



EGLĖ PILKAUSKAITĖ

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Eglė Pilkauskaitė is a mixed media artist based in Vilnius. Her practice is rooted in conceptual investigations of themes such as: ruins, displacement, the anthropocene, or new materialism, and driven by exploration of various industrial, as well as craft-oriented, techniques and materials.



Contacts

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in Vilnius, Lithuania
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Dialectical landscape

2016

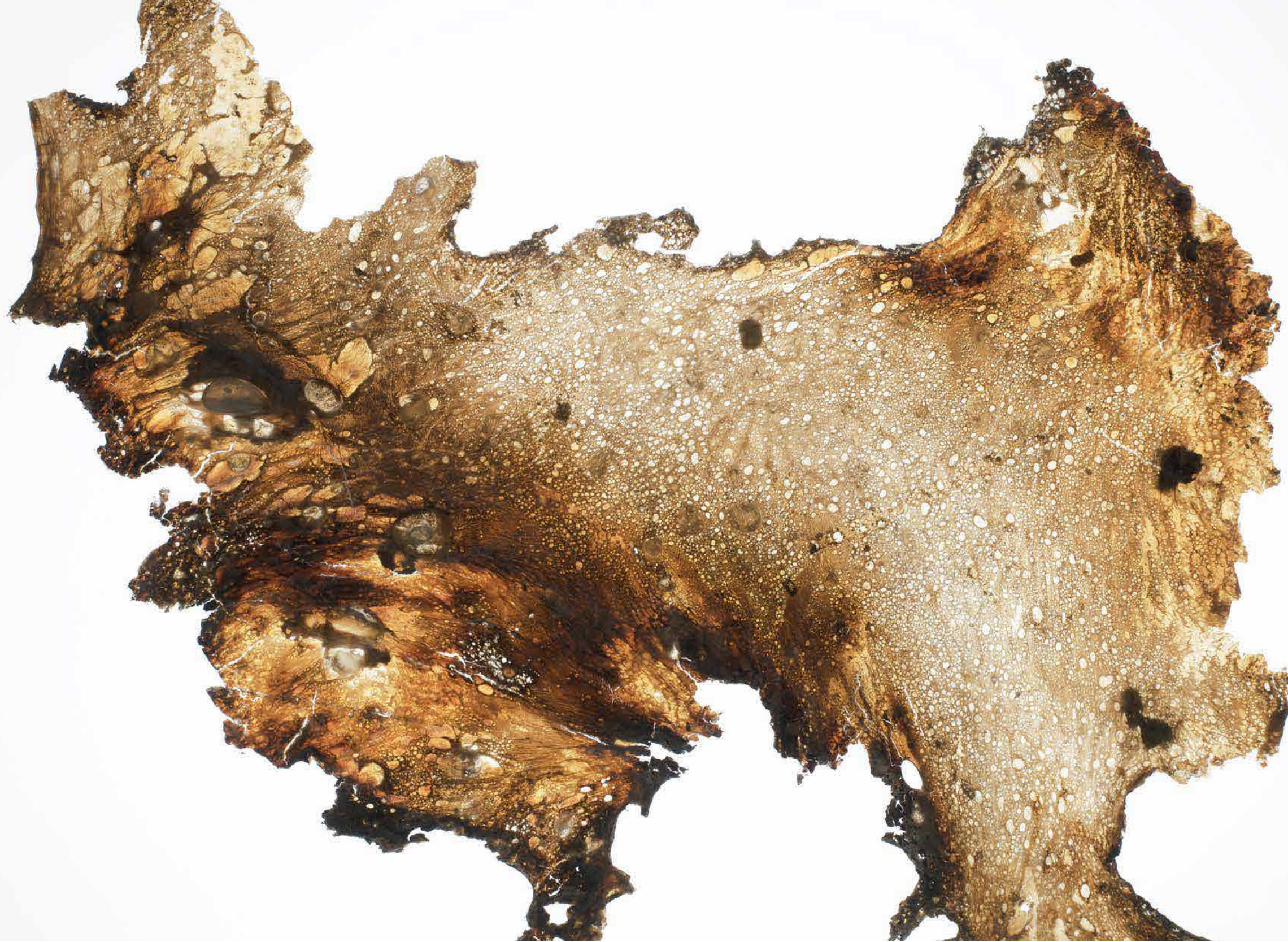


wood, glass, led light, dirt

40 x 40 x 16 cm



foto credit: S. Mačiulskas



The key concept behind this work was the interrogation of our modes of perception and cognition. At the first contact with the piece it is almost impossible to determine the origin of the exposed object. From the outset the lightbox resembles a museum exhibit, with an intrinsic archeological value, yet the perception of it changes once the source of the piece is revealed. The process of appreciation of the beauty of an artefact turns into one of admiration of a formation of dirt - a product of pollution. Challenging the pre-established concepts of beauty is a recurrent interest I cultivate in my work.

The dirt used in this piece was originally found on a street in London. It is an incredibly fragile material, comparable to a peeled skin tissue or a wing of a butterfly. It comes from a specific place, yet it does not bear any recognizable signs of its primary location. Its distinctive shape

resembles a map, or an outline of a continent, however it does not serve as cartography of a particular space. Instead, it simply creates an allusion to a location and can be treated as a dialectical landscape; the surface of the streets marked by dirt becomes an unconventional archive of the city.

The work also presents a personal dimension. The dirt forming this piece accompanied me on my travels around Europe. Now, that it is preserved, it relates to all those places at once and no one place in particular. It becomes an interesting, more personal and singular variation of a non-place. The space it represents, and at the same time creates, is deterritorialized. It becomes immobilized, and its original pluralistic distance becomes immeasurable.

Object in black

2016

Giclee print on Fine Art
Photo Rag, 308 g paper

100 cm x 100 cm
edition 3 of 3

framed
(3-004; 10101050)

60 x 60 cm
edition 5 of 5



foto credit: S. Mačiulskas

Paper surface – any surface

2016



pencil, paper, framed
(3-004; 10101050)

85 x 55 cm



foto credit: P. Saulėnas, V. Petrošius

video available at:

<https://youtu.be/KgyIFyWuDMM>



Symbiosis

2016



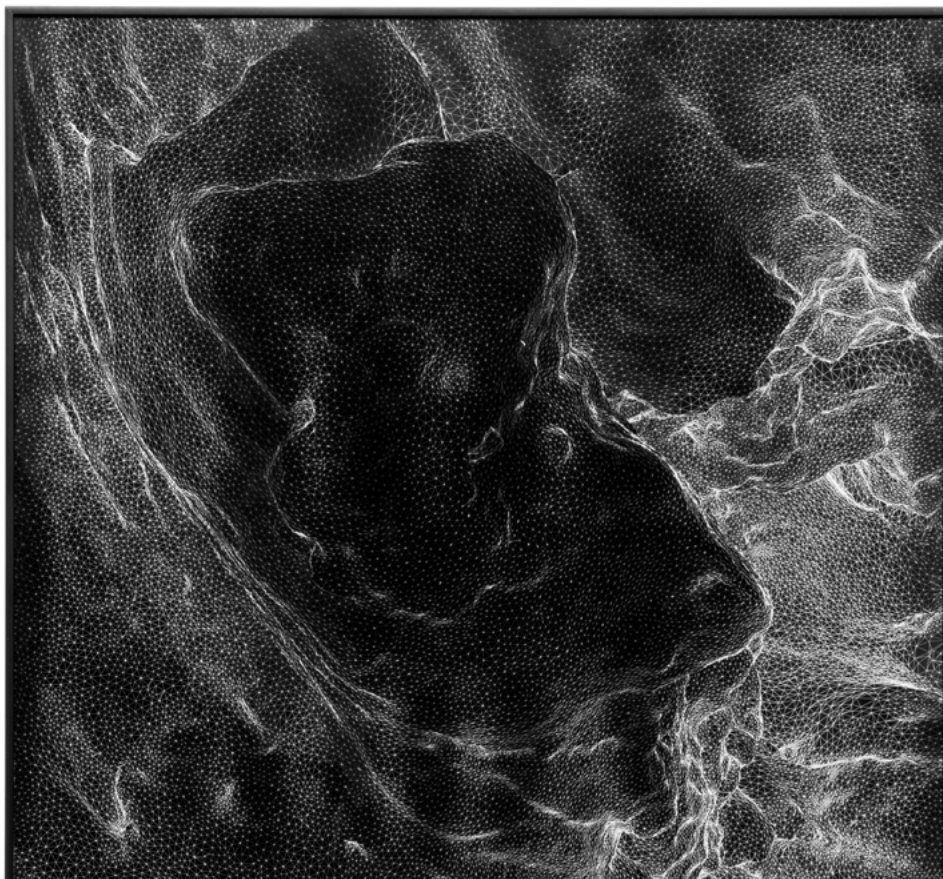
Symbiosis is a series of artwork oscillating between the themes of the organic - the analogue - the digital, as well as the relationship between authenticity and reproduction. The essence of the work is carried out in both spatial and temporal dimensions, encompassing a vast array of techniques and craftsmanship. The series originates from a natural phenomenon and concludes in a series of highly technical prints, contributing to the discussion of art and authenticity in relation to copy and reproduction - the omnipresent discourse ever since Walter Benjamin's 1935 famous essay 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction'. While Benjamin is highly suspicious of the effect technical practices such as photography might have on the 'aura', the authenticity of the work of art, Pilkauskaite shifts the main focus to the question of identity.

The series follows the tropes recurrent in the oeuvre of Pilkauskaite, with the crucial emphasis on the creative process itself. Here, the process examines the relationship between the technological, the technical, and the techne. The initial sculptural objects take their shape directly from a cast of a tree burl, therefore on one hand they constitute a copy, yet on the other, they become artefacts preserving the DNA of an organic phenomenon, and represent a uniquely precious, indexical relationship with nature. This relationship is maintained throughout the whole series, even while the subsequent techniques (3d scanning, rendering and contact printing) become more mechanical and technologically intricate. The artist's main stake in this indexicality is contact.

The contact carrying the work's identity is both analogue (the two collapsing into one - the tactile sculpting process) and digital (the singular one splitting into two - the laser touching the sculpture and translating its surface into a full binary map). The initial object undergoes a process of transformation, fragmenting, and detachment, yet its identity gets preserved as an eternal spectre in its every subsequent iteration. The initial function and purpose of the tree burl is lost, however, fragments of its identity are still haunting the derived artefacts. In the final pieces crowning the series - the large-scale prints- the agent of creation is the light, not the binary code. While the digital mesh can be conceptualised as a shadow of the original pieces, here, the contact transforms the tactile into the luminous. The digitally constructed shadow translates into analogue light and concludes the series.

Pilkauskaite finds the delicate balance between respecting the found object she works with, and channeling her own creative input and artistic direction. The work in its various stages and mutations always preserves the quality of the direct touch and contact with the source material, yet simultaneously transgresses the constraints of mere mechanical reproduction, creating elaborate works of art which preserve the close relationship with their organic origins.

Magdalena Krysztoforska



Left:

contact print, photographic paper, framed

edition 1 of 1
50 x 50 cm

Right:

plaster cast, flock fibre
14 x 16.5 x 13.5 cm

Foto credit:

Petras Saulėnas

left:

bronze

23 × 23 × 18 cm

right:

bronze

14 × 16.5 × 13.5 cm

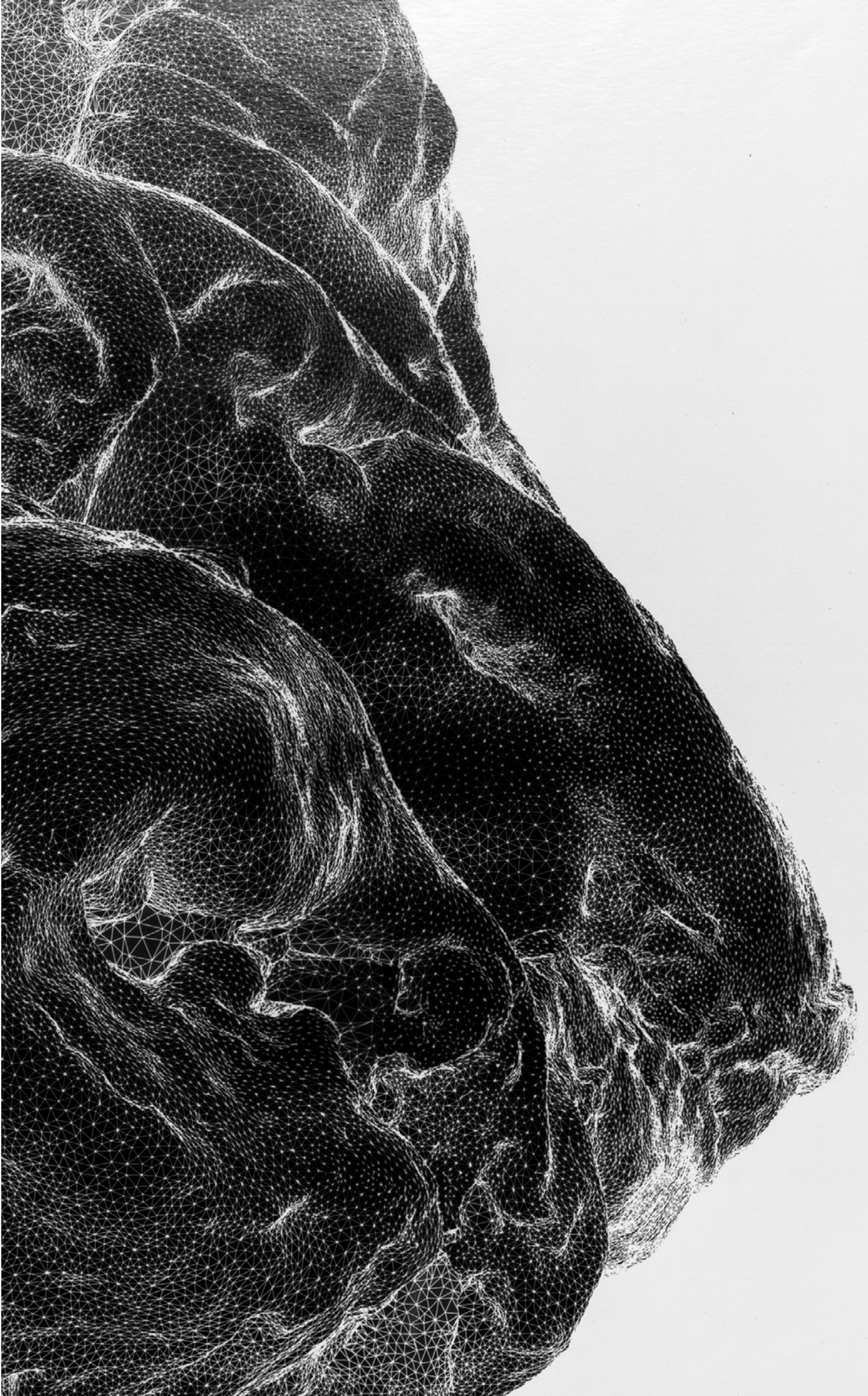


foto credit:
B. Navanglauskas,
S. Mačiulskas



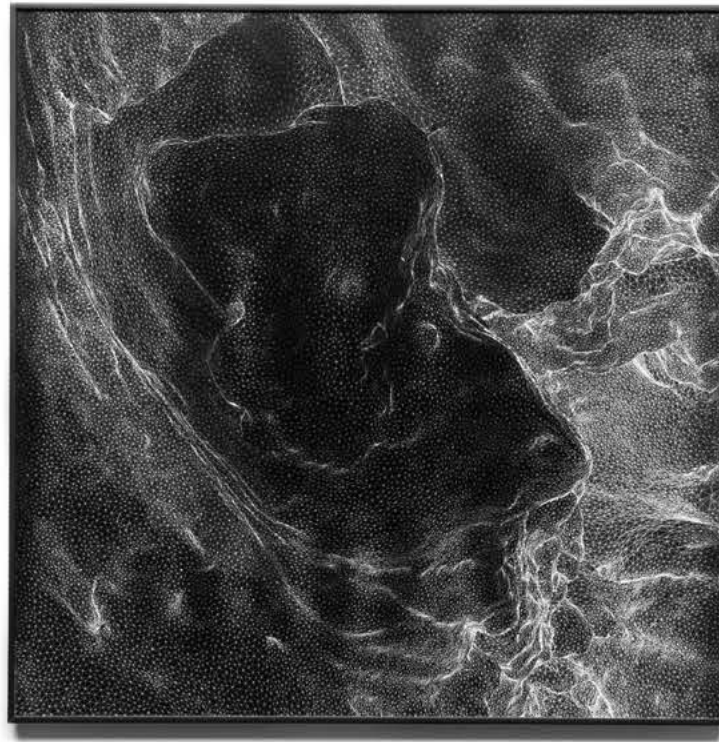
gelatin silver contact print,
photographic paper, framed

edition 1 of 1
50 x 50 cm



gelatin silver contact print,
photographic paper, framed

edition 1 of 1
50 x 50 cm



plaster cast, flock fibre

23 × 23 × 18 cm



plaster cast, flock fibre

23 × 23 × 18 cm



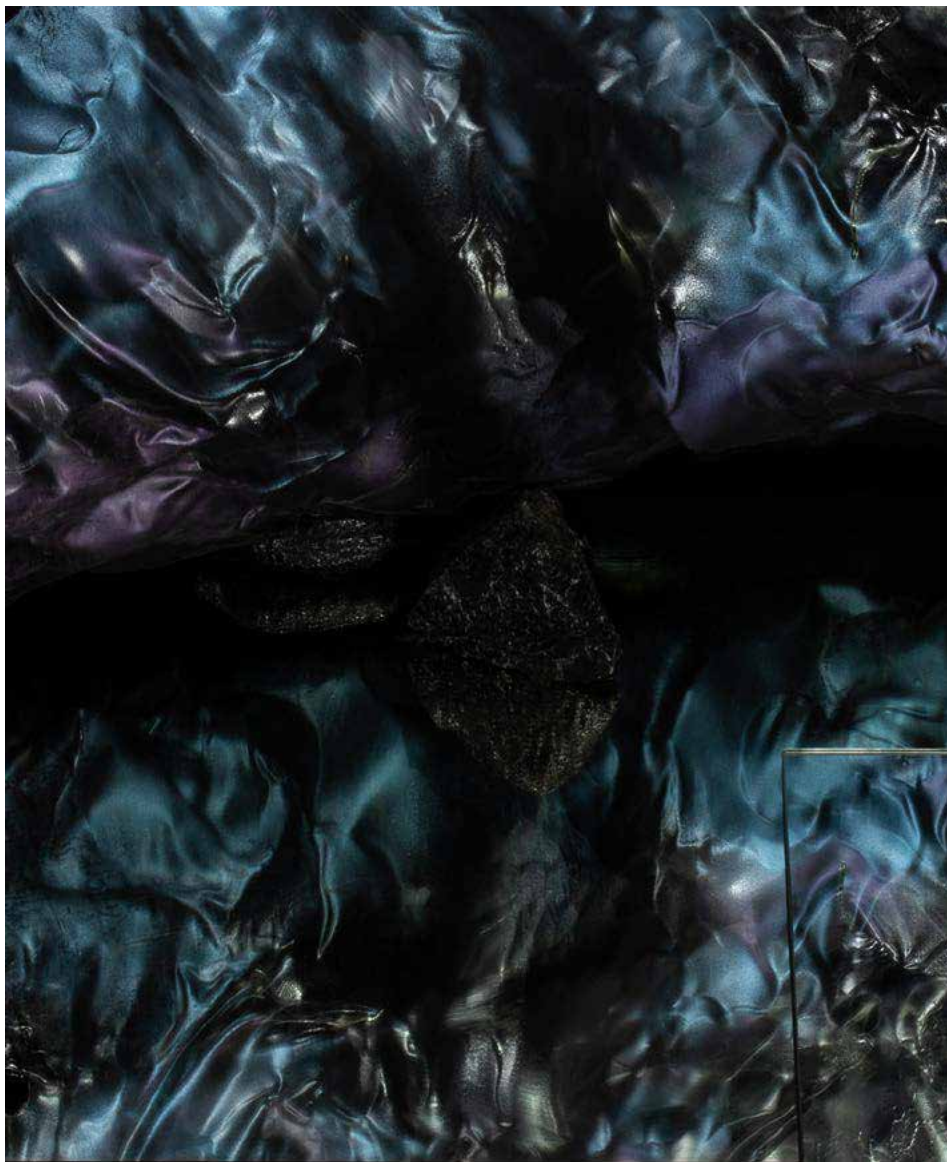
plaster cast, flock fibre

23 × 23 × 18 cm



Alterations in pleasure

2019

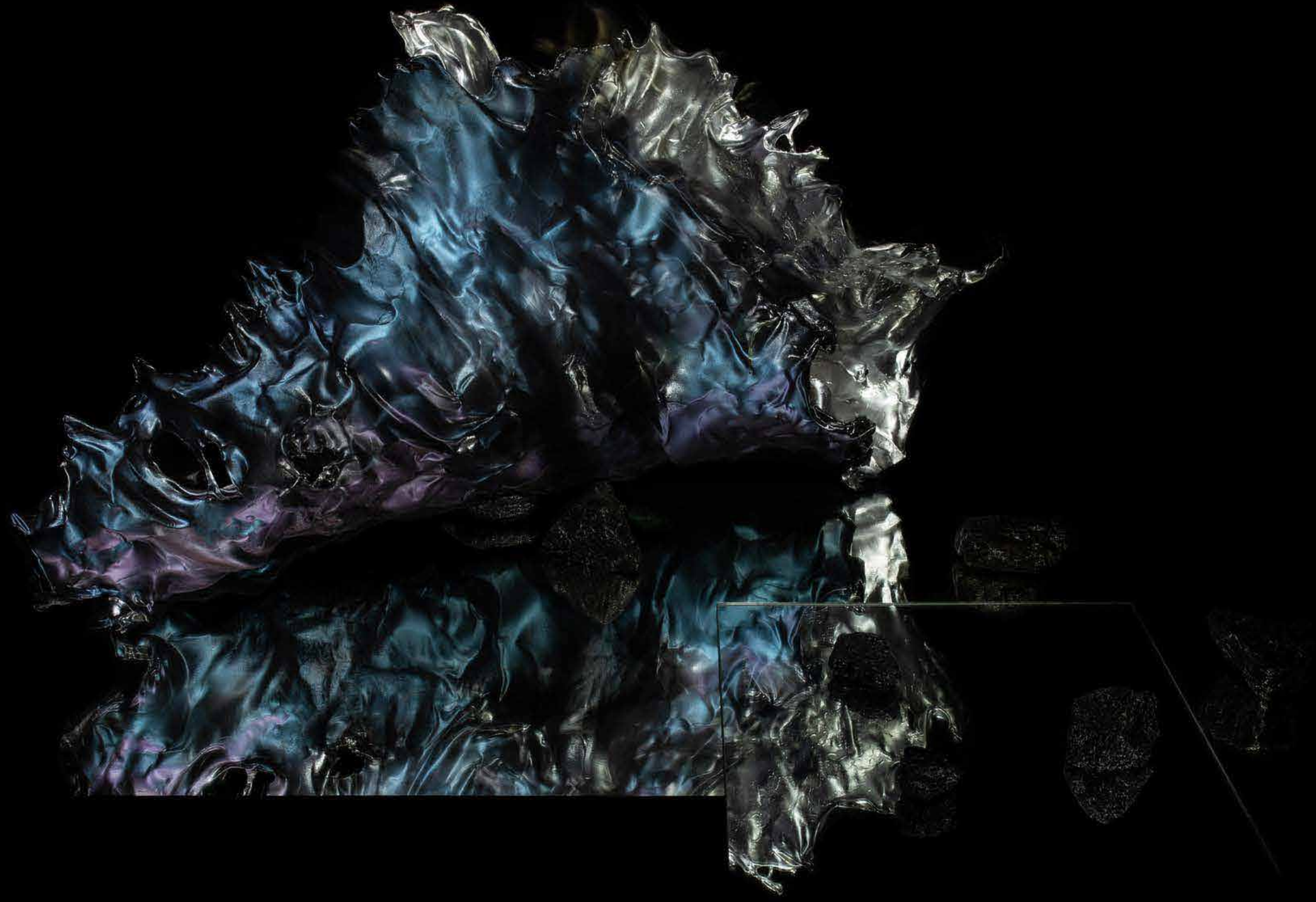


plastic, paint

120 x 60 x 45 cm



foto credit: E. Pilkauskaitė, S. Mačiulskas



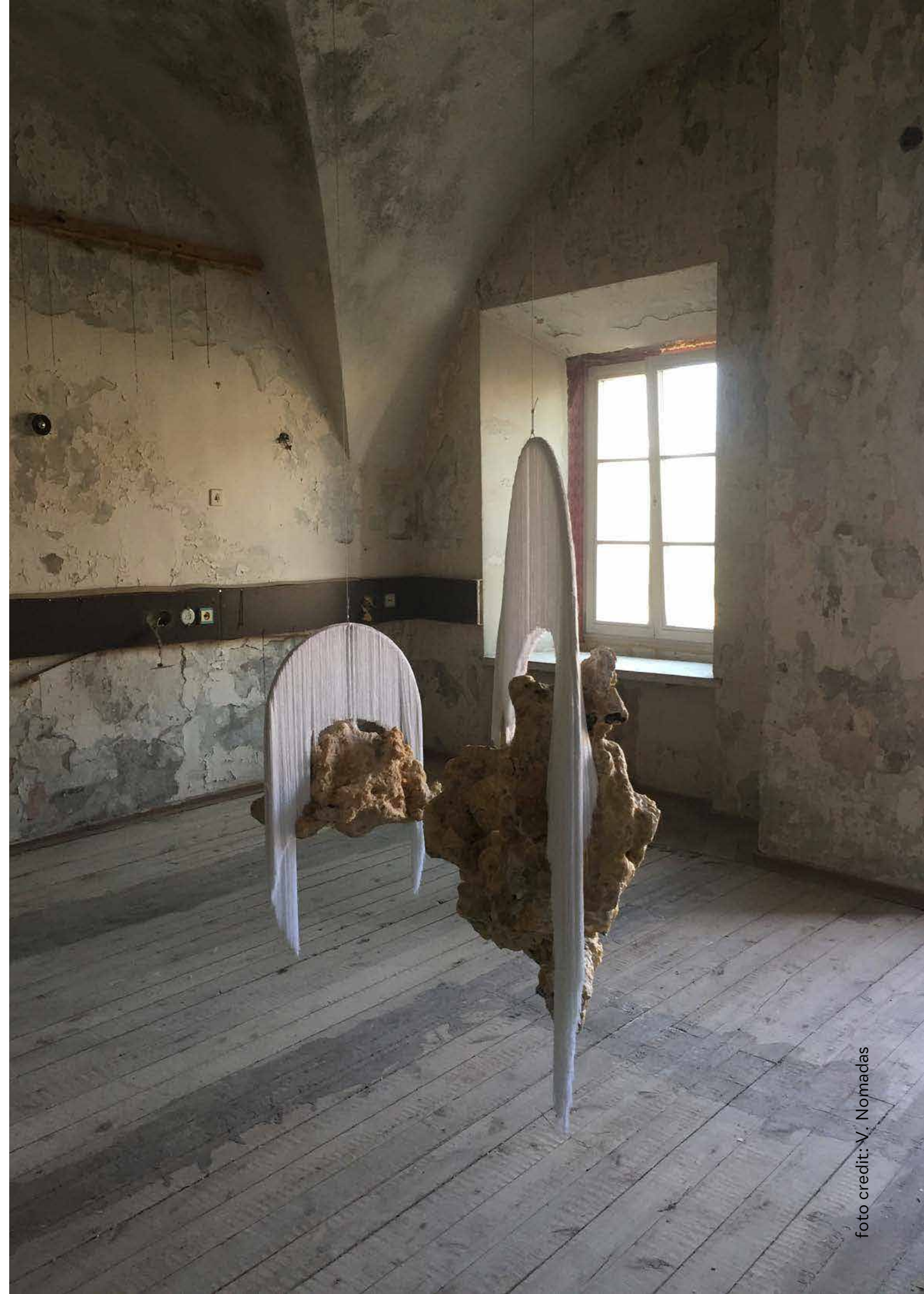
Soap between fingers

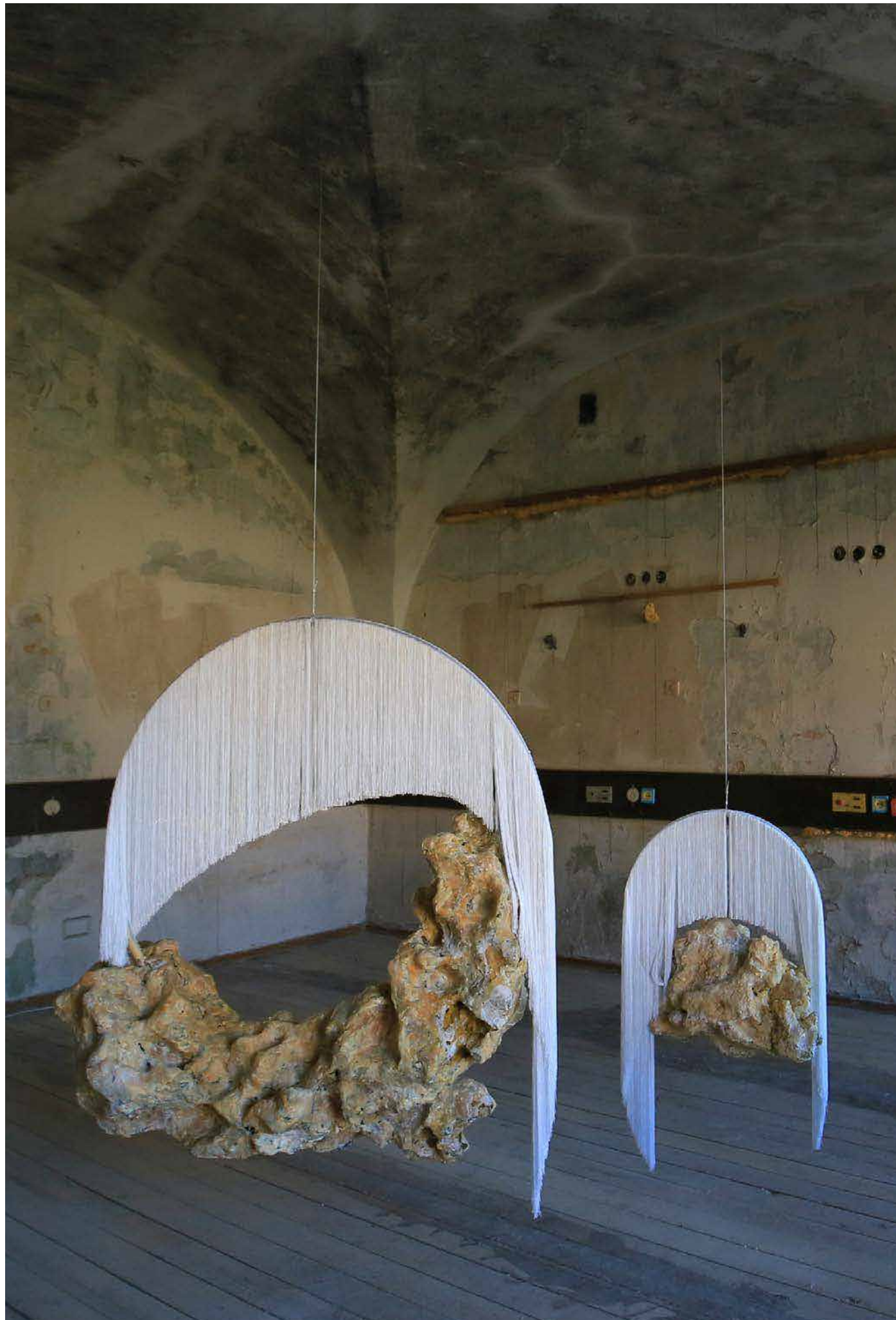
2020



soap, aluminum, fabric, foam

200 x 500 cm





My work is based on the common social belief of biblical women, stating that personal things related to corporeality should be hidden, left only for intimate use, only for one's eyes and not brought to the public. Similarly, lye soap* is generally not exhibited for guests to see - it is usually hidden in a closet or a pantry, reminiscent of an unattended heel surface, and is used only for household purposes. The use of soap evokes an association with a ritual of removing personal emotional dirt.

Thus, the main material of these works is lye soap. It was important to me to maintain its authentic and recognisable texture and scent. Recognition and association, identification are very important - each of us has or can remember having some kind of a personal relationship with this material. It is important to emphasise that this relationship is usually not based on romanticised nostalgia, as is often thought of when talking about the past. I wanted to touch on the topics of privacy and cleansing from dirt.

The symbolism of the ring is revealed in the shapes of the objects. Using this concept I sought to convey a hint to the themes of the marriage sacrament and an uninterrupted ritual, a repetitive action. After cleaning, the soap residue often remains between the ring and the finger. The shapes of hardened soap confront the white veil of fabric hanging from the top of the objects.

The impeccably white fabric can be interpreted as an impossible pursuit of perfection. Just as in an ordinary life, the action takes place indoors, inside of the ring.

*Lye soap is a homemade soap, which is typically made with animal fats and drippings, mixed with lye water and boiled. This type of soap is a multi purpose soap that can be used for many household purposes, such as washing clothes or curing poison ivy and mosquito bites.

interview with the Lithuanian public broadcaster,
Lithuanian Radio and Television, available at:

<https://bit.ly/3ppvKzg>

start – 10:55



Soil surface

2020



commission for the
restaurant Nineteen18

soil, plaster, steel, paint

95 x 95 x 185 cm



foto credit: S. Maciulskas





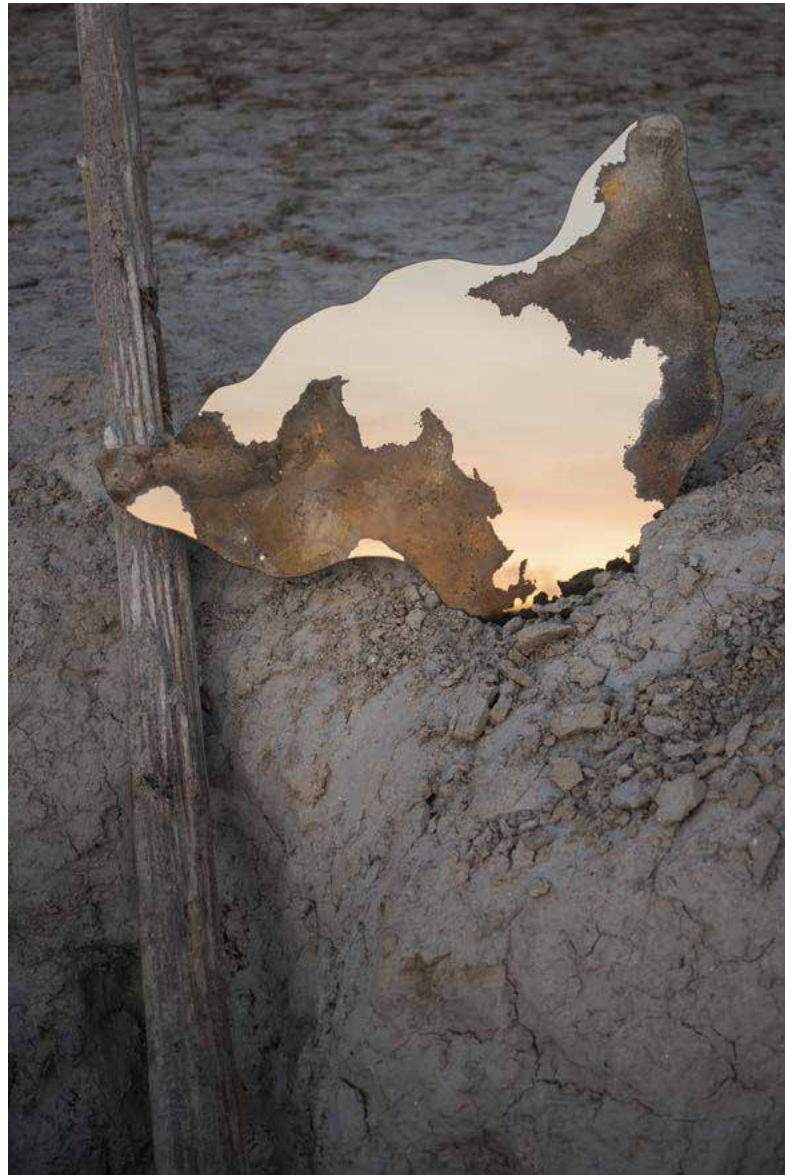
video available at:

<http://youtu.be/mm6ai8c4AJg>



Mirrors

2020



burned mirror, paint,
flock fibre

79 x 55; 80 x 90 cm



foto credit: T. Kaliukevičiūtė



The aesthetic value of work is created by a peculiar conflict of used materials. Being washed by thinner (dissolving) image is attempted to be saved by fire. While performing the fixer function, fire immortalizes the simulated “drama” of the disappearing image. The dialectic image appearing in the present work seeks to actualize narratives of a possibly mouldering memory.





Commission for Nineteen18 restaurant

2018 – 2020



mirror

burned mirror, paint

190 x 76 cm

2020

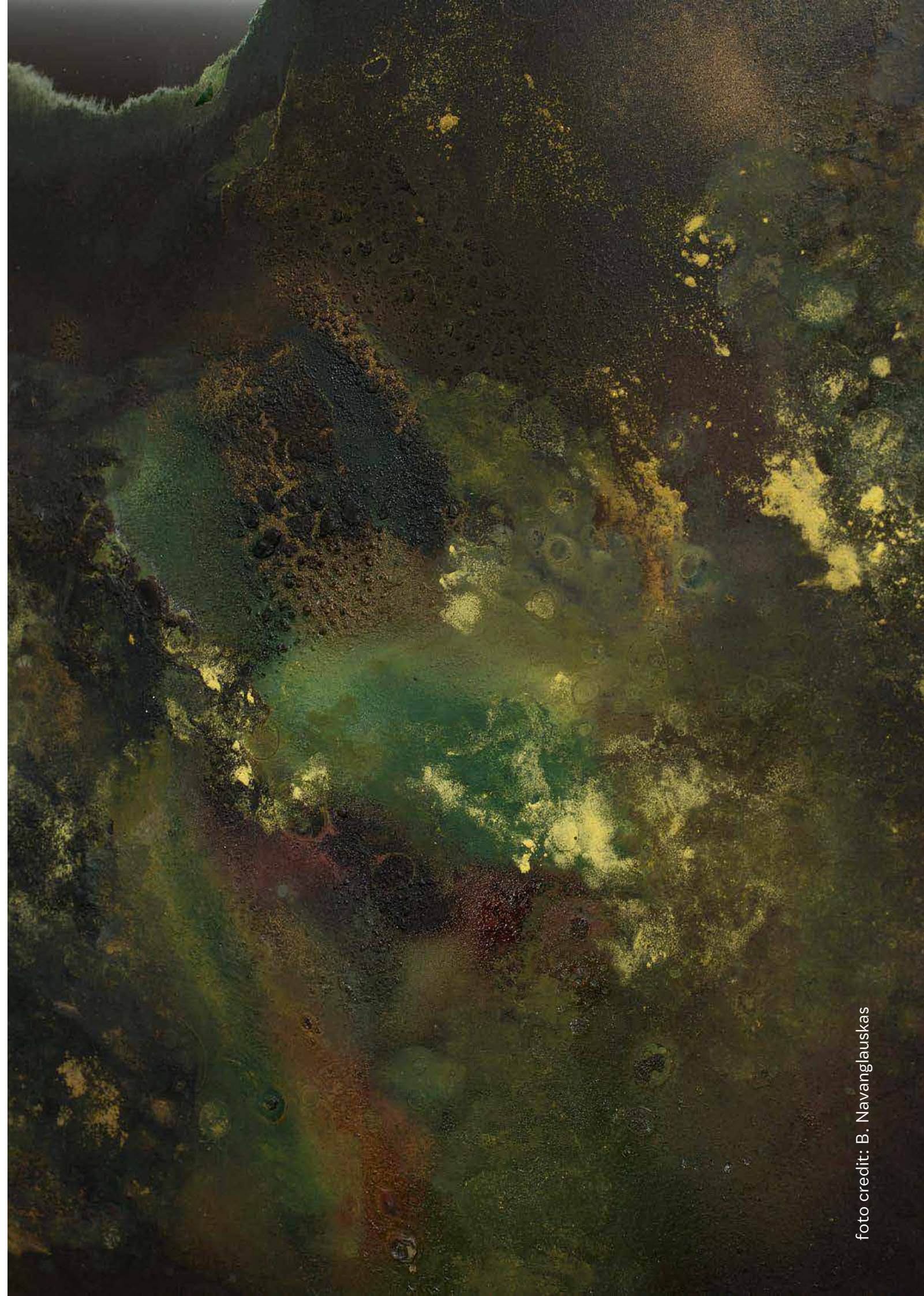








foto credit: B. Navanglauskas





Interior

2020

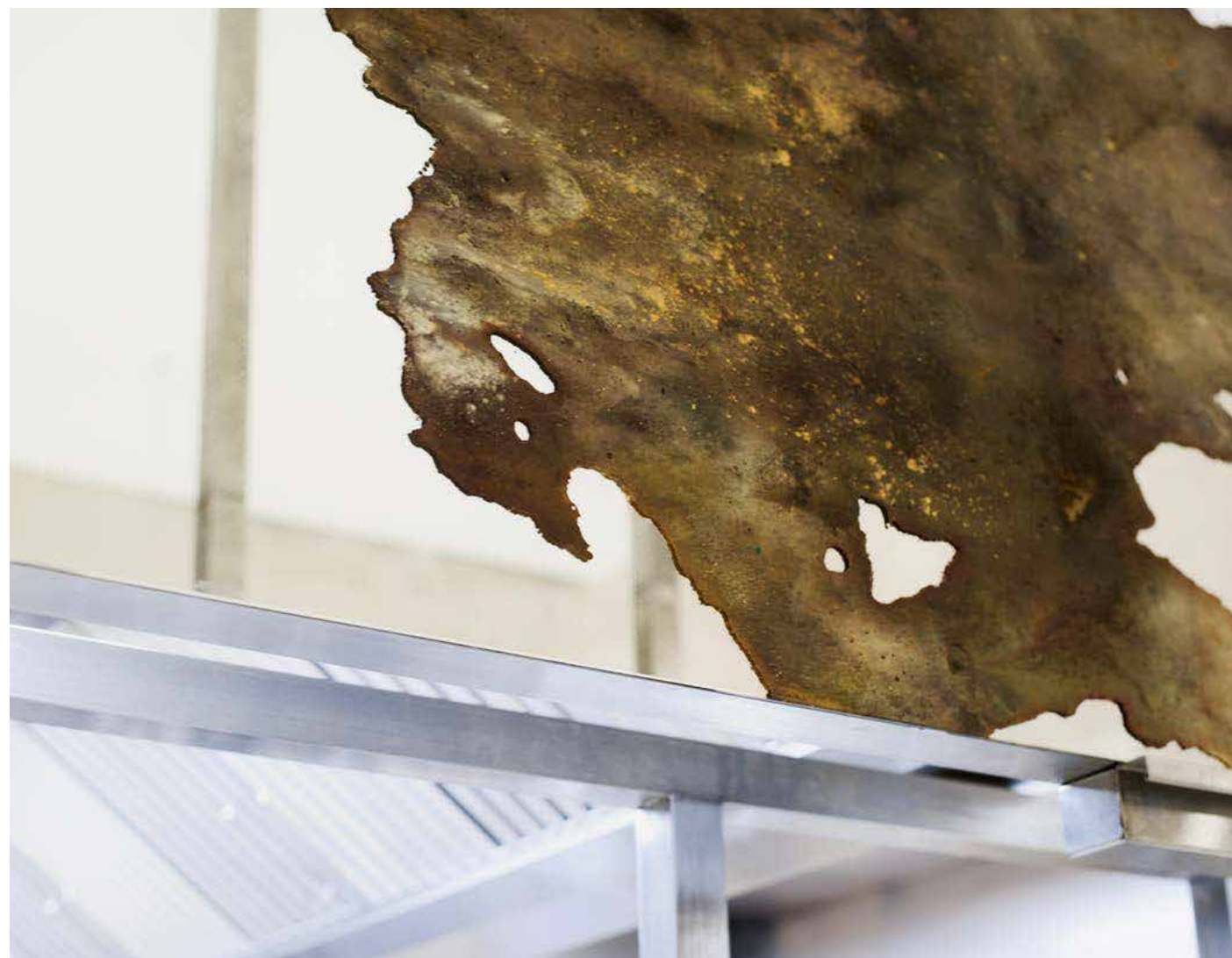


foto credit: B. Navanglauskas





Repetitive labour routine

2017



steel, tar, wax, artificial
velvet, oak

113 x 116 cm

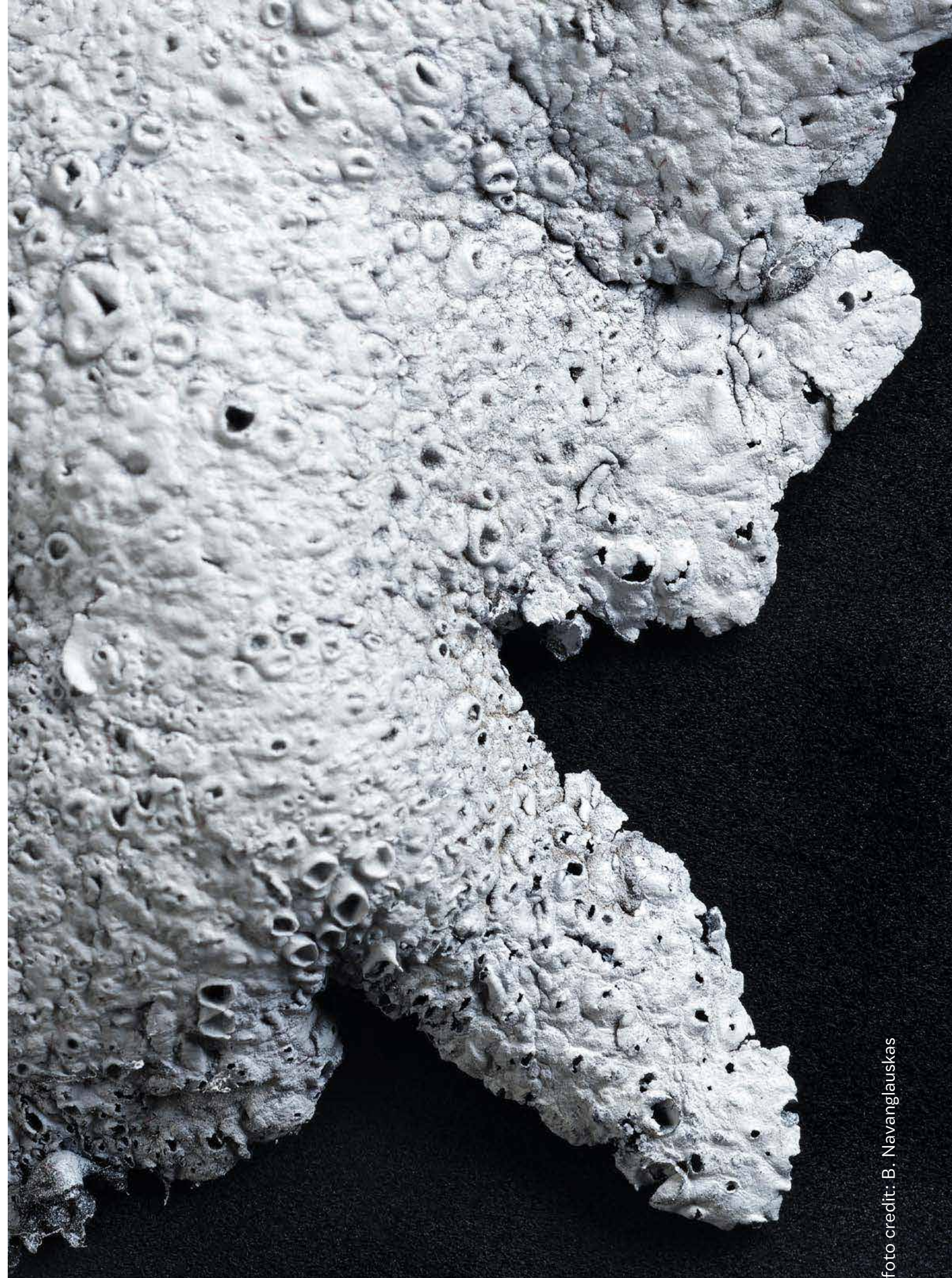


foto credit: B. Navanglauskas

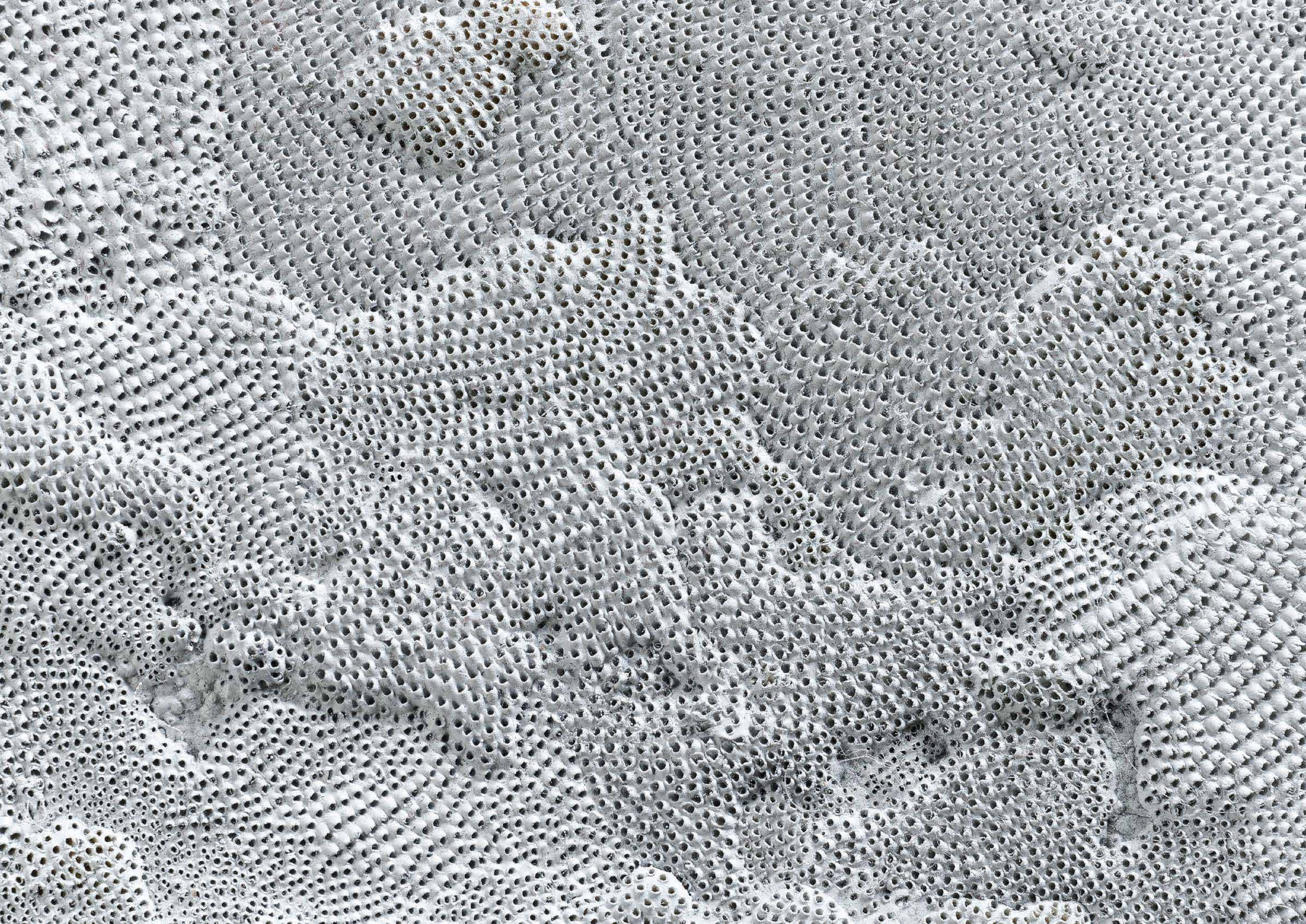


The piece interrogates the themes of identity of objects and the multifaceted nature of processual creative practice. In functions affectively on a spectrum of volume - at first it astounds with its scale, yet the more it draws in attention, the more distinct minute detail gets revealed. The main driving force behind the piece is the blending of boundaries between the initial found object and the handcrafted wax layer. The technique used requires a continuous, uniquely detail-oriented and repetitive process, which becomes a constant meditative negotiation between following the spontaneous structure of the found object and imposing a new, carefully crafted layer upon it. As a result, we witness an encounter between the natural force of fire and the Promethean drive to remaking the given. In this case, the particular process of making becomes meticulous needlework, positing typically feminized labour as a new site for Promethean ambitions.









Wind

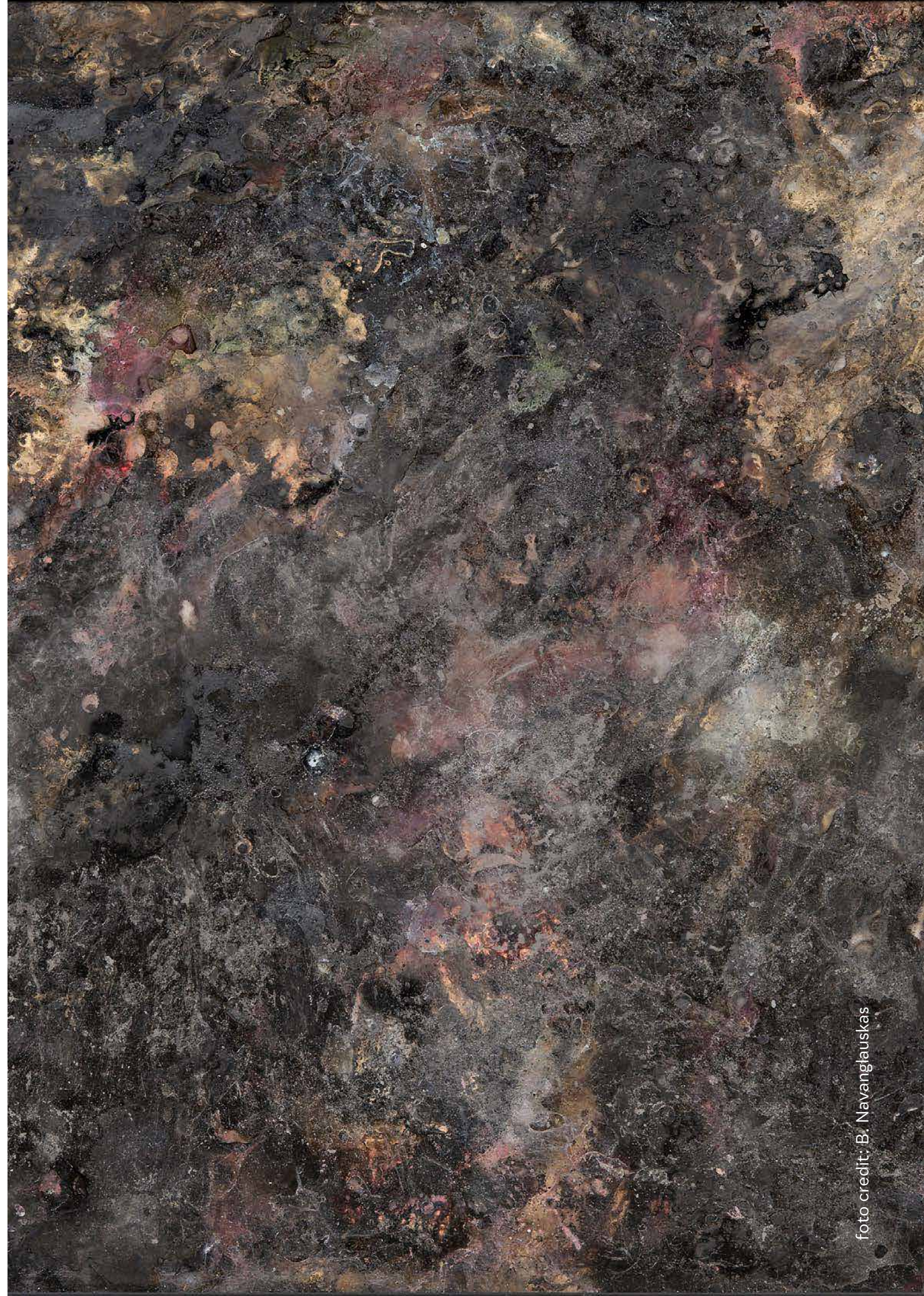
2018



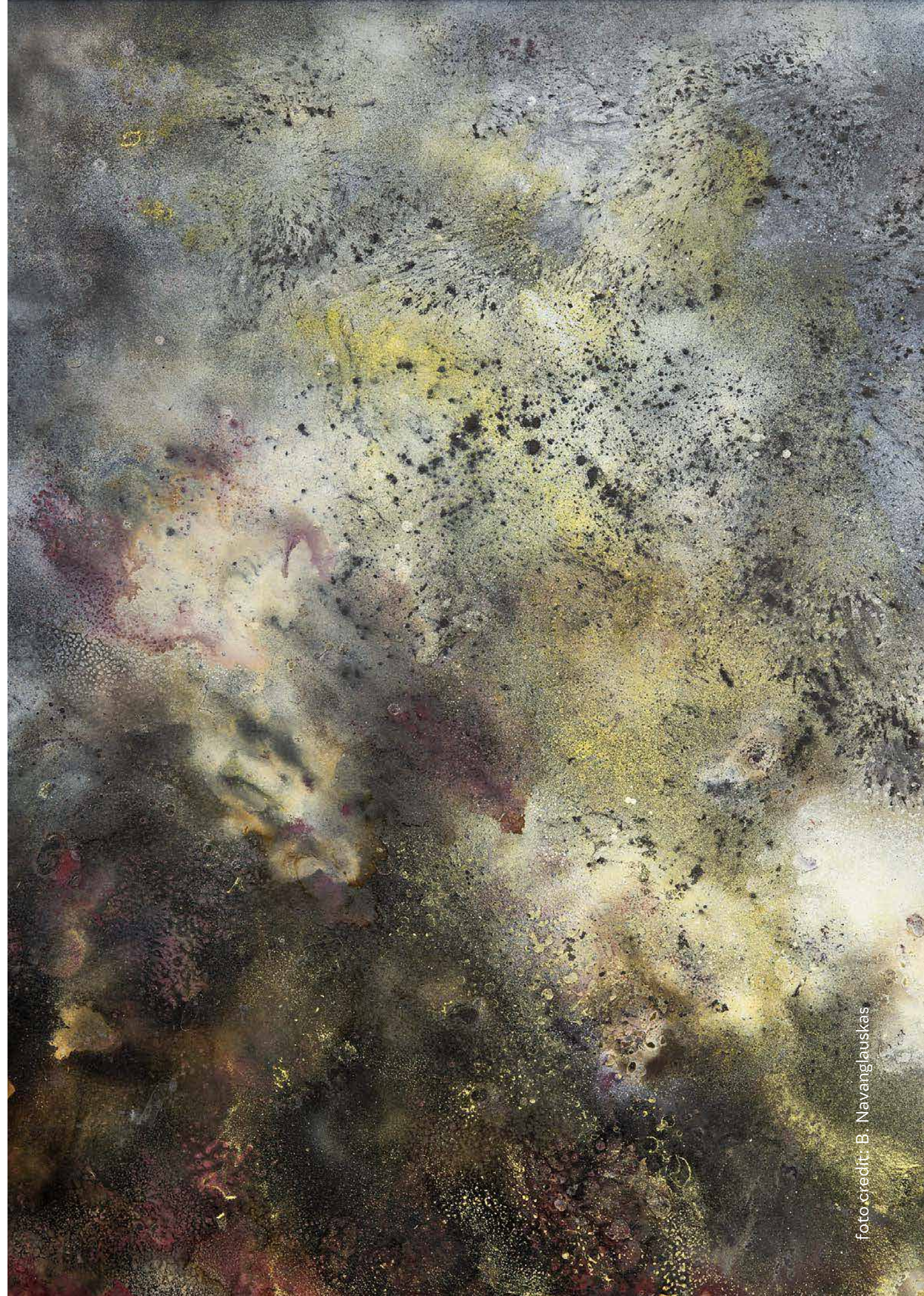
burned glass, paint,
bronze dust

framed, 90 × 90 cm

2018



The aesthetic value of work is created by a peculiar conflict of used materials. Being washed by thinner (dissolving) image is attempted to be saved by fire. While performing the fixer function, fire immortalizes the simulated “drama” of the disappearing image. The dialectic image appearing in the present work seeks to actualize narratives of a possibly mouldering memory.





Anamnesis

2020



bronze

220 x 150 x 130 cm



foto credit: B. Navangliauskas



Inspiration:

Allegory of the Cave. In his Republic, Plato uses a well-known Allegory of the Cave. It narrates about people imprisoned in the cave who have never experienced or seen life outside the cave. External shadows and echoes they perceive as the only acceptable truth and reality. When one of the prisoners is freed, he not dares to leave the cave. Only habitual things look acceptable and safe to him. Despite his resistance and against his will he is brought to the daylight. Outside blinded by clear light he gradually becomes acquainted with real objects that were perceived only by their reflections and shadows in the dark and their significance.

Piece or object:

Direct bronze casting of real stub, felled and rooted out. In this case, uprooting of the tree is strong and brutal action which is important both in the sense of symbol and physical action metaphorically expressing both rising to the light and immersion to the darkness. This action definitely binds object and Plato's story. Roots should be precepted as mediator between two inseparable poles connecting light and darkness. The story by Plato tells about problem of acceptance of truth and indifference, and this problem nowadays remains essential. Ancientry of the story emphasizes relevance of the problem and stimulates perception of the existence of human being. This piece also analyzes human's demand to remain in the position of strength towards nature, relationships and beliefs.



Erotic massage for a wood sculpture

The relationship between the author and the sculptural object developed during the creative process is always special and multi-layered. I removed the layers of bark from the tree burl, as if I undressed it gently. The polishing process revealed surface relief of a sleek shape and it became more and more fleshlike. The materiality and form of the object clearly suggest its natural completeness. In the shown video projection, the oiling of the wood is performed with the systematic movements of an erotic massage master. Although it is a special tactile method, at first glance it is almost no different from ordinary surface coating with oil. A slight change in hand movement creates a new meaning and raises the question - are we seeing the work by fetishizing it.

2022

Duration:
5min

Video editing:
Stasys Maciulskas

Camera:
Lukas Keizikas

Performance:
Dovilė



foto credit: Lukas Keizikas

video available at:

<https://youtu.be/gDxV14FGKNw>



Road sign table

2022

The lower part of the road sign is designed to be invisible. The amorphous concrete casting which ensures the stability of the pole, remains underground for decades - as long as the sign serves its function. These concrete castings are brought to the surface during rare periods of transition - roadworks or specific changes.



Exhibition:

The Invisibles. Historic Furniture
from a Contemporary
Design Perspective

Museum of Applied
Arts and Design

Left:

plaster cast, flock fibre
14 × 16.5 × 13.5 cm

Right:

glass, concrete, steel, cold zinc
45 × 46 × 114 cm



Copper electroforming

2021



100 x 7 cm

120 x 8 cm



foto credit: S. Mačiulskas







The Face of Soil #2

2023



Gallery:
apiece

Exhibition curators:
Milena Černiakaitė and
Aušra Trakšelytė

Communication:
Menų Komunikacija

Graphic design:
Marek Volda

concreate, soil, steel
85 x 85 x 130 cm



foto credit: Laurynas Skeisgiela

Eglė Pilkauskaitė
Soil Surface #2

www.apiece.lt







Disruptive coloration

2022



Play with Glass
European Glass Festival 2022

Melting borders
the main exhibition

Arttrakt Gallery,
Wrocław, Poland

Curator:
Dalia Truskaitė



foto credit: Alicja Kielan





Familiar object

2022



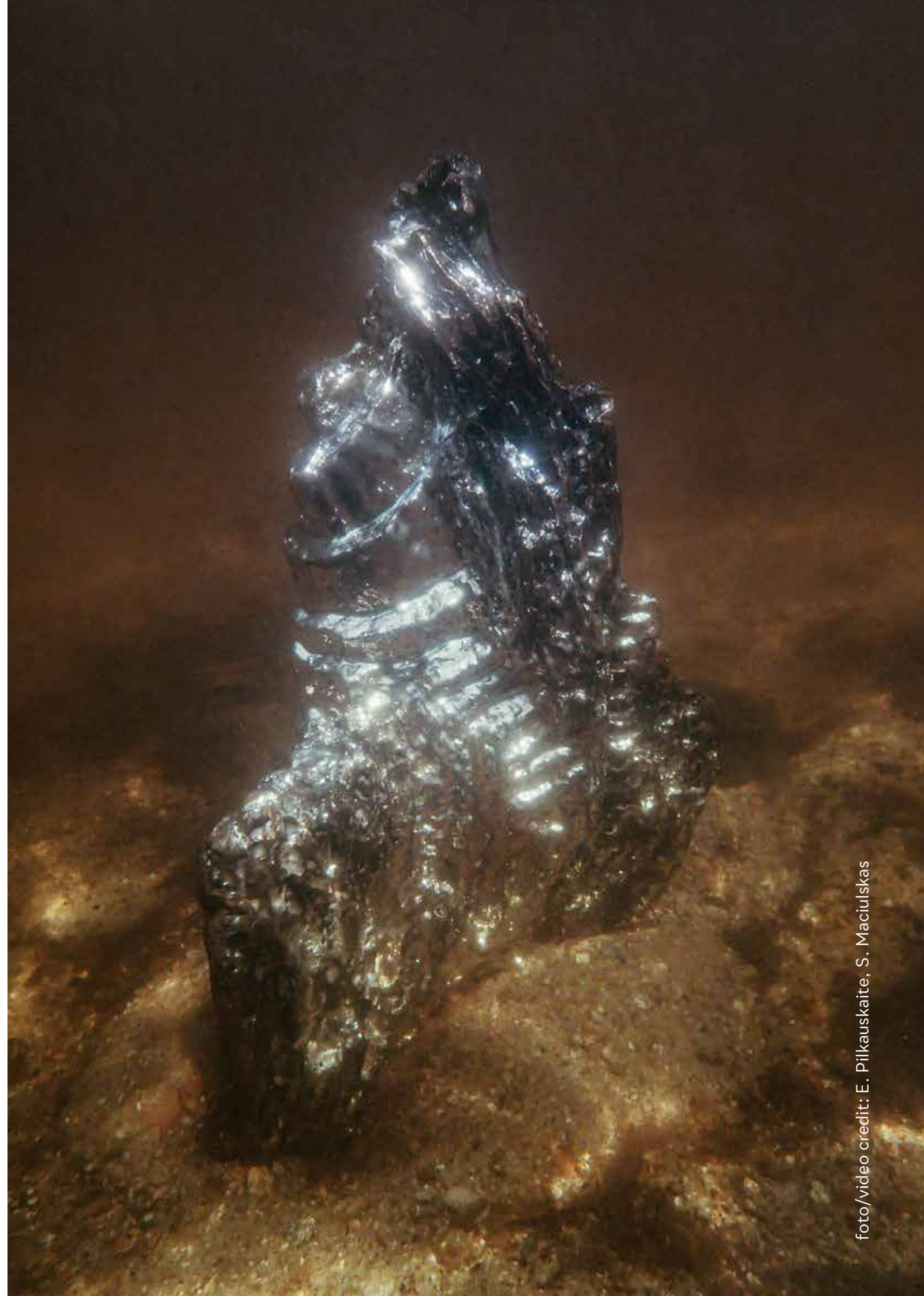
video available at:

<https://vimeo.com/584479870>

<https://vimeo.com/582456705>

bronze, silver nitrate

14 x 21 x 12 cm



foto/video credit: E. Pilkauskaitė, S. Maciulskas

October

2022



157 x 99 cm



foto credit: Stasys Mačiulis



The Column

2023

The Column is a sculptural object referring in its visual expression to self-made improvements to the interiors or exteriors. I have an interest for household tools or building elements that serve unexpected purposes and the new spatial meanings they create. Concrete poured in a pit and an old glass pipe replacing a fence retaining wall can become part of an imaginary ornate portico. These so-called courtyard "frankensteins" are usually found in environments where, for financial or ideological reasons, disused objects are resurrected by finding unexpected uses for them. I believe that such environmental improvements playfully transform an imitation into a real object.



steel, glass,
concrete, tin



