NINA SLEJKO BLOM

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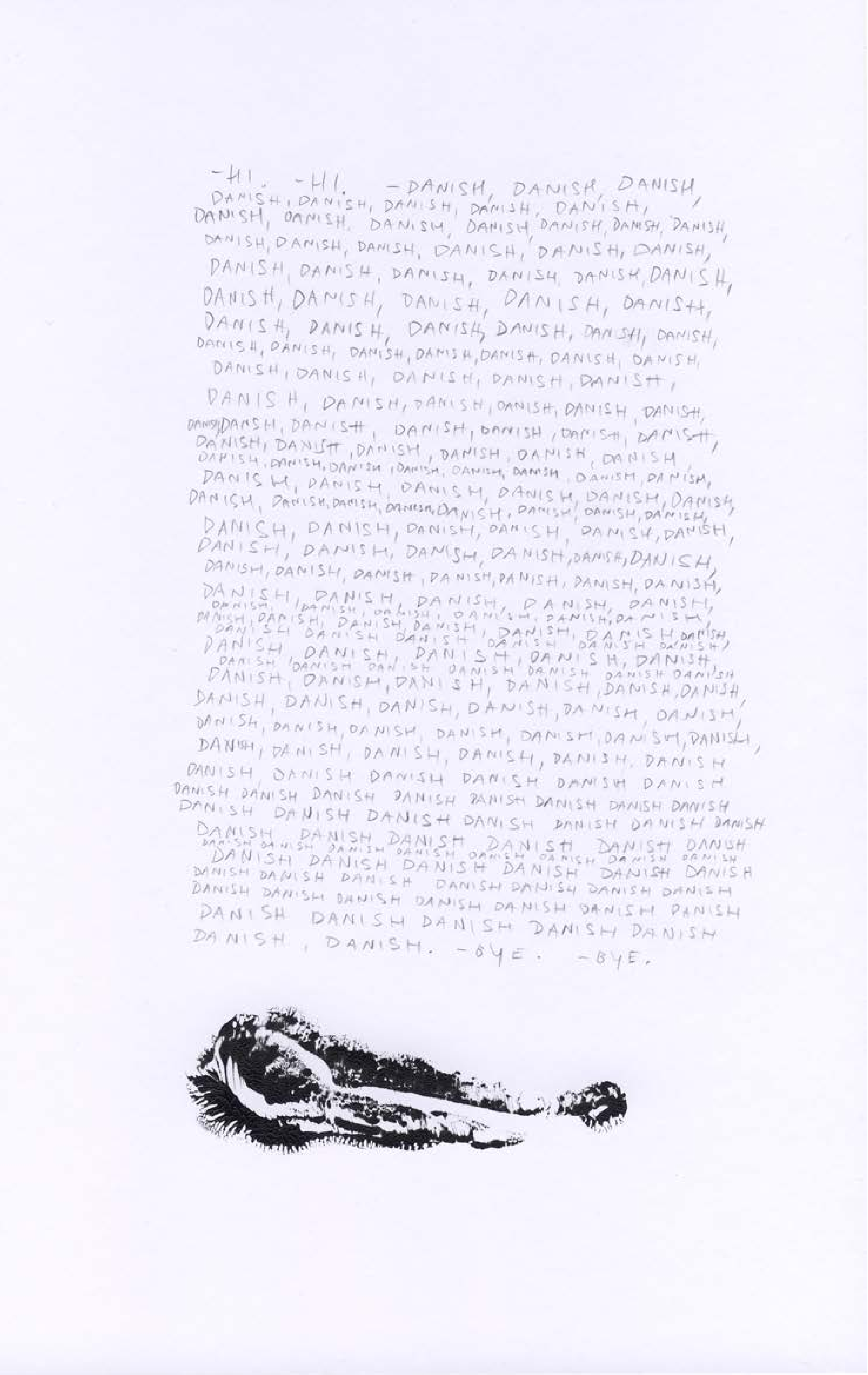
Untitled
acryl on canvas and panel, 170x275cm. 2015


COME ON LITTLE
GIRL... WHY ARE
YOU MAKING
SUCH A FUSS

Assistant's Work
acryl, red wine, ink and pencil on paper, panel and frame, 30x40 cm, 2015

Reflections in words and pictures over my time as an assistant to Tal R.



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NOW THE
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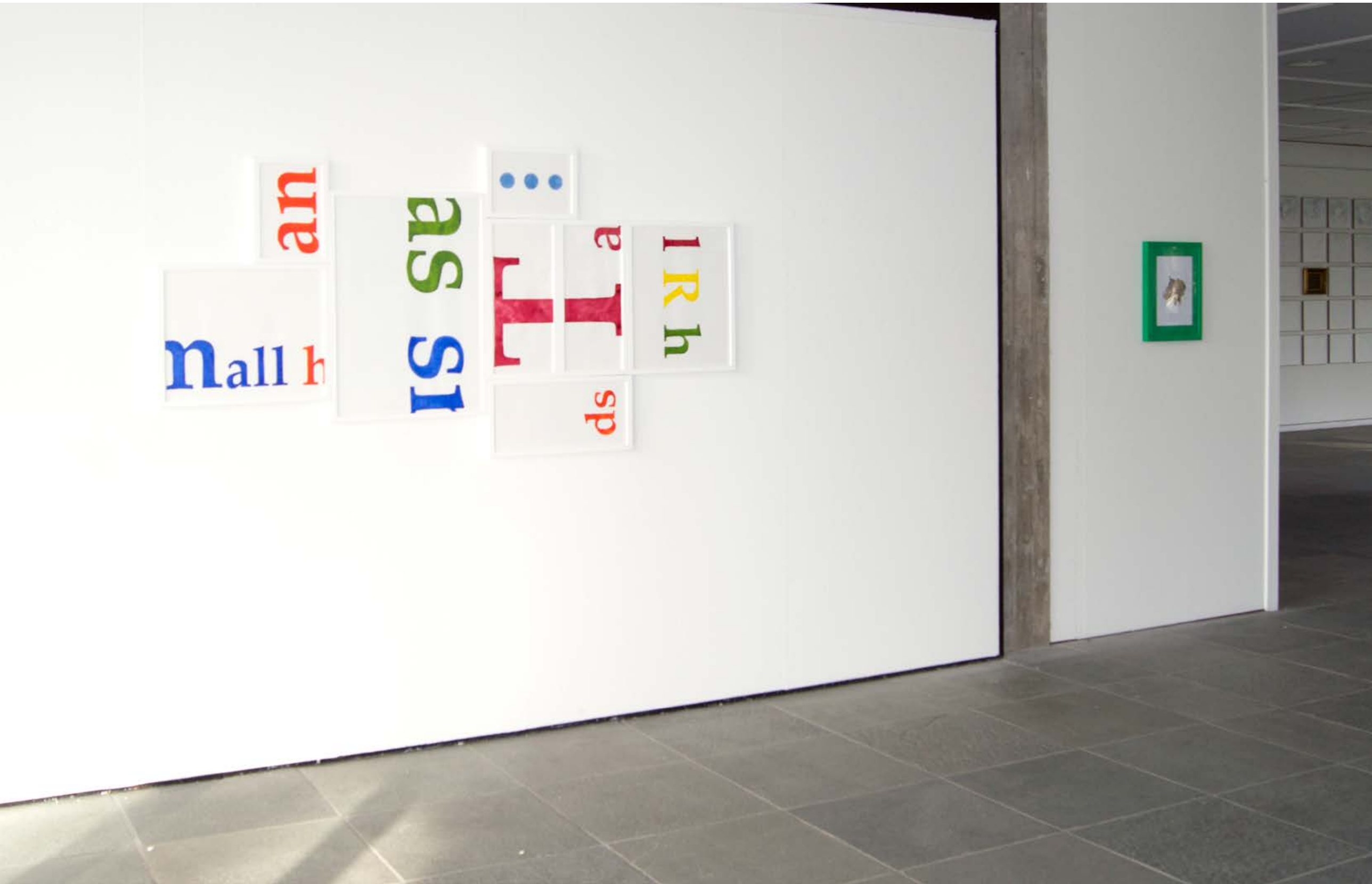
GOOD DAY!

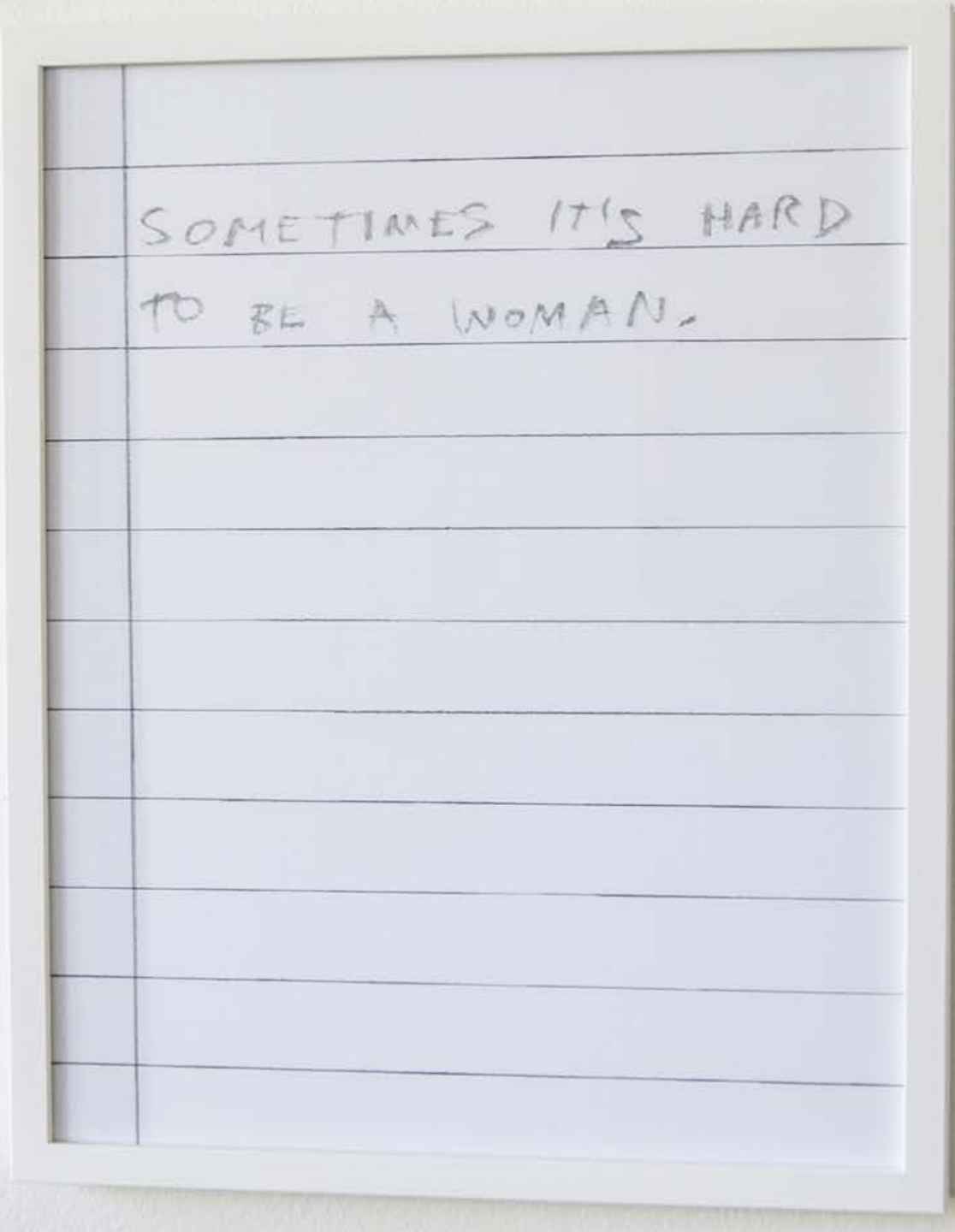
(Le Cousin Rouge's
Le Grolle, vin

Assistant's Work (You Know What They Say)
watercolour on paper, 100x200 cm, 2015



Cranky Paintings
acryl on canvas. 2014

Sometimes
0.3 mm pencil on paper, 40x50 cm. 2015



METIMES

BE A W

Politically Correct White Monochrome

acryl on canvas, 2014

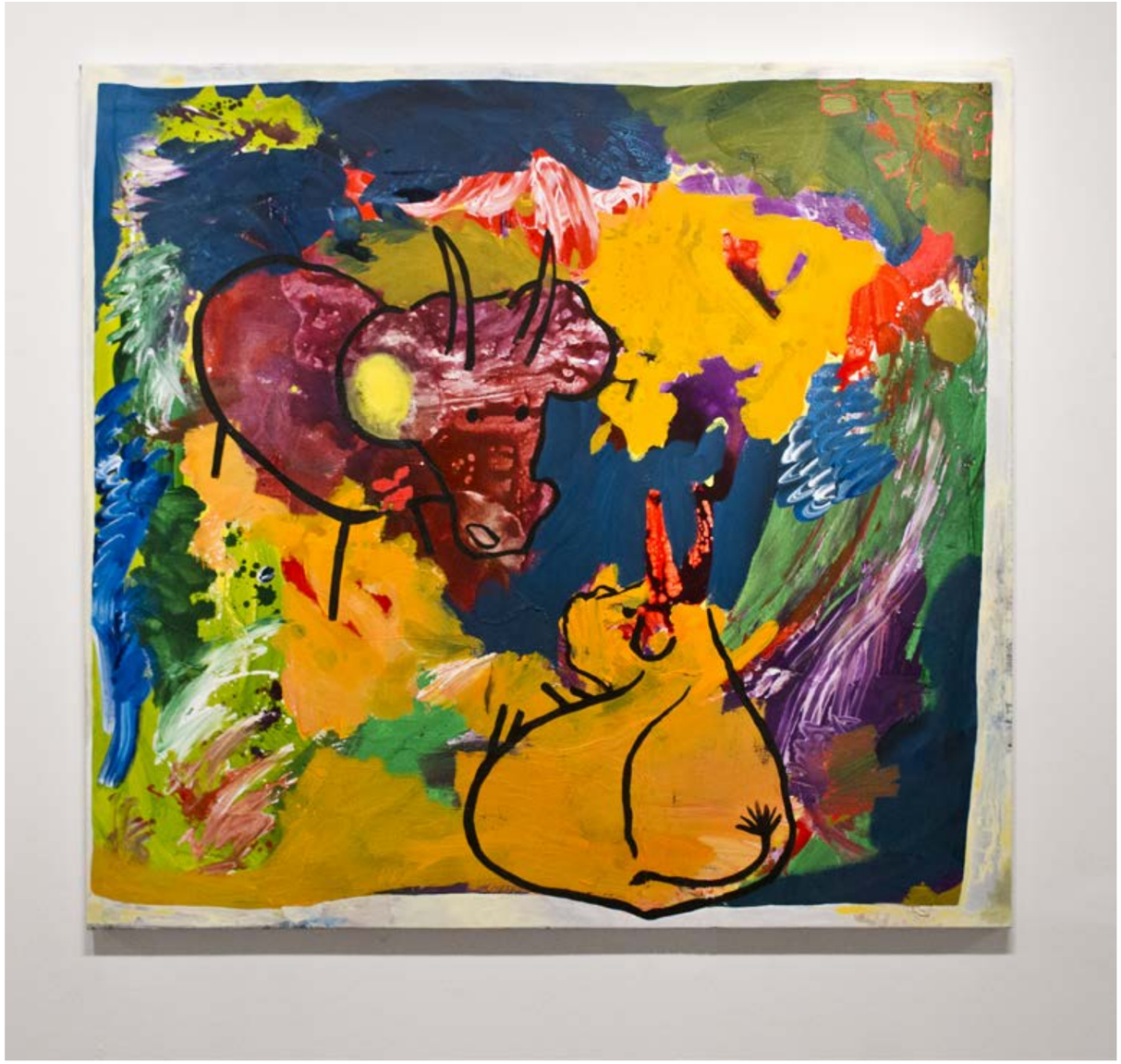
THERE ARE NO MORE SAFE INVESTMENTS
mixed media. 2015

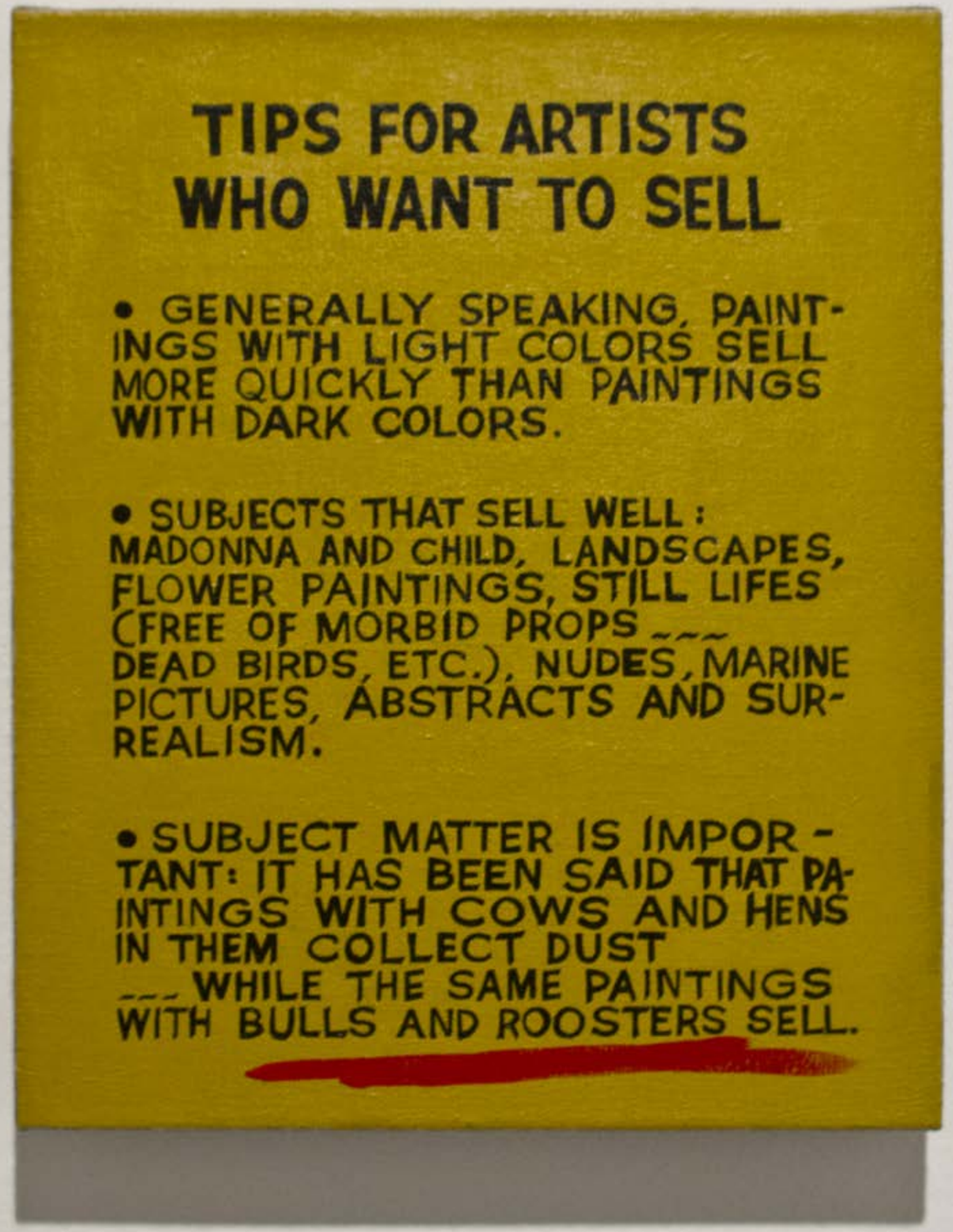

MUNKEN PURE 80 g/m²
THERE ARE NO MORE
SAFE INVESTMENTS.

nina slejko
biki in petelini

BULLS AND ROOSTERS
acryl on canvas, 2013

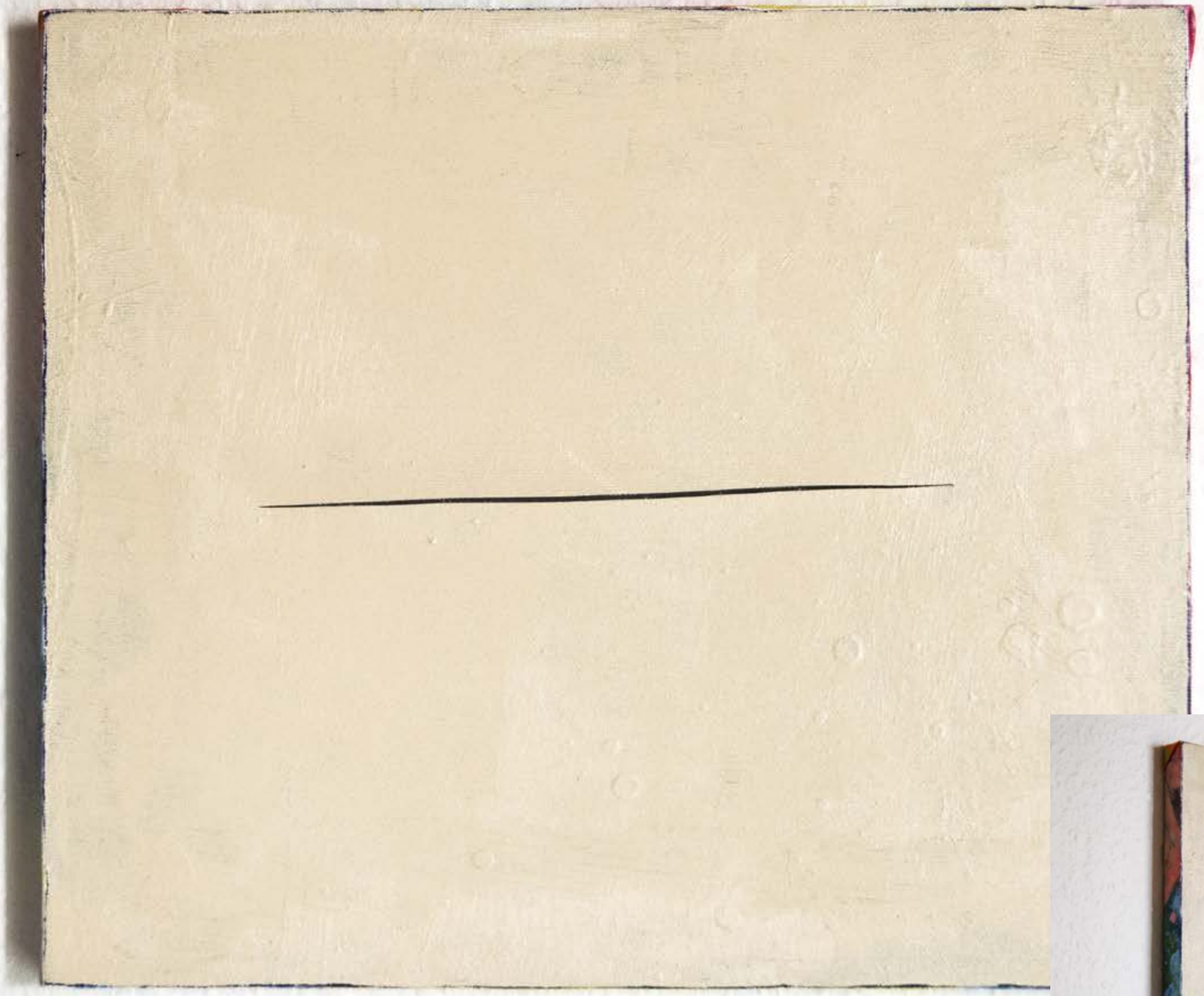
What is a saleable painting? John Baldessari suggests that the motif is important. Paintings of cows and hens supposedly gather dust while paintings of bulls and rooster sell well. A gallerist whom Mark Kostabi used to work with was convinced that red paintings sell best. Nina Slejko was encouraged to paint big and colourful paintings for this exhibition even though she was more interested in examining the properties of the colour white and small formats at the time.




TIPS FOR ARTISTS
WHO WANT TO SELL
• GENERALLY SPEAKING, PAINTINGS WITH LIGHT COLORS SELL MORE QUICKLY THAN PAINTINGS WITH DARK COLORS.
• SUBJECTS THAT SELL WELL: MADONNA AND CHILD, LANDSCAPES, FLOWER PAINTINGS, STILL LIFES (FREE OF MORBID PROPS ~~~ DEAD BIRDS, ETC.), NUDES, MARINE PICTURES, ABSTRACTS AND SURREALISM.
• SUBJECT MATTER IS IMPORTANT: IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT PAINTINGS WITH COWS AND HENS IN THEM COLLECT DUST ~~~ WHILE THE SAME PAINTINGS WITH BULLS AND ROOSTERS SELL.

Cellar Door

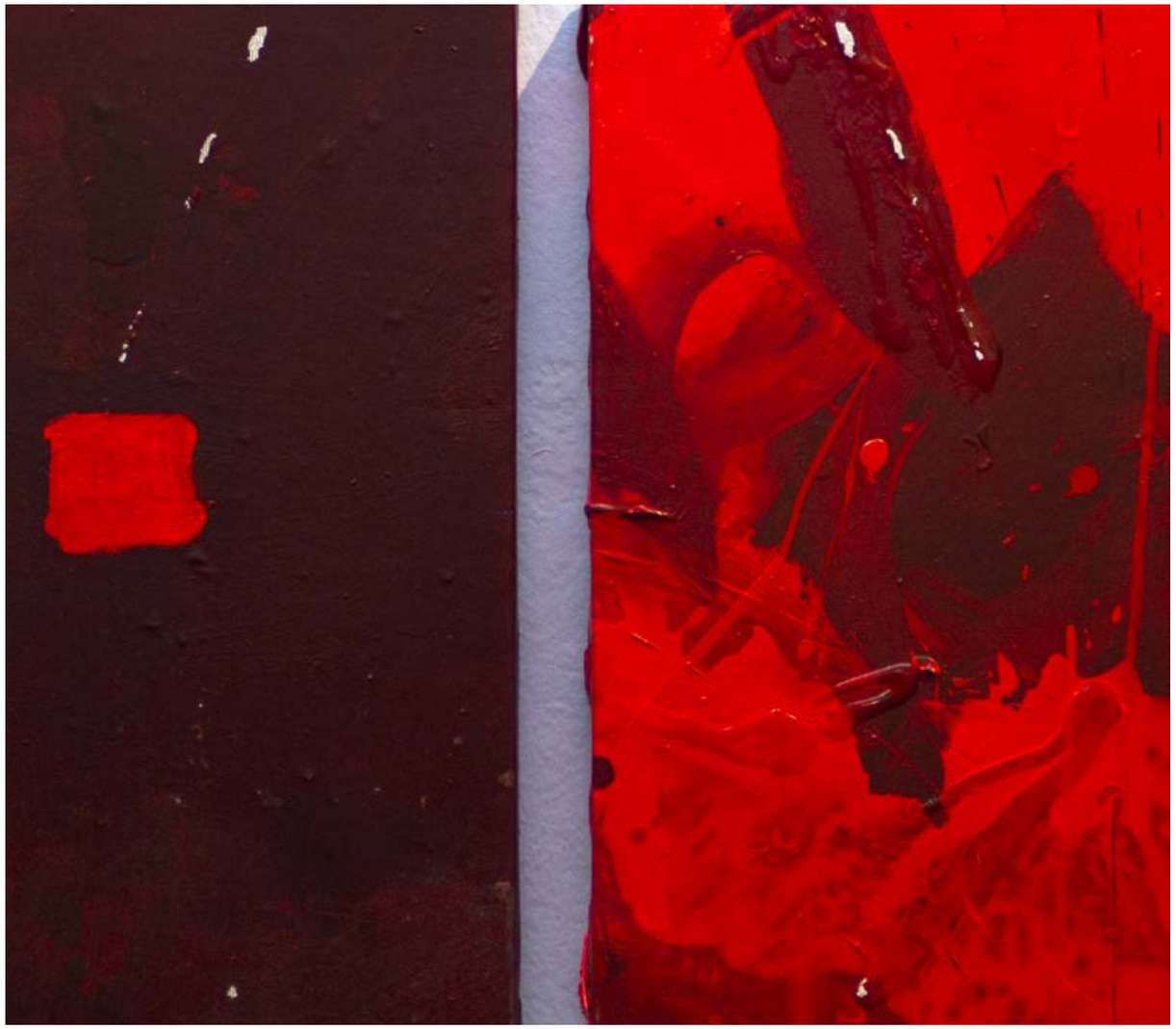
acryl on canvas, 2014



Giveupheus (One of the Lesser Known Greek Myths)
various materials, 2014

The title of the project is a word newly coined from the verb to give up, and it suggests the motif that links the five works constituting it. "**The Devil's Icons**", "**Fake (Robert Ryman, Untitled 65)**", "**Not Fontana**", "**Almost All the Vegetables in the World**" and "**Almost All the Dogs of Aki Kaurismäki**" are all works initiated with a certain goal in mind, and then abruptly finished due to my laziness or inability to reach that original idea, and it is this giving up on the goal that gave a new sense to the works and completed them. There is of course a self-ironic commentary in the project, but there is also a reflection upon the notions of failing, giving up, giving in, which are interesting in themselves, as I find they can sum up rather beautifully that which I am most attracted to in art – its ability to turn something as negative as a defeat into an entirely positive conclusion.

"**And We Know Where They Live**" and "**Unrealized Plans**" are ideas that should remain paperbound.



Almost Like Primož, But Not Quite
9 dyptichs, acryl on canvas, 2014

A new work in the series of pieces that are dealing with spatial and financial shortage by means of recycling - paintings from the Appreciation for Red and Smaller Paintings series have been remade anew, this time using Primož's technique, only a tad more subtly.
Inspiration for the work was an incident with two of the paintings from named series. They have been inappropriately stored at a gallerist, which made them glue onto each other and at separation acquire symmetrical white patterns.


SAM
LOUIS

Dogovorjeno, Nina (That's a deal, Nina)
10x acryl on canvas. 2012

AND WE KNOW WHERE THEY LIVE, 2014
- pen on paper, framed, 21 x 15 cm

Scenes from Lives
40 paintings inspired mostly by scenes from motion pictures. Occasionally paintings are depicting scenes from real life.
acrylics on panel, various formats. 2010-2013


45

UNREALIZED PLANS, 2014
- 3 drawings, felt-pen on paper 50x75 cm, multifolded into 5 x 6,5 cm

THE DEVIL'S ICONS, 2014
- 2 icon boards
- a corner shelf
- text; pencil, color pencil and sticker on wall

Orthodox icons are treated by believers as if they were well liked people or cared for plants; they are talked to, confessed to, if moved, they are transported with care; if, for some reason, they have to be destroyed, such is done with a ritual (not so much as if they were plants, but still as if they were certain people or pets). I know that expensive paintings might get treated with a lot of care sometimes too, but I am rather certain they are not as often talked to or confessed to or buried with a ritual.

I find the meticulously prepared icon boards beautiful.

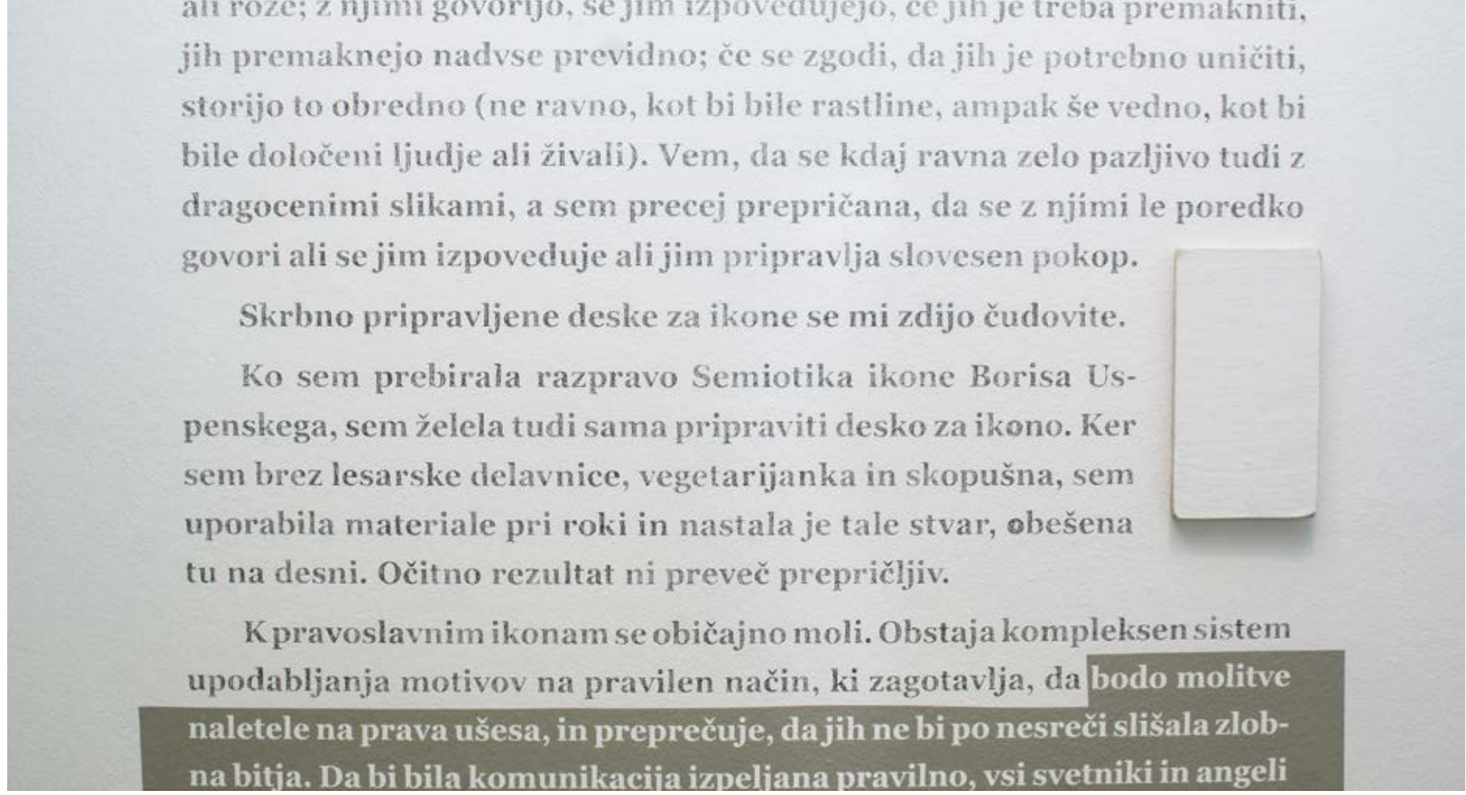
When I read The Semiotics of the Russian Icon by Boris Uspensky, I tried making my own board for an icon. Being wood-workshop-less, vegetarian and cheap, I used materials at hand and came up with this thing hung here to the right. Obviously, the result was not overly impressive.

Icon boards are prayed to, and there is a complex system of depicting the motifs correctly to make sure that the prayers will reach the right ears and would not accidentally be overheard by an evil entity. For the communication to be channelled properly, all the saints and angels face directly towards the viewer, even if they are depicted while conversing with each-other. The painter would portray their bodies facing each-other, while all their faces would be looking straight out from the board at the viewer. At the same time and for the same reason all the devils and evil creatures, painted rarely as they are, can only be depicted in profile or from behind, again, to ensure that the prayer aimed at the holy lot would not accidentally end up being aimed at the bad ones, and so forth. All these iconographical laws and structures make for an excitingly interesting imagery with twisted bodies and piercing stares, so I do find it a bit amusing that I am more interested in a piece of grounded wood and it's white surface than the finished icon.

But, in the book I read also about icons that turned out to have the devil drawn on the board underneath the holy image, facing directly towards the viewer.

And then I really wanted to make a piece about the Icons, if only to be able to call it The Devil´s Icons. It sounds so strong. So I searched the internet and found the boards, they come gessoed and all, I would not even have to dirt my hands with bunnies, and still get the real deal. I wear leather shoes too, so hypocritical am I.

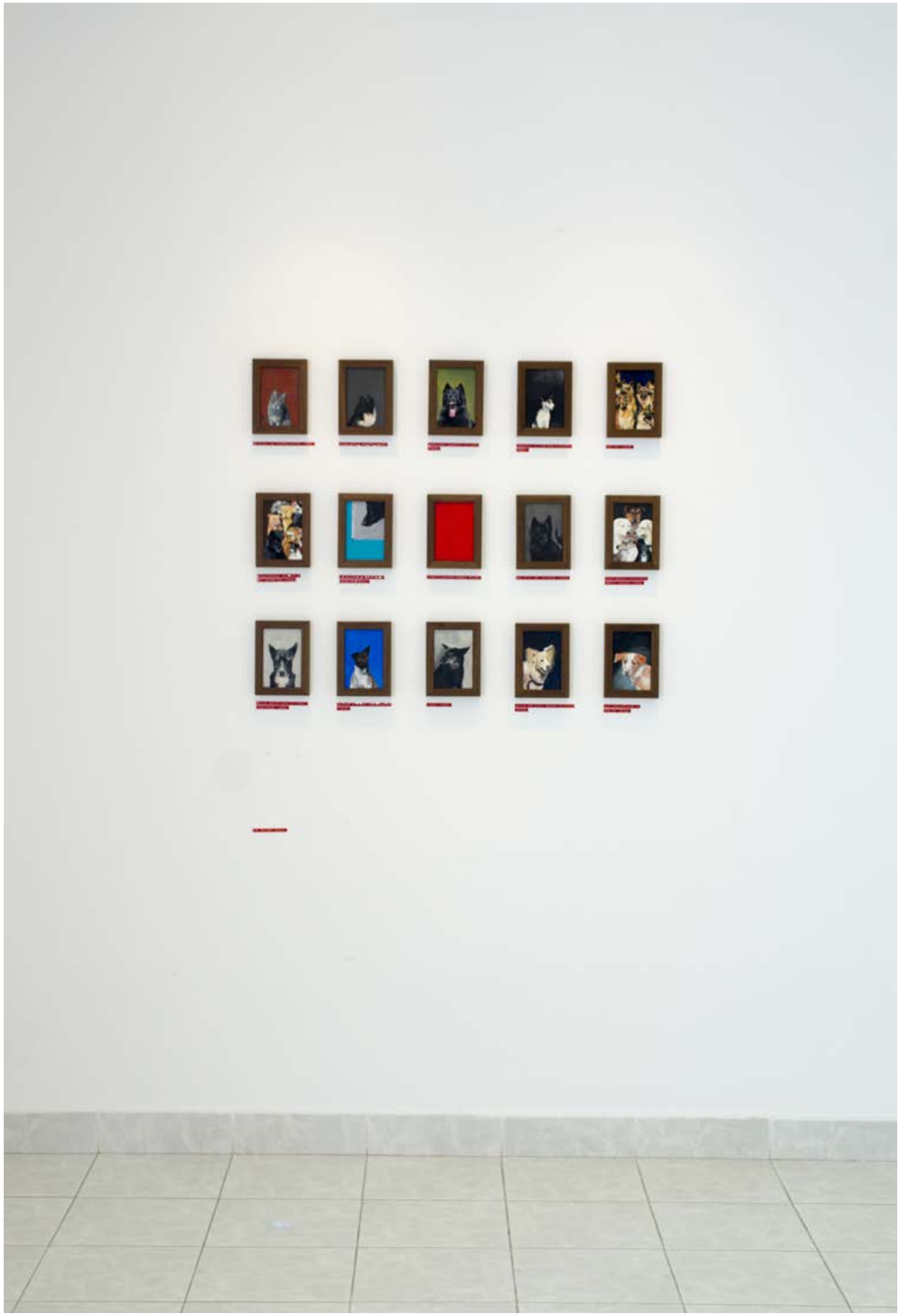
I found and ordered a prepared board. Not directly on Amazon, but easily enough available at http://www.religious-supply.com/shop.php3?cid=16 and http://www.iconboards.com/index.php3?cid=43&pid=51, amongst others. Times of worshipping are a changing. Then it arrived. It is beautiful. And who knows what lies underneath the linen cloth that seals the wood and provides a surface that is flexible and helps to eliminate cracking in the gesso, while it is also symbolic of the shroud of Jesus, and the 10 or more coats of gesso representing the state of non-action before Creation, a state of pure potential, made from marble dust and rabbit skin glue. What if the Russian monks that are said to have made the board, which has been shipped to me from USA, took some liberties?

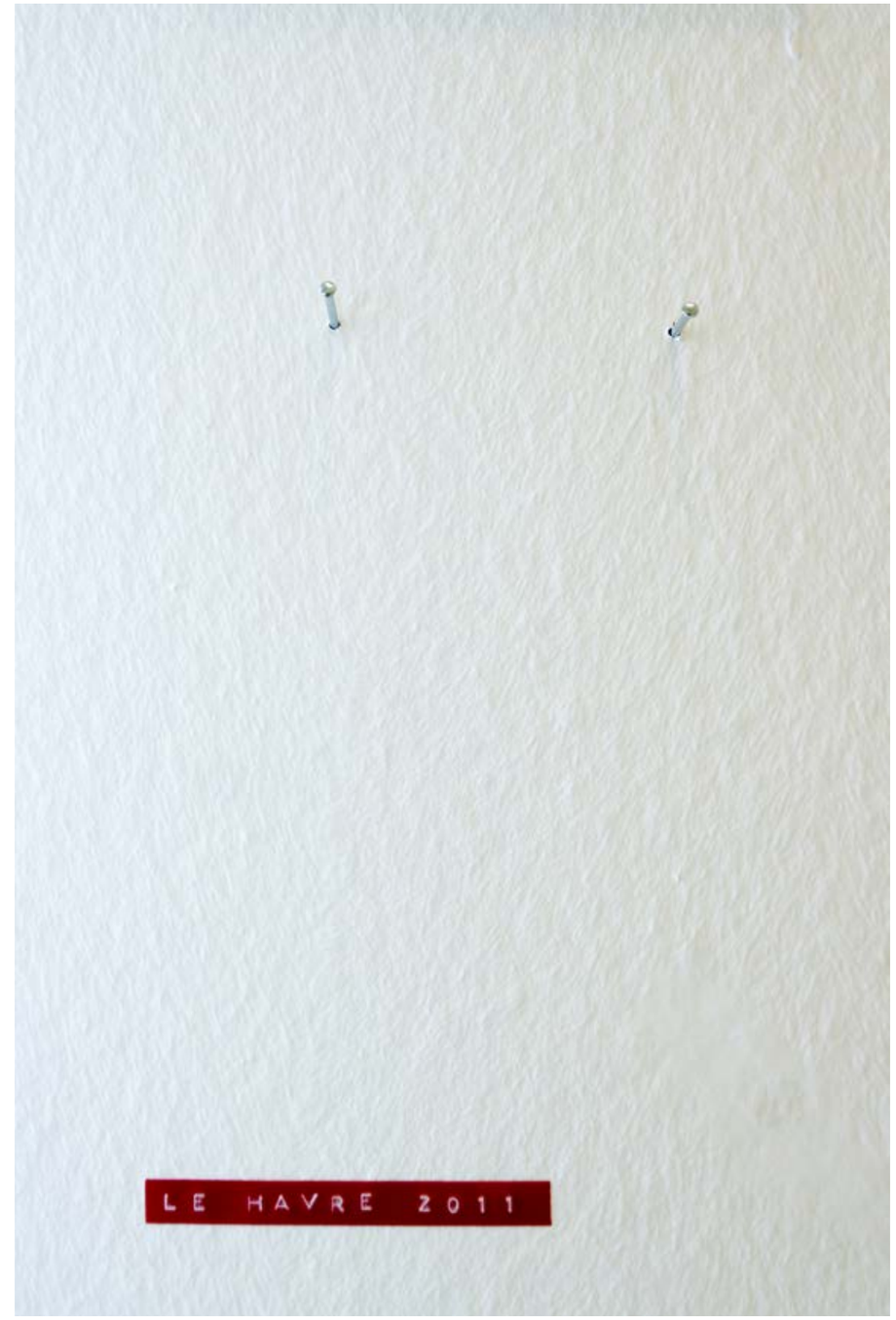

ali rože; z njimi govorijo, se jim izpovedujejo, če jih je treba premakniti, jih premaknejo nadvse previdno; če se zgodi, da jih je potrebno uničiti, storijo to obredno (ne ravno, kot bi bile rastline, ampak še vedno, kot bi bile določeni ljudje ali živali). Vem, da se kdaj ravna zelo pazljivo tudi z dragocenimi slikami, a sem precej prepričana, da se z njimi le poredko govori ali se jim izpoveduje ali jim pripravlja slovesen pokop.

Skrbno pripravljene deske za ikone se mi zdijo čudovite.

Ko sem prebirala razpravo Semiotika ikone Borisa Uspenskega, sem želela tudi sama pripraviti desko za ikono. Ker sem brez lesarske delavnice, vegetarijanka in skopušna, sem uporabila materiale pri roki in nastala je tale stvar, obešena tu na desni. Očitno rezultat ni preveč prepričljiv.

K pravoslavnim ikonam se običajno moli. Obstaja kompleksen sistem upodabljanja motivov na pravilen način, ki zagotavlja, da bodo molitve naletele na prava ušesa, in preprečuje, da jih ne bi po nesreči slišala zlobna bitja. Da bi bila komunikacija izpeljana pravilno, vsi svetniki in angeli





ALMOST ALL THE DOGS OF AKI KAURISMÄKI, 2014
All the dogs from almost all the feature length movies by Aki Kaurismäki.
- 15 framed paintings, acryl on panel, 12 x 17 cm
- 16 dymo-embossed labels

Bonsai

a series of paintings of bonsai trees, depicting the relationship between art and writing about art.

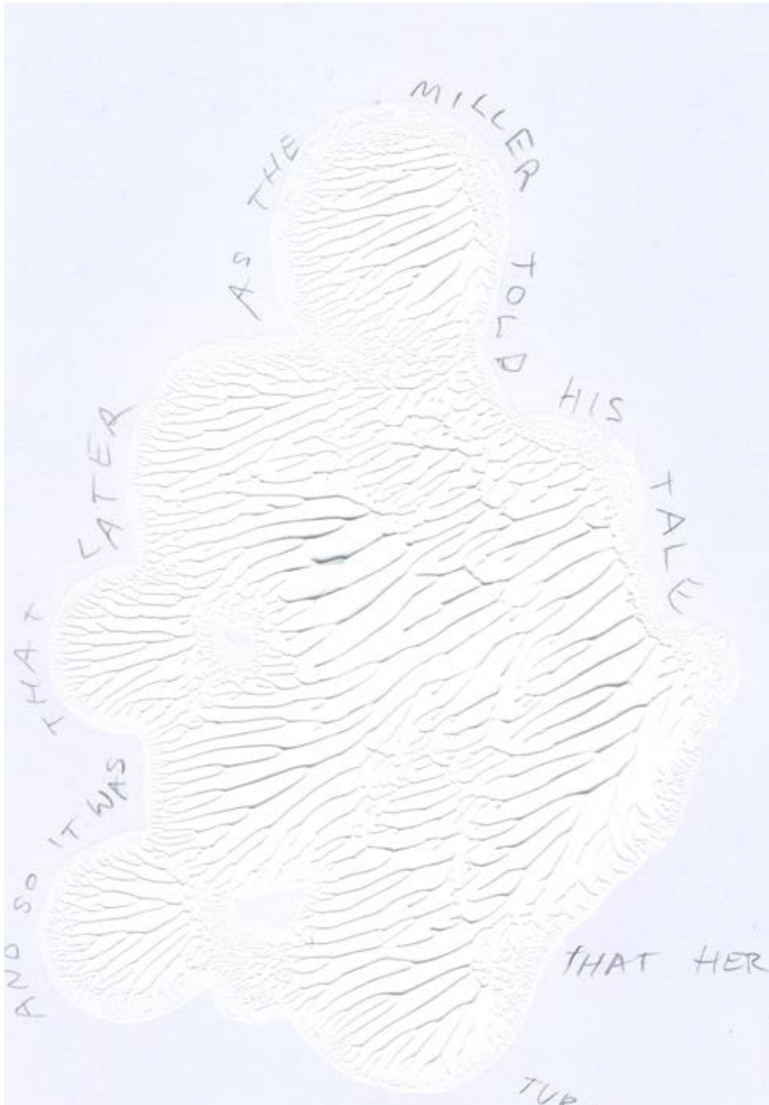
acryl on canvas, text. 2012

A Whiter Shade of Pale
acryl and pencil on paper, A4. 2012

PODNAR SAID OUR HOUSE IS UGLY.

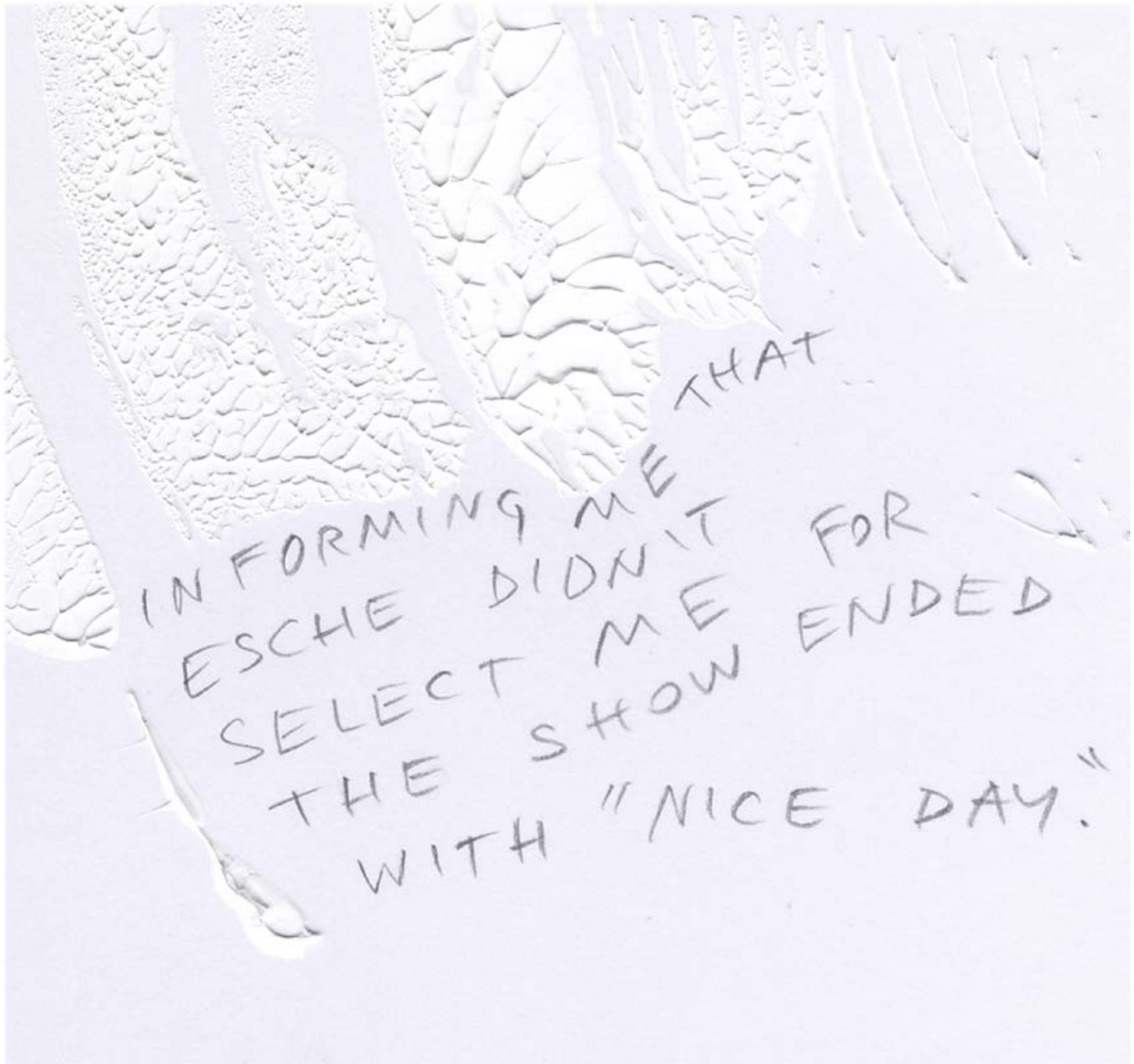
A WUSS

AFRAID OF: FLYING, RIDING IN A CAR, TALKING OVER PHONE, SPEAKING IN PUBLIC, THAT MY TEETH WOULD BREAK OR BE DAMAGED IN VARIOUS OTHER WAYS, DENTISTS, SNAKES, SPIDERS, DOGS, CATS, LEMON GHOSTS IN OUR BEDROOM, GERMS, CONVERSATIONS WITH NEW PEOPLE, SHOWING MY ART, DISEASES, SOMETHING BAD HAPPENING TO MY HUSBAND, BEING APART FROM MY HUSBAND, THAT WE WOULD NOT HAVE CHILDREN, HAVING CHILDREN, THAT I WILL CHOKE ON MY FOOD IN THE WRONG MOMENT, KNIVES, BLOOD, DARK ALLEYS, STRONG SUN, HORSES, PIGS, HAVING NO MONEY AND HOME WHEN OLD, CAUGHING WHEN EVERYBODY IS QUIET, ENTERING CHURCHES & FANCY SHOPS & RESTAURANTS, CHANGES, SYRINGES



THAT HER FACE, AT FIRST JUST GHOSTLY TURNED A WHITER SHADE OF PALE.


THE LETTER
INFORMING ME THAT
ESCHE DIDN'T FOR
SELECT ME
THE SHOW ENDED
WITH "NICE DAY."


THAT
INFORMING ME
ESCHE DIDN'T FOR
SELECT ME
THE SHOW ENDED
WITH "NICE DAY."

"I eat only white foods: eggs, sugar, grated bones, the fat of dead animals; veal, salt, coconut, chicken cooked in white water; fruit mold, rice, turnips; camphorated sausage, dough, cheese (white), cotton salad, and certain fish (skinless)." Quoted by Rollo H. Myers (1968). Erik Satie, p.135. New York: Dover.

Satie mentions to his friends that for achieving whiteness in his work, he gets himself into the right mood by eating nothing but "white" foods. By eating white food, if only for a week, Slejko is preparing for the new piece - Alphonse Allais´ Souvenir Shop.

Menus:

THURSDAY

Breakfast: Rice crackers with spread fresh cheese, peeled apple; semolina; lemonade; kefir

Dinner: Rice gnocchi with cheese sauce served with white onion marinated in rice vinegar and salt; cauliflower salad with white onion, salt, sesame oil and rice vinegar; lemonade

Snack: Peeled banana and Rafaello coconut balls

white tea, water

FRIDAY

Breakfast: Rice crackers with spread fresh cheese; peeled apple, peeled banana and semolina with yoghurt; lemonade

Dinner: Pangasius fillet, cauliflower, garlic, white onion, cooked in salted coconut milk with lemon juice, served with basmati rice; rice gnocchi with cottage cheese; water

Snack: White Pavlova cake, snaps (at Rasmus Albertsen's opening at CAC Bukovje)

Snack: basmati rice with milk

Snack: Peeled banana with kefir

white tea, white monkey, snaps, vanilla parts of chocolate vanilla wafers, water

SATURDAY

Brunch: Cooked rice noodles with white onion, peeled apple, feta cheese, dressed with salted rice vinegar and sprinkled with parmesan cheese and sesame seeds; lemonade

Dinner: Rice crackers with spread fresh cheese; peeled pear, peeled apple, peeled banana with yoghurt; lemonade

Snack: Cooked rice noodles with white onion, peeled apple, feta cheese, dressed with salted rice vinegar and sprinkled with parmesan cheese and sesame seeds with pickled onions, cottage cheese and toast cheese; water

white tea, white chocolate, water

SUNDAY

Breakfast: Rice crackers with spread fresh cheese; peeled apple, peeled banana and coconut flakes with yoghurt; lemonade

Dinner: Rice pudding; water

Snack: Peeled pear, peeled apple, feta cheese

Snack: Basmati rice with cottage cheese and pickled onions; water

white tea, white monkey, water, peeled banana,vanilla parts of chocolate vanilla wafers, white chocolate

MONDAY

Breakfast: Rice crackers with spread fresh cheese; peeled apple in lemonade; peeled banana with rice pudding; kefir

Dinner: Rice noodles with cheese sauce and mozzarella cheese; cooked cauliflower with rice vinegar, sesame seeds and salt; water

Snack: Rice noodles with cottage cheese; cooked cauliflower with rice vinegar, sesame seeds and salt; peeled apple, water

white tea, white monkey, water, peeled banana, white chocolate

TUESDAY

Breakfast: A rice cracker with spread fresh cheese and sprinkled with sesame seeds, peeled apple; peeled banana and rice pudding; kefir; lemonade made with lime

Snack: A rice cracker with spread fresh cheese and cottage cheese; water

Dinner: Pangasius fillet, peeled white potatoes, garlic, white onion, cooked in salted coconut milk with lemon juice, served with basmati rice; water

Snack: Peeled pear and apple

Snack: Basmati rice with milk

white tea, water, Lucozade Energizer, white chocolate

WEDNESDAY

Breakfast: A rice cracker with spread fresh cheese; semolina with peeled banana;lemonade made with lime

Dinner: Rice noodles with cheese sauce and sour turnip; water

Snack: Peeled pear and apple

white tea, water, peeled banana

ITEMS CONSUMED:

rice crackers, fresh spread cheese, kefir, lemonade, semolina, milk, peeled apple, water, salt, white sugar, rice gnocchi, white onion, cheese sauce, cauliflower, rice vinegar, sesame oil, white tea, white monkey, peeled banana, Rafaello coconut balls, yoghurt, pangasius fillet, basmati rice, garlic, coconut milk, cottage cheese, white Pavlova (white sugar, egg whites, cornstarch, double cream, peeled litchi), snaps, vanilla parts of the chocolate vanilla wafers, rice noodles, feta cheese, parmesan cheese, sesame seeds, peeled pear, pickled onions, toast cheese, white chocolate, coconut flakes, short grained rice, mozzarella cheese, peeled white potatoes, Lucozade Energizer, sour turnip

Eating, After Satie
A week-long performance, 2010

"I eat only white foods: eggs, sugar, grated bones, the fat of dead animals; veal, salt, coconut, chicken cooked in white water; fruit mold, rice, turnips; camphorated sausage, dough, cheese (white), cotton salad, and certain fish (skinless)." Quoted by Rollo H. Myers (1968). Erik Satie, p.135. New York: Dover.

Satie mentions to his friends that for achieving whiteness in his work, he gets himself into the right mood by eating nothing but "white" foods. By eating white food, if only for a week, I am prepairing for the white piece (Alphonse Allais' Souvenir Shop).

It's Already Been Shown

A a sculptural installation, consisting of a short text and three different works that have been rejected due to having been shown before. The works are presented packaged for storage and therefore not on view despite their placement in the gallery. 2011

- 144 Attempts to Paint a White Monochrome. Eight large boxes containing a series of 144 paintings

- An Attempt not to Paint a White Monochrome. A wrapped roll of canvas which when unrolled is a nine meter long painting

- So Happy Together. Two bubble-wrapped photo albums, a folder containing 200 photographs, and a roll of wall paper on a white shelf.

When I am offered an exhibition, I take it. I am always lacking shows and I never can know when the next opportunity might come. So I exhibit also at places that nobody visits, nobody writes about and that hold little merit, as that is still better than nothing. I exhibit new pieces so I can take photographs of them. A work of art can only look well in a portfolio if installed in a nice clean room. I constantly need to be able to present nice new works to be able to apply for nice new shows. And I get repeatedly rejected from exhibitions on grounds of that the piece has been shown before; whether anyone has seen it or not does not matter. Art is not for being shown and seen, art is for giving credits to curators or/and institutions.
Are artworks really mere consumables, as lasting as last year's fashion?

It's Already Been Shown II

It's Already Been Shown II is a continuation of *It's already Been Shown*; it is a sculptural work/installation, that uses already shown pieces as material.

- Dogs of Aki Kaurismäki; 14 framed paintings, acryl on panel.

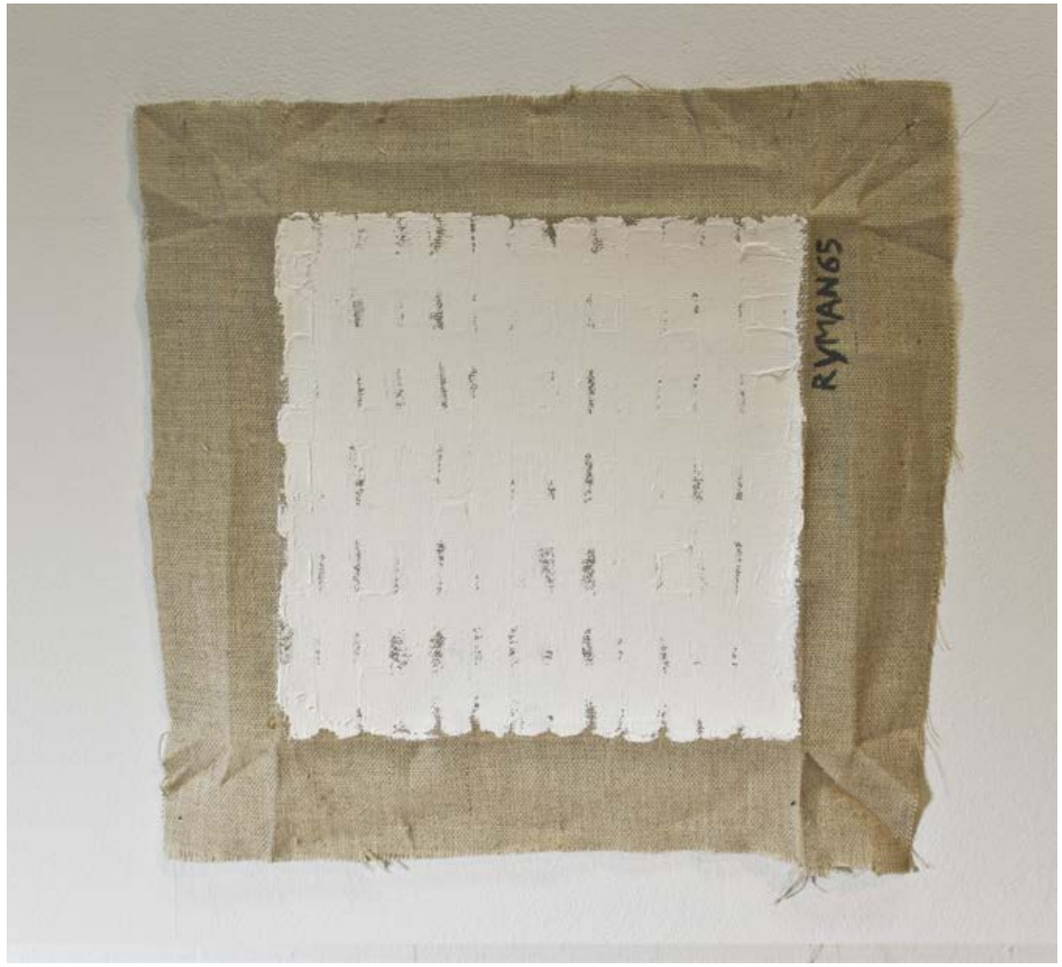
- The Coverings; Various number of paintings from the named series, acryl & oil on canvas.


NINA SLEJKO, 2005
NINA SLEJKO, 2005
"FROM THE MOMENT YOU
READ THESE WORDS"
NINA SLEJKO 2005
"IT'S A LIAR"
"UNTIL YOU KISS SOMEBODY
WITH GREEN EYES"
NINA SLEJKO, 2005

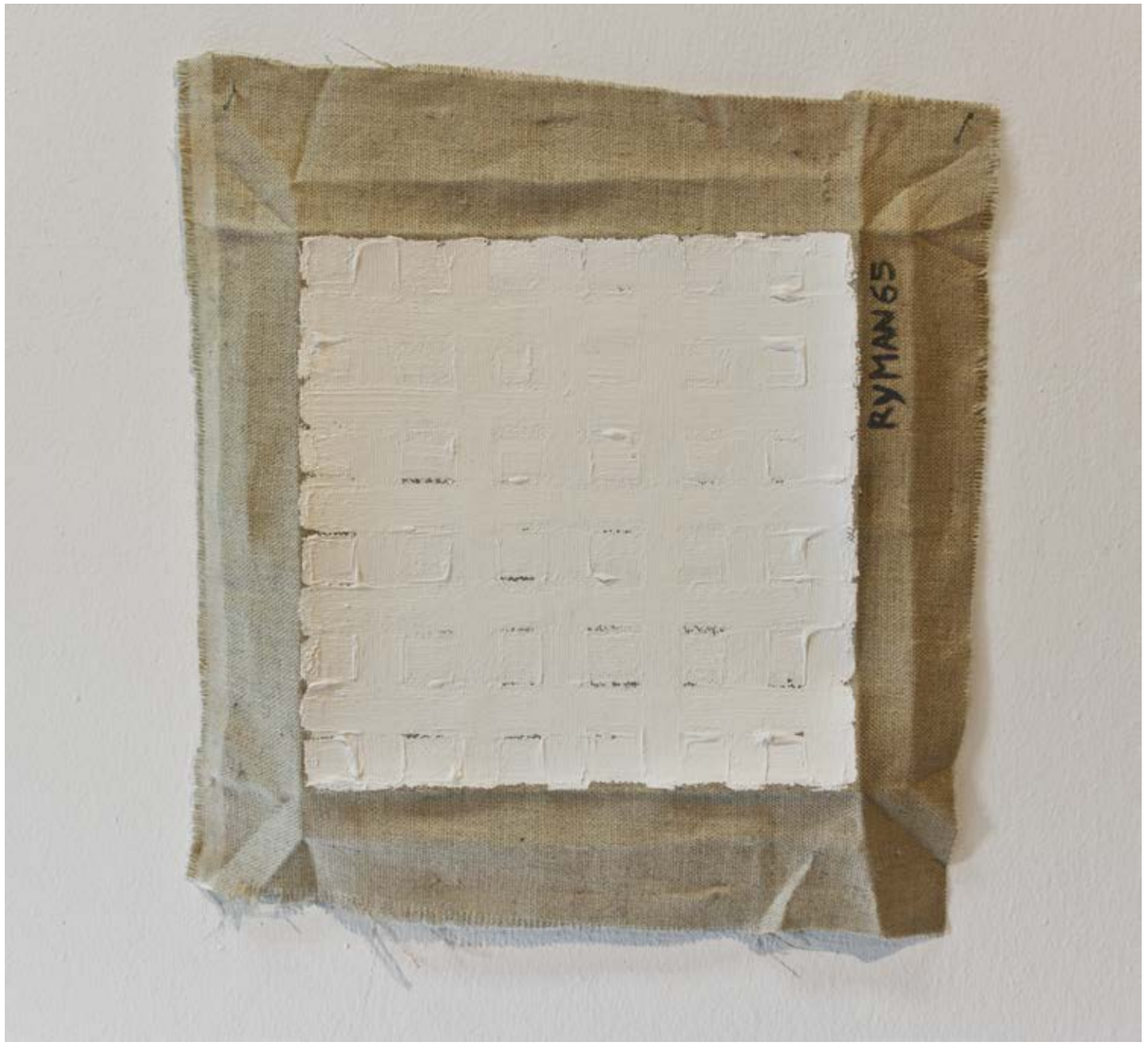
Fake (Robert Ryman, Untitled 65)

Five failed attempts to paint a replica of one of Robert Ryman's Untitled 65 and one of my old paintings pretending to be a piece by Cyprien Gaillard.

5 x acrylics on unframed canvas, cca 30x30cm; acryl and oil on canvas, 25x30cm; text. 2011



Cyprien Gaillard Nouveau pittoresque



I was about to do a magnificent piece. One that would sum my long time private involvement with the white monochrome; it would be a conclusion of the intimate research, featuring white pieces that are my personal favorites, amongst which there would be a monochrome from 19th century even. I would be remaking, copying, faking some iconic works that have touched upon the theme of this final anemic cul de sac of modernism or a carte blanc for a new thought, and at the same time I would be questioning the issues of original versus copy. I was of the opinion that the world would benefit of general relaxation when it comes to the question of The Original - since to show an original requires a lot of money, word and time exchange (with gallerist, rights' holders, insurance companies …), many of the exciting art achievements miss out on being shown and seen in certain places, so to show replicas instead should be just as well (if that did not cost also, that is). I was also of the opinion that it is often in the late 20th and 21st century art the thought or concept that makes the piece, rather than the aura of the original. And finally, I was of the opinion that to see the brilliant thought through a copy is much better than not seeing it at all. And showing it, for that matter.
I was proud of my concept. The exhibition would be called WHITE: Personal Favorites. With Alphonse Allais, Conny Blom, Tony Conrad, Spencer Finch, Lucio Fontana, Tom Friedman, Cyprien Gaillard, Clay Ketter, OHO, Robert Ryman, Nina Slejko and Wolfgang Tillmans. Yes, some have not yet made the white pieces, but I was certain I could make them for them. And yes, I included myself, but who could resist the temptation of the possibility to be mistakenly taken for showing in such elite company. So, I would paint the replicas (and pre-replicas) and show them with descriptions, I would curate this amazing show (and paint it). The pieces would be called for ex. Cyprien Gaillard Nouveau pittoresque and would not differ from the originals unless one studied them very carefully. I started with the just mentioned piece, and was happy with the result, as I only brought from storage one of my old paintings which resembles the before mentioned work of Cyprien Gaillard and the first piece was made! I was feeling bold, I would not ask for permissions. It would be fantastic.

I thought.

Then I started trying to paint one of Ryman's Untitled 65. In acryl even, oh, the silliness of youth.
After the fifth attempt I was rather certain further fiddling with the matter would mean a further waste of time and I started painting some sorts bonsai trees and dogs with feet in mouths, mice at breakfast tables, bloody fences, and similar.

Saleable Paintings

The series is composed of four projects, all connected with addition of red elements to the paintings. I was examining the idea of an art work as a commodity and, in the same perspective, investigating the relation between art market and art itself.

SALEABLE PAINTINGS 1
RED SELLS

Compositions with red. The series is based on a usage of pre-existing paintings, both mine and those by other artists, as base for the works. Trough remaking paintings by adding red elements I was heightening the paintings' commercial value (based on a conversation between Mark Kostabi and Bill Levine) 23 paintings, various formats. 2005.

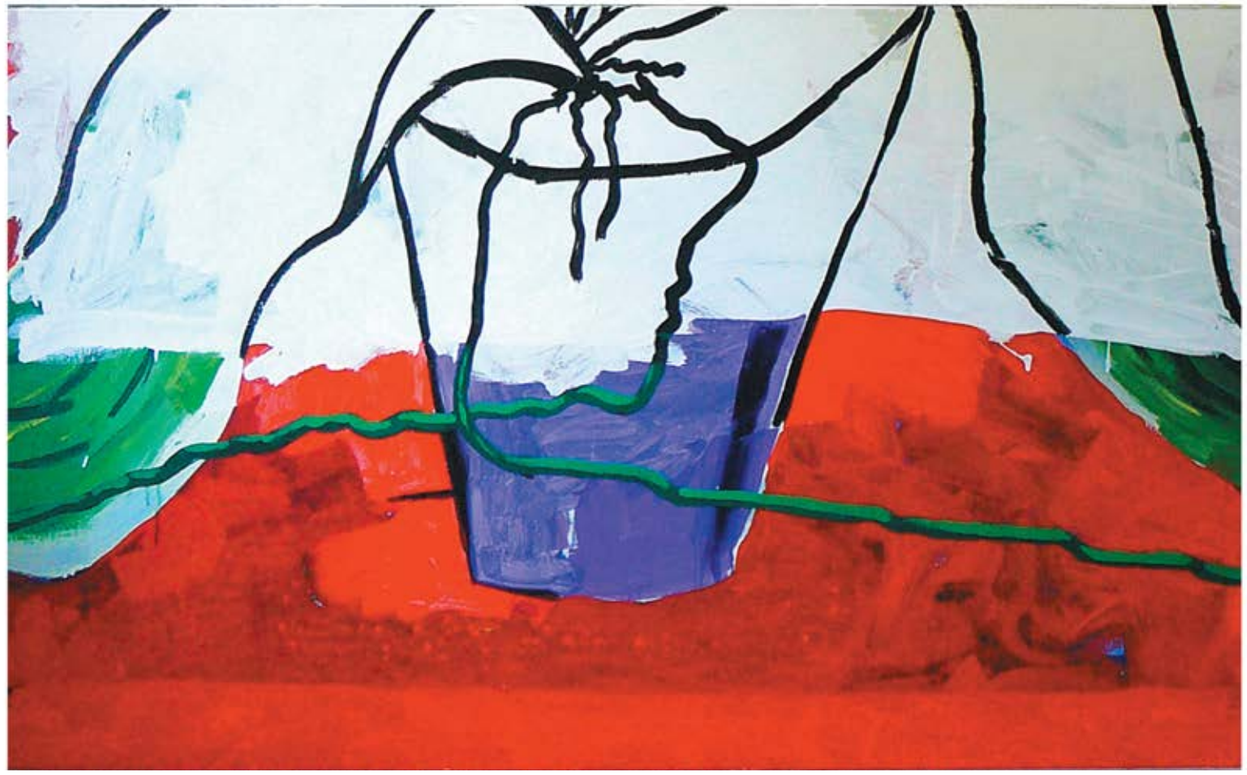
- "You sure you don´t want this back? Why do you have troubles selling this painting, it´s got green in it, the color of money."

- "Green doesn´t sell, red sells."

- "Why don´t you take this one then, it´s got red in it, it´ll sell. Why don´t you take this instead."

- "No, I´m looking for something with architecture in it. My clients love your architectural works now."

Conversation between Mark Kostabi and collector and gallerist Bill Levine.



2 x 115 x 190 cm

SALEABLE PAINTINGS 2

DOGS OF AKI KAURISMÄKI

All the dogs from all the feature length movies by Aki Kaurismäki (commercially available before November 2009). In one of the movies there are no dogs. Dogs are loyal and human, but there is no loyalty or humanity in this movie.
In one of the movies the role of dog is played by a cat.


LA VIE DE BOHÈME
MEET MOSES
2002 MIES VAILLA
MENNEISYYTTÄ
2006 LAITAKAUPUNGIN
VALOT

APPRECIATION FOR RED
AND SMALLER PAINTINGS

SALEABLE PAINTINGS 4

APPRECIATION FOR RED AND SMALLER PAINTINGS

23 paintings, various formats. 2009

My unsold works cut into above sofa fitting formats & coated with red.

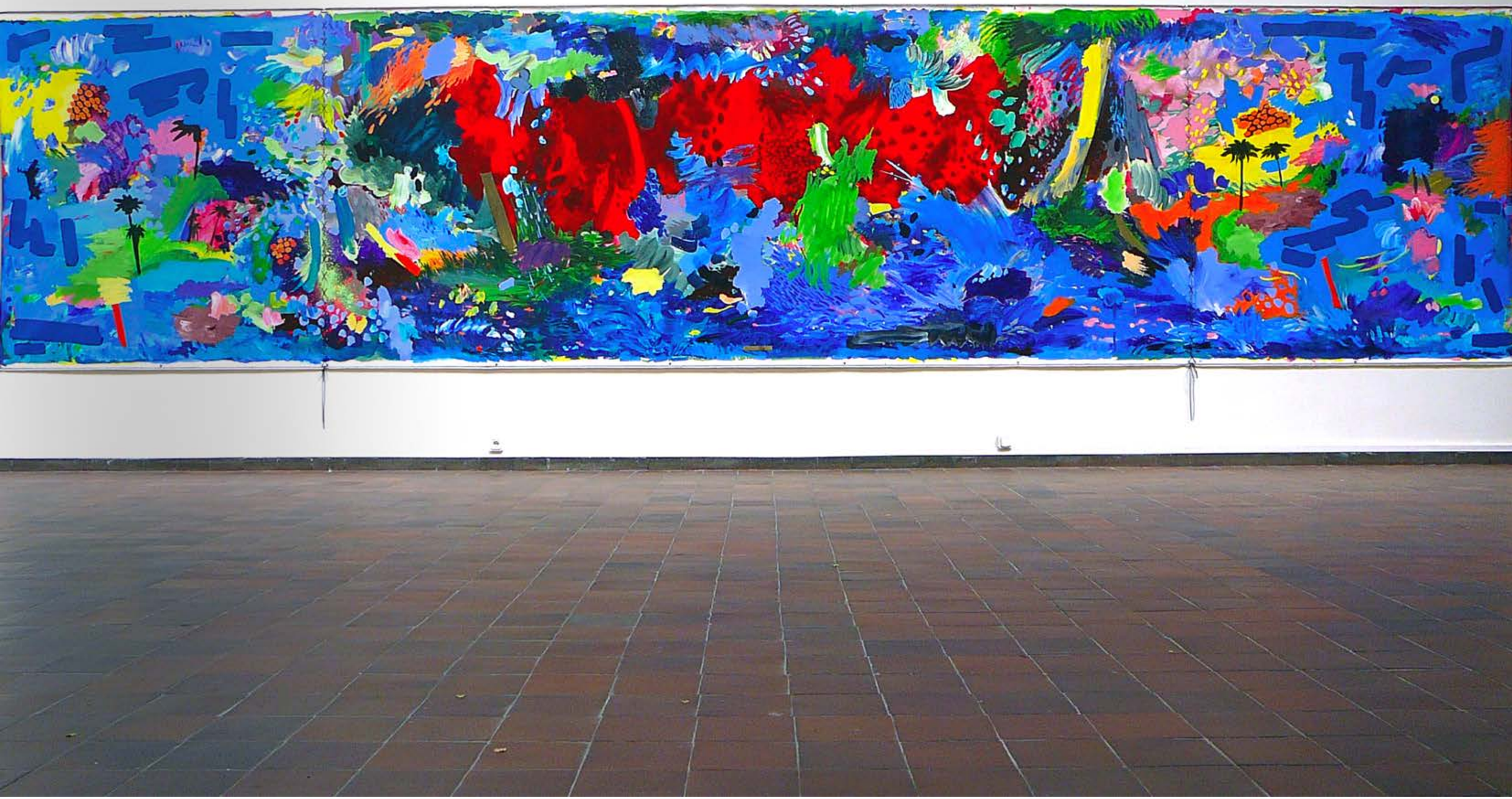
The work is playing with the idea of salability and taste; I cut the paintings into small, above sofa fitting formats and painted them red, as the gallery owner that showed the work had expressed his appreciation for red and smaller paintings; I found that especially amusing since I have some years ago made a piece a bit like this one (Red Sells), then commenting on the words of Bill Levine.


LUIGI'S
SAM PA

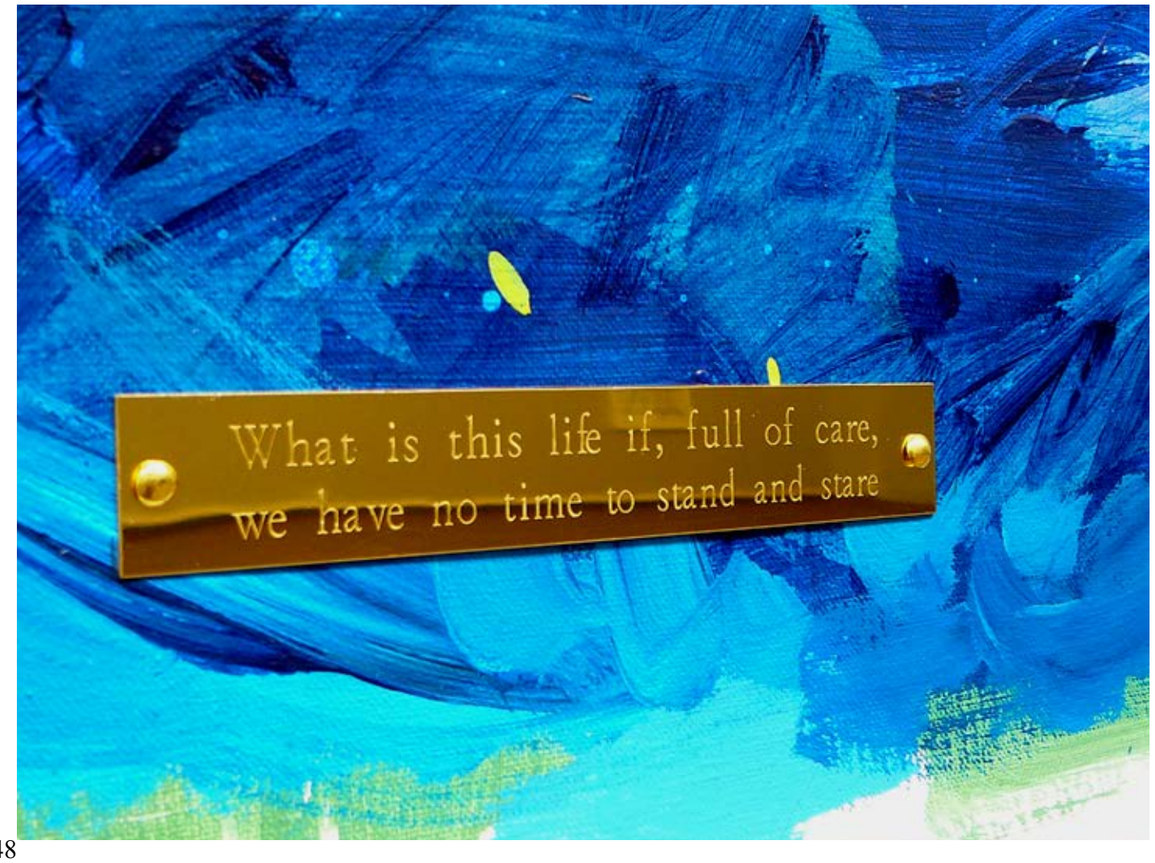
144 Attempts to Paint a White Monochrome
the series is dealing with the nature of painting as a form. gradually the semantic content is being excluded, with every painting more so, in an attempt to make it obvious that what my painting is about is a form, the how of painting; acrylics on canvas, 144 x 30 x 35 cm. 2007-08

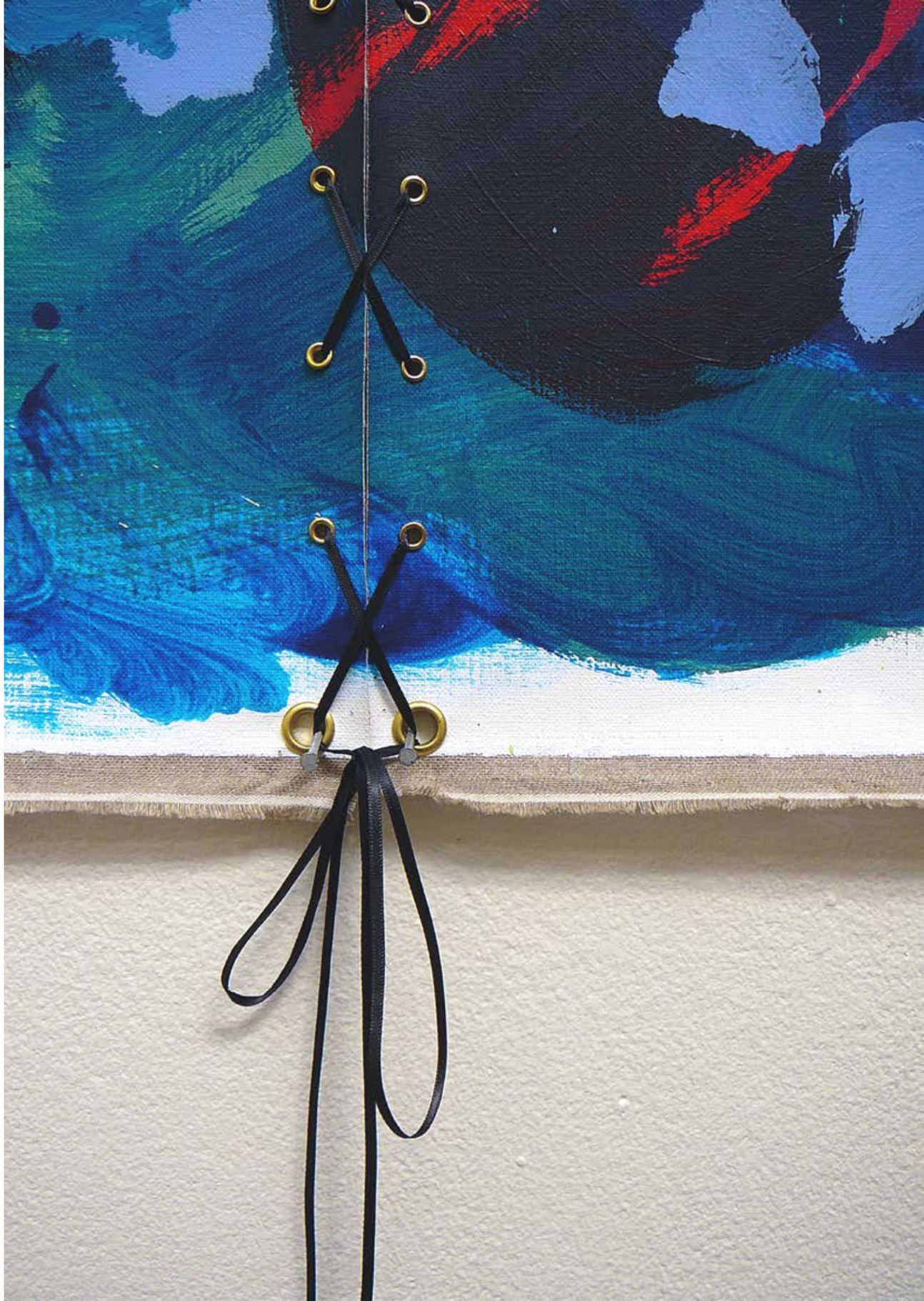
144 attempts to paint a white monochrome

An Attempt not to Paint a White Monochrome
acrylics on canvas, 210 x 920 cm. 2009



installation view, pictures taken at Göteborgs Konsthall


What is this life if, full of care,
we have no time to stand and stare



The work I am preparing has slight conceptual grounds, but mostly it is a painting, and an abstract one at that. It is therefore difficult to say much about it. There is no narration to retell, no hidden or double meanings, no symbolism ... The only way I can talk about it is to explain its formal structure trough the conceptual frame I have been preoccupied with; the concept being, roughly, not to paint a white monochrome.

Many paintings have been done. I like to paint. There is little left to be discovered. And discoveries seem much easier once they have been discovered. I justify my painting activity trough trying out modernist inventions in painting and thus bringing them forward, into today, contextualizing them, making contemporary art of them.
In my previous piece I was trying to paint a white monochrome. Trying, I say. It is not easy for someone who is an abstract expressionist at heart to paint in a minimal manner. But after 140 attempts I came close. I painted an almost entirely white painting and I could still call it a painting.
In the work for the Konsthallen show, I am trying to move away from the white monochrome, as far away as I can manage.

The piece I am working on will have a title. *An Attempt Not to Paint a White Monochrome.*

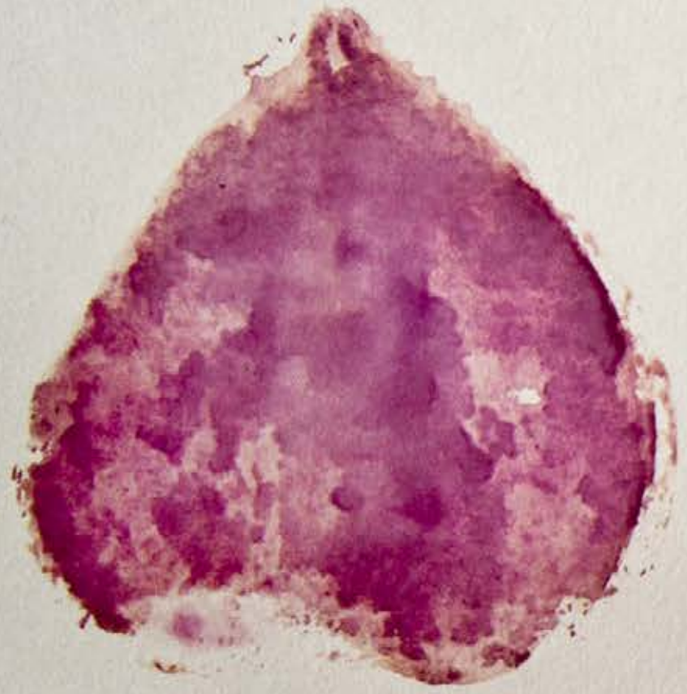
The painting the piece will consist of will also have a title. It will be engraved on a brass plaque and attached to the canvas. *What is this life if, full of care, we have no time to stand and stare.*
The title adds another level to the work. The white monochrome is for a painter about being minimal with means, about using little elements and making them sufficient. For a viewer, it should be about the richness of the scarceness of elements. The title attached to a white monochrome would lessen the monochrome's self sufficiency, it would undermine it, hide it behind something that it is not. Attaching a title to a monochrome would be as if not daring to let people see the painting's gist. The title would interfere and disturb, it would hide the whiteness, the edges, the expression of each brush stroke, the Painting.
Although it is extremely interesting and amusing since it was done in the 19th century, a monochrome called *First Communion of Anaemic Young Girls in the Snow* is to a painter mere illustration, or a conceptual piece, but not a full grown painting. Had this painting not had a title, art history might have been different today.
To not paint a monochrome as much as I can, I have to paint a piece with a title.
My painting will be one to be looked at for a certain time. It will demand attention. It will want people to stand and look. Or sit and look. Or at the least make somebody now and then ponder about time for a second. Time in general perhaps as well, but it is time in a gallery that I have in mind here. So besides the painting, the piece will consist of comfortable chairs. People should have a chance to see this piece. It looks best if seen from an armchair. I want clear, though preferably discreet, directions as of how the painting should be looked at. Armchair(s) seem sleekest and clearest solution.

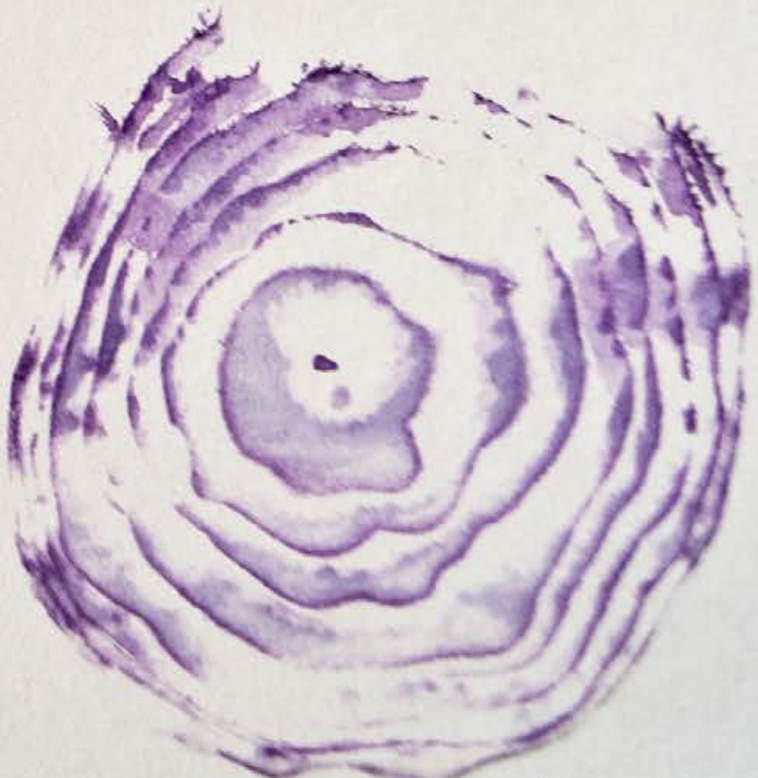
To not paint a white monochrome as much as I can, I have to use plenty of colours and either frame the painting or unstrech it.

As I was putting so much thought and attention into the paintings' sides and edges when trying to paint a monochrome and since I do not have enough money to hide the painting's sides under a frame, I find it an adequate point of departure here to decide upon using only the painting's front flat and literally take away the extras that would ordinarily form a painting.
By minimizing the narration and the colours one maximizes the three dimensional object-hood of a painting. Exclusion of elements heightens importance of that which is left. The painting stops being a flat surface covered by paint and becomes a 3d object, the edges of which are as important as its front, even if left untouched; now a painting is a sum of all that a painting is made of. Everything that is left matters.
At the monochromes opposite however, it is the flat of the painting that matters (unless one chooses to paint the edges as well. I will write about a painting composition that has its contours on the front side). When painterly elements are plenty, the sides loose their significance. They might be there though, they are formed by stretchers that support a painting that requires a very flat, stretched surface, and they might make the painting pretty or common or proper in terms on which we are used to look at paintings – stretched paintings are a uniform norm. Since we have been served them for centuries we imagine that that is how a finished painting should look like. I think it is a sane form this though, it makes a lot of sense and I think it is one of those conventions where one can easily understand why they have become so widely accepted and used. It is however possible to paint without stretchers, and just as possible to look at paintings that are hanging freely. A piece of canvas, un-stretched and fragile is revealing the canvas's soft nature – it is not a stiff material this, canvas is soft, wrinkly, lively. Painters know that, and it is not wrong to use this characteristic, and to show it. It is not a novelty either; it just is not most frequently met.
When painting a two dimensional surface covered by paint and not putting any thought in painting's edges, to have a nice boxy painting-object is not fully justified for me any more. If I wanted to have my canvas on stretchers I would have to use the frame, to cover the sides that would have nothing to say and to frame in the area viewers should look at. Modernism took all the frames away to point out that paintings are not windows into other realities, but, paintings. It was quite a "discovery" and a big step further. Since frames have been taken away quite some painters noticed the edges and used them in their works. So now we know how to look at paintings in a new way, from left and right and from underneath and from above, we look at whatever we can get our eyes on, beyond the front flatness. But sometimes there is nothing there. Sometimes the painter did not care about the edges, and yet they are there, and we look at them and we see some unintentional and boring drips. And by now I think we all know that paintings are not windows. The removed frame should perhaps be reconsidered once again, and perhaps returned to the painting, if for no other reason than to mask away the insignificant, the disturbing, to shift focus on to the painting that a painter painted.
The other option is to only leave what there is of the painting, the painterly surface, to remove the stretchers, thus sides – and that leaves me with an un-stretched canvas.
Due to the enormous costs for framing a nine meter long painting I decide for the latter.

Finally, the painting consists of three pieces tied together by ribbons. When I started working on thus piece I thought I was painting a trilogy so I cut the canvas. Later I changed my mind, and inspired by the upside down turned cow in what was previously my favorite café then called Minimal (now by new owner decorated in an all but minimal manner), tied the pieces together with black satin ribbon drawn trough golden rings. As for the small rosettes that round up the stitches, they are inspired by the woman in me.

ALMOST ALL THE VEGETABLES IN THE WORLD, 2014
- vegetable prints on paper, 70 x 100 cm
- pencil on unfolded paper, 30 x 21 cm





The Coverings

The Coverings is a painting project for which I bought paintings at flea markets, painted them over and exhibited them, thereby raising their value. Despite the precise conceptual grounds, the painterly quality of each finished painting is important as I wanted to paint paintings rather then statements. A significant part of the work was a romantic idea of preserving paintings by servicing not most successfully done ones, and bringing up both their aesthetic and the monetary value.

Then I bought "The Rooster" for 1800€ in an art gallery, painted it over and named the work "Today I Was an Evil One". Its value sank, became even with the flea market bought, now mine, paintings by Slejko. The painting used for this work is one of many proclaimed paintings of a rooster by France Slana, whom Slovene bourgeoisie thinks highly of. His paintings with a motif of a rooster are considered to be a status symbol. Young girl artist painted over an old proclaimed man painter, people thought. I claim that I painted over the Slovene bourgeoisie's bad taste most of all. I expressed my opinion towards the icon painting of Slovene provincial taste and offered a statement of own aesthetic orientation.; oil & acrylics on canvas, various sizes. 2005

installation view, pictures taken at National Gallery Ljubljana

raining in darling

Today I Was an Evil One
A painting from the series “The Coverings”, oil and acrylic on canvas, 2006

"I have painted over the Slovene bourgeoisie's bad taste most of all. The Rooster is richer now, no doubt, and more beautiful; it is well a painted over Slana! The expensive painting is gone, its absence charms it. I have painted over almost all of my savings, and I am happy. A very special feeling. Liberating. A roguish exciting feeling, with a little drop of butterflies in belly. I am proud of me today.*

*If nothing else, at least my "aesthetic judgments are honestly reported**".*

*France Slana, author of the original painting
**part of John Baldessari`s text
(excerpts from"The Coverings", Nina Slejko, 2006)

The More the Merrier

work in progress

At least 100 replicas of my over painted Slana painting, ordered from a Chinese manufacturer, framed in identical frames as Slana's original. To be shown in display-windows of the main selling-type galleries (the ones that sell Slana´s works) in Ljubljana, as well as in the gallery where my show will take place – covering walls, with the original amongst them, and sticking out of boxes …

This project is a continuation of a work from 2006 called "Today I was an Evil One". As a young female artist who at that time only had access to very marginal galleries, I bought a painting by France Slana, an old male painter who is highly proclaimed by Slovene bourgeoisie, and painted it over. This painting with a motif of a rooster is one of very many paintings with the same motif painted by Slana. They are understood to be a status symbol in Slovenia, and there is an understanding among wealthier people that one just has to have one of these paintings. I liked the idea of taking down its monetary value. I liked the idea of painting over the rooster. Both literally and metaphorically.


SLANY


SOANA