

ISABELLE DE KLEINE

23 JUL - 9 AUG 2025

as it was
as it was



CURATORIAL+CO.

ISABELLE DE KLEINE



Isabelle de Kleine b.1994 is a mixed media painter based in Walyalup/Fremantle, Western Australia. Her artworks explore the multifaceted nature of self and the complexities, subjectivity and contradictions of identity and the psyche expressed through figure, colour, movement, texture and shape. Her works are visualised through photography and technological experimentation and realised through a combination of water based paint on paper to create collage-like artworks that move between realism and abstraction.

Isabelle completed her bachelor of Fine Arts at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology in 2016 with distinction and was awarded the Tolarno Hotel Painting Prize at her graduate exhibition. Following, she was a joint winner of the Digital Portrait Award at the National Portrait Gallery (2015) in Canberra and was awarded the Arkley Prize at the Not Fair Art Fair (2016), participated in numerous group and solo exhibitions across Australia and has exhibited at Sydney Contemporary art fair (2019, 2020 and 2023). Her work has been televised on ABC News and profiled in publications such as the Sydney Morning Herald, Beautiful Bizarre Magazine and Hunter & Folk.

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.

as it was as if it was

*Pieced back together
memories, sensations, experiences,
weaving a narrative of life,
of reality as it was.*

*Contradictions,
moments lost,
a fallible mind
but was it
as it was?*

Inspired by a three-month solo expedition into the remote outback of northern Australia, these works emerged from a place of deep reflection. While elements of colour and texture pay homage to the harsh, arid landscape, the inspiration for this body of work developed primarily through the contrast between solitude and self-reliance, and the subsequent re-emergence into society. The polarisation and discordance of two very different ways of being.

This tension is explored through a series of mixed-media watercolour paintings that reflect on the duality and multifaceted nature of contemporary human experience. As if they are caught between the digital and physical; yearning for simplicity in an accelerating world and the nostalgia for the past amid increasing connectivity. The figures appear to oscillate between moments of stillness and oversaturation.

Digitalisation plays a central role in the creation of this body of work. Captured images are distorted through photo-negative aesthetics, colour inversions, and basic editing tools to reflect the increasing mediation and manipulation of self and society.

The works further explore the beautiful yet flawed nature of identity and perception. They consider the instability of memory, and the inconsistencies and subjectivities that shape our experience of the world. Areas of fragmentation, revelation and obfuscation intersect the forms, alluding to the tenuous nature of the psyche and the overstimulation of modern life. Questioning the notion of objective truth and authenticity in the age of information, whilst highlighting the beauty of their unique perspectives.

The figures, however, remain in a state of stillness and quiet contemplation, as if the world is moving around them. Lost in the subconscious, their soft expressions and gentle gestures create a sense of calm within the chaos, as if they are both accepting and resisting the world they inhabit.

*Pieced back together, memories, sensations, experiences,
weaving a narrative of life, of reality as it was.*

*Contradictions, pieces missing, a fallible mind,
but it was as it was?*





Iron Stain, Rose Tint, 2025
Watercolour, gouache and acrylic on paper
157 x 157 x 5 cm
Framed in Tasmanian oak, behind acrylic
AUD 9,500



Passenger, 2025
Watercolour, gouache and acrylic on paper
153 x 127 x 5 cm
Framed in Tasmanian oak, behind acrylic
AUD 8,000



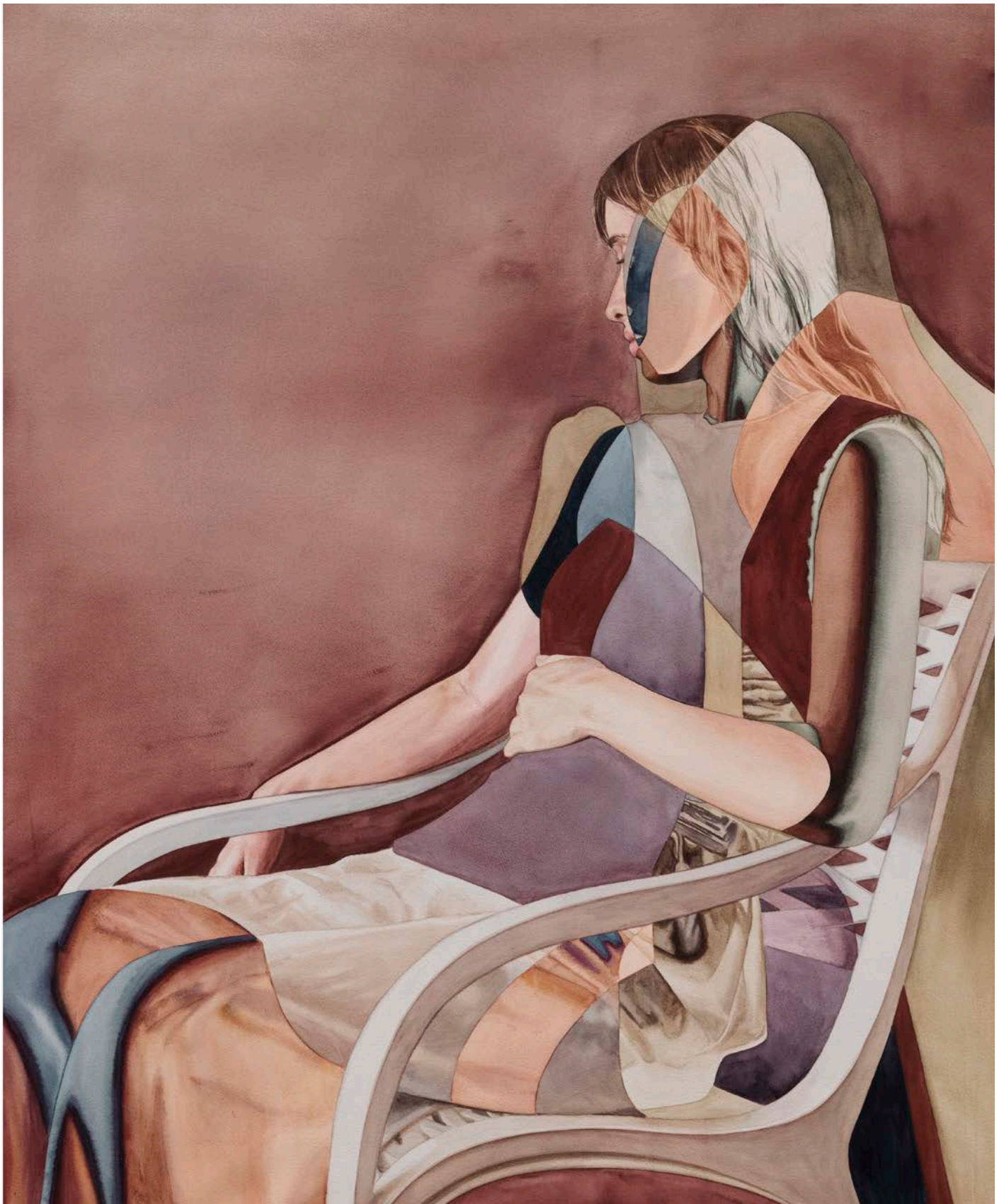
Homeward, 2025
Watercolour, gouache and acrylic on paper
130 x 107 x 5 cm
Framed in Tasmanian oak, behind acrylic
AUD 6,000

The figures, however, remain in a state of stillness and quiet contemplation, as if the world is moving around them. Lost in the subconscious, their soft expressions and gentle gestures create a sense of calm within the chaos, as if they are both accepting and resisting the world they inhabit.






Relic, 2025
Watercolour, gouache and acrylic on paper
153 x 127 x 5 cm
Framed in Tasmanian oak, behind acrylic
AUD 8,000



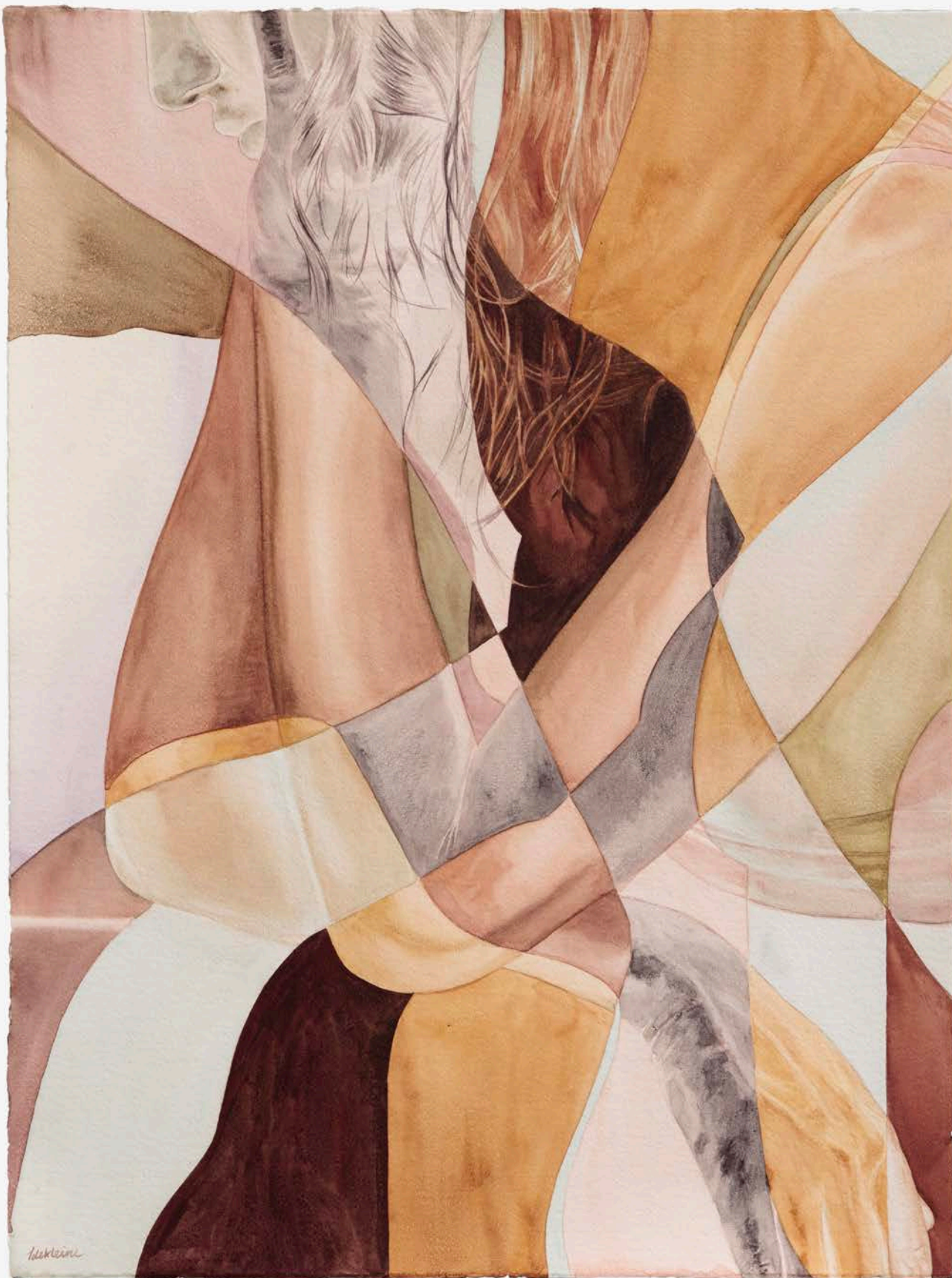
Until Then, 2025
Watercolour, gouache on paper
130 x 107 x 5 cm
Framed in Tasmanian oak, behind acrylic
AUD 6,000



While elements of colour and texture pay homage to the harsh, arid landscape, the inspiration for this body of work developed primarily through the contrast between solitude and self-reliance, and the subsequent re-emergence into society.



Disconnected, 2025
Watercolour, gouache and acrylic on paper
93 x 73 x 5 cm
Framed in Tasmanian oak, behind acrylic
AUD 3,950



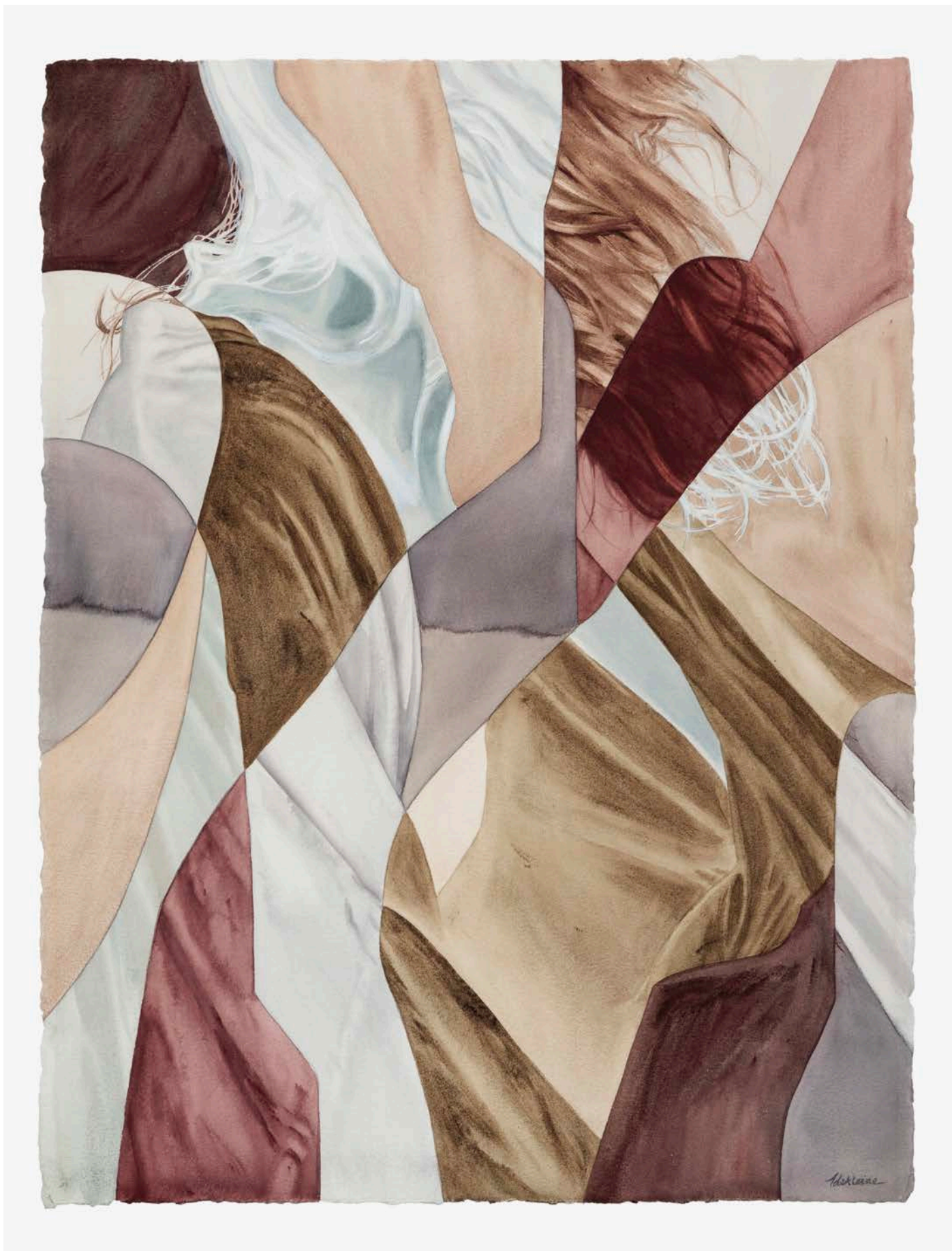
From The Marble Skies, 2025

Watercolour on paper

93 x 73 x 5 cm

Framed in Tasmanian oak, behind acrylic

AUD 3,950



In Turn, 2025
Watercolour, gouache and acrylic on paper
93 x 73 x 5 cm
Framed in Tasmanian oak, behind acrylic
AUD 3,950



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Photography courtesy of Rosie Lang