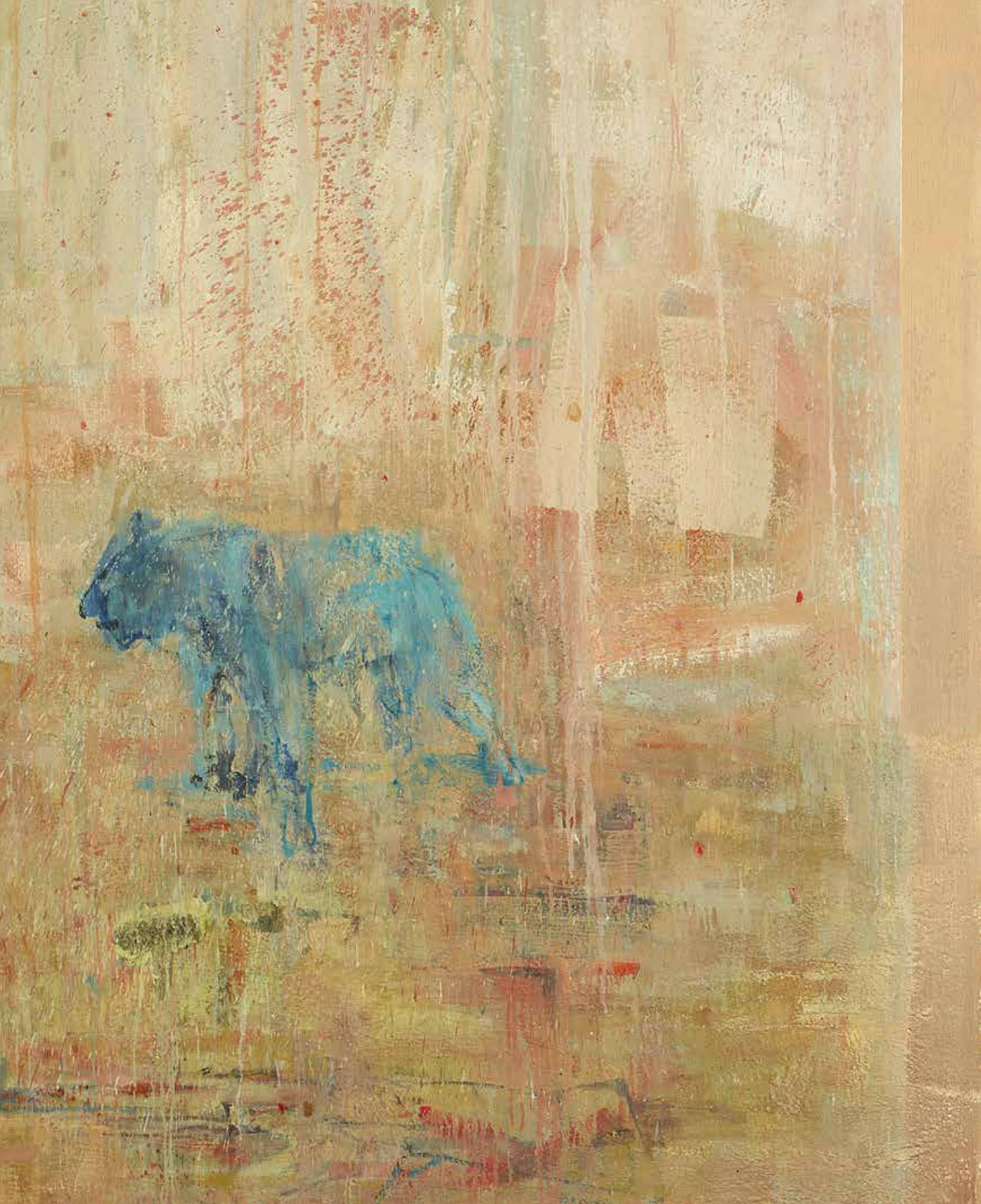


CESARE LUCCHINI

PIETÀ





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text: Ian Rosenfeld

design and creative direction: Salvatore Morelli & Milagros michilli, milagro adv srl, Italy

photography:

Vito Robbiani

Fabio Speranza photography pages: 8, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 25, 27, 29, 73, 87, 91, 95

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37 Rathbone Street

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t+44 (0) 20 76371133

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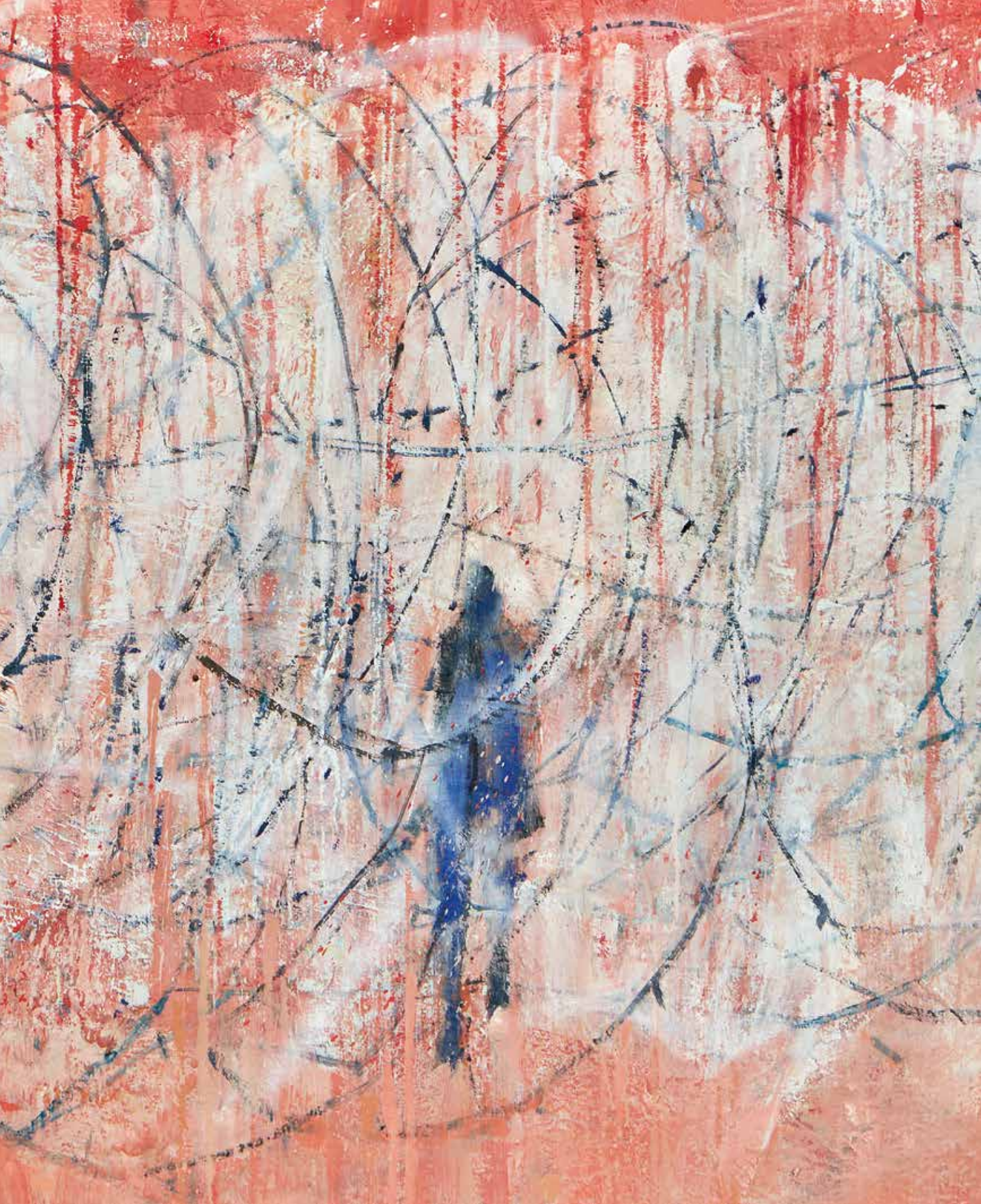


'La Pietà', the iconic image of Christ's inert body being supported by the Virgin Mary is one of the most emotionally charged images in all Western Art and also one of the most moving testimonies to human compassion. 'Compassion' or the lack of it, is at the core of all Cesare Lucchini's paintings: The inability of man to ever emerge from the innate contradictions which condemn him to never fulfilling his potential. The desperation of the absolute solitude to which he is condemned as a consequence of that behaviour. Lucchini, through his works, demands of us to face the question: Why? Why are these people alone and abandoned to their destiny. In a western world dominated by an alarming shift to the political right where any form of moderation is immediately shouted down; where episodes of racism are on the rise, Cesare Lucchini addresses the ultimate isolation which will ultimately afflict all of us.

This volume will open and close with two key paintings where the artist places animals; a tiger in one and a dog in another, as innocent bystanders to human tragedies. Constrained to look on with pity at what human beings are capable of inflicting on each other. In one work, a headless body lies on the ground, a gun a short distance away from him, whilst the tiger looks on. In the other, a helicopter is spraying gunfire on a group of people huddled together unable to defend themselves whilst a dog witnesses the scene. These two paintings are bookends to the moral outrage which underpin his works.

Having visited the detention centre for immigrants on the Italian island of Lampedusa, it is no surprise that it became a focus for a recent series of paintings. Concentrating as he has often done in the past on what 'remains' after a tragedy, the paintings contain footprints and what appear to be pieces of discarded belongings, whilst in another area of the canvas, a lone silhouetted figure surrounded by barbed wire, witnesses the scene. A boat covered in barbed wire with a solitary human being standing in the distance, whilst a majestic looking mountain and a terse blue sky look on, is another reference to the almost daily tragedy taking place on the sea just beyond the island. The concept of focussing on 'Those who Remain' comes from the Istrian but adopted Italian artist Zoran Mušič's works whilst in the concentration camp of Dachau during the Second World War. Initially sharing the same Milanese gallery, the portraits Music made of the inmates in the camp greatly affected the much younger Lucchini who felt an instinctive empathy with the older artist's concentration on the 'victims' and the ones who 'remain' and have to live with the memory of what they have seen. As Music's works were entitled 'Those who Remain', so Lucchini adopted the title for many of his own works which spoke of man's indifference to his fellow man.

The use of barbed wire is a recurrent theme in the paintings, yet although on occasions it can stand for the traditional idea of forced enclosure, more frequently it becomes a metaphor for the inevitable solitude of human beings both psychologically and physically. Emerging or standing alongside some vague form of wreckage, his subjects appear as silent observers to the tragedy. Although silhouetted,



they have something of the Holocaust survivors, alive but almost shades, forever marked by what they have witnessed.

Other canvases depict large figures lying sprawled on the ground dominating the landscape or smaller figures laying contorted over large cube-like forms much like an improvised altar. Titled 'Ascension', they draw on Lucchini's desire to reference Christian imagery in the works not because of a deep religious belief but more for the compassion and emotional clarity at the core of the Biblical stories.

The mountain, for the artist, has a fundamental role because it represents a form of nirvana or paradise which human beings dream of but can never attain.. We constantly fantasise about this unattainable world, yet as can be seen in the paintings, whilst the blue skies are painted in a limp blue and the mountains are similarly simple in construction, the figures lie contorted in the bottom half of the picture, often seen as more of an 'assemblage' constructed from the various elements which constitute a body. Drawing on the lesson of 'cubism', he deconstructs his figures so that they themselves become a poignant metaphor for the human condition.

Whilst the mountain represents a pure state, trees in his works are seen, rather like animals, as innocent but involved participants often seen metaphorically dripping in red paint, as if crying for what they have to unwillingly become a party to.

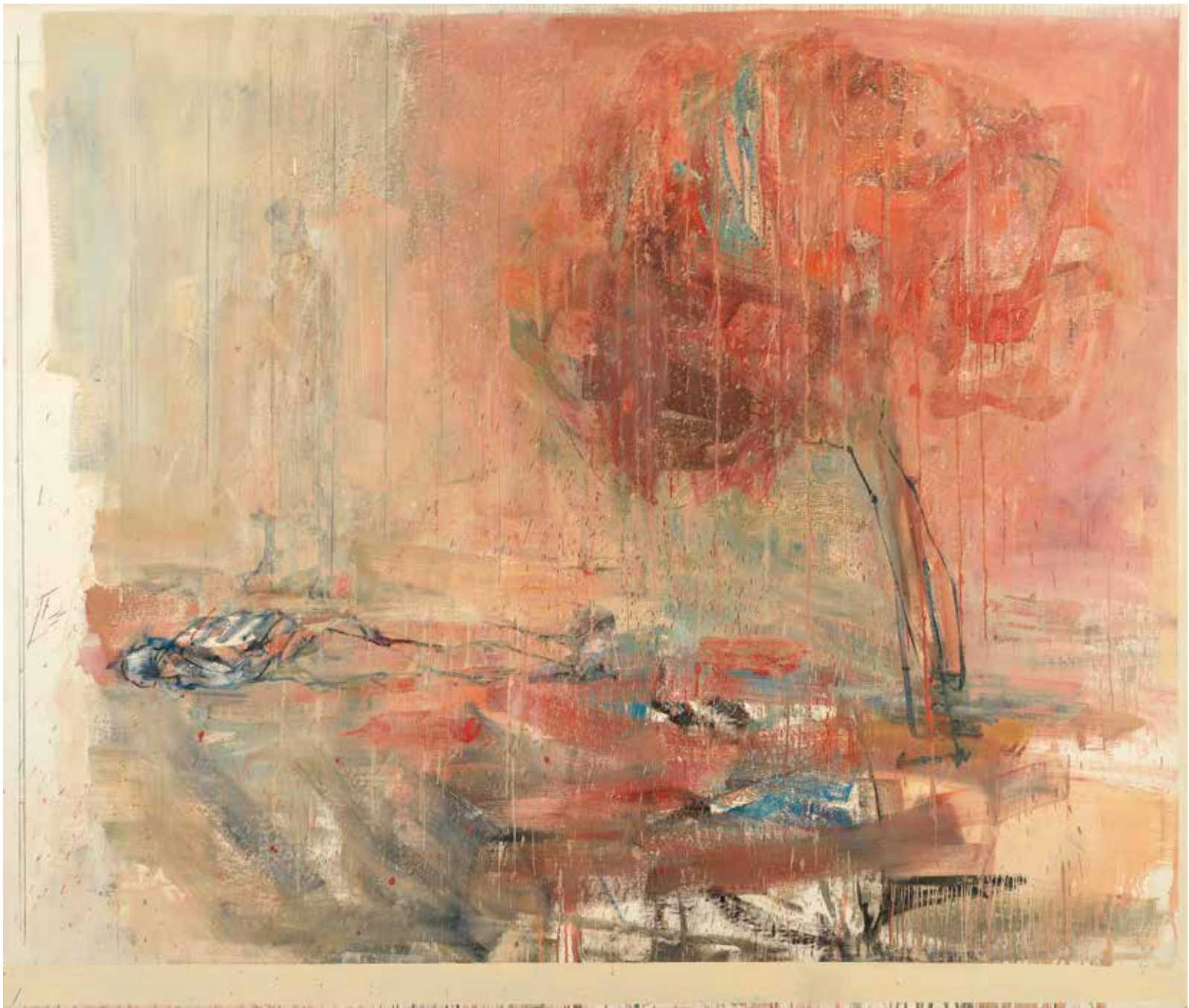
Emerging from the era of 'abstract expressionism' with his repeated layering of paint and attention on the force of the gesture, each finished work is the result of many, many hours in the studio working and reworking the canvas. The richness of the paintings' surfaces reveal themselves little by little. As can be seen in the exhibition, his methodology is to work on a series of canvases simultaneously, all of which feature the same narrative. Only the act of painting will ultimately create the differences between the various pictures. When Lucchini is asked what he does, his reply is never 'I am an artist' but rather 'I am a painter' because that is exactly how he sees himself, as someone who goes into his studio everyday and 'paints'.

Now in his late seventies, a lifetime of dedication to his profession gives his paintings a rare richness and depth, the narrative and form resulting in a perfect unity.

Although his narrative can appear bleak and dramatic, what saves the paintings from a dark pessimism is the richness of his palette. His colours are those of the Mediterranean and they work in total contrast to the starkness of his subject matter creating an extraordinarily powerful and highly emotional dynamic. Lucchini does not want us to wallow in desperation but rather desires to produce in us a cathartic charge through the 'beauty' and 'richness' of 'painting' to make us understand that 'we' alone, as a collective of simple individuals, can ultimately be the only agents of change.



Il Giorno della Memoria, 2013



Il Giorno della Memoria, 2012

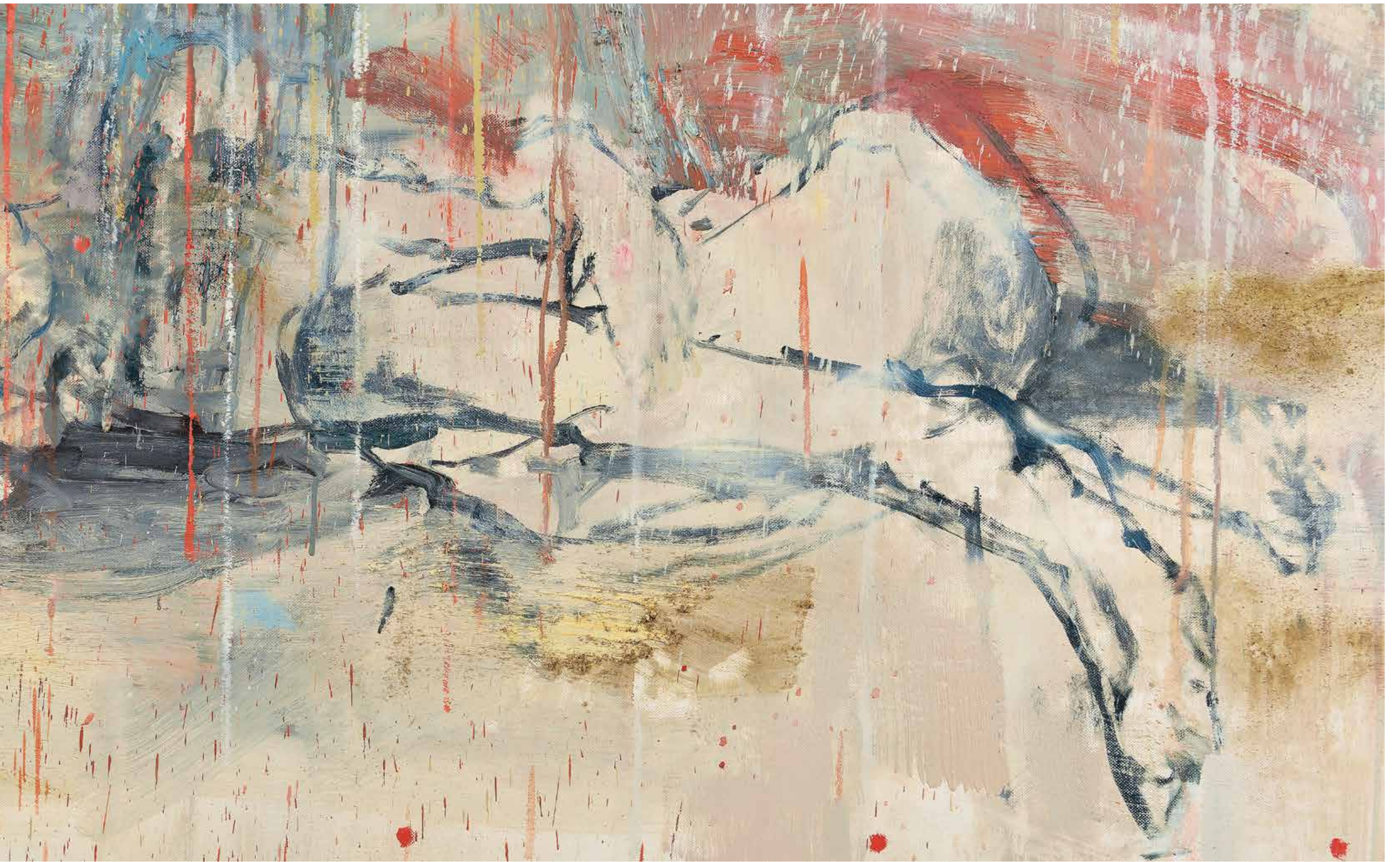


Quel che rimane, 2011

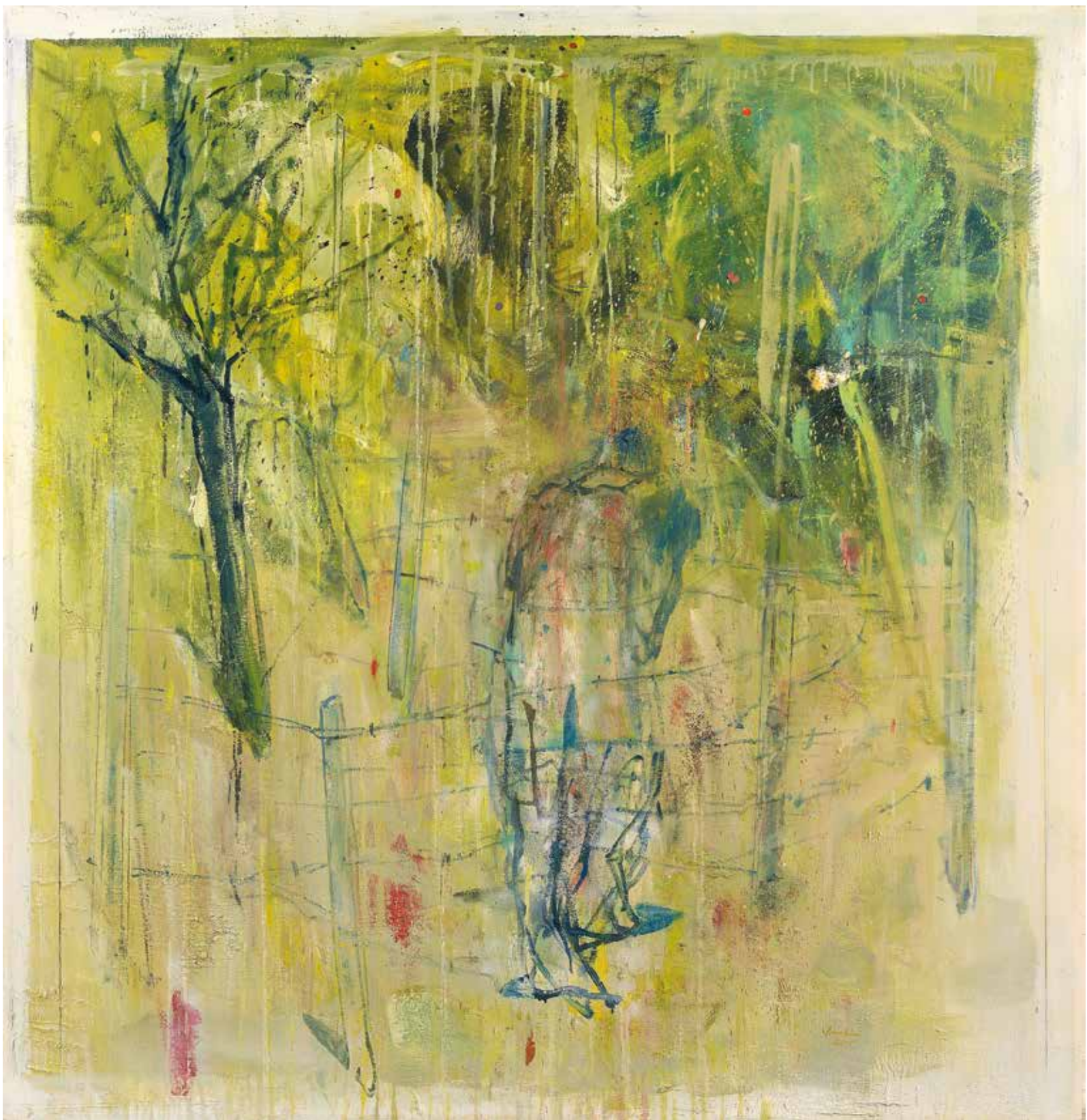


Quel che rimane, 2011 (detail)





Un percorso molto accidentato, 2015



Nella polvere - resti, 2015



Un percorso molto accidentato, 2014



Quel che rimane la caduta, 2013



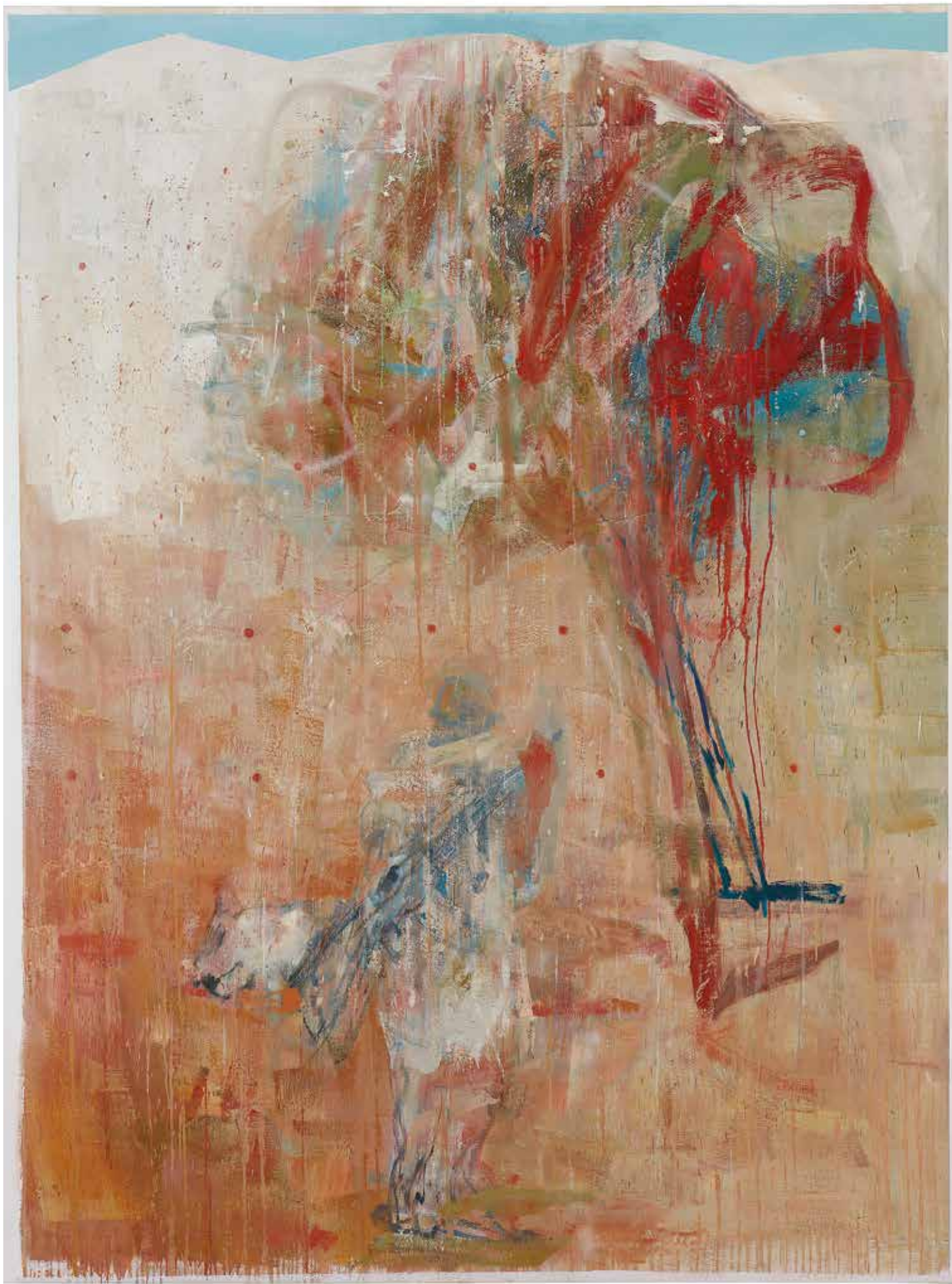
Interno la caduta, 2014



Ascensione, 2018



Il bambino soldato, 2013



Il bambino soldato, 2013, (detail)



Il bambino soldato, 2013







Contrasto, 2018

*"The essential of any painting is light. You could say that it is
the mirror of its soul. There is no system that can create it.
Light must invade the whole surface of the work in a totally natural way:
It's how the painting lives and breathes."*



Dove vanno, 2017



Dove vanno?, 2018



Dove vanno?, 2017-2018



Dove vanno?, 2017-2018



Dove vanno?, 2017



Dove vanno?, 2017



La barca è vuota, 2017



La Barca è vuota - resti, 2018



La Barca è vuota - resti, 2018



La Caduta, 2017





Interni - resti, 2016



Ascensione, 2017



Ascensione, 2019



Ascensione, 2018



Filo Spinato, 2014







La caduta, 2014-2018 (detail)

La caduta, 2014-2018



La caduta, 2013



La caduta, 2014



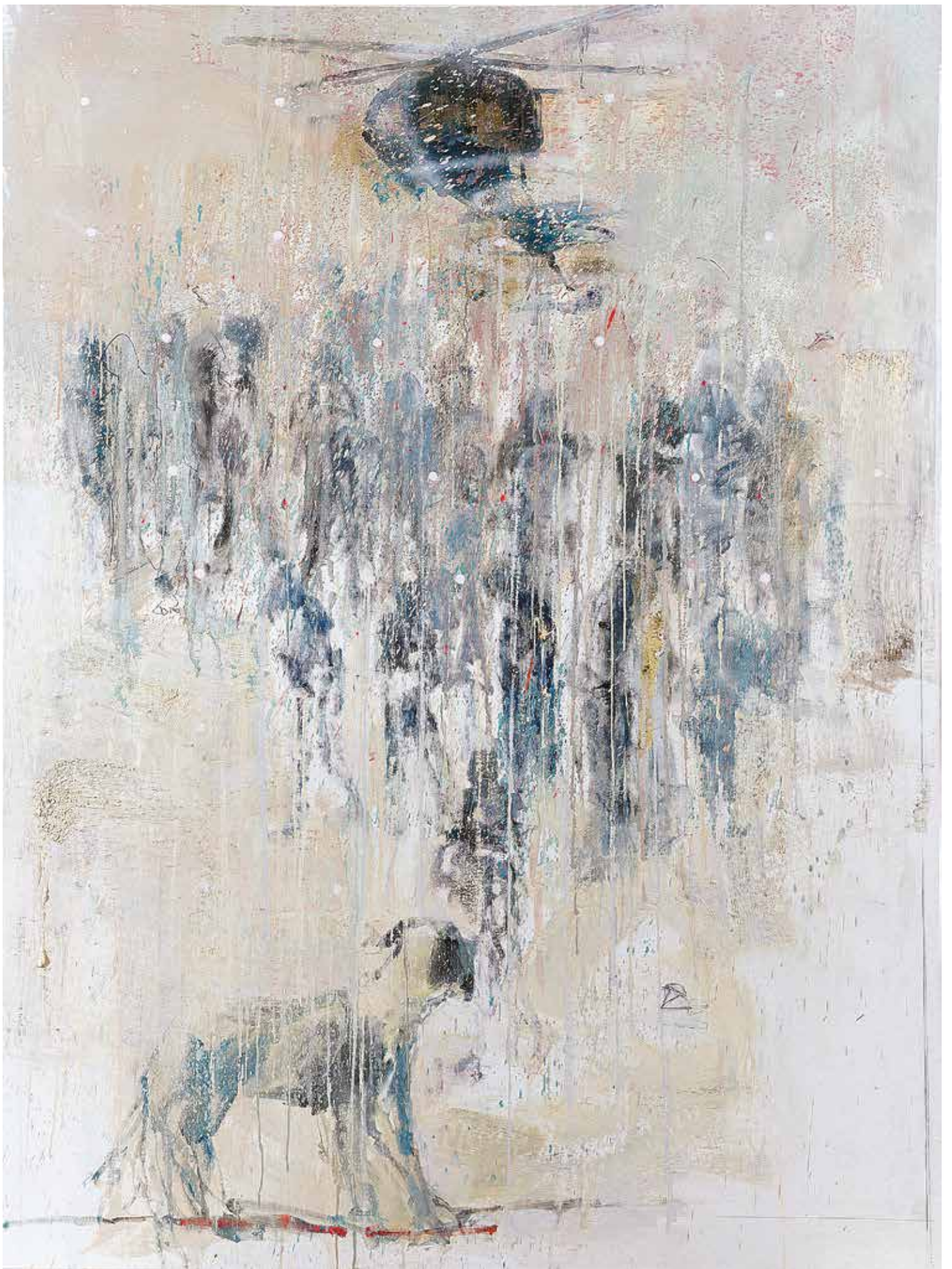
Ascensione, 2019



Ascensione, 2019



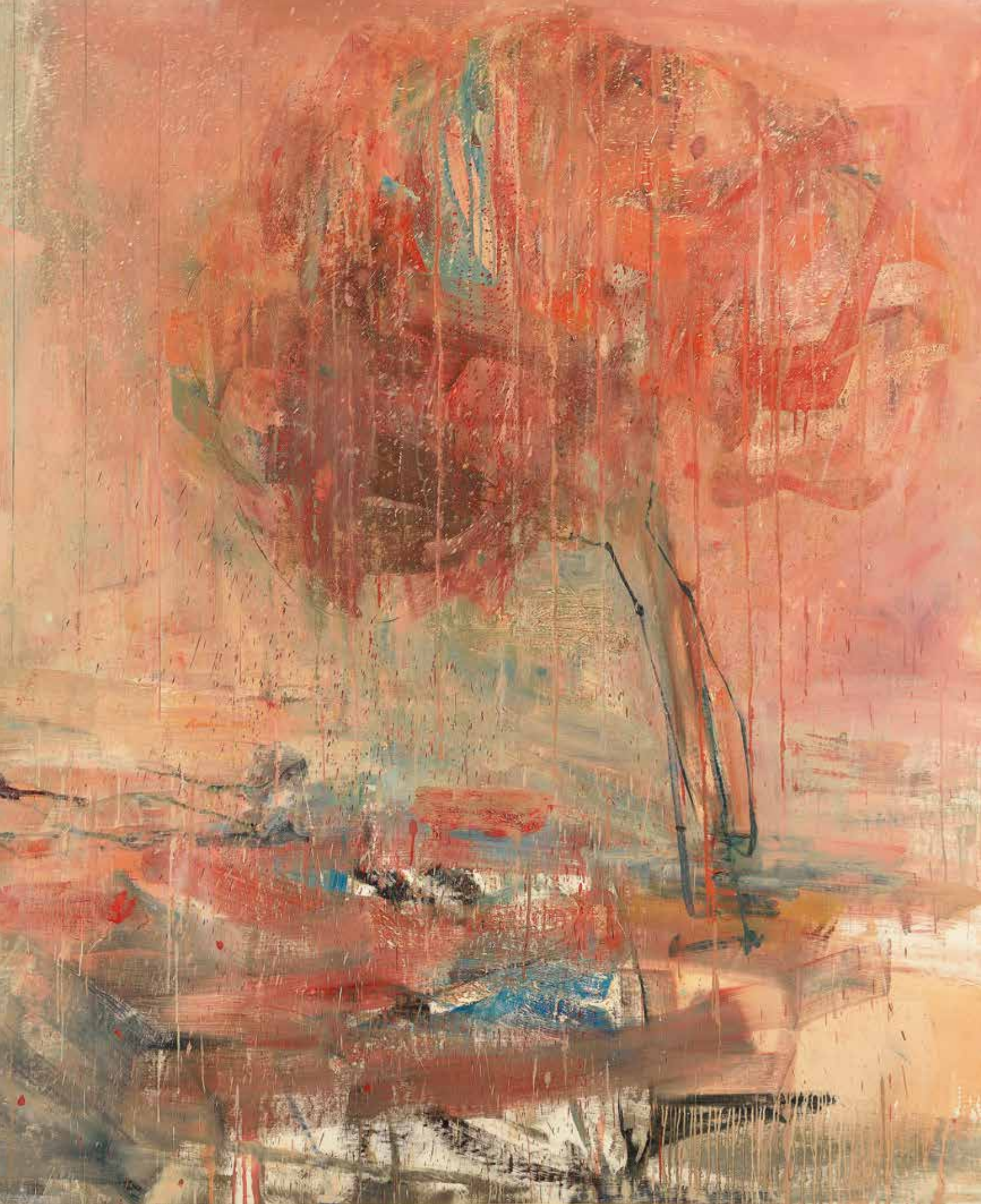
Quel che Rimane, 2009



Un giardino accidentato, 2015



Il Giorno della Memoria, 2013 (detail)



Bambino soldato, 2013



Cesare Lucchini
b. 1941 in Bellinzona, Switzerland
Lives and works in Lugano

Education

1965

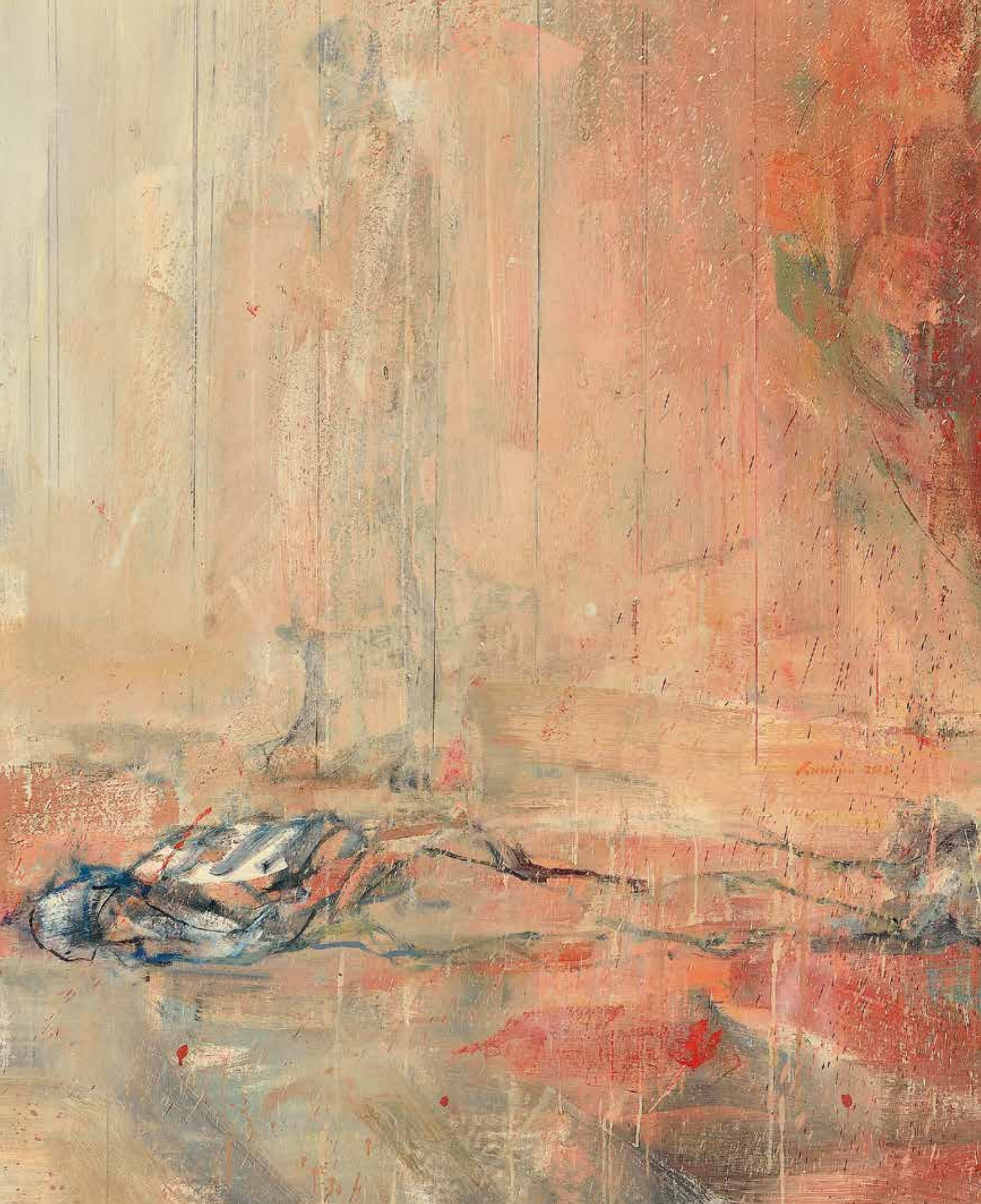
Brera Academy of Fine Arts in Milan

Exhibitions

- | | | | |
|------|---|------|--|
| 2017 | The Figure in Contemporary Art, rosenfeld porcini, London, UK | 1990 | Galery Carzaniga-Hücker, Basilea, Switzerland |
| 2016 | Kunstmuseum, Berne, Switzerland
Expo Chicago, rosenfeld porcini, Chicago, USA | 1989 | Galery Ditesheim, Neuchatel, Switzerland
Galery Am See, Zug, Switzerland |
| 2015 | From Battlefield to Paradise, rosenfeld porcini, London, UK | 1987 | Galery Carzaniga-Hücker, Basel, Switzerland |
| 2013 | The Birth of Cinema...and Beyond, rosenfeld porcini, London, UK
Galerie Ditesheim-Maffei di Neuchatel, Switzerland | 1986 | Galery Bergamini, Milan , Italy
Galery Italiana Arte, Busto Arsizio,Italy |
| 2012 | Those Who Remain, Rosenfeld Porcini, London, UK | 1985 | Galery Kornschütte, Luzern, Switzerland
Galery Verena Müller, Bern, Switzerland |
| 2009 | Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz, Germany
Museo Cantonale d'Arte, Lugano, Switzerland | 1983 | Galery Carzaniga- Hücker, Basel, Switzerland |
| 2008 | Galerie Hans Strelow, Düsseldorf, Germany | 1982 | Palazzo Pollini, Mendrisio, Switzerland
Galery Verena Müller, Bern, Switzerland |
| 2006 | Galerie Ditesheim, Neuchâtel, Switzerland | 1980 | Galleria Matasci, Tenero, Switzerland |
| 2005 | Centre Culturel Suisse, Milano, Italy
Galerie Hans Strelow, Düsseldorf, Germany | 1978 | Galleria Bergamini, Milano, Italy |
| 2003 | Galerie Kornfeld, Bern, Switzerland | 1975 | Galleria Correggio, Parma, Italy |
| 2001 | Galerie Strelow, Düsseldorf, Germany
Museo Villa Ciani, Lugano, Switzerland | 1973 | Galleria delle Ore, Milano,Italy |
| 2000 | Galerie Ditesheim, Neuchâtel, Switzerland | 1971 | Cupola Arte Casa, Lugano, Switzerland |
| 1998 | Galerie Hans Strelow, Düsseldorf, Germany
The Marble Palace Museum, Saint Petersburg, Russia
Manège (with Rolf Iseli, Stephan Spicher, Paolo Bellini and Pierre Casé), Moskau, Russland | 1969 | Galleria delle Ore, Milano, Italy |
| 1996 | Galleria Matasci, Tenero, Switzerland
Galerie Triebold, Basel, Switzerland
Galerie Lawrence Rubin, Zuerich, Switzerland | 1968 | Galleria Mosaico, Chiasso, Switzerland |
| 1995 | Galerie Strelow, Düsseldorf, Germany
Galerie Kornfeld, Bern, Switzerland | 1967 | Galleria La Ruota, Bellinzona, Switzerland |
| 1993 | Galleria Bergamini, Milano, Italy | | |
| 1992 | Pinacoteca Casa Rusca, Locarno ,Switzerland
Musée d'Art et Histoire Neuchatel, Switzerland
Palazzo dei Diamanti, Ferrara, Italy
Galerie Proarta, Zurigo, Switzerland | | |
| 1991 | APC Galery, Hamburg, Germany | | |

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

- Collezione Città di Lugano, Lugano, Switzerland
Museo Cantonale d'Arte, Lugano, Switzerland
Museo d'Arte Mendrisio, Mendrisio, Switzerland
Museo Villa dei Cedri, Bellinzona, Switzerland
Pinacoteca Casa Rusca,Locarno, Switzerland
Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz, Chemnitz, Germany
Kunstmuseum Bern, Bern, Switzerland





Quel che rimane - resti, 2009-2010
oil on canvas, 198x335cm
p02



Un percorso molto accidentato, 2015
oil on canvas, 167x162cm
p20



Nella Polvere - Resti (detail), 2015
oil on canvas, 195x240cm
p05



Nella polvere - resti, 2015
oil on canvas, 195x240cm
p22



Un percorso molto accidentato (detail), 2015
oil on canvas, 167x162cm
p06



Un percorso molto Accidentato, 2014
oil on canvas, 190x201cm
p24



Dove vanno? (detail), 2018
oil on canvas, 243x177cm
p08



Quel che rimane la caduta, 2013
oil on canvas, 192x148cm
p26



Il Giorno della Memoria, 2013
oil on canvas, 194x228cm
p12



Interno la caduta, 2014
oil on canvas, 150x210cm
p28



Il Giorno della Memoria, 2012
oil on canvas, 156x187cm
p14



Ascensione, 2018
oil on canvas, 200x189cm
p30



Quel che rimane, 2011
oil on canvas, 200x230cm
p16



Il bambino soldato, 2013
oil on canvas, 220x173cm
p32



Quel che rimane (detail), 2011
oil on canvas, 200x230cm
p18



Il bambino soldato (detail), 2013
oil on canvas, 220x173cm
p34



Il bambino soldato, 2013
oil on canvas, 214x191cm
p36



La barca è vuota, 2017
oil on canvas, 261x232cm
p54



Contrasto, 2018
oil on canvas, 192x545cm
p38



La Barca è vuota - resti, 2018
oil on canvas, 157x127cm
p56



Dove vanno, 2017
oil on canvas, 194x143cm
p42



La Barca è vuota - resti, 2018
oil on canvas, 180x125cm
p58



Dove vanno?, 2018
oil on canvas, 243x177cm
p44



La caduta, 2017
oil on canvas, 203x199cm
p60



Dove vanno?, 2017-2018
oil on canvas, 187x119cm
p46



Interni - resti, 2016
oil on canvas, 165x190cm
p64



Dove vanno?, 2017-2018
oil on canvas, 203x132cm
p48



Ascensione, 2017
oil on canvas, 146x188cm
p66



Dove vanno?, 2017
oil on canvas, 151x161cm
p50



Ascensione, 2019
oil on canvas, 123x90cm
p68



Dove vanno?, 2017
oil on canvas, 197x208cm
p52



Ascensione, 2018,
oil on canvas, 165x200cm
p70



Filo Spinato, 2014
oil on canvas, 147x212cm
p72



Un giardino accidentato, 2015
oil on canvas, 127x126cm
p88



La caduta, 2014-2018 (detail)
oil on canvas, 137x208cm
p74



Il giorno della memoria, (detail) 2013
oil on canvas, 194x228m
p90



La caduta, 2014-2018
oil on canvas, 137x208cm
p76



Bambino soldato, 2013,
oil on canvas, 157x127cm
p92



La caduta, 2013
oil on canvas, 180x243cm
p78



Il Giorno della Memoria, (detail) 2015
oil on canvas, 194x228m
p95



La caduta, 2014
oil on canvas, 174x232cm
p80



La barca è vuota, (detail) 2017
oil on canvas, 261x232cm
p99



Ascensione, 2019
oil on canvas, 124x150cm
p82



La Caduta - Ombre, 2015
oil on canvas, 182x135cm
p100



Ascensione, 2019,
oil on canvas, 148x94cm
p84



Quel che Rimane, 2009
oil on canvas, 202x150cm
p86



