



CURATORIAL+CO.

BIRD WATCHING ME

TIARNA HERCZEG

8 – 25 JULY 2026

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TIARNA HERCZEG (b. 1999) is a proud First Nations and Hungarian artist, born on Dharug Country and currently practising on Butchulla Country (Queensland). Identifying as Yalanji/Kuku Nyungkul, her multidisciplinary practice explores home, identity, and belonging through painting, sculpture, sound, and installation.

Drawing on her connection to Country, ancestral memory, and the experience of movement and relocation, Herczeg approaches her art practice as an act of listening. She works intuitively, without predetermined outcomes, guided by feeling, inherited gesture, and embodied knowledge – letting each piece emerge as a conversation between memory, place, body, and land. Living between her First Nations heritage and her Hungarian lineage, Herczeg’s practice holds presence and displacement in the same hand. Through loose, gestural mark-making and vivid colour, she evokes the emotional charge of place, creating immersive works that explore the relationship between Country, spirit, and the quiet intelligence of the body.

A finalist in the Elle Next Gen Awards (Artist Category, 2025), Herczeg has presented solo exhibitions including *Girl In The Clouds* (Apollo Gallery, Budapest, 2025), *I Came Through The Sky* (Laundry Gallery, 2024), and *Through Coloured Glass* (Curatorial+Co., 2024), and was featured in Curatorial+Co.’s presentation at Sydney Contemporary (2023). She has completed major public art and mural commissions for The Sundays (Hamilton Island), Youth Hostels Australia (Haymarket), Urban Logistics Co. (Rockdale), The Harbord Hotel (Freshwater), and Barangaroo (Sydney). Alongside her studio practice, Herczeg is actively engaged in community mentorship and cultural initiatives supporting First Nations artists and communities.

BIRD WATCHING ME

Sometimes I cry and feel completely lost. I overwhelm myself with the number of things I need to do, spreading myself thin and somehow convincing myself I work best that way. In the lead up to something important, especially creatively, I almost always break. It has become something I recognise now. A point in the process. A feeling of "oh, we are here again".

This time I found myself sitting on the floor crying. I got up, walked outside and took my shoes off. I made a point of putting my feet on the ground. That bird was there again.

That bird is always following me.

It appears in strange moments, often when I need it most. Sometimes when I am looking for direction, sometimes when I am asking questions that I cannot answer myself. Over time I stopped seeing these encounters as isolated events and began paying attention to them.

As I get older, some questions become clearer while others continue to expand. I am still growing into myself. I am still trying to understand what I know and how I know it.

The unknown within my work exists in the things I cannot fully explain. There are experiences that resist language. Dreams, feelings, encounters, and moments of recognition that remain difficult to communicate to others. Painting allows me to sit with those experiences without needing to resolve them.

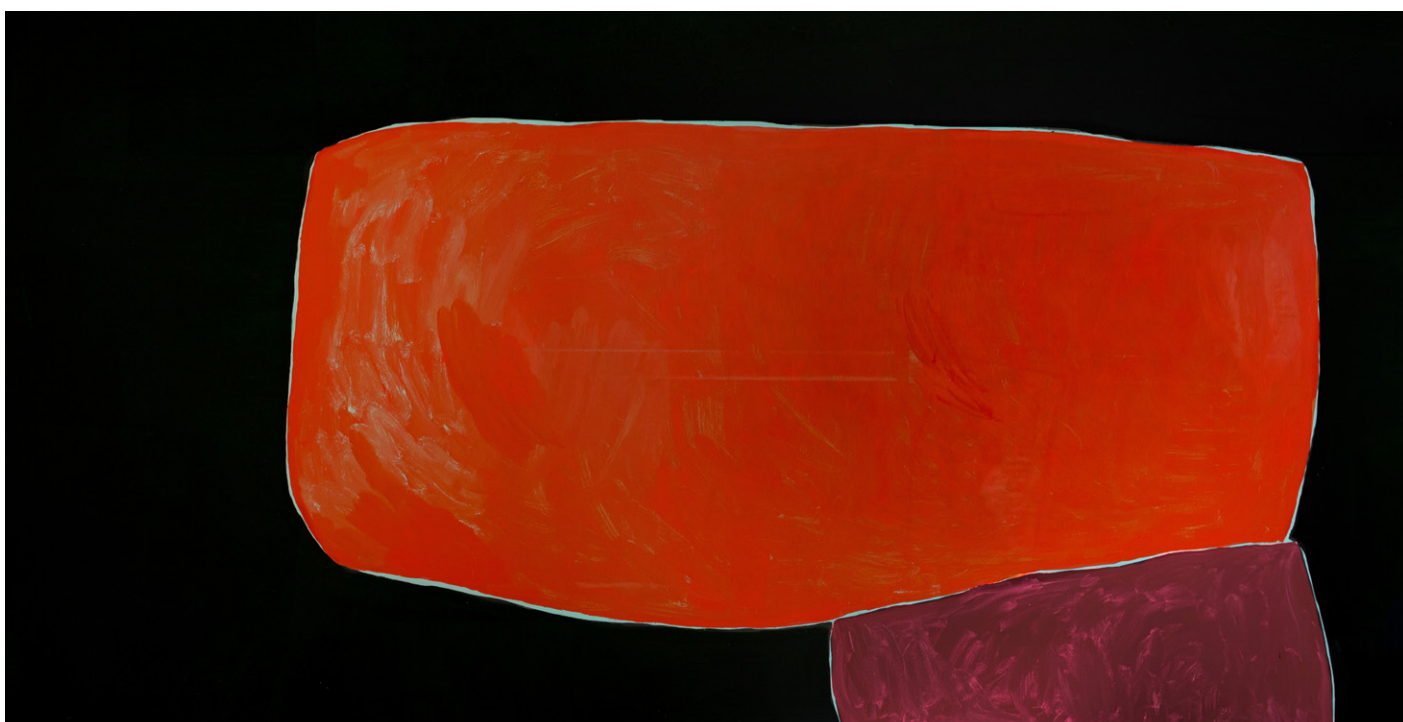
My paintings are not figurative, abstract, or portraiture in any fixed sense. They operate somewhere between these categories. They are not illustrations of memories or beliefs – they are evidence. Proof to myself that what I experience emotionally, spiritually, and intuitively is real, tangible, and alive.

I often find myself returning to questions about what is real. How do we know something is true? Where does memory live? Can something be real even if it cannot be explained? Much of my practice sits within these questions. Through painting I try to understand experiences that are emotional and spiritual. I am less interested in proving these experiences to others than I am in acknowledging them for myself.

Painting becomes a way of paying attention. A way of recording things that are otherwise recorded in my mind and written into my life. The works do not explain these experiences. They simply allow them to exist in a tangible way.

Over the last twelve months I have grown in ways that feel impossible to measure while painting far less than before. Much of that time was shaped by a feeling of being pulled towards Queensland and towards Butchulla Country, where my grandfather comes from and where my grandmother once lived. Since arriving here, I have felt my practice shifting. I have slowed down. I spend more time observing, more time listening.

Bird Watching Me emerges from this period of change. The exhibition is shaped by memory, dreaming, and becoming. Through dreams I am guided by my ancestors. The works emerge from encounters where memory and the present become entangled. They are concerned with presence rather than representation. It is ultimately an exhibition about dreaming and about the feeling of being watched by something beyond yourself while learning to watch yourself more clearly. It's about me and history.



I Emerge, 2026
acrylic on canvas
156 x 303 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 14,000



Rest, 2026
acrylic on canvas
156 x 303 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 14,000



Not Without Help, 2026
acrylic on canvas
156 x 125 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 7,900

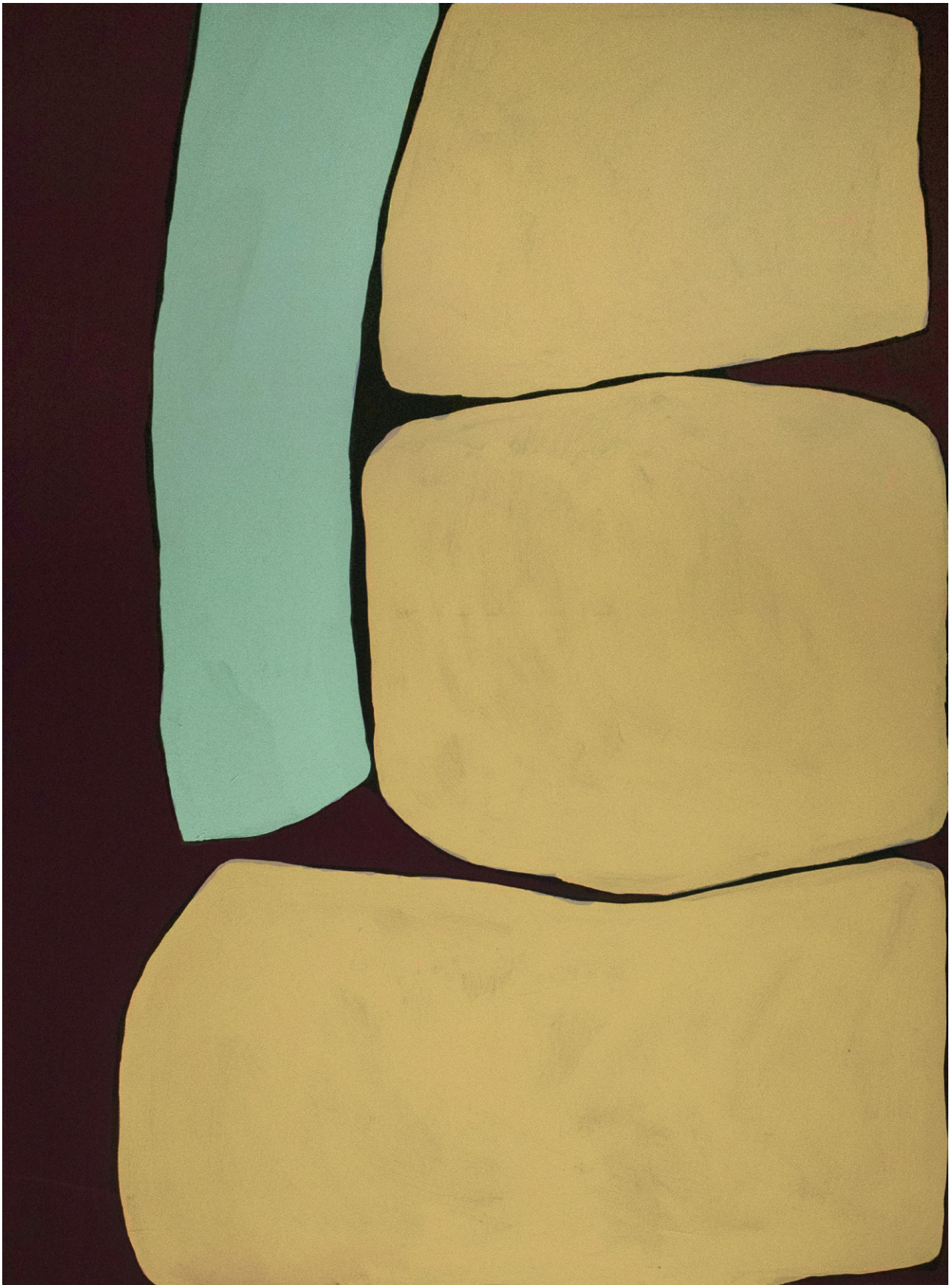


I'm With Her, 2026
acrylic on canvas
150 x 203 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 10,500

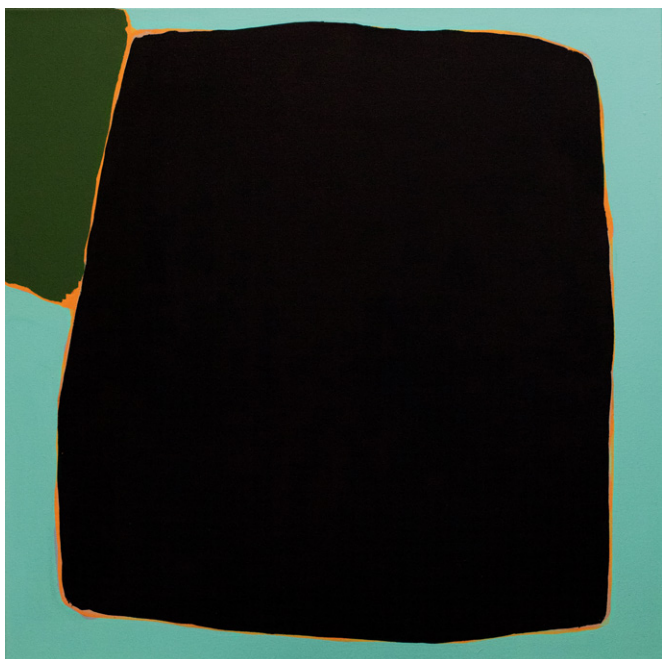


The Ocean Remembers, 2026
acrylic on canvas
153 x 113 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 7,500





Between Tides, 2026
acrylic on canvas
153 x 113 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 7,500

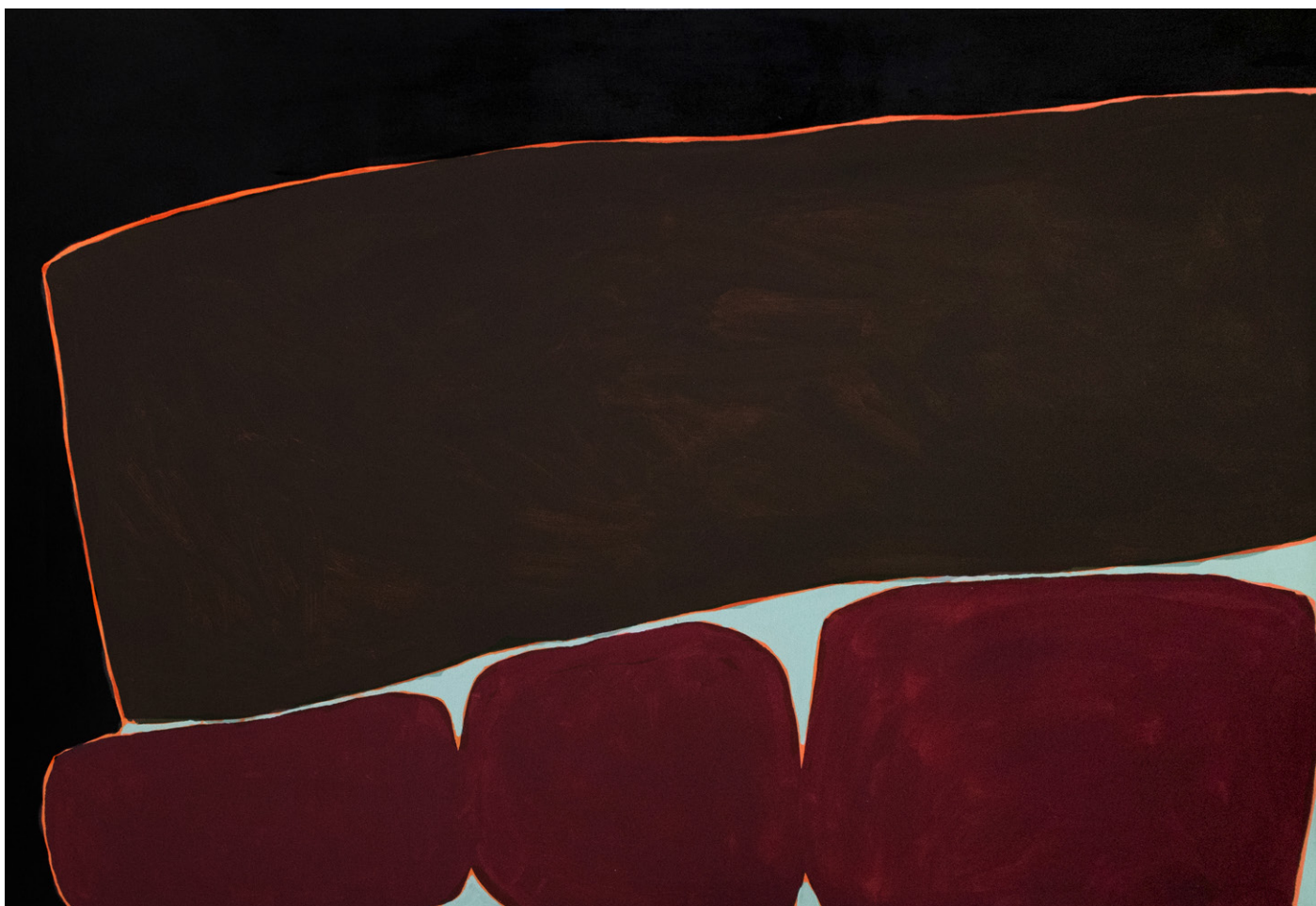


Reminding Me, 2026
acrylic on canvas
93 x 93 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 5,200

When the Mango Tree was Chopped, 2026
acrylic on canvas
93 x 93 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 5,200



I'm Like the Tide Drawing in, 2026
acrylic on canvas
125 x 156 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 7,900



Crows Always Following Me Now, 2026
acrylic on canvas
103 x 153 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 7,200





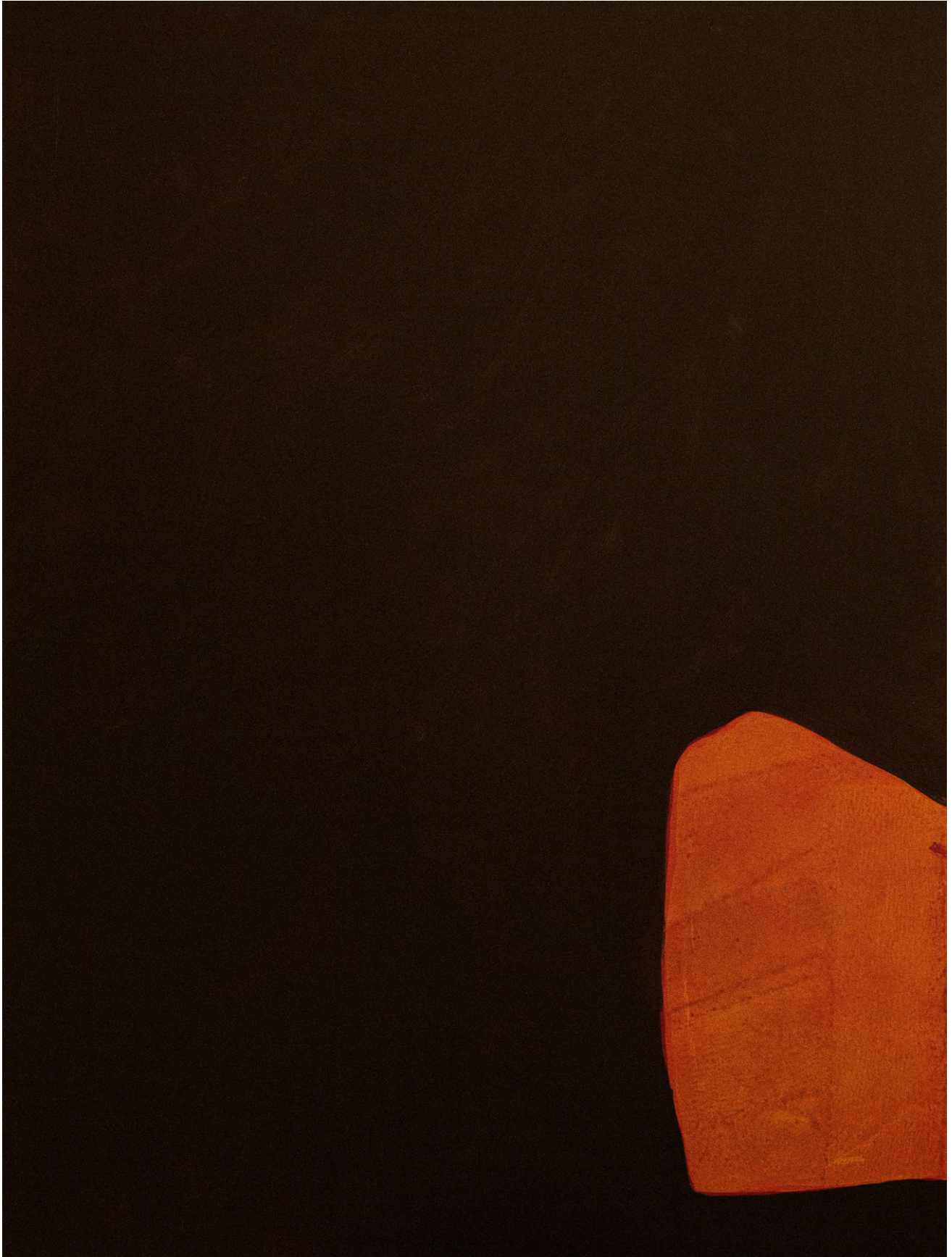
Looking Out at Big Woody Island, as the Sun Goes Down, 2026
acrylic on canvas
93 x 93 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 5,200



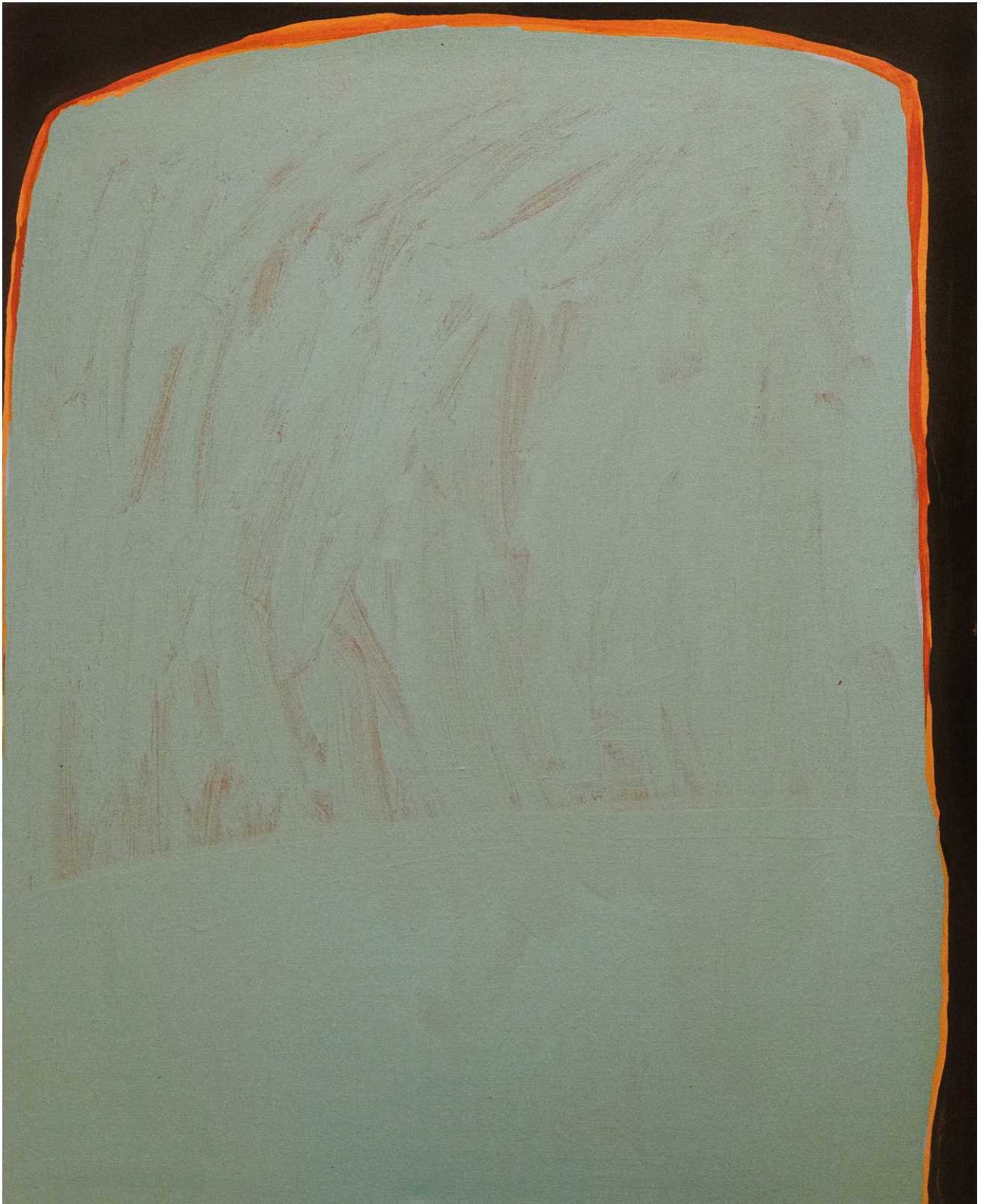
Keep Following That Path, 2026
acrylic on canvas
93 x 93 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 5,200



Someone's Always Watching Me, 2026
acrylic on canvas
143 x 93 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 6,500



Bright Sand Over There, 2026
acrylic on canvas
123 x 93 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 6,000



The Water is Hot and Murky, 2026
acrylic on canvas
79.5 x 64 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 3,900



Night Heat, 2026
acrylic on canvas
113 x 93 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 5,700



Before Waking, 2026
acrylic on canvas
61 x 76.5 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 3,900



Trees Out in the Water, 2026
acrylic on canvas
61 x 76.5 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 3,900



Wet Season, 2026
acrylic on canvas
113 x 93 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 5,700



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Photography by James Hinds.

We acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which this gallery stands. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, skies, and culture. We honour the rich artistic traditions that have existed on this Country for tens of thousands of years, and we recognise that First Nations people are the first artists, storytellers, and custodians of culture. We are committed to listening, learning, and working in respectful collaboration with First Nations communities.