

## **Into the Maelstrom**

This is a site-specific sculptural installation made of highly textured clusters of painted repurposed materials taken from her art studio and her everyday life, mainly assorted paper and plastic. These disjointed material fragments coalesce into sculptures of varied scales that are all light weight and ephemeral yet by grouping them in dense clusters of detailed textured layers, they appear massive or even monumental. From afar they seem like tactile segments of satellite images or abstracted seascapes, predominantly in whites, grays, and blues, but from closeup they reveal tiny narrative documenting vignettes from the artist's daily experiences. The clustered dimensional structures, and not less important, the breathing space in between, create an overall rhythmic flow in the enclosed gallery space, activating walls, air, and floor into a visceral environment where the visitor is prompted to walk through and observe from different perspectives. The notions of a simultaneous perpetual movement, shifting vantage points, and intra-connectivity between all the fragments, are equally central in this installation as well as in Yaniv's overall work.

In Edgar Allen Poe's short story, *A Descent into the Maelstrom*, on which this installation is loosely based, surviving a plunge into the chaotic abyss of a horrific whirlpool is possible only by being acutely alert to its details. In *Down to Earth Politics in the New Climatic Regime*, the French philosopher and anthropologist Bruno Latour points out that what distinguishes the sole survivor from the drowned victims in Poe's story, is merely the detached attention with which this individual is able to observe the movement of all the debris swirling around the vortex — when his ship is pulled down into the abyss, he attaches himself to an empty barrel and manages to come up to the surface, deeply traumatized but alive. These days we are all in what appears to be an unprecedented complex and global whirlpool coming at us from all directions. We probably need to be as astute as that old sailor to believe that escape from the maelstrom is possible. Only by understanding that we are spiraling down while paying close attention to the nature of the details on the way, we have a chance to grasp why some of the debris is sucked toward the bottom while other objects, because of their inherent form, can serve as life savers and act on it.