

Ekatherina S. Sacred Places
2008–2014



Ekatherina S. **Sacred Places**
2008–2014



Ashok Jain Gallery
New York USA

Ekatherina S.

Born in Russia, Ekatherina S., as she calls herself, lives in Germany and New York, and has exhibited in both the United States and in Europe. Most recently, she spent time in India, becoming familiar with and photographing the country's great spiritual centers. She uses these photographs as the basis for these stunning, brilliantly colored works .

By painting over images of classic temples and robustly carved statues, she imbues them with an otherworldliness, often adding lines of calligraphy or graffiti to intensify the mystery.

In the deep pink-purple India 1, the frieze of voluptuous goddesses, photographed from below, is interrupted by squiggly white childlike tracings that bring the scene up to date and subtly unify past and present. More majestic and almost humbling, India 11 - which along with India 7 is among the most gorgeous works in the exhibition – shows an elaborate temple soaring from deep blue into a golden light. Oddly, the paintings conjure up a futuristic landscape as much as they do an ancient one, and this may be the artist's objective. She has chosen a very tantalizing and seductive way for viewers to see India, not so much as a geographical place but as a richly layered and nourishing state of mind.

Valerie Gladstone

Art News Magazine

Sacred Places

During my many years of study and travels, I discovered that ancient cultures on different continents, including Africa, North and South America, Asia, and Europe, had many similarities to each other. These cultures have much in common such as their connection to astronomy, huge monuments, pyramids and observatories, music, sacred art, dance ceremonies, fertility rituals, cults of Mother Earth and symbols of snakes, phalluses and spirals.

Many of the ancient structures are probably much older than officially dated. Many of the drawings in the caves, carvings in the stones, and sculptures are between 12,000 and 40,000 years old.

Mythology from the Americas, Incas, Mayans cultures, Egypt, China, India, Israel, Mesopotamia, Greece, and Scandinavia describes Gods coming down from the sky and teaching humanity heavenly knowledge: script, art, astronomy, mathematics, geometry, architecture, music, and agriculture. In both Asian and American mythology, flying serpents or dragons often symbolized these Deities. The Incas believed that the souls of the teachers of humanity, called Snakes, came from a specific area of the Milky Way Galaxy. We can recognize the snakes worn on the heads of the Egyptian Pharaohs, the staff of Moses, and the two snakes on the caduceus or staff of Hermes. Indian and many Asian cultures worship the Naga that sometimes is represented by a flying half woman-half snake or serpent who has given people Divine Wisdom. The snake is still today a very positive image in Asia and Peru.

The snake represents creative Kundalini energy that flows through the 7 chakras located along the spine of the human body. The human spine is symbolized by the Kabbalistic Tree of Life that connects the 7 lower sephirot, or spiritual dimensions, with the 3 higher and unknowable sephirot, or Divine Male energy, Divine Female energy and Divine Source. The sacred union of masculine and feminine cosmic energies is represented by the two snakes around Hermes' staff. Waves of energy, moving like a snake between positive and negative poles, create an electrical current. The coiling snake, like a spiral, is one of the most important shapes of cosmic development and is observable in the spiral shape of Milky Way Galaxy and the double helix spiral of human DNA.

Many tales speak about the battle between the benevolent Gods who helped people and other Gods who were envious of the harmony and unity between Gods and humans. The jealous Gods won and created natural catastrophes, exposed Mankind to fear, oppression, egocentric behavior, hate and greed. The Greek Olympic Gods defeated the Titans. The brother of Osiris killed him. Prometheus was punished. The Golden Age of Abundance, Prosperity and Immortality came to an end at this time. The glacial ice melted and the water levels rose quickly to great heights. Most of the civilizations around the world were destroyed and disappeared under the water. The Garden of Eden was deserted. The Greek philosopher Plato tells about loss of the very advanced civilization of Atlantis. Hermes had to hide the secret Wisdom from these selfish powers. Humanity fell down into materialistic consciousness, losing the spiritual connection to the Divine.

The Gods, like Osiris or Persephone, left the Earth and went into the Underworld. In the Sacred Places the Priests of Egypt, Tibet, Mexico, and Peru prepared the Souls and the Bodies for travel in the other world where these Gods are waiting for them. The mummies of Peru and Egypt were made with the consciousness of living forever in the Spiritual dimension.

The Hindus believe in cycles of periods of times. They place our present time toward the end of the negative Kali-yuga. In the Mayan calendar, the cycle of the time of selfish consciousness is now ending. Astrologically, we are entering the Age of Aquarius and that should bring us new technology, knowledge, wisdom, healing, democracy and freedom.

All this may be true. We are communicating with each other on a much more global scale, constantly networking, discovering new technology, pushing oppressive and despotic powers away, connecting to a new consciousness of caring for the ecological environment and the Earth, becoming less egoistic, searching the genetic engineering for a longer and healthier life, and even immortality. People are opening to Love of neighbors, themselves and the Divine.

With my art, I want to contribute to the process of developing the elevated God-like humanity. I wish to inspire the visitors of this exhibition to be tolerant, respectful, and sharing with each other and other cultures, for the sake of Peace and Unity on Earth.

Ekatherina S.

Ekatherina Savtchenko's Kama Sutra

All of Ekatherina Savtchenko's interests converge in her powerful Kama Sutra series, the quintessence of her complicated dynamics, as mentioned. In Indian mythology, Kama is the god of love, and, more fundamentally, the personification of the creative impulse, by reason of the fact that he is born of primeval chaos, and makes all later creation possible. He is often represented as a handsome young youth attended by heavenly nymphs, which is the way we see him in Savtchenko's series. The Kama Sutra, which is the point of departure for her ecstatic imagery, has been attributed to the sage Vatsyayana. Savtchenko's series, like the book, is an account of the ritual lovemaking necessary to generate the cosmos - out of ecstasy, as it were - as well as a „demonstration“ of the gods all human beings are when they make love.

Force is what Savtchenko's paintings are about, and it is implicitly cosmic force. This is all but explicit in Kama Sutra Red, in which a grand spiral curves inward toward the center, even as it expands beyond the frame of the picture. This contradictory movement evokes a double infinity, a double beyond - the fluid space of the infinitely inward cosmos and the fixed space of the infinitely outward cosmos. Near and far, the intimate and the unreachable, converge in the spiral's relentless movement. It is a kind of endless spiral staircase, along which innumerable figures dance, their bodies intensifying and individualizing its dramatic curve. It is as though Savtchenko has flattened the dome of some great cathedral of consciousness, or as though she has unfolded the surface of an ancient Greek vase, spread out its levels of discourse

so that they can be read in a single glance, as in a medieval picture. Flattened, the various scenes seem to be happening simultaneously, suggesting their inevitability. The whole narrative seems concentrated into a single dramatic moment, making it all the gripping.

The first thing that strikes one about Savtchenko's paintings is the richness of their color, and the second thing one notices is the peculiarly archaic character of her dynamic figures. The paintings are a double performance: of the swirling paint, at once vivacious and morbid, and the figure, which sometimes holds its own against the fiery gestures, sometimes seems to dissolve into it - only to return, undefeated, a female phoenix perpetually rising from the eternal flames.

There is an air of invincible intensity to Savtchenko's expressionist pictures: despite the emotional pressure of the driven paint, the figure retains its human integrity, identity, and dignity. It signifies an ego that is the master of its own instincts, even as it gives them free play - apparently complete license. Savtchenko's rhapsodic figure seems to give into its drives - indeed, passionately indulges them, as though losing herself in their energy. At the same time, her aroused passions, however aroused, remain connected to - even implicitly contained by - the sturdy blackness of her body. Its impenetrable density, symbolizing its indestructibility, condenses and concentrates their wild energy into a singular force.

Savtchenko's figures are archaic in form and spirit, both by reason of their abstract, schematic, emblematic character and execution. They are often composed of spontaneous lines that seem incised in the surface, which

tends to be dense and solid, however agitated the gestures that compose it may be. The linear figures of the paintings, all have a quixotic, lyric look, conveying the visionary excitement with which they seem conceived. Some of Savtchenko's sources seem Egyptian – her boat has a family resemblance to the Egyptian Boat of the Dead, transporting the soul to the afterworld – while others seem Minoan. That violent creature, reaching toward the red light of the ultimate sun, appearing in the infinite distance, is to my mind even more of an emblem of passionate spiritualism than Savtchenko's dancing females. The ground of the painting is black, and divided into earthly red and heavenly white zones. The auras that radiate from the sun spread over the plane of the entire picture, implicitly extending beyond it in all directions.

Mysterious, cabalistic texts – sacred writing indecipherable except to the initiated, the illumined – fill the spaces between the concentric lines of the auras. (Savtchenko's works in general often use a frieze of quasi-hieroglyphic figurative elements.) The animal reaches through them toward the sun, showing a passion for the divine – an awareness of higher life, as it were – that suggests its deep intelligence.

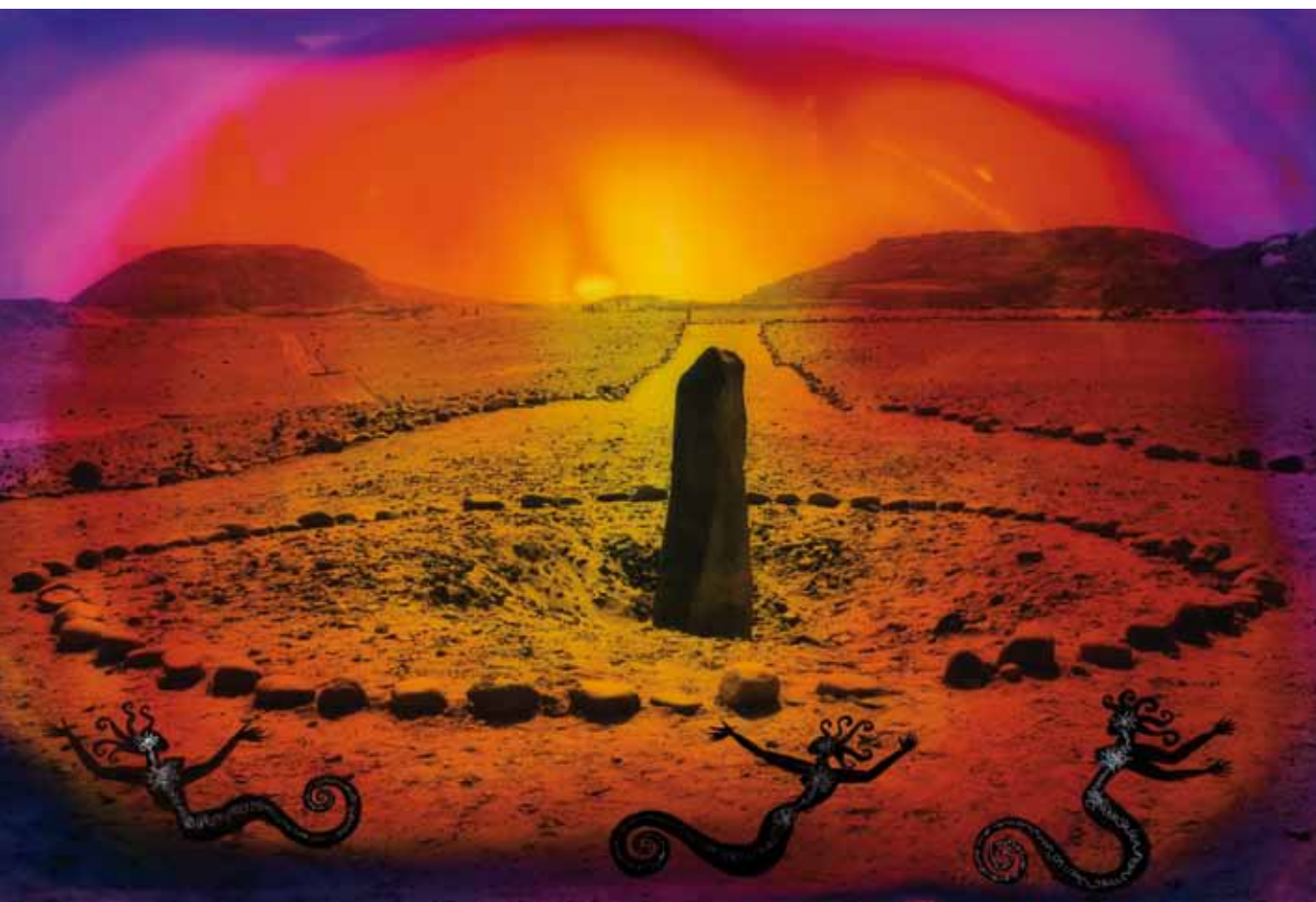
It is the animal in all of us, Savchenko implies that understands the ultimate, not the ordinary human beings we are on the surface. It is the animal in us that is the mystic – that is capable of mystical-ecstatic experience – not the everyday person. Indeed, Savtchenko seeks again and again to move beyond ordinary, "selfish" to extraordinary, "selfless" experience, whether by means of ecstatic solo dancing or ecstatic sexual intercourse, as many of her works indicate. Again and again we see male

and female figures in a kind of ritual mating dance, suggestive or ceremonial, impersonal sexuality. The figures are not particular individuals – they have no faces – but mythological abstractions, as the titles of many of the works indicate. Ecstasy makes them mythological – transcendent. Besides themselves through ecstasy-inducing Experience-painting clearly seems as sexuality for Savtchenko – they become more than themselves, indeed, a kind of mystical material, like paint at its most fluid yet dense.

Donald Kuspit

Fine Art Magazine

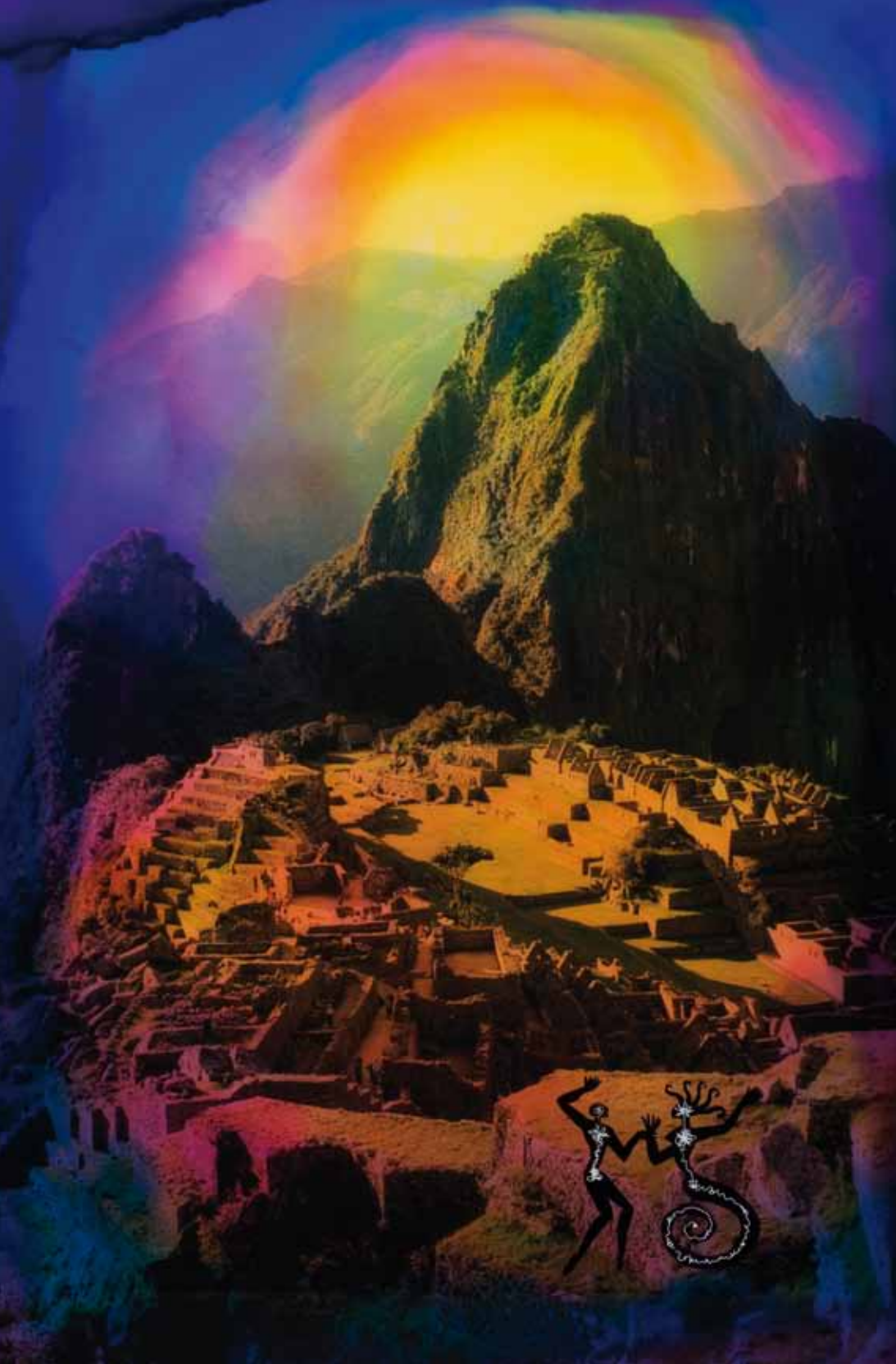
Donald Kuspit is Professor of Art History and Philosophy at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and the A.D. White Professor at Large at Cornell University. He is the author of several books and hundreds of articles on aspects of modern and contemporary art, including *The Cult of the Avante-Garde Artist*, *Signs of Psyche in Modern and Postmodern Art* and *Idiosyncratic Identities*.



Spirits of America 4
100 x 150 cm
painted photograph on diasec
2013



Spirits of America 2
100 x 150 cm
painted photograph on diasec
2013



Spirits of America 30

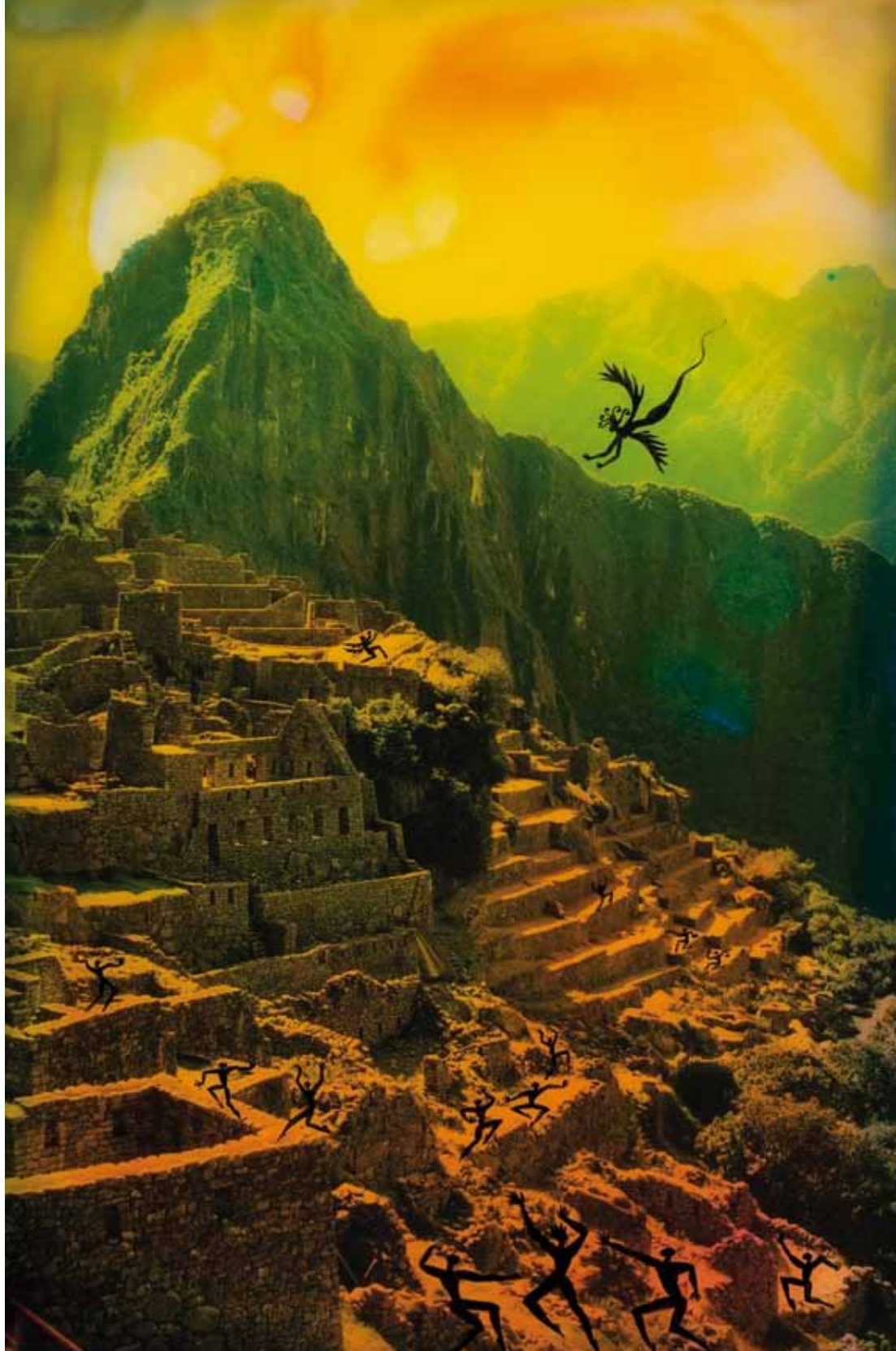
90 x 60 cm

painted photograph

on diasec

2013

Spirits of America 12
150 x 100 cm
painted photograph
on diasec
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Spirits of America 29
60 x 90 cm
painted photograph on diasec
2013



Spirits of America 1

100 x 150 cm

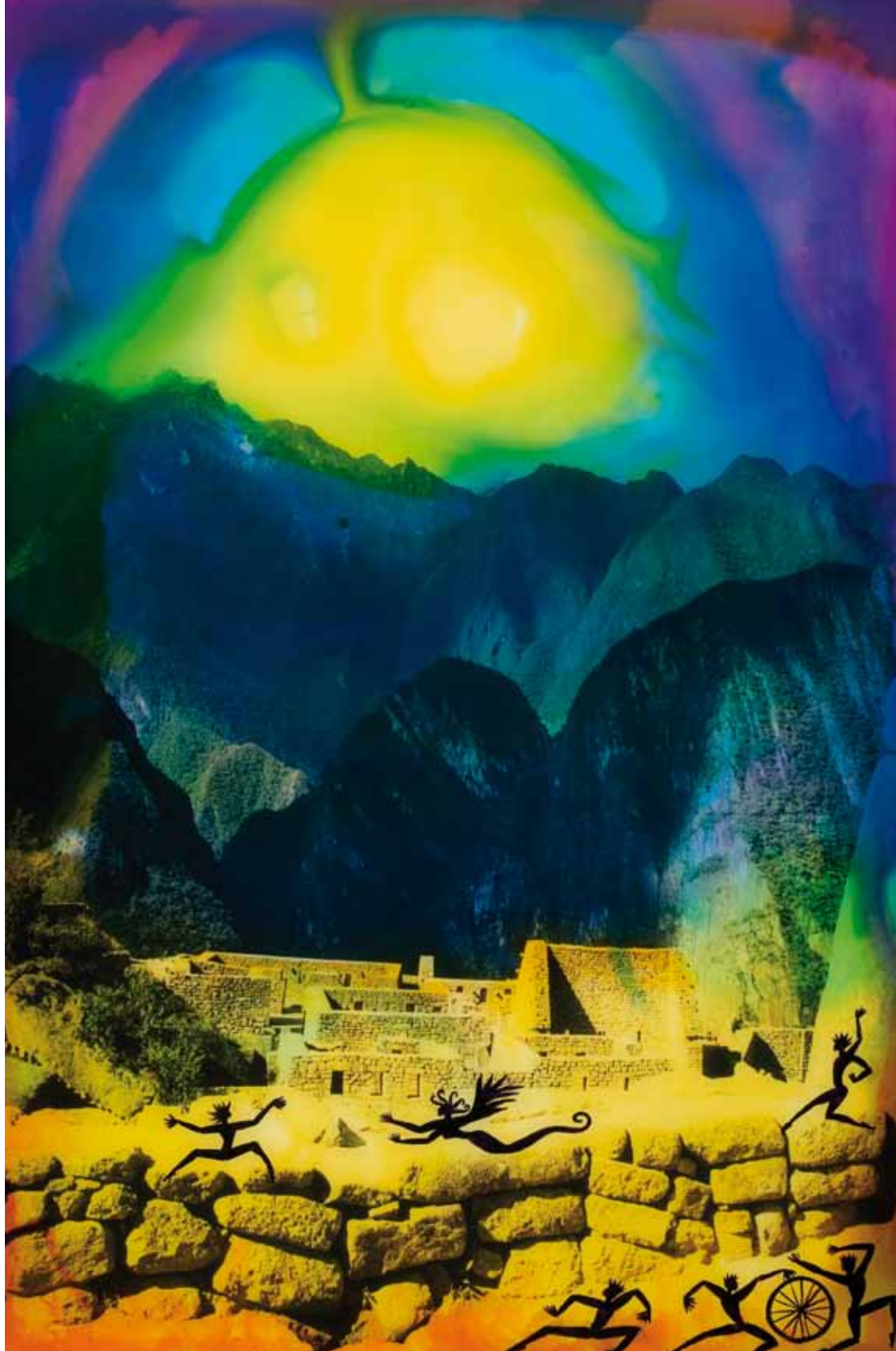
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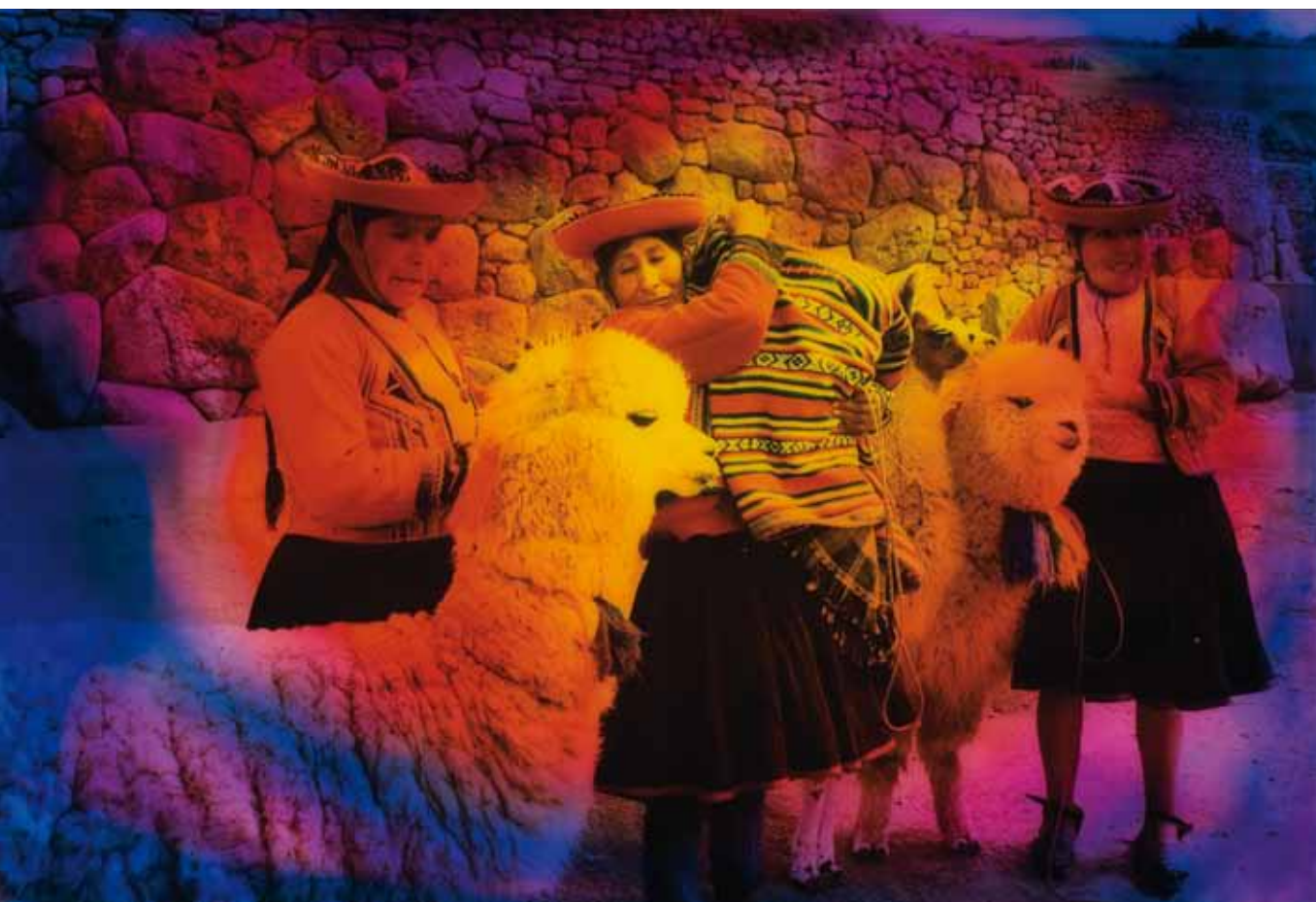
2013



Spirits of America 13
90 x 60 cm
painted photograph
on diasec
2013

Spirits of America 9
150 x 100 cm
painted photograph
on diasec
2013





Spirits of America 14
60 x 90 cm
painted photograph on diasec
2013



Spirits of America 20

60 x 90 cm

painted photograph on diasec

2013



Spirits of America 27
60 x 90 cm
painted photograph on diasec
2013



Spirits of America 16

60 x 90 cm

painted photograph on diasec

2013



Spirits of America 5
100 x 150 cm
painted photograph on diasec
2013



Spirits of America 10

100 x 150 cm

painted photograph on diasec

2013



Spirits of America 6
100 x 150 cm
painted photograph on diasec
2013



Spirits of America 3
100 x 150 cm
painted photograph on diasec
2013



Spirits of America 23
60 x 90 cm
painted photograph on diasec
2013



Spirits of America 26

60 x 90 cm

painted photograph on diasec

2013



Spirits of America 11
100 x 150 cm
painted photograph on diasec
2013

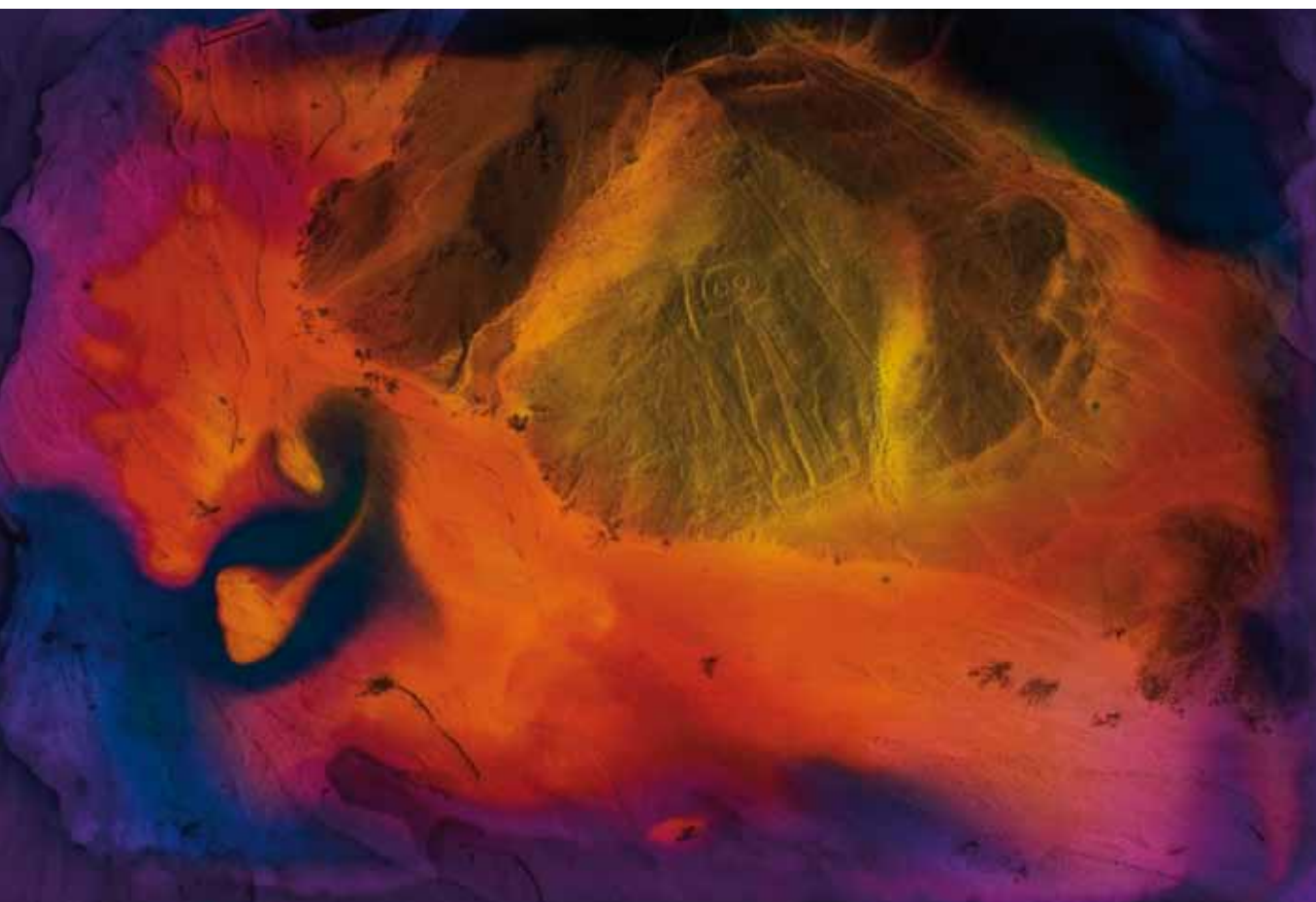


Spirits of America 7

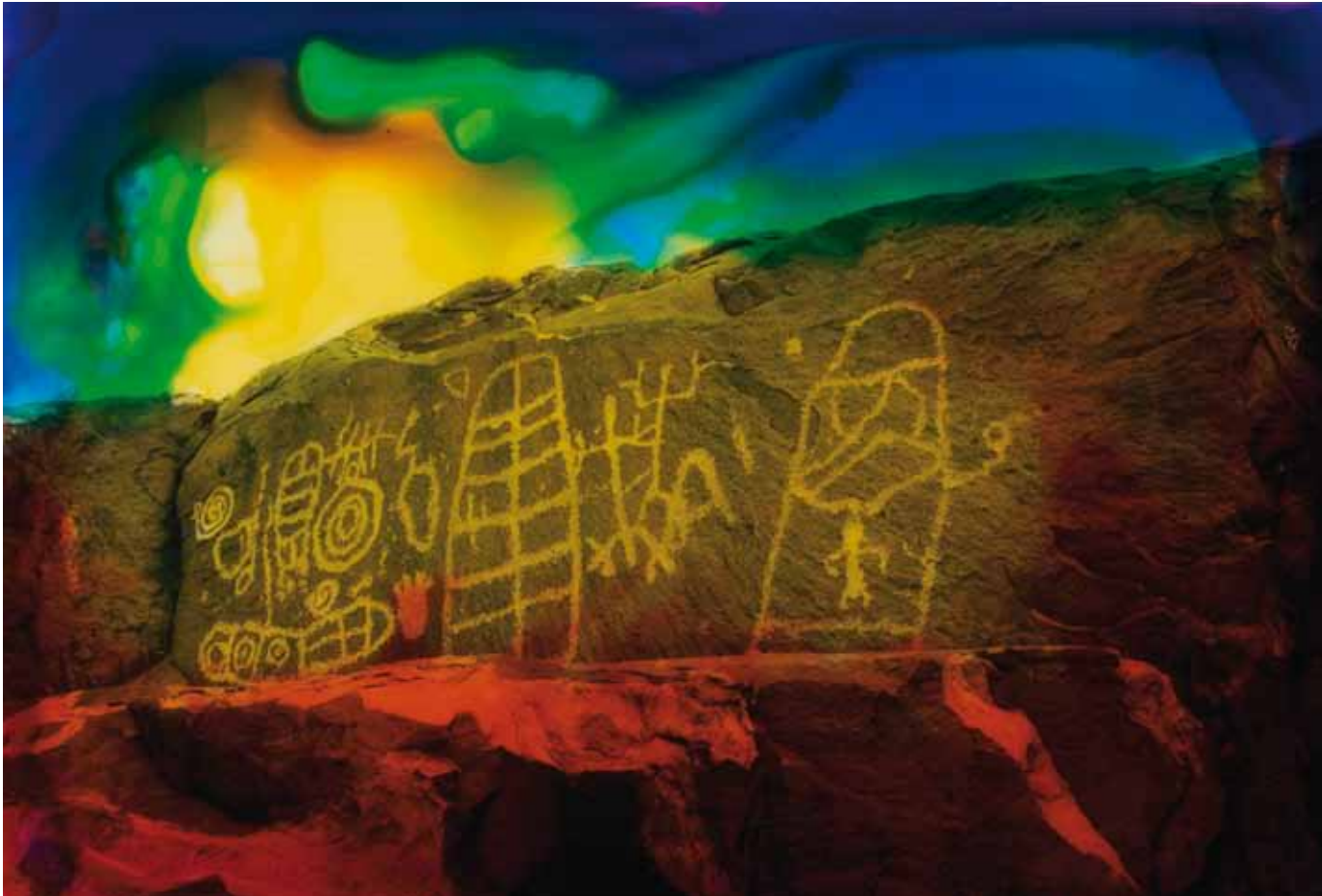
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painted photograph on diasec

2013



Spirits of America 15
60 x 90 cm
painted photograph on diasec
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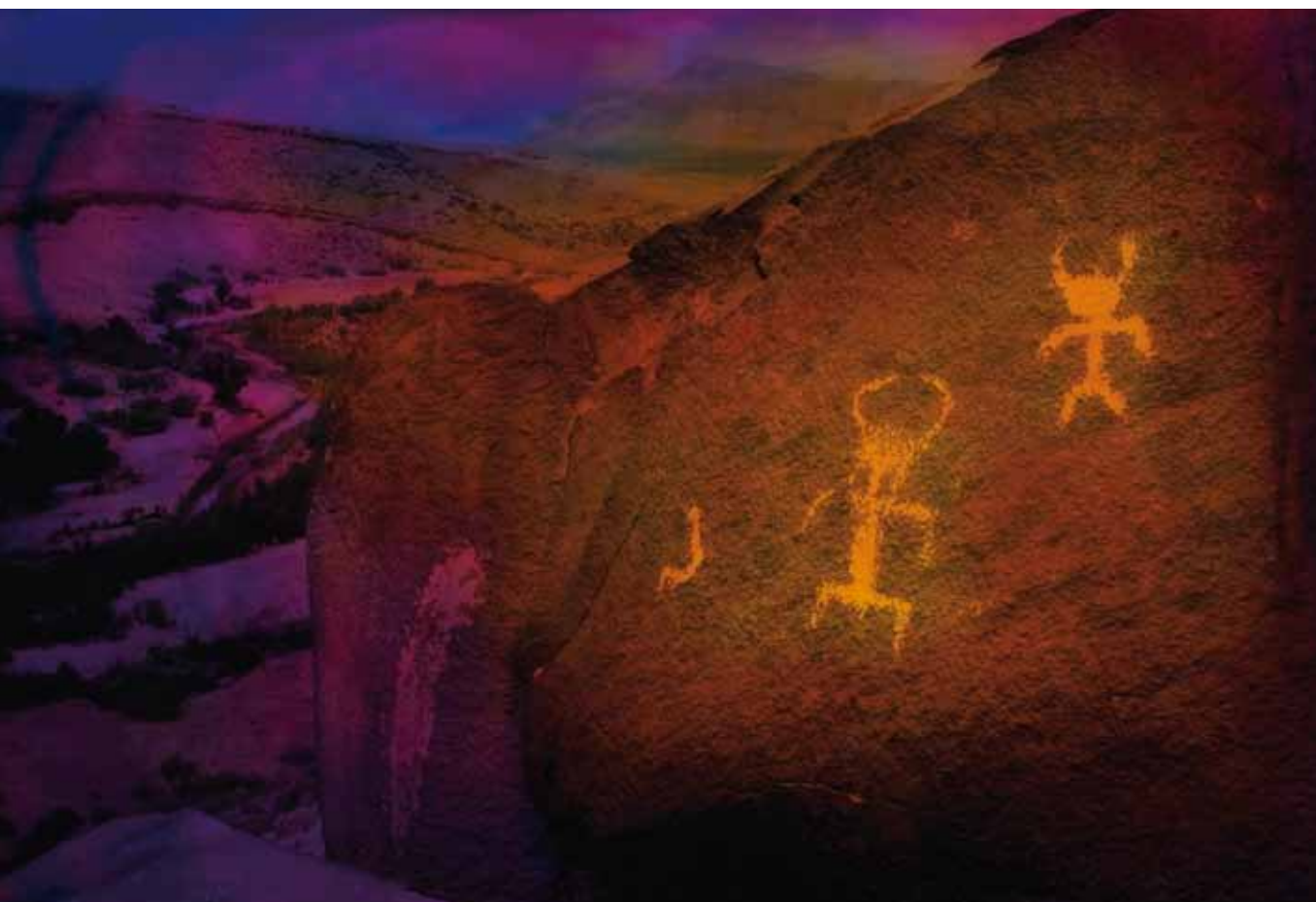


Spirits of America 22

60 x 90 cm

painted photograph on diasec

2013



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painted photograph on diasec
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60 x 90 cm

painted photograph on diasec

2013



Spirits of America 28

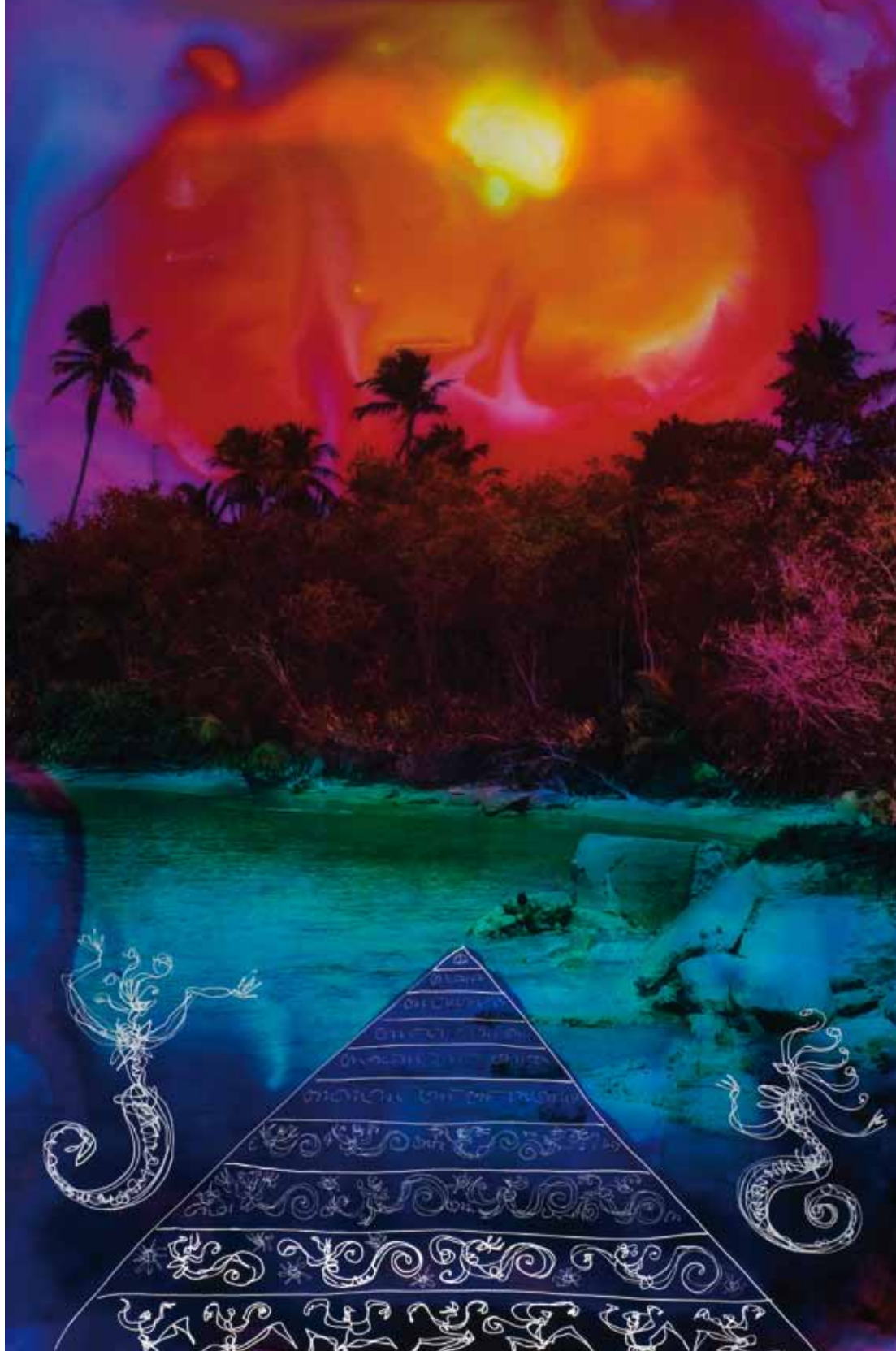
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painted photograph

on diasec

2013

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on diasec
2013





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Spirits of America 17

60 x 90 cm

painted photograph on diasec

2013



Spirits of America 24

90 x 60 cm

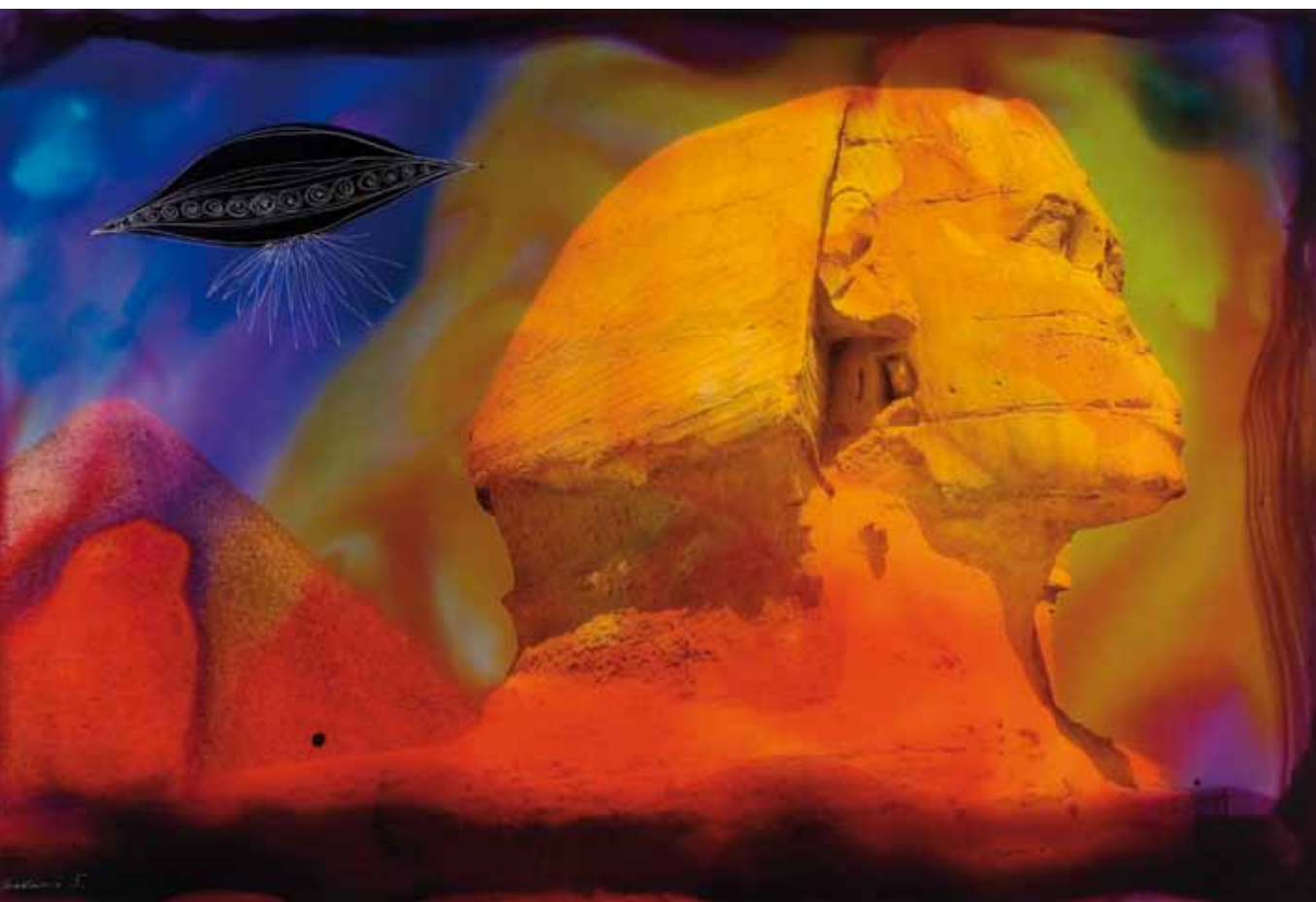
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painted photograph on diasec
2012

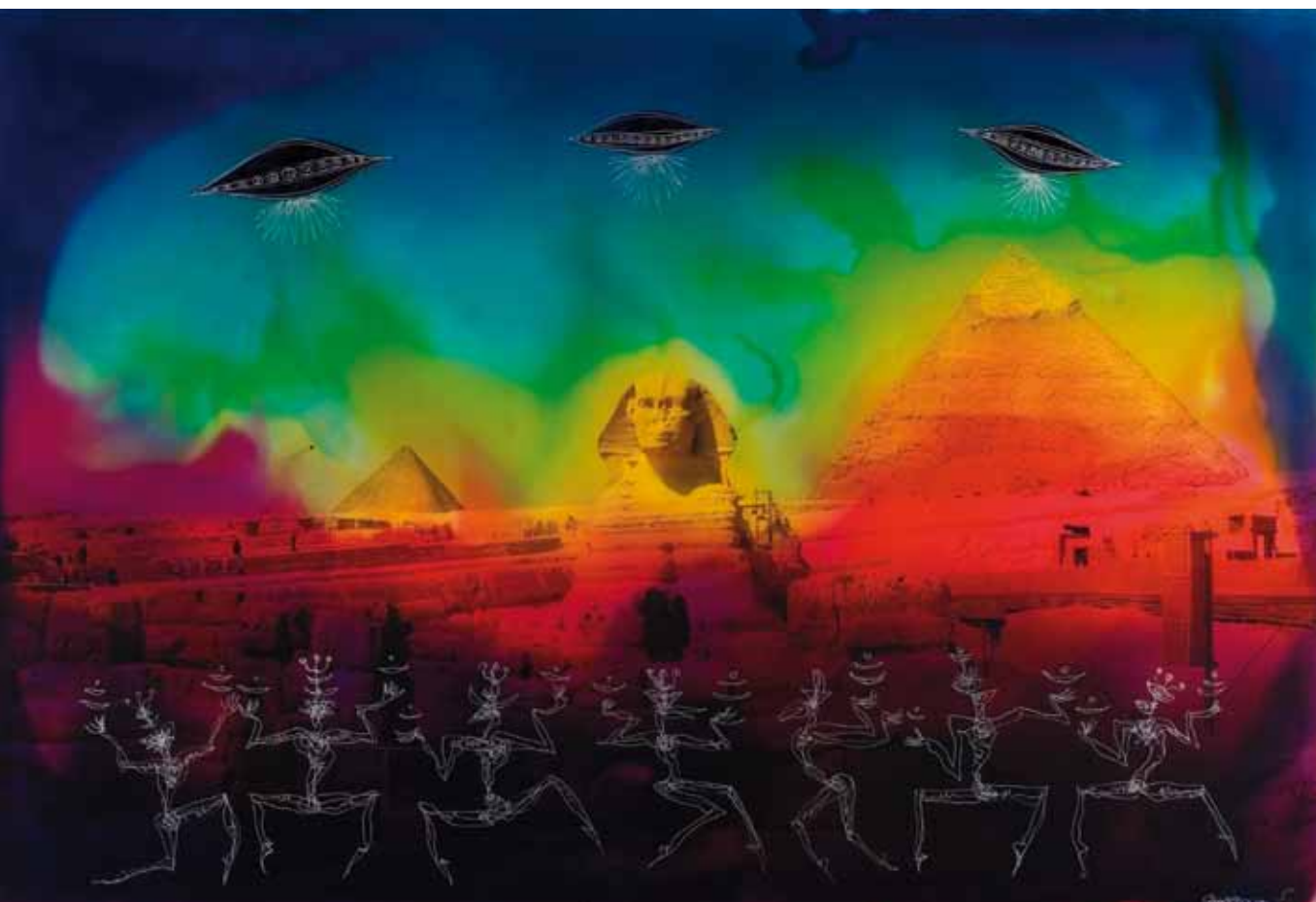


Past and Future 3

100 x 150 cm

painted photograph on diasec

2012



Past and Future 2
100 x 150 cm
painted photograph on diasec
2012

Past and Future 3
150 x 100 cm
painted photograph
on diasec
2012

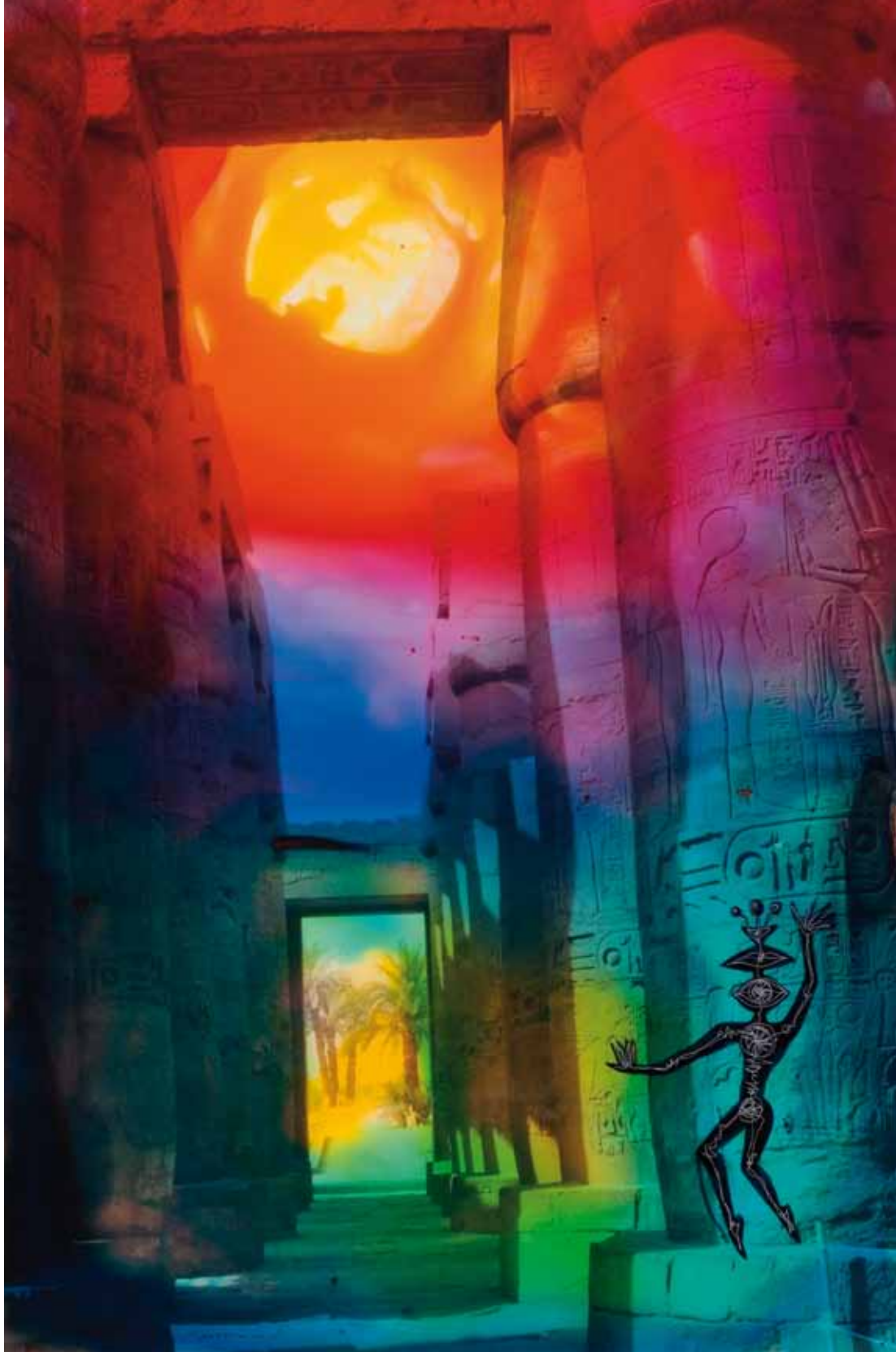


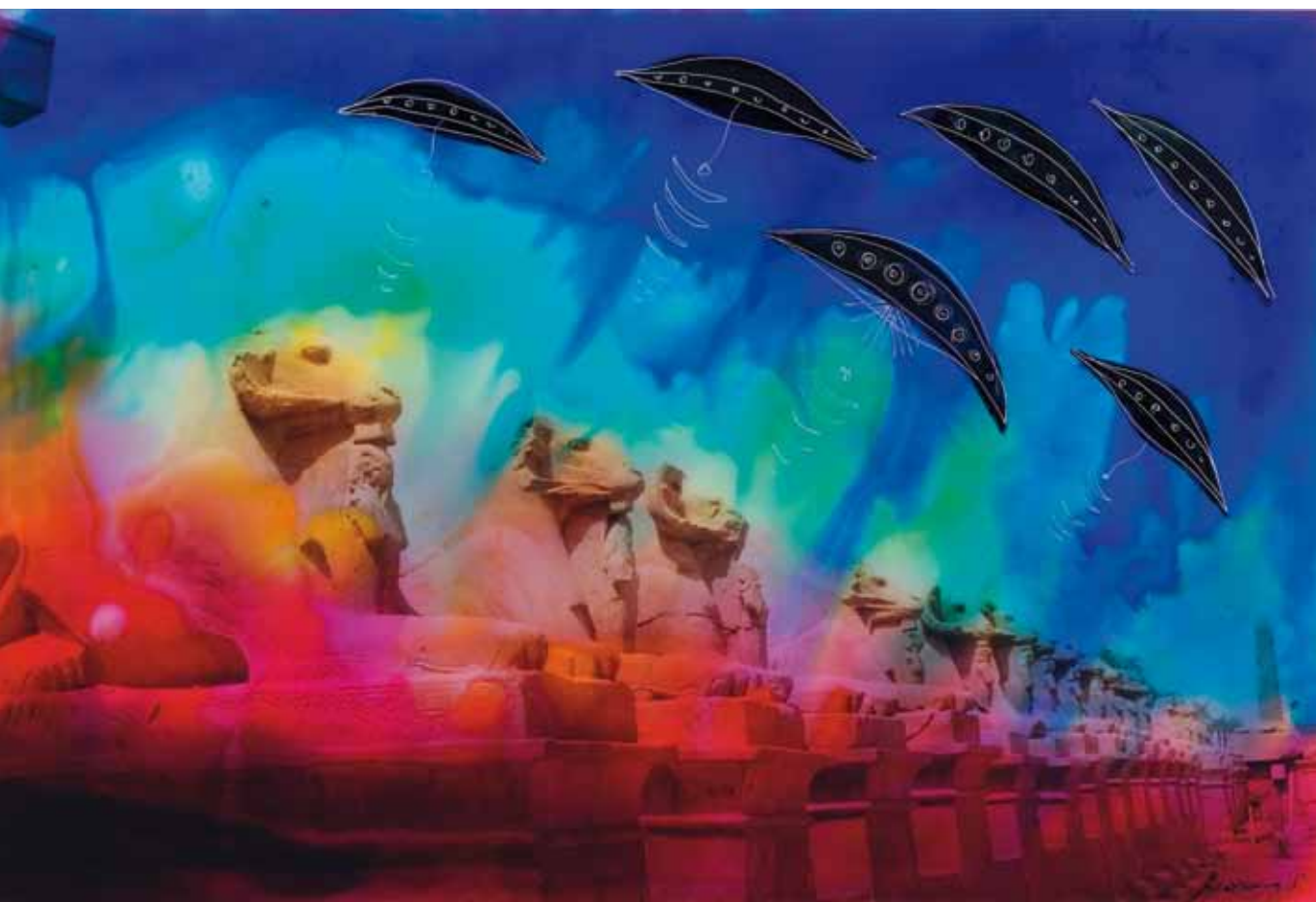


Past and Future 5

150 x 100 cm
painted photograph
on diasec
2012

Past and Future 4
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painted photograph
on diasec
2012





Past and Future 7
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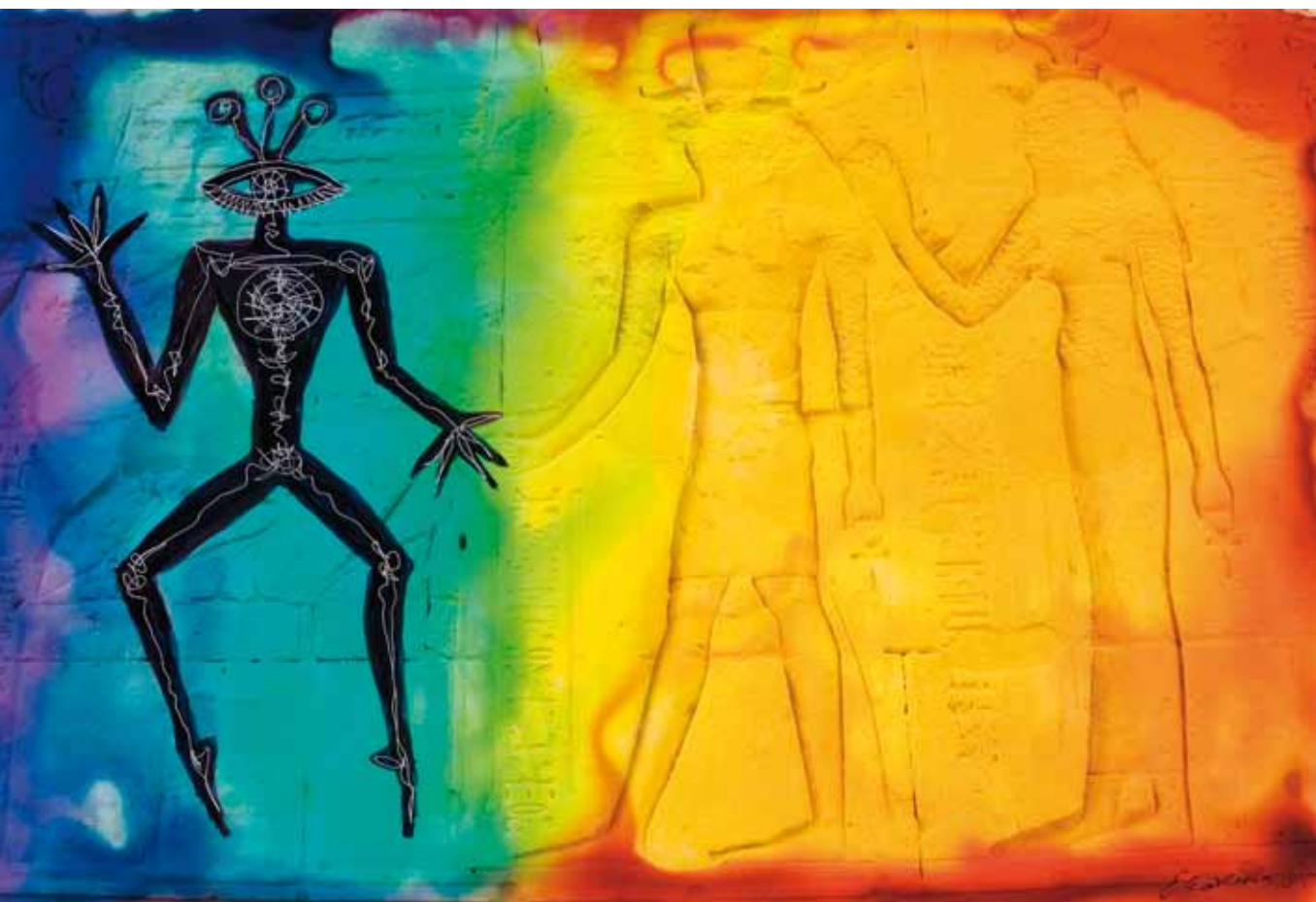


Past and Future 2

60 x 90 cm

Painted photograph on diasec

2012



Past and Future 9
60 x 90 cm
painted photograph on diasec
2012



Past and Future 10

60 x 90 cm

Painted photograph on diasec

2012



Past and Future 11
60 x 90 cm
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2012



Past and Future 12

60 x 90 cm

Painted photograph on diasec

2012



Chechen Iza blue
100 x 150 cm
painted photograph on diasec
2013



Life and Death 1

60 x 90 cm

painted photograph on diasec

2010



Life and Death 11
60 x 90 cm
painted photograph on diasec
2010



Life and Death 12

60 x 90 cm

painted photograph on diasec

2010



Life and Death 6
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painted photograph on diasec
2010



Life and Death 9

60 x 90 cm

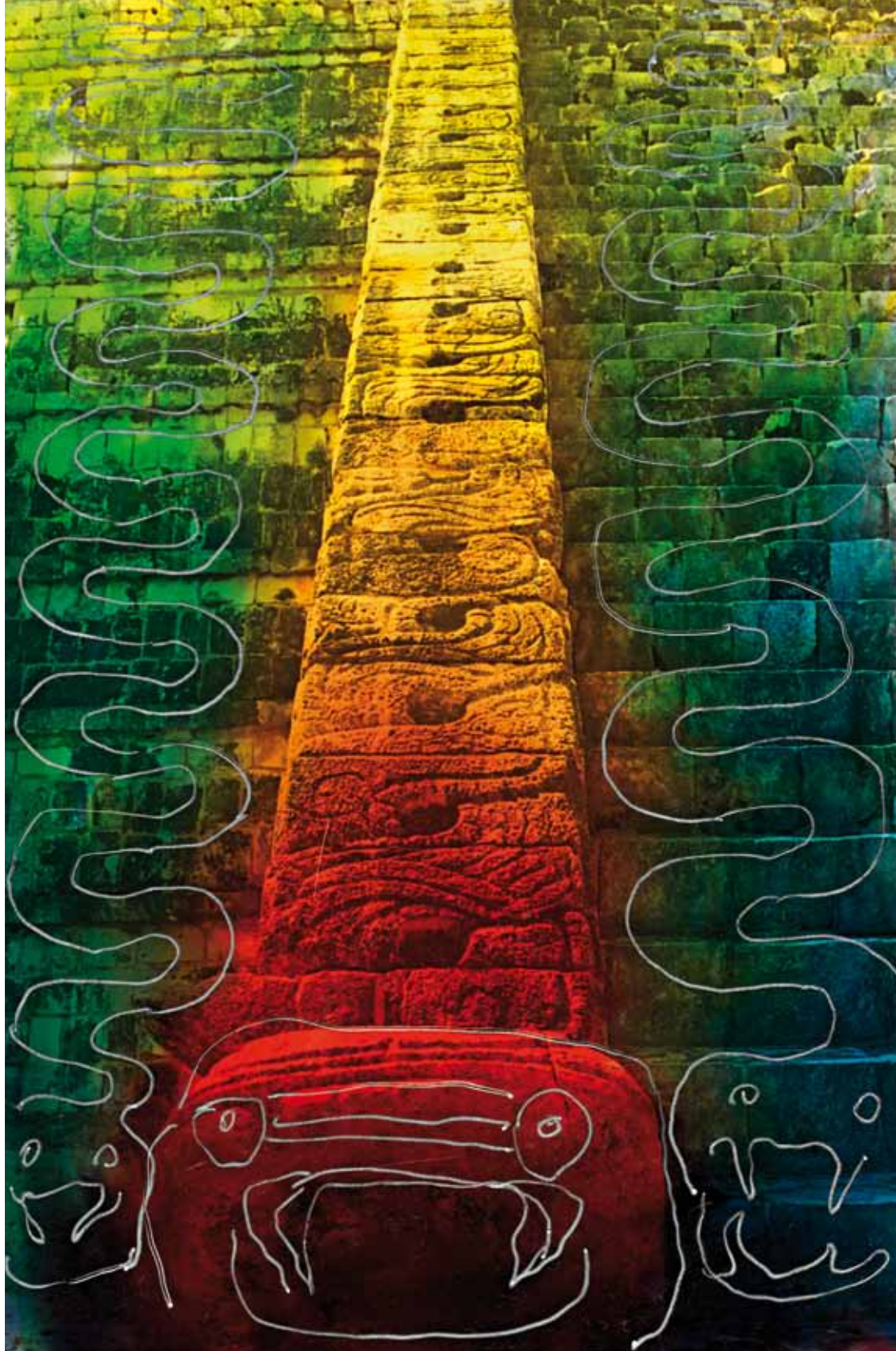
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Life and Death 7
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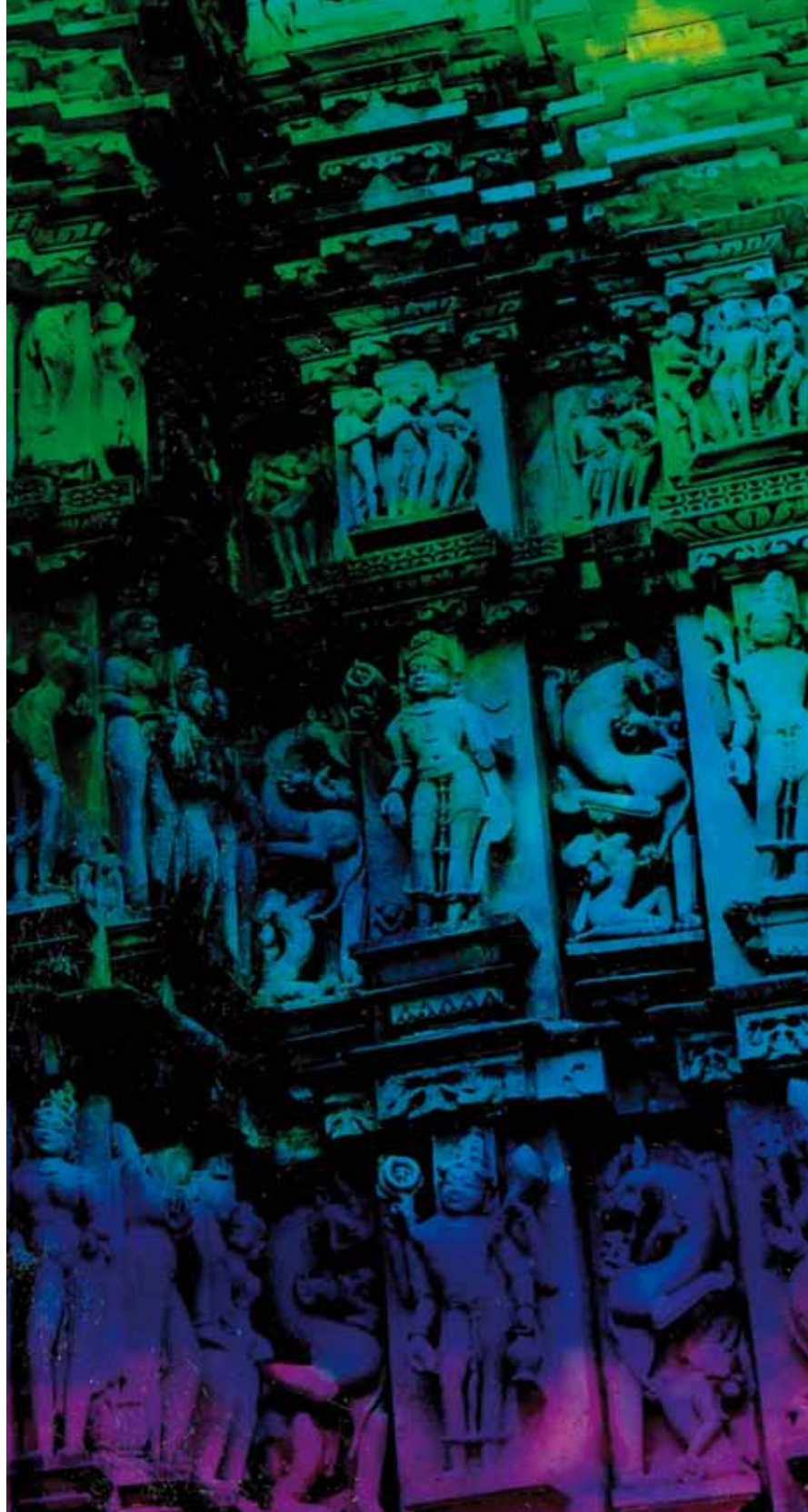
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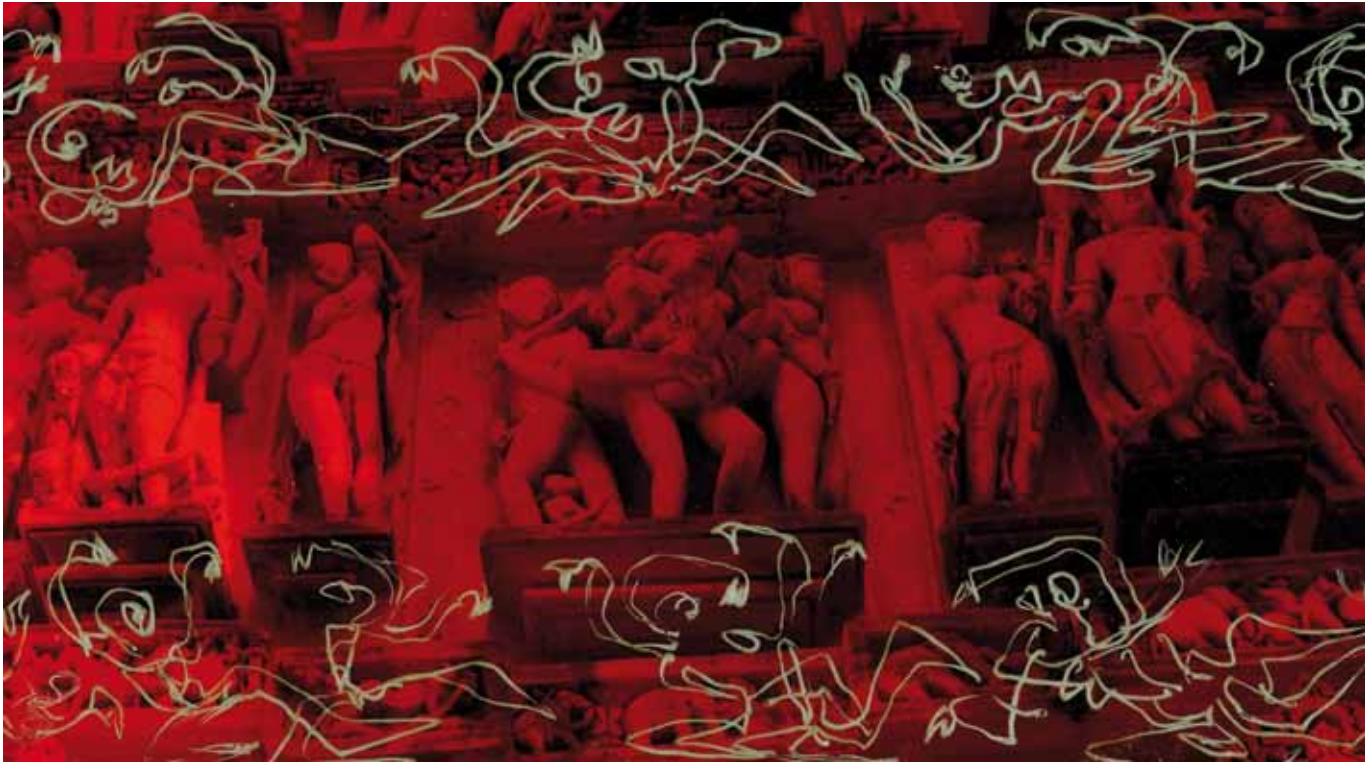
India 7
100 x 50 cm
painted photograph
on diasec
2008

India 5
100 x 50 cm
painted photograph
on diasec
2008





India 1
50 x 100 cm
painted photograph on diasec
2010



India 9

50 x 100 cm

painted photograph on diasec

2010



Ekatherina S. (Savtchenko)

Born in St. Petersburg Russia

Study of mathematic, physic and informatic in St. Petersburg (graduated)

Study of fine art, painting, sculpture, photography and video in the Academy of Fine Art in St. Petersburg and Dusseldorf, Germany (Prof. Michael Buthe, master degree under Prof. A.R. Penck)

Based in New York and Dusseldorf (Germany)

Solo exhibitions (selection)

- 2014 “*Spirits of America*”, Ashok Jain Gallery, New York (USA)
“*Spirits of America*”, 30Works Gallery, Cologne (Germany)
- 2013 “*Garden of Love*”, Gallery Pigvin, Oslo (Norway)
“*Himmelzeichen*”, Gallerie Kunstdetektiv, Düsseldorf (Germany)
- 2012 “*Tree of Life*”, Museum of Russian Art, Jersey City, New Jersey (USA)
“*Tree of Life*”, 30Works Gallery, Cologne (Germany)
“*Unity: Life and Death*”, Gallery Pingvin, Oslo (Norway)
- 2011 “*Unity: Life and Death*”, Ana Tzarev gallery, New York (USA)
- 2010 “*Unity: Jerusalem*”, Gallery Pingvin, Oslo (Norway)
“*Unity: Jerusalem*”, GalerieZ, Stuttgart (Germany)
- 2009 “*Unity: Jerusalem*”, United Nations Building, New York (USA)
“*Unity: Jerusalem*”, Ashok Jain Marunouchi Gallery, New York (USA)
- 2008 “*India: Sensuality and spirituality*”, Museum Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi (India)
“*India*”, Ashok Jain Marunouchi Gallery, New York (USA)
“*Unity*”, State exhibition hall A3, Moscow (Russia)
- 2007 “*Unity*”, Museum Viehmarktthermen, Trier (Germany)
“*Unity: identity*”, Contemporary Art Museum B.S.1, Beijing (China)
- 2006 “*Unity*”, Artforum E&Y GAP 15, Duesseldorf (Germany)
“*Passport*“, with Reng Rong and Huang Yan in Imperial City Art Museum, Beijing (China)
“*Unity: divine geometry*”, Niavaran Museum, Tehran (Iran)
- 2005 “*Unity*”, United Nations building, New York (USA)
“*Phoenix*“, for Michael Gorbatschow – Foundation, Bonn (Germany)
“*Unity*”, Museum PAN, Kunstforum Niederhein (Germany)
- 2004 “*Unity*”, State Russian Museum, St.Petersburg (Russia)
“*Unity*”, State Museum of Montenegro (Serbia-Montenegro)
- 2003 GTZ building with Olafur Eliason, Berlin (Germany)
- 2001 “*Tra sogno a realta*”, Forum Artis Museum (Italy)
- 1999 “*Fire*”, State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg (Russia)
- 1998 “*Fire*”, Museum of Contemporary Art, Washington D.C. (USA)
- 1997 Museum Tonhalle, Duesseldorf (Germany)
- 1994 Pusckin Museum, St.Petersburg (Russia)
- 1992 Museum of the Russian History, St. Petersburg (Russia)

Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2014 Asia Contemporary Art Show, Hong Kong (Hong Kong)
- 2013 Asia Contemporary Art Show, Hong Kong (Hong Kong)
Sacred in Russian Art, The Museum of Russian Art, Minniapolois (USA)
Springtime, 30Works Gallery, Cologne (Germany)
- 2012 Art Basel Miami Wynwood, Gallery Paragon, Miami (USA)
Russian year in Italy – Cultural exchange, Villa Pagana, Rome (Italy)
- 2011 Russian Year in Italy – Cultural exchange, Pallazo Forma, Naples (Italy)
Ostrale, Dresden (Germany)
- 2010 State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg (Russia)
Vinzavod, Contemporary Art Center, Moscow (Russia)
Carrousel du Louvre, Paris (France)
- 2009 “*Photo- Biennale*”, State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg (Russia)
- 2008 “*Power of Water*”, State Russian Museum from the permanent collection, St. Petersburg, (Russia)
- 2007 “*Agua*”, from the permanent collection of the State Russian Museum, Evian hall (France)
- 2005 Museo Laboratorio Castello Colonna Genazzo, Rome (Italy)
Plakas Art Center, Athenes (Greece)
- 2004 Pallazio dell’Arsenalle, Verona (Italy)
Museum PAN, Kunstforum Niederrhein (Germany)
- 2003 Museum Schloss Rheydt (Germany)
- 2002 International Biennale Liverpool (UK)
- 2000 Museum of Art, Orlando (Florida, USA)
- 1999 Museum in Motion, d’Ars, Milano (Italy)
- 1998 International Sculpture Triennale, Osaka (Japan)
- 1997 Museum of Modern Art, Odessa (Ukraina)
Museum Karavanserei, Tiflis (Georgia)
- 1996 Landesmuseum, Duesseldorf (Germany)
- 1990 Museum of Modern Art, Riga (Lettland)
Museum of Modern Art, Tallin (Estland)

Cover**Spirits of Amerika 2**

100 x 50 cm

painted photograph on diasec

2013

Text

Valerie Gladstone

Ekatherina S.

Donald Kuspit

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Ekatherina S.

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