



Solid Air

An exhibition of paintings by Marianne Morild, Lars Korff Lofthus and Hanneline Visnes in Transition Gallery, London 01.12.2012 – 07.01.2013. My participation in this project was both as co-curator, and as a participating artist.

Submitted by Hanneline Visnes
Output No. 1



OUTPUT

Title
Solid Air

Submission No.
1

Authors/Creators
H Visnes

This exhibition brought together three Norwegian painters, who come from the same western part of Norway but live and work between Norway, Scotland, England and Germany. Transition Gallery is an artist run space in East London. In conjunction with this exhibition we produced an on-line catalogue with an essay by Dr Ben Greenman,

CONTEXT

The context for this exhibition and my individual paintings is an ongoing discussion with the painter Marianne Morild about the Norwegian term «Ånd». I particularly looked at how this term is manifest in some of the paintings in the National Romantic tradition, particularly those of Lars Hertervig and Nikolai Astrup, who both painted motifs from the western parts of Norway, a landscape I am very familiar with.



Lars Hertervig, «Gammel Furu»
(«Old Pine»), 1865

“Ånd” is a particularly Norwegian word, which has no direct translation into English. In English it means “spirit” or “ghost”, but in Norwegian it is also used to mean “intellect” and “breath”. This word in many ways sums up the way Norwegians relate to nature, a deep spiritual and bodily connection which is not religious. It goes beyond “the Sublime”, where the individual remains a disinterested spectator with no investment in the landscape outside of the aesthetic. The word “ånd” implies some kind of transfer, of spirit or breath, but also allows someone to feel a connection or belonging to a place, or that a place already “has” this element of “ånd”, possibly left over from other people who have been to this place, made marks in it. The exhibition aims to explore how this attitude of “ånd” might manifest itself across borders and how it affects the relationship to nature and belonging.

The meaning of this term, and how to manifest it in visual art is continually a main area of interest within Norwegian contemporary art, for instance, Mari Slåttemid, Marianne Heske and AK Dolven are amongst the artists currently exploring this theme. Part of the question for this project was if, and how this term – or the visual description of it could be understood in the particular context of a post industrial space in the East end of London.

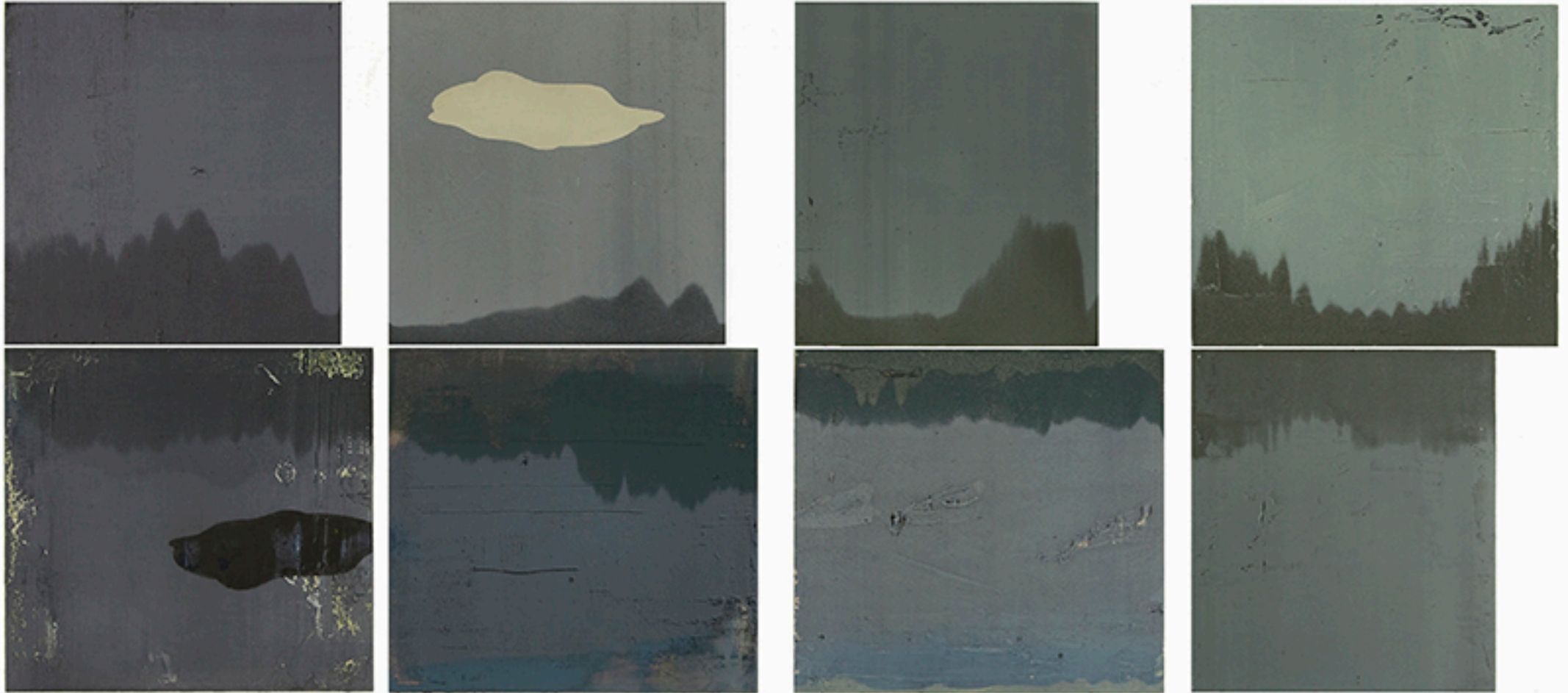


Left: Nikolai Astrup, «St Hans bål» («Summer Solstice Bonfire»), date unknown. Right: Nikolai Astrup, «Vårnatt i haven» («Spring night in the garden»), 1909 .

Along with paintings by Lars Hertervig (above) these were some of the works that I responded very directly to in this project.



Marianne Heske «Mountain Of The Mind» Video painting. Heske is a contemporary artists whose work with attempting to depict energies or forces in nature beyond human comprehension. She uses modern, custom made technology, but still relates the results back to romantic landscape paintings .



Mari Slåttilid «Inland Area (first part)» 2013 Oil on aluminium. Slåttilid is a painter whose work often is a direct response to the traditions in depiction of landscape, and play on language and clichés in relation to this .



Lars Korff Lofthus «Volcano» Acrylic on canvas 2011. Korff Lofthus is one of the two other artists participating in this project with me.



Marianne Morild «Coker aurora» 2012 Acrylic and bitumen on board. The project «Solid Air» came about as a result of ongoing discussions about language and landscape, and cultural attitudes to nature and to religiosity between Morild and myself over a long period of time, this is one of her paintings.

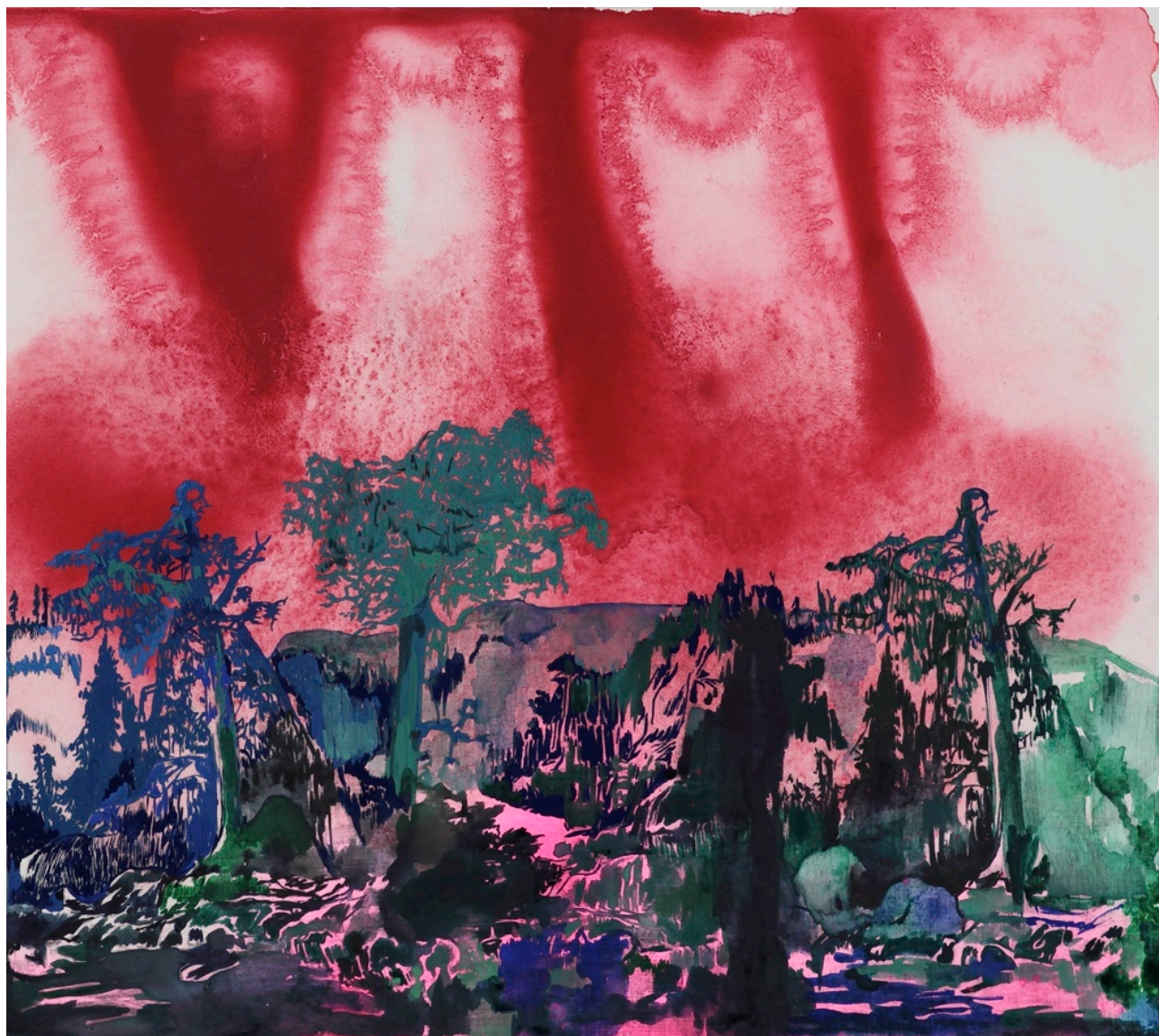
METHODOLOGY

In order to address the idea of the exhibition I produced works that attempted to embody the idea physically in the work as well as reflect on the motifs of this Norwegian tradition of painting.

Using paintings by the Norwegian National Romantic painters Lars Hertervig (1830–1902) («Gamle furutrær» – «Old Pinetrees») and Nikolai Astrup (1880–1928) («Vårnatt i haven» «Spring night in the garden» and «St Hans bål» «Summer Solstice Bonfire») as motifs I made a body of paintings. I used colours found in the paintings of Hertervig and Astrup, and I juxtaposed these with colours of a heightened intensity. I also used very small, and finely rendered brush marks, something that expresses amongst other things a deep physical and mental involvement and concentration

Some of the paintings were made in oil paint on loosely shaped boards, and some were made in watercolour on paper.





Hanneline Visnes, «Landscape, after Hertervig», Watercolour on paper 2012



Hanneline Visnes «Atomic»,Watercolour and gouache on paper 2012



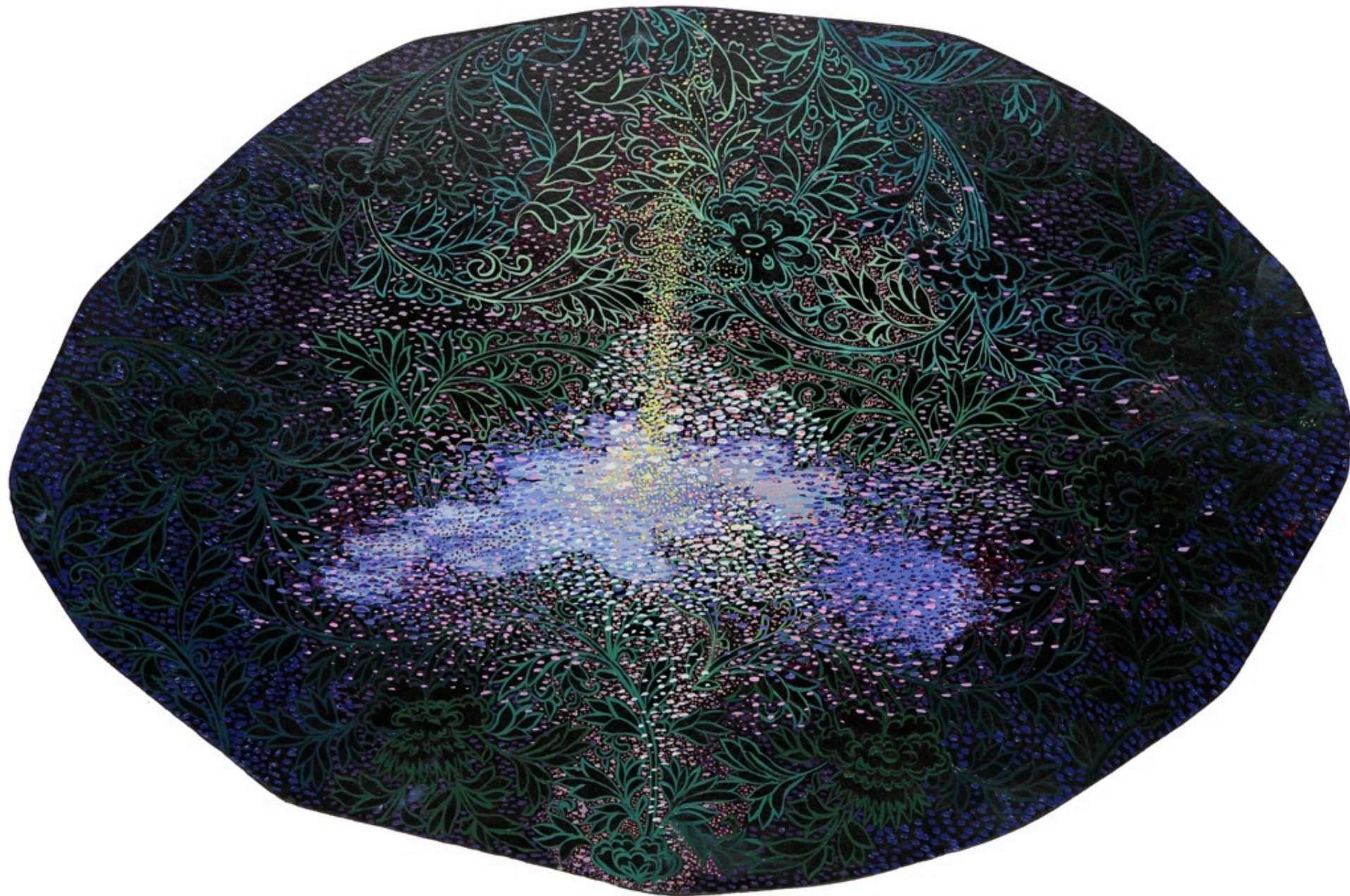
Hanneline Visnes, «Morild», watercolour and gouache on paper



Hanneline Visnes, «Rose Painting», Watercolour on paper, 2012



Hanneline Visnes «Borrowed Garden, Ardabil» Oil on board 2012



Hanneline Visnes, «Spring Night in the Garden, after Astrup», 2012



Hanneline Visnes «Midsummer, After Astrup» 2012 Oil on board

DISSEMINATION

This exhibition was held in December 2012 in Transition Gallery, London, an independent and innovative gallery and publisher founded by artist Cathy Lomax in October 2002.

The gallery shows work by both emerging and established contemporary artists as well as producing publications and periodicals. There is in this gallery an emphasis on contemporary painting, particularly in painting that in some way incorporates forms of figuration.

In addition to the exhibition an online catalogue was produced, with accompanying essays. This addressed a wider audience beyond those who visited the gallery.

The idea of the exhibition as well as the individual works exhibited is a contribution to an ongoing dialogue with this tradition and its specific meaning as manifest in the work of Norwegian contemporary art.

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Acknowledgements

This project was supported by the Norwegian embassy in London as well as by NABROAD/ Norwegian Organisation for Collective Art Abroad