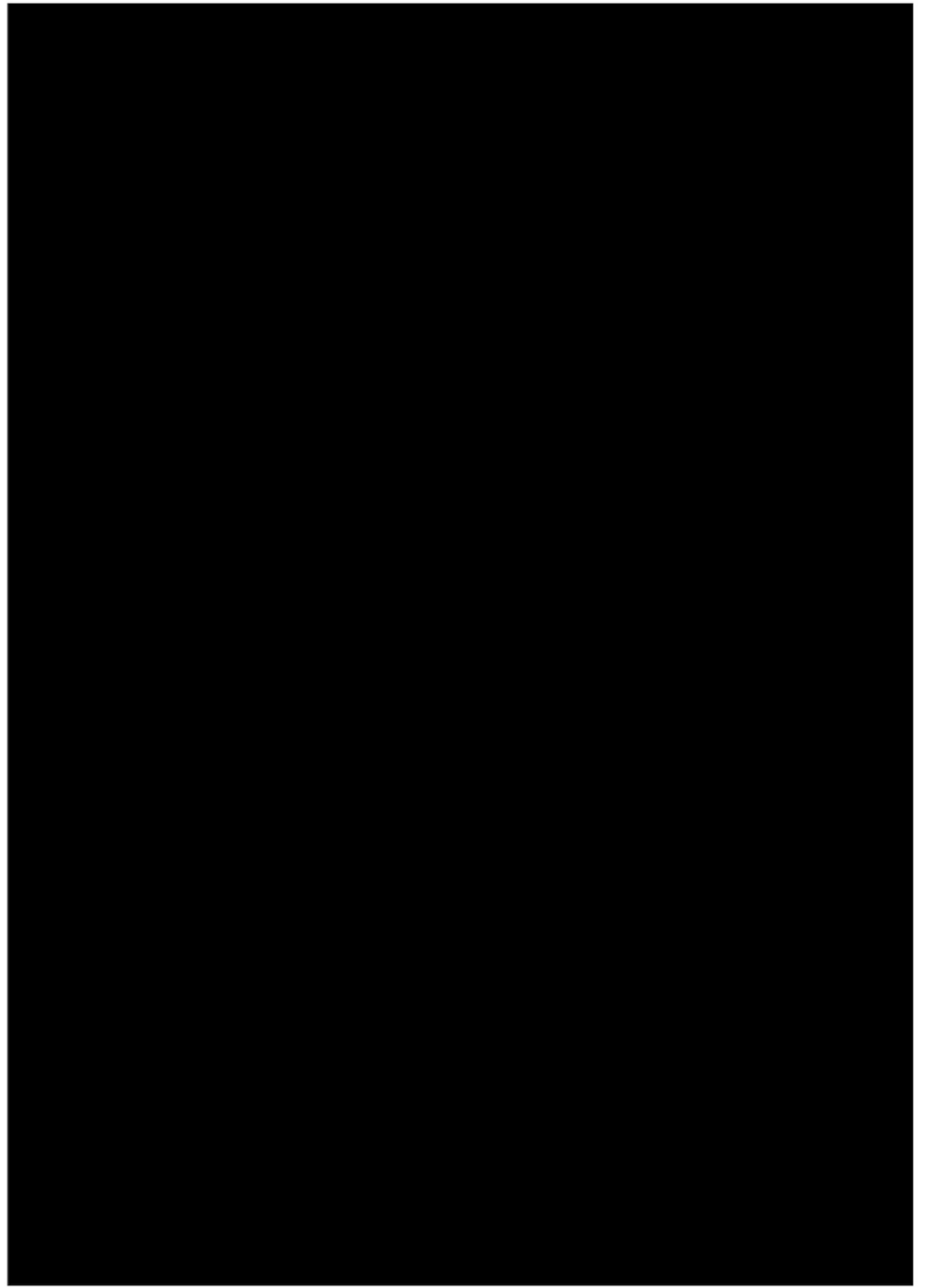
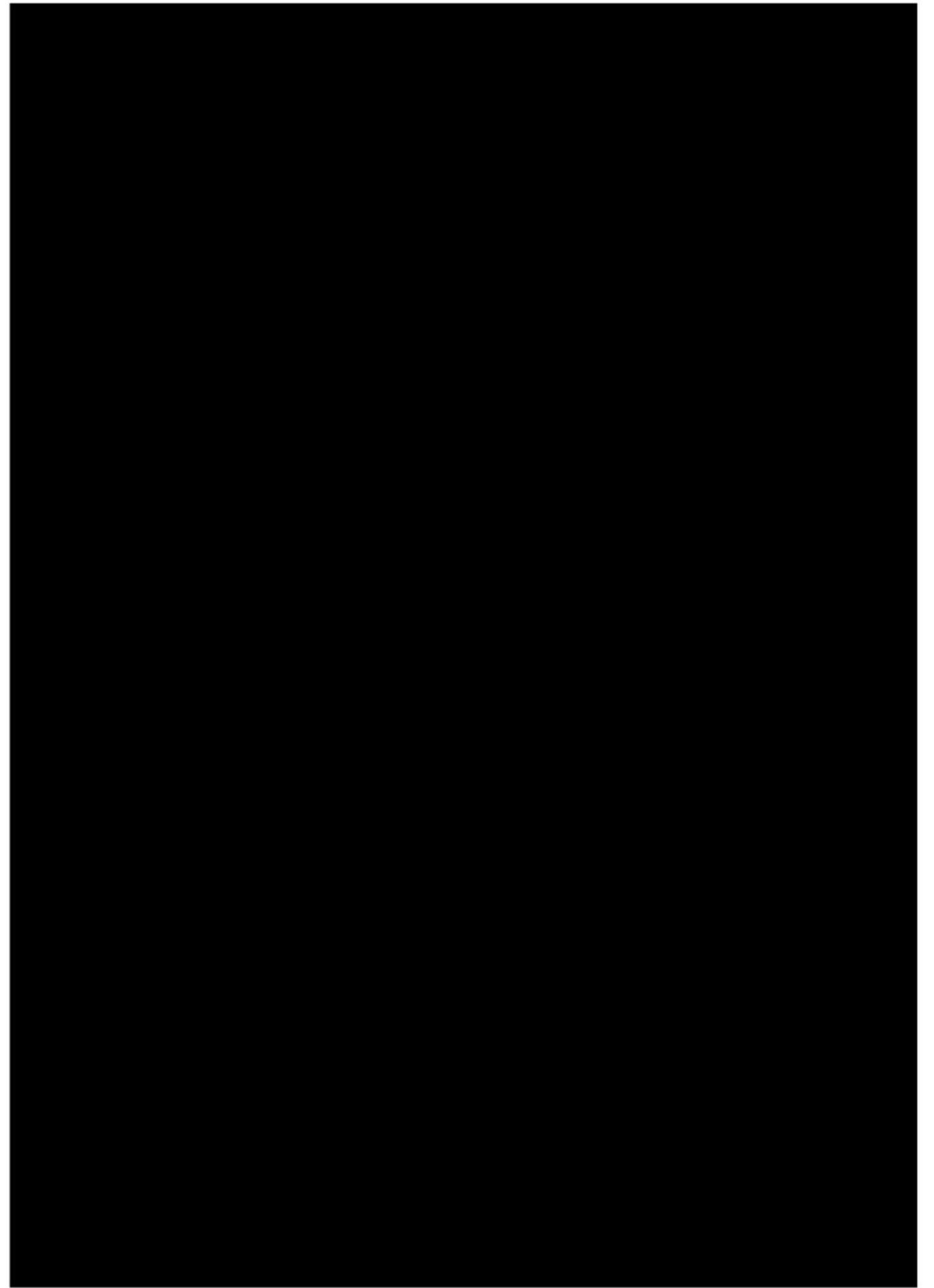
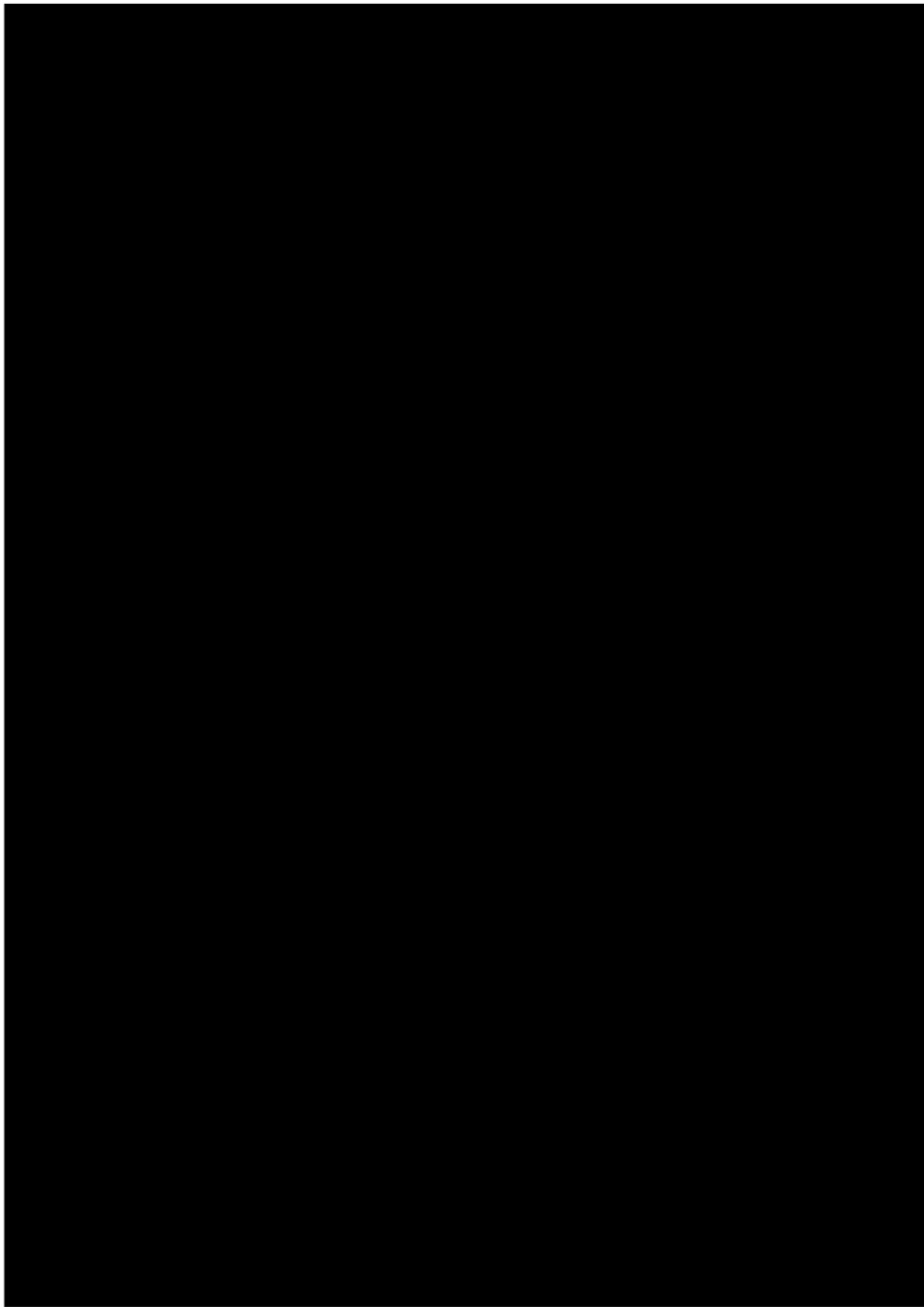


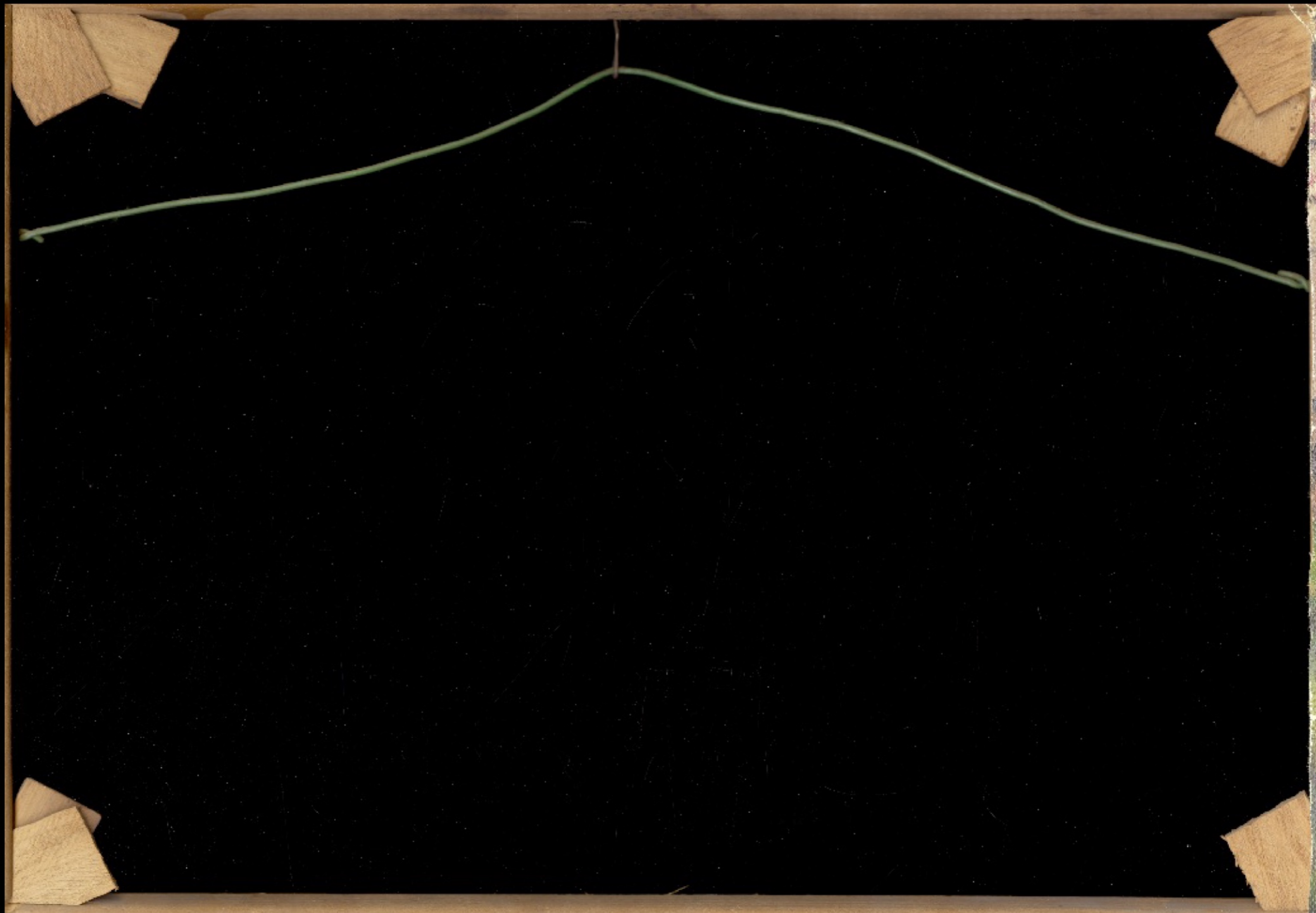


PULSE
BUT NOW / YET / AGAIN

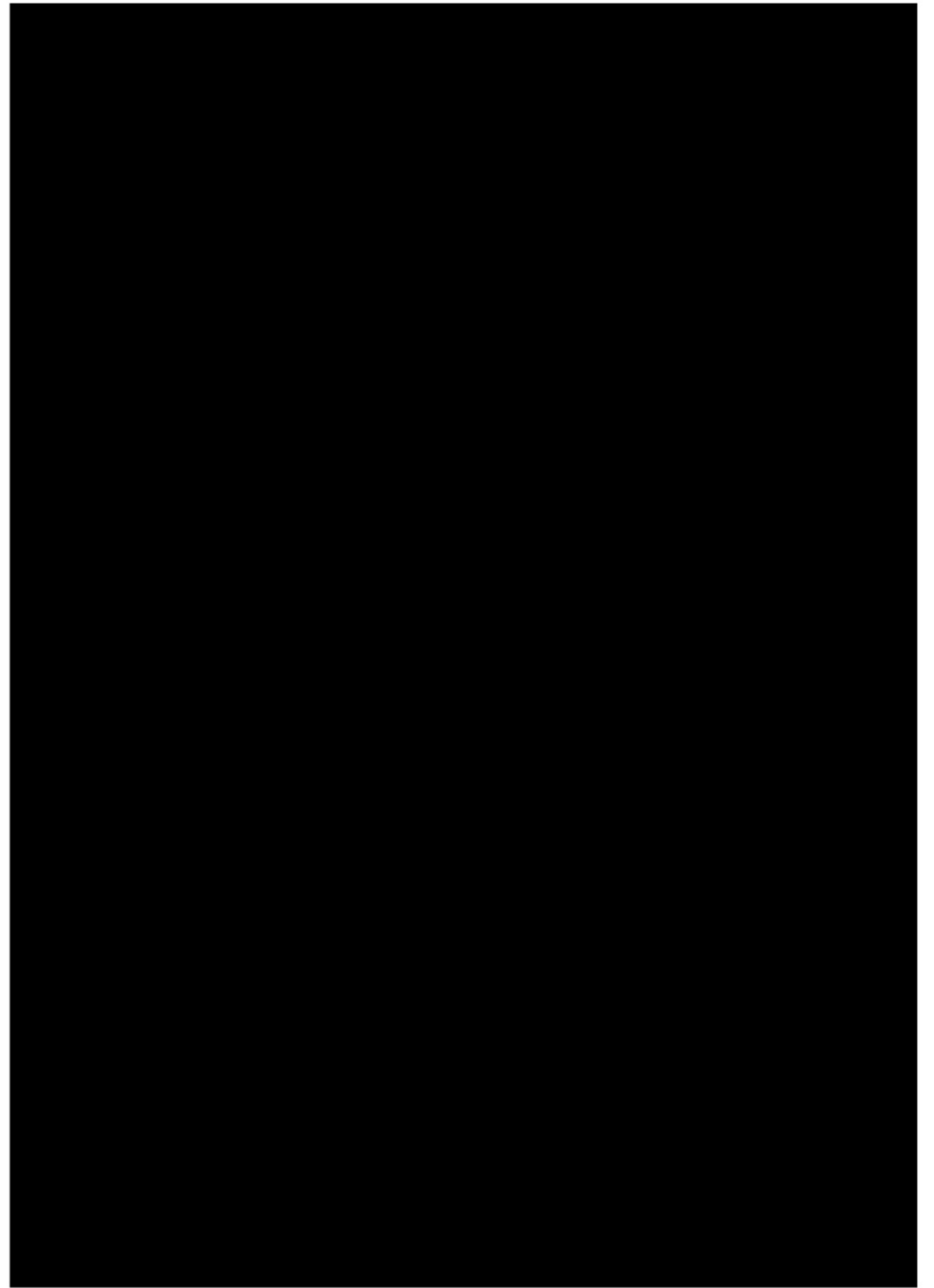
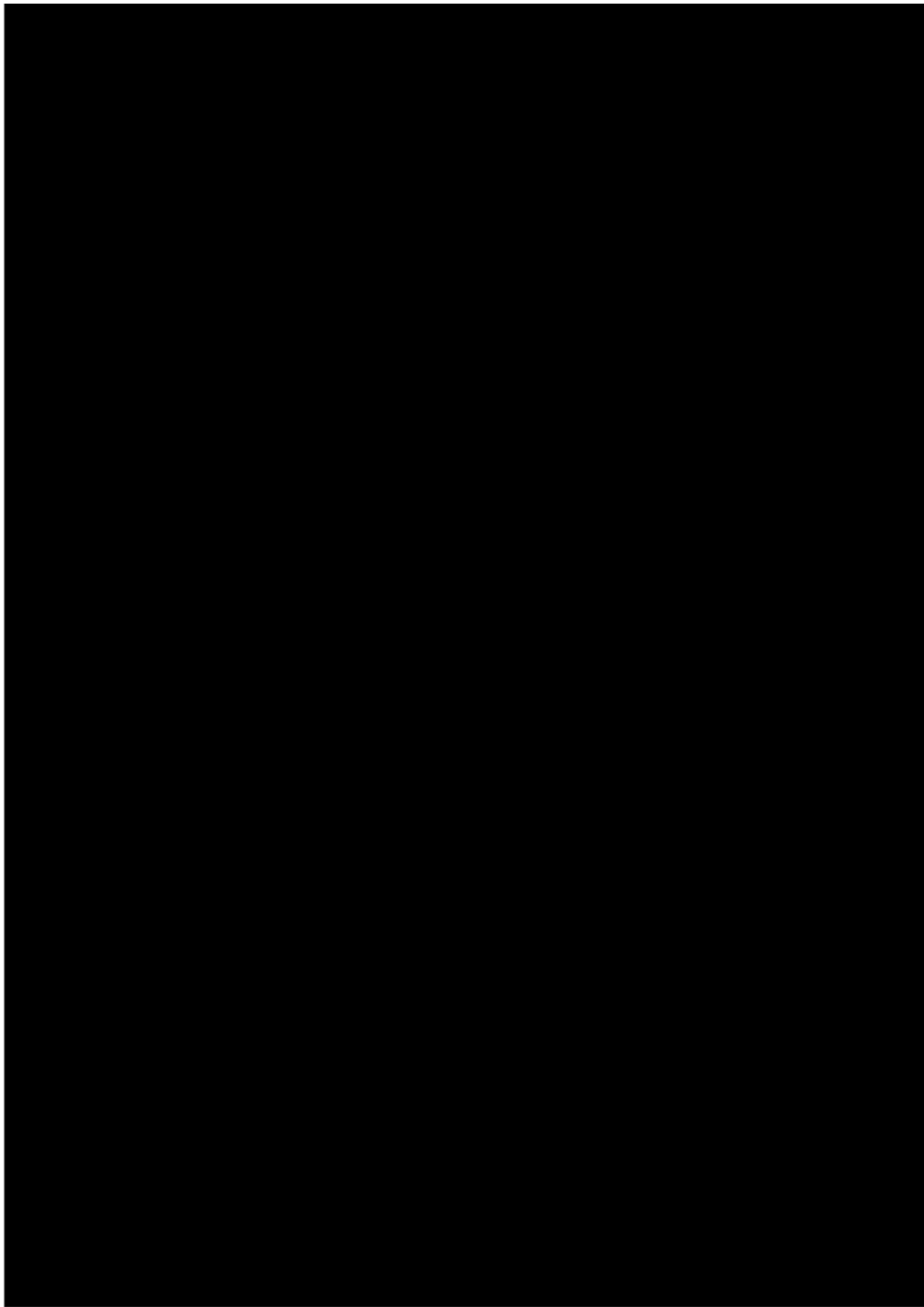
MattievanderWorm
2017

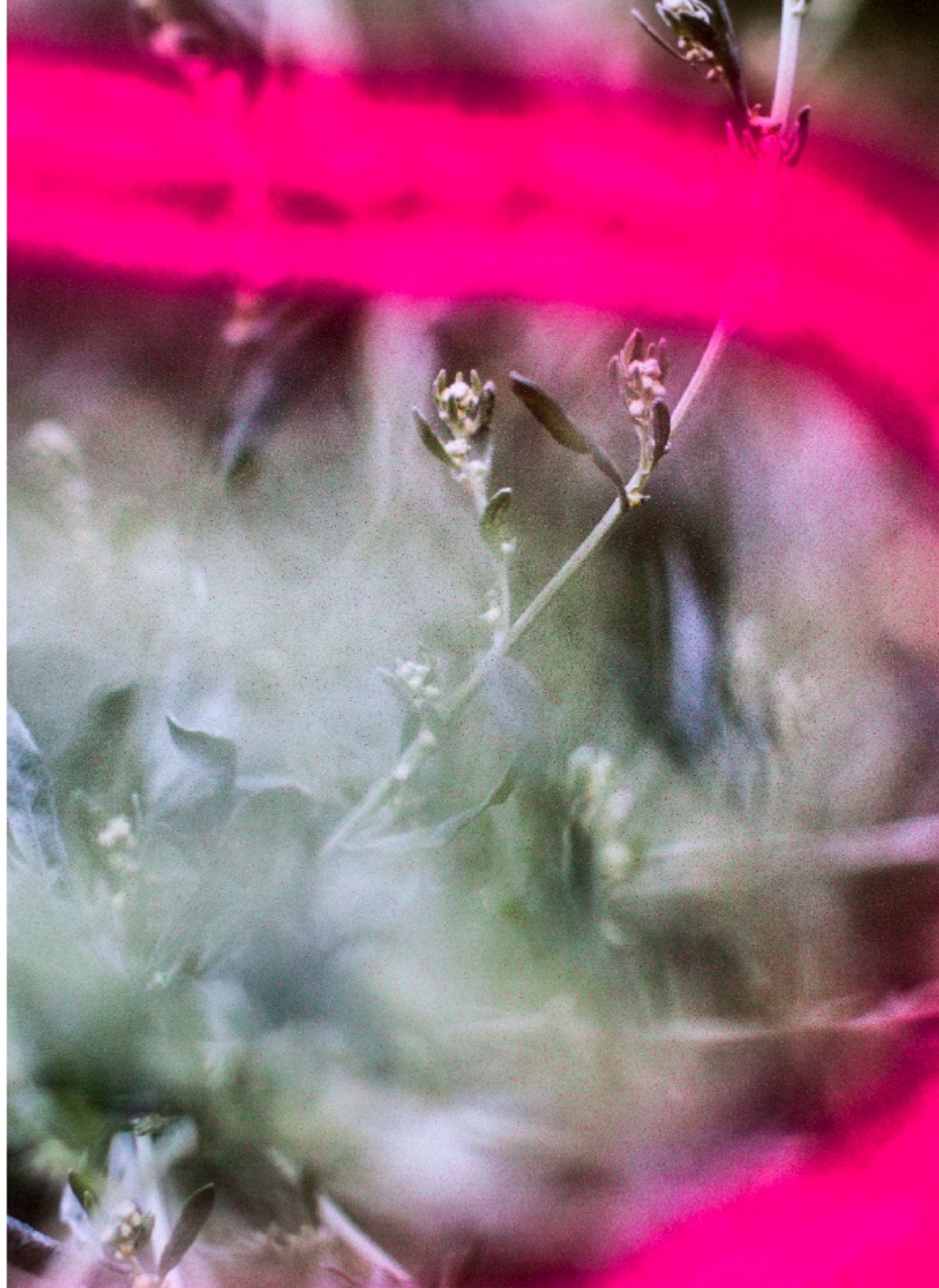


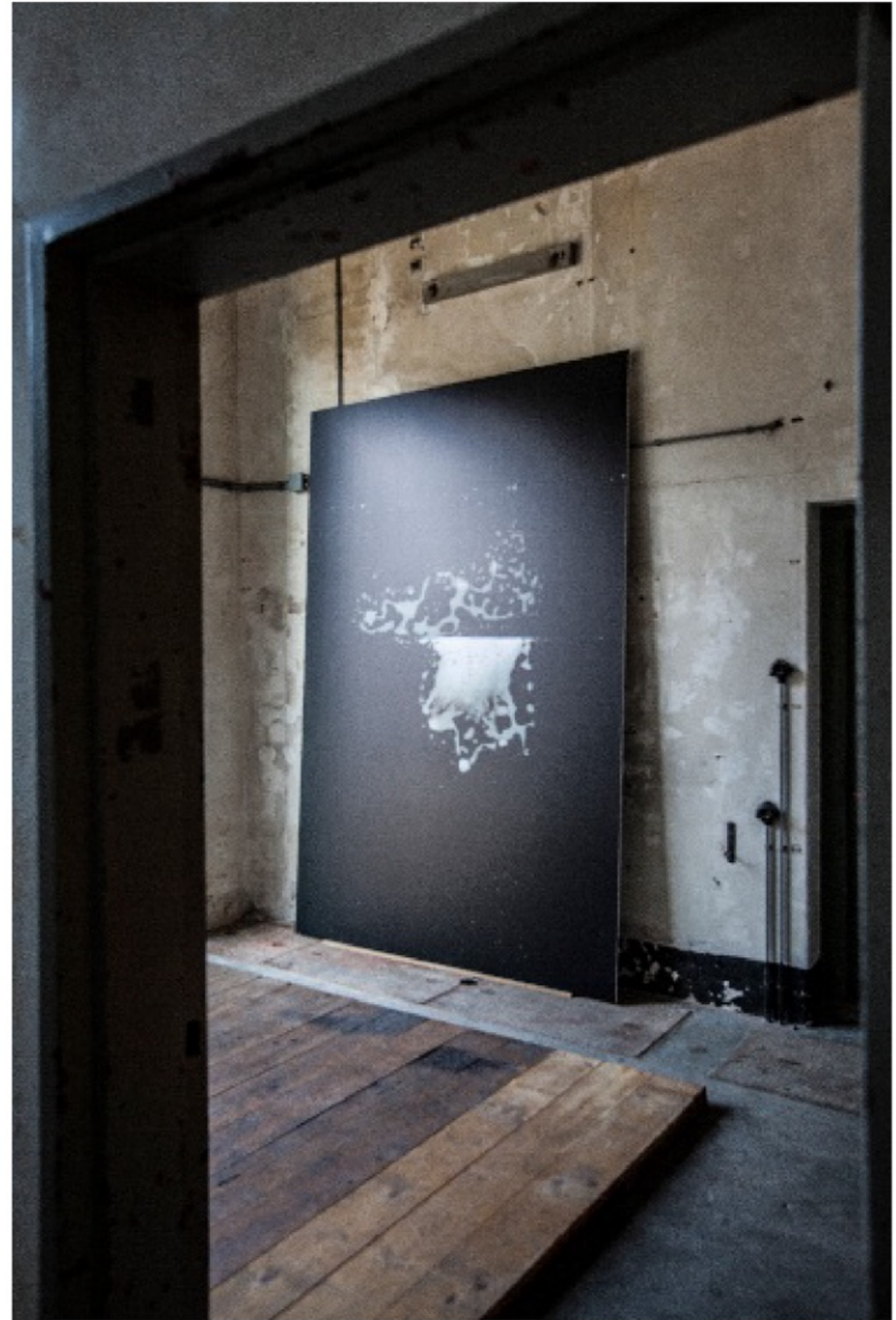
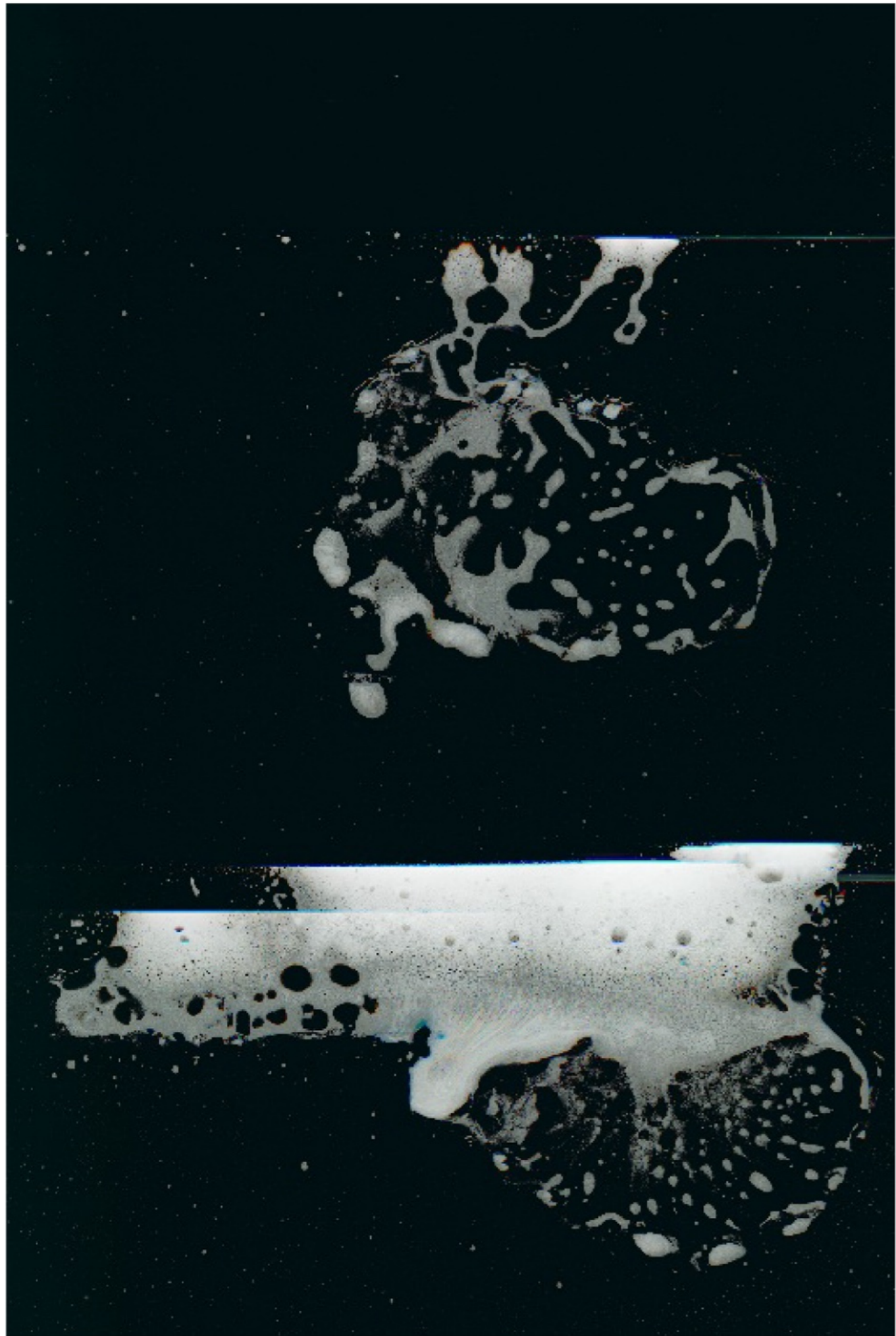




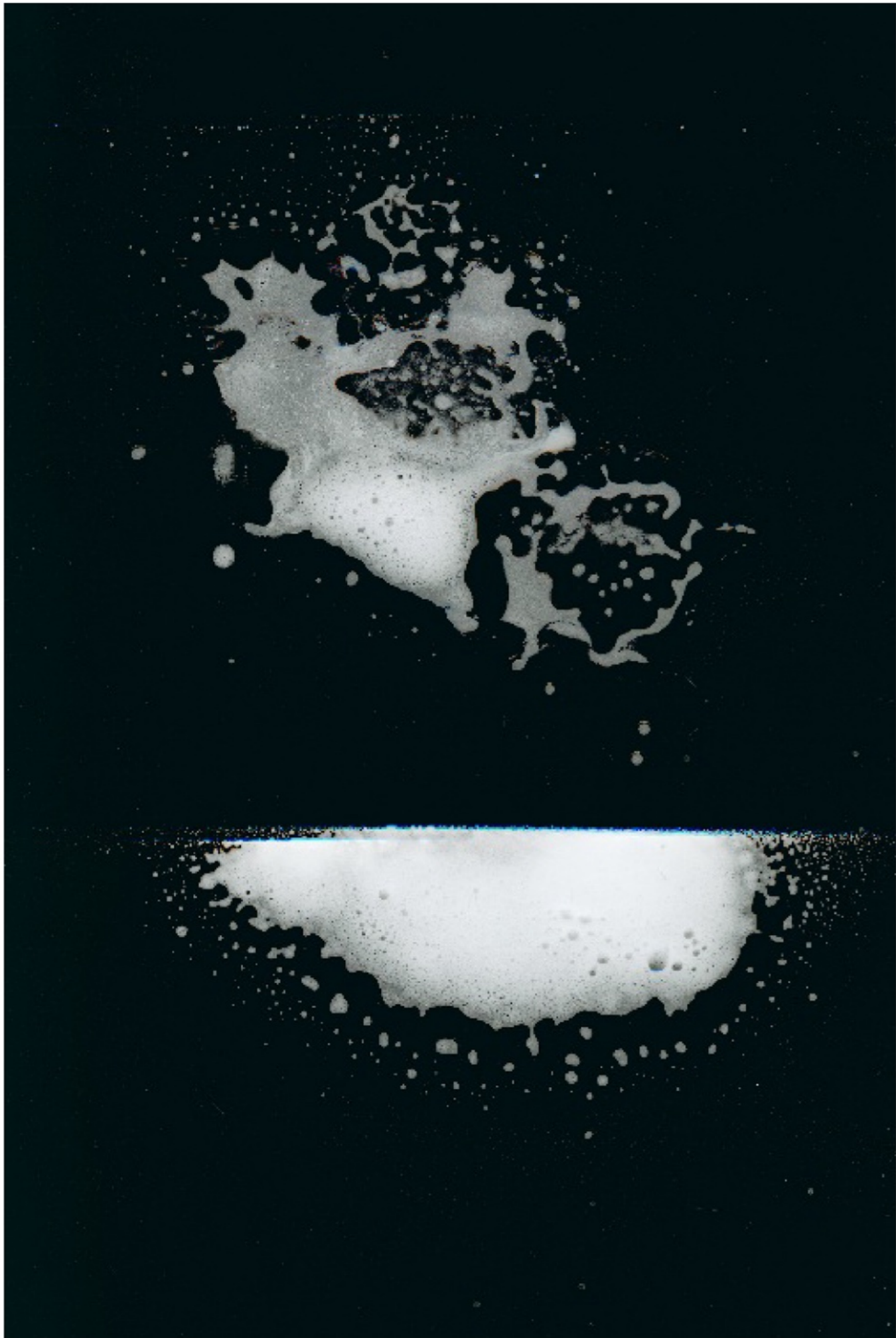




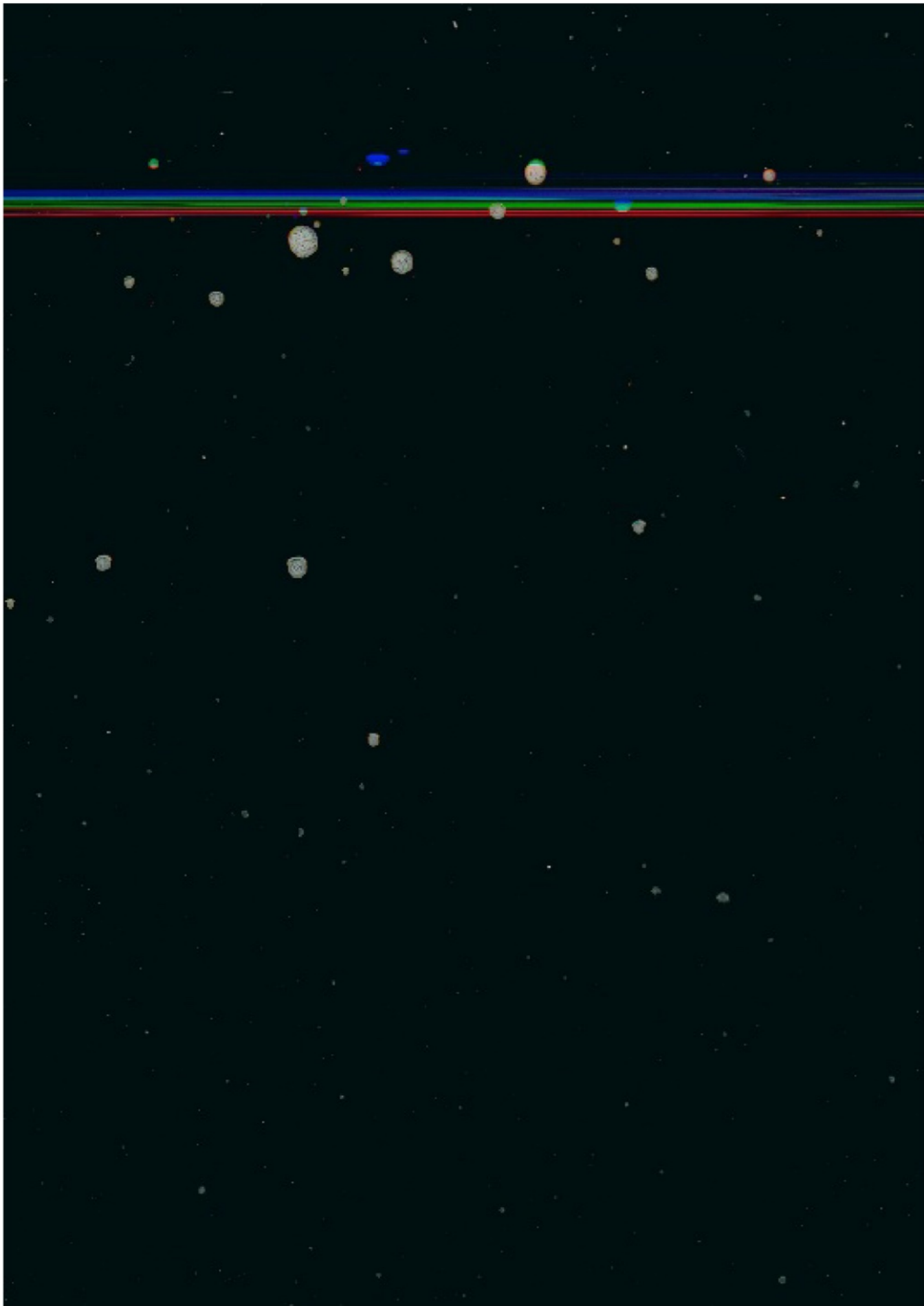


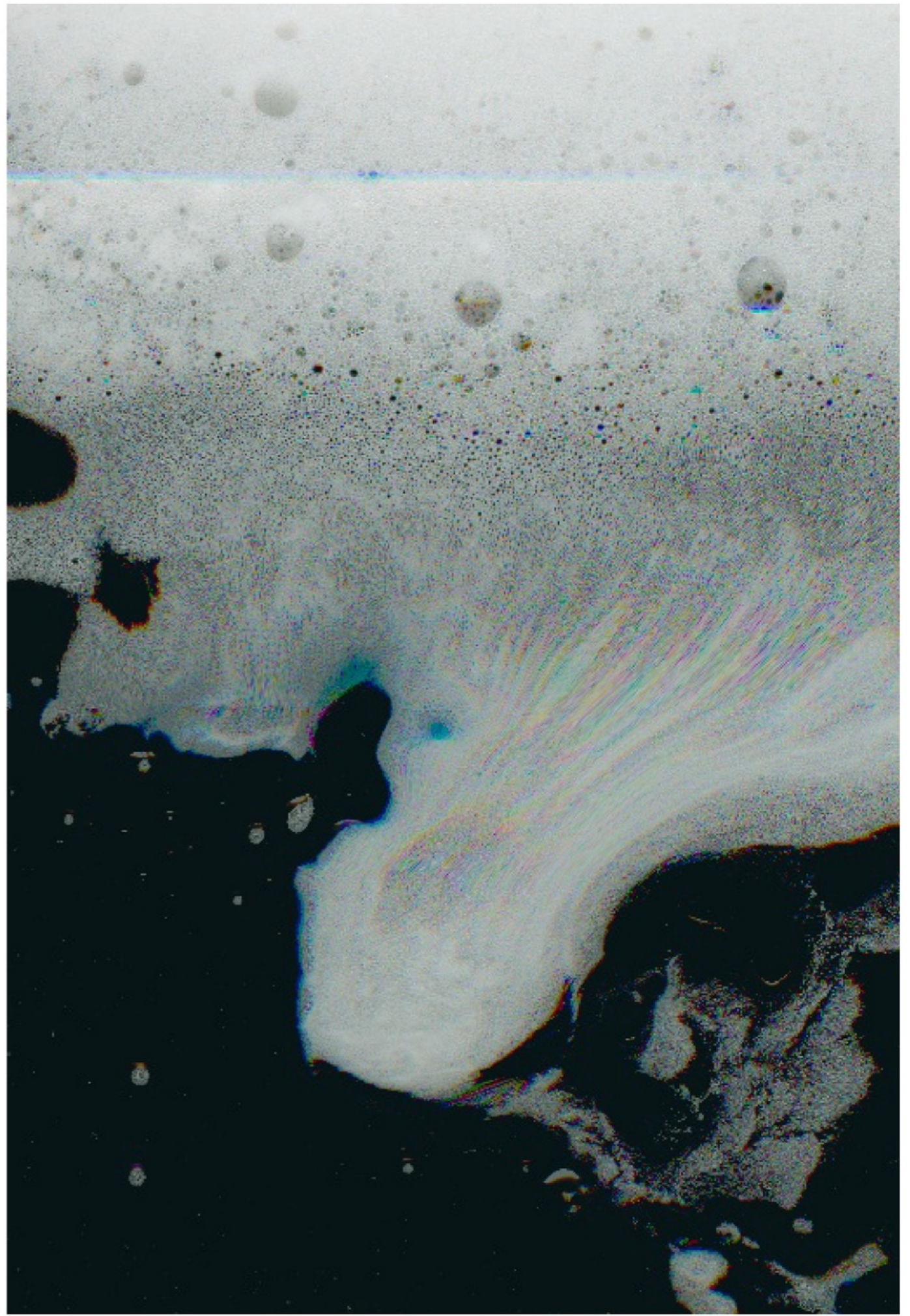
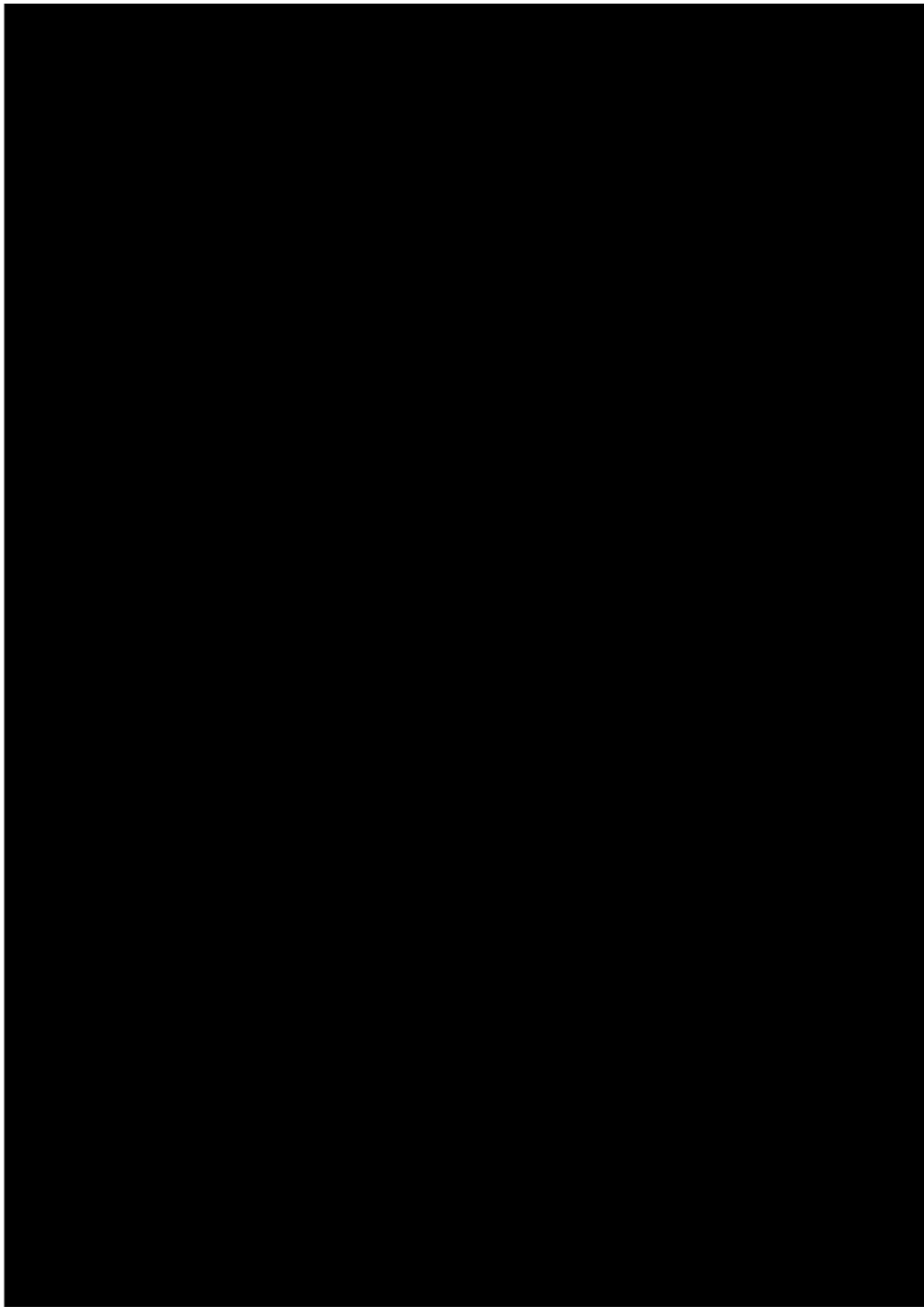


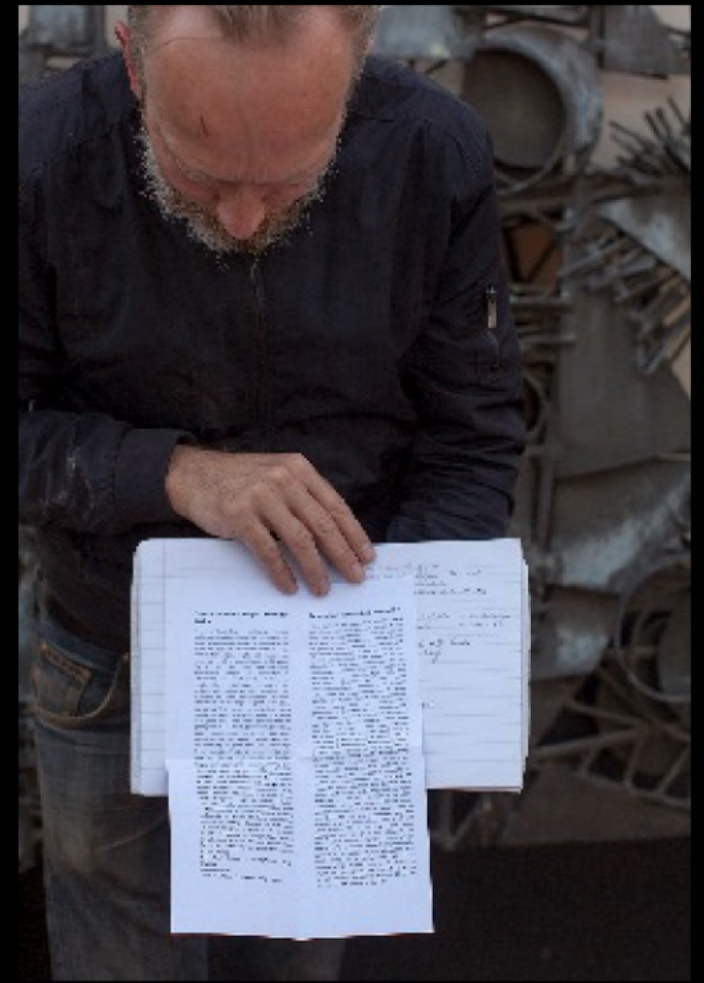




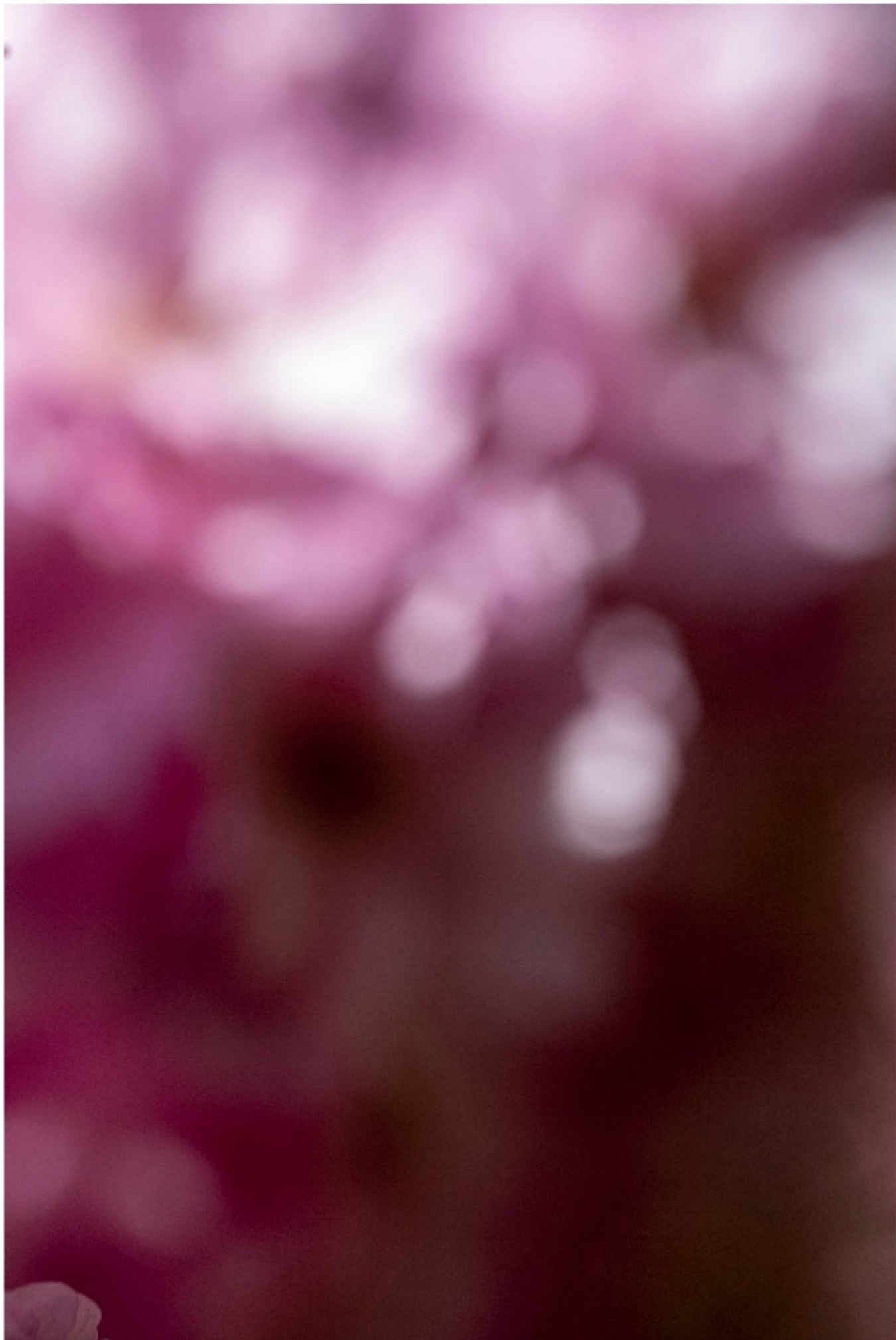


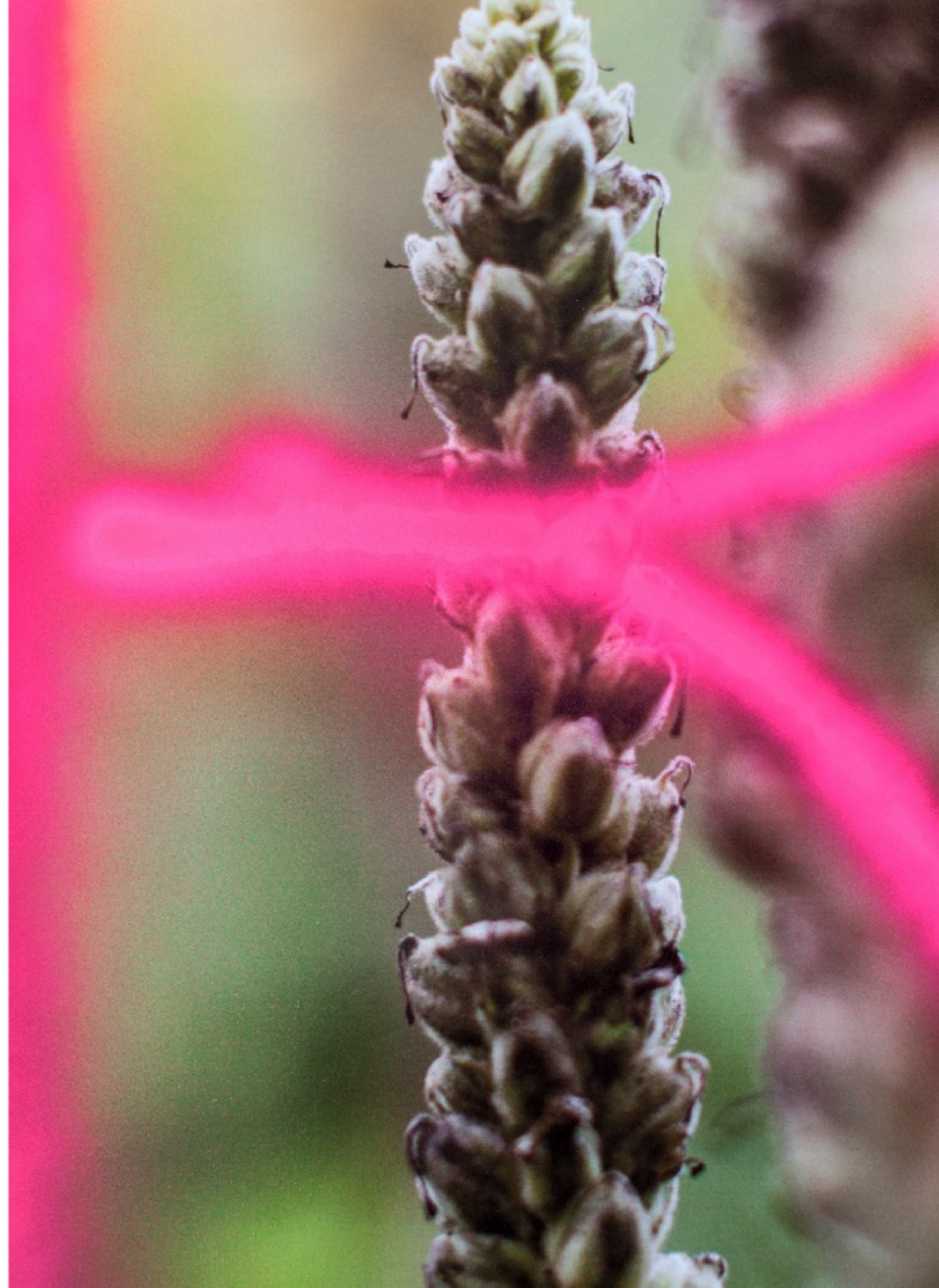






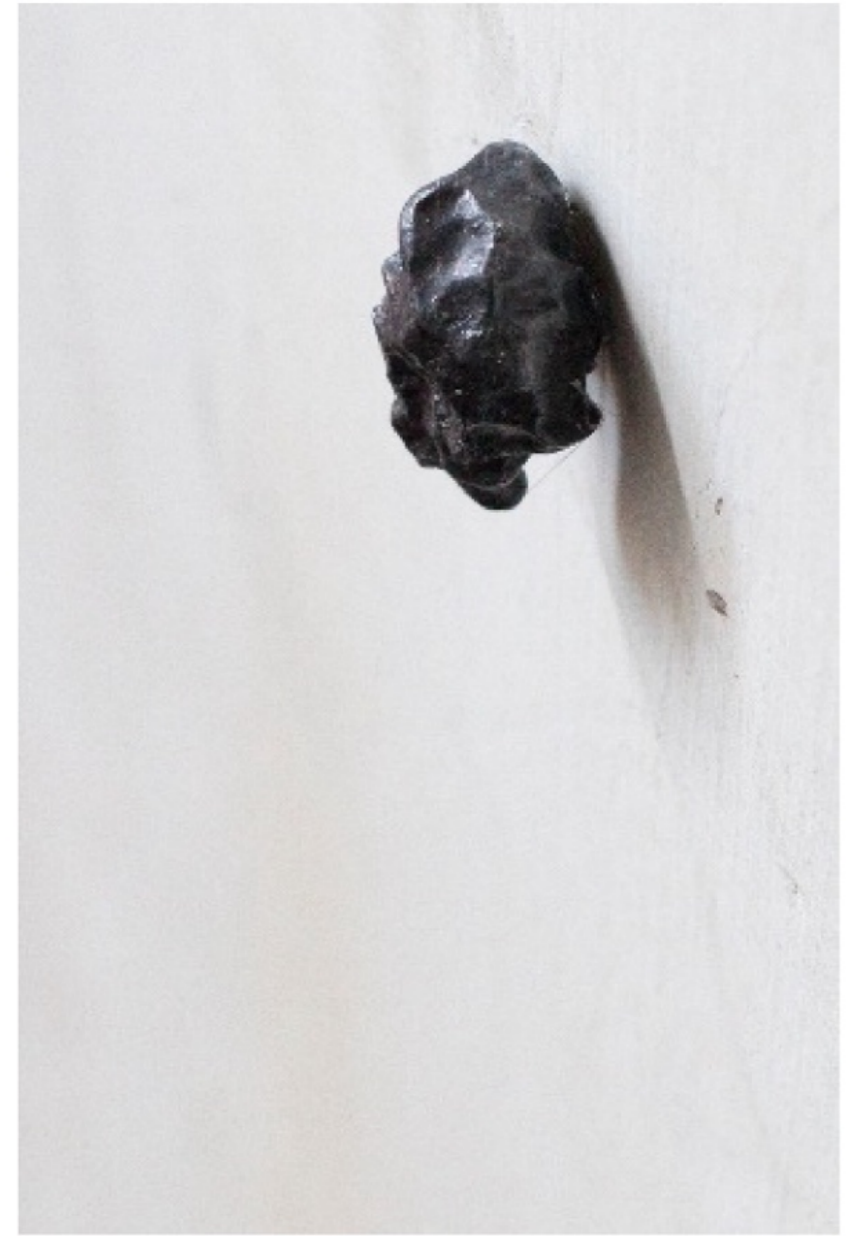




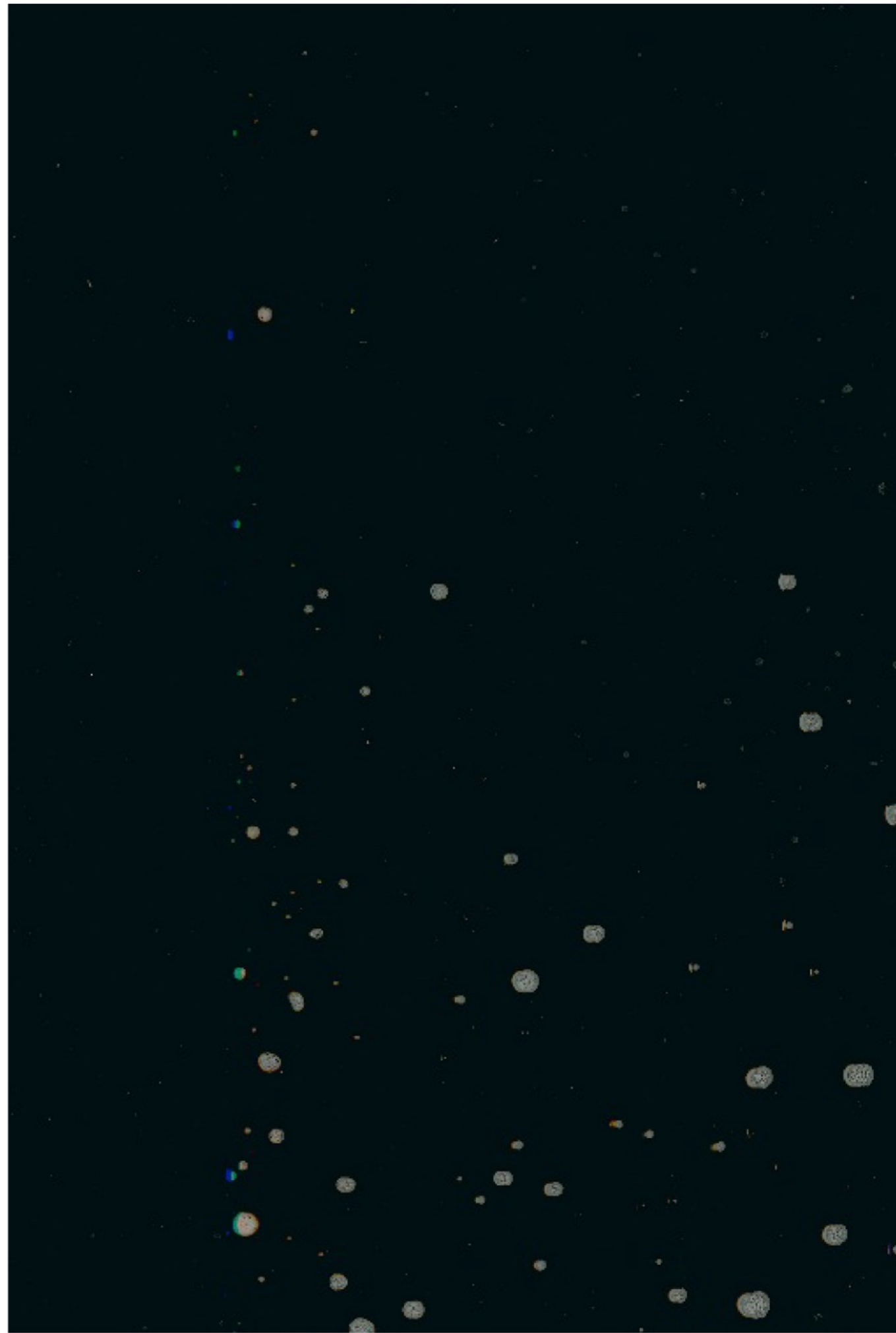
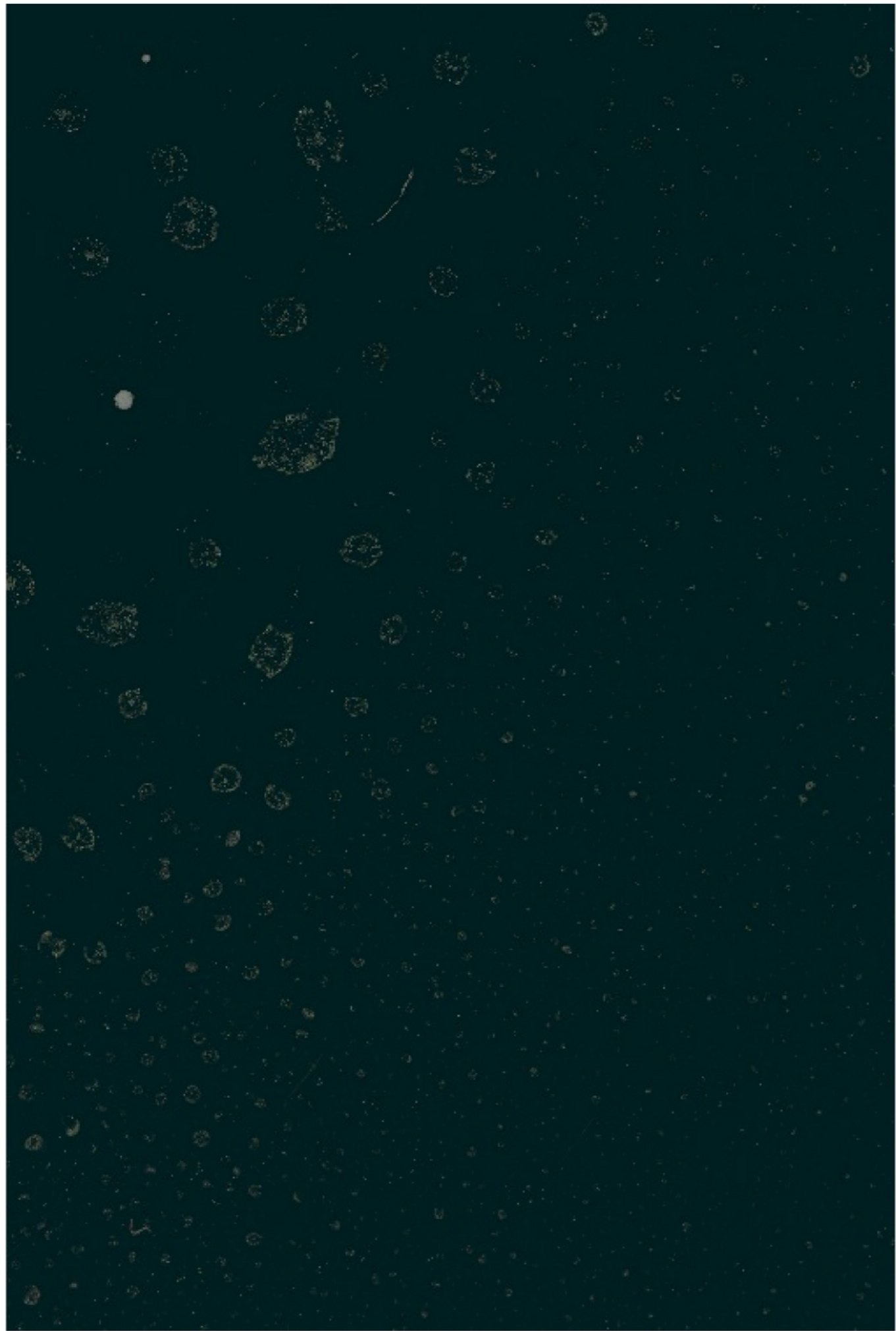












In *Portraits of Spaces* (2001), published for a show at the Strasbourg Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Brouwn's idea of a "portrait" is to list the dimensions of the museum's rooms. A great deal of leeway is factored in; it intersects with precision and control.



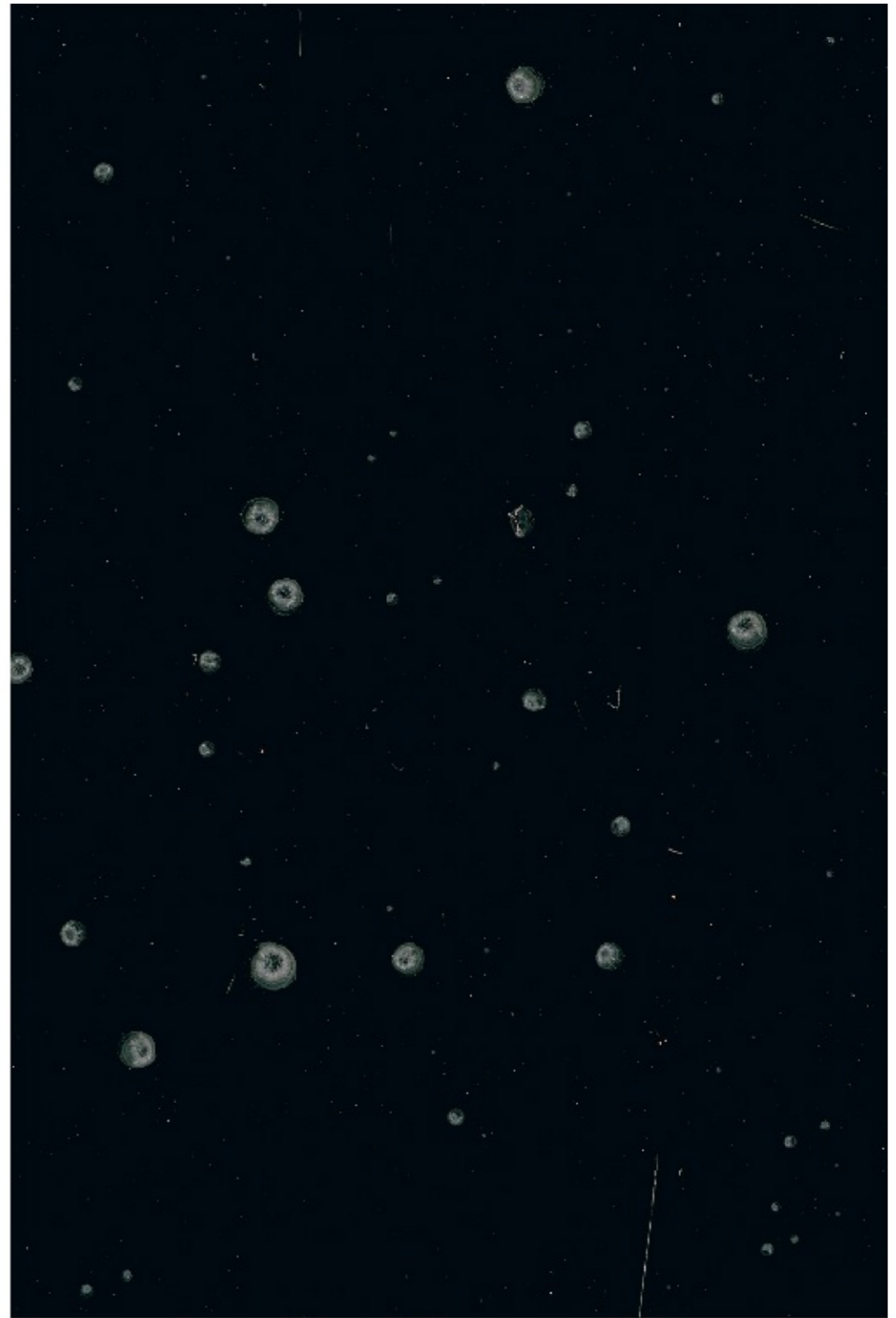
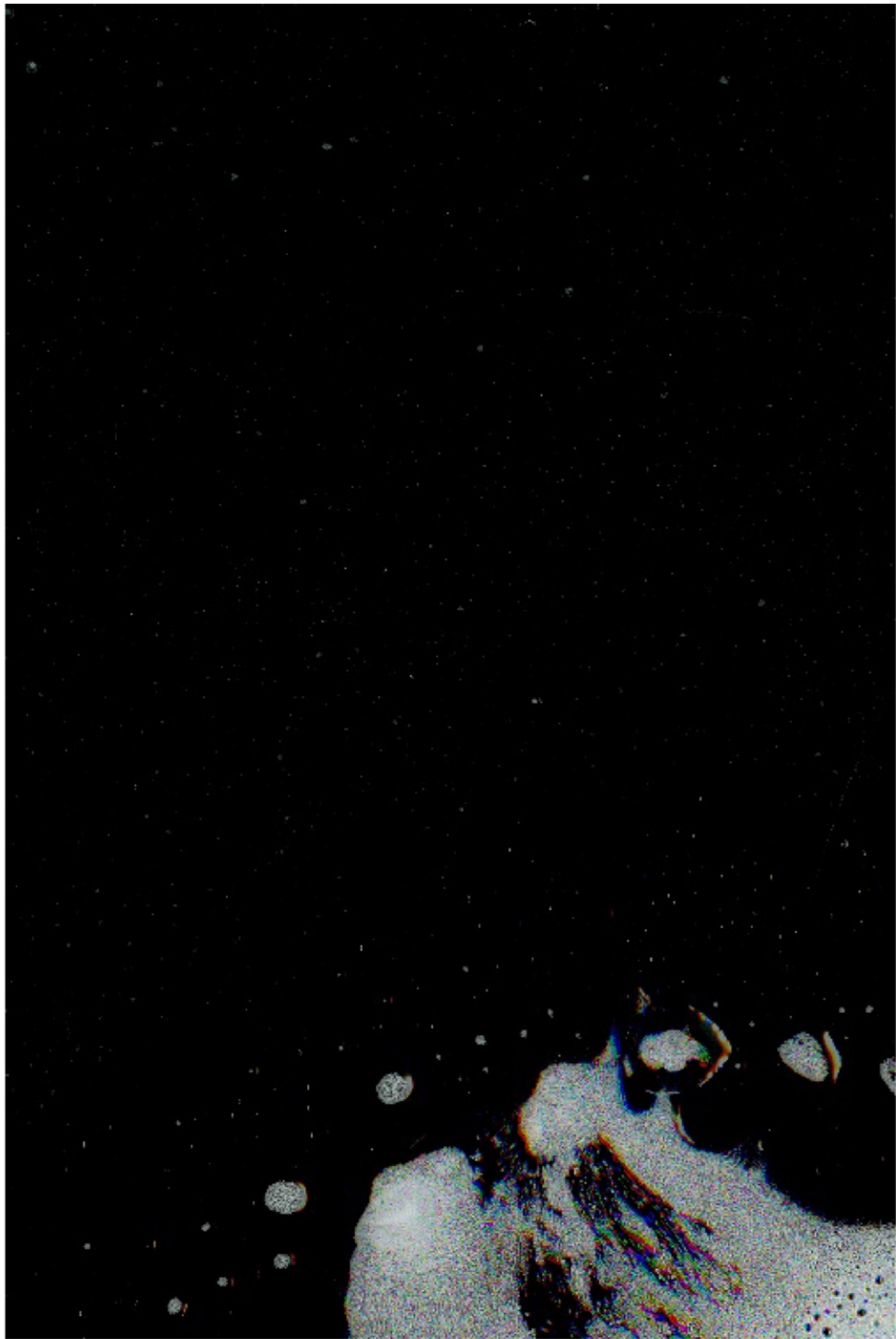
Draw, in your mind's eye, a capacious circle. That might be Brouwn's work: at once theoretic and defined and with abundant space—for you, for anyone—in the middle, because apparent emptiness is never really empty, not when circumscribed as carefully as this. Yes, there is the grounding conceit of re-enchanting physical experience, against its dissolution by technology: a handful of quotes accredited to Brouwn in publicity materials for his 2005 exhibition at MACBA, in Barcelona, include the statement: "Never before have distances been so meaningless as nowadays. Increasingly more people fly long distance several times a year. The validity of the concept of distance is being still further eroded. In my work distances are recharged again. They regain meaning." But then there's the question of what it means for meaningfulness to be restored to distance. So here's me, in the open tracts of Brouwn's work, and here's what it makes me think of.

In 1972, when the artist—who, to reiterate, hails from a former Dutch colony, one whose economy was founded on the slavery of Africans who were beaten, whipped, and starved, and that was hardly heavenly when Brouwn left in the 1950s—was planning his steps and thinking about space and (very probably) ancient Egypt, the African-American musician Sun Ra was making his film *Space Is the Place*. According to its plot, the sui generis jazz bandleader and his self-styled Arkestra left this planet in 1969 and settled on another one. Egyptology and sci-fi—here constituting a double movement away from a racist present, back to origins (however much the "black Egyptian" thesis has been questioned) and into the interstellar future—were a huge part of black nationalist culture in the 1960s and '70s, from Ra naming himself after the Egyptian god of the sun, to Earth Wind & Fire's populist takes on the same material, to funk bandleader George Clinton's regular invocations of space travel, the extraterrestrial mother ship as an upgraded low-swinging sweet chariot.

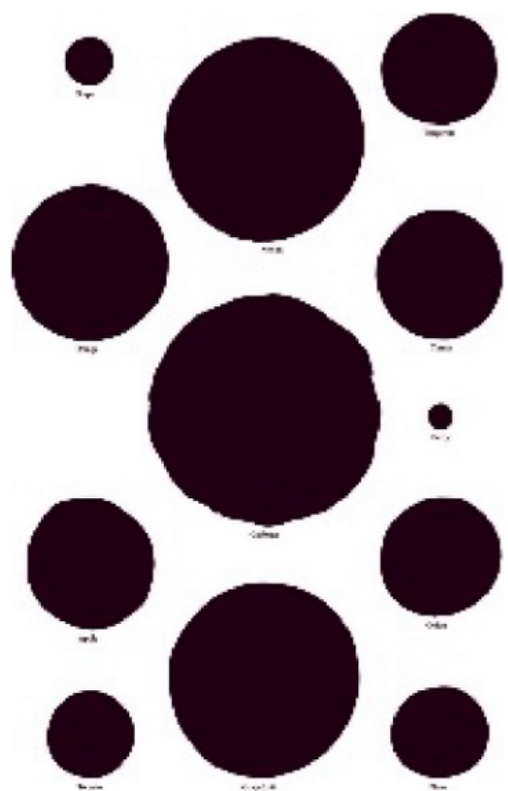
Meanwhile, in one 1970 exhibition entitled "Walking through Cosmic Rays," at the Städtisches Museum Abteiberg in Mönchengladbach, Germany, Brouwn refused to exhibit any art objects at all, so that viewers could experience the "cosmic rays"—debatable, this, since cosmic rays are high-velocity subatomic particles, radiation striking from space, that are supposed to only exist in the earth's upper atmosphere—in the building. (Sun Ra's own first band was called the Cosmic Rays.) A wall text read:

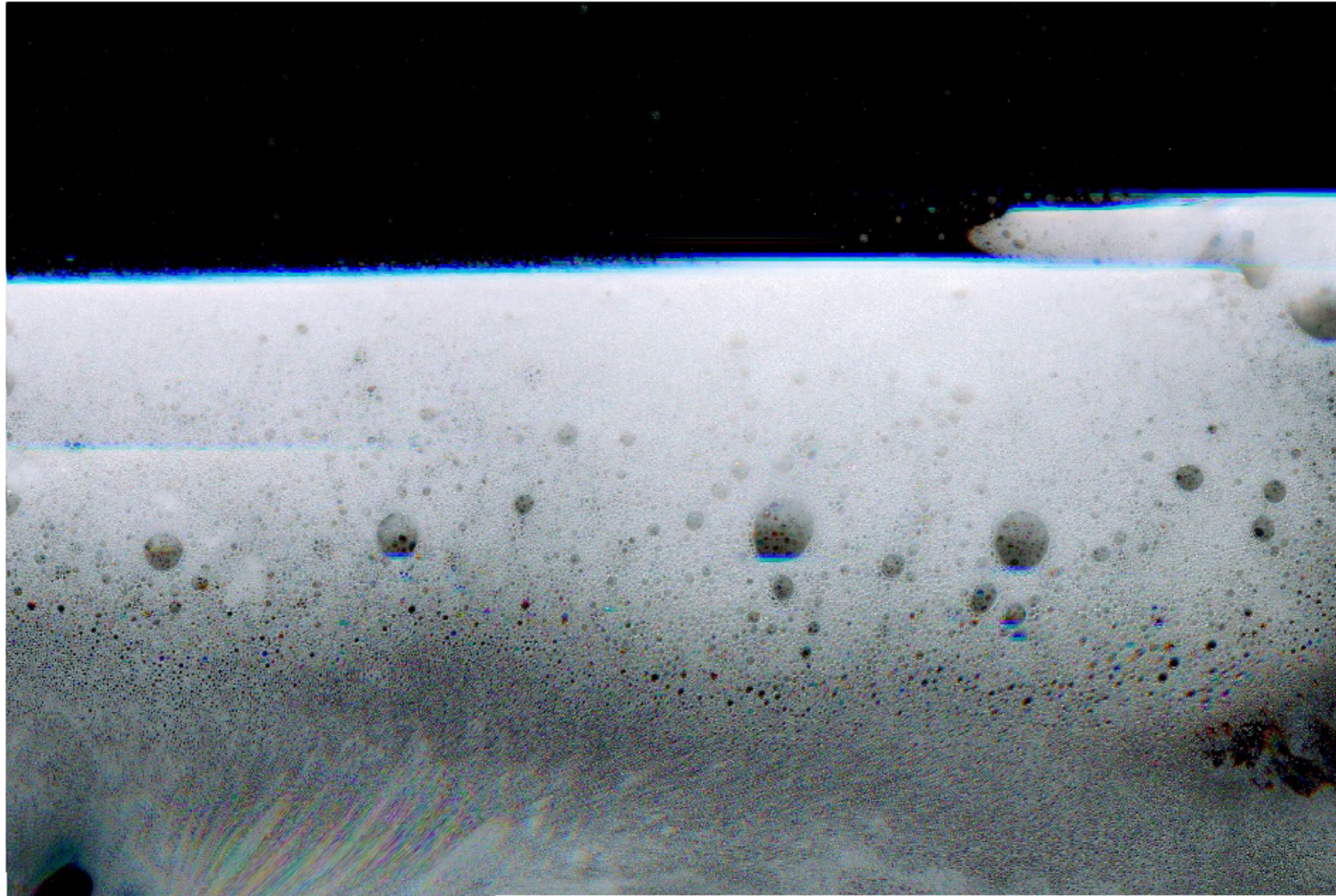
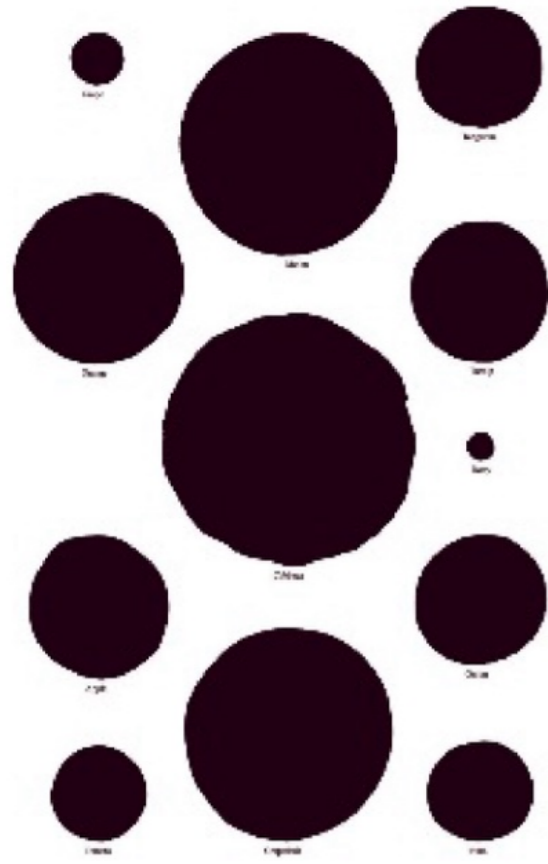
how empty is this space?
all the planets, thus including planet earth,
constantly find themselves in a "shower" of cosmic rays
in this space, as in every building on earth, it is also
"raining cosmic rays"
walking consciously through the invisible cosmic rays
in this space confirms, intensifies
the presence of this space

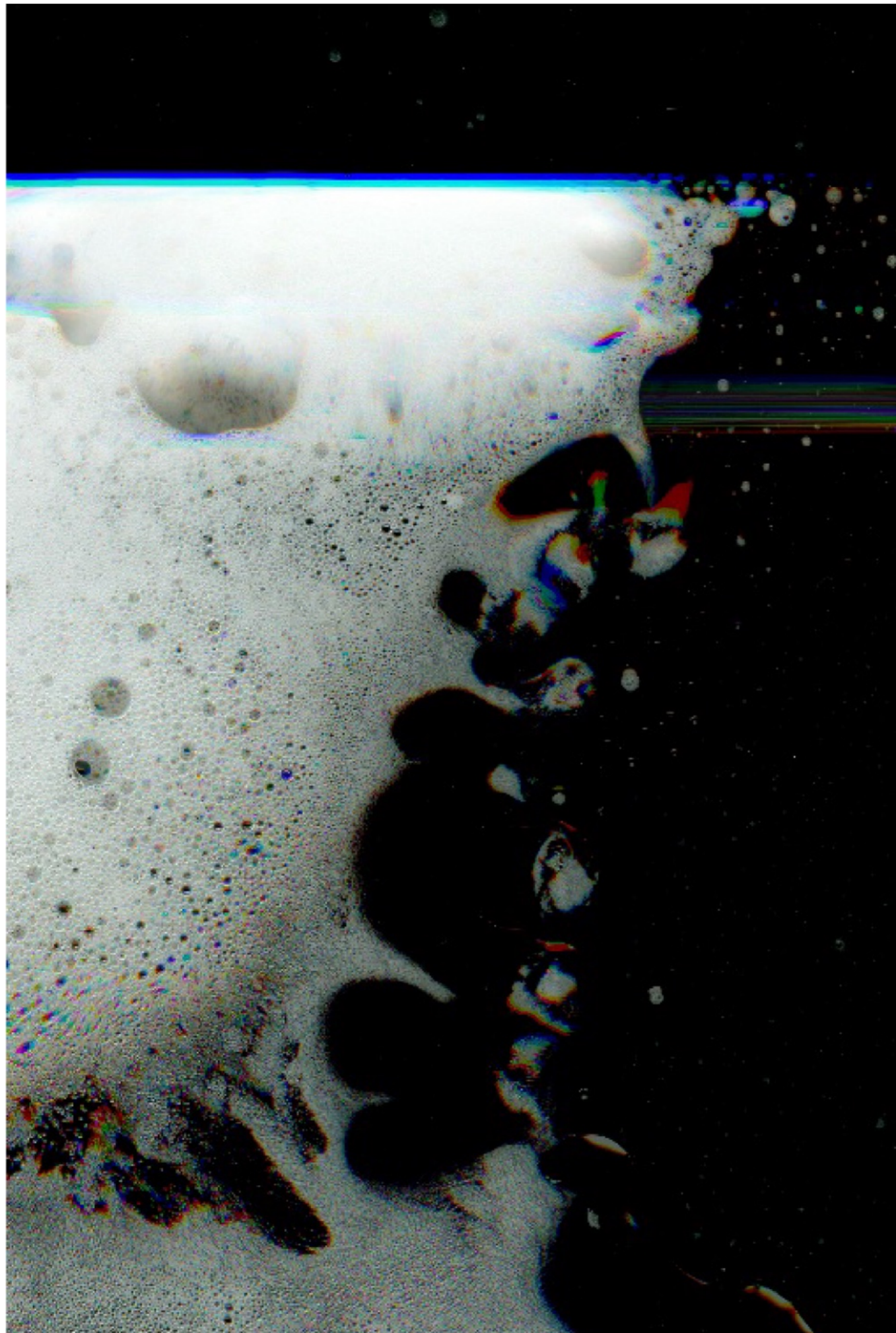
Brouwn has, so far as I know, never talked about these overlaps—again, for decades he has almost never spelled anything out—and it's purely a hypothesis, though with a certain amount of evidential propulsion. Consider *I Have Hunger*, which the artist would evidently rather we forgot; consider Cherix's neat summation that Brouwn's work conveys "a sense of inner travel that keeps the outside world at bay,"⁶ or Van den Boogaard's "Brouwn is a space traveller and wants the viewers to become space travellers too."⁷ Perhaps ask why the African-American artist David Hammons—whose work, as we'll see in the next chapter, is explicitly charged with racial issues while the artist himself determinedly remains, in many ways, removed from the art world—counts himself an admirer of Brouwn. Think of black and white: Brouwn diminishing himself in catalogues to the white page, or his acts that involve darkening something white—laying a brown hair on a white page in an artist's book; leaving white paper to be darkened with dirt. Think of Hammons's works involving darkening white sheets of paper with Harlem dirt from the surface of a thrown basketball. Think of Brouwn's identification with brown, both in a work like *Brouwnhairs* and elsewhere. (A video fragment reportedly





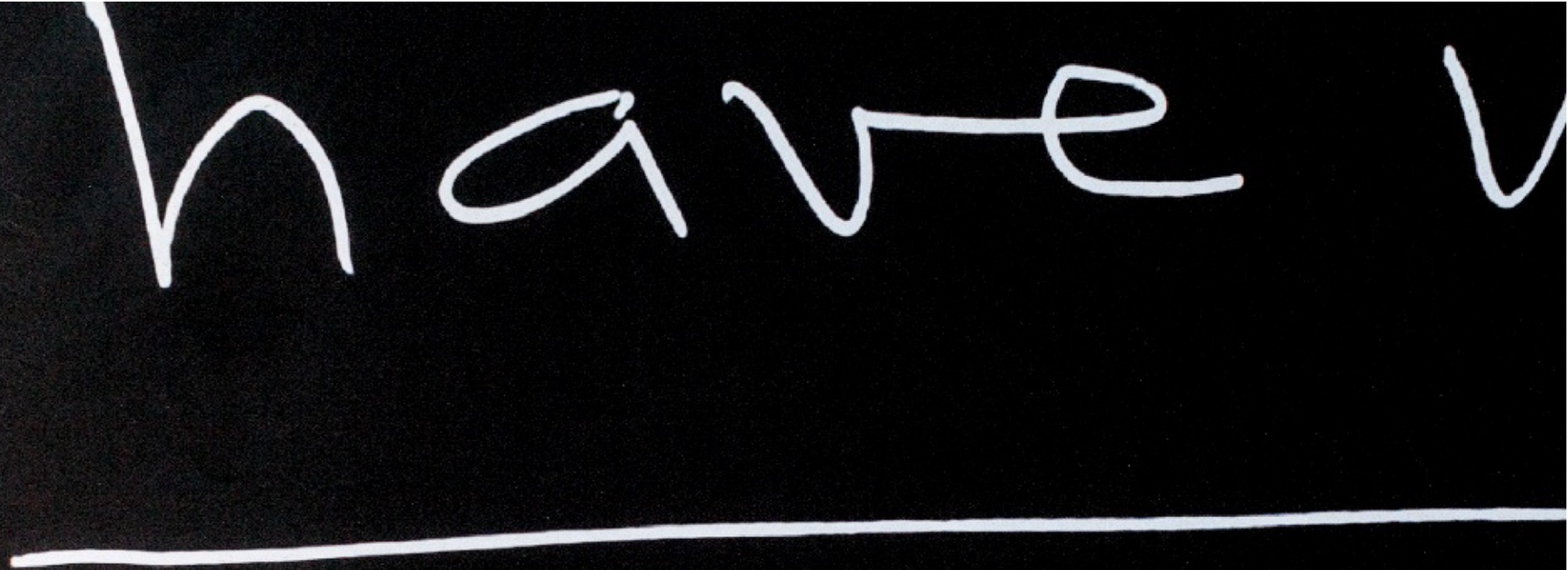






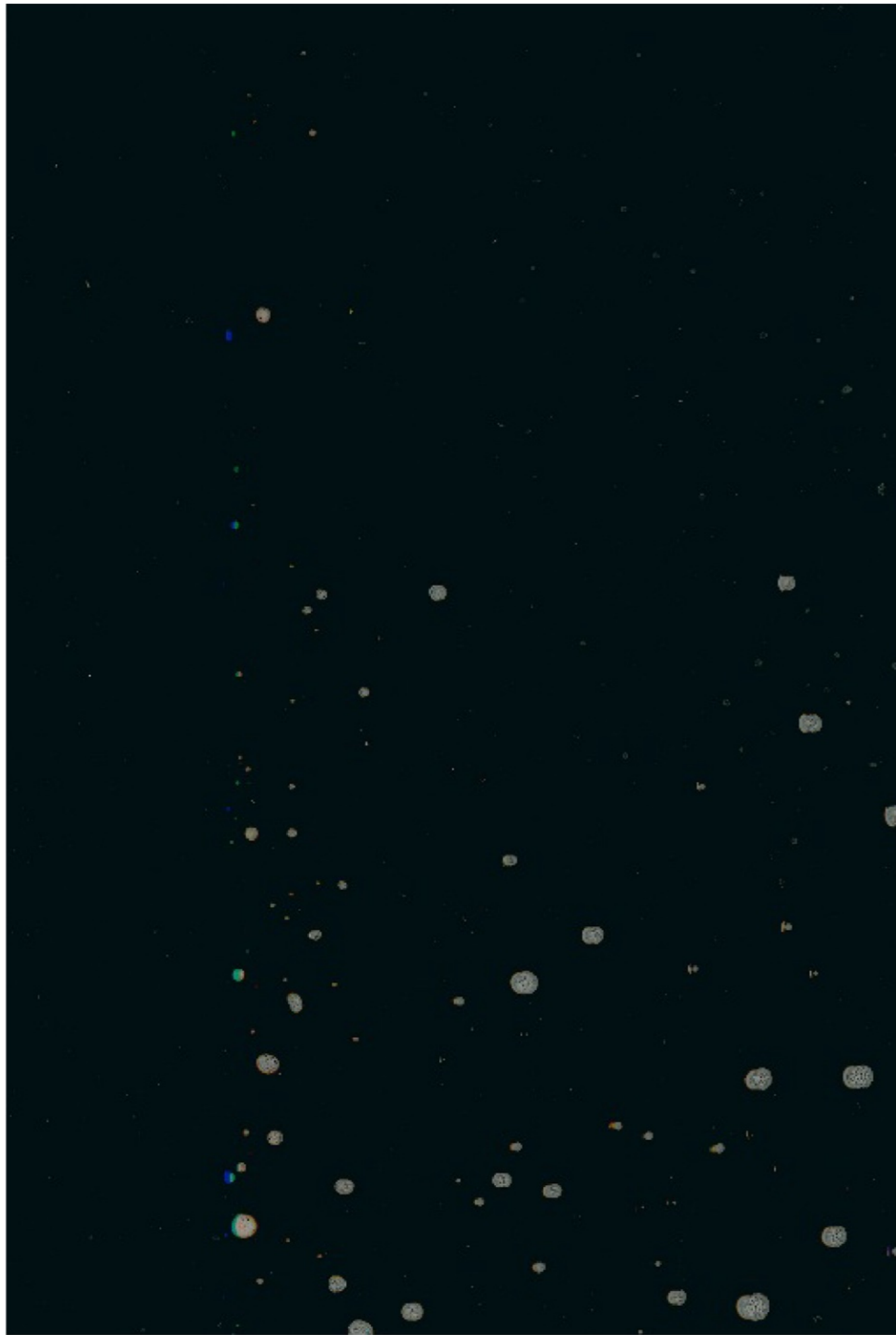


Joseph Beuys: If I take
care of you others will
take care of me.
Stonislav Menshikov:
If I take less others
have more.
K. ACC 2010



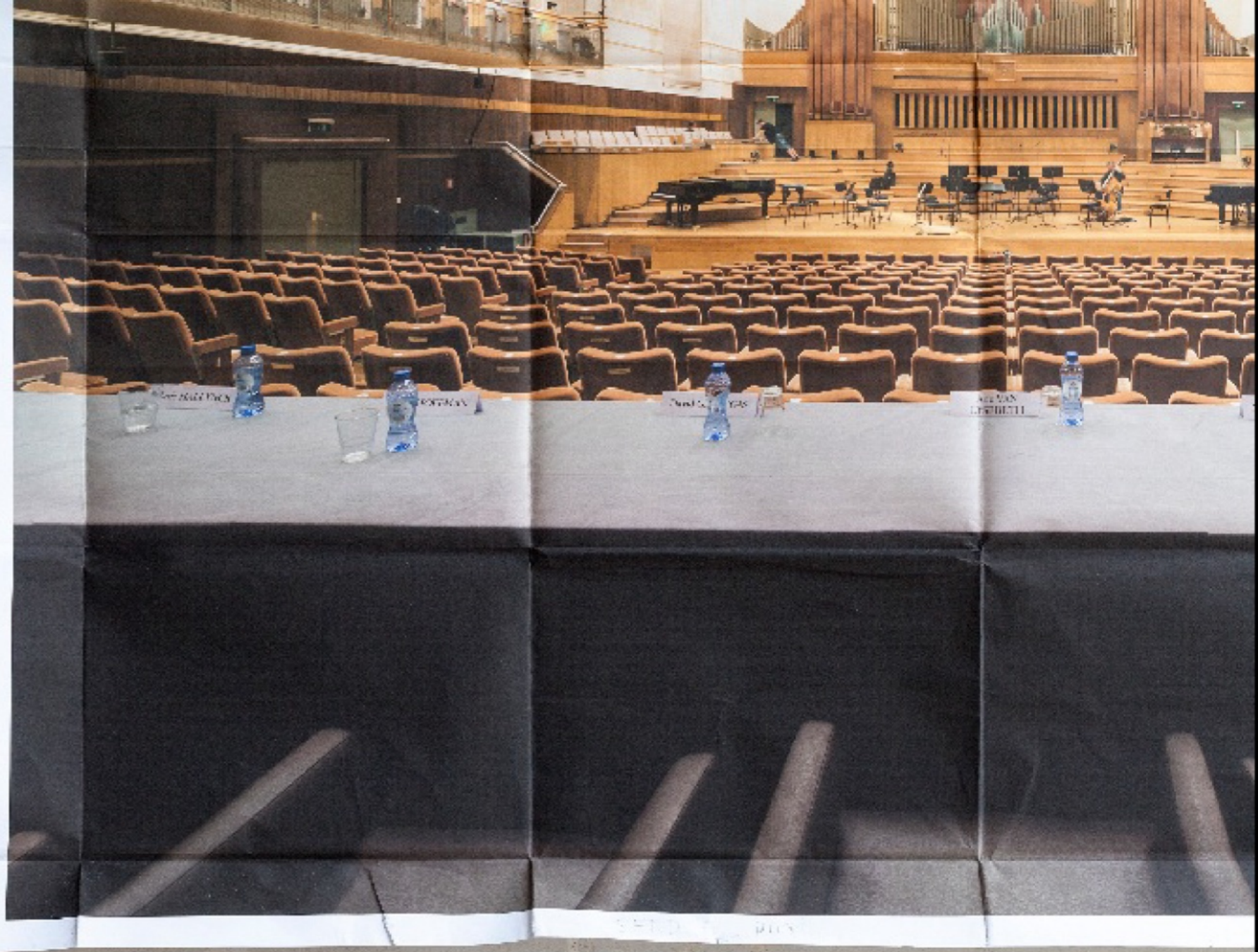
karma

De economische visie van Beuys: "If I take care of you others will take care of me" is een tantrische manier van kijken naar alles dat bestaat. Beuys zegt ook in het interview dat ik tussen hem en de Tibetaanse Lama Sogyal Rinpoche heb gerealiseerd in Parijs, 29 jan. 1982: "Kunst=Tantra" Hoe kwam hij daarop? Ik was verbaasd, want het is waar. Beuys volgt daarmee de karmische manier van kijken naar je eigen activiteiten van lichaam, spraak en geest. Je bouwt daarmee negatief of positief karma op. Als je positief karma opbouwt, dan zullen anderen voor jou zorgen als jij met een positieve motivatie voor anderen zorgt of hebt gezorgd. Dat is de meest hoogstaande kijk op economie. De hele uitspraak van Beuys luidt: "The essence of economy is: If I take care of you others will take care of me." Dat is een multidimensionale manier van redeneren, die past in het huidige chaotische wereldbeeld.

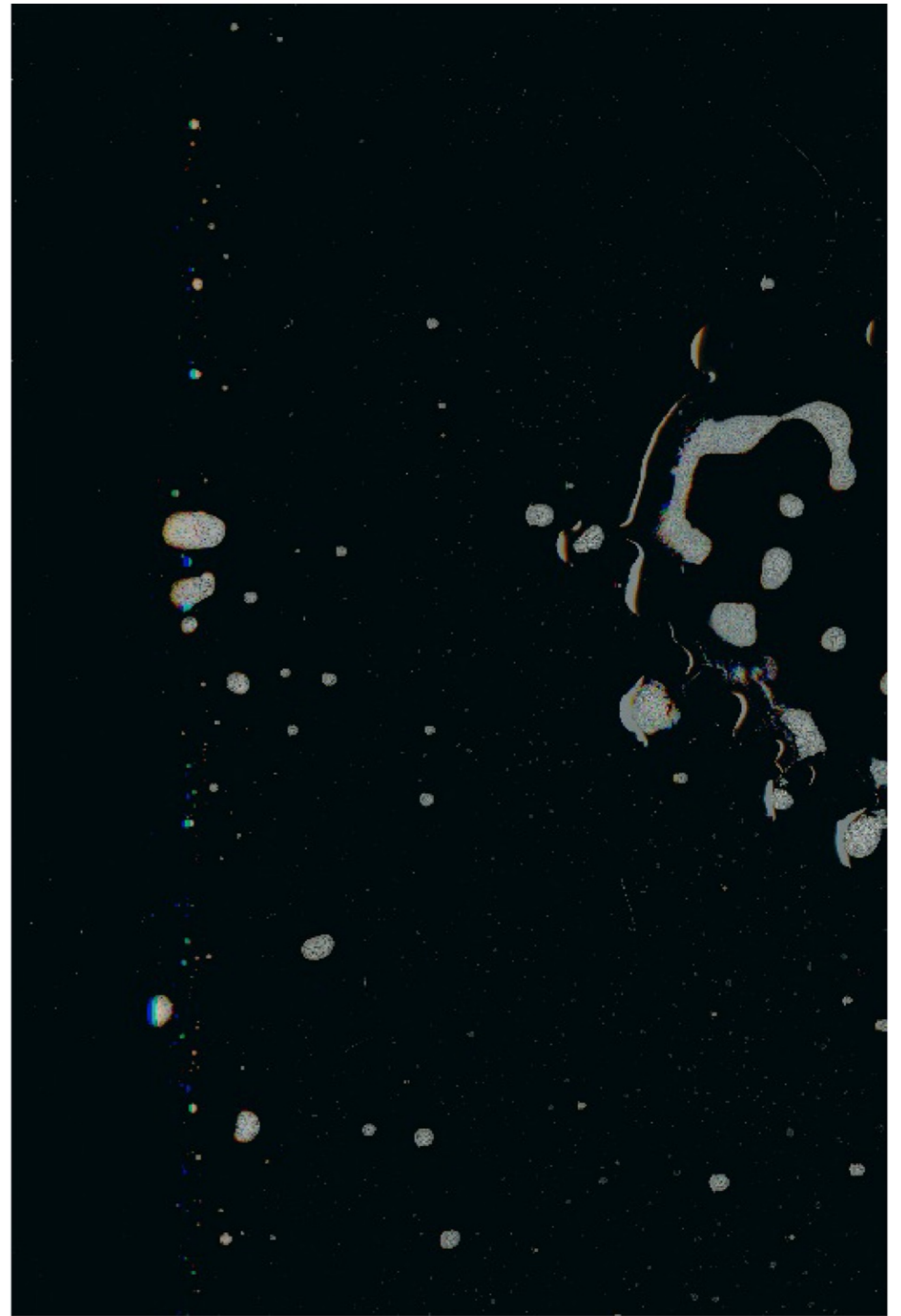
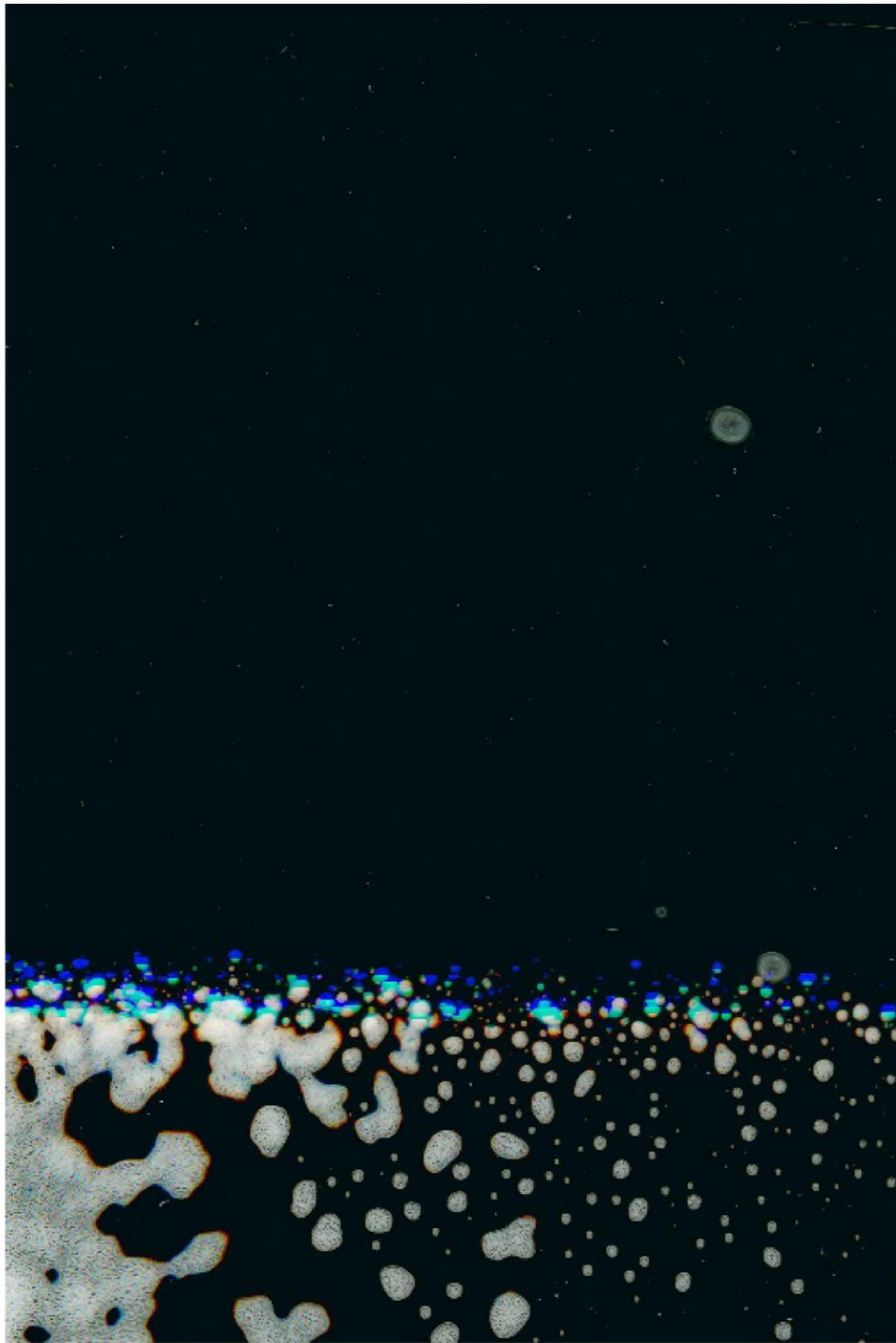




THE WATER OF THE JURY OF THE









ART
IS FOR
BEGINNERS



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Paul Goede/ In his non presence Paul Goede Fires Mental White/2 Meteorits

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J.C.J.vanderHeyden/Yellow Beam,1981/77,3cm x 7cm x 0,7cm/Caseine Paint on canvas on wooden pane

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Stanley Brown/Tell Them I Said No/Martin Herbert/Sternberg Press

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Justin Gosker/Print/1 paper-, 2 ceramic objects

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Justin Gosker/Print

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Louwrien Wijers/Goat Wisdom-Bison Wisdom/Print

Louwrien Wijers/If I take Care of You/Print

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Louwrien Wijers/If I take care of you/Print

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Voebe de Gruyter/The water of the jury of the queen Elisabeth Competition cello, 2017/Written, folded and posted poster

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Sema Bekerovic/Untitled/SD Video 5:40, 2009-2010

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Sema Bekerovic/Study in Circular Motion, 2016

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Met dank aan:

Nouvelles Images/De legaten van J.C.J. van der Heyden

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Louwrien Wijers

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