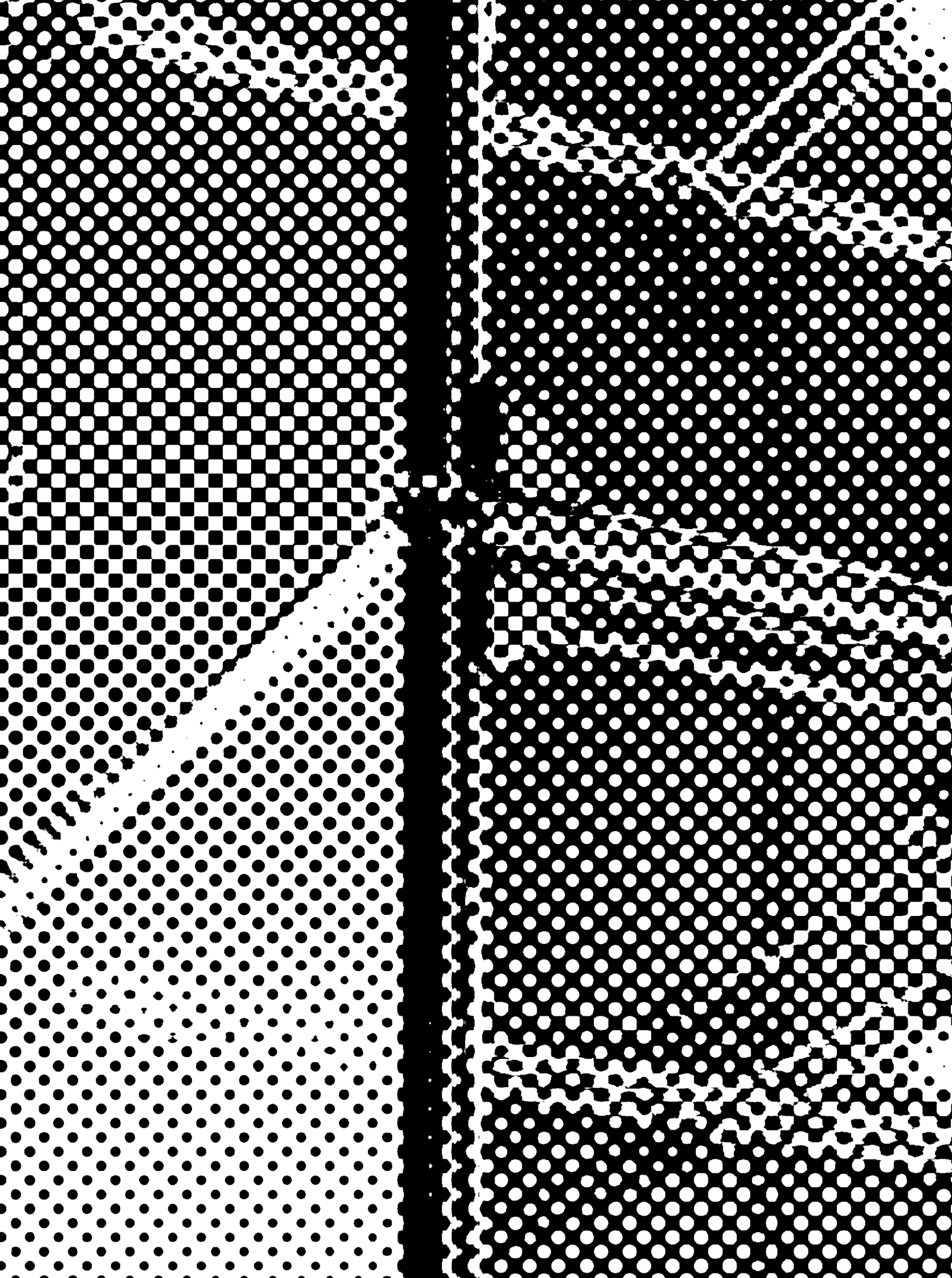




for everyone a garden

david hartt

corbett vs. dempsey











FOR EVERYONE A GARDEN

FOR EVERYONE A GARDEN

FOR EVERYONE A GARDEN



POURQUOİ FONDER UNE COMMUNE?







UN MEILLEUR SERVICE POUR TOUT LE MONDE

The spontaneous acts of revolt forming everywhere must find a tactic that takes into account the spectacle's power of recuperation.






PENSÃO

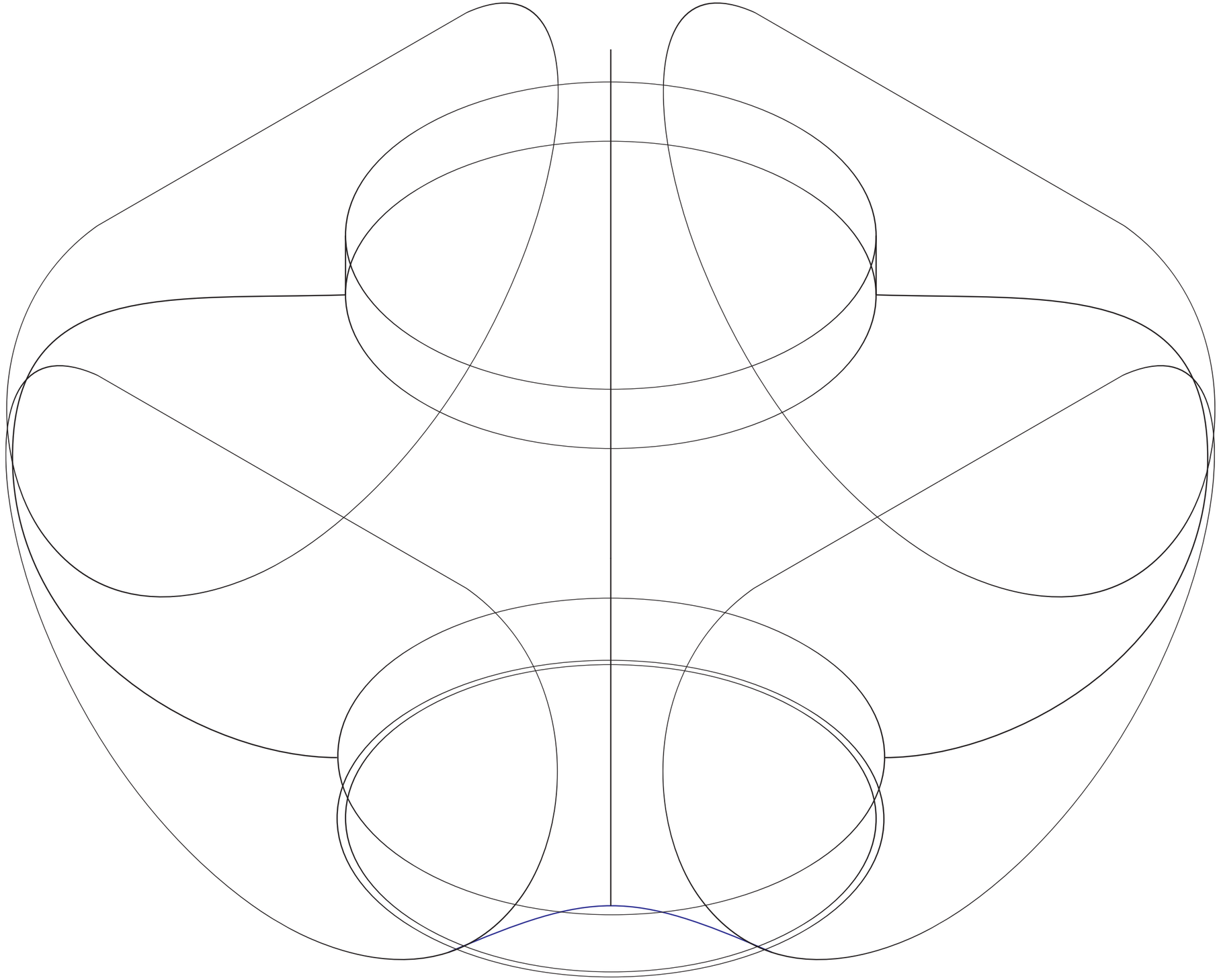


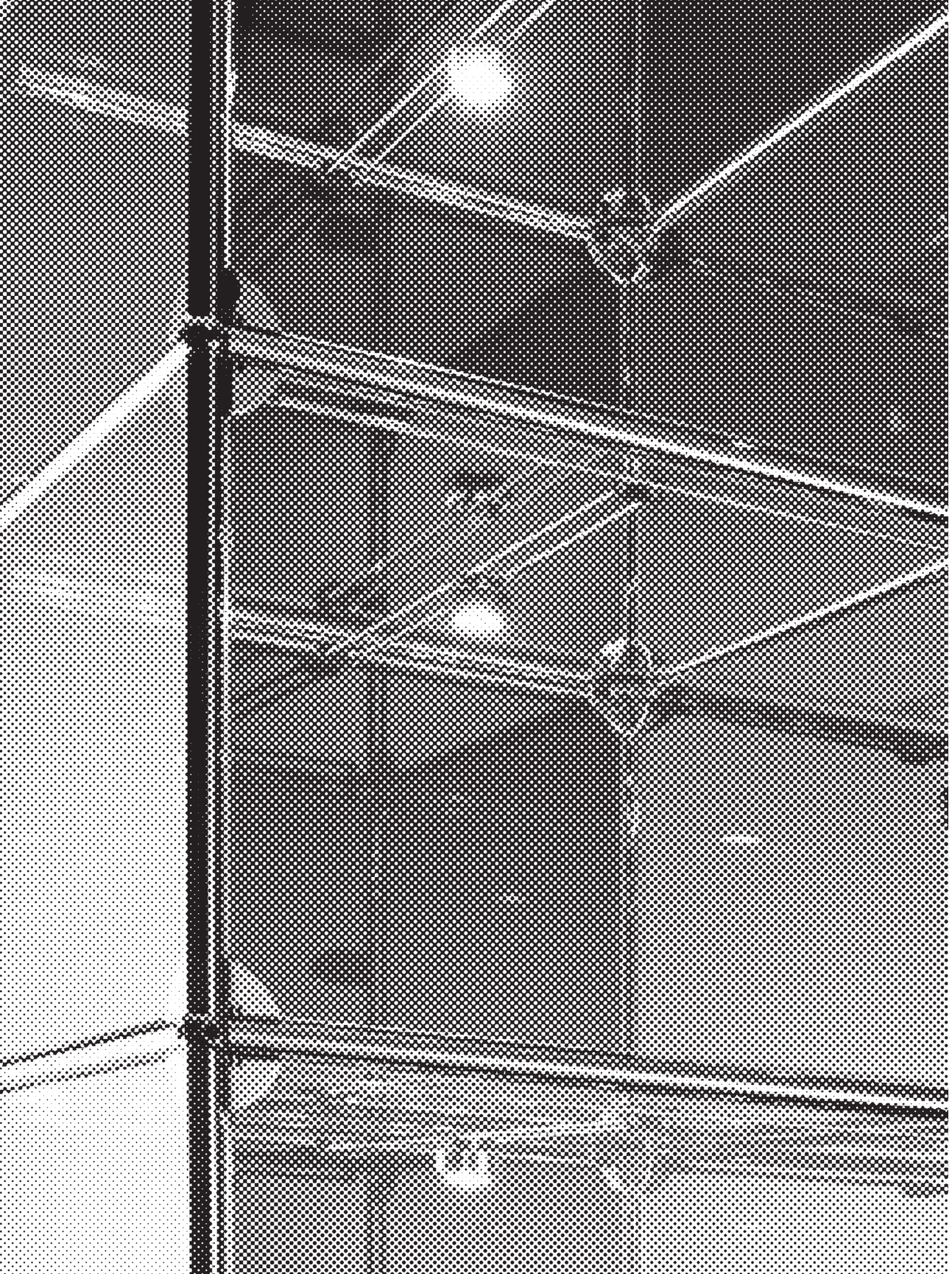

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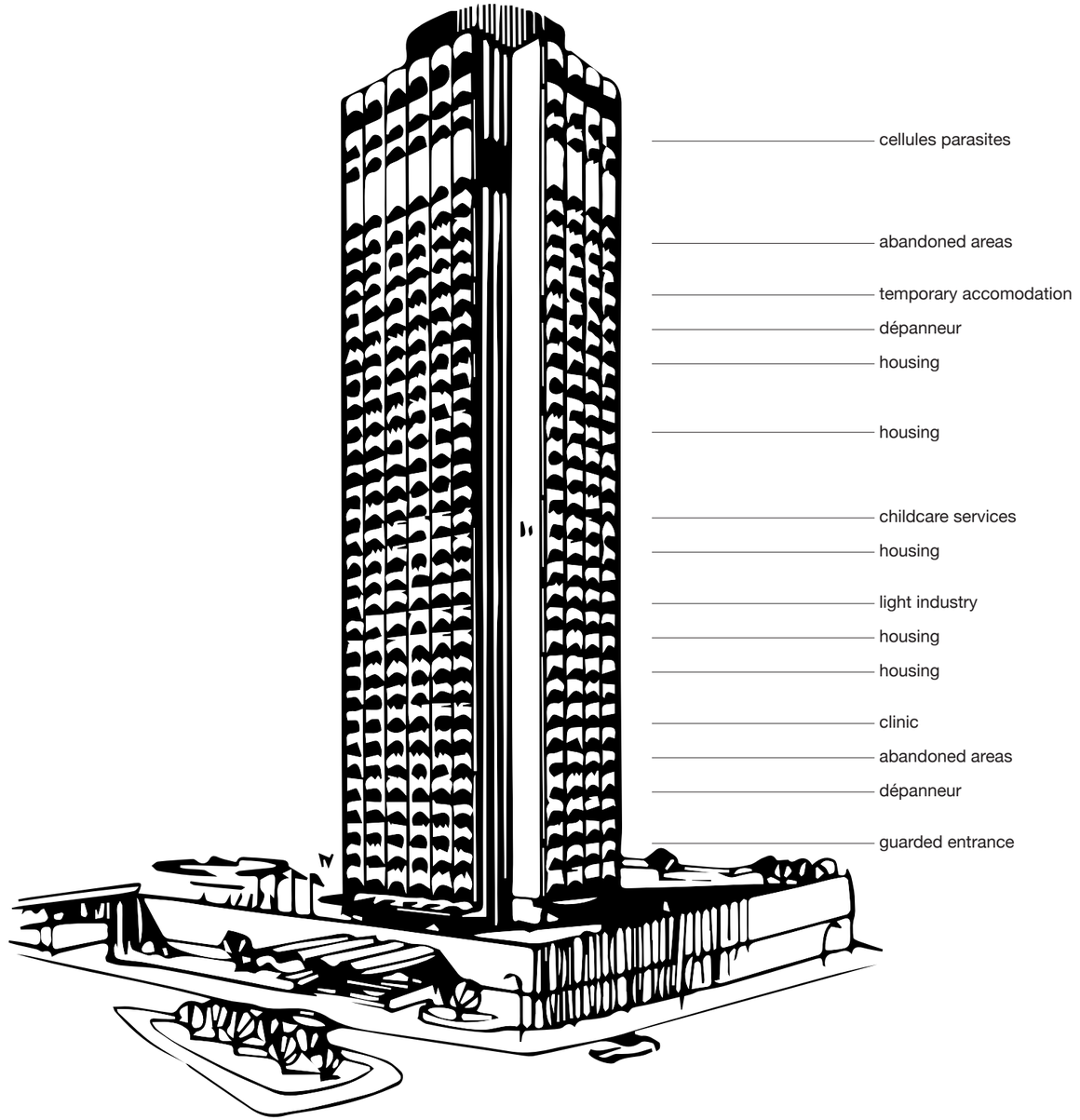
Laundry and



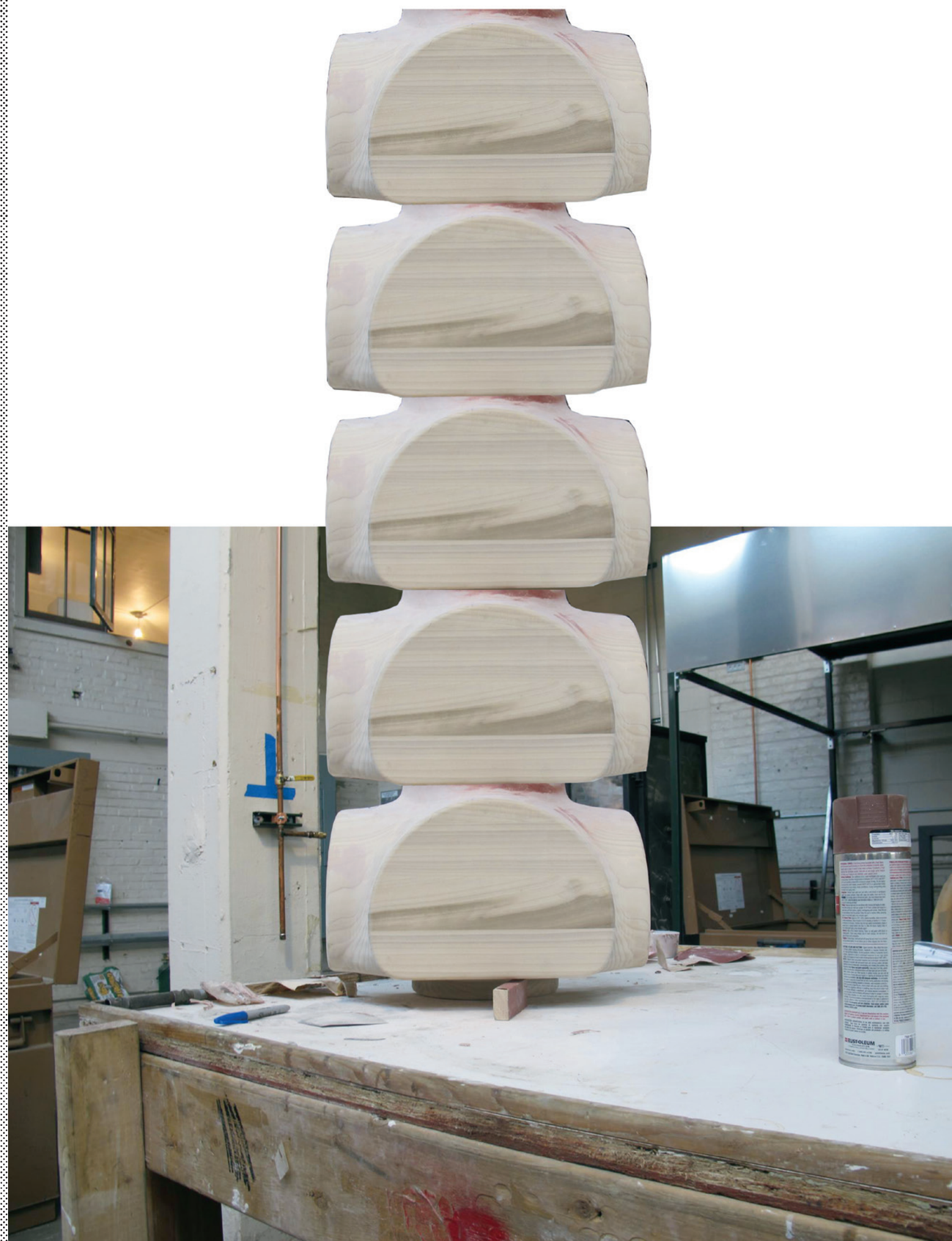







cellules parasites
abandoned areas
temporary accomodation
dépanneur
housing
housing
childcare services
housing
light industry
housing
housing
clinic
abandoned areas
dépanneur
guarded entrance

UNE FOLIE PURE









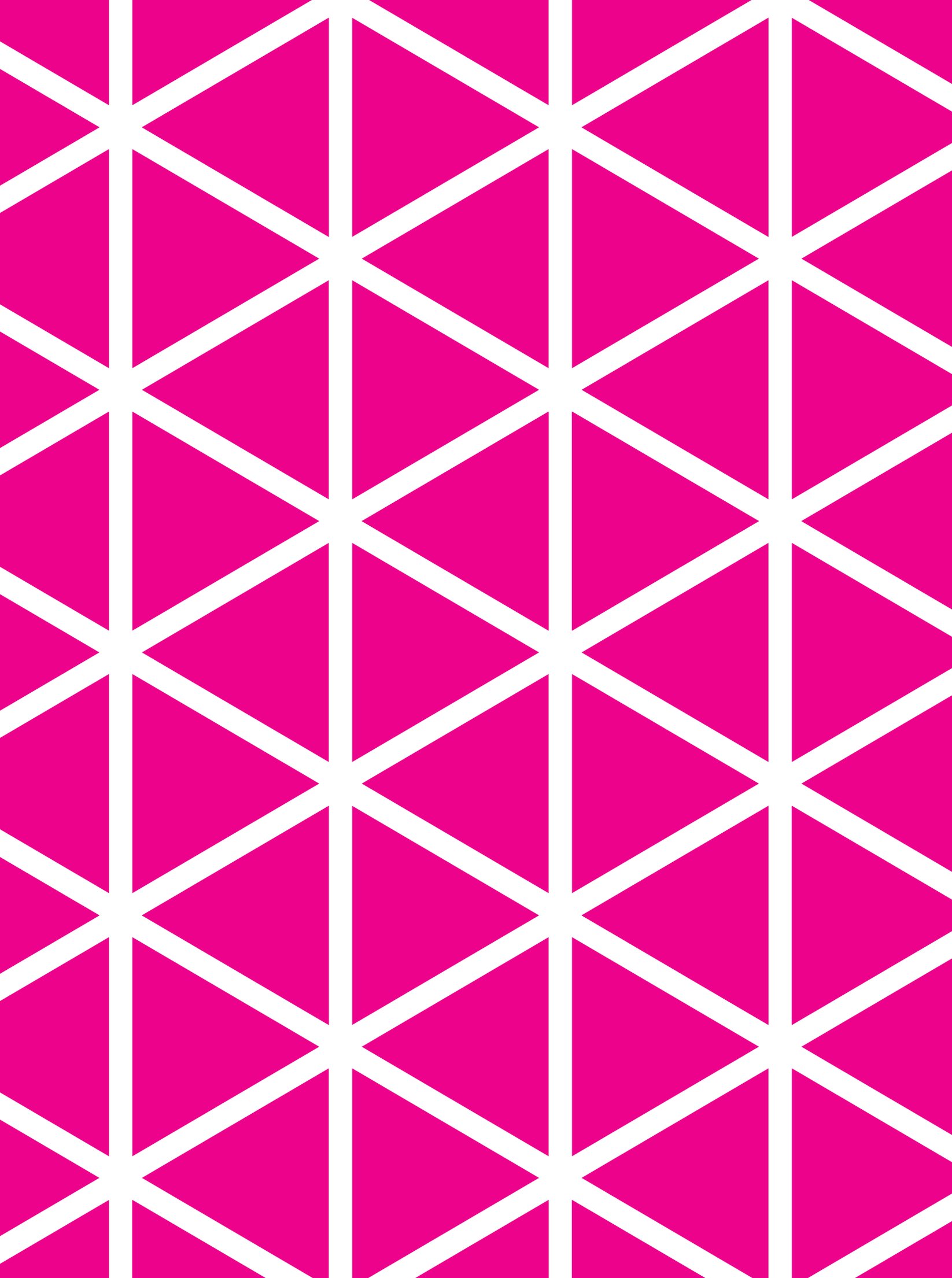

Zukunftsoffenes Krankenhaus
GIDON/GOYER
MEDICAL DESIGN


Marriott CHÂTEAU CHAM




FLAMMABLE
KEEP FIRE AWAY





a common place
john corbett

I had to run so far to find a clear spot.
—Captain Beefheart

Utopia. Topos—the notion of a place, a beautiful place in which all are equal and relations are harmonious and good things grow. How now to acknowledge the heroic, sometimes hilarious efforts of past utopian projects? How, as it were, to pluck the fruits of those projects? How to do so without an ironic curl to the lip but also without indulging in naïve adulation? Is it possible to refer to the utopian work of another era without the musty, stifling air of nostalgia? What is the proper distance at which to observe the utopian? Which balcony will provide the best vantage?

Perhaps there are two distinct species of utopia.

1 Utopia = *state of perfection*. This concept of the utopian suggests a static ideal, achieved and then defended, a goal of singular balance + order + harmony.

2 Utopia = *contingent expression of negotiated relations*. Provisional and ever-changing, this way of experiencing the utopian is essentially improvised in response to actual circumstances rather than an imagined ideal.

Maybe the second of these utopias allows us to cast failed or unrealized utopian projects in a softer light, to observe them without ridicule or romanticisation, dispassionately tinged with genuine admiration, as attempts to align the imaginable with the real.

David Hartt's work always engages topos. In his photographs, sculptures, installations, and moving pictures, he investigates the topography of ideology, plotting a spectrum of ideological positions, from the post-hippy radical left to the pre-apocalyptic fringe right. Indeed, in his mapping of these positions such markers as left and right lose their meaning. Hartt is fascinated by places, imagined and real; he explores the energy of the architecture, the design decisions, and all the detritus that any given topos gives us to chew on.

Of course, the utopian is a special kind of topos, a virtual topography of unrealized desire and beatific design. In a capitalist context, the altruistic thoughts of a modernist furniture designer (*Democratize space! Beauty and elegance for the everyman!*) were not incompatible with the notion of successful business. See here: the right/left designations stop making sense.

The germ for Hartt's engagement with the utopian dates back to his childhood in Montréal, where Expo 67 erected several monuments to its own utopian moment, including *Habitat 67*, the groundbreaking prefab housing units designed by the architect Moshe Safdie. Safdie's 1974 book *For Everyone a Garden* lends its title to this exhibition. But the points of reference are manifold, and Hartt is at pains to integrate and adapt them rather than make simple appropriations.

References to '60s radical, avant-garde and utopian thought, from Guy Debord and Archigram to the Montréal countercultural magazine *Mainmise*, abound in Hartt's *for everyone a garden*. Perhaps the paramount point of contact is with the architect Jean-Louis Chanéac, whose "juxtaposable cellules" of 1962 provided Hartt with a basic form that runs—overtly and covertly—throughout the exhibition's work. Stacked, modular pods, arranged in organic clusters, accreted more like coral or mushrooms than like conventional rectilinear architecture—here is the notion of a design for living, a beautiful, beneficent fantasy of egalitarian domestic space, fully theorized and realized in advance of the radical events of the Paris commune.

Other points of reference include artist Richard Hamilton (one of Hartt's primary influences), artist-designer François Dallegret, cartoonist Jack Kirby, manga artist Katsuhiro Otomo, and the decidedly non-utopian instance of communal living represented by the so-called Tower of David: a giant squat situated in an abandoned Venezualan skyscraper in Caracas in which real power is expressed in brute Mafiosi force, a space parasitically inhabited, repurposed, returned, in a manner, from the developers to the people.

For his sculptures, Hartt chose to use glass, building stacks of hand-blown modules. You know what they say about glass houses? They're the model utopian dwellings—utterly transparent. Nothing hidden. No secret agendas or unseen pacts. Hartt's scenario for living is more than MoMA's Design Store or *Dwell* magazine, more than elegant interior design; indeed, he's implying a whole politics of space and requiring the deployment of an archive. In doing so he bridges between the potentially harsh reality of society's present and the exuberant imagination of utopian social movements of the past. Not bourgeois. Radical, experimental, explosive. Hartt is, in spite of *not* being a utopian thinker, deeply invested in the idea that the shape and color and texture and placement of things can change the way people think and interact. Maybe we can call him a social formalist. Or a formal socialist. Whatever he is, he does not bathe himself in a protective pool of cynicism or irony. He's contingently earnest, the contingency being a lurking sense of playfulness that pokes the ribs of anything too deathly serious.

Collaboration is fundamental to Hartt's working method, has been for years. But it is a kind of collaboration in which the conception is his, while the fabrication and realization involves others. In *for everyone a garden*, he's used glass artisans to make the pods and a draughtsman to realize the drawings; in the process, he experienced evolving expectations, exploring what was possible and what was fantasy, and meeting somewhere in the middle. Perhaps this connects Hartt's current work with his long love of speculative fiction. He is a fan not only of science-fiction's texts, but of the book cover designs—all the accoutrements, the total package through which one experiences the work, the gravity of its material manifestation. The book, the magazine, the LP, furniture, the blueprint, the sketch, the building—all are material manifestations, all have accumulated meanings, specific densities that play out in the interaction between the elements.

One reference in *for everyone a garden* involves direct and unmediated appropriation. For pedestals, Hartt has chosen USM shelving, high-end furniture that in itself refers to the apex of mid-century systems design. Hartt has designed furniture before—he once détourned a Tony Smith sculpture, sketching it, lopping off the top to reveal a latent African sculpture, then sending his design to Africa to be carved by a master woodworker. It's now an end table in his home.

The locus of *for everyone a garden* is the city. From the gallery, banks of windows look out onto a busy urban streetcorner where an apartment building is being erected. In one of the exhibition's two drawings—produced, mounted and presented in the same manner as one of Hartt's photographs—a lone figure sits in a contemporary flat in one of Chanéac's buildings, his black cat posed on the couch next to him. A crowd scene fills the other drawing, another such building in the background, protesters hoisting signs with the show-title-anthem. Like subversive illustrations from the *Situationist International* or an issue of *Archigram*, they refer to a particular moment of resistance, a projection of revolutionary energy into mass-market aesthetics.

An insignia on the sleeve of one of the protaganists in the crowd of protesters refers to the anarchist squatter punk collective Crass, whose 1978 debut *The Feeding of the 5000* included a cover image of a bombed-out cityscape by Gee Vaucher. While it is more bare faced and partisan in its politics, with its neo-Dada collage, Vaucher's image is in a way not far in spirit from Hartt's exhibition. Optimism and social critique jostling for top spot in a dense thicket of intertextual underbrush.

Cover, 16, 36, 45
USM marketing images, appropriated and used without permission

02–03
for everyone a garden VI, 2013
Archival pigment print mounted to Dibond and framed
36 × 54 inches

04–05
for everyone a garden IV, 2013
Archival pigment print mounted to Dibond and framed
36 × 54 inches

06–07
for everyone a garden II, 2013
Archival pigment print mounted to Dibond and framed
36 × 54 inches

08, 09, 17, 23, 24, 30–31, 39, 44, 52–53
production photographs

10–11
for everyone a garden (1 of 2), 2013
Archival pigment print mounted to Dibond, colored acrylic and framed
60 × 80 inches

12–13
for everyone a garden V, 2013
Archival pigment print mounted to Dibond and framed
36 × 54 inches

14–15
Taipei

18
Chicago

19
Montréal

20–21
for everyone a garden (2 of 2), 2013
Archival pigment print mounted to Dibond, colored acrylic and framed
60 × 80 inches

25
Lisbon

26–27
Skagit Valley

28–29
for everyone a garden VII, 2013
Archival pigment print mounted to Dibond and framed
48 × 60 inches

32
Montréal

33
Montréal

34–35
production drawing

37
speculative legend

40–41
for everyone a garden III, 2013
Archival pigment print mounted to Dibond and framed
36 × 54 inches

42–43
Montréal

46
Taipei

48–49
Montréal

50–51
Indiana

54–55
Miami

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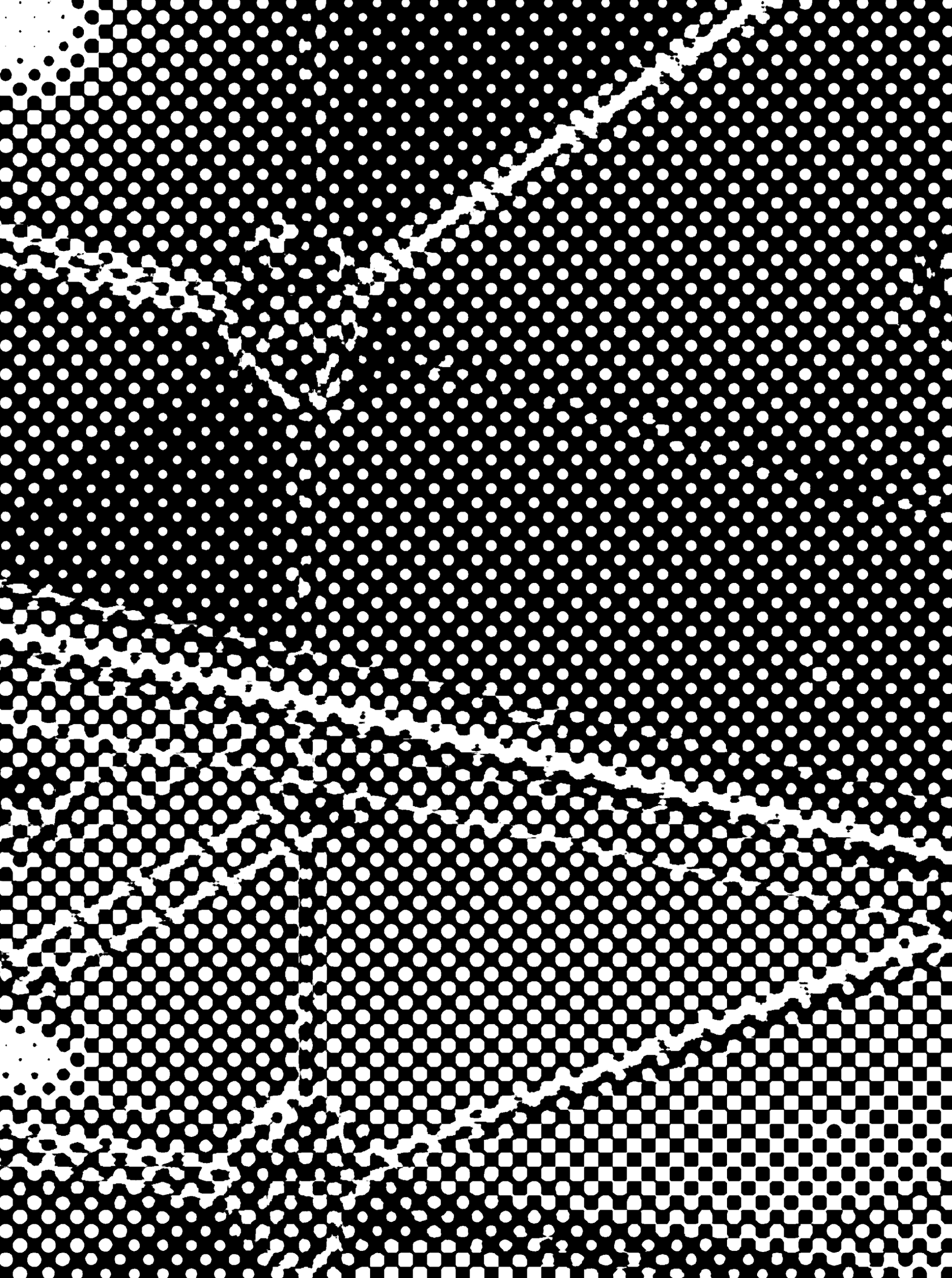
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FOR EVERYONE A GARDEN