

PHILIPPE BERTHO



MARTIN•LAWRENCE GALLERIES

Bertho

About Philippe Bertho (b.1964)

The works of Philippe Bertho are characterized by his innovative approach to both subject matter and materials. In his earlier works, he show-cased his ingenuity by depicting individuals in comical and precarious situations, and incorporating unusual materials such as rusty metal boxes, old light bulbs, and corrugated iron in his paintings. Despite bizarre settings that often conjure up uncertainty or peculiarity, his subjects exude an air of nonchalance, evoking a light-hearted atmosphere.

One of Bertho's most distinctive techniques is the use of *tromp l'oeil* ("to fool the eye"), which establishes the illusion of three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface. This technique, combined with his surreal compositions, are at the heart of Bertho's artistic vision. Add to that his innate ability to incorporate bold colors and playful imagery and each zany creation becomes a delight to behold.

Typically populating his canvases with mischievous actors – climbing, searching, dancing, leaping, running, thinking – Bertho fabricates hyper-realist scenarios that immediately inspire curiosity in the viewer. This curiosity reflects the artist's own relentless inquisitiveness, shown in his works again and again.

Often emphasizing the physical smallness of the individual in comparison to the vast and infinite world that surrounds them, Bertho alludes to a sense of surreal 'aloneness,' but not necessarily loneliness. The viewer is invited into these expansive settings, and to reflect on their own place in the chaotic reality they live in. How do we each experience solitude, particularly the creativity found there, or the abnormal – how does this connect or disconnect us from others?

In Bertho's latest compositions, he explores new expressive territory - roiling seas, celestial star-scapes, and otherworldly fields – often embellished with whimsical, 'Dr. Seuss-esque,' plumes swaying in the breeze. The feeling evokes a nostalgia for both the wonder of childhood and its fascination with nonsense, silliness, and anything that does not 'behave.' The work is so immersive that you cannot help becoming enthralled in these outlandish scenarios, strangely captivated by his unique vision.

On the Cover: **Love Tralala**, acrylic on canvas, 21.5 x 18.25"

Philippe at work in his studio.





Artist Statement

“It was about 2 years before the pandemic. I felt the strong need to take a fresh look at my relationship with art. The idea of starting a sharp turn in my journey began to tease me more and more. I told myself that if until then I had done things in this way, nothing except habit and a certain intellectual comfort should oblige me from now on to do them in the same way. I then immersed myself in the history of art, from the Italian Renaissance to today. The great artists whose names are frozen in the collective memory, but also those equally great in my opinion a little neglected by history or even completely forgotten; I told myself that the artistic experience should be like a road trip through reality, through cultures, countries, oceans, space, and that freedom should be the goal of art, and also of life.

I visited museums and art galleries like a child discovering things. Looking at a painting by Jean Léon Jérôme, Répine or Ingres by superimposing on this look, a Fernand Léger, a Matisse or a Toulouse Lautrec is a fascinating exercise. 20th century artists shook minds with their insolence. And today, we admit that Marcel Duchamp’s urinal is a true masterpiece. But in reality what is grandiose is not the urinal, it is all the passions that have been unleashed around this idea that a urinal can be a work of art. We know this very well; it’s the paths that count.

I changed my technical habits and tried to tame the colors together, in search of my aesthetic and freedom. A canvas is a freeze frame in a film where the wind, the sea spray, joy, humor, madness mix. A painting is a delicious effort provoked by the love of life, a gentle or violent impulse, a fever for which we especially do not want to find a cure.

Some paintings stand out from the crowd like a head that stands out above the other heads in a crowd and can be recognized in the distance. We see them larger in the middle of all the others and these are the ones that call you to other paintings to come, to other paintings whose shape and textures and colors will express life.”

Super KITCH
acrylic on canvas
47.12 x 23.5"





The Most Beautiful Boat
acrylic on canvas
25.62 x 21.25"



Love Again
acrylic on canvas
24 x 19.75"



As Seen From Above

acrylic on canvas

25.5 x 19.5"



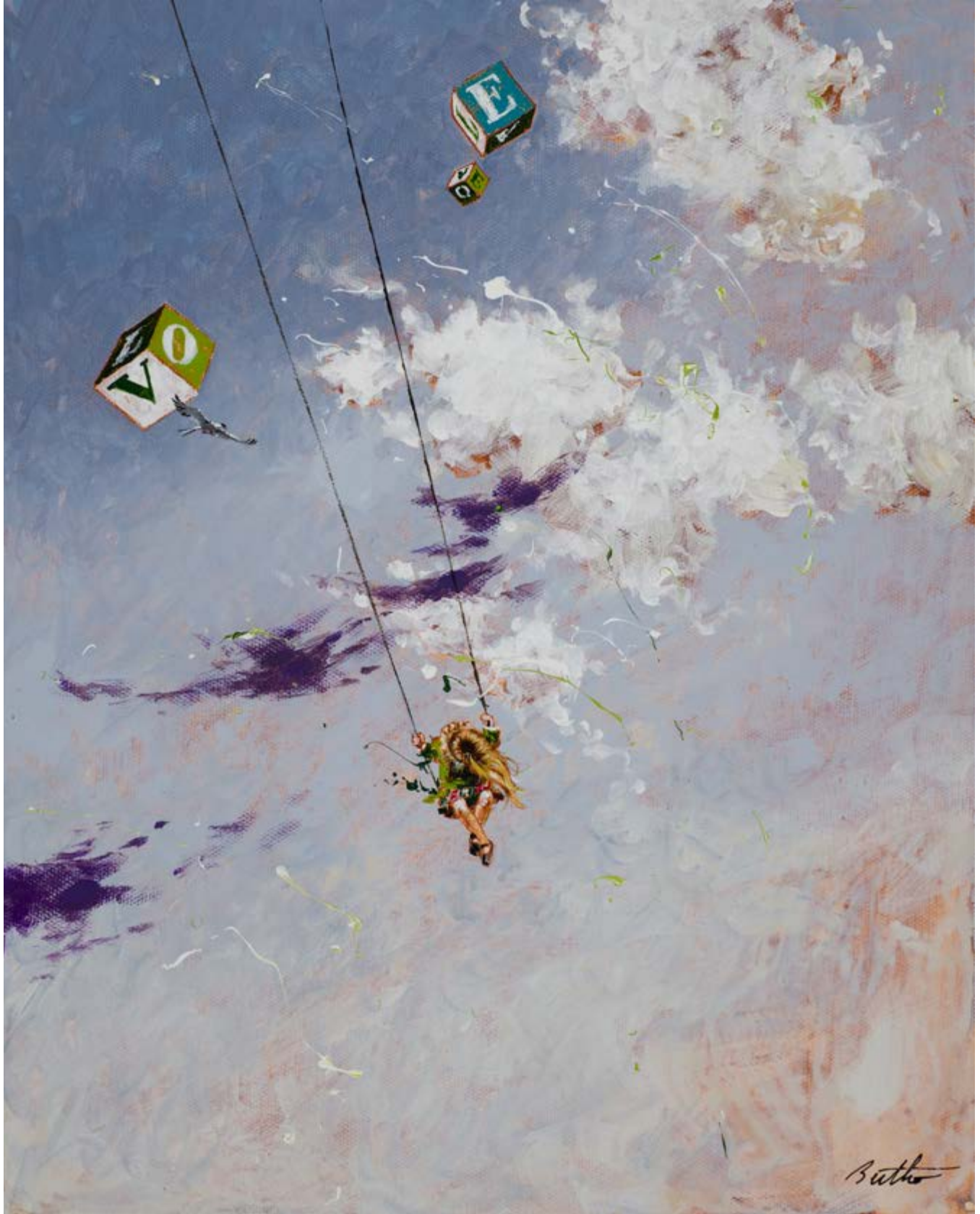
Let's Be Funny
acrylic on canvas
25.5 x 19.5"



Beyond There
acrylic on canvas
25.5 x 21.25"



In the Sky
acrylic on canvas
11.75 x 11.75"



In the Wind
acrylic on canvas
16.12 x 13"



Vacation

acrylic on canvas

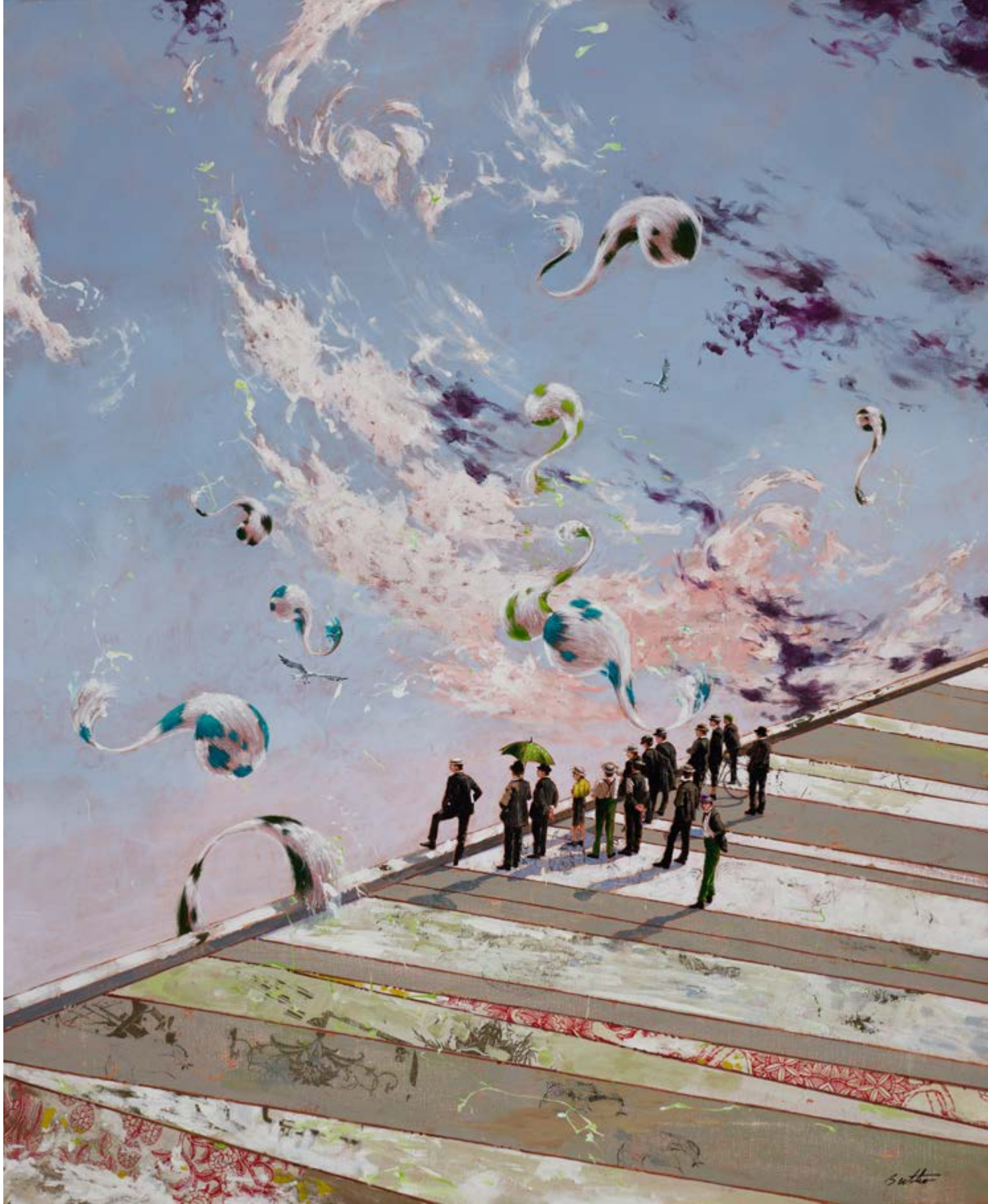
25.5 x 19.5"

Everything is Fine

acrylic on canvas

28.62 x 21.25"





The Love of Pompoms
acrylic on canvas
28.62 x 23.5"

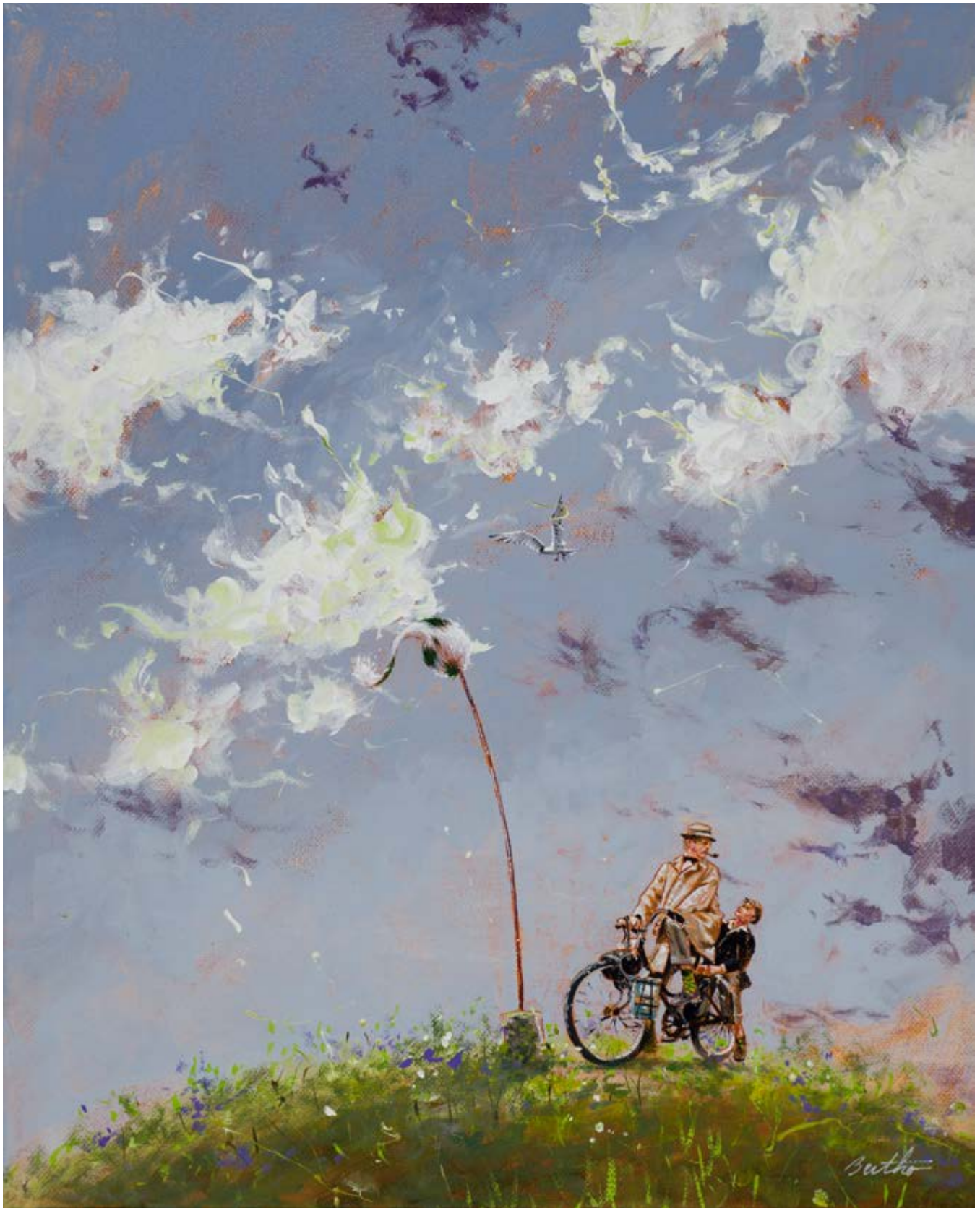


And Hop
acrylic on canvas
16.12 x 13"

It's Here

acrylic on canvas

16.12 x 13"





Tralala Love
acrylic on canvas
21.5 x 18.25"



Haring Tralala
acrylic on canvas
21.62 x 18.12"

Stack of Masterpieces
acrylic on canvas
47.12 x 23.5"





Friend of Angels
acrylic on canvas
36.25 x 28.75"



The History of Adults and Children

acrylic on canvas

36.25 x 28.75"



Why Are the Little Ones So Big?

acrylic on canvas

36.25 x 28.75"



Somewhere
acrylic on canvas
15.75 x 15.75"



Pompom Fisherman
acrylic on canvas
24 x 19.62"

Love at Sea
acrylic on canvas
24 x 15"





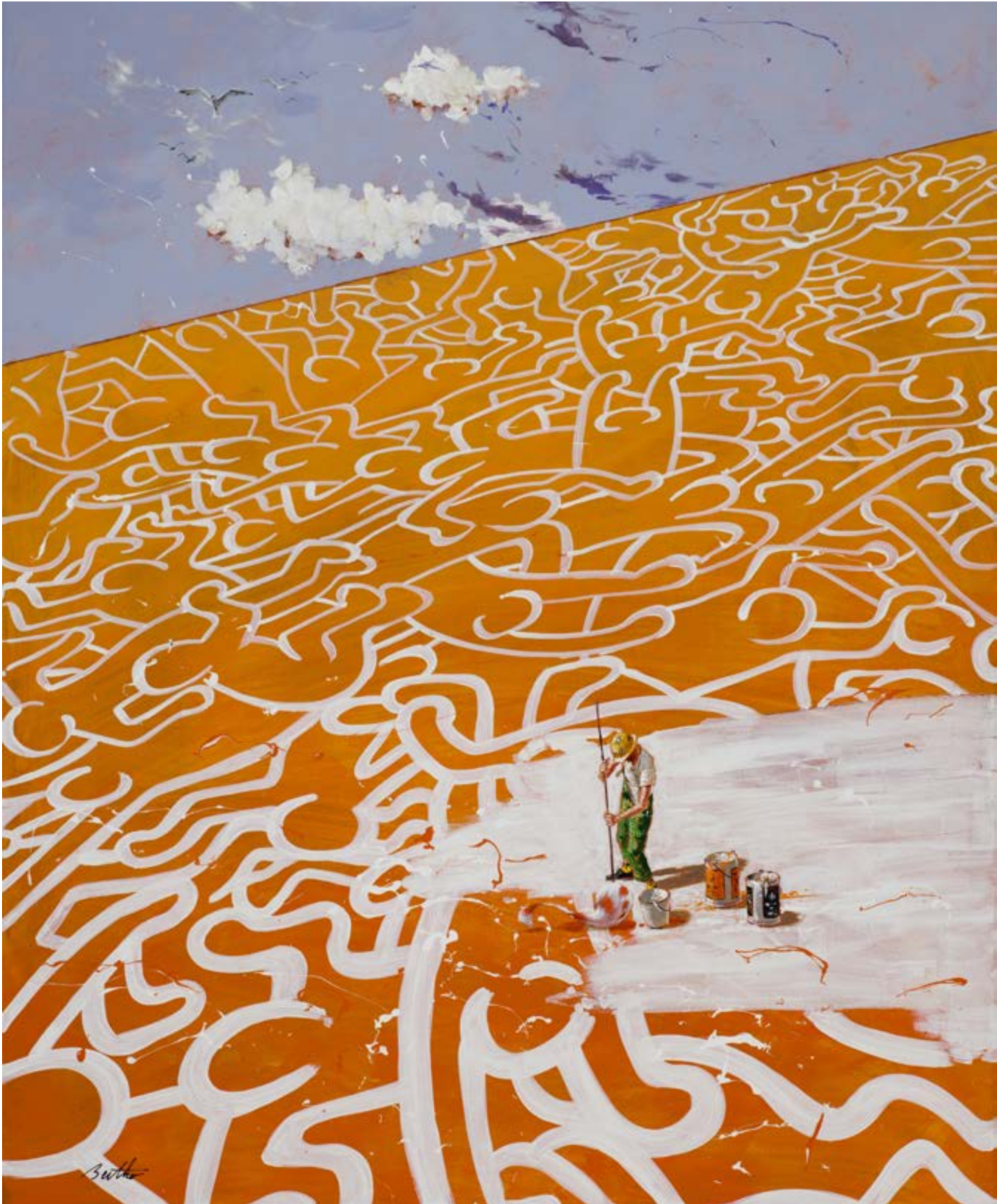
Theft of Chairs
acrylic on canvas
18.12 x 15"



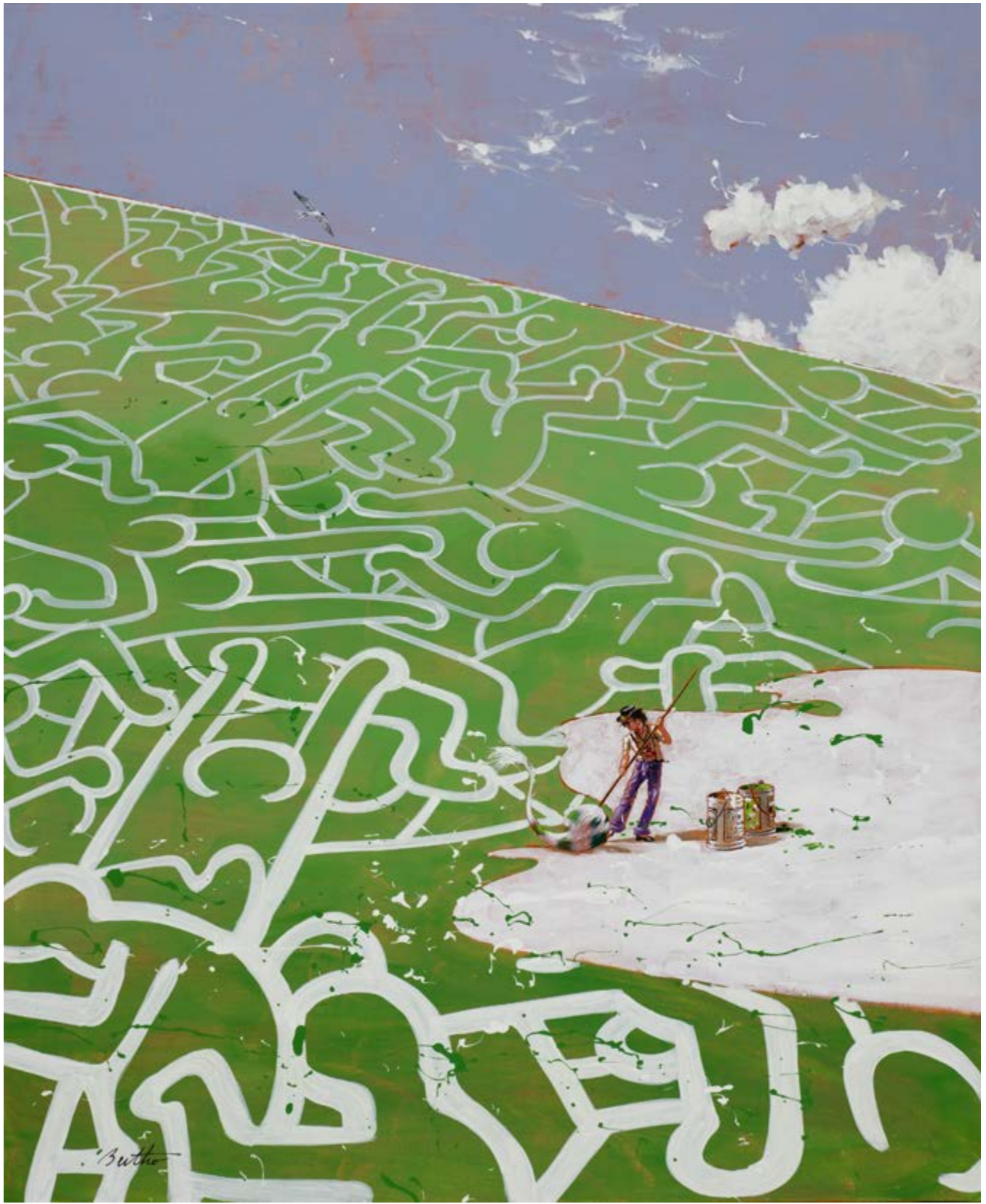
A Day Not Like the Others
acrylic on canvas
19.62 x 15.75"



The Cleaner
acrylic on canvas
19.62 x 15.75"

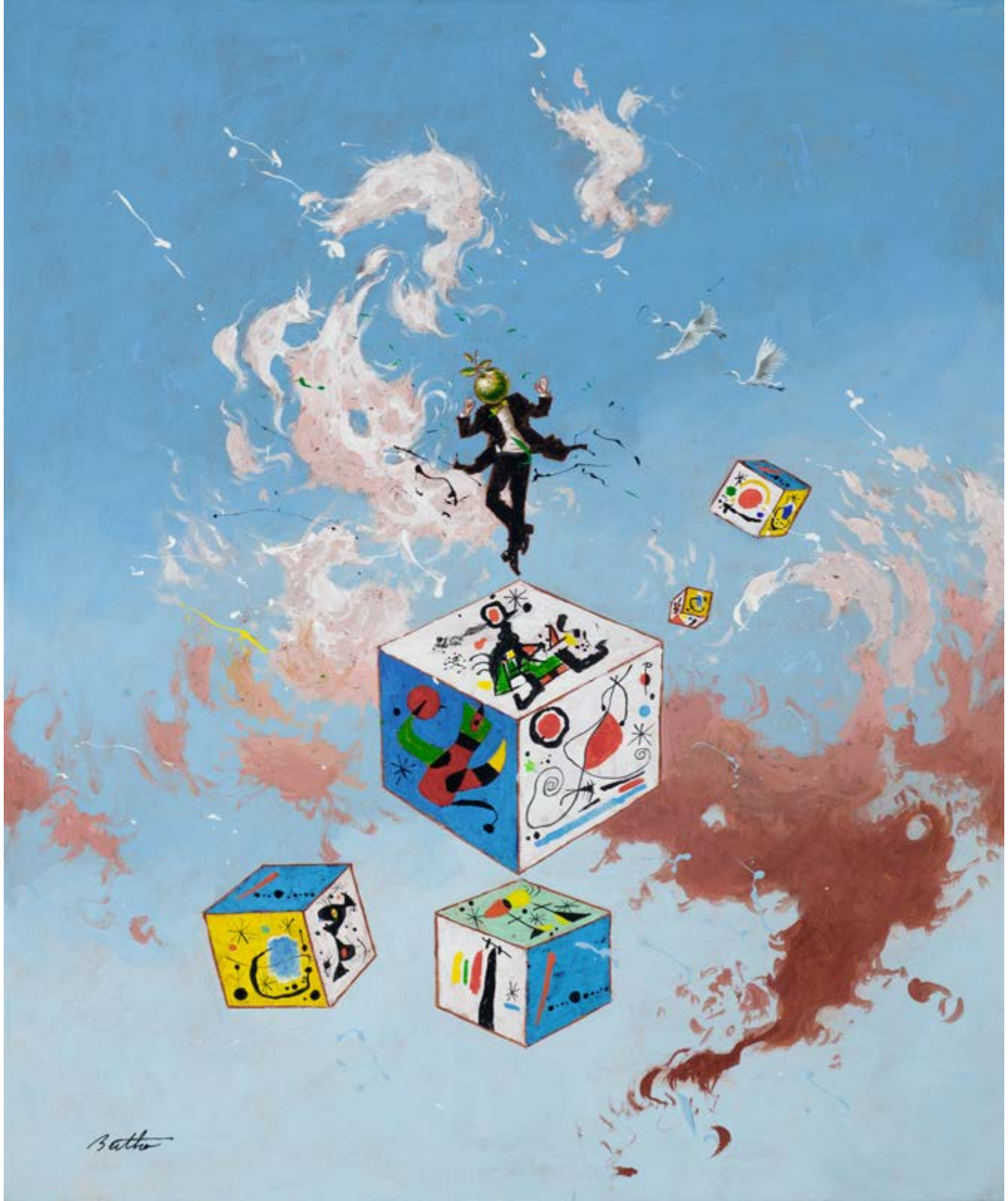


Beautiful Day to Work
acrylic on canvas
24 x 19.62"



Buthe

Beautiful Day
acrylic on canvas
24 x 19.62"



Miró Tralala
acrylic on canvas
21.62 x 18.12"



Tralala Picasso
acrylic on canvas
21.62 x 18.12"



Haring Place
acrylic on canvas
28.62 x 23.5"



Haring Picnic
acrylic on canvas
35.37 x 35.37"

At Francis's
acrylic on canvas
28.62 x 23.5"





Oh là là! (Oh dear!)

acrylic on canvas

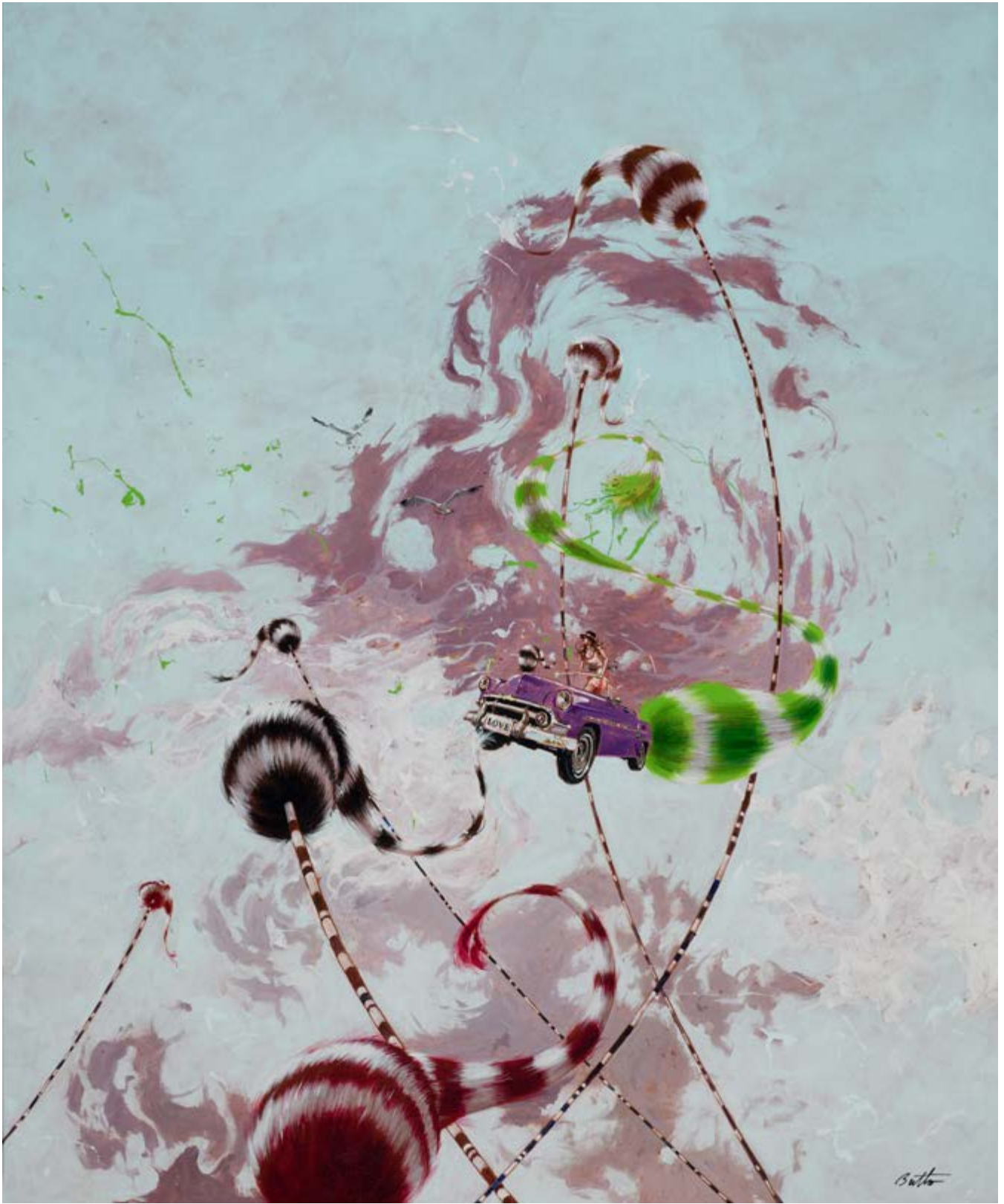
31.75 x 25.5"



How Beautiful the Weather Is

acrylic on canvas

28.62 x 23.5"



Crazy About Cars
acrylic on canvas
28.62 x 23.5"



Joyful Cape
acrylic on canvas
31.75 x 25.5"



Tralalove
acrylic on canvas
25.5 x 21.25"



Basquiat Tralala
acrylic on canvas
21.62 x 18.12"



In Good Company
acrylic on canvas
19.75 x 19.75"



The End
acrylic on canvas
28.62 x 23.5"



Mondrian Hotel
digital pigment print on
archival canvas
36.25 x 24.375"



Somewhere in Space
digital pigment print on
archival canvas
20 x 16"