



birth & death



# ACANTHUS

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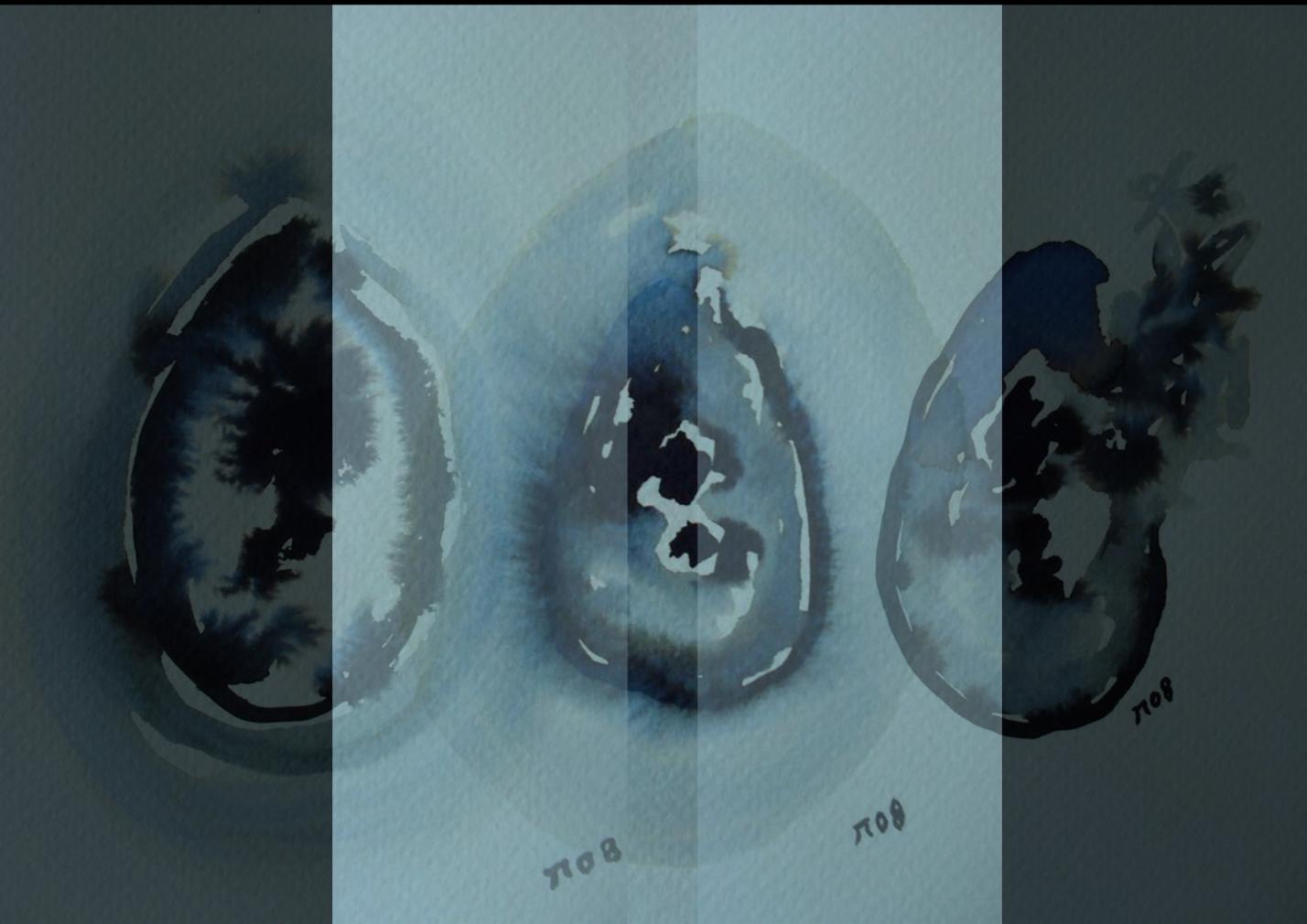
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Life is a series of moments between birth, the beginning of life and death, the end of it. Gautama Buddha said: *“We begin to die from the moment we are born, for birth is the cause of death.”* For death is not a single vanishing point, but a series of everyday moments which artists can capture. Art can depict these as a series of emotions, and this action, caught in space and time, renders both the moment and the artist immortal.

Since the beginning of human existence, we have tried to escape death. Gilgamesh, the demigod of the oldest recorded epic, tried to elude death by seeking immortality. But is immortality an illusion? Andokides lived in the six century BC, yet his name lives through his work, is it immortality? Thus, through art, we can become immortal.



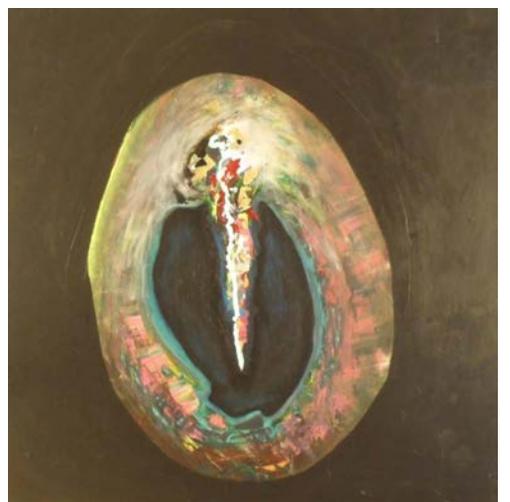
*Maternity* by Sorin Lazar



# Ovoidales by Rabih Khalil

Born in 1974 in Beirut, Rabih Khalil is a Lebanese-Brazilian artist and art theorist. He pursued his studies at the Lebanese University (IBA II) from which he graduated in 1995 with a BFA in Painting and Drawing. He finalized his first Master's degree in the same field in 2011 and his second in 2014 researching Art Science at the Doctorate School of Art (Lebanese University). In 2020, He crowned his studies with a PHD in Art Science at the aforementioned school. Alongside his teaching career (schools and universities), he developed a painting style that expresses simultaneously intimate emotions, sexual desires and metaphysical thoughts. His passion for literature and philosophy added an extra dimension to his pictorial experimentations and led him to create a manifesto about a form of non-existing art: the Art Sans Medium (ASM) or Art Without Medium. He exhibited his ASM artworks in different locations along with artists like Chaouki Chamoun, Samir Khaddaj, Saloua Raouda Choucair, Mona Hatoum and others.

Rabih Khalil is currently living and working in Beirut.





“For many years now, I’ve been developing a concept related to pregnancy and the prenatal world. Throughout the years, the female figure disappeared gradually to give space to a more abstract form: an egg shape form. Despite the whole biological context – related to nature and life – another dimension, having more to do with my inner world alongside with an existential anxiety is constantly evoked by this “egg”. Therefore, to prevent false or insufficient attributes, I finally decided to call it “Ovoïdales”.

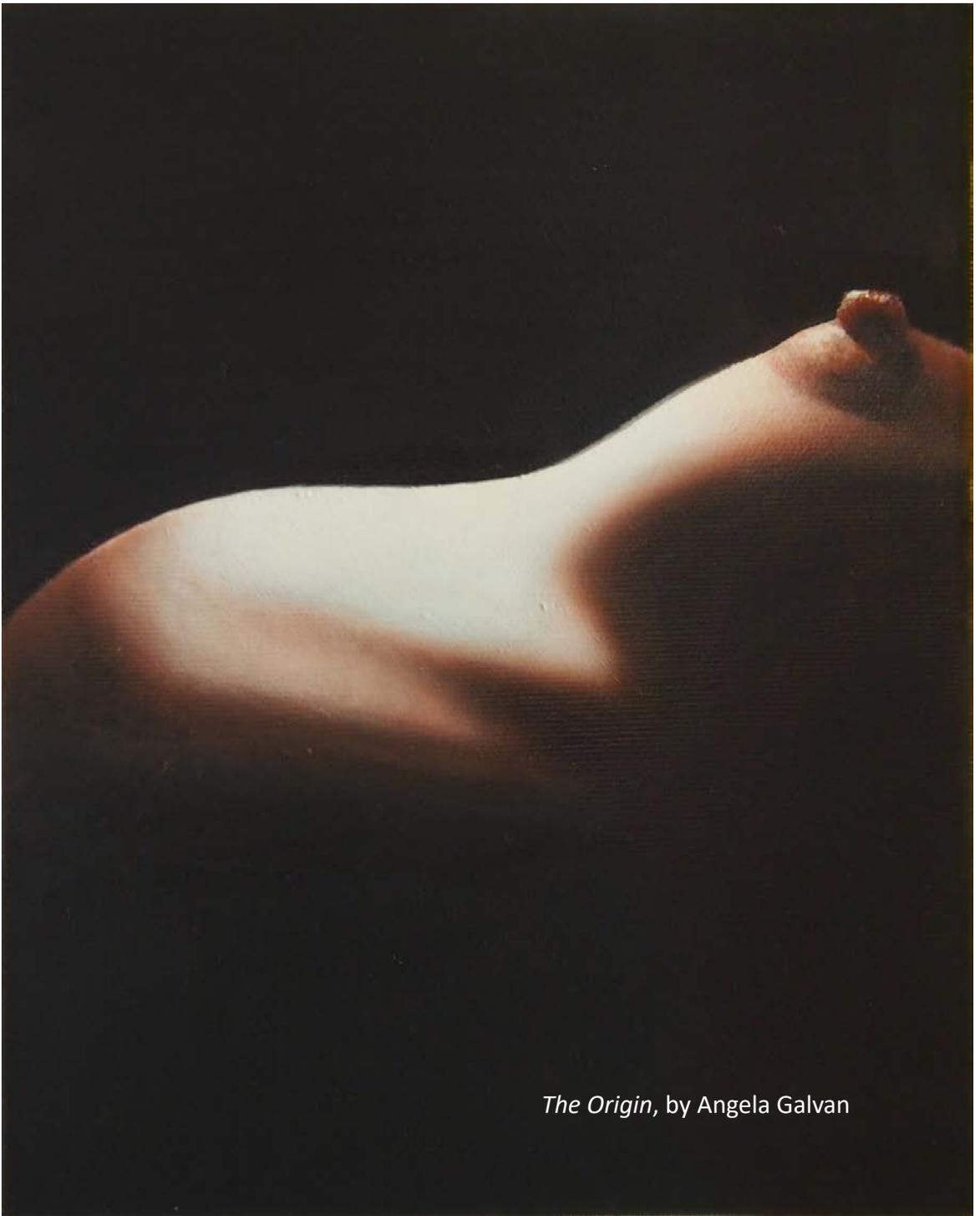


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My Ovoïdales are simply a well concentrated egg shape forms, in a constant tension; yearning for freedom yet comfortable in their strangely colored “cocoon”.



The Ovoïdales are metaphyscerotic thoughts dipped in the infinite oceans of absurdity...”



*The Origin*, by Angela Galvan

# Col tempo and the symbolism of mortality

by Angela Galvan

“*Col tempo*” quotes Giorgione's Portrait of an old woman, but in my painting only one arm is visible, the arm of a young male holding the clock. He can hold the clock, but he can't stop time; the only way to frame it is making it eternal in a painting or a photo.”







“The iconography of the crucifixion in the history of art was mostly linked to Jesus and relegated to religious paintings, until Francis Bacon, with his numerous studies, completely changed this perspective. He was then able to show how a crucifixion can become the expression of universal pain (animals included). I've always found this idea fascinating and I've always wanted to depict my own version: a crucifixion that would include all feelings. In my painting the cross is missing, but the pose is the same, and along with suffering the model shows pleasure, restraint, frustration and a mix of love and death that perhaps is the key ingredient of most of my portraits.”

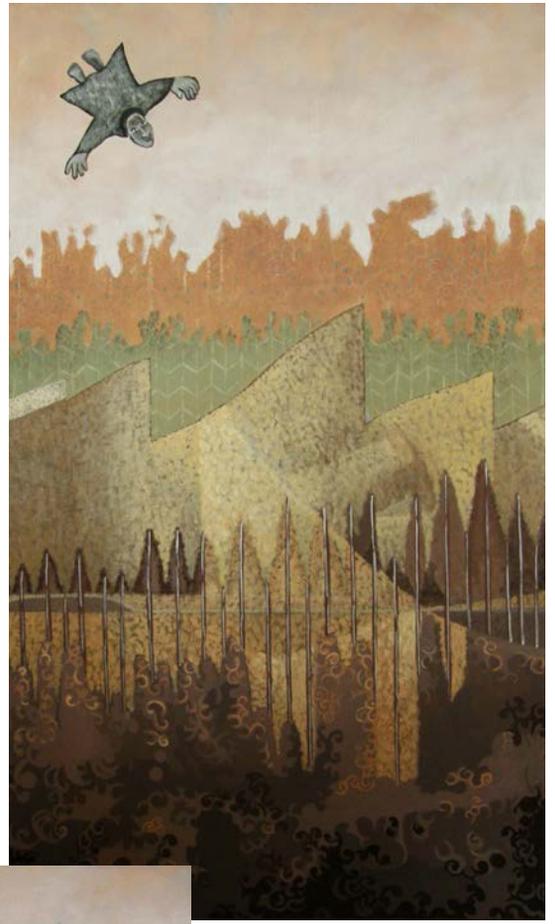
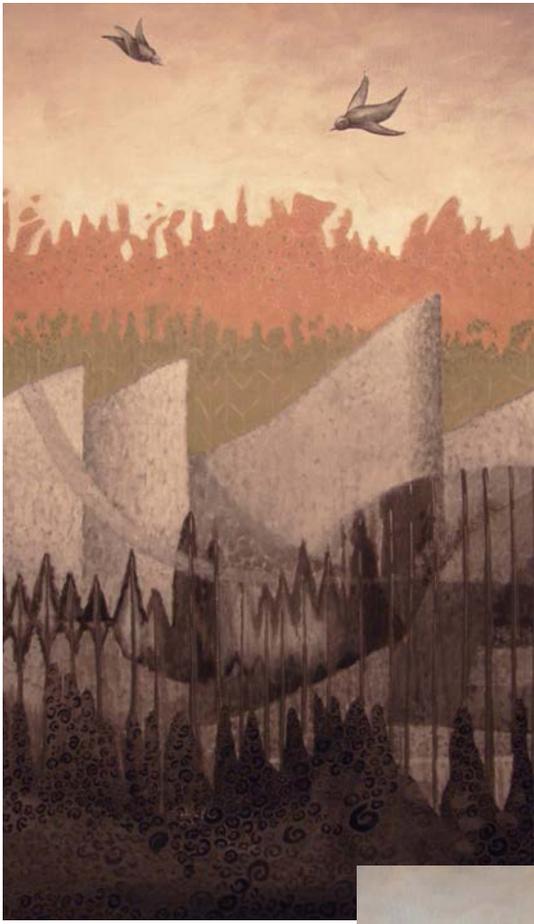
Angela Galvan was born in 1987 in Venice, Italy. There she studied philosophy (Cà Foscari university) and drawing (Academy of fine arts) before moving to Pisa and England where she graduated in the history of art. Now based in Budapest, she works as a language teacher while she paints and writes.



Landscapes of the Soul

By Mila Gvardiol

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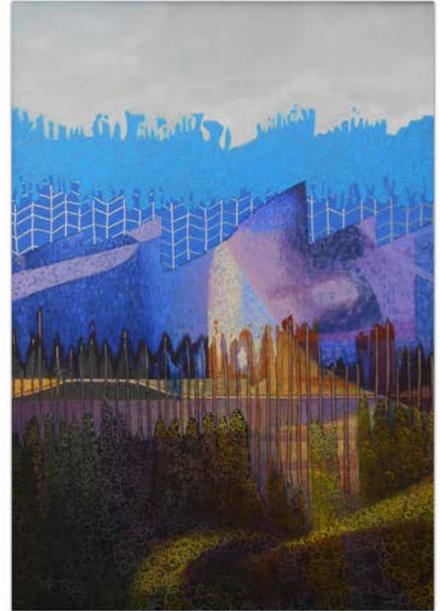


Mila Gvardiol is a visual artist and designer from Belgrade, Serbia. She was born in 1979. She graduated at Faculty of Applied Arts - Applied painting Department in Belgrade where she also took doctoral degree in Digital art within interdisciplinary studies at the University of Arts. Mila is a member of the Association of Fine Artists of Serbia and Association of Applied Arts and Designers of Serbia. She is employed as an Associate Professor at the Academy for Digital Production in Sremska Kamenica, Serbia as well as at the Academy of Applied Arts in Belgrade. Mila has taken part in 33 solo and over 250 group exhibitions, and she participates at international Digital Arts festivals and Fine Arts colonies. Mila has also won many awards for her paintings.



“The series of paintings called “Landscapes of the Soul” was created after the death of my father, the painter Goran Gvardiol. I have always been interested in using shapes and colors in my paintings, but I have never entered the world of landscapes. When my father died, I felt the need to paint my own world of landscapes. In the beginning, these were landscapes from my imagination that abounded in lush landscapes and colors. They were dominated by wooded areas with a stream and a hint of wind. As this series progressed and as I became more and more instinctively immersed, as the phase came into being, I began to copy the characters from my father's paintings (figure and birds) and insert them into my landscapes. I felt these characters were guardians, so I called those paintings “Guardians of the Soul”. This whole process of thinking, painting and copying my father's characters helped me to heal my sadness, to say goodbye to my father, and at the same time to preserve his memory.”



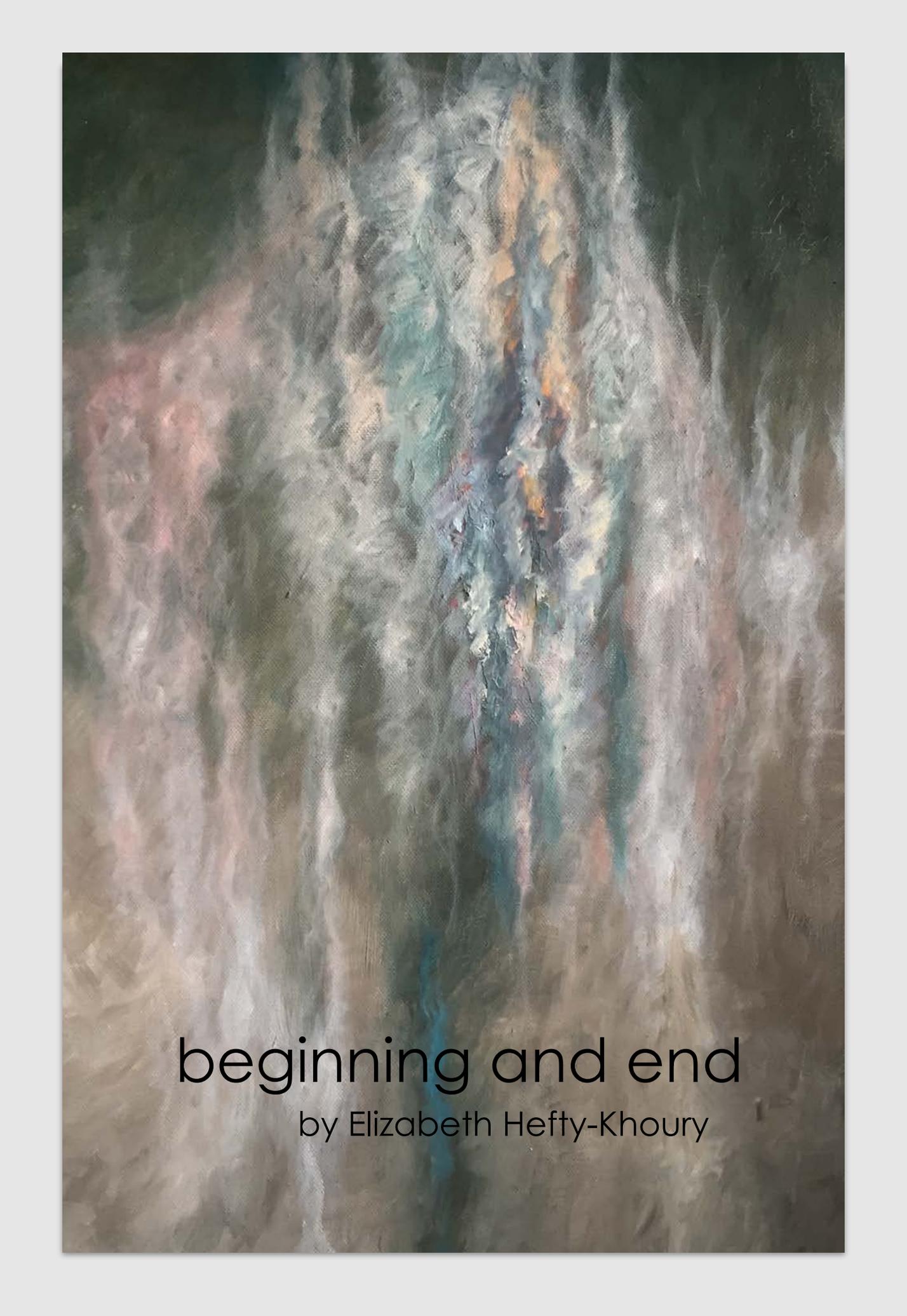


A pale light flickers  
Alone in the dark.  
Weak and fading  
In  
Out  
In  
Out  
Like shallow breath  
Then...  
Gone.  
And the grains of dust  
Once bones and blood  
Scatter to the winds.

The setting sun  
Burns away the light  
All now faded to black  
The stars come out

And one pale light flickers  
Alone in the dark...

*death/rebirth* by Elizabeth Hefty-Khoury



beginning and end

by Elizabeth Hefty-Khoury

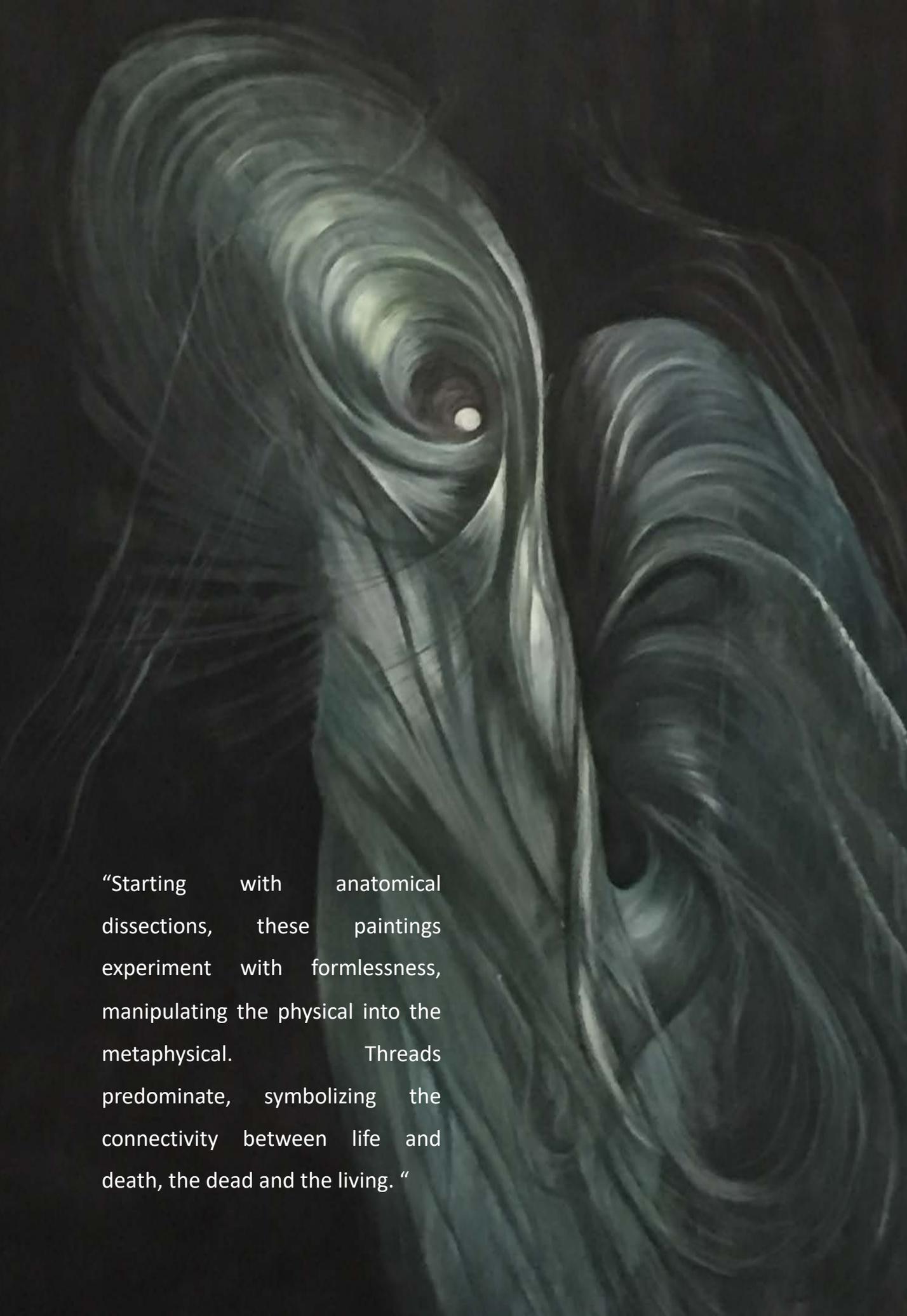


“The prescience of grief and the anticipation of loss can be a terrible thing to bear. The knowing, yet not knowing. Death hanging over you like a cloud, sometimes clearing, but always there. Always present.

Beginning and End is a narrative in trying to form an understanding of my late husband’s impending death. It is an illustration of the process of struggling to reconcile with coming loneliness, grief and loss.”



Elizabeth Hefty-Khoury is a London born writer and artist, and co-owner of Bloom Gallery in Valencia, Spain. Her work is a symbolic interpretation of the body. Issues such as grief, mental illness, violence, and inequality inform her use of the corporeal as a representation of the emotional being. As well as an MFA in Fine Art - Painting, Elizabeth holds a MA in Celtic Studies, and her interest in comparative mythology forms an important part of her research methodology. She believes that a painting holds multiple narratives, interpretable through different viewpoints and experience. Her figures are deliberately fragmented and abstracted, faceless and often with gender ambiguous.

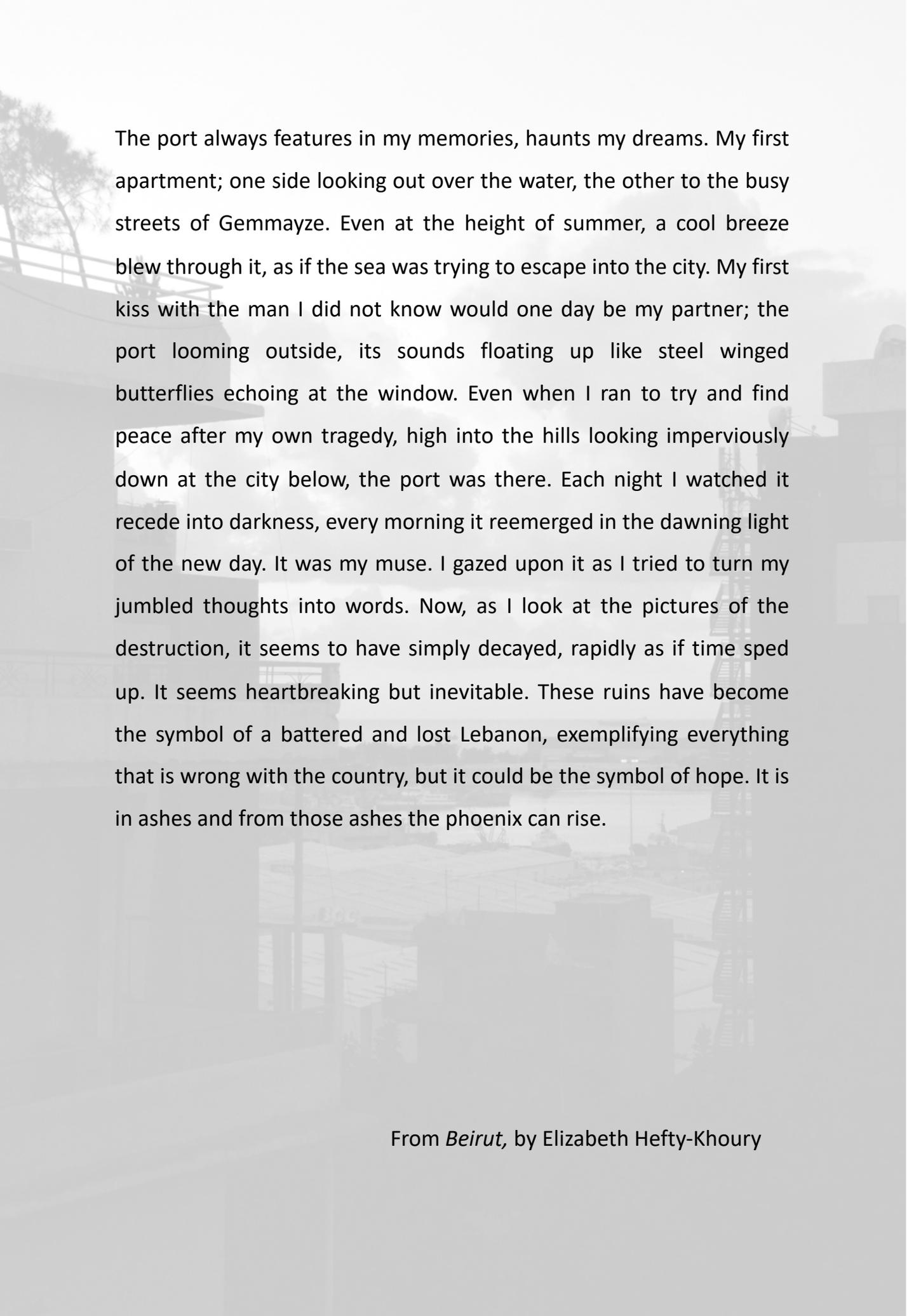


“Starting with anatomical dissections, these paintings experiment with formlessness, manipulating the physical into the metaphysical. Threads predominate, symbolizing the connectivity between life and death, the dead and the living. “

A night view of a city skyline, likely Beirut, with illuminated buildings and a waterfront promenade in the foreground. The scene is dimly lit, with the city lights providing the primary illumination. A prominent building in the center is brightly lit with blue and white lights. The foreground shows a paved walkway with a metal railing, suggesting a waterfront promenade or bridge. The overall atmosphere is one of a bustling city at night, despite the text's reference to a recent tragedy.

It is not only organic that are alive; cities are also sentient; they are born, and they die. Civilizations rise and crumble to dust. But some, they seem to rise like a phoenix from the ashes time and time again.

Beirut is a city that has endured. War, economic crisis, chaos and fatigue yet still it continues. The 2020 port explosion resonated far beyond the physical, causing a grief which has scarred the psyche of a nation.



The port always features in my memories, haunts my dreams. My first apartment; one side looking out over the water, the other to the busy streets of Gemmayze. Even at the height of summer, a cool breeze blew through it, as if the sea was trying to escape into the city. My first kiss with the man I did not know would one day be my partner; the port looming outside, its sounds floating up like steel winged butterflies echoing at the window. Even when I ran to try and find peace after my own tragedy, high into the hills looking imperviously down at the city below, the port was there. Each night I watched it recede into darkness, every morning it reemerged in the dawning light of the new day. It was my muse. I gazed upon it as I tried to turn my jumbled thoughts into words. Now, as I look at the pictures of the destruction, it seems to have simply decayed, rapidly as if time sped up. It seems heartbreaking but inevitable. These ruins have become the symbol of a battered and lost Lebanon, exemplifying everything that is wrong with the country, but it could be the symbol of hope. It is in ashes and from those ashes the phoenix can rise.

From *Beirut*, by Elizabeth Hefty-Khoury

# Ode to Beirut

By Manar Ali Hassan



Manar Ali Hassan was born in 1980 in Beirut, Lebanon. She is an emerging multidisciplinary visual artist and graphic design instructor, with a BA in Art Education (2002) and a BA in Graphic Design. In 2019, Manar earned her Master in Visual Arts with distinction for the Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts (ALBA) - University of Balamand.



“Ode to Beirut is a visceral reaction to the Beirut blast that took place on August 4, 2020. It queries the notion of collapsing space and time into one image. The analogue of the unescapable event is reshuffled as a trapped succession of distortions, where the figures representing a painful body are dissolving into several fields and breaking up, hinting at the devastated city. The semi-transparent background is an ellipsis that reveals nothing yet suggests the possibility of seeing other realms. All the while taking into consideration the emotional states that could be conveyed by not rendering the event as we see it, but as we experience it emotionally, hoping to find in these isolated caged figures empowering forms to contemplate.”





and people  
and a casket of an old man  
but  
and my old doll is now a girl

