

EMBER FAIRBAIRN

THIN SKINS

17 NOVEMBER – 5 DECEMBER 2020

Thin Skins by Ember Fairbairn explores the yearning of belonging in nature and how relationships with place play out in the time of covid. As the artist describes, the veils or skins are thin, but they have not yet shed. The paintings reflect this transient time, and thinking is divulged in the process, how difficult times become sacred. For Fairbairn, a rite of passage of humanity is exposed within 'doing', instead of feeling powerless in what is beyond our control. She channels a hopefulness through her practice, connecting threads to metamorphosis reflected in residual forms of art. "It's definitely put me through my paces as at times I would succumb to feeling that loss of autonomy or loss of control," says the artist. "Then I'd pick up the brush and keep pushing through." Within Fairbairn's painting practice is an influence of nature, where she explores the metaphysical philosophy of ecology and her own feminine body. The result is something akin to art as meditation; each consideration of process, colours, gestures playing out until the artist finds a resolution. The works reveal themselves in active gestures or layers of paint. They reveal a belonging, connecting Fairbairn's time in the landscape, and evolving within nature.

Spending time in nature becomes a meditation on being present in the moment, a feeling that comes through in her paintings, each gesture a methodology of grounding. The process begins intuitively, in thin layers, as the artist builds a narrative through texture that uncovers the depth of the painting. Naturally drawn to autumnal tones or soft grounding earthy but also ethereal colours, these paintings are the springboard to a grounded container. The new collection is a metamorphosis, of shedding skin. The layers of surface tension yearn out for nature as the artist considers the surface of the earth, the surface, or the body—a mirroring of self and expression. Fairbairn is concerned with what's underneath, her paintings becoming a carrier of information to make some form of sense for herself. Through the paint application, there becomes a 'dance between inside and out'. *Thin Skins* explores how we attribute identity, reflecting disparities that Fairbairn actively seeks out in becoming and taking power through the process-based practice. Two patterns emerge. A dreamy, thin-layered gestural abstraction that hints at sheer fabric moving in the wind. Or another pattern of geometric portals moving through the landscape.

The artworks are ephemeral, coming from a dream or that daze of covid — either way, reality is completely flipped. The intersection between a dream and reality is at the crux of the works, the interpretation of these illusions that are constructed from the memory of travel and nature.

For the artist, by channelling her vivid dreams, she attempts to make sense of her mystic adventures which feed into interconnectedness and belonging to places. The years of dreams and magical interpretation comes through on the surface in colour and line. A particular dream of floating down the river imbues the paintings. While the series wasn't initially related to covid, as a Melbourne-based artist, those feeling of being trapped and anxiety appears. Yet, the expressive linework and colour reveal the waves and motions of life. The 'thin skins' are only a cover for the connections to our ecologies. There is always something beyond a perception of sensitivity or being 'thin-skinned'.

Her works ask how we are becoming and falling away. The covid lockdown playing a role, exposing themes of belonging, becoming and relationships with nature and place. Fairbairn reflects, that in some ways, covid politics are a mimesis of broader environmental concerns as if the biome of humanity and nature is getting more out of balance.

Thin Skins refers to how we are worn thin by it all, yet how, underneath the layers, there is hope. That despite the challenging times we face, there is a way through, beyond the veil.

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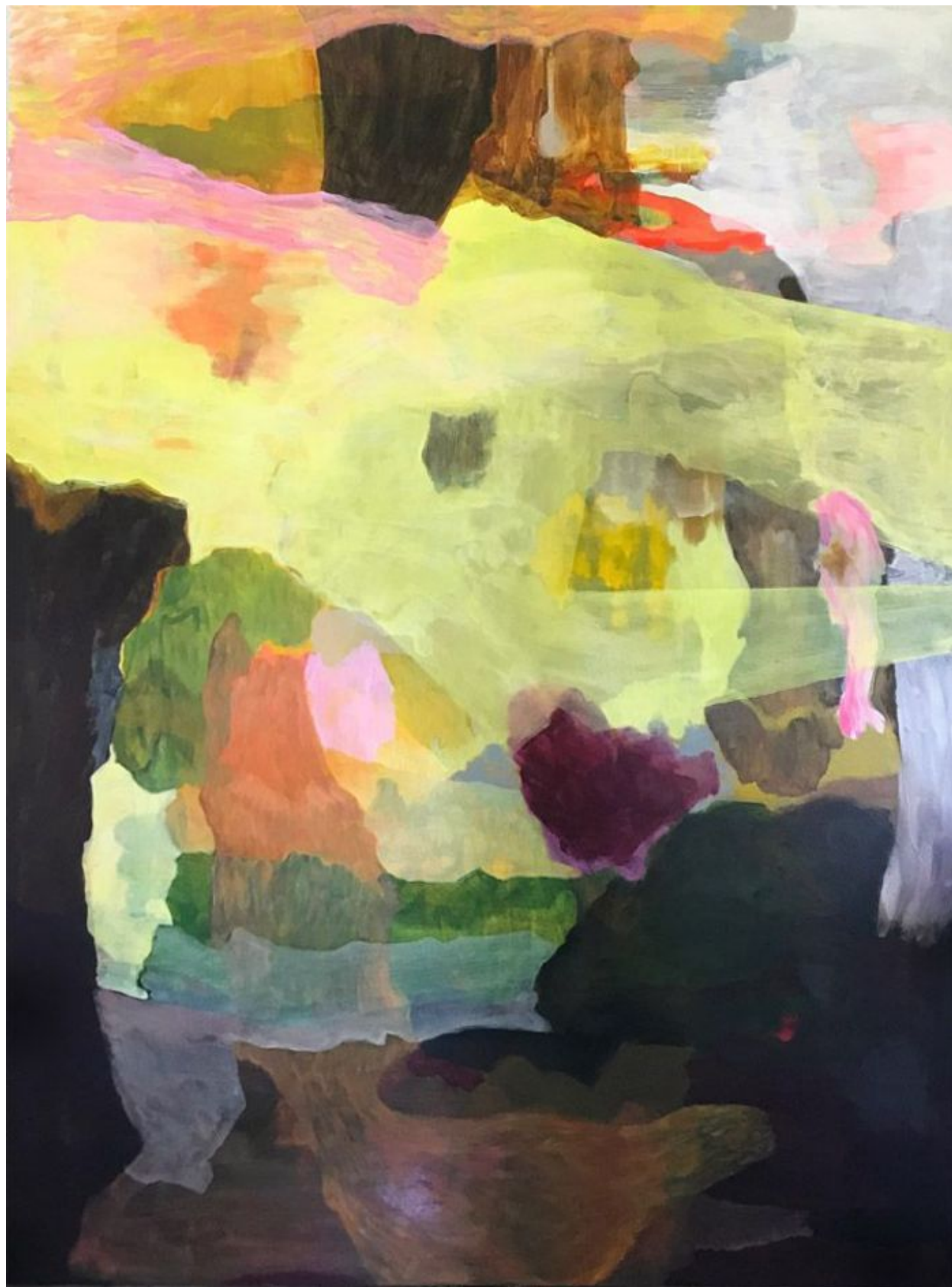
EMBER FAIRBAIRN

Beyond the wall and the floor, 2020

oil on Dibond on board

180 x 140 cm

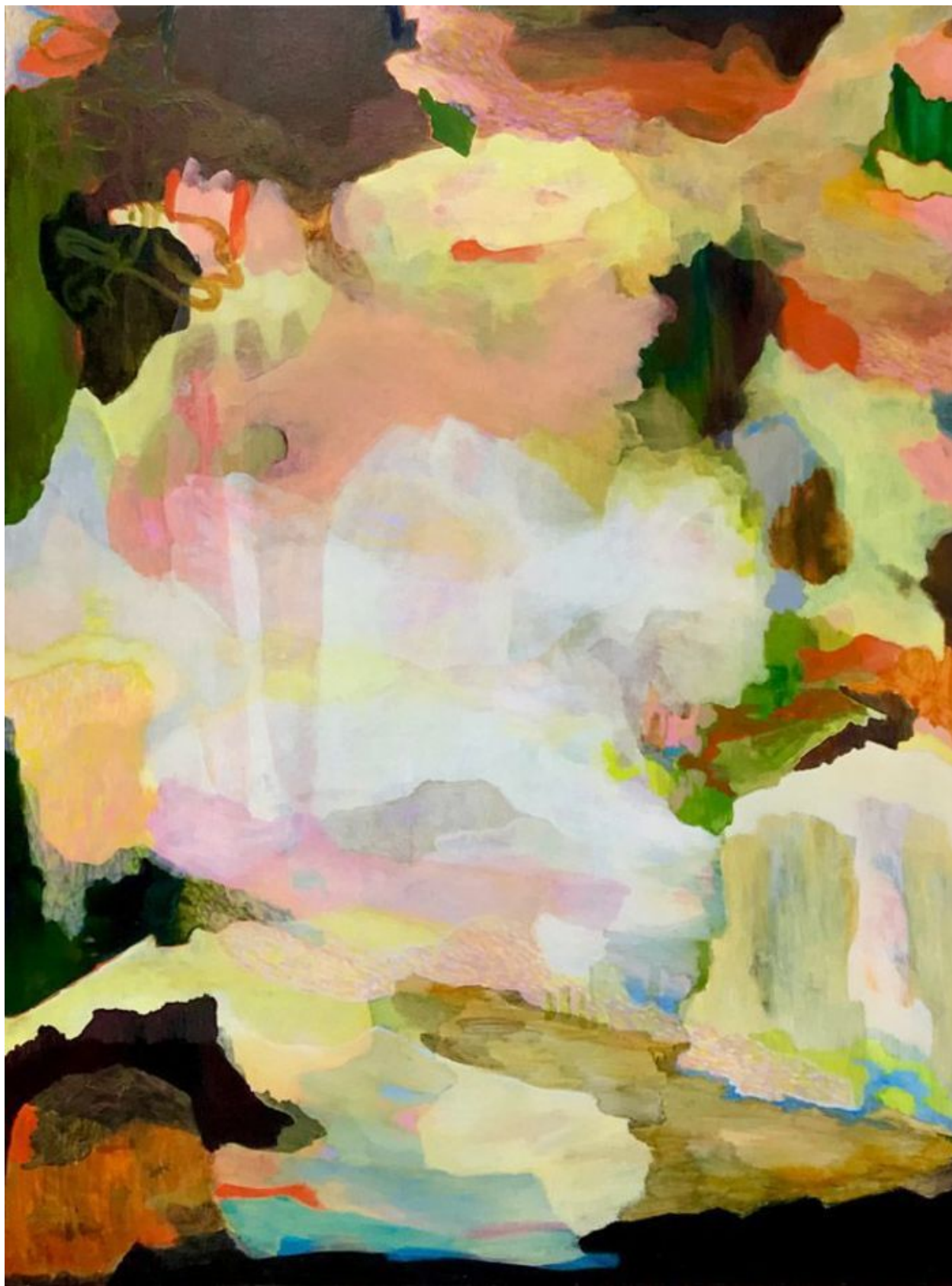
AUD 6,000



EMBER FAIRBAIRN
Coming in from the east, 2019
oil on wood panel
160 x 120 cm
AUD 5,000



EMBER FAIRBAIRN
Stone water dreamer, 2020
oil on board
160 x 120 cm
AUD 5,000



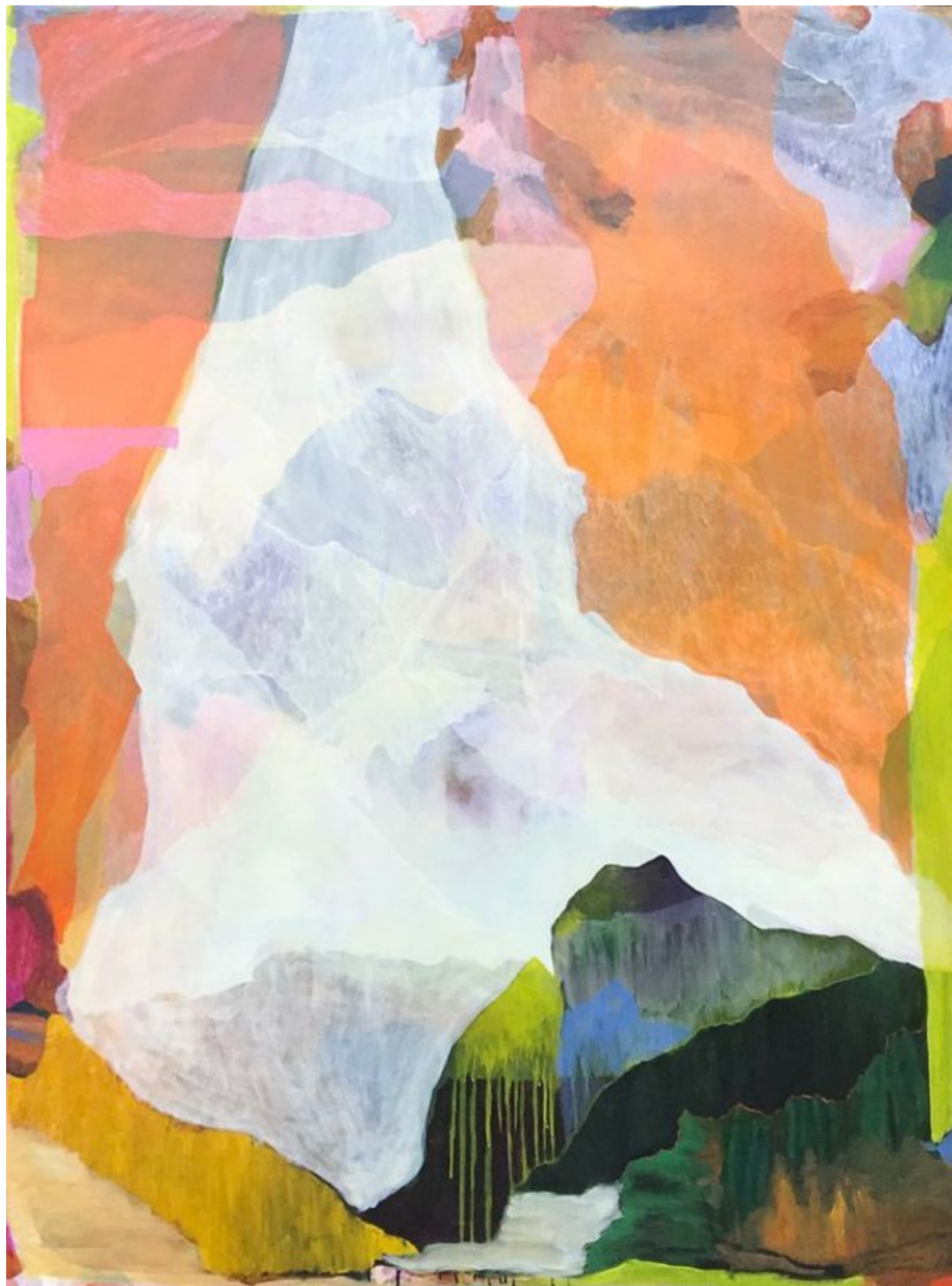
EMBER FAIRBAIRN
Magic river, 2020
oil on board
160 x 120 cm
AUD 5,000



EMBER FAIRBAIRN
Empress, 2020
oil on wood panel
160 x 120 cm
AUD 5,000



EMBER FAIRBAIRN
Almost with you, 2020
oil on wood panel
160 x 120 cm
AUD 5,000



EMBER FAIRBAIRN
Once and future dream, 2020
oil on board
160 x 120 cm
AUD 5,000



EMBER FAIRBAIRN
San Pedro's love child, 2020
oil on wood panel
160 x 120 cm
AUD 5,000



EMBER FAIRBAIRN
Many histories, 2020
oil on wood panel
135 x 90 cm
AUD 4,000



EMBER FAIRBAIRN
Grounding in light, 2020
oil on wood panel
135 x 90 cm
AUD 4,000



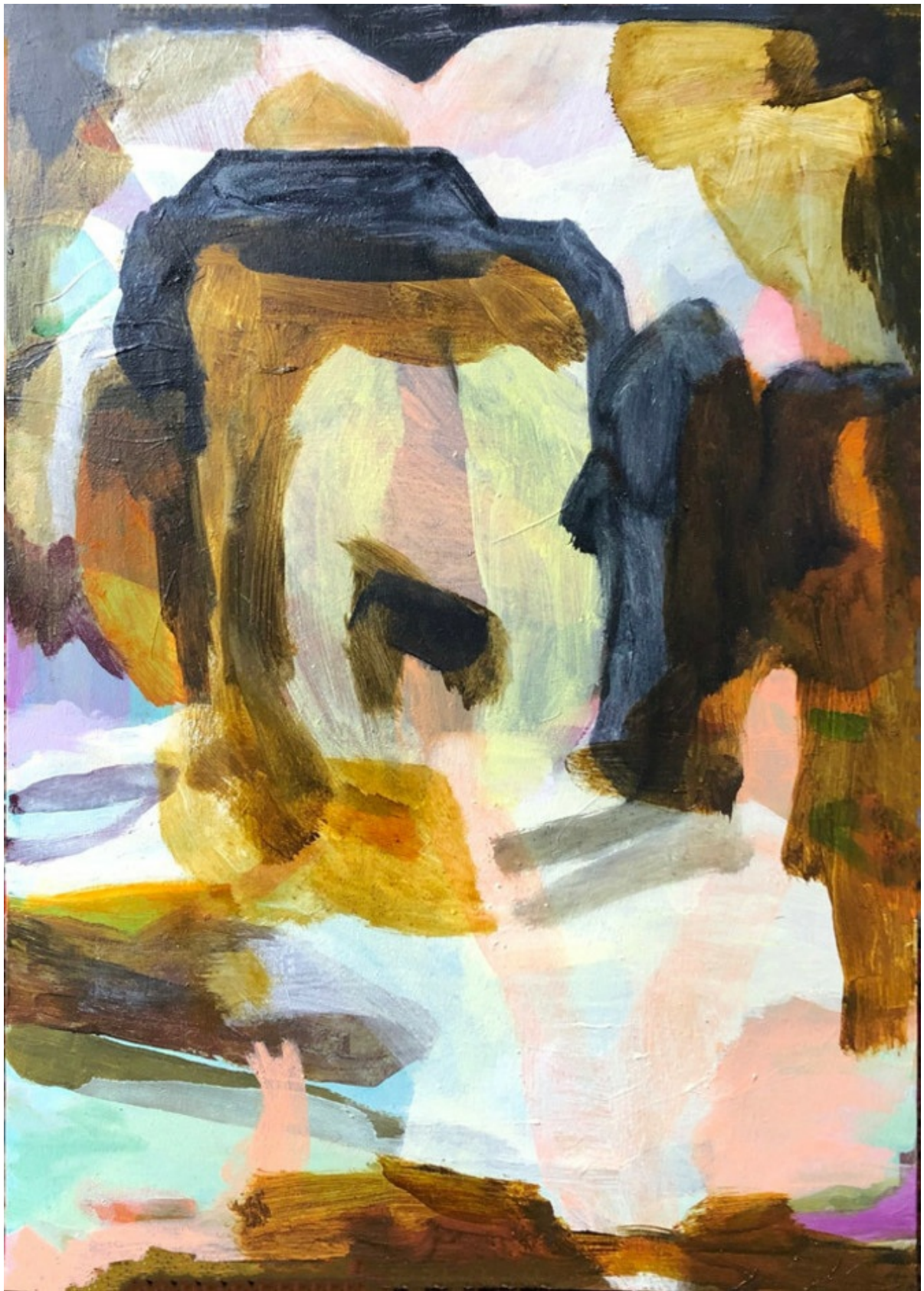
EMBER FAIRBAIRN
Felt you there, 2020
oil on wood panel
100 x 70 cm
AUD 2,500



EMBER FAIRBAIRN
An ancestor, 2020
oil on wood panel
100 x 70 cm
AUD 2,500



EMBER FAIRBAIRN
Study for inside things, 2020
oil on wood panel
42 x 30 cm
AUD 1,200



EMBER FAIRBAIRN
Study for a way home, 2020
oil on wood panel
42 x 30 cm
AUD 1,200



EMBER FAIRBAIRN
Study for beyond object, 2020
oil on wood panel
42 x 30 cm
AUD 1,200

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