

Arctic Issues: from Rupes Nigra to energy CEOs

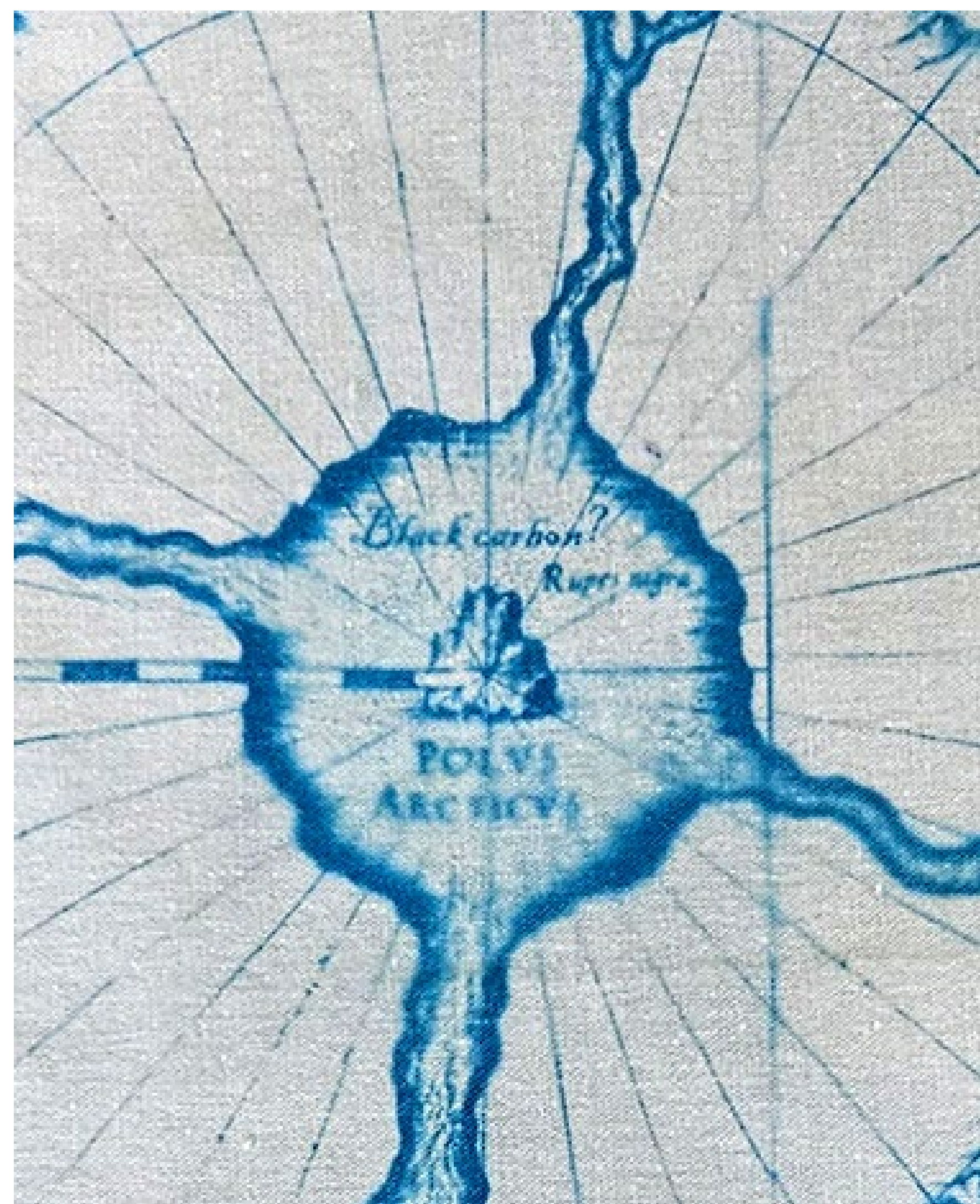
Ispra, IT, 2024

Cyanotypes on fabrics, various sizes

A work in progress series of artworks that aim to contextu-alise and relate a number of issues in the Arctic. I started with an interest in old European maps of the North Pole, which were incomplete because the North Pole had not yet been discovered. So the depictions of it were pure-ly speculative and imaginative. This in turn inspired me to compare these fantasies with today’s realities, and there were uncanny parallels, and the old maps suddenly seemed almost prophetic to me, pointing to much later events such as melting poles and Arctic oil reserves. Through my research of maps I became also very interested the early attempts to discover the North Pole. And I also wanted to find a way to weave the stories and imag-es of these voyages into the project as the attitudes of these explorers were not dissimilar to the behavior of today’s exploiters in the region. During my stay at the EU maker space, I had the opportunity to talk to scientists and schol-ars and learn more things that I had not considered before. They made me more aware of specific problems of the Arctic population in relation to global warming, for example in the case of the Sami population and the problem of reindeer not getting enough food, or the weather phenomenon of black carbon, where the Arctic ice darkens due to air pollution and then no longer reflects as much UV-light, leading to an acceleration of global warming. Another story I include is my personal connection to the North Pole. As the great-grand-son of the aircraft engineer who designed the Dornier Whale aircraft that Roald Amundsen and his crew used to attempt to fly to the North Pole in 1925, I feel that there is a strong connection to the Arctic, its discovery and history in relation to technology in my own family history.



Selection of Cyanotypes on natural fabrics



Detail of Rupes Nigra, a supposed black magnetic rock on the North Pole, 16th Century



Dornier Wal and traditional sledge from Kamchatka.

Cable tapestries

Berlin (DE), 2010- ongoing

handwoven tapestries made of various cables, various sizes

Old cables that have become useless or that are broken are woven together. They remind me of my old devices, connecting a router, charging an old phone or connecting an old game console to a TV. These cables, line by line, are chronological formations of the electronic age and they will form new geological layers of the earth at some stage.



Scart, phone and usb`s
30 x 50 cm

Large VGA cable weav-
ing and smaller mixed ca-
ble weavings at studio



Large VGA cable weaving, wool,
cotton vga monitor cable
100x 140 cm

HÖME/NOME

Berlin (DE), 2021/2022

Video installation, SNES game consoles, animation, video, Hi8, miniDV, Bang & Olufsen 90s TV sets

Video material (raw cut): <https://vimeo.com/517883274>

I grew up in a kinda shabby ground floor apartment in Berlin Kreuzberg in the 90s. Many years later when I returned from living and studying art in Aotearoa/ NZ, I rediscovered this apartment which had been transformed into a contemporary art gallery in the meantime. Memories came back and I as I watched old home videos from that apartment I decided to do something. I used the old Super Nintendo and the game Mario Paint which I already played in this space as a child to draw and now I animated memories from that time on the same device. I got special TVs from that era and installed them in the gallery and the hallway. Each memory was shown at the exact spot of the former rooms of my home relating the old version of this place to the present one.



Custom made SNES Cartridge



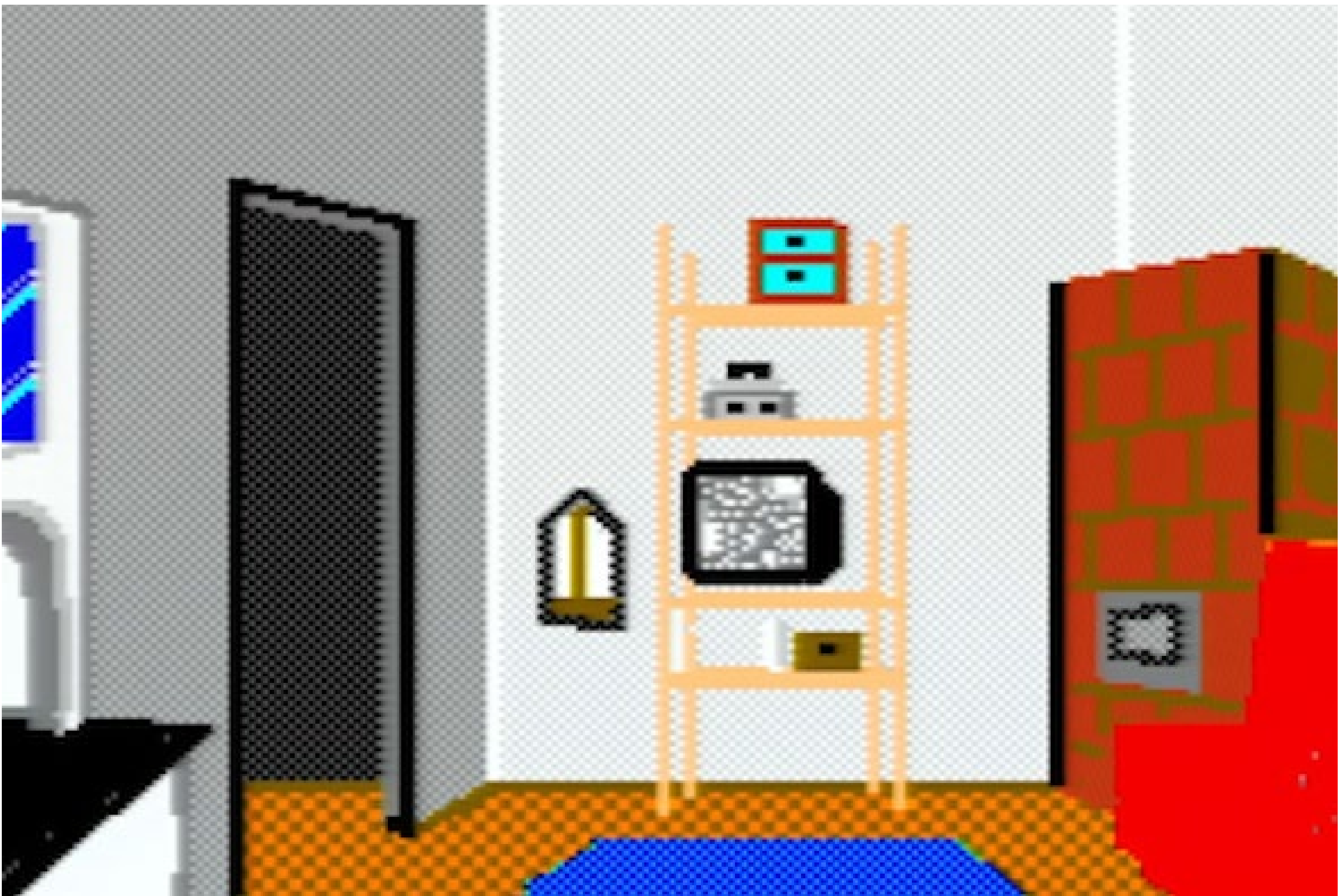
Mini DV video still: me during a performative setup installation of an exhibition at my actual former childhood home. On the monitor the word "HOME" becomes the word "NOME" (the name of the gallery)



Family photo: me and my siblings playing on the SNES when it was still an apartment (1995)



Family photo: me and my siblings playing on the SNES when it was still an apartment (1995)



The old room drawn on the SNES that I played with in this room as a child.



Installation view at my former home/
NOME Gallery (2021)

Unweaving the machine

Guimarães (PT), 2022

Wood, metal springs, polyester rope, heddles, industrially woven jute fabric, stools
150 cm x 100 cm x 700 cm



Installation view, Contextile 2022 Biennial



Unweaving with the audience

I built an apparatus that can be used to un-weave industrially produced fabrics. The machine reverses/rewinds processes that have become increasingly problematic for our ecosystems. The task of operating this very slow and seemingly unproductive machine gives the 2 operators a chance to collectively rethink normative directions and logics of production.

Contextual video work: <https://vimeo.com/746910999/d0697db66e>



Detail



Detail: pulled out threads



Installation view, Contextile 2022 textile art biennial

Video link: <https://vimeo.com/746910999/d0697db66e>

The video starts with an image sequence of ultra-fast modern weaving machines which I relate to a number of environmental and political issues. The video connects various parts of the installation which consists of a machine that I invented for un-weaving industrial fabric, cotton cloths that relate to global warming and colonialism and more. The video itself mimics the movement of fabric in a factory. In the end the video does not simply loop but rewinds to start again.

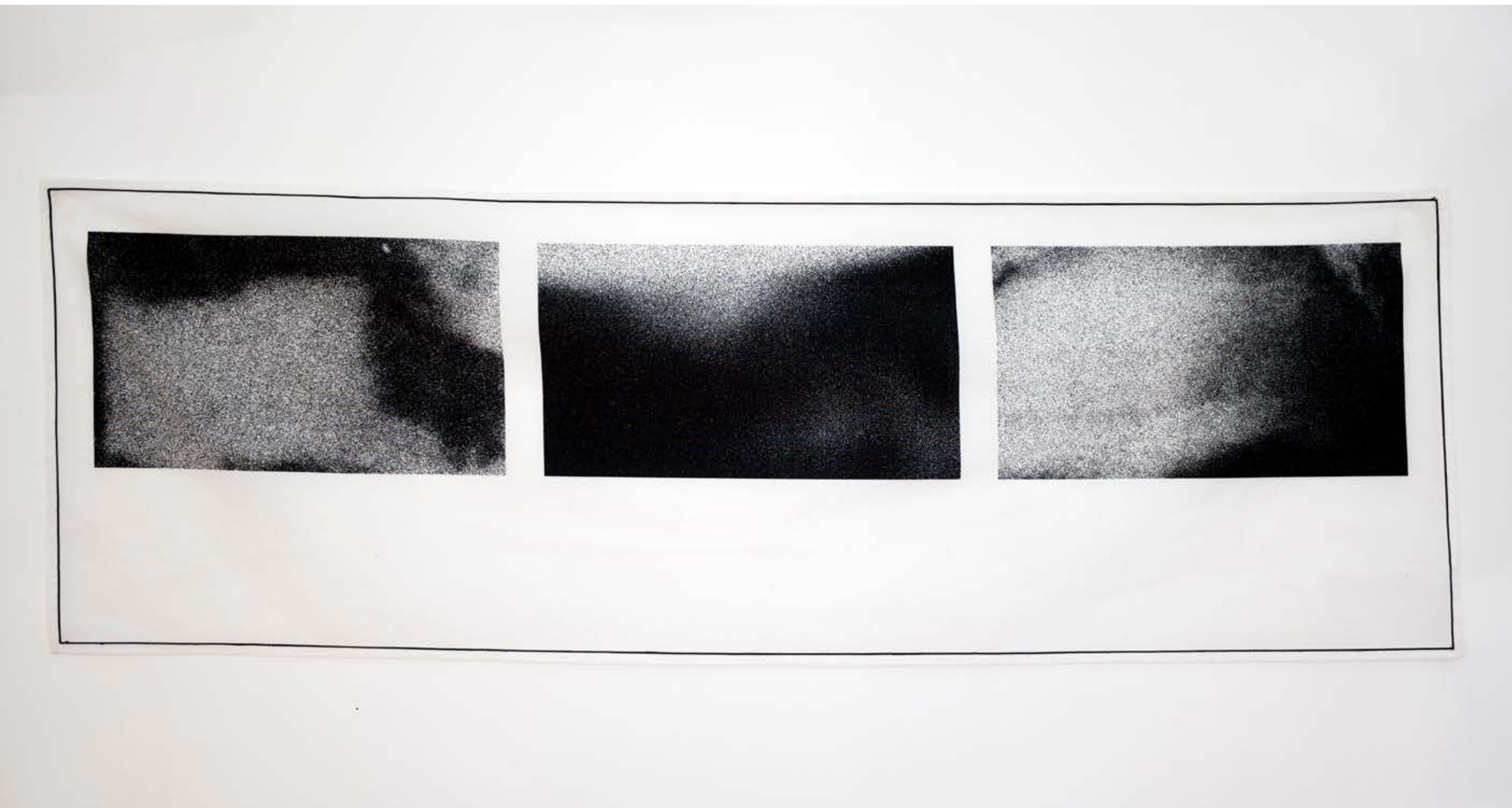
Sudarium/ tenugui/ sweat cloth (the politics of sweat)

Guimarães (PT), 2022

Industrial textile print on cotton, hand sewn, custom made cabinets
30cm x 90cm each

The images of the foreheads of the owner of a textile mill, a worker in a textile mill and a worker on a cotton field in Portuguese Angola (under the condition of forced labour) are imprinted on a cotton cloth that can be used to wipe off sweat of ones face during a hot day, during hard work or because one feels guilty or ashamed. Across time and space our foreheads are touching as the piece gives insight into post-colonial, historic and present relations within the textile industry and the impact on our environment which we can already feel during global heat waves. The cotton farbic was woven and printed in collaboration with a textile factory in Guimarães (Portugal) the same city as the director and the worker depicted on the cloth. There are two sets of three cloths arranged in different formations suggesting a shift in power relations.

Contextual video work: <https://vimeo.com/746910999/d0697db66e>



One unfolded handkerchief



3 of 6 folded handkerchiefs in one ow two custom built cabinets at Convento de Santo António dos Capuchos in Guimarães (PRT).
(The formation of the three textile protagonists differs in the other cabinet)



The forehead of an unnamed factory worker in a former textile mill in Guimarães.



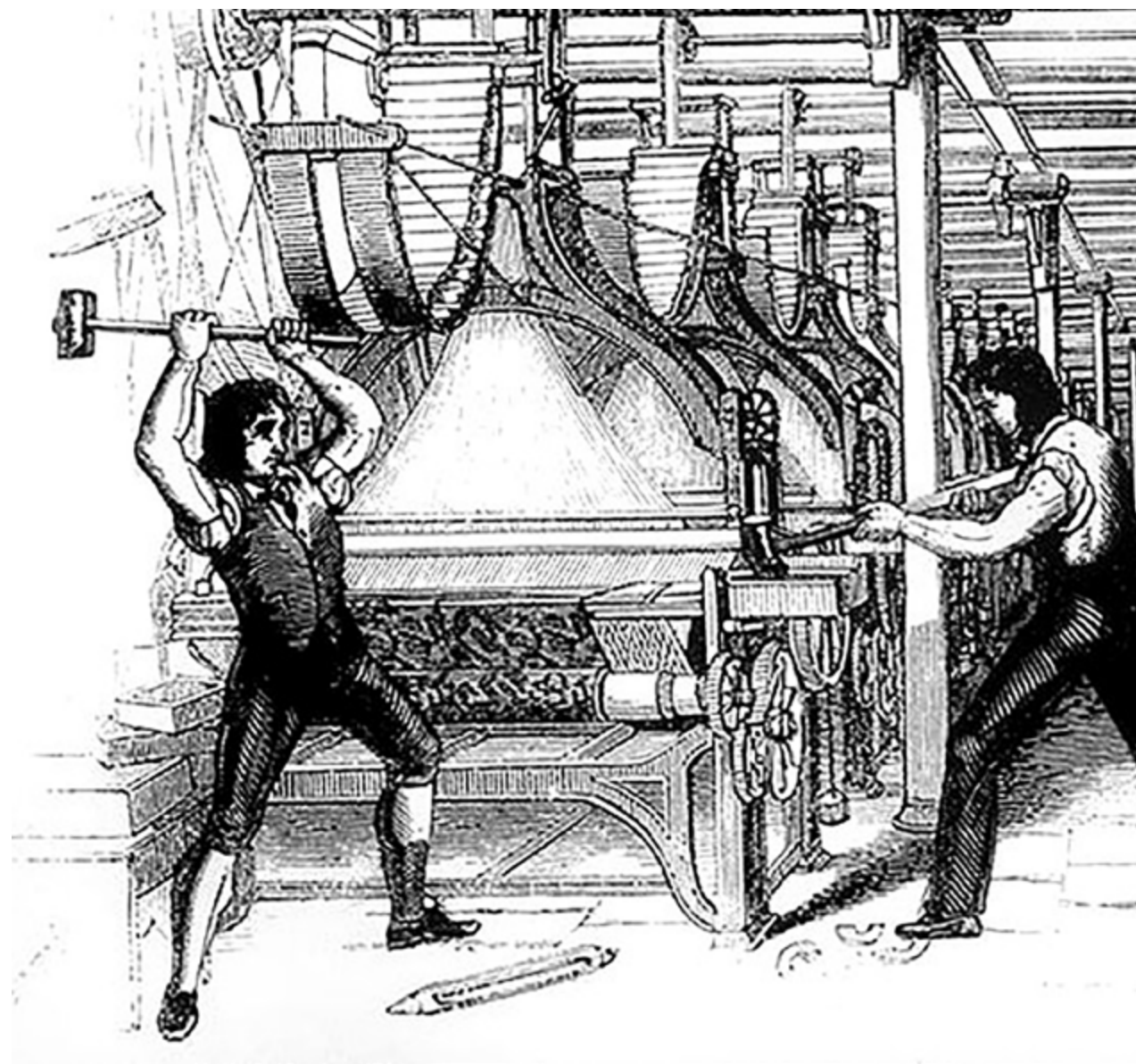
Video work that contextualizes the various parts of the installation.

Blueprints for Luddites

Guimarães (PT), 2022

cyanotypes of hand drawn designs on old cotton fabrics
40cm x 50cm

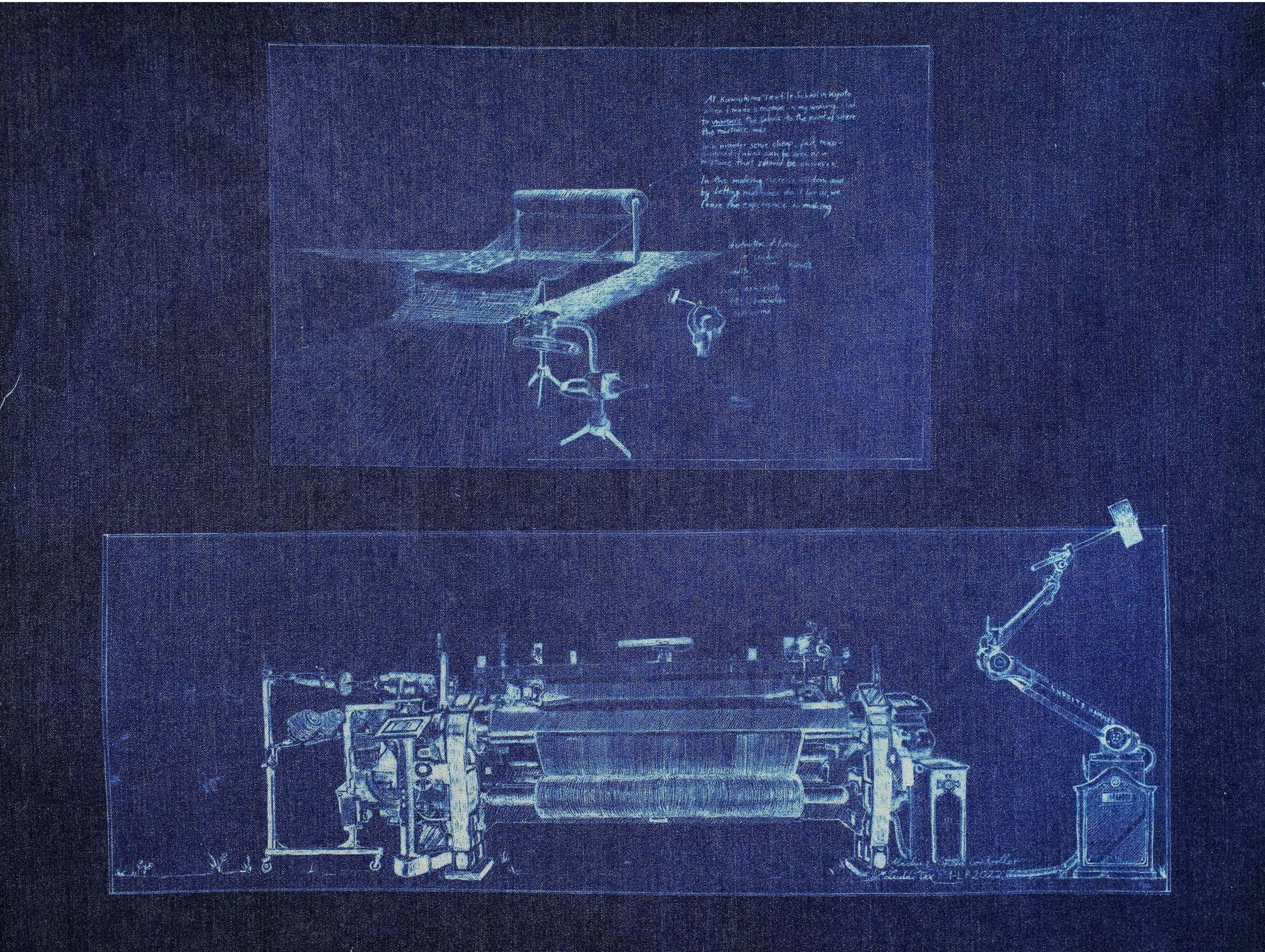
In reference to the Luddites, a labour movement of early industrialisation who destroyed machines in factories (an act that became a capital crime punished by death) I attached a robotic arm holding a hammer over an industrial weaving machine. The robotic Luddite is a contradiction asserting a level of control to an otherwise unregulated machine. If the machine causes trouble, it will be smashed by itself.



Research image
Credit: Mary Evans Picture Library/
Tom Morgan ca. 1812



1 of 2 Cyanotypes exhibited alongside
several other works of mine at Contextile Biennial 2022.



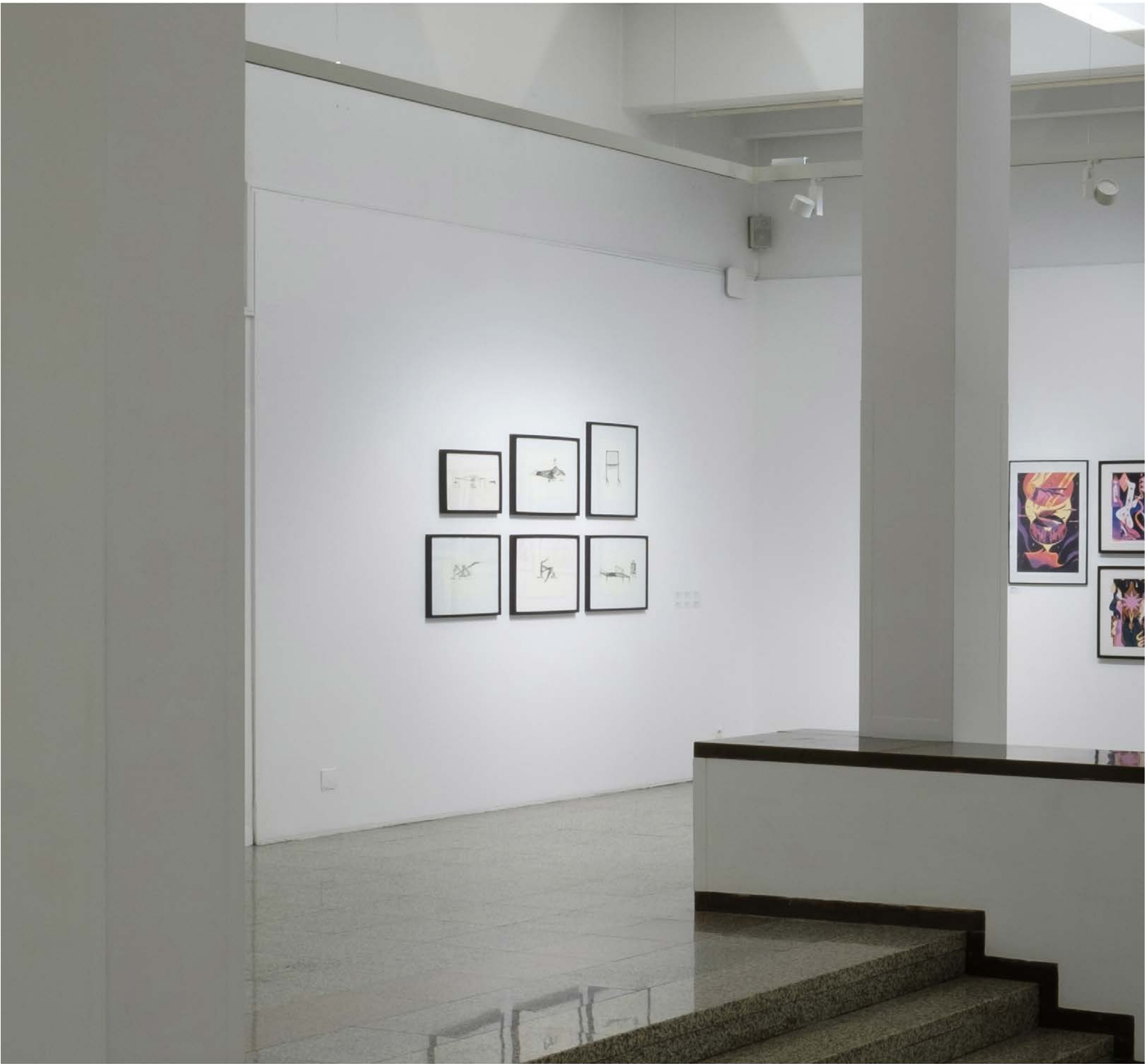
Blueprint for Luddites
Cyanotype on old cotton

Drawings of other machines

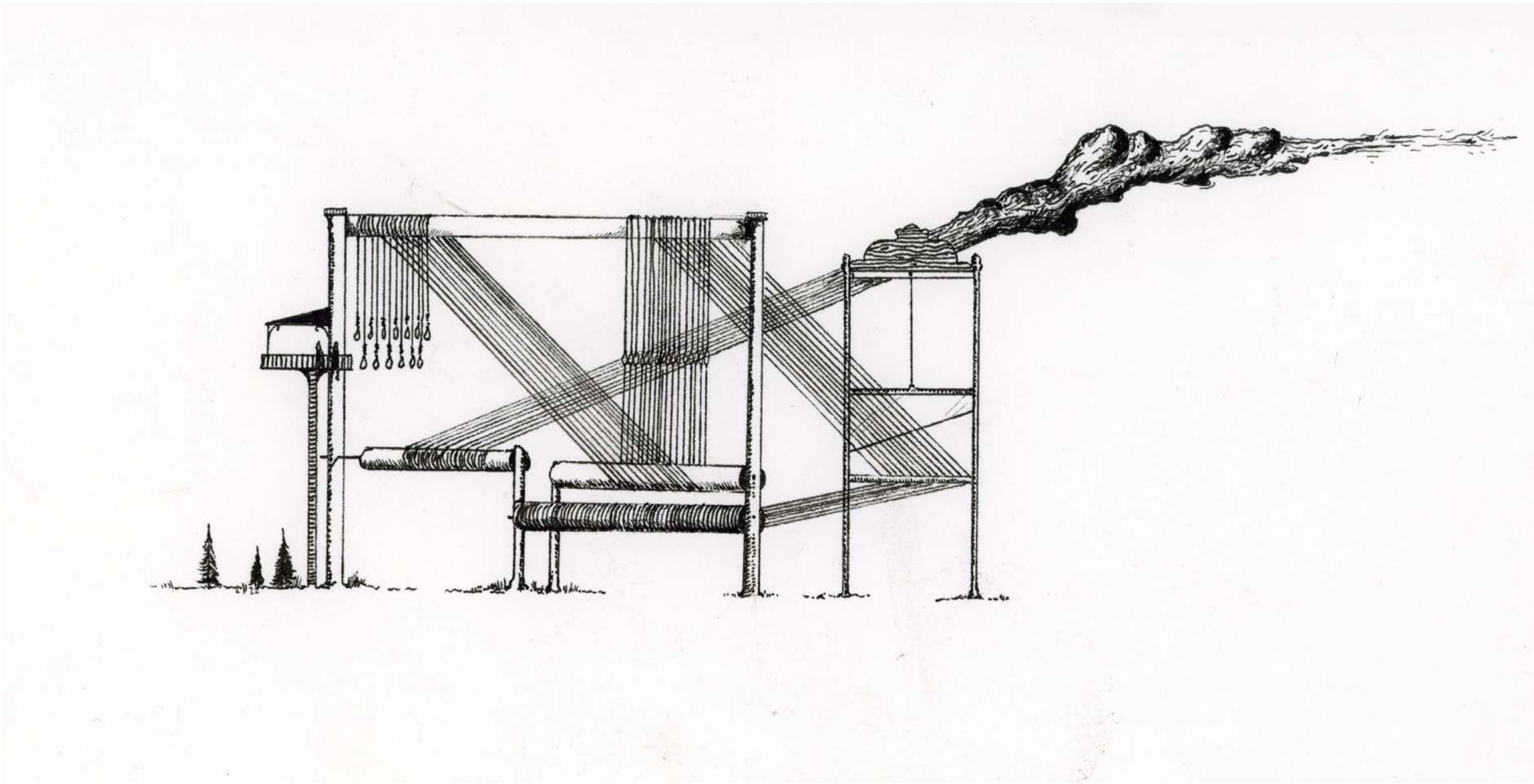
Berlin (DE), 2022

pigment pen on paper
various small formats

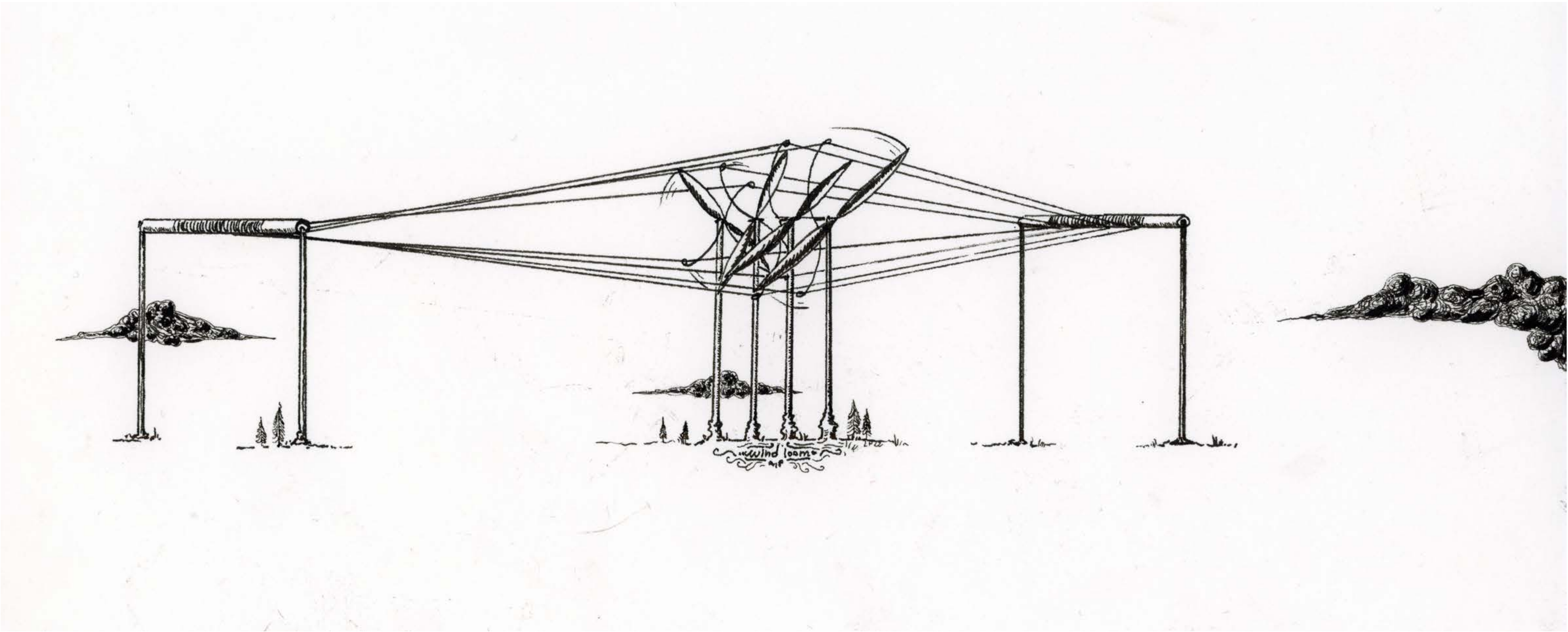
This series of drawings is influenced by industrial textile history, revolutionary movements like the Luddites who were hung for breaking weaving machines. There is also solutions like wind powered weaving machines where the movement of propeller blades is directly causing a movement of a connected weaving machine part. I believe that the time will come when machines need to be in harmony with nature and consider our history and the mistakes of the past.



Exhibition view at UIVO12 (PT)



Relations
Pigment pen on paper



Wind loom
Pigment pen on paper

Time of the last wastelands I

Berlin (DE), 2019

10min, 2K, 16mm film video montage (2K scan of 16mm material with digitaly animated transitions)

I filmed the last wastelands of Berlin on 16mm, creating a personal archive of these disappearing spaces and my memories of them. The empty spaces of Berlin that existed since the end of WW2 were natural reminders of the war. In contrast to parks and playgrounds, they are places without prescribed functions and rules. The old emptiness of Berlin gave people room for their alternative ideas of what constitutes urban life. By slowing down the film, I wanted to give each film-still some more time. The countdown for these spaces will soon end.

Video: <https://vimeo.com/342299463/28c8969815>



Exhibition of the original 16mm material att
Zwitschermaschine, Potsdamer Str. Berlin.



Screening at Kunstverein St Pauli exhibition
“Welt in Teilen” Hamburg, Germany.

Time of the last wastelands II

Berlin (DE), 2017 - ongoing

16mm stills billboards in public space
356cm x 252cm each

Installation of film stills and texts from a personal archive of Berlin's remaining wastelands that I filmed since 2017 on 16mm analogue film. The images of wastelands and the my thoughts in the form of subtitles/ texts are a tribute to the fading emptiness and a way to commemorate and honor these underrated and dissapearing spaces which are natural reminders of German history and non-places in cities that are full of rules and functions otherwise.



Installation view of 10 billboards around a remaining wasteland at Potsdamer Str. in Berlin Schöneberg (2021). All stills are from wastelands that exist or used to exist in this particular district of Berlin.



Installation view of 1/6 billboards at U-Bhf Alexanderplatz during Kunst im Untergrund 2018 (nGbK)



A concrete mixer truck passing a notorious wasteland of Berlin, which now does not exist anymore.

Animated urban spaces

2021

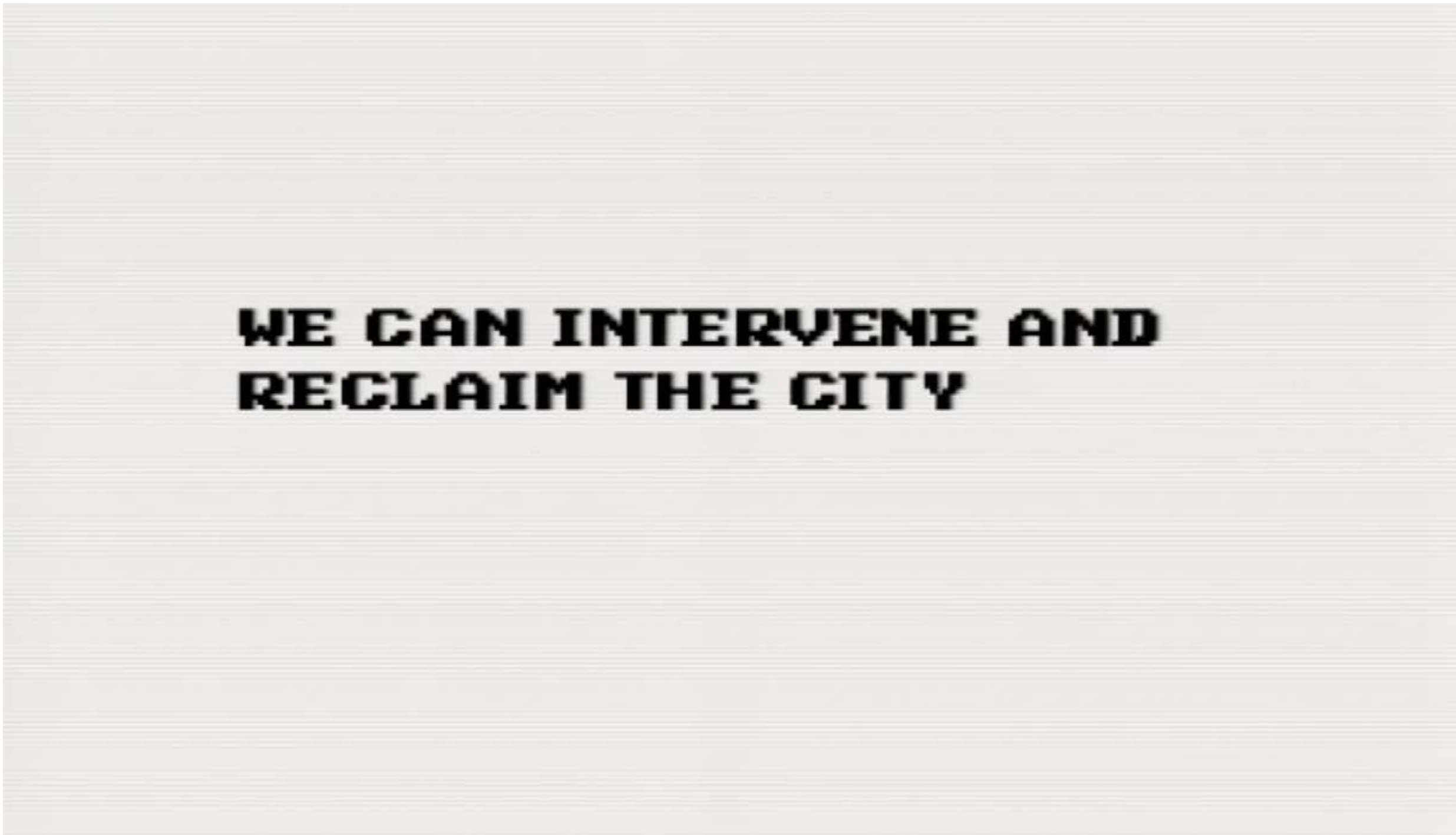
SNES animated video, 9min, HD, 16:9

Animation short about how big palaces are rebuilt in the name of culture and high art while smaller project spaces dissappear. The animations are made on a SNES/Super Nintendo Entertainment System, game console from the 1990s.

Link: <https://vimeo.com/571801209/28a1e66dee>



Still on monitor showing the new palace which is a copy of an once demolished palace and inside you see the old GDR palace of the republic which got demolished as well. Exhibited at Kunstpunkt Gallery in Berlin.



Animation still

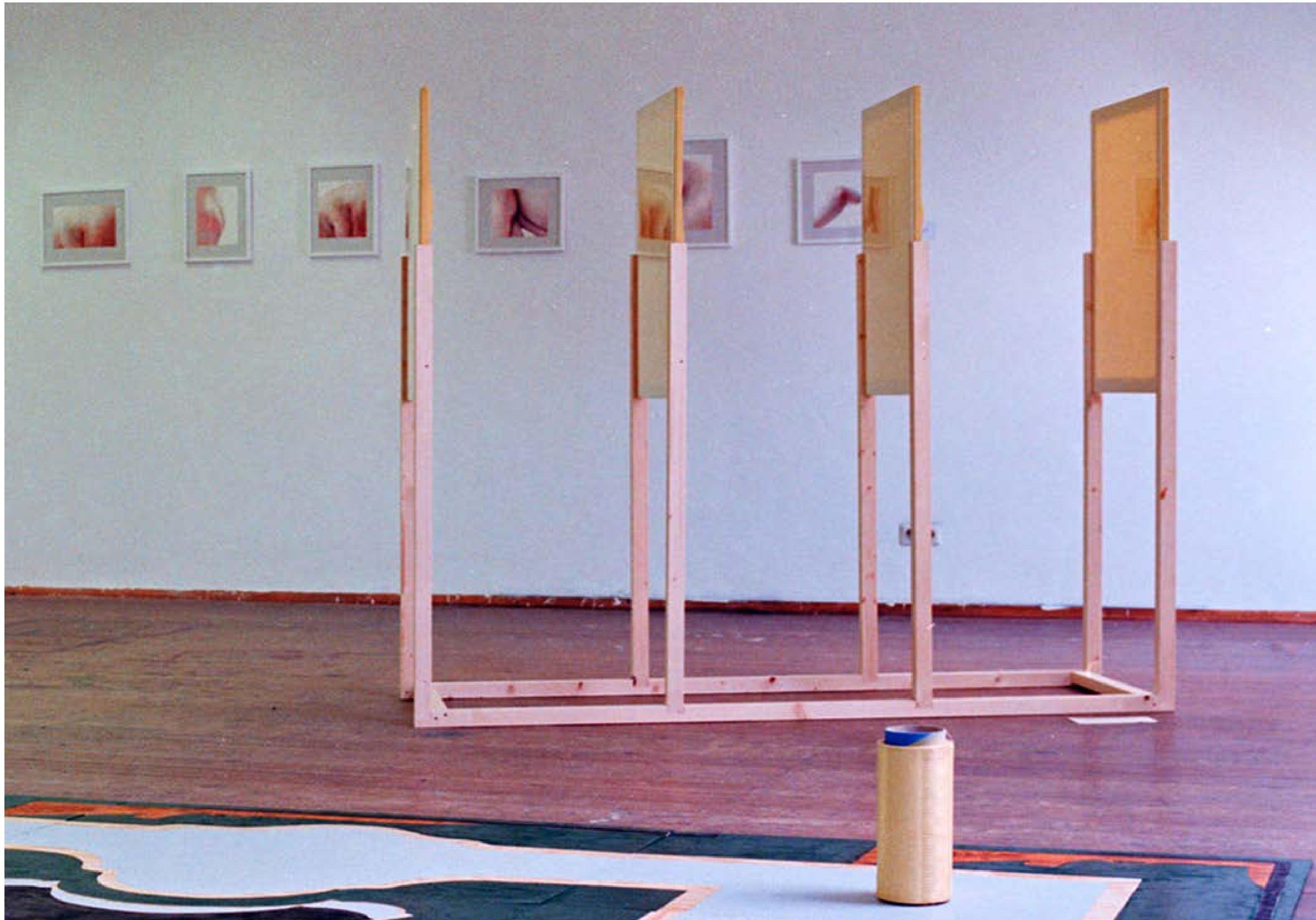
Kevlar/Sun canvases

Berlin (DE), 2019

bullet proof fabric, wood, sun, 200cm x 180cm x 70cm

Canvases with bullet proof Kevlar fabric on wooden rack. When sun hits Kevlar it turns dark, it also makes it loose its strength. I exposed an abstract shape reminiscent of a detail of a bullet proof vest or it could be a detail of a pool at Mr. Duponts mansion. The work relates/belongs to my installation “Famillionaire “ matters.

Installation



Installation

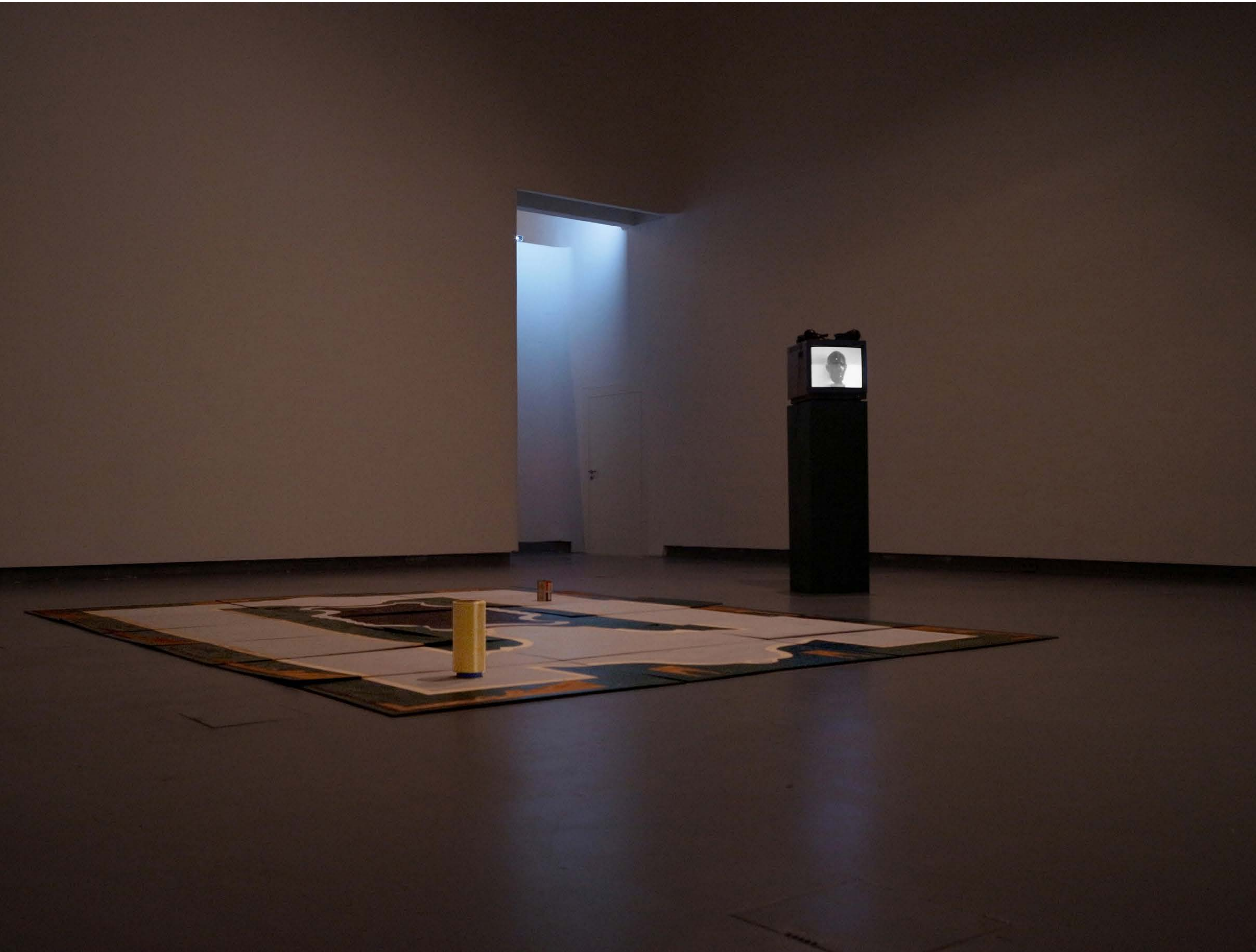


Single edition exhibited at SCOTTY gallery exhibition “Material”.

Famillionaire Matters

Lindau (DE), Winterthur (US), 2019-2022

Installation, painted wood, Kevlar spool, gunpowder tin, animation, film, drawings
various sizes



installation: Kevlar, gunpowder tin, 24 x painted wood boards (480cm x 360cm), 16mm film on monitor (showing a statue of my great grand father

Painted wooden boards of a garden setting around a black pond. The field is surrounded by depictions of old wooden rifles. In one corner stands an industrial Kevlar spool (bullet proof fibre) opposite an old Dupont gunpowder tin. A 16mm film runs on a monitor, upstairs drawings and handdrawn animations tell the surreal story of a family that invented gunpowder and bullet proof fibres and how it interconnects with my own heritage within a family that make weaving machines but also airplanes during wartimes.



film still: the different wooden boards from the installation on my family's estate relating the families.

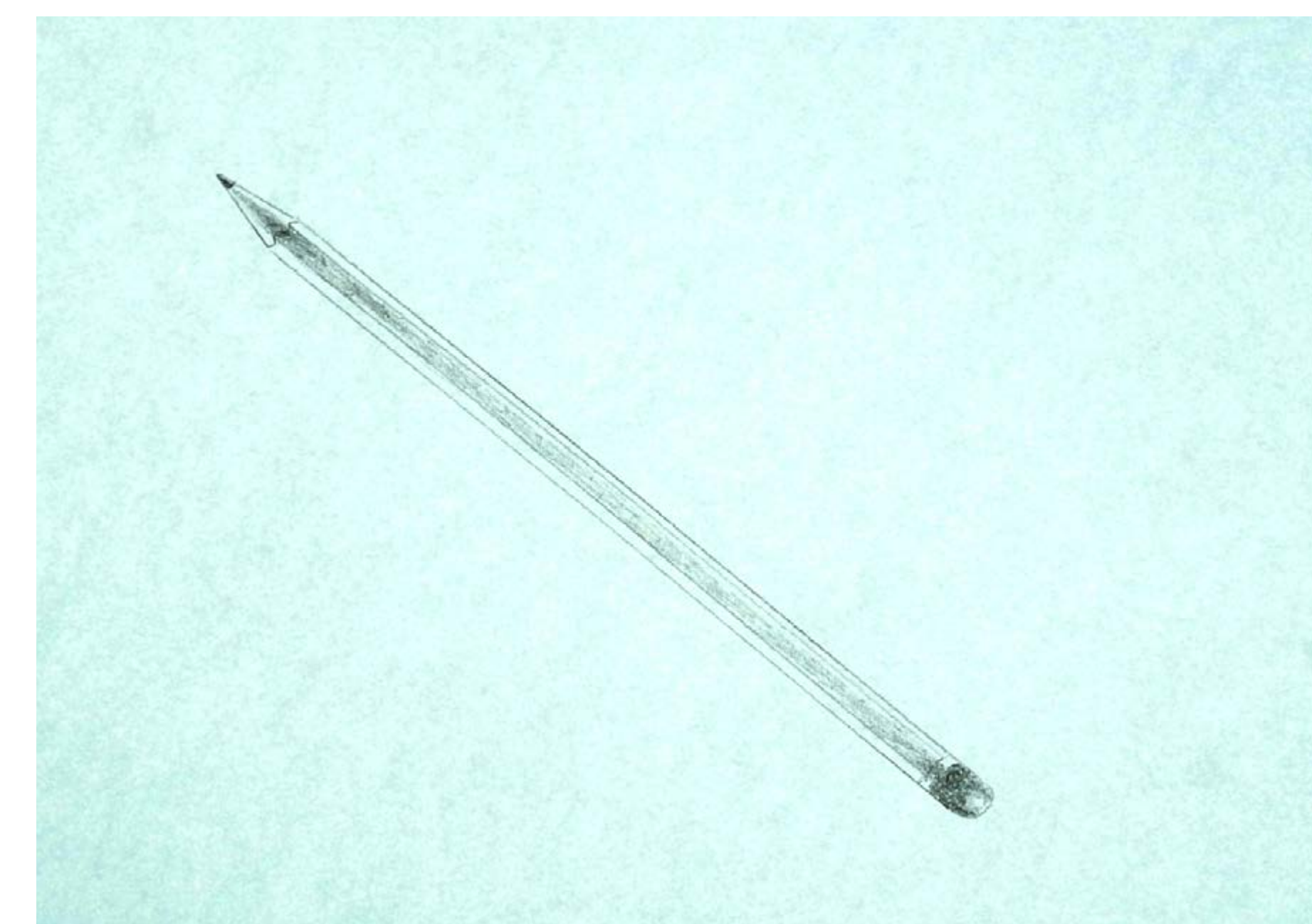
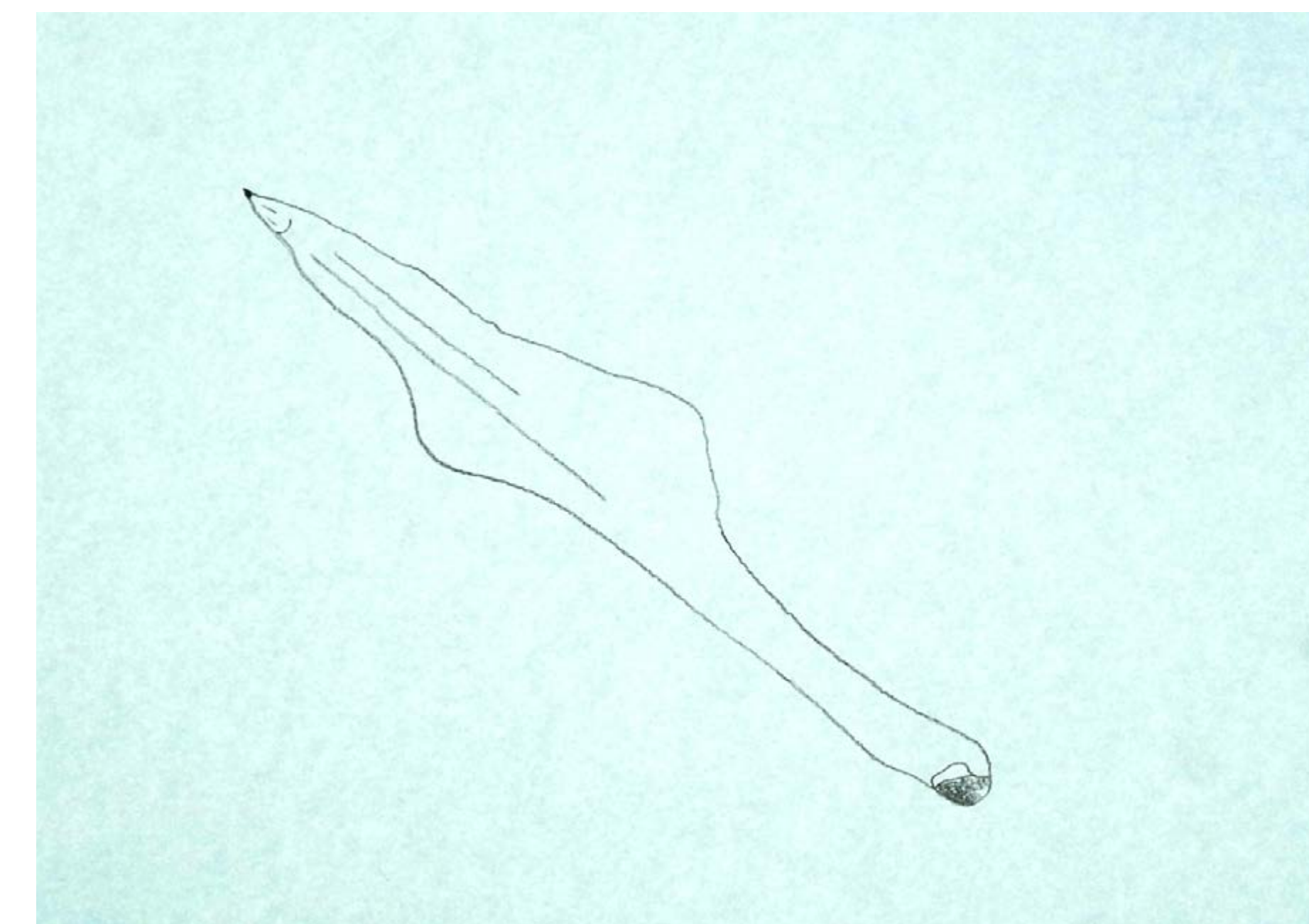
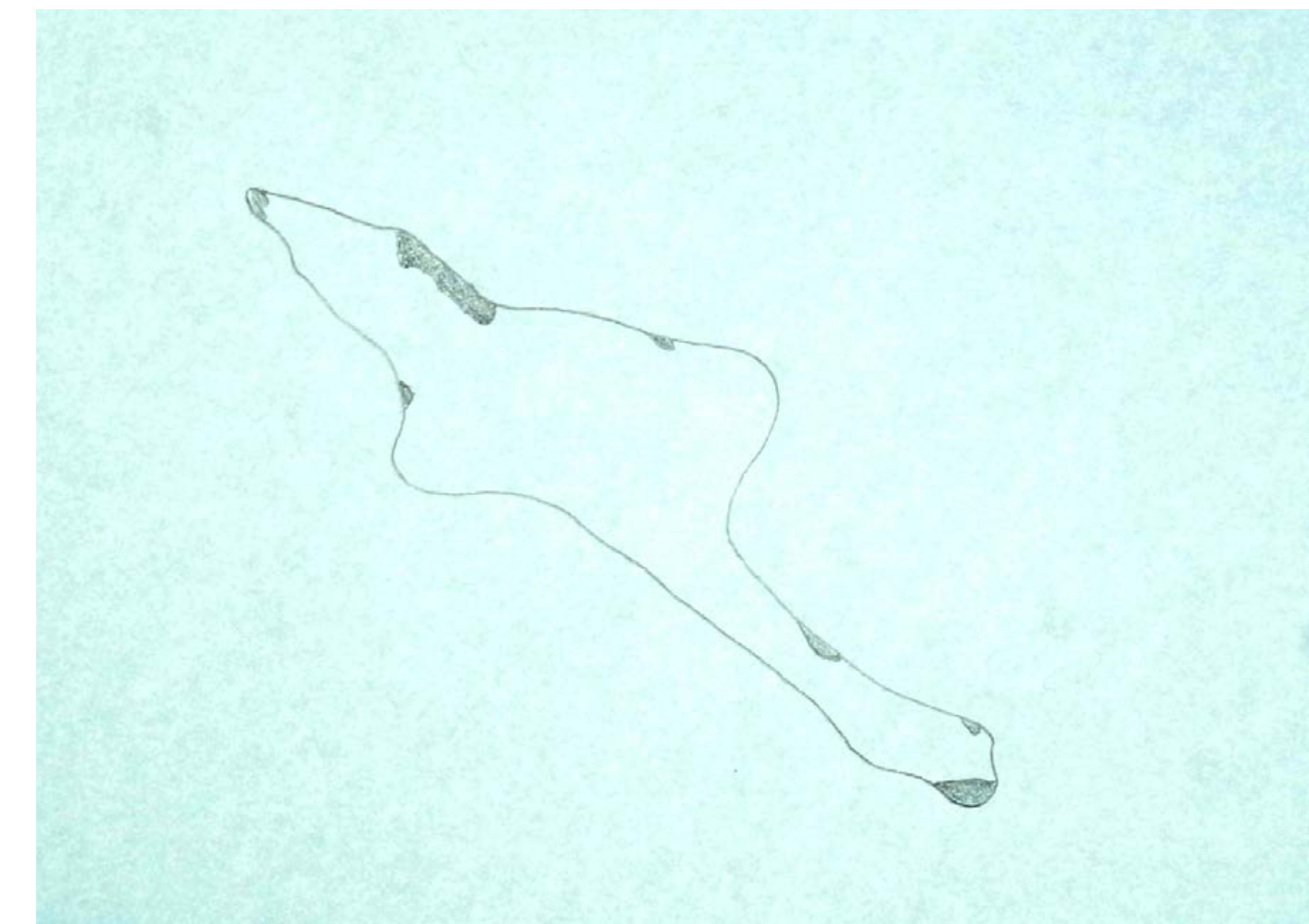
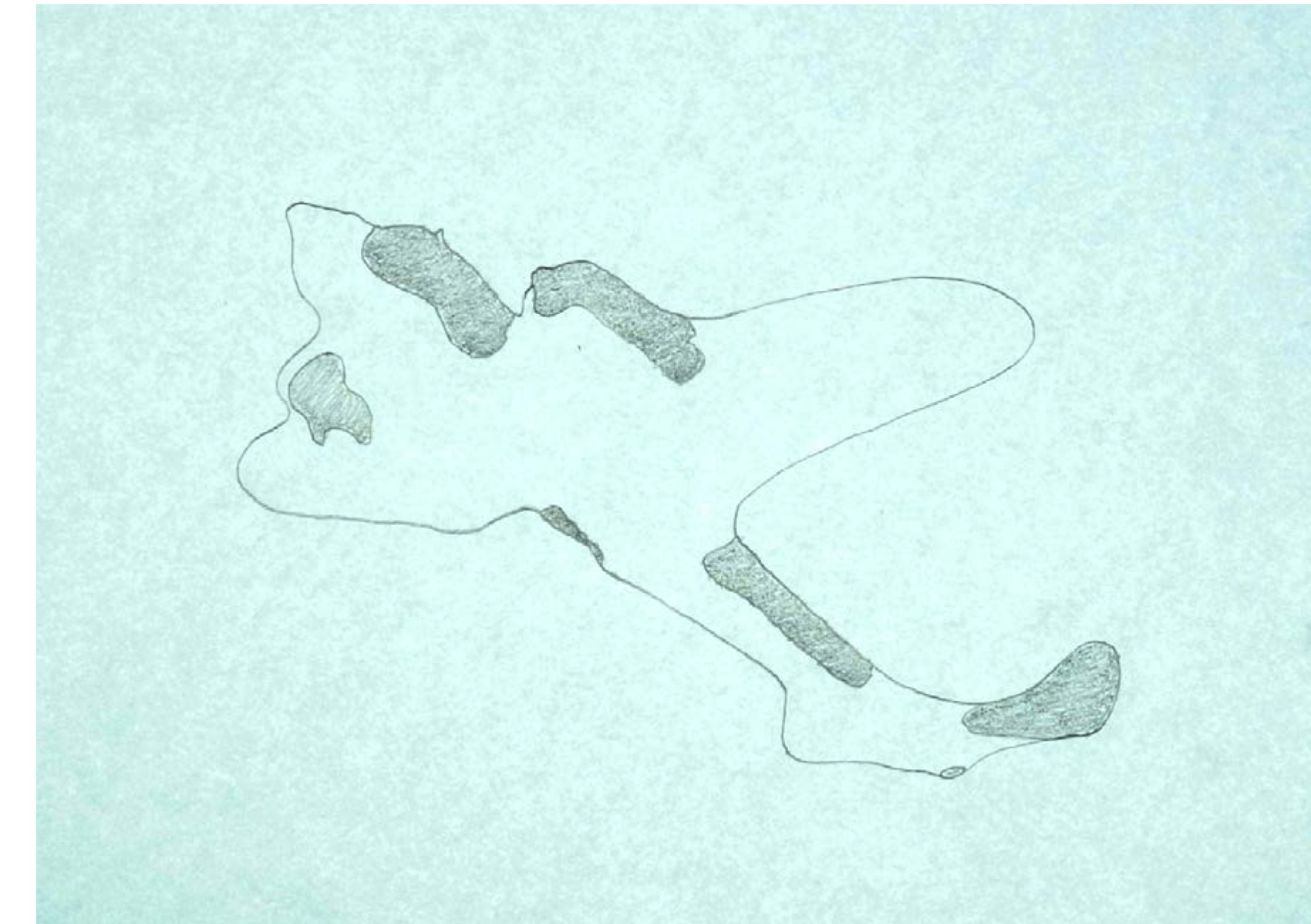


The painted wooden boards installed on a lawn to be filmed.



Film still: hand drawn pencil animation of a seemingly harmless pencil spinning and becoming a bomber. The nickname of this place was “the flying pencil”. The invention of a deadly weapon often starts with a simple drawing or blueprint.

Full video: <https://vimeo.com/331421860/181eb45e9d>



Weaving drawers

Berlin (DE), 2014

Wood and steel construction



Presentation at Bauhaus Dessau



Weaving in action at Bauhaus
Dessau

A file cabinet for drawings and a weaving loom become one machine. The four drawers simultaneously function as shafts of a secret loom.

Depending on the order in which the drawers are pulled out, the structure of the woven fabric changes.

Human weaving machine

Berlin (DE), 2014

dyed ropes, wood, performance

Visitors are invited to hold threads and become moving parts of a human weaving machine. Weaving is often used as a metaphor for society.



Performing machine
(inactive)



Performing at Bauhaus
Dessau with friends, politi-
cians and audiences

The roots of technology

Noresund (NO), 2023

handwoven tapestry on driftwood, two photographs, GPS coordinates pointing to location of the real piece

This woven work acts as a bridge between ancient roots of technology and current states of it. Weaving is an ancient craft following a principle that until today has not changed. The technology has also led to other groundbreaking events like the invention of the computer. Hidden away in a Norwegian forest and only captured on two digital photographs, the binary logic of its plain and simple weave structure points to both the beginnings and current themes of the digital. The GPS coordinates point to the real object. It remains speculative in what state the actual work is and if it has been finished by hand or if the weaving has been digitally finished. The Two depictions of it, one in process and the other seemingly finished, are no trustworthy indicator while the only way to find out remains in the code of the coordinates and an actual visit.



Hand woven tapestry, wool on drift-wood placed in Norwegian forest.



Photo work of finished and work in progress weaving with GPS coordinates pointing to actual physical work.