

Melissa Rao,

Melissa la O,

EDDEN

10 Nov - 02 Dec 2017

Words by Jeppe Ugelvig | Critic, curator

Melissa la O' is a Filipino artist based in Manila, Philippines. Trained an architect, she completed her studies at the SCI-Arc School of Architecture in Los Angeles in the 1990s, continuing to Columbia University in New York, after which she oversaw several international projects at the intersection between design, architecture, art, and science both in Manila and abroad.

LaO's painterly practice departs from this cross-interdisciplinary methodology to broadly inquire into questions of space, place, and the possibilities of representation. Her large-scale works in oil depict abstracted scenes of nature, suggesting expanses of water, vegetation, and natural sediments, sometimes in direct reference to the tropical lands of her native Philippines. In this way, la O writes herself into the global and diverse histories of landscape painting, critiquing the pastoral romanticism of scenes of nature. Under la O's treatment, nature is processed instead in architectural terms, deconstructed into indexical and organizational components, hinting to the viewer at the indexical impulse in all human perception of the non-human.



EARLY EDEN BLUE, Oil on canvas, 61cm x 51 cm, 2015



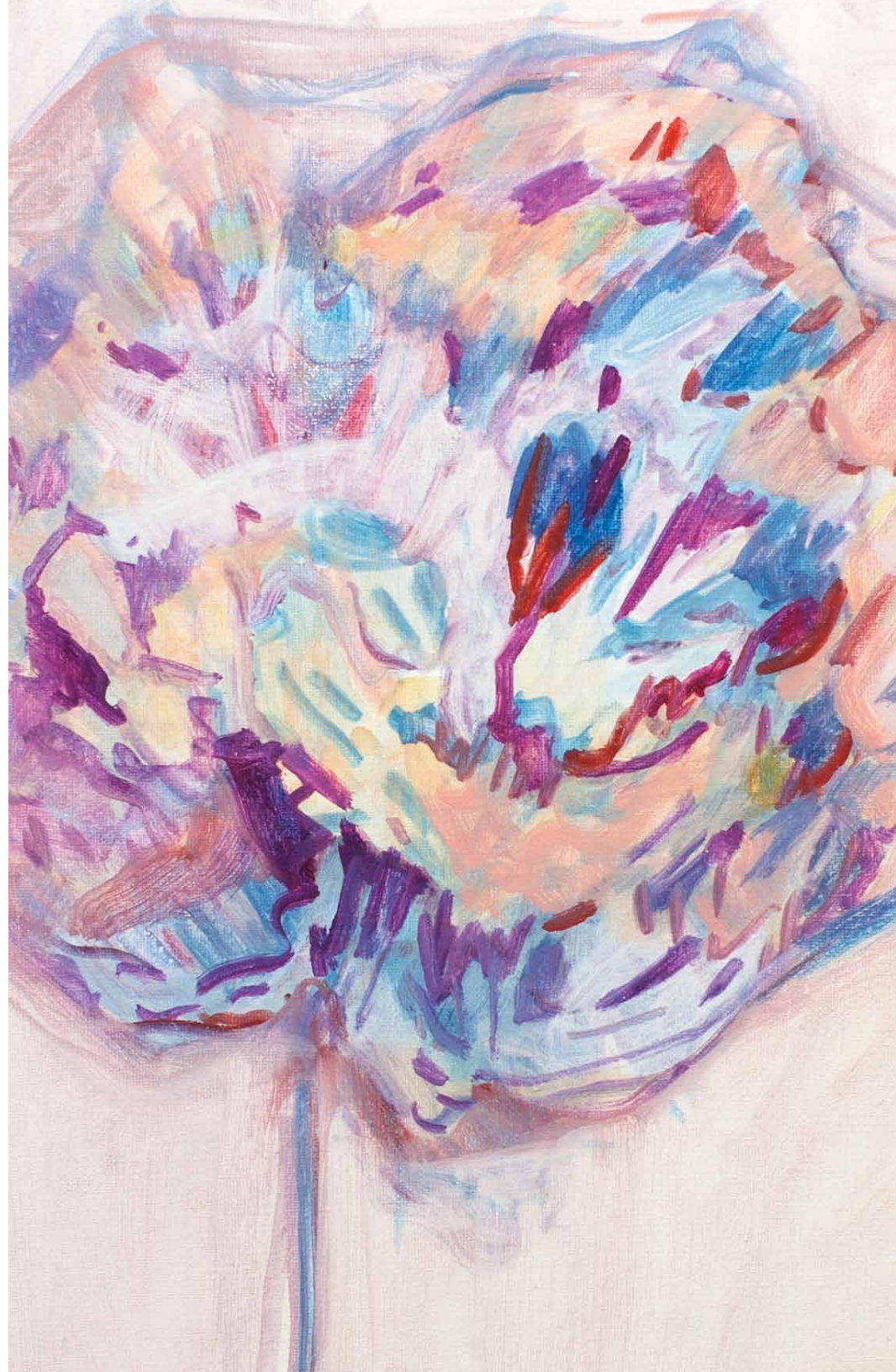
FALLING EDEN 2, Oil on canvas, 50cm x 40 cm, 2016



This Page
BRAVE FLOWERS 3, Oil on board
35cm x 27.5 cm, 2015



Opposite Page
BRAVE FLOWERS BLUE, Oil on
board, 40cm x 30 cm, 2015





RED EDEN 3, Oil on canvas, 50cm x 46, cm, 2015

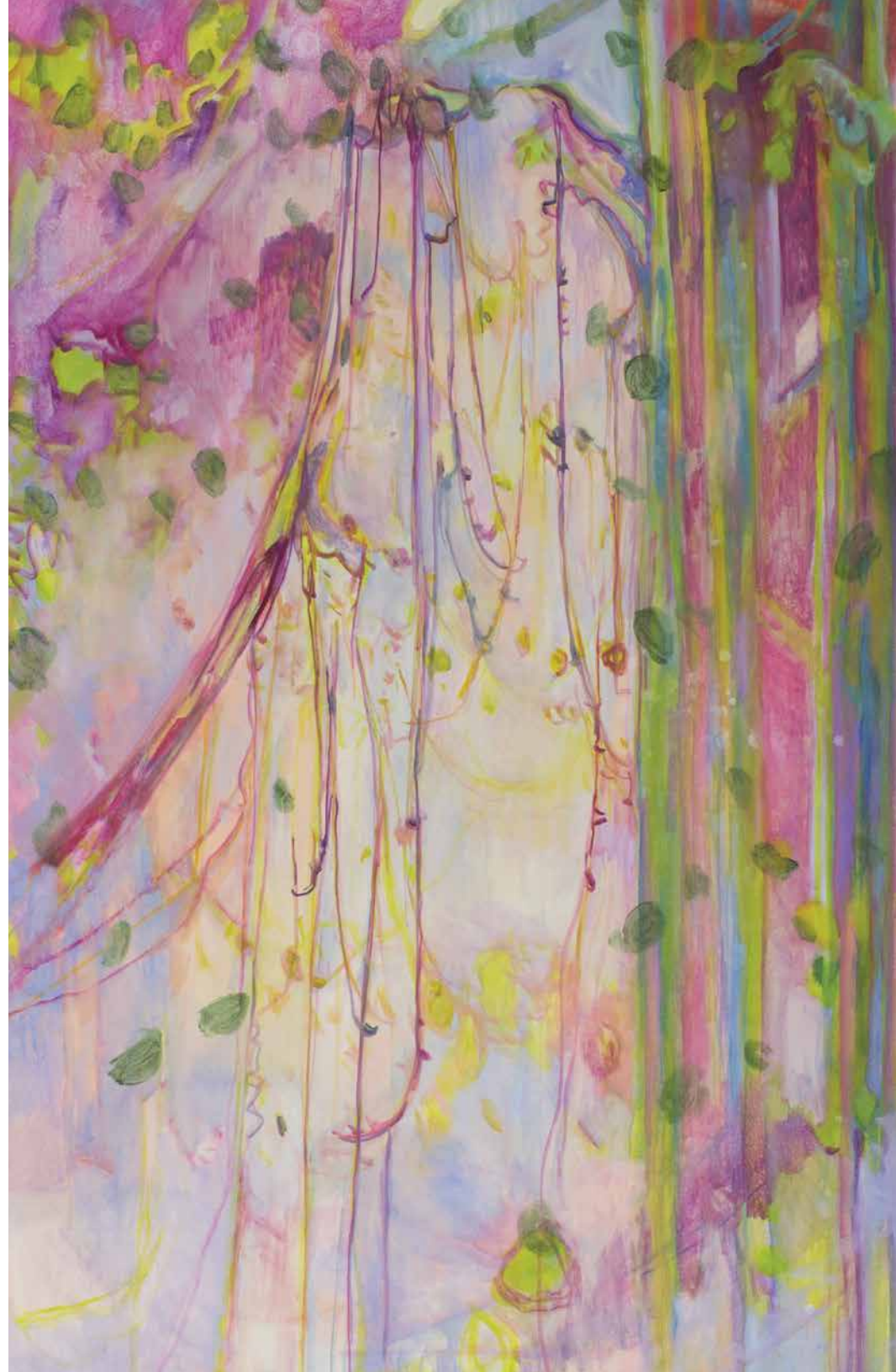


FALLING EDEN 9, Oil on canvas, 50cm x 40 cm, 2016



This Page
EARLY EDEN PINK, Oil on canvas, 61cm x 51cm, 2015

Opposite Page
PINK TROPICS 1, Oil on canvas, 162.5 x 105cm, 2016

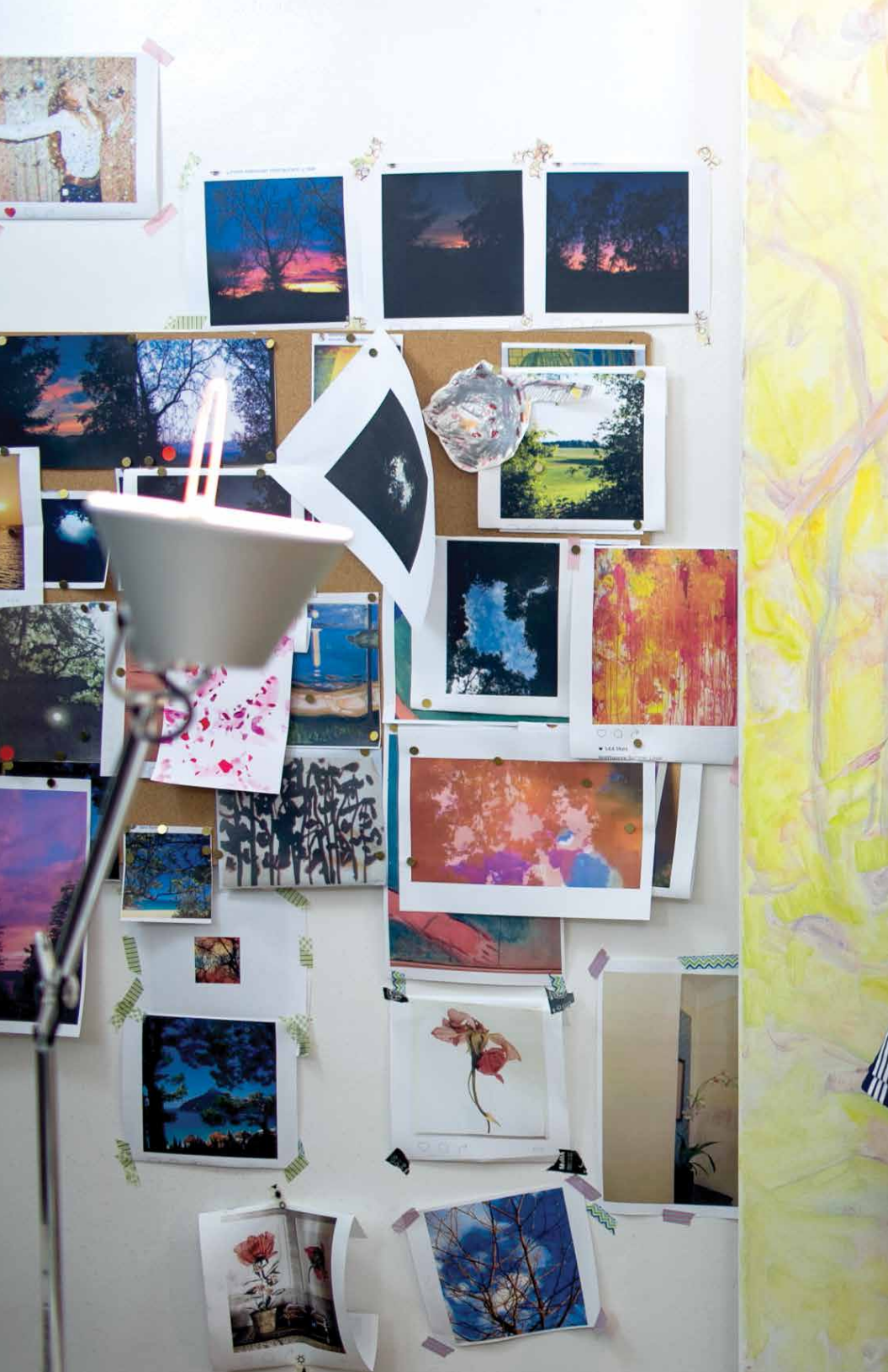




RED EDEN 1, Oil on canvas, 152.6 cm x 105.4 cm, 2016



FALLING EDEN 4, Oil on canvas, 51 cm x 46 cm, 2016



As a visitor to western traditions, my practice takes root in adapted cultural territories.

The gaze, is subtly directed and fixed without aggression nor cynicism. Pieces of nature, such as passing sunlight, mist, clouds, water, waves and falling leaves are smashed, stretched out and redistributed unto the surface of a canvas.

Layered washes, haptic brushwork and color, abstract pictorial motifs wherein figuration is reterritorialized - bringing ease, comfort and healing to unsettling shifting landscapes of our confusing times.

Special thanks to:

Yoichi Nakamuta
Mayumi Matsubara
Gabriel Lichauco
Jose Cobarrubias
Karen Bolilia

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