

gallery neptune & brown

CARTE BLANCHE

Works on Paper

March 28th - May 9th, 2026

ALEXANDRA CHIOU SOOMIN HAM MICHAEL DAX IACOVONE ERICK JOHNSON

NICK LAMIA CALEB NUSSEAR CHARLES RITCHIE BEN TOLMAN REDEAT WONDEMU

PLEASE NOTE:

The availability of the works in this catalogue is subject to change.

For further questions or inquiries please contact the gallery:

neptunebrowngalleries@gmail.com or phone: 202-986-1200



CARTE BLANCHE: Works on Paper

March 28th - May 9th, 2026

gallery neptune & brown is pleased to present Carte Blanche: Works on Paper. The exhibition features nine local and national artists who explore paper beyond the boundaries of the page through collage, watercolor, graphite, photography, oil on paper, and mixed media.

Alexandra Chiou and **Caleb Nussear** both transform paper with bold colors--one with cuts and the other with folds. Chiou carves thousands of painted pieces of paper, arranging and pasting them in complex compositions. Nussear creates dynamic folded colored drawings using the Japanese Miura folding method.

Erick Johnson and **Nick Lamia** create geometric and abstract paintings and drawings. Working with oil paint on paper, Johnson builds layered patterns and rhythms of geometric paintings that blur the line between precision and imperfection. With his love of nature and architecture, Lamia creates abstract paintings and drawings that use geometric and architectural lines alongside organic shapes to evoke the poetic tension between the natural world and the constructed one.

Charles Ritchie and **Ben Tolman** create highly intricate drawings. Through his drawing practice of over fifty years, Ritchie has found inspiration in his home and neighborhood, using watercolor and graphite to investigate domestic themes. Ben Tolman executes highly detailed and time-consuming architectural pen drawings of complex manufactured realities that explore broader social and political themes.

Redeat Wondemu, **Soomin Ham**, and **Michael Dax Iacovone** all work in photography. In Wondemu's Flower Studies, created during her year-long residency at Hillwood Estate, she captures her ongoing interest in immortalizing ephemerality through long-form study. Ham uses photography and mixed media in her Windows series to explore familial relations, memory, identity, and dreams. Iacovone is a land artist and photographer who creates large-scale sand and salt drawings in the earth and documents his work by drone before they disappear.



Alexandra Chiou

Emerge, 2023

acrylic ink & hand-painted cut paper

Sheet size: 8 x 8 inches

Framed size: 12 3/4 x 12 3/4 inches

Signed lower right



Alexandra Chiou
Another New Day, Another New Hope, 2023
acrylic ink & hand-painted cut paper
Sheet size: 8 x 8 inches
Framed size: 12 3/4 x 12 3/4 inches
Signed lower right



Alexandra Chiou

A World in Bloom, 2023

acrylic ink & hand-painted cut paper

Sheet size: 10 x 10 inches

Framed size: 15 1/8 x 15 1/8 inches

Signed lower right



Alexandra Chiou

Renewal, 2023

Acrylic ink & hand-painted cut paper

Sheet size: 10 x 10 inches

Framed size: 15 x 15 ½ inches

Signed lower right

ALEXANDRA CHIOU

b. Richmond, Virginia

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Art, Studio Art, Painting, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA

Bachelor of Science, Commerce, Marketing and International Business, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA

Alexandra Chiou is a collage and mixed media artist who carves thousands of painted pieces of paper, arranging and pasting them in complex compositions. She lives and works in Virginia

ARTIST STATEMENT:

My recent work explores healing, transformation, and renewal. Through intricately carved and layered paper compositions, I create dimensional forms that give physical shape to these abstract concepts and ideas. Drawing on both nature and memory, these unfolding shapes suggest imagined landscapes where fragments of color and form emerge, dissolve, and reemerge.

These works explore the beauty of permanence and impermanence, change and regeneration. Forms appear to blossom, expand, and dissolve across the surface, evoking cycles of endurance and renewal. The works ultimately emphasize peace, beauty, and the enduring presence of memory.

I am drawn to paper as an unassuming material that is both strong and resilient. At once fragile and enduring, it mirrors the emotional landscape that inspires the work, where vulnerability and resilience live side by side. For each handmade piece, I carve hundreds—sometimes thousands—of precise knife cuts into painted paper. I design, paint, cut, and arrange these elements like fragments of a puzzle, allowing individual shapes and colors to flow into a larger visual landscape. Each form becomes a trace and impression of nature, memory, and the ebb and flow of transformation



Soomin Ham

Song of "Schoolboy" from ***"Windows"*** series, 2018

Archival pigment print on Hanji (Korean mulberry paper)

Edition: 3/15

Sheet size: 20 x 14 inches

Framed size: 27 1/4 x 21 inches

Signed lower right

Soomin Ham
Song of “Tree of Memory” from ***“Windows”*** series, 2018
Archival pigment print on Hanji (Korean mulberry paper)
Sheet size: 20 x 14 inches
Framed size: 27 1/4 x 21 inches
Edition: 7/15
Signed lower right



SOOMIN HAM

b. Seoul, Korea

Master of Art, Photography and New Media, New York University and the International Center of Photography in New York
Bachelor of Music, Ewha Woman's University, Seoul, Korea

Soomin Ham is a photographer and multimedia artist based in the Washington, D.C., area. Originally trained as a musician with a Bachelor of Music from Ewha Women's University in Seoul, Korea, Ham holds a Master of Art in Photography and New Media from New York University and the International Center of Photography in New York. Her work including photography, mixed media, and multimedia installations has been exhibited extensively across the DC area, New York City, and Seoul, Korea.

ARTIST STATEMENT: Portraits and Windows

I was astonished by the tiny black-and-white photographs my grandfather had made in the late 1930s and early 1940s. He was not a professional photographer but had an artist's sensibility, and this would have been lost to me if not for the box of photos I found after he was gone.

The photos sat before me, faded and worn, but the images were alive with a fragile beauty of expression and gesture. Except for a few photos of my grandmother, the portraits were of people I didn't recognize. But the candid images were haunting, and I started to wonder. In my imagination, I began to create small visual poems, woven fabric of memory and dreams. Then, I decided to give life again to these lost images.

After exploring and gaining a deeper understanding of these photographs, I began to alter the images, blending them with my own images to create the "Portraits" series. Using imagination and building upon fading memories, these images are reconstructed as composites where the past and present coexist and resonate. The "Windows" series extends this exploration further by merging my grandfather's artistic vision with my own. The original faded photographs are recontextualized with fragments from the "Portraits" series as musical composites. These works suggest a new narrative, transcending the people, place, and time originally portrayed. Photography serves as a window to place, time, and memory. In Portraits and Windows, photography enables me to connect to my grandfather, understand his creative vision and collaborate with him across time to create this new body of work.



Michael Dax Iacovone

Right Before the Storm, 2024

Archival Print mounted on aluminum

Edition: 1/3

Framed size: 26 x 20 inches

Signed on verso

MICHAEL DAX IACOVONE

b. 1975, Worcester, MA

MFA, Studio Art, Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA)

MFA, Photography and Digital Media, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU)

Post Graduate Study, Contemporary Art History, Middlesex University, London, England

Bachelors, Science in Art Education, Minor in Art History, State University of New York (SUNY), New Paltz, NY

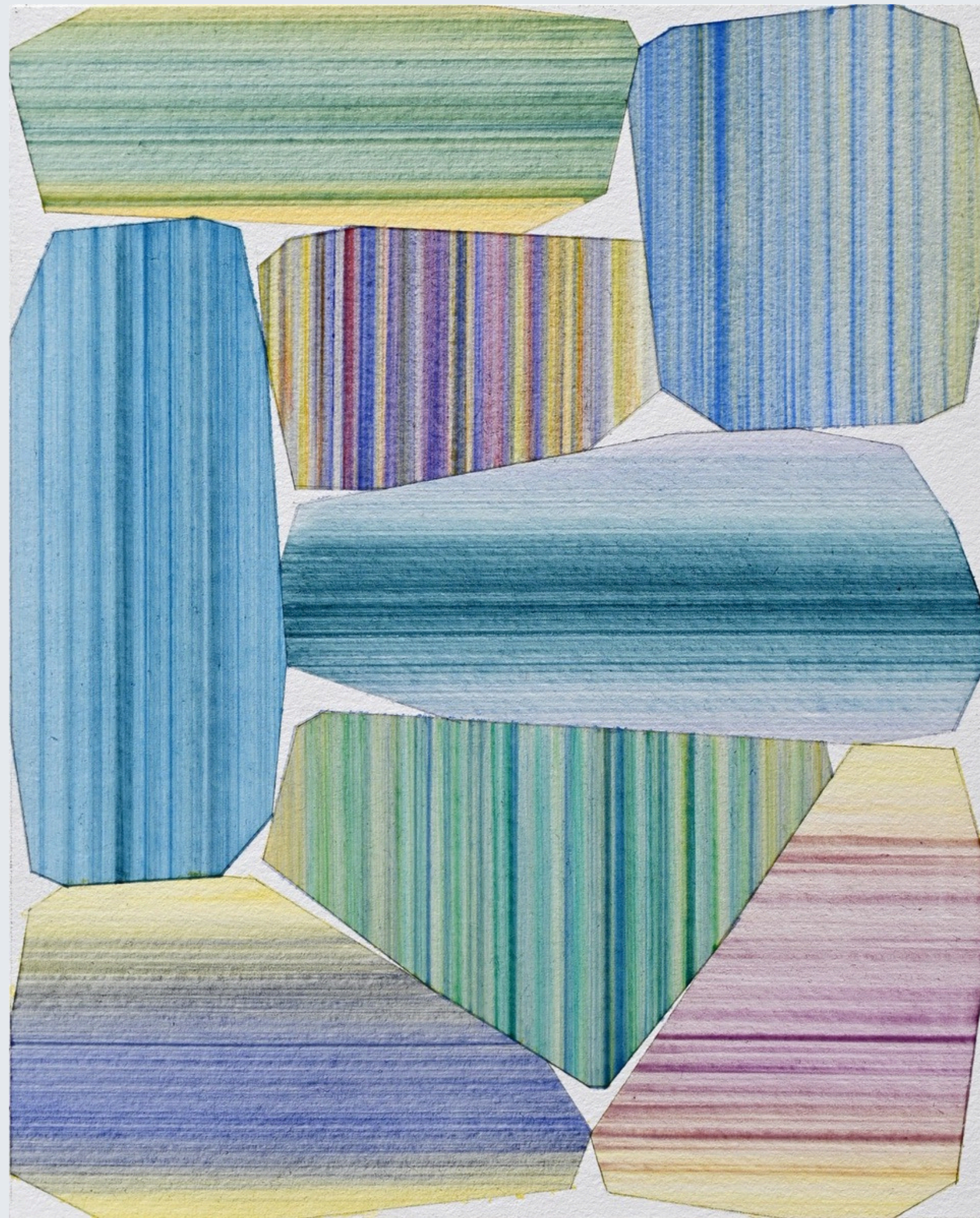
Michael Dax Iacovone is a DC-based land artist and photographer. Using math and science he creates ephemeral drawings in the salt flats of Utah and Nevada. Iacovone documents the resulting drawings with photography before they disappear.

ARTIST STATEMENT:

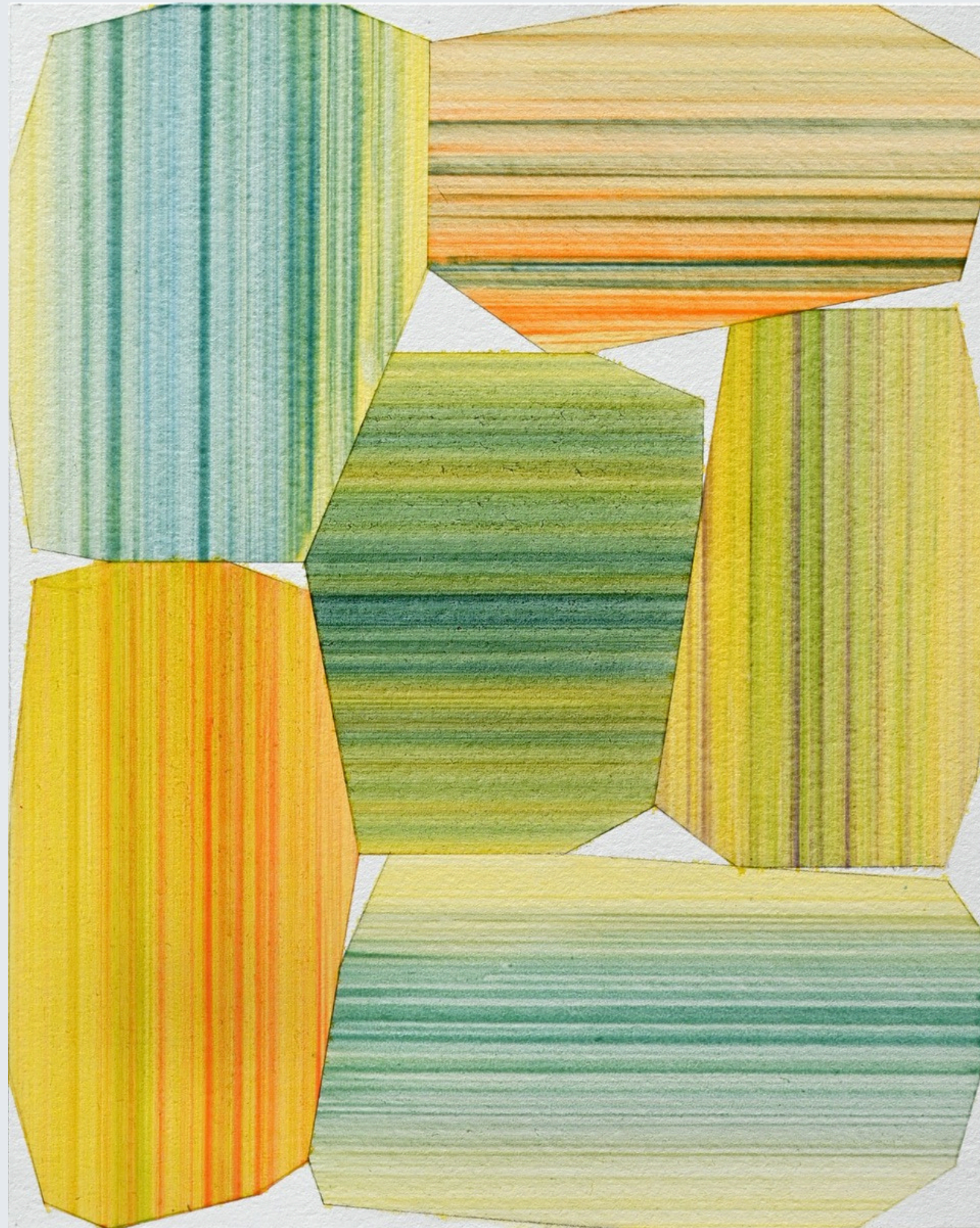
There is an overwhelming corporeal sense of scale that can be felt when standing in the desert, miles from civilization. I have been going to the desert in Nevada and Utah each summer for the past ten years to work in the landscapes, and document my interventions in those spaces. I'm interested in immersing myself into a location, and spending days working in the quiet desert to leave my mark, however fleeting and anonymous.

I spend months looking at maps, drawing diagrams, and creating formulas to create a work specific to a space, and time. The idea, the planning, and the formula lead me to a performance of labor that takes place in solitude.

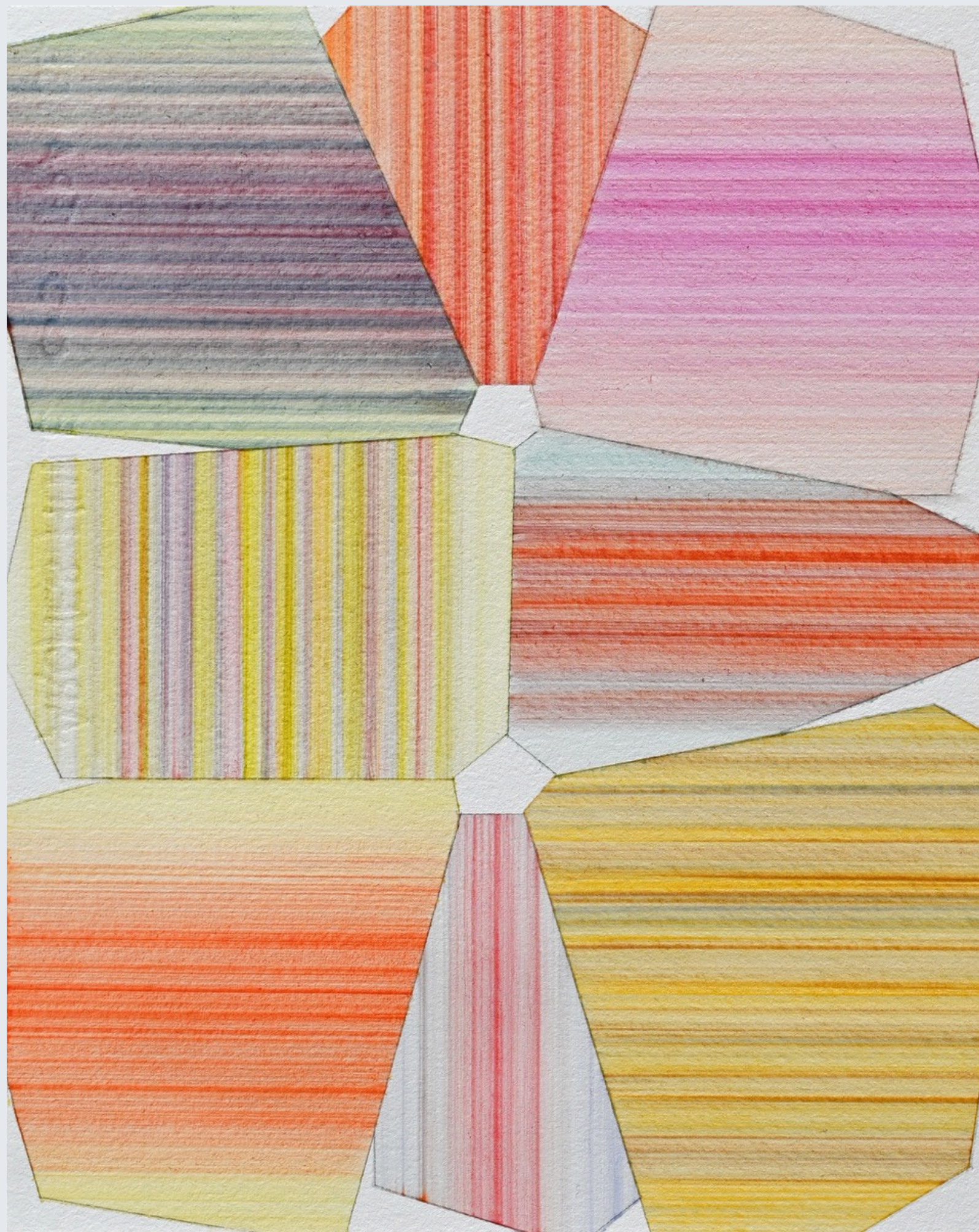
To create these lines, I use a handheld garden tiller to break through the salty crust revealing the darker earth underneath. The lines are temporary, and disappear within a few weeks of drawing them. To document the labor I use a drone to capture photos and video as artifacts of an intervention. I am hopeful that those documents will draw attention not only to my process and intervention, but also into the fragile beauty of the landscape.



Erick Johnson
Echoplex 2, 2026
Oil on paper
Sheet size: 10 x 8 inches



Erick Johnson
Echoplex 1, 2026
Oil on paper
Sheet size: 10 x 8 inches



Erick Johnson
Echoplex 3, 2026
Oil on paper
Sheet size: 10 x 8 inches



Erick Johnson
Echoplex 4, 2026
Oil on paper
Sheet size: 10 x 8 inches

ERICK JOHNSON

b. 1959, San Francisco, CA

Master of Fine Art, Milton Avery School for the Arts, Bard College
Bachelor of Art, Empire State College

Erick Johnson is a New York-based abstract artist whose work spans painting, drawing, and works on paper, developed over a career of more than three decades. Holding an M.F.A. from the Milton Avery School for the Arts at Bard College, Johnson has exhibited widely across the United States and internationally

ARTIST STATEMENT:

What has long inspired me is the interplay between color and form. The exploration of chromatic relationships merged with form is endless. My painterly space adheres to the picture plane but has intimations of atmosphere and depth. Each work starts from a neutral beginning, developing a deeper particularity that evokes a resonance of place, feeling and memory.

Irregular polygons, slotted together imperfectly, are my building blocks, which result in slivers of white ground, suggesting movement and mutability. The surface is scraped, dragged, rubbed and layered, leaving the painting process visible.



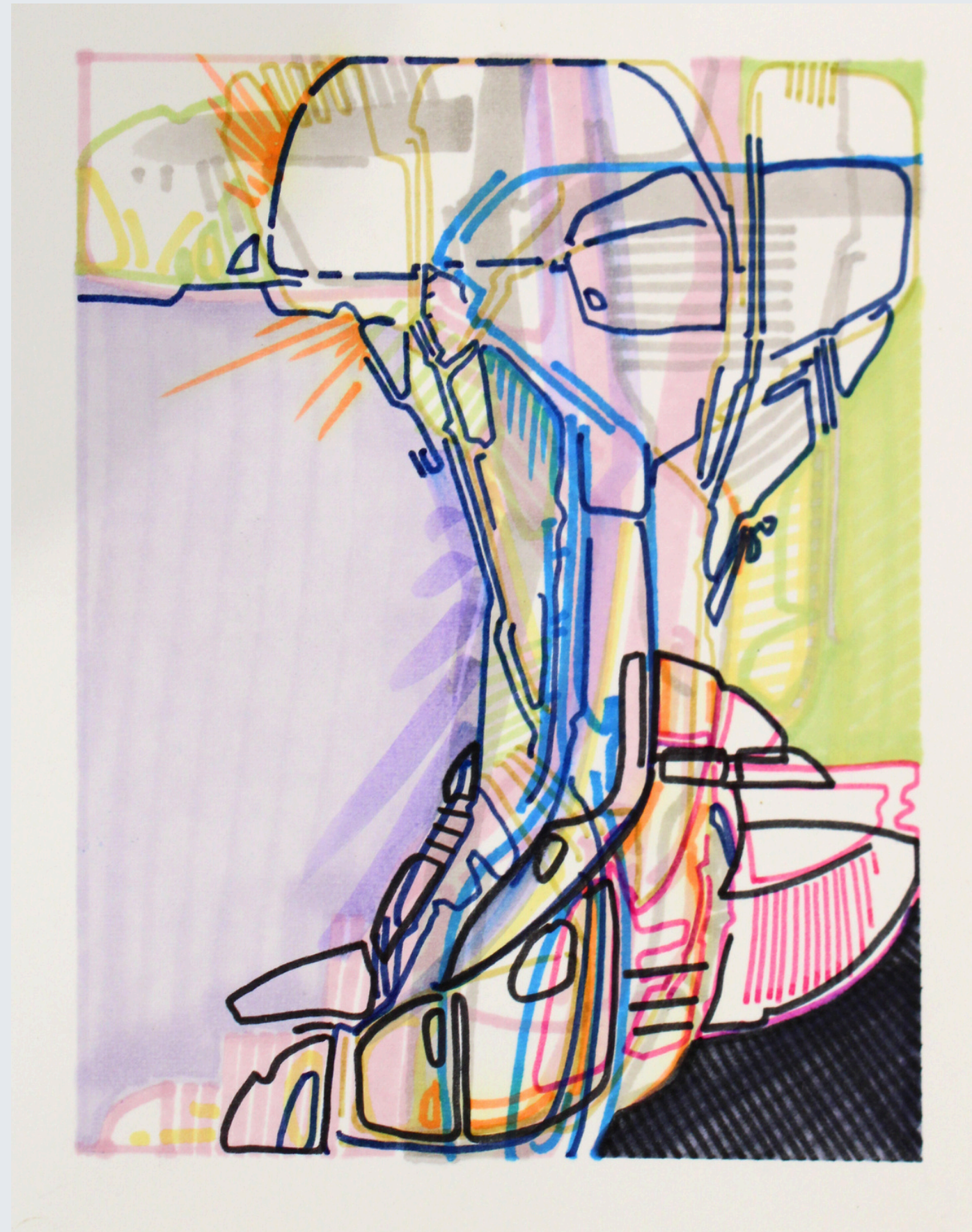
Nick Lamia
Untitled 1, 2007
Ink on paper
7 x 6 inches



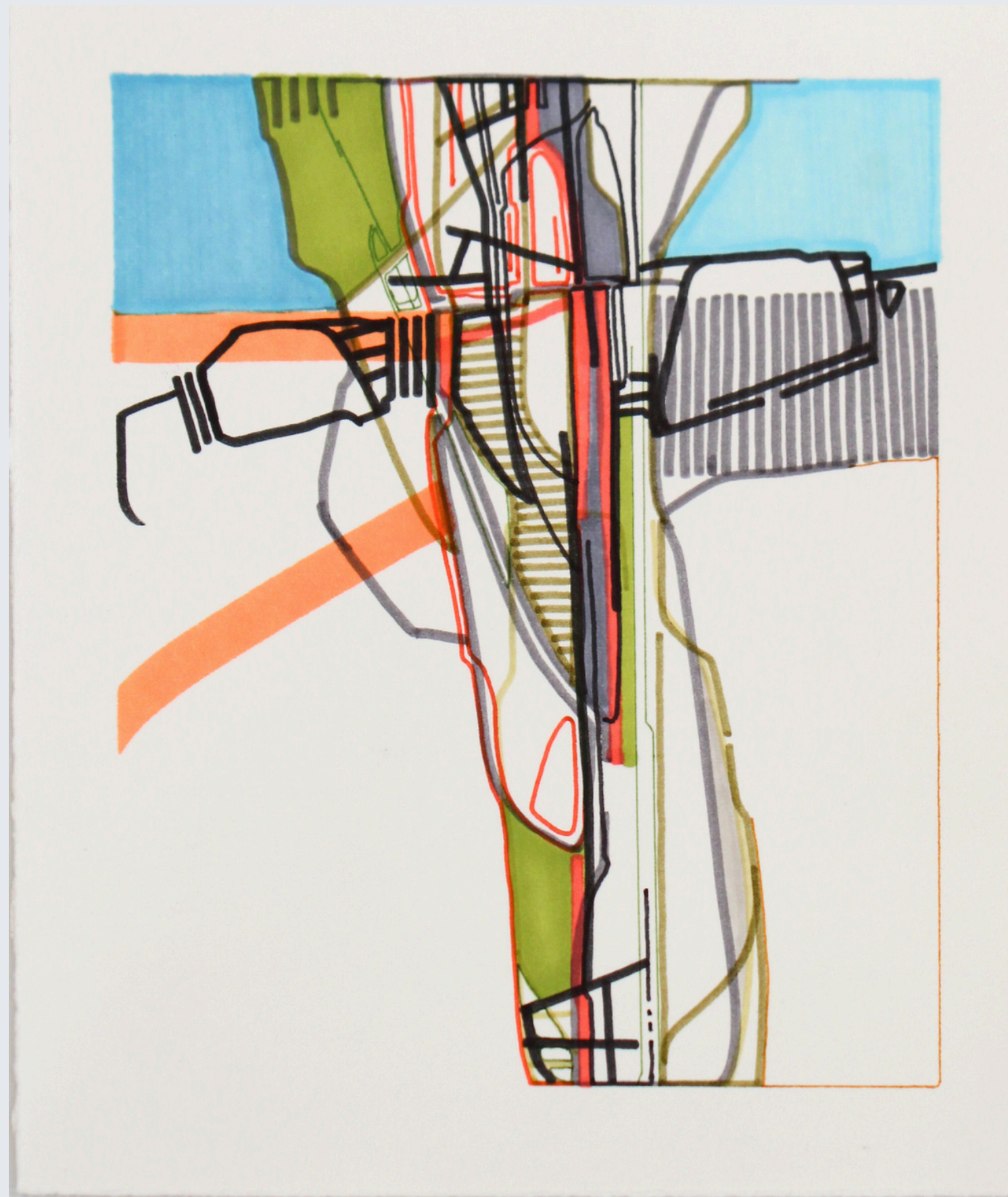
Nick Lamia
Untitled 2, 2007
Ink on paper
7 x 6 inches



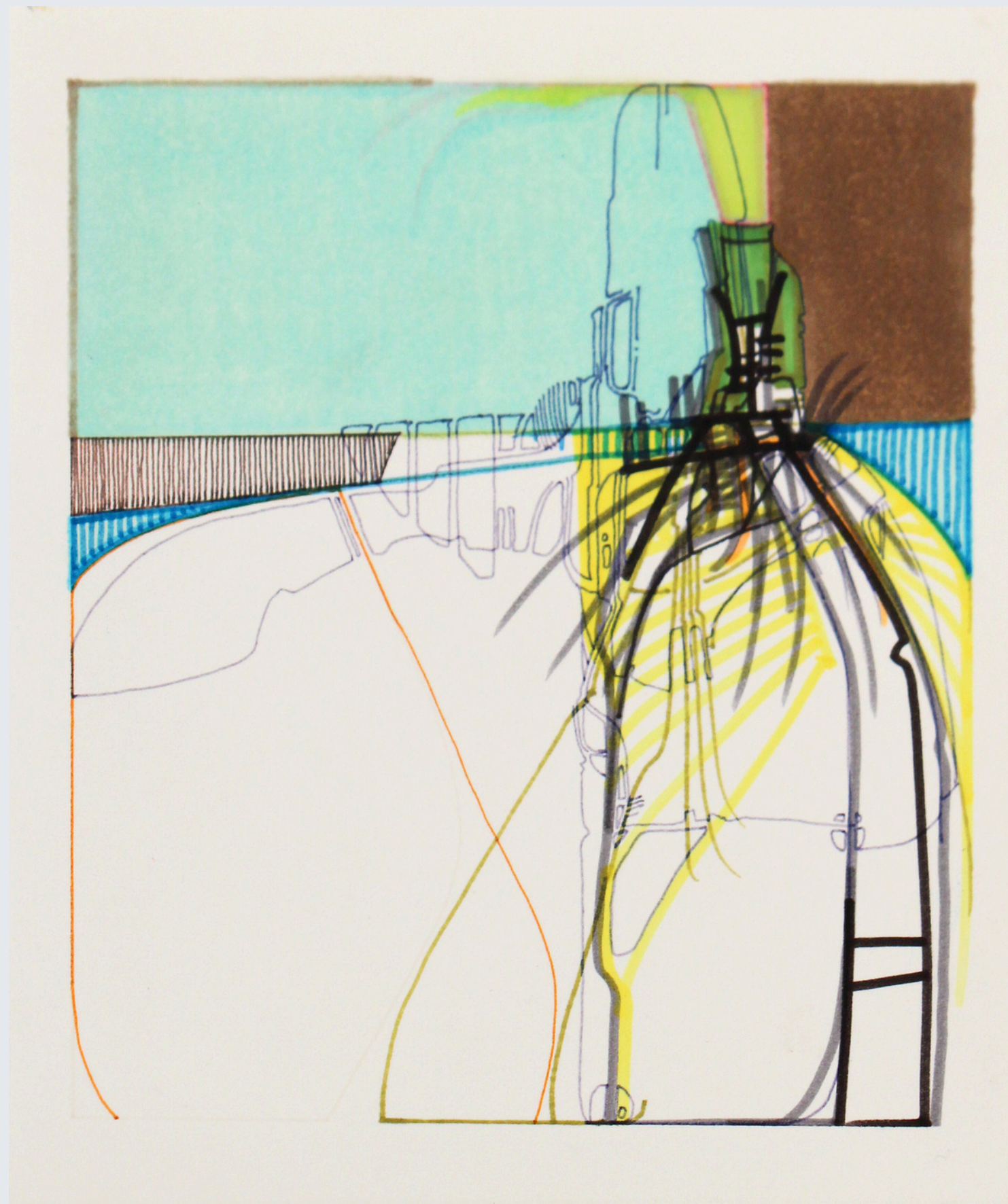
Nick Lamia
Untitled 3, 2007
Ink on paper
7 x 6 inches



Nick Lamia
Untitled 4, 2008
Ink on paper
7 x 6 inches



Nick Lamia
Untitled 5, 2009
Ink on paper
7 x 6 inches



Nick Lamia
Untitled 6, 2009
Ink on paper
7 x 6 inches

NICK LAMIA

b. 1971, Santa Monica, CA; lives in NYC

Master of Fine Art, Painting, Boston University

Bachelor of Environmental Science, Biological Emphasis, UC Berkeley

Certificate in Timber Framing, Shelter Institute, Woolwich, Maine

Nick Lamia is an award-winning artist whose work includes drawing, painting, printmaking, installation and sculpture. Despite its non-objective appearance, all of his artwork is based on real, lived experience--often involving outdoor adventures in the mountains and on the ocean. His artworks are metaphoric representations of the overlap of the natural world with the constructed world of man.

ARTIST STATEMENT:

Overlaps of nature and society fascinate me and inspire my artwork. Despite the abstract appearance of much of what I make, all my imagery is rooted in real, lived experience. I collect information by drawing and painting recognizable subjects and scenes “en plein air” and then use memory and intuition to create studio artwork which evokes, rather than illustrates, the intertwining of society with nature. Linear, diagrammatic structures and flat planes of color are metaphors for the constructed world, while irregular organic contours and passages of atmospheric, translucent paint stand in for nature. I’ve been inspired by experiences hiking remote glaciers, wading urban trout streams and sailing boats through storms at sea. But regardless of the underlying subject matter, I enjoy when pictures appear to depict objects or situations that are almost recognizable but that, like ultraviolet light flickering just outside our range of perceptions, remain tantalizingly beyond our ability to identify them specifically. At their best, my images tease our sense of familiarity while refusing to be pinned down with certainty.

Caleb Nussear
Kara, 2025
Colored pencil and pastel on folded Masa paper
Image size: 15 ½ x 11 ½ inches
Framed size: 19 ½ x 16 ½ x 2 ½ inches
Signed on verso



Caleb Nussear
Ice wand, 2025
Colored pencil and pastel on folded Masa paper
Image size: 15 x 11 inches
Framed size: 19 1/2 x 16 1/2 x 2 1/2 inches
Signed on verso



CALEB NUSSEAR

b. 1976, Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY

Master of Arts in Social Sciences, University of Chicago.

Bachelor of Arts, Concentration in Religion and Philosophy, Simon's Rock College of Bard

Caleb Nussear is an American artist living in New York. He received a B.A. in Philosophy and Religion from Bard College at Simon's Rock and an M.A. in Social Sciences from the University of Chicago. His work is based on the overlap between complex formal geometries, physical and mathematical concepts of higher dimensionality, the natural landscape as it is found, and finally, the sensual, tensile quality of line drawing. He works in a variety of media including drawing, sculpture, photography, and installation.

ARTIST STATEMENT:

My drawings are folded in the Muira crease pattern, which is a class of folding patterns originating in Japan. I have been working with various Miura folds in my practice for six years. To me, the folded structure exists between 2 and 3-dimensional space, which, provides an elegant scaffold and perfect foil for unusual color relationships.



Charles Ritchie

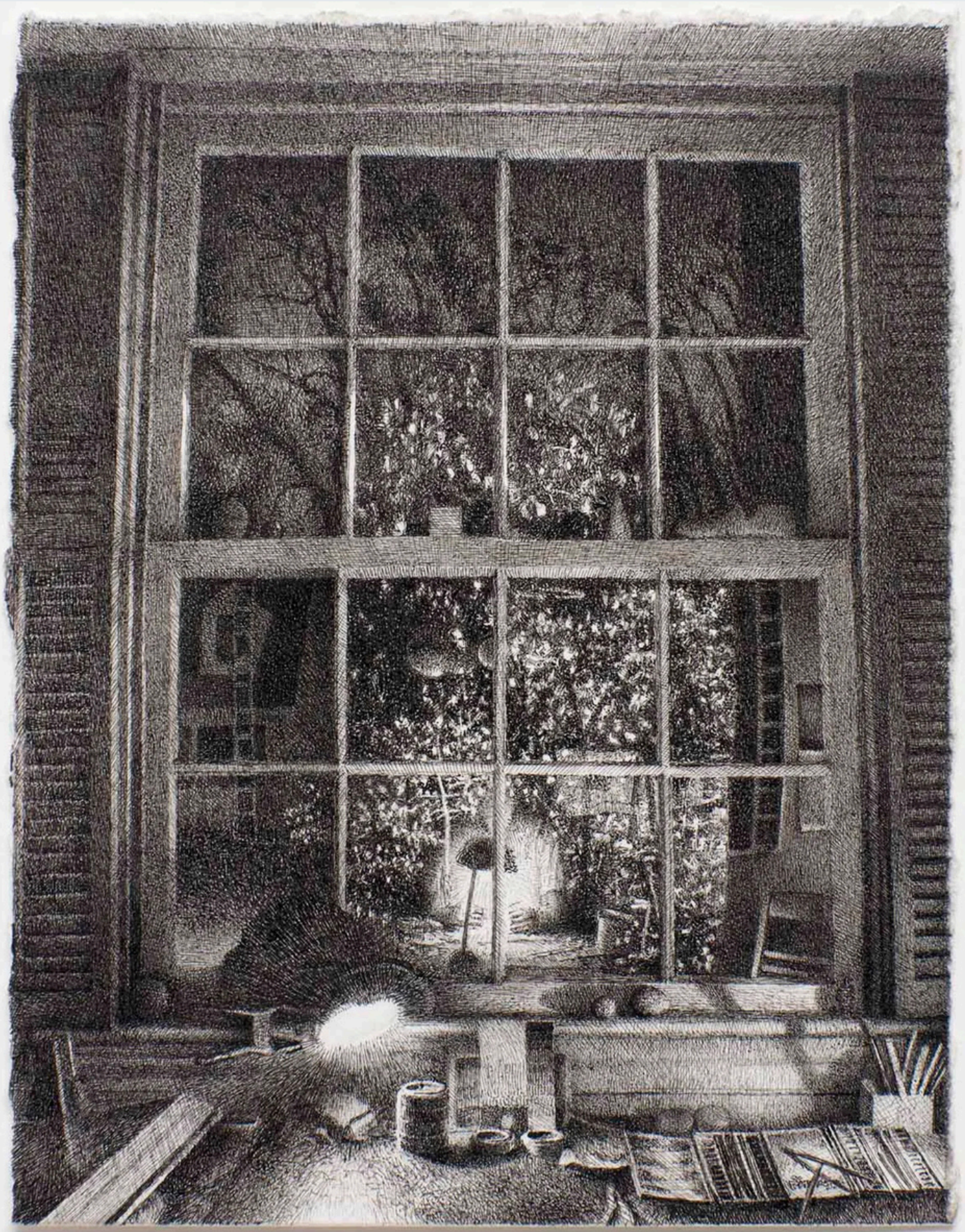
Midday Rain, 1994-2007

Watercolor and graphite on Fabriano paper

Sheet size: 4 7/8 x 9 3/4 inches

Framed size: 12 x 17 3/8 inches

Signed in graphite on recto, lower left: "Ritchie 1994 - 2007"



Charlie Ritchie

Self-Portrait with Fall Leaves, 2019-2021

Black pen and ink, gouache, watercolor, and
graphite on Fabriano paper

Sheet size: 5 x 4 inches

Framed size: 13 7/8 x 11 7/8 inches

Signed in graphite on verso center: "Self-Portrait with / Fall Leaves /
Charles Ritchie / 2019-2021"



Charles Ritchie

Summer Shadows, 2022-2023

Black acrylic and graphite on Fabriano paper

Sheet size: 6 1/4 x 10 3/8 inches

Framed size: 13 7/8 x 17 3/8 inches

Signed in graphite on verso center:

"3 July 2022, Summer Shadows,
2022-2023 Charles Ritchie, 25 June 2022"



Charles Ritchie

Kitchen II, 2021-2025

Watercolor, acrylic, graphite, and pen and ink on
Fabriano paper

Sheet size: 6 x 7 5/8 inches,

Framed Size: 13 7/8 x 15 3/8 inches

Signed in graphite on verso center:

“15 October 2021 - / February 2025 / Kitchen II /
Charles Ritchie / watercolor, acrylic, graphite, and
pen and ink”

CHARLES RITCHIE

b. 1954, Pineville, Kentucky

1980 Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA, MFA Painting

1977 University of Georgia, Athens, GA, BFA Graphic Design

Charlie Ritchie creates small-scale, intricate drawings and paintings. His detailed work evidences years of observation of his domestic space and the surrounding nature. Each piece is a result of the study of light and time.

ARTIST STATEMENT

My drawings are investigations of a series of sites in and around my suburban home, which I have explored repeatedly for forty-one years. Light is my essential subject. My tendency has been to work in black and white to establish studies of contrast. As I work on paper, I try to save the light of the white sheet rather than use white pigment. I feel this yields the most brilliant light attainable. My experience using watercolor has guided me to this approach, and it is also a key issue in black and white printmaking, which has come to be of great interest to me.

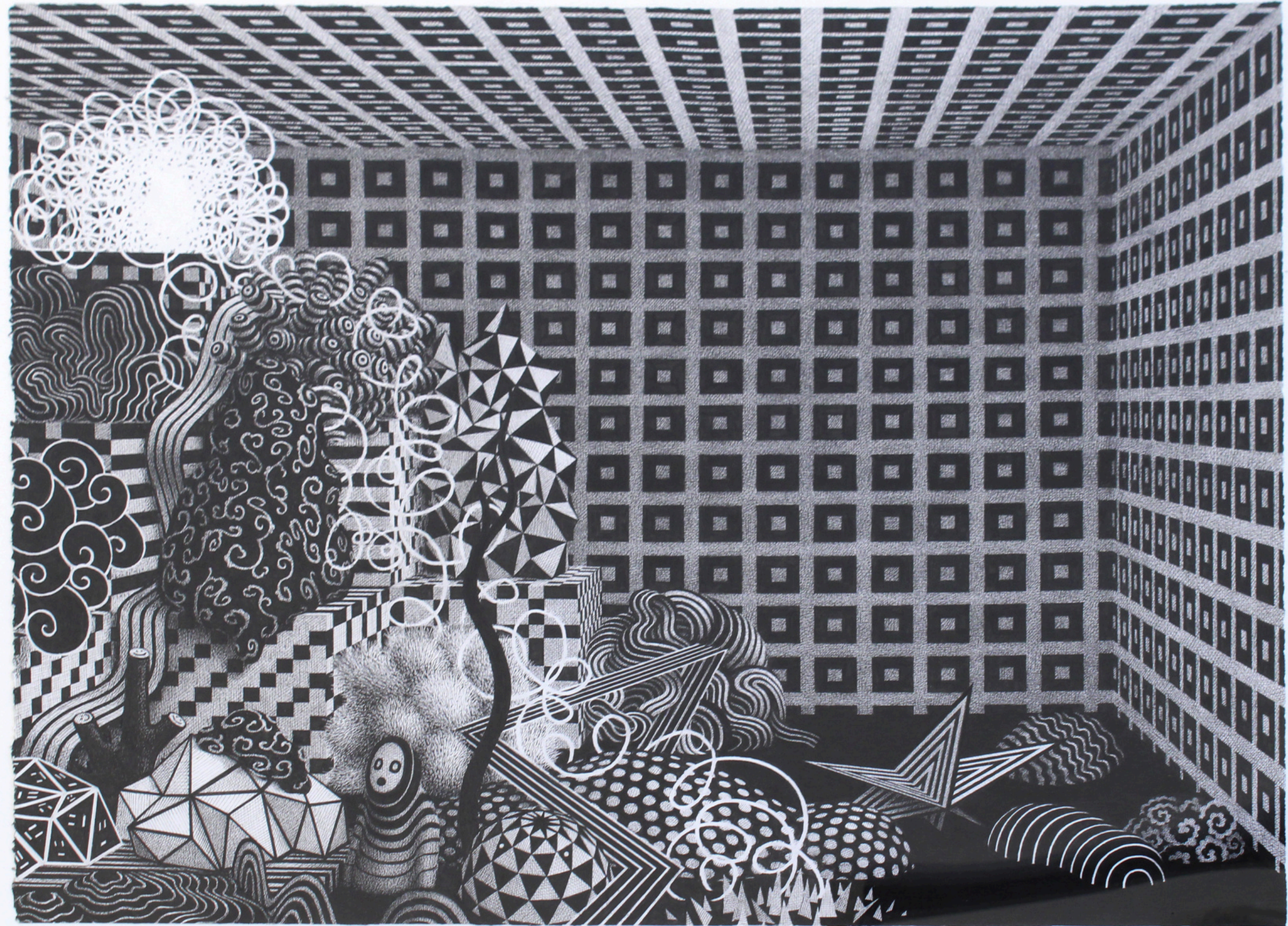
Variation in size, shape, edge, surface, and technique are critical issues for me. At any one time, I am developing many drawings, and I work on most of them for years by building up layers of pigment and paper and breaking them back down with erasures and revisions. The surfaces evolve over these extended periods, leaving pentimenti, a history of growth. These tracks are an invitation for the observer to participate in the process, an archaeology of surface.

The use of a small size is important to my work. I see this as an invitation to the viewer to crawl into an intimate yet immense universe. It also creates a very private experience as the viewer must come close and experience it alone.

My passion is for the landscape, both visible and metaphorical. My inspirations come in a flash, and I hope to convey that initial excitement. When I begin to work, I am often dependent on the ephemeral: a slant of light, a certain season, a subject in a temporary state. When the state passes, I often put the work aside until it reappears. However, by the time the drawing is finished, the site may be vastly different than when I started; trees have come down, houses have new additions, etc. The exhibited work is an abstracted accumulation of many different experiences and events.

The pictures begin with the scene and yet aim to move deeper, beyond what is seen. Often, what cannot be seen is most evocative. I offer the viewer a context in which essential details are obscured, and by doing so, I leave things open to personal interpretation. Night is an important theme for its obscuring quality.

After years of scrutiny, these subjects have continually accrued greater meaning and mystery for me. As I evolve with them, I aim to come to deeper levels of awareness and to more fully interpret the magic and mystery behind the surface of things.



Ben Tolman
Fragments, 2023
Ink on paper
Sheet size: 20 x 30 inches
Framed size: 26 x 30 ½ inches
Signed within the drawing, lower left

BEN TOLMAN

b. 1979, Washington, DC

BFA Corcoran College of Art and Design

MFA American University

Inspired by the complexities of urban geography, artist Ben Tolman creates highly detailed, time-consuming drawings of imagined cityscapes. Beginning with the real experience of a place, Tolman builds levels of structures with Micron pens and a ruler, delving deeper and deeper into dark and humorous manufactured worlds. Storylines unfold and evolve at a microscopic level, revealing grave anecdotes of the impacts of capitalism, including poverty, isolation, and human struggle.



Redeat Wondemu

Hillwood in April, 2024

Photographed on Film,

Printed on Japanese Washi Moenkopi Unryu Fiber Paper

Image size: 8 x 8 inches

Framed size: 13 x 13 inches

Signed in pencil, lower right



Redeat Wondemu

Hillwood in May, 2024

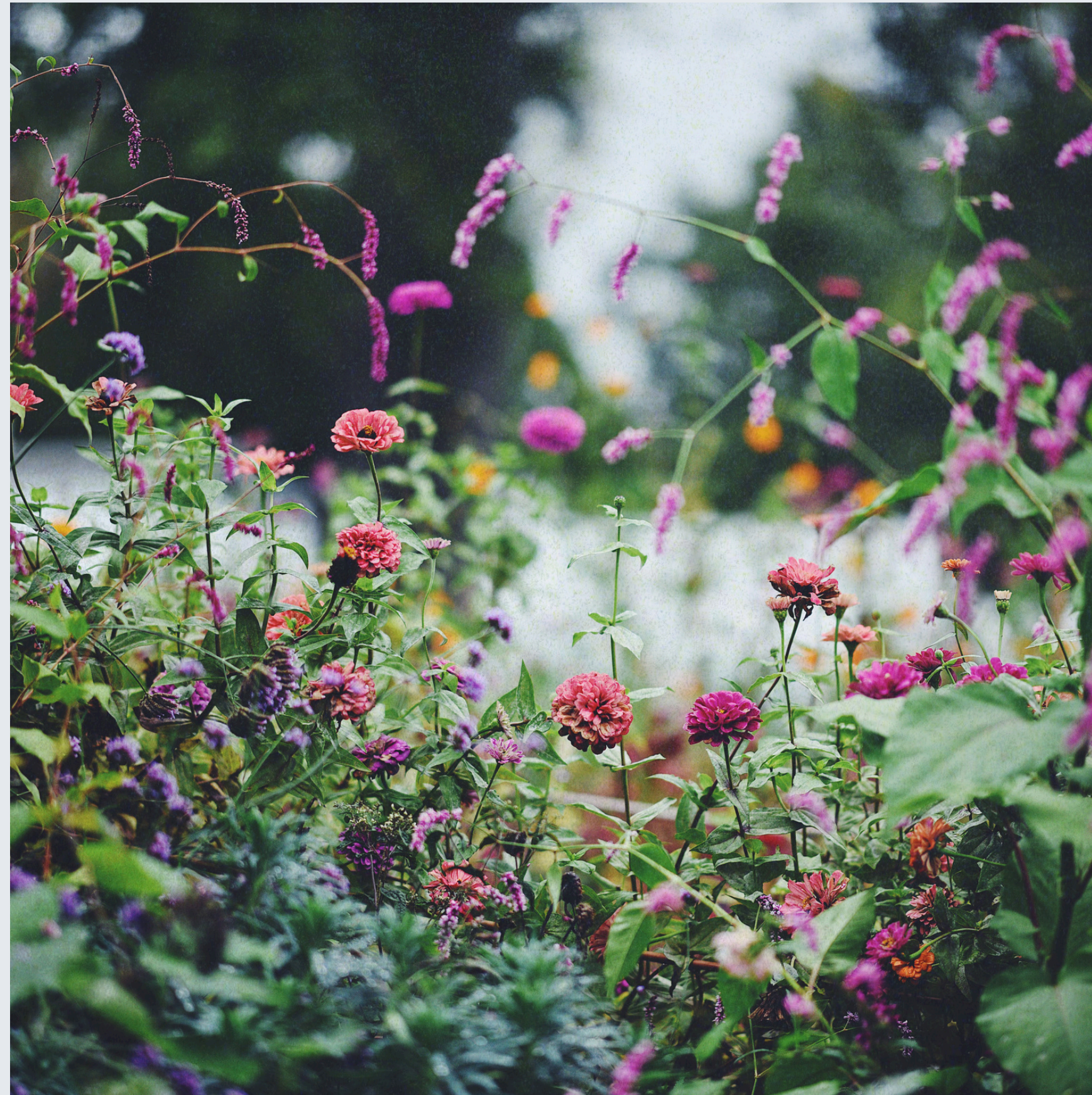
Photographed on Film,

Printed on Japanese Washi Moenkopi Unryu Fiber Paper

Image size: 8 x 8 inches

Framed size: 13 x 13 inches

Signed in pencil, lower right



Redeat Wondemu

Hillwood in June, 2024

Photographed on Film: Printed on Japanese Washi Moenkopi Unryu Fiber Paper

Image size: 8 x 8 inches

Framed size: 13 x 13 inches

Signed in pencil, lower right



Redeat Wondemu

Hillwood in July, 2024

Photographed on Film: Printed on Japanese Washi Moenkopi Unryu Fiber Paper

Image size: 8 x 8 inches

Framed size: 13 x 13 inches

Signed in pencil, lower right



Redeat Wondemu

Hillwood in August, 2024

Photographed on Film: Printed on Japanese Washi Moenkopi Unryu Fiber Paper

Image size: 8 x 8 inches

Framed size: 13 x 13 inches

Signed in pencil, lower right



Redeat Wondemu

Hillwood in September, 2024

Photographed on Film: Printed on Japanese Washi Moenkopi Unryu Fiber Paper

Image size: 8 x 8 inches

Framed size: 13 x 13 inches

Signed in pencil, lower right

Redeat Wondemu

b. 1984, Lives and works in Washington DC

Redeat Wondemu's photography captures the honesty, emotion, and quiet vulnerability of her subjects, often weaving personal narratives between Washington, D.C. and Ethiopia. Working in both digital and film, she approaches her subjects and at times herself with vulnerability, imagination, and care. Her practice is rooted in analog processes; she develops her own film and hand-prints in gelatin silver, platinum/palladium, and cyanotype.

ARTIST STATEMENT:

Flower Studies is an ongoing photographic series that began in 2018, rooted in my interest in photography as a long-form study—returning to the same subjects over time until observation deepens into understanding. This approach shapes how I work as a lens-based artist. Through repeated encounters with the same plants, my relationship to them shifts from looking to knowing. The camera and eventually the printing process function not as tools, but as mediums that tell a story, allowing time, material, and light to shape what is revealed. These particular photographs represent a year-long fellowship at Hillwood Estate, Museum, and Garden from Spring 2024 to Spring 2025, I photographed all seven gardens throughout the year, tracing their transformations from season to season. The work is created using a combination of analog and digital tools, including medium- and large-format cameras, alongside alternative photographic printing processes. I incorporate gelatin silver, platinum-palladium, cyanotype contact prints made directly from botanical forms or negatives, and tintypes, allowing light, chemistry, and plant matter to collaborate in the image-making process. These printing methods slow my practice, creating space for knowledge to emerge through sustained encounter, return, and transformation. Ultimately, my work reflects an ongoing desire to embrace and preserve impermanence as both subject and method.