

Polar Aesthetics: Art of the Arctic and Antarctic

Wayne Binitie

PhD (RCA)

Fine Art Research

Appendix A

Documentation of Practice

This thesis represents partial submission for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the Royal College of Art. I confirm that the work presented here is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis. During the period of registered study in which this thesis was prepared the author has not been registered for any other academic award or qualification. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

6th Aug 2023

Wayne Binitie

PHOTOGRAPHIC SERIES P8-39

VAPOUR SERIES P40-65

LIQUID SERIES P66-133

SOLID SERIES P134-213

DOCUMENTATION OF PRACTICE

PHOTOGRAPHIC SERIES

Apart from my public commissions Ice Floor and Polar Zero, which involved collaborative thinking and making, I am the sole author of work submitted in this documentation unless stated. My **photographic series** was made in Iceland and at the British Antarctic Survey. In line with the entire research, the series was underpinned by temperature and was moderated by the equivalent chemical and societal phase changes outlined by physicist Iberall:

Much as a given chemical compound (water, for example) may exist in several distinct states (solid, liquid, gas) and may switch from stable to unstable state at critical points in the intensity of temperature (called phase transitions), so a human society may be seen as a 'material' capable of undergoing these changes of state. (Iberall, 1972:221)

VAPOUR SERIES

Chapter One: Vapour Series of installations

Sublimation, Deposition and the Future Sublime

In the phase transitions of water, subliming is when a substance passes from solid to gas without going through the liquid phase, while deposition is when a substance goes from gas to solid without going through the liquid state.

Artists and architects Fujiko Nakaya, Diller+Scofidio and Olafur Eliasson, use fog, vapour and steam to create installations that evoke a future sublime. Author David Nye uses 'technological sublime' to denote a questioning of lived experience at a time of rapid technological advances. Diller describes his work with vapour as a technological sublime parallel to the romantic sublime, experienced in the scale-less and unpredictable mass of fog.

This chapter begins with an exploration of the sublime in Arctic Iceland as experienced during field research at the Jökulsárlón glacial lagoon and mediated through my primary case study, the Library of Water, by artist Roni Horn. Anchored by my **Vapour Series of installations**, the chapter then examines critical ideas of sublimation and deposition in my research at the British Antarctic Survey. It concludes with a discussion of Arctic and Antarctic sublimation and deposition in practice through my installation Solid, Liquid, Gas at the V&A museum.

LIQUID SERIES

Chapter Two: Liquid Series of paintings

Condensation and Evaporation in Liquid Modernity

In the phase transitions of water, condensation is the change from a vapour to a condensed state, which could be solid or liquid; and evaporation is the change of a liquid to a gas.

This chapter explores notions of liquid modernity, a phrase coined by the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman to describe a fragile and dematerialised society. Juhani Pallasmaa sees liquid modernity as driven by technological acceleration, resulting in spatial rupture, sensory loss and increased environmental isolation. Informed by the speed and velocity of the present, the chapter explores ideas of condensation and evaporation as mediated through several of my performative exhibitions, including Ice Manuscript at the Arup Gallery.

It draws ideas of condensation in relation to the paintings of Pat Steir and notions of evaporation in the installation of Christian Boltanski. My **Liquid Series of paintings** explore ideas of liquid modernity across Arctic and Antarctic waters, focusing on light and shadow, surface and depth. The work rethinks and re-imagines the polar waters as a fluid narrative of the transient, the fleeting and the contingent where images of ice, water and the sea condense and evaporate to produce extended meditations on the passage of time and the history of the earth.

SOLID SERIES

Chapter Three: Solid Series of glass sculptures

Freezing and Melting in Solid Antiquity

In the phase transitions of water, freezing is when a substance changes from a liquid to a solid, and melting is when it changes back from solid to liquid.

In this chapter, this material freezing and melting is explored in the thinking and making of my cast and hand-carved glass sculptures, created in the form of cylindrical sections of solid ice cores and jagged ice fragments. Following the tradition of glass being used as a scientific lens through which to understand the world and our place within it, my **Solid Series of glass sculptures** are posited as enduring crystalline fragments – permanent indexes through which to negotiate the passage of time, place and memory.

Using Esther Leslie's polarisation of reactionary thought as 'always a hardening' and emancipation as 'always a melting', I consider the release of ancient air as an experiential and emancipatory form of freezing and melting during my Ice Floor exhibition at the Arup gallery. Rethinking Benjamin's idea of 'plumbing the depths of language and thought by drilling rather than excavating', the chapter explores the idea of the Arctic and Antarctic history as a vital form of solid matter written in ice and glass. Anchored by my Polar Zero exhibition at COP26, the chapter concludes with an exploration of an atmospheric and climatic form of polar spirit loci, freezing and melting, north and south, that is both held and released within a solid outer depth and a molten liquid core.

PHOTOGRAPHIC SERIES. 1-15 ICELAND. ARTIST BOOK



64° 04' 13" N 16° 12' 42" W NO.1



64° 04' 13" N 16° 12' 42" W NO.2



64° 04' 13" N 16° 12' 42" W NO.2



64° 04' 13" N 16° 12' 42" W NO.4





64° 04' 13" N 16° 12' 42" W NO.6



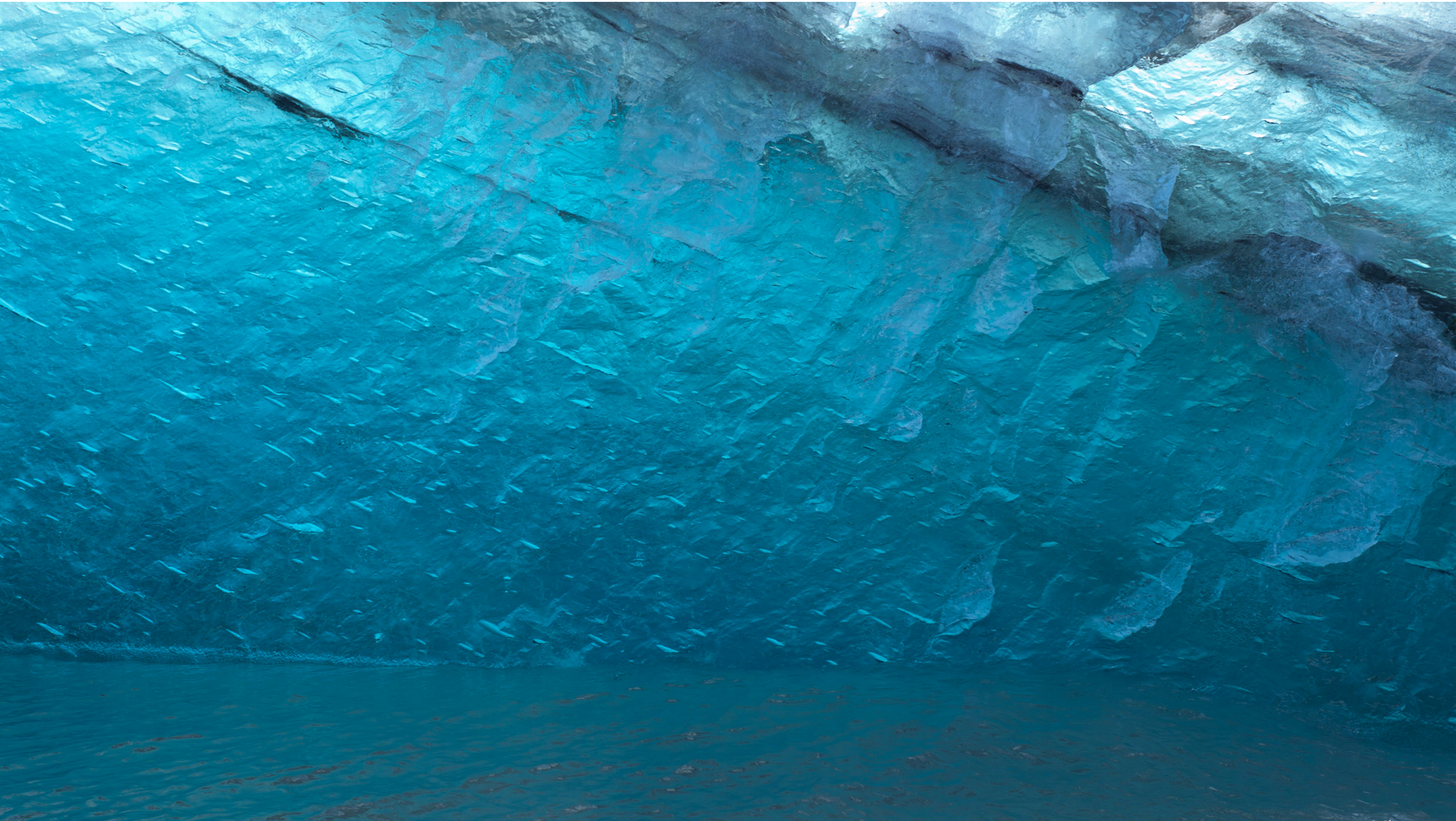
64° 04' 13" N 16° 12' 42" W NO.7



64° 04' 13" N 16° 12' 42" W NO.8





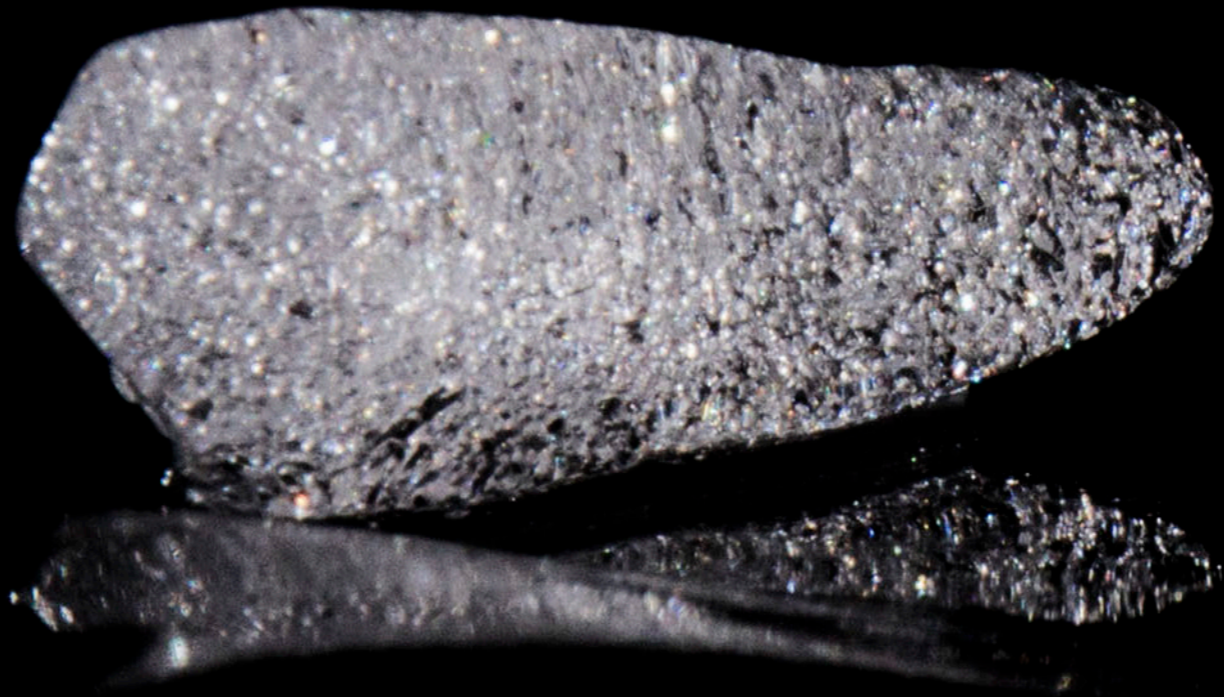




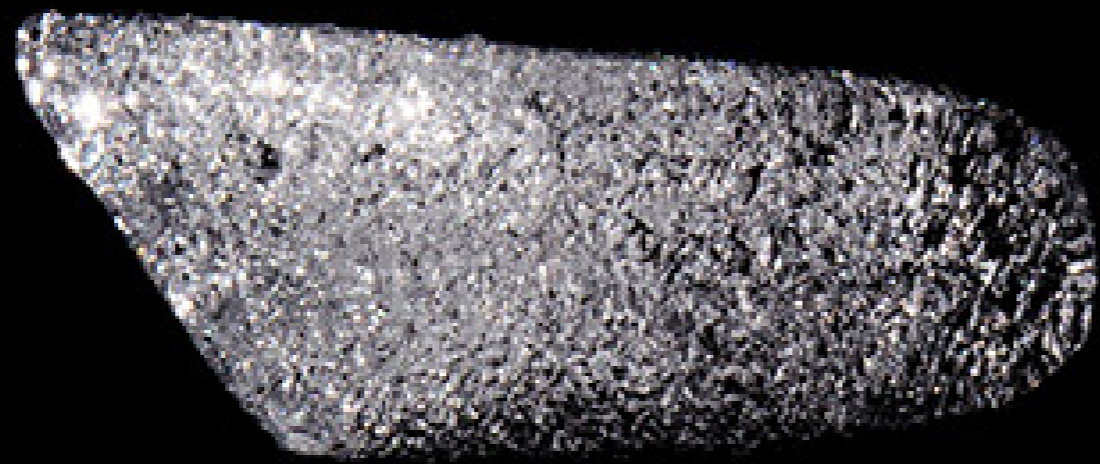
PHOTOGRAPHIC SERIES NO.12

PHOTOGRAPHIC SERIES NO.13 ICE ON CONCRETE





PHOTOGRAPHIC SERIES NO.14 ANTARCTIC ICE. 1,500 YEARS OLD



PHOTOGRAPHIC SERIES NO.15 ANTARCTIC ICE. 1,500 YEARS OLD

VAPOUR SERIES



VAPOUR SCULPTURE. SERPENTINE LAKE. NATIONAL TRUST/PRIOR PARK



VAPOUR SCULPTURE. SERPENTINE LAKE. NATIONAL TRUST/PRIOR PARK

Aurora Borealis - Future Air

Wayne Binitie

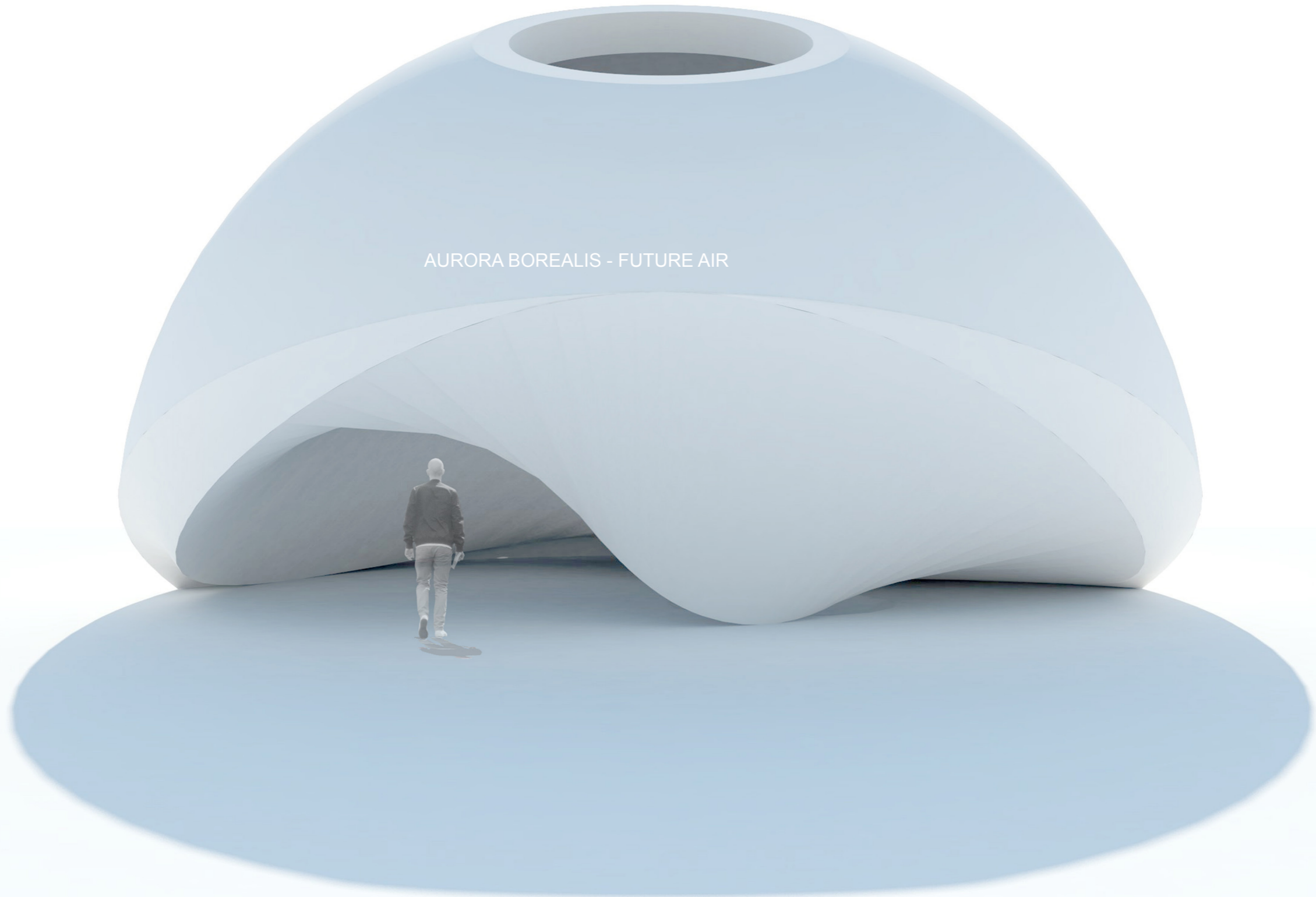
Andante misterioso

Musical score for page 46, measures 1-4. The score is in 4/4 time and features a complex arrangement of staves. The top two staves are for a string quartet (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello), with the Violoncello staff containing a double bar line. The middle two staves are for a piano, with the right hand staff containing a double bar line. The bottom two staves are for a double bass, with the right hand staff containing a double bar line. The tempo is marked 'Andante misterioso'.

2

Musical score for page 47, measures 5-8. The score continues from page 46. The top two staves are for a string quartet, with the Violoncello staff containing a double bar line. The middle two staves are for a piano, with the right hand staff containing a double bar line. The bottom two staves are for a double bass, with the right hand staff containing a double bar line. The tempo is marked 'Andante misterioso'. Measure numbers 5, 6, 7, and 8 are indicated at the beginning of their respective staves.

AURORA BOREALIS - FUTURE AIR

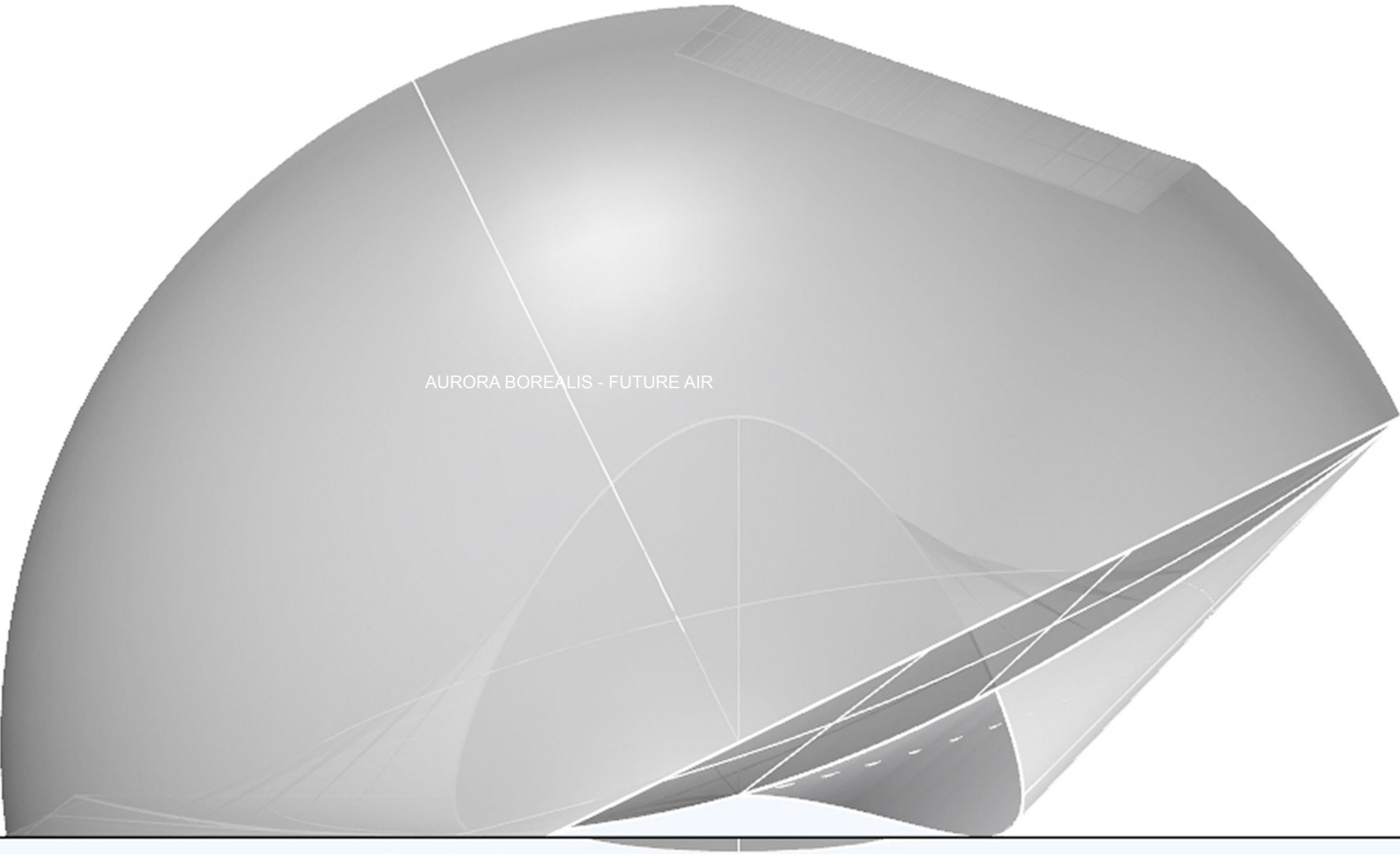


A minimalist architectural rendering of a white, dome-shaped structure. The dome is composed of several curved, overlapping panels that meet at a circular opening at the top. The structure is positioned on a flat, light-colored surface, casting a soft shadow to the right. The background is a uniform, bright white, creating a clean and modern aesthetic.

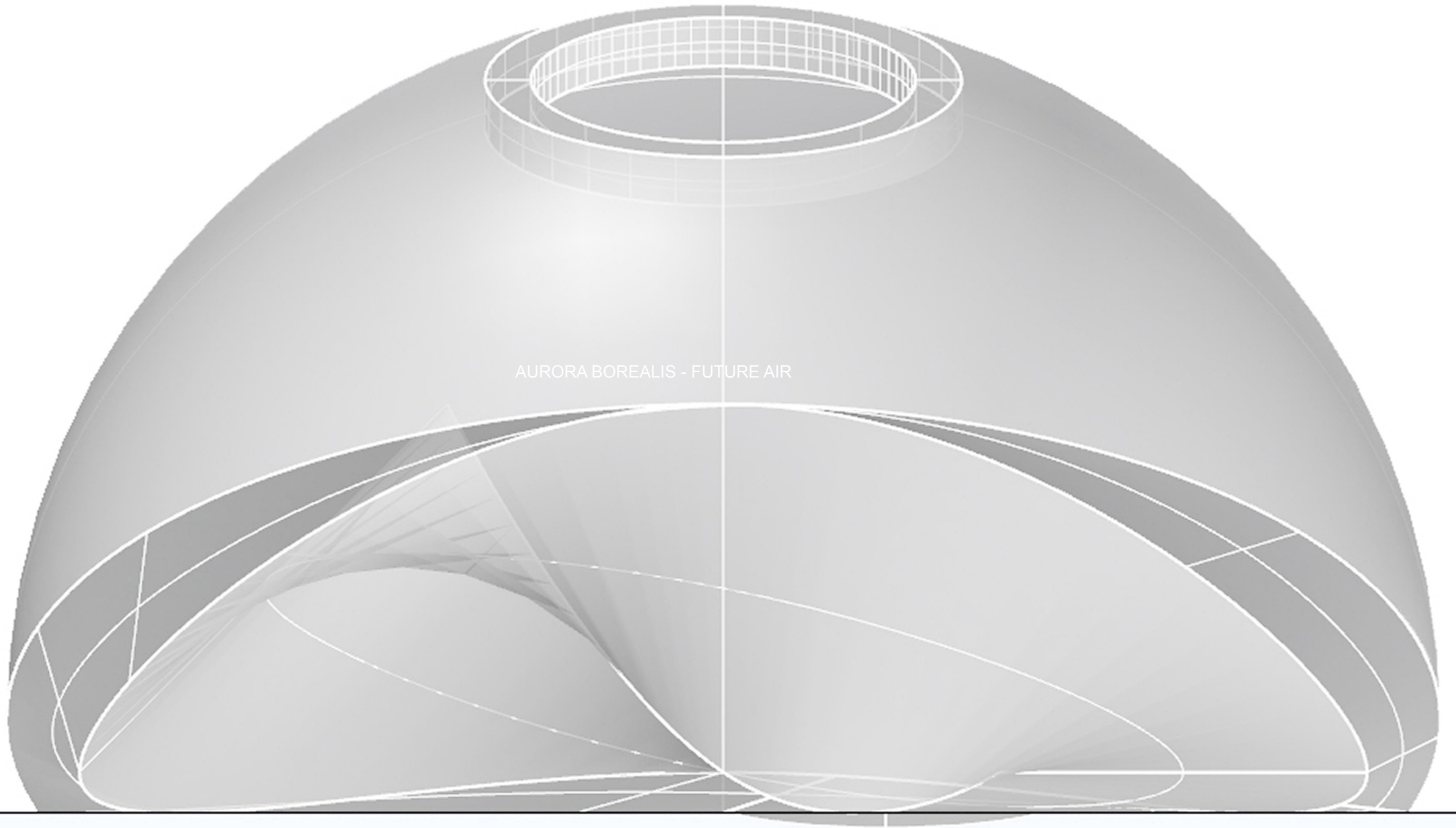
AURORA BOREALIS - FUTURE AIR

The image depicts a futuristic, minimalist interior space. The walls and ceiling are a uniform, light blue-grey color. In the upper left, a circular light fixture with a glowing cyan center is mounted on a thin, cylindrical stem. Below it, a large, curved, illuminated structure, possibly a piece of furniture or a wall panel, is lit from within, creating a bright, glowing effect. The overall atmosphere is clean, modern, and serene.

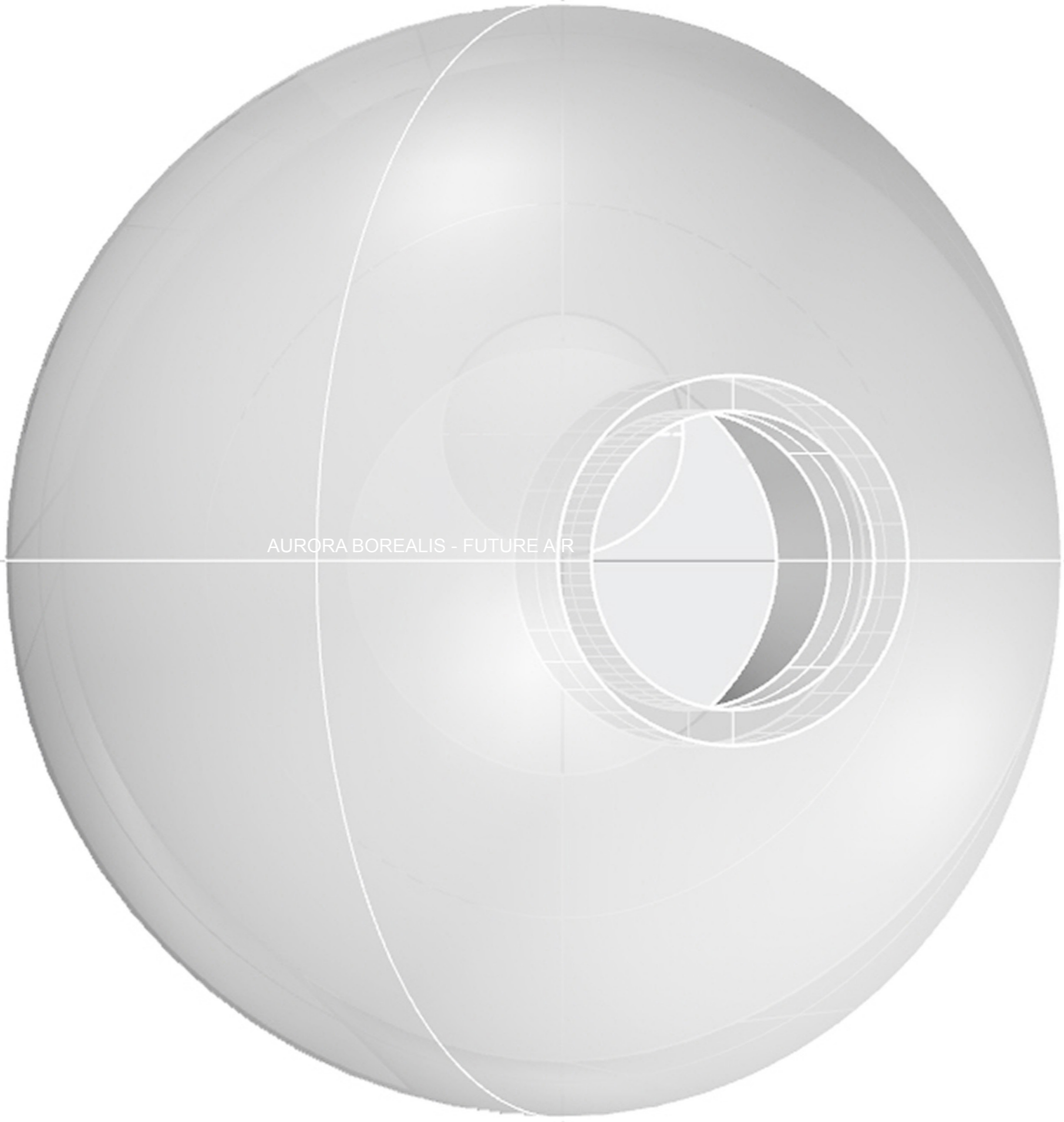
AURORA BOREALIS - FUTURE AIR



AURORA BOREALIS - FUTURE AIR

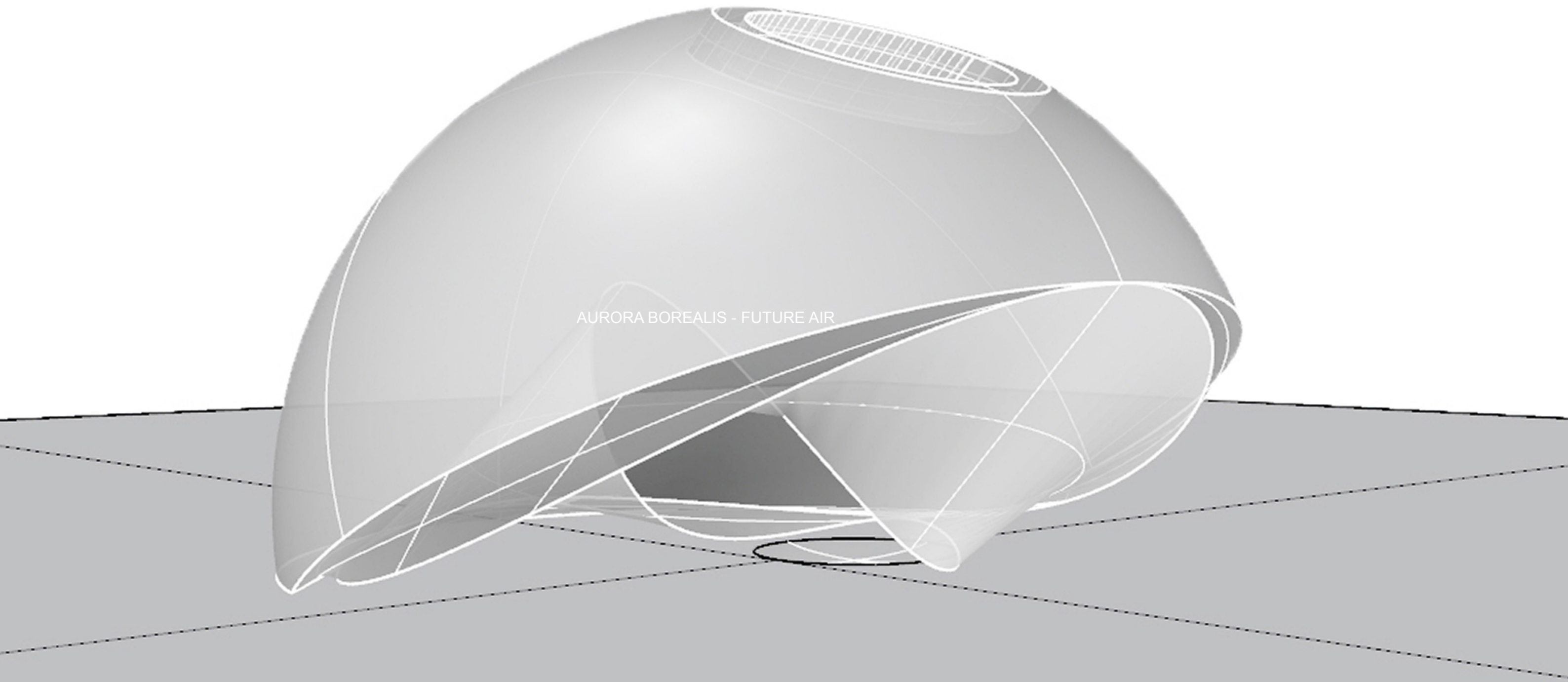


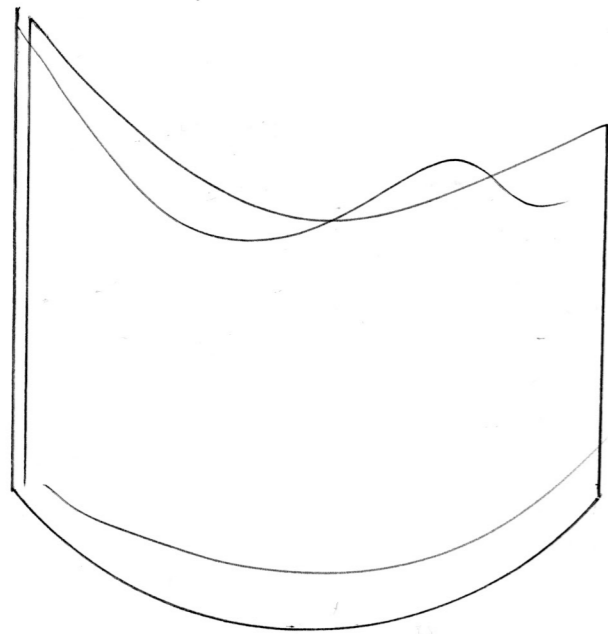
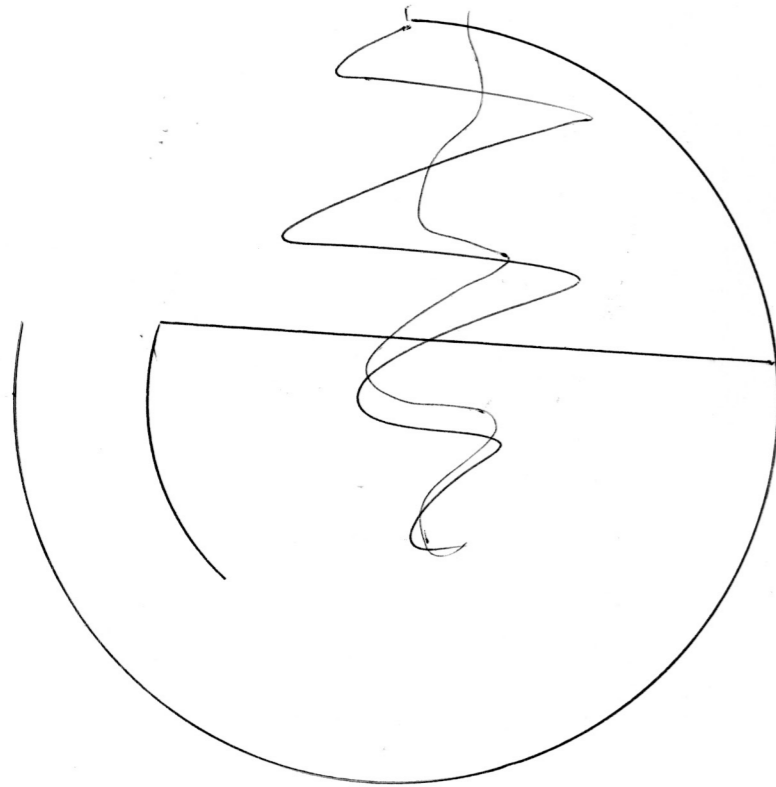
AURORA BOREALIS - FUTURE AIR



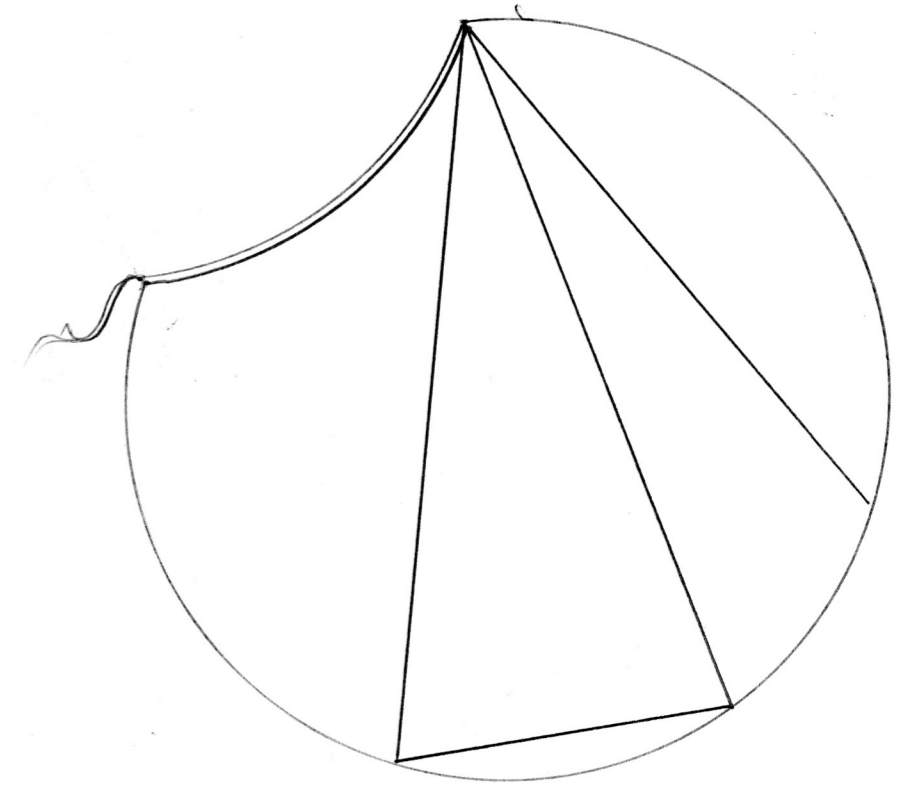
AURORA BOREALIS - FUTURE AIR

AURORA BOREALIS - FUTURE AIR



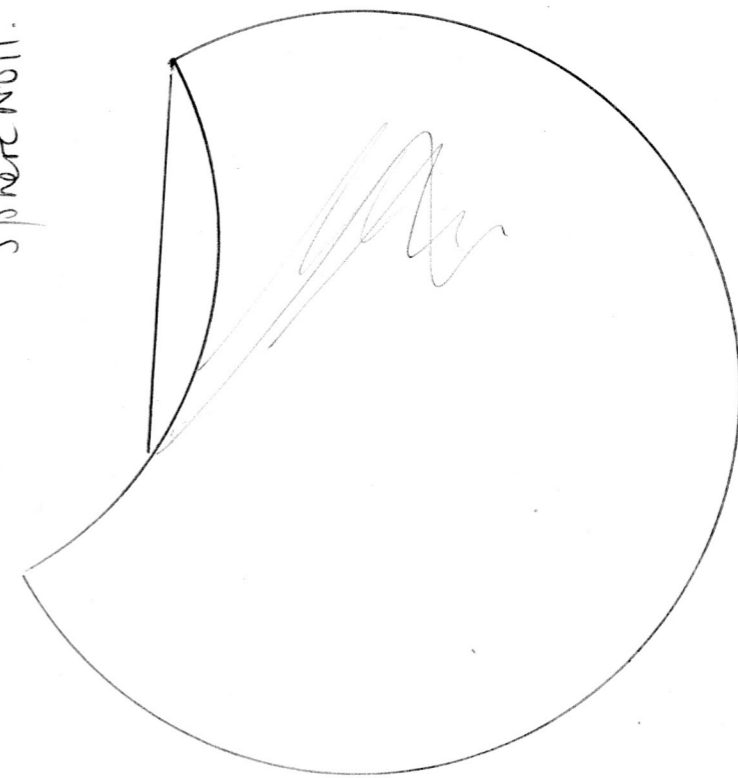


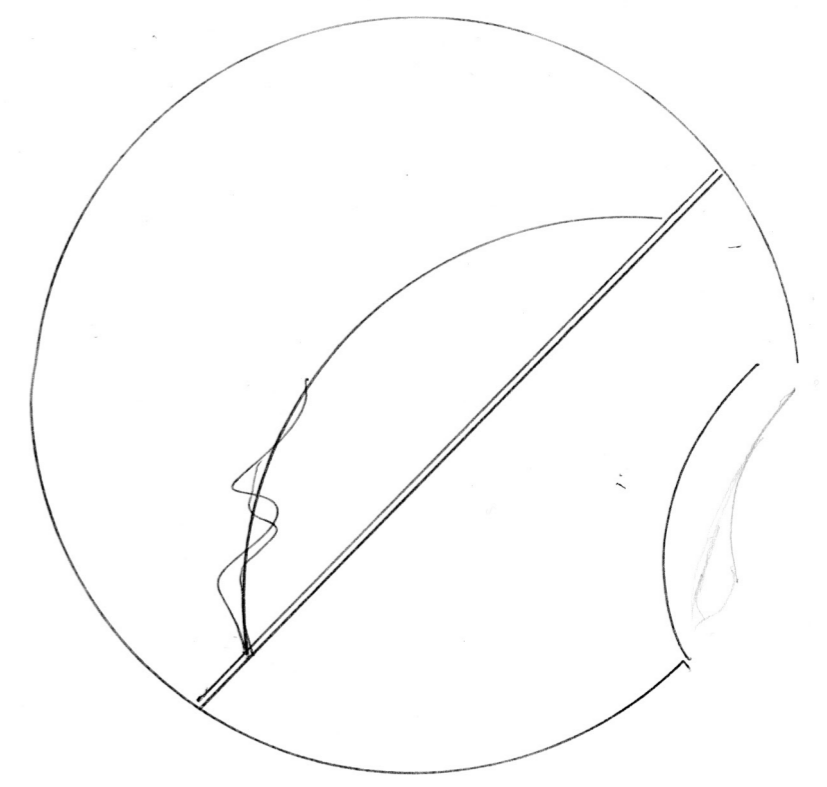
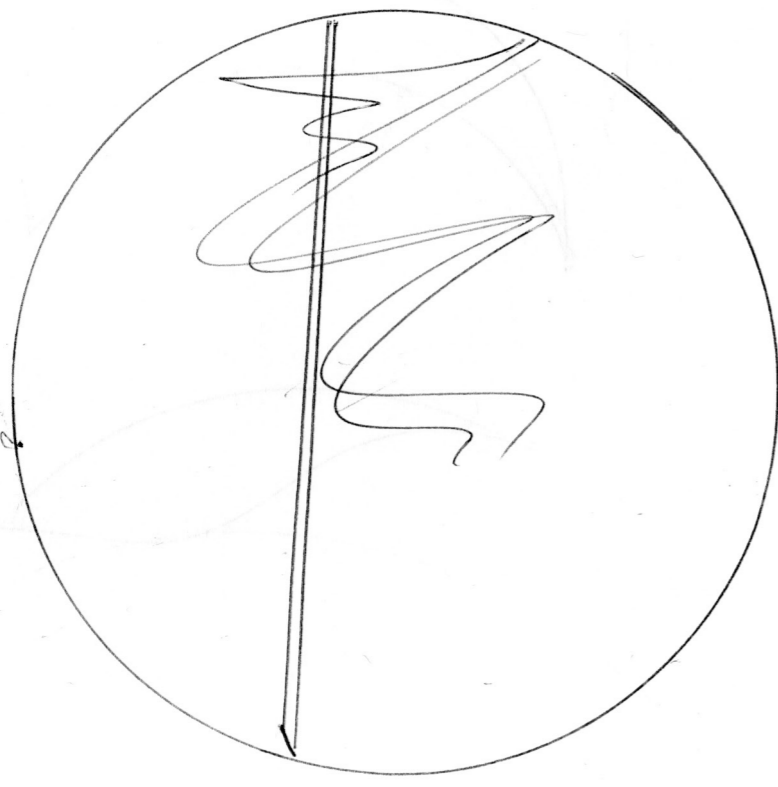
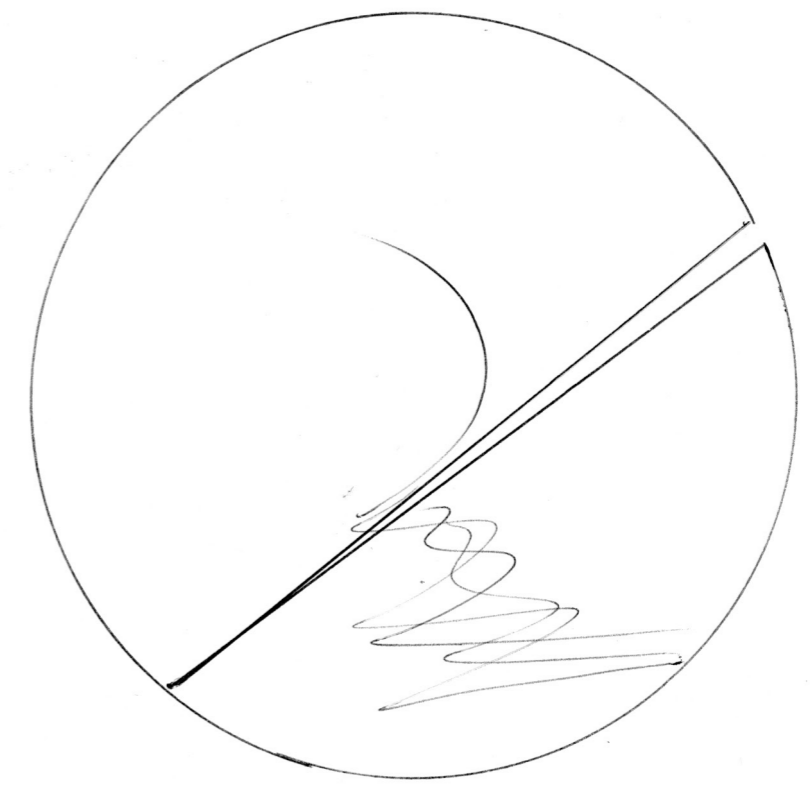
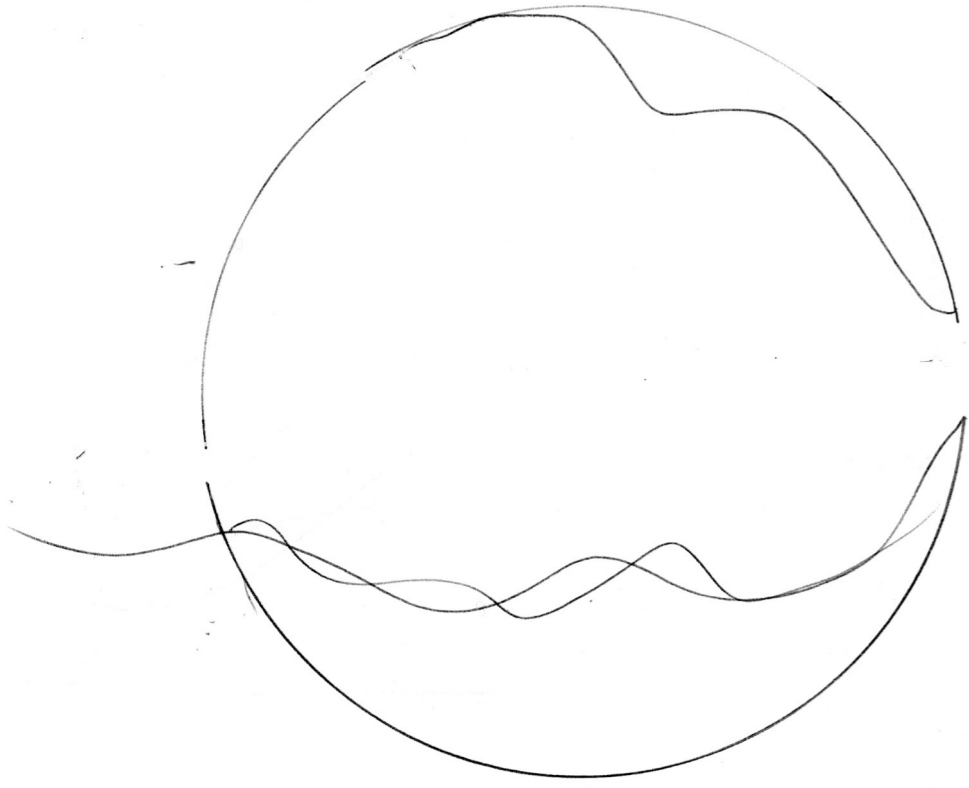
Provisional sketches for Aurora Borealis - Future Air



Sphere NO10.

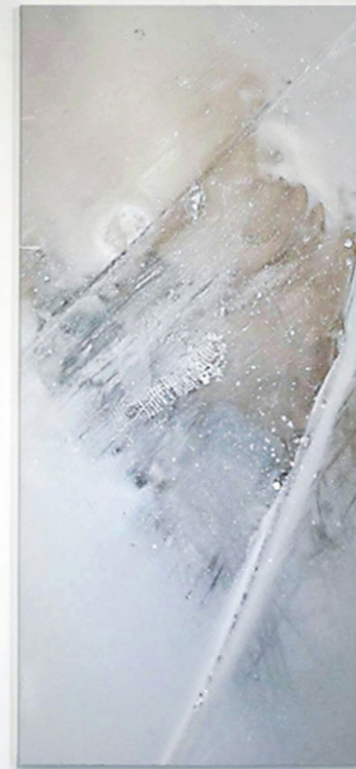
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Provisional sketches for Aurora Borealis - Future Air

LIQUID SERIES



LIQUID SERIES NOS. LEFT TO RIGHT. 2, 3, 1, 45 OIL + GLASS FRIT ON PRINTED CANVAS. 244CMX122CM



LIQUID SERIES. NO. 2 OIL AND GLASS FRIT ON PRINTED CANVAS. 244CMX122CM



LIQUID SERIES. NO. 3. OIL AND GLASS FRIT ON PRINTED CANVAS. 244CMX122CM



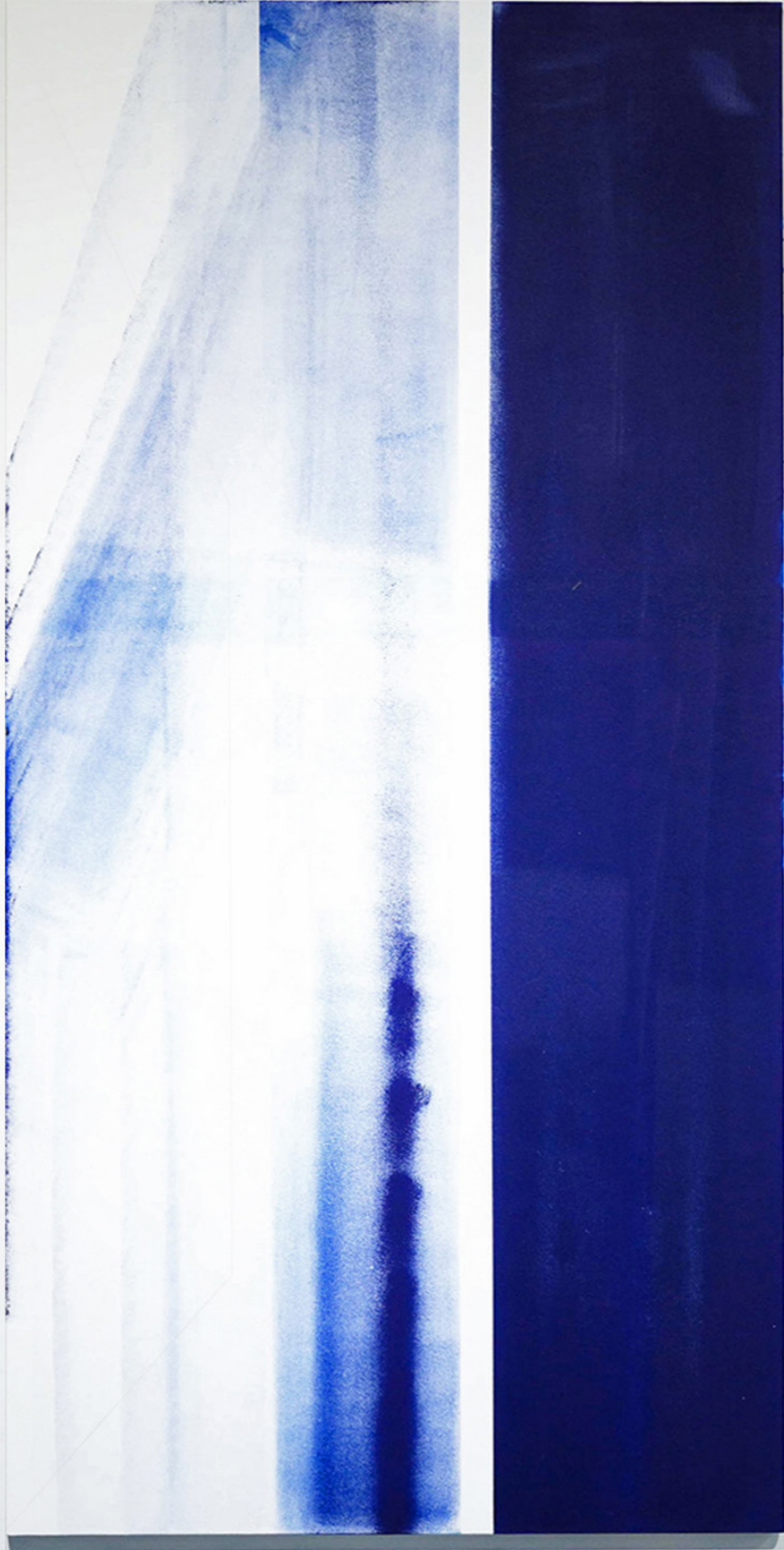
LIQUID SERIES NO.56 DETAIL. OIL ON CANVAS. 244CMX122CM. IMAGE. LYNN PHYLISS SEGER



LIQUID SERIES NO.12. MAGNETIC STORM. OIL + GLASS FRIT ON CANVAS. 244CMX122CM



LIQUID SERIES NO.14 OIL + POLLEN ON CANVAS. 244CMX122CM



LIQUID SERIES NO.17 LONGITUDE + LATITUDE. OIL ON CANVAS. 244CMX122CM

LIQUID SERIES NO.1 OIL + GLASS FRIT ON PRINTED CANVAS. 244CMX122CM



LIQUID SERIES NO.8 COMET. OIL + GLASS FRIT ON CANVAS. 244CMX122CM



LIQUID SERIES NO.9 OIL + GLASS FRIT ON CANVAS. 244CMX122CM





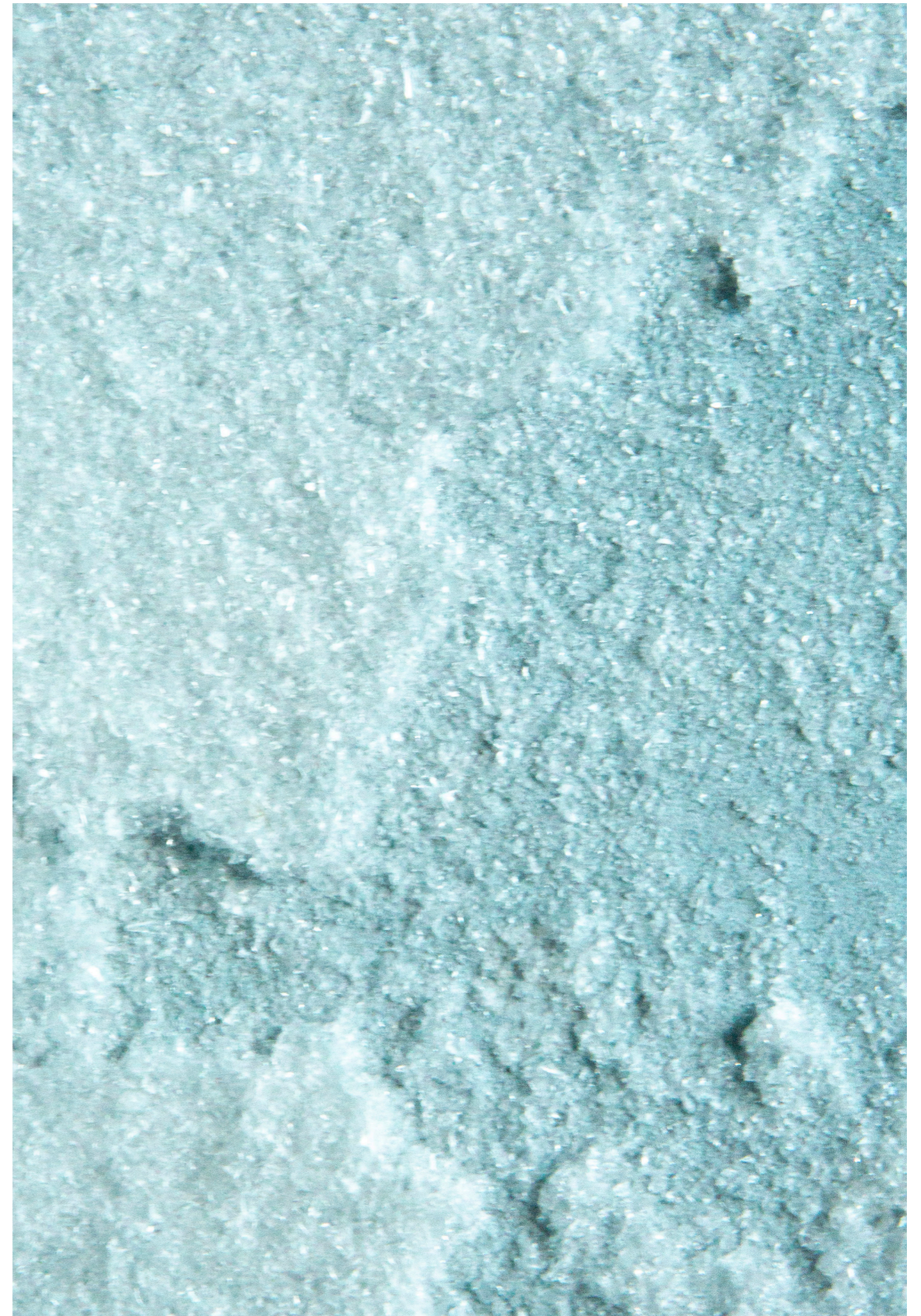
LIQUID SERIES NO.54. WATERMELON SNOW. OIL ON CANVAS. 81CMX60CM



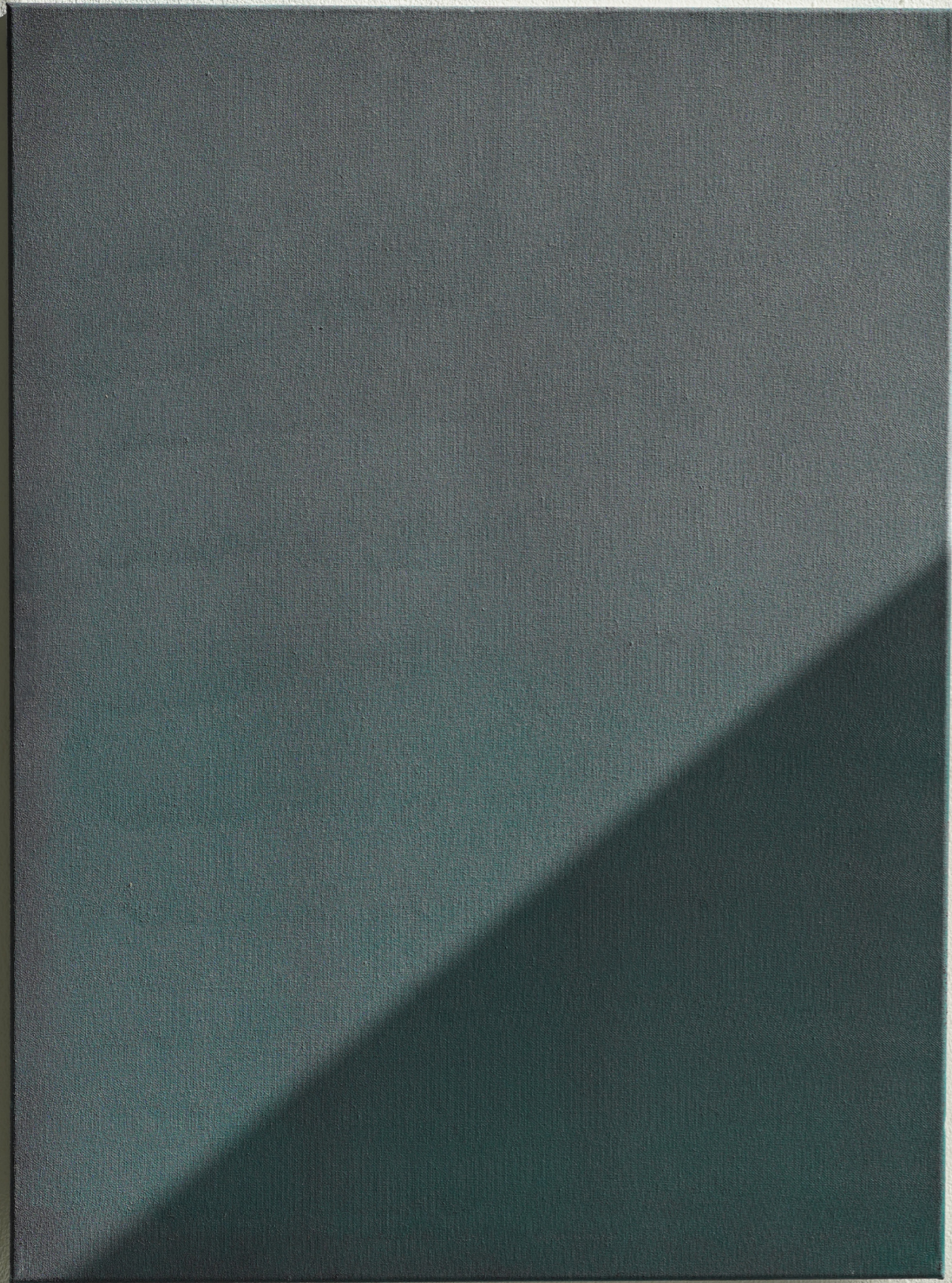
LIQUID NO.4 BEESWAX AND OIL ON CANVAS. 120CMX210CM



LIQUID NO.7 ANTARCTIC ICE ON RED LEATHER. 81CMX60CM



LIQUID NO.8 GLASS FRIT ON BLUE LEATHER. 81CMX60CM

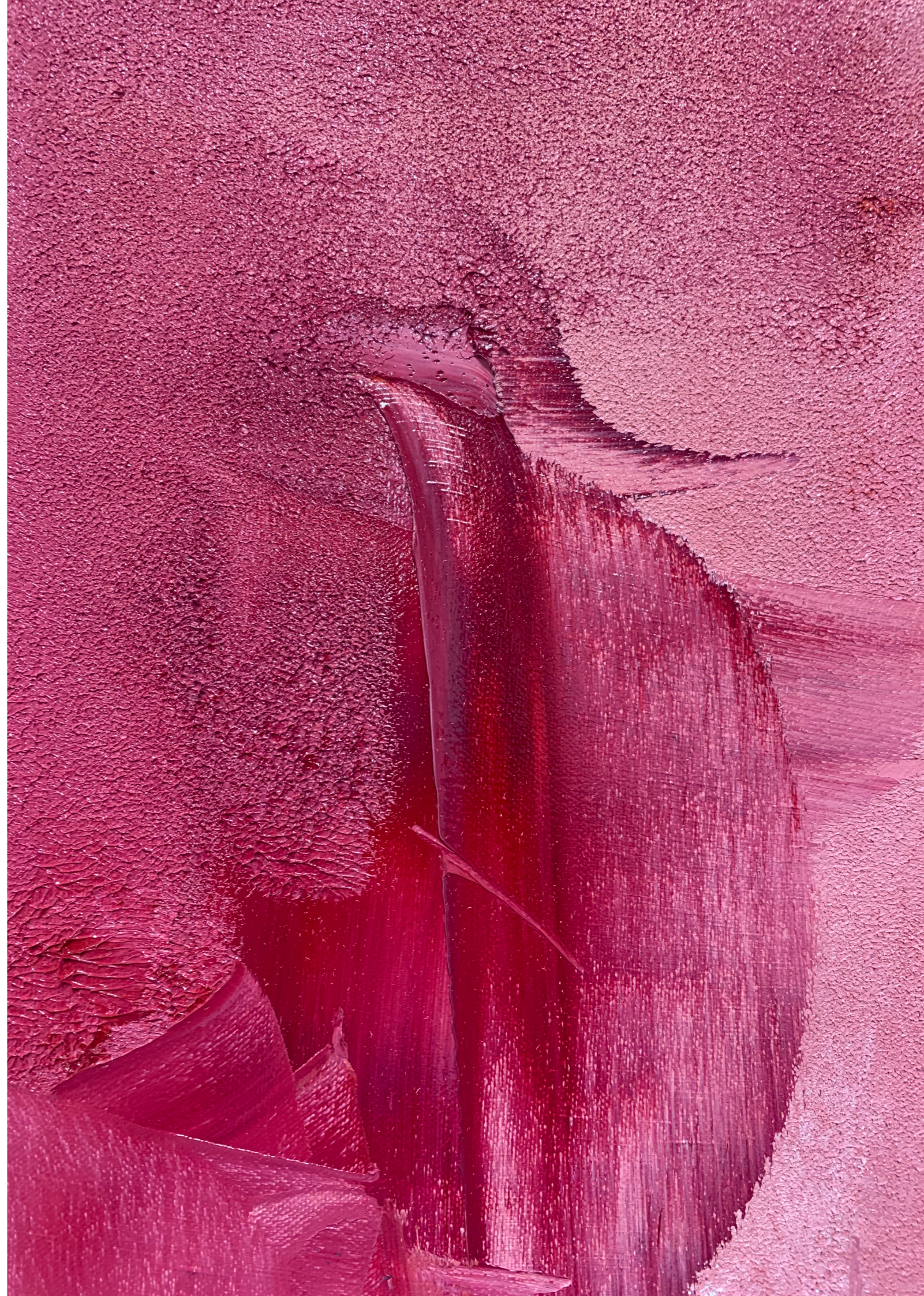


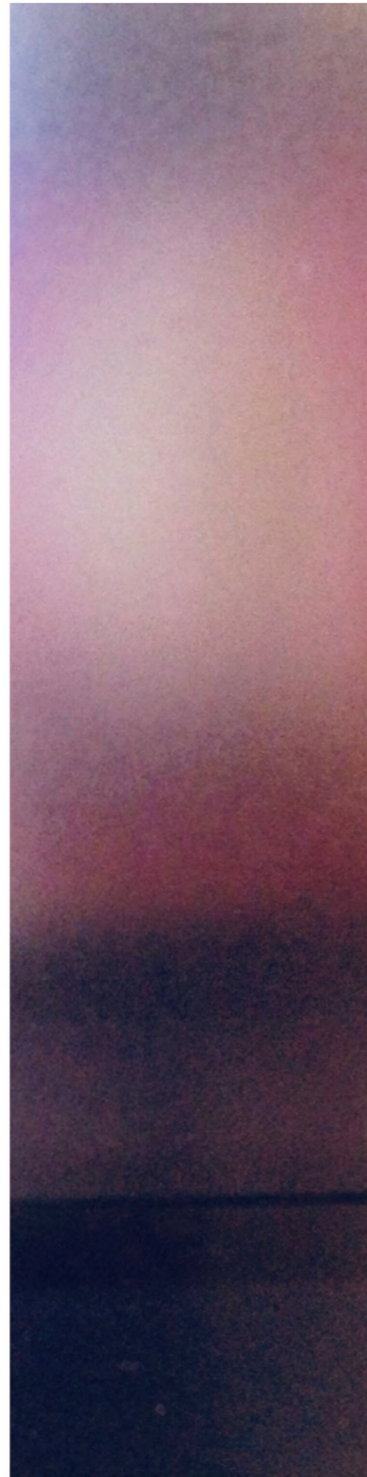
LIQUID SERIES NO.62 OIL ON CANVAS. 81CMX60CM

LIQUID SERIES NO.61 OIL ON CANVAS. 81CMX60CM



LIQUID SERIES NO.60 WATERMELON SNOW. OIL ON CANVAS. 244CMX122CM

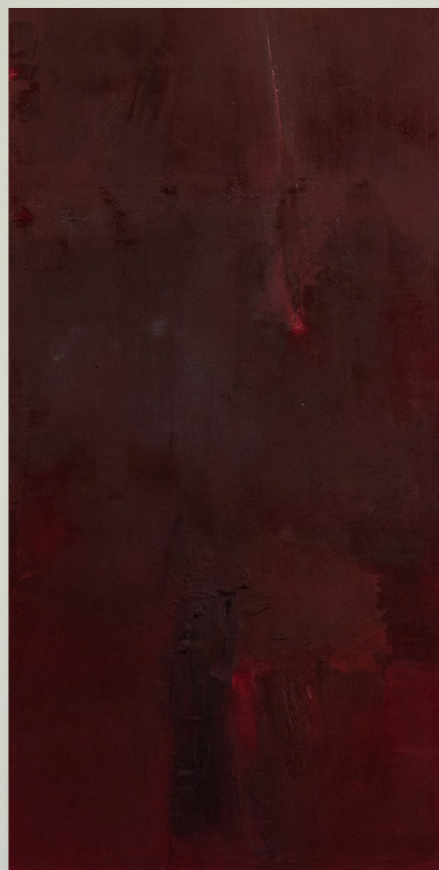
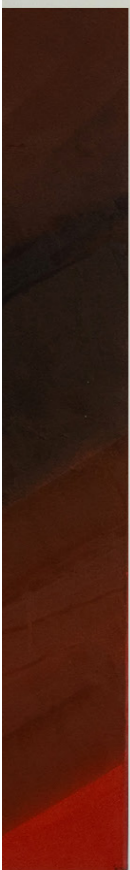




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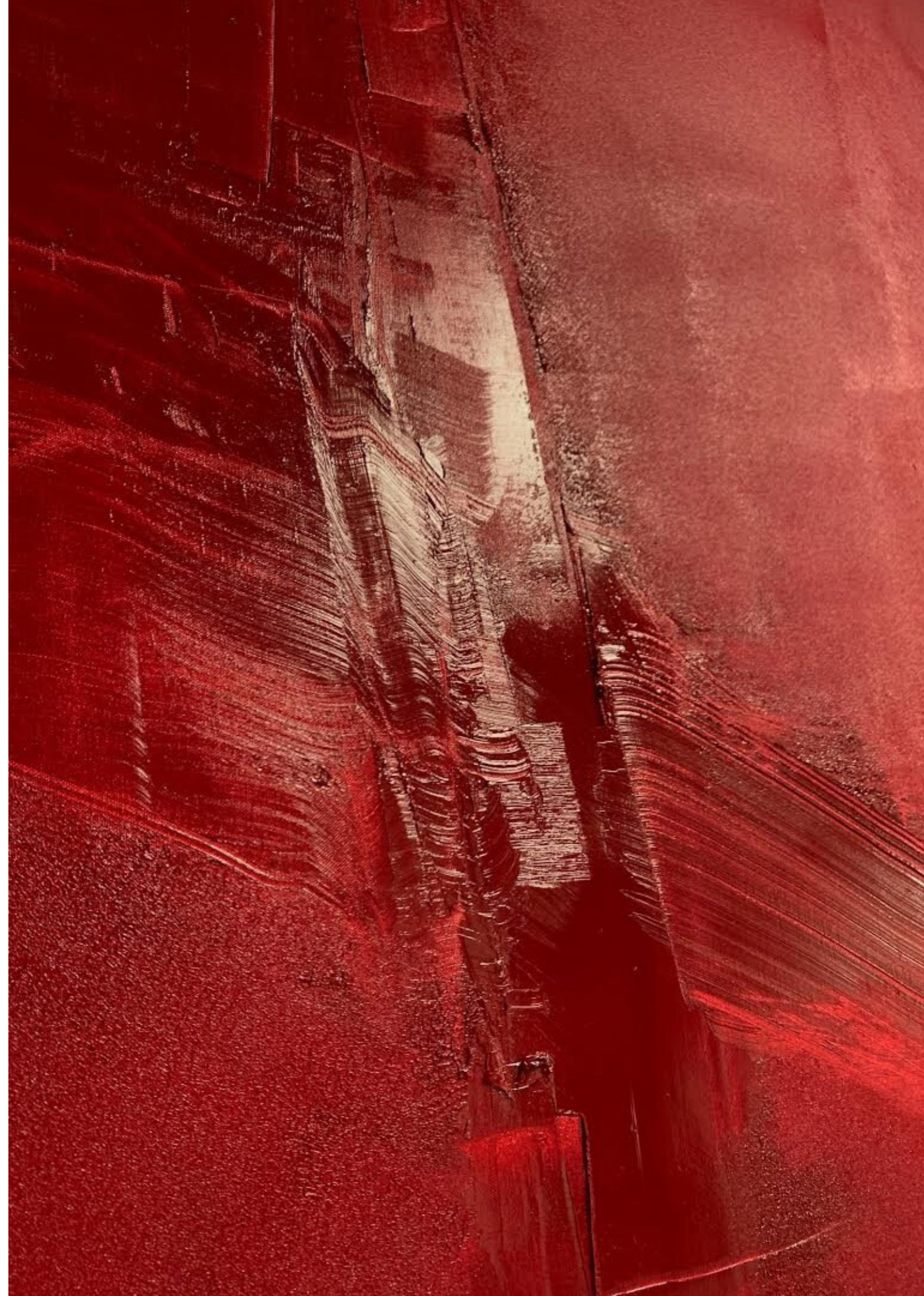


LIQUID SERIES NO.58 WATERMELON SNOW. OIL ON CANVAS. 81CMX60CM

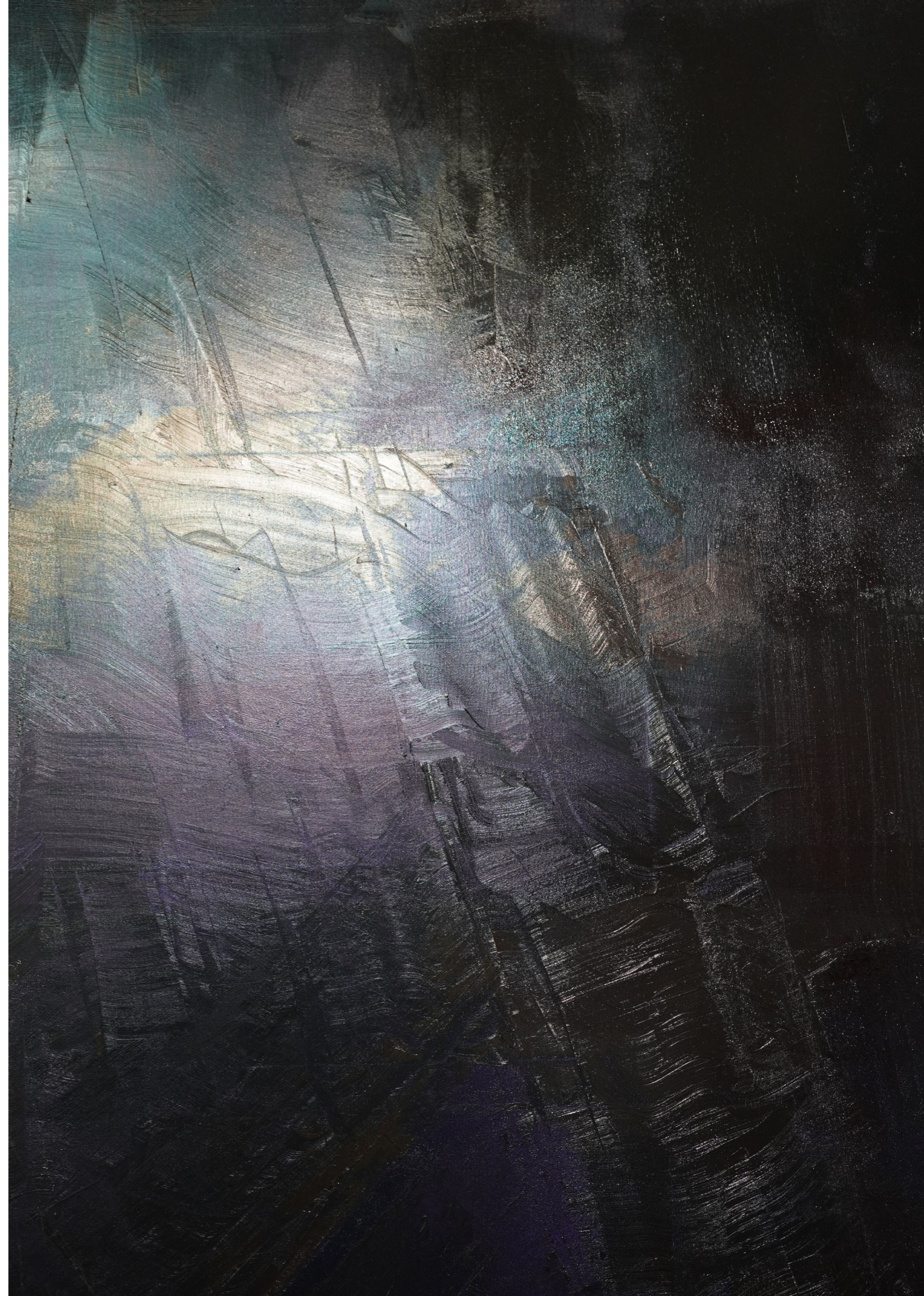


LIQUID SERIES NOS. 55, 57, 56 LEFT TO RIGHT. OIL + GLASS FRIT ON CANVAS. 244CMX122CM

LIQUID SERIES NO.57 DETAIL. OIL ON CANVAS. 244CMX122CM. IMAGE. LYNN PHYLISS SEGER



LIQUID SERIES NO.19 MAGNETIC. OIL ON CANVAS. 244CMX122CM



LIQUID SERIES NO.55 DETAIL. OIL + GLASS FRIT ON CANVAS. 244CMX122CM





LIQUID SERIES NO.54 OIL + GLASS FRIT ON CANVAS. 244CMX122CM

LIQUID SERIES NO.45 OIL + GLASS FRIT ON PRINTED CANVAS. 244CMX122CM





LIQUID SERIES NOS.18,19 LONGITUDE AND LATITUDE. OIL ON CANVAS. 244CMX122CM



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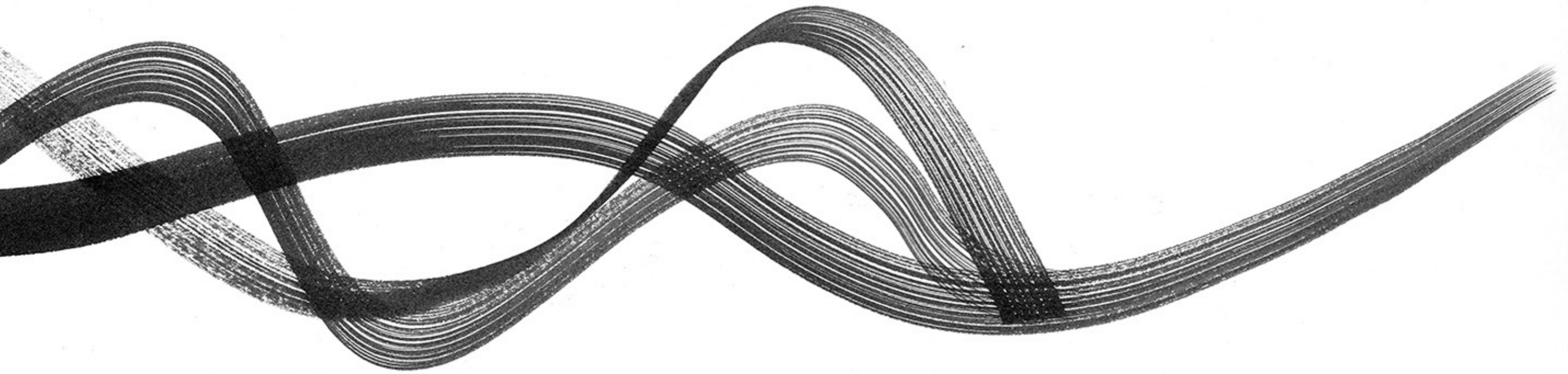
THE RESONANCE OF WATER. SOUND + VIDEO INSTALLATION WITH CHOREOGRAPHER ALISON RAY. TRINITY LABAN CONSERVATOIRE





ICE MANUSCRIPT. ARUP GALLERY. ANTARCTIC ICE + INK ON SOMERSET VELVET PAPER
DRAWING 210X197MM. DIGITAL PRINT. 255GSM. 18 FTX2.5FT. IMAGE: NICOLA WEBB





LIQUID NO. 31 INK ON SOMERSET VELVET PAPER. 210X120MM. 255 GMS. DIGITAL PRINT. 18 FTX2.5FT.

ICE MANUSCRIPT. INK DRAWING ON SOMERSET VELVET PAPER. 210X120MM. 255GSM

DIGITAL PRINT. 18 FTX2.5FT.





YUKI KOBAYASHI PERFORMING HAIR PAINTING ON
S: FUTURE EXHIBITION. ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART



GLASS WINDOW OF GALLERY USING WATER FROM A MELTING BLOCK OF ICE.



AQUA PER SULIS. INSTALLATION. FLOW + EXHIBITION. CHELSEA COLLEGE OF ART



LIQUID NO.32 INK ON SOMERSET VELVET PAPER.

DRAWING. 210X120MM. 255 GSM. DIGITAL PRINT. 18 FTX2.5FT.

SOLID SERIES

SOLID SERIES. NO.1 "OCTET". 8 CARVED GLASS FORMS DIMENSIONS VARIABLE.

IMAGE: NICOLA WEBB





SOLID SERIES. NO.2 VERSO. CAST GLASS. 10CMX10CMX5CM



SOLID SERIES. NO.11 CAST GLASS. 18CMX10CM



SOLID SERIES. NO.3 CAST GLASS. 18CMX10CM





SOLID SERIES. NO.30 CARVED GLASS. 15CMX9CMX4CM



SOLID SERIES NO.56 BLOWN GLASS. 7CMX6CM

SOLID SERIES NO.47 CARVED GLASS. 40CMX20CMX12

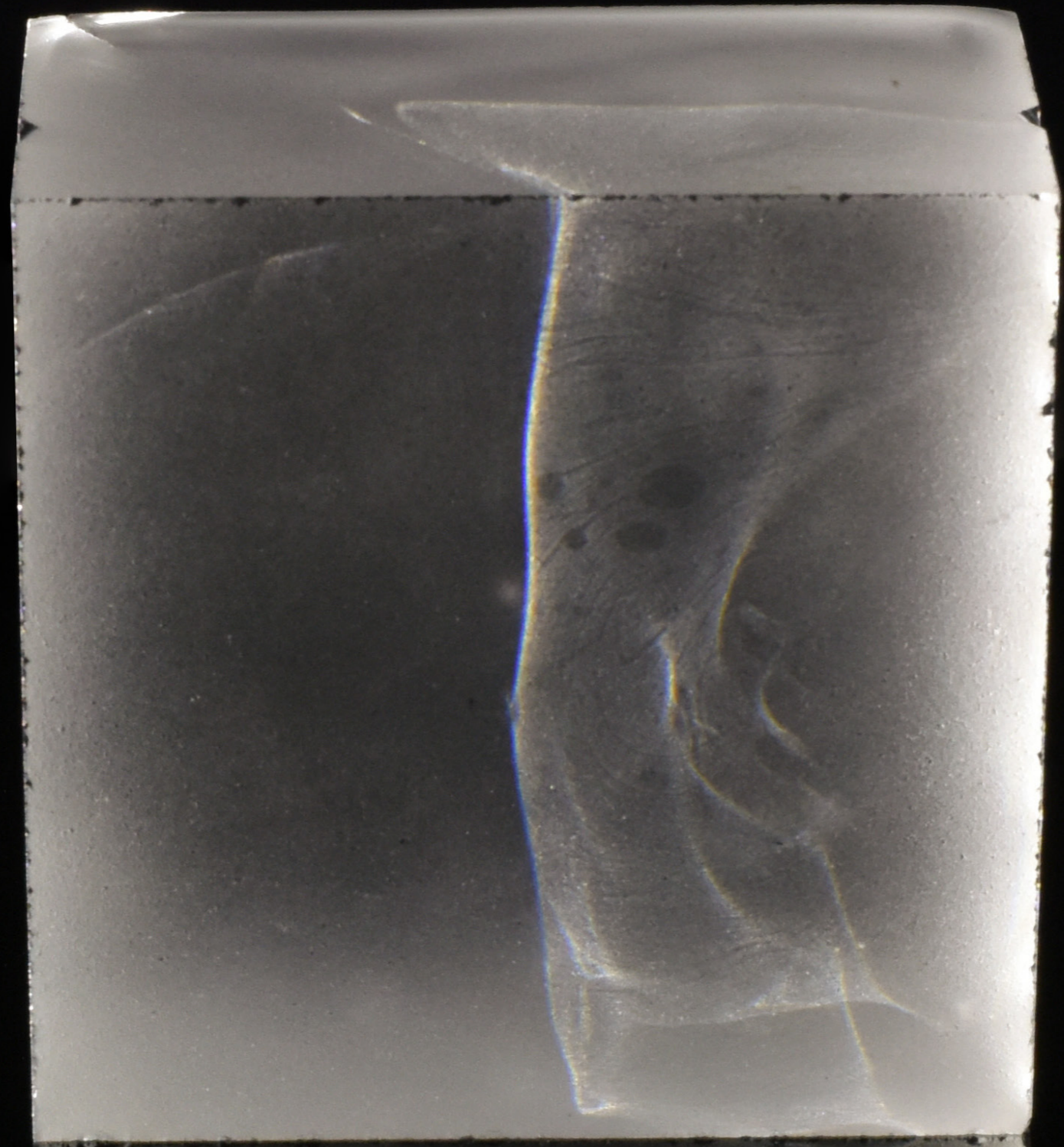


SOLID SERIES NO.31 CARVED GLASS. 30CMX8CMX2CM





SOLID SERIES NO.49. VERSO. CARVED GLASS. 15CMX8CM



SOLID SERIES. NO.2 RECTO. CAST GLASS. 10CMX10CMX5CM



SOLID SERIES NO. 24 LASER ENGRAVED AUDIO DATA ON GLASS. 15CMX10CMX1CM

SOLID SERIES NO.22 LASER ENGRAVED AUDIO DATA ON GLASS. 30CMX30CMX1CM



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SOLID SERIES NO.38 VOLCANIC ASH. CAST GLASS. 15CMX7CMX4CM



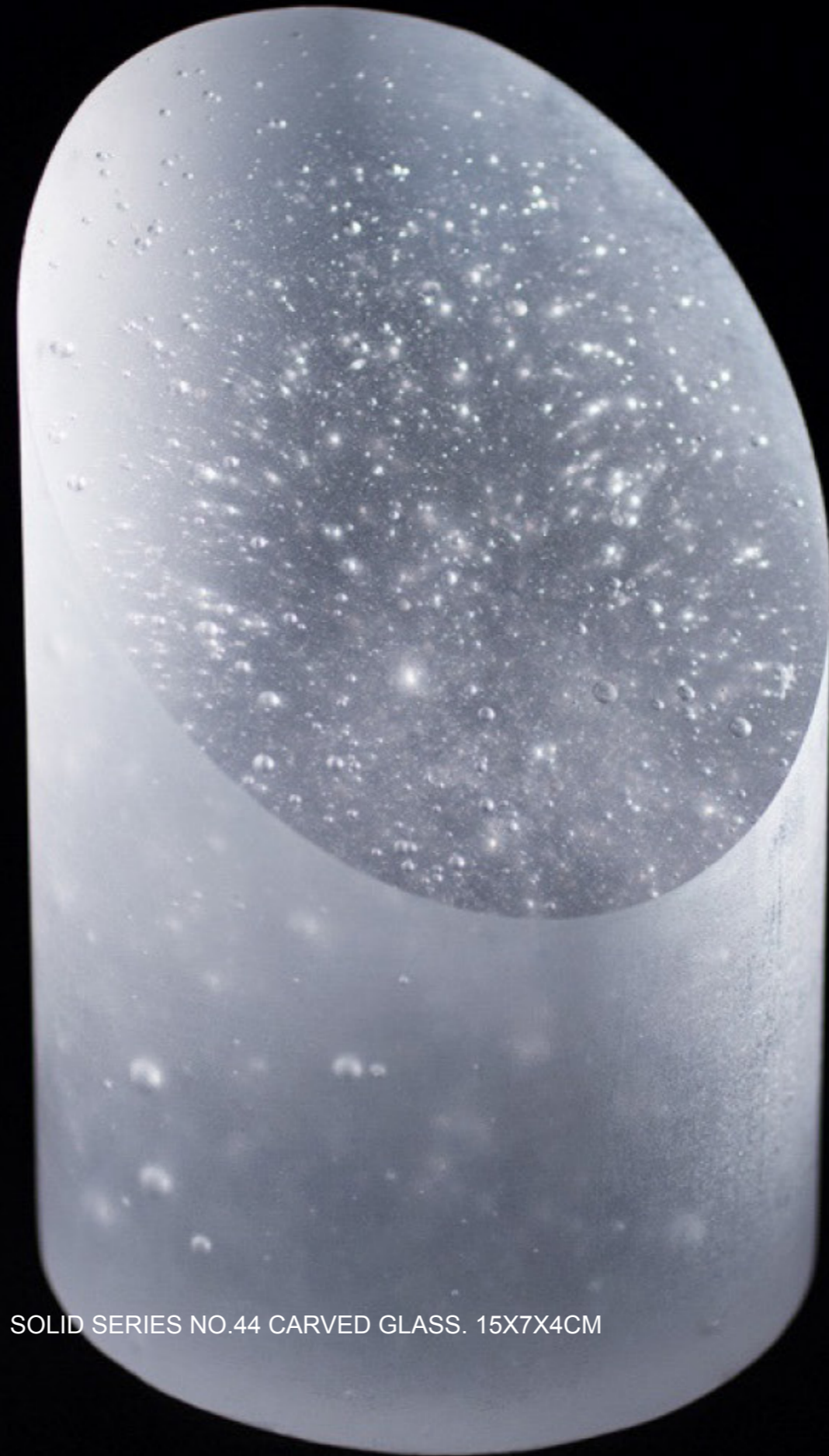
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SOLID SERIES. NO.30 CARVED GLASS. 15CMX9CMX4CM





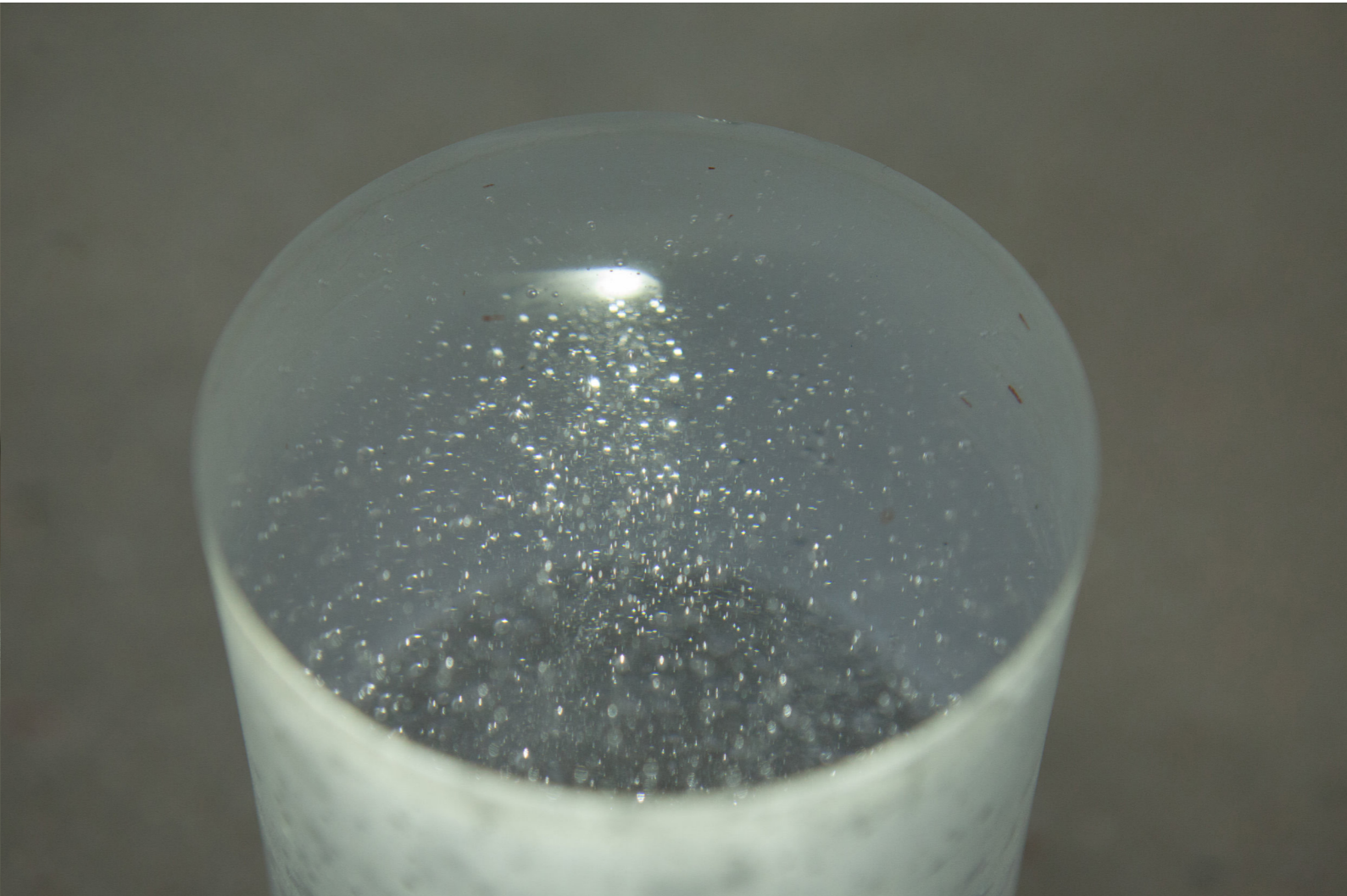
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SOLID SERIES. NO.36

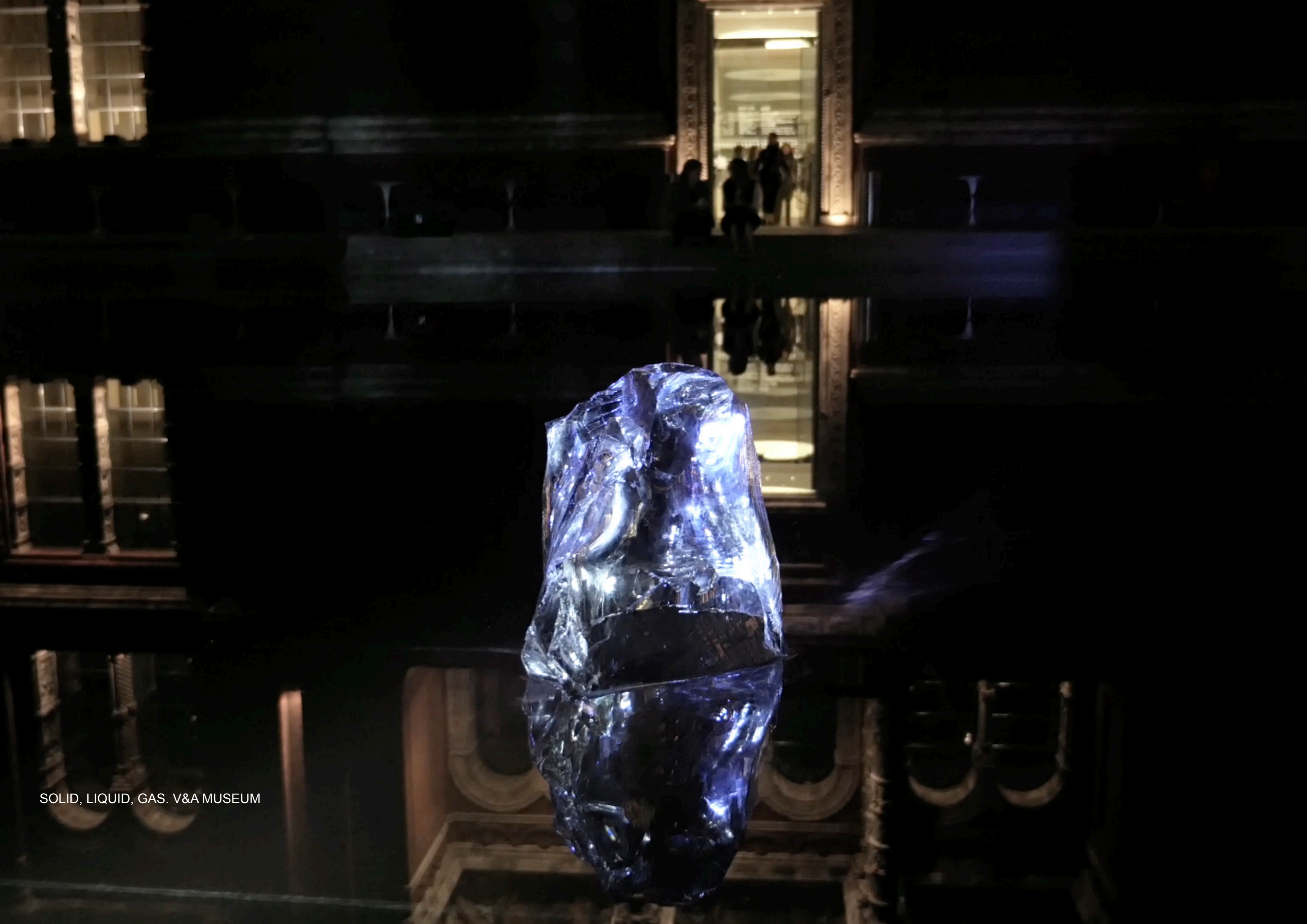
8 GLASS VESSELS. MELTED ANTARCTIC ICE. 1,500 YEARS OLD.



SOLID SERIES. NO.3 CAST GLASS. 18CMX10CM

SOLID SERIES NO.21 VOLCANIC ASH. GLASS. 30CMX30CMX1CM





SOLID, LIQUID, GAS. V&A MUSEUM





ICE FLOOR

ICE, LIGHT + SOUND INSTALLATION IN COLLABORATION WITH THE BRITISH ANTARCTIC SURVEY AND ARUP. NOV 2019-FEB 2020 ARUP GALLERY, 8 FITZROY ST, LONDON



IMAGE: NICOLA WEBB





IMAGE. JANICE CYLI






POLAR ZERO. COP26. GLASGOW SCIENCE CENTRE



Welcome to Glasgow Science Centre
**where
science
comes alive**



25th April 2011



Discover science online with #GSCAsH

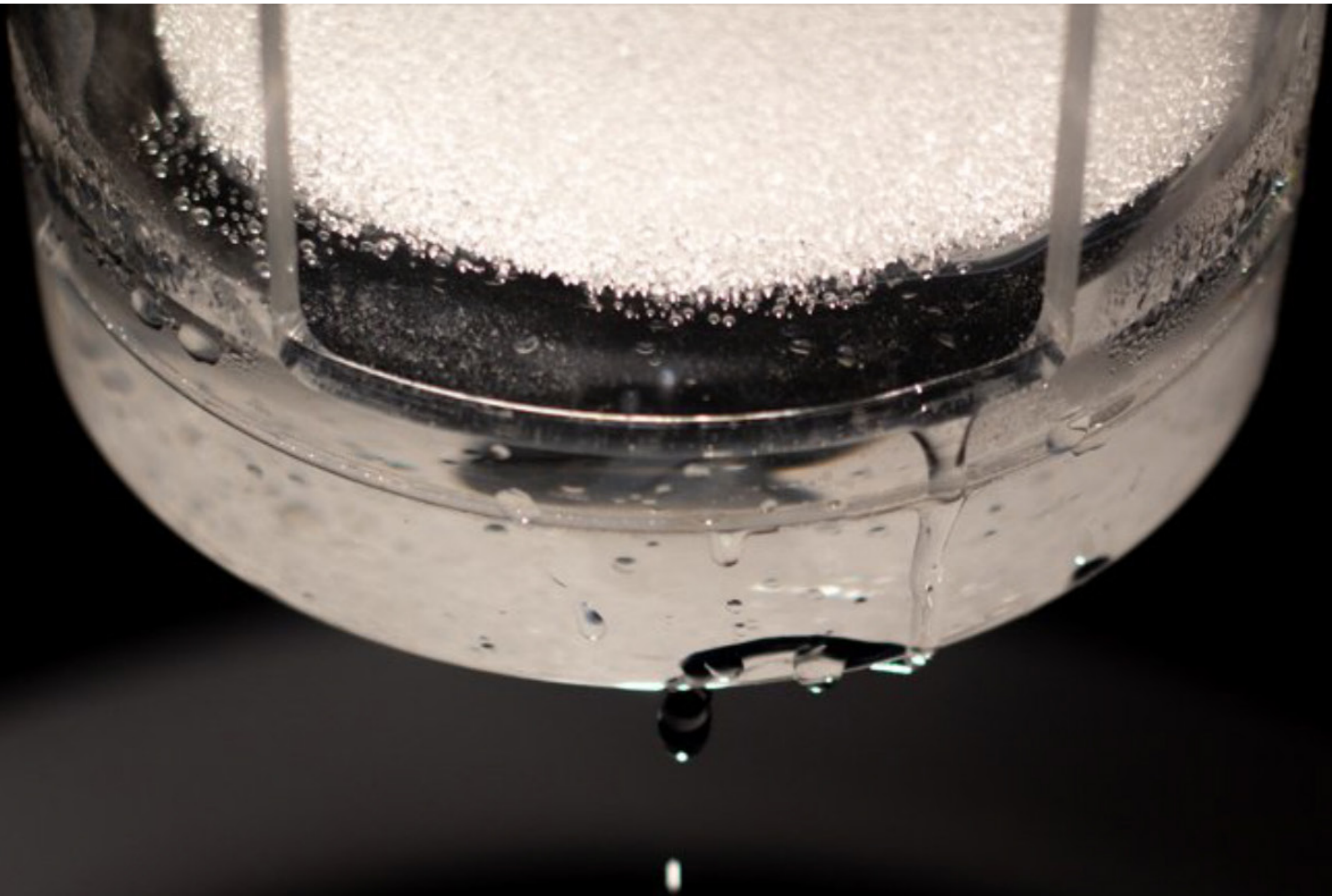
0800

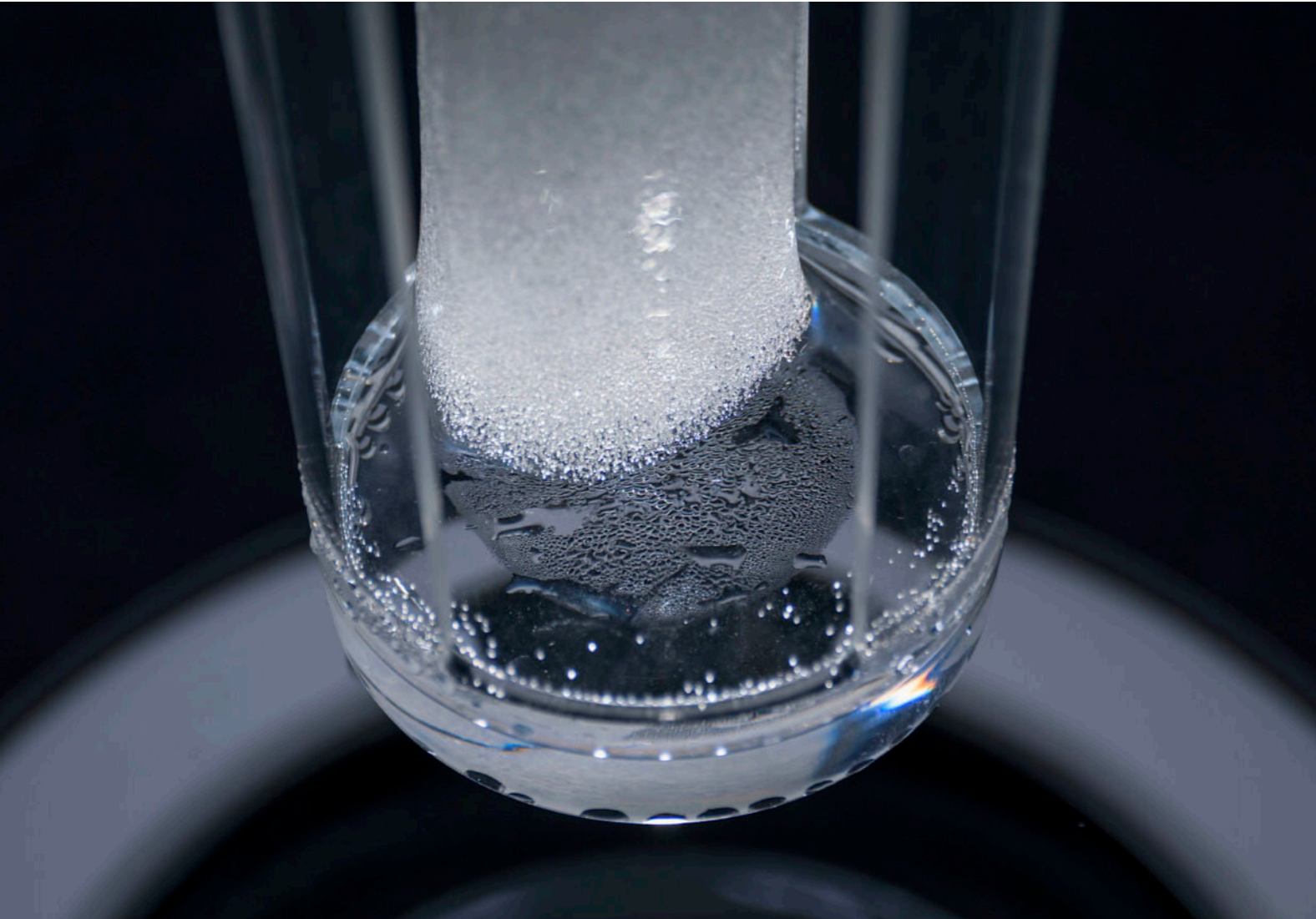
POLAR ZERO DOCUMENTARY FILM. GLASGOW SCIENCE CENTRE

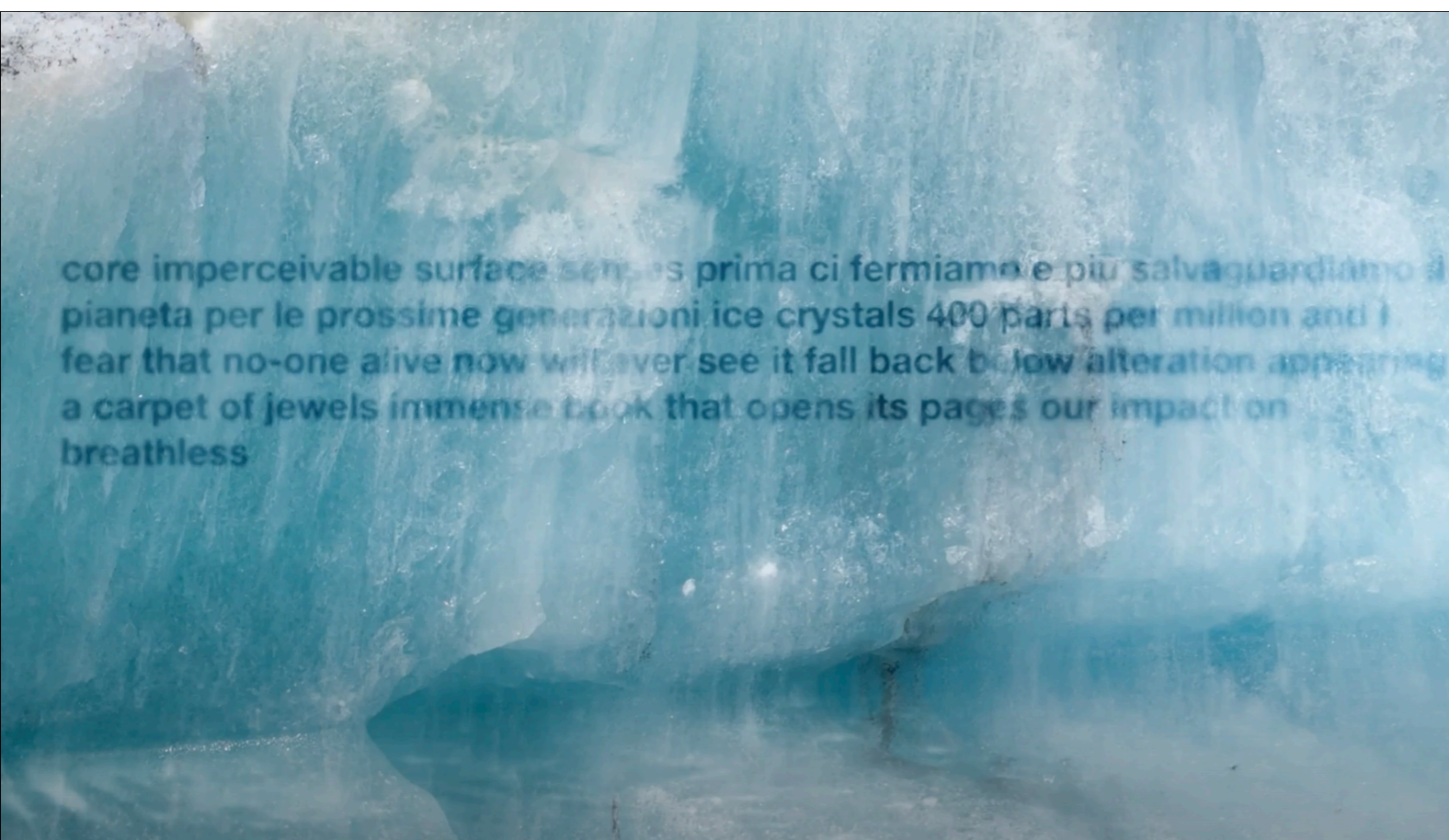


1765 - ANTARCTIC AIR. GLASS. LIQUID SILICON

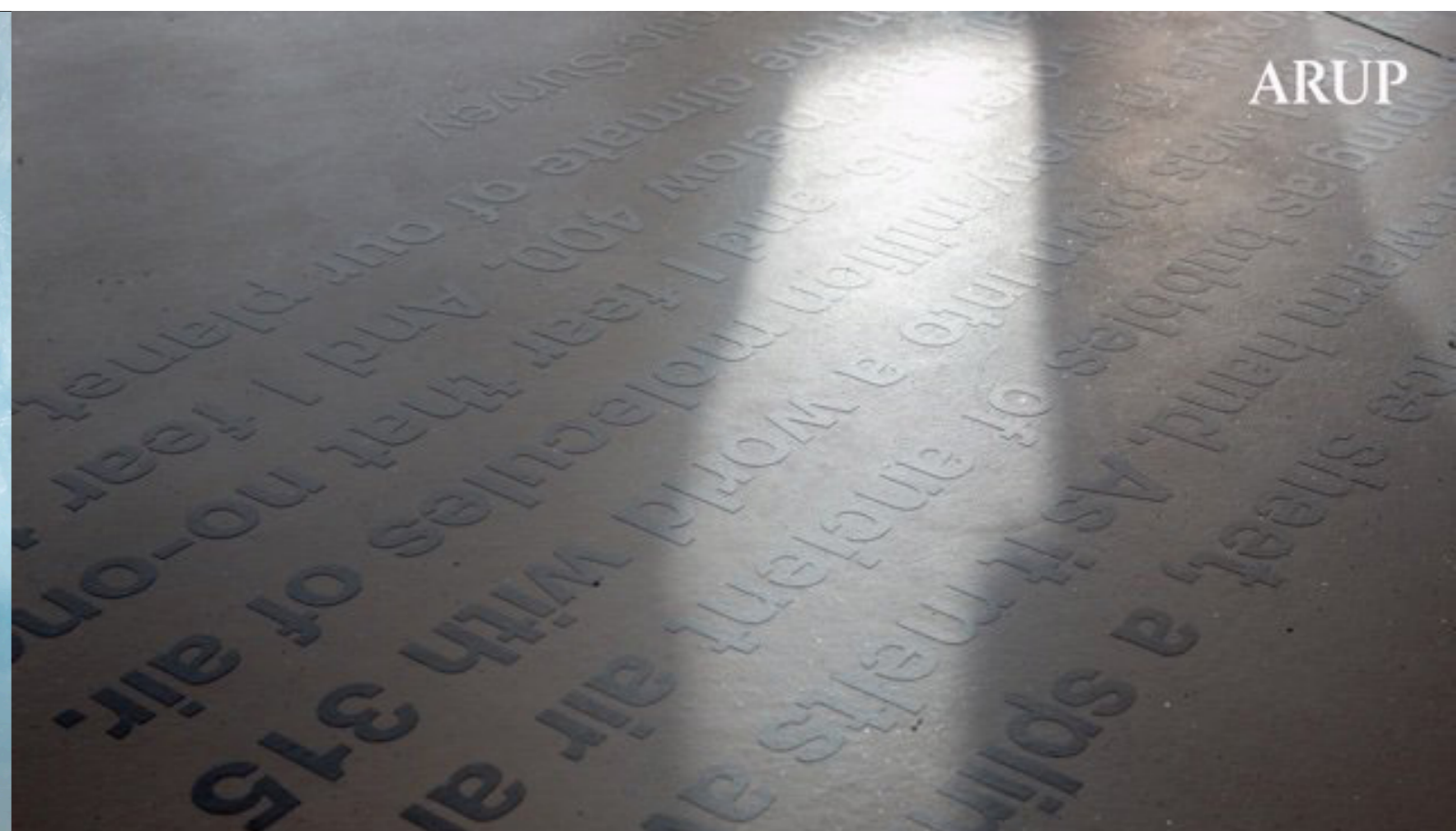
ICE CORE. ANTARCTIC ICE







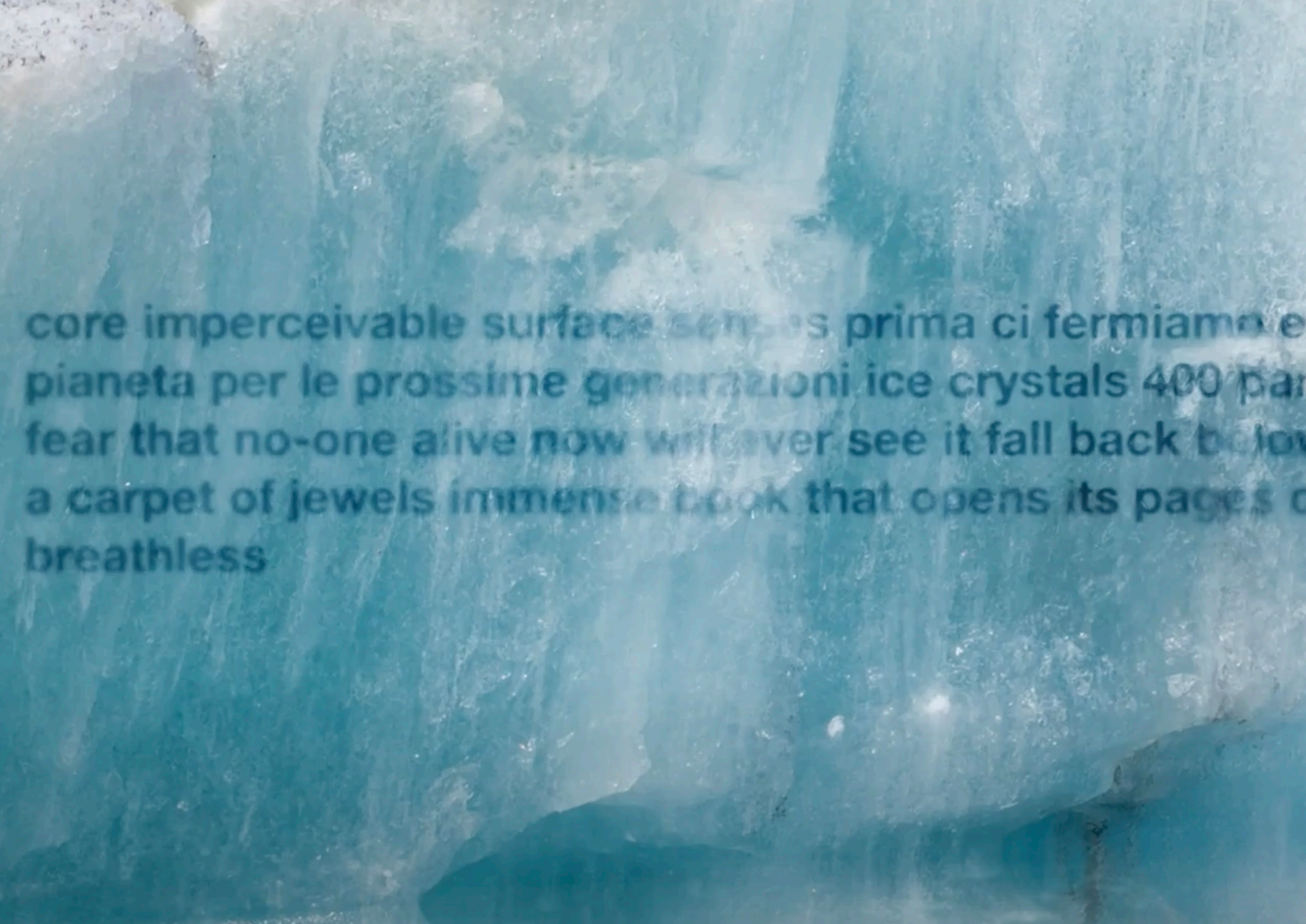
core imperceivable surface senses prima ci fermiamo e più salvaguardiamo il
pianeta per le prossime generazioni ice crystals 400 parts per million and I
fear that no-one alive now will ever see it fall back below alteration appearing
a carpet of jewels immense book that opens its pages our impact on
breathless



ARUP

ICE STORIES FILM. WORDS OF INTERNATIONAL GLACIOLOGISTS. PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGE. SOUND

ICE STORIES. INSCRIBED WORDS OF INTERNATIONAL GLACIOLOGISTS ON CONCRETE



core imperceivable surface senses prima ci fermiamo e
pianeta per le prossime generazioni ice crystals 400 par
fear that no-one alive now will ever see it fall back below
a carpet of jewels immense book that opens its pages o
breathless





SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

Poles Apart. National Maritime Museum. July 2022. <https://www.rmg.co.uk/stories/topics/wayne-binitie-art-climate-change>

Tidelines. Messums Gallery. May 14th - July 3rd. 2022

Polar Zero. Glasgow Science Centre. COP 26. Nov 2021. <https://youtu.be/i-Eaveam2vE>

Ice Floor. Collaboration with the British Antarctic Survey and Arup. Arup Gallery. Nov 2019-Feb 2020. <https://www.arup.com/news-and-events/ice-floor>

Ice Manuscript. Arup Gallery. Fitzroy St. WC1. Oct 23-Nov 19 2019

Theories of the Earth. Ground Works Gallery. Oct 13-Dec 16 2018

Vapour Sculpture. National Trust. Prior Park. Dec 15-17 2017

Solid, Liquid, Gas. V&A Museum. 27 Oct 2017. <https://youtu.be/CkE-veCgEa8>

The Emerging and the Established. Christie's. 30 Jan-10 Feb 2017

Data Floes. Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge. 20 Oct 2016

S:FUTURE. Co-Curator + Exhibiting Artist. Royal College of Art Research Exhibition. 5-9 Oct 2016

Gardens of Delight. Royal College of Art. 22-24 Jan 2016

SELECTED PRESS, CONFERENCES, TALKS

Perspectives on UK-Germany Arts and Humanities Research. AHRC-DFG. Wellcome Collection. May 2022

Ice, Art, Writing and Policy in the time of Climate Crisis. AHRC Techne Congress. Roehampton University. Lecture with Prof Klaus Dodds and Prof Redell Olsen. June 2022.

She came out with a revolver and told the boys to freeze. Keynote speaker graduate symposium 100°C: Hauntology, Turmoil, Change with Tim Ingold and Roger Hiorns. University of Dundee. Nov. 2021.

Glasgow School of Art. Lecture. Nov. 2021.

Google Arts and Culture. Nov 2021. <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/polar-zero-cabinet-of-fice/1QWRwC49O94jcw?hl=en>

Ocula Magazine. Nov 2021. <https://ocula.com/magazine/art-news/artists-leading-action-on-climate-change-at-cop26/>

ABC Australian National Radio. Nov 2021. <https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/the-art-show/feminism-art-cop26/13378754>

Artnet Magazine. Nov 2021. <https://news.artnet.com/opinion/cop26-art-science-2031566>

Guardian. Nov 10 2021. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/oct/10/capsule-1765-air-antarctic-ice-polar-zero-glasgow>

Arup. Nov 2021. <https://www.arup.com/news-and-events/art-science-and-the-race-to-zero>

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