



EMOTIONAL LANDSCAPES

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"Like the drug addict or the gambler, the artist is also an addict — and not just in a figurative sense. Moreover, their addiction is irreversible: they cannot detoxify; their greatness, if they manage to achieve it, lies in the ability to transmute inner conflicts into creative energy."

— Quico Rivas

Statement of intent

My most recent work focuses on constructing a hybrid visual language, born from color-stain painting and gradually opened to graphic mark-making.

In this dialogue between painting and drawing, the line takes on a central role: it is not merely an outline or structural element, but a living part of my gesture and expressiveness.

Through a constant balance between the material strength of painting — dense, layered, emotional — and the intuitive tension of the line, I aim to create a dynamic and coherent visual synthesis.

The result is a fluid vocabulary, where each painterly intervention generates connections, contrasts, and harmonies that translate into images suspended between control and spontaneity.

The works that emerge from this process do not position themselves rigidly between figuration and abstraction, but move freely within an intermediate space.

In this space, personal narrative, memory, and the painterly gesture intertwine to give form to an open, mutable, and constantly evolving iconographic universe.

1. Introduction

The artistic work, primarily painterly and recently also graphic, created between September 2024 and June 2025 as a student of the Master's in Painting at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the UPV in Bilbao, which I present here, is titled "Emotional Landscapes". An open and perhaps somewhat ambiguous title, but fundamental so as not to overly condition the viewer.

However, it is necessary to clarify the two terms that compose it: the noun "landscapes" and the adjective "emotional."

The first term etymologically comes from the French *paysage*, derived from *pays* ("country"), which in turn comes from the Latin *pagus* ("village," "rural region"). In its narrowest sense, it refers to the visual representation of a natural or urban space (mountains, fields, seas, cities, suburbs, etc.), while in a broader sense it refers to the set of elements that define an environment, often observed from a personal, aesthetic, or emotional perspective.

For these reasons, landscape is connected to a gaze: it is not only what exists and is offered to our vision (contemplation), but it is defined through our perception (space lived in the first person) and our memory.

The second term, the adjective "emotional," etymologically derives from the Latin *emovere* ("to move outward," "to shake").

Its meaning is linked to intense affective states that involve both the psyche and the body.

In conclusion, the title "Emotional Landscapes" refers, through my artistic work composed of painted canvases, drawings, monotypes, screen prints, and photographs (created in recent months in Bizkaia), to something intimate, subjective, and profound, related to my inner sphere, where memories and sensations combine to generate personal "emotional" reactions, more or less conscious, emerging from the depths of the psyche, stimulated by physical spaces (real or imagined): the landscapes. In other words, it can be said that these are visual or mental spaces shaped by emotions, but also symbolic representations of moods, filtered through imagined or remembered places.

The landscape ceases to be exclusively an external environment and transforms into an extension of the interior, a form of visual narration of the invisible.

My interest in landscape arises from a deeply visual dimension, but it also has its roots in a personal and emotional experience.

It is not merely about observing nature or depicting a place, but about activating a visual and sensory memory shaped over time through travels, encounters, and stays in concrete territories. The landscapes that attract me are never completely anonymous: they carry traces of lived experiences and often coincide with places I have actually seen and inhabited, even if only for brief moments.

In those contexts, the gaze intertwines with emotional experience, and the landscape becomes a container of memories, atmospheres, and relationships.

The people I met in those places, the conversations, the shared sensations leave an imprint that is reflected in the way that landscape is imprinted in my visual memory and, consequently, in my artistic practice.

Being of an extroverted spirit, the place is not only a concrete reality but also a space of imagination that stimulates my desire to discover new realities.

For me, undertaking a journey means opening oneself to the unknown and to adventure: an experience that enriches my emotional, sensory, and intellectual world.

Every movement is an open window onto different worlds, an opportunity to nourish my creativity and deepen my self-knowledge through encounters with others and with new landscapes.

In my painterly and graphic work, I therefore try to synthesize all of this.

The canvas or sheet of paper offers me the possibility to remember and, at the same time, to create a new landscape reality, whose matrix is the emotions experienced and which I hope can evoke new emotions in those who approach to contemplate it.

A landscape is a living organism, or at least a living entity in constant transformation.

This dynamic and ever-changing nature of the landscape reflects the same complexity and fluidity of emotions and memories that I try to capture and interpret in my work.

The artwork, then, becomes an attempt to reconstruct an inner geography, an affective map where the landscape acts as a mediator to reactivate a living relationship with the other, with time, with memory.

It is in this intertwining of space, experience, and relationship that the landscape, for me, acquires an aesthetic and poetic value.

For these reasons, since I began to approach landscape at a painterly level, from March 2024 until today, I speak of "Emotional Landscapes."

2. Let's talk a little about desire

"I wonder what drove me to dedicate so much time of my life to a marginal activity like art, which certainly does not return prestige nor economic, social, or cultural benefits proportional to the effort made, and probably not even proportional to one's own abilities. On the other hand, I wonder how art has changed my way of being, my way of desiring." (Moraza, 2009: 3)

Talking about my work is equivalent to talking about a familiar place that I face and, at the same time, a practice that is not always known in advance.

For years, this familiar place was the kitchen of my home, the kitchen of my grandparents, or of my uncles and aunts.

The kitchen was the place where, as a child, I spent my free time and did my school homework. In the kitchen, I used to draw and color on sheets of paper until I discovered tempera paints at the age of twelve.

Sheets of paper were never lacking, neither at my home nor at the relatives' where I spent most of my time during my parents' absence for work reasons.

Drawing was a way to stay calm, without disturbing the always busy adults.

At the same time, it was a way to stay close to them discreetly, almost absent, a strategy not to worry them since I was hyperactive and very restless.

In those moments of presence/absence, I could give free rein to my imagination, against the background of the adults' words as they cleaned the house, prepared dinner, and repeated much of the same boring conversations.

It was a way not to get bored when I didn't have my brother or a friend nearby, a way to keep myself company, to give voice to my imagination, and to communicate with others through the creation of images.

Immediately and spontaneously, without the intention of copying something around me, I drew simply for the pleasure of doing so, without a predefined plan.

The themes I dealt with most often were landscapes and faces.

Landscapes made of stains and bright colors.

And expressive faces, sometimes monstrous, caricatures of subjects I knew and that struck me for some physical characteristic or for words they had addressed to me directly, or that adults indirectly told me about them.

It was especially during autumn and winter that I was more productive, also to distract myself from the melancholy of the gray days that still characterize the Po Valley today.

Drawing has always been, for me, a way to reach painting.

From narrative and non-decorative drawing, I arrived at painting, which offered a territory of continuous discoveries thanks to the possibility of mixing colors and varying the amount of material I could spread on sheets of paper.

The only concern was to fill the surface of the sheet.

My painting may not have been very refined, but it was sincere, quick, without second thoughts. Sometimes grotesque, but always authentic.

It was also a way to fix an expression or a detail of a place that had emotional meaning for me or my loved ones.

Thus, the stroke that has always characterized me was personal and fast: it did not seek the precision of detail but rather the capture of an atmosphere at a given moment and an attempt to surprise myself.

This stroke was shaped according to the tools I had at hand, based on what I possessed at that moment.

Obviously, I had favorite colors that I used more often, but I did not rigidly stick to dogmatic positions.

What mattered most, more than the right color or the ideal brush, was the desire to challenge myself and confront something unknown.

The will to work with some tempera paints and a couple of cheap brushes represented the greatest satisfaction: a way to fill time, to give meaning to otherwise repetitive days.

I tried to represent my personal perception of reality rather than an objective reproduction.

My stroke, fueled only by impressions, reflected the immediate experience of the landscape and atmosphere, without aspiring to perfect verisimilitude.

Transitions between colors were often left visible, creating an effect of movement and change, reflecting the fleetingness of the moment I sought to capture.

My restlessness manifested itself in the painting.

Everything had to be completed quickly.

"What is that desire to record something plastic, visual, of one's own gaze? Isn't memory enough? Is it then about fixing, for others or for oneself, something that goes beyond the event, the episode?". (Moraza, 2009:6)

For me, the desire to record visually arises from an inner urgency: memory alone is not enough. I do not only want to remember but also to see, touch, confront what I have experienced. I do not seek to fix a fact but an emotion.

Sometimes it is testimony, other times it is liberation.

Every image is a form of translation: of my gaze, of my feeling.

My artistic process is connected to memory, but not as something nostalgic or closed off; rather, it is a fertile ground where memory intertwines with the present and with my identity.

It is not about deciding whether it is time to forget or to remember, but about understanding that both dimensions coexist in the painting practice: what has been and what is, what hurts and what gives meaning.

When I paint, I often feel like I am entering a familiar place, like my grandparents' kitchen when I was a child, a space suspended in time that still lives in the folds of my memory.

A place I recognize, but that no longer exists.

There, fragmented images, smells, muted colors, everyday objects emerge and transform into symbols.

I do not represent them literally, but they are present in the material, in the way I apply color or draw a line.

As an artist, I do not seek to restore it, but to evoke it with gestures, layers, textures.

Each work is an attempt to dialogue with the dense silence of memories, with what has not been said, with what has been partially forgotten or cannot be named.

My painting, therefore, is a form of resistance to oblivion, of inhabiting the present with awareness of what has shaped me.

It is not a nostalgic reconstruction but an emotional archaeology that feeds on the body, on the pictorial material, and on a sensitivity that tries to remain open to what emerges uncontrollably.

Art is my desert

The desert is an unexpected place, almost inaccessible, problematic, lacking landmarks to help us orient ourselves, with no presence except for those who cross it, where signs of human life are minimal or sometimes completely absent. But it is also a fascinating place, in its symbolic and exotic dimension.

"What the desert wants is from the desert," says a proverb of the Tuareg (the men covered up to their eyes with indigo-colored cloth). In other words, those who live in the desert must respect the purity and harshness of the landscape, know how to live in connection with it, often in solitude.

It is easy to get lost in the desert. And time stretches so much that there is no tomorrow, everything is reduced to the present.

For me, the desert represents both a real and an inner space in which I act as an artist. It is an unexpected and often difficult place to cross, without pre-marked paths or certainties about which direction to take.

Like someone walking in an environment without reference points, every day I face the unknown, the challenges, and difficulties of a journey without reliable maps.

In this space, where human presence is scarce and orientation uncertain, one lives a condition of isolation and silence which, however, is not emptiness but full of stimuli.

Like the Tuareg, who respect the harshness and purity of the desert and learn to live in deep connection with it, I too try to listen to and respect this inner environment, finding strength in solitude to keep moving forward.

Here time expands, and the worry for tomorrow is lost: there is only the now, the present moment in which I fully immerse myself, living every instant to the fullest and letting my artistic creation arise from this intense encounter with myself and what surrounds me.

The secret of the desert's aesthetics might lie in its radical otherness, a diversity full of mystery and history, because deserts have been places of passage for peoples, merchants, troops, adventurers, solitary travelers, and ascetics.

In my artistic practice, the desert transforms into a metaphor: a space of trial, research, and silence, it is a real and symbolic place where one confronts otherness, empties oneself, and listens.

To paint it means to traverse that inner landscape full of mystery, memory, and spiritual tension. Each artwork is a trace of a passage, a gesture that seeks, like in the desert, revelation and meaning.

In the work *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche describes the desert as a symbolic space of spiritual transformation, a place of gathering and solitude where the individual passes through three stages: the camel, the lion, and finally the child.

In this inner landscape, I recognize myself as an artist: the camel embodies the beginning of my journey, when I accept the burden of codes, traditions, and expectations, carrying them with discipline and commitment through my creative desert. Then, like the lion, I claim the freedom to break away from those ties to assert an authentic voice, capable of transforming and not merely absorbing.

But it is only in the child — symbol of innocence, oblivion, and creative play — that I rediscover the deepest essence of my artistic doing: a rebirth of vision, a spontaneity that transforms the gesture into creation, silence into image, the present into form.

My desert, like Nietzsche's, is as much real as symbolic: a place of trial and revelation, where each work becomes a passage, every stroke a search for meaning, and every creative instant a "sacred yes" to life and the possibility of reinventing it. Likewise, I consider both my process and my artistic practice to be — borrowing the words of philosopher Giorgio Agamben — a field of forces in tension between potentiality, power, and the power of non-action, of resistance. (Agamben, 2019:40)

Having faith in the path

That cat crossed the street in the middle of the night, yesterday, April 14th. I watched it last night from the window of my room in Basarrate (Bilbao).

Relaxed, in control of the street, and confident, it walked between the cars with a noble air, unconcerned about dangers. It was aware of the risks of the road, but that didn't mean it hid or lived in terror. The street was its own and no one else's.

That cat made me reflect.

It revealed to me the right attitude I must maintain both as a person and as an artist: to move forward without letting fear and anxiety paralyze me, to accept that success and failure are two sides of the same coin, and that inaction is often a choice as comfortable as it is wrong—one that breeds dissatisfaction and regret.

That cat reminded me why, in September 2019, with a life already lived and no longer young, I decided to revolutionize my existence by enrolling in the Paolo Toschi Art High School in Parma, in the evening painting course, and later at the Brera Academy in Milan. And after completing the Academy, I chose to leave for Bilbao and face a new challenge: to attend the Master's in Painting at the University of the Basque Country – Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea (UPV/EHU).

I think of your skin

I think of your skin.

The marks of time become permanent.

The light illuminates a part of you.

The same light that allows me to see where to place my hands; in which direction I should guide my actions.

The violent and instinctive actions on the canvas reveal who I am.

Few regrets in those moments; there will be time later to remember what has been.

Time reveals itself and, at the same time, hides in oblivion.

They are two sides of the same coin. Opposite forces play with each other, obstruct, chase, sometimes fight, and in this unfolding create harmony.

Balance is a truce point between two opposites.

We are beings with a soul: but do we truly know the shameful part? The dark side, the one we hide in a corner and ignore?

What could I say about the thoughts that cross me and the actions that arise from my body?

Does thought stimulate action, or is it the other way around?

Do new thoughts, ideas, concepts arise from actions?

The only certainty: the desire for you.

The more I desire you, the more I feel you are far away.

The action born from desire comes to life from a deep energy that wells up at a given moment.

From outside to inside and from inside to outside: incessant trajectories to which I direct the energy I possess.

How much more will I still have, at this relentless pace?

I have no respite.

Time slips through my fingers like sand.

Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going?

Living the present as impulse or planning a hypothetical future? In both cases, the result may not be satisfying.

Having no certainty about tomorrow is the lowest common denominator.

Adrift.

Often we feel adrift.

The current drags you.

False promises erase my few certainties.

Who are we, if not lying beings seeking meaning, knowing that there is perhaps nothing meaningful?

The brush is an excuse, the colors are an excuse, even the canvas on which I paint for hours is an excuse.

Every action I take is less valuable than I believe, but it's necessary to give it a tone in the game of appearances.

Can something good be born from a lie, from a deceptive game like this...?

I don't know for sure, but I hope so.

Sometimes it's pleasant to deceive oneself. How many of us tell ourselves lies every day, several times a day?

Is it better to live in a dream than in reality? But to what extent does the dream make me happy?

I always think the problem with dreams is that they can suddenly turn into nightmares.

I fear my life will become a nightmare I can no longer wake up from.

Anyway, now I am here. And I am alert.

The ego varies from individual to individual, but it's fragile, it wavers like the paintings that are made, created for others.

Maybe, in reality, they are created for the benefit of the author himself, who doesn't always feel fit for life, and precisely for this reason must generate a new life that passes through his work.

A work of solitude.

A serious work that, at first glance, seems like a game.

It's necessary to keep nerves steady if one wants to do the artist's job.

Few satisfactions, much disorder, a lot of uncertainty, rare recognition, and money.

Money that goes away, money that sometimes comes.

And how does the ego react to all this?

By working, working, working.

Meanwhile, the years pass. The years go away.

And maybe something of us will remain.

A moment frozen in a fragment of colored surface.

The text titled "I Think of Your Skin" was written by me to express something unconscious related to my artistic practice.

In my painting work, the surface — the skin of the canvas — is the place where I put myself to the test.

Every action is a gesture of desire: a desire to build, to know, to transform an impulse into form, even without knowing where I am going.

Painting is a way of confronting uncertainty, the absence of certainties about the future, the fragility of identity and the time that slips through my fingers.

I alternate moments of control with gestural and instinctive explosions.

Painting thus becomes an exercise in balancing chaos and order, an attempt to give shape to deep tensions.

I often move between opposites: instinct and thought, matter and concept, light and darkness.

Each painting is born from this dialectic, like a fragment that encloses a part of me — a frozen imprint, a piece of life.

My work is solitary, intense, composed of gestures that might seem like play, but arise from a radical seriousness.

The painting is a pretext, but also a necessity: a way to endure precariousness, to ask myself who I am, and perhaps to leave a mark that remains.

3. Journal of the process and artworks

"While working, a skilled craftsman or artist makes only aesthetic decisions. Aesthetic decisions are not rational; they are made at a level that does not coincide with rational consciousness. Thus, many artists feel they work in a trance-like state and that, in that state, they do not make decisions: it is the work itself that tells them what must be done, and they do it. Perhaps it really is as mystical as it sounds. Returning to the equestrian metaphor, a good cowboy rides a good horse with loose reins, without constantly telling it what to do, because the horse knows. The cowboy knows where they are going, but the horse knows how to get there." (Le Guin, 2018: 302)

I deeply identify with this vision: when I paint, I don't follow a rational plan, but let myself be guided by listening to the painting, as if it were leading me.

The gesture arises from an inner tension, from an intuition I don't fully control.

As the text suggests, I feel my task is to remain present and receptive, to give space so that the work can show me the way, holding the "reins loose" but keeping a watchful eye.



"Mediterranean Landscape," mixed media on canvas, 97 x 92 cm, 2024

Now, in May 2025, while I am writing my Master's thesis (Trabajo de Fin de Máster), I have a clear understanding of the following: in my painting practice, I feel I have reached a point where I move between two different, and at first glance opposing, modes of painting: on one hand, painting that starts from patches of color (gestural, material, spontaneous); on the other, painting that begins with lines (structuring, rhythmic, directional).

Tim Ingold's text *The Life of Lines* has offered me a powerful key to understand this dualism. Ingold describes every living being as a combination of bubbles and lines. The bubbles — with their volume, density, and weight — represent matter, the body, substance. The lines, instead, are movement, bending, living energy: they are what gives us life.

I recognize myself in this tension.



"Emotional Landscape," mixed media on paper, 65 x 50 cm, 2025

The blotches I spread on the canvas are bubbles: dense, layered, corporeal.
They are my way of inhabiting the painting, of grounding myself in the gesture, in the physical presence of color.
But these same blotches, left to themselves, risk closing in on themselves, becoming self-referential.
And this is where the line comes into play.

The line helps me connect, to break down and reorganize space, to guide the gaze.
It is the thread that weaves, that links, that opens pathways.
When it interacts with the blotches, the line does not negate them: it challenges them, contains them, activates them.

In my process, then, the line is not an accessory.
It is a visual and conceptual necessity.
It is the element that allows me to generate a “network” — to borrow Ingold’s term — between gesture and structure, between chaos and order, between impulse and thought.

I try to bring forth, painting after painting, a work that lives in the unstable balance between these two forces, without ever nullifying either.
A painting that, like life, is built by intertwining bubbles and lines.



"Emotional Landscape," mixed media on paper, 65 x 50 cm, 2025

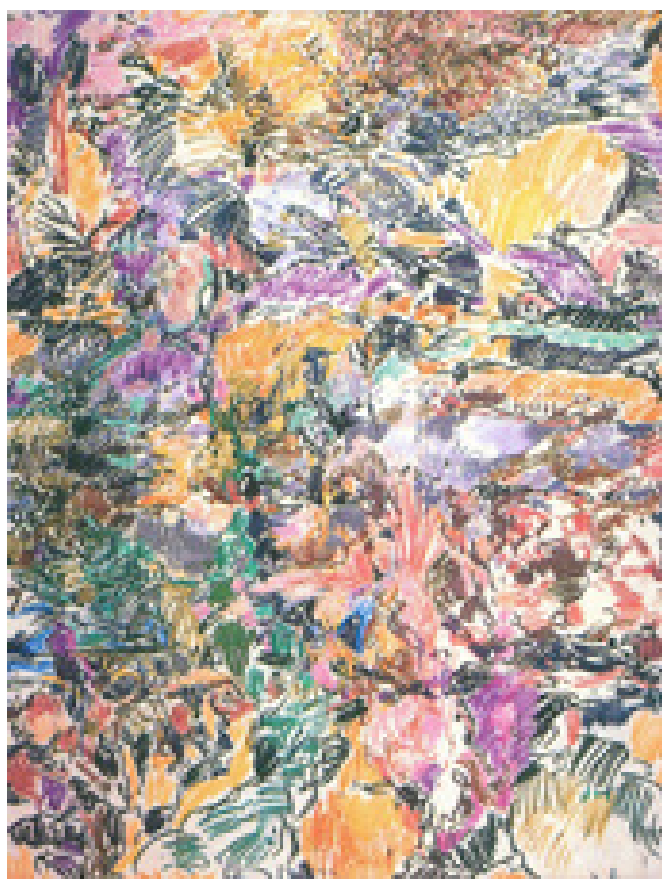


"Emotional Landscape," mixed media on paper, 65 x 50 cm, 2025

In recent months, starting from March 2025, I have introduced the line into my practice, understood as a tool of order and structure. It has the power to contain and dominate the blotches, but also to impart rhythm and direction to the image, like a sort of visual score. I believe this element arose naturally when, during my Master's in Painting, I experimented with different ways of painting and came into contact with the work of artists like Per Kirkeby and Rafael Ruiz Balerdi (below, one of his works).

They are artists who have succeeded in creating paintings where blotches and lines coexist, intertwine, and complement each other, giving rise to dynamic and layered compositions.

Their example strengthened my awareness that it is possible to integrate gesture and structure, matter and mark, into a living and open painting.



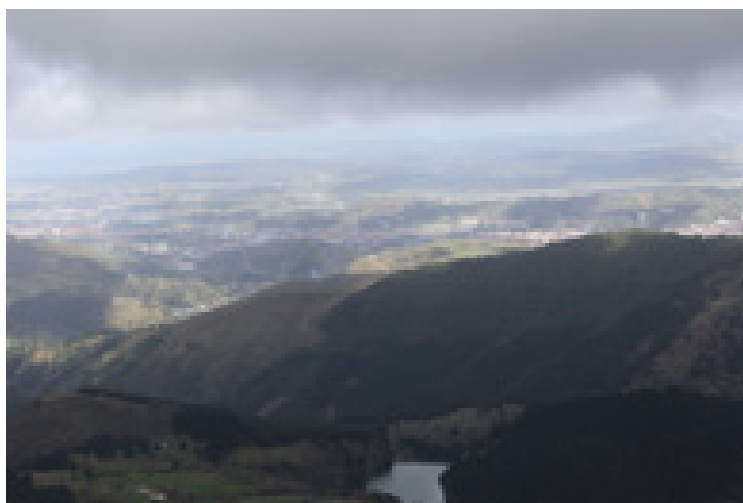
Rafael Ruiz Balerdi. "Untitled", wax on paper, 142 x 110 cm, 1980–1985



"Emotional Landscape," mixed media and acrylic painting on steel panel, 102 x 80 cm, 2025



"Ganekogorta Landscape," oil on canvas, 81x100 cm, 2025



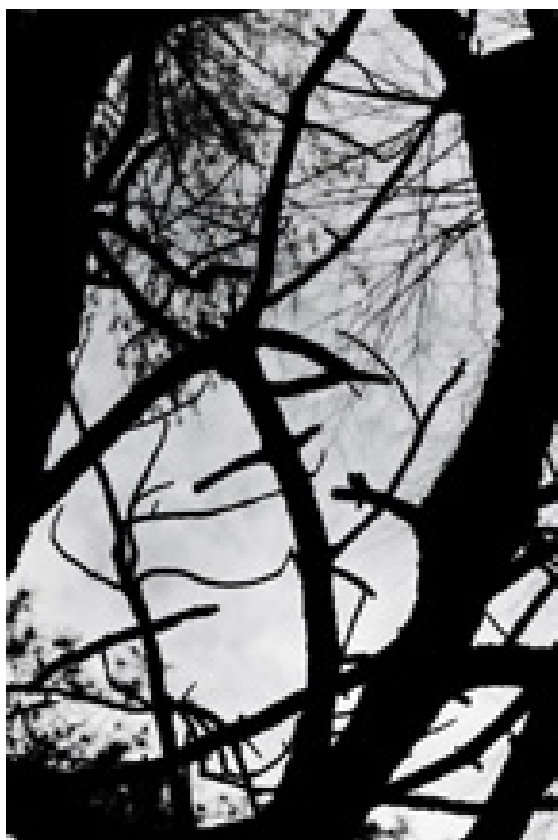
"Landscape", from the summit of Ganekogorta, photo taken with Canon EOS 70D, 2025

I also believe that the line, as a formal element in visual creation, revealed itself to me through experimentation, monoprints, and screenprints on paper made during graphic arts classes with Susana Jorda Llorente and Myriam Guesalaga Eizaguirre.

Graphic art has offered me many opportunities, insofar as it helps me reduce the elements that constitute the image and allows me to vary one aspect at a time.

At least, this is what I have experienced in my recent landscape works, starting from photographs I took at Pagasarri and Ganekogorta in the spring of 2025. These photos served as the starting point for creating black-toned screenprints on paper, which I then enhanced with color using oil paint, colored pencils, and oil pastels.

This process helped me temper my initial impulse.



Photographs taken around Ganekogorta, serving as the starting point for my landscape research through screenprinting.

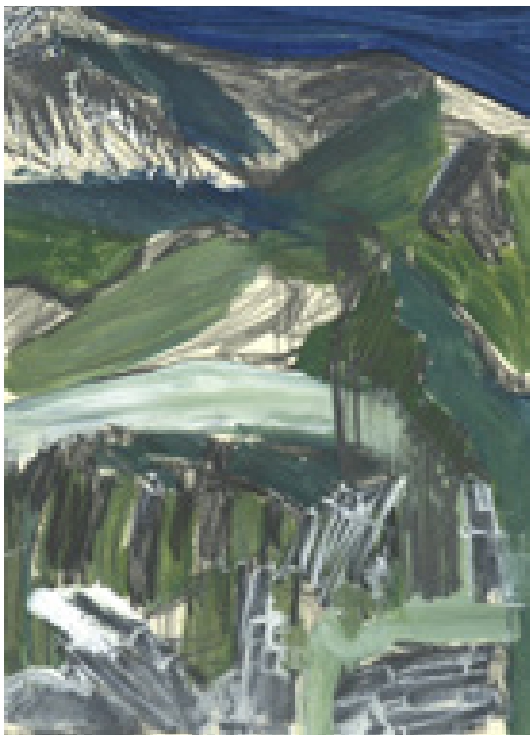


"Landscape at Ganekogorta," transfer and oil painting on canvas, 39.6 x 28.8 cm, 2025



"Landscape at Ganekogorta," screenprint and acrylic painting on paper, 30 x 40 cm, 2025

Limiting the frenetic energy of my actions, trying to give them an order — as is typical in graphic work — is also helping me on a pictorial level in managing the canvas (or other supports) in a less chaotic and more reflective way.



"Landscape in Arantzazu," sketches, mixed media on paper, 20.4 x 13.8 cm, 2025

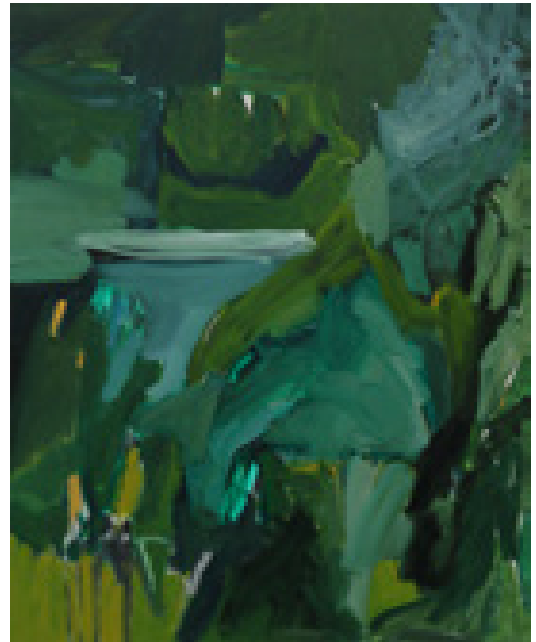
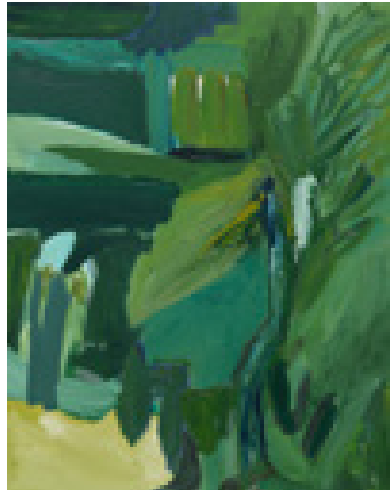
Graphic art, therefore, has not been a pause, but a fertile territory from which to continue building. It has also helped me to manage the surface of the support more consciously, insofar as it values the "absence" of application on it, leaving some areas untreated that, as a whole, allow the composition to breathe, creating a balance between emptiness and fullness, between light and dark. As a painter who has always used the entire surface of the support, I believe this is a valuable lesson learned.

During the first four months of the master's program, I felt disoriented: I had a lot of energy that I needed to channel. I produced incessantly, but without a clear goal or destination.

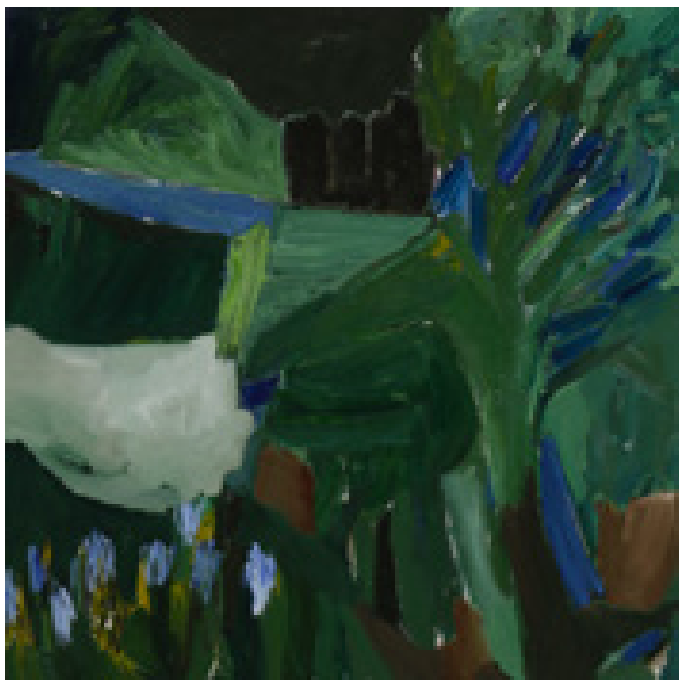
Thus, I alternated between figurative and abstract painting, working both with landscapes and portraits, on small and medium-sized supports, both on paper and canvas, using a wide variety of techniques: oil, acrylic, colored pencils, wax, mixed media, collage.

After the Christmas period, upon returning from Italy to Bilbao, I completed a series of about ten landscape paintings in green tones that I titled "Emotional Landscapes."

Most of them measure 100 x 81 cm. However, two of the works I present below have non-standard dimensions.



"Emotional Landscapes," technical details on the following pages





"Emotional Landscape," oil on canvas, 92 x 73 cm, 2024



"Emotional Landscape," oil on canvas, 93 x 92 cm, 2025



"Emotional Landscape", oil and acrylic on canvas, 100 x 81 cm, 2024



"Emotional Landscape", oil and acrylic on canvas, 100 x 81 cm, 2024

In January, before starting the new series of “Emotional Landscapes” in black and brown tones, after discussing with some master’s professors, I sensed an evolution in my painting practice. I began to glimpse a direction that materialized in exploring the qualities of my painting: in the management of the painted surface, the use of color, and the treatment of the stroke. From inside out was the direction to follow.

Thus, from January 2025, I abandoned the use of Liquin, which I had been using excessively to speed up the drying of oil colors, but which did not satisfy me in the final result, as the colors appeared flat and aesthetically uninteresting, overly “plasticized.”

At the same time, I varied the materiality of the oil paint, playing with the amount of color applied: I started using larger brushes and very diluted oil, then moved to thicker layers of color during the development of the painting.

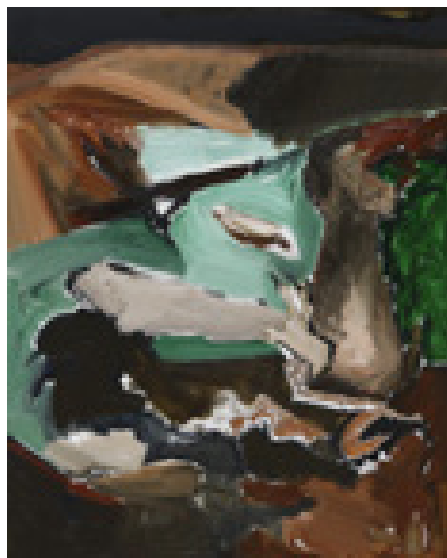
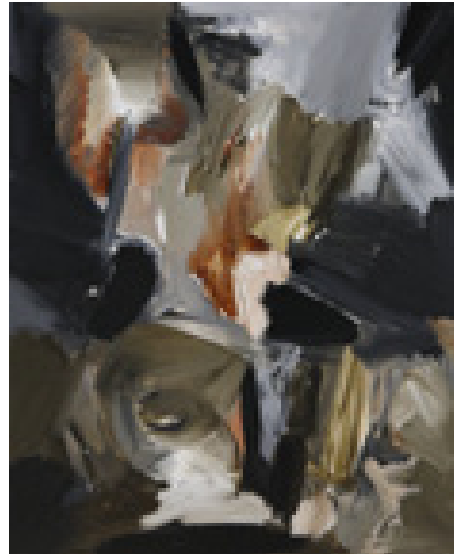
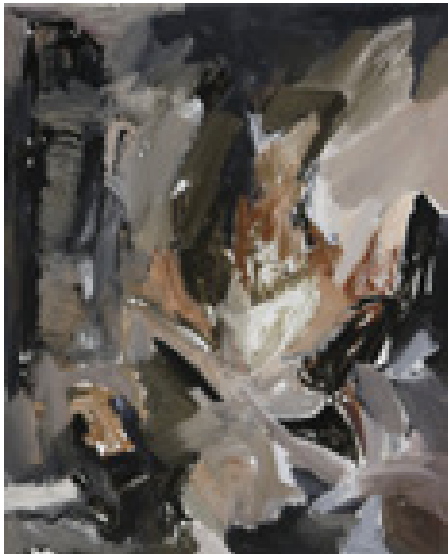
In this way, I created four larger paintings, and only in May 2025 did I complete two works of about 2 x 2 meters.

I also better managed canvases and papers by varying the applied strokes, using my hands and medium and small-sized palette knives to create visual effects that brushes alone cannot achieve.

I also made use of pencils and oil pastels, as well as oil sticks, which leave a more or less dense mark depending on the pressure applied to the surface.

On several occasions, I intervened on these residues with quick brushstrokes, alternating the use of turpentine (to reduce their intensity) and linseed oil (to make the mark more precise and uniform).

In January 2025, I began creating a series of four abstract landscapes (three of which are shown below), changing the color palette while maintaining the 100 x 81 cm format. The colors used were primarily black and brown oil tones. However, to add brightness, I also included metallic black paint. I began working on them in a horizontal position, laying them on the floor, and completed them on the easel.



"Emotional Landscape," oil on canvas,
100 x 81 cm, 2025



"Emotional Landscape," oil on canvas, 100 x 81 cm, 2025



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"Emotional Landscape," oil on canvas, 100 x 81 cm, 2025

After this series, in February 2025, I resumed experimenting with landscape painting, although without developing a specific series. At the same time, I returned to working on portraits, created mainly as a pretext to explore the properties of color.

Moreover, these portraits approached through painting can be considered part of the category of emotional landscapes, because when I paint a face, I am not only interested in capturing its physical features: what I seek is to capture that subtler, intimate, and ever-changing dimension that lives behind the outward appearance.

The human face, in its complexity, offers itself as a true territory to explore: every glance, every fold of the skin, every absence or intensity of color becomes a sign, an imprint of what is unsaid but felt.

In this sense, the portrait transforms into an inner landscape.

I do not represent just a person, but a presence traversed by time, memory, and emotions.

As happens with emotional landscapes, here too my attention is not so much on likeness, but on the possibility of evoking a mood, a psychic atmosphere.

The interiority transforms into form, color, gesture.



"Portrait of Dario Pancaldi," oil on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm, 2025



"Portrait of Dario Pancaldi," oil on paper, 42 x 29.7 cm, 2025



"Portrait of Orlando and Serafina," oil on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm, 2025

The landscape I paint is not a mere representation of a physical or recognizable place, but an external reflection of an emotional state—a projection of my constantly transforming inner world. Each landscape is a psychic territory crossed by tensions, voids, accumulations, ruptures. Just as my body has been wounded and rebuilt (due to accidents and competitive rugby until my thirties), the landscape in my paintings appears fragmented, reconfigured, eroded by invisible forces.

I am not interested in capturing the ideal beauty of the environment, but rather exploring its vulnerability, instability, and capacity to change.

I paint landscapes that sometimes verge on the unrecognizable: they may look like ruins, fading horizons, fields crossed by nervous lines, by patches that emerge or dissolve.

Time manifests itself in them: the time of memory, of the body, of thought.

Thus, the landscape becomes an existential space.

It is the place where I project my experience of impermanence. I approach it as if it were a living body: I inhabit it with gesture, shape it with layers of color, wound it with matter, redeem it with line.

Every pictorial element — a gestural brushstroke, a dense area of color, a crossing line — is a way of saying: “this too changes, this too hurts, this too can begin again.”

So, my landscape painting is not contemplative but lived.

It is an attempt to build a visual language that can speak of passage, of the desire for rooting and the impulse to depart, of the fear of disappearing and the need to remain.

The landscape, like me, is fragile and resilient at the same time.

It breaks down and rebuilds itself in a continuous act of search, of balance between chaos and form.

For this reason, each painting is an emotional cartography, a moving map of the soul, where bubbles and lines — as Ingold would say — intertwine to sustain life.



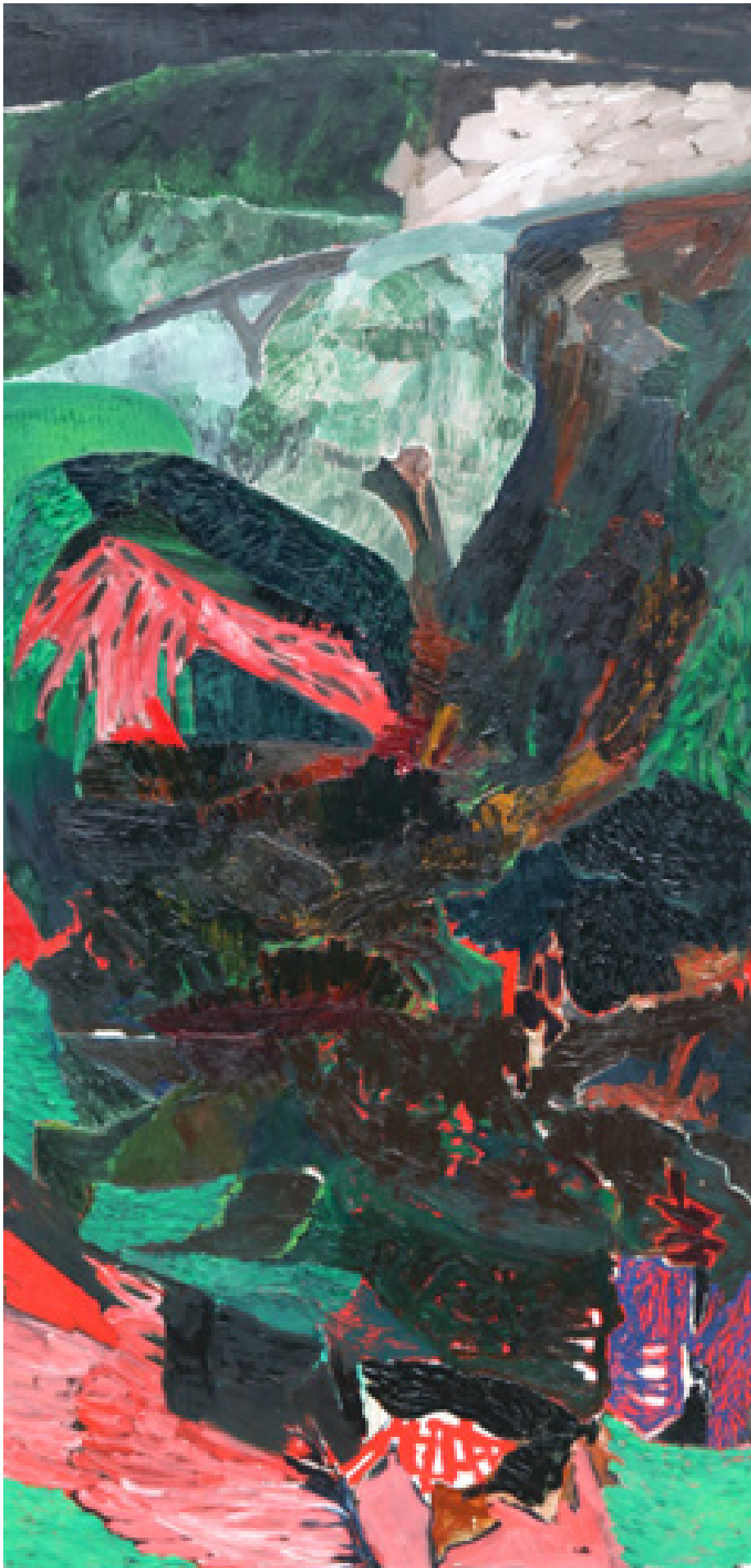
"Landscape", oil on cardboard, 188.3 x 107 cm, 2025

Starting from January 2025, I have been paying greater attention to the relationship between the chosen colors, beginning from an anchoring point within the painting: a defined area of the canvas that serves as a chromatic center of gravity.

From this point, subsequent brushstrokes develop, generating an internal — almost subterranean — structure within the composition.

This way of applying color, in layers or organized zones around that visual axis, allows me to create one or more levels of depth.

This approach is evident in works such as "Landscape in Bilbao", "The embrace", and "Landscape with bird", where color is not simply a surface but a living material that builds space and emotion.



Monoprints on paper
(29.7 x 21 cm),
created based on the
adjacent painting,
2025

"Landscape with bird," oil on canvas, 211.8 x 103 cm, 2025

During the master's program, this question spontaneously came to me several times: is art perhaps the result of a series of accidents caused by chance?

In other words: could we say that the artist is someone who hunts for chance, to take advantage of favorable accidents?

Dubuffet answers this way: "Chance, it's true, is somewhat guided or provoked, or at least accepted and exploited by the artist; chances that are the true prey the artist hunts, constantly calling, enticing, and setting traps. That is, the small irregularities in the thickness of layers, the tiny gaps or interstices produced by the brush strokes (...) from which the underlying tones emerge here and there, more or less. All these incidents exist in infinite numbers within a painting. They are very important for the charm of the image. Often, the arrangement of tones, shadows, and lights depends on them. (...) But the accident ruled: an accident happened here — long live the accident! — the painter adapts, indeed, takes advantage of it. How thrilling is the search for and the encounter with these favorable accidents: what a game full of surprises and fascination for the painter! It is no longer about using tame colors whose combined effect is known beforehand, but about manipulating magical substances that seem to have a will of their own (...)" (Dubuffet, 2021: 73–74)

Chance color is a starting point for reflecting on my painting.

In my case, color is not simply a rational or controlled choice: it is a living matter that allows me to explore the unknown.

When I start a painting, I begin with a barely sketched idea, and the painting process becomes a constant dialogue with the unexpected.

The color patches do not follow a closed plan but open new paths. From them arise new thoughts, unforeseen sensations, visual and emotional associations that lead me along an unknown road, full of discoveries.

I let myself be guided by those small "surprises" that emerge during the application of color — as Dubuffet said — by those accidents that gain meaning and strength as I work.

Moreover, while painting, phrases I have read, ideas, and words often resonate in my mind, mixing with the gesture and the colors I am preparing.

For me, the act of painting is therefore an intuitive, almost meditative process, where the energy I transfer to the surface combines with chance and the pictorial matter to communicate something that even I do not fully know at the beginning, but that gradually reveals itself.



"Landscape in Bilbao," oil on canvas, 195 x 96.5 cm, 2025

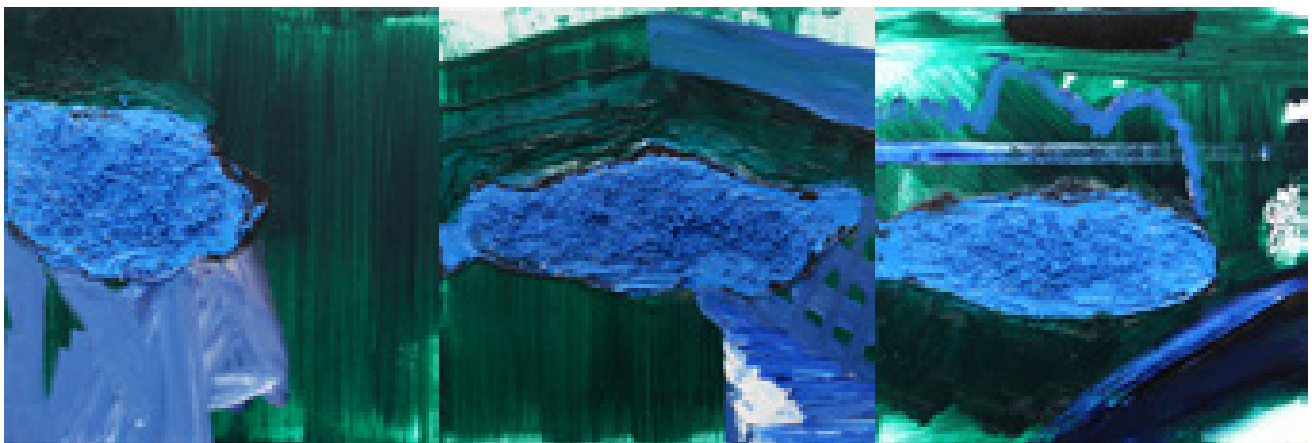


Monoprints on paper
(29.7 x 21 cm),
created based on the
adjacent painting,
2025

In my work, immediacy and spontaneity are not merely stylistic choices, but essential ways to bring the artwork to life.

As Dubuffet suggests, it is in the quick gesture, the bold and almost “rough” use of color and materials that the true energy of painting unfolds. He writes: “A painter who roughly lays down a light tone on a dark background — or vice versa — so that the whims of the brush allow the background to interact with an infinity of shades, will achieve — provided he has the lucky hand, the skilled hand — a much more effective result, in just a few minutes (minutes of fullness and joy for the artist), than another painter who has worn himself out for weeks trying to combine laboriously studied shades”. (Dubuffet, 2021:80).

I don’t seek perfection nor calculated balance, but the intensity of the encounter between brush, matter, and canvas. This freedom in gesture creates unexpected dialogues between surfaces, revealing an authentic and unrepeatable vitality.



Triptych, "Emotional Landscape," mixed media on canvas, 30 x 90 cm (total), 2025

Risk and chance become essential tools to overcome the coldness of calculated technique, restoring to art its pulsating, human nature.

Fundamental in this process are the choice of support, the size, and above all, how I position it in the workspace.

Working on the canvas on the easel, pinned to the wall with metal staples, or laid flat on the floor allows me to modulate my gesture: I can adopt thicker or more diluted techniques depending on the canvas’s position.

This constant mobility — moving the canvas, putting it away, placing it at eye level, or leaving it on the floor — creates a dynamic dialogue with the light and my gaze.

In this movement, unexpected details reveal themselves, and new expressive possibilities arise, as if the canvas itself were suggesting the next step to take.



"Emotional Landscape," mixed media on canvas, 100 x 81 cm, 2025

My painting aims to arise from the simplicity of the plastic language, as if each mark were an instinctive extension of the body.

I strive for the works to convey an expressive force born from a quick gesture, sometimes seemingly disorderly, but full of intention.

For me, the painting process embodies a continuous struggle between the matter and the hand that transforms it. I use my fingers, palette knives, brushes, or any tool as physical extensions of my body, capable of leaving a vital trace on the surface: signs of energy, tension, and presence. I'm less interested in traditional chromatic variety and more in a rich palette of color-matter — those found in everyday life and in the organic: stone, earth, walls worn by time.

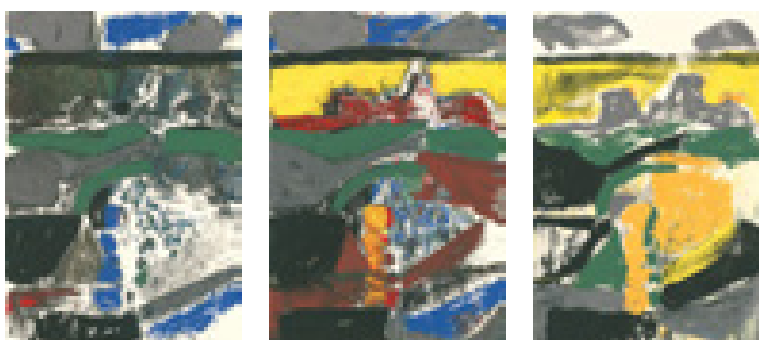
Tones that evoke without describing, that call forth something intimate and archaic. I do not seek bright harmonies, but colors that can be felt, that speak from within.

My painting process is built in layers: dense impastos or glazes, material overlaps, contrasts between what is seen and what is barely sensed. It is in that point of friction between gesture and matter that, perhaps, what I am truly searching for emerges.

Ultimately, my painting is a direct testimony of lived experience, a sensitive language in which color, the way it is applied, and the support itself become protagonists of a tactile and emotional narrative, speaking of the body, movement, and the passage of time.



"The embrace," oil on canvas, 100 x 81 cm, 2025



Monoprints on paper (35 x 25 cm), created based on the painting above, 2025

I consider myself both a painter who works in series and a creator of unique works.

In my painting practice, I tend to frequently change theme, technique, and format to avoid repetition and falling into automatism. However, I have discovered that controlled repetition, maintained for a limited period of six to eight weeks, can become a valuable tool.

Working on the same theme while keeping the color palette and support constant — in terms of material and size, as with the 100 × 81 cm primed canvases I used during this period — allows me to deepen my painting practice, exploring some essential aspects with greater clarity.

This method also helps me temper the restlessness that sometimes pushes me to work too quickly. It reminds me that just as I vary the gestures on the canvas, I can also modulate the speed of execution and the rhythm of the compositional elements I create and let emerge in the work.

Often I feel the need to hold back, to slow down my momentum and focus more on the details of the painting, reducing frenzy and increasing patience, the ability to listen to and see what the painting has to communicate.

This awareness was consolidated during the making of two series: the green “Emotional Landscapes” (between October 2024 and January 2025) and the black and brown-toned “Emotional Landscapes” (between January and late February 2025).

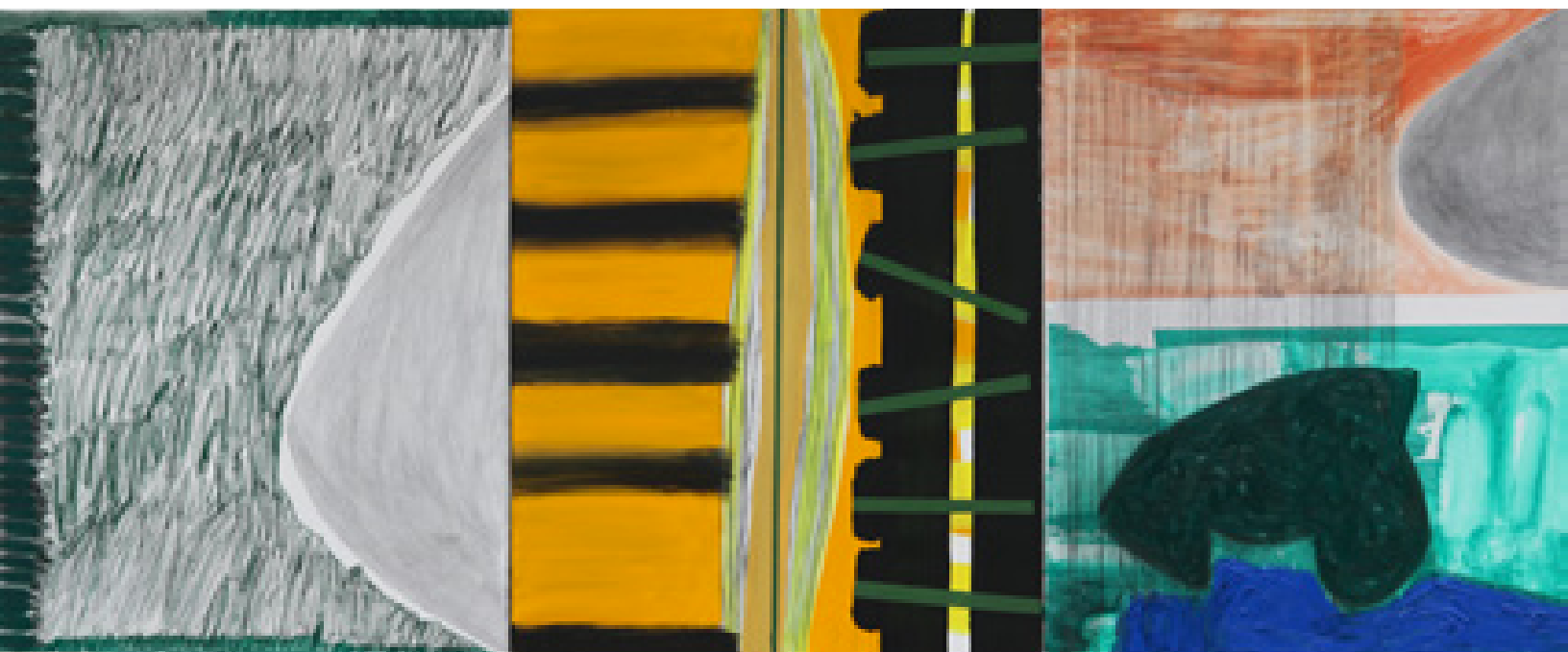
In both cases, seriality was not a form of sterile repetition but fertile ground — a space of observation where gesture, color choice, and composition could evolve and solidify.

Every action on the canvas implies a more or less conscious decision.

Every gesture can generate mistakes, and it is up to me to welcome and transform them.

Often it is precisely these mistakes that lead to unexpected and precious discoveries.

The harmony that can emerge between different interventions depends on my ability to manage contrasts: between form and color, between line and blotch, between the quickness and slowness of the gesture.



Triptych, "Emotional Landscape," mixed media on canvas, 100 × 243 cm (total), 2025



"Emotional Landscape," mixed media on cardboard, 179.5 × 154.5 cm, 2025



"Emotional Landscape," mixed media on cardboard, 181 x 180 cm, 2025

4. Conclusions

I believe I have managed to develop a hybrid language to speak about the landscape, starting from painting, moving through graphic arts, and arriving at a blend between the two artistic disciplines.

The meaning of my work has been to “bring an image into focus,” that is, to try to find a way—through graphics and painting—to bring order to the landscape, to select what to show, what to omit, and how to construct a coherent visual language, while simultaneously seeking a balance between control (of my actions and chosen materials) and openness to chance, which for me is essentially what visual art is.

I have learned to value the process as much as the final result of a work.

By process, I mean a space that is as much physical as mental, where actions and desires condense—a space to move within to arrive at a result (most of the time only imagined).

In my painting practice, I often seek a visual short circuit, a point of formal tension that can generate astonishment—first in me, then in the viewer.

I have learned that it is fundamental to ask oneself: when does my painting become a finished artwork?

To answer this question, I have to place the canvas—which might be in a specific spot in the studio, on the easel or on the floor—onto the white wall, at the center of the room.

Only then can I contemplate it.

I observe it from the right distance, then up close.

I sit comfortably a few meters away.

Looking at it as a whole, at its physicality, I retrace the gestures I made: the brushstrokes, the veils, the spots I covered to reach the point where I am now.

I struggled with the chaos the white canvas offered me at the start to challenge myself.

I handled the painting according to my impulses and technical skills; it required actions and decisions, like how to move to imprint on my hand, arm, and eye a sequence that would ultimately culminate in a representation in the form of an image.

I have made mistakes—some I corrected, while others I adapted to and continued the creative process, not always fully aware of the path I was taking in trying to bring order to a thought and see it translated into a plastic act.

Almost always, I repeated gestures with varying intensity: from light touches to rougher, heavier ones—and vice versa.

Reflecting on my painterly gesture, I realize that I tend to work with short and contained movements—originating from the hand, passing through the wrist, and stopping at the elbow. However, I feel the need to expand the gesture, involving the arm, shoulder, and back.

For this reason, I began experimenting with large-scale formats, which force me to open up my body and give more space to action.

This process also includes an exploration of the speed of the gesture and the materiality of color. Oil bars, for example, allow me to draw dense, irregular marks, which I can then dilute with turpentine or white spirit to achieve effects of transparency and lightness, similar to watercolor.

I often think of Willem De Kooning and his ability to manage the density, breadth, and speed of gesture with absolute confidence.

I too aspire to that kind of controlled freedom, that instinctive clarity that knows when to stop—without hesitation.

That said, I increased the density of the paint in certain areas of the canvas, while in others I left a layer more akin to watercolor.

Slowly applied strokes of color are juxtaposed with stains and smudges.

Initially, the material was distributed across the surface with a seemingly random rhythm and direction, allowing other marks to emerge from it.

Now that I am closely observing the work I believe I've completed, I establish an almost intimate relationship with the surface I have worked on—one that absorbed me for hours, offering me joy and wonder, while also plunging me into doubt and unease.

If the image created through my painting manages to transcend itself, I believe the work has reached its conclusion.

In other words, I believe I've arrived at the point where I can call my work a painting.

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