

THE HISTORIC
DOCKYARD
CHATHAM



IN TURNERS WAKE

Contemporary Visions by Jake Wood-Evans

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19 September - 15 November 2026



www.jakewoodevans.com



The largest display of original works by J.M.W. Turner ever shown at The Historic Dockyard Chatham will be on display this autumn, alongside the evocative paintings of Jake Wood-Evans. This major exhibition bridges the gap between the 19th century and the contemporary art world.

In *Turner's Wake* explores and re-contextualises the legacy of Britain's most celebrated "painter of light" through an exciting creative response by Wood-Evans, whose own contemporary oil paintings are presented in dialogue with Turner's historic influence. Visitors will have a rare opportunity to view Turner's *Medway Sketchbook* and his powerful oil painting, *Second Sketch for 'The Battle of Trafalgar'*, alongside large-scale contemporary works.

Bridging Past and Present

Jake Wood-Evans' work revels in blurring the boundaries between representation and abstraction. Much like Turner's radical late works, which laid the groundwork for the Impressionist movement, Wood-Evans conceives his paintings as "prisms of light."

In this exhibition, you will see how Turner's influence is alive today. Wood-Evans' work plays with balancing obscurity and detail to alter the emotive atmosphere in his paintings, translating the energy of weather, water and the passage of time into luminous layers of paint.

A Connection to Medway

Turner was fascinated by the Medway. He regularly visited the Dockyard to sketch the very place where the Royal Navy's legendary ships, including HMS VICTORY and HMS TEMERAIRE (the subject of his most famous work), were built. This exhibition brings that history full circle by presenting original Turner pieces on loan from national collections, including Tate Britain and Courtauld Gallery, in the historic setting that inspired them.

Behind the Scenes

Beyond the finished canvases, *In Turner's Wake* offers a unique glimpse into the creative process. Explore Jake's personal sketchbooks, artist materials, and ephemera to get a glimpse of how a contemporary studio operates.



JMW Turner
Second Sketch for 'The Battle of Trafalgar'
Oil on linen
122.8 x 153.6 cm
c. 1823
On loan courtesy of Tate Britain



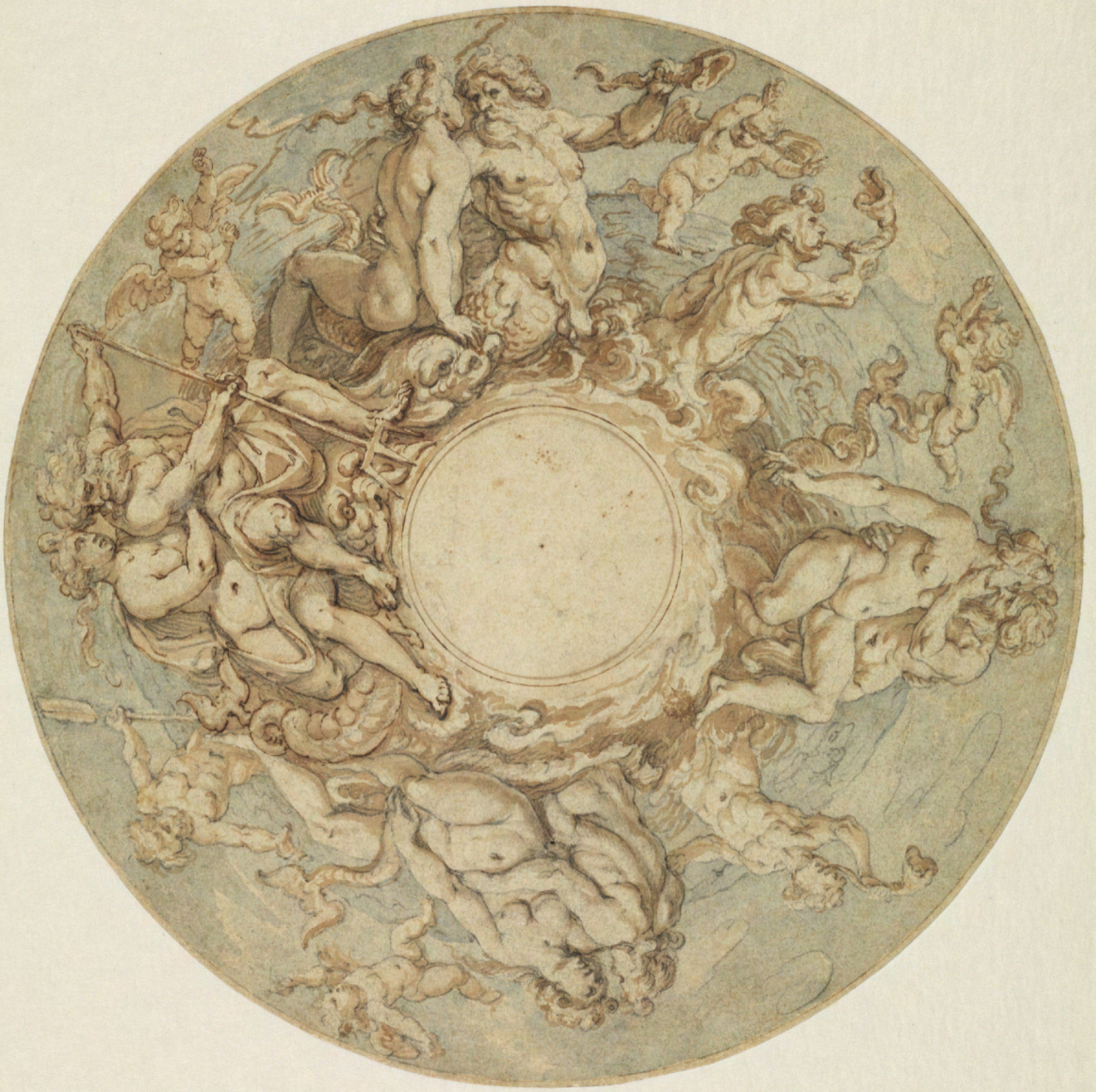
JMW Turner
Shipping in Rough Waters
 Watercolour on paper
 13.9 x 22.8 cm
 c.1834
 On loan courtesy of Tate Britain



JMW Turner
Neptune and Britannia
 Pen and ink on paper
 11.2 x 14.2 cm
 c.1790-1
 On loan courtesy of Tate Britain



JMW Turner
Storm Clouds over a Landscape at Sunset
 Graphite and watercolour on paper
 24.2 x 34.5 cm
 c.1823-6
 On loan courtesy of Tate Britain



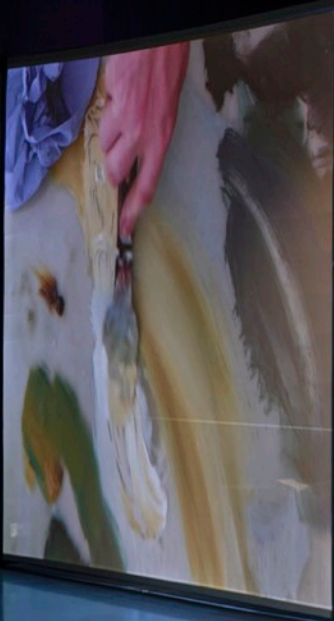
Attributed to Hendrick van Balen, the Elder (formerly attributed to Theodor van Thulden)
Design for a decorated dish - frieze with Neptune and Amphitrite
Black chalk, pen and brown ink, brown and blue wash on laid paper, cut into a circle and
executed with a compass, with brown ink framing lines, laid down
Diameter 22.2cm
1600-1699
On loan courtesy of Courtauld Gallery

Light and Colour

For Turner, light was never simply a natural effect; increasingly, it became the dramatic and narrative energy through which he described the world. Across his career, and with particular intensity in the 1820s, 1830s and 1840s, he moved beyond the traditional artistic opposition of light and dark, known as 'chiaroscuro', and towards compositions organised through colour.

Warm and cool contrasts – yellow and blue, orange and violet, red and black – could impact structure, emotion and movement without depending on conventional tonal modelling.

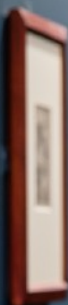
Turner's innovations grew from close observation, academic training and engagement with artistic theory. At the Royal Academy he absorbed the lessons of earlier Masters such as Claude Lorrain, Poussin, Salvator Rosa, Titian, Caravaggio and John Rubens Cartier, while his own teaching emphasised the study of nature's changing effects. He was fascinated by atmosphere, reflection, mirrors, haze, sunsets and the sea phenomena that resist fixed outline and demand a language of transition. His later reading of the German philosopher Goethe's *Theory of Colours* confirmed what he had already discovered in practice: that colour could act physically, psychologically and aesthetically upon the viewer. Goethe's polarity of yellow and blue, and the illumination of colour through light, haze and darkness, validated effects Turner had long pursued.



Turner's use of colour was a key element of his artistic innovation, allowing him to create a sense of atmosphere and movement without relying on traditional tonal modelling.

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Turner's Influence

Turner's influence on the art world was profound, inspiring a generation of artists to explore the possibilities of colour and light. His innovative use of colour and light in his paintings, such as 'Rain, Steam, and Great Smokes', 'Rain, Steam, and Great Smokes', and 'Rain, Steam, and Great Smokes', paved the way for the Impressionist movement and beyond.







In a studio teeming with postcards and art books **Jake Wood-Evans** works instinctively. He is surrounded by paint-splattered pages showing printed reproductions, including many of art history's most celebrated artworks.

Through his practice the artist re-contextualises the Old Masters, using each reference as a springboard for his own creativity. Familiar images are iterated beyond recognition, then pulled back into focus, then reworked again in a continual play of push and pull with the past. Wood-Evans' layered approach of addition and reinvention shows how painting can continue to renew our relationship with history.

Altering the emotive atmosphere of a work, whose origin may be more or less identifiable in the finished piece, is his driving force. The referenced works are a foothold that Wood-Evans steadies himself with momentarily, before weighing anchor and entering a phase of exploration.

Wood-Evans' process echoes how we experience memory - incomplete, fluid, and continually rewritten. He paints quickly, using intuitive strokes with brushes, knives, scrapers and gloved hands to move the surface, rearranging the scene before it dries. In this reordering, the painting's character develops and expands our potential readings of the work.

Wood-Evans' mark-making combines acts of construction and of loss, preserving certain fragments while allowing others to disappear. His intention is to leave only visual impressions, emulating the physical imprints of time. In Wood-Evans' hands, historical imagery remains live, shifting with each encounter. His work attempts to untether prestigious, hallowed artworks from their traditional settings and contexts, and through reworking the imagery, reveal their inherent instability.

Wood-Evans says:

"I'm looking to disrupt the authority of the original image. I build up layers of reference in order to dissolve and rework them. Images are never fixed; they shift over time, shaped by distance, experience and the imperfect nature of recollection. The fluidity of paint mirrors this process, allowing forms to dissolve and reform in ways that resist certainty."

The practice of copying the Old Masters is a well understood and longstanding part of Western artistic education. It was seen as a non-negotiable part of an artist's training and is a critical way for artists to learn from their forebears. But it also offers the opportunity to display a new artistic vision and commentary, presenting a unique field of work for artists.

The paintings in this collection take inspiration from J.M.W. Turner, forming a dialogue with significant works loaned from Tate for the exhibition. Jake was lucky enough to spend one-on-one time with Turner's works in preparation for the exhibition, and as the work developed, additional reference points from Claude Lorrain, Willem van de Velde the Younger (from whom Turner took inspiration) arrived into the work, as well as from Nicholas Pocock and James McNeil Whistler, who in turn took inspiration from Turner.

Wood-Evans embraces the physicality of oil paint as an active force capable of dissolving, concealing and transforming the image and in doing so continues Turner's exploration of paint not simply as a vehicle for representation, but as a subject in its own right – capable of conveying atmosphere, emotion and the instability of vision.

Surface, and its transparency, become as significant as the image itself in Wood-Evans' work. The paintings invite you to move close and consider detail and mark making. Moving around the work offers a shimmering and shifting vision. The ethereal beauty in his paintings is found within the transient and ungraspable nature of these distortions.

"I hope what remains are paintings which enable new, individual and contemporary encounters with something like the kernel of the beginning image. I am interested in creating paintings which contain an intangible emotional and material presence".

Ultimately, the paintings explore the fragile threshold between presence and absence. They ask how images survive, how they change, and how painting itself can continue to renew our relationship with the past through its unique capacity to combine material, gesture and light.





*The Birth of Venus, also known as, The Triumph
of Neptune and Amphitrite, after Poussin*
Oil on linen
200 x 260 cm
2026



Ships

Victory at the Battle of Trafalgar over the combined French and Spanish fleets on 21 October 1805, laid confidence in Britain's maritime supremacy. It subsequently also consolidated Nelson's death into a national myth of victory, heroism and sacrifice. In 1922, George Wyke commissioned Turner to paint a monumental version of the battle for the House of Commons, as part of a campaign to bring the memory of the battle to military and naval schools. Turner approached the subject as a contemporary record of a historical event, a not unlike history painting. The work's focus is on the battle's climax, as Nelson's flagship, the HMS Victory, is surrounded by the enemy's ships. The work is a testament to the British naval supremacy in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The work is a testament to the British naval supremacy in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The work is a testament to the British naval supremacy in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.







Study for *The Birth of Venus*, also known as, *The Triumph of Neptune and Amphitrite*, after Poussin
Oil on linen
104 x 94 cm
2026

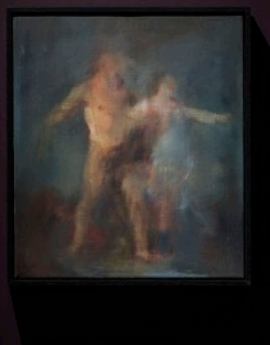


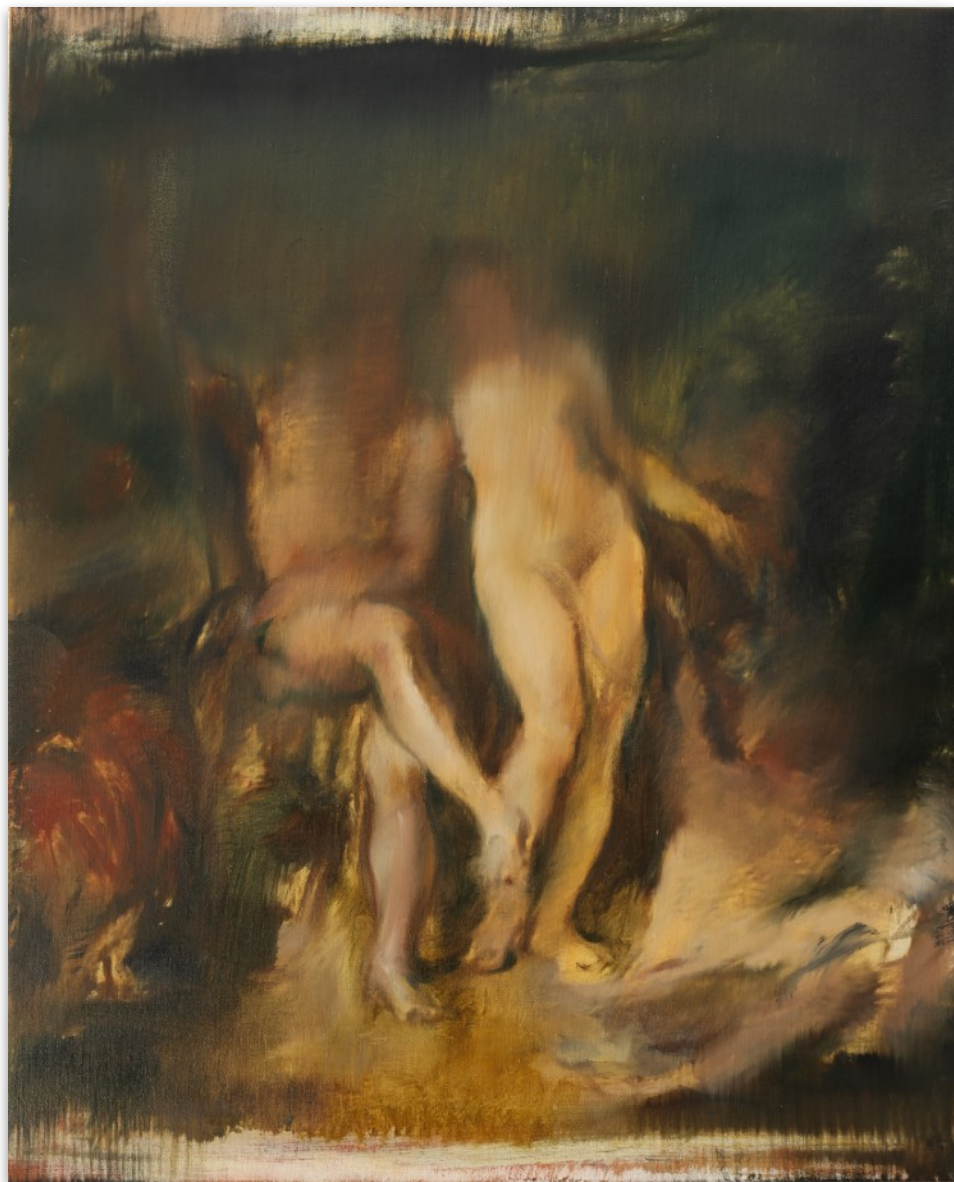


Neptune and Amymone, after Carl van Loo
Oil on linen
71 x 61 cm
2026

In a studio teeming with postcards and art books, Jake Wood Evans' works instinctively, surrounded by paint-splattered pages showing printed reproductions, including many of art history's most celebrated artworks. Through his practice the artist re-contextualises the Old Masters, using each reference as a springboard for his own creativity. Familiar images are iterated beyond recognition, then pulled back into focus, then reworked again in a continual play of push and pull with the past. Wood Evans' layered approach of addition and reincarnation shows how painting can continue to renew our relationship with history.

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Neptune and Amphitrite, after Rubens
Oil on linen
45 x 55cm
2026



Neptune and Amphitrite in the Storm

Oil on linen

70 x 60 cm

2026



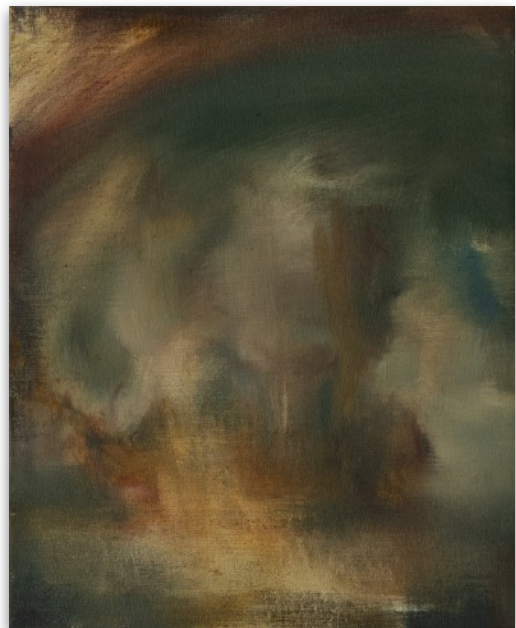
Ship, after Turner I
Oil on linen
30 x 37 cm
2026



Ship, after Turner II
Oil on linen
30 x 37 cm
2026



Ship, after Pocock I
Oil on linen
30 x 37 cm
2026



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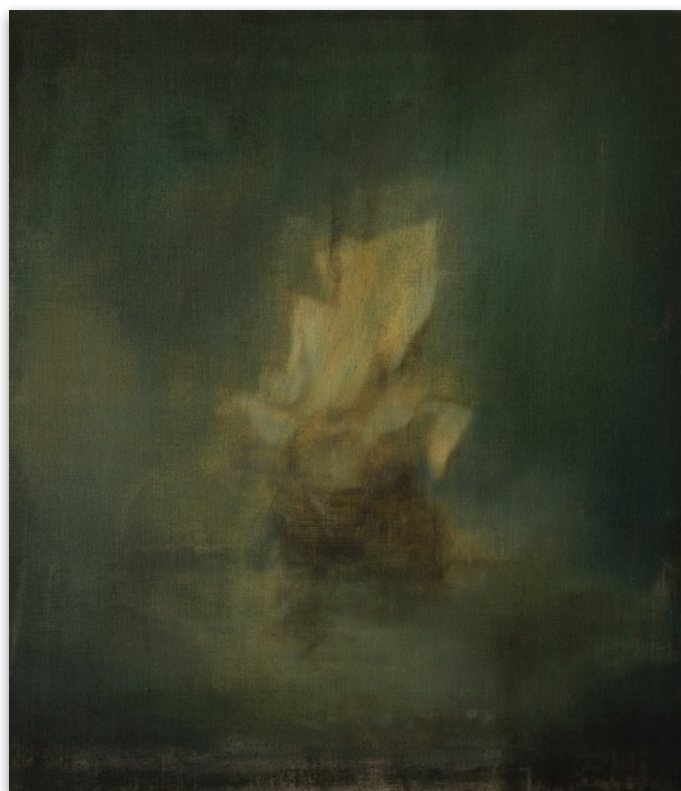
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*Response to Second Sketch for The Battle of
Trafalgar, after Turner*
Oil on linen
160 x 140 cm
2026



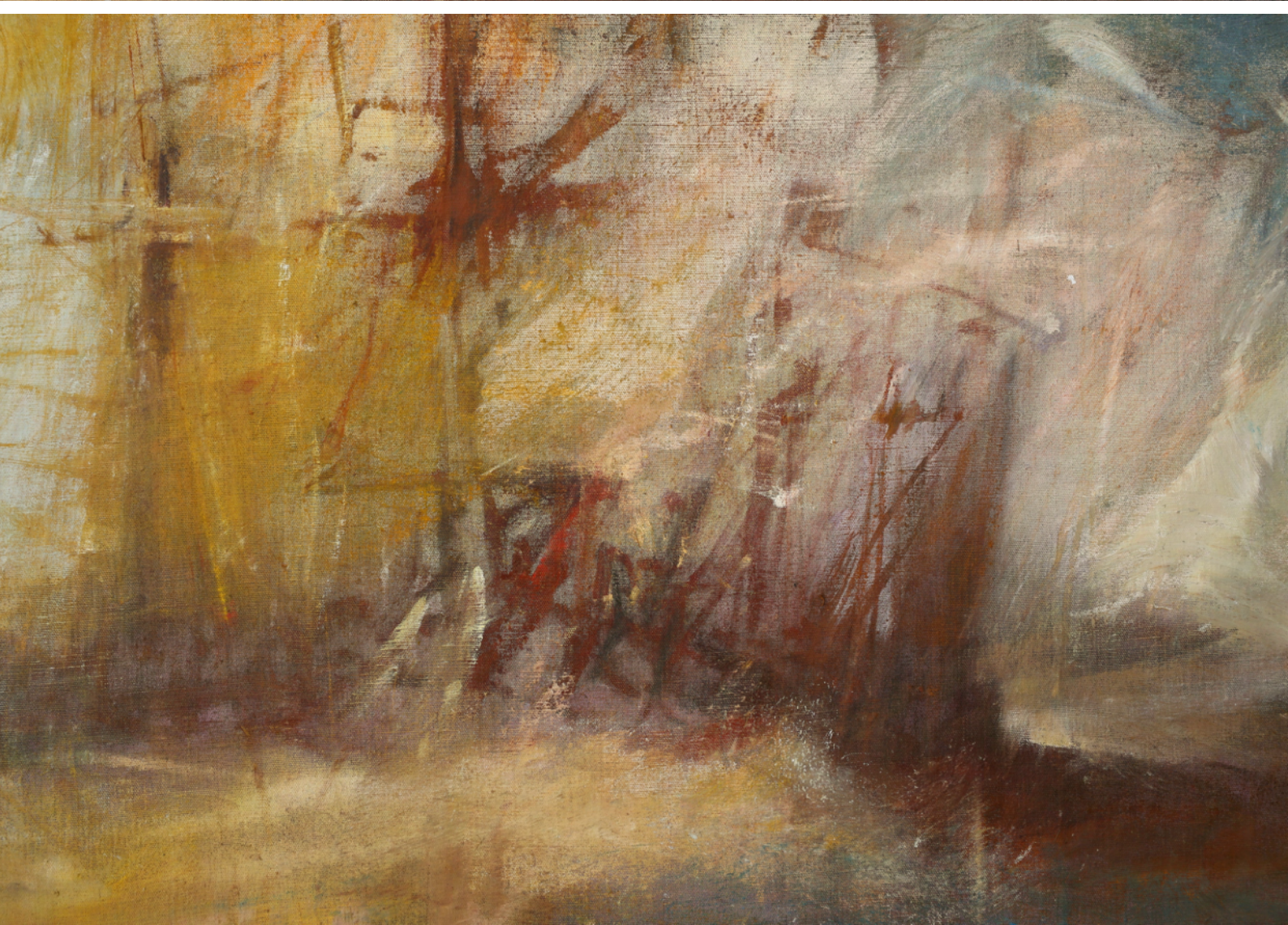
*Het Kanonschot, after Willem
van de Velde The Younger
Oil on linen
53 x 60 cm
2026*



The Defence, after Nicholas Pocock
Oil on linen
53 x 60 cm
2026



Ships in a Breeze, Part II, after Turner
Oil on linen
200 x 155 cm
2026



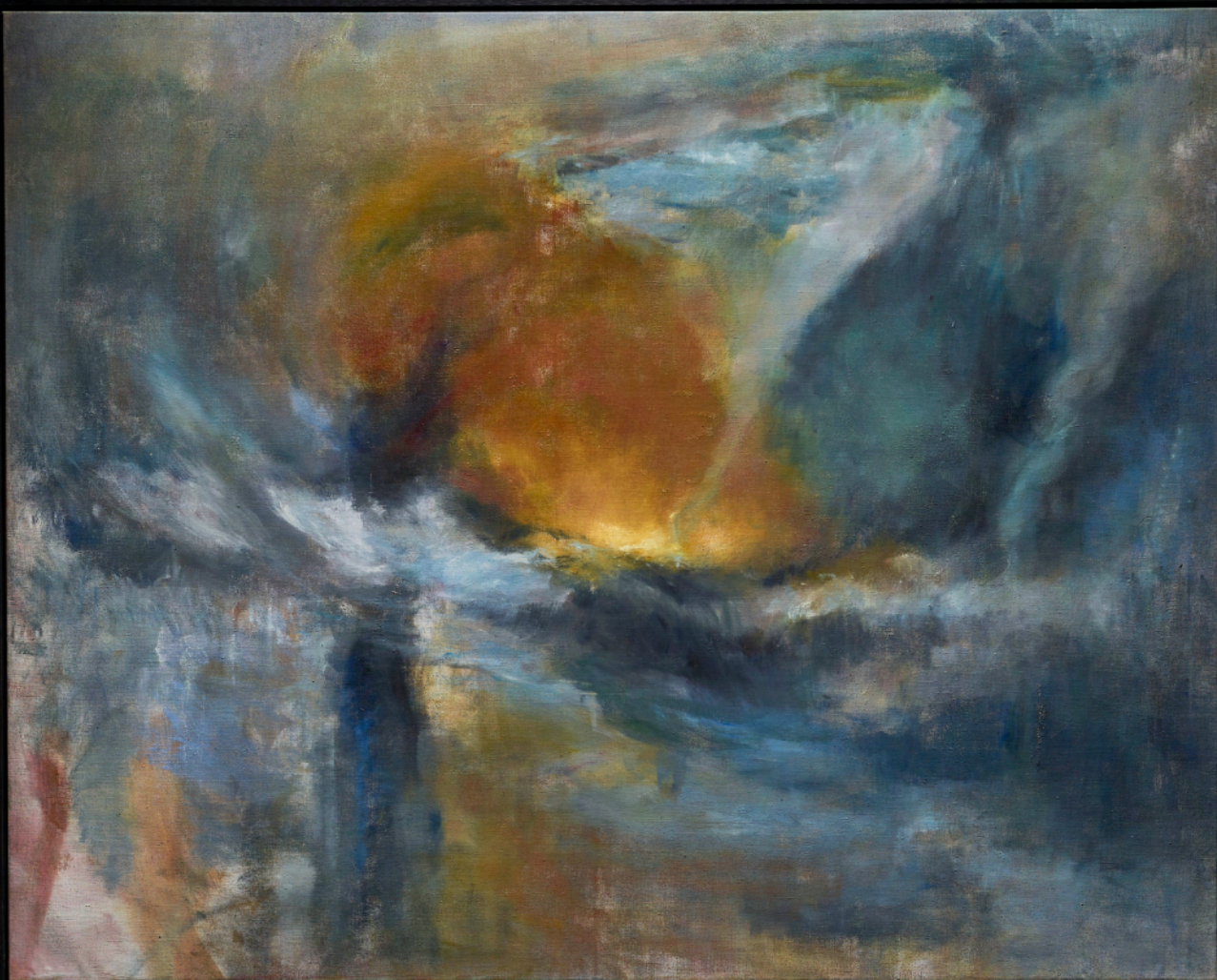


Ships at Sea, after Turner
Oil on linen
200 x 140 cm
2026



“I see painting as a conversation across centuries. Works by past greats, across art history, provide contemporary artists with a point of departure rather than a destination. They offer us a visual framework that can be disrupted, questioned and reimagined”.

Jake Wood-Evans

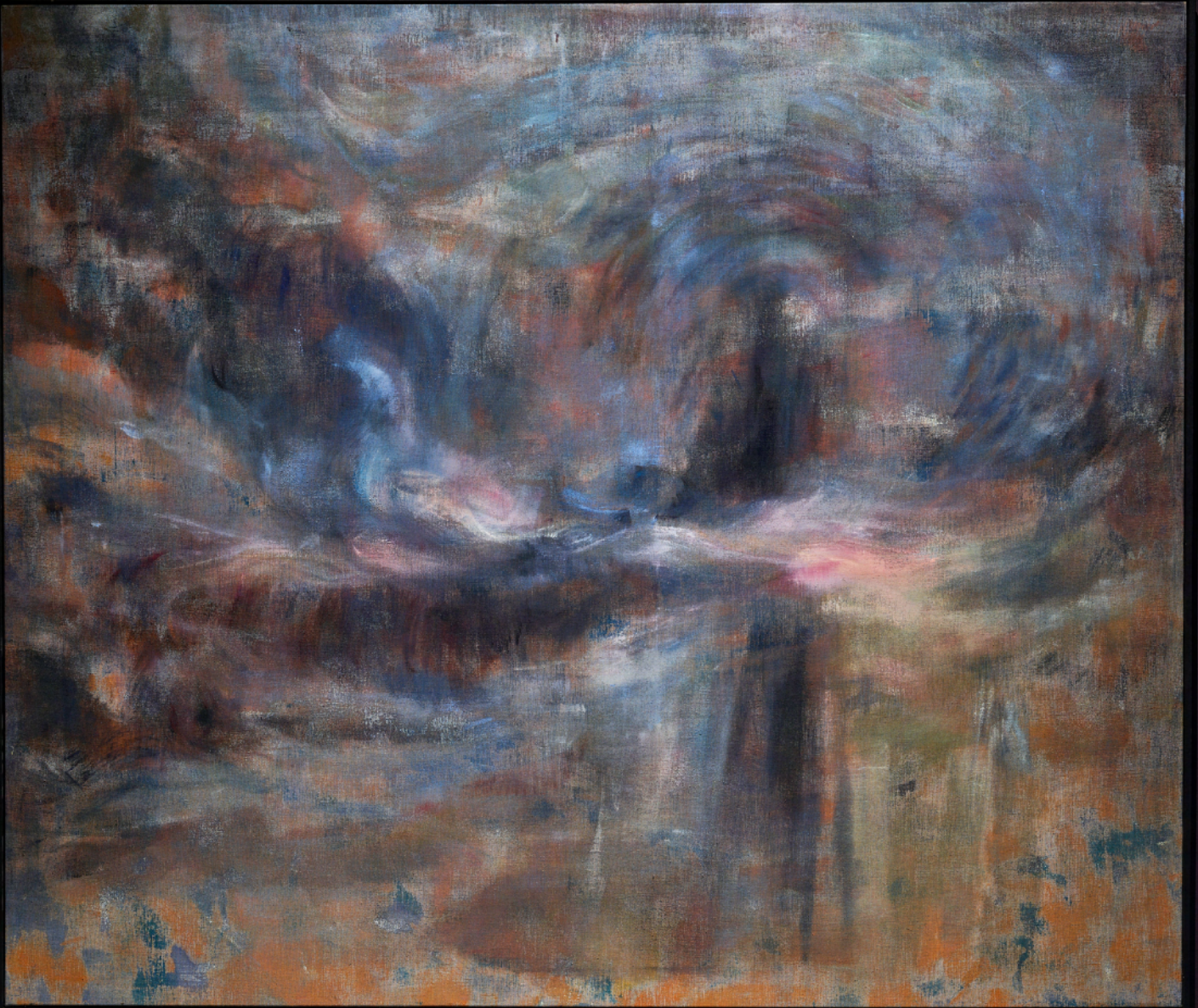


*Rockets and Blue Lights (Close at Hand) to Warn
Steam Boats of Shoal Water, after Turner*
Oil on linen
200 x 160 cm
2026

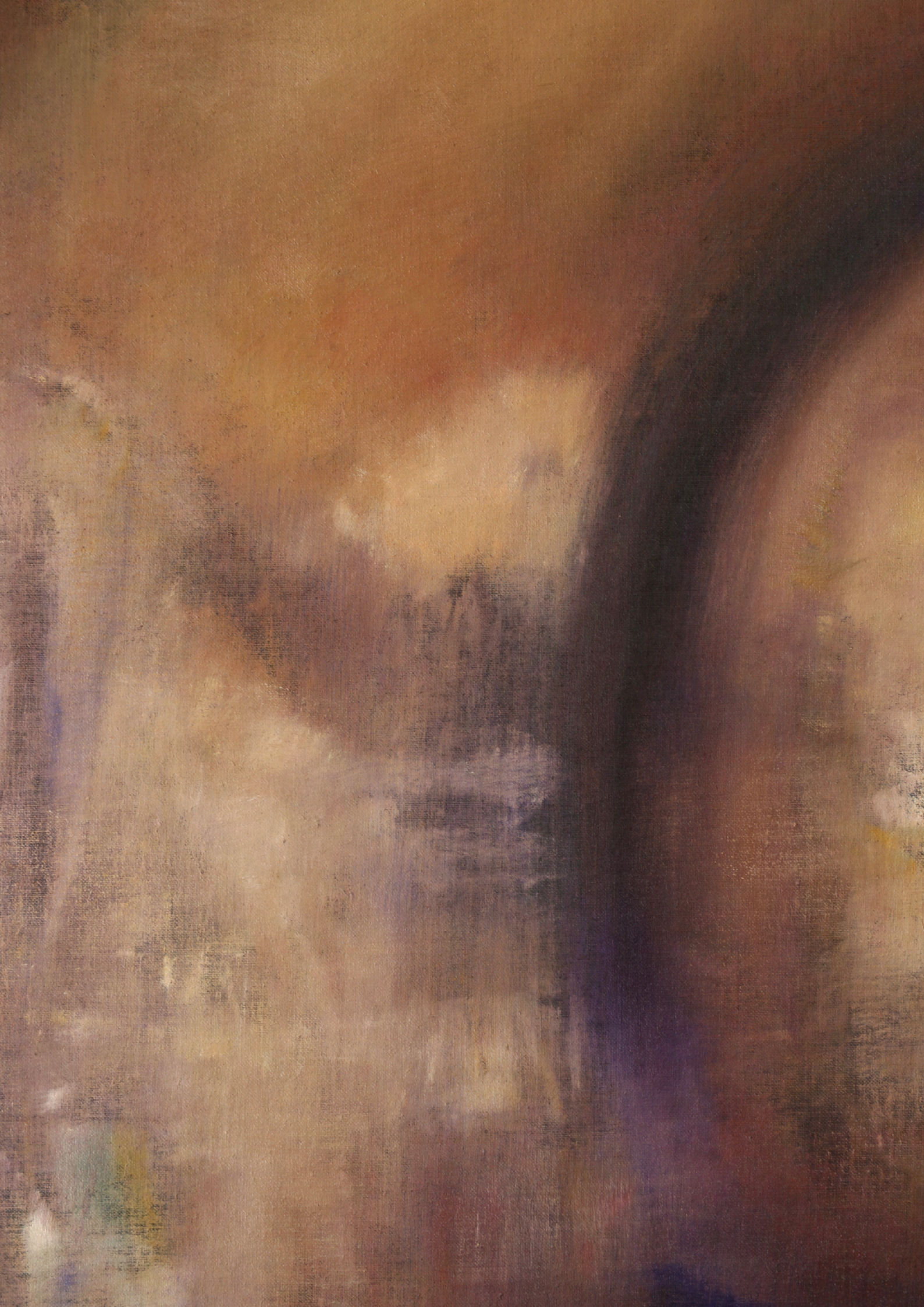


Study for Rockets and Blue Lights
(Close at Hand), after Turner
Oil on linen
68 x 56 cm
2026





Rockets and Blue Lights (Close at Hand) II, after Turner
Oil on linen
206 x 175 cm
2026







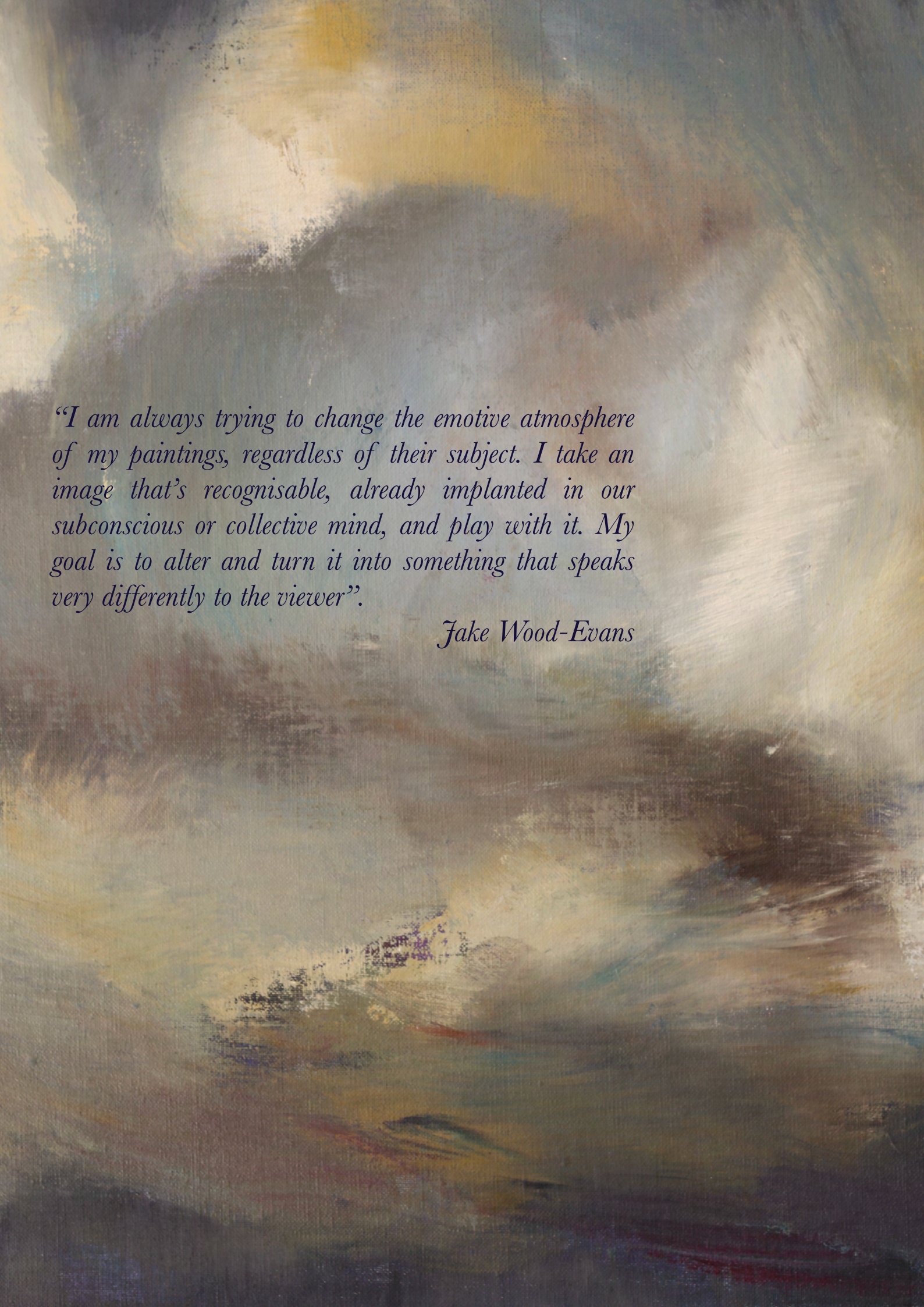


Dark Rainbow over Loch Awe, after Turner
Oil on linen
88 x 66 cm
2026



Rainbow over Loch Awe in Blue, after Turner
Oil on linen
45 x 55 cm
2026



An abstract painting with a textured, layered appearance. The color palette is dominated by earthy tones: yellows, browns, greys, and muted blues. The brushstrokes are visible and expressive, creating a sense of movement and depth. The overall effect is atmospheric and somewhat somber, with a focus on texture and color over a clear subject.

“I am always trying to change the emotive atmosphere of my paintings, regardless of their subject. I take an image that’s recognisable, already implanted in our subconscious or collective mind, and play with it. My goal is to alter and turn it into something that speaks very differently to the viewer”.

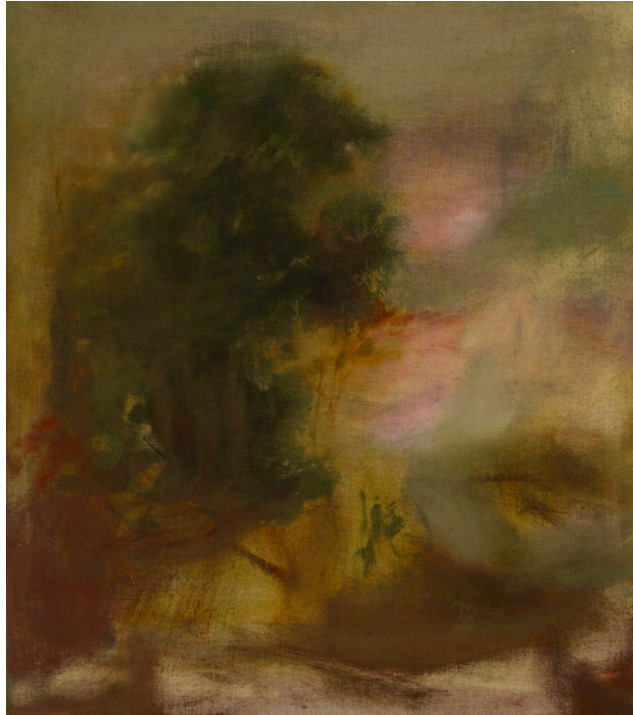
Jake Wood-Evans



Broken Seascape Study, after Turner
Oil on linen
100 x 53 cm
2026



Study for Landscape - Composition of Tivoli, after Turner
Oil on linen
100 x 67 cm
2026



Pastoral Study after Lorrain
Oil on linen
52 x 60 cm
2026



JAKE WOOD-EVANS

B. 1980

Based in Lewes, East Sussex, UK

"Wood-Evans' evocative works create a crackled tension, of place and unknown space on the canvas, blurring the distinctions between the past and the present. Swiftly, with his Proustian sensibility, Jake Wood-Evans catches the transience of past histories - its glories and frustrations; in his 'search for lost time', he reveals time's depth, unveiling all its sublime pleasures and tainted legacies".

Rachael Thomas

Senior Curator: Head of Exhibitions

Irish Museum of Modern Art



In an age dominated by screens and pixelated image, Jake Wood-Evans' work feels like a welcome antidote. Drawing on the legacies of Old Masters, his intention is to capture the essence of these historic works without replicating them, depicting familiar, yet obscured subject matter.

Creating ethereal images that are both unsettling and beautiful, Wood-Evans' powerful use of light emerges from a loose and instinctive application of paint. His oil paintings shimmer with luminous and intense layers of colour as bold marks, dripping oils and scored surfaces sit in company with fine, delicate detail.

Describing his work as "a process of conflict with the ambiguous space between representation and abstraction", Wood-Evans resists the urge to provide easy readings or instantly accessible compositions. He invites the viewer to pause and quietly contemplate a series of multi-layered paintings that denote a common visual language built through our shared history and consumption of art imagery.

Wood-Evans' work has been exhibited at galleries in London and across the UK, as well as international art fairs. He has worked with museums including Nottingham Castle Museum & Art Gallery, The Holburne, Bath, Hampshire Cultural Trust and the Musée d'Art Classique de Mougins, France. Wood-Evans' work can be found in private collections internationally, including collections in New York, Malaysia, London, Antwerp and Miami. He holds a BA Hons in Fine Art from Falmouth University, and was subsequently awarded a scholarship from the Royal Academy for classical study at the Prado museum in Madrid. The artist currently lives and works near Lewes, East Sussex.

Education

BA Hons in Fine Art from Falmouth University
Scholarship at The Royal Academy of Arts

Solo Exhibitions

2025

Nocturne, Unit, London, UK

2023

Altered Lands, Frevo, New York, USA

2022

The Edge of Reality, Unit, London, UK

2021

Vanitas, Mougins Museum Mougins, France

(Re)Birth of Venus, Pulpo Gallery, Murnau, Germany

2020

Jake Wood-Evans: Relic, The Gallery, Winchester Discovery Centre, UK

2019

Legacy & Disorder, Unit, London, UK

2017

Transitions, Unit, London, UK

Art Wynwood, Art Wynwood Miami, USA

2016

Subjection & Discipline, Unit, London, UK

2015

Lawrence Acquisition Campaign, The Holburne Museum Bath, UK

2014

Darkness Visible, Leyden Gallery, London, UK

Group Exhibitions

2024

Dante's Inferno, Unit, London, UK

The Three Graces, Unit, London, UK

2023

London Calling, Unit, London, UK

Revival I – XVIIIe siècle, co-curated by Laura Gowen and Rachel Cole Sherr, Gowen, Geneva

2022

Nassima Landau, Tel Aviv, Israel

ART021 Shanghai Contemporary Art Fair, Shanghai, China

Que te seja leve o peso das estrelas, Centro de Arte Contemporânea de Coimbra, Coimbra, Portugal

2021

Art Taipei, Taipei World Trade Centre, Taiwan

2020 Draw Together (online), Unit, London, UK

2019

MTV RE:DEFINE, organised by The Gross-Michael Foundation, Dallas, Texas, USA

2017

Avant Art, Unit, London, UK

Paintguide, Unit, London, UK

Reportrait, Nottingham Castle Museum & Art Gallery, Nottingham, UK

Selected Collections

Bunker Foundation (Rudwin DeWoody Collection), LA, USA

Di Donna Collection, USA

The Goss-Michael Foundation, Dallas, USA

Jiménez-Colón Collection Popnce, Puerto Rico

Mougins Museum Collection, Mougins, France

Sagol Family Collection, Tel Aviv, Israel

USAZeifang Collection

Verhuelsdonk Collection, Hamburg, Germany

Selected Press

2025

April 'Jake Wood-Evans on Reimagining the Old Masters (Q&A)', The Exclusivist

February 'Jake Wood-Evans and 250 years of JMW Turner', UNIT

January 'Jake Wood-Evans Creates A World of Light and Shadow in "Nocturne" at Unit, London', Whitewall; 'Jake Wood-Evans' New Series, "Nocturne" Coming to Unit, London', Juxtapose Magazine; 'Must-See Exhibitions in London', Whitewall Art

2023

May 'The Artful Life: 6 Things Galerie Editors Love This Week', Galerie Magazine

2020

March 'Interview with Jake Wood-Evans', Visual Atelier 8

February 'Jake Wood-Evans: Interview', Studio International

'Jake Wood-Evans: Relic', Hastings Independent Press

January 'The Times: Critics' Choice of what to watch, see and do this week', The Times Online

2019

December 'Jake Wood-Evans New Solo Exhibition', Trebuchet Magazine

June 'The Top 7 Art Exhibitions to see in London in June', FAD Magazine; 'I used to paint walls rather than Old Masters, says artist Jake WoodEvans', Voice Magazine

May 'Jake Wood-Evans on why he wishes to visit Andy Warhol's The Factory and more', GQ; 'The Week Ahead', Observer; 'Jake Wood-Evans – Legacy and Disorder', Considering Art; 'Exhibition of the Week: 'Legacy & Disorder' by Jake Wood-Evans at Unit London', ViewZine; 'Legacy & Disorder: A Look at Jake Wood-Evans', Hastings Independent

2017

December 'Further into abstraction': Nine minutes with Jake WoodEvans', After Nyne;

'Jake Wood-Evans Makes another 'Transition'', Juxtapoz Magazine

May 'Reportrait', a-n

2016

September 'Jake Wood-Evans at Unit London', Artversed

August 'BBC London News Feature on Subjection and Discipline', BBC News; "Young at Art", Evening Standard; 'Subversion of the Classic...Nine Minutes with Jake Wood-Evans', After Nyne; 'Jake Wood-Evans 'Subjection and Discipline'', Juxtapoz Magazine; '6 Must-See Exhibitions in August', The Londonist

2015

August 'Jake Wood-Evans – Shades of Night', Wall Street International

2014

September 'Modern Portraiture in Covent Garden', The Londonist; 'The Unit London exhibition private view', Tatler web feature; 'Breakthrough gallery The Unit London celebrates its first anniversary with new exhibition called 'U'', Mail Online; 'U – The Unit London Gallery', The Huffington Post

August 'U: 19 Sep-18 Oct 2014 at The Unit London', Wall Street International; 'Preview – U @ The Unit London', FAD Magazine; 'U – Contemporary Portraiture', Widewalls

May 'Darkness Visible – Jake Wood-Evans', Laissez Faire

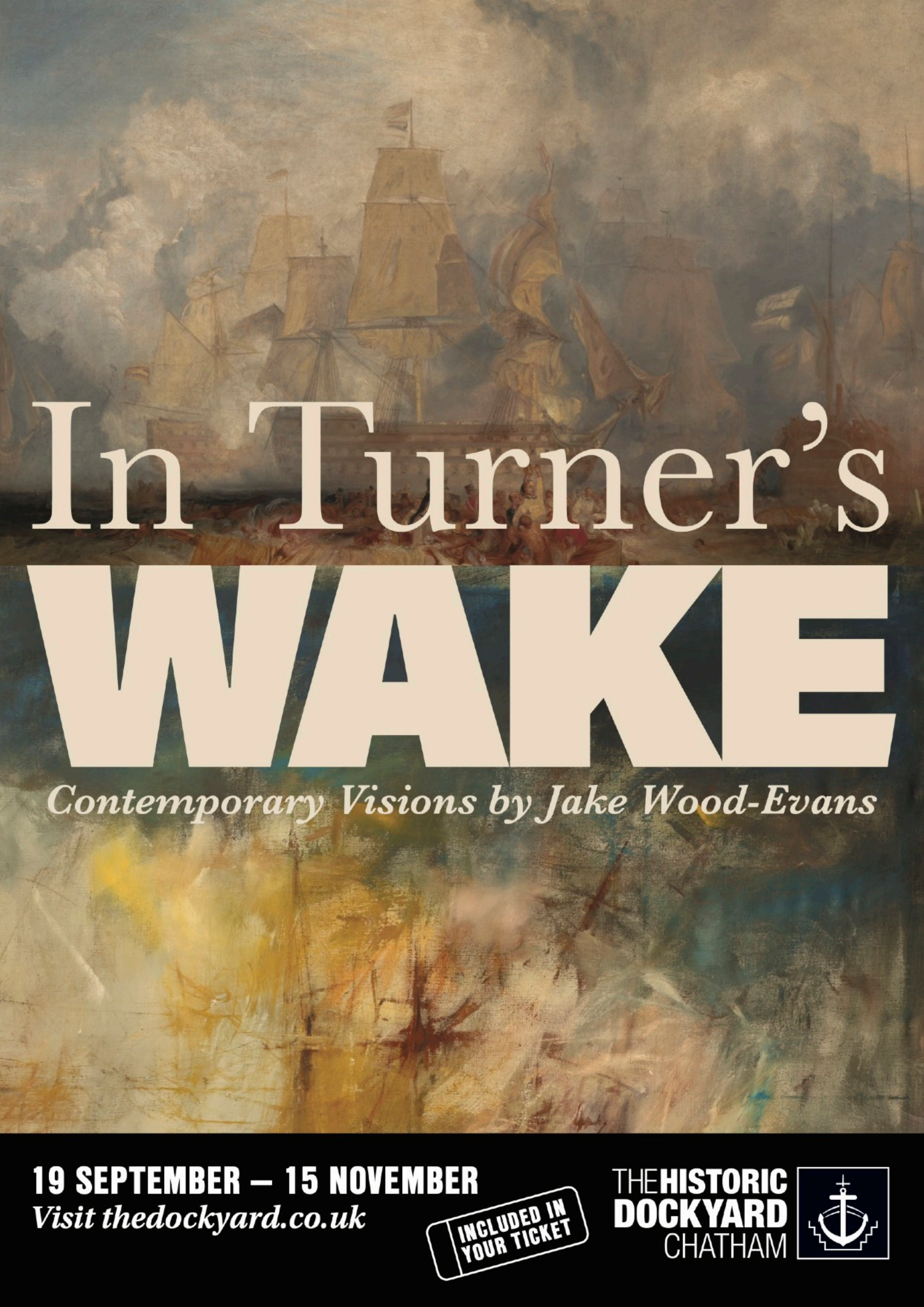
2013

October 'The Work of Jake Wood-Evans', Gulliver Looks; 'Jake WoodEvans', Empty Kingdom

September 'Jake Wood-Evans', Ignant







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