

arshad hakim
portfolio

to see the sun at midnight/loving against time

This is the story of the changing of the light.

Of what transformations are and what they do.

This is the story of an eclipse, or many eclipses—the change in and of light making us believe in the magnificent and the insignificant.

The film takes its cue from *The Stellar Rays of the Stars* by Al-Kindi and a re-reading of Iblis's narrative by Husayn Ibn Mansur al- Hallaj—foregrounding the image and the phenomena of the eclipse. *The Stellar Rays of the Stars* is an astronomical and astrological treatise by Al-Kindi who was a philosopher during the Abbasid period. He proposed that rays from the stars travel in straight lines and when those rays reach an object they carried some part of the star within them; in turn affecting the object that the light has touched. Working with Al-Kindi's framework, I speculate on how he would frame shadows—light being blocked by an object and the effect light being blocked can have on us.

Three Sufi Saints re-read the story of Iblis and propose that he is a lover par-excellence. The narrative of Iblis mimics the narrative of the fall of Lucifer within Judo-Christian theology. The Sufis defend Iblis by stating that he does not prostrate to Adam as per God's command, because he is so much in love with God that he couldn't take his eyes off him.

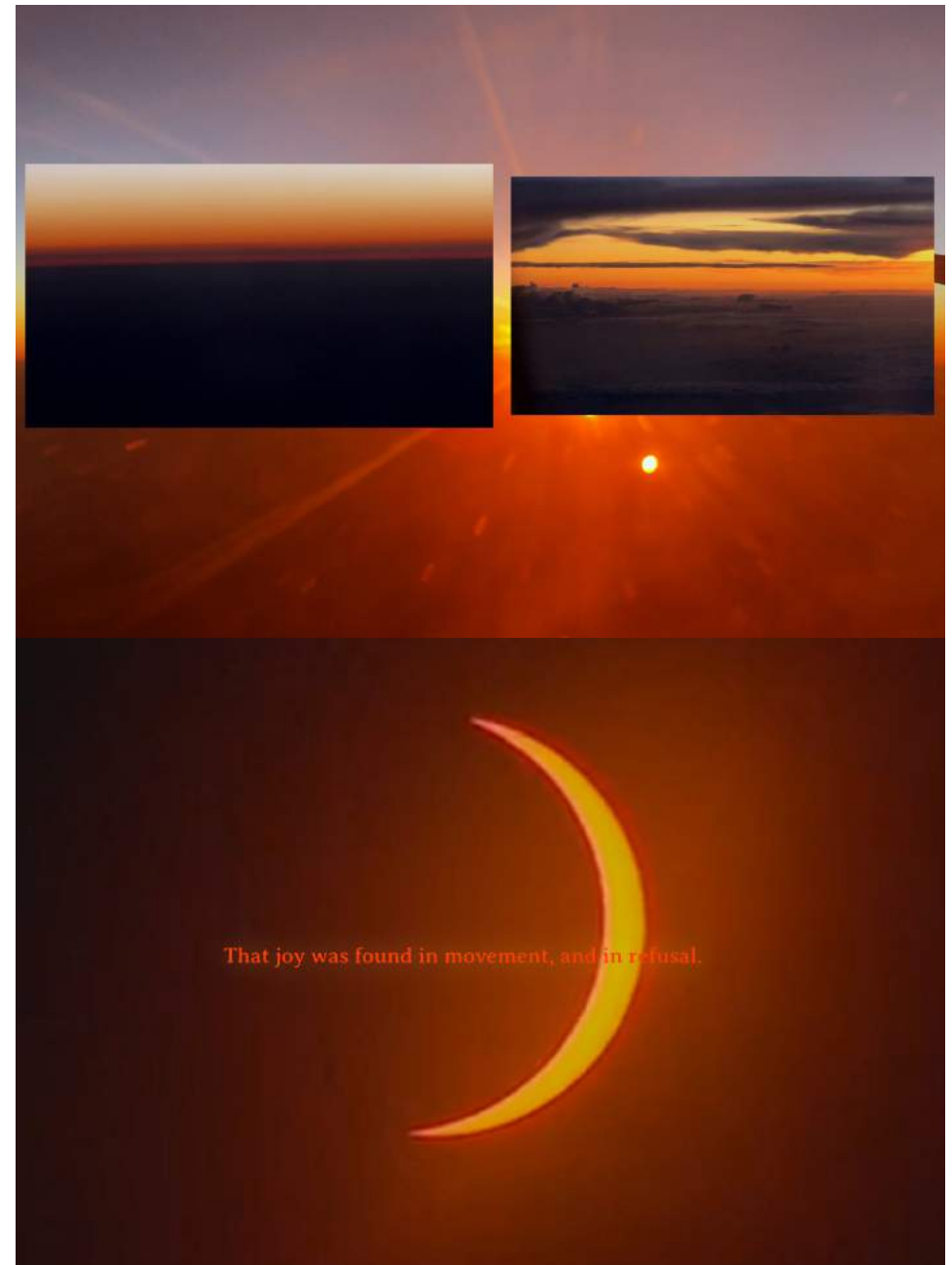
Within Sufi Iconography, Iblis is known as the Peacock Angel, Black Light and the Tresses of a Lover.

Framed within a dialogue, the film speculates the effects of light changing and marks them on the registers of the ethereal, the emotional and the theological.

<https://vimeo.com/744919130>

Password: Iblis2022

Digital film with sound, 28minutes 34sec
2023

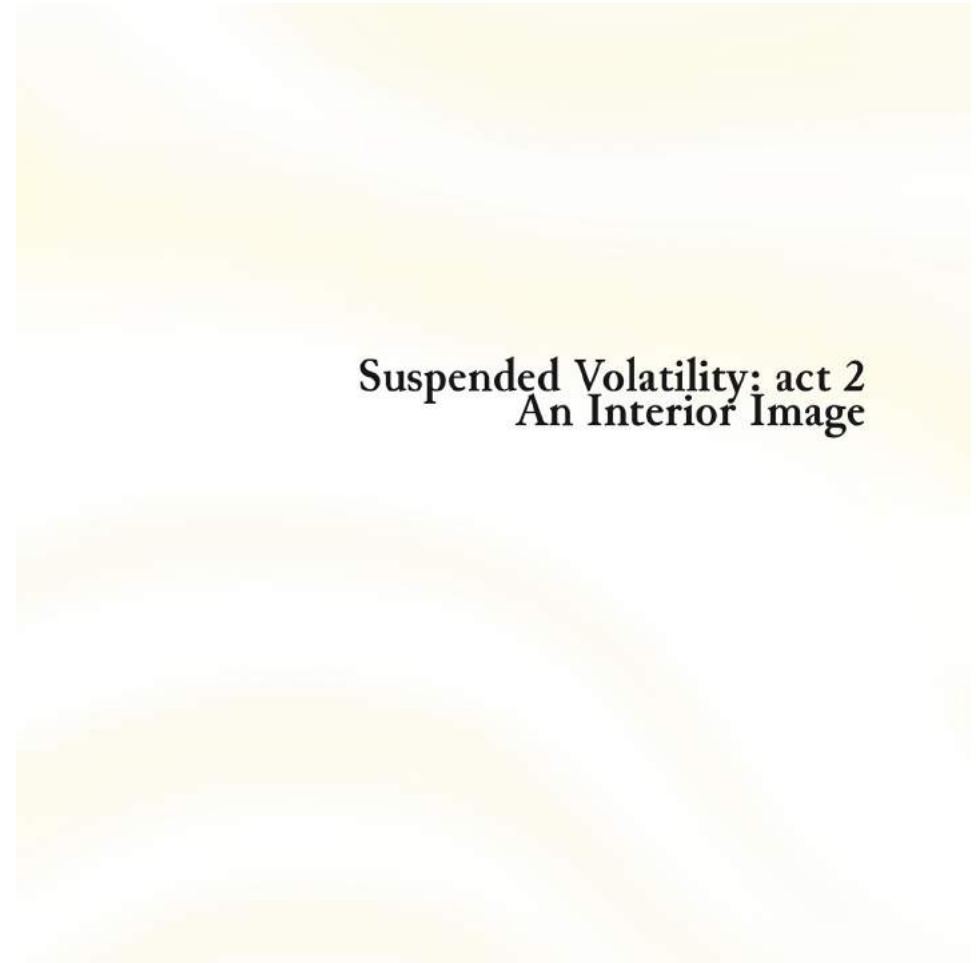


That joy was found in movement, and in refusal.

suspended volatility: act 2 **an interior image**

In an experimental piece—part-prose, part-poem—Arshad Hakim stays with an image. Through jumps, cuts and loops he tells and never shows, a moment as freeze-frame, as screenshot, as kinetic imprint. A force that suspends everything. Interlaced with music, literature and theory, *Suspended Volatility* takes us on the transmutative path of a lived moment to image to memory to software and finally, to history.

—Arushi Vats, Editor, *ASAP Fiction*



Link to the text, [here](#)
2022

ghost rhythms

digital print, gouache, gold ink, and gold vinyl on paper
21 x 29.7 cm each
2022





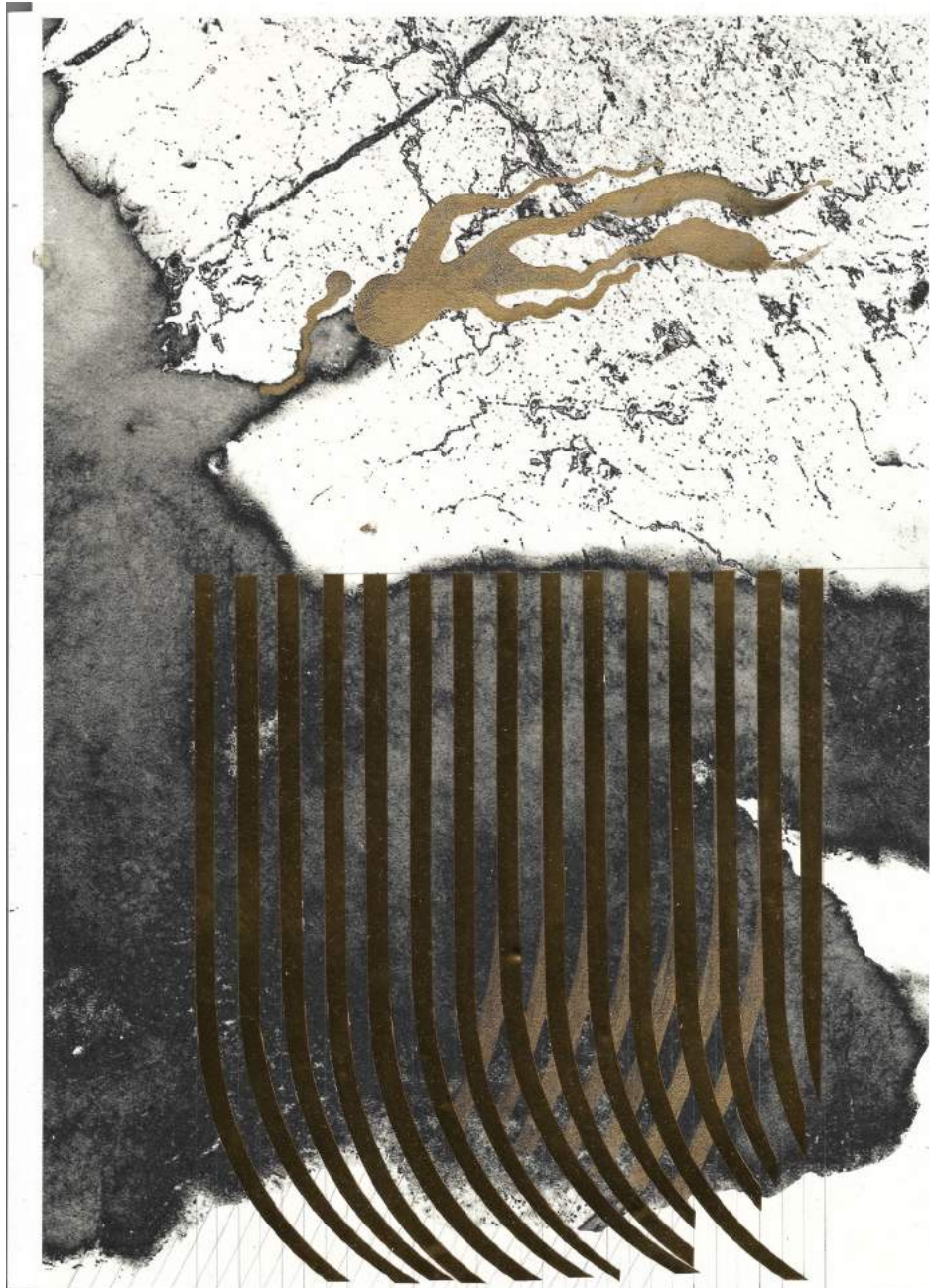
1. *The presence of another being mobilises your attention, your senses. That feeling grows, becomes a desire to repeat the experience. It becomes an itinerary. A voyage. The imagination takes over that reality and starts building fantasies, dreams, projects . . . It creates its own necessity, and in some people encompasses the whole of life. It becomes that voice in the night that tells you “I love you,” and that knocks your whole being off balance. Ultimately, it reaches the zones where you question the whole universe; it domesticates thinking, it ends as an addiction. And then, in the tragic cases, it falls into an abyss, where there are cries of pain, where the lovers lose sense of all dimensions, of all reality. These are times when a poet can say that love changes the direction of time.*¹ Linear time, cyclical time, geological time, cosmic time, a time where I could feel your heartbeat on mine, a time where distance is additive. What happens to people who live their life without any yearning? Who do they become?

¹ Adnan, Etel. *The Cost of Love We Are Not Willing to Pay*. Hatje Cantz, 2011.



2. A desire not named desire; a rhythm not named rhythm.

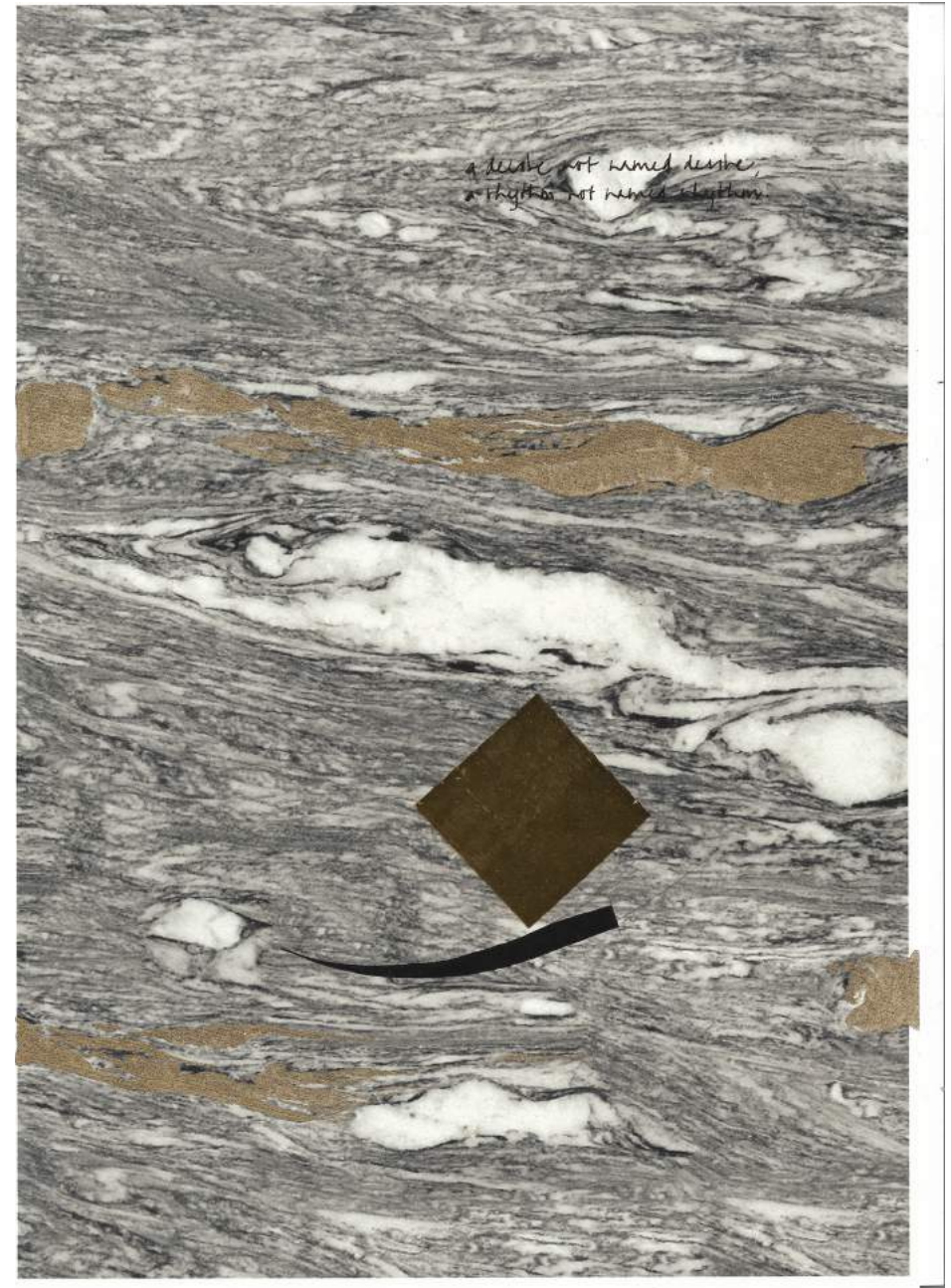




distance, velvet distance
distance, velvet distance
distance, velvet distance
distance, velvet distance



3. Distance versus intimacy,
distance versus separation,
distance versus resentment
and, distance versus beauty

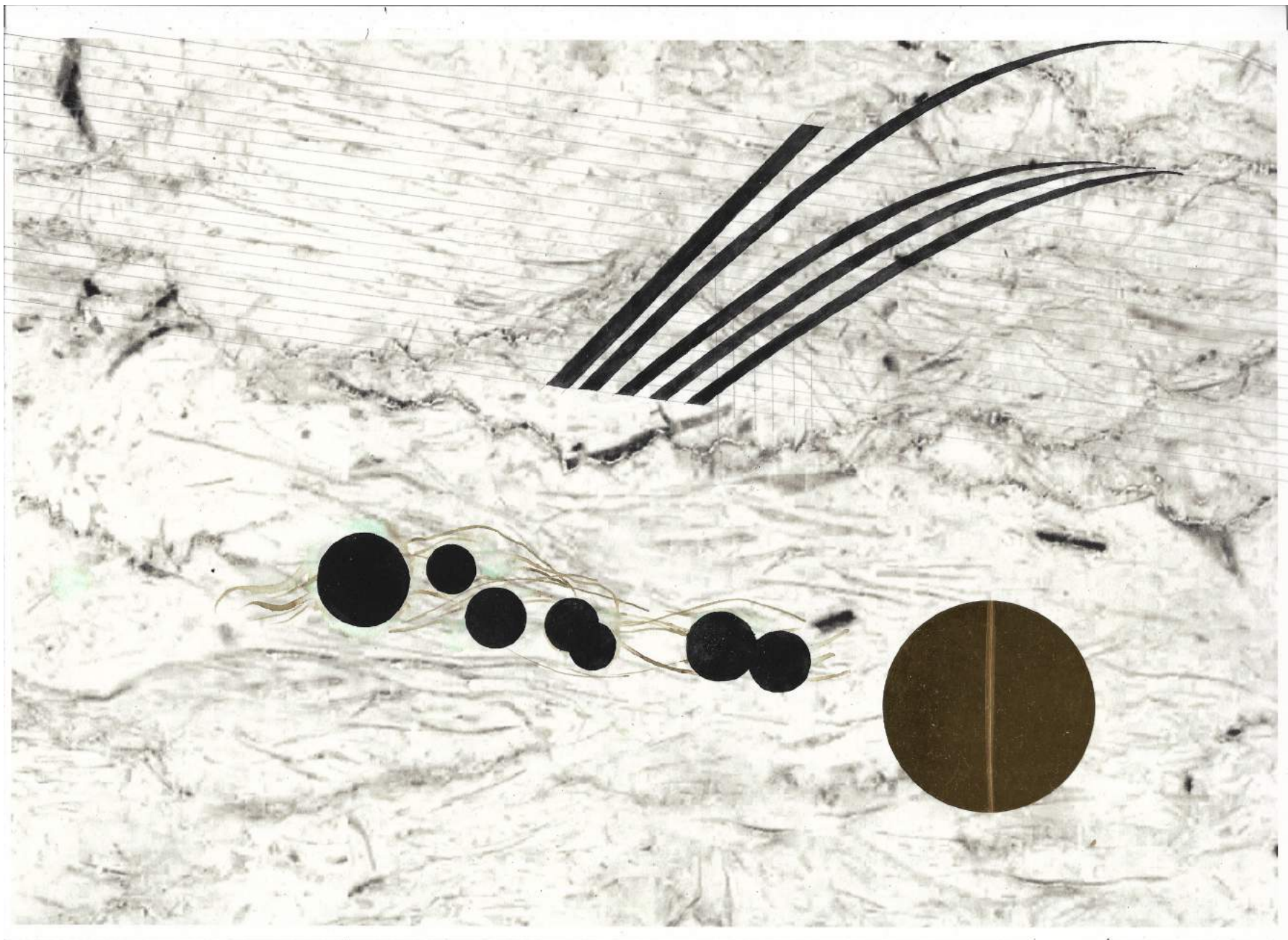






4. "This last phenomenon is presented to the camera by Jan Zalasiewicz, the British geologist who was one of the first proponents of the Anthropocene... Standing in front of a tunnel excavated into the sandstone, he describes "Ghost Strata", theoretical lines of strata imagined by geologists in places where rocks would once have been but have since eroded or been destroyed by humans, because "even rocks are just passing through". In other words, they are projections, invisible yet *omnipresent*, which cumulatively amount to the entirety of the Earth's history." (From a review written by Giovanni Marchini Camia of Ghost Strata, a film by Ben Rivers).

A ghost strata as an inscription of time and of capital machinery:
a ghost strata as a cinematic space; ghost rhythms.



this is the rhythm of the night

This lecture is about how a body moves while one is dancing, what sensations are generated during this event through the body movements and how these movements lead to zones of inflicted autonomy. Taking this as its premise, the lecture describes various conditions that occur within this temporal frame and how the body and communality become vectors—a Temporary Autonomous Zone that operates within the frame of the night.

The lecture takes two digressions in order to illustrate vectors of movements that may not rest within the body but are rooted in the body—taking instances from cosmology and Islamic theology. The lecture also has components of electronic music—techno, jungle, amongst others, which provide an mise-en-scene to this thought.

Performance Document [here](#)



Lecture Performance
approximately 50 min
2019

at the overturn

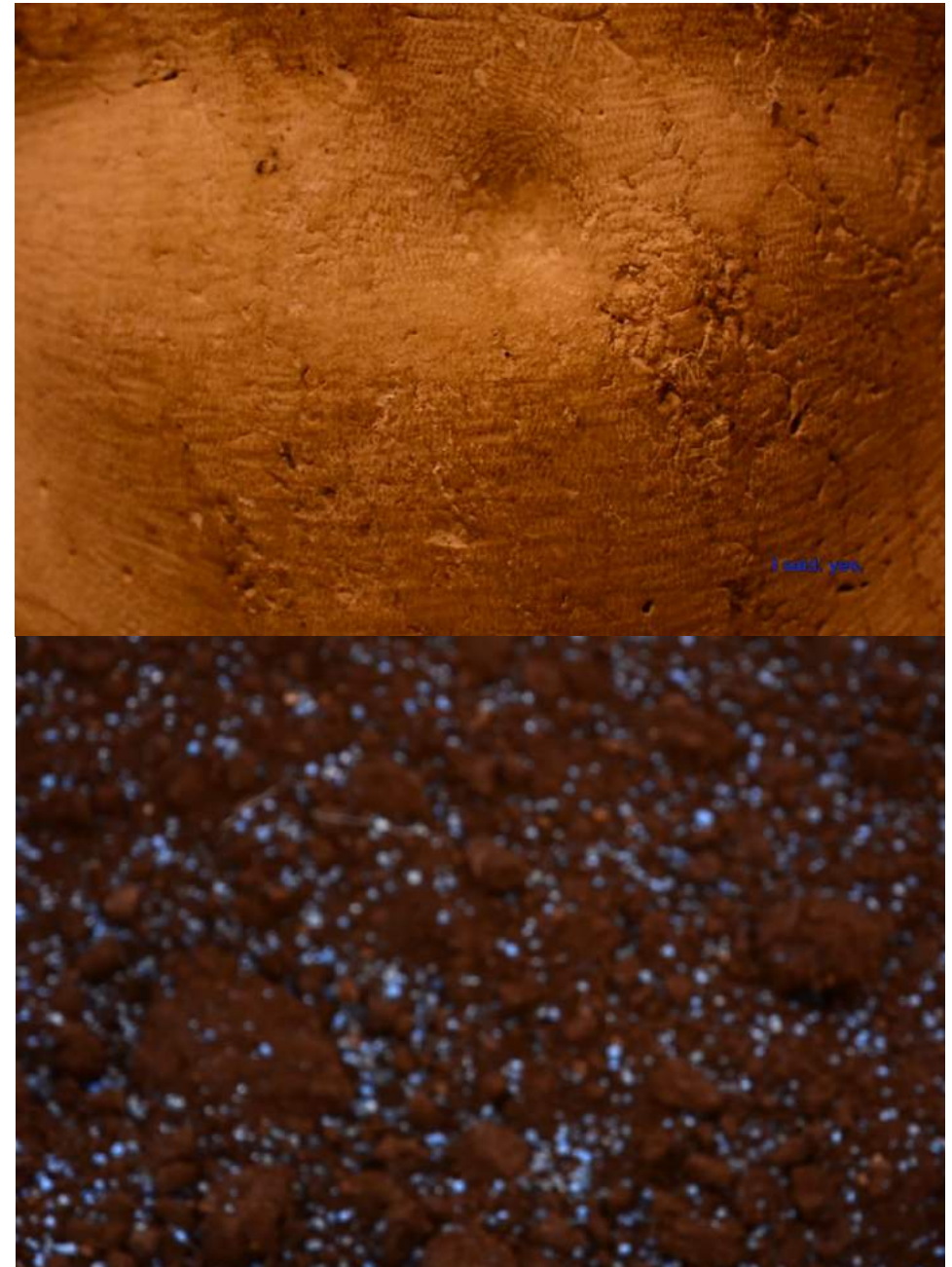
The film's central pivot rests on the idea of a dislodged and a fragmented sense of consciousness, where boundaries—between what one is and what is not—are hazy. As a result, this consciousness lacks a centre, and is constantly looking for one. By doing so, it acts as a parasite looking for a host, to attach itself to and consume. Linked with the idea of the parasite, is the idea of nihilist subjectivity; where points of not knowing and points of meaninglessness become generative sites for forging ideas around this dislodged consciousness.

Taking this as a base, the film explores these ideas of parasitic time in relation to a lover; notions of heat, self-immolation and how they are intrinsically tied to notions of nihilism. The film is sourced from a range of ideas and sequences, which include: a confrontation scene from *Solaris*, 1972 (By Andrei Tarkovsky), *Self Immolation* by Qung Duc, 1963 in Saigon, Vietnam and The Promethean myth.

<https://vimeo.com/280223922>

Password: attheoverturn00

Digital Video and sound, 17min 55sec
2018



it was high noon and I slept with the Sun (After Blade Runner, 1982)

My impulse of making this video was to repurpose a sequence from Blade Runner 1982 by Ridley Scott. I was intrigued by the sequence where Roy (replicant) confronts Dr. Tyrell (Head of the company who manufactures these replicants), asking the doctor to extend his life (according to the plot the replicants are very human like. Their life is cut short to 4 years in order to prevent any revolt from them). My intrigue was: What does it mean to ask for more life? Why are we plagued by this existential question and how does it address the time that we live in?

The second video is a found footage taken from the NASA archives. It captures solar flares and magnetic waves emitted from the sun for a period of a month, which has been compressed to a minute. The piece is played on two separate screens, which are placed keeping the back of the screens together.

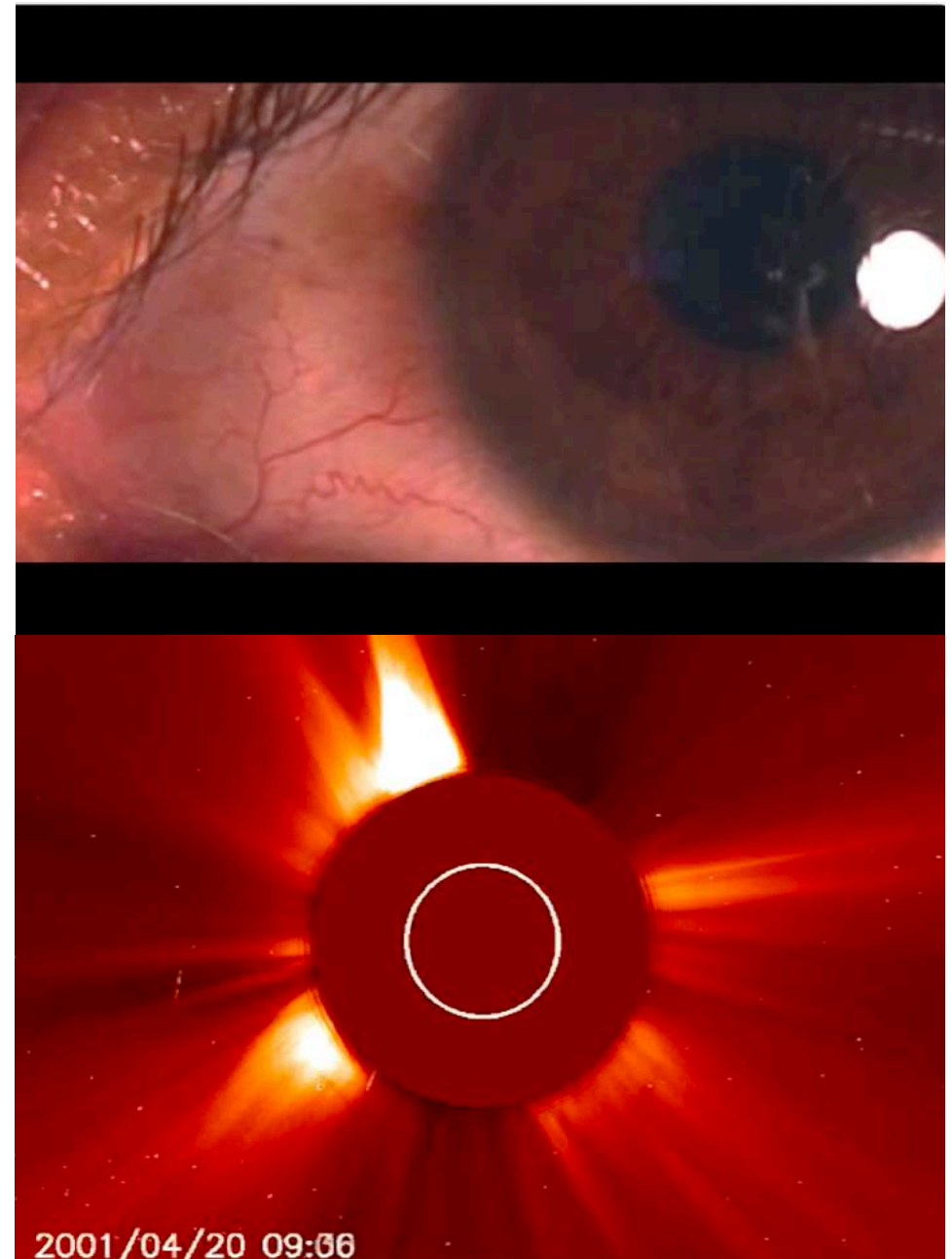
<https://vimeo.com/228544716>

Password: eye2017

<https://vimeo.com/228541296>

Password: solarflare2017

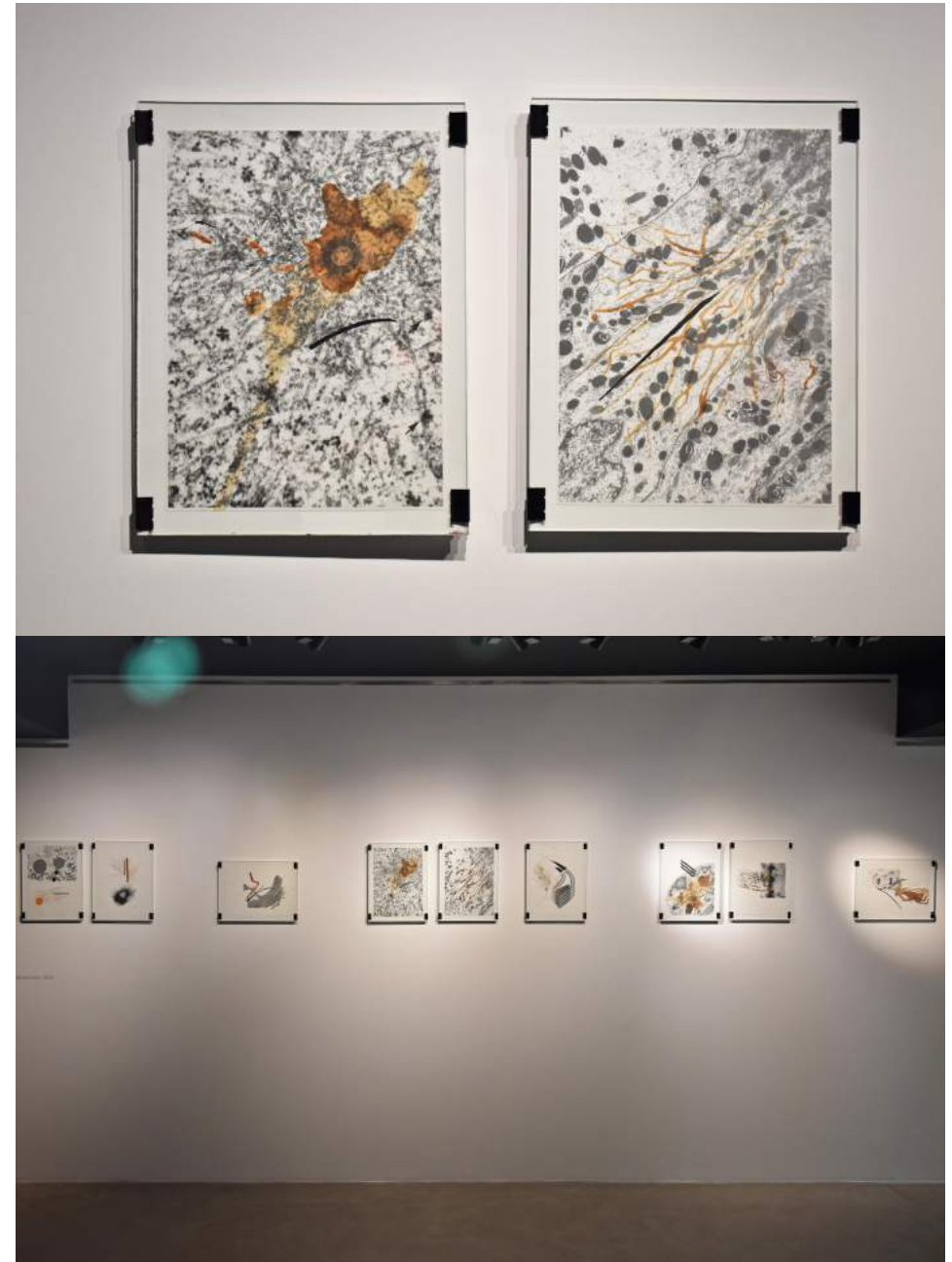
Digital Video and sound, 3minutes 40sec and 1 minute; loop time: 13min 06sec
2017



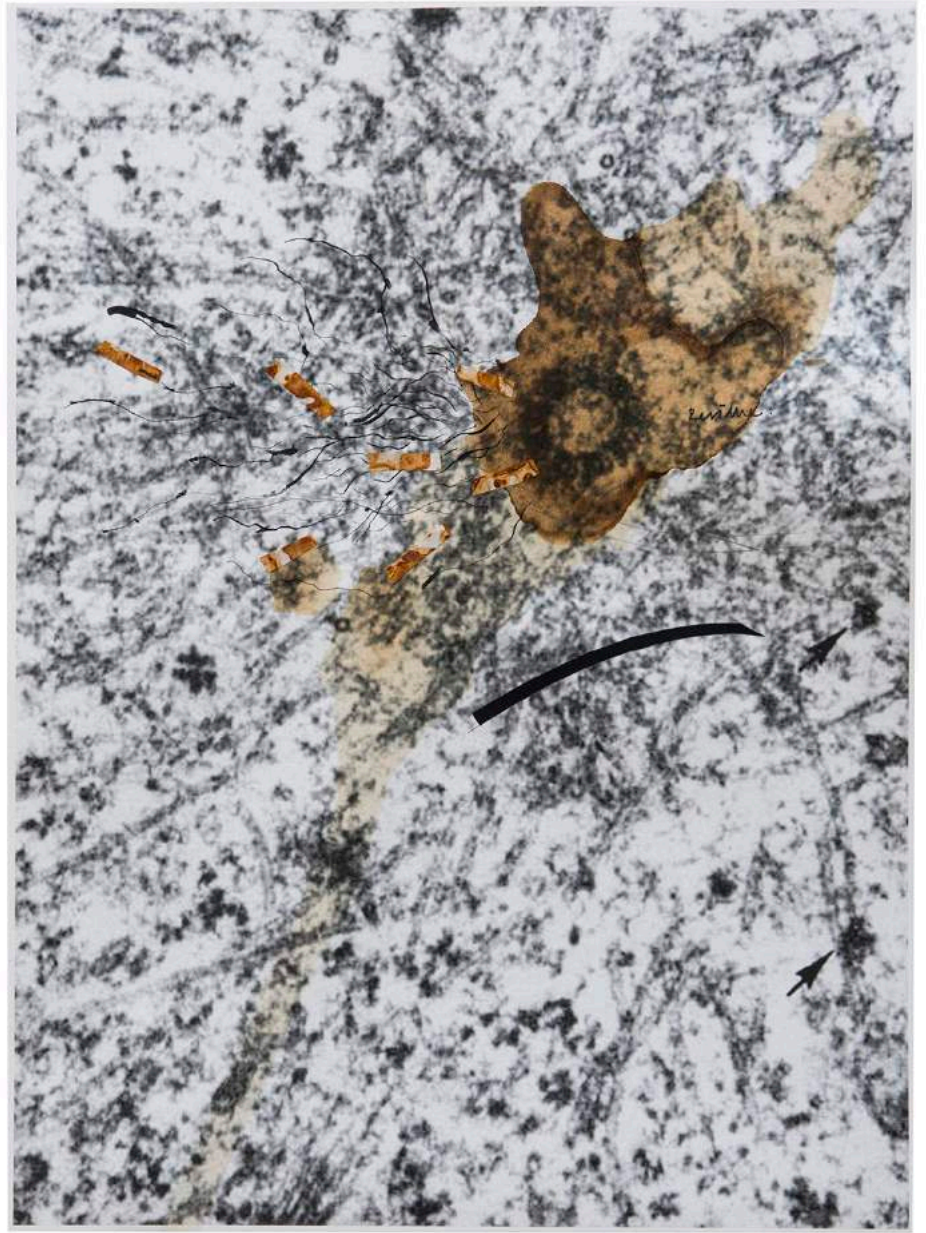
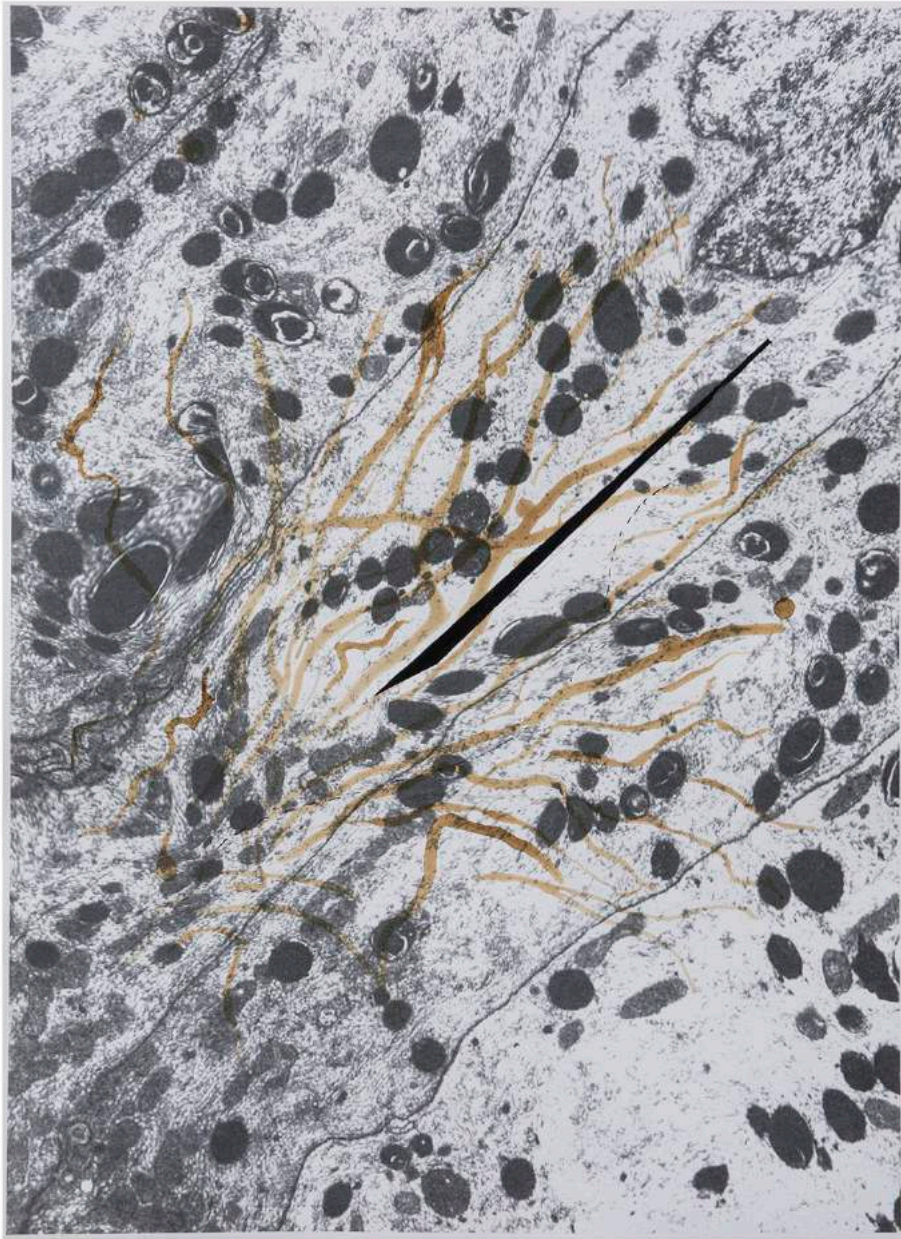
stages in return that I did not want

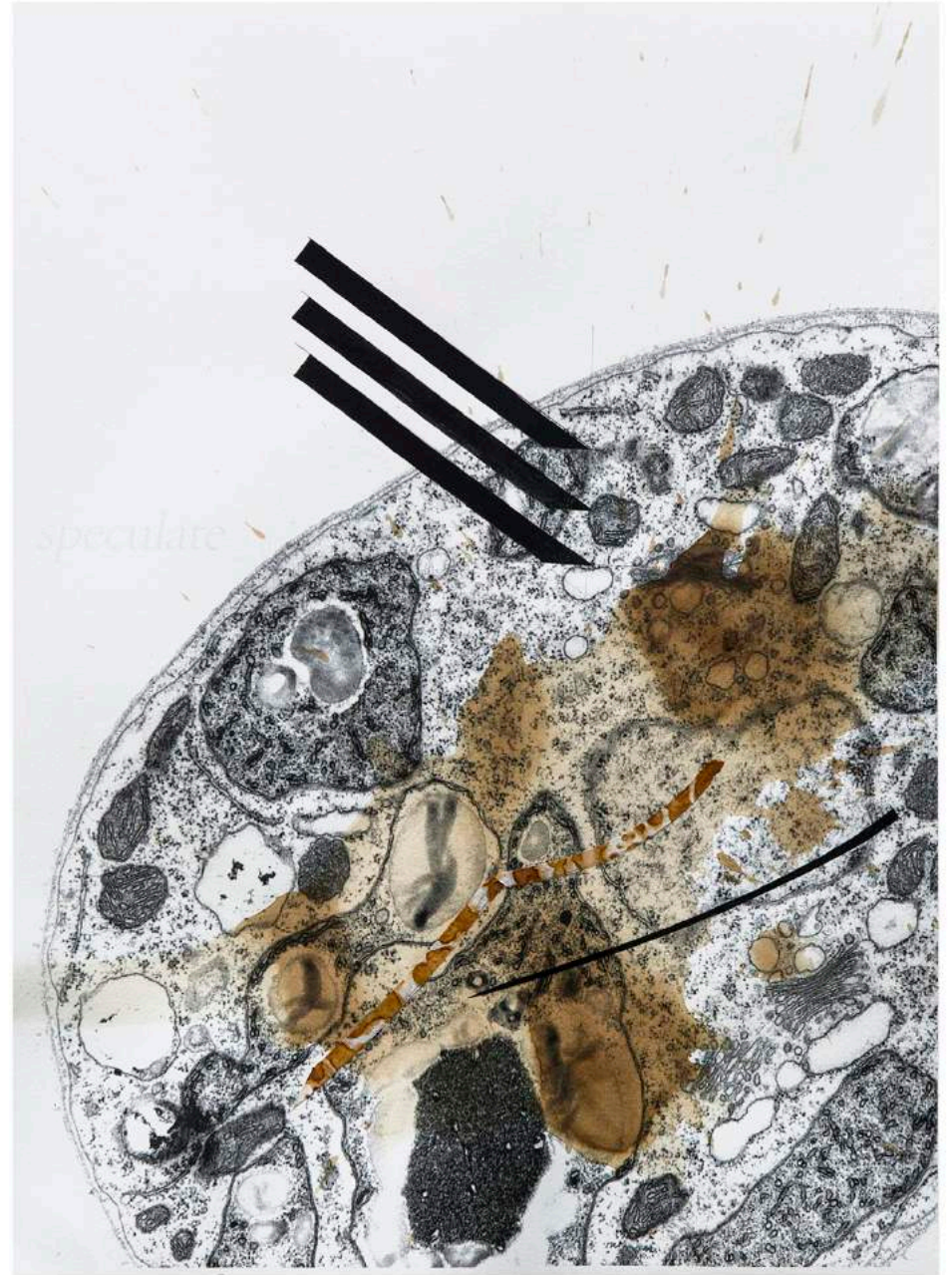
These set of drawings are of an internal monologue of a cyborg in love. The cyborg couldn't recollect what the monologue was, it only remembered how it felt, and "feeling" was alien to it. It thought of its body, what responses the body had to its condition and how memory shaped what it felt. In this case, feeling something was to disintegrate.

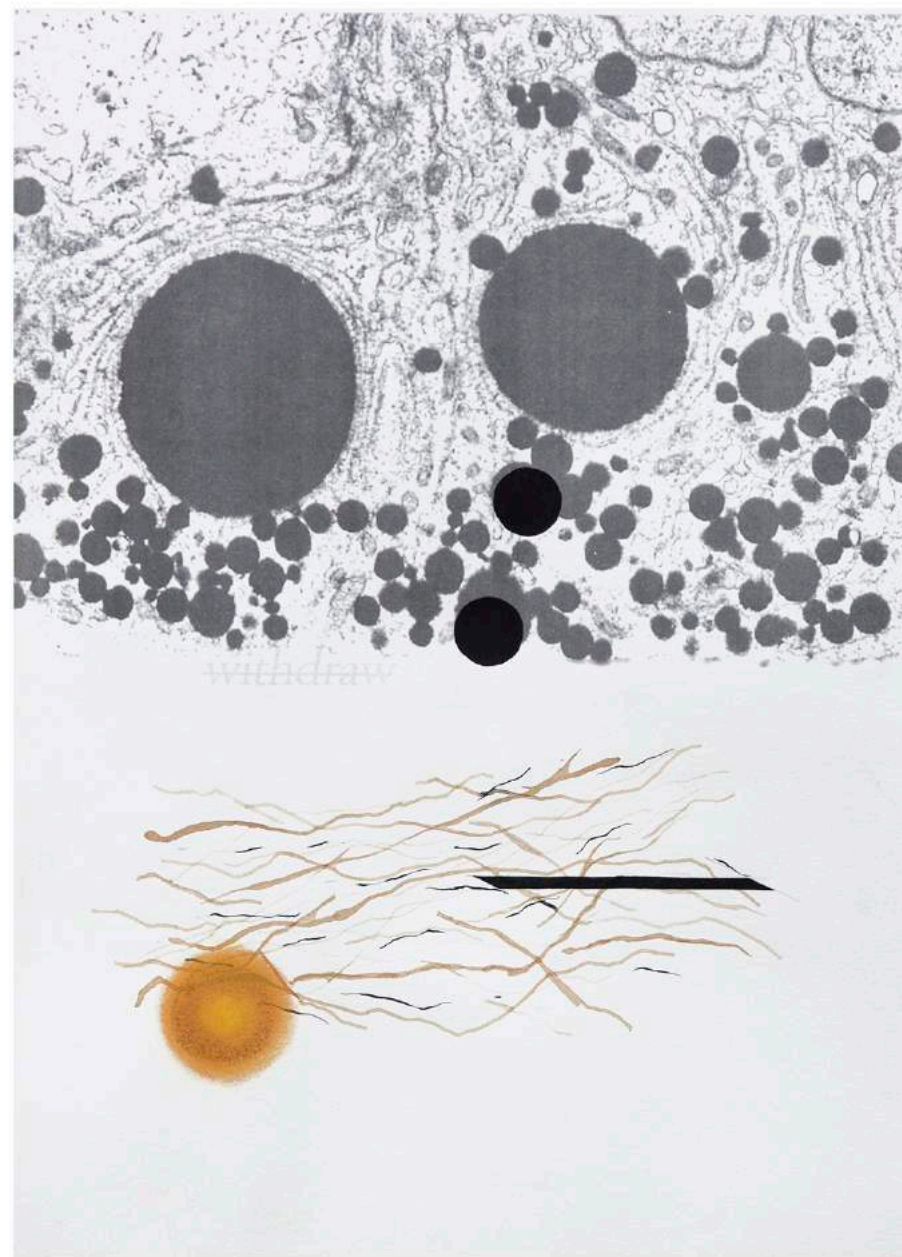
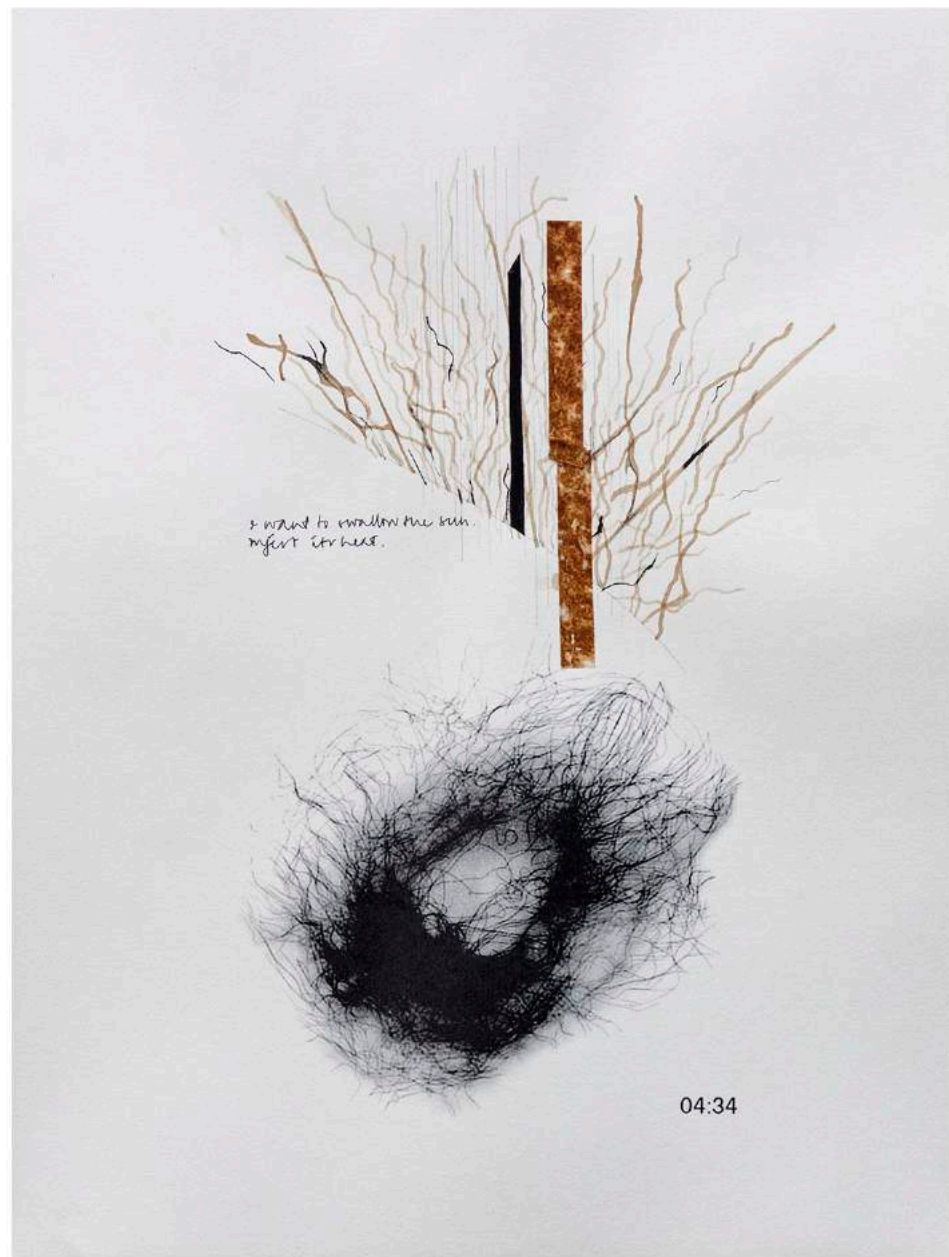
Images within these drawings are sourced from an open-source cellular archive.

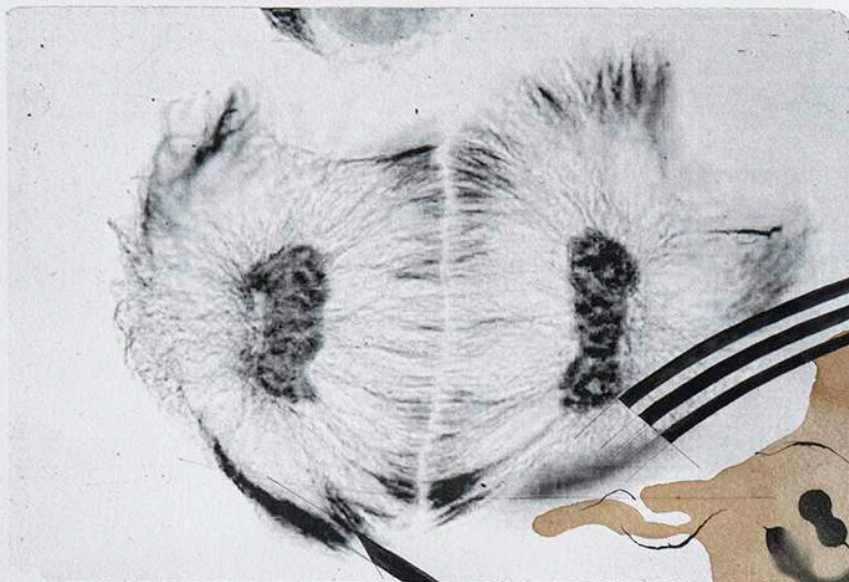


Digital print, rust transfer, tea stain and gouache on paper
11X15 inches (9 images)
2016









ayer in return & did not want.

have it etc.

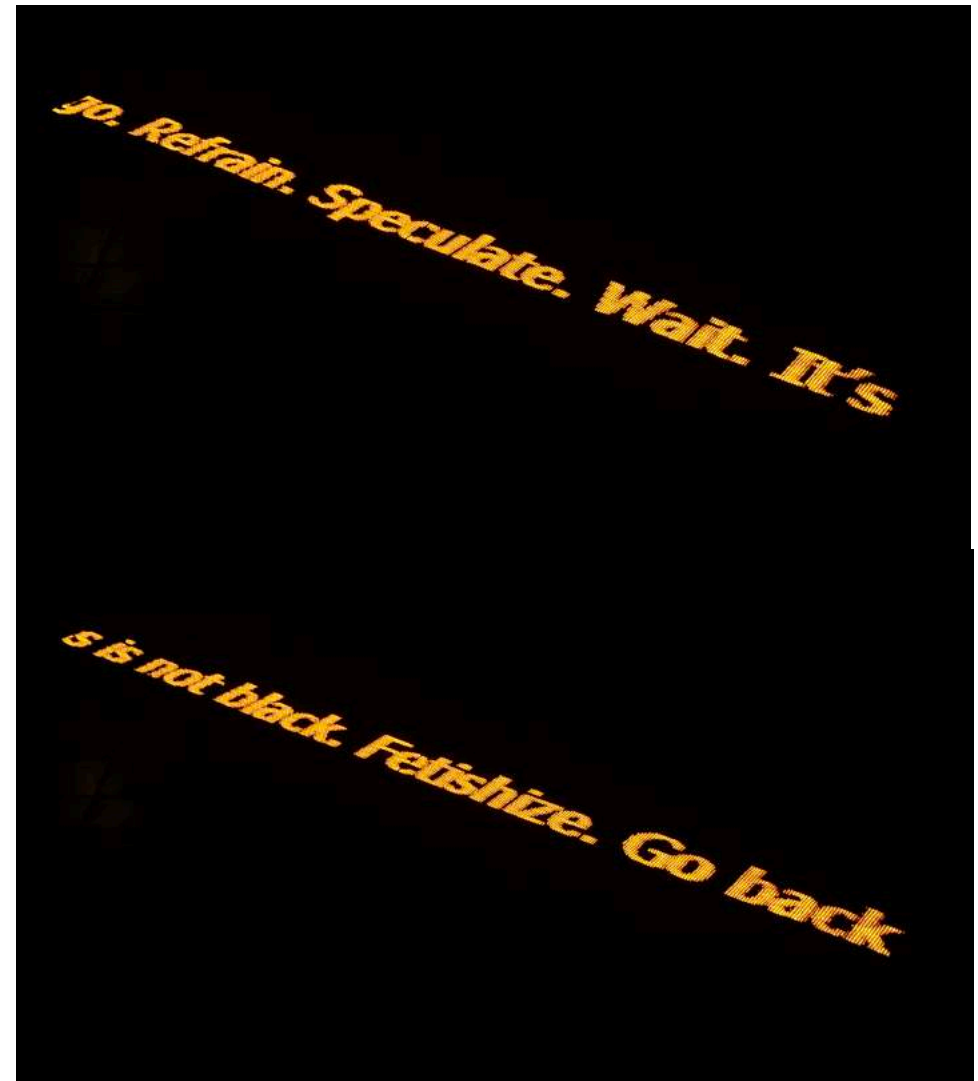






ouroboros

This work was conceived while these few words kept going around in my mind: Refrain/Resist/ Hesitate/Wait/Agitate/Dance/Red/Inertia/Speculate/Rush/Revolt. Additionally, I had recently seen Sergei Parajanov's, *Colour of Pomegranates*, and there is a line within in it, which states that 'you are fire, your dress is made out of fire.' This line was tweaked to 'I am fire, my dress is made out of fire' and was running with the words on the LED board.



<https://vimeo.com/197034799>

Password: ouroboros

12X1.5X1 feet, LED Scrolling Board
2016

Flubber, 2002 (After Flubber, 1997)

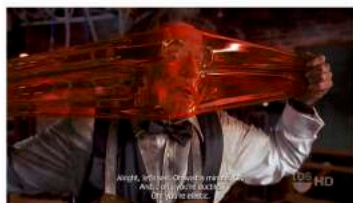
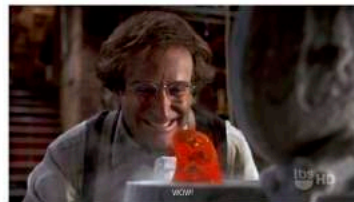
Flubber is a 1997 rom-com movie, a remake of *The Absent-Minded Professor* (1961), directed by Les Mayfield and starring Robin Williams. The section that I have taken from the movie is when Robin Williams is making Flubber at his basement cum lab. This section becomes ironic as a scientist is producing a material, which he does not have much control over and has human like qualities—Williams gives a strand of his hair into the solution that makes Flubber. The movie becomes relevant for me as I had seen this during the 2002, Godhra pogrom which was state funded and I was living in Ahmedabad, where I was affected. This memory resurfaced during the Dadri lynching episode (2015), where the university where I was studying in was a few miles away from Dadri and I used to go there almost every second day.

9 snapshots accompany the video from the same clip, where Flubber being green in color has changed to red and on the 10th sheet is a dua (prayer) for “ghar ki hifazat”(ayatul kursi)—the sheets being displayed on a light table.

<https://vimeo.com/159900707>
password: flubber2002

Digital Video and sound, 9min 14 sec, on loop
2016



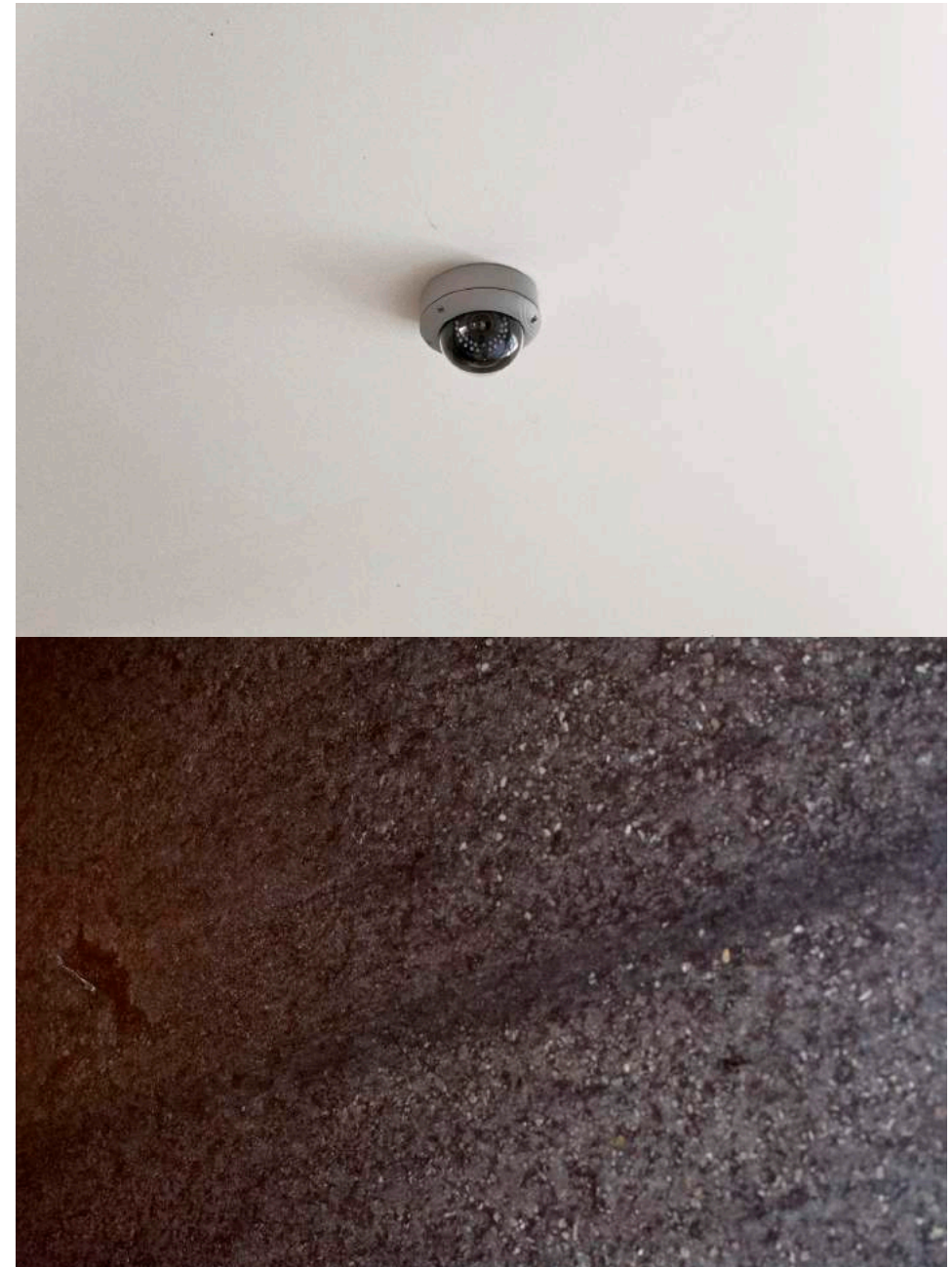
[illegible]

22nd February 2012

9 Snapshots from Flubber, 2002 and handwritten *Ayatul Kursi*
Inkjet prints and ink on paper 8.3 x 11.7 inches (10 images)
2016

static photographs

The photographs were shot during a storm, later edited out and synced with static sound.

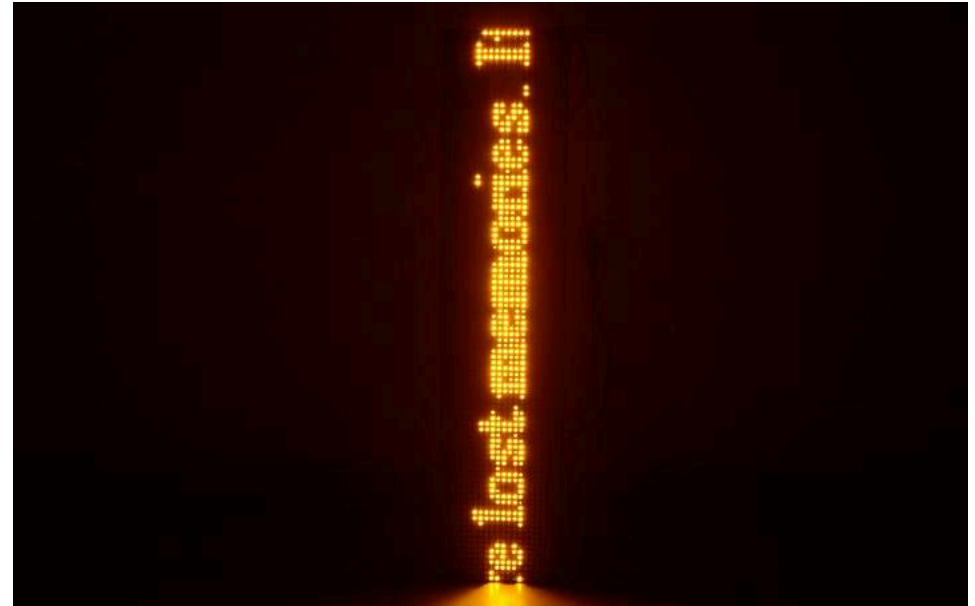


<https://vimeo.com/171442212>

(8X12)X12 photogrpahs, archival ink on paper, sound
2016

nobody really knows (After 2046, 2004)

The LED strip came as a response to living in a homogenised space and the sense of alienation that it creates. I kept going back to the opening sequence in 2046 by Wong Kar Wai, where the year 2046 is seen as a time warp and where memories are held still. In that sense, the homogenised space where I was living became 2046, where everything was held very still and I could move in and out of it. Taking this as my trigger and from what I had written, a new text was written in order to intensify the sense of alienation.



<https://vimeo.com/159464598>

Password: nobody2015

LED Running strip, 3.5 X 1.7 feet
2015

Are you going to rekindle the blaze?
Is life without fire unbearable for you?
(After, Lessons of Darkness, 1992,ff Werner Herzog)

Lessons of Darkness, a Sci-Fi/War film by Herzog; documents the retreat after the first Gulf War. The film is largely shot from a helicopter and has biblical narrations as audio. As an aftermath of the war, there are huge oil spills, which documented from a helicopter; seen from above, one does not know if it is water or oil. In order to fix the underground oil pipelines, the workers burn the oil in order to exhaust it. What results is a column of fire. Placed along side a biblical narrative, the image becomes potent. The entire film is divided into chapters, the image that is used is taken from the chapter titled, "Life without Fire" (Trans. Leben ohne feuer)

The audio is as follows:

leben ohne feuer (live without fire)

Trans: two figures are approaching an oil well.

One of them is holding a lighted torch.

What are they up to?

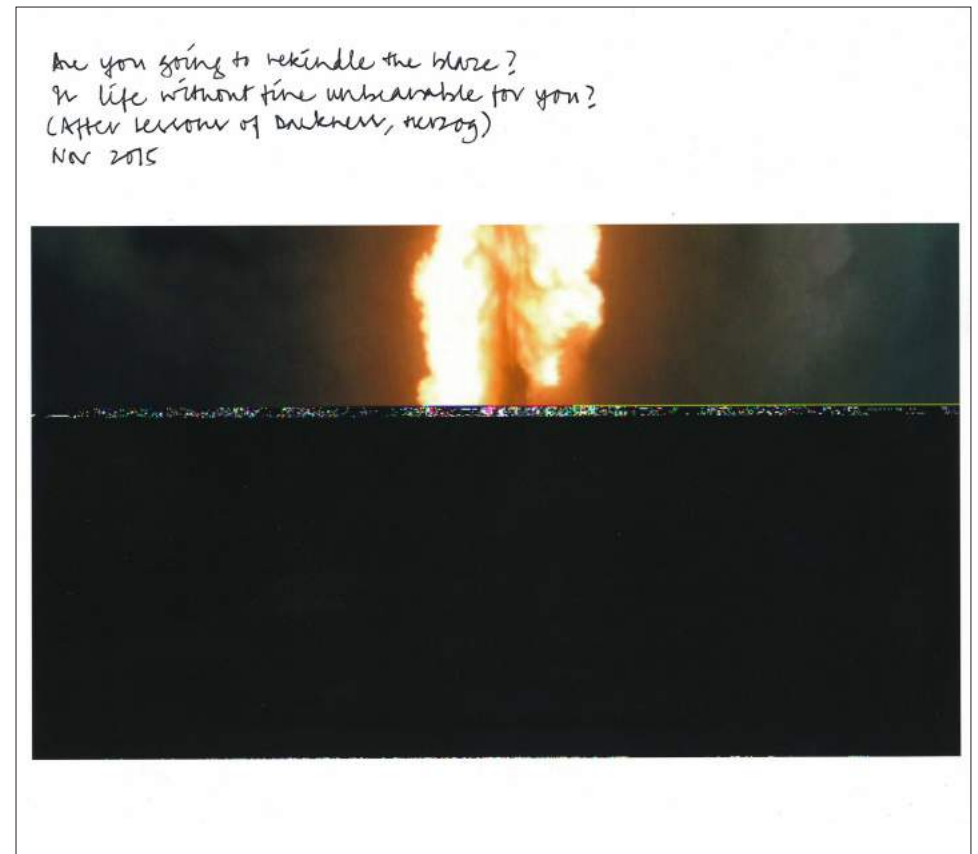
Are they going to rekindle the blaze?

Is life without fire become impossible for them?

The last two lines which is the title of the image is changed to:

Are you going to rekindle the blaze?

Is life without fire unbearable for you?



Archival pigment print (edition of 3)
8.3 X 7.07 inches
2015



arshad hakim is an artist and filmmaker. He is interested in conditions of impasse, interludes, parentheses, suspension and interruptions. He works with the essay form; forms of narrative that are first-person, fragmentary and non-linear; and makes video/film essays and drawings derived from philosophy, film, theology, music and poetry.

Link to CV, [here](#).

arshadhakim19@gmail.com