



FALLING SETS FORWARD

DAVID PALLISER

August 30th - September 21st, 2024

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FIVE WALLS

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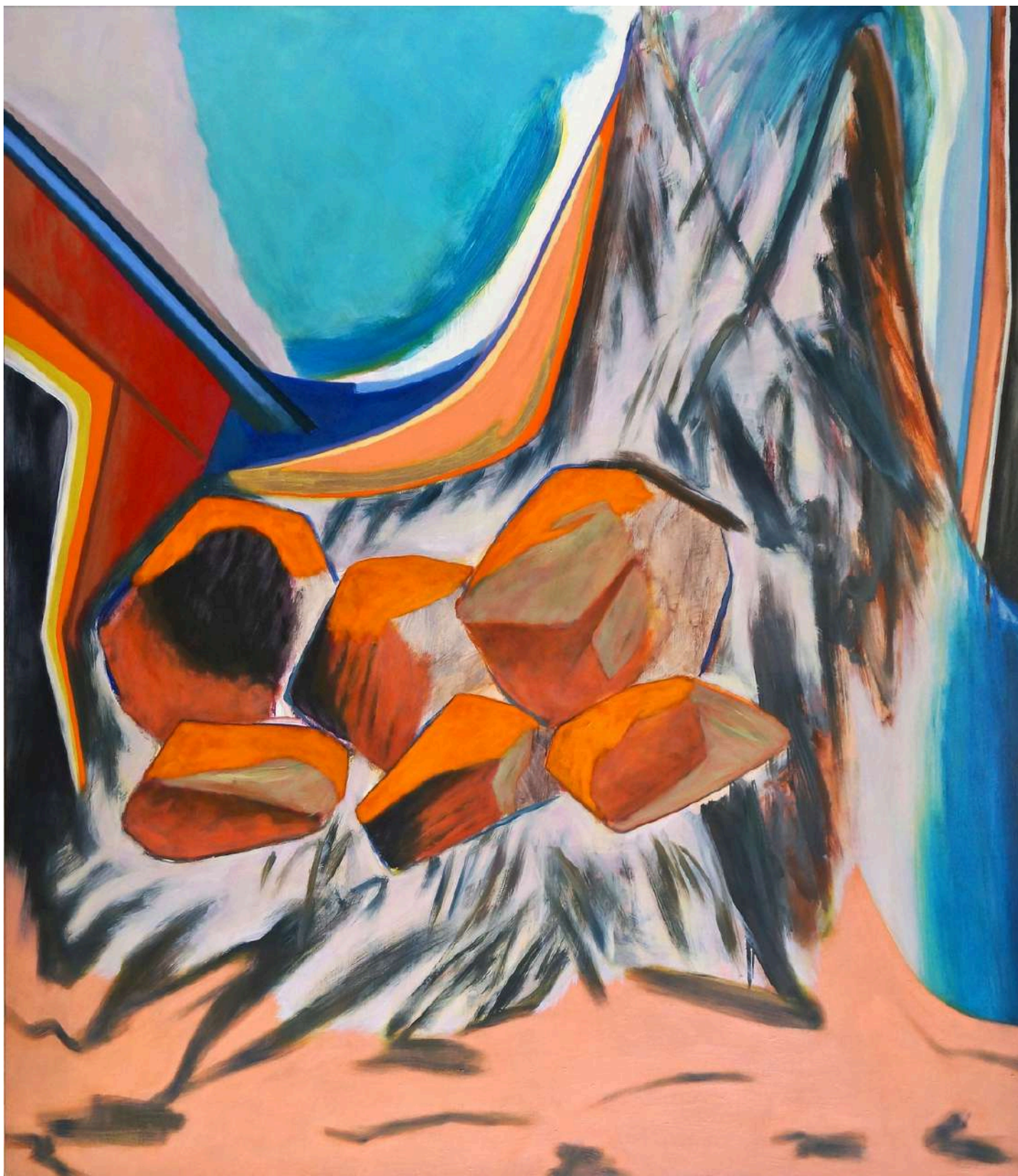
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Wed-Sat 12-5pm

David Palliser is an artist based in Naarm, Melbourne. His work possesses an uncanny oscillation between sensations of abstraction and figuration. Driven by a particular sensitivity to colour and space, it is also informed by his long standing practice as an improvising musician.

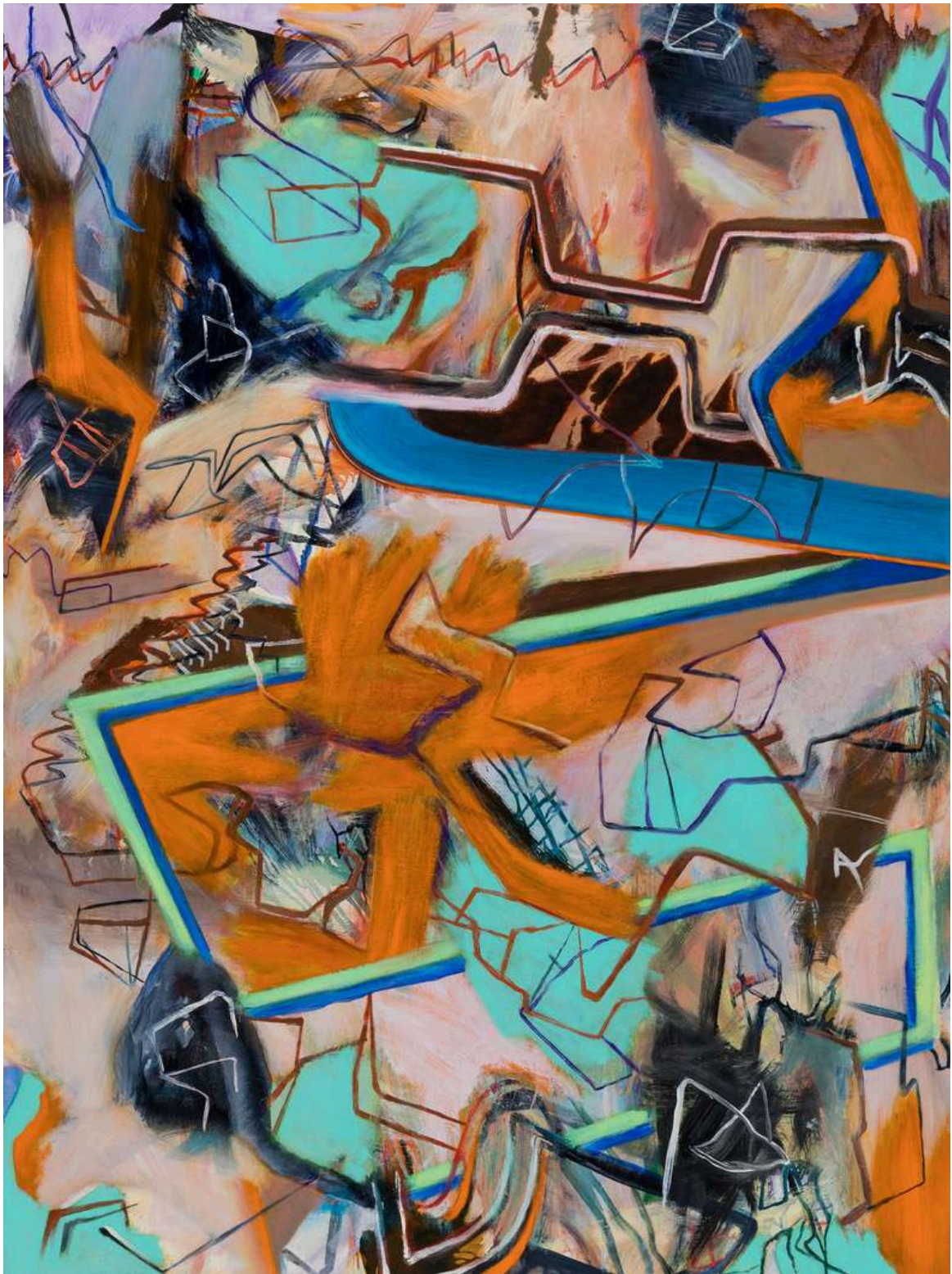
With painting I like to keep the ingredients motiveless and find a state of suspension. Style and content seem best when they arrive by default. I find myself pushing things so I can enjoy the incredulity of having certain anomalies all coexisting on a canvas. I don't know how it will turn out- often the most interesting things happen when a picture reaches a point of hopeless coagulation-things then have to be disowned, indiscriminately erased, or painted over, something has to jump forward or pushed back under the surface. Uncontrol helps control.

Manipulating space with colour gives me something to hang onto and opens the windows however being able to see what I've made and how to proceed is always a headache. Like getting off a train and being confronted with a place you thought would be better. The wrong, dull and unbearable bits end up becoming a new point of departure.



Clump
2021-24
oil on linen
185 x 160 cm

POA



Prescription
2023
oil on linen
122 x 92 cm

\$7500



Sets Setting
2023
oil on linen
122 x 102 cm

\$8500



Hobbling
2024
oil on linen
122 x 97 cm

\$8000



Fable
2024
oil on linen
92 x 122 cm

\$7500



Mirage of Bandages

2024

oil on linen

122 x 97 cm

\$8000



Formula
2023
oil on linen
122 x 102 cm

\$8500



Convex Cave
2021-24
oil on linen
102 x 82 cm

\$7000



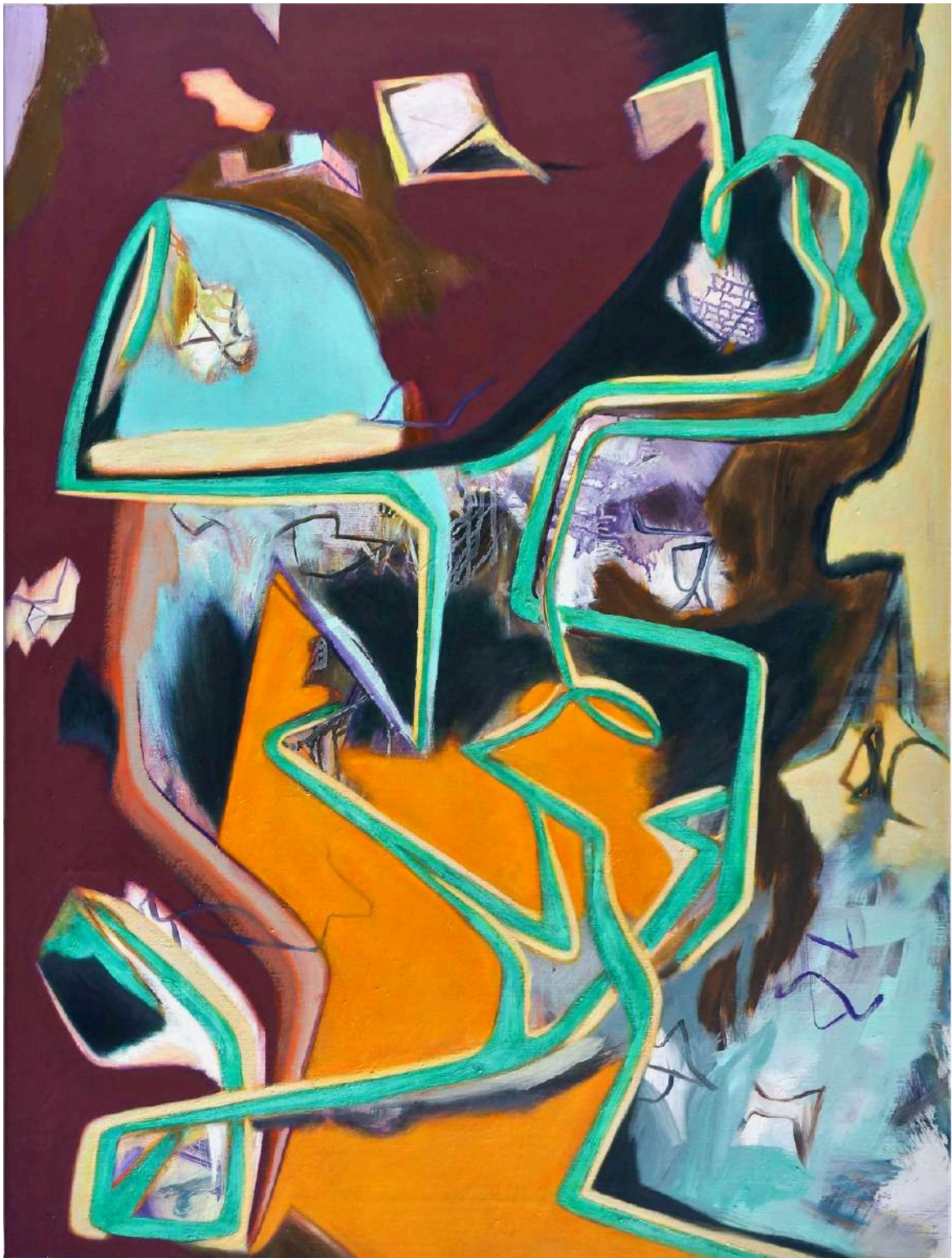
Lens
2024
oil on linen
122 x 102 cm

\$8500



Milk Purple
2023
oil on linen
122 x 92 cm

\$7500



Extra Guest
2023
oil on linen
122 x 92 cm

\$7500

Essay Exerpts 2006 - 2022

"All the works seem to suggest the idea of possibility. What I mean is, they all hint at a fascination with the inherent possibilities of working responsively, so that the final painting or drawing isn't necessarily held as a complete entity but is more like a series of approaches. But, as you've suggested, it is complete in another way – as a painting – it's formally resolved. "

"I'll go home, come back, and the painting slowly builds, and then I'll put something like one of those forms in somewhere and think, 'Oh, that's interesting' and get carried away with that, and then probably scrub most of it out. There might be a fragment, an inch and a half square that stays, and it will stay for the whole picture. Then I'll move my attention over to another part and try and make some relationship between the first part and the second part, and then it doesn't work and I'll do something else. The momentum of putting stuff down is often the only way things are ever going to be resolved; to add another element to it rather than to keep chiselling away at one spot. I'll see something, some spatial thing, some quirky shape or something that is alive to me in my head, which is always just eluding me – and I try to chase this particular image, and often it will lead nowhere. But, in fact, the remnants of that stuff all come back and that's kind of ... the picture. And then it's also the formal considerations. Well actually the whole thing is formal ... and I also try to work to get a dynamic into the picture.²"

"The drawings are awkward and kooky, and fused with an anxiety that derives from the task of putting something transitory to paper. But they also strike the self-assured pose of an artist having fun with a preposterous moment. And it's this sense of absurdity and curiousness, an awareness of the awkwardness of something seen in the first instance, but never fully recognised, that carries across to his strongest paintings."

"I also thought about the visual complexities within Pallier's paintings and how they hovered somewhere between constant reinvention and accumulated technique. I thought about the difficulties of thinking about them in any one particular way and the work made me recall that as long as I can remember I have been suspicious of the word 'reality', knowing that everyone has their version."

" While it's difficult not to be aware of the individual eccentricity of the shapes and forms within Palliser's work, there is always the accompanying feeling that they should exist together although little of his imagery is unambiguous. Palliser avoids confusion, and the possibility of nihilism, in his paintings by carefully managing the equilibrium of elemental aspects of painting: balance of colour, relative scale and composition. The world he presents is a strange environ, where perplexing imagery makes specific conclusions unreliable and even irrelevant. Yet Palliser's work evokes trust: through the simple material substance of paint; its handling and ability to metamorphose."

David Palliser sees painting as an accumulation of mistakes, an ordering of an essentially haphazard methodology. For Palliser painting is about trying to use the fullness of the inherent ambiguities within painting as an expressive potential.

Peter Westwood, taken from the catalogue of the exhibition 'Imagine' at Heide Museum of Modern Art, 2006.

"David Palliser's paintings seem to arrive at a point of urgent equilibrium before our eyes. Forms, colours and shapes are poised, held together in a manner that is simultaneously so pitch perfect that it is impossible to imagine any other orchestration while also seemingly on the brink of collapse. In fact it is this process of collapse and repair, the making and un-making of the images that defines their outcome."

Excerpt from Julia Powles' essay "Inhale and Let Go", May 2018, for the exhibition "Deep Sneeze" at Hunger Rosario

" His work reminds me how painting can give so generously if it can only think highly enough of its own strangeness and imperfections, learning to work with and not against itself."

" Looking back, I remember standing with an artist friend in front of one of David's large works at an opening a few years ago, both of us thrilled with how he dared to leave in the most bizarre painterly moments. And while there were these windows of loose and manic gestures, other sections were laboured over, tended to, articulated through gradients, impasto paint and wound-up string forms. Building this tension is how David sculpturally constructs his spaces – what falls apart is drawn back together through another colour, a repeated form, a different process or a tiny section of washy paint left from the first day he started making the piece. Everything flexes between any number of dualisms: violence and jubilation, micro and macro, punk and jazz, tightness and looseness, the beginning and what's to come."

Excerpt from Laura Skerlj's essay "My Mind is Made Up" for the exhibition "Endless Condition" Jacob Hoerner Gallery 2022

" 'It's a torturous process of getting the mechanics of the picture right so that no one thing dominates,' he says. 'The drawn sections come very early. The most agonising thing is getting the colour to work, trying to make all the parts animated so that they "sing" or have a "bite" or an emotional punch that you can't quite put your finger on.'

Painting is, for Palliser, unequivocally process driven, propelled by discovery of 'anomalies' and solutions through the creative act rather than by preconceived outcomes. The same holds for his hopes for the viewer. 'The paintings are about the experience of looking rather than looking at something,' he says. "

"'From the post-war period onwards, German artists have been painting a dilemma. I find that so invigorating.'"

'The visual language in Germany seems more used to mixing things up, abstraction and figuration can coexist. There's also a great understanding of the ways in which paint and mark can play out on the canvas and act as a generator of content.' "

"'In a way, these are disassembled paintings,' says Palliser. 'They are reassembled through the viewing.' As I continue looking, over days, just what might be reassembled remains an open question. And this may be precisely the point: to hold open the question of what is this we're looking at? And what kind of experience of looking and encountering does the work generate?

His work defies genre and interpretation. On one hand, they are 'just pictures' he says in a half-joking, self-effacing moment. On the other, everything is staked in the act of painting, and the improvisations that occur. He speaks of the 'elevation of slight moments and slight shapes' generated by that improvisation into 'something more lasting and sculptural.'

Excerpt from Saskia Beudel's essay for the exhibition "Subjects in Orbit" July 2021

"Always, there is evidence of a kind of highly rigorous improv, where decisions are made, rejected, remade, changed, accepted, reversed, diminished, enlarged, repeated, restricted, obliterated, enhanced, finalised etc. That intellectual visual journey is as thrilling for the viewer as it obviously, and necessarily, is for the painter. The results are always thrilling because the tussle is real."

Excerpt from Steve Cox' opening address for the exhibition Endless Conditions 2022 at Jacob Hoerner Gallery