



A POSTER A DAY

Mine  
Yours  
Ours  
Hers

PROJECT ROOM N°10 ABA ART LAB

BY ALEX PROBA





## ABA *ART* LAB

Plaza Porta de Santa Catalina 21b  
07012 Palma de Mallorca  
T. +34 971 717 835  
M. +34 656 965 423  
[www.abaart.com](http://www.abaart.com)  
[info@abaart.com](mailto:info@abaart.com)

**Photography & Design Layout**  
Leon Forristal

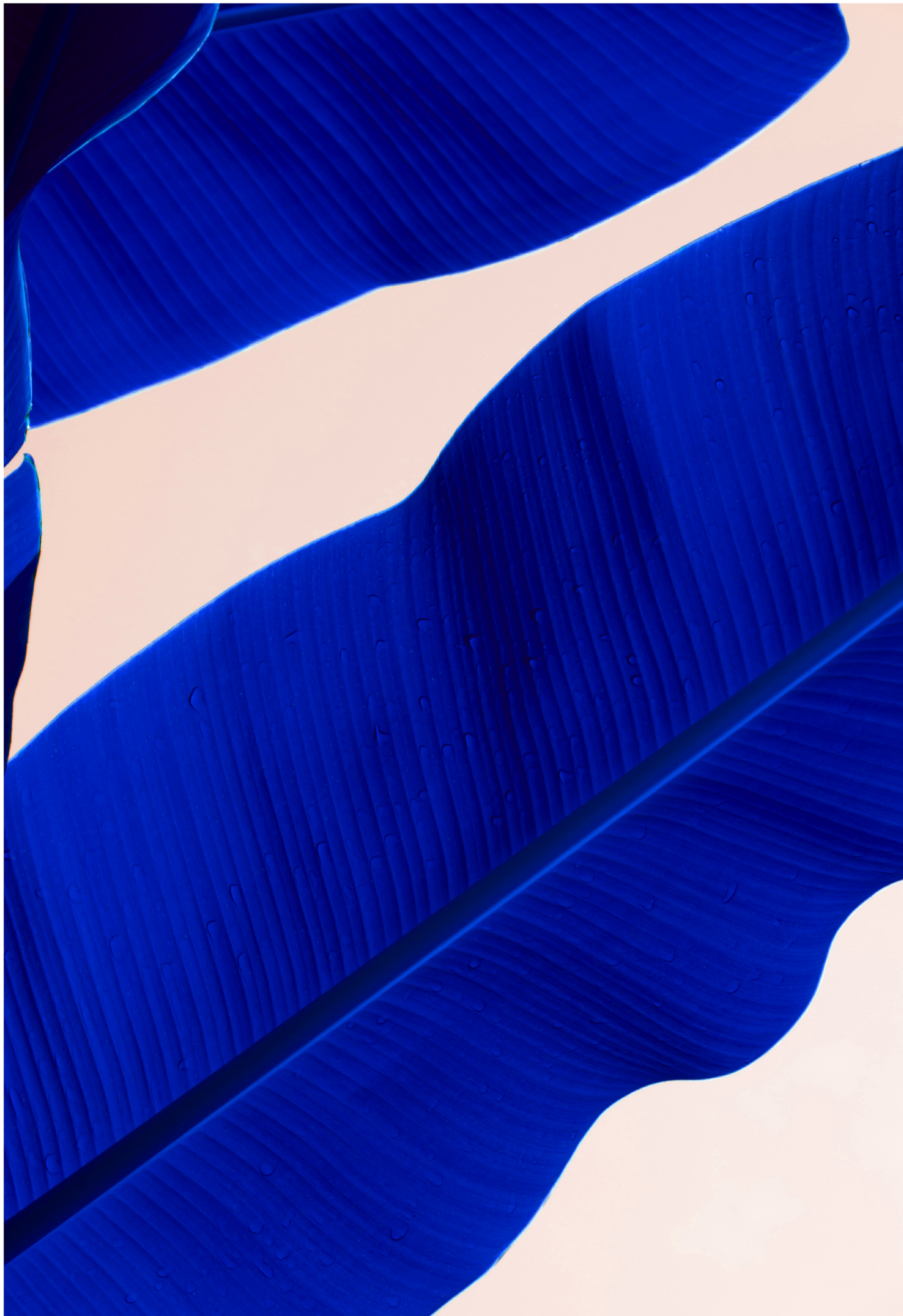
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## AN ALEX PROBA INTERVIEW by ABA ART LAB

### **What are the moments where you need to create?**

I am a maker at heart. When I make I am the happiest? I try to create things every single day, even if it's only sketches of ideas, at least it is something. But I do have to say that there are moments where I use my creativity as personal therapy—sometimes when I am stuck with a project or an assignment I try to switch gears and create something off topic for a little while. That paired with a nice run will bring me back to center.

### **When did you decide to dedicate your life to art and design?**

My story is a little longer one. Design or the arts weren't really part of my upbringing. I was raised by a family of doctors with a high focus on science in general. Art wasn't a thing that was a career option for me. When I turned sixteen, I studied as an exchange student in Ohio. That's where I was exposed to art and design fully. I've learned to appreciate art and craft more than other time in my life. I started drawing, painting and experimenting with materials and objects. I felt something special when creating. After I came back home to Germany, I somehow didn't stop creating. My parents thought of my newfound creativity as a hobby but I didn't. But when it was time to decide on a career, I initially chose the expected route to become a doctor. That decision was quickly dismissed and I started to explore the world of Spatial and Graphic design as well as product and furniture. Now I feel incredibly fortunate to have chosen the path that's right for me and that fulfills me every single day. All I want to do is create and make things. I feel very fortunate to be able to do that.

### **What are your sources of inspiration (in Art History? Other artists?)**

I try to take in the world that we live in as sources of inspiration. I try to look up and down, left and right when I run around New York City. I feel nowadays everything, especially inspiration, is so easy accessible to us due to the internet that I often try to remind myself to take in the simple things in life and find beauty and sparks in my surrounding (textures of the city, nature, people, weather patterns etc.).

### **What do you like to read? Authors?**

For the longest period, I was obsessed with reading "The Secret Life Of Plants" by Peter Tompkins (1973) over and over again. I am not quite sure what it is, but there is something very magical and inspirational in imagining that the green world surrounding our lives, each and every day, have feelings and emotions. I like to imagine that my plants know who I am in some capacity. Ha, I know it must sound crazy, but I must say it's a beautiful piece of literature.

### **What music do you specially appreciate? and while you work?**

I am a very sound sensitive person. To the point that I have to sleep with earplugs every night. There would be no other way for me to actually fall asleep otherwise. That said, I am also very particular with music while creating. Most of the time I prefer silence. But there are days where I would listen to one song on repeat as well. My most calming "sounds" to do work are actually podcasts, or generally conversations between people.



**What cultures and/or countries inspire you?**

I feel like I am often inspired by the Unknown and Undiscovered. There are places in the world I am dying to visit, for example “The Rainbow Mountains” in China, parts of India and Nepal as well as the crazy colorful city of El Alto in Bolivia. I haven’t had the chance to go there yet, but that doesn’t mean that I can’t be inspired by them. I imagine those places to be some kind of way, loud, colorful, energetic, mixed with amazing food and cultures and people. I like to believe that it comes close to reality. As you probably noticed all these places I’ve listed are places full of color and energy. I think that is a very important aspect of who I am, as well as what my work is.

**What are your favourite materials for creating and designing?**

There is no favorite material or medium. I love being able to switch from digital work to a brush or from glass to textile. I am someone that needs to do something different every day, within my area of art and design of course, but I need to be able to have no boundaries to create the best work. which is your message? the one you would like to transmit to the viewer?

Each project has a different message in my opinion. But in this case, you are showcasing my four year long project “A Poster A Day—Mine Yours Ours Hers” and especially in this personal project of mine I wanted to develop a relationship with “strangers” and make someone smile every day, even just for one second. I wanted to turn their stories, sad or happy ones, into visual manifestations told by them, visualized by me. Now, after completing the project in June, I somehow feel empty and am already searching for my next community based project. I miss them, even though I don’t really know them.

**How do you feel about your first solo exhibition in a private gallery in Spain?**

I am still beyond belief to be honest. I feel humbled and grateful and it’s something I just dreamed of.

**What is your opinion on the contemporary art market?**

Oof I must say, I am still very sad it is such a “business”.

**How is a day of a young European woman artist in NY?**

For me personally, New York is one of the best cities in the world to be a creative in. It is a melting pot full of amazing and talented people. This forces you to work hard and try to compete with the others. Not in a negative way, more in an emotional and motivational way. It makes you work hard and do things and just go for it. And sometimes it might make you do things that won’t work or where you fail but that failure is what you need to keep moving and doing and growing as a designer or any type of creative. No one should be afraid to fail—it is one of the greatest things we as humans need to learn.

Haha, well everything that is surrounding me in my home and in my personal life has to be curated and well thought out. I am not sure if it’s a blessing or a curse. But I am very particular—with everything.

This is the scariest thought for me. Every day I ask myself: how will I stay relevant? do you ever think of a Proba aesthetics universe to be a building, a public space...? That is my favorite question because it is my dream. I always imagined, and still am, to one day be able to own a 5 to 7 story house in a place of my choice where each floor has a different and unique function, for example ceramics on floor 7, woodworking on floor 6, a graphic design studio on floor 5, an architecture office on floor 4 etc. I would love to spent each day of the week on a different floor.

























## A Poster a Day

"A Poster a Day" began as a personal ritual.

One summer night in 2013, artist and designer Alex Proba found herself stuck in the goo of a creative block. In hopes of shaking it loose, she started to play with random images, shapes, and hues. She had no goal in mind, but even so, a design emerged—and her creative brain was ring again. The process was satisfying, freeing, and addicting. So Proba made a pact with herself: repeat the process every day for the next year. It's from this private scenario, hatched late-night in a Brooklyn apartment, that "A Poster a Day" emerged. But the project quickly became something of a public phenomenon.

Since then, Proba has made an artwork everyday for four years. That's 1,460 posters, as she humbly refers to them, in total. Sometime before or after her day job as a creative director, she'd queue up design programs to produce an artwork that inadvertently reflected her day, her mood, or unseen forces in her life that only images could capture. Then, she'd post them to Instagram for public consumption. After 20, 65, 109 days, a lexicon of symbols began to amass that were both tantalizingly personal and open-ended enough so that anyone could relate.

On day one, two luminous, buoyant circles intersected like a venn diagram floating in space. On day 103, a bunny stared quizzically at an abstract arrangement of angular forms. On day 294, a fuschia-glazed donut emitted a comical burst of purple steam. The ritual was calming, and the response e usive, so Proba kept at it. But as day 365 rolled around, she realized something needed to change. It was time to more actively engage the community who'd begun to expect "A Poster a Day"—that little burst of color, amusement, beauty—in their feed everyday.

Year two offered an open call: "Last year's posters were about my life. The next 365 days are about You." Heeding the invitation, friends and strangers alike sent their stories, which Proba translated into a visual encyclopedia of memories. A submission from @saracombs resulted in a hybrid guava-cactus, sumptuous albeit blanketed in spikes; @k8barrows's tale morphed into peach grid filled intermittently with scoops of technicolor ice cream. Proba didn't reproduce the texts, in turn preserving a secret between herself and the storytellers—not to mention triggering curiosity in others. Each year after, the project morphed. Proba called the next "Ours," for which she canvassed her followers for questions that she answered with art. Year four brought "Hers," which gave form to crowd-sourced stories about inspiring women.

This summer, on June 24, Proba published her last poster. Luckily, the project lives on in the 1,460 posters left behind. And these, for those who participated, are more than just pretty designs—they are memories, they are feelings, and they are a connection with something larger than themselves. —Alexxa Gotthardt

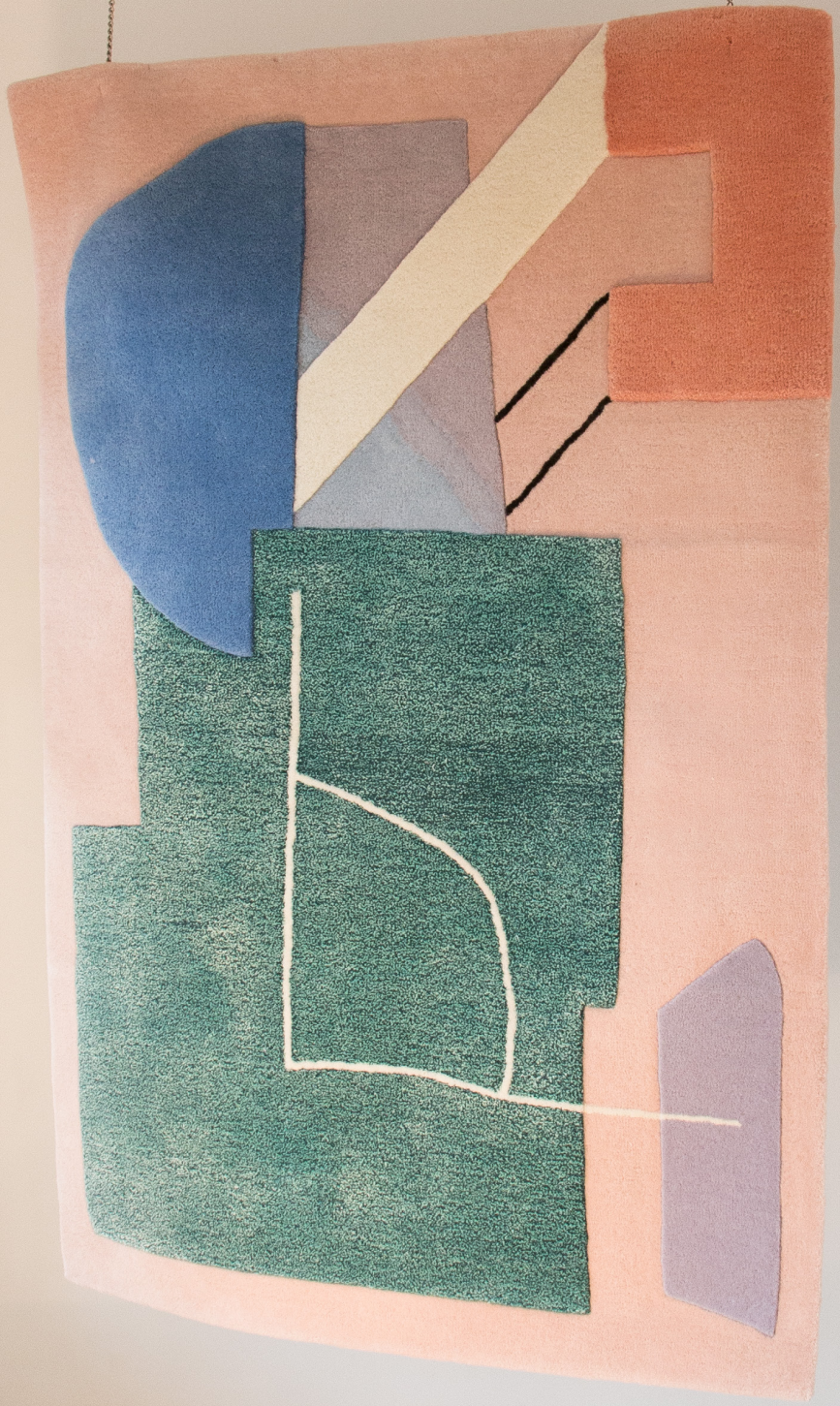
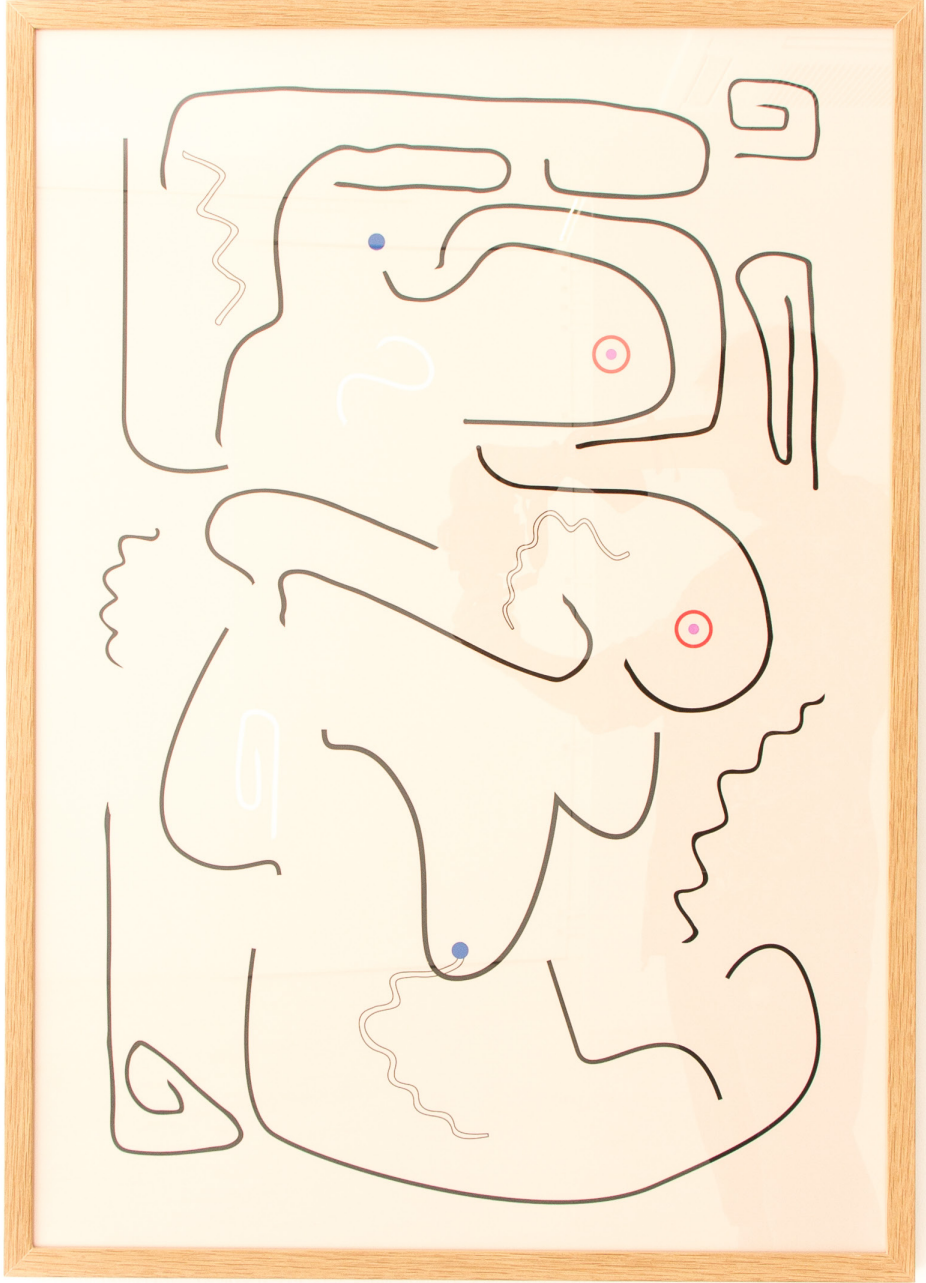




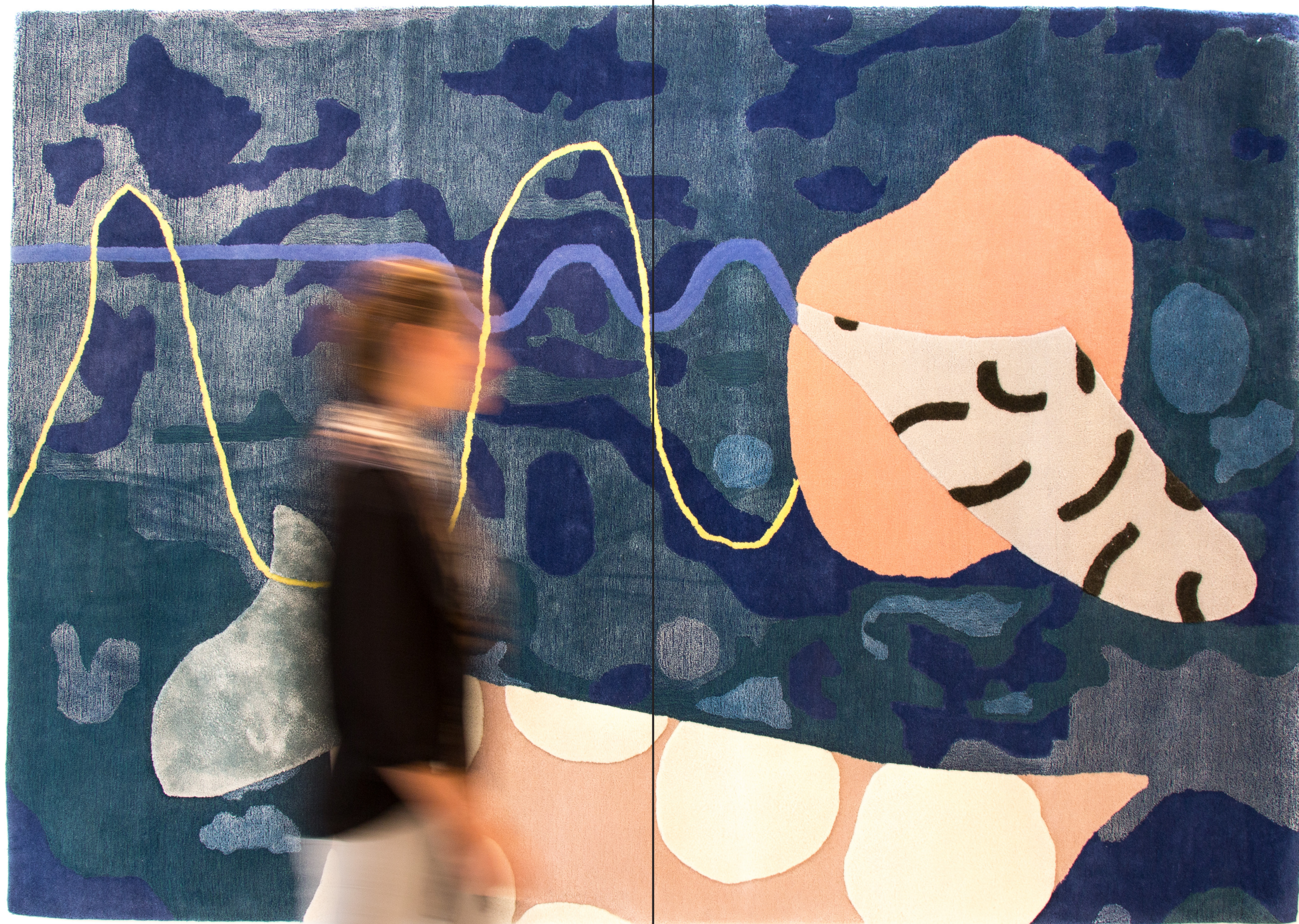














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