

szvén
békési

Portfolio

BRUSH 3

FRAGMENTS 11

ALLA PRIMA 14

IMBIBOLEO 18

Series

MUNICH 23

OLD WHITE MEN 31

LIGHT 33

ANNU EXHIB 37

ANGELS 41

KLISCHEE 67

Compositions

FRATERNITÉ 47

Publications

FRATERNITÉ 56

MONA LIZA 59

ZIGLE FONT 70

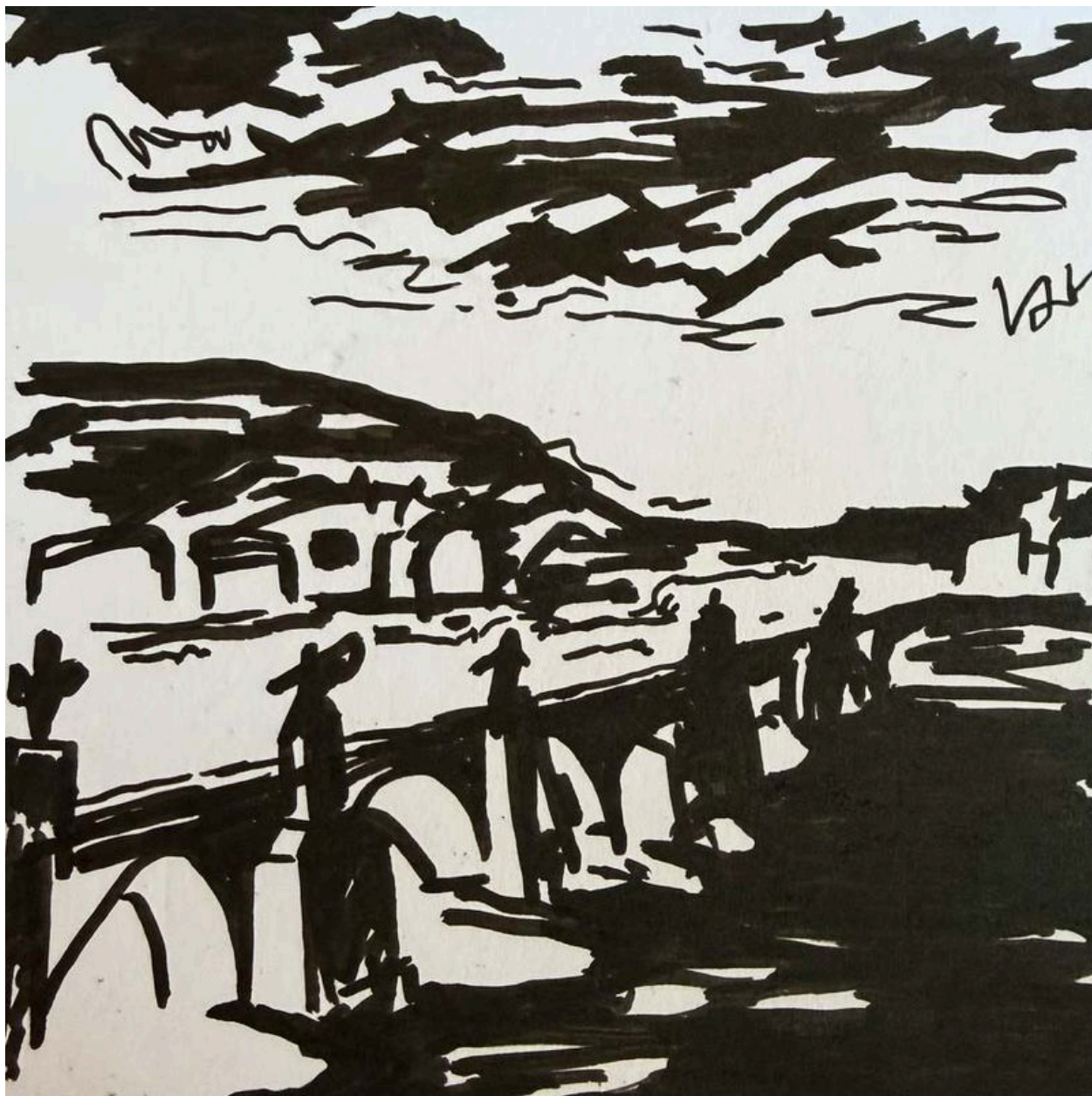
Artist

ZVEN BĚKĚŤ 72

BRUSH

Ink brush, landscapes on the road, 10 × 10 cm

PORTFOLIO · 7 WORKS



Praha, Ink brush, 10 × 10 cm, 2026

Charles Bridge.



Austria, church tower and mountains, Ink brush, 10 × 10 cm, 2026



Austria, village, Ink brush, 10 × 10 cm, 2026



Austria, forest ridge, Ink brush, 10 × 10 cm, 2026



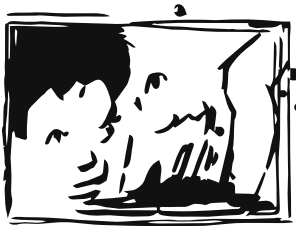
Austria, alpine hut, Ink brush, 10 × 10 cm, 2026



Crowd, Ink brush, 2024



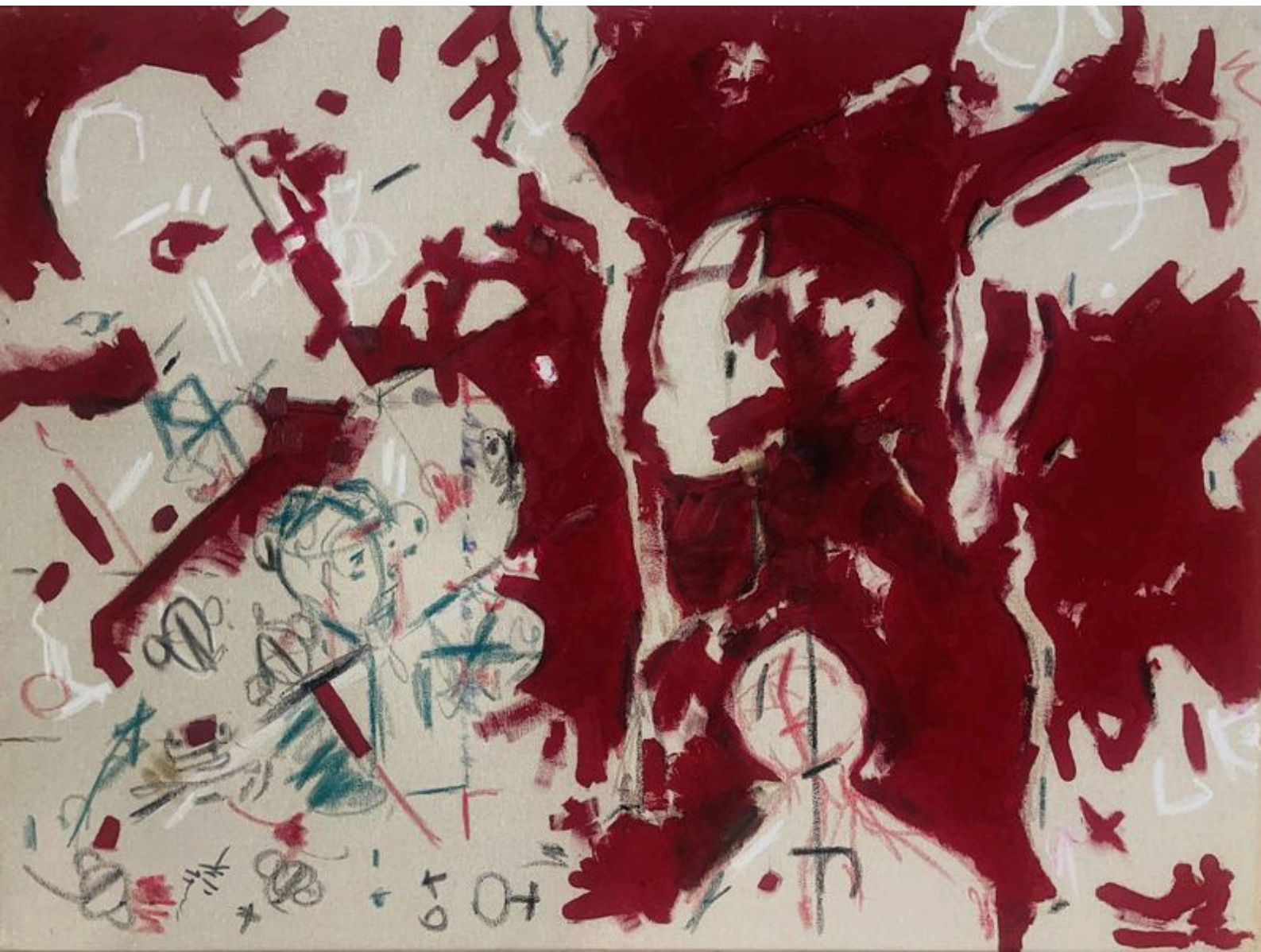
Akademiegarten, Munich, Ink brush, 2025



FRAGMENT 2

Fragments & Fractals, details, lino, patterns, series of small formats

PORTFOLIO · 2 WORKS



Fragments & Fractals, red crowd I, Oil, oil pastel and charcoal on raw canvas, 2025



Fragments & Fractals, red crowd II, Oil and charcoal on raw canvas, 2025

ALLA PRIMA

Oil, wet on wet, in one go

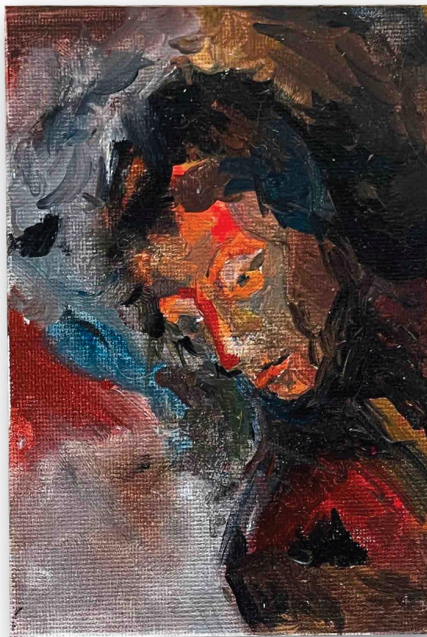
PORTFOLIO · 3 WORKS



Sleeping II, Oil, charcoal and egg on wood panel, 2025



Sleeping I, Oil, charcoal and egg on wood panel, 2025

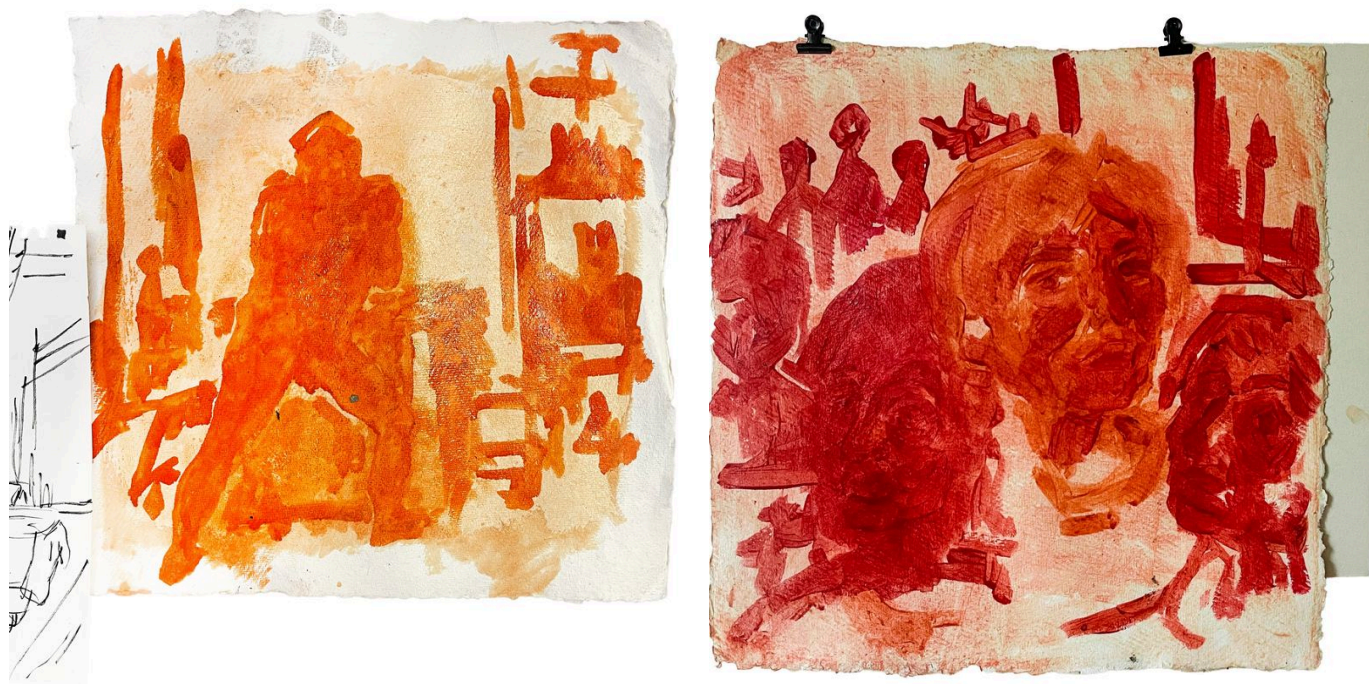


Woman in red, Oil on canvas, 7 × 10 cm, 2024

IMBIBOLEO

Pure pigment, oil and pigment chalk. Imbiboleo, from imbibere and oleo

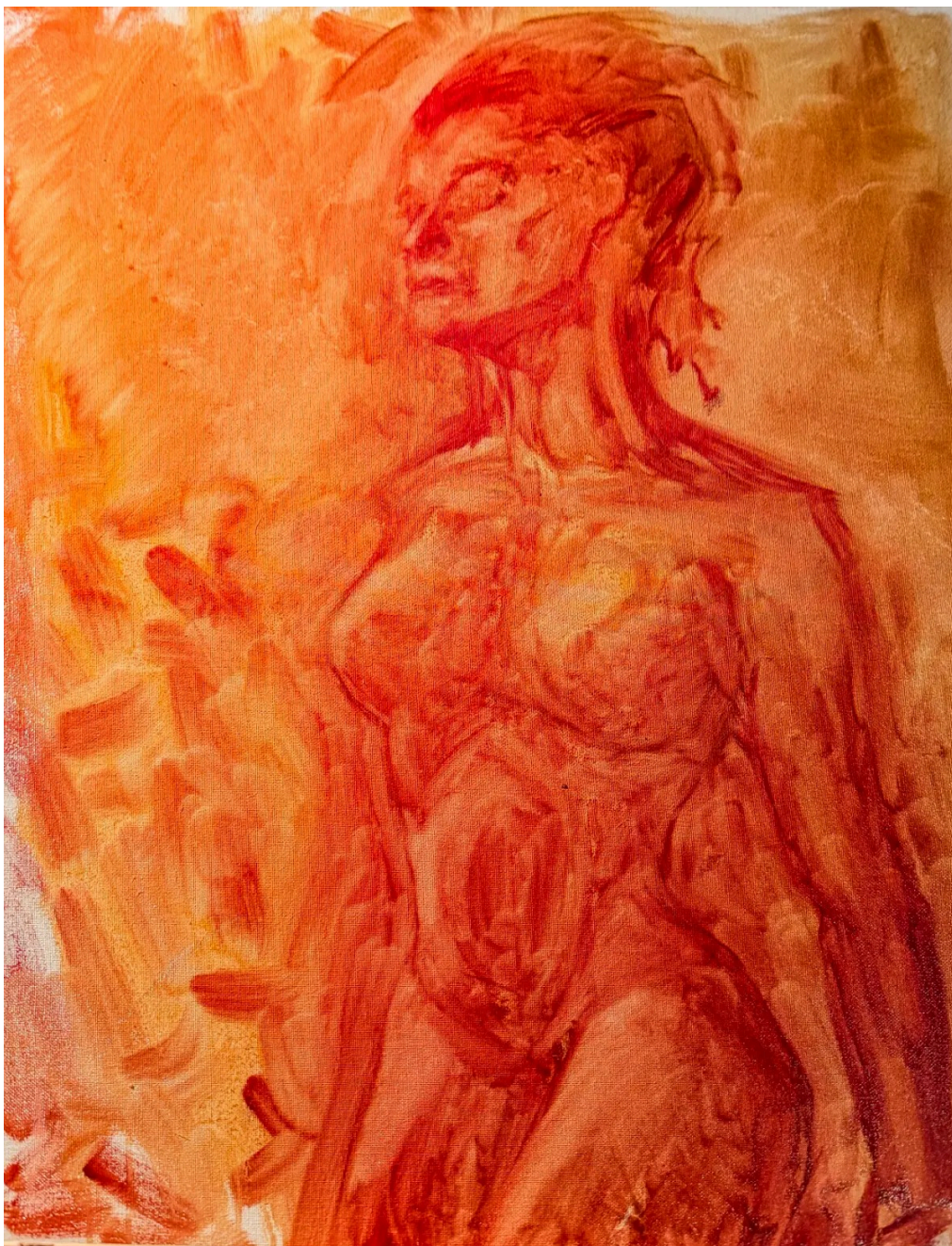
PORTFOLIO · 3 WORKS



Akademie mood, Earth pigments on lime-grounded laid paper, 2025 Imbiboleo



Woman in Oil, Oil and pigment, Imbibleo, 2025 Imbibleo



Woman in Oil II, Oil and pigment, Imbibleo, 2025 Imbibleo



20x30cm, Ink Brush, 1991



10x15cm, Ink Brush, Deutsches Museum, Müllerisches Volkshaus, 1991, Englischer Garten

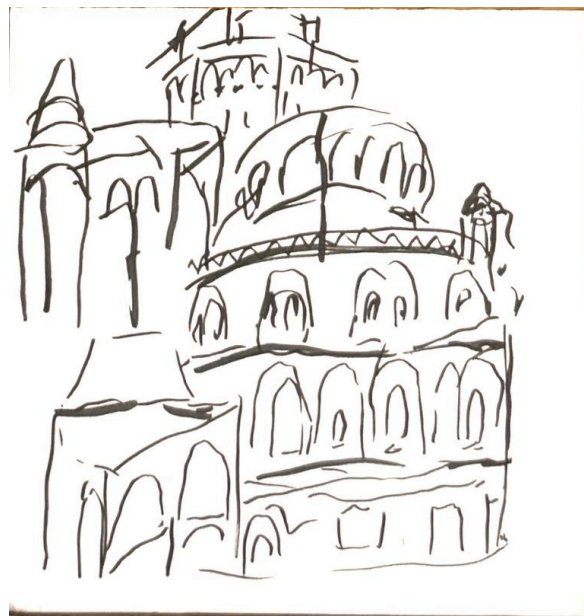
MUNICH

A week in Munich, Isar, Gasteig, museums

SERIES · 7 WORKS



Englischer Garten, Ink brush, 10 × 10 cm, 2025 Munich



Deutsches Museum, Ink brush, 10 × 10 cm, 2025 Munich

Four ink-brush sketches.



Müller'sches Volksbad, Ink brush, 10 × 10 cm, 2025 Munich

Sketches and the bath at night.

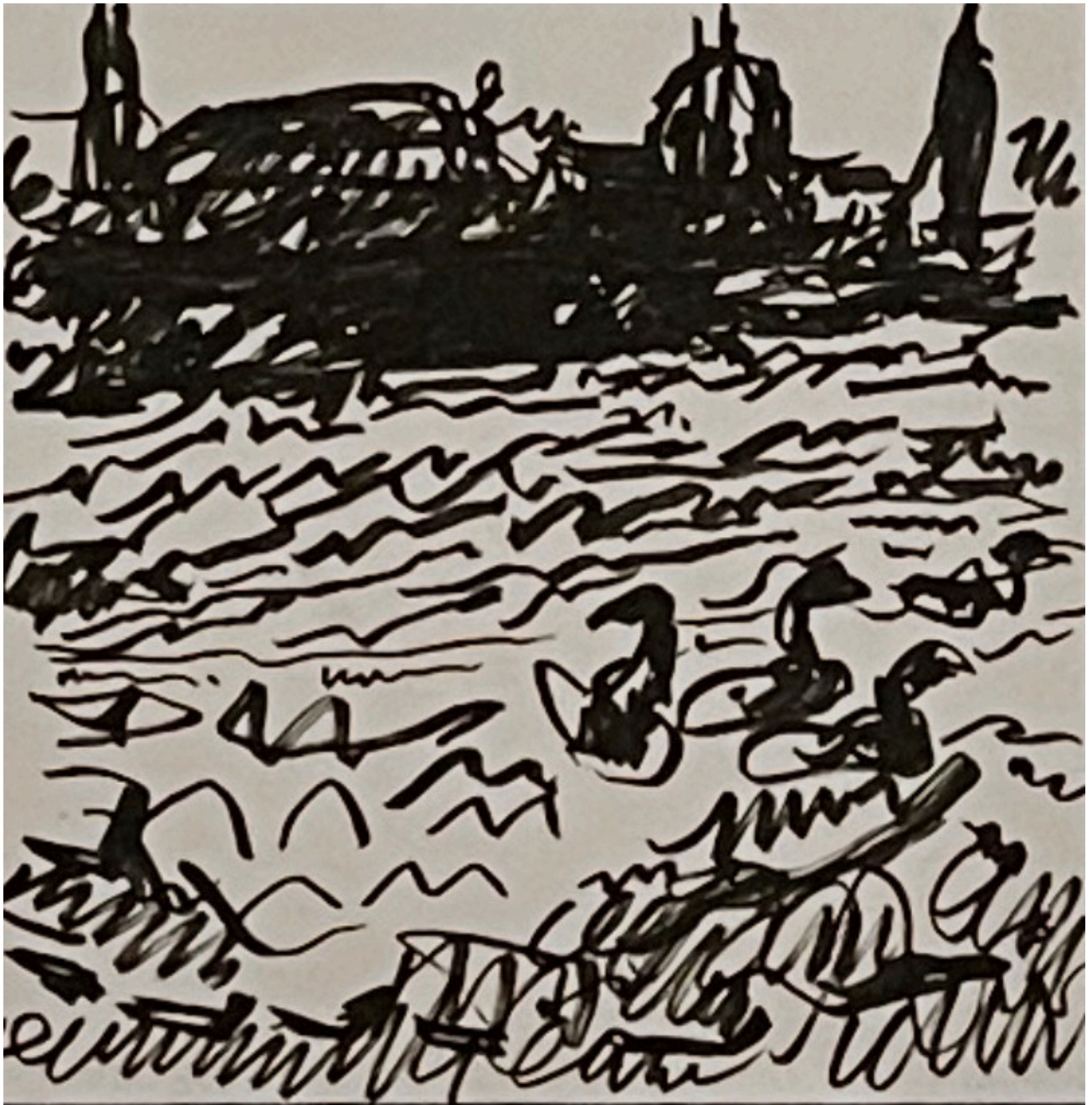


Deutsches Museum, tree and lamp, Ink brush, 10 × 10 cm, 2025 Munich



Residenz, the courtyard, Marker on paper, 2026 Munich

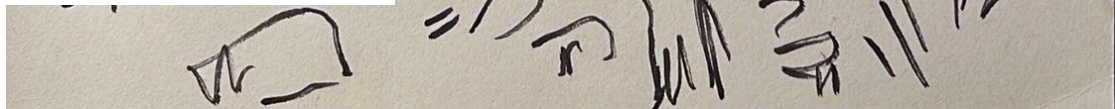
Residenz München.



Munich, Isar, Ink brush, 10 × 10 cm, 2025 Munich



Isar I, Ink brush, 20 × 30 cm, 2025 Munich



OLD WHITE MEN

Old White Men, 2025. Marker, chalk and ink

SERIES · 1 WORK



Old White Men I and II, Marker and chalk; ink, 2025 Old White Men

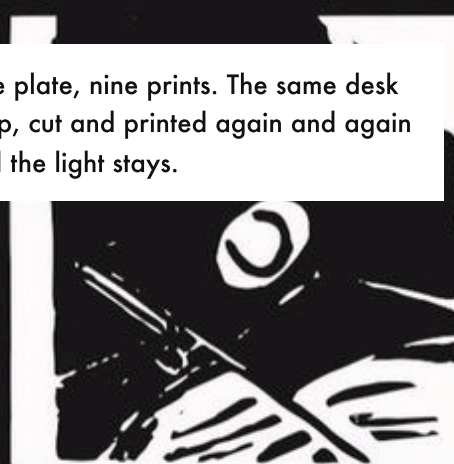
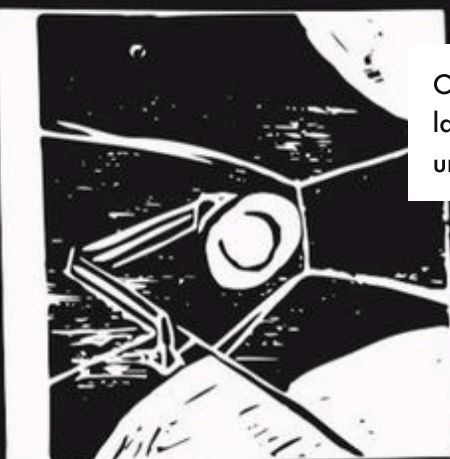
LIGHT

Linocuts, 2024. Is it flickering?

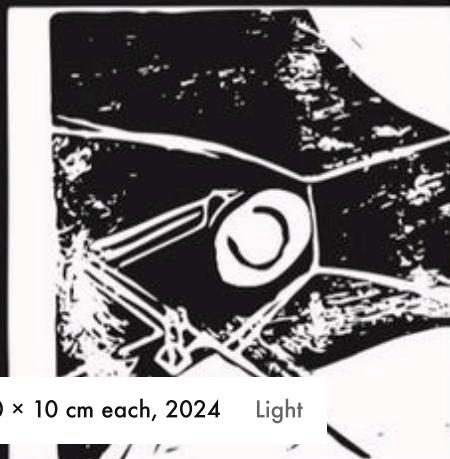
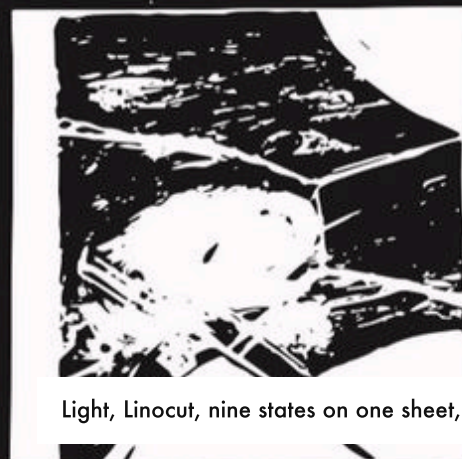
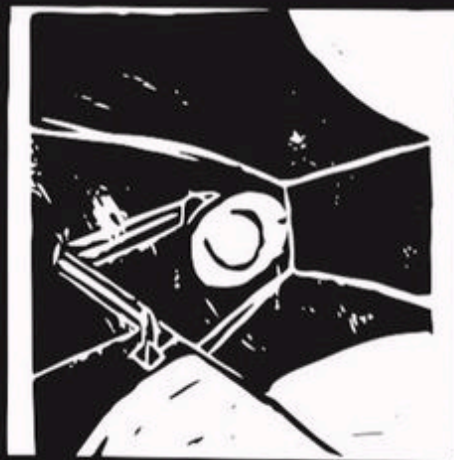
SERIES · 3 WORKS



Light, Linocut prints on the studio table, 2024 Light



One plate, nine prints. The same desk lamp, cut and printed again and again until the light stays.



Light, Linocut, nine states on one sheet, 10 × 10 cm each, 2024 Light



Light, Linocut, 10 × 10 cm, 2024 Light

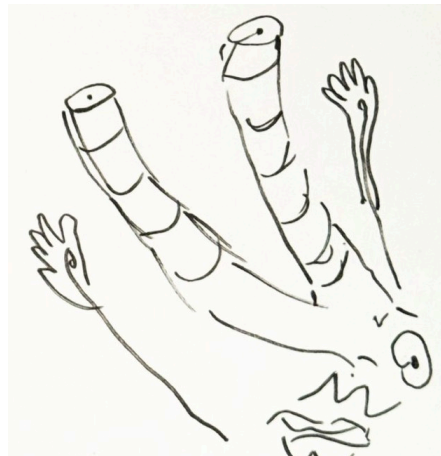
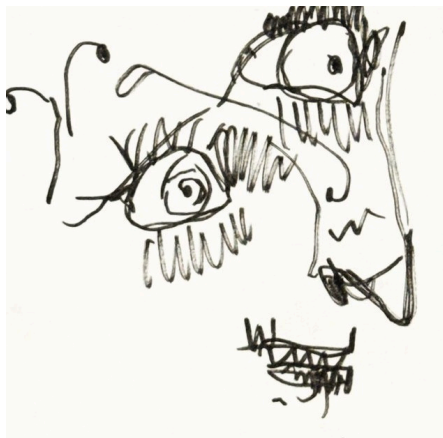
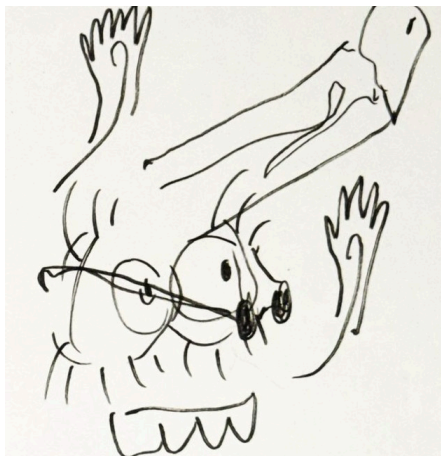
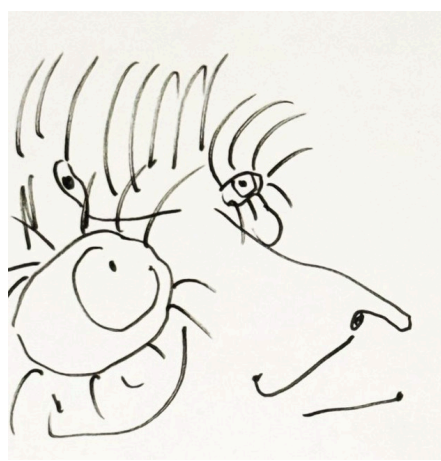
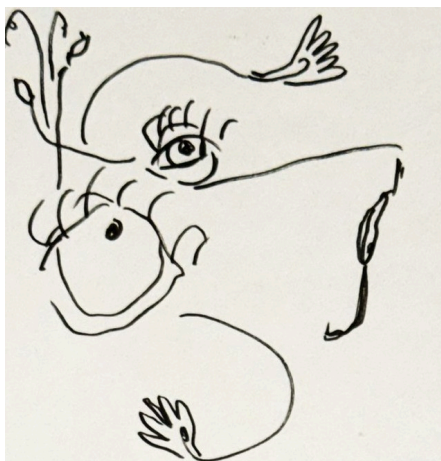
ANNU EXHIB

Ink impressions

SERIES · 3 WORKS



The annual exhibition, Ink on paper, 2026 Annu Exhib



Strolling art lovers, Ink on card, six sheets, 2026 Annu Exhib



Less strolling art lover, Pen and ink, 2026 Annu Exhib

ANGEL2

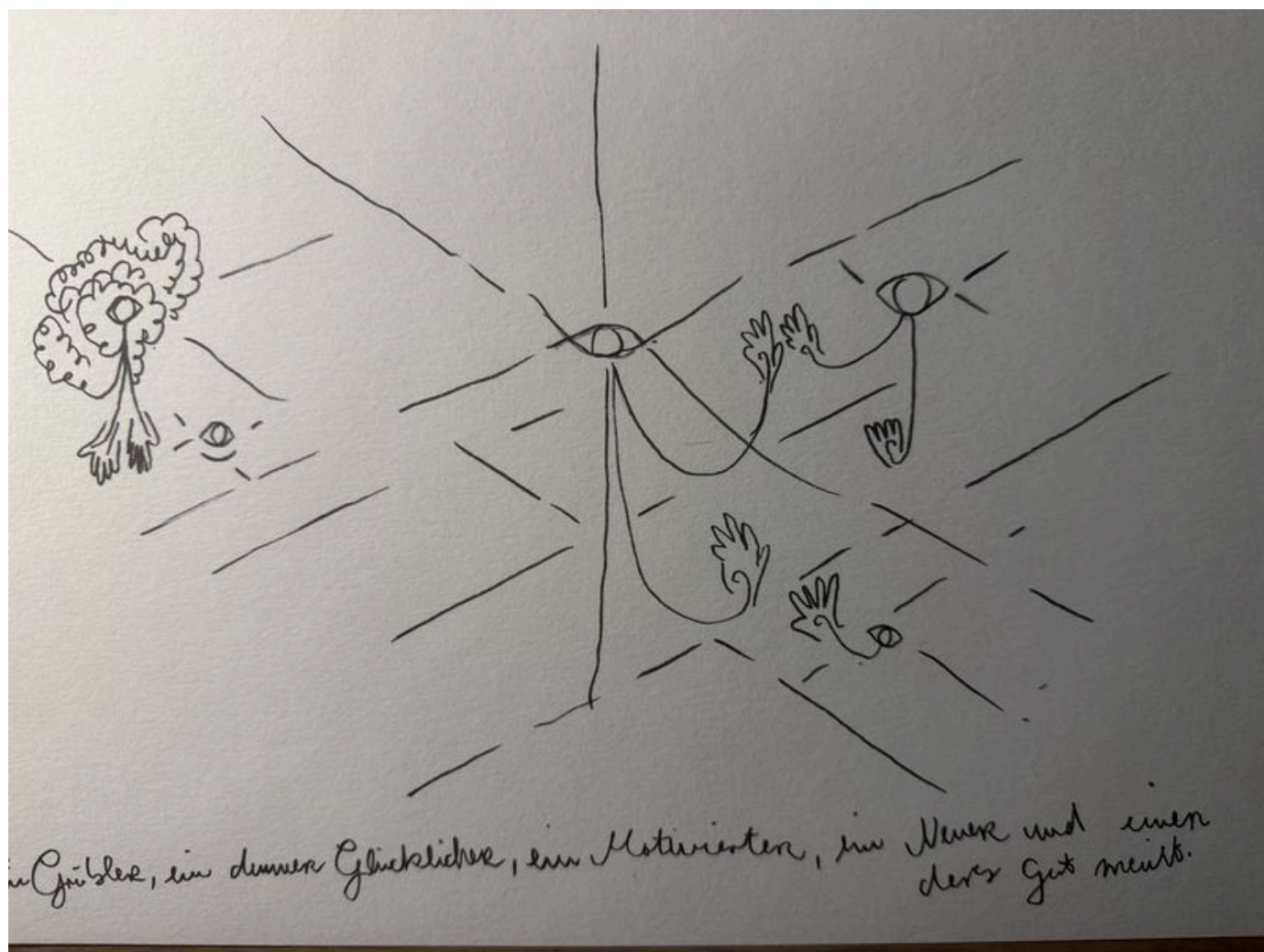
Angels, 2026. Ink, a series of five
SERIES · 3 WORKS



Angels II, Ink, 30 × 20 cm, 2026 Angels



Angels III, Ink, 30 × 20 cm, 2026 Angels



Angels V, Ink, 30 × 20 cm, 2026 Angels

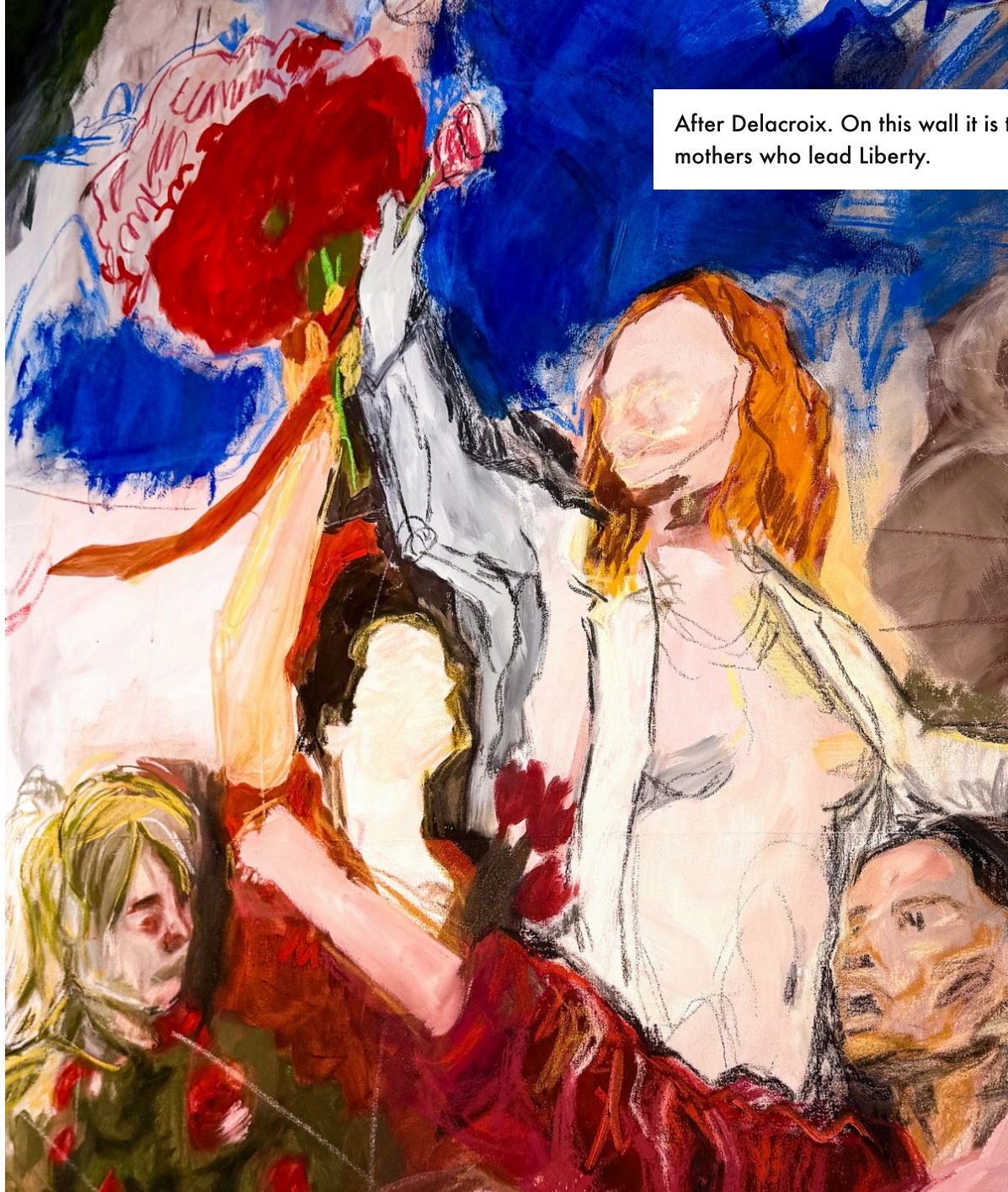


Fraternité

FRATERNITE

Fraternité, les mères guidant la liberté. The Georgian revolution, Delacroix, the mothers

COMPOSITIONS · 8 WORKS

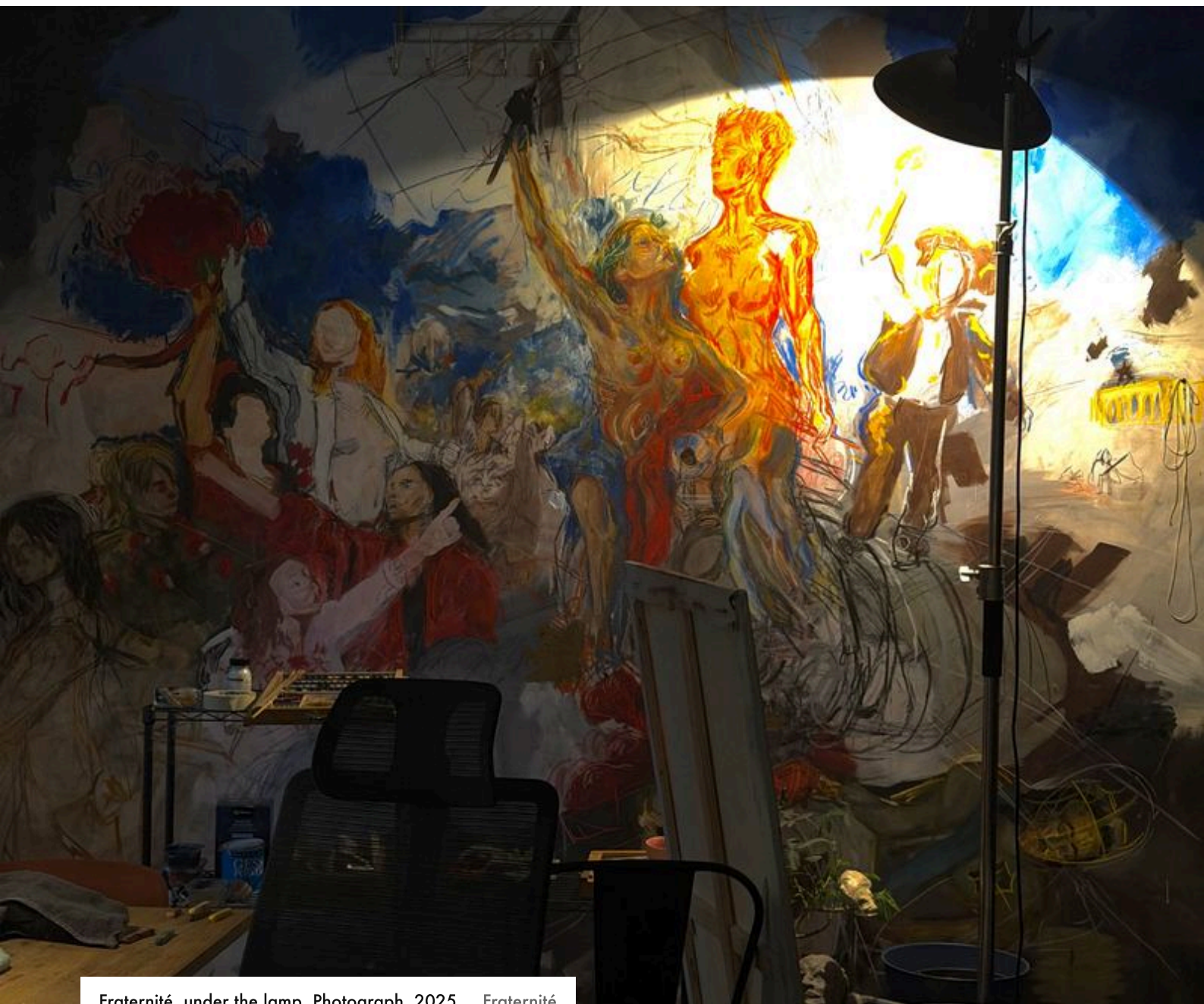


After Delacroix. On this wall it is the mothers who lead Liberty.

Fraternité, les mères guidant la liberté, Fresco study, pigment on canvas, 260 × 325 cm, 2025 Fraternité



Fraternité, details, Fresco study, 2025 Fraternité



Fraternité, under the lamp, Photograph, 2025 Fraternité



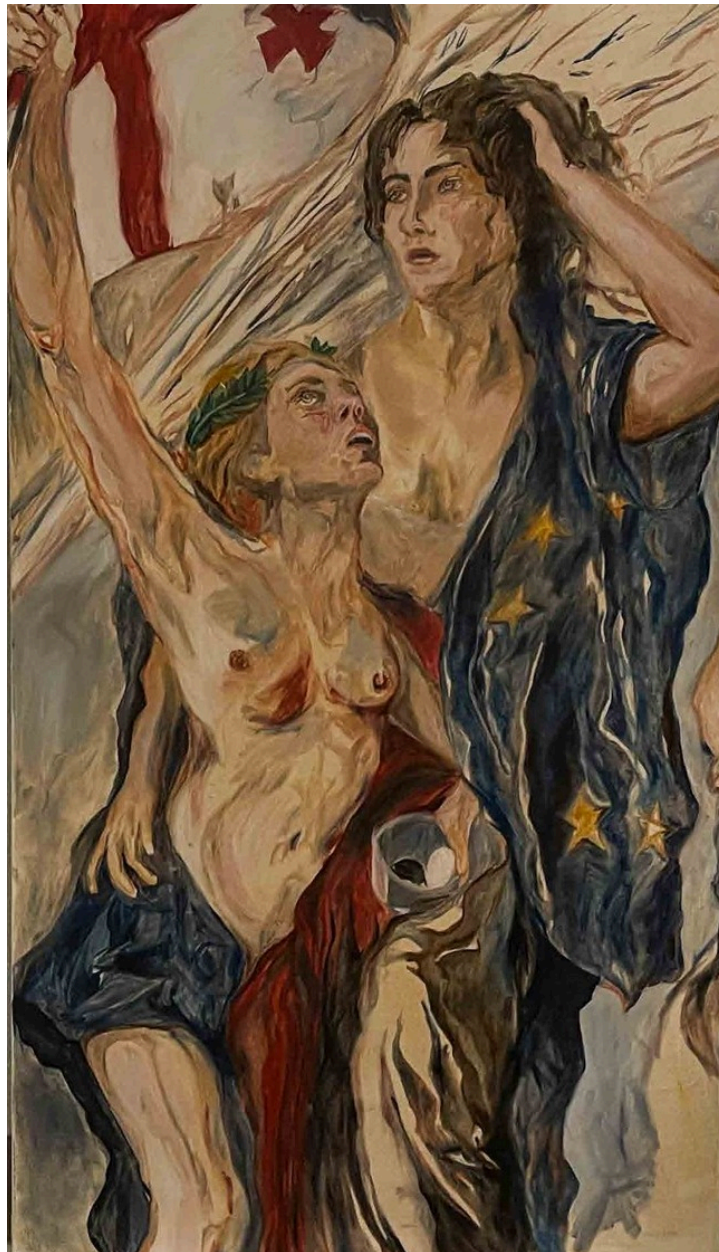
Fraternité, the reference wall, Studio wall, photograph and video, 2025 Fraternité

Georgian women, Delacroix, Repin, Merkel, the police line. Pinned next to the wall while it was painted.



Georgian Revolution, Studies, oil on canvas, 100 × 80 cm, 2024-2025 Fraternité

After Delacroix's "La Liberté guidant le peuple", studies on the protests in Tbilisi.



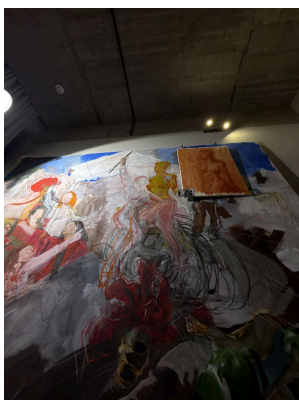
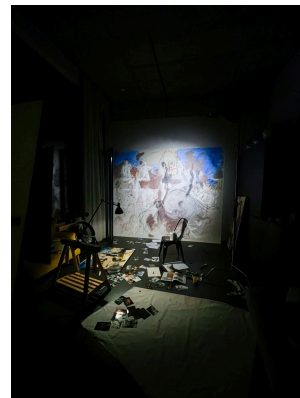
Study, Liberty, Oil on canvas, 2024-2025 Fraternité

After Delacroix's Liberty, with the Georgian flag; later inlaid in the Scenes wall.



Crowd of heads, sanguine, Red and white chalk on grey paper, 2025 Fraternité

Study for the Rose Revolution composition: a crowd of heads drawn inside rose-petal forms, mountains at the top left, in red and white chalk on grey board.



Fraternité, in progress, Photographs, 2025 Fraternité

From the lattice stretcher via silhouettes, drawing and chalk to the inlaid canvases.

LES MÈRES GUIDANT LA LIBERTÉ. WHILE AUTOCRACIES DESTROY, WE CAN CREATE.

FRATERNITÉ

Sven Békési, Munich, 2025

Les mères guidant la liberté. The Georgian revolution was the start. People in Tbilisi stood in the street for weeks with European flags, and watching from Munich I could not get rid of one thought: these people may feel more European than we do. We have to bring that together.

Not the flags

Yes, there are flags. But flags are not what people identify with. What held Europe together is clothing and strong women. The women who cleared the rubble after the wars. That is why on my wall it is the mothers who lead Liberty, and not the other way round.

I wanted to show that women are all the same, Russian or Ukrainian, French or Iranian. I took the images of modern revolutions, Russian ones and new ones, and united them in one picture. It is a composition of motifs that found itself.

The wall is not finished. It still has blurred places, and that is why everyone sees something of their own in it. A Ukrainian friend of mine stood in front of it and told me the story of the red ruta, the flower that blooms once a year and that you have to go looking for. How beautiful, she said. That is exactly it. She smiled.

Nothing here is self-evident

Our liberal, free values and our art are under massive threat from autocracies. Gerhard Richter and his generation came out of socialist realism and managed to make modern art feel self-evident, to free themselves from history. It is not self-evident. Art does not need a purpose, and that is a good thing. But art has power,

and free artists should use that power to defend themselves.

Putin plays with images of a Russian identity. He wants to rewrite the history books, and once he has done it, he will have his worldview painted. Here the artists of liberal democracies have a head start. Autocracies can destroy. We can create something new. We are the light of the world. An artist can make pictures that others cannot see yet, and draw visions that then become reality. That is what mattered to me here.

Who owns a symbol

White flags. Red and white as the colours of Europe. Blue and yellow for Ukraine. A motif that does not burn in the fire. I want to know whom symbols belong to, who claims them for themselves, and whether a painting can take them back and put them into a shared context.

I am not interested in illustrating a political position. To say "this is the right opinion and everyone else is wrong" would be too easy for art. A picture can do something a tweet, a press release or a political statement cannot: it does not have to explain at once whose side someone is on. That tension is what interests me.

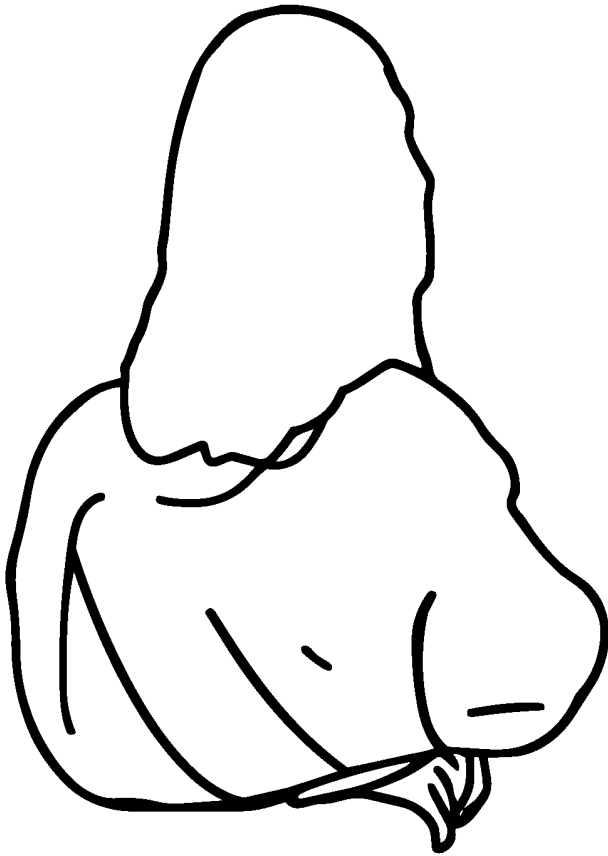
I wanted to make this work big at a university, not through galleries, private exhibitions or social media, because of who it is for: everyone. The task was to create a motif that everyone understands, whoever stands in front of it. I am trying to bring people together, and for that everyone has to move a little.

There is a personal line in this. My grandfather fought for freedom in Hungary. Students were shot, he had to flee, and he thought he would never see his family again. Europe was not even that free after the wall came down: he was still afraid to travel to Hungary. Oppression is bad, but it is the psychological violence that keeps us from being free. Against that you need a picture that welds people together.



Budapest, 1956. Students take the red star down from a roof.

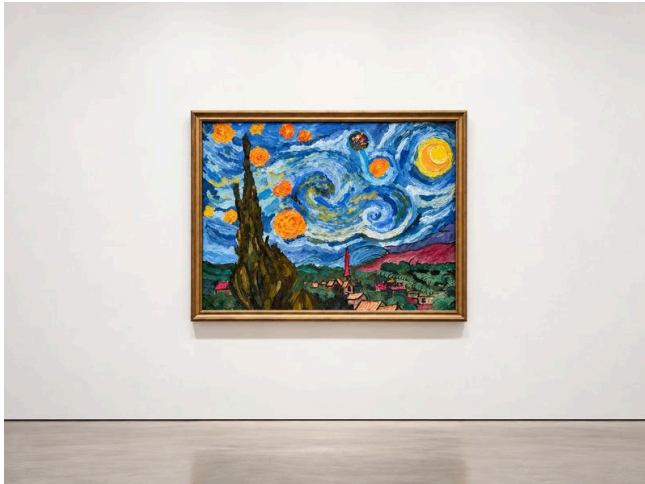
When I painted this wall, Orbán was still in power. My grandfather would have cheered to see the Georgians in the street. When Hungary got a new head of government in the months that followed, I just stood in front of my picture and smiled. We may not have grasped it yet, but this is the future. Here it is, painted. This is how it will come.



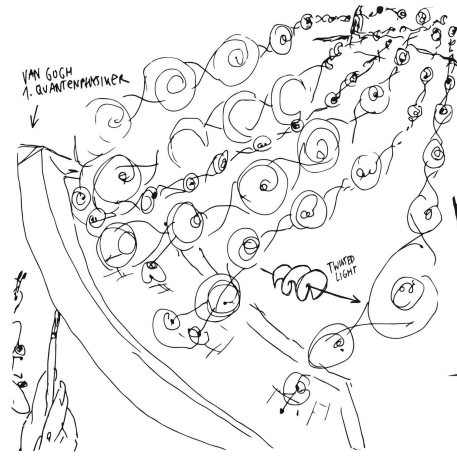
SOLVED THE DA VINCI CODE: EVERYTHING YOU
KNOW ABOUT MONA LISA IS WRONG

I am convinced that art becomes popular because it carries a truth. A truth you may not be able to put into words yet, but it is there, in colour and matter. Finding that truth and understanding it is, for me, the joy of art. It is why I paint, and it is why I look at paintings the way other people take apart engines.

It started when I copied Van Gogh's *Starry Night* at the age of six. Did he paint it that way because he found it beautiful? Did he have an eye condition and simply see the world like that? Or was he so sensitive that he perceived something, a twist in the light, that everyone feels but only he could put into form?



Starry Night, art class, 2007.



Van Gogh, "Twisted light": sitting and painting in the bottom left corner, the sky in the top right corner. Ink, 2019.

The same with the *Mona Lisa*. Why does she look at you? Art history answers with technique: *sfumato*, thirty layers of glaze, the missing eyebrows, the soft corners of the mouth that make the smile flicker in your peripheral vision. Fine. You can list all of it. As an explanation it makes no sense to me. As soon as we take art for granted, it is dead. We should always question the status quo.

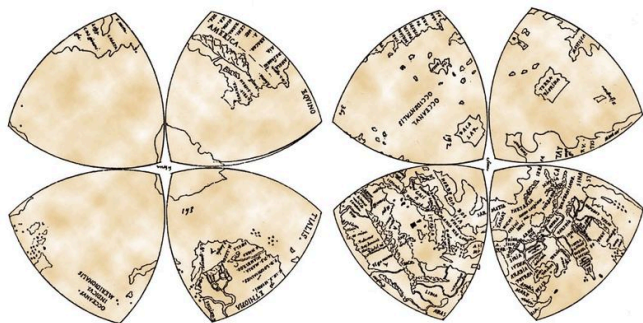
A photograph and a painting are still projections of a 3D world

Much of my work is about how a painting is perceived in a room, how AI perceives images, and how our brain sees stereoscopically. In 2018 I constructed a figure from two eye views: one drawing for the left eye, one for the right, laid over each other as a stereo pair, with the diagrams of the binocular setup next to it.

The stereo pair plays with the difference between the two eyes. But the decisive thing is something else: the viewer has a position relative to the painting, and that position changes everything that lands on the retina. Stereoscopic vision is only one factor among several. Close one eye and the phenomenon is still there, simply through the distortion of perspective.

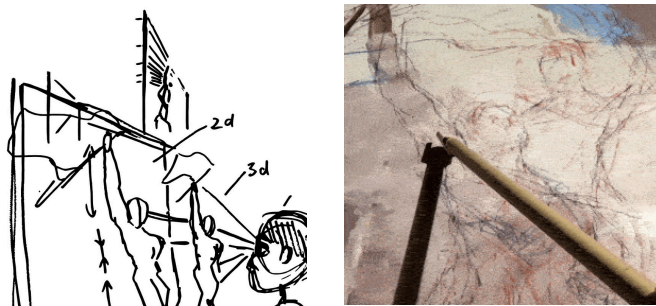
That is why I paint with a two-metre brush, so I can paint large pictures from where the viewer stands. It makes a difference. It makes a difference whether you copy a photograph and scale it up, or whether you notice that our spatial perception is more than a photograph. A photograph is only a distorted projection of a three-dimensional room onto a plane. I have analysed many paintings this way and spent years on it.

Mapmakers have always known this. Every world map is a projection of a sphere onto a plane, and every projection distorts something: areas, angles or distances. Leonardo tried it too. His world map of around 1514 cuts the globe into eight curved triangles so that each piece distorts as little as possible. A painting is no different. It is a projection of a three-dimensional world onto a flat surface, and the painter decides what gets distorted.



Leonardo da Vinci (attributed), world map in eight octants, c. 1514. A sphere cut into eight curved triangles: a projection too, with its own distortions. Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

Painting Liberté leading the people and my sketches for it, I struggled hard with the proportions. I started painting with a long stick because I had no ladder. The way I had measured out the underdrawing, it felt wrong to paint the picture like that. I had the scene in front of me like 3D, and it simply did not fit. I noticed that the stick kept me from judging the perspective, and at first I thought that was a mistake. But whenever people looked at the painting, they said how spatial it felt and that I should not change it. That got me thinking about what the stick had actually done.



The viewer, the wall and the figure from the scene: how the 3D is projected onto the wall. Painting with a 2 m pencil extension.

The reason is simple once you see it. A viewer in front of a wall that size looks at its edges from a completely different angle than at its centre. The figures at the edges land differently on the retina. Paint them anatomically correct and they look wrong from where people actually stand. So you pre-distort them. Art history has names for the neighbouring tricks, anamorphosis, di sotto in sù, quadratura, but not for this one. Painters did it anyway.

David did it

Put Jacques-Louis David's Oath of the Horatii next to his study for it. In the study the stairs are in the foreground, the woman sits further back, the warrior holds his spear behind him. Lay the two on top of each other: he started bottom left, got wider and wider, dropped the stairs, and stretched the whole picture vertically. It makes sense once you remember how you meet a picture that size: you do not stand in front of it, you walk towards it at an angle, from the side of the room. Painted one to one, the distortion of the large room would have looked odd as you walk in. The stairs would feel wrong, the warriors somehow thin. He corrected the room, not the anatomy.



David, Oath of the Horatii, 1784.

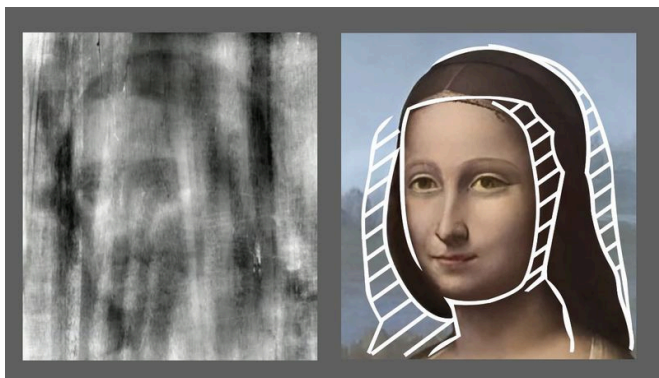


The study laid over the painting. Bottom left matches, everything else widens and rises.

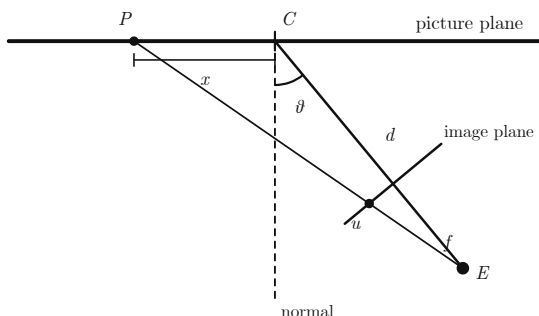


The feet, closer. On the left, study and painting sit on top of each other. Towards the right they drift apart: the painting is wider than the study.

It is interesting to compare sketches with reality. The same goes for the Mona Lisa: under the famous painting, an X-ray revealed an underpainting. The person in it has a narrower face and looks far more natural. While thinking about this, that it is not only about stereoscopic vision but simply about the person relative to the painting, I had to ask myself whether one could try to paint such a 3D picture. I believe Leonardo had the same thought.



X-ray of the Mona Lisa, and the construction: the narrow head underneath, the veil and hairband filling what each side view adds.



The geometry of it: the eye E at distance d and angle θ to the picture plane. A point P at x on the plane lands at u on the retina. Move E and everything moves.

I built it with the Mona Lisa herself. One version as seen from the left, one as seen from the right, then both laid over each other, half transparent.

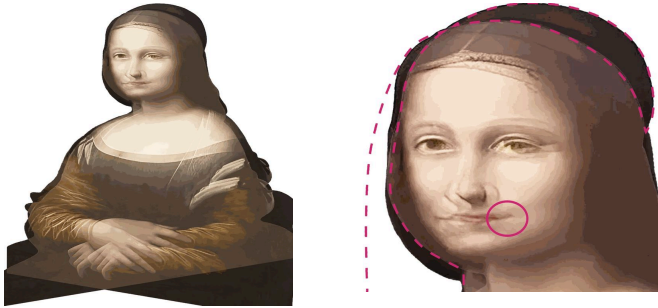


Seen from the left. Seen from the right. Both at once, half transparent.

The hair from the blue view is too much for the red one. It destroys the illusion, so you cover it by separating it off as a hairband. The head gets wider. The mouth would get longer, which is exactly what a smile can hide. And the dress doubles in the background, just as it does in the original. Multiply the two views as negatives and you can make out, blurred, the Mona Lisa we know today.

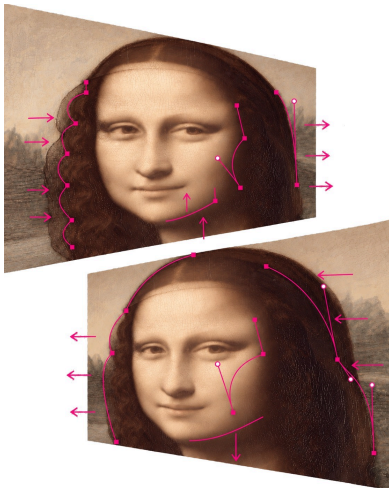
Maybe Leonardo did not even do it on purpose. He painted the woman with the hairband, noticed the perspective effect, and then matched the rest of the painting to it: the extended hair and the veil on the left side.

Leonardo constructed this painting. The person in the X-ray images, the one with the narrow head, is the actual Mona Lisa. The other one appears through the perspective distortion from right and left. All you have to manage is that whatever is too much from each perspective gets optically concealed. And that is exactly what Leonardo did with the hairband, the veil and the chin.



The two views multiplied as negatives. Blurred, today's Mona Lisa appears. The narrower head, marked. The dashed line is the head of the underpainting; the circle sits where the mouth is extended into the smile.

What reads as a veil in one moment reads as hair in its compressed form. What is a hairband in one moment is the edge of the hair in the next. What is a shifted jaw in one moment is a sly glance in the other.

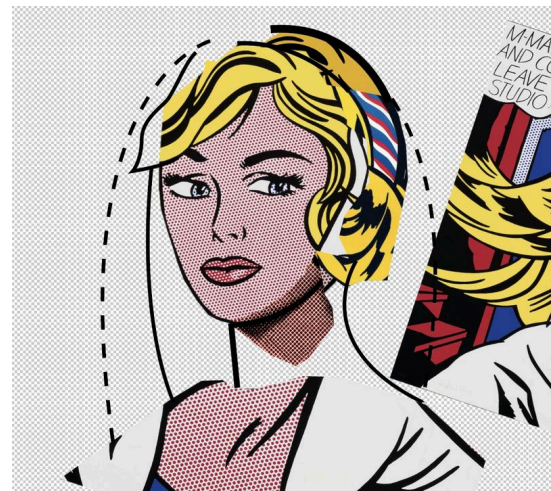


Mona Lisa as you would see her from the left and from the right. From the left there is too much hair on the left, from the right too much on the right. And yet it blends in: veil becomes hair, hairband becomes hairline, jaw becomes glance.

He constructed her. He wanted to paint a 3D picture. I do not believe he cared that she looks at you wherever you stand. That was a side effect. Because the eyes are not the main reason why we think she looks at us. It is her whole head, her whole body. He was after a stereoscopic picture. He did not get there, but what he got instead has held the world's attention for five hundred years.

But what about sfumato?

Once you have understood something empirically, once you have shown it inductively, you have found a new tool, and you can use it. How better to refute the idea that sfumato is the secret, to bring this article to the point and to break with the status quo, than with a modern pop art version that works just the same: "Lisa with Hair Ribbon", done in the manner of Roy Lichtenstein. No shading, no glazes, just line and dots. You have to see it life-size, because it is about perspective and the game of band and veil, not about painterly softness.



The construction: cut-outs from Lichtenstein, the dashed line is the outline of the finished head.

Think different, change meaning

We should start questioning things more. It is only the artist who was never one before who thinks AI could replace him. Art is something so human. Our binocular seeing and perceiving is human.

So beware. Since I learned to see this way, I can tell AI art from painted art in seconds. I recognise every AI fraud, because AI does not see binocularly, any more than cameras do. Generated images are built from photographs, so they carry the flat projection in their bones. It amuses me to walk through an academy or a gallery and decode the works made with projectors and generated images. They are always photographs in disguise.



Study, Sven Békési 2026, "Lisa with Hair Ribbon". No shading, no sfumato, and it still does its job.

KLISCHEE

Klischee, 2016. 2 million bottles, several prizes

SERIES · 2 WORKS



Jugendkunstbiennale, theme "young Black Forest". Made as a critique of the competition and its lack of perspective. The motif won and was printed on 2 million bottles.

Klischee, Screen print, 15 × 5 cm, 2016 Klischee

SIGLE

A typeface from the handwriting of Reinhard Sigle.

Sigle is the typeface this site and catalogue are set in. It is drawn from the handwriting of Reinhard Sigle, sculptor and architect from Rottweil, born 1954, who builds fragile three-dimensional forms from construction timber and firewood and paints them in signal colours. Sven Békési went to Sigle's school and was in his class. Sigle shaped Békési early and supported him from the start. In 2024 Sigle sat down at his studio table and wrote the alphabet, the numbers and the signs by hand, sheet by sheet, with his own faces as emojis. The font carries that hand into every heading here.

2024



Reinhard Sigle writing the typeface, Atelierhaus Sigle, 2024.

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SVEN BÉKÉSI

Artist, Designer, Data Scientist. Munich.

Sven Békési, born 2000, lives and works in Munich, a few minutes from the Gasteig and the museums.

He finished school at sixteen, then spent years in software start-ups building apps and AI products, converted a Sprinter van into a mobile studio (2020-2024) and founded several companies, drawing all the while. Since 2024 he has turned fully to painting: oil, chalk oil (Imbiboleo, from imbibere and oleo), Indian ink and lino.

He is interested in the union of free creation and clear reasoning: Leibniz, Goethe, Leonardo. Classical painting as a field of tension between innovation, craft, statement and effect. Art, for him, does not have to solve anything.

