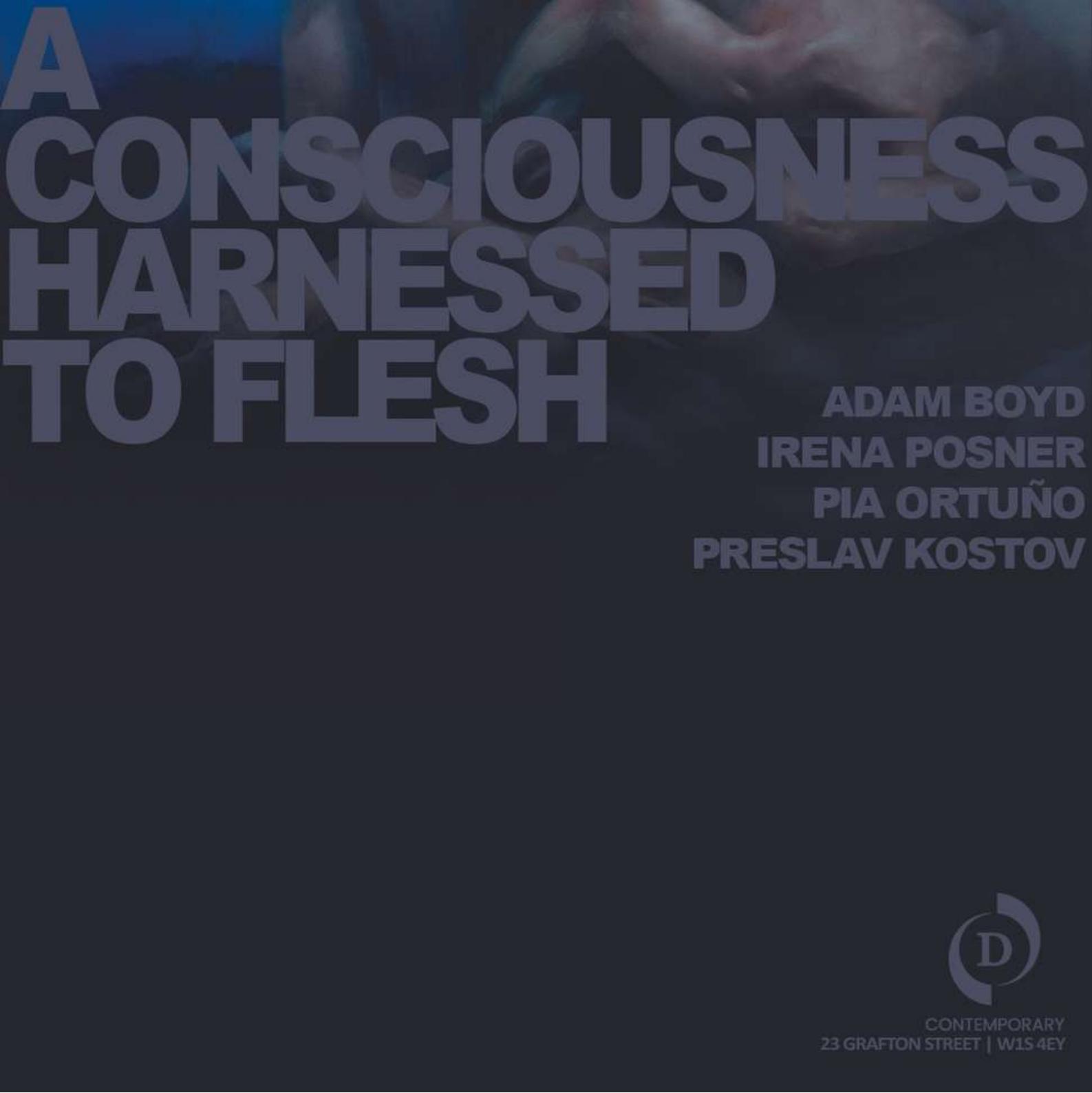


# A CONSCIOUSNESS HARNESSED TO FLESH



ADAM BOYD  
IRENA POSNER  
PIA ORTUÑO  
PRESLAV KOSTOV



CONTEMPORARY  
23 GRAFTON STREET | W1S 4EY



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## EXHIBITION CATALOGUE



23 Grafton St  
London W1S 4EY



Driven by Susan Sontag's quotidian notes documenting the evolution of an extraordinary mind, the exhibition brings together a group of artists presenting works that navigate dimensions of time, ritualistic repetition, showcasing tropes and turn innate textures into supernatural imagery.

Notes collected into a very truthful picture coming from our inner self completing a worldview that reflects the nowness. Narratives of time and archetypes reflected on harrowing futurism, embedded in the present, harnessing a fraction of the maker's mind to reveal what lies beneath. Transforming materiality, bodies becoming one with abyssal voids, instilling energy, searching for an environment of non-possession.

In an ensemble of painting, sculpture and installation, **Pia Ortuno** navigates dimensions of time, the possibilities in ritualistic repetition and the aesthetics of spirituality. Her work echoes post-colonial religious aesthetics as well as Columbian rituals and bridges these conversations with those of material exploration. Drawn to quasi-ecclesiastic, supernatural imagery, **Adam Boyd** works are an alignment of traditional felting and quilting, with 3D-printing and lidar-scanning technology. Researching pop cultural & art historical content which, in turn, harbour traces of much wider philosophical and scientific debate, he aims to situate his practice as a syncretic testbed, where ideas and processes coexist and cross-pollinate.

**Irena Posner's** installation turns the vitrine and the space around the window of the gallery into a vivarium, consisting of woodland mulch, fluorescent lamps, and hand carved marble reptiles. 'The young and the restless', a riff on a soap opera, uses the artificial environment as a metaphor for states of displacement and non-belonging. The stone iguana perched under a lamp, unable to regulate its body temperature, derives warmth by affixing itself to an apposite surface and basking under warm light in the hope of mobilising her body into action. Taking further the essence of bodily representation, **Preslav Kostov's** imposing compositions of carnal imagery echoes the forms and palette of the old masters presenting Ghosts, searching for an environment of non-possession. Tangled forms with alluring asymmetry forge a feeling of melancholic isolation emerging from a metaphysical void.

Adam Boyd (b. 1993, Newcastle-under-Lyme) has recently completed an MFA at The Slade School of Fine Art, London and holds a Bachelor's from Glasgow School of Art (2016). During his studies he was selected for the Euan Uglow Scholarship and the George & Cordelia Oliver Scholarship. Before commencing his studies at The Slade, Boyd generated two solo exhibitions for venues in Glasgow, Solaristics (2018) & Synthespians (2019). In 2021, Strand Systems, Boyd's first solo showing outside of the UK, opened in Hafnarfjordur, Iceland. The show represented the culmination of Boyd's month-long residency at SÍM, Reykjavík in August 2021. Individual works have been exhibited in several group exhibitions in the UK and abroad (Tokyo, Hokkaido, New York, Reykjavik). Adam was recently selected for Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2022.

The content Boyd is drawn to, tends to embrace the fugitive, immaterial or ethereal. He employs diverse craft-biased channels, in order to materialise these fleeting observations. Boyd often documents phenomena refracted by the urban environment, permeating the domestic. His research orbits pop cultural & art historical content which, in turn, harbour traces of much wider philosophical and scientific debate. A fascination with the tropes of science-fiction has become an internal filter for the quasi-ecclesiastic, supernatural imagery he favours. Boyd aims to situate his practice as a syncretic testbed, where ideas and processes coexist and cross-pollinate. An extensive, and often unlikely, range of materials and processes have been utilised to transcribe the subtle qualities of Boyd's digital photography. The simultaneous alignment of traditional felting and quilting, with 3D-printing and lidar-scanning technology, offers-up works that seem to stand autonomously from the original catalyst; they sit in the in-between. Collectively, these compositions take on a taxonomic function, a pictorial sense of balancing which, to Boyd, feels akin to the consideration of opposing modes of thought.



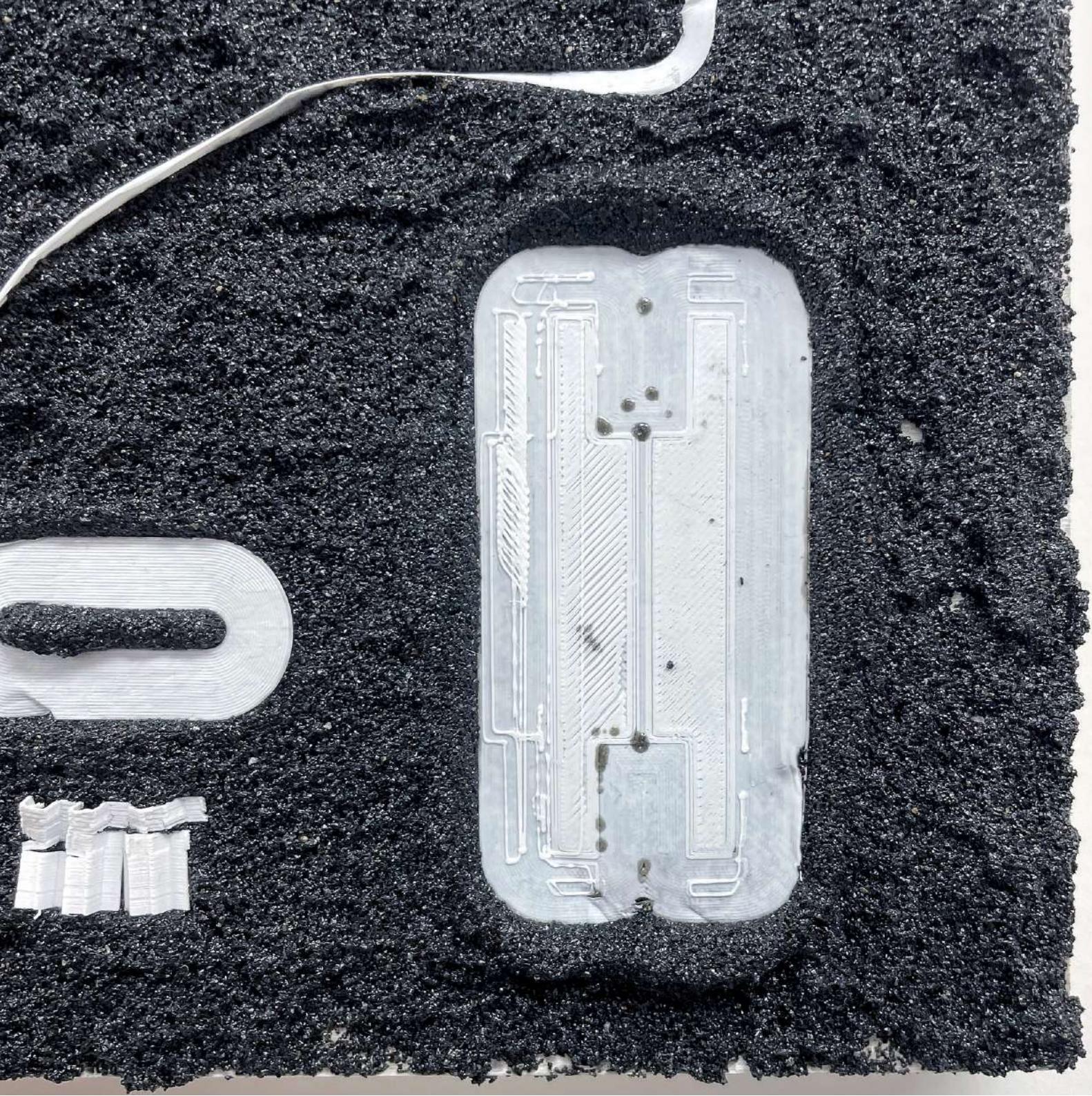
@adamb0yd



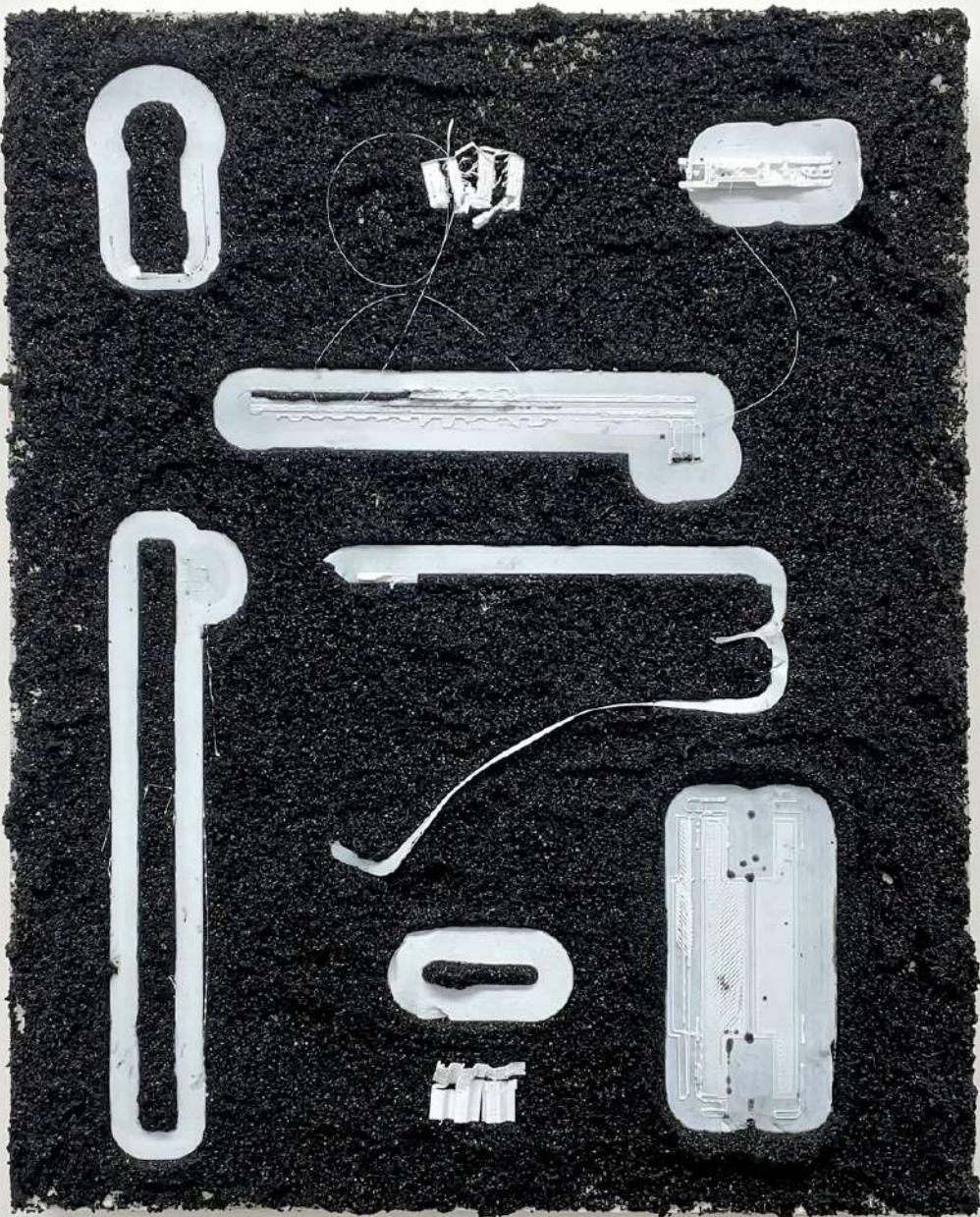
[www.adamboydstudio.com](http://www.adamboydstudio.com)

A close-up photograph of a white, ribbed, cylindrical object, possibly a lamp or a piece of art, mounted on a dark, textured wall. The object has a long, thin, curved base extending downwards and to the right. The wall is dark and appears to be made of a coarse, granular material.

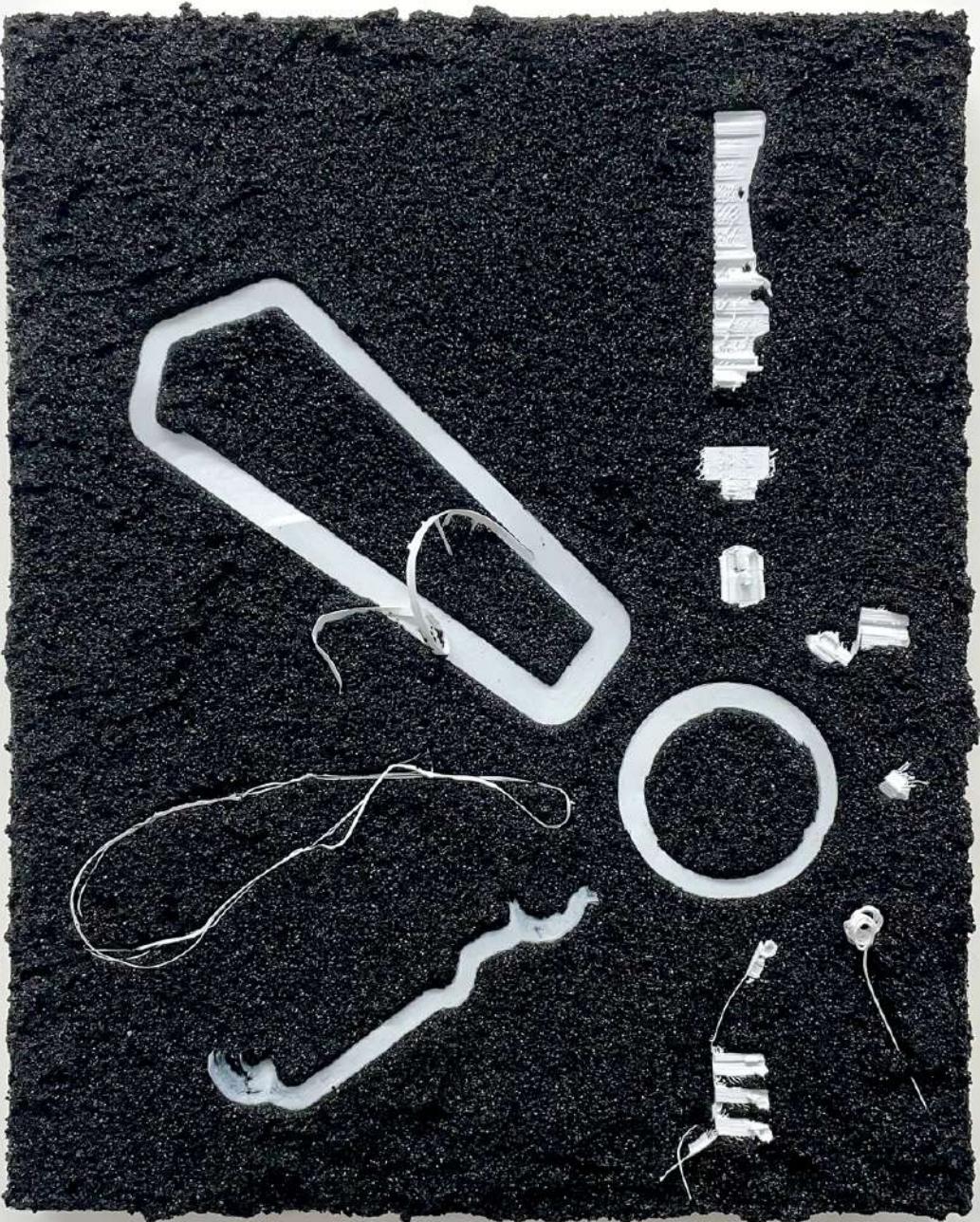
**ADAM BOYD**



**Untracked Sand | 2022**  
**3D printed PLA filament & acrylic media on plywood panels | 25.5 x 20.5 x 3 cm**  
£800



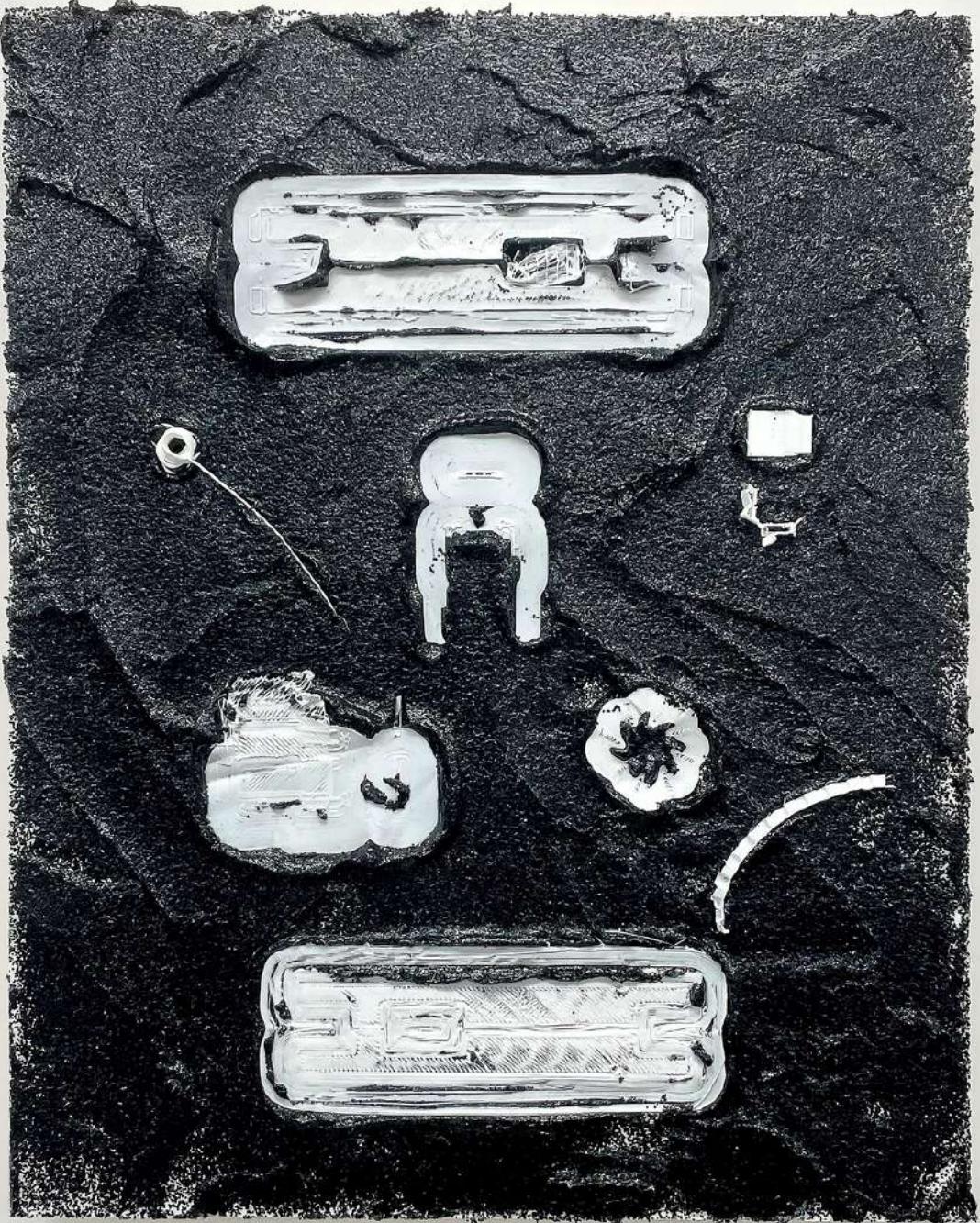
**Untracked Sand | 2022**  
**3D printed PLA filament & acrylic media on plywood panels | 25.5 x 20.5 x 3 cm**  
**£800**



**Untracked Sand | 2022**

**3D printed PLA filament & acrylic media on plywood panels | 25.5 x 20.5 x 3 cm**

**£800**





Odradek | 2022

Quilted and embroidered inkjet on polycanvas, hand-felted wool, felt, tie-dyed  
spun velvet cotton duct, cotton, wadding, thread and zips | 233 x 276 x 4 cm  
Price: £2700



**IRENA POSNER**



Irena Posner (b.1987) works between Carrara and London. She graduated from Royal College of Art in 2022 with a Masters in Sculpture.

Irena works primarily with marble and limestone. Her material research is informed by ancient carving techniques, examining the space between object and body. The spontaneity of direct monolithic carving and the reductive approach looks for playfulness, accident and humour to explore feminine subjectivities, sexuality, ageing and immortality embodied in animal forms and situated bodies. Animals are monumentalised and venerated seeking out approaches which re-contextualise marble, a material associated with masculine endeavour and permanence, cold and historically problematic, to question existing hegemonic structures and gender roles.

Irena was awarded the Harlow Sculpture Town Artist in Residence for 2023 and was the recipient of the Gilbert Bayes Sculpture Award in 2021. She was shortlisted for the Kenneth Armitage Award in 2022 and has undertaken residencies in Carrara, Weymouth, and most recently completed a 6-month carving residency at the University of East London. Her works are held in Odunpazari Modern Museum, Turkey, and Fondazione Benetton, Italy, permanent collections.

Select solo and group exhibitions include: Groundwork, Studio West (2022), Everything in Equal measure, The Baths, London (2022) Ashburner Sculpture Prize (2022), Stone Lane Gardens (2022), Making Marks, Battersea Park (2022), Degree Show, Royal College of Art (2022), Flesh, Old Operating Theatre, London (2020), WIP, Royal College of Art, London (2020), Movement, Tate Exchange, Tate Modern, London (2019), Unfinished, Peckham Levels, London (2018), Light Ignites our Inspiration, Asylum, London (2018), Snorkel, Cookhouse Gallery Chelsea, London (2018), Fragments, The Garage, London (2017), Still Lives, Erarta Gallery (2016), London Griffin Gallery Open, Griffin Gallery, London (2015)

Awards: Harlow Sculpture Town Artist in Residence STAIR (2023); Gilbert Bayes Award, Royal Society of Sculptors (2021); shortlisted for Kenneth Armitage Award (2022); Griffin Gallery London, Winsor & Newton Painting Prize (2015)

Collections: Fondazione Benetton, Treviso, Italy; Odunpazari Modern Museum, Turkey, Soho House, Shoreditch , London



@starkey\_painter



[www.irenaposner.com](http://www.irenaposner.com)

The starting point for the installation was thinking about how reptilian zoomorphisms creep into our language. The inability in reptiles to regulate their body temperature becomes a byword for lack of emotion and callousness. Each process of reptilian lifecycles is associated with connivance, temptation, a hidden agenda. They are mythologically complex creatures, associated with prehistoric, demonic and feminine archetypes.

'I am transported into a vivarium. Seated on a rotting log, feeling the warm glow of the infrared lamp as the crickets chirp, hop, fuck and habitually clean their antennae. I sit and watch, immobile. I am preparing to shed my skin. I itch all over, the old skin feels like a polythene jacket, constantly rustling in my ears. The other lizard in the tank (a gecko?) sits on a heated stone, tail missing singing 'Blue Velvet'. I can see she has evaded capture. She tells me you can't experience physical and emotional pain at the same time. We are both in-patients warming our bodies under the blue night lamp as the passers-by watch us in our varying states of unease.'



Venus | 2022

Hand Carved Statuario Marble | 150 x 52 x 25 Cm

Price on Request



**Eva perched on a wood beam | 2022**

**Hand Carved Statuario Marble, tree trunk | 70 x 48 x 53 Cm**

**Price on Request**



**Percher | 2022**

**Hand Carved Statuario Marble, Tree Trunk | 73 x 52 x 50 Cm**

**Price on Request**





**PIA ORTUNO**

Pía Ortúño (b. 1996 San José) is a Costa Rican artist currently living and working in London. She graduated from the University of Costa Rica with a BA in fine arts (2019) and later moved to Pietrasanta, Italy to work and learn ancient marble and bronze techniques. She apprenticed under Jimenez Deredia in his Carrara studio and worked at the Fonderia Artistic Mariani (2020). She is the Co-founder of Sala Salon (2021) and recently graduated from Painting at the RCA (2022). Ortúño has exhibited in the UK and internationally. Recent exhibitions include Stables Gallery in Switzerland, Helen J. Gallery in Los Angeles, Fold Gallery and Incubator in London.

'Through the spiritual rituals taught to me as a child in Costa Rica I find, collect, unearth and reveal pockets of time. I listen to the echos of postcolonial religious iconography, color, and architecture as well as precolumbian rituals and bridge these conversations with those of material exploration. In an ensemble of painting, sculpture, and installation I navigate dimensions of time, the possibilities in ritualistic repetition and the aesthetics of spirituality. By experimenting and transforming materiality I challenge the linear notions of time and embed surfaces with my own history and traditions alongside their own. The alchemical processes that

I condemn my materials to endure enable a form of creation that is an ever changing process of deconstruction and becoming. I seek to excite the viewers curiosity and admiration of the elemental. In this volatile and saturated world, I find relief and calm in the simple smell of salt, the slow oxidizing of nails and the narratives of time in these portals. I have wondered how slowly I can provoke time to pass, how much attention it is willing to give. I encourage the viewer to explore these harrowing and salty landscapes, to look deep into the cavernous holdings and seek the objects that layer personal and collective memory, and to let time pass through the work and onto themselves.'



@piaortuno



[www.piaortuno.com](http://www.piaortuno.com)





Ahora Y En LA Hora | 2022

Salt, rusted nails, wood glue, ink and pigments on wood | 30.5 x 30.5  
£2700



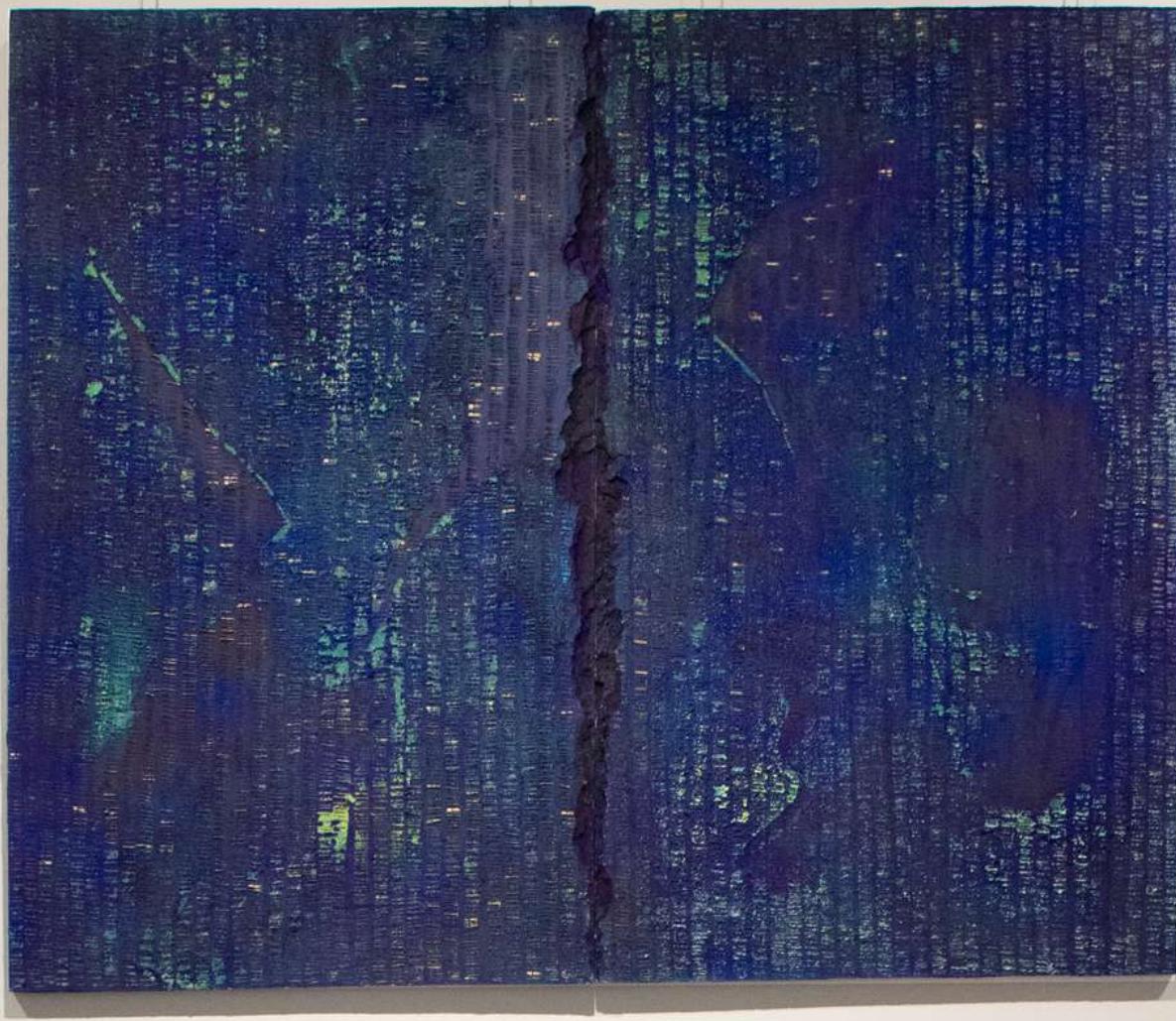


Untitled | 2022

Sea salt and pigment on burned wood with steel frame | 30.5 x 30.5

£2200





Next to, away from and inside out | 2022  
Salt and Pigments on Wood 116 x 130 x 4 cm  
£4000



PRESLAV KOSTOV

Preslav Kostov (B.1998, Bulgaria) is a painter and draughtsman who currently lives and works in London. Before the Royal College of Art, Preslav attended Leeds College of Art and The Royal Drawing School. He is the recipient of The Elizabeth Greenshields Award and an elected member of The Contemporary British Portrait Painters Society.

Preslav's works are held in private collections across Europe and the States, as well as Soho House London.

"With painting, I am not seeking to explain.

I begin by sweeping areas of colour across the surface, instilling energy, searching for an environment of non-possession. A painted fog invites me to wade in.

I poke guesses at it. A stumble of interpretations scratching at the surface. The early moves often fail. I redact them carefully.

Ghosts of dead ends slowly stack into a scaffold. Each reach towards the surface paints a truth to someone. I work into the muddle.

Peeking into details, wiping away and painting out, whatever it takes to wash away the noise. Past moments turn up uninvited and echo back at me across the surface. I stand back and let one in.

From then it's simple."

Preslav employs methods of automatism and pareidolia to exhume autobiographic narratives.



@preslavkostov



www.preslavkostov.com





**The state of nature | 2022**

**Oil on Linen | 150x150cm**

**£5400**



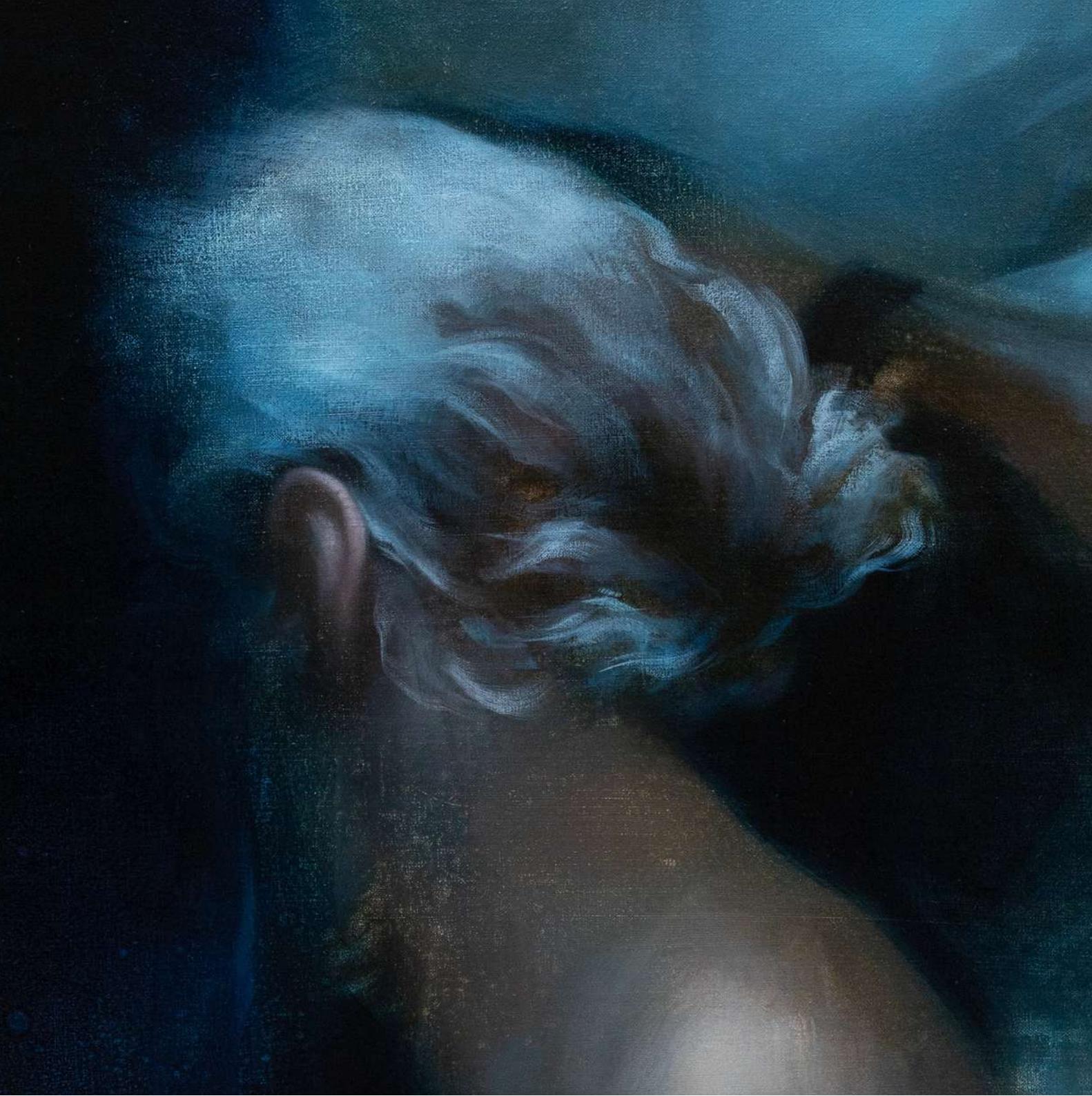
**The tear Collector | 2022**

**Oil on Linen | 120x120cm**

**£4350**



**Impersonations on the climbing frame | 2022**  
**Oil on Linen | 150x120cm**  
**£4900**





**Memories of what could have been | 2022**

**Oil on Linen | 60x48cm**

**£1900**





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**Opening hours**

Tuesday-Friday: 11am–5pm  
Saturday: 12–4pm