

MODERN ART OXFORD

*A Slice through the World:
Contemporary Artists' Drawings*

Wall Captions



Lucy Skaer, *Available Fonts*, 2017

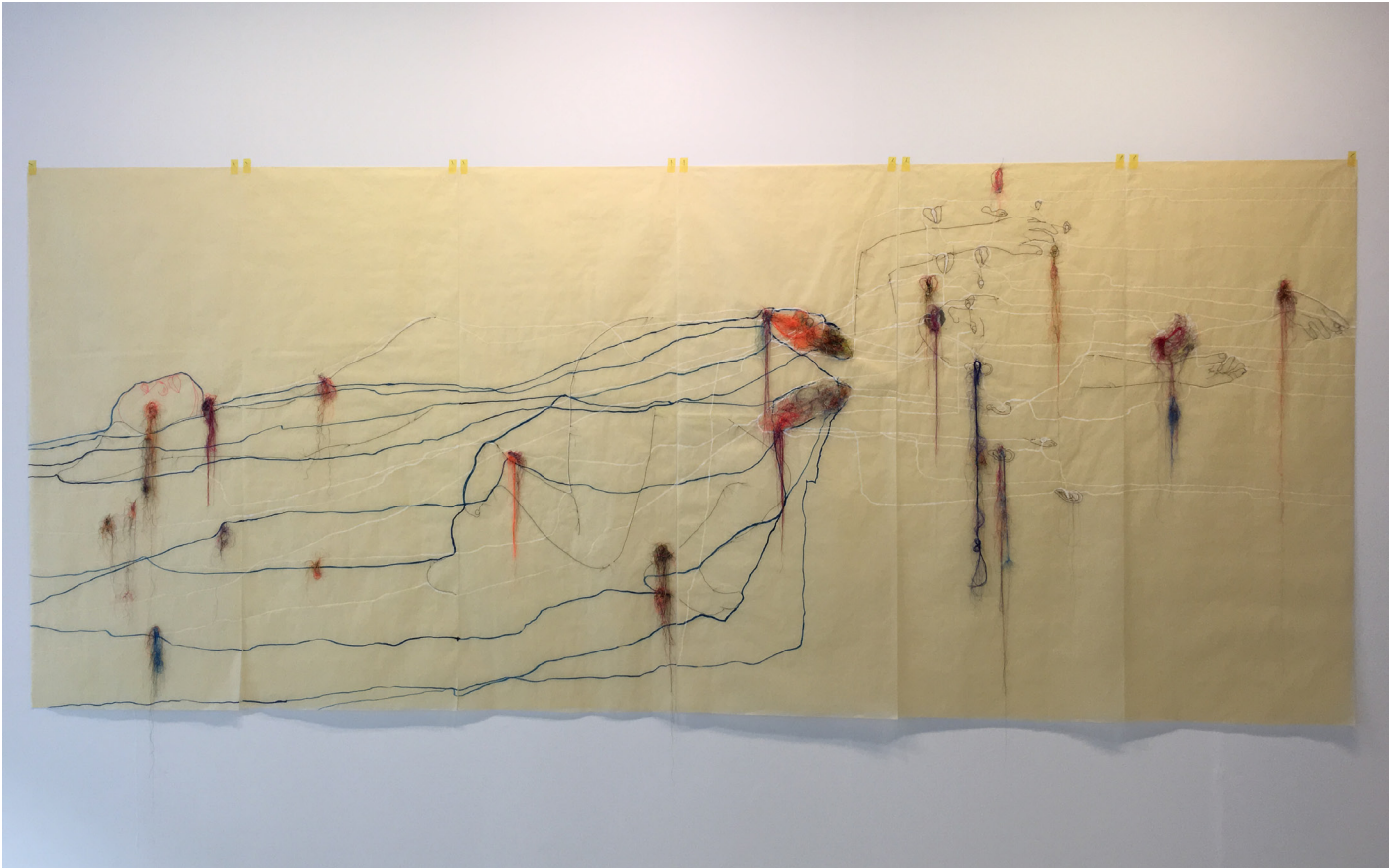
Chine-collé of etching, wood engraving and found material on paper

In Skaer's prints, she has reconstituted and reworked imagery from historical source materials and her own series of black drawings, which she has produced intermittently since 2006. Skaer thinks of her drawings in terms of manufacturing: they use a range of abstract shapes to produce schematic versions of recognisable objects and artworks, always based on secondary images rather than the object itself.

Available Fonts encourages us to interrogate the very act of looking, by presenting a vertical stack of printmaking plates where brightly coloured ferns and dovetailed joints connect a scrambled field in which the overlaid sources are ambiguously suspended between abstraction and representation. As the artist has said: 'something as static as an image can be seen constantly to be altering in relation to itself and to you.'

Skaer's *Untitled (Black Drawing)*, 2015, is on view at Drawing Room, London.

Courtesy of the artist, GRIMM, Amsterdam / New York, and Peter Freeman, Inc., Paris and New York



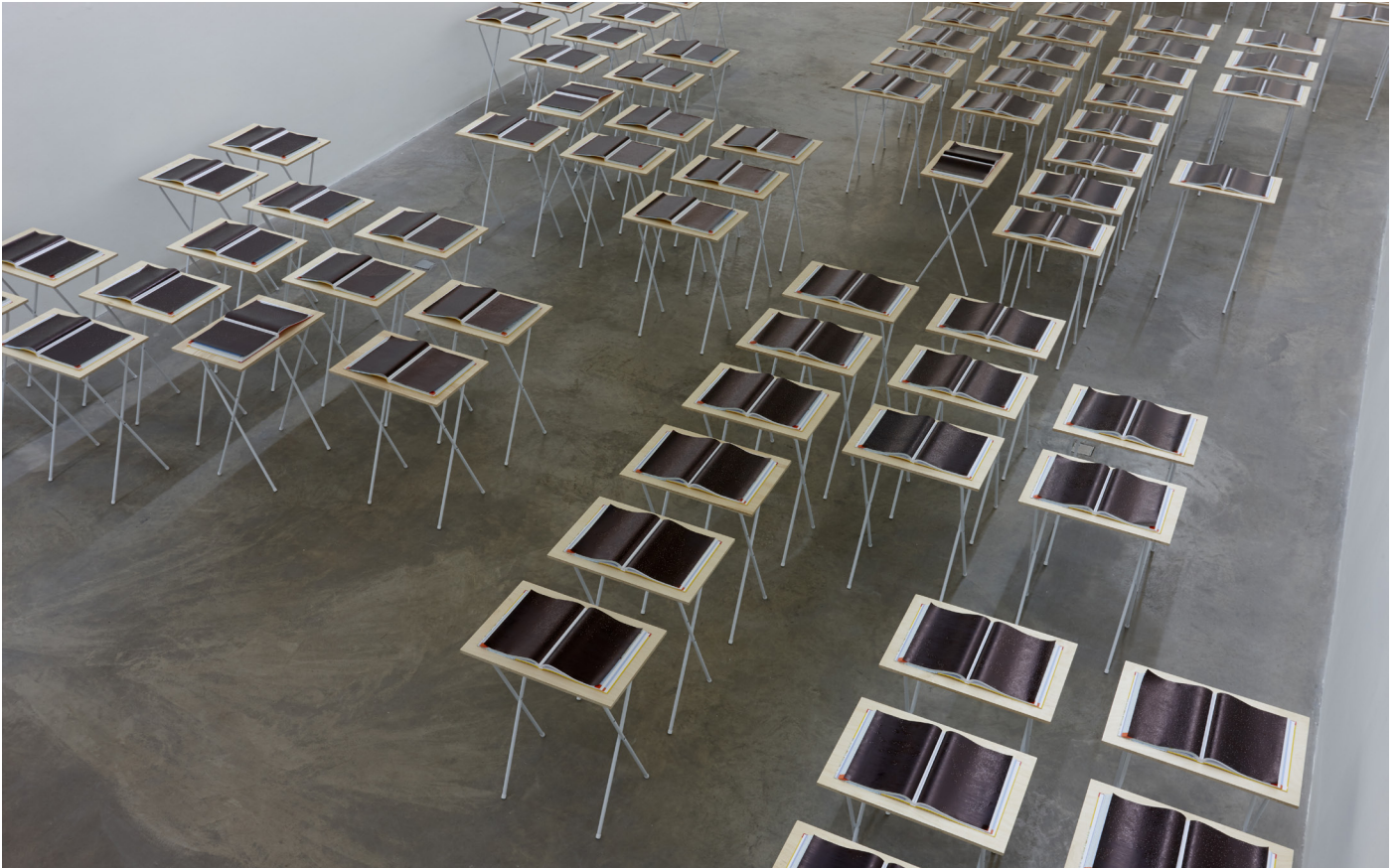
Wura-Natasha Ogunji, *The proof, an undersea volcano, attraction, extraction, distraction*, 2017

Thread, ink and graphite on architectural tracing paper

Ogunji is a writer as well as an artist, and her long, evocative titles hint at a tangle of energies that run through her drawings. Across this work's six panels, suggestive of a volcanic landscape, we can discern mouths, noses and ears that multiply and float free from the two horizontal female bodies, whose contours seem to dart in and out of visibility. In her work, the action of drawing is carried out using traditional graphic tools such as ink and pencil, but also through the accumulation of tendrils of coloured thread, which remain unwoven, unbound, and unstable.

The artist, commenting on the spatial aspect of her drawings, said: 'I like this idea of a dance. The way people move through space is collective choreography. We walk so differently in Lagos... it's this flowing dance of bodies... I am fascinated by how our physical movements and gestures embody societal rules and expectations.'

Courtesy of the artist and 50 Golborne, London



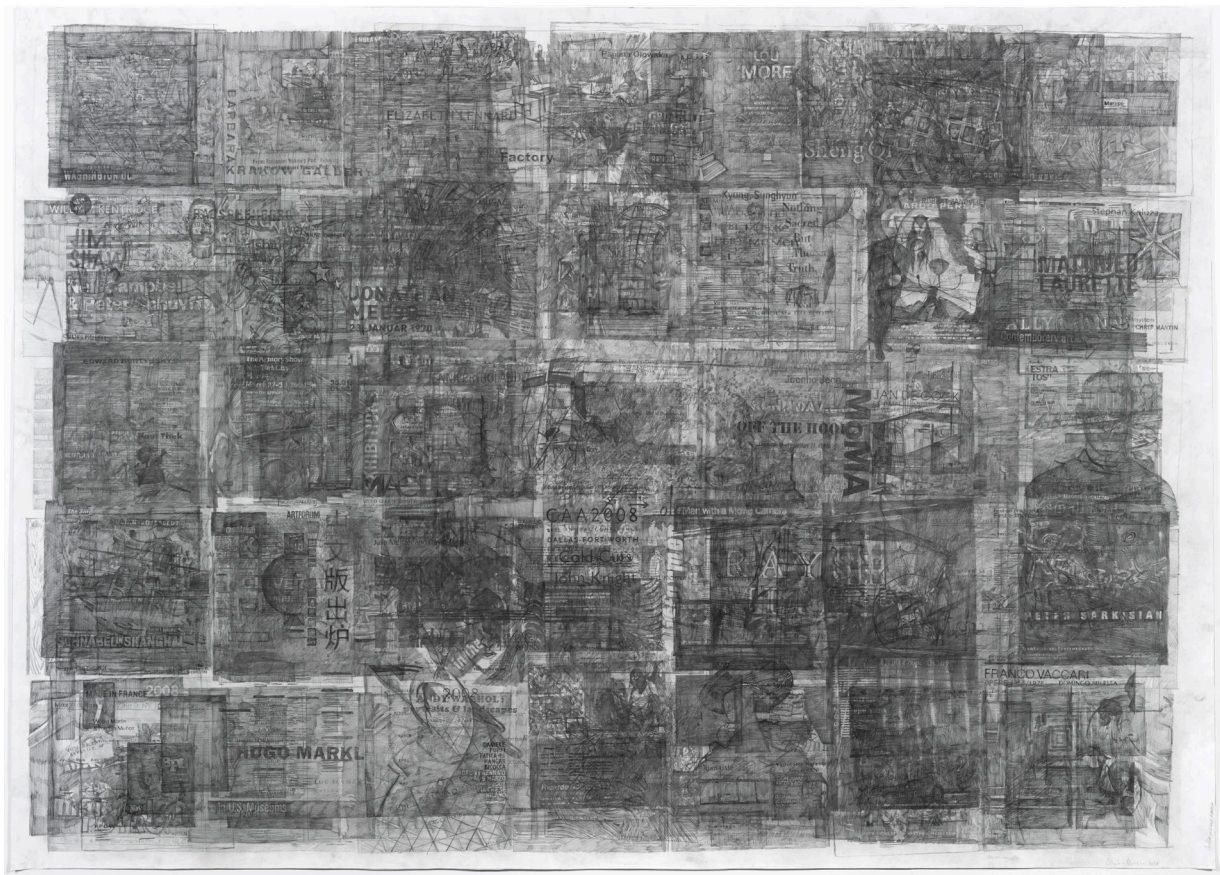
Kathy Prendergast, *Atlas*, 2016

100 copies of the AA Road Map of Europe, ink, trestle tables

Atlas is made up of 100 abstracted copies of a commercial road atlas, each copy containing one drawing on a different double-page spread that is laid open on a small table. The open maps are arranged according to their approximate position within the continent of Europe. Prendergast has used a black fine liner pen to draw around the small white circles that identify towns and cities in the map's legend. The rest of the page is covered with black ink.

By emphasising settlements and erasing borders, the artist creates a version of Europe that captures population spread and density, and deprioritises delineation between neighbouring nations, and between land and sea. The artist often listened to music while drawing these maps, to help with the repetitive and meditative process, which took one year to complete.

Courtesy of the artist and Kerlin Gallery, Dublin



Ciprian Muresan, *Palimpsest*, Artforum November 2007 (1), 2016, *Palimpsest*, Artforum March 2008 (2), 2016

Graphite pencil on paper

In this drawing every advert that appears within one issue of the magazine *Artforum*, famous for its ad-heavy layout, has been re-drawn onto a single sheet of paper, creating multiple layers of visual information. It represents the inflated art market at its perilous heights, pre-financial crash: its images and texts map the dynamics of the contemporary art world in 2008, with the 'brand names' of artists and galleries slowly emerging from the graphite haze. The transformation, from artwork to photographic magazine reproduction to a drawing in pencil, creates an unbroken circuit from original to copy and back to original.

Muresan was born and grew up in Communist-era Romania, during which time access to art books and visual material was extremely limited. His work is a response to the stark contrast between this era and the contemporary excess of visual consumption. Muresan explains that 'there is a feeling of historical quicksand, situated at the intersection of these two ways of dealing with [visual] information.'

Palimpsest, *Artforum* November 2007 (1), 2016. Private Collector, London

Palimpsest, *Artforum* March 2008 (2), 2016. Courtesy the artist and Galeria Plan B Cluj - Berlin



Ian Kiaer, *Endnote (panoramico)*, 2018

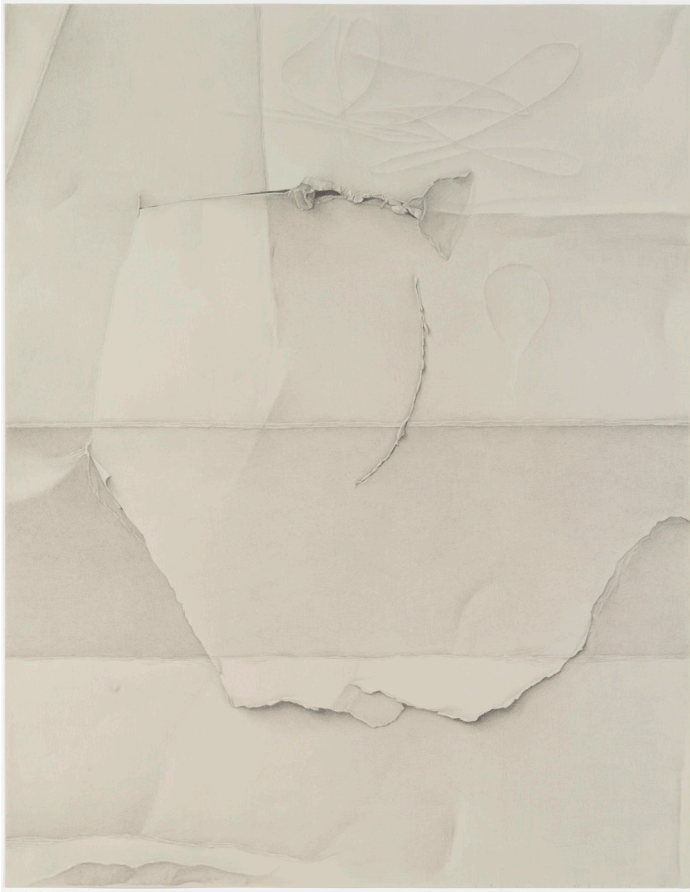
Mixed media installation

Kiaer is interested in the almost incidental drawing that is prompted by our physical surroundings (such as the boredom triggered by waiting at a bus stop). These Plexiglas panels contain different registers of mark making, the artist's marks and others, the passage of time reflected in the accumulation of dirt and the interventions by waiting bus passengers. These act as readymade graphic incisions that are almost unintentional: tedium-induced scrawls rather than purposeful graffiti.

Kiaer's thoughtful, installation-based projects respond to the fragmented narratives of utopian modernist thinkers and architects, like Bruno Taut and Frederick Kiesler. The video explores Kiaer's cardboard model of a panoramic building overlooking Lisbon: the Monsanto restaurant designed by Chaves da Costa in 1968.

The building exists now as a shell of the viewing platform, no longer fully itself, not yet fully a ruin. In its current state, the artist suggests it is like a working model.

Courtesy of Alison Jacques Gallery, London



David Musgrave, *Repaired plane no. 4*, 2018, *Spirit plane no. 3*, 2015

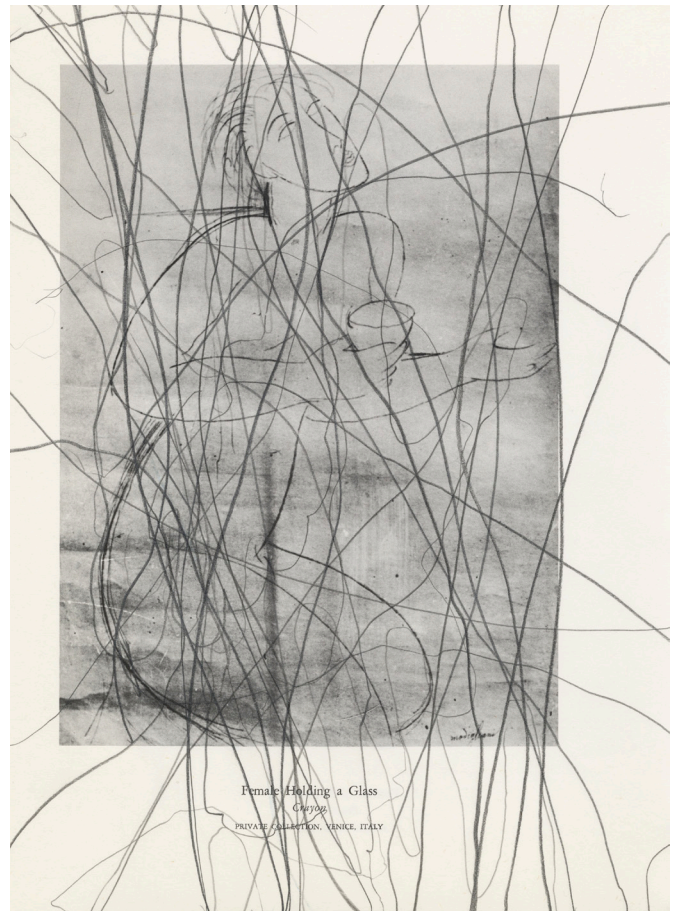
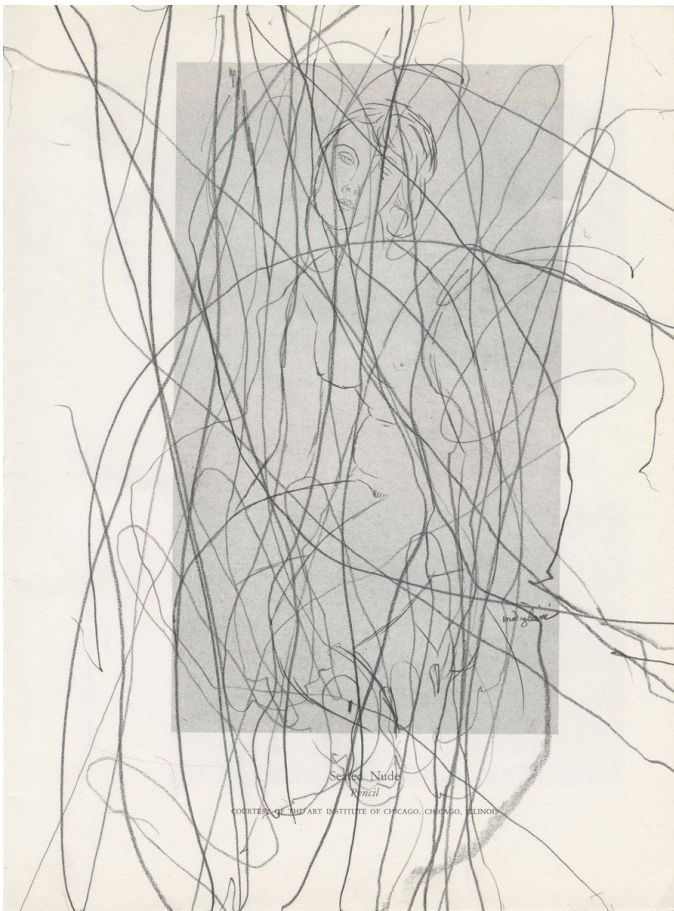
Graphite on paper

Musgrave makes images that tap into our capacity to find human features in the most inanimate of objects - a stone, or a leaf, or the surface of the moon - and in the most reduced forms, like snatches of lines and pockets of shade.

In his drawings the artist creates an illusion: no drawn lines are visible, and yet the uncertain status of these images draws attention to the artist's handmade methods of production. As he states: 'I don't know if my hand is anything other than one trace of labour among a multitude of equivalents, but again and again I find I still can't abandon it.'

Repaired plane no. 4 is drawn on paper that has a soft and furry texture, like the sugar paper used in primary schools. For this drawing, the artist has employed trompe l'oeil (literally, drawing or painting that 'deceives the eye') to create the illusion of 'minor material violence.'

Courtesy greengrassi, London



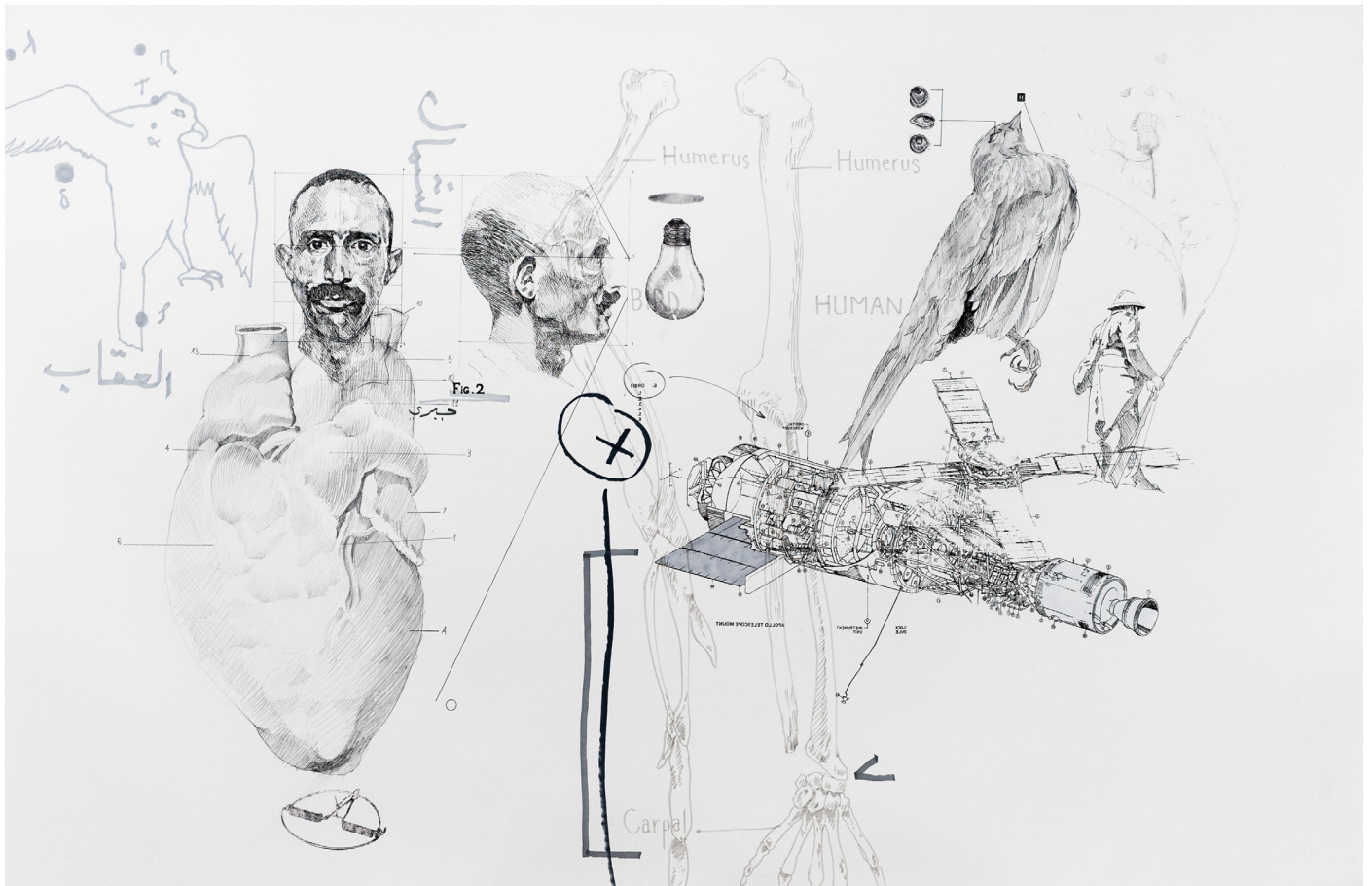
Kate Davis, *Disgrace I, II, III and IV*, 2009

Pencil on page from monograph

'The *Disgrace* drawings were made by lying on a page from a Modigliani monograph and mapping around the edge of my entire body - as much as I could fit on the page at one time. [...] Various parts of the body were more difficult to draw around, like my head, as to have my head on the page meant that I couldn't see or control the line drawn so easily.' - Kate Davis

The found images of the *Disgrace* drawings are pages from *The Drawings of Amedeo Modigliani* (1972). It featured the Italian artist's now instantly recognisable female nude studies and portraits in pencil, published as part of the 'Master Draughtsman Series.' All other artists included in this mass-market art publishing series from the early 1970s, with the exception of Käthe Kollwitz, were men. Davis found herself seduced by the sinuous lines Modigliani used to describe the female form, yet repelled by his representation of women as vacuous, empty shells: here, she disrupts the male gaze by taking control of her own image.

Courtesy of the artist



Nidhal Chamekh, *Le Battement des Ailes No. XVI*, 2017, *Le Battement des Ailes D*, 2017

Graphite, ink and photo transfer on cotton paper

This ongoing series fuses artistic, anatomical and scientific imagery, reminiscent of the visual research process seen in the sketchbooks of Leonardo da Vinci and other Renaissance draughtsmen. Chamekh combines different graphic signs and symbols, and different types of notational, diagrammatic and realistic drawings, together with photographic transfers. Every component is based on an image sourced from archives.

The subject matter focuses on comparisons between the human body, its anatomy and facial features, and the anatomical structures present in animals, particularly the wings of a bird. The title of the series translates as 'beating of the wings', and alongside the many images of birds in flight, the drawings present correlating human endeavours such as manned space flight, and spacecraft involved in moon landings.

Courtesy of Selma Feriani Gallery



Karl Haendel, *Weeks in Wet Sheets*, 2015

Works on paper and cardboard elements, installation

This assembly of Haendel's drawings are all copied by the artist from his vast slide library of image sources, arranged according to his own system of thematic categorisation. In this installation, every image you see is related to the subject of water or wetness. Haendel has combined these disparate images with backdrops of bright colour and abstract shapes, so that his predominately monochromatic pencil drawings, realised at different scales and sizes, start to feel suggestive of an online image search realised in three-dimensional space. Cardboard structures propel some drawings into our physical space, while a variety of water-endangered animals perch precariously on stacks of cut-out geometric shapes.

The installation is comprised of 30 drawn components, each individually titled, 21 of which are on view at Modern Art Oxford. The nine that complete the artwork can be seen at Drawing Room, London, where this exhibition runs concurrently.

Courtesy of Galerie Barbara Seiler, Zurich



Milano Chow, *Façade I*, 2018, *Entryway (Push/Pull Doors)*, 2017, *Frame/Exterior 1*, 2017, *Entryway (Niches)*, 2017

Graphite, ink, Flashe and photo transfer on paper

Chow's meticulously rendered drawings create staged scenarios that border on the surreal in their juxtaposition of oversize cornice plasterwork, doorways, windows and extravagant columns, arches and sconces. The male and female figures are photographic transfers taken from vintage fashion magazines, lending an eerie timelessness to her scenes.

These four drawings are studies in the aesthetics and postures that emerge from the experience of looking and being observed. Both inanimate objects and human body are presented for the viewer's visual consumption and pleasure. Chow playfully acknowledges many strands of 20th century visual culture and interior design history, as well as the body's relationship to architectural spaces. The artist is fascinated by exploring what she calls 'design in excess of use value.'

Courtesy of the artist and Mary Mary, Glasgow



Barbara Walker, *Backdrop*, 2018, *Untitled*, 2018, *Flags*, 2018

Graphite on embossed paper

Over the last five years Walker has developed this series of embossed drawings, which deal with military conflict subject matters from the First World War to the present day. The photographs from which she adapts her images are sourced from various historical archives, including the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Imperial War Museum, as well as online image searches. Her drawings foreground those West Indian and African soldiers who fought for the British Army, and other armies from European countries with an historic colonial presence throughout the African continent.

Backdrop (detail illustrated) shows German troops guarding captured French colonial soldiers; *Untitled* shows personnel from the Senegalese Tirailleurs (riflemen), a colonial infantry corps within the French Army; while *Flags* depicts the King's African Rifles, a British colonial regiment that recruited from East African territories and was operational from 1902 until independence in the 1960s.

Courtesy of the artist



Massinissa Selmani, *Récit d'Arrangements I, III, V, and VIII*, 2017

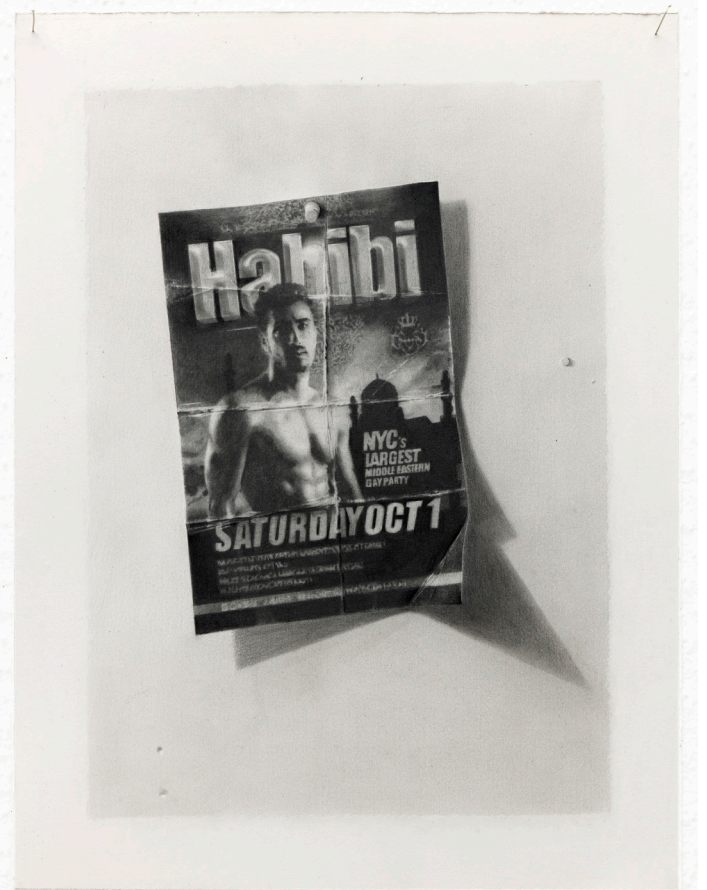
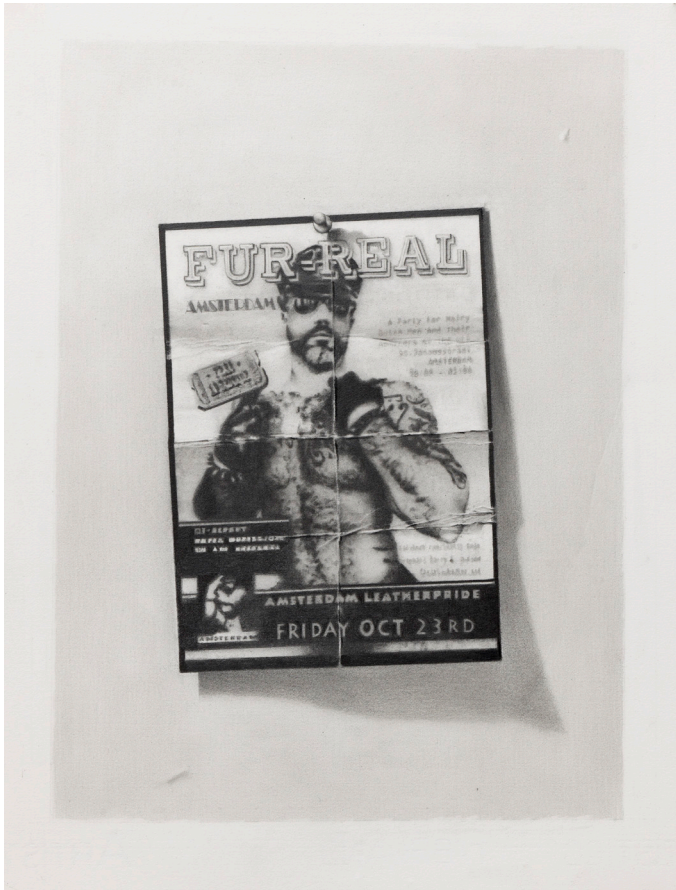
Graphite and coloured pencil on paper

'I have always liked the immediacy of drawing [and] I have always been interested in different forms of storytelling and recounting events. [...] The media coverage of events and their representation runs through my work. I have looked at a lot of press photography and have always enjoyed finding the same image captioned or framed differently to illustrate different articles.'

By obscuring the context in my artworks, I am interested in poses or attitudes and how, depending on one's background and experience, everyone will be able to interpret these differently. These are the first elements of a story.'

- Massinissa Selmani

Courtesy of Selma Feriani Gallery



David Haines, *Still Life with Flyer (Fur Real)*, 2017, *Still Life with Flyer (Habibi)*, 2017

Graphite pencil on paper

Haines' 'Still Life with Flyer' series investigates the physical evidence of live interaction in the absence of a digital interface. The artist collects flyers and tickets for fringe events and club nights across his home city of Amsterdam and New York - folded, placed in pockets and 'body-worn' with sweat and scuffs, this paper ephemera displays traces of human use, unlike the flat perfection of a screen image.

To make exact renderings of these creased and humble artefacts, Haines has used the trompe l'oeil technique (literally, drawing or painting that 'deceives the eye') to capture these peripheral moments in our cultural and social history. These modestly scaled works belie the many accumulated hours of the artist's skill and labour. They equally act as explicit evidence of other forms of physical presence - of actual contact between people in a social setting, and between a person and the drawn material.

Courtesy of the artist and Upstream Gallery, Amsterdam



David Haines, *Meatboy and Bob Starr*, 2016

Graphite pencil on paper

Haines' *Meatboy and Bob Starr* employs a vast range of mark making techniques in pencil to explore virtual interaction as it meets the human body. A pixelated webcam projection is juxtaposed with a lush, brocade fabric, exposed human skin and the messy excess of shaving foam, to produce an almost overwhelming material and textural scene.

KRC Collection, The Netherlands



ruby onyinyechi amanze, that low hanging kind of sun, the one that lingers two feet above your head, (never dying) house plants in exchange for your freedom... orchids in exchange for your love, who are you kissing, when you kiss a mask?, 2015

Photo transfers, collage, ink, metallic pigment, graphite and coloured pencil on paper

This drawing belongs to amanze's ongoing series 'aliens, hybrids and ghosts.' The global, postcolonial and culturally hybrid existence that amanze embodies is reflected in her materially diverse approach to drawing, which blends photo transfer and collaged elements with a colourful variety of pencil, metallic pigment and ink drawing.

The artist explains: 'These drawings are part of an ongoing, non-linear narrative that exists between constructed realities, memory and make believe. The magical potential of space (in all of its dimensions) is its malleability: its ability to shift, overlap, take form or infinitely expand. There is a point where land and sea invert, time travel happens daily and flying and walking are interchangeable. The drawings embrace these spatial freedoms, and playfully flirt with design, architecture and utopic mythology.'

Courtesy the artist and Tiwani Contemporary



Nidhal Chamekh, *Trois Poses de Fadhel Sassi*, 2016

Burned bread and charcoal on canvas, three parts

This large-scale drawing in three parts documents and transforms the photographic evidence of the death of a young militant martyr on 3 January 1984 in Tunisia. Government forces in downtown Tunis shot the young man, Fadhel Sassi, during a demonstration against rises in the price of bread, triggered by an International Monetary Fund-imposed austerity programme.

Sassi was a teacher, poet and an activist in the Tunisian Democratic Patriots' Movement. He taught Arabic and studied literature at the same university as Chamekh's mother, who kept a series of original prints by an anonymous photographer. The artist also found the source newspaper cutting in the family archive. Art historian Clotilde Scordia notes of this triptych that: 'A desire to recount something always resurfaces; these fragments that the viewer discovers give access to memory or events.'

For this work, Chamekh has used burned bread to produce his own drawing charcoal.

Courtesy Kamel Lazaar Foundation