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PAUL

COLLINS



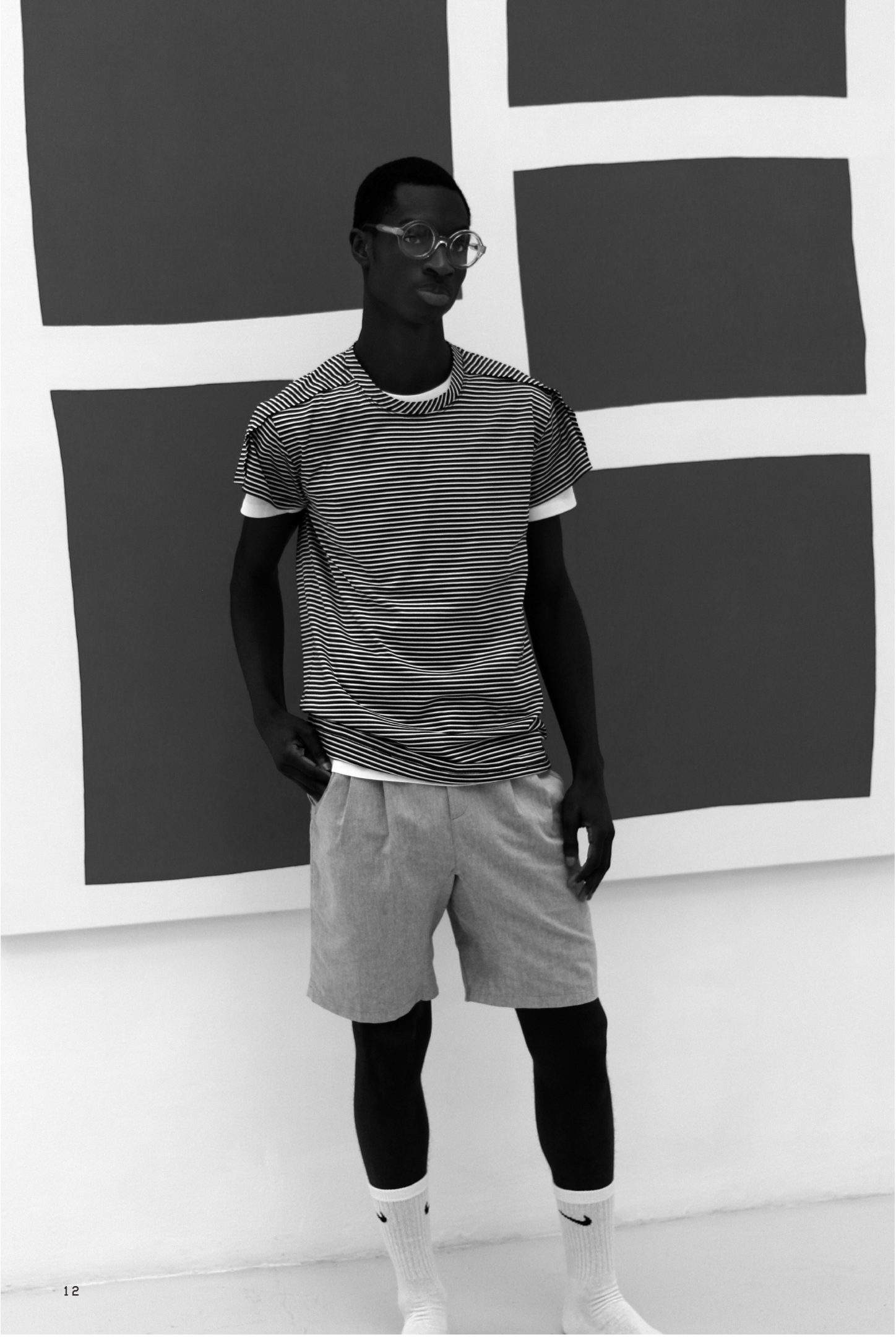






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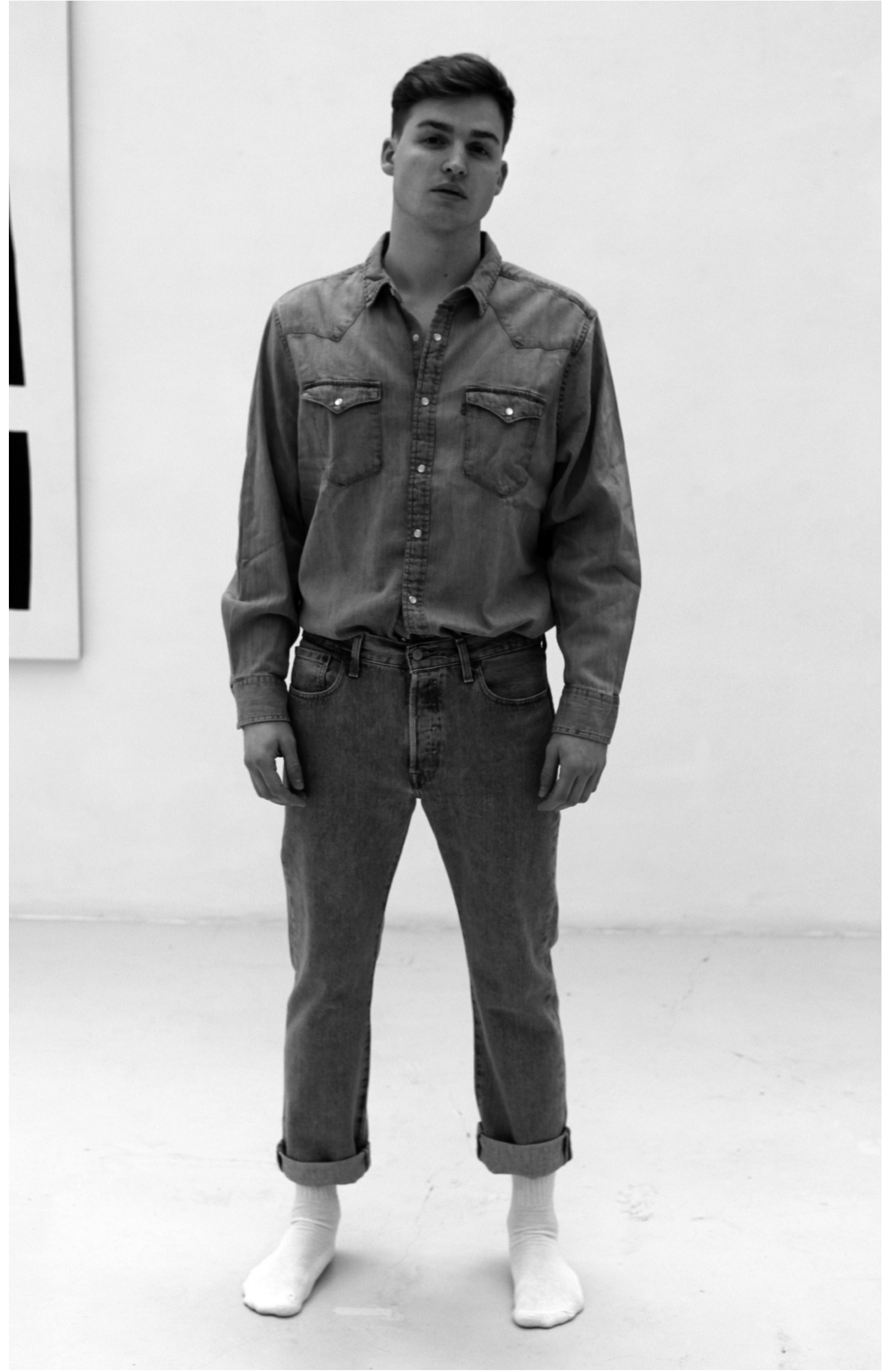






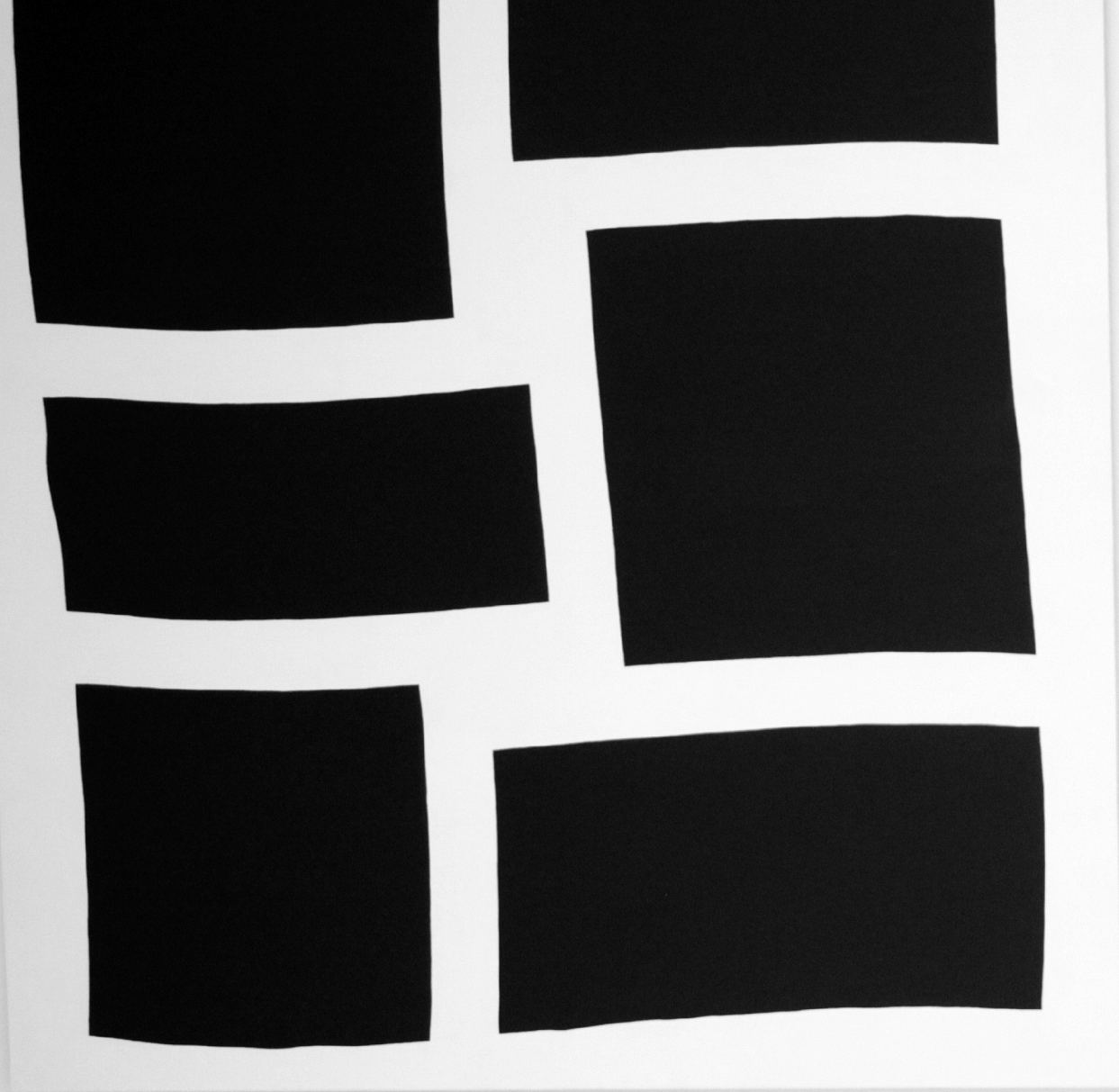
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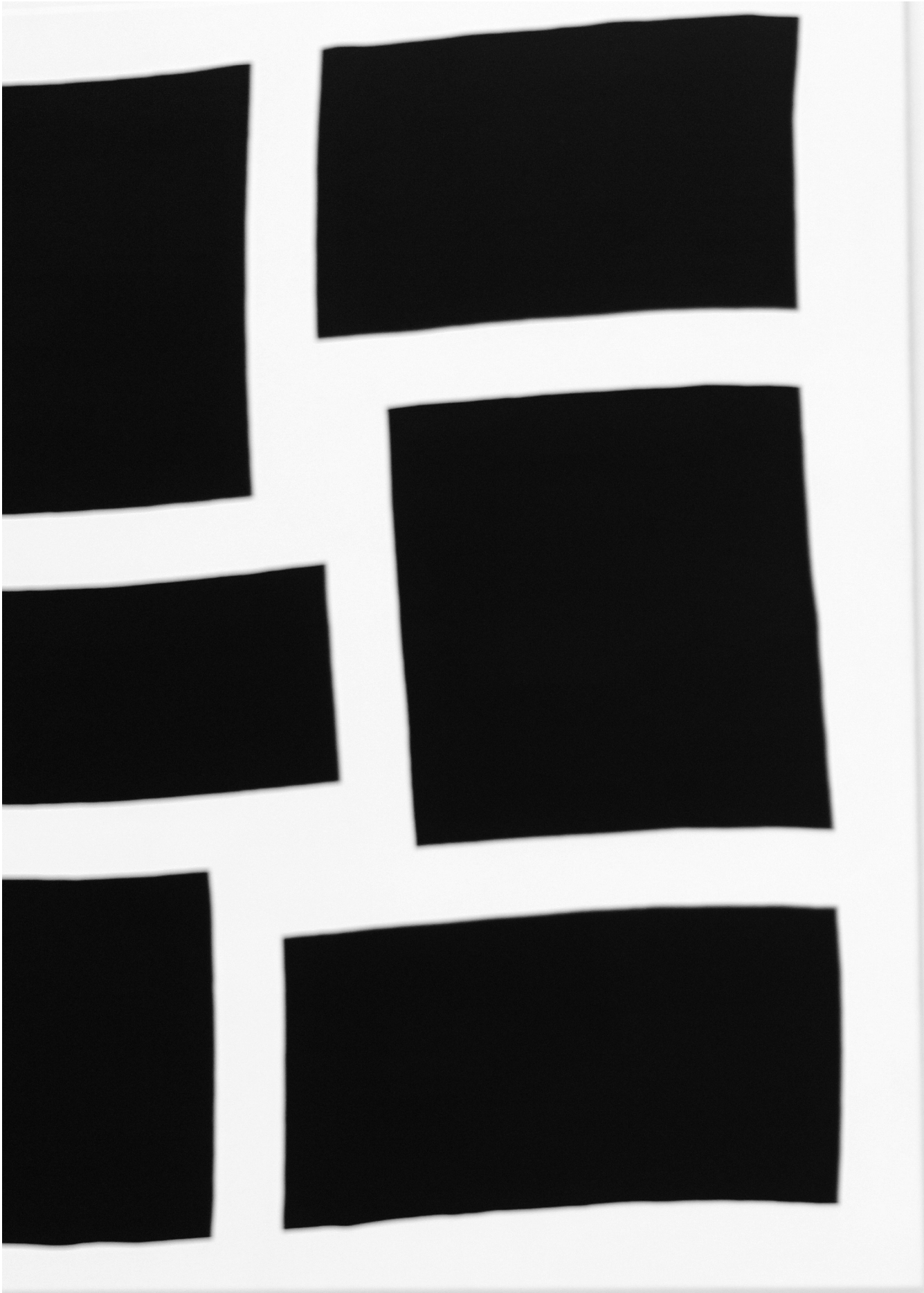








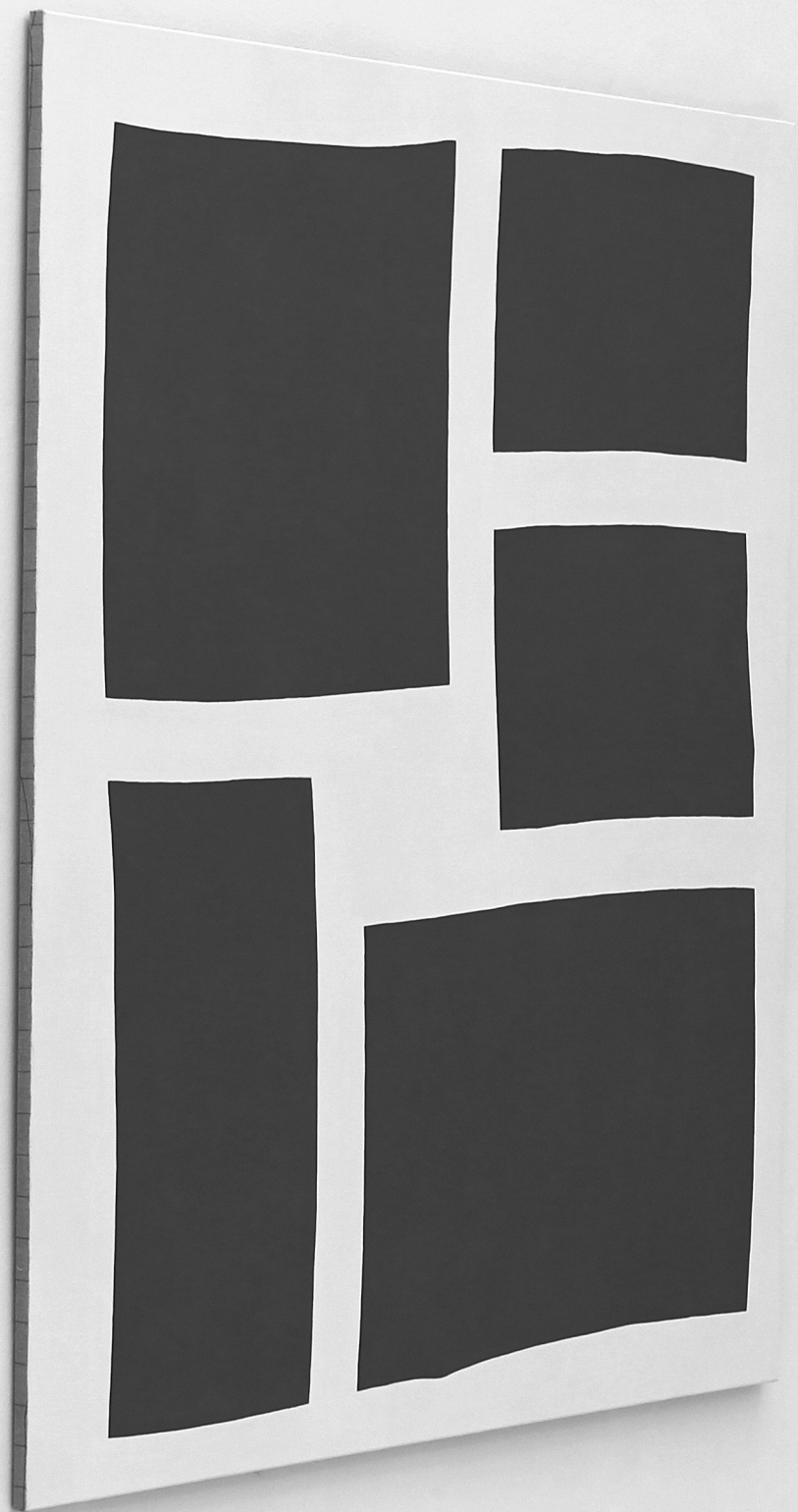














FAIRY TALE

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PARIS-COLUMBUS, SUMMER 2020

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Curated by Jo-ey Tang, and co-curated
with Ian Ruffino and Marla Roddy.

Gallery assistant: JiaHao Peng
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COLUMBUS

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Models: Mars, Archie, Asa, Brooklyn

Text: Daniel Marcus, Robert Slifkin

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Hat: V5 Paris, T-Shirt: Fruit of the Loom
Jacket: Junya Watanabe Comme des Garçons

RE-FRESH brume beauté hydratante,
RE-BOOST crème fraîcheur hydratante from
my Clarins

Pages: 3-7, 11, 13, 34: Jacket: Comme des
Garçons Shirt, Trousers: Erotokritos,
T-Shirt: Fruit of the Loom, Hat: V5 Paris

Page 8: Jacket: Junya Watanabe Comme des
Garçons

Pages 15 + 15, 23: Glasses: Lesca, T-Shirts
and Trousers: Erotokritos, Socks: Nike
Pages: 14 + 18, 19: Jeans and Shirt: Levis,
Hat: V5 Paris

Page 17: Pullover: Erotokritos

Pages 20 + 21: Hat: V5 Paris

Pages 25 + 27: Shirt: V5 Paris, T-Shirt: Fruit of the
Loom, Pants: Comme des Garçons Shirt, Socks: Nike.
Jeans and Shirt: Levis, Hats: V5 Paris

Pages 28 + 31: Hat: V5 Paris, T-Shirt: Fruit of the
Loom, Pants: Comme des Garçons Shirt.

Jeans and Shirt: Levis

Pages 32-35: Pullover: Erotokritos. Jacket: Comme
des Garçons Shirt, Trousers: Erotokritos, T-Shirt:
Fruit of the Loom, Hats: V5 Paris

Page 37: Hat: V5 Paris, T-Shirt: Fruit of the Loom

Photos Steeve Beckouet: Pages 2-10, 13, 15, 22-24, 37

Photos Achim Reichert: Pages 12, 14, 17-20, 26-34

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Fruit of the Loom: fruitoftheloom.com

Lesca: lescalunetier.com,

at Marc Le Bihan: marclebihan.fr

Levis: levi.com

Nike: nike.com

V5 Paris: v5paris.com

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BEEELER GALLERY

at Columbus College of Art & Design

VIER5



CONJUNCTION

PHOTOS: JIAHAO PENG





FRESH
PRODUCE

Lucky's Market

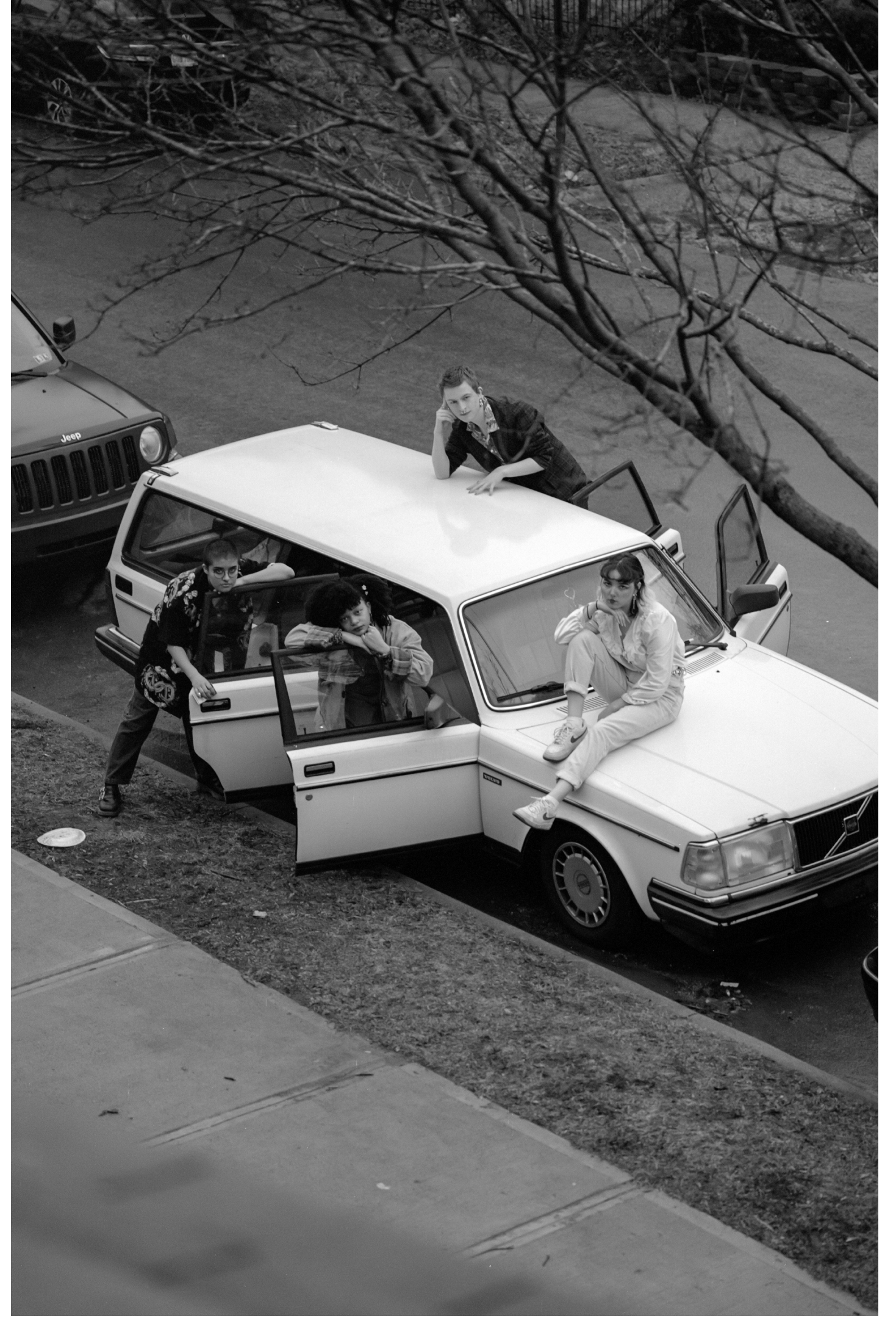
NATURAL
FOODS

WE TAKE
MEAT
seriously.

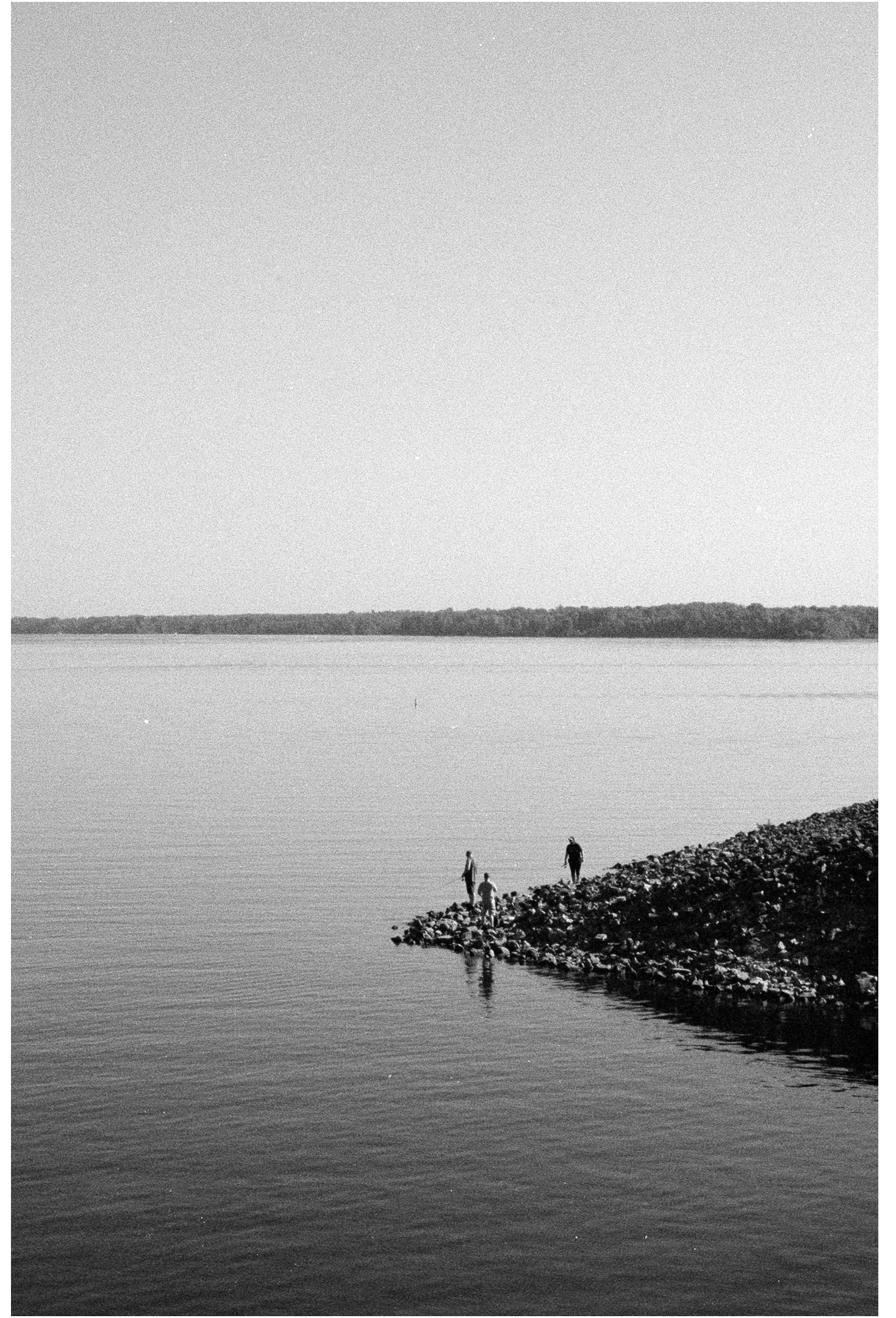
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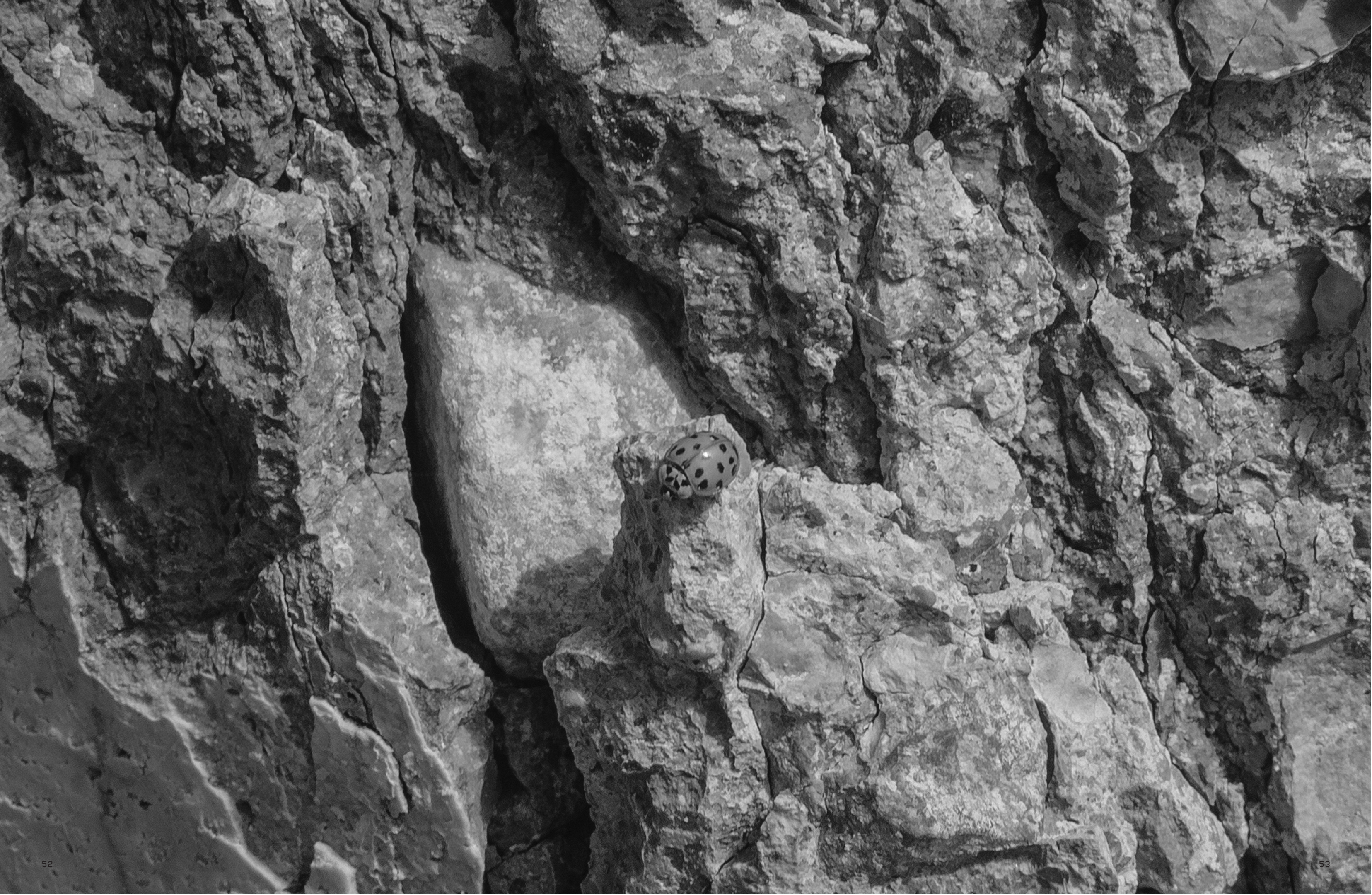














SEASON ZERO:

HOW WELL DO YOU BEHAVE?
IN THE FLAT FIELD.
BEELER GALLERY AT COLUMBUS COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN

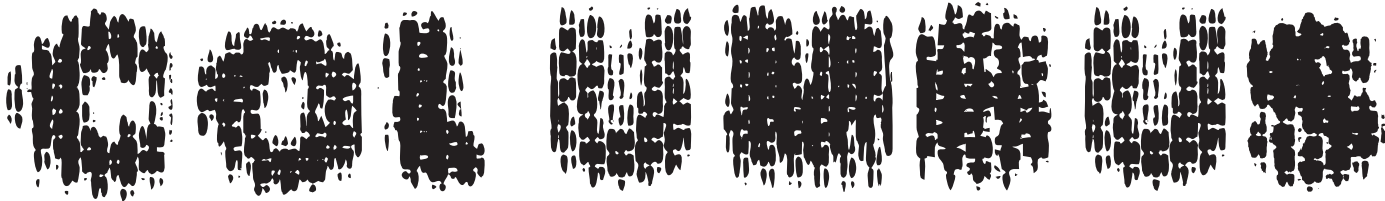
March 1, 2018
Conversation Four — Les Levine with Sarah Robayo Sheridan

One winter’s night, artist Les Levine spoke to curator Sarah Robayo Sheridan about his work. Papered high on an adjacent Beeler Gallery wall were the 28 rainbow-rolled lithographs that comprised Culture Hero (subtitle: “a fanzine of the stars of the super world”) (1969–71). Complete with a gossip column by poet John Giorno, the rags were exuberantly insular, chockful of fake factual stuff about artists in the worlds they lived in and wanted to inhabit. When probed to discuss his work’s intent, Levine tartly avoided a boxable answer. As more of an antenna than a mirror-holder, his oeuvre was “about nothing” and “about everything.” The evening’s exchange was funny and Socratic, a masterclass in thumbing the edges of epistemological limits through cultural insertions of art. Some of the artist’s earlier examples: *Wire Tap* (1970), a roomful of Levine’s secretly recorded phone conversations about his art production; Levine’s, a restaurant opened in 1969, sold Irish-Jewish-Canadian food on New York’s Lower East Side; *Star Garden* (1967), a vacuum-formed wave whose curved, held space seemed to expand visibility within our light range. Perhaps his work’s throughline could be its acknowledgment of a horizon to outrace. Levine ended the evening’s conversation with one more bon mot, “I’m always trying to get away from myself, but can’t.” So say we all.

Yin Ho



GALLERY



I’m always trying to get away from myself, but can’t!
Les quipped, sat back, and was swallowed up

Soft cheeks rattling
A giant seashell ear reverberating
Reborn as a mountain
A new transmission propels a bladed wheel and I hear the postulations:

To make a consequence,
circle another sun and paper high walls with stars of that world.
I get it, I made up classifieds
and obituaries for the rough and ready in the last days of empire

The ansible thrums a pervasion
Wire a conduit in an interior
and flood a chamber with the overheard. My back’s also my mother’s back
who used to listen in on phone calls
in devotion to dull surveillance

Here’s a cracklin’ statement of quality
When Les pushed a round-cornered prancy cube Into stretchy nylons, I heard the silent fabric
And my soft-spoken third-grade teacher’s Slender elasticized heel swinging in step

Receiver fizzes a koan on perversion
You know, Irish-Jewish-Canadian restaurants don’t serve curry
Ain’t no clean cuisine, Clean Chinese Cuisine

The horizon hums a smooth line
I’ll go out dry-cheeked and rattling
A giant seashell ear pulsating
Reanimated as a mountain
Unfixed in definite reason on tap
A looped current, searing the wheel of edges

Yin Ho

SEASON TWO: FOLLOW THE MUD
INSTANCE NO. 1

LAËTITIA BADAUT HAUSSMANN “WATER”

MICHEL AUDER “LES PENDUS DE TULLE” (THE HANGED AT TULLE)

1978, 1/2” Betamax video SP to digital video DS, 7 minutes, 25 seconds Translation: Emmanuelle Day Transcription: Rafaela Lopez

MICHEL AUDER “VIVA / AUDER / HELIOGABALUS”

1969, HD video, transferred from 16mm film 8 minutes Subtitle adapted from Heliogabalus, Antonin Artaud, Published by Creation Books, 2003, translated by Alexis Lykiard. Subtitle Technician: Amelia Blasio

C. SPENCER YEH IMPROVISATION ON AMPLIFIED VIOLIN

For Instance No. 1 at Beeler Gallery, Badaut Haussmann addresses a case of, what art historian Aby Warburg calls, *Nachleben*, the survival, or afterlife, of one cultural tradition within another. Writing at the turn of the 20th century, Warburg was concerned with understanding how the cultural traditions of Greco-Roman antiquity “survived” into the European Renaissance, stripped of their original meaning yet, nevertheless, preserved intact. Reversing the terms of Warburg’s analysis, Badaut Haussmann’s project considers the survival of modernity within a semi-feudal setting: At the center of her installation, *Water*, is the Museum of Modern Art in Kamakura, Japan, a building designed by Japanese architect Sakakura Junzō in 1951 as the nation’s first public contemporary art center. Located on the grounds of a medieval shrine, Tsurugaoka Hachimangū, and sited overlooking Heike Pond, a water garden designed in the year 1182, the museum enacts a confrontation between Japanese landscape aesthetics and the landscape-denying principles of European modernism, which Sakakura had absorbed as a trainee in the Paris atelier of the Swiss architect Le Corbusier. A two-story concrete box supported by bare steel girders, the Museum of Modern Art in Kamakura contrasts sharply with its surroundings, interrupting the traditional harmony of “wild nature” versus “artificial nature.” Even so, water remains a dominant element in Sakakura’s design. Channeling visitors toward a covered walkway and sculpture garden overlooking the lotus pond, the museum ends up “exhibiting” the aquatic landscape as a primary object of display—a spectacle on par with the artworks within its galleries. The career of the Museum of Modern Art in Kamakura formally ended in 2016 when the prefectural government declined to renew the museum’s land lease with Tsurugaoka Hachimangū, citing the high costs of retrofitting and upkeep. Soon thereafter, Sakakura’s building would be transferred to its former landlord, which initially considered demolishing the museum, sparking an international outcry from architects and preservationists. As of June 2019 the museum has been repurposed by the shrine to display Shinto artifacts and relics—an about-face marking a reversal, not just of the museum’s fortunes, but also of historical time itself, rehousing antiquity within modernity’s empty shell. Upon learning of the museum’s potential (but eventually thwarted) demolition, Badaut Haussmann traveled to Kamakura in 2017 during an artist residency at Villa Kujoyama, Kyoto, shooting a series of photographs of the museum’s empty galleries and shuttered grounds. For Instance No. 1 at Beeler Gallery, she continues to explore the temporal rift between the museum’s closure and its reopening, reconstructing Sakakura’s original museum ticket booth in the entrance to Beeler Gallery. Once inside the galleries, visitors confront a shimmering floor-to-ceiling curtain, which might evoke the meeting place of architecture and water; or, perhaps, the margin between different cultural regimes and historical temporalities. Over the course of *Season Two: Follow the Mud*, Badaut Haussmann will take charge of the gallery’s illumination, bypassing the existing overhead lighting in order to reveal (and conceal) the traces of each Instance.

In the history of architecture, the element of water is most often treated like a zoo animal, charming to look at, but only from a safe distance. Channeled into waterfalls and reflecting pools, water plays the part of architecture’s foil, performing the beguilements of Nature—the Eternal Feminine—opposite hard-dicked Culture. But the powers of water are not so easily constrained. Shrugging off the zookeeper’s commands, water eats away at hard-set concrete, penetrating skylights and casements, disintegrating façades, and spreading rot and ruin in its wake. Reluctant to confront water on equal footing, most architects opt for a pantomime of mastery, conjuring spurting fountains and supine ponds fit for Narcissus. In the end, however, water dominates: the ceiling drips, the pool leaks, and the forces of fluidity advance. Laetitia Badaut Haussmann is a friend of water. Her work explores hidden currents and counter-flows in the archives of modern art, architecture, and design, focusing on the role of women architects and artists, non-Westerners, and vernacular makers both inside and along the margins of the avant-garde.

Text by Daniel Marcus

As one of the innovators of video art, New York-based French artist Michel Auder has produced a vast and influential body of work that, through its documentation and subsequent archiving of significant events—both historical and personal—has probed the boundaries between truth and fiction, especially when recorded through various forms of technological mediation.

In *The Hanged at Tulle* Auder presents a short interview with the poet Patrice Cauda in which he reminisces about a death-defying experience during his time as a member of the *Maquis*, the small guerilla outfit that contributed to the

French Resistance during World War II. The video was originally recorded in 1978 as part of another work, which will be part of Instance No. 4: Michel Auder + Michael Stickrod present *May ’68* in ’78, Sunday, Nov. 10, 2019, 12–6 p.m., in which Auder interviewed numerous people about their memories of the large-scale strikes and political activism that took place in Paris, and around the world, in spring 1968.

In its focus on the subjective recollection of a past event, *The Hanged at Tulle* underscores the fundamental contingencies of personal recollection, especially when they coincide with matters of historical consequence. This is, perhaps, most striking when Cauda notes that the noted French man of letters, André Malraux, who was also at the gruesome events at Tulle, misremembered the location and other important details in his, notably titled, *Anti-Memoirs*, published in 1967.

A different sort of historical recollection is portrayed in Auder’s *VIVA / Artaud / Heliogabalus*. Here, Viva, a member of Andy Warhol’s coterie of “superstar” actors, (and Auder’s wife at the time) languorously lays on a hotel bed and reads a passage from Antonin Artaud’s 1934 fictional biography of the Roman emperor Heliogabalus (Heliogabalus; or, the Crowned Anarchist), whose short reign (218–220 CE) was notorious for its decadence and, as the title of Artaud’s books suggests, anarchism.

As Viva reads Artaud’s fantastical account of a visit to the temple of Emesa in Rome, Louis Waldon, another Warhol superstar, reads another book in the background and a contemporary recording by Jimi Hendrix plays on a portable turntable. These juxtapositions of words and sound as well as different registers of reading and history are thematized in the text itself, which recounts how the ancient temple that the author contemplates was already, in its own day, “cause for reflection.”

Here, as in *The Hanged at Tulle*, the performance of the past not only conjoins multiple temporalities but, moreover through their performance, invests them with a renewed sense of immediacy, revealing how these earlier moments can serve as potent allegories for the present, a theme that informs Auder’s film *Cleopatra*, which will be part of Instance No. 5: Michel Auder + Michael Stickrod present *Cleopatra* (1970), Thursday, Dec. 12, 2020, 6–8:30 p.m.

Since the early 1990s C. Spencer Yeh has produced a wide-ranging body of work that has considered the possibilities of sound in both its formal and informal registers. A New York-based composer, musician, and visual artist who has worked as a solo performer and collaborated with other musicians, Yeh has drawn upon a variety of traditions such as minimalism, free improvisation, and avant-garde experiments with accidental and incidental sound to develop a practice that alternates between structure and openness and that considers alternative, and even autodidactic, notions of technique. Whether deconstructing established methods of virtuosity by playing traditional instruments, such as the violin with two bows, or defamiliarizing the human voice through bodily tension and a sensitivity to how sound travels in space, Yeh’s works often conveys a visceral energy that registers the materiality and corporality of sonic expression.

For his contribution to *Follow the Mud*, Yeh will perform a solo improvisation on an amplified violin. Like Michel Auder’s films, with their apparently spontaneous documentation of commonplace events—which nonetheless call upon significant historical incidents—Yeh’s work negotiates conventional boundaries between media and genre.

Likewise, by augmenting the sonic resonance of a traditional instrument, Yeh’s performance will offer a counterpart to the degrees of intercession that crucially inform the films of Auder, especially as they have been digitally restored and reformatted by Michael Stickrod. Yeh’s work, in this regard, shares important affinities with Auder’s and Stickrod’s work. By reconsidering—and, in particular, remediating—established and outmoded means of representation and communication, such works engender new expressive capacities from these familiar methods.

Text by Robert Slifkin

INSTANCE NO. 2

LAËTITIA BADAUT HAUSSMANN “EXPOSURE”

2019

90-minute performance, Oct. 13, 2019 Glenbrow / Gunning House, Blacklick, Ohio

For Instance No. 2, *EXPOSURE*, Badaut Haussmann engages the Gunning House, also known as Glenbrow, a private residence in the Columbus suburb of Blacklick, Ohio, commissioned by Robert and Mary Gunning in 1939. In sharp contrast with conservative Columbus society, the Gunnings were gregarious bohemians, whose desire for a new home had been piqued by a bicycle trip through provincial France in 1938. Returning to the States, they contacted the 18-year-old design student Theodore van Fossen, who was a friend and conversation partner to the couple, commissioning him to draw up plans for a ravine-side plot in rural Blacklick. At the time of the Gunning House commission, van Fossen had less than a year’s worth of formal training under his belt: In 1938, he had departed Columbus for Chicago to attend the New Bauhaus, an experimental art, architecture, and design school headed by the Hungarian émigré László Moholy-Nagy. It was at the New Bauhaus that van Fossen (who would go on to design Rush Creek Village in Worthington, Ohio, a planned community of 48 modernist homes), met his future collaborators Tony Smith (best known for his later contributions as

a Minimalist sculptor) and Laurence Cuneo (the future art director of the television show I Love Lucy), who joined him on the Gunning House project the following year. Rebelling against what they perceived as Moholy-Nagy’s excessive emphasis on industrial design over art and aesthetics, the trio of van Fossen, Smith, and Cuneo left the New Bauhaus to apprentice with Frank Lloyd Wright in Pennsylvania, with van Fossen joining them as a laborer. They became acolytes of Wright’s “Usonian” design philosophy—especially his prescription of locally sourced building materials and a harmonious marriage of architecture with its natural surroundings. The site chosen for the Gunning House furnished an ideal case study in Wrightian aesthetics: a sparsely wooded clearing overlooking Dysart Run, a tributary of Blacklick Creek, the terrain sloped gently from East Broad Street, then a modest two-lane road, before descending into the streambed. Although the Gunnings had requested a farmhouse-style design with peaked roof (a modernist flat roof was not to their taste), the three young designers —led by Smith, who was both the eldest at age 27 and the most experienced of the group—offered them something altogether different. As van Fossen later recollected, the house “could be designed to marry the open field with the wooded ravine along the complete break that existed then between them. It would face north into the view of the ravine drinking in the sun in Winter and being sheltered from it in Summer.” The team’s plans called for a single-story home hugging the edge of the ravine, its flat roof barely visible from the driveway, with an open-plan kitchen for Mary—an unheard-of novelty in 1939—and a “dormitory” for the Gunning children. Improbably, the Gunnings warmed to this idea, and the house would be built over the course of the following year, remaining in their family’s possession until the late 1980s. Passing from owner to owner following the death of Mary Gunning in 1986, the Gunning House was abandoned from 2006 to 2014, during which time the powers of nature took their toll. Rainwater cascaded through the house, rotting the interior structure and paneling beyond repair (the exterior board and batten cypress, originally grown in swampy conditions, had weathered but remained viable). Purchasing the Gunning House in 2014 with plans to make a full restoration, the Columbus-based couple Dorri Steinhoff and Joseph Kuspan discovered, much to their chagrin, that the majority of original woodwork needed replacement. Attempting to marry architecture with nature, van Fossen and his colleagues nearly doomed the Gunning House’s habitability in the long term. Even so, the Gunning House remains a monument (or anti-monument) to its natural surroundings, drawing its raw materials from the creek-side site—including the element of water, which makes itself felt in various forms. Walls made of sandstone quarried from the ravine below evoke the slow action of water upon stone (fittingly, Robert nicknamed the creek “Quarry Run”) as well as the sedimentary prehistory of central Ohio, which once formed part of a shallow inland sea. Floor-to-ceiling glazing in the original living (now a dining room) affords a panoramic view across the streambed, which swells into a cataract during storms. At the same time, the house’s horizontal silhouette expresses fluidity in a different sense, symbolizing the flow-space of automotive transit—a vector of mobility that has led to the rapid suburbanization of the Blacklick area over the course of the Gunning House’s lifetime. Water gives and water takes. On the afternoon of Oct.13, 2019, Badaut Haussmann invites visitors to engage the past and future of the Gunning House, conjuring its original occupants as well as the site’s environmental forces and flows. As if temporarily suspending the forward motion of historical time, a team of dancers, Tai Chi practitioners, and artists will animate the concatenated memories of the Gunning House (which Robert and Mary regarded as a person in its own right), its trio of designers, and the surrounding landscape. Text by Daniel Marcus In collaboration with the experimental graphic design team Vier5, Badaut Haussmann has commissioned a set of drinking glasses to be used by guests on the occasion of EXPOSURE; and, partnering with Brothers Drake Meadery, she has developed a cinematic cocktail made of love, addiction, and randomness. Harriet Gardens, an urban farm in Merion Village, provides sustenance in the form of shade vegetables and root vegetables. Glasses will be clinked, memories made and unmade, and time, slowed to a trickle.

Text by Daniel Marcus

INSTANCE NO. 3

MICHEL AUDER + MICHAEL STICKROD

STAPLES AND RUBBER BANDS SCULPTURE AND VIDEO 1967–2019 is a collaborative project comprising various works, both by the artists individually and collectively.

MICHEL AUDER “MAY ’68 IN ’78”

1978, edited in 2019 by Michael Stickrod ½” Betamax video SP to HD video Translation: Youna Kwak Transcription: Rafaela Lopez Subtitle Technician: Amelia Blasio

MICHAEL STICKROD “UNTITLED” (BLEACHERS 1, 2)

2019 Metal, wood, dried plants, and speakers

In 1978 Michel Auder returned to Paris after living in New York for nearly a decade. Traveling with his friend, the artist Larry Rivers, and equipped with a video camera (which Rivers operated), and the relatively new technology of a wireless microphone, Auder interviewed friends he hadn’t seen for many years—as well as numerous strangers he encountered on the street—about their memories of the events surrounding the student uprisings and national strike

that took place across France in Spring 1968. This footage was to be shown alongside a large drawing by Rivers and exhibited within a public sculpture created by Swiss artist Jean Tinguely. Ultimately, technical limitations prevented its exhibition and the video remained unseen, and largely forgotten, until Michael Stickrod, a frequent collaborator with Auder, discovered it and began to digitize and edit the immense archive of interviews. In May ’68 in ’78 Auder presents a wide-ranging, freewheeling portrait of how people experienced and remembered the events surrounding what has become known as “May ’68.” Throughout the video, Auder takes on the respective roles of television news reporter and intimate confidant, speaking with a wide array of subjects—some who perceived the strikes and social upheaval as a nuisance, a few who participated in the destruction of property, and many others who saw the acts as largely symbolic, which is not to say socially or historically inconsequential. Auder, who lived in in Paris in 1968 and captured some of the events that took place there with a 16-millimeter camera, only to lose the footage when he left the country the following year, thus engages in an act of repetition and, arguably, reenactment, recreating in video testimonials what he had previously documented in film. Indeed, Auder’s spirited exchanges with a range of individuals—from store owners to artists to security guards—in certain respects, rehearses the sorts of random, joyful encounters among strangers of varying social classes that numerous participants in the events 10 years earlier recalled as being, perhaps, its most unprecedented and radical political effects. For the video’s debut presentation for Follow the Mud, Stickrod has installed a pair of sculptural bleachers and cone-shaped speakers whose forms draw attention to the fundamentally spectacular and theatrical nature of so many memories recalled in the video. At the same time their expansive—if not barricade-like—occupation of the gallery space seems to prohibit the sorts of communal, participatory actions often associated with the public imagination of May ’68. If these skeletal renderings of collective spectatorship suggest a public long dispersed or perhaps, more optimistically, yet to assemble, Stickrod’s inclusion of large bunches of dried goldenrod and ironweed suspended inside the bleachers offers a natural analog to the recorded memories and their preservation that Auder’s video performs.

Text by Robert Slifkin

INSTANCE NO. 4

JULIA TROTTA “FORGET TO BE AFRAID: A PORTRAIT OF LINDA NOCHLIN”

2012–2019

Digital videos Written and directed by Julia Trotta. Edited and produced by Maria de Victoria.

How deep is the water now, and where is it flowing? What is the meaning of its dripping and pooling? How long until the water overflows this threshold? How long until we are immersed up to our eyelids? --- Water is taking the form of sand. Water is taking the form of light, pooling across the floor, and condensing upon the ceiling. Water is slowly redistributing the pieces of an IKEA kitchen, stacking shelves and easing cabinets into place. Deforming the techno-kitchen of modernity, water returns the site of cooking to its status as convivial potlatch—as circle of sisterhood; as gathering ground. Water is forming a matrilineage—a river of friendships. --- Water has taken the art historian Linda Nochlin (1931–2017). How deep is this water? In the year 1970, at the urging of a friend, Nochlin becomes immersed in the literature of the women’s liberation movement, including the newspaper Off Our Backs, and other “crude broadsheets of the early feminist movement.” Later that year, an offhand remark by gallery owner Richard Feigen inspired her now-famous essay, “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?”, in which Nochlin elucidates the history of greatness in art—pointing to women’s exclusion from the artistic profession and attacking the notion of the “great artist” as a flimsy myth. Many decades later, Julia Trotta, artist, curator, writer, filmmaker, and Nochlin’s granddaughter, sets out to make a documentary film about her grandmother’s life but, ultimately, decides the project can’t be completed and elects to show only isolated vignettes in place of a feature-length film. In one of these vignettes Trotta asks what makes a great work of art, eliciting Nochlin’s reply, “I’m more interested in why this is an interesting piece of art ... or why this works in the way it does.” What is greatness’s cure? Water, water, water. In another video vignette Nochlin reads from one of her recent poems—an ode to her own body: It’s not 16 / it’s big and mean / it’s none too clean / it’s sort of obscene / it’s my body baby / it’s obsolescent / it ain’t adolescent / it’s post-pre-pubescent / not iridescent / not illuminiscent / not quite putrescent / it’s my body baby / it’s obsolescent / what’s soft and baggy / what’s bent and saggy / what’s crooked and raggy / what’s definitely absolutely positively haggy / that’s my body baby / it’s obsolescent How deep is this water, how dark and how lovely?

Text by Daniel Marcus

INSTANCE NO. 5

MICHEL AUDER + MICHAEL STICKROD

STAPLES AND RUBBER BANDS SCULPTURE AND VIDEO 1967–2019 is a collaborative project comprising various works, both by the artists individually and collectively.

MICHEL AUDER “CLEOPATRA”

1970 126 minutes Michael Stickrod Untitled (Coil Snake) 2019 Bronze

MICHAEL STICKROD “UNTITLED” (SNAKE II)

2019 Bronze, cherry root ball

MICHAEL STICKROD “ARISNOE’S LEG”

2019 Beeswax, aluminum, cherry root ball

MICHAEL STICKROD “UNTITLED (COIL, SNAKE)”

2019 Bronze

Prompted by the publicity of a 1968 New York Times Sunday Magazine feature on his wife, the Warhol “Superstar” Viva, and him, Michel Auder received considerable financial backing in 1969 to direct a feature-length movie that would allow him to bring a new scale and scope to his underground sensibility. Working for the first time with sound and a professional crew, Auder recruited a group of Warhol regulars, including Viva, Taylor Mead, Ondine, Ultra Violet, and Louis Waldron, to act in his freewheeling portrayal of the Egyptian queen Cleopatra’s life and, in particular, her marriage to Julius Cesar and their subsequent voyage from Alexandria to Rome—a story previously told in Joseph Mankiewicz’s notoriously expensive and extravagant 1963 film of the same name, starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. In its sketchy burlesque of the Hollywood epic, Auder’s Cleopatra is playfully permeated with willful anachronisms and ironic reversals. In the first half of the film, the snowy expanses of Upstate New York serve as the Egyptian desert (and snowmobiles are camels) and the towering skyscrapers of Manhattan are pyramids. Yet, when the plot moves to Rome, the film depicts the actual eternal city, albeit with scenes just as often shot at Cinecittà, the same Roman soundstage Mankiewicz used for his movie, when not taken amid the car-filled modern metropolis or the sixteenth-century mannerist gardens north of the city at Bomarzo, as ancient locations. The actors, in their extemporaneous dialogue, frequently acknowledge these spatial and temporal paradoxes—sometimes quite humorously as when Mead, playing the queen’s minister, states he just read in the newspaper that it’s 472 BC and they need to find an architect who can build an inn without any rooms to accommodate the prophecy of the birth of Jesus, which will take place nearly a half century in the future. Michael Stickrod’s earthy sculptures present a physical correlate to Auder’s time-traveling and subversive allegory of hedonistic decadence and despotic cruelty. If the two large coiled snakes cast in bronze, Untitled (Coil Snake), and Untitled (Snake II), both 2019, and the beeswax cast of a human leg, Arisnoe’s Leg, 2019, adorned in beer-can-tab chainmail suggest a similarly knowing transformation of ancient mythic motifs into a common modern lexicon, a lush carpet of dried goldenrod flowers punctuated by two root balls from cherry trees indicate the ultimate authority of the natural forces of growth and decay. Stickrod’s largely recycled materials and roughly reproductive techniques invest his objects with a sense of ruinous economy, giving the equally patinated and somewhat degraded copy of Auder’s film a sense of some kind of archeological document rescued from a long-vanished civilization. Text by Robert Slifkin

INSTANCE NO. 6

MICHEL AUDER + MICHAEL STICKROD

STAPLES AND RUBBER BANDS SCULPTURE AND VIDEO 1967–2019 is a collaborative project comprising various works, both by the artists individually and collectively.

MICHAEL STICKROD “SUBVERSIVE HISTORIAN”

2020
16mm, Super 8, mini-dv,
½” reel-to-reel video,
½” Betamax video SP to HD video

In the new video commission, Subversive Historian (2020), Michael Stickrod presents an expansive portrait of his friend and mentor, Michel Auder.

Assembled primarily from an estimated 20,000 hours of footage Auder has recorded and collected over 50 years, and interspersed with more recent footage shot by Stickrod, the video is also a paean to the artist’s prolific and, in many ways, farsighted practice of capturing moments of offhand intimacy that, nonetheless, register broader historical currents. Stickrod has worked with Auder on a variety of projects for more than 15 years, becoming the unrivaled expert on the contents of Auder’s recorded output (including much that has never been shown publicly) and in his efforts to digitize Auder’s largely analog, and thus materially unstable, media collection, its principal archivist and conservator. Using Auder’s highly personal footage as raw material for his own loosely nimble editing—and equally adroit selection—Stickrod underscores Auder’s restless commitment to chronicling realms of experience typically deemed unworthy of documentation and preservation, which, nonetheless, contains deep, unguarded knowledge of the past and, perhaps, even wisdom for the future.

The video and, in particular, its consideration of the ways history can be apprehended unexpectedly and in retrospect, was in certain regards prompted by the rediscovery of a small box stored in Auder’s sister’s summer house in Pommiers, in the south of France. In that box was a cache of materials from Auder’s youth. Stickrod, whose work has frequently drawn upon family archives found in garages, basements, and attics to create new amalgamations that capture an inaccessible past, was dispatched by Auder to retrieve the box. This journey, along with the unearthing of examples of Auder’s photographic work produced before he moved to New York in 1969 and began focusing his attention on film and video work as well as documents related to his military service in Algiers, spurred Stickrod’s interest in creating a kind of summarizing account of his friend’s life and work. Like the forgotten box, Subversive Historian is an incidental time capsule.

Despite Stickrod and Auder’s long working relationship, their joint contributions for Season Two: Follow the Mud represent the most sustained and synergetic collaboration between the two artists. Along with Subversive Historian, their collaborative project Staples and Rubber Bands features three other newly produced videos that revisit Auder’s vast archives: Les Pendus de Tulle (The Hanged of Tulle), Viva Artaud Heliogabalus, May ’68 in ’78, and Stickrod’s sculptural installation for Auder’s 1970 film, Cleopatra. In each instance, Stickrod’s retrospective remediation of Auder’s work resurrects moments seemingly destined for oblivion, all the while registering the inevitable decay and delay that any record of the past occasions.

Text by Robert Slifkin

INSTANCE NO. 7

HEIDE HINRICHS “INSCRIPTIONS”

2006–2020
PEN, PENCIL, CHARCOAL, AND INK ON
Letter- and A4-size paper

LAURA LARSON “ALL THE WOMEN I KNOW”

2018–2019

B/W PHOTOGRAPHS

RYLAND WHARTON “FIGURE 16, AN ALPHABET FOR BEELER”

(ANARCHY, COMMUNITY, POLITICS, LIBERATION, RESISTANCE)
2020
FURNITURE

second shelf, initiated in 2018 by Brussels-based German artist Heide Hinrichs, is a collaborative book acquisition project and multi-institutional, international effort to increase library holdings of publications by nonbinary, female, and queer artists and artists of color. At the project’s core is the formation of a new collection of books in the library of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp, simultaneously acquired through Beeler Gallery at Columbus College of Art & Design’s initiative with Packard Library and at University of Bristol, United Kingdom. As part of Season Two: Follow the Mud, Heide Hinrichs installs more than 100 drawings, Inscriptions (2006–2020), based on drawings by artists in second shelf: Anni Albers, Lutz Bacher, Silvia Bächli, Louise Bourgeois, Andrea Büttner, Ulises Carrián, Hanne Darboven, Mirtha Dermisache, Ulrike Grossarth, Eva Hesse, Hilma af Klint, Emma Kunz, Lee Lozano, Agnes Martin, Ana Mendieta, Ree Morton, Meret Oppenheim, Lygia Pape, Lily van der Stokker, Paul Thek, Cecilia Vicuña, Annette Weisser, and Rachel Whiteread. In dialogue with these drawings is a selection of Columbus artist Laura Larson’s photographic series All the Women I Know. Larson’s book Hidden Mother (Saint Lucy Press, 2017) is part of second shelf.

Columbus artist Ryland Wharton conceives a series of furniture pieces consisting of modular seating and a desk that take the forms of letters and punctuations for the viewing of the drawings. The seats will also serve as stations for Beeler Gallery Ambassadors.

For more info on second shelf, please visit www.second-shelf.org.

