



***Milko Pavlov: Unsettled
Paintings Frozen like
Mountains***

14.04.2022 - 04.06.2022

Paseo del Faro 33, 20008, Donostia-San Sebastian, Guipúzcoa, Basque Country, Spain



Milko Pavlov: Unsettled Paintings Frozen like Mountains

April 14 – June 4, 2022



Milko Pavlov
2107/4
MPП 2051
2021
Oil on canvas
230 x 190 cm
(91 x 75 inches)



Milko Pavlov
P.F. 2109
MPП 2042
2021
Oil on canvas
240 x 190 cm
(94 x 75 inches)



Milko Pavlov
B.V. 2097/7
MPП 2056
2021
Oil on canvas
230 x 180 cm
(91 x 71 inches)



Milko Pavlov
2122
MPΠ 2016
2021
Oil on canvas
230 x 185 cm
(91 x 73 inches)



Milko Pavlov
P.F. 2116/1
MPΠ 2039
2021
Oil on canvas
190 x 240 cm
(75 x 94 inches)



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Press release

Beginning on April 14 until June 4, 2022, Villa Magdalena will present *Milko Pavlov: Unsettled Paintings Frozen like Mountains*, a selection of new paintings by Berlin-based, Bulgarian artist Milko Pavlov (Aytos, 1956).

Milko Pavlov paints places and things we haven't seen. Environments that can't be named. For Pavlov, the act of painting does not require thinking. There is no idea or narrative that determine his images. With each work he is approaching an unknown terrain. Seeing is something that develops slowly after working on each canvas thoroughly and letting time pass by. The subject is forming itself somehow.

Pavlov is a Bulgarian abstract painter whose primary approach to painting is through color. "*I am a colorist, and color knows everything.*" In Pavlov's paintings form, surface, composition, and subject matter develop as a response to the artist's colorful palette which derives from his early exposure to 18th and 19th century Bulgarian icon painters. In the 70's, Pavlov shifted his attention towards the Tryavna Iconographic School - where he spent time as a child due to his father's medical practice - instead of assimilating formal ideas related to the socialist realist aesthetic dominant in Bulgaria at the time. Even though representation is not intentional, the way he organizes space in his paintings and the general composition loosely resemble mountains or landscapes; a subconscious gesture which perhaps illustrates the mountainous nature of his native country. At times, the viewer sees an elusive figure blending into its surroundings. The artist is not interested in talking about subject matter in literal terms, he hopes that the story or any suggestions of what may be identifiable will come through the viewer. Nonetheless, a fusion of different painting genres makes the imagery in his paintings come to life and allow him to invent his own pictorial dimension.

Despite his interest in 19th century Bulgarian icon painters, Pavlov went on to create a painterly language stripped of any symbols or figures alluding to prescribed meanings. Instead he paints an invented natural world, or perhaps what one sees when they dig deeper into the earth's surface. These recent paintings suggest many things, landscape, figuration, abstraction. At times one might be looking at rock textures or other details of the earth, until the forms become immense creating a vast scale within the picture plane. A way of seeing that is everchanging, as if the viewer is witnessing the shifting of tectonic plates. Pavlov's figurative gestures are always implicit. The figure can take on many shapes and forms: the sky, mountains, stones, a single cliff or cloud. An omnipresent entity. Everywhere and nowhere. Overall, these images are abstract because the picture never defines itself.

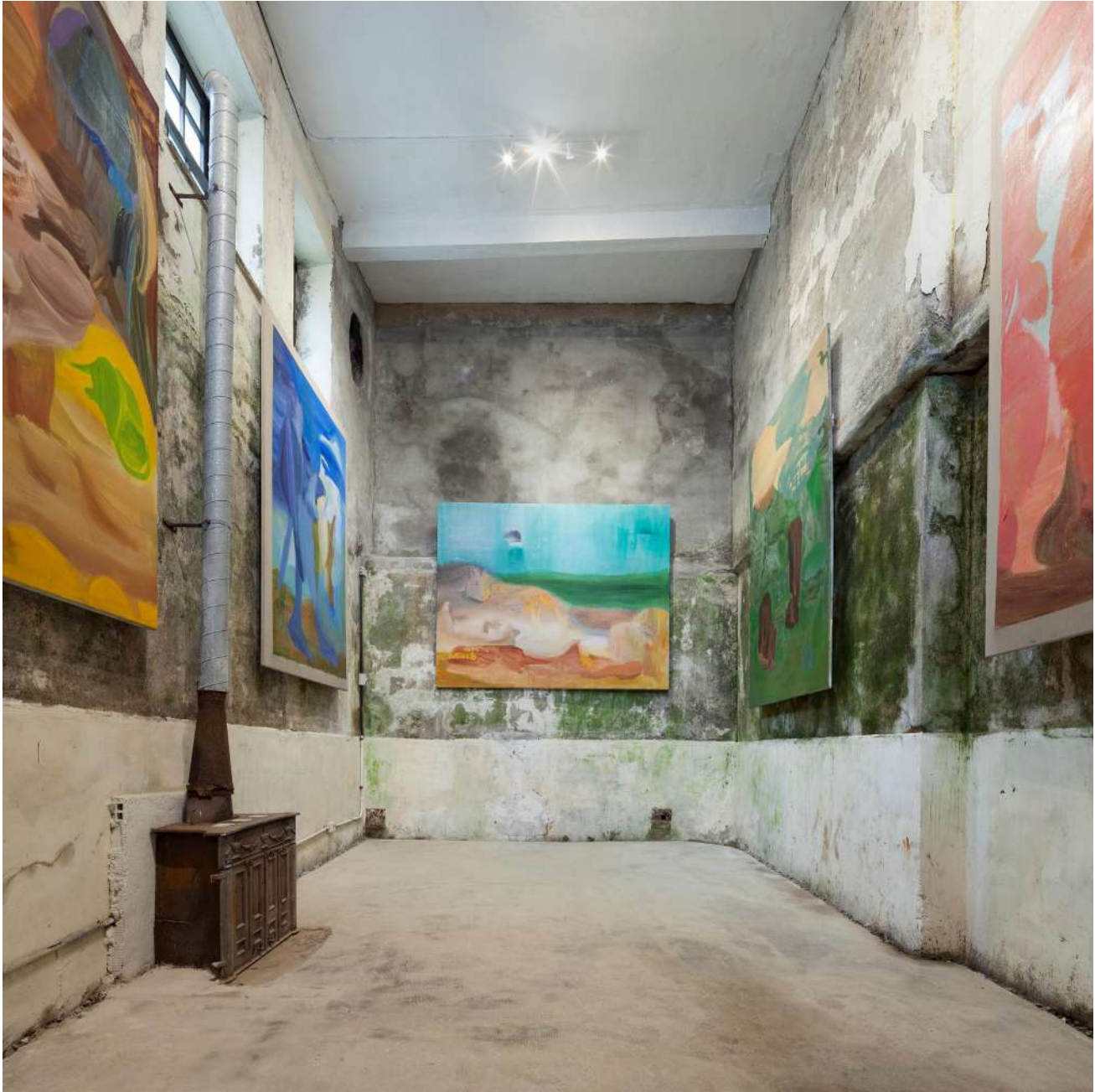
When asked about composition in a recent interview, Pavlov said, "*Space is always there, and space is not always the one we are seeing with our material eyes, the 'other space' that you can't perceive, is my approach to the form of space...*". Pavlov is creating a fictional arena just beyond perception, revealing invisible space. An admirable attempt to illustrate the inexpressible.

With his titles, Pavlov is interested in a conceptual dimension that reflects an intersection between different moments in time. In many cases an artwork title can contain multiple dates yet to come, for example, *P.F. 2109 MPП 2042* or *B.V. 2097/7 MPП 2056*. Through these references to futuristic times, Pavlov is challenging the life expectancy of everything: himself, the viewer, the painting itself.

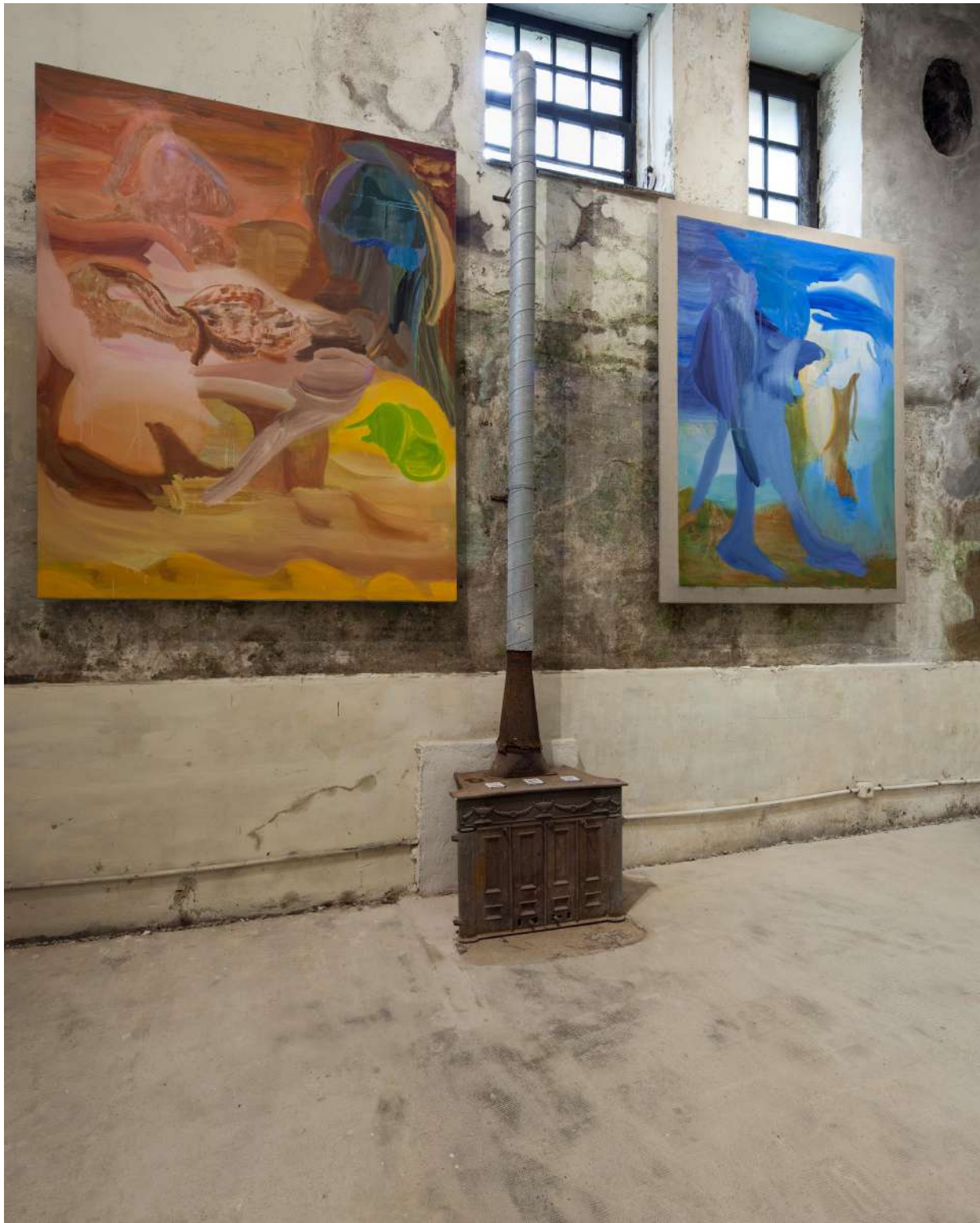
Perhaps Milko Pavlov is constructing his particular vision of the future filled with spectacle and fleeting sights. The light's reflection on a cliff, the remnants of a prehistoric man consumed by the earth, an ethereal giant entering a valley, mountains that look like frozen human forms. The undefined character of these pictures feel like blurry records of places or the faulty nature of memory that becomes inevitable when time passes by.

Tuesday through Sunday by appointment only

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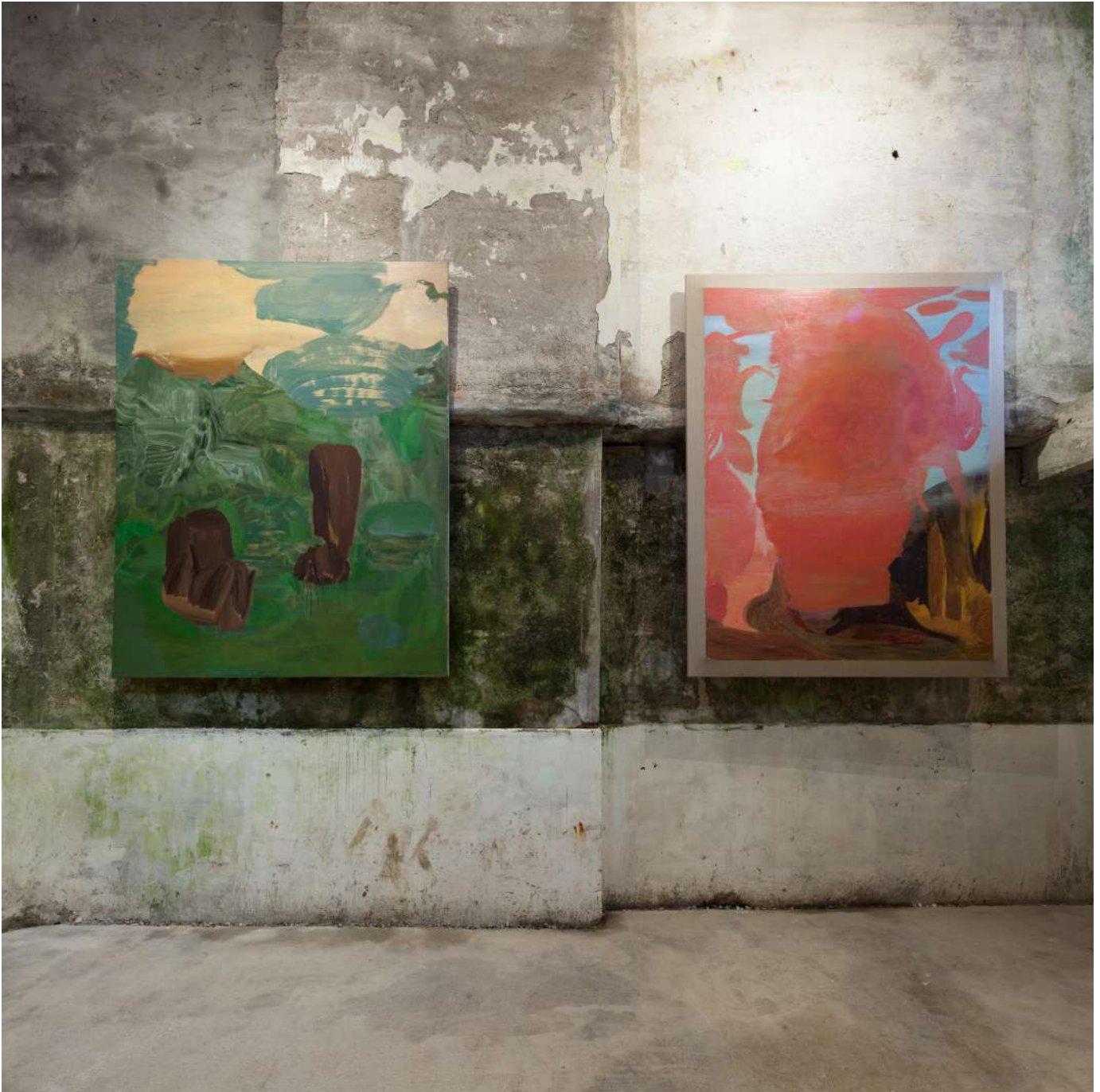
Installation view: *Milko Pavlov: Unsettled Paintings Frozen like Mountains*, Villa Magdalena, Donostia-San Sebastián. Photography by Idoia Unzurrunzaga



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