

itch the scratch

exhibition catalogue

3-7 July 2026



The idiom “scratch an itch” means to alleviate or satisfy a strong desire or need, often by taking action to obtain what is desired.

Shifting the syntax, transposing the idiom, and exchanging ‘an’ for ‘the’ does more than just invert the meaning derived from three (relatively) simple words.

This body of work explores the fragility of language—the languages we use with one another and the languages we develop within creative practice. Oil and canvas are the primary forms through which I explore the fluidity of meaning and how it agitates.

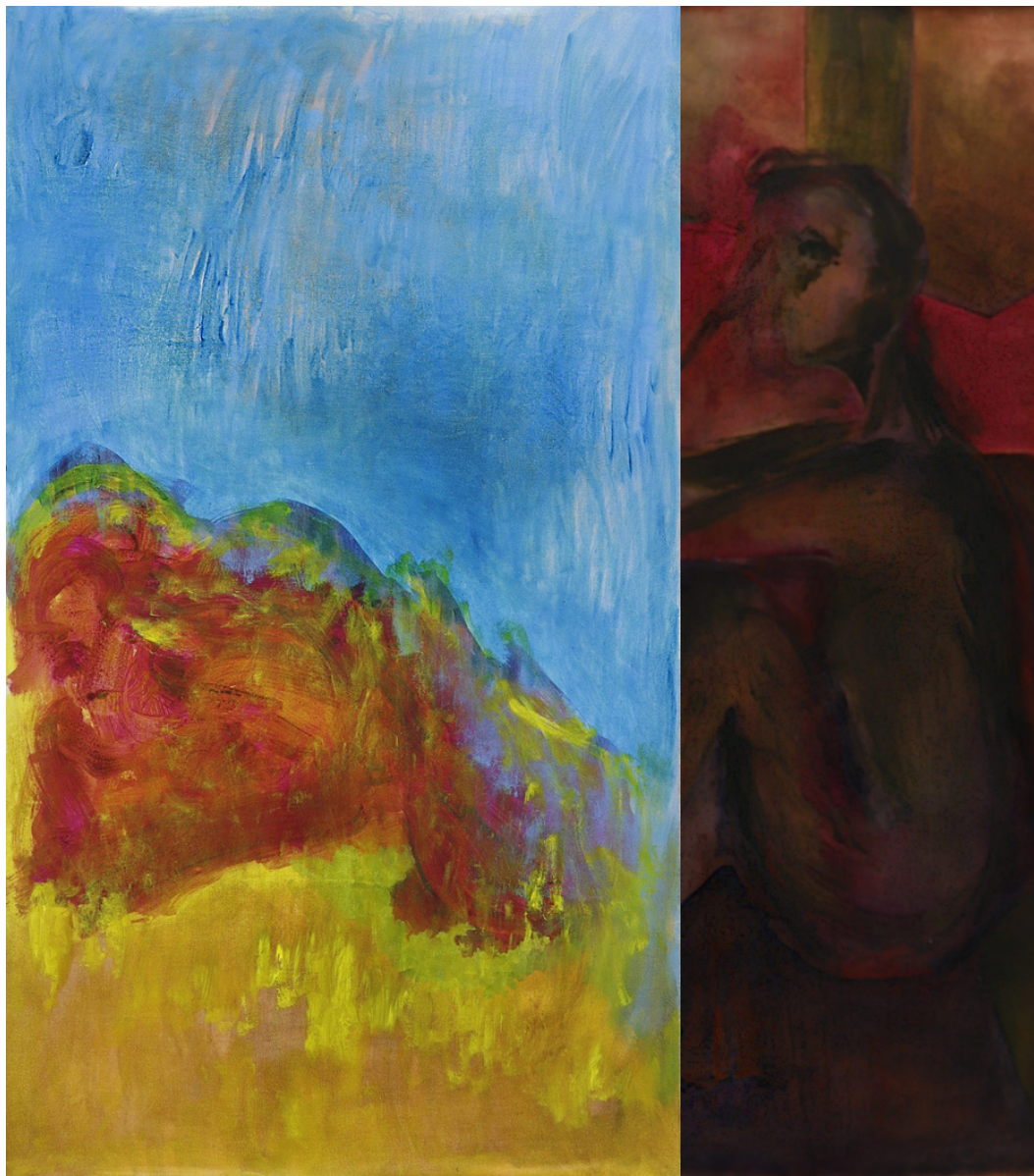
A basic tenet of the human experience is the yearning to be heard, understood, and to bask in the warmth of a moment of shared comprehension. Humans have developed any number of ways to express what we hold within; we verbalize, use non-verbal signals, paint pictures, write poetry, use signs and symbols, pass notes, send text messages filled with funny little yellow-faced emojis, and we offer gifts, pander and perform.

And yet, the opportunities for misinterpretation are infinite. There is no certainty that what we wish to share with another will be received in the manner intended. The variables that influence the receiver are myriad. And so, we surrender to the fallibilities of communication.



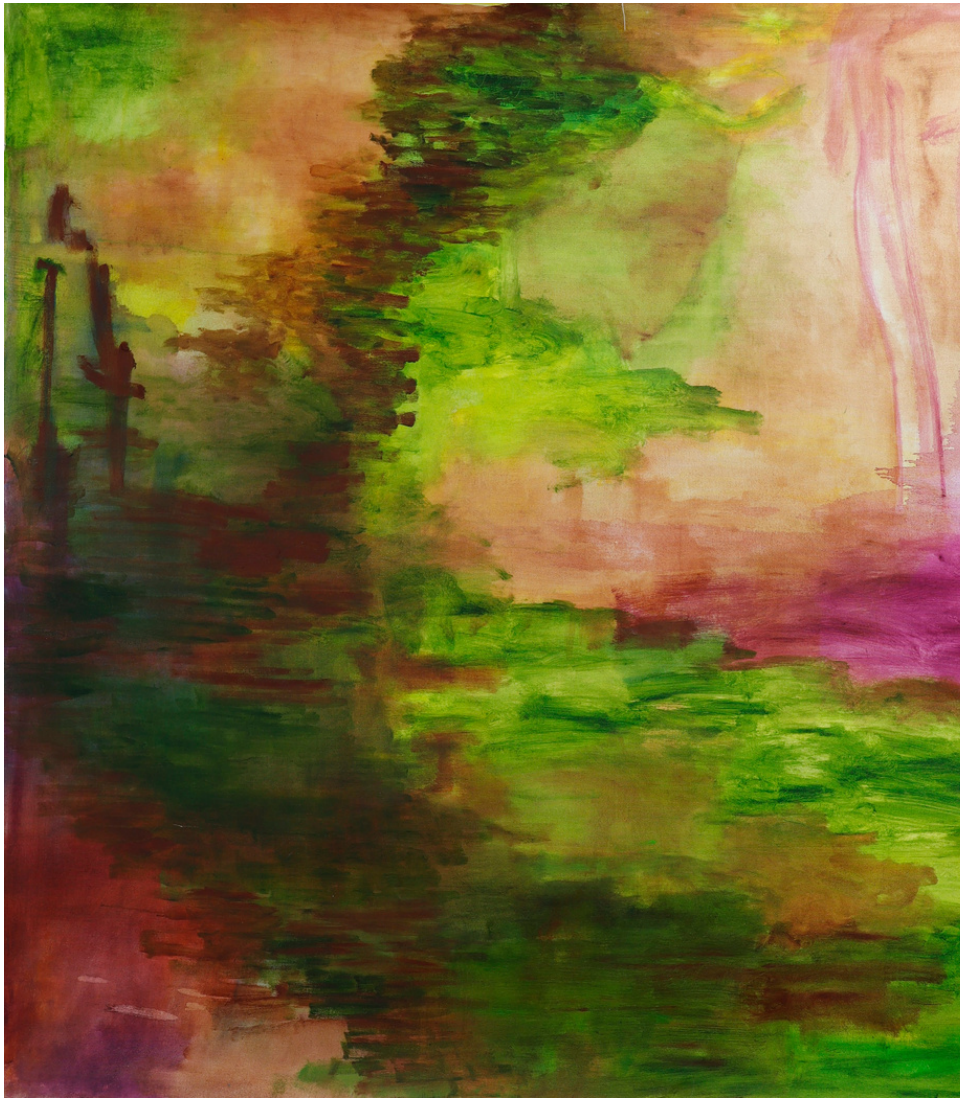
honey/i think we will be better

Oil paint on canvas. 60x90cm. 2026. SOLD.



hills

Oil paint on canvas. 55x125cm. 2026.



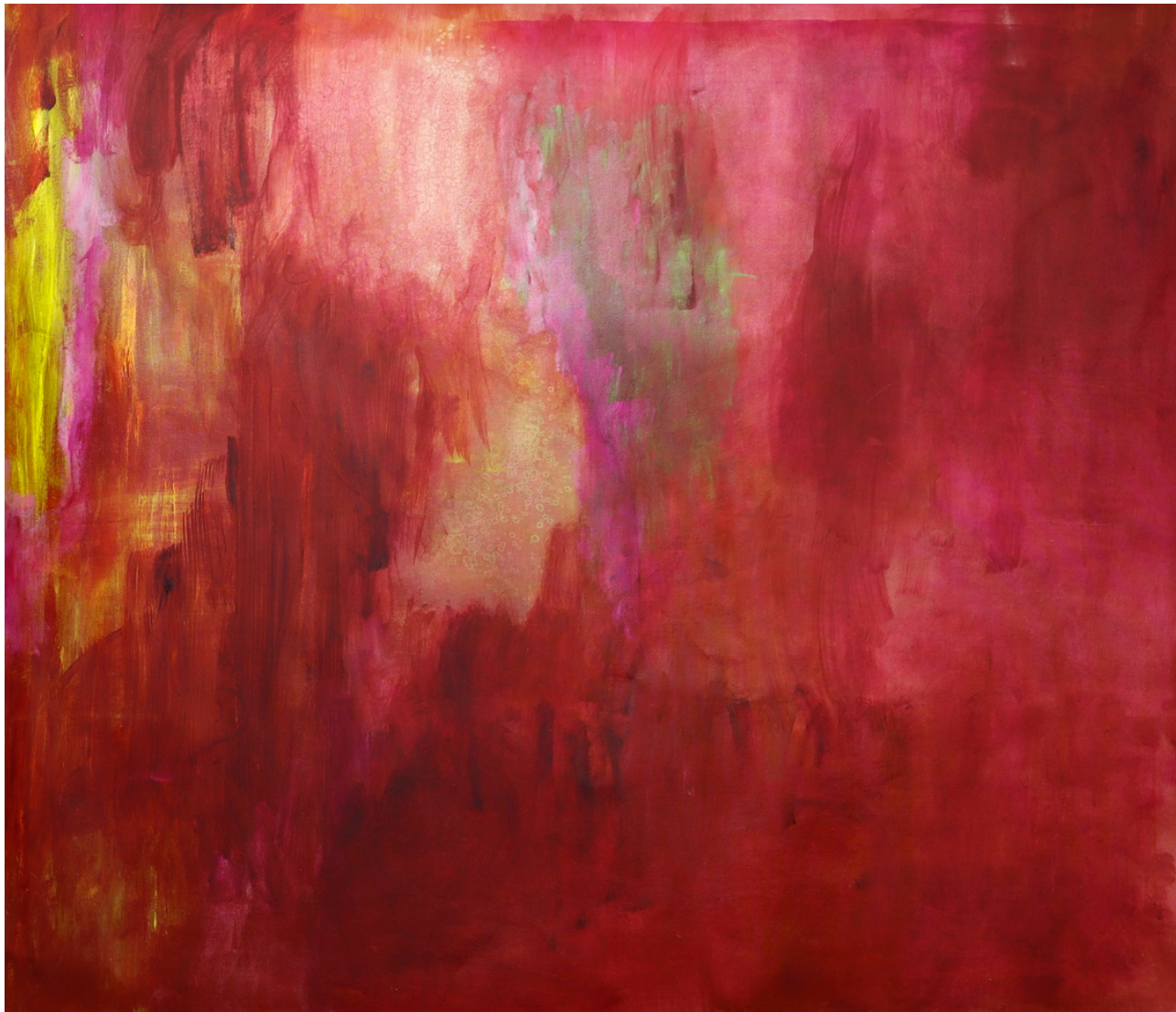
mountain (1/2)

Oil paint on canvas. 110x180cm. 2026. SOLD.



mountain (2/2)

Oil paint on canvas. 110x180cm. 2026. SOLD.



expect miracles

Oil paint on canvas. 110x180cm. 2026.



expanded

Oil paint on canvas. 25x40cm. 2026.



ahh/uhh

Oil paint on canvas. 10x8cm. 2026.



emma, walking

Oil paint on canvas. 90x200cm. 2026.

In these works, colour, line, perspective, scale and pain-laden gestures became a conduit for confession and contemplation. The canvas served as a recipient of candour, alternating between visual cacophony and something entirely more subdued. Gentle swathes of colour and sweeping brush strokes illustrate the tenderness that underpins this collection of paintings.

“itch the scratch” represents a relinquishing of the desire to control perception and comprehension of the languages that I speak. Several of the works in this series are comprised of paintings on both sides of the canvas, a reference to the way in which our personal experiences, historical and current inform the how we absorb, receive, dispense and deliver language. In this body of work, I have engaged in a practice of active surrender of control, eschewing any attempt at a singular truth and instead reveling in interpretation.

Building upon prior investigation into traditional painting hierarchy, the works in *“itch the scratch”* have been installed unbound by stretcher bars or recognisable framing devices. It was Walter Benjamin who presented the idea of art work possessing an aura, informed by its presence in time and space and its unique existence at the place where it happens to be. Without the distinct physical boundary between painting and person, how does the aura of the work shift?

Inviting viewers to contemplate what the removal of a frame does to a painting is a celebration of our devotion to share and receive, and that to create and present visual art is to engage in community and conversation. These works celebrate the innumerable failures we sustain in our efforts and the magnitude of our successes in understanding one another and that it is a miracle that we are able to do any of it at all.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge that within the chaos of communication there are not moments of mutual and true comprehension. It is only that what is conjured in the spaces between can often act as catalyst for unparalleled expansion and evolution.



against the current, yet again
Oil paint on canvas. 90x150cm. 2026.



séverine (belle de jour)

Oil paint on canvas. 60x90cm. 2026. SOLD.

Born in a Volkswagen Kombi, on the Pacific Highway in the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales (Bundjalung), Kepsibel's creative practice is characterized by a similarly unconventional confluence of material, process and practice.

Kepsibel's work disassembles foundational tenets of contemporary painting practices and investigates the associated symbols and semiotics interwoven into techniques and traditions. Ritualistic studio practice transforms oil paints and canvas into material conduits that engage in ideas relating to intersubjectivity, dialogism, phenomenology, embodied and multimodal communication. This practice of disruption, dissection, and discernment results in works that once reassembled, are representative of a reverence for meaning through making.

Kepsibel currently lives and practices between her childhood home of Bali, Indonesia and the unceded lands of the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation (Naarm/Melbourne, Australia). She completed the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) at RMIT University and is currently investigating the healing benefits of mountain air.

For all inquiries email kepsibel@kepsibel.com.

Photography by Meg Kelso.



