

## rocks

an exhibition and publication launch  
curated by Chloë Reid and Matty Roodt

catalogue of works



## rocks

### exhibition and publication launch

14 September – 9 November 2019

the gallery, 44 Stanley Avenue, Braamfontein Werf, Johannesburg

*rocks* is an exhibition about the same, curated by Chloë Reid and Matty Roodt. Less of a curatorial essay than a collection of things to be set out and looked at, *rocks* includes work by *Nina Barnett, Nolan Oswald Dennis, Jared Ginsburg, Dan Halter, Thami Jali, Io Makandal, Garth Meyer, Nabeeha Mohamed, Daniella Mooney, Sean O'Toole, Matty Roodt, Jonah Sack, Inga Somdyala and Sitaara Stodel.*

**Thami Jali's** colour lithographs are a tribute to the artist Nukain Mabuza, whose lifework was the Painted Rock Garden at Revolver Creek. **Dan Halter** reflects on rock balancing traditions and societal structures in Zimbabwe and Switzerland respectively by using a high-speed camera to slow down the action of tumbling rock formations. **Sitaara Stodel** has used 5 found rocks to produce a series of cyanotypes – original blueprints, that form part of an on-going preoccupation with the concept of home and memory. **Daniella Mooney's** sculpted granite curbstones grow out of a weariness of the idea of home and a need to understand what it means to lift up what you have off the ground and carry it with you. A homage to mountains, and the artists who love them, *The Magic of Stones* by **Sean O'Toole** is also a story about lateness, failure, heartbreak and the necessity of uniforms. **Jared Ginsburg's** *mini room 2* is from a series of tiny exhibitions made for his collection of rocks / stones. Beach debris portraits are the starting point for **Nabeeha Mohamed's** watercolour series, *Sea of Faces*. **Jonah Sack** continues with an exploration of ground, playing with vertical and horizontal in relation to support, subsistence, surface and composition. Multiple works on paper are prompts to **Nina Barnett's** extensive research into the Vredefort Dome, a meteor impact site located south of Johannesburg. In *Just let me sleep*, **Matty Roodt** uses rocks to contemplate late capitalist fatigue. *black earth (reader)* by **Nolan Oswald Dennis** is a component of an ongoing project, a

*curriculum for mud*, which engages the conditions of possibility through which we can imagine trajectories of decolonial resistance differently. Weaponised bronze dipped rocks by **Garth Meyer** are a symbolic allegory of laws that allow the stoning of a queer body. In the digital lithograph, *Untitled (The Knowledge of Transgression)*, **Inga Somdyala** replicates the silver-grey of a found concrete slab. **Io Makandal** presents elements of a previously realised collaborative project where the cross-continental exchange of objects in physical and virtual space was used to examine gentrification, globalisation and mercantile expansion.

*rocks* is a project by **gallery, gallery** in partnership with **the gallery**.

**gallery, gallery** is a movable and collaborative template for artists, curators and writers that adapts itself to physical spaces in response to its projects. *rocks* is the first in a series of projects, hosted by and produced in partnership with *the gallery*.

**the gallery** is a platform for contemporary art developed by the atelier. Its programme includes exhibitions, exchanges, workshops, publications and residencies.

NINA BARNETT

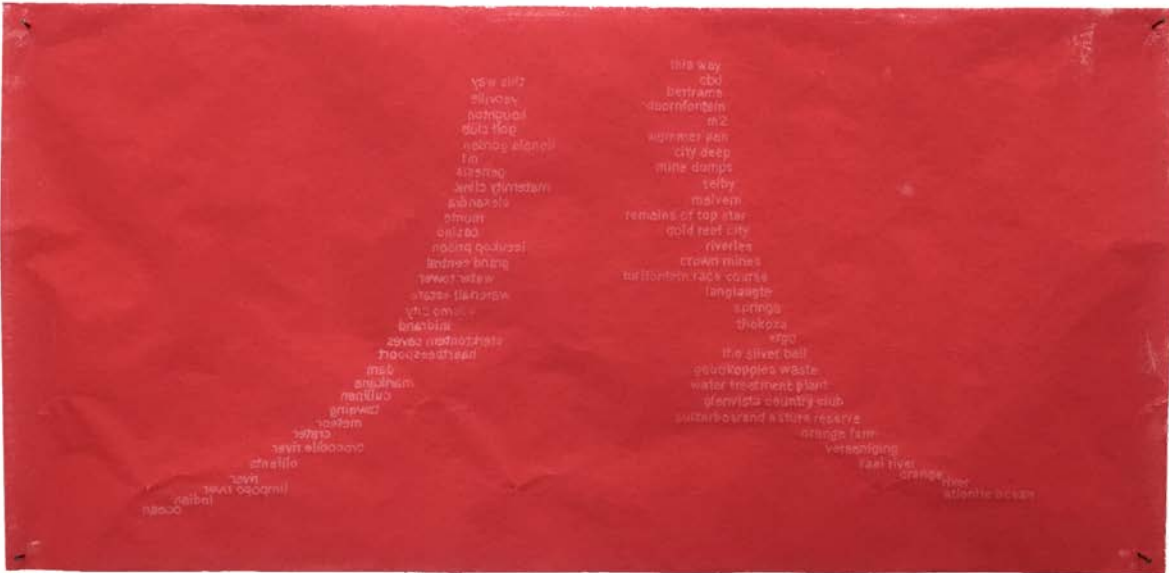




NINA BARNETT

Rubbing the Witwatersrand (North, South), 2011-2019  
graphite rubbing on paper (installation)

price on application



NINA BARNETT  
The Way The Water Flows Out, 2019  
drawing on transfer paper  
20 x 42 cm  
price on application



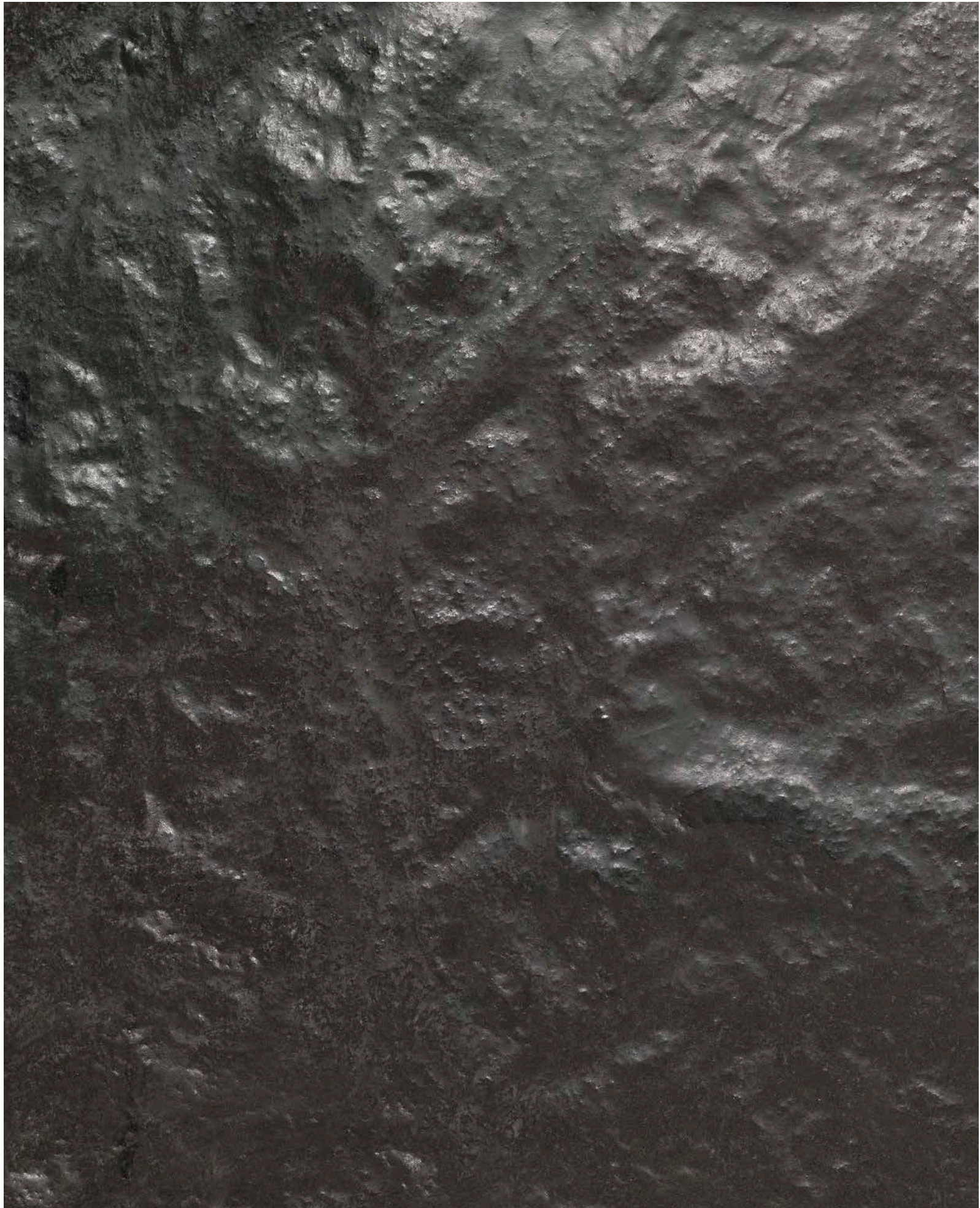
NINA BARNETT

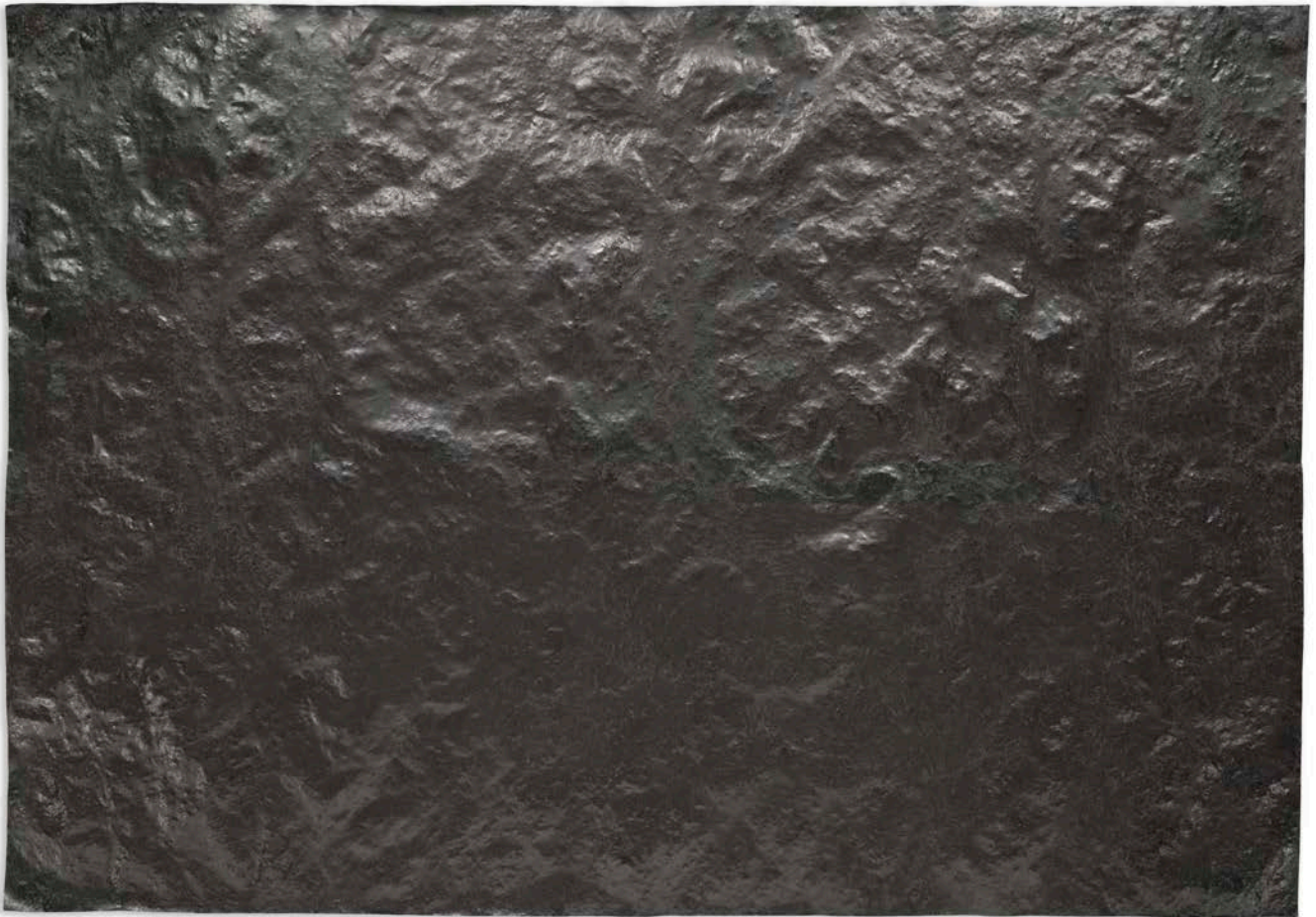
Shattercones III, 2016

coloured pencil rubbing on paper

SOLD







NINA BARNETT

Rock Drawing: Molten Flow Filled Fracture From Meteor Impact II, 2017

graphite on rock paper

66 x 52 cm

R 28 700

NOLAN OSWALD DENNIS

**black earth (reader)**

steel shelving, plastic modular bins, micro controller, books, in collaboration with eisenia fetida earthworms

This work operates as a program for reading 'The Wretched of The Earth', Franz Fanon's critical contribution to the archive of liberation theory. In this work the book is slowly consumed by a community of earth worms, orchestrating the act of reading as a different kind of engagement with the substance of the text. In this decompositional act the worms consume the cellulose fibre in the paper, cotton and card which make up the book, converting them into flesh, energy, heat and worm casings (shit) which is soil (along with a parallel community of micro-organisms).

Colloquially known as black earth, this dark composted soil becomes an afterlife for the book in which knowledge is shared with realms specifically defined as unknowing (soil, worms, the earth itself).

This work is a component of Nolan Oswald Dennis's ongoing project 'a curriculum for mud' which engages the conditions of possibility through which we can imagine trajectories of decolonial resistance differently.



Frantz Fanon The Wretched of the Earth MODERN CLASSICS

FRANTZ FANON THE WRETCHED OF THE EARTH  
FRANTZ FANON THE WRETCHED OF THE EARTH  
FRANTZ FANON THE WRETCHED OF THE EARTH





NOLAN OSWALD DENNIS

**black earth (reader), 2019**

Steel shelving, plastic modular bins, micro controller, books, in collaboration with eisenia fetida earthworms

not for sale

JARED GINSBURG

JARED GINSBURG  
mini room 2, 2016  
cardboard box, wax crayon, paper  
not for sale



DAN HALTER

## The Social Contract vs The State of Nature (Switzerland and Zimbabwe), 2018

video compilation

duration: 46'53"

With thanks to Pro Helvetia

The idea of a social contract dates back to early philosophy. Usually, the social contract concerns the origin of society and the legitimacy of the authority of the state over the individual. Social contract arguments typically mean that individuals have consented, either explicitly or tacitly, to surrender some of their freedoms and submit to the authority of the ruler or magistrate (or to the decision of a majority), in exchange for protection of their remaining rights.

While a social contract does exist in Zimbabwe, it feels broken in comparison with how well it works in Switzerland. Charles W. Mills argues in his book *The Racial Contract* that racism is at the core of the "social contract," rather than racism being an unintended result attributed to the failings of imperfect men. Mills argues that the ideals of the social contract are at worst pure fiction or at best intended only to apply to a specific group of people, namely members of the tribes of Europe and their genetic decedents. "...when white people say 'Justice,' they mean 'Just Us'."

The state of nature is a concept of what life was like before civil society and the social contract came into being. This was a time before government. The only law was "The law of the jungle" which meant "survival of the fittest". The Latin phrase *bellum omnium contra omnes*, meaning "the war of all against all" also describes this state.

Balancing rocks and rock balancing connect Zimbabwe and Switzerland. Zimbabwe is well known for its natural balancing rock formations. Balancing rock formations are found throughout Zimbabwe. They were created when ancient granite intrusions were exposed to weathering, as softer rocks around them eroded. Also known as Balancing Rock kopjes, they are seen in the form of huge angular blocks of granite "piled on top of and beside one another, forming pillars and stacks, like a child's building blocks."





DAN HALTER

The Social Contract vs The State of Nature (Switzerland and Zimbabwe), 2018

video compilation (stills)

duration: 46'53"

With thanks to Pro Helvetia



DAN HALTER

Domboremari, 2017

Linocut on Zerkall Litho 300gsm

Edition of 6 (each colour - other colours on request)

Paper & image dimension: 100 x 81 cm

R 26 760

THAMI JALI



THAMI JALI

The Rock, 2004, four colour chine collé lithograph, edition of 30, 50 x 43 cm

framed: R 6 800

unframed: R 5 440



THAMI JALI

*The Shrine*, 2004, three colour chine collé lithograph, edition of 30, 50 x 43 cm

framed: R 6 800

unframed: R 5 440

## IO MAKANDAL

### From where I was: A project in parts, Part Two – Documents, 2015

*From where I was: A project in parts, Part Two – Documents, 2015* was a site specific project of an exchange between Melbourne, Australia and Johannesburg, South Africa.

The initial iteration of Part 2 took place at the Turbine Art Fair in 2015 as part of the performance programme and was part of a series of exchanges. Part 2 was the second instance of a process-based project that had its inaugural instantiation at the end of March, 2015. It was exhibited at The Substation Gallery in West Melbourne and Kalashnikov Gallery in Braamfontein.

The first project examined the ways in which gentrification is a part of globalisation, reminiscent of earlier forms of mercantile expansion. 'Revival' of urban space, often in conjunction with the accumulation of cultural capital, is self-consciously questioned. Objects were collected from urban areas surrounding the respective galleries and sent between South Africa and Australia to be presented in both galleries.

The installation for the Turbine Art Fair continued with this process of exchange, focusing on the language of surveillance technology and the permeability between public and private space. Objects and images of objects circulate like capital across the globe, located in both physical and virtual spaces. The project is then composed through a series of portals, connecting material and ethereal components. Viewers were invited to participate by viewing the material at the Turbine Art Fair as well as remotely through an App, which was downloadable onto their tablets or mobile phone.

What is represented here of the project is a replication of a rock inside a box. The original rock was found on a street pavement in Johannesburg and sent to Melbourne. The rock was replicated in several forms as mentioned previously. Here we see a risoprint of two images of the replica rock. In the initial project viewers were also invited to view the rock through a surveillance camera feed on a screen or on their mobile phones. The object of the rock becomes the subject to question these ideas.



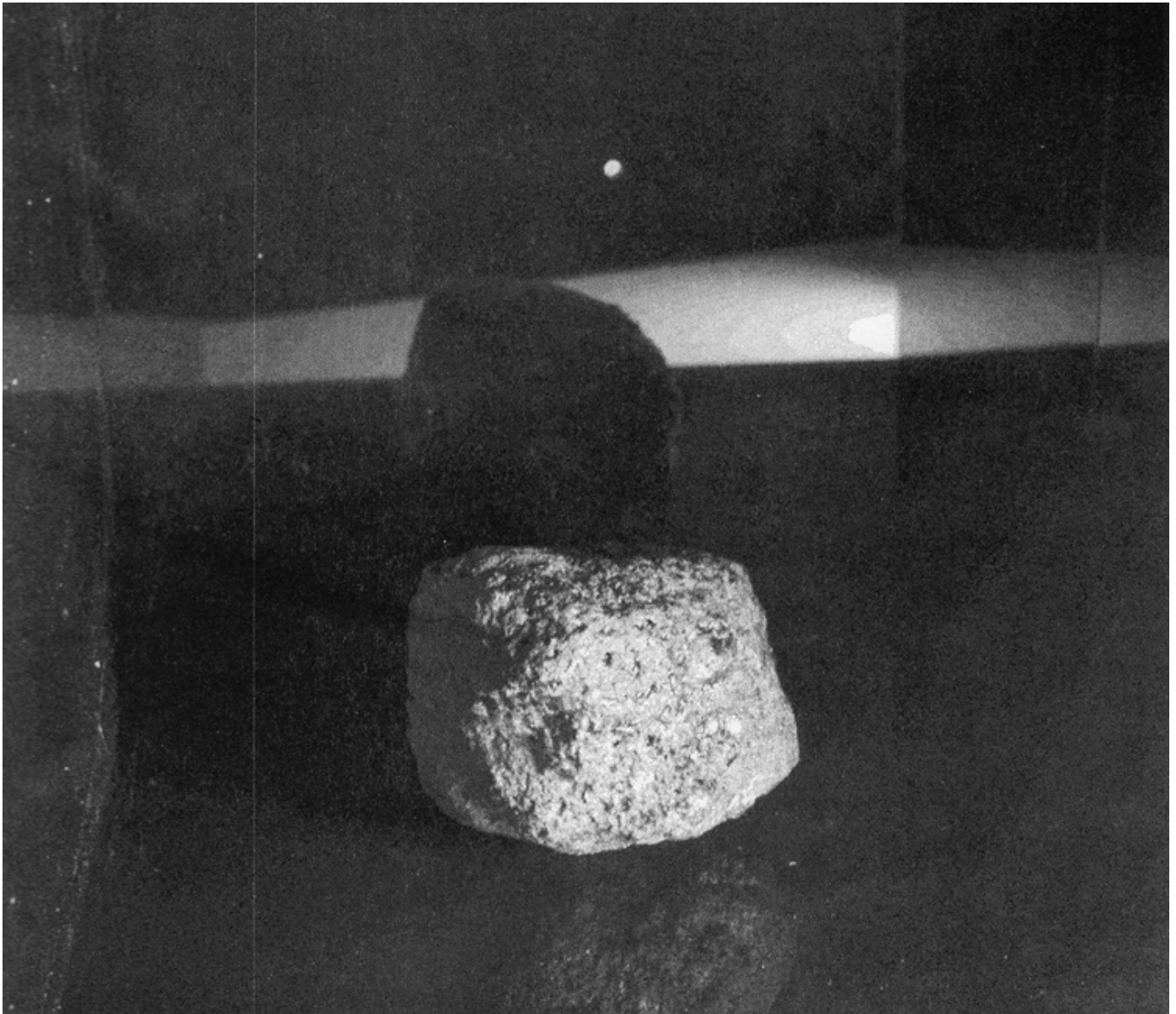
IO MAKANDAL

Document 2: Replica of a Rock in a Box

Originally presented in "From Where I Was: a Project in Parts: Part 2", 2015

Black acrylic box, black resin cast

Instruction: Place a light source at the top of the box while looking through the hole on the side of the box with your dominant eye.



IO MAKANDAL

Document 1: Image of a Rock (section)

Originally presented in "From Where I Was: a Project in Parts: Part 2", 2015





IO MAKANDAL

Boundary III

wood, chalk stone, glass, copper wire and dried amaranth, 2017

23 x 22 cm

R 8 800

GARTH MEYER

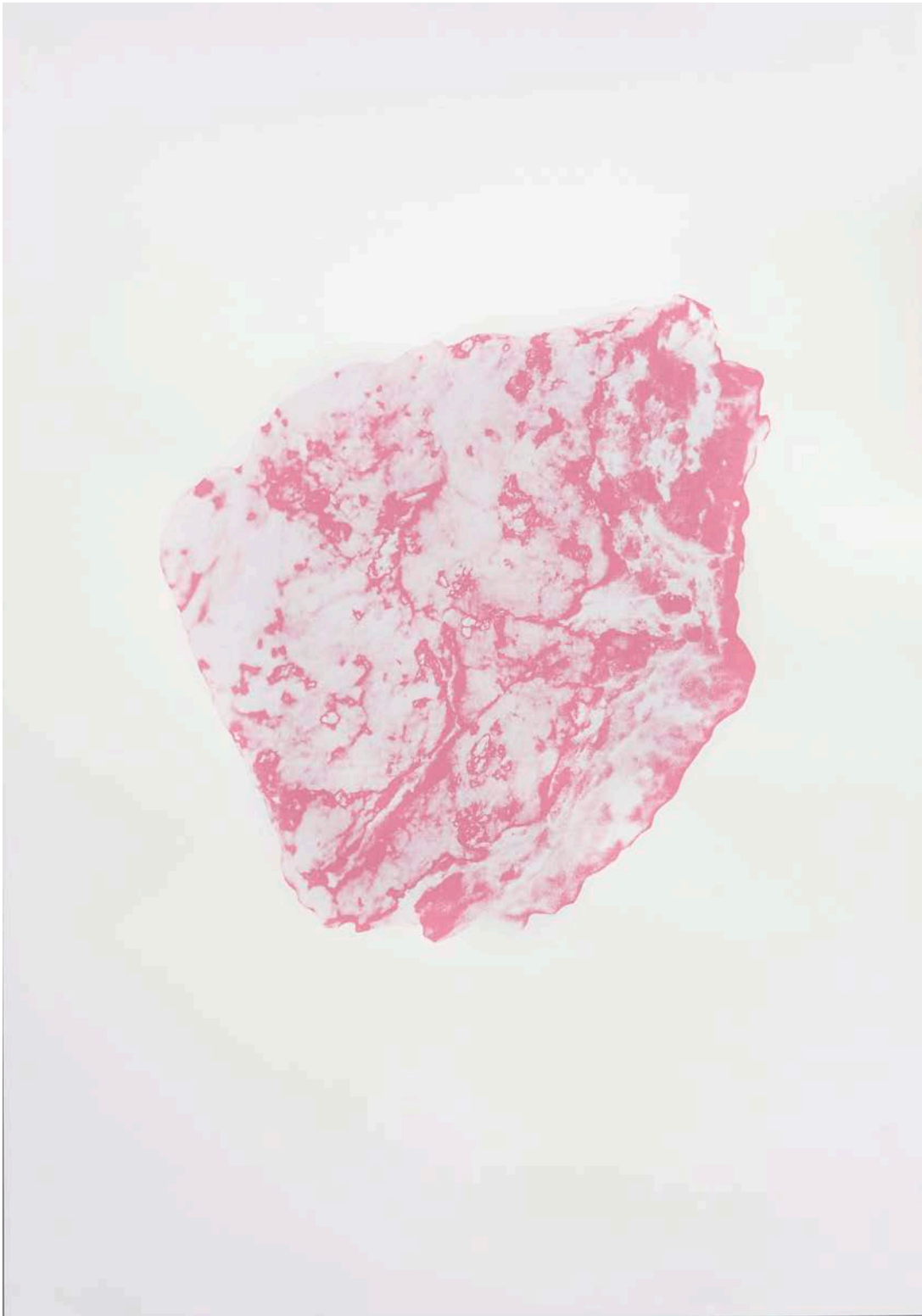
SMASH, 2019

chrome, bronze, black metal

R 4 200 - R 7 800 (price on application)

The weaponised bronze dipped rocks are a symbolic allegory of laws that allow the stoning of a queer body. There are four countries in Africa (Mauritania, Sudan, Northern Nigeria, Southern Somalia), and six countries in the Middle East (Yemen, Iran, Iraq, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates) where homosexuality may be punished by death (Rupar, 2014). In Mauritania, Article 308 of the Mauritanian Penal Code punishes homosexual acts by Muslim men with death by stoning ("Amnesty International UK" n.d.). In Saudi Arabia, under the country's interpretation of Sharia law, a married man engaging in sodomy (or any non Muslim who commits sodomy with a Muslim) can be stoned to death ("Amnesty International UK" n.d.). Sharia law deems homosexuality 'a danger to society' ("Library of Congress" n.d.). Queer as a movement, a politics and an aesthetic critically challenges systems of "supremacy, constructed sexual and gender identity, patriarchy and is a counterargument to heteronormativity" (Bronson, 2013: 95). Queer theorisation is a multi-sited strategy to contest dominant power (Bronson, 2013: 95). Written and visual texts are a vital tool for the powerless in attempting to communicate and persuade others of various ideas be they ideological, political, religious or sociocultural (Bull, 2016).

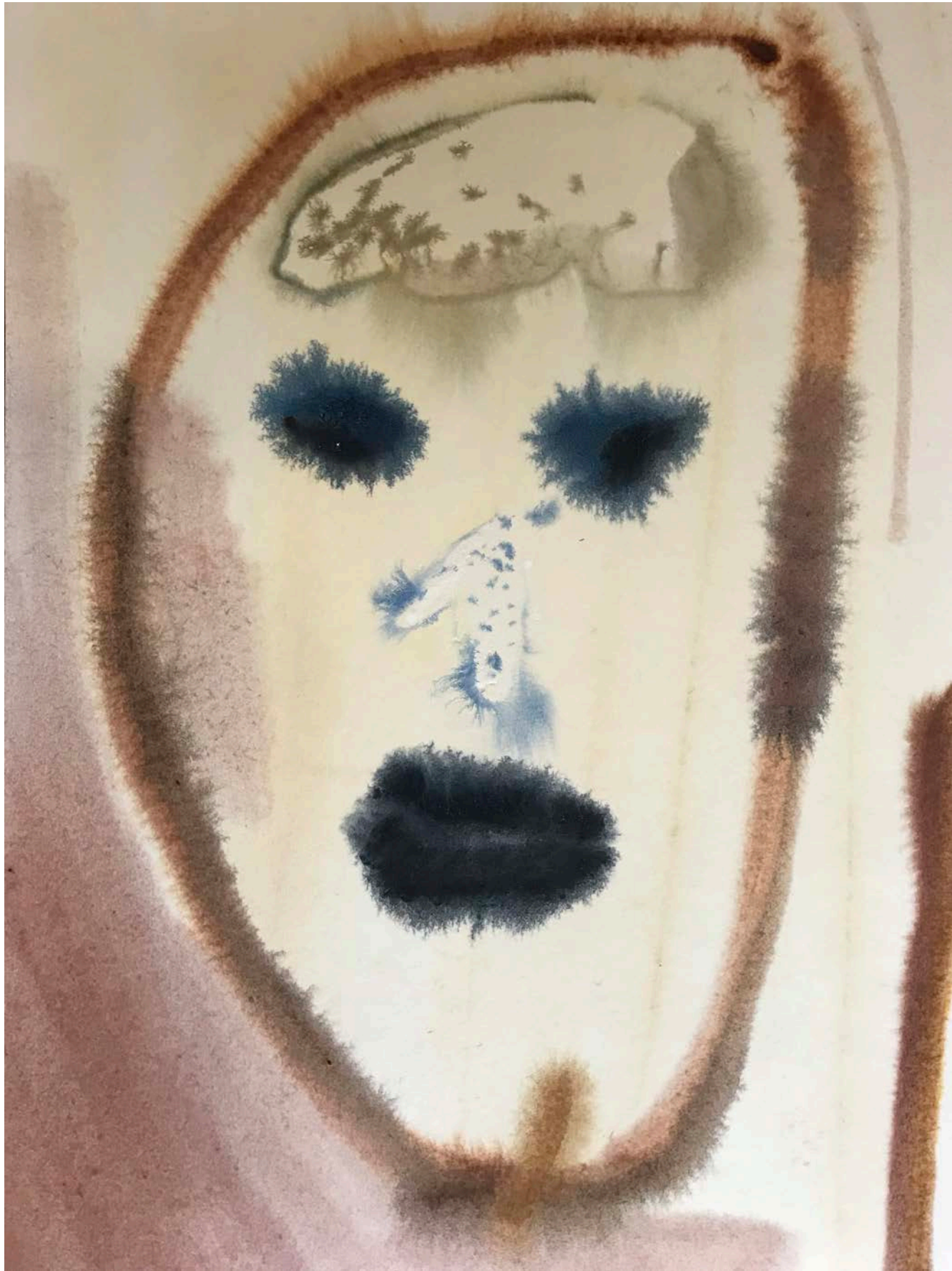




GARTH MEYER  
Pink Stone  
screenprint, 1/1  
63 x 45 cm

R 4 572

NABEEHA MOHAMED



NABEEHA MOHAMED, Sea of Faces (series), 2019, watercolour on paper, 27.9 x 21 cm, R 5 160 (each)

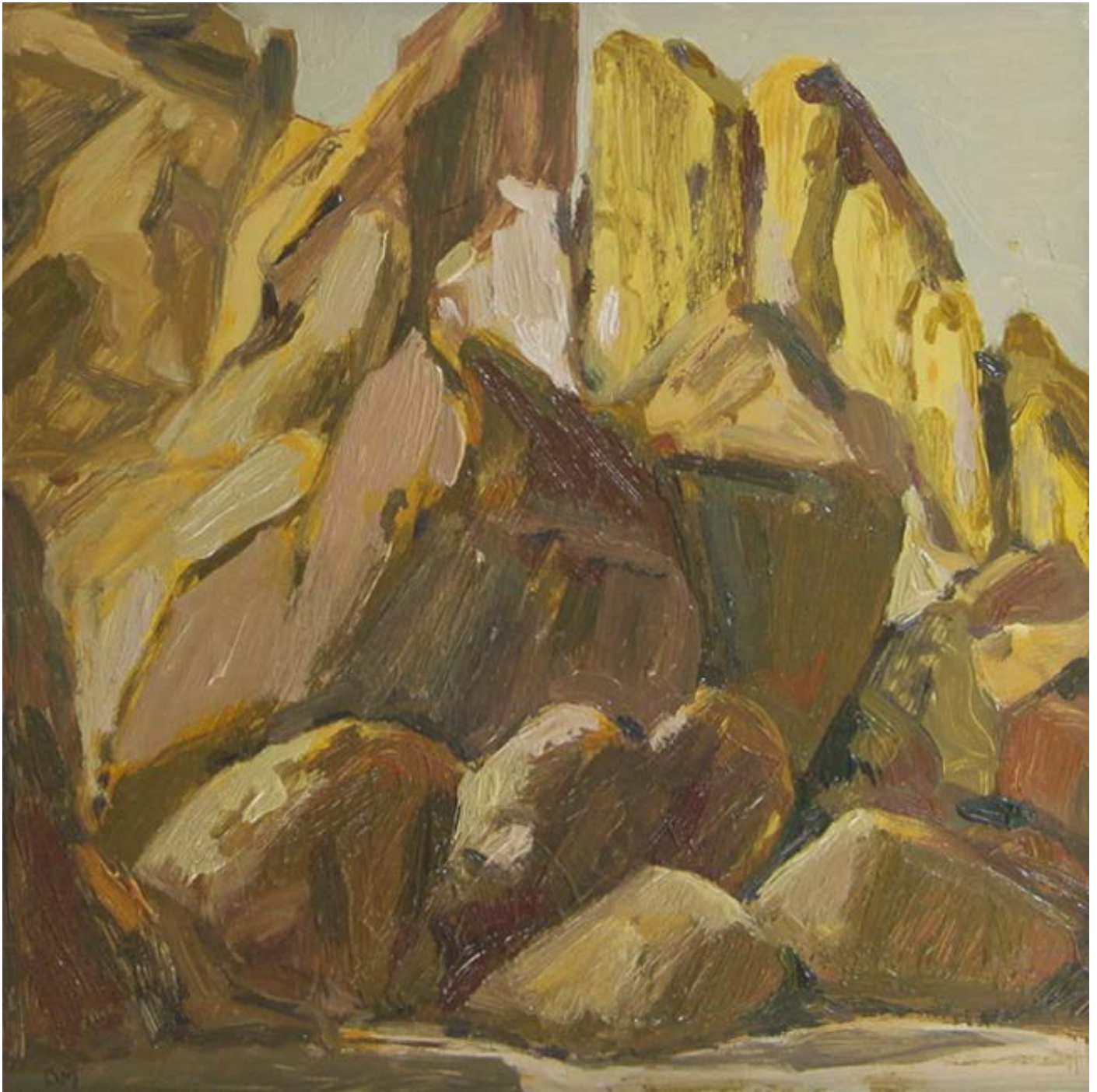








DANIELLA MOONEY



DANIELLA MOONEY

We Took The Standard Route, Spitzkoppe, 2019

oil on board

28 x 28 cm

R 9 300



DANIELLA MOONEY  
Burnt Mountain, 2019  
oil on board  
28 x 28 cm

R 9 300



DANIELLA MOONEY  
Find a Place / Create a  
Centre

Find a Space / Create a  
Centre

granite, retired climbing  
rope

not for sale



SEAN O'TOOLE

SEAN O'TOOLE

The Magic of Stones, 2019

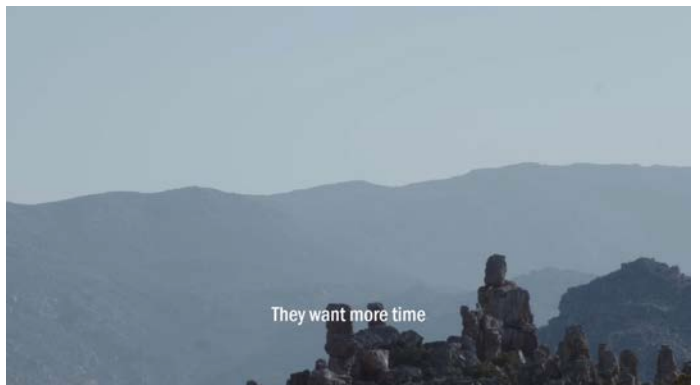
In 2012, writer and art critic Sean O'Toole returned to Japan. His ambition was to summit Mount Fuji. He failed. His new chapbook, titled *The Magic of Stones*, tangentially draws on his failed mission. A homage to mountains, and the artists who love them, *The Magic of Stones* is also a story about lateness, failure, heartbreak and the necessity of uniforms.

R 150





MATTY ROODT



MATTY ROODT  
Just let me sleep, 2019  
video, duration: 5 min 38 sec  
available online here



MATTY ROODT  
Just let me sleep, 2019  
rock, snake, wood

SOLD

JONAH SACK



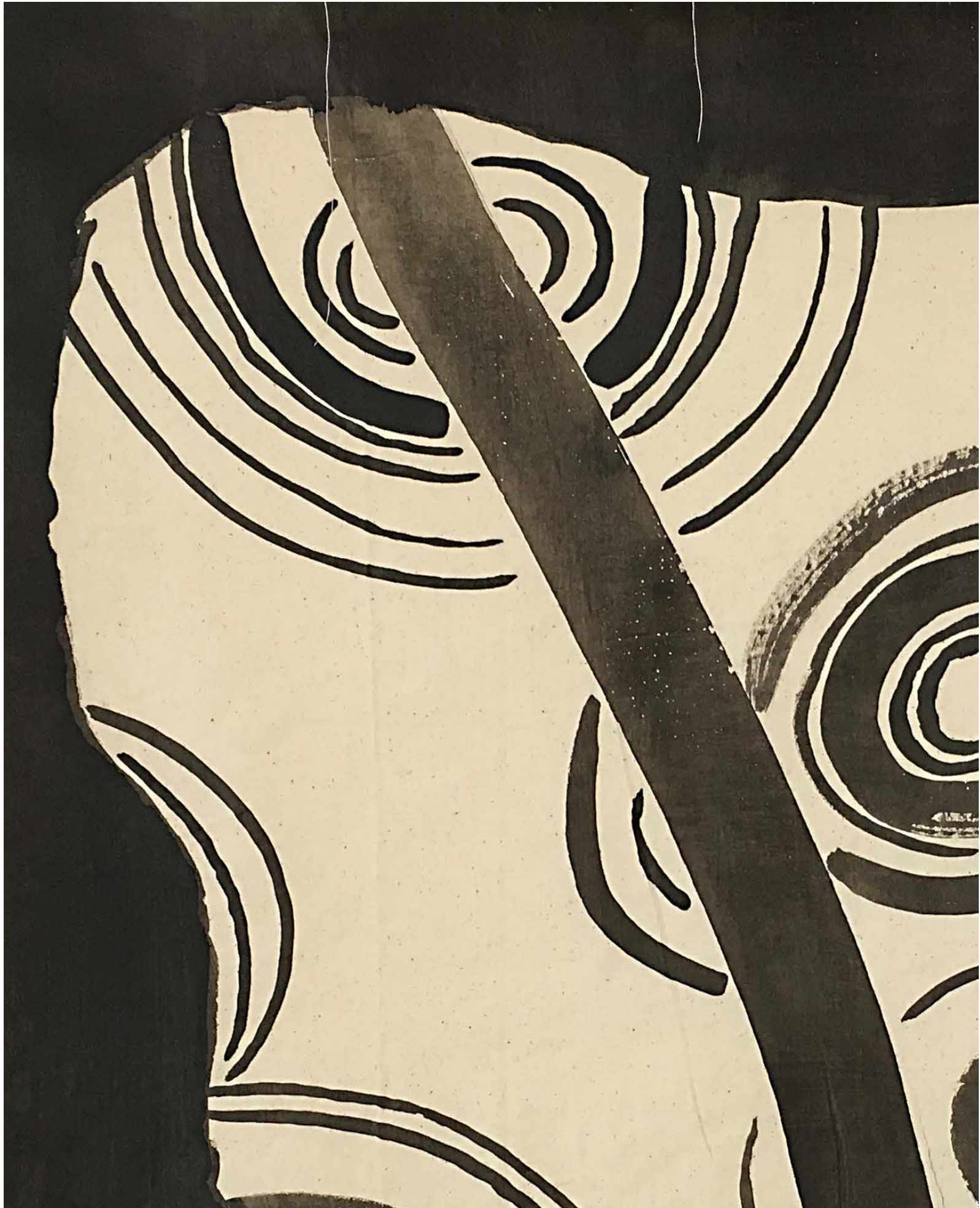
JONAH SACK, *Stones* (series), 2019, acrylic, oil, and pencil crayon on plywood and hardboard price on application



JONAH SACK

At an angle to the Earth (individual drawings from a series), 2018-2019  
ink and ink wash on canvas  
variable sizes (approx, 900 x 900 mm)

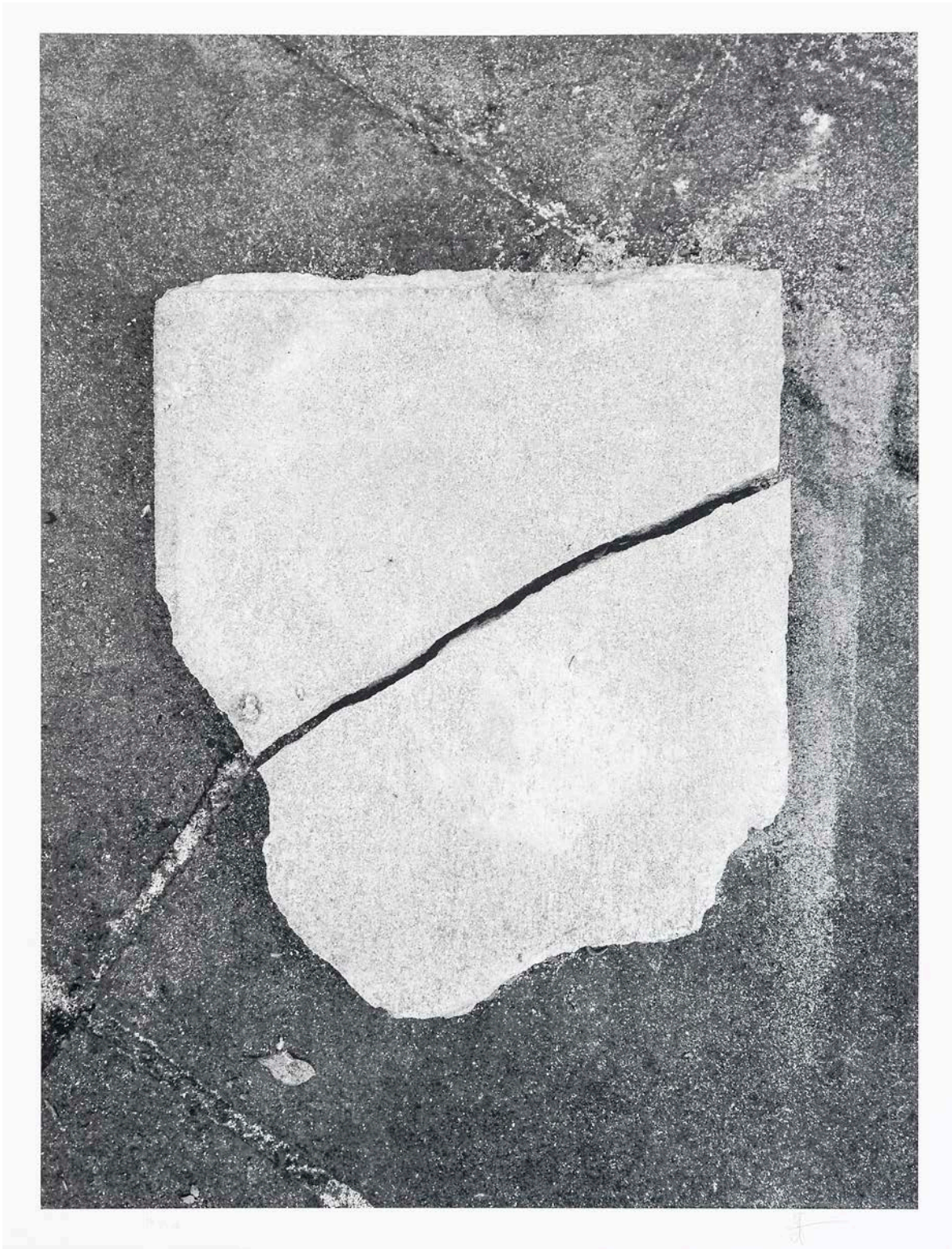
R 29 700 (each)







INGA SOMDYALA



INGA SOMDYALA

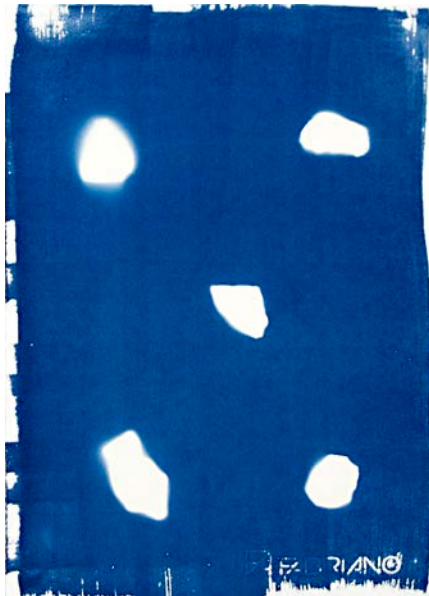
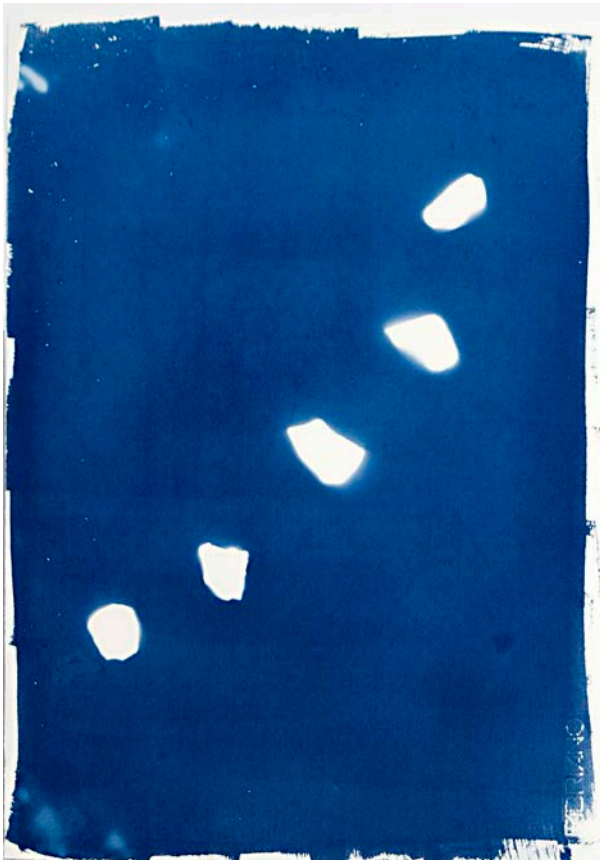
Untitled (The Knowledge of Transgression), 2017

Digital Lithograph on BFK Rives 250gsm, 12/15, 650 x 500 mm

framed: R 5 330

unframed: R 3 500

SITAARA STODEL



SITAARA STODEL

(clockwise from left) Constellation, Dust to dust &  
5 rocks from Germany  
cyanotype on fabriano rosapina  
50 x 35 cm, 50 x 35 cm & 35 x 25 cm

ALL SOLD

*please inquire about other works in the series*



SITAARA STODEL  
Searching, 2019  
cyanotype on fabriano rosapina  
35 x 25 cm

R 5 500

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