



**SARA MELZER**



Association Mémoire de l'Avenir - Paris ■ ■ ■ Artura Artist Museum - Tel Aviv Jaffa

présentent

# SARA MELZER

Du 5 au 30 avril 2013

Vernissage le Vendredi 5 avril 2013 - 19h30

Programmation musicale :

Joachim Stutchevsky – Romance for Flute solo (Israel, 1956)

J. S. Bach (Arranged by M. Melzer) – Choral-Prelude for 3 Recorders

Michael Melzer – Nani, Nani (after a Judeo-espagnol lullaby) for 2 Recorders (Israel, 1996)

Salomone Rossi – Sonata sopra l'Aria di Ruggiero (1608) for 3 Recorders

MICHAEL MELZER - flûte à bec et flûte

EZER MELZER - flûte à bec

Yael MELZER - flûte à bec

ESPACE INTERCULTUREL MEMOIRE DE L'AVENIR

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Galerie ouverte du lundi au vendredi de 10 h à 18 h

Sous le parrainage de Pierre Shapira, Adjoint au Maire de Paris

MDA ouvre ses portes au public du quartier et à tout type de groupes pour des rencontres et un dialogue autour des arts et des cultures.



MÉMOIRE DE L'AVENIR

ذاكرة المستقبل

MEMORY OF THE FUTURE

זיכרון העתיד

# Sara Melzer

## Two-Faced Reality Counterpoint

*Without mercy I am condemned, step by step,*

*To return and see...*

Dan Pagis

Colored cardboard boxes scattered in space, on which are drawn brightly colored, expressive portraits and monochromatic reliefs of charred portraits hanging on the white wall - all these are part of Sara Melzer's exhibition.

The contrast between the two types of portraits, between the ghosts, on the one hand, and those who represent the power of life and its continuity, on the other hand, creates the tension that characterizes the entire exhibition, taking place between two parallel entities.

Destiny diverted Melzer's path of life several times: during World War II, when she was eleven, her life was saved just hours before the German invasion of her hometown; and later on, when her nuclear family was suddenly exiled from Poland to Siberia, leaving behind a rich life saga.

Many years later, in 2008, she received, by chance, a family heritage of letters and postcards. While rummaging around old family testimonies, accompanied by nostalgic emotions that this arouses, the artist found a yellowed piece of paper – an SOS telegram from 1940, sent by her uncle, Mendel Weinfeld, from the city of "Lvov" (Lviv) to his sister in Palestine, pleading her to get for him and his young family a certificate to immigrate to Eretz Israel. He feared he might be exiled to Siberia.

The certificate was not obtained. Shortly after, the Nazis occupied the area and the threat of deportation was replaced by a much greater concern, which materialized with the killing of the family at the Belzec extermination camp in 1942.<sup>1</sup> The emotional upheaval that the unexpected discovery of this telegram caused, brought up from memory the image of the family that perished. The concreteness and clarity of images from the past on the background of history's vicissitudes and quirks of fate flooded the mind with restless thoughts about the disturbing way reality works and the way destiny determines life and death.

The pain of longing and grief that was never quite extinguished now came out and surfaced, awakening the powerful creative impulse with which Melzer was blessed. As a result, began a long and complex process of work requiring many emotional forces to look and touch the hidden and the repressed that suddenly erupted. Preoccupation with the nothingness of life and with memory was the focus of the work. These led to the development of a unique technique with symbolic significance. It started out with tearing newspapers as intimation of grief, turning them into pulp, the raw material from which she created dozens of portraits devoid of human image, then baking them in a home oven until smoldered and charred. The charred portraits with hollow eyes, created through this process, were glued separately on a uniformly white surface. Together this forms a mass of faces with no ethnic identity, age or gender absorbed at first glance as a flood of negatives composing a large "class photo", doubtful whether of skeletons or masks.

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<sup>1</sup> Belzec extermination camp was the first camp established by the Nazis created for implementing Operation Reinhard in Poland. Half a million Jews found their death in this camp. The fact that no one survived the camp is one of the reasons that it is not as well-known and famous as Sobibor and Treblinka, created later for Operation Reinhard.

The term “class photo” recalls the works of Christian Boltanski, immersed in Holocaust memories. The writer and art critic Meir Agassi wrote in the context of Boltanski’s “class photos” that in such photos individuality is actually emphasized from a starting point of anonymity.<sup>2</sup> At first glance, the photo commemorating the end of some kind of event is grasped in its overall unity. Gradually, and at a further glance, scanning and intimate, one deciphers different features and personal characteristics that defy the equality principle of such images.<sup>3</sup> The question “Where are they now?” produced by the intimate glance, is almost inevitable and consequently transforms the photo both into an affirmation of life and a memento mori.

A similar process occurs with the oppressive anonymity of the charred reliefs in Melzer’s exhibit, which at first glance seems like a memorial wall. A deeper look allows identification of individual details challenging the anonymity dictated by multiplicity. The fact that not one relief is similar to another exposes an attempt to give back ghosts the personal uniqueness taken from them, touching one’s heart through repetition. To wonder, “Who were they?” as opposed to the question “Where are they today,”- a moment before they became a small part of collective memory - this is largely the memento mori of the post mortem.

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<sup>2</sup> Meir Agassi, *The Jar from Tennessee*; Christian Boltanski, *Class Photos as Memento Mori*, *Am Oved*, Tel Aviv 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

In her second series of works, Melzer reuses cardboard boxes of various sizes. The box once new and full, is empty, and becomes a drained memory container, folding the past within itself like a refugee tossed from place to place. The portraits on the outer layer of the boxes were drawn with great corporeality and intense colors characteristic of her artistic language. These emotional and intimate portraits contain the memory of those present – the absentees, living within her, with whom she holds a constant dialogue; and referring to the concepts of Walter Benjamin, one can see in them figures wandering and roving not only in visible space but inside their souls, as they return to the past, forgotten and repressed. This past arises to the existential plane from hidden places in a two-faced reality that wavers between a dynamic, living world and the world of the figures represented in the reliefs of burnt pulp paper, sinking into the darkness of oblivion as an open wound.

Ruty Chinsky-Amitay









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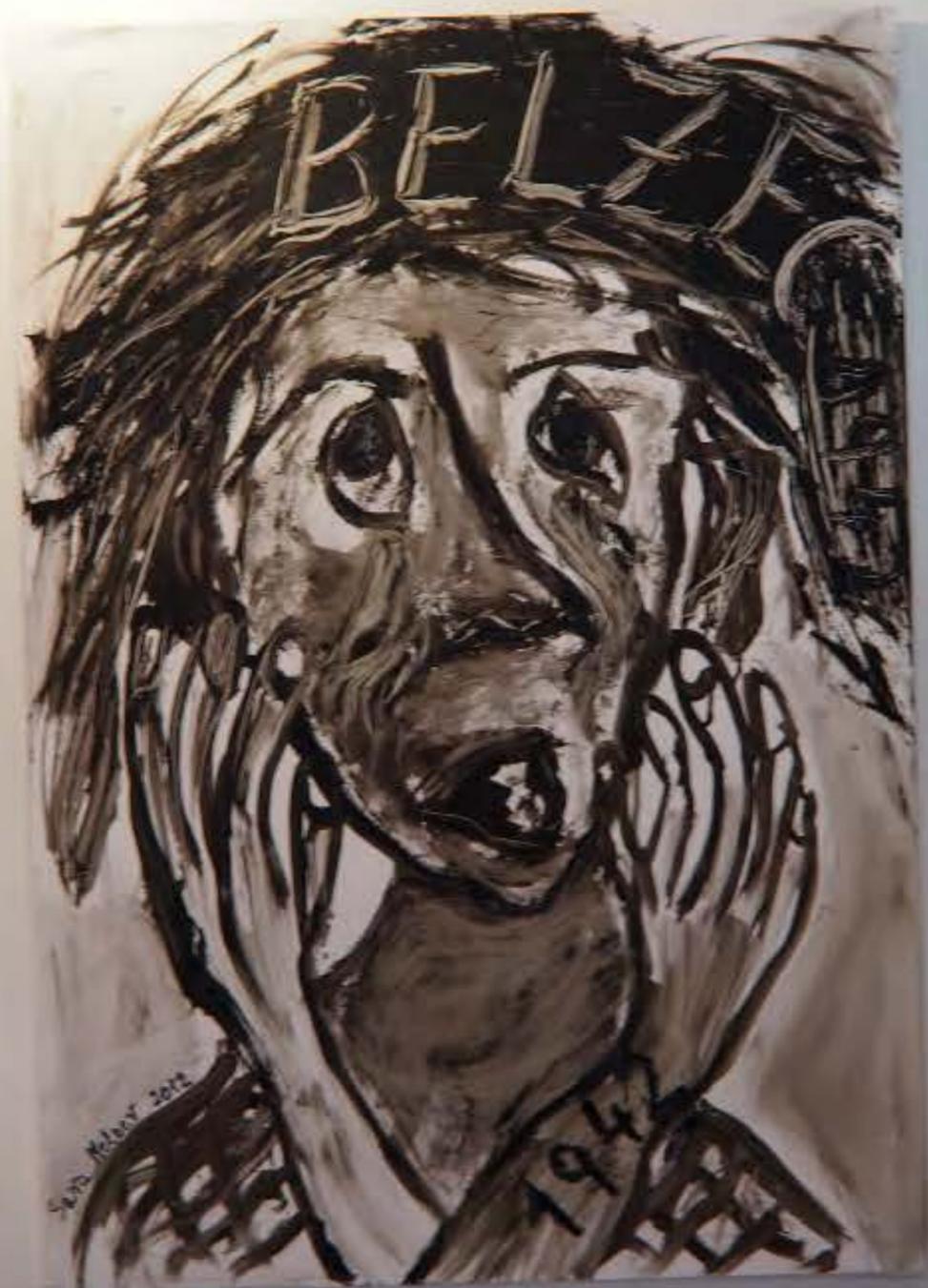












5/22, May 2012

1942







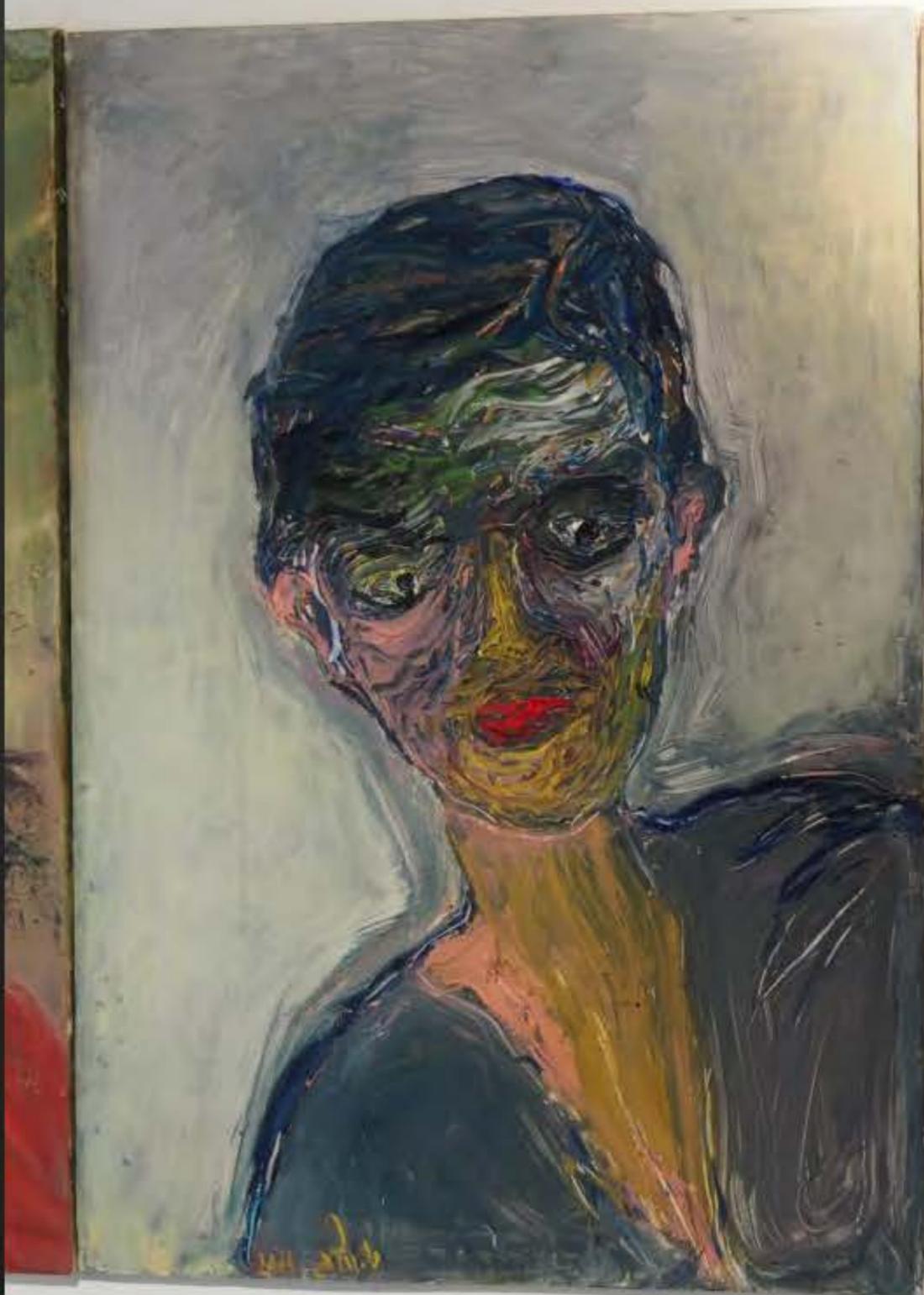
Sara Hildes  
2012



Sara Hildes  
2013















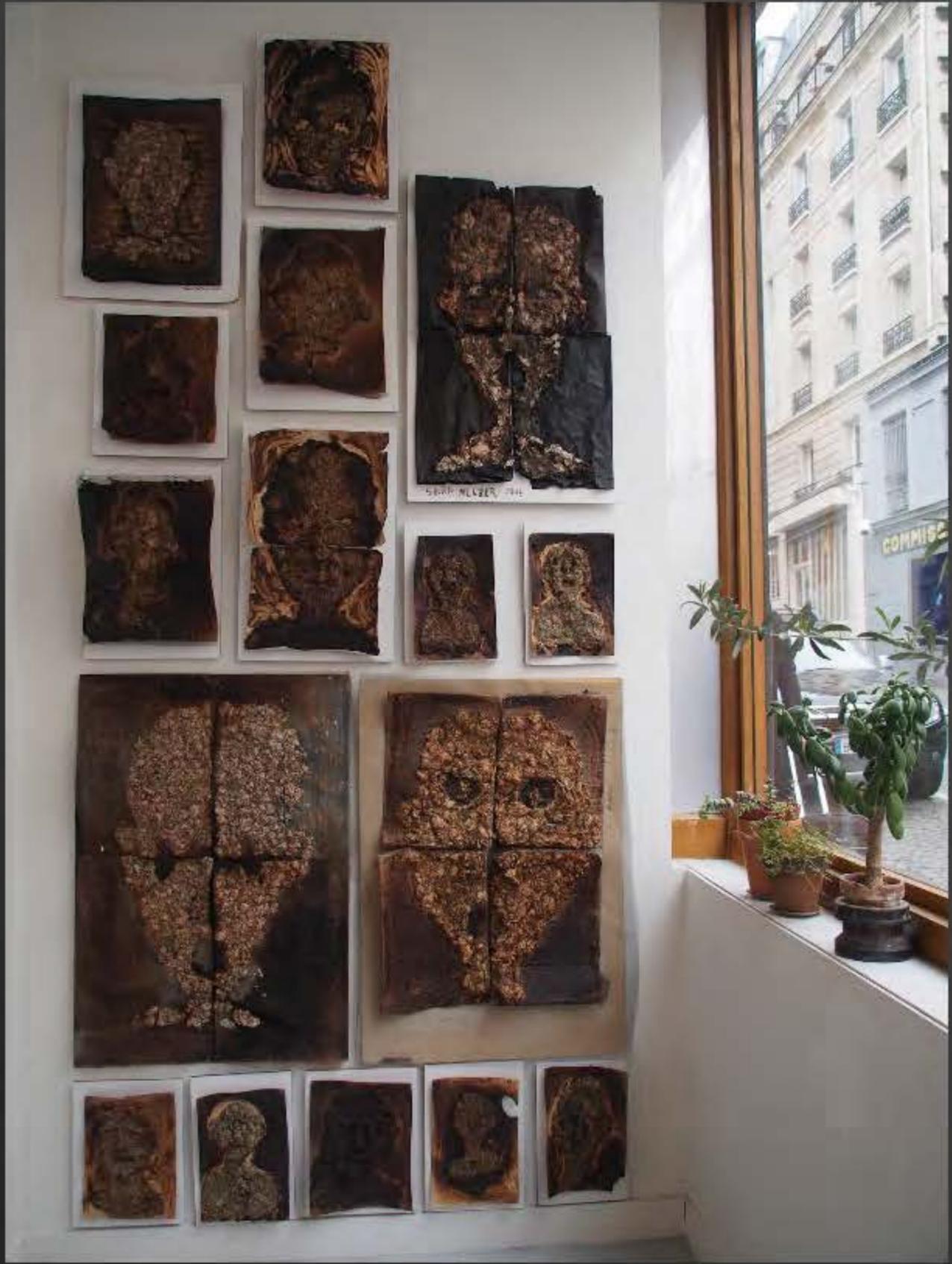


SARA NELZER 2013





Susan Wilson 2009















Lucia Meloni  
2016

Sara Melzer  
2010



Sara Melzer  
2010

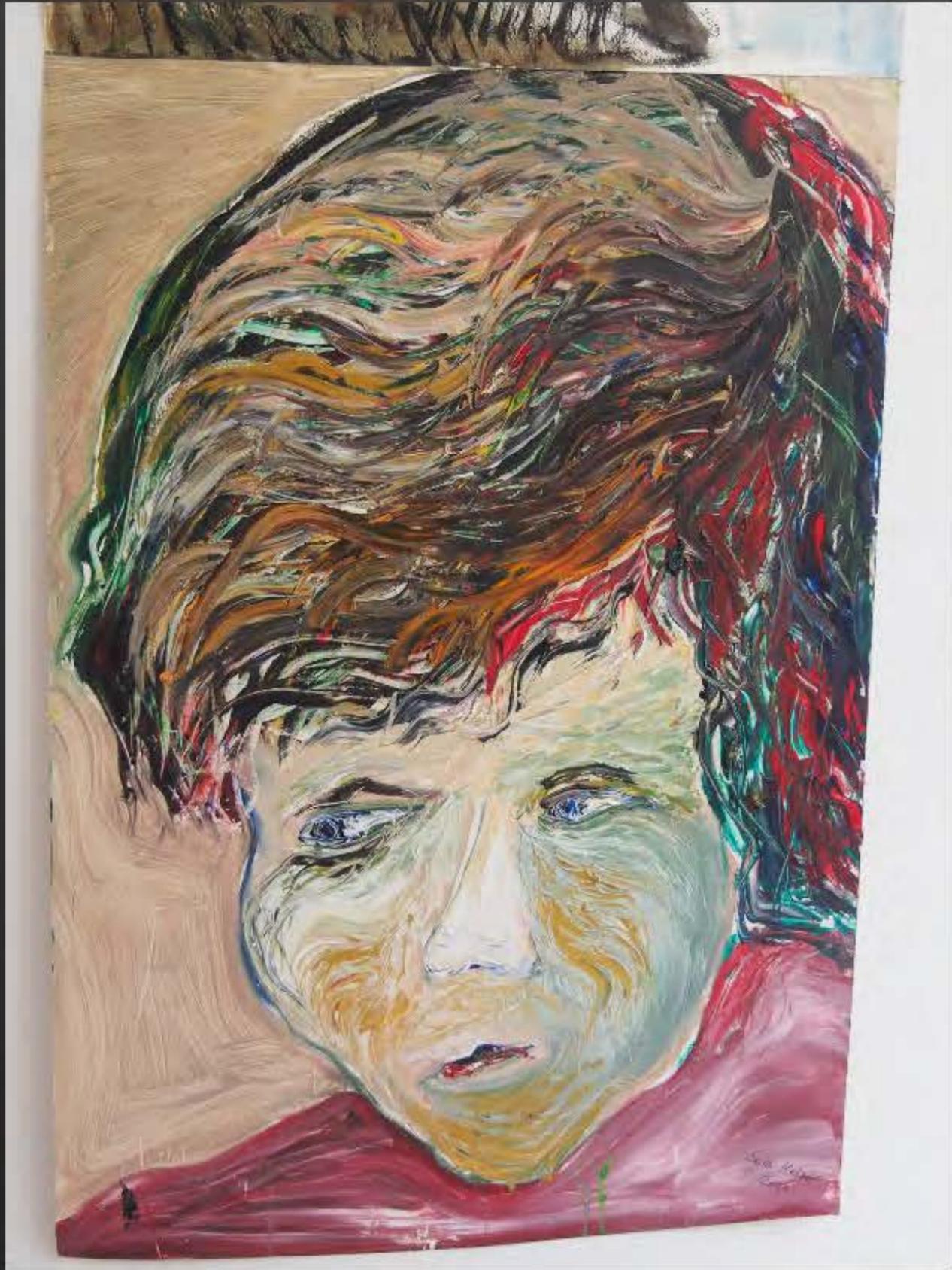


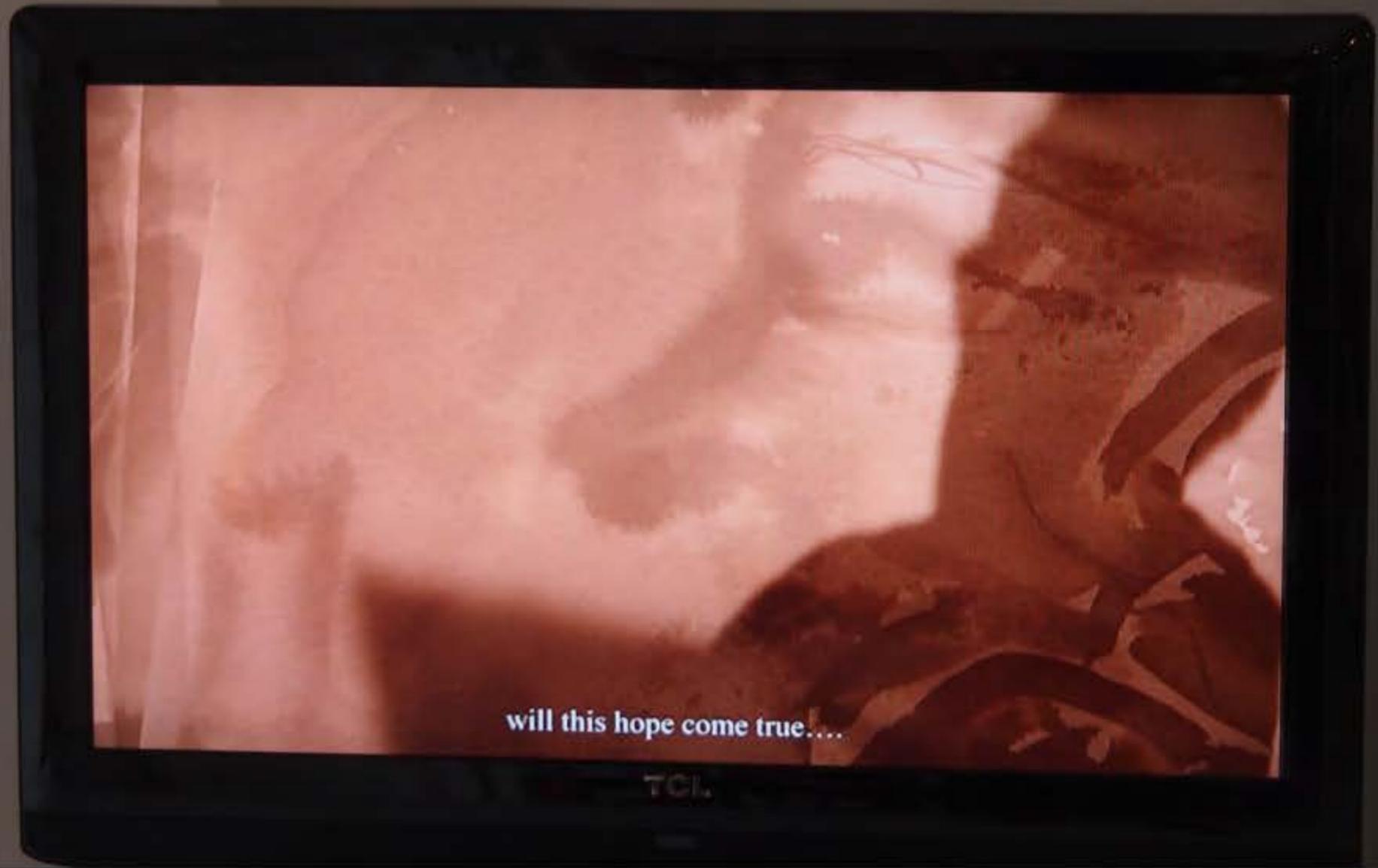
Sara Melzer  
2010









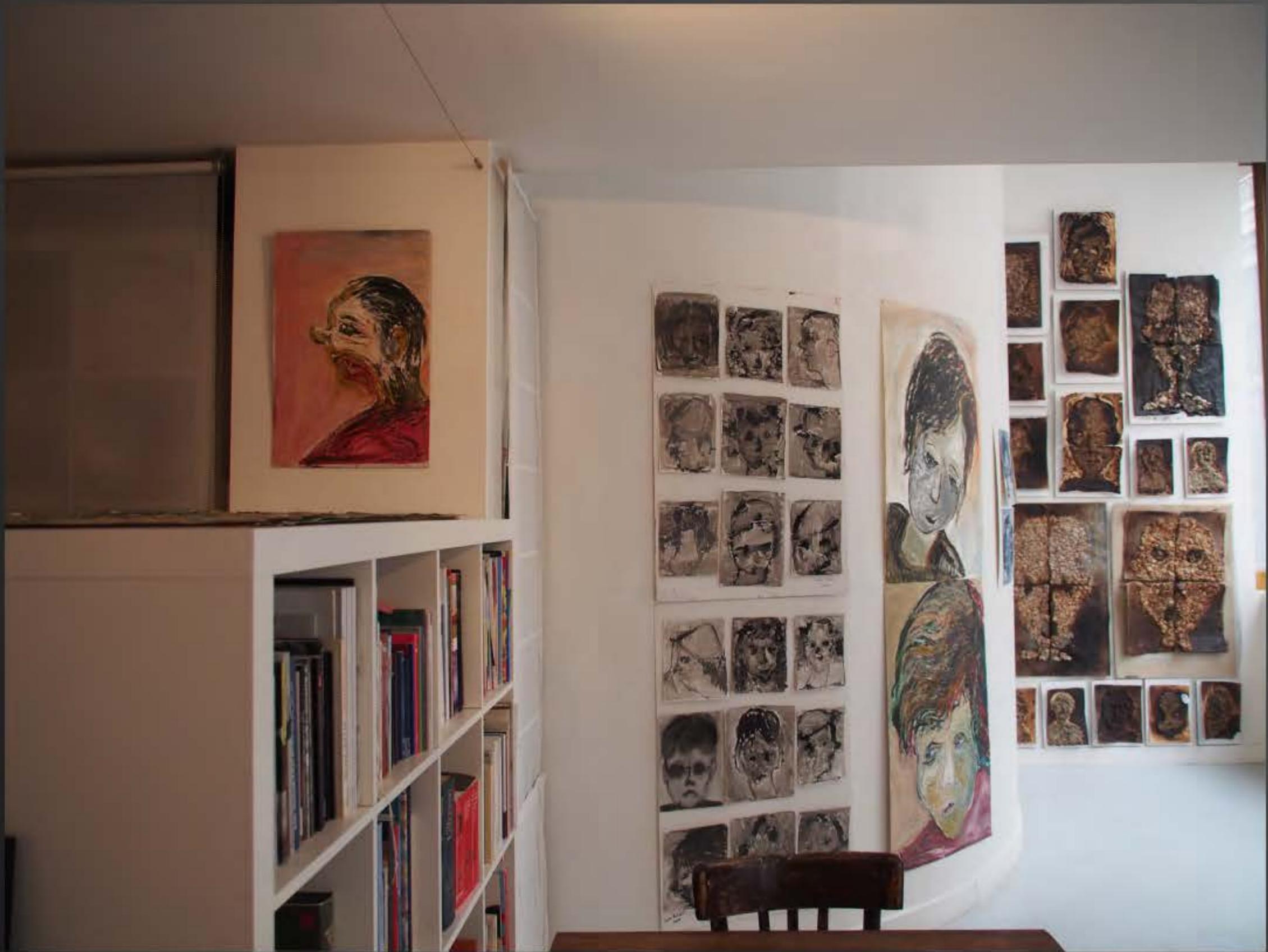


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# SARA MELZER

Associazione culturale "L'Arte" - Via ...

## SARA MELZER

1978 - Roma (Italia)

Artista contemporanea, si occupa di pittura e scultura. Ha lavorato in diverse gallerie e spazi espositivi. Ha partecipato a numerose mostre individuali e collettive.

ESPOSIZIONE COLLETTIVA "L'ARTE" - VIA ...



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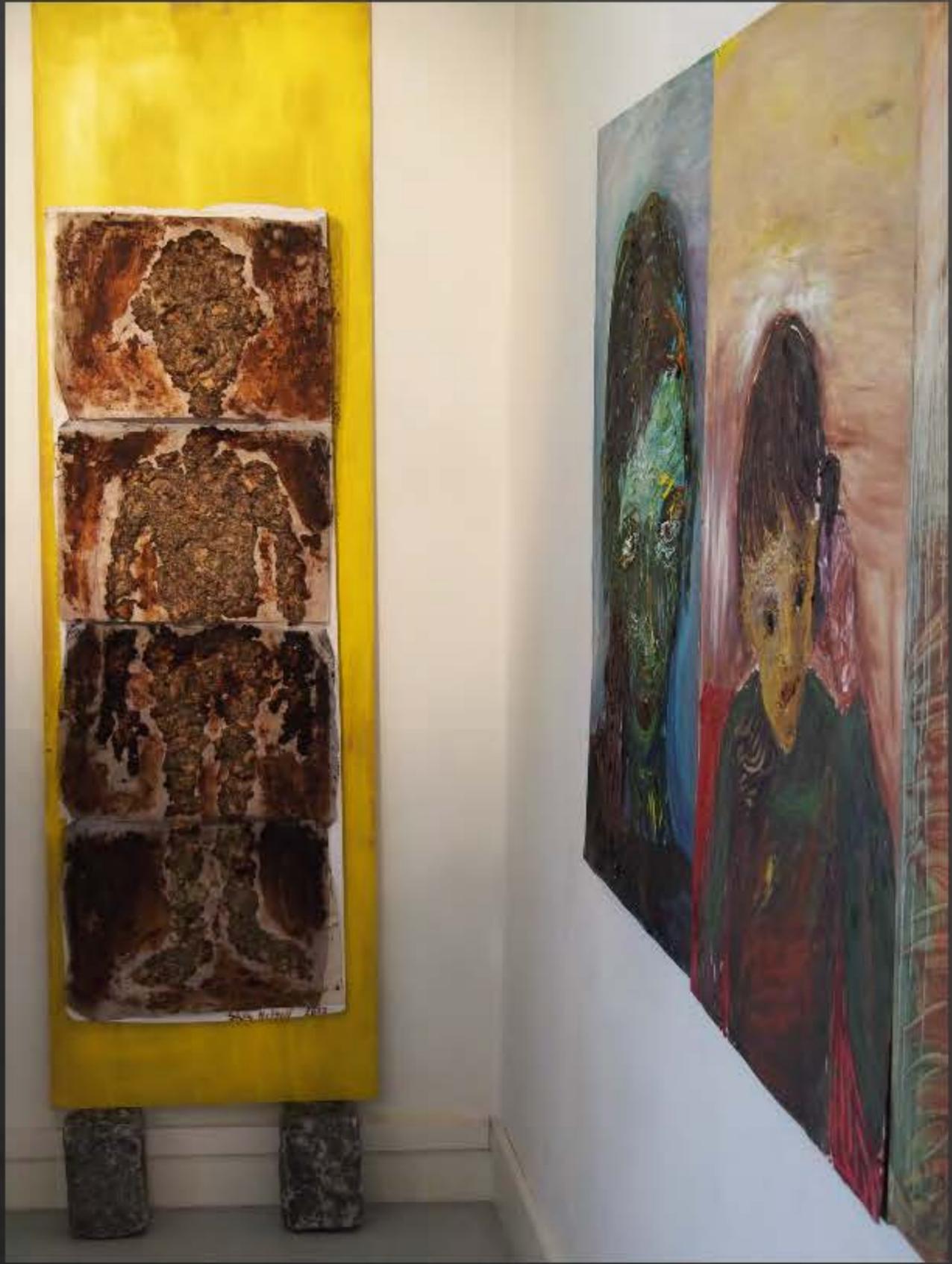














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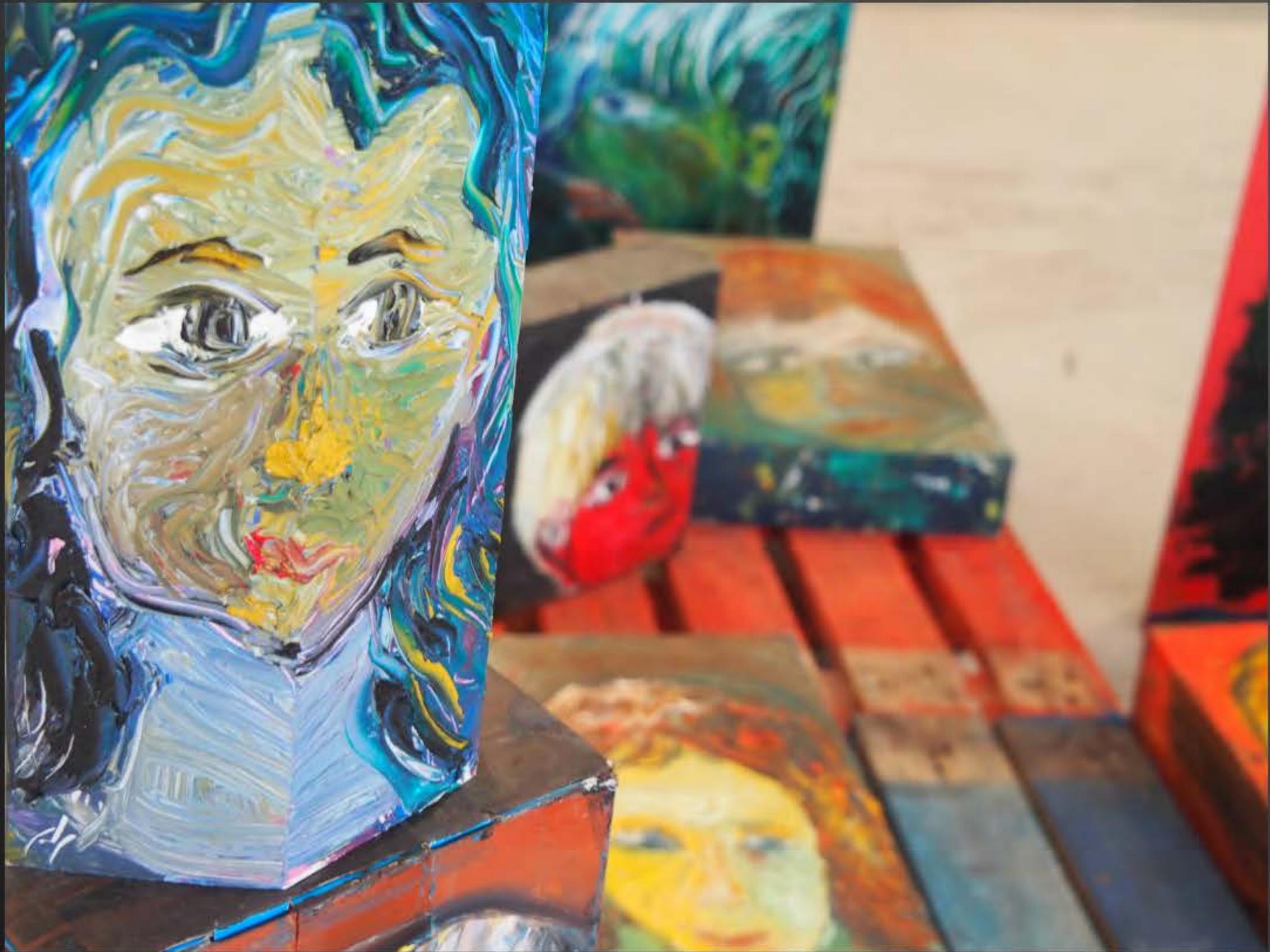
















































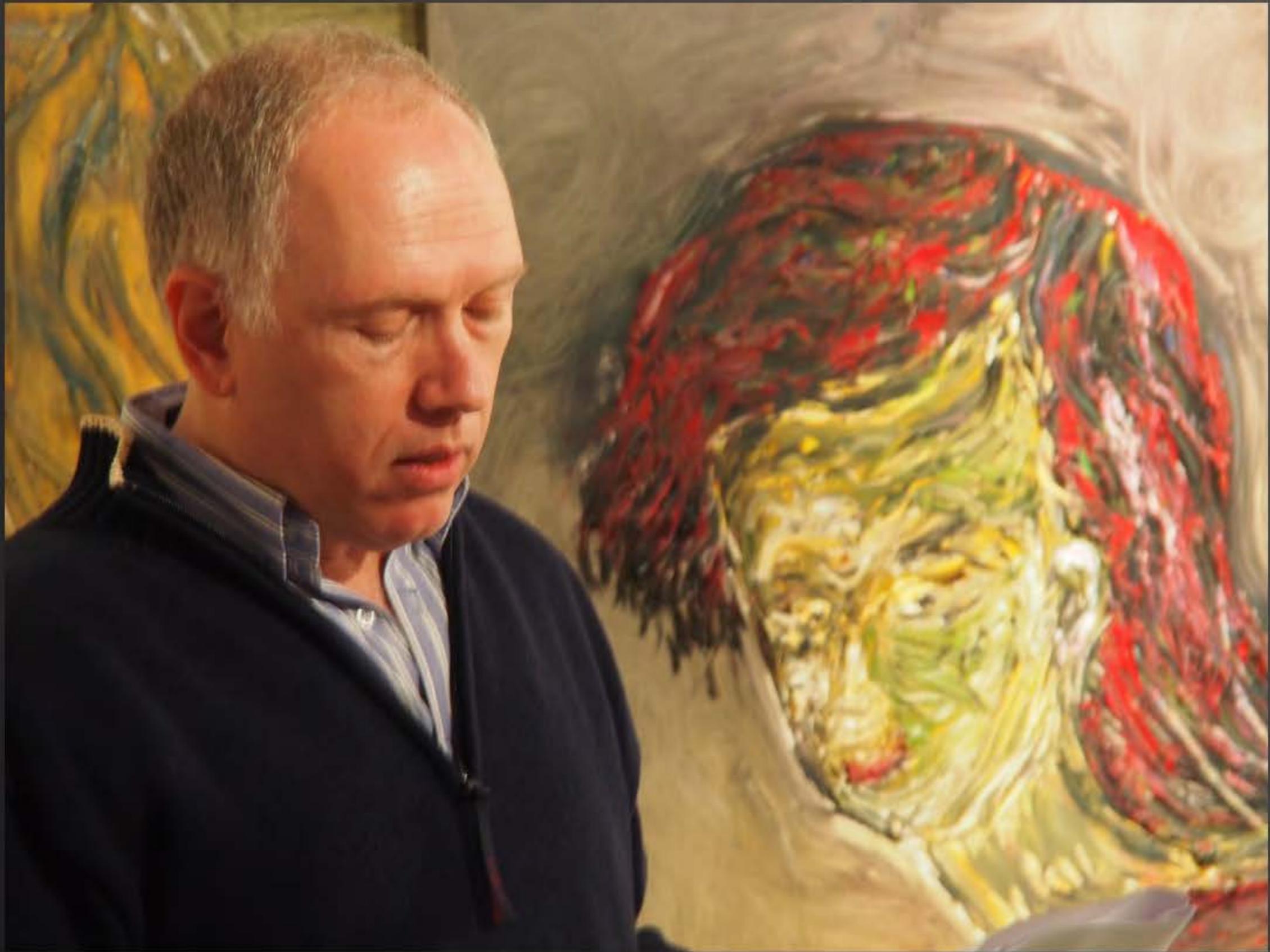




































































SARA MELZER

SOBRIE ESCRITURAS

