

genuinely
expected





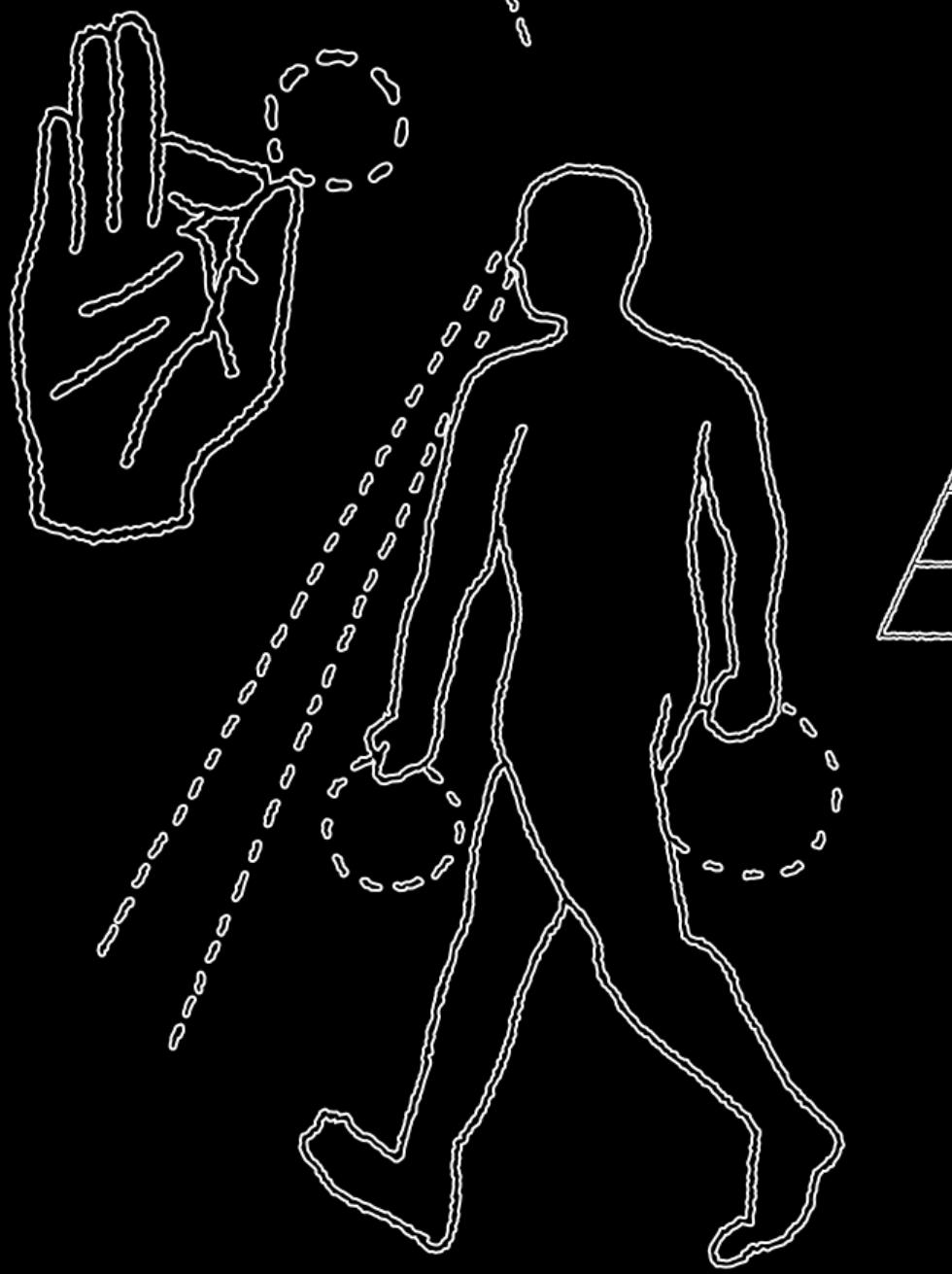
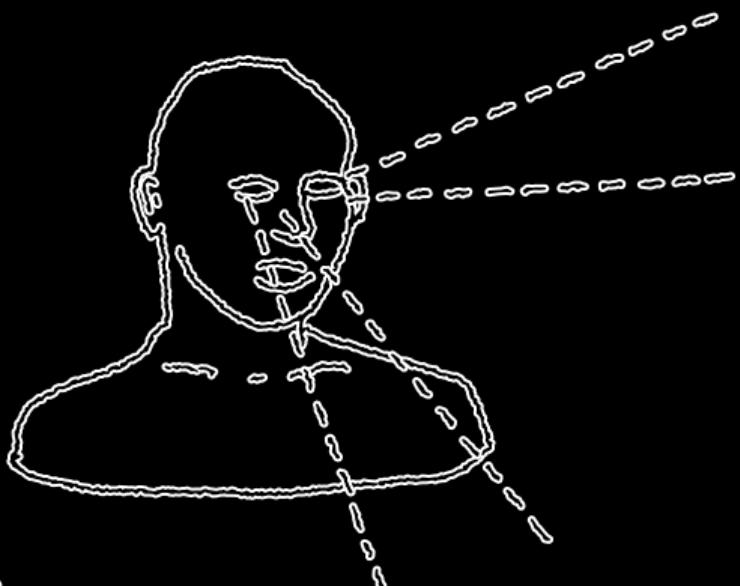
This book tells a story of the unexpected growth project journey

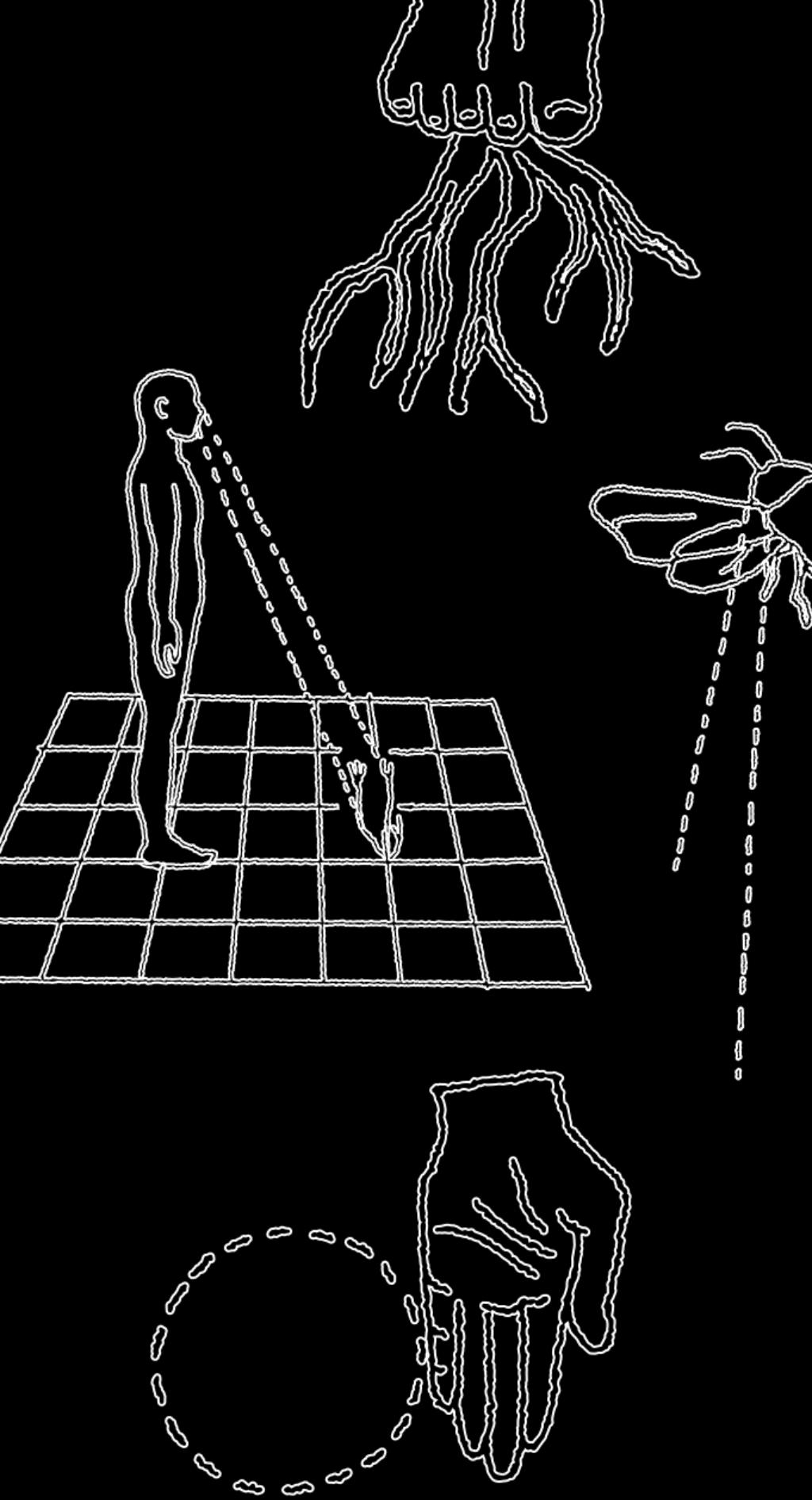
This project began with an effort to understand and question the relationship between my surroundings and my internal feelings- the feeling of wanting to escape or move forward. I started by exploring the town where I reside- a city that often feels dry and rigid.

During my exploration, I discussed with the environmentalists, and their perspective on the city opened my eyes to things I had never noticed before. The tiny, almost invisible plants like liverworts, the diverse animal sounds that can be identified while standing under a large tree, the connection between mother trees and saplings spreading nearby in urban areas, or the challenging growth of weeds in unfavorable spaces. All these observations reflect on the struggle to exist that resonated deeply with the feeling in my heart.

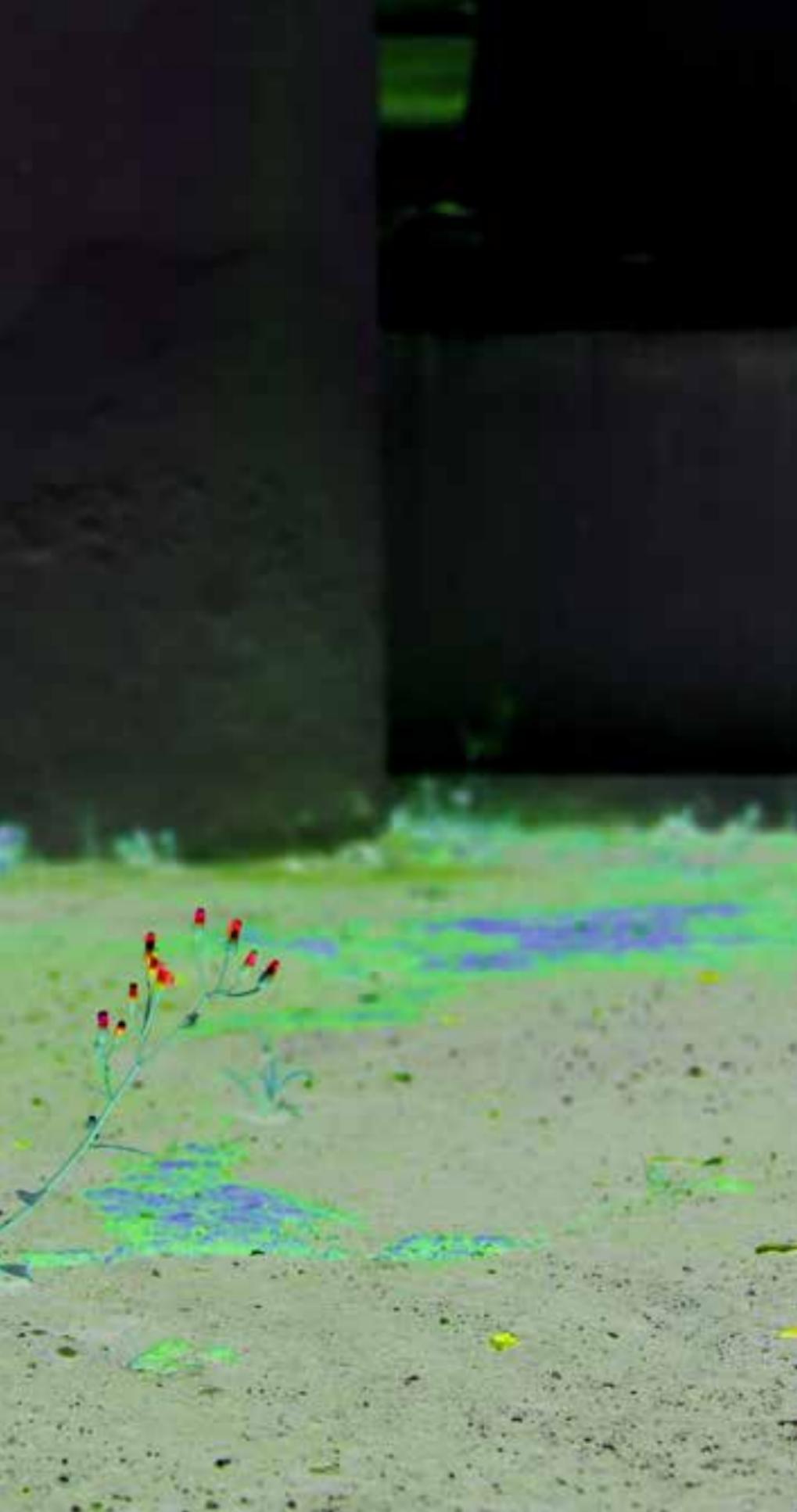
I started by walking around the city, exploring, gathering information, taking photos, and collecting weeds for my creative process. These activities made me feel like a bee discovering flowers, like finding beauty in an unpleasant town. It gave me a new focus that, once seen, could never be ignored. This exploration evolved into experiments in making paper from weeds, which became the foundational material for my creations. During these trials, I found limitations such as thickness, flexibility, and size, which led me to a trip to learn from the paper-making experts. This process allowed me to view paper from a new perspective— from its origins as weeds growing by the roadside, through transformation into fibers— far beyond a finished product detached from its users.

Through this project, I hope to encourage audiences to spend time observing and start questioning the origins of material and how it was created— with an eye that sees things often overlooked in daily life. By looking at the ground, walls, and constructed objects, I invite you to see the hidden connections in everything around you. Leading to an open discussion to search for any possibilities hiding under the existing mindsets, narrowing the gap between objects and ourselves, and finding meaningful connections. Representing the struggle for existence, growth, and arising, whether in nature, in human-made creation, and ourselves.



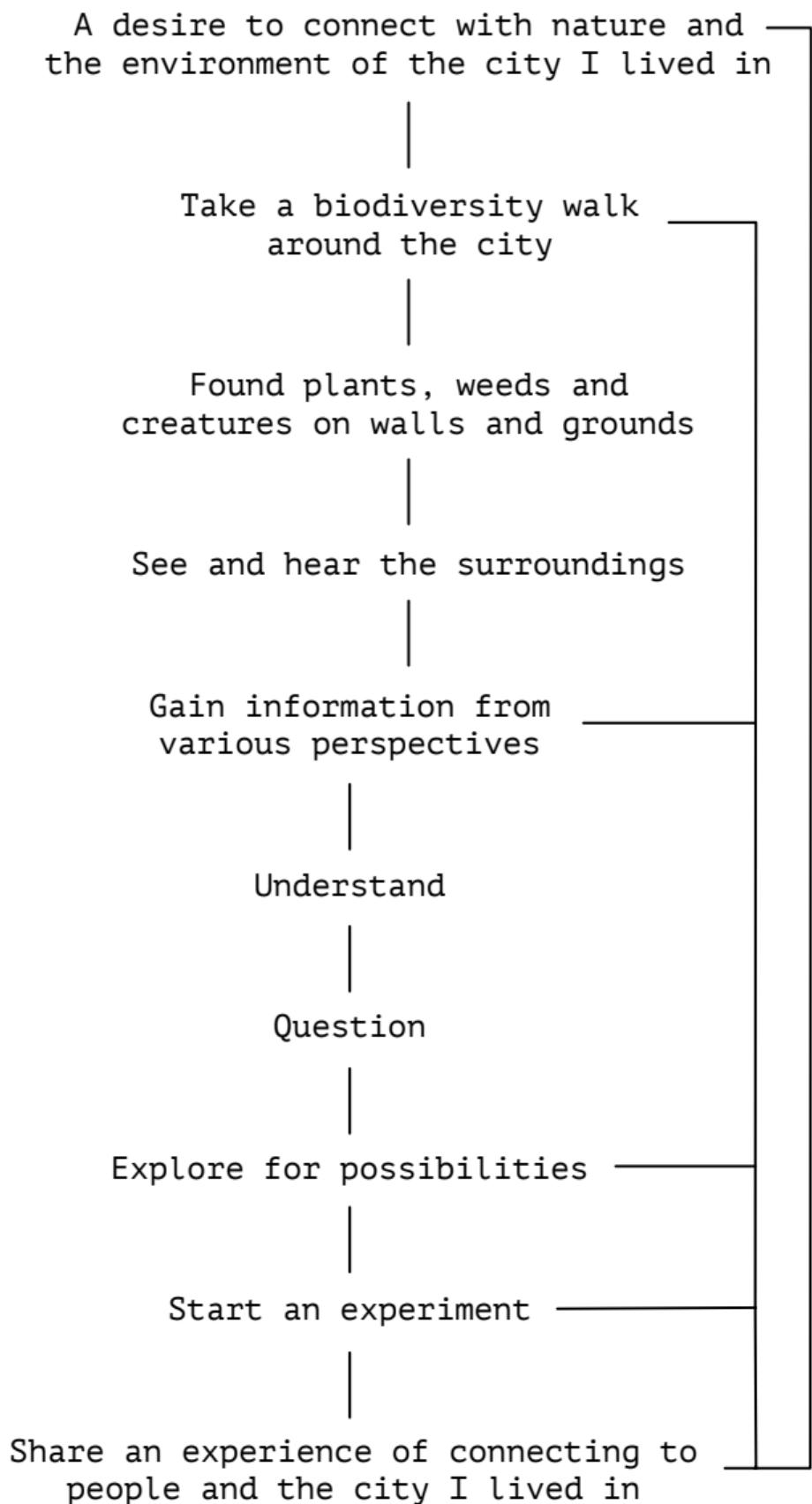








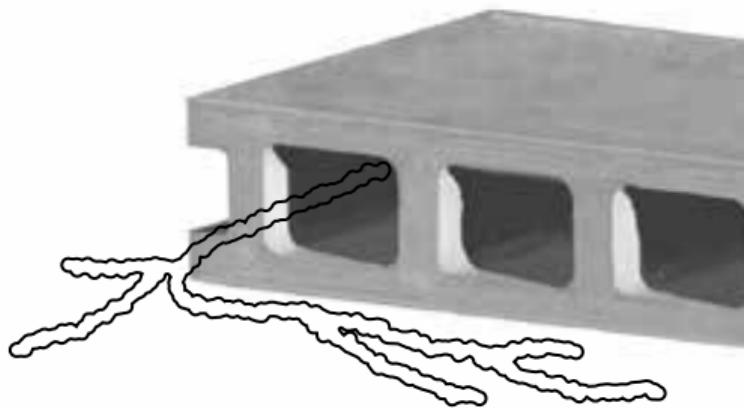
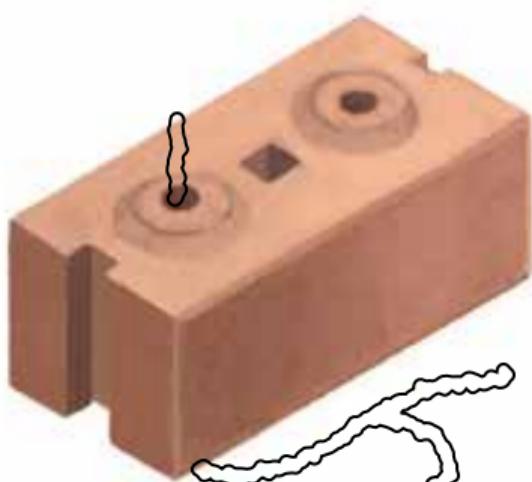
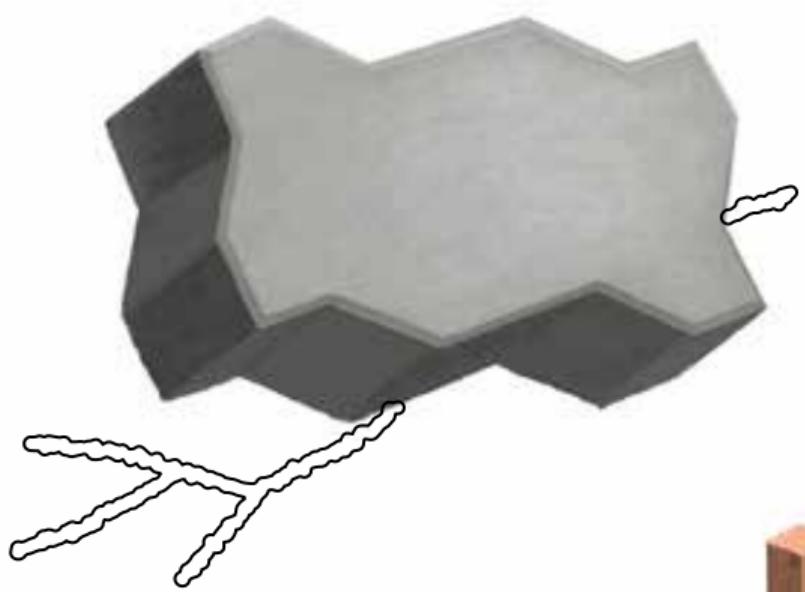
The Diagram of Unexpected Growth Project Journey

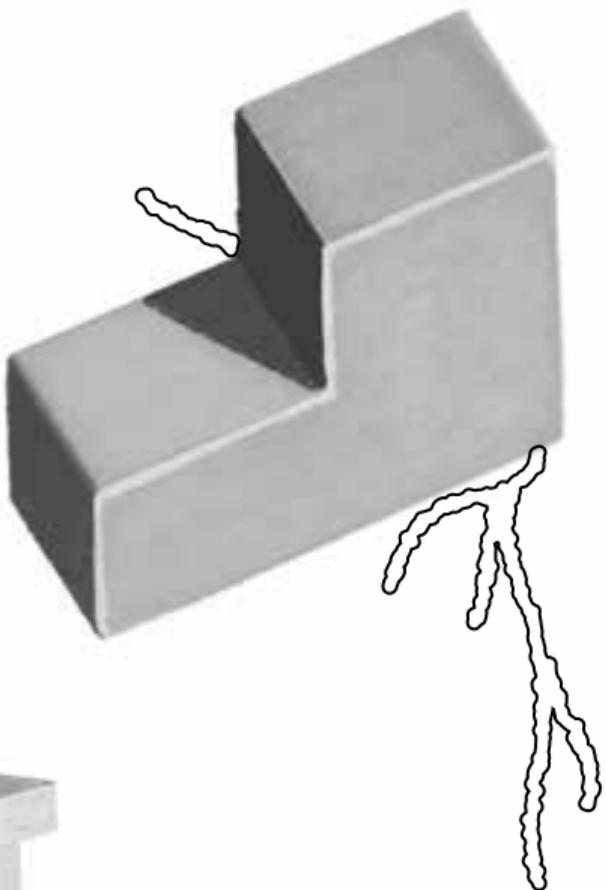
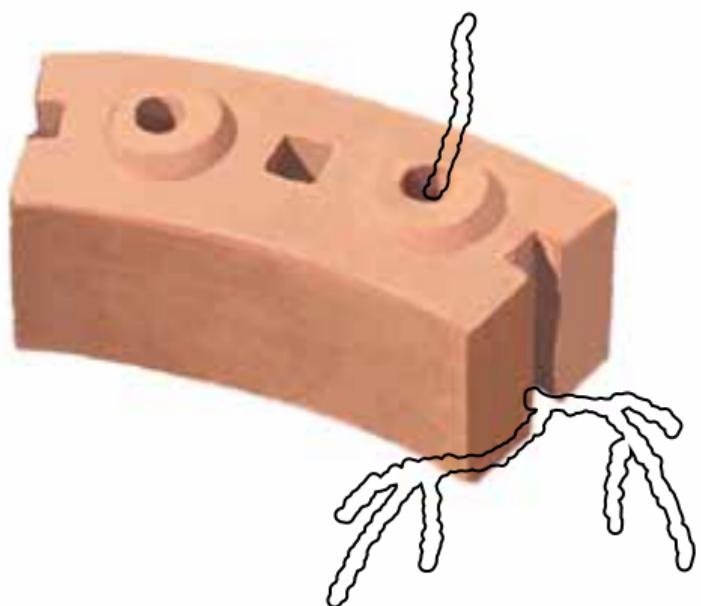


You see it.

You're the seed,
Let it grow.

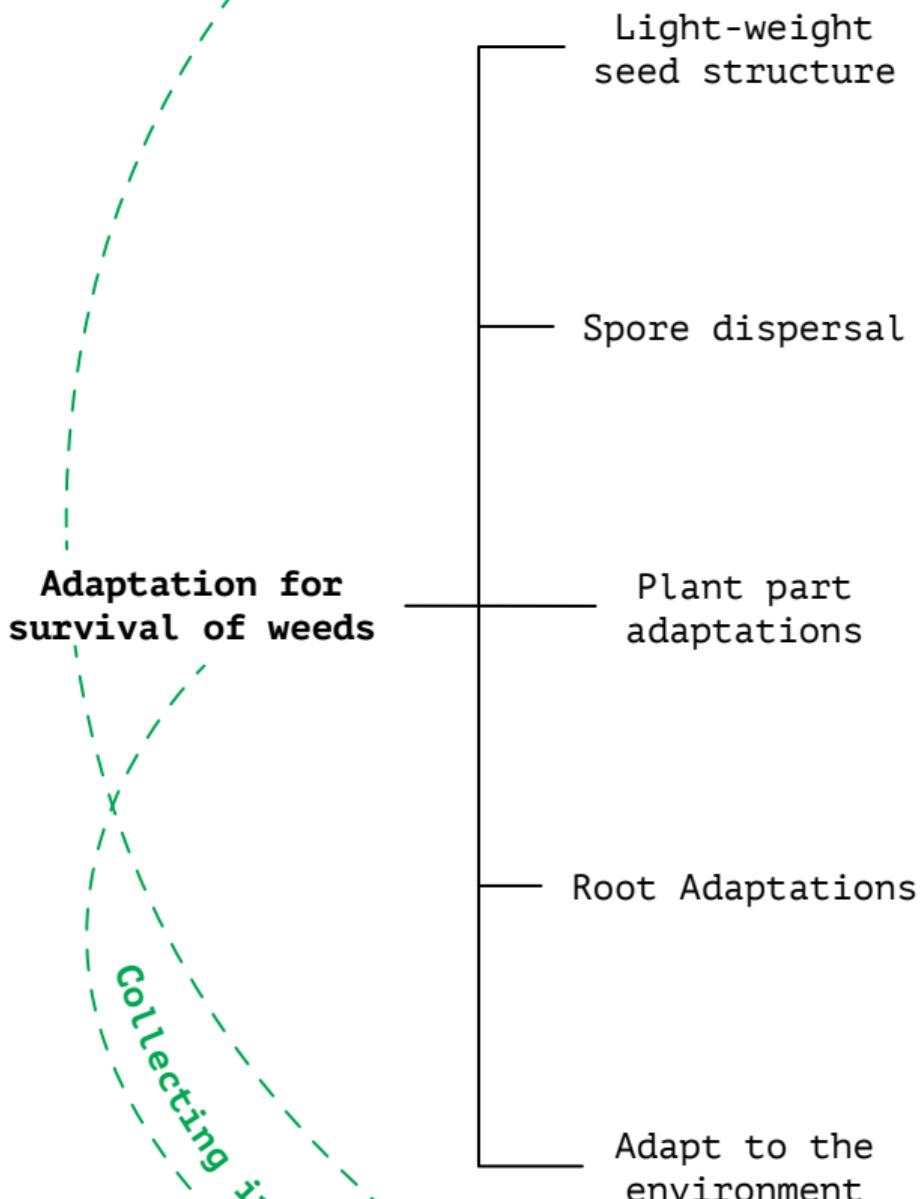
**You're the bee,
Seeking
the bloom.**

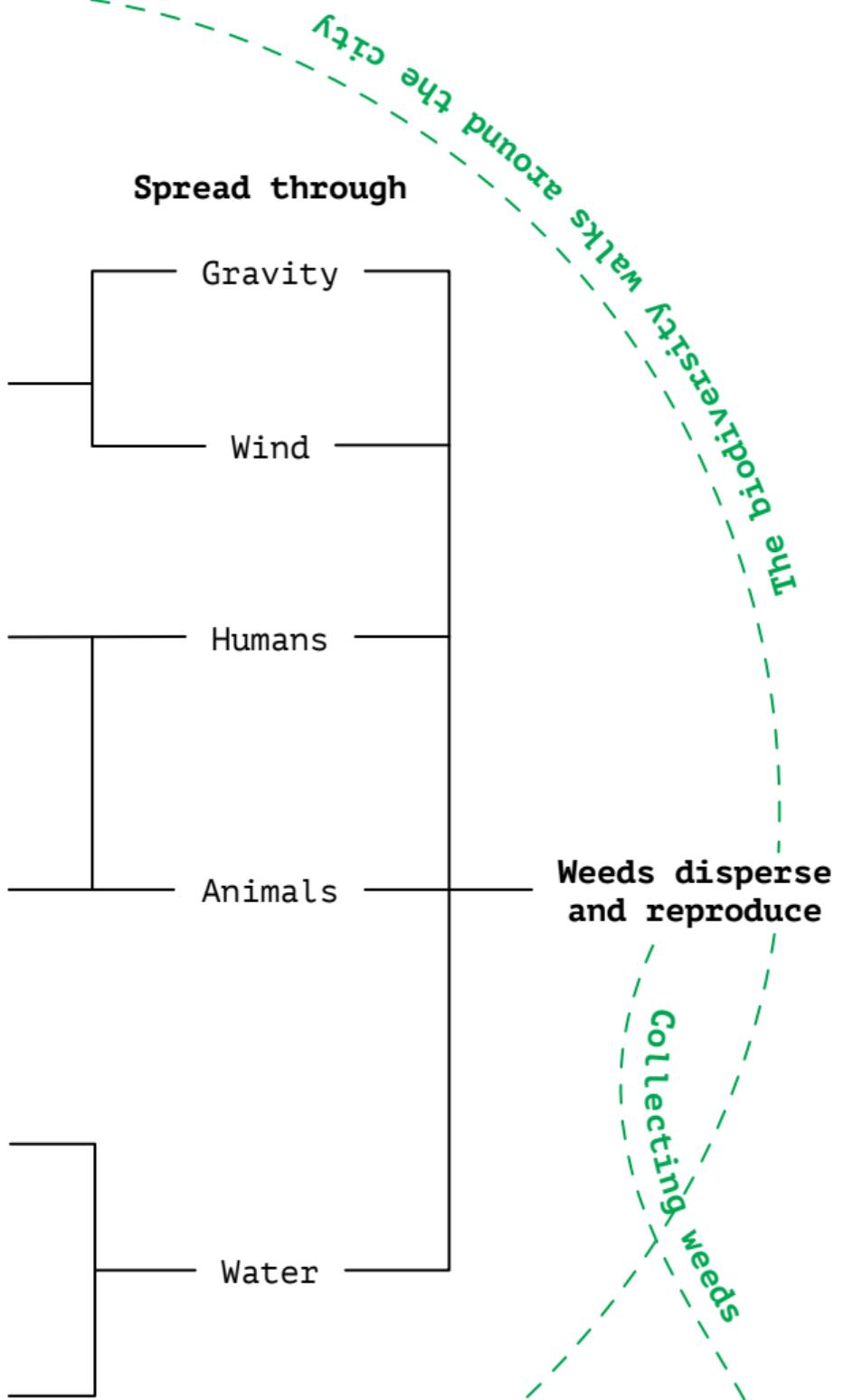




Why do weeds grow everywhere?

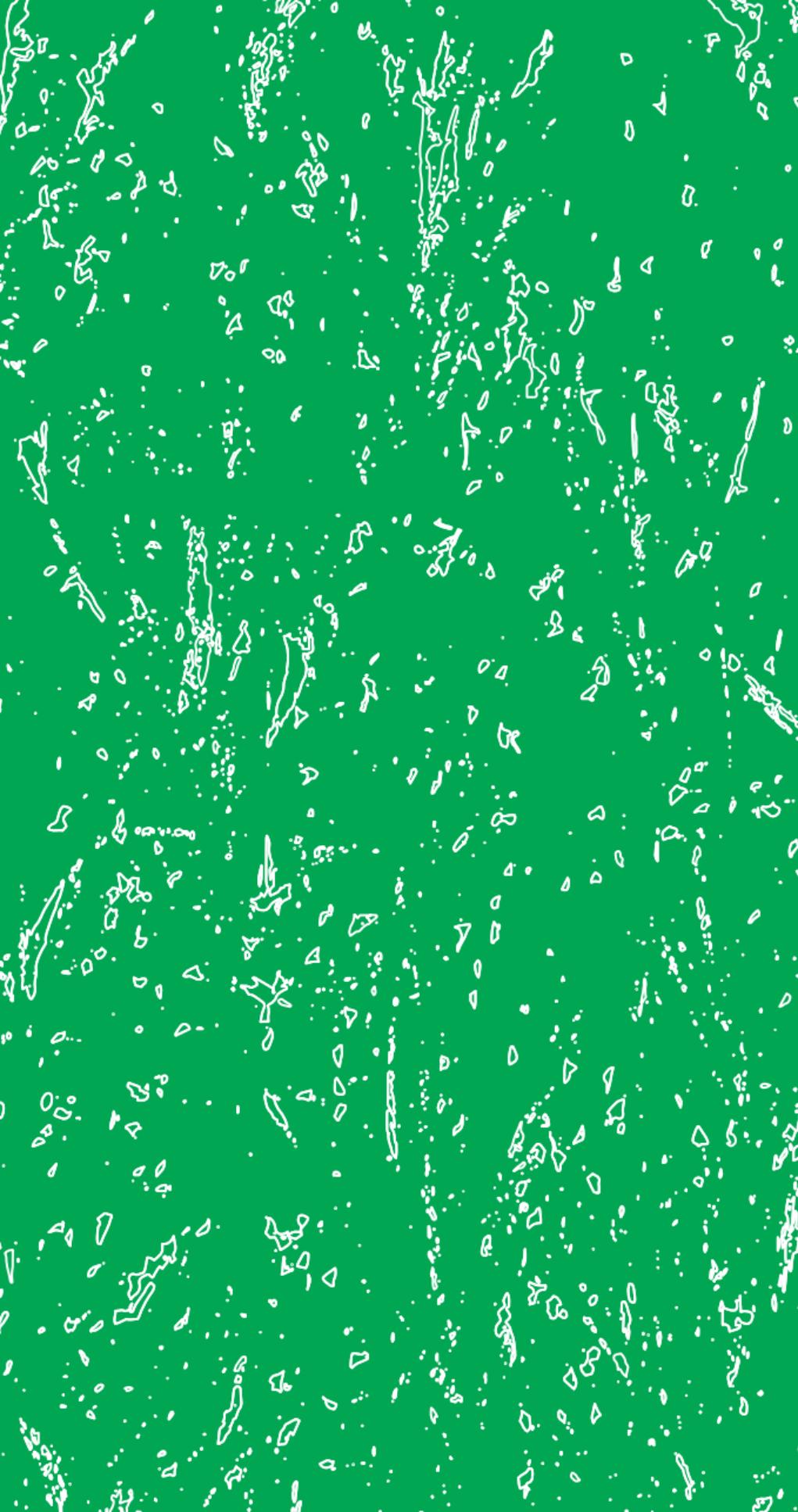
A note from discussing with the environmentalist





**Transform into
the project**









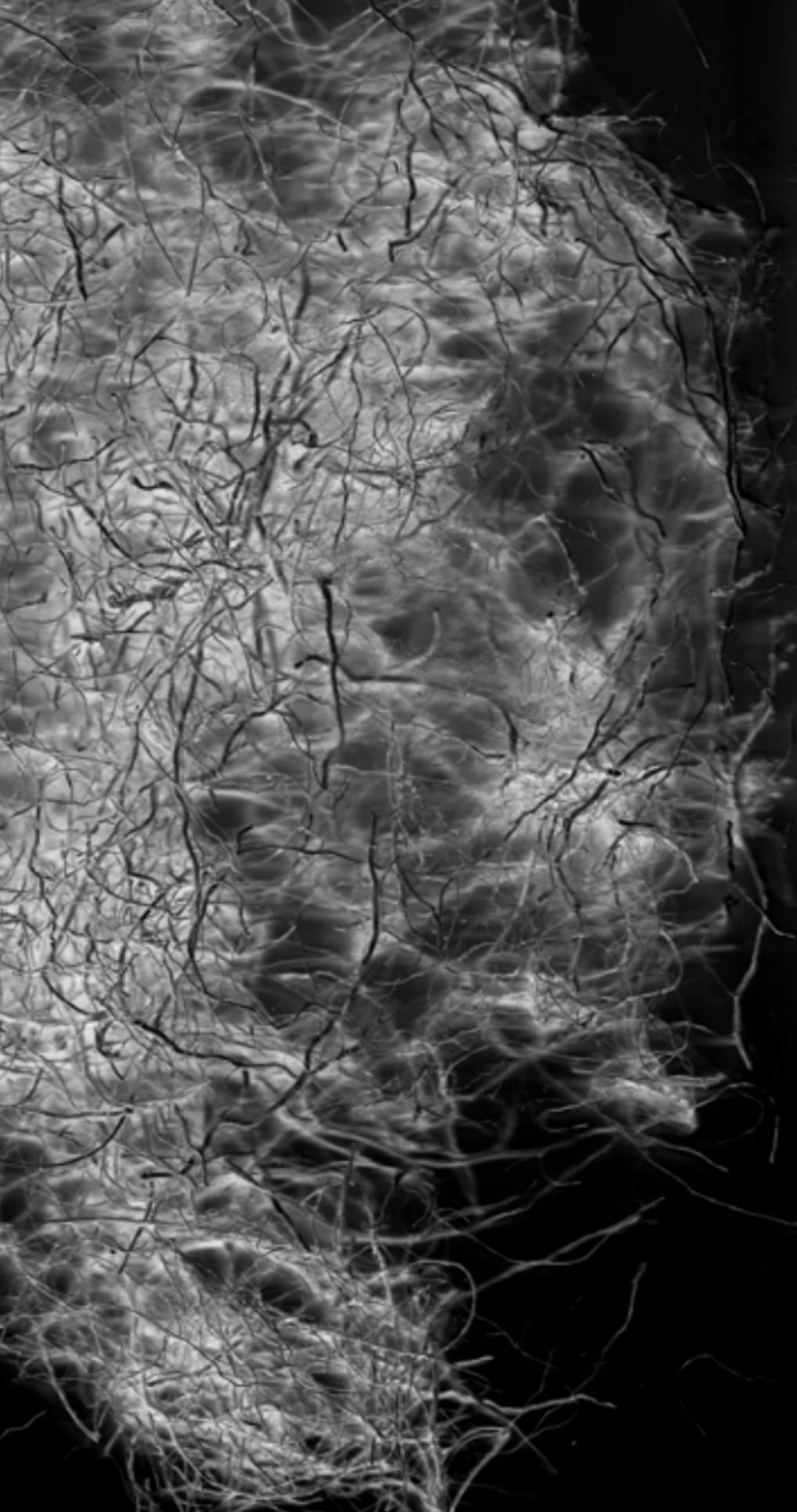




Keep breathing.

**Immerse your
surroundings.**

**Feel
the motion
beneath
your feet.**





apbox i

D



I started to make a plan for my daily harvesting.

Depending on the location and items I carry in my bag that day. I considered bringing some of these tools for my harvesting task.

A rake fork

Good for uprooting weeds.

Rubber gloves

Protect your hands when pulling weeds by hand.

Small digging shovel

Useful for small digging tasks.

Scissors

For quick and easy cutting.

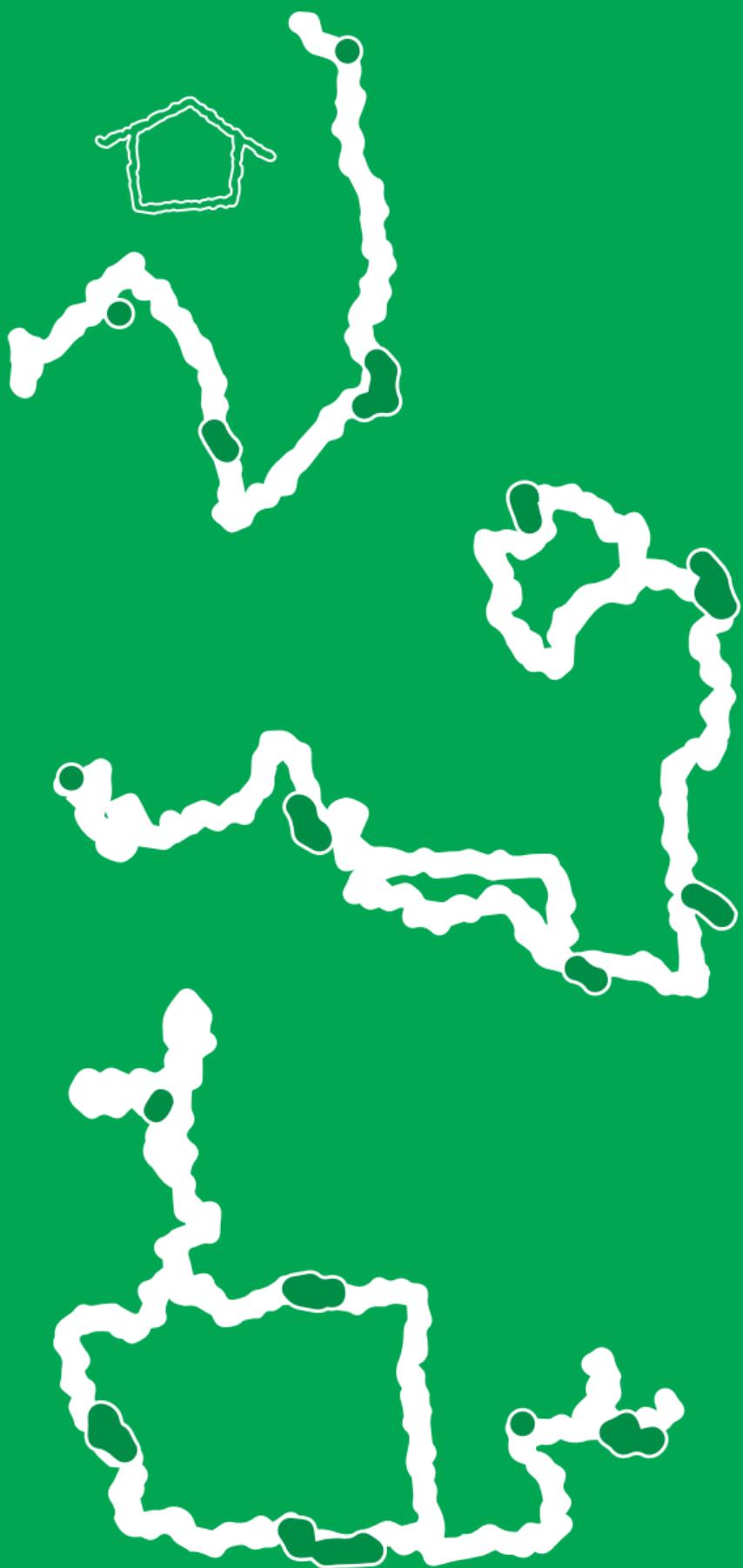
Pruning shears

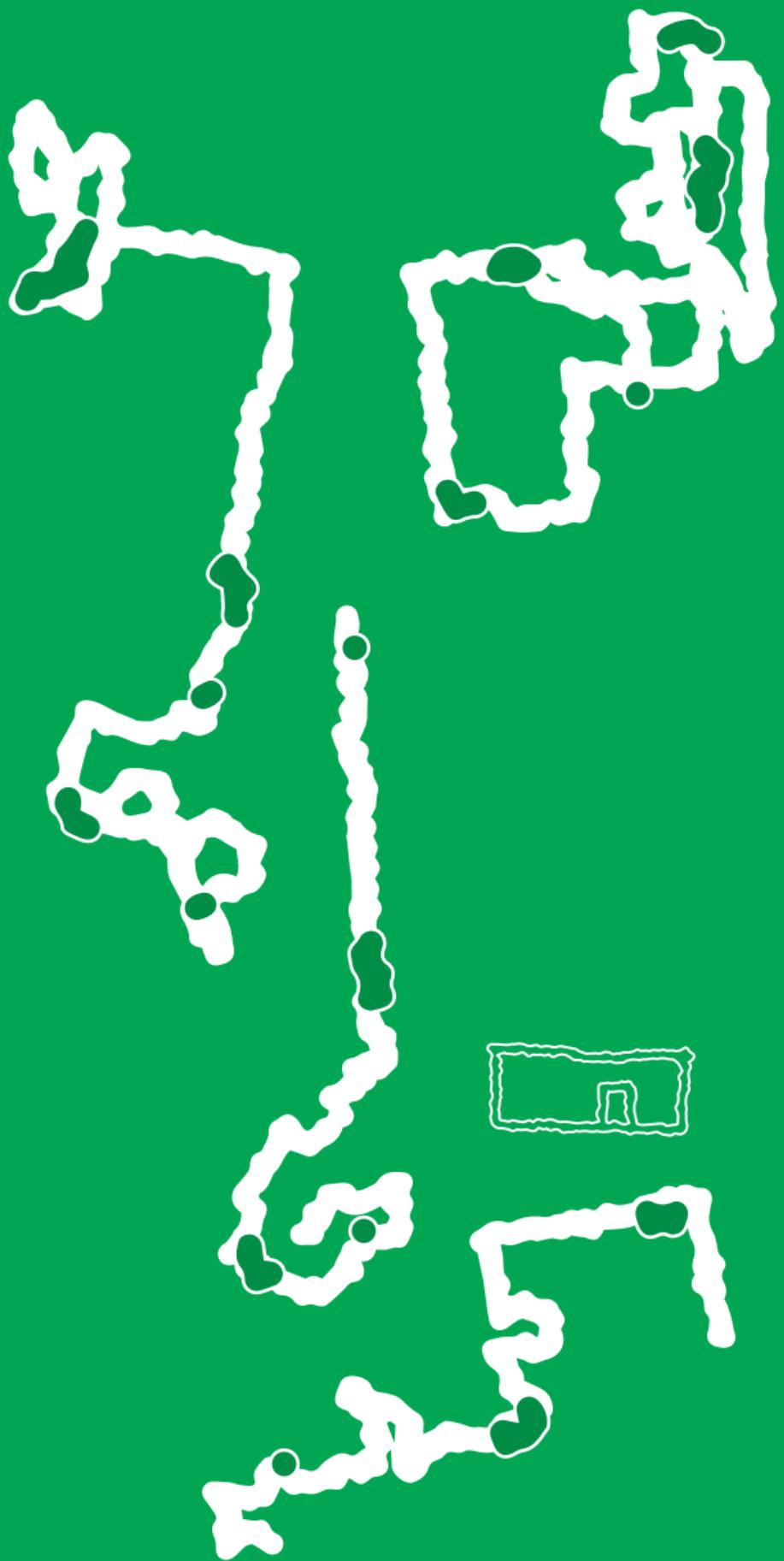
Help you cut through tough stems.

At first, I started my walk only focusing on exploration. After that, I tried to explore more during my daily travels.

It got me to spend more time on my feet, walking through small alleys across the community area where people live, observing and seeing things I have never laid my eyes on.

Weeds mostly appear on the grounds and walls near the living area. Perhaps the liveliness and movement of living people unexpectedly fill their surroundings with fertility.



















The next step is how I make paper from weeds by myself.

Gather materials

Gather proper weeds and clean them.



Cut and prepare the fibers

Chop the weeds into small pieces, then boil them in water.



Boil again with chemicals

Boil chopped weeds with soda ash or alkaline solution for 1-2 hours.



Make the pulp

Rinse the fibers and blend them into pulps.



Prepare the pulp

Mix the pulp with water, then add additional ingredients such as gum, starch, or dye.



Make it into a paper shape

Scoop the pulp with a screen or mold, sift it to create a paper layer, then drain the excess water.



Let it dry

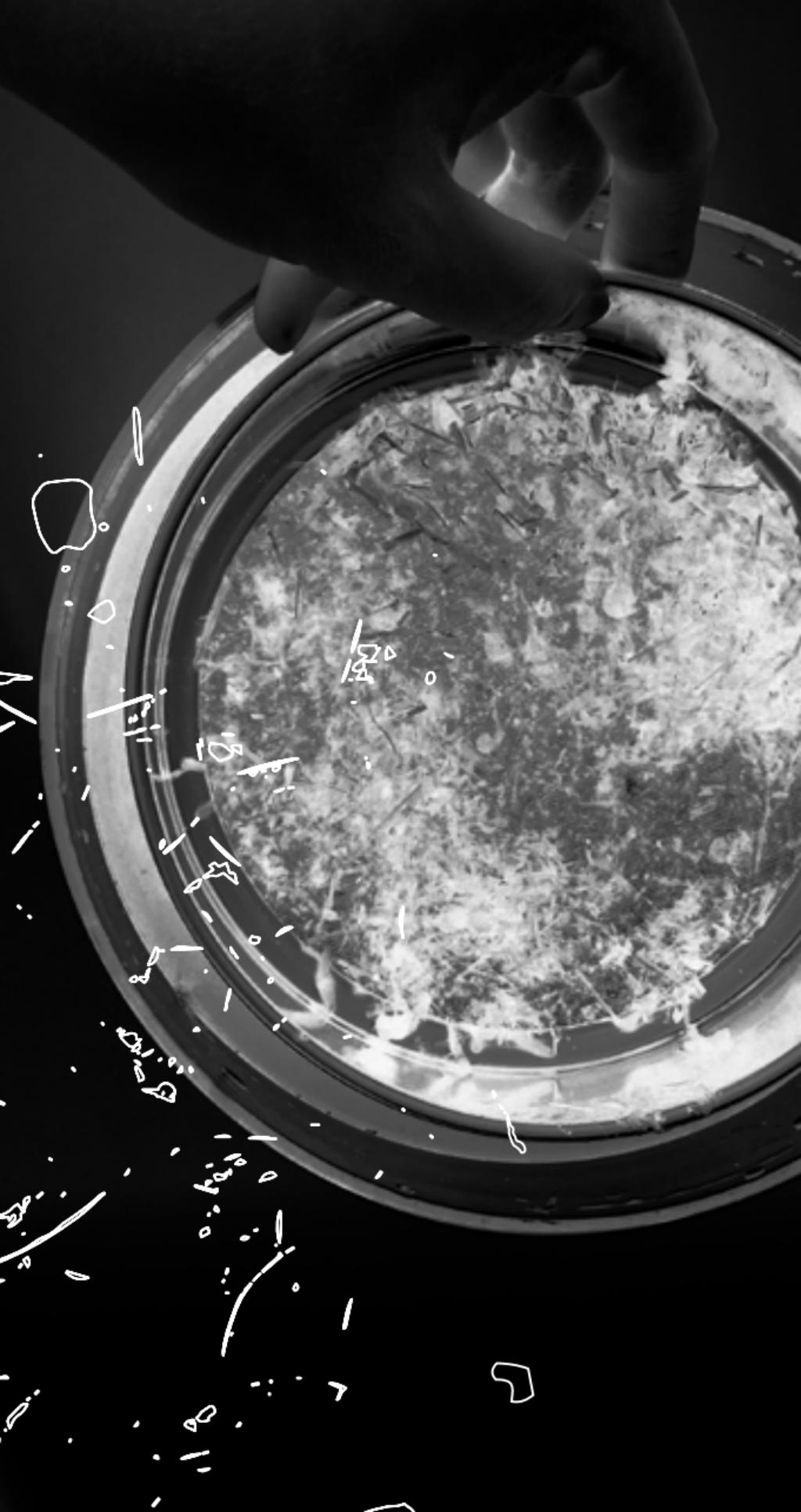
Place it on a level surface and let it dry under the sun.



Collect and store

Peel the paper off, trim the edge, and keep it in a dry place.







By using entire weeds from leaves, branches, stems, and roots to make the paper, the result is a firm, rough, and thick paper with an interesting texture, giving out the feeling of cardboard or tanned leather. On the other hand, using only soft parts like leaves or using entire soft weeds like a Shiny Bush, the paper turns out to be thinner and more flexible— but not that sturdy.

Looking closely at the paper, I can still see some components that tell me which weeds I use to make it. I recognize some of them by my feelings, which takes me back to where the weeds were growing before.



Be curious.

Honor what is.

**Challenge
assumptions .**

After a few experiments, I wanted to create a bigger paper, enhance its sturdiness, and improve its quality. I also wanted to try bending, painting, screening, and other creations with the paper. Eventually, my friend advised me to visit the mulberry paper factory.

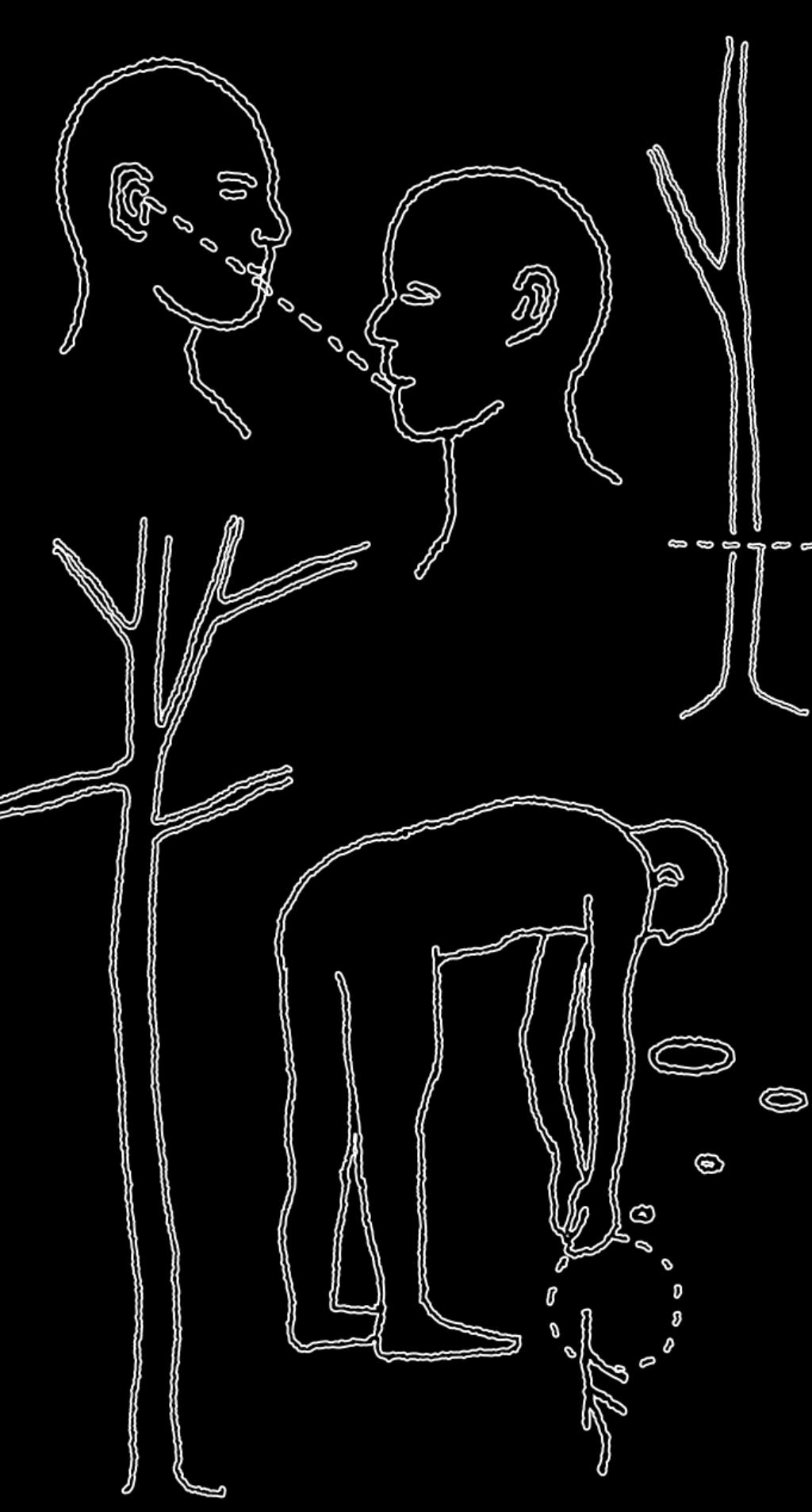
When we talk about paper, many people think of Northern Thai mulberry paper, an embossed Bo Sang umbrella with a thick and rough texture, which is made from roadside paper mulberry plants. We can create a smooth and thin paper like regular paper or add some features to give a special feeling to it. So, I packed my bag and traveled to Sukhothai, where Kozo Studio— the mulberry paper factory, is located.

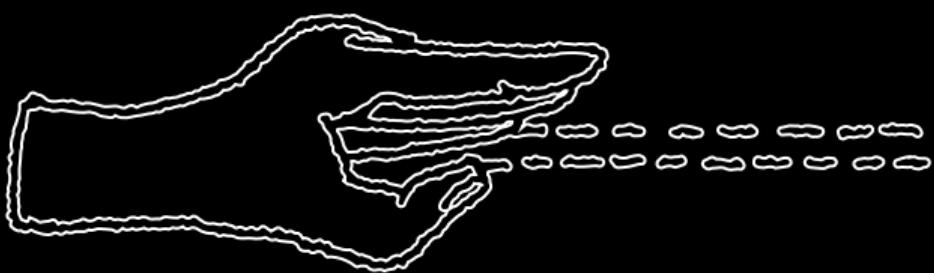
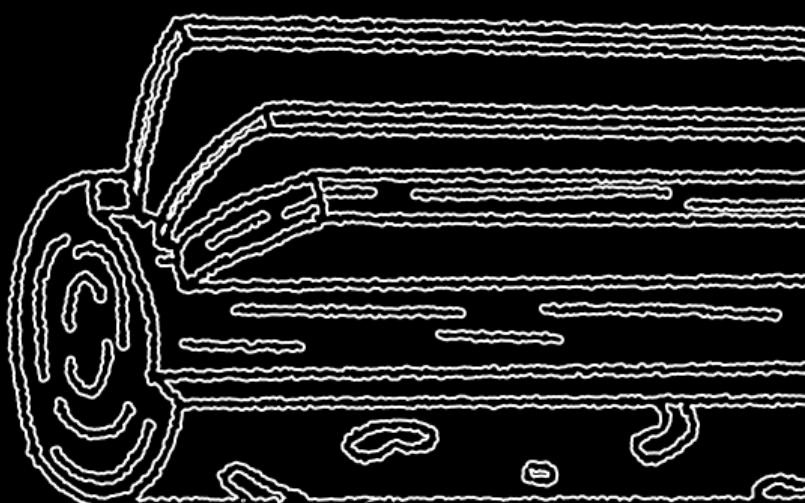
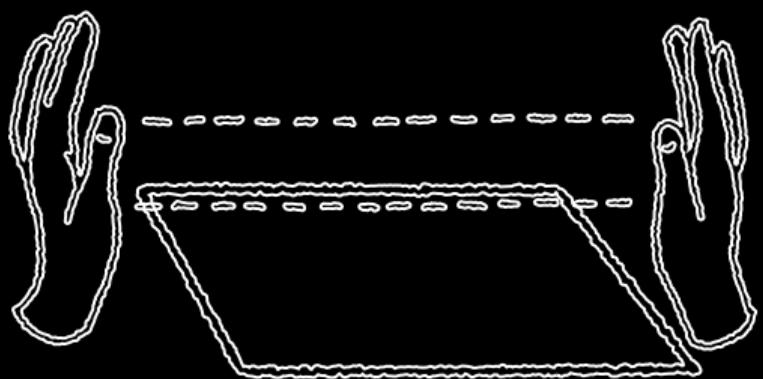
บริการซ่อมแซมเครื่องจักร

ซ่อมแซมเครื่องจักร 1 วัน
ซ่อมแซมเครื่องจักร 1 วัน
ซ่อมแซมเครื่องจักร 1 วัน

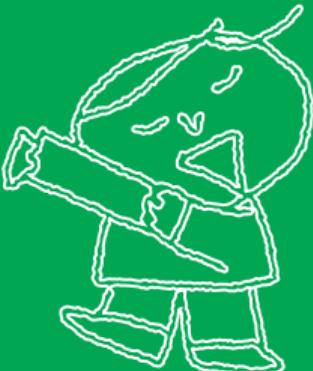
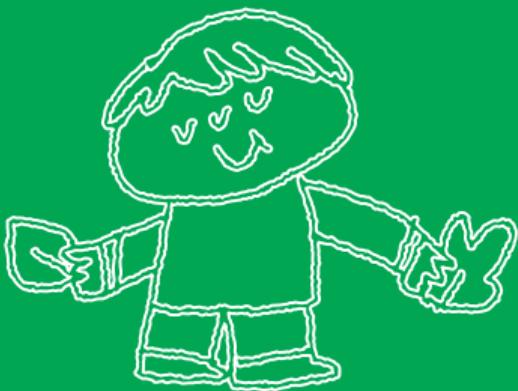
**รับซื้อป้อสา
ราด้าสูง**

โทร. 081-888-2045





There are lots of paper mulberry trees found in the Northern Thailand area. They are weeds, but we don't want to call them that. These plants naturally appear along the roadside, are easy to grow, and require a little maintenance. We cut the bark, peel it out, clean it, and dry it. Even though it is easy to find, gathering its bark needs to be planned carefully from the first step. If we cut the bark and leave it around knee height length, After a year passes, the bark will grow back again.







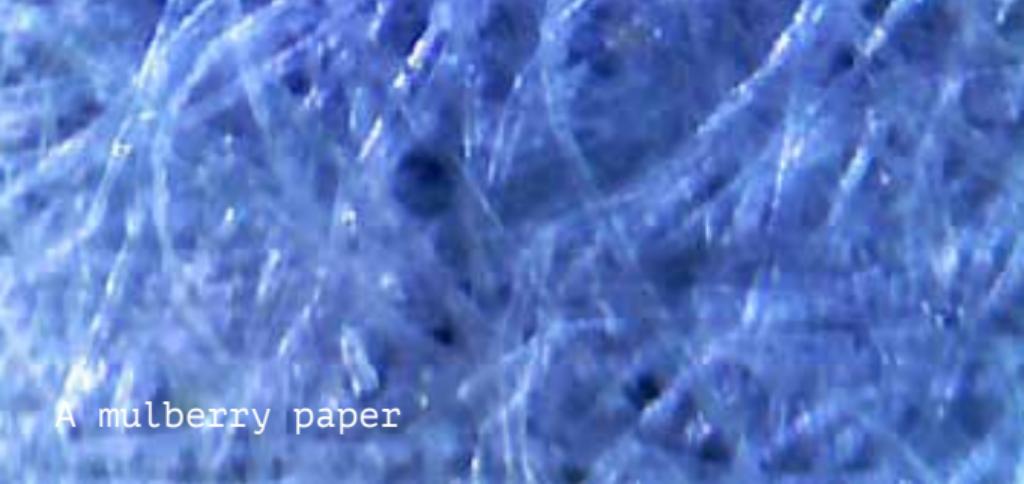
A paper from weeds



A Regular A4 paper



A paper made from weeds
and mulberry fibers



A mulberry paper

The image shows paper fibers at 4x magnification, revealing traces of fibers from the weed paper I made—almost like observing weeds under a microscope. When comparing it to regular A4 paper, which is made from wood trunks (wood-based), and mulberry paper, which is made solely from bark (bark-based), a paper specialist pointed out two key differences between these types of paper.

Fiber Length

The fiber length of wood-based paper is approximately 1 mm, whereas the fiber length of bark-based paper is around 6-7 inches. With fibers nearly ten times longer, the sturdiness is significantly different. Even after soaking mulberry paper in water and letting it dry or crumpling it, it will not tear apart.

Lignin Content

Wood-based paper contains lignin, an acidic compound that causes the paper to turn yellow over time. In contrast, bark-based paper is acid-free and remains unchanged even after 20 or 50 years. An 8 gsm mulberry paper can be used to repair torn books by directly gluing it onto the damaged area, allowing the text to remain visible through the thin layer.

The quality of the weed paper I made depends on the type of weed used and how smoothly it was blended. Adding pulp from other fibers could further enhance its strength and overall potential.

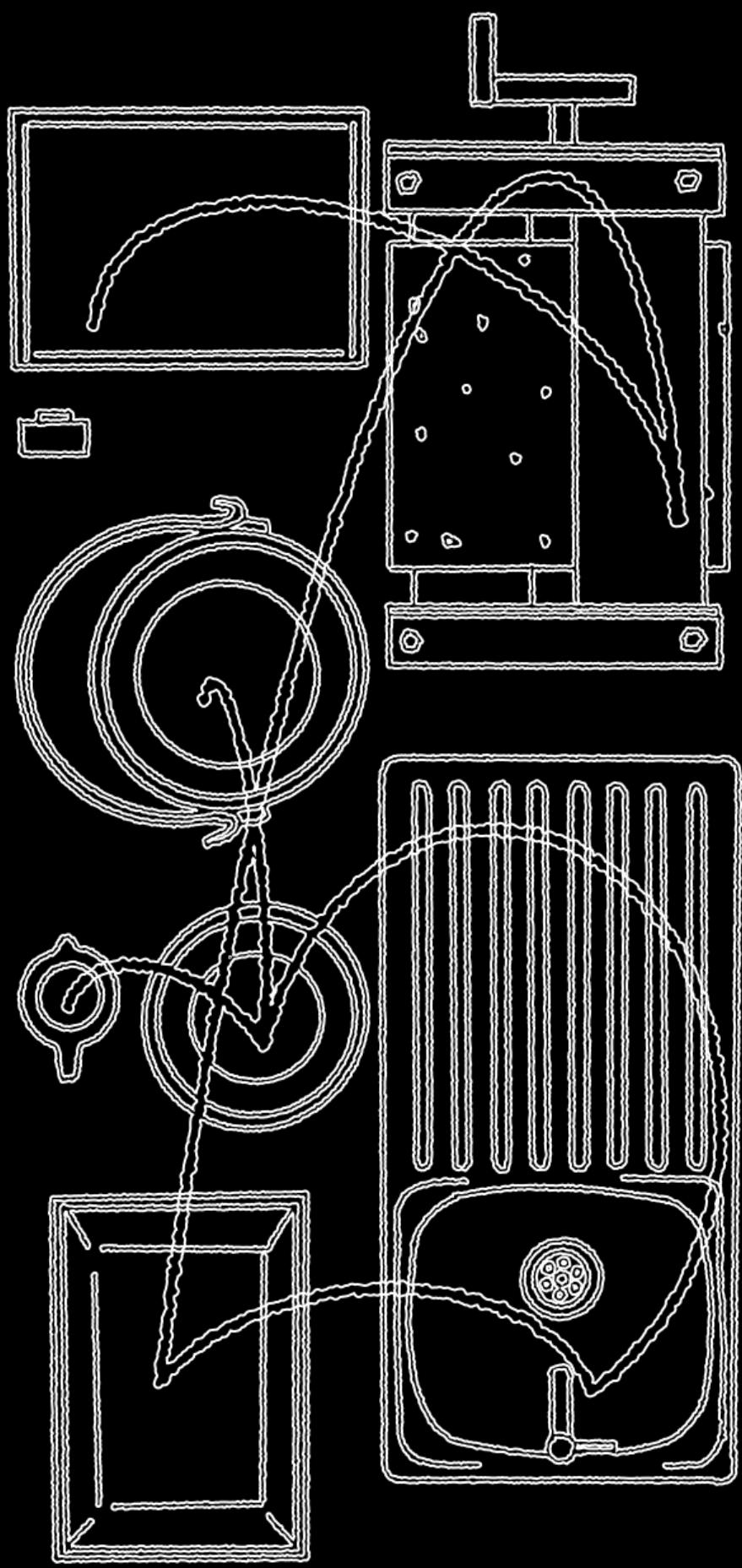


The crafting process for making paper from weeds and mulberry fibers is as follows.

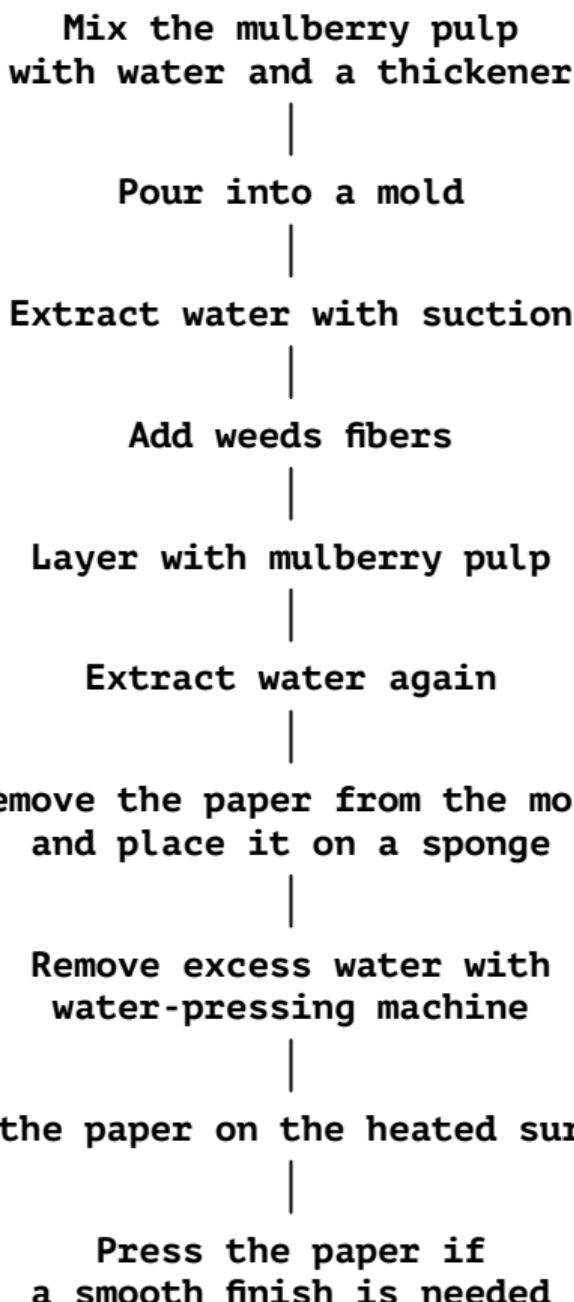
1. A mature mulberry tree ready for bark gathering.
2. Mulberry bark peeling.
3. Bark collecting.
4. Soak the mulberry pulp in water.
5. Boil the mulberry pulp with an alkaline solution.



6. Spin the mulberry pulp.
7. Mix the mulberry pulp with water and a thickener.
8. Gathered weeds.
9. Making paper from weeds mixed with mulberry fibers.
10. Squeeze water out.
11. Dry the paper on the heated surface.



During the visit, the factory set up a small paper-making station to let me try and later adjust to make my own paper by following these steps.



Each step is delicate and well planned, from selecting to trimming, even pouring one layer at a time. Also, there is a machine that helps remove excess water and several drying techniques that are unexpected to see.

**Open your
eyes wide.**

**Trust in
evolution.**

**Seek for
possibility.**

P'Kae is a paper maker specialist from Kozo Studio with 30 years of experience working with mulberry paper since 1992 (2535 BE). He created the mulberry paper-making station to demonstrate the making process to us. He said this was the first time someone got to try it here.

P'Kae shared that the Kozo Studio is a special paper maker that creates a variety of mulberry papers. The uniqueness of our paper goes far beyond its beauty- it lies in the mystery of how it is crafted. In his opinion, the best part of the paper-making process is when the paper comes out as planned. Happiness appears every time he touches the paper. It got him thinking about new ideas and finding new techniques he didn't expect.

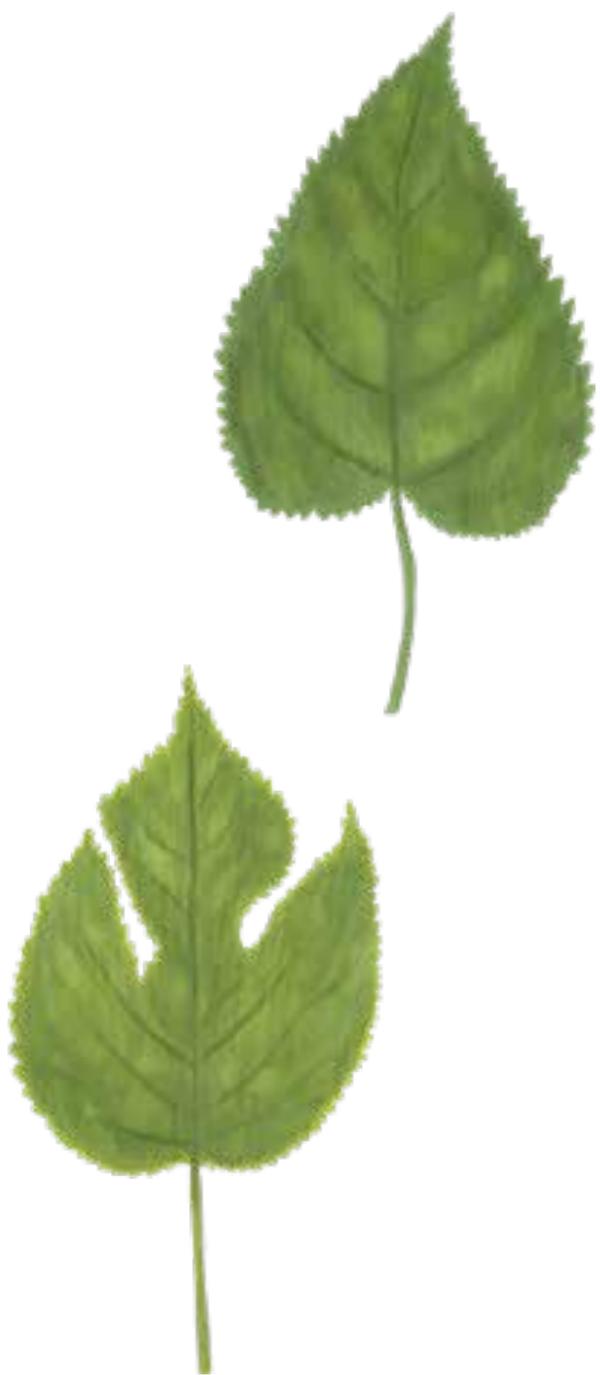
The main challenge in designing new papers is finding the right balance between style, functionality, manufacturability, and cost-effectiveness.

Paper made from various types of plant fiber is a popular product line. A great tip for creating this type of paper is to add the mulberry pulp mixture to help increase its flexibility and sturdiness.

Paper-making is far more than an industry for Kozo Studio. Because in every step of paper crafting, apart from a keen eye for details, imagination is a needed ingredient no different from an art creation.





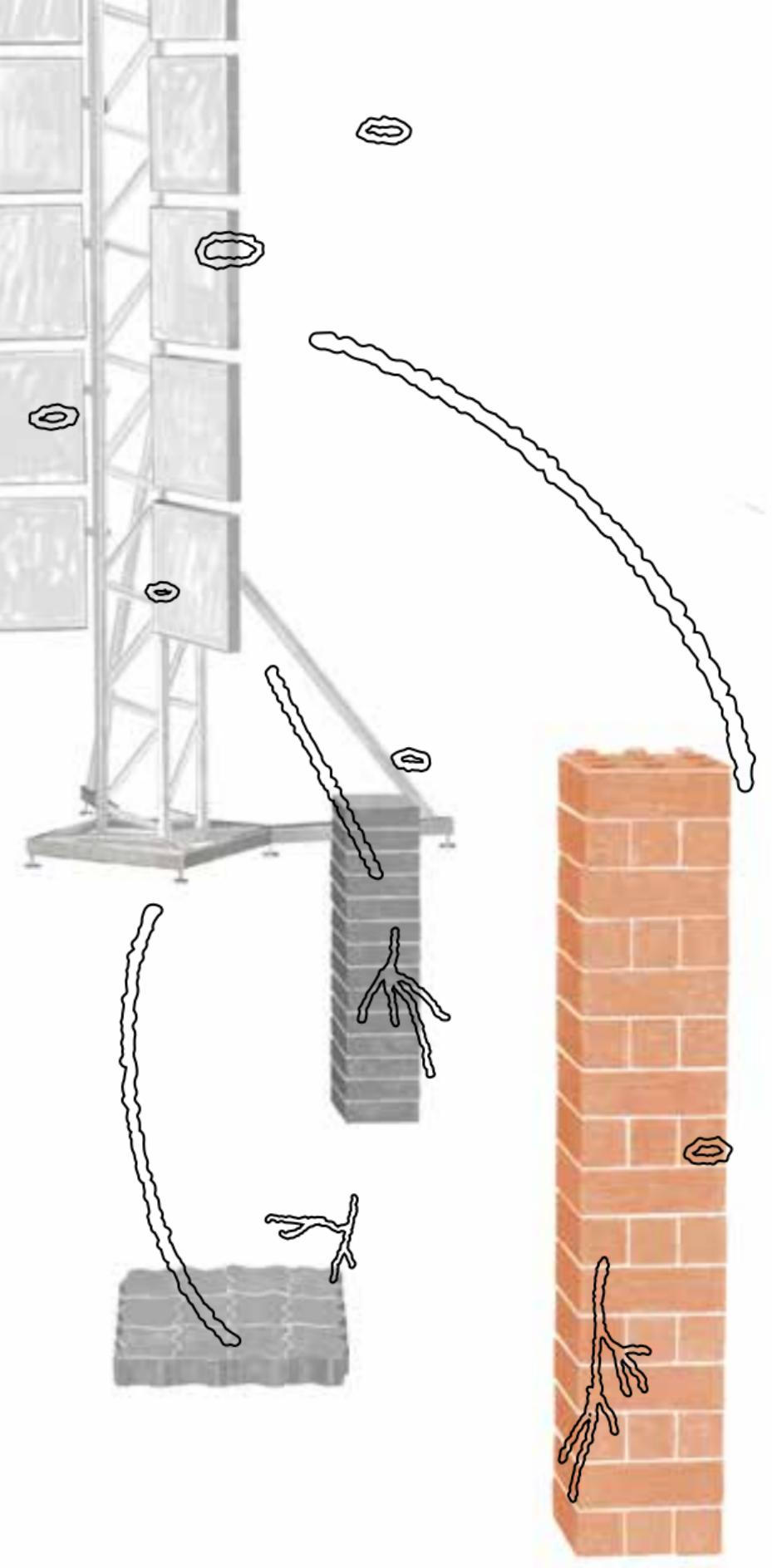


If you want to improve the quality of the material, try searching for a mulberry tree in Bangkok. I bet you can find it growing by the street in less than an hour. Keep an eye on the leaf. There are two types of leaf in a tree— a three- pointed leaf and a rounded one. This plant naturally appears near the living area with a damp environment. The mulberry tree will continuously sprout from the root and tree bud of the mother tree.





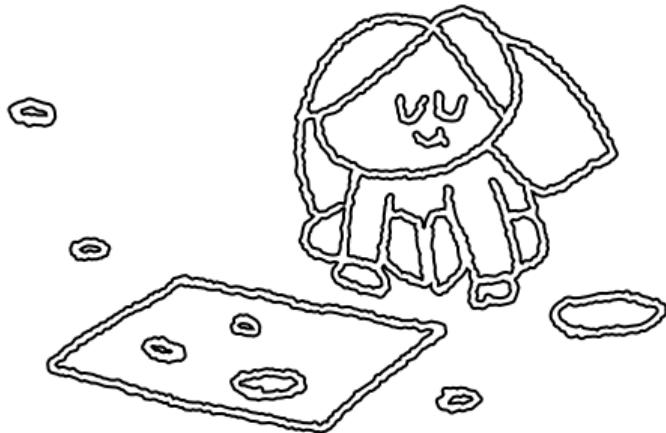
**Let the cracks
guide your way.**

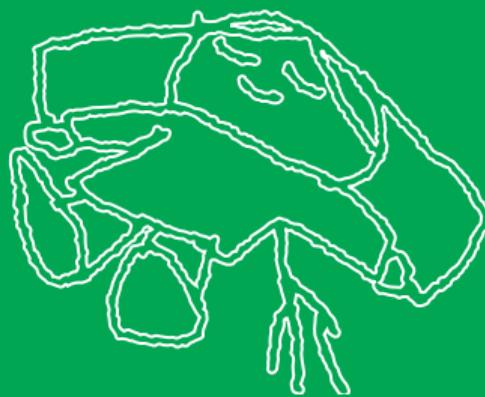


This book was made to tell the story of dialogue, people, and everything I have encountered along my journey, all combined into this project.

Thank you for taking the time to pick up this book and read it all through.

I hope my story gives you an experience and lets your feelings connect with what you see and what exists together.





You see it.

You're the bee,
Seeking the bloom.

You're the seed,
Let it grow.

Keep breathing.

Feel the motion beneath your feet.

Immerse your surroundings.

Be curious.

Challenge assumptions.

Honor what is.

Open your eyes wide.

Seek for possibility.

Trust in evolution.

Let the cracks guide your way.

Unexpected Growth
By Apisara Hophaissarn

This book was published in conjunction
with the Early Years Project 8 (EYP8)
exhibition at the Bangkok Art and Culture
Centre, March 27-June 29, 2025.

First published in March 2025,
in an edition of 100 copies.

Translator
Nawakorn Wattanasiri

Printer
Parbpim Printing, Bangkok

Informant for Urban Biodiversity Walk
Green World Foundation

Informant and Paper Maker
Kozo Studio
Jirath Luamarin (P'Kae)



