

# Ali Bezer

## Open Space



*Body Dispersed 1* 2017, Mixed media on paper, 116 x 85 cm

Exhibition Dates

21 November – 16 December 2017



Inner World 1 2017, Mixed media on paper, 43.5 x 54 cm

The creative impetus for the artworks featured in *Open Space* stemmed from my experience doing an ongoing residency at St Andrews War Memorial Hospital (Brisbane). For many years my art practice focused on expressing music and other sound concepts through visual counterparts. This path diverged when I was given the rare opportunity to see directly inside the human body in surgery as well as studying medical imaging. Seeing the human body turned inside out was both confronting and strangely alluring.

I am especially drawn to the diffused, partly out-of-focus character of many x-rays, scans and surgical footage - qualities that I emulate in the artworks featured in this exhibition. The grainy and blurry effects of medical imaging occur when internal fluids and vapours cloud the telescopic lens of operating tools, or when the contrast of radiology equipment needs finicky adjustment. In these moments, the human form dissolves into spectral nebulas of tissue and veins. The circular format of medical imagery also created planetary impressions of our internal bodyscape reminiscent of Jupiter or the streaky surface of the moon Europa. Floating specks inside the bladder also glow in the light of the laparoscope like stars. While the relationship between fractals and larger natural structures is common knowledge, the resonance between the human body and the cosmos seems to be less known.

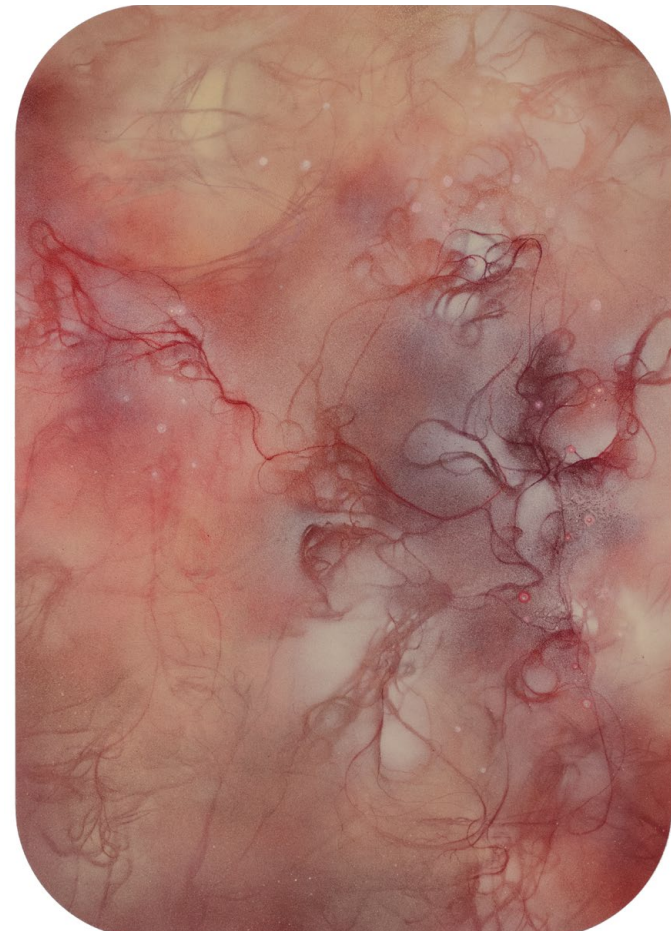
Undoubtedly, the science fiction novels I have been reading have folded into my interpretation of cosmic landscapes within the human interior. In particular, the *Expanse* novels by James S.A Corey led me to imagine the internal space of the human body liberated from its shell. In the *Expanse*, an alien proto-molecule recomposes and intertwines human bodies into new, visceral structures that spread across space. The key character James Holden also experiences moments of transcendence when his body encompasses the universe;

He felt the stars within him, the vast expanses of space contained by him. With a thought, he could pull his attention to a sun surrounded by planets like he was attending to his finger or the back of his neck...He had become immeasurably large, and rich and strange...Here was the nexus that sat between worlds.<sup>1</sup>

With this in mind I called the exhibition *Open Space*, to poetically imply that inside the human body is a universe that seems larger than its containing form. The title of the show, and the framing of these artworks, also references how medical-imaging technologies create screen-shaped portals into what would otherwise be an inaccessible world, akin to how the telescope opened our eyes to the far reaches of space. Through art, I am interested in exploring the idea that our internal bodies contain a nexus between visceral and cosmic landscapes.

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<sup>1</sup> James S. A. Corey, *Abaddon's Gate: Book Three of the Expanse* (Orbit: Great Britain, 2013: 266).



Body Dispersed 10 2017, Mixed media on paper, 116 x 85 cm



*Body Dispersed 5* 2017, Mixed media on paper, 116 x 85 cm

## Woolloongabba Art Gallery

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