Ruptured Adjacency

by Valentina Buzzi*

In the development of awareness, there is a moment when time is deconstructed. We discover that it is not the steady line we imagined: it stretches, bends, dilates, folds back into loops. This discovery is quietly shocking: everything we knew about the very force that defines life, about the meanings of before and after, about distance and return, must be rebuilt. Learning the universal laws of being through intellectual discourse and academia is one path to this realisation. For Jin Meyerson, this understanding came not from the study of physics, but through the inherently violent processes of post-colonial reformation. Born in Korea and raised by an adoptive family in the American Midwest, without official records of his birth, he has long known time not as a river flowing steadily forward, but as a pool, pushed and pulled by undercurrents beneath a composed surface. Trauma bends time in this way: a past that has been subverted does not remain non-visible; it loops, resurfaces, bends space, and returns. Origin is at once a point on a map and a place that cannot be reached, a geography known largely through absence. Painting becomes, then, a location in its own right: geographical, where landscapes drawn from scattered sources are gathered onto a single canvas, and psychological, where memory, loss and longing can be re-inhabited.

What does it mean, then, to exist within an orbit? In Samantha Harvey's novel *Orbital* (2023), six astronauts circle the Earth sixteen times a day.[1] For them, the attachment to our point of origin is revealed by distance. In a sense, an orbit is a fall that never lands, a perpetual return around a centre one cannot reach. In *Ruptured Adjacency*, Meyerson's first solo exhibition with Dirimart, paintings become such orbits: coordinates from which to measure how far we have drifted, and how strongly we are still pulled back. The exhibition title names a paradox: a proximity formed between things that have been separated. Quantum physics has a name for it: entanglement. Two particles that have interacted remain correlated across any distance, so that what happens to one is inscribed in the other. The pattern holds when scaled up from the molecular to families, communities, and how we organise belonging. What has met once keeps meeting. Distance does not dissolve; rather, in stretching it, it amplifies our longing to remain connected.

Living and working today in Seoul, Meyerson knows that all of us are distanced from origin. Proximities and perimeters exist to be crossed, expanded, left behind and, sometimes, reclaimed. The exhibition refuses to frame diaspora solely as a wound. In her open letter 'Suspending Damage' (2009), Unangaŝ scholar Eve Tuck called for moving away from narratives that define communities solely by their damage, towards a framework of desire. Desire, she writes, 'is the song about walking through the storm, a song that recognizes rather than denies that pain doubtlessly lies.'[2] TMeyerson's paintings sing in this register: they hold rupture and longing together and, from the space between them, build a place to land. Desire, after all, does not travel in straight lines, nor does return: the orbit Meyerson traces is not a closed loop.

---

[1] Samantha Harvey, *Orbital* (London: Penguin, 2023).

[2] Eve Tuck, 'Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities', Harvard Educational Review 79, no. 3 (2019): 419..

In her essay ‘Surrealism Against Fascism’ (2025), Naomi Klein references Walter Benjamin’s image of the *angel of history*: history does not repeat itself one to one; it rather accumulates.[3] And so time spirals, coming back to places that feel familiar but have grown heavier with everything that came before and after. Turned one way, a spiral tightens into a whirlpool; turned the other, it opens outwards, like a shell or a galaxy. The Surrealists, many of them survivors of the trenches, found room within the wreckage for metaphor, poetry and dreams. Meyerson longs for a similar moment, after the protest, when that room opens again. His paintings spiral away from the wreckage, towards an alternative, towards reconciliation.

The five paintings titled *Landing* (2026) are over two and a half meters tall. Landscapes cut loose from memory, distilled into velocities of exit and entry. Sky and light rush towards, or burst out from a single vanishing point, caught in the instant of take-off or touchdown. They grow from a single piece Meyerson has cycled through for four years, inspired by rhizomes, by Pando (a grove of aspens in Utah that is, one organism) and by the birth of his youngest daughter. Since 1997, searching for new optical frontiers, he has passed images through randomisation software, and later, through AI and 3D imaging, before translating them by hand into oil.

The exhibition can be read as an archipelago. Édouard Glissant, thinking from the Caribbean, set archipelagic thought against continental thought: islands that remain distinct yet are joined beneath the water, embodying a way of thinking based on relation rather than a single root. All the works here, video and paintings, grow from a single point of source data, answering each other across many layers, from the video room to the paintings in the main hall. At the end of that hall, the monumental *The Shape of Re-Entry* (2025), five meters wide, fractures the same green into crystalline shards of blue and silver: the moment a body crosses back into an atmosphere and burns. Across the cavernous space, a light cycle isolates one canvas at a time. Beyond a politics of attention, Meyerson proposes an ethics of attention: painters are creatures of the sun, the passing of the day decides what becomes visible, and each encounter with the viewer becomes poignant.

Beyond the blackout curtain, the darkened video room holds the four *Duet* paintings (2026), the final iteration of a séance series begun as a contained goodbye to a birth mother who lives, for the artist, in another dimension. Their source is an evening in the family’s Oksu apartment in Seoul, when Meyerson took photographs and LiDAR scans of his eldest daughter hidden under a thin sheet, cocooned, lit only by the glow of her screen. The draped forms are as much vessels as figures, spaces within a space that contain loss, longing and distance. After the passing of his sister last year, Hannah Hyunjoo Meyerson, also an adoptee, the series became a duet: two vessels fused into one shared space, an ode to a shared childhood. Six months after her death, an articulation of what he was experiencing came from reading Yiyun Li, who wrote about grief in *Things in Nature Merely Grow* (2025).[4] From Li, the sense that opacity and lucidity are one and the same: what cannot be seen through can still be seen clearly. Painting becomes an emancipation, a way of learning what to feel, and how to feel it.

---

[3] Naomi Klein, ‘Surrealism Against Fascism’, *Equator*, 26 November 2025, https://www.equator.org/articles/surrealism-against-fascism (accessed 22 October 2026).

[4] Yiyun Li, *Things in Nature Merely Grow* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2025).

The video *Habitat* (2025–26) opens, disarmingly, as a screensaver, homaging the drifting graphics of early computers that kept an image from burning into the glass. This gesture lends the room a lightness. From there, the 3D scan of the Oksu room unfolds, alongside data drawn from the foliage of a plant the artist could not save, resurrected on screen via AI. Over six and a half minutes of entry and exit points, elegiac images arrive, glitch into data and re-emerge as foliage, fabric and body, never quite beginning, never quite ending, carried by an ambient composition by artist and musician Teebs, written to the length of the film and glowing among the *Duets*.

A question that haunts linguistics is what binds it to storytelling. One contested hypothesis, prompted by the painted caves of Lascaux, reverses the usual order: if we tell stories to make sense of the world, and can make sense only of what we can articulate, then perhaps storytelling is not a product of speech but the very reason we speak. Articulating once meant simply to join: to set parts against one another until they hold. What, then, do we say when the only joints within reach are made with a brush? Yoko Tawada, who writes in both Japanese and German, calls one version of this exophony: writing outside one's mother tongue, a stepping out that makes language strange, poetic and newly audible. Meyerson paints exophonically, with a difference: he did not step out of his first tongue but was carried away from it. Severed from that language and its records, he speaks through a borrowed grammar of algorithmic fracture and oil. Still, some experiences exist beyond language altogether. In Donna Tartt's novel *The Goldfinch* (2013), the young Theo, who survives the explosion that kills his mother, comes to know trauma as a place: a psycho-geographical site, carried in the body and mapped onto the city, where words do not work.[5] If trauma is a place, painting may be the way back into it: a location built not of words but of brushstrokes, where what cannot be said, only longed for, can at last be inhabited. Plato knew that such places are approached through trembling. In the *Phaedrus*, the soul that glimpses beauty 'shudders at first,' then reveres it as a god, because beauty awakens the memory of a home it once saw and has since lost. Beauty, for Plato, is recollection, and recollection is never without terror. Meyerson's canvases quiver in this way: velocities that crash, sheets as shrouds, a glow that is both farewell and a birth event.

We return, then, to the orbit. Distance diminishes, and distance amplifies. *Ruptured Adjacency* does not ask us to choose between the two, but to stand where they meet, before a painting that is at once a place and a departure. The Greeks had a word for the journey home: nostos. It is the root of nostalgia, literally, the pain of return. An orbit is a nostos without arrival: there is no end to it, only departure and return, each ruptured in its own way. Meyerson has spent a lifetime making sense of that movement, and what he offers here is not a final resolution but a reconciliation: rupture and adjacency held on the same canvas, which is why it feels at once so intimate and so universal. The desire to make sense of our worlds through language, whatever that language might be, words or brushstrokes. We all orbit towards our own identities, gathering them piece by piece, and the homecoming is never complete. The works presented at Dirimart give us somewhere to land for a while, before the next departure.

---

[5] Donna Tartt, The Goldfinch (London & New York: Little, Brown & Company, 2013).

*** Valentina Buzzi** (b. 1995, Genova, Italy) is a French-Italian curator and PhD researcher working at the intersection of contemporary art, systems of knowledge, and socio-cultural analysis. Her practice explores how contemporary art and exhibitions engage with socio-cultural questions and transnational networks. She was the Artistic Director of the Italian Pavilion at the 14th Gwangju Biennale (2023) and curator of an official collateral exhibition at the 60th Venice Biennale (2024). Recently, she has been co-curating the official cultural diplomacy exhibition celebrating the 140th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea and France at the Korean Cultural Centre in Paris, while serving as the Curatorial Researcher at the Park Seo-Bo Foundation and Museum. She is a member of ICOM (International Council of Museums) and IKT (International Association of Curators of Contemporary Art). Buzzi was awarded the UNESCO Research Fellowship on Transnational Cultural Heritage by the Korean National Commission for UNESCO in 2026, while in 2025, she was named to *Forbes Italia*'s Under 30 list in the Art & Culture category. Valentina Buzzi lives and works between Paris and Seoul.