



BARE LIMBS
HELEN TEEDE

FIRST FLOOR GALLERY HARARE

Bare Limbs

“A rose is a rose is a rose” is one of the most quoted and paraphrased line in twentieth century poetry. Written by Gertrude Stein in 1913 it was and remains profoundly avant-garde in its simplicity and conception. Even though the first “rose” in the original conception was a reference to a person, we now recognise it and assimilate the statement as a way of seeing things for what they are and the way they are, in art and in life.

Looking at Helen Teede’s work in Bare Limbs, an analogous phrase comes to mind - ‘a painting is a painting is a painting’. All too frequently in contemporary art, we are in a rush to dissect the artist’s intent, to reduce the work to the illustration of some set ideas filtered through the didactics of the artist’s formal identity. However to abuse a cliché – at the end of the day, a painting is a painting is a painting, it is what it is, it does what it does and if it does it very well, then this is more than enough.

So what we see in Bare Limbs is the essence of a painter painting and making paintings in a way that is an exploration of the medium in the same way as it is an exploration of self in a way that is visual, visceral, physical and auto-biographical. In more ways than one, Bare Limbs is a microcosm and a macrocosm of the artist’s experience as a human being and as an artist. Scaling from monumental to miniature, rich impasto to loose drawn lines, from intense abstraction to subtle figuration and text are a spectrum of contemporary explorations of the medium and its relationship with art history from a deeply personal perspective.

In an era when artists are under enormous pressure to categorise, dissect and justify their practices through the strictures of social utility and virtue signaling of social justice agendas, Teede’s works insist on giving her audiences the freedom to experience, freedom to interpret and freedom to engage with her work on their own terms. Bare Limbs is an emphatic rejoinder not only that painting defies reductionist strategies of political theory but also a conclusive vindication for personal indeed being political.

Valerie Kabov
Curator

Helen Teede

Born in 1988, Zimbabwe

Lives and works in Harare, Zimbabwe

Helen Teede is a visual artist from Zimbabwe, working primarily in painting. She completed her Bachelor of Arts in Fine Art at the University of Cape Town and Honours in English Literature in 2013 and began working full time as an artist in Zimbabwe with First Floor Gallery Harare in 2015. She has participated in numerous group and solo exhibitions in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Canada and Dubai as well as participating in a major exhibition of contemporary African Art in Perth, Australia (2017) and a survey of Zimbabwean painting at the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary African Art in Cape Town, South Africa (2018-2019). In February 2017, she was selected as one of ten emerging African artists for the curated section, “Tomorrows/Today” of Cape Town Art Fair and in September of that year she was invited to speak on a panel at the International Conference for African Cultures (ICAC) at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe. At the start of 2018 she attended an invitational two-month residency program with two other Zimbabwean artists in Tel Aviv. She has published written work in Art Africa Magazine, Something We Africans Got magazine, and The Art Section.

Recent Exhibitions

- Traffic Festival Delle Anime Gentili: San Lorenzo in Campo, Italy. 2019
- Home Affairs, Daor Contemporary: Cape Town, South Africa 2019
- The Harare Fauves, Alon Segev Gallery: Tel Aviv, Israel. 2019
- Investec Cape Town Art Fair, First Floor Gallery Harare: Cape Town, South Africa 2019
- Without Breaking Anything, Matter Gallery, Toronto, Canada. 2018
- Five Bobh. Zeitz Museum of Contemporary African Art (MOCAA), Cape Town. South Africa. 2018
- FNB Joburg Art Fair. First Floor Gallery Harare, in Johannesburg, South Africa. 2018 •Next Level. First Floor Gallery Harare, in Harare, Zimbabwe. 2018
- Cape Town Art Fair. First Floor Gallery Harare, in Cape Town, South Africa. 2018



A Raw Afternoon, Part 1, 2019
Oil on Canvas



Graduation, 2019
Oil on Linen
200cm x 170cm



Tempest, 2019
Oil on Linen
200cm x 170 cm



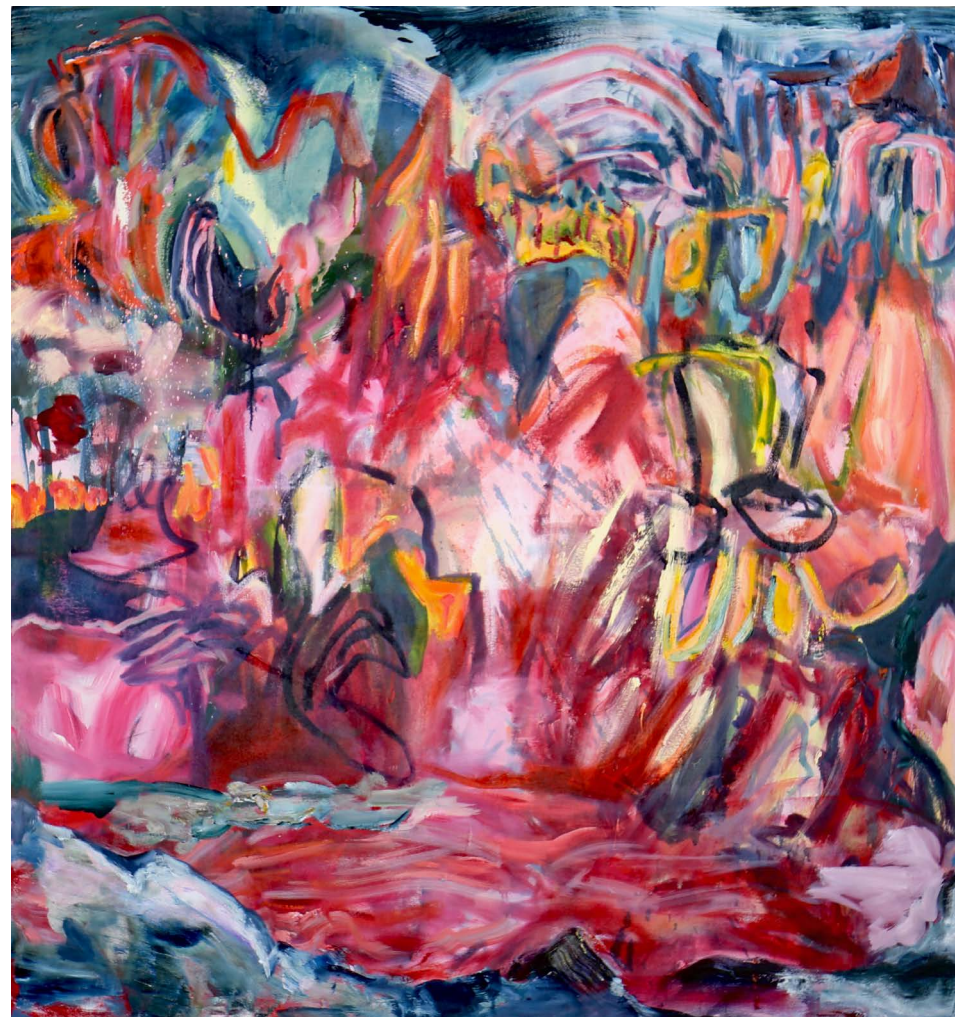
Ecosystems, 2019
Oil on Linen
200cm x 170cm



Empty Chest, 2019
Oil on Canvas
190cm x 160cm



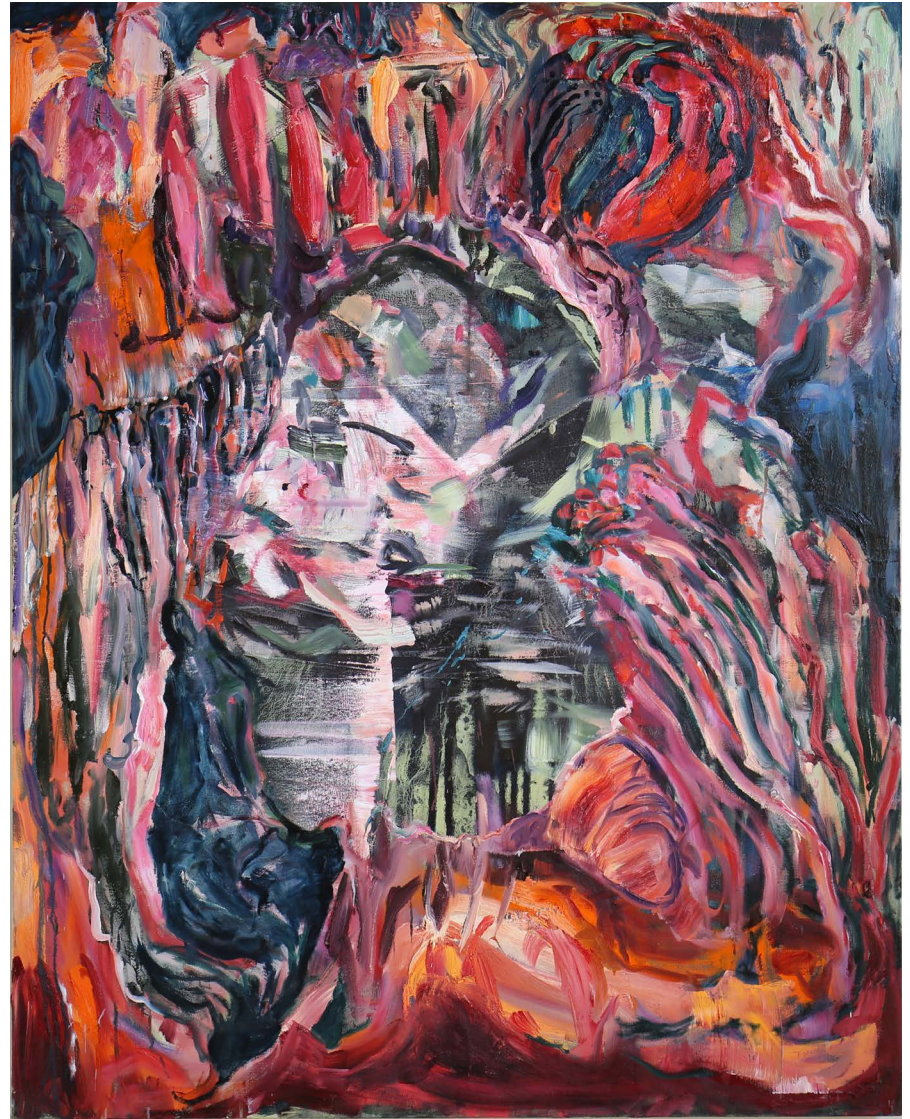
Leopards Kop in August, Part 2, 2019
Oil on Canvas
145cm x150cm



Leopards Kop in August, Part 3, 2019
Oil on Canvas
145cm x150cm



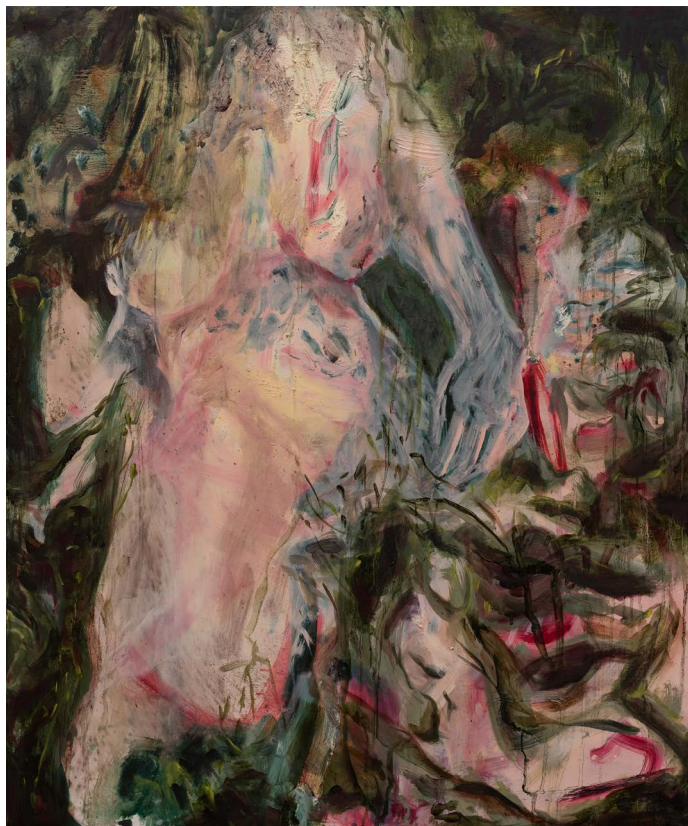
A Raw Afternoon, Part 2, 2019
Oil on Canvas
150cm x 120cm



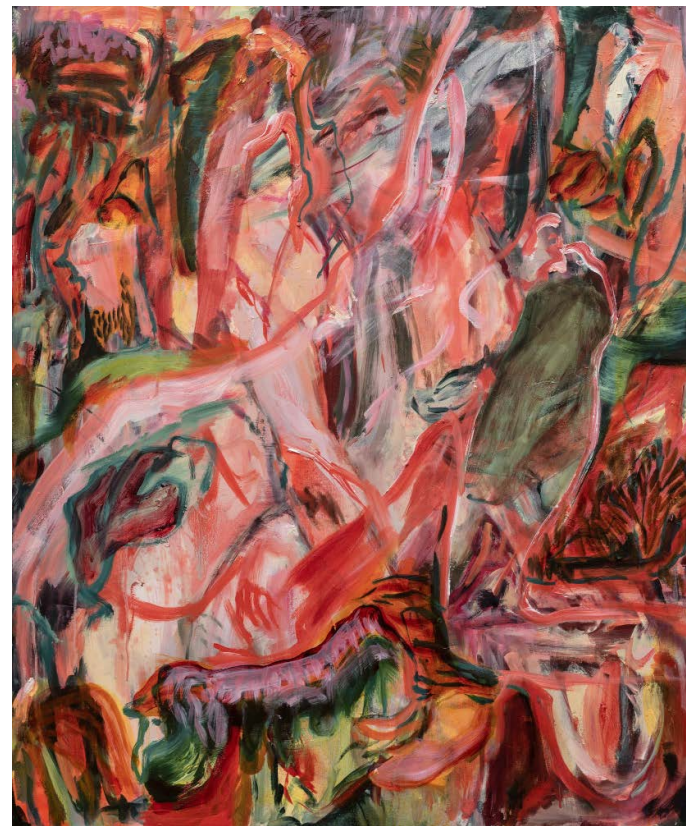
A Raw Afternoon, Part 3, 2019
Oil on Canvas
150cm x 120cm



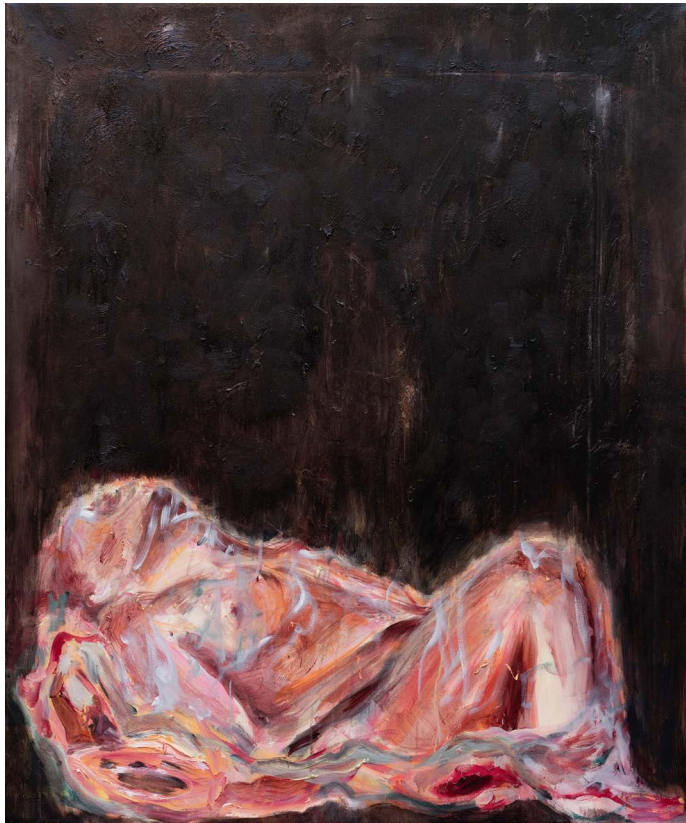
A Raw Afternoon, Part 4, 2019
Oil on Canvas
150cm x 120cm



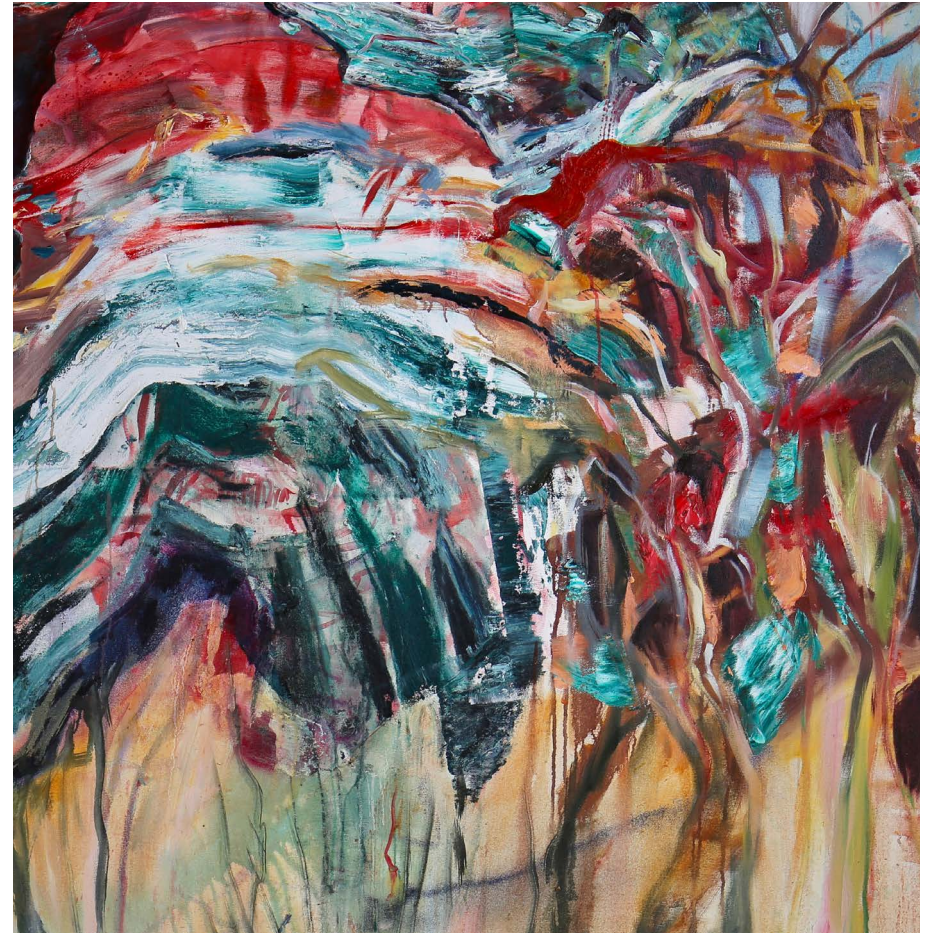
Fleshly Forest, 2019
Oil on Canvas
75cm x 90 cm



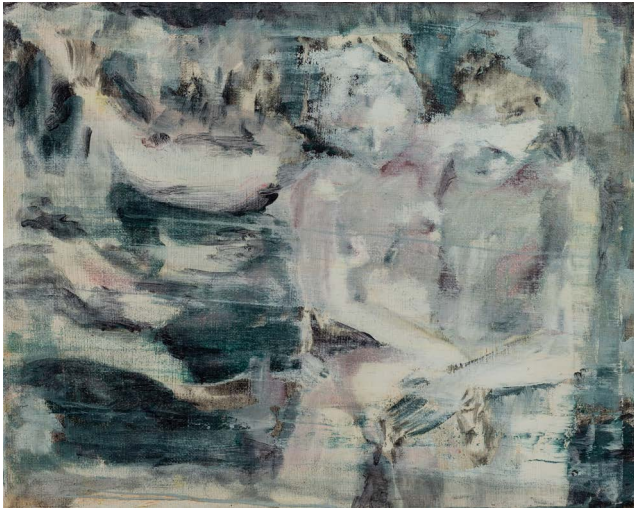
Suspended, 2019
Oil on Canvas
75cm x 90 cm



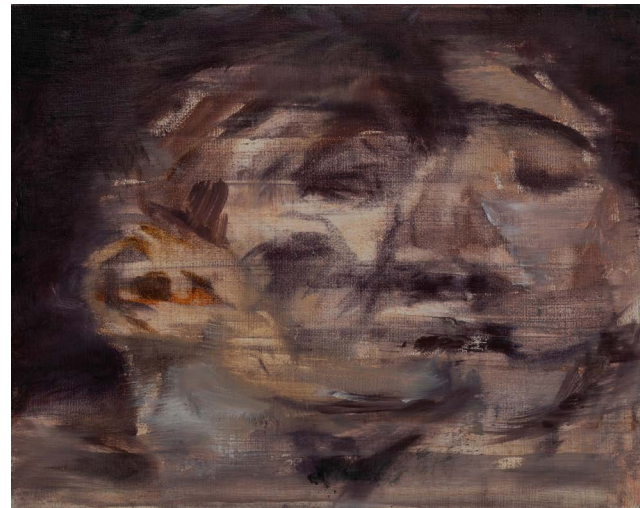
Little Death, 2019
Oil on Canvas
75cm x 90 cm



Leopards Kop in August, 2019
Oil on Canvas
145cm x 150cm



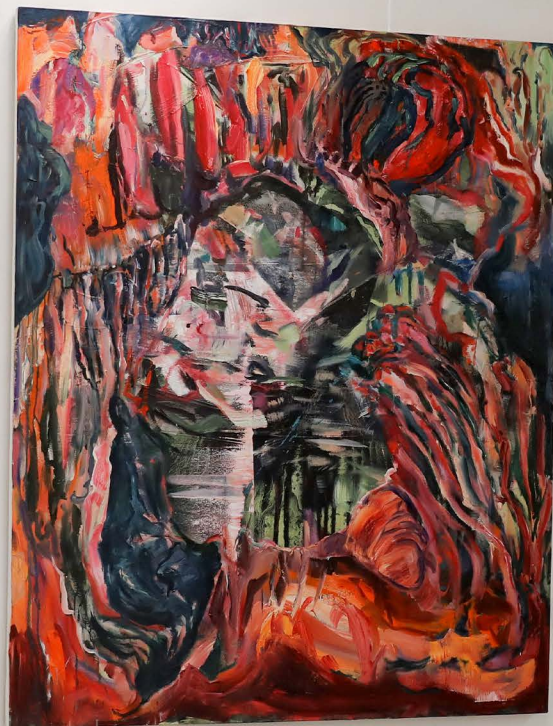
Graduation(Study), 2019
Oil on Canvas
24.5cm x 19.5 cm



People Stare Carefully, 2019
Oil on Canvas
24.5cm x 19.5 cm









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