



Adams and Ollman

Will Rawls: *Amphigory*

October 29–December 3, 2022

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Adams and Ollman is pleased to announce *Amphigory*, a solo exhibition by American artist Will Rawls. This exhibition, his first at the gallery, builds upon Rawls' long-standing interests in the politics of movement and language with a large-scale, multi-panel installation of prints on paper and a sculpture. The exhibition opens on Saturday, October 29 and is on view through December 3, 2022.

For more than twenty years, Rawls has been creating performances that bring together dance, installation, text and video. Across his practice, Rawls grapples with language as an ever-evolving site of negotiation, drawing parallels between its fluctuating meanings and the human body as it dances, contorts, transforms, speaks, groans and repeats itself. The artist's work poetically embraces glitches and failures in communication—whether linguistic, gestural or visual. This resulting loss and retrieval of meaning signals Rawls' belief that precarity is fundamental to storytelling.

In his solo and group dance works, Rawls pushes against linear narratives by deconstructing the boundaries of coherence as performers vocalize, move and animate objects. In *Uncle Rebus*, performed at the High Line in New York, dancers manipulated large-scale letters in a critical retelling (and re-spelling) of *Tales of Brer Rabbit*, a compilation of African-American folklore based on a white author's written account. As sentences emerge and come apart, and nonsense grips our attention, Rawls pressures the limits of standard English, black orality and the performers' personal expression within these fields. For *What Remains*, Rawls collaborated with Claudia Rankine to create an original performance drawing on

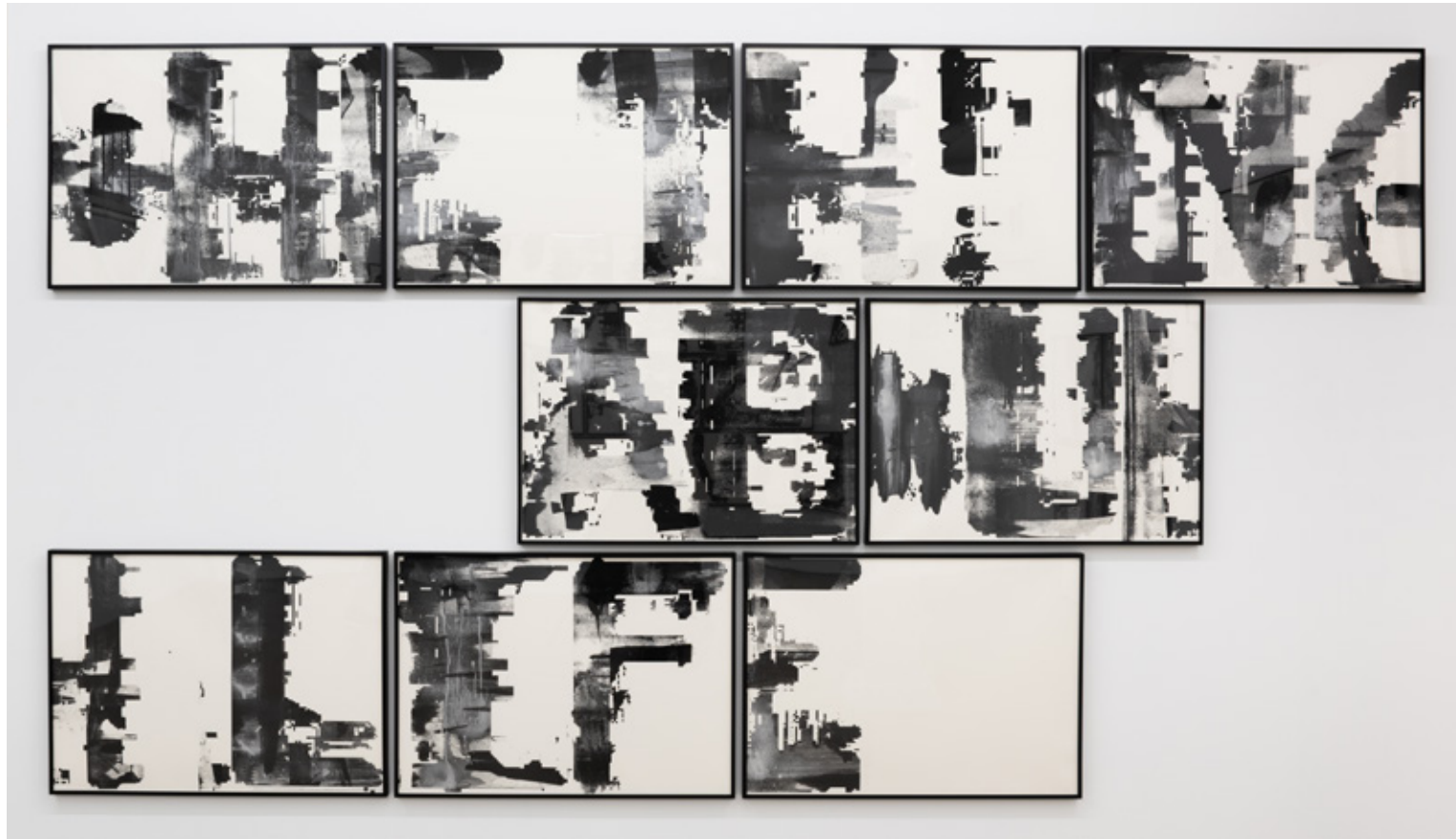
the poet's texts on mental illness, bodily rupture and her keen observations of the American social fabric. With this project and others, Rawls addresses the inherent concealment and exposure of performance and by extension the thresholds where black presence meets the edge of erasure from abstraction.

Central to the exhibition is a suite of forty screen prints on paper that feature abstracted letters. Each letter or punctuation is uniquely marked with traces of the artist's body, scraping, dissolving and displacing the ink through the screen. This results in viscous pixelated images that call to mind a film frame, a photo flash, a fingerprint or a landscape in the distance. Their kinetic forms imply a pictorial language in flux. Evocative phrases occupy the room, divided into one or two letter passages that encourage non-linear, polysemous reading. "OO" might imply excitement, while "HA," is perhaps a nod to Rawls' wordplay. An isolated "GA" could be gay or Georgia, the state where the artist's paternal family was born and worked the land. As the viewer moves through the exhibition, meaning is formed and reformed in real time and space. As Rawls pulls language apart, he asks fundamental questions about one's agency to intervene into the very flesh of meaning.

Rounding out the exhibition's key theme of "the printed body" will be a figurative sculpture printed from foam and resin, and lit from within. This free-standing figure is composed of rough, pixelated edges and liquid lines that fuse together anatomical synthesis and disjunction. The torqued sculpture calls to mind video game avatars while indexing racialized bodies that are

transposed into data points, and hence subject to erasure and violence. Standing fugue-like in the show, this work accelerates the moment of interpretive breakdown that occurs when gesture, embodiment and abstraction meet, much as they do in the other work on view in *Amphigory*.

Will Rawls (b. 1978, Boston, MA) earned a BA in Art History from Williams College, Williamstown, MA. He is a recipient of a United States Artists Award, Creative Capital Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, Foundation for Contemporary Arts grant, MacDowell Fellowship, Headlands Center for the Arts Residency, Robert Rauschenberg Residency, Hodder Fellowship at Princeton University, a “Bessie” (New York Dance and Performance Award), and Herb Alpert Award in the Arts. Rawls’s choreographic work has appeared nationally and internationally at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; the Chocolate Factory Theater, Queens, NY; High Line Art, New York, NY; ICA Boston, MA; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Portland Institute of Contemporary Art, Portland, OR; and Tanzquartier Wien, Vienna, Austria, among others. His writing has been published by *Artforum*; *Dancing While Black Journal*; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; and Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY. Rawls has been a guest artist at Bard College, Barnard College, Harvard University/Carpenter Center, Wesleyan University, and Williams College, and a mentor for Colorado College’s Department of Theatre and Dance. He is Assistant Professor of Choreography in the Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance at UCLA.



Will Rawls

Amphigory [The Thing About Life], 2022

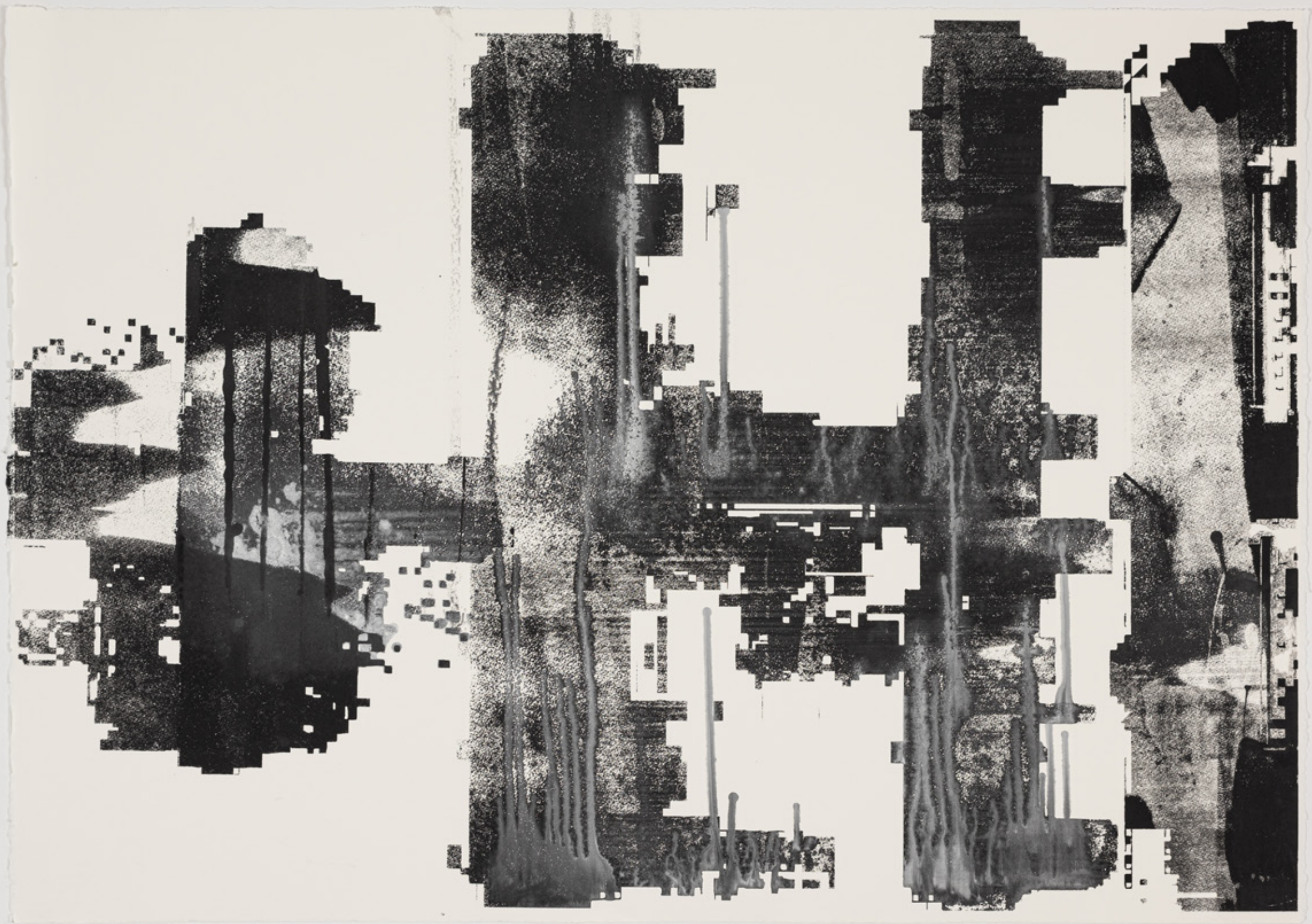
oil-based ink on paper

each: 30 x 40 inches / 76.20h x 101.60w centimeters

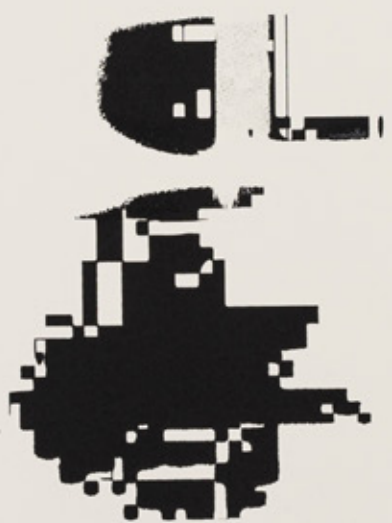
installed: 91h x 164w inches / 231h x 416.56w centimeters

2 + 2 AP, varied edition

WR_2022_GR_02



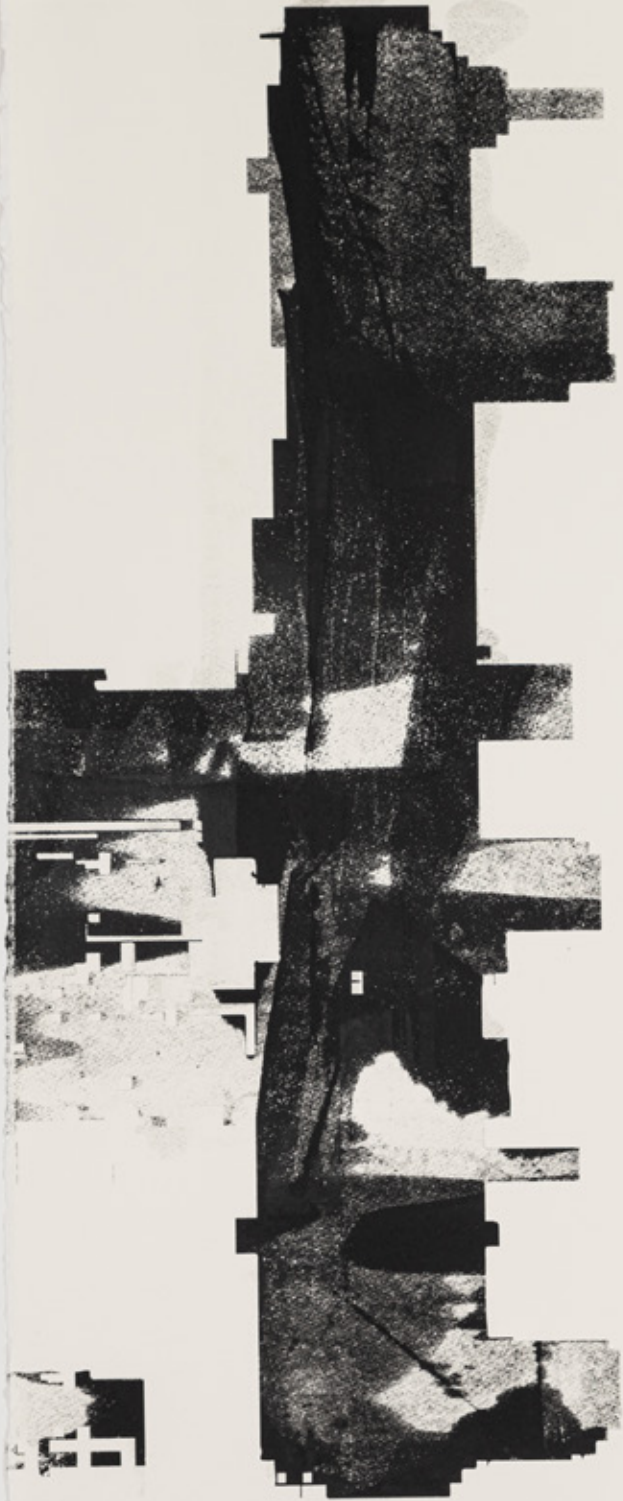


















Will Rawls

Amphigory [Is That You], 2022

oil-based ink on paper

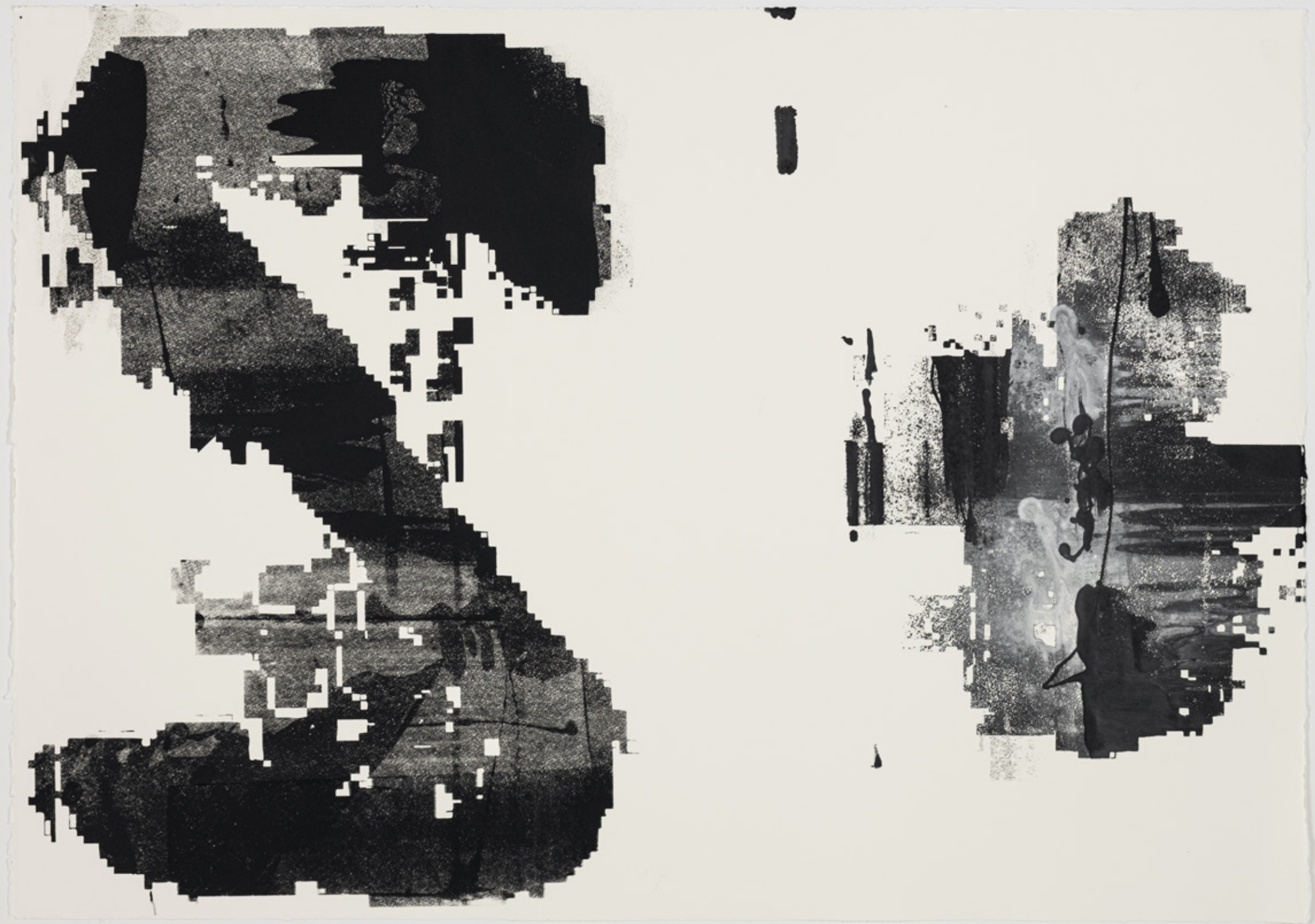
each: 30 x 40 inches / 76.20h x 101.60w centimeters

installed: 91h x 174w inches / 231h x 441.96w centimeters

2 + 2 AP, varied edition

WR_2022_GR_01















Will Rawls

Amphigory [U Can't Escape Alive], 2022

oil-based ink on paper

each: 30 x 40 inches / 76.20h x 101.60w centimeters

installed: 91h x 240w inches / 231h x 609.60w centimeters

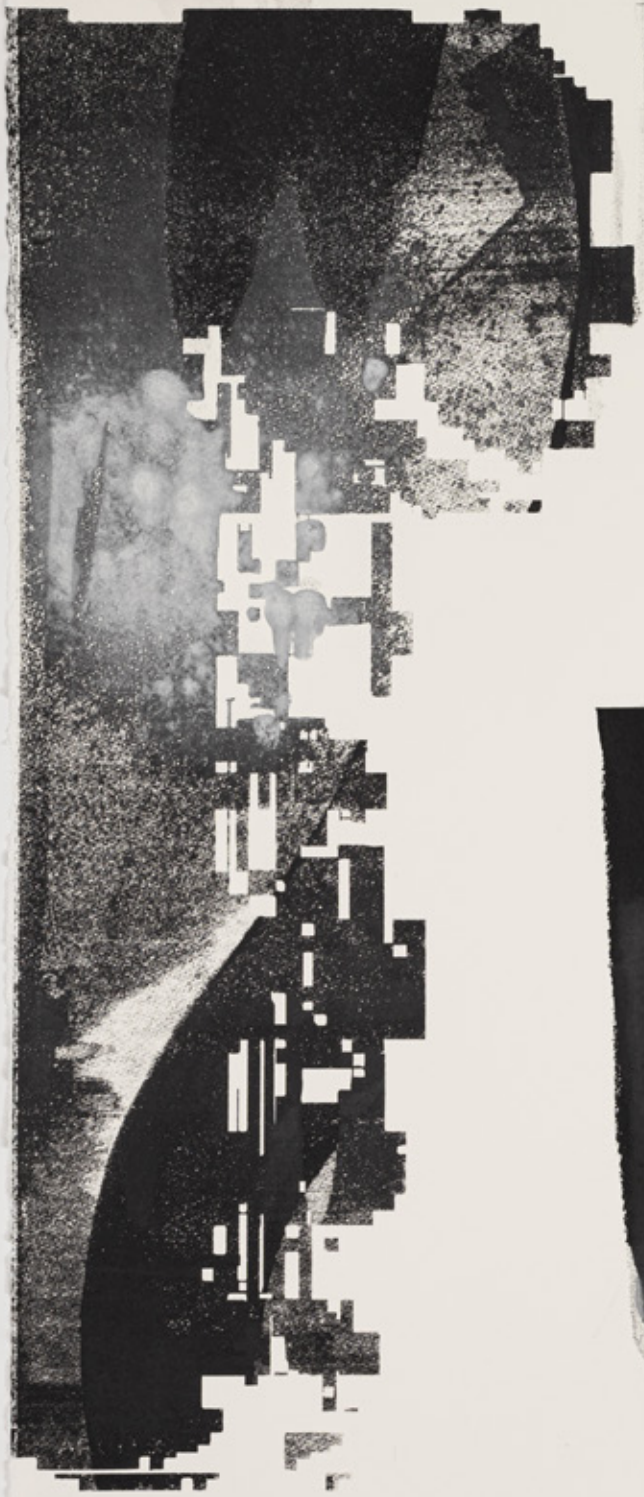
2 + 2 AP, varied edition

WR_2022_GR_04



























Will Rawls

Amphigory [Whoops! Game Over], 2022

oil-based ink on paper

each: 30 x 40 inches / 76.20h x 101.60w centimeters

installed: 91h x 186w inches / 231h x 472.44w centimeters

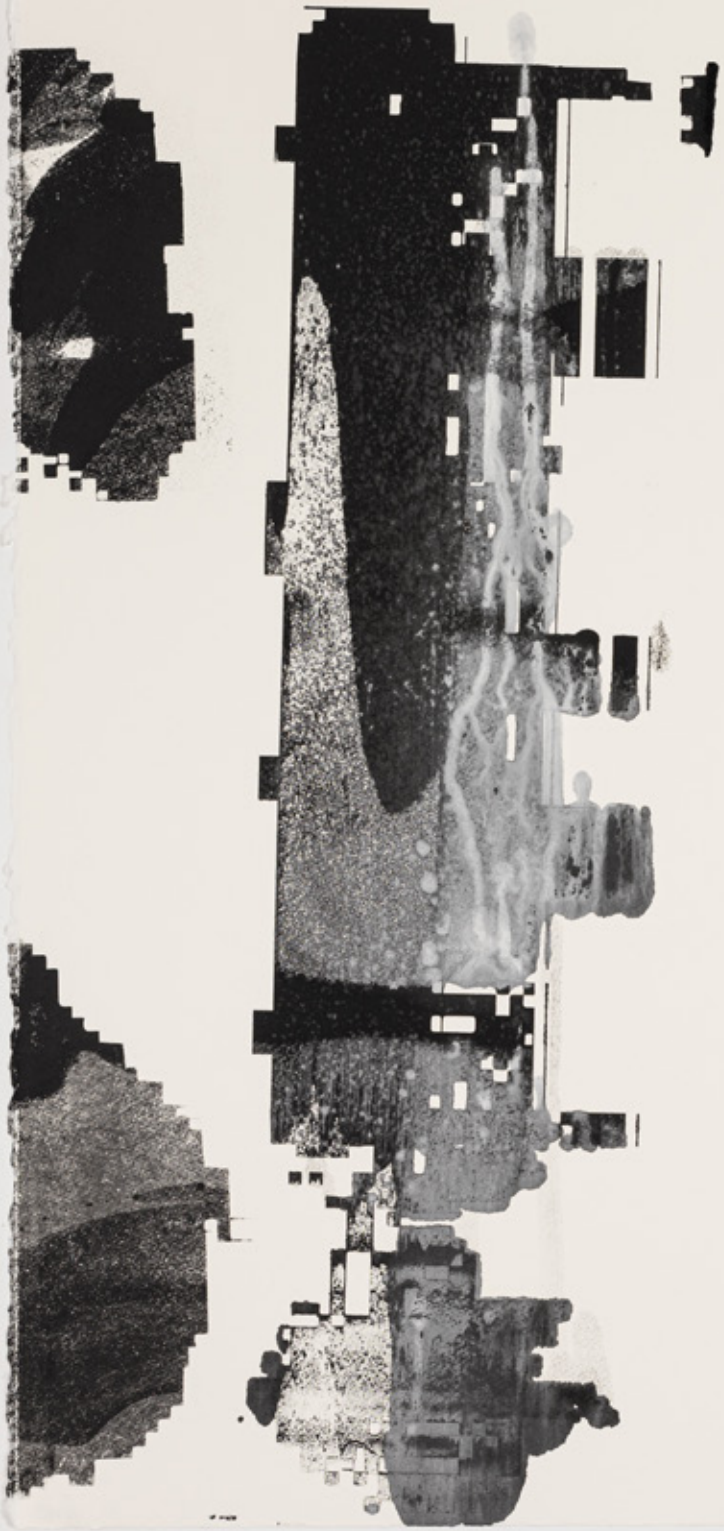
2 + 2 AP, varied edition

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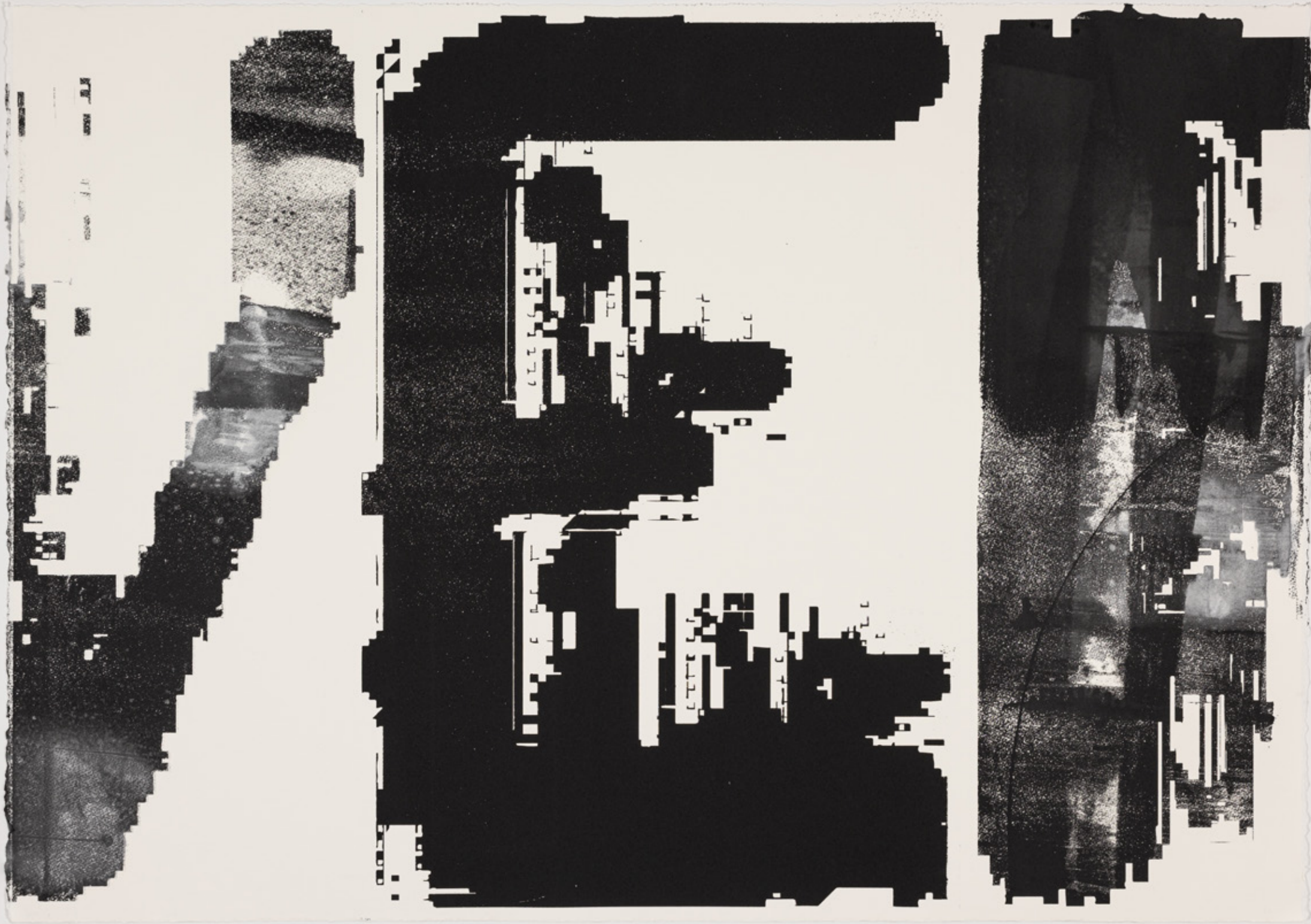


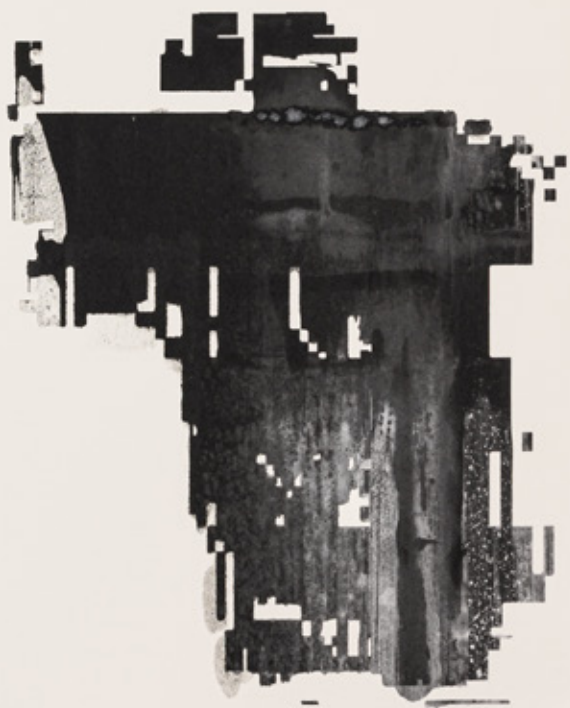


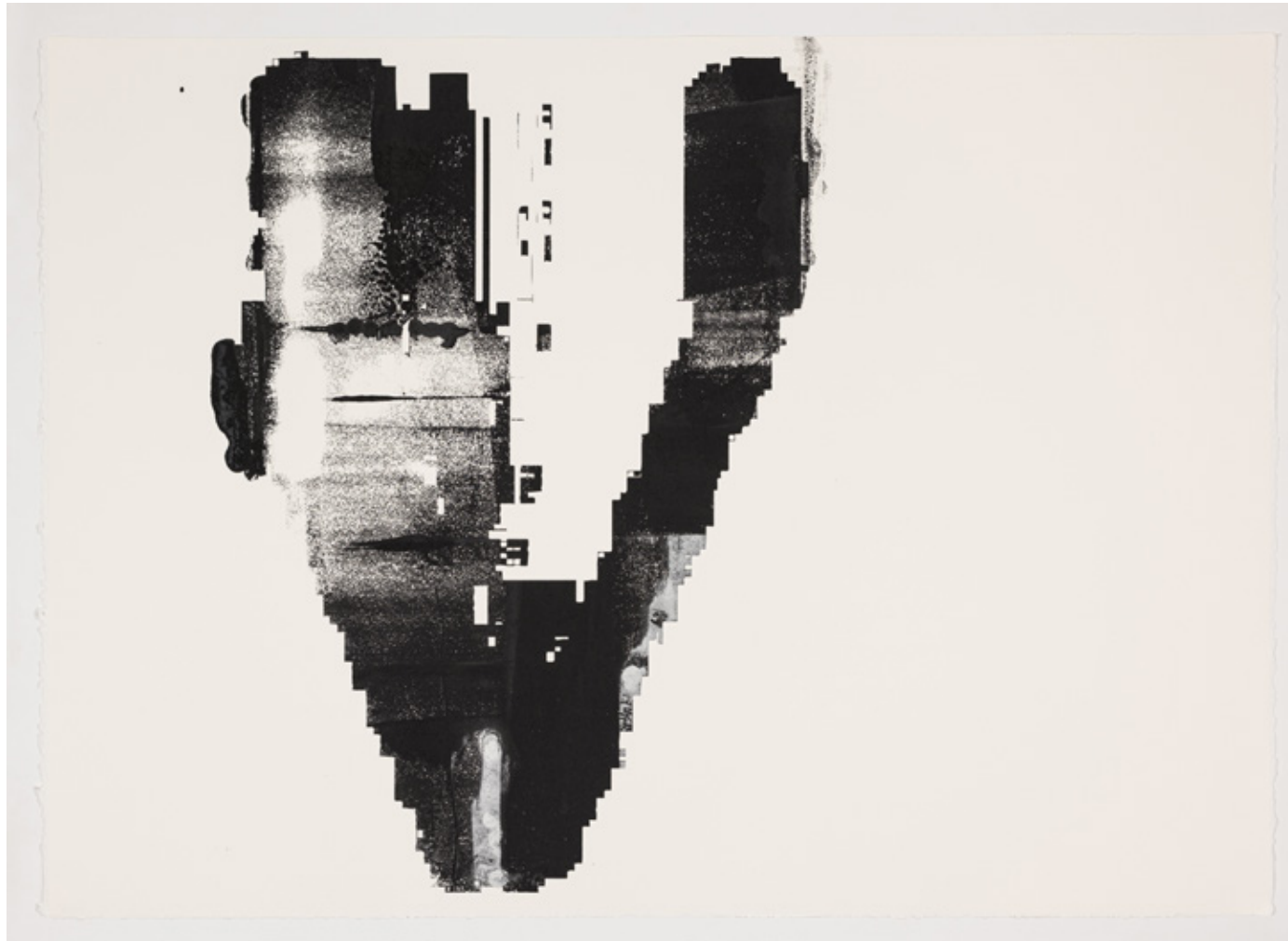












Will Rawls
Amphigory [37], 2022
oil-based ink on paper
30h x 40w inches
76.20h x 101.60w centimeters
2 + 2 AP, varied edition
WR_2022_37_01



Will Rawls, *Amphigory [37]*, 2022



Will Rawls
Amphigory [38], 2022
oil-based ink on paper
30h x 40w inches
76.20h x 101.60w centimeters
2 + 2 AP, varied edition
WR_2022_38_01





Will Rawls
Amphigory [39], 2022
oil-based ink on paper
30h x 40w inches
76.20h x 101.60w centimeters
2 + 2 AP, varied edition
WR_2022_39_01





Will Rawls
Amphigory [40], 2022
oil-based ink on paper
30h x 40w inches
76.20h x 101.60w centimeters
2 + 2 AP, varied edition
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Will Rawls, *Amphigory* [40], 2022



Will Rawls

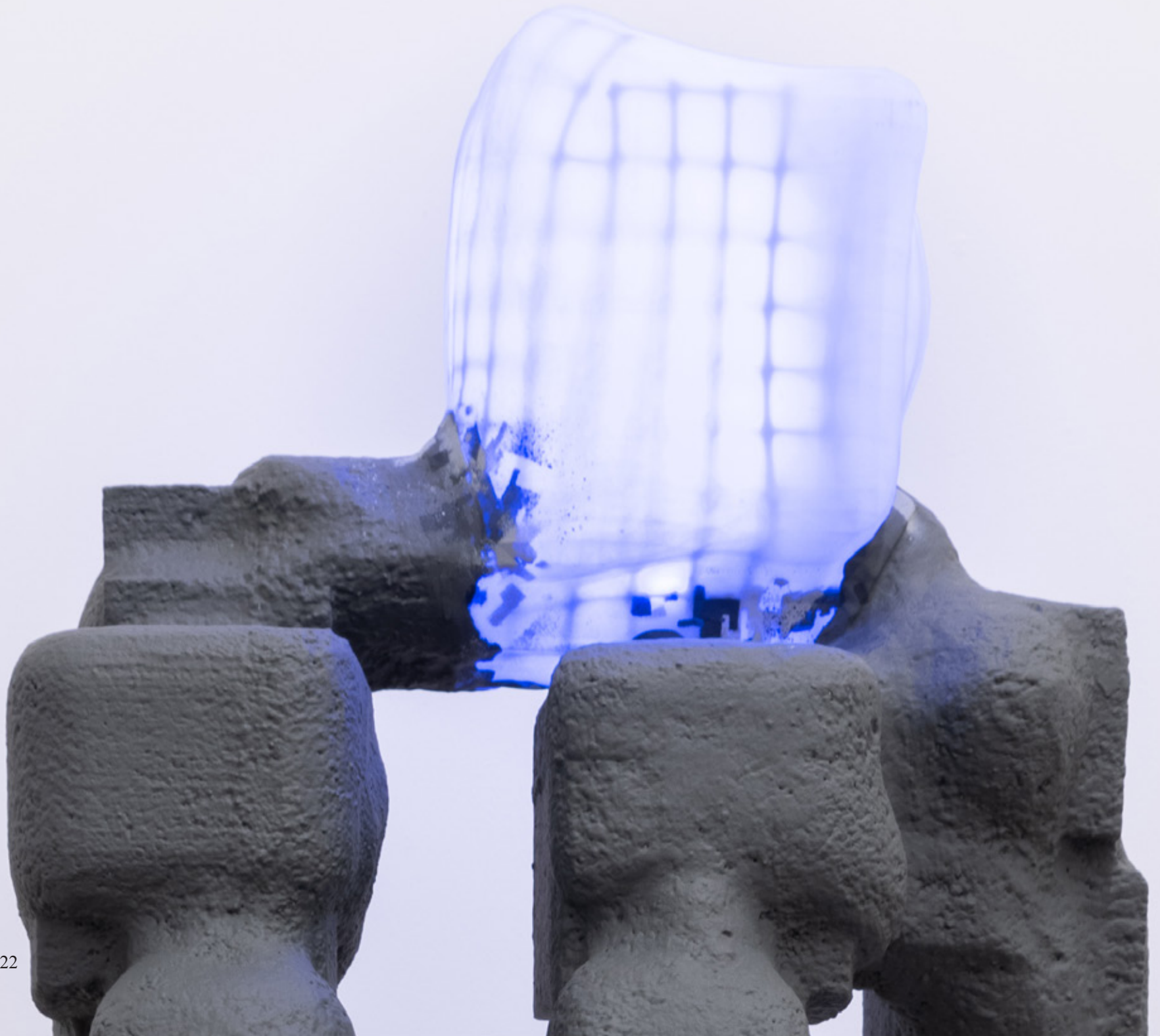
01, 2022

foam, resin, epoxy, electrical conduit tubing, LED lights, acrylic paint, wood, and woodstain

60h x 19w x 22 3/4d in

152.40h x 48.26w x 57.78d cm

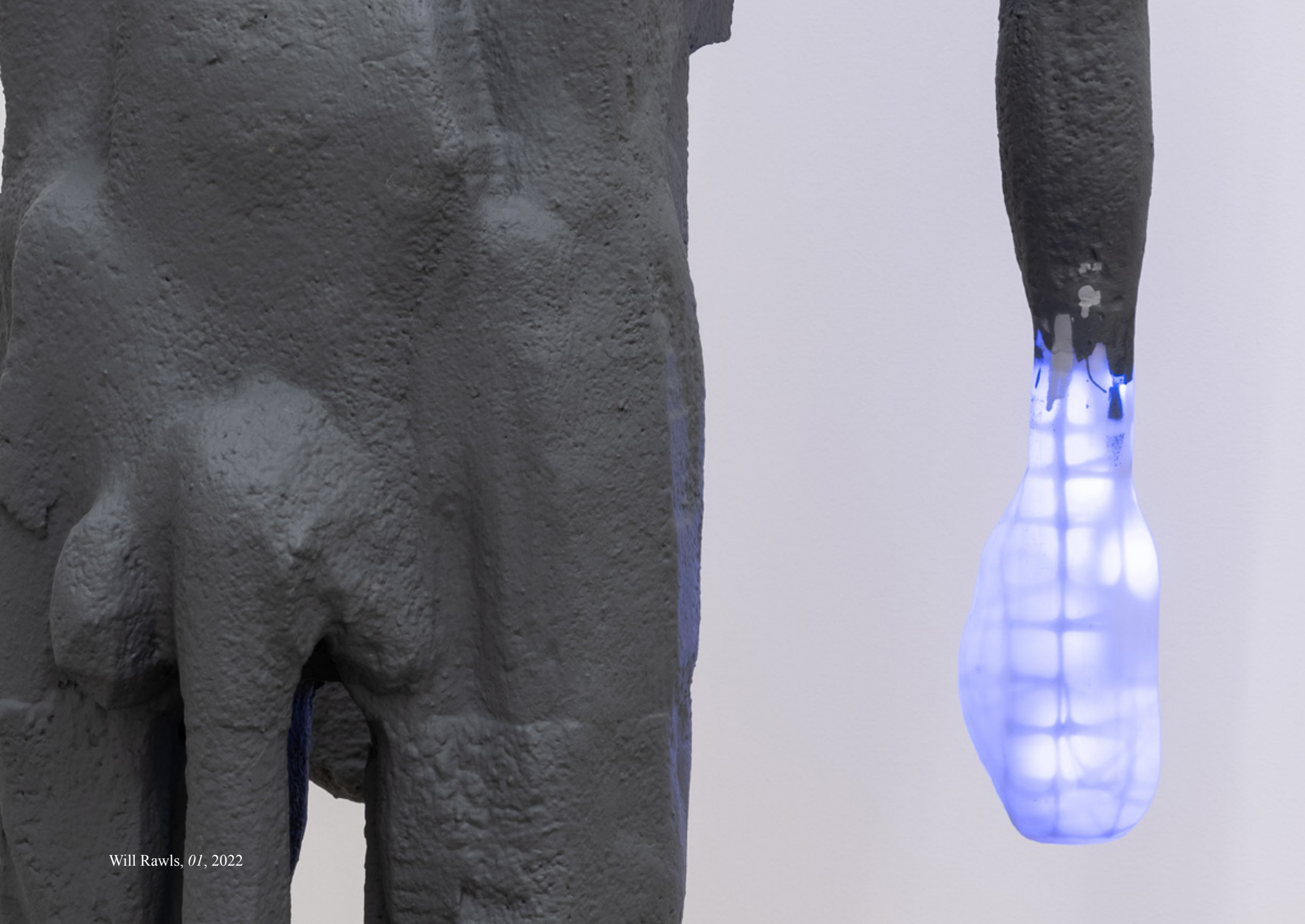
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Will Rawls, *01*, 2022



Will Rawls, *01*, 2022





Installation view: Will Rawls, *Amphigory*, 2022



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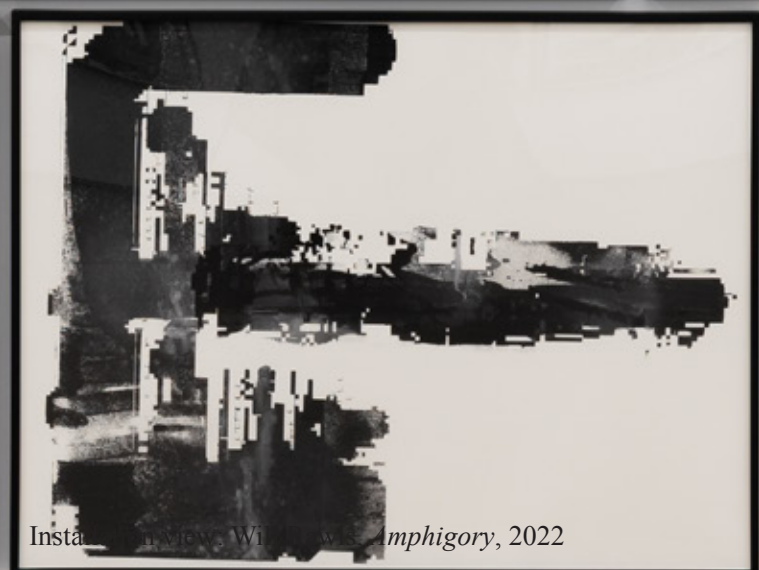
Installation view: Will Rawls, *Amphigory*, 2022



Installation view: Will Rawls, *Amphigory*, 2022



Installation view: Will Rawls, *Amphigory*, 2022



Instagram: [www.WilliamAmphigory.com](#), 2022



Installation view: Will Lawls, *Allegory*, 2022



Installation view: Will Rawls, *Amphigory*, 2022

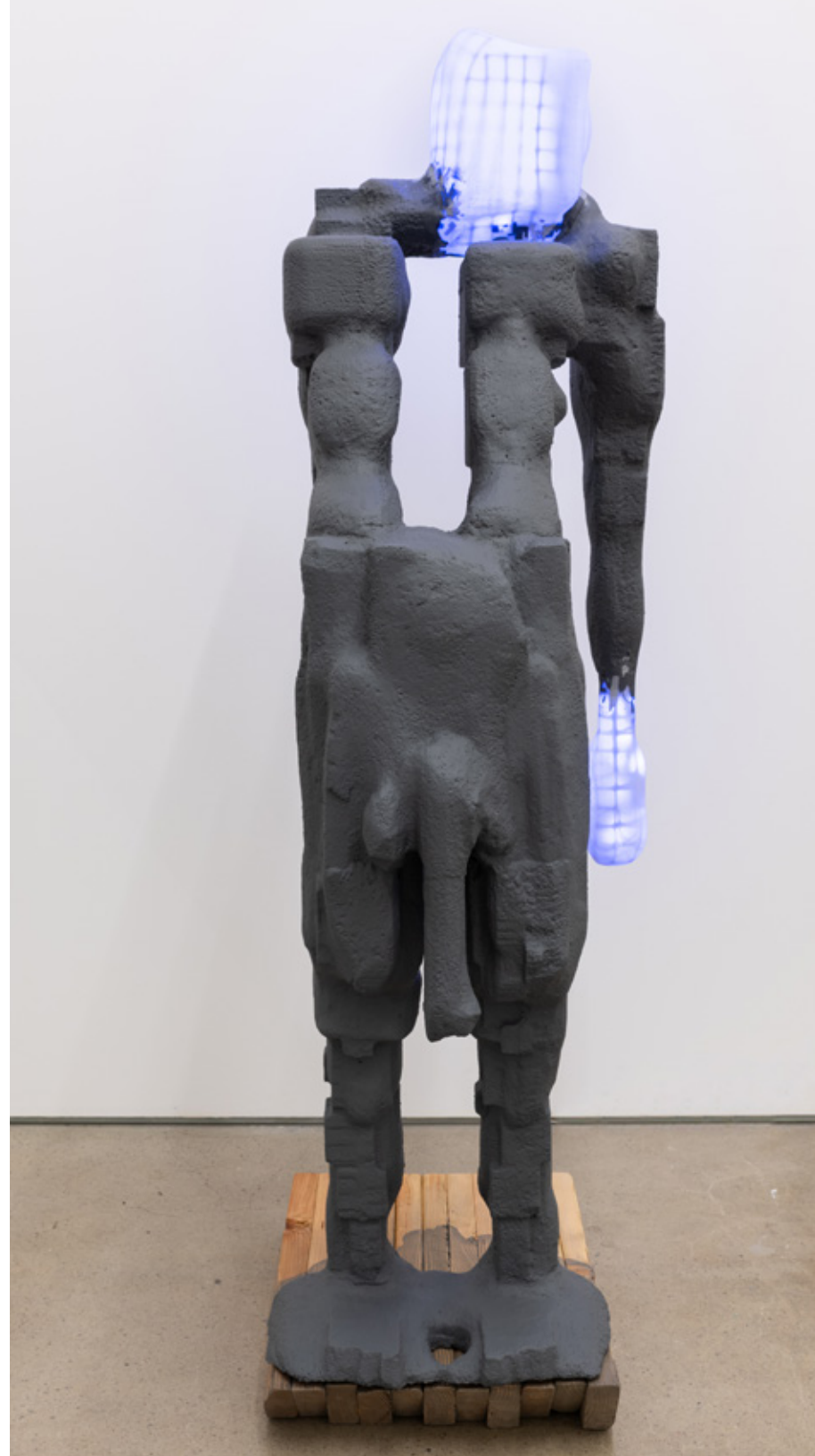


Installation view: Will Rawls, *Amphigory*, 2022



Installation view: Will Rawls, *Amphigory*, 2011

Installation view: Will Rawls, *Amphigory*, 2022



Installation view: Will Rawls, *Amphigory*, 2022



Installation view: Will Rawls, *Amphigory*, 2022





Installation view: Will Rawls, *Amphigory*, 2022



Installation view: Will Rawls, *Amphigory*, 2022

Installation view: Will Rawls, *Amphigory*, 2022



WILL RAWLS
CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATION

2000 Bachelor of Arts in Art History, Williams College

WORKS

2023 *[siccer]*, The Kitchen, (New York, NY). National tour: Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (Portland, OR), On the Boards (Seattle, WA), The Momentary (Bentonville, AR), Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago, IL)

2021 *Everlasting Stranger*, solo exhibition, Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, WA
Cursor, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, UK: TBR (to-be-rescheduled)

2020 *[sic] tv*, Brooklyn, NY

2019 *Cursor*, Hessel Museum, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY
Cursor, Issue Project Room, Brooklyn, NY

What Remains, with Claudia Rankine, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA

What Remains, with Claudia Rankine, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN

What Remains, with Claudia Rankine, Yale Repertory Theatre, New Haven, CT

See-Saw, with Andros-Zins Browne, The Work Is Never Done, Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY

2018 *What Remains*, with Claudia Rankine, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Illinois

What Remains, with Claudia Rankine, Crossing the Line Festival, Danspace Project, New York, NY

Cursor 3: Untitled, Issue Project Room, Brooklyn, NY

Cursor, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.

Uncle Rebus, High Line Art, The High Line Park, New York, NY

Cursor 2: Ditties, Issue Project Room, Brooklyn, NY

The Tony Cokes Remixes No. 1, with Andros Zins-Browne, 10th Berlin Biennial, Berlin, Germany

Sister Spell, *The Party*, *Alpha Dance* [animated films], New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, NY

Cursor 1: Word Lists, Issue Project Room, Brooklyn, NY

2017 *I make me [sic]*, TBA Festival, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Portland, OR

Q&A, *Block Universe Festival*, Peckham Asylum, London, England

Q&A, *The Whitney Biennial*, The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

What Remains, with Claudia Rankine, Bard College Fisher Center, NY

2016 *HONORARIUM*, Kate Werble Gallery, New York, NY

The Planet-Eaters: Seconds, Schauspielhaus, Vienna, Austria

The Planet-Eaters: Seconds, National Museum of the American Indian, New York, NY

A Marvelous Order [opera], with Tracy K. Smith, Judd Greenstein, Joshua Frankel, Williams College, Williamstown, MA

I make me [sic], Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, MA

I make me [sic], Greater New York, MoMA PS1, New York, NY

- Personal Effects*, Performa 15, Westbeth Artist Housing [Basement], New York, NY
- 2015 *#loveyoumeanit*, Platform: Dancers, Buildings and People in the Streets, Danspace Project, New York, NY
A Marvelous Order [opera], with Tracy K. Smith, Judd Greenstein, Joshua Frankel, Three-Legged Dog, New York, NY
Settlement House, Abrons Arts Center, New York, NY
- 2013 *The Planet-Eaters*, The Chocolate Factory Theater, New York, NY
- 2012 *A folk tale, or some thoughts on dancing in the dark*, Emily Harvey Foundation, New York, NY
Frontispieces, Platform: Parallels, Danspace Project, New York, NY
Dog Three, Dance Gang (with Kennis Hawkins), dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, Germany
- 2011 *Folk You! Folk Me Too!*, Tanzquartier Wien, Vienna, Austria
- 2010 *Census*, Mount Tremper Arts, Catskills, NY
- 2009 *Dog Breaks*, Dance Gang (with Kennis Hawkins), Dance Theatre Workshop, New York, NY
Dog Free, Dance Gang (with Kennis Hawkins), Summer on the Hudson Festival, New York, NY
- SELECTED PERFORMER EXPERIENCE
- 2018 Dancer, *Landscapes of I*, Björn Säfsten, European Tour: Sweden, Germany
- 2014 Dancer, *Retrospective*, Xavier Le Roy, MoMA PS 1, New York, NY
Dancer, *Baron Samedi*, Alain Buffard, European Tour: France, Germany, Switzerland
- 2012 Dancer, *This Variation*, Tino Sehgal, dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, Germany
Dancer, *The Show Must Go On*, Jérôme Bel, Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY
- 2010 Re-performer, *The Artist Is Present*, Marina Abramović, MoMA, New York, NY
Performer, *This Progress*, Tino Sehgal, Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY
Dancer, *Big Eater*, David Neumann, The Kitchen, New York, NY
- 2009 “Mockette”, *Burning Down The House*, David Byrne, Radio City Music Hall, New York, NY
- 2008 Dancer, *Free the Angels*, Nicholas Leichter, The Joyce Theater, New York, NY
Dancer, *feedforward*, David Neumann, Dance Theater Workshop, New York, NY
- 2005 Dancer, *Agora*, Noémie LaFrance, McCarren Park Pool, Brooklyn, NY
- 2004 Dancer, *Connect. Transfer.*, Shen Wei Dance Arts, Lincoln Center, New York, NY
Dancer, *Connect. Transfer. & The Rite of Spring*, Shen Wei Dance Arts, Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 2009-2017 Board of Directors, Movement Research, New York, NY
- 2016 Co-curator, Danspace Project Platform: Lost and Found, New York, NY
- 2014-2015 Co-editor, Critical Correspondence, Movement Research, New York, NY
- 2012 Co-curator, Danspace Project Platform: Parallels, New York, NY
- 2009 Co-curator, Movement Research Spring Festival 2009: ROLL CALL, New York, NY

AWARDS / RESIDENCIES

- 2022 Artist-in-Residence, Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito, CA
Artist-in-Residence, The Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center, Troy, NY (postponed from 2020)
- 2021 Herb Alpert Award in the Arts
Creative Capital Award, *[siccer]*
Artist-in-Residence, Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography, Tallahassee, FL
Artist-in-Residence, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Portland, OR (postponed from 2020)
- 2020 Artist-in-Residence, Onassis Foundation, Athens, Greece
National Dance Project Production Grant, *[siccer]*
United States Artists Fellowship

National Performance Network Development Fund Award, *[siccer]*

- 2019-2020 Mary Mackall Gwinn Hodder Fellow, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ
Artist-in-Residence, Movement Research, New York, NY
- 2019 Artist-in-Residence, Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography, Tallahassee, FL
Artist-in-Residence, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR
Artist-in-Residence, The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA
Artist-in-Residency, Gibney Dance Center, New York, NY
National Performance Network Creation Fund Award, *[siccer]*
- 2018 Artist-in-Residence, Stephen Petronio Residency Center, Roundtop, NY
Artist-in-Residence, Issue Project Room, Brooklyn, NY
Inaugural Sam Miller Award for Performing Arts Award, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council
MAP Fund Award, *[siccer]*
- 2017 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship
NY Dance and Performance Award ('Bessie' Award), Outstanding Emerging Choreographer
Robert Rauschenberg Foundation Residency, Captiva Island, FL
- 2016 Casinos Austria Prix Jardin d'Europe Award, ImPulsTanz, Vienna, Austria
Artist-in-Residence, Pieter, Los Angeles, CA
- 2015 Foundation for Contemporary Arts Award

2015-2017 Extended Life Choreographer's Residency, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, New York, NY

2013 MacDowell Colony Fellowship

2010 Artist-in-Residence, Mount Tremper Arts, Mount Tremper, NY

2009 Artist-in-Residence, Dance Theater Workshop, New York, NY

2008 ImPulsTanz, danceWEB Fellowship, Vienna, Austria

2000 Class Speaker, Williams College Commencement Exercises, Williamstown, MA
Hubbard Hutchinson Memorial Fellowship, Williams College
TEACHING / LECTURES

2021 University of California Regents Professor, Dept. of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA

2020 Presentation, Within Practice, Stockholm, Sweden
Lecture: "Stopping Dancing: Animation and The Disnegatif", The Black Embodiments Studio and Workshop, University of Washington, Seattle, WA,
Keynote Speaker: "Stopping Dancing: Animation and The Disnegatif", Collegium for African Diaspora Dance, Duke University, Durham, NC

2019 Workshop and Performance: "Cursor", Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY
Research and Practice Intensive: "Disnegatif: Undoing Foucault's Dispositif", ImPulsTanz, Vienna, Austria

Seminar, MFA Program, Yale University, New Haven, CT
Lecture: "Cursor", Carpenter Center for Visual Arts, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

Graduate Seminar on Choreography, Dept. Of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, University of California Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA

Presentation and Workshop, Dept. of Dance, University of California Riverside, Riverside, CA

Presentation, California Institute of the Arts,, Valencia, CA

2018 Lecture: "New York, HIV/AIDS, Then & Now", Dept. of Performance Studies, New York University, New York, NY

MFA Thesis Advisor and Lecture: "Cursor", Pacific Northwest College of Art, Portland, OR

Lecture: "Cursor", The University of Dance and Circus, Stockholm, Sweden

2017 Performance Workshop, Dept. of Visual and Environmental Studies, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

Lecture: "Undoing Bodies Moved By Language", Arts Research Center, University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA

MFA Studio Visits and Lecture, Parsons School of Design, New York, NY

2016 Arthur J. Levitt Artist-in-Residence, Dept. of Dance, Williams College,, Williamstown, MA

2015-2016 Mellon Foundation Creative Campus Fellow, Dept. of Dance, Wesleyan University, , Middletown, CT

- 2014 Workshop, Dept. of Dance, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ
- 2013 Workshop and Presentation, Dept. of Dance, Williams College, Williamstown, MA
Seminar and Practicum: "Theories of Performance", Tanzquartier Wien, Vienna, Austria
- 2012 Seminar on Contemporary Choreography, Dept. of Theater, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, CO
- 2011 Contemporary Dance Technique, Dept. of Dance, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY
Senior Thesis Mentor, Colorado College Independent Study Program in New York, NY
- 2010 Adjunct Professor/Resident Choreographer, Dept. of Dance, Barnard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- Rawls, Will & Lax, Thomas, "Essayons." In *Brooklyn Rail* Nov. 2020, Edited by Ralph Lemon. New York, NY, 2020.
- Rawls, Will, "Disnegatif." In *Historias de Dança*. Edited by Julia Bryan-Wilson and Olivia Ardui. São Paulo, Brasil: Museu de Arte de São Paulo, 2020.
- Rawls, Will, "Broomstick." In *This Is Not A Gun*, edited by Cara Levine and Vivian Sming. Chicago, IL: Candor Press, 2020.

- Rawls, Will. "Contra Bougie Semio." In *Who Is Surfing Who?: Adam Linder*, edited by Aram Moshayedi. Los Angeles, CA: Hammer Museum, 2018.
- Rawls, Will. "Uncle Rebus Poems." In *Dancing While Black* Journal No. 1. Edited by Nia Austin-Edwards. Website, 2018.
- Rawls, Will. "Our Ghosts in the Room: Intersections of Race and Dance Archives in the Age of AIDS." In *Bodies of Evidence: Ethics, Aesthetics and Politics of Movement*. Edited by Gurur Erten and Sandra Noeth. Vienna, Austria: Passagen Verlag, 2018.
- Rawls, Will. "1000 Words." Edited by Mira Dayal. *Artforum*, October 2018.
- Rawls, Will. "To Do You." Edited by Kemi Adeyemi. New York, NY: Recess Gallery, 2017.
- Rawls, Will. "I set out in the morning." *RALPH LEMON*. Edited by David Velasco. New York, NY: Museum of Modern Art, 2016.
- Rawls, Will. "Artists and Identity." Edited by Annie Godfrey-Larmon. *Artforum*, 2016.
- Rawls, Will, Ishmael Houston-Jones, and Jaime Shearn Coan, eds. *Lost and Found: Dance, New York, HIV/AIDS, Then and Now*. New York, NY: Danspace Project, 2016.
- Rawls, Will. "Neighbours, in the Plural." In *German Dance Platform*. Edited by Sandra Noeth. Berlin, Germany: Goethe Institut, 2016.

Rawls, Will. "Dog Years." In *Triple Canopy*. Edited by Lizzie Feidelson. New York, NY: Triple Canopy, 2015.

Rawls, Will. "My Lunch with Will." Edited by Noémie Solomon. *DANSE: A Catalog*, Cultural Services of the French Embassy. Paris, France: les presses du reel, 2015.

Rawls, Will. "Glenn Lowry with Will Rawls in Conversation." In *On Value*. Edited by Lizzie Feidelson. New York, NY: Museum of Modern Art, Triple Canopy, 2015.

Rawls, Will, and Biba Bell, eds. "THE FRED HERKO DIALOGUES." *Critical Correspondence*, New York, NY: Movement Research, 2015.

Rawls, Will, and Biba Bell, eds. "THE POST DANCE DIALOGUES" *Critical Correspondence*, New York, NY: Movement Research, 2015.

Rawls, Will. "Leap of Fake: On Dancing and Doubting." In *Scores No. 4: On Addressing*. Edited by Sandra Noeth. Vienna, Austria: Tanzquartier Wien, 2014.

Rawls, Will, and Abigail Levine, eds. "Interview with Noémie Solomon." In *Critical Correspondence*. New York, NY: Movement Research, 2014.

Rawls, Will, and Abigail Levine, eds. "Interview with Ligia Lewis." In *Critical Correspondence*, New York, NY: Movement Research, 2014.