



TILTON
GALLERY

Rebecca Purdum: Early Paintings
Frieze Masters 2024
Booth B10



Rebecca Purdum: Early Paintings

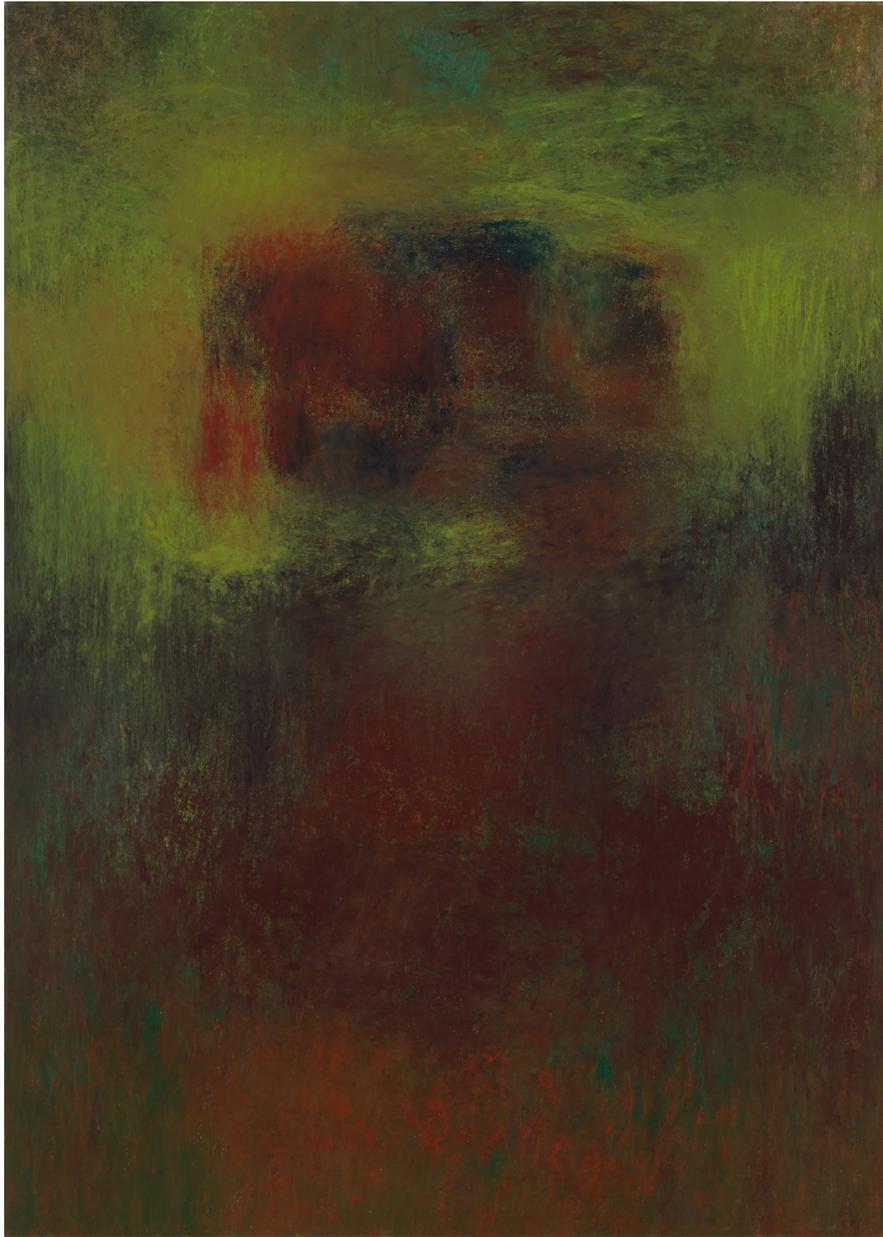
Frieze Masters 2024
October 9 – 13th

Tilton Gallery is pleased to present early paintings by American abstract artist Rebecca Purdum. This presentation will introduce her work in London for the first time. It will highlight works Purdum produced while living in New York City in the late 1980s and early 1990s, before moving to Vermont in the 2000s. This period saw Purdum's first solo exhibition at Tilton Gallery in 1986 and her inclusion in the Whitney Biennial in 1991.

These paintings highlight her unique approach. While at Saint Martin's School of Art, Purdum eschewed the traditional brush in favor of a more immediate method: her fingers. Painting with gloved hands allowed her ten simultaneous brushes and resulted in layered paintings of contemplative depth and immediacy of surface. Her compositions, often likened to those of artists J.M.W. Turner and Mark Rothko by John Russell and other critics, emanate an inner light from within their gently varied, often lush colors.

Purdum's timeless paintings reward slow and careful viewing. Her works do what the best of abstract – or any – art should do: give one that unnamable depth of experience that silently contributes to one's understanding of the world.





Rebecca Purdum

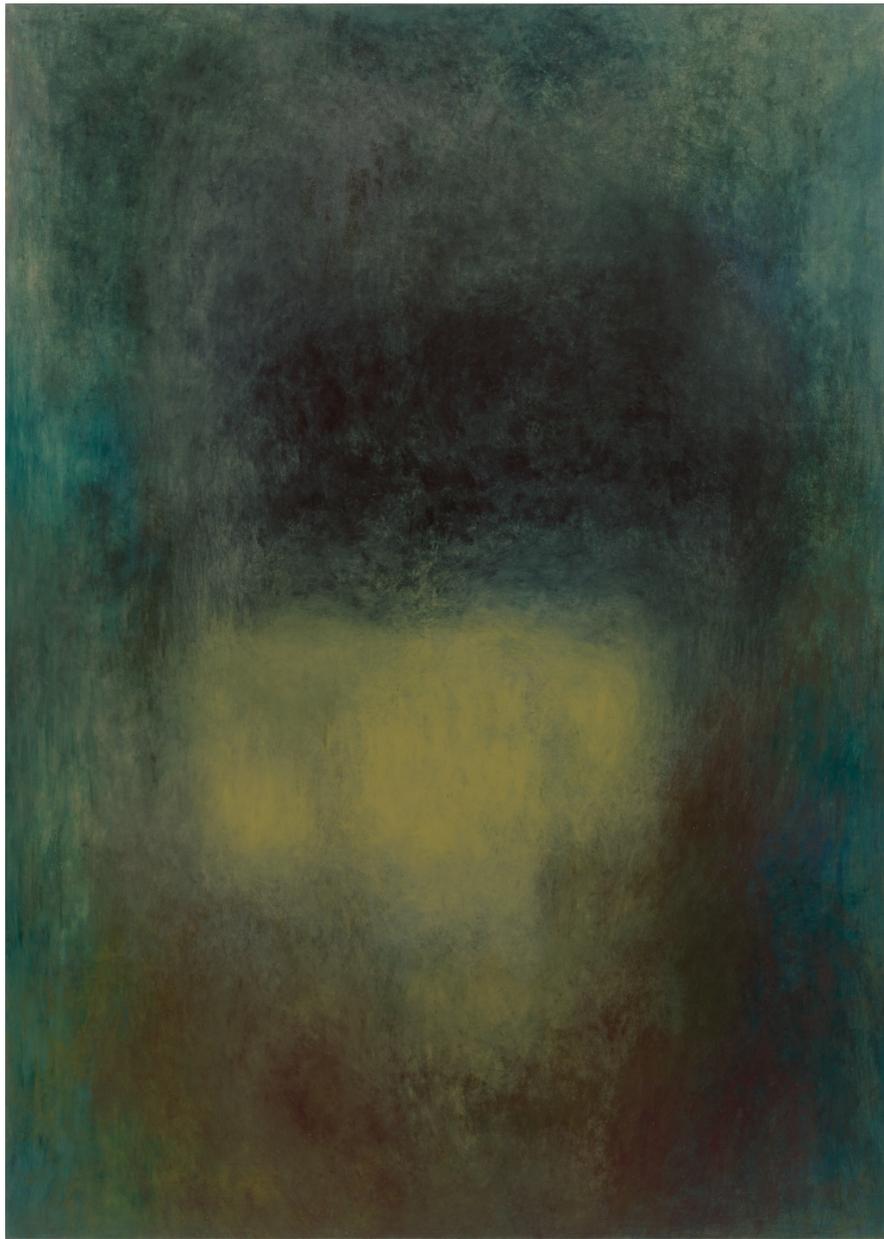
But Where There is Danger, What Saves Grows, too, 1987

Oil on canvas
84 x 60 inches
(213.4 x 152.4 cm)
(pur2639)
\$45,000



Rebecca Purdum

Untitled (NYC 159), 1986
Oil on canvas
84 x 60 inches
(213.4 x 152.4 cm)
(PUR124)
\$45,000



Rebecca Purdum

Flat Top, 1986
Oil on canvas
84 x 60 inches
(213 x 152 cm)
(pur2784)
\$45,000

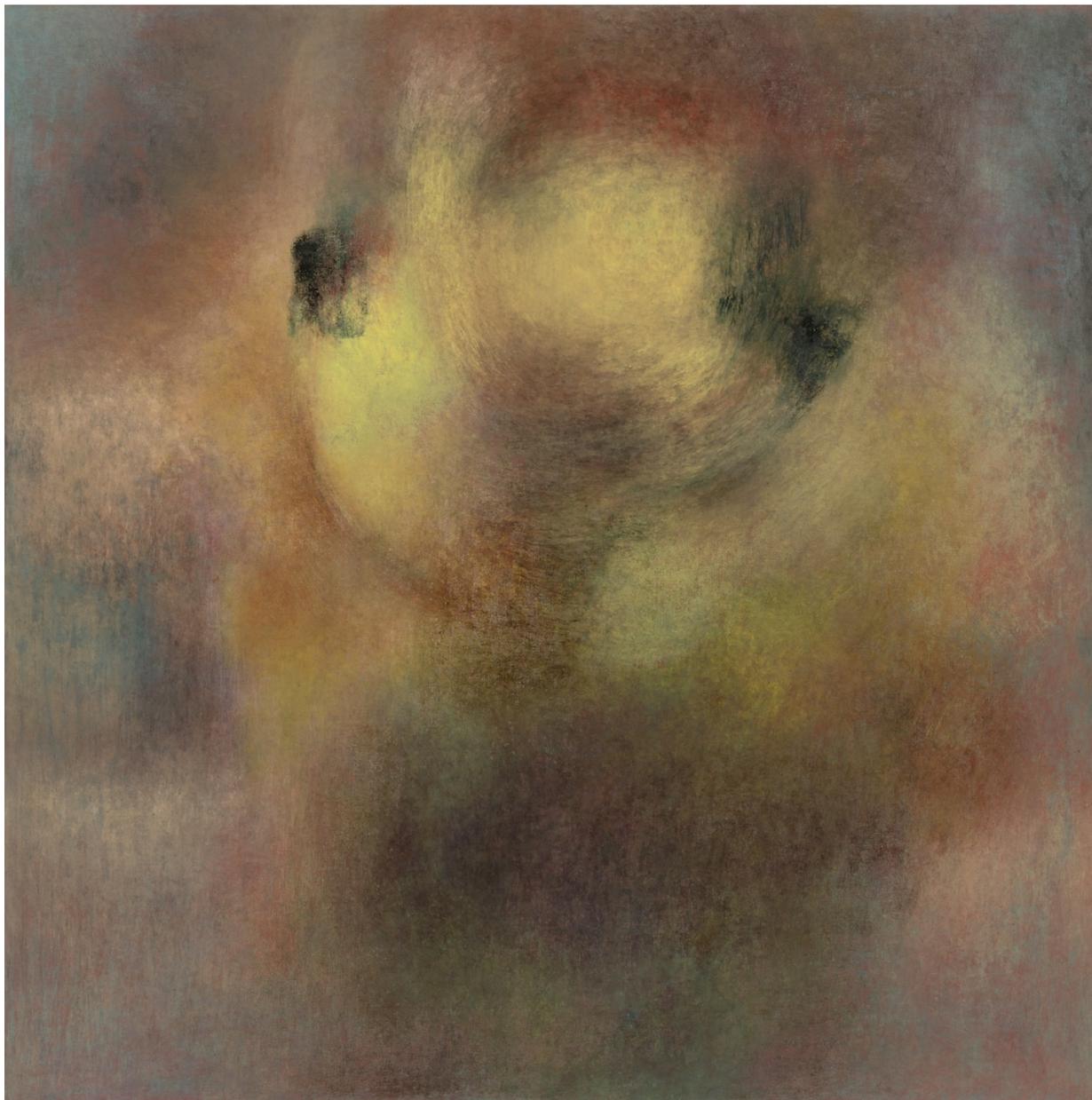


*Purdum does not try to reproduce reality, but celebrates our emotions in the face of life:
“It is the biggest idea of life, of living, of a certain kind of reality and all reality
that we experience every day in the city, in nature, or just in people.”*



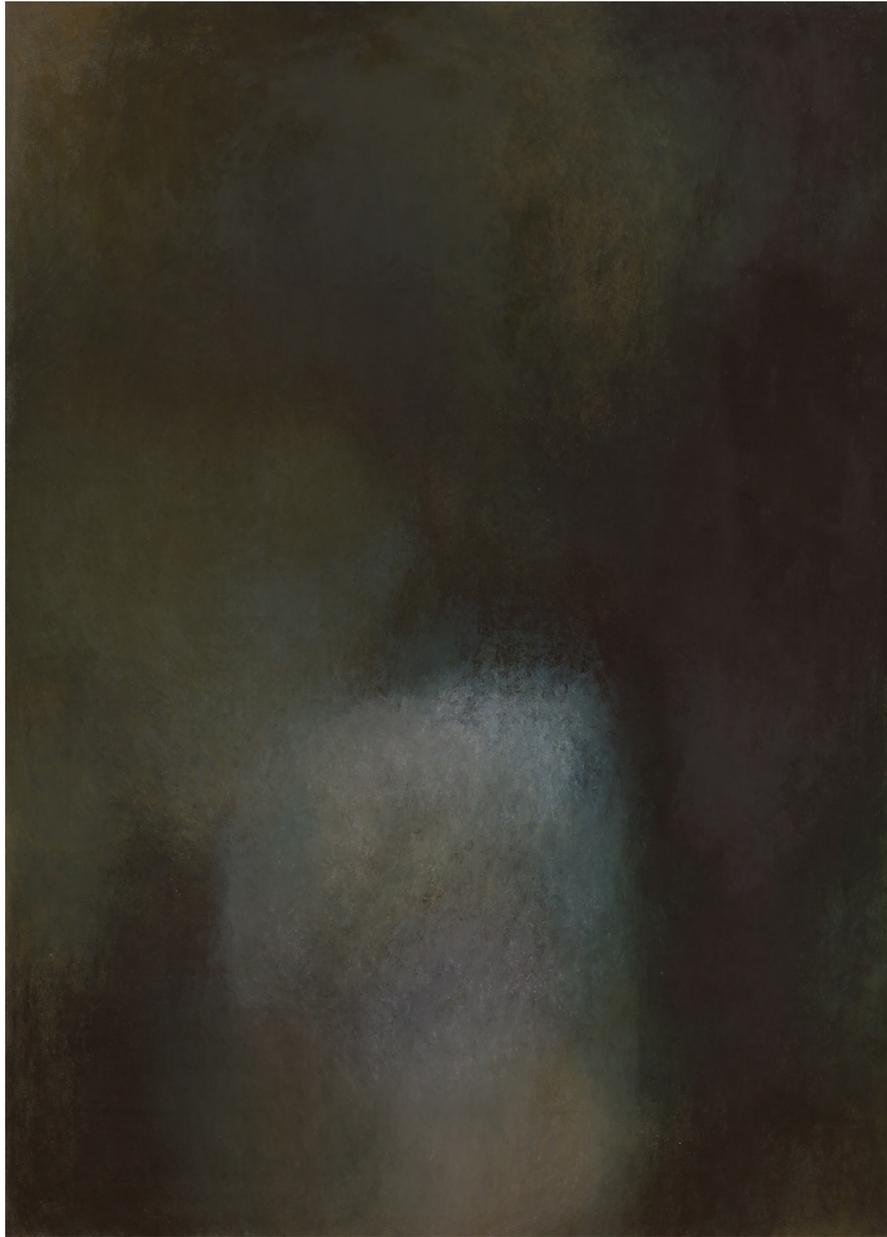
Rebecca Purdum

Marble 414, 1996
Oil on canvas
60 x 60 inches
(152 x 152 cm)
(pur2761)
\$35,000



Rebecca Purdum

Salt Water, 1991
Oil on canvas
60 x 60 inches
(152 x 152 cm)
(pur2547)
\$35,000



Rebecca Purdum

Multiplication Tables, 1985

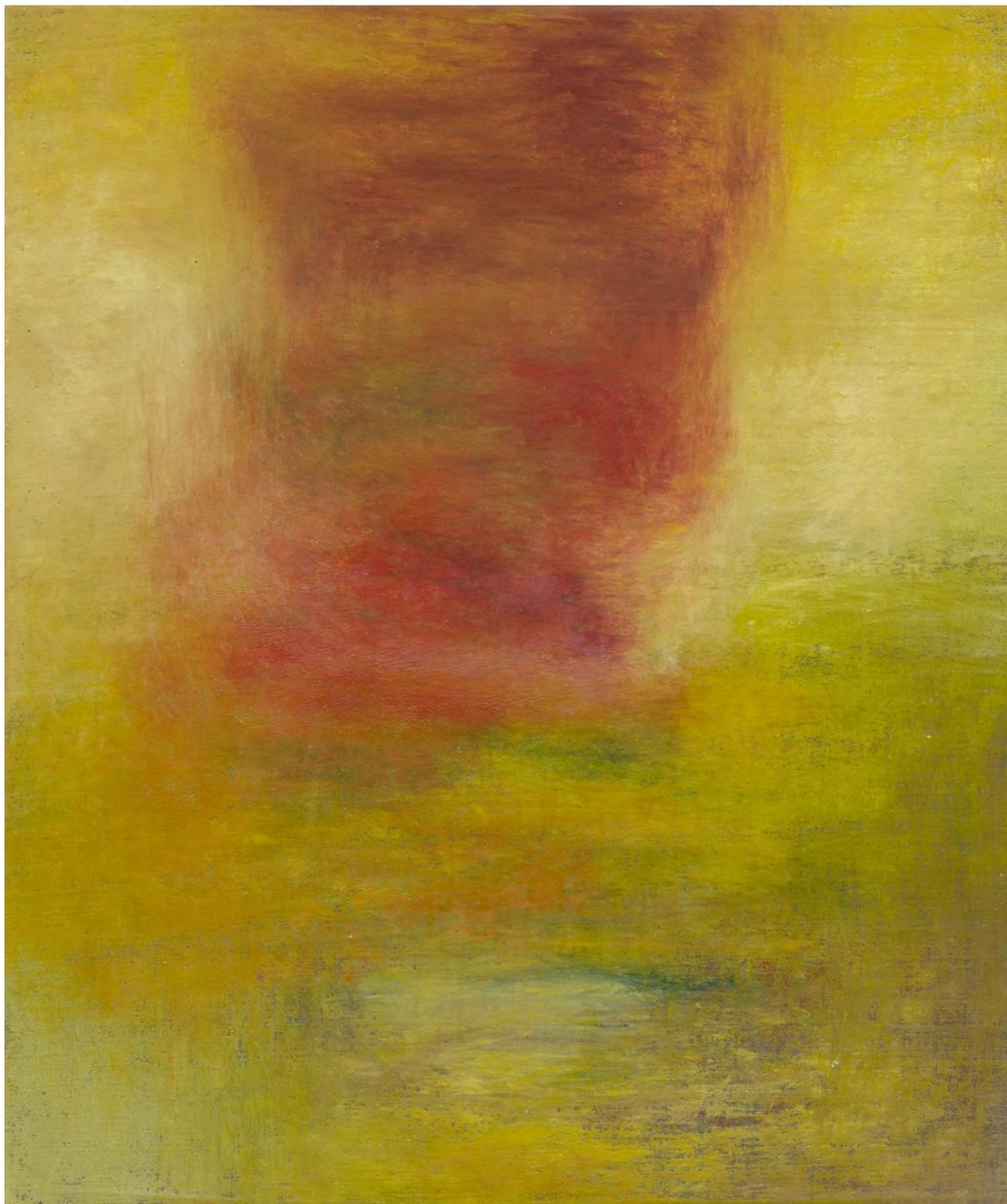
Oil on canvas
78 x 56 inches
(198.1 x 142.2 cm)
(pur2565)
\$40,000



Rebecca Purdum

3 to 6A, 1997
Oil on canvas on wood (diptych)
16 x 32 inches
(41 x 81 cm)
(PUR014)
\$15,000

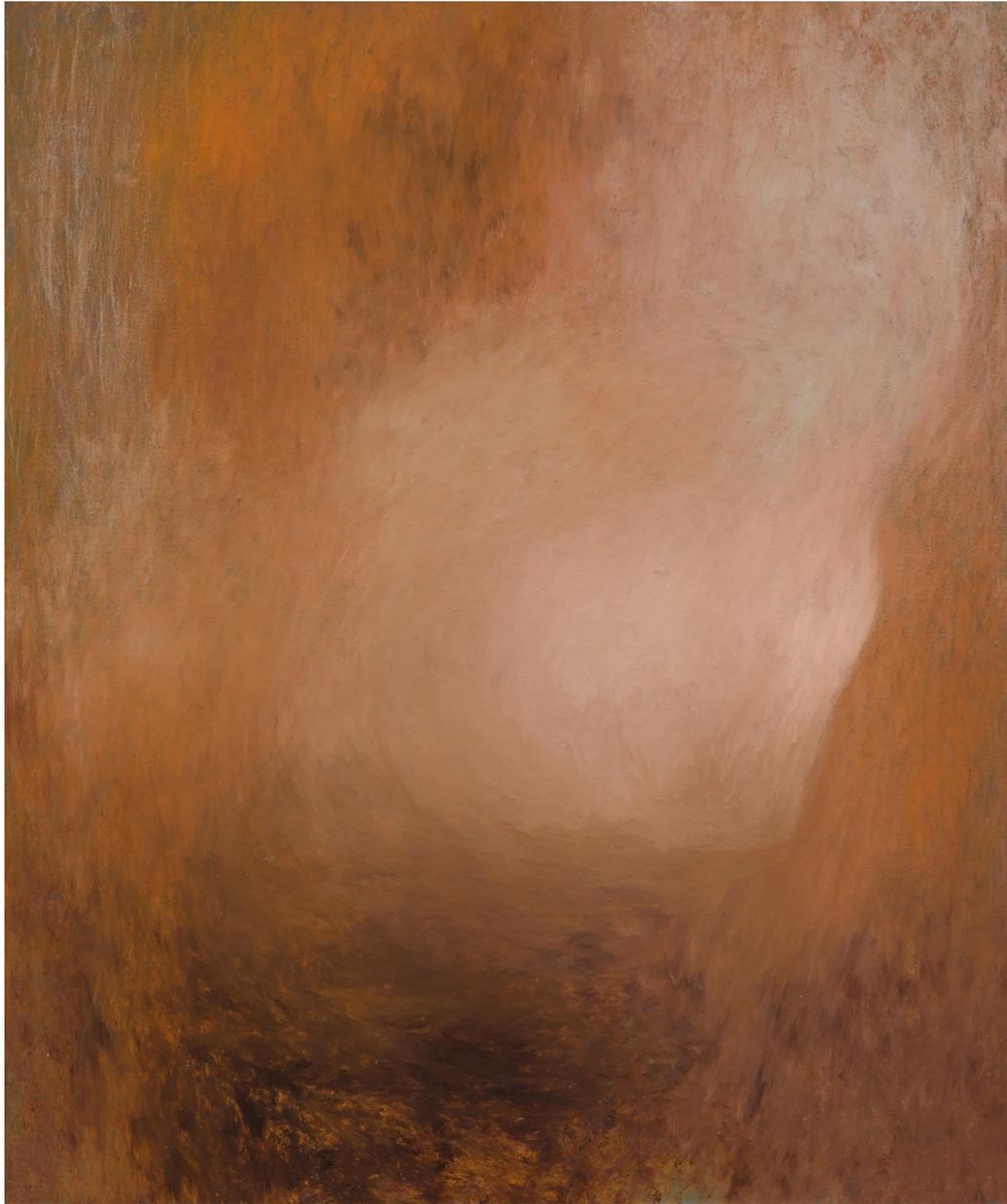




Rebecca Purdum

Untitled (NYC 138), 1987
Oil on canvas mounted on wood
19 x 16 inches
(48 x 41 cm)
(PUR102)
\$10,000





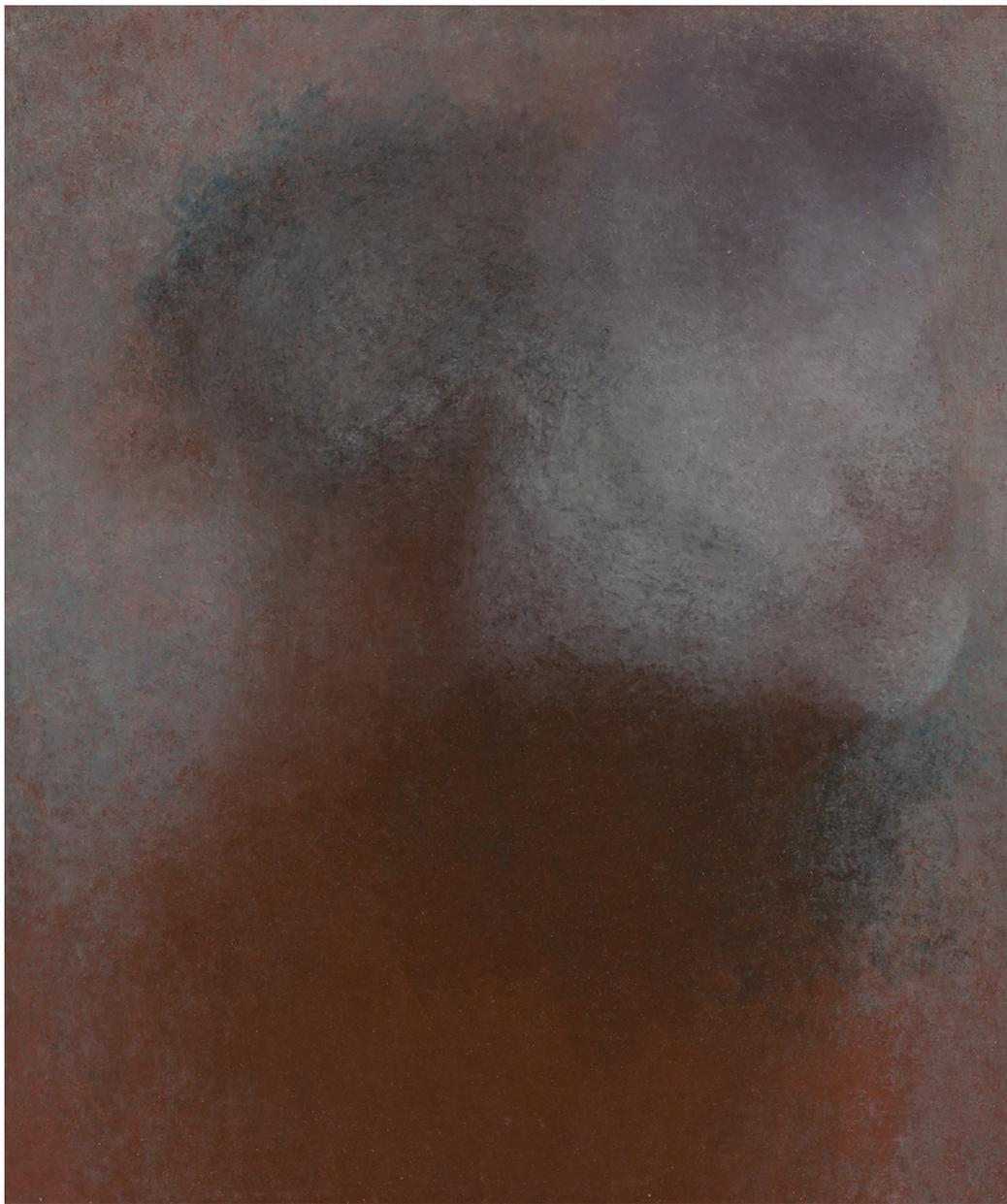
Rebecca Purdum

Curve Ball, 1986
Oil on canvas mounted on wood
19 x 16 inches
(48.3 x 40.6 cm)
(PUR128)
\$10,000



Rebecca Purdum

Preoccupied, 1987
Oil on canvas mounted on wood
19 x 16 inches
(48.3 x 40.6 cm)
(PUR125)
\$10,000



Rebecca Purdum

Untitled (NYC 152), 1986
Oil on canvas mounted on wood
19 x 16 inches
(48.3 x 40.6 cm)
(PUR127)
\$10,000



"I always wanted to show in that space [the old Betty Parsons Gallery, now Tilton's], and I finally got up my nerve to send slides. Month passed and I never heard back, so I called and a woman said, 'Come Thursday afternoon.'

I went and there was a line all the way out the door. The hours went by - I was last - and I could hear Jack saying, 'I'm sorry, but this isn't for us,' over and over again. It was awful. Then they had to search through an enormous box of slides to find mine. But when Jack looked at them, he said, 'Do you have something small you could bring in?'"



EXIT



"I remember one day in the studio I was so frustrated with brushes that I began picking up gobs of paint with my hands, and I realized right away it was much better. It was almost like having ten brushes. When you get into the frenzy of painting, you want to lose yourself in paint."

The New York Times

NEW YORK, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1987

By JOHN RUSSELL

Rebecca Purdum

*Jack Tilton Gallery
24 West 57th Street
Through Oct. 31*

Still in her late 20's, Rebecca Purdum made a paradoxically strong impression last year with paintings that were about evanescence, or perhaps about nonbeing. They worked upon us, but what exactly was it that worked so strongly? Was it an echo of J. M. W. Turner's way with tinted steam clouds? Had Mark Rothko anything to do with it? Or were they portraits of meditation, and very like?

Her second show comes with a quotation from the theologian Martin Buber that does something to straighten this out. Buber spoke of a form that he could neither experience nor describe, but only actualize: "Tested for its objectivity, the form is not 'there' at all; but what can equal its presence? And it is an actual relation: it acts on me as I act on it."

In the context of a Purdum painting, we may take this either as literal truth or as a wonderfully stylish verbal structure. Either way, it does seem to bear directly upon the new paintings. As before, they are a matter of mist and wraith, most eloquently evoked but stopping well short of definition. Huge perspectives beckon, only to vanish. Forest rides ask us in, only to rescind the invitation. Caverns lurk — or do they? Great sheets of water stand at our feet, only to disappear underground. This is true visionary art, and most tellingly wrought.



TILTON

GALLERY



Rebecca Purdum was born in 1959 in Idaho Falls, Idaho. After travelling extensively across the country during her early years, Purdum studied painting at Syracuse University, NY and St. Martin's School of Art in London. After attending Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 1981, she moved to New York City and held her first solo exhibition at Jack Tilton Gallery in 1986. Her work was included in the 1991 Whitney Biennial and she has been exhibited widely since. In 2021, the New York Studio School held a career-spanning survey of her paintings from 1987 to 2020. Her work is held in numerous private and public collections including the Modern Art Museum, Fort Worth, TX; the Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, NH; the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, NY; the List Visual Arts Center, MIT, among others. Purdum lives and works in Ripton, Vermont.