

Untitled: An Architectural Provocation Exploring  
The Loss of Control and Rationality

Amelia G Jarvinen

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Committee:  
Nicole Huber  
Vikramāditya Prakāsh

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Amelia G Jarvinen

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**Abstract**

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This is a thesis that mines the possibilities in contingency and speculative fictions to overcome essentialist notions of architecture. Here, architecture is no longer a tool for the control of time and space, instead architecture is an active agent, alive and kicking.



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An Architectural Provocation Exploring  
The Loss of Control and Rationality

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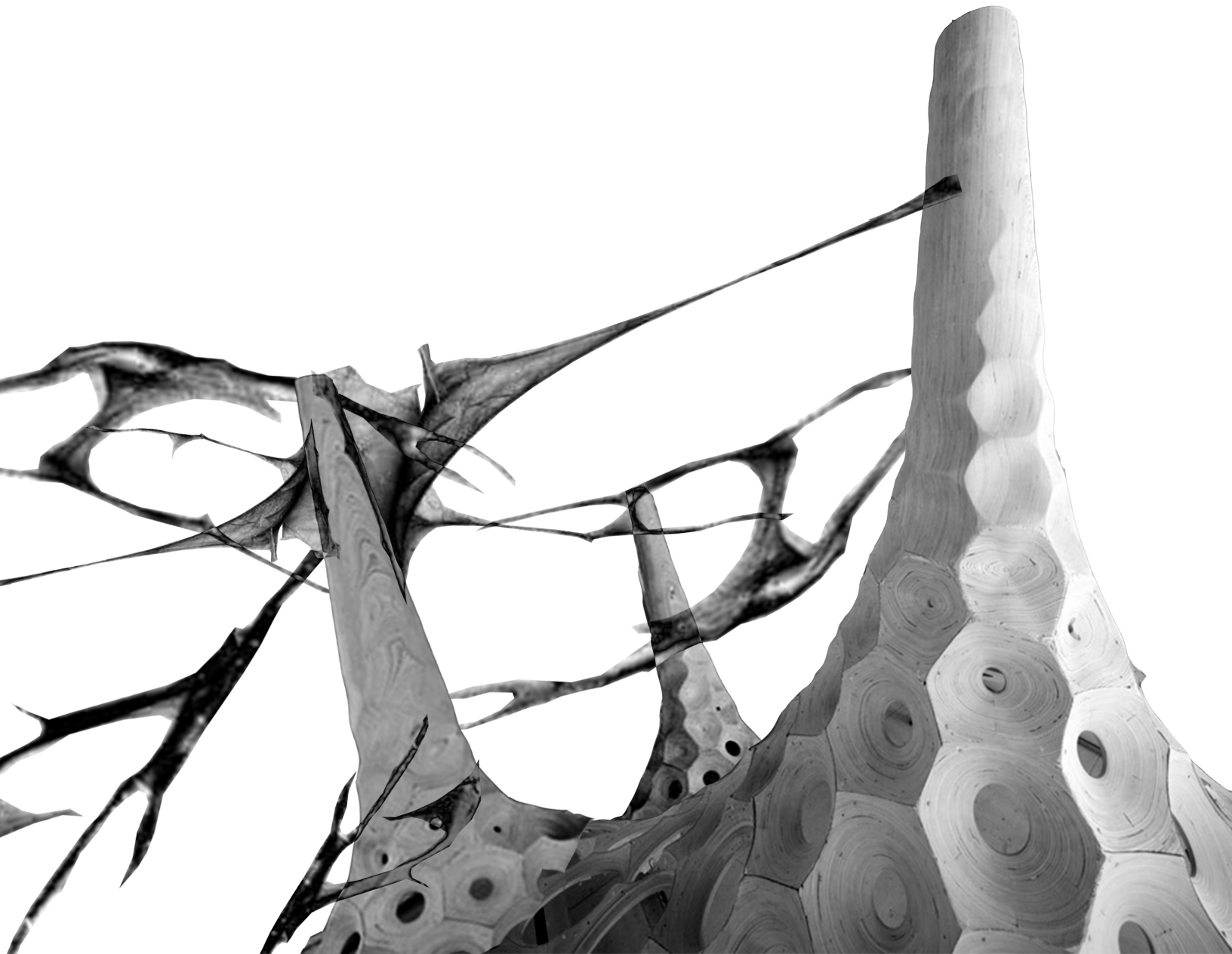




figure 1

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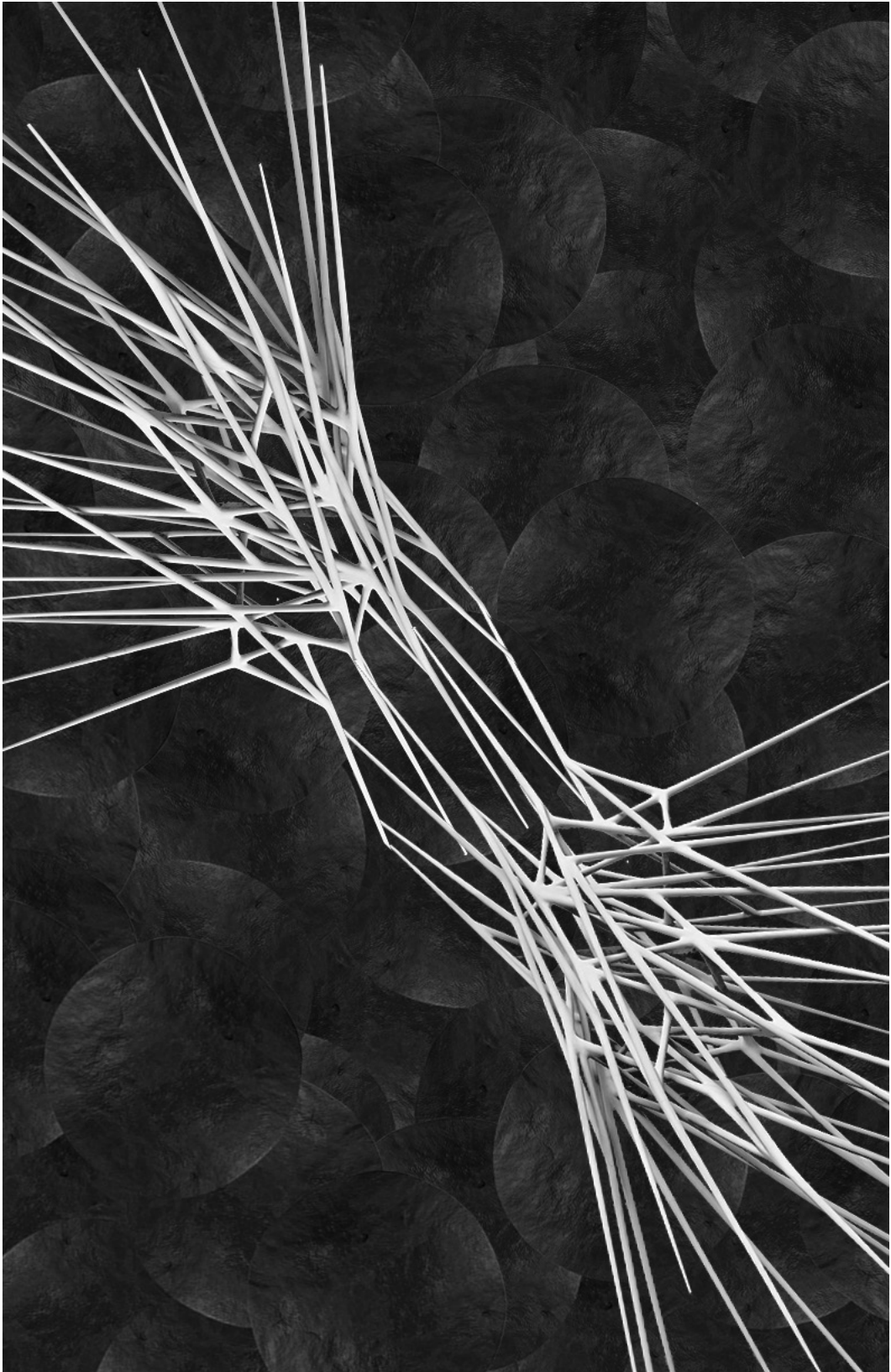


figure 2

## PREFACE

Written in 1972, *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars* chronicles David Bowie's alien and androgynous alter ego, Ziggy Stardust a rock star who communicates with other extraterrestrials. According to some sources, this album, which was marketed as a concept album was not originally so and the story was written after it had been recorded. It was characterized as a "high-heeled, multicolored extravaganza with overt and outrageous sexuality." What started as a fictional alter ego for Bowie started to bleed into his actual life and affect his personality. Bowie said that Ziggy "*wouldn't leave me alone for years. That was when it all started to go sour ... My whole personality was affected. It became very dangerous. I really did have doubts about my sanity.*"<sup>1</sup>

Later, he would muse: "*What you have there on that album when it does finally come out, is a story which doesn't really take place, it's just a few little scenes from the life of a band called Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders From Mars, who could feasibly be the last band on Earth—it could be within the last five years of Earth. I'm not at all sure. Because I wrote it in such a way that I just dropped the numbers into the album in any order that they cropped up. It depends in which state you listen to it in.*"<sup>2</sup>



## INTRODUCTION

Suppose I were to begin by saying that I've lost my sanity somewhere in the back tendrils of this project. Suppose I have embraced this temporary state in order to tap into that Ziggy Stardust power - to find new identities within myself and to question how I am being in the world. Suppose I flipped a gasket and began doing without thinking calling it an architecture project at every step of the way.

This project is personal. It is about asking myself what I would like to see in the world and how that might be accomplished. The terrain that we will be traversing here involves five major nodes of inquiry:

contingency

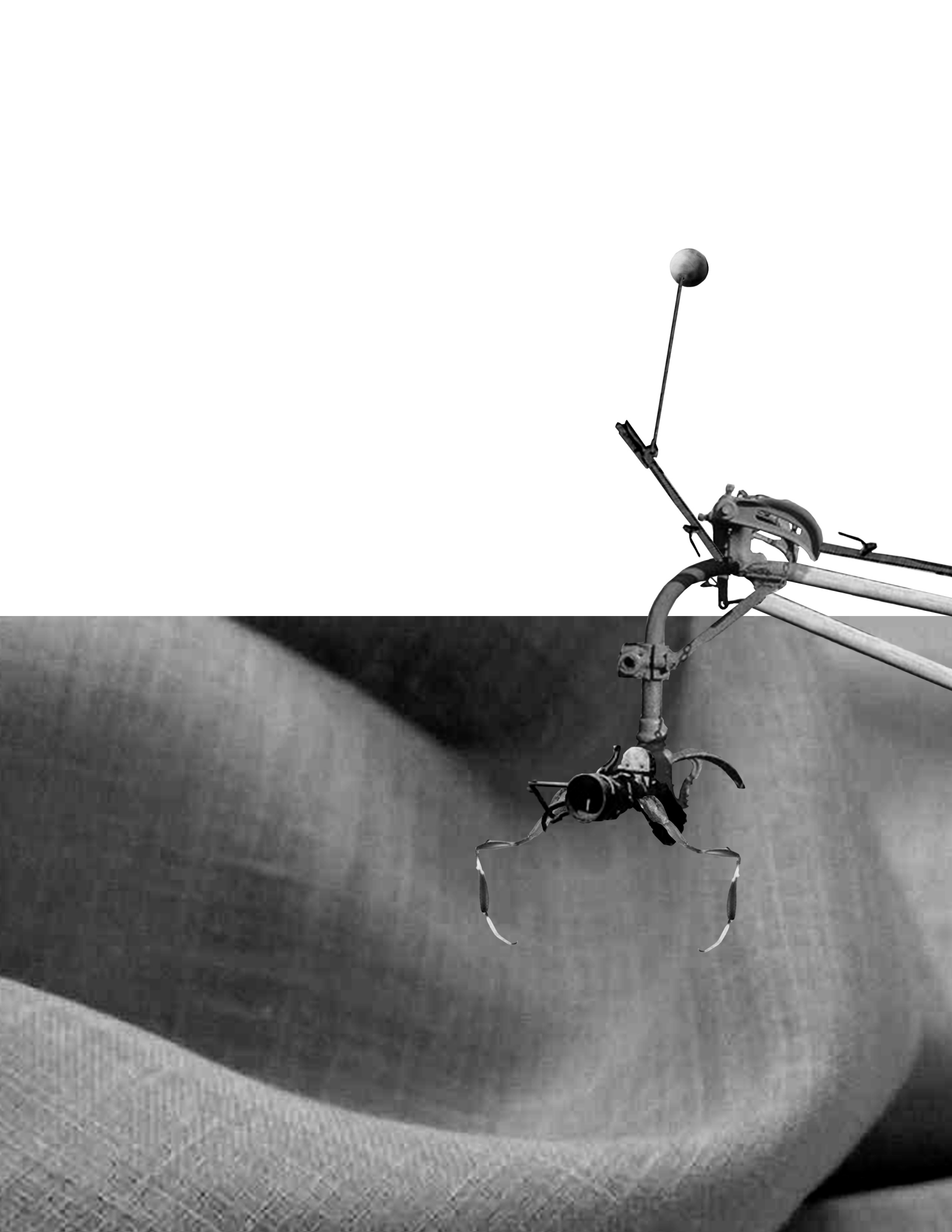
compost

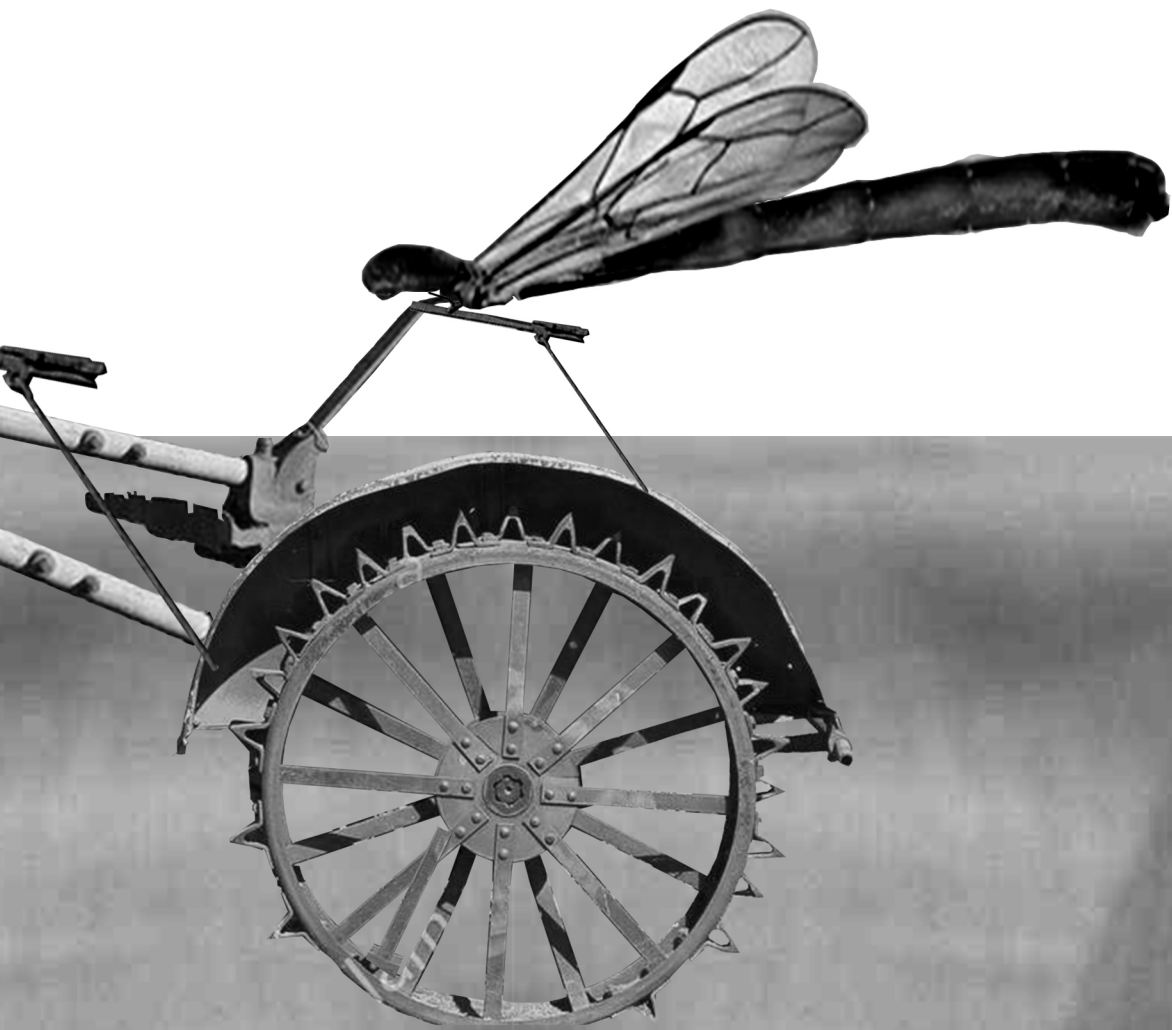
dream work

grotesque

(s)cyborg

Just as fluids tell the story of one's body, these nodes of inquiry set in motion excretions and leaks that tell a story of a design process grounded in my own subjectivities, but open to interpretation. Mystical in many regards and pataphysical in others, the process that unfolds asks questions about identity, situatedness, normalization, post humanism and narrative as spatial shapers. The flows of this project are shaped with thought not to form but the doing.







## CONTINGENCY

as a fluid unfolding of continuous change and entanglement; impossible to predict with any certainty

Before digging in here more, let us first consider contingency in reverse: words that spring to mind are predictability, order, control, scheduling...all more or less goals of modernism. With these ordering structures comes collective morals and common goals - sensible desires. But do not make the mistake of thinking that these goals are entirely innocent.<sup>3</sup> Order, control, and rationality iron out the beautiful differences, contradictions, impulses, uncertainties, ambiguities and situated subjectivities that run through our veins. These normalizing forces are often paired with marginalization on all scales and corners of life, from sectors of the population to emergent sectors of the self.<sup>4,5</sup>

A utopia for some is a dystopia for others.

Turning back to contingency, what can we learn from this indeterminate threshold condition of sustained change?

Embracing contingency can mean rolling with the ambiguity punches. It means celebrating the possibilities that come with the “what ifs” the “who knows whats” and the accidents. So much has been created and discovered through the loss of control, through shifting focus. Afterall, the discovery of penicillin is a story of an accidental experiment with a common mold.

Designing with contingency means sustained speculation, oscillations, and potential for multiplicity and speculation.<sup>6</sup> With imagination as a tool of discovery we can think about possible future unfoldings with the recognition that speculations are just that: unfixed and often unlikely. Change is the only thing we can really count on.

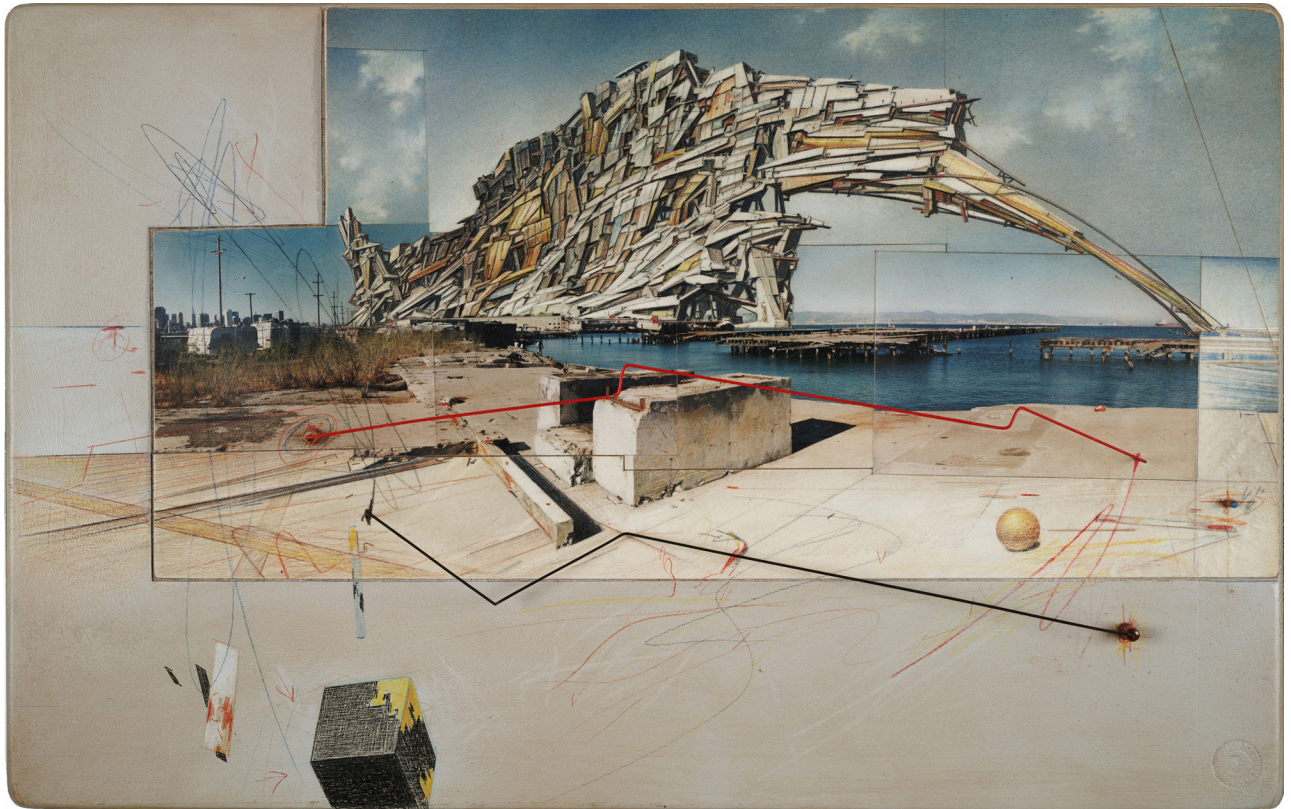
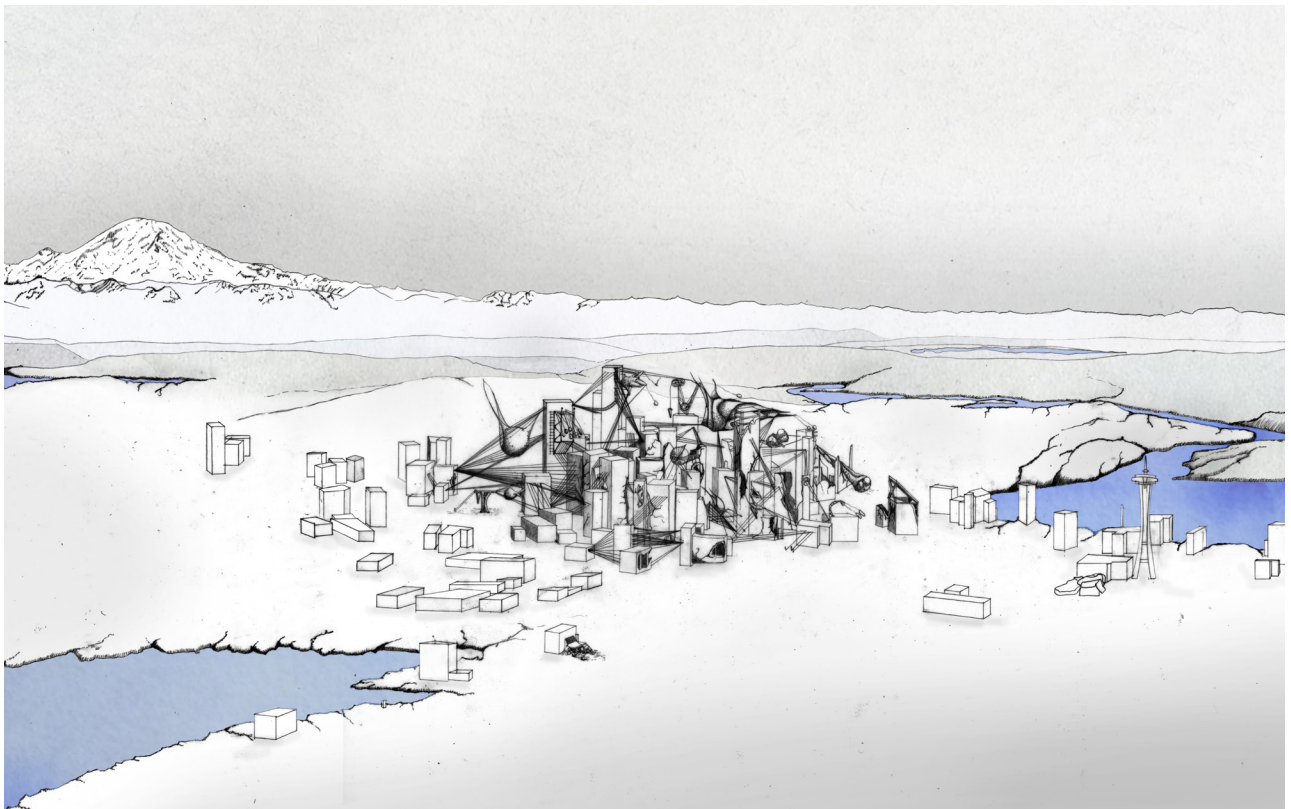


figure 3



**CONTINGENCY::** Lebbeus Woods, a quick case study

We cannot talk about contingency without noting Lebbeus Woods' contributions to this arena of architecture. Dreamlike in their futuristic aesthetic yet unmistakably architecture, his explorations into the future of this ever changing world aggravate our sensibilities about what architecture is and could be. In posing imaginative alternatives to architectural aesthetic, Woods subverts our expectations of architectural subjectivity. His drawings are witchcraft, pulling us into wildly elaborate possibilities.<sup>7</sup>

**CONTINGENCY::** She-attle

In a similar vein, this thesis is not necessarily interested in going along with "things as they are," but rather asking who we are, where we are, and where we are going. I'd like to think of myself as a contingency correspondent, reporting back from the field, though, I can't tell you anything with certainty. However, I can tell you what *might* happen if our planet's center of gravity changes.<sup>x</sup>

## COMPOST

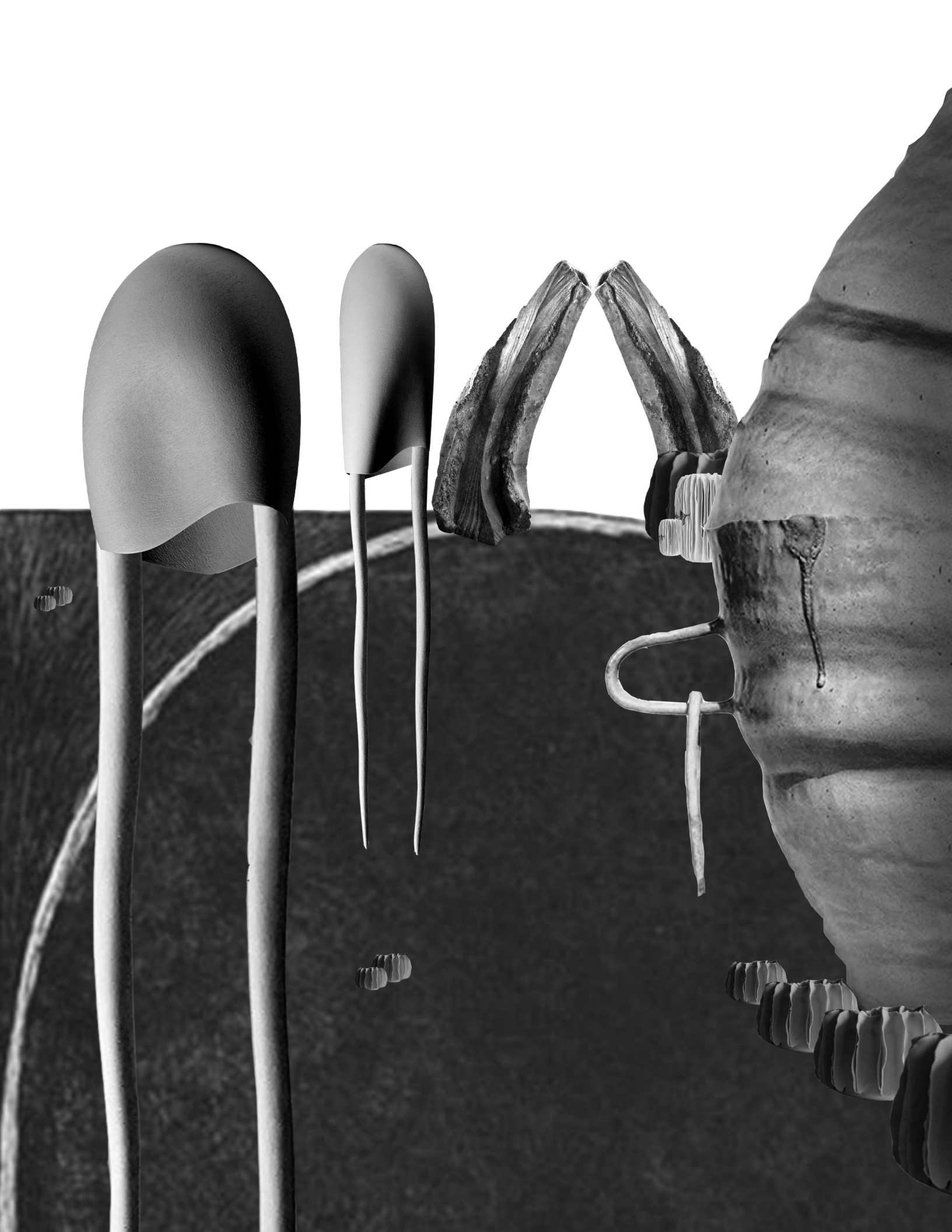
enrichment through placing oppositional, surreal and strange things in concert with each other

The philosopher and social theorist Donna Haraway writes: *“Staying with the trouble requires making oddkin; that is, we require each other in unexpected collaborations and combinations, in hot compost piles. We become-with each other or not at all. That kind of material semiotics is always situated, someplace and not noplac, entangled and worldly.”*<sup>8</sup>

The hot slop of compost is messy and chaotic. Made up of excess, leftovers, misfits, difference, in its decomposition it serves a crucial function in the composition and constitution of new life. It is a living cross-reference of complex entanglements and a great reminder of the serendipity that results from chaos, the richness in different forms of relationality, and the speculation in constant becoming and contingency. Who knows what it will smell like?

In the richness of compost, we may find potent metaphors for design processes. As a tool, compost teaches not solutions, but reveals thresholds leading to fresh terrain.

In a sense, compost is nature’s precedent for assemblage practices. Compost enriches through uncommon pairings. Compost design calls for a “direct material engagement with the world” instead of observation from afar.<sup>9</sup> It requires getting one’s hands dirty to decompose the division between binaries. And it takes more than one to make.



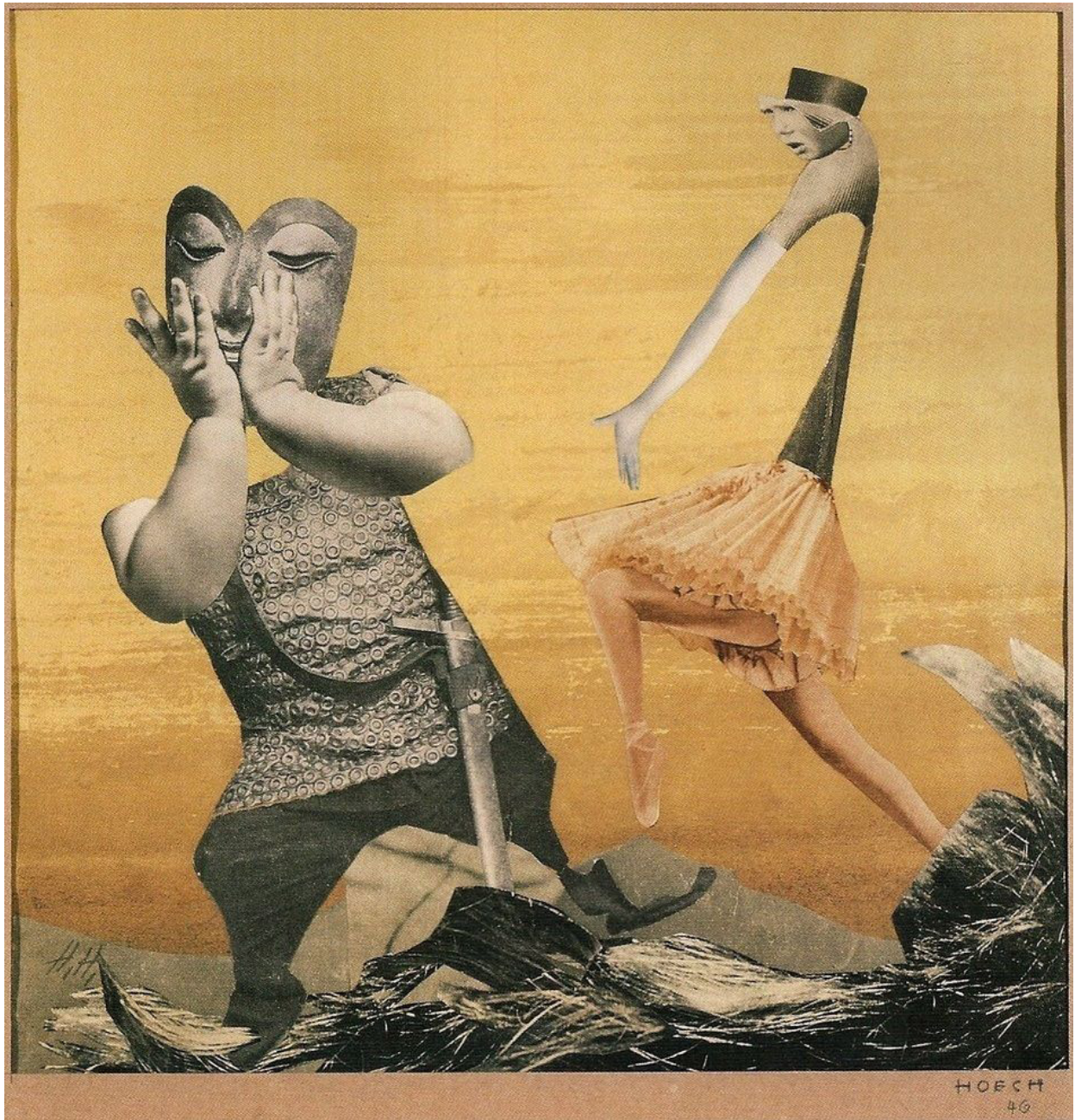


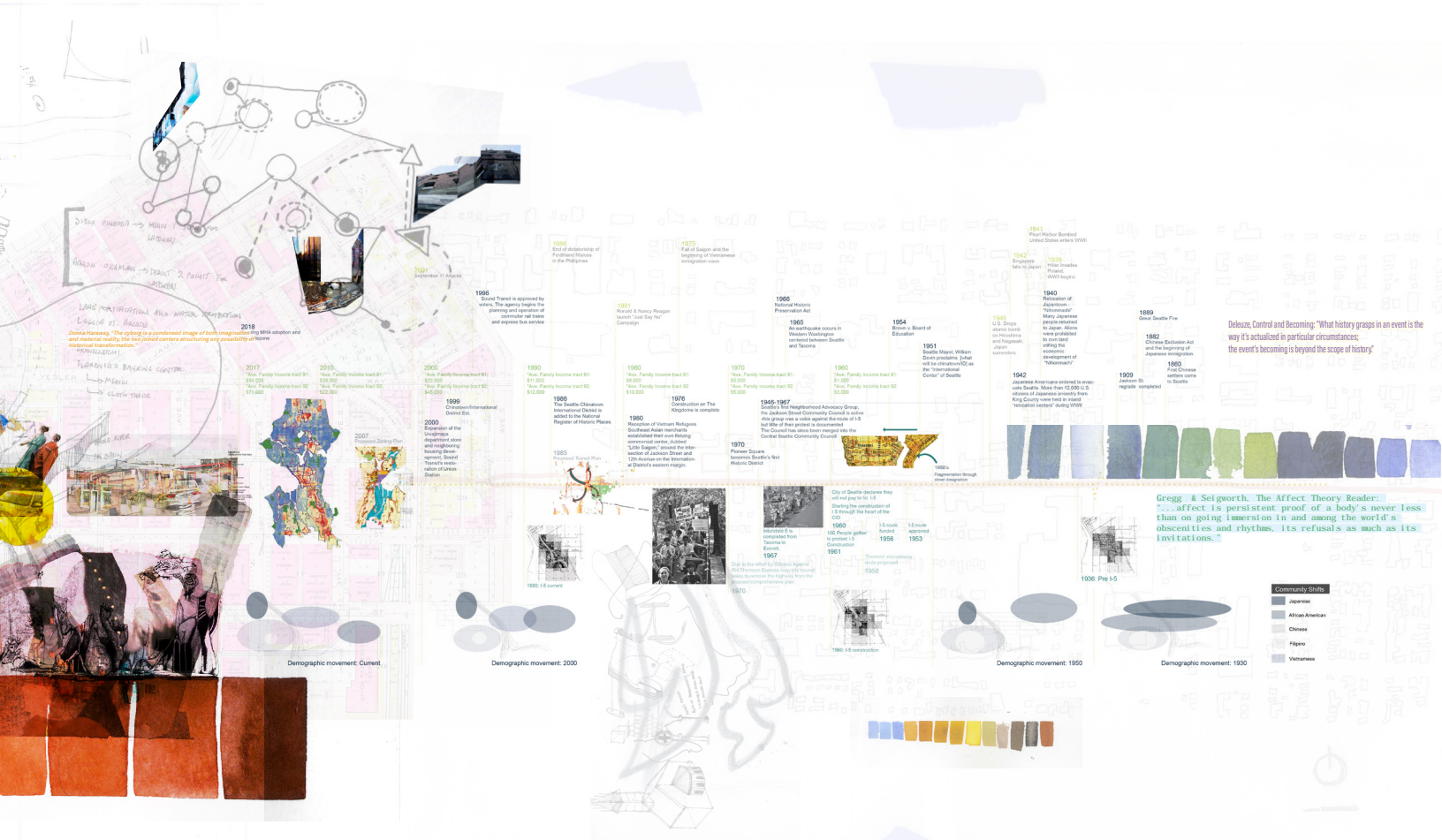
figure 4

### COMPOST:: Hannah Höch, a quick case study

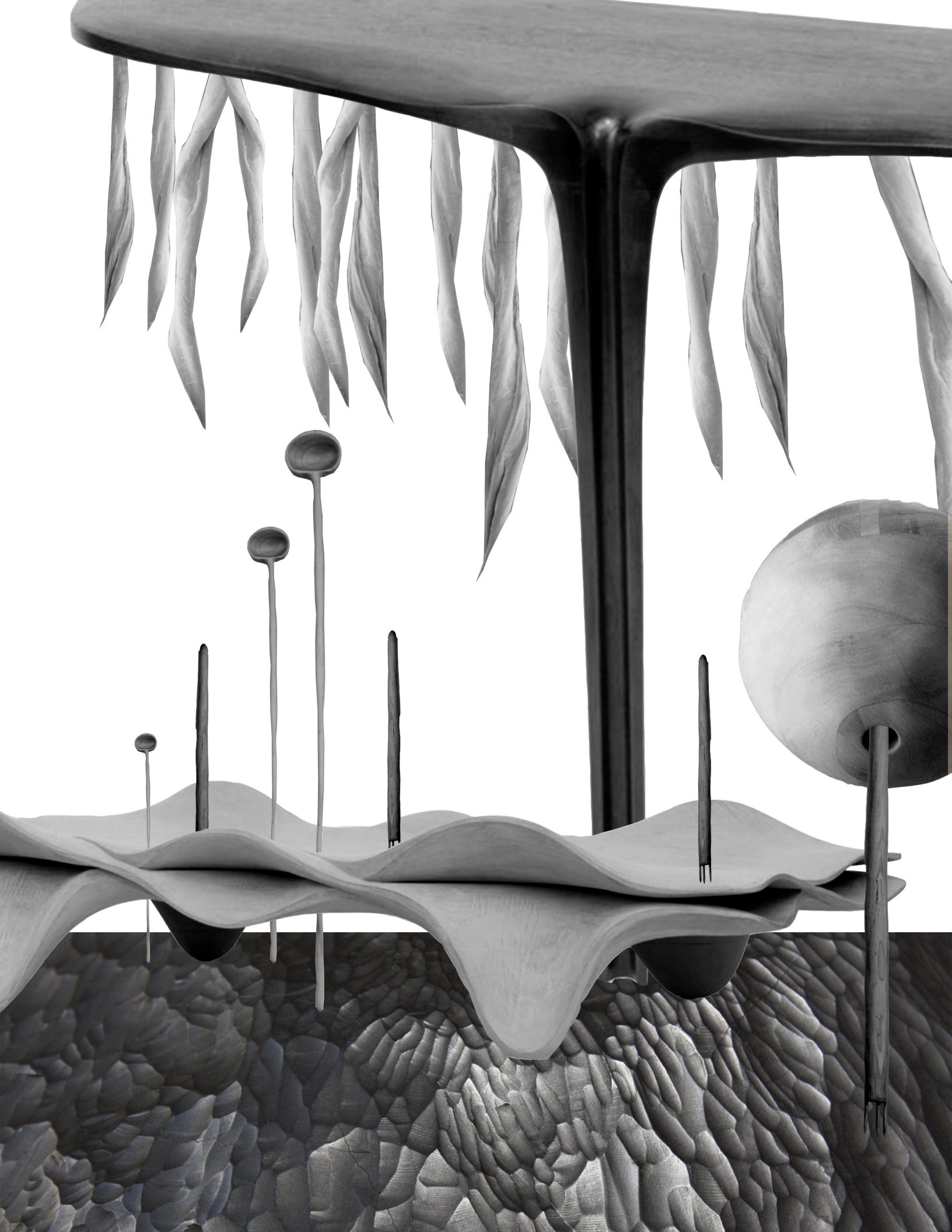
Although not explicitly mentioned in the histories, Hannah Höch was a composer. Her work within the Berlin Dadaist movement often re-appropriated text and images from pop culture of the time to contribute to a critical discourse on the social politics of 1920s Weimar Germany, the socially constructed roles of women, and identity politics. Although condescended to by her male peers, she continued to collaborate and participate in the Dadaist movement for many years creating work like the image on the left - a collage aesthetic that still holds power and relevancy today.<sup>10</sup>

Many people do not associate collage with anything truly meaningful. “It’s just a random assortment of images cobbled together,” some might say. To that Robert Brackett III might say that “*collage offers an opportunity to negotiate complex concepts in the vibrant spaces of images and juxtapositions; creating new and uncertain territories for further exploration.*”<sup>11</sup> and I would agree with him.





xx see appendix 2



## DREAM WORK

animating one's design by introducing possibilities for multiple readings of the same components

What are dreams anyway?

Our most vivid dreams occur during the sleep phase when our brains are at their most active.<sup>12</sup> Sigmund Freud believed that dreams are a window into our unconscious, a repository for latent memories, emotions, thoughts, and nebulous connections.<sup>13</sup>

I invite us to think of Dream work practices as methods of discovery, reflection, and of deconstructing the logics of linear thinking to arrive at new understandings and new questions. In its weirding of the real, dream work introduces a tension between, or a promiscuous slippage between reality and surreality. In the fusion of imagination, speculation and partial recognition, dream work invites a multitude of interpretations.

As an embodied practice, working with dreams and illusions comprises a specific physical arrangement. As Karen Barad would say, *"To theorize, [to dream] is not to leave the material world behind and enter the domain of pure ideas where the lofty space of the mind makes objective reflection possible. Theorizing, like experimenting, is a material practice."*<sup>14</sup>

This project looks to dream work as a means to lose control of logical thought construction and to view architecture itself as alive and kicking. What might an architectural subjectivity, tied to a specific unconscious look like through this frame? What would an architecture look like if it engaged the viewer and negotiated multiple partial perspectives?<sup>15</sup> Afterall, isn't our experience of space contingent upon the individual perceiver?

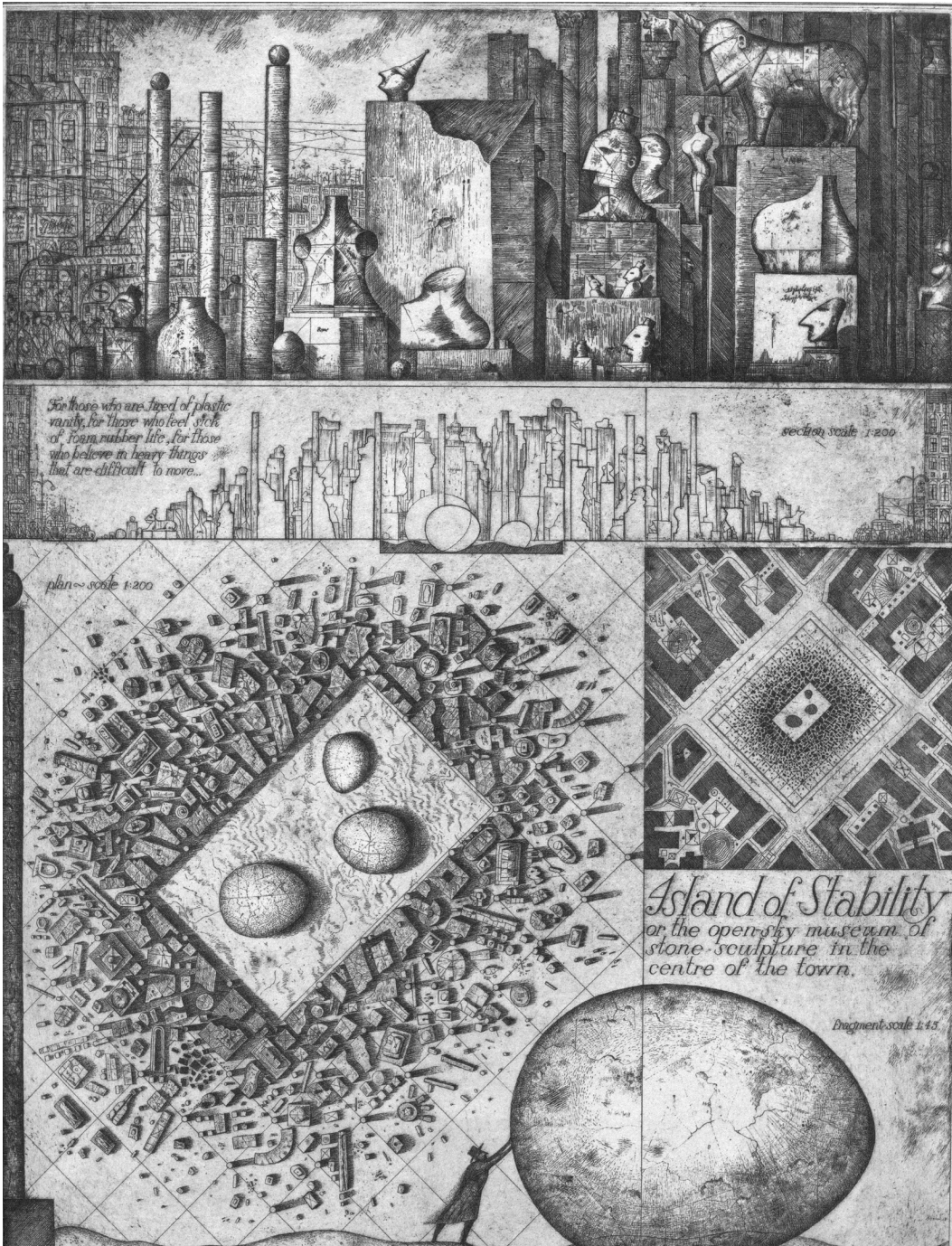


figure 5

### DREAM WORK:: Brodsky and Utkin, a quick case study

Facing a Soviet clamp-down on imaginative and creative architectural design, Brodsky and Utkin emerged from the Moscow architecture scene and entered the world of dreams - using visionary schemes as a graphic form of architectural criticism.<sup>16</sup> Their work taps into collective architectural memory, referencing the style of Piranesi, and thematics from throughout history. By updating these memories, they tap into the recipe of dreams - a bit memory, a bit random thought, some raw emotions.

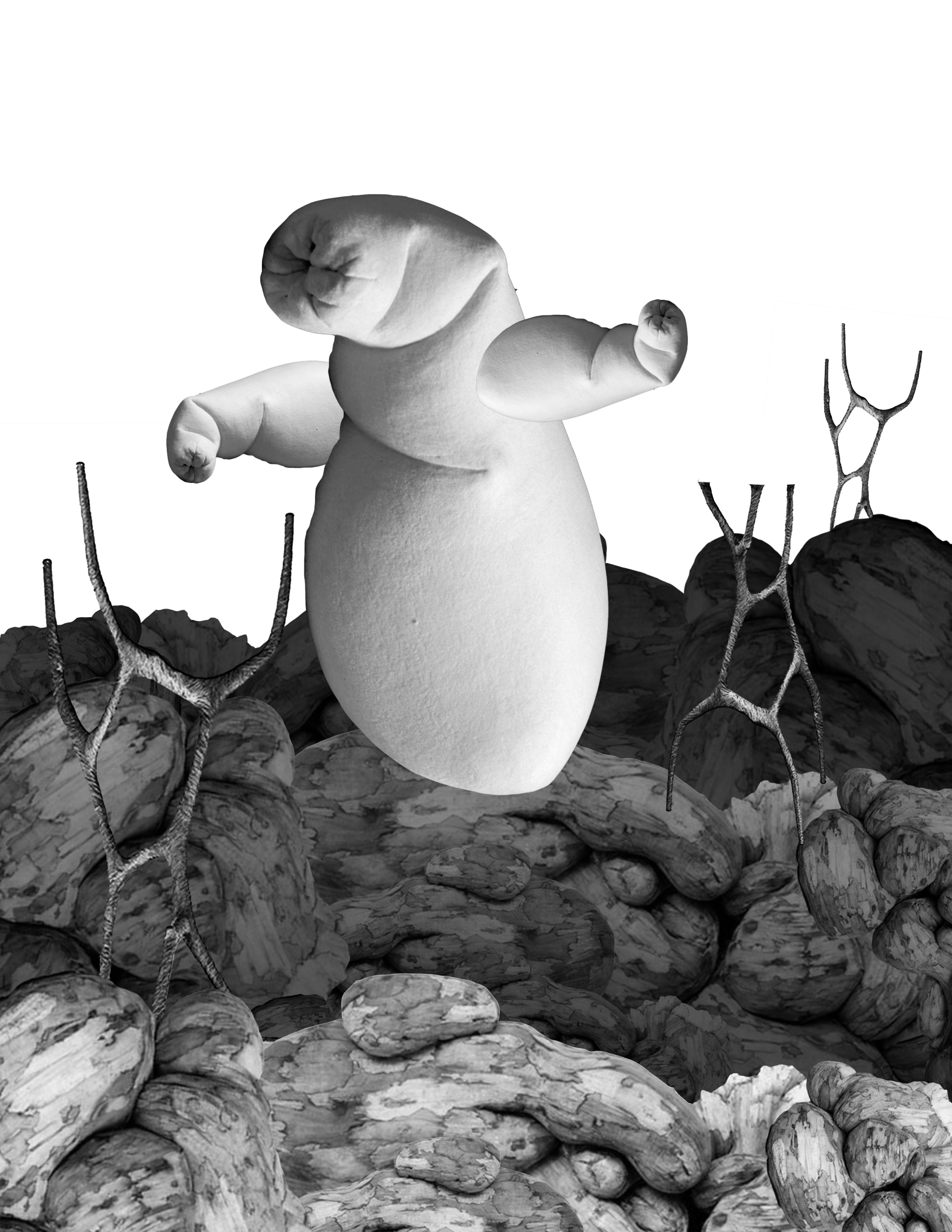


### **DREAM WORK:: Chimera Urbanism**

Amelia Jarvinen, junior contingency correspondent, reporting back from the field: What we have here is the stuff of dreams brought into reality. A fictional seed pod that begins a housing revolution in some future. It is an empathic seed pod that feeds off of the emotions and desires of the residents of the International District here in Seattle. The next image that I've procured from this future shows a more mature version of the seed pod growing large so as to overtake the I-5 bridge that transects Jackson Street. Can you imagine!







## GROTESQUE

images material apparatuses as multiple, bulging, over or undersized, protuberant, incomplete; that which celebrates eroticism, desire, openings and orifices rather than closure, polish, finish; thematically includes fertility, growth, over-abundance, jouissance; always in process<sup>17</sup>

My interest in the grotesque lies in our flesh. It carries all sorts of unspoken stories.

Grotesquing focuses on the flesh and the accoutrement that come with it: identity, performativity, behavior.<sup>18</sup> It draws its power from the combination of the familiar and the distorted, uncanny familiar.<sup>19</sup> According to Sara Shabot, a grotesquing of ourselves “*triggers an inner estrangement that enables us to recognize the otherness within ourselves.*”<sup>20</sup> Is this a road to empathy?

Grotesque looks to the uncanny to question the walls of reality around us, to uncover hidden pots of gold beneath the veil. The grotesque attends to the changes, transformations, eruptions, and abjections that occur around the openings, orifices, and jiggly bulges.

The grotesque subverts the preconditions of dominance by making it impossible to impose hierarchies - the marginal becomes central and the essential remains just as important. Flesh is the stuff of embodied subjectivities, the site of carnality and sexuality, and the manifestation of our grotesqueness. It is a necessary ingredient for connectedness and situatedness. Grotesque performativity involves embracing flaws and rejecting perfection.<sup>21</sup>



figure 6

**GROTESQUE::** Cindy Sherman, a quick case study

Illustrative of the grotesque in their body transformations, Cindy Sherman's body works (Untitled, 1989 - 1990) seem to suggest a hyperreal version of the body and not the polished, finished version of perfection we so often yearn to project. George Teysot would say, "Art can and does make the real more so."<sup>22</sup>



### **GROTESQUE:: Mother Beast**

Here we have an image of my mother. Last spring my mother birthed me in a celebration of the messy event of posthuman intermingling. In thinking of the maternal body, we can also think of the material container of architecture, how it holds its own untold stories and subjectivities. How might we tap into those stories?

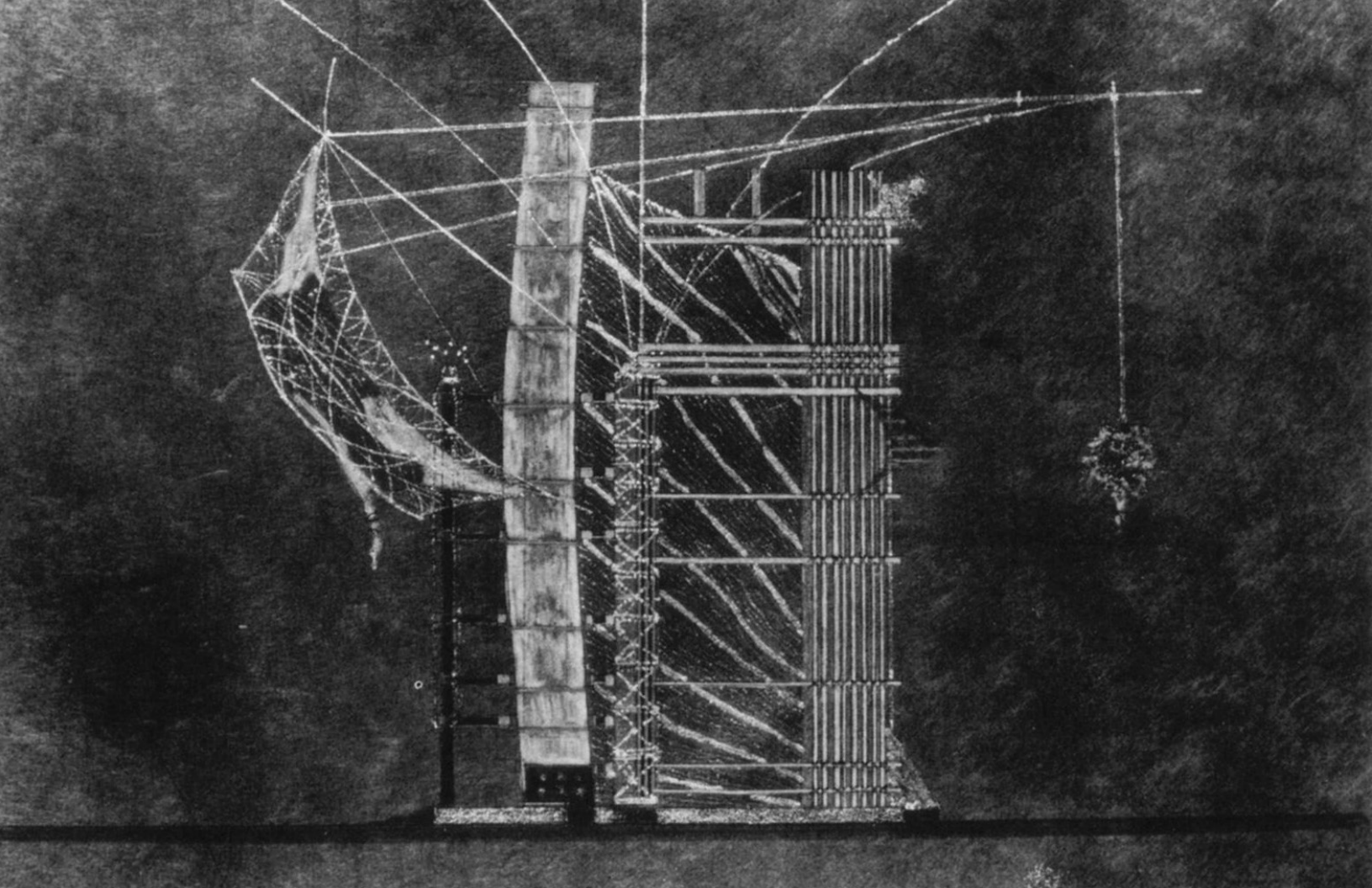


figure 7

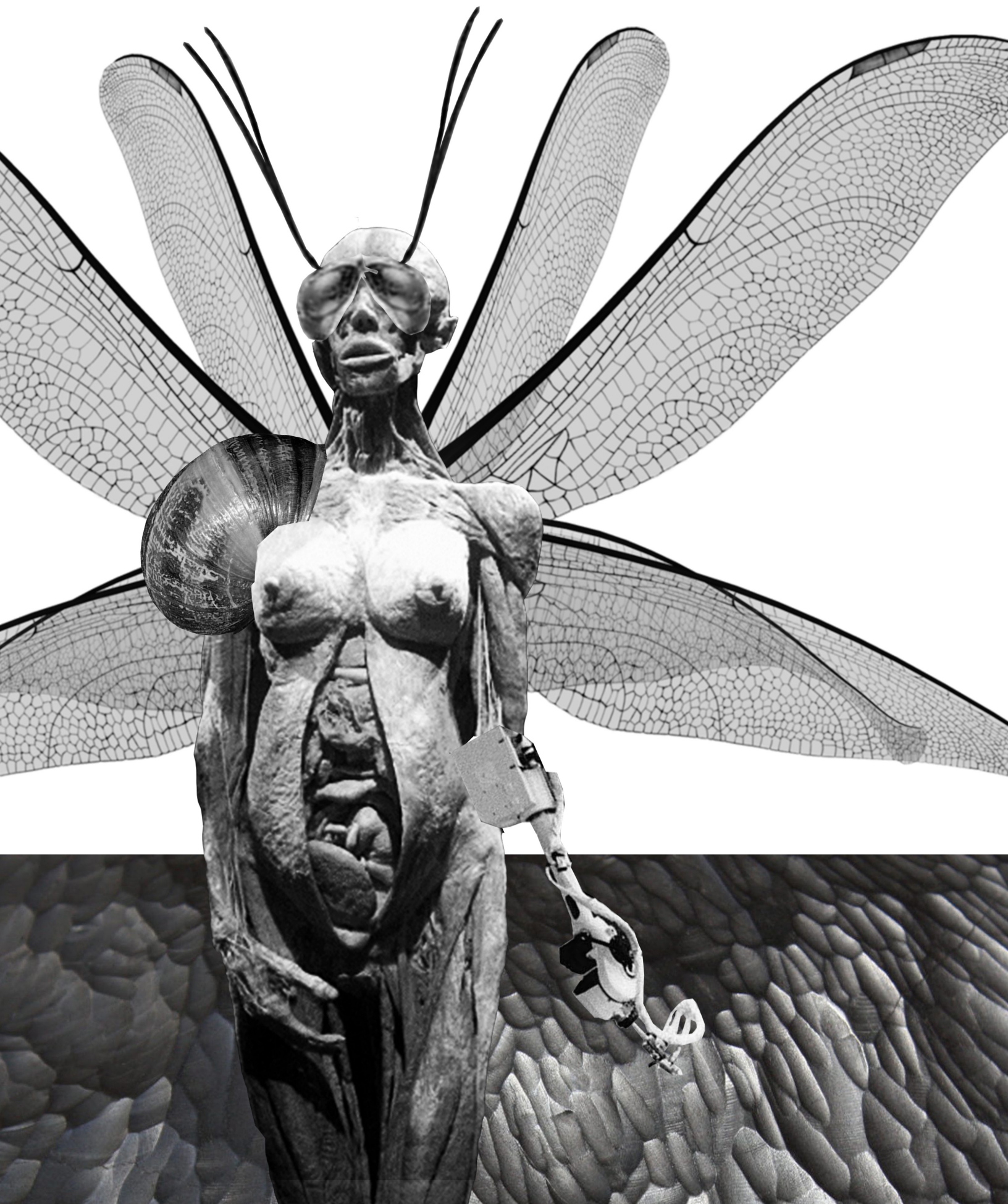
**GROTESQUE::** Story 1 by Jennifer Bloomer

*“It is 1992, Dozens of parasitic gaudy grotesque structures appear, chrysalises, attached to the corners of Chicago buildings, suspended and counterweighted at the parapets. They are structures of significance: woven of iron rings and golden rings and pink triangles and hoops, of metaphoric disturbances, of crocheted cable and braided silk, of fetters and stays, of the visual/ verbal slippage of condensation and displacement, of tabby and bone, woven by the miming of the technique of Louis Sullivan’s foliate weaving. Bowers of tabble. They constitute a mapping and marking of the hysteria of Chicago. Hollow and accessible from the street by pull-up ladders which disappear into hidden orifices, they are occupiable. Places for those leftover to rest. Places that accept both theory and flesh.”<sup>23</sup>*



**GROTESQUE::** Story 2 by Amelia Jarvinen

It is 2018. A parasite springs into being, attaching itself to the body of Amelia, merging her with her altar ego, Ophelia. It is a structure of overlapping fabrics, held rigid by the integration of setting plaster. As Amelia and Ophelia settle in, it becomes a lumpen house of sorts where each ego may wrestle tirelessly with the throes of life and the shapes of their bodies begin to inform the contours of the house.



## (S)CYBORG

a bending and extending of boundaries; dissolution of binaries; constantly undergoing transformation through accumulation and culling; a situated position; "a theory of assemblage in action"<sup>24</sup>

The (s)cyborg is a literal manifestation of partial - a whiff of this, a bit of that. In accumulating different bits and pieces, the cyborg not only forms their physique, but also their partiality, specificity, their situatedness, their piece of the universal puzzle. La Paperson would say that "The (s)cyborg may be personal in scale but is wired into telescoping scales of assemblage."<sup>25</sup> Remember, the human body itself springs from assemblage: we are made up of tiny biomes, our brain patterns are not just a product of the individual, but a largely social product.<sup>26</sup>

And thus the (s)cyborg recognizes that what we thought were individuals are actually part of a much larger network that ebbs and flows.

(S)cyborg design involves the breakdown of clean distinctions and the reconstruction of the boundaries of daily life.<sup>27</sup>

The (s)cyborg as a being in assemblage - as one of many - means that there are others that have their own capacity to shape and change the assemblage we inhabit. How the assemblage is shaped is particular to which (s)cyborg is doing the shaping - different (s) cyborgs have different powers, but each is integral to the whole.



figure 8

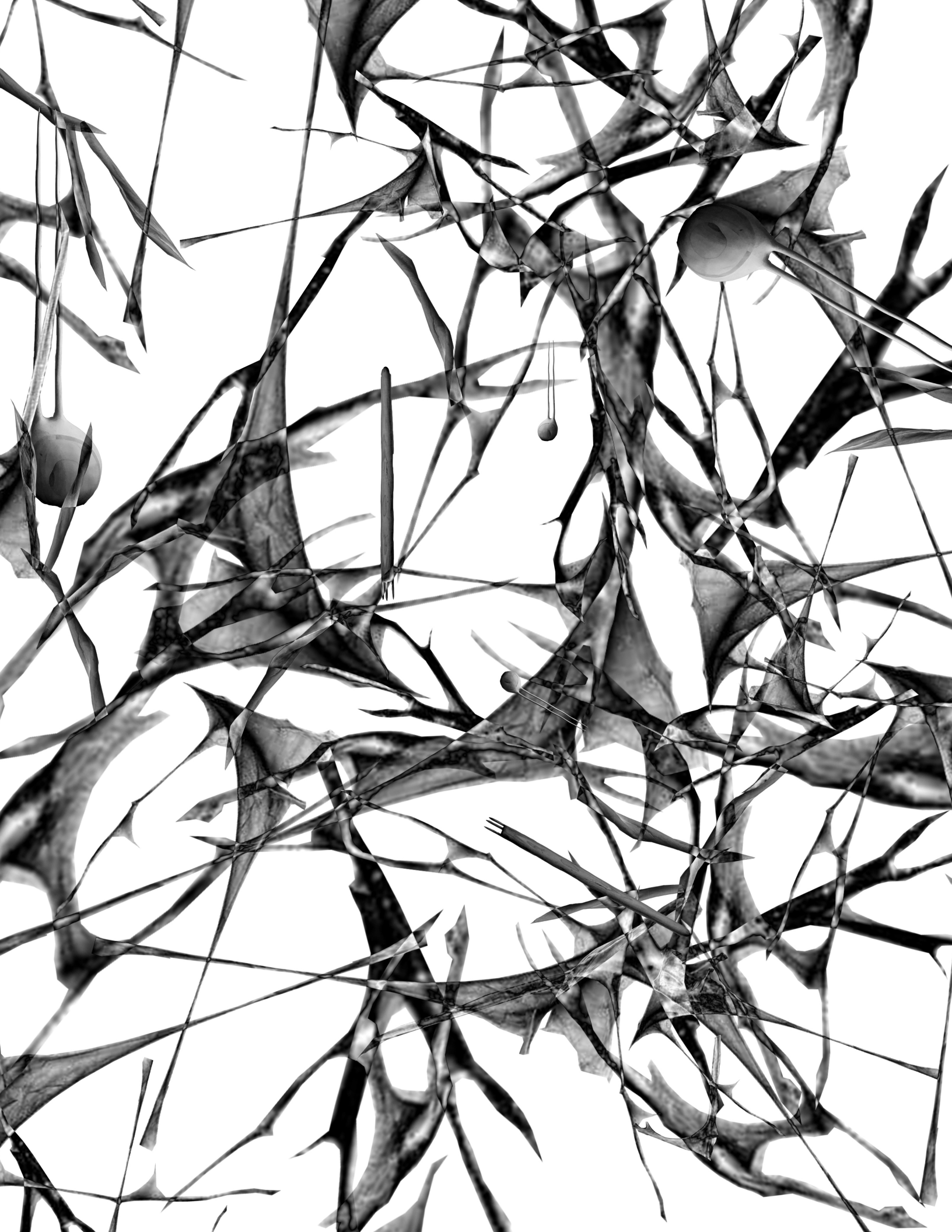
### (S)CYBORG:: Wangechi Mutu, a quick case study

In an interview with Barbara Kruger where Mutu discusses the intersection of race, class and gender in society, she reflects: *“This structure is like any other matrix: It’s man-made. Once I realized that, I also realized you can play with it; you can mentally play with the freedoms you do have to transfigure yourself—you can embody something different from what society claims and thinks you are.”*<sup>28</sup>



### (S)CYBORG:: Story 3

Who are we, where are we, and where are we going? Am I human or cyborg. My body has sprouted extra storage space in the back. And what of this helmet apparatus around my head. and...is that an antenna? It is 2018, Amelia undergoes some bodily transformations that look as though she may be turning a bit into an insect. Is this because she drank too much royal jelly as a child?



## REFLECTION

With this project, I am asking: how do we practice ways of knowing and doing otherwise? It is a project that centers imagination as the dominant force of change, the force that enables transgressions and unconscious play to rework society into an amorphous, ever-changing, ever-iterating city-jungle, crafted by the bodies that imagine in those spaces. It is a project that envisions the processes and tools needed to radically unlearn everything that we have been configured to believe is normal. This is a project that looks to decolonize and decouple knowledge from traditional structures in order to build knowledge, skills, and strategies grounded in collaboration and composting. Achieving this might take the form of collaging, writing, drawing, filming, etc...but is not limited to those practices.

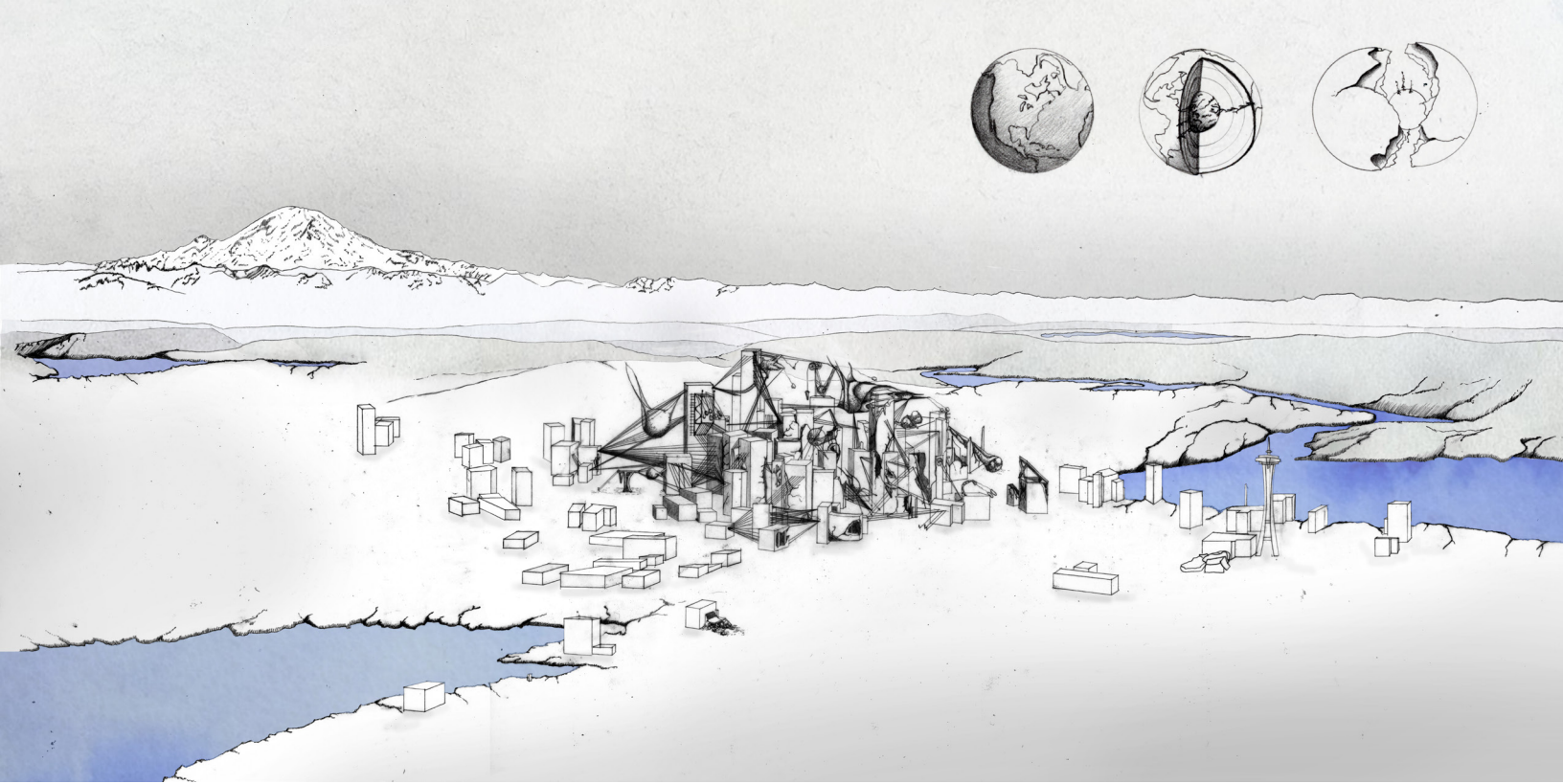
This kit embraces the importance and specificity of partial perspectives, of different conceptions of human (human, (s)cyborg, chimera, etc...), and the untold stories that come with those different forms of embodiment.

This tool kit insists on a relational and intersectional understanding, and involves a collective stumbling to figure it all out. What would it look like to live in the absence of order? control?

Architecturally speaking, this process explores the power in threshold conditions, as opposed to terminuses and one-off solutions.

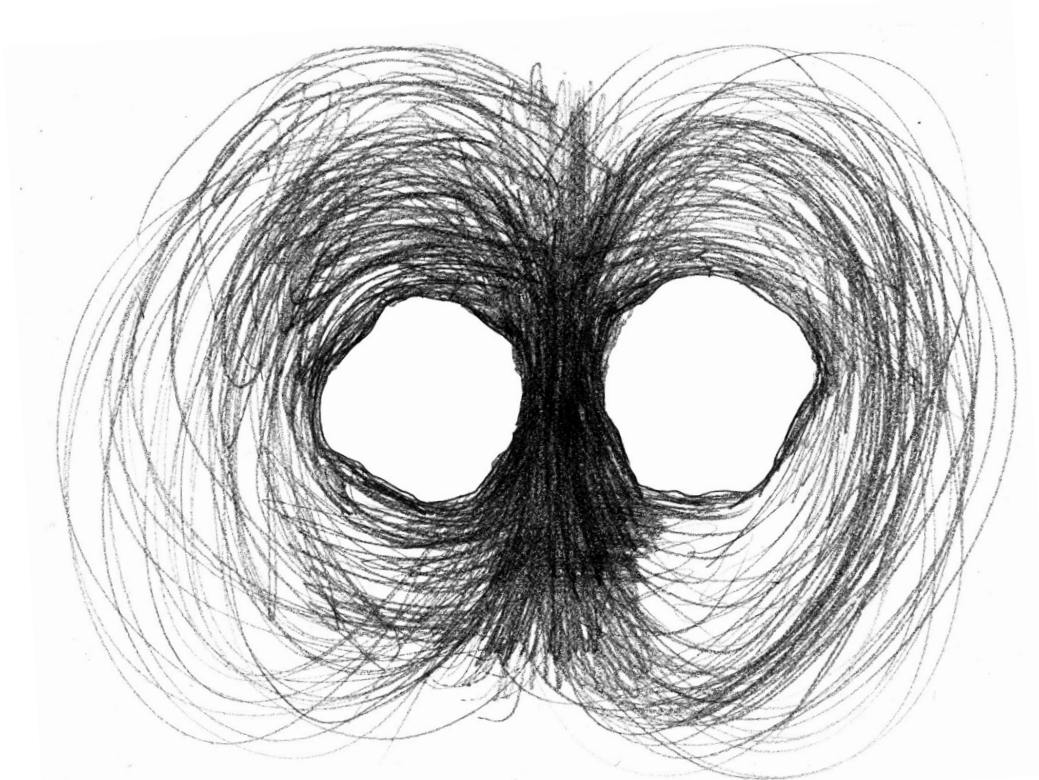
## ENDNOTES

- 1 Goodier 2019.
- 2 Schneider 2019.
- 3 Stoner 2012, 7.
- 4 Till, 129.
- 5 Connolly 1987, 8-9.
- 6 Stoner 2012, 1-12.
- 7 Becker 2014.
- 8 Haraway 2016, 4.
- 9 Barad 2007, 49.
- 10 Boswell 1997, 7 - 12.
- 11 Brackett III, as quoted in @prattsoa, Nov. 27, 2019.
- 12 <https://www.webmd.com/sleep-disorders/dreaming-overview#1>
- 13 <https://www.freud.org.uk/learn/discover-psychoanalysis/the-interpretation-of-dreams/the-dream-work/>
- 14 Barad 2007, 54 - 55.
- 15 Haraway 1988.
- 16 Brodsky and Utkin 2015.
- 17 Stallybrass and White 1986.
- 18 Butler 1990.
- 19 Vidler 1992.
- 20 Shabot 2013, 63.
- 21 Ibid, 64.
- 22 Teysot 1994, 17.
- 23 Bloomer 1992, 175.
- 24 la paperson 2017.
- 25 Ibid.
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- 27 Haraway 2016 (Cyborg Manifesto).
- 28 Kruger, as quoted in Olivares 2012.



## APPENDIX 1:: She-Attle And The Encyclopedia Of Expanding Knowledge

Human civilization had thrived on the surface, molding the crust to their will. An earthquake of cataclysmic size struck in our year 2080 p.h., splitting the planet into pieces. The forces that had previously governed the earth crumbled with the earth's destruction. Few of earth's creatures survived this assault. Of the species that survived, humans were among the most resilient. Using the carcass of the world they had crafted for themselves, the humans began again. Gravity as they knew it had failed them and turned on them. Down was no longer down, but oblique. The disintegrating magnetic field released a massive destructive pulse that wiped out "elektroniks" on a universal scale. The old order was no longer sustainable - houses, institutions no longer livable. Salvation was found in tethering and tensile structures strung from the old world towers. New relationships with environments created a new nature, based on the cities of old.



Speculated to be pre-hatch era human optic houses i.e. how humans used to “see” the world around them.

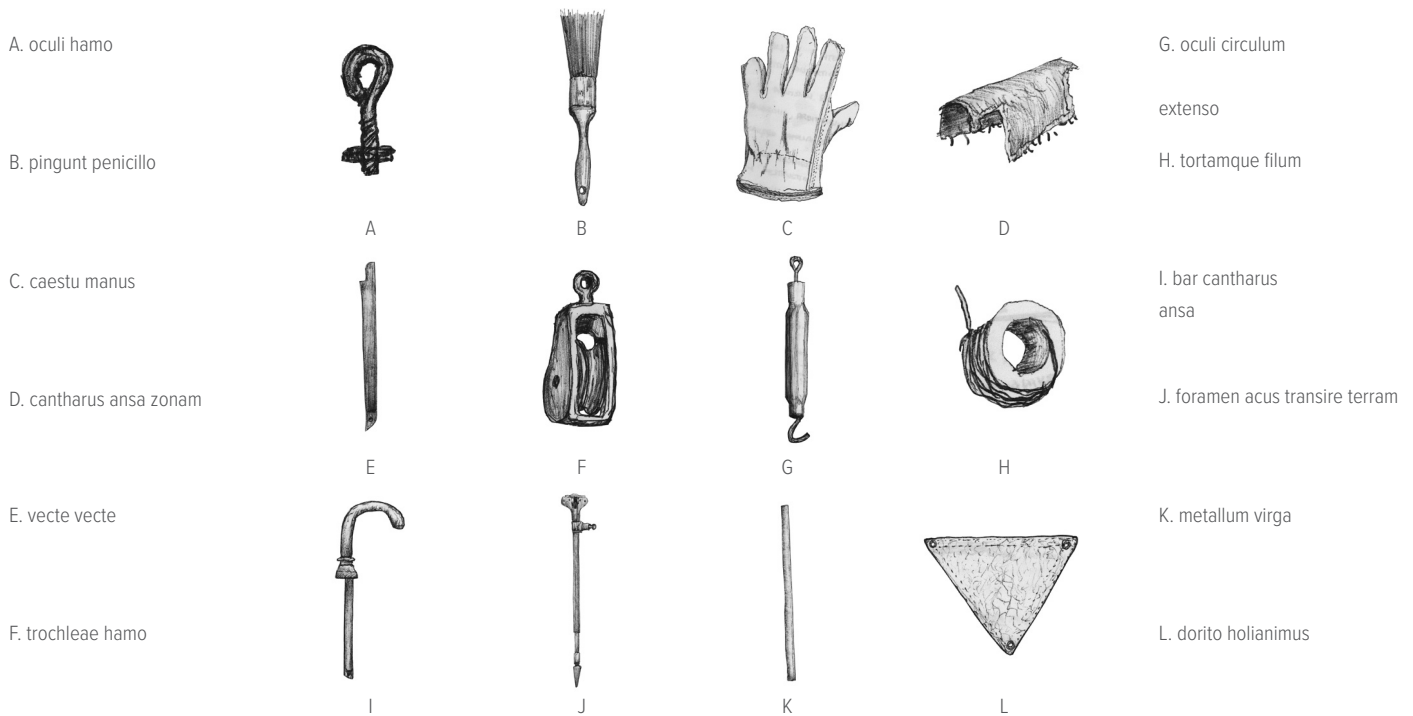
## Introduction

The sum of human knowledge of the pre-hatch human age is a remarkable thing to contemplate. The era of true human knowledge, of course, died with original earth. The tide of New Terra ushered in a clean slate of our knowledge base, thus we can only speculate as to what any surviving artifacts and infrastructures were actually used for.

Study of pre-hatch era humanity is a fickle science, as there are many competing theories in this area of study, there is no factual evidence for any of these theories, and of course, most of them are entirely subjective as there is no such thing as true objectivity. Those who study pre-hatch humanity are known as Subjectivists. This volume is a compendium of the most convincing speculations, from the leading Subjectivists of New Terra.

## Taxonomy

Subjectivists have begun to attach names that they believe bear some resemblance to the listed objects, but nobody knows what these names actually mean, if they are an accurate representation of the artifacts, how they are pronounced, or if they are even pronounceable.

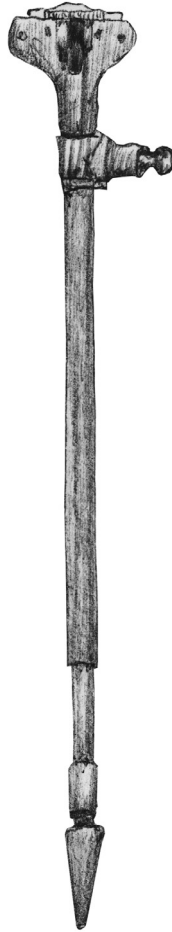


It is perhaps more of an asemic language that provides comfort in these times of great confusion. Speculation and heaping doses of imagination have been employed to manufacture these meanings and relationships.

### Hemoglobin Menagerie

This assemblage was first discovered on New Terra during the now infamous Hemoglobin expedition of 2183. The Hemoglobin task force was sent to investigate the interior surfaces of the ancient towers of She-attle. The task force boldly assumed that the deadly gases that had driven out the original humans had dissipated. It is widely believed that it was this mission that provoked accelerated evolutionary growths in the heads of humans. The oculi hamo (specimen A) is thought to represent the sun's path during a standard diurnal term. Subjectivists believe that the sun once rose directly orthogonally to the earth's surface over a span of 24 owers.

The cantharus ansa zonam (D) was once believed to hold air-purifying powers, but the slightly rancid smell and lack of porous membrane suggest that this may not be the case, and instead may have been a contributing factor to the deaths of those humans who believed that it did have air-purifying powers.

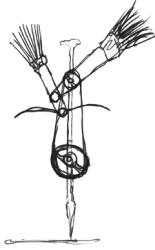


Foramen acus transire terram, otherwise referred to as a shit poker

Subject L (the dorito holianimus) is thought to hold the greatest religious value in civilizations of old. The delicate nature of this specimen makes it incredibly rare to find one so fully intact. The delicious orange dust that is often left behind on the appendage after handling is the breath of their highest deity, "Gawd". Once breathed on, the subject may experience euphoria.

Exhibit B was found on the outskirts of a crater field. Subjectivists widely agree that this instrument was used to analyze the depth of the impact of the craters for their own obscure purposes.

A. pictura machina



A

B. factum est paratum



B

C. factum est paratum



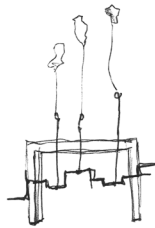
C

D. factum est paratum



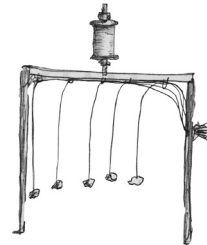
D

E. factum est paratum



E

F. factum est paratum

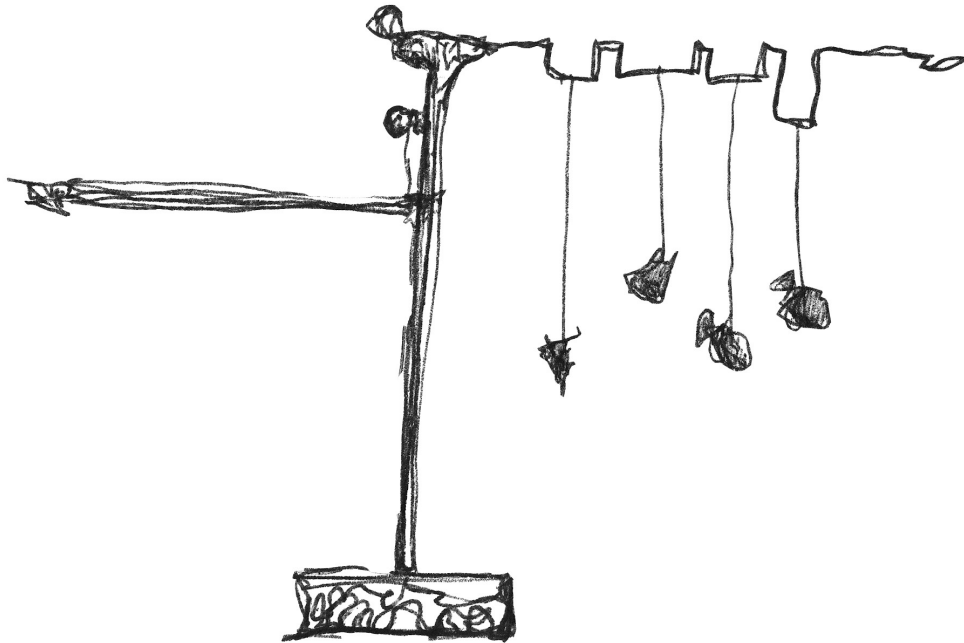


F

## Factum est paratum

These specimens have proven to be a weak spot for Subjectivists. The problem was perceived by one subjectivist when they declined to speculate on the ancestral relationships of the component parts that make up these compositions. One could pinpoint definite patterns in their crafted makeup, but the purpose of each anatomical element is subject only to speculation and ludicrity of the highest order.

Based on pure observation and emotion, relationships between these instruments become apparent. One of the most convincing speculations posits that each specimen attracts rodents and insects in inordinate amounts. Compositionally, each machine contains long tensile components, much like a crude and roughly hewn reproduction of our very own tensile constructions, that serve as connections between one body and the next. This has



Factum est paratum - the Children's Parliament has fallen in love with this particular specimen. The multiplicity of uses lends itself well to use by those who lack long attention spans.

led many Subjectivists to believe that the ancient humans were somehow able to predict the cataclysmic hatch and in doing so, experimented extensively with these life-saving devices. However, because of the extensive degeneracy in the tensile membranes, it is clear that even in the case of the most well-preserved specimens, many different material sequences could give rise to a plethora of different uses.

The above example has been found to have countless contemporary uses. This machine is not only strangely aesthetically satisfying, it is also a sound-maker, a nonsensical toy, and a fruit holder, with countless other uses being discovered daily. The multiplicity of uses has attracted the attention of the Children's Parliament who wish to manufacture these on a large scale for widespread distribution.

### Diabolical Tree

The very last of the ancient order trees, this particular specimen represents the firmness



Diabolical Tree

in constitution of the evils that plague this world, even in the face of imminent disaster. The leaves and branches symbolize the ever growing tendrils of destruction that render civilizations defunct. The second top represents adaptability to new challenges. The trunk and its immense root structure represents the strength and stability of the diabolical nature of the ancient earthen forces that drive all living beings to an early grave. It is a living reminder of the beauty that comes from withstanding cataclysmic events. Subjectivists visit upon their graduation from the University of Expanding Knowledge to come to terms with their inevitable decline.

A. single occupancy flat



A

B. spontaneous shelving unit



B

C. lightning harvester



C

D. steam engine



D

## Early Human History

In early post-hatch days, the surviving humans were set the impossible task of creating a new mode of living - a new civilization. The hatching of New Terra, and the splitting of old Earth in twain changed the gravitational pull and simultaneously propelled the crust closer to the sun, causing the interior materials to exert the previously inert gases that proved deadly to those occupying those spaces. No longer did the magma core have any pull. The earth's crust (or what was left of it) had shifted its center, thus pulling everything on its surface to a new center.

The orthogonal structures that humans had thrived in for millenia no longer supported living with a new center of gravity. Because the magma core had hatched and exploded the "elektroniks", the humans were left with very little in the way of tek-kno-log-ees. Crude tools were then asked to achieve impossible tasks.

New architectures were crafted to accomodate the possibility of more shifts in gravity and to avoid the murderous gasses. Spherical and rounded structures were the most conceivable option. As gravity shifted, so too could the contents of the interior living situation - and easily!

A. irrigation system



A

B. slipper limpet commune



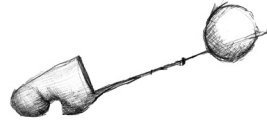
B

C. trolley car



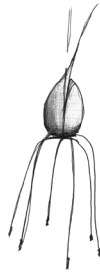
C

D. family home with  
outpost for hormonal  
adolescents



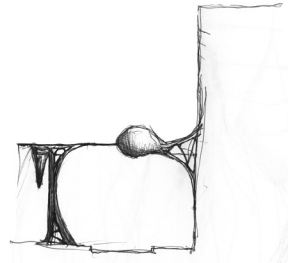
D

E. expeditionary transport



E

F. standard single room flat



F

## Tek-kno-log-ees

Pre-hatch humans often relied upon dig-ital tools for their day-to-day lives, but those tek-kno-log-ees crumbled with the earth's crust.

Ancient energy machines, like the steam engine, were built to redistribute natural resources to the survivors. Much research was focused on the development of the lightning harvestor, which only works some of the time, and not at all reliably.

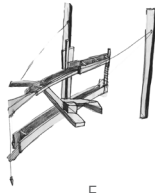
New Terra's gravitational forces are always on the verge of shifting. Anticipating this inevitability, a leading subjectivist invented the spontaneous shelving unit for all storage needs.



## Bild-ing Types

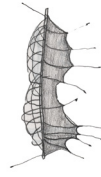
“After a natural disaster, the added value of architecture is neglected in favour of immediate recovery infrastructure,” explains Andrea Panizzo, a leading Subjectivist in the architectural subset of the profession. In the aftermath of the cataclysmic hatch of 2080 p.h., the need for well-designed and resilient structures was crucial for survival. Subjectivists initially conceived of natural resource management facilities, such as the irrigation system (specimen A), in order to ensure that all survivors had at least the bare minimum for life continuance. The first attempts at housing resembled rounded insect-like barnacles that could cling to the sides of the ancient towers of She-attle (specimens B, D, and F). They were generally emergency single room flats that could accomodate up to four people, with a little shoot for toiletry needs. The Subjectivists also developed manually propelled modes of public transport, as well as crust-exploring expeditionary transport trolleys to avoid the noxious gases that still filled the air. Following emergency infrastructures, New Terra began

E. tether research facility



E

F. family dwelling



F

G. vertical garden



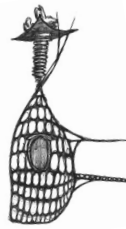
G

H. portable agriculture



H

I. single family home



I

J. new terra flags



J

K. storage



K

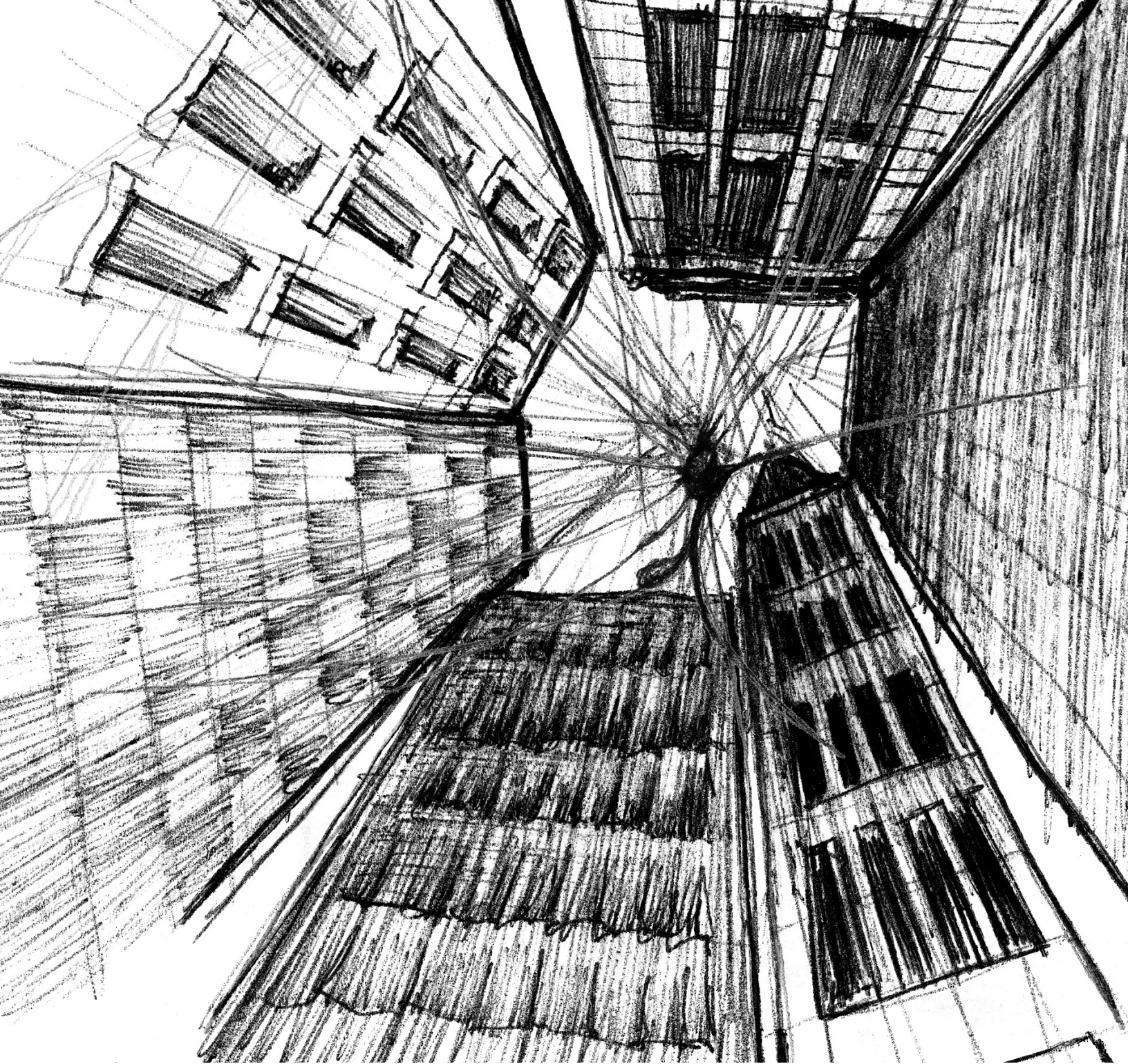
L. home decor



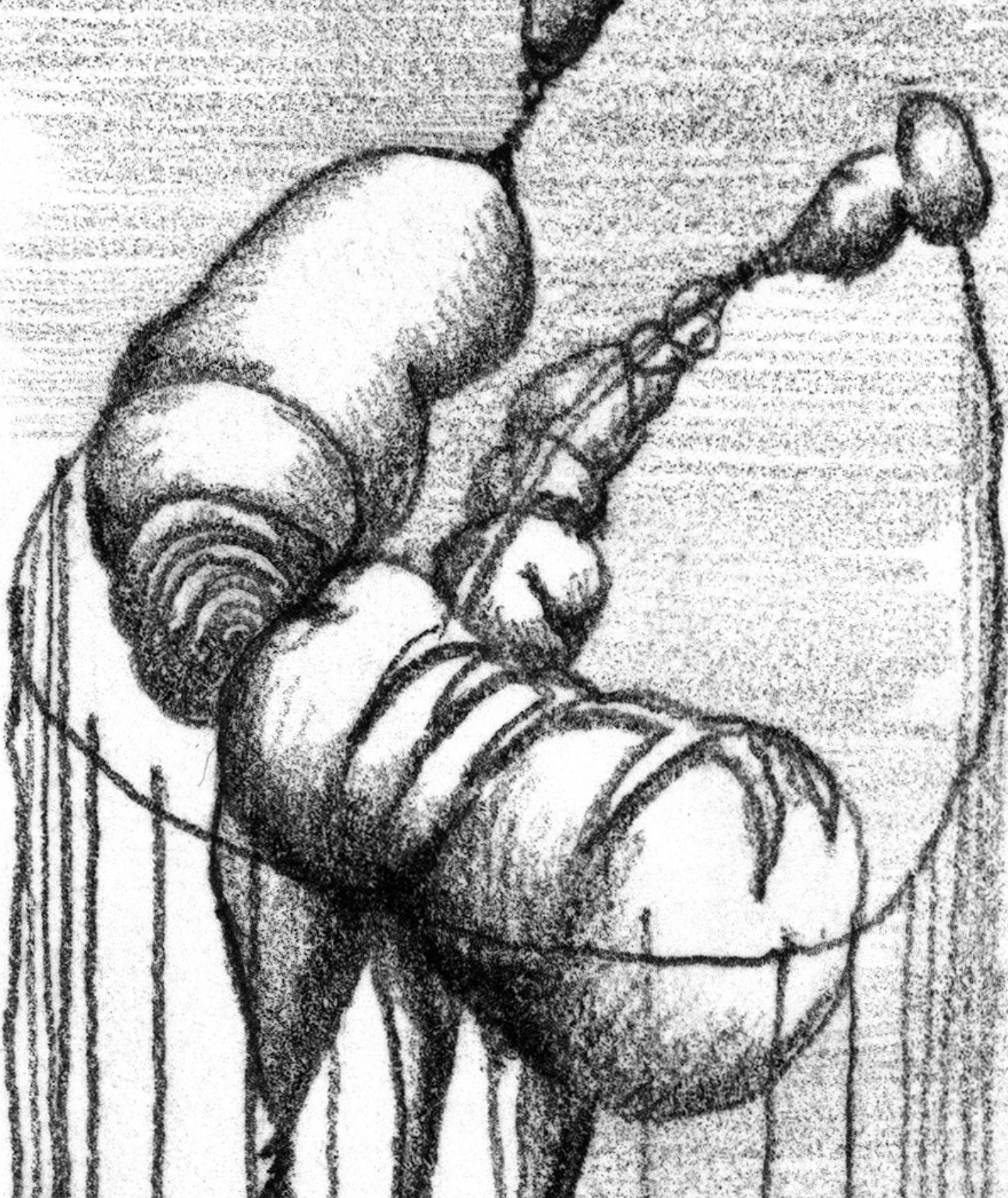
L

to pick up the pieces from their previous civilization. Vertical gardens were instituted as the primary mode of agricultural production, while portable gardens took up residence in many homes for the production of more personalized food morsels. Homes became more finely tuned to the tethering mechanisms developed by the early Subjectivists, while new tethering technologies were constantly being developed. Entire facilities were devoted to developing these crucial membranes.

Meanwhile, the ancient cities of pre-hatch Earth became a new kind of nature. The crust was entirely too dangerous to inhabit by humans without the proper protective gear.



One of the earliest New Terra settlements embedded within the old city of She-attle.



A more contemporary example of architecture built within the old city of She-attle. This particular opera house was a highly contested bild-ing, commissioned by the Children's Parliament for the appeasement of the Olds. Its program is highly innovative, bringing together an opera theater and a hospital



Initial conception for the New Terra civilization.

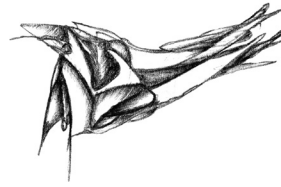
Living collaboratively and communally in New Terra has been the standard model since the very early post-hatch days. Though there are a number of single family dwelling units and single occupancy dwelling units, all resources are generally part of a communal economy that is loosely overseen by the beneficent Children's Parliament. While tantrums

A. protective gear for crust exploration



A

B. university of expanding knowledge



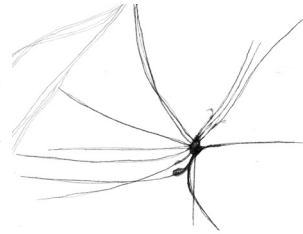
B

C. collective housing



C

D. one of the earliest New Terra settlements



D

E. collective housing



E

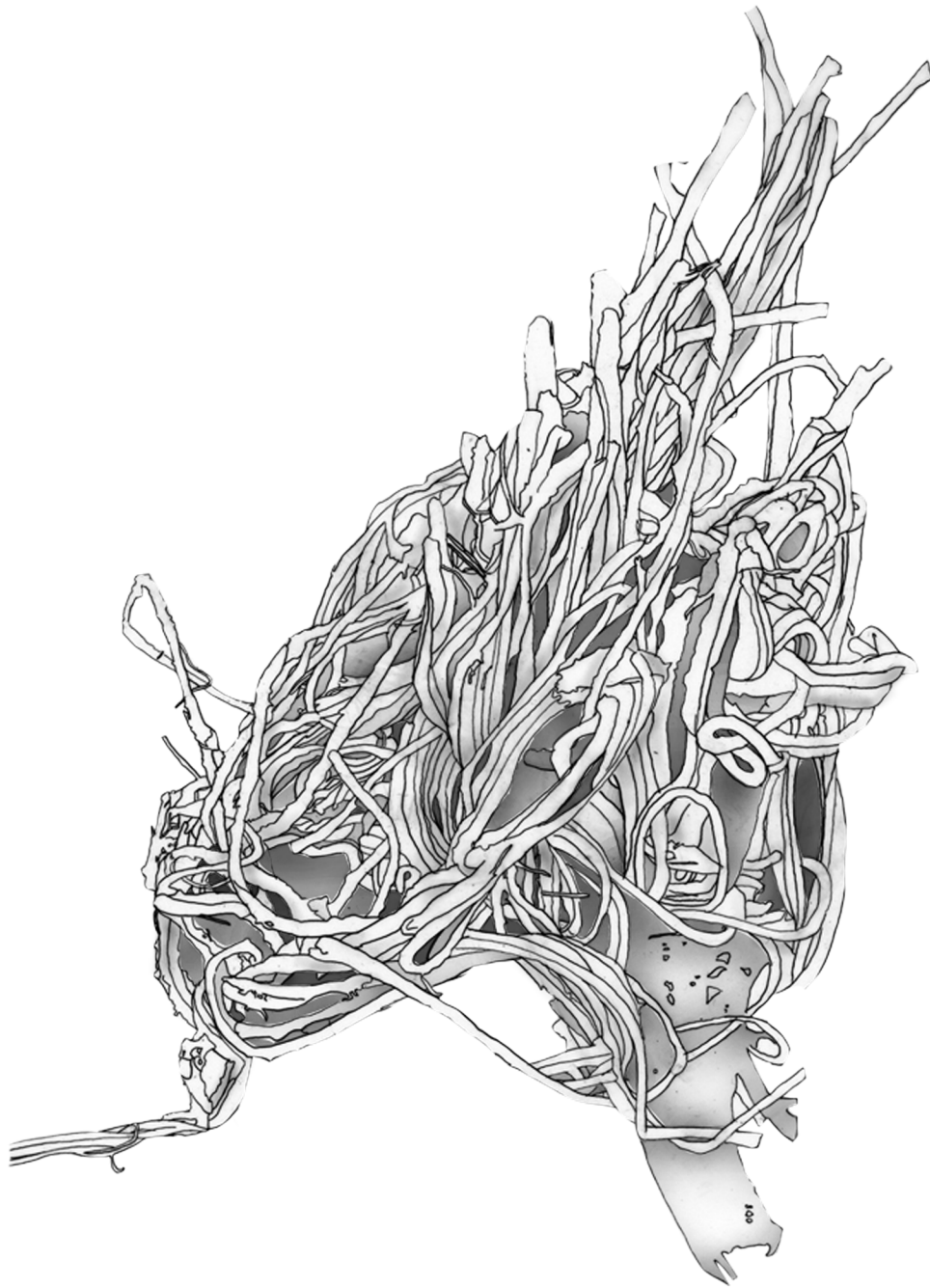
F. research outpost



F

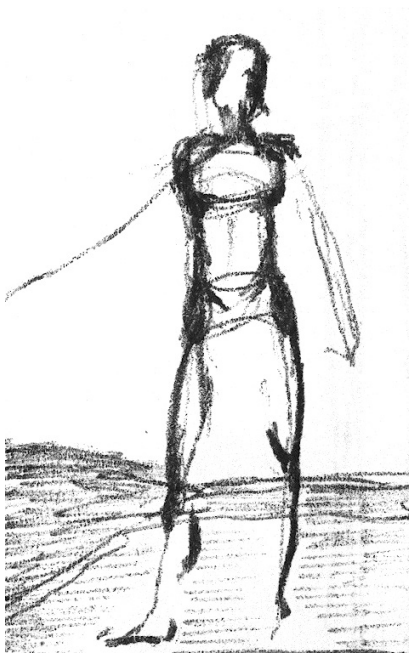
occur frequently, there is no other political party that can share resources better than the little tots. Communal living as the standard model has facilitated the sharing of resources and amenities, and minimizes the destructive impact that new buildings bring to Seattle. Original speculations in housing design conceived of netted structures that would interweave with the towers native to Seattle. Before long, however, programmatic uses began to dictate the general forms that these tensioned structures would adopt, inevitably sharing ideas with early iterations, but becoming much more complex in the process.

Skins of waxed canvas and spinned spider webbing form the material language of new development, while tensioned webbing defines the structural vocabulary. And all homes are equipped with air purifying technology.

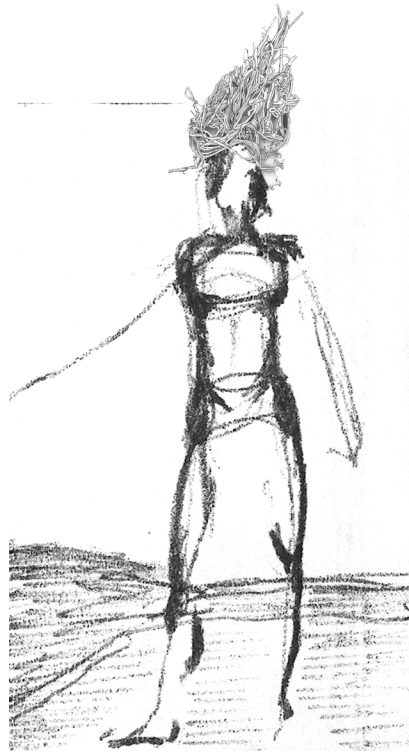


depiction of the contemporary human head appendage largely believed to be  
a new evolutionary feature

The evolution of the head appendage was a curious one. The Hemoglobin expedition resulted in horrifying changes to the task force, but soon, these tensiled heads proved to be remarkable additions to the human physiology. Not only do they sense noxious gasses by flaring up, but they also function as extensions of the inner ear, aiding in balancing acts between the hanging structures of She-attle.



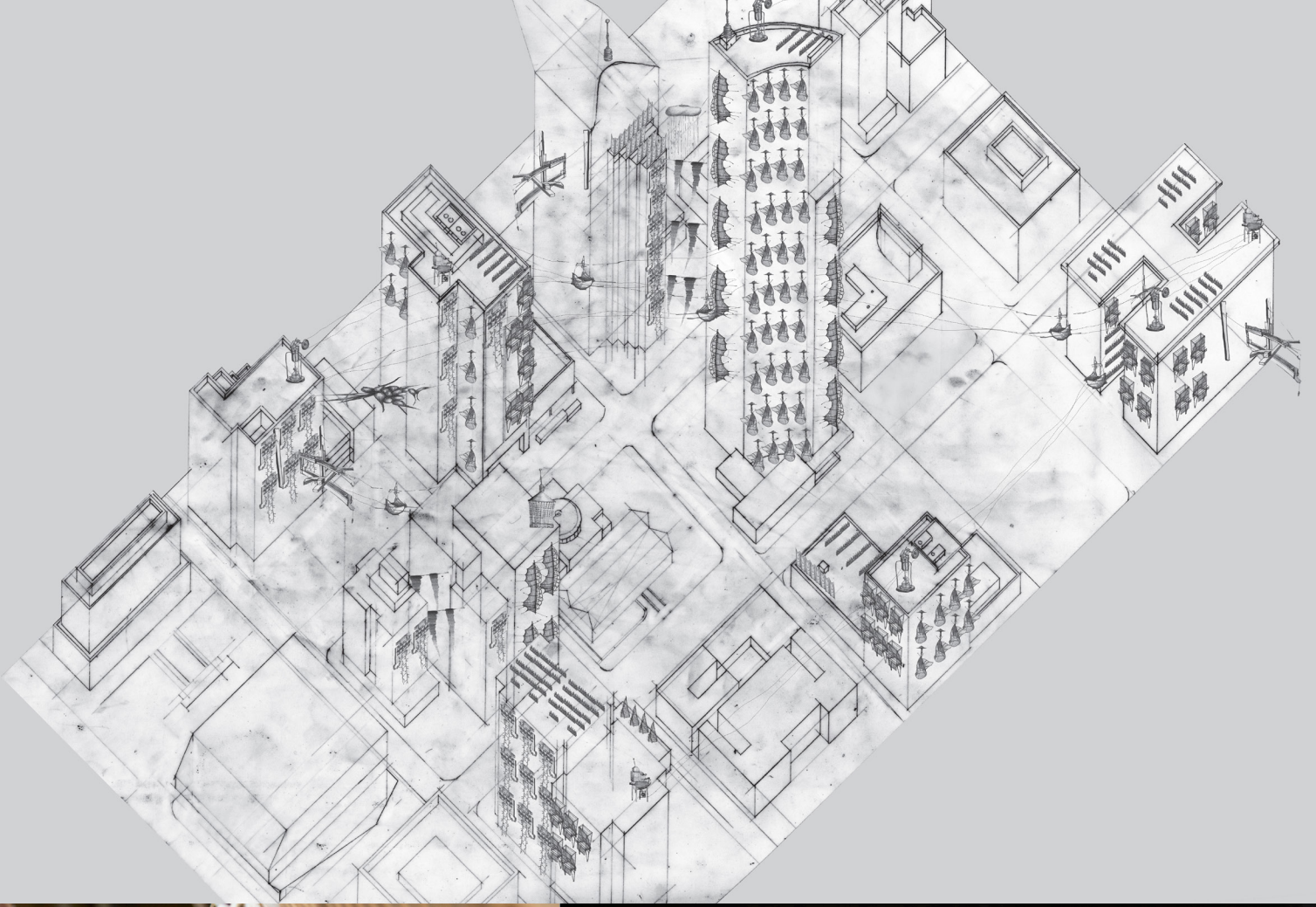
depiction of pre-hatch human. specific features unknown. largely believed to share many characteristics with the current crop of humans.



depiction of the contemporary human in calm state



depiction of the contemporary human in agitated or excited state



APPENDIX 2:: Chimera Urbanism [done in collaboration with Sami Prouty]



hand drawings and watercolor swatches in collages done by Amelia Jarvinen  
collage assemblages done by Sami Prouty  
narratives done by Amelia and Sami

## INTRODUCTION

*“...the ‘spatial confusion’ of the modern city as a symptomatic of the violence inherent in capitalism configuration of the space of the production and reproduction of its social relations”*

*- Thomas McDonough  
The Situationist Space*

Urban ecology is complicated. As designers, our instinct is to simplify, abstract, step out, beginning the decision making process from an imagined pattern disregarding the rich texture of life reflected in a space; to see urbanism as a problem to be solved. The condition on the Jackson st. transects is an excellent example of how this complex collection of lives, organized into a less complex, top-down order, creates an urban environment that fails in reflecting the voices of those who live inside. We measured the differences in neighborhood representation along the transect, using instagram data from both hashtags and location, the differences were dramatic, reflecting the discrepancy between those posting in the neighborhood, and those posting about the neighborhood. We traced a history of fragmentation in the area, finding that the transect has always been a place of marginalization, constantly manipulated spatially for the benefit of downtown, or the region, or developers, but never for the transect. We mapped the visual character of the neighborhoods along the transect and found an ever homogenizing pattern emerging where a rich tapestry had once been.

*“...we are all chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism; in short, we are cyborgs”*

*- Donna Haraway*

This discrepancy in agency is the subject of Lefebvre’s Right to the City, and the subject of our project, Chimera Urbanism. This project aims to imagine a future in which the urban condition of a space is in direct dialogue with the lives that inhabit it; that the urban condition can be a space of infinite possibilities rather than clear routes and throughways. We hope to achieve this by imagining a new urban-ecology based in a relationship of empathy between space and space maker, rather than reflective re-production. We believe that the power change your urban space lies in the ability to imagine how that urban space could be different. Our hope is that, if a person living on the transect now where to see this work, that they could also imagine a future of infinite possibilities and infinite ways of living in their neighborhood.

*“...the architect is no more a miracle-worker than the sociologist. Neither can create social relations, although under certain favourable conditions they can help trends to be formulated (to take shape). Only social life (praxis) in its global capacity possess such powers - or does not possess them”*

*- Henry Lefebvre*

This project is a re-imagining and subsequent reshaping of the city of Seattle, with, perhaps repercussions for a broader re-shaping of society as a whole.

This is a project that stresses social change before physical change, but also recognizes that physical change occurs simultaneously with social change.

The citizens of the International District, and the Central District have a long history of community activism. By centering this area as the site of social, political, and economic revolution, we draw directly on the existing active energies to envision an alternative futurity that operates on an intimate community level re-imagined and re-shaped by empathy.

We both recognize the problematics of us outsiders attempting to represent a community that we are not embedded within. Therefore, our goal is to attempt to understand the structural violence, racism, legacy of colonization and white supremacy that oppresses the various racial and ethnic minorities who have occupied and continue to occupy the transect by imagining a wave of revolution that topples the state and economic systems of oppression; rebuilding a society from the ground up based on notions of intersectionality, acceptance, and empathy.

*From Feminist Accountability  
referencing Sherene Razack,  
page 219:*

*“Whose stories are being told and  
from whose perspective?*

*Whom do the stories make into  
villains or into heroes?*

*Who are the victims, the saviors,  
and from whose perspective and  
for whose benefit?*

*Whose power gets reproduced in  
the stories?*

*What kind of relationships do the  
stories build within and across  
power lines?*

*And within the stories, what issues  
are highlighted, and what issues  
are not addressed?*

*Whose voices, experiences, and  
perspectives are missing?”*

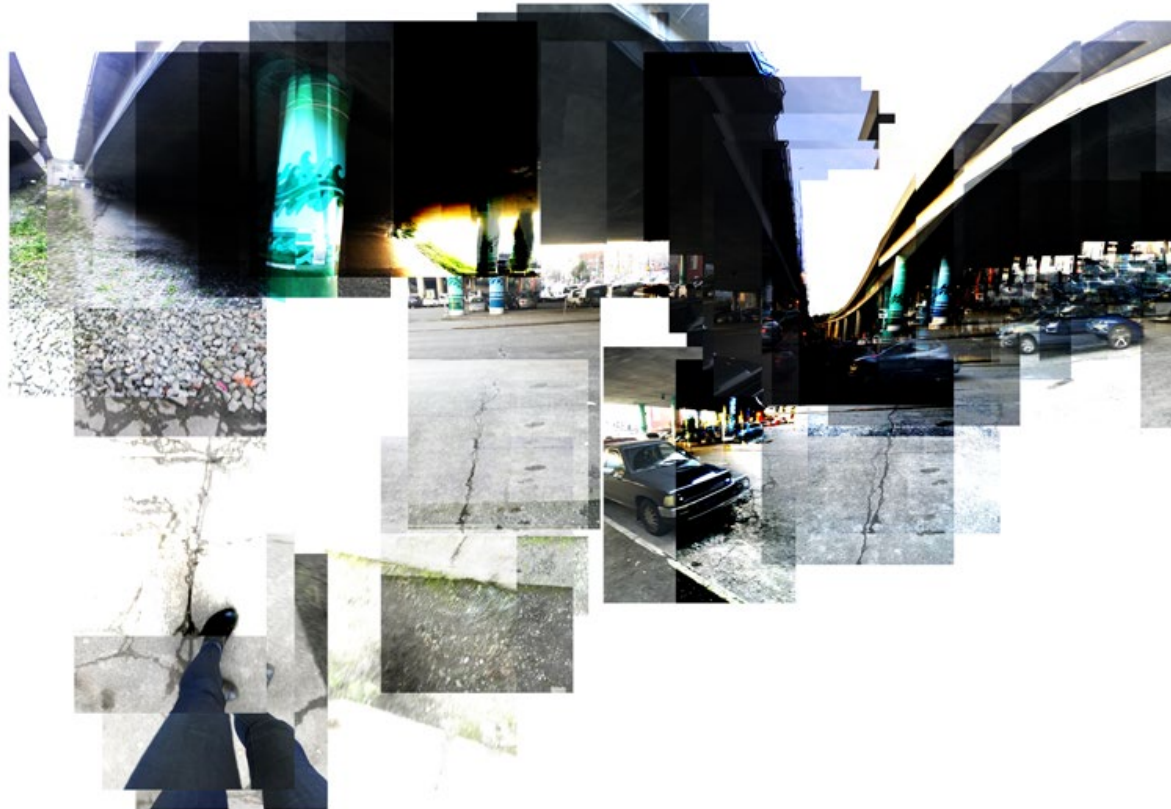
## THE BODY IN SPACE

*"...affect is persistent proof of a body's never less than on going immersion in and among the world's obscenities and rhythms, its refusals as much as its invitations."*

*"Affect is born in in-between-ness and resides as accumulative beside-ness. Affect can be understood then as a gradient of bodily capacity- a supple incrementalism of ever-modulating force-relations..."*

*"No one has yet determined what the body can do [quote from Baruch Spinoza]...the capacity of a body is never defined by a body alone, but is always aided and abetted by, and dovetails with, the field off context of its force-relations, second, the 'not yet' of the 'knowing the body' is still very much with us..."*

*-Gregg & Seigworth, The Affect Theory Reader:*





photomontages assembled by Amelia Jarvinen and Sami Prouty

## PRE-CHIMERA CONDITION

*“The cognitive map’s normative function relies on the production of a spatial imaginability that desire to assume what Rosalyn Deutsche has called, ‘a commanding position on the battleground of representation’”*

*“...directly lived space (representational space) had moved away into the space of the conceived and the perceived (representations of space)”*

*-Thomas McDonough,  
The Situationist Space*



This collage of Historical Maps reflects the complexity of urban design decisions, historic events, human behavior and past imaginations of Seattle’s future. All contributes to ongoing process of FRAGMENTATION and UNIFICATION occurring along the Jackson st. Transect. The construction of the highway dramatically changed the socio-spatial life of the area and leaves a staggering physical artifact of this action.

Fragmentation in an urban condition is not just a physical, spatial experience. In fact, much of our understanding of fragmentation is an effect of the abstraction of mapping. Visualizing a space from the bird’s eye view gives designers and planners an image of the city that does not exist in reality. Imagining the city as a whole by which can be fragmented and re-organized is a fundamental component of how we understand a built environment



maps assembled by Sami Prouty

RE-IMAGINING FUTURE | RE-IMAGINING PAST





hand drawings and watercolor swatches in collages done by Amelia Jarvinen  
collage assemblages done by Sami Prouty

## **THE CHIMERA PLANT** [SOME FUTURE]

The sporadic growth of the chimera had origins in the dumpster of Hou Hou market. It was believed to be the spawn of a papaya and an invasive blackberry bush, with an unhealthy mix of pollution from the I-5 corridor, back when it still existed. The first person to discover this new breed of fruit mistook it for a rare kind of pear - one with a red flesh, a sharp crunch, and an unbeatable sweet and sour punch - known as the red widow pear. Because the red widow pear was only known to grow in one very specific region of the world, the discoverer sent the small bush to a fruit lab to confirm its true nature, but was surprised to find the dna results did not align with any fruit currently in existence. This curiosity became an afterthought, but was delicious to snack on from time to time, and was thus planted in the backyard of the Intervener's headquarters. When first planted, the bush struggled mightily. It seemed to shrivel at the tops and turn a brownish hue, when before it was a lavish emerald green with red specks. Underneath the topsoil, the plant had taken hold and grown its roots at an accelerated pace reaching for the farthest known morsels of nutritional content. Mycelium attached to the roots and helped aggregate the crop, making it appear in more and more backyards over the course of the next decade.

To support those living without shelter, or those whose homes are pulled out from underneath them by landlords and developers, this plant becomes a provider, a new structure, a new way of building an environment cherished by those living on the transect. But of course, the city does not approve of these new structures consuming rubbles and settling in spaces not zoned for development, permanently turning tent cities into groves of homes. Vacant lots are becoming "infested" with this new architecture, developers cannot break ground, landlords cannot collect rent as people abandoned rented space to set up business in there new symbiotic homes. The rebellion is not to overthrow the system, but to defend a new relationship between environment and body, between material and construction.



hand drawing done by Amelia Jarvinen

## MOMENTS [SOME UNDISCLOSED PAST]

ALITOS:

*“A minority, on the other hand, has no model, it’s a becoming, a process...A people is always a creative minority, and remains one even when it acquires a majority, it can be both at once because the two things aren’t lived out on the same plane. It’s the greatest artists (rather than populist artists) who invoke a people, and find they ‘lack a people’...How is a people created, through what terrible suffering? When a people’s created, it’s through its own resources, but in away that links up with something in art (Garrel says there’s a mass of terrible suffering in the Louvre, too) or links up art to what it lacked. Utopia isn’t the right concept: it’s more a question of a “tabulation” in which a people and art both share”*

*-Deleuze, Control and Becoming*

It has been a week since the militant arm of the Interveners took the state building. The city - and country - has devolved into utter chaos. Their work had a ripple effect across the nation. Groups with similar ideologies banded together to form a network of Interveners with designs to take down the government. It had been years since the government did anything for anyone other than those holding the majority of resources and power. The State’s most recent policies and laws showed a complete disregard for the welfare of the people, and chose to side with corporations over the working class folk. Our prisons had become bloated with scapegoats and innocent individuals, and our racist police forces had militarized the nation, turning once friendly neighbors into enemies. The Interveners were amongst the strongest coalitions to begin addressing the widespread poverty, racism, and structural violence that had seeped into every crevice of civilization from the beginning. [The Interveners had first convened around 2020...]

I remember when they had first begun to plan it, I was part of the collective from the beginning, and they had been designing this “intervention” for quite some time. Though I didn’t quite know the scope of the work, I was committed to the cause of “turning the tide” of capitalism. Everyone was aware of the trajectory of the economic condition of the country, that the future would bring immense suffering to a majority of the people, and that our capitalist system would eventually eat itself. Many individuals from diverse backgrounds were motivated by abstractions, like freedom, dignity, social justice for racial and ethnic minorities, and they were not affiliated with any group or ideology. Our political movement was gaining ground through workshops and outreach that would draw on personal narratives to begin to understand the nuances of the larger issues we were trying to tackle. To understand the abstractions that formed our obstacles. We didn’t know what post-capitalism would look like, we just knew ideologically that toppling capitalism was just one cultural monolith that needed to be destroyed for any real change to occur. After that, our manifesto called for the dismemberment of prisons, the restructuring of health care, and decentralized education for everyone - essentially, the beginning of a new civilization. But, I’m getting ahead of myself.

The Interveners first came into being as an artist collective. We cultivated appreciation of craft, beauty and knowledge. As such, we formulated a coalition of mastercraftsman, master storytellers, master artisans,

tinkerers, and skilled dancers, to create an economy of ideas and narratives that would help form the basis of what was soon to be the foundations of a revolution. Our economy of ideas was centered around a process of radical unlearning and relearning that enabled us to first look outside the societal norms we were conditioned to operate within, and second, to reformulate a futurity that could topple the structural violence that plagued our communities. We began to hold workshops of community healing because the suffering was so widespread, that our art simply did not have enough reach or impact. We fostered mutual care and compassion interpersonally in order to come together more as a cohesive whole under a banner of love. And we held accountability discussions to help address the structural violence that we ourselves (albeit unintentionally) perpetuated. We expanded our scope to include community child care, and we began subsistence farming on the vertical surfaces of our building in case anyone was experiencing food shortages (as so many at the time were).

## **THE FIRST CARNIVAL** [SOME FUTURE]

It was the beginning of the 21st century. Most of the city has been taken over by big tech money and developers, leaving only pockets of Seattle still “livable” for most regular people. Just east of the old downtown was the last of these urban pockets before the revolution. The Jackson St. transect was once home to the most diverse body of people in the city, but over time, re-zoning and development displaced and isolated these diverse bodies. When the Chimera plant was discovered, a new potential in building and occupying the city was discovered.

My grandparents recall the first carnival, the first time the Chimera was launched into the infrastructure. The rebel groups had been planting small rings for months, spreading the word and the potential of this plant to help people take back the city, to grow a city that was theirs. From the tops of buildings, from the streets, everywhere seed bombs were launched into the earth! It was a week before the Carnival was to occur, in the intersection outside of Hau Hau market, the celebrated birthplace of new space making. The morning of the Carnival, the fresh sprouts bore their heads, a conspicuous ring of new growth created a massive circle around the market and intersection.

It had been tested on a small scale before, growing the Chimera. When a body stepped into the circle of sprouts, the plant would slowly grow, its colors and shape reflecting whatever was happening inside. The hope was that bringing the entirety of the community into the Carnival ring would erupt the Chimera into life, taking back each open space along the ring in the form of those celebrating within. The rebels knew if they could launch the Chimera, the city would have to forfeit the transect. The lots, the roads, the partially developed high-end housing projects would all lose their value, no longer having the capacity to produce capital.



watercolor collage done by Sami Prouty

# BECOMING THE CARNIVAL





hand drawings and watercolor swatches in collages done by Amelia Jarvinen  
section perspective collage assembled by Sami Prouty

## **MOMENTS** [SOME PRESENT]

AMIOS:

To understand our current history, one must first understand the history of the revolution and the parallel rise of the Chimera plant. Through the network of storytellers and circle keepers, the revolution was growing stronger day by day. The revolution was built on the backs of everyday people young and old who were no longer afraid.

The Interveners could now count most of the International District as part of the movement, with not only the younger generations showing up, but also the community elders, as well. Each individual brought their own specialties to the movement, and coalition growth was nonlinear and exponential. While the elders taught patience, thoughtfulness, and a willingness to slow down, the younger generations provided fluidity of thought, willingness to do the groundwork, and unrestrained desire for social change. This incredible intragenerational dynamic made the coalition and movement a force to be reckoned with - a malleable agglomeration of energies and talents that built the foundation for massive change.

While the coalition was building itself through community meetings and workshops centered on building communal values and desires, the Chimera plant was finding fertile ground amongst the rubble of the International District. With origins in the back dumpster of Hau Hau market, the Chimera plant proved resilient and hungry for anything. With each attempt to destroy it, it grew back with a ferocity that rivaled the great Hydra of heraldic mythos. When left alone, the plant would grow slowly and sprout in strange circular groves, overlaying an interconnected and incredibly strong root system deep beneath the soil.

At first the citizens of the International District fought this chimeric plant fiercely, even conscripting the local state government to intervene in any capacity. But the plant merely grew back at each attempt to quash it, and thus the residents of the ID eventually left it alone to eat the dumpster trash.

The months following saw a major reshuffling of the state apparatus. Police arrest quotas were increased, state funding for social services were cut down, and several major public schools were forced to close their doors all contributing to a growing unease within communities in the International District.



rendering assembled by Amelia Jarvinen

## MOMENTS [SOME PRESENT]

*"In allowing themselves, 'to be drawn by solicitations of the terrain,' persons on the derive escaped in the imaginary totalizations of the eye and instead chose a kind of blindness"*

*-Thomas McDonough,  
The Situationist Space*

IO'S DERIVE:

The idea for today was to cut a crude 0 into the fabric of the city through ambulant semiotics. I was to forge a sandwich through these meanderings, stopping at randomly selected shops along my arbitrary route to craft my meal for the day.

My abuela told me that nomadic enjoyerism like this wasn't always the way things were done. She used to tell me stories about how efficiency was favored over all else under the regime of capitalism. What I find absolutely nuts is: in a capitalist system there were actually single shops devoted to the making of a sandwich! I mean, hell, there were even single shops for the making of cars, books, music, you name it! The production of goods was not centered on crafting something beautiful, it was about getting something in return.

As I stop in at the first shop of my derive, I just imagine what it would taste like to get a sandwich that wasn't crafted by the finest craftsmen in the land. HAH! Not on my watch.



hand drawings done by Amelia Jarvinen  
collage assembled by Sami Prouty

## A NEW URBAN CONDITION





joint effort by Amelia Jarvinen and Sami Prouty

## MOMENTS [SOME DISTANT FUTURE]

*"Nature and culture are re-worked; the one can no longer be the resource for appropriation or incorporation by the other"*

-Donna Haraway

*"...affect is persistent proof of a body's never less than on going immersion in and among the world's obscenities and rhythms, its refusals as much as its invitations."*

-Gregg & Seigworth, *The Affect Theory Reader*

*"So my cyborg myth is about transgressed boundaries, potent fusions, and dangerous possibilities, which progressive people might explore as one part of needed political work. One of my premises is that most American socialists and feminists see deepened dualisms of mind and body, animal and machine, idealism and materialism in the social practices, symbolic formulations, and physical artifacts associated with "high technology" and scientific culture"*

-Donna Haraway

SHIMA:

I stepped outside, it was raining again, the clubs were peeling open so the rain could rinse the dirt and grime from the floors from the night before, or from this morning . I always love the city in the rain, dancing to collect a drink, showering, playing in the glistening sprinkler. The lights shimmer caught in each raindrop, its own treasure. I find myself pausing to admire each one as it falls.

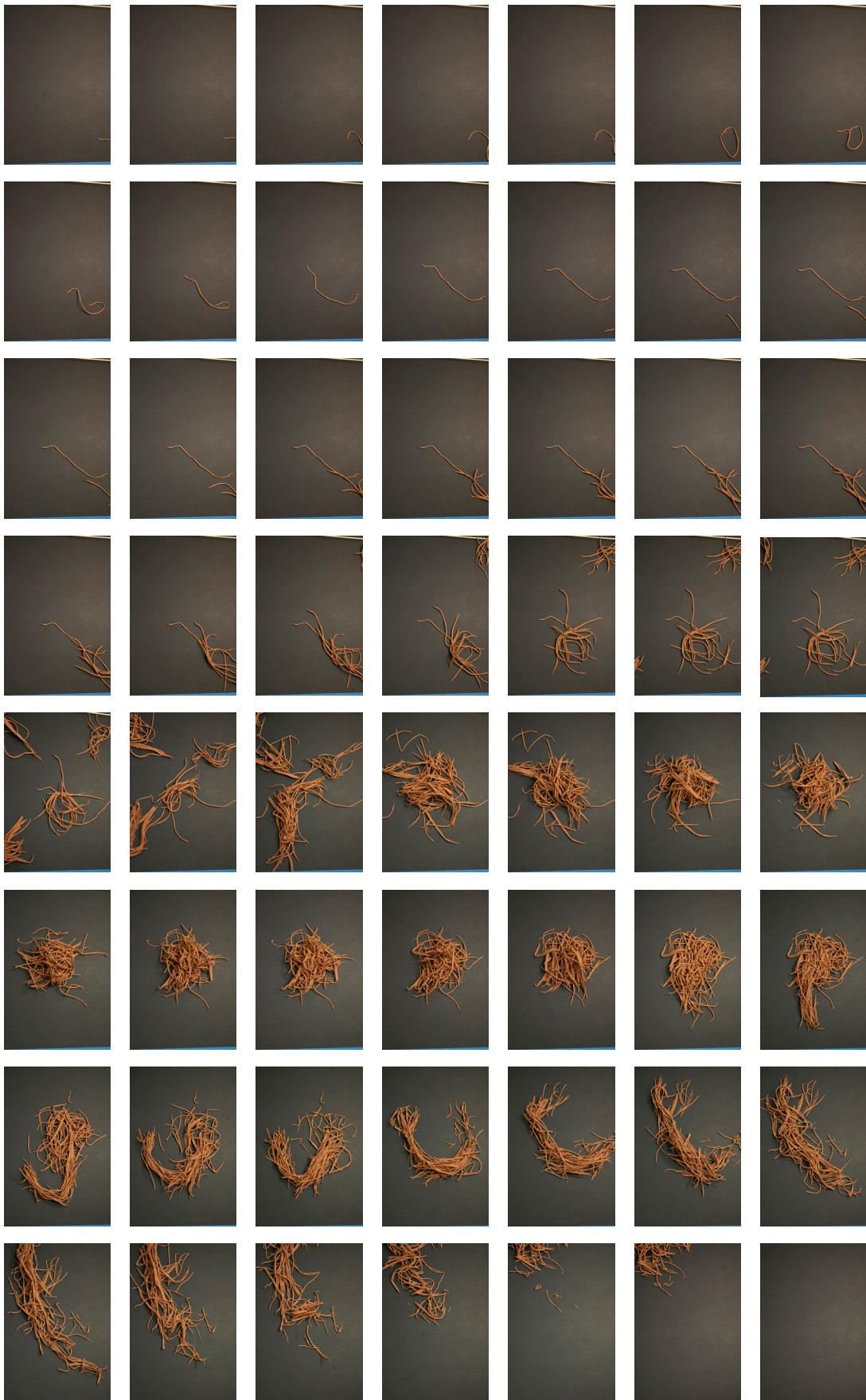
So distracted by the kaleidoscope of drizzle, I didn't notice the rain, just around me, had stopped. I was being passed by a market crawler above. My new dress, a gathering of golden tentacles I wove from muscle wire (I am really quite proud of my newest hobby, getting to know the muscle wire has been infinitely fruitful) managed to snag a leg of the market just before it passed me. It's underbelly absorbed me into the, very busy, mass of produce, spices and gadgets. I notice I'm already shopping, my dress is as much gold arms as it is bundles of fruits and salts . A small bouquet of golden tentacles pulls itself from my dress and wiggles its way into the market structure, re-weaving its pattern into the very skeleton of the market, the are around me now a string of golden wrapped goods, bouncing about each other joyfully. Like everything in this city, the dress is alive with knowledge and experience, it becomes one with whatever it wishes, reforming the market crawler into a glistening spectacle of a produce basket .



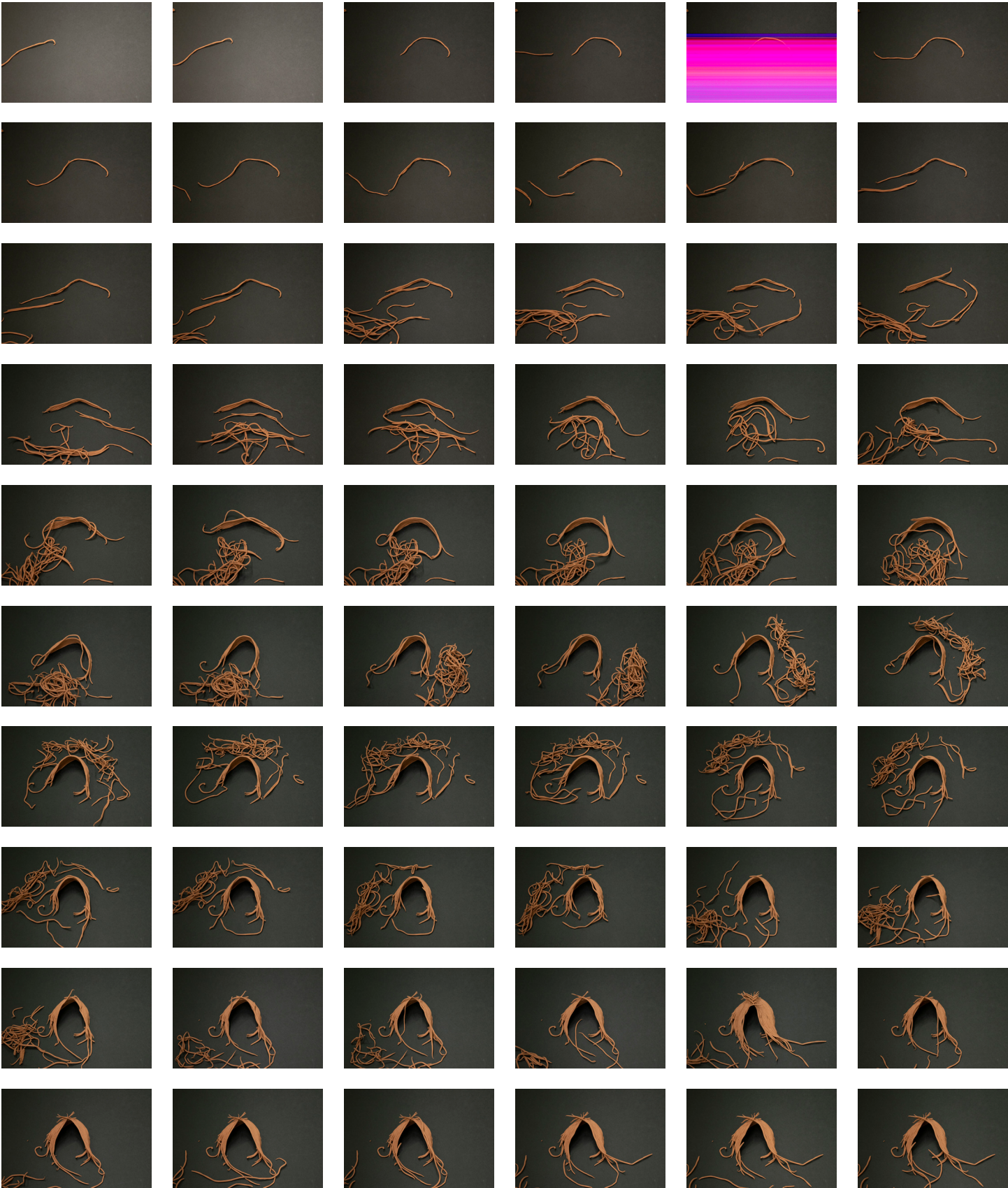
collage assemblage done by Sami Prouty

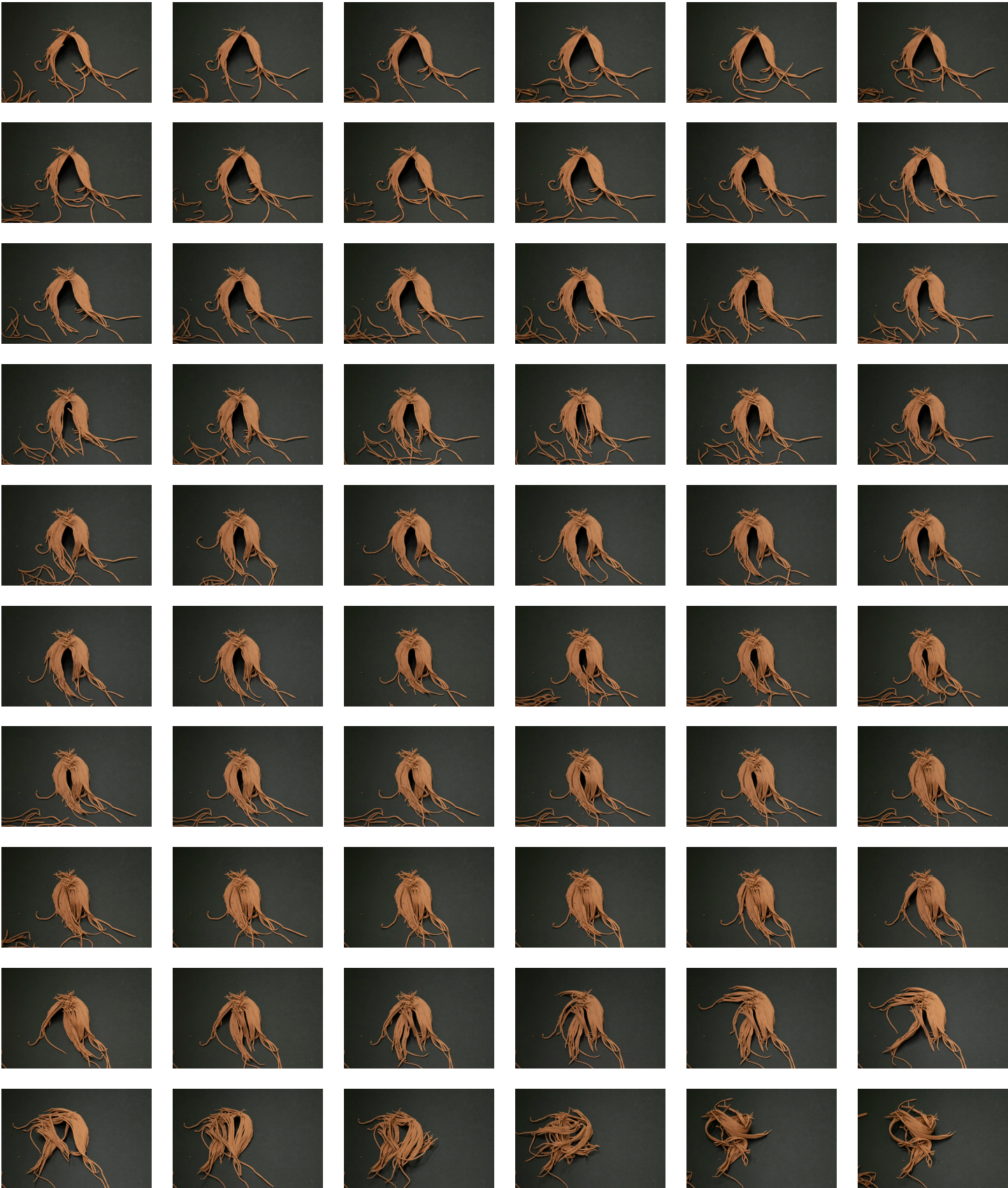


APPENDIX 3:: film stills and films of the future



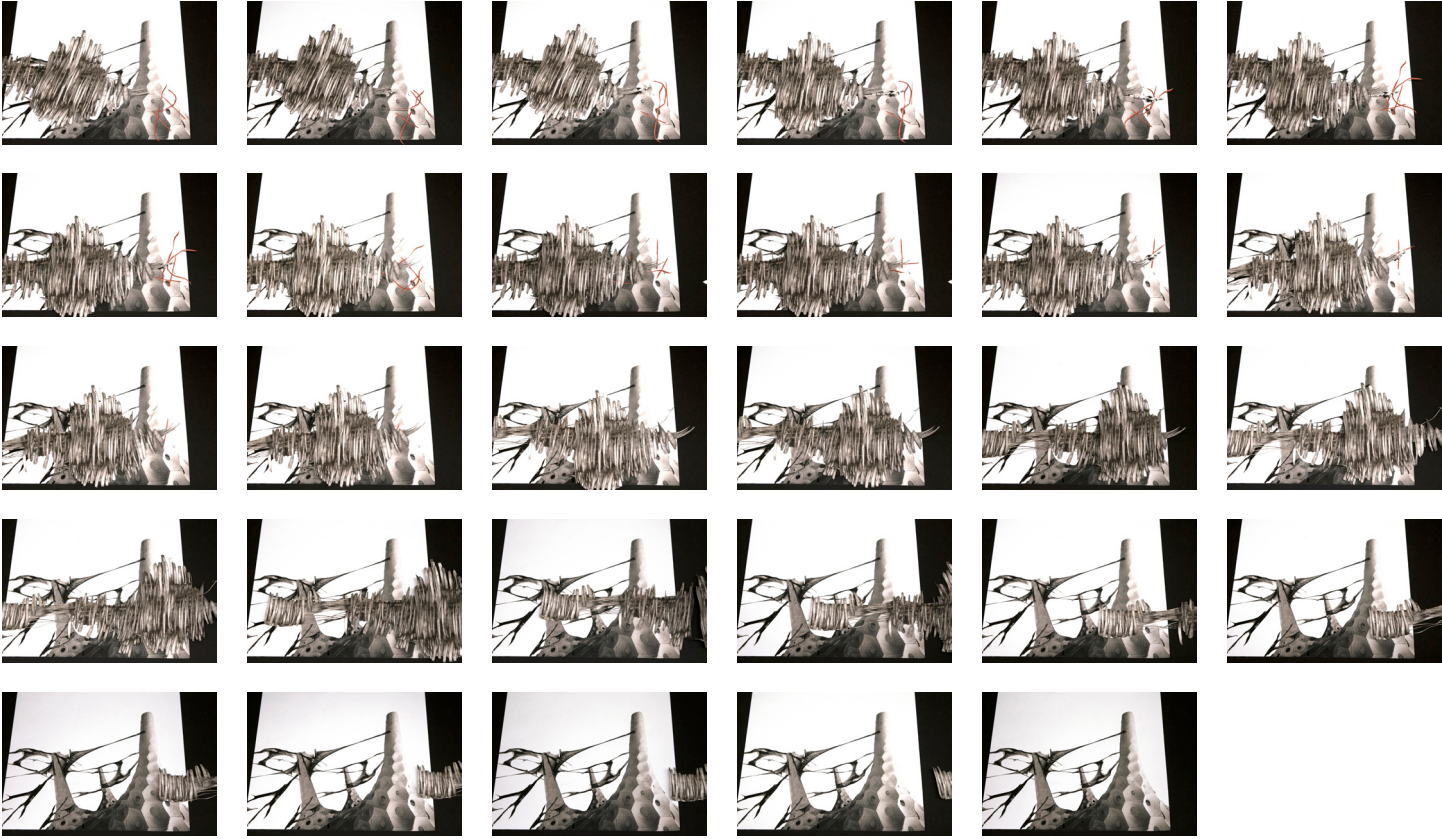


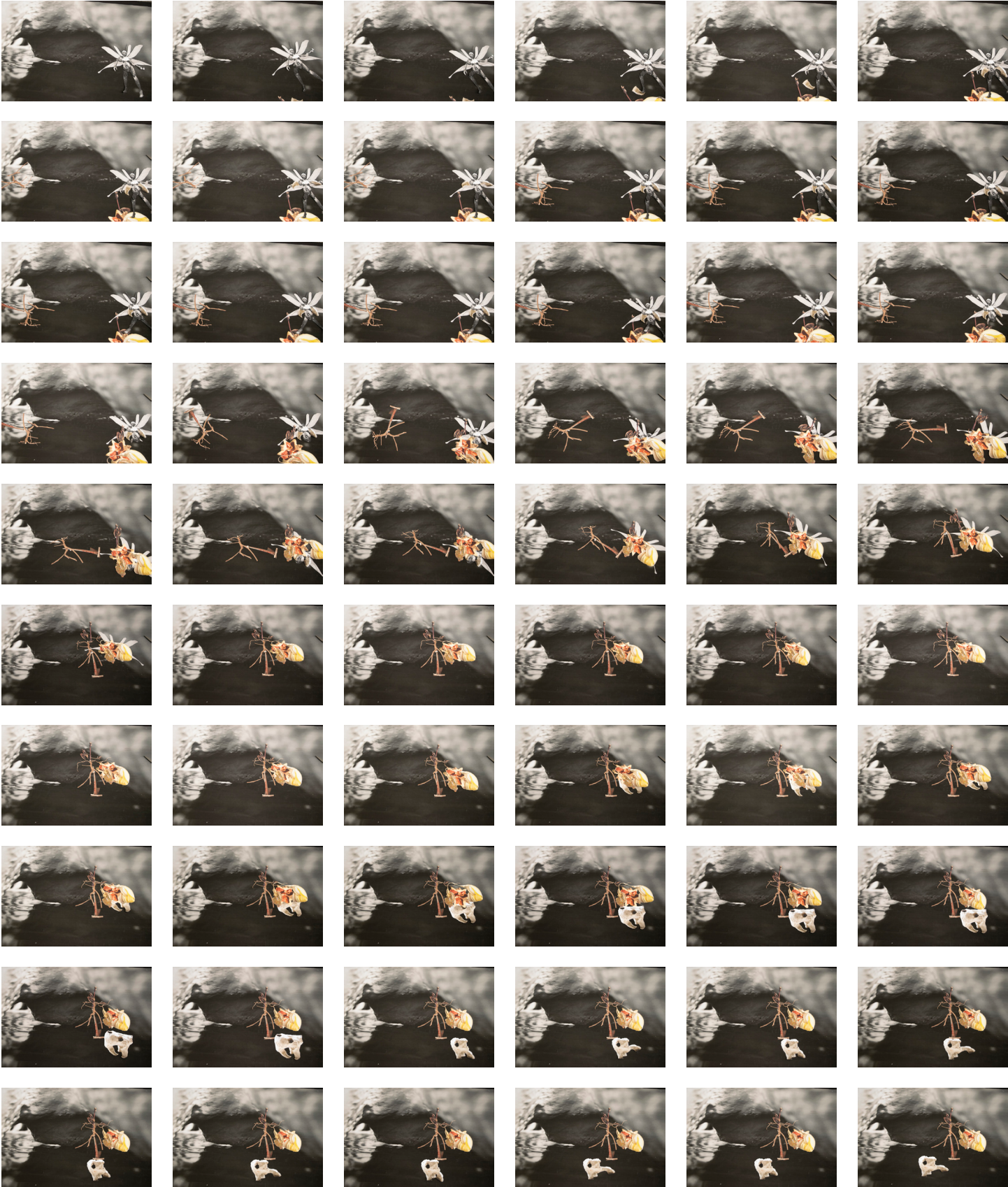




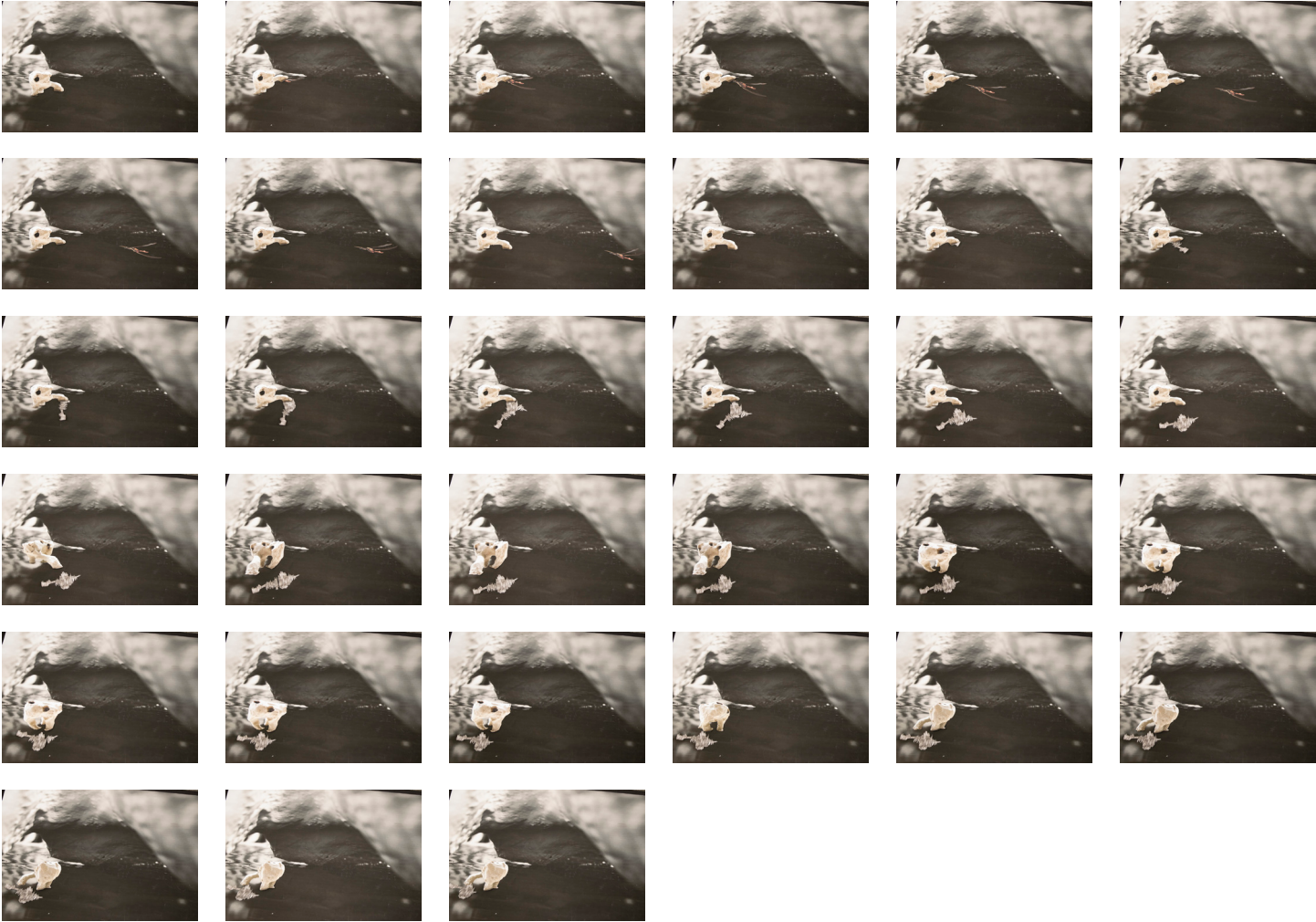


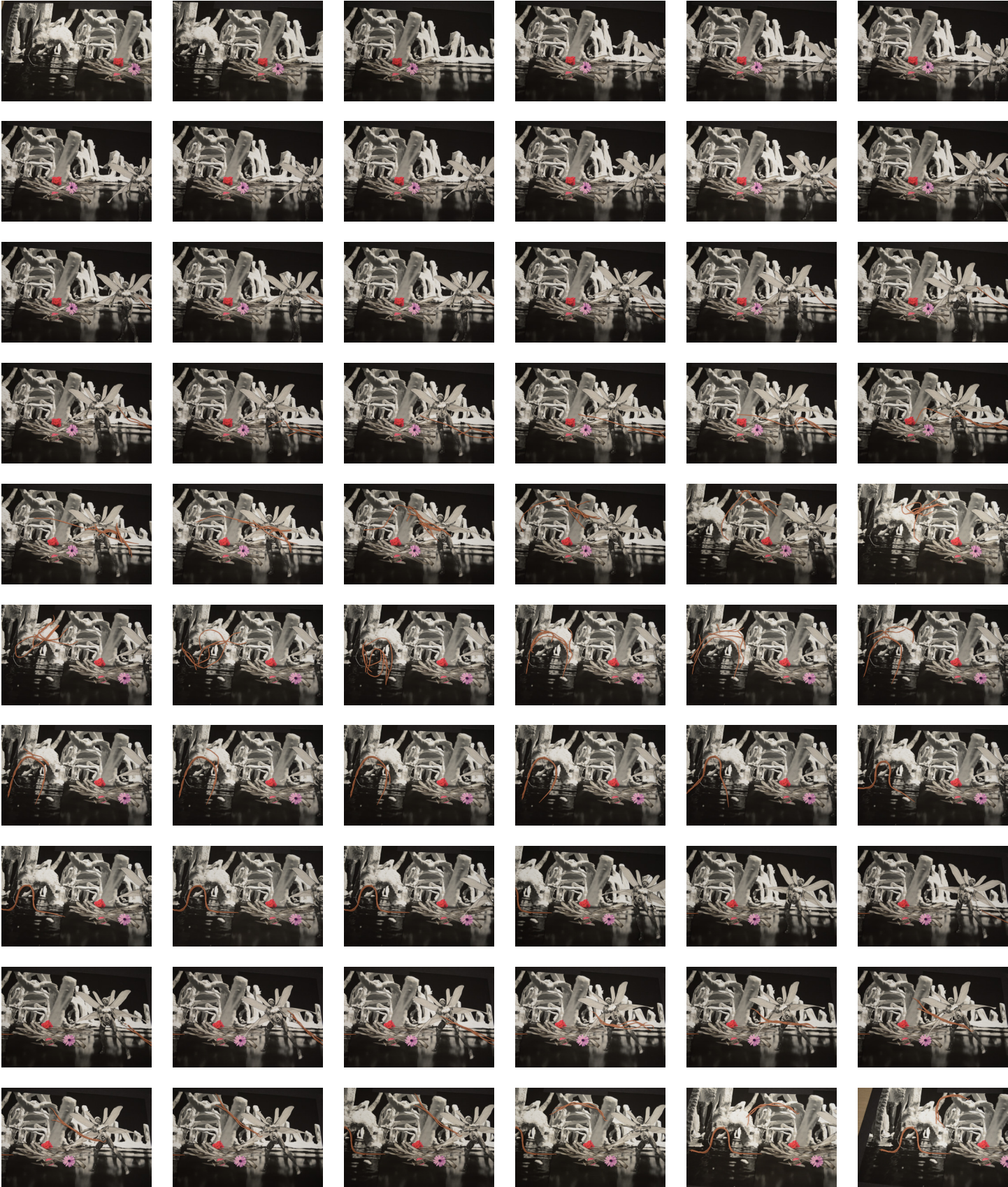


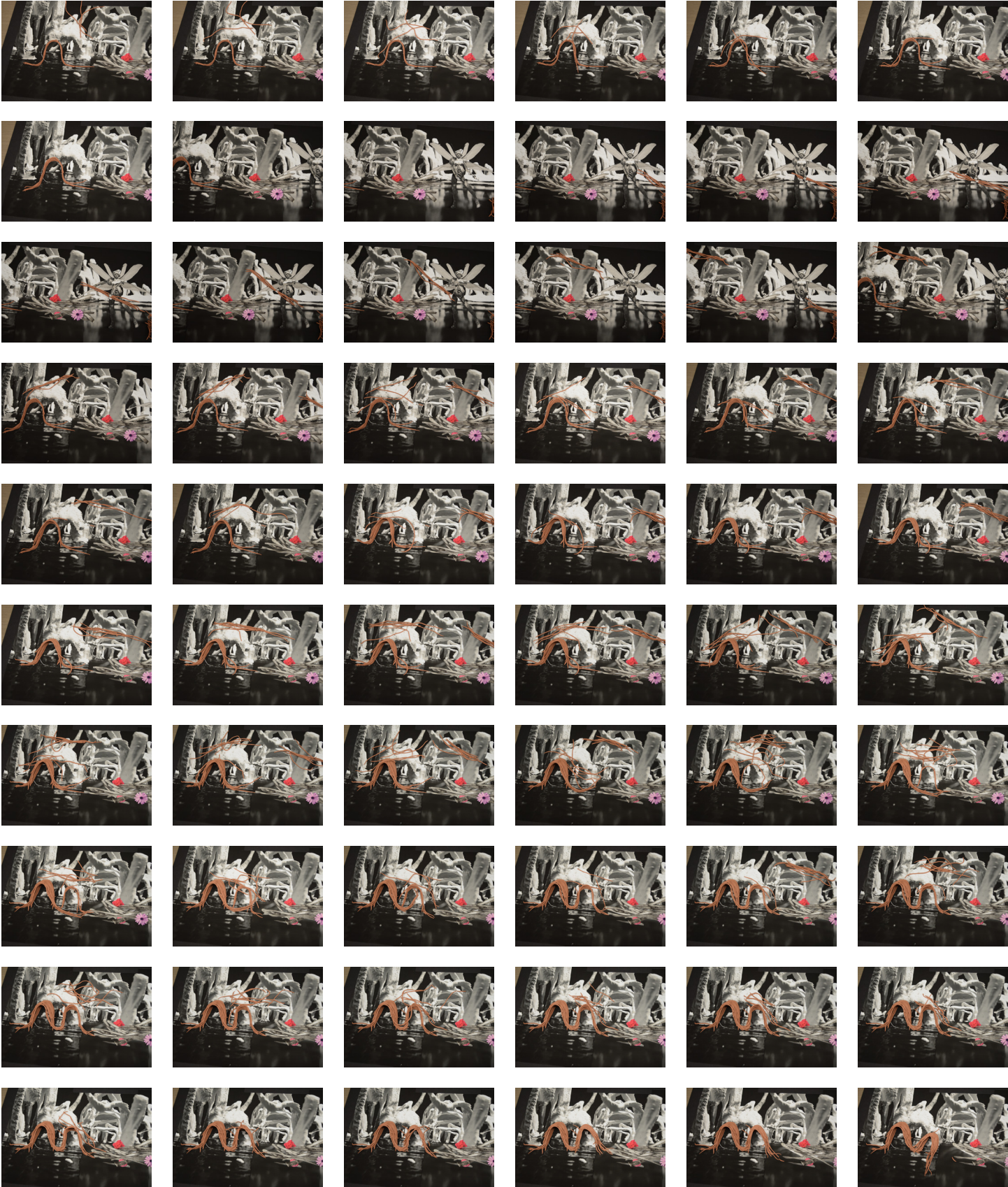






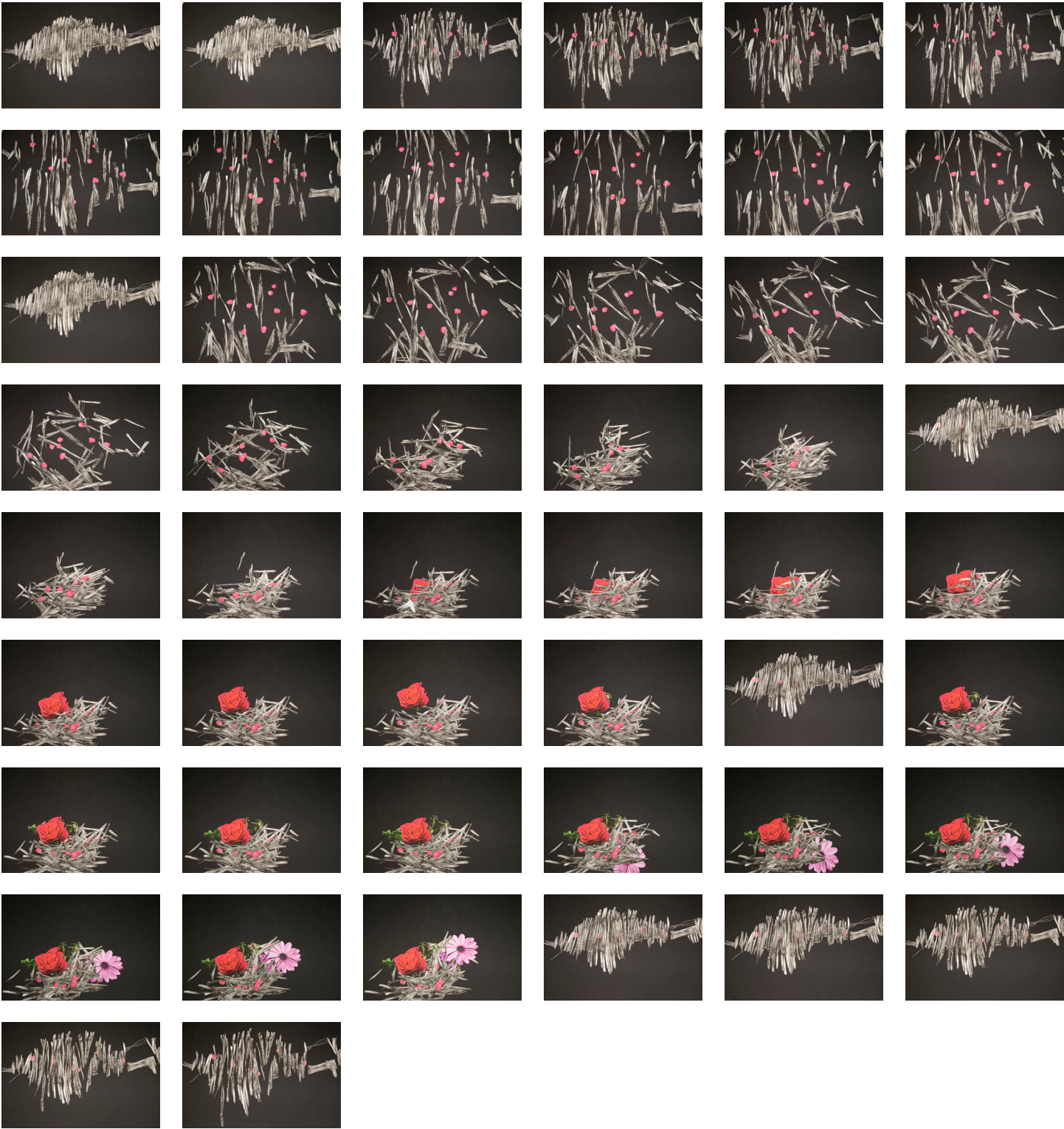


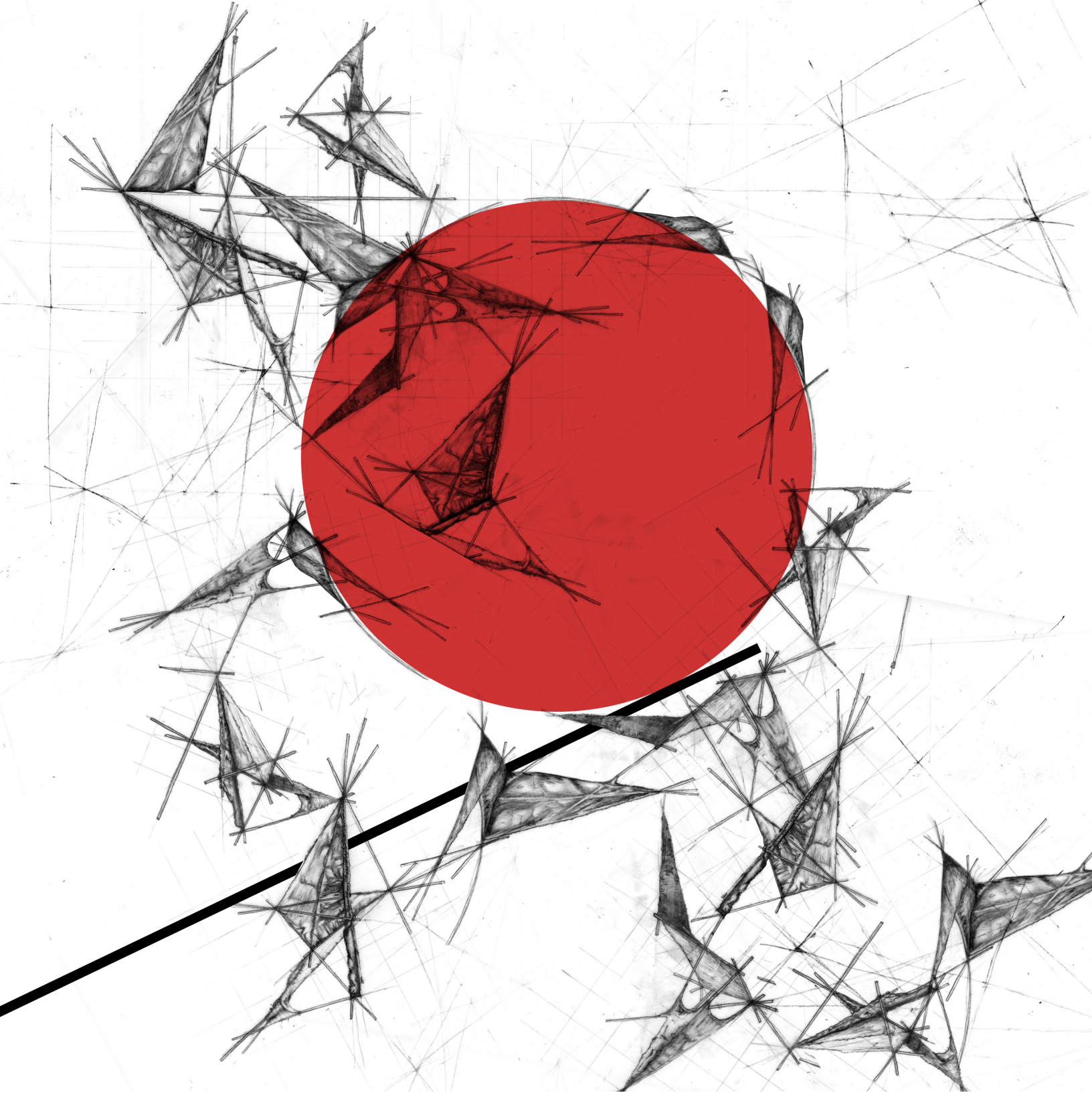




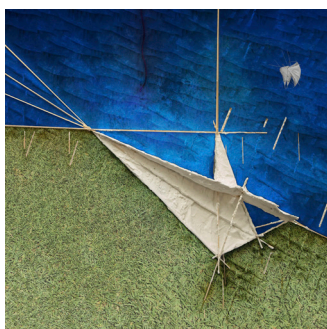
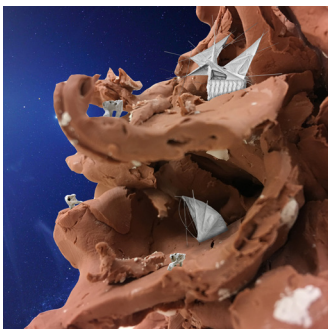
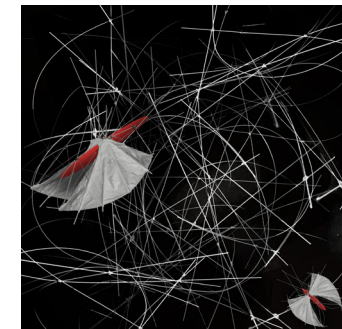
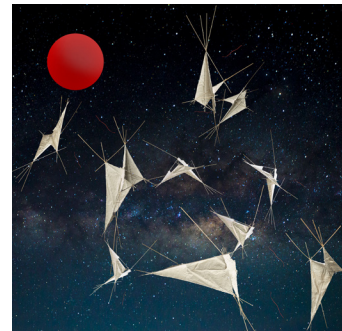
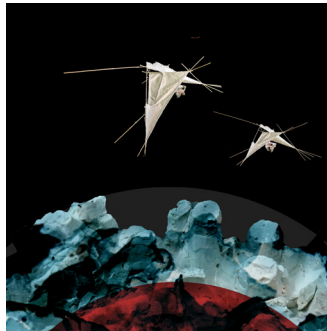








teaser poster for future film



teaser posters for future films

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- figure 3* Lebbeus Woods, "Quake City," from *San Francisco: Inhabiting the Quake* (1995), Graphite and pastel on paper and wood, 14½ x 23 x ¾ inches, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Accessions Committee Fund purchase in Becker, Joseph and Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher, curators, *Lebbeus Woods: Architect* (The Drawing Center, 2014).
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- figure 7* Jennifer Bloomer, "Dirty" drawing of elevation, 1992, colored pencil, gouache, and metallic ink on mulberry paper, in Bloomer, Jennifer, "Abodes of Theory and Flesh: Tabbles of Bower," *Assemblage*, no. 17, 1992, p. 6., doi:10.2307/3171221.
- figure 8* Wangechi Mutu, <http://literalmagazine.com/cyborg-consciousness-in-the-art-of-wangechi-mutu/>