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WATER SPRINGS ETERNAL FROM THE IMPOSSIBLE GARDEN OF LIGHT





WATER SPRINGS ETERNAL
FROM THE IMPOSSIBLE GARDEN OF LIGHT

HARRY ADAMS

and other imperfect constructions demonstrating the mechanics of our revolt

selected work 2014–2016

First Edition
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WATER SPRINGS ETERNAL
FROM THE IMPOSSIBLE GARDEN OF LIGHT
and other imperfect constructions
demonstrating the mechanics of our revolt

JOHN MARCHANT GALLERY at THE EAGLE GALLERY
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Shadow Clock wall painting and tools





FOREWORD

John Marchant

“How happy and serene all nature appears.”
Frankenstein, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

Water Springs Eternal from the Impossible Garden of Light and Other Imperfect Constructions Demonstrating the Mechanics of Our Revolt is not only the longest exhibition and book title I have ever come across, but also possibly the most challenging. The challenge of course is in the bombast, since we expect deference from artists, not confrontation. What is doubly unexpected with Harry Adams is that we are also confronted with beauty, and – here’s the true shocker – painting. And figurative painting at that, when a practice like this can be a visual equivalent of “Hey Nonny No” trad folk. But there’s an edge here. As Jean Rhys wrote in her late masterpiece *Wide Sargasso Sea* “Our garden was large and beautiful as that garden in the Bible – the tree of life grew there. But it had gone wild.”

This book serves as a brief survey of the last two years of studio practice by Adam Wood and Steve Lowe, aka Harry Adams, on the occasion of their first solo show in London for four years. This survey is not about the work in itself so much as it is about looking for the connections between the works – the landscapes, the Brutalism, the sacred geometry, the trial by combat! It’s important to know that Harry Adams paintings are not made for people to like. If they do – and I do, a lot – then that’s a bonus. The paintings must make their own journey, in the back and forth between the two painters, and in the potentially toxic atmosphere of their semi-subterranean studio in Clerkenwell (and more recently in an open air studio whilst on a residency in Italy). And it’s this journey that Harry Adams wishes to take you on, sometimes it’s a ramble in bucolic, hazy beauty, and sometimes it’s a tumbling rush into the rubble, with the paint and the canvas a souvenir, with all its layers, scrapings, scratches and splashes.

Hey Nonny No!
Men are fools that wish to die!
Is ’t not fine to dance and sing
When the bells of death do ring?
Is ’t not fine to swim in wine,
And turn upon the toe,
And sing Hey Nonny No!
When the winds blow and the seas flow?
Hey Nonny No!
English trad.



HARRY ADAMS: MOUNTAIN RELIGION AND SINLESS LEPROSY

Neal Brown

Harry Adams is not one person, but the name of two. The name was devised in 2008 for the working partnership of Steve Lowe and Adam Wood, who have made art and music together since 1988. Many of the works seen here were painted by him (we are allowed to use a singular personal pronoun) during the summer of 2016, as part of a residency at the Eremo St Maria Maddalena on Montelucio, in the Spoleto mountain district of Umbria, Italy. Adams was invited to work there as the guest of Alessandra Bonomo, who generously made available an old hermitage, or monastery, that had once been her family's old summer vacation residence. Previous visiting artists have made works specific to the building, including autograph wall drawings by Sol Lewitt. The old hermitage is placed high on the side of a wooded mountain, Montelucio (the name is derived from *lucus*, meaning sacred wood), and parts of the house are literally built into the side of the mountain. The house commands a considerable and magnificent view.

Montelucio is known as a holy mountain, and is associated with St Francis of Assisi¹ and, before him, with many hundreds of years of contemplative Christian hermits and religious persons. Prayer and meditation took place in the sacred wood at the top of a mountain, and this is where Francis established the community that became the Franciscan order. The Romans, in classical antiquity, preceded the Christians, decreeing the mountain and its wood to be a holy place. Adams quotes Alessandra Bonomo as saying that, if he came to work on this mountain, he and his practice would be changed by the experience.

Bonomo seems to have recognised a narrative correspondence between the art of Adams and the real and mythological stories of St Francis, and the relationship Francis had, and Adams might have, with the Montelucio sacred mountain. Adams has directly or indirectly invoked St Francis in his work prior to Bonomo's invitation, basing his paintings about him on works by Giotto. As well as St Francis, Adams' corresponding painterly themes have included Roman,² medieval and Renaissance art and culture, as well as natural geological forms, animals and birds, spiritual community, high aerial view, ecstatic landscape, water and sky, ethics, and the many evidences of mankind's machinations and wickedness. The number and nature of these correspondences increases if the wider creative context of Adams is considered; that is, the gallery and workshop known as L-13 that the Steve Lowe part of Harry Adams set up, and the publishing, painting and other ventures Lowe and Wood have facilitated. Not least is the community of artists Lowe has facilitated as a collaborative artist and gallerist.

After art college, Lowe set up a rare books business which expanded when he decided he wanted a space where, as he says, 'creativity happened, rather than one which just displayed and sold it,' and he began working with the artist, writer, poet and musician Billy Childish. With the addition of Jimmy Cauty, and Jamie Reid, Lowe began a collaborative approach, a little along the lines of Robin Klassnik's Matt's Gallery, for whom Lowe had once worked.³ At the same time, Lowe and Wood were engaged in musical and visual art projects under the

name STOT21stCplanB (they had previously made music in a band known as The Impossible), and Wood began to contribute an indispensable technical expertise to a graphic aesthetic – one of distressed modernist decay – which became hugely important to the project. Exhibitions and publications became increasingly fused; the name of the space changed from the aquarium to L-13,⁴ and Lowe facilitated a veritable outpouring of exhibitions, books, posters, pamphlets, records, CDs, art objects, readings, performances, sculptures, projects, openings, and other events, to which Childish, Lowe, Wood, Cauty and Reid (and other artists occasionally invited, such as the painter Neal Jones⁵) contributed in a fervent style, accompanied with irreverent, dark humour and much discourse. Childish's record company, Damaged Goods, was also involved, as were a miscellany of writers, gallerists, publishers, designers and curators. Work was playful, and often polemical, with the artists sometimes working under pseudonyms and unlikely identity constructs. In this they were well aided by the militant L-13 graphic style, whose commanding visual effect was achieved through the high design and technical skills that Wood, already mentioned, and the artists shared.

Some aspects of the L-13 project were decidedly anti-authoritarian, punk-anarchic, or alternative-hippy, reflected in the Situationist and other interests of Lowe and Reid, while Childish and Cauty were more Dadaist, absurdist, socio-political or religionary. Many of the artists were interested in the relationship of dispute and conflict in the context of art and the art world, which they situated in various contexts including, with Childish, the idea of art as a hostile war zone, represented in the projects he initiated that became known as Art Hate, and continued further in Adams' interest in medieval trial by combat, and war and apocalypse architecture. Humour created a protective buffer to the vulnerable painting practice that was encouraged and supported in L-13, and which was almost romantic in its respect for painting and painterly possibilities. Much rare merchandise resulted from these projects, such as hand made, special limited editions which, in the ways these things happen, became holy objects to collectors. As other galleries and curators became involved, particularly in respect of Childish, Lowe experienced a lessening of the demands on him as a gallerist, and he and Wood came to have the time to become Harry Adams. Choosing to make paintings was a decision that allowed them purity of expression – and the wonder of finding out what they would paint if they became painters, an enquiry they have been following through consistently ever since.

It is irresistible not to offer up Lowe's L-13 workshop to a comparison with the ideas of art, religion and culture that surround St Francis and his ideas of spiritual community, although stopping slightly short of claiming Lowe to be a saint. The three principle artists he has worked with, Childish, Cauty and Reid, have all, at some point, renounced the ruling laws of the art or music worlds, even though being in privileged positions from which they might expect to benefit from them. Childish was, for a long time, in an empowered position in the art world, but chose to define himself oppositionally, and as a consequence of this, and his unfashionable faith in Godly truth, was ignored, or even reviled, by it. This has changed in the last few years. Cauty, when working with his partner Bill Drummond, as the music group the KLF, and then the art based K Foundation, created disruptive provocations to the value order of the art world that were of such enormity – fabulously and successfully facilitated by the enormous wealth they had created together – that he too was marginalised or reviled. Reid, after creating vast honour and cultural status for himself through his graphic work for the Sex Pistols, chose to forgo the social, cultural and financial empowerment this might allow him, and made paintings whose sense of sincere spiritual value – again, a bit like Childish – put him in conflict with art world orthodoxy. These renouncements, particularly of material wealth, mean that the artists could be considered (by the author of this text at least, if less so by Harry Adams, who may raise his four eyebrows at this) as sharing something in common with the principles of holy persons, such as Francis, who embraced the ideals of a high calling.

Francis came to an awareness of his spiritual direction when praying before the icon cross known as the San Damiano crucifix, which displays painted images of personages associated with the meaning of the cross. Depending on which source you consult, Francis is said to have been personally addressed by a painting of Jesus on this crucifix, who asked him to follow God and rebuild the church. This story, or idea, accords painting and painters immense value, and places them and art in a highly intimate relationship with ideas of spiritual communication. Here there could be narrative resonance with Adams, and his engagement, in his work, with the idea of being involved in art and artists that is attuned to the highest ideals of making things special – even without a direct instruction from a divine being.

Another aspect of the story of St Francis that may be relevant to our understanding of Adams, and his artist community, is leprosy. Francis's earliest biographers emphasised the importance of leprosy to his spiritual conversion, and recount the occasion when Francis overcame his repugnance for lepers and kissed one of them, this being a defining moment of his conversion process. By identifying with lepers Francis rejected the lifestyle he had previously enjoyed as a member of the prosperous merchant class. For a medieval Christian, especially the moralists, the terrible symptoms of the disease were a failing of the soul that must have originated in sin. Leprosy was a visual manifestation of inner disfigurement, and from the moment at which someone was diagnosed with the disease they were confined to a leprosarium, or required to leave their community. The negativity of this attitude was counterbalanced with the idea that leprosy was an important lesson or even a blessing from God, forcing attention to the next world, and led to the ambiguously improved idea of sinless leprosy. Representations of disease in art have complex cultural and social functions, particularly around the fear of contagion and collapse, and Adams, Childish, Cauty and Reid could be said to offer a model of interpretative change to the limits of real and ideological fear around contagion. Somehow, at some stage, it seems they may have made a choice; either to be sinless lepers in the art world, or to voluntarily embrace the art world's leprosy – or a bit of both. More accurately, perhaps, they have chosen the stigma of madness over career sanity: by adopting unfashionable painterly styles or approaches; by having sincerity of ethical purpose; and by accepting their banishment from the art world as a gift, and a route to blessing. Theirs might be the great joy of being outsiders, or mendicants, or just being spiritually free. It is an approach that is now more recognised by the art world who, perhaps out of moral guilt – some of them – have come to support them.

From looking at the variousness of Adams' paintings, there might be – or ought to be – more than just Lowe and Wood at work, but there is not. As there is no stated endpoint target, and as the work arises in an organic way from the interaction between the two artists, it is only when the work is in the gallery, and out of the studio, that it is called art. Adams' work comprises the processes he employs, and the resulting paintings are the final evidence of the process. It is possible to see evidence of the artists struggling with an understanding of their own motivation, in which work is destroyed and remade, perhaps similar to the self-sustaining sufficiency of the gardener, who works with nature's growth force. Indeed, there are many depictions of gardens, forbidden fruits, and expulsions in Adams' work, and ideas of impossible natural perfection and perfect natural impossibility occur frequently. In one painting a bird from Giotto's St Francis painting appears, without Francis himself, and is an indicator that things change, and that there are diversities of fluctuation.

Some of Adams' work engages with ideas of conflicted geometry, and shows a variety of configurations that can be related to symbolic or mystical ideas and aesthetic ideals in art and nature. These are placed by Adams in the midst of what appears to be painterly disarray. Some works are pretty, and some are not pretty – they are leprous, but with the beauty that artists are able to see in books of skin diseases, and which are also somehow related to the sun-rotted painted surfaces of Umbrian buildings. Some works contain stories of magic and wonder,

or horror, with many different levels of meaning, and sometimes they are locked into intense surface appearance, commanding intense pleasure – nearly so much pleasure that, on occasion, they hurt. Adams says he wants to be surprised by what’s going on, and does not want to be totally in control. He (and Billy Childish, as well) has said that if he does something, and it does not feel like he did it, that this indicates he may be enjoying success. Certain painterly marks he calls the ‘voice of God marks’ appear in his work, indicating ecstatic purpose, and which is related to ideas of religious experience, or hallucination.

Adams is situated in a poetic constellation, or kaleidoscope, of hopeful and inspirational images and ideas within ideas of a holy mountain, or landscape. Holy mountains (axis mundi) exist in many beliefs and philosophies as an existence centre, or as the connection between heaven and earth. They are where a correspondence is made between higher and lower realms. Every day during their residency, Lowe and Wood would walk the paths to the top of Montelucio – a strenuous walk – and then descend to work. Whether this made them holier than if they did not make the ascent would be an interesting point to consider, but it is certainly a form of perfection to ascend a mountain to its top, and the top of this holy mountain is the culminating end of a known pilgrimage route. It is also the case that during his residency at Bonomo’s house Adams lived in proximity with Sol Lewitt’s first ever hand-drawn wall works which, being symmetrical, may be thought of (perhaps this is a little too controversial) as being spiritually contemplative – or if not, then certainly having the mystic aura of an important work by a venerated master.

Adams, it can be said, is on a journey of discovery rather than trying to discover a specific thing – idea or image – that is being looked for. And his journey has had fine things to ponder: St Francis and art born of religion, a mountain to be on, fine conceptual art to be engaged with, a garden to paint in – all under a benevolent Italian sun, and witness to the magnificent, occasional thunder storms of the vast Umbrian landscape.⁶ In these, and in the works of his London Studio, and in his work with fellow artists, Adams wants to be part of the good things about art, and life, and appears to be succeeding. So it would be cruel to counter ideas of St Francis (as one could), with a description of him as a spoilt member of the ruling class; or that the church, or spiritual mountains,⁷ or conceptual art, or religious belief itself, might be vehicles for superstitious repression, or fraud. (And indeed Adams is amongst the first to expose and renounce his conflicted participation in some of these constructs of cultural, spiritual and political control, and their fallacies.) But fortunately these ideas would have to be another story, to be written elsewhere, by someone else. What is true is that the placing of Adams’ finished paintings in the architectural recesses of the Montelucio hermitage created a gently religious, shrine effect, and from this there arises the possibility of Adams’ works being fine religious paintings, without Adams necessarily being religious.

¹Founder of the Franciscan Order, born at Assisi in Umbria, in 1181 or 1182. Died there 1226.

²The full name of L-13 is ‘L-13 Light Industrial Workshop and Private Ladies and Gentlemen’s Club for Art, Leisure and the Disruptive Betterment of Culture.’

³Robin Klassnik was also head of complementary studies at the Byam Shaw School of Art where Lowe and Wood studied.

⁴See particularly Adams’ work that references the garden fresco from the triclinium or dining room of Livia’s Villa, Rome, 1st century BCE. The fresco runs around four walls, and gives a panorama of a luxuriant garden with birds and insects, and a brilliant blue sky.

⁵A more complete list of the other artists associated with L-13 includes Geraldine Swaine, Neal Brown, Charlotte Young, Anne Pigalle, Sexton Ming, Harry Pye, Mark Manning, Pete Bennett, Jeannine Guidi and ‘Edgeworth’.

⁶But not, fortunately, the devastating 2016 earthquake which occurred not far away, shortly after his residency ended.

⁷For a digressive, non L-13 view of contemporary art and holy mountains see Neal Brown and J&K: http://www.jk-world.net/wp/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/JK_the_perfect_stage_publication.pdf





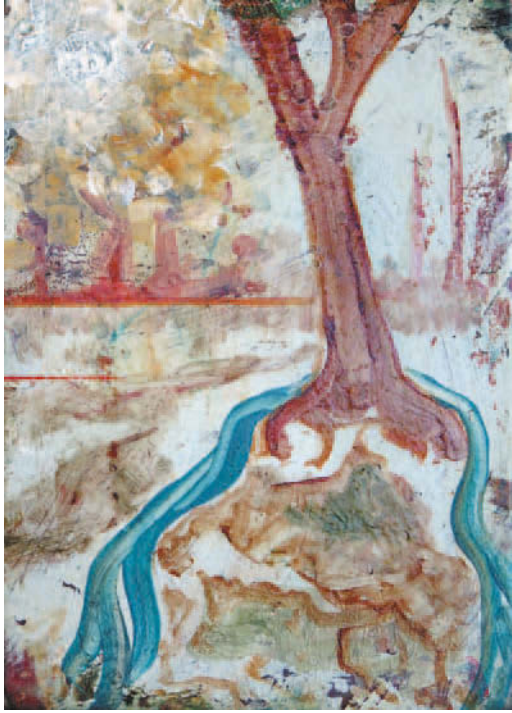
An Impossible Garden at the Modernist Ruin, Galleria Alessandra Bonomo, Rome, 2015.
Photograph by Giuseppe Gernone.



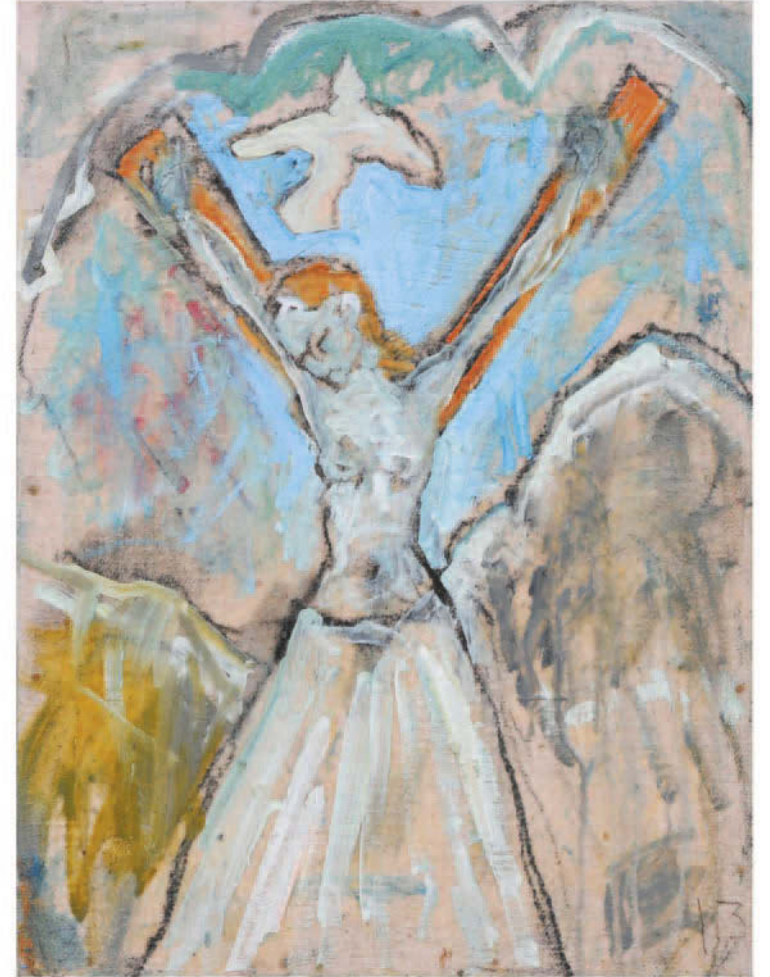
Study for An Impossible Garden



Imperfect Construction: Tree Within, Tree Without (The Impossible Garden)



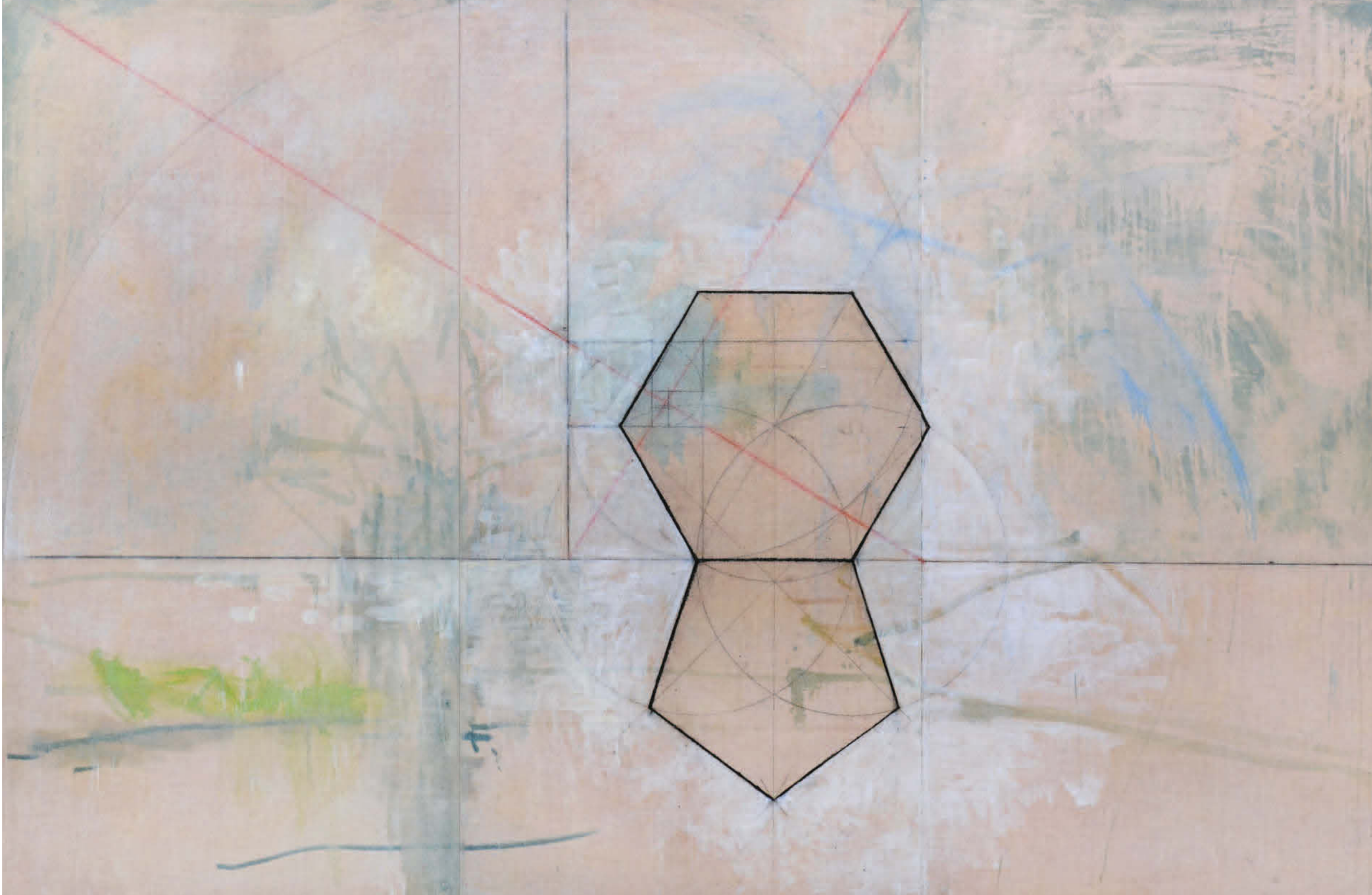
Water Pouring Forth from the Tree Outside the Sacred Woods



The Ecstasy of St Eulalia

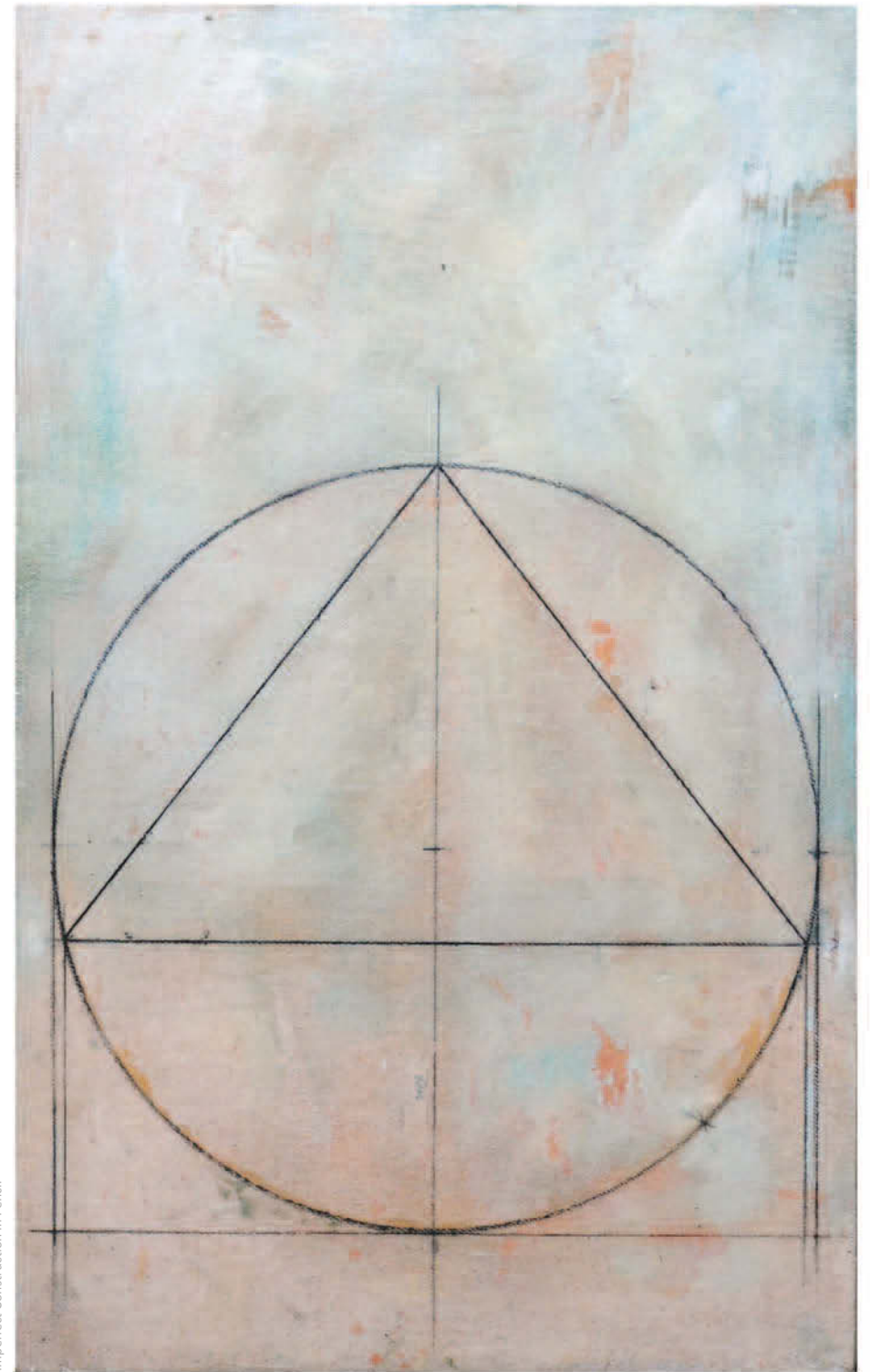
Study for a Fallen Oak Sprig







A Study for the Sound Mirrors



Imperfect Construction in Pencil



A Sketch for the Sound Mirrors



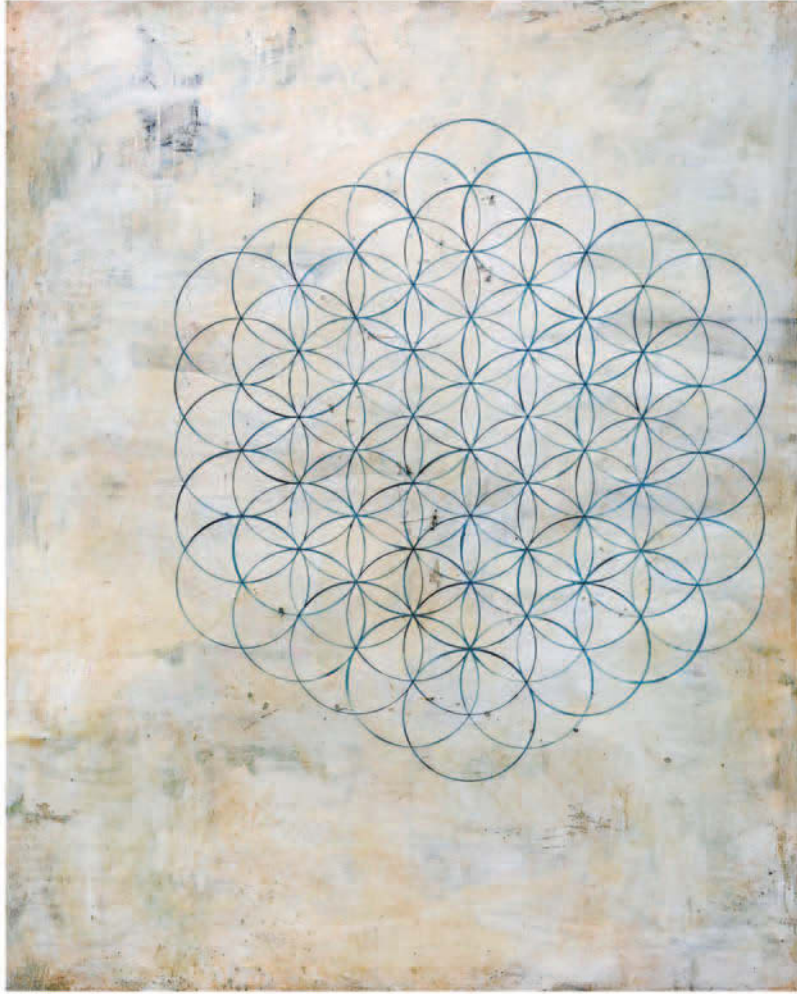
Imperfect Construction: God and the Forbidden Fruit Tree (circa 1280)



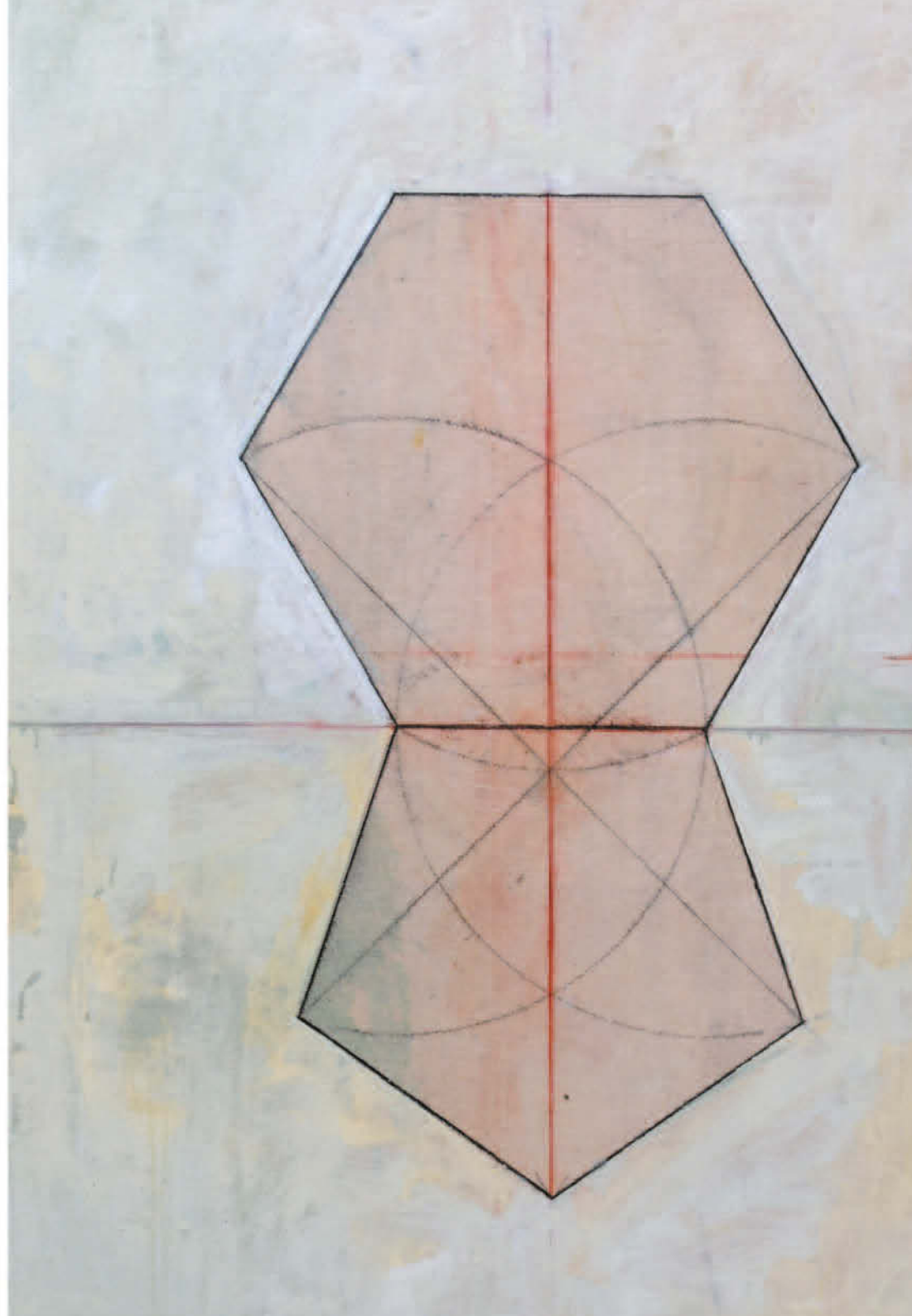
Adam in the Garden



Our Expulsion (after Masaccio)



Imperfect Construction: Circles in Blue



Imperfect Construction: Adenine and Red Intersection









Clouds Over Pasture

Previous pages:
Clouds Over Wheat Field
Cultivated Lands
Red Sky Over Woodlands and Pasture



Slate Sky



Trees by the Gun Position



Copse on the Horizon



Mortal and Perishing Substances (After Leonardo Da Vinci)



Derelict Chapel of Light at the Modernist Ruin



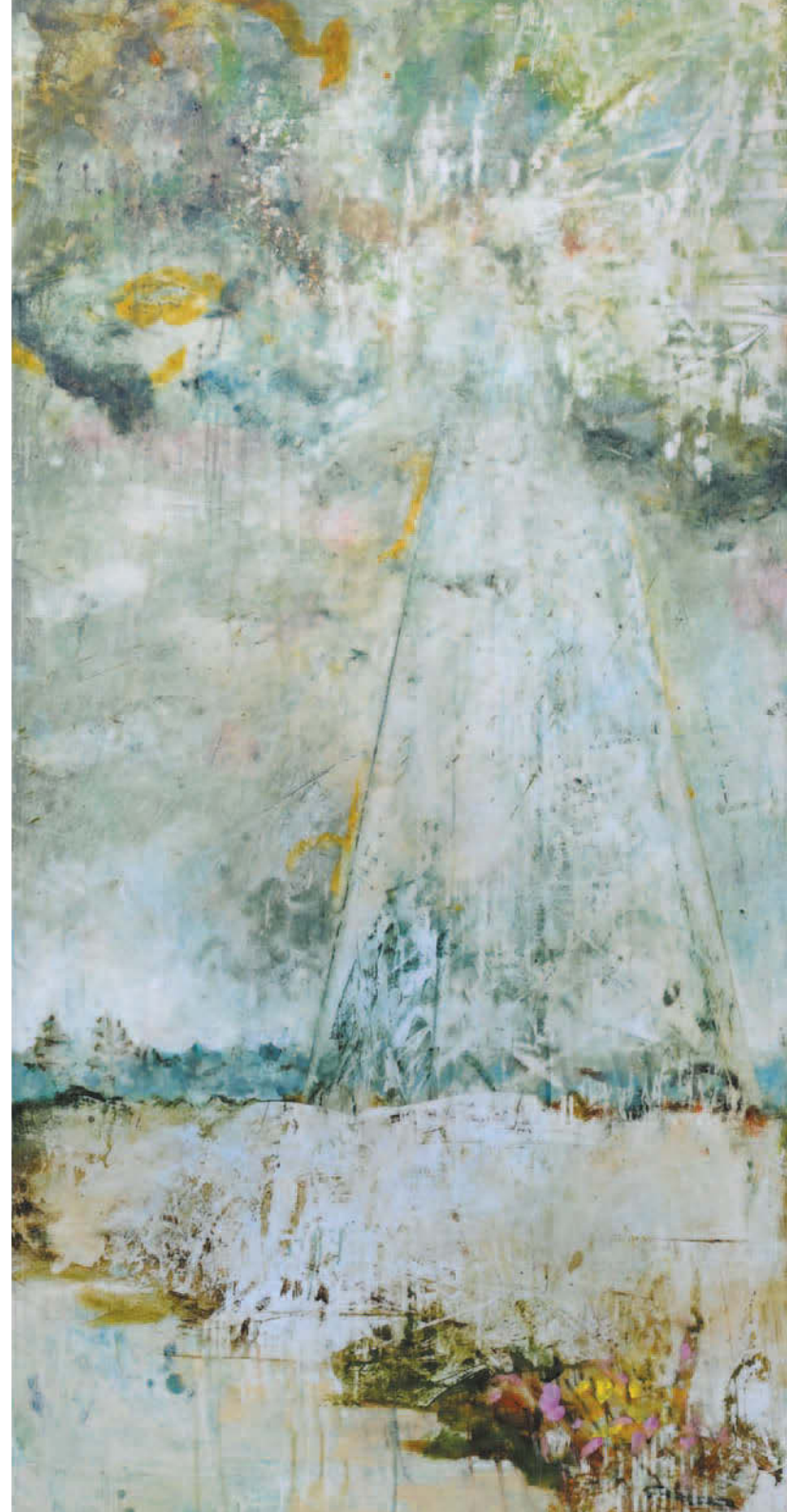
A Sketch for the Tower of Babel (after Bruegel)



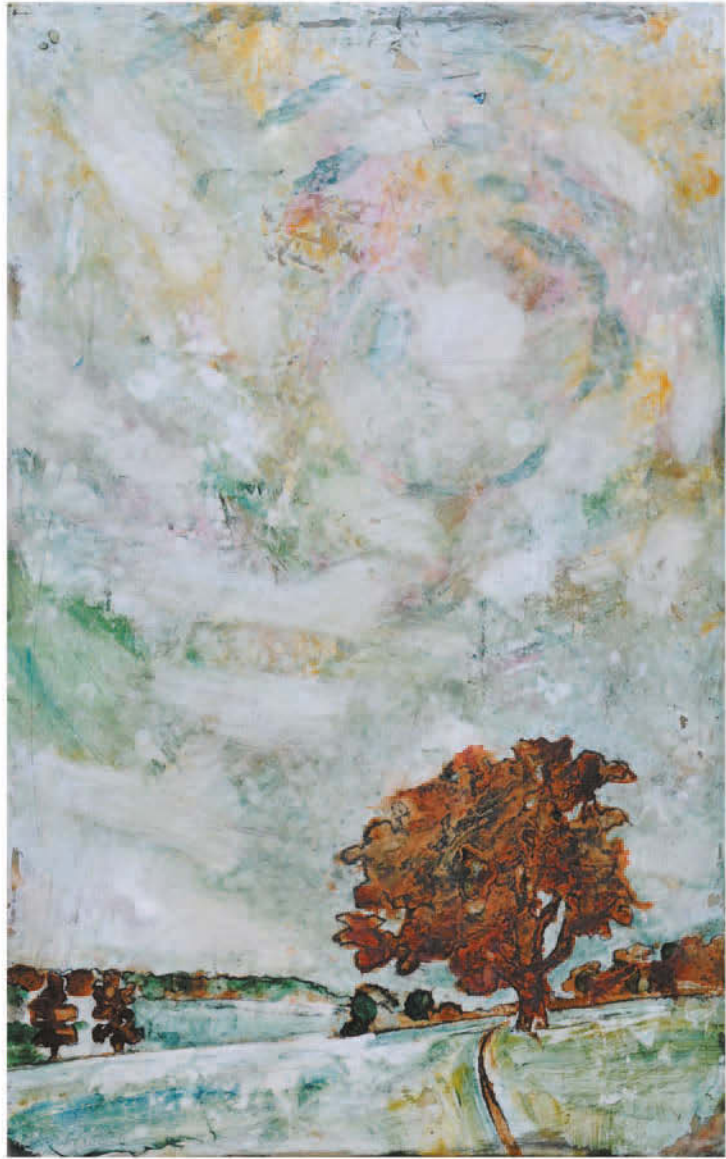
Trial by Combat: Woman Beats Man (after Talhoffer 1459)



A Study for a Panopticon



A Study for a Communications Pylon

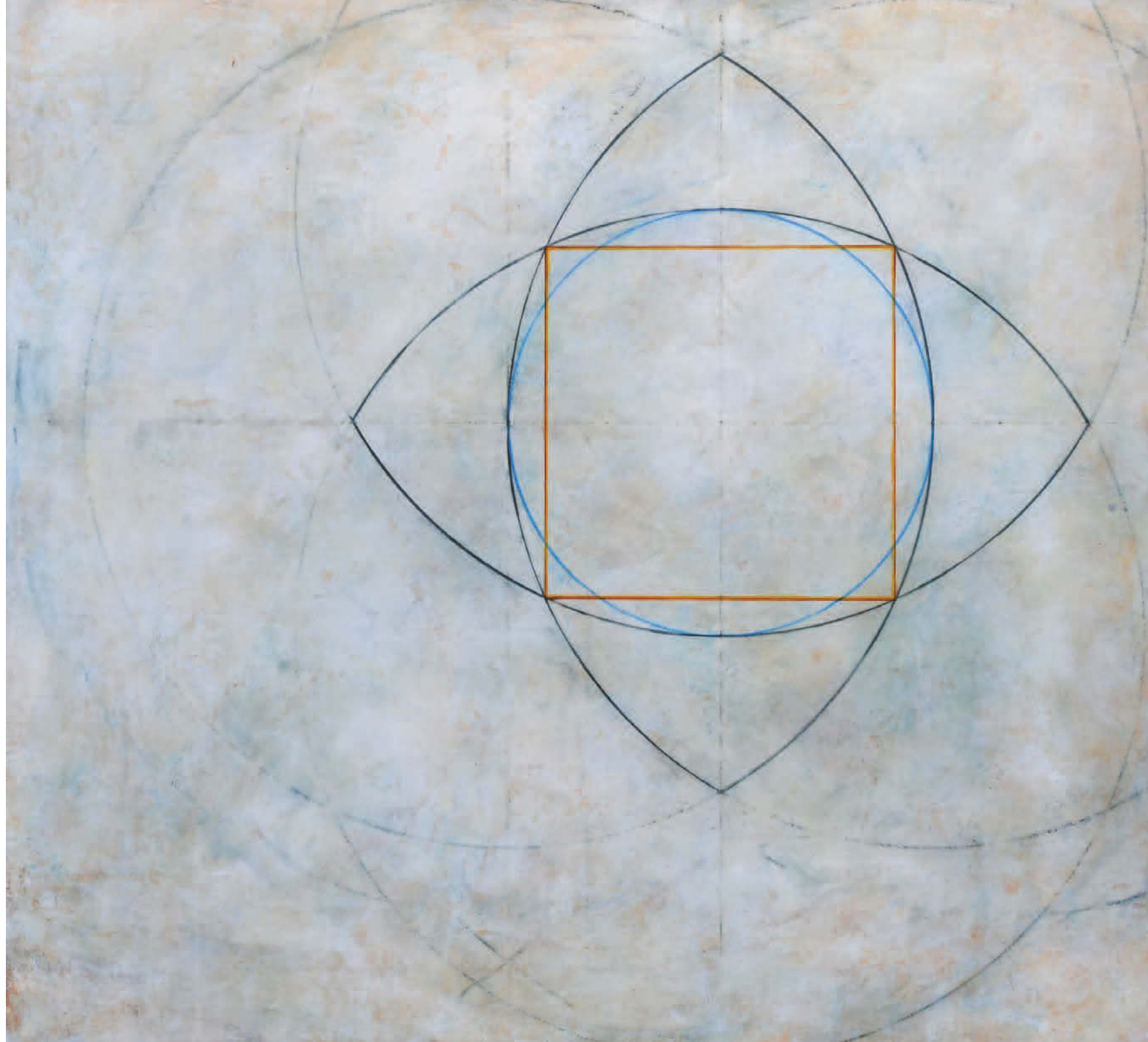


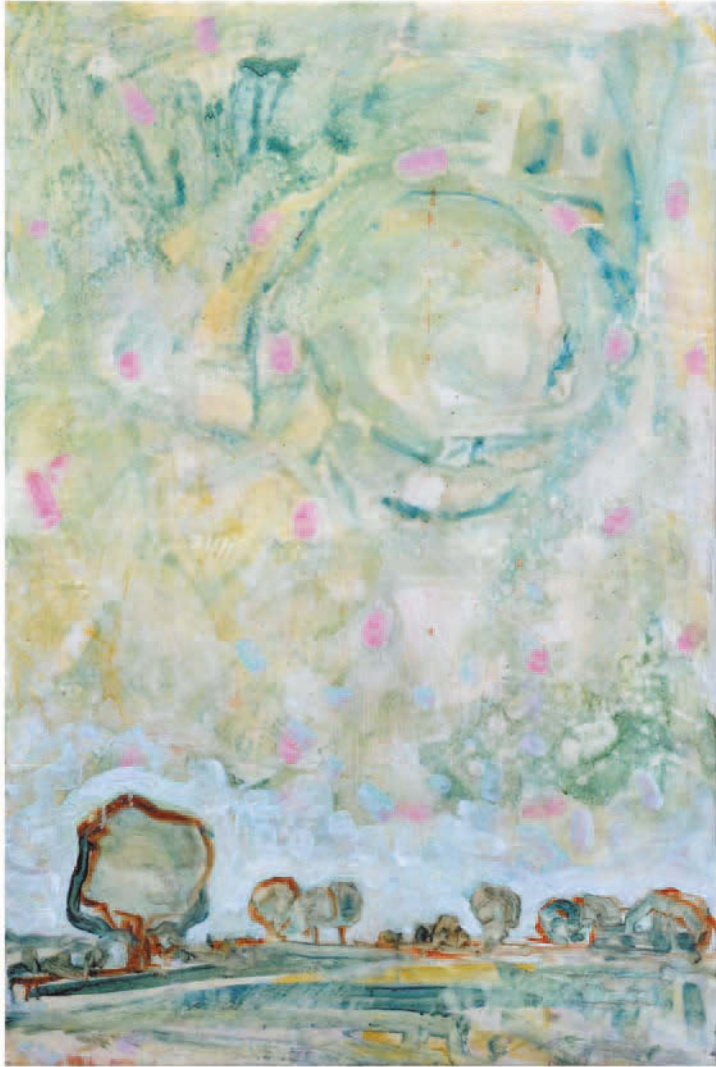
A Sketch for a Path to the Mighty Oak



A Study for Three Trees

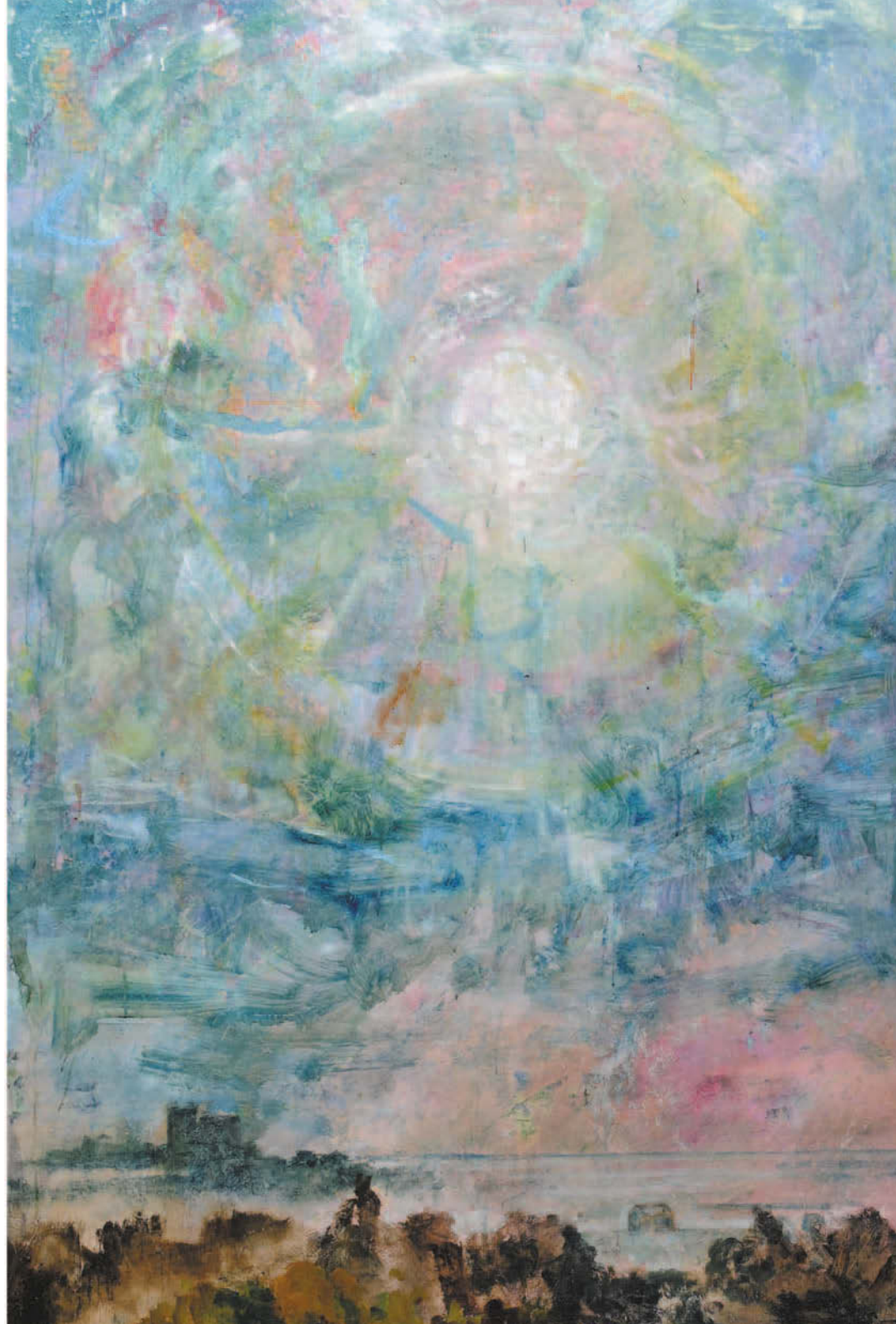
Imperfect Construction: Squaring the Circle in Red, Blue and Black





Sketch for Trees by the Gun Position

Power Station and Lifeboat House







Imperfect Construction: Cupping the Hand of Christ



A Sketch for the Wall



Leafs



Leaf Shadows



Tree Outside the Sacred Wood



Rose



Rose Star Shadow

Water Springs Eternal from the Impossible Garden of Light





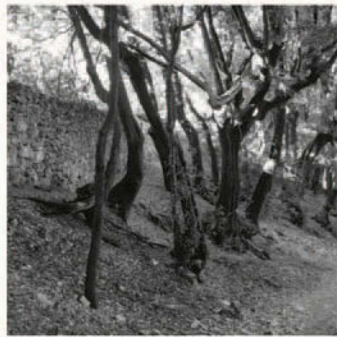
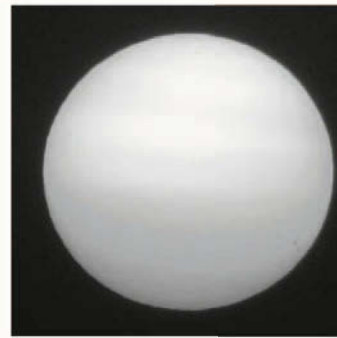
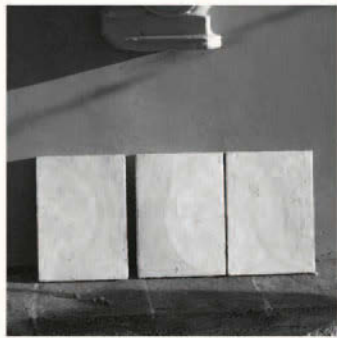
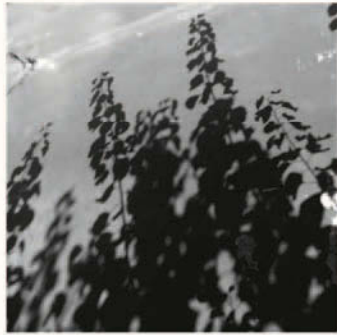


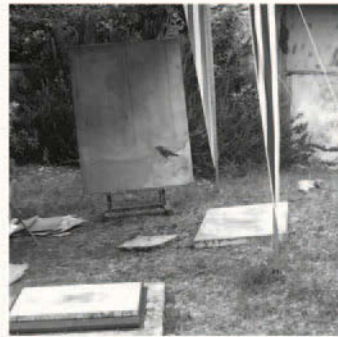
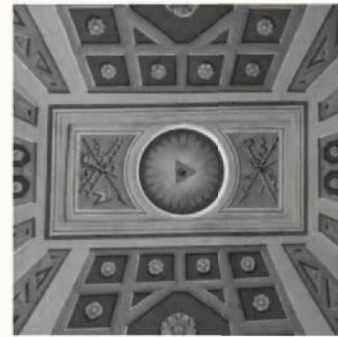
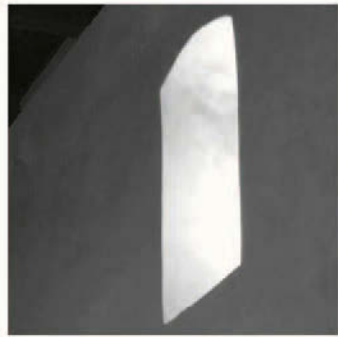
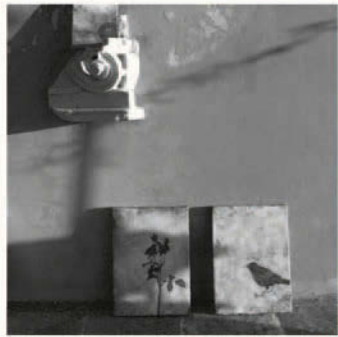
All the things they know

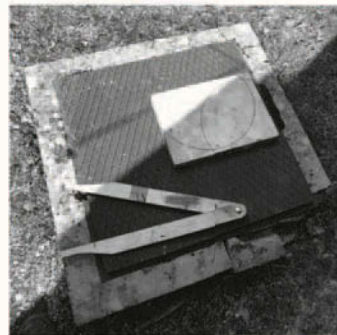
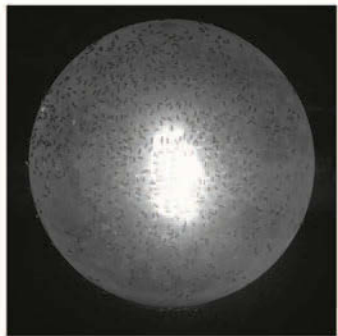


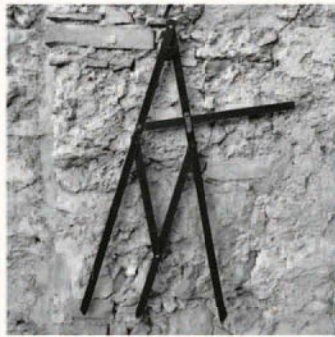
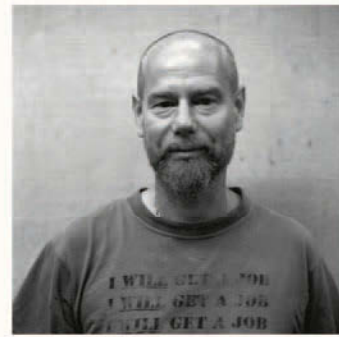
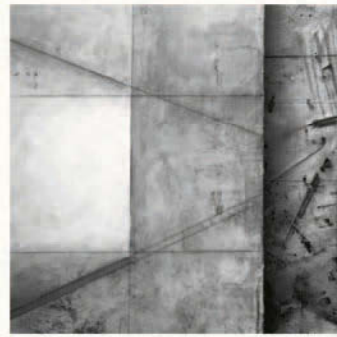
Open air studio at the Eremo St. Maria Maddalena, Montelurco











CAPTIONS AND NOTES



Dust wrapper inner flap (detail)
A Saint in the Clouds, Montelucio, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
86.5 x 61 cm



Shadow Clock wall painting and tools
Eremo St Maria Maddalena, Montelucio, 2016

A Harry Adams Shadow Clock is a clock of no function or purpose other than to be accurate at the time of its making.

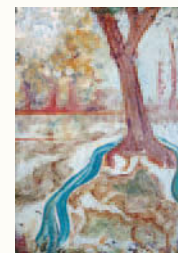


Study for An Impossible Garden, 2015
oil, charcoal and cold wax paste on cotton covered boards
244 x 530 cm in 5 panels
(First shown in Rome at Galleria Alessandra Bonomo with just 4 panels with a different title in Latin)

Based on the Garden di Livia – a trompe l’oeil illusion of a garden painted around the dining room of a Roman villa circa 20 bc. Our idea was to make a painting in panels that could be infinitely added to – a painting that could span the world. We stopped after 5 panels but more could be made.

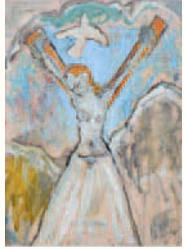


Imperfect Construction: Tree Within, Tree Without (The Impossible Garden), 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered board
91.5 x 183 cm



Water Pouring Forth from the Tree Outside the Sacred Woods, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
36 x 25.5 cm

Every morning whilst on a residency at Montelucio (a holy mountain in Umbria, Italy) we’d take a strenuous walk to visit the ‘Sacred Wood’ up above us, and have an espresso before descending to spend the morning painting. This tree was near the top – just below the outer wall of the monastery and woods. Water would pour from behind it in two spouting torrents and would give us a good excuse to stop for a breather, and to ponder miracles and drainage systems.



The Ecstasy of St Eulalia, 2015

oil, pencil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered board
61 x 45 cm

The story of St Eulalia is gruesome. She was a thirteen-year-old Roman Christian who refused to renounce her religion. She was subjected to thirteen horrific tortures before being beheaded – after which a dove flew from her neck (apparently). Our version here is from a medieval depiction of one of her ordeals.



Study for a Fallen Oak Sprig, 2014

oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered board
49.5 x 61 cm



Imperfect Construction: Adenine and Golden Ratio, 2015

graphite with oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
183 x 297 cm

Hexagons and pentagons occur naturally in nature – from snowflakes to honeycomb to flowers and fruit cores. Together they form the molecular structure of Adenine – one of the building blocks of DNA – and are used to make footballs.



A Study for the Sound Mirrors, 2015

oil, charcoal and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
122 x 244 cm

These are the sound mirrors near Dungeness on the south coast of Britain. As an early form of radar these huge concrete structures were designed to pick up the sound of enemy aircraft approaching. They quickly became obsolete as aeroplanes became faster and new tracking technologies were developed.



Imperfect Construction in Pencil, 2015

graphite drawing with oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
99 x 61 cm

A diagram of the phi triangle constructed within a circle.



A Sketch for the Sound Mirrors, 2015

oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
152.5 x 122 cm



Imperfect Construction: God and the Forbidden Fruit Tree (circa 1280), 2015

oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
152.5 x 107 cm

One of many paintings we've made based on images from a miniature 13th Century illuminated manuscript. God is pictured, explaining the rules about the forbidden fruit. The tree looks very strange – almost alien or fungal - drawing our thoughts to the likely use of mind altering substances in the development of religious belief systems.



Adam in the Garden, 2016

oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
183 x 122 cm

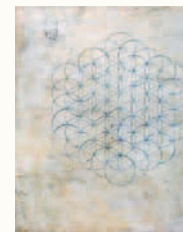
Adam being bad.



Our Expulsion (after Masaccio), 2015

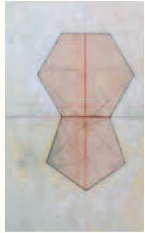
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
152.5 x 107 cm

From an early and venerated renaissance painting of Adam and Eve being expelled from the Garden of Eden.



Imperfect Construction: Circles in Blue, 2015

oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
152.5 x 122 cm



Imperfect Construction: Adenine and Red Intersection, 2015
 chalk-line, graphite and charcoal drawing with oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
 147.5 x 91.5 cm



Clouds Over Wheat Field, 2015
 oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
 183 x 297 cm

Our 'English' landscapes often show wheat fields and the tracks made into them. We always saw them as symbols of man's mark on the land and our interest was further stimulated after hearing about Yuval Harari's theory (from *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*) that wheat had domesticated man

rather than the other way around. "In evolutionary terms wheat is now one of the most successful plants in the history of the earth. In areas such as the Great Plains of North America, where not a single wheat stalk grew 10,000 years ago, you can today walk for hundreds upon hundreds of kilometers without encountering any other plant." Through history this production led to the need for settlement and work forces, bad diet, famine, armies and war.

These fields however – at all times of the year – still make a fine and beautiful sight in our green and pleasant land.



Cultivated Lands, 2015
 oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
 61 x 99 cm



Red Sky Over Woodlands and Pasture, 2015
 oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
 61 x 99 cm



Clouds Over Pasture, 2015
 oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
 61 x 99 cm



Slate Sky, 2015
 oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
 183 x 91.5 cm



Trees by the Gun Position, 2016
 oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
 152.5 x 122 cm

This scene is close to a castle in East Sussex where they also built a fortified gun position during the second world war. Just below the trees is a canal and behind us a bridge that we presume the gun was protecting.

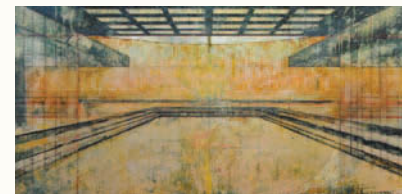


Cope on the Horizon, 2016
 oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
 61 x 46 cm



Mortal and Perishing Substances (After Leonardo Da Vinci), 2014
 oil, charcoal and beeswax encaustic on linen covered board
 Triptych in four panels
 Each panel 183 x 91.5 cm
 Total size with spacing 183 x 380 cm

An audacious attempt to make a version of one of the world's best known paintings: painted for and shown in Milan, close to where the original fresco is viewed by art pilgrims from all over the world. It was a conflicting experience clouded with doubt, but it turned out OK.



Derelict Chapel of Light at the Modernist Ruin, 2015
 oil, chalk and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
 122 x 244 cm

One of a series of paintings based on St Peter's Seminary in Cardross, Scotland. Built in the 1960s this impressive but flawed structure is considered to be a prized and important example of modernist architecture. It fell into disuse in the 1980s and is now a ruin.



A Sketch for the Tower of Babel (after Bruegel), 2014
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
83 x 61 cm



Trial by Combat: Woman Beats Man (after Talhoffer 1459), 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on hessian covered board
183 x 122 cm

Trial by combat was a method of Germanic law in the Middle Ages to settle accusations in the absence of witnesses or a confession in which two parties in dispute fought in single combat; the winner of the fight was proclaimed to be right – essentially allowing God to decide. For battles between a man and a woman, the man was handicapped by having to stand in a hole up to his waist with one arm tied down, and armed with a club. The woman was armed with a 5lb rock tied in her headscarf as a sling. The image here is from Hans Talhoffer's manual on fighting skills where he describes various techniques for defeating your opponent. This one is a winning move by the woman.

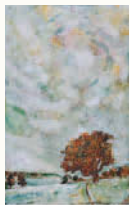


A Study for a Panopticon, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on hessian covered board
183 x 122 cm

The Panopticon is a type of institutional building designed by the English philosopher and social theorist Jeremy Bentham in the late 18th century. The concept of the design is to allow all inmates of an institution to be observed by a single watchman without the inmates being able to tell whether or not they are being watched. Although it is physically impossible for the single watchman to observe all cells at once, the fact that the inmates cannot know when they are being watched means that all inmates (in theory) must act as though they are watched at all times, effectively policing their own behaviour constantly.



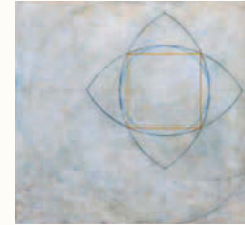
A Study for a Communications Pylon, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on hessian covered board
183 x 122 cm



A Sketch for a Path to the Mighty Oak, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
99 x 61 cm



A Study for Three Trees, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
183 x 91.5 cm



Imperfect Construction: Squaring the Circle in Red, Blue and Black, 2015
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
183 x 198.5 cm

Squaring the circle is a problem proposed by ancient geometers. It is the challenge of constructing a square with the same area as a given circle by using only a finite number of steps with compass and straightedge.



Sketch for Trees by the Gun Position, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
99 x 61 cm



Power Station and Lifeboat House, 2015
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
183 x 122 cm

In the distance is Dungeness nuclear power station. The building in the middle is the Mary Stanford lifeboat house where in 1928 a lifeboat was launched to aid a distressed steamboat. After launching, news came in that the steamboat had reached safety but it was too late to call the lifeboat back. In the morning it was found capsized and all hands on deck had perished.



Bird on the Garden Wall, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
122 x 183 cm



Imperfect Construction: Cupping the Hand of Christ, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
61 x 99 cm



A Sketch for the Wall, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
99 x 61 cm



Leafs, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
36 x 25.5 cm



Leaf Shadows, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
36 x 25.5 cm



Tree Outside the Sacred Wood, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
36 x 25.5 cm



Rose, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
36 x 25.5 cm



Rose Star Shadow, 2016,
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
22.5 x 14 cm



Water Springs Eternal from the Impossible Garden of Light, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
152.5 x 107 cm



Hand of Adam, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
56 x 35 cm



Dust wrapper inner flap (detail)
A Painting for the Birds, Montelucio, 2016
oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered boards
152.5 x 107 cm

