

An abstract painting featuring a dense composition of thick, expressive brushstrokes. The color palette is dominated by various shades of red, from deep maroon and burgundy to bright, almost white highlights. Interspersed throughout the red are numerous black strokes, some of which are long, thin, and diagonal, while others are thicker and more horizontal. The overall effect is one of intense energy and movement, with the strokes overlapping and creating a complex, layered texture.

Raphael Mur

01



Raphael Mur

... a dark concept

Years

19.20.21

Works

Pre-COVID

Old Spirits

Dark Øtzi

Red Zone

Works on Paper

Dedicated to you.

... a dark concept

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**In serious times,
it is wise to
remain serious
oneself.**

Raphael Mur

2021

Hej

PREFACE

I live in a world in motion. It is a changing world. And it is coming to the boil in people who are calling and questioning and re-assimilating. Yes, people are evolving and rediscovering themselves time and time again. The fact that such development can lead to failures is in the nature of the evolutionary plan and goes hand in hand with the historical, social and cultural conditions in every society.

Capturing and querying human nature, facing the old spirits of my home region of South Tyrol as well as the challenges of my time as a painter, interpreting them and critically eying structures is extremely exciting. The old and the new – they can’t live with each other but can’t live without each other either. Culture is the result of the combination of both.

In times of crisis, when people need to apply themselves to the essential necessities in the fight for survival, culture threatens to fall by the wayside as non-system-relevant and expendable special benefit. That also means that an essential branch of education is then

removed, especially from young people.

When normality collapsed in 2020, I asked myself: What remains of all the things I love? Where can I find it? It’s all here with me because I’ve seen it. I hear the music, far away, somewhere outside and yet only in my head, with my body. I think about it. A picture emerges. Clear and fresh.

The old is behind me, including old spirits, which were sometimes light and sometimes dark. We need to see things to understand them, and it’s the same with art. I live in a changing society, in a new time, with perpetually new pictures. This volume, which is now in front of you, is the product of the conditions of my time, of the place to which I was tied and of the necessity to do something.

And that is to paint.



ARTISTIC CAREER

Looking back at my childhood creativity it becomes clear that drawing opened the world for me. I vividly recall how curiosity and an urge to explore was triggered by depicting animals, humans and objects. Subsequently, this spurred me on to take on more challenging subjects.

Books on the other hand, mostly school and non-fiction books provided me with answers to a lot of questions especially to those pertaining to human psychology and its deeper implications.



I have always appreciated working concentrated in the tranquillity of a secluded working space. From early on I wanted to do something with this deep interest and ever since I have wholeheartedly dedicated myself to drawing.

Nevertheless, the prospect of becoming a professional artist did not occur to me at first, but my high school teachers, who helped me a lot gave me the idea to visit an art academy.

Later I passed the entrance examination at the “Akademie der bildenden Künste” in Munich and studied there for 3 semesters. I then decided to leave the academy to seek answers to my many questions about art elsewhere.

I have come to realize that I can only bring my idea of art to fruition outside the constraints imposed by conventional opinion. I therefore decided to continue to develop my art individually and independent of any artistic or social conditioning.

I worked as master apprentice with the painter Dalip Kryeziu in Gießen near Frankfurt am Main who for the first time gave me insight into the work of an already recognised and well-established artist. I learnt a lot of how to work correctly in an art studio, interact with players in the artworld and envision and plan exhibitions.

Since my return to South Tyrol I live and work in Brixen.

Pre-COVID

Work cycle 2019 – 2020 / Acrylics and Mixed-Media on canvas

In 2020, I decided to turn freelance as an artist and had to manifest my action by the first series of pictures. I worked on them from March 2020 onwards, some before, and some after the first lockdown in South Tyrol. I focused on the symbols and styles I had encountered in my previous career as a painter.

Old Spirits

Work cycle 2020 – 2021 / Acrylics and Mixed-Media on canvas

To fathom the attraction of the old legends, heroes and spirits, I set off on a hike lasting several days through the Fanes Region in South Tyrol with photographer Thomas Sutti and graphic designer Florian Dariz in August 2020. The aim of the journey was to search for the relics of past epochs and to question if and how a landscape can influence the creation of fantastic stories.

Dark Øtzi

Work cycle 2020 / Acrylics and Mixed-Media on canvas

The man from the Ice is a world-class archaeological find. In the collective memory of the natives of South Tyrol, he is the “forefather”, old Øtzi that everyone comes to see in the museum as a child. There, one catches a glimpse of the dead man, a lifeless shroud and yet so alive. Dark Øtzi stands for a new concept in my work, with which I link historical and current anthropological events with each other or juxtapose them.

Red Zone

Work cycle 2020 / Acrylics and Mixed-Media on canvas

“Red Zone” deals with the safety measure of the same name to contain the Covid pandemic, which was also applied in South Tyrol in 2020. Italian’s regions were evaluated based on various statistical parameters on the pandemic situation and classified based on a traffic light system. A strict ban on entry and exit applied to the red zones. This condition came as a shock to most contemporaries. The world was in waiting. Ethnic questions came to light. Political and civil life rubbed up against each other as never before in post-war history and gave this time a dystopic aftertaste.

Works on Paper

2019 – 2020 – 2021 / Acrylics and Mixed-Media on Paper

These works in 40 × 30 cm format were created as a technical by-product to the canvases in the “Old Spirits” cycle and offer a direct insight into the way in which I plan and execute group hangings. Hung in twelve pairs, these works form a large individual unit. The presentations placed in relation to each other, irrespective of sequence, merge and create a surprising impression of depth.





Pre-COVID

I view the “Pre-Covid” cycle as my first intuitive question of painting as an artistic discipline. I chose Pre-Covid as the title, i.e. literally before Covid, as a pre-Covid and post-Covid awareness is bound to emerge. This global condition has taken on historical dimensions.

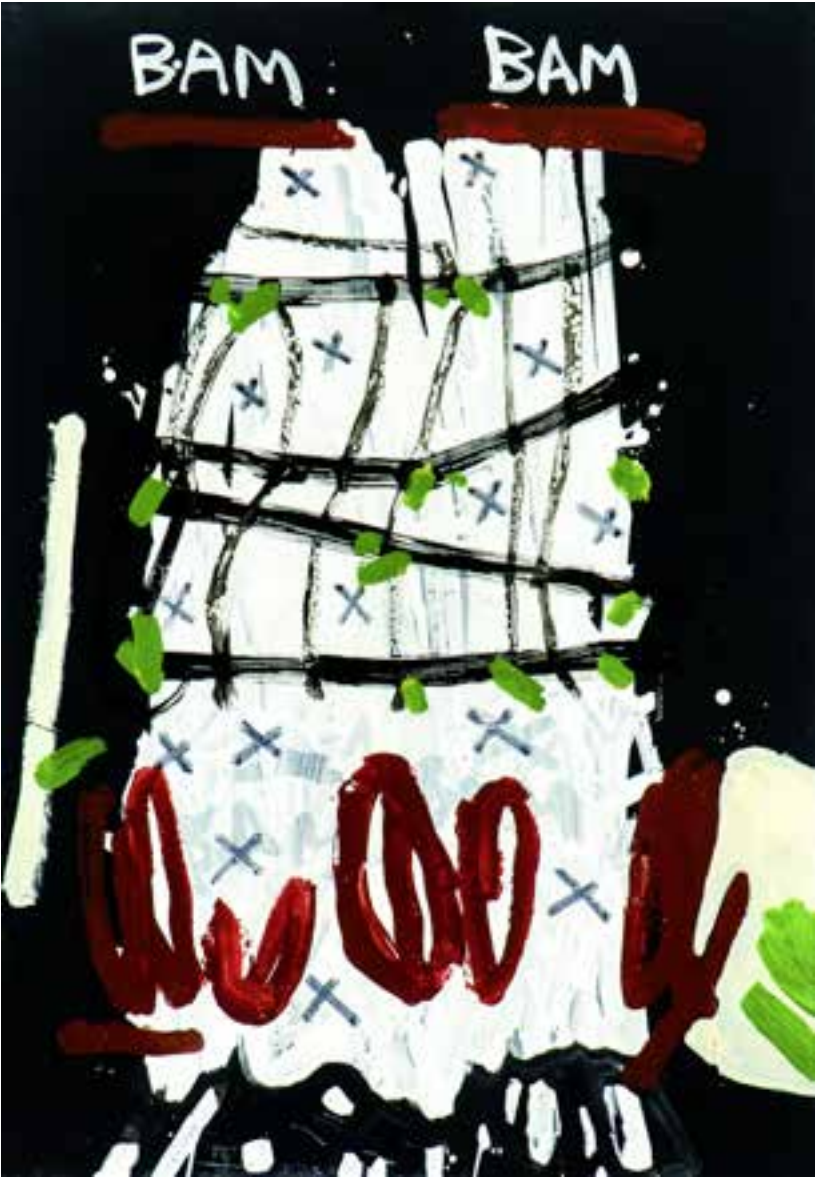
In 2020, I decided to turn freelance as an artist and had to cement my action by the first series of pictures. I worked on them from March 2020 onwards, some before, and some after the first lockdown in South Tyrol. I focused on those symbols and styles I had encountered in my previous career as a painter.

I primarily aligned myself with the figurative, narrative painting, whose masters I located in the European North and in post-war America with its pop art. Bringing figuration and abstraction

into a tolerable balance was one of many challenges in this cycle, as the work process was always intuitive.

My aim was to discard the methods and approaches taught and conveyed to me in the academy, and to lend my work its own language. I first had the idea of working with series and work cycles, instead of limiting myself to a single work each time. Every material is good enough, if you know how to use it.

This economical attitude to the substances I use made the process even more multi-track. Paper as a basic material particularly fascinated me.



O.T. (BAM BAM)
70 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T.
70 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T.
70 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2019



O.T. (Massnahme)
70 cm × 100 cm / Acryl, Mixed-Media und PU-Lack auf Leinwand / 2020



O.T. (Bottom)
70 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T.
70 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



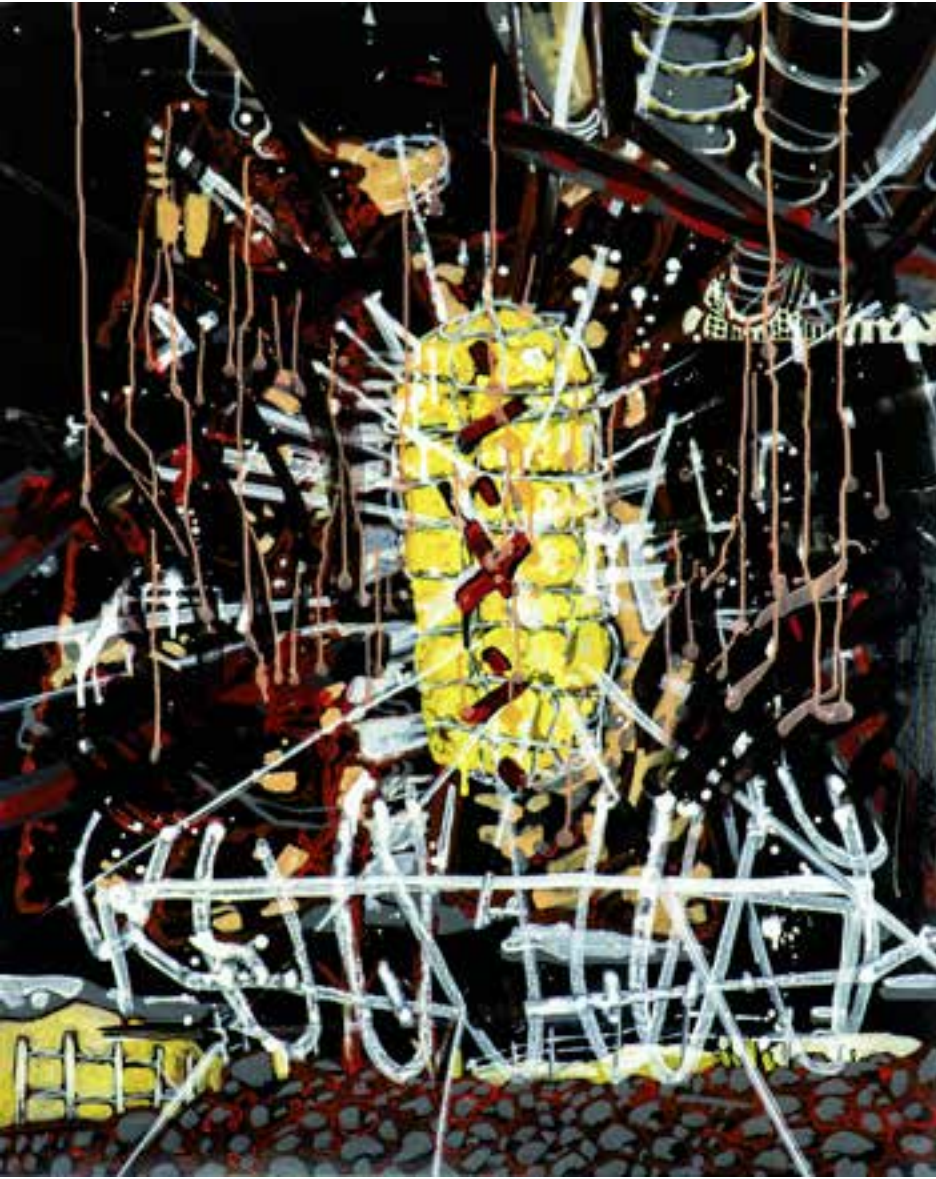
O.T.
80 cm x 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2019 – 2020



O.T. (Druck)
80 cm x 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T. (Tauben)
80 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T.
80 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



Galerie in Flammen
100 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2019 – 2020



O.T. (Black)
100 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2019



O.T. (Blau)
100 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2019



O.T. (Toxic)
100 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2019



Gefallener Adler
100 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T. (Ecce Homo)
100 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T.
100 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2019



Gefallener Adler
100 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020

O.T.
150 cm x 150 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020

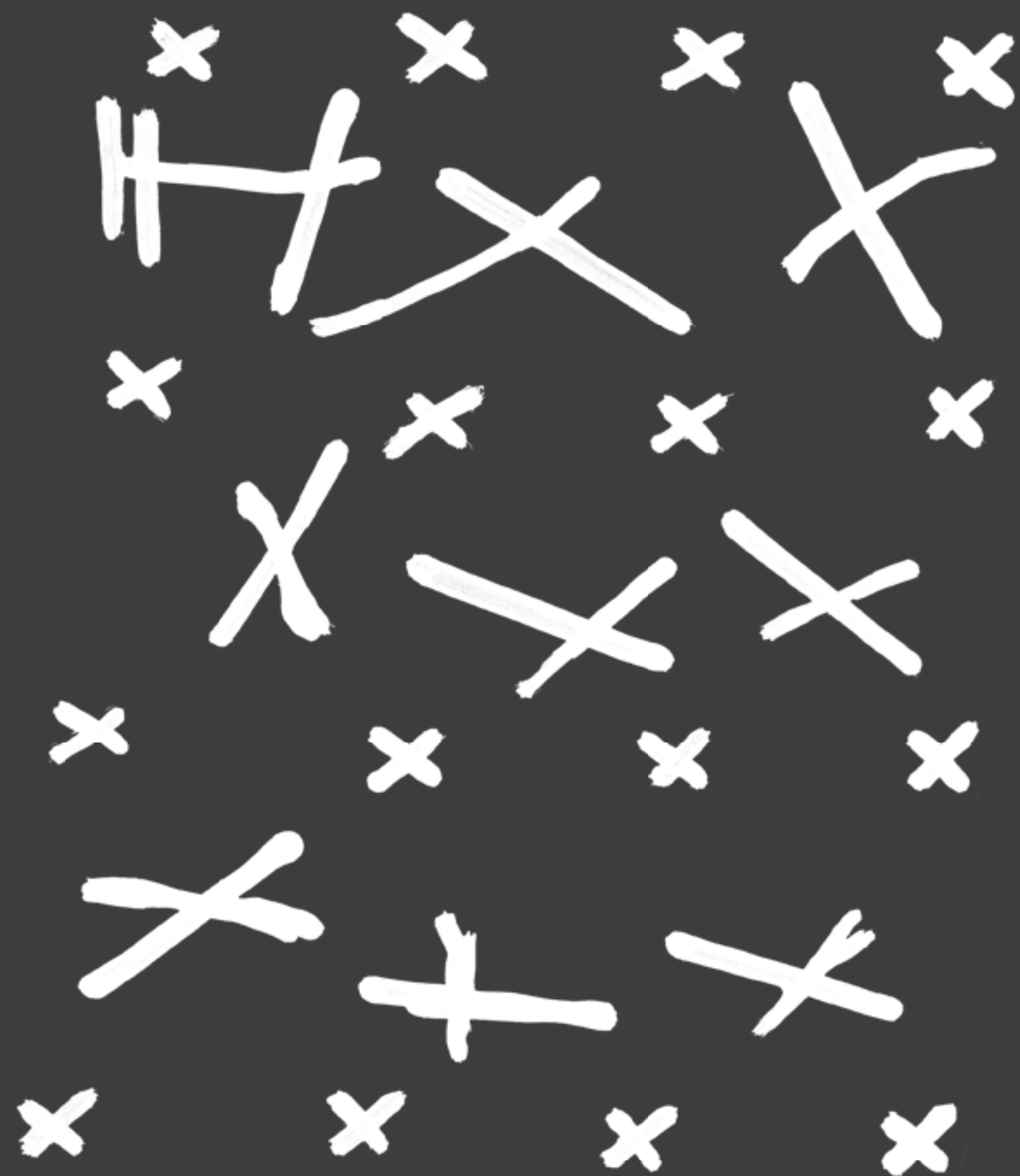


O.T.
150 cm x 150 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T.
150 cm x 150 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020





The new age does not make you younger either.

Raphael Mur

2021



Old Spirits

A society's relationship to landscape and analysis of stories preserved therein are what explains how things were in that society in the past. How it is, what it will become is conveyed by contemporary art.

South Tyrol has innumerable legends, dark tales full of frightening figures. A good example of that is the Fanes legend. This legend gives rise to the figure of Spina de Mul, an archaic magician whom I have named as the protagonist for the world cycle. This figure stands for the old patriarchy and the latter's fight against the matriarchy, an ancient conflict that still remains unresolved today.

I chose this "old spirit" as companion for the observer, as a new painter I watch society and the beauty in life in my weighty pictorial world, in which

gazes can restlessly wander.

To fathom the attraction of the old legends, heroes and spirits, I set off on a hike lasting several days through the Fanes Region with photographer Thomas Sutti and graphic designer Florian Dariz in August 2020.

The underlying aim of the journey was to search for the relics of past epochs and to question if and how a landscape can influence the creation of fantastic stories.

My team and I found unexpected treasures during the course of the project. They were the inspiration for works on paper, paintings and photographs.



O.T.
80 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T.
80 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



Corona End
80 cm x 120 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



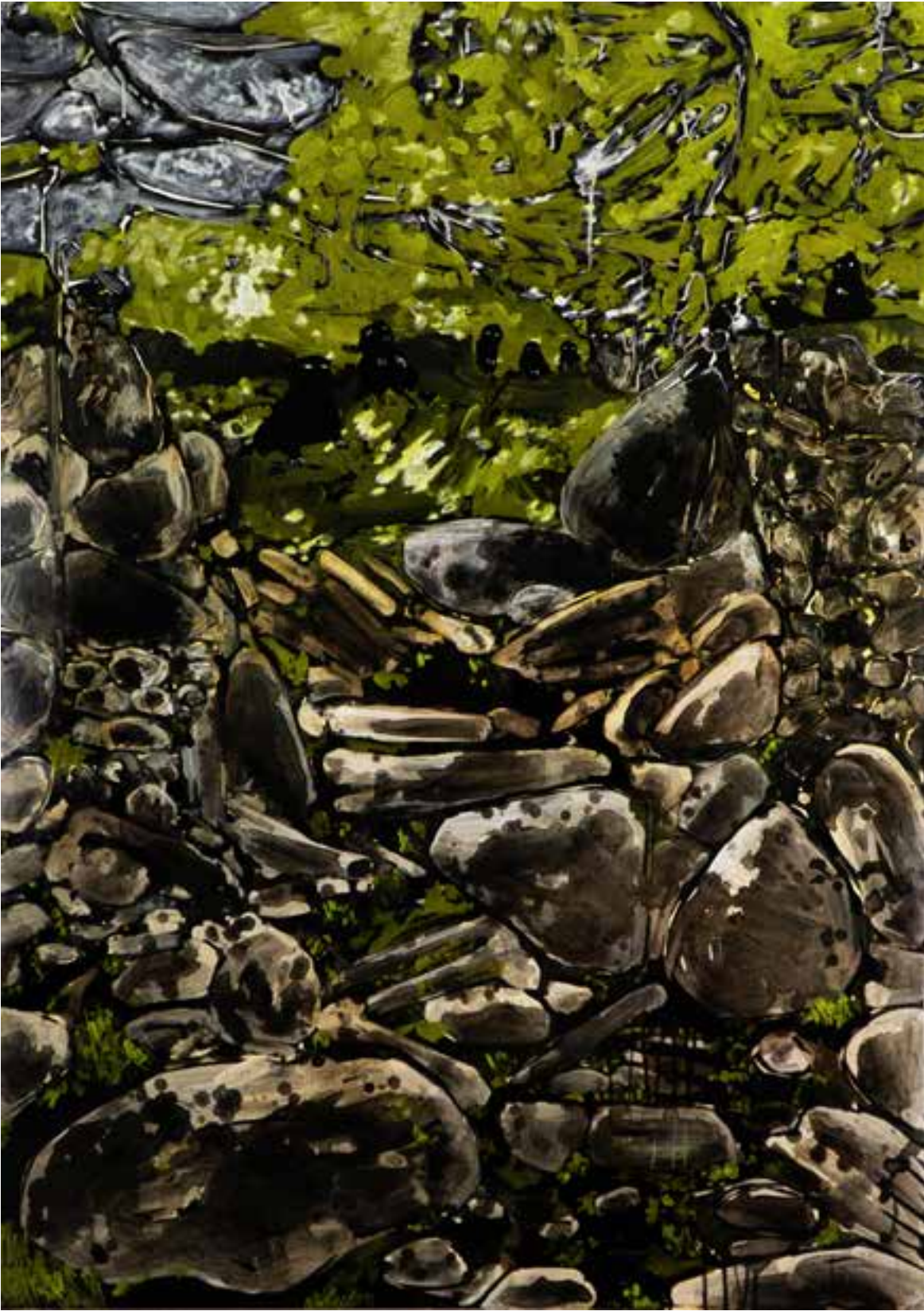
O.T. (Cry Baby)
100 cm x 120 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T.
80 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T.
80 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T. (Fanes)
100 cm × 140 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T.
100 cm × 140 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T.
100 cm × 160 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T. (Rayeta)
100 cm × 160 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020

O.T.
120 cm x 120 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T.
120 cm x 120 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T.
120 cm x 120 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T. (Dark Spring)
120 cm x 120 cm/ Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



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Whiskered teal...
 not a waterfowl...
 apron torn...!
 by the...
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 xxxxx

A new picture from Øtzi ...

South Tyrol Museum of Archeology

2020



Dark Øtzi

Who doesn't know him? The "man from the Ice", rediscovered in 1991 in the Ötztal Alps after around 5,350 years. Øtzi, a man with a tale to tell! Øtzi the cross-border commuter, murdered under mysterious circumstances, took his secrets with him into his icy grave.

There was much polemic and dispute about the mummy, which embodied an old as well as current conflict in a bizarre way. Italy and Austria both laid claim to the archaeological treasure for themselves. Finally, the countries agreed to leave the mummy in the autonomous province of Bolzano in South Tyrol, thus entrusting the region with an irreplaceable cultural treasure.

The man from the Ice is a world-class archaeological find. In the collective memory of the natives of South Tyrol, it is the "forefather", old Øtzi that ever-

yone comes to see in the museum as a child. There, one catches a glimpse of the dead man, a lifeless shroud and yet so alive.

And I realised: This man cannot die. His spirit is borne by all those who know him and know that their life will end someday as well. In an unprecedented way, Øtzi embodies the vanitas, the "memento mori". When I thought about it, it seemed to me as if Øtzi's spirit had entered my house. It appeared on the paintings, incited discourse about old and new and ultimately raised questions that can't be answered by pure display. Øtzi's tale serves as motivation to look inside ourselves and find the dark places concealing the things we fear as well as the answers to important questions.



O.T. (Dark Øtzi)
60 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on paper and canvas / 2020



O.T. (Awake)
100 cm × 140 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer
on paper and canvas / 2020



O.T. (Der Tanz)
100 cm x 120 cm /Acrylics and PU lacquer on paper and canvas / 2021



O.T. (Damokles)
100 cm x 120 cm /Acrylics and PU lacquer
on paper and canvas / 2021



O.T. (Phönix)
100 cm x 120 cm /Acrylics and PU lacquer on paper and canvas / 2021



O.T. (Schmerz der Zeit)
100 cm x 120 cm /Acrylics and PU lacquer
on paper and canvas / 2021

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**Culture
is not
every-
thing,
but
every-
thing is
nothing
without
culture.**



Red Zone

The “Red Zone” work cycle deals with the safety measure of the same name to contain the Covid pandemic, which also began in South Tyrol in 2020.

This condition came as a shock to most contemporaries. The world was in waiting. Ethnic questions came to light. Every individual considered a lockdown as a “red zone” rather than the question: “Where can I be?”

As an artist, who could on no account simply ignore this crisis situation, I felt myself obligated to place my main focus on this current topic. The documentary quality of art is a basic principle in my work.

A bubbling mix of feelings swirls around this difficult time and demands resilience and awareness of people, while old boy networks and encrusted structures can merely hinder the mas-

tery of a challenge of this magnitude and turn it into a slow and threatening issue.

Transformation and change are indispensable in a developing, futureem-bracing society, even if that always means relinquishing something else. In this work cycle, I set myself the goal of dealing with this topic pictorially and recording the “Red Zone” in paintings.

Restless landscapes, ruins in red, with obstacles as dark silhouettes for a dark incomprehensible force in front of them. We are tempted to look away. Behind them, we find rubble and debris again. The colour red denotes the fear of restriction, oppressive security policy and resentment, knowledge and ignorance.

And, nonetheless, red transcends even more, far from everything evil. Red is the colour of blood, of the ripe fruit

and of the ruby, something valuable. It also stands for those values society needs for peace and for genuine freedom.



O.T.
80 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2021



O.T. (Red Power)
100 cm × 100 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2021

O.T.
120 cm x 120 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T.
120 cm x 120 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



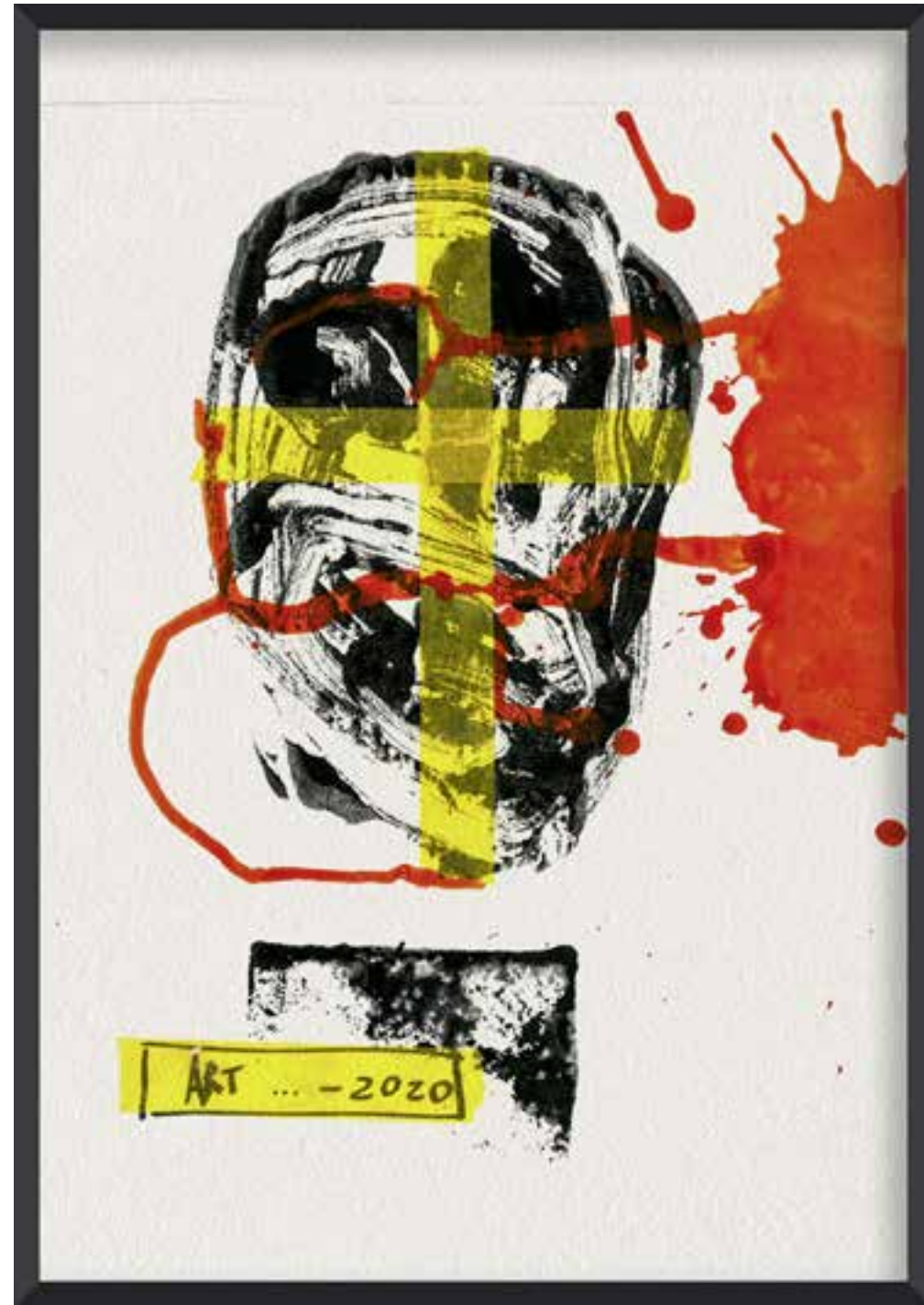
O.T.
120 cm x 120 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020



O.T. (Omen)
120 cm x 120 cm / Acrylics and PU lacquer on canvas / 2020







Works on Paper

Parallel to the paintings on canvas, works on paper were also created.

Unlike the rather planned painting process on large formats, there is spontaneity in the process here. This approach is essential for me and represents a necessary alternative.

Here, materials and painting and drawing techniques are mixed as well as the boundaries in representation and conceptual content are explored. These works are usually created quickly, one after the other. This gives them a serial character, which is crucial for the presentation.

In a second step, I finally combine the pictures into an assemblage of twelve individual ones into one large new picture.

The representations now enter into dialogue with each other and create a

narrative space of interpretation for the viewer.

The pictures depict heads, bodies, natural and abstract figures, spaces and suggested landscapes.

Working with writing in the picture was also a challenge of its own in these works. The texts seem to be taken out of thin air, spontaneous and free and usually have something in common with the theme "Old Spirits".



O.T.
12 x 30 cm x 40 cm / Mixed-Media on Paper / 2020 – 2021



O.T.
12 x 30 cm x 40 cm / Mixed-Media on Paper / 2020 – 2021



O.T.
12 × 30 cm × 40 cm / Mixed-Media on Paper / 2020 – 2021



O.T.
12 × 30 cm × 40 cm / Mixed-Media on Paper / 2020 – 2021



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12 x 30 cm x 40 cm / Mixed-Media on Paper / 2020 – 2021



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12 x 30 cm x 40 cm / Mixed-Media on Paper / 2020 – 2021



O.T.
12 x 30 cm x 40 cm / Mixed-Media on Paper / 2020 – 2021



O.T.
12 x 30 cm x 40 cm / Mixed-Media on Paper / 2020 – 2021



O.T.
12 x 30 cm x 40 cm / Mixed-Media on Paper / 2020 – 2021



O.T.
12 x 30 cm x 40 cm / Mixed-Media on Paper / 2020 – 2021

Pre-COVID



018



018



019



028



029



020



020



021



030



031



022



023



032



033



024



025



035



037



026



027



039

Old Spirits



044



045



052



053



046



047



055



057



048



049



059



061



050



051

Dark Øtzi



066



067



068



069



070



071

Red Zone



076



077



079



081



083



085

Mange Tak

Founded
by good
DOING

MANGE TAK!

That’s Danish, my mother’s native language, and means: “Thank you very much!”

Everything my partner and I have done and risked for this book makes me very proud and confident as regards a new direction for art!

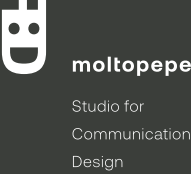
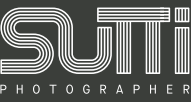
After such a project as this book, I’d now like to take the opportunity to thank those who pitched in to finally render the inconceivable conceivable.

I look back on hours of valuable talks and collective conceptualising with you.

Once again: MANGE, MANGE TAK!



TEAM



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Created on Planet Earth with Love

