

An abstract artwork featuring dark, textured brushstrokes in shades of brown, black, and grey, creating a sense of depth and movement. A central, lighter, yellowish-brown area provides a focal point for the text.

# *Draw Distance*

Online Solo Presentation  
by Kemalezedine



“The narrative of this exhibition is about Balinese art, the historical complexity that has created and framed Balinese paintings until today and its complicated relationship to Indonesian art.”

– **Kemalezedine**

***Sigar Mangsi 1***

2021

Ink and oil on canvas

200 x 200 cm









***Sigar Mangsi 2***

2021

Ink and oil on canvas

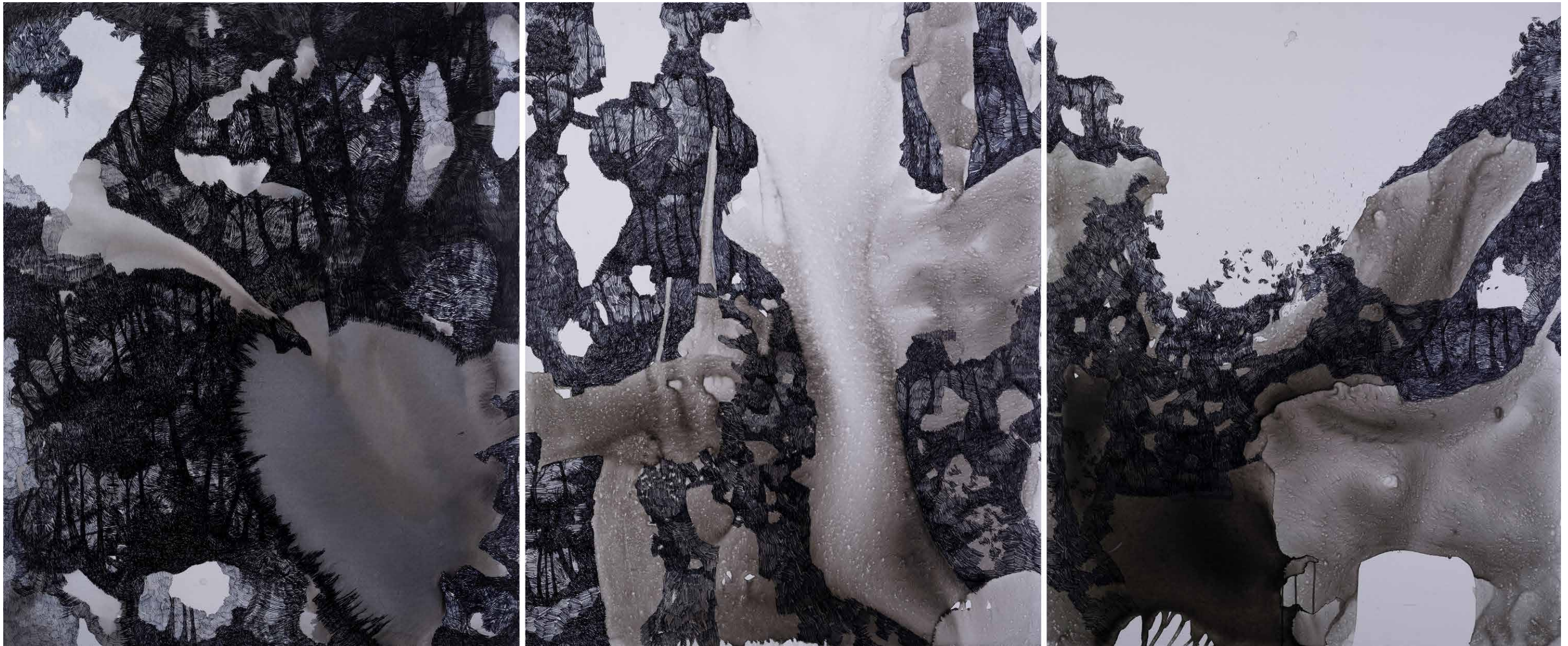
200 x 200 cm











***Dentiyis 1903, Pen and Weapon***

2021

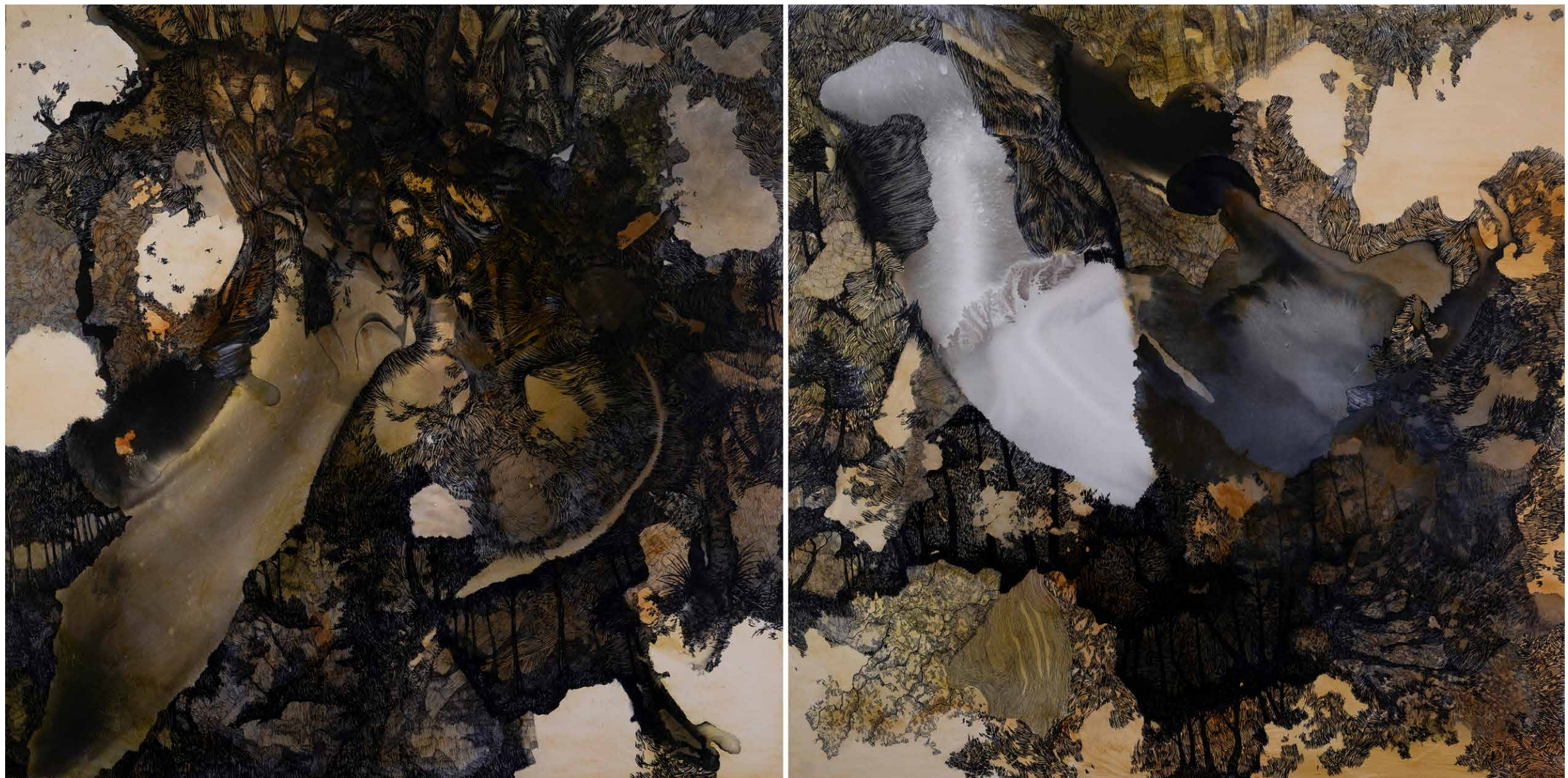
Ink and oil on canvas

150 x 120 cm each (3 panels)









***Post Exotic I & Post Exotic II***

2021

Ink and oil on canvas

140 x 140 cm each (2 panels)









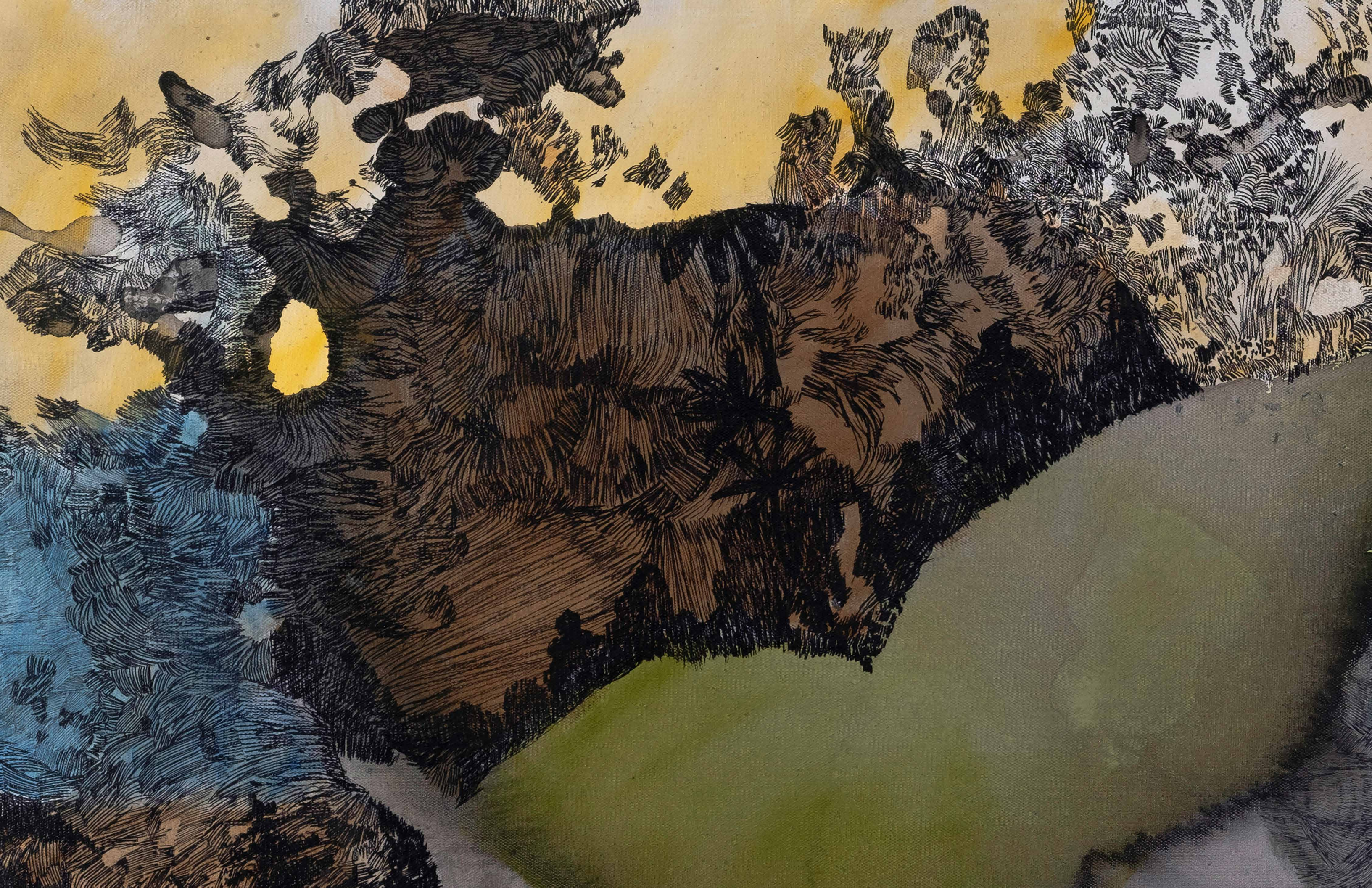
***The Edge of Heaven I, II, III***

2021

Ink and oil on canvas

180 x 150 cm each (3 panels)







## Artist Bio

**Kemalezedine** (b. 1978, Yogyakarta), is a multidisciplinary Bali-based artist who works in paintings, drawings, prints and objects. His practice investigates the complex narratives and history of Balinese paintings and its complicated relationship to Indonesian art. This latest body of works in ***Draw Distance*** continues his exploration with non-figurative paintings that are based on drawings of repetitive lines and ornamentations of various deconstructed Balinese visual iconography, arranged in individual and multi-panel layouts. In this series, the artist further experiments with darker monochromatic colours of the Batuan style painting of Bali and introduces water-based ink into his oil paintings, representing the artist's idea of 'conservation' and 'exploration', where 'tradition' and 'change' come together to create something new.

Kemalezedine has exhibited locally and internationally, including *Sixty Percent Around the Sun*, Black Hand Gang, Artsphere Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia (2021), *Drawing Bali Today*, Sika Gallery Ubud, Bali, Indonesia (2019), *Crossing: Beyond Bali Seering*, 45downstairs, Melbourne, Australia (2016), *ENCOUNTER: Art from Different Lands* – Southeast Asia Plus (SEA+) Triennial 2016, National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia (2016), *Contemporary Art from Bali*, Langgeng Art Foundation, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2016), *Balinese Graphic Art: Painting and Drawing*, Langgeng Art Foundation, Yogyakarta (2016), and *Toyama International Art Camp*, Toyama, Japan (2015).



# Interview Excerpt

**Tell us about how you came to conceive the works for the show – what were your inspirations and aims for this exhibition?**

The narrative of this exhibition is about Balinese art, the historical complexity that has created and framed Balinese art until now, and its complicated relationship to Indonesian art. I am interested in highlighting this dynamic and tension, and through my works, exploring the possibility of bringing new ideas and development into Balinese art.

**Why are you interested in talking about Bali and Balinese paintings as the underlying concept of the works?**

I have been talking about Bali and Balinese paintings in my artistic practice since 2012, the year I moved to Bali. I co-founded the *Neopitamaha* movement with a few other Balinese and non-Balinese painters the year after, with an aim to bring new ideas and experimentation to Balinese paintings. In order to do so, I believe it is important to understand the historical complexity of Balinese art and critically build from it to create new perspectives in Balinese paintings. I think Balinese art is unique and has gone through a long struggle. What is important is now to think about its position in Indonesia and globally. What is next for Balinese art and what can we do?

**Can you tell us about the historical complexity of Balinese art that you discuss through your works?**

I think one of the biggest challenges is perhaps our view of Bali and Balinese art that celebrates 'tradition' and 'exoticism', which has been formed for many years and has not changed much. The image has been created by many external

factors since the colonial era. The policy of Baliseering, for example, which was first introduced in the 1920s by the Dutch colonial government to train locals to continue the traditional arts of dance, theatre, painting, sculpture and literature. Furthermore, the creation of a new tourist industry based on the policy of Cultural Tourism in 1950s and 1970s, that presented and reframed the <sup>1</sup>*Mooi Indië* view of Balinese art to the world.

Despite many accounts that illustrate Balinese artists have long experimented with new styles and modes of art prior 1930s, and even more so with the presence of and interaction with many Western painters in the island in the 1930s, their genuine modernist works were classified as 'traditional'. The confusion about how to classify 'modern' and 'traditional' Balinese art does not fit with the narratives of the development of modern Indonesian art. Consequently, the reading and discussion of Balinese art is always separate, as if it is not part of the history of Indonesian art. So my question is, how can we bring Balinese art to be part of Indonesian art? And how do we define Balinese art in the contemporary context?

**Tell us more about the paintings in this exhibition. How do you explore the complex history of Balinese paintings and how do you bring new perspectives to your works?**

Being an outsider gives me the ability to have a healthy distance and a critical look at Balinese paintings. In a way, I have more freedom and flexibility to experiment. I believe there are two important things in regard to the development of Balinese paintings that I can suggest. One is 'conservation' of what has been considered as the 'tradition' but with a more critical understanding of its complex history. Therefore, through education, we need to reframe the reading and rewriting of Balinese art, among other things. Secondly is 'exploration', which includes embracing new ideas and outside influences. That is what I am trying to achieve through my works in this exhibition.



I have experimented with different styles, from street art to figurative works, by using different Balinese visual iconography. Last year in 2020, I started the *Our Existence Within a Scene* series. The works are non-figurative with a central focus on drawings where all the symbols and imageries are deconstructed and simplified into repetitive lines and ornamentations. I experimented with different colours, the majority of the colours that are used in Balinese paintings, such as yellow, red, blue and white.

The works in this exhibition is a continuation of the series, but I use a much darker tone, as well as some black and white paintings, in my reference to the <sup>2</sup>*Batuan* style tradition in Bali. The reading of black and white paintings also follows the *Batuan* style tradition where the work is read from below to top, in comparison to my colourful works that is read from left to right following the <sup>3</sup>*Kamasan* paintings tradition. My large-scale coloured paintings are often multi-panels, again borrowing the visual story-telling format of *Kamasan* paintings, where the work is read in sequential orders.

I still focus on drawing in the series. Balinese paintings are paintings that are made with drawing, consequently, when we talk about Balinese paintings, drawing is key and reflects the identity of Balinese paintings.

I think what is particularly new in the current body of works is that I experiment a lot more with the use of ink and how it creates certain effects that I combine with my drawings. The use of ink, which is water-based materials together with oil in my paintings, symbolize differences. The ink drop technique is about ‘chance’ and ‘control’ at the same time. I think it beautifully represents the idea of ‘conservation’ and ‘exploration’ for Balinese art in my philosophy, that is, how far you let outside elements get soaked up to create something new without destroying what you already have.

<sup>1</sup>*Mooi Indië*: or Beautiful Indies refers to the style of paintings that were popular in Indonesia during 19th century Dutch occupation. The works show the romanticized portrayals of the country, very often created by Dutch or expatriate painters living in Indonesia, as well as some Indonesian painters.

<sup>2</sup>*Batuan* style: *Batuan* style evolved in the village of Batuan, Sukawati, Gianyar since 1930s with painters like I Nyoman Ngedon, I Ketut Reneh and Ida Bagus Togog. *Batuan* style paintings are decorated with patterns in great details with lines dominating and functioning to divide spaces. Themes include tales, tantri stories and fables. Batuan painters work with watercolour or tempera on paper, and use predominantly the black and white colour technique, called *Sigar Mangsi*.

<sup>3</sup>*Kamasan* style: *Kamasan* style is considered as one of the most significant styles of Balinese traditional paintings and often classified as classical paintings. Theme and style of *Kamasan* paintings are largely influenced by *Wayang* traditions, where figures in the paintings are drawn flat two-dimensionally. Themes include epic stories of Ramayana, Mahabharata, astrological calendar and horoscopes, but also feature stories of everyday life. In the past, the works were done communal without painters signing off their names on the works. *Kamasan* paintings use colours that are often considered as “Balinese colours” and made from traditional materials, such as, white from deer antlers, black from soot, yellow from a certain type of clay or other mineral materials, blue from plants, and red from Chinese lip balms.



# Curriculum Vitae

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2020

Comparing Perspective, CGartspace, Jakarta, Indonesia.
- 2016

Balinese Graphic Art II: Painting and Drawing – Nyoman Ngendon, Pencarian Corak Seni Lukis Baru Indonesia, Edwin’s Gallery at Art Stage Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
Balinese Graphic Art: Painting and Drawing, Langgeng Art Foundation, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.
- 2012

Tales of Moving Island, S.14, Bandung, Indonesia.

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2021

Sixty Percent Around the Sun, Black Hand Gang, Artsphere Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
Hidup Berdampingan dengan Musuh, Ciputra Artpreneur, Jakarta, Indonesia.
- 2020

Art Jakarta Virtual 2020 with CG ArtSpace, Virtual Exhibition.  
ARTJOG: Resilience 2020, Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.
- 2019

Incumbent – Yogyakarta Annual Art #4, Sangkring Artpace Yogyakarta, Indonesia.  
Art Bali 2019, Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia.  
Drawing Bali Today, Sika Gallery Ubud, Bali, Indonesia.  
Art Jakarta 2019 with CG Artspace, Jakarta, Indonesia.

Art Moments Jakarta 2019 with CG Artspace, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
Intention Please!, Edwin’s Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia.

- 2018

ART BALI 2018 , Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia.  
NU-Abstract: The NU - Abstract, Orbital Dago Gallery, Bandung, Indonesia.  
NU-Abstract: Balinese Abstract, Edwin Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
Art Jakarta 2018 with CG Artspace, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
Spectrum Hendra Gunawan, Ciputra Artpreneur, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
Redraw III: Ugahari, Edwin’s Gallery Jakarta, Indonesia.  
NU-Abstract: Political Aesthetic, Nadi Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
NU-Abstract, Langgeng Art Foundation, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.
- 2017

Art Stage Jakarta with CG Art Space, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
Kecil Itu Indah XV, Edwin’s Gallery, Jakarta,Indonesia.  
What’s Next, Sika Gallery, Bali, Indonesia.
- 2016

Contemporary Art from Bali, Langgeng Art Foundation, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.  
Crossing: Beyond Bali Seering, 45downstairs, Melbourne, Australia.  
ENCOUNTER: Art from Different Lands – Southeast Asia Plus (SEA+) Triennial 2016, National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
Art Taipei 2016, Edwin’s Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan.  
Neo Pitamaha – Bazaar Art Jakarta 2016, Ritz Carlton Ballroom Pacific Place, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
Redraw II: Discovery, Edwin’s Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
Art Fair Philippines 2016, Michael Janssen Gallery, The Philippines.  
Art Stage Singapore 2016, Singapore.
- 2015

Art Taipei 2015, Equator Art Project, Taipei, Taiwan.  
Toyama International Art Camp 2015, Toyama, Japan.



*Violent Bali with Neo Pitamaha*, Tony Raka Contemporary Art Gallery, Bali, Indonesia.  
*Kemalezedine Special Presentation of Bazaar Art Jakarta 2015*, Ritz Carlton Ballroom Pacific Place, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
*Void*, Langgeng Gallery, Magelang, Indonesia.  
*Rooms With a View – Art Moments: Jogja 2015*, Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.  
*NOW: Here – There – Everywhere* with Neo Pitamaha, Semarang Contemporary Art Gallery, Semarang, Indonesia.  
*Neo Pitamaha, Paradigma Baru Seni Lukis Bali*, Platform3, Bandung, Indonesia.  
*Inside/Out*, Braddock Tiles Event, Brooklyn Street Art Event Manhattan, New York, USA.

**2014**

*Art Supermart 2014*, Sika Gallery Ubud, Bali, Indonesia.  
*Dickies Art Charity 2014*, Melbourne, Australia.  
*Pameran Besar Seni Rupa Se-Indonesia*, Taman Budaya Jayapura, Papua, Indonesia.  
*Bazaar Art Jakarta 2014*, Ritz Carlton Ballroom Pacific Place, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
*Kota Tua Creative Festival 2014*, Kota Tua, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
*Good and Wood*, Ciputra Artpreneur, Jakarta, Indonesia.  
*Legacies of Power – ARTJOG 2014*, Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.  
*Manifesto No.4: Keseharian “Mencandra Tanda-tanda Masa”*, National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia.

**2013**

*Pameran Ilustrasi Cerpen Kompas 2012*, Bentara Budaya Bali, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia.  
*Mythography: Now*, Sukadara Art Space, Sanur, Bali, Indonesia.  
*Bazaar Art Jakarta 2013*, Ritz Carlton Ballroom Pacific Place, Jakarta,

Indonesia.

*JALAN MONSTER*, Ubud Public Art Festival, Seniman Industries Art Project, Ubud, Bali, Indonesia.

*Art Mini Mart*, Sika Gallery Ubud, Bali, Indonesia.

*Art Bromo: Collision of Nature and Culture*, Java Banana Gallery, Mt. Bromo, Probolinggo, Indonesia.

**2012**

*Reposisi*, National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia.

*Renegotiating Boundaries*, Lawangwangi Art Space, Bandung, Indonesia.

*Indonesian Contemporary Art #1: Mapping*, ART: 1, Jakarta, Indonesia.

**2008**

*Showcase Showdown*, Guerillas Art Space, Bandung, Indonesia.



SANTY  
SAPTARI  
Art Consulting

+61 451 929 741 | [art@santysaptari.com](mailto:art@santysaptari.com)  
[www.santysaptari.com](http://www.santysaptari.com)  
PO BOX 316, Carlton South, VIC 3053, Australia

**CG**artspace