

Nicolene Burger

Fall Collection 2022



burgernicolene3@gmail.com
www.nbcollective.space

2022 THE CREATIVE CYCLE COLLECTION

Drawing the analogy that, just like nature, people have seasons and distinct cycles of creativity I am creating paintings that attempt to illustrate my own cycle. I am documenting, deciphering and visualising these stages of the creative life in an attempt to create an educational opportunity for other artists to understand their own seasonal creative cycle. I understand, feel and use this intuition in my own practice and since becoming more aware of my cycles, have found relief and comfort in them. This makes me a productive and healthy creative. Because these seasons are understood intuitively, I create images in the same way. Recording the different cycles in symbolically layered paintings. These paintings can act as tarot cards, graphs or mnemonic devices of the cycle when interpreted by viewers and myself.

The Creative Fall

When the creative fall comes along I am often still in the studio after a highly productive summer. I start to feel the clarity of whatever I am working on dwindle down and my energy to create drops. This feels strange and frustrating as the prospect of not creating can be scary to an artist. I have come to know this feeling as a call inwards- an indication that it is time to reflect on what I have created and consolidate the project into a neat series. It is the time to catalogue, archive and write.

The last few visual convulsions that take place in the studio when fall is settling in (the work that doesn't quite fit and feels unclear and incomplete) can be interpreted in two ways: with self-judgment, perfectionism and pressure, or with the understanding that it is a natural function of the creative cycles.

The second understanding was reached in my own practice when I noticed that these "incomplete" and "inconsistent" works act as the "breadcrumbs" for the start of the next cycle. These "disrupted" canvases are clues and catalysts for works to come. Work that will be created during the next spring and summer.

I painted all the artworks in this series on "disrupted" incomplete canvases. I have boxes full of paintings that, when I started working on them, didn't want to reach a "sweet spot" - a place where I felt content with them. When I started feeling my creative spring come along in creating these paintings about the fall cycle, it was those boxes that I unpacked first. The charge of creative potential that they hold acted as the stimulant for the final works of this collection. I interpret the symbols of the creative cycle on them, creating "finished" paintings that speak to the fall season in my cycle.

An applied way to deal with the breadcrumbs creation in your studio is to use all leftover paint in a non-directional way. When I am still in "making-mode" but the summer is passing, I start to use all leftover colours in light, diluted washes and dump it on the canvases left in my studio. This is a characteristic of these artworks in this series as well - they were all started in a non-directional fashion.

Other activities distinct of a healthy creative fall is sorting out and cleaning. Practically, it is a time in my studio that I halt production (after the purge of the breadcrumbs took place) to prepare the space for the inactivity in winter. I work all my physical references and resources into visual diaries, I throw away all empty containers, make note down the silhouettes of future projects and make the space ready for the next creative spring, when production will begin again.

The symbols used in this collection as well as in the rest of the series over the year of 2022 were derived from personal significance. Beside psychological behaviour, practices, mantras and activities, these symbols also come to represent Jungian archetypes active during the creative cycle. These archetypes have through the ages been illustrated in tarot cards, books, journals and all sorts of media. I have created my own set of symbols to present these phenomena. Instead of the father archetype being a literal painting of a father, it is tied to the image of a red sun for example*.

In these paintings the following symbols can be read:

- **The Grid:**

- (Light colour): *Meditation; practicing the mind.*

When I use the painting as a form of meditation in order to sit with uncomfortable emotions like self doubt, fear, sadness instead of suppressing or avoiding them this grid will be present.

- (Dark colours): *Over-active inner-critic.*

When I get stuck in perfectionism; overthinking structure and concepts, which blocks natural flow of creativity, this grid will be present.

- **The Palm Tree:** *Abundance; floating in the wind; free expression; open to opportunities and ideas.*

When I experience an abundant mindset palm trees are in full flow. This can be abundance experienced in materials, connections, opportunities, sales, new clients or ideas.

- **The Pine Tree:** *Perspective.*

When I work with patience and the knowledge that art does not function linearly, but whatever is invested now can expand beyond imagination or stay the same. This symbol is often painted when I start thinking, "this makes sense to me, but what if no one resonates with it or finds it important?". The pine tree is a reminder to stick to what is important to me, because in the long run authenticity leads to more expansion.

- **The Moon (Gold):** *Connection to moon cycle.*

This is an honouring symbol that signifies I am working in tune with my menstrual cycle. When I started studying my creative cycle it became apparent to me that the influence of my menstrual cycle has an undeniable influence on it. I have since structured my work around my menstrual cycle and when I am in tune with the needs of my various hormonal phases as well as my creative phases, I experience a flow and harmony in my studio that is pleasurable and sustainable. It is not always easy to maintain this commitment, as I also have a lot of "wounds" or creative aversions from childhood that "muddy" my creative psychology. The internalisation of narratives concerning perfectionism, comparison, competition and maintaining a day-to-day life that is accepted as normal in society, often throws me out of sync. This is why the moon only occurs sometimes. (Traditionally the white or silver moon is painted on the tapestry that hangs behind the queen in Korea. After visiting a very special temple in Seoul, I brought back an illustration of this male and female symbols which hang in my studio).

- **The Sun (Red):** *Healthy father archetype active in subconscious.*

This is an archetype interpreted in the creative cycle by dr. Clarrissa Pinkola Estes as bringing clarity in structure and a calm, integrated logical approach. *(The red sun in Korean tradition is also male or representative of the king).

- **The Female Form:** *Presence and connection with The Muse.*

I embrace and believe in the mystical, magical qualities of creativity. When I trust that the ideas coming to me are aligned with my artistic path, I am working with The Muse. I am The Muse - I can step into a place of certainty and power that makes the ego's doubts quiet.

- **The Eye(s):** *Connection to intuition and innate wisdom.*

This one is harder to explain, as intuition is something that is not understood, but felt and then acted on. This symbol is used to illustrate the trusting of intuiting in my practice.

- **The Mountains:** *Grounded in practice.*

When I feel grounded, stable and settled in the rhythm of my practice, I paint these mountains.

- **The Pink:** *Active inner child (Persephone).*

The dirty light pink in my paintings symbolises playfulness, curiosity and child-like innovation. It forms the ground of most of my paintings as these values are key to this study. It is also in childhood that the base of creative expression is formed.

- **The Roots:** *Drawing energy from the earth; productivity (Demeter).*

When there is a flow of productivity and I am producing one painting after another, I embody the goddess, Demeter. She leaves blossoming flowers and new sproutlings everywhere she steps.





Start the Process

A meditation on the wisdom of the creative mother archetype

15 x 15 cm - Oil on board (unframed)

~~R1600~~

Sold



Finish the Process

A meditation on the wisdom of the creative father archetype

15 x 15 cm - Oil on board (unframed)

R1800



Feeling into it

A meditation on abundance

15 x 15 cm -Oil on board (unframed)

R1800



Suggested pairing



Fall Collection 2022

Surrender

22 x 15 cm

Oil on canvas mounted on board (unframed)

R2200



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Beware of Hades



This painting symbolises the moment in the creative cycle that the high energy of summer starts to dwindle. There is a moment between expression and reflection, external and internal, production and process that "Hades" can creep in. He is the representation of the stories we believe and tell ourselves that block our creativity. He is the voice that whispers, "you will never create again; this might be the best work you will ever make and then what; you spent all that time and this is what you made?"

Hades and the way he functions in our creative cycle is also an indicator of where our inner artist needs the most love and support. He is the embodiment of our shadow side; the one that functions underground. His voice can be helpful when it is brought into balance with the inner child artist. When he asks questions like, "what if you try this? I wonder what will happen if you do that?".

Hades, to me, represents the prefrontal cortex- the part of the brain that is constantly chatting and checking up on me. It has been proven that if the prefrontal cortex is overactive during creative activity it inhibits an artist to reach a flow state. This part of the brain assists in survival by constantly projecting disaster to make sure we are prepared for EVERYTHING. In the wild, a panicked thought about encountering a lion will save your life- but with the stimulus of the modern world our poor prefrontal C is overloaded with ways things can go wrong. This produces a non-stop, anxiety inducing backtrack of self doubt, fear and self criticism. Not great for making art believe me!

In my sessions we face Hades in many ways, working with the relationship to this voice in our heads we all have. One way I like to challenge this non-stop train of blocking thoughts, is by getting the prefrontal cortex to relax. This is done by practicing visualisation meditations at the beginning of each session/workshop.

The pine tree to me symbolises wisdom- knowing what is needed to step into the right relation with something. It is equal parts perspective, groundedness, open mindedness and creativity. It is sitting with your Hades, figuring out what he wants to protect you from, when he enters your creative cycle- how he is triggered and what he says to block you. Of course your Hades is just a part of your psyche- wisdom is knowing and loving that so that it doesn't have power over your process.

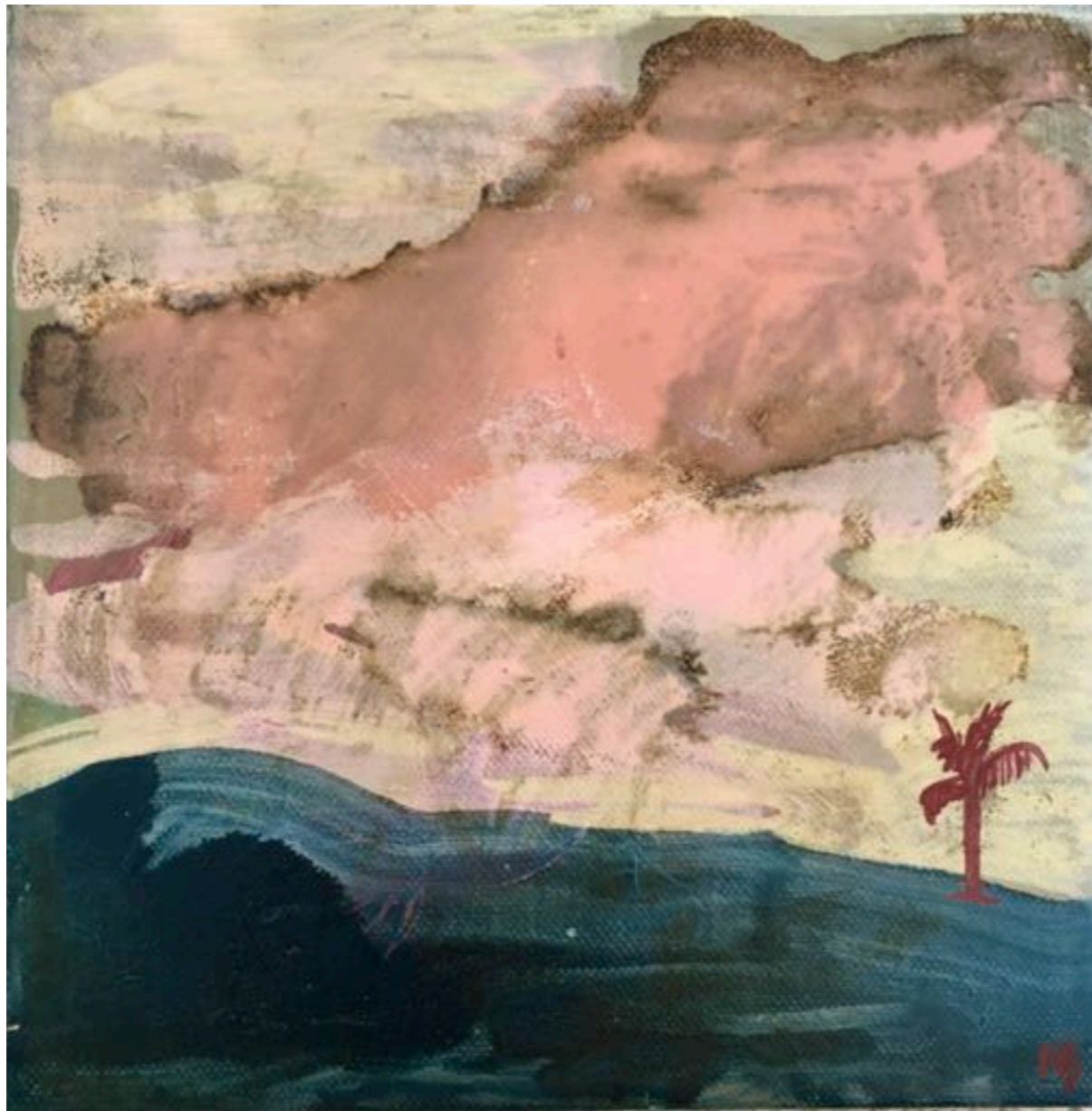


30 x 25 cm -Oil on canvas (unframed)

R4600

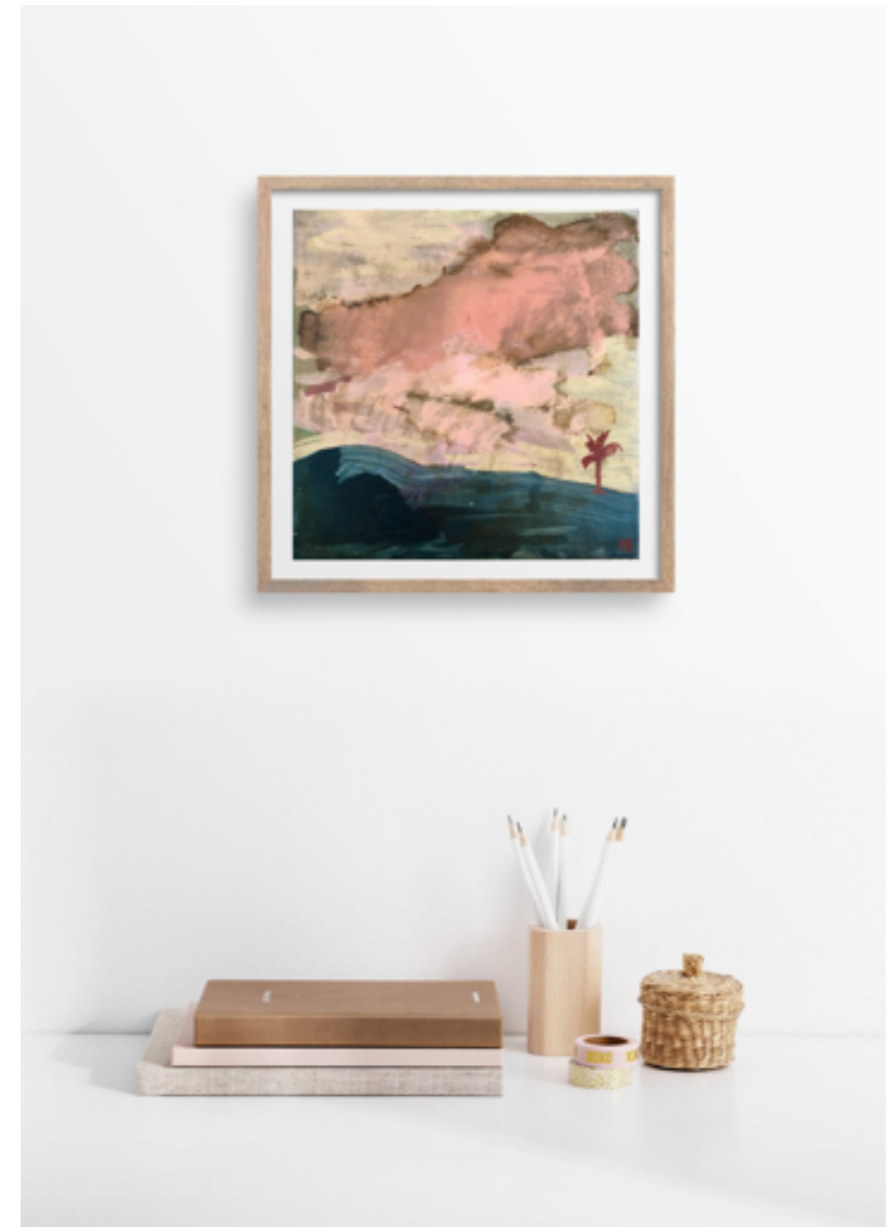


Details of Vast Mind



Vast Mind

Allowing the mind in the process of creating to become vast and non-directional, trusting that this too can bring abundance to my practice.



20 x 20 cm - Oil on canvas (unframed)

R2800

Fall Collection 2022

Wandering Persephone

A meditation on play

35 x 17 cm

Acrylic on unstretched canvas (unframed)

R3300





Breadcrumbs



20 x 20 cm - Oil on board (unframed)

R2800





Mountain Rhythm

46 x 36 cm - Oil on canvas (unframed)

R6500



Brandende Bos

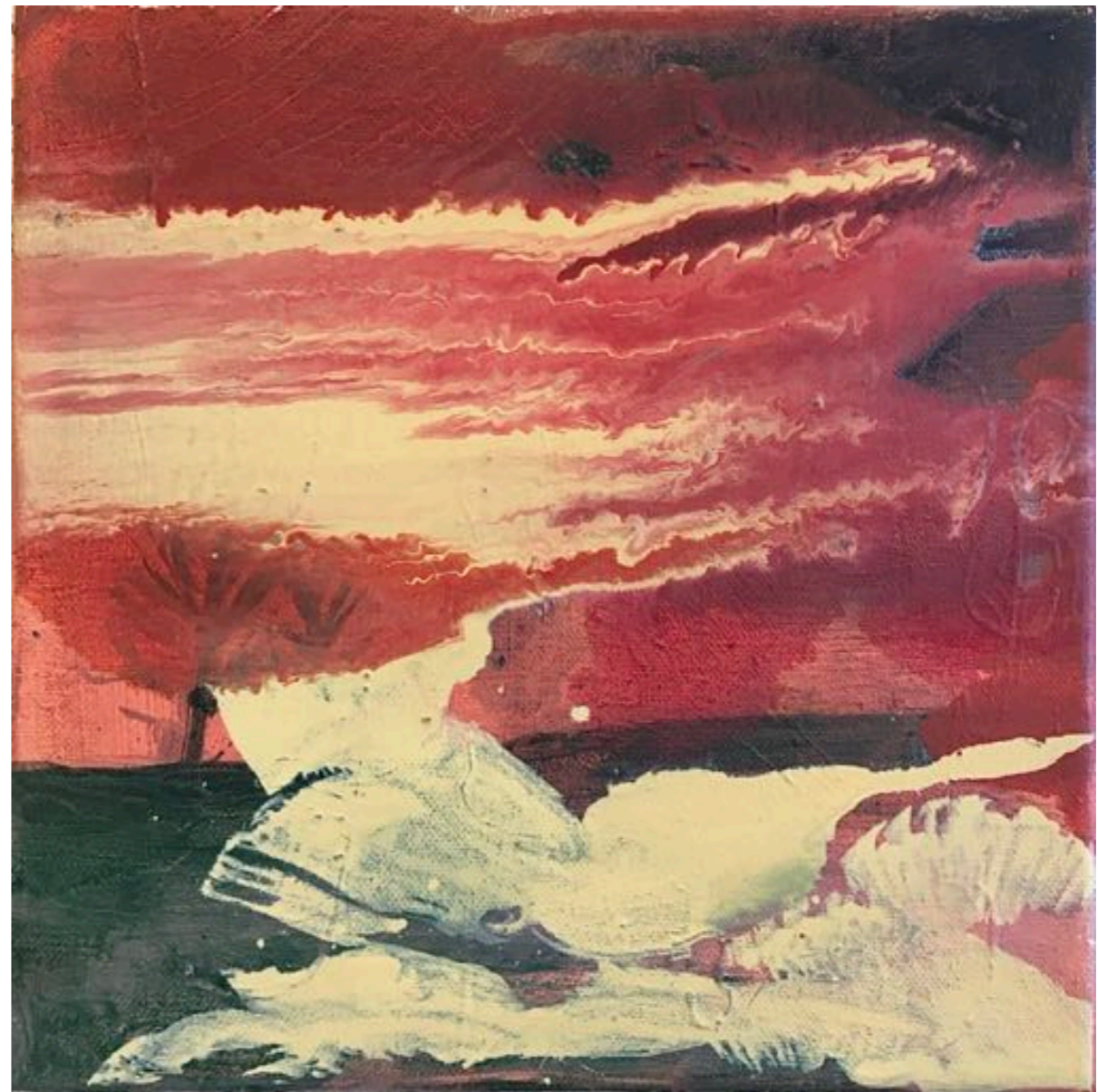
50 x 40 cm - Oil on canvas (unframed)

R6900





Suggested pairing



When all is lost

25 x 25 cm -Oil on canvas (unframed)

R3100

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Persist

1002 x 30 cm

Acrylic & oil on canvas (unframed)

R9500

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Clarity

20 x 20 cm - Oil on board (unframed)

R2800



Foresight

30 x 30 cm - Oil on board (unframed)

R5500



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Queen of Fall

30 x 30 cm

Oil on canvas mounted on board (unframed)

R5500





Suggested pairing

5 brode & 2 vissies

The meditation on abundance can be biblical to me as artist. When I through myself into an intuitive creative process a massive quality part of this practice is TRUST. I have to trust that my exploration will lead you somewhere fruitful. This trust becomes a mindset that is grounding to the artist, that allows me to feel around in the dark until insight strikes; to keeps the anxieties at bay.

This painting illustrates the layers of trust, feeling grounded in my studio and then experiencing abundance in ideas, inspiration, opportunities and sales. During the fall season of the creative cycle, the feeling of being lost in the forrest of the creative mind can be overwhelming. Self talk and limiting belief regarding my trust in the mysteries of creativity need to be reflected upon and evaluated.

30 x 30 cm - Oil on board (unframed)

R5500

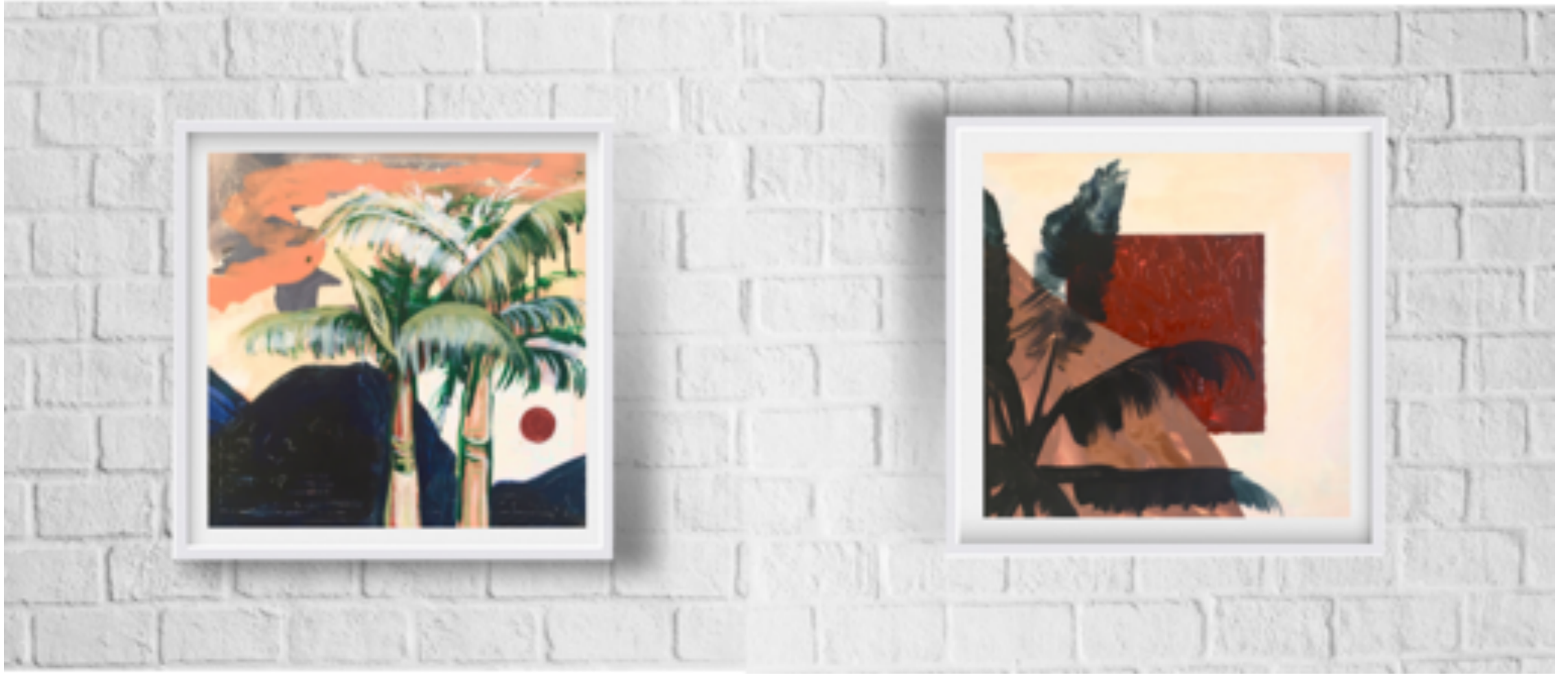




Father Sky

30 x 30 cm - Oil on canvas (unframed)

R5500



Suggested pairing



In the Dark

A meditation of nothingness



15 x 15 cm - Oil on board (unframed)

R1800

PURCHASING A PAINTING:

- *Send me an email with the name of the painting and the address you want it shipped to/arrangement suggestions to collect from my studio in Fish Hoek.*
- *I will make up a shipping quote for you.*
- *Your painting will be shipped to you as soon as the proof of payment is received.*
- ~~*A payment plan with instalments can be negotiated.*~~

THE FULL FALL COLLECTION 2022 WILL BE RELEASED END APRIL/ BEGINNING MAY