

Detail of City of Light (2023), 10" x 8", Digitally generated image



RANDOM ENCOUNTERS 2.0

Artist: CL Fisher
November 2-29, 2023
North York Central Library, 5120 Yonge Street, Toronto

ABOUT

CL Fisher



CL Fisher came to visual art after a 30-year career in software development. Working primarily in code-based art, CL studied at Centennial College's Fine Arts Studio program, winning the Peter Dickinson Award for radical creativity, and at the Arts Academy of Turku University of Applied Sciences (Finland).

CL has exhibited in Toronto and Sweden.

Samples of Fisher's work can be found at clfisher.com, Works in progress are posted on Instagram at [@clfisher_art](https://www.instagram.com/clfisher_art)

Introduction

In 2018, I started focusing on psuedo-randomness as the main thrust of my art practice. Initially, letting chance play a significant role freed me from worrying about whether I was doing every single little thing "right", but I have found it has led me down paths I would never have investigated otherwise.

Random Encounters 2.0 is the result of years of working with randomness and developing new ways to combine it with my love of words and of the mythology of the common era.

If you are interested in acquiring any of the works in this catalog, please check the availability page at:

<https://exhibitions.clfisher.com/avail/>

and use the form on that page to reach out to the artist.

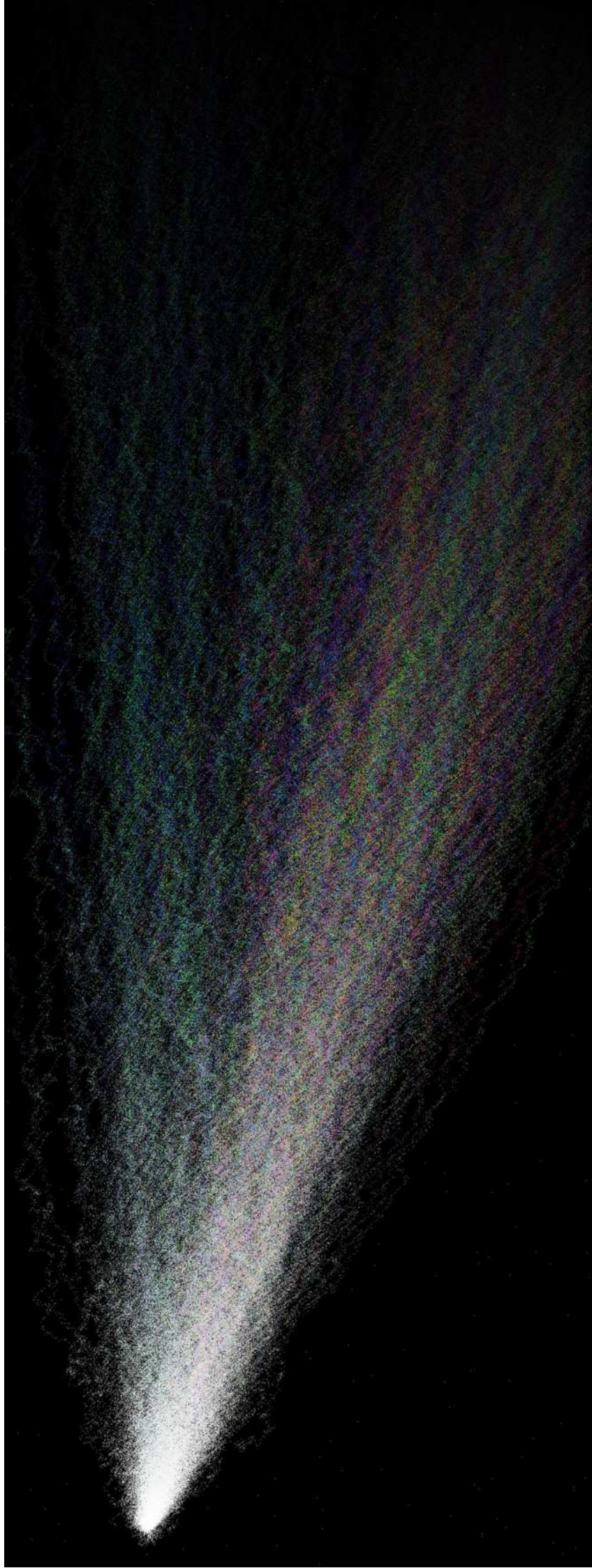
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1577

**(2023) 12" x 32" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Canvas Edition of 5 \$235**

1577 commemorates the Great Comet of 1577.

I created this piece by placing pixels according to the text of a biographical article on Tycho Brahe. His observations of this comet contributed to Johannes Kepler's realization that planets move in ellipses rather than circles, which was a big deal, model of the universe wise.



Ananke

(2020) 16" x 20" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$225

Necessity.

Compulsion.

Inevitability.

These are the province of the goddess Ananke.

This piece marries colours from the Notre Dame fire of 2019 and shapes corresponding to the letters in an English translation of Victor Hugo's Hunchback of Notre Dame.



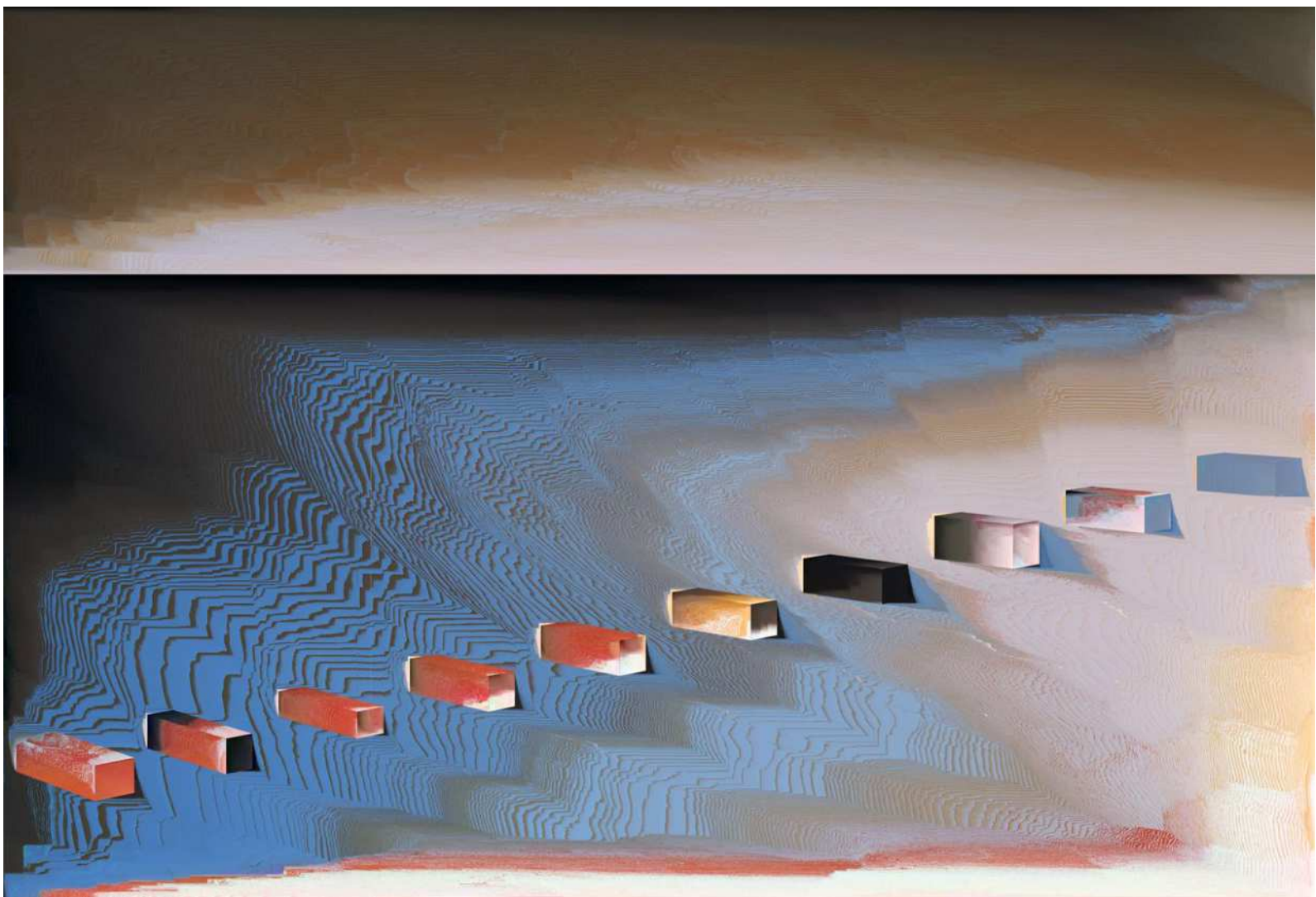
Canute

(2020) 26.5" x 18.75" Digitally Generated Image
Unique Giclée \$295

Once upon a time, or so the stories go, Cnut the Great set his throne by the sea and commanded the incoming tide to halt, deliberately demonstrating the limits of his power.

One day in 1983, a 767 ran out of fuel over Red Lake, due to an imperial/metric mixup. Luckily the pilot had experience in non-powered flight, landing without casualty at a former airforce base. This image is based on a photograph of that plane, the "Gimli Glider."

The forces of nature care little for we puny humans.



Charade

(2019) 8" x 10" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$115

Charade: an absurd pretense intended to create a pleasant or respectable appearance

Assorted Actresses series. Based on a photograph of Audrey Hepburn



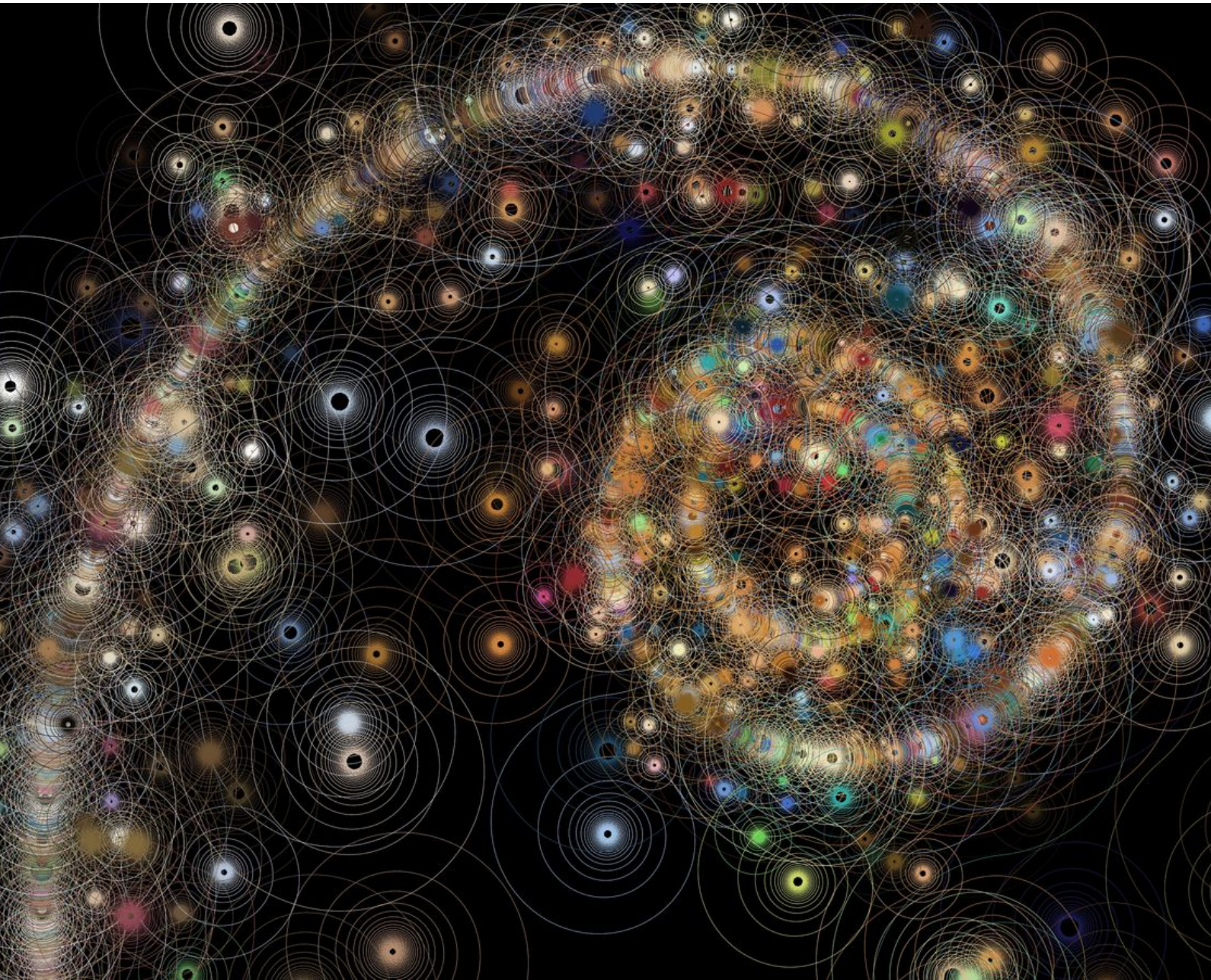
City of Light

**(2023) 10" x 8" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$115**

Paris is 'The City of Light', possibly because it was one of the first adopters of street lighting, but more likely because of its role in the Age of Enlightenment.

The shapes in this piece are inspired by the ubiquitous ironwork railings in central Paris., with a nod to the highly Catholic culture of secular France. The colours are extracted from snapshots from a 2023 visit.

Sense of Place series

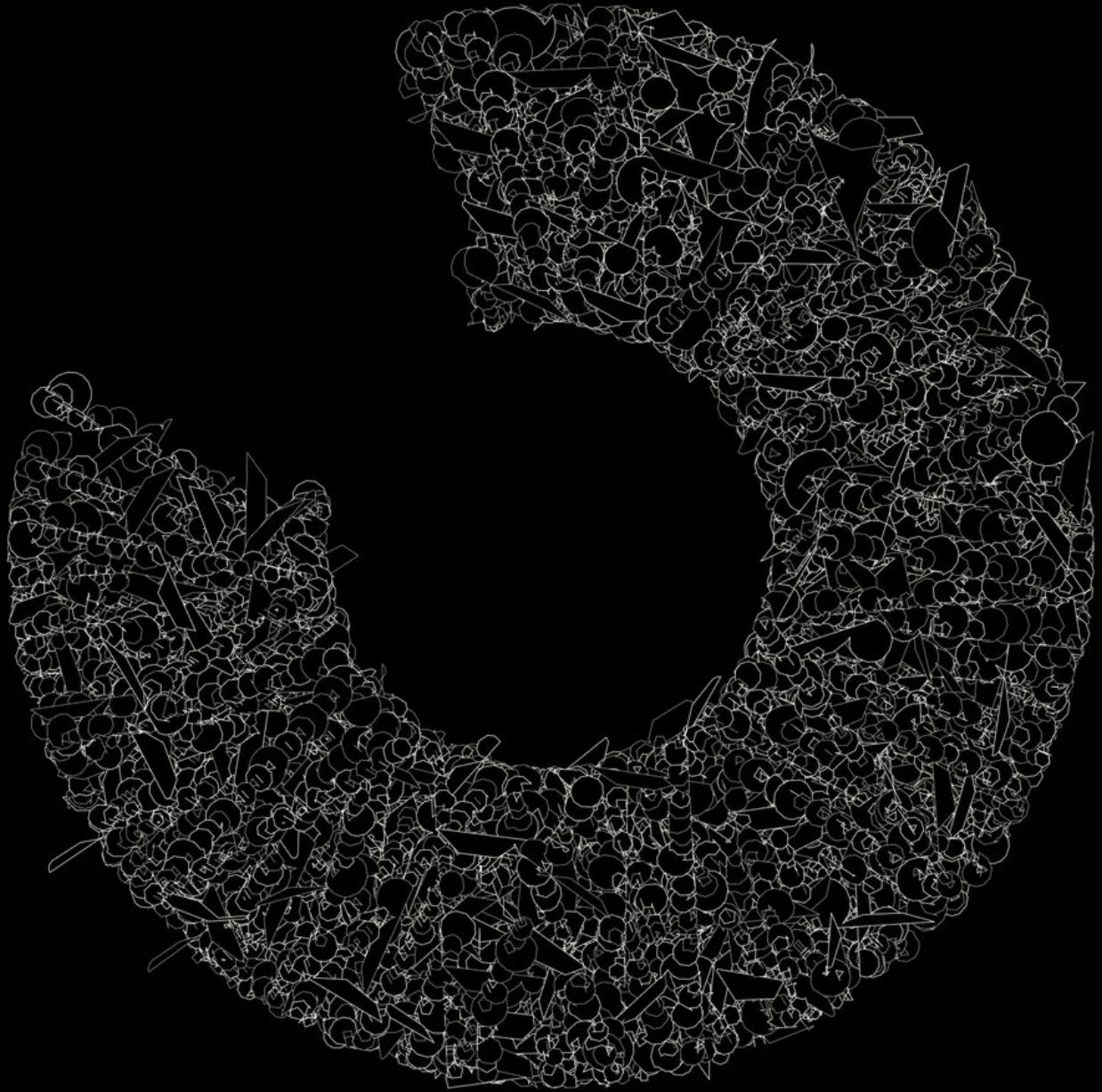


Determination II

(2020) 14" x 11" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Canvas Edition of 5 \$160

This is a smaller reworking of a piece I did for an exhibition on "Grit".
Ruth Bader Ginsburg was an exemplar of that virtue.

I used shapes derived from the words of Ginsburg's opinions: United States v. Virginia: and Burwell v. Hobby Lobby, arranged with a random element, to mimic Ginsburg's trademark collars.



Dimensions

**(2020) 16" x 20" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$225**

Pondering abstraction, representation, and reality and how we decide if an image is representational or abstract – and, if it is representational, what the thing it represents is (a portal to another dimension?, a simple cubic solid?), and whether that is “real”.

“Ceci nest pas une boîte.”

Based on a photograph of a dear friend with a space bra on her head. Because nebulae are pretty.



Dinner

(2019) 8" x 10" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$115

This piece is based on a portrait of Jean Harlow. The title refers to the film "Dinner At Eight".

I chose the titles for the "Assorted Actresses" pieces first, before generating them, based on some fact I knew, some movie or particular scene the actress had been in. So I quite enjoyed the interplay between the title of this piece and the bloodiness of the resulting image.

Assorted Actresses series



Eve

(2019) 8" x 10" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$115

Distraction. Flash and subtlety. Motives behind motives

Based on a photograph of Barbara Stanwyck.

Assorted Actresses" series



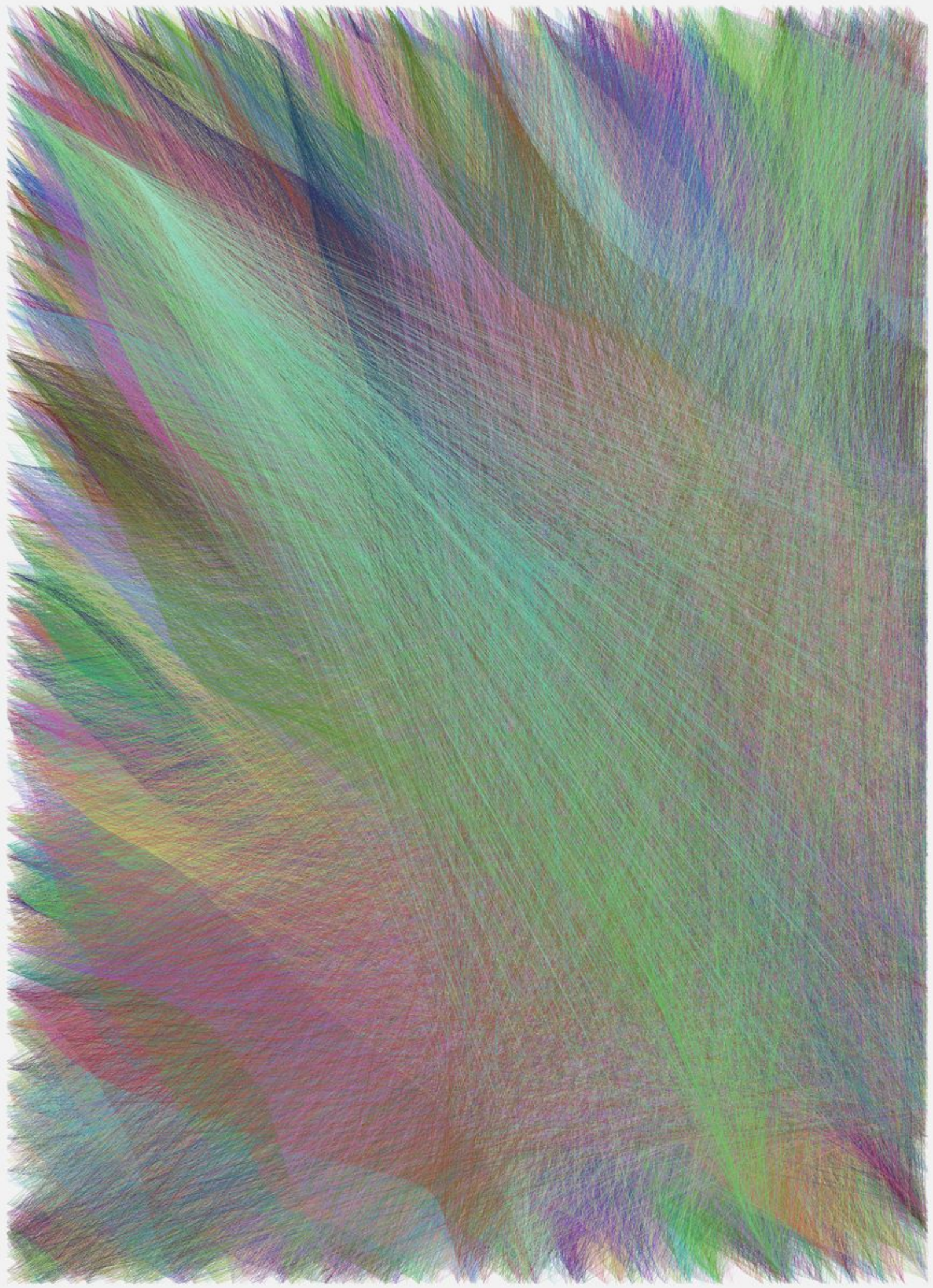
Feb 30, 1712

**(2020) 16" x 20" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$225**

It was a real thing.

You see, Sweden made an early attempt at gradually switching over to the Gregorian calendar, by eliminating several consecutive leap years. They skipped the first one on schedule, but with wars and such, they neglected to skip the next couple of leap years. Eventually they decided to go back to the Julian calendar by adding a day in 1712. Since 1712 was already a leap year, that meant the added day was Feb 30.

This piece was constructed from 1 straight line for every day from Feb 30, 1712 to Jan 1, 2021.



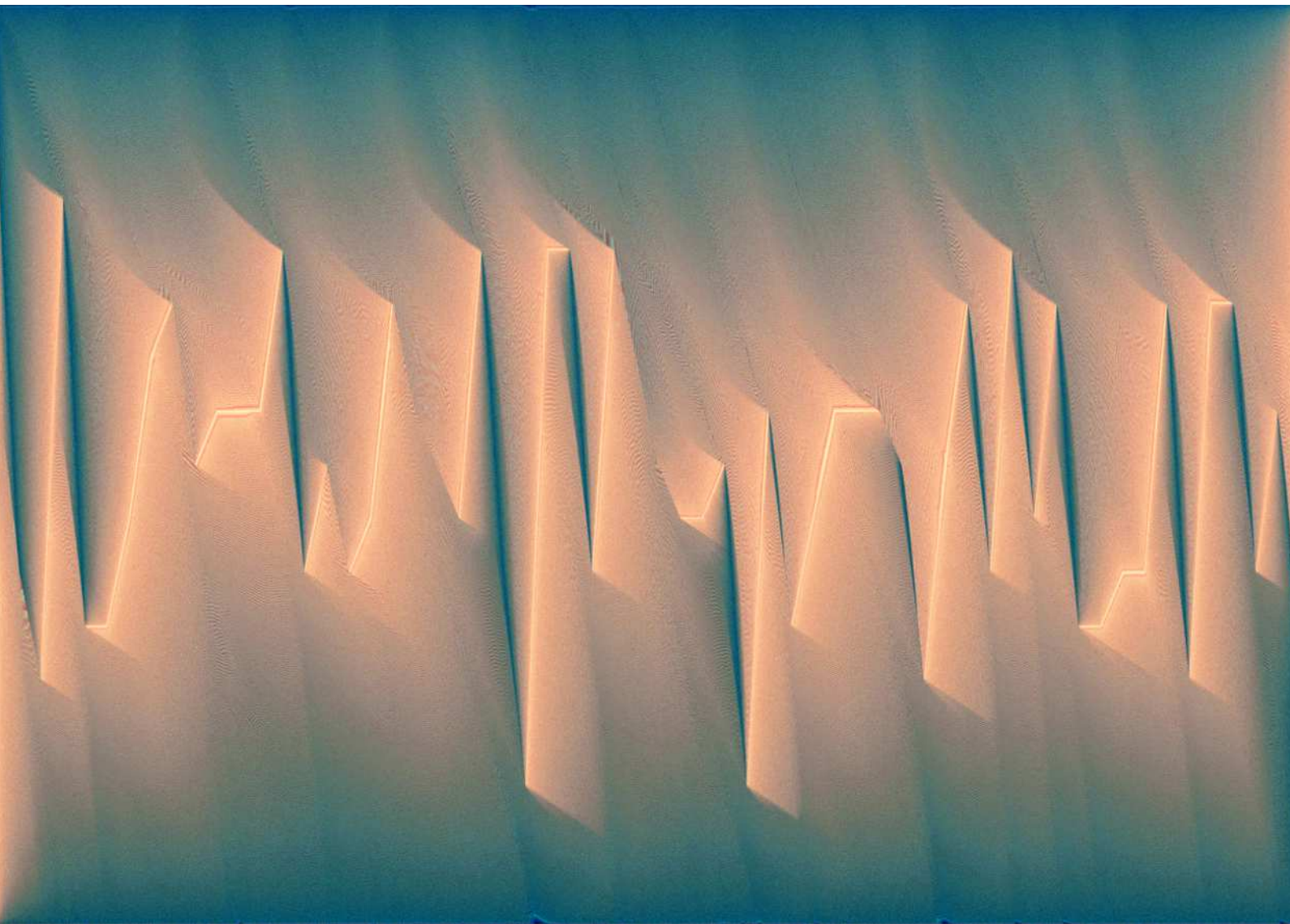
Finnish Line

**(2019) 26.5" x 18.75" Digitally Generated Image
Unique Giclée \$295**

In 2019 I spent 4 months in Finland, There, I photographed nearly everything I threw out. Then, I extracted the number of pixels of each colour in the collection of photos as the basis of a new image.

For the line element I turned to the Consumer Price Index from 2015 to 2019. Then I applied a modified sort algorithm to the pixels on each side of it.

The result? One viewer called it "scary desert things will fall on me." Your mileage may vary.



Flaunt

**(2019) 8" x 10" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$115**

My personal favourite in the series, this reminds me both of a speeding runner and the twirl of a magician's cape.

Based on a photograph of Mary Pickford

Assorted Actresses series



Gap

**(2023) 18.75" x 26.5" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Edition of 5 \$125**

In September 2023, I walked across England, following the Hadrian's Wall Path. The most photographed view along that walk was the tree at Sycamore Gap.

Il say "was". On September 27, 2023, during a storm, the tree was chain-sawed down..

The colours of the stones were extracted from snapshots taken on that walk.

Shape of Place series



Goodness

(2019) 10" x 8" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$115

Coat check girl:

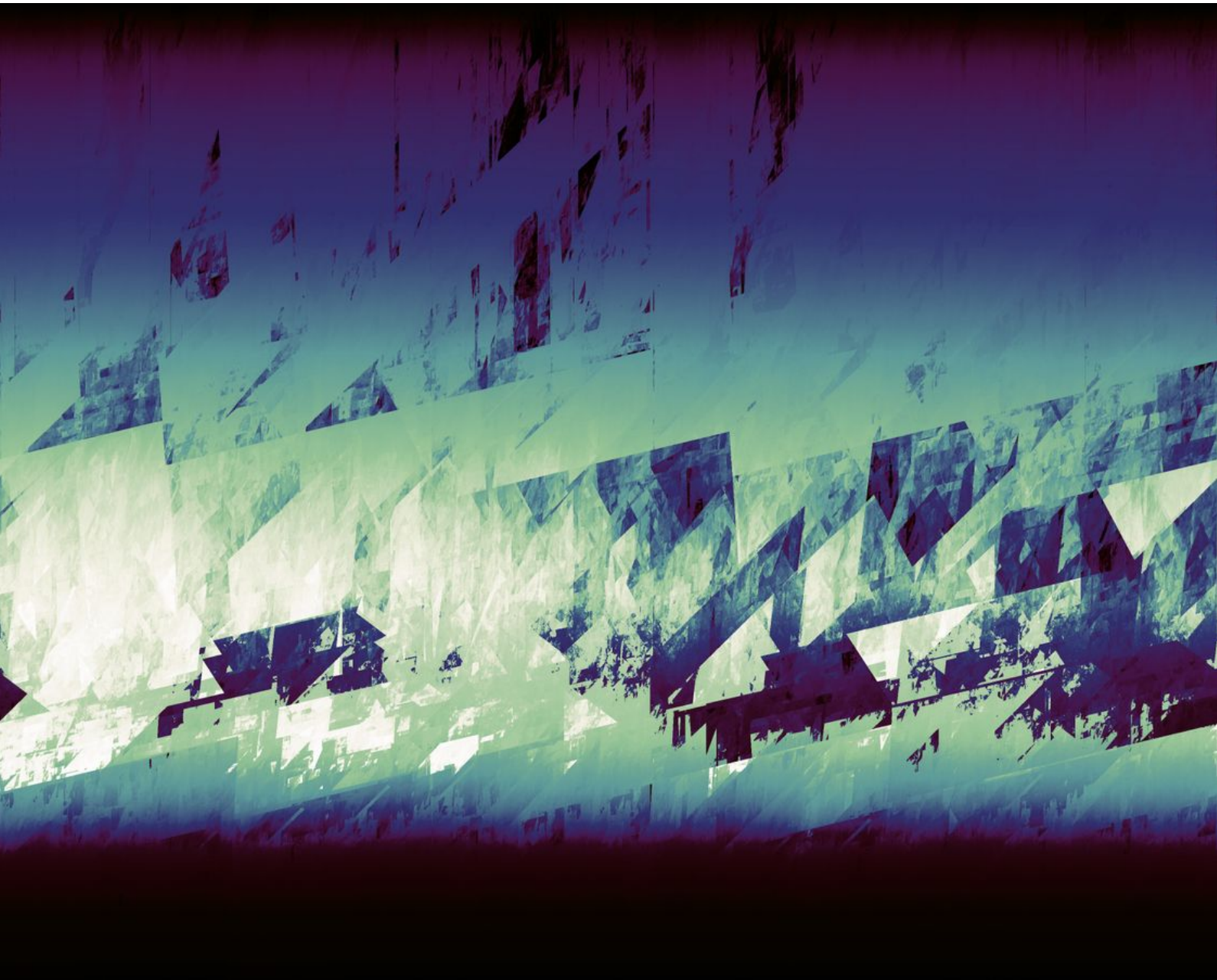
"Goodness, what beautiful diamonds"

Maudie:

"Goodness had nothing to do with it."

Maybe it's just the suggestion of the title, but I see diamonds.

Assorted Actresses series. Based on an image of Mae West.



Kansas

(2019) 10" x 8" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$115

"Toto...

I have a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore."

This piece captures a little of the overstimulation of arriving in a place of too many colours and too many people..

Based on a photograph of Judy Garland.

Assorted Actresses series



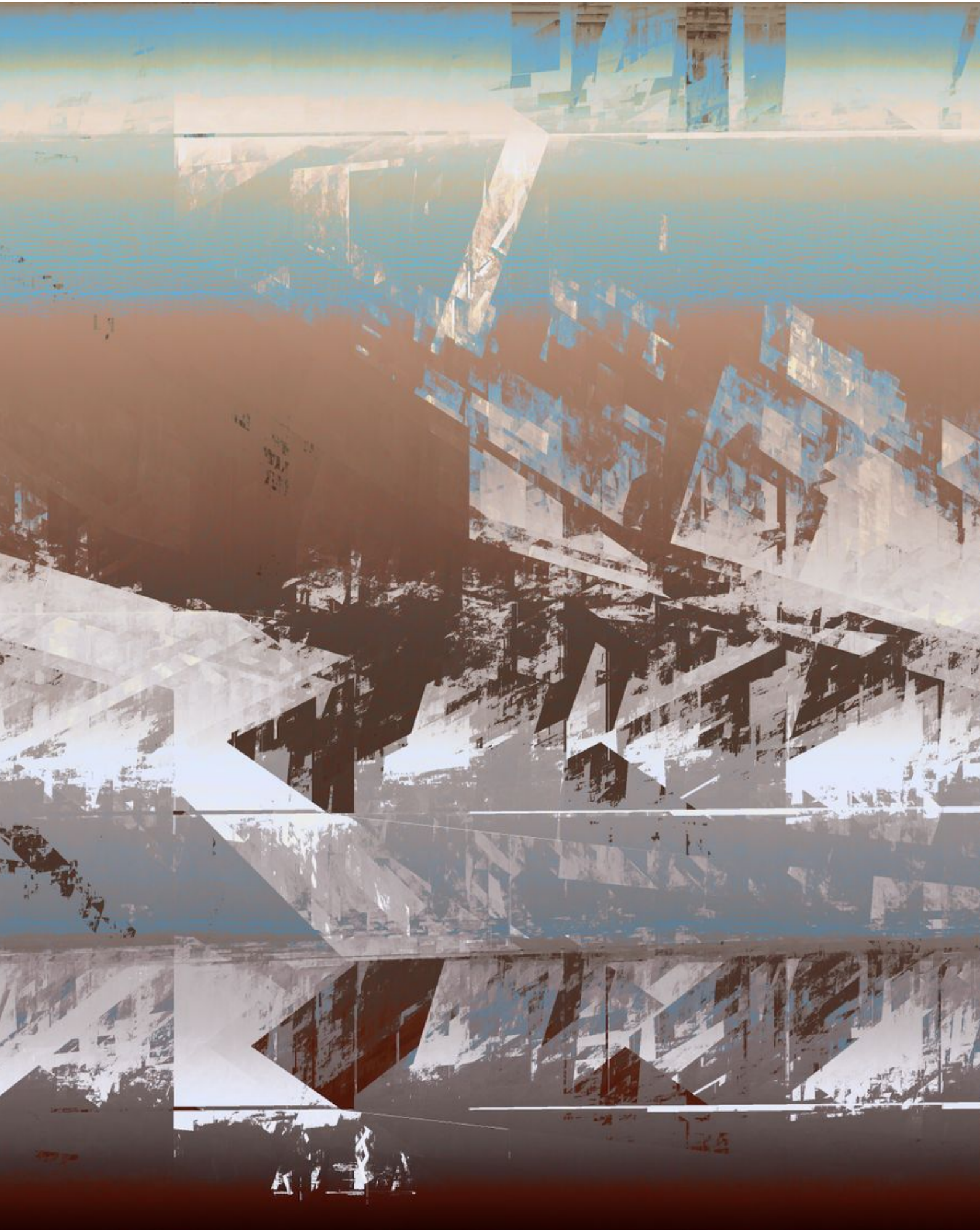
Mame

(2019) 8" x 10" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$115

"One night she started to shim and shake,
That brought on the Frisco Quake.
So you can put the blame on Mame boys,
Put the blame on Mame."

This piece refers to a song sung in the film "Gilda". Once again, some lucky correspondence between the title and the result.

Assorted Actresses series. Based on a photograph of Rita Hayworth.



Numerous

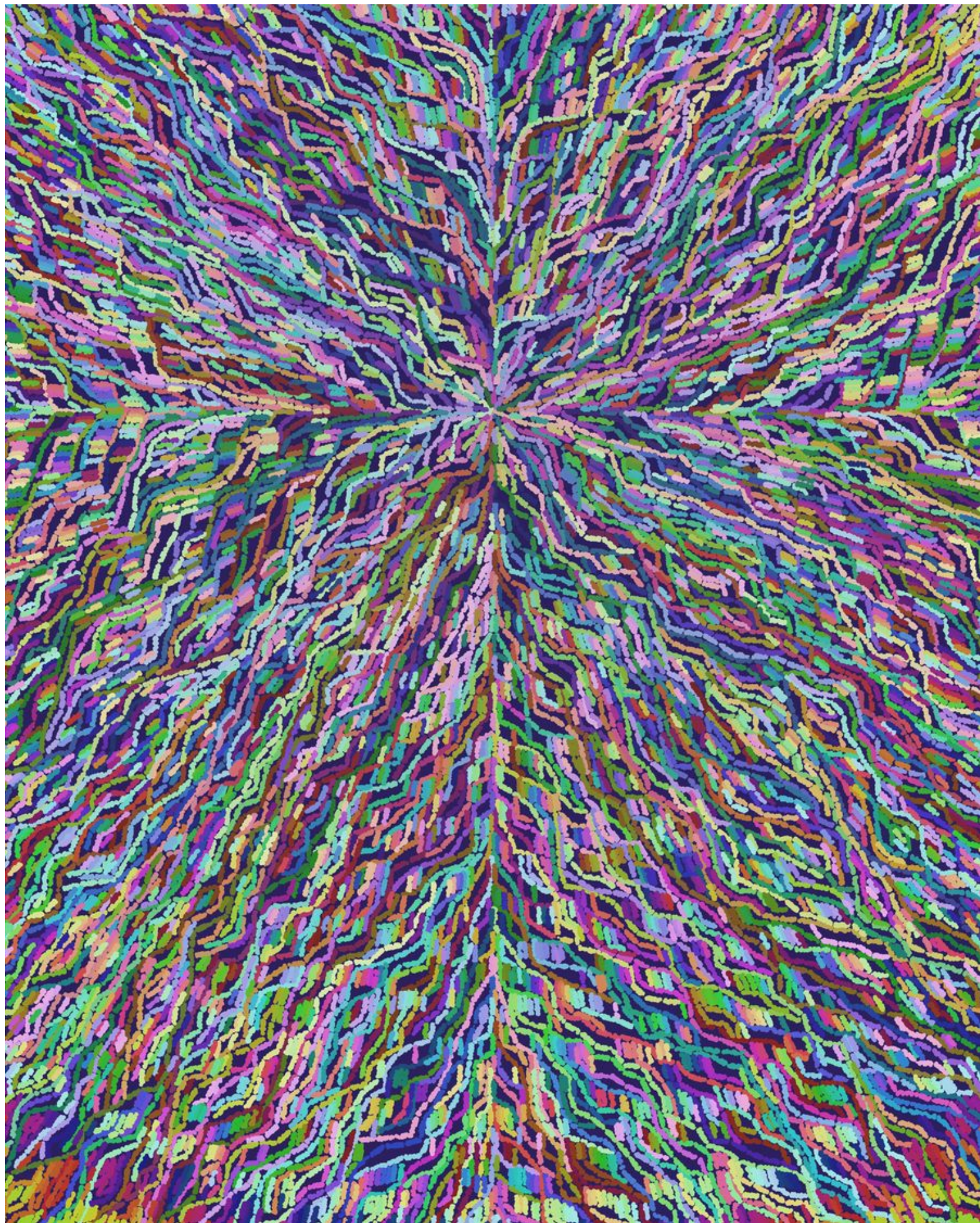
(2019) 16" x 20" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$225

This is the second in my series based on random words from the Oxford English Dictionary

The word "numerous" put me in mind of great herds of sheep. Sheep follow a kind of alpha-sheep known as bellwethers. I based this image on the idea of masses following leaders. That it ended up looking like crewel work (needlework done with yarn, often wool) was a bonus.

There are 11279 "sheep" in the piece.

Random Words series



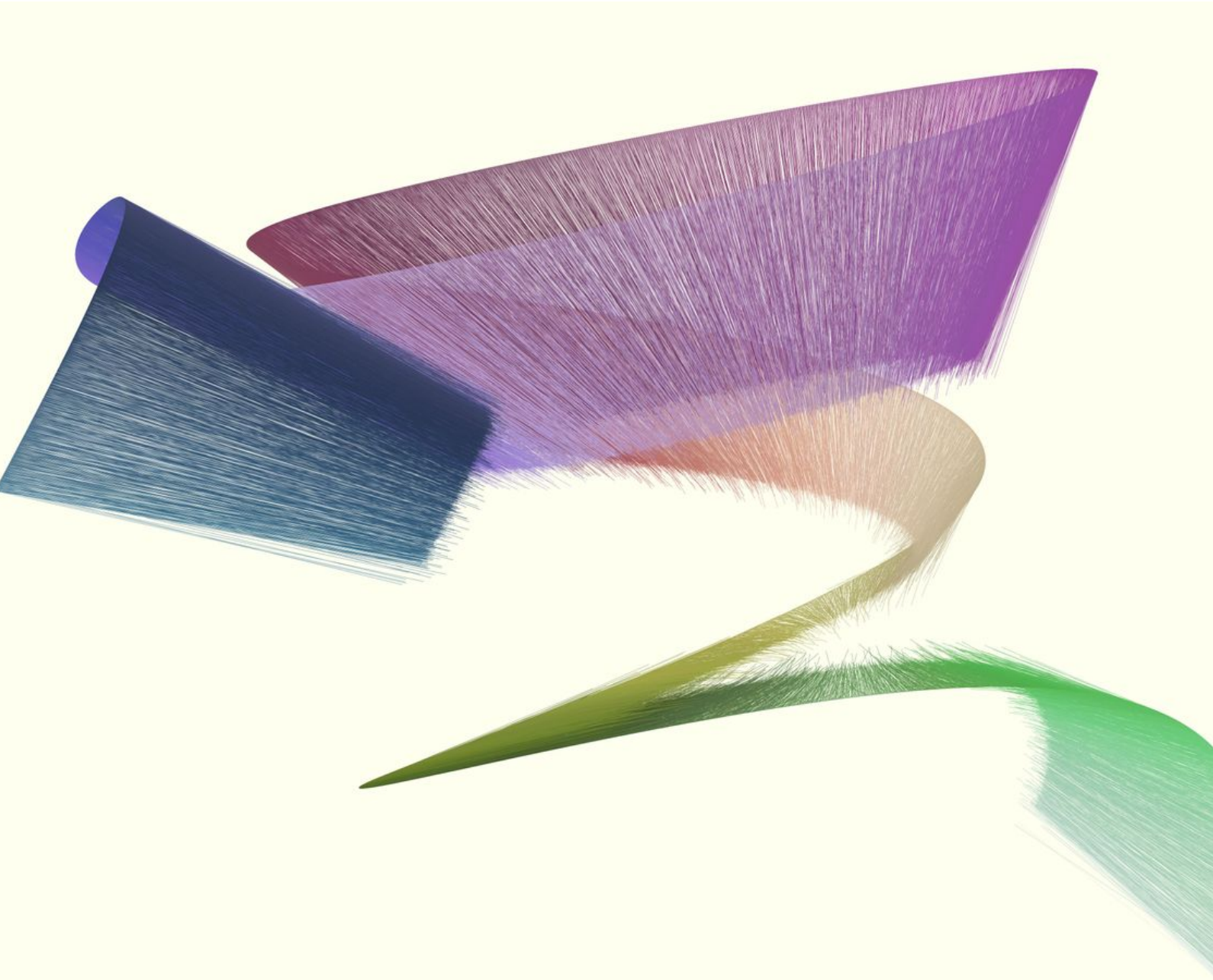
Pronation

**(2020) 20" x 16" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$225**

In mid-2020 I embarked on a series of works based on words randomly selected from the Oxford English Dictionary. This is the first in that series:

Using the repeated children's prayer "Now I lay me down to sleep," to govern the length of each line segment, Pronation suggests the process of falling over at the end of a long day.

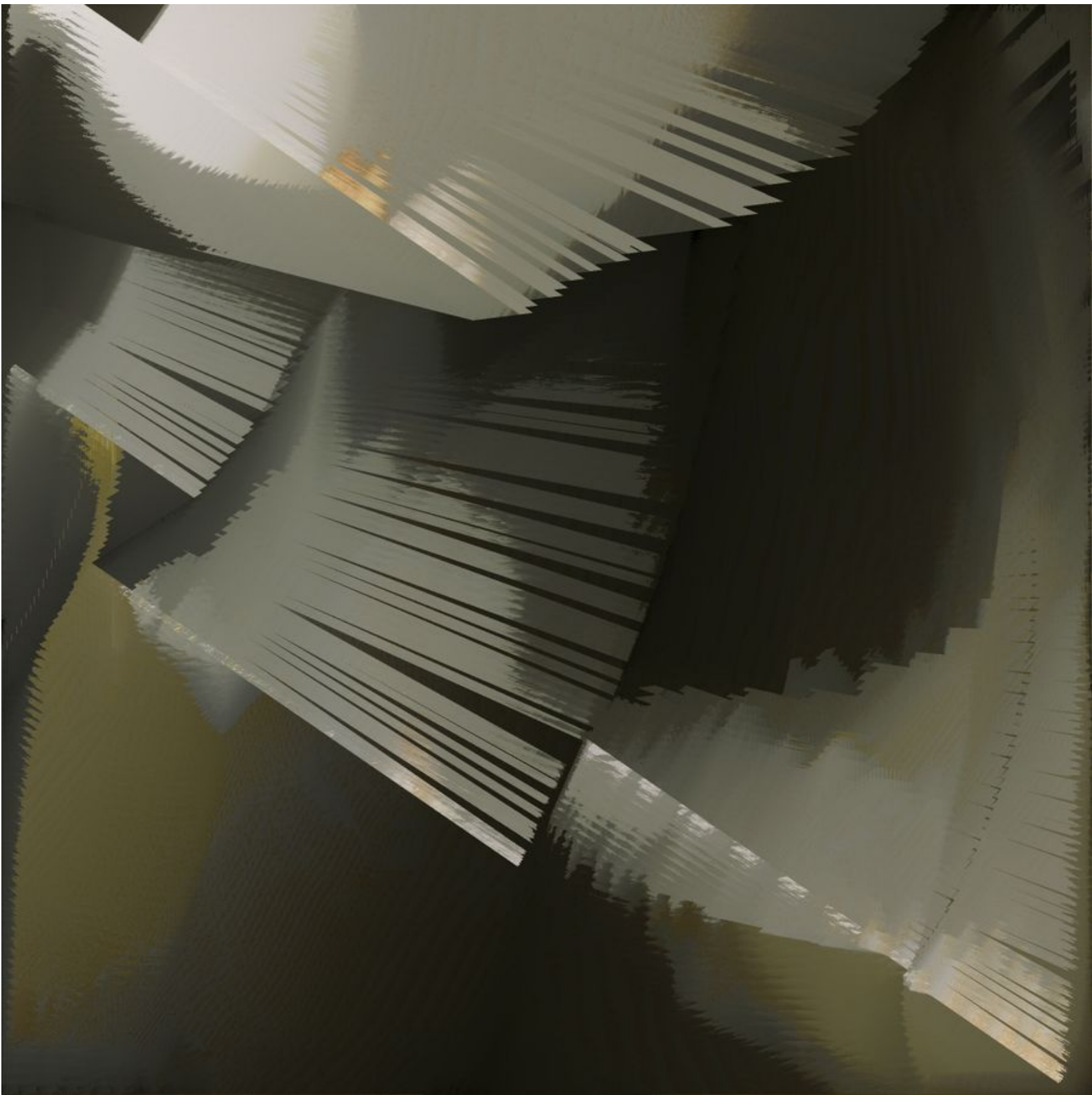
Random Words series



Rearrangement in Grey and Black No. 1

(2020) 8" x 8" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$110

This piece is based on John McNeil Whistler's "Arrangement in Grey and Black No. 1", aka "Whistler's Mother."

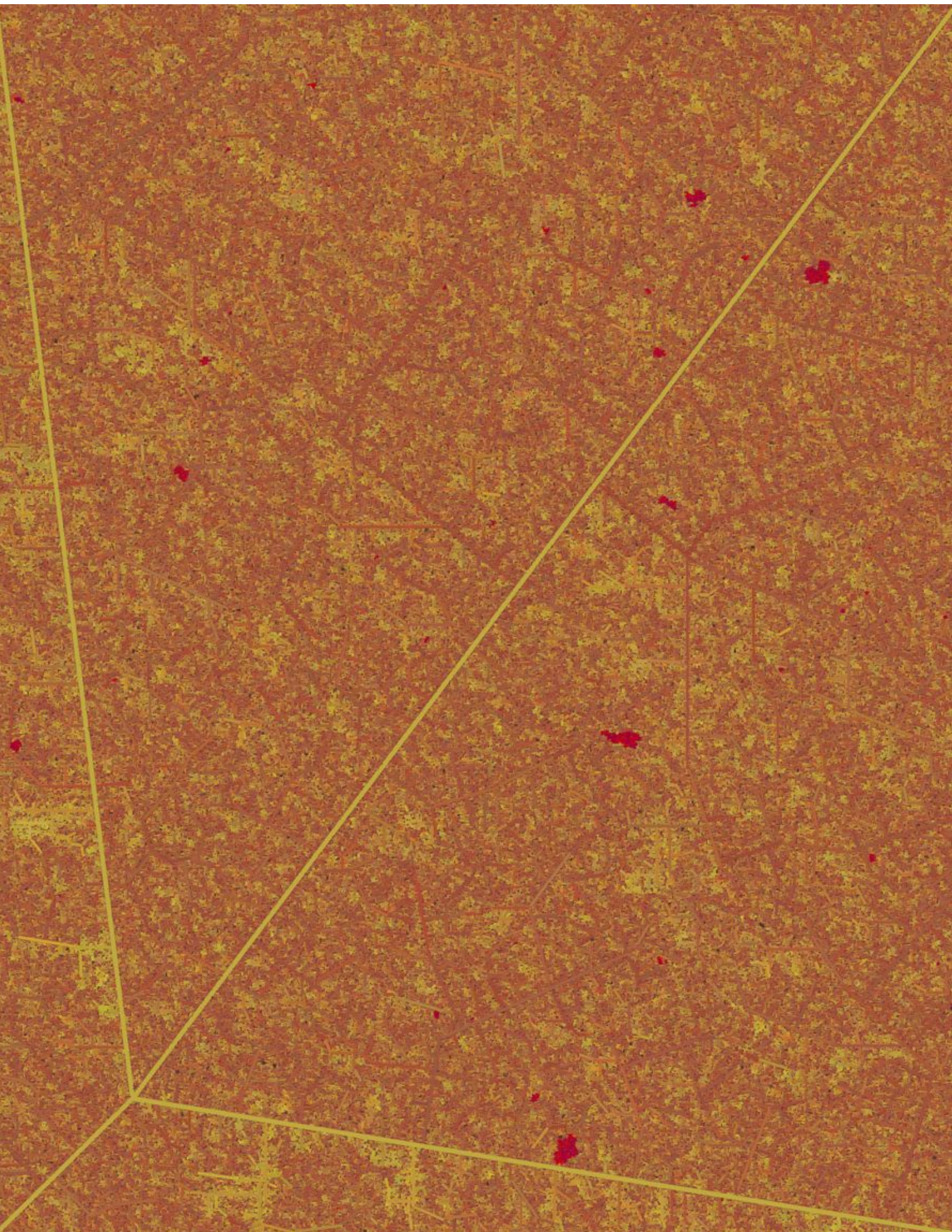


Rise and Fall

(overleaf)

(2020) 2 11" x 14" Digitally Generated Images
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$260

Rise and Fall were made by first connecting a constrained-random point to all the corners of the image with a thick 'stem', then repeatedly picking random points in the image to connect to the image as it grew, with some secret sause for choosing the colours.





Twister

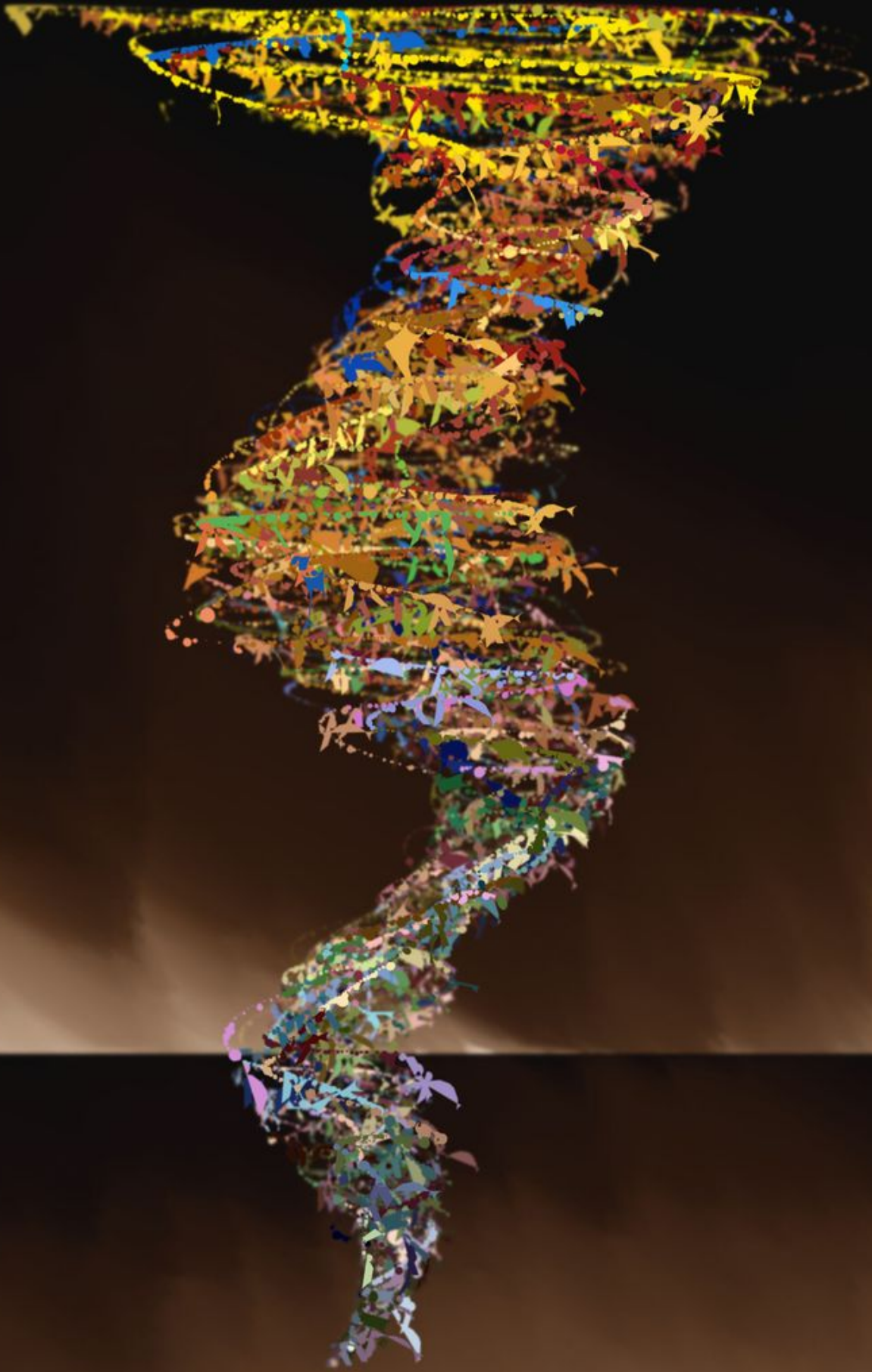
**(2020) 16" x 20" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$225**

It is said that L. Frank Baum deliberately set out to create an American fairy tale with his books about the fabulous land of Oz. It's fair to say that he succeeded - if not directly, then through the adaptations of his work, especially the 1939 movie, "The Wizard of Oz."

The colours in this piece come from that film, and the shapes from the first of Baum's Oz books: "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz".

There is a deep dive into the making of this image for the insatiably curious on the main page for the show:

https://exhibitions.clfisher.com/random_encounters_2_0/

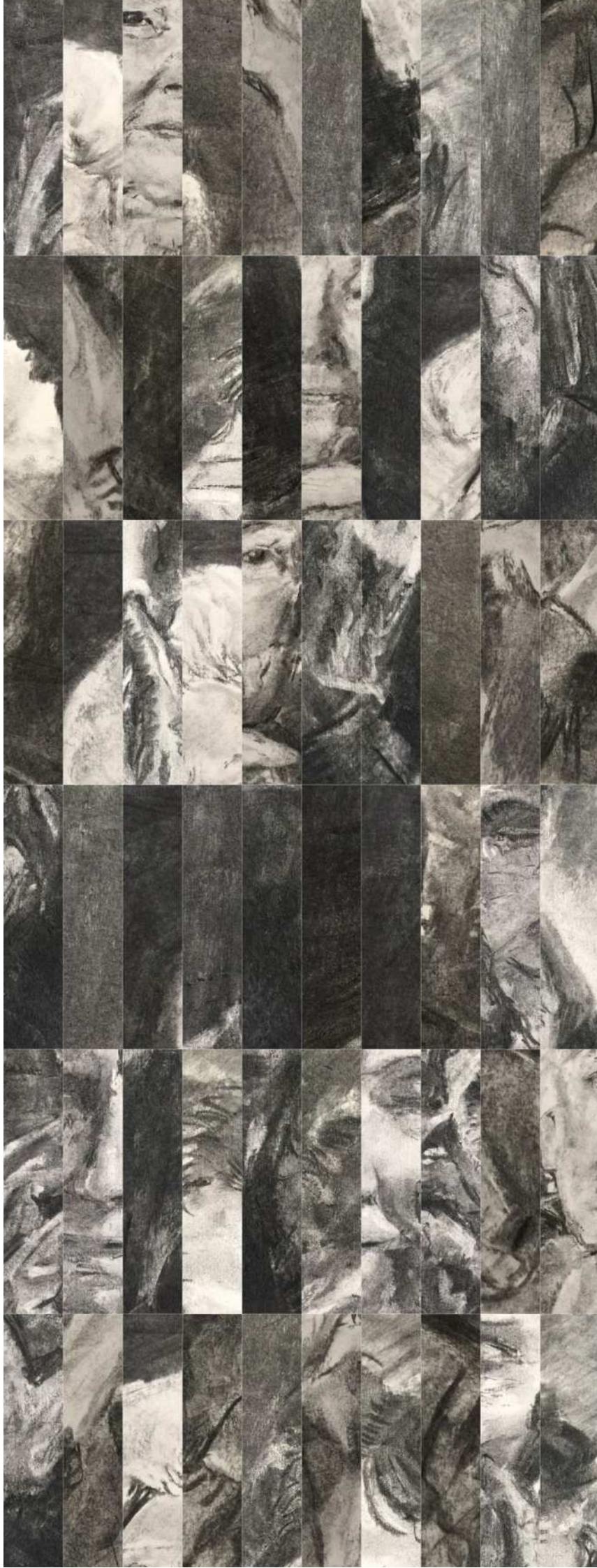


Two Helens

(2018) 12" x 32" Digitally manipulated drawing
Limited canvas edition of 5 \$250

"Two Helens" is ultimately based on Yosuf Karsh photographs of Helen Hayes, and of Helen Keller. I made charcoal drawings from the photographs, then divided them into sections and rearranged them by chance.

The fragmentation and combination of the two base images speaks to the unreliability of our mental images of our elders, of the near truths, misattributions and utter fabrications that make up our stories of our predecessors..



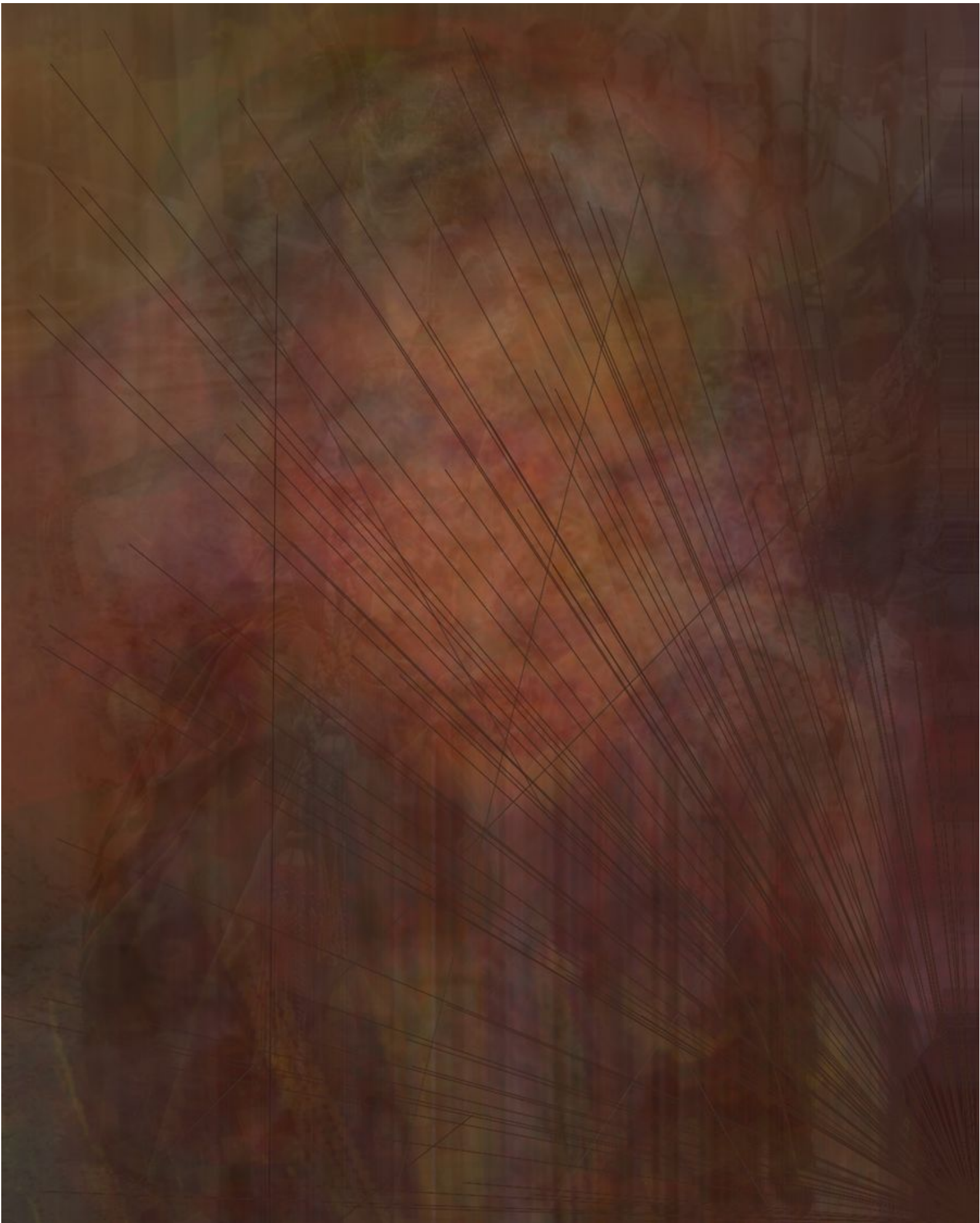
Unintended Consequence

(2022) 8" x 10" Digitally generated image
Limited metal edition of 5 \$115

The artists I most often hear my work compared to are Pollock and Rothko. This was the result of an experiment in channelling my inner Rothko

.Using the same set of stills and portraits that I used for the Assorted Actresses series, I intended to build up an image by adding images in different colours, and apply random scratches to get an overall aged copper effect.

There was a mistake in the code, though.



Want

(2019) 8" x 10" Digitally Generated Image
Limited Metal Edition of 5 \$115

"I want to be left alone"

Based on a photograph of Greta Garbo.

Assorted Actresses series



Acknowledgements

Thanks to the North York Central Library for hosting this iteration of the show.

The "Assorted Actresses" pieces were part of a project in collaboration with a group of people that included:

Sofia Aarmio, Diane Bayley, Lisa Binnie, Brian Peter Dickson, Jesper Dolgov, Katharine Draper Quinn, Pene Gerber, Saara Hast, Kati Immonen, Heli Janhiainen, Venla Kaasinen, Aapo Kotilainen, Sakari Kyyrönen, Matti Lankireen, Seonaid Lee, Jussi Lipasti, David McClyment, Eero Merimaa, Mehtap Memmi Mertdoğan, Natalie Plociennik, Robert Quinn, Bob Shaland, Michelle Wehrle, Maria West, Anita Woodard, and Shiyu Zhang

Thanks to

Shiyu Zhang, Mehtap Memmi Mertdoğan, Natalie Plociennik, and Kai Hart for their curatorial input, and continued support / tolerance when I popped up saying "Here's another thing I did! What do you think?"

Thanks to **David McClyment** for his mentorship in the form of practical advice and kind words.

Thanks also go to the folks at **Studio Faire.** in Gascony. Two of the pieces were completed during my residency there.

And thanks to **Seonaid Lee** for (ahem) encouraging me to do something with art in the first place, for being a regular sounding board, and for helping to install the show..