

# *Clouds*

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Is seeing truly seeing the not-thingness of things?  
Is seeing cockatoos whales or teddy bears in clouds  
different  
than seeing “clouds”?

If, struggling, I begin to see, just begin,  
to see  
without naming

my eyes slide across a formless  
glorious  
world.

Not “my”. Not “eyes”.

Not-me.



“Clouds are water vapor”,  
I am told.

But those are words,  
names,  
and don't help me much  
don't help me understand  
all that much.

Tiny molecules of something.  
Tinier, still tinier atoms of something.  
Names upon names, tinier and tinier  
til we no longer are able to name  
the tininess.

Breaking them down,  
all is the same as me.

Clouds the same as me.  
All the same as me,  
all the same as all,  
all the same as all.

Hello, Cloud.  
My name is Michael.

Pleased to meet you —  
after all these years.





*Click!* The enduring appeal of sunsets. *Click!*

To say they are beautiful doesn't clarify things.  
That is a tautology,  
meaning something like,  
*"I really like it. I really, really like it."*

Surely there is more,  
something other?

But perhaps beautiful does have meaning,  
because we choose it over pretty or nice.

Perhaps we sense something, feel something  
beyond  
what we normally sense or feel or understand.

That, perhaps, is what we mean, though we cannot say it,  
when we say, *"Beautiful!"*

– an otherness, a hugeness,  
a glimpse of our small place  
in the world of all existence,

of beautiful all existence.







A boy, eight, lies on his back in the summer grass,  
hands behind his head,  
short black hair going where it wants to go,  
the grass cool against his back.

He watches, because there's nothing better to do,  
clouds drifting overhead,

slowly,  
edges curling,

slowly.

So much has changed in him since then.  
His body is long now and differently muscled,  
his hair white, the face creased.  
Within are experiences thoughts and memories  
the boy could not have imagined or understood.

So much has changed.

But the clouds remain.  
The clouds remain as they always were,  
drifting slowly, edges curling,  
drifting,  
slowly.

So much has changed but the clouds remain,  
still and as they always were,  
sliding, drifting,  
changing shape slowly,  
forever slowly,  
changing slowly,

just as they always did,  
just as they always did.

Hello, Clouds. It's been awhile.  
Remember me?







Trying to draw space, I stumble.  
How to see space itself,  
space unto itself, by itself?

Sans referents or objects,  
sans anything?

Clouds' shifting formless selves  
help me understand,  
their edges evaporating,  
The essence of their selves disappearing.

Am I not the same?  
Walking, my form changes,  
edges wriggle,  
Colors bounce, shimmer, shift, elide.

No, you say.  
That is not the same.  
A cloud is permeable and dissipates in real time,  
disappears entirely,  
vanishes (into thin air).

But do not I as well  
if over a slower timeframe?

Do we impose shape and form  
on an ephemeral formless aggregate  
and name it “cloud”?

Better perhaps to name it Brahman.

ब्रह्मन्

I struggle to draw ब्रह्मन्.

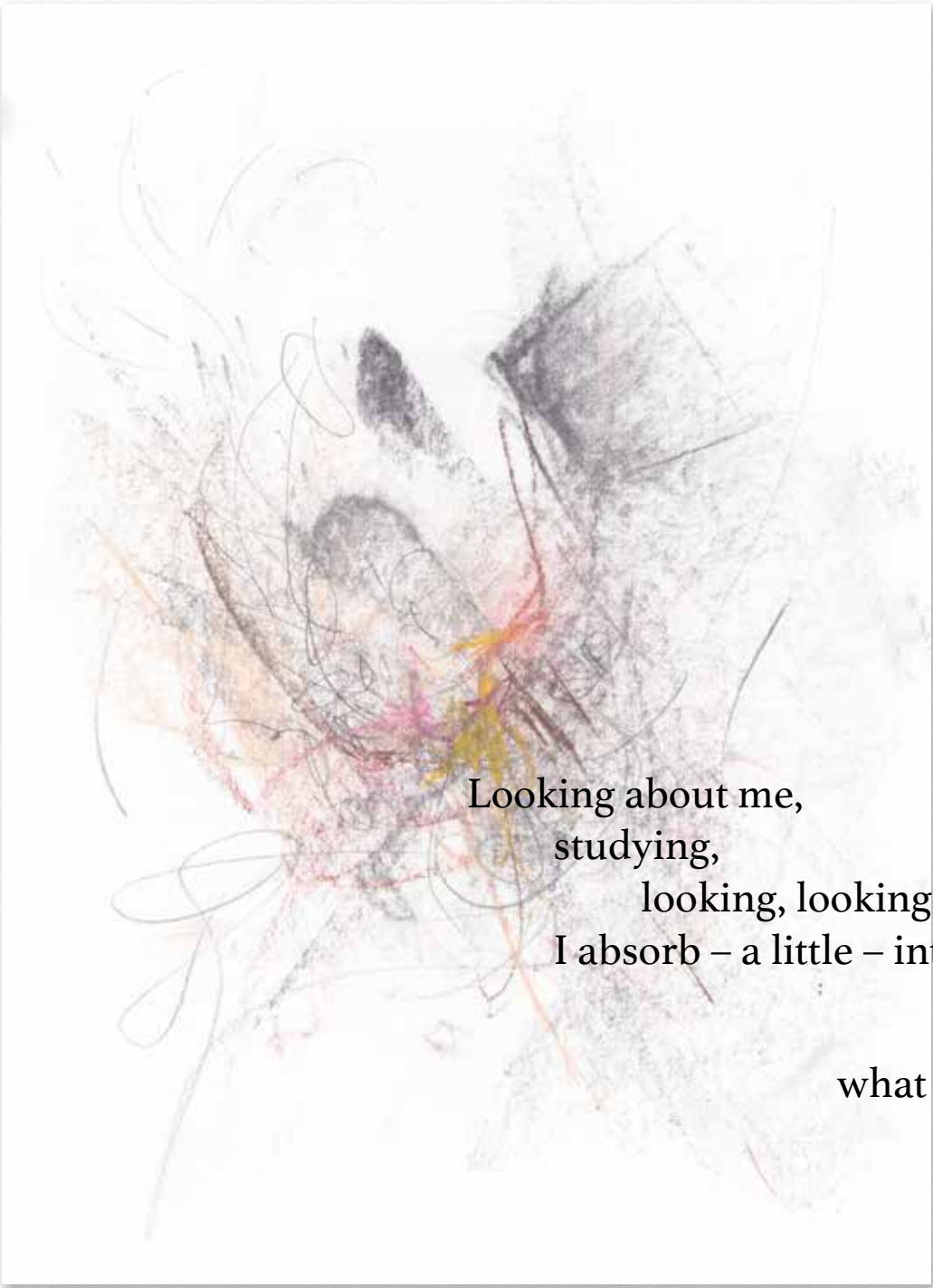
Small wonder I fail.





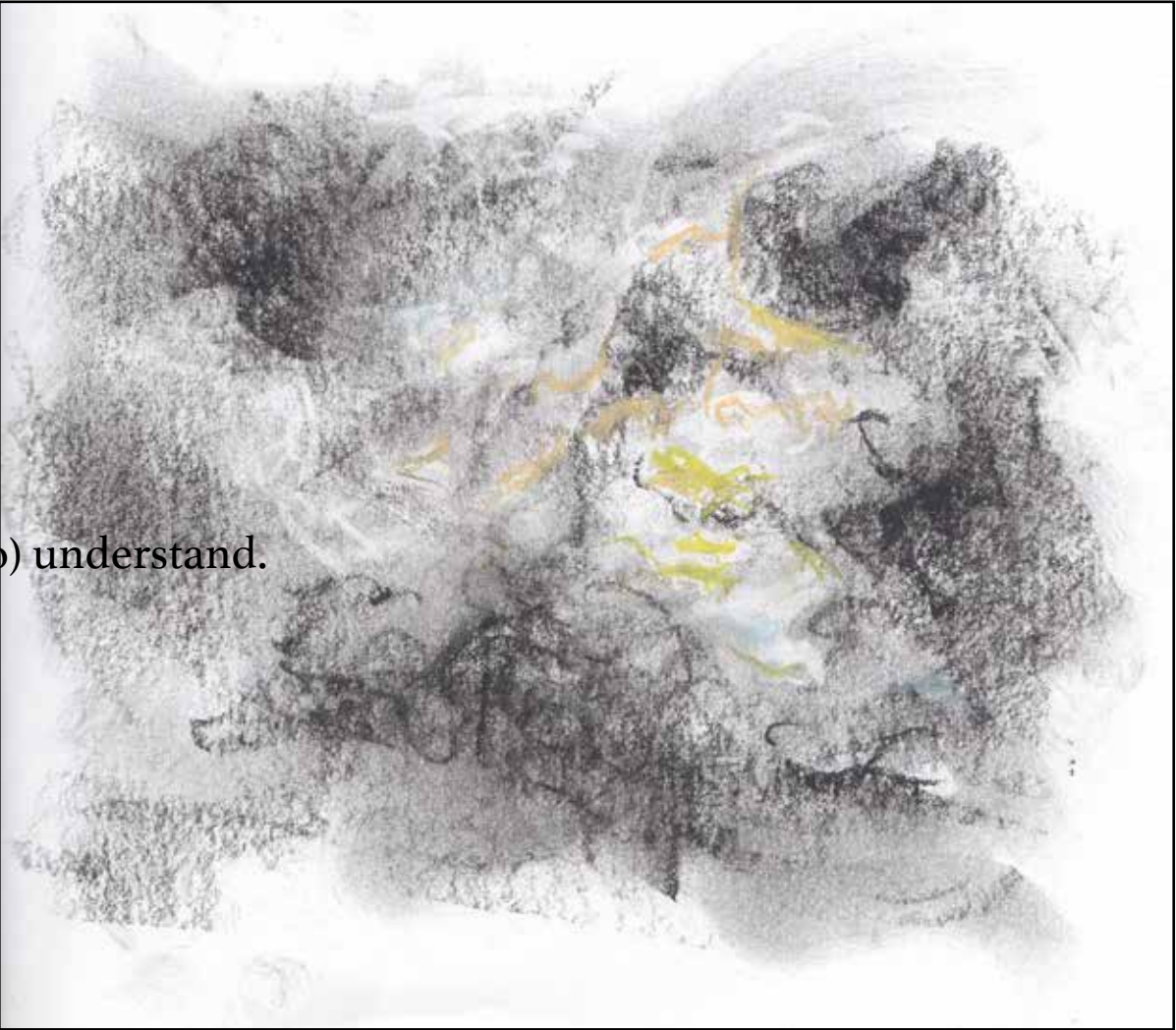






Looking about me,  
studying,  
looking, looking,  
I absorb – a little – into myself

what I see and (start to) understand.



Within me now resides  
– a little, a bit,  
I hope –  
the beauty and wonder

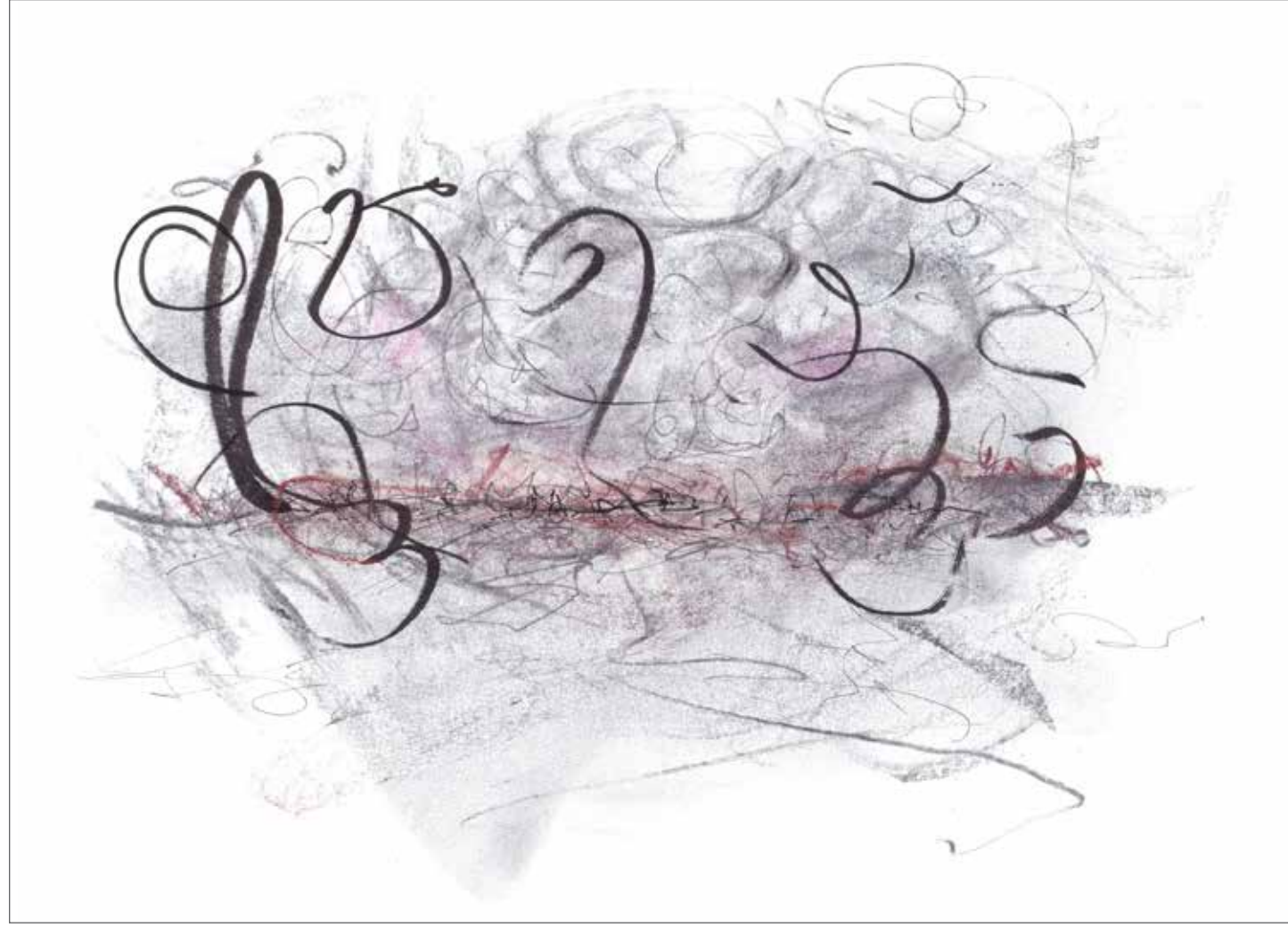
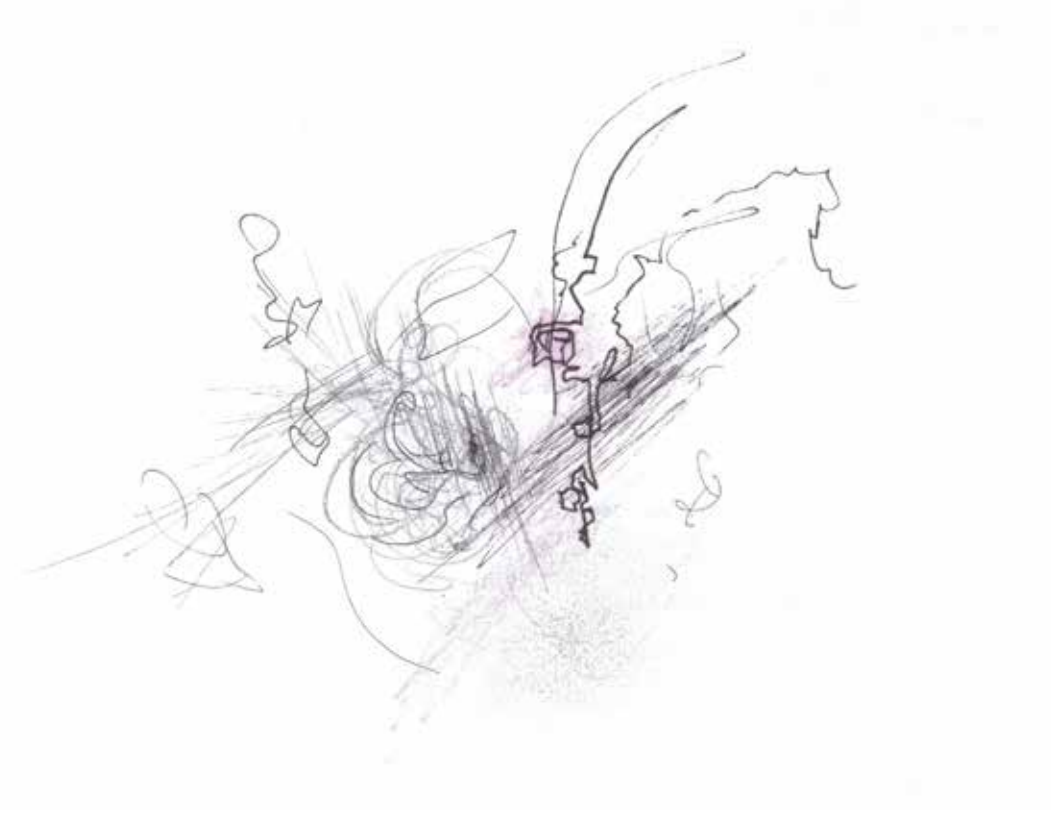
of what I see and study.



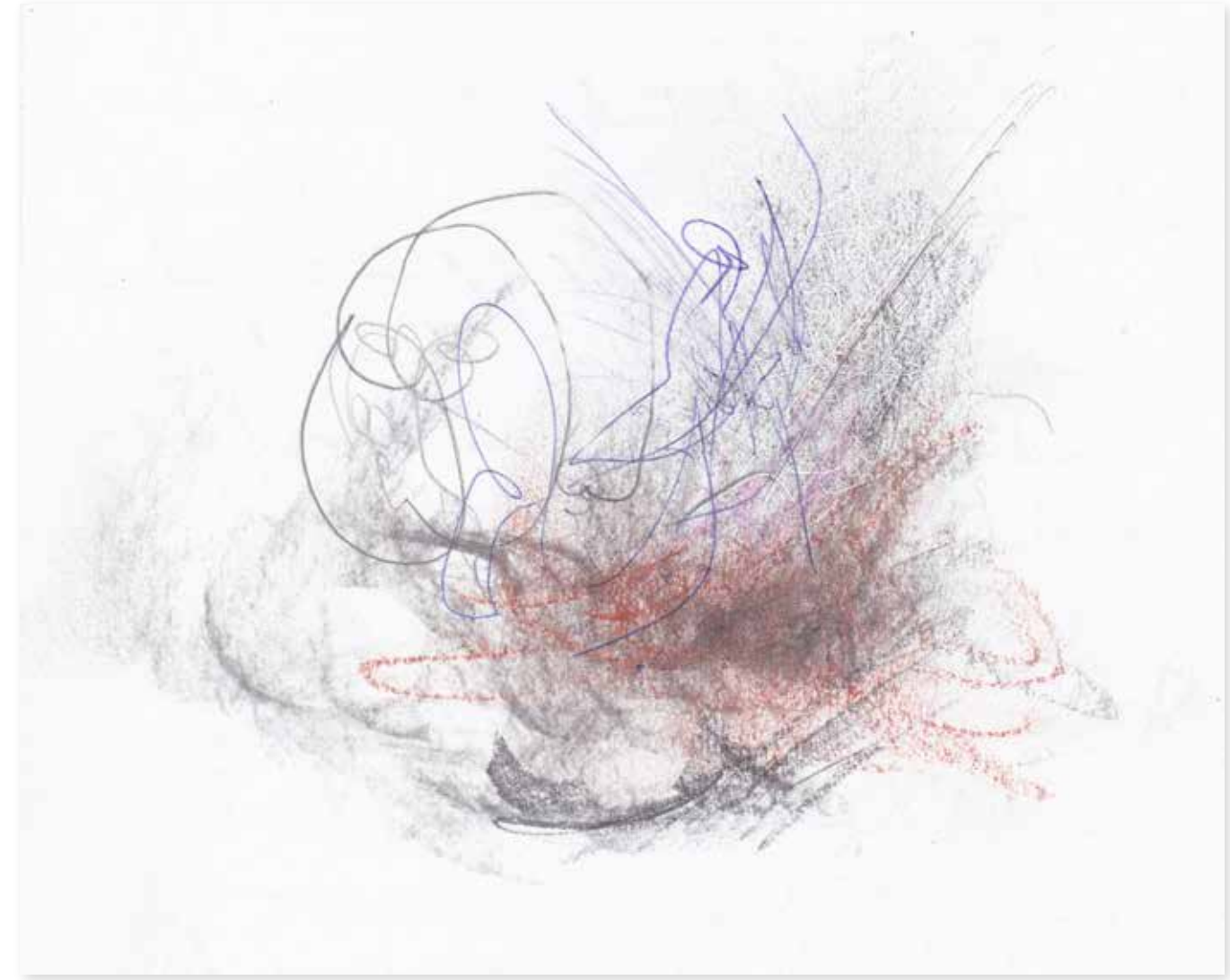
Perhaps I am a little better for it  
a little, a bit.

I hope.

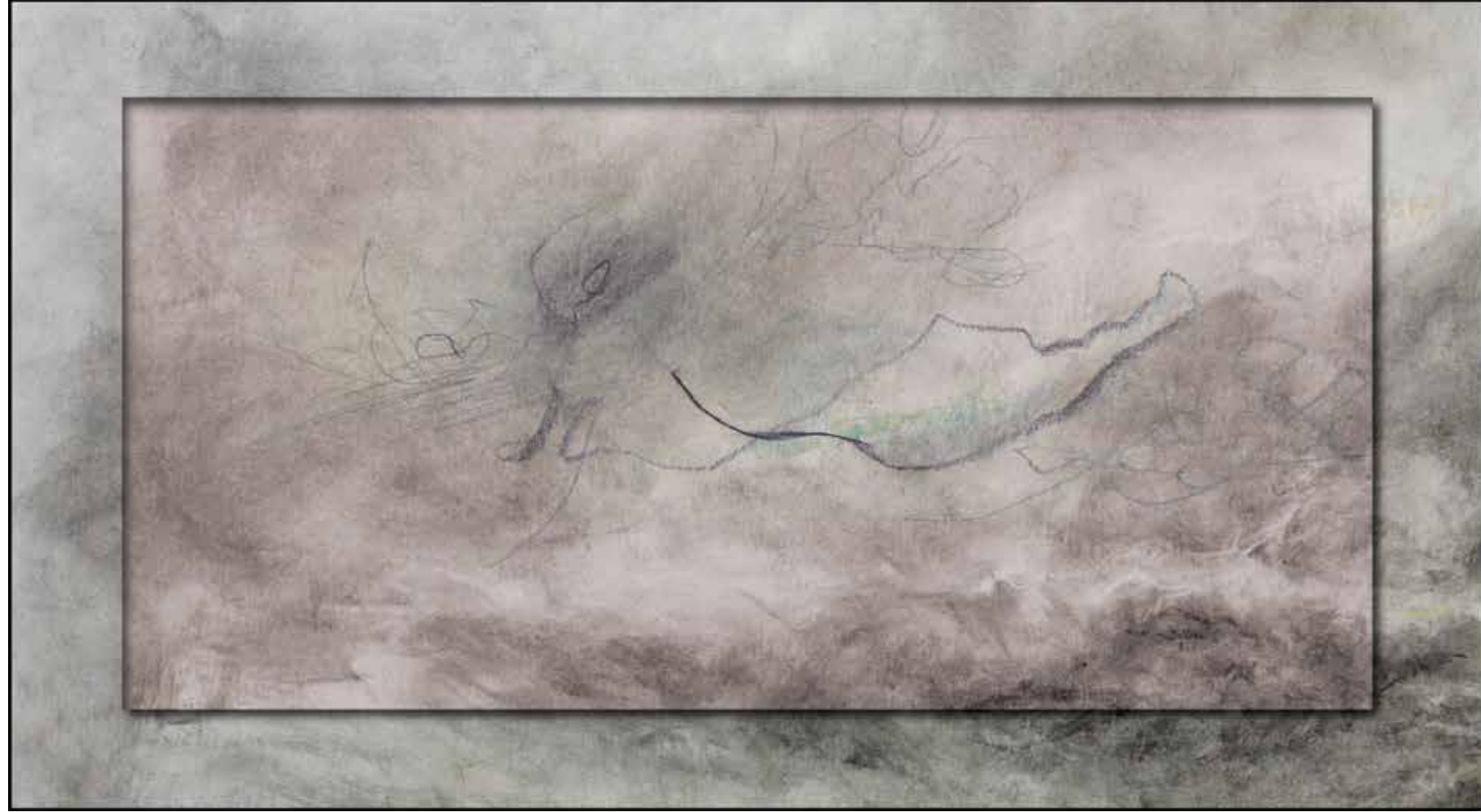








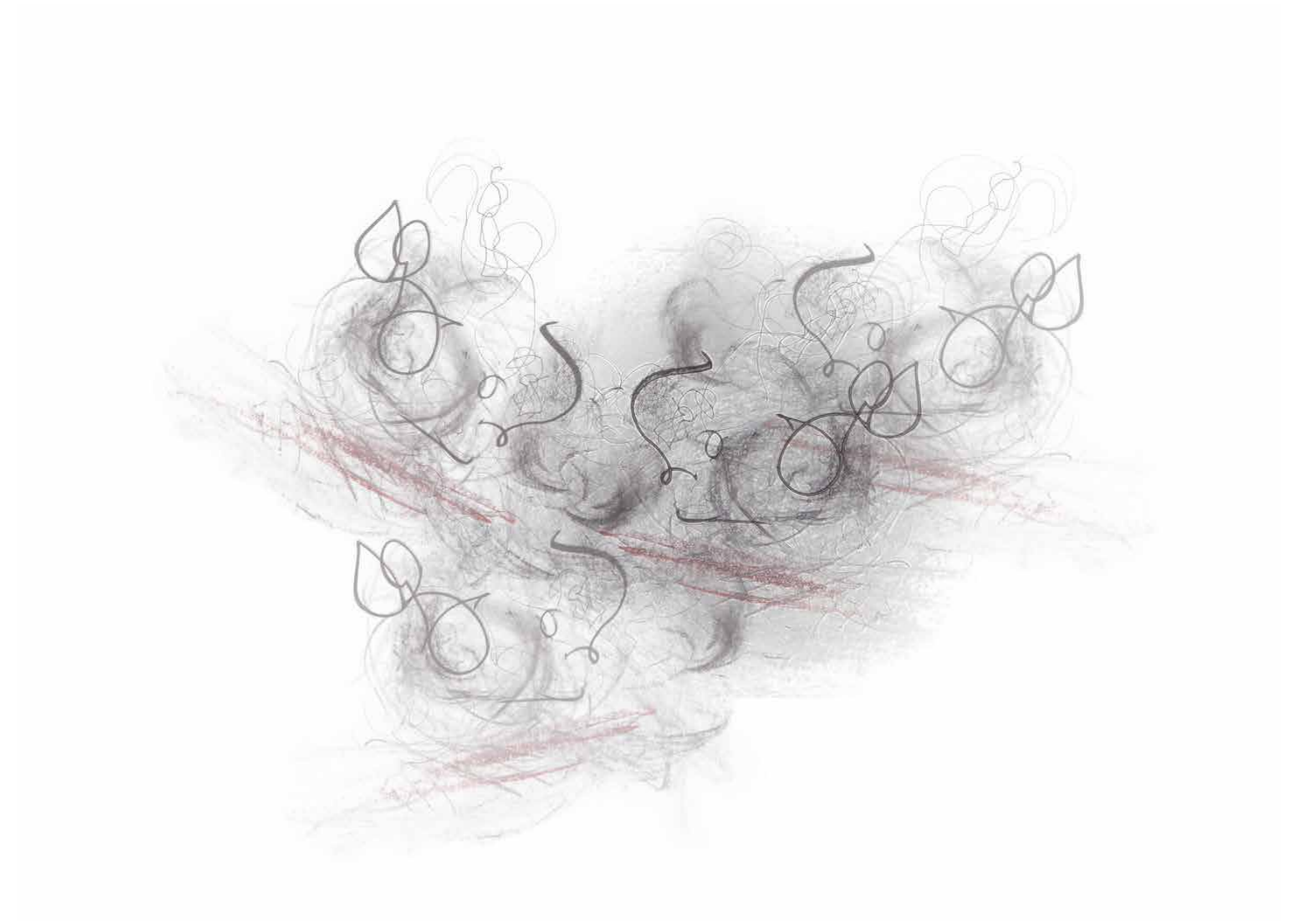






My efforts are thin and vaporous,  
never to match the complexity  
or beauty  
of what I see.

But I shall continue  
'til death do us part  
'til death do me part.











Trying to draw space, I stumble....

Wait....

I repeat myself.

I repeat myself  
again.

Words fail me.  
Words fail me yet again.

I study  
I look I look  
I study

attempting to understand.

But still I repeat myself  
again and again

though not quite exactly,  
not quite exactly as before,  
I think.

I shall evaporate.  
You shall evaporate.  
We shall evaporate.  
Like a cloud  
All edges gone.

Brahman.  
Yahweh.  
Holy Spirit, Wakhán Thánka.  
Unnameable unknowable.

Amen.

Amen.  
Amen.











/Mastomys  
#1

11/23