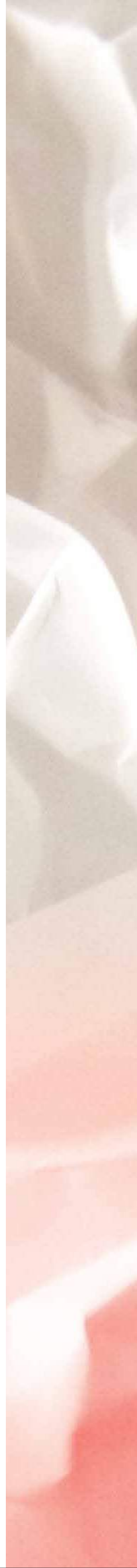


Imagined



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Jia Song

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Abstract

My thesis started with drawing as a means to explore architecture. In pursuit of a vision in the seascape, initial drawings were made holding the notion of light and water. Later development of spaces was informed by these drawings. Pure drawing helps me not only with directly expressing what I imagine, but also furthering the design by observing and valuing the object rather than representing what was preconceived, which reveals my intuition, judgement and the unknown. This exploration leads me to discoveries as well as knowledge, which comes both from myself and from the world.

Architects build reality out of imagination; reality inspires imagination through our senses and personal memory. As theme of my thesis, my approach leading from imagination to architecture excludes the reality of conventional architectural elements and is completely free of geometry-it is an indication of construction and potential material use as opposed to assembling architectural elements or applying known material; drawings are the only reality of my thesis as physical presence being the only reality of architecture; the non-geometric form is bounded by initial feelings and intentions as opposed to by description in geometry. Even as a completely non-geometric project might fit better in the realm of art than architecture. I was always hoping one can truly inhabit the mass in the reality of these drawings, and allow one's own imagination to resonate in it, as my personal intention is unknown to beholders the moment the work is done. What's left should be architecture-mass, space, and personal imagination.

Bringing personal imagination to manifest itself in the world is one of the strongest desires of being an architect. I believe this is the real power of an architect, which can only be reached by cultivating a noble individual soul. It is the genuine cause of architecture and what makes architecture or any other arts being both individually unique and collectively enjoyable. However, the expression might be limited by the medium, for example, the instrument for the musician and physical material for the architects. I learnt that for architects drawing is a rather free and direct medium, yet distinguished from pure art, there should be more to an architect's drawing - ideas of good space and form, a sound sense of material and construction, and understanding of the place to be suitable for human life. With all these intentions we draw. To inhabit these drawings is truly experiencing the design, evaluating it and being informed by it. This is where art and architecture overlap in my thesis.

The program is a second-hand bookstore situated on the seaside of my hometown Yantai. Growing up walking on the coast, I always thought of the potential of this unique site-a long coastal line running north and south, and separating the land to the west and the sea to the east with traffic above and sidewalk below. This edge line is constantly interacting with the ever changing ebb and flow of waves, layering of vapor emerging along the horizon, the infinite wind blowing between land, sky, and sea. My project was conditioned by these qualities of the site. The lower entrance stretches the coastal line and establishes a direction towards the sea, which sits inbetween the upper edge and the lower edge as a ramp; four vertical elements rises from the water to hold up the floor, to hold books and to receive the flow of the waves; walls surrounding the small tower have scattered openings, in which books and light can be discovered from both sides, the roof is partially held up by the curved wall which contains the upper entrance and creates the spaces of various heights and continues downward as a wall faced with a narrow gap; the south wall leans slightly back and creates a path of rock leading to the sea.

Drawing in the room was a most unforgettable experience. My committee allowed me the freedom of practising in an ideal and unknown realm. I struggled with this freedom as much as I enjoyed it. Countless questions and conversations started from here, through which my understanding of architecture grows. I see in it the impulse to my exploration and aspiration of becoming an architect. Conversations with Professor Hans Rott expanded my love for architecture. I learnt a much refined and noble world through his eyes. It is one of the most powerful experiences in my life. I take with me the sensible knowledge and aspiration.

I wish to express my gratitude to my committee:
Hans for sharpening my senses, real conversations, real friendship and real food.
Frank for unceasing encouragements and Sunday nights studio with Barry.
Steve for insights in my project and incisive critiques.

I wish to express my gratitude to my parents for the greatest and unconditioned love.
It is all that I can imagine

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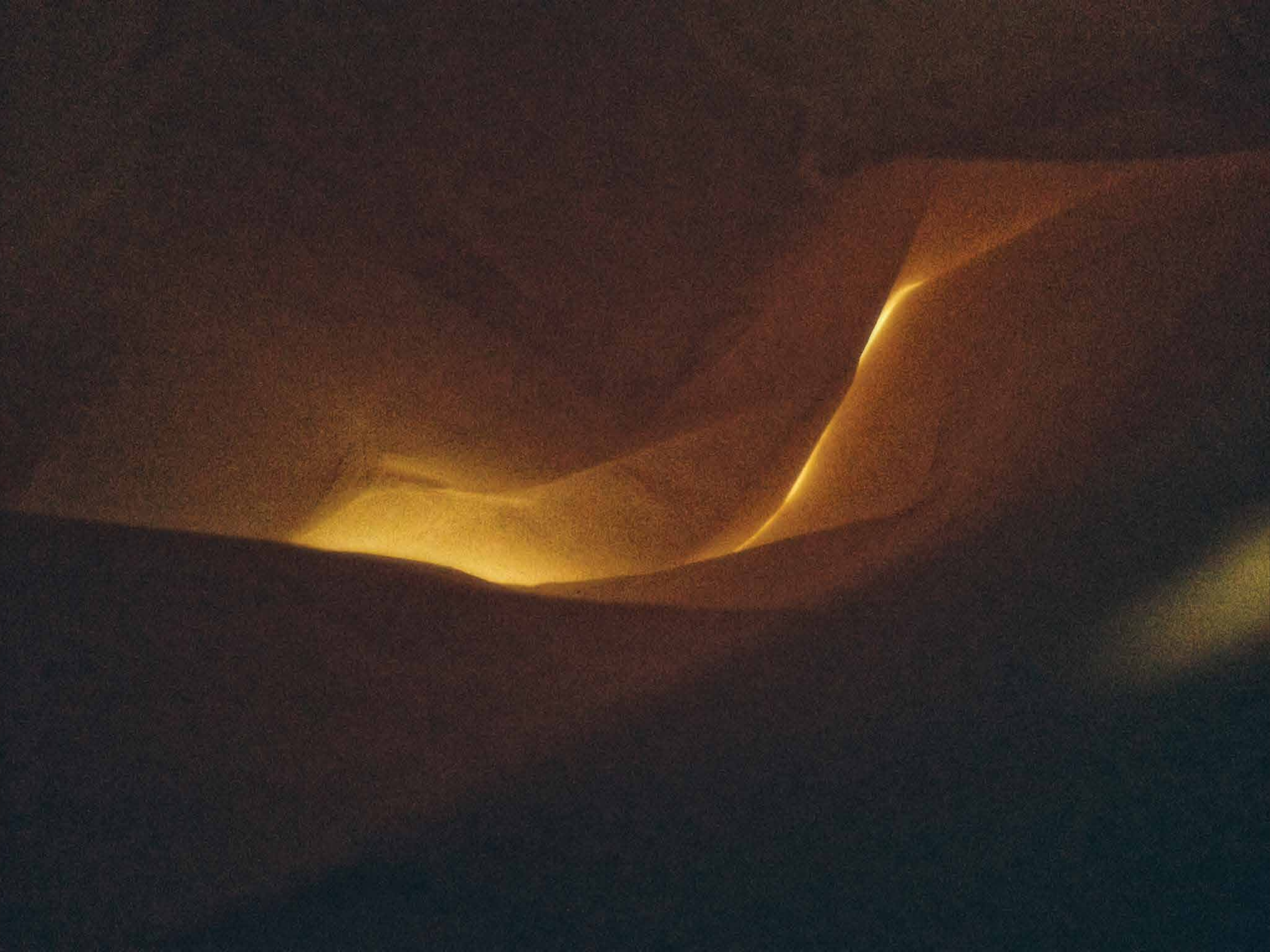
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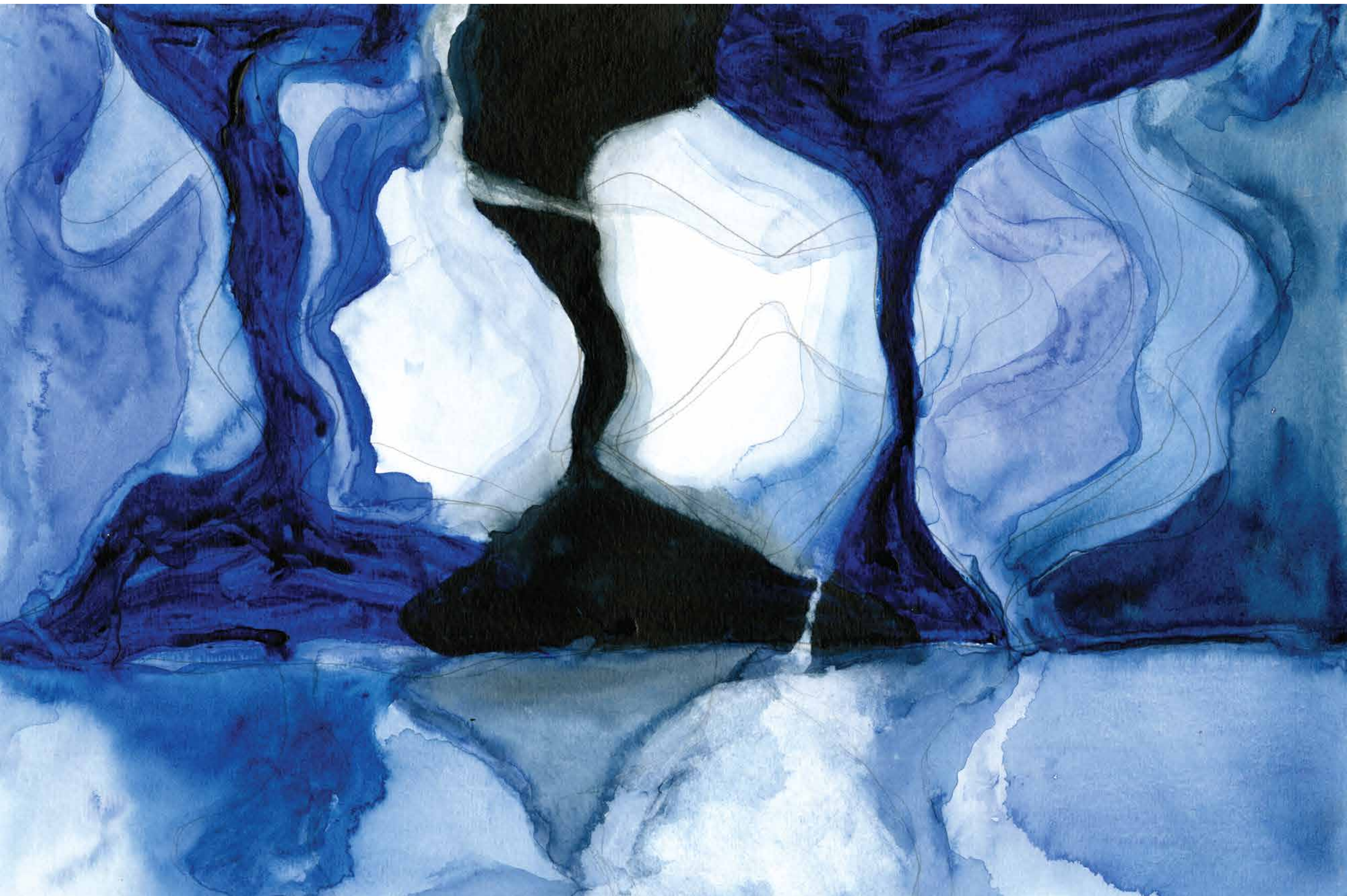
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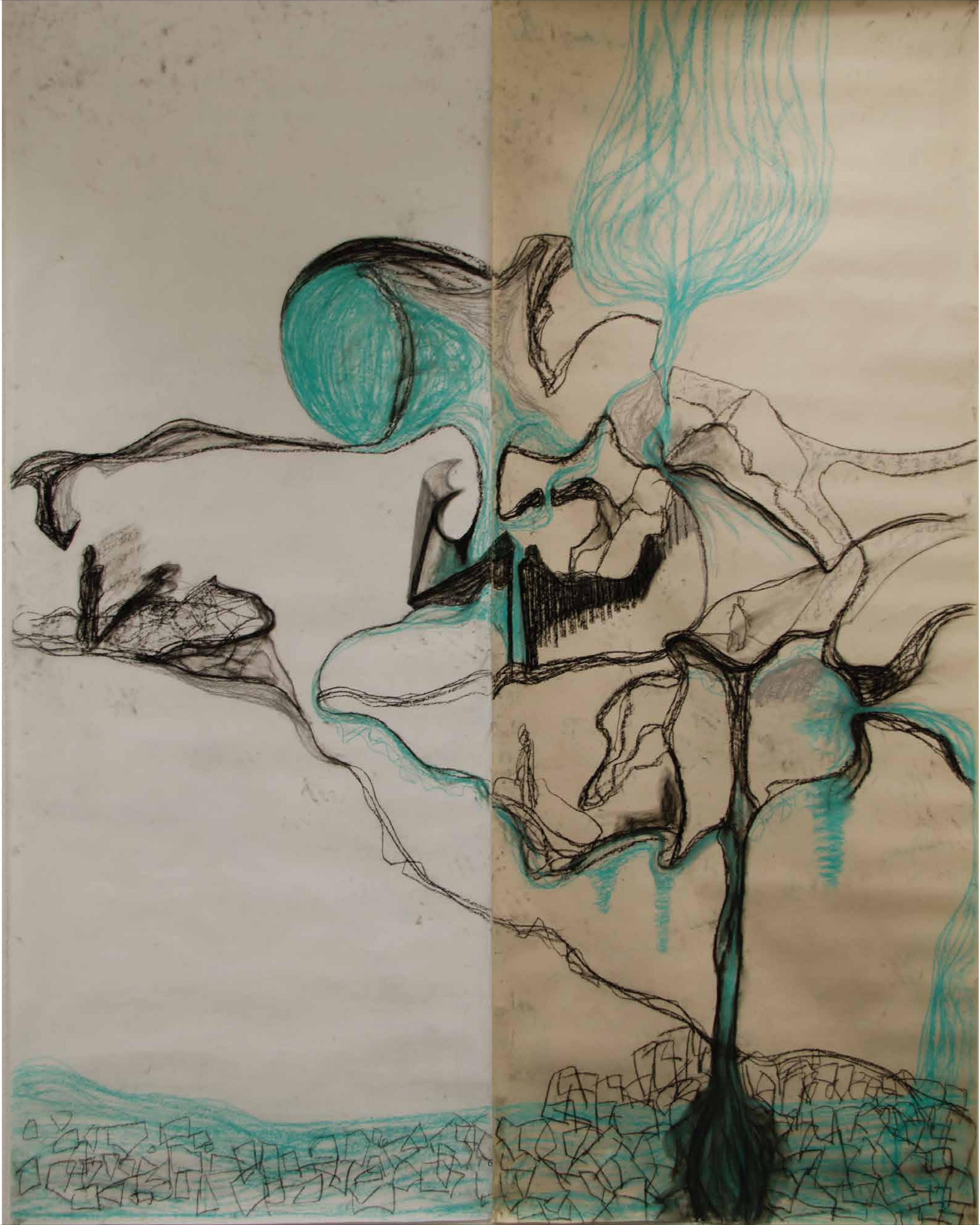
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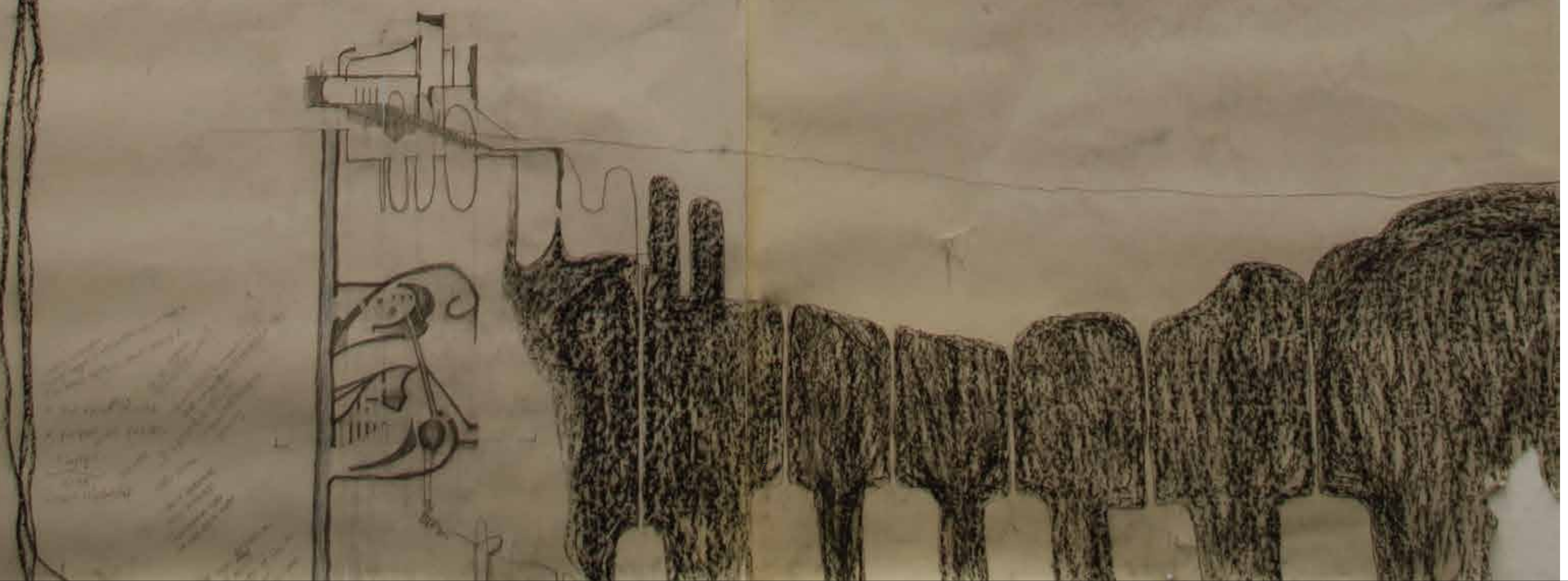


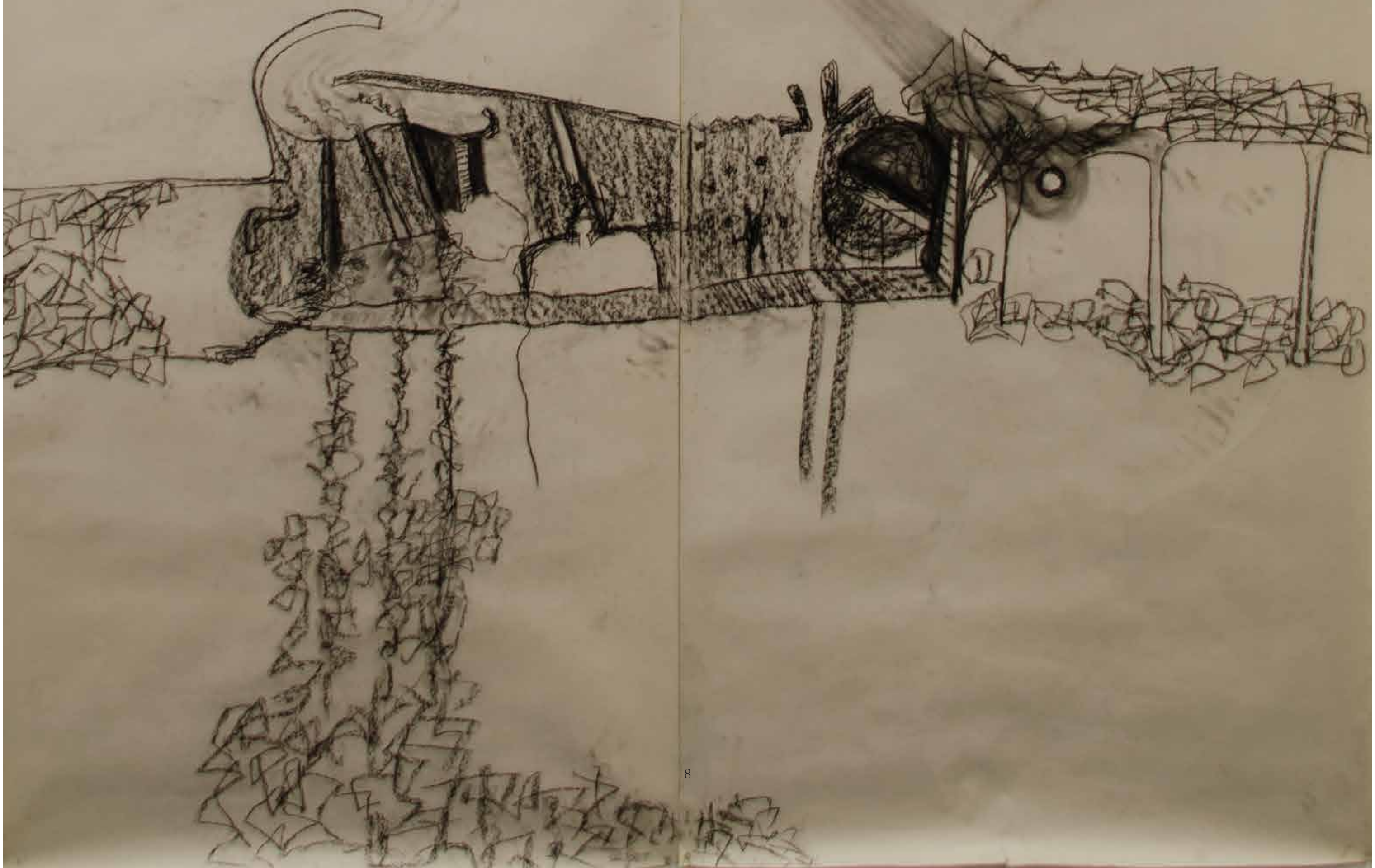
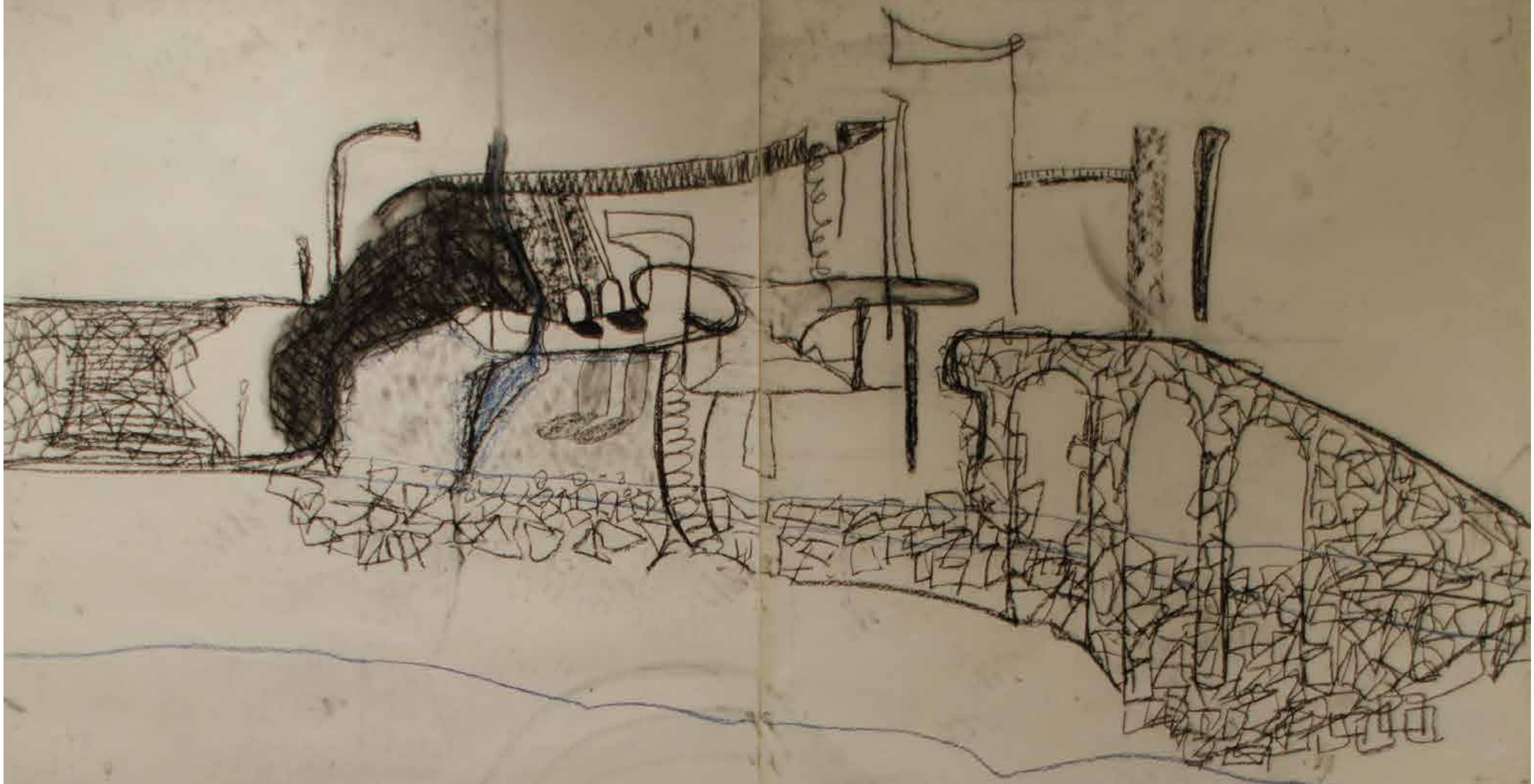


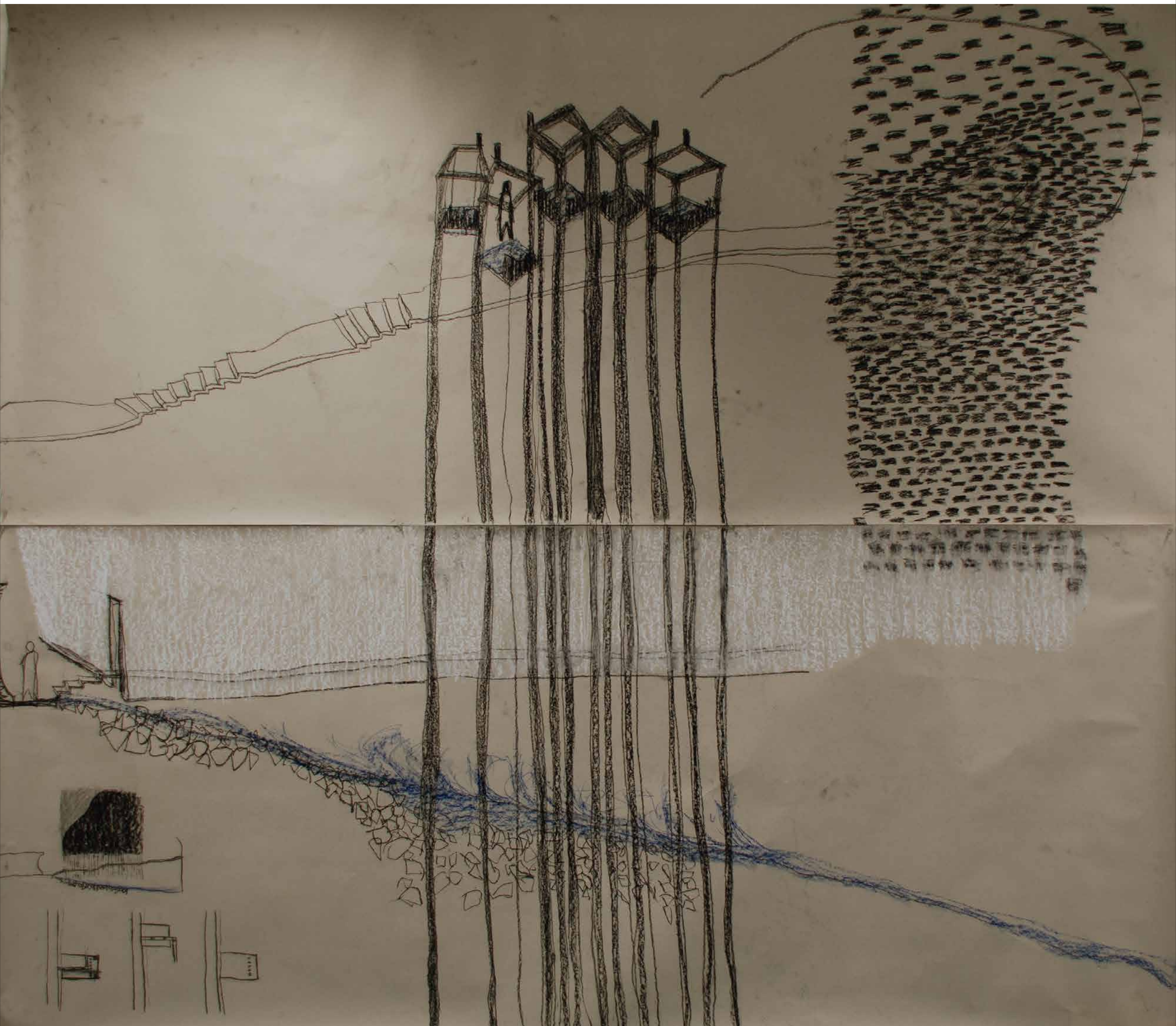


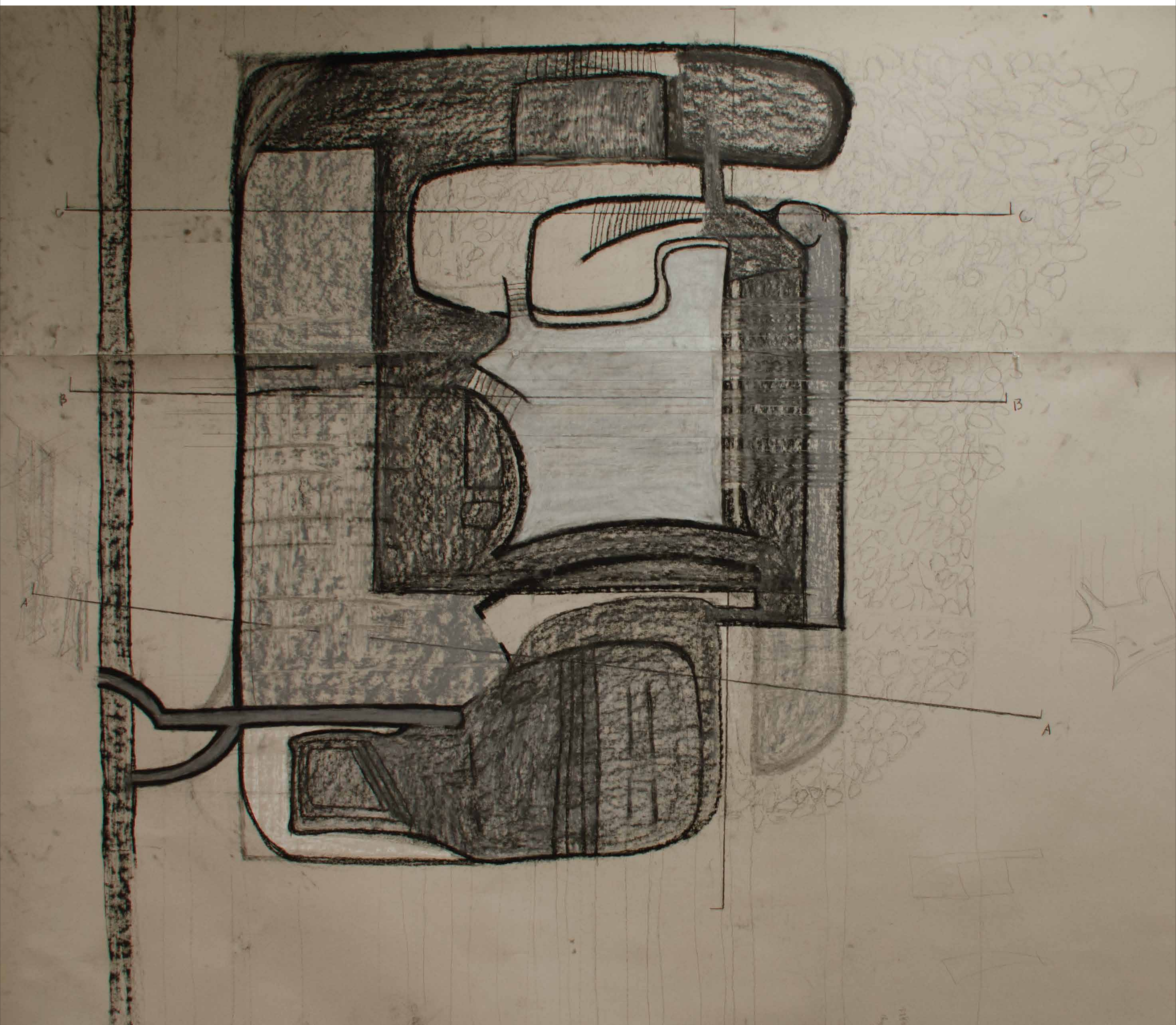


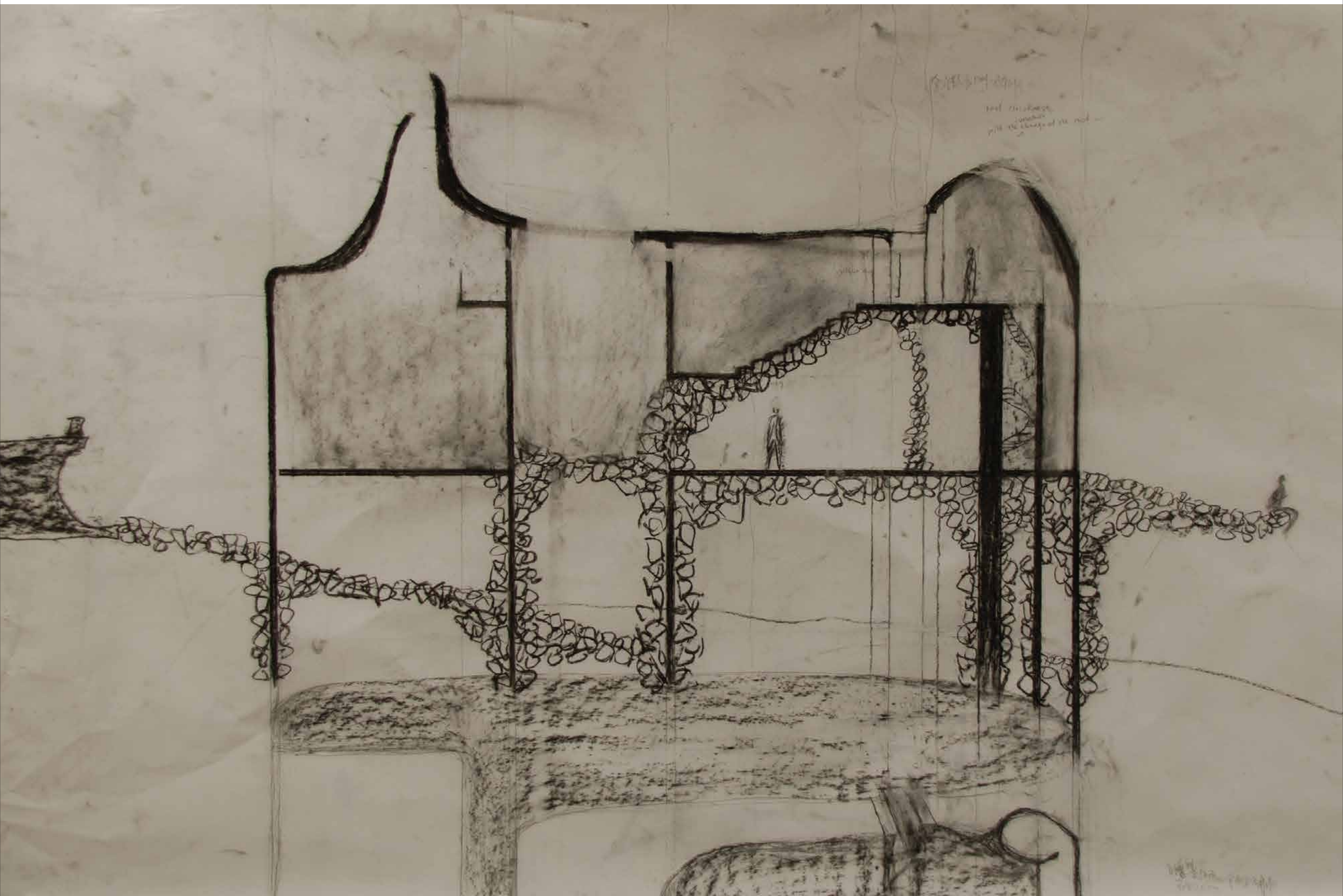


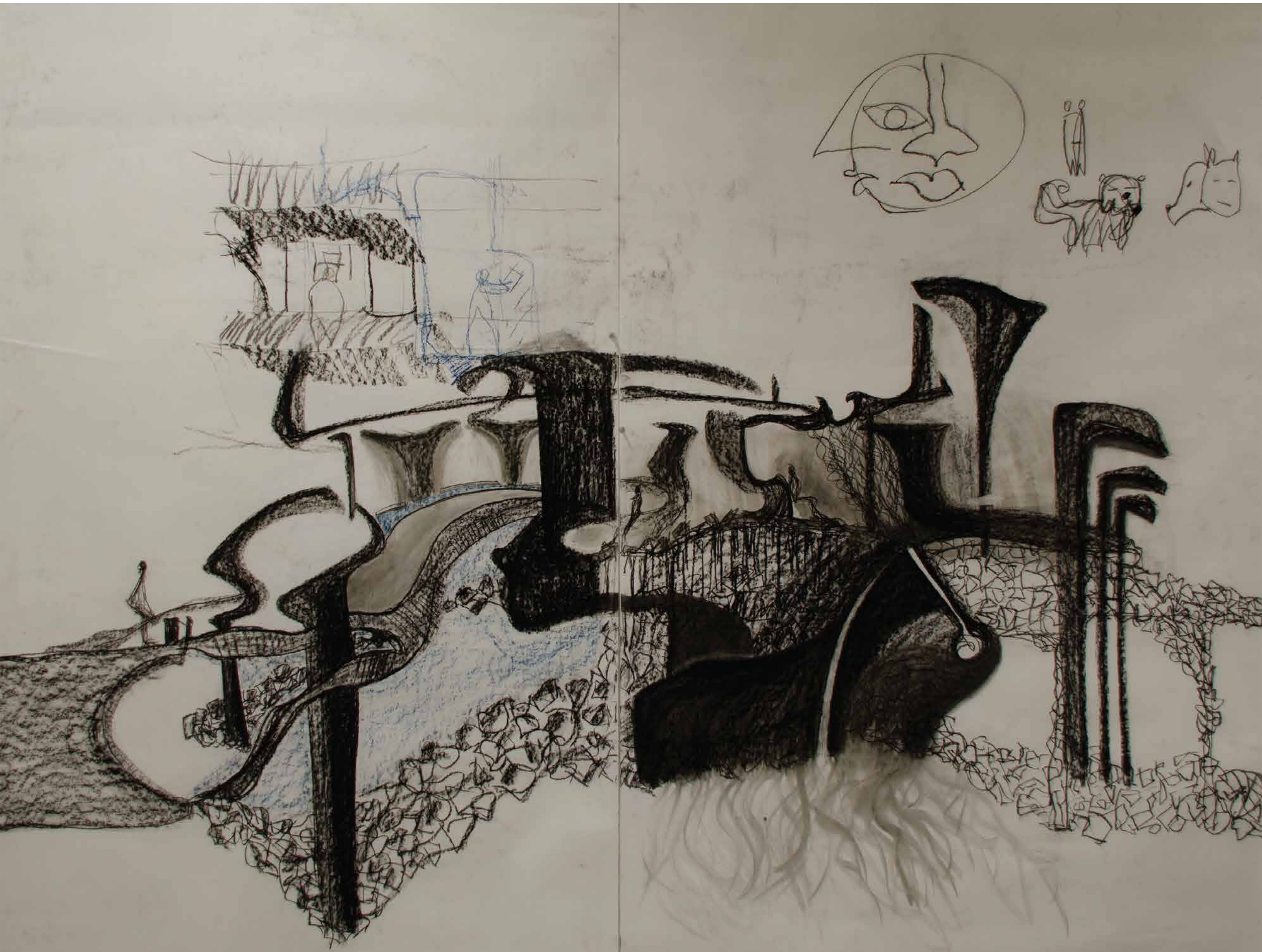




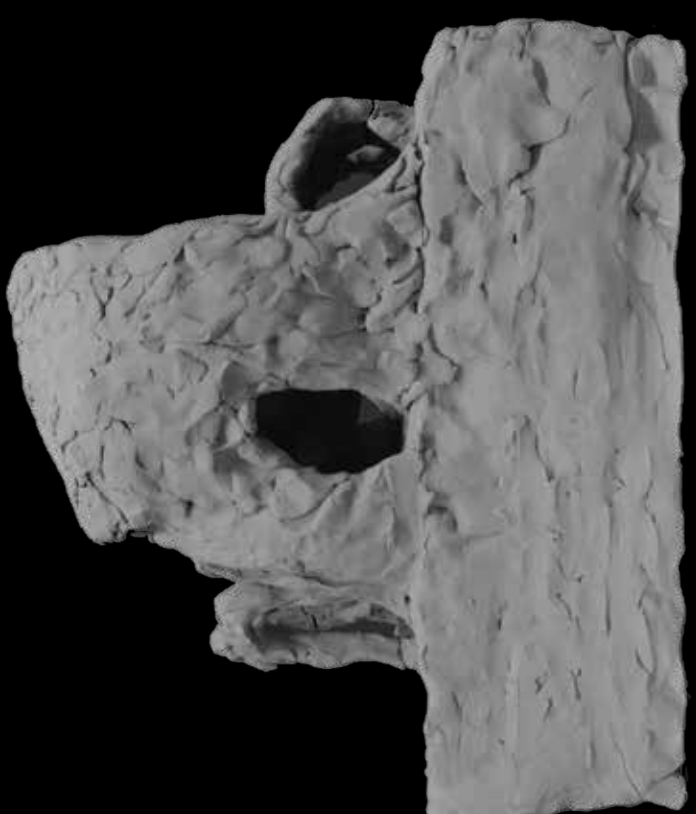
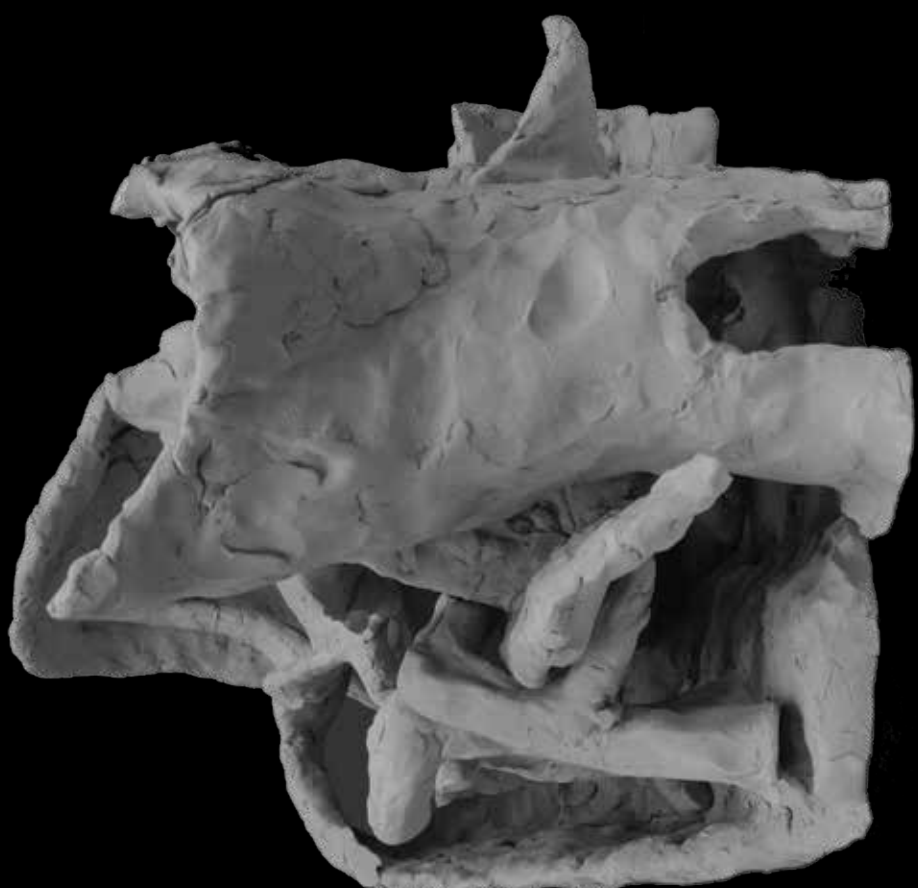
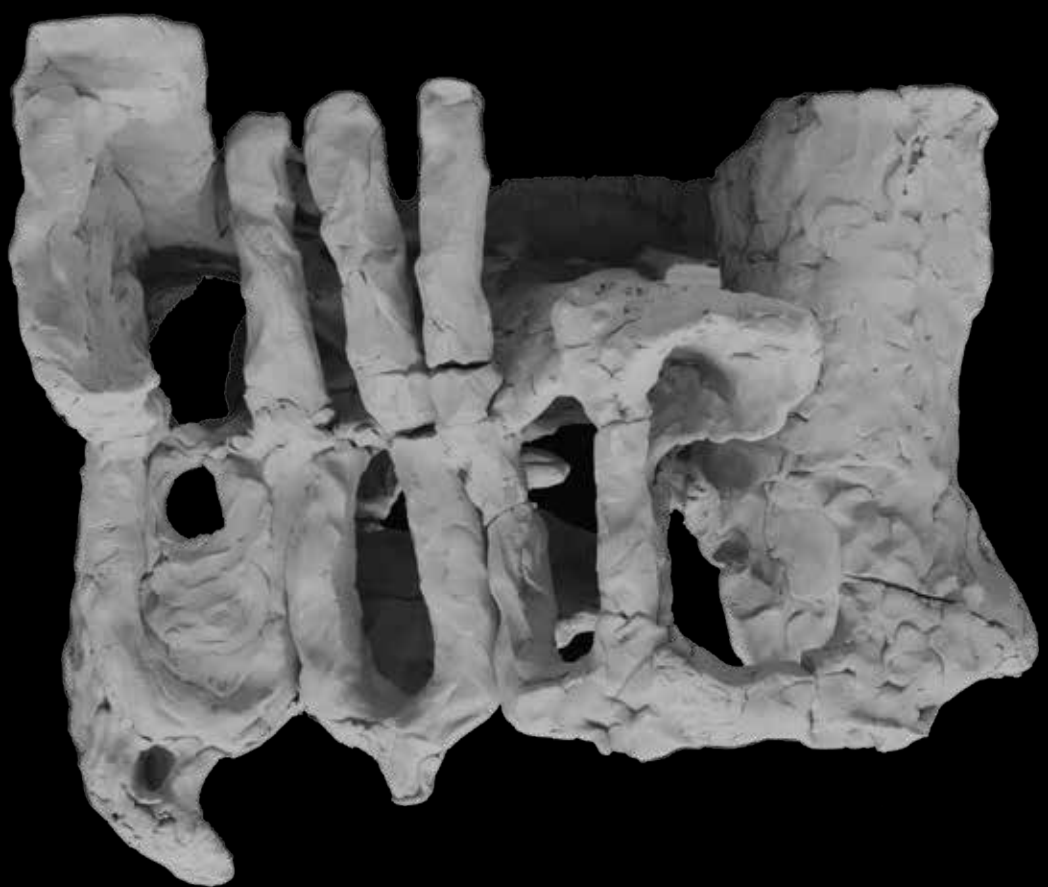


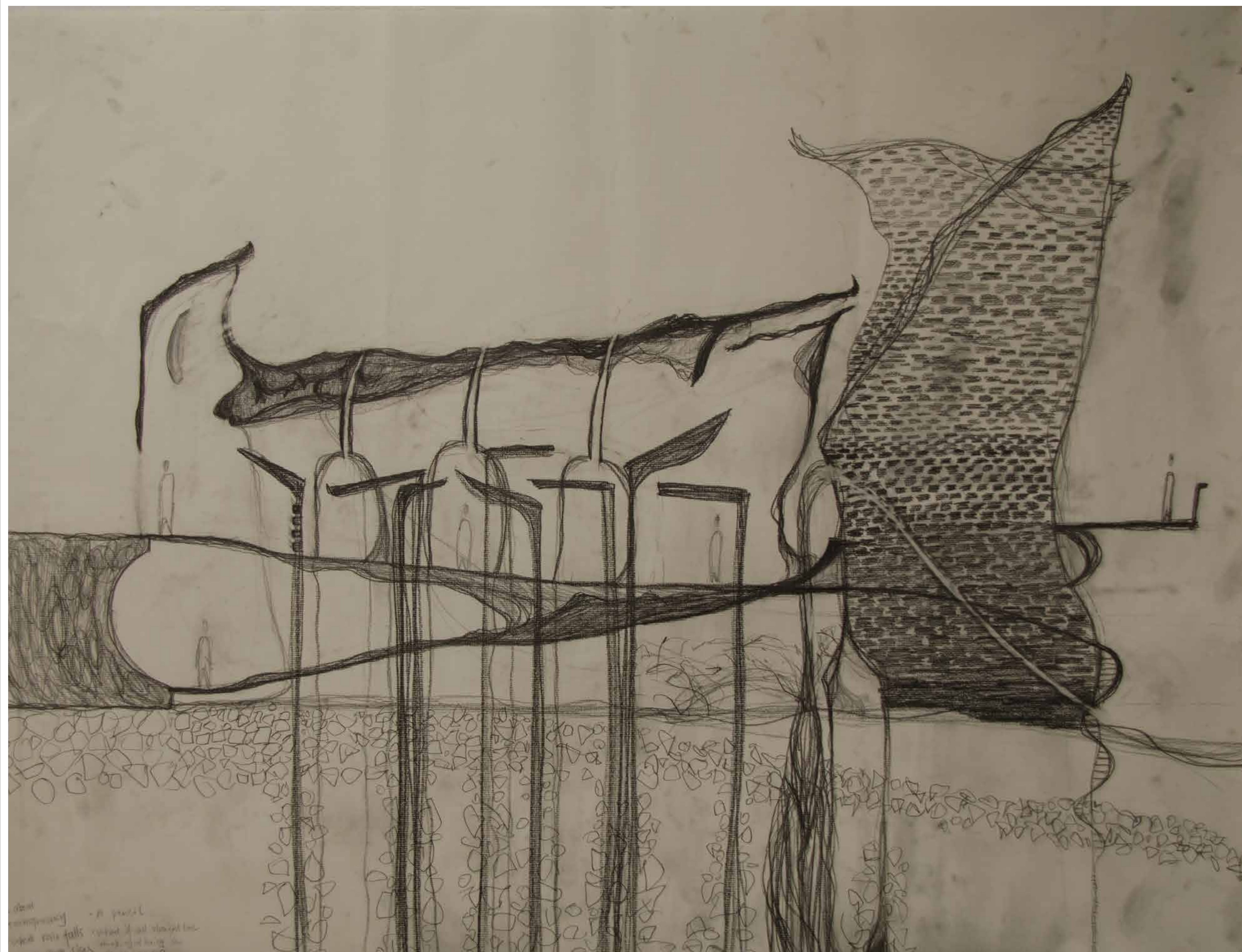




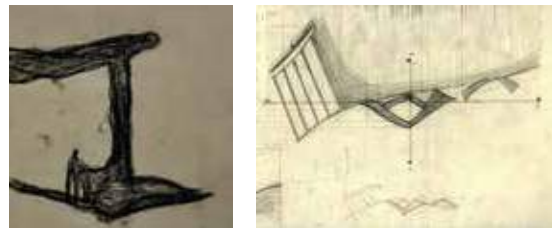




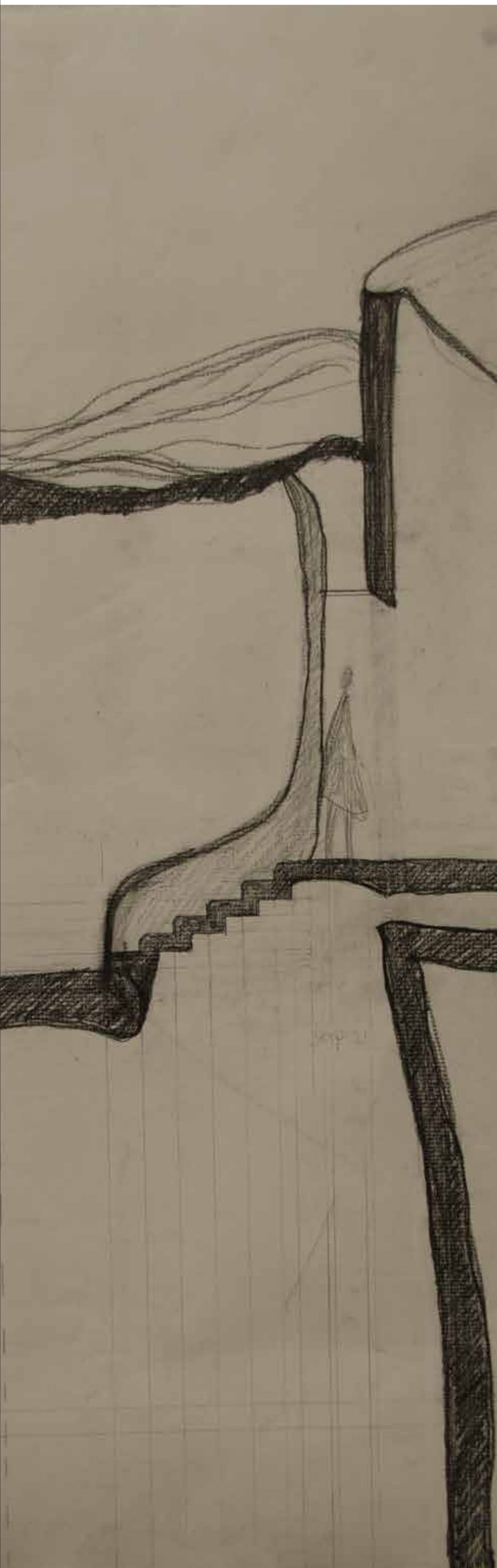


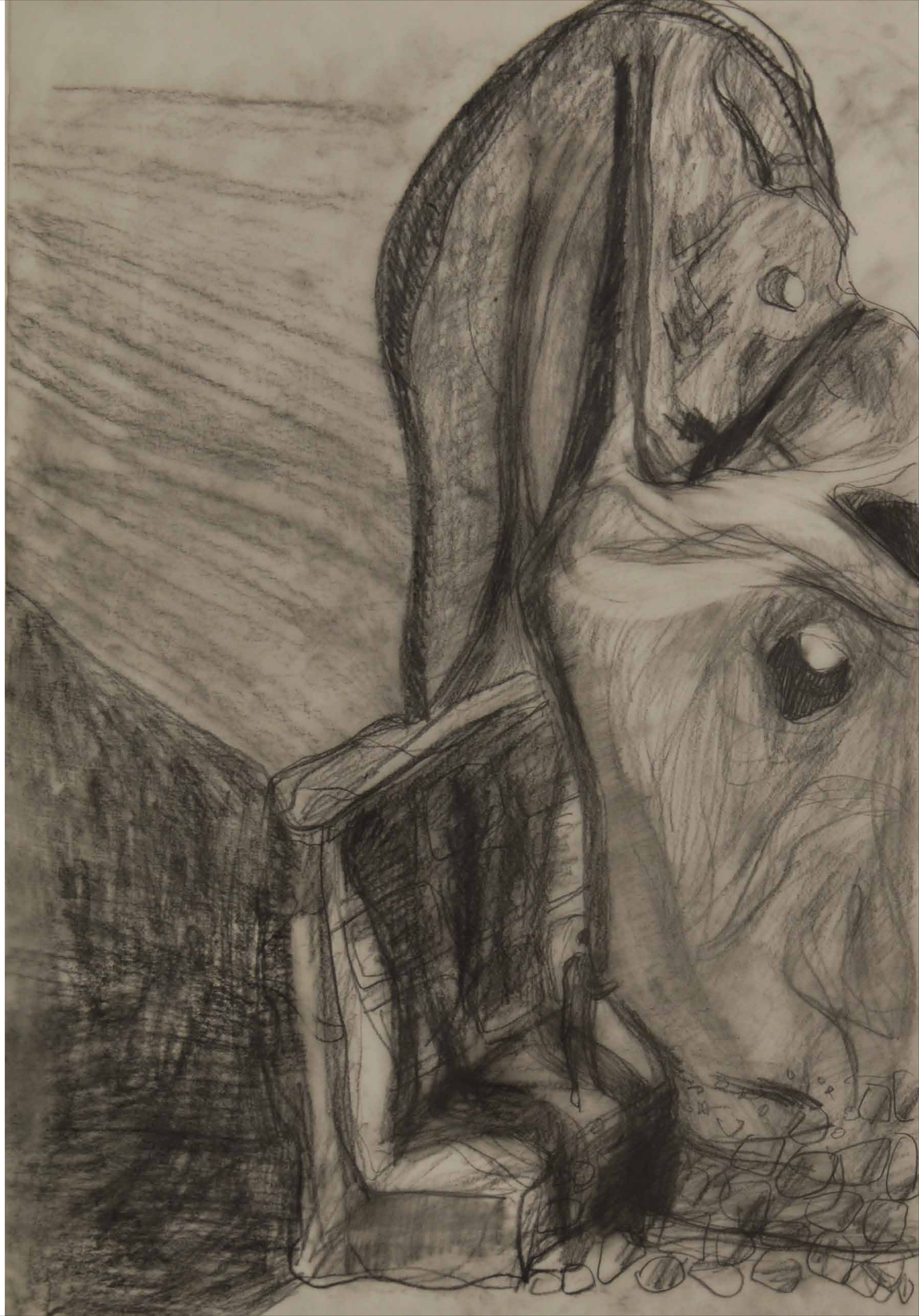






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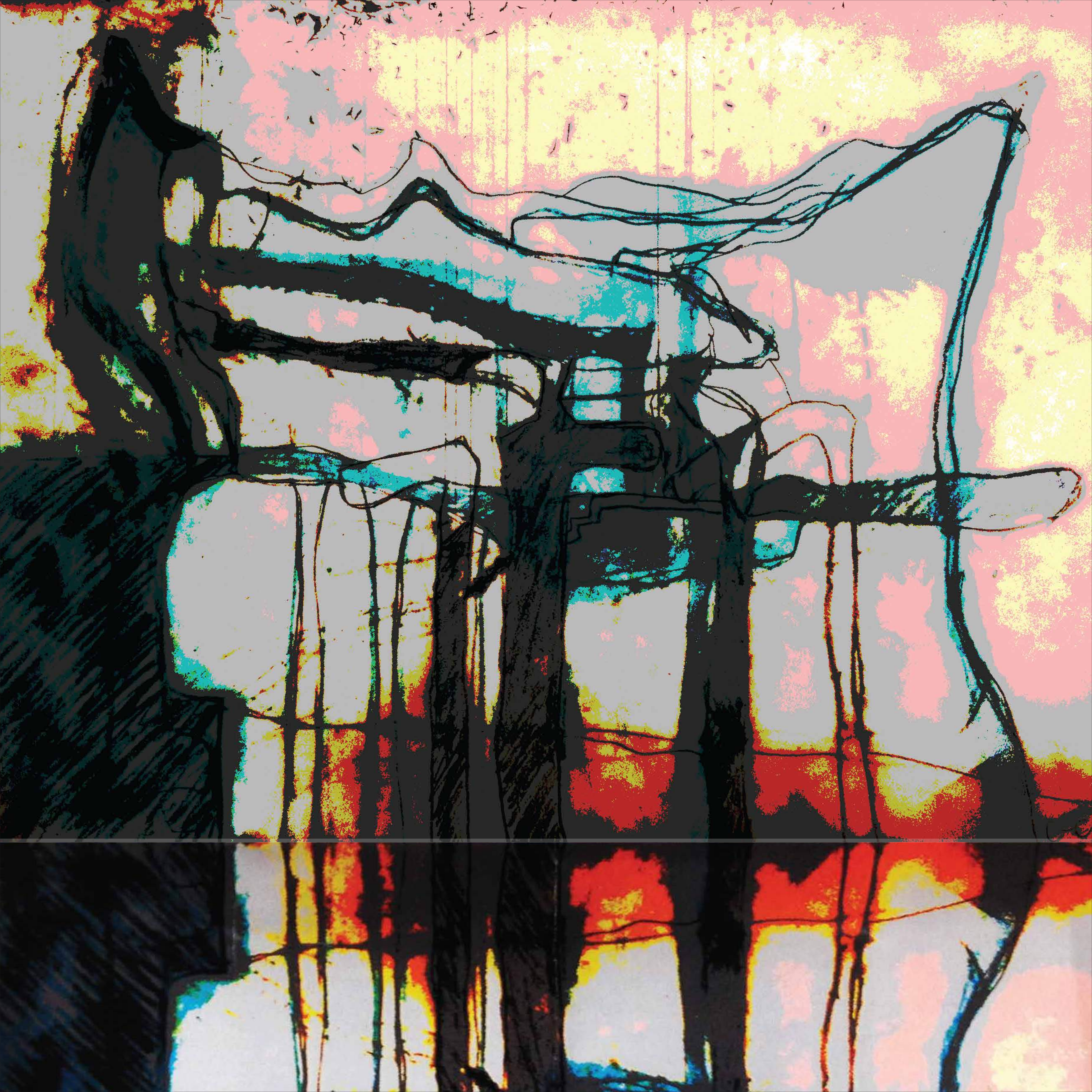








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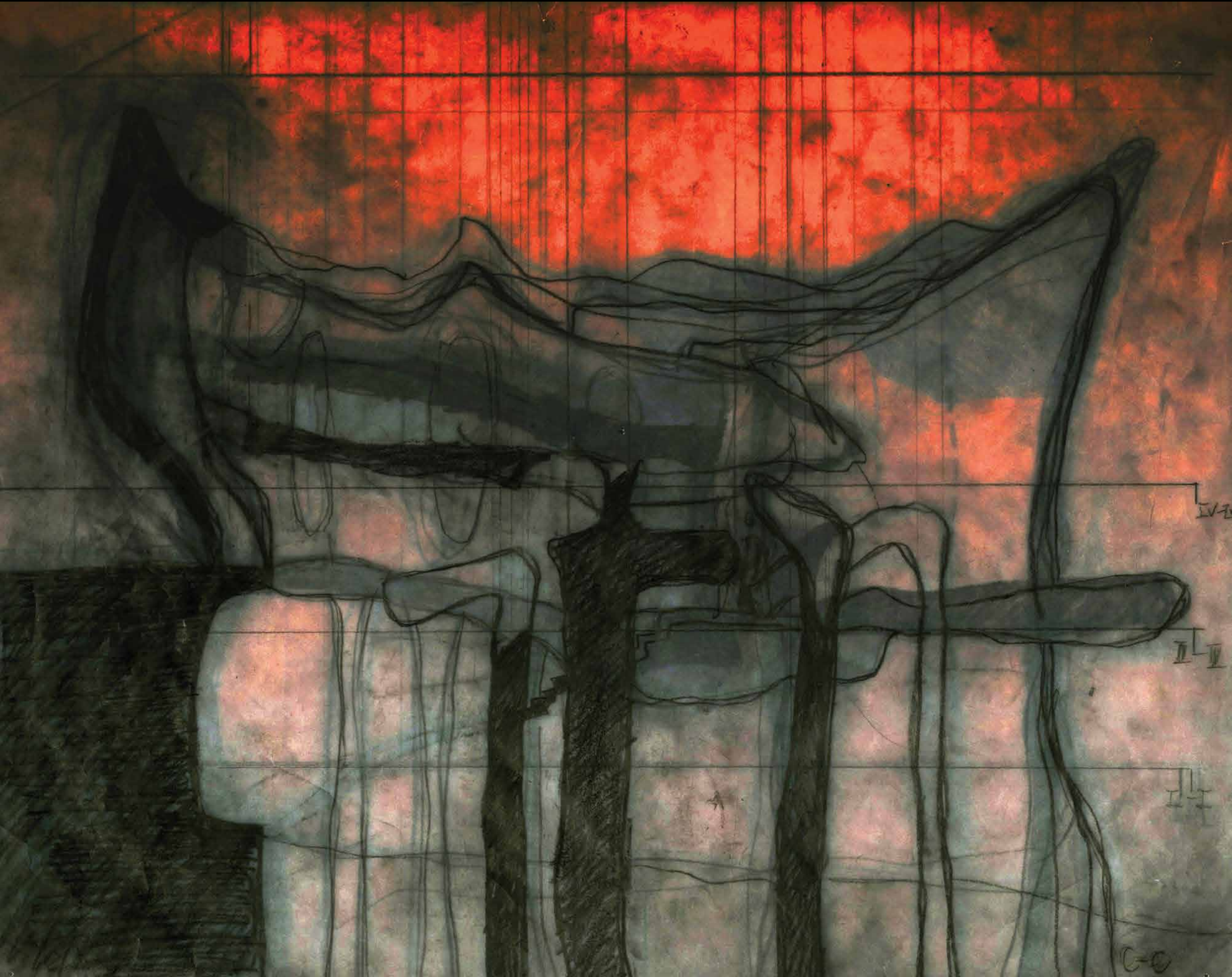


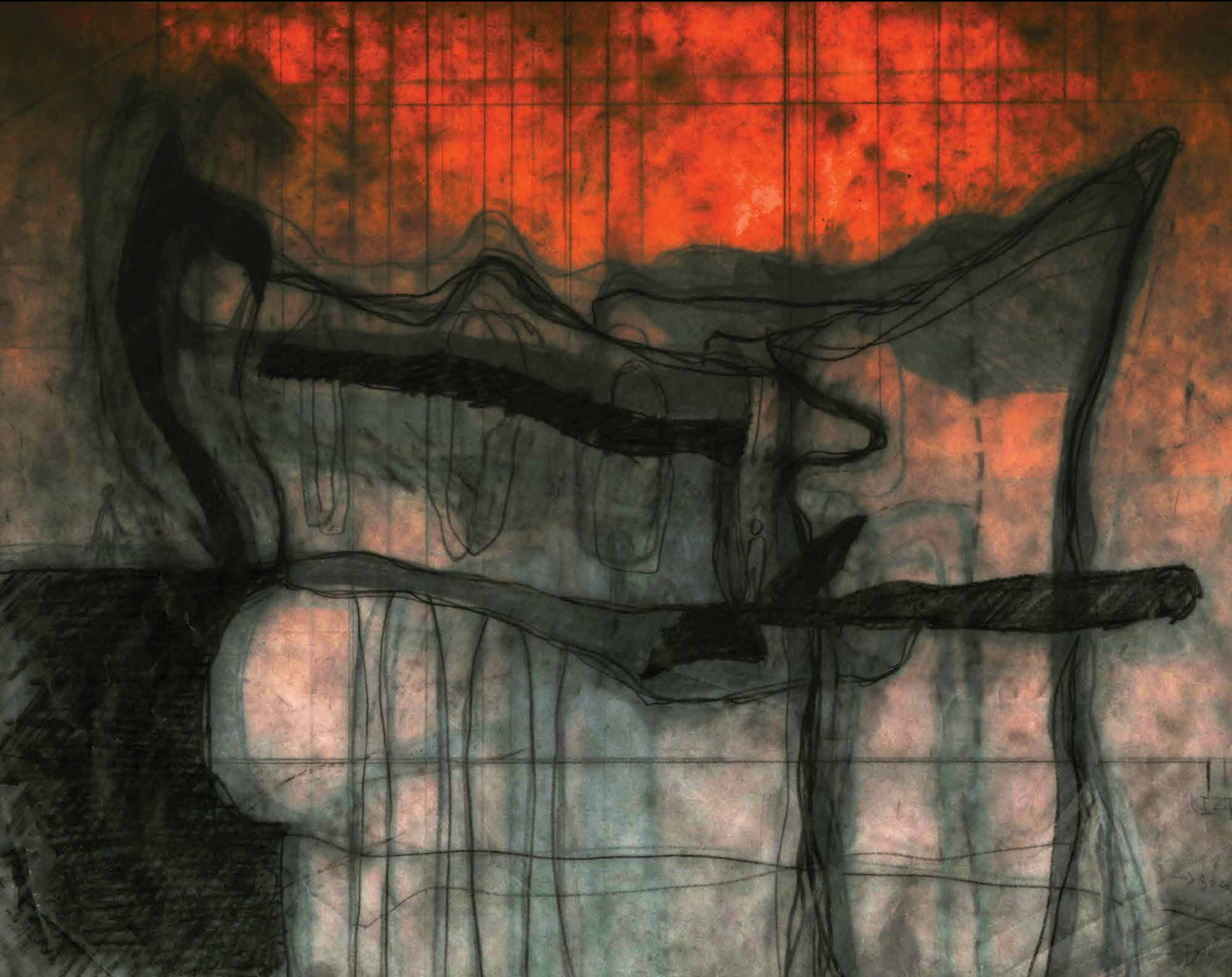


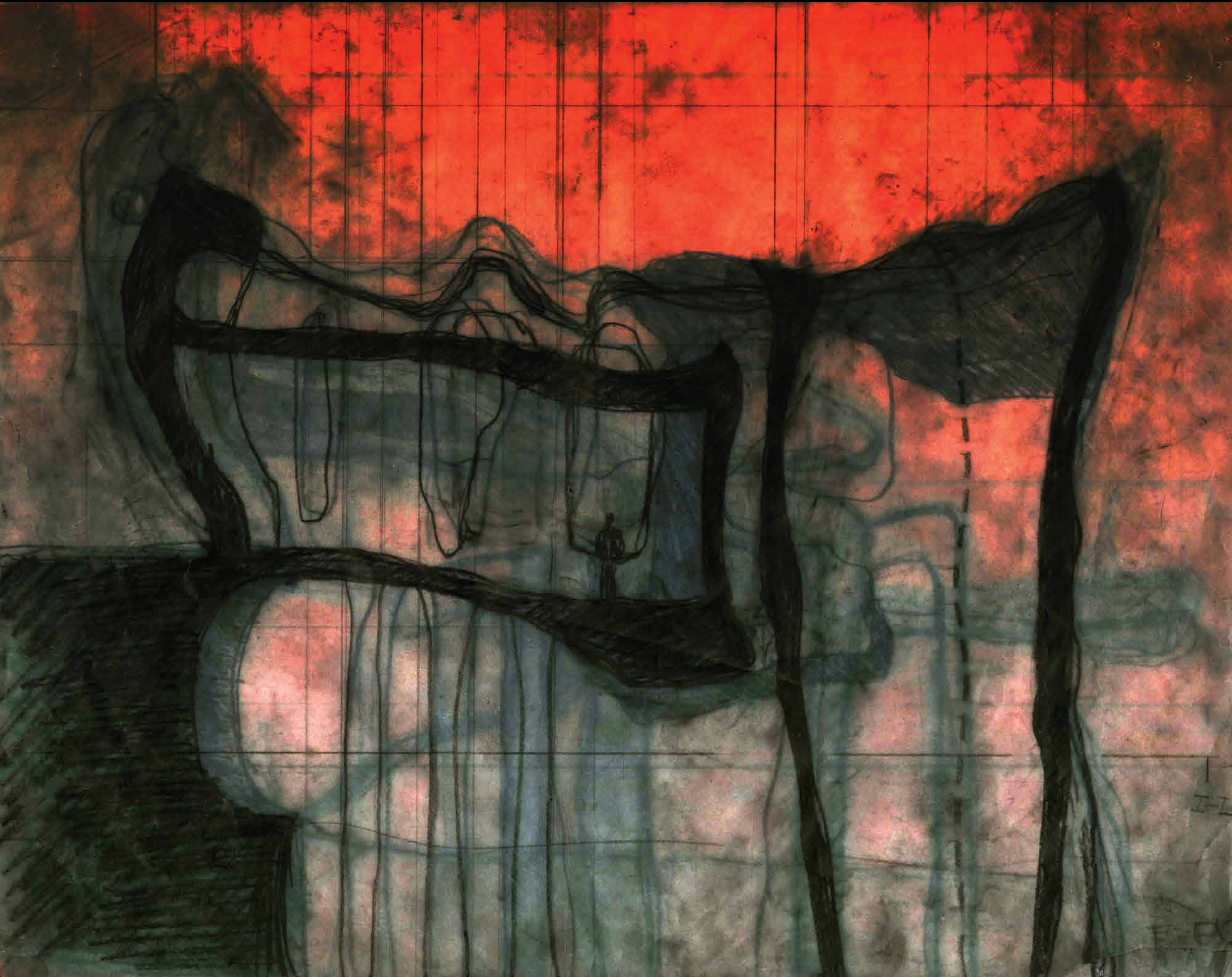


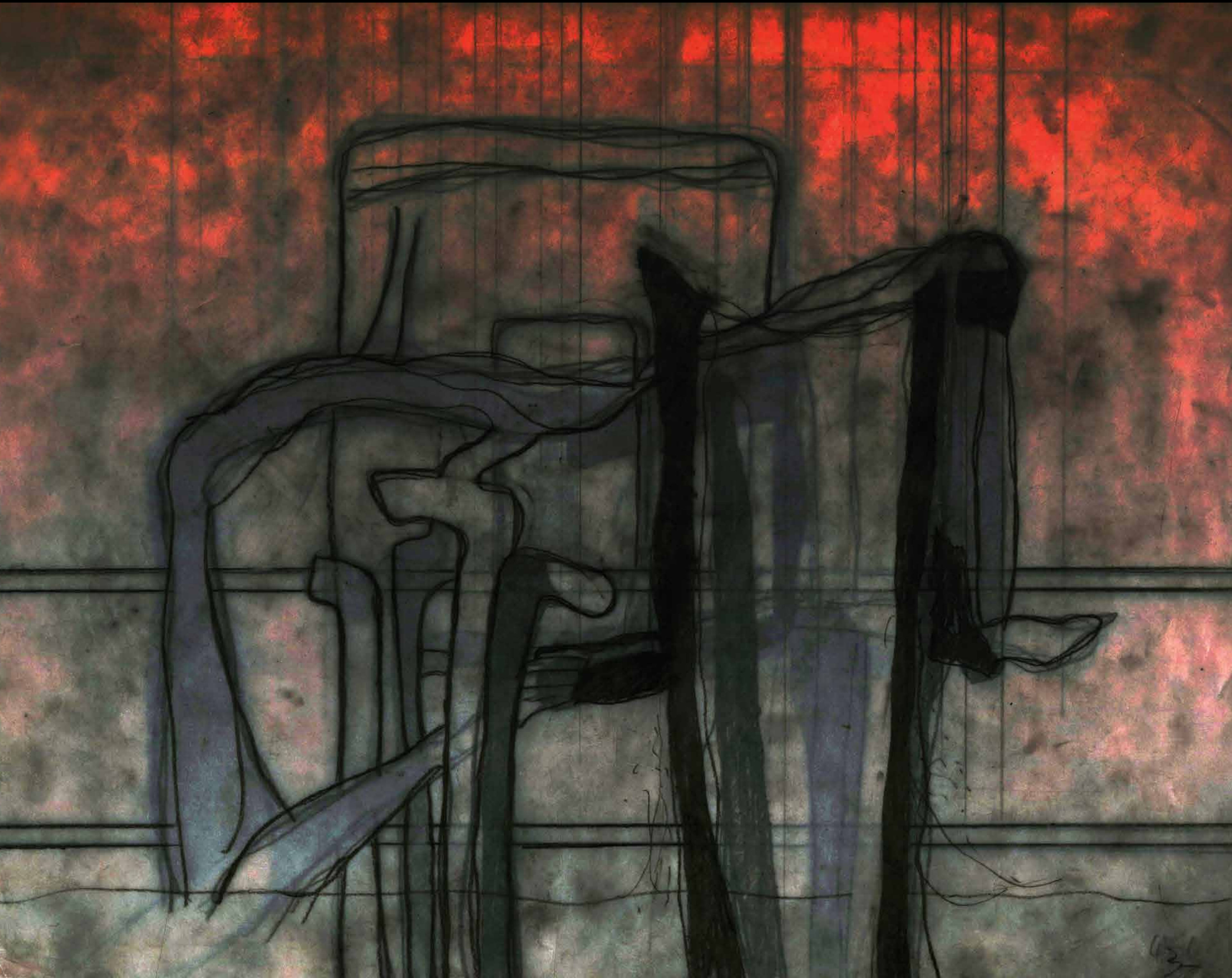














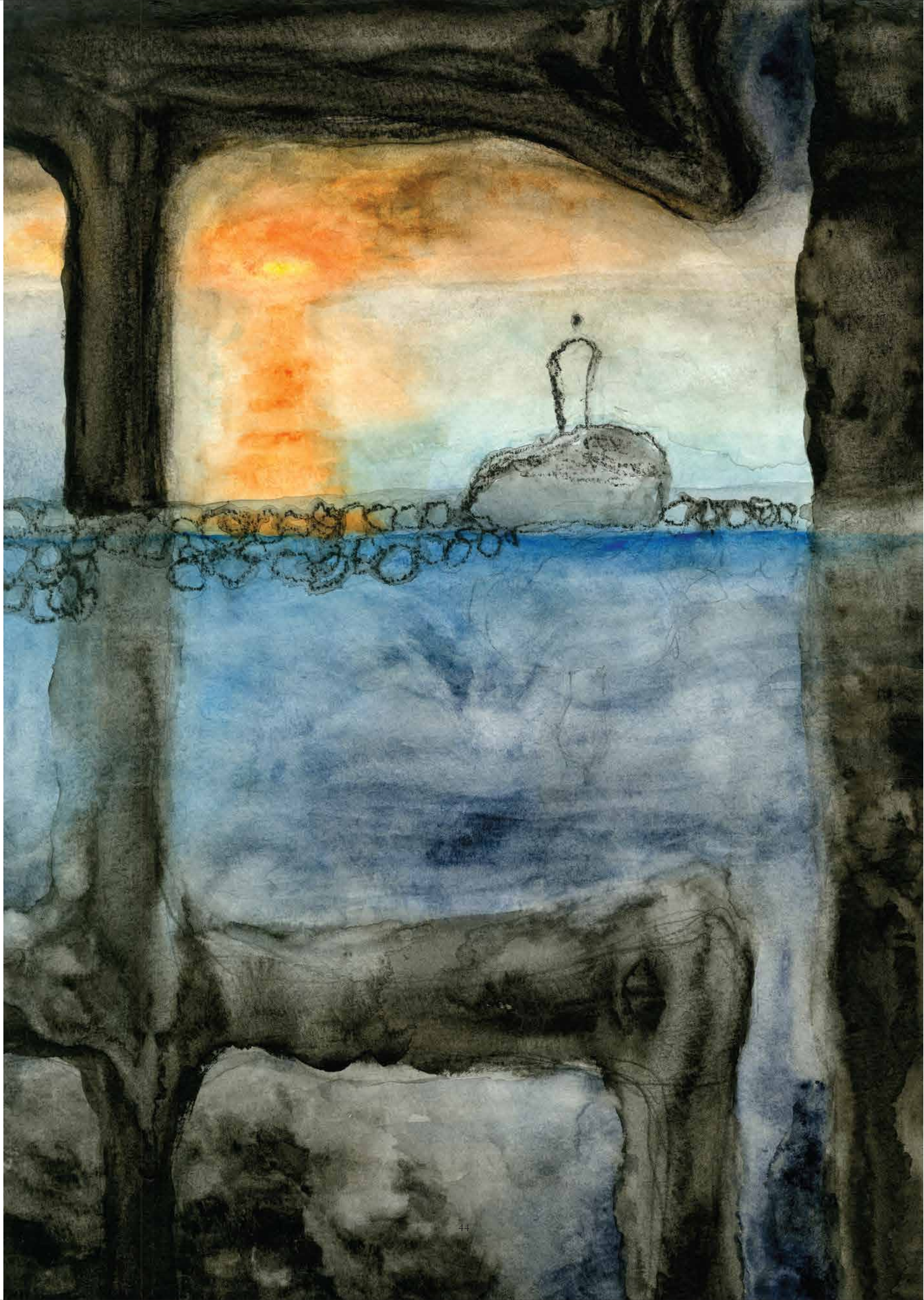
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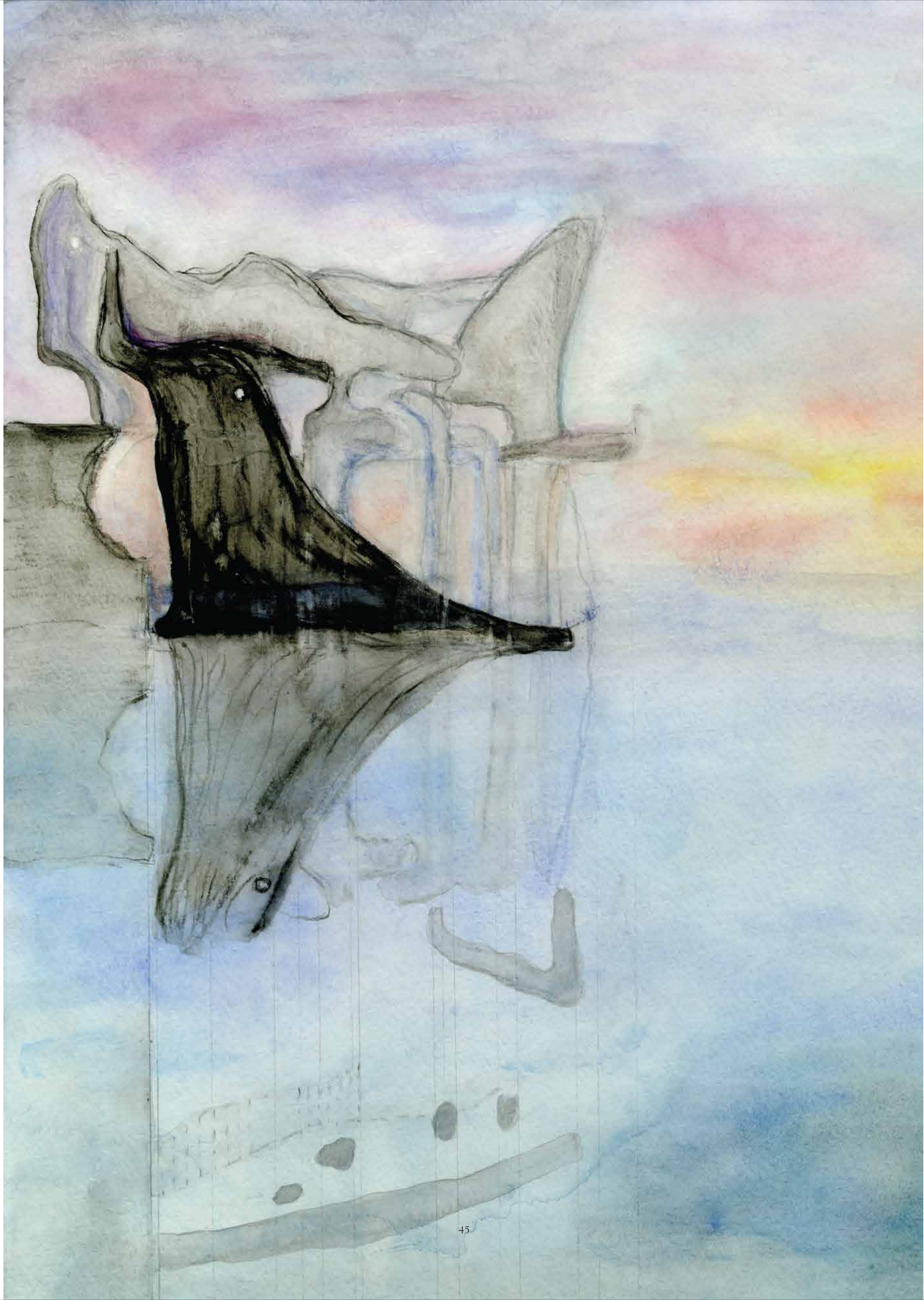


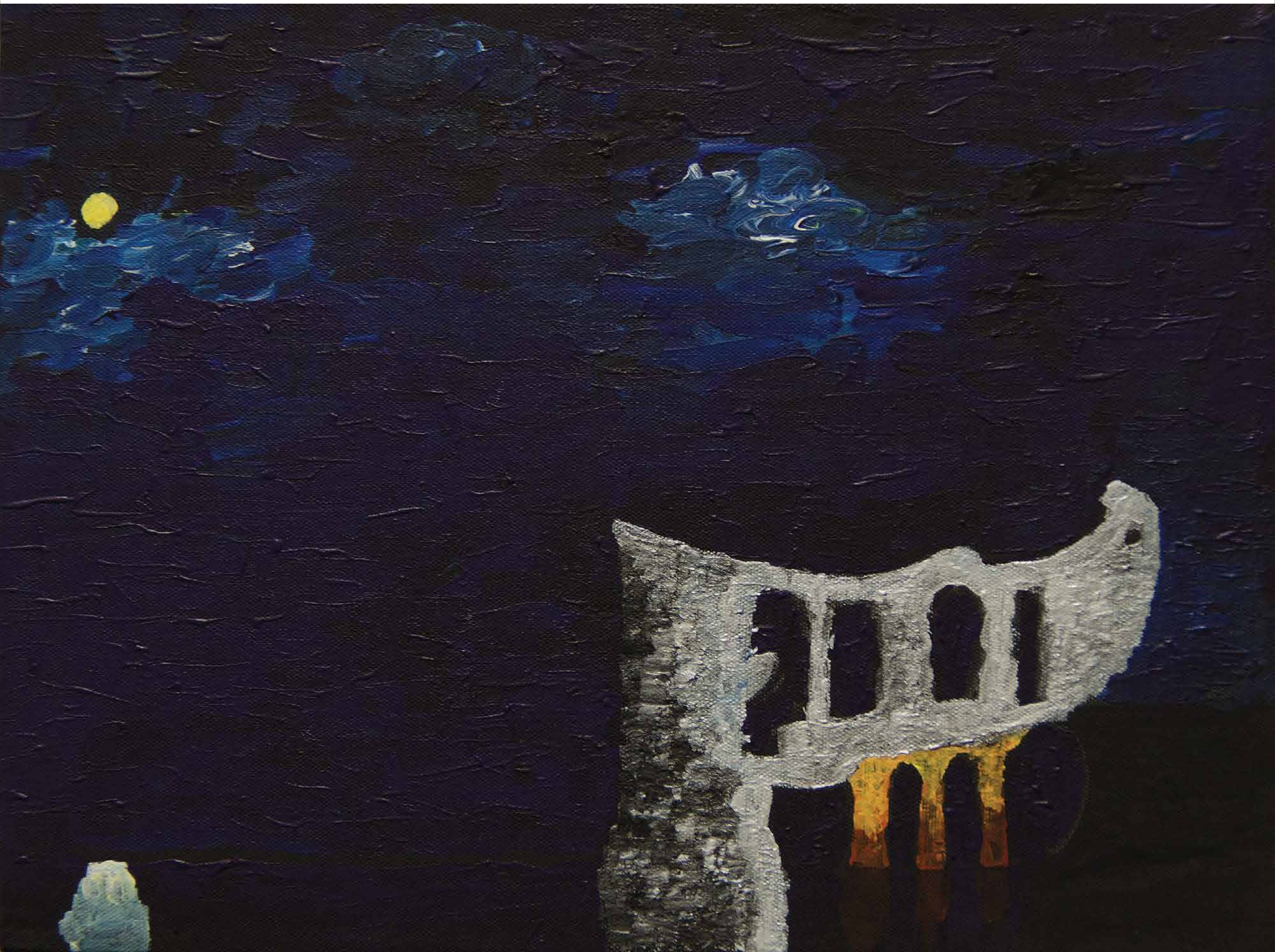
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I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by;
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.

John Masfield



End Notes

Every motion of the hand in every one of its works carries itself through the element of thinking; every bearing of the hand bears itself in that element. All the work of the hand is rooted in thinking.

Heidegger-what is called thinking

If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea.

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

All that we desire to create has its beginning in feeling alone. This is true for the scientist. It is true for the artist. But I warned that to remain in Feeling away from Thought means to make nothing.

Louis Kahn- Form and Design

Architecture is about harnessing the will, desire and skills of a handful of people in order to modify a place at a given point in time. Architecture is never something you create alone. You always create it somewhere in particular, at the request of one person or several people, but always for everyone to enjoy.

- Jean Nouvel

"I shall look at you out of the corner of my eye, and you will say nothing. Words are the source of misunderstandings. But you will sit a little closer to me, every day..."

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

When I like it, you will like it, too, because I'm not so special."

Zumthor-Ceremony Acceptance Speech

But suppose that walls rise toward heaven in such a way that I am moved. I perceive your intentions. Your mood has been gentle, brutal, charming, or noble. The stones you have erected tell me so. You fix me to the place and my eyes regard it. They behold something which expresses a thought. A thought which reveals itself without word or sound, but solely by means of shapes which stand in a certain relationship to one another. These shapes are such that they are clearly revealed in light. The relationships between them have not necessarily any reference to what is practical or descriptive. They are a mathematical creation of your mind. They are the language of Architecture. By the use of raw materials and starting from conditions more or less utilitarian, you have established certain relationships which have aroused my emotions. This is Architecture.'

Le Corbusier

"An amazing need for participation which, going beyond the attraction of the imaginations of form, thinks matter, dreams in it, lives in it or in other words materializes the imaginary"

Gaston Bachelard

But rule is really spirits or you might say the psyche and law. And since the psyche is indefinable, since it cannot be measured, cannot be felt, it is something which is changeable. I think anyone should approach rule as changeable, as something that can be changed, and approach law as something that cannot be changed.

Louis Kahn- Law and Rule in Architecture

...precisely from such moments, I believe, we build our best and necessary sense of an independent yet meaningful reality. I should like to call them direct esthetic experiences of the real and to suggest the following: in our media-saturated times it falls to architecture to have the direct esthetic experience of the real at the center of its concerns."

Michael Benedikt-For an Architecture of Reality

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