An abstract painting featuring a complex interplay of colors and textures. The background is dominated by vibrant blue and green hues, with darker, more muted tones of brown and black interspersed. Overlaid on this are numerous thick, expressive brushstrokes in a bright red color, creating a sense of movement and depth. The overall effect is one of dynamic energy and layered meaning.

Vian Sora

Noosphere

Independent NY

Booth 606

May 9-12, 2024

DAVID NOLAN GALLERY



David Nolan Gallery is pleased to present *Noosphere*, a new series of paintings by Vian Sora. The noosphere, a philosophical concept often summed up as the “thinking layer of earth,” or the “sphere of reason,” represents the highest level of evolution, that of humankind’s rational activities in pursuit of a unified consciousness. As Sora’s paintings reimagine our collective journey towards growth and transcendence, her works are particularly urgent within today’s landscape unsettled by violence, political extremism and the looming destruction of our natural environment, each unresolved due to differences amongst humans. The paintings contrast beauty and brutality, chaos and control to symbolize rebirth and growth within a metaphorical detritus, the elemental conditions for our imperiled evolution.

Vian Sora initiates each work with a disciplined chaos, covering surfaces in a barrage of fast-drying spray paint, acrylics, pigments and inks, using whatever is within arm's reach — brushes, sponges, paper, nylons, spray bottles or even the force of her own breath — to create passages of intricate texture that might be described as delicate if not for the intensity of color they comprise. The associations they evoke range from the earthly (desiccated land, wood grain, animal pelt), to the celestial (gaseous cloud formations, swirling interstellar dust), to the biological and grotesque (networks of capillaries, fragments of bone).

Over this visual bewilderment, Sora carves out forms with exacting control, using a small flat brush to apply an opaque layer of paint, usually in two or three distinct and saturated hues, occasionally with a gradated effect. Through this process, a peculiar sort of optical trickery occurs as the opaque sections recede to the background and cause the textured base layer to be viewed as foreground elements.

Sora is highly intentional in the shapes she calls forth from the confusion, as in *Verdict*, on the left side of the canvas, she creates the suggestion of a figure, perhaps a woman, with a pink face and golden garments; to the right, a more ominous form — a black crow, or maybe a raven — threatens to overtake the human figure in its exaggerated size.

Abstract patches of pink and white and black swirl around them, as if whirling, subconscious hauntings, yet Sora is able to assert a sense of composure and assuredness with the soft curves of azure blue she carves into the textured background.

Many of Sora's works take on the characteristics of landscapes, with clearly demarcated horizon lines, gradient skies and a profusion of bloom- and foliage-like shapes; in interviews, the Baghdad-born Sora has recalled with fondness the hours of her childhood spent among the roses and pomegranate shrubs of her grandmother's garden in that ancient, fertile crescent. Some of her shapes are sharply defined and present more clearly as tropical foliage or a bird's plumage, with textures that recall stars scattered across the cosmos. Still, Sora leaves plenty of room for ambiguity and darkness, as when joyful memories of home are tainted with the painful knowledge that one can never return there.

- *Natalie Weis*

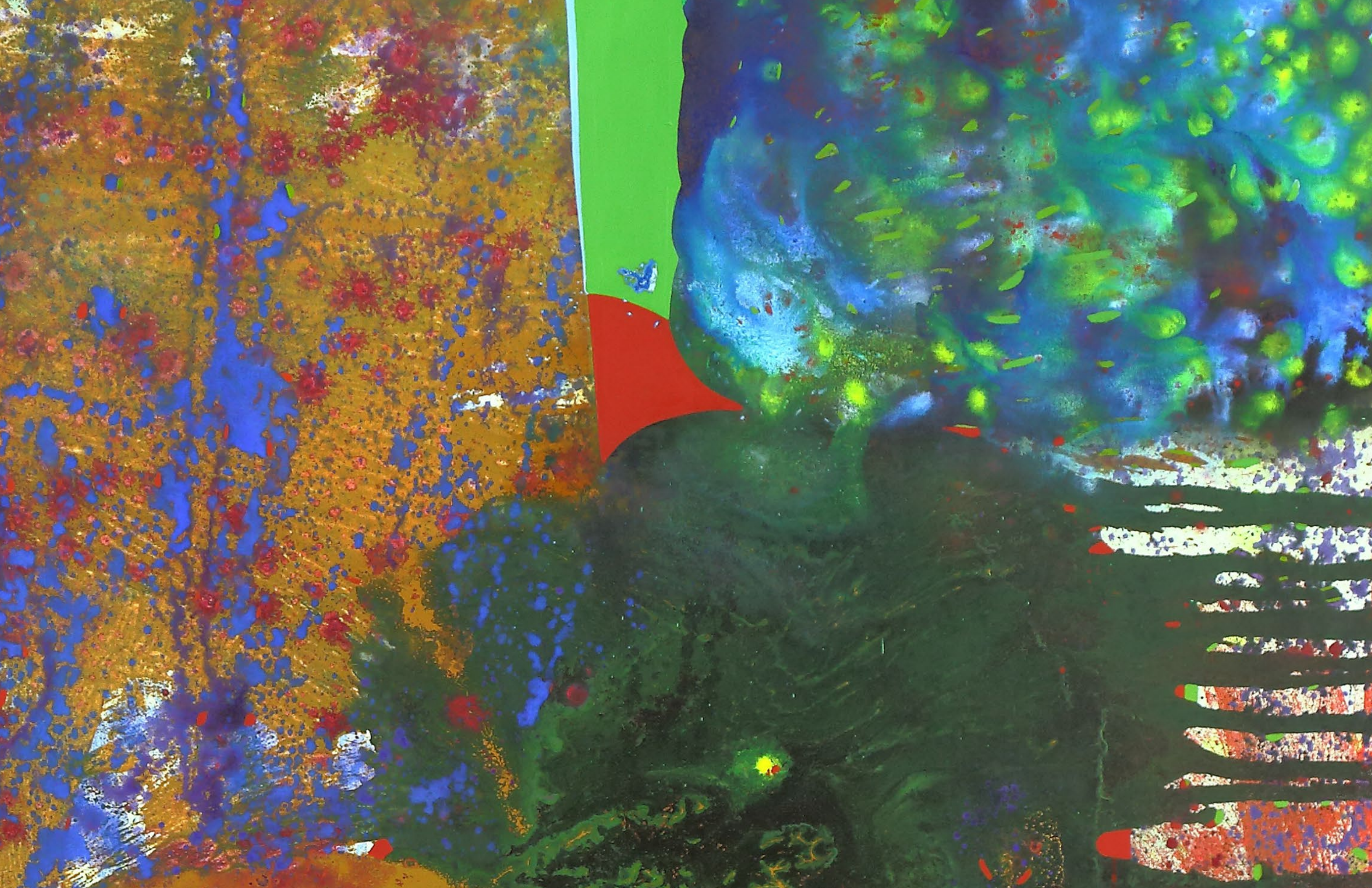
About Vian Sora

Vian Sora (b. 1976, Baghdad, Iraq) has lived and worked in Louisville, KY, since 2009. She received a BS from Al Mansour University in Baghdad, Iraq, in 2000 and studied printmaking at the Istanbul Museum of Graphic Art in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2007. Sora's work has been presented in solo and group exhibitions nationally and internationally including the Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY; Contemporary Arts Center (CAC), Cincinnati, OH; Sharjah Biennale, Sharjah, UAE; Imoga Istanbul Museum of Graphic Art, Istanbul, Turkey; Japanese Foundation Culture Center, Ankara, Turkey; Baghdad Art International Art Festival, Iraq; KMAC Triennial, Louisville, KY; and Grinnell College Museum of Art, Grinnell, IA; among others.

Commencing in 2025, Vian Sora will have a traveling solo museum exhibition at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA; the Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY; and the Asia Society of Houston, TX. Sora's work is included in the collections of the Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD; Dar El Cid Museum, Kuwait City, Kuwait; KMAC Museum, Louisville, KY; Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA; Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY; Grinnell College Museum of Art, Grinnell, IA; Ministry of Culture Contemporary Collection, Baghdad, Iraq; the Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, OH; Fidelity Art Collection, Boston, MA; Shah Garg Foundation, New York, NY; as well as numerous private collections.



VIAN SORA (b. 1976)
Ecotones II, 2023
oil on canvas with mixed media
67 x 72 x 2 in (170.2 x 182.9 x 5.1 cm)
(VS9153)



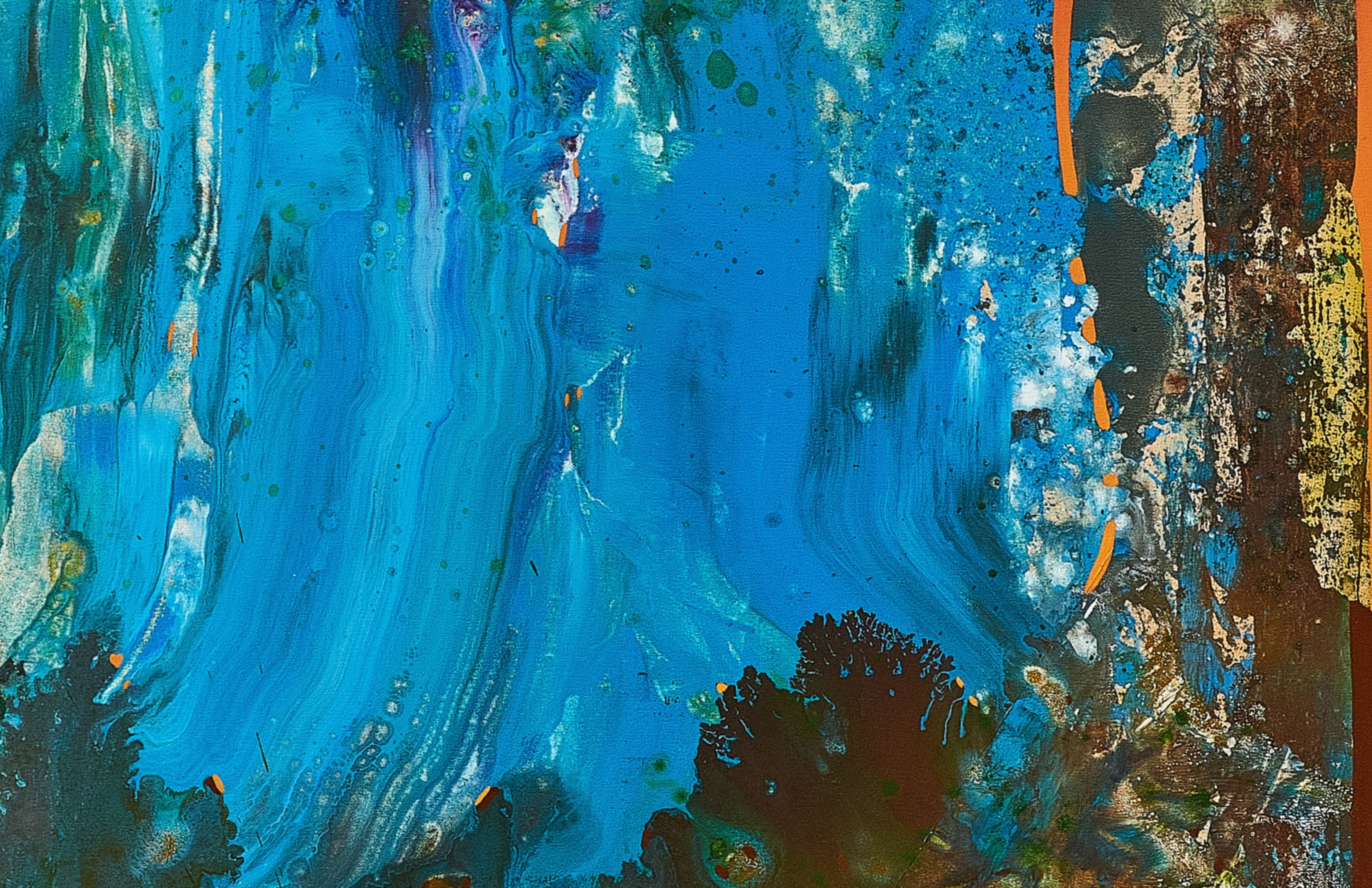
VIAN SORA (b. 1976)
Biomimicry I, 2024
oil on canvas with mixed media
72 x 65 in (182.9 x 165.1 cm)
(VS9203)







VIAN SORA (b. 1976)
Biomimicry II, 2024
oil on canvas with mixed media
84 x 65 in (213.4 x 165.1 cm)
(VS9204)



VIAN SORA (b. 1976)
Noosphere, 2024
oil on canvas with mixed media
72 x 48 in (182.9 x 121.9 cm)
(VS9205)







VIAN SORA (b. 1976)
Dragoman IV, 2024
oil on canvas with mixed media
30 x 30 in (76.2 x 76.2 cm)
(VS9210)



VIAN SORA (b. 1976)
Dragoman III, 2024
oil on canvas with mixed media
30 x 30 in (76.2 x 76.2 cm)
(VS9211)







VIAN SORA (b. 1976)
Dragoman I, 2024
oil on canvas with mixed media
30 x 30 in (76.2 x 76.2 cm)
(VS9207)



INDEPENDENT

Spring Studios
50 Varick St.
New York, NY 10013

Preview Day
Thursday, May 9, 5–8pm

Public Hours
Friday, May 10, 11am–7pm
Saturday, May 11, 11am–7pm
Sunday, May 12, 11am–6pm

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31 E. 21st Street, New York, NY 10003 | Tel: 212.693.1111 | www.davidnolanguard.com