

CLARA MAÏDA

PORTFOLIO - 2023



Photograph: Puzzling puzzles - © Clara Maïda, New York, 2012

A SELECTION OF PAINTINGS, VISUAL INSTALLATIONS,  
DRAWINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

## A SELECTION OF PAINTINGS

**Pillness**

A triptych of acrylic paintings on canvas

2023



White Gesso. Black Gesso. Acrylic paintings (white, black, turquoise blue). Pouring medium. Various palette knives  
Collage of aluminum blister packages. 3 cotton canvases (100x50cm x 3)

**Pillness** Painting 1 (top)**Pillness** Painting 2 (centre, detail)

**Pillness** is a triptych of acrylic paintings on canvas with mixed media techniques.

The title combines the words "pill" and "illness". It reflects a kind of "pill's disease", the addiction to medication that can appear when their use becomes excessive. French and German people would be for instance the largest users of medication in Europe.

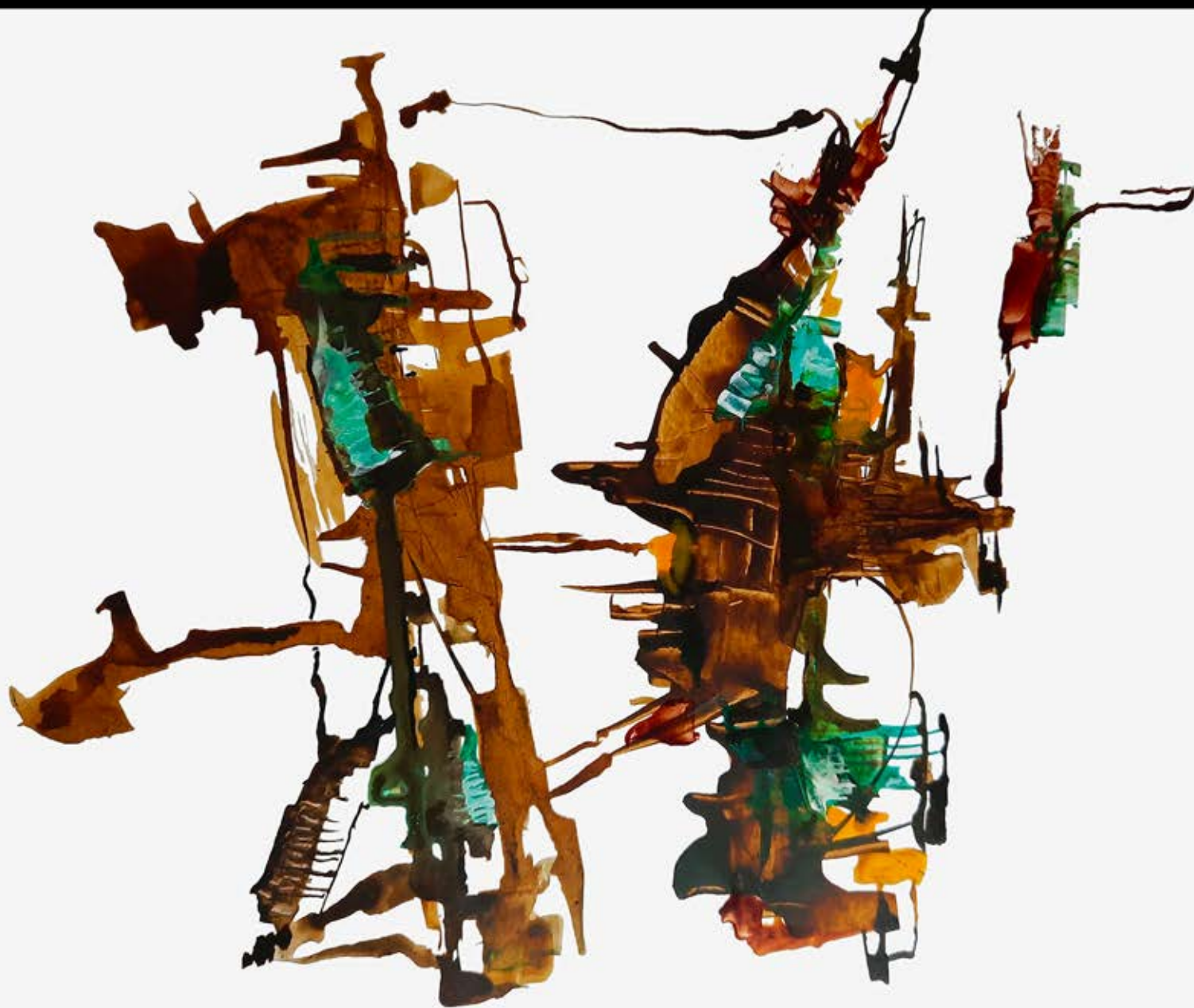
The proliferation of blister packages on each painting suggests this overuse by tracing some paths that take possession of the pictorial space. A cartography of silver lines emerges from the background whose dark and thick texture evokes tar and reminds us that beyond the potential pollution of the body induced by an overuse of medicines, the accumulation of packages and the numerous chemical residues in waste water produce an additional pollution of the environment.

[See the webpage of PILLNESS](#)

## Rorsch'Art

A series of acrylic ink paintings on paper – Ink painting 1

2022



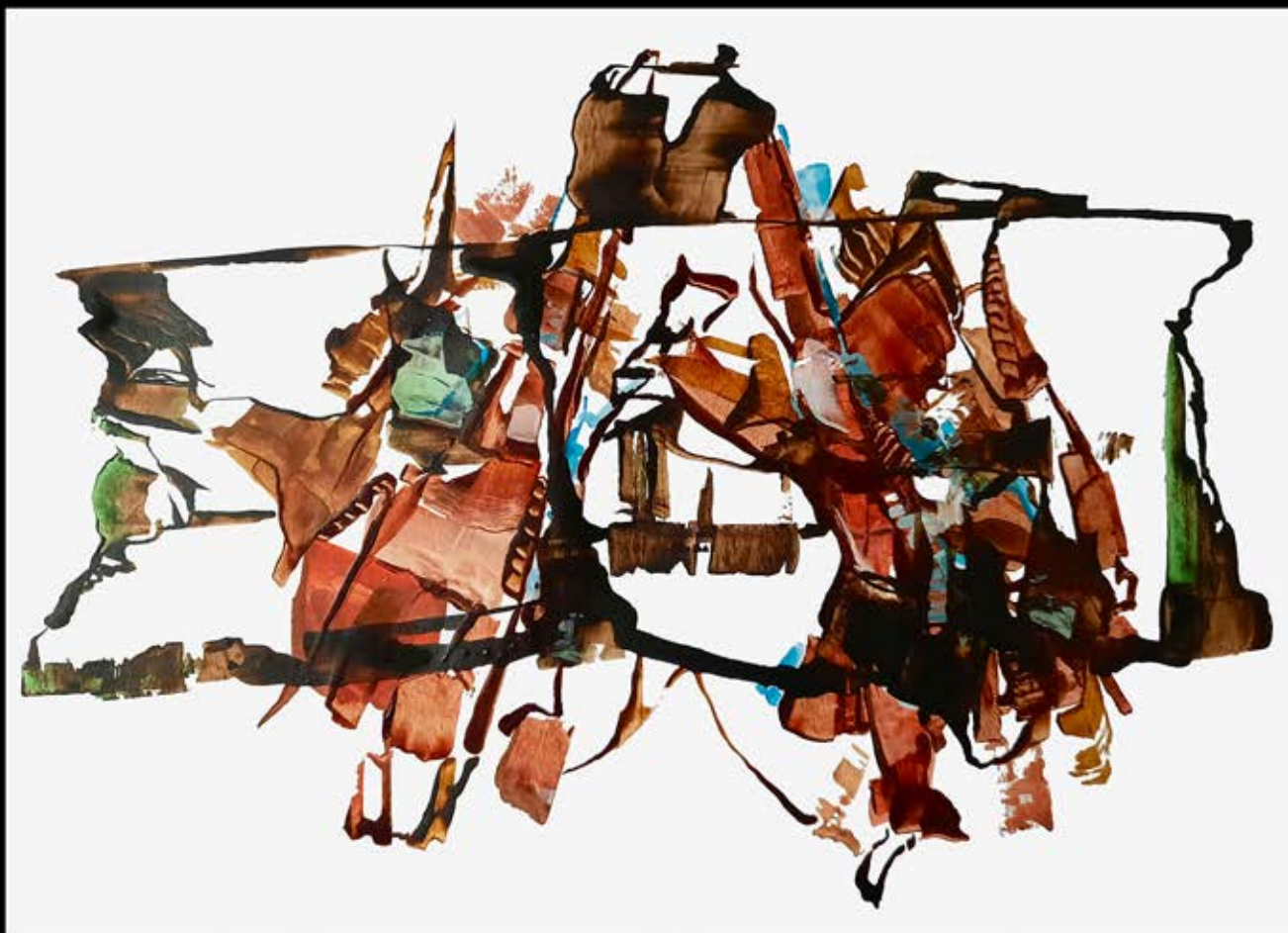
Acrylic inks with various colours. Palette knife. White technical paper (24x32cm, 200g)

**Rorsch'Art** is a series of acrylic ink paintings in progress which alludes to Rorschach projective test. The 10 cards of this test present symmetrical inkblots - 5 black, 2 two-colour (black and red) et 3 polychrome cards - and they are shown in a specific order.

The series proposes a somehow critical distance. It presents a distorted symmetry as well as more complex colours and shapes than those of the test. It suggests that the graphic conception of the latter is a little systematic and can eventually induce a preformatted interpretation of the answers given by the persons who undergo the test.

**Rorsch'Art**

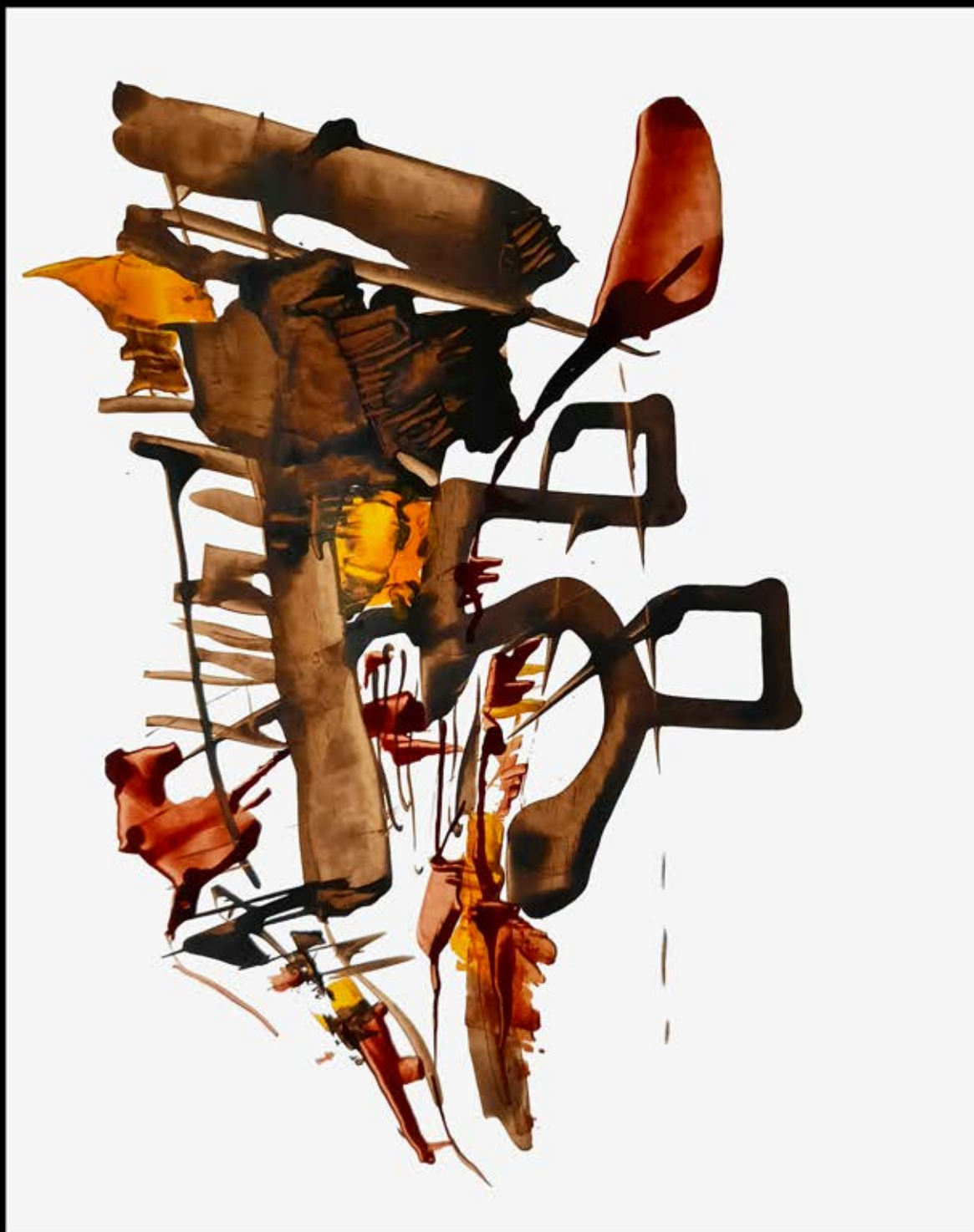
Ink painting 3 (2022) and Ink painting 1 (2023)

[See the webpage of RORSCH'ART](#)

## Line(a) viva

A series of acrylic ink paintings on paper – Ink painting 1

2022



Acrylic coloured inks (sepia, Sienna, yellow). Palette knife. White technical paper (24x32cm, 200g)

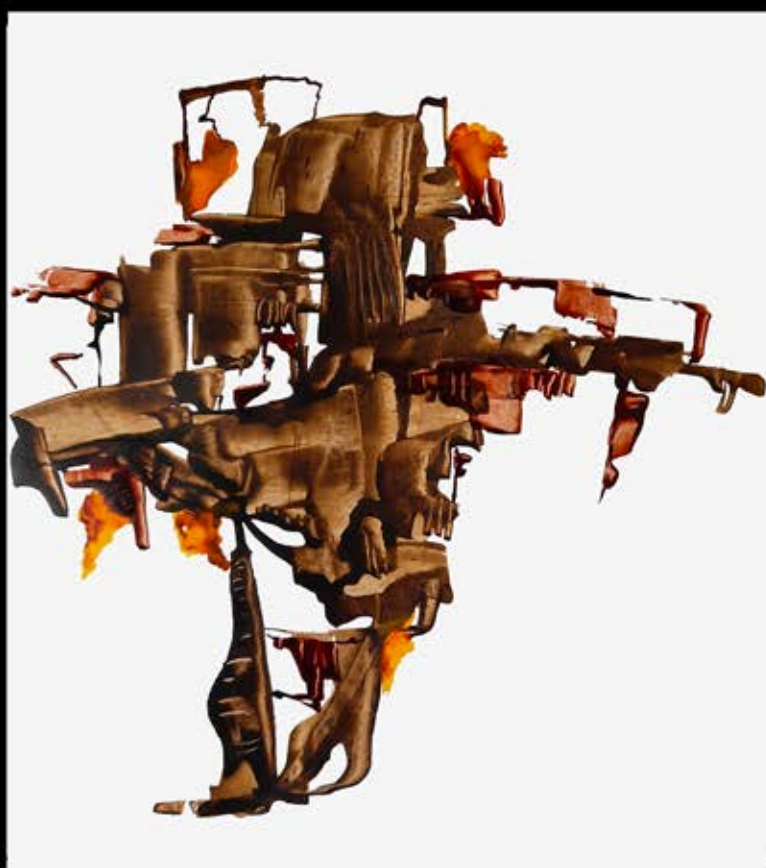
*Line(a) viva* is a series of acrylic ink paintings.

The title means "Living line" in Italian and proposes a kind of mirror counterpoint to the "still lives" presented so many times in the History of painting.

There are no inanimate objects here, but rather more entangled lines that draw quasi vegetal or organic cartographies.

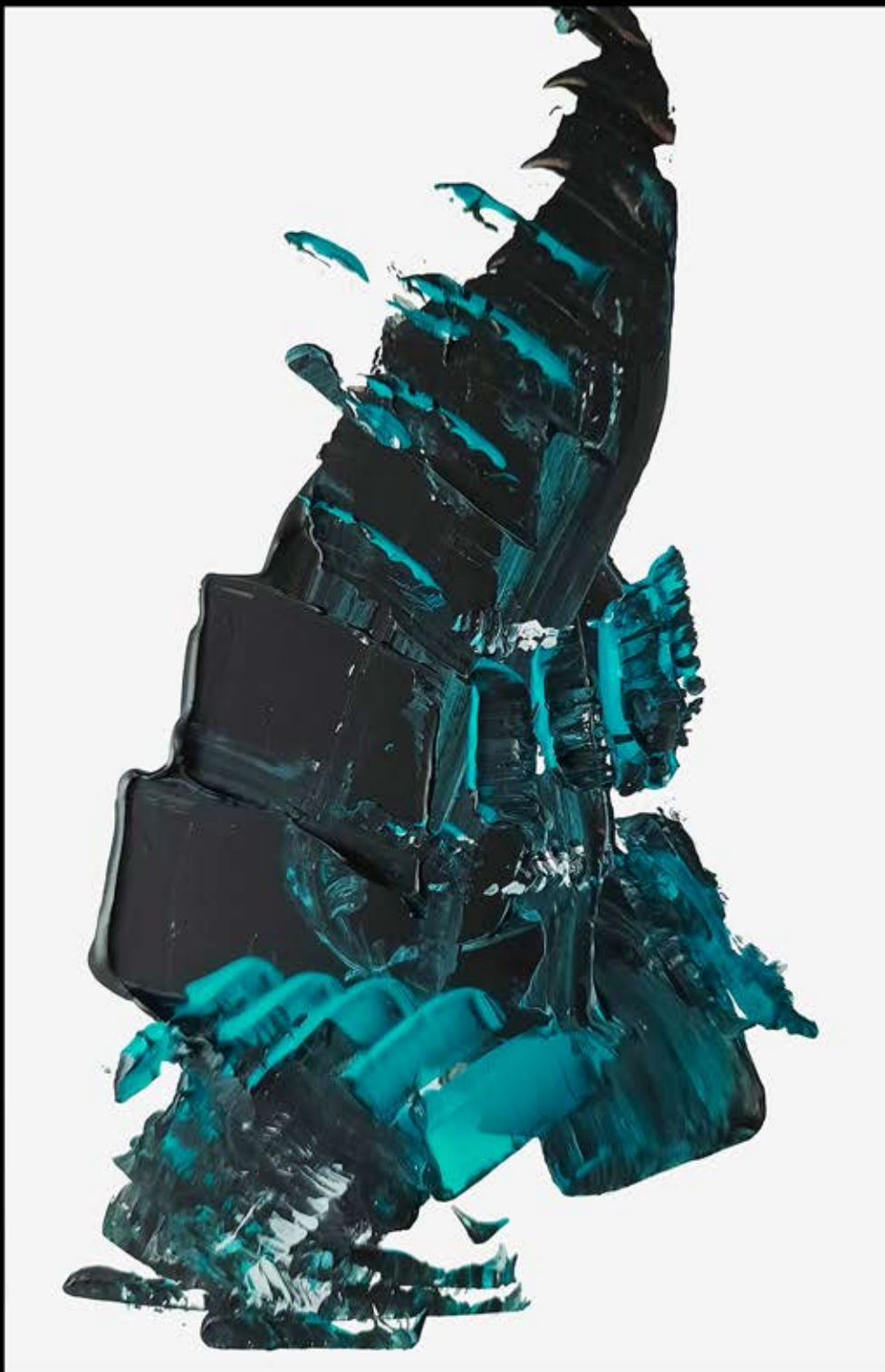
**Line(a) viva**

Ink paintings 2 and 8

[See the webpage of LINE\(A\) VIVA](#)

## Anim(a)

A series of acrylic paintings on paper – Painting 3  
2021



Acrylic paintings (black, turquoise blue, white). Various palette knives. White photographic paper (10x15cm)

**Anim(a)** is a set of acrylic paintings that explores the border between two dimensions, the animate and the animal, with declensions of a variety of shapes in motion that can evoke an animal or a phantasmagoric figurality. They can be perceived as snapshots, as if their trajectory had been suspended, captured in its quintessence. It is the breath of motion or the motion of breath, both animate and animal.

The title refers to the Latin term *anima* which means "soul", "breath", and which gave the word "animal".

**Anim(a)**

Paintings 2 and 5

[See the webpage of ANIM\(A\)](#)

## Kinêm(a)nima - Colour

An acrylic painting on canvas

2021



White Gesso. Acrylic paintings (white, grey, turquoise blue, black). Pouring medium. Palette knife. Cotton canvas (20x20cm)

*Kinêm(a)nima - Colour* is an acrylic painting on canvas which uses again the same techniques as those of the painting *Kinêm(a)nima*, but this time with an introduction of a few colours meant to underline the different spaces of the painting, and notably a kind of transversal diagonal line in false mirror.

The same work on movement and on the rapidity of the gestural kineme is explored, drawing undulatory lines and outlining a few masses. In some areas, the matter is torn apart by some streaks which form a kind of "rugged terrain".

The title is derived from the Greek word "kinêma", which means "movement", and the Latin word "anima", which means "breath", "soul", and then gave the word "animal". This title alludes to one of my series of musical works, *Kinêm(a)* for amplified instruments, composed between 2008 and 2012.

[See the webpage of KINÊM\(A\)NIMA - COLOUR](#)

# Kinêm(a)nima

An acrylic painting on canvas

2021



White Gesso. Acrylic paintings (white, black). Pouring medium. Various palette knives and teeth brush. Cotton canvas (100x50cm)



Detail 1



Detail 2

***Kinêm(a)nima*** is an acrylic painting on canvas.

The title is derived from the Greek word "kinêma", which means "movement", and the Latin word "anima", which means "soul", "breath", and then gave the word "animal". This title alludes to one of my series of musical works, ***Kinêm(a)*** for amplified instruments, composed between 2008 and 2012.

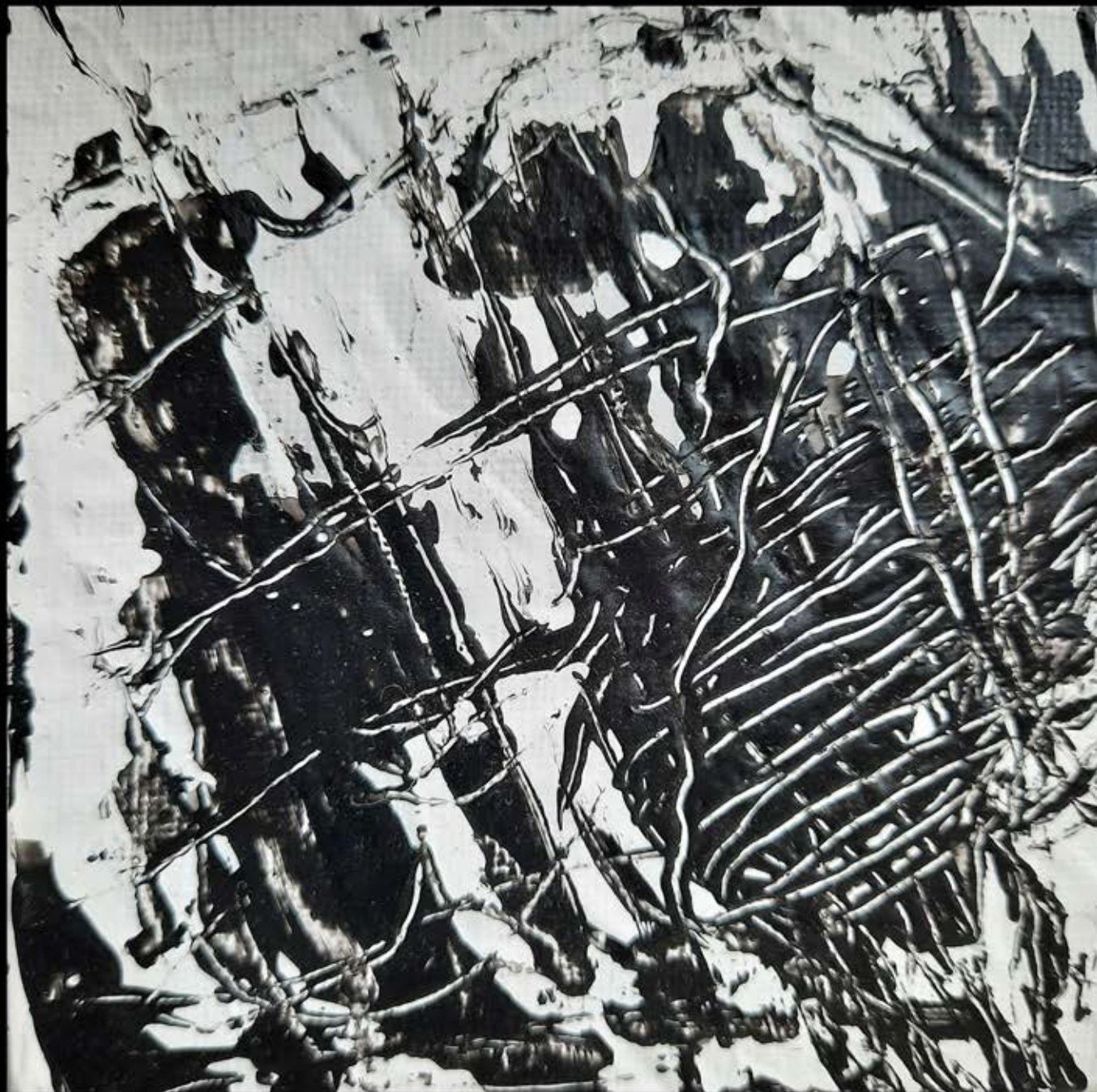
The bipolarity of colours (black and white) reveals more obviously a work on movement, on the rapidity of the gestural kineme which combines a hatched and undulatory outline. A shape seems at the same time to emerge and disintegrate, or even to tear to shreds, under the push of an urgent and violent expulsion of matter.

[See the webpage of KINÊM\(A\)NIMA](#)

## Studies for Kinêm(a)nima

A series of acrylic paintings on canvas (miniature format) – Study 1

2021



White Gesso. Acrylic paintings (white, black). Pouring medium. Palette knife  
Cotton canvas (10x10cm)

These *Studies for Kinêm(a)nima* form a series of acrylic paintings realized on a small format, either on cotton canvas (10x10 cm), or on photographic paper (10x15cm).

The series of studies explores the techniques used for the painting *Kinêm(a)nima*, notably the bipolarity of colours (black, white), the undulatory texture made with Gesso, as well as a work on movement and line fluidity.

**Studies for Kinêm(a)nima**

Paintings 2, 3 and 4



[See the webpage of STUDIES FOR KINÊM\(A\)NIMA](#)

## Wane And Ruin

A series of varnish paintings on paper – Painting 1

2018



Wood varnish (wax rustic old tint). Small brush spalter and pencil's square handle. A4 white paper (80g)

The series **Wane And Ruin (WAR)** evokes war, any war, a timeless and apparently inexorable phenomenon to which Humankind has always been exposed, at any time and in any place.

Several visual "kinemes" are proposed in the drawings of the series: a falling movement, running, escape, a sensation of deflagration and deformation of the contours, or a threatening attitude, for instance. They try to recreate the major upheaval of the behaviours and the destruction of shapes that war situations generate. They remind us that war only leads to wane and ruin.

## Wane And Ruin

Paintings 2 to 7



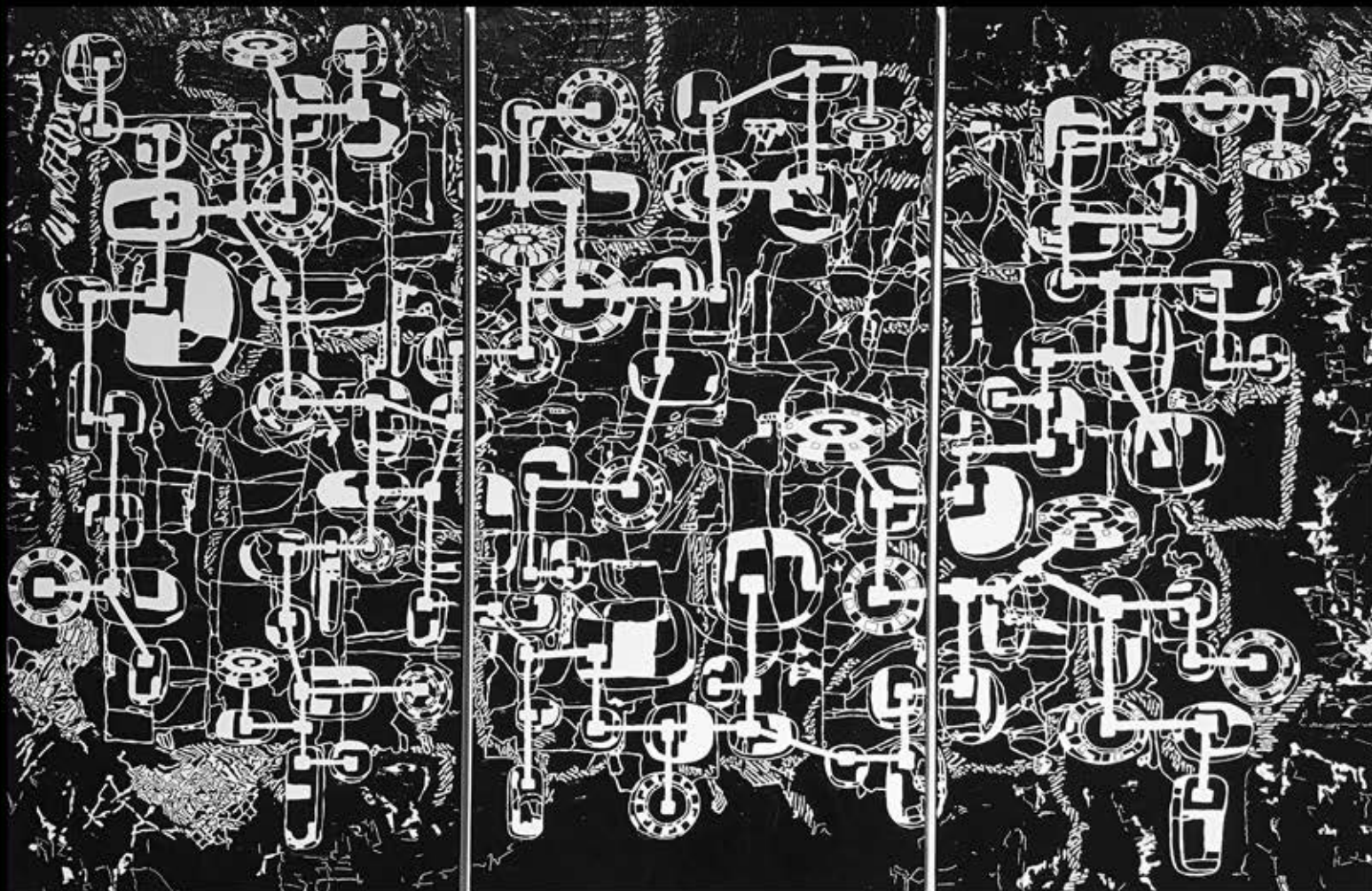
[See the webpage of WANE AND RUIN](#)

## SOUND AND VISUAL INSTALLATIONS

**Lostery 3 - Ipso primero**

An audiovisual installation about gambling, games of money and chance (poker)

2022



Triptych of acrylic paintings with mixed media techniques on cotton canvases (50x100cm x 3)  
White Gesso. Black Gesso. Acrylic paintings (white, black). Pouring medium  
Brush and various palette knives

**Lostery 3** is part of a diptych which refers to gambling, games of money and chance (Lottery, poker) and evokes the socio-political impact of the notion of chance upon people's life (in a country at peace or at war, in a rich or poor socio-economic context, etc.).

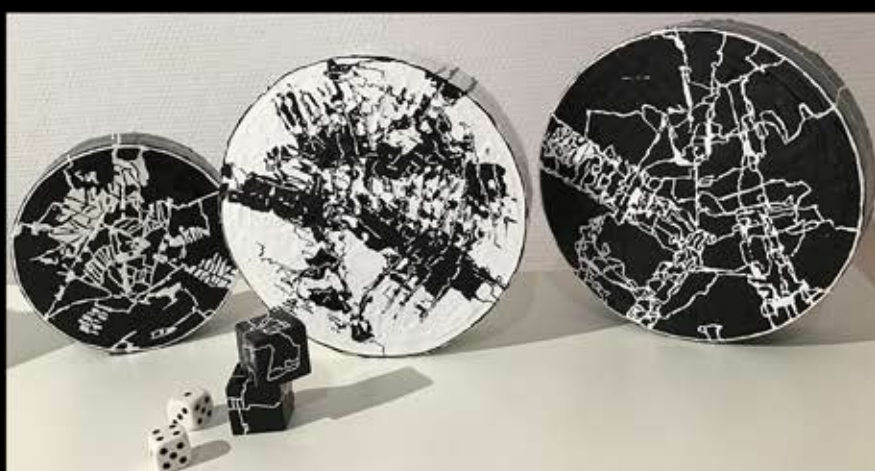
From objects and sounds of the real world (a poker case, chips and dice, sounds of casinos and game rooms), the built objects (painted styrofoam discs, kinds of giant chips) seem to proliferate and create an obsessional poetization which accounts both for the addictive mechanisms of gambling and a kind of rugged "chance circuit". The abstract black and white graphic design, present on the objects, on a triptych of paintings as well as on an animated video, suggests the mechanical gearwheels that capture us in an all-or-nothing trap.

The 6-channel electroacoustic work, **Ipso primero**, is played around the audience in the space where the installation is setup.

The title condenses the words "lost" and "Lottery", thus expressing a rather pessimistic state of mind according to which what has been brought into play leads most of the time to failure.

## Lostery 3 - Ipsos primero

Photographs of the objects



Black metal poker case with black and white chips, Dealer chips, Modiano poker cards and small decorated plastic chips

Printed black and white drawing, under a glass frame

34 painted styrofoam discs (diameters: 25cm, 20cm, 15cm, 10cm). Acrylic paintings (white, black)

Acrylic markers (black, white). Pencil and palette knife

Dice and 20 painted wooden cubes (10x10cm)

See the webpage of LOSTERY 3

SOUND SAMPLES and INFO - IMAGES | [IPSO PRIMERO](#) | [PHOTOGRAPHS](#) | [ANIMATED VIDEO](#)

## A SELECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS

**Puzzling puzzles**

A series of photographs taken in New York – Photograph 20  
2012



This series **Puzzling puzzles** gathers numerous photographs taken during a 3-month stay in New York in 2012 thanks to the HORS LES MURS PROGRAMME of the Paris FRENCH INSTITUTE.

New York is the city of grid patterns, those of the streets and of the glass buildings with their unnumerable glazed rectangles that reflect the mosaics which face them. With all these distorted and diffracted lines, everything becomes abstraction. At nightfall, under the artificial lighting, space is full of a multitude of small luminous squares that reflect one another, thus inducing a fragmentation that seems infinite: reflections of the reflections, pulverization and boundless mirrors.

## Puzzling puzzles

Photographs 22 and 30



See the webpage of [PUZZLING PUZZLES](#)

## Diffract City

A series of photographs taken in Paris – Photograph 21  
2007



*Diffract City* endeavours to throw into light the diffractions of the shapes and colours noticed on the pavements of cities under rain. The lights, the game of colours brightened by the rain and artificial lighting at dusk recompose abstract, strange, often fascinating forms, and make an unrecognizable urban environment, a kind of parallel city, another reality.

## Diffract City

Photographs 1 and 5



[See the webpage of DIFFRACT CITY](#)

## Big Apple's people

A series of photographs taken in New York – Photograph 1  
2012



Photograph: **Two women in black** (New York, 2012)

The series *Big Apple's people* is also part of the photographs taken in New York in 2012 (a 3-month stay thanks to the HORS LES MURS PROGRAMME of the Paris FRENCH INSTITUTE). A whole motley population crosses New York's streets. I tried to catch daily situations and the political and socio-economic context they reveal here and there: alternative ways of being, poverty and social and economic injustice, times of expressed opposition or times of relaxation in the squares during summer, the various mixed communities in the city.

This photograph, *Two women in black*, as well as another photograph of the series, *A fireman and a policeman*, received an *Honorable Mention* at WORLDWIDE PHOTOGRAPHY GALA AWARD 2012 in the category STREET PHOTOGRAPHY.

# Big Apple's people

Photographs 6 and 9



[See the webpage of BIG APPLE'S PEOPLE](#)

## Shel(l)ter

A series pf photographs taken in Berlin – Photograph 1  
2005-07



This series of photographs has been taken in one of the atomic bunkers in Berlin in 2004, in 2005, and then, in 2007 while I was a guest composer of the BERLINER KÜNSTLERPROGRAMM of the DAAD during one year for the musical writing of *Shel(l)ter*, a series of works for ensemble and electronics.

Source of inspiration for the composition of *Shel(l)ter*, the photographs manifest both a search for abstraction and the oppressive impression that such a confined space can induce, with its subterranean location, its darkness and artificial light, and the opacity of the walls letting no sound inside.

# Shel(l)ter

Photographs 6 and 2



[See the webpage of SHEL\(L\)TER](#)

## PHOTOGRAPH/DRAWING

**WWW**

A digitally edited photograph

2015



Photograph: Clara Maïda (New York, 2012). Reflection of wire ropes on a glass skyscraper  
Digital editing with Photoshop (negative inversion process, colorization and filters, inlay of frgments of another photograph)

The title **www** refers to one of my series of musical works, for string quartet. This repetition of a same letter, in a movement which could last forever, visually evokes a waveform and reminds us that any matter, according to the very poetic String Theory developed by modern physics, might be not made of particles but of invisible strings which vibrate with different frequencies.

This photograph shows wire ropes reflected in the windows of a New York glass skyscraper. A digital editing has been made with Photoshop and the fragments of another photograph have been inlaid on the windows.

[See the webpage of WWW](#)

## Rhizhommes

A series of drawings on paper – Drawing 1

2017



The title of the series of drawings, *Rhizhommes*, condenses the terms "rhizome" and "hommes" ("men" in French) and alludes to the concept developed by French philosophers Deleuze and Guattari.

The filaments are interwoven in various trajectories, form condensations or are frayed, and lead to the appearance of a semblance of shapes in motion that can be perceived as hybrid beings, at the intersection of several possible ephemeral identities, or as the graphical snapshots of a pure movement which would never be fixed on one determined category.

# Rhizhommes

Drawings 2, 5, 9 and 10



Black painting marker (medium tip). White A4 paper (80g)

[See the webpage of RHIZHOMMES](#)

## Big Apple's puzzles

A series of drawings on paper – Drawing 1

2014



The series of drawings *Big Apple's puzzles* started during a 3-month stay in New York in 2012 thanks to the HORS LES MURS PROGRAMME of the Paris FRENCH INSTITUTE. This series is a work in progress whose purpose is to draw a succession of 49 snapshots of New York associated to 49 very elliptic texts (2-3 lines), kinds of haiku poems in English.

In this kind of transparent and coloured puzzle, people follow their lonely course. The drawings evoke this assembling of undulatory fragments, this puzzle of Big Apple, into which human shapes finally seem to melt and disappear.

## Big Apple's puzzles

Drawing 4



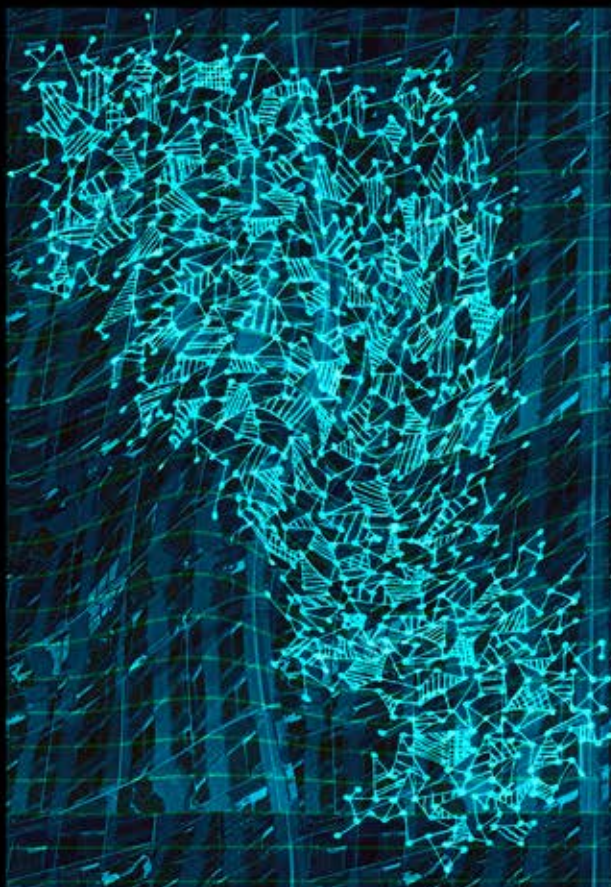
Black ultra-fine permanent marker. Notepad (70g), ruled with margin, American Letter format (21,6x27,9cm)  
 Negative inversion process of the drawings with Photoshop and printing on A4 paper

[See the webpage of BIG APPLE'S PUZZLES](#)

# Mutatis mutandis

2 drawings

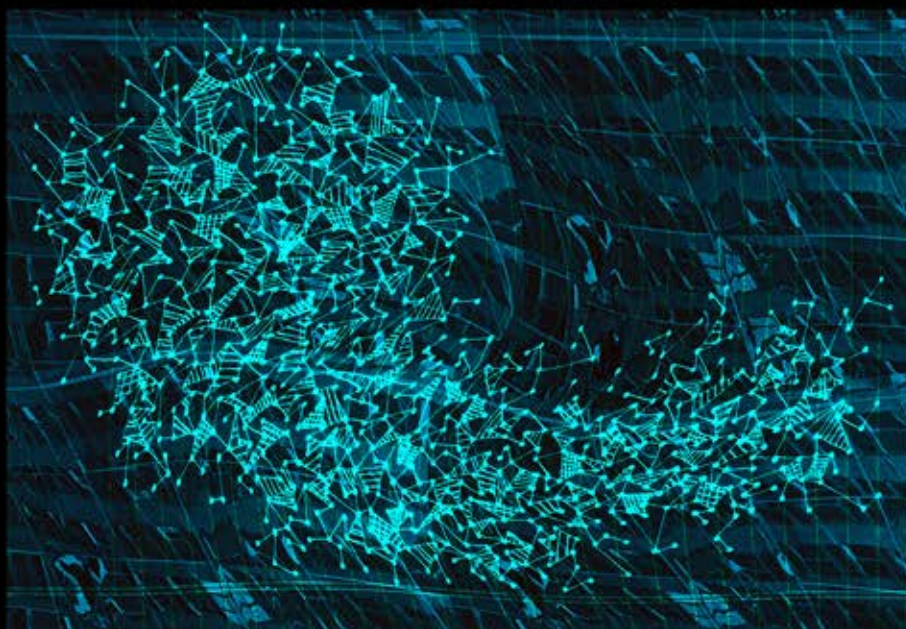
2012



Drawing on a notepad (70g),  
ruled with margin,  
American Letter format  
(21,6x27,9cm)  
Black ballpoint pen

Background: photograph  
of a New-York glass skyscraper  
(photograph: Clara Maïda)

Editing with Photoshop:  
superimposition of the drawing  
and the photograph,  
colorization, deformation and  
filters



After the 12-drawing series realized before the composition of the musical work *Mutatis mutandis* for 12 amplified strings, I went back to the idea of a whole set of wave-particles. The multitude of interconnected dots and the small triangular densities that they form by regrouping echo the 3-pitch pendulums, recurrent figures in my musical works, and the modularity of my sound writing.

The configuration of dots seems mobile and elastic and its declensions are potentially unlimited. The background evokes a Riemannian geometry. The rigidity of the frame is disrupted by mutative forces. The vertical and horizontal lines of the grid are deformed and become curves.

[See the webpage of MUTATIS MUTANDIS](#)

## Bag-dead

A series of drawings on paper drawing – Drawing of the Page 1 of the narrative  
2006



The series of drawings *Bag-dead* has been inspired by the second Lebanon war and Israel's bombardments on this country in July-August 2006, but it also evokes the second Iraq war.

The title alludes to the body bags in which the dead bodies of the American soldiers were brought back to the US during this war as well as to the name of Iraq's capital city, Baghdad.

The choice of a frameless edgeless drawing is meant to recreate the impact of wars on cities, bodies, lives: everything is shattered, smashed, leaving only debris and disturbance. People merge into the pulverized environment because war also pulverizes their life and psyche.

## Bag-dead

Drawings of the Pages 3 and 6 of the narrative



Black liquid ink felt pen (2mm tip). White A3 drawing paper (180g)

Cutting of the drawings into thumbnail pictures for the montage of the narrative with Photoshop. Montage: printed on A4 paper

[See the webpage of BAG-DEAD](#)

CLARA MAÏDA

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