

Two years ago I had the pleasure of writing about Andy Leleisi'uao's exhibition "A Diasporic Pulse of Faith and Patience" at the Bergman Gallery, Raratonga. With Leleisi'uao's new show, 'An Uncanny Catharsis of Unrequited Bones', opening at Artis Gallery, the artist from Samoan descent builds further on his idiosyncratic graphic language while overloading our sense of sight with universal fantasies about compassion, integration, transience, participation and unification.

In the thirteen exhibited paintings, Leleisi'uao observes and interprets processes of living and projects it into the spiritual building of an alternative world full of existential connectivity and profound harmony. As spectator we witness the birth of a new culture brought to life by an intellectual expression of choices and conflicts rhythmically reflecting the absurdity of living. The mind's eye is aspirated into enigmas and secrets which thematize notions of being(s), so universal and wonderfully weird that they transcend culture, gender, race and ideology.

Leleisi'uao geometrically scattered compositions zigzag from right to left, from top to bottom, and the appearance of predominantly black-white controlled chaos with distinctive touches of red are interconnected dialogues between representation and void, figure and space. The use of this illusionary pictorial space holds entities, objects and activities together in this self-referencing unity, making it possible to experience the whole exhibit different at different times. A timeless illustration in which each visual grid, each figure, each object has a redolent poetry of its own speaking about a shared genealogy, social sacrifice and transcendence.

Some beings are frozen in time, some explore everyday contingencies, some are deeply thinking, some are recreating knowledge lost in migration, some are looking up, some are looking into the void and others are mimicking each others movements and social patterns while the bones carried by the red balloons allude to a permanence beyond death. Knowledge and the spirit of those who have left us are transferred to the next generations. Repetitive group-oriented events and erected monuments represent something larger than the



Integrated Utopia
Acrylic on canvas, 410 x 300 mm

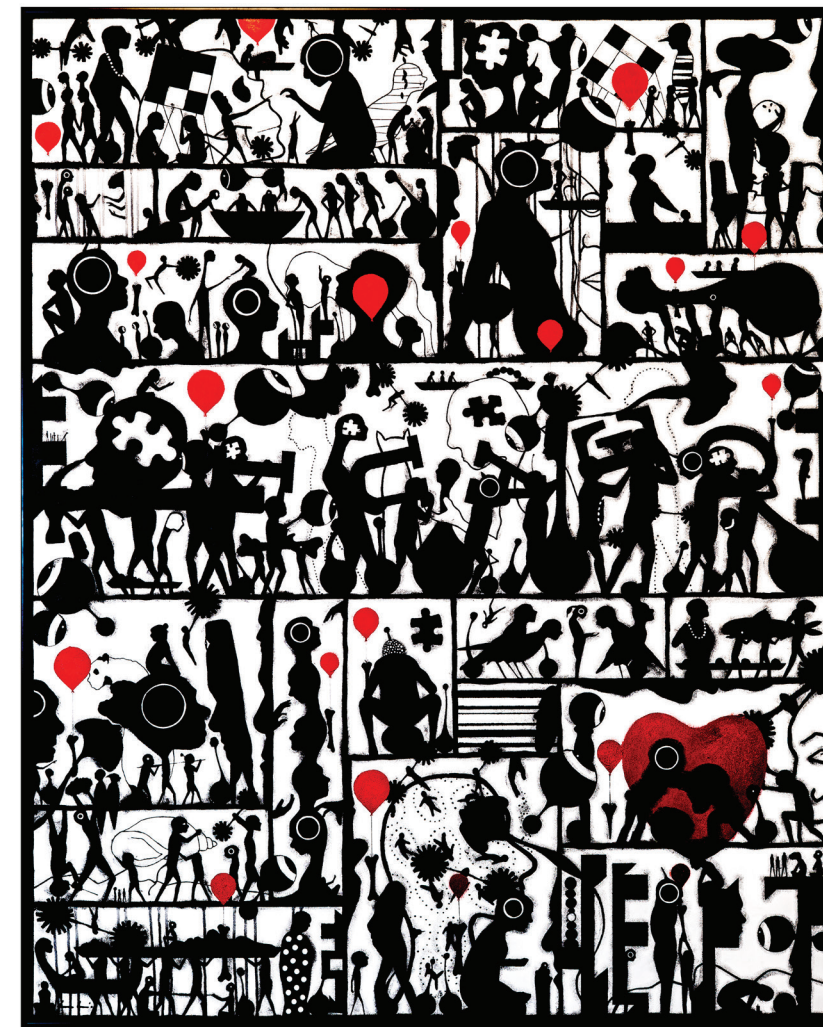
beings themselves, something that immortalises their faith in alliance. The whole series, engraved in our memory as one large work, reads itself as an ever-moving procession, an organised ceremony in which beings look for meaningful connections without manifestations of power and wealth.

So the artist recognizes that our being human is invested not simply in our existence as individuals but also in our collective existence as social beings. Our ability to rise above our individual physical selves and to see ourselves as part of a larger project, to project onto the world, and onto human life, a purpose that exists only because we as human beings create it. The series' allegorical storytelling, a species constantly searching, making social gestures, moving, thinking and constructing, reveals in all mysterious grotesqueness to have love for oneself and show some love for the other. From hammer to shell, from mechanical to magical powers, from the material to the spiritual, this is a visual plea to take care of (y)our existence, for everything that lives and moves.

Arthur Buerms
Gallerist & Curator based in Belgium
2021



An Uncanny Catharsis of Unrequited Bones - Part IV
Acrylic on canvas, 1500 x 1100 mm



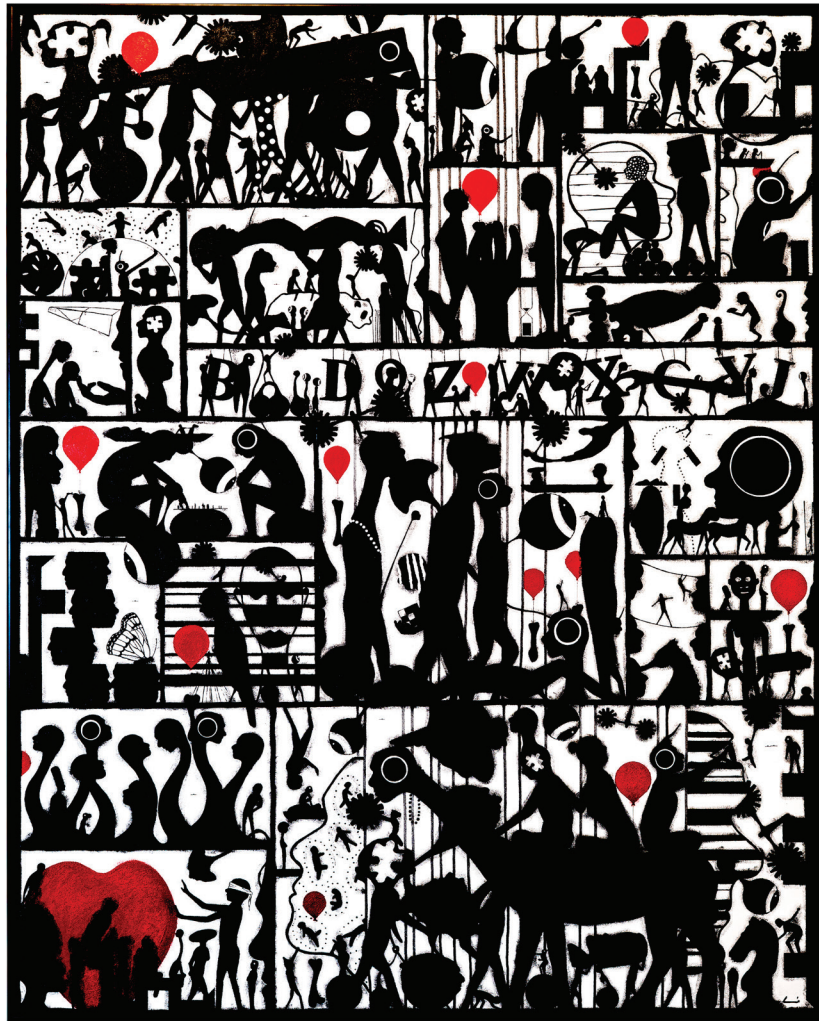
CONTEMPORARY NEW ZEALAND ART

280 Parnell Road Auckland New Zealand Ph: +64 9 303 1090
artis@artisgallery.co.nz www.ArtisGallery.co.nz
Photography by Raymond Sagapolutele & ARTIS Gallery



ANDY LELEISI'UAO

An Uncanny Catharsis of Unrequited Bones



An Uncanny Catharsis of Unrequited Bones - Part II
Acrylic on canvas, 1500 x 1200 mm



Interweaved Erewhon
Acrylic on canvas, 500 x 400 mm



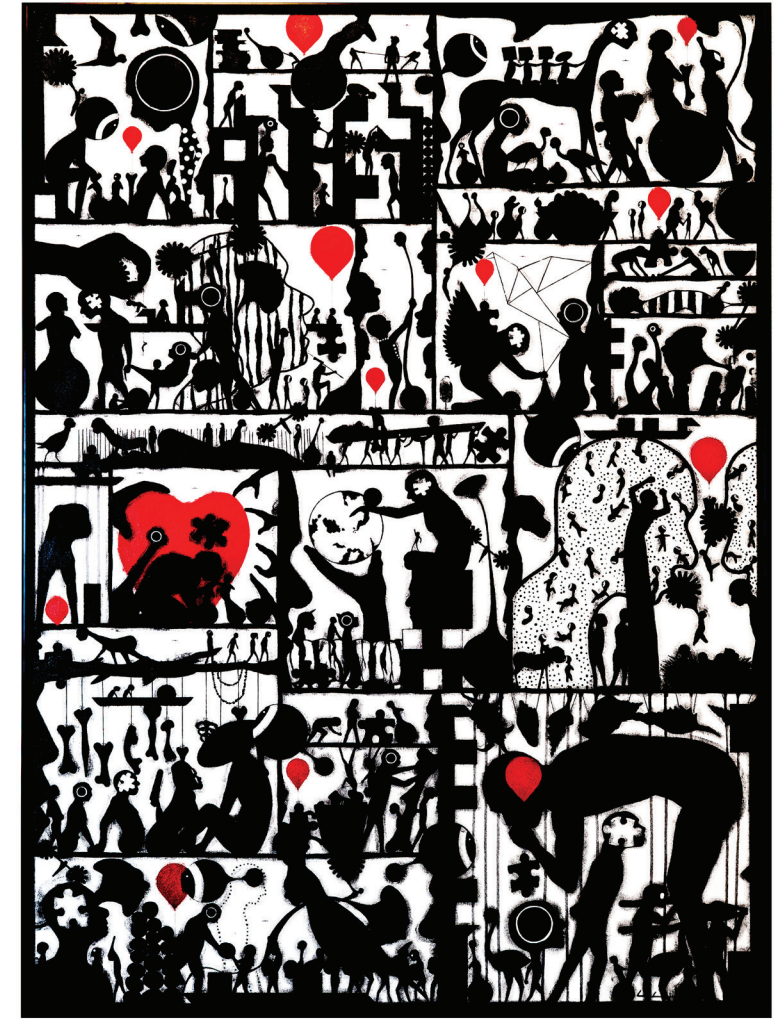
Intermingled Arcadia
Acrylic on canvas, 500 x 400 mm



Intertwined Xanadu
Acrylic on canvas, 500 x 400 mm



Interfused Elysium
Acrylic on canvas, 500 x 400 mm



An Uncanny Catharsis of Unrequited Bones - Part III
Acrylic on canvas, 1500 x 1100 mm