

VISUAL PERCEPTION

Organic Abstraction



Belinda Shinshillas

VISUAL PERCEPTION SERIES

Artwork © Belinda Shinshillas 2015

BELINDA (FLORES) SHINSHILLAS

Renowned figurative painter Belinda (Flores) Shinshillas' latest abstract body of work presents atmospheric portals to other-worldly landscapes; they evoke the uncanniness of the quaint New Orleans bucolic and pastoral scenery where the heavy Bayou humidity weighs on languid oak trees and drippy Spanish moss, and deafens the enigmatic call of black crows.

Shinshillas develops a painterly method based on a multiplicity of washy, fluid layers that keep mounting and dripping, one on top the other, one becoming the other as they push the composition back and forth and by so, creating an exclusively pictorial landscape on its own.

In this manner, Shinshillas' compositions almost create themselves by growing from hints prompted by the immediately previous gesture. Those "hints" are deployed throughout the canvas thus rendering the compositions somewhat democratic. The whole surface commands the same pictorial hierarchy. However, since each layer responds and to the previous one and all the layers are connected through unexpected connection, those connections are confronted, questioned, or contradicted at each layer. The Creative process brings to mind the principles used for an *exquisite corpse* that precisely allows for ambiguity and paradoxes.

Regarding abstraction methods and the contention of an established system with a work itself (like that of Shinshillas' series of liquid layers and a procession based on "hints"), curator Yasmil Raymond explains that "for Foucault and other, the question of ethics rests in maintaining a level of discomfort with one's own belief system-never to consent to being completely comfortable with one's own presuppositions-"¹. With her established system of interweaving layers that encourage unlikely and unpredictable results, Shinshillas practices her own ethics: she finds herself never completely comfortable with her presuppositions. By exercising this criticality, she gives place to works that are somewhat contradictory, works that leave territories unexplored and open to possibilities of interpretation. She has extended the notion of criticality to her own career as she turns now to abstraction, a new system for her, after having a command on figuration and representation.

Shinshillas' paintings do intimate some interpretation consensus. The viewer is presented with abstracted elements of nature. Colors identifiable with water, fire, sky, clouds, sun and rain are submitted to her abstraction process and thus rendered as thin curving series of blue and green washes, brown and purple circular spots, bluish gradations, or blurred red drips. The recurrent visual vocabulary provides us, the viewer, with some tools to identify a landscape and yet, as we know, the paintings reveal an ambience rather than a direct reference. Ultimately, the back and forth of the gaze through the multiple layers and drips is enhanced by the back and forth between vague representation and abstraction that is simultaneously present in Shinshillas' work. These paintings reveal some information while simultaneously resisting a thorough interpretation of them. They straddle both worlds (abstraction/representation) and find themselves inhabiting the uncanny realm of the in-between and evoking the uncanny mood of the New Orleans hazy character.

Ultimately, Shinshillas' vaporous portals need to be experienced and are intentionally open ended for the viewer to find a myriad of colors, gestures and moods to relate with.

Monica Ramírez-Montagut, Ph.D.

Curator

Museum Director of the Newcomb Art Museum of Tulane in New Orleans

¹Yasmil Raymond, "Contending with Comfort: The Possibility of an Abstract Resistance," *Abstract Resistance* (catalogue for the exhibition at The Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, February-May, 2010), 15.



BLOOM

Acrylic on canvas

36 x 36 inches



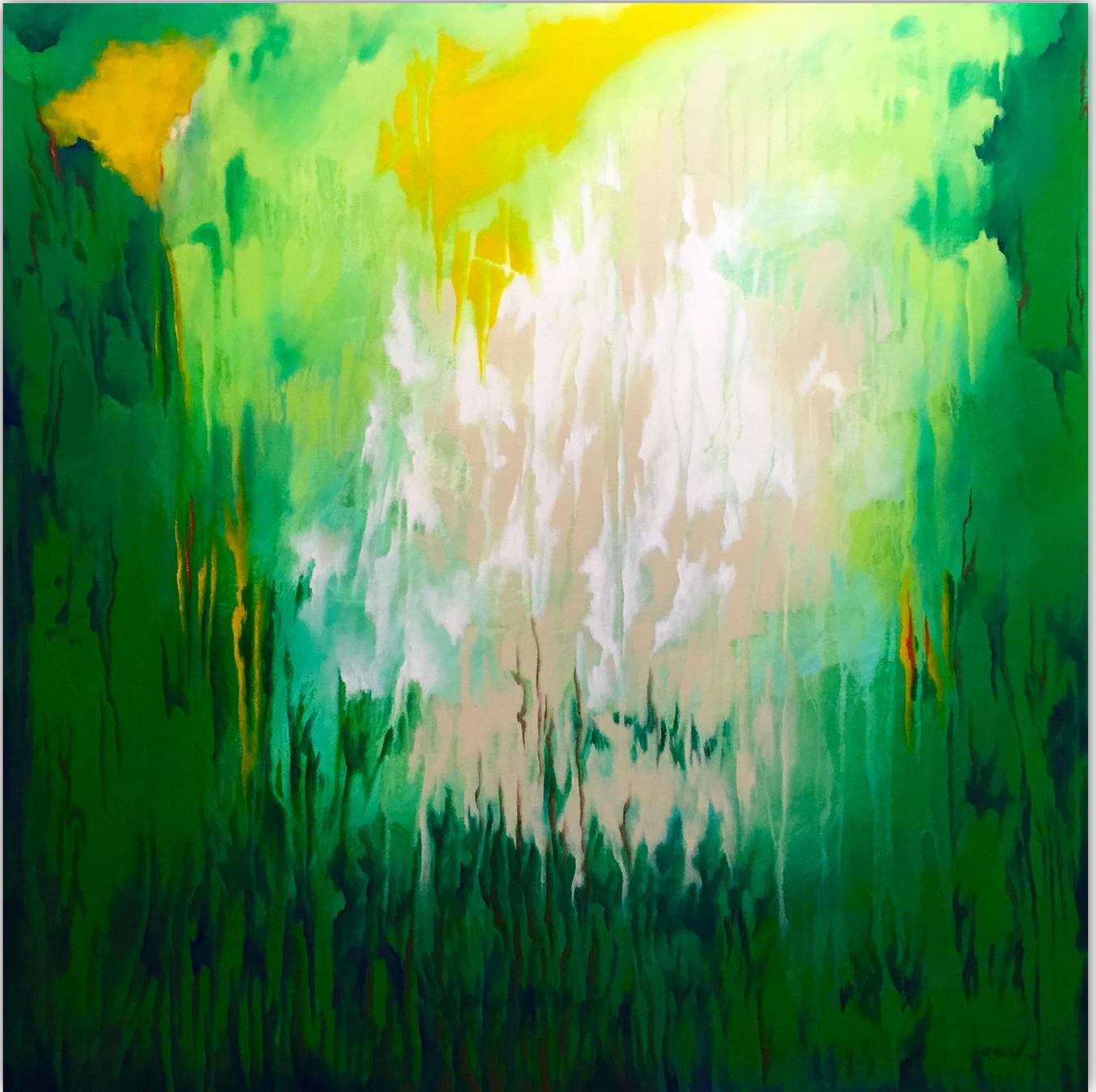
AMARYLLIS
Acrylic on canvas
36 x 48 inches
Diptych



METAMORPHOSIS

Acrylic on canvas

36 x 36 inches



SUCCESSION

Acrylic on canvas

36 x 36 inches



BASIN

Acrylic on canvas

36 x 36 inches



BAYOU TECHE

Acrylic on canvas

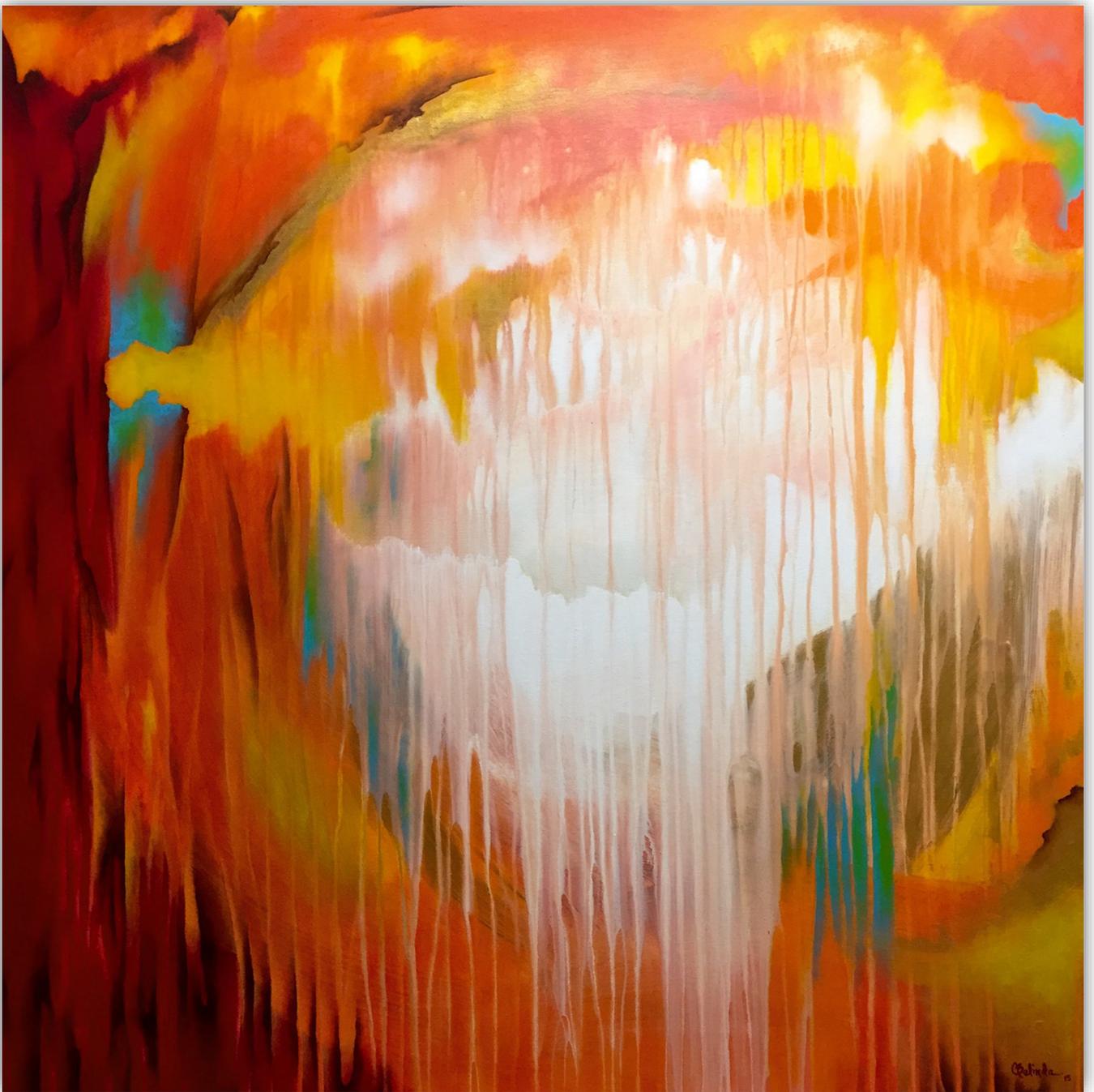
48 x 36 inches



SLEEPLESS LOVE

Acrylic on canvas

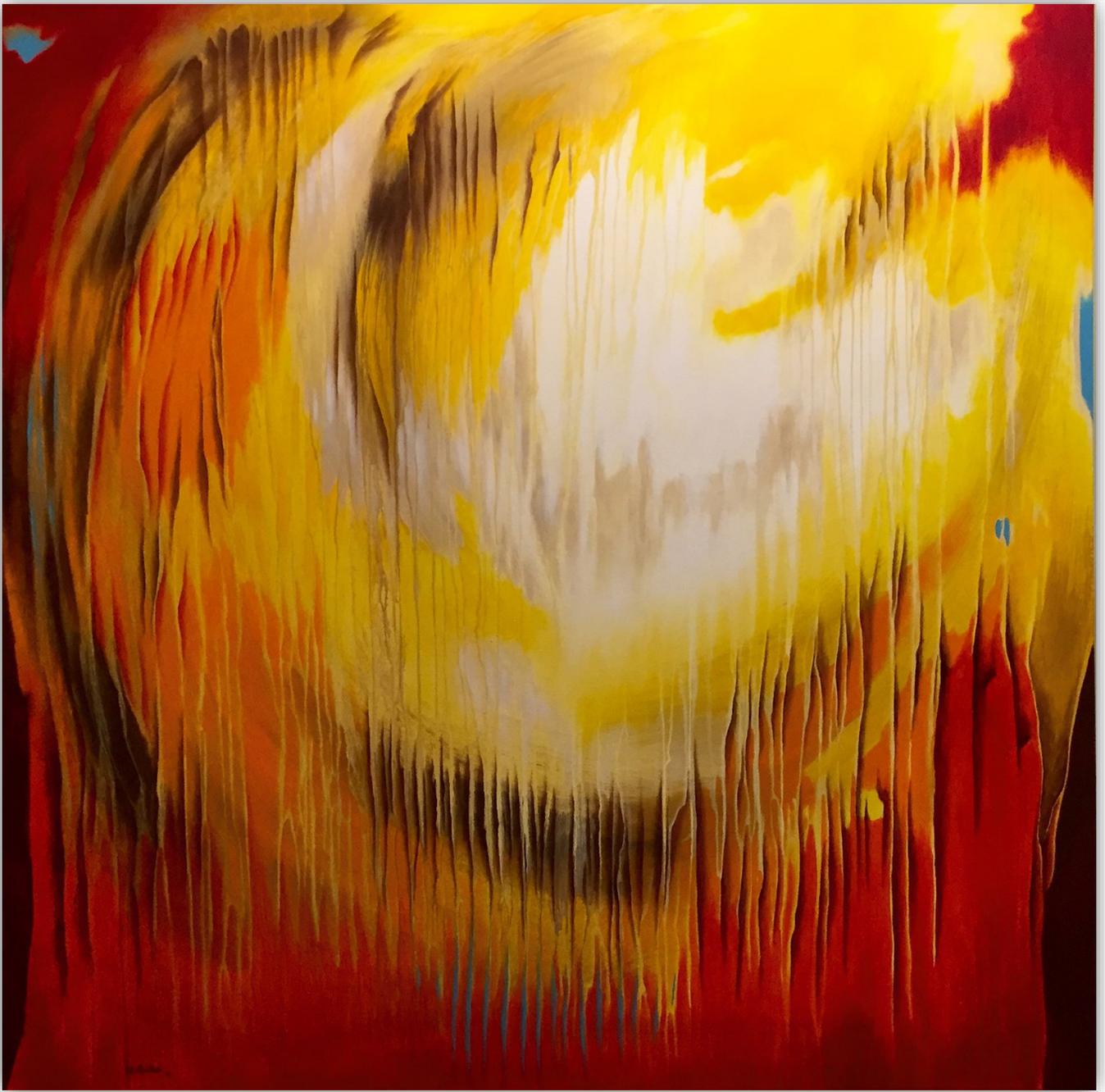
36 x 36 inches



VENA CAVA

Acrylic on canvas

36 x 36 inches



ICARUS

Acrylic on canvas

48 x 48 inches



EQUILIBRIUM

Acrylic on canvas

48 x 60 inches

Diptych



TIMELESSNESS

Acrylic on canvas

40 x 60 inches

Diptych



OLD GHOSTS

Acrylic on canvas

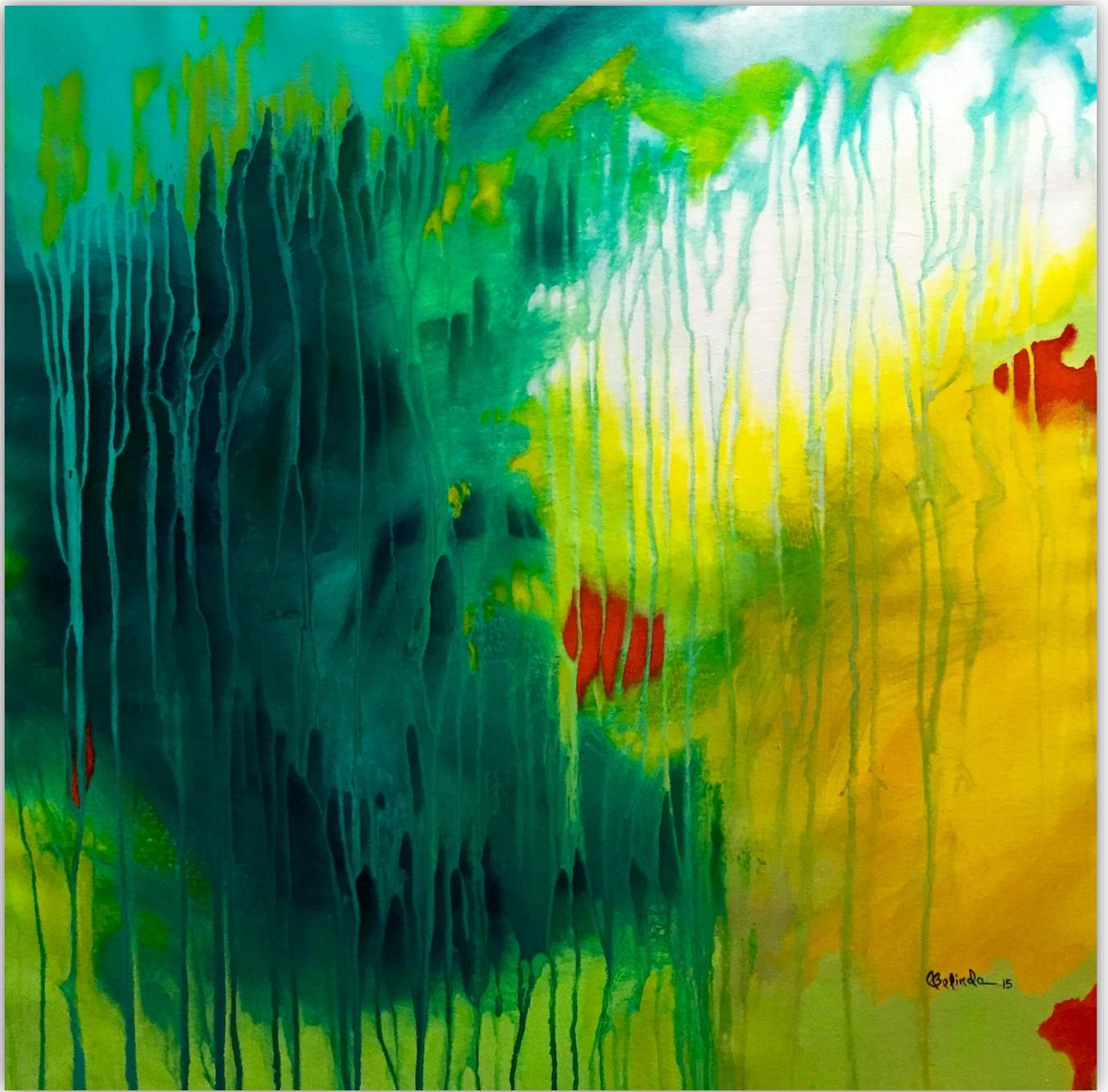
36 x 36 inches



NOESIS

Acrylic and gold leaf on canvas

36 x 36 inches



ATCHAFALAYA BASIN

Acrylic on canvas

28 x 28 inches



HUNTERS MOON

Acrylic and gold leaf on canvas

28 x 28 inches



ASTEREAE

Acrylic on canvas

28 x 28 inches



MONARCH

Acrylic and gold leaf on canvas

28 x 28 inches



NIMBUS

Acrylic and gold leaf on canvas

28 x 28 inches



OCTOBER RAIN

Acrylic and gold leaf on canvas

28 x 28 inches



POPOCATEPETL

Acrylic on canvas

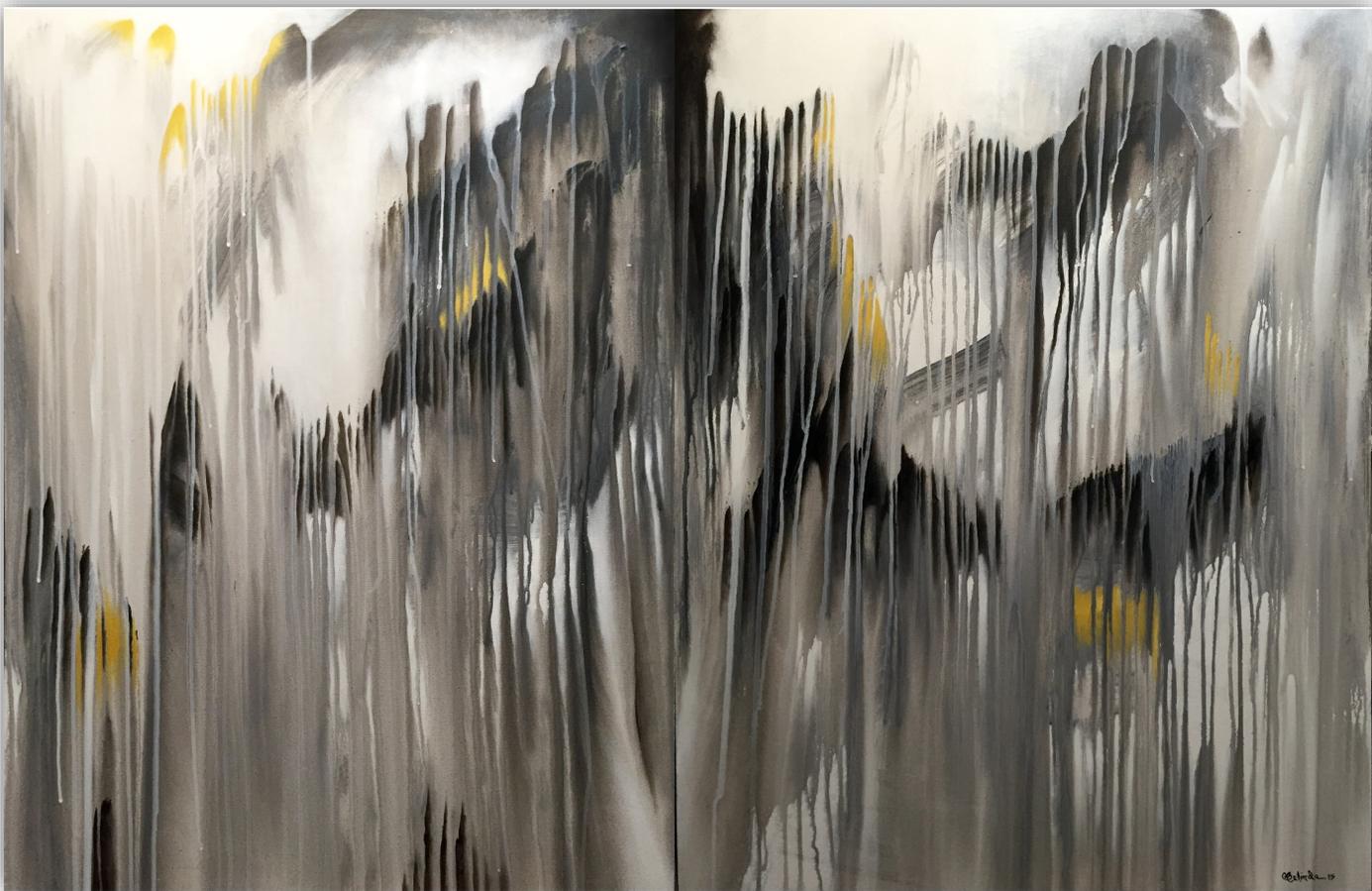
28 x 28 inches



SERENITY PRAYER

Acrylic on canvas

28 x 28 inches



COMMON GROUND

Acrylic on canvas

40 x 60 inches

Diptych

Being born in a city so eclectic as Mexico City and later moving to New Orleans has greatly influenced and expressed in my Art.

My work has been of a contemporary nature and explored surrealistic ideas using the figure as an important element in the visual narrative. Presently, I find myself in a period of rediscovery as an artist developing a body of work completely abstract.

Using abstraction as a way to move through a space, all elements become a metaphoric voice, capturing the human nature that is reflected while balancing between intimacy and distance.

My paintings are an extension of my identity and culture, using color as an idea, an attitude and an interpretation that questions the permanence of the world surrounding me.

“Visual Perception” is a series of work conceived within the idea of provoking an emotional and spiritual reaction through the eyes of the viewer. It seeks a spiritual transformation with the use of vibrant colors to create a visual experience.

Belinda Shinshillas.



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