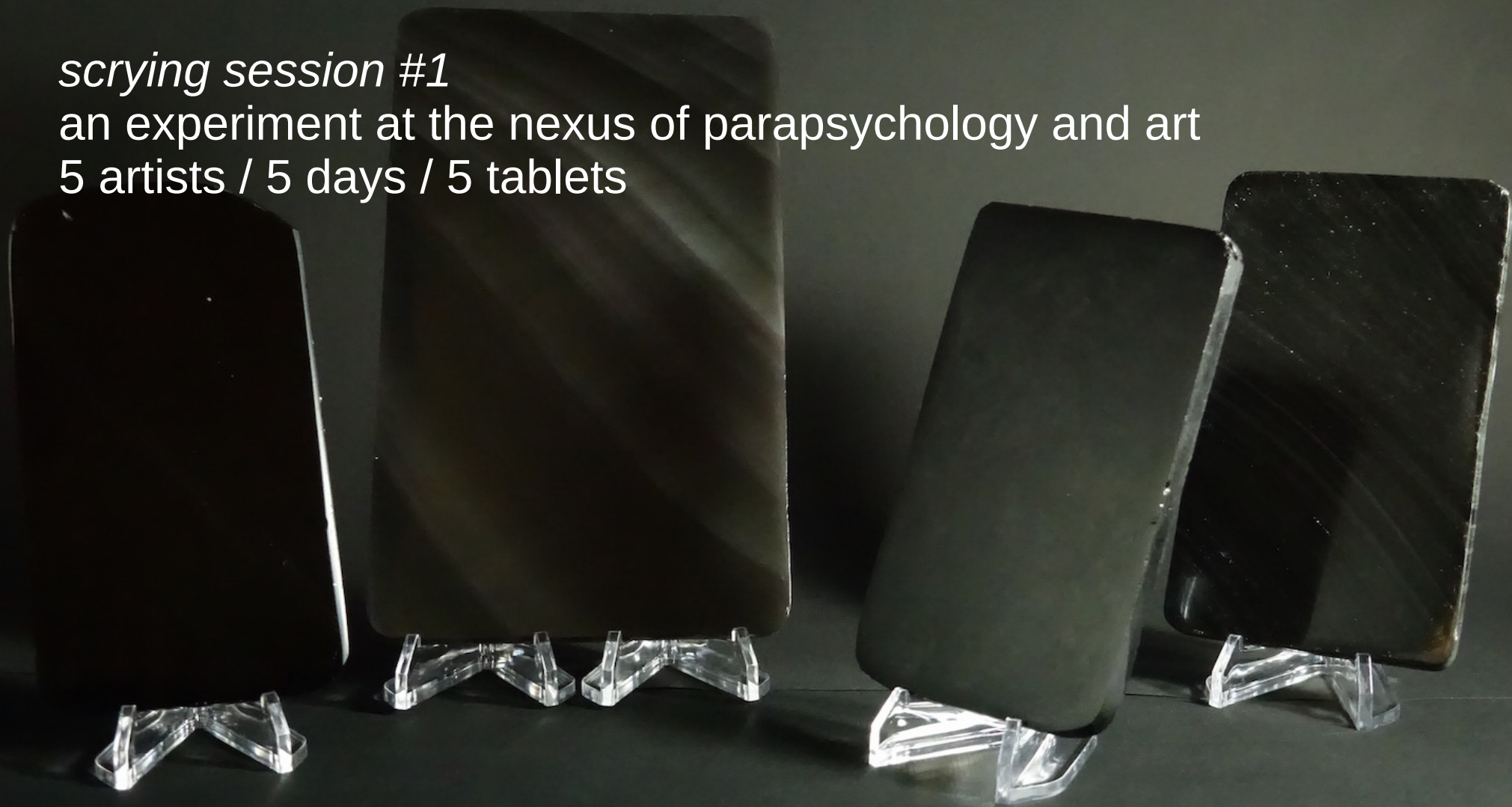


scrying session #1

an experiment at the nexus of parapsychology and art

5 artists / 5 days / 5 tablets



Silvan Laan & Emily C. Thomas

drawings by Melissa Dunn, Terri Phillips, Lauren Cain, Mary K. VanGieson & Lindsay Donnelly-Bullington

Bridging the Distance / UrbanArt Commission, Memphis, TN / 2020



During the summer of 2018 we visited Glass Butte, one of the world's largest deposits of obsidian (volcanic glass) which lies outside Burns, Oregon. We camped out a few weeks and worked with a local lapidary to produce a family of 'entangled' obsidian tablets, akin to the legendary Crystal Skulls. The Shew Stone of the 16th century alchemist John Dee, an obsidian mirror of Aztec origin, is an important reference.

The obsidian tablets are intended for experiments at the intersection of parapsychology and art. *Scrying session #1*, in the context of UrbanArt Commission's project Bridging the Distance, is the first such experiment.

Even if we are not physically in the midst of one another, we share a collective field of consciousness as a species. This has variously been referred to as telepathy, the collective unconscious or, in quantum mechanics, 'spooky action at a distance'. We currently see a huge move towards mediation via digital screens, referred to by Charlie Brooker, creator of the sci-fi drama by that name, as 'black mirrors'. The black mirror surfaces of our obsidian tablets provide an alternative, hopefully unlocking our innate psychic abilities, helping to emancipate us from the hypnotic power of digital tools and the corporate forces behind them.

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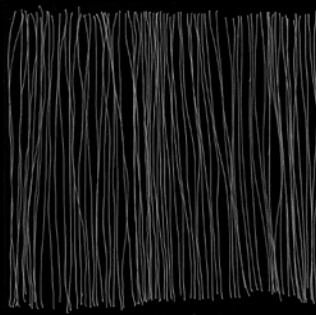
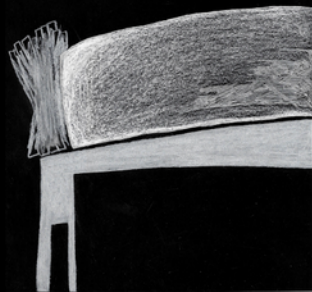
Melissa Dunn

We asked five artists from the Memphis area to participate in *scrying session # 1*:

Lauren Cain
Lindsay Donnelly-Bullington
Melissa Dunn
Terri Phillips
Mary K. VanGieson

We handed each of them an obsidian tablet, art supplies (sheets of 11" X 11" black paper, white colored pencil, conté crayon, china marker and pen) and a set of instructions. Over five days, at a set time (between 9 and 9.30 PM on June 10 thru 14), they were to consult their tablets and create a series of drawings in the privacy of their home.

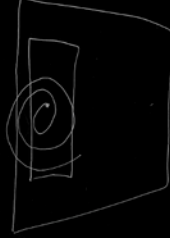
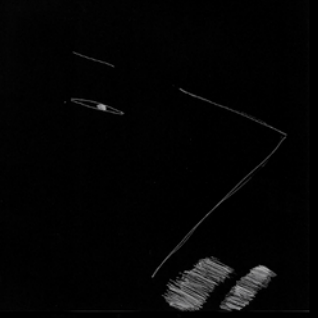
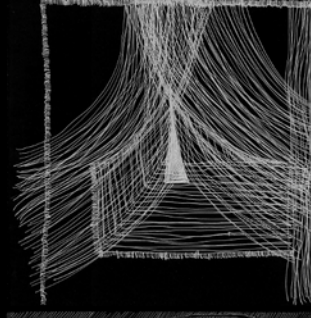
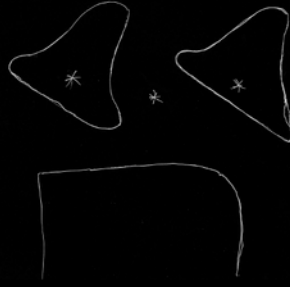
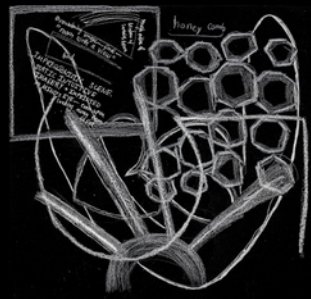
There are no "senders" and "receivers" here. We asked participants to imagine tuning in to a shared field of awareness and confide to paper whatever emerged, if anything. None of the participants knew who the others were. After the five day period, having collected the drawings, we looked for correspondences in the drawings. We produced five collages, one for every day of the experiment, bringing the drawings in relationship with each other.



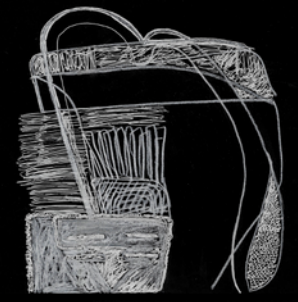
Day 1 / June 10th



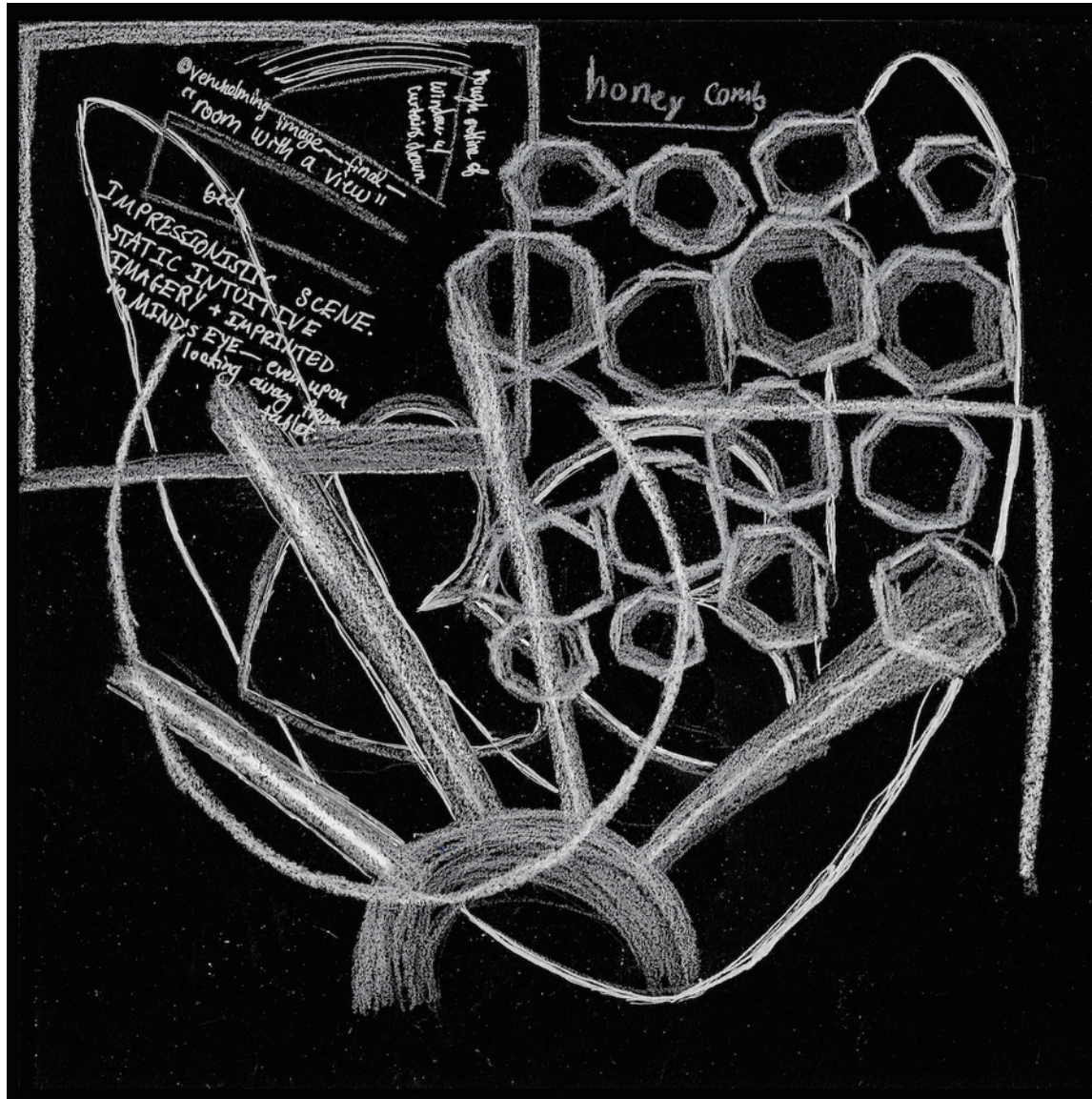
sample drawing June 10th: Mary K. VanGieson



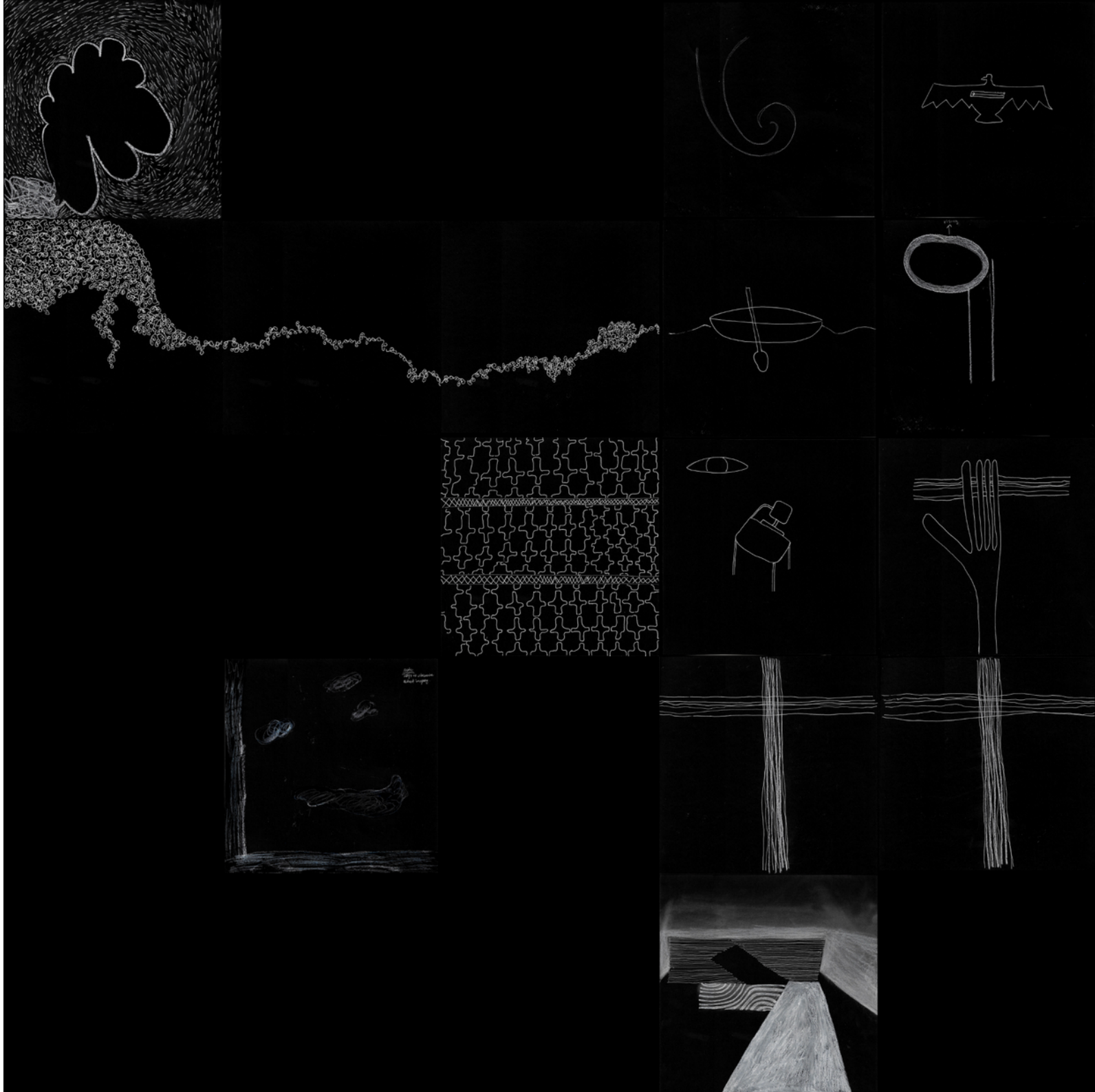
Handwritten notes in a box, possibly describing the sketches or the overall theme.



Day 2 / June 11th



Sample drawing June 11th: Lauren Cain

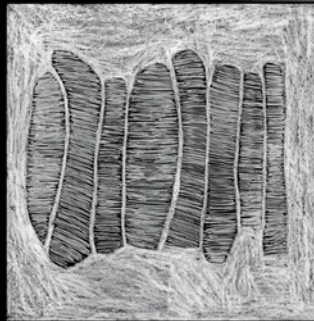


Day 3 / June 12th

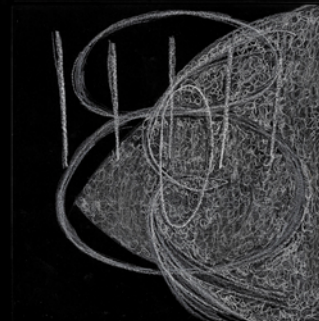
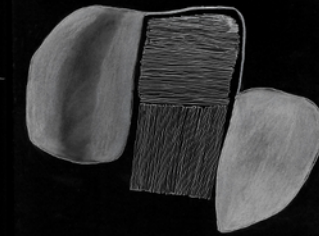
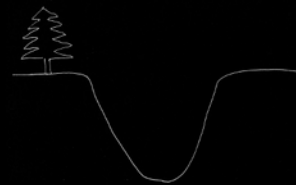
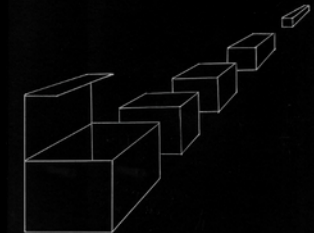


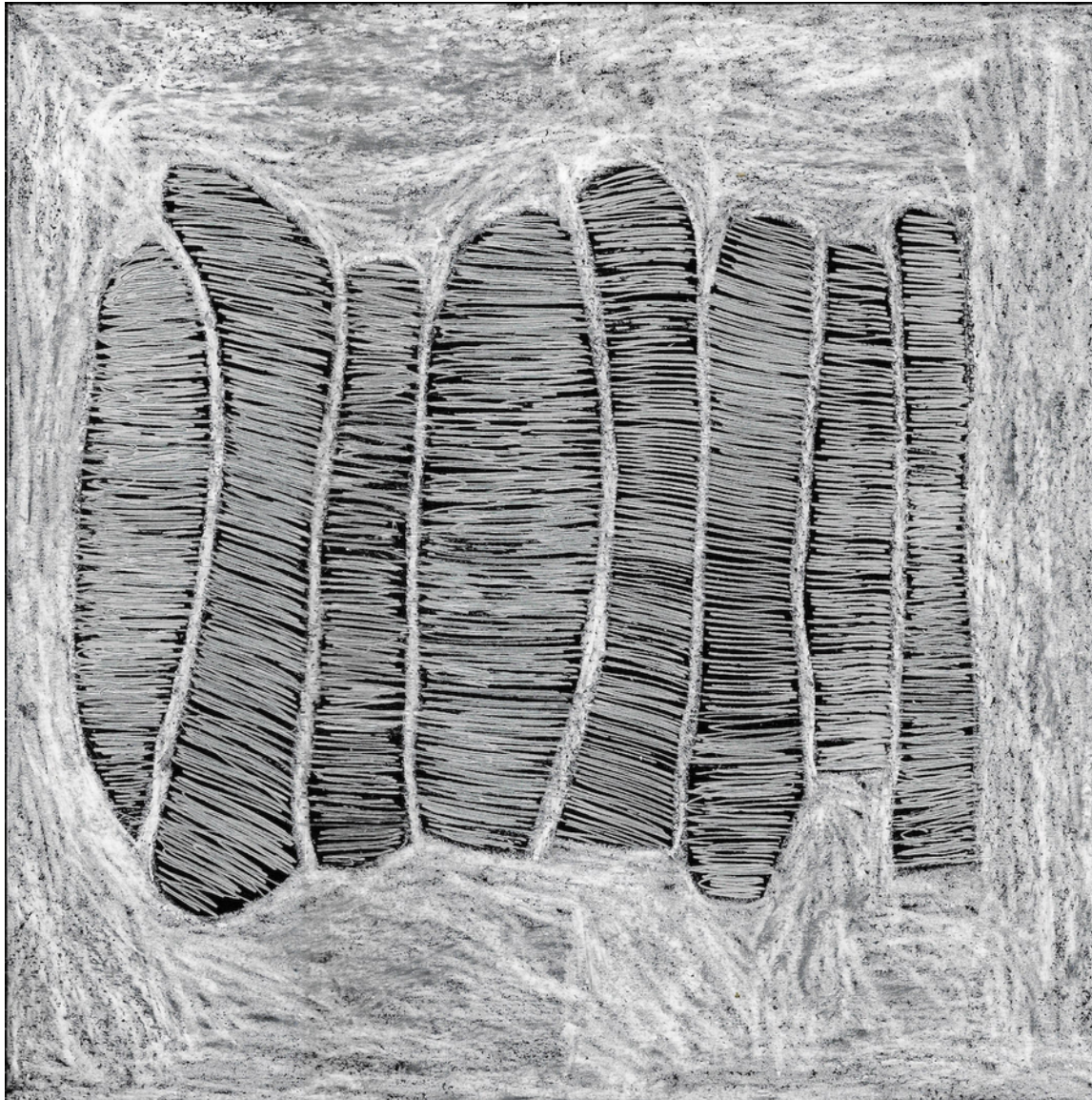
Sample drawing June 12th: Lindsay Donnelly-Bullington

Day 4 / June 13th



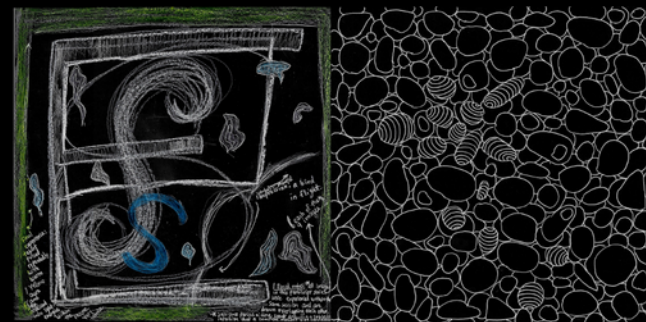
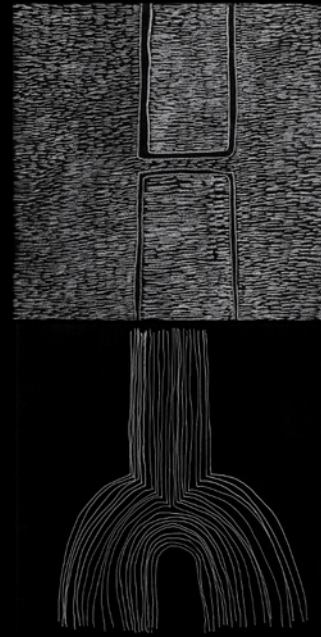
100%
Texture of black woven material:
the structure of the woven fabric is formed by
the vertical and horizontal threads.

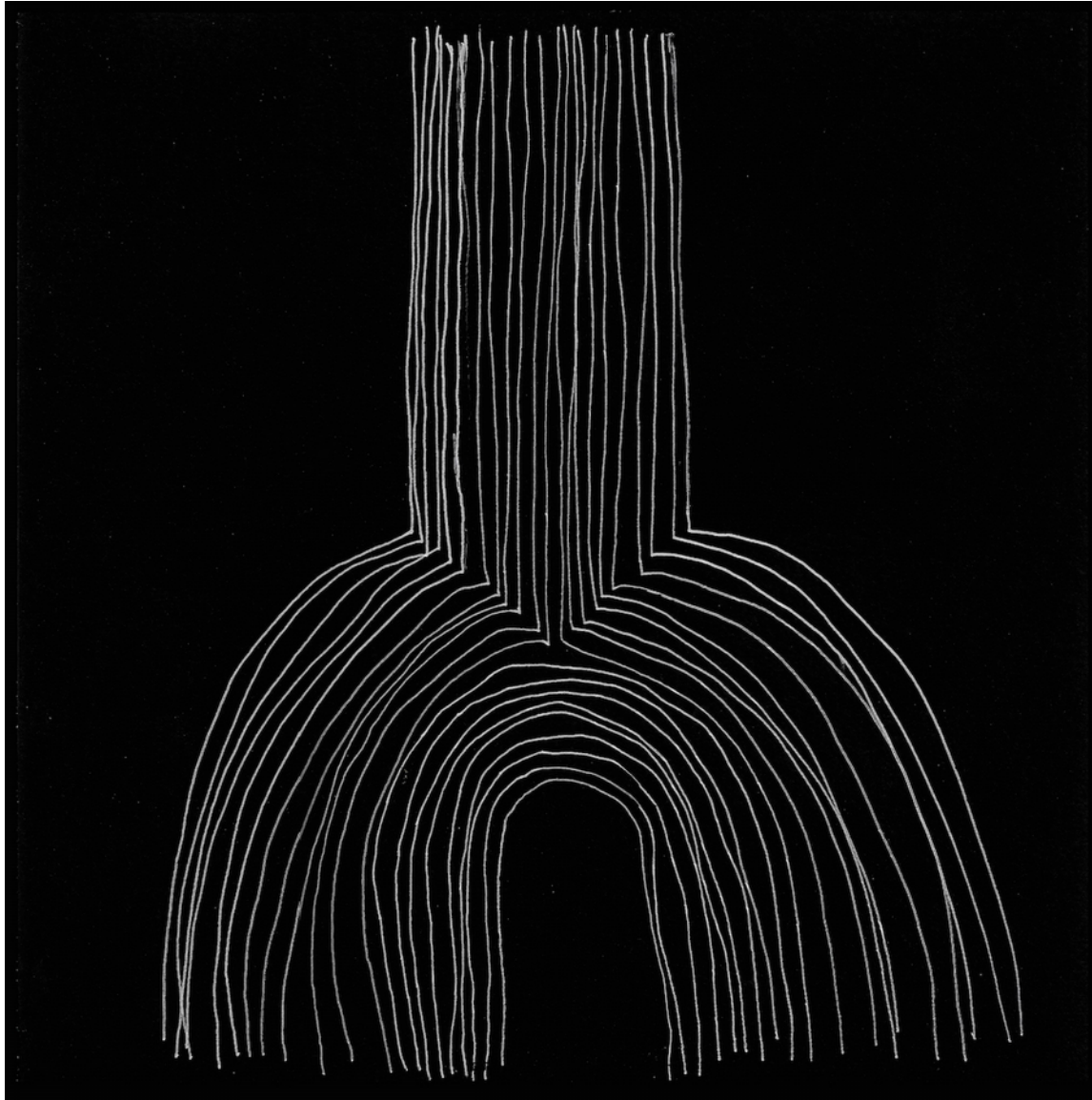




Sample drawing June 13th: Melissa Dunn

Day 5 / June 14th





Sample drawing June 14th: Terri Phillips

