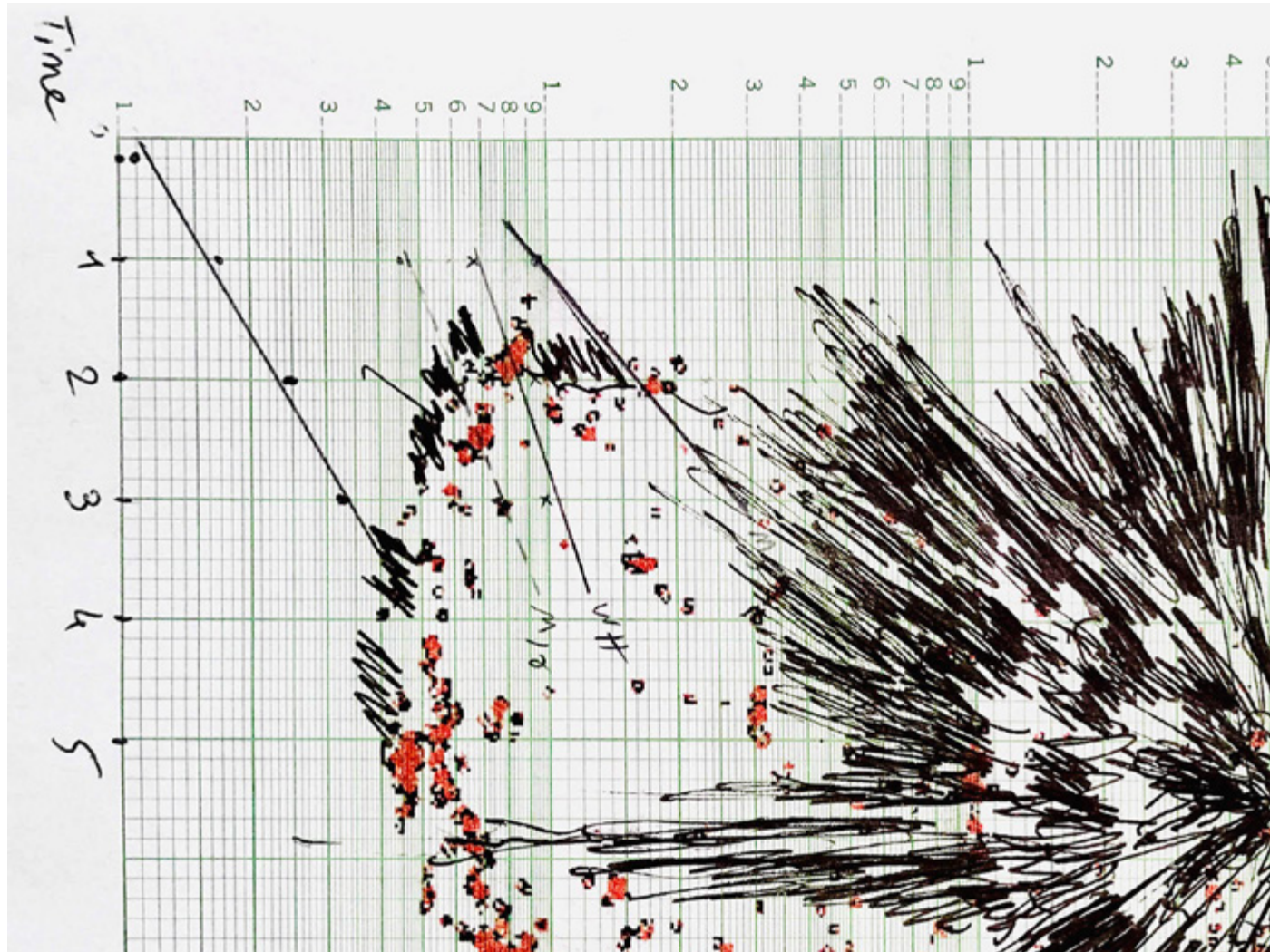
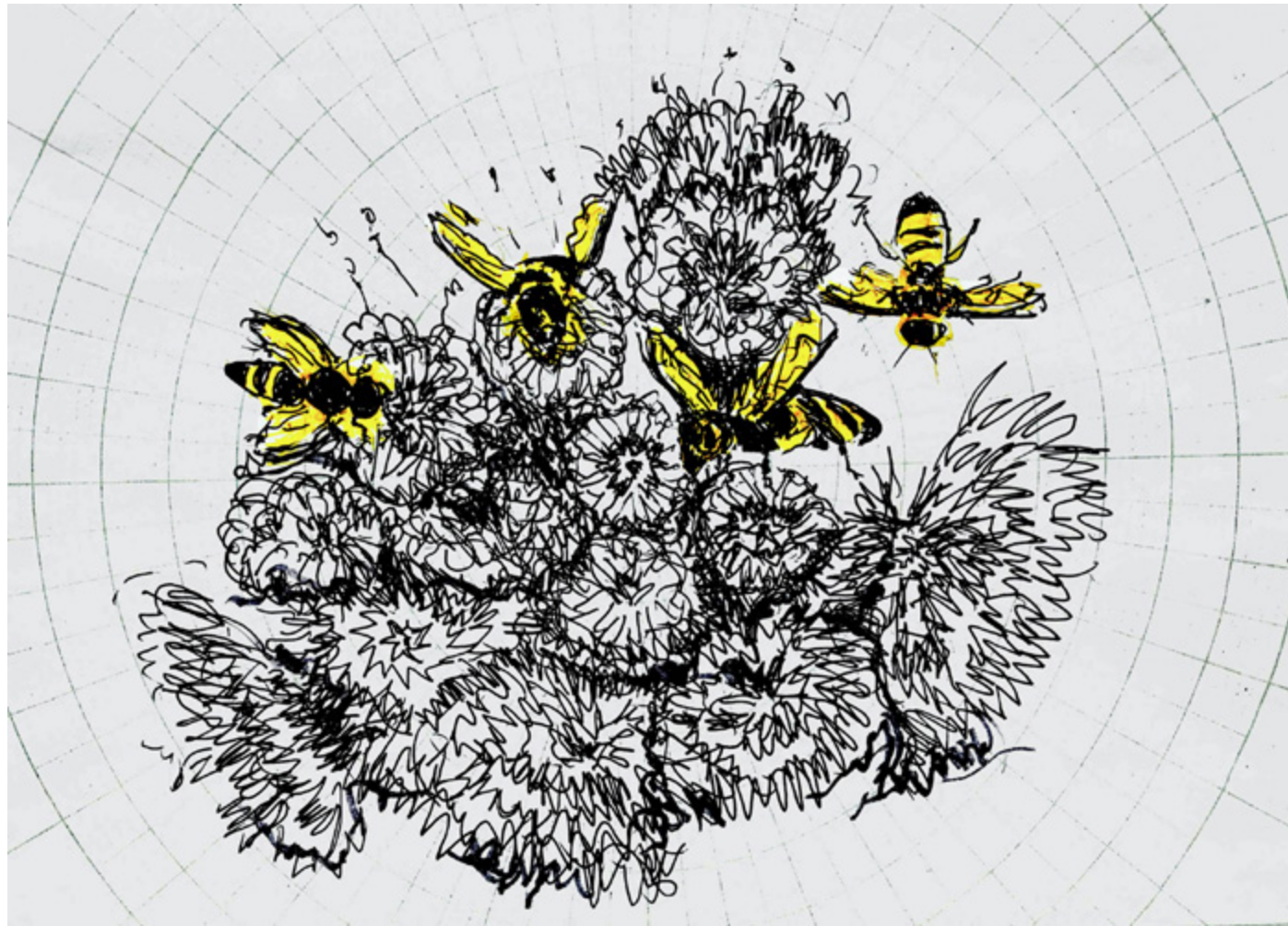


PHYLLIS EWEN
sonata



I. chaos
II. resilience
III. loss & renewal



Sonata is a marvelous new series of drawings. Tender weight of line and lyrical gesture are the scaffolding for powerful political statements that are also deeply personal. It is a complex and unexpected dynamic that gives Ewen's art the power to effect change.

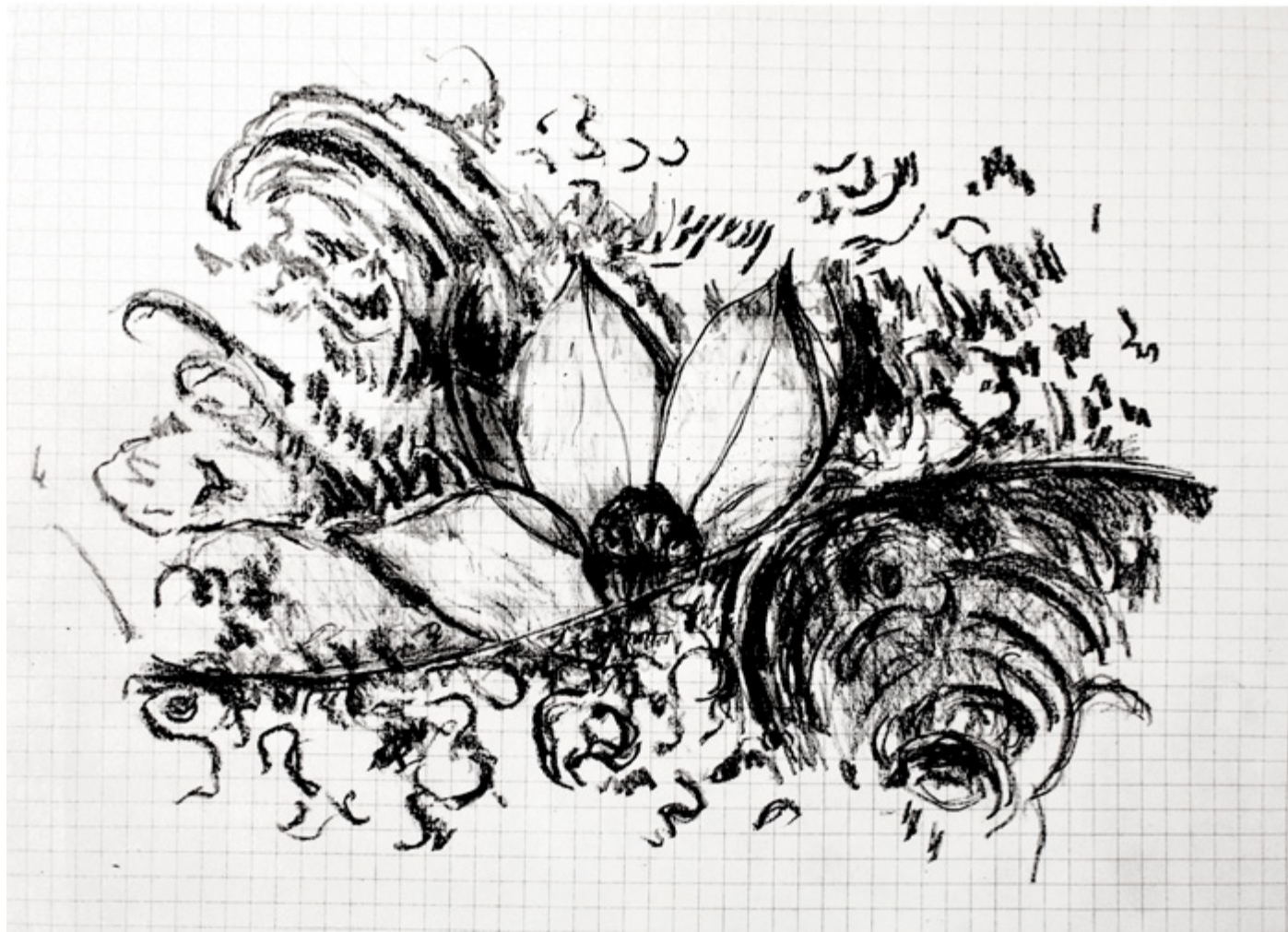
—BARBARA O'BRIEN

Former Executive Director, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art

Phyllis Ewen's drawings are in many ways revelatory. These eloquent and evocative visual entries span a year wrought with enormous hardship and change. Working on graph paper, each work is like a rough-cut recording of a single note sounding a moment in time. Scientific, tonal and organically explosive, "Sonata" distills through meditative mark-making the beauty that can be found in chaos.

—DEBBIE NADOLNEY
Director and curator of AMP Gallery

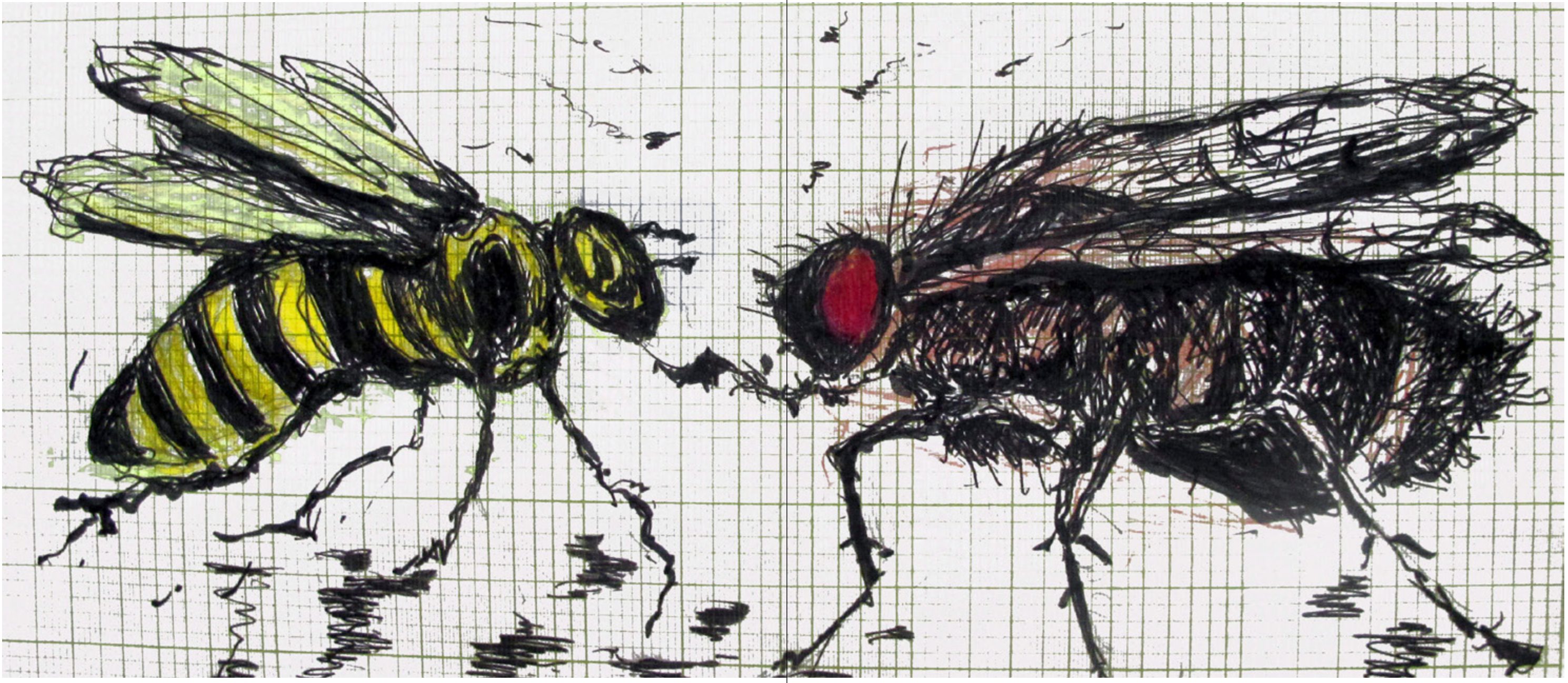


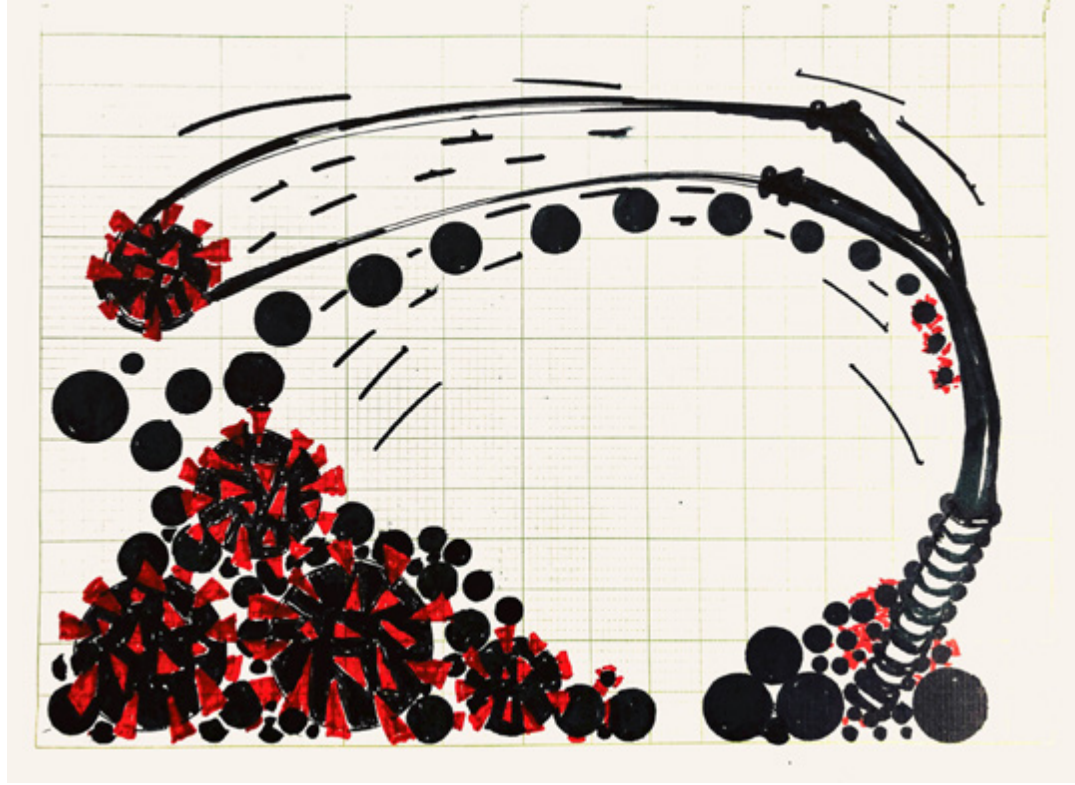


mixed message 05.19.2020

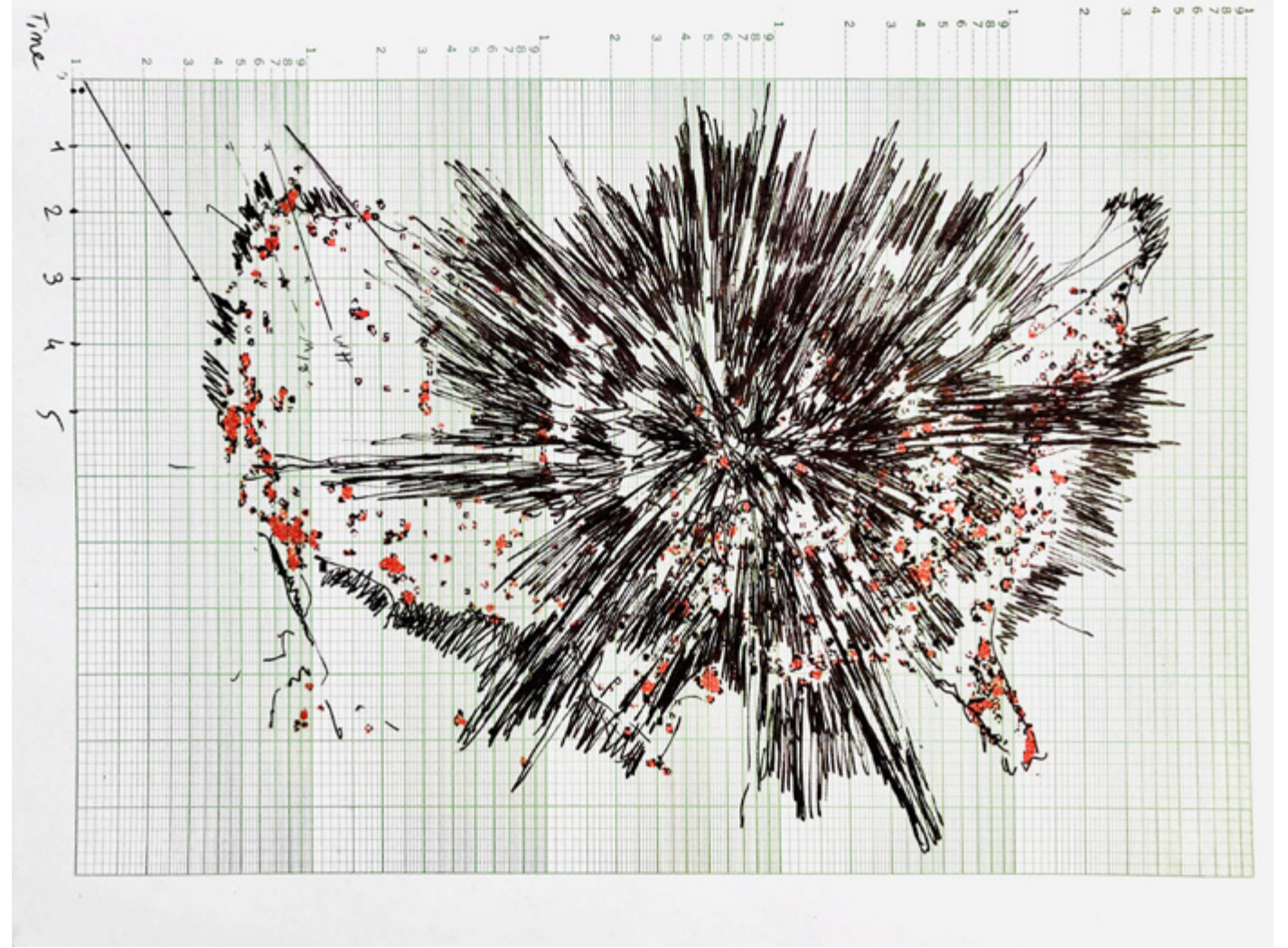


herd immunity 05.29.2020

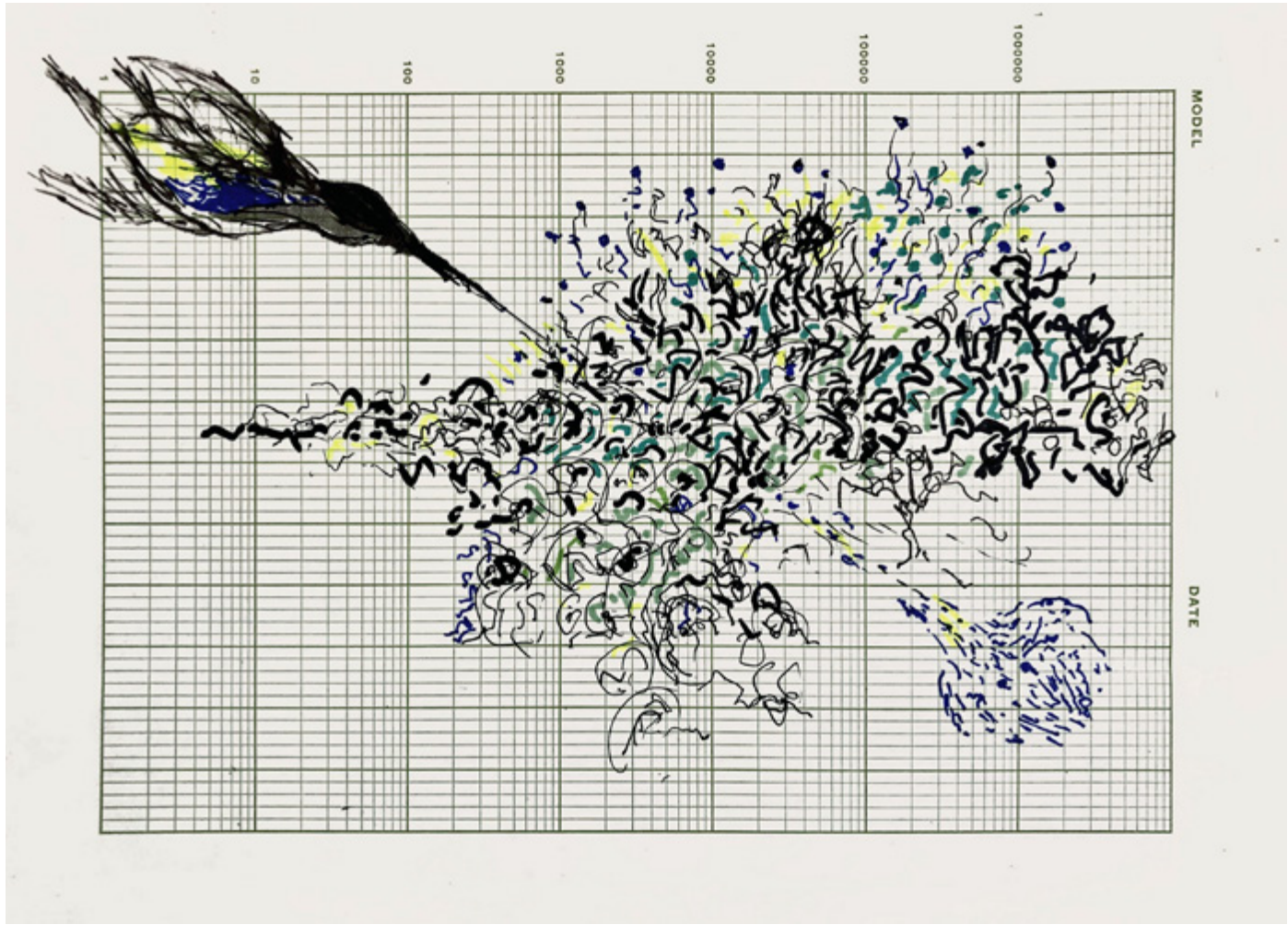




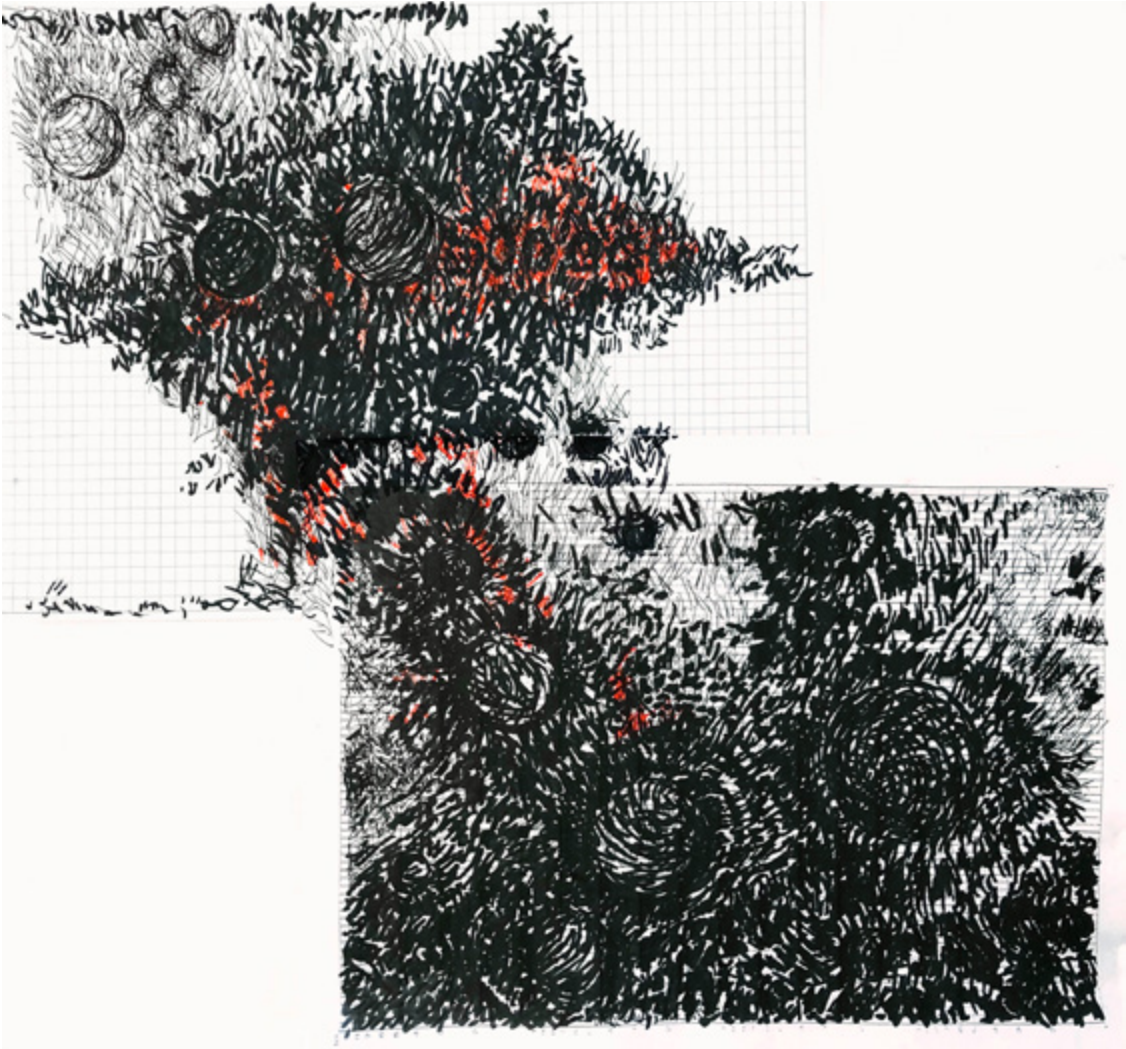
taking aim 07.14.2020



of thee i sing 07.20.2020



vacuna 03.06.2021

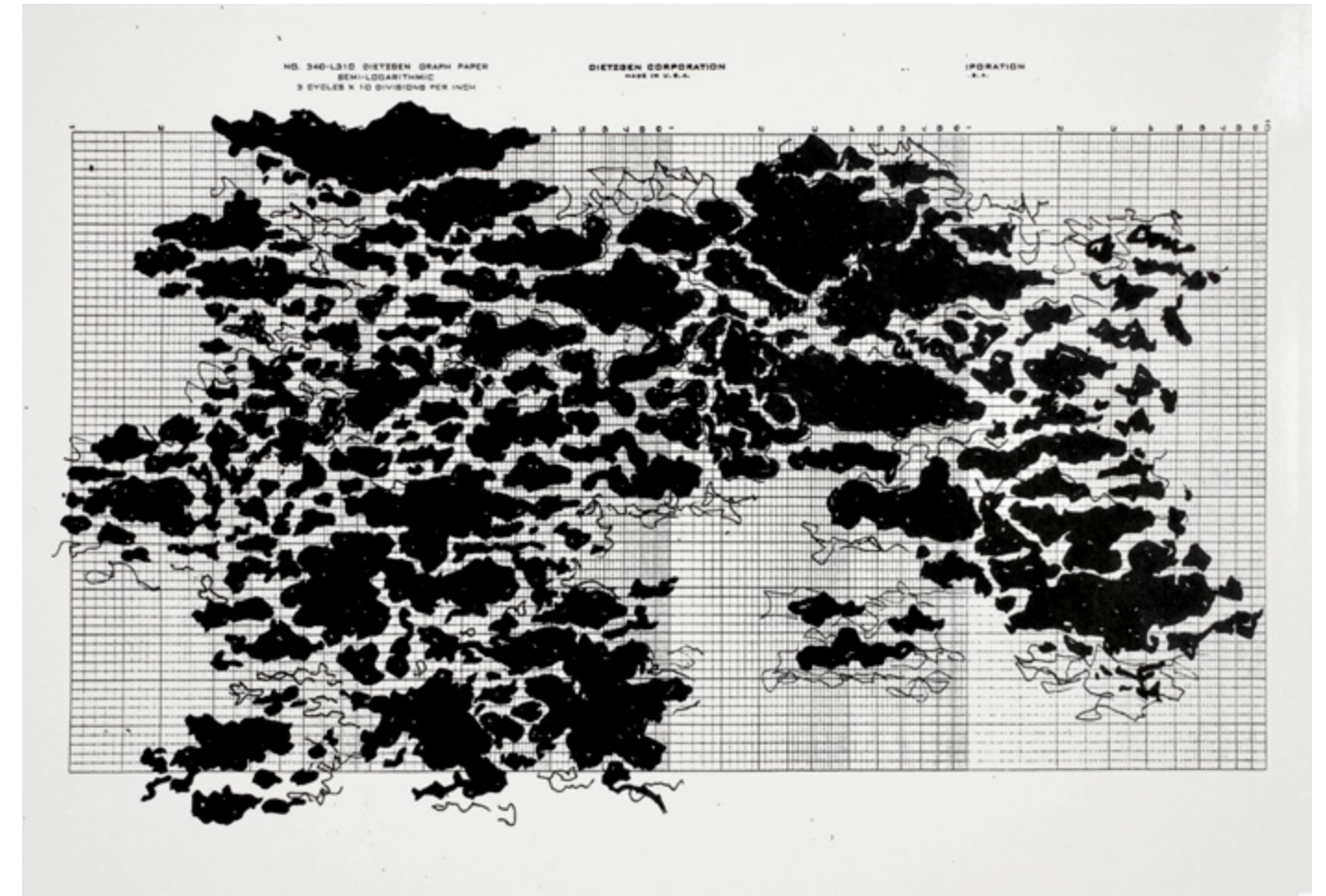


mummuration 01.06.21

As 2020 unrolled before us, around us, and in us, with its incipient fascism, its ravaging disease, its exposure of racism, Phyllis Ewen mapped it in drawings. Recording our national catastrophe, and with it our seasons, growing things, the possibility of life: she has faithfully kept in sight the fact that the coronavirus looks like nothing so much as a grain of pollen. What would I have done without her translations of our fears and passions? Not cameos or snapshots, but taken together, an epic. Epics record, “sing of,” shape the fall of human worlds, and sometimes their foundations.

The shape that emerges from this sequence of drawings is a map of the United States, outlined in the names of murdered Black folks, deluged by waves, smothered with chrysanthemums, disintegrating into embers, bursting apart with rage—or is it energy? We are still here, in a dangerous space between worlds, one damaged and one (or more) possible: it’s fitting to close this series with one covert map made of tulips and another smothered in viruses. We are exploring still.

MARY BAINE CAMPBELL
Poet, Professor Brandeis University

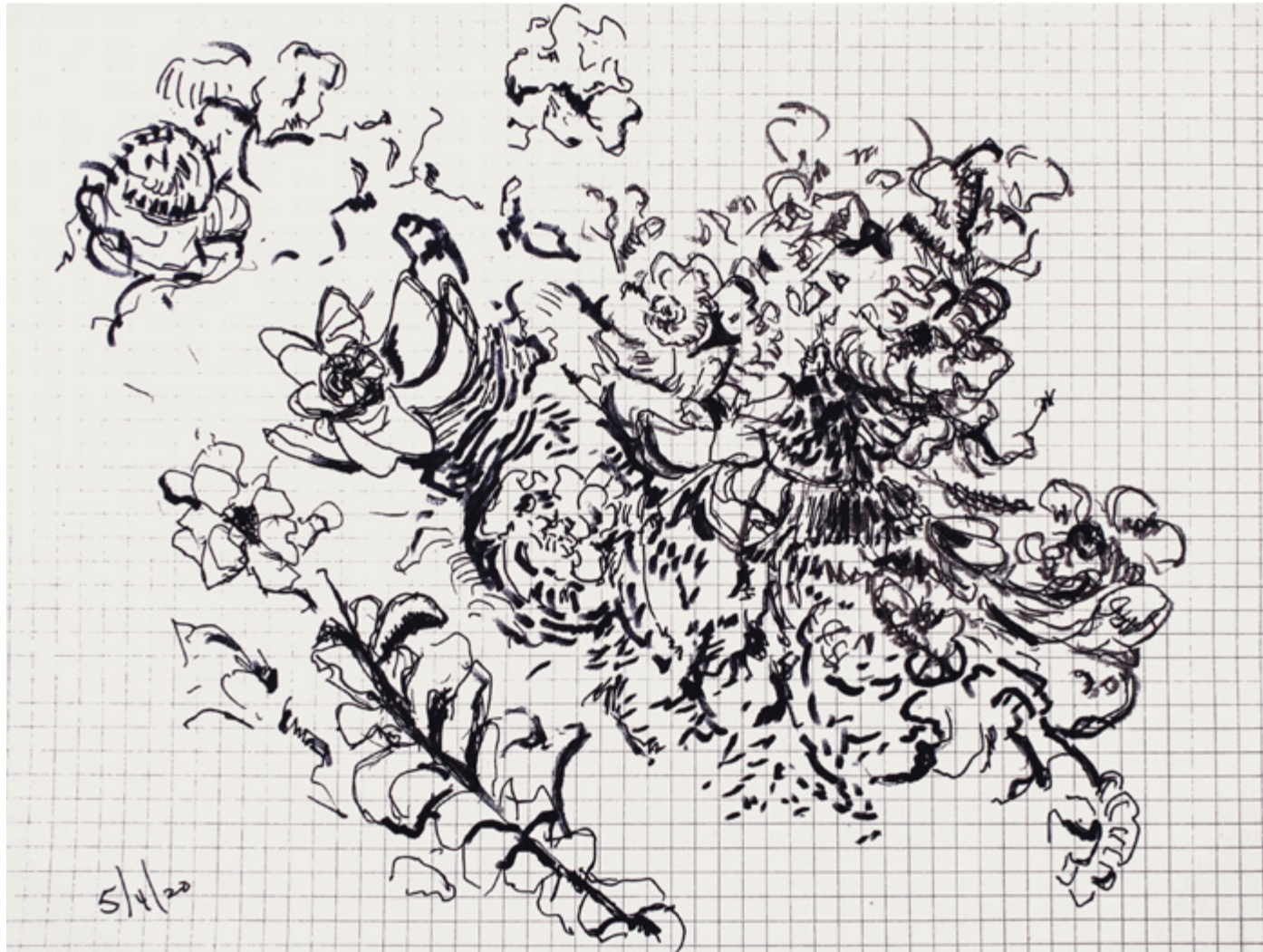




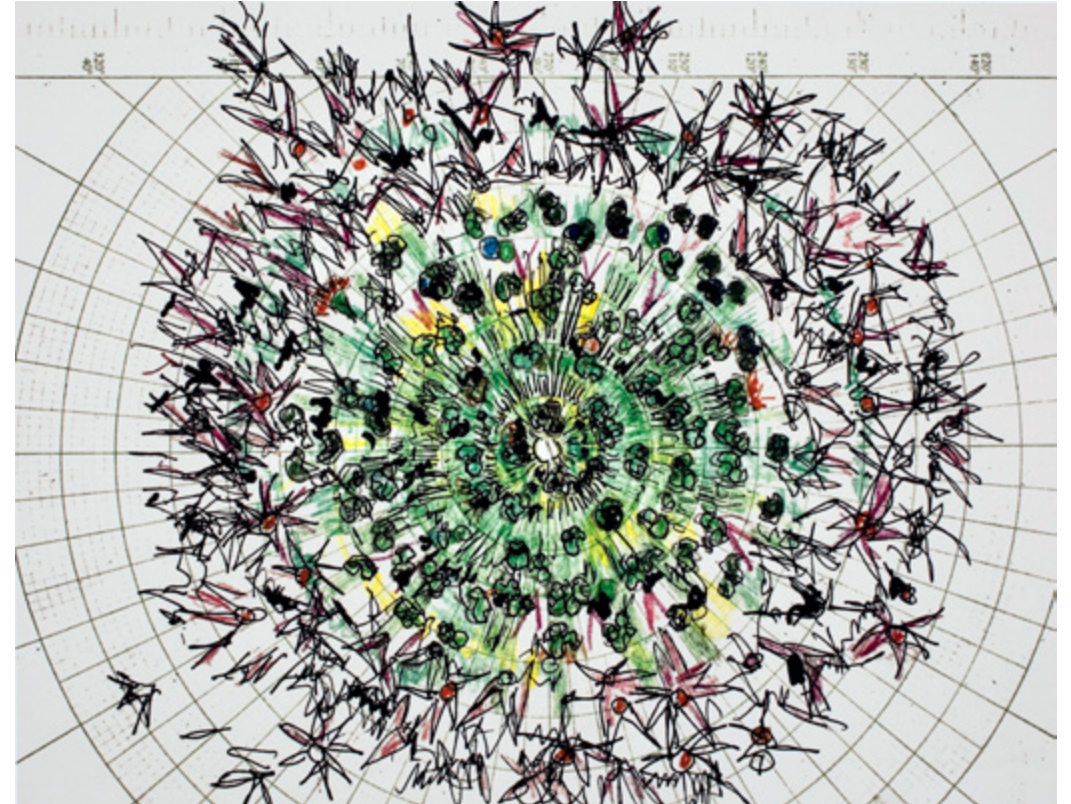
there is a crack in everything 06.05.2020



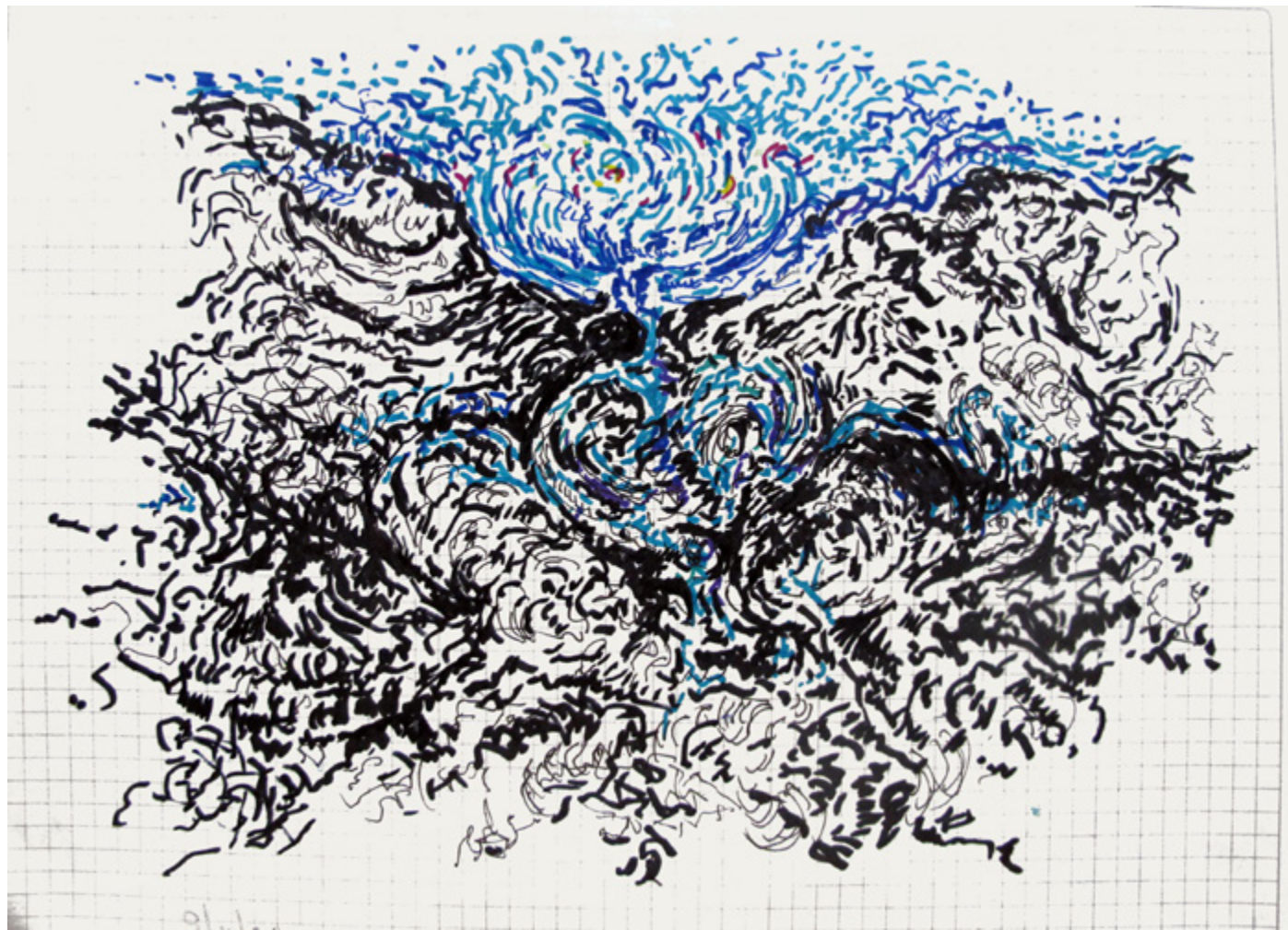
irregular path 05.16.2020



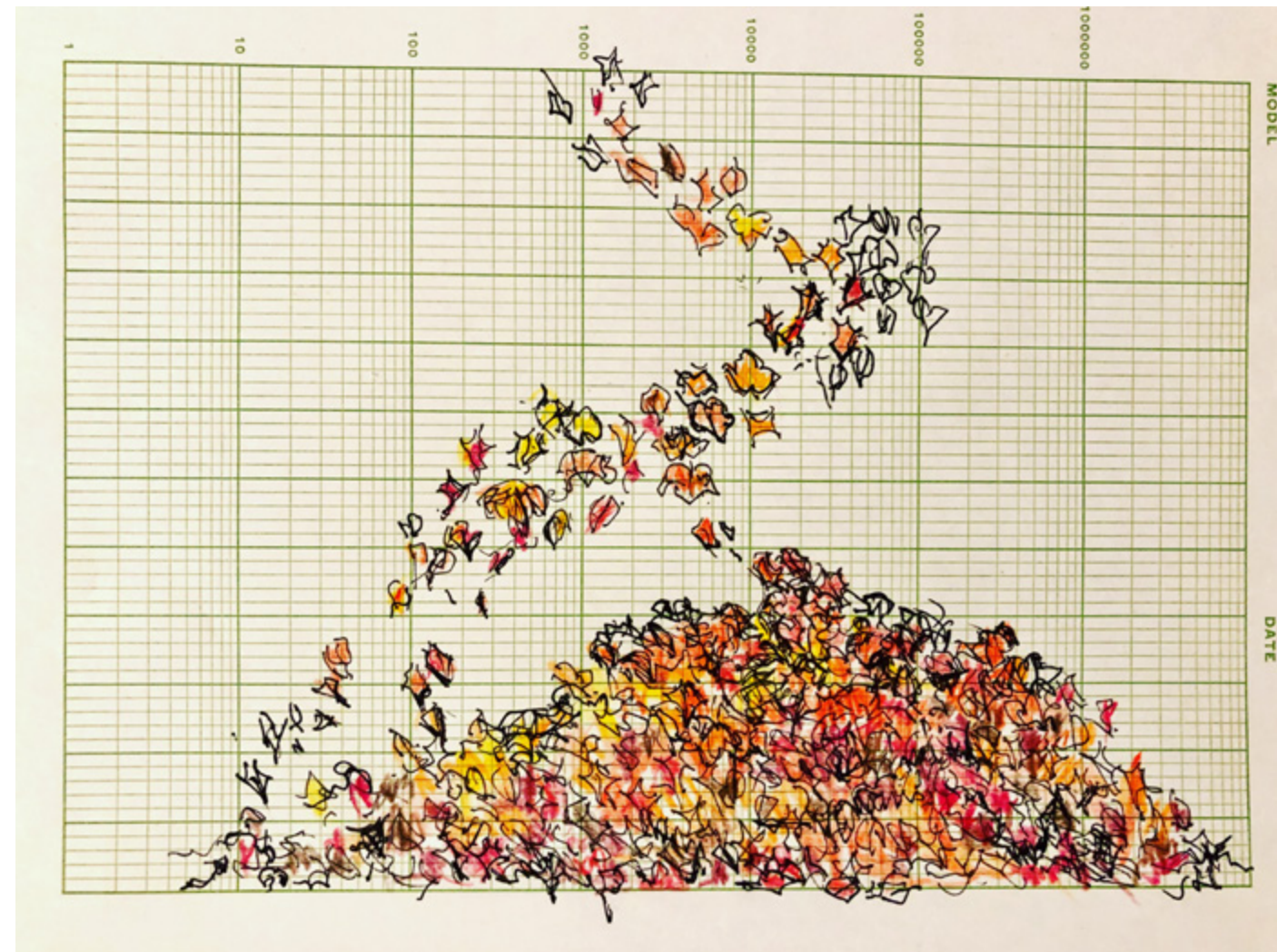
imagined flowers 05.04.2020



allium 06.18.2020



fountain 09.11.2020



colors for a grey day, 10.26.20



aftermath 09.14.2020

The Covid-19 Pandemic opened new avenues of expression and exploration for me. I began in April 2020 to draw every day on graph paper; its quadratic structure giving order to the chaos I sensed within and without. The images in SONATA are a selection of these daily drawings. My sources include drawings by Leonardo of the Deluge, garden growth and decay, climate changes, the virus, and the politics of race and grief.

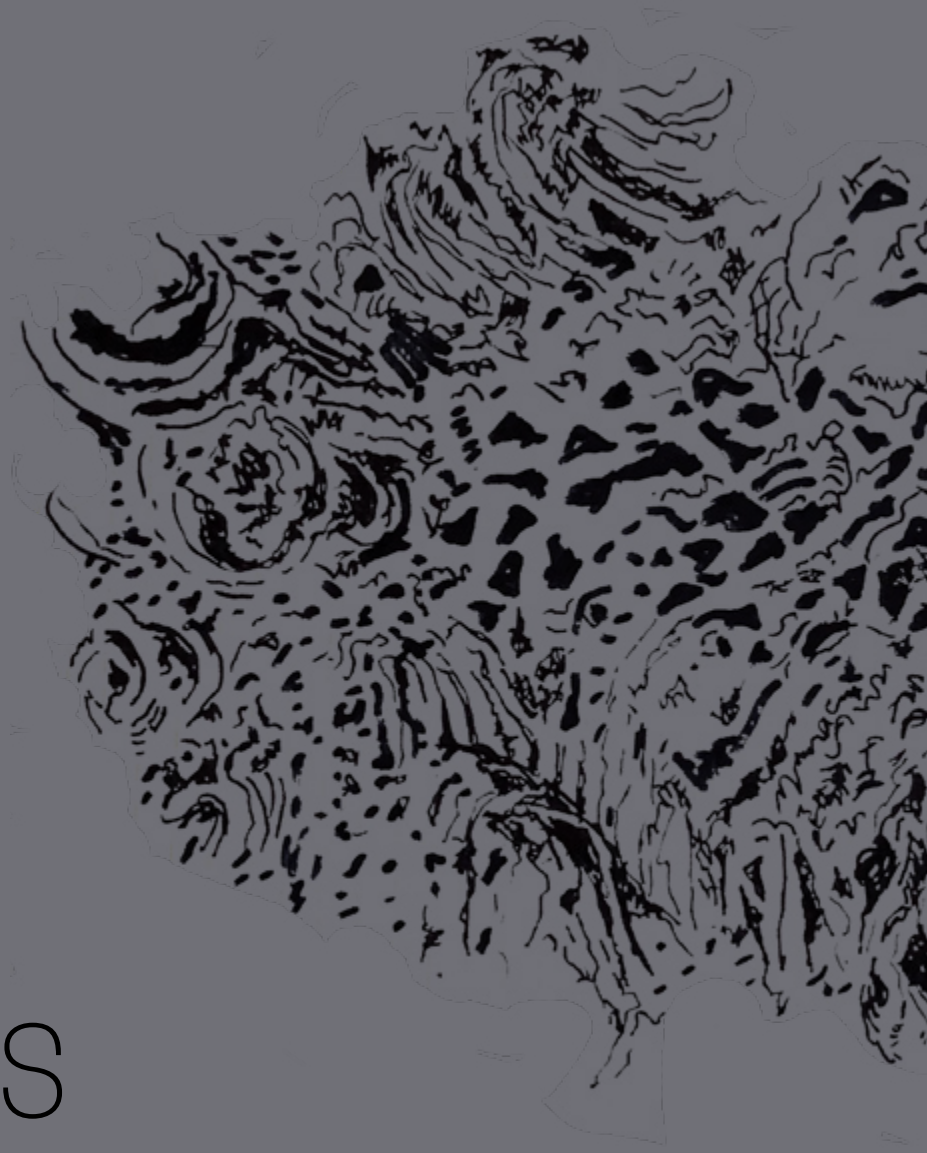
—PHYLLIS EWEN
Artist



cover image: deluge 04.08.2020, detail
spread image: it's debatable 10.23.2020

phyllis ewen 2021©
design: farm projects

may your heart always be joyful, may your song always be sung. 11.23.20



DRAWINGS

phyllis ewen