

A BEND  
IN THE  
RIVER  
PRAT  
UL  
DASH

SEPT 28 - OCT 7, 2023



# A Bend in the River:

## - Girish Shahane

Viewers familiar with Pratul Dash's oeuvre will discover a startling change in his present solo exhibition. The artist is associated with a lush-hued figurative style combining politically engaged realism with Daliesque reverie. In contrast, his creations of the past three years are monochromatic semi-abstract landscapes, frequently constituted by tiny circular forms, painstakingly drawn, reminiscent of blood cells seen under high magnification. The new compositions, epic in scale, conjure night skies, caverns and grottos, cross sections of mountains, aerial views of alluvial tracts, and the earth seen from outer space.

Figures do appear, including motifs used in previous paintings such as an ostrich with its head buried in the ground, but are dwarfed by their surroundings. Since these figures carry the political heft of paintings like the enormous seven-panel canvas *24x7: A Global Discourse*, their relative inconspicuousness could signal the marginalisation of inconvenient truths in an era marked by polarisation and weaponised disinformation. However, it would be an injustice to dismiss the intricate, exquisite patterns that dominate each painting as mere distractions from real issues represented by the figures. The foregrounding of the background, as it were, suggests the artist is placing the present moment and immediate social concerns within a bigger picture involving nature's sublimity, which is undiminished by humanity's depredations. These two readings are contradictory yet simultaneously valid – like alternate orientations of a Necker cube – and taken together capture some of the complexity of signification generated by the show.

Although the latest suite of paintings marks a leap into the unknown in terms of Dash's exhibition history, it results from years of experiments carried out in his studio but kept private. This long secluded



# Hope in a Tempest, 2023

Acrylic, gold foil and archival ink on canvas, 60" x 78"

Pratul Dash leaves the immediacy of places and spaces and explores the innards of an apparent world, which is possible only through digging into dreams and memories. There is some desperation in this self-consuming life and it is a sort of omniscience and omnipotence of the artistic self as the sole negotiator of his/her world.

As a metaphorical tempest gathers around in the shadows of the mind, Pratul Dash chronicles the desperations of our times but at the same time, he shows us how we could overcome it by trusting in our own goodness and regaining those lost worlds of innocence and trust. The grimness that looms large over the canvases gives way to a sombre sanguinity. If pain, rigour, suffering and trials are part of our destiny then hope is also part of our DNA.

The protagonist of the painting bursts through the monochromatic drudgery on a golden cloud at the cusp of a silvery crescent moon, his stance is liberated and butterflies emanate forth hovering in the thick black night. Just as sunlight-loving butterflies aren't nocturnal unless disturbed, hope doesn't show itself unless in the face of the darkest of nights.

In suggestive motion, the boy portrays boldly yet rather poetically that our fates are open-ended. As he surrenders himself to hope, liberation and aspirations – he gathers the innocent to spread their arms in abandonment and and take off in a flight of fancy. In that flight, one could experience a utopia that never is, never was and never would be, but remains covetable. Hope perhaps is a sort of undoing of today and making of tomorrow devoid of today's baggage and dirt.

# Hope in a Tempest, 2023

Acrylic, gold foil and archival ink on canvas, 60" x 78"



# Frays of Earthly and Celestial Bodies, 2023

Mineral colour & archival ink on Fabriano acid-free 650 GSM paper, 41" x 30"

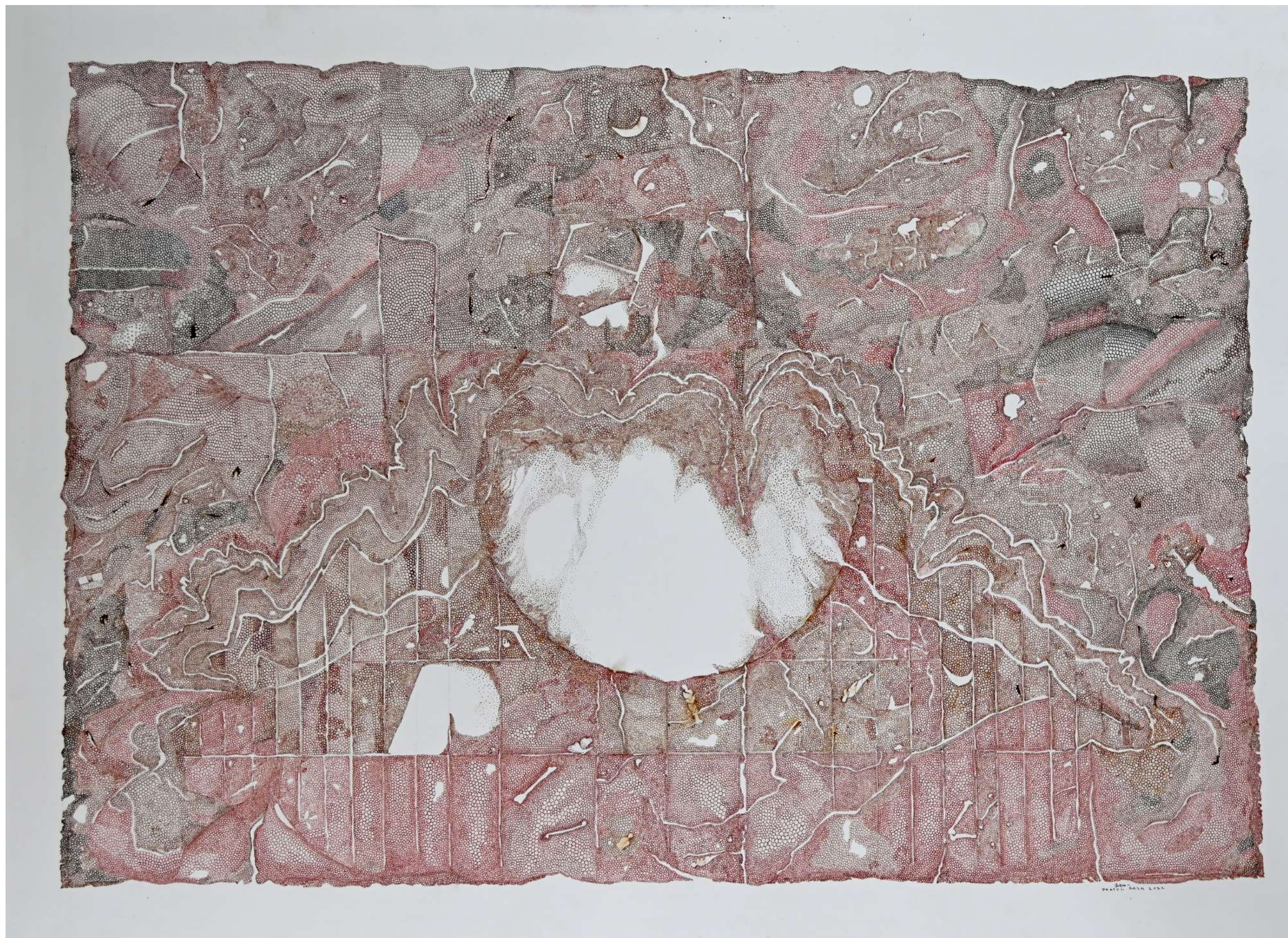
Deflating the idea of spreading a carpet of colours and then infusing the magic dust of his brush on the surface, in order to create an iconic painting, Pratul Dash drives home the point that his art is also his way of carrying forth his conceptualizations of cellular structure, topography, human bodies, dogs, maps, bones and the elements of our universe into a pluriverse of coexistence. His canvas is alive with forms and landscapes that contrast the then and now, the microscopic and the macrocosmic, the abstract and the real, the tangible and the unfathomable.

As his eloquently ghostly work engulfs the senses in aesthetic drama, a tug of life and death, celestial and earthly, geographic and metaphysical, entrenches us to a point of listless fixation. Thus the large surfaces of his works seem to move on two distinct levels in their conceptualized format. The current depletion is directly impacted on the surface by barren topographical landscapes or negated spaces, with telltale haziness. The void of clarity and the vacancy of space becomes slowly populated by human intervention. Everything that was, is. Everything that is, was. The myriads of images and forms dot the negative spaces while the canvas remains a pristine sheet of similar colouration. Pratul Dash shows that he is a cerebral artist who ponders over each stroke of his brush before landing it on his canvas. Behind all the conglomeration of natural and abstract forms, the artist in him emerges as the spokesperson and commentator.

With such profound messaging as the fulcrum of his art, Dash's stories are indeed large and it is not possible to subside them in a smaller space. Paradoxically, they expose the harsh reality of the artist as protégé sensitized by social and ecological transformation and seeking to reverse the downslide, through the power of his brush.

# Frays of Earthly and Celestial Bodies, 2023

Mineral colour & archival ink on Fabriano acid-free 650 GSM paper, 41" x 30"





# The Brain, 2023

Archival ink on Fabriano acid-free 650 GSM paper, 30" x 41"

The influenced mind has digressed from the truth under a deluge of political alignments, cultural misappropriation, public opinion, mass mentality and the age of misinformation. While the brain is the vanguard of eternal light, it can also so easily be swayed and clouded. Punctured by a surge of external forces the sublime qualities of the brain twist into wisps of nothingness.

In Pratul Dash's paintings, the pictorial frame is often translated into a window to engage an alternate view of reality, the virtuosity of his exceptional skills details the exactitude of everything he painted. He has evolved ways to orchestrate his imagery, pushing his viewers to engage the smallest but pertinent details, sharply placed within the structured composition. Furthering the possibilities of the painted image, Pratul now seems to bring to the pictorial frame, the experience of entering a rabbit hole, taking the viewer into a mysteriously uncertain world – that of the mind.

Translating the abstract qualities of the mind into a representation of the brain, the artist also notates his fixation on the phenomena of memory and memory-making. These pictorial vexations, however, simply drive home the preoccupations of the artist with the human aspect that sensitizes the brain organ – in a meaningful or destructive way, depending on how it is nurtured. We are reminded of a metaphorical allegory of evolution, one that has been and one that is yet to come. These metaphysical perceptions leap out at us from deep within the recesses of 'The Brain'.

# The Brain, 2023

Archival ink on Fabriano acid-free 650 GSM paper, 30" x 41"



# The Tidal Trance, 2020-23

Mineral colour on Fabriano 350 GSM acid-free paper, 80" x 56",  
Set of 8, 20" x 28" each

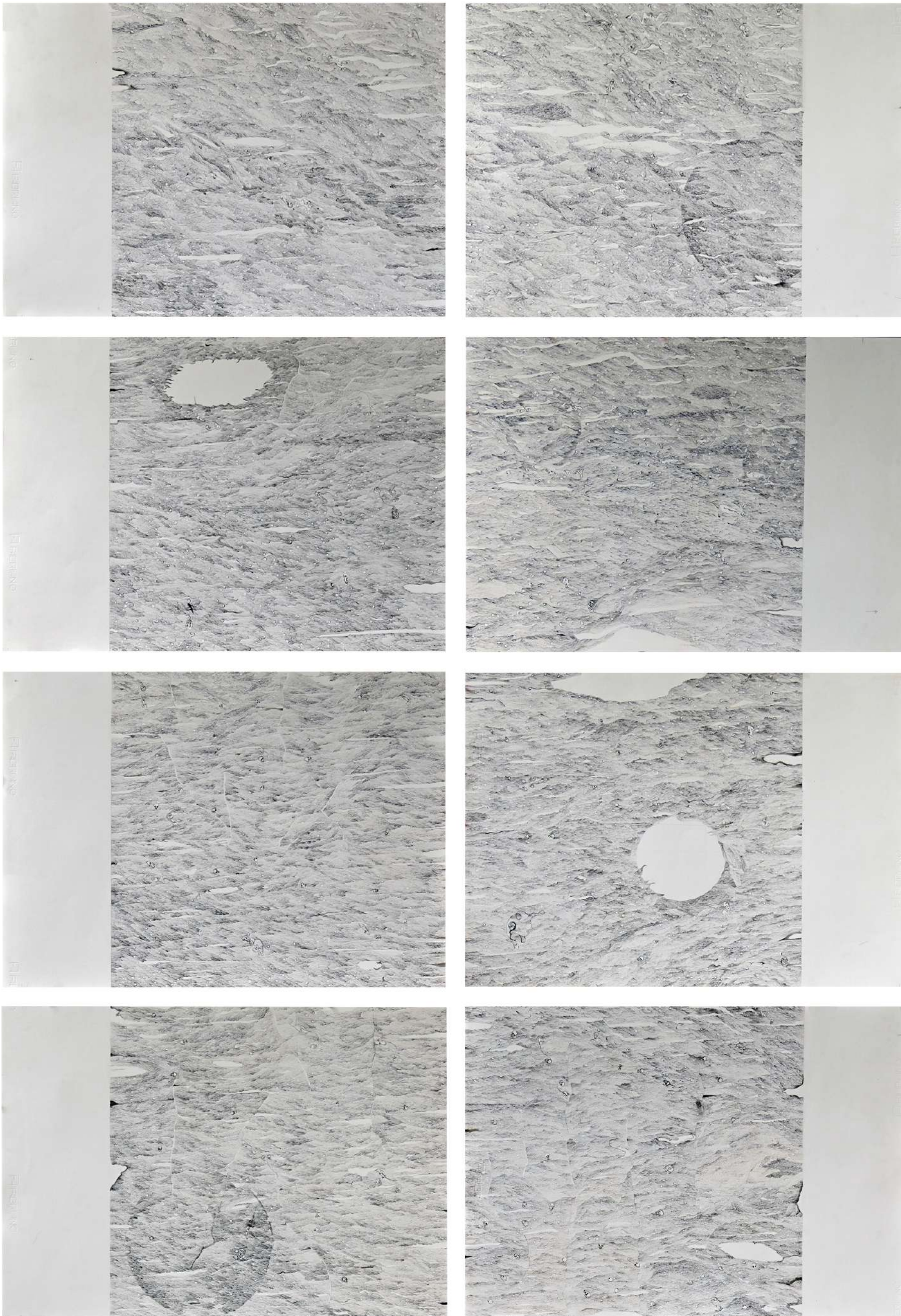
Pratul Dash presents the intensifying conflict between nature and humans in literal and poetic ways. He uses 'politics of aesthetics' as a tool and delves into his subconscious with great sensitivity, where his meanderings are a reflection of current events and times as well. In the cosmic dance, and tidal waves of existence, we are but the specks of a dissolving nostalgia, yet our actions and thoughts deeply impact the fabric of the universe. Tethered to it by a thread of eternity we become the enactors of its ever-flowing movements. While our bodies and lives are fragile and temporal, our actions are not.

Every artist has his own perception of tradition and his own style. There is definitely an influence of the miniature tradition in Dash's work which is quite evident in this canvas. It is like nostalgia. When he started to study the history of Indian art and discovered miniature paintings across the spectrum – Mughal, Sikh, Rajasthani and Kaangra, the artist was introduced to another world – the world of details, the world of minutiae and intimate visual language. Photorealism takes a backseat while the light shines on emotional expression and representation.

Here, the monochromatic canvases and detailed strokes allow for varied interpretations, with subtle, oblique imagery. "Over the years, I look at the painted surface as a window through which one can slowly rupture and fragment the viewer's ideal of realism," says the artist. Change is always accompanied by the duality of desire and anxiety and it is this aspect that Dash underlines in his works.

# The Tidal Trance, 2020-23

Mineral colour on Fabriano 350 GSM acid-free paper, 80" x 56",  
Set of 8, 20" x 28" each



# The Time Altitudometer, 2022

Watercolour and archival ink on Fabriano acid-free, 650 GSM Paper, 60" x 41"

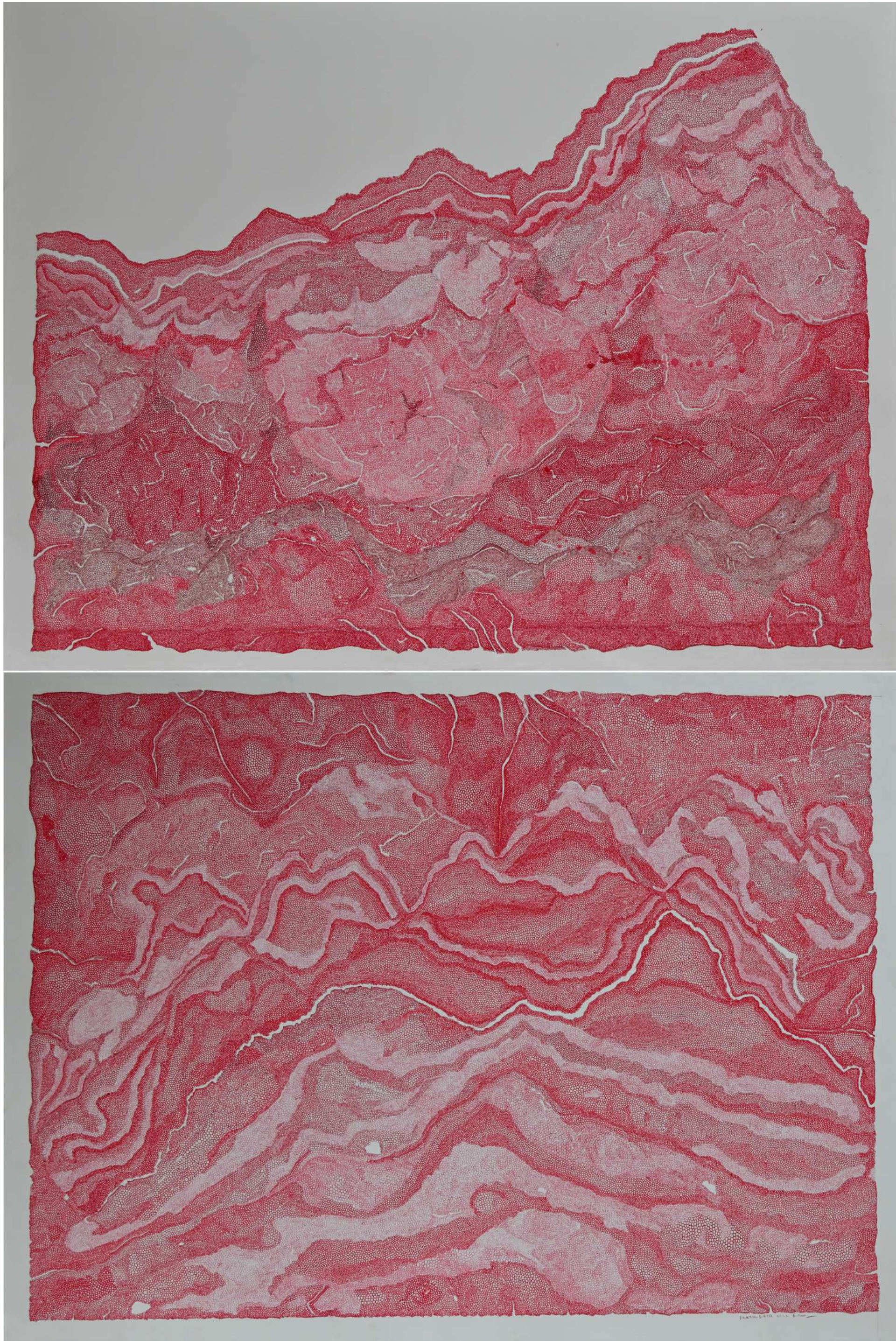
What appears to be the cross-section of an altitude record, could also be a record of the variegation and passage of time - hidden layers that the artist unearths through his visual excavations. Like the Earth is an unrecorded record of events, epochs and creatures, time is a chronological record of history. The two display a delicacy and dance of contours and details, as time becomes the protagonist of the canvas. Time is the undeniable underlying theme across the artist's canvases and his preoccupation with the phenomena spans his entire practice in one form or the other - sometimes obvious and at others, obscure.

While these topographical and geological imprints are irrefutable, the passage of time is too. Yet the overall moods and abstraction of the artist's canvas is a foreboding that reminds us of the fluidity of our memories, that their veracity is real only to our own ways of experiencing life. Dash grants us and also takes for granted these approximations as they make up our individual lives and outlooks. Traversing his own memories through time, one encounters all forms of disruptions and rhythms - a language not unlike that of the universe and of existence itself. What is the artist attempting to foray through his artistic journeys and endeavours? Is it the reliving of the universal truth? Is this the primordial code of life reenacting its patterns and genetic replication through the lapses of time?

Hidden secrets are unearthed but left unspoken and a mysterious shroud of artistic poetry veils the depths and transgressions of an ever-inquiring mind. Remnants litter the abstract mindscape while an overall language and flow are characteristic of the creator and the created. The spark of life and the fabric of living are embedded into the artist's oeuvre and also woven deeply into this artistic time capsule.

# The Time Altimeter, 2022

Watercolour and archival ink on Fabriano acid-free, 650 GSM Paper, 60" x 41"



# Of Blood, Of Birth, Of Death, 2020

Archival ink on paper, 112" x 66",  
Set of 12, 22"x 28" each

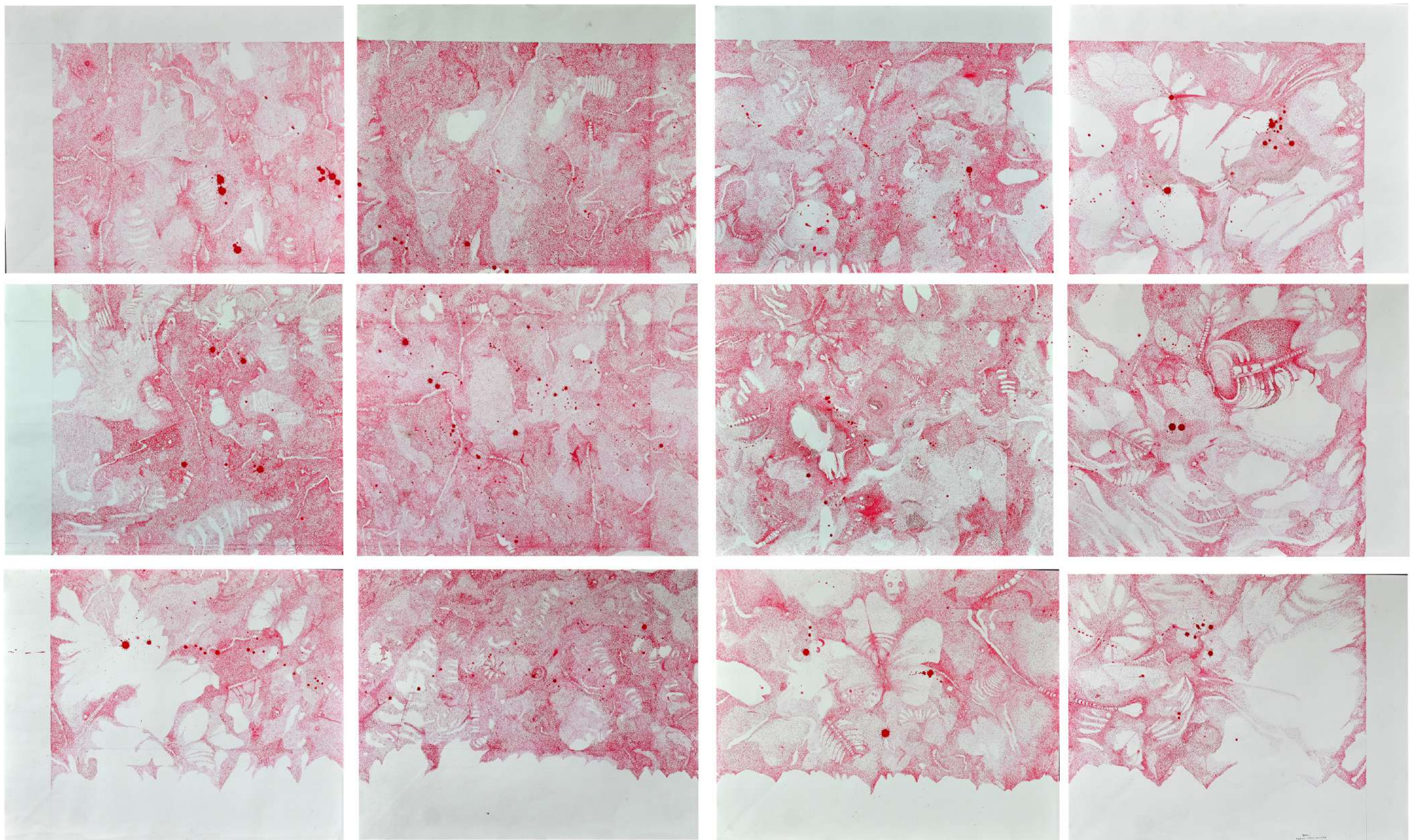
As creatures of Earth and sky revel together in mortal dance, butterflies, earthworms, hands reaching out, bones and blood, celebration and shame, life and death, perseverance and failure, are evidence of our own transience. The distance between the panels speaks of the separateness of our physical beings yet in the larger cosmic play of the creator, we come together as a whole.

The redness predominant in the work speaks of the warmth and passion existing in relationships, which the artist considers as his offerings. Even if the protagonists have moved on from the physical plane - creatures, objects and people alike have left behind an irrevocable bond that came from living, from being born in flesh and blood and bone. Thus blood ironically liberates them from birth and death, linking them into an everlasting imprint of time and matter.

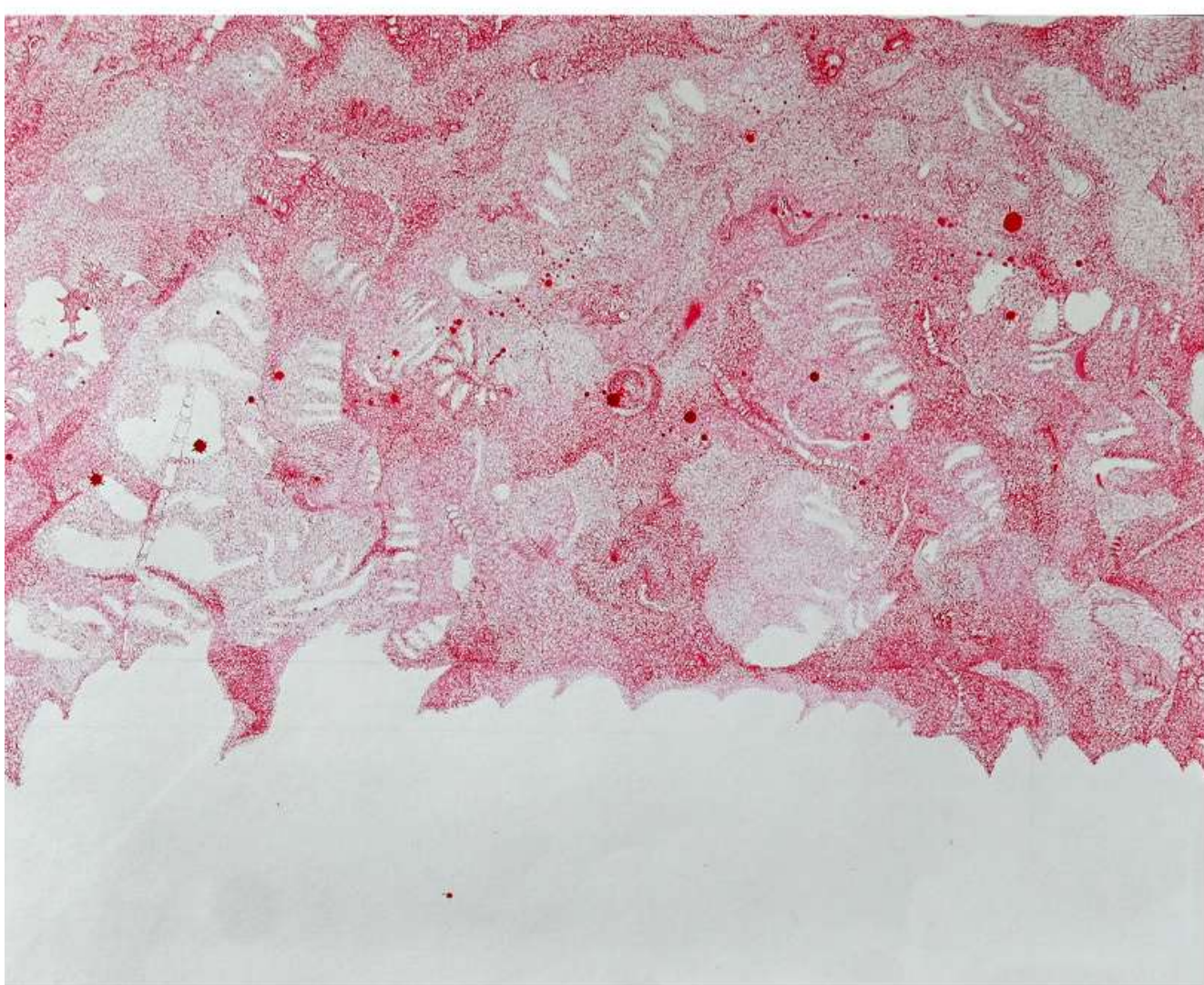
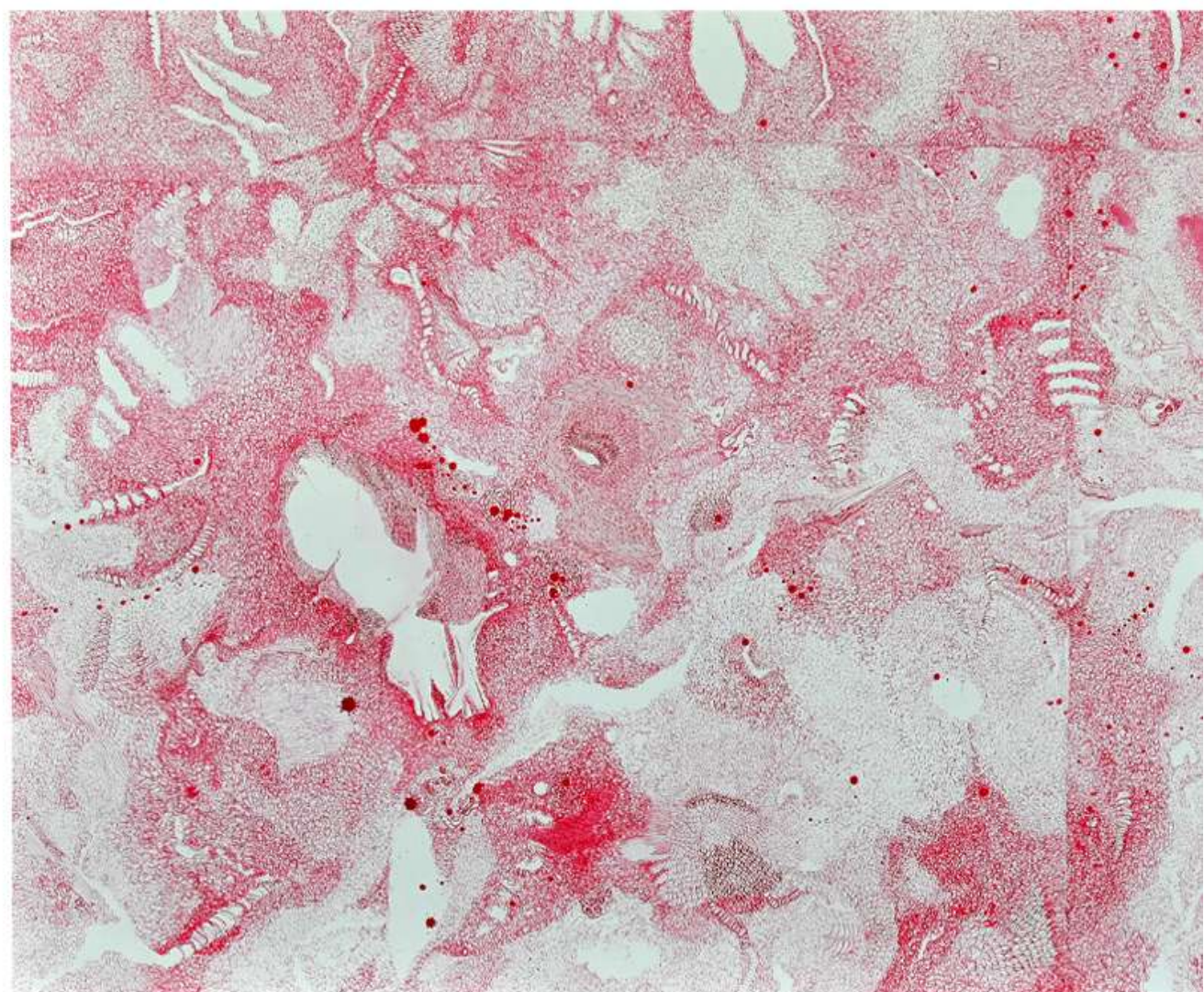
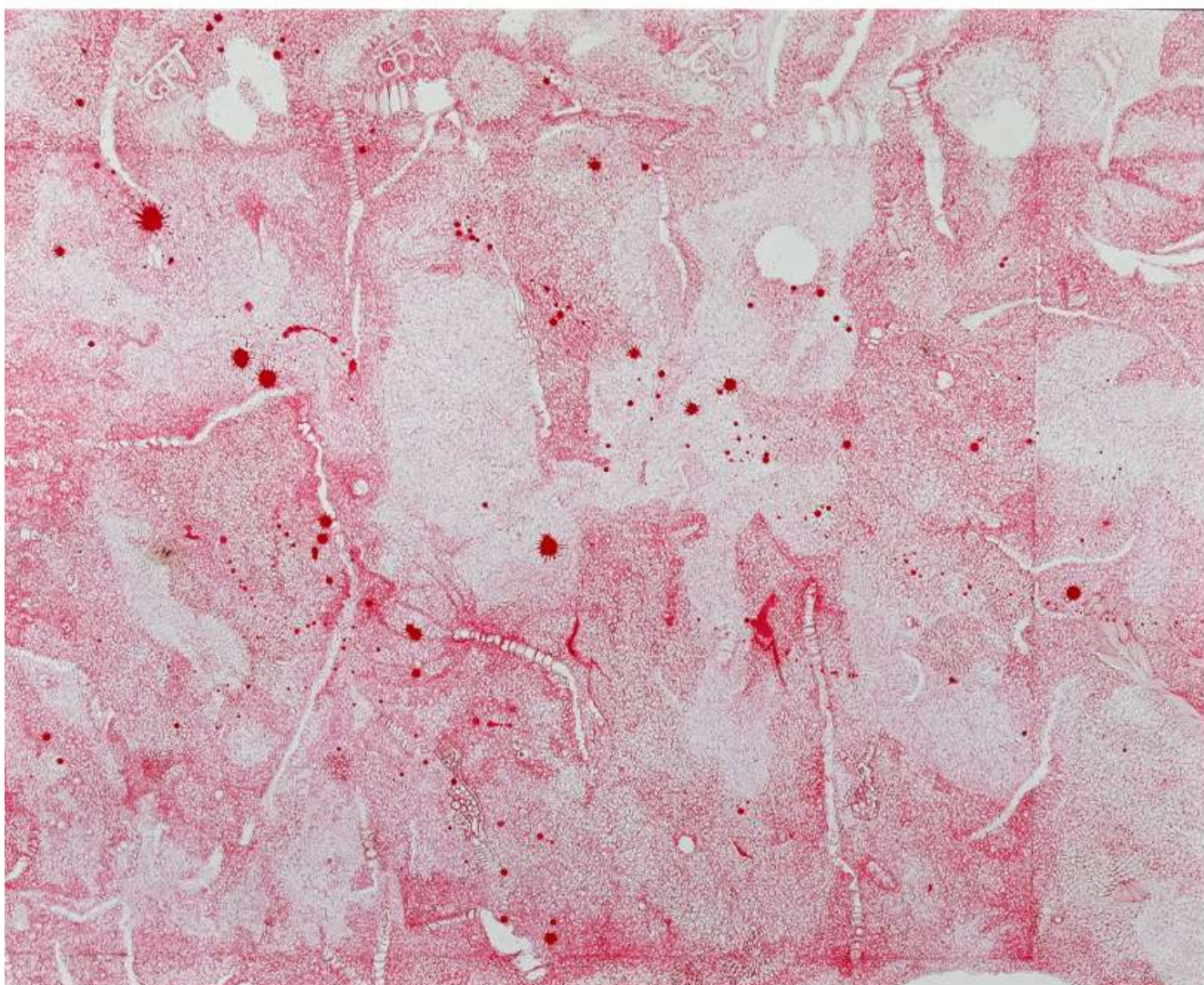
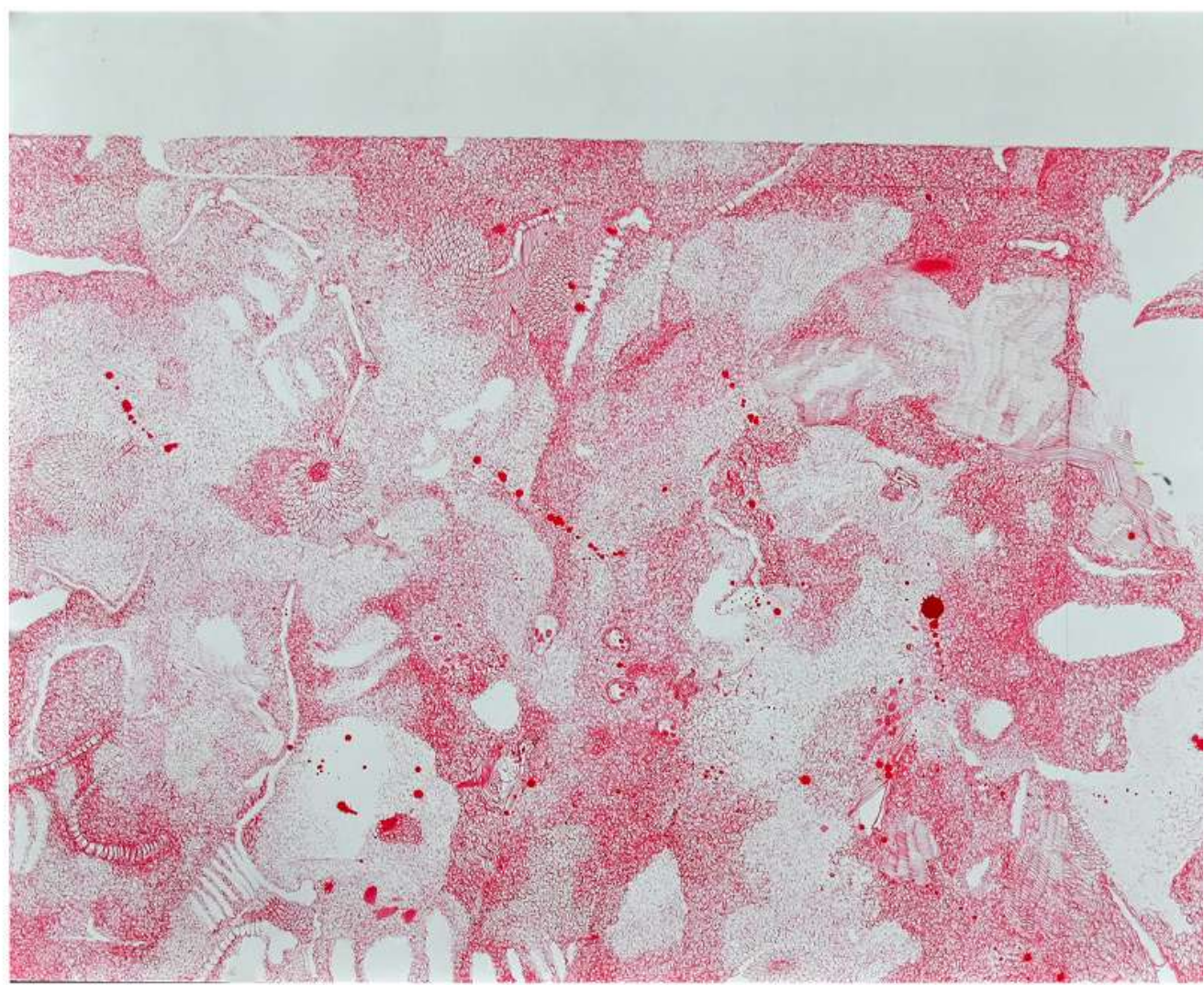
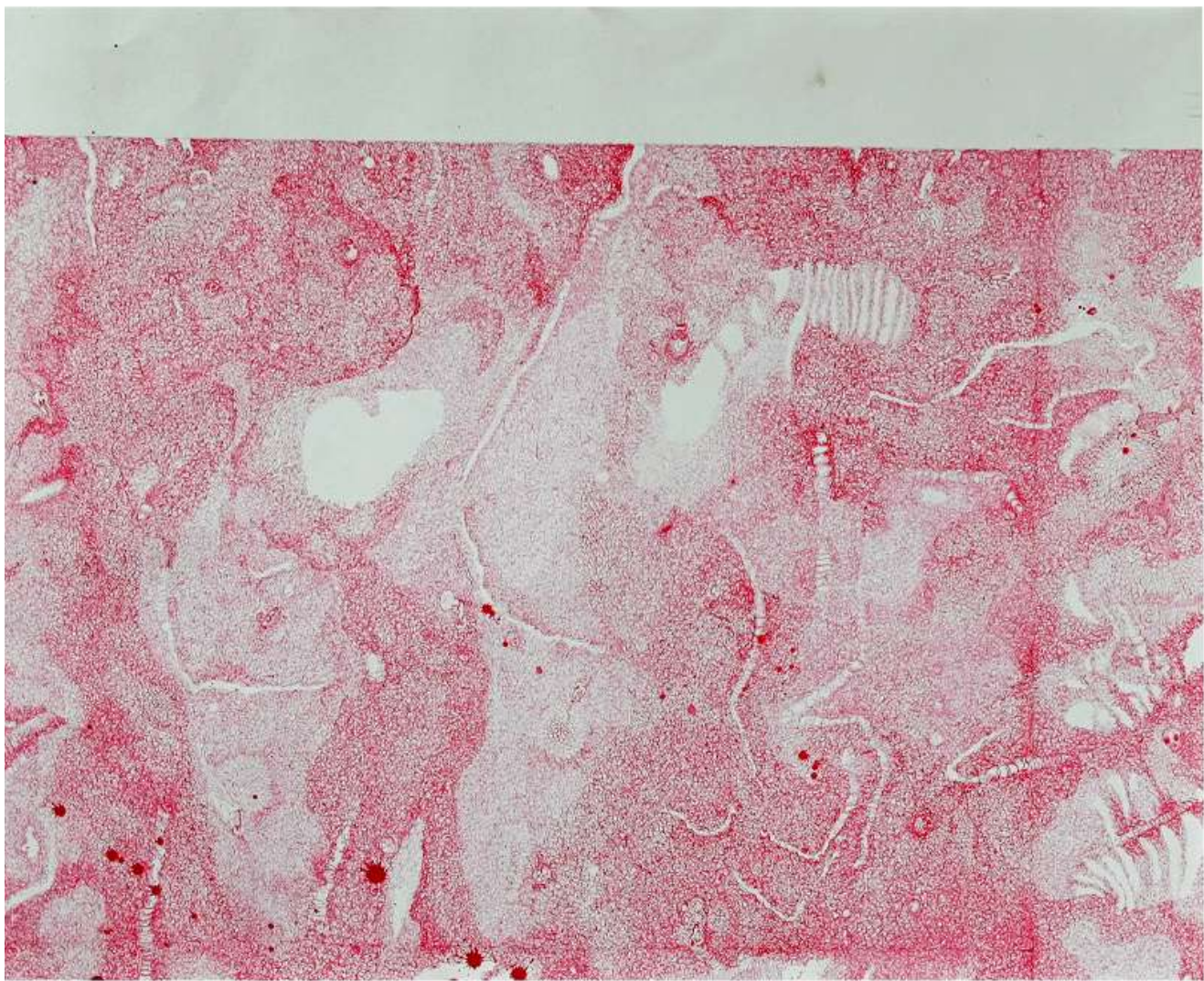
Pratul Dash creates an imaginative space and designs a format where history and memory intermingle into his subject matter and plot. His interest as an environmental activist is seen to converge with his artistic oeuvre as he begins to dig into his own experiences, exploring the present and making futuristic predictions like a story-teller who foretells the inevitable doom though often couched in sublime and pleasantly painted or animated imagery endowed with an aesthetic appeal. Somewhat sombre, sensitive, both minimalistic and maximalist while also very provocative and effective, Pratul Dash highlights the problems caused by social, cultural, and personal values.

# Of Blood, Of Birth, Of Death, 2020

Archival ink on paper, 112" x 66",  
Set of 12, 22"x 28" each







# The Crescent Moon, 2022

Archival ink on Fabriano acid-free 650 GSM paper, 30" x 41"

Pratul Dash has been preoccupied with the fear and fantasies that accelerate contemporary life, constantly changing in unwarranted ways. Whether or not his personal opinions and thoughts align with ongoing issues, he certainly cannot remain unchanged and unaffected by them. Thus his work becomes a commentary on time, a record of the lapsing of the eras, a visual seance on the linking of the beginning and the end. The ever-romanticised Moon juxtaposes with the reality of its effect on life on Earth, our ebbing and waning social structures. A constant cycle of ages coming and going.

The moon has been interpreted by so many artists and poets in so many various ways, and while the artist has been sharpening skills of rendering the painted surface with a seductive realism, he also continues to seek ways and means to address the predicament of living in a precarious world that has pushed itself to the edge. It has been important for the artist to reflect upon and share the implications of a world, not so easy to comprehend and yet surrounding us. A dichotomy of aesthetic images and values underpins a commentary on the realities of existential crisis and dilemma.

To contemplate upon the world from a celestial standpoint remains the prerogative of the artist who creates a sensation that at once seems familiar and yet strange and unsettling in its configuration. Pratul juxtaposes motifs obliquely hinting at depleting resources and fragmentation of natural beauty. The precisely rendered beauty of Pratul's paintings is in a sense deceptive, as the artist uses the tool of pictorial attraction to enrapture the viewer's attention, demanding deeper engagement with his concerns through the visual encounter.

# The Crescent Moon, 2022

Archival ink on Fabriano acid-free 650 GSM paper, 30" x 41"



# Memory of Unrecorded Records, 2023

Mineral colour & archival ink on Fabriano acid-free 650 GSM Paper, 41"x 90"

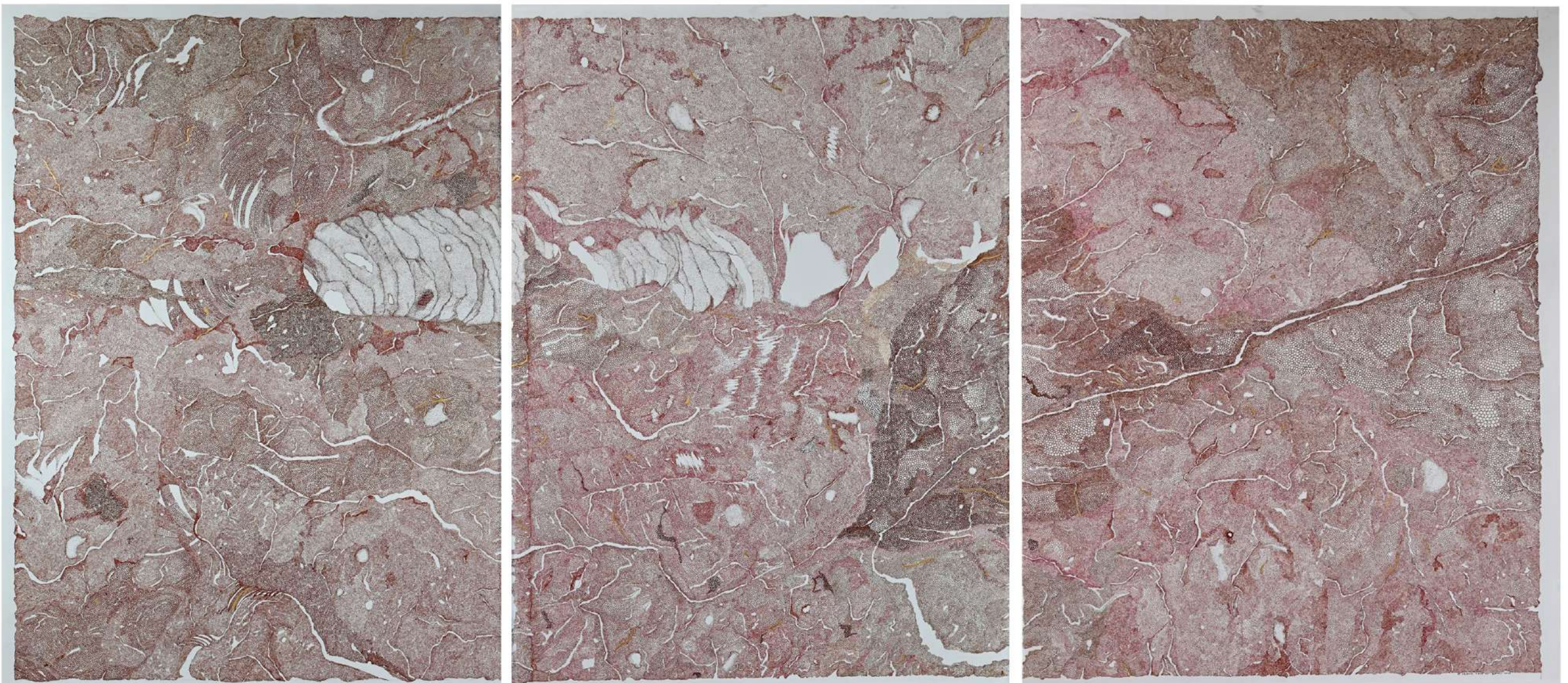
What appears to be a geographic landscape from an aerial view could also be the variation and tonality in the landscape of the mind and memory map - hidden layers that the artist unearths through his visual excavations. Like the Earth is an unrecorded record of events, epochs and creatures, memories are a record of unintentionally archived moments and beings. The two display a delicacy and dance of contours and details, the sensuousness of forms brings an extraordinary beauty to the imagery of the composition.

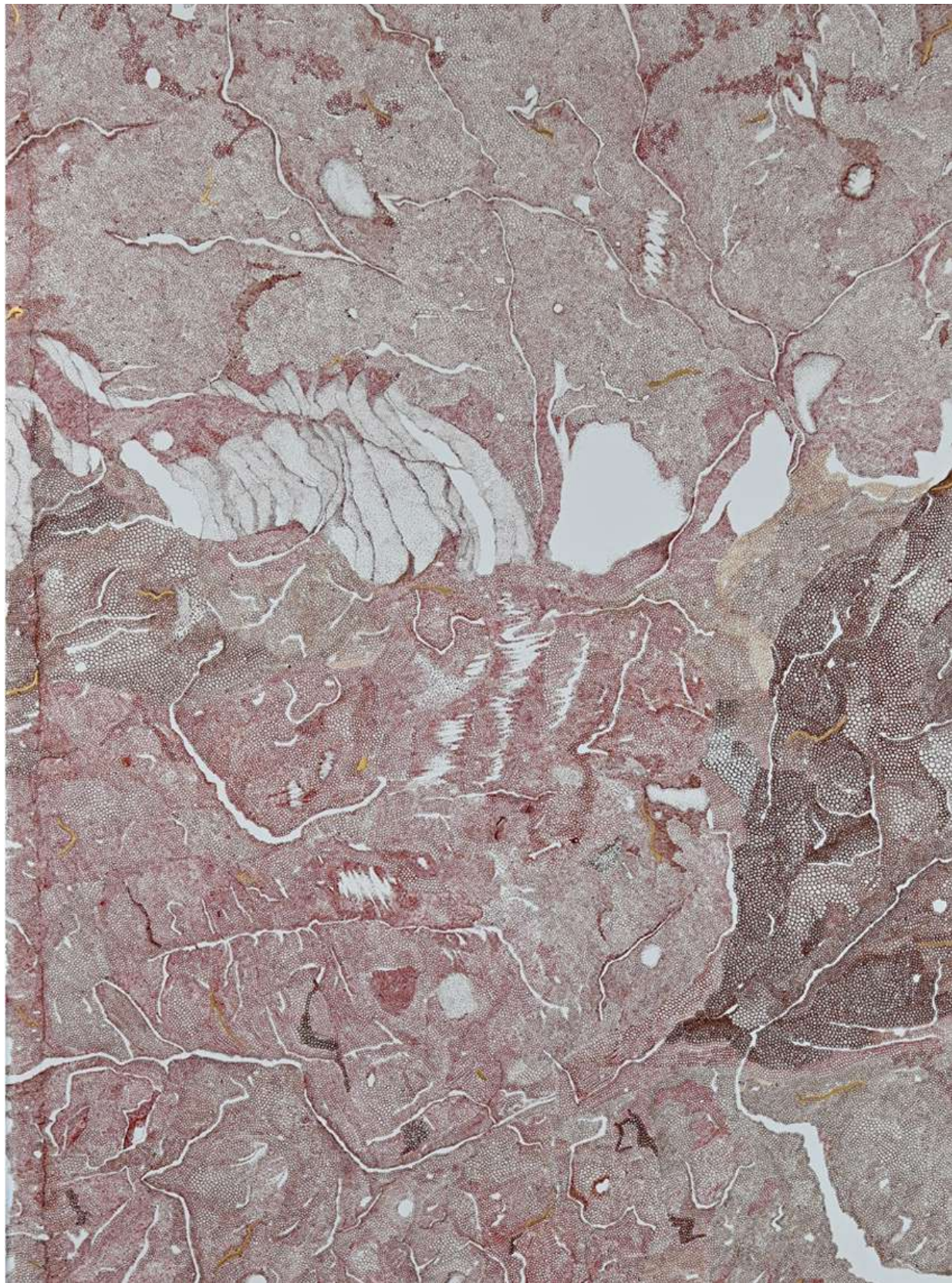
While these topographical and geological imprints are irrefutable, memories too seem so. Yet the overall moods and abstraction of the artist's canvas is a foreboding that reminds us of the fluidity of our memories, that their veracity is real only to our own ways of experiencing life. Dash grants us and also takes for granted these approximations as they make up our individual lives and outlooks. Traversing his own memories through the canvas one encounters all forms of disruptions and rhythms - a language not unlike that of the universe and of existence itself. What is the artist attempting to foray through his artistic journeys and endeavours? Is it the reliving of the universal truth? Is this the primordial code of life reenacting its patterns and genetic replication within the mind-space?

Hidden secrets are unearthed but left unspoken and a mysterious shroud of artistic poetry veils the depths and transgressions of an ever-inquiring mind. Fossils and remnants litter the abstract mindscape while an overall language and flow are characteristic of the creator and the created. The spark of life and the fabric of living and embedded into the artist's oeuvre and also woven deeply into this particular memory work.

# Memory of Unrecorded Records, 2023

Mineral colour & archival ink on Fabriano acid-free 650 GSM Paper, 41" x 90"





# Spherical Soliloquy I, 2021

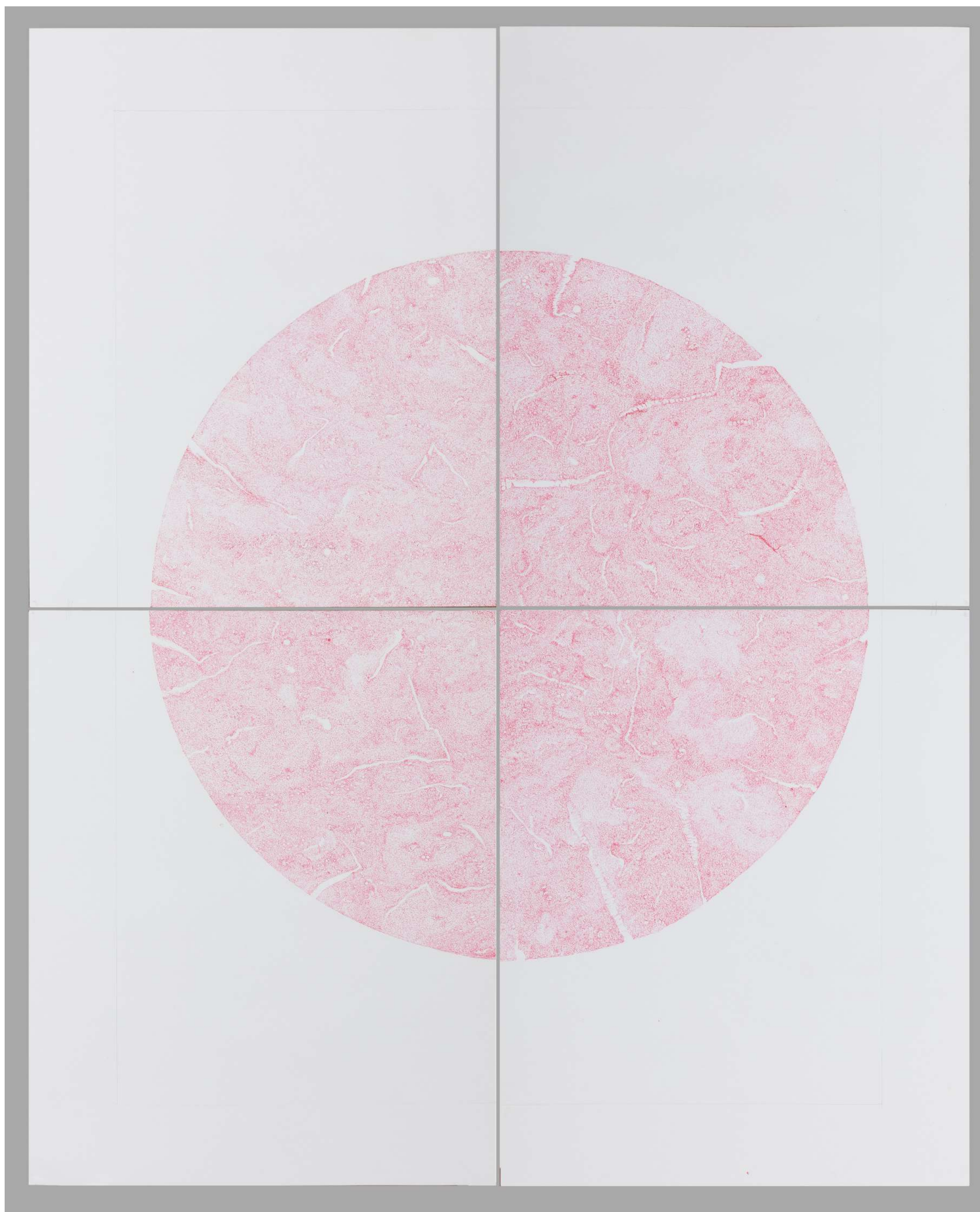
Watercolour and archival ink on paper, 60" x 44"

For Pratul Dash, the idea or the concept behind an artwork is the most important aspect of his creations, though they figure as paper works, drawings, paintings and video art in the current repertoire. A meticulous planner, whose compositions make clever use of the negative spaces to formulate some hard-hitting statements about contemporary dilemmas and realities of life, he seems to prefer a somewhat overarching minimalistic style and design working in a soft tone but in high detail. His skill seems to lie in conveying complex issues in a subtle manner.

The Earth, the universe, the personal sphere – these parts of the whole are in constant dialogue with each other, yet it is a soliloquy. There is also a coalition of the old with the new going back and forth in time and frame across socio-economic and cultural, political dilemmas to explore and address issues that are universal and confront us all in the current illustrations. Coming full circle, Pratul's style has yet again evolved in a completely new direction, yet the themes and preoccupations that consume the artist have never changed. As an artist, Pratul finds new ways to express himself and his innermost ideologies and self-inquiries, leaving one to always wonder about what's to come next. The works in this show are inspired by landscape, memories both fragmented and time-based, self-prognosis, and contemporary commentaries. As points, circles and representations of human blood cells, and those of molecules and atoms come together to form the artist's magnum opus we are subtly yet surely reminded of the representations of the coexistence of earth, all beings and humans as one entity.

# Spherical Soliloquy I, 2021

Watercolour and archival ink on paper, 60" x 44"





# Spherical Soliloquy II, 2021

Mineral color on Fabriano paper, 60" x 40"

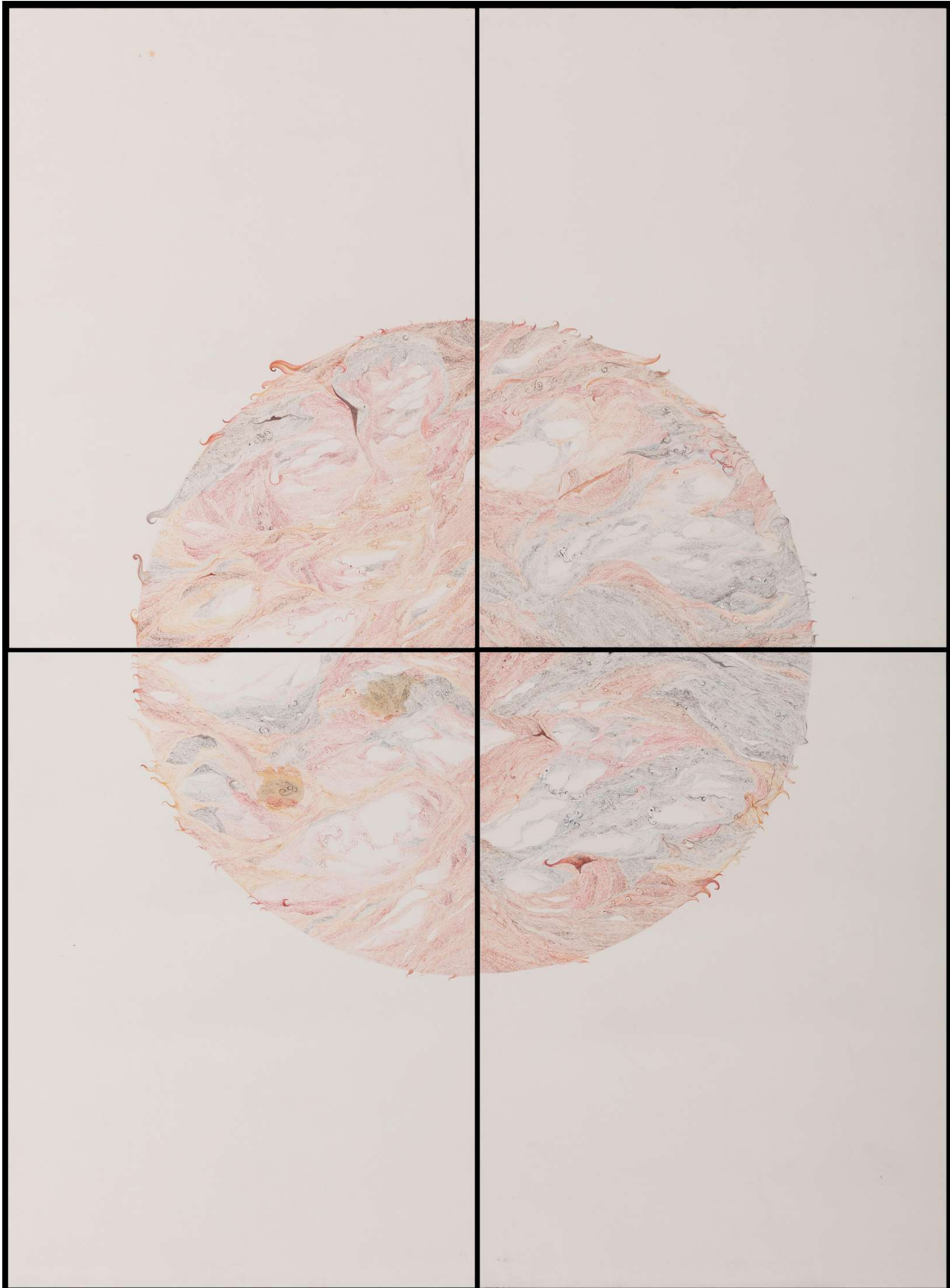
Pratul Dash's expression is more important than the image and there is an abstraction in the works which is a departure from his usual style. The poetics of pigment and a 0.5 brush transform the canvas into a wispy sphere of thousands of lyrical lines and water waves. From the depths of the sea of paint, emerge forms, and mythical aquatic creatures, swirling imageries exacted from memories over time form an ocean.

No one can pinpoint the specificity of memories, yet they create an overall impact in our lives and a storyline in our impressions. These memories reveal themselves in reality or dream state as they will and sometimes, as we will. Conjuring the formless, to make something tangible from the abstract, the artist's world of emotions translates to the image we see before us. The artist suggests the revelation of a world buried deep within the recesses of his mind, one that has existed beneath the waves of everyday life. As patterns start to disintegrate through his extrapolations, Pratul interrogates the dilemma that memories undergoing transition invariably encounter.

As we speak of poetic inspiration, let us not forget that Dash is greatly influenced by Padma Shri Haldhar Nag, a Sambalpuri poet and writer from the western part Odisha. The poet's work inspires Pratul, as he's a people's poet and is his likeness to Pablo Neruda. Nag a powerful orator, who uses his impromptu poetry and lyrical prose to talk of environmental degradation, women's power and the cultural, historical and political predicaments that plague our times resonates with the artist's own ideologies and philosophies.

# Spherical Soliloquy II, 2021

Mineral color on Fabriano paper, 60" x 40"



# 24x7: A Global Discourse, 2021

Acrylic, oil, ink on canvas, 84" x 288"

Set of 6, 84" x 48" each

This work is a fusion of six distinct canvases that blurs the boundaries between art and contemplation weaving together an intricate dance of contemporary aesthetics, philosophical inquiry, and incisive political commentary in a postmodern symphony.

The title serves as a poignant commentary on the unending cadence of today's media landscape. With a playful nod to the relentless cycle of 24-hour news channels, the creation becomes a visual representation of the ceaseless torrent of information inundating our lives. This motif evokes a sense of interconnectedness and immediacy, hallmarks of our contemporary epoch. Inspired by Pink Floyd's thought-provoking line, "64 channels of shit to choose from," the piece adopts a satirical stance that humorously underscores the overwhelming deluge of content defining our era. This excess is likened to an everlasting flow of "24x7" narratives, transcending languages and platforms—a digital symphony echoing the multi-faceted dimensions of modern existence.

In a world dominated by digital saturation, humanity grapples with an unprecedented flood of information, akin to an unyielding tsunami. The very essence of truth becomes elusive, hidden behind a tempest of conflicting narratives, propaganda, and counter-propaganda. Pratul's work suggests that the era of truth has given way to a wavering landscape where competing ideologies surge and recede like tidal currents. This perspective encourages viewers to navigate the contours of reality through the prism of contemporary philosophical thought, where the nature of truth itself becomes supple and subjective.

The artwork emerges as a nuanced negotiation capturing the very essence of our age, becoming a fundamental human odyssey in the quest for truth. It inspires profound contemplation of the viewer's role within the boundless expanse of our complex postmodern human experience.

# 24x7: A Global Discourse, 2021

Acrylic, oil, ink on canvas, 84" x 288"

Set of 6, 84" x 48" each





# Memory Dreamcaster, 2022

Acrylic, oil and archival ink on canvas, 60" x 84"

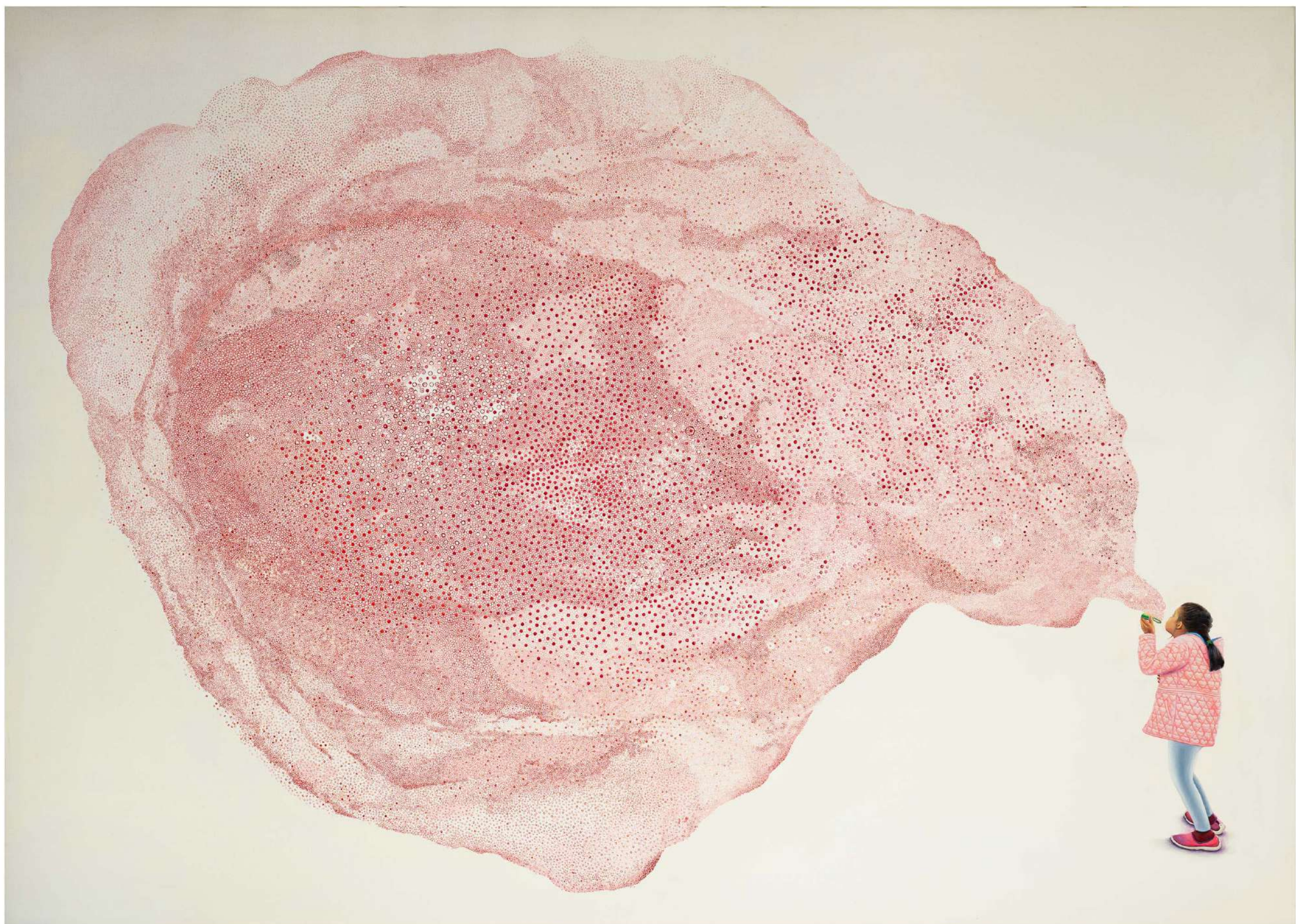
As worlds within worlds and layers up on layers imprint themselves into the universe of our minds, one really never knows how deep the rabbit hole runs or how it impacts us and our surroundings at large. We are only as vast as our imaginations and only as old as our memories. As thoughts and dreams escape us they release themselves from the beyond into the physical plane. Here the most mysterious wonderments occur in ordinary parlance, imaginations play a powerful part in propelling tangible forms driven by tender emotions and potent desires.

Generations of personal and collective experiences, stories, realities, realisations, traumas and even aspirations interweave into a mesh of individual and universal truths. The paradox of inside and out, dark and light, tangible and ethereal, infinite and minute, imagination and reality, fragile and resolute, dream state and waking state, memory and momentary all make up a complex neuro-network within the mind.

Are these secrets beheld by us, or is it us who are held within a dream?

# Memory Dreamcaster, 2022

Acrylic, oil and archival ink on canvas, 60" x 84"



# Disrupted Meta-Memorabilia - A Journey through Time and Transformation, 2020-23

9 Minutes 30 seconds, single channel video

This visual odyssey delves into the intricate interplay between unforeseen circumstances and the artist's transformative spirit. It encapsulates the essence of Pratul Dash's journey through the tumultuous year of 2020, a period of unexpected introspection that unfolded amid a global crisis. When the artist found himself marooned in his ancestral village, a temporary stay evolved into a profound period of self-discovery, yielding a unique artistic venture. Stripped of his usual resources, Pratul turned to modest tools at hand – newspapers, pens, and pencils. With a smartphone as canvas, he captured fleeting moments, mundane and exceptional alike.

The narrative unfurls beneath the starlit night sky, where flies encircle a solitary light post, symbolizing humanity's eternal quest for enlightenment. House lizards engage in a dance of survival and dominance, mirroring human behaviour in a microcosmic display. The eloquent verses of Haldhar Nag, the revered tribal poet from Sambalpur, thread through the scenes, infusing lyrical depth into the unfolding story.

Transitioning, the video transports viewers to Delhi, where a fleet of tractors converge, an embodiment of the resounding farmer protests echoing across the nation. The visual chronicle mirrors the ebb and flow of media attention, depicting how certain pivotal narratives wane into obscurity over time.

"Disrupted Meta-Memorabilia" encapsulates humanity's ability to adapt, create, and reflect amidst unexpected disruptions. It resonates with universal emotions, prompting contemplation of the fleeting nature of contemporary events against the backdrop of enduring metaphysical impressions. As sketches and captured fragments converge, the video becomes a poignant reminder that while memories may evolve and dissipate, their resonance persists, etching an enduring mark on the canvas of time.

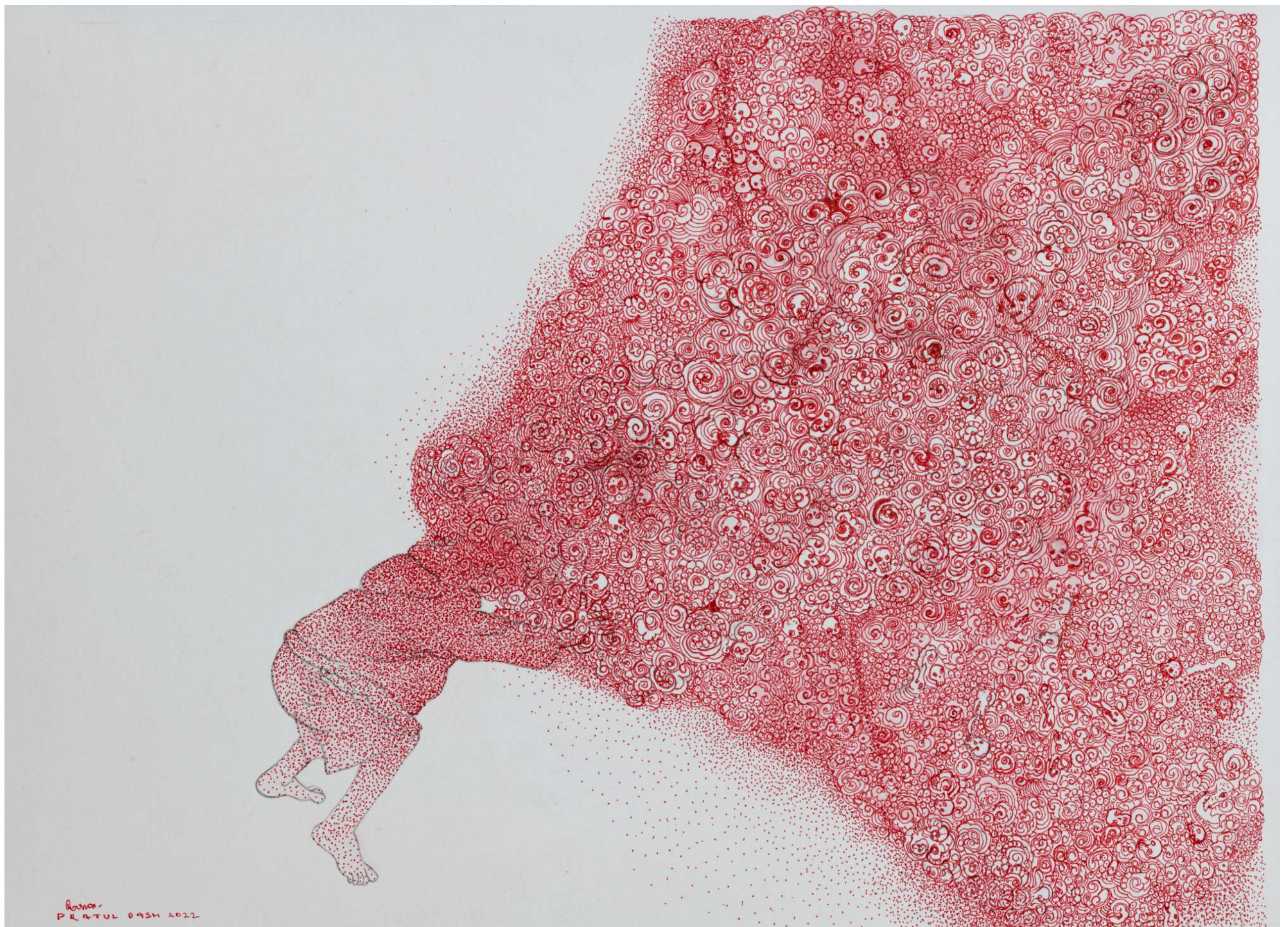
This exploration of life's undulating currents serves as a testament to the enduring potency of human expression in times of upheaval. "Disrupted Meta-Memorabilia" invites viewers to embrace the beauty of metamorphosis and recognize the lasting echoes of our shared human experiences.





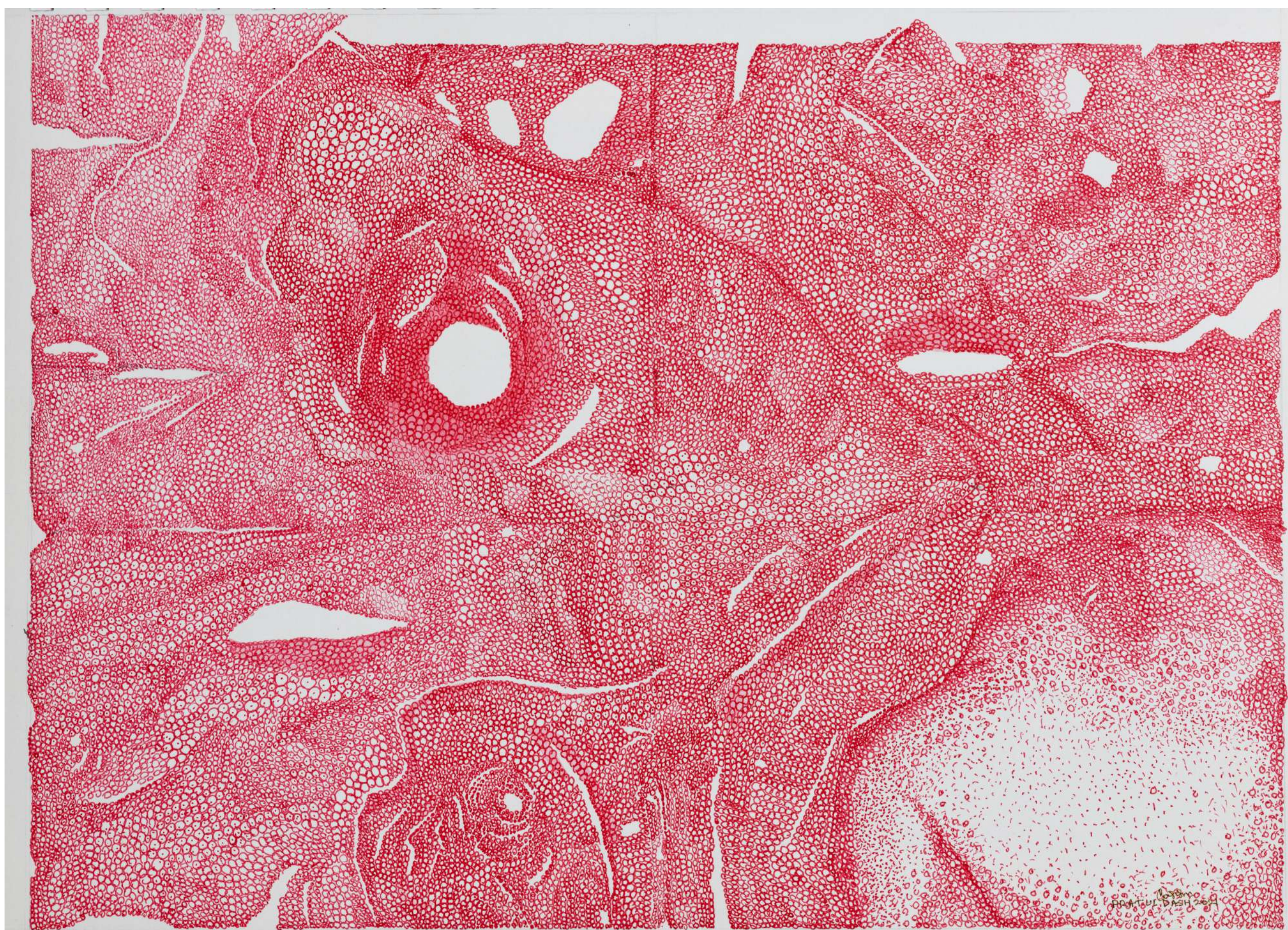
# Resolution-I

Watercolor and archival ink on 300 GSM acid-free paper, 9" x 12"



# Origin-II

Watercolor and archival ink on 300 GSM acid-free paper, 9" x 12"



# The King

Watercolor, 24K gold foil & archival ink on 300 GSM acid-free paper, 9" x 12"



# Two Incomplete Spheres

Watercolor, 24K gold foil & archival ink on 300 GSM acid-free paper, 9" x 12"



# Origins-I

Watercolor and archival ink on 300 GSM acid-free paper, 9" x 12"



PRATUL DASH 2021 *Pratula*

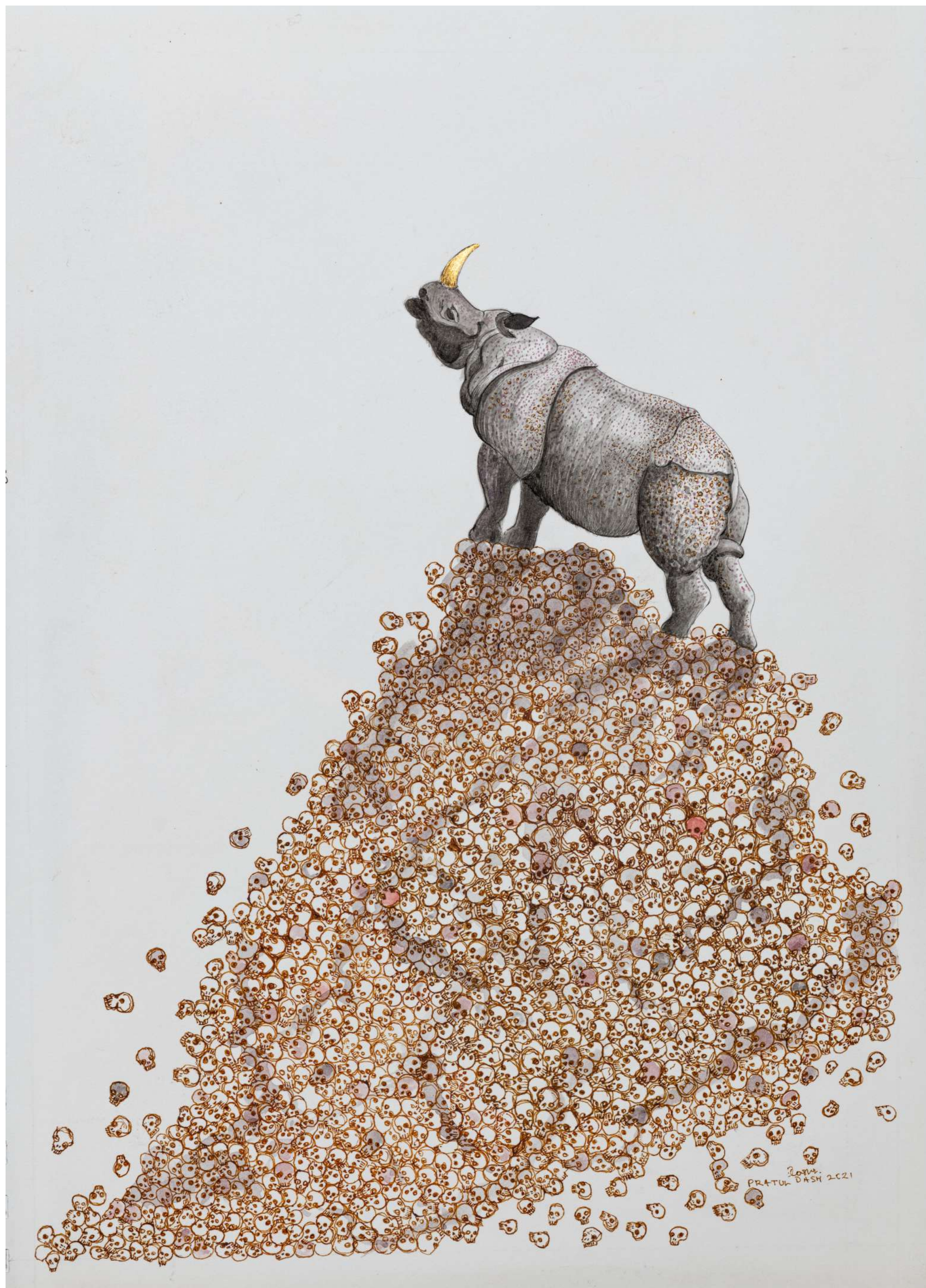
# Origins-II

Watercolor and archival ink on 300 GSM acid-free paper, 9" x 12"



# Deluge

Watercolor, 24K gold foil & archival ink on 300 GSM acid-free paper, 12" x 9"



# Pratul Dash:

## Navigating Aesthetic Terrain

### - An Artistic Journey

#### **Artistic Visions and the Transcendental:**

Emerging from the rich cultural tapestry of Odisha, I haven't just created artworks; I've opened gateways to transcendental realms. My artistic toolbox includes a symphony of oil colours, acrylics, watercolours, ink, gouache, mineral colours, graphite, photography, and video. My abilities go beyond the usual boundaries, encompassing a diverse spectrum of forms like paintings, drawings, video art, and even stepping beyond galleries to create installations in artistic residencies. A core theme running through my work is an exploration of the environment, a testament to my unwavering commitment to uncovering its intricate mysteries. Rooted in visual language, I navigate the emotional and conceptual challenges, free from the confines of essays.

#### **Philosophical Artistry and Beyond:**

My artistic journey isn't just about making art; it's a pilgrimage into the uncharted territories of philosophical discussions. My dedication to art goes beyond regular limits, resonating like the lone melodies of a singer on a vast stage. My uniqueness lies in my commitment to personal contemplation, avoiding fitting into any specific ideology or the attraction of leadership roles. This existential approach finds harmony in the symphony of contemporary art, a mix of various disciplines - cinema, literature, music, portraits, and philosophy. My creative pursuit is a treasure trove of these interdisciplinary melodies.



**Artistic Realism within a Global Tapestry:**

My art is intricately woven into India's vibrant fabric, where human stories, cultural threads, and political landscapes come together. In a world where borders blur and global influences are strong, my creative expressions tell a story of how local and universal ideas dance together. While I'm not swayed by external pressures, my creations are a lively conversation between my own context and the global viewpoint, showcasing the delicate balance of our times.

**Art in the Changing Times:**

In the 21st century, how we express art has changed a lot. Old ways have given way to new ones, influenced by scientific discoveries, technology progress, and a mix of cultures. My art represents this evolving conversation - a rich tapestry woven with threads of exploration, redefinition, interaction, and conversation. Navigating this contemporary art journey is like exploring the mysteries of science and technology, demanding careful attention.

**Being at the Vanguard:**

My recent works showcase the essence of art that's process-driven, reflecting meticulous craftsmanship and unyielding dedication. Every piece I create comes from a labour-intensive process, much like the careful artistry of the past, such as Pahari paintings, Mughal miniatures, Basoli, Mewar, and Jaipur styles. In a world of quick changes, my approach stands for the lasting value of dedication, time, and careful craftsmanship, which are vital for creating meaningful art.

**Concluding the Journey:**

As you explore my artistic journey, you'll discover a path of never-ending exploration, an ongoing effort to shape new meanings, create fresh aesthetics, and shed light on the intricacies of human experience. My canvas reverberates beyond borders, capturing the spirit of current thought and the transformative power of art. With every brushstroke and precise line, I invite you to join me in this artistic pilgrimage - a chance to explore the colourful tapestry of human feelings, thoughts, and creations within a vast global view.

**Pratul Dash**

# Pratul Dash

(b. 1974, Sambalpur, Orissa)

**Pratul Dash** is one of the most significant voices in contemporary art in India. His artistic practice encompasses a symphony of media and materials focussing on the intermediality of installation, performance and video. Experimenting with various disciplines of art from painting to cinema to philosophy, Pratul's creative pursuit is a personal contemplation of these interdisciplinary melodies. He is widely acknowledged for raising awareness on the current ecological crisis facing us at large, the displacement of labourers, their migration to cities and the subsequent sub-human conditions of their living circumstances, as expanding cities encroach upon surrounding green covers and ecosystems. The artist's oeuvre spent in a mix of rural and urban landscapes appears rooted in a juxtaposition of the local with the universal and past with the present. This is reflected in his large-scale intricately detailed works delving into the possibilities of the existence of varied vantage points and perspectives from which contemporary time and space can be looked at. He is represented by LATITUDE 28.

Spanning three decades, Pratul's career is marked by several solo presentations and many significant curated group exhibitions. As a recipient of the prestigious Inlaks Foundation Award, he travelled to Italy for further studies in Fine Arts at Unidee-in-residency, which culminated in a solo presentation there as Open House at Cittadellarte in 2004 receiving much critical acclaim, further receiving the Industrial Literature Society Award, Biella, Italy (2005).

Pratul's solos include 'In the Twilight Zone', Anant Art Gallery, New Delhi (2018); 'Metropolitan Matrix', Tamarind Art Gallery, New York (2010); 'Human Paces', Sara Khan Contemporary Art, Schaan, Switzerland (2010); 'Neo-Istoria' and 'Proxy Horizon', Palette Art Gallery, New Delhi (2007 and 2008).

Select participations in curated group exhibitions comprise of 'VAICA 2' curated by Bharati Kapadia, Chandita Mukherjee and Anuj Daga (2021); 'Phantasmagoria', LATITUDE 28, New Delhi (2021); 'City Tales: Crisis. Care. Catharsis', Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi (2020); 'Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, through the eyes of Artist, "BAPU" 150 years', curated by Uma Nair at Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi (2019); 'Enactments and Each Passing Day', an exhibition of moving images curated by Roobina Karode and Akansha Rastogi, KNMA, New Delhi (2016); 'Forms of Activism', curated by Vivan Sundaram and Sasha Altaf, Lalit Kala Gallery, Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi (2014); 'Maximum City' curated by Birgid Uccia, Switzerland (2014); 'Aesthetic Bind Phantomata', curated by Geeta Kapur on the occasion of 50 years of contemporary art and 'Video Wednesday [iii]' curated by Gayatri Sinha, Gallery Espace, New Delhi (2012). The artist has been a part of the Bodhgaya Biennale, Bihar (2016 to 2018) and has presented his work at the India Art Fair, New Delhi for over a decade and a half.

Pratul's works have been placed in several coveted collections in India and abroad which include Rai Foundation (New Delhi), Devi Art Foundation (New Delhi), Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (New Delhi), ITM Universe (Gwalior, M.P.), Inlaks Foundation (New Delhi), National Gallery of Modern Art (New Delhi), Orissa State Museum, Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi (Bhubaneswar), National Lalit Kala Akademi (New Delhi), Hindustan Lever Ltd. (India), British Council Division (New Delhi); Gandhi Smriti Darshan, Rajghat (New Delhi), and Swiss Re Art.

# About **LATITUDE28**

Since 2010, LATITUDE 28 has probed into a gallery practice that is lateral, disruptive and avant-garde.

Astutely nurturing emerging artists from South Asia, the gallery focuses on experimentation with medium and material fostering critical dialogue, perspective and practices by writers, critics and researchers alike. These maker-market relationships amongst collectors, art enthusiasts and art practitioners have grown through the gallery's interactive incubation space, where ideas have been generated through innovative curatorial projects located on the cusp of art history and socio-political context through site-specific artworks and artist talks. The gallery makes art accessible and inclusive with exhibitions located at the intersection of artists, institutions and art education. LATITUDE 28's vision is shaped by its Founder/Director, Bhavna Kakar, who is also the Founder and Editor-in-Chief of TAKE on Art - South Asia's leading contemporary art publication.

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