

Ruthi Helbitz Cohen **Curtain of Tears**

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Ruthi Helbitz Cohen, 2015



**Ruthi Helbitz Cohen: Curtain of Tears**

In Dialogue with the Play *Raft of the Medusa* by Joshua Sobol

This catalogue is published in conjunction with the exhibition organized by the Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art (curator: Aya Lurie), on view September 26 to December 26, 2015

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Catalogue Design and Production: Ayala | Graphic Design

Dimensions are given in centimeters, height precedes width.

On the cover: Leftover materials on the floor of the artist's studio

This page: *Blonde*, 2015, mixed media on parchment paper cutouts, 22x70

All installation views are from the exhibition "Curtain of Tears," Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art, 2015

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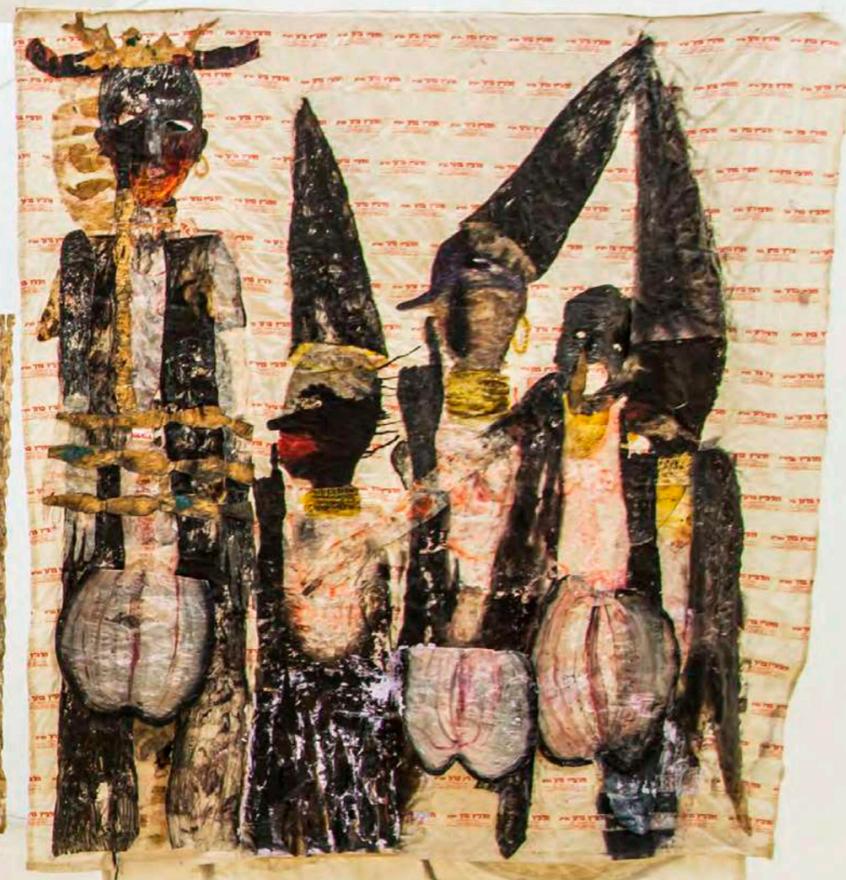
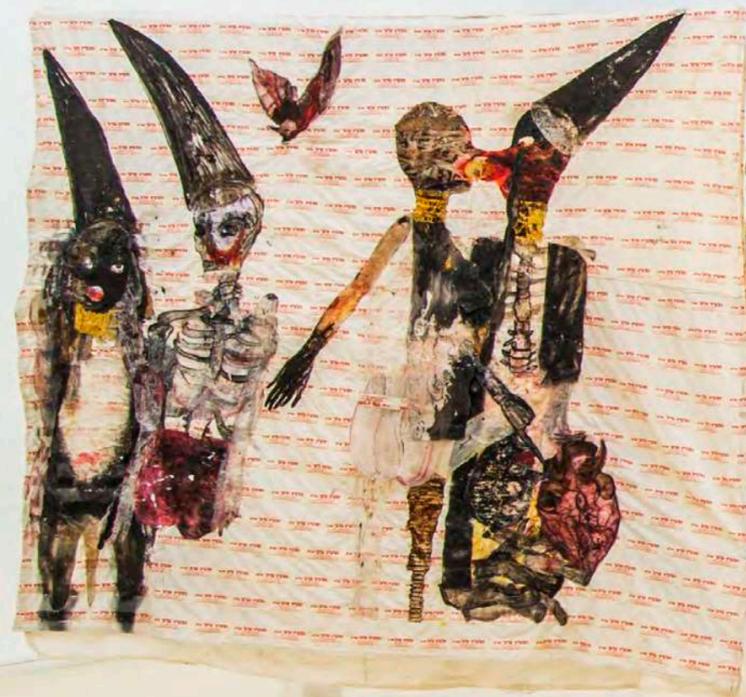
The artist is represented by Gordon Gallery 2, Tel Aviv;  
Galerie Helga Hofman, Alphen aan den Rijn, the Netherlands;  
The Umtrieb Gallery of Contemporary Art, Kiel, Germany

Ruthi Helbitz Cohen **Curtain of Tears**



מוזיאון הרצליה לאמנות עכשווית  
Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art















## Ruthi Helbitz Cohen's "Curtain of Tears"

Aya Lurie

Ruthi Helbitz Cohen's current interdisciplinary installation is an autonomous artistic space with its own unique language. At the same time, it responds to Joshua Sobol's new play, *Raft of the Medusa*, and provides the setting for presenting monologues from the play in the museum space. Helbitz Cohen activates the big gallery at the Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art by various, complex means, hanging works on canvas and paper elements on the walls as well as suspending them from the ceiling throughout the gallery space. The images add further layers to a repertoire she has been developing over the years, and which has crystallized into a unique allegorical and material language. Her works feature a mixture of acrylic paints, ink, spray paint and less conventional materials such as coffee, wine, and fabric softener.

First curtain. Shush... Silence please. Two black women are depicted on the canvas, their arms raised, finger to mouth. They stand back to back, shushing us with a concerted gesture (p. 6), secretive, possibly inviting us to take a peek surreptitiously. Worn out chokers on their necks, pointed hats on their heads, and a dark moon above. The bodies are covered in dark, tattered dresses made of painted and wrinkled thin greaseproof paper. Layers of rustling tulle, like puffed up vaginas. The dresses are adorned by a white Madonna lily – symbolizing Mary's virginity – and a moth. The event is silent, evoking black magic and mentalscapes of anxiety and nightmares. Take care as you walk in, the show begins.

★ ★ ★

*A jackal howling in the fog, a vampire cursing.*

*A dozen purple witches*

*Rustling at my home windows.*

*Come virginal women*

*And hallucinate a real dream with me.*

*And here one mustn't fake,*

*You groan, get tired,*

*Fall backward and forward,*

*Suddenly start mumbling:*

*This is failed witchcraft.*

*A jackal howling in the fog, a vampire cursing.*

*A dozen purple witches*

*Soiling my kitchen.*

*Come virginal women*

*Even in pain I will not scream.*

...

*A jackal howling in the fog, a vampire cursing.*

*A dozen purple witches*

*Fly back into the closet.*

*Come virginal women*

*To the celebration of your last day.*

**– Inbal Perlmutter, "Witches"**

The gallery is teeming with women: queens and servants, mothers and whores, seducers and consumers – all swathed by a train of cloth that must have been splendid a long time ago. Archetypal, symbolic figures such as have appeared throughout the history of human culture in numerous contexts, including ancient Egypt, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Christian martyrs, medieval auto-da-fé rituals of penance of condemned heretics and apostates, the stories of the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen, or early-twentieth-century Vienna. The works are predominantly imbued with the spirit of Gustav Klimt, but also of Sigmund Freud, Otto Weininger, and Carl Gustav Jung. Helbitz Cohen's figures include a clown and a witch, Snow White, Anima and Animus, Eros and Tanatos, Gustav Mahler's *Death and the Maiden*, Judith and Holofernes, Daphne and Apollo, Danaë and Zeus. Feminine figures that are tormented and tormenting, sinners and causes for the sins of others, protective and lethal, childbearing and emasculating, enticing and rebuffing.

A screen of golden tears is hung across the large hall. It recalls the story of Danaë whom Zeus, despite her being locked in a room by her father to protect her virginity, succeeded in coming to by transforming himself into golden rain. The curtain of tears makes soft rustling sounds in the gallery, recalling the receding sound of the ocean's waves; echoing, like Echo, the tragic fate of the mute Little Mermaid, as well as the cruel fate of seafarers lured to their death by the singing of mythological Sirens. And so the architecture of the gallery's ceiling, designed as a series of arches, suddenly looks like a wavy ocean.

The screens suspended from the ceiling all over the hall narrate a spectacular tale of terrible visions of pain, torture, and punishment. The horrifying image of death recurs over and over again. The tormented human figures are all of women. In ancient art, Death was depicted as a personification of the human skeleton. In Renaissance and Romanticism art this motif turned extreme and

macabre, combining the memento mori admonition to remember the way of all flesh with its opposite – a young, gentle female figure that possesses all the joys of Eros or lust for life and the potential of humanity’s continuity, as well as the Original Sin. This, for instance, is how this notion is portrayed in *Death and the Maiden* (1517) by the German painter Hans Baldung-Grien.

A series of four large canvases is hung on the back wall of the gallery. All depict images of large trees with charred trunks and forking branches (pp. 30–37) as well as female figures. The female body is portrayed as skewered, crucified, hung, burned or burning (as in an auto-da-fé). Heads are beheaded – there is no mercy here. A placenta holds a small embryo, torn out of the body yet still attached to it by the umbilical cord. The title of one of the works refers to the mythological figure of Daphne, who was pursued by Apollo. Having vowed to keep her chastity, she wished she were dead rather than break her vow. With help from the gods she froze and turned into a tree. Another work is inscribed “F.F.F.” – an acronym of the common terminology for human responses to traumatic threat: Fight, Flight, Freeze.

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*Every day life is thrown to the trash*

*Every moment the body sheds cells*

*Caressed live skin, live skin at a happy moment,*

*Dies between the sheets, falls off flake by flake*

*Food for the mattress’s dust mites*

*Image of an entire life*

*Red enamel pot on the stove, abounding with a stew*

*Cold can of beer on a hot day*

*Girl brushing a doll’s hair*



Hans Baldung-Grien, *Death and the Maiden*, 1517, oil on panel, 30x15, Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel

*Every day life is thrown to the trash*

*Every moment the body sheds cells*

*Caressed live skin, live skin at a happy moment,*

*Dies between the sheets, falls off flake by flake*

*Food for the mattress’s dust mites*

*Image of an entire life*

*Red enamel pot on the stove, abounding with a stew*

*Cold can of beer on a hot day*

*Girl brushing a doll’s hair*

*Scholarly book*

*Bird in the sky*

*Photograph of a calm woman on deck*

*Of the Titanic*

– **Joshua Sobol, “Every Day”**

It comes as no surprise that the starting point of the dialogue between Helbitz Cohen and Sobol, twelve years ago, was when Sobol recognized in one of Helbitz Cohen’s works an accurate visual representation of a dream or nightmare he once had. The dialogue that has developed between the two artists since that first meeting reaches in the present project a new pinnacle of powerful expression.

Sobol’s play *Raft of the Medusa* was inspired by the renowned painting by the French painter Théodore Géricault (1791–1824), depicting a horrific event that took place in June 1816. During the journey of the frigate *Méduse* to the port of Saint-Louis in the French colony of Senegal, it ran aground. The ship’s captain chose to reserve the few lifeboats for members of the senior command and the noblemen among the crew. The other passengers were evacuated to an improvised wooden raft, in fact abandoned to their fate in the open sea without food or water. Many of the raft’s passengers died shortly after,



Théodore Géricault, *Raft of the Medusa*, 1818–19, oil on canvas, 491x716, Louvre, Paris

and the survivors experienced violence, despair, insanity and extreme hunger, which drove some of them to cannibalism. Géricault's painting therefore became a moral and political indictment, a symbol of the corruption of the regime and the boundless cruelty of mankind. Sobol's play is based on conversations between the painter Géricault and the survivors Corréard and Savigny, in which they recounted the terrible events they had experienced during the thirteen days they spent on the raft of the Medusa, wavering between total despondency and a desperate faith in humanity.<sup>1</sup>

In Helbitz Cohen's works the skin peels off the body like greaseproof paper, revealing flesh and internal organs in pinkish red: lungs, heart, kidneys. It is an unusual color, achieved by using laundry detergent; have no fear, all the blood stains will be cleaned by an adroit hand. Elsewhere the flesh has been eaten away to reveal parts of the skeleton, particularly the spinal cord and the skull. What is this punishment for? Desire? Gluttony, as one of the titles declares (p. 45)? For on the raft, in light of the great suffering of those on board – mainly at each other's hand – both human morality and Divine reward and punishment collapse. Three scenes from Sobol's play are performed in the exhibition space. The Artist, Clown, and Leader hurl words of disillusionment and despair at the merciless horror around them. The patriarchal figures of authority – the Captain, King, and Priest – have long lost their moral standing.

Ruthi Helbitz Cohen's exhibition is composed of two-sided screens, whose front side is dark and inverse side light. On the one hand, painful, black, muddy tears; on the other, purifying tears of gold. Over the canvases, lengthwise and crosswise, are taped lines of masking-tape bearing the commercial logo of the building-materials company established by the artist's grandfather, which his sons have headed since his death. This representation of the supporting, alimending patriarchy is pushed backward and turned into a backdrop, emptied of its original function and of male authority. Having turned into the support for Helbitz Cohen's work it now functions both as textile ornamentation and as the artist's signature.

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<sup>1</sup> The play was produced in September 2014 by MA Theatre Lab Students at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) in London, directed by Andrew Visnevski.







## RAFT OF THE MEDUSA

Fragment from a play by Joshua Sobol

Can the Round Ball Have Any Effect on the Players?

**BELIEVER:** It is not a question of chance. (*All look at him.*) God Almighty who sent Jonas the Big Fish to swallow him and to throw him up on the shore – He will send us a ship to rescue us and to bring us safe and sound ashore.

**ATHEIST:** If by any chance there happens to be a God –

**BELIEVER:** There is a God and not by chance, but by necessity.

**ATHEIST:** Oh, really? If something exists by necessity, then you should be able to prove it by faultless deductive logic.

**BELIEVER:** (*Turns to the Priest.*) Please, Father, prove it to him.

**PRIEST:** You said God exists by necessity, try to prove it to him yourself.

**BELIEVER:** I'm a simple person. I'm illiterate. Please, Father, prove it to him. I am sure you can do it easily.

**PRIEST:** We people, on this raft, we are a plaything of Life and Death. In order to play their game, Life and Death need a Playground. If you agree with me that the game between Life and Death is a necessity, and that it will go on eternally, then the playground is an eternal necessity. So as long as the play between Life and Death is bound to go on there is necessarily an Entity that invented the play and threw the players onto the playground that he devised for the play. Now, my dear brethren in suffering, we are the playthings of Life and Death that play with us their game on this vast playground that is the Ocean.

**BELIEVER:** (*To the Atheist.*) You see? There is a God, and you received the logic proof you asked for.

**ATHEIST:** Hold on! If it is a true game between these two adversaries, does your Playmaker control the result? Does he fix it from the word "GO!"? If this is the case, why pray to him? If he doesn't, what good is it to pray to him and to practice his commandments?

**PESSIMIST:** Moreover, if we are the playthings, can we influence the final outcome of the match? In other words, can the round ball have any effect on the players that kick it around?





Scene from Joshua Sobol's play *Raft of the Medusa* performed by Yael Nivron, Omri Levi, and Karin Serrouya at Helbitz Cohen's exhibition, Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art, October 2015











## Ruthi Helbitz Cohen's (Female) Transformations

### Beatrice von Bormann

There are women everywhere you look in Ruthi Helbitz Cohen's work: female figures with black faces and pointed hats, making a hush sign; a woman with a burning dress on a cross; two women exchanging a golden egg or ball between their mouths; a woman spouting a line of gold-and-brown tears that recur in the *Curtain of Tears* (2015). Even death is a woman, portrayed as a skeleton without legs next to the figure of a big-bellied girl with a dark face, or hanging on the cross next to the woman with the burning dress, a large egg at its feet. Most of the women are not recognizable as such – we must take the artist's word for it. The portrayal of these hairless figures with dark faces, generalized features and often undefined clothing turns them into Jungian archetypes, such as the great mother or goddess; the trickster; or animus, the male in the woman, who possesses both a cruel, destructive side and a creative one. Helbitz Cohen's figures seem to unite various archetypes in one. Her more than life-size women are imposing like dark goddesses. They seem to keep changing, like the trickster, from life into death and vice versa; from clown to witch, mother, partner, or sister; from victim to perpetrator. Their creative, magical aspect is accentuated by attributes like a moon or sun, a rabbit, a fish, a bird, a heart. These symbols keep recurring and are as ambivalent as the figures themselves. The fish, for example, is both a well-known symbol of Christianity and of fertility; held by some of Helbitz Cohen's figures like a baby, it carries associations of eroticism and spiritualism at the same time. Helbitz Cohen uses these associations to create an image that is both disturbing and fascinating.

Horror, suffering and shame are themes that run like a red thread through Helbitz Cohen's work, and these themes unite her paintings with Joshua Sobol's theatrical interpretation of Théodore Géricault's 1818–19 painting *Raft of the Medusa*. In the historical event depicted, women played next to no role. Among the people who were left behind on the raft after the French vessel *Méduse* ran aground and was abandoned, there was one woman only and she did not survive long. Perhaps she was swept overboard, perhaps she fell victim to the cannibalism that the survivors resorted to. All we know is that she was not among the fifteen survivors. In his play *The Shipwreck of the Medusa: Or, The Fatal Raft!* (1820), William Moncrieff gives this woman a central role, focusing on the rivalry of two men for her love. One of the men escapes on a lifeboat, thinking his loved one got away on one of the lifeboats and that he has left his rival behind on the raft. When he realizes that the woman he loves has been left behind on the raft, too, it is already too late. Joshua Sobol changed the story, inspired by Helbitz Cohen's figures, and added more women in his play *The Raft of the Medusa*. His figures seem like archetypes, too: Leader, Clown, Priest, Scientist, Believer, Soldier, Pessimist, Optimist, Thinker, and so on. The figures recall typologies popular in 1920s art,



particularly in New Objectivity. However, whereas artists like Otto Dix and George Grosz focused on types like the prostitute, the cleric, the war cripple and the rich bourgeois, Sobol shows us roles that any of us can change into. His characters represent, as it were, different parts of us.

The central themes of the *Raft of the Medusa* as painted by Théodore Géricault were the misery and shame of the survivors on the raft. He depicts some of them as dead or dying, avoiding any clear reference to the cannibalism that helped the rafters survive. Helbitz Cohen has no problem pointing out this part of the story, one of the biggest taboos of mankind. She shows figures with missing limbs, or wearing, almost casually, a head or heart on a cord attached to their wrists, or to the tree they are transforming into. This kind of depiction of women with strong overtones of fear, suffering, and also, in parts, great poetic beauty evoked by the materials she uses, recall certain representations of women in art of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the work of artists like Félicien Rops, James Ensor, Alfred Kubin, and Edvard Munch the old vanitas motif was transformed into images of syphilitic prostitutes or horrific “femmes fatales” posing a danger to men, luring them to certain death. In *Les Fleurs du Mal* (1857, 1861/68), Charles Baudelaire already consciously transgressed moral boundaries, combining lust, death and disgust in strong verbal images that were to influence many poets and artists over the next few decades. Obscenity was, and is, often associated with ugliness. Artists have employed this correlation since the late nineteenth century to shock the viewer with images that are both sexually charged and not beautiful in the traditional sense of the word, producing what has been named the “aesthetic of ugliness” by philosophers like Karl Rosenkranz (see his book of that title from 1853) and Friedrich Nietzsche. According to Nietzsche, art should reveal the world’s evil and suffering and, by revealing it, ultimately overcome it. A precondition for art is, in his opinion, intoxication, and the generation of artists who started their career around World War I took this to mean that their art, in order to reflect the world’s suffering, violence, suppressed sexuality and contradictions, should transgress taboos.<sup>1</sup>

Helbitz Cohen’s images of women seem to stand in that tradition. *The Sky Fell on Me* (2015, p. 41) shows two skeleton-like women with pointed hats, such as dwarfs or magicians wear. The one on the right seems to be pointing at a tree trunk from which the other one is hanging upside down, a rope around her neck. The standing woman’s arms are stretched out toward the tree, tears or drops of some liquid are falling from her fingertips, while her eyes are empty of compassion. The relationship between the two is unclear, although at first sight they seem to be victim and perpetrator. But then, why the tears and what are those logs doing at the standing woman’s feet, seeming to catch fire?

<sup>1</sup> Sigmund Freud’s analysis of the importance of taboos, *Totem and Taboo: Resemblances between the Psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics*, was first published in 1913 and subsequently influenced many artists.



The golden and black-brown tears that appear in several paintings prior to becoming an object in their own right in the *Curtain of Tears* (2015) recall the work of another painter of the early twentieth century, Gustav Klimt. His *Danaë* (1907/08) shows the naked princess curled up in her sleep while Zeus, in the form of golden rain, impregnates her. The image is simplified and abstracted, focusing entirely on the outlines of the woman's body, which fills the entire canvas between the ornamental forms of a veil and the golden rain. Helbitz Cohen's *Curtain of Tears* seems to echo this rain, but also reflects the suffering of her female characters as well as their strength in overcoming it.

More than Klimt's women, Helbitz Cohen's figures recall those painted by his successors, Oskar Kokoschka and Egon Schiele, around 1910. Influenced by theories of the unconscious and a changed perception of the world following the theories of Max Planck and Albert Einstein, these young artists did not aim for an accurate portrayal of people. Instead, they painted their vision of mankind, their imagined view of the psyche, of the person's inner self and his or her "aura," as Kokoschka called it. In Kokoschka's double portrait of *Hans Tietze and Erica Tietze-Conrat* (1909, Museum of Modern Art, New York) he focused not only on their different energy by showing glowing colors and scratches in the background – often made with the back of his brush or even his fingernails – but also on the relationship between them by letting them "talk" to each other with their very expressive hands. He portrayed the two art historians separately, while they were at work, but nevertheless achieved an extraordinary dialogue between them. The figure of Erica Tietze-Conrat seems slightly out of focus, giving her a ghost-like appearance. Eric Kandel writes about this portrait, "With their eyes looking in different directions, they seem to be caught in a revealing, sexually charged conversation with their hands, a conversation that also involves the viewer."<sup>2</sup>



Gustav Klimt, *Danaë*, 1907/08, oil on canvas, 77x83



Oskar Kokoschka, *Hans Tietze and Erica Tietze-Conrat*, 1909, oil on canvas, 76.5x136.2, Museum of Modern Art, New York

<sup>2</sup> Eric Kandel, *The Age of Insight: The Quest to Understand the Unconscious in Art, Mind, and Brain, from Vienna 1900 to the Present* (New York: Random House, 2012), p. 156.





Helbitz Cohen's work is, as she says, "all about relationships."<sup>3</sup> *Gluttony* (2013) shows a couple standing next to each other but looking at us, the viewers, with bloodshot eyes. The figure on the right, in a white girl's dress, a pig's head and a spiral instead of legs, is placed on a circle. The figure next to her is a dark, witch-like creature with a pointed hat, a large insect on her chest and a dress that covers her invisible body from neck to toe; both are floating in an undefined space. One of the first things one notices in this painting is the language of the hands: the girl on the right has her right arm stretched out so that her fingertips are almost touching those of the dark figure on the left, whose wrist is bent strangely in order to reach out for the pig-headed girl's hand. The dark, witch-like woman holds her other arm at a ninety degree's angle in front of the girl's womb, in an almost protective gesture. The pig-headed girl has no left arm and appears to have lost her skin; her flesh and organs seem exposed to the air. In spite of the animal's mask, referring to *Gluttony* as one of the seven deadly sins, she seems vulnerable. The dark figure to her right could be her partner in crime, reflecting another aspect of the sin which the survivors of the *Medusa* fell guilty to, but she could also be her strong counterpart – defending, with an action that makes her loose her hat, the pig-headed girl.

The figure of the Clown in Sobol's play was inspired by Helbitz Cohen's figures with the magician's pointed hat. These figures show women as powerful, somewhat scary figures. They recall the witches of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, who function as prophets that predict Macbeth's ascent to the throne as well as his downfall. In his film *Macbeth* (1948) Orson Welles depicted the witches as voodoo priestesses, playing with the king's doll. Helbitz Cohen's witches play with hearts and planets and human body parts. The artist explains the role of her witches as effecting the transformation of trauma into magic, from victim to powerful figure. Transformation is the operative word; it defines her art, which is all about ambivalence, thesis and antithesis, opposites of the same principle, like black and white, Death and the maiden, the victim and the perpetrator. Her *Daphne* (p. 46) recalls Ovid's myth of the nymph who, persecuted by Apollo, changes into a tree to escape his advances. It also refers to Bernini's famous representation of the theme. In his depiction of Daphne freezing as she flees, the marble imitates soft flesh and rustling leaves yet remains cold, hard, and white. The effect of the material is important to Helbitz Cohen. Through the use of various materials on a flat surface, she reflects on painting as a moment frozen in time. At the same time, she plays with the idea of two-dimensionality by assembling various materials into a collage and turning her "paintings" into objects suspended in the exhibition space, communicating with each other across it. This method of the collage, of assembling materials and ideas, is reflected in her work process, during which she inserts references to art history, myths, fairytales, movies, the events of the day – like the violence going on in her country – into her art, but ultimately translates all of this into a form that speaks of the depth of human emotions.

<sup>3</sup> Ruthi Helbitz Cohen in conversation with the author, November 2015.

Sobol's Clown is in fact an artist. In the play, she exposes the moral downfall of the small group of survivors by singing loudly about the cannibalism that has been taking place. The Leader defends the Clown, saying, "She got carried away. She's only an artist. A poor artist. There wasn't of course even a grain of truth in all that she said. I don't have to tell you that I don't agree with anything she said, but I will defend her right to say what's on her mind." He explains, "She is a brave rafter like all the rest of us rafters. We are all for one – and one for all. Don't forget it." The horror of what has been taking place on the raft becomes a symbol of all humanity, a necessary deed of survival, exposed by the Clown. The artist reveals what humanity is capable of: cruelty, pain, but also intimacy, protectiveness, even love.

When Géricault's *Raft of the Medusa* was first presented in London in 1820, it was staged theatrically not only by placing it close to the ground and thus stressing its monumental impact (the figures being painted over-life-size and the entire painting measuring 491x716 cm), but also by its presentation coinciding with two theatrical entertainments based on the events on the raft, which were presented during the exhibition of the painting: the aforementioned play by Moncrieff, performed in 1820 at the Royal Coburg Theatre (now the Old Vic), and Messrs Marshalls' *Grand Marine Peristrephe Panorama of the Shipwreck of the Medusa French Frigate with the Fatal Raft*, first shown in Edinburgh in 1820 and then in Dublin in 1821, during the exhibition of Géricault's painting in that city.<sup>4</sup>

Helbitz Cohen turns the exhibition space into her own theater, as it were, dividing it with the gold-and-black curtain and hanging huge paintings on either side of it. On one side there are women being transformed – or transforming themselves? – into trees. On the other side of the curtain there are two figures on a cross, a scene inspired by a nightmare the artist had, in which she was one of six crucified people, most of whom were injured or dead.<sup>5</sup> However, the figures on the cross are also those of Death and the Maiden, and the burning girl recalls the burning of women accused of being witches in the Early Modern period. Witches can be victims as well as powerful figures. In seventeenth-century Europe, people believed that witches participated in wild Satanic ritual parties with much naked dancing and cannibalistic infanticide. Taboos of various kinds keep appearing in this exhibition, with all their transformative power and suggestions as to human nature. Friedrich Nietzsche wrote, "It is true, there may be a metaphysical world; the absolute possibility of it can scarcely be disputed. We see all things through the medium of the human head and we cannot well cut off this head: although there remains the question what part of the world would be left after it had been cut off."<sup>6</sup> Ruthi Helbitz Cohen has the answer to that question.

<sup>4</sup> See Christine Riding, "Staging The Raft of the Medusa," *Visual Culture in Britain*, vol. 5, no. 2 (Winter 2004), pp. 1–26.

<sup>5</sup> Helbitz Cohen in conversation with the author, November 2015.

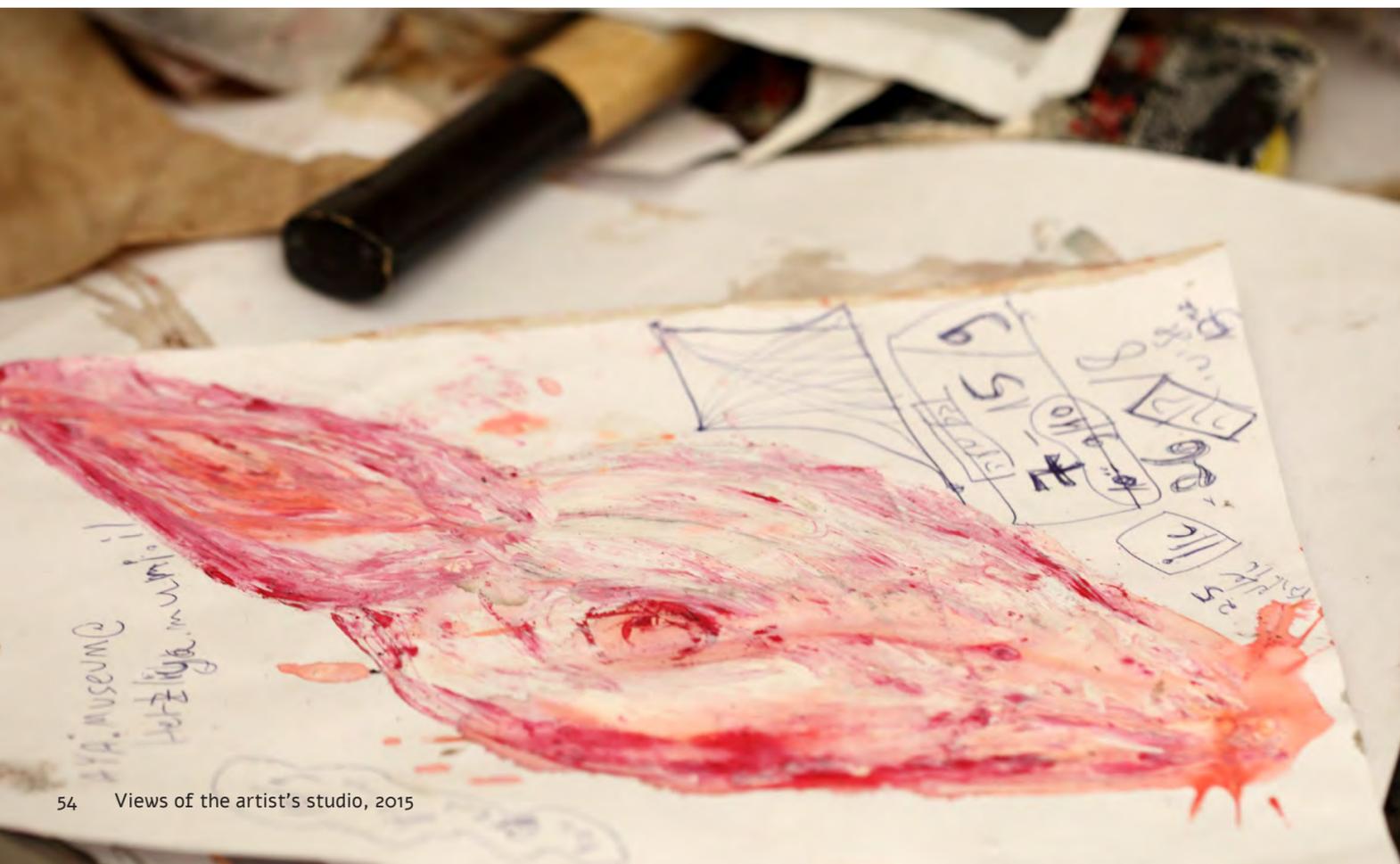
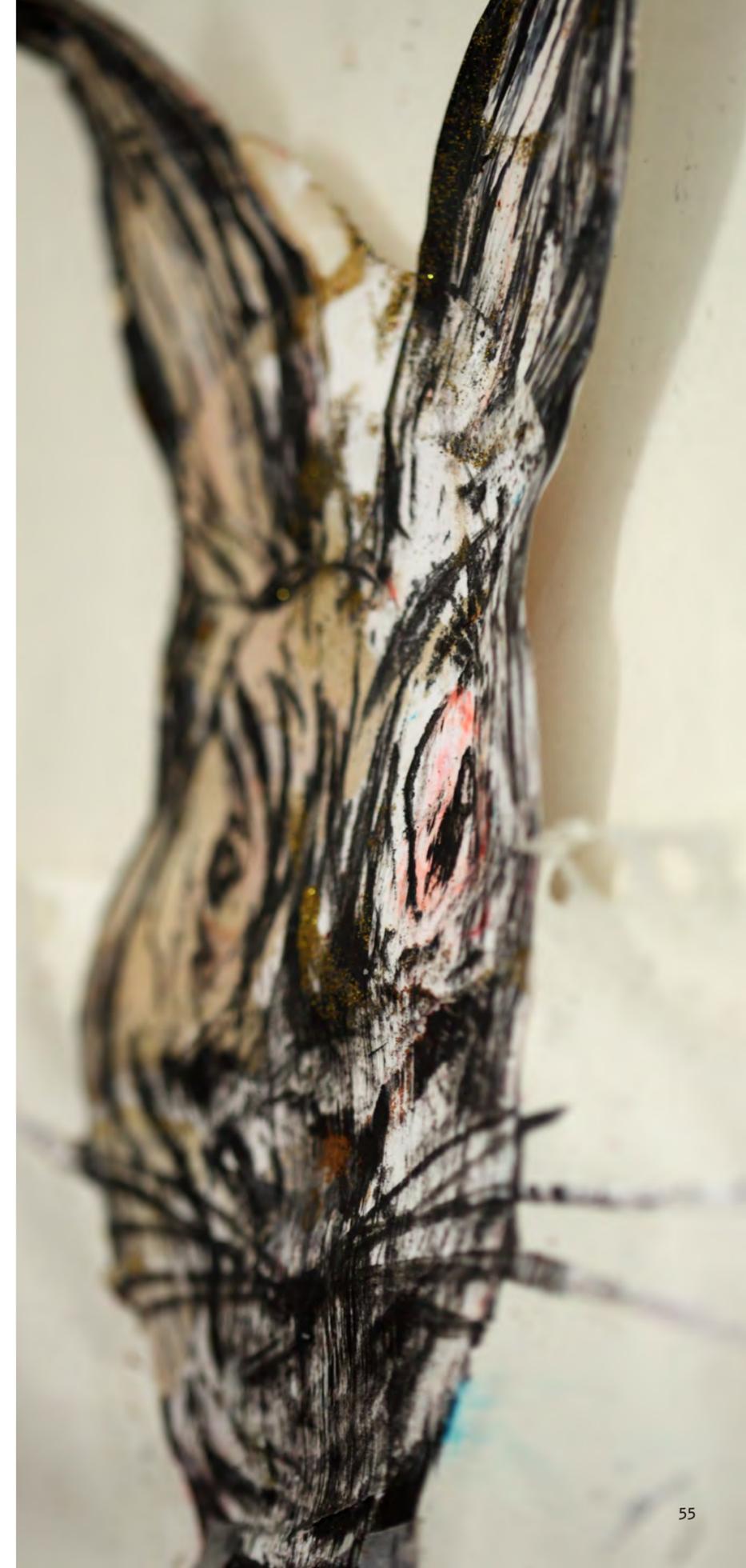
<sup>6</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Company, 1908), p. 28.

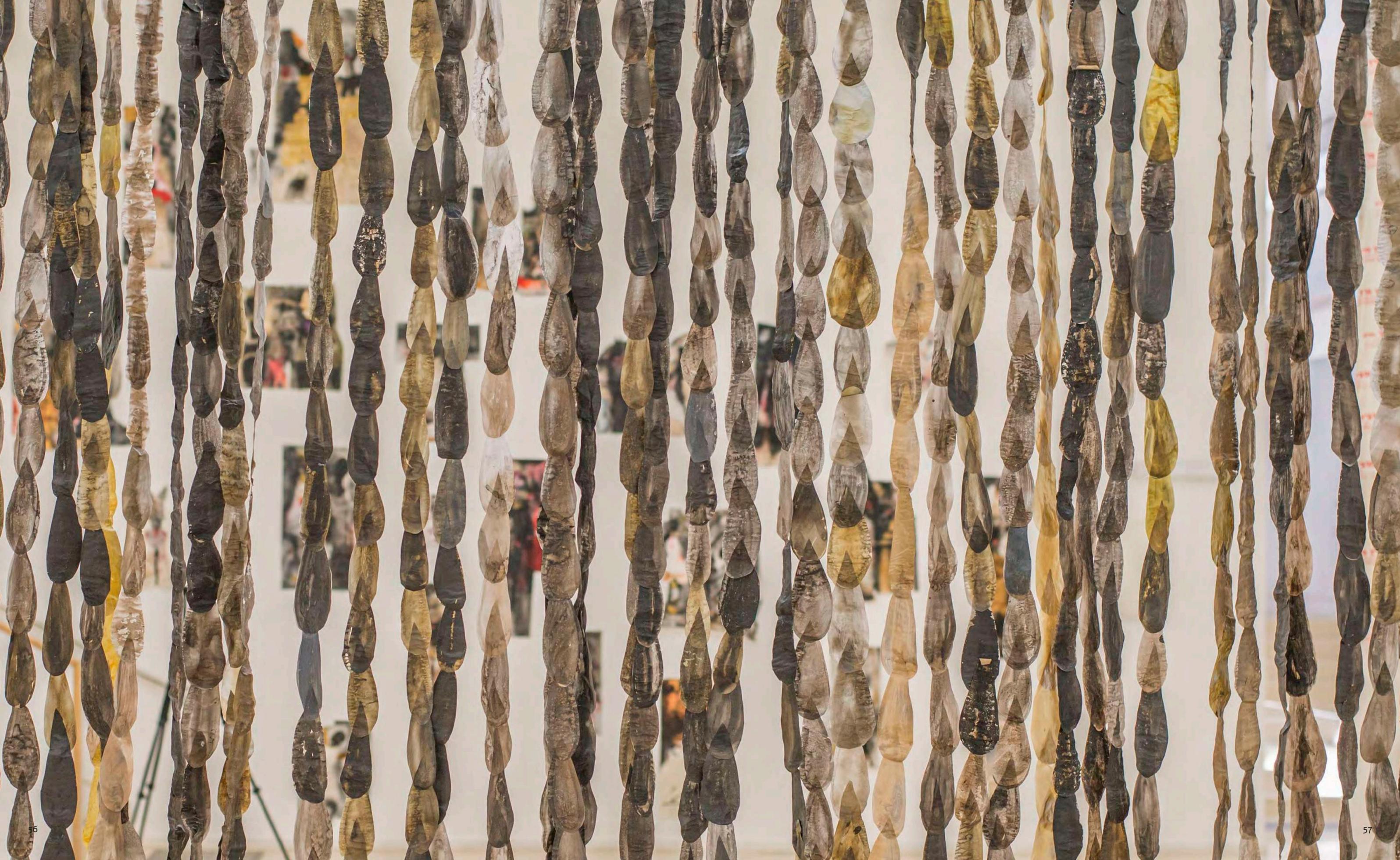




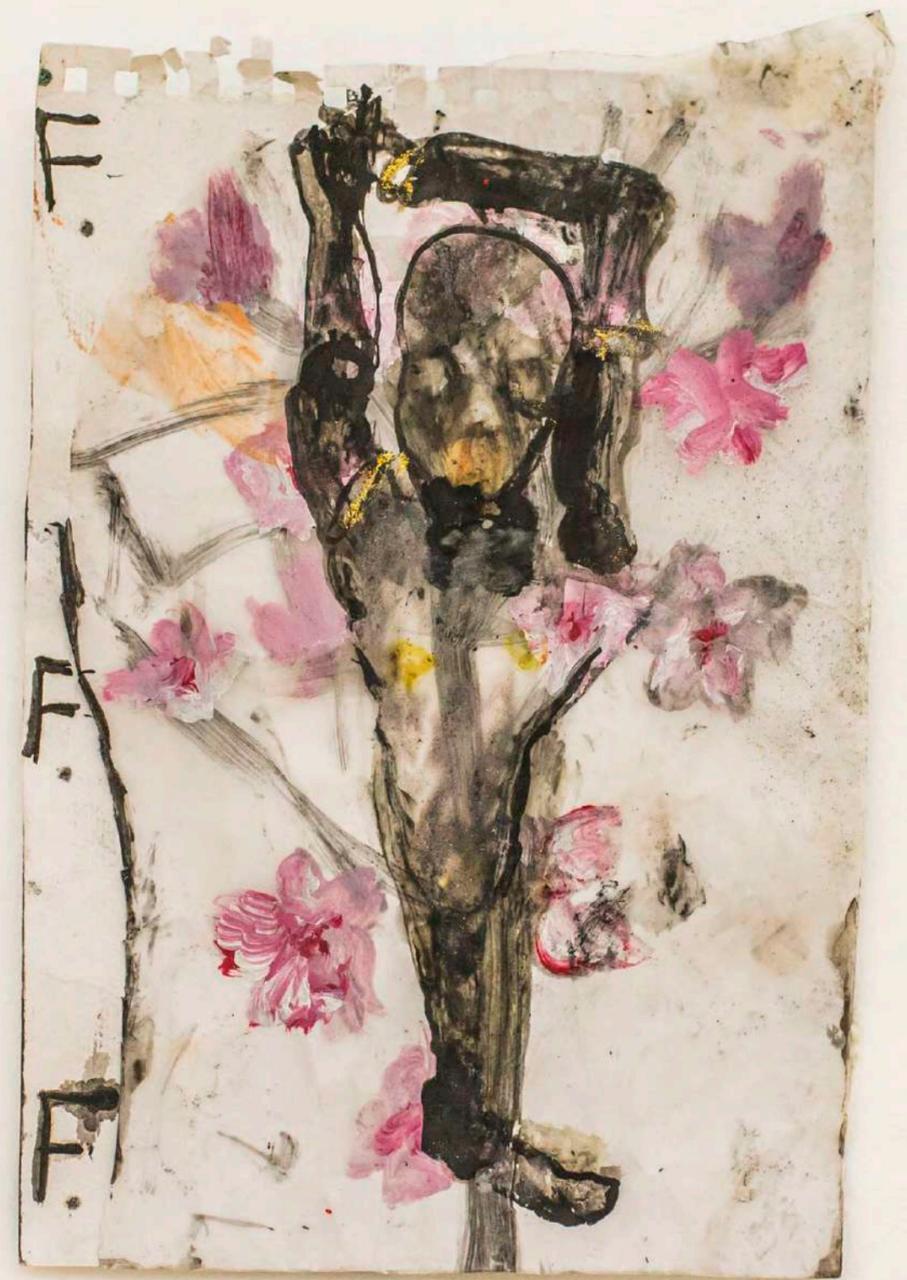
Four Matriarchs and a Remainder, 2013, mixed media on paper cutouts and masking tape on canvas, 300x400



























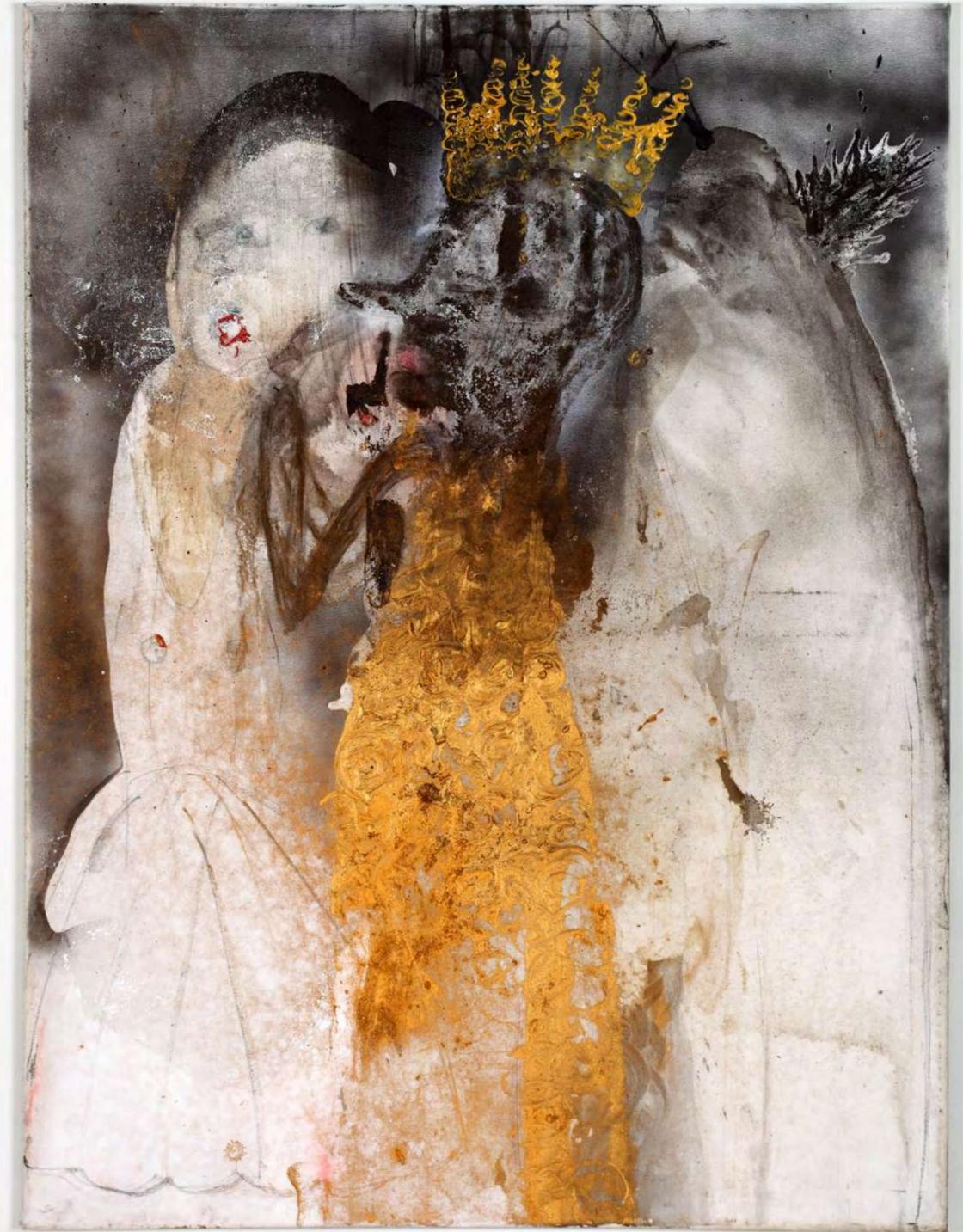








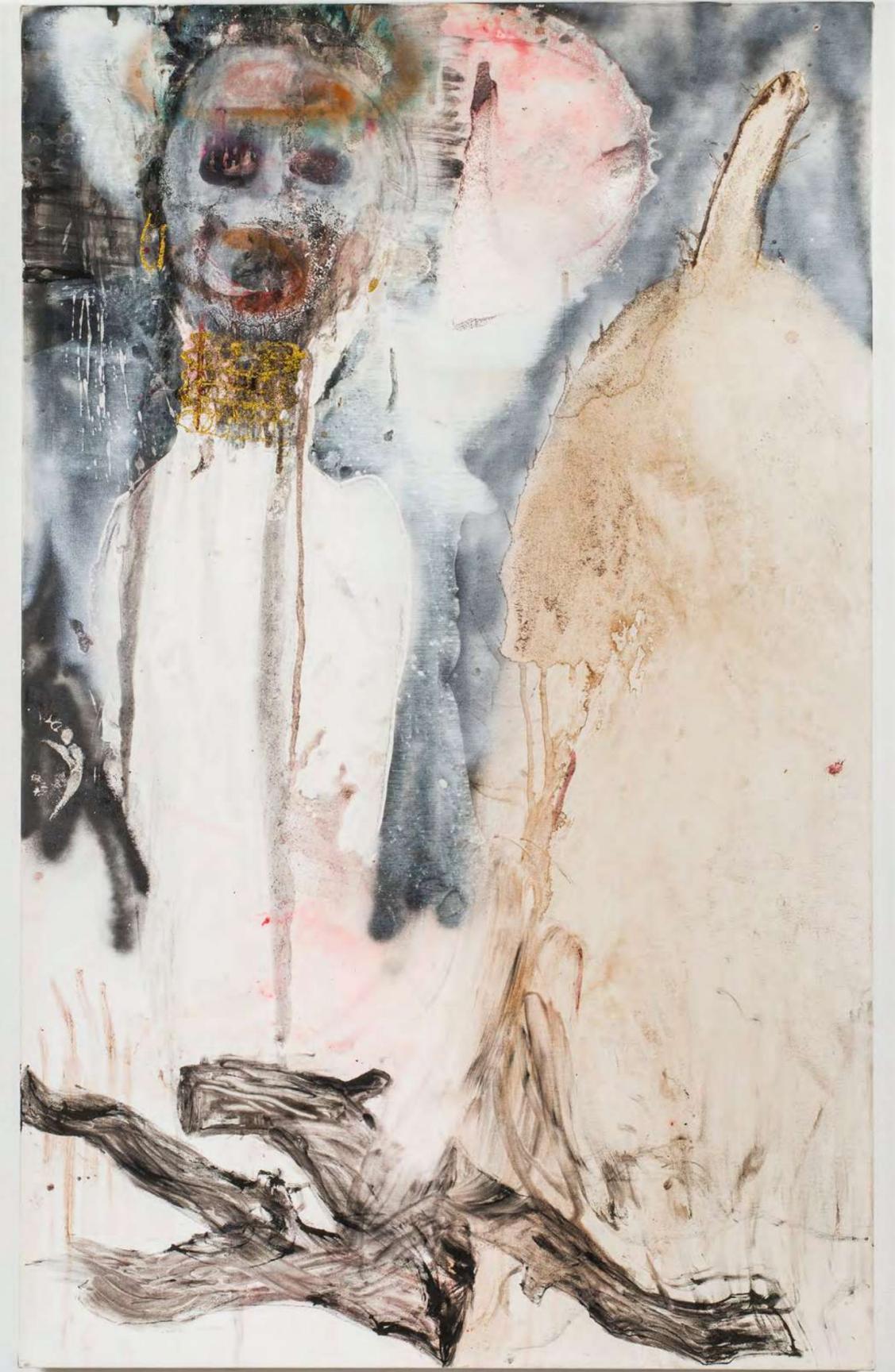




Left: *Untitled*, 2015, mixed media on canvas, 70x50  
Right: *Untitled*, 2015, mixed media on canvas, 70x50



90 *Untitled*, 2015, mixed media on canvas, 160x110



*Untitled*, 2015, mixed media on canvas, 160x110 91

## Ruthi Helbitz Cohen

*Born 1969, Israel. Lives and works in Israel.*

1989–1991 BFA, art and psychology studies, University of Haifa  
1991–1992 BFA, Art Department, Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem  
1992–1993 BFA, Art Department, Hamidrasha School of Art, Beit Berl  
1997–1998 BFA, Art Department, Haifa University, Haifa  
2008–2010 MFA, Oranim Academic College of Education, Tivon

### *Selected Solo Exhibitions*

1995 *New Works*, Gallery at Borochoy, Tel Aviv  
1998 *Sweet Dreams*, Janco-Dada Museum, Ein Hod  
2001 *New Works*, Tel Esther Gallery, Tel Aviv  
2002 *I Will Have to Restrain It*, Goren Gallery, Emek Israel Academy College  
2003 *Boomerang*, Tel Esther Gallery, Tel Aviv  
2004 *The Cliff Gallery*, Netanya  
2006 *Mind the Gap*, Umtrieb Gallery, Kiel, Germany  
*New Works*, Julie M. Gallery, Tel Aviv  
2007 *Distortion*, Umtrieb Gallery, Kiel, Germany  
2008 *Mind the Gap*, Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art; Evi Gogenheim Gallery, Paris  
2009 *Free But Securely Held*, Julie M. Gallery, Tel Aviv; Oranim Gallery, Oranim Academic College of Education, Tivon  
*Damsel's House*, Helena Rubinstein Pavilion for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv Museum of Art  
2010 *Site Specific*, Galerie im Turm, part of *Sisyphus, Polylog*, Mittelmeer Biennale, Cologne, Germany  
2011 *On the Edge*, in collaboration with Joshua Sobol, Nahum Gutman Museum of Art  
*Black Mamba*, in collaboration with Tali Ben Bassat, Julie M. Gallery, Tel Aviv  
2012 *The Spider's Strategy*, Museum Beelden aan Zee, The Hague  
*Whispers*, Gordon Gallery, Tel Aviv  
2013 *Without Frames*, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China  
2014 Helga Hofman Gallery, The Hague  
*Four Matriarchs and a Remainder*, Gordon Gallery, Tel Aviv  
2015 *Whispers*, Kibbutz Rosh Hanikra Gallery

### *Selected Group Exhibitions*

1993 Gallery at Borochoy, Tel Aviv  
1994 *Hamidrasha Final Show*, Nofar Gallery  
*Tiger*, Mary Fauzi Gallery, Jaffa

*Painting Above and Beyond*, Ramat Gan Museum of Israeli Art  
Art Focus, Tel Aviv  
1995 *Co-Existence*, Mitzpe Ramon  
*Sharet Foundation Award Winners*, Genia Schreiber University Art Gallery, Tel Aviv University  
1996 Ami Steinitz Gallery, Tel Aviv  
*Sharet Foundation Award Winners*, Ramat Gan Museum of Israeli Art; traveling in the USA  
2001 *Artists Against The Strong Arm Policy*, Umm al-Fahm  
2002 *At Home*, Tal Esther Gallery, Tel Aviv  
*Imagine: 300 Artists for Co-Existence*, Umm al-Fahm  
2003 *Love is in the Air*, Time for Art Gallery, Tel Aviv  
*First Portrait: Award Winners Exhibition*, Helena Rubinstein Pavilion for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv Museum of Art  
*Teacher-Artists Award*, Oranim Gallery, Oranim Academic College of Education, Tivon  
2004 Brantesburg Gallery, Copenhagen  
*Body Marks*, The Commemoration Gallery, Tivon  
2006 *Preview*, Berlin Art Fair  
2007 *Lo-li-ta*, Office in Tel Aviv Gallery, Tel Aviv  
*In & Out*, Julie M. Gallery, Tel Aviv  
2010 *Still Life*, Dana Art Gallery, Kibbutz Yad Mordechai  
2012 Gordon Gallery 2, Tel Aviv  
2013 *Summer Exhibition*, Gordon Gallery and Gordon Gallery 2, Tel Aviv  
2014 *The Chicago Triangle*, Haifa Museum of Art  
*New Works: Spring 2014*, Gordon Gallery, Tel Aviv  
2015 *Summer Exhibition*, Gordon Gallery, Tel Aviv  
KunstRAI Art Fair, Amsterdam  
Contemporary Art Fair, The Haag

### *Prizes and Awards*

1994–1997 Keren Sharet Scholarship Program Award, America-Israel Cultural Foundation  
2002 First Portrait Award, Israel National Lottery Council for the Arts  
Artist-Teacher Award, Israel Ministry of Culture and Science  
2004 Artist-Teacher Award, Israel Ministry of Culture and Science  
2008 Prize for the Encouragement of Creation, Israel Ministry of Culture, Science and Sport  
2013 Israel Ministry of Culture Award for Visual Arts





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