



Damian Taylor
Borders

Project Pigeon II (2024)
Pigmented alkyd on aluminium
30 × 21 cm





Project Pigeon I (2024)
Pigmented alkyd on aluminium
30 × 21 cm



CROSSROADS (2022-23)
Pigmented alkyd on aluminium
192 × 240 cm (two panels)

Puffy Surgeon Fish (2025)
Pigmented alkyd on aluminium
21 x 30 cm





Borders I (after Bourke-White) (2025)
Pigmented alkyd on aluminium
96 × 72 cm



Borders II (after Bourke-White) (2025-26)
Pigmented alkyd on aluminium
108 × 80 cm



Borders III (after Bourke-White) (2025-26)
Pigmented alkyd on aluminium
128 × 96 cm



Borders

These paintings draw from a wide variety of sources, ranging from old newspaper cuttings found in archives to digital photographs I took when flying over Greenland. Spanning a period from the second world war to the present, the subject matter crosses decades and continents—and indeed moves beyond the Earth's atmosphere.

A consistent concern across the paintings is the energy, violence, violation, or hope that can accompany the establishment and erasure of boundaries. The images frequently raise questions concerning humanity's porous borders with animality and technology. Another theme is nationhood and a sense of belonging, and hence also issues of exclusion. A further interest, threading between these, is how visibility and invisibility gain different significance in an age of radioactive fallout and potential nuclear annihilation.

Many works develop from iconic images of historical events, whether of the first underwater test of an atomic bomb in 1946, the Indian Partition in 1947, or space walks in the 1960s. Others offer more occluded anticipations, traces, or consequences of these moments—the photogram of a fish made in total darkness, the photographic plate exposed only by the radiation the animal had absorbed; the young chimpanzee, lashed into his seat and sent into orbit in advance of the USA's first manned flight; the lunar surface of a Nevada desert as seen on Google Earth today, cratered by hundreds of nuclear tests, vast and alien and of our own making. Some speak more directly of the present, such as that of Greenland, also seen from above, the landscape's untamed beauty now increasingly haunted by the vagaries of geopolitics.

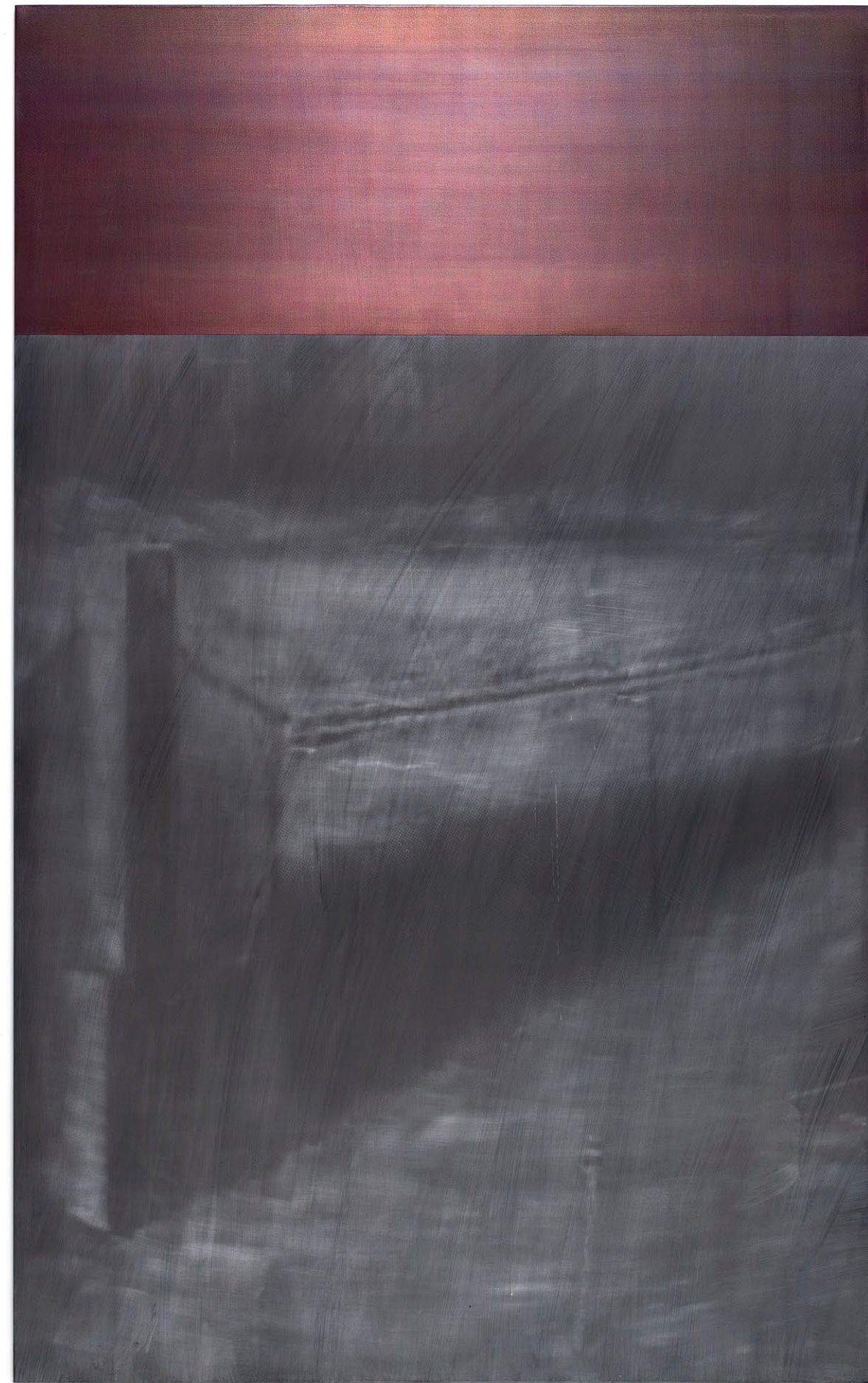
The source photographs arrest moments from the flow of time. The paintings unfix these. A crop violates the appropriated image, but it also undermines the image's originary violence. Changes in light reanimate and revise the trace of past light, as forms emerge from formlessness before dissolving once more. Identity is deferred; histories overlap or interpenetrate. In this way, new possibilities of images and unthought connections between them are, I hope, suggested.

A horse in India, for example, looking ahead while burdened with two children and a household's possessions during a forced migration, is drawn into the same orbit as houses built to embody an ideal of American domestic security and safety. Fabricated in the Nevada desert, these houses were publicly destroyed as part of a US nuclear testing programme. During these tests, the eyes of wild horses roaming the surrounding plain were cauterised by the blast, the animals blinded in a flash, the survivors succumbing to hunger or the cellular corruption rendered by the silent and invisible penetration of their bodies by radiation.

Right
Upshot-Knothole Annie I (17 March, 1953) (2024)
Pigmented alkyd on aluminium
192 × 120 cm

Following spread
Doorstep I ('scenes typical of the American family at home', 17 March, 1953) (2023-24)
Pigmented alkyd and spray enamel on aluminium
72 × 48 cm

Doorstep II ('scenes typical of the American family at home', 17 March, 1953) (2023-24)
Pigmented alkyd and spray enamel on aluminium
72 × 48 cm







Upshot-Knothole Annie II (17 March, 1953) (2024)
Pigmented alkyd on aluminium
192 × 120 cm

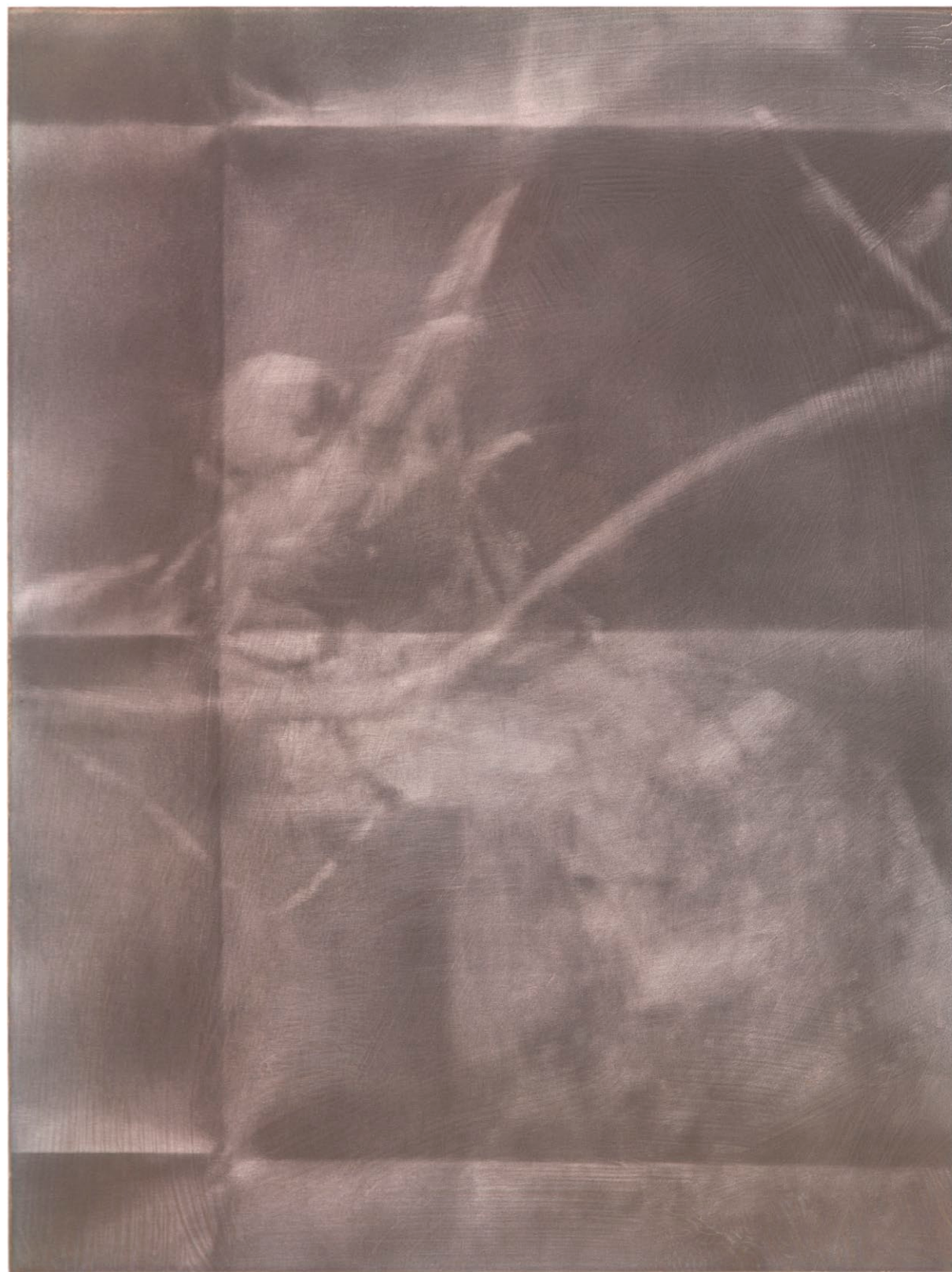
Ham, 1960 (2025-26)
Pigmented alkyd on aluminium
80 × 48 cm







THE TIMES FRIDAY NOVEMBER 18 1966 (right) (2025)
Pigmented alkyd on aluminium
96 × 72 cm



THE TIMES FRIDAY NOVEMBER 18 1966 (left) (2026)
Pigmented alkyd on aluminium
64 × 48 cm



37°10'N 116°02'W (2023)
Pigmented alkyd on aluminium
120 x 90 cm



Greenland 27/03/2025, 15.21 (2025)
Pigmented alkyd on aluminium
120 x 192 cm



