

MATT MULLICAN

The Universe

28 February – 11 April 2026


LIFE ON EARTH
MAN
MAN
HISTORY AND CULTURE
CULTURE
CULTURE
MAN AND MACHINES
ATLAS


LIFE ON EARTH
LIFE ON EARTH
LIFE ON EARTH







The Universe is Matt Mullican's latest "book," a category of artwork he conceived and began using in the early 1970s in various formats, including drawing, collage, prints, photos, lightboxes, and rubbings. For *The Universe*, taking two copies of the 1990 edition of the *Random House Encyclopedia* (originally published in 1977) as his starting point, Mullican cut out every image or chapter title per page, collaging each onto individual sheets, and numbering the sheets according to their published order. The work comprises 9,519 uniform sheets of paper, yet only 9,496 sheets were counted by the artist. Discrepancies and miscalculations illustrate the difficulty in processing such an enormity of information.

Mullican retained the encyclopedia's two-sectioned structure—*Colorpedia*, which consists of illustrated essays on overarching topics, from "Life on Earth" to "Man and Science," and *Alphapedia*, which consists of alphabetically arranged summaries on particular subjects. The sheer volume of images isolated from these sections highlight the breadth of information contained within a single reference book and how each image relates to one another without text. This dissection of widely disseminated knowledge continues Mullican's lifelong exploration into the signs and symbols that make up both his own artistic universe and the real world.

The work can be installed in various ways: arranged on tables, affixed to bulletin boards, or hung directly on the wall, either as a whole or in groupings by chapter; or within its organizational storage system consisting of 25 boxes and 101 envelopes. The work need not be installed in its entirety, with the caveat that the integrity of the page order should always be preserved.

Mullican has made more than 30 "books." Examples are in the collections of The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo, the Netherlands; Voorlinden Museum & Gardens, Wassenaar, the Netherlands; Museo National Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; and FRAC Picardie, Hauts-de-France.

The Universe is his second project referencing the *Random House Encyclopedia*. His first, *City as a Map (of Ideas)* (2003), maps each of the encyclopedia's subjects and chapters onto neighborhoods and buildings in the city of Hamburg, Germany, resulting in a cartographic list that indicates their locations according to the Gauss-Krüger coordinate system.

The Universe
2023–2025
9,519 paper collages with ink, each 11 x 8 1/2 inches, in 101 manila envelopes with ink, distributed in 25 cardboard boxes with ink
installation dimensions variable
PF9654

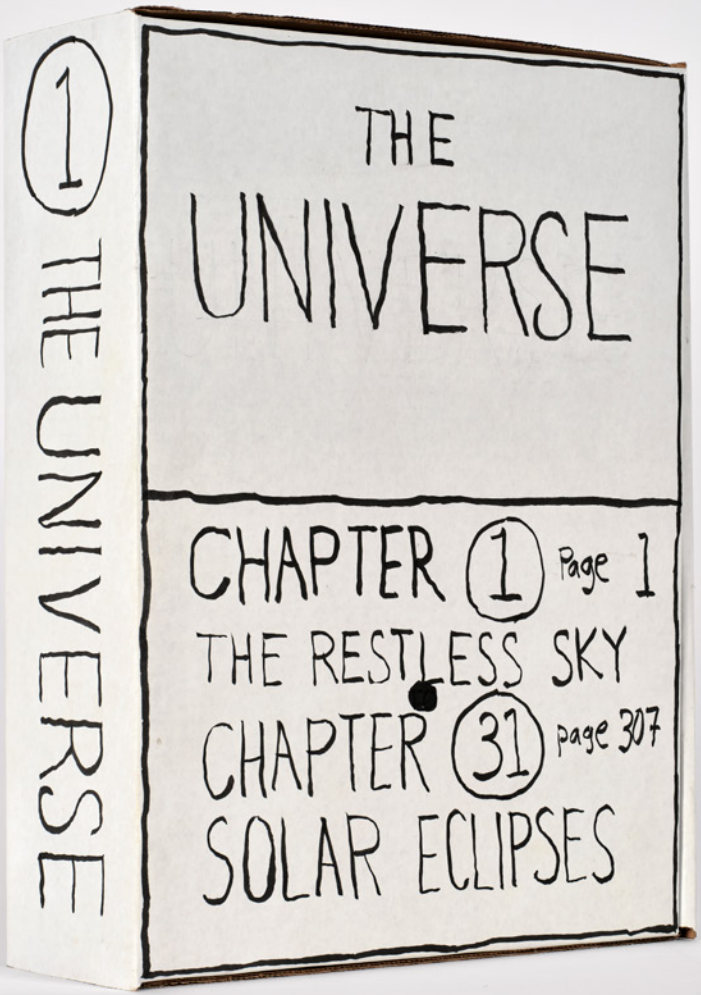
Provenance

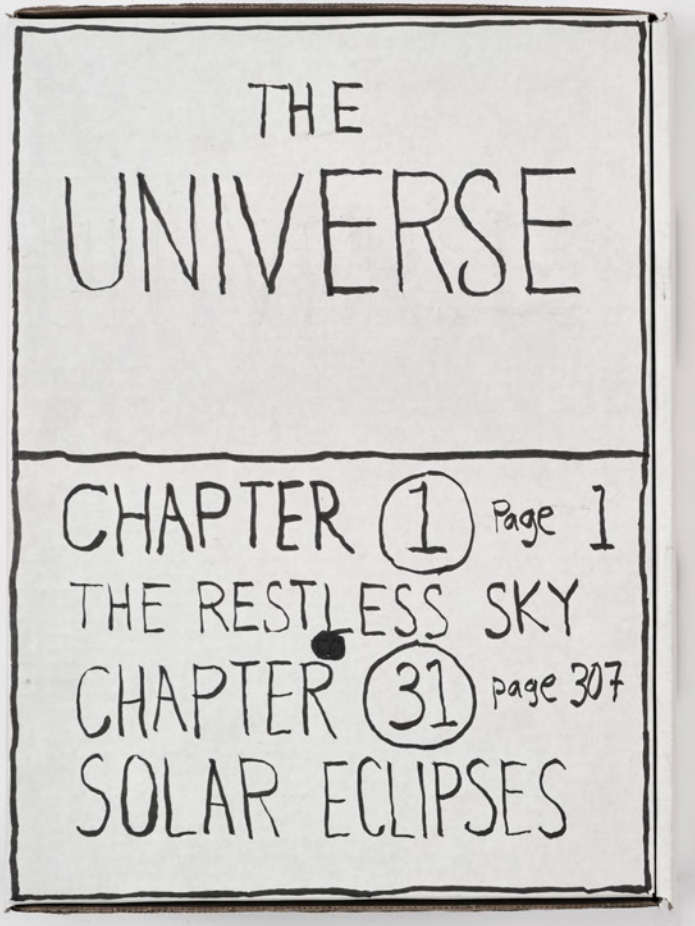
the artist

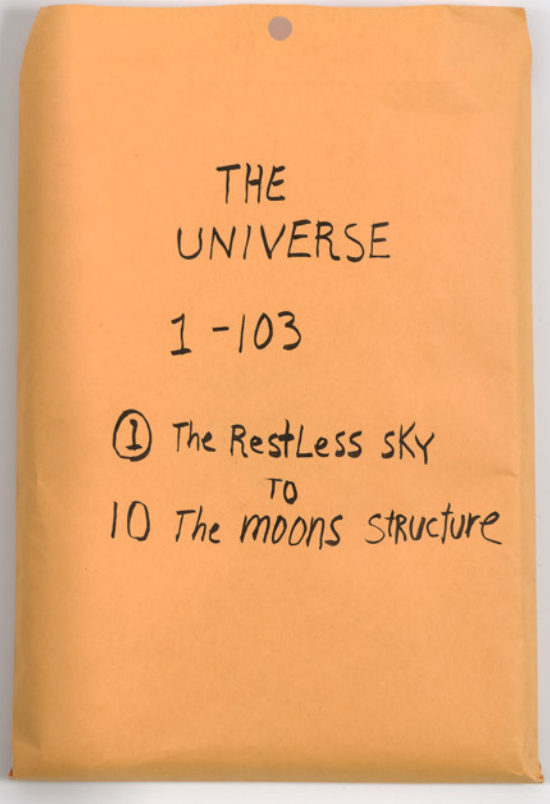
Exhibited

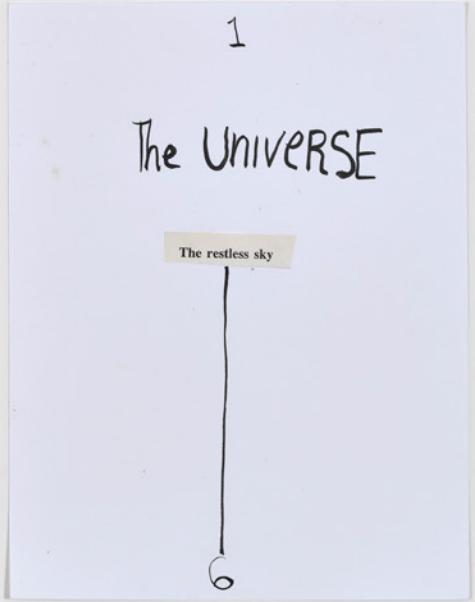
Peter Freeman, Inc., New York. Matt Mullican: The Universe (28 February – 11 April 2026)

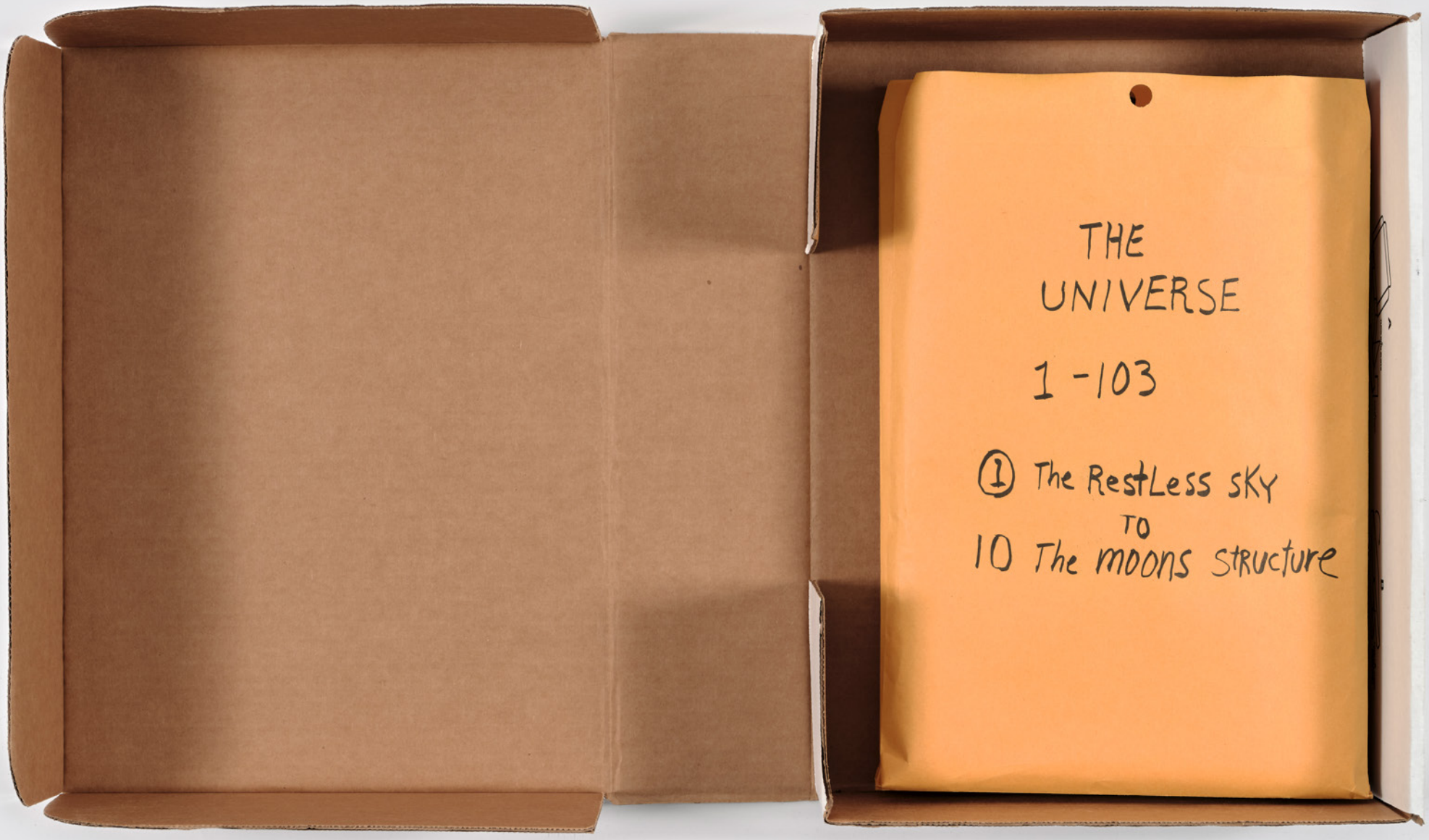

1 THE UNIVERSE
3 THE EARTH
5 LIFE ON EARTH
9 LIFE ON EARTH
8 MAN
10 MAN
6 MAN
4 HISTORY AND CULTURE
13 HISTORY AND CULTURE
15 HISTORY AND CULTURE
16 HISTORY AND CULTURE
20 MAN AND MACHINES
19 MAN AND MACHINES
23 ALPHABET
25 ATOM
THE UNIVERSE
THE EARTH
MAN AND SCIENCE

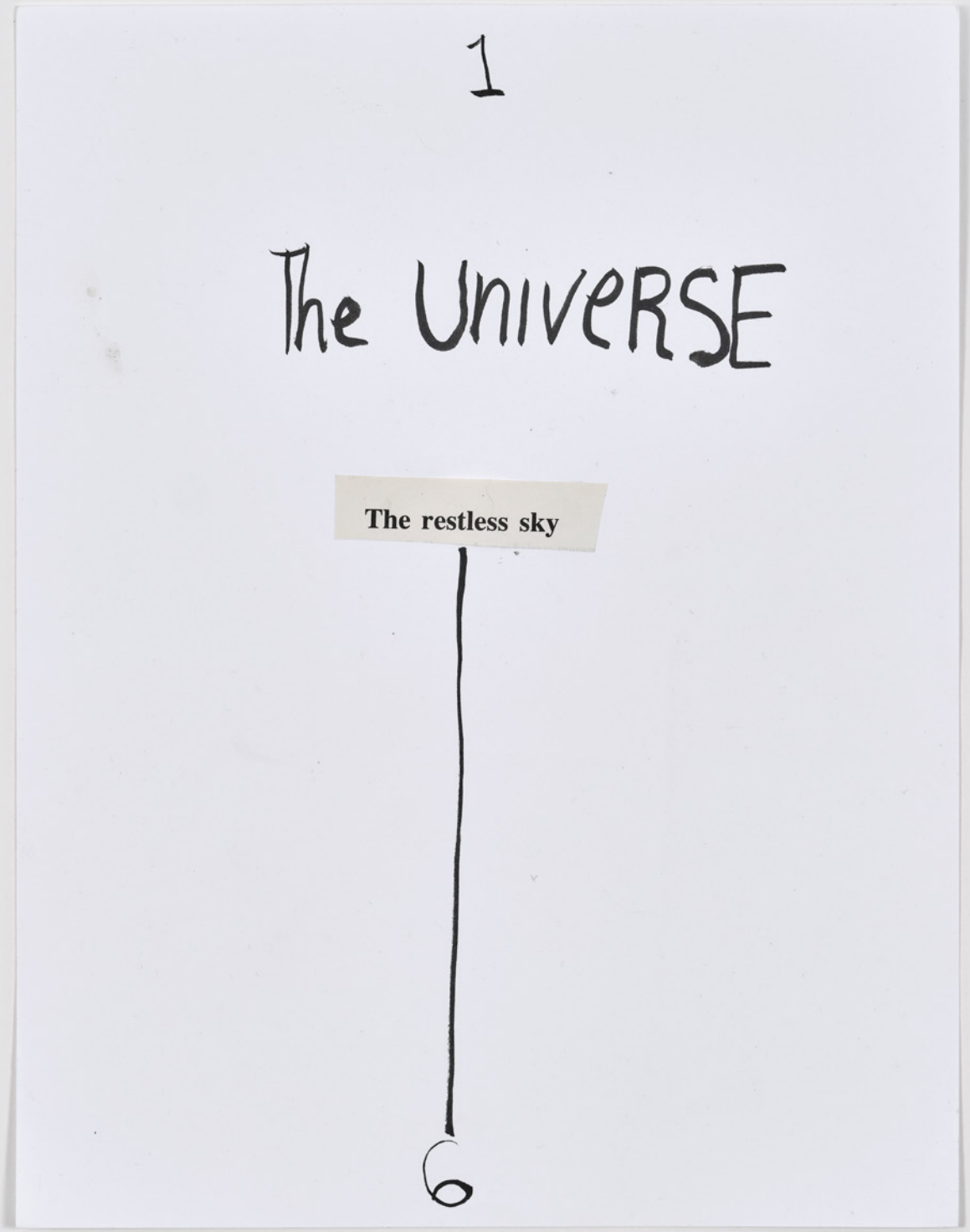

1 THE UNIVERSE
THE
UNIVERSE
CHAPTER 1 Page 1
THE RESTLESS SKY
CHAPTER 31 page 307
SOLAR ECLIPSES


THE
UNIVERSE
CHAPTER 1 Page 1
THE RESTLESS SKY
CHAPTER 31 page 307
SOLAR ECLIPSES

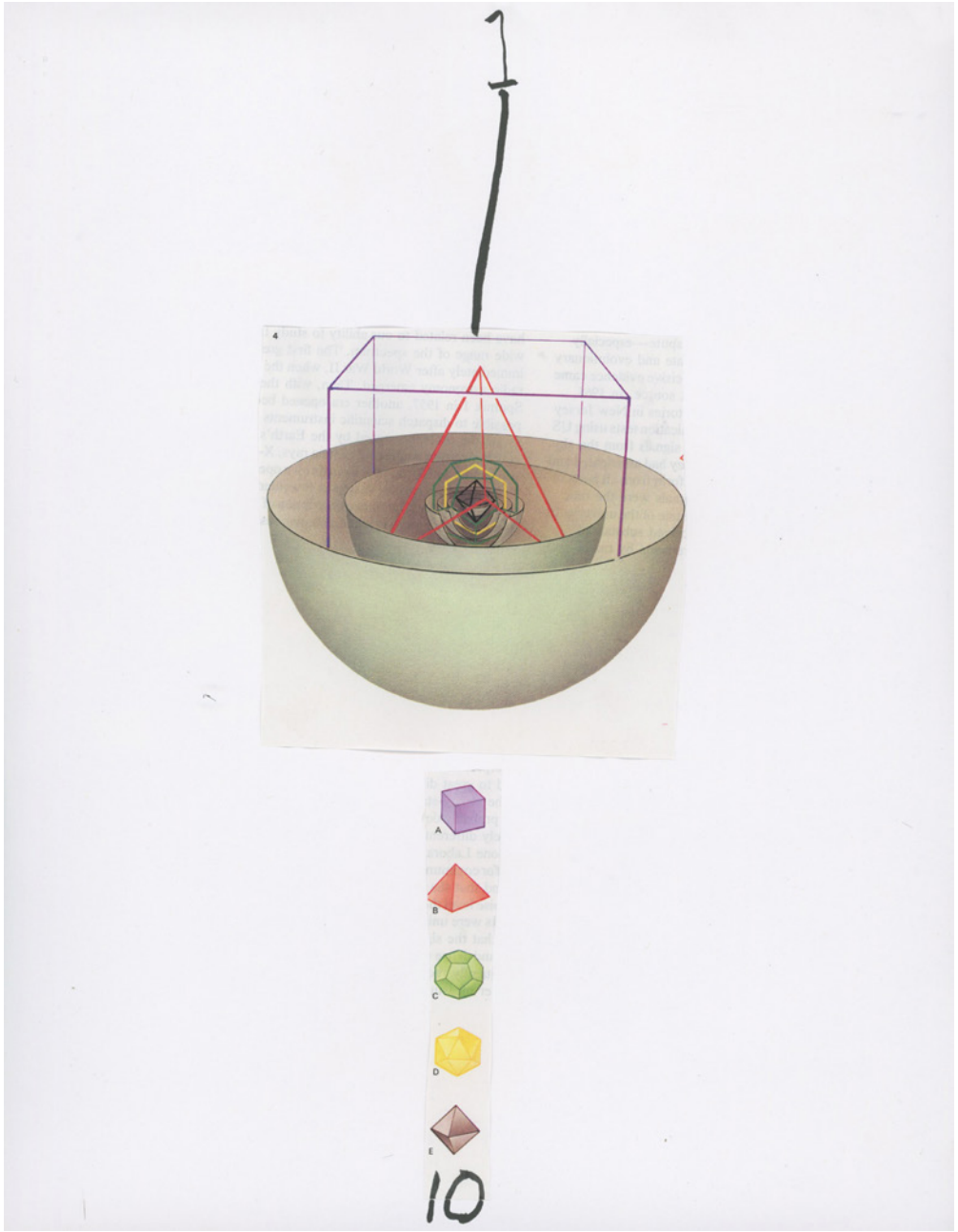

THE
UNIVERSE
1 -103
1 The RestLess SKY
TO
10 The moons structure


1
The UniverSE
The restless sky
6


THE
UNIVERSE
1 - 103
1 The RestLess sky
TO
10 The moons structure



example sheet from “The Universe”





example sheets from “The Universe”

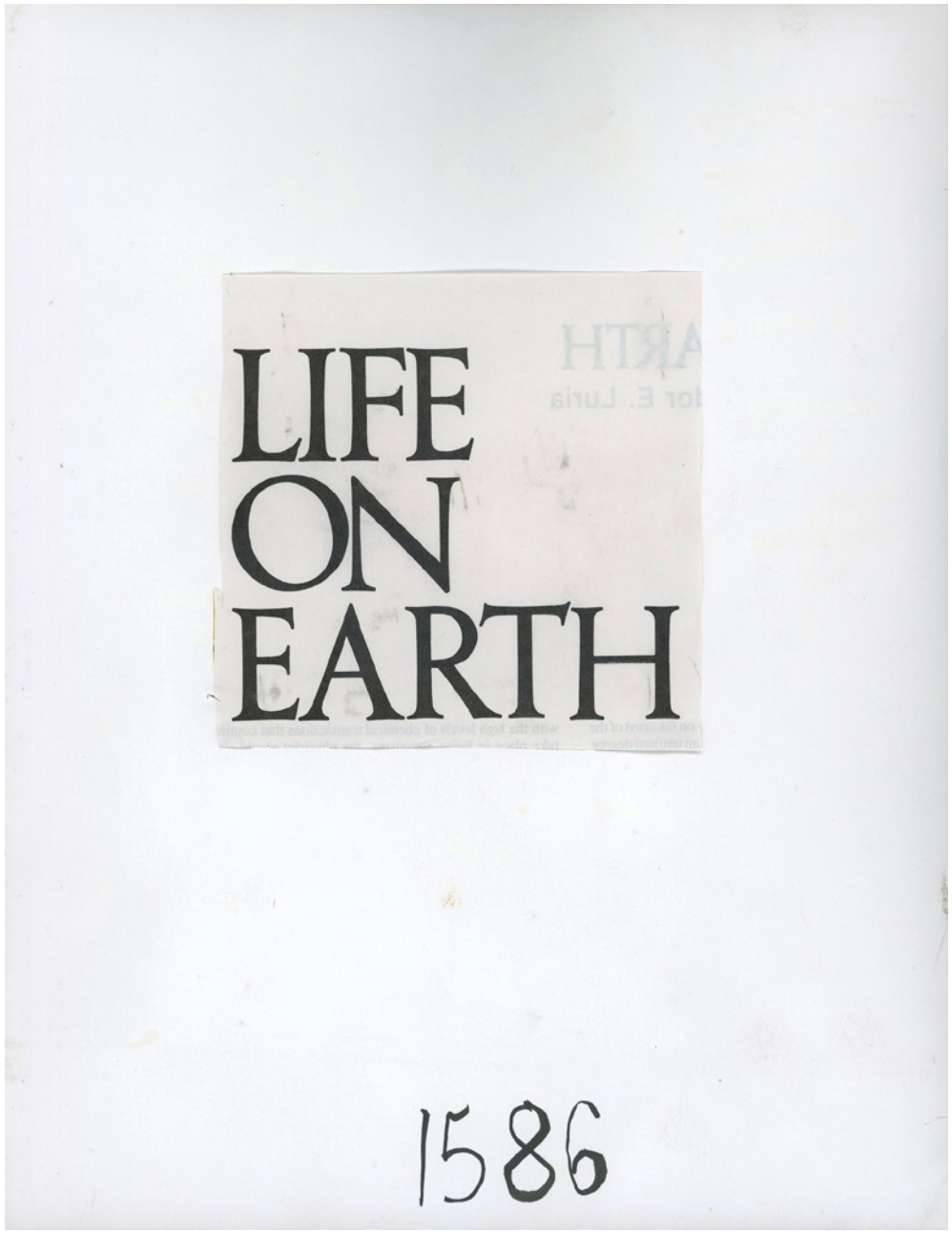
EARTH

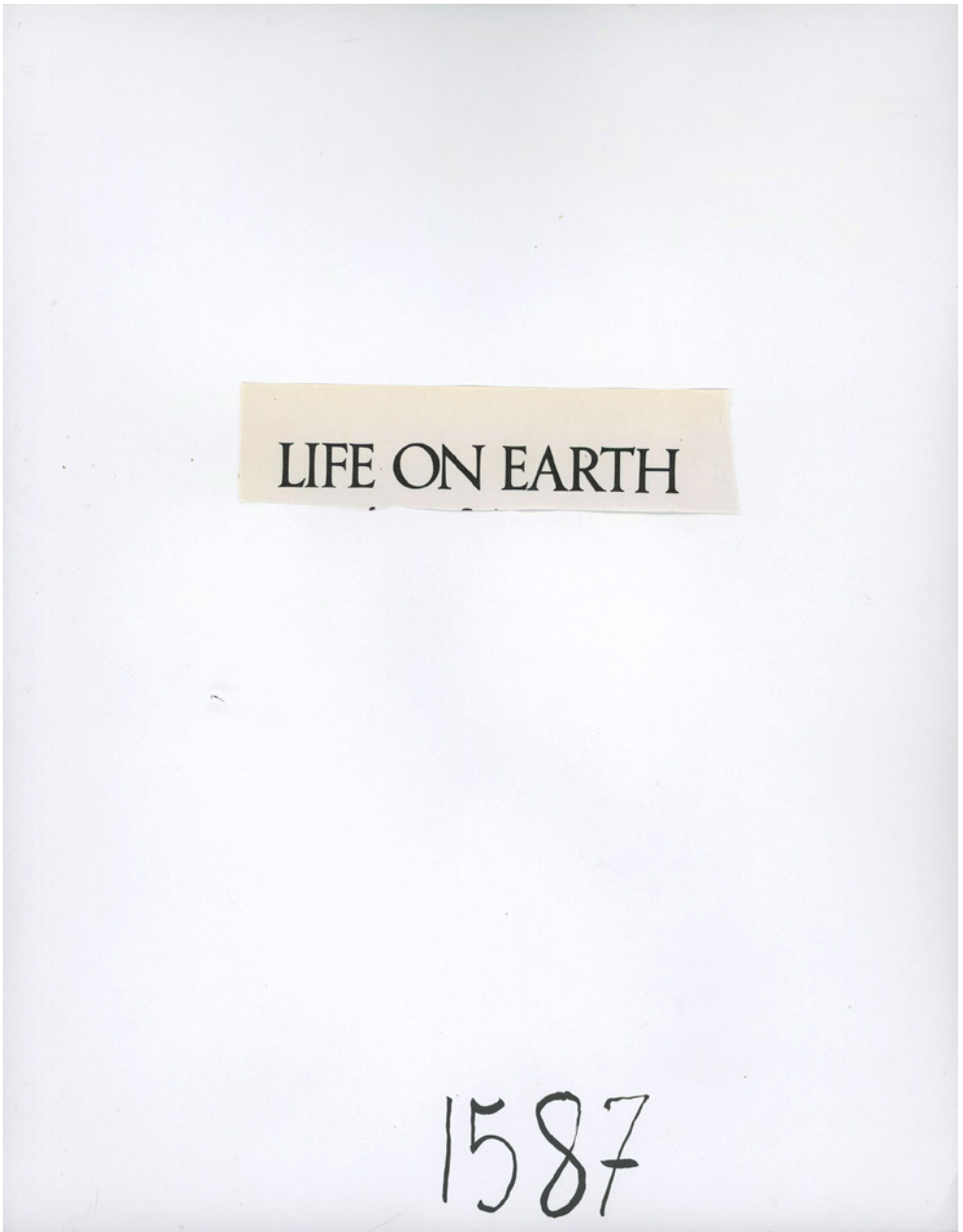
568



569

example sheets from “The Earth”





example sheets from “Life on Earth”

MAN

2973



2974

example sheets from “Man”



4338

451
HISTORY
AND
CULTURE

The art of prehistory

4339

example sheets from “History and Culture”

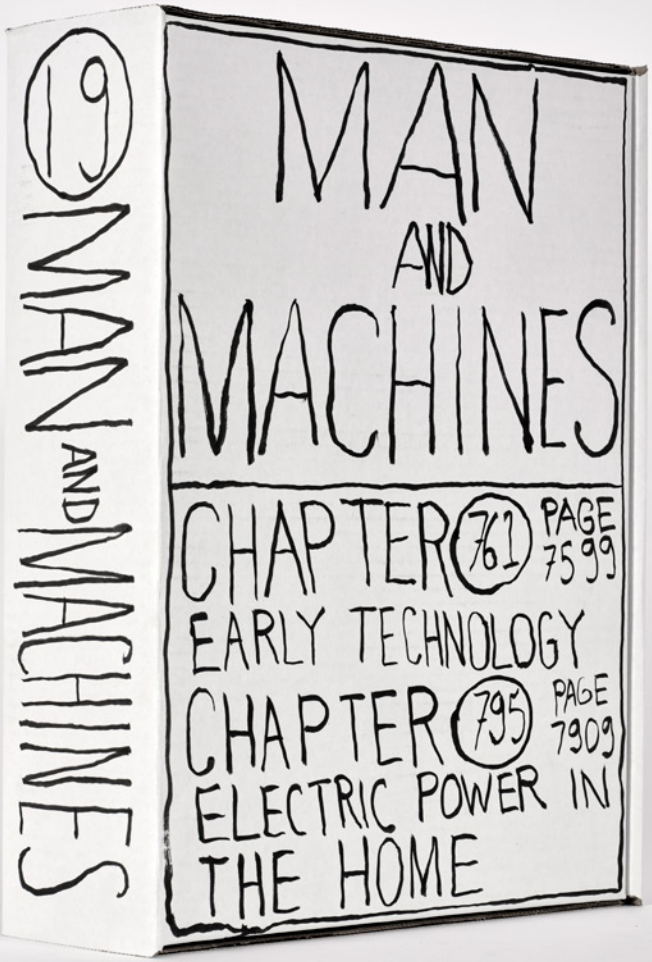


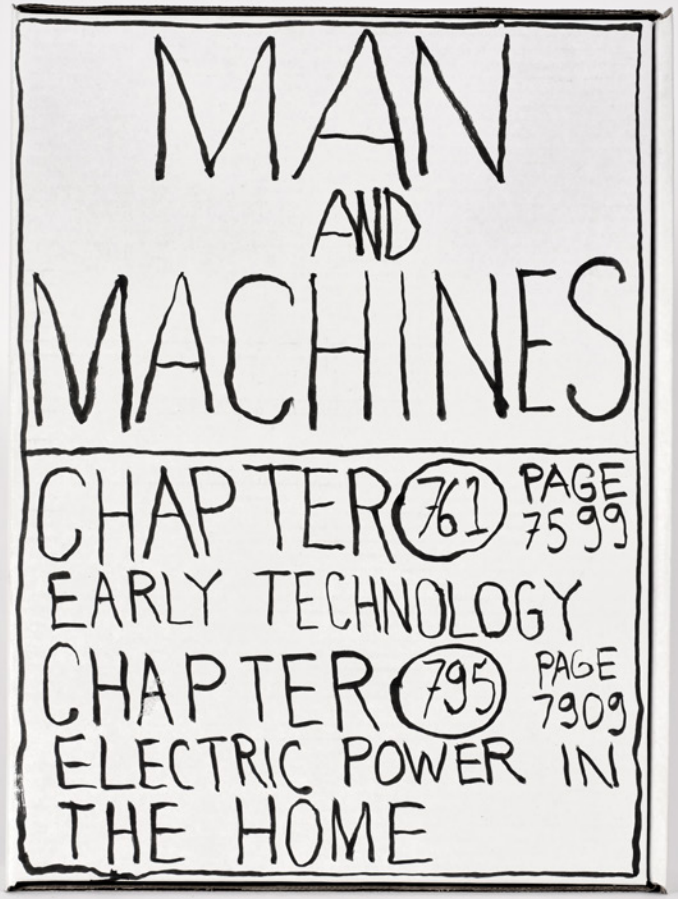
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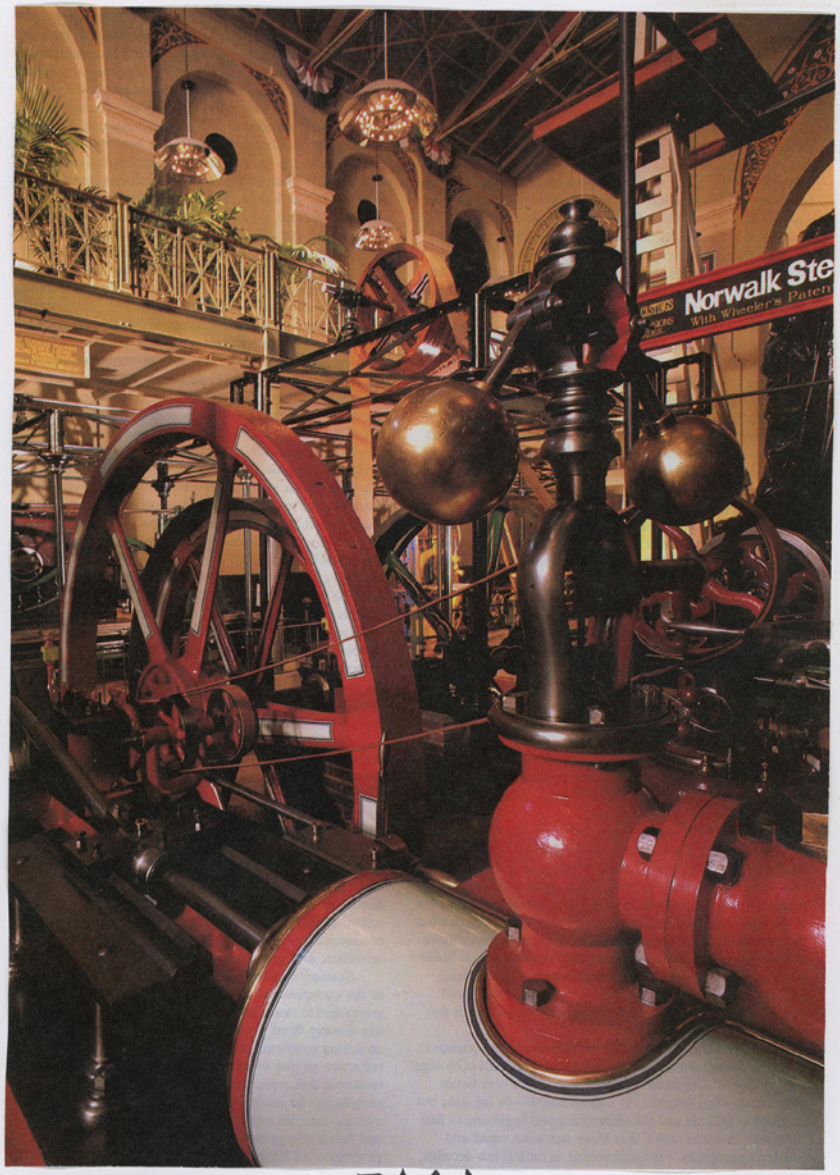
MAN AND SCIENCE

6897

example sheets from “Man and Science”


19
MAN AND MACHINES
MAN
AND
MACHINES
CHAPTER 761 PAGE 7599
EARLY TECHNOLOGY
CHAPTER 795 PAGE 7909
ELECTRIC POWER IN THE HOME


MAN
AND
MACHINES
CHAPTER 761 PAGE 7599
EARLY TECHNOLOGY
CHAPTER 795 PAGE 7909
ELECTRIC POWER IN THE HOME



7601

761

MAN and MACHINES

Early technology

7602

example sheets from “Man and Machines”




MAN
HISTORY AND CULTURE

