

LYUBOMIR KRASTEV

Inconsistent Spaces

INCONSISTENT SPACES

curated by Maria Vassileva

22.10.2024 - 16.11.2024

Structura Gallery

Lyubomir Krastev has worked on this series of large-format drawings for almost four years. The length of the process is determined not only by the complexity and specificity of the technique but also by the search for an image that captures the essence of our problematic world with a minimum of expressive means.

Although inspired by specific landscapes, places, and situations, in the process of research and recreation on the paper, Krastev creates utopias whose connection to reality is almost lost. The clash between industries and urbanization on the one hand and the resistance of nature on the other, creates desert spaces in which only traces are left. Geographical, political, and cultural differences are unified and transformed into images with an abstract sound. Images-metaphors, images-predictions of possible future cataclysms, disturbing, depopulated landscapes, only hinting at past dynamics.

Krastev's process usually begins with a photograph taken by the artist or found, reversed in black and white. He starts a kind of game by transforming individual areas from positive to negative, shifting them, and enlarging them. This enables him to move away from the concrete and enter the abstract fields of emotions.

He transfers the intended image onto the paper with a highly complex, slow, and demanding immense concentration technique that uses charcoal and graphite powder. The included collage highlights the fluidity and instability of experience, often remaining on the spectrum of the superficial and transitory. In the project, individual realities, objects, and spaces from the natural, architectural, or urban environment bleed into one another, mutually altering each other. Lyubomir Krastev's work relies on oppositions such as visible-invisible, conscious-unconscious, metaphysical-real.

"The desire to be close to nature is increasingly palpable. But only in the form of escape...", says the author. The exhibition is dedicated to the impossibility of finding harmony between what we have created and the surrounding nature. Somewhere, the connection has broken, and restoring it seems almost impossible.

Maria Vassileva

Bio

Lyubomir Krastev (b. 1983, Rousse, Bulgaria) is a visual artist based in Plovdiv. His practice investigates tensions between urbanization, industrial systems, and the natural world. Through drawing, collage, and photographic transformation, he explores fragmentation, both environmental and psychological, seeking coherence amid dissonance. His layered compositions reflect on memory, ecological rupture, and the fragile boundary between constructed and organic realities.

He holds a Master's and a Doctorate in Graphic Arts. His conceptual approach centers on reduction, inversion, and reassembly, strategies that address visual overload and the complexities of identity and place. From 2017 to 2018, he was a guest lecturer at the Sichuan Institute of Fine Arts in Chongqing, China, teaching in the field of contemporary print-based media.

His recent solo exhibition, *Inconsistent Spaces* (2024, Structura Gallery, Sofia, curated by Maria Vassileva), examined environmental and emotional disintegration through charcoal drawings and collage. Earlier solo projects include *Scarfield* (2017) and *The Industrial Temple* (2016), both presented during the Night of Museums and Galleries in Plovdiv and supported by Sariev Contemporary. In 2019, he was featured in *BACKGROUND: Young Artists from Plovdiv*, a curated exhibition by Sariev.

Krastev has participated in numerous international exhibitions, including *Rising Ruins* (curated by Serge Ecker, Luxembourg, 2019), *LISTE Art Fair — Basel*, *Tractatus Locus* (2017, a curatorial project by Kristina Schrei, Vienna), *In.print.out* (2013, Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Vienna), and *The Collection: New Acquisitions 2010–2011* at the Sofia City Art Gallery, where his work is now part of the permanent collection.

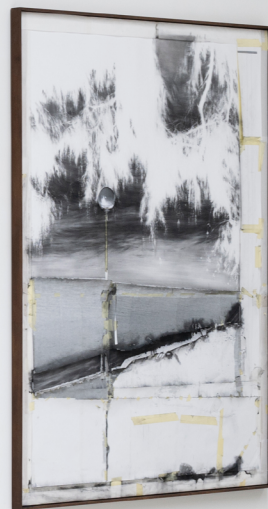
He has twice been invited to the Guanlan Original Printmaking Base (China, 2010 and 2015), and is a beneficiary of the Support Program of the Gaudenz B. Ruf Award (2016). His drawings and installations function as quiet acts of resistance, interrupting the noise of the present with slowness, silence, and poetic fragmentation.



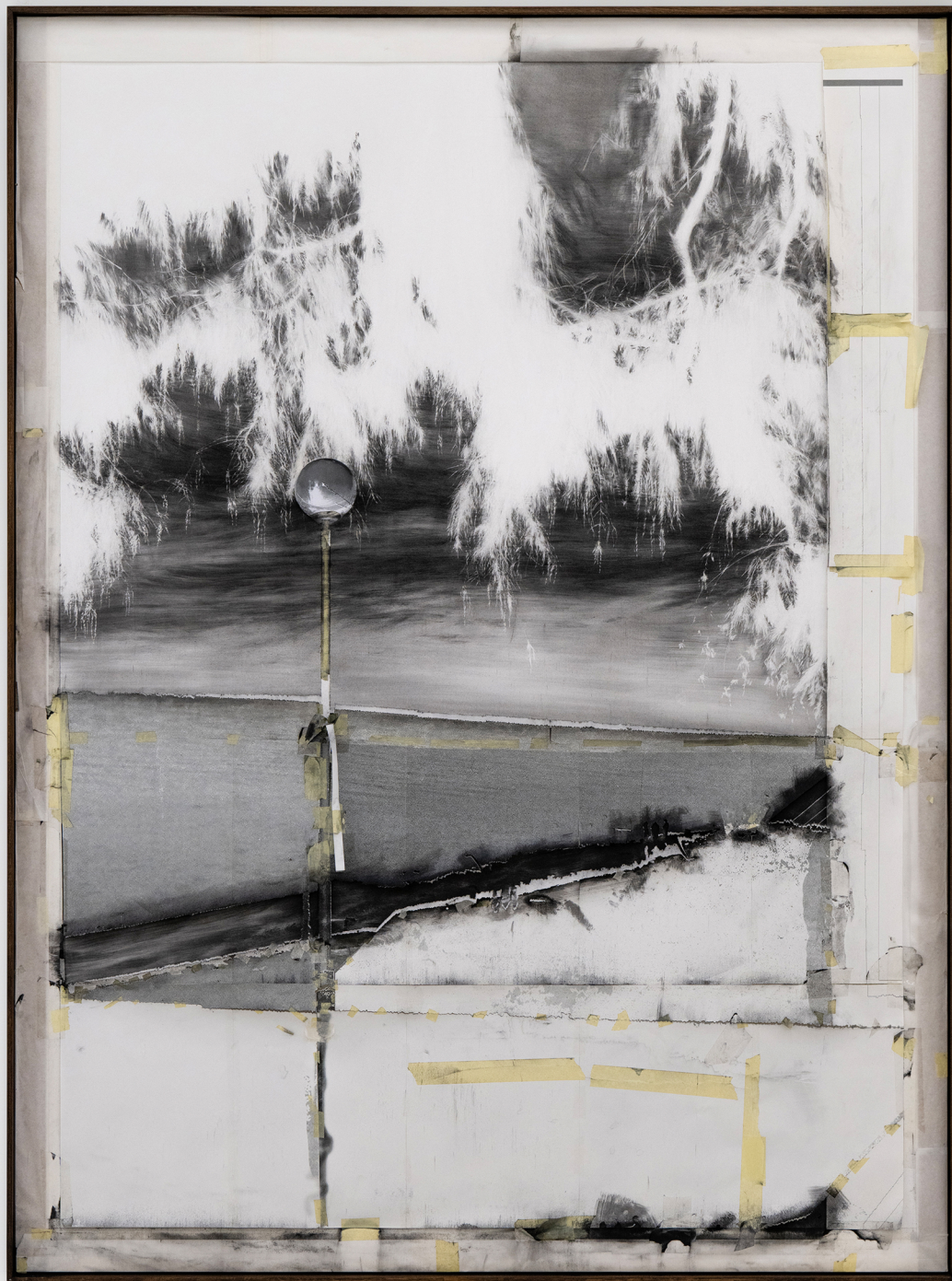
Exhibition: Inconsistent Spaces, Structura Gallery Sofia, 2024



UNTITLED
2020-2021
Charcoal on paper
144 x 205 cm







TULPA
2020-2022
Charcoal on paper
160 x 215 cm





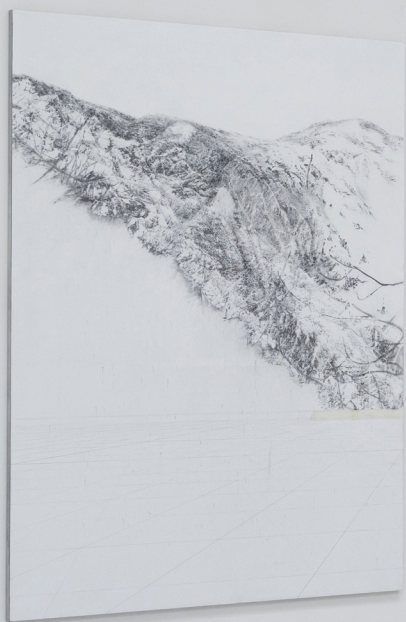
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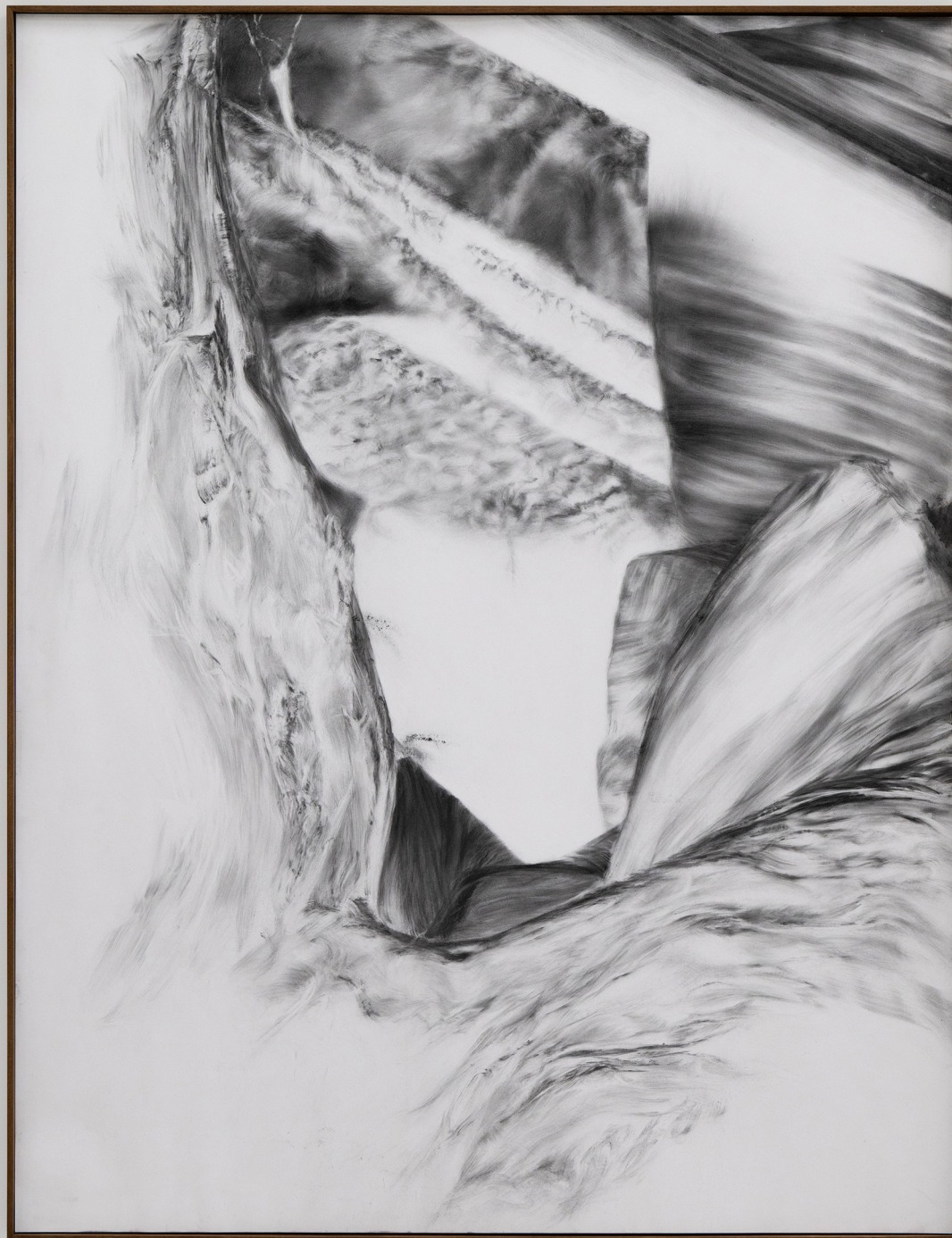
2022

Charcoal and graphite on aluminium panel

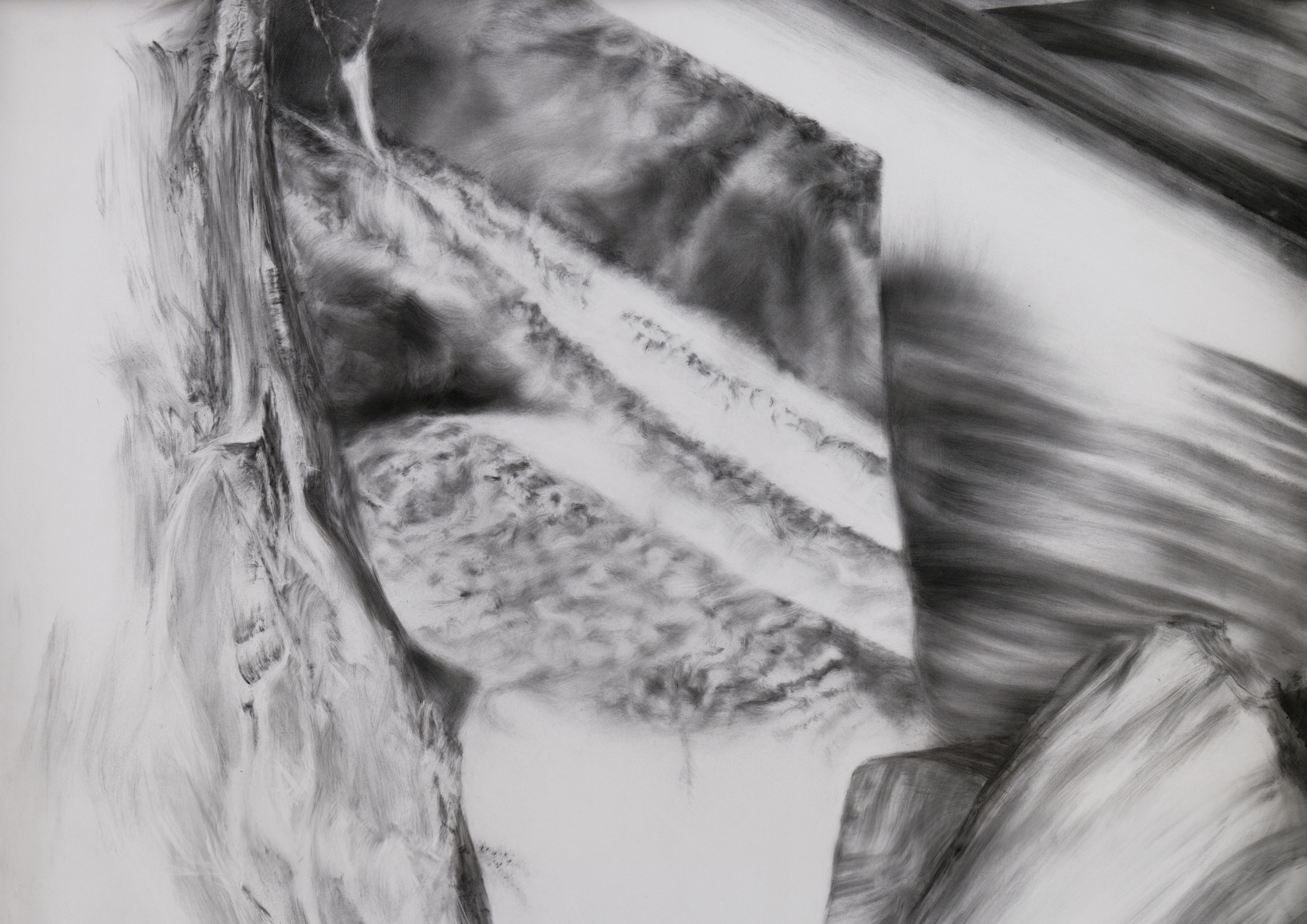
145 x 200 cm







UNTITLED
2024
Charcoal and graphite on paper
150 x 195 cm







UNTITLED

2024

Collage, charcoal and graphite on paper
150 x 210 cm







UNTITLED

2024

Charcoal and graphite on paper
150 x 195 cm





Photography by Yana Lozeva.

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