

Making Noise



Janno
McLaughlin

Senses

*Dedicated to everyone
who has been having hard times*

Making Nonsense Janno

Making Nonsense — Janno McLaughlin

— Catalogue Part I —

texts

large works

small works

soft sculptures

press
release

Making Nonsense

by
Rose
Lang

An expanded exploration of the oversized soft-sculpture installations Janno produced during her Masters studies at VCA (2017-18), Making Nonsense is her response to the pandemic of 2020 with all its accompanying crises, upheaval and disorientation. Understandable as a defiant celebration of life, resilience, humour and absurdity, Janno's enduring preoccupations as an artist encompass ideas about compassion, love and community as the sustaining principles of a kinder world.

The exhibition is an unapologetic, wildly exaggerated, absurdist conflagration of installation, large- and small-scale paintings, paper works, textiles and hand-sewn soft sculptures with bold explosions of colour. Janno has also included the collaborative Corona Girl project with Covid-19 responses from participants around the globe, sewn into the dress of the large-scale female figure, representing togetherness in isolation.

This is a show unafraid to advocate for enduring humanist virtues. Love, dignity, compassion, social justice and the primacy of human happiness, promise a gentler and less complicated way of being in the midst of a deeply strange, post-truth moment in history.



Janno

Making Nonsense

words by
Janno
edited by
Rose Lang

Intended as a gesture of love, Making Nonsense is a celebration of colour, life, optimism, and the compassion that unites us in such tumultuous and topsy turvy times.

The exhibition is an intentionally wonky and imperfect response to 2020, an attempt to make sense of life's crazy circus — which is central to all my work — but which here also hopes to be a defiantly open-hearted hug to the world.

The large-scale installation work and paintings in this exhibition were made in response to the sense of doom that seemed to hang over the world in 2020: the pandemic, ugly politics, deforestation, bush fires, and the effects of global climate change being felt everywhere and all at once.

Embedded within Making Nonsense is an open call international community project titled 'Esperanza' which has been designed to allow us to reach out and to (metaphorically) hold hands

in this year of Covid 19. Having spent the majority of my adult life as an expat overseas, many close friends are still scattered across multiple countries. In 2020 as each country fell to the devastation of the virus and people everywhere were isolated and stranded in their homes, it felt important to try and gather together as a global community.

'Esperanza', meaning hope in Spanish, has materialised in Making Nonsense as a collection of soft sculptural multi-cultural 'dolls', layered, patched and hand stitched to muslin. Patches submitted from friends and strangers speak to shared experiences of love, resilience, loneliness, loss and uncertainty. These offerings celebrate optimism, solidarity and the blessings of life. Statements of hope and humour are juxtapositioned with those of outrage and despair.

'Esperanza' acknowledges an emotional journey as well as the physical

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movement of the patches traveling across the world by post. Immense effort has been involved in the making and sending of these pieces now joined together. Makers range from young to old and from within and outside of an established arts community. I returned a thank you gift to each maker of a hand stitched red silken heart to note my absolute gratitude.

Sharing the installation space with 'Esperanza' are stitched, sculptural creatures that grace a 'Mad Hatter's' table, with an oversized sequined teapot. Improbable flowers and trees hang alongside giant paintings of spring blossoms, birds and strange beings. Familiar motifs and circus metaphors, gorillas, elephants and birds, act as reminders of the need to protect our vulnerable natural world.

The palm trees suggest deforestation and the need to awaken our obligation to save the planet.

An exuberant proliferation of imagery, pattern and colour is designed to be a playful celebration of life, oscillating in scale from big 'wallpaper' gestures to tiny moments of quirky collage and introspection. These are scattered thoughts amidst an abundance of fabric, stitching, sequins and soft sculpture. Muslin is stitched and bandaged to acknowledge frailty, fears and vulnerability, but at the same time evoking cocoons, metamorphosis and the necessity to adapt.

These artworks speak to the darkness of our times by holding on to light. They are postcards to another world where life and love, kindness, honesty, inclusion, nature and the beauty of happiness can thrive.

large
works

—large works guide—

Cocoons, Landscape, Nature



Bush Fires, Raindancing



Covid 19



Down the Rabbit Hole



Out the Other Side



Cocoons, Landscape, Nature

1

Ode to Country (A)

183 cm x 183 cm
hand stitching, muslin, mixed media
on canvas

● SOLD

The song of the Bell -bird echoing through the landscape, beautiful yet haunting as it marks its territory and oncoming demise of the bush.

Snapping twigs, footsteps, softly falling leaves, the cracking of branches, voices singing and receding ... Sounds...of roaring bushfire...and rain and recovery.

Sounds of the accumulation of whispered fractured histories, apologies and magnanimity, songlines of knowledge and resilience echo in reminder of fragility;- of nature, peoples and landscape and the need to protect.

Questions? what once was, what is now, what is tomorrow ?

This work has taken a few years to finish (started this work at VCA in 2018 -2021)

2

Venus of Willendorf (A)
183 cm x 183 cm
mixed media and hand
stitching to canvas



3

Venus of Willendorf (B)
183 cm x 183 cm
mixed media and hand
stitching to canvas



Venus of Willendorf (B)
detail



4

N° 4. Pendulum
183 cm x 183 cm
paint, thread, muslin and
hand stitching on canvas

reminder of fragility



5

Extinction Rebellion
183 cm x 183 cm
paint, thread, muslin and
hand stitching on canvas

● SOLD

Oops comes out of her circus tent to chat to her alter ego Mrs Gorilla, and contemplates the meaning of life, trying to make sense of an upside down, topsy turvy world.

One of my self portraits - I choose the Gorilla to indicate our origins and connections within the larger animal world. Humans and animals are one and intertwined and extinction of species is to the detriment and extinction of ourselves.

I am playing here too though, and hanging on to a sense of humour and the ridiculous, using metaphors and motifs from current and earlier works. Circus is always amidst my painting as I am drawn to the craziness, magic and injustice that jostles within the layers of the circus tents and audience.

Description: Painting on canvas, mixed media and hand stitching, layered with metaphors and motifs.





Extinction Rebellion
detail

6

Gotta fix this
183 cm x 183 cm
mixed media, hand stitching
on canvas



7 **Hola**
183 cm x 122 cm
paint, thread, muslin and
hand stitching on canvas



8 **Hello**
183 cm x 122 cm
paint, thread, muslin and
hand stitching on canvas



raindance



10

Raindance and Bushfire
183 cm x 183 cm
paint, thread, muslin and
hand stitching on canvas

● SOLD



On our knees praying for rain to put out the fires and the drought that has ravaged so much of Australia. Looking to the heavens, rain dancing, arms up begging for rain and for the burning to stop.



11

Looking for the Sunny
183 cm x 183 cm
paint, thread, muslin and
hand stitching on canvas



Feels weird, feels strange, feels happy,
feels sad, feels connected, feels love,
feels lost, feels hope, feels deeply.



13

Hello, Are You Ok?
183 cm x 183 cm
mixed media and hand stitching to
canvas



N° 6. Totems
detail







16

Lets Get Loud
183 cm x 183 cm
hand stitching, muslin,
mixed media on canvas

● SOLD

Like much in life this started with a song and a dance, erasure, layered memories..travels...
It is hope and resilience and shouting out loud the need to wake up and care for our planet and our peoples.
It is the memory and lessons of life of years spent living in South America and watching as the government in Brazil allows the burning of rainforest and denial of Covid 19.
It is the love of the people there and the culture of dance and joy and colour.



Grey and pink flash across the evening skies casting shadows on the red dirt and sweeping plains. Taking water and preparing to roost, noisy chatter and sqwarking is silhouetted in high branches, heralding approaching dusk and time to rest.

Looking at Australia, our past and our future ...Flying galahs in the countryside, and flying ducks as they are immortalised in vintage ceramic across interiors of homes and wallpapers, comforting as they screech hello across evening skies, ...looking on the inside as we are stuck in our homes at wall papers, wildlife, landscape, dreaming, needing to protect nature, each other and nurture.

Flying Galahs
detail





18

I Grew You a Big Bunch of Flowers
183 cm x 183 cm
hand stitching, muslin, mixed media
on canvas

● SOLD

Covid 19

It is about life

places





A quirky, crazy life of bowling balls and alleys, games played, secrets, travel to out of the way places.

Multi cultural dolls , hand-painted;
 -of people hidden within people within people, shared connections, traditions, stories, play ...funny, life,love.

As bowling balls knock down pins, life knocks us down and we journey, as we try to bounce back up.

as we try
to bounce
back up





21

Holiday Dreaming
183 cm x 183 cm
synthetic polymer on linen

Greetings from Another World
 183 cm x 210 cm
 hand stitching, muslin,
 mixed media on canvas



Ooh La la, Mama mia, dios mia, holy shit ...Running out of the theatre, through the streets, and realising that something has turned upside down and terribly wrong in the world.

Greetings from an upside down world where all of our worlds and peoples have been side swiped and toppling over, facing up to the harsh realities of covid 19.

This started as a Where's Wally of USA, France, China, Japan, Spain, Italy, Brazil, Australia, the UK Argentina, the Netherlands ..etc and the world went into lockdown.



esperanza

She throws her hands in disbelief and vulnerability, unarmed and isolated yet defiant and brave, grieving for the heart break and loss in the world. She hopes for a more positive future, a way forward together, out of this mess.





24

Viva España
183 cm x 183 cm
hand stitching, muslin,
mixed media on canvas

Viva España is a reaching out to friends in Spain and Latin countries hurting in the pandemic. I painted this early on, when Spain was one of the earliest European countries to start to fall over. The Spanish dancer, rose and bull are emblematic of culture, music, tradition, heart and strength.

25

Making Nonsense
183 cm x 122 cm
detail

● SOLD





Keeping a sense of humour in the pandemic and stating the ridiculous, and the odd phenomena of hoarding of toilet paper and ruckus in Western supermarkets. Spare a thought for the felling of trees.

Wish

I
was
a

tree





Down the Rabbit Hole

'Oops' makes an appearance with her recurring acrobatic friends on bowling pins. She is one of my alter egos, extroverted yet shy, so sure of herself yet vulnerable in her humanity and awkwardness. Oops likes to dance and doesn't care what people think.







30

Oops Practices Her Circus Moves
183 cm x 183 cm
mixed media and hand
stitching to canvas





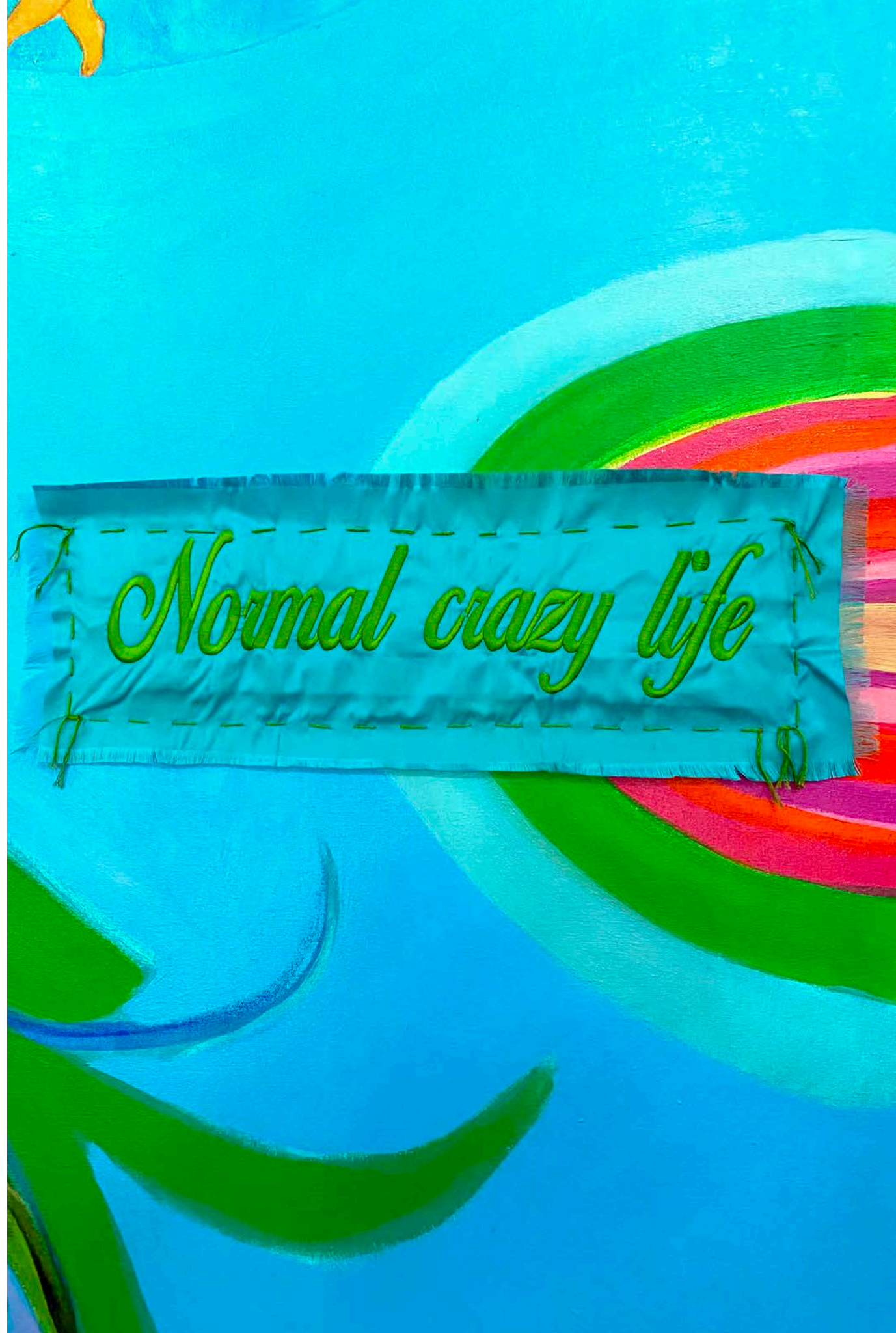
31

Normal Crazy Life
183 cm x 183 cm
paint and mixed media
on canvas

● SOLD

Swinging on a palm tree and dreaming of magical spaces and escapes whilst trying to make sense of the new normal, upside down world of no travel, face masks, isolation, covid, crazy politics, climate change and the pressing need to look after nature and each other.

to look after
nature and
each other



She bathed in the safety of the soft
calm before taking a journey to the
topsy turvy space of in between

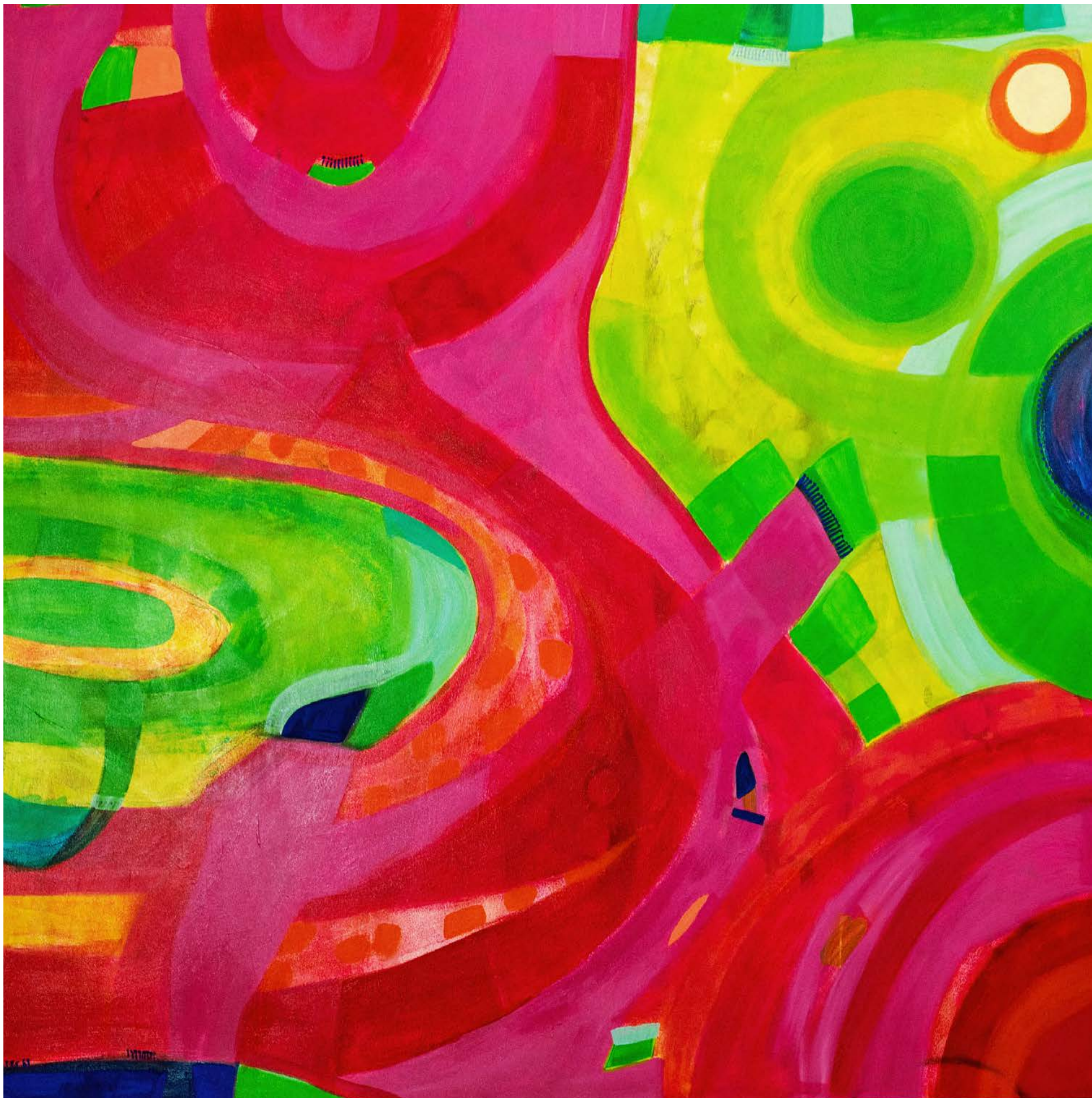






33

Blurred Lines in Yellow
183 cm x 183 cm
mixed media on canvas



34

Blurred Lines in Red
183 cm x 183 cm
mixed media on canvas



35

No More Boring
150 cm x 150 cm
mixed media on canvas

36

**Peeling Back the Layers
of the Little Dot**
183 cm x 183 cm
mixed media on canvas



small works

These small works coexist with the larger works,
sometimes the small works came first, sometimes they came after.

— small works guide—

Cocoons, Landscape, Nature



Bush Fires, Raindancing



Covid 19

– Down the Rabbit Hole



Alice in Wonderland



Out the Other Side

49 cm x 49 cm

Cocoons, Landscape, Nature

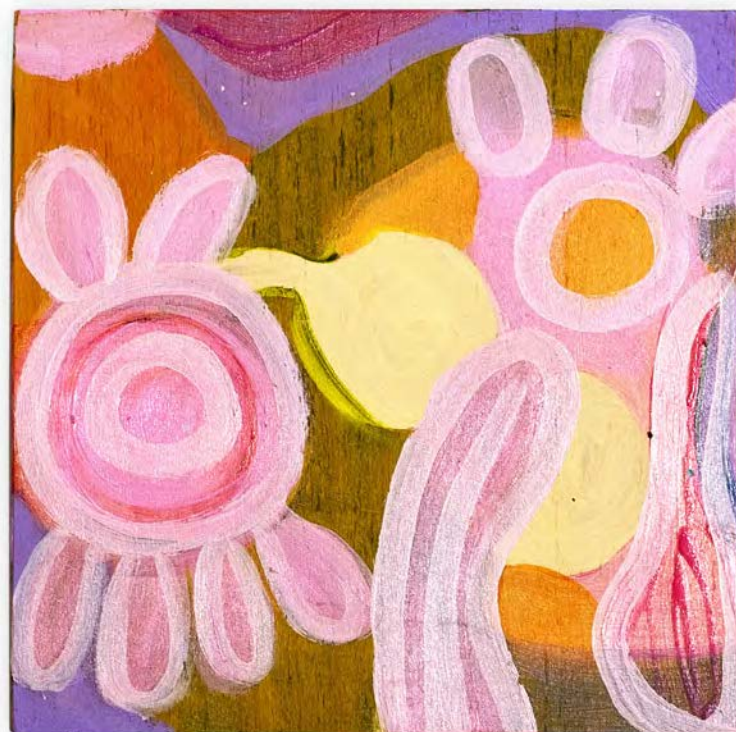
beehive



37

● SOLD

nature



39
● SOLD



38



40

41

42

● SOLD

COCON



43

● SOLD

44





45



46



47

48

blurred lines

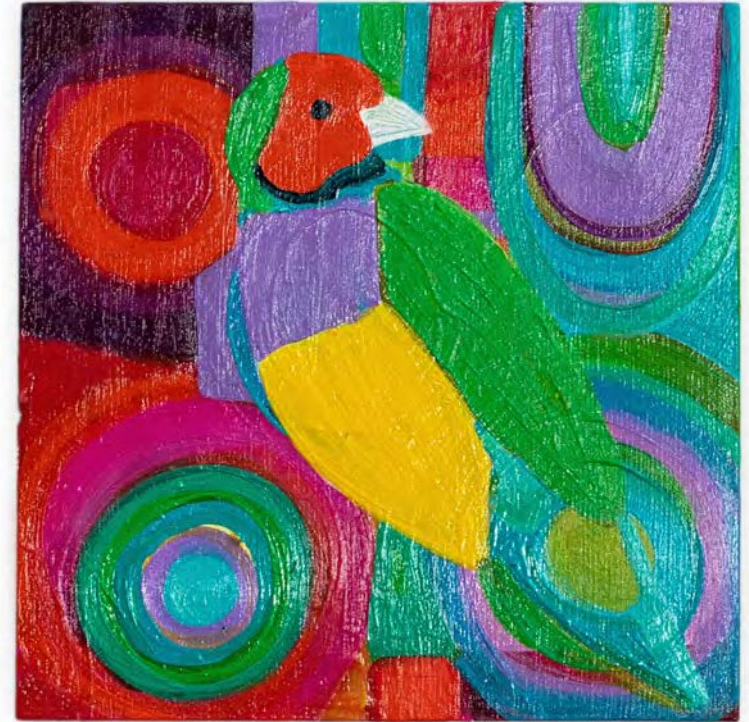


49



50





raindancing

Bushfire - Raindancing

59



61



60



62





63



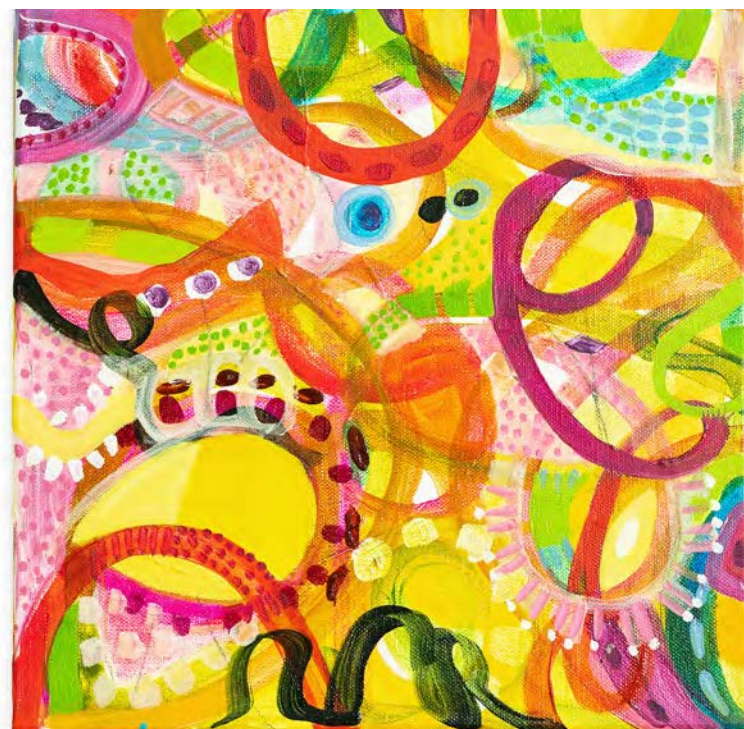
64



65



66



68



69

● SOLD



70



71



72



N° 73: 20 cm x 20 cm
N° 74 round: 20 cm x 20 cm
N° 75 oval: 40 cm x 30 cm

Covid 19

Covid - Down the Rabbit Hole

73



74

● SOLD

75

76



77



78



79

80



81



83

84

● SOLD

85

Alice



86

87

88



89



90



91





92



93

N° 94: Round: 20 cm x 20 cm
N° 95, 96,97: Round: 15 cm x 15 cm

tea pot

94



95



96

● SOLD

97



N° 98: Round: 23 cm x 23 cm
N° 99: Round: 45 cm x 45 cm
N° 101 B: Round: 23 cm x 23 cm

98



99



100

● SOLD



101 B



103



103 B



N° 104: Round: 31 cm x 31 cm
N° 105: Round: 28 cm x 28 cm
N° 106, 107: Round: 23 cm x 23 cm

104

105

never going down



106

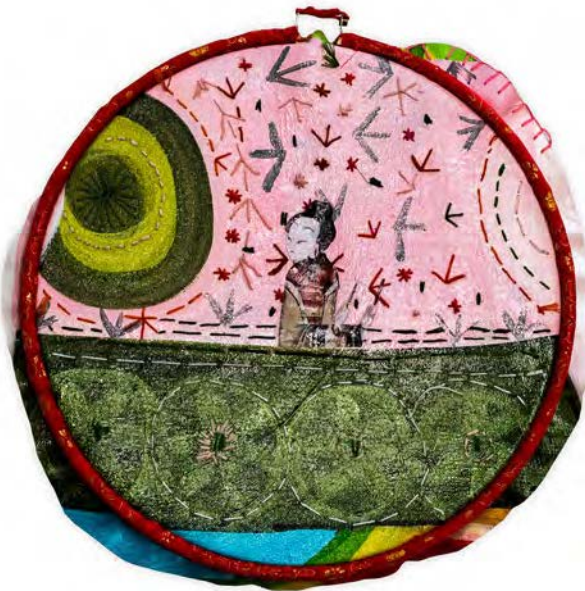
107

108



109

● SOLD



110

● SOLD



111

● SOLD

N° 113: Round: 35 cm x 35 cm
N° 114: Round: 25 cm x 25 cm
N° 115: Round: 31 cm x 31 cm

112

● SOLD



113



114



115



N° 117: Round: 26 cm x 26 cm
N° 119: Round: 24 cm x 24 cm

116

● SOLD



117

● SOLD



118

● SOLD



119

N° 121: Round: 24 cm x 24 cm
N° 122: Round: 23 cm x 23 cm
N° 123: Round: 20 cm x 20 cm

120

● SOLD



121

● SOLD



122

● SOLD



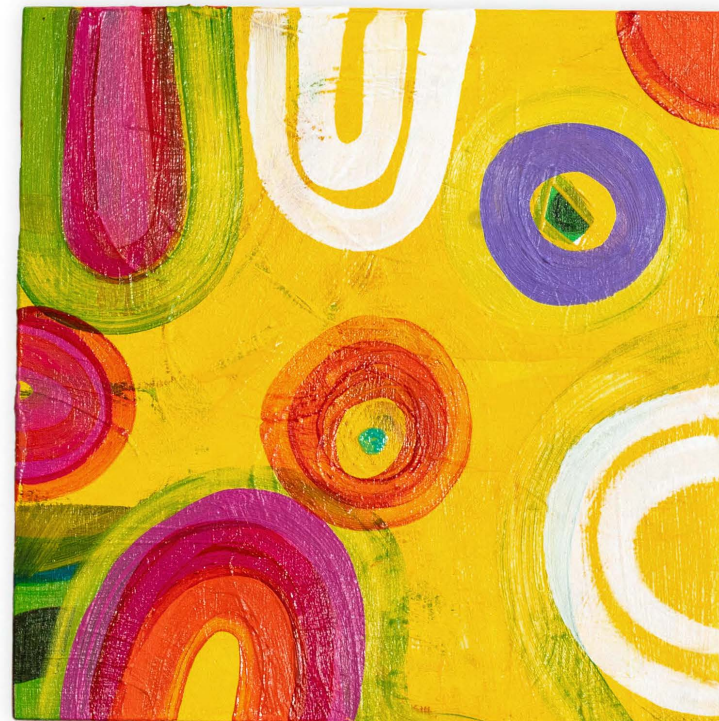
123



126

127

Out the Other Side
finodina
the sunny



128

● SOLD

129

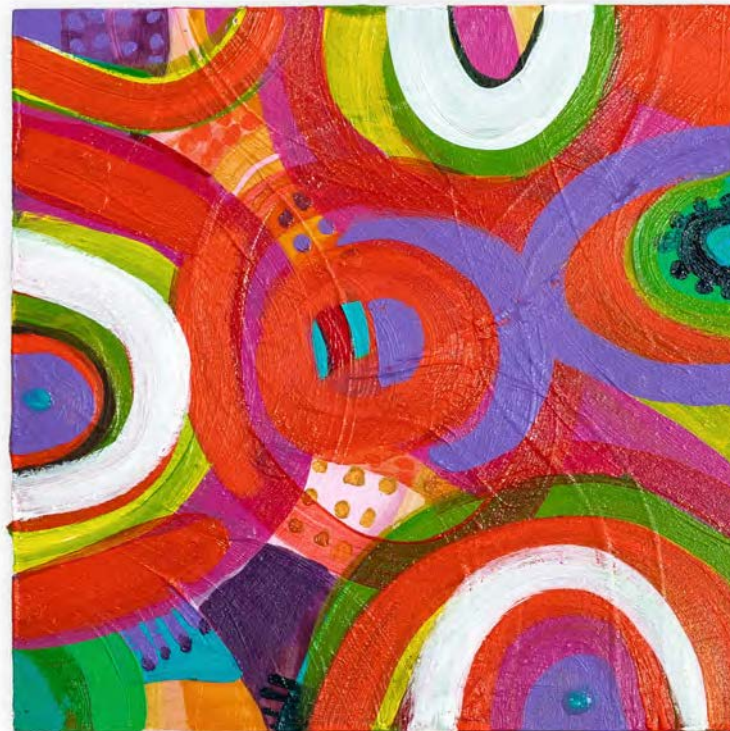
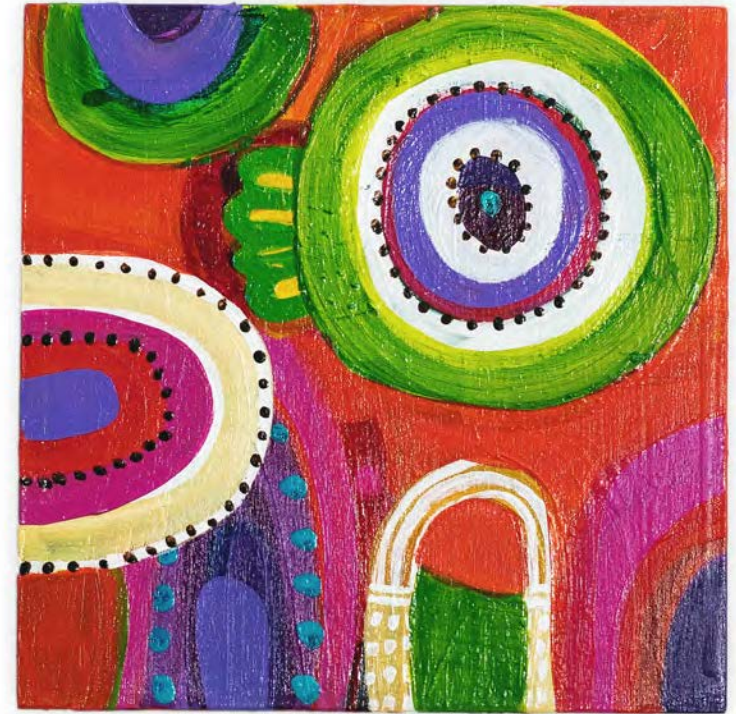


130

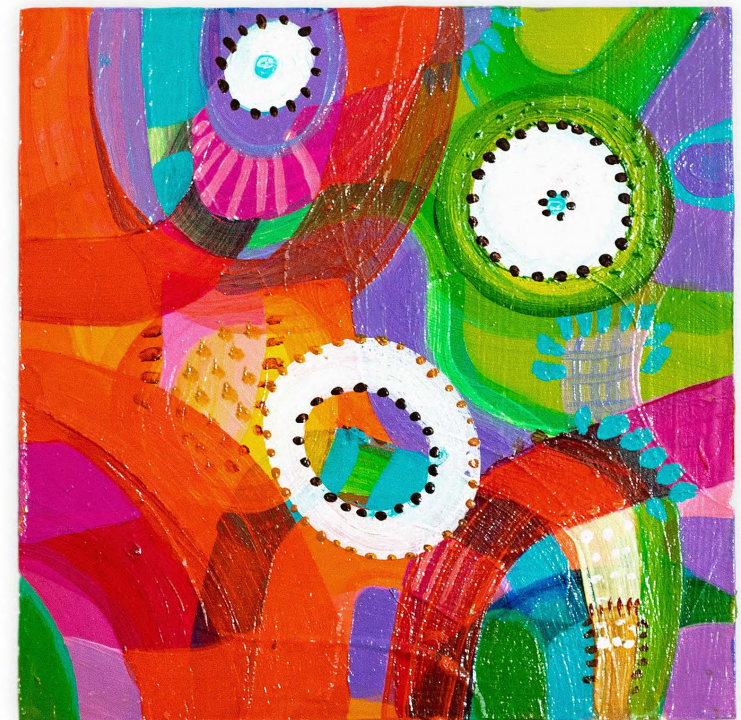


131

● SOLD



132



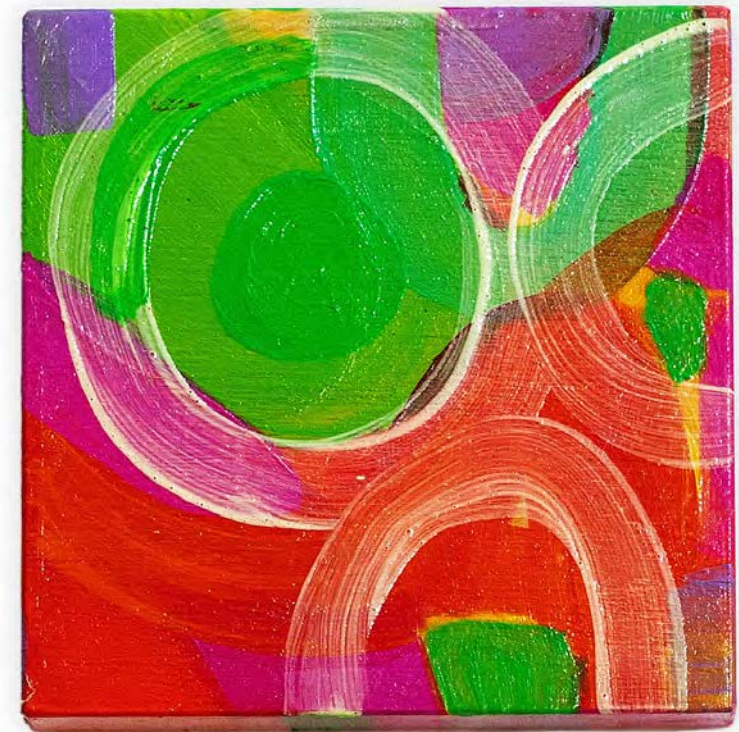
133



N° 144: 30 cm x 30 cm
N° 145: 20 cm x 20 cm

134

● SOLD

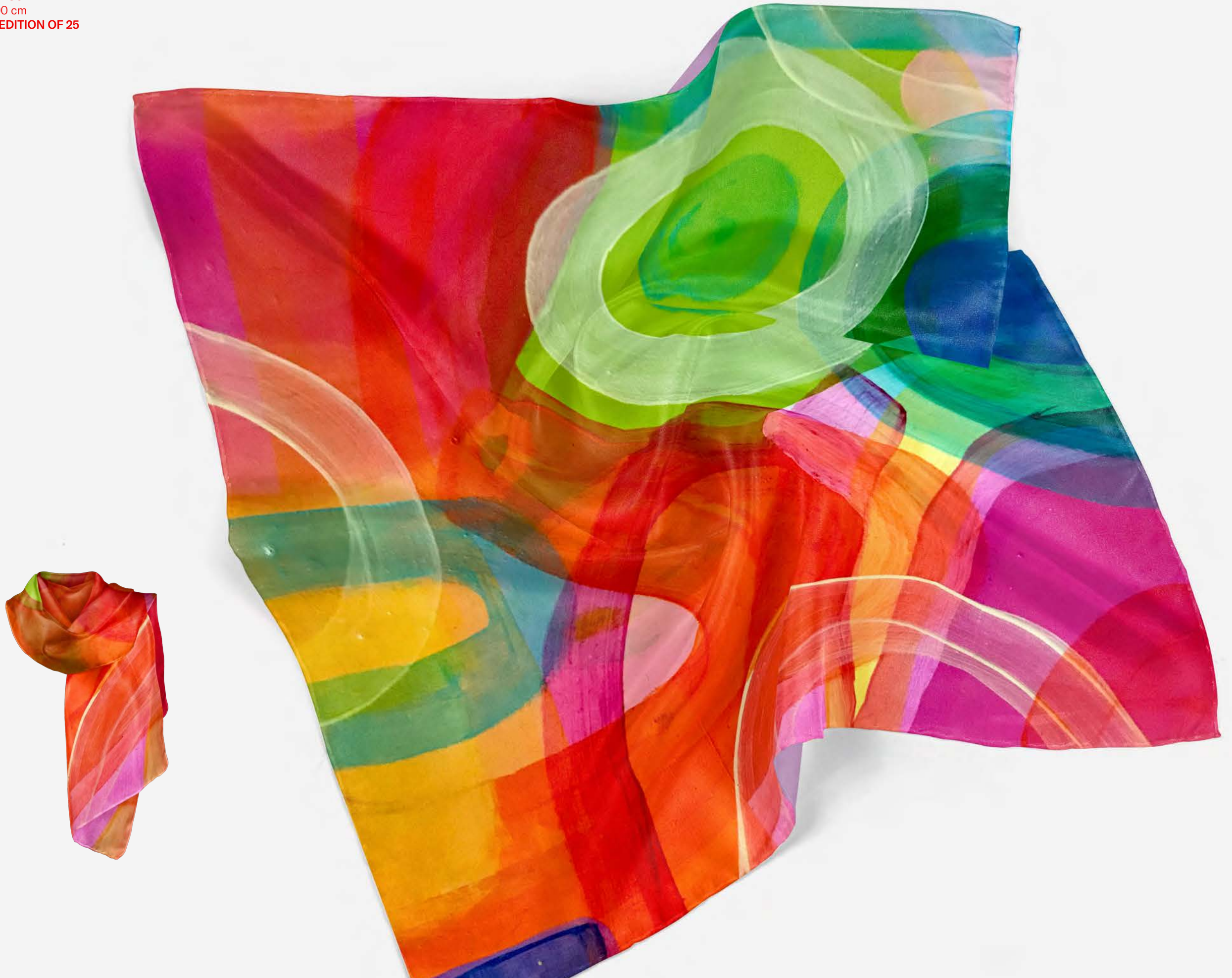


135



scarves

100% SILK SCARF
90 cm x 90 cm
LIMITED EDITION OF 25



100% SILK SCARF
90 cm x 90 cm
LIMITED EDITION OF 25





Making Nonsense

CATALOGUE PART I

Large works

Janno McLaughlin

Phone +61 400 209 009
jannoart@yahoo.com

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DESIGN: CABINA / CARO MIKALEF

Making Nonsense

Janno
McLaughlin