

Wilderness House Literary Review 20/4

Hanna Bernbaum

Hanna Bernbaum was raised in Riverside, California and earned a BFA in Studio Art from the University of Texas at Austin, where she worked at the Blanton Museum of Art. Thereafter, she quickly found a professional home as an access worker in art studios and in workforce development spaces.

Hanna currently lives in Somerville, MA with a geologist and a vegetable garden. You can find her as a regular exhibitor at Somerville Open Studios and follow her on Instagram at @hpbernbaum.

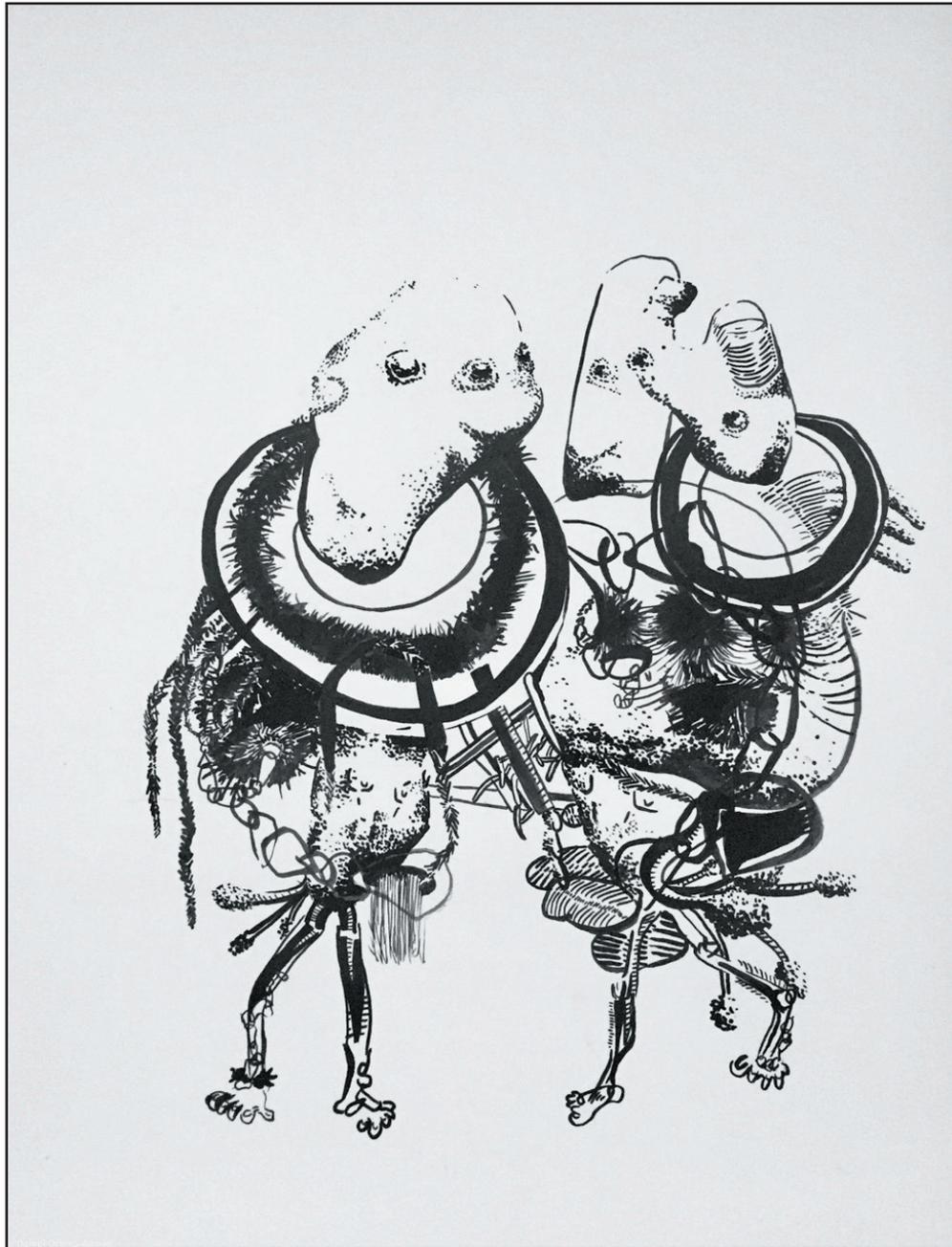
Artist Statement

This selection of paintings from the last decade reflects a triangulating of play, absurdity and whimsy. Figures traverse permeable environments, a product of the indeterminate transition from dream state to wakefulness and its accompanying viscerality. For most of my life, paint has been a conduit for transmuted chaos. What results is a primordial abstraction on canvas and paper.

A surging need for additional tactility and grounding in a newly distanced reality kickstarted my exploration of natural pigments during the COVID-19 pandemic. Five years later, I make watercolors from an array of earth, botanical and algal pigment sources. Each pigment carries the imprint of its origin—an embedded memory of a moment, gesture, or site that has impacted me as a frequent traveler. The pigments' provenances range anywhere from the trails of the White Mountains to the shores of Provincetown. Even as days seem to accelerate faster to make up for lost time since 2020, making pigment from plants and earth still forges a path of inertia resistant yet parallel to the attention economy.



Untitled, 2016, ink on paper. 16" x 20."



Parentheses of Chuckles, 2018, india ink on paper. 16" x 20".



Untitled, 2019, mixed media on paper, 10" x 14".



Untitled, 2019, acrylic on canvas, 16" x 20"



hirst, 2019, acrylic on canvas. 16" x 20".



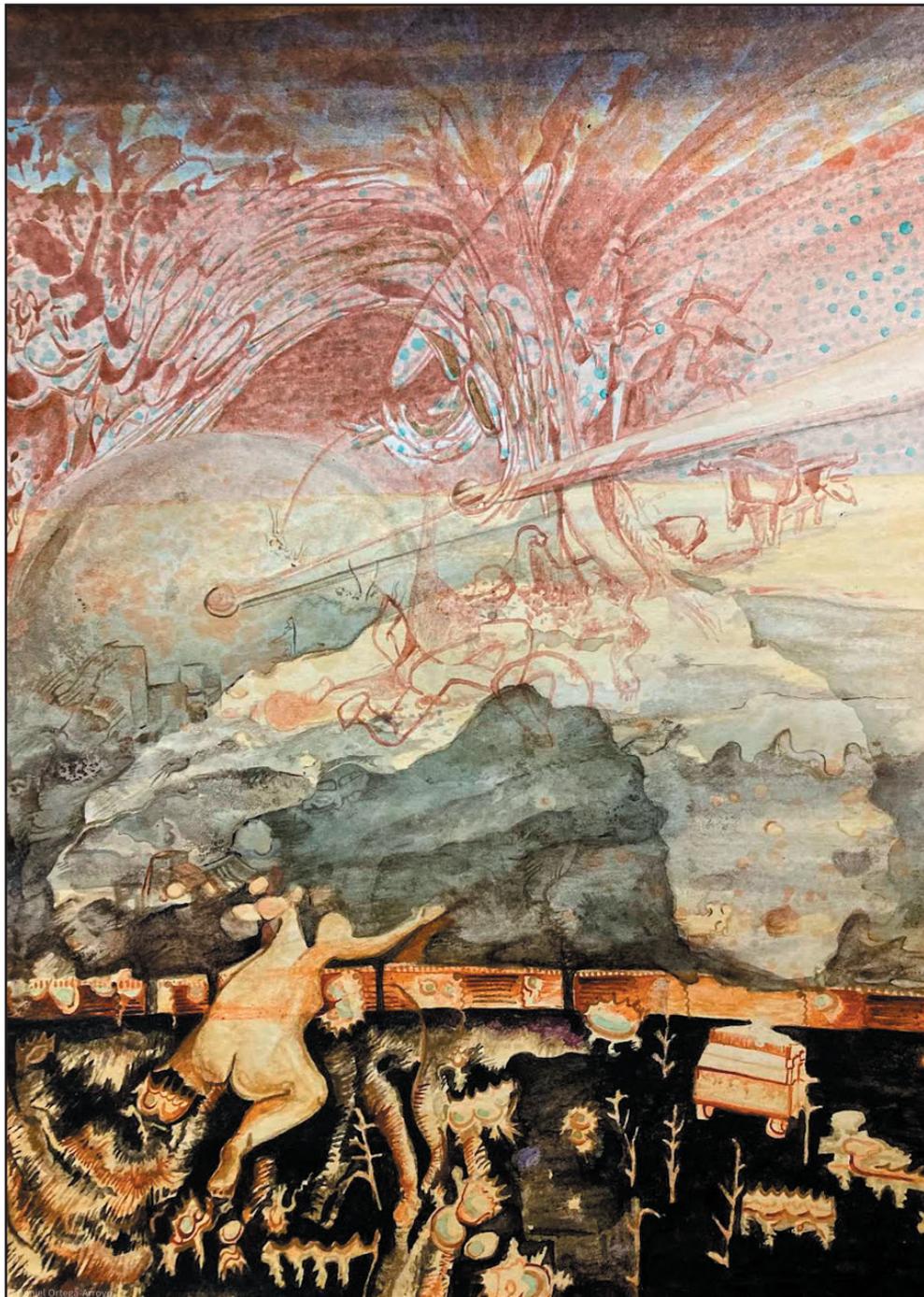
Untitled, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 36" x 48".



Untitled, 2021, natural watercolor on paper, 8.5" x 11".



Untitled, 2022. Natural watercolor on paper, 11" x 14".



Untitled, 2022, natural watercolor on paper, 11" x 14"



Untitled, 2022, natural watercolor and SCOBY on paper. 8.5" x 11".



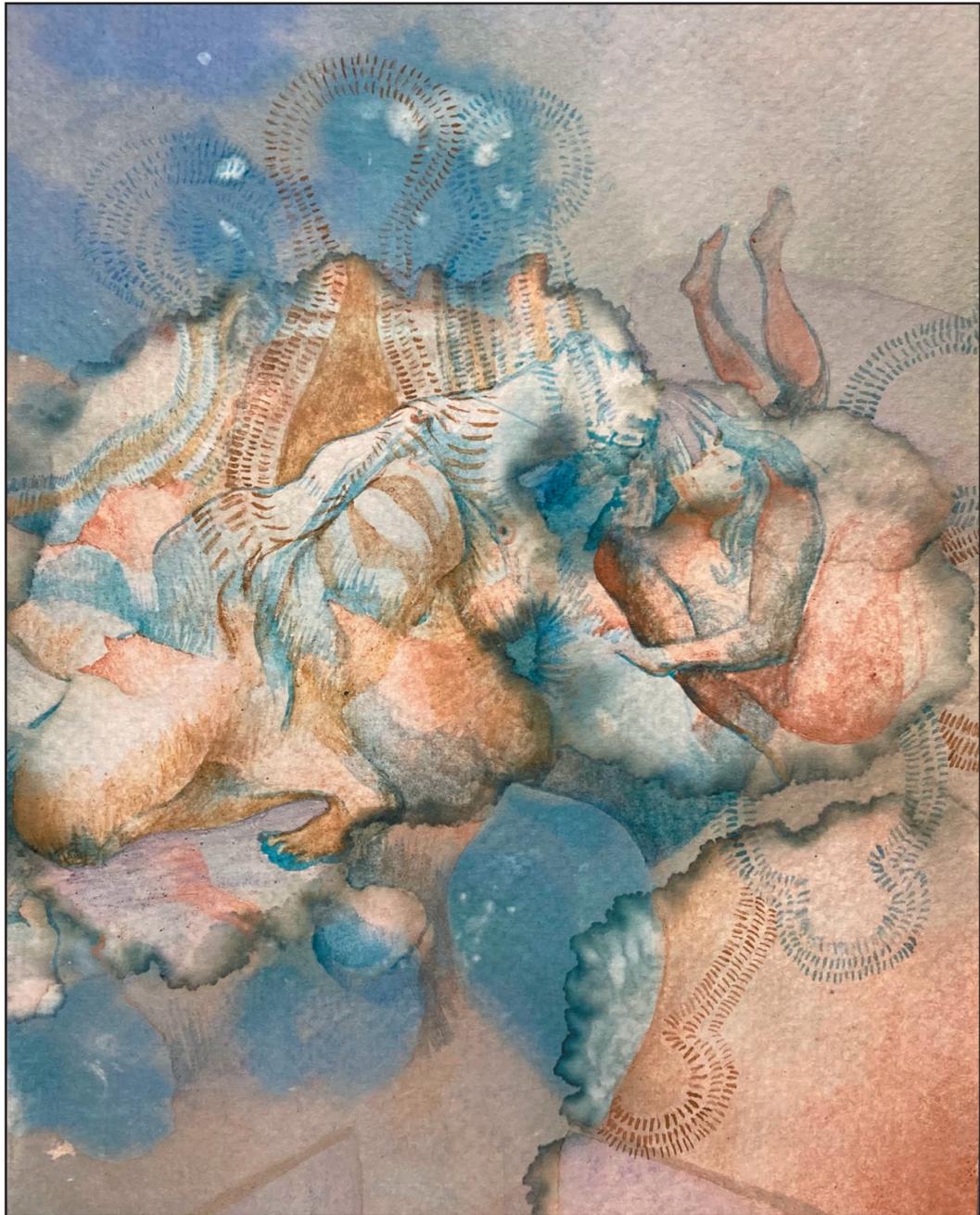
Aphids, 2022, natural watercolor on paper. 11" x 14"



Untitled, 2022, natural watercolor on paper. 6" x 6"



Resort, 2024, natural watercolor on paper, 11" x 14".



Untitled, 2024, natural watercolor and anotype of handpicked herbs on paper, 4" x 6".