

MAR 28
-30, 2025

ART BASEL HONG KONG

Soler Santos

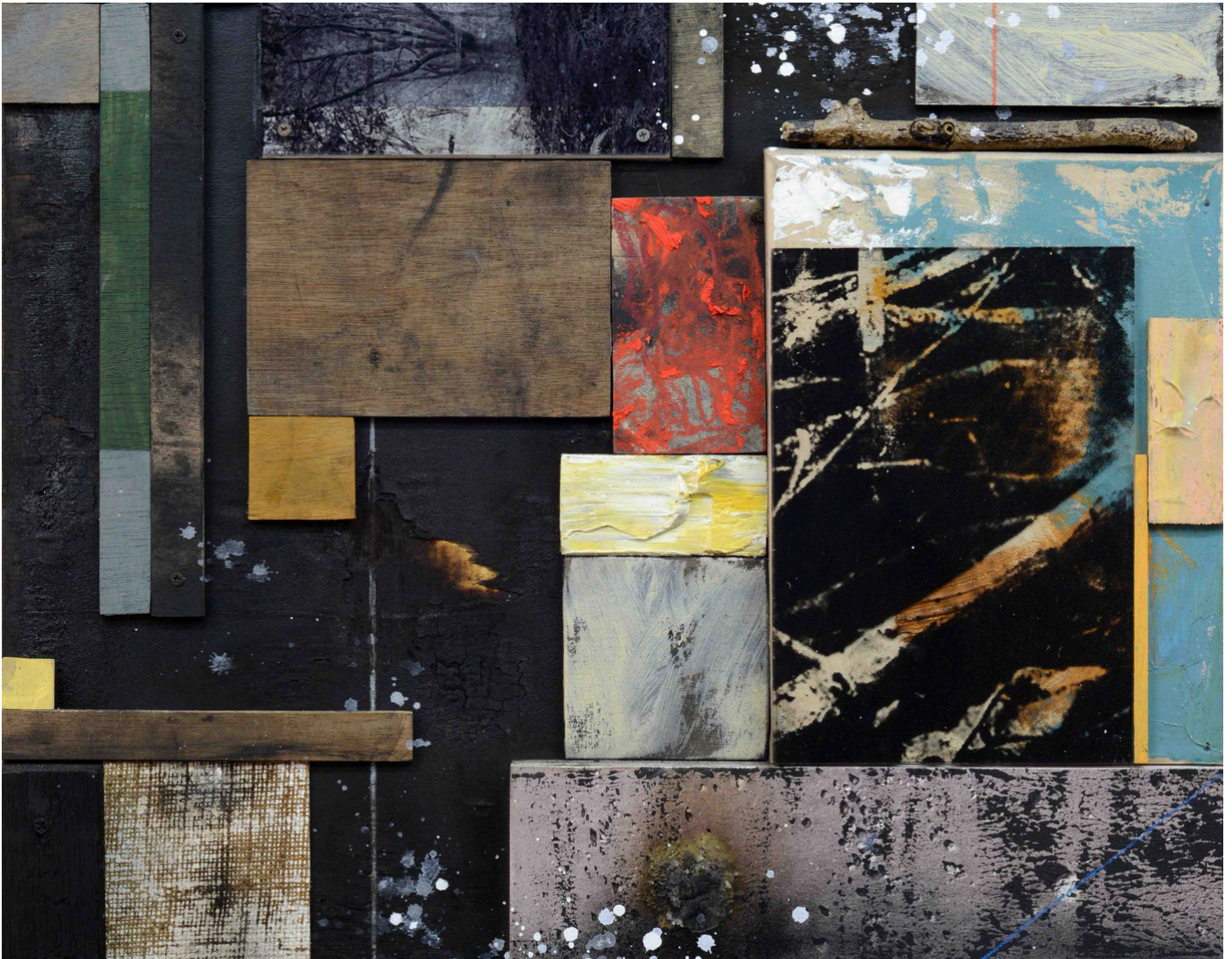
THE
DRAWING ROOM
CONTEMPORARY ART

Art Basel Hong Kong 2025

Staged in dialogue, Soler's *Amalgam* series and Luis Antonio's *Untitled (Structures)* series and *Fragmentation* series naturally visually communicate with each other, though each one is a result of a natural progression of each artist's practice.

Soler's and Luis Antonio's works interrogate similar themes, and echo similar aspects of different modes of making, though approaching each differently, either through combination or isolation, drawing largely from their own sensible and perceptible experience.

Excerpt written by Carina Santos



Amalgam Series 7, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024, detail



Amalgam Series #001AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



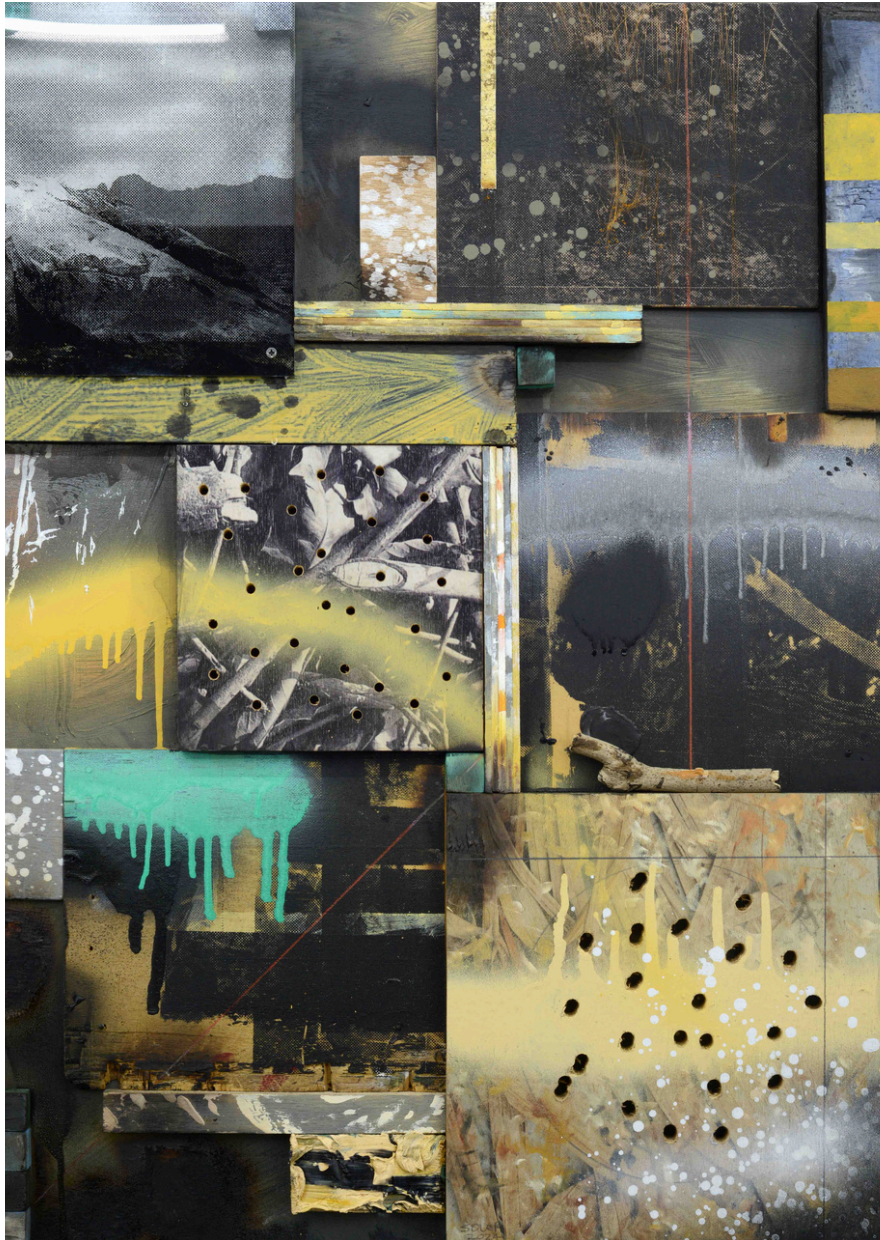
Amalgam Series #002AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



Amalgam Series #003AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



Amalgam Series #004AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



Amalgam Series #005AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



Amalgam Series #006AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



Amalgam Series #007AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



Amalgam Series #008AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



Amalgam Series #009AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



Amalgam Series #010AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



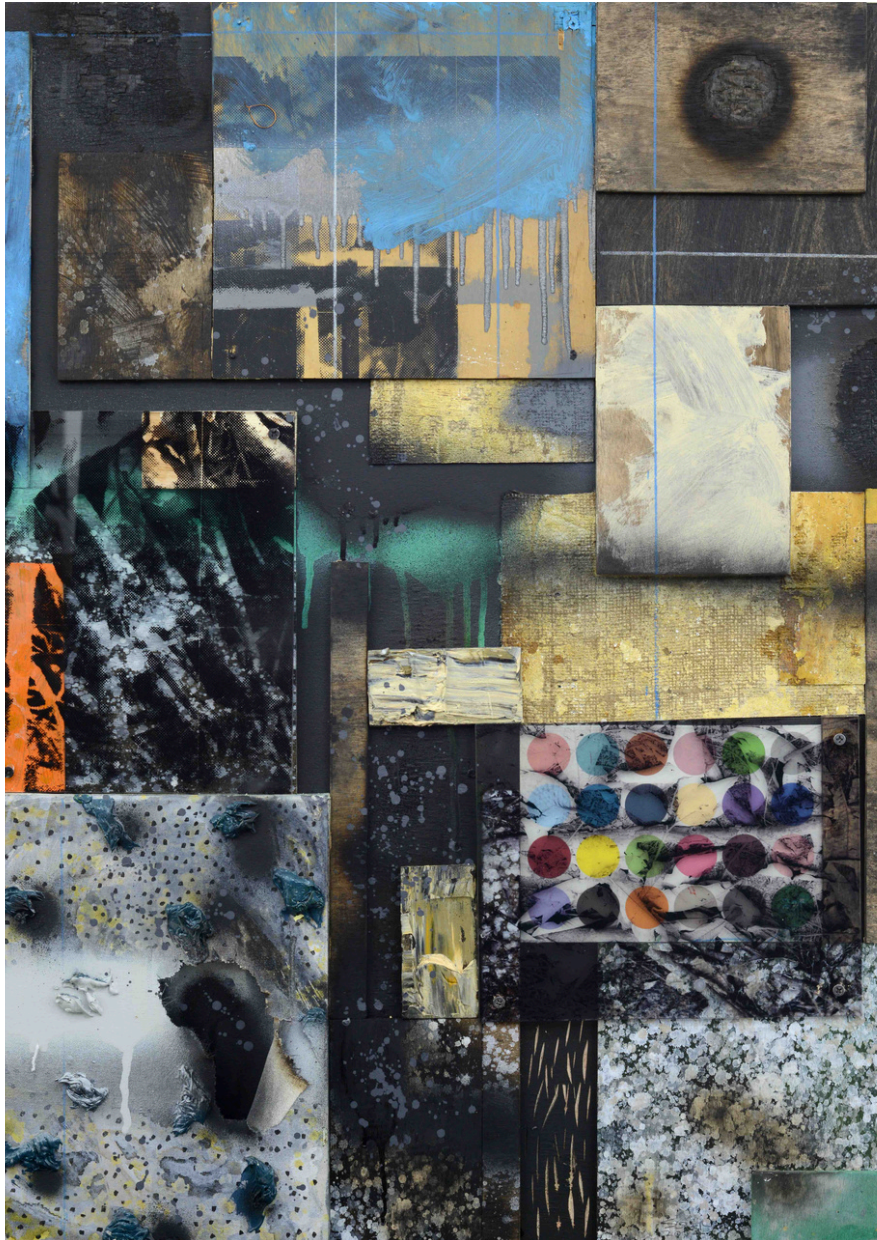
Amalgam Series #011AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



Amalgam Series #012AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



Amalgam Series #013AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



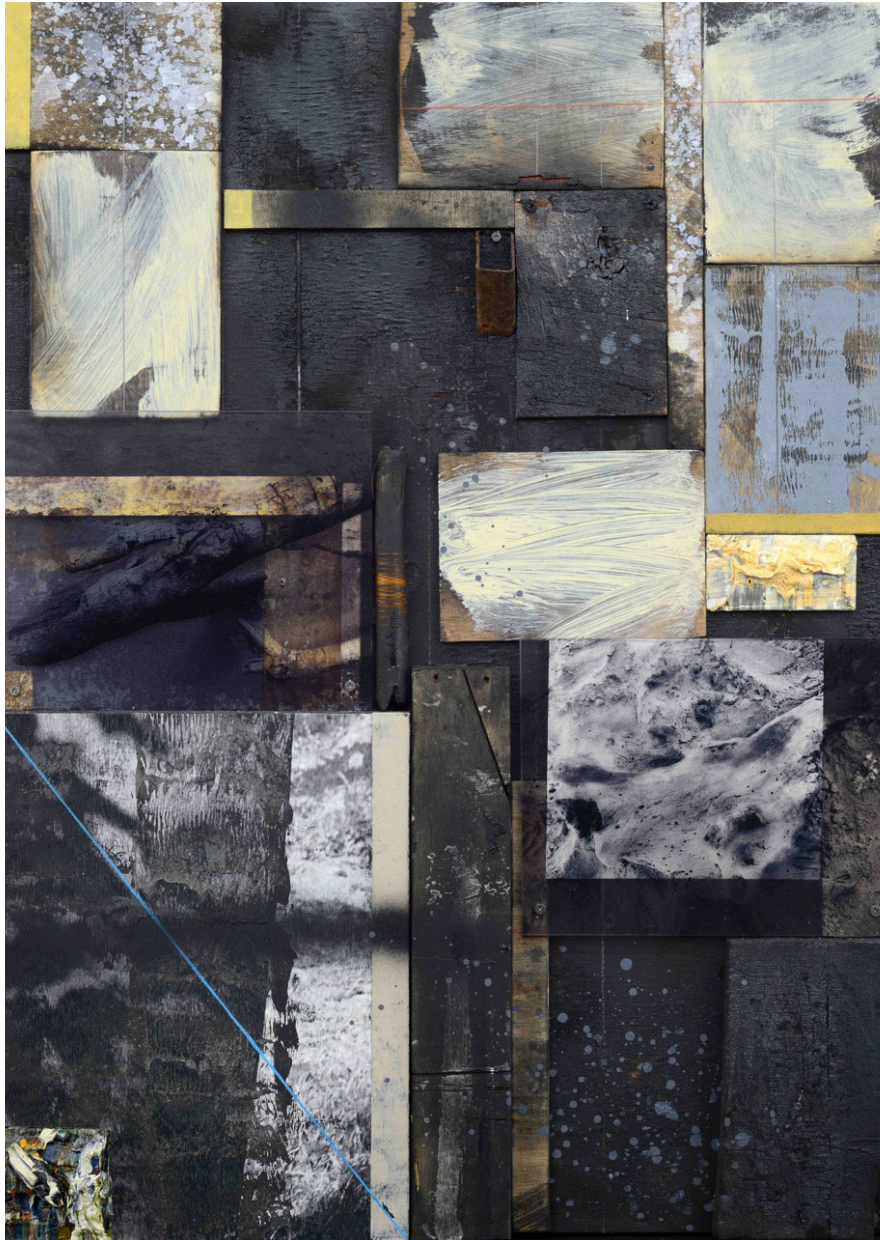
Amalgam Series #014AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



Amalgam Series #015AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



Amalgam Series #016AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



Amalgam Series #017AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



Amalgam Series #018AB, assemblage on wood, 84 x 61 cm, 2024



SOLER SANTOS

Soler, an artist whose career began in 1981, has constantly evolved with his explorations of a singular subject: nature, in all the ways that it applies to what exists outside and around us. From depicting fallen foliage to the natural textures and complexities of the environment in hyperrealist, painterly modes, his practice has evolved to include the abstraction and distillation of these concepts, recombined together in the form of assemblages, photography, and sculpture. For *Amalgam*, Soler selects the sources of his inspiration from nature and his own environment – the frenetic city that he lives in – and uses them as the foundation of each work. From there, he builds: whether by the addition of more objects, debris, or paint.

Soler has been practicing since 1981 and has been the director of West Gallery, an artist-run space, since 1989. He was the recipient of the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Thirteen Artists Award in 1992. Luis Antonio, who began his practice in 2011, was the recipient of the Ateneo Art Awards and Embassy of Italy's Purchase Prize in 2023 and was shortlisted for the Signature Art Prize in the same year. In 2018 he was nominated for Singapore's Signature Art Prize.

For over four decades, Soler has explored the relationship between painting, photography, and mixed media through the central theme of nature. This recent collection of work is built upon an archive of natural elements that he has collected over the last ten years, which serve as both the inspiration and subject matter of his practice. Over this long period of time, an ever-evolving dialogue is constantly being created between mediums and processes, time and space, and nature itself.

Historically, painting and photography have been in conversation, often influencing one another, especially with the inclusion of different techniques, processes, and technologies involved in the creation of work within each genre. Where the precision and accuracy allowed by photography in capturing an image or moment and the space in which painting allows for interpretation and emotional expression meet is where Soler's interest lies. It is in this interplay of both mediums that Santos chooses to work, going beyond utilising photographs as reference for paintings and including these images as part of the reimagination that painting begins.

The collected objects serve as the subjects for both mediums, where the constant documentation of his surroundings – whether capturing the images on camera or collecting the detritus and embedding in his work – adds layers and dimension to his canvas. The decade-long process also imbues this collection of work with the essence of his subject matter, exploring themes of change, observation, and the patience involved in witnessing the passage of time. Nature is static; it grows, decays, and transforms.



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