

The Falls

The colonial landscapes of explorer and painter Thomas Baines* (1820 - 1875), and in particular his waterfalls such as the Victoria falls of Zimbabwe are reframed in this series in which Vári creates a discomfiting synthesis between cartography and mythological portraiture. Through her work, Vári has long explored the conditions and technologies of colonialist desire, and though this series, produces an ambiguous 'self' that becomes equally distorted, 'othered' and mythologised, but also something more threatening. Finally, *The Falls* hints at the calamities and catastrophes of grand political projects and power struggles, and the errors of hubris that seem to repeat themselves throughout history into the present day.



* THOMAS BAINES WAS AN EXPLORER, CARTOGRAPHER, DIARIST AND SCIENTIFIC OBSERVER OF FAUNA AND FLORA AND MEMBER OF DAVID LIVINGSTONE'S ZAMBEZI EXPEDITION FROM 1857 TO 1859.

"GREAT WESTERN (OR MAIN) FALL, FROM THREE RILL CLIFF TO GARDEN ISLAND." PUBLISHED 1865

"HERD OF BUFFALOES DRIVEN TO THE EDGE OF THE CHASM, OPPOSITE GARDEN ISLAND" PUBLISHED 1865



"In these richly colored circular images, reminiscent of terrestrial globes, Baines' blasted landscape of smashed tree trunks, pools and distant groves is distributed around the circumference of the tondo format with a circle of sky and cloud at centre. It is like gazing at the firmament from the depths of a well, with the boundless azure relieving our sense of immurement.

The feet of the naked Vári emerge from the branches of a heroic storm-wracked tree. She materializes as abruptly as a genie from a bottle, making a sensationally dramatic and drastically foreshortened appearance as she lunges towards us upside down, twisting vigorously around her own axis in hectic contrapposto.

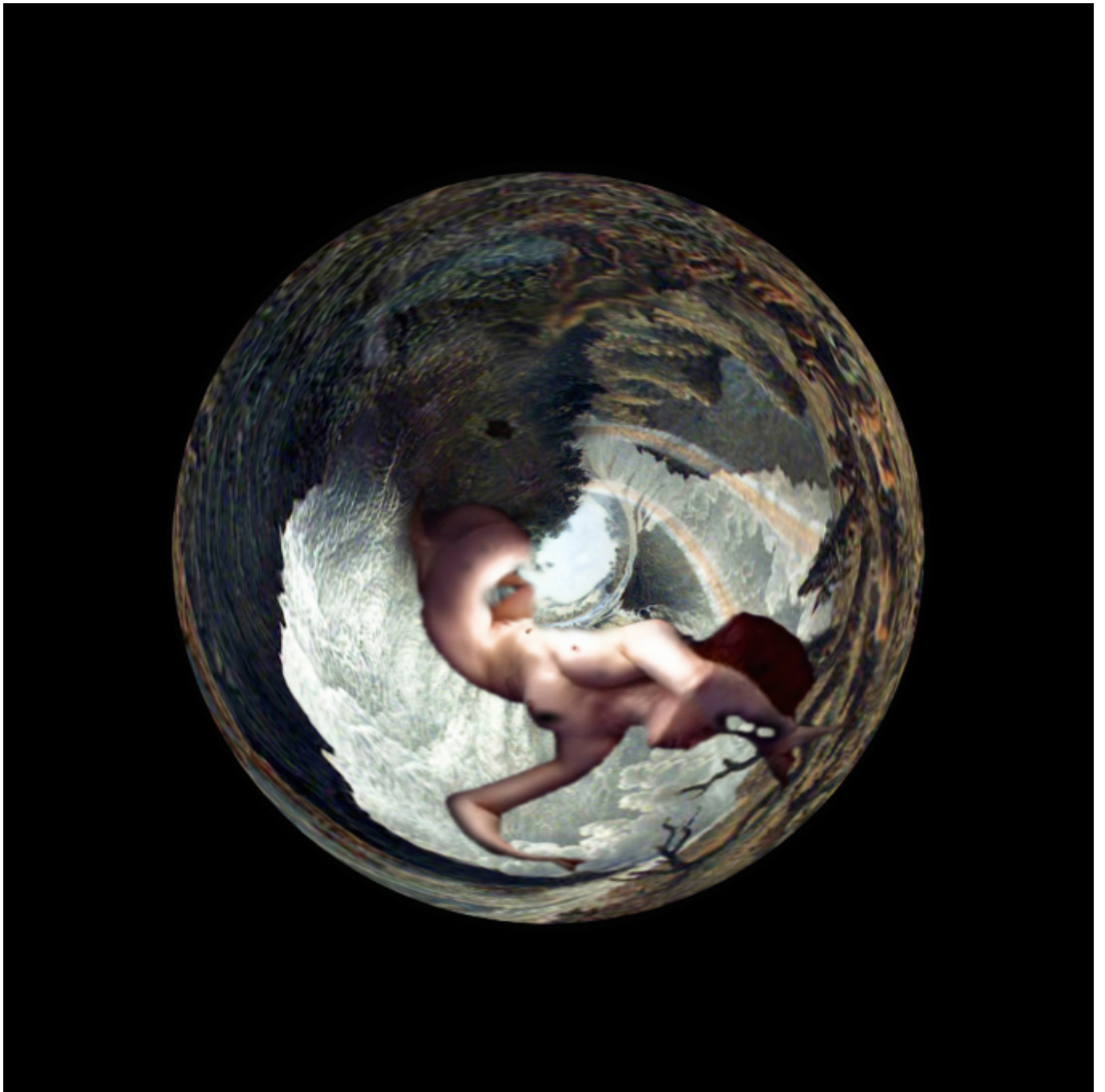
Composition is vertiginous, for earth whirls around Vári who appears tethered to it, unable to escape, a victim of history struggling to free herself from the past like our country itself. The site appears both halcyon and problematic. A giant question mark hangs over the land and its future. The tree of life that brought Vári forth may well be dead, and her identity is hedged in ambiguities. Is she a martyred female counterpart to Sisyphus compelled by the gods to endlessly expiate her sins? Or a chthonic deity whose tortured contortions express her native soil's travail?"

LLOYD POLLOCK, REVIEW (WWW.ARTTHROB.CO.ZA/REVIEWS08/GOODMANC.HTML)



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INSTALLATION VIEW, GOODMAN GALLERY CAPE



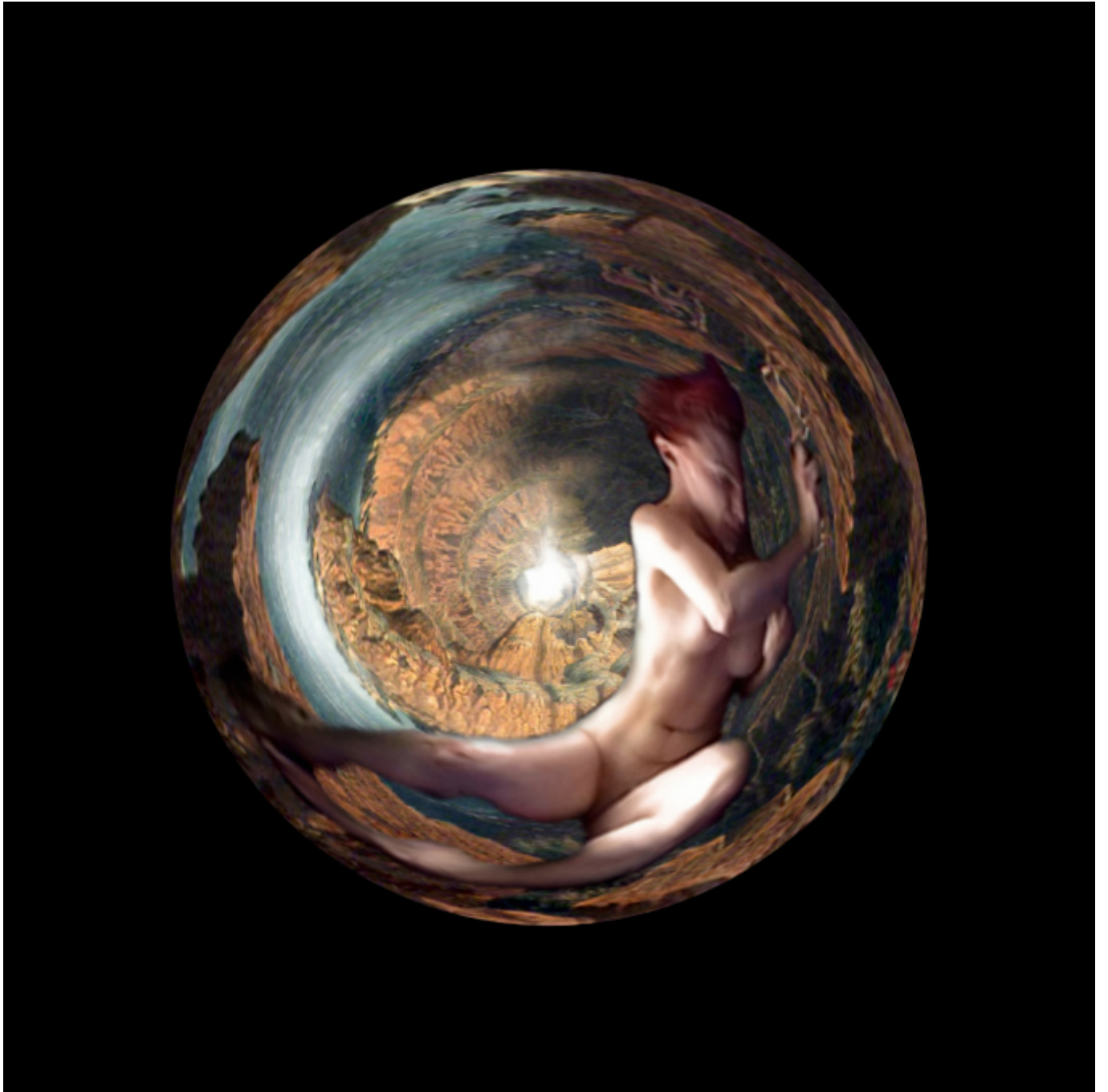
The Falls (i)

2008 | Digital Print: Pigment Ink on Cotton Fibre Paper | 800mm x 800mm | Edition of 5 and 2 Artist's Prints



The Falls (ii)

2008 | Digital Print: Pigment Ink on Cotton Fibre Paper | 800mm x 800mm | Edition of 5 and 2 Artist's Prints



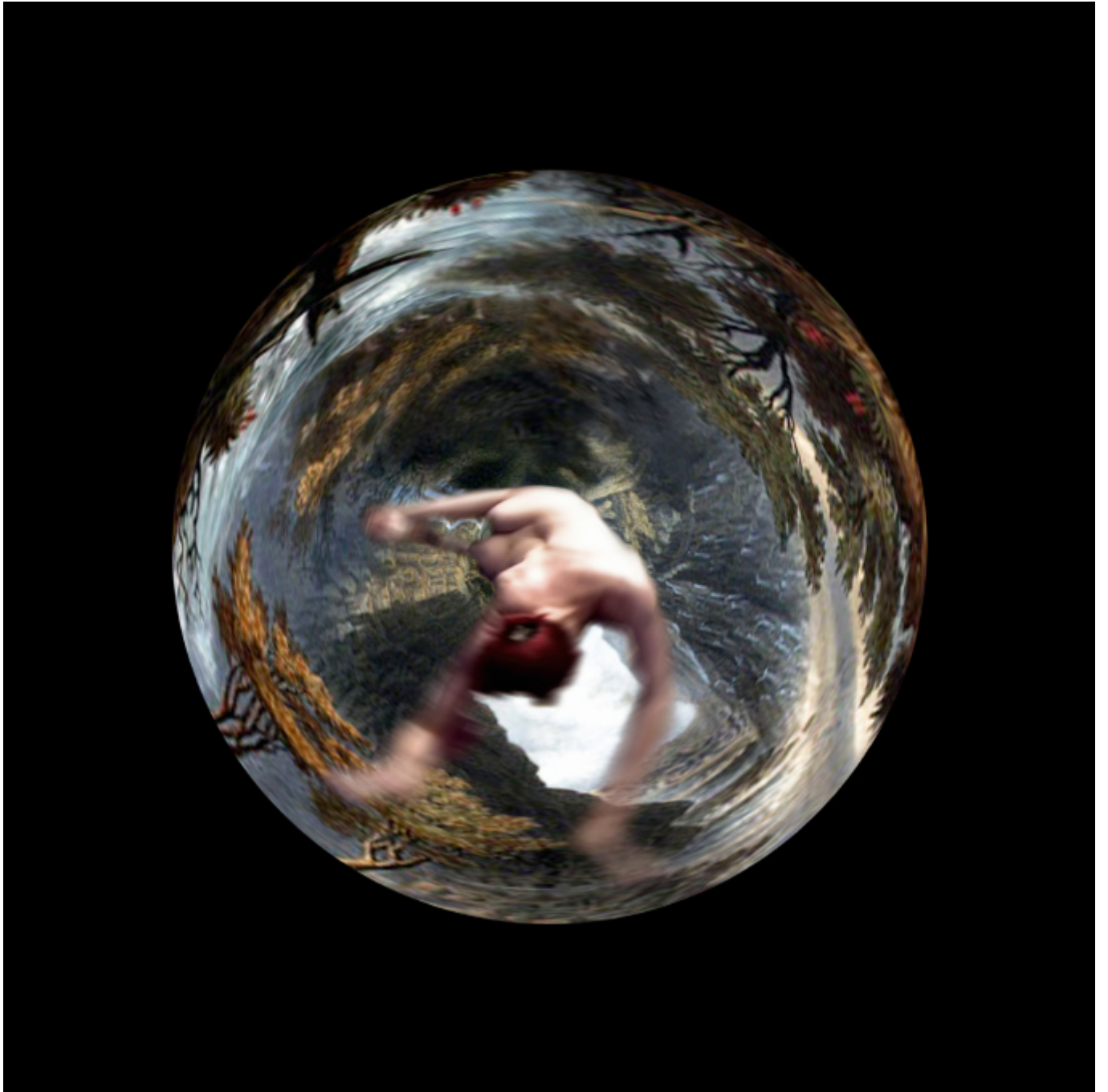
The Falls (iii)

2008 | Digital Print: Pigment Ink on Cotton Fibre Paper | 800mm x 800mm | Edition of 5 and 2 Artist's Prints



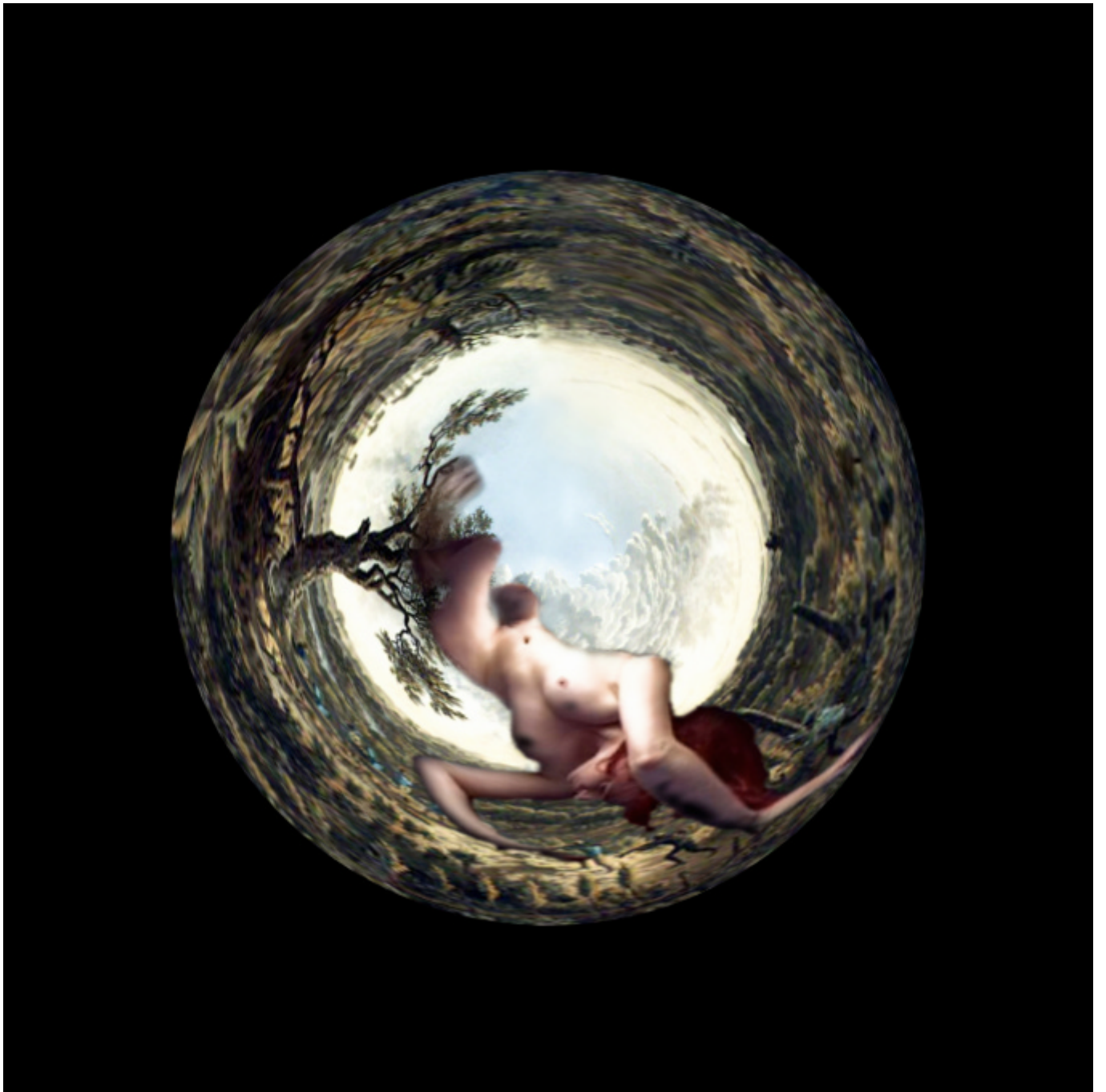
The Falls (iv)

2008 | Digital Print: Pigment Ink on Cotton Fibre Paper | 800mm x 800mm | Edition of 5 and 2 Artist's Prints



The Falls (v)

2008 | Digital Print: Pigment Ink on Cotton Fibre Paper | 800mm x 800mm | Edition of 5 and 2 Artist's Prints



The Falls (vi)

2008 | Digital Print: Pigment Ink on Cotton Fibre Paper | 800mm x 800mm | Edition of 5 and 2 Artist's Prints