

C F M H K L L



U L F
R O L L O F

Ulf Rollof
Pairs

January 11—February 9,
2024



Ulf Rollof

Pairs

Once again Ulf Rollof has invented both himself and his works of art. During his more than 40 year long career he keeps finding new ideas to surprise the observer. Ulf Rollof will never stop, he has always been ahead of his time and will have many more years to consolidate his platform as one of the most important and hard working artists from Sweden. Rollof has been part of the International art scene since the late 1980s when he achieved his big breakthrough with several stripped-bare yet innovative and existential installations. As early as 1992, he participated in Documenta in Kassel, and since then, he's had a long series of important solo exhibitions; the Venice Biennale, Kiasma (Finland), MUAC (Mexico) and the celebrated exhibition 2018 at Moderna Museet in Malmö.

The theme for Rollof during his early career was to give us suggestions how to survive. In 1985 Rollof arrived as a young man to the American-Mexican border and found himself in the middle of an earthquake catastrophe that cost thousands of lives. This shocking experience left deep marks in his artistry in the early nineties and he created amazing life-saving machines: bellows, fly-traps, heated seats, protective clothing. During this time, survival was his sole focus.

Pairs is his fifth exhibition with CFHILL; *Kleptomaniac* 2016 and *Pinocchio, Pirates & Other Female Creatures* 2017, exhibited for the first time the innovative monochrome façade paintings that can be illuminated and flash in dark. As of now the theme was not only *survival*; the sea with surfboards, pirates, maps and sandy beaches - inspired from his long-time love for South America - appeared in the motifs. The colours grew more vibrant and started to install hope. The new chapter shines through even stronger in *The Wellspring* 2019 and specially after the pandemic when Rollof was overwhelmed by all the beauty found in nature. During his walks around Stockholm together with his soulmate and dog Soli he had started to discover colorful flowers, the experience became the exhibition *Narcissus* 2023.

In *Pairs* Rollof develops a new way to combine his well known bullet hole paintings made of glossy glass with blooming silicon mounted narcissus; pain and beauty opens the door to the future and evokes an unexpected optimism.

Anna-Karin Pusic
Michael Elmenbeck
Michael Storåkers

In conversation with Ulf Rollof

by Saskia Neuman

Ulf Rollof's mild expression, a swift smile and intense stare is matched by the artist's quick rapport throughout our conversation. Having lived for several years as a young man on America's west coast, and later as a slightly more mature man in New York City, the Swedish artist not only expresses himself in English with ease but has taken custom to frothy Americanisms as his lingua franca... his enthusiasm is as infectious as his work. Beholden by routine due to his illness, Parkinson's, we meet before lunch. 'I am clear and coherent throughout the day', he explains, 'but I tire... meeting in the morning is preferable.' The artist's practice seems to have flourished, despite health challenges. 'Time, or the lack of it, makes you more productive. I don't have the luxury of being idle, I have a few hours each day to work, so I make them count, I must be effective. As you get older you become more efficient, you're focused.'

Rollof is thrilled ahead of his fifth solo exhibition at CFHILL. In the exhibition, titled *Pairs*, he revisits his seminal Shoot Paintings, a series of work that he has come back to in instances over the years. The Shoot Paintings, along with monumental new Flower Paintings aim to weave the exhibition together. The combination of two distinct narratives within Rollof's practice is intended to create nuances of familiarity, as well as anticipation of the introduction of completely new work. It is as if the artist's intention is to create a well of knowledge within his own painterly practice, pairing the new series of works with reflection and his personal memory of his oeuvre.

So much has been written about Ulf Rollof, there is an almost perverse amount of information to be found about his life and practice. We take a more contemplative stroll down memory lane together. Revisiting the importance of influence, people and places that have made an impact on the artist, his life and practice.

Is memory important?

— I have very selective memory. Somethings I remember with great specificity, others are completely lost to me... things from my childhood I can't recall at all. My youngest daughter Klara is like a tape recorder. She remembers everything we've ever done, every detail, which is a blessing, but can also be a bit of curse. How do we sort and differentiate good and bad memories...

I've been thinking about your works *Skottmålningarna* — the first ones you made were in 2003 (Shoot Paintings, the artist calls them RGB Paintings). Could you elaborate on these works?

— I've been making the RGB Paintings since 2003. The first ones were triptychs, red, green, and blue, relating to the color space of digital images which are built up out of RGB, when you work in photoshop... then they are shot. These paintings are physical, and fragile and they weigh at least 25 kg. They're terrible to carry around, heavy as hell, and they're problematic. The works are indescribable, because they're not about shooting, they're about pain. Referring to the situation I was in during 2003. No matter how I positioned my body I was in an immense amount of pain. How do you describe that? This was the only way I could do it.

Despite getting better, having treatment, you continued making the paintings?

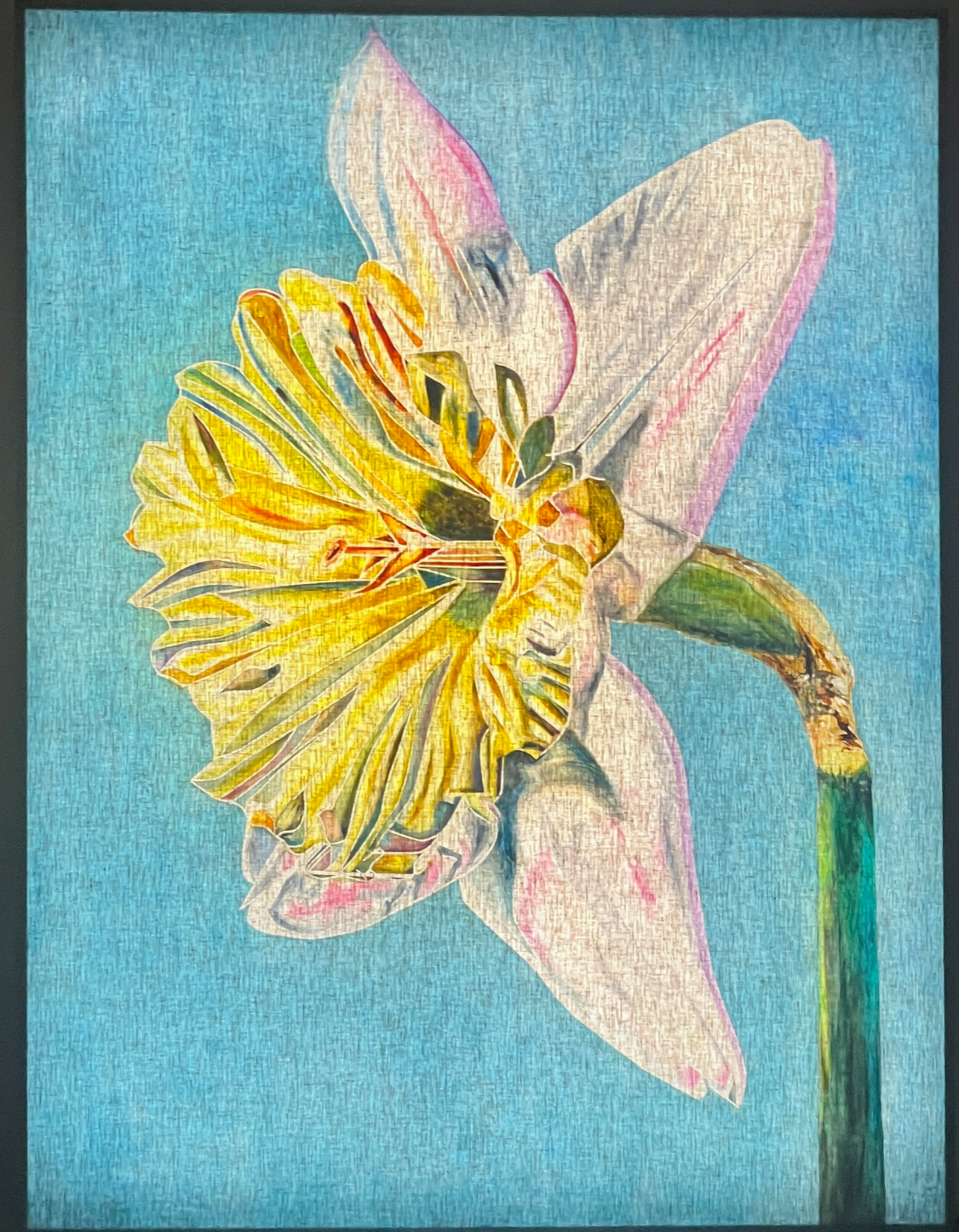
— Yes. Every year I make a new series... but this is the first time I have paired the paintings with another series of work.

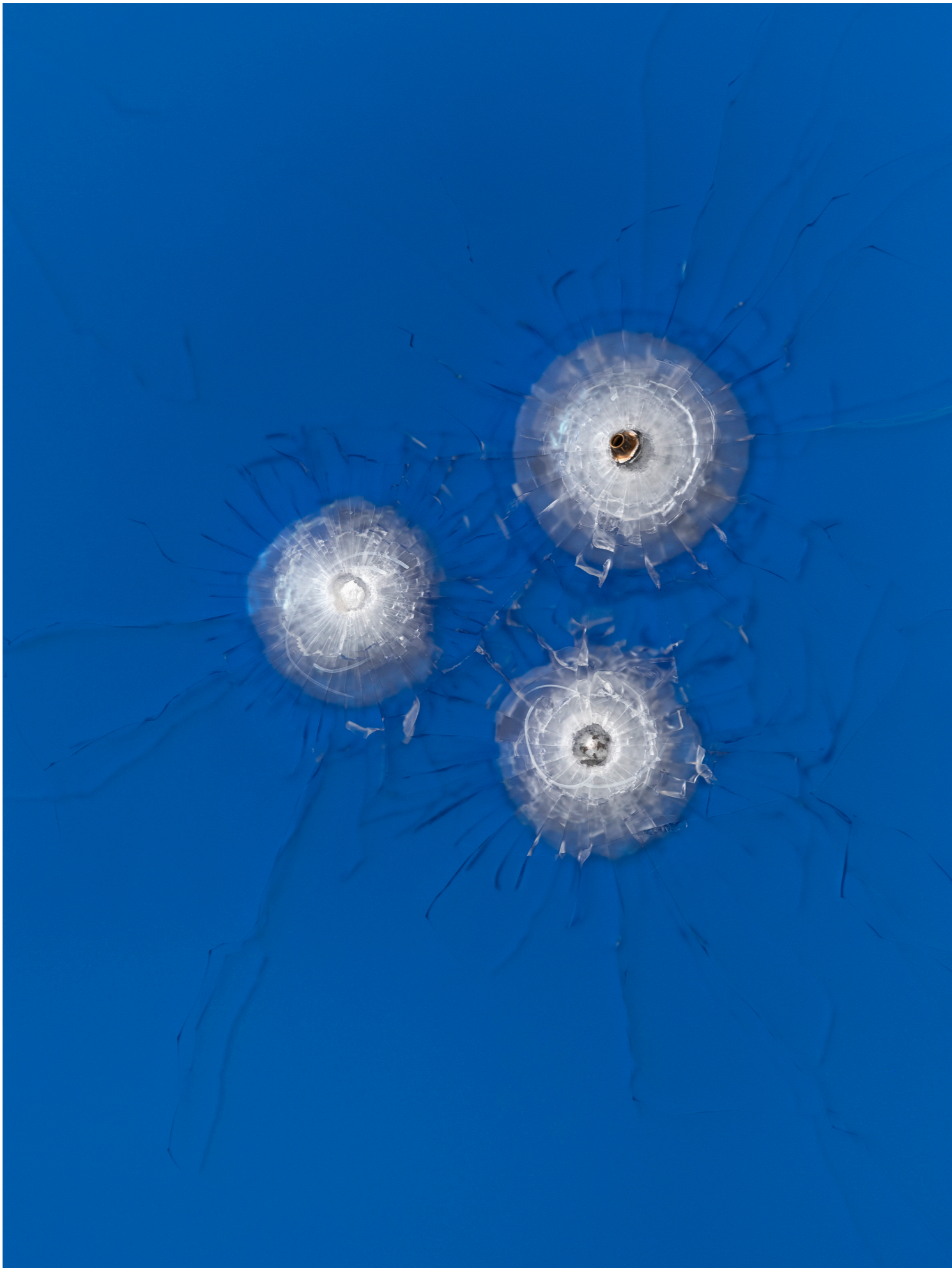
How did this come about?

— After the pandemic ended, I was so happy to see all these flowers emerge from the ground, in the Spring. It was the first season after the pandemic ended where you could get out properly. I had been very isolated because of my sickness. My neurologist told me getting Corona wasn't an option, I just couldn't. I've never been scared in my life, never ever... this was the first time I experienced fear, for two years, and it was awful. Then, to come out, to see these flowers, was just a revelation.

How did you express this revelation?

— My last exhibition, about a year ago, was drawings, very colorful drawings of Narcissus flowers... in Swedish they're called påskliljor. I didn't even know that they were called Narcissus flowers. I mean it's perfect. Now I am pairing these new paintings with the Shoot Paintings. They are identical in size and in mount, silicon mounted, behind glass... my hope is that the two objects match each other perfectly.





Do you still look at the Shoot Paintings as representations of your own pain, or can you view them through the lens of other people's or types of discomfort?

— Yes, absolutely. Of course, the pain, or rather discomfort is more universal. They are relevant to everyone in different ways. That's why they speak to people, and that's why people collect them. For me, learning Sōtō Zen meditation really helped me survive. I spent time in Sausalito, in California. I guess this is what the work is about, overcoming obstacles, seeing elements in life from a new perspective.

How was it to spend time in California again, after having spent time there as a teenager, studying art?

— Total full circle. It all made sense. I came to San Diego as a 17-year-old, started making art, met my mentor, the artist Michael Schnorr.

California is important to you... during our conversation we've touched upon artists, including Niki de Saint Falle, and then more obvious influences such as the American artist Chris Burden...

— Yes, that's an obvious influence. He was important to me when I was young, he was a friend of a friend. Bruce Nauman is another very important reference of mine, his work has been a strong voice throughout my early practice. Film is another strong reference for me, I watch a lot of film, television. I am obsessed with film, and television.

Geography is another important component in your life, right?

— Yes, it is. Later, after California and Mexico I spent time in New York. I was there with Iaspis, a grant, but really longed for nature. When I was an exchange student in California, I had the great fortune of arriving in Imperial Beach, the most southern part of San Diego, where the border crossing to Mexico is located, it's connected to Tijuana, joined by a swamp. It was a tough place, a military base, a navy town... like Karlskrona, where I grew up, but completely different. There were all these low riders there, motorcycle gangs... again, not dissimilar to where I grew up, they have Raggare (car/motorcycle aficionados) in Karlskrona. It was close to farmland; I grew up close to farmland. I had plans of becoming a Mexican citizen, I moved there in 1985, but then I had a family and life had other plans. So, I go back often, but to Mexico City, and spend a few months there at a time. For many years I wasn't able to travel back to the remote mountain village San Bartolo Parreo where I lived 1985–1987. I learned Spanish in the village, and it was a very welcoming, fun and formative experience learning farming

and customs in an ancient tradition. I was luckily able to travel there just before the pandemic to meet my old mentor Dona Maria Velez. Unfortunately, the village is only an hour away from Uruapan which is the center of the drug war today. So, I stay in Mexico City, with my service dog, she's wonderful, and from Mexico. I keep a routine there, spend time in the sun, think, work... people are very open and polite. There is a mix of everything there, it's the most cosmopolitan place.' Back to memory... what other influences growing up made an impact on you? What experiences do you go back to, in your memory.

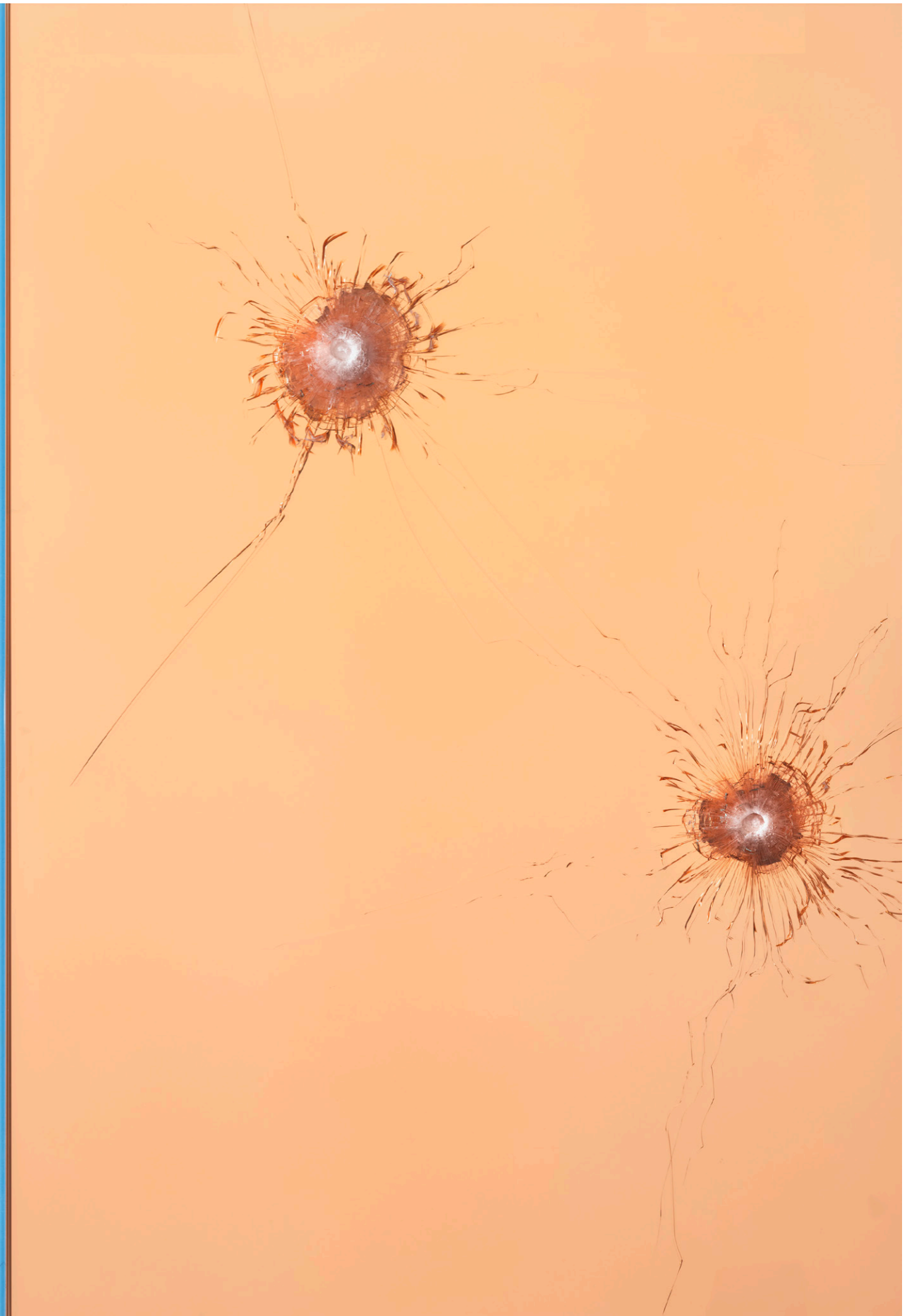
— I used to assist a friend of my mother, who was also an artist, Harald Kraft. He was very influenced by American pop art, I used to assist him as a kid. I am sure that made a huge impact. Another strong memory of an important influence came to me when I was working on my retrospective with Iris Müller Westermann at the Modern Museum of Art, in Malmö. When I was five my mother put me to work with a cobbler — Uncle Henry. I didn't get along with the kids in preschool, kindergarten, so two years before I enrolled in school was spent with Henry, repairing shoes. That's why I work with the material rubber. This memory, or rather this influence dawned on me when I was preparing my exhibition in Malmö. Henry had the shop next to where we lived in Karlskrona, he was a Jewish immigrant from Germany, he was a total hero. Another exhibition I did that is very important to me is *Eve, Mom, Dad, The Machine and I*, in 2001. It's the first exhibition I made about my family. I love photography ever since I used to work as a black and white photo printer. I had been participating in a great deal of therapy with my therapist Ulla Wiggen (the artist), she's very important to me. The combination of the machinery and sculpture that was in the exhibition, along with the yellow breast bowl made in Madame Tussaud casting wax, depicting the female form, with the photographs... it was an important show. I had been in such a bad place; the therapy was hard and intense. The course of therapy was very conversational, and at that time Ulla wasn't making art, just engaging in therapy. Sometimes in life you really need support, Ulla was incredibly supportive. The photographs in the exhibition were amazing to make, I went down to Kivik (largest apple producers in Sweden) and took the pictures. It was a very personal exhibition.

When making work for the exhibition *Pairs*, the flower paintings in particular, do you plan on making more of these in the future?

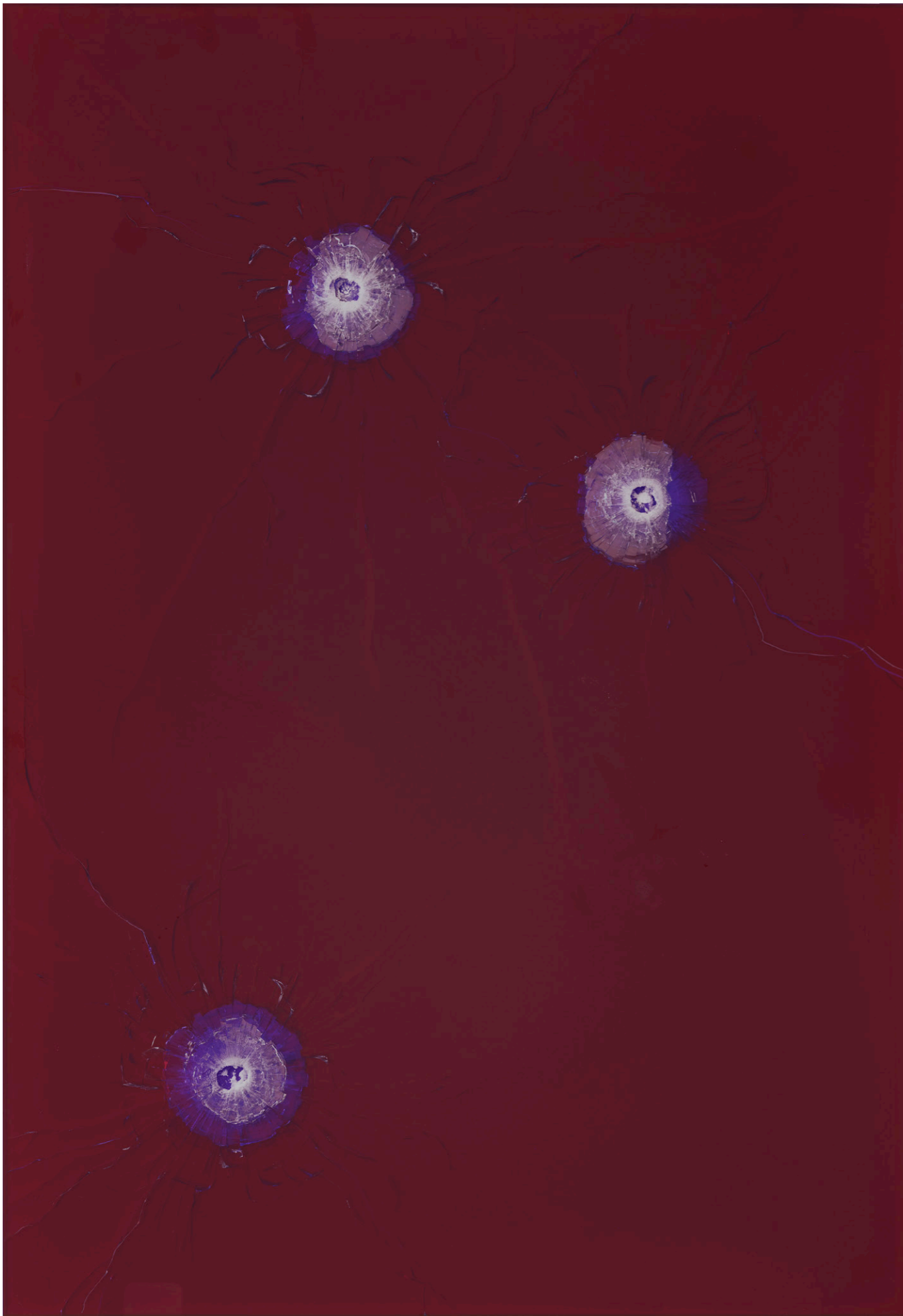
— Yes! I am planning on going to Colombia, to Medellín, to paint or work with photography... they are one of the largest flower producers in the world, roses especially. I have wanted to go to Colombia all my life, it's never really ideal to travel there, but I plan to go and stay away until it gets warmer here.



NAVY & NOAH
2023
Drawing mounted on silicon
and laminated optiwhite glass
shot with 9 mm bullets
99 x 69 cm (each)



GOLD & RIVER
2023
Drawing mounted on silicon
and laminated optiwhite glass
shot with 9 mm bullets
99 x 69 cm (each)



RED & MICHEL

2023

Drawing mounted on silicon
and laminated optiwhite glass
shot with 9 mm bullets
99 x 69 cm (each)



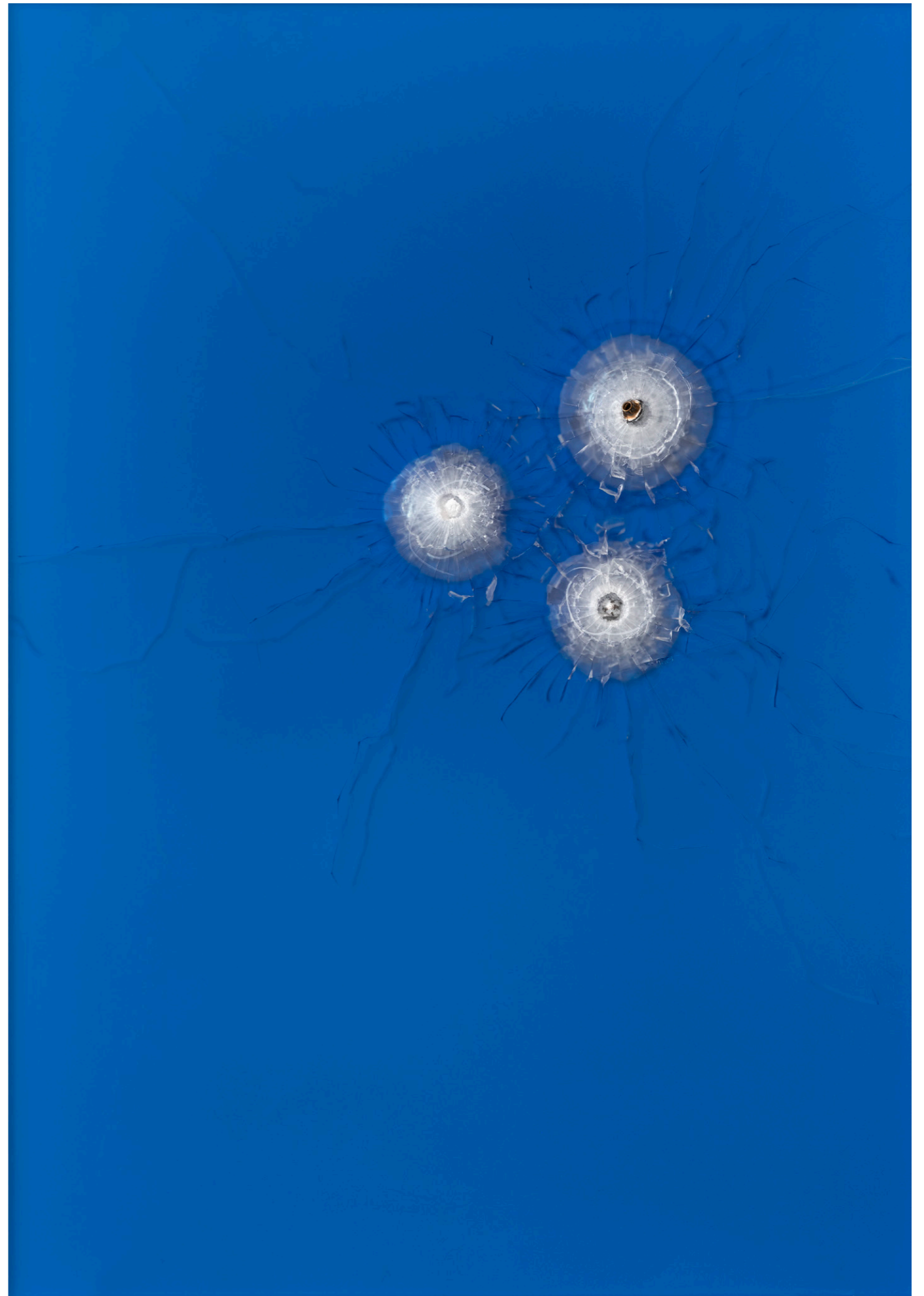
WHITE
2023
Linen canvas, acrylic and electrical
207 x 157 x 10 cm





LILAC
2023
Linen canvas, acrylic and electrical
157 x 107 x 10 cm

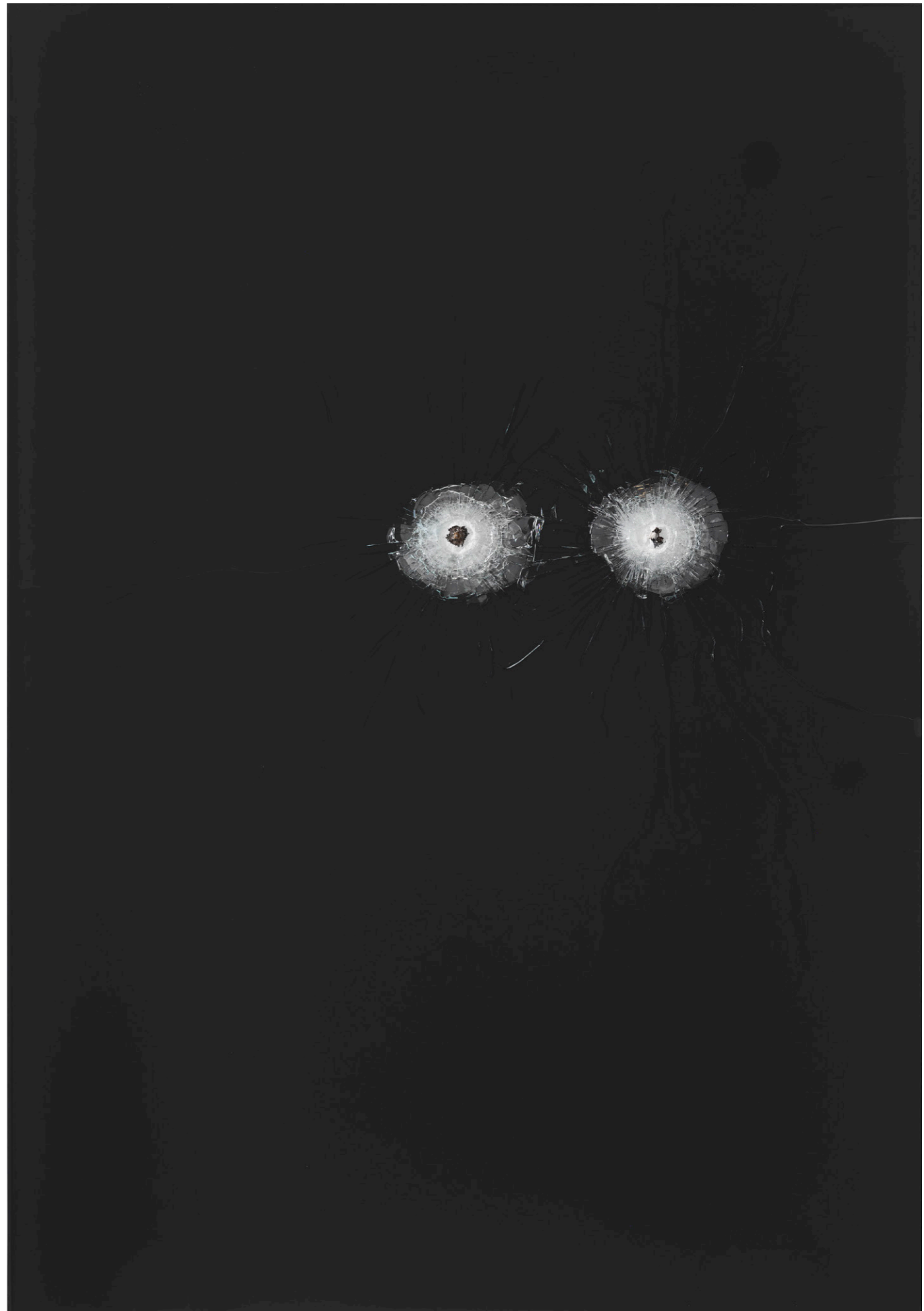
SUPERBLUE
2023
Laminated optiwhite glass
shot with 9 mm bullets
99 x 69 cm

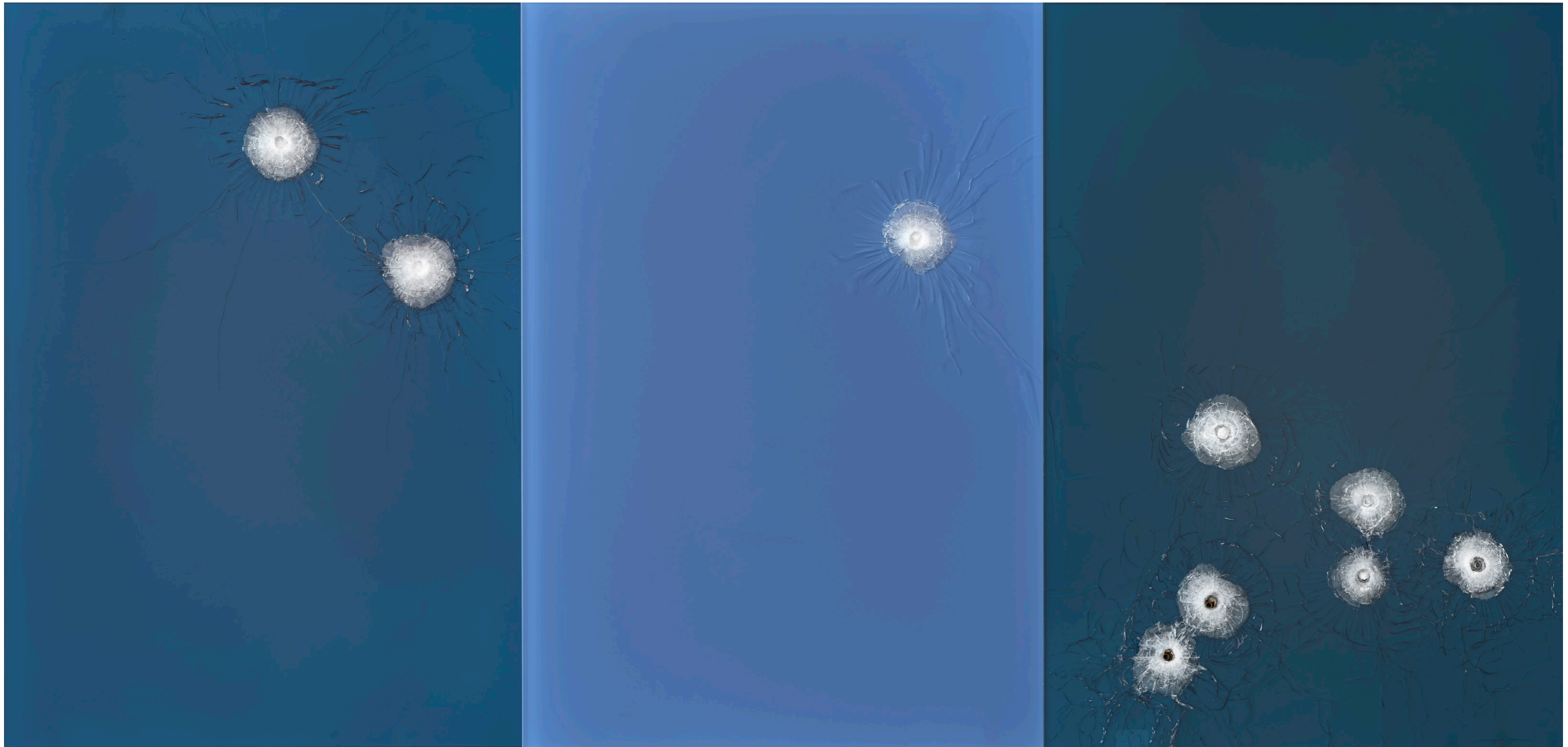




GAMMELROSA
2023
Laminated optiwhite glass
shot with 9 mm bullets
99 x 69 cm

BLACK
2023
Laminated optiwhite glass
shot with 9 mm bullets
99 x 69 cm





SEA
2023
Laminated optiwhite glass
shot with 9 mm bullets
99 x 207 cm

PUNKS
2021
Antique glass laminated with Optiwhite
float glass shot with 9 mm bullets
67 x 59 cm



CV Ulf Rollof

Born in 1961 in Karlskrona, Sweden.

Lives in Stockholm, Sweden.

Studies

1982–87 Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Professor Bard Breivik, Stockholm, Sweden

1978–79 Student of Professor Michael Schnorr , San Diego, USA

Teaching

1990 Teacher at Valand (Academy of Fine Arts) Gothenburg, Sweden

1991 Teacher at Statens Konstakademi, Oslo, Norway and Konsthögskolan, Stockholm

1993 Teacher at Photography Academy, Gothenburg, Sweden

1993 Assistant professor at Royal Academy of Art, Copenhagen, Denmark

1994–95 Assistant professor at Royal Academy of Art, Stockholm, Sweden

2007 Professor of Monumental Sculpture at Valand Academy (University of Gothenburg)

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2023 *Mision Circundante Primera Estacion Casa De Mario Rangel Faz*, Mexico City / Curated by Guillermo Santamarina.

2022 *Narcissus*, CFHILL, Stockholm, Sweden

2019 *The Well*, CFHILL, Stockholm, Sweden / Curated by Kalle Norin

2017–18 *Urgent*, Moderna Muséet, Malmö, Sweden / Curated by Iris Müller-Westermann

2017 *Pinocchio, Pirates & Other Female Creatures*, Stockholm, Sweden

2016 *Kleptomaniac*, CFHILL, Stockholm, Sweden

2014 *Kleptomani*, Gallery Andersson Sandström, Stockholm, Sweden / Curated by Linus Elmes

Cleptomania, Casa Maauad, Mexico City, Mexico

2011 *Moment*, Museum of Modern Art, Stockholm, Sweden / Curated by Iris Müller-Westermann

2009 *Project Axolotl*, M U A C, Mexico City, Mexico / Curated by Guillermo Santamarina

2008 *Under*, Millesgården, Stockholm, Sweden

2007 *Now*, Gallery Brändström & Stene, Stockholm, Sweden

2004 *Irak / Ikaros*, Kristianstad Konsthall, Kristianstad, Sweden

Hitch, Kunstbanken, Hamar, Norway

2003 *No Pic Nic*, Göteborgs Konsthall, Gothenburg, Sweden

Villa, Ludwigsburg Kunstverein, Stuttgart, Germany

2002 *Ulf Rollof*, Galerie Metta Linde, Lübeck, Germany

2001 *Eve, Mom, Dad, The Machine and Me*, Gallery Nordenhake, Stockholm, Sweden

2000 7C´ s, Nikolaj Kirke, Copenhagen, Denmark

Desert, Tensta Konsthall, Stockholm; Sweden

Kalender, Stefan Andersson Gallery, Umeå, Sweden

1999 7C´ s, 48th Venice Biennial, Venice, Italy

New Works, Galerie Nordenhake, Stockholm, Sweden

1998 *Äggcity*, Västerås Konstmuseum, Västerås, Sweden

Axolotl, Crestet Centre D´ art, Vaison La Romaine, France

Axolotl, Chaufferi, Strassbourg, France

1997 *Ulf Rollof*, Galerie Nordenhake, Stockholm, Sweden.

Ulf Rollof, Galleri Sölvberget, Stavanger, Norway

1996 28.09.1985 – 14.03.1996. The Museum of Contemporary Art (now KIASMA), Helsinki, Finland

Eggdoc, Norrköpings Konstmuseum, Norrköping, Sweden

1995 12 Jan 1995, Moderna Galerija, Ljubljana, Slovenia

New Works, Galerie Anhava, Helsinki, Finland

1994 7 Jan 1994, Ujadowskie Castle,Warzaw, Poland

New Works, Gallery Krognoshuset,Lund, Sweden

New Works, Gallery Mejeriet, Alskog, Sweden

1992 *Instituto Butanta*, Galleri Eklund, Umeå, Sweden

New Works, Galerie Nordenhake, Stockholm, Sweden

Ulf Rollof, Miller-Nordenhake, Cologne, Germany

1991 *Diagnose*, Gallery Riis, Oslo, Norway

Seven sick Sailors were Succored by Seven Splendid Sisters on The Sinking

Steamer Shanghai, Galerie Anhava, Helsinki, Finland

1990 *Lifeboat*, Nordic Arts Center, Sveaborg, Helsinki, Finland

Land, Galerie Nordenhake, Stockholm, Sweden

1989 *Axolotl*, Gallery Stefan Andersson, Umeå, Sweden

1988 *Hule Mio*, Bergen Konstförening, Bergen, Norway

Dormimundo, Galerie Nordenhake, Stockholm, Sweden

Dormimundo, Malmö Konsthall, Malmö, Sweden

1987 *Despues del 19 Sep 1985*, Exconvento, Los Leones, Mexico D.F.

1986 *Faros*, Patzcuarolake, sitespecific work, Patzcuaro, Mexico

1985 *Dokument*, United Sardine Factory, Bergen, Norway

1984 *Passage*, Galleri Ahlner, Stockholm, Sweden

1982 *Rooms*, Galleri Ahlner, Stockholm, Sweden

Rooms, Galleri Camera Obscura, Stockholm, Sweden

Selected Group Exhibitions

2016 *Life itself*, Moderna Muséet, Stockholm, Sweden

2015 *Like a Prayer*, Magasin 3, Stockholm, Sweden

2014 *I Love it! What is it?* Kulturhuset, Stockholm, Sweden

2010 *Aion Projects*, Project Art Center, Dublin, Ireland

2009 *Borders & Beyond*, Kunsthalle Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

2008 *El Golfo de Mexico*, Museo de la Ciudad, Queretaro, Mexico

2006 *The Age of Discrepancy, U N A M*, Mexico City, Mexico

Drömdiken, Skissernas Museum, Lund, Sweden

2005 *Contemporary Painting*, Galleri Andersson Sandström, Umeå, Sweden

Contemporary Sculpture..., Wanås Foundation, Wanås, Sweden

2004 *Äntligen hemma*, Uddevalla Konstmuseum and Nacka Konsthall, Sweden

2003 *Projekt Framtiden*, Naval Historical Museum, Stockholm, Sweden

ID 2003, Vasa, Finland

2002 *Sculptura 02*, Falkenberg, Sweden

2001 *Chairs in Contemporary Art*, Palazzo Affari Ai Giureconsulti, Milano, Italy

Drawings, Institute of Contemporary Art, Maine, Portland, USA

La Vérité est Ailleurs, Centre pour l´image, Saint-Gervais, Genève, Schweiz

Shifte, Malmö Konstmuseum, Malmö, Sweden

Image, Centre pour l´ Image Contemporaine, Geneva, Switzerland

De Verbeelding Art Landscape Nature, Zeewolde, Netherlands

2000 *Barnsligt - Eller bara barn*, Blekinge Läns Museum, Karlskrona, Sweden

Världsbilder, Botkyrka Konsthall, Botkyrka, Sweden

1999 *Ex-Tension*, Museum het Domein, Sittard, Netherlands

1998 *Out of the North*, Württembergisher Kunstverein, Stuttgart, Germany

Icegarden, Berry House, London, GB*

1997 *Nordbergs Fort*, Nordberg, Norway

New Delhi Triennial, New Delhi, India

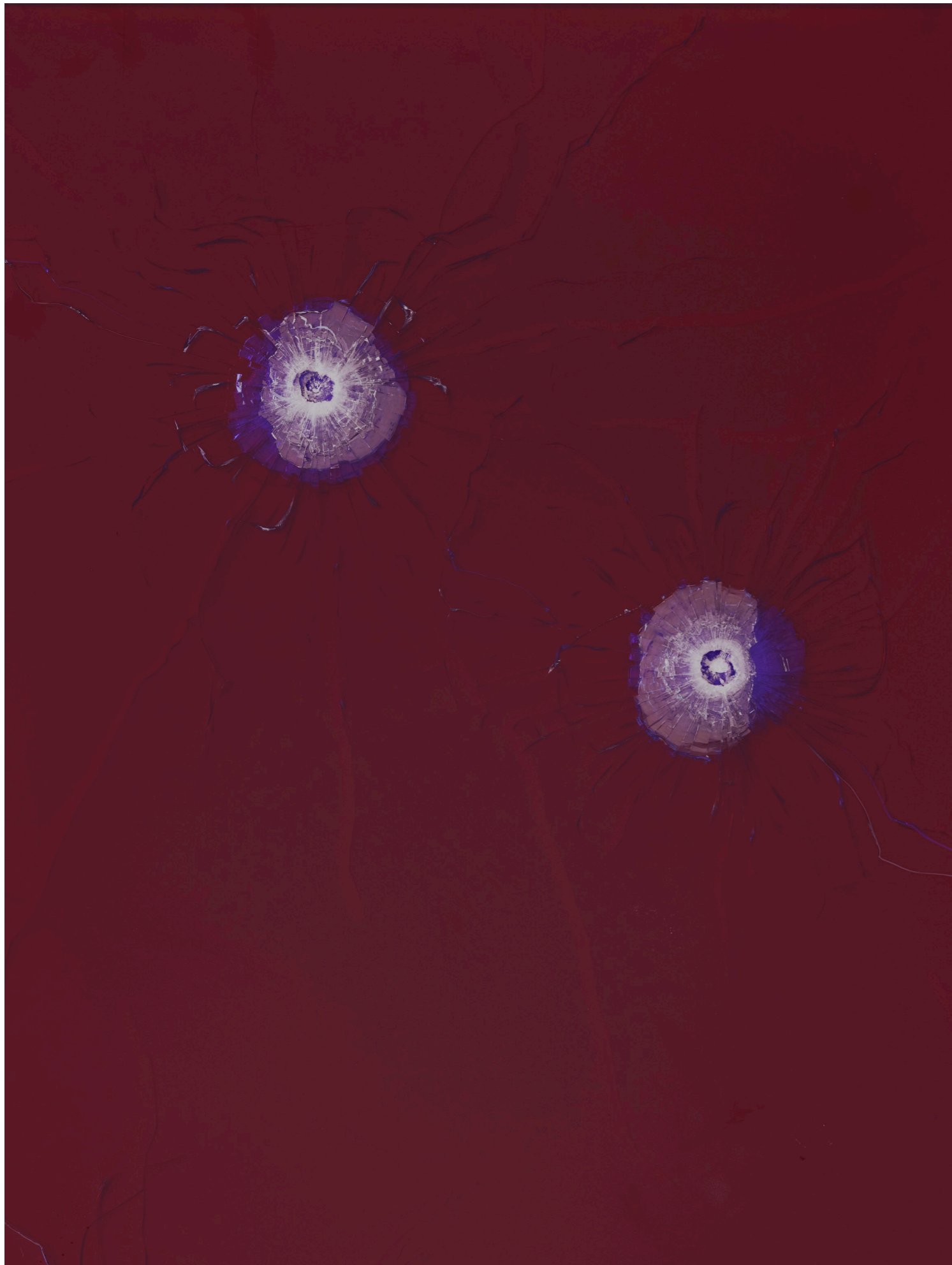
1996 *Se hur det känns*, Rooseum, Malmö, Sweden

- Strangers in the Arctic*, Rundetårn, Copenhagen, Denmark
Cityspace, Vesterbro, Copenhagen, Denmark
Baltic Biennial, Kunsthalle Rostock, Germany
1995 *ARS 95*, Museum of Contemporary Art (now KIASMA), Helsinki, Finland
Fundament, Parkexhibition in Breda, Netherlands
Monument, Public Sculpture, Soros Foundation, Riga, Latvia
Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul, Turkey
1994 *Artmachine*, Norrköpings Konstmuseum, Norrköping, Sweden
The ideal Place, Haags Centrum voor Aktuele Kunst, Haag, Netherlands
Territory, Kulturhuset, Stockholm, Sweden
In-Site 94, Colonia Libertad, Tijuana and San Diego, Mexico & U S
1993 *Borealis 6*, National Gallery of Iceland, Reykjavik, Iceland
1992 *Rollof, Salcedo, Huber, Moro, Uutinen*, Schedhalle, Zurich, Switzerland
Documenta IX, Kassel, Germany
In-Site 92, Abandonado, Installation together with Michael Schnorr, Tijuana, Mexico
1991 *The Last Border; Migration; The 4th World*, Enkehuset, Stockholm, Sweden
Contemporary Arts in Sweden, Museum of Modern Art, Kamakura, Japan
Metafor och Materia, Moderna Muséet, Stockholm, Sweden
Nordic Drawings, The Nordic Arts Center, Helsinki, Finland
Gullivers Travels, Galerie Sophia Ungers, Cologne, Germany
Bienal de Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo, Brazil
1990 *Spegling*, Moderna Muséet, Stockholm, Sweden
12th International Biennial of Drawings, Museum of Modern Art, Rijeka, Yugoslavia
1989 *Konstnationalen*, Globen, Stockholm
Wanås, Wanås Castle, Wanås, Sweden
1988 *Bälg 4*, Fylkingen, Concert for Bellows, Stockholm, Sweden
Frizon, Kulturhuset, Stockholm, Sweden
1987 *Verktyg*, Sveagalleriet, Stockholm, Sweden
1985 *Aurora*, Nordic Arts Center, Helsinki, Finland
1984 *Femte Elementet*, Borgholms Slottsruin, Borgholm, Sweden
1983 *Lust*, Galleri Camera Obscura, Stockholm, Sweden
1981 *Bländande bilder*, Photographic Museum, Stockholm, Sweden
1978 Assisting Michael Schnorr on the Mural *Death of a Farmworker* in Chicano Park, San Diego, USA

Public Collections

- Centro Cultural de Arte Contemporaneo, Mexico City, Mexico
Göteborgs Museum, Gothenburg, Sweden
Gävle Museum, Gävle, Sweden
Kiasma, Helsingfors, Finland
Malmö Museum, Malmö, Sweden
Moderna Galerija, Ljubljana, Slovenia
Moderna Muséet, Stockholm, Sweden
MUAC, Mexico City, Mexico
Museum of Contemporary Art Arken, Copenhagen, Denmark
SMAK, Museum Van Hedendaagse Kunst, Ghent, Belgium
National Gallery of Iceland, Reykjavik, Iceland
Nationalmuseet för Konst, Arkitektur & Design, Oslo, Norway
Norrköpings Konstmuseum, Norrköping, Sweden
Photographic Museum, Stockholm, Sweden
Skissernas Museum, Lund, Sweden
Statens Konstråd, Stockholm, Sweden
Västerås Konstmuseum, Västerås, Sweden





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