



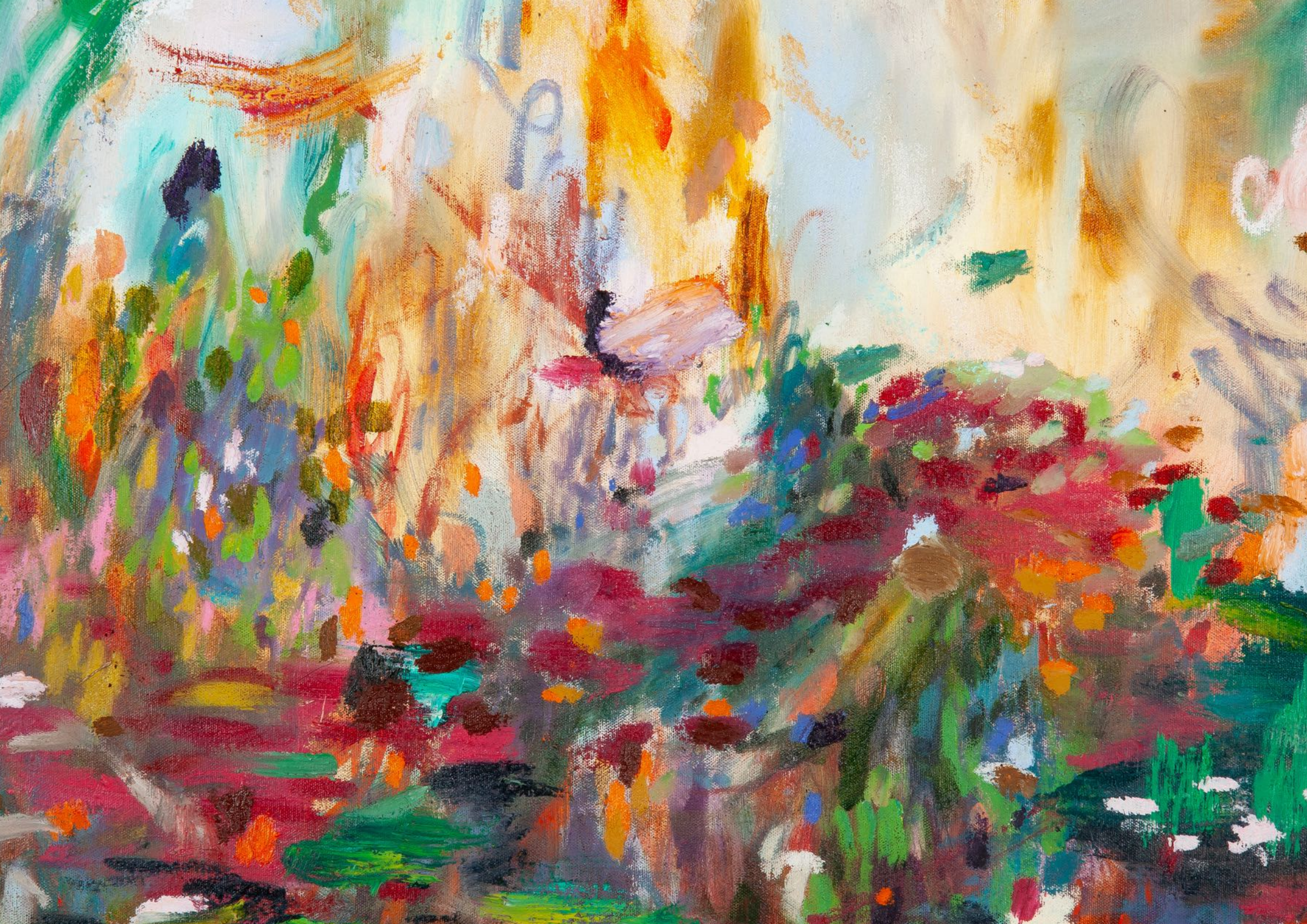
GUNS & RAIN

Unrest

Hedwig Barry

30 September – 27 October 2023

anthea@gunsandrain.com
+27 (0)79 628 3361
www.gunsandrain.com



Guns & Rain is pleased to announce Hedwig Barry's first solo exhibition with the gallery, titled *Unrest*. Produced during an ongoing period of physical itinerancy, this exhibition of paintings traces connections between place, feeling, nature and the political. In an entirely new body of work made in several locations around South Africa, Barry continues an exploration of what she calls "compulsive surfacing", the building up of painted surfaces until the relationship between figure and ground becomes obscured.

Her abstract visual language is characterised by restless yet careful marks, a striking sense of movement, and a strong commitment to colour. The overwhelming surfaces of Barry's works seduce the eye while disintegrating the figure-ground convention which is so embedded in our ways of reading the visual. In Western art history, the relationship between figure and ground, or the subject and the background, dominates the narrative of painting. According to this logic, the background is always subordinate to, and in service of, the subject, or the "main" content of the painting. This same history has been monopolised by male artists, critics and patrons, and, moreover, by a particularly aggressive way of relating to materials.

Barry's work undercuts this combative approach to painting, choosing instead to coax forms out of dense, forest-like painterly environments, and to give space to excess. Instead of reiterating hierarchies in which a foreground subject diminishes the background, Barry creates all-over paintings in which the ground is at once everywhere and nowhere. The related metaphors of "grounding" and "groundlessness" have preoccupied her practice since she started her Masters in Fine Arts in 2019, and connect her work to nature, the earth and our tools for orienting ourselves in relation to place.

Barry situates her practice as part of a rich and underrated tradition of women painting. Recalling the work of artists such as Lee Krasner, Joan Mitchell, Linda Bengtson, Cecily Brown and Rachel Jones, Barry's paintings explore the relationships between form and formlessness, precision and freedom. Wholly immersed in a painting process that balances intuition, expression, calculation and meticulous calibration, she questions what painting is and does today, how we make meaning from the visual, and what is at stake for those who exist precariously, whether by choice or necessity.



Hedwig Barry

Change Happens in the Margins

2023

Oil on canvas panel

46 x 61 cm

ZAR 32 000 / USD 1700 (framed)



Change Happens in the Margins (detail)



Hedwig Barry

Hokusai's Octopi

2023

Oil on canvas panel

61 x 46 cm

ZAR 32 000 / USD 1700 (framed)



Hokusai's Octopi (detail)





Hedwig Barry

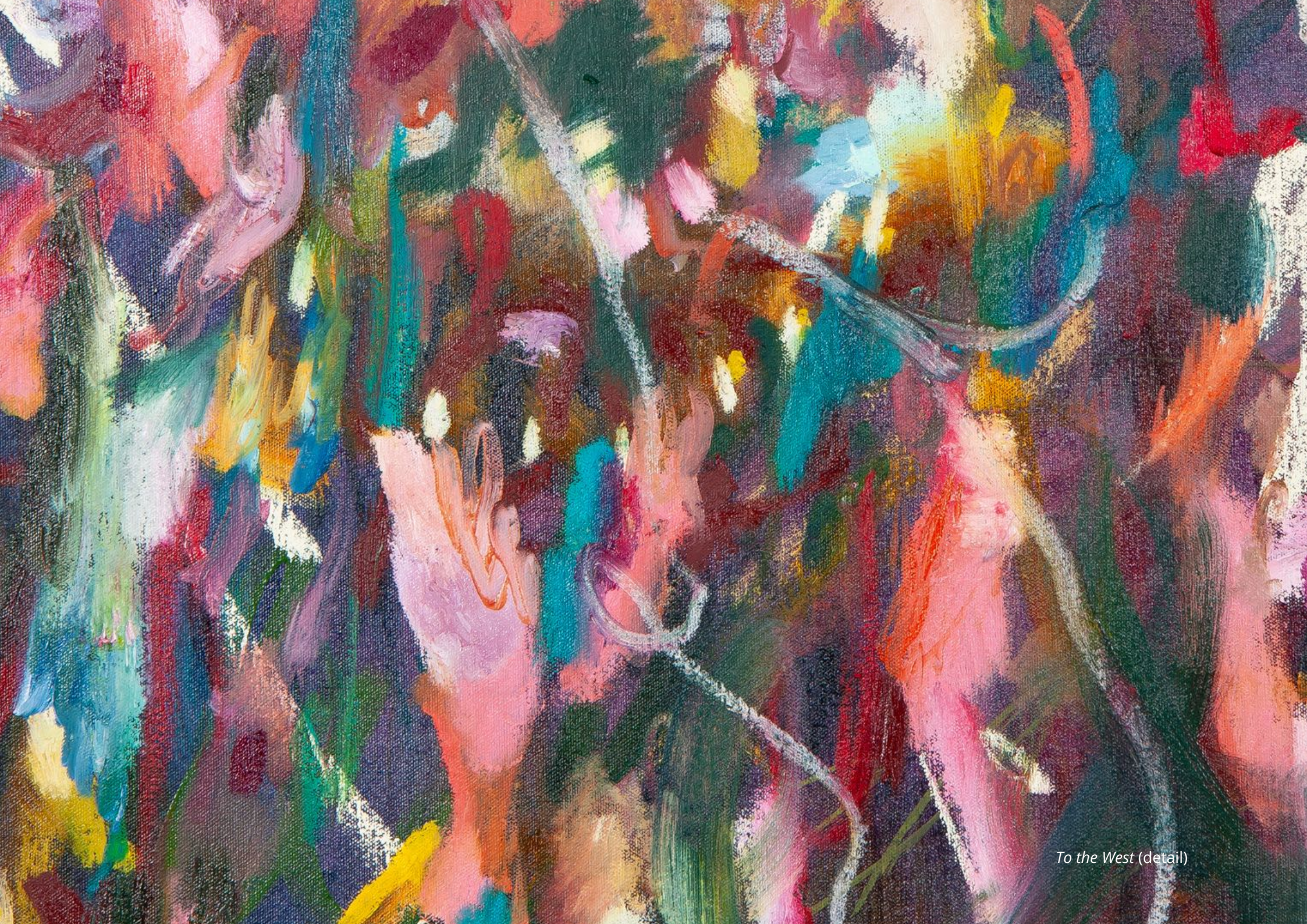
To the West

2023

Oil on canvas

153 x 122 cm

ZAR 80 000 / USD 4200



To the West (detail)



Hedwig Barry

To the North

2023

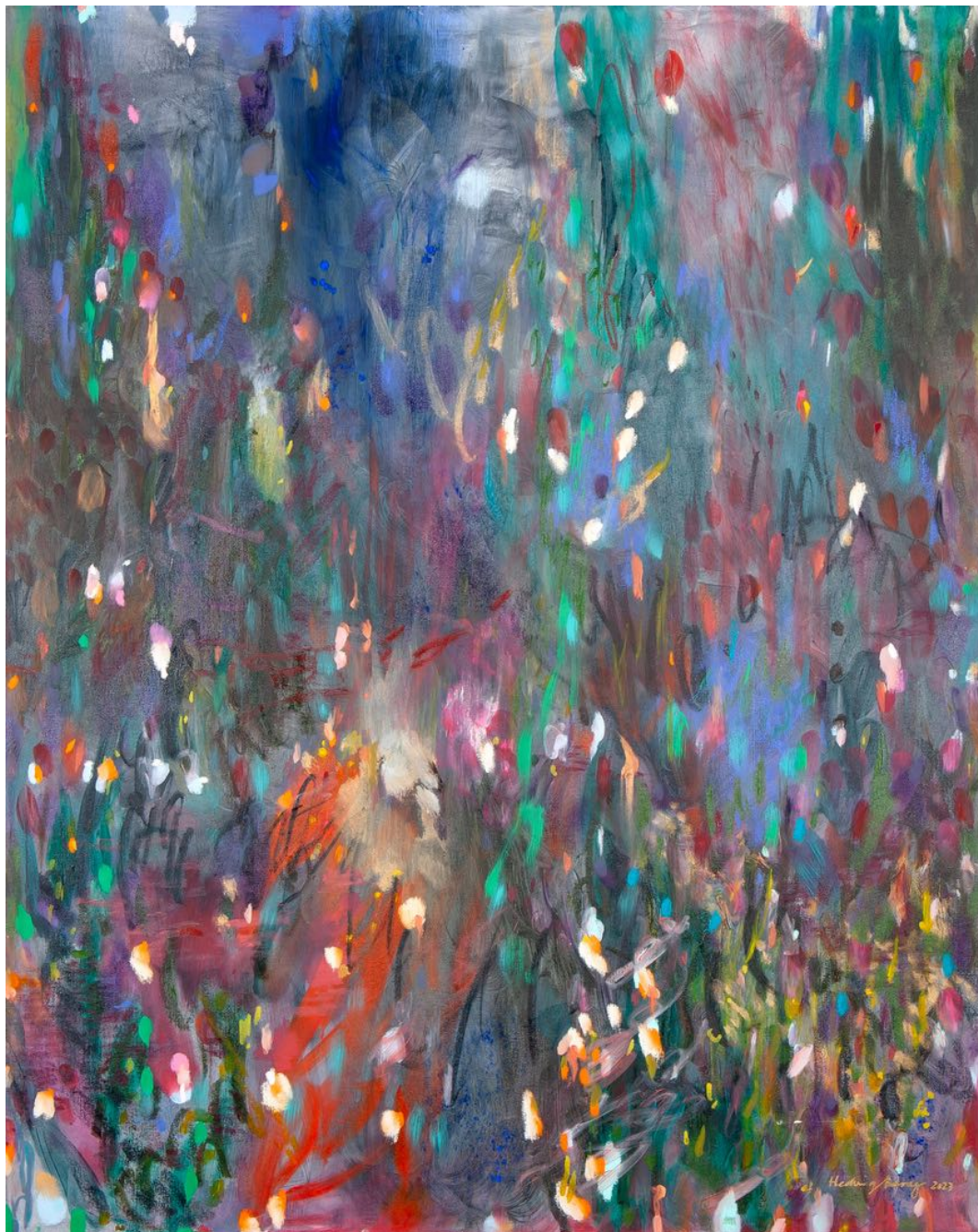
Oil on canvas

153 x 122 cm

ZAR 80 000 / USD 4200



To the North (detail)



Hedwig Barry

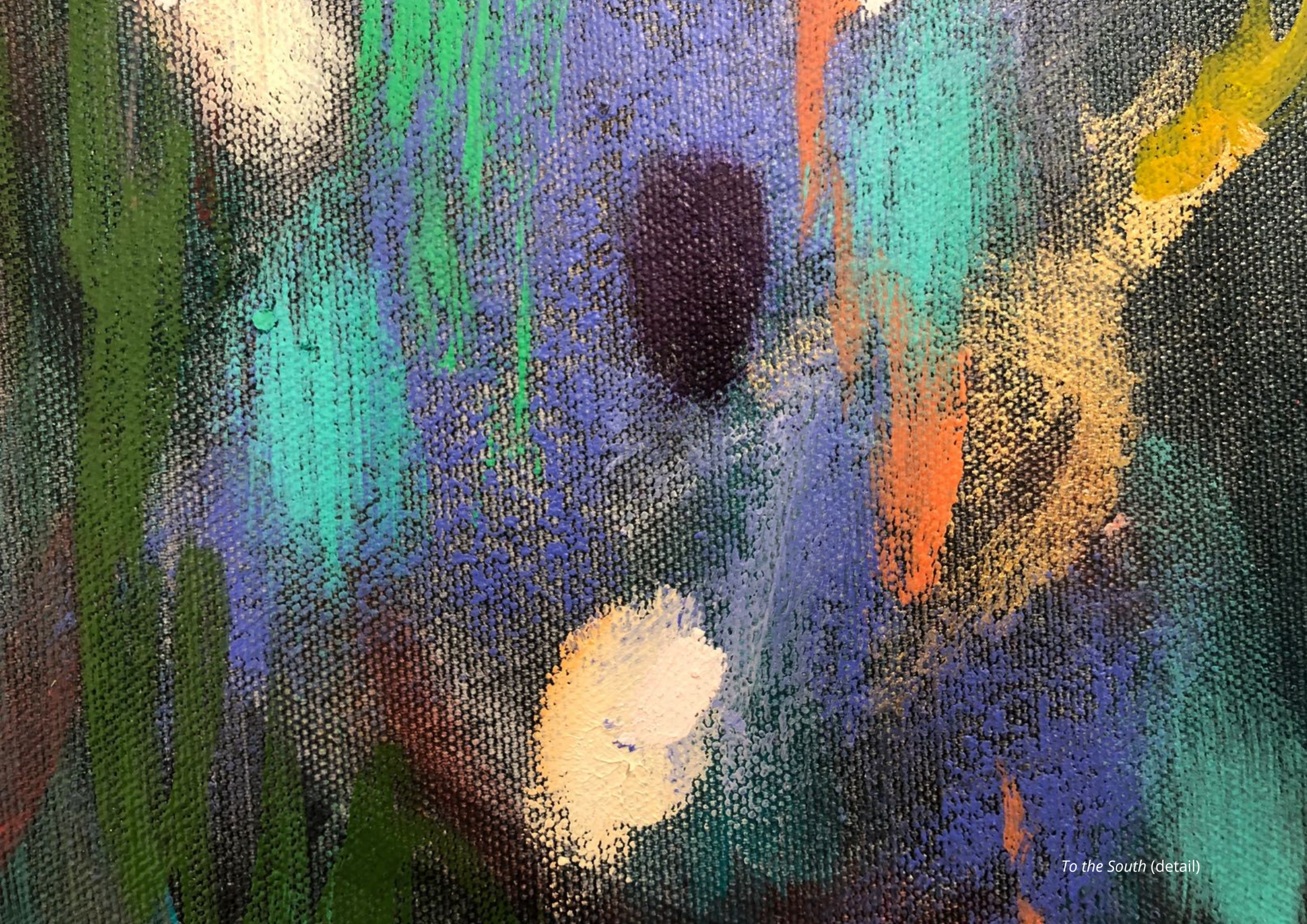
To the South

2023

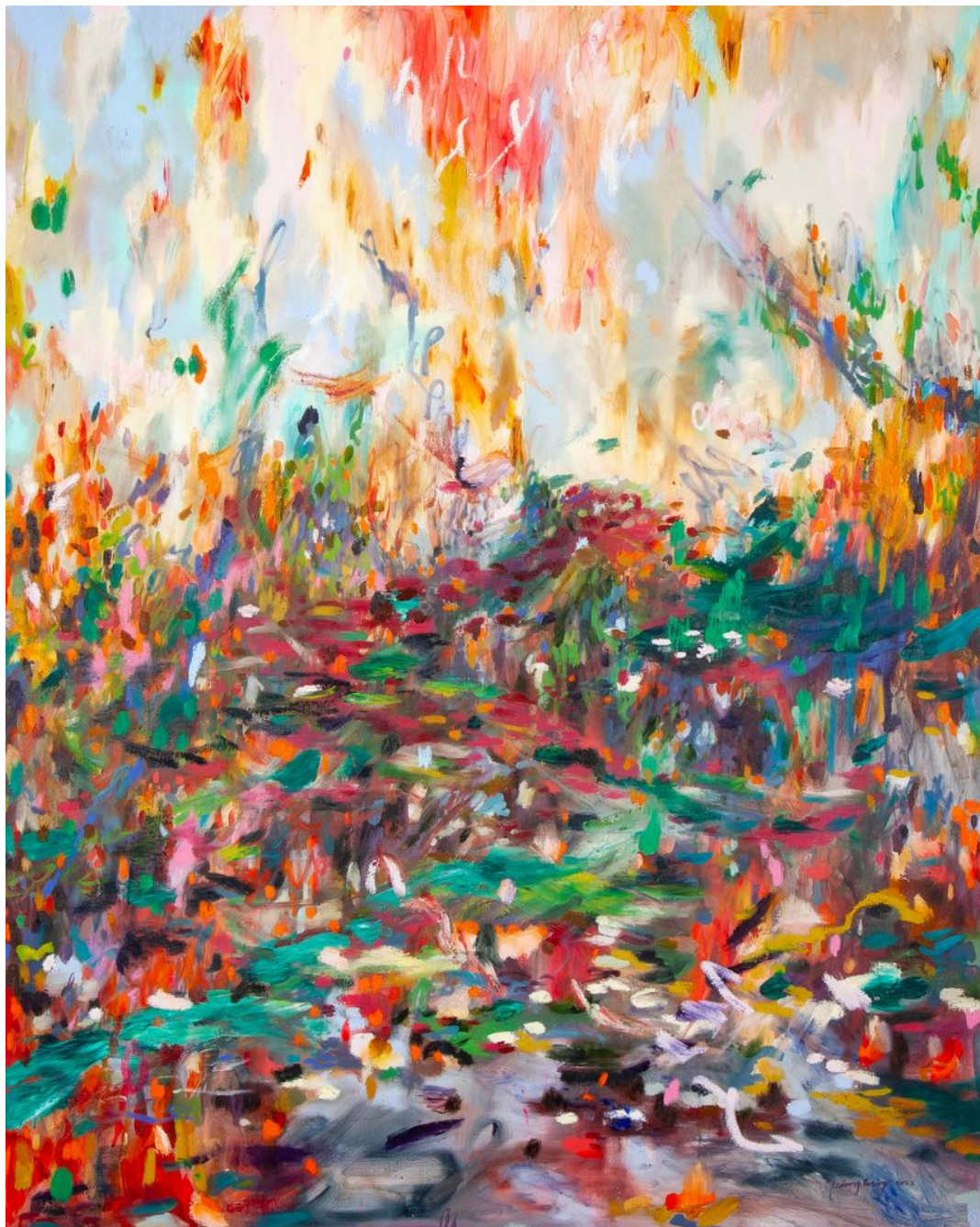
Oil on canvas

153 x 122 cm

ZAR 80 000 / USD 4200



To the South (detail)



Hedwig Barry

To the East

2023

Oil on canvas

153 x 122 cm

ZAR 80 000 / USD 4200



Hedwig Barry

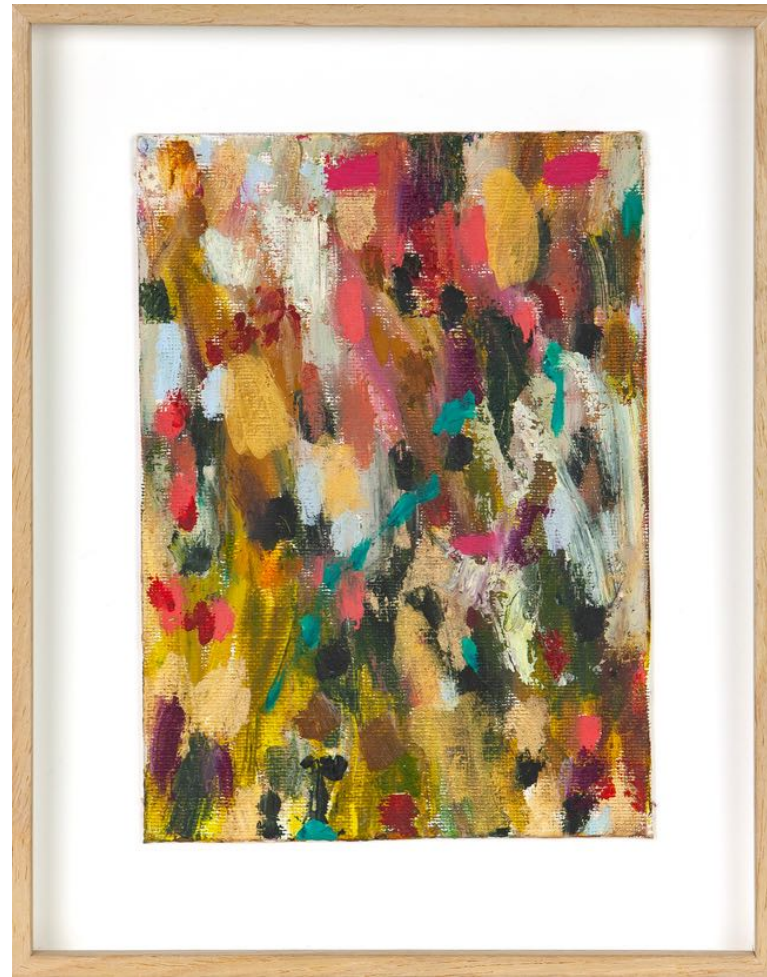
Every Frame a Painting: Forest x Mountain Dissolve, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31

2023

Oil on canvas panels

24 x 19 cm each (framed with Art Glass)

ZAR 48 000 / USD 2500 (set)



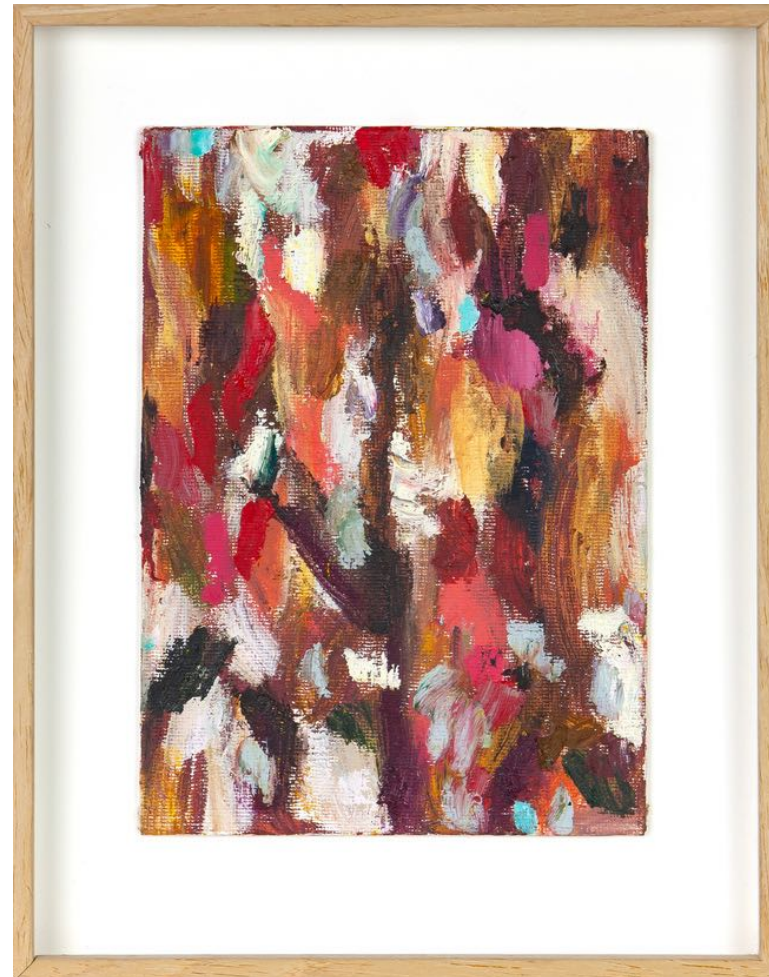
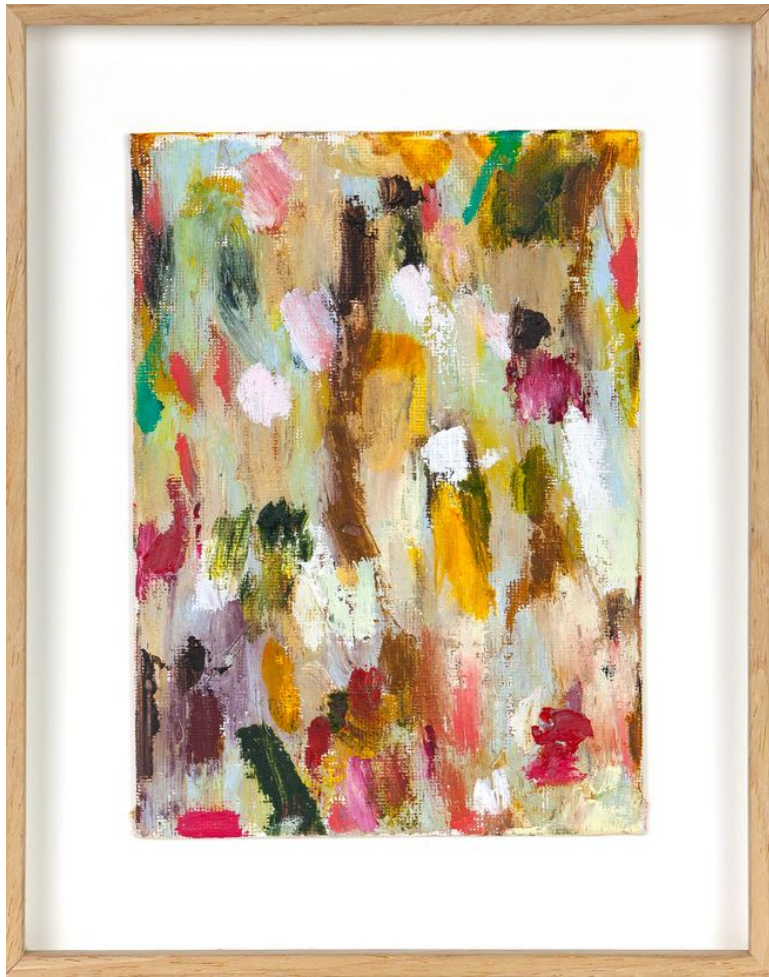
Hedwig Barry

Every Frame a Painting: Forest x Mountain Dissolve, 25, 26
2023

Oil on canvas panels

24 x 19 cm each (framed with Art Glass)

ZAR 48 000 / USD 2500 (set)



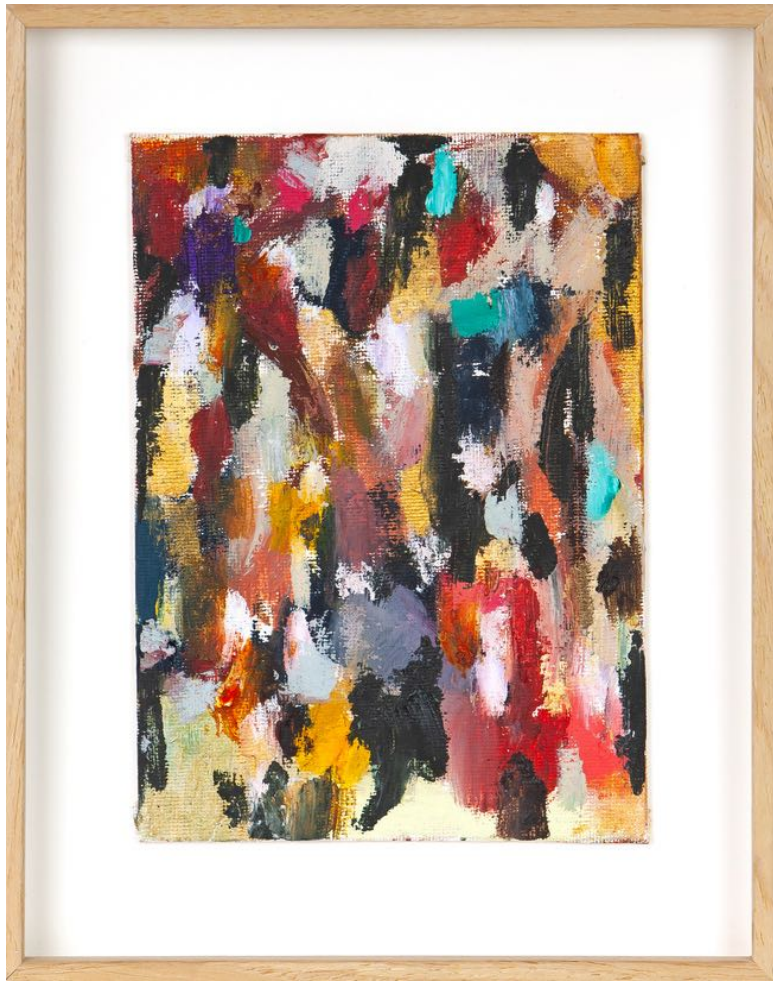
Hedwig Barry

Every Frame a Painting: Forest x Mountain Dissolve, 27, 28
2023

Oil on canvas panels

24 x 19 cm each (framed with Art Glass)

ZAR 48 000 / USD 2500 (set)



Hedwig Barry

Every Frame a Painting: Forest x Mountain Dissolve,

30, 31

2023

Oil on canvas panels

24 x 19 cm each (framed with Art Glass)

ZAR 48 000 / USD 2500 (set)



Hedwig Barry

Every Frame a Painting: Mountain x Sea Dissolve,
32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37

2023

Oil on canvas panels

19 x 24 cm each (framed with Art Glass)

ZAR 48 000 / USD 2500 (set)



Hedwig Barry

Every Frame a Painting: Forest x Mountain Dissolve,

32, 33

2023

Oil on canvas panels

24 x 19 cm each (framed with Art Glass)

ZAR 48 000 / USD 2500 (set)



Hedwig Barry

Every Frame a Painting: Forest x Mountain Dissolve,

34, 35

2023

Oil on canvas panels

24 x 19 cm each (framed with Art Glass)

ZAR 48 000 / USD 2500 (set)



Hedwig Barry

Every Frame a Painting: Forest x Mountain Dissolve,

36, 37

2023

Oil on canvas panels

24 x 19 cm each (framed with Art Glass)

ZAR 48 000 / USD 2500 (set)



Hedwig Barry

The Restless River

2023

Oil on canvas panel

46 x 61 cm

ZAR 30 000 / USD 1600 (unframed)



The Restless River (detail)



Hedwig Barry

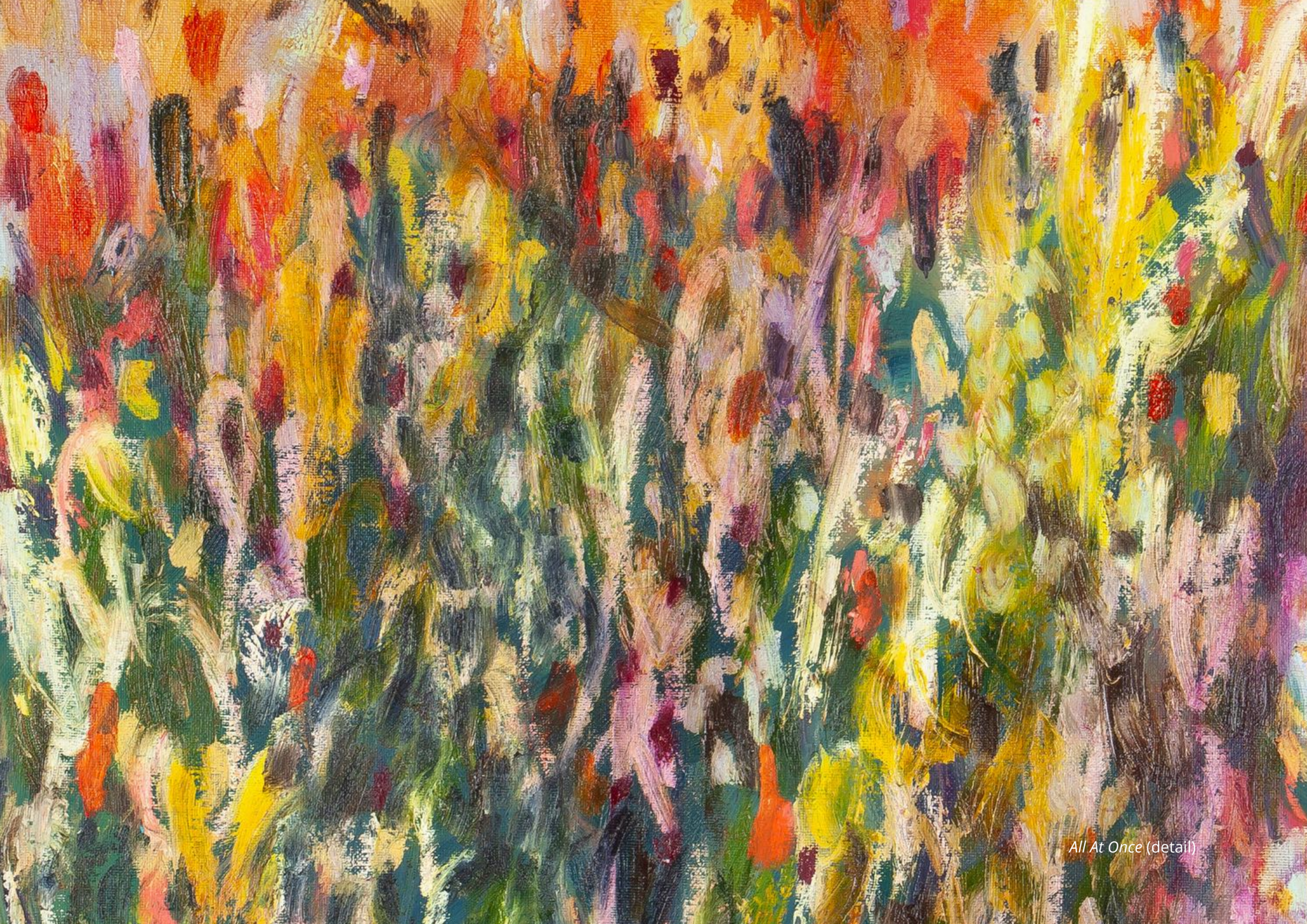
All At Once

2023

Oil on canvas panel

61 x 46 cm

ZAR 30 000 / USD 1600 (unframed)



All At Once (detail)



Hedwig Barry

Fusion

2023

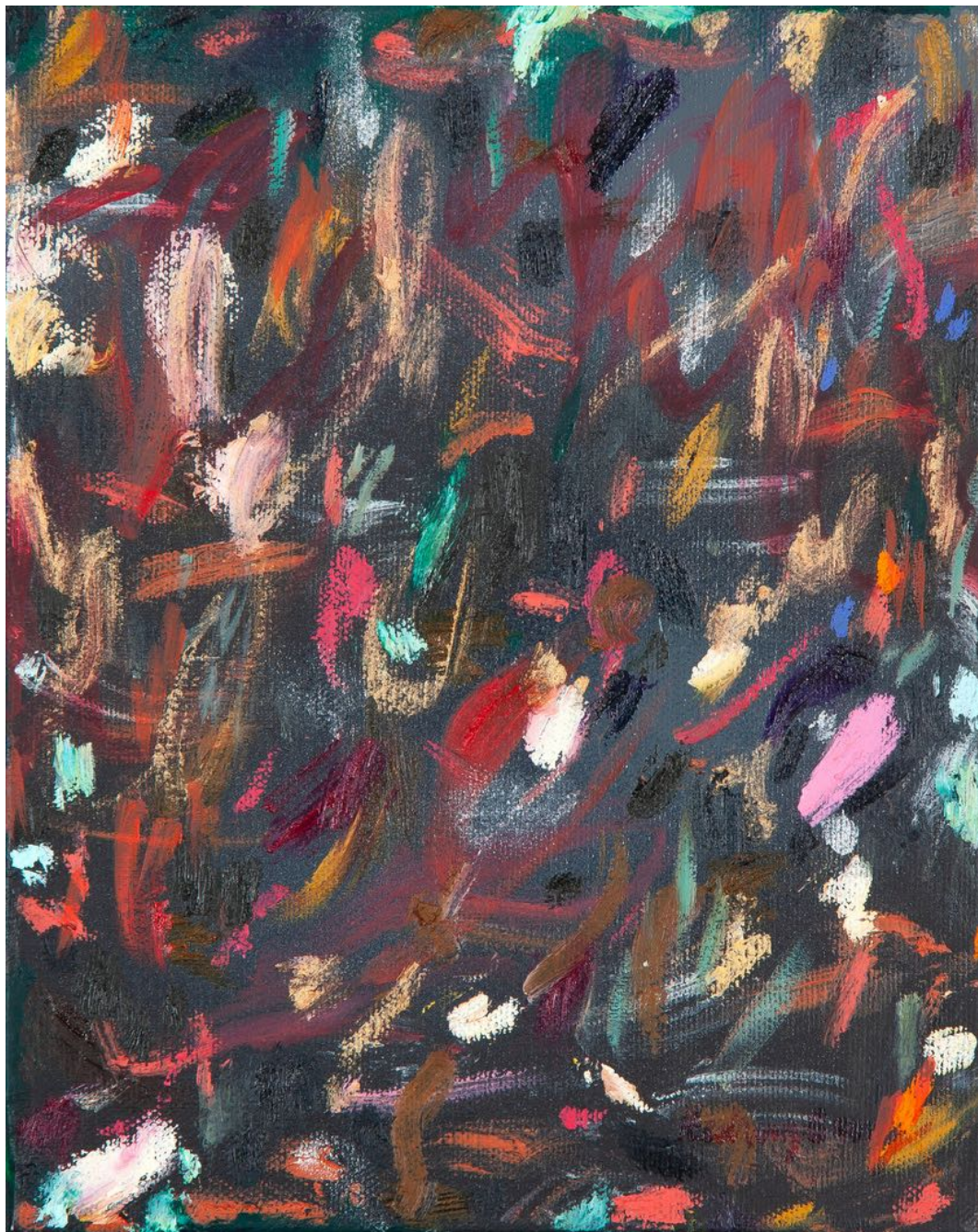
Oil on canvas

30,5 x 23 cm

ZAR 16 000 / USD 850 (unframed)



Fusion (detail)



Hedwig Barry

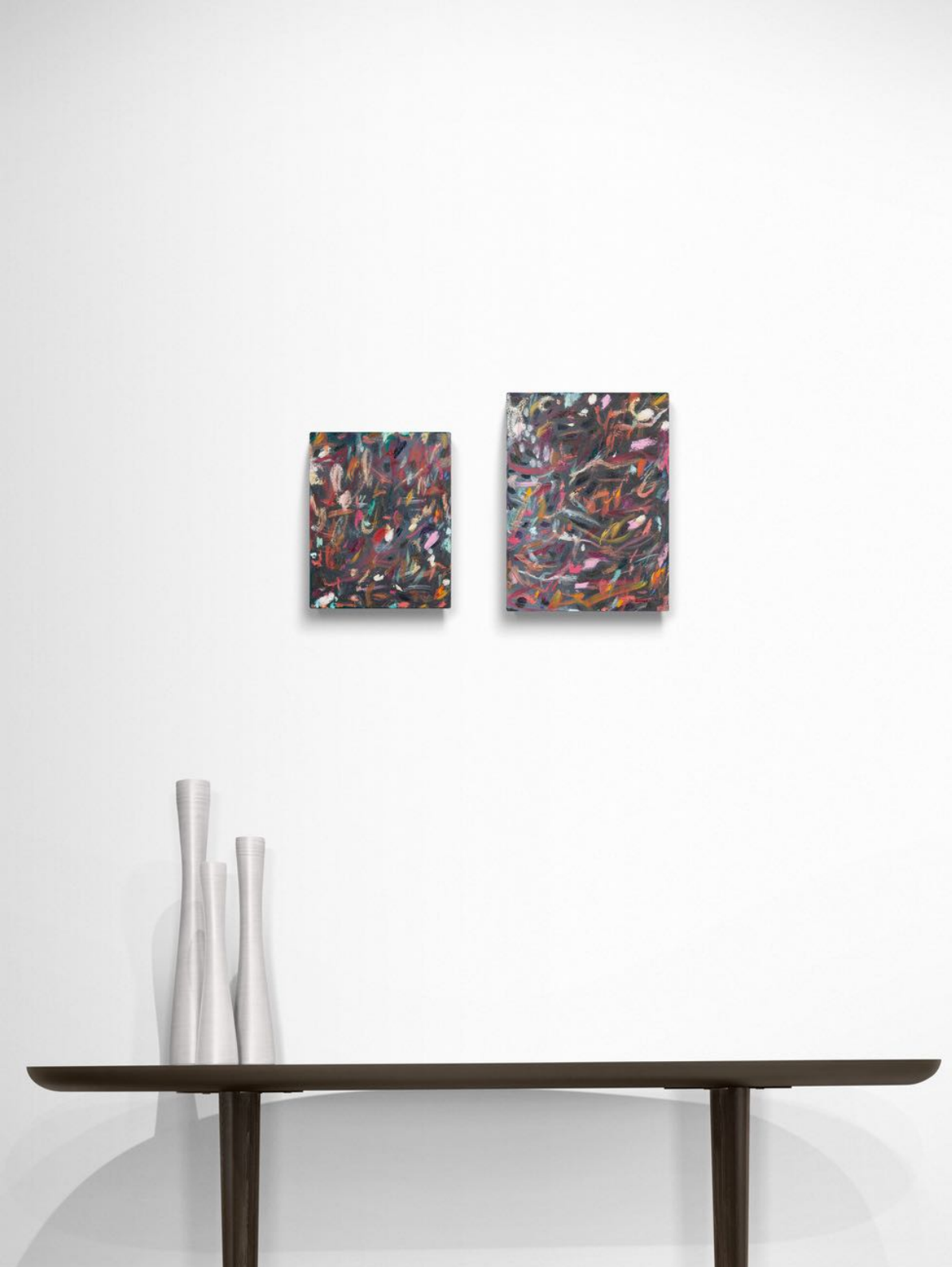
Ember

2023

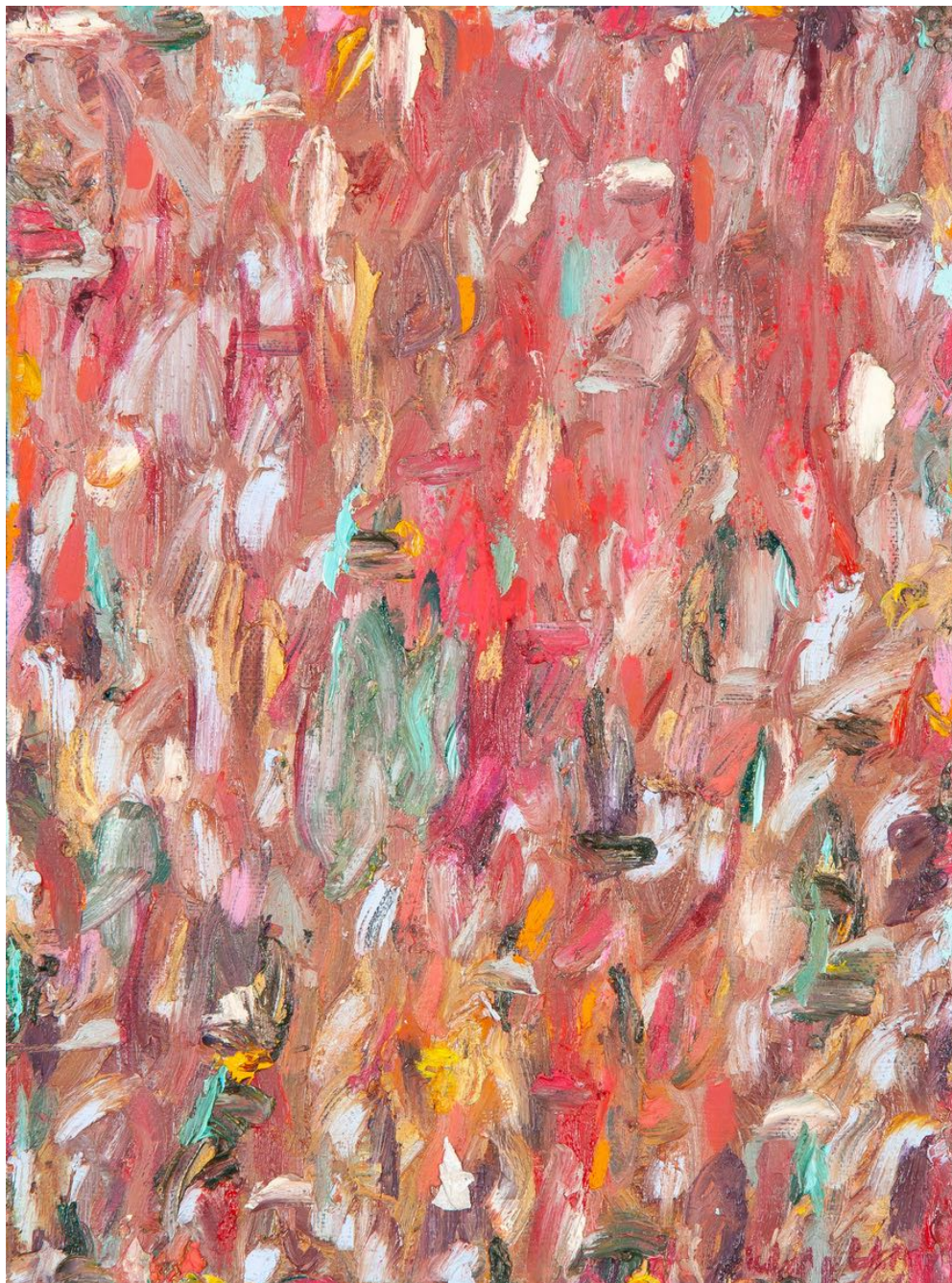
Oil on canvas

25,5 x 20 cm

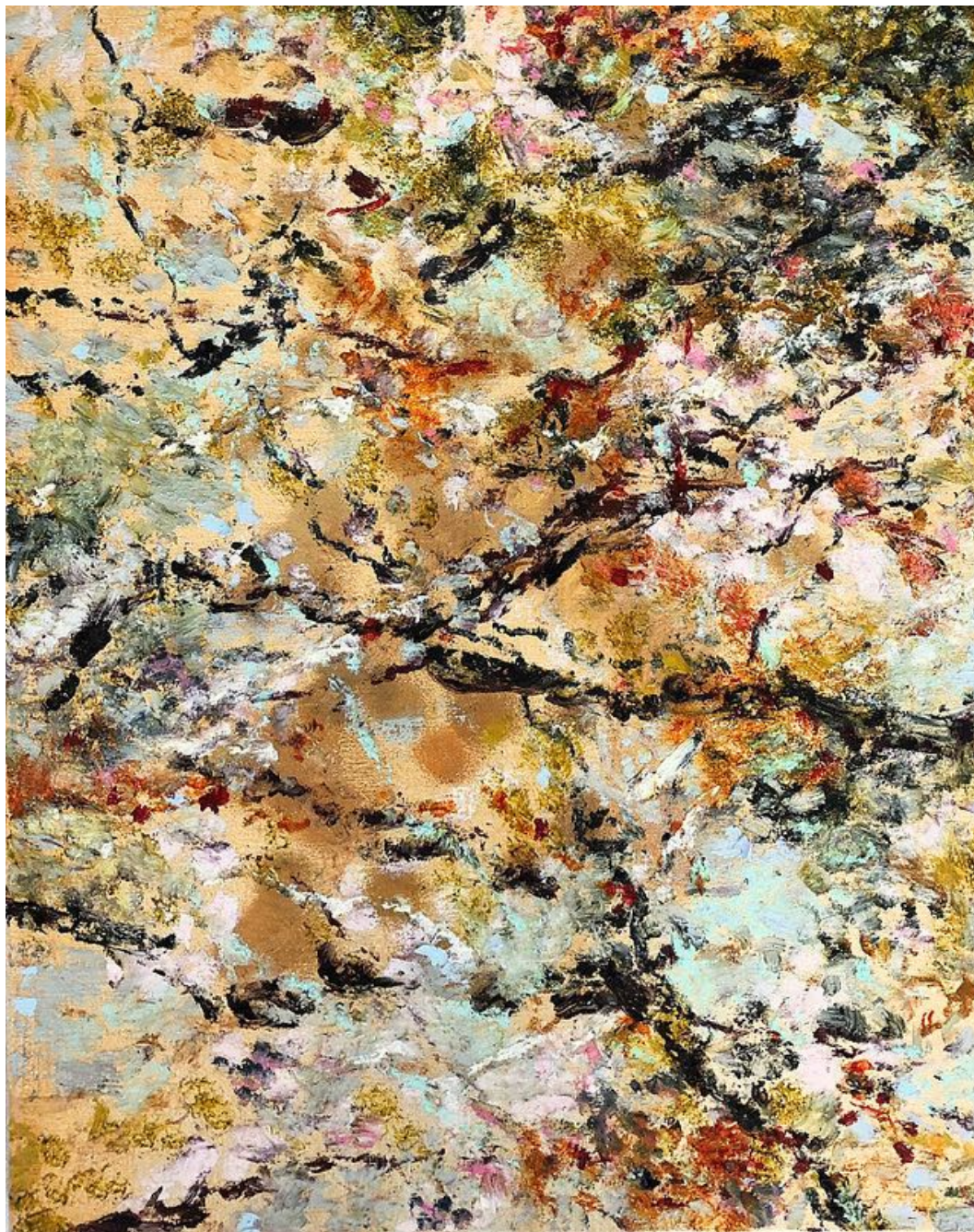
ZAR 14 000 / USD 750 (unframed)



Hedwig Barry
Ember (l), *Fusion* (r)
2023
Oil on canvas
Installation view



Hedwig Barry
Flooding
2023
Oil on canvas
25,5 x 20 cm
ZAR 16 000 / USD 850 (unframed)



Hedwig Barry

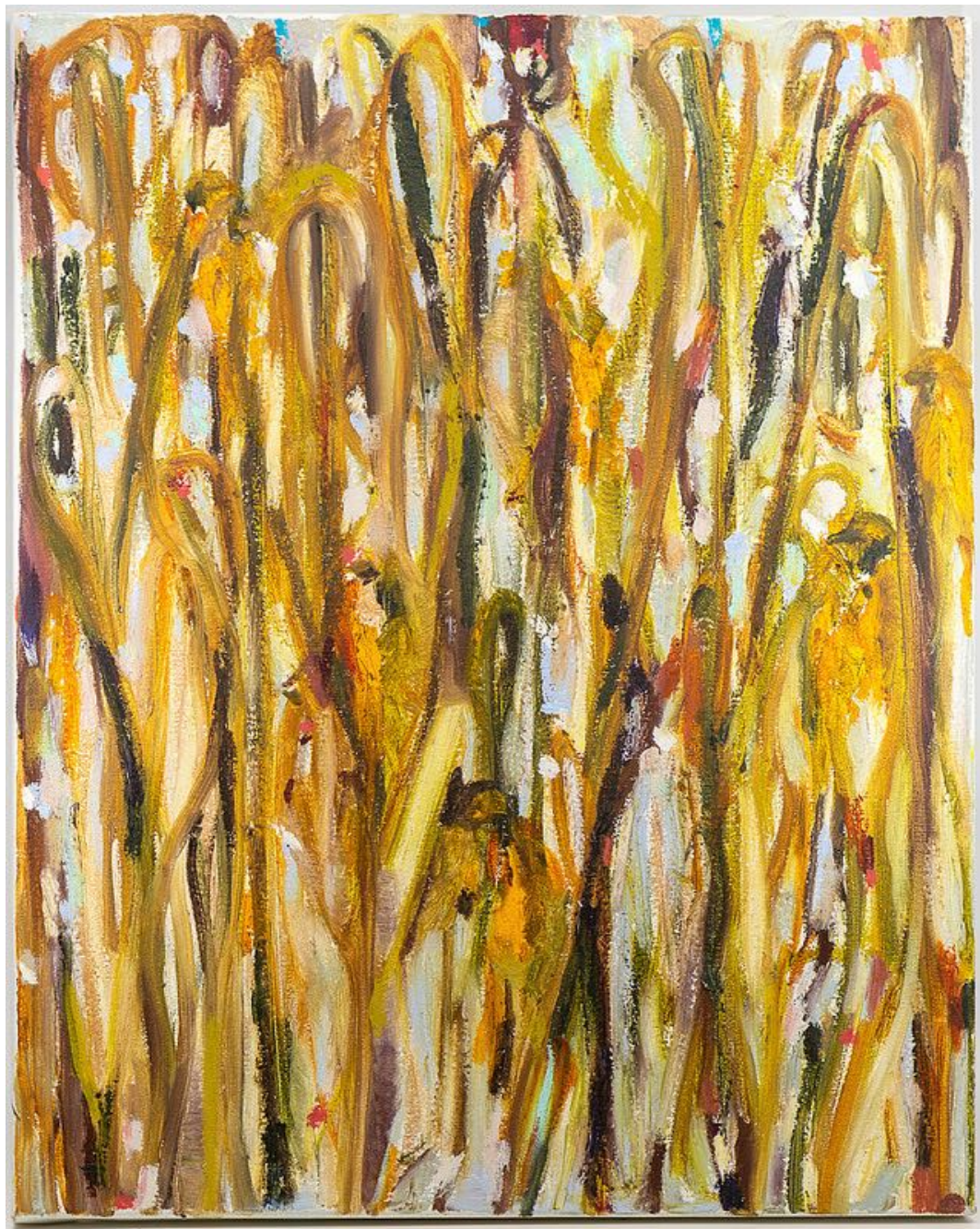
The Missing

2023

Oil on linen

51 x 41 cm

ZAR 28 000 / USD 1500



Hedwig Barry

Masked Weavers

2023

Oil on linen

51 x 41 cm

ZAR 28 000 / USD 1500



Hedwig Barry
Home is Where the Heart is (Eucalyptus Tree)
2022
Oil on canvas
25,5 x 20 cm
ZAR 20 000 / USD 1050 (framed)

About the artist

Working across different locations around South Africa, Hedwig Barry (b. 1969) uses drawing, painting and sculpture to make artworks that explore the politics of love, desire, care, and destruction and repair. Having established a long career as a producer, director and educator across artistic disciplines, Barry undertook to focus on her own artistic practice in 2019 and has since then worked prolifically, producing works for private and public contexts.

Through a language of abstraction Barry explores the metaphors of “grounding” and “groundlessness”, engaging deeply with the historical weight of painting and its ties to nature, empire, modernity and Western aesthetics. She sees her practice as a coming together of the personal and the public, the emotional and the intellectual, and the bodies, grounds, materials, desires and gestures which give meaning to these relationships.

Barry has an MA in Fine Arts (cum laude) from the University of the Witwatersrand (2020), and through a collaboration between Wits and BMW she was commissioned to create two site-specific sculptures for the BMW headquarters in Midrand, South Africa (2021). She has been an artist-in-residence at the Nirox Foundation culminating in the presentation of her debut solo exhibition at the NIROX Sculpture Park in 2022. Her work is included in both South African and international private collections with her first institutional acquisition being the large-scale outdoor public sculpture “Crumple (Jeanette Schoon)” (2021), incorporated into the Constitutional Court of South Africa Art Collection in 2022. Barry showed with Guns & Rain at RMB Latitudes Art Fair, Johannesburg, and at ARCO Lisboa, both in May 2023. This is her second solo exhibition, and her first with Guns & Rain.

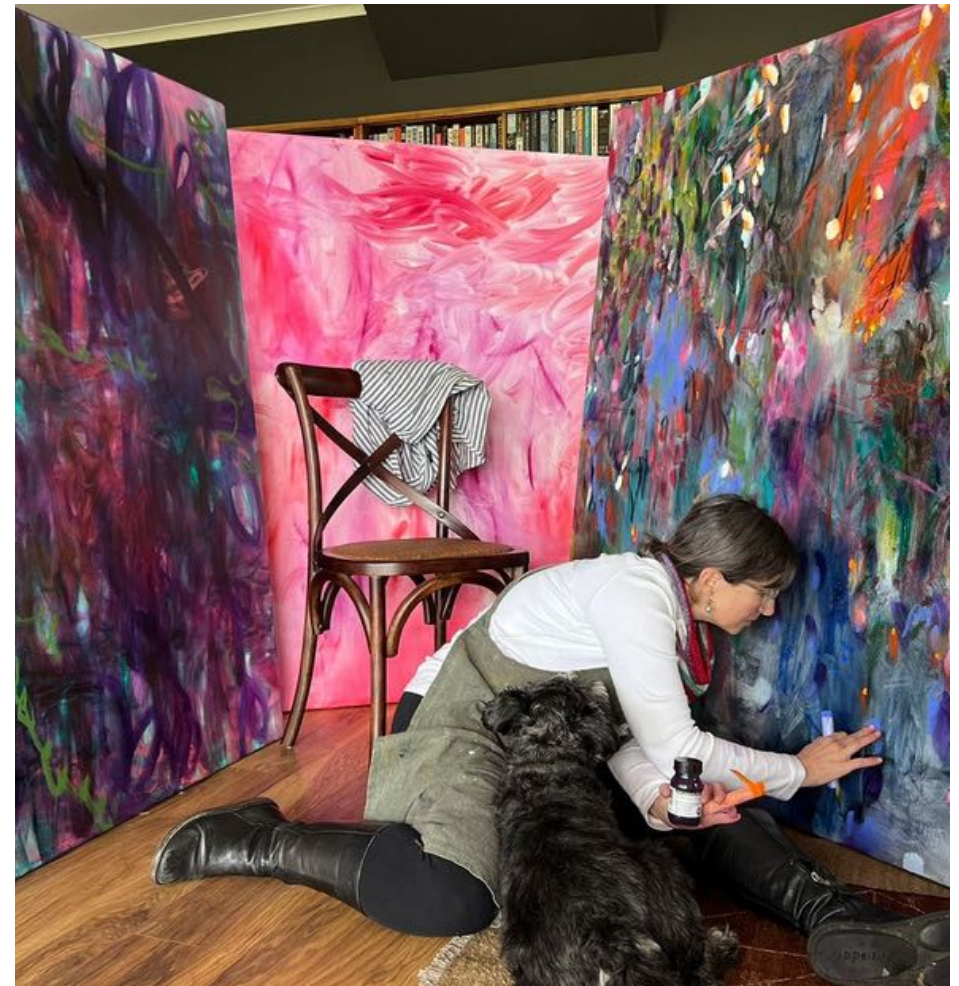


Image: Adi de Ruyter

Hedwig Barry's production of the works for this exhibition was realised with support from the National Arts Council of South Africa.

For enquiries please contact Anthea Buys,
Curator, Guns & Rain

anthea@gunsandrain.com

+27 (0)79 628 3361

www.gunsandrain.com

instagram: @gunsandrain