

Ilona Lénárd

powerlines

paintings

*Paintings: Ilona Lénárd, visual artist
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Foreword

Powerlines

PATTERN

OMNIVERSE

Q

TANGLE

TWIG

FLOW

MACHINING EMOTION

Immersive Universes

Biography

content

*“you have to train your intuition to
steer your logic”*

Ilona Lénárd

Foreword

This book is a comprehensive documentation of my paintings from the period between 1998 and 2019. I have worked in different locations and cultures, which is reflected by the gradual evolution from the Flow paintings to the Pattern series. As from the Flow series I have predominantly worked with acrylic markers with a wide tip, that are typically used by graffiti artists. I have adopted a working method that can be described as a form of abstract calligraphy. Also, elements of procedural painting can be found in my work. I spread out the canvases on the ground, working all around and on the painting as to add layer by layer. The most recent Pattern paintings are documented in the beginning of the book, while the earlier Flow series are found towards the end. A special place in this book is reserved for the Machining Emotion robotic paintings, a collaborative effort together with architects and designer-programmers, working with a large industrial robot to hold and drive the acrylic markers.

Ilona Lénárd

Powerlines

By definition, according to Wordnet, "a line is a length [straight or curved] without breadth of thickness". Also, a curve is the trace of a moving point. And Kandinsky states in his book "Point to Line to Plane": "The geometric line is an invisible thing. It is the track made by the moving point; that is, its witness. It is created by movement - specifically through the destruction of the intense self-contained repose of the point. Here, the leap out of the static into the dynamic occurs." Thus, a line can be defined as an infinite sequence of points, moving freely in space as to form a curve.

The trajectory of the line

In my own work the trajectory of the line is influenced by a number of internal and external forces working upon the line during the tracing process. Internally, the body / arm put constraints and willpower to the trajectory. External forces are, for example, the tool that the line is drawn with or the medium [paper, digital space] that the line is

drawn upon. Each line is drawn in a unique environmental context, which is partly created by myself, simply by the way I am, and partly by the studio environment I am working in.

Formula I

My curves are a personal and powerful form of drawing a line. I have named these "powerlines". Not all lines are powerlines. A deliberately drawn line is not a powerline. So there are lines and there are powerlines. The power comes from the force with which the line is drawn. An unconscious doodling line certainly is not a powerline. A doodle usually is slowly searching for its destiny, unsure where to go, and hesitating due to its lack of speed. To me, the power of a line comes with the speed with which it has been put on paper. My powerline has an energetic driving force, just like Formula I drivers who paint their powerlines onto the asphalt of the racing track.

Speed of drawing

Similar to drawing a line on paper, the Formula I drivers draw lines by smoothly connecting a series of points along the racing track. Each little movement

they make with their steering wheel creates a new point along the line. Based on their experience, these points are placed almost intuitively, by super-quick and immediate action. And because each driver has developed his own personal style, each Formula 1 driver draws a personal powerline when looping the circuit. Drawing my quick and intuitive sketches I do exactly the same. I trace my personal powerlines by changing the course of the lines through intuitive acts, executed by the muscles of my arm and my hand. I do not know exactly where the acrylic marker will go, but I do know that I must drive it super-fast as to allow my energy to flow through my body and pass maximum energy on to the paper.

Building up the power

The power of the drawing action just does not come like that. I need to build up the energy first, I must build up the power. Compare it again to the world of Formula 1. Look at the way F1 drivers prepare for the race. A team of experts and technicians prepare the vehicle. The driver tests the vehicle, explores the physical limits of the car and scrutinizes the track. The driver needs to build up knowledge and experience. The driver carries all that with him when

driving up to the start, preferable in pole position. As an artist, preparing for the sketch, I do much of the same. I have tested my tools [wide-tipped marker] and my materials [acrylic paint], and have arranged the tracing paper on the ground in my studio. Then I prepare for the start, building up the energy for the trace itself - which is equivalent to a race - mobilizing the accumulated knowledge and experience I have been working on so hard. In the following drawing process I make my knowledge available for quick and intuitive actions, like an idiot savant who creates a shortcut to his/her database / his/her memory when reciting all numbers and names from the telephone book [s]he has been spelling out before. Similarly, I must be prepared to make a shortcut to my deeply embedded knowledge when drawing the powerline.

Unleashing the power

Go to the start. On your marks [pole position]. And there I go. I have lift off. All my systems go. I unleash the power. The graphite rushes over the paper like the rubber tires mark the asphalt. Speed is essential for unleashing the power. It only takes one or two seconds to make my quick and intuitive sketches. The speed of the sketch is by far faster than the time

-consuming thinking process of the brain. There is no time for deliberate action. I rely completely on my intuition, on my trained ability to connect as directly as possible to my experience, to my knowledge base. Unleashing the power is letting the information flow freely through my body to my arm and hand to the paper. Unleashing the power is becoming the idiot savant, becoming the Formula 1 driver.

Intuition

But just like the idiot savant, who has no conscious understanding of what the names and the numbers in the telephone book mean when connecting directly to the data, I do not know yet what is the meaning of the powerline sketch. The neural connections have been made before the process of fast and powerful action, but when executing the actual sketch, I have no conscious communication with my brain. It is a one-way information flow. This is intuition. According to Wordnet, intuition is "instinctively knowing without the use of rational processes". I just "know". Intuition is doing without thinking. Intuition always unfolds in the present, in real time, it never comes from the past. Intuition is by definition actual. According to Buckminster Fuller,

intuition is insight and sensitivity to the environment and to the self. In that sense the person following his or her intuition is bridging the self with the environment, I create a shortcut between myself and the world that surrounds me.

Ilona Lénárd

*"I create a shortcut between
myself and the world that
surrounds me"*





*“layer by layer, I am
weaving a spatial web of
floral patterns, using
rubber paint rollers
as my brush”*

PATTERN



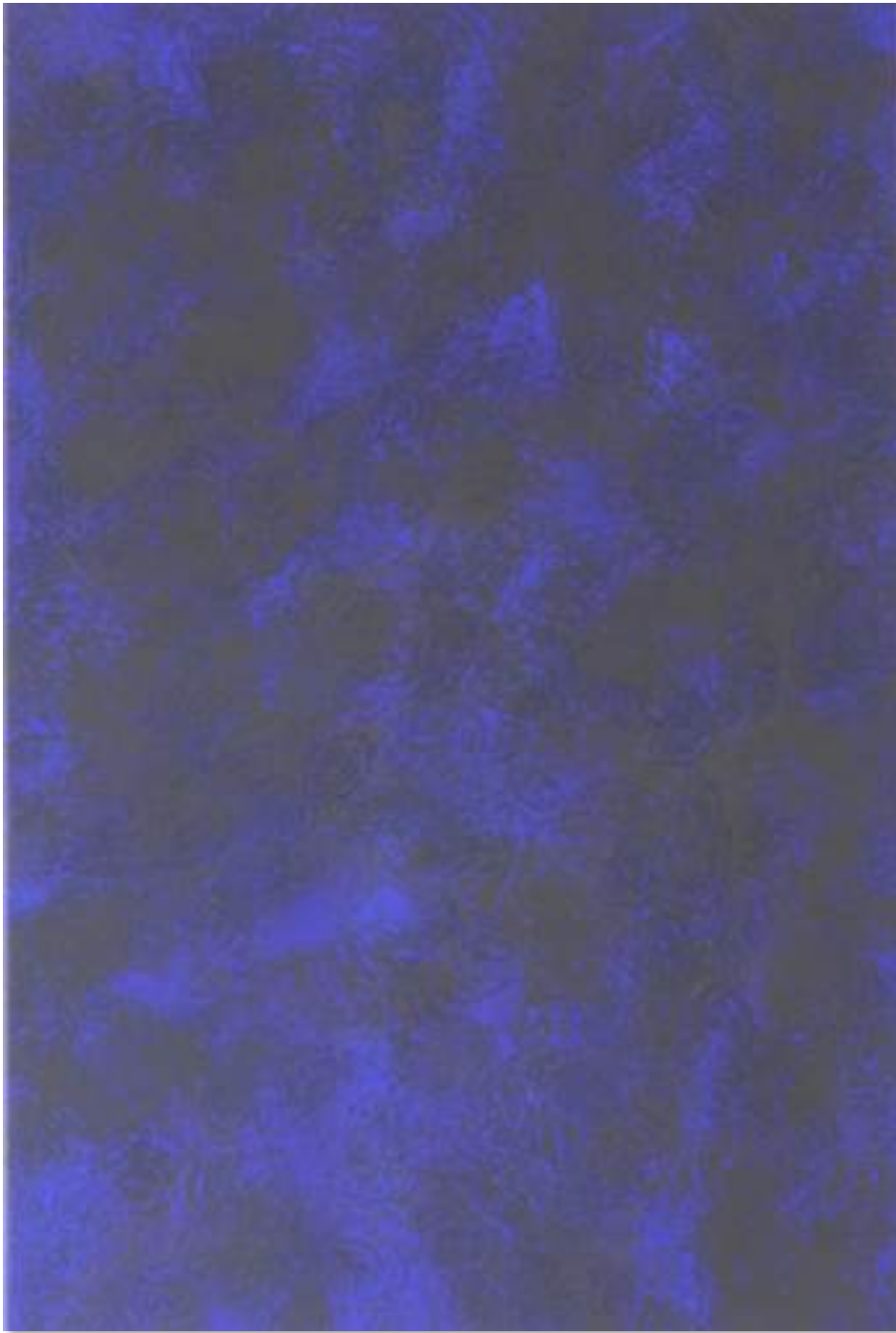
PATTERN 03 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 200 x 200 cm | 2019 | collection Qatar Museums



PATTERN 06 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 180 x 120 cm | 2019



PATTERN 05 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 180 x 120 cm | 2019







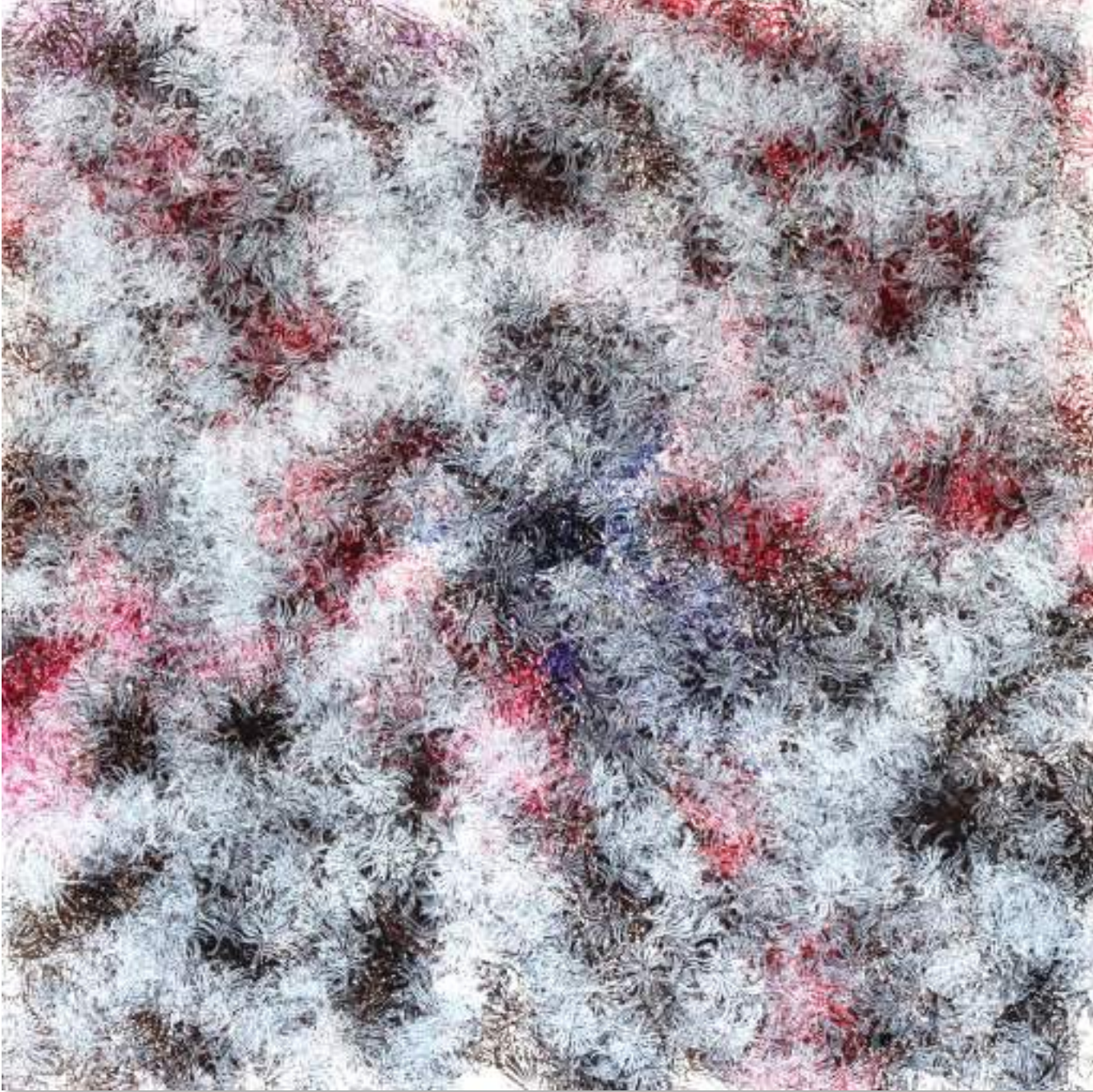
PATTERN 07 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 180 x 140 cm | 2019

*“by the speed of my gestures
I avoid deliberate thinking”*





*“intuitively I unleash my energy
through procedural brush strokes,
leaving traces on the canvases”*



PATTERN 04 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 180 x 180 cm | 2019





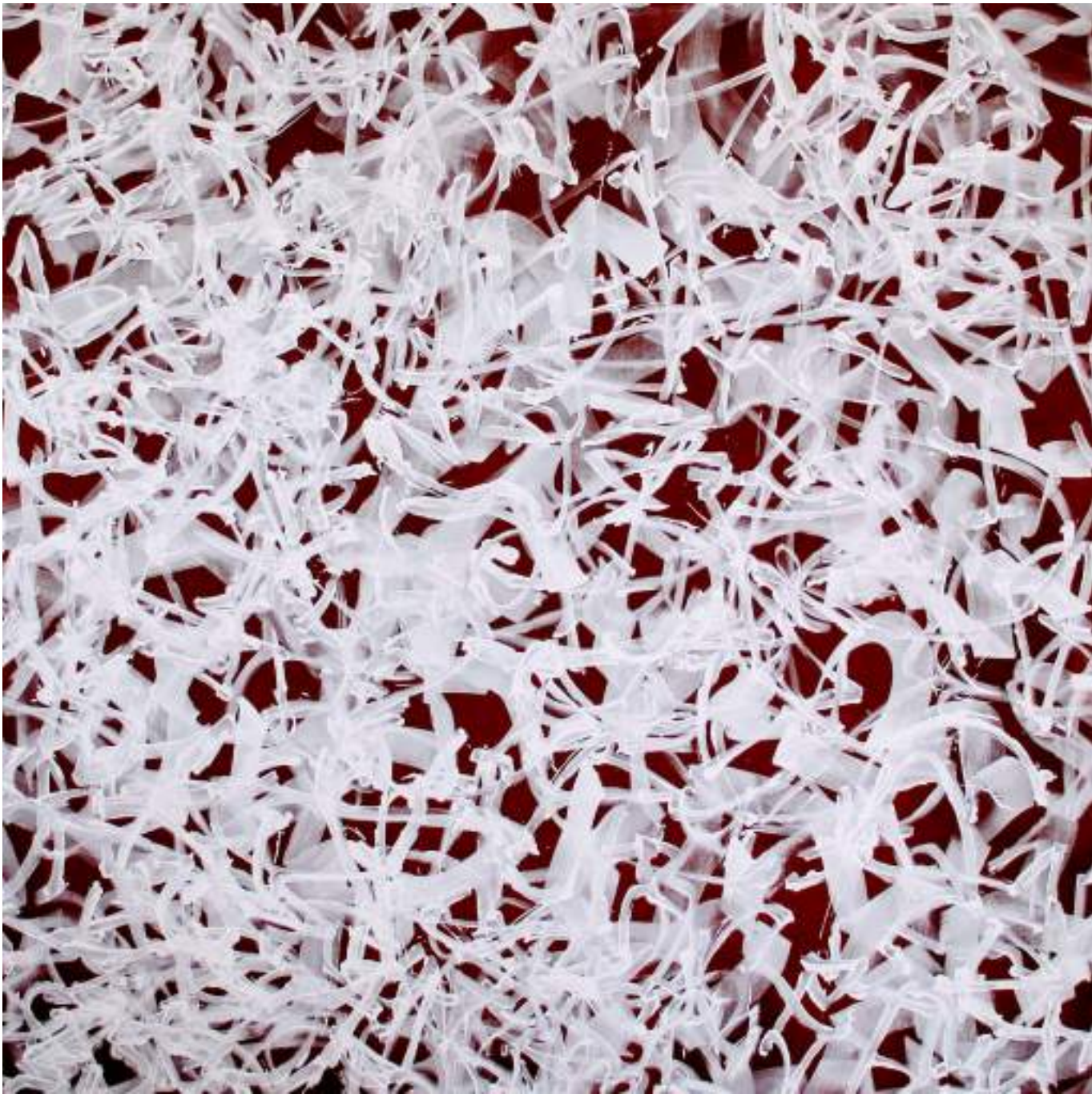




"I spread out the canvas on the floor of my studio, I work around and on the painting, adding layer by layer to achieve omniversal depth"

Q







Q.02 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 160 x 160 cm | 2017





Q.06 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 180 x 180 cm | 2018

*“during my stay in Qatar
I developed a novel form of
abstract calligraphy”*



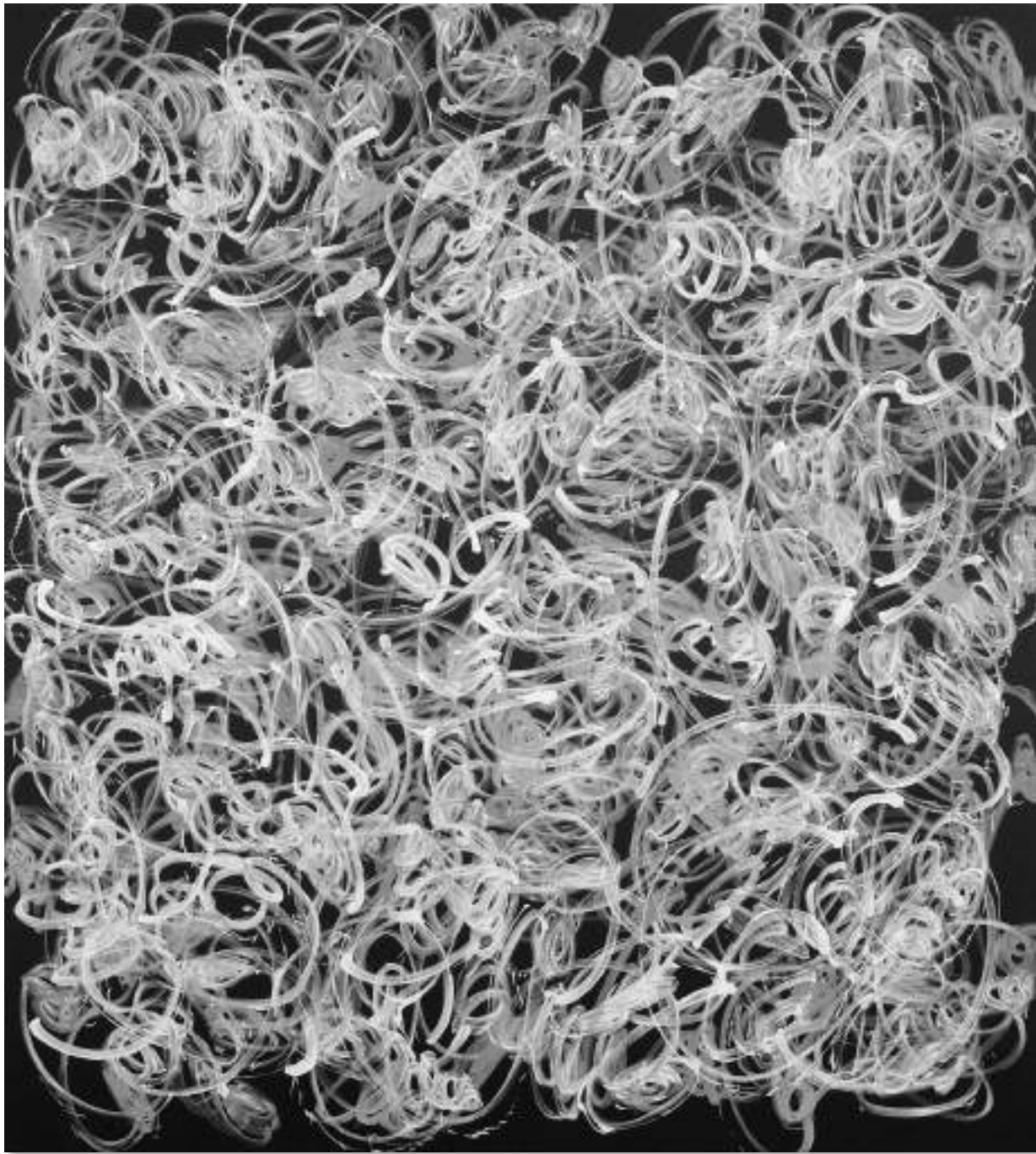






*“there is no up and down, no front
or back, no left or right, only after
finishing the painting I know
how to hang it on the wall”*

OMNIVERSE





Omniverse 03 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 190 x 180 cm | 2015





Omniverse 02 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 190 x 180 cm | 2015

*"I invite the viewers to navigate
freely in my multi-layered
omniverses as to create
their own experience"*









Omniverse 07 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 190 x 180 cm | 2015





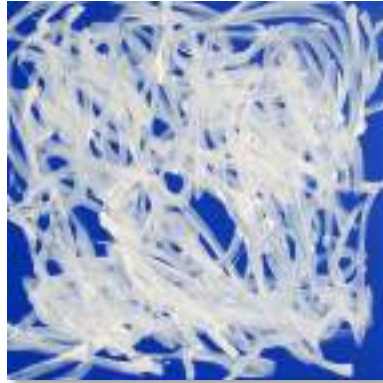
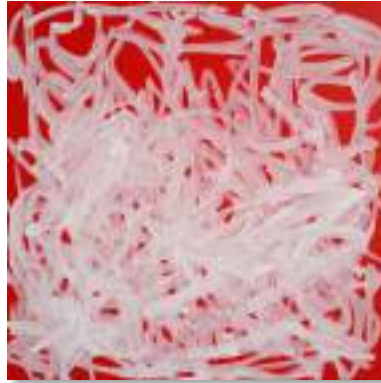








*“in preparation of my paintings,
I often make numerous quick
acrylic sketches on canvas
to develop new characters”*



TANGLE

*"I am orchestrating
a procedural form of serendipity as
to take the viewers by surprise"*



TANGLE 01 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 120 x 180 cm | 2014



TANGLE 02 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 120 x 180 cm | 2014



TANGLE 03 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 120 x 180 cm | 2014



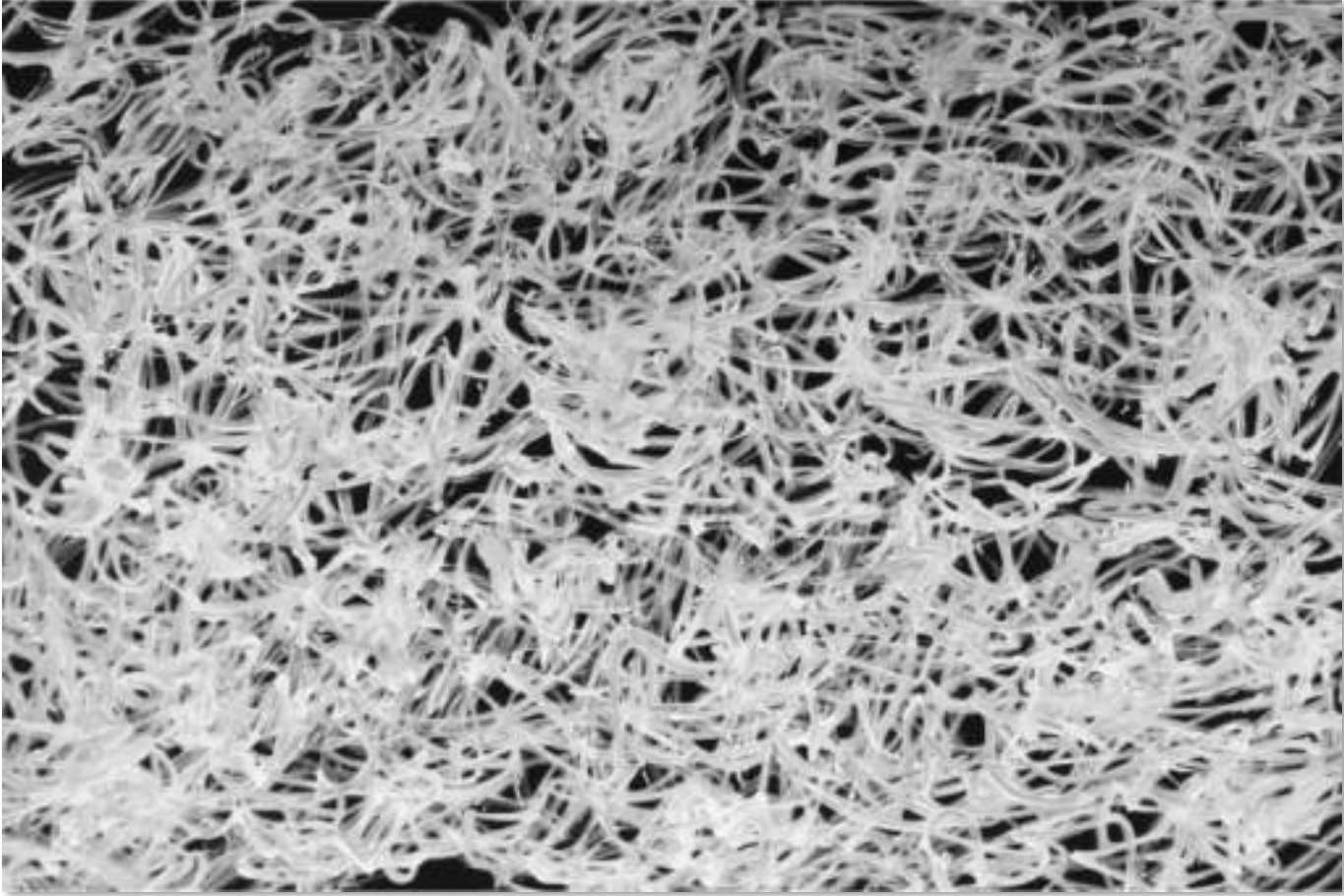
TANGLE 04 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 120 x 180 cm | 2014



TANGLE 05 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 120 x 180 cm | 2014



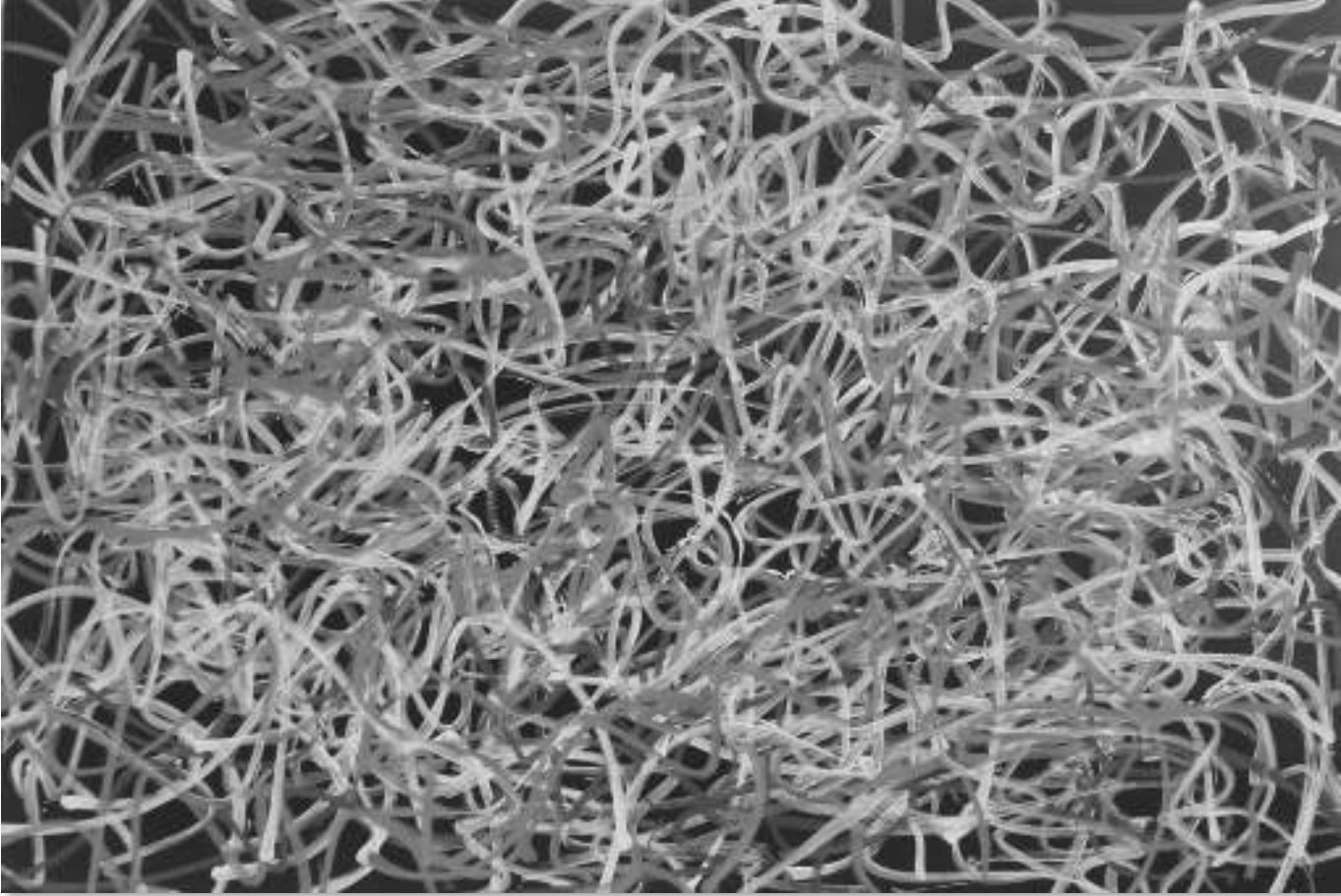
TANGLE 06 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 120 x 180 cm | 2014



TANGLE 07 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 120 x 180 cm | 2014







TANGLE 12 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 120 x 180 cm | 2015



TANGLE 13 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 150 x 180 cm | 2015



TANGLE 08 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 120 x 180 cm | 2014



TANGLE 09 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 120 x 180 cm | 2014



TANGLE 10 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 120 x 180 cm | 2014



TANGLE 11 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 120 x 180 cm | 2014





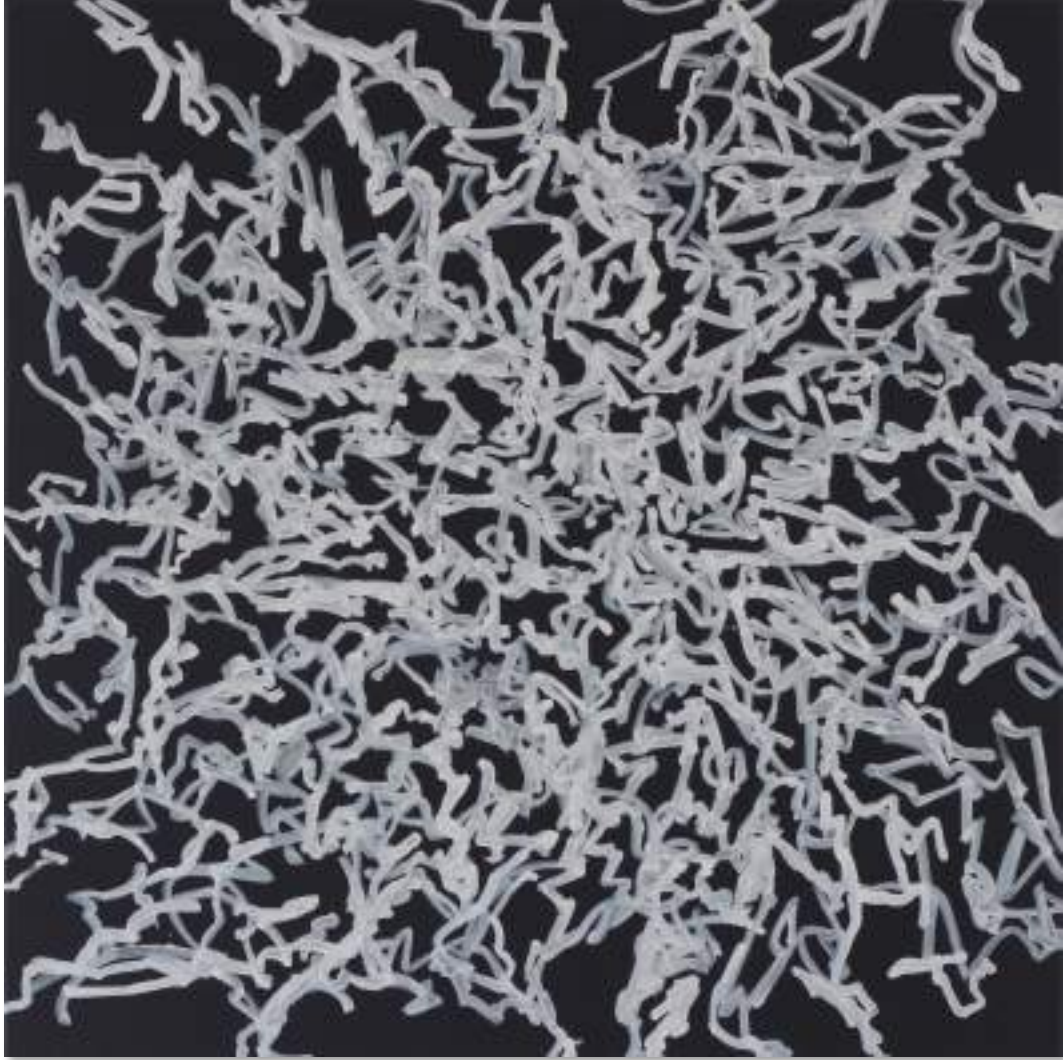




TWIG

“from point to line to surface”





TWIG 01 | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 140 x 140 cm | 2015

*"I developed angular strokes
that radiate into space"*

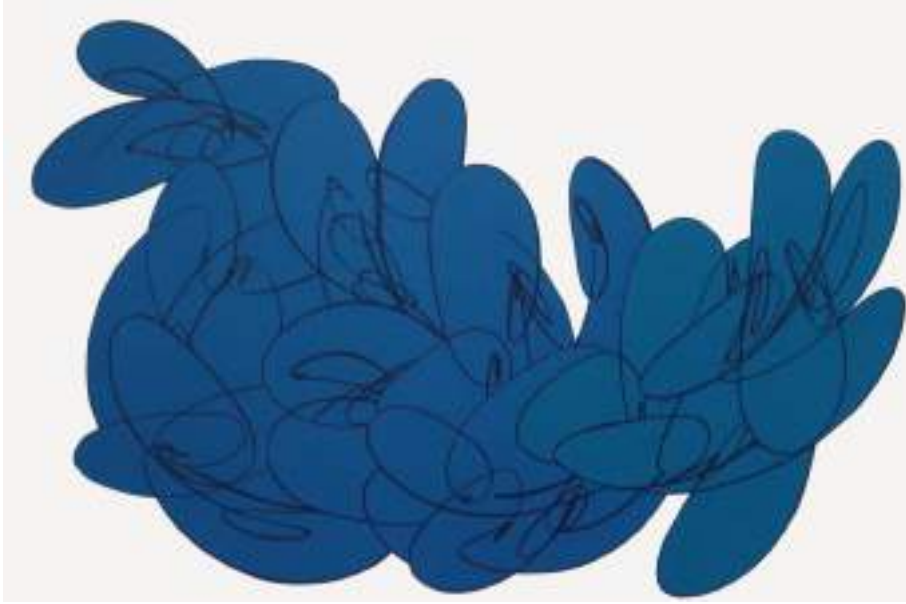


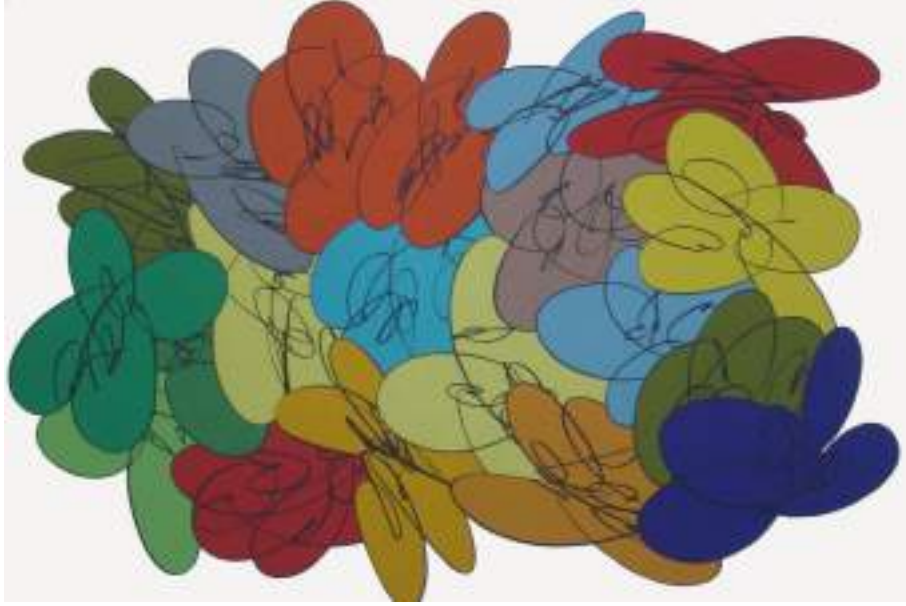


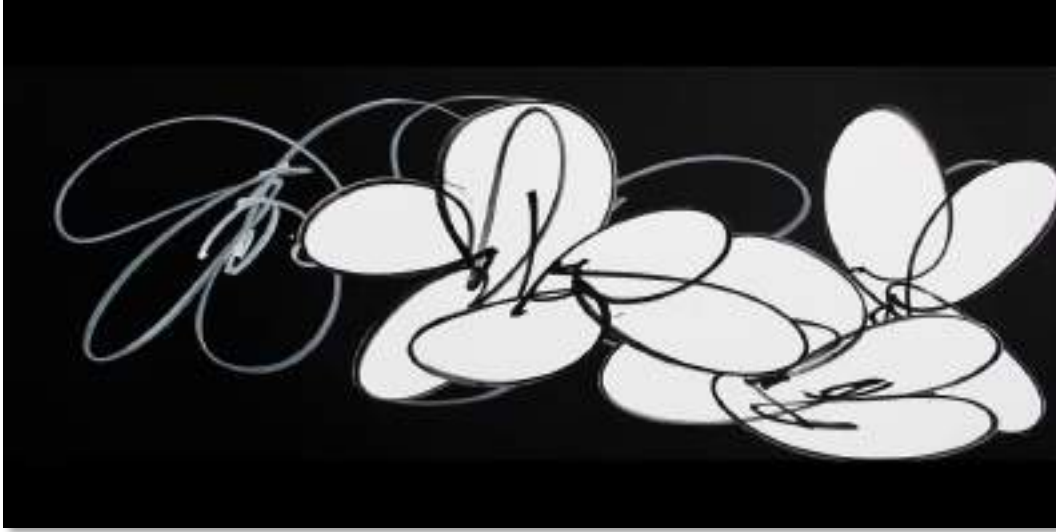
FLOW

*"I construct a tension
between centripetal and
centrifugal forces"*









FLOW | collage canvas on canvas | dimensions 70 x 140 cm | 2014

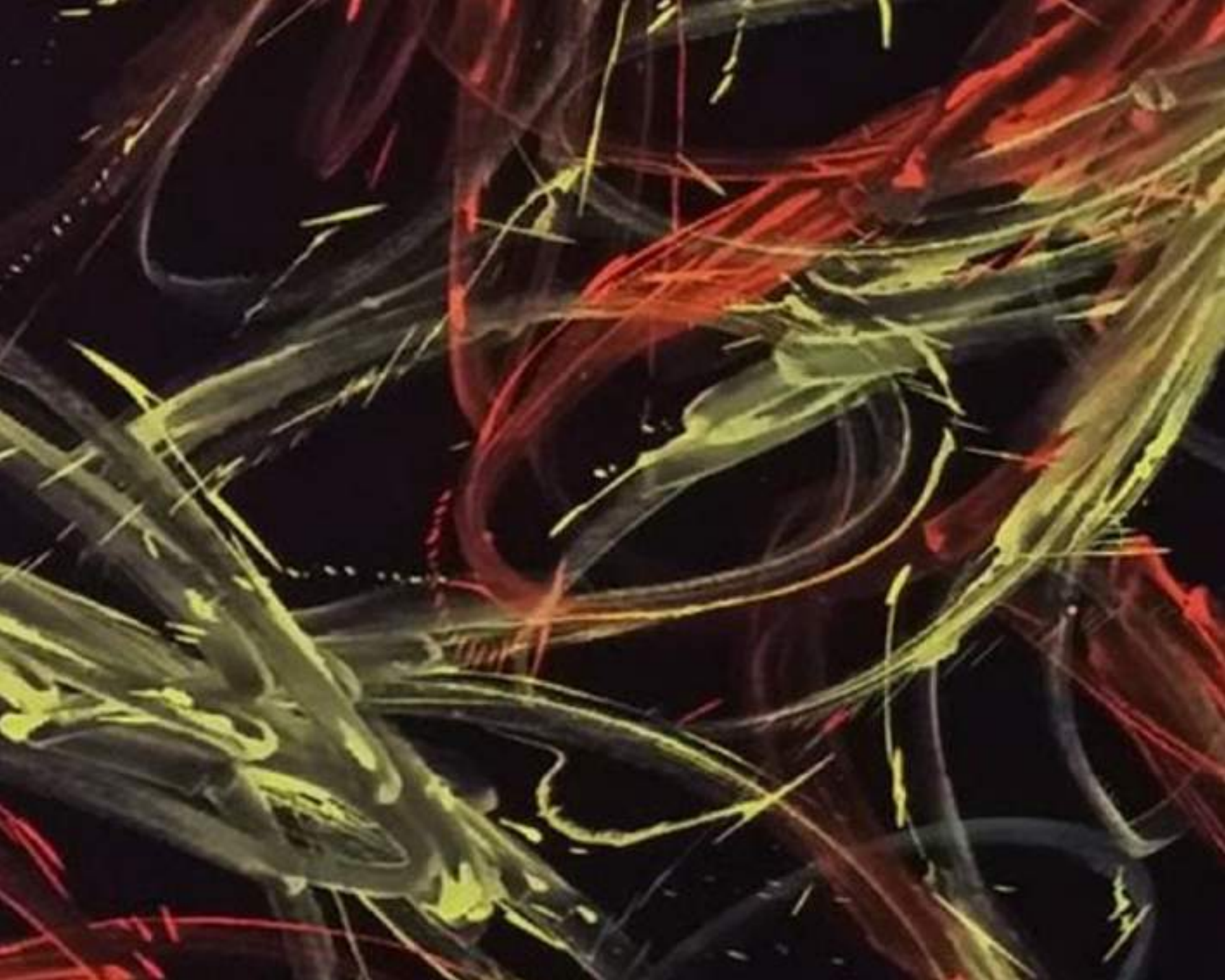




FLOW | acrylic on canvas | dimensions 70 x 140 cm | 2014



FLOW | fluorescent acrylic on canvas | dimensions 140 x 140 cm | 2014







Machining Emotion

*The Machining Emotion project establishes a mutual relationship between human emotions and robotic machines. The Machining Emotion process is based on a series of consecutive steps, starting with my fast and intuitive drawings on paper. My acrylic marker was fixed to a 3d digitizer stylus pen. The data that were produced when I made the initial drawings included - besides the speed of the curved trajectories - the varying orientations of the stylus pen and the changing pressures of the marker tip. By intentional arm movements during the original sketch, and by precise control of the parameters in the algorithms, the calligraphic characters were built. The process was curated by **Kas Oosterhuis**, director of ONL and professor Hyperbody TU Delft [2000 -*

*2106]. Together with the designer-programmers **Ana Maria Anton** and **Serban Bodea**, both former students of Hyperbody, I produced with the Machining Emotion team 12 unique paintings, of measuring 110 x 190cm each in just four working sessions at the RDM Campus in Rotterdam. For each of the 12 Machining Emotion paintings different characters were developed, ranging from simple to complex, from single to multiple layers, from monochrome to multicolored, from a small to a large tip of the acrylic brush, from slow to fast robotic movements, from smooth trajectories to more angular ones, from nervously changing the angle of the marker to smooth and gradual changes in the position of the tip with respect to the canvas.*







MACHINING EMOTION



*"my 3d digitizer sketches
form the genes for the robotic
paintings"*

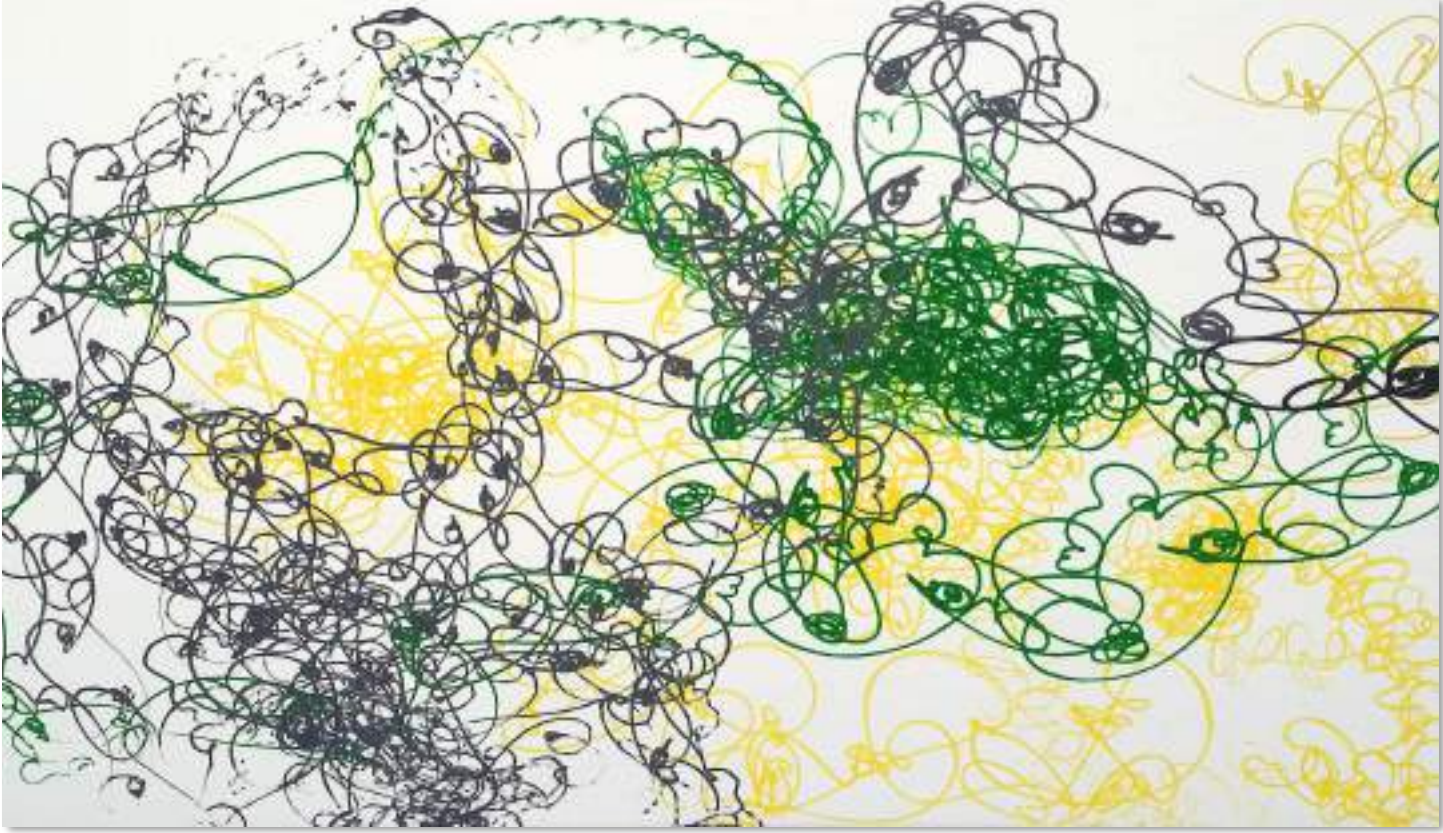


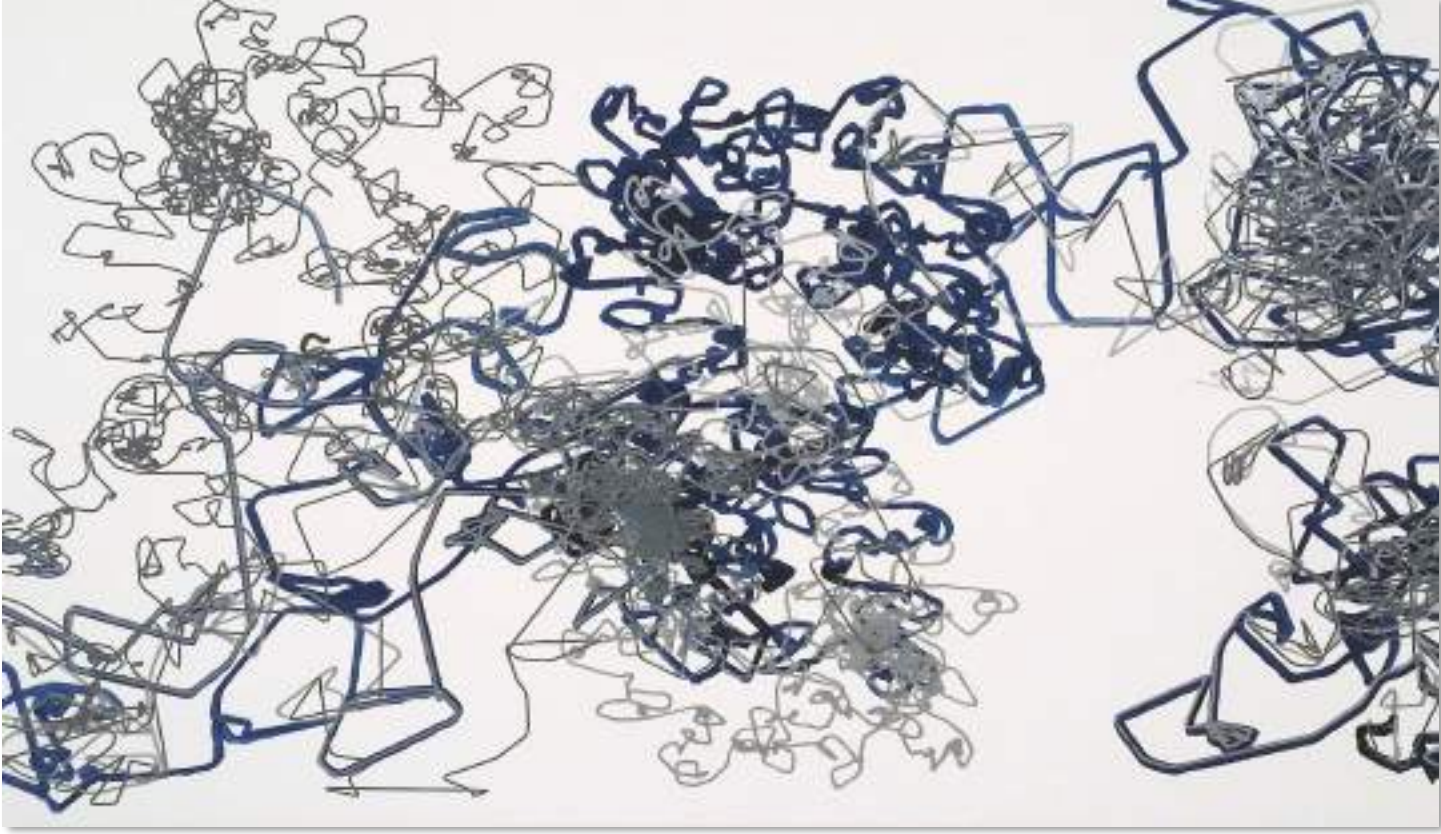


Machining Emotion 02 | robotic acrylic painting on canvas | dimensions 110 x 190 cm | 2015

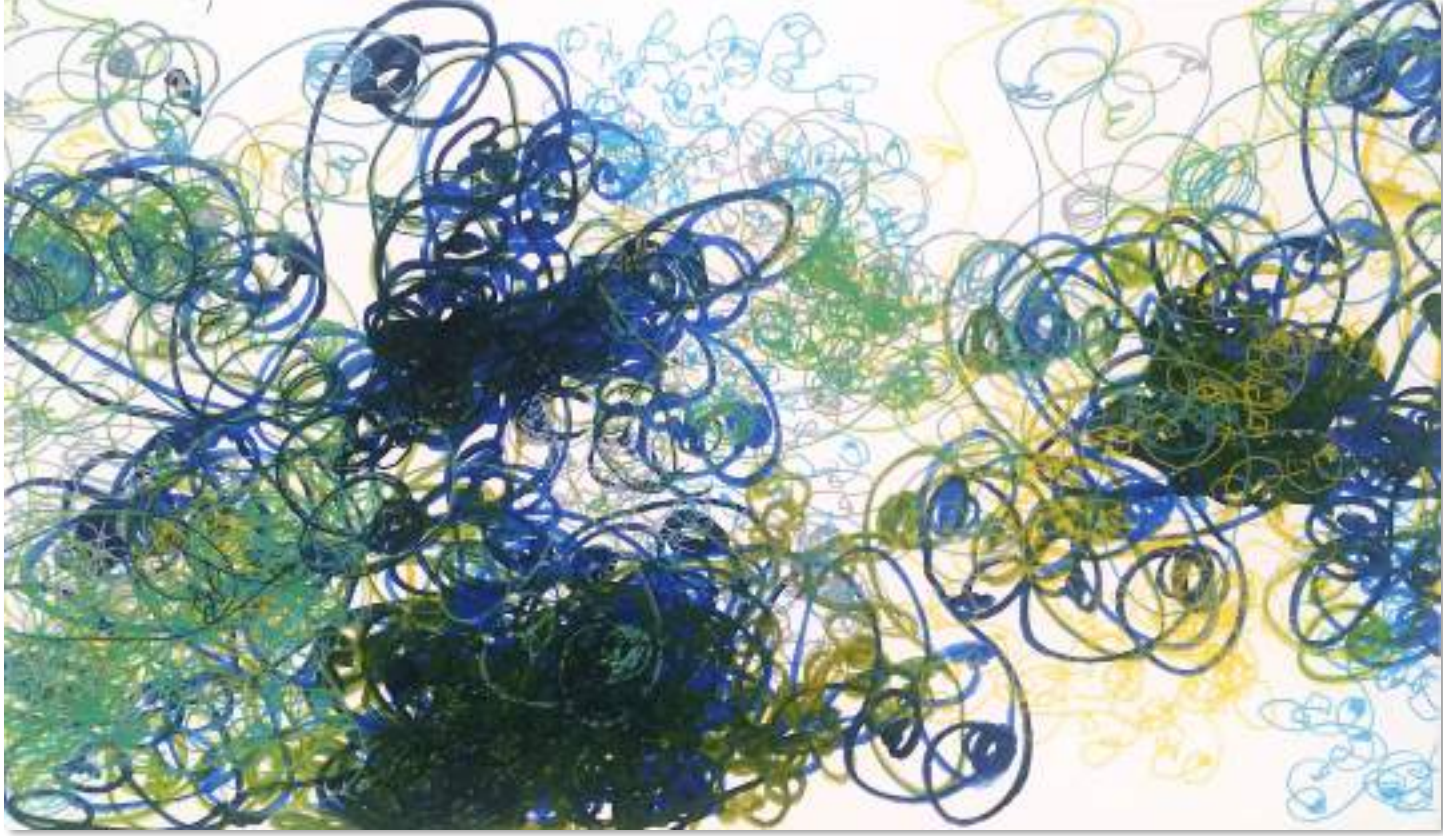




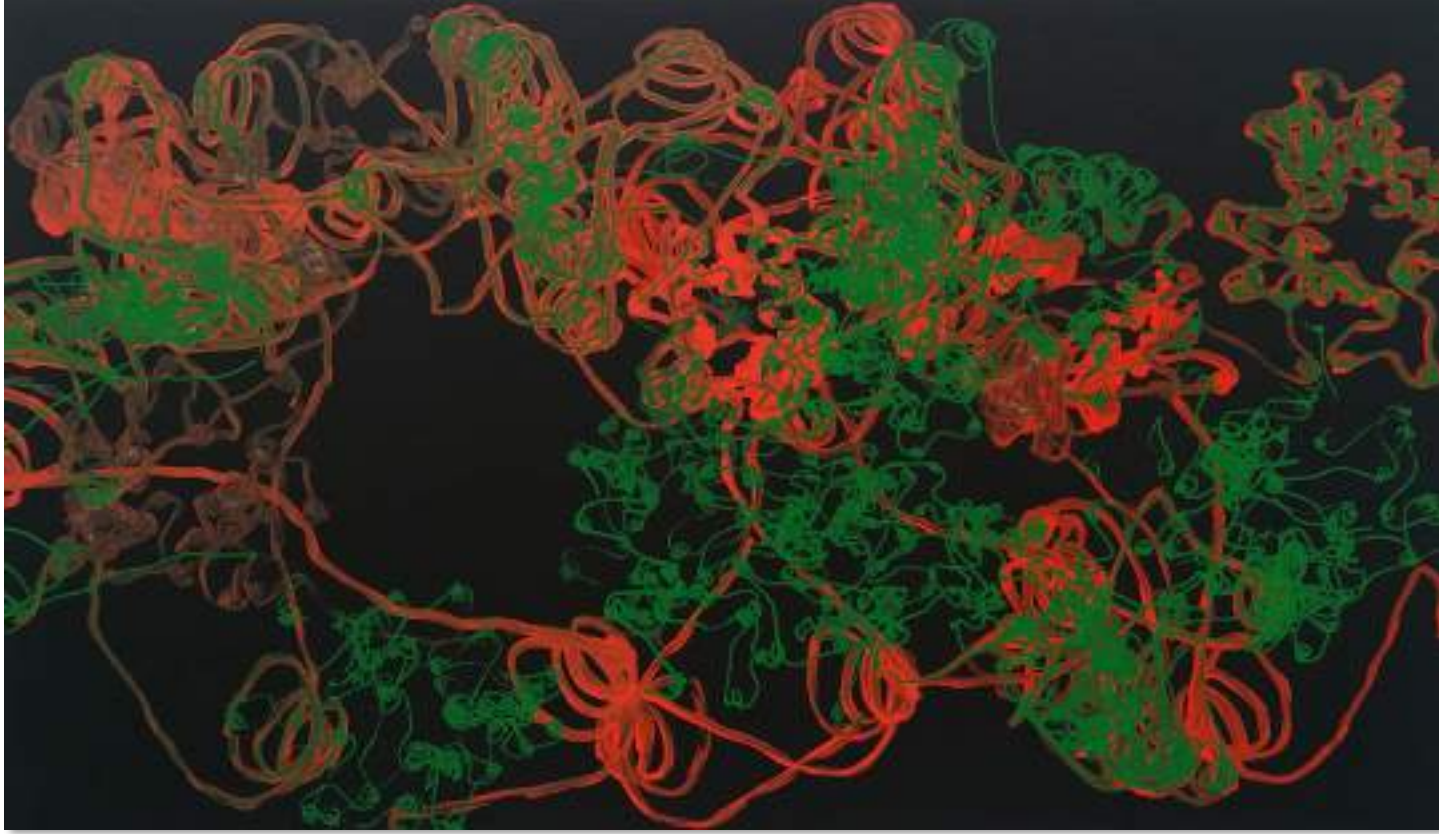








Machining Emotion 08 | robotic acrylic painting on canvas | 110 x 190 cm | 2015 | collection Ana Anton / Serban Bodea



Machining Emotion 09 | robotic acrylic painting on canvas | 110 x 190 cm | 2015 | collection Ana Anton / Serban Bodea



Machining Emotion 10 | robotic acrylic painting on canvas | dimensions 110 x 190 cm | 2015

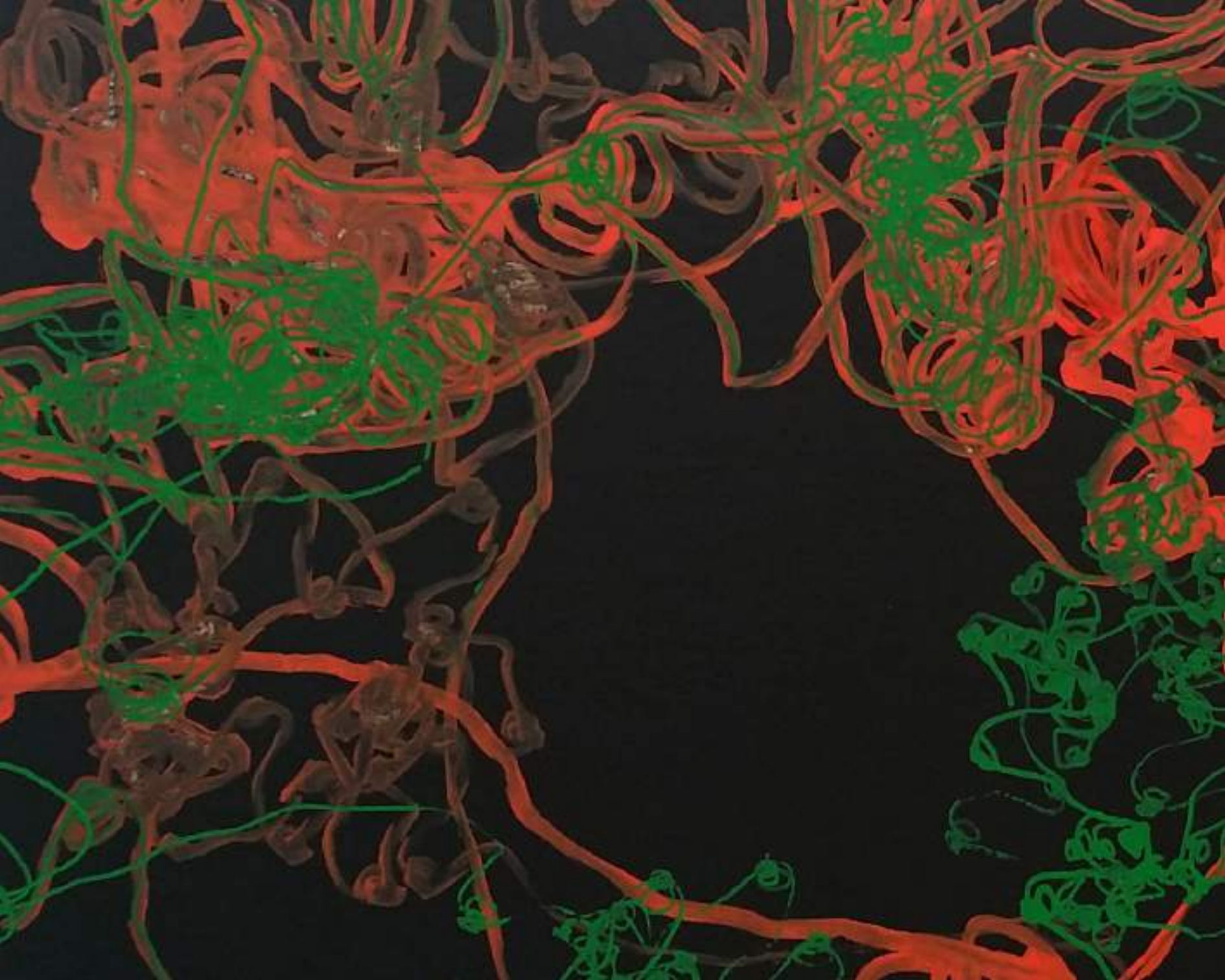


Machining Emotion 11 | robotic acrylic painting on canvas | dimensions 110 x 190 cm | 2015



Machining Emotion 10 | robotic acrylic painting on canvas | dimensions 110 x 190 cm | 2015

*“Machining Emotion
establishes an emotive
relationship between myself
and the robot”*



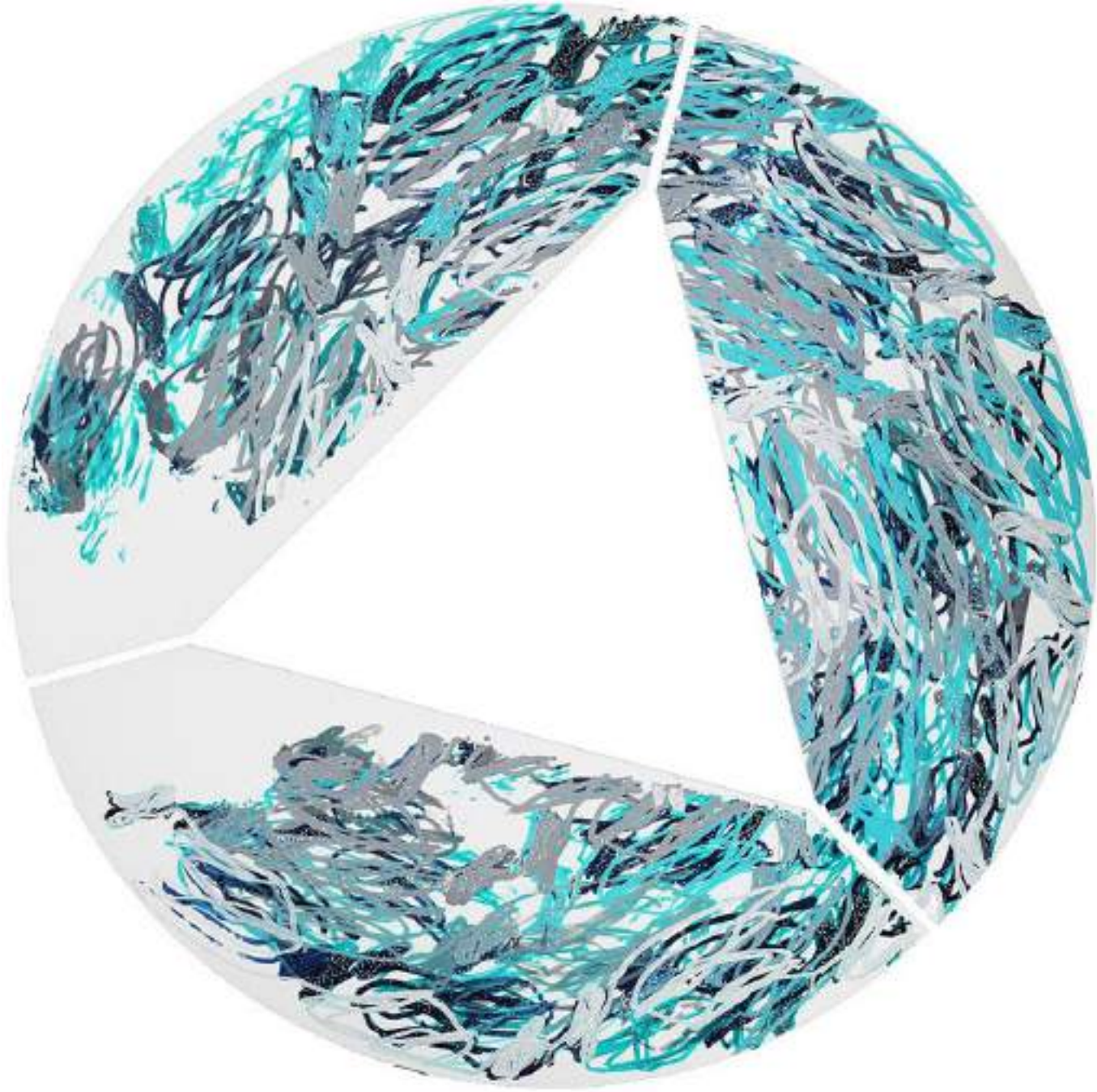


As a member of the Dutch Creative Industry and supported by the Partners for International Business [PIB] program of the Netherlands Enterprise Agency [RVO] I produced together with the Machining Emotion team 4 large circular paintings and 2 large square paintings during the Dubai Design Week end of October 2015. The ABB robot was the only robot we could find at that time in Dubai. We transported the robot to the site in the Dubai Design District [D3], calibrated the robot and tested the right pressure of the robot arm to the canvas, all in one day. With both the circular and the square paintings we challenged the maximum reach of the robot. Assembled together the 3 panels form a large circular painting of 315 cm in diameter. It was a truly mesmerizing experience to see the robots patiently executing the controlled intuitive commands with high precision.

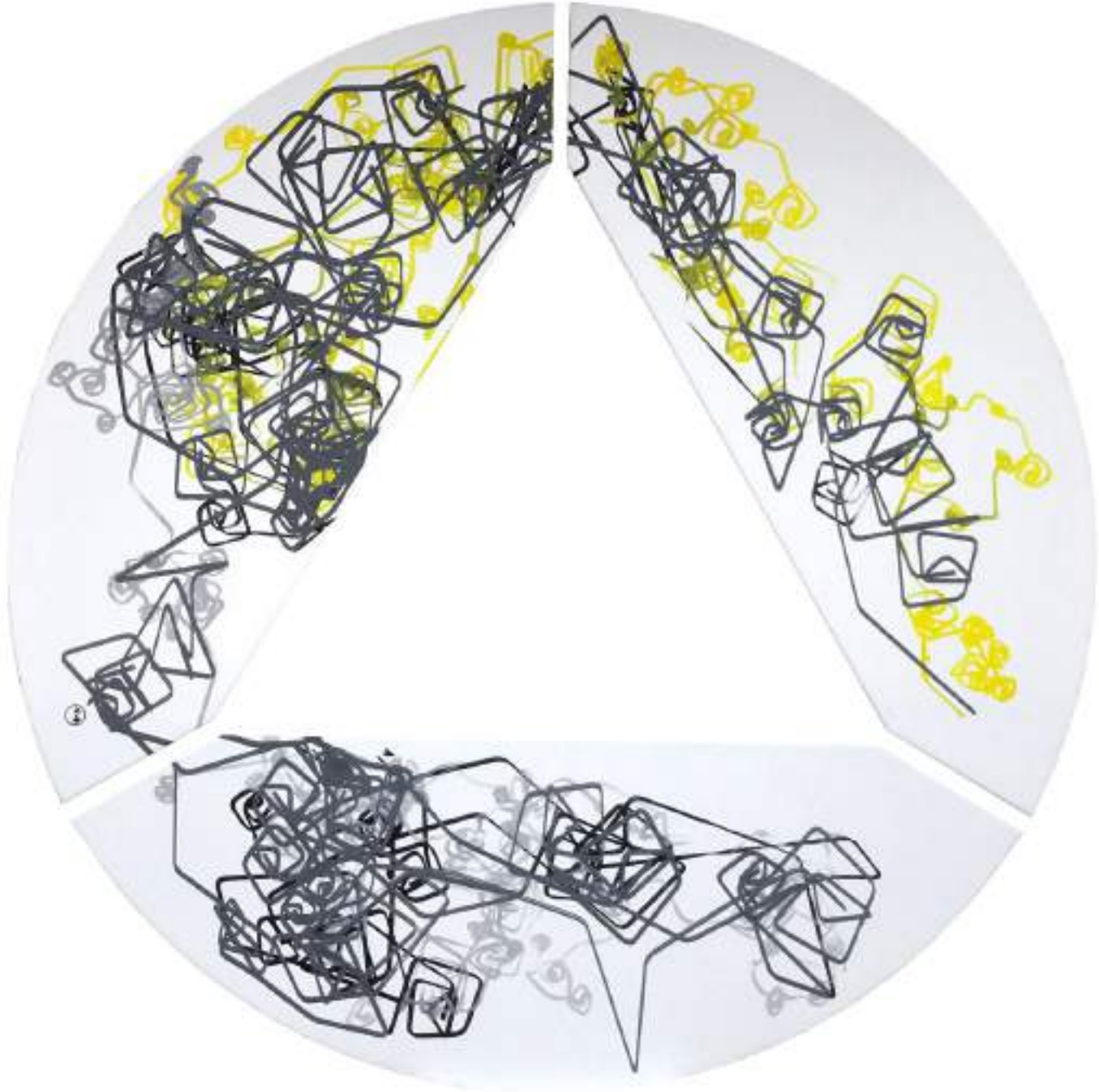




*"I establish a hot-link
between the sketch and
the robotic painting"*



DXB 01 | robotic acrylic painting on canvas | dimensions 315 x 315 cm | 2015











DXB 05 | robotic acrylic painting on canvas | dimensions 180 x 180 cm | 2015



DXB 06 | robotic acrylic painting on canvas | dimensions 180 x 180 cm | 2015





Immersive Universes

Looking at Ilona's paintings one feels a tension between the dimensions. Working on a flat surface as a painter she creates a tension between the surface of the painting and an imaginary spatial world. While trained as a sculptor, working in two dimensions as a painter she typically sets up an upward tension towards three-dimensional spaces. Ilona builds her personal universes in the voltage field between the 2nd and the 3^d dimension.

We as mankind have extended our vision deep into the macroscopic universe, using telescopes and by visualizing recorded data. With these augmented eyes we see the filaments between the clusters of galaxies, we plunge into the endless depths of the billions of galaxies and the complex web of atomic threads between them, visualized using data analysis techniques. With a different pair of extended eyes we look deep into the delicate fabric of our cells, we dive into the immeasurable vast space between the atoms of complex molecular structures, and find ourselves lost deep inside the world of quantum uncertainty, deeply embedded within the very building

blocks of our existence. At the one hand we are engulfed by an huge universe, in which we are nothing more than a tiny grain, making us ultimately feel very small. At the other hand we as human beings contain endlessly deep universes within ourselves, which makes us feel extremely big. Thus, mankind thrives on a ultrathin membrane between the macrocosmos out there and the microcosmos inside ourselves. I believe that this delicate position in between outer and inner universe is exactly what is so eloquently expressed in Ilona's paintings.

When slowly approaching her paintings one gets the impression of becoming immersed in deep abstract calligraphic omniverses, one feels like navigating in a three-dimensional tangled web of strong intuitive traces that are imposed on the canvases.

Only in hindsight Ilona's paintings bear a resemblance to Arabic calligraphic writings and paintings, obviously without any reference to their meaning. In Ilona's capricious and abstract calligraphic strokes the meaning is inclusive in their pre-defined characters. But the key difference to traditional calligraphy is her tremendous speed of operation. Ilona draws

with force and speed, so fast that the brush strokes can not be controlled by her own deliberate thinking.

In preparation of the actual process of painting she has developed methods to upload her energy, often on the tunes of expressive minimal music, and then she unleashes the built-up energy to the canvas. due to the sheer speed of her painting, she manages to surprise herself all the time. Therefore, her brush strokes are genuinely intuitive, while procedural in its execution.

Layer by layer, Ilona constructs her complex mesmerizing omniverses, interlacing foreground and background, left and right, up and down. The viewer is invited to immerse oneself into the fabric of the painting, to experience a memorable form of immaterial weightlessness.

Kas Oosterhuis

"I want to surprise myself"



Ilona Lénárd is a Dutch - Hungarian visual artist. She studied autonomous spatial design at the Willem de Kooning Academy in Rotterdam. Trained as a professional actress in Budapest, she learned from acting the importance of gestures and empathic intuition. Ilona Lénárd's paintings is characterized by her Powerlines, strong fast and intuitive gestures that translates into abstract 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional worlds. Having studied both acting and spatial art she has developed a natural feeling for cross-disciplinary work and has been active in such different fields as work of art in public space, digital sketching, sculptures, collaborations with architects on the grand scale of architecture leading the way to

large realized sculpture buildings, interactive installations, abstract calligraphic paintings, carpet designs, and robotic paintings. Her one year stay in the former Studio of Theo van Doesburg - the famous multi-talented Dutch painter, writer, theoretician and architect in the roaring twenties of 20th century - in Meudon near Paris in 1988-1989, has been her inspiration for intense cross-disciplinary work. Ilona Lénárd has realized works of art in public space, among others the Musicsculpture in Oldemarkt and the TT Monument in Assen. Having [co-]organized manifestations like The Synthetic Dimension, the Genes of Architecture and the Sculpture City event she has positioned herself at the world stage to promote the fusion of art and architecture on a digital platform. World-famous buildings like the Waterpavilion showed the power and importance of her vision to boldly design buildings as large sculptures. From then on a building could be a sculpture / itself, and a sculpture could function as a building. The paintings that are presented in this book are representative of Ilona Lénárd's series of abstract calligraphic work and the robotic paintings that are produced during the Dubai Design Week 2015.

