



# SPICHER

### **Abgesagte Retrospektive im Russischen Museum in Sankt Petersburg**

Es war geplant, dass dieses Buch zu meiner Retrospektive im Staatlichen Russischen Museum in Sankt Petersburg Ende November 2020 in russischer Sprache publiziert wird. Die Ausstellung kann jedoch an diesem Datum wegen Corona Virus nicht stattfinden.

Ich habe mich nun entschlossen, das Buch in englischer Sprache auf dieses Datum hin trotzdem freizugeben und in PDF-Form meinen Freunden und Bekannten, Sammlern, Galerien und Museen zukommen zu lassen.

Ich möchte mich bei allen für ihre Unterstützung herzlich bedanken. Vor allem bei Gabriel Heuberger für das Design, bei Philipp Klemm für die Fotos und bei Andrea Hagen für Übersetzungen deutsch/russisch/englisch.

Geplant sind weitere Texte und Essays, die unter den jetzigen Voraussetzungen neu aktualisiert werden müssen. Wann und unter welchem Herausgeber das Buch schlussendlich gedruckt wird, ist noch offen, da die Planung von internationalen Ausstellungen auch für 2021 im Moment unmöglich ist.

Mit besten Grüßen  
Stephan Spicher

### **Cancelled Retrospective at the State Russian Museum in Saint Petersburg**

The plan was to publish this book in Russian for my retrospective at the State Russian Museum in Saint Petersburg at the end of November 2020. Due to Corona virus the exhibition cannot take place at that time as intended.

I have decided to release the book in English language on this date anyway and to publish it in PDF format for my friends and acquaintances, for collectors, galleries and museums.

I would like to sincerely thank all the people, who supported me, especially Gabriel Heuberger for design, Philipp Klemm for photos and Andrea Hagen for translations German/Russian/English. More texts and essays are planned, but need to be updated under current conditions.

When and with which publisher this book will be printed in the end is still open, since at the moment it is impossible to plan international exhibitions for 2021.

With best regards  
Stephan Spicher

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**1985 -1993**

WALL OF ASHES

**53**

**1993 -2005**

SPACE/COUNTERSPACE  
ETERNAL LINES

**79**

**2005 -2014**

BLOSSOM

**107**

**2015 -2020**

BLOOMING FADING  
ELEMENTALS

# 1985 - 1993

## WALL OF ASHES

In 1980 he moves to Maggia, to the Italian-speaking part of Switzerland, where he spent part of his childhood. There, he discovers his love for the stony world and tectonics in the valley of the same name, which had been scientifically researched by his father, a professional geologist. After a temporary stay in Berlin, he returns to southern Switzerland to continue his work on the mineral and earthy elements. The ash walls were created here and a large part of the drawings, including the Elementals, are still made in Maggia.

Urs Ramseyer

**Wall of ashes, 1985**  
mixed media on canvas  
200 x 150 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1985**  
mixed media on canvas  
80 x 120 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1985**  
mixed media on canvas  
150 x 100 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1985**  
mixed media on canvas  
200 x 150 cm

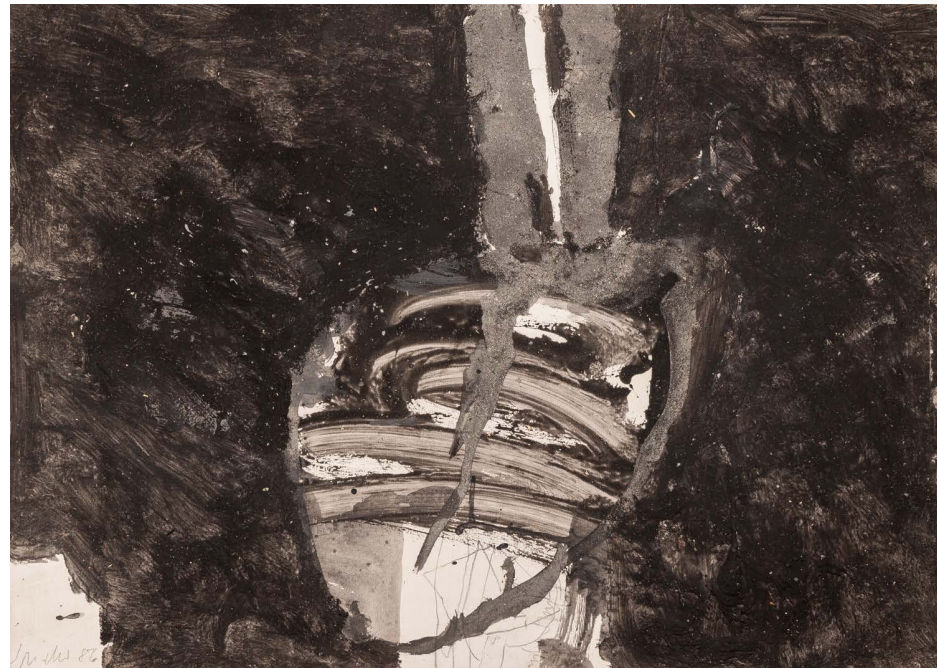




**Wall of ashes, 1985**  
mixed media on canvas  
200 x 150 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1985**  
mixed media on paper  
50 x 70 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1985**  
mixed media on paper  
25 x 31 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1985**  
mixed media on paper  
32 x 42 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1985**  
mixed media on paper  
32 x 42 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1985**  
mixed media on paper  
32 x 42 cm



Art and alchemy are specific methods of transforming nature into something different, into a new reality. Like art, the ultimate goal of alchemy is to transform matter into spirit, the material into the spiritual.

So metal becomes gold - flower pictures -

In alchemy, transmutation is a chemical transformation process that leads from the elemental to the subtle. In art, this is an artistic transformation of matter into form - pigments, earth, ashes, etc. The artist transmutes the material he finds.

Urs Ramseyer

**Wall of ashes, 1985**  
mixed media on canvas  
200 x 150 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1988**  
mixed media on canvas  
200 x 150 cm

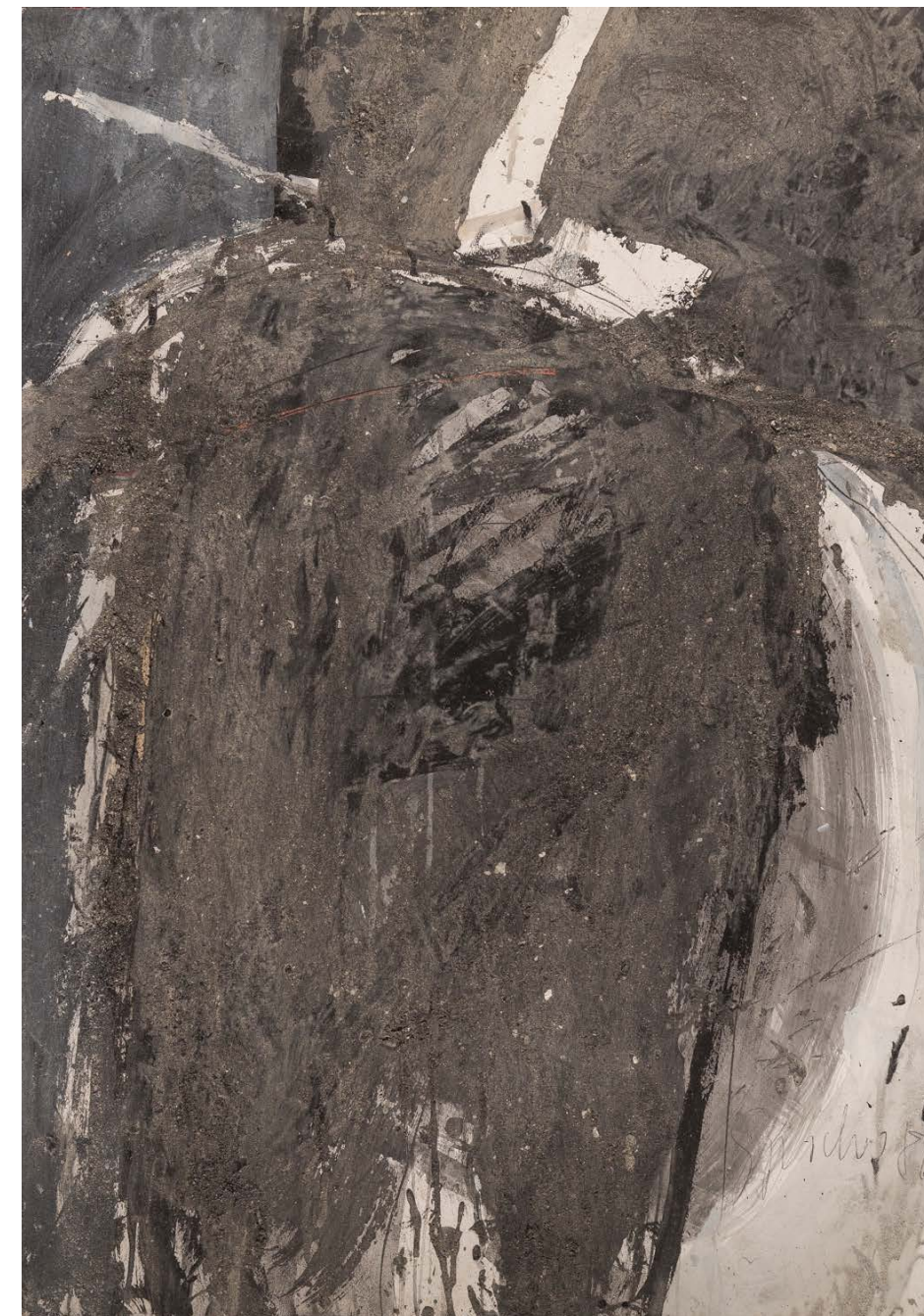


**Wall of ashes, 1988**  
mixed media on canvas  
200 x 150 cm





**Wall of ashes, 1986**  
mixed media on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1986**  
mixed media on paper  
100 x 70 cm

**Wall of ashes, 1988**  
mixed media on canvas  
200 x 150 cm

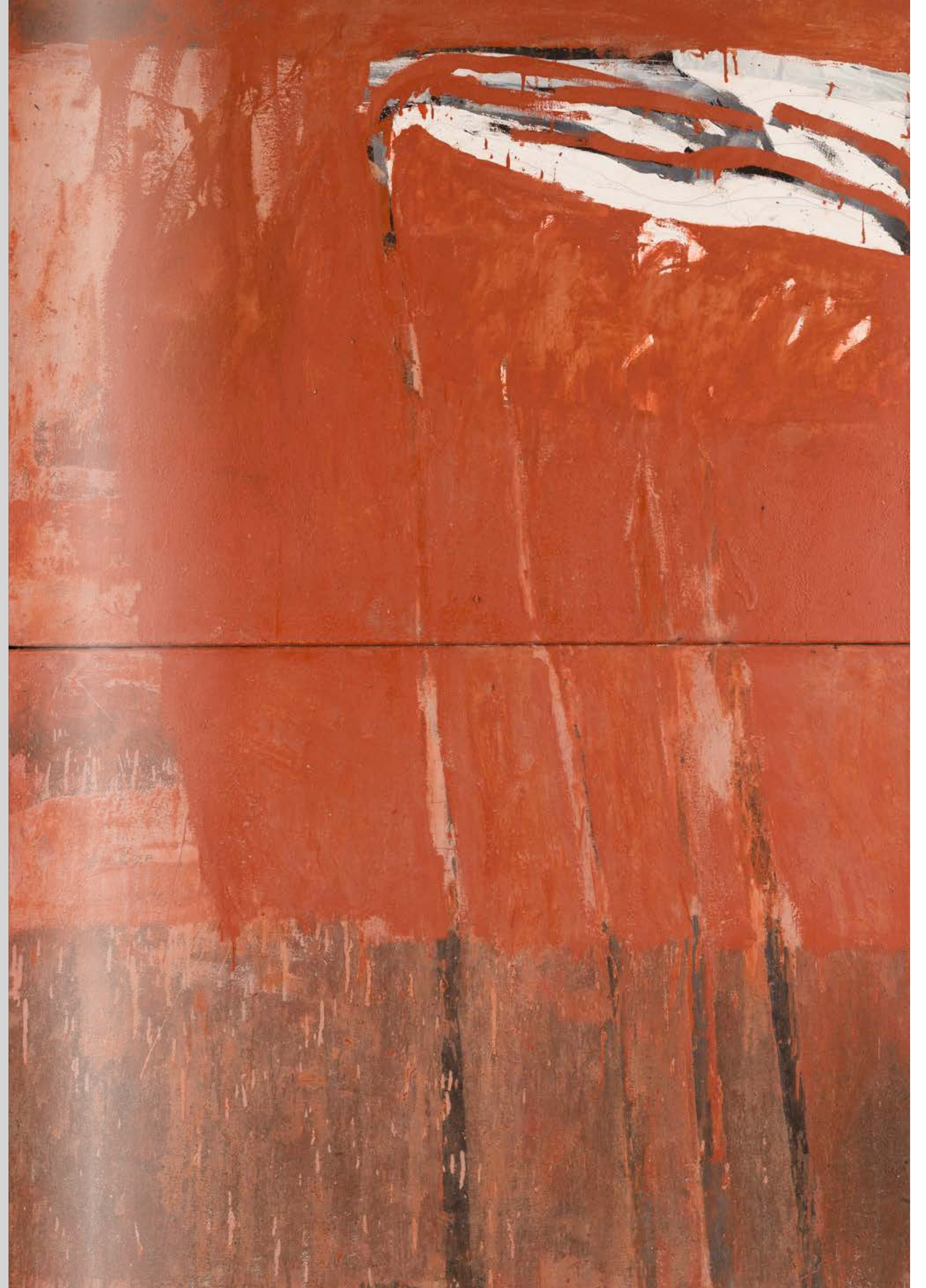




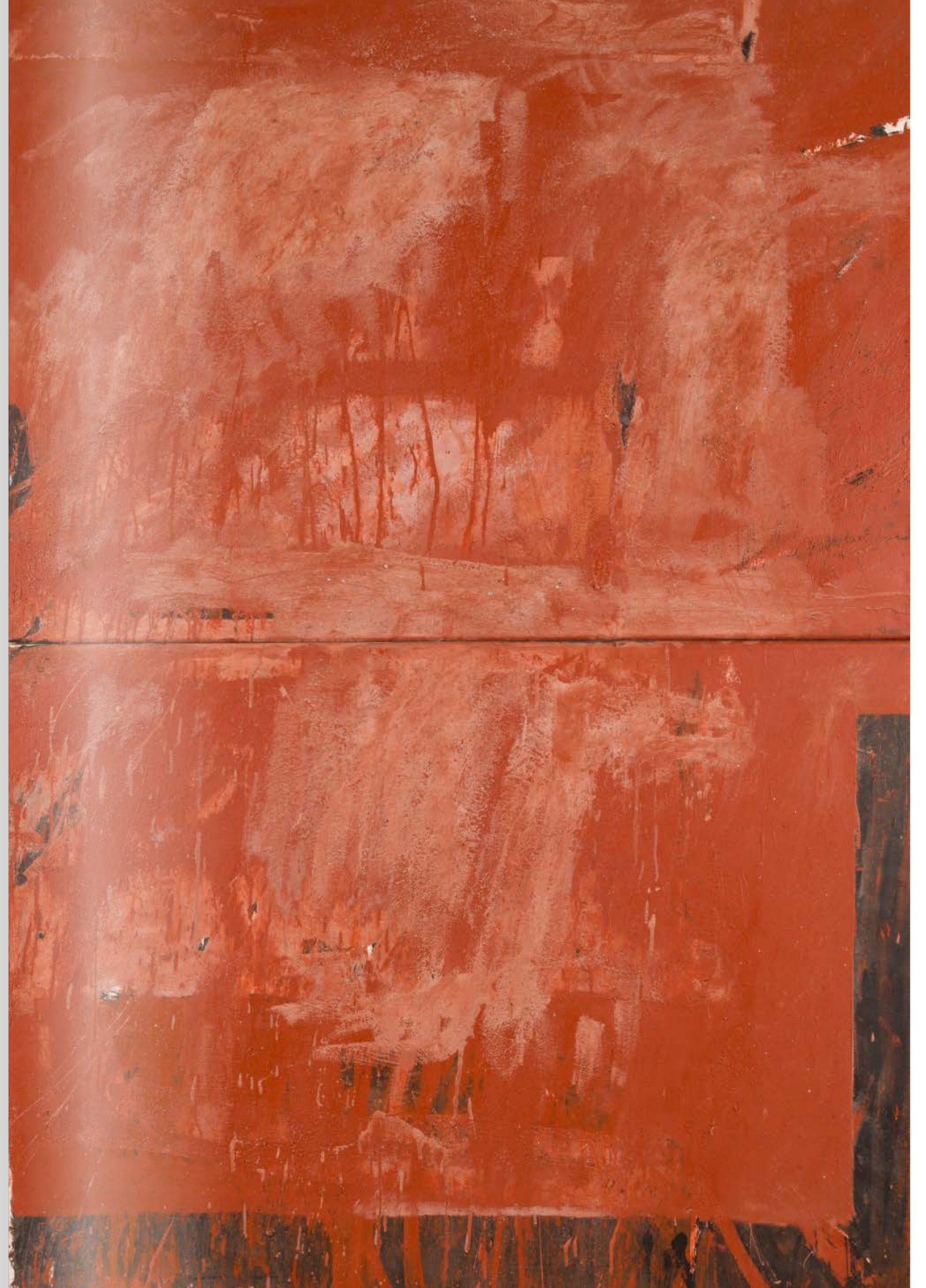
**Wall of ashes, 1989**  
mixed media on canvas  
180 x 100 cm

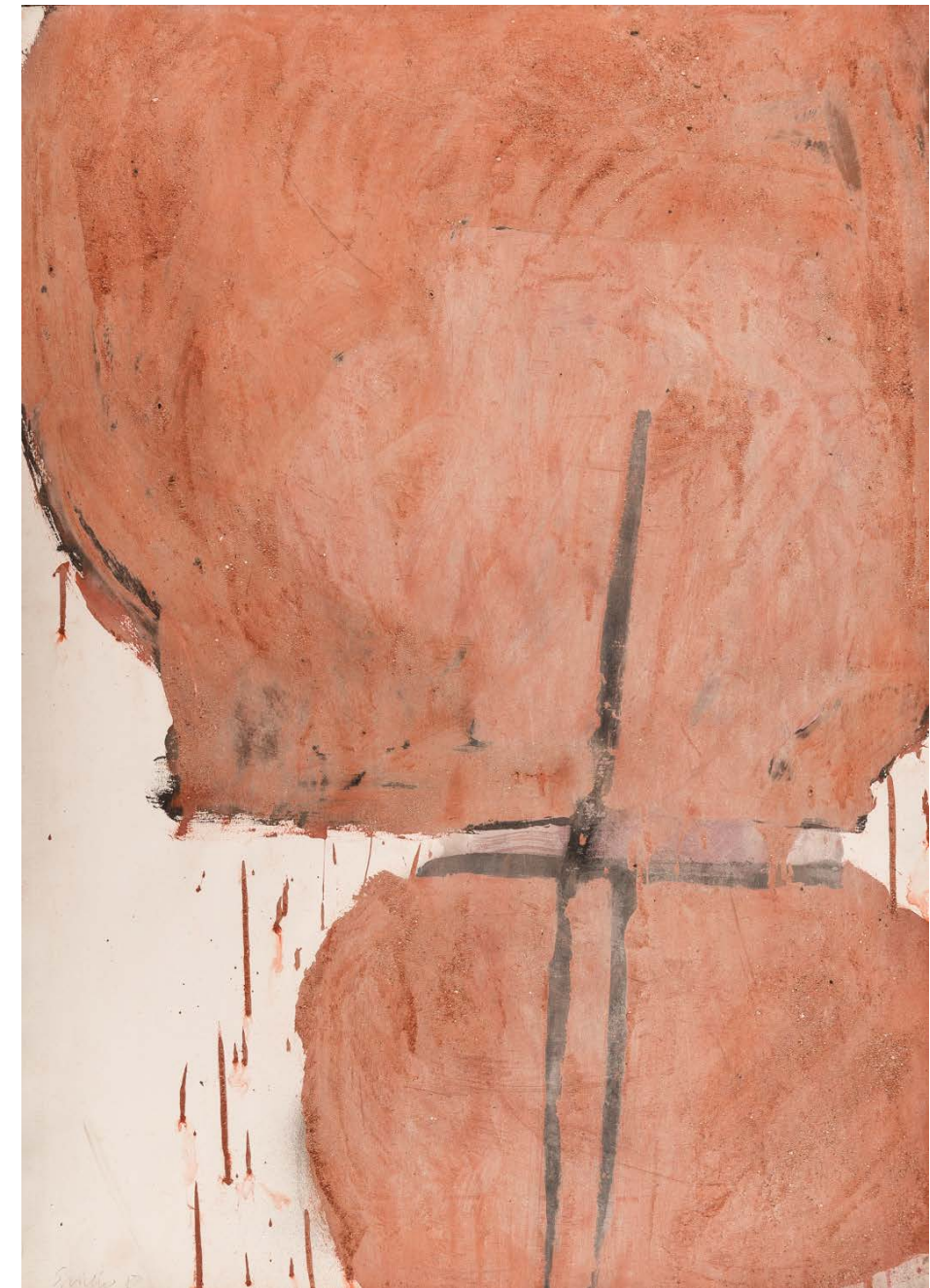


**Wall of ashes, 1988**  
mixed media on canvas  
218 x 150 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1988**  
mixed media on canvas  
218 x 150 cm





**Wall of ashes, 1988**  
mixed media on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1988**  
mixed media on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1988**  
mixed media on paper  
100 x 70 cm

**Wall of ashes, 1987**  
mixed media on canvas  
150 x 108 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1987**  
mixed media on canvas  
150 x 108 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1987**  
mixed media on canvas  
150 x 108 cm





**Wall of ashes, 1989**  
mixed media on canvas  
218 x 150 cm



**Wall of ashes, 1991**  
mixed media on canvas  
180 x 90 cm



# 1993-2005

## SPACE/COUNTERSPACE

### ETERNAL LINES

#### **Spicher - Line - Space - Area**

If you paint a form in awareness of the two-dimensional, then the painted space is two-dimensional, too. The understanding of what is front and back gets blurred.

„For me my work is two-dimensional. The main motif of two-dimensional space is the relationship between periphery and centre“.

The space Spicher creates might be whole. The world stops at the edge of the picture. Or is it only part of the whole?

Urs Ramseyer

**Wall of ashes, 1996**  
mixed media on canvas  
150 x 200 cm





**Wall of ashes, 1989**  
mixed media on canvas  
150 x 250 cm

**Mountain, 1993**  
acrylic on canvas  
200 x 200 cm



**Space/Counterspace, 2001**  
inc on canvas  
53 x 74 cm





**Space/Counterspace, 2001**  
inc on canvas  
63 x 88 cm

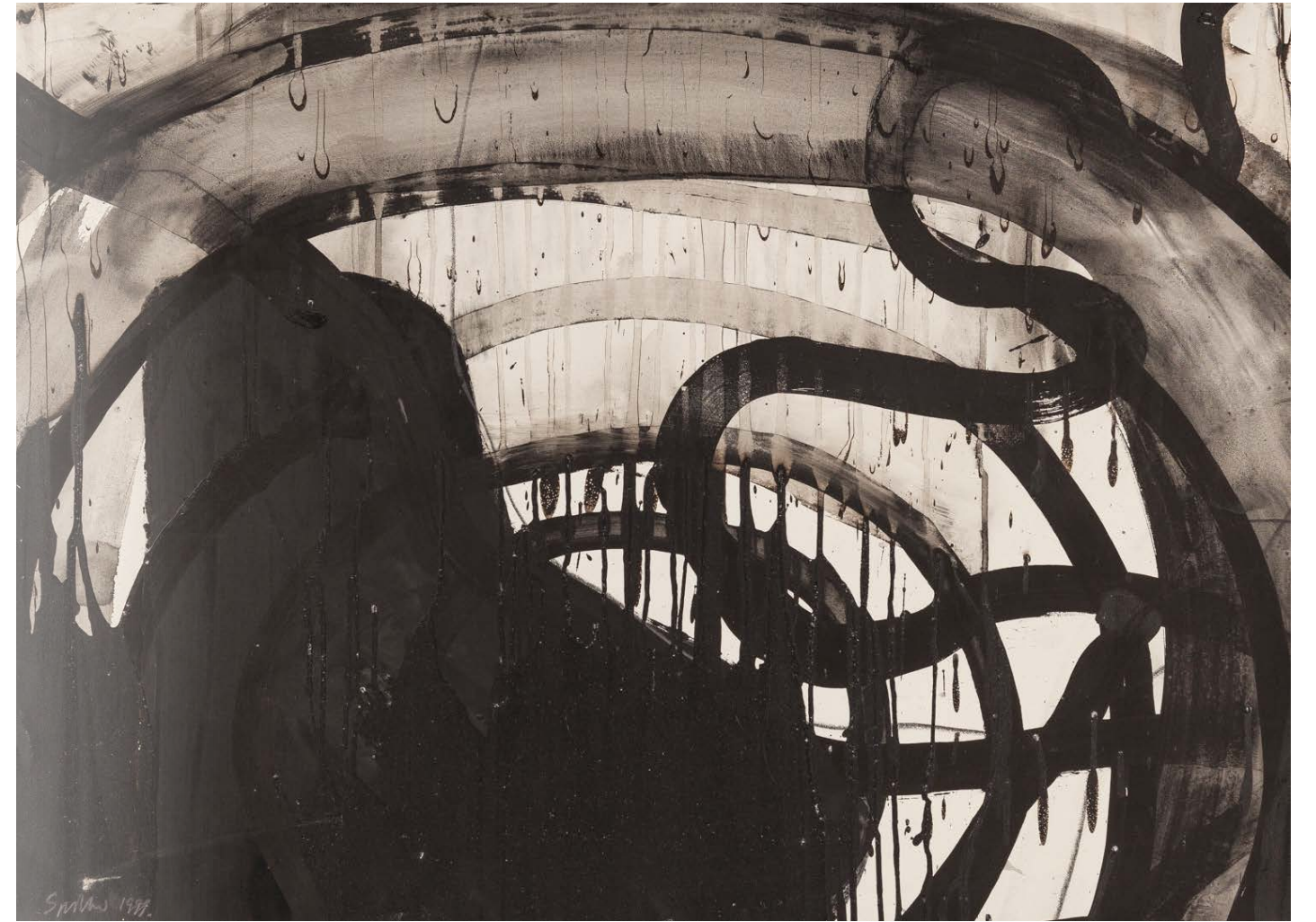


**Space/Counterspace, 2001**  
inc on canvas  
63 x 84 cm





**Space/Counterspace, 2001**  
inc on canvas  
53 x 76 cm



**Space/Counterspace, 2001**  
inc on canvas  
65 x 90 cm

**Eternal line, 2000**  
mixed media on zinc  
30 x 30 cm



**Eternal line, 2003**  
acrylic on canvas  
150 x 125 cm

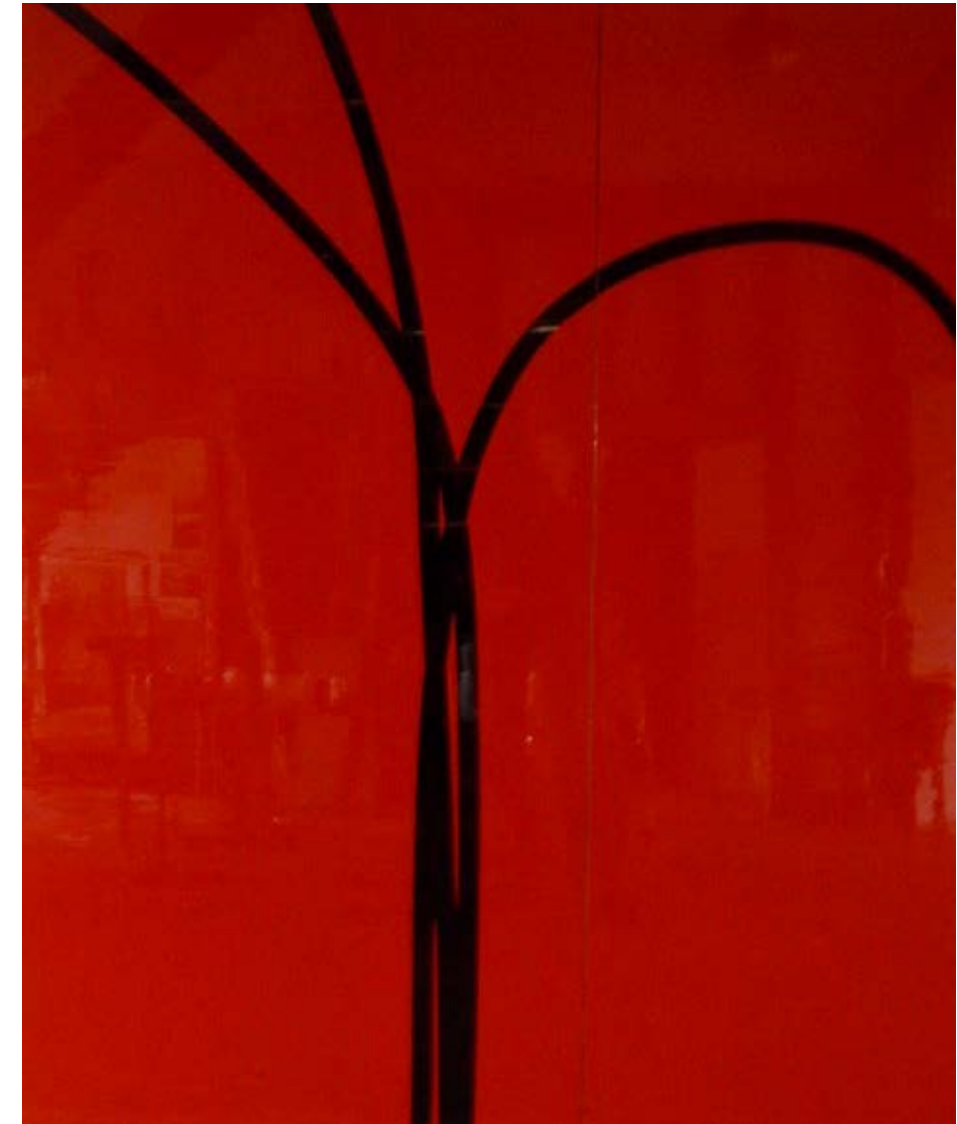


**Eternal line, 2003**  
mixed media on zinc  
150 x 50 cm





<  
**Eternal line, 2005**  
lacquer on canvas  
180 x 270 cm



**Eternal line, 2004**  
lacquer on alu  
90 x 75 cm



**Eternal line, 2004**  
lacquer on alu  
90 x 75 cm



**Eternal line, 2004**  
lacquer on alu  
90 x 75 cm

**Blossom, 2005**  
lacquer and gold on alu  
150 x 68 cm



**2005-2014**  
BLOSSOM



**Blossom, 2014**  
lacquer on alu  
150 x 200 cm



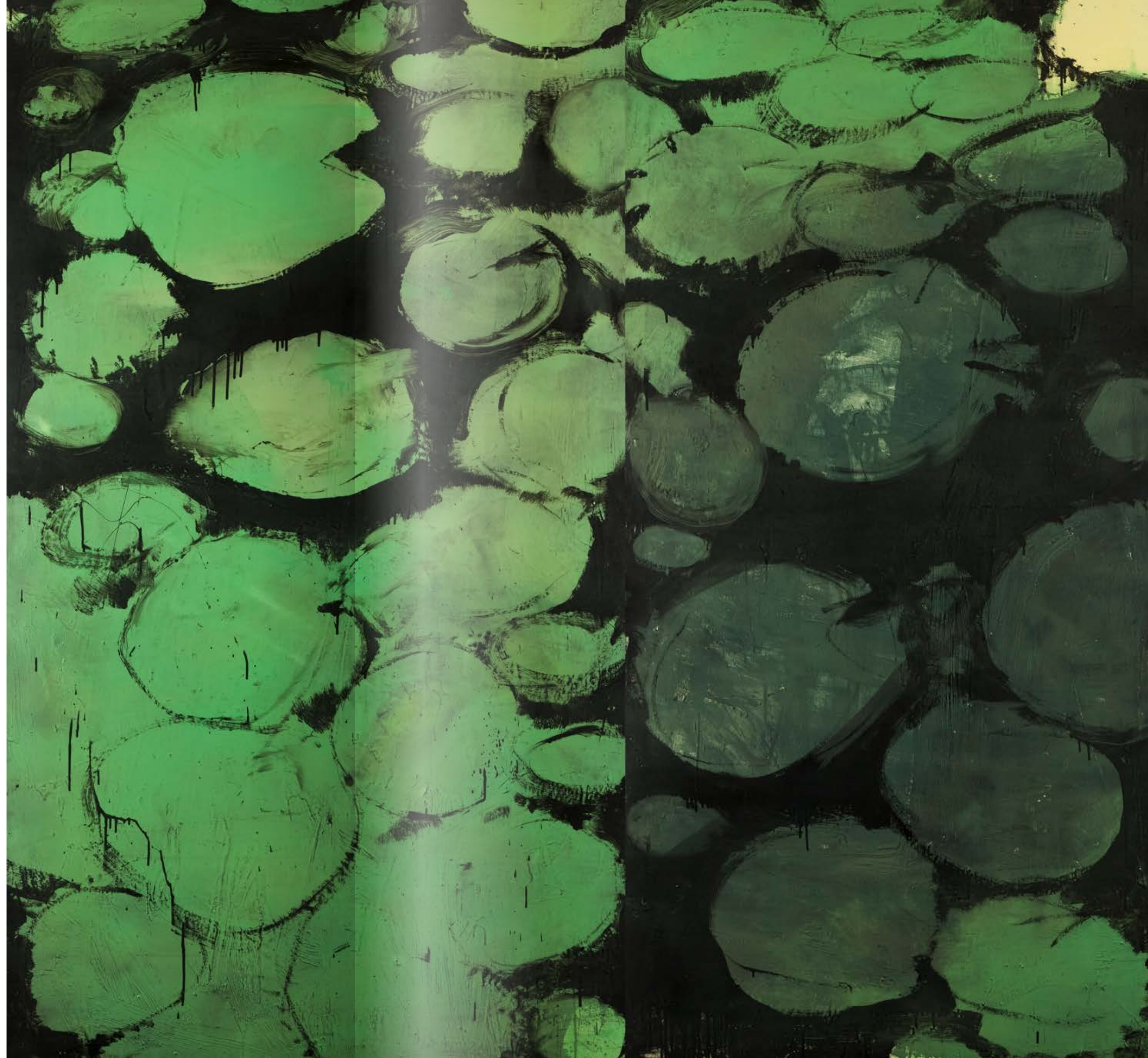
**Blossom, 2014**  
lacquer on alu  
125 x 150 cm



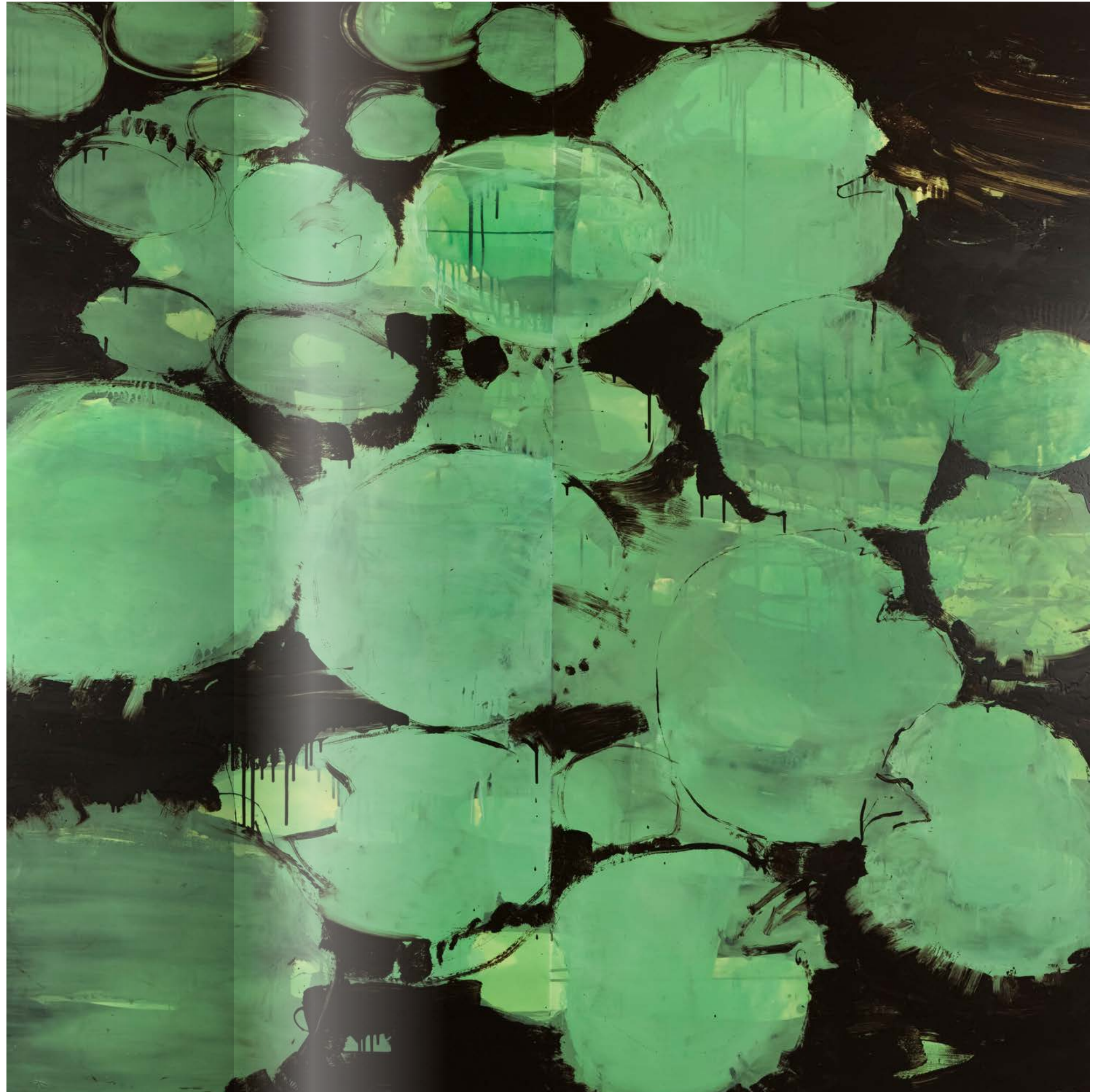
**Blossom, 2014**  
lacquer on alu  
125 x 150 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2014**  
lacquer on canvas  
200 x 200 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2014**  
lacquer on canvas  
180 x 180 cm



### **Blooming - Fading**

A look into the seed in which everything is in motion, an enclosed light just before the explosion, a microcosm in which, like in the galaxy, a new star is born. A force of nature in search of form, a demonic, unpredictable, amorphous element that finds artistic expression and thus becomes tamed culture.

Blooming and wilting are not opposite poles, but part of a holistic, organic process. There is no aesthetic assessment. Every bud contains the blossom and its wilting, the fruit and the seeds. Based on the observation of nature, the multiple visible and invisible biological processes of the transformation from blooming to wilting are morphed into a new artistic reality and a new artistic statement.

The artistic challenge is to explore the multi-layered potential of the blossoming and the wilting and make it possible to see and experience it.

Urs Ramseyer

**Blooming Fading, 2017**  
lacquer on canvas  
130 x 100 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2017**  
lacquer on canvas  
130 x 100 cm





**Blooming Fading, 2017**  
lacquer on canvas  
130 x 100 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2017**  
lacquer on canvas  
130 x 100 cm



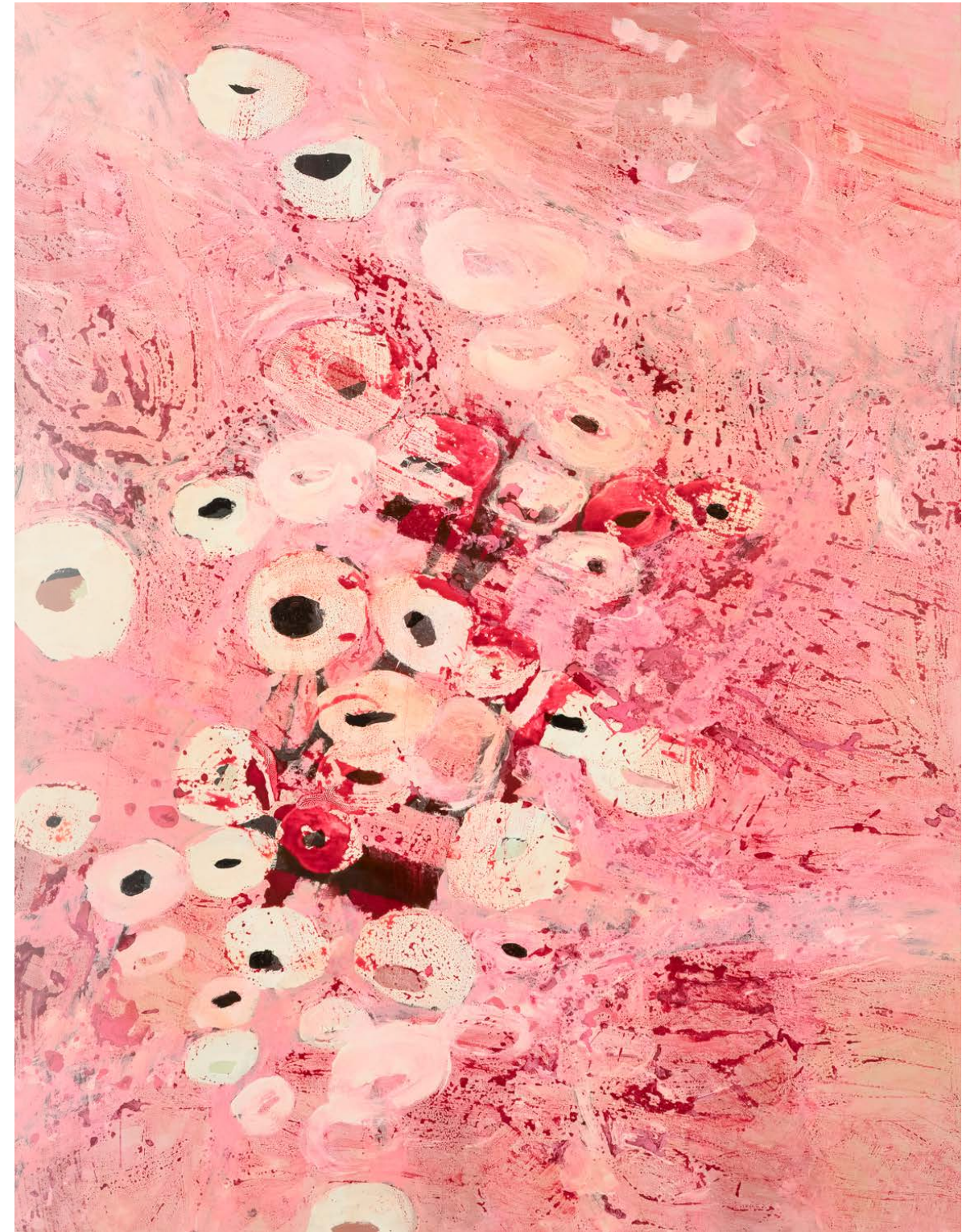
**Blooming Fading, 2017**  
lacquer on canvas  
130 x 100 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2017**  
lacquer on canvas  
130 x 100 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2017**  
lacquer on canvas  
130 x 100 cm





**Blooming Fading, 2018**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm

**2015-2020**  
**BLOOMING FADING**  
**ELEMENTALS**



**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm

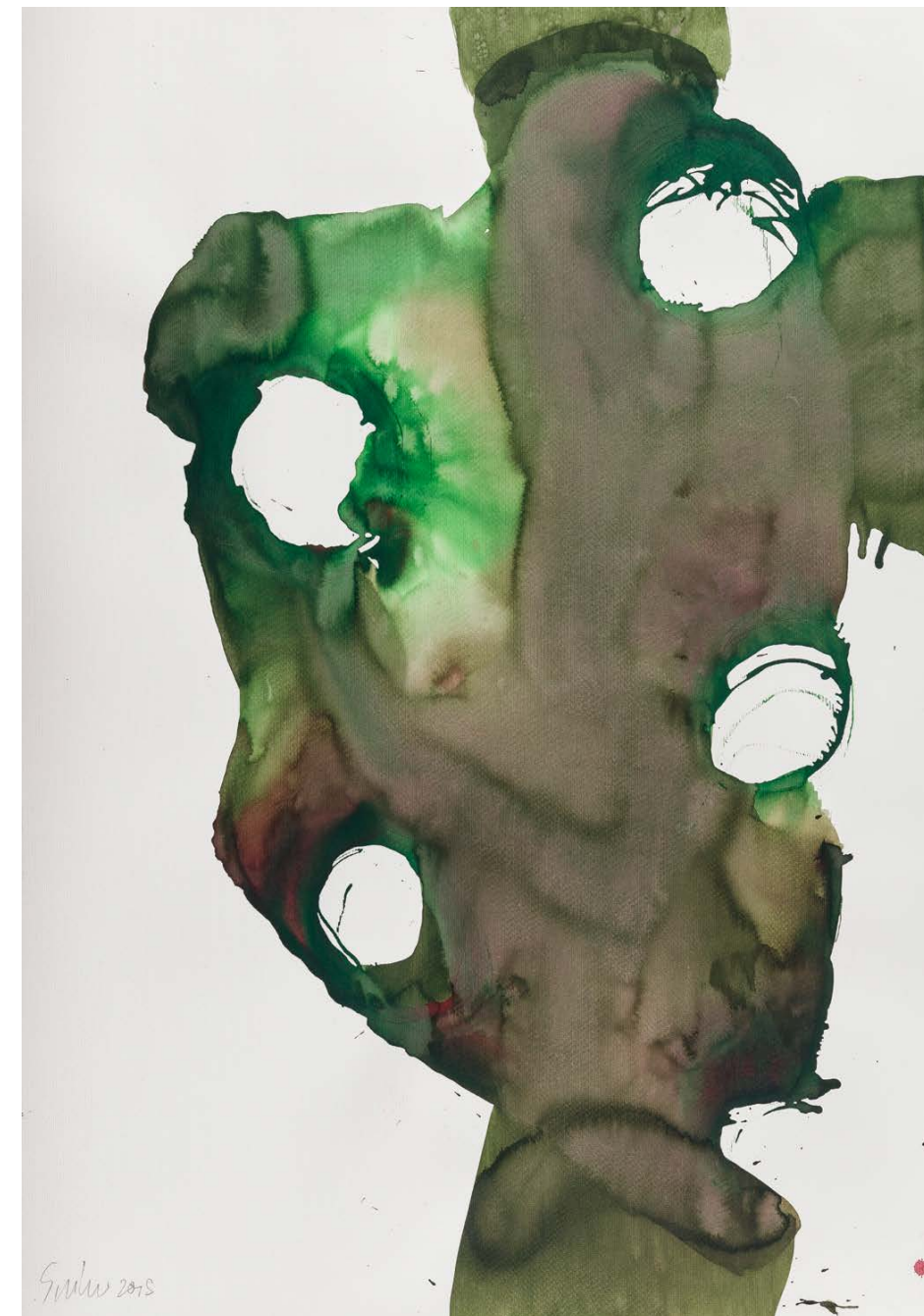


**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm





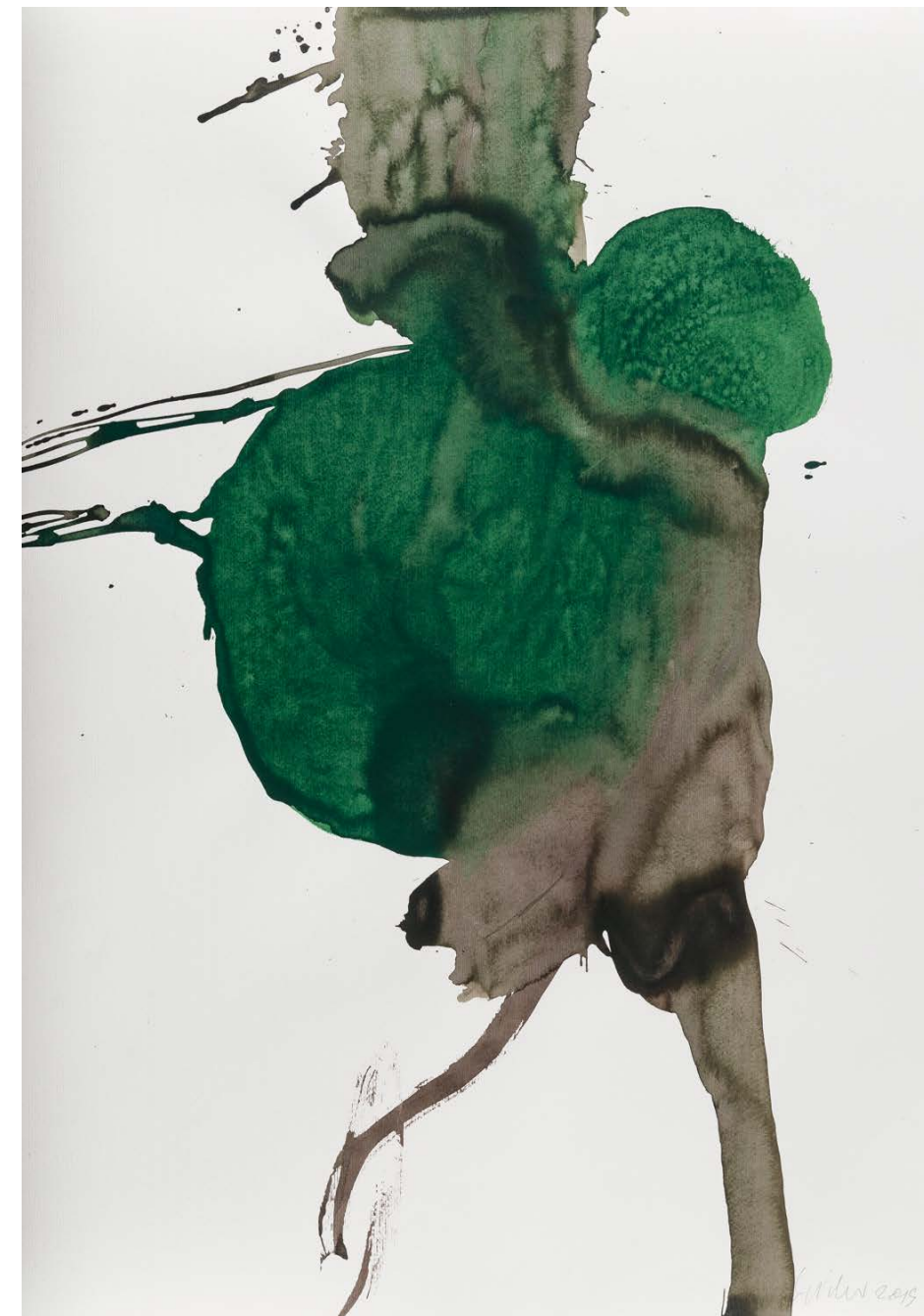
**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm

**Blooming Fading, 2017**  
mixed media on paper  
86 x 50 cm



### **Blossom, Blooming Fading, Elementals**

Not the blossom, the tree or the plant, but the spirit, the being, the energetic forces, movement, light and darkness. Spicher is not interested in archiving and scientific research. The plant is not a plant, the blossom is not a blossom, but an archetype of a plant, of a blossom, it is the timeless plant, the eternal blossom, the cycle of the whole.

Our consciousness should remain open, like ignorance in the scientific sense, nature should reveal itself. Spicher says: It is not me looking at nature, but nature looking at me. It appears and reveals itself as something incomprehensible that inspires me and becomes form in the process of painting. I let myself be steered and guided by it and reveal another reality.

### **Elementals**

Spicher observes nature, photographs it, draws it, searches for the elemental part in nature. Nature with its energetic, atmospheric and spiritual power is a source of inspiration and imagination. The flowers, the light, the plants are in motion and become lines. Everything is in flux, in a never ending flow that creates life, forms and images.

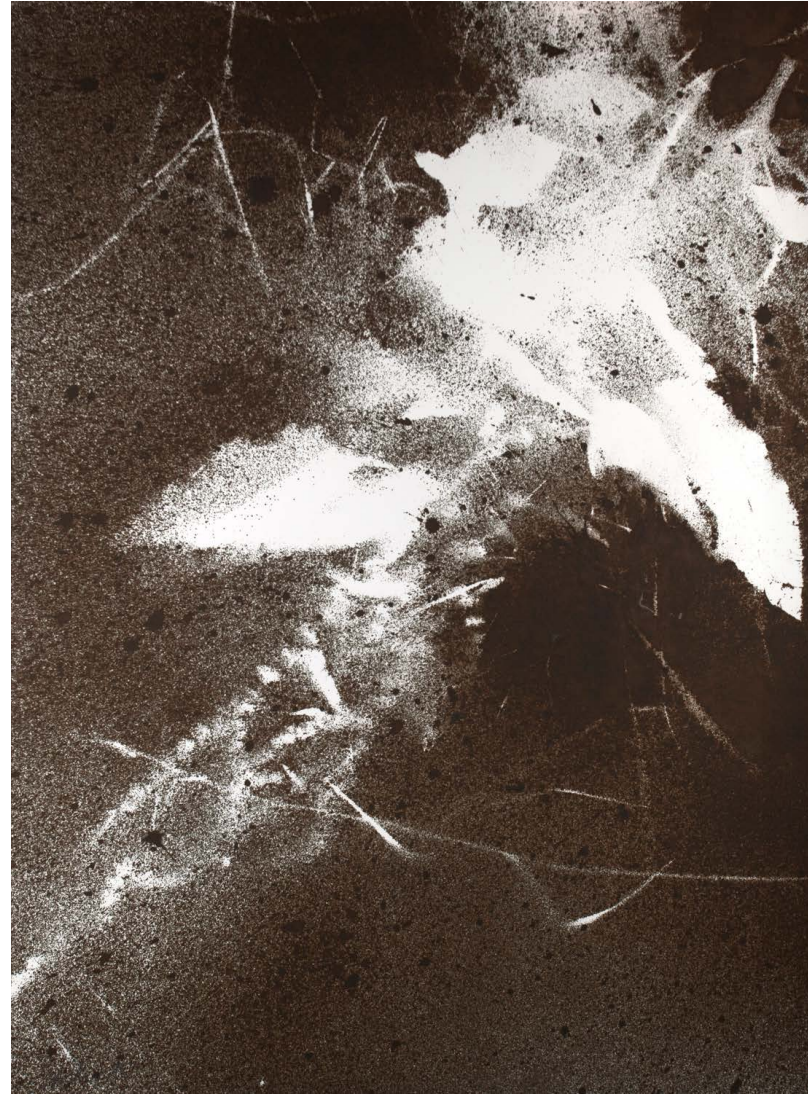
Urs Ramseyer

**Blooming Fading, 2017**  
mixed media on paper  
86 x 50 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2017**  
mixed media on paper  
86 x 50 cm

**Blooming Fading, 2017**  
mixed media on paper  
86 x 50 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2017**  
mixed media on paper  
86 x 50 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
mixed media on canvas  
150 x 400 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
mixed media on canvas  
150 x 400 cm



**Elementals, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Elementals, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Elementals, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Elementals, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm





**Elementals, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Elementals, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Elementals, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Elementals, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



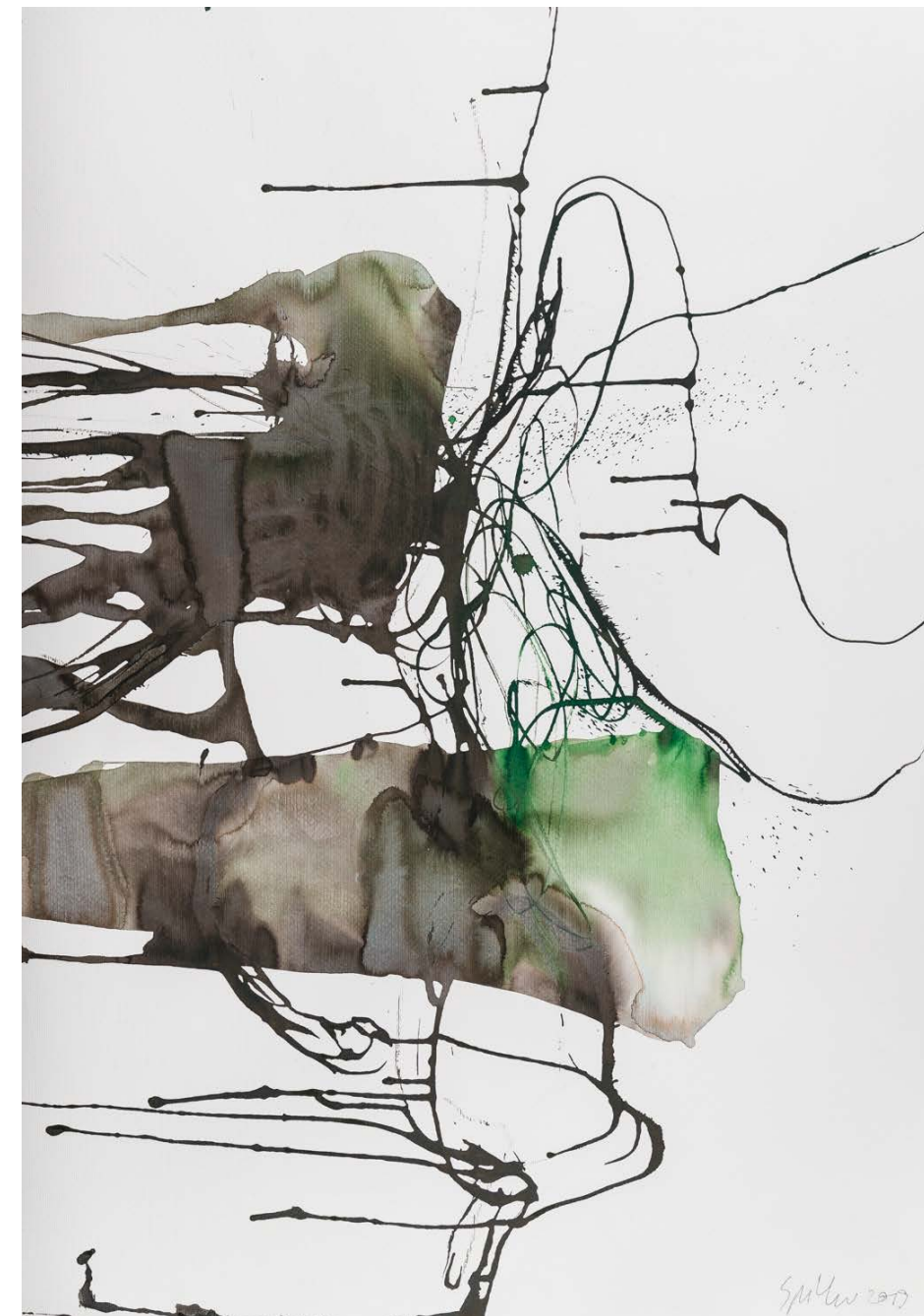
**Elementals, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Elementals, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Elementals, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm

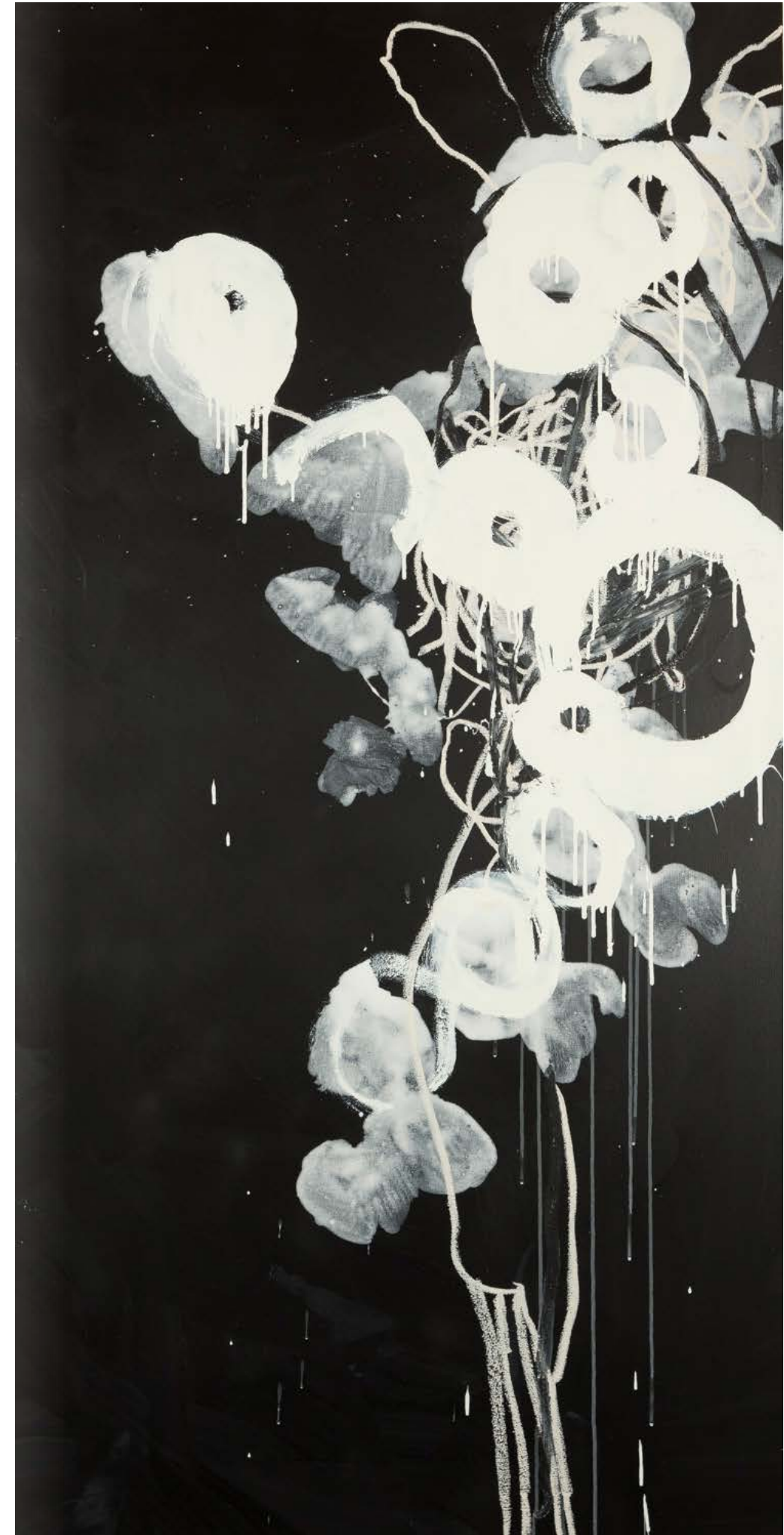


**Elementals, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm

**Elementals, 2019**  
lacquer and oil on canvas  
180 x 90 cm



**Elementals, 2019**  
lacquer and oil on canvas  
180 x 100 cm





**Elementals, 2017**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
50 x 70 cm



**Elementals, 2017**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
50 x 70 cm



**Mountain, 2018**  
inc - aquarell and lacquer on paper  
70 x 50 cm

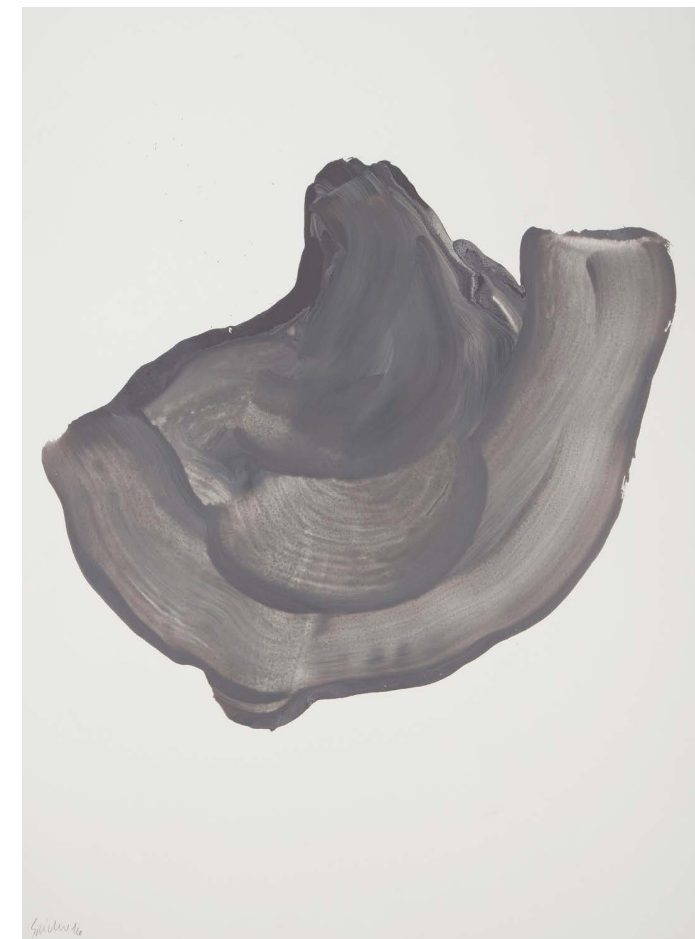


**Mountain, 2018**  
mixed media on paper  
70 x 50 cm





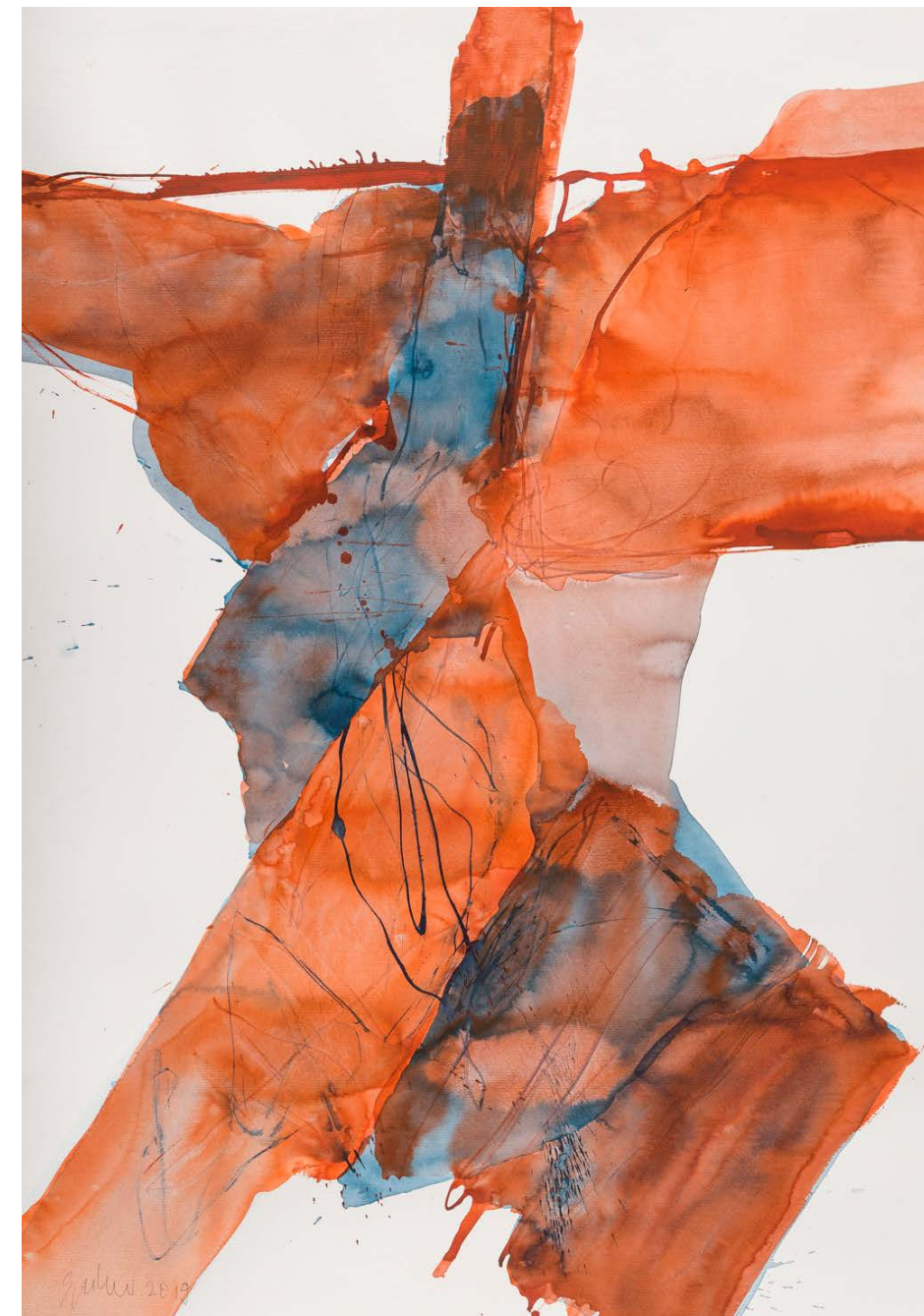
**Mountain, 2018**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
70 x 50 cm



**Mountain, 2018**  
lacquer on paper  
70 x 50 cm



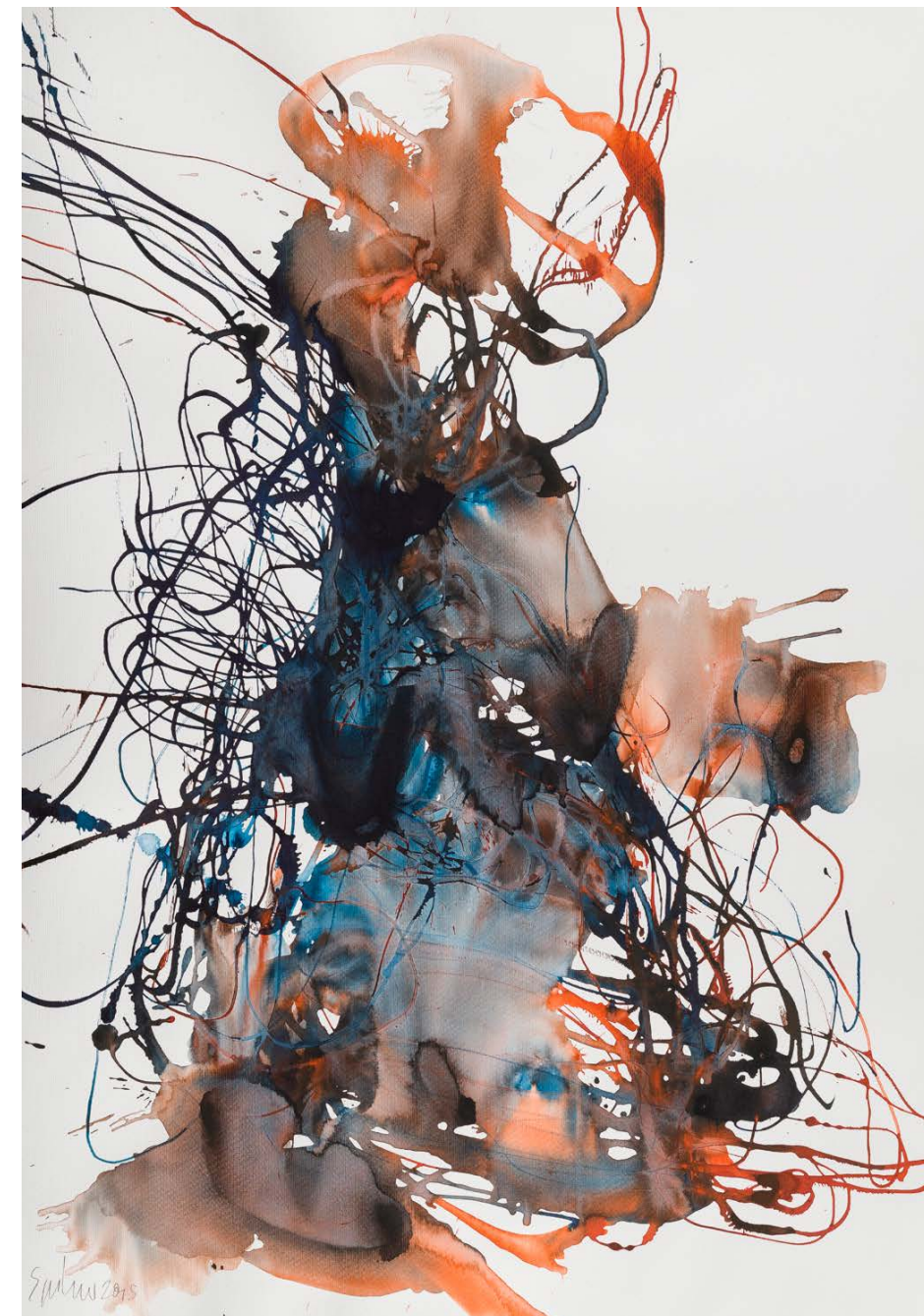
**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



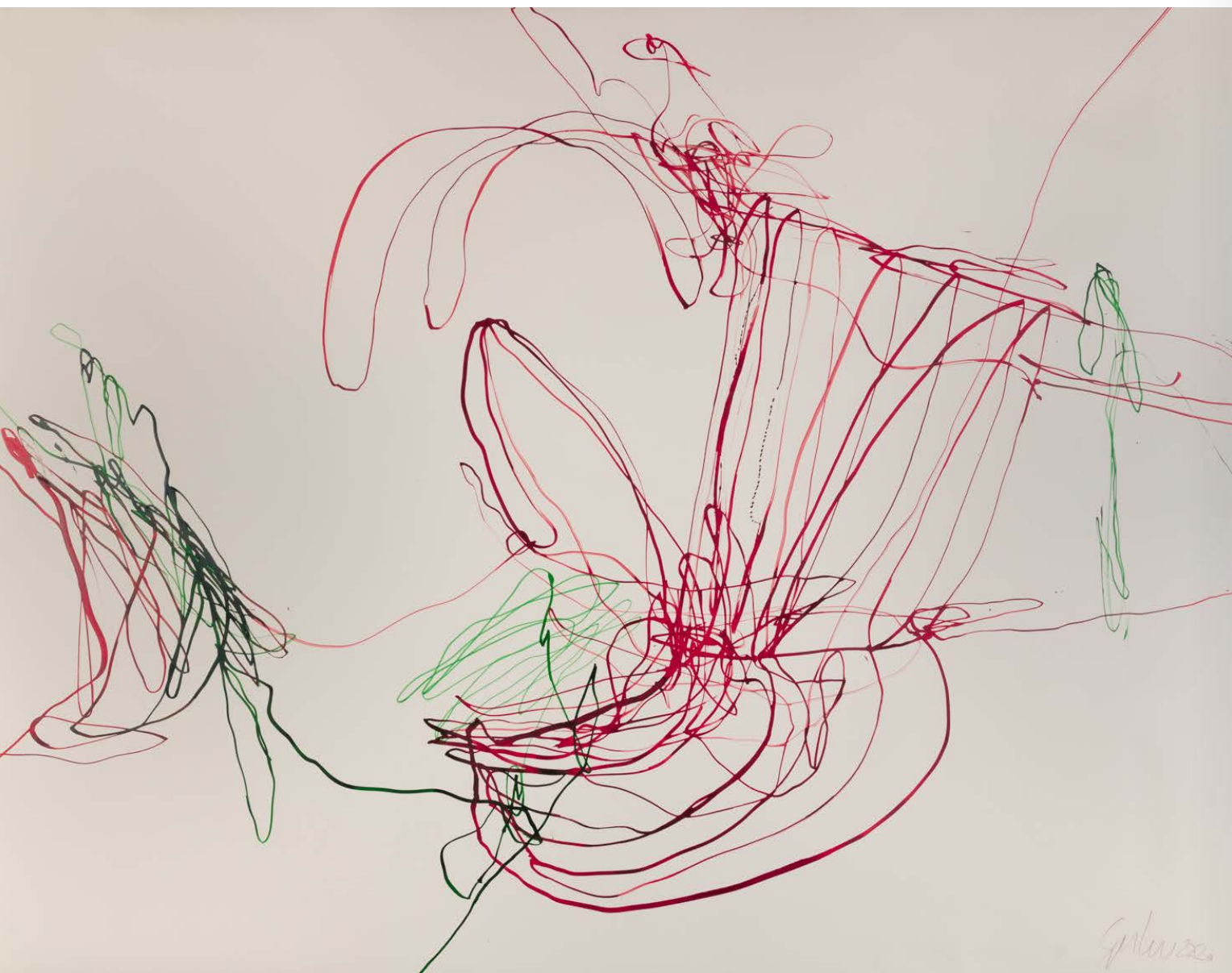
**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2019**  
inc - aquarell on paper  
100 x 70 cm



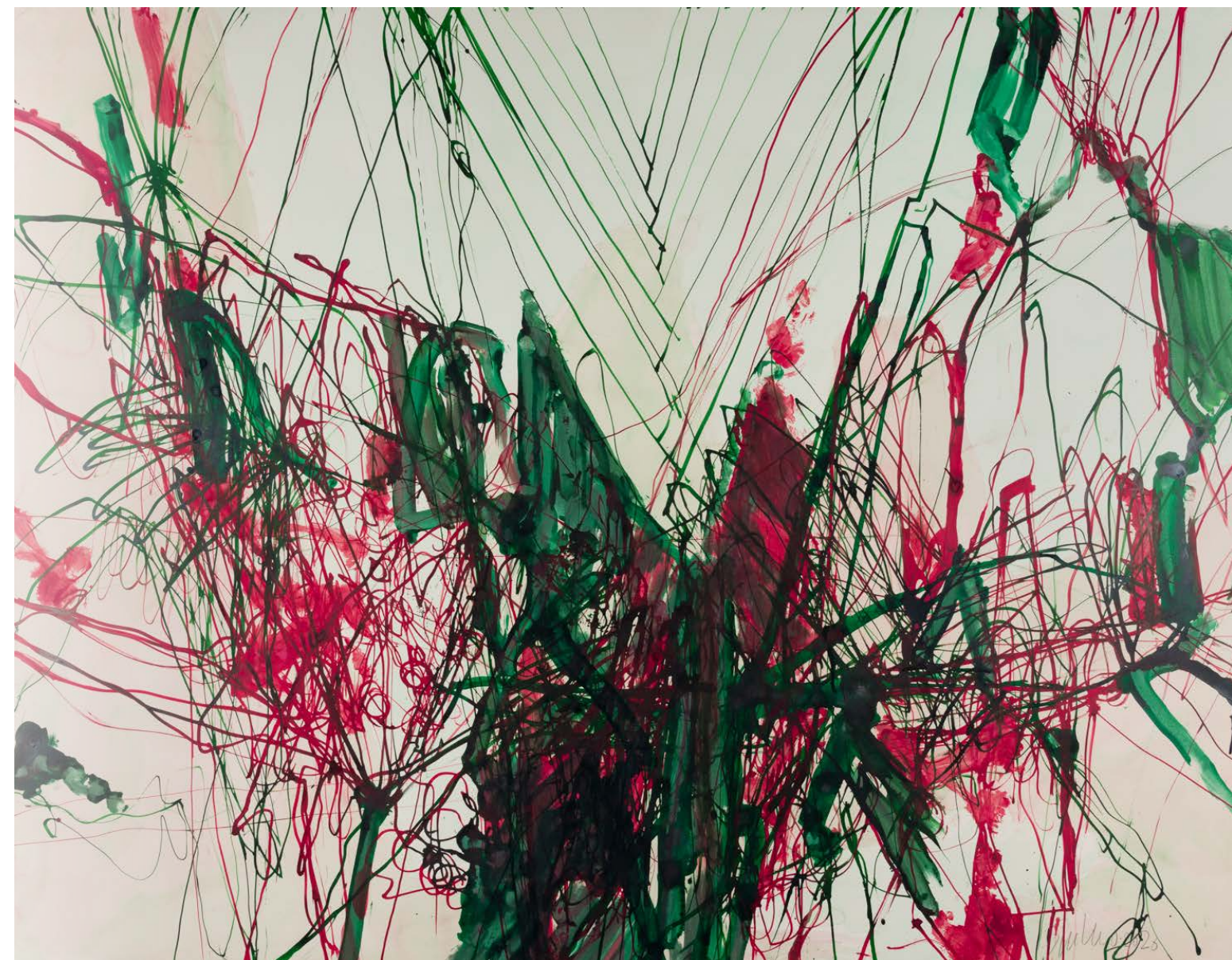
**Blooming Fading, 2020**  
inc on paper  
100 x 130 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2020**  
inc on paper  
100 x 130 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2020**  
inc on paper  
100 x 130 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2020**  
inc on paper  
100 x 130 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2020**  
inc on paper  
100 x 130 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2020**  
inc on paper  
100 x 130 cm



**Blooming Fading, 2020**  
inc on paper  
100 x 130 cm





## Biography



Stephan Spicher was born in Basel on November 27th, 1950 and grew up in a harmonious, middle-class home. The family spent the summer months in the Italian-speaking part of Switzerland and the winter in Basel. His father was a mineralogist and researched the Southern Alps.

“For me it was and still is important to be able to identify with two cultures, to live on the north-south axis, so to speak.”

After the schools he attended in Basel, at the age of 19, he began to study at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Basel, but then at the age of 22 found his teacher, Beppe Assenza, in whose workshop he studied painting for over four years. Academic studies were the basis, but Assenza, born in Italy, taught pure, free painting and the study of colour.

“Assenza taught artistic, processual thinking and at the same time represented Italian aesthetics, my father taught me how to read and observe nature. For me this was an ideal combination”.

In 1978 Spicher moved back to the Maggia Valley on the southern edge of the Alps to digest his studies.

“To learn something is one thing, to forget it again, respectively to free oneself from the knowledge is another”.

Spicher decided to abandon the colour he had studied so thoroughly, to concentrate purely on black and white and to deepen the texture with the material ash, only to dissolve it again afterwards. For a painter an informal process that was in keeping with the zeitgeist. The series of ash walls were characteristic for the 1980s. After long spells in Paris, Berlin and the USA, Spicher was very impressed by Japan, which he visited during his exhibition in Tokyo in 1986.

“To see the individual as a whole, this aesthetic fascinated me very much and stayed with me until today”.

Spicher has visited Japan many times and has exhibited in various Japanese cities. His paintings became more and more condensed into lines. The spaces between these lines became more and more important, space and counter-space, visible and invisible line - themes that were formative for the 1990s.

In 1991 Spicher married Tatiana Semenova, a Russian doctor, and in the following years built up his studio in St. Petersburg. Having already witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall, Spicher now saw a Russia that was breaking free from the Soviet era and slowly opening up. His main studio was now in Basel and he was constantly commuting between the Italian-speaking part of Switzerland, Basel and St. Petersburg. Artistically the lines changed into vegetative forms:

He named the following large group of works „Blossom“.

During this time Spicher was involved in an exchange project with artists from Indonesia by Urs Ramseyer, a leading ethnologist for Southeast Asia and spent many months in studios in Jawa and Bali.

“In Japanese culture, in Asia in general, one feels the blossoming together with the withering. We separate the two and concentrate on the blossoming. In Asia, withering is also beautiful.”

“The blooming and fading, the elemental in nature, remains a theme which I still work on and explore in depth while painting and drawing. I am actually still in the middle of this process.”

## Group exhibitions

- 1982** Wahlverwandtschaft Münchner Künstler, City Hall, Munich (Germany)
- 1983** C. Brambach Gallery, Basel (Switzerland)
- 1984** C. Brambach Gallery, Basel (Switzerland)
- 1985** Artists from Ticino, Musee des Beaux-Arts, Sion (Switzerland)  
5th Biennial of Swiss Artists, Olten (Switzerland)
- 1986** Galleria Italiana Arte, Busto Arsizio (Italy)  
Constellations, Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo (Japan)  
Constellations, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei (Taiwan)
- 1987** Gallery Hartl & Klier, Tuebingen (Germany)  
Constellations, Museum of Art, University Arizona, Tucson (USA)  
Tendenze nella Svizzera Italiana, Centro Culturale, Ascona (Switzerland)  
Proposte, International Fair of Contemporary Art, Milan (Italy)  
VII national Biennial of Contemporary Art, Piacenza (Italy)  
Constellations, Kunsthalle Basel, Basel (Switzerland)
- 1988** Gallery Hartl & Klier, Tuebingen (Germany)  
6th Biennial of Swiss Art, St. Gallen (Switzerland)  
German Art, Gallery Neville-Sargent, Chicago (USA)
- 1990** Gallery Hartl & Klier, Tuebingen (Germany)
- 1991** Gallery Hartl & Klier, Tuebingen (Germany)
- 1992** Tiefgang, Bildräume im Schlossbunker, Mannheim (Germany)
- 1999** Crossing Lines, Art 99, Moscow (Russia)  
Gallery Riehentor, Tr. Bruckner, Basel (Switzerland)
- 2000** Dimitriy Semenov Gallery, Saint Petersburg (Russia)  
Gallery Riehentor, Tr. Bruckner, Basel (Switzerland)
- 2002** Painting on the move, Michel Fischer Gallery, Basel (Switzerland)
- 2003** Art Moscow, Lisa P Gallery – Semenov Gallery, Moscow (Russia)
- 2004** Gaya Fusion Gallery, Ubud, Bali (Indonesia)
- 2005** Dimitriy Semenov Gallery, Saint Petersburg (Russia)  
Museum Agung Rai, Bali (Indonesia)
- 2006** Mountains, Beyeler Gallery, Basel (Switzerland)  
Seeds and Blossoms, Nahappan – Spicher, National Library, Singapore
- 2007** Art Moscow, Scope Art Fair, Basel, Art Athina  
Gallery Karin Sutter, Basel (Switzerland)
- 2008** Art Moscow, Scope Art Fair, Basel (Switzerland)  
Pinacoteca Casa Rusca, Locarno (Switzerland)
- 2009** Arte & Natura, Museo Villa dei Cedri, Bellinzona (Switzerland)  
Art Asia, Gallery G 77, Basel (Switzerland)
- 2010** Japanese Artists, Japan Art Centre, Brussels (Belgium)  
Sky – The National Russian Museum, Saint Petersburg (Russia)  
Meeting with Japan Art, Gallery Karin Sutter, Basel (Switzerland)  
Meeting with Japan Art, Dimitriy Semenov Gallery, St Petersburg (Russia)
- 2011** Japan Art + 2, Museum Yokohama, Yokohama (Japan)
- 2012** Dimitriy Semenov Gallery, Saint Petersburg (Russia)  
Gallery il Rivellino, Locarno (Switzerland)  
Gallery Karin Sutter, Basel (Switzerland)  
Gallery G 77 – Contex Art, Miami (USA)
- 2013** Art Space Event, Moscow (Russia)  
Scope Art Fair, Basel (Switzerland)
- 2014** Reflexion of Blossom, Mizutani – Spicher, International Design Centre,  
Nagoya (Japan)
- 2015** Dickicht, Kunsthalle Palazzo, Liestal (Switzerland)  
Le carte dei poeti, Museo Villa dei Cedri, Bellinzona (Switzerland)
- 2016** Cinquantesima, Gallery Mazzi, Tegna (Switzerland)
- 2017** Museum of modern Art, Saitima (Japan)  
Wild thing, Kunsthau Aarau, Aarau (Switzerland)
- 2018** Gallery Sacchetti, Ascona (Switzerland)
- 2019** WopArt Lugano, Gallery Sacchetti, Lugano (Switzerland)
- 2020** il Rivellino LdV, Locarno: Soto – Bini – Spicher, Locarno (Switzerland)

## Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 1983** C. Brambach Gallery, Basel (Switzerland)
- 1984** C. Brambach Gallery, Basel (Switzerland)  
Media Gallery, Zofingen (Switzerland)  
Galleria l'immagine, Mendrisio (Switzerland)
- 1985** Trudelhaus Gallery, Baden (Germany)  
C. Brambach Gallery, Basel (Switzerland)
- 1986** Art 17-86 Basel, C. Brambach Gallery (Switzerland)
- 1987** Emmerich Baumann Gallery, Zurich (Switzerland)  
Hartl-Klier Gallery, Tuebingen (Germany)
- 1989** Hartl-Klier Gallery, Tuebingen (Germany)
- 1990** Kunsthaus Grenchen, Grenchen (Switzerland)  
Harcourts Gallery, San Francisco (USA)
- 1992** Galleria Matasci, Tenero (Switzerland)
- 1993** Hubert Goote Gallery, Zug (Switzerland)  
City Gallery, Emmen (Switzerland)
- 1998** Riehentor Gallery, Basel (Switzerland)  
Russian State Museum, Saint Petersburg (Russia)  
Manege Exhibition Hall, Moscow (Russia)
- 1999** Dmitriy Semenov Gallery, Saint Petersburg (Russia)  
Riehentor Gallery, Basel (Switzerland)
- 2000** Kunstverein Schaffhausen, Schaffhausen (Switzerland)  
Riehentor Gallery, Basel (Switzerland)
- 2001** Crossing lines - Museum der Kulturen, Basel (Switzerland)
- 2002** Dmitriy Semenov Gallery, Saint Petersburg (Russia)  
NoMi Exhibition Hall, Saint Petersburg (Russia)
- 2003** Eternal line - Seputih Art Gallery, Denpasar (Indonesia)  
Museo Villa dei Cedri, Bellinzona (Switzerland)
- 2004** Dmitriy Semenov Gallery, Saint Petersburg (Russia)
- 2005** Ganesha Gallery Jimbaran, Bali (Indonesia)  
Four Seasons Gallery, Jakarta (Indonesia)  
XL Gallery, Moscow (Russia)
- 2006** Karin Sutter Gallery, Basel (Switzerland)  
National Library, Singapore (Singapore)
- 2007** Ludwig Museum in the Russian Museum, Saint Petersburg (Russia)
- 2008** Dmitriy Semenov Gallery, Saint Petersburg (Russia)  
Patty Look Lewis Gallery, Santa Barbara (USA)
- 2009** Fundation Niebla, Girona (Spain)  
Karin Sutter Gallery, Basel (Switzerland)
- 2010** il Rivellino di Leonardo da Vinci, Locarno (Switzerland)
- 2011** Galeria Barcelona, Barcelona (Spain)
- 2012** RuArts Gallery, Moscow (Russia)
- 2013** Sangkring Art Space, Yogyakarta (Indonesia)
- 2014** Hakusasonso Hashimoto Museum, Kyoto (Japan)
- 2015** Barbara Ruetz Gallery, Munich (Germany)  
Central Art Gallery, Nagoya (Japan)  
Gallery Mazzi, Tenero (Switzerland)
- 2016** Inner Voice Gallery, Saint Petersburg (Russia)
- 2017** G77 Gallery, Kyoto (Japan)  
AMC, Nagoya (Japan)
- 2018** Inner Voice Gallery, Saint Petersburg (Russia)
- 2019** Noivoi Gallery, Nagoya (Japan)  
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