

Ava McDonough

All I Hear Is the Symphony

November 18, 2023 - January 20, 2024

...the previous one because I am about to begin a story that is... the almost impossible for me. This is something I...
reader. You have been elevated to reader from viewer if you have made it this far. And if you just happened to begin reading a
all because all success is largely chance. I go on: when I was younger, my father told me a story that had place in possi-
has engaged my memory - I believe it had a highlight and was very formal. Anyway, my father tells the story of a stone
away from Entolander Out. Jesse Walt's chair rested a very peculiar handbag made of a greyish leather material. My father
but went on with his metal leaving the handbag in the corner of his eye. The story goes, as he told it, that walking through
and the bag swells, grows, and returns to its original form. It is not a handbag: it's an armadillo. Now, whether or not th-
of having an armadillo) exactly as recalled, does not matter. The story, however outrageous, seems as credible and con-
decide. Upon hearing this story, I said "ah-ha!" I want to be the armadillo. I want to be the curious story peop-
watches people in complete surprise. If I looked like someone who makes ~~as~~ for work I make, I would not appear
to my own appearance and lack of desire to change it, I move around in the world trying to embody this spirit
the handbag as an armadillo. This, though, is often very defeating. I cannot reveal myself as the fatal animal it is
by me and eye on having their whole life not having known about anything passed a handbag. It has been a practice for
experience. I probably pass by many handbags that I think are armadillos, and witness many armadillos that ~~are~~ I
I talk about being a person in a world that is so large and impatient. I rage war against the individuals and
scattered among the masses. What I have learned, though, is that it doesn't really matter what you look like. ~~Things~~
come, but it does pain me from time to time when people look at my breasts or don't ask me any questions because
we are all guilty of this. My dog is barking in his sleep on the concrete floor beneath my head. I assume he is dreaming
by is ~~more~~ more rant, more wild. I never have an answer, so I don't know why I bother writing. There existential
realistic, but they keep me entertained. Like I said, I have a very distorted sense of time, so I have to get creative.
of my friends have jobs or do not exist, so I entertain myself in my inner world. It is private and personal and very
I am in the world that both you, the reader, and me, the whole person writing this piece, have no idea what
eye. When I become the reader, I will know, but you, the reader, will never know. But in this very moment, a
as to what I will do. And as you are reading this, the person writing has no idea who you are. Even when I get
every time, it comes), I will not know who I am in later moments. I will be a stranger to myself there, as I am in
among good and bad of a poem I love. It goes, "you will rise like sunlight to perfect laughter, it's the only good night dream
But read to me by a lover who I eventually felt to embody and then the exact message of that poem. He was obse-
sed. But I love him dearly for all the times we shared and all the lessons we learned together. Sometimes, in this se-
e. I put a string on the envelope and wrote an address. Then I shove them deep in my desk, behind the top
I am doing here, now. This letter is addressed to no one and will not fit in my desk, so I am more inclined to send
red my former pen in favor for a new one with a sharp tip and a well-enclosed ink reservoir. I feel that it will be
I more lightly out at a very different ~~single~~ angle. When I was a child learning her to write, they had to send me to
to hold the pencil. I never adopted their suggested way; I simply turned the paper. Two wrongs don't make a right
you because I was so afraid of speaking. That I don't believe I've significantly cared to improve upon. Hence
day one) I have ~~nothing~~ better in love with vocabulary and etymology. I feel that speaking words for speaking
to me of the fact that I am not special nor alone in many matters. My love for expanding my personal lexicon
complex colors. Every time I learn a new word - really learn it, not just read it - I feel as if I have a new color
the both experience and in writing. Words can be entire poems. They capture an entire collective experience in the
something shared and known. I am sure, at this time, if my primary curiosity is semantic or semiotic. Usually, a
concern the semantic. I suppose I am concerned with translating the former into the latter. Speaking of the latter
how I had cast in aluminum and set in a concrete mass. The writing told in this piece is "That colorless desert
of it - in my imagination a long time ago, these babies were going to have a very sterile and outbreathed form
ing new experience. The meaning of stars final form exist within me, and I can feel the outbreathed gestating now. I
one disease of doubt that I second guess showing anyone anything. I have spent hours writing these words, and as

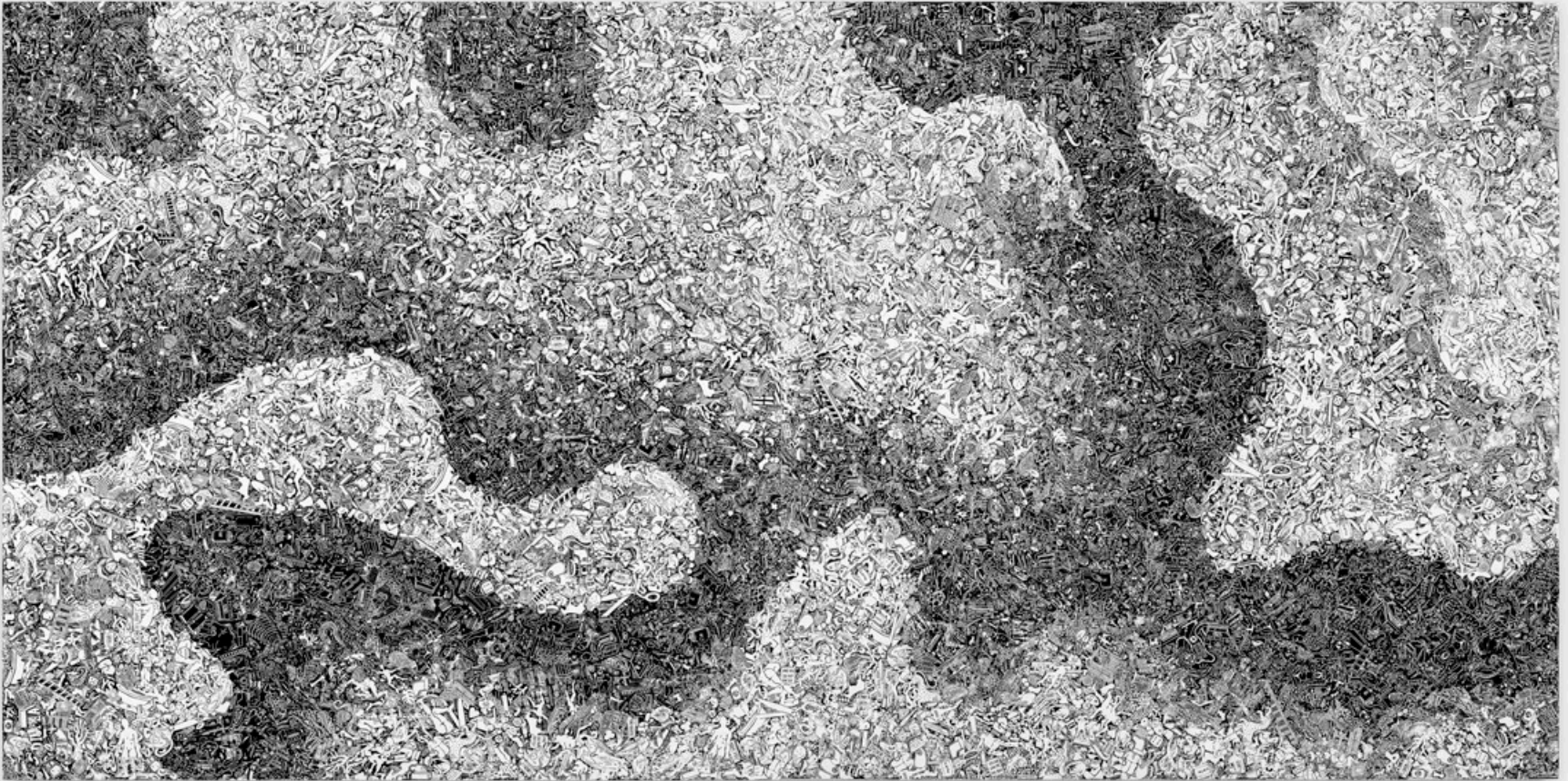
Lowell Ryan Projects is pleased to present *All I Hear Is the Symphony*, Ava McDonough's debut solo exhibition. McDonough is a 24-year-old, self-taught artist based in Los Angeles, CA. Comprised of paintings, sculpture, and video, the exhibition explores depictions of recollections, illusions, and dreams through the artist's unique process that simultaneously fades and expands as time progresses. *All I Hear Is the Symphony* endeavors to create systems to remember while also understanding the temporal and relational aspects of memory and its effect on our psyche.

Utilizing an ever-expanding symbolic language of imagery drawn from the artist's subconscious, McDonough creates monochromatic collages out of linocut prints that form the basis of her painting process. A routine of intensive writing and meditation allows the artist to channel the information for her drawings, which she then carves into linoleum blocks. These figurative depictions encompass a rich mixture of her current enthusiasms—stories, dreams, nightmares, people, places, and objects—and capture her emotional state towards them as vestiges. By the repeated process of printing on paper, the blocks gradually deteriorate, resulting in imagery of varying saturation and symbolizing our relationship to memory—sometimes intensely vivid and other times as if slowly erased. These prints are then used to form elaborate collages that are emblems of a continuous process containing encounter and resolution, suffering and exhilaration, tragedy and comedy through a pictorial field that references a form of storytelling. The ensuing works are both highly personal in nature while encompassing the universality and absurdity of the human experience.

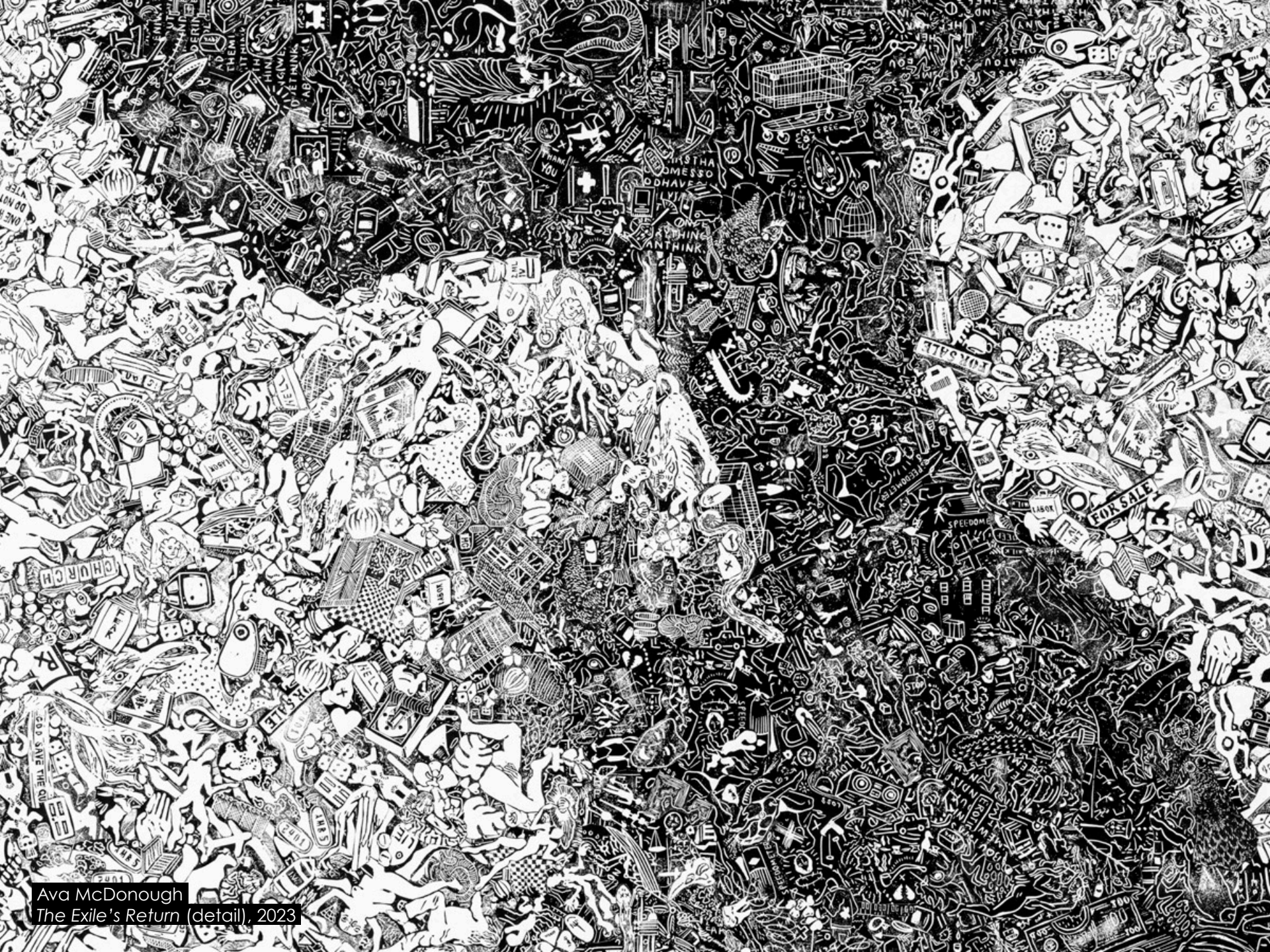
McDonough's current printmaking practice began in a hospital bed. After a severe accident in 2020, the artist had a near-death experience, undergoing extensive surgeries and episodes of hospitalization. A poor reaction to high doses of Fentanyl combined with extended periods of isolation due to COVID-19 visitation restrictions led her to spend a week in a dream-like state, enduring intense hallucinations and delusions which continue to inform her practice. Notable in the exhibition is the large-scale triptych *I, As a Sky-Painting Journeyman*, 2023, in which the form of a pelvic x-ray emerges from the gestalt of dissected and collaged prints affixed to the panels. Upon closer approach, the paintings parade ages of life and death; imagery such as pill bottles, deities, graves, gardens, ladders, scissors, and lovers transform into waves and patterns, a nebulous subconscious portrait of the artist.

Engaging with McDonough's creative practice is like unraveling a labyrinth of narratives and emotions, each layer revealing the intricacies of her mind's musings, while at the same time inviting viewers to delve into the depths of their own interpretations and sentiments. Ava McDonough was born in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 1999 and lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. A self-taught artist, McDonough graduated magna cum laude from Cornell University, majoring in Environmental Science in 2021.

For more information please contact: info@lowellryanprojects.com



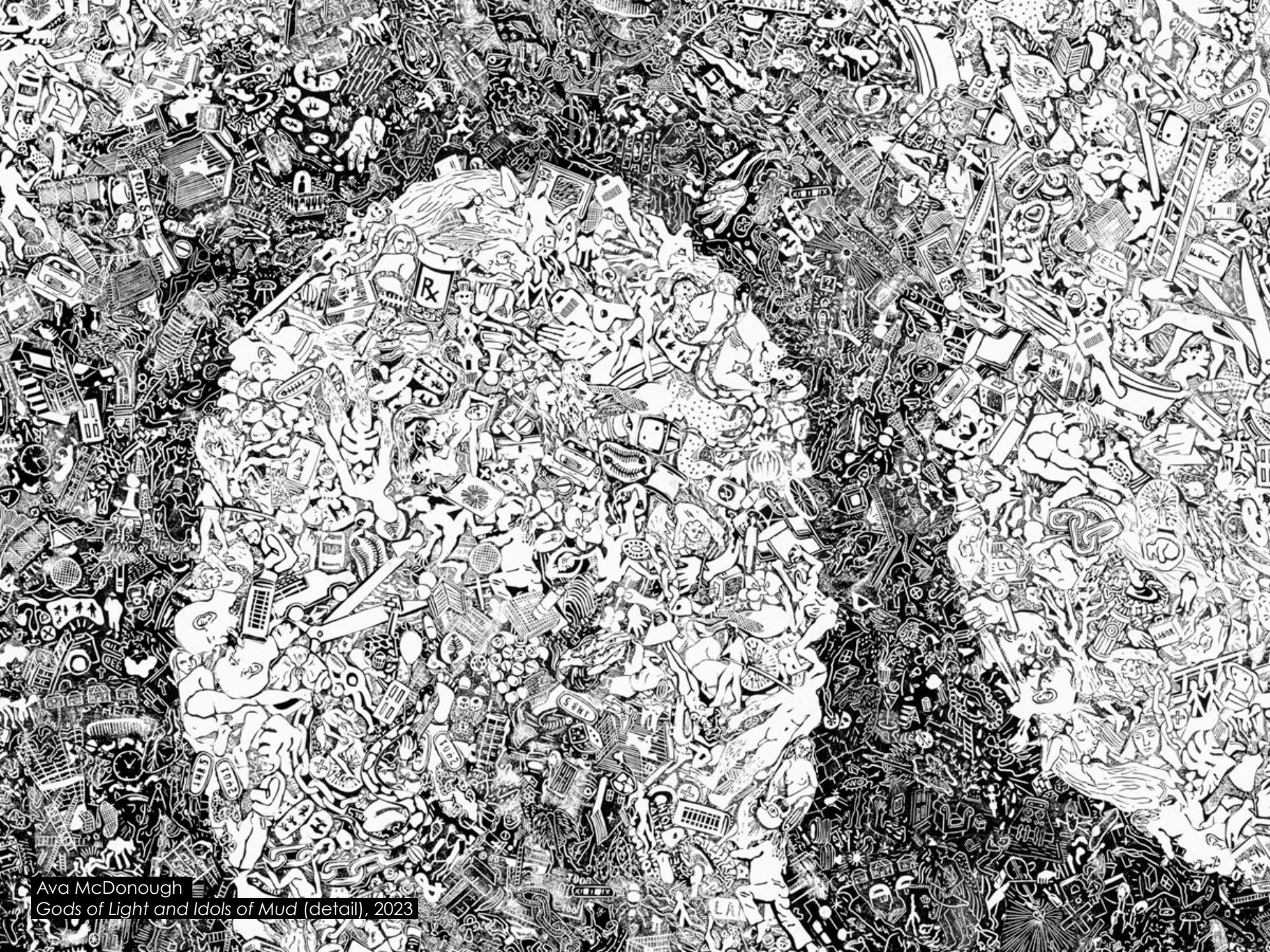
Ava McDonough
The Exile's Return, 2023
Ink, paper, and acrylic on panel
60h x 120w in
152.4h x 304.8w cm
AM021



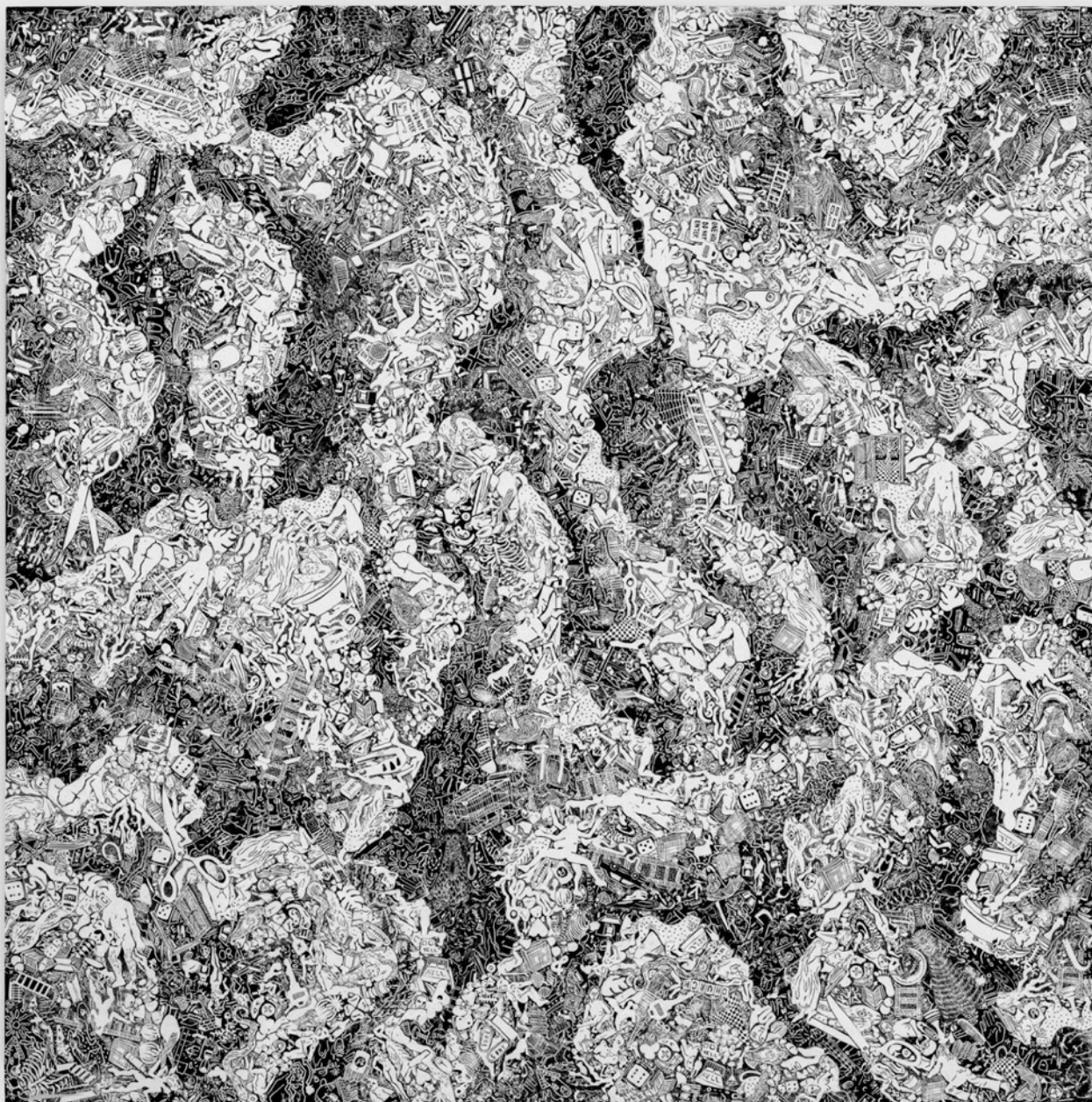
Ava McDonough
The Exile's Return (detail), 2023



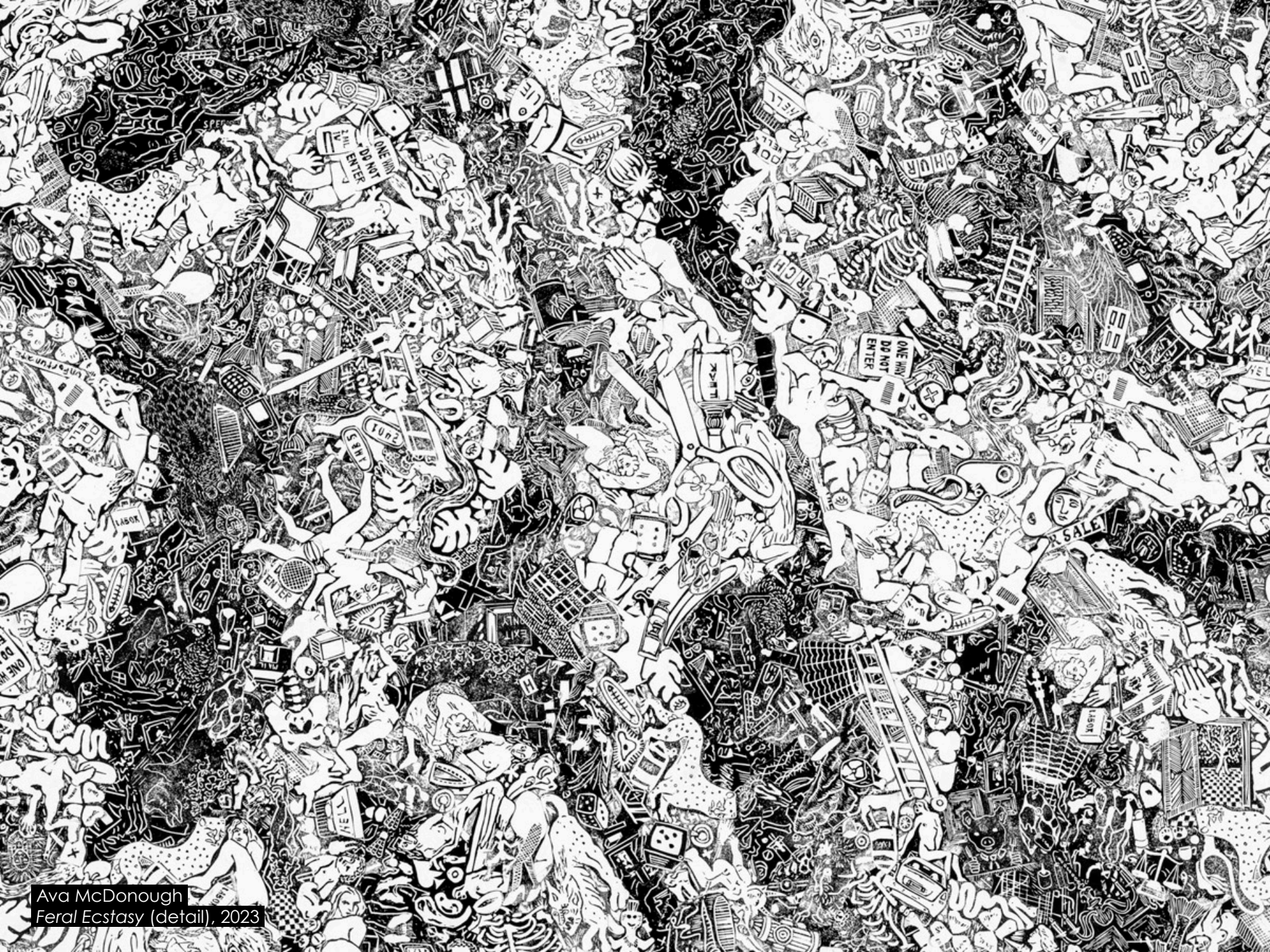
Ava McDonough
Gods of Light and Idols of Mud
2023
Ink, paper, and acrylic on panel
82h x 60w in
208.3h x 152.4w cm
AM020



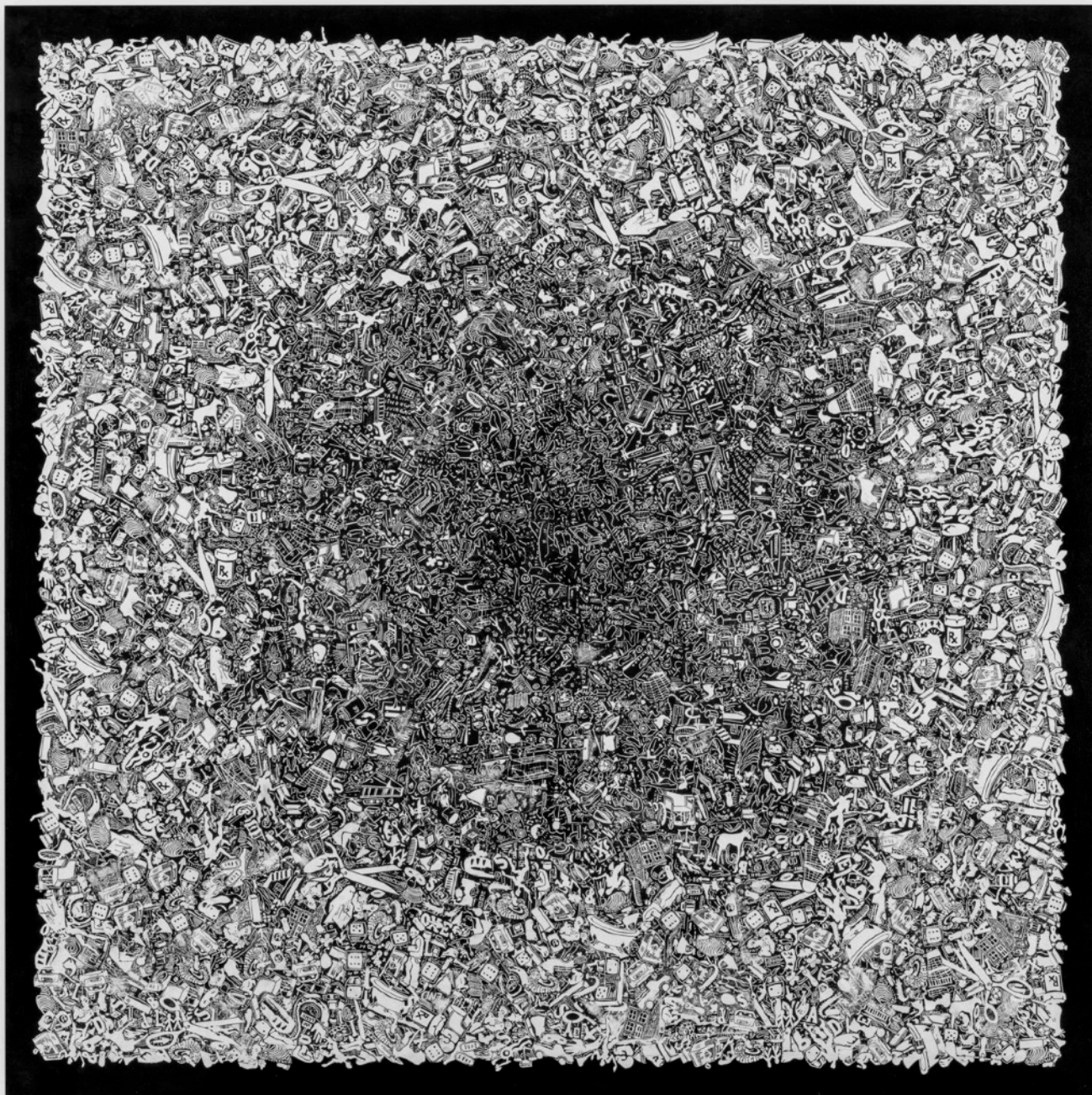
Ava McDonough
Gods of Light and Idols of Mud (detail), 2023



Ava McDonough
Feral Ecstasy
2023
Ink, paper, and acrylic on panel
48h x 48w in
122h x 122w cm
AM022



Ava McDonough
Feral Ecstasy (detail), 2023



Ava McDonough
Unfortunate Woman's Parade
2022
Ink, paper, and acrylic on panel
60h x 60w in
152.4h x 152.4w cm
AM060



Ava McDonough
Unfortunate Woman's Parade (detail)
2022



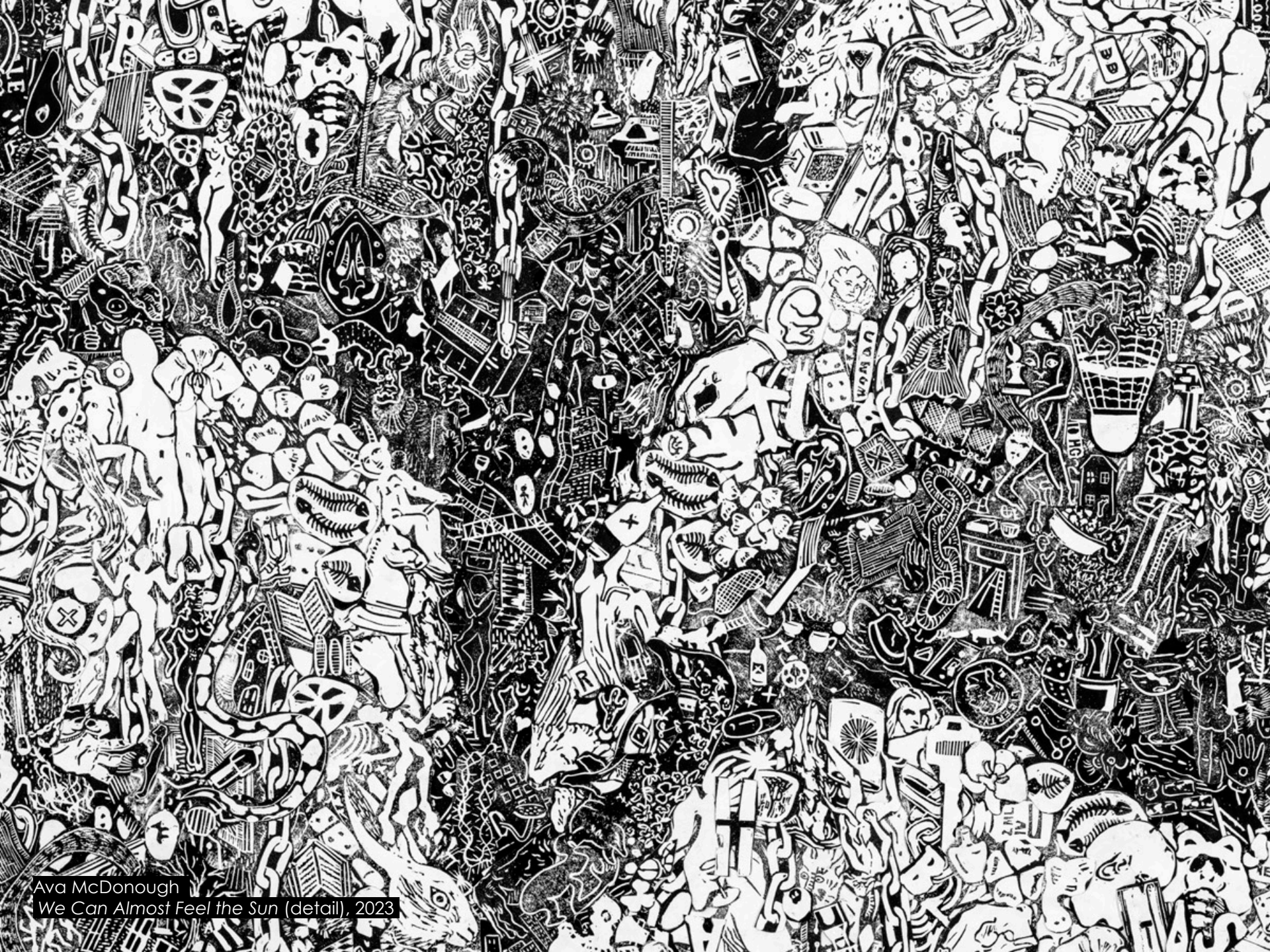
Ava McDonough
*A Portrait of the Absurd Man
as a Young Woman*
2023
Ceramic tile, wood, and
LCD display (video 48 seconds)
16h x 16w x 2d in
40.64h x 40.64w x 5.08d cm
Edition 1 of 3 (2 AP)
AM032



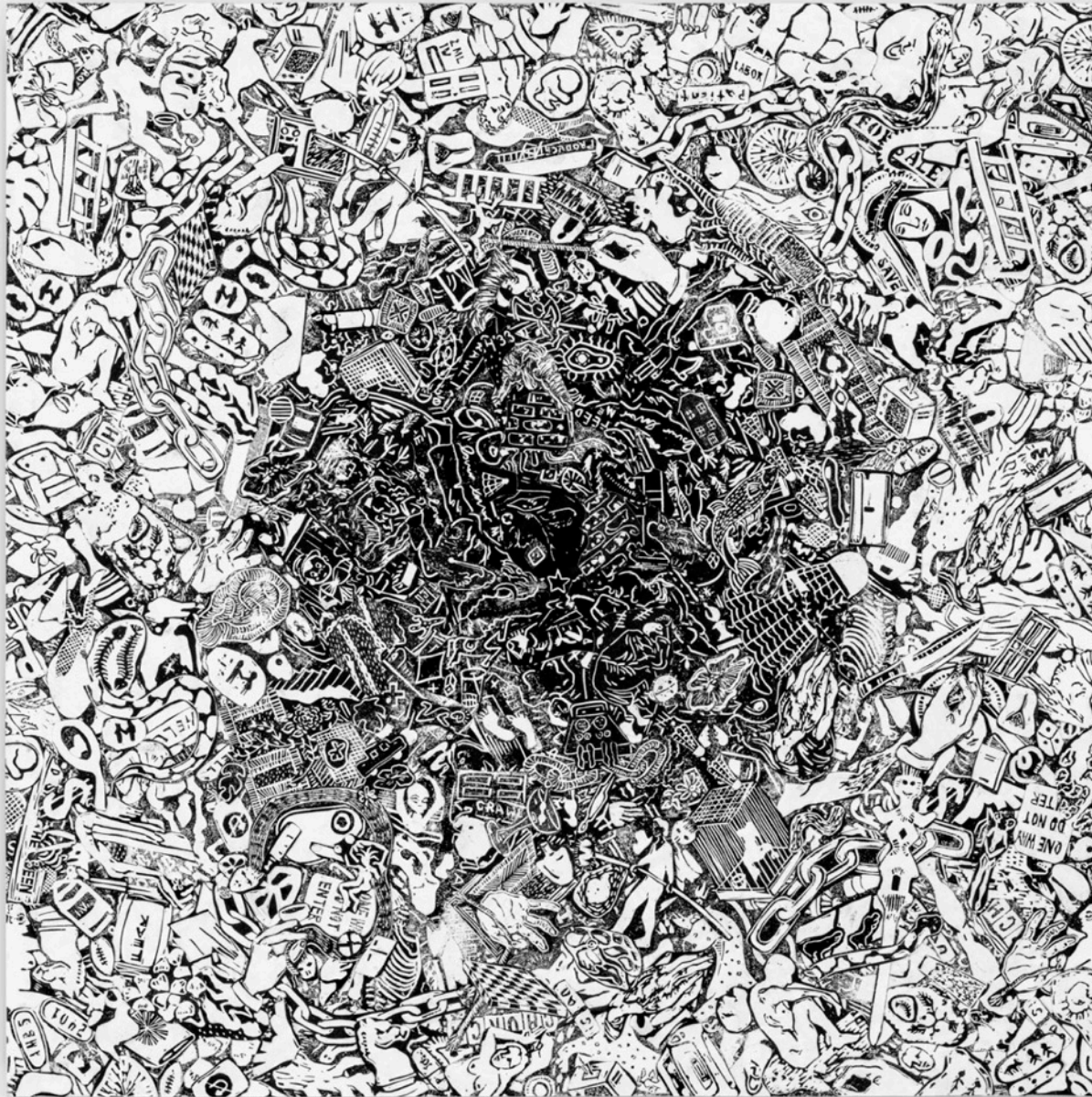
Ava McDonough
A Portrait of the Absurd Man as a Young Woman (video still), 2023



Ava McDonough
We Can Almost Feel the Sun
2023
Ink, paper, and acrylic on panel
36h x 24w in
91.5h x 61w cm
AM023



Ava McDonough
We Can Almost Feel the Sun (detail), 2023



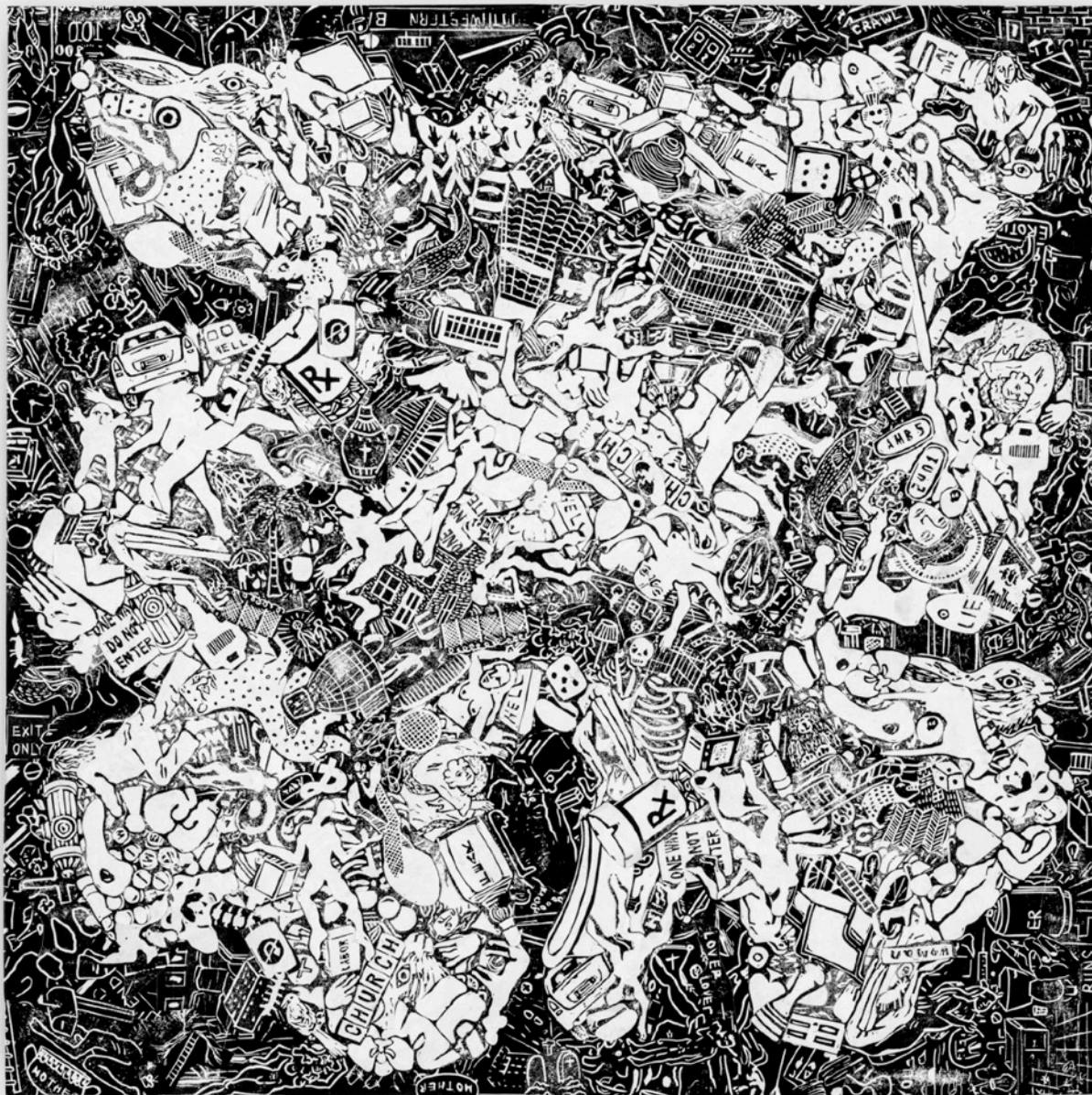
Ava McDonough
In One of the Earth's Attics
2023
Ink, paper, and acrylic on panel
20h x 20w in
50.8h x 50.8w cm
AM027



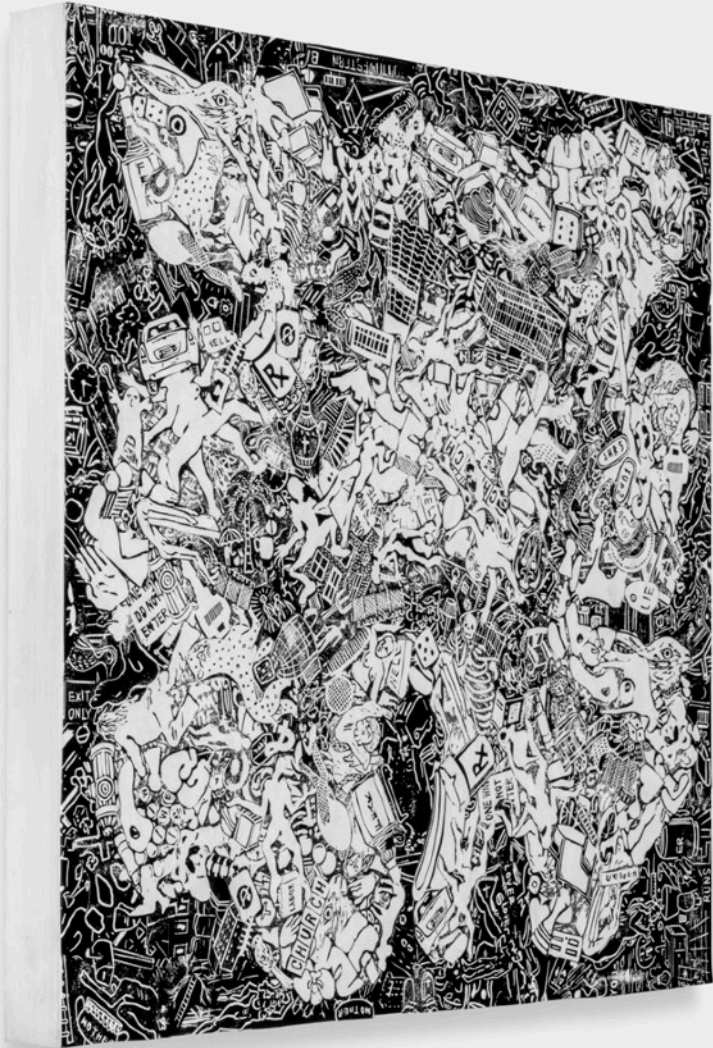
Ava McDonough
Like a Brushfire, Soon Forgotten
2023
Ink, paper, and acrylic on panel
20h x 20w in
50.8h x 50.8w cm
AM024



Ava McDonough
Like a Brushfire, Soon Forgotten (detail), 2023



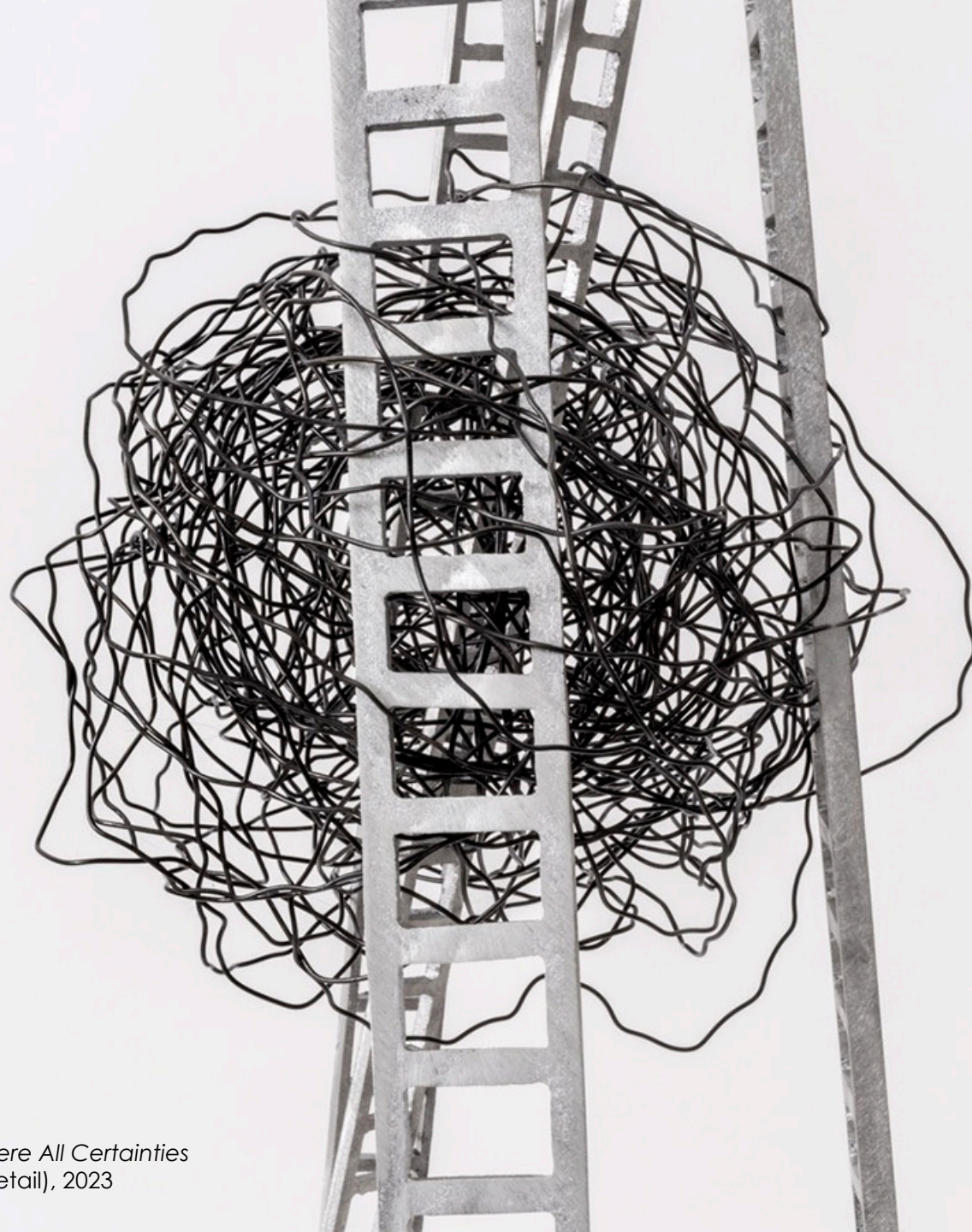
Ava McDonough
Directions for Decomposition
2023
Ink, paper, and acrylic on panel
20h x 20w in
50.8h x 50.8w cm
AM025



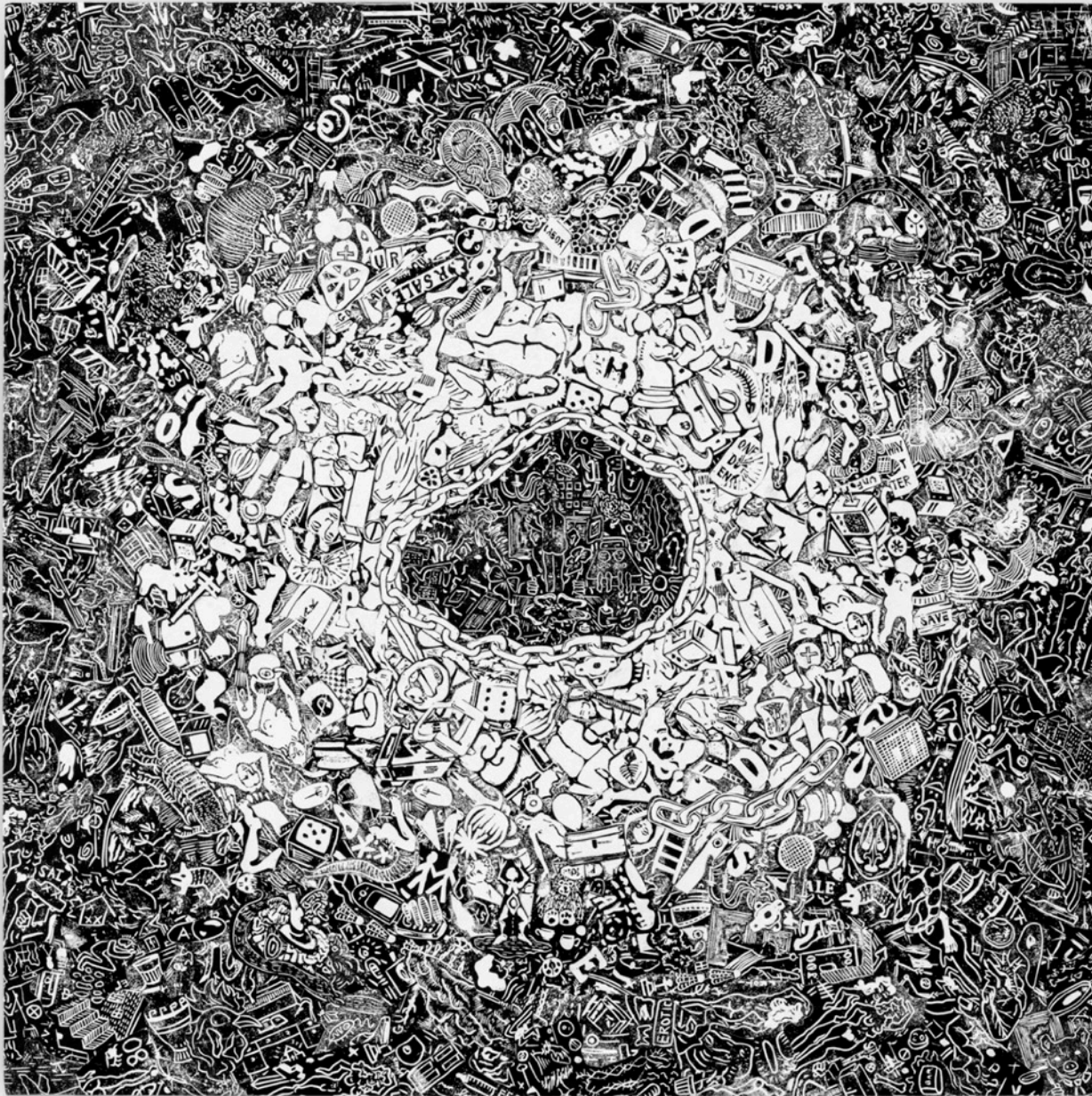
Ava McDonough
Directions for Decomposition (side view)
2023

Ava McDonough
That Colorless Desert Where All Certainties Have Become Stones
2023
Cast aluminum and steel wire
75h x 11w x 14d in
190.5h x 28w x 35.6d cm
Variation 1 of 3
AM033





Ava McDonough
*That Colorless Desert Where All Certainties
Have Become Stones (detail), 2023*



Ava McDonough
Behind the Pure Syntax of Steel
2023
Ink, paper, and acrylic on panel
24h x 24w in
61h x 61w cm
AM026



Ava McDonough
Behind the Pure Syntax of Steel (detail), 2023



Ava McDonough
My Beloved Vegetables!
2023
Ink, paper, and acrylic on panel
7h x 5w in
17.8h x 12.7w cm
AM028



Ava McDonough

CARNIVORES

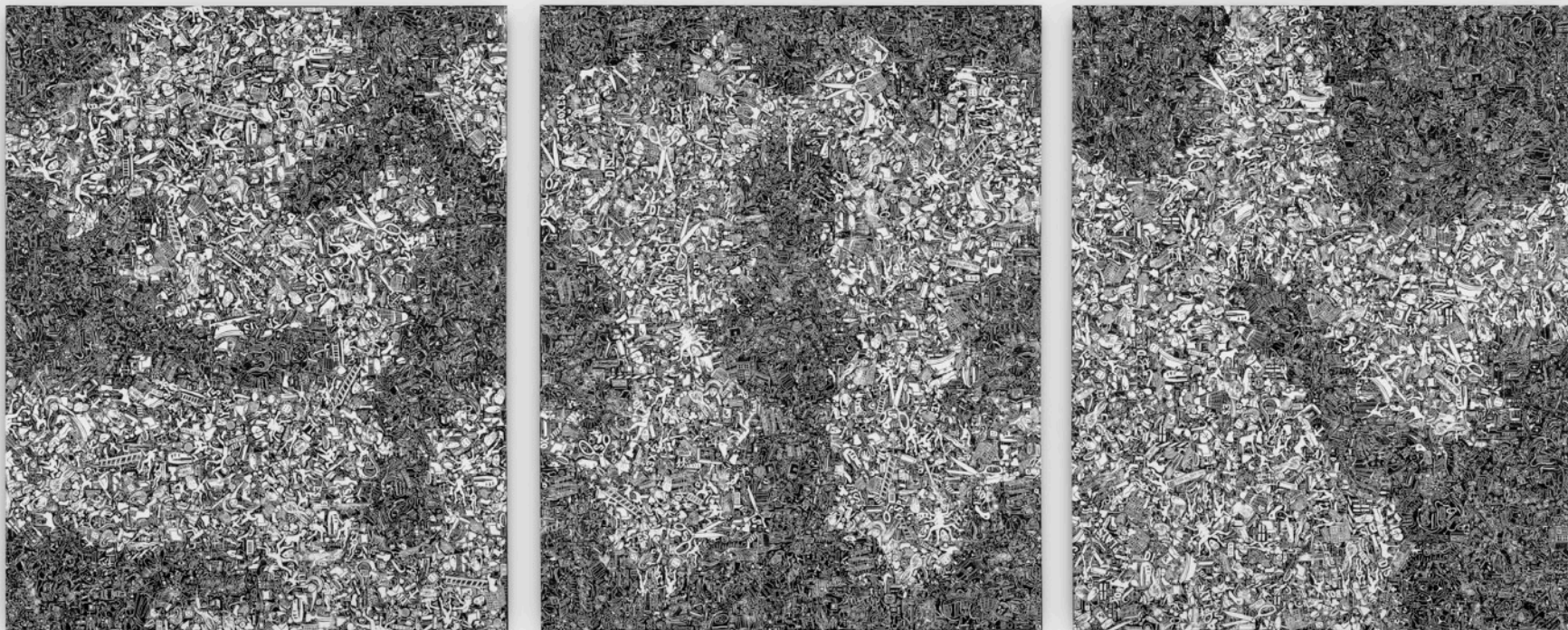
2023

Ink, paper, and acrylic on panel

7h x 5w in

17.8h x 12.7w cm

AM029



Ava McDonough

I, As a Sky-Painting Journeyman, 2023

Ink, paper, and acrylic on panel

60h x 152w in (3 panels each: 60 x 48 in, 152.4 x 122 cm)

AM019

Ava McDonough

I. As a Sky-Painting Journeyman (detail), 2023

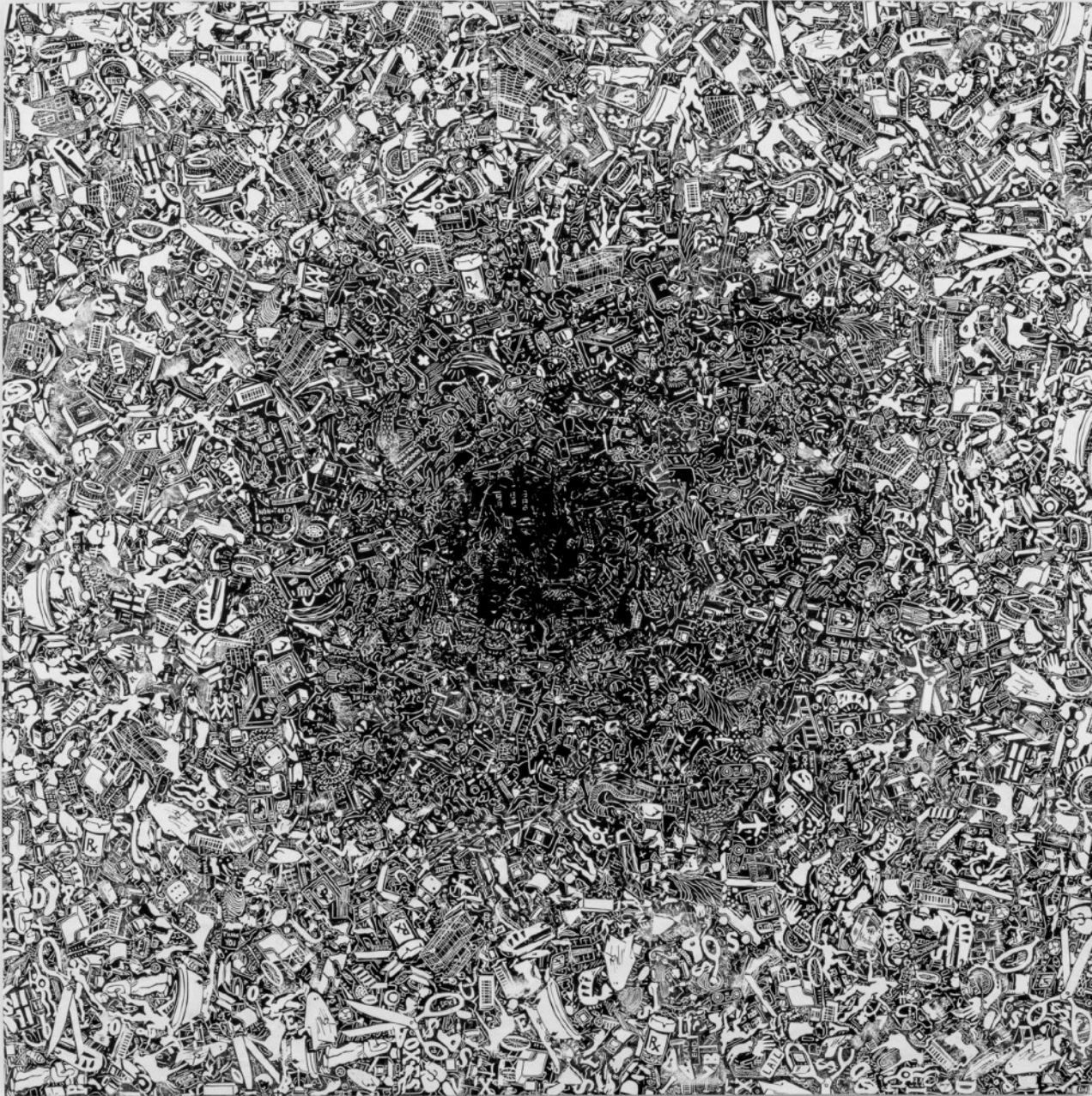




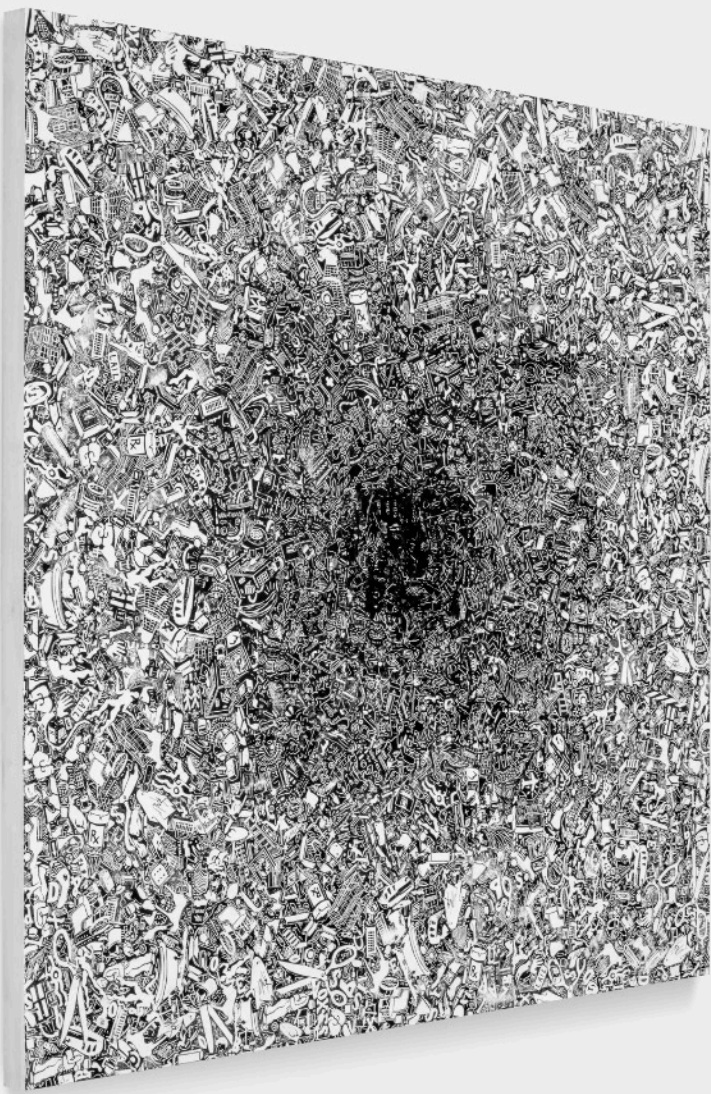
Ava McDonough
I, As a Sky-Painting Journeyman (detail), 2023



Ava McDonough
Cat's Tongue
2023
Ink, paper, and acrylic on panel
20h x 30w in
50.8h x 76.2w cm
AM018

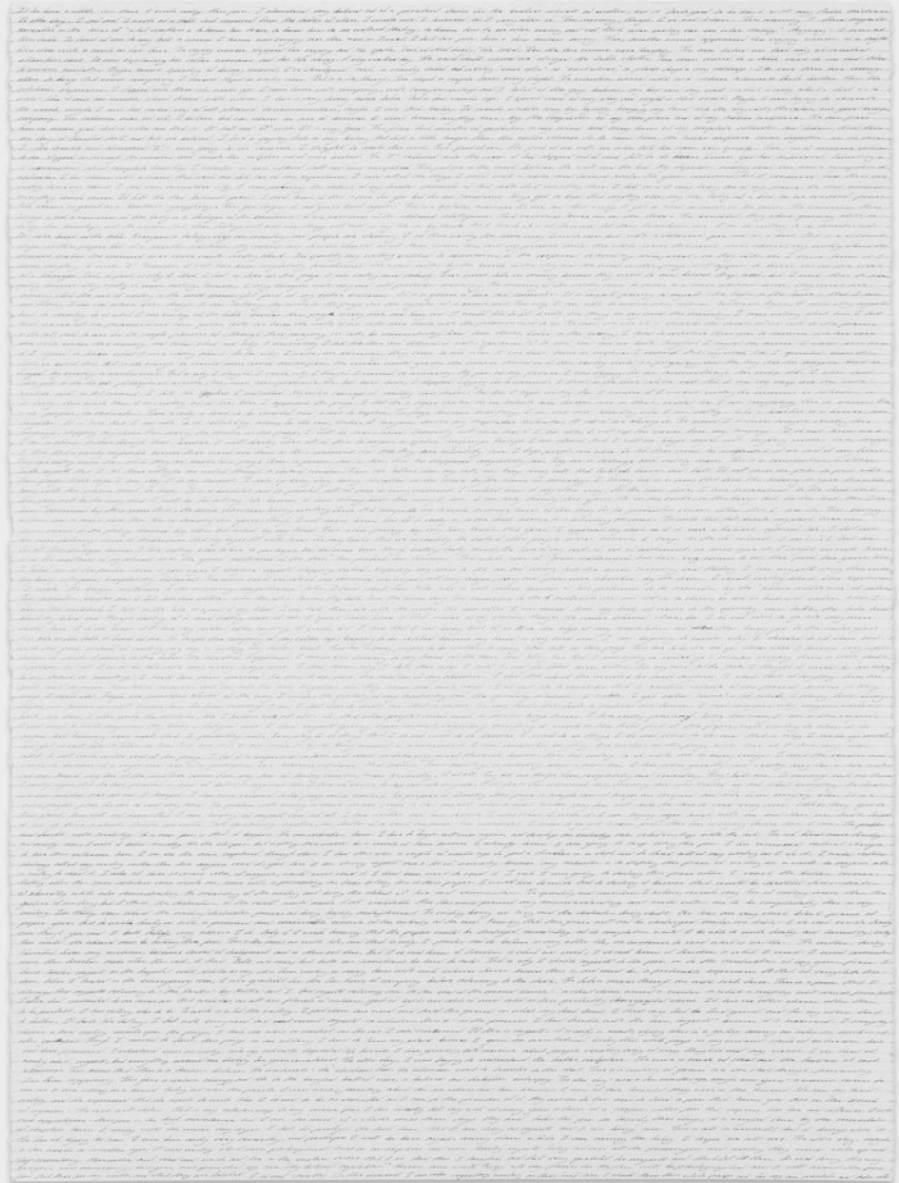


Ava McDonough
In Forgetting There Is Pleasure
2022
Ink, paper, and acrylic on panel
48h x 48w in
122h x 122w cm
AM008

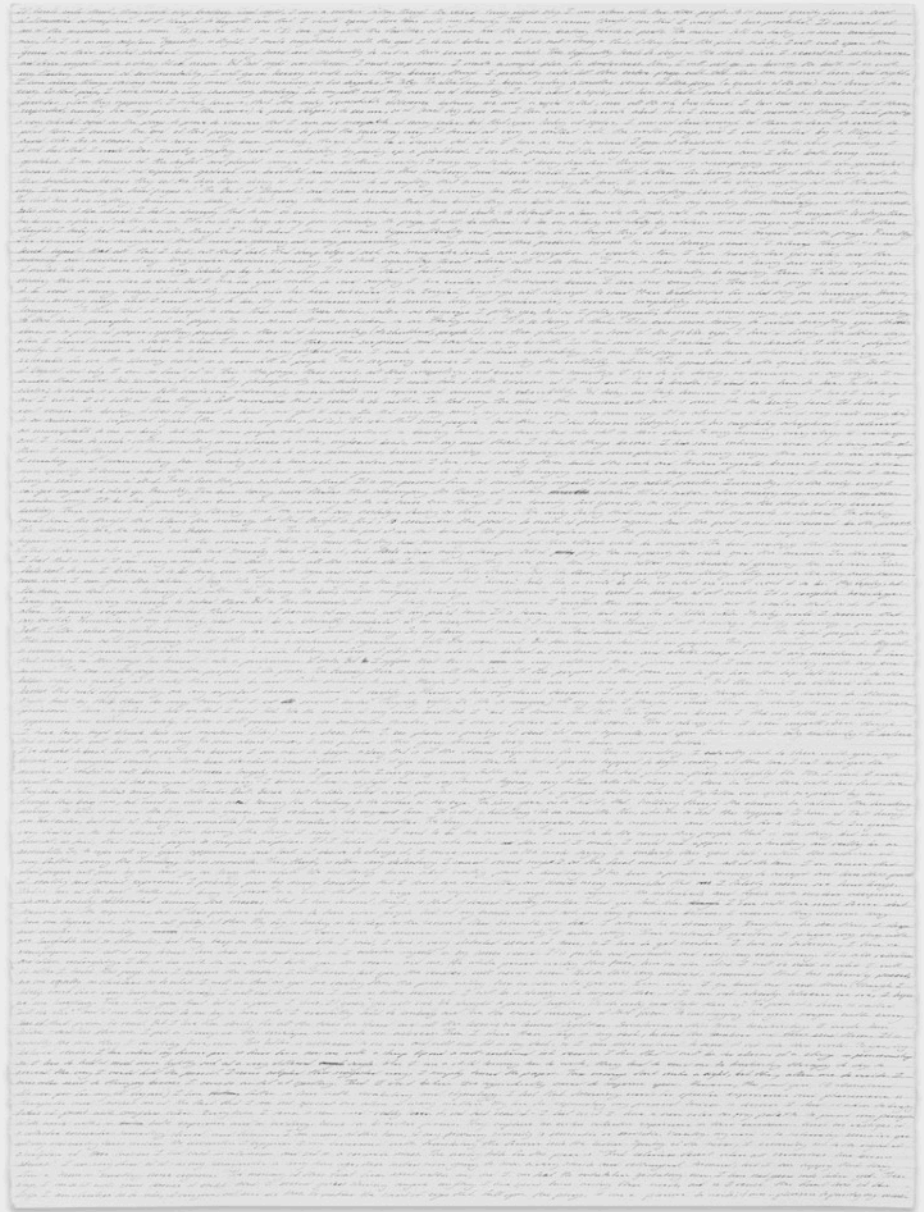


Ava McDonough
In Forgetting There Is Pleasure (side view)
2022

Ava McDonough
208 Minutes
2023
Ink and graphite on paper
30h x 22w in
76h x 56w cm
AM031



... I don't think about the accident too much anymore. I don't
... sometimes afraid of the way I write, the quality of my handwriting and the quality of what I write. I get called "messy" a lot and
... the mistake, like I believe not all else do, that other people's minds work in much more ways seems. I have really enjoyed being here even
... My brain is independent and I find myself getting more content, regretting anything I missed on the first part of this paper, and
... in love. It is in love that I can survive by it. Every moment is a moment. I can't remember anything. I've written on this page so far
... and less of a participant or a listener, someone that means. Then it's something so disturbing about a world box. I feel more grateful and
... and less of a participant or a listener, someone that means. Then it's something so disturbing about a world box. I feel more grateful and
... I don't know how anyone read it, yet here I am doing myself into a bit of anxiety because my intention is to destroy this piece of writing
... destroying the conceiving of the writing and being the object of love and examination. The quantity and sacrifice, I believe, reveals my love
... the destruction of the result would make it all irrefutable. Also this would prevent my mind from being and would allow me to be
... the writing/destruction process as being highly metaphorical. The writing being on long and the destruction being short. One tries one way
... early on with a promised and unreasonable course of the entirety of the end. Knowing that this piece will not be destroyed makes me
... the writing/destruction process as being highly metaphorical. The writing being on long and the destruction being short. One tries one way
... becomes devoid of judgment and is thus set free. But I do not know if freedom is what we want; I do not know if freedom is what I
... the end, it kind. Both are nice, but both can sometimes be hard to hold. That is why I shudder myself to be free or to be constrained
... hospital with stroke in my chin from working so many hours with such intense focus because this is, and must be, a probable experience
... emergency room, I was grateful for the few hours of company before returning to the shop. The love moves through me with such force
... "the father" by father and I find myself returning from the end of the second stanza: "a ritual dance around a center in which a man
... our son that unfolds as all her planks of actions, feet of light, and ribs of mud orbit in their perfectly choreographed dance. It has no
... to be. To work is a lot like walking. I put down one word and find the ground on what my feet touch. I find my feet to find ground
... I fall with every word and read several myself - or whatever this is - in the process. I find trouble with the term "imprint" because it
... upon the page; I have no idea or control as for as I am concerned. If this is myself, it is only a small, dying star in a galaxy among
... to be with this page in one sitting, I had to leave my desk because I grew so overwhelmed. Writing this whole page in my current
... and more anxiety into my already depleted life because I am growing self-conscious about people reading any of my thoughts and my
... getting around me feeling too generalized. The other day, I was trying to understand the ladder sculpture. The wire is made of steel and
... is a tension between the materials - the aluminum bar the aluminum went to transfer to the steel. There is a coating of grease on the steel
... and looking out over the Pacific. I was writing something about the sea others and how anxious I was to be because they were in the town
... I like words to write like I should be as dedicated as I am to the practice of it. My advice to her was to find a poem that leaves y
... that is my relationship to my previous poem. I have recently felt my wife of many years in favor of a change, better poem that requires
... the high maintenance and I am so much of a chaotic mess these days. My hand holds the pen so heavily these days, it is weighed
... with one word on my page. I feel, for perhaps the first time, that I am being as myself and I am being seen. This is all so wonderful



Ava McDonough
176 Minutes
2023
Ink and graphite on paper
30h x 22w in
76h x 56w cm
AM030



Ava McDonough
Who Makes Your Money
2023
Ink, paper, and acrylic on panel
12h x 18w in
30.5h x 45.7w cm
AM010



Ava McDonough photographed in her Los Angeles studio by J.B. Alexander, 2023

