



03. September 2022 - 29. October 2022

**WIM BOTHA**  
TO BE WATER

Galerie Hans Mayer



Wim Botha  
**To Be Water**

Water – seen and thought of as a force at rest in itself, the texture smooth from the depths of the element, then fissured by movements that ripple across the surface through inner motifs giving the impression as if momentarily formed yet is always flowing, emerging.

Wim Botha's new sculptures appear as though they had emerged from such fluidity: Carved from walnut, they are enveloped in an immaterial veil that exposes human facial features or reveals rugged landscapes in which skeletons of homo sapiens pose and recline. They are surrounded by dichromatically reflecting glass plates that illuminate the space created by the sculptural assemblages and expand transversely through their shimmering traces of light – sometimes supplemented by canvas, the coarse lineated thread of which is retained, still visible under oil paint applied in a reductive manner.

A distinctive feature of Botha's sculptures is his use of the non finito technique, which in turn allows them to be experienced as independent bodies through the assemblage of various material fragments. Previously often formed out of paper, encyclopedias and other discarded books, Styrofoam, bronze, marble, or steel, the growth and mode of existence of the material is intrinsic to his new works made of walnut wood. The walnut promises protection in times of reserve: through its rich texture, it promises to be a source in moments that call for absorption. Walnut trees bear unpredictably and are known for fruiting heavily one year and being nearly barren the next. During these periods of bearing, nuts are produced extensively to ensure the continuity of the trees, which in turn act in groups or collectively in the fabric of a forest.

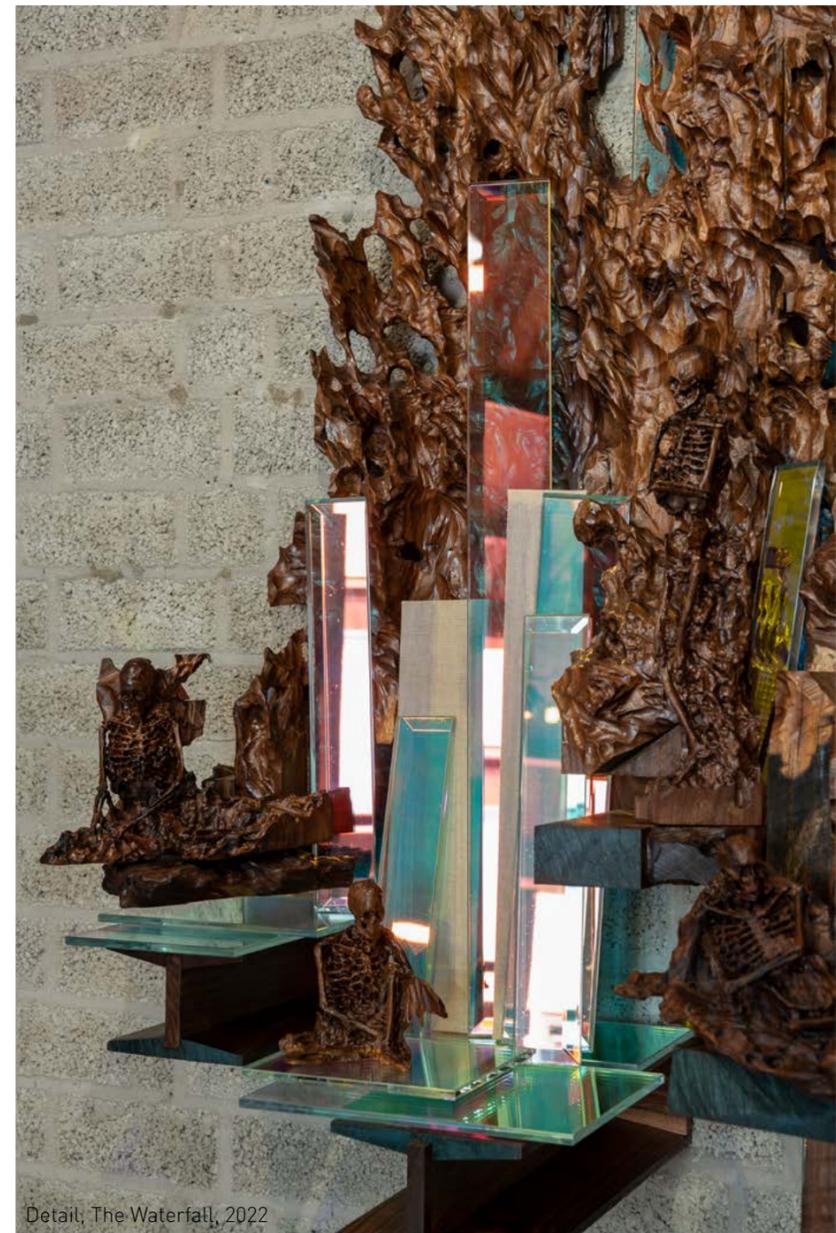
The walnut wood is precious and outgrows a fluid organism – it umbues itself in Wim Botha's often human-scale sculptures through the texture of the wood and by means of narratively generated forms, subtly reporting on a kinship that unfolds between water, trees, wood, and humanity. The artist, who was born in 1974 in Pretoria, South Africa, and lives and works in Cape Town, takes up the subject of oscillating connections analogously in his drawings and works on paper exhibited at Galerie Hans Mayer. These show the human form reduced to the basic forms of his skeletal frame in familiar yet both timeless and contemporary poses. Contemplative aspects are reflected in individual abstract traces of color and monochrome areas of color in blue, which partly dissolve the structure of the pigments on the picture surface through water and leaving a sense of fluidity. It is the motif and essence for Wim Botha's exhibition "To Be Water", which brings the actual and the emerging together in a magical flow.

Dr. Christina Irrgang

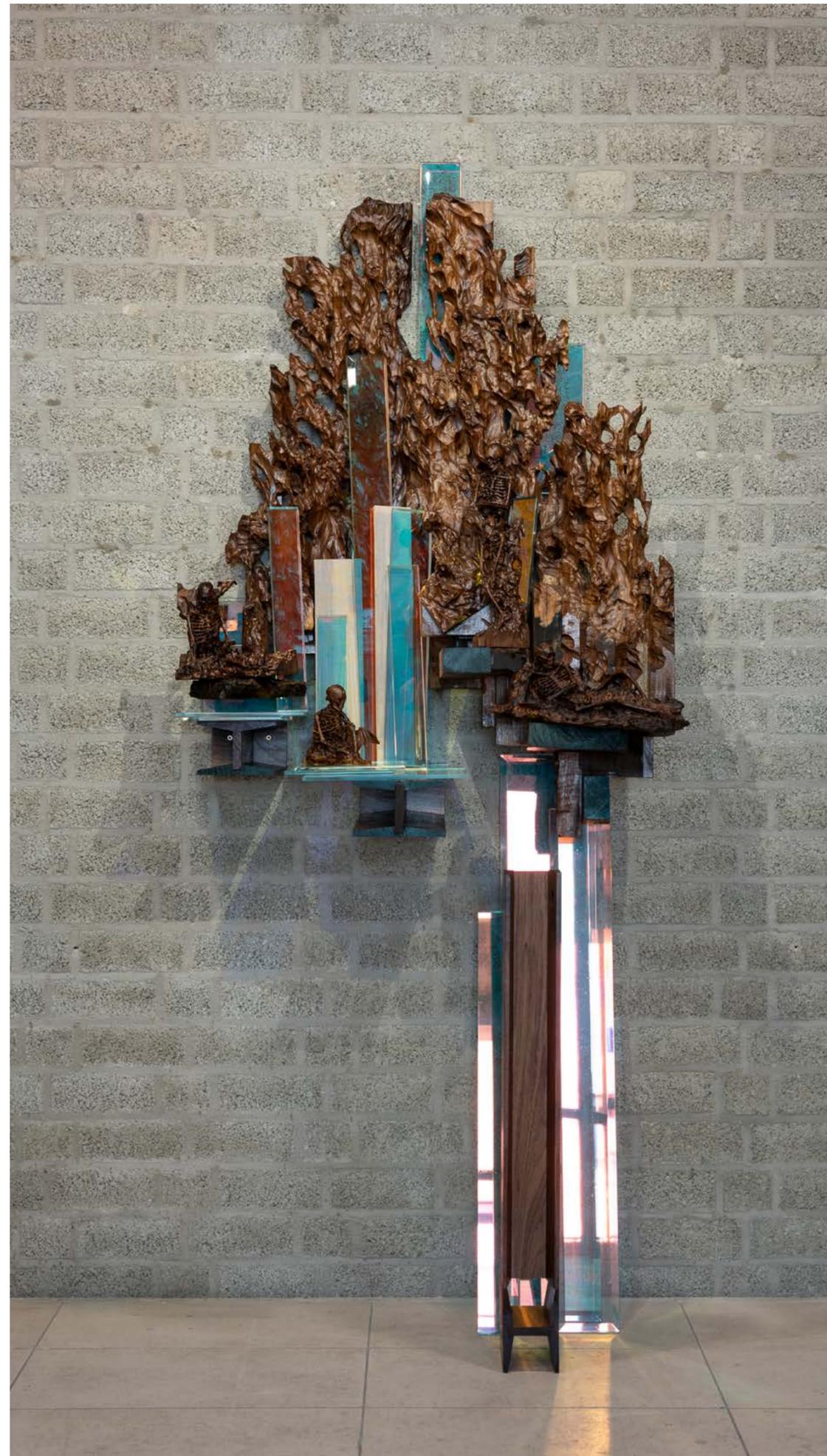




To be Water 5, 2022  
Pigment on canvas,  
Edition Unique  
72 x 92 x 5 cm

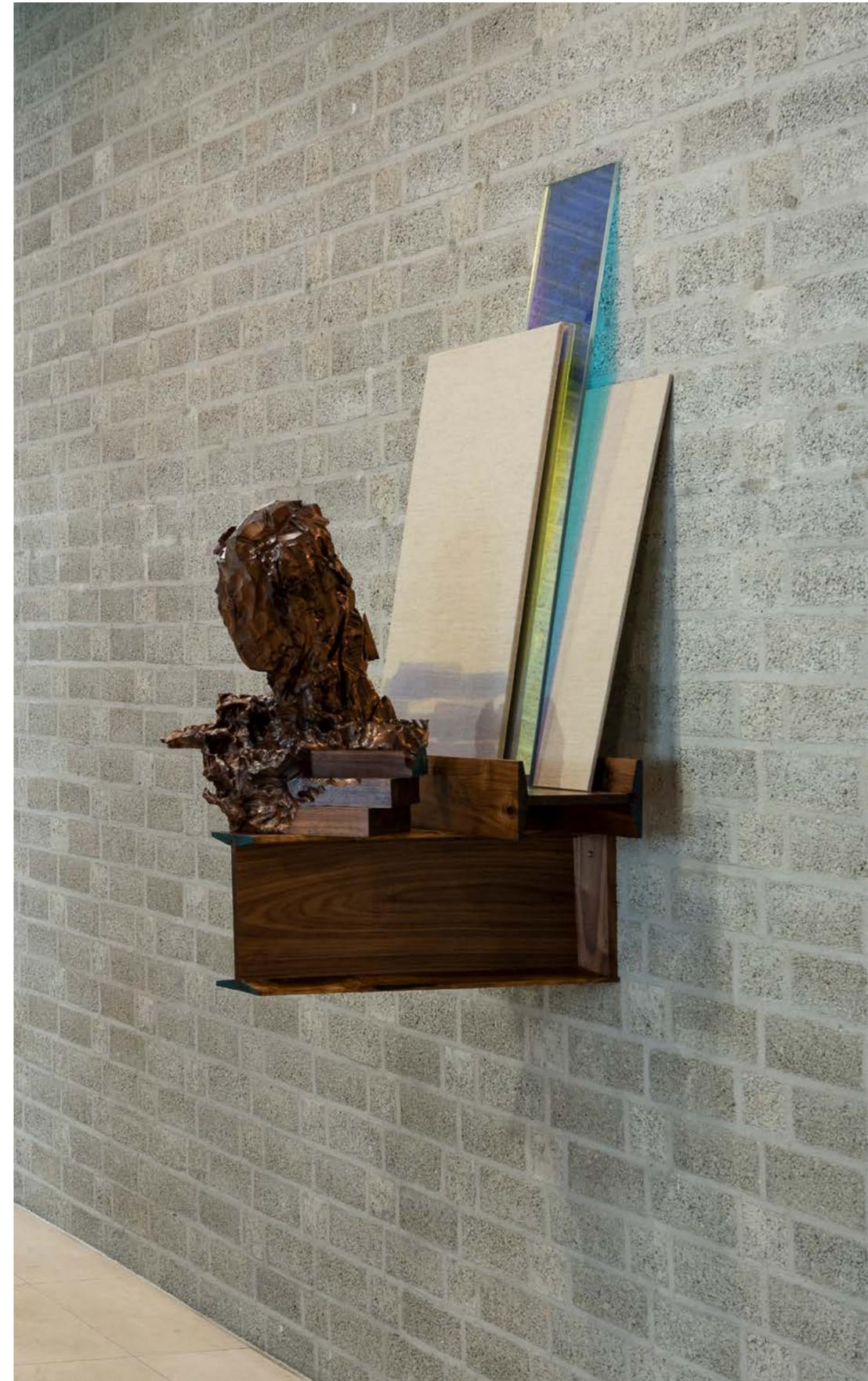


Detail, The Waterfall, 2022



The Waterfall, 2022  
Walnut, glass, oil on linen,  
Edition unique  
95 x 230 x 60 cm



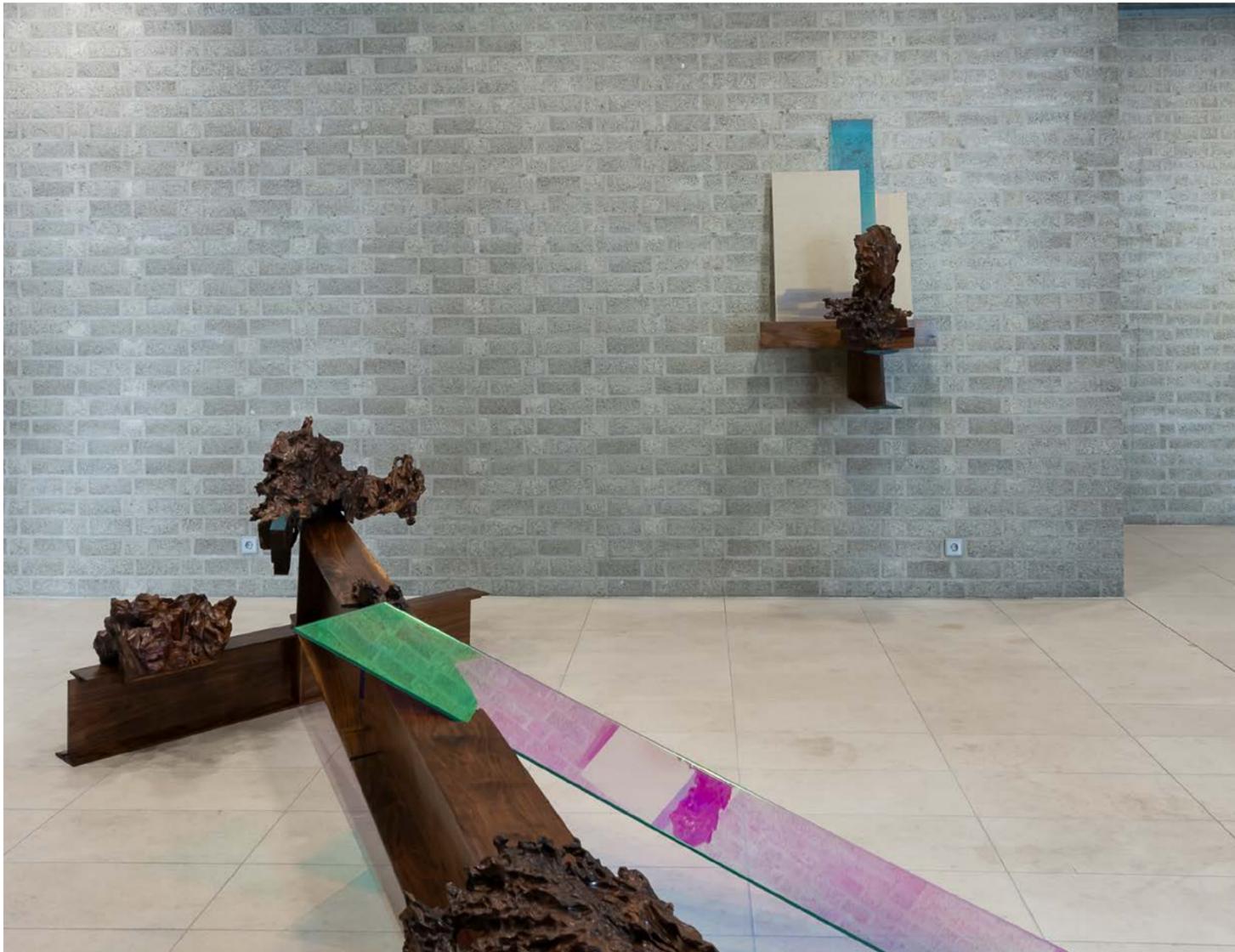




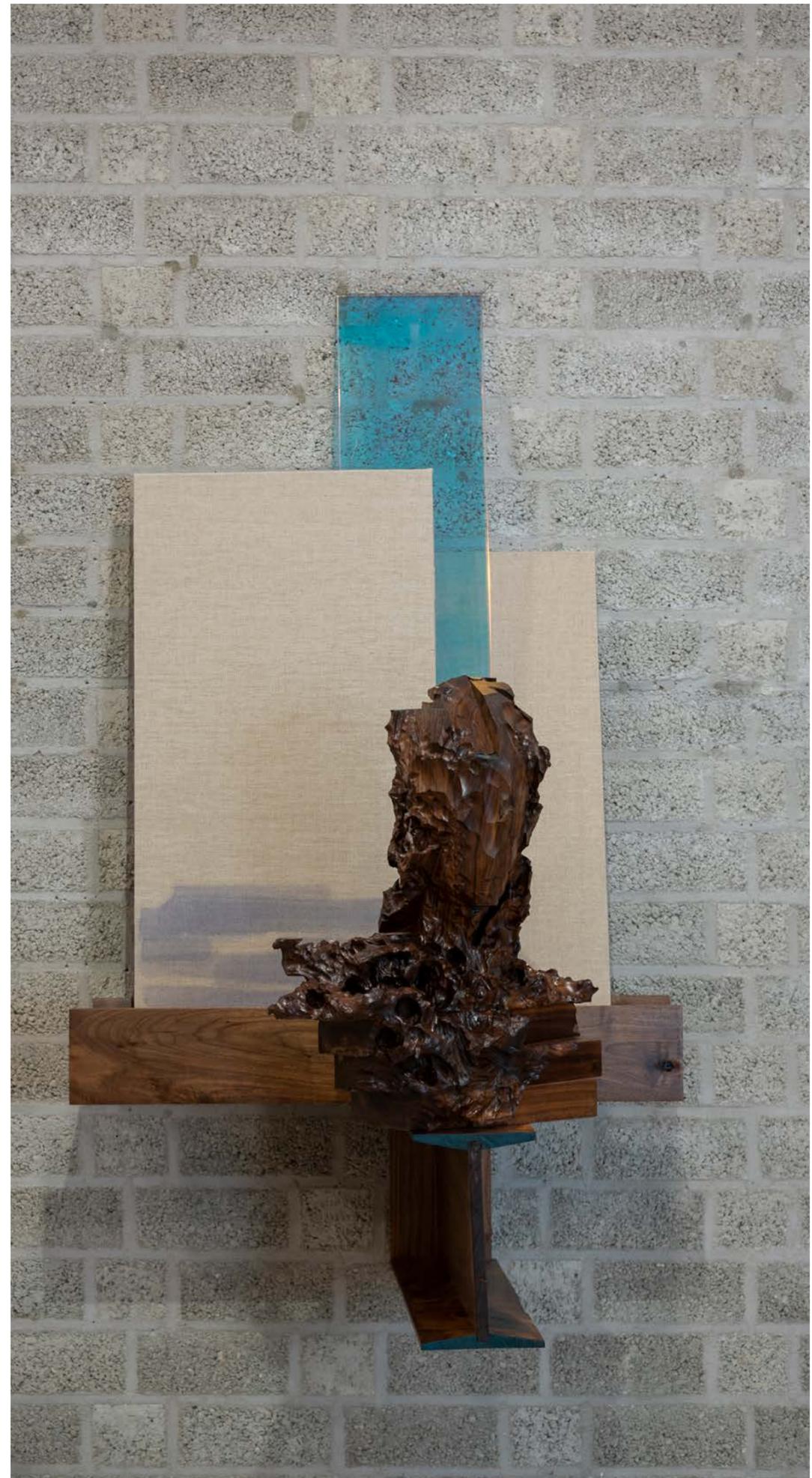
To be Water 6, 2022  
Pigment on canvas,  
Edition Unique  
42,5 x 55,5 x 5 cm



Flow Study 1, 2022



Flow Study 1, 2022  
Walnut, glass, oil on linen,  
Edition unique  
78 x 130 x 70 cm



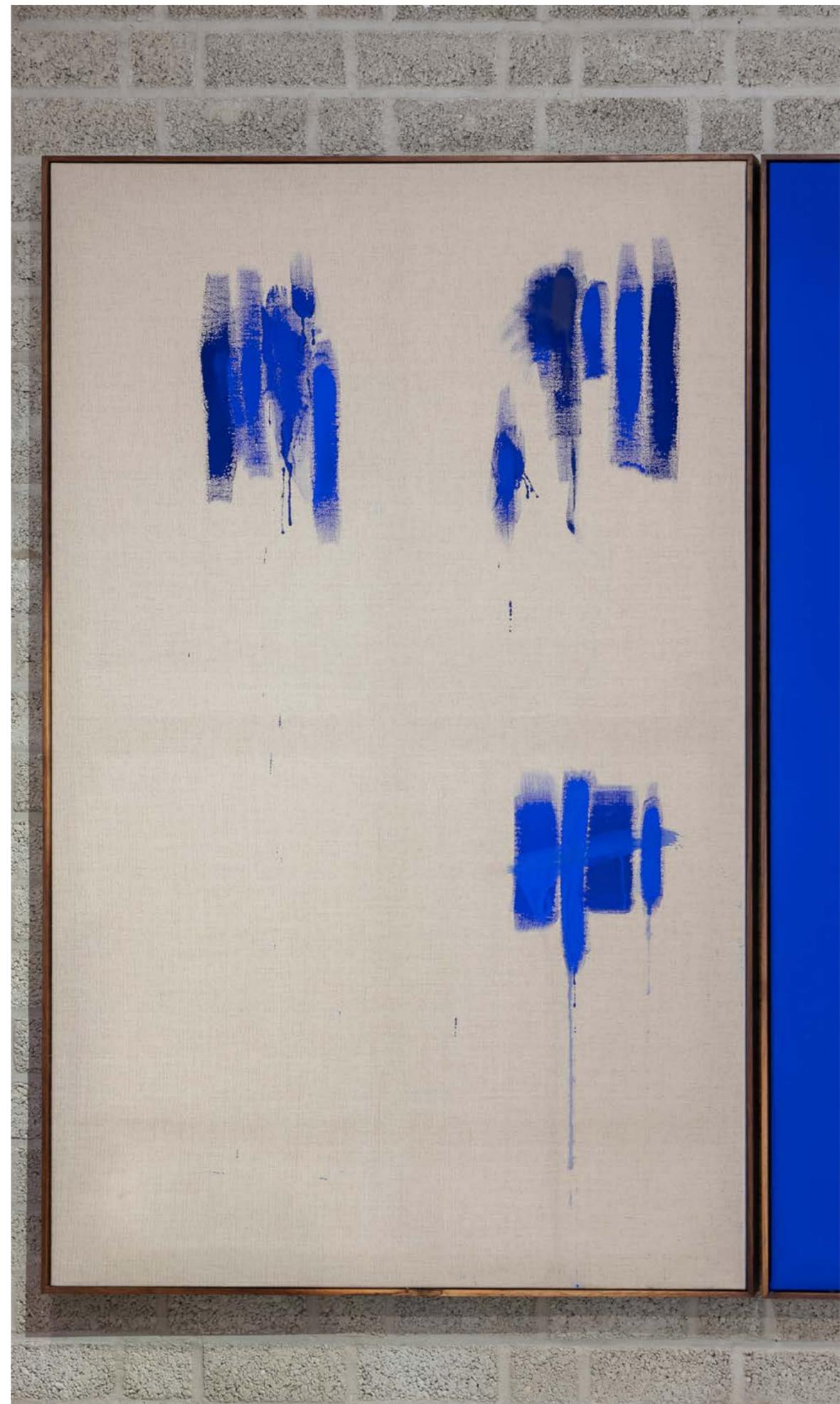


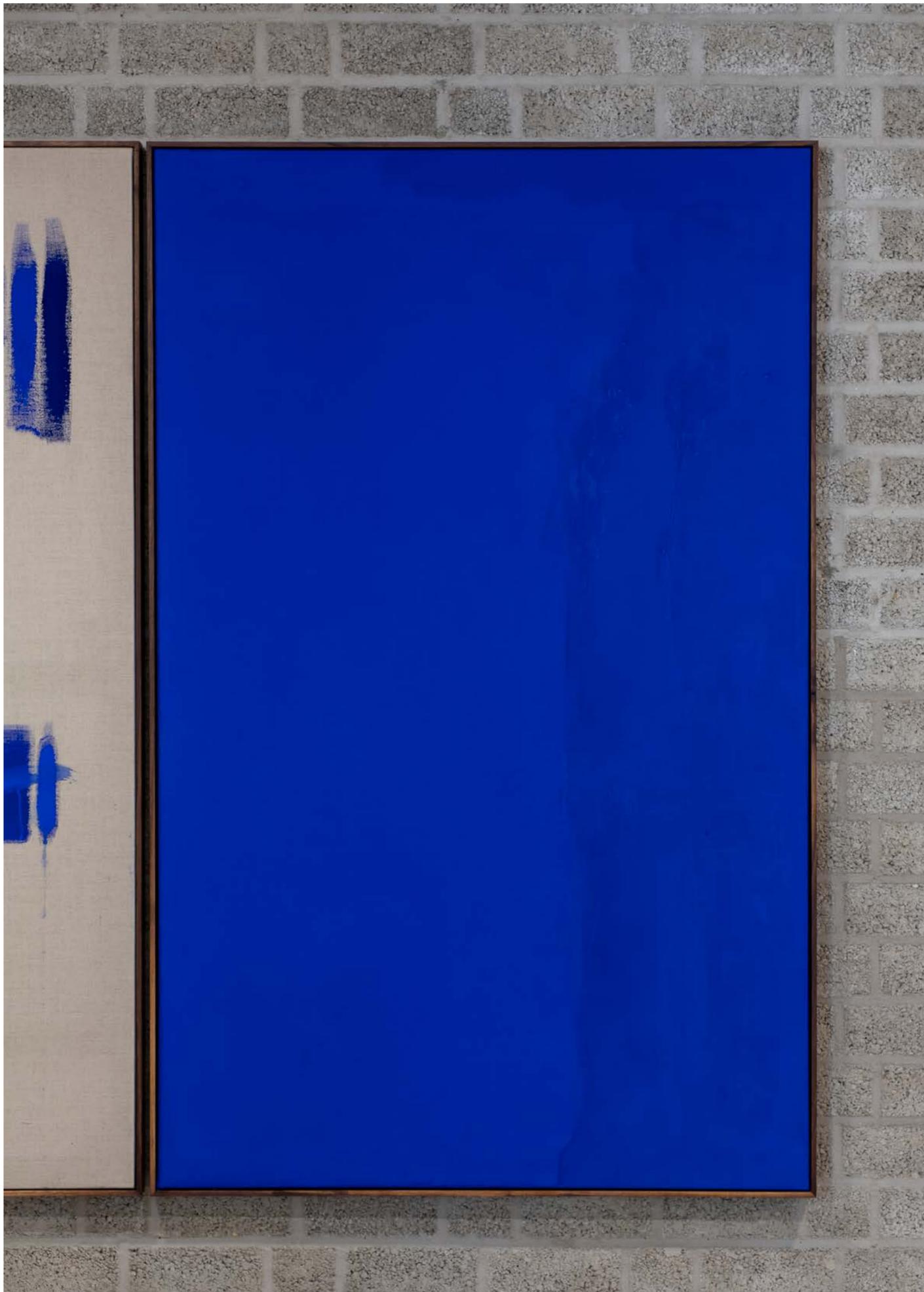
Untitled, 2022  
Walnut,  
Edition unique  
20 x 73 x 52 cm





To be Water 2, 2022  
Pigment on canvas,  
Edition Unique  
102 x 162 x 5 cm

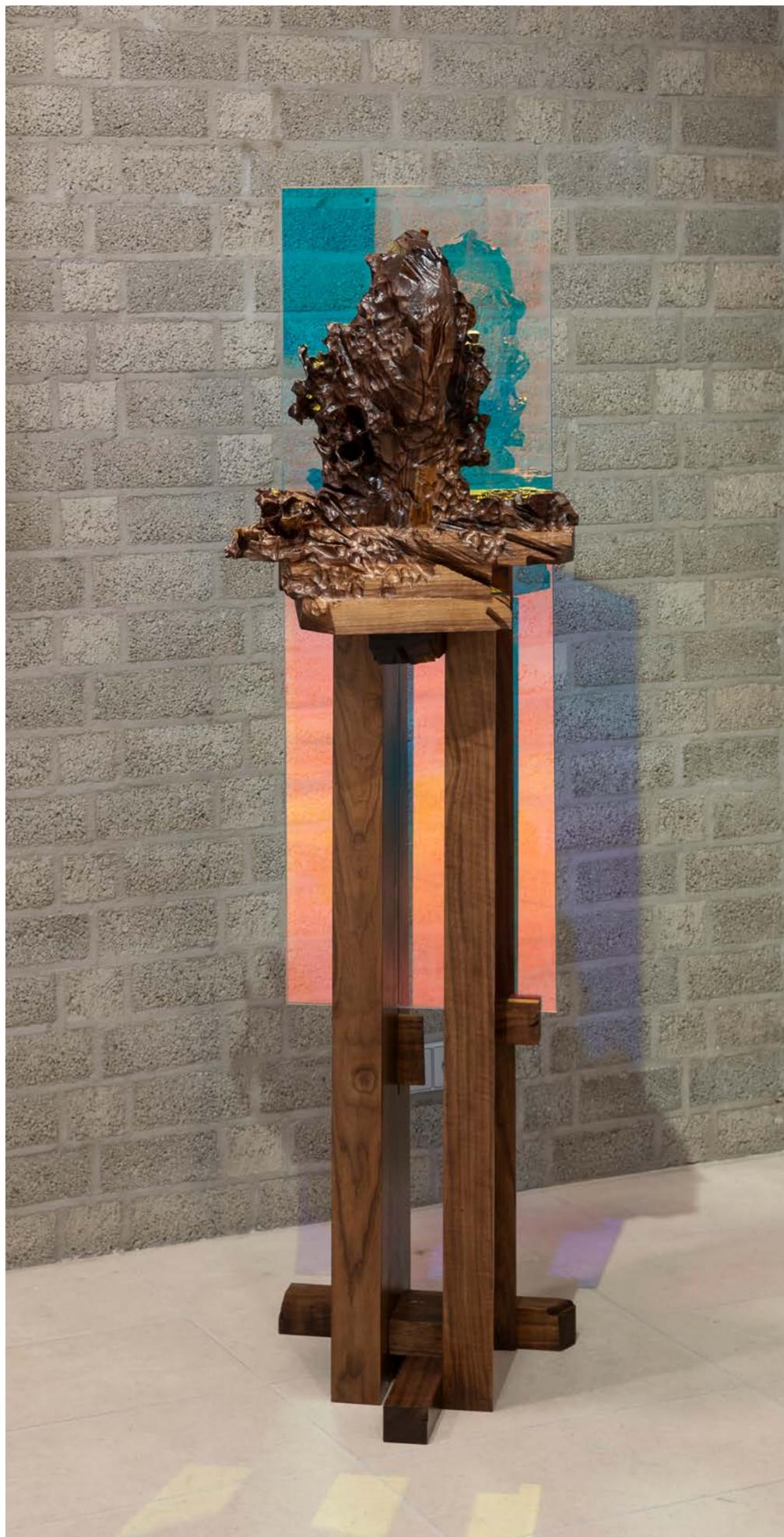




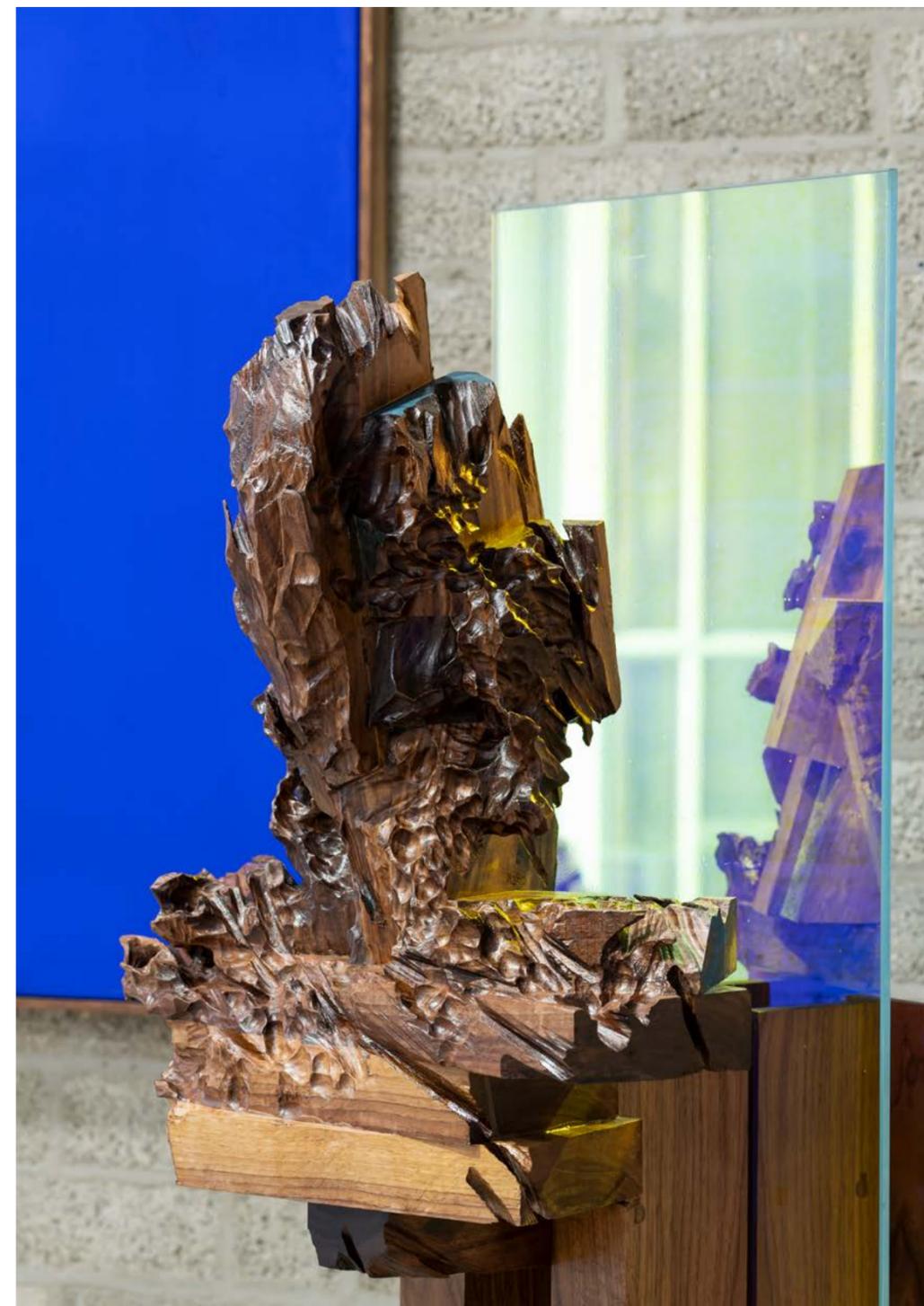
To be Water 1, 2022  
Pigment on canvas,  
Edition Unique  
102 x 162 x 5 cm

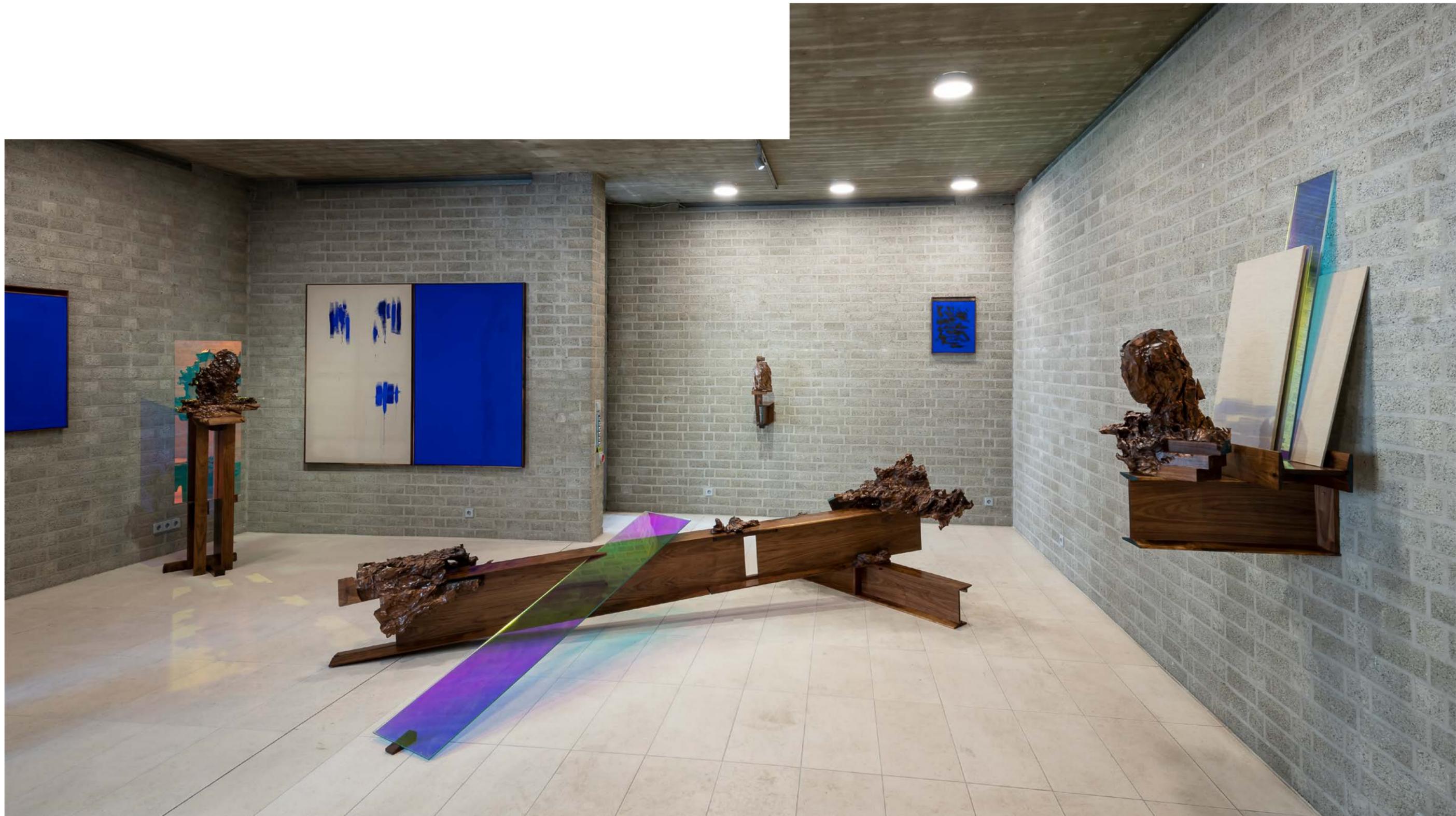


Flow Study 2, 2022



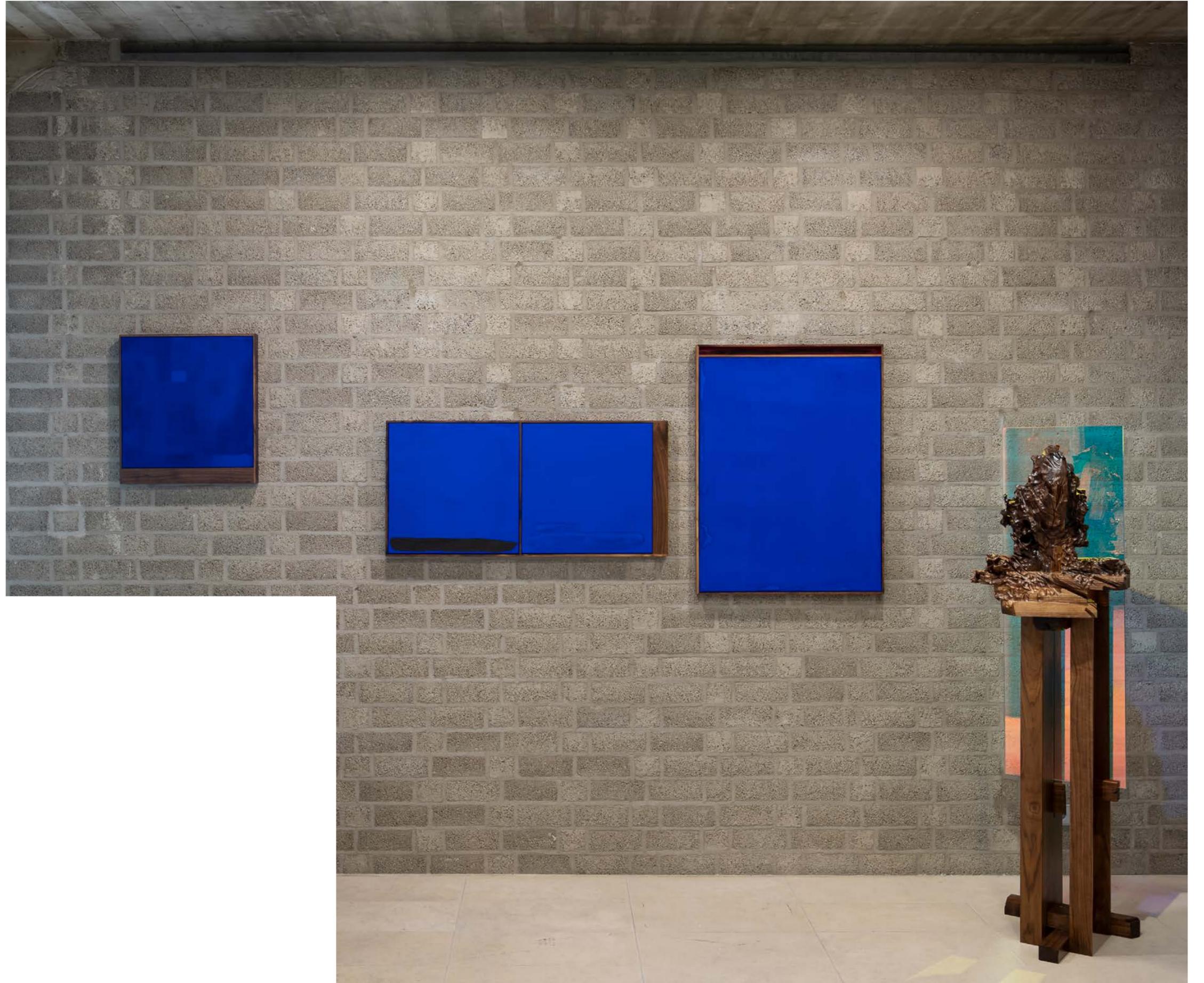
Flow Study 2, 2022  
Walnut, glass, oil on linen,  
Edition unique  
50 x 175 x 53 cm





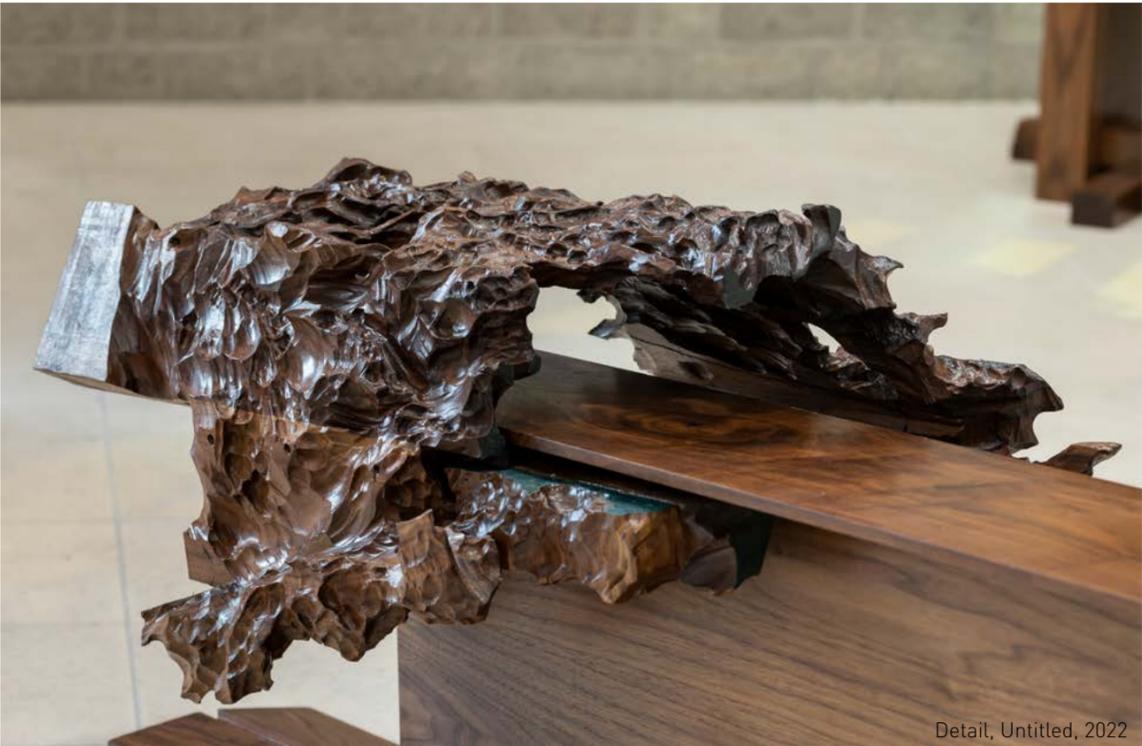


Untitled, 2022  
Walnut, glass,  
Edition Unique  
370 x 230 x 100 cm





To be Water 7, 2022  
Pigment on canvas,  
Edition Unique  
57 x 52 x 5 cm



Detail, Untitled, 2022



Detail, Untitled, 2022



To be Water 3, 2022  
Pigment on canvas,  
Edition Unique  
108 x 52 x 5 cm



To be Water 4, 2022  
Pigment on canvas,  
Edition Unique  
72 x 96 x 5 cm



Detail, Untitled, 2022

## **Galerie Hans Mayer**

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