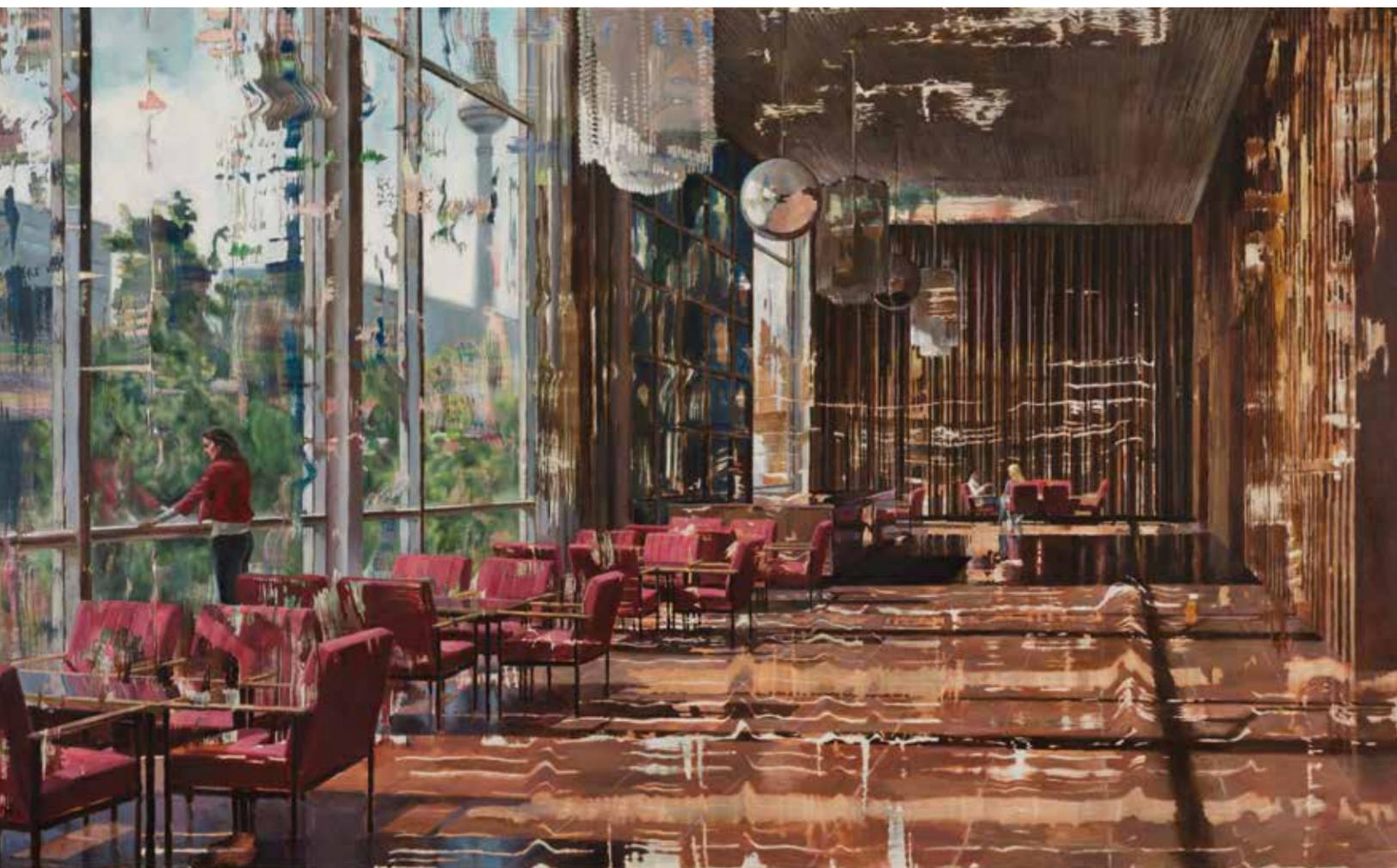




GHYCZY  
WAVELENGTH



1 MEMORY LOUNGE acrylic and oil on canvas, 59 x 98 in. / 150 x 250 cm

# DÉNESH GHYCZY

WAVELENGTH

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## WAVELENGTH: THE UNCANNY EYE OF DÉNESH GHYCZY

*“The painter should paint not only what he has in front of him, but also what he sees inside himself. If he sees nothing within, then he should stop painting what is in front of him.”*

Caspar David Friedrich

We live in a world of binary elements, each competing for our attention, not so much in a conflict of opposites as in a dance, a conversation between components of a single whole, which has been fragmented by our own dualistic perceptions. At the beating heart of the work of Ghyczy is a basic dichotomy between the built and the unbuilt environments: the natural world of sleek organic proportional harmonies, and the human habitation of synthetic proportional harmonies inherent in the grid we use to build our dwelling places.

The fact that there is a window in almost every painting can make it easy to forget that every painting already is a window: one differentiating the viewer and the viewed by only the slenderest of threads, an experiential thread that also unites us all in the viewing. Windows within windows: looking in, opening out. A slightly voyeuristic frisson accompanies our watching “Boy in a Window” and “When Real Days Break” for instance, since we are watching people who are watching. Perhaps someone else is also watching us watching them watching.

It is reassuring for a critic or commentator to know that they are on the right track while searching through the forest of images for a meaningful metaphor. Ghyczy provides that stability of intention in his own assessment of his principal themes and subjects, and he expresses himself through his image-archive in words as clear and concise as his brushstrokes are wavy and curved.

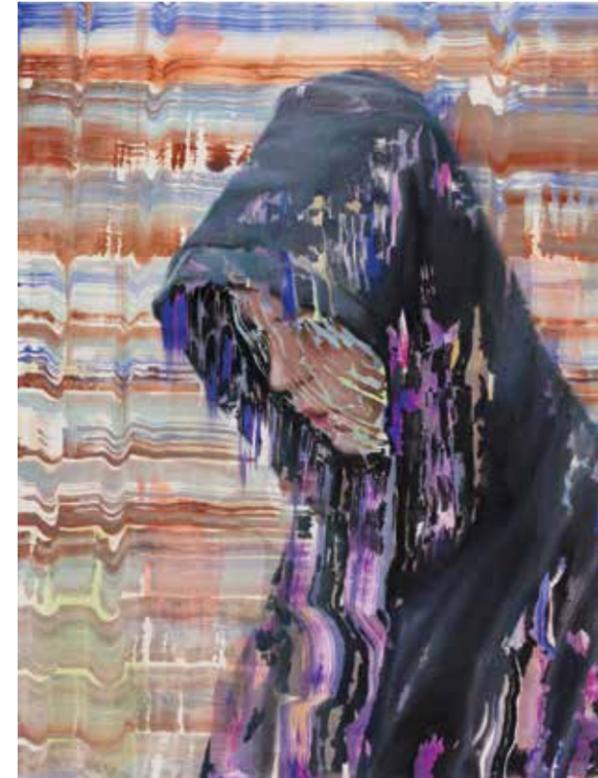
“What does it mean to be inside or outside? What is the layer we are looking through? For a long time I have been interested in the idea of fragmentation. To see more than one level of reality and/or to reveal the illusion of our superficial perceptions. We constructed our fragmented reality, leaving many with a longing to go back to the source, dissolving into nature.” He achieves this aesthetic agenda with artful ease and a high degree of graphic skill, largely by juxtaposing his flowing intuitive brushstrokes (which we are invited to celebrate as brushstrokes, usually in acrylic and thin to the point of fluid transparency) contrasted with the more rigid and controlled spaces defined by geometric forces and the modernist grid.

This conscious collision is both a charmed and a charming one. It blinks back at us: the more we stare into his poetic spaces, the more they tremble under the weight of our vision. When the poet Wallace Stevens managed to poetically define poetry as the *search for the inexplicable*, he neglected to explain that the search is not necessarily conducted so very far afield and can be executed every single morning by going to your front window and staring outside. There, as if hiding in plain sight, the inexplicable nature of everyday life is waiting for those with enough powers of attention to recognize it. The magical is surrounding us in its many mundane disguises and only waits for the focused gaze of an educated onlooker to engage it in conversation.

Artists are educated onlookers, and a painter such as Berlin-based Dénes Ghyczy is possessed of precisely the kind of careful gaze required by both the magical realm and the inexplicable domain to be freely accessed. In other words, he stares at the same things as we all do, an urban street down below a building occupied by the gaze, a window frame which automatically contextualizes the environment quietly hovering between exterior and interior, a person’s head and shoulders in the act of a poised pause. He stares the way we all do, but he sees, truly sees, as few others can.

A large painting (at a roughly human scale of five by seven feet) with the pulsating, vibrating, rippling, almost buzzing tones of his “Daylight Studio”, for example, is a veritable document of what a painter is and does. He is a transmission device for electromagnetic currents and flowing wavelengths that temporarily take on the shifting shape of our surroundings: fractured surfaces with floating brushstrokes reminding us that we are indeed looking at a *painting* of a place or person. It is a depiction not just of the built or unbuilt but also of the *unbuildable*. That is where the inexplicable zone of poetry commences, especially in the alluring context of the architectural uncanny: seduced by the familiar, we are bewildered by the obvious.

The uncanny is originally a Freudian concept (*unheimlich*) of an instance where something can be familiar yet also foreign at the same time, resulting in



2 BOYHOOD  
acrylic and oil on canvas, 36 x 28 in. / 90 x 70 cm

a feeling of it being somewhat unsettling. There is a parallel cognitive dissonance at work in the paintings of Ghyczy, where a seemingly ordinary setting such as an interior wall or a shimmering window suddenly takes on a profoundly extraordinary aspect.

The psyche and the dwelling are primary focal points for our shared appreciation of the domestic and private versus the collective and public. Ghyczy is absorbed by the way our built spaces tend to define not only the parameters of our communal lives but the very ingredients of our consciousness itself. Some of his interior spaces appear to be uninhabited (except for us, the visiting viewer), others have a solitary figure coming or going, leaning or looking away. When a close up portrait of a person is presented to us, they can feel equally elusive and impossible to situate, perhaps due to the rippling energy fields, almost aura-like, which often envelop their figure.

The intersection between the ideas of space and place, where space *turns into* place, or into a person, appears to be the primary mode for pictorial meditation in his

graceful practice as a visual storyteller. The haunting portraits in “Self Portrait” and “Boyhood”, each tell a story, but one whose plot is withheld by the characters in that story. Here too, in the landscape of the human face, the *inscape* perhaps, each portrait shows us another kind of sealed room, one which we may enter only with the distant permission of the subject being portrayed.

“Look at Me” is even more tantalizing, since we can’t do so, and a woman in glasses appears to implore her interlocutor to return her gaze, something we feel almost guilty about doing from our hiding spot. “Memory Lounge” and “Villa Savoye” are likewise almost but not quite empty spaces, again elaborating the magic language of windows in which the very air itself seems to crackle with a morse code of meaning.

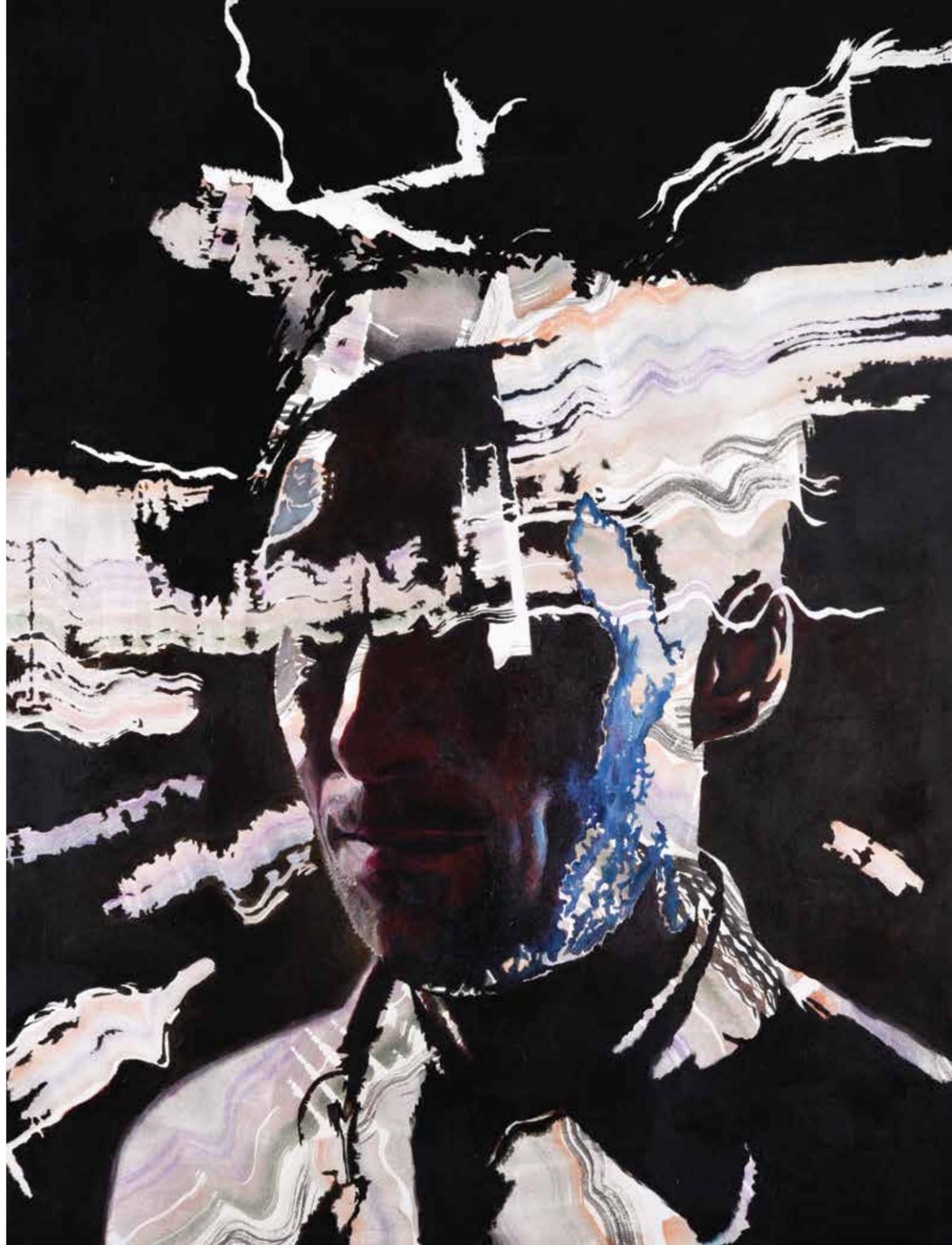
The sublime is easily registered in classical pictures produced by the German painter Caspar David Friedrich, among others. But in the deft hands of a contemporary artist such as Ghyczy, we are invited into the unexpected realm of the everyday, the seemingly ordinary, quotidian zone of our own dwellings and nearby nature. In this respect Ghyczy is a master of the *anti-sublime*. His painted settings, at first glance at least, appear to be familiar locations, and yet they immediately reveal their uncanny layers of undisclosed multiple meanings upon closer quiet inspection.

Enigmatic diagrams of energy in the process of coalescing into matter and form, they are charged with electric currents and patterns, pulsations of that pure magnetic power associated with our own sensual embodiment. The remarkable “Membrane” is perhaps the most emblematic of this unique epi-phenomenon of portrayal. Again, the facial gaze in Ghyczy’s portrait is averted, obstructed or hidden, thus rendering her a mysterious space we are left to imagine. The girl in the painting literally appears to be taking the pulse of a window, while we take the pulse of the painting she lives in.

Our hovering gaze is utterly free to roam across the glistening spaces of these uncanny works. Hallucinatory, surreal, almost psychedelic evocations of the palpable world around us, they proffer the daily promise of the inexplicable. All we have to do is open our perceptual windows.

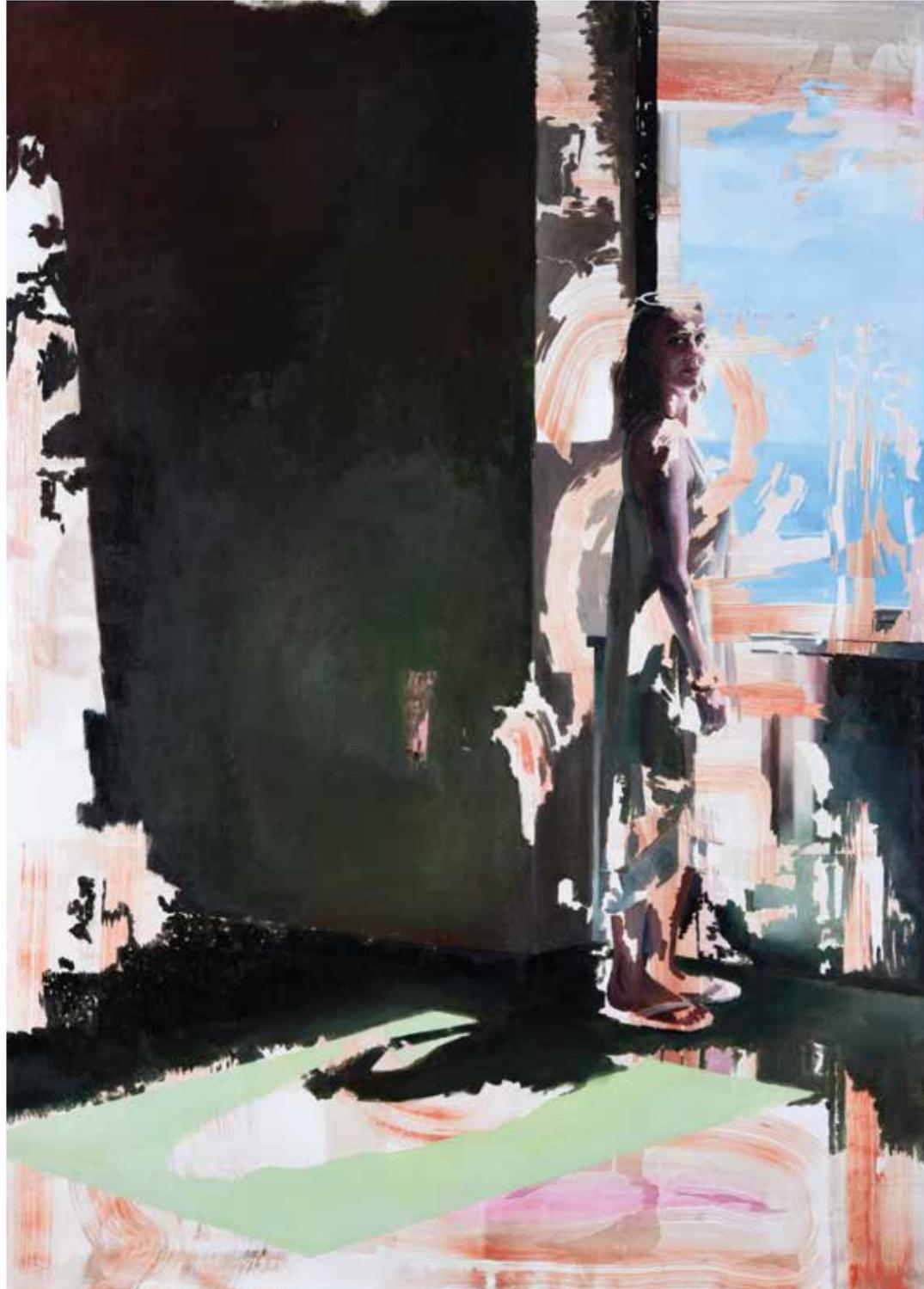
Introduction by Donald Brackett

3 SELF PORTRAIT acrylic and oil on canvas, 65 x 49 in. / 165 x 125 cm





4 SHISHA SMOKER acrylic and oil on canvas, 55 x 79 in. / 140 x 200 cm



5 POINT OF VIEW acrylic and oil on canvas, 71 x 51 in. / 180 x 130 cm



6 BOY IN A WINDOW acrylic and oil on canvas, 43 x 32 in. / 110 x 80 cm



7 FOUNTAIN

acrylic and oil on canvas, 59 x 99 in. / 150 x 250 cm



8 WHEN REAL DAYS BREAK acrylic and oil on canvas, 51 x 67 in. / 130 x 170 cm



9 THIN BLUE PULSE acrylic and oil on canvas, 65 x 49 in. / 165 x 125 cm



10 VILLA SAVOYE acrylic and oil on canvas, 63 x 91 in. / 160 x 230 cm



11 PAVILION acrylic and oil on canvas, 67 x 91 in. / 170 x 230 cm



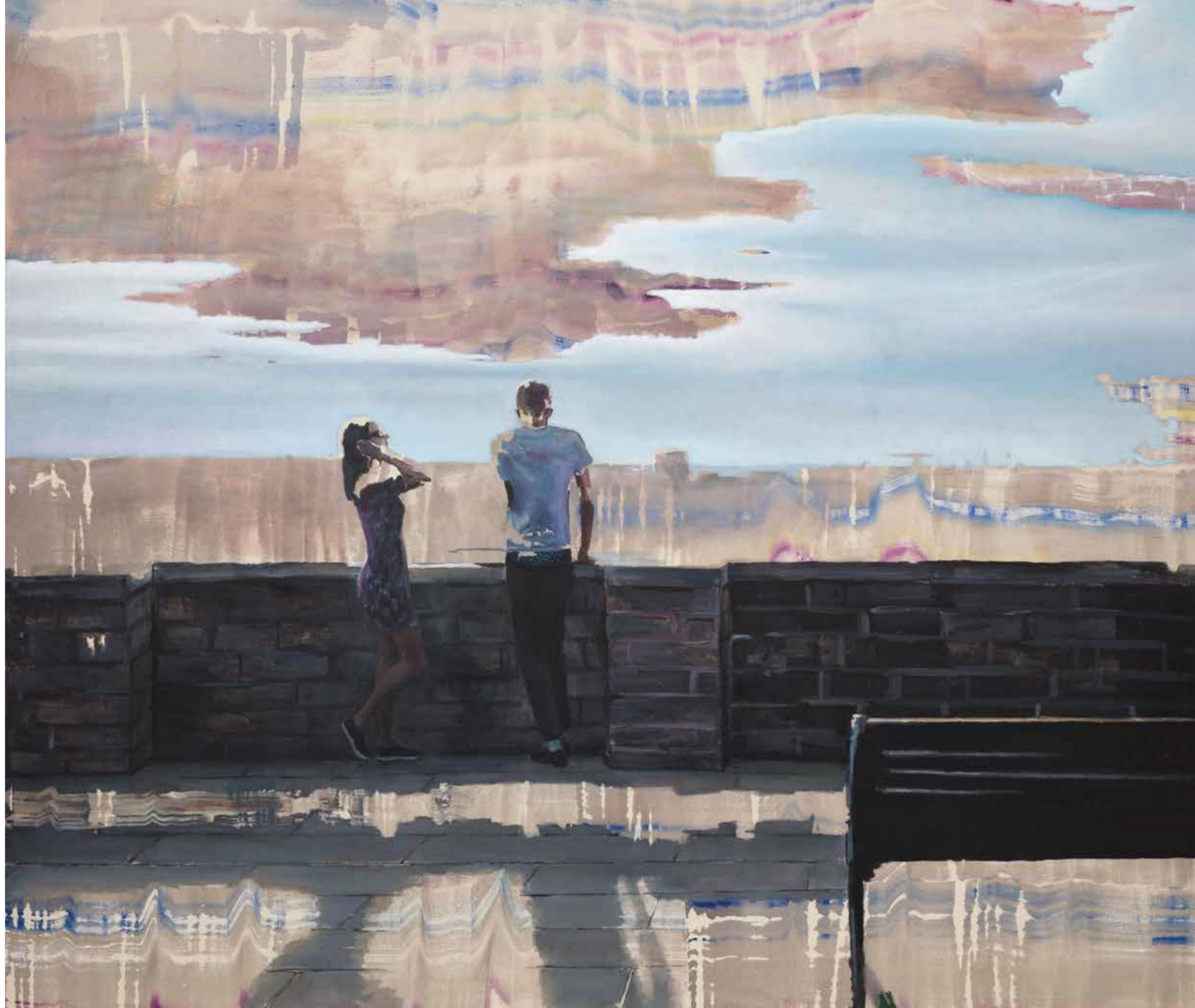
12 VANISH IN A DAY acrylic and oil on canvas, 35 x 28 in. / 90 x 70 cm



13 MEMBRANE acrylic and oil on canvas, 32 x 43 in. / 80 x 110 cm



14 DAYLIGHT STUDIO acrylic and oil on canvas, 79 x 71 in. / 200 x 180 cm



15

LOOK AT ME

oil and acrylic on canvas, 67 x 79 in. / 170 x 200 cm

# DÉNESH GHYCZY

1970	Born in Diepholz, Germany
1988-1990	Studied at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam
1990-1991	Studied at the Art Academy, Budapest
1991-1992	Studied at the St. Luc Academy, Brussels
2014	Artist in residence, Shanghai (Pantocrator Gallery) Artist in residence, Budapest (ART Factory BAF)
2017	Artist in residence, Collegium Hungaricum, Berlin

Dénesh Ghyczy lives and works in Berlin, Germany.

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS (since 2010)

2018	<i>Wavelength</i> , Odon Wagner Gallery, Toronto <i>Dénesh Ghyczy</i> , Galerie Erlass, Traunkirchen, Austria solo presentation at Paper Positions Berlin with Westphal-Berlin
2017	<i>Between Lines</i> , Balassi Institute, Helsinki and Tallinn <i>Unknown Frequencies</i> , Westphal-Berlin, Berlin (catalogue)
2015	<i>Fragmentiert</i> , Brennwald Galerie, Kiel <i>Close Up</i> , Reinhardt & Partner Contemporary, Hamburg <i>Temporary Mural</i> , povvera, Berlin
2014	<i>Das Fremde Selbst</i> , Galerie Robert Eberhardt, Berlin <i>Silent Mantra</i> , Biksady Gallery, Budapest (catalogue) <i>Insight Inside</i> , Pantocrator Gallery, Shanghai <i>Spectral</i> , Whiteconcepts, Berlin (with Greg Murr) <i>El acto de ser</i> , Alejandro Gallery, Barcelona
2013	<i>Die Gefühlte Mitte</i> , Klettgau Gallery, Klettgau-Grießen <i>Chaque être humain</i> , 5 Pieces Gallery, Bern
2012	<i>Soul Out</i> , Art Suites Gallery, Istanbul (catalogue) <i>Echo Vision</i> , Neonchocolate Gallery, Berlin
2010	<i>Napp und Ghyczy</i> , Schreier & Von Metternich Fine Arts, Düsseldorf (with Janetta Napp) <i>Mind Out Of Time</i> , Erika Deák Gallery, Budapest (catalogue) <i>Tuning In</i> , Galerie kulturreich, Hamburg (curated by Uwe Goldenstein)

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS (since 2010)

2018	<i>Greetings from Molsberg</i> , Galerie Britta von Rettberg, Munich <i>Unforgettable? Unforgettable!</i> , Greskewitz Kleinitz Galerie, Hamburg <i>Magic</i> , Emmanuel Walderdorff Galerie, Molsberg
2017	<i>Enter Art Foundation</i> , Multipolster, Berlin
2016	<i>Widerkunst</i> , Holzmarkt, Berlin <i>Millerntor Gallery #6</i> , Millerntor Stadium, Hamburg <i>Innerscape</i> , Treptower, Berlin (with Ulrike van de Löcht, Sofia Nordmann and Nina von Rössing)
2014	<i>Sunland</i> , ENPC Free Trade Zone, Shanghai <i>Drive the Change</i> , 100 Plus, Zürich (curated by Annette von Spesshardt Portatius) <i>Frühjahrsausstellung</i> , Klettgau Gallery, Klettgau (with Nina Nolte and Marco Reichert)
2013	<i>Viel Zu Viel</i> , Galerie Baum Auf Dem Hügel, Berlin
2012	<i>I'm Sorry, I Couldn't Recognize You</i> , Port-Art Gallery, Ankara <i>Schatzlager</i> , Emmanuel Walderdorff Gallery, Cologne
2011	<i>Technology Won't Save Us</i> , Art Suites Gallery, Istanbul <i>Young European Landscape</i> , Collegium Hungaricum, Berlin and Galerie Wolfsen, Aalborg, Denmark <i>Ungarische Gegenwartskunst aus Berlin</i> , Hungarian Embassy, Berlin (with Gábor A.Nagy, Adam Bota and Konstantin Déry)
2010	<i>I'm Not There</i> , Collegium Hungaricum, Berlin (with Simone Haack, Alejandro Rodriguez-Gonzalez, Steffi Stangl and Attila Szücs, curated by Uwe Goldenstein) <i>On Paper</i> , Erika Deák Gallery, Budapest

## CREDITS

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Front Cover: DAYLIGHT STUDIO acrylic and oil on canvas, 79 x 71 in. / 200 x 180 cm

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