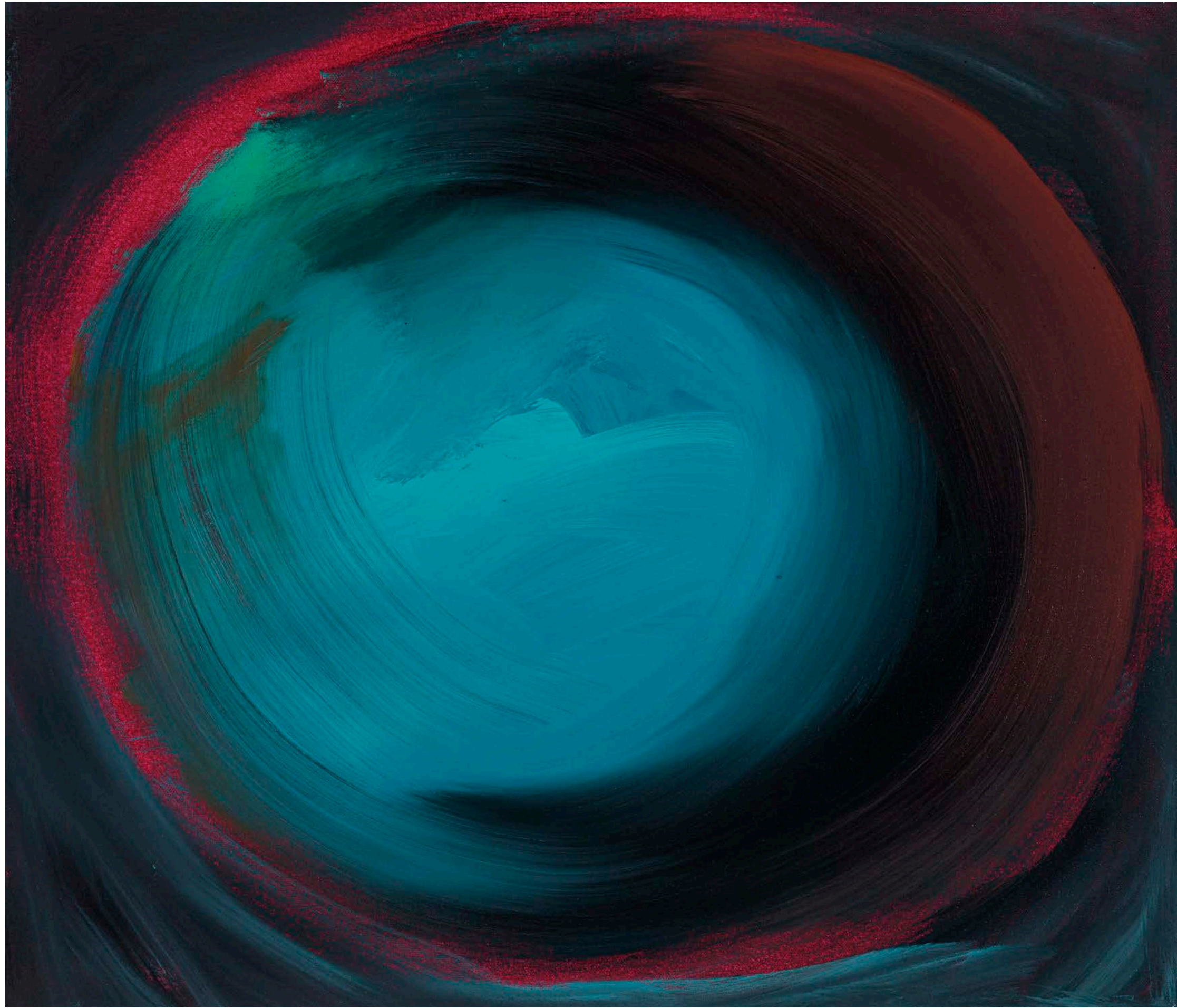
Variation
2019
oil on canvas
24x32 inches



Diversification
2019
oil on canvas
24x32 inches

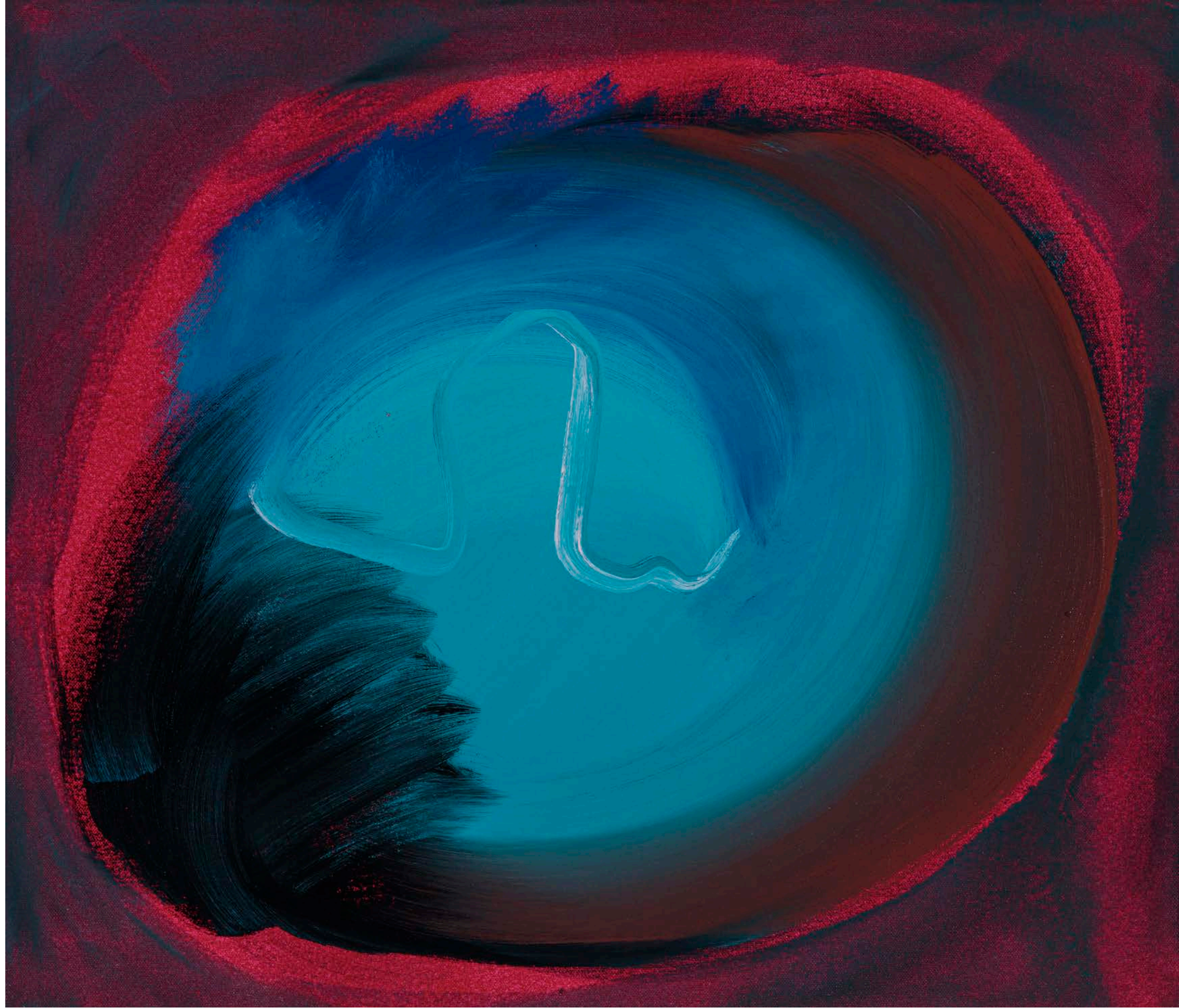


Human I
2020
oil on canvas
17x20 inches



LYNN PAROTTI

Human II
2020
oil on canvas
17x20 inches



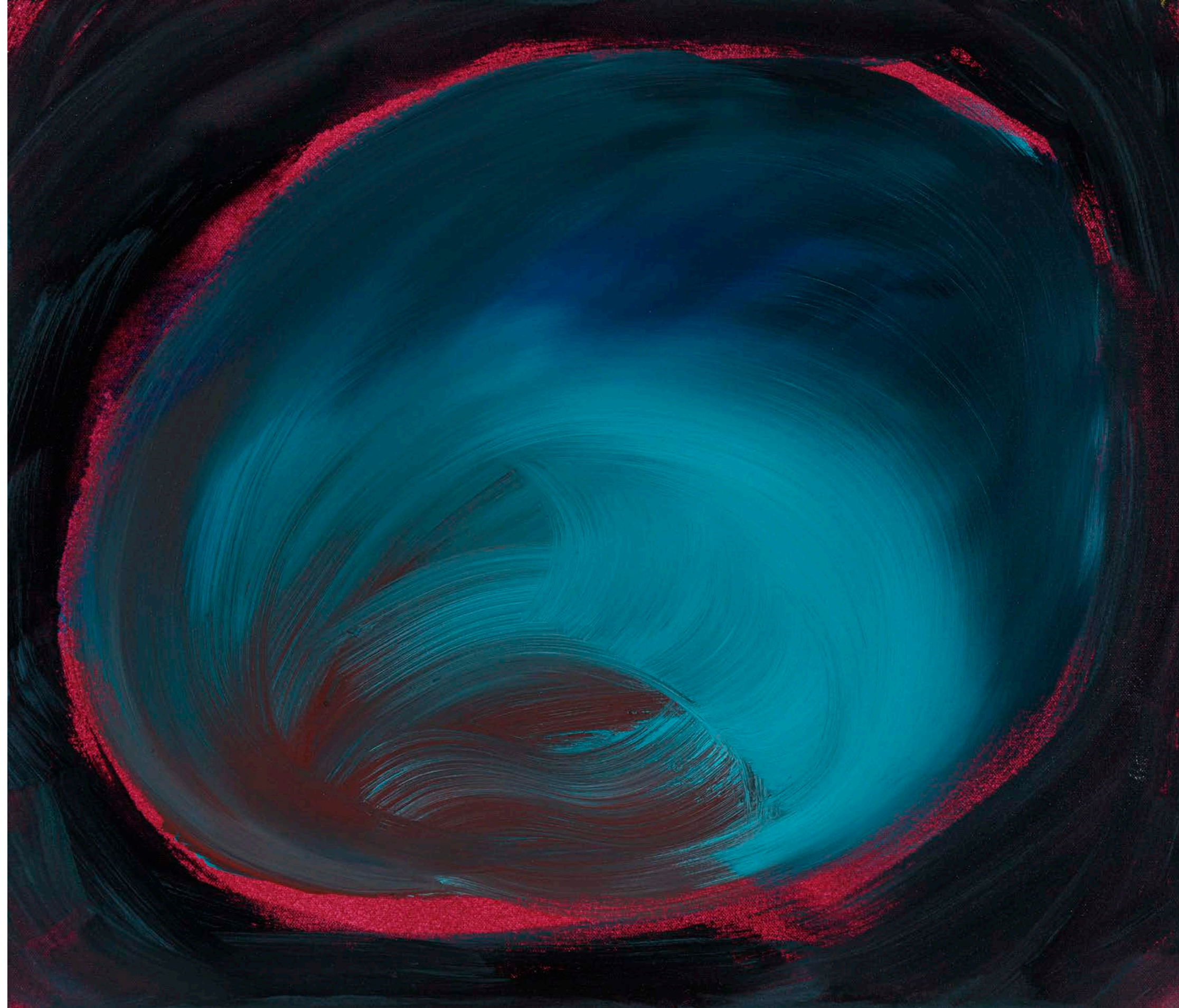
LYNN PAROTTI

Human III
2020
oil on canvas
17x20 inches



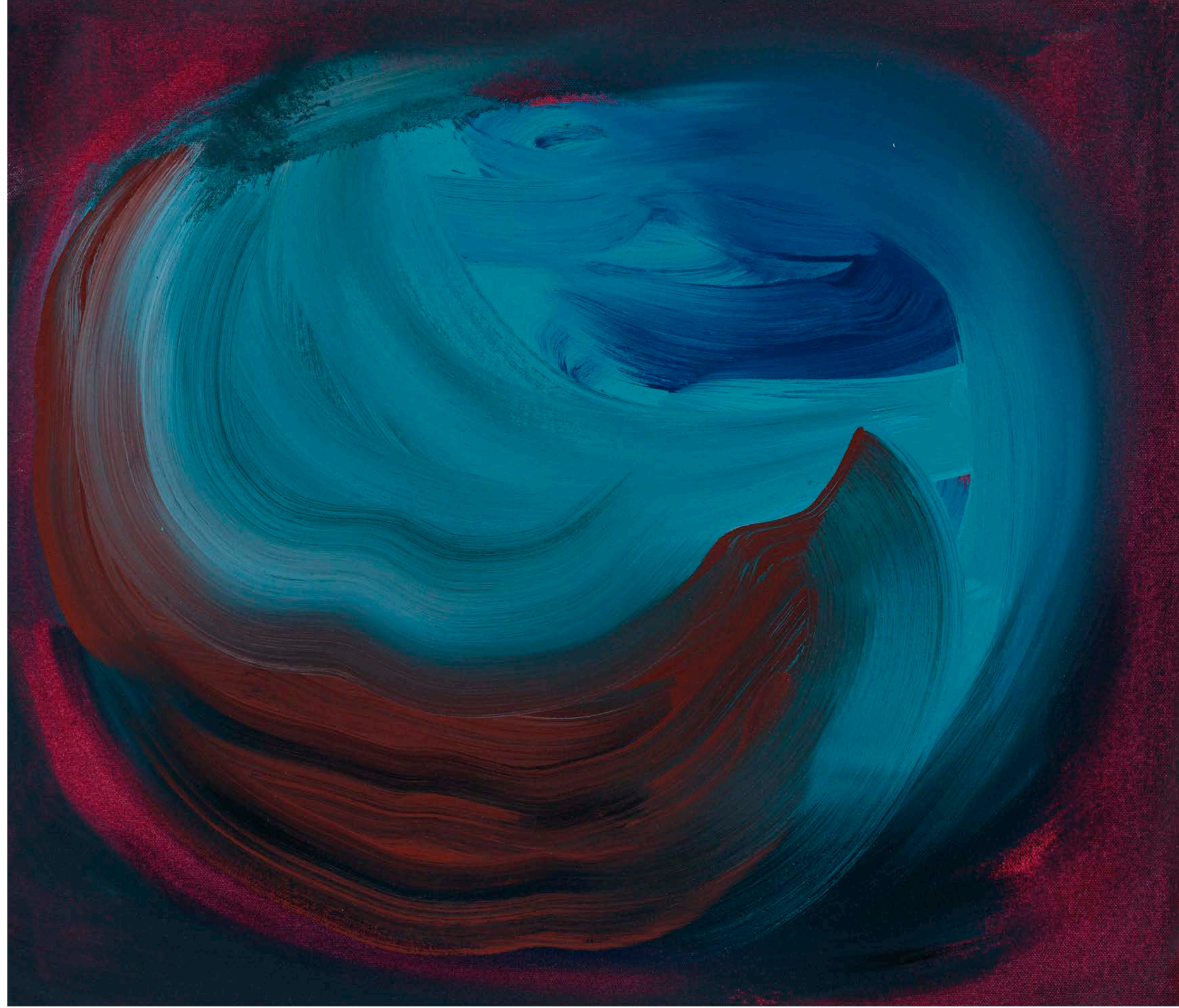
LYNN PAROTTI

Human IV
2020
oil on canvas
17x20 inches



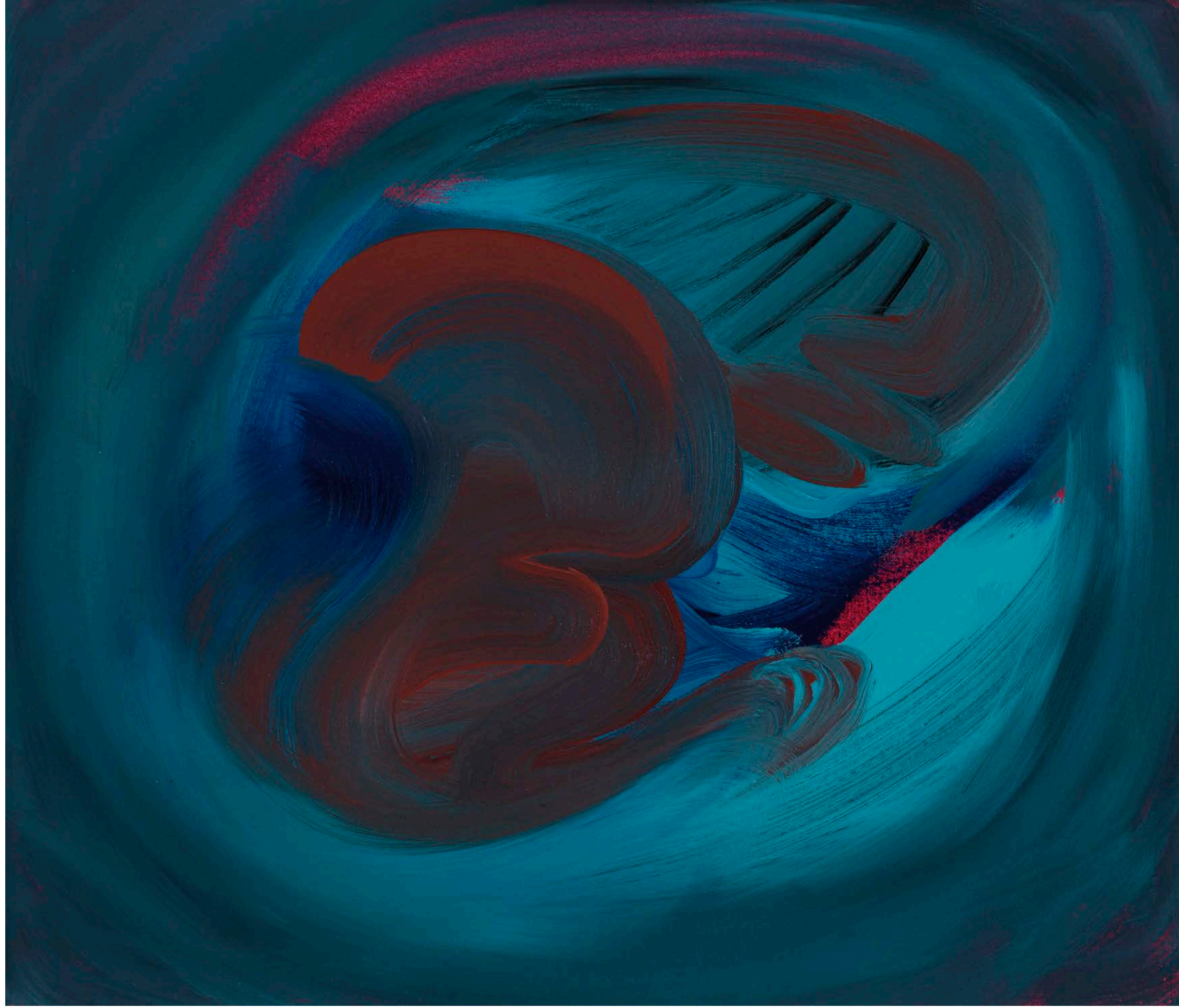
LYNN PAROTTI

Human V
2020
oil on canvas
17x20 inches



LYNN PAROTTI

Human VI
2020
oil on canvas
17x20 inches

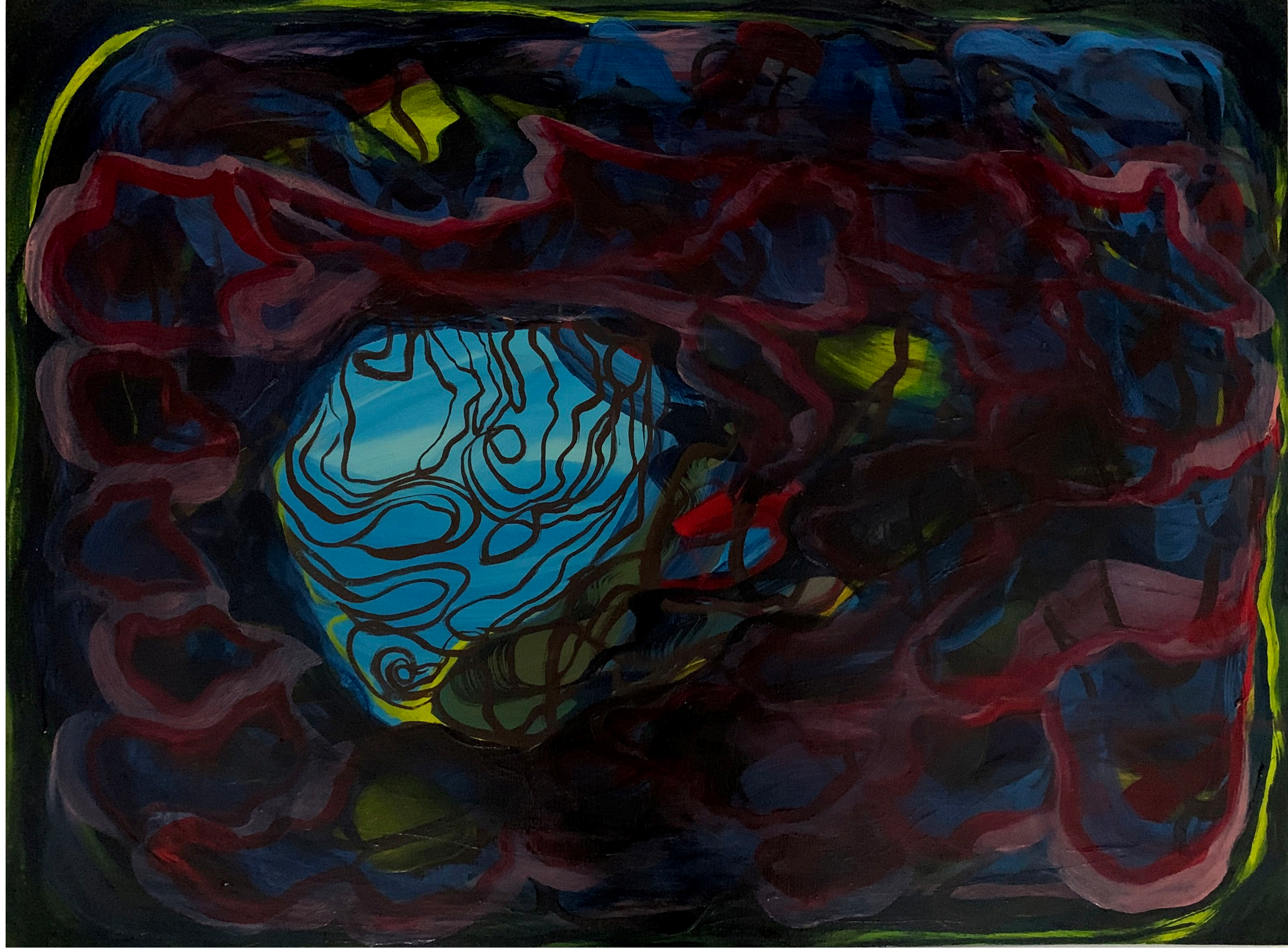


LYNN PAROTTI

Song of Moses
2016-2020
oil and wax on canvas
65x90 inches

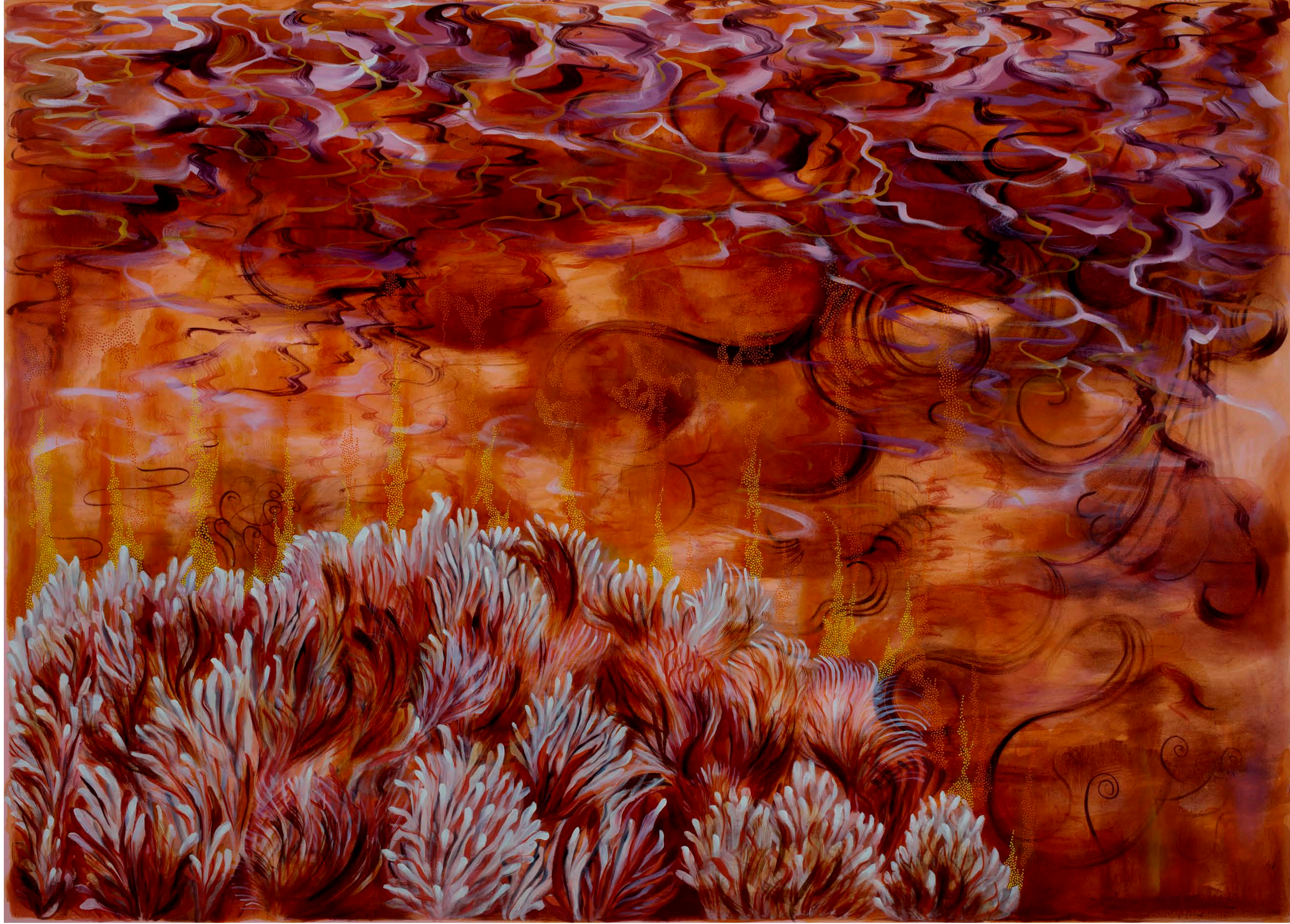


Runoff
2020
oil on linen
24x32 inches



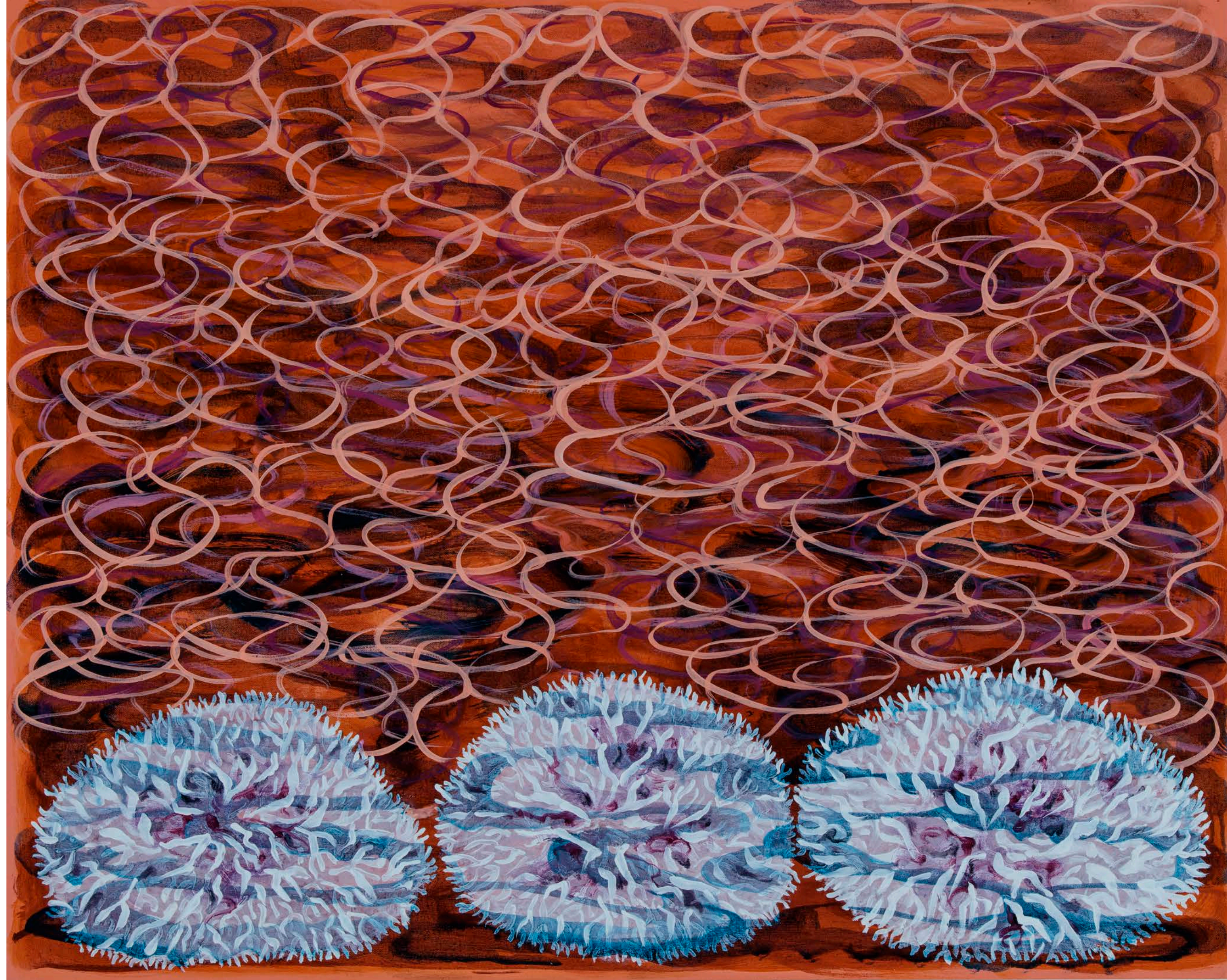
LYNN PAROTTI

Threads of Zooxanthellae
2019
oil on canvas
65x90 inches



LYNN PAROTTI

Birdsnests' Ensemble
2019
oil on canvas
29x35 inches



LYNN PAROTTI

Bleaching II
2020
oil on canvas
17x20 inches



To Dust We Return
2017-2020
oil, wood chips and wax on canvas
88x78 inches



From Water We Came
2017-2020
oil, wood chips and wax on canvas
88x78inches



Contributors

Amanda Coulson

Amanda Coulson has worked for three decades as a scholar, critic, curator and cultural producer on both sides of the Atlantic, having collaborated with artists and institutions, private and corporate colleagues, in the US, Europe, and various sites in the Caribbean. As an art critic and curator, she noted a lack of platforms for galleries representing emerging art and, with three other partners in 2005, founded the VOLTA fairs, which has taken place annually in New York and Basel for the last 15 years and for which she was Executive Director until 2012 and Artistic Director until 2019. She returned to her home in The Bahamas to take up the position of Executive Director at the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas (NAGB), where her focus is on increasing international awareness of the contemporary Caribbean art scene and on expanding the capacity and reach of the NAGB through a rigorous combination of capital works, collaborative projects and the building of strong inter-island and international networks.

Natalie Willis

Natalie Willis is a British-Bahamian curator and cultural worker. Born and raised in The Bahamas, she received her BA (Hons) and MA in Fine Art at York St John University in the UK. Willis is currently working as Associate Curator at the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas. Somewhere in a parallel universe, she still makes artwork.

As an emerging curator desperately trying to not contribute to the brain-drain of the Caribbean, she has dedicated her time at the NAGB to focusing on knowledge building and access through developing an inter-island traveling exhibition, and speaking to how colonial tourism shaped the cultural and physical landscape of the Anglo- Caribbean.

Willis was named the 2018 Tilting Axis Curatorial Fellow, and completed her fellowship in 2019 - culminating in an exhibition at the centre for Black Studies at the University of Texas at Austin, entitled “Lingua Franca: Black Spirit Speaks in Common Tongues”. Most recently she was invited to speak for the CCCADI “Curators in Conversation” talk series in 2020.

Tatiana Flores

Tatiana Flores, Ph.D. is Associate Professor in the Department of Latino and Caribbean Studies at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, with a joint appointment in the Department of Art History. She also serves as Director of Visual and Performing Arts at Rutgers’ Center for Women in the Arts and Humanities. She is the author of *Mexico’s Revolutionary Avant-Gardes: From Estridentismo to ¡30-30!* (Yale University Press, 2013), winner of the 2014 Humanities Book Prize by the Mexico Section of the Latin American Studies Association. She was an invited expert for the launch of the Getty Foundation’s initiative *Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA*. As part of this program, she curated the critically acclaimed exhibition *Relational Undercurrents: Contemporary Art of the Caribbean Archipelago* for the Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA) in Long Beach, CA. A 2017-18 Getty Scholar, Flores is Vice President of the Association for the Study of the Arts of the Present (ASAP), chair of the editorial board of *Art Journal*, and also serves on the boards of *ASAP/ Journal*, *Latin American and Latinx Visual Culture*, and *liquid blackness journal*.

Allison Thompson

Allison Thompson (Ph.D.) is an art historian and curator living in Barbados. She is a lecturer at the Division of Fine Arts at the Barbados Community College, focusing on modern and contemporary art of the Caribbean, Africa and the African diaspora. She is co-director with Ewan Atkinson of PUNCH Creative Arena, a curatorial initiative that aims to showcase and interrogate creative production with a multi-disciplinary focus on Caribbean and international art practices. Thompson has worked with a number of cultural organizations in the Caribbean including the Barbados National Art Gallery Committee, ICOM Barbados, and is the founding president of AICA Southern Caribbean, a regional chapter of the International Art Critics Association. She is currently the Vice-Chair of the Barbados National Art Gallery Board.

Allison has worked with the Black Diaspora Visual Arts project since 2007, organizing a series of symposiums and exhibitions aimed at creating greater visibility for Caribbean art and developing stronger and sustainable working relationships throughout the diaspora. She has also worked with the International Curators Forum’s mentoring programme, *Beyond the Frame*. In 2016 she was a Brooks Fellow, hosted jointly by the Delfina Foundation and Tate Britain. She has written numerous articles on Caribbean art, co-authored the book *Art in Barbados: What kind of mirror image* and co-edited *Curating in the Caribbean* with contributions from nine curators, writers and artists working in the region.

Acknowledgments

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With her ongoing relationship to the International Curators Forum, London and Barbados, she also wishes to thank Jessica Taylor, Allison Thompson and David. A. Bailey. Immense gratitude also to US-based curator, Tatiana Flores.

Without the gracious support of the Lyford Cay Foundation throughout her education, none of this would have been possible and for this she is humbly grateful.

Finally, it is the strength and resilience of her mother, Mrs. Dianne Parotti (The Silver Fox), that continues to inspire her.

Acknowledgments

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