

LEE BETHEL FLOURISH



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For Lee Bethel, elegant constraints are the foundation of her workings, manipulating the fold, the grid and the seed. In her hands, the paper fold reveals its capacity for resilience and malleability. It is both a tangible folding of paper and a metaphorical folding of time and memory. The works suggest states of being that are “open-ended ... non-exclusive and unlimited, exterior and infinite”*. The inside is nothing more than a fold of the outside where the interior becomes exterior.

To visit Bethel's studio is to gain insight into her purposeful arrangement of cut paper and collected seed, and to note the shifting qualities of the grid in her work. Sketchbooks reveal axonometric drawings of possible relief structures. There are collections of cut paper shapes and seed casings that work as a glossary of forms. She presents these elements within the grid to highlight both their similarity and gentle variance. The seed types in the current exhibition include local and introduced, the marbled Coral Princess pod from Western Australia, reddish brown Sichuan peppers and tiny spiked buds fascinating in their regularity. In another sequence, Bethel has used bell jars as a further classifying structure. These are articulate environments that suggest a furthering of the fold into vertical growth patterns – columnar twists, multiplying tetrahedrons, architectonic skins.

A restricted colour palette emerges via chemical processes: opaque encaustic thickening the paper and an irregular application of copper sulphate creates a rust that extends underneath the grids. A subtle wash tint has an illusory effect, playing with micro-shadows cast by the sculpted paper.

The repetition that Bethel employs is a contemplation on process work and time. The emergence of the grid in her early work was an act of memorium, linking with the handkerchiefs her mother would fold and prepare for her father. It has since become a formal classification system, its framework used to highlight repetitive and subtle differences in nature. The grid presentation allows for intricate readings of these natural forms. And if we expand the concept of the grid to a broader scale, it is also used to bring an ordering system to the landscape. Lee Bethel noted this on her residency at Hill End – an imposed order, the street network, had been overlaid on an unruly surface. The rusty wash introduced on her new works evokes this fluid landscape that has been subdivided and cut through with an ordering grid.

Lee Bethel's *Flourish* untwines the possibilities for formal extension in process work. The word itself describes both natural growth and a poetic physical gesture. In *Flourish* we might find those parallels between Bethel's variations on a theme and changing states in nature.

* Parr, Adrian 2005 “Fold”, *The Deleuze Dictionary*, Edinburgh University Press, pp 107–108.

-Melody Willis, 2017

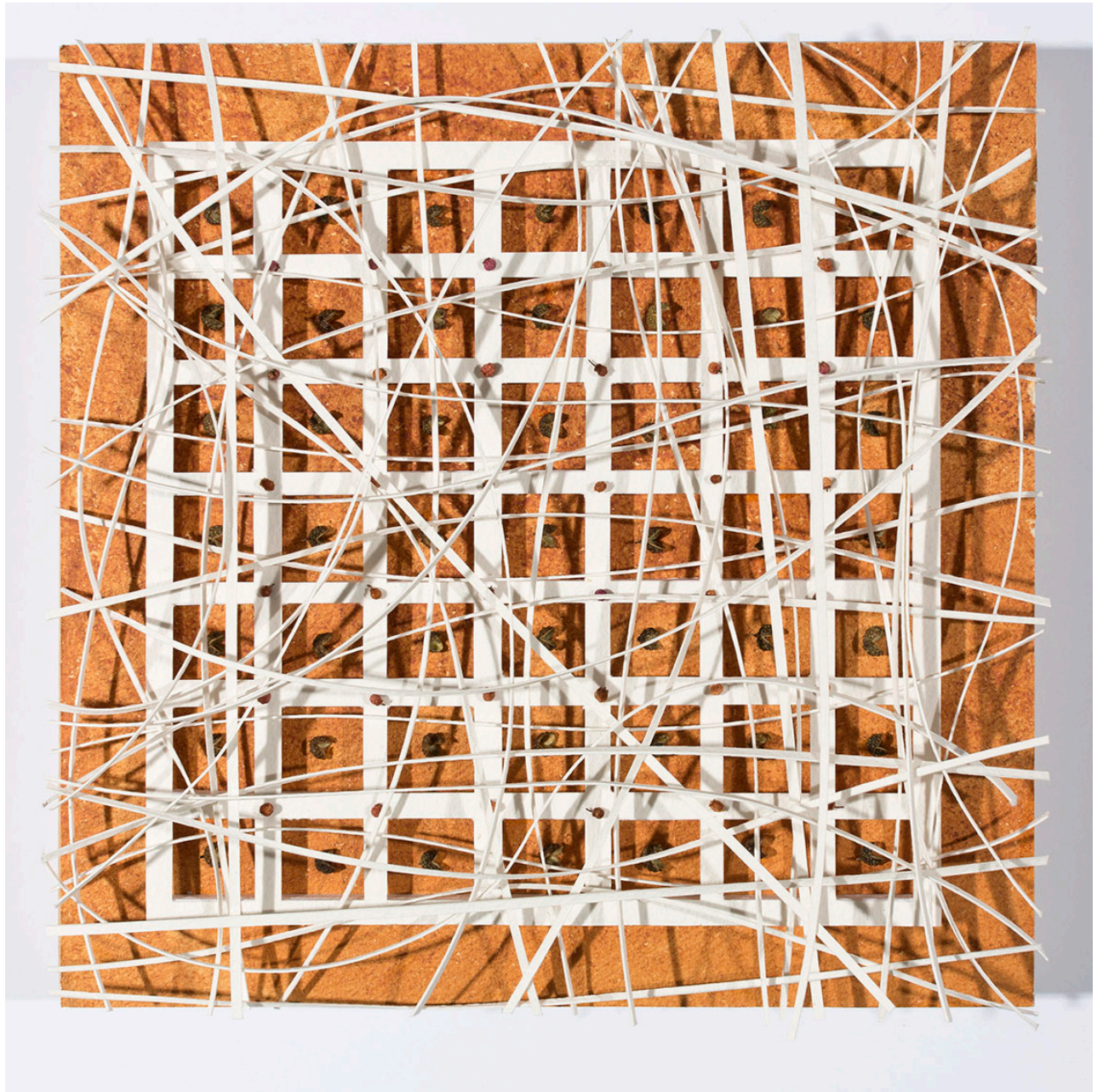
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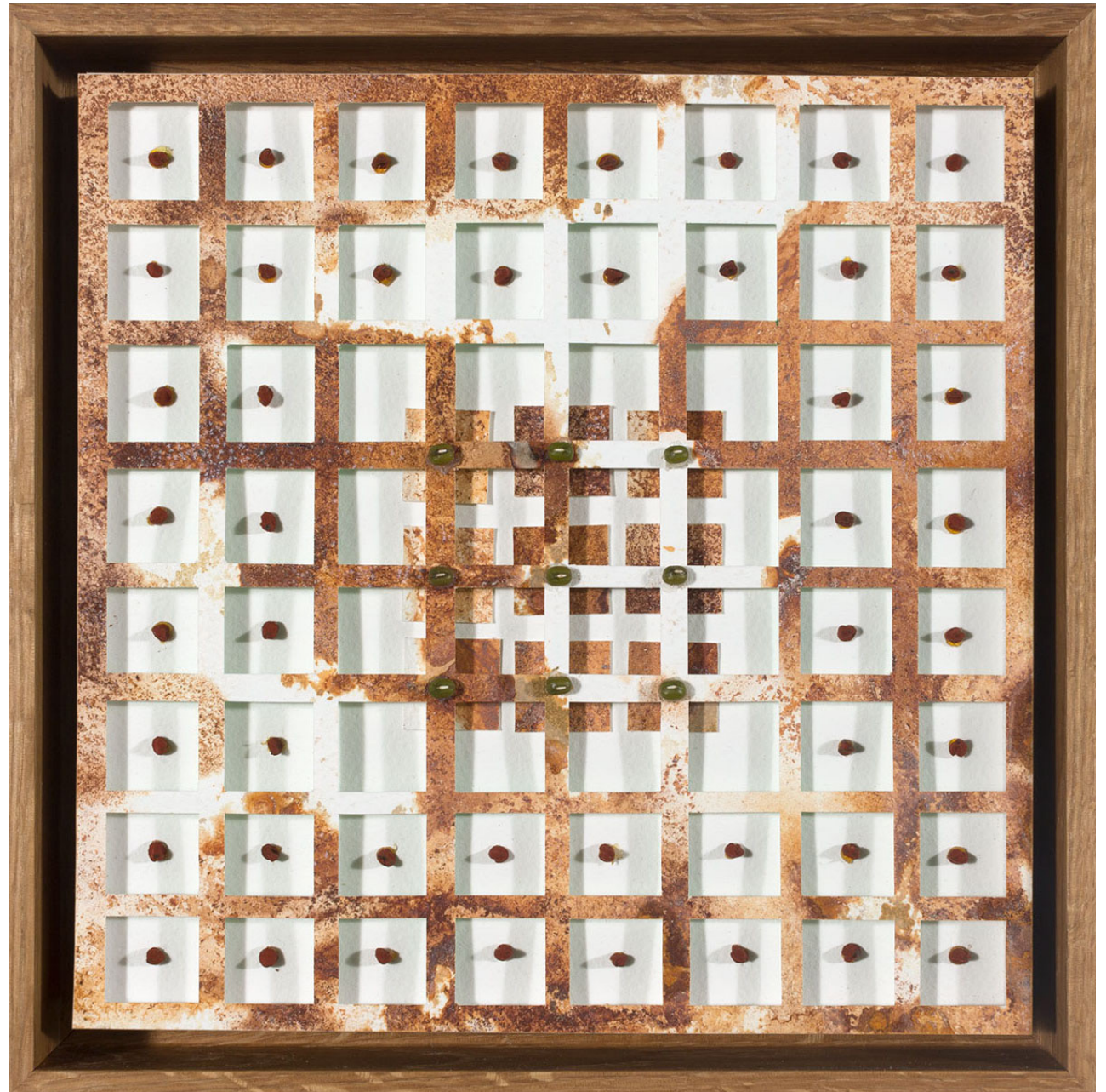
Spore, 2017
seeds & rust on hand cut & folded paper on board
20 x 20cm
\$500

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Abound, 2017
seeds & rust on hand cut paper on board
20 x 20cm
\$500

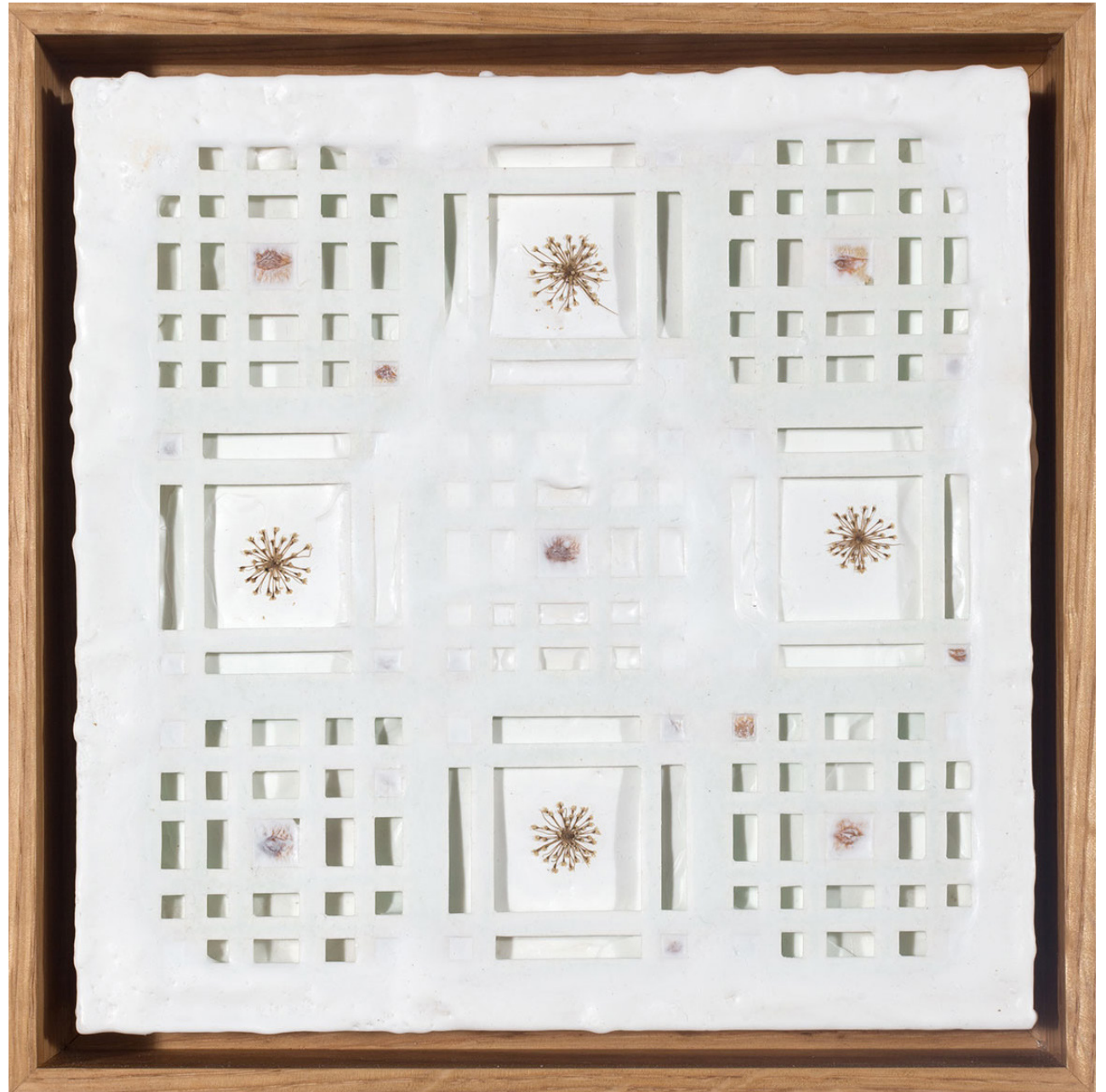


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Supine, 2017
seeds, rust & watercolour on hand cut paper on board
20 x 20cm
\$500

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Parterre, 2017

encaustic, seeds & watercolour on hand cut paper on board
20 x 20cm

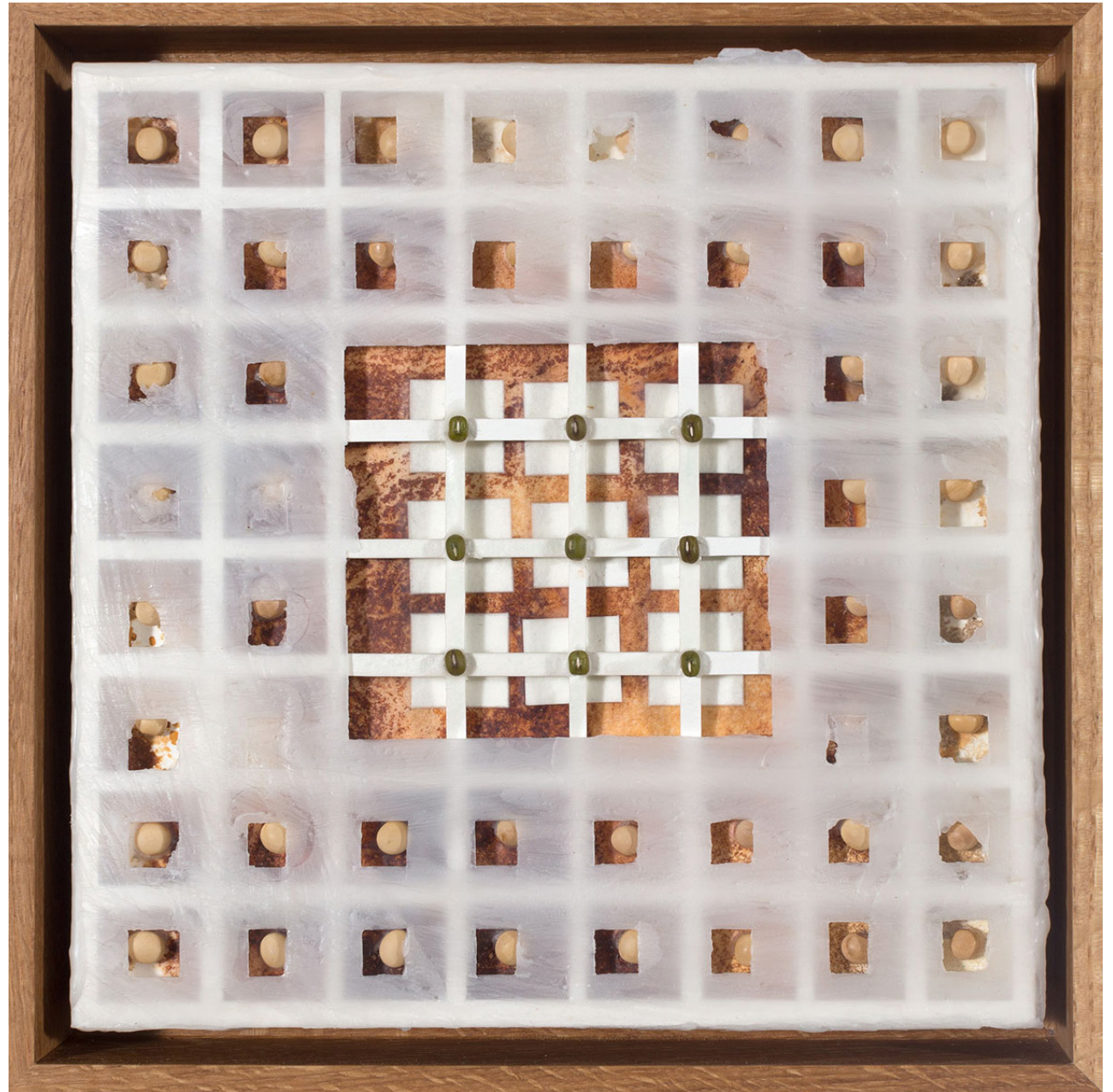
\$500

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Floreo, 2017
seeds & rust on hand cut paper on board
20 x 20cm
\$500

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Paradeisos, 2017
encaustic, seeds & rust on hand cut paper on board
20 x 20cm
\$500

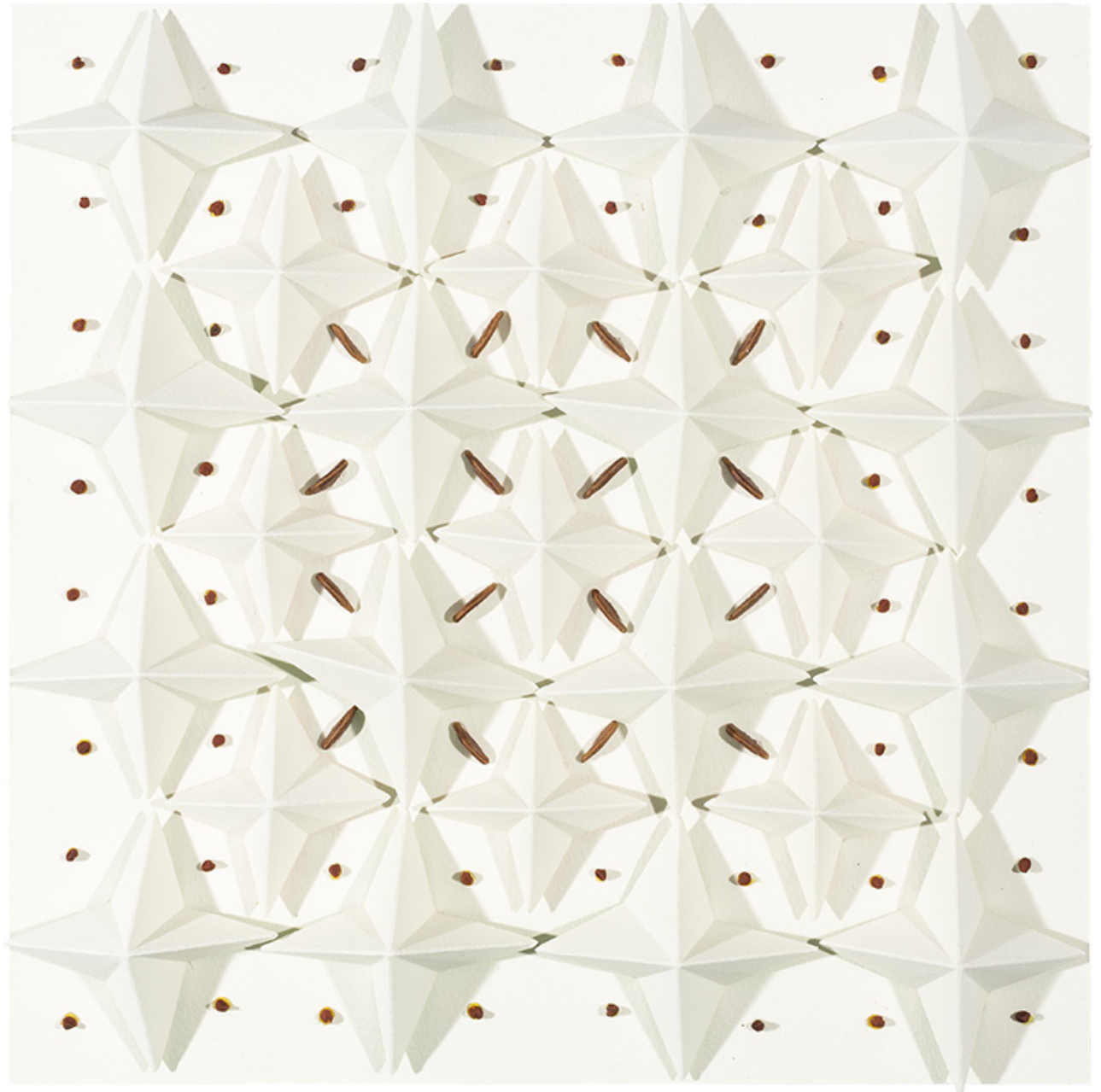
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Bloom, 2017

encaustic, seeds & watercolour on hand cut & folded paper on board
20 x 20cm
\$500

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Burst, 2017
seeds on hand cut & folded paper on board
30 x 30cm
\$750

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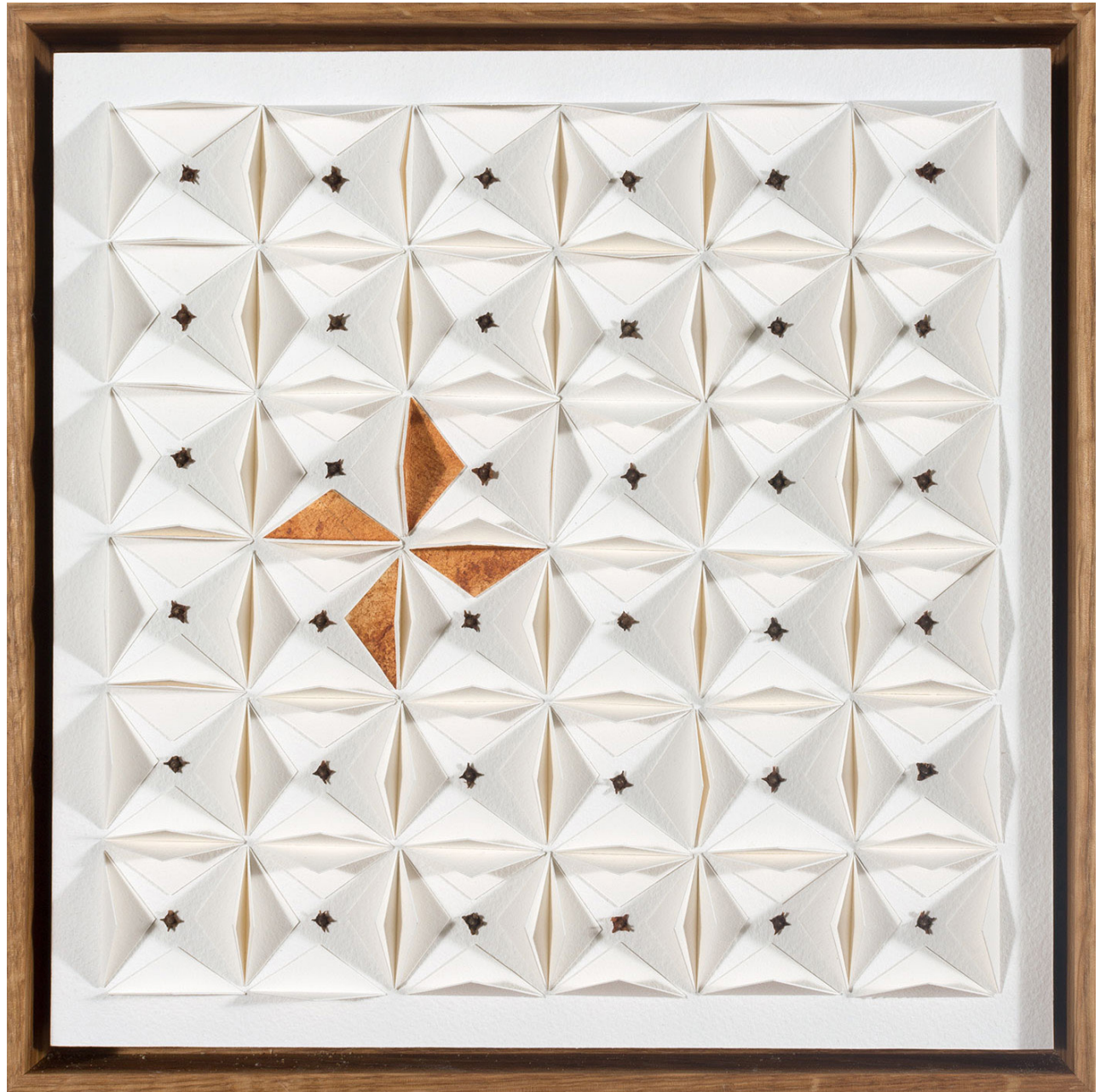
Lattice, 2017
encaustic & watercolour on hand cut paper on board
30 x 30cm
\$750

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Graticule, 2017
encaustic & watercolour on hand cut paper on board
30 x 30cm
\$750

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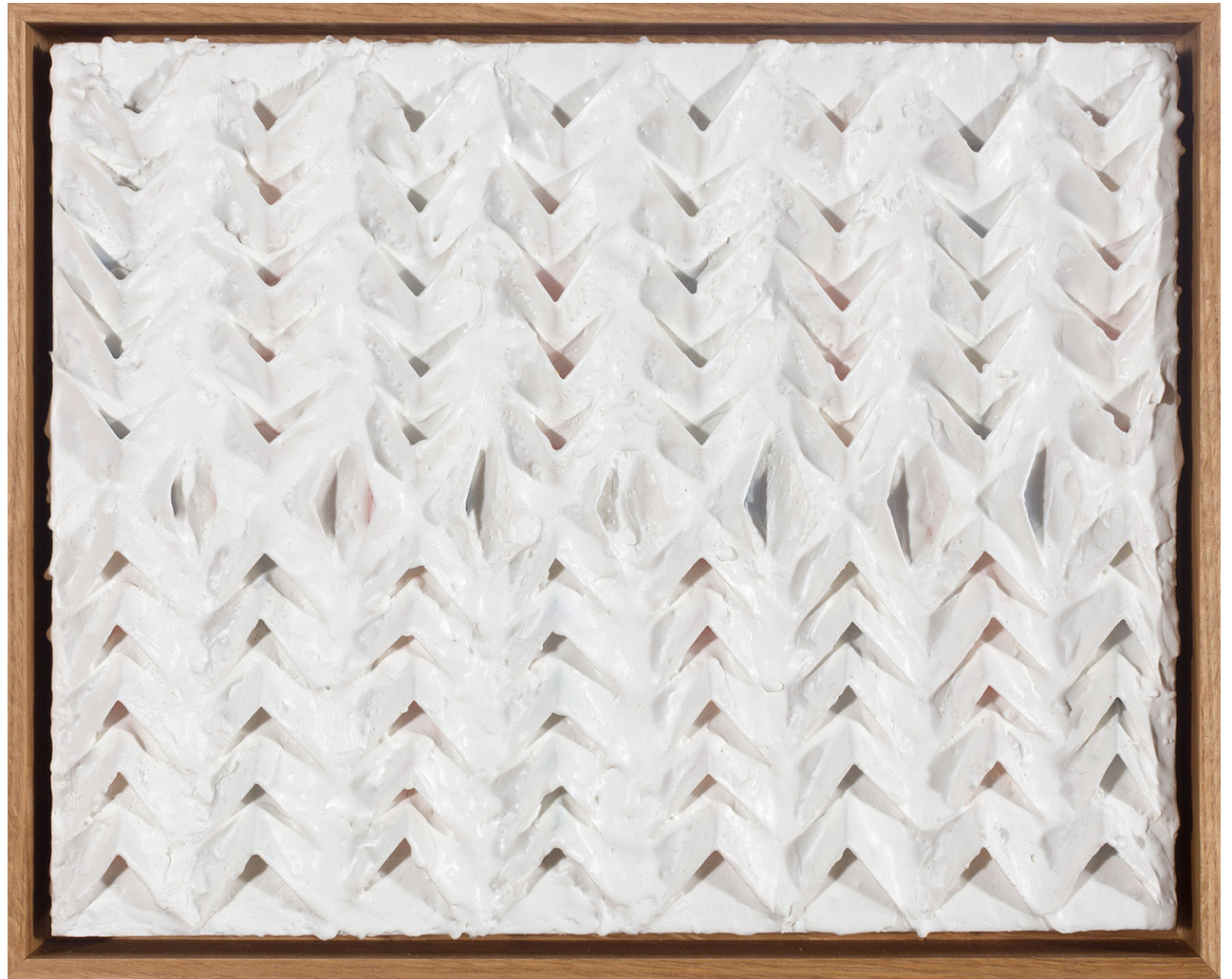
Calyx, 2017
seeds & rust on hand cut & folded paper on board
30 x 30cm
\$750

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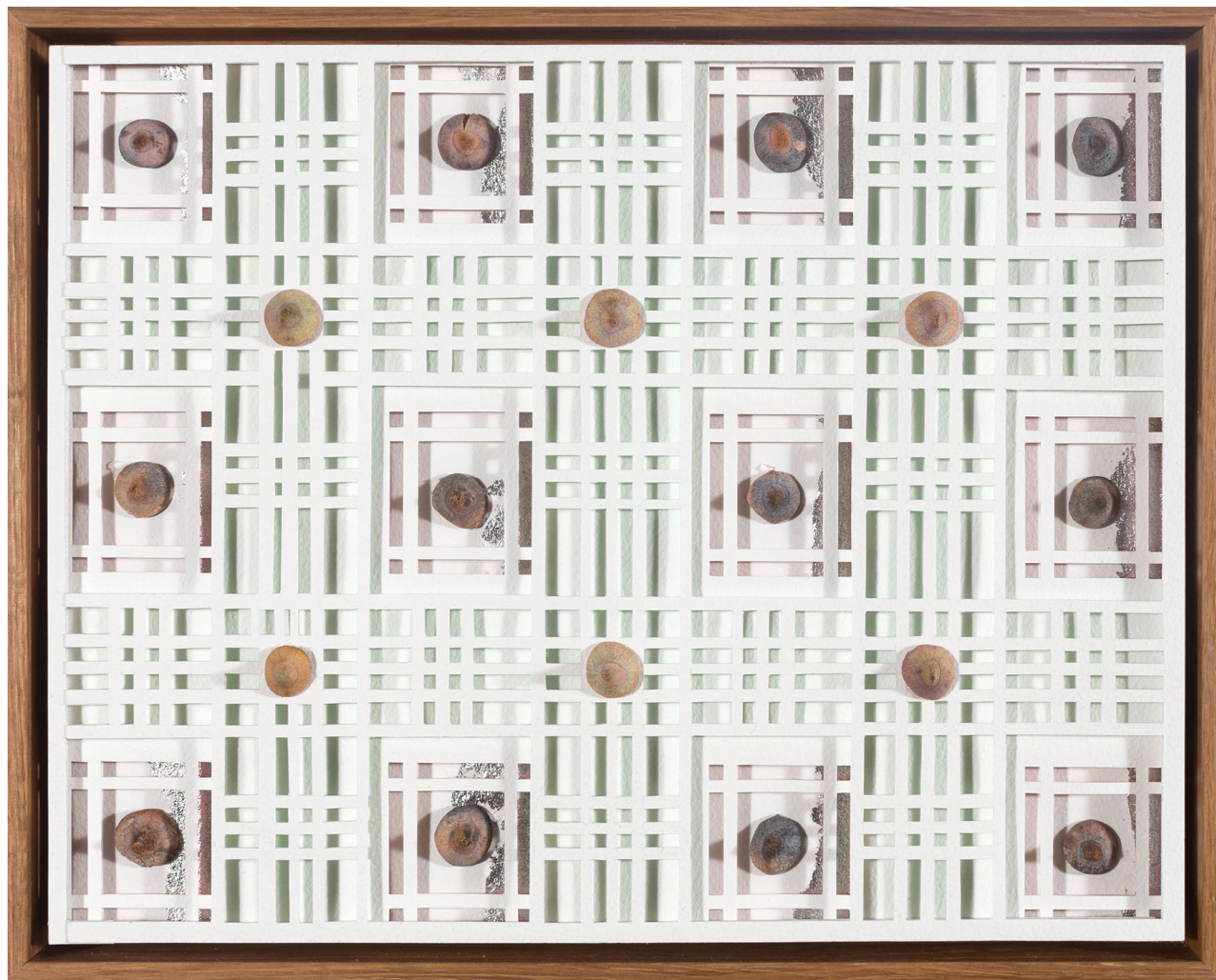
Lotus, 2017
seeds & watercolour on hand cut paper on board
30 x 30cm
\$750

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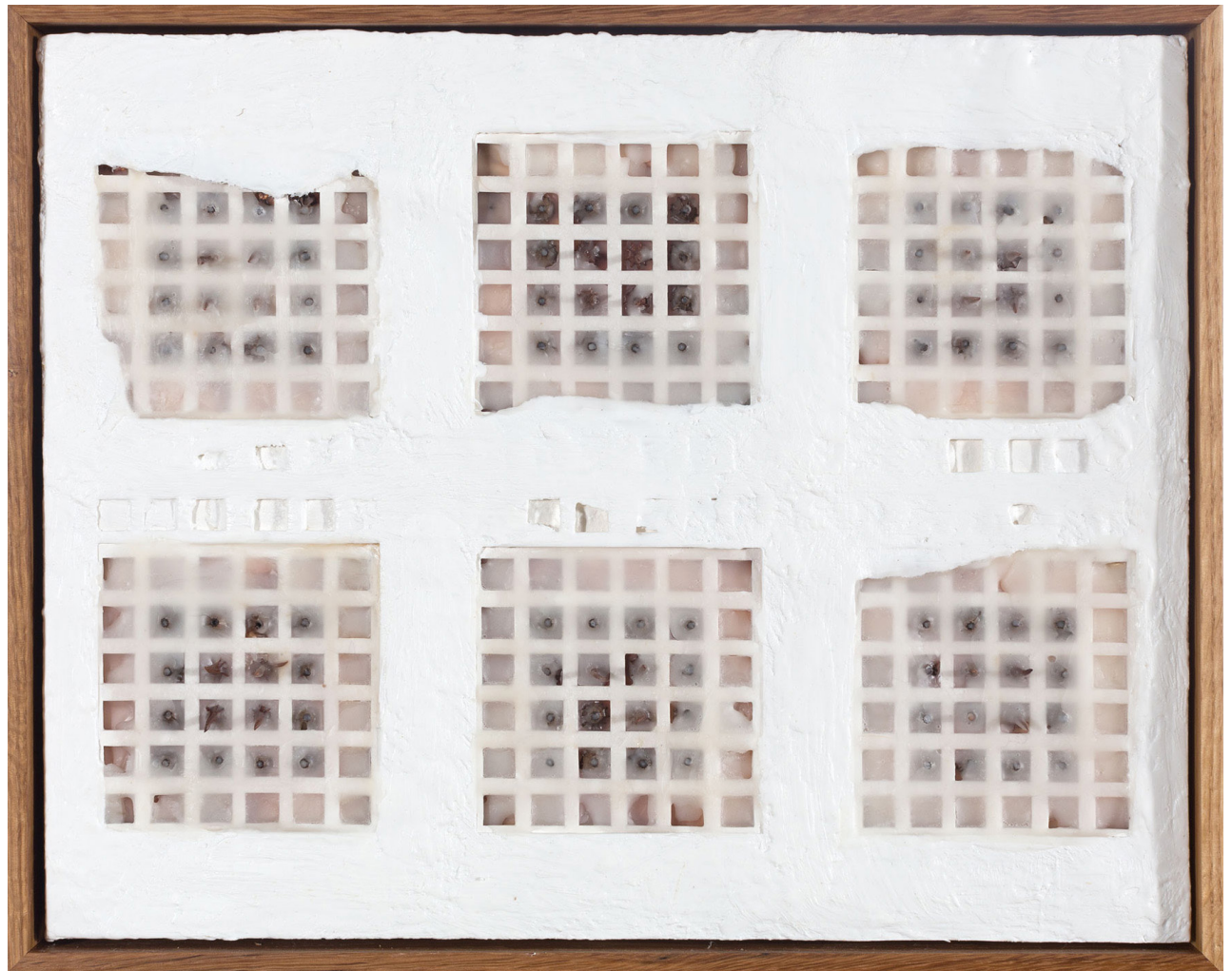
Oculus, 2017
encaustic & watercolour on hand cut paper on board
35 x 45cm
\$820

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Maze, 2017
seeds, gold leaf & watercolour on hand cut paper
35 x 45cm
\$820

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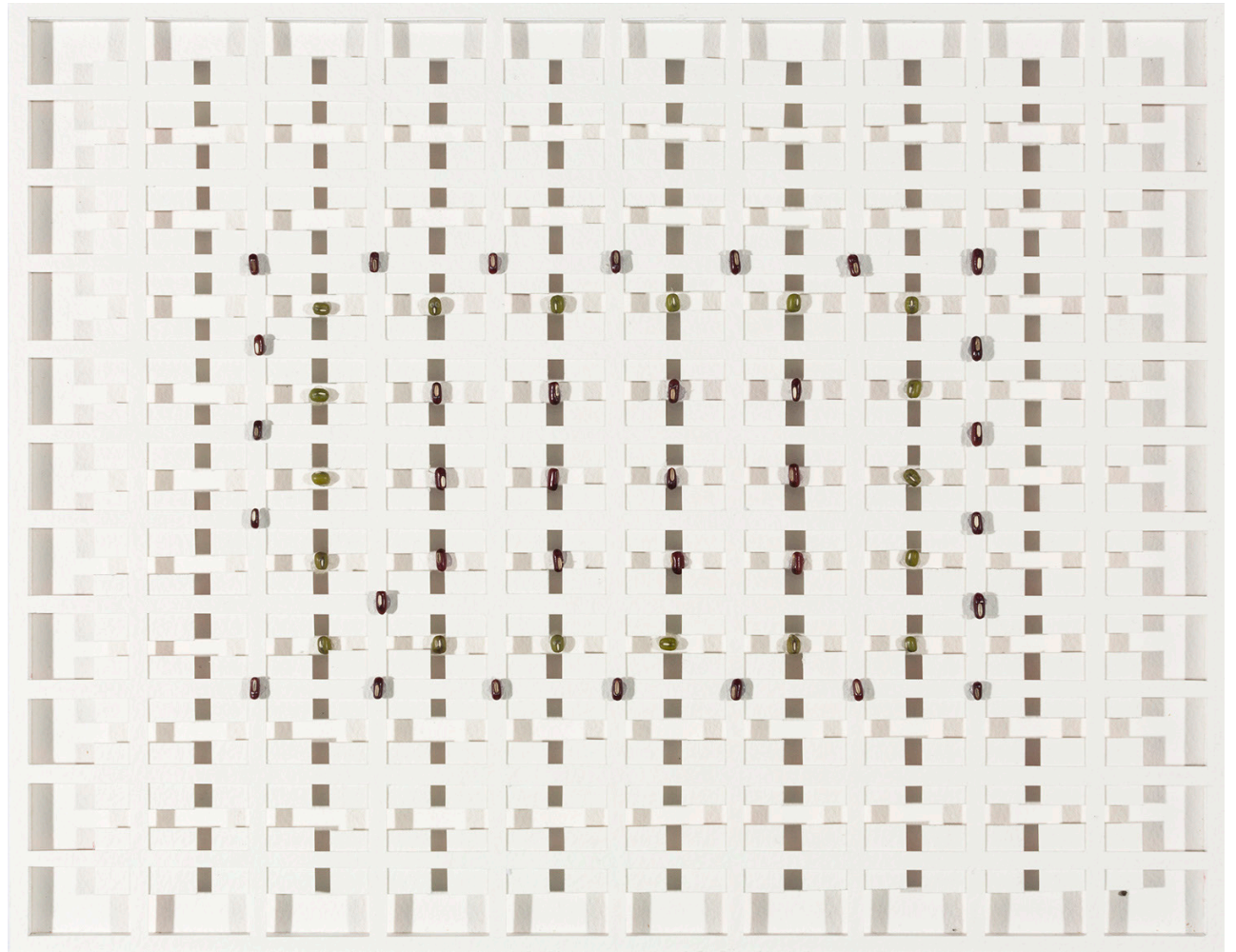
The Garden, 2017
encaustic, seeds & watercolour on hand cut paper
35 x 45cm
\$820

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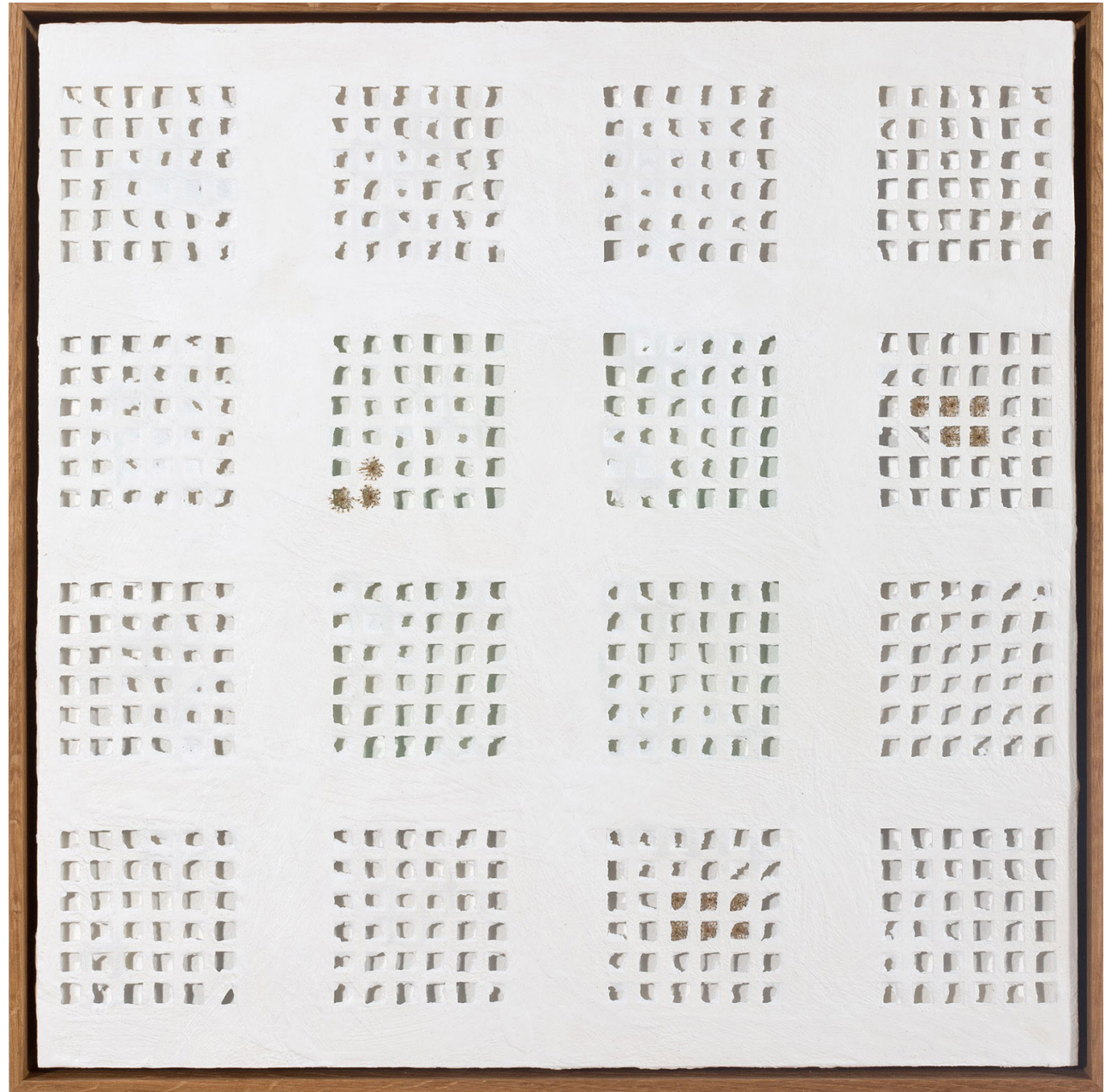
Propagate, 2017
seeds & watercolour on hand cut paper on board
35 x 45cm
\$820

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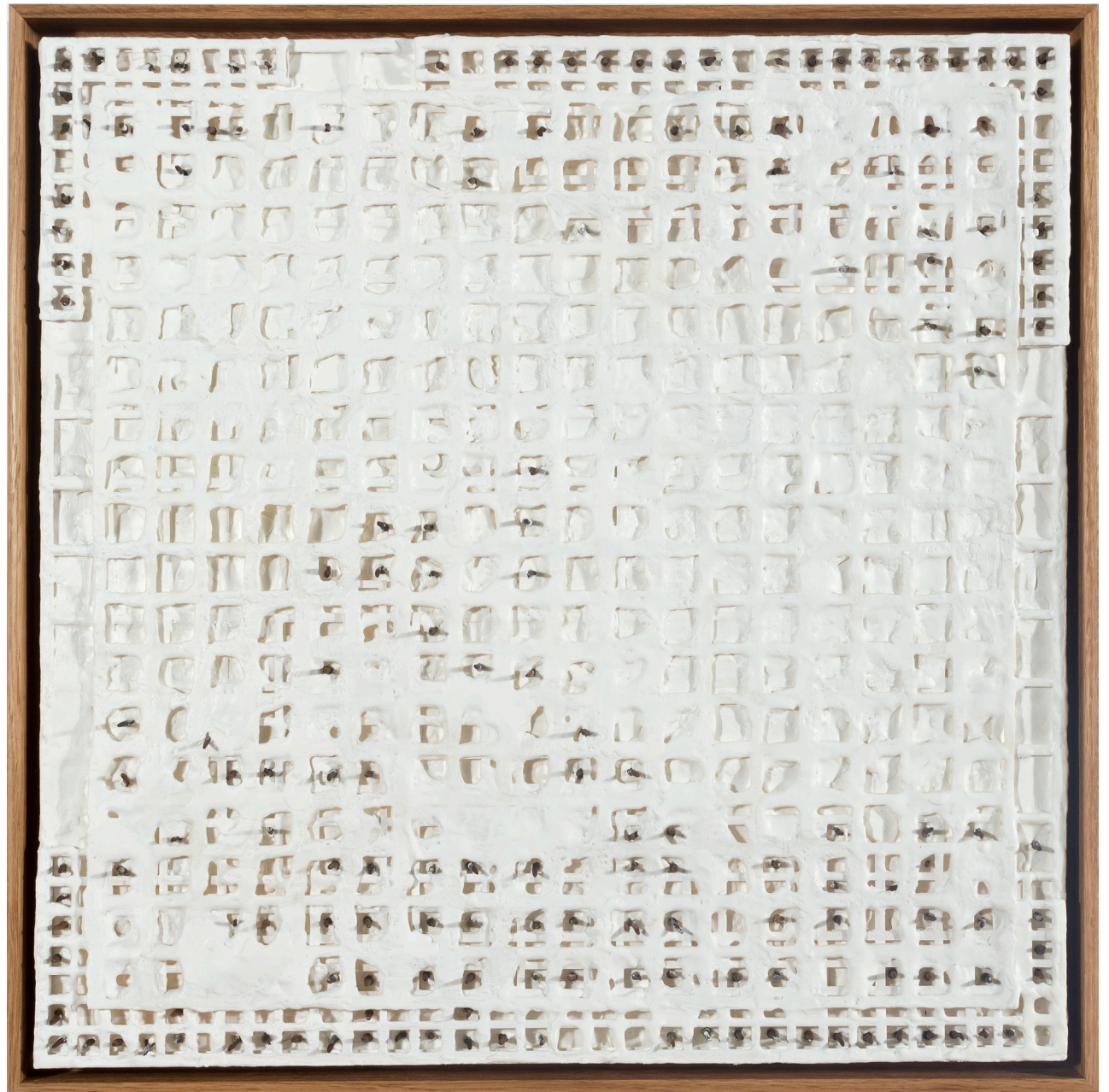
Daeza, 2017
seeds & watercolour on hand cut paper on board
35 x 45cm
\$820

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Ground Cover, 2017
encaustic, seeds & watercolour on hand cut paper on board
50 x 50cm
\$1000

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Labyrinth, 2017

encaustic, seeds & watercolour on hand cut paper on board
50 x 50cm
\$1000

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Flaunt, 2017
encaustic & seeds on handcut and folded paper
20 x 15cm
\$250



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Twist, 2017
encaustic & seeds on handcut and folded paper
20 x 15cm
\$250



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Days Eye, 2017
encaustic & seeds on handcut and folded paper
27 x 20cm
\$380



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Bounty, 2017
encaustic & seeds on handcut and folded paper
27 x 20cm
\$380



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Colony, 2017
encaustic & seeds on handcut and folded paper
27 x 20cm
\$380



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Daeza, 2017
encaustic & seeds on handcut and folded paper
27 x 20cm
\$380



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Trelli, 2017
encaustic & seeds on handcut and folded paper
27 x 20cm
\$380



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Thrive, 2017
encaustic & seeds on handcut and folded paper
27 x 20cm
\$380



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Grow, 2017
encaustic & seeds on handcut and folded paper
20 x 15cm
\$250



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Twist II, 2017
encaustic & seeds on handcut and folded paper
20 x 15cm
\$250



LEE BETHEL CV

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2017 *Flourish* The Egg & Dart Gallery, Thirroul NSW
2015 *Hybrids* The Egg and Dart Gallery, Thirroul NSW
2015 *Forage* Bathurst Regional Gallery, Bathurst NSW
2015 *Forage* Jean Bellette Gallery, Hill End, NSW
2015 *Forage* The Egg and Dart Gallery, Thirroul NSW
2015 *Forage* Moran Gallery Sylvania, NSW
2013 *Lee Bethel* Kerrie Lowe Gallery, Sydney NSW

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2017 *Between the Sheets Artist Books* Australian Galleries, Melbourne VIC
2017 *Sentiment*, Sawtooth Gallery, Launceston TAS (*Ten Days on the Island Festival*)
2017 *The Sculpture Show* Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Sydney NSW
2016 *Op Art* Brenda May Gallery, Sydney NSW
2016 *The Egg & Dart Gallery on Excursion*, Casula Powerhouse Gallery, Sydney NSW
2016 *Drawn from Life* Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Sydney NSW
2015 *Paperworks III* Brenda May Gallery, Sydney NSW
2015 *Paper and Glass* Gabrielle Adamick & Lee Bethel, The Egg and Dart Gallery, Thirroul NSW

SELECTED AWARDS & PRIZES

2017 *Fischer's Ghost Art Prize* Cambelltown Art Gallery, Sydney NSW (Finalist)
2017 *North Sydney Art Prize* North Sydney Council NSW (Finalist)
2017 *Art on Paper Award* Hazelhurst Regional Gallery NSW (Finalist)
2017 *Paramor Prize* Casula Powerhouse NSW (Finalist)
2016 *Sculptures by the Bay* Rockdale Outdoor Gallery Art Prize, Sydney NSW (Finalist)
2016 *James Kiwi Contemporary Watercolour Prize* Wollongong Regional Gallery NSW (Highly Commended)
2016 *Gosford Art Prize* Gosford Regional Gallery NSW (Finalist)
2015 *North Sydney Art Prize* NSW (Finalist)
2015 *Hutchins Works on Paper Prize* TAS (Finalist)

SELECTED RESIDENCES

2017 Artsbox, Fitzroy, Melbourne Maribynog Council VIC
2015 Fremantle Art Residency, Fremantle WA
2010, 2013 Hill End Residences Program, Bathurst Regional Gallery NSW
2006 UNESCO Laureate Recipient FRANCE
2004 Bundanon Trust, Illaroo NSW

All images courtesy of Jessica Maurer

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Install; *Flourish* at The Egg & Dart
20 October - 4 November 2017

Egg &
DART

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