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Georgii Uvs | Full Circle: The Beauty of Inevitability

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Full Circle: The Beauty of Inevitability

24 January – 3 February 2019

Curated and produced by
Eva McGaw and Tatiana Palinkasev / Metamorphosis Art Projects, London

Saatchi Gallery
Duke of York's HQ, King's Road, London SW3 4RY

Presented by  **KALIBRE**

Contents

Curators’ introduction 5

The exhibition 8

 Mesozoic 8

 Genesis 14

 Codes 26

 Wings 34

At a glance 46

About the artist 50

About the curators 51

The artist’s studio 52

About Saatchi Gallery 53

Contact 54

Credits 54

Full Circle: The Beauty of Inevitability

“Beauty is the torch that you hold up in the belief that it will lead you to truth in the end.” Sir Michael Atiyah

GeorgII Uvs (born 1954) began painting in his teens using figurative styles to embody strong references to the real world. Indeed, such was his specific interest and curiosity in the development of geological formations over hundreds of millions of years, that he went to Moscow University to study geology. This was followed by a second degree in Fine Arts. His education as a geologist has played an intrinsic influence on his artistic inspiration. Whilst, by definition, geologists need to appraise time in hundreds of millions of years, Uvs surmises that geologists may be prone to melancholia, a trait that is often associated with artists and a condition exemplified in the famous engraving ‘Melancholia’ by Dürer whose legacy on Western European art lasted for more than three centuries. This concept was also so well described by Wittkower in his art historical classic ‘Born Under Saturn: The Character and Conduct of Artists’.

The synthesis of science and art is crucial to Uvs’ vision and we must bear it in mind when we look at his works.

Mathematics is a key language for Uvs and he draws parallels with different periods in the history of art. He likens Arithmetics with the Renaissance, Algebra with Post-Impressionism and Higher Mathematics with Abstracts, in an ascending scale of complexity and proximity to the truth. In this sense, the choice of Uvs to move from his early figurative style to abstracts is indicative of a deep level of thought and

investigation. The relationship with mathematics is a recurrent theme throughout the history of art. Notable examples include Leonardo, the ultimate Renaissance polymath, and, more recently, Paul Klee who, as one of the fathers of abstract art, insisted in his lessons at the Bauhaus on obsessive study of nature and the fundamental relationship between mathematics and painting in order to create and perfect a new figurative language. Uvs, in a way, follows the lessons of Klee and brings to the artistic language his specific experience of the natural world.

Uvs’ transition to the abstract took place between 2014 and 2017 while he was living in Malta, thereby providing his artistic language with an efficient tool to express his emotions and transmit his energies in a more sustained and inquisitive dialogue with the environment, nature and people.

The paintings in this exhibition – his first in the UK – originate from this Maltese period and form four interlinking groups: ‘Mesozoic’, ‘Genesis’, ‘Code’ and ‘Wings’. These represent stages of an immersive and wide-ranging investigation through the cycles of life. The exhibition depicts a journey from the Mesozoic era, which spanned 252 to 60 million years ago and symbolized the purity and simplicity of the ‘very beginning’, to Genesis, the moment of the creation of life, to the Codes that embody intellectual development and knowledge (but also the formation and imposition on the individual of codes of behavior, language

and interaction that define society) and, finally, to the freedom from external and earthly constraints characterized in *Wings* where the innate desire for liberation triumphs.

The realisation that arithmetics and higher mathematics are leading principles both in nature and in art are fundamental to the rhythms in Uvs work. Pythagoras postulated that there is a mathematical reason behind everything and especially behind nature and the cosmos. Furthermore, that there is a cosmic music produced by the movement of planets creating another form of mathematics but Pythagoras laments that we are not always able or willing to hear this cosmic music. Accordingly, this philosophical hypothesis predicates that mathematics, art, music and beauty are intrinsically connected. The expression “beauty of an equation” is often used, and as Sir Michael Atiyah said, “Beauty is the torch that you hold up in the belief that it will lead you to truth in the end”.

The uniqueness of Uvs’ art can be found in his use of a personally developed painting technique and solution. He does not use a brush but instead transfers his knowledge and emotions directly on to the canvas by laying it flat on the floor and, without directly touching or intervening, pours different colours on it thereby allowing him to sustain his flow of ideas, energy and actions without distraction. He then manipulates the paint from underneath the canvas by making

it move at various speeds and directions. This unique manner of painting is also a consequence of Uvs’ idea that no artist can alter nature better than nature itself and that intervention by the artist must be minimal.

The art of Uvs is art without surface intervention although his aim is to communicate the beauty and perfection of nature in the most direct way with detailed attention to the texture and composition of colours.

The articulacy of his works is controlled by a specifically created density in the paint combined with a rich consistency of colours that produce different levels of fluidity and composition. These colours, in some cases, may take up to three years to dry but, in the process of drying, form beautiful folds and creases which emerge on the surface of the painting and cause a profound effect on the eye of the beholder.

Uvs’ notion that art and mathematics are languages that, in parallel and in cooperation, lead to a deeper and more refined understanding of reality, stands behind his other experimentation with technique, namely the use of UV light reactive pigments. This technique has been used by many modern artists, Basquiat for example, and add a new layer of enjoyment and interpretation to these works.

An image that reacts to UV light is an image that invites the audience to at least two visions, two

sensitive approaches, two emotional and logical interactions. The change of light radically modifies our perception of the painting and its relationship with the surrounding space. Such a painting is open to a metamorphosis, to a transformation, in the sense of unveiling a hidden message from the illusion of appearance to a more faithful representation of nature. If, like in Plato’s cave, all we can see is a projected shadow of the truth, a metamorphic image can correct the distortions of empiric reality and present us with a rendition that is closer to the essence.

A very laborious process is required to create these works of art and Uvs can never quite predict how the painting will transform itself, but, once he begins his work, he has identified his inspiration, the feeling he wants to transmit, and channels it towards the canvas. The process of painting flows at the moment of creation, with a spontaneous feeling of movement, colour, and change. During this process, there is a form of intuitive conflict where the artist remains the creator, but the creation, through self-determination, materialises via an intense relationship between mind, hand, material and environment. The accident, in the sense of what cannot be predicted or calculated, becomes part of a creative method based on a rational approach to the study of chance and probability.

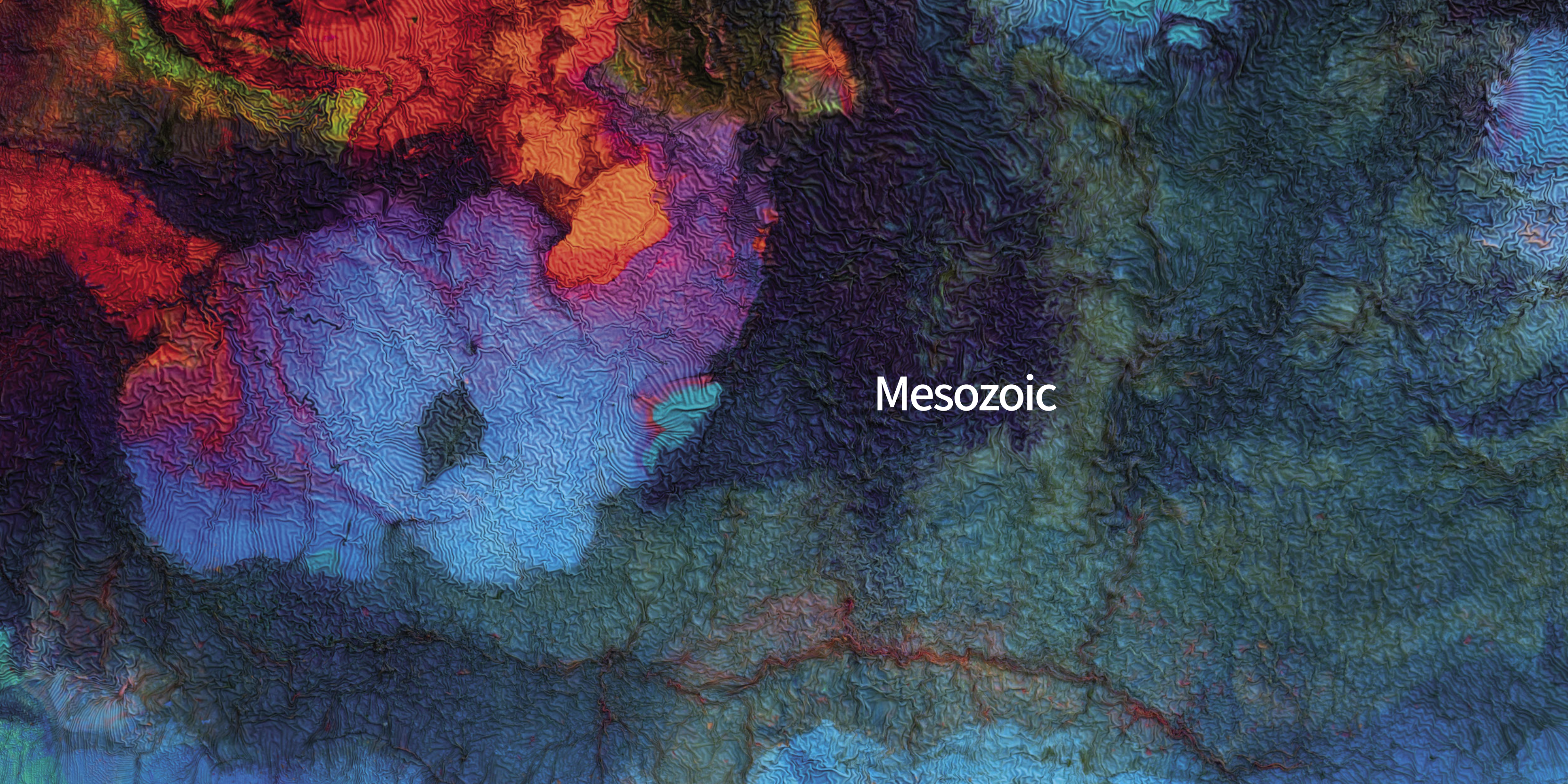
Thus, his paintings develop an independent existence during the process of their creation, a process that Uvs can only partially control

by using different techniques. For example, he uses very liquid, fast-drying paint for *Mesozoic* and *Code* and, conversely, a high viscosity state in *Genesis* and *Wings* which transforms itself in the process of a several-year drying period. This difference in use of texture provides nature with the possibility to express itself differently. If nature is perfect, Uvs argues, then the artist must let it manifest itself, rather than try to imitate it.

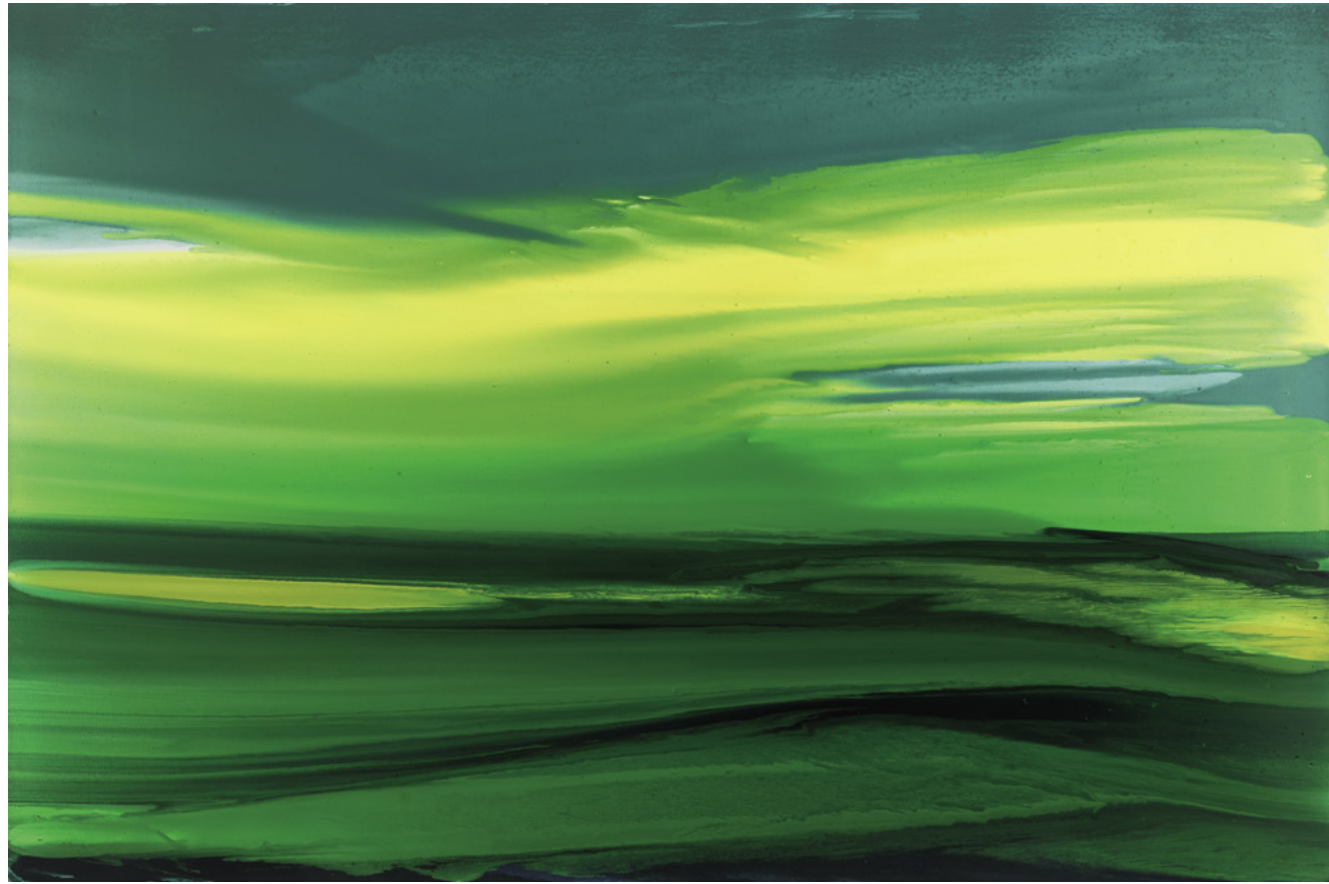
This articulate process of philosophical inspiration, art historical references and technical experimentation brings phenomenal significance and vibrant substance to the works of Uvs, whilst at the same time reflecting the turbulence of the artist’s emotions, the depth of his thoughts on art, and the primordial energy of his colours.

The ‘Full Circle’ exhibition rounds up the last stylistic phase of Georgii Uvs’ work through which he masterfully evokes the beauty of the unstoppable force of nature and transforms the inevitability of change through his art into ‘The Beauty of Inevitability’.

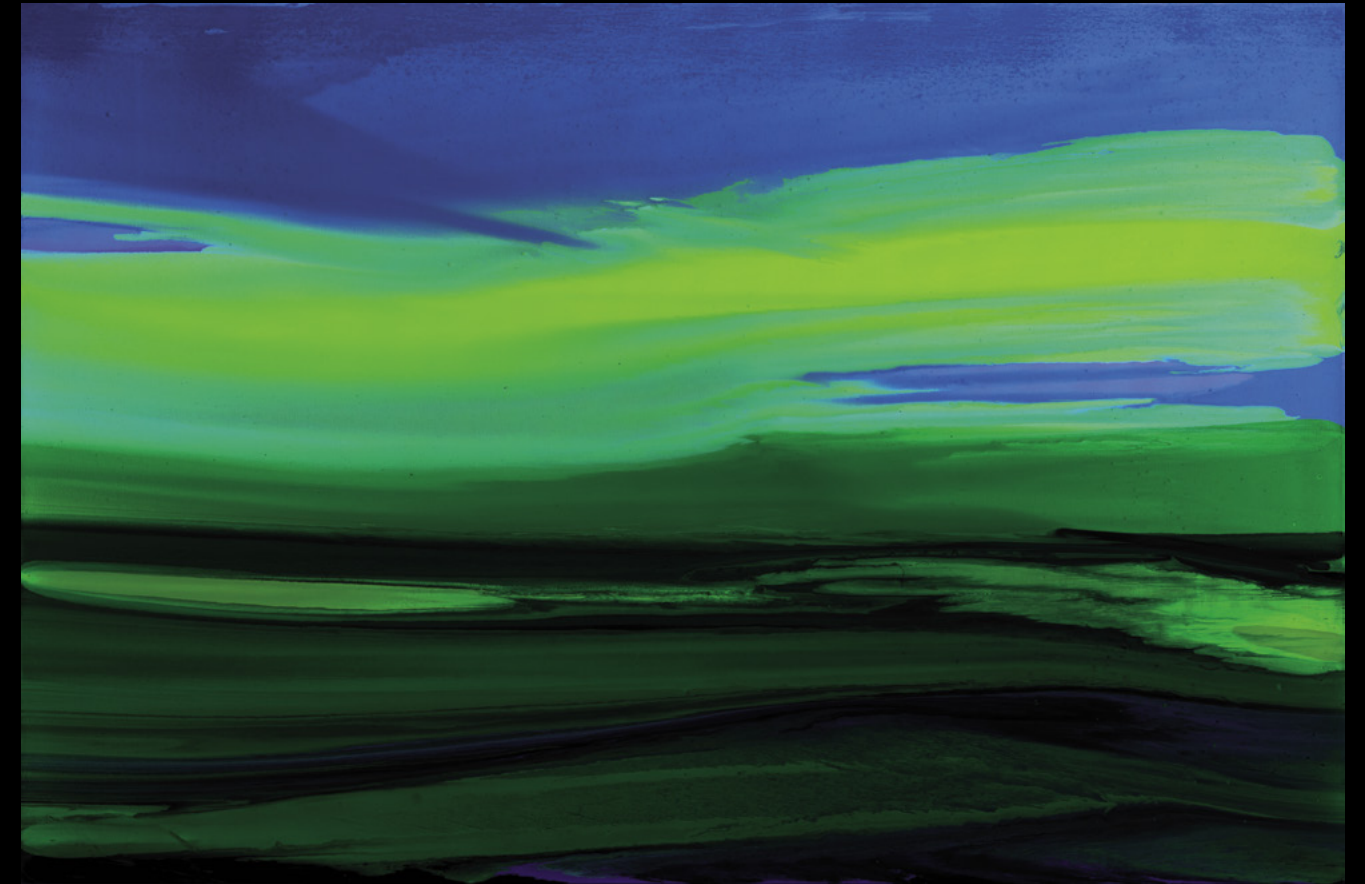
Tatiana Palinkasev & Eva McGaw



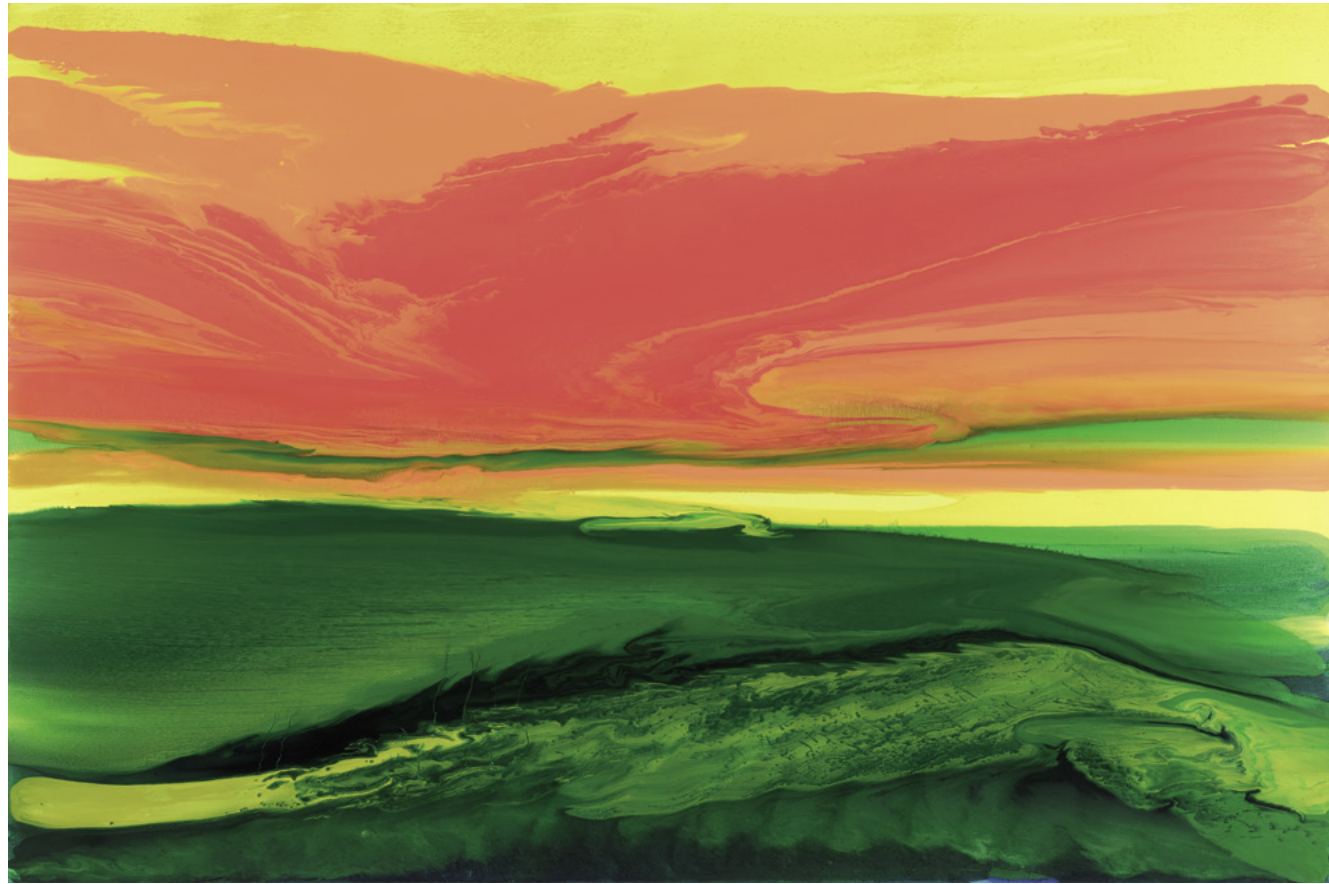
Mesozoic



Mesozoic 3
140 x 210cm
2017
Oil on canvas



Mesozoic 3 (under UV light)
140 x 210cm
2017
Oil on canvas



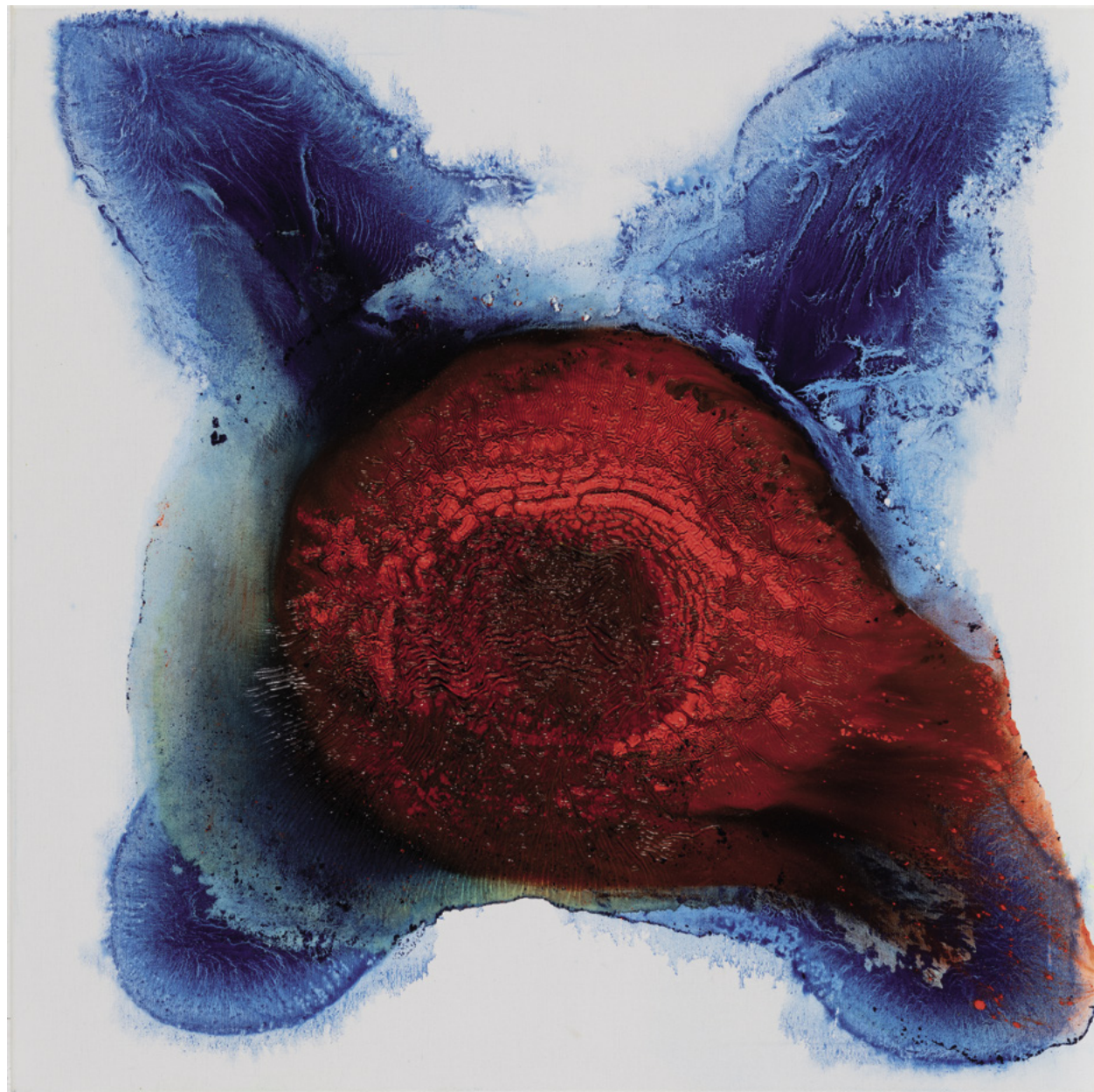
Mesozoic 4
140 x 210cm
2017
Oil on canvas



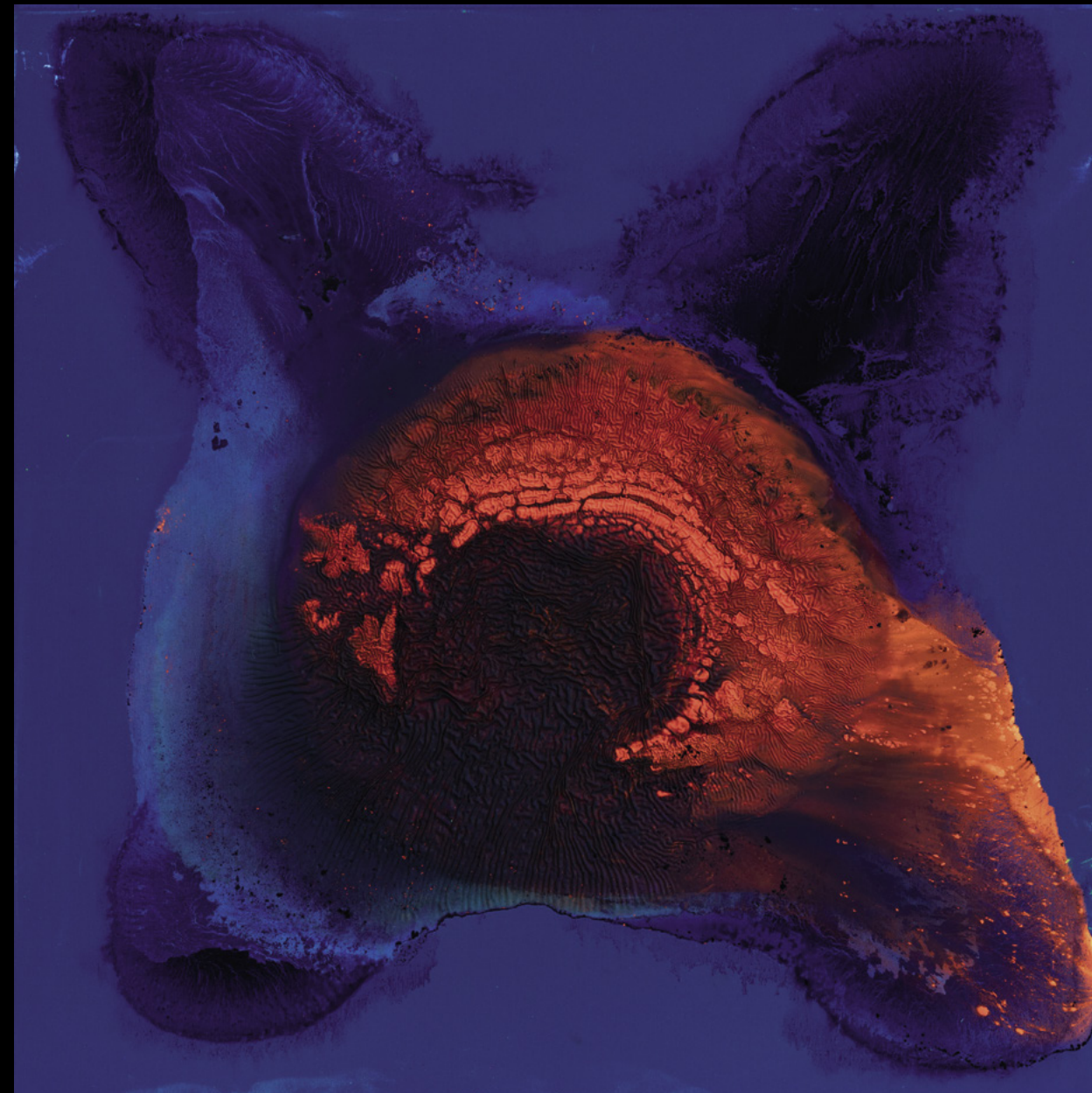
Mesozoic 4 (under UV light)
140 x 210cm
2017
Oil on canvas

The background of the image is a complex, wavy, and textured surface, resembling a topographical map or a distorted image. The color palette is primarily shades of blue, ranging from deep, dark blues to lighter, almost white highlights. The texture consists of numerous small, irregular, and interconnected ridges and valleys, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall effect is that of a shimmering, undulating surface. In the center of this textured field, the word "Genesis" is written in a clean, white, sans-serif font. The text is centered both horizontally and vertically, standing out prominently against the busy, blue background.

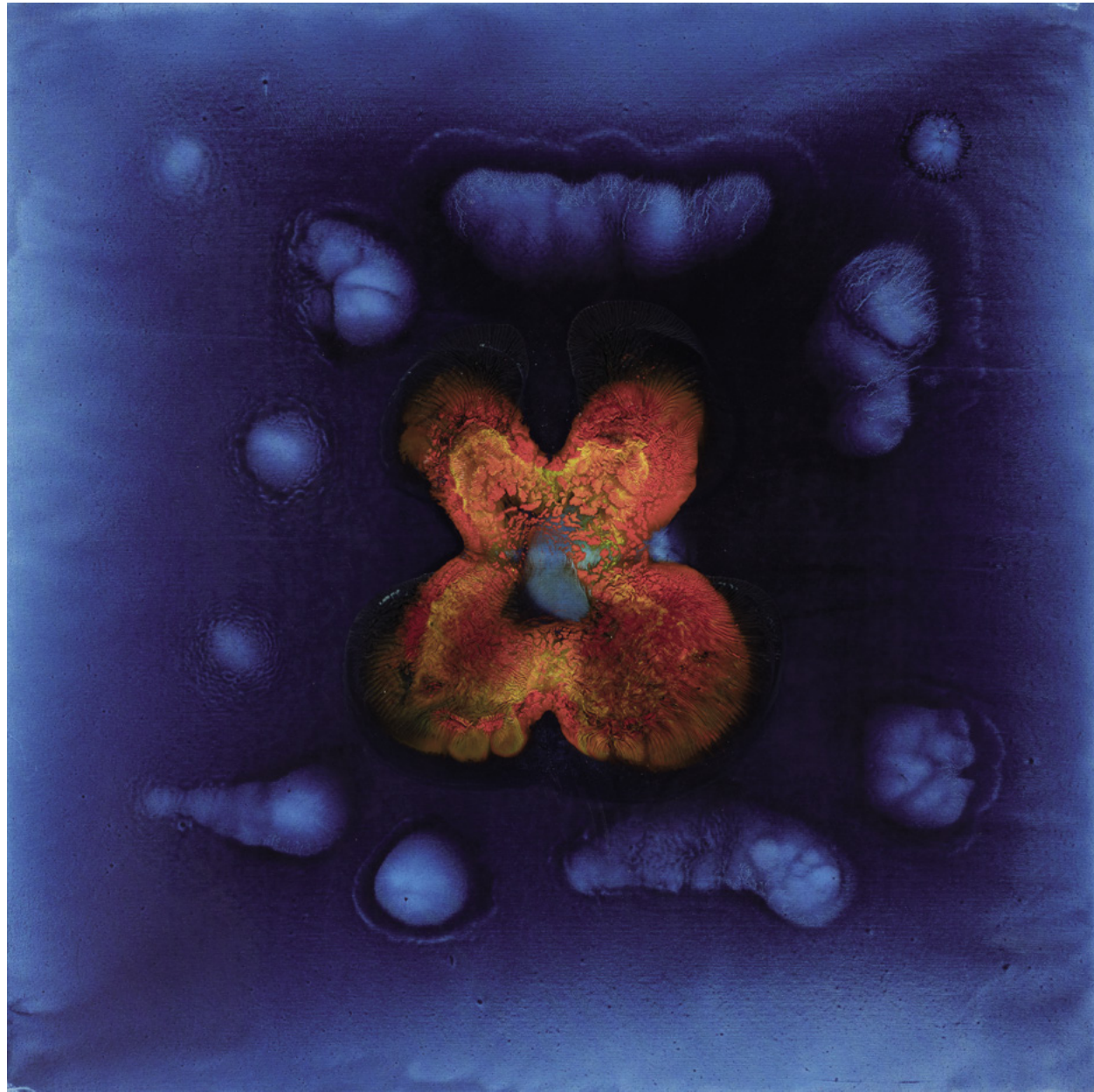
Genesis



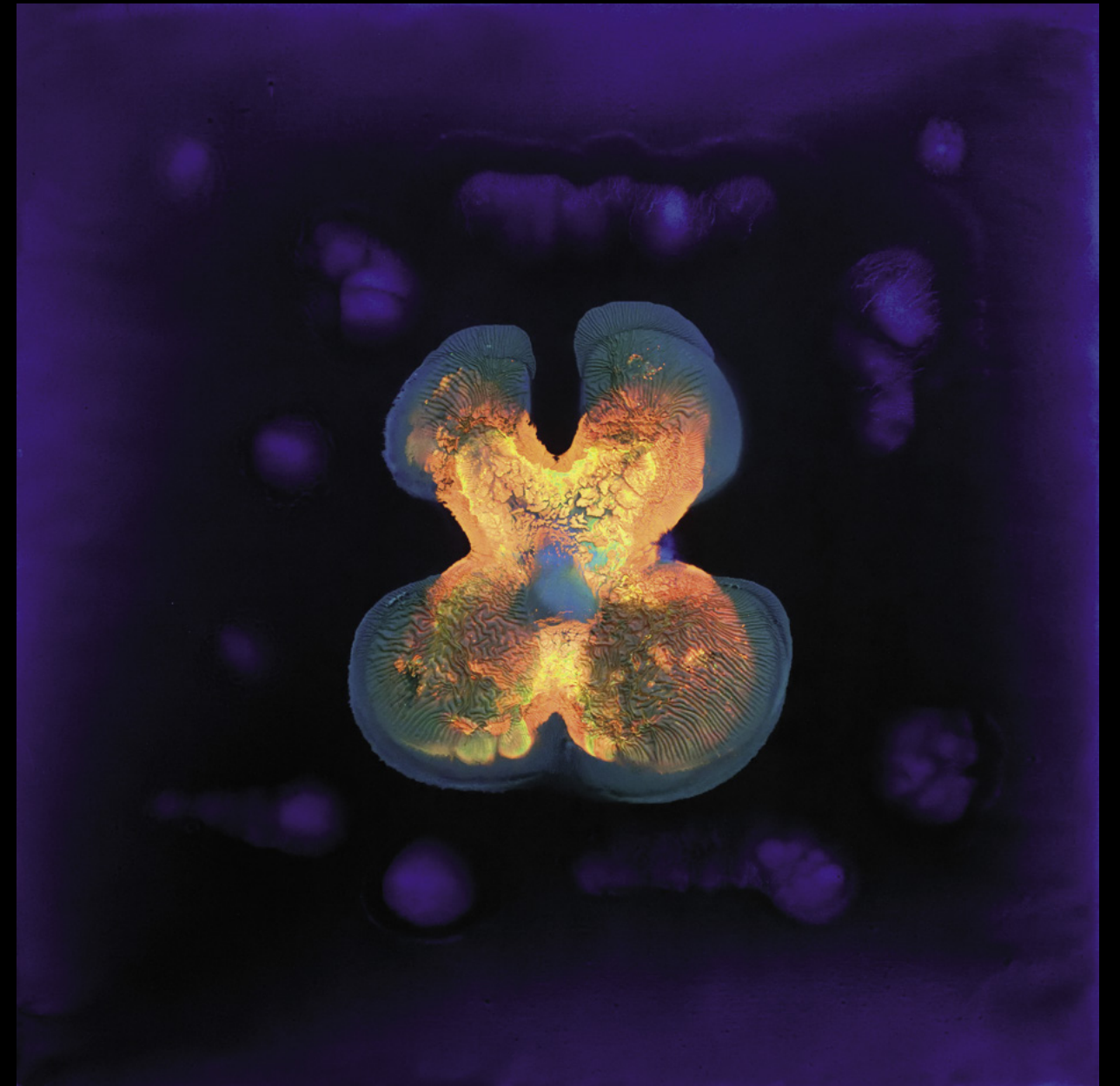
Genesis 2
90 x 90cm
2017
Oil on canvas



Genesis 2 (under UV light)
90 x 90cm
2017
Oil on canvas



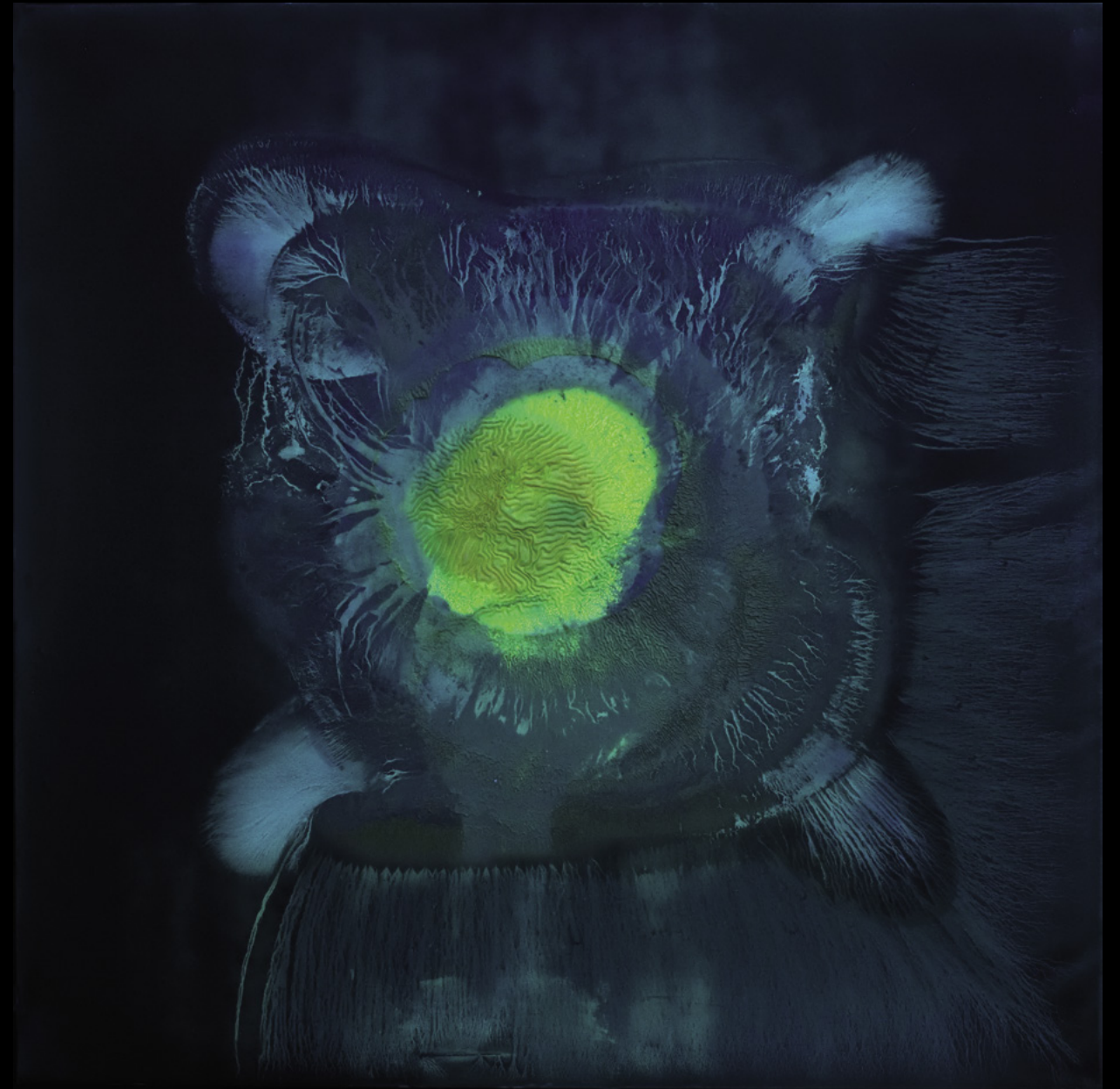
Genesis 7
150 x 150cm
2017
Oil on canvas



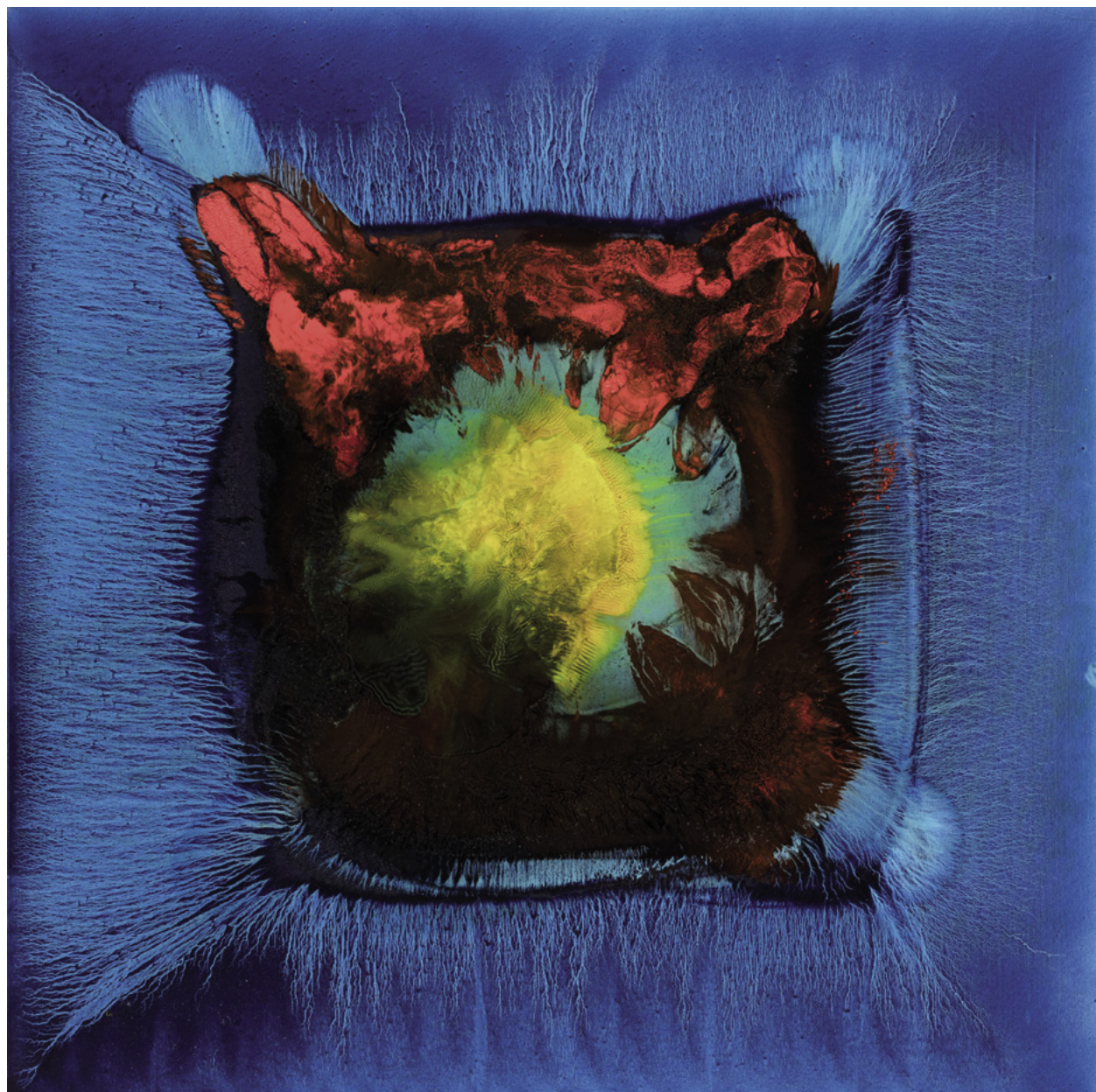
Genesis 7 (under UV light)
150 x 150cm
2017
Oil on canvas



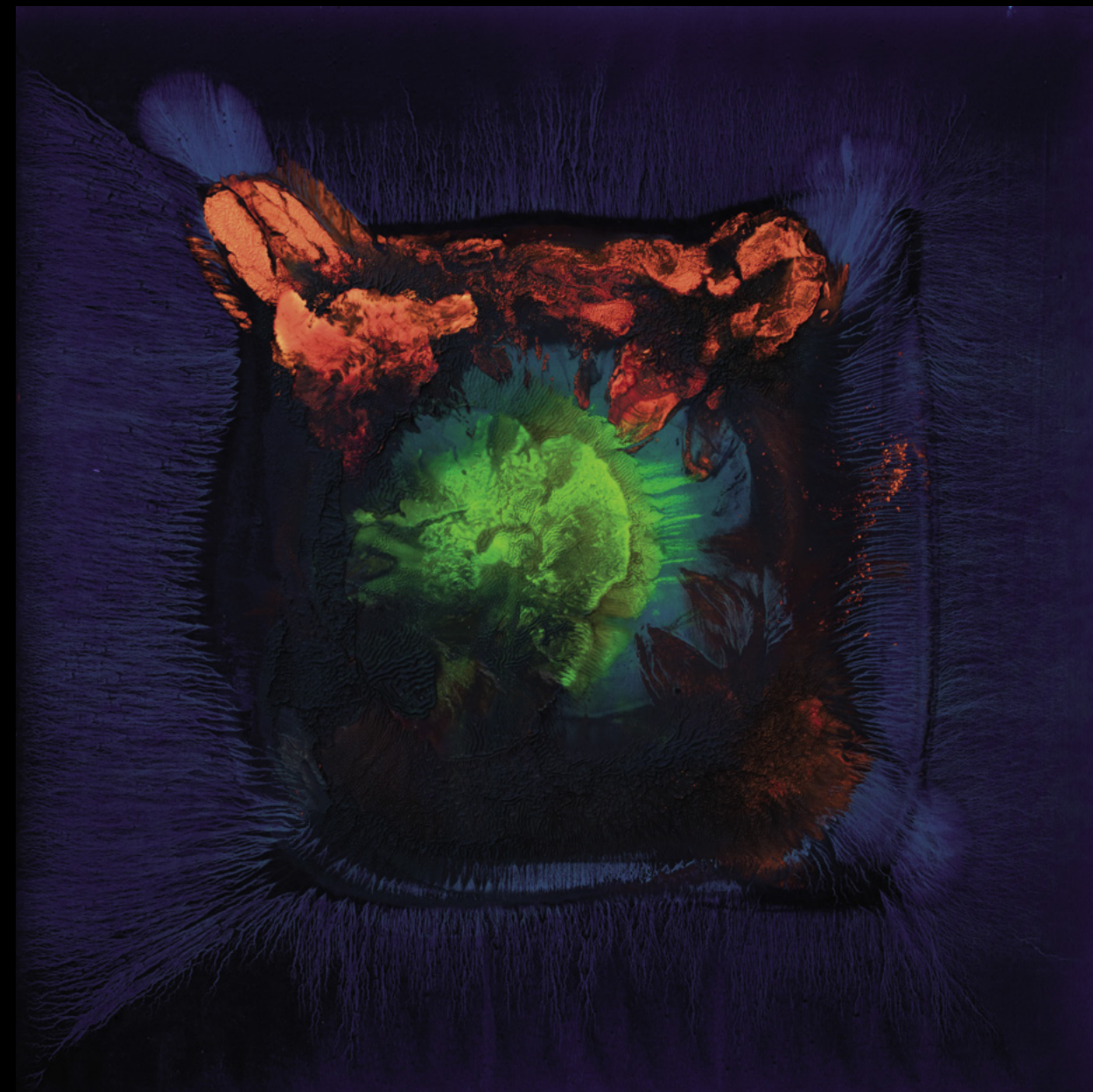
Genesis 8
150 x 150cm
2017
Oil on canvas



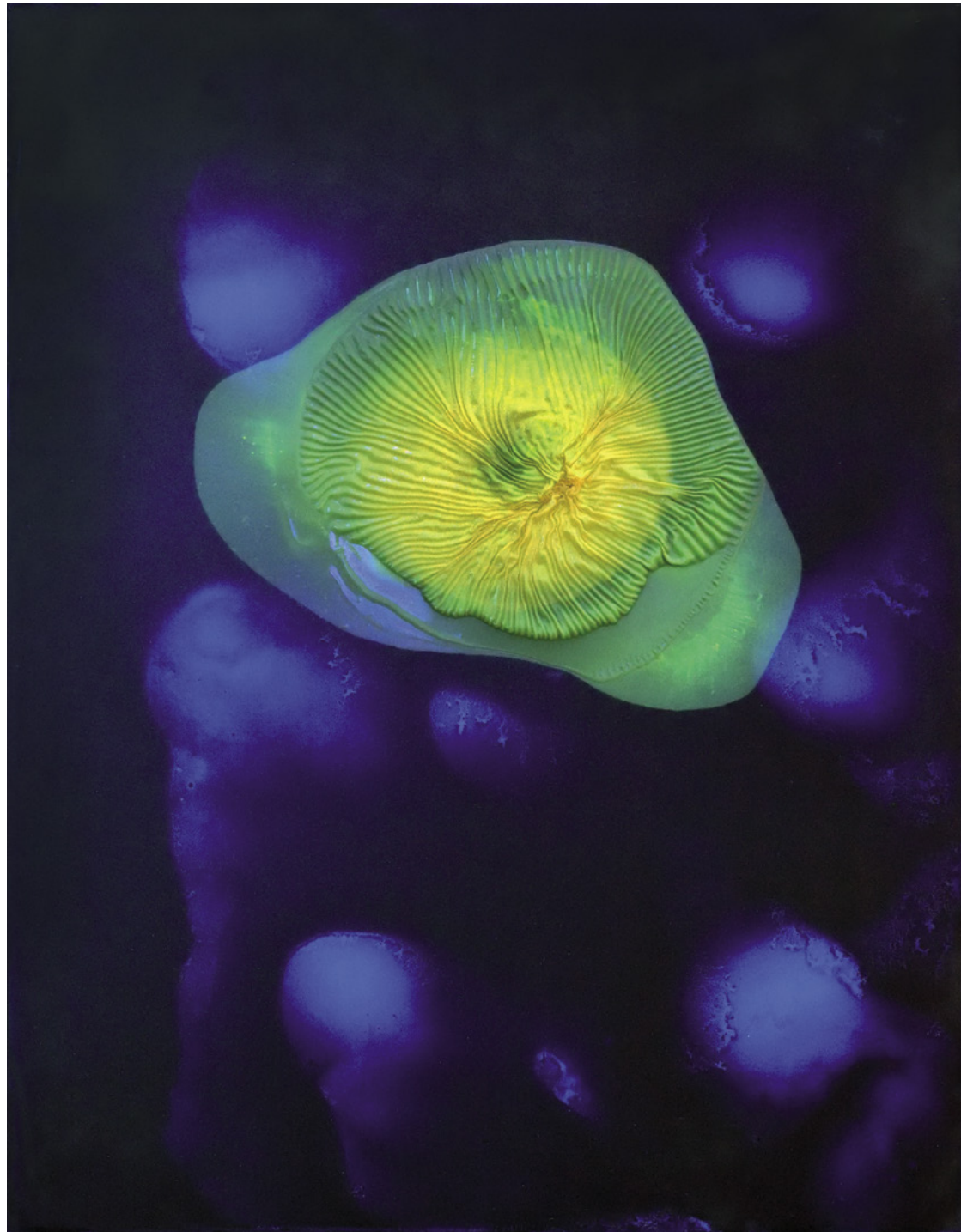
Genesis 8 (under UV light)
150 x 150cm
2017
Oil on canvas



Genesis 5
150 x 150cm
2017
Oil on canvas



Genesis 5 (under UV light)
150 x 150cm
2017
Oil on canvas



Genesis 12
90 x 70cm
2017
Oil on canvas



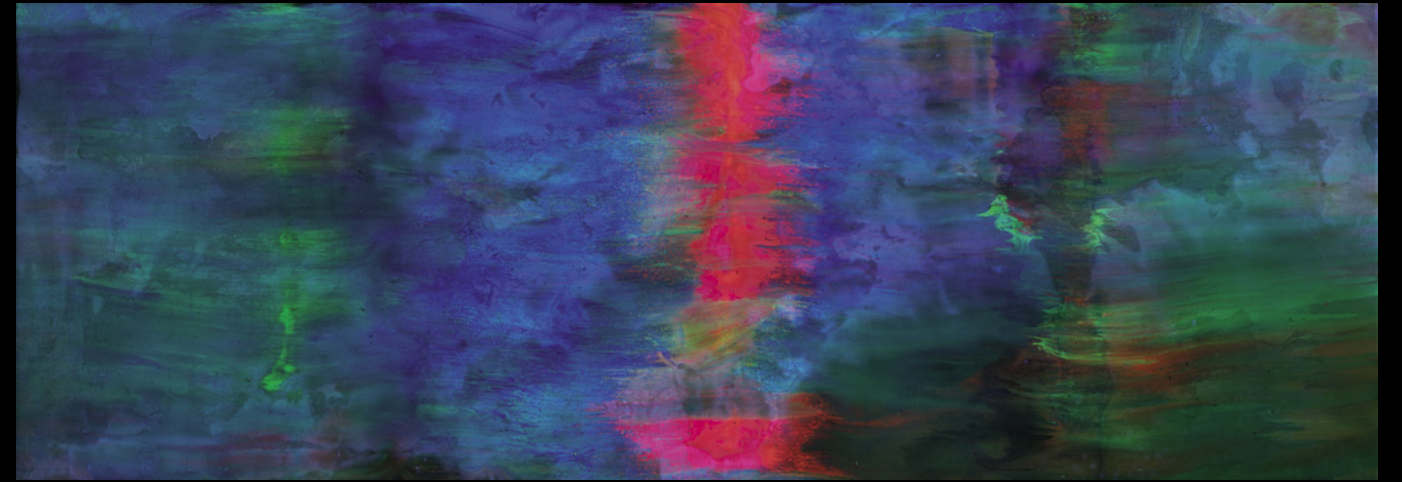
Genesis 12
(detail)
90 x 70cm
2017
Oil on canvas



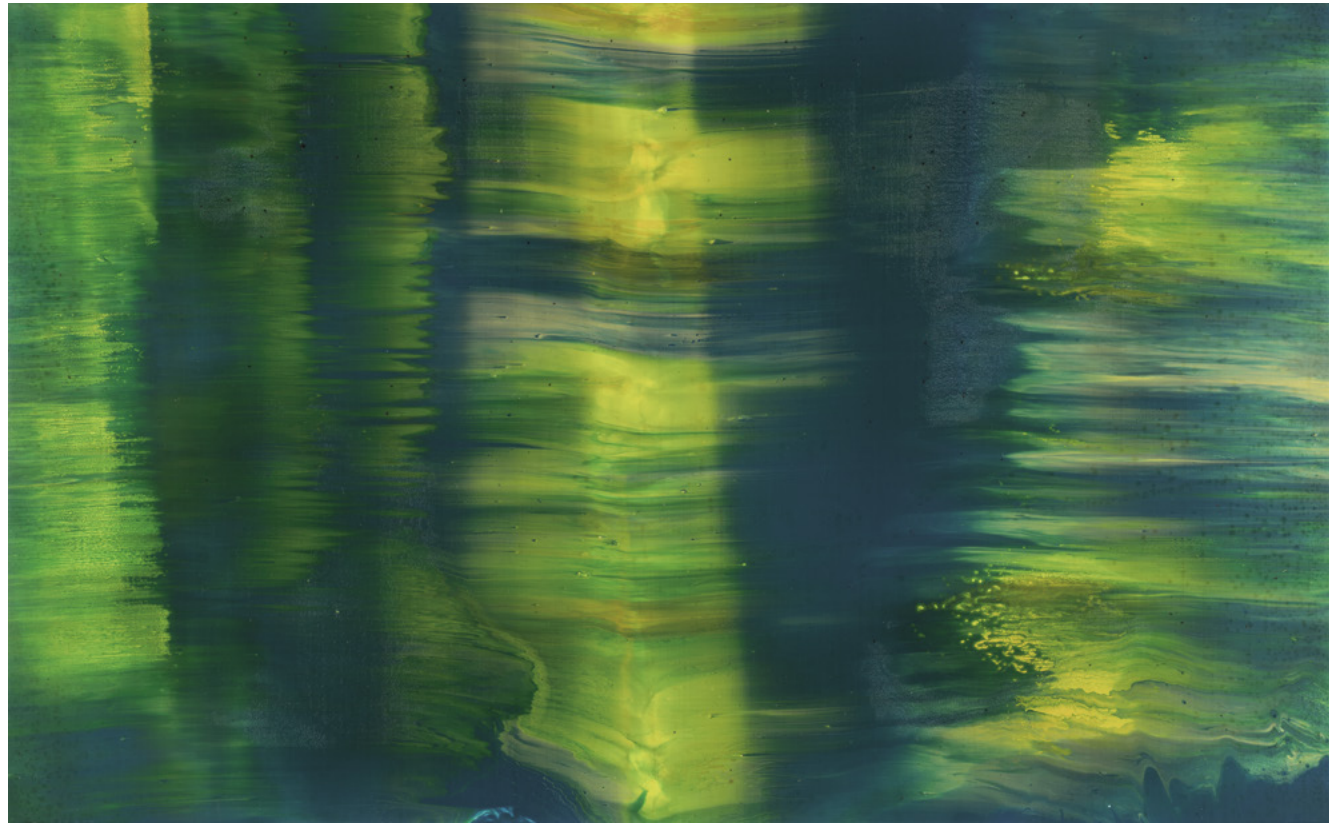
Codes



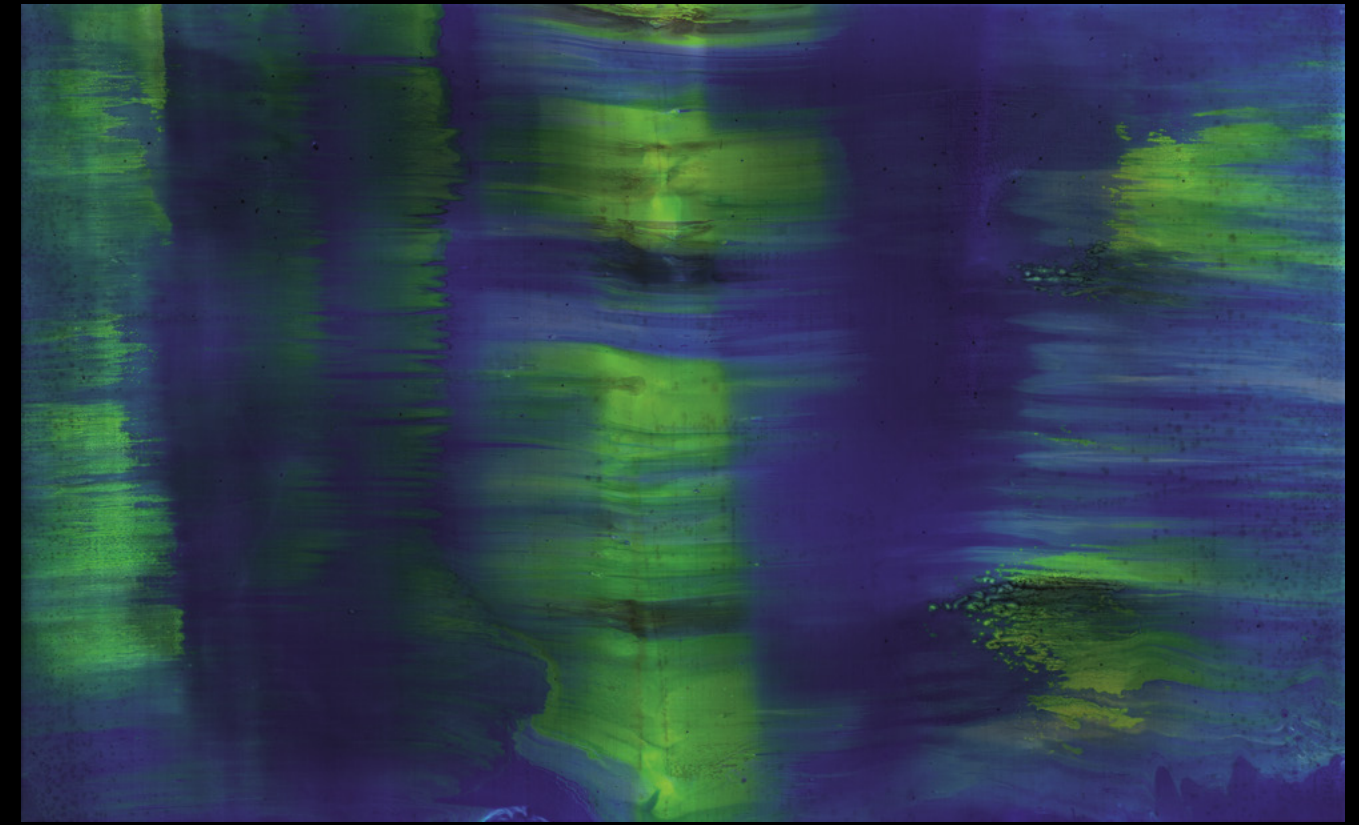
Codes 1
100 x 285cm
2017
Oil on canvas



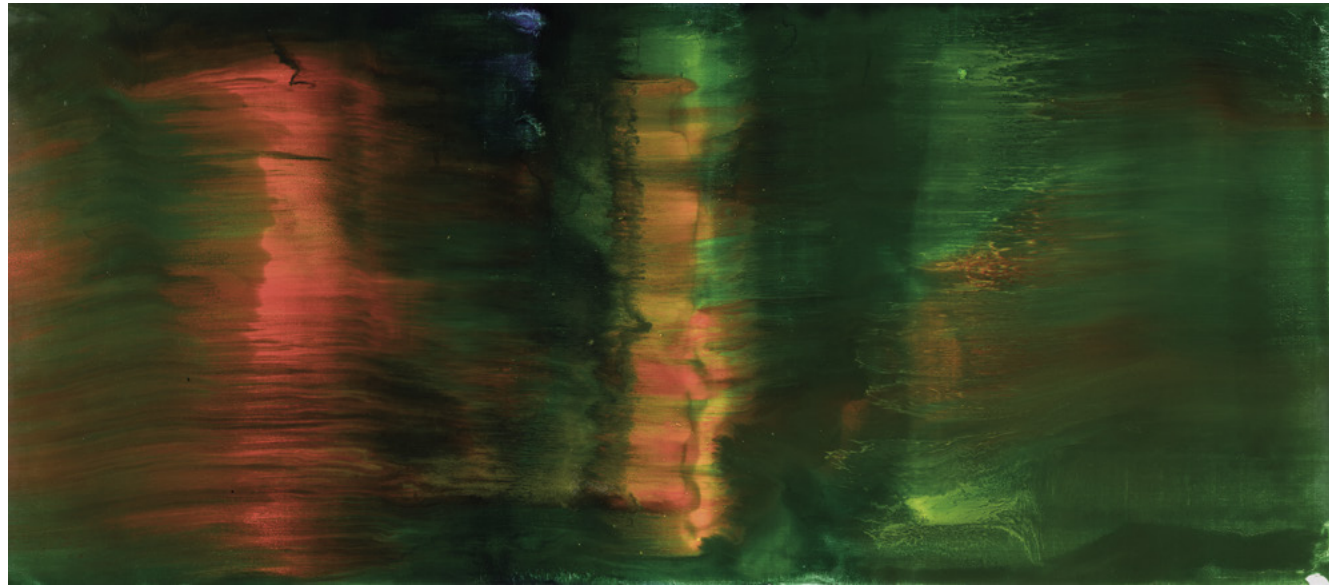
Codes 1 (under UV light)
100 x 285cm
2017
Oil on canvas



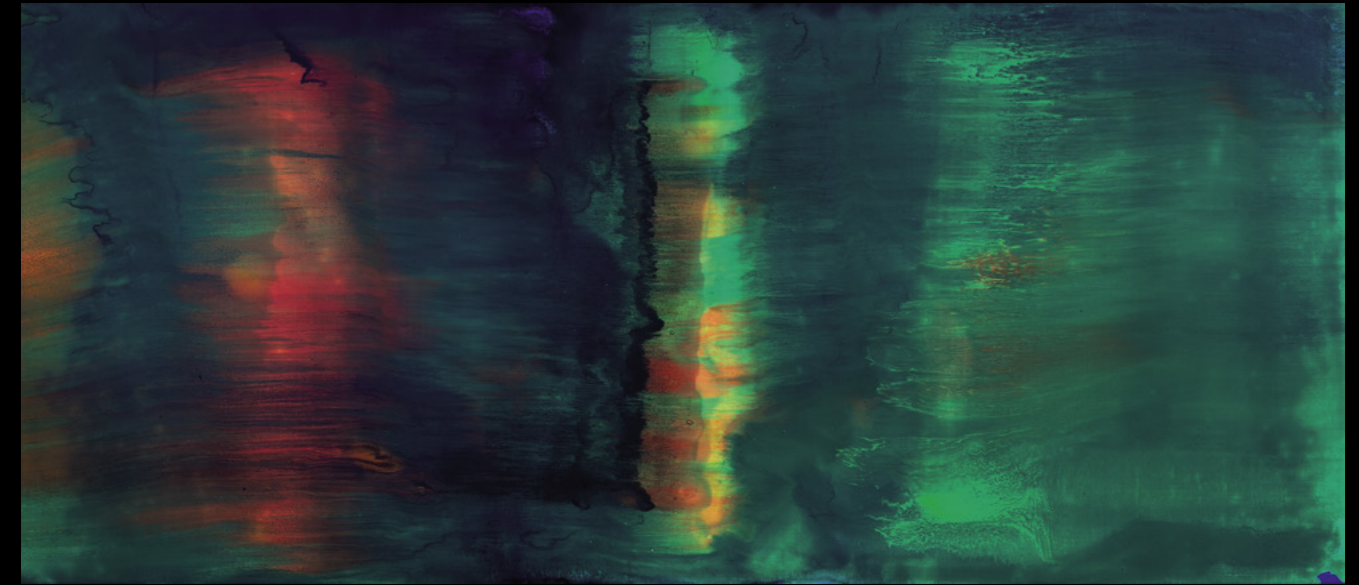
Codes 7
130 x 210cm
2016
Oil on canvas



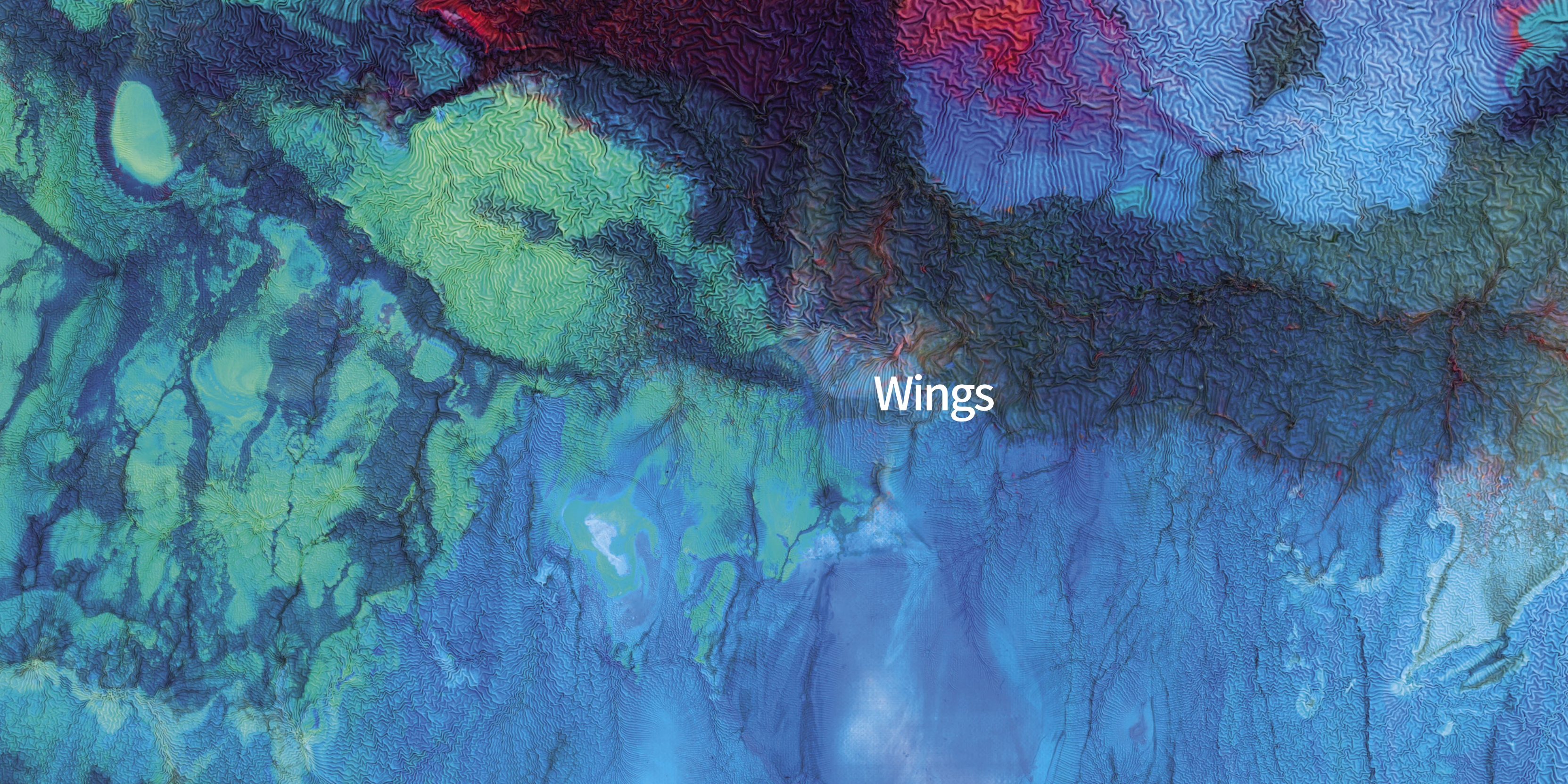
Codes 7 (under UV light)
130 x 210cm
2016
Oil on canvas



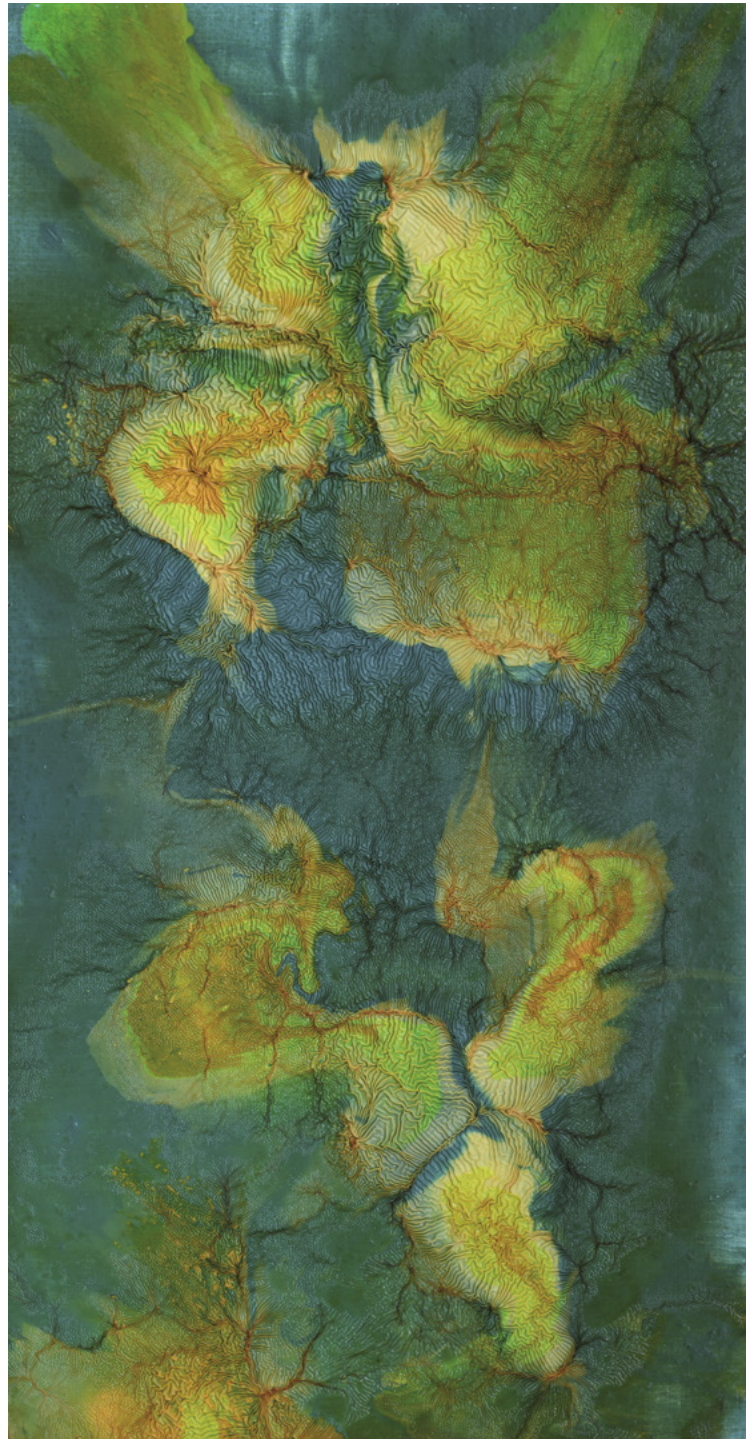
Codes 6
90 x 205cm
2017
Oil on canvas



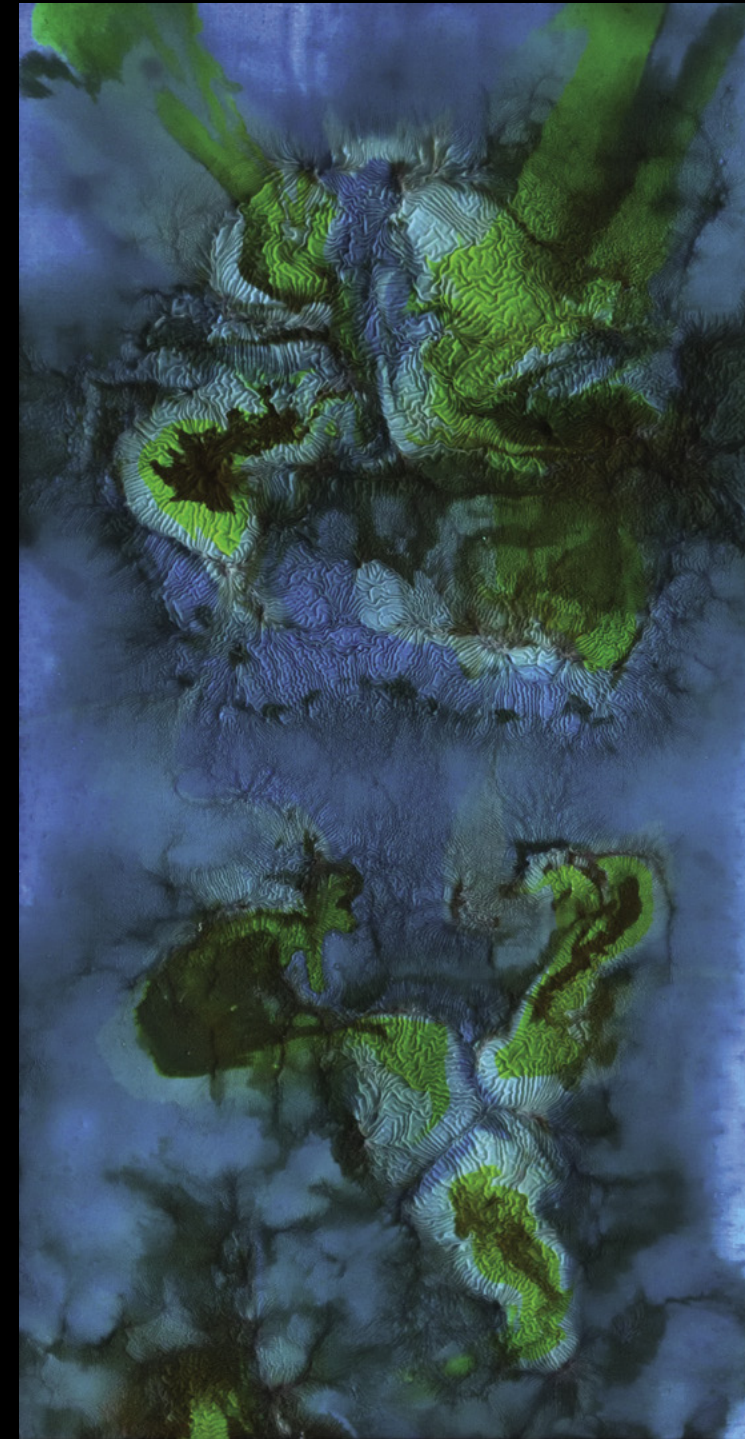
Codes 6 (under UV light)
90 x 205cm
2017
Oil on canvas



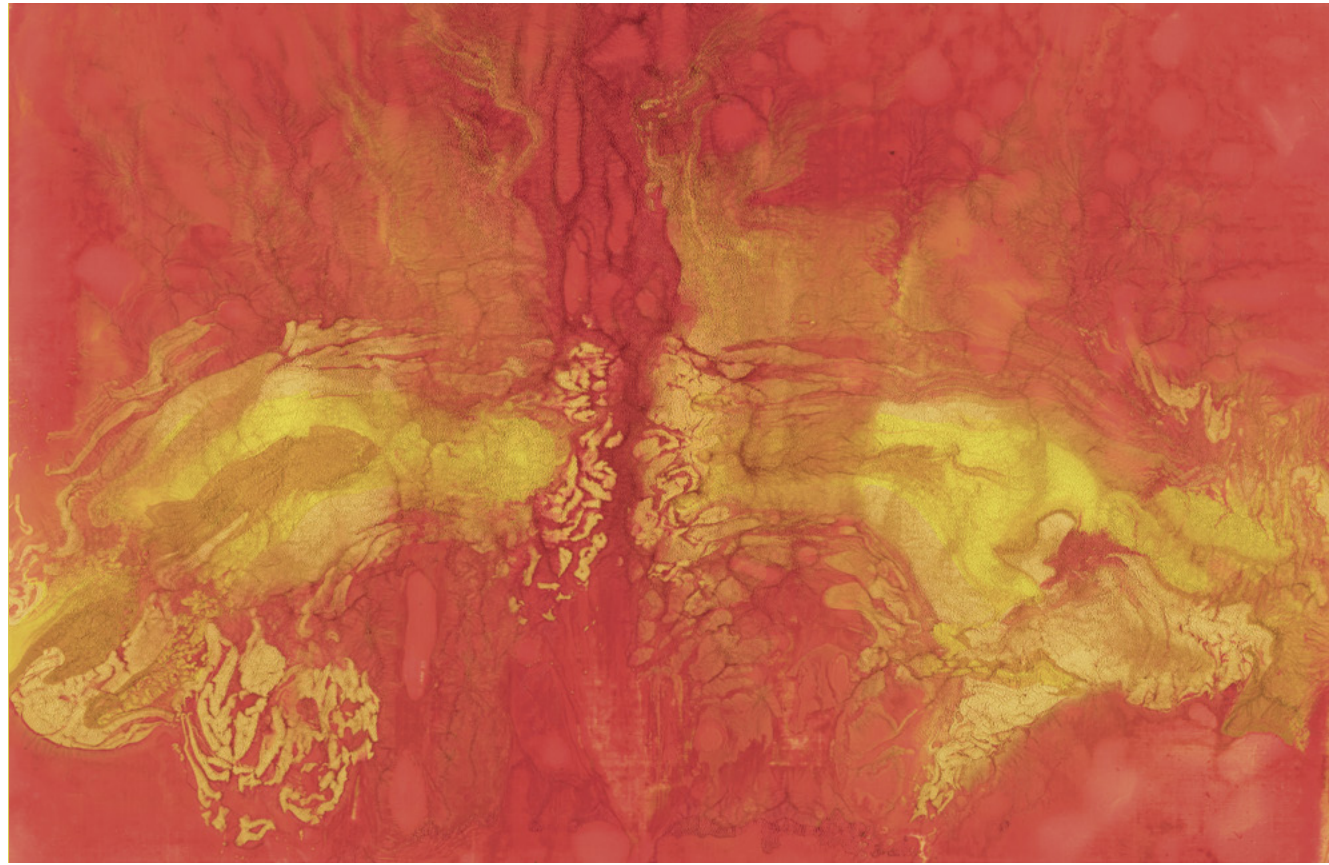
Wings



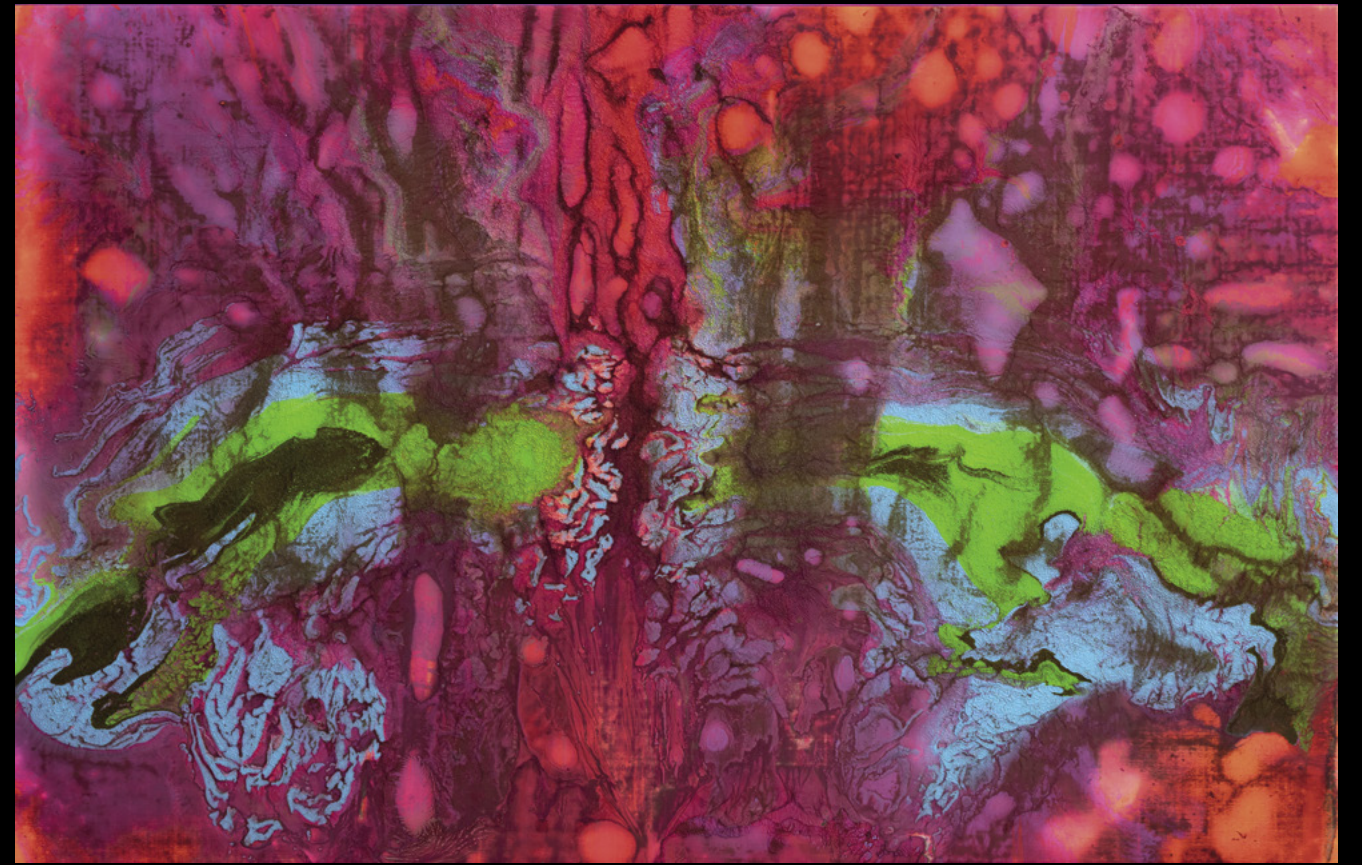
Wings 13
95 x 50cm
2015
Oil on canvas



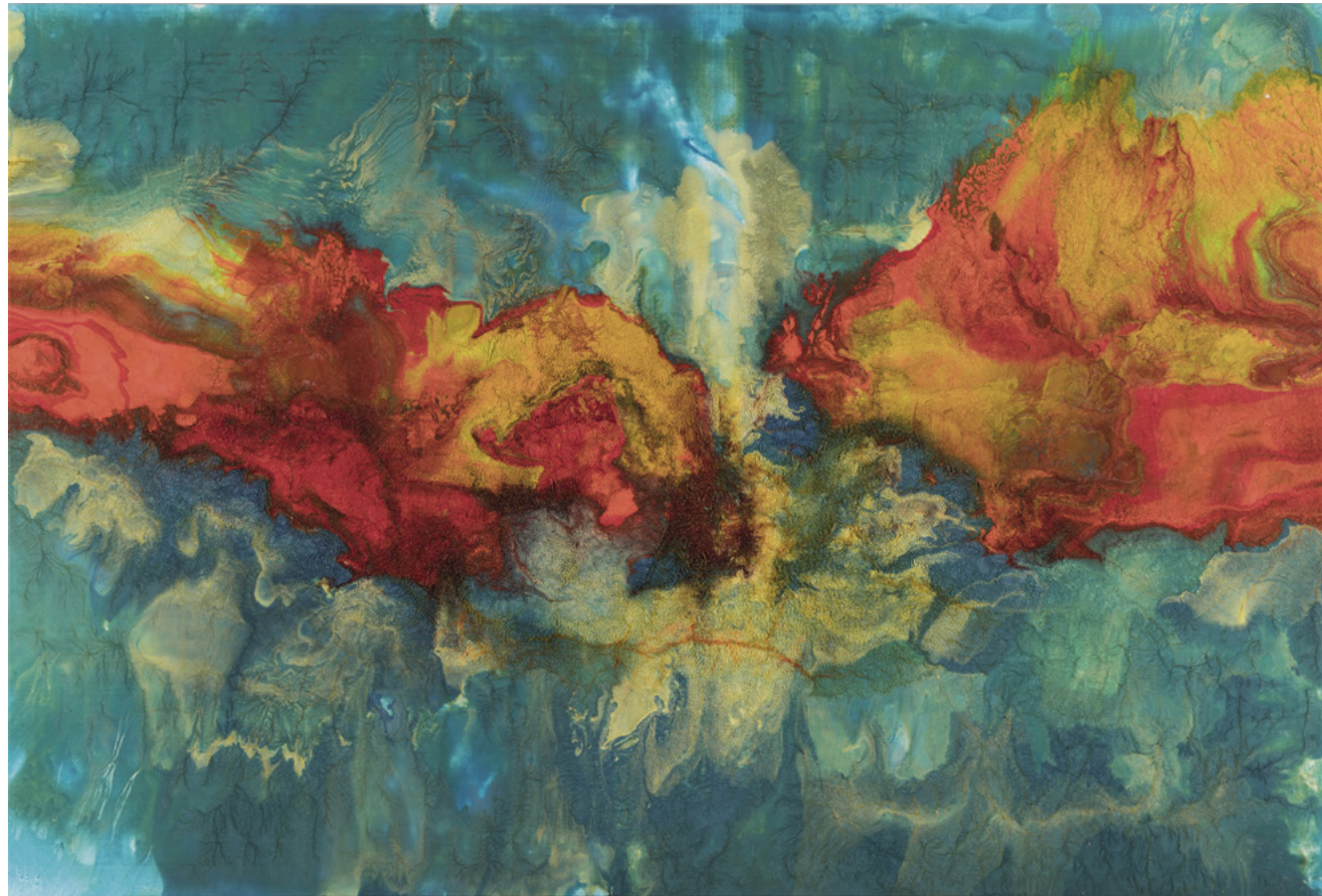
Wings 13 (under UV
light)
95 x 50cm
2015
Oil on canvas



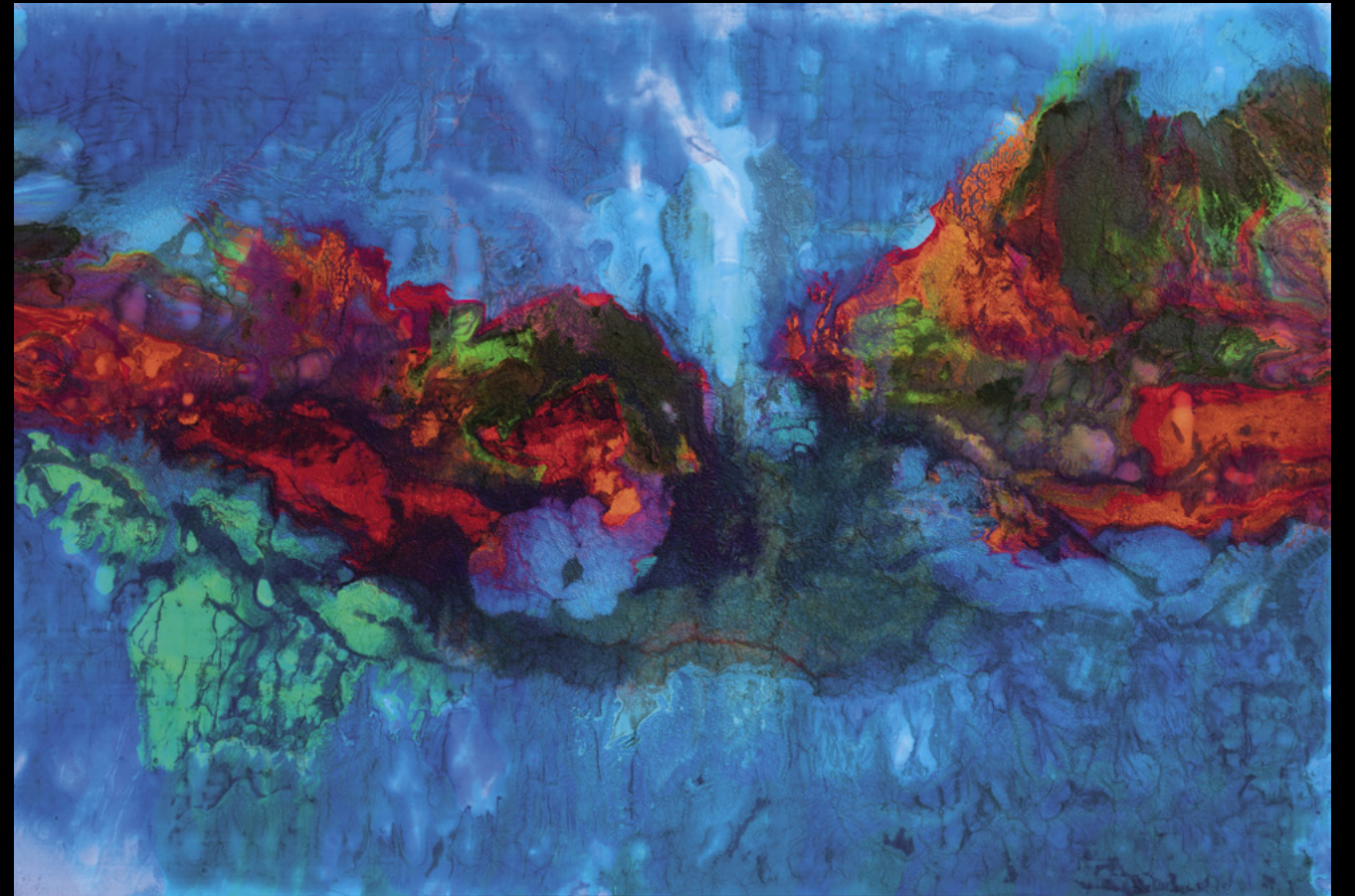
Wings 9
130 x 200cm
2017
Oil on canvas



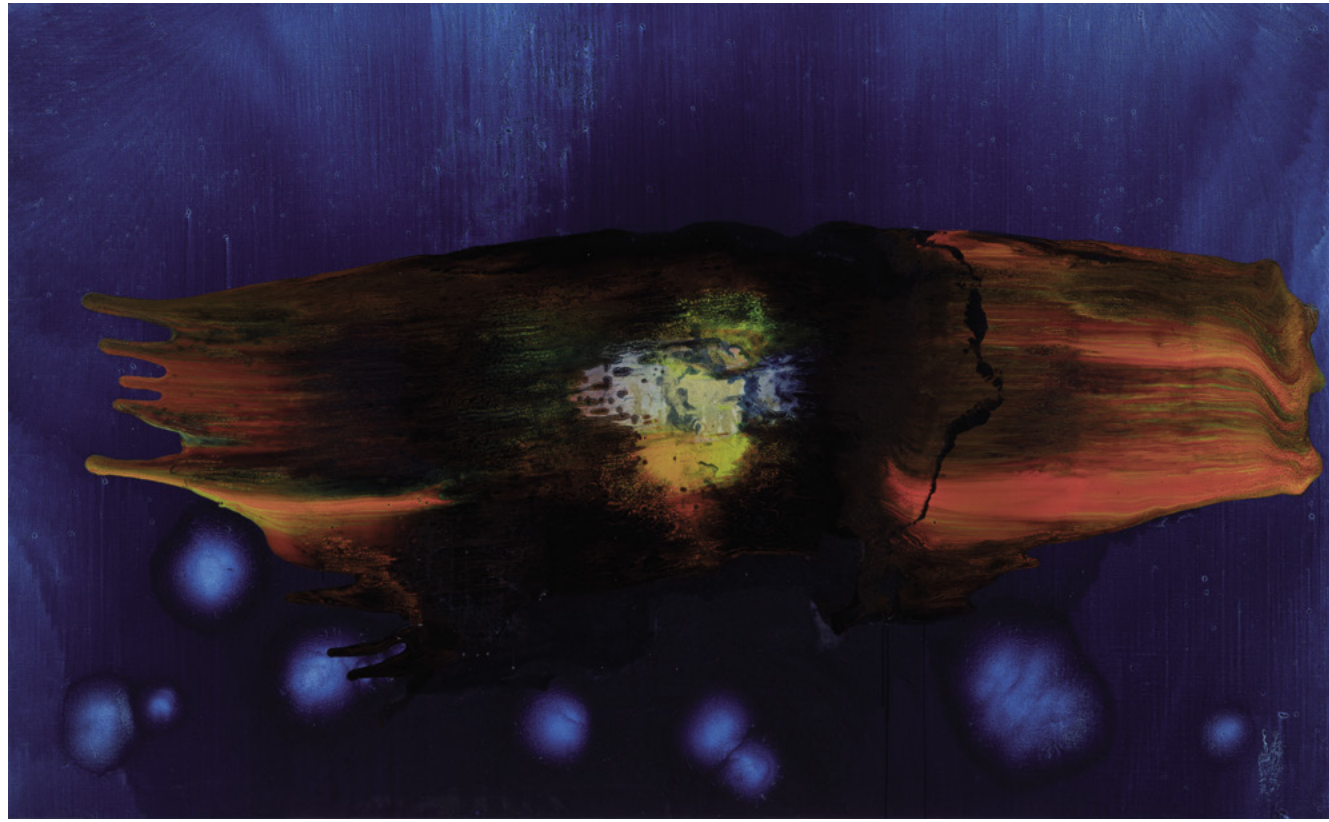
Wings 9 (under UV light)
130 x 200cm
2017
Oil on canvas



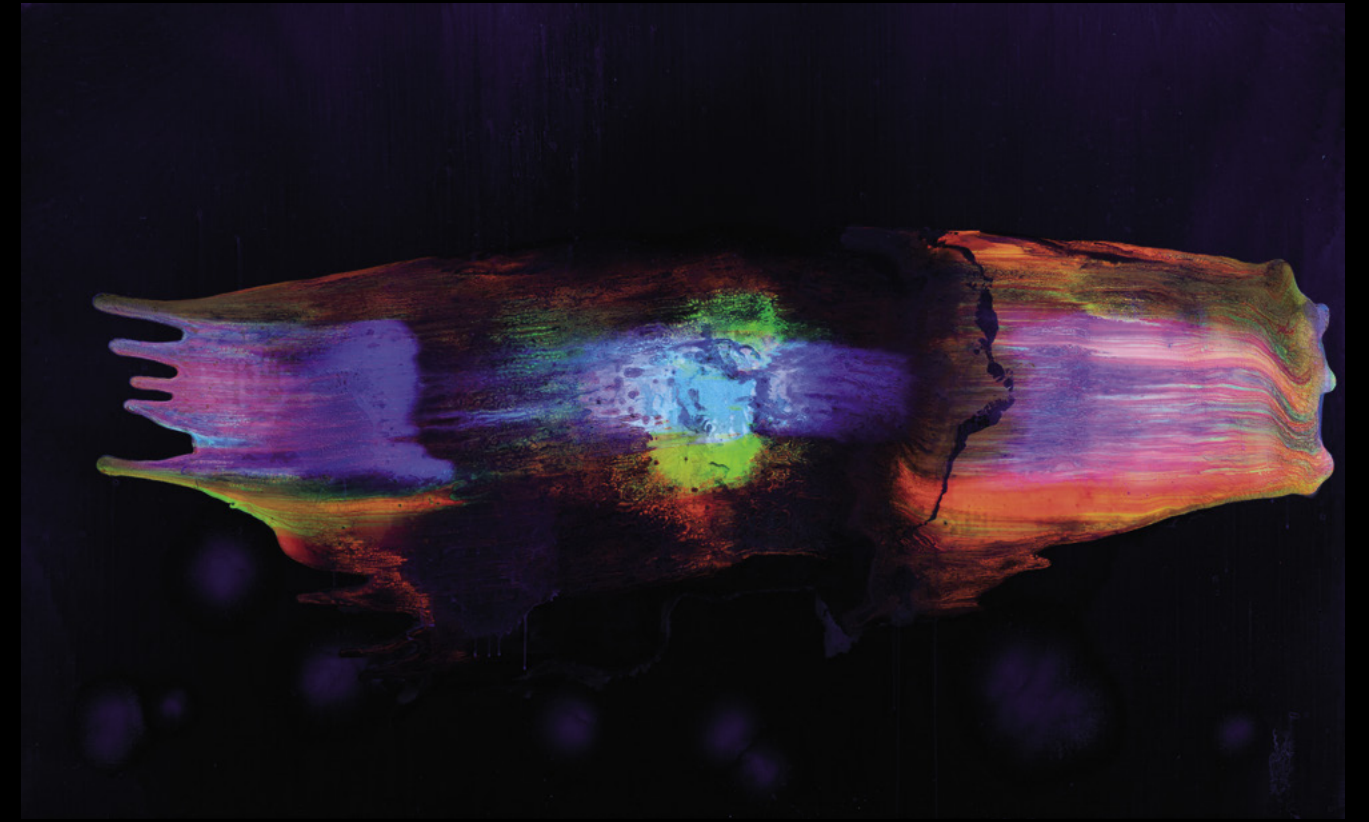
Wings 2
200 x 295cm
2016
Oil on canvas



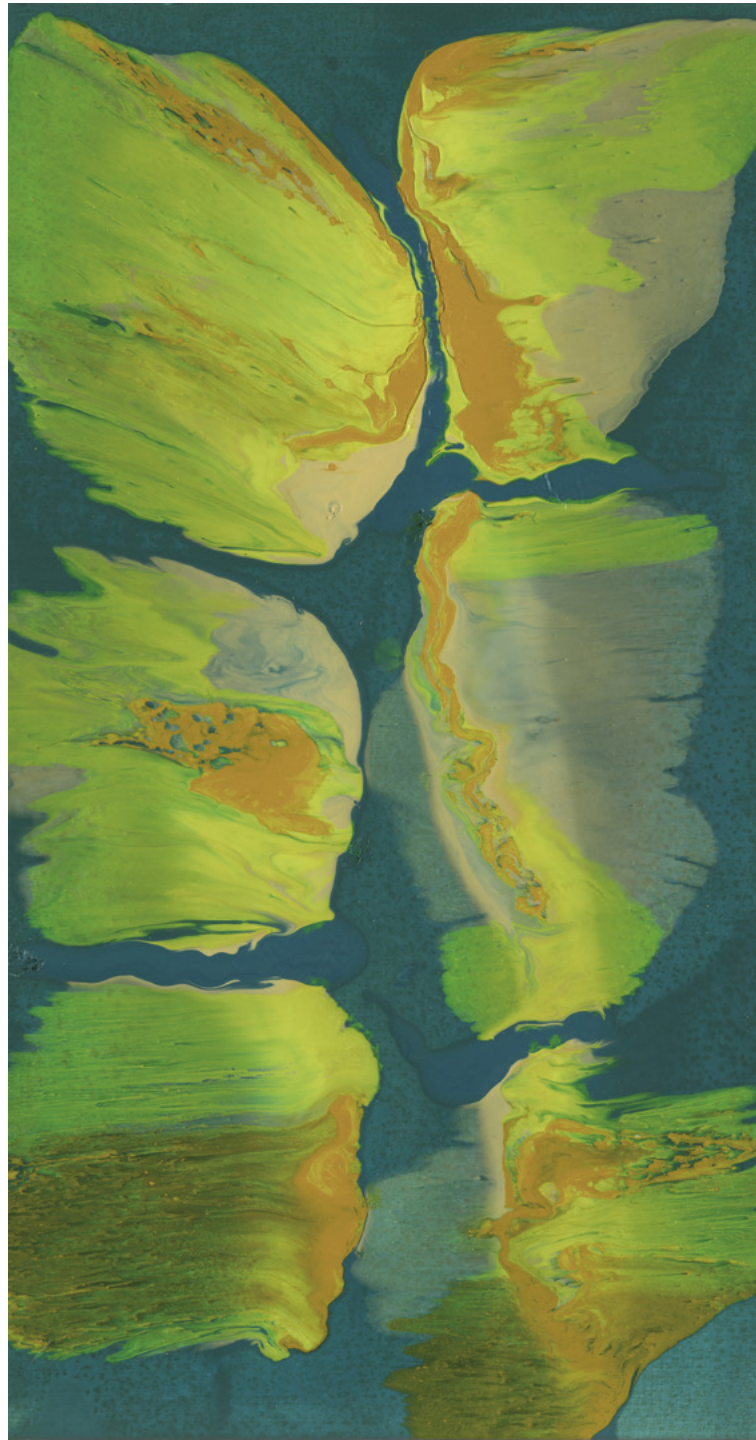
Wings 2 (under UV light)
200 x 295cm
2016
Oil on canvas



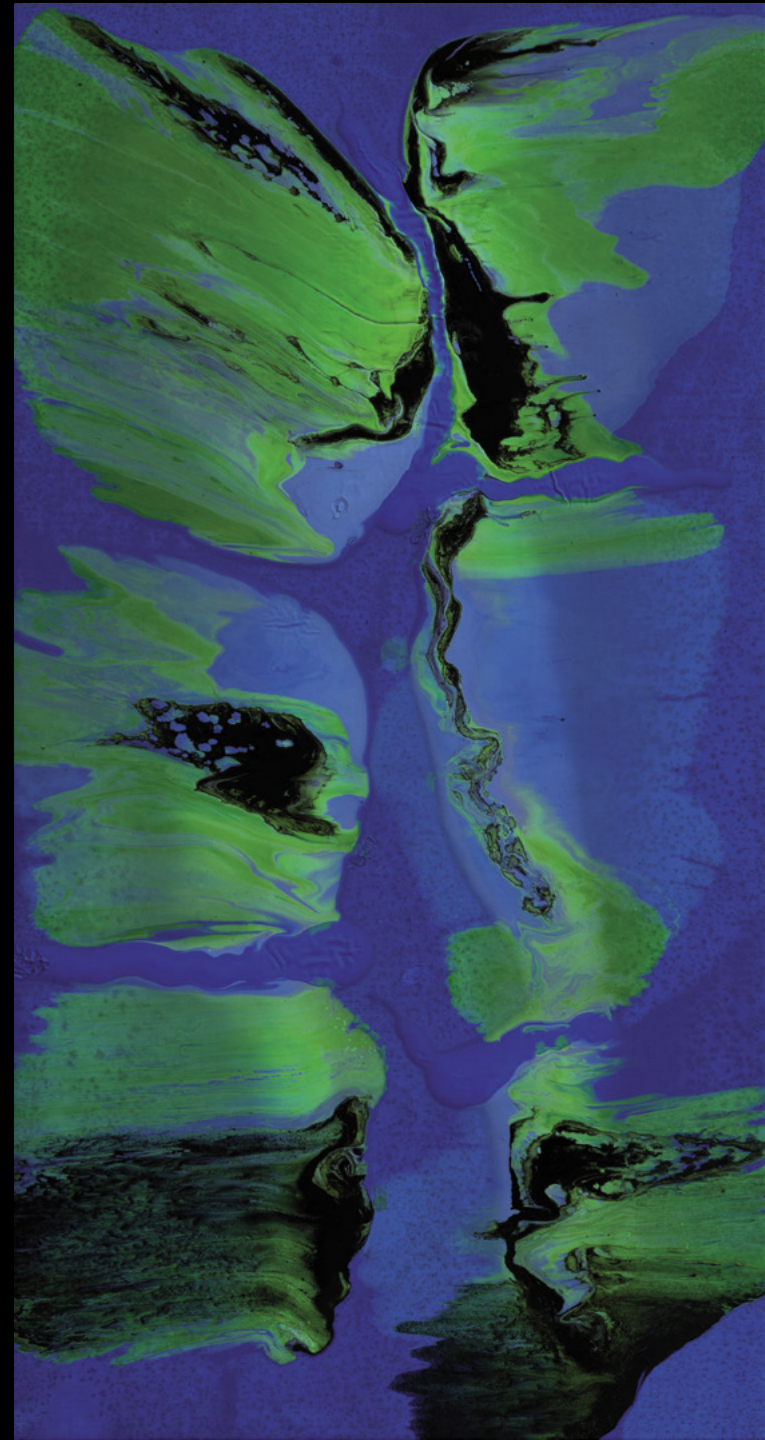
Wings 12
130 x 210cm
2017
Oil on canvas



Wings 12 (under UV light)
130 x 210cm
2017
Oil on canvas



Wings 14
95 x 50cm
2015
Oil on canvas



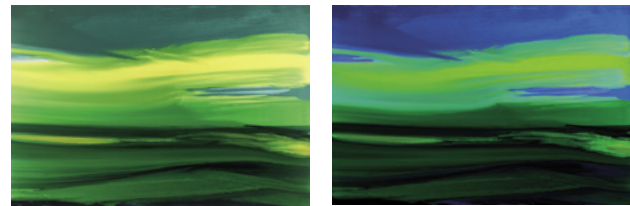
Wings 14 (under UV light)
95 x 50cm
2015
Oil on canvas



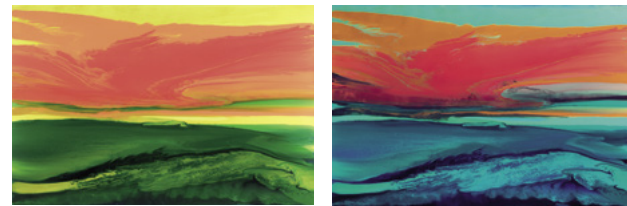
At a glance

Full Circle: The Beauty of Inevitability

Mesozoic

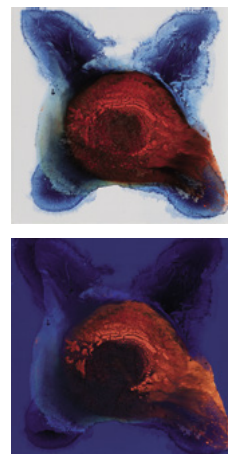


Mesozoic 3
140 x 210cm
2017
Oil on canvas

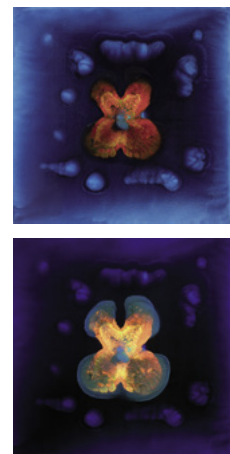


Mesozoic 4
140 x 210cm
2017
Oil on canvas

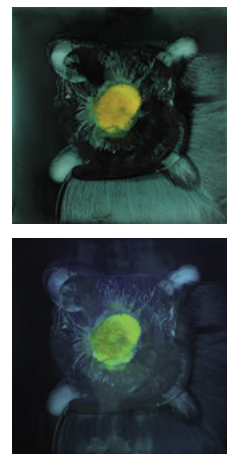
Genesis



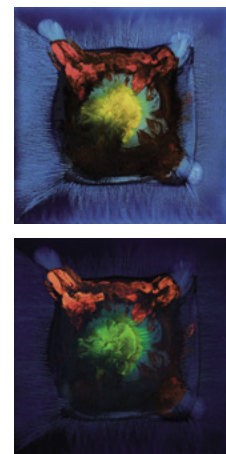
Genesis 2
90 x 90cm
2017
Oil on canvas



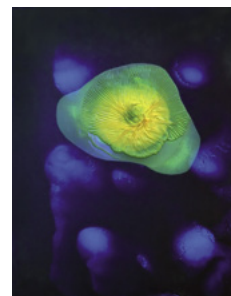
Genesis 7
150 x 150cm
2017
Oil on canvas



Genesis 8
150 x 150cm
2017
Oil on canvas

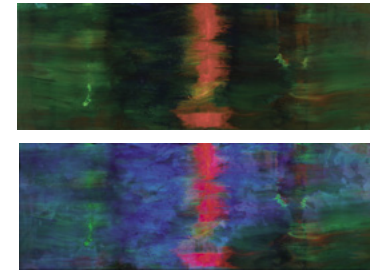


Genesis 5
150 x 150cm
2017
Oil on canvas

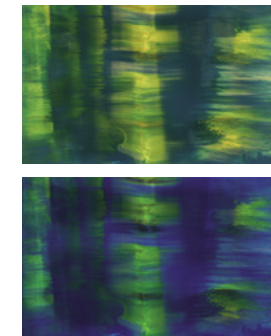


Genesis 12
90 x 70cm
2017
Oil on canvas

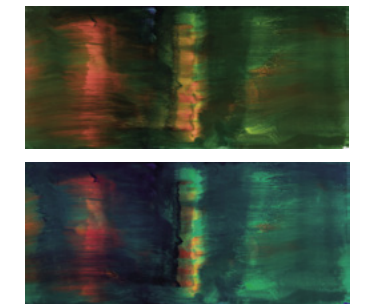
Codes



Codes 1
100 x 285cm
2017
Oil on canvas

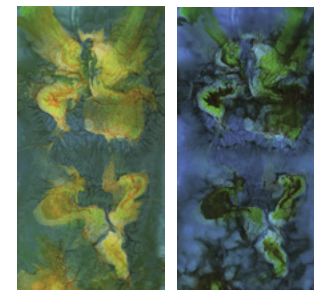


Codes 7
130 x 210cm
2016
Oil on canvas

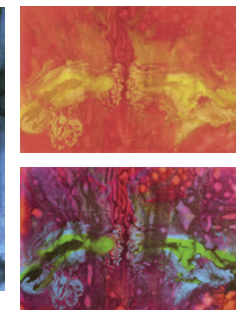


Codes 6
90 x 205cm
2017
Oil on canvas

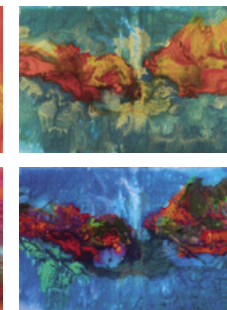
Wings



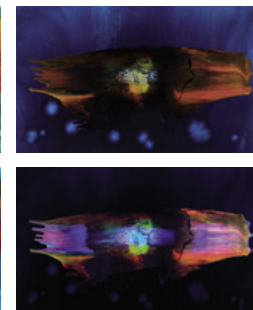
Wings 13
95 x 50cm
2015
Oil on canvas



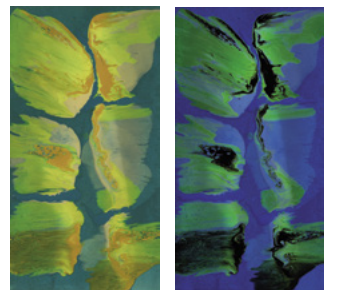
Wings 9
130 x 200cm
2017
Oil on canvas



Wings 2
200 x 295cm
2016
Oil on canvas



Wings 12
130 x 210cm
2017
Oil on canvas



Wings 14
95 x 50cm
2015
Oil on canvas

About the artist



Georgii Uvs (b. 1954) began painting at the age of 17. After graduating with a degree in Geology from Moscow State University, he pursued his second degree in Fine Arts. His attitude to art is an integral part of his being, a channel to express his emotions and transmit his energies. For Uvs art is a dialogue with the environment, nature and people. His style and focus changed when he moved to Malta, when his works became more abstract, and he crystallised his artistic energies into the four series of paintings now on show at Saatchi Gallery.

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About the curators



SVETLANA PRODANOVA

Eva McGaw has been actively involved in the art world since the early 1990s. She has pursued her passion by supporting Eastern European artists through commissioning and producing exhibitions. She lived in the Middle East for over 17 years, where she worked as a special representative for Sotheby's.

Tatiana Palinkasev began her career at Christie's auction house in London and further worked in their Madrid and Rome offices. After valuable experience gained at the auction house internationally, Tatiana co-founded Callisto Fine Arts, where she focuses on curatorship and exhibitions.

Together, Eva and Tatiana established Metamorphosis Art Projects, where they produce and curate art exhibitions with a special edge. They create extraordinary experiences to motivate artists in developing new forms of expression, helping them to communicate their innermost convictions to inspire their audiences. Interaction and inspiration are the key elements of their exhibitions. They look for special, out of ordinary elements to achieve extraordinary exhibitions.

www.metamorphosis-artprojects.com

The artist's studio



About Saatchi Gallery



Saatchi Gallery was founded in 1985 with the aim of bringing contemporary art to as wide an audience as possible by providing an innovative platform for emerging artists to show their work. Over the last five years Saatchi Gallery has hosted 15 out of the top 20 most visited exhibitions in London, according to The Art Newspaper's survey of international museum attendance, and also has more followers on social media than any other museum in the world. Entry to all Saatchi Gallery's exhibitions is free.

Opening hours:
10am-6pm
7 days a week, last entry 5:30pm

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King's Road, London SW3 4RY
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Credits

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