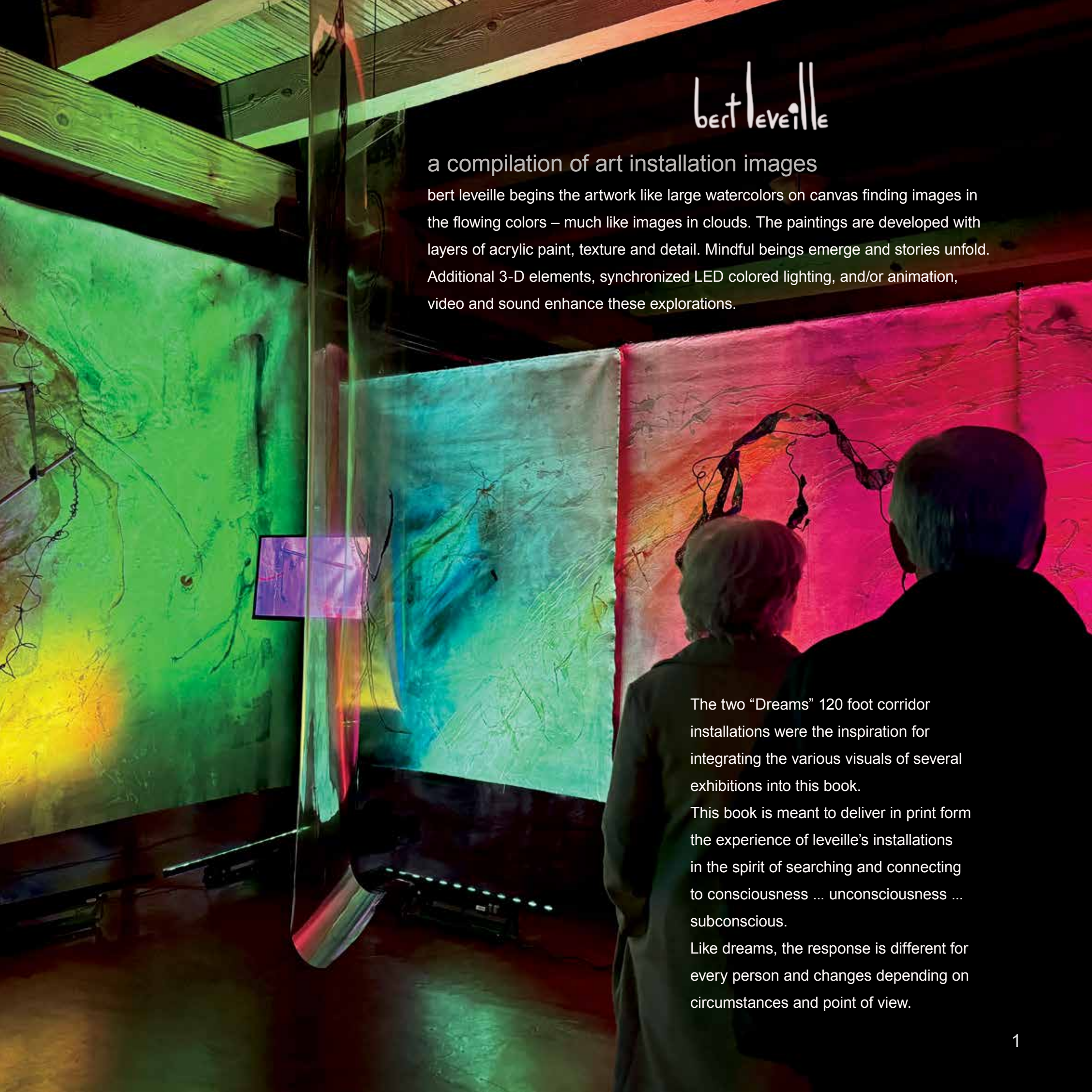




bert leveille

a compilation of bert leveille art installation images



bert leveille

a compilation of art installation images

bert leveille begins the artwork like large watercolors on canvas finding images in the flowing colors – much like images in clouds. The paintings are developed with layers of acrylic paint, texture and detail. Mindful beings emerge and stories unfold. Additional 3-D elements, synchronized LED colored lighting, and/or animation, video and sound enhance these explorations.

The two “Dreams” 120 foot corridor installations were the inspiration for integrating the various visuals of several exhibitions into this book.

This book is meant to deliver in print form the experience of leveille’s installations in the spirit of searching and connecting to consciousness ... unconsciousness ... subconscious.

Like dreams, the response is different for every person and changes depending on circumstances and point of view.



























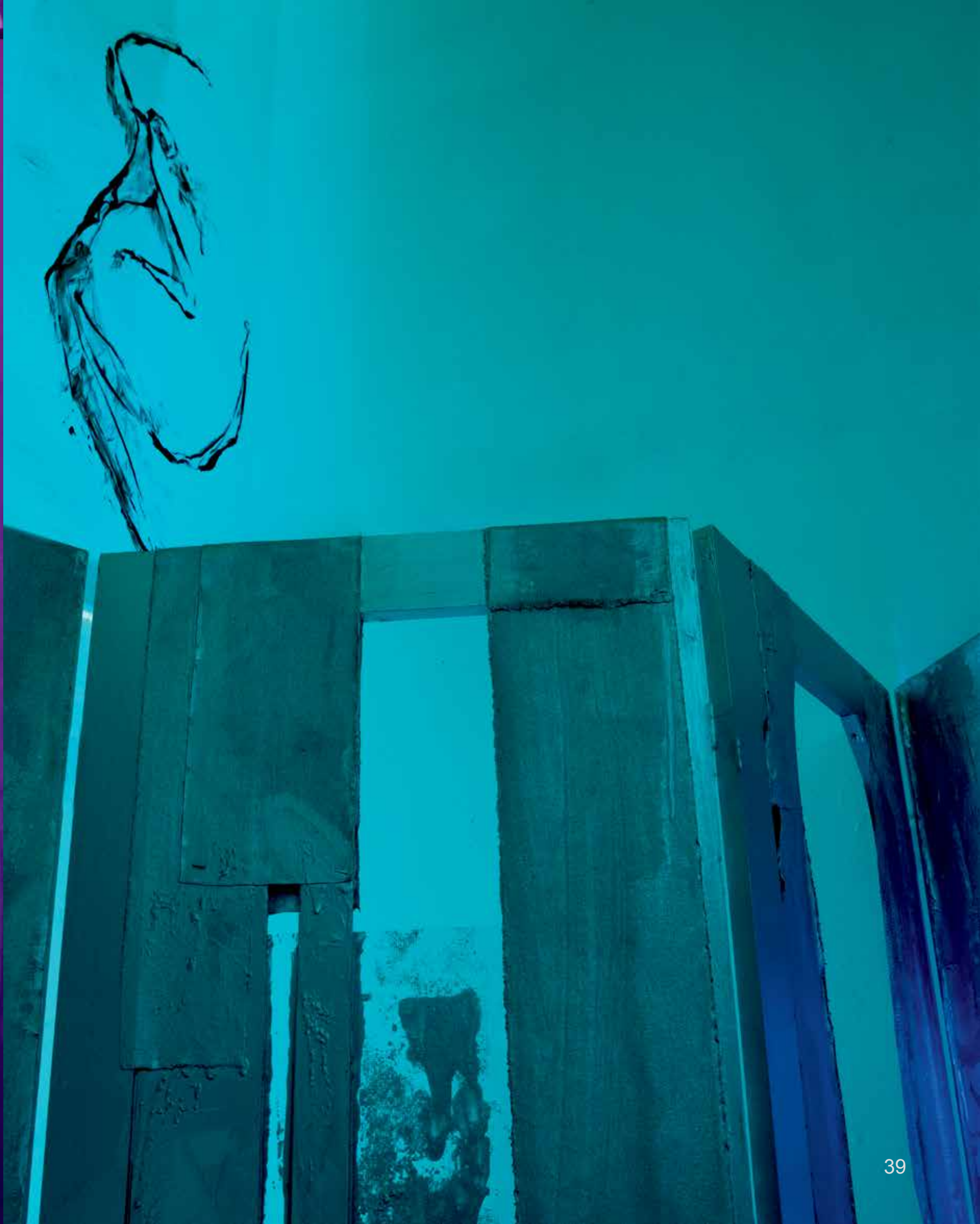
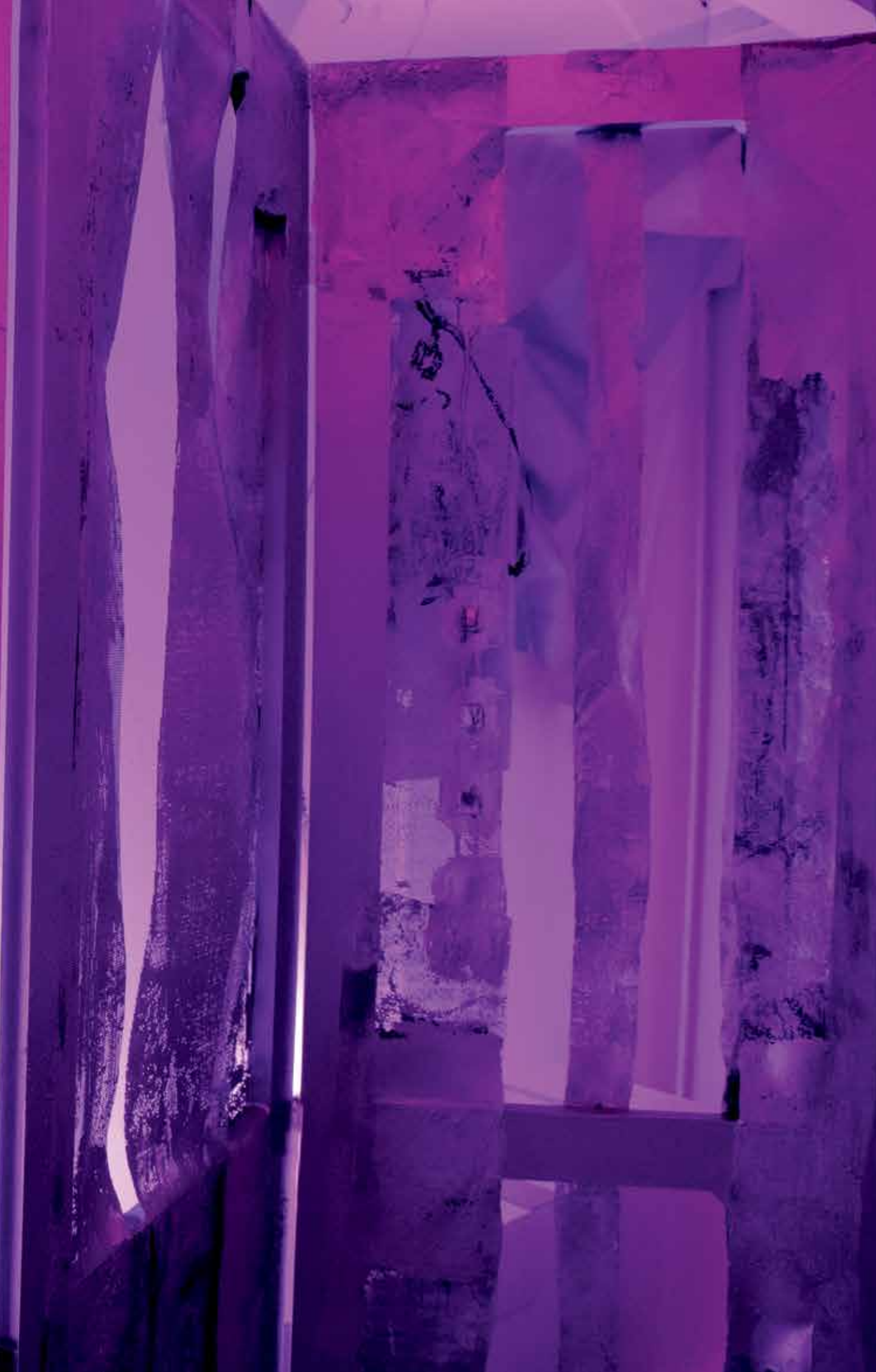
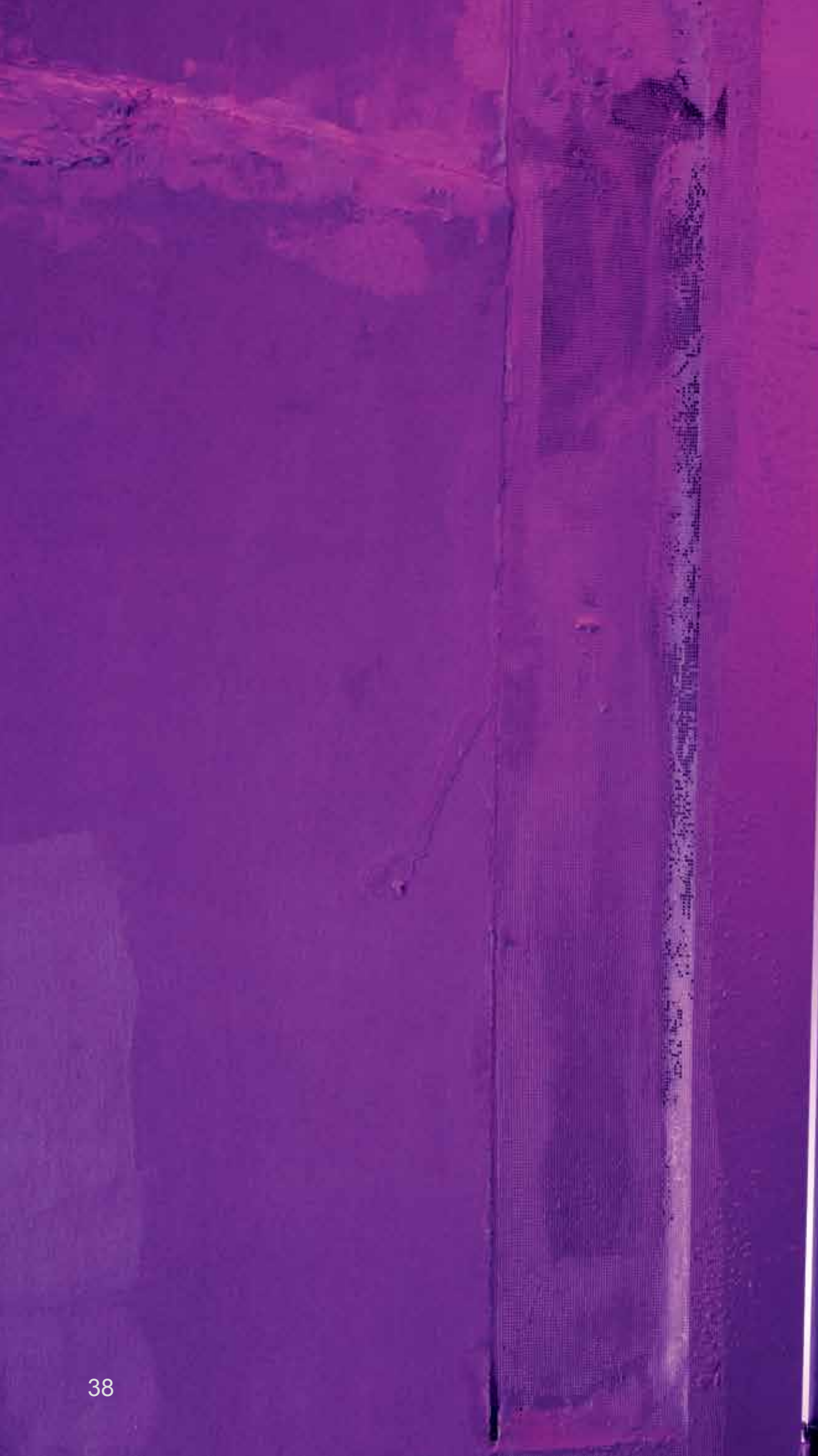






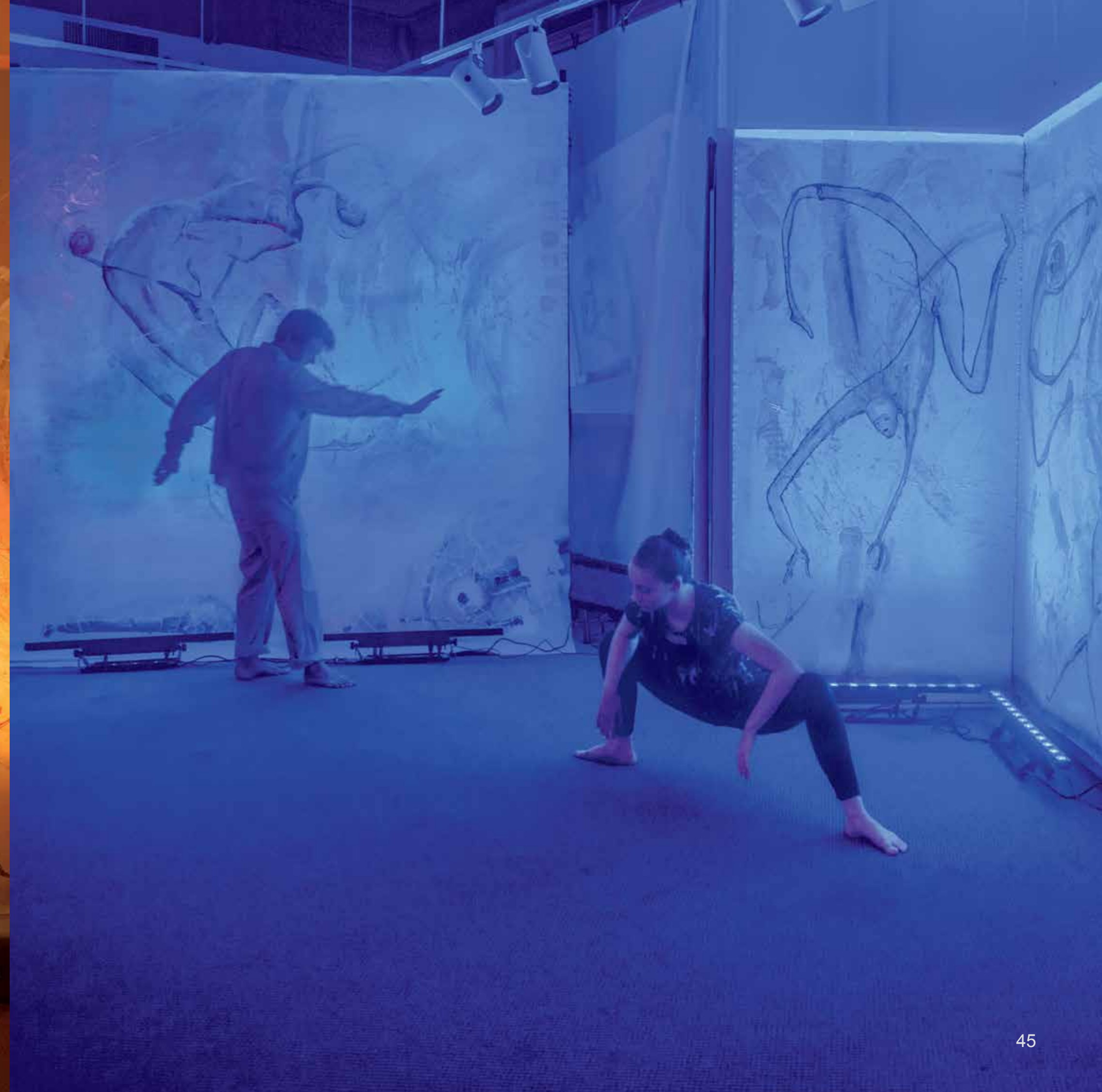






















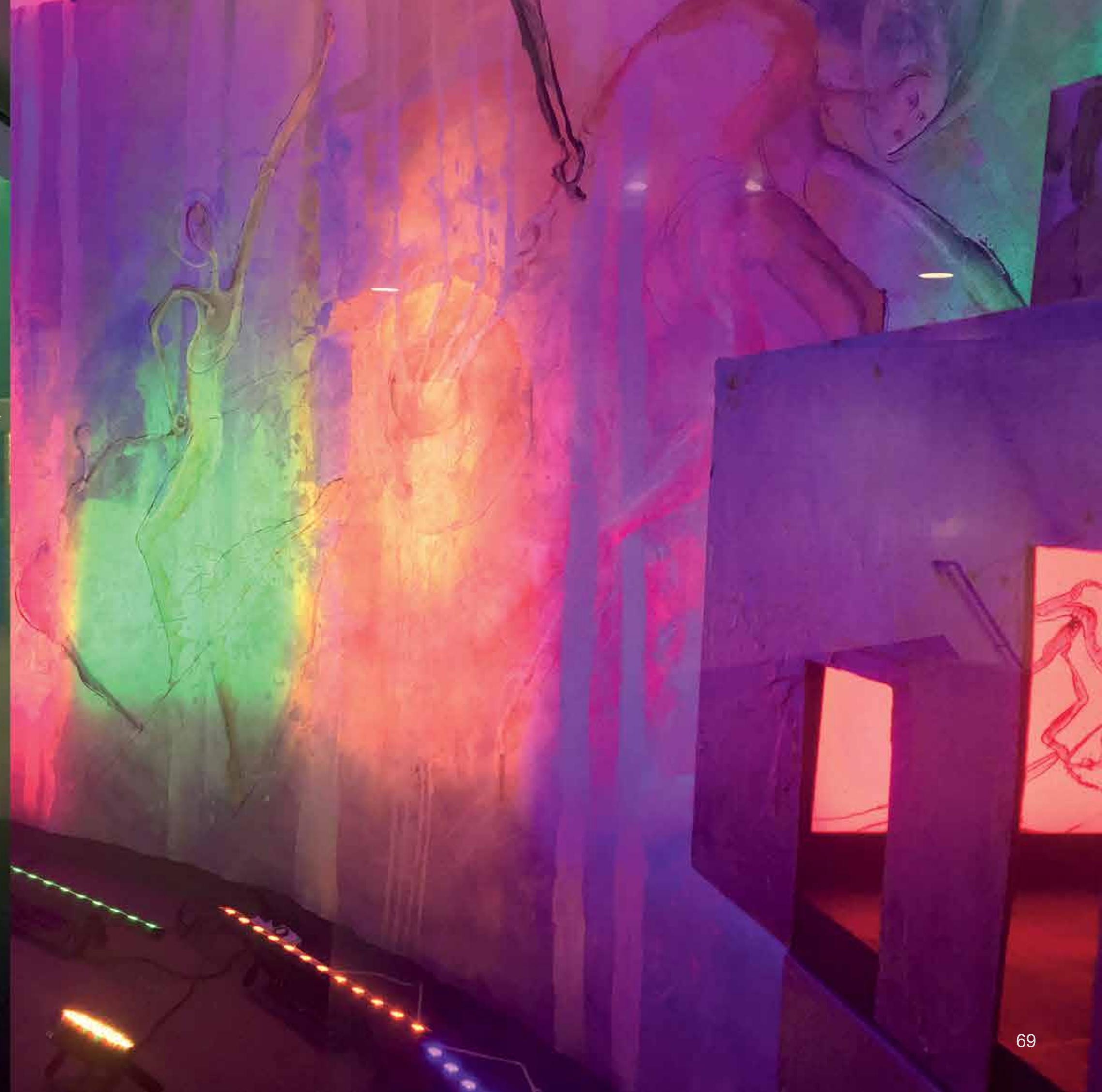












dreams

layers of gestural marks and washes. harkening back to the surrealists’ practice of automatic writing. — *Sandra Bacon Artist, Curator, Educator*

Imagine walking through a 120’ corridor of immersive artwork. Bert Leveille combines painting, video and a play of ever changing LED lights that take us through layers of consciousness In a dreamlike ambience.

Monumental paintings are unfurled like tapestries both against the wall in gallery fashion and also free falling to reveal both sides.

Amorphic beings emerge from layers of gestural marks and washes. harkening back to the surrealists’ practice of automatic writing. Leveille’s figures feel like a conduit to the subconscious. . .

As the colors flicker, the figures are revealed and concealed . Nothing stays static. As soon as the viewer identifies a group of figures another story emerges. From cool to warm colors the figures

dance and move , a juxtaposition balancing different dreamlike scenarios. The videos interspersed along the corridor complement the everchanging energy. Leveille’s work is uniquely her own, deeply personal, ambitious, both spiritual and aesthetic.

— *Sandra Bacon*

streaming reflections

They swoop and bend and perform magical arabesques, both as solo performers and as animated partners. — *Ann Landi, Contributing Editor, ARTnews; Founder and Editor, Vasari21.com*

It’s never easy for the critic to understand where an artist’s imagery comes from and how it evolves. Joan Miró, Arshile Gorky, and Jackson Pollock—three of Bert Leveille’s favorites—started off as figurative painters of one stripe or another and gradually moved through stages, often lasting years, toward a completely abstract language. For Leveille, the process seems to have been the reverse. In her large acrylic series from several years ago, paintings like Hair Revisited or Sacrifice, the human figure is treated almost like an afterthought, one of many elements in an explosive and almost apocalyptic mash-up of color and shape and line. Over time, though, the figure has come to take precedence, and in her most recent series, “Streaming Reflections,” these fluid beings, neither entirely male nor female, have a presence that is quite literally larger than life.

They swoop and bend and perform magical arabesques, both as solo performers and as animated partners. They are otherworldly, and yet strangely benign. In conversation, Leveille refers to these magical creatures as “mindful beings,” and adds that she’s hopeful

that with a more universal, meditative presentation she can “have just a little part of helping people raise their consciousness.” While working on the installation, the artist—like the rest of us—was overwhelmed by news of immigrants’ struggles at the border of the U.S. “It’s not just that we’re related to mindful beings in the universe,” she says. “We’re not all that different from the people at our borders.”

The theatrical elements of her work have their roots in Leveille’s earliest experiences as a student at Elmhurst College in Elmhurst, IL, a western suburb of Chicago. She was drawn first to the drama department, until she realized she did not really want to be an actress or engage with other aspects of the theater. At the same time, she was taking art classes and saw painting and drawing as a better form of expression for her. Over the years her mature work evolved steadily toward what is now commonly referred to as an “interactive art experience.”

About fifteen years ago, Leveille made an installation for a gallery that houses an atom splitter (an accelerator in which scientists staged the nuclear reactions that led to the development

of the atomic bomb). For the inaugural exhibit, Leveille first used a silver ground on which to deploy her fluid characters. Not until 2015 did she return to the silver painting technique. She now starts with several layers of silver, but has recently added colored spotlights—and the lighting, she discovered, acts like another medium, bringing the walls and paintings to vibrant life. The lighting also highlights and ties together elements of the various paintings so that a magical ballet unfolds on all four walls.

In conversation, Leveille speaks of “spirituality” and her desire to connect with a “more universal consciousness.” These are sentiments very much of our times, when many turn to meditation, not just as a way of cooling our hyperactive brains but of tuning into a higher realm of being, where possibilities of ecstasy exist and can be accessed through art. Like Rothko’s large and dreamy canvases, Leveille’s installations invite us to lose ourselves in an encounter that transcends the irritations and limitations of the day to day. It may not go on forever, but it’s a welcome respite from an increasingly troubled world.

— *Ann Landi*

streaming reflections

expresses the relationship between the visual and the collective consciousness revealing how art has the ability to take us on a journey — *Caren Helene Rudman, Curator, Artist*

The Art Center Highland Park presents a solo exhibition of artist Bert Leveille, creating a site specific art installation exploring consciousness, light, and movement. Bert implements a full experiential component to her work, using light to intensify the experience. Streaming Reflections’ large-scale paintings complete the stage’s transformation into an “alternate” world where the dancing figure seems to flow across space. Bert states. “I am exploring consciousness. I present abstraction and light with the intent to create a meditative space to walk into — a place where one can enter a stream of consciousness — strands of the past, present and future; reflections of both our interior and exterior realities. As I paint, I attempt to connect to consciousness and reflect on myself and my world as I perceive it —

question and explore thought, and my connection to a greater consciousness. I see myself as a conduit — data filters through me.” Bert Leveille is a contemporary Chicago area artist employing mediums including video, animation, LED changing lighting, mixed media, canvas, and acrylic paint. Each installation offers a unique experience for the artist and the viewer. Her life-size mindful beings that inhabit her large-scale paintings are not necessarily human. But, they are imbued with the same challenges, emotions, desires, pain, uncertainty, disappointments, and victories. “I see them more like me than not; you more like me than not; and my reality more connected to the greater universe than not.” These mindful beings therefore reflect the collective

consciousness that together streams throughout the universe. Bert’s exceptional work expresses the relationship between the visual and the collective consciousness revealing how art has the ability to take us on a journey. As literature creates worlds in the unconscious imagination, Bert’s work reflects the other worldly aspects of thought, imagination and wonderment. In the process, what is uniquely human is stripped down to its most fundamental, where form represents a universal rather than a particular gender, race, or age. To walk into the space, one is surrounded by light, the still image swirling in constant motion, while the pure energy of the experience expands our horizons.

— *Caren Helene Rudman*

streaming reflections

Collective Consciousness, flying even out the window and into the square and into space—wave’s don’t die—and they want a ripple — *B. David Zarley, Writer, Art Critic*

Waves Don’t Die ~ ~ ~I ~I ~L~Look, bert is trying, right?, they’re all trying, artists and philosophers and physicists and priests and economists and mathematicians and computer scientists, their artificial intelligences and machine learning algorithms, they’re all trying to hook into that vespine vibe, Yoda’s catechism, the Collective Consciousness; every single one of them wants to channel the Collective Consciousness, and not a single arrant one has a true, definitive Answer, no bat phone with which they can call it up, which means they all have an Answer, and bert’s seems as possible, then, as any of t~t~T~There’s a true purpose to what they are doing here, to the the canvas, naked and raw, inviting in its softness and lack of manipulation; to the alien figures—they are like us in gestural form, less physiology than a spirit, less a figure than a feeling—who first bewilder, next frighten, next coax through chimerical, impossible dance, apian language, coquettish motion, come join us, uncanny valley bridged

by dancing limbs, colonial beckoning into bert’s attempt to dial us up, or in the very least inspire us to try, to join what they call “mindful figures,” who stretch like the event horizon, limbs like coat hangers and ampersands, bodies free from the brutal oppression of outline and anatomy, black and grey with gilded obliques, violet hair, sanguine lips, eyes abyssal yet alive, abalone chests and clavicles, different and yet us, a possible us, who dance freely along the tops of the nanowaves surfing the universe like, well, the Silver Surfer, because bert knows all figures are the same, right?, they all connect b~b~B~Bathed in light, and the light’s really part of it, right?, cold to warm and back again, the sidereal cycle of life and the universe, blue violet red orange yellow green blue violet ... light is both a particle and a wave, and those waves wash over everything; they emanate from spots—circles are everywhere! superannuated ring pulls, open up!—and encompass the canvas; they break in all directions, an impossible surf, bouncing off the ceiling,

the floor, the cones, the selenic stages on which the mindful figures dance, light as atmosphere, as analogue to the Collective Consciousness, flying even out the window and into the square and into space—wave’s don’t die—and they want a ripple from this art, the frequency of which changes everything around it and bounces off the silver which ~f~f~F~Flows from time itself; from toe-walking and unaffordable ballet lessons and a longstanding love of dance, from a silver born with the split of an atom, argent beacons that bounce off that wonderful light, and it’s all connected!, all of it!, you and me and bert and the mindful figures, the light waves and memories and physical paintings they’re throwing into the water to send ripples—signals—across the surface of the Collective Consciousness; it’s all there, time and space and particles and waves, and bert wants you to just surf ... welcome to us all, locals only meaning the universe...

— *B David Zarley*

connecting

spiritual peritoneum composed of thousands of years of synapses and suffering, science, philosophy, art, myth, religion, and the personal ties — *B. David Zarley, Writer, Art Critic*

HUMAN NEBULAE: One could be forgiven — when in Rome — for the erroneous names perched, like kestrels ready to hurtle themselves; hollow bones and hewing scythes a thrill, into the breach, on the tongue, the Classic and Holy and Deific names of the Western canon and the study of the stars, their armor shined and enormous mien roused in preparation to be applied to Connecting. Connecting, the four massive canvases-cum-banners are, after all, massive, sitting betwixt — no, floating in — the space between the ceiling and the floor, the walls and observers, between breathes and blinks and sighs and flights and falls, and they exert a certain pull, the old bowling-ball-on-a-blanket gravitational dip, wherein they draw all the eyes and bodies toward them. And, are they not meant to be enjoyed in orbit, round and round, the observation of both sides of their Janus face — our first god! — requisite to their power? Even the very colors evoke planets, a Saturnine melange of rapeseed and saffron, a brutal slash of Martian carmine, the mud and cream and blood of a Jovian hurricane, the gravid purple of a nascent Earth, freshly seeded...

Yes, one could be forgiven for approaching Connecting as one does the heavenly bodies; to have one's perceptions extended, telescoped, up beyond the gasping void into heaven, except, well... How to put this — it isn't

so much that one would be wrong, exactly — this is art, after all! The only vile affect is none, and then it is the sleeping observer or toothless artist who should be castigated, or, if at all possible, riven. But the nut of it is that bert leveille does not believe in heaven, per se, the catechetical construct, and what she is trying to put across over the divide is of a monumental scope, catholic.

What leveille is after — what she is connecting to, connecting us to — is the collective consciousness, the cultural patina of humanity, the spiritual peritoneum composed of thousands of years of synapses and suffering, science, philosophy, art, myth, religion, and the personal ties which bind — invisible spider webs, inscrutable circulatory system — and which envelopes and develops our ipseity and environment.

Environment is key to leveille's work; from the day the oleaginous scent of greasepaint — unctuous python! — slithered into her sinus passages and drove her from drama to diorama, the idea of the set has been crucial; this is why Connecting is loosed onto the audience, untreated, raw, let down off the wall, so that we may move about it, ensconce it, relate to it spatially and create around it a world, create within it a world; until the desire is to dive into one as one would a pool.

Spectrum of Consciousness takes the idea even further, its five panels allowing it an array of arthritic serpentine poses, a constantly shifting structure creating a myriad of spaces — sets — as the observer wants. Through Spectrum's apertures and wounds one catches glimpses, separated briefly in space and time, of the ad hoc collective consciousness formed around the screen.

The collective consciousness, as leveille renders it, is something of a brume, prismatic or ashen, a nebulae within which human figures, purposeful and pareidolic, materialize. They are floating, surreal eyes, or swipes of color assuming corporeal form, atavistic echoes of Chauvet, the reflected light of a quasar.

On the back side of Connecting 1, in that hot passionate flush of red, one finds perhaps the most effective analogue of Connecting, the exhibition, and leveille's collective consciousness: The diluted red acrylic — mitigated by time, water, the thin distance and thirsting fibers of the canvas — is mirrored, aggrandized, in the blood and armor of its descendant side, emerging from the gloaming of the recent — distant — all extant — past like the dread riding pinks of a fox hunter in the fog, forever behind the fox and yet forever diving its future.

— *B David Zarley*



A sincere thank you to all of my patrons and supporters most notably RKD; to the art community; to all who gave me the opportunity to exhibit in their venues; to all who assisted me with implementing these exhibitions; and of course to all who have taken the time to view my art in person, on-line, or in print.

THANK YOU — *bert leveille*

contents

p1-3	DREAMS 2, Starline
p4-5	THE END IS THE BEGINNING, OCHAC
p6-7	DREAMS 2, Starline
p8-9	CONNECTING with details, Starline
p10-11	DREAMS 2, Starline
p12-13	FRACTALS, Starline
p14-15	DREAMS 2 (left); WATERFALL (right), Starline
p16-17	FRACTALS (left); detail (right), Starline
p18-19	TUNNEL, Schaumburg Prairie Center
p20-23	DREAMS 2, Starline
p24-29	DREAMS installation, Starline
p30-31	DREAMS 2, Starline
p32-33	DREAMS, Starline
p34-35	WALL, Starline
p36-39	STREAMING REFLECTIONS, OCHAC large vault
p40	EXPLORING CONSCIOUSNESS, Starline (left); STREAMING REFLECTIONS, OCHAC (right)
p41	EXPLORING CONSCIOUSNESS, Starline
p42-45	STREAMING REFLECTIONS, OCHAC
p46-53	STREAMING REFLECTIONS, TACHP
p54-55	STREAMING REFLECTIONS, OCHAC
p56-59	SYNAPSE, OCHAC small vault
p60-61	DREAMS 2 (left); WATERFALL (right), Starline
p62-65	DREAMS 2 (left); detail (right), Starline
p66-67	DREAMS 2, Starline
p68-69	STREAMING REFLECTIONS - CROSSOVER, Adlai
p70	ESSAY by Sandra Bacon Artist, Curator, Educator
p71	ESSAY by Ann Landi, Contributing Editor, ARTnews; Founder and Editor, Vasari21.com
p72	ESSAY by Caren Helene Rudman, Curator, Artist
p73-74	ESSAYS by B. David Zarley, Writer, Art Critic
p75	EXPLORING CONSCIOUSNESS, Starline
p76	CONTENTS

credits

VENUES:

Adlai Stevenson H.S., Lincolnshire, IL

Old Court House Art Center (OCHAC),
galleries and vaults, Woodstock IL

Schaumburg Prairie Center for the Arts, Schaumburg IL

Starline, galleries and event spaces, Harvard IL

The Art Center Highland Park (TACHP), Highland Park, IL

POETS:

Jen May & Annie Hex

"AS IT HAPPENS" - "SYNAPSE" collaboration –
p 56 & 57

PRFORMERS:

Ellyanna Hope Anderson, dancer – p45 & 46

Shawn Coyle, choreographer "TUNNEL"
and Shawn Coyle dancers – p18 & 19

smoovEments, performance artist – p45

PHOTOGRAPHERS:

Eldon-Schulz-Photography©2018 – p 45 & 47

Victoria Senn – p 56 & 57

contact

bert leveille

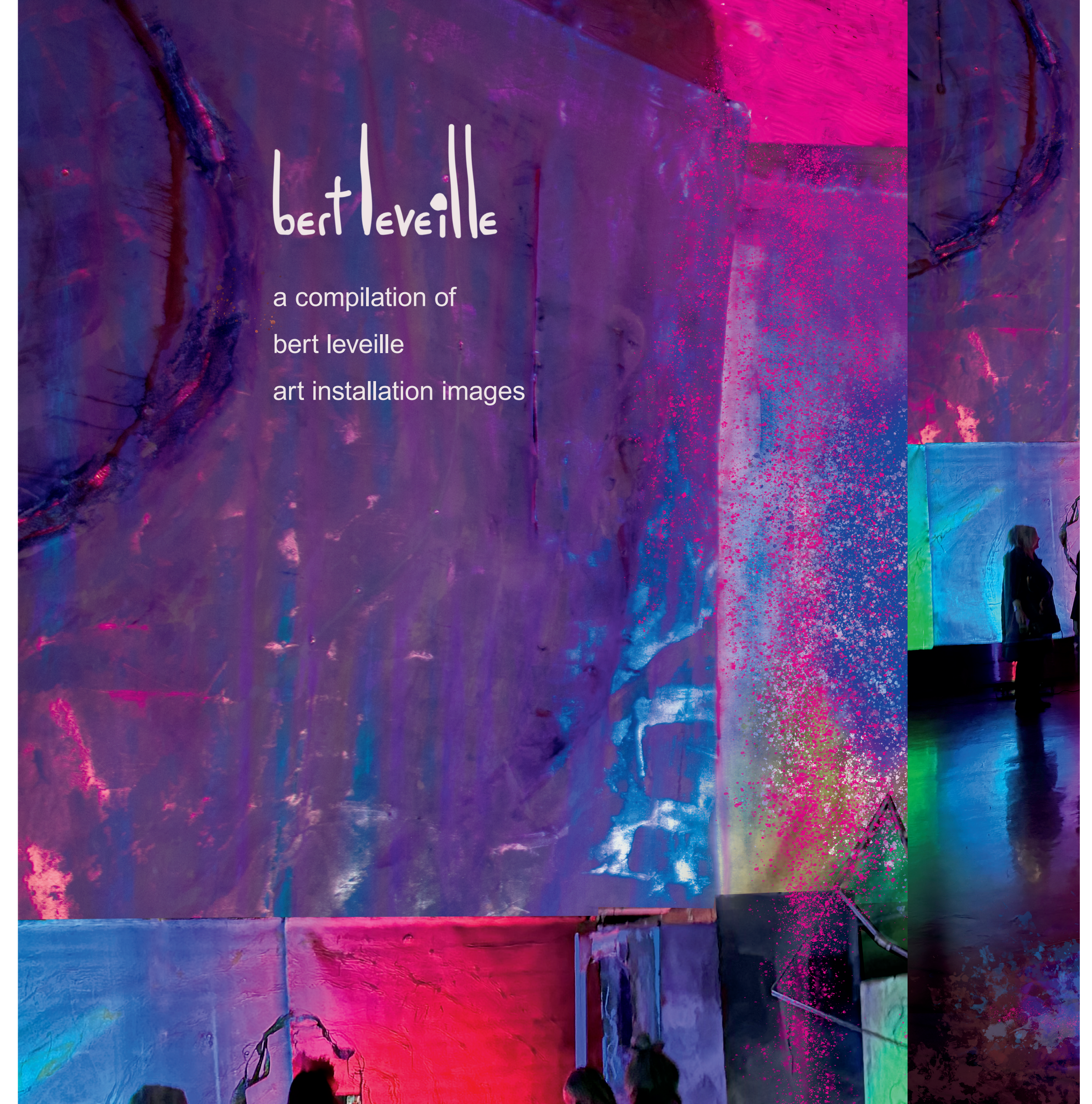
WEB-SITE: www.bertleveille.com

PHONE: 708-309-3333

EMAIL: bert@bertleveille.com

Studio: 204F, Starline Studios, Harvard, IL

Mail: PO Box 1123, Woodstock, IL 60098



bert leveille

a compilation of
bert leveille
art installation images