



UOA D32

ART AND DESIGN:
HISTORY, THEORY AND PRACTICE



RESEARCHER

Stuart Bennett

OUTPUT TITLE

Phantom Linn

OUTPUT TYPE

Exhibition

DATE

6 – 10 July 2017

FIG. 1

Stuart Bennett, *Template*,
pearwood, approximately
1000 x 400mm, July 2017. Image
courtesy of Harry Meadley.



01 / STATEMENT

The output was an exhibition at Dovecot Gallery, Edinburgh, 6 – 10 July 2017.

It was the result of a one-week group residency at the gallery, conceived as an experimental, collaborative practice-based research inquiry into drawing as a method of thinking.

The residency brought together eight international, university-based artists: Stuart Bennett (University of Edinburgh), Dean Hughes (Northumbria University), David Mackintosh (University of Central Lancashire), Kelly Chorpening (University of the Arts London), Rebecca Fortnum (Royal College of Art), Chloe Briggs (Paris College of Art), Mark Nagtzaam (Sint Lucas, Antwerp) and Veronique Devoldere (Paris College of Art).

The research interrogated the nature of drawing as a form of enquiry, observational tool and end in itself. It also explored the idea of a collective work. The artists – all teachers of drawing within different University settings – were particularly interested in exploring instructions for drawing as a means of prompting reflection on the often implicit values entailed in the pedagogy of drawing.

The residency was presented as a live studio environment, structured to encourage public engagement, and this semi-public, collective and participatory nature of the research space sought in part to recreate the environment of the art school. The gallery was used as studio, a conference room, a social space and an exhibition space. The artists designed, and Bennett constructed, a large scale, flexible framework that received the collaborative work as it was made, and functioned as the focus for dialogue and public engagement.

02 / RESEARCH DIMENSIONS



FIG. 2
Stuart Bennett, *Phantom Limn*,
installation. Image courtesy
of Dovecot Studios.

Phantom: 'an appearance without material substance, a dream image. *Limn*: to depict or describe in painting, drawing or words'.

The research was motivated by three broad objectives:

1. To develop new ways of practising drawing collaboratively, and investigate how this can generate new insights into the pedagogy of drawing – in particular with respect to the relation between instruction and process.
2. To challenge boundaries between drawing as a conceptual process and drawing as a means of public engagement that can participate in the demystification of contemporary art.
3. To explore the way in which collaborative studio practice can interrogate aspects of the art school experience, investing the space of the working environment to prompt reflection on the experience of learning.

The output is situated within the broad field of contemporary drawing practice – in particular, ideas around collaborative practice, relations between installation and drawing, and conceptual practices of drawing that centre on investigations of rules and process to interrogate drawing as an act of thinking. It also positions itself within recent investigations of installation, and examinations of how site can be expanded to challenge boundaries between conception and execution, collaboration and individual inquiry, audience participation and the production process, and public/private activity.

In its public nature, the residency was also a response to the specific site of the Dovecot – an established place of tapestry production, where the public can observe weavers at work. It was also a way of exploring the collective pedagogy of drawing, touching on aspects of the history of art education (such as the tradition of the observational drawing class as a collective studio activity) and deliberately setting up a contrast to the way most professional artists work after art school.

The eight artists worked alongside each other during the duration of the residency, making drawings at once fuelled by their own research interests and responsive to the work of others. Bennett's works were driven by an interest in the value of using anachronistic drawing tools intended for accuracy in a digital age when exactitude is easily attainable through other means.

A particular reference for the research was the work of the late 1960s-early 1970s French group 'Supports/Surfaces', who explored a deconstructed approach to practice and exhibition sites. Another key reference was the 2009 'manual' *Support Structures* (Céline Condorelli (ed.) Sternberg Press) which examined the concept of 'support' from interdisciplinary perspectives, including the way existing spaces can be repurposed to inspire transformations of practice. Inspired by this work, *Phantom Limn* interrogated drawings as 'supporting' objects of knowledge.

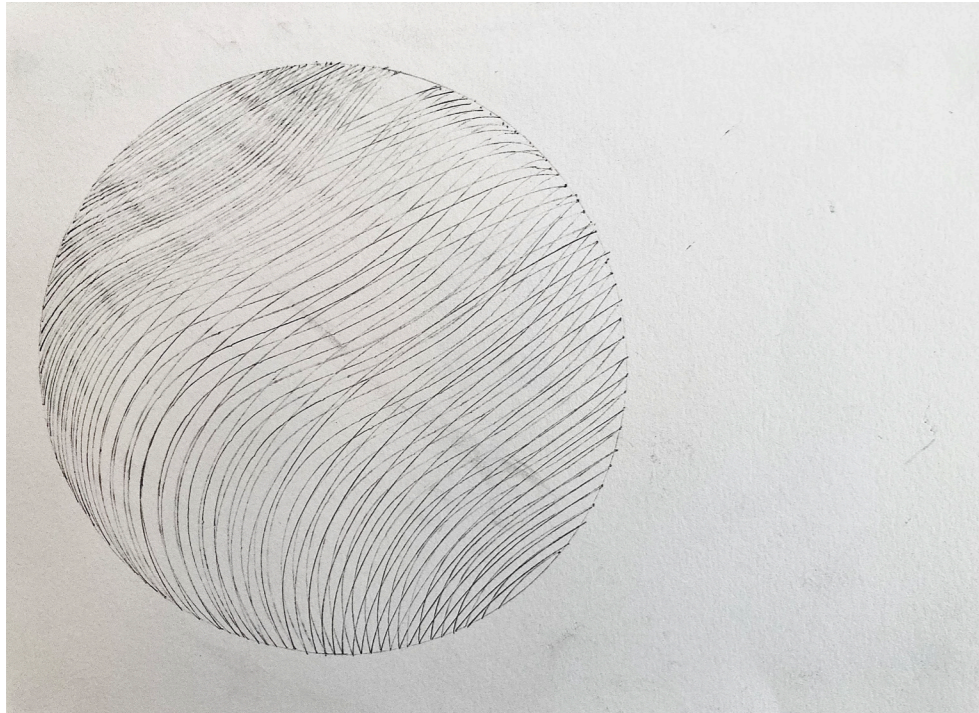


FIG. 3
Stuart Bennett, *Untitled* (pencil on paper), 210 x 150mm, July 2017.
Photo Stuart Bennett.

FIG. 4
Stuart Bennett, *Untitled* (pencil on paper), 210 x 150mm, July 2017.
Photo Stuart Bennett.

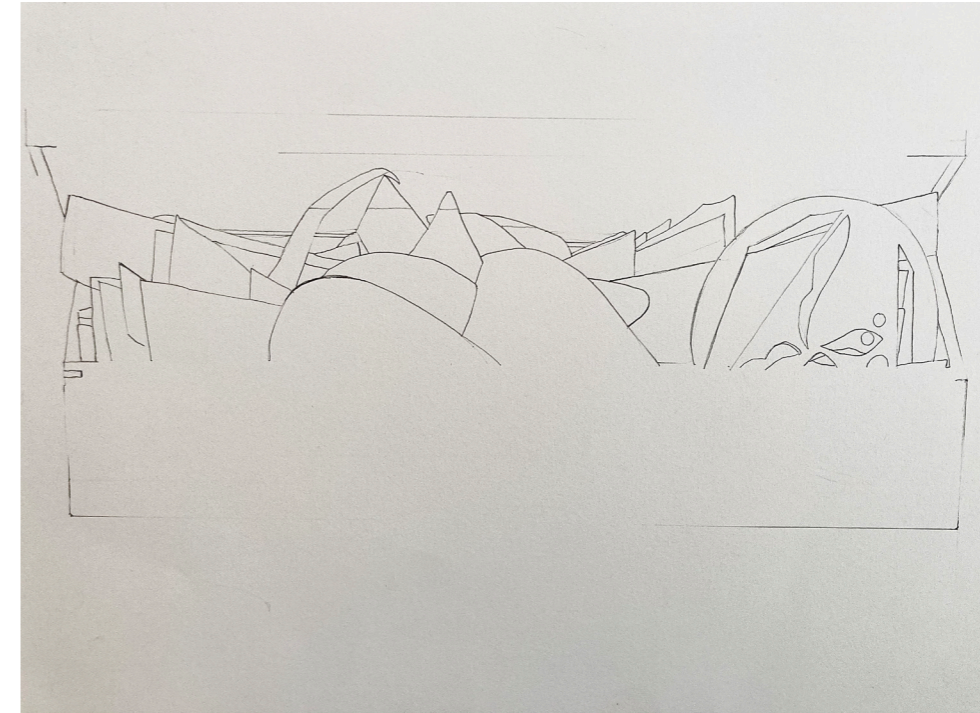
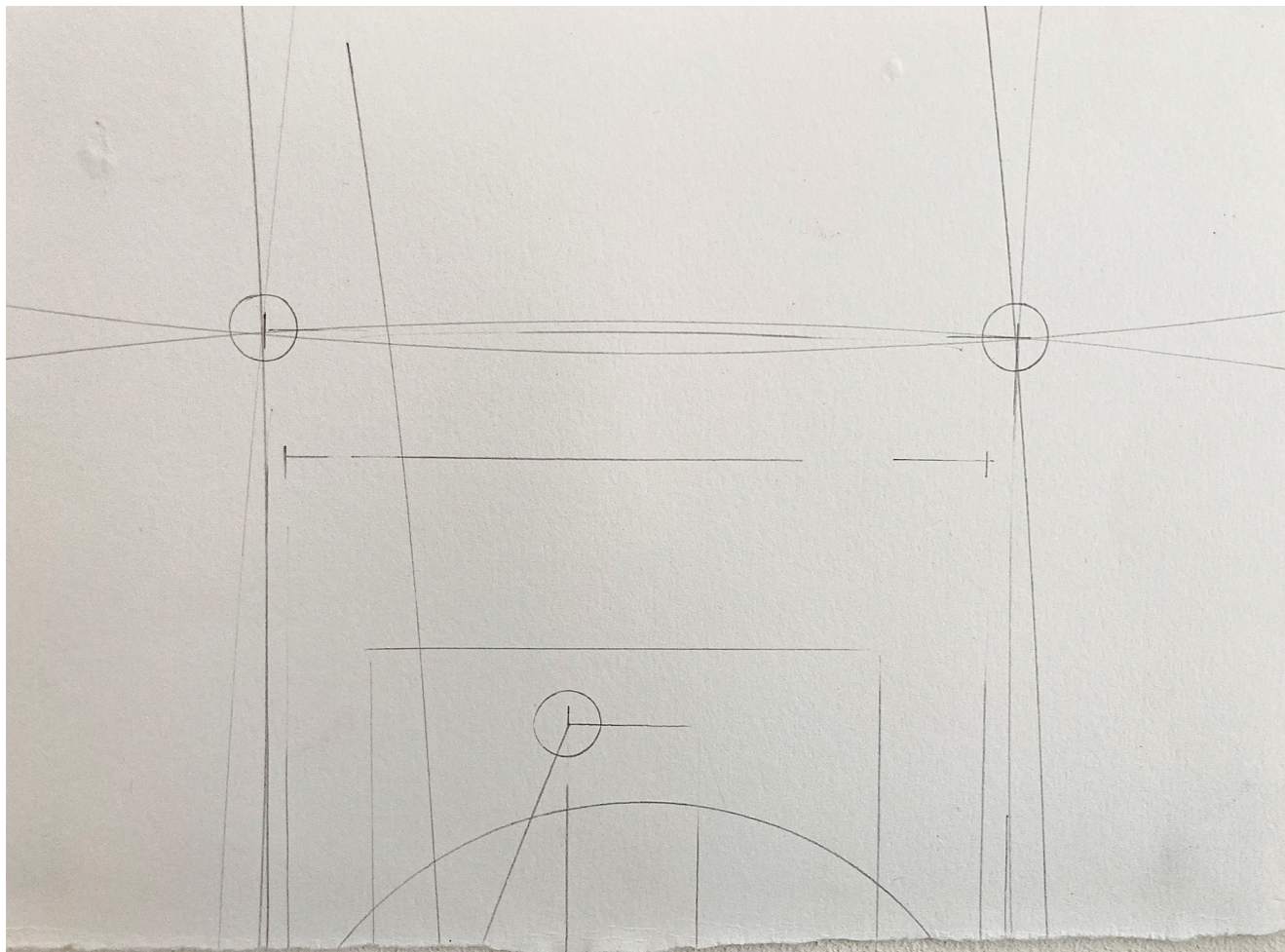
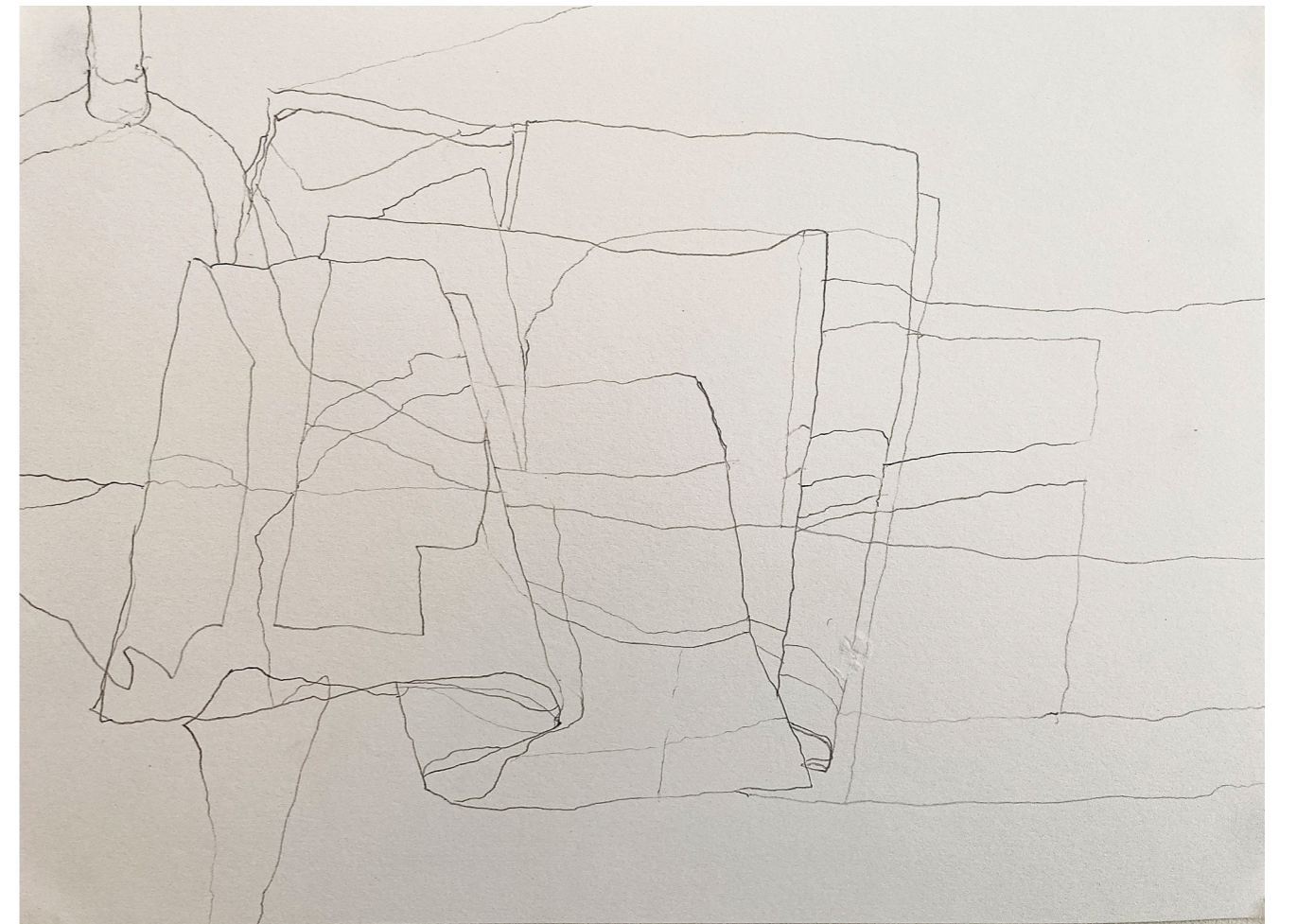


FIG. 5
Stuart Bennett, *Untitled* (pencil on paper), 420 x 290mm, July 2017.
Photo Stuart Bennett.

FIG. 6
Stuart Bennett, *Untitled* (pencil on paper), 300 x 210mm, July 2017.
Photo Stuart Bennett.



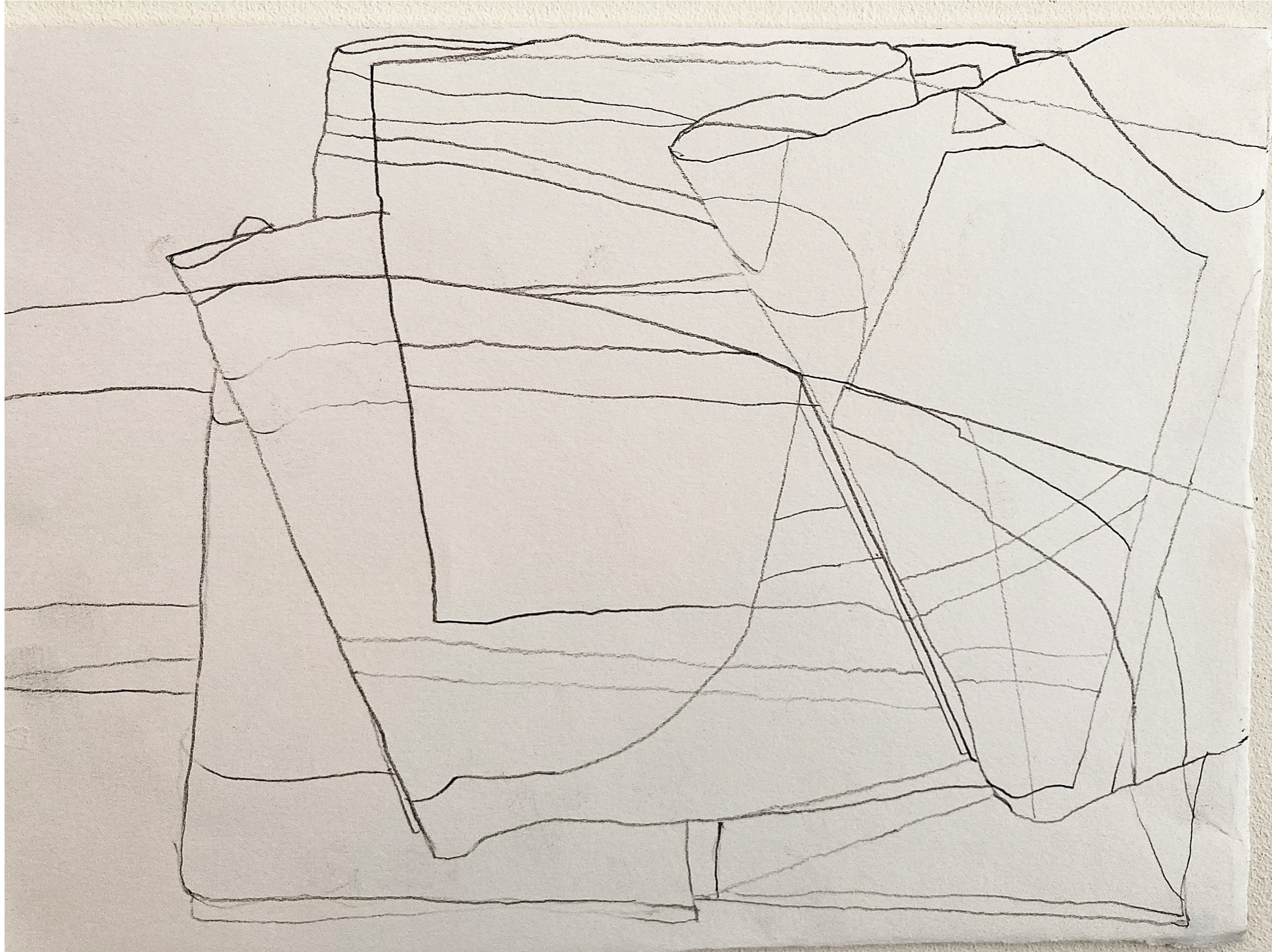


FIG. 7
Stuart Bennett, *Untitled* (pencil on paper), 300 x 210mm, July 2017.
Photo Stuart Bennett.

FIG. 8
Stuart Bennett, *Untitled* (pencil on paper), 300 x 210mm, July 2017.
Photo Stuart Bennett.

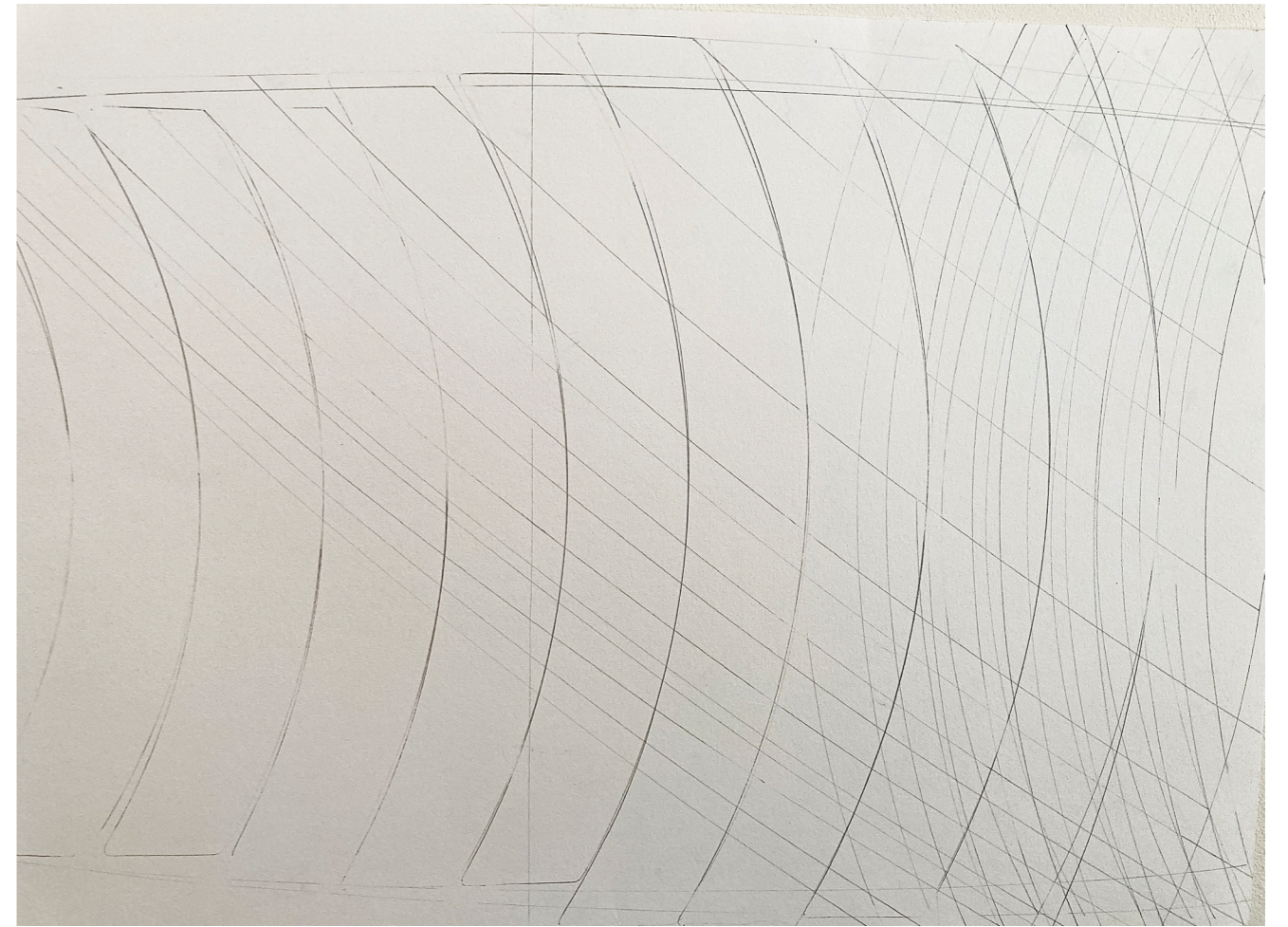
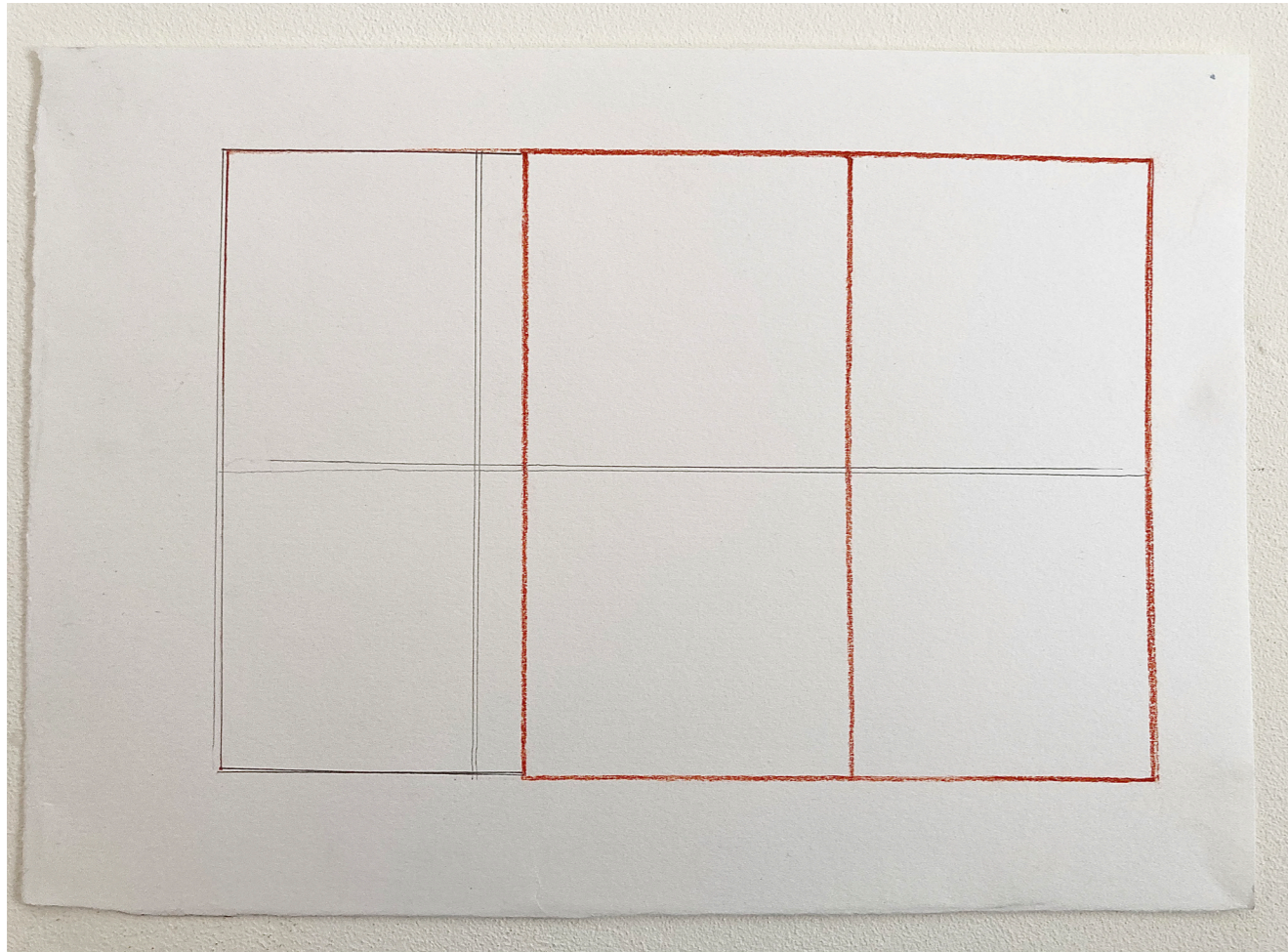


FIG. 9
Stuart Bennett, *Untitled* (pencil on paper), 420 x 300mm, July 2017.
Photo Stuart Bennett.



FIG. 10
Stuart Bennett, *Untitled* (pencil on paper), 300 x 420mm, July 2017.
Photo Stuart Bennett.

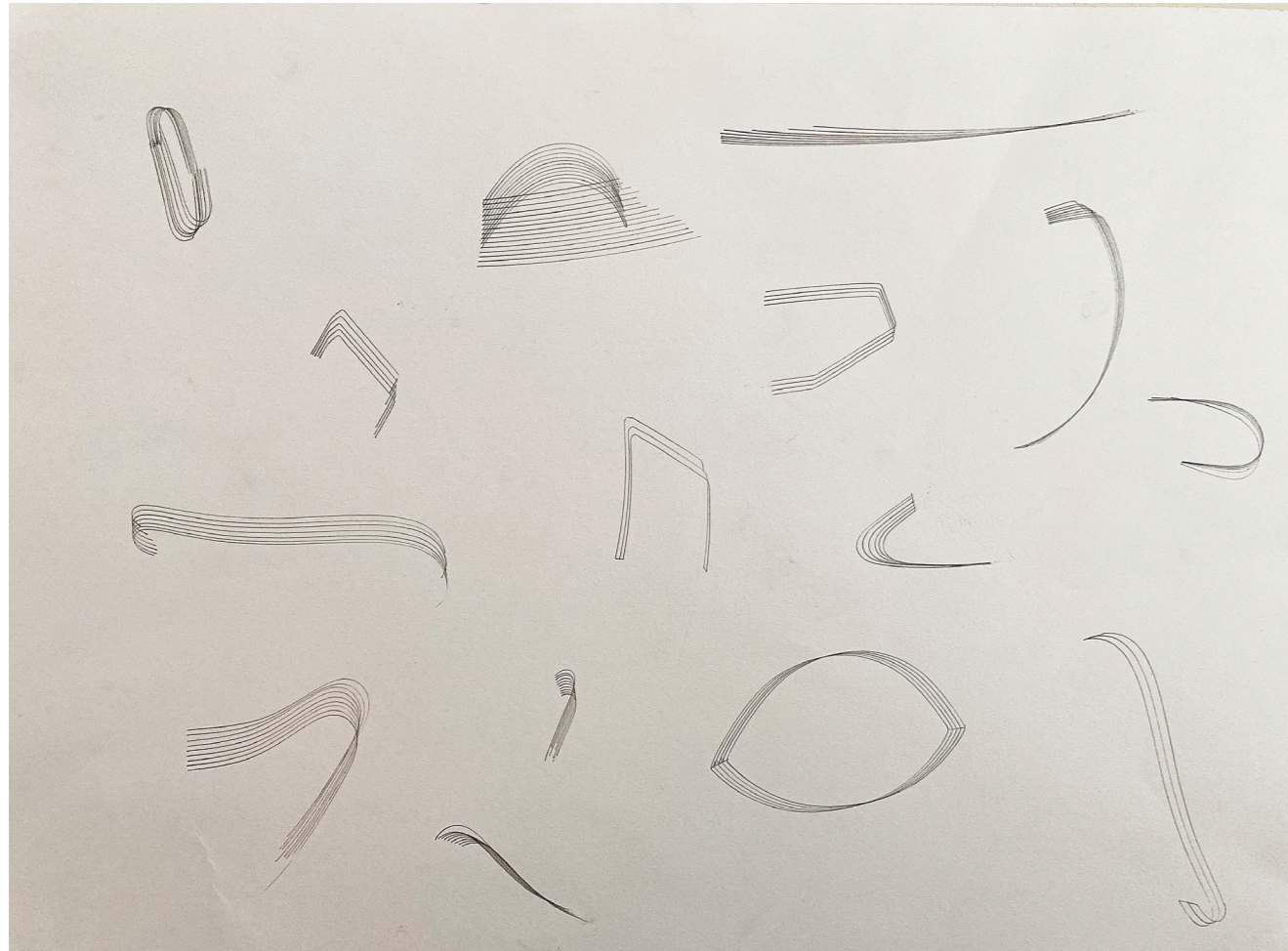


FIG. 11
Stuart Bennett, *Untitled* (pencil on paper), 600 x 420mm, July 2017.
Photo Stuart Bennett.

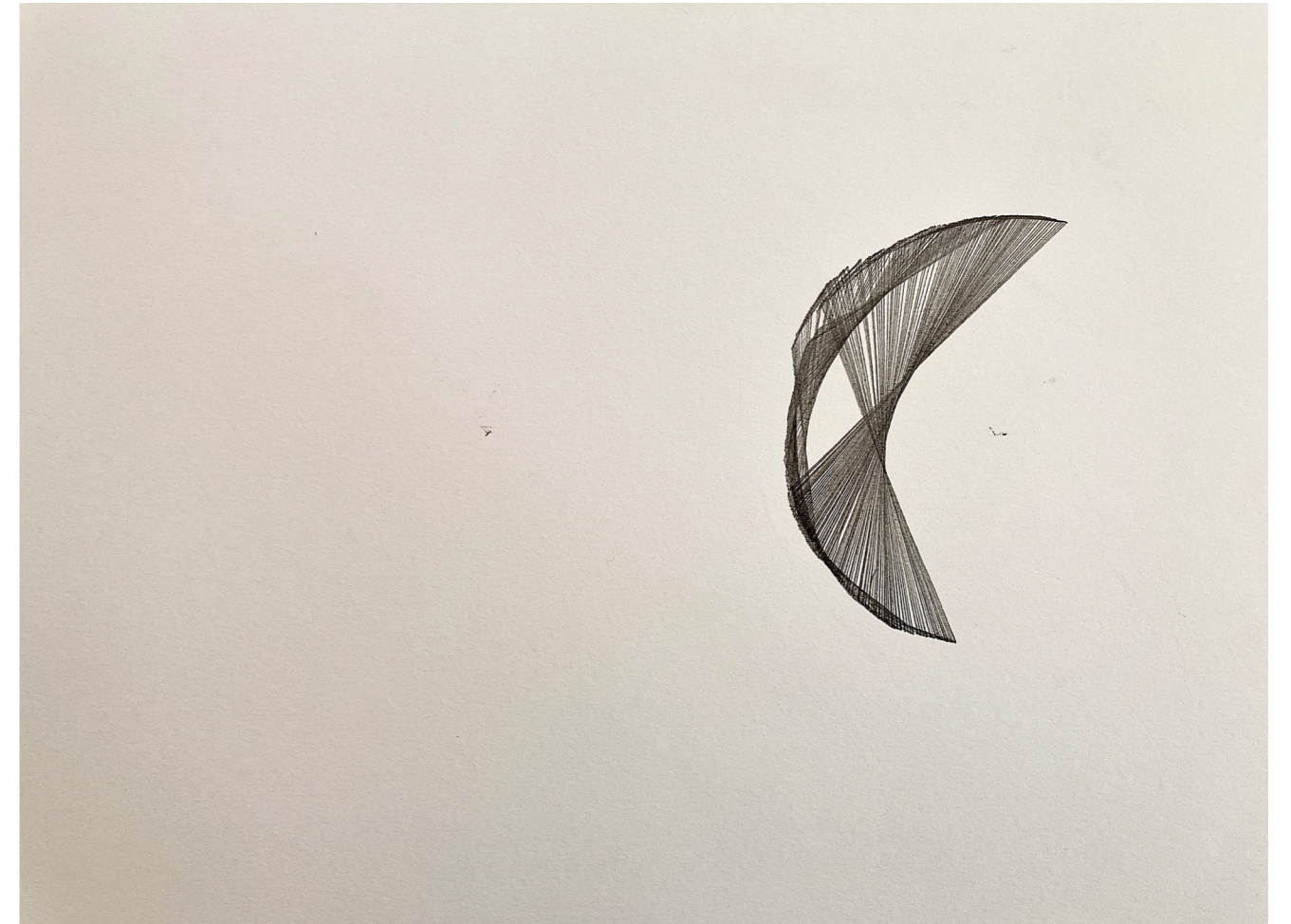


FIG. 12
Stuart Bennett, *Untitled* (pencil on paper), 600 x 420mm, July 2017.
Photo Stuart Bennett.

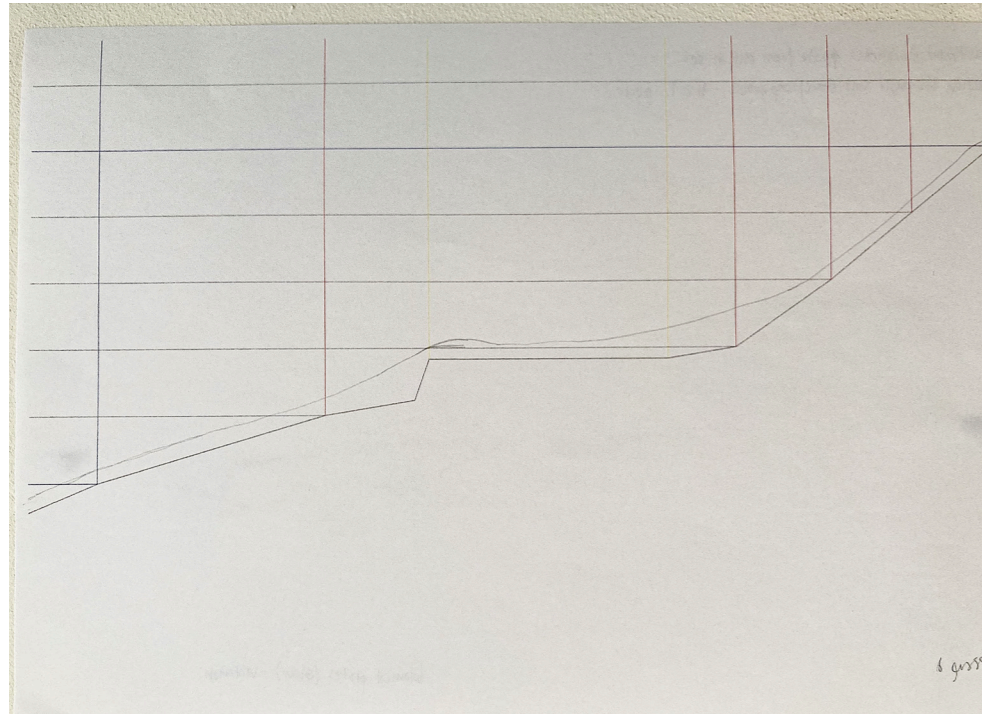


FIG. 13
 Stuart Bennett, *Untitled* (pencil on paper), 300 x 210mm, July 2017.
 Photo Stuart Bennett.

FIG. 14
 Stuart Bennett, *Untitled* (pencil on paper), 300 x 210mm, July 2017.
 Photo Stuart Bennett.

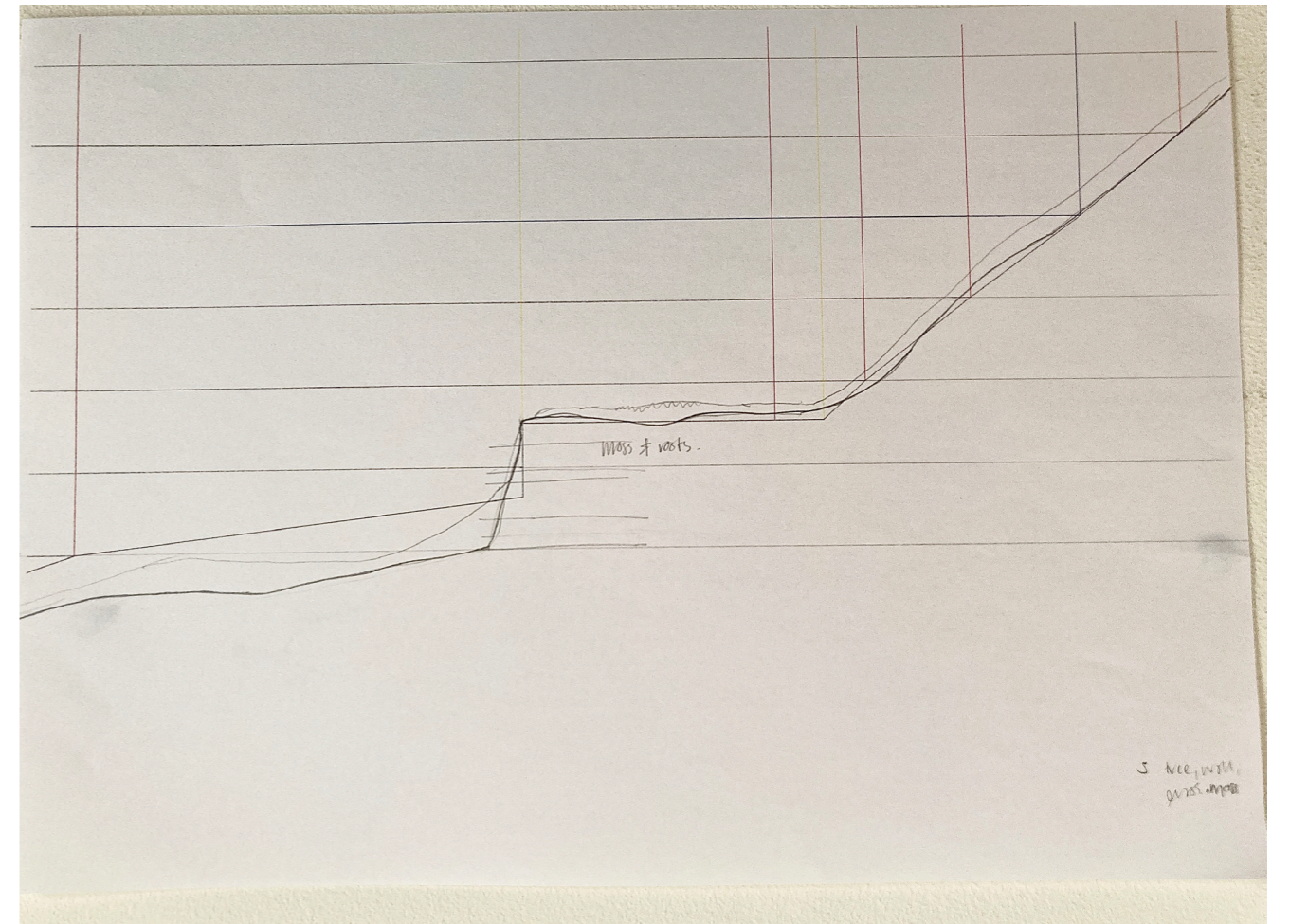
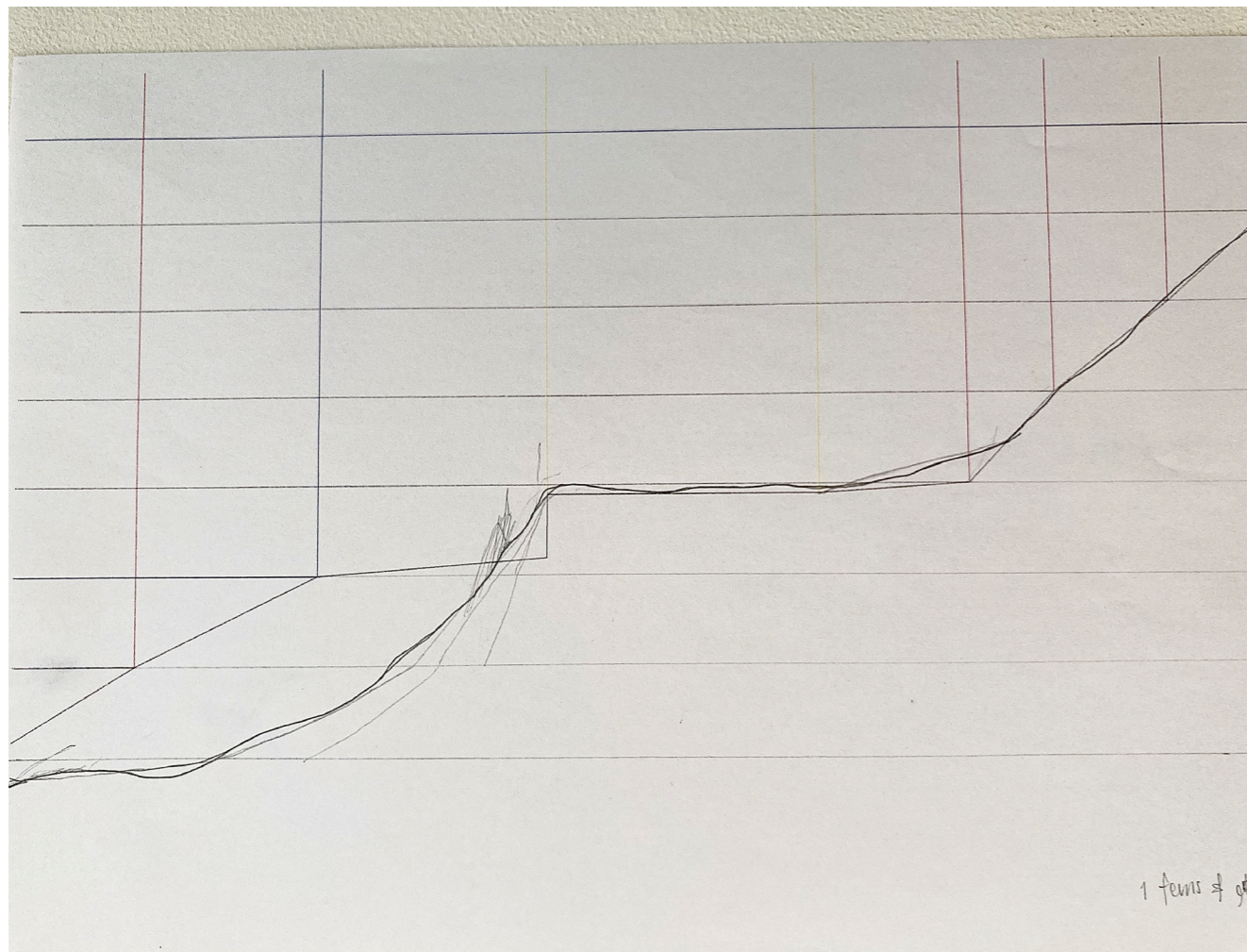


FIG. 15
 Stuart Bennett, *Untitled* (pencil on paper), 300 x 210mm, July 2017.
 Photo Stuart Bennett.

FIG. 16
Stuart Bennett, *Untitled* (pencil on
paper), 420 x 300mm, July 2017.
Photo Stuart Bennett.



FIG. 17
Stuart Bennett, *Pearwood Curve*
230mm x 36mm, July 2017.
Photo Stuart Bennett.



03 / ORIGINALITY

Despite the many advances and transformations over the past few decades, it is still customary for the relation between practice, installation and exhibition presentation to be treated as distinct, successive stages.

Phantom Limn set out to interrogate and challenge this norm by bringing together production, installation and public exhibition as a simultaneous, extended event. This contributed new knowledge about the potential of drawing practices as collaborative inquiry both in terms of practice research and pedagogical research. This is important because drawing continues to be a key element of contemporary art practice and fine art teaching – one whose relevance to post-conceptual fine art education nevertheless remains underdeveloped.

The residency invested drawing as a means of challenging habitual studio practice. Here, the eight artists worked in close proximity, making work fuelled by their independent research interests whilst maintaining a responsiveness to the work of others.

In addition the gaze of a public audience, and their interjections and queries, further 'exteriorised' what is often a very interior way of working. This was an unsettling experience that in turn enabled a clearer understanding of the dynamics of the shared studio context of the artschool. The imposition of these predetermined rules and conditions of practice brought a level of focus and rigour to reflections on the ontology of the artwork with respect to dynamics of process, production and presentation.



FIG. 18
Stuart Bennett, residency activity
at Dovecot Studios. Image courtesy
of Kelly Chorpeneing.



FIG. 19
Bennett's drawing tools. Image
courtesy of Veronique Devoldere.



FIG. 20
Phantom Linn, installation shot.
 Image courtesy of Veronique
 Devoldere.

04 / RIGOUR

The concept of the residency developed through the groups' longstanding discussion about drawing through academic engagement.

It was further shaped when the group were invited to exhibit by Dovecote curator Kate Grenyer who set the brief to produce a collaborative, public-facing project. The work responded to the Dovecot itself, where international collaboration and making is at the heart of its activities

In advance of the residency, the artists generated keywords related to their own practices of drawing, which were then circulated. These words produced a group lexicon that was in turn invested as communal source material for the drawings produced. The words served as linguistic prompts for the drawings made in the residency and this circulation of language and visual form was key to sustaining the idea of a collaborative work as a flow of images. Bennett's keywords were 'apprehension, attune, gauge, heuristic, residue' and ordered as a sequence that can indicate the stages of making.

As the work was made it was displayed on a temporary sculptural framework that could support an evolving installation. The group designed and constructed the framework in response to the Dovecot's tapestry frames as well as their research into the work of 'Support Structures' and 'Supports/Surfaces'.

The artists continually edited and responded to each other's work, enabling visual and conceptual correspondences between their drawings to manifest through the daily-changing selection and display. This method initiated new insights into the flow of ideas and perceptions that manifest during the making process and their impact on the artefacts produced.

The research proceeded as a dynamic process of interrogation through collaboration and rule making. This involved demarcating distinct periods of time for making, discourse, installing, public engagement, and collective reflection.

The group's interest in collaborative studio practice as a way of interrogating art school environments and learning processes was in part prompted by the group's interest in Benson Snyder's 1973 book *Hidden Curriculum* which advanced a thesis that campus conflict and student anxiety is caused by unstated academic and social norms. This interest was developed at an international Fine Art educators conference at which both Hughes and Bennett presented. (*PARADOX: Alternative Zones: Uncovering the Official and the Unofficial in Fine Art Practice, Research and Education*: Poznan 2015).

The ongoing interaction with the public was facilitated by the employment of Fine Art students as invigilators, who were tasked daily with sharing information about the artist's working processes – thus rendering often private activities overtly public, and indeed, questioning the boundaries between individual and collective creative processes.

DAVID	REBECCA	KELLY	DEAN	STUART	CHLOÉ	VÉRONIQUE	MARC
Subconscious	identity	surface-support	Ersatz	Apprehension	Impulsive	Counting	Some
Tragicomic	solipsism	slapstick	Simple	Attune	Botanic	Resonance	Over
Irreverence	gaze	defiance	Meliorate	Gauge	Domestic	absence	Vlak
Bathetic	unknown	illusion	Quotidian	Heuristic	searching	Traces	surplus
Wonder	time	heritage	Dwelling	Residue	sinewy	erased	reissue

FIG. 21
Phantom Linn, and table of
 keywords, June 2017.
 See Appendix, page 34 for
 link to animation.

05 / SIGNIFICANCE



FIG. 22
Installation frames with work in progress. Photo Stuart Bennett.

The residency was an invitation from the Dovecot exhibitions curator Kate Grenyer, who approached the group on the basis of their previous engagement with rule-based collaborative processes.

Grenyer was interested in how the group could convert the gallery space from a space of display to a place of research, production and public engagement, as well as notions of artistic interpretation and transformation that could respond to Dovecot's veritable tradition of tapestry.

Established in 1912, Dovecot is an important centre for contemporary art, craft and design.

The significance of the output lies in its repositioning of the relationships between artists, artwork and audience, through facilitating a spontaneous forum where making and discourse occur simultaneously.

This residency generated a follow up exhibition, *Elephant*, Espace F15, Paris College of Art 23 October – 4 November, 2017, with the following artists: Helen Barff, Stuart Bennett, Ivo Boncorsi, Chloe Briggs, Kelly Chorpening, Daniel Clarke, Veronique Devoldere, Rejean Dorval, Rebecca Fortnum, Kate Grenyer, Benjamin Hochart, Dean Hughes, Corinne Laroche, David Mackintosh, Marc Nagtzaam, Marine Pages, Diogo Pimentao, Alys Scott-Hawkins, Thorsten Streichardt, Eric Vernhes and Saskia Weyts. See Appendix page 34.

This exhibition extended the concept of rule based collaborative drawing practice.

FIG. 23
Installation view. Image courtesy
of Veronique Devoldere.



FIG. 25
Installation view. Image courtesy
of Veronique Devoldere.



FIG. 24
Public engagement image. Image
courtesy of Veronique Devoldere.



FIG. 26
Public engagement image. Image
courtesy of Veronique Devoldere.



FIG. 27
Vernissage image. Image courtesy
of Veronique Devoldere.



FIG. 28
Exhibition image. Image courtesy
of Veronique Devoldere.

06 / APPENDIX

Elephant exhibition, Paris

<https://www.paris.edu/elephant-exhibition-at-pcas-espace-f15/>

Animation

https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/t/1_7o70xmhb



FIG. 29
 Phantom Limn, *Elephant*, Paris
 College of Art, exhibition poster.
 Image courtesy of Chloe Briggs.

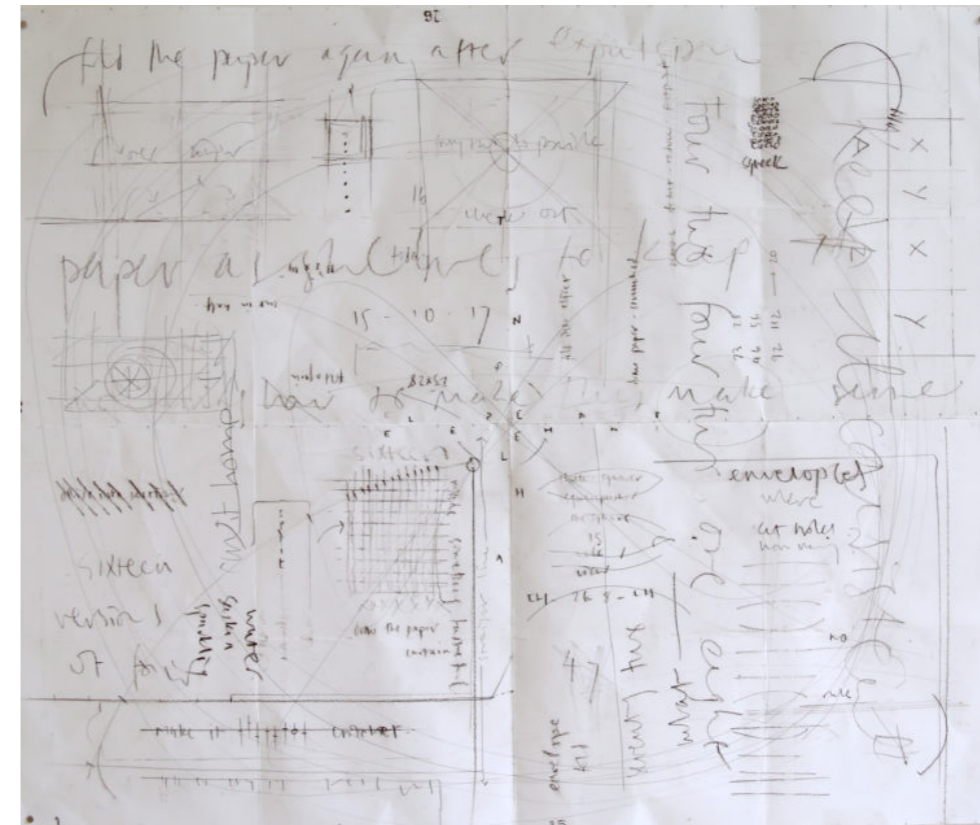


FIG. 30
 Stuart Bennett *Untitled* (pencil on
 Elephant paper) 584.2 x 711.2mm.
 Phantom Limn, *Elephant*, Paris
 College of Art, 2017. Image
 courtesy of Chloe Briggs.



FIG. 31
 Installation shot, *Phantom Limn*,
Elephant, Paris College of Art, 2017.
 Image courtesy of Chloe Briggs.



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art

ISBN: 978-1-83645-008-5
DOI: 10.2218/ED.9781836450085

All text in this portfolio is under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence. This means you are free to share and adapt this content provided you give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made.

All images in this portfolio are All Rights Reserved. This means the authors retain copyright over original work and it is not permitted to copy or redistribute these images.

May 2020

The University of Edinburgh
is a charitable body, registered
in Scotland, with registration
number SC005336.

www.eca.ed.ac.uk
