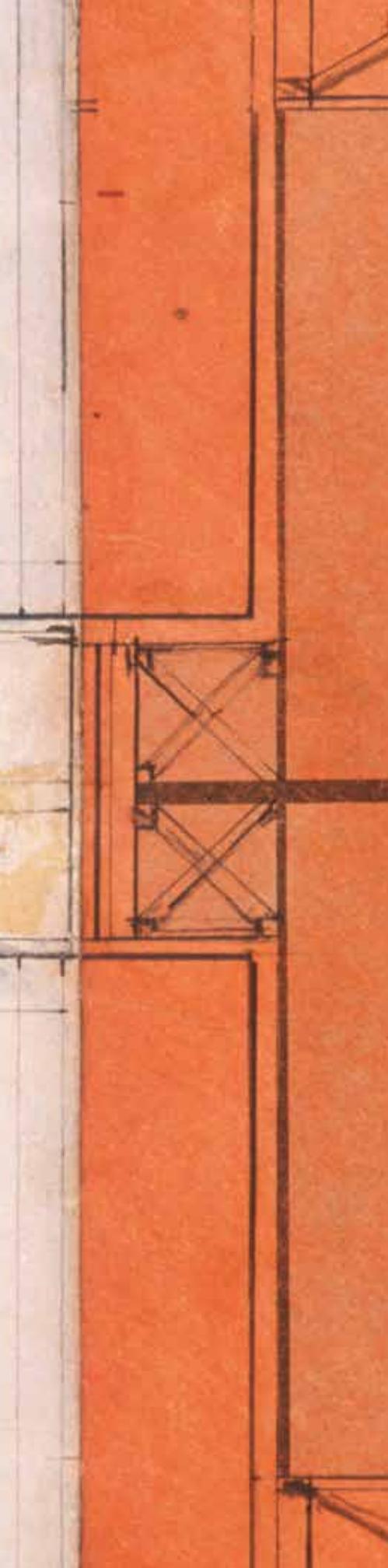
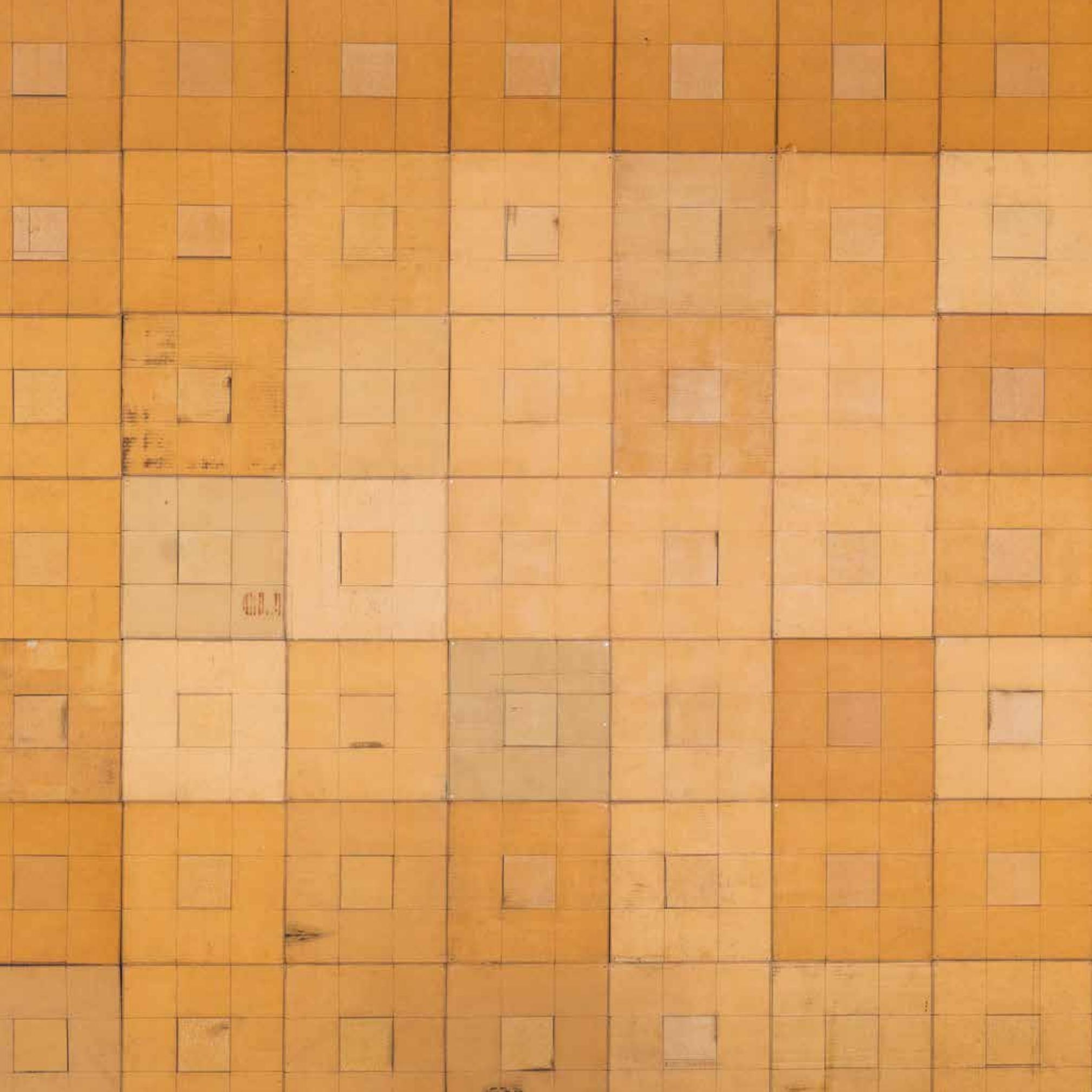


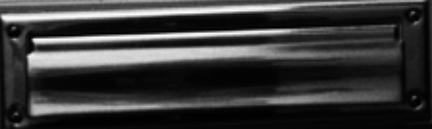
# THE ART OF D. E. MAY







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# THE ART OF D. E. MAY

ESSAY BY LINDA TESNER

HALLIE FORD MUSEUM OF ART  
WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY  
SALEM, OREGON

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# PREFACE

*D. E. May: Postcards from Islandsalem* is a forty-plus-year retrospective exhibition for this important Salem mixed-media artist who passed away from pancreatic cancer in 2019 just as he was emerging onto the national art stage. Dan was born and raised in Salem and educated at the Oregon College of Education (now Western Oregon University), where he studied with the late Larry Stobie, who became a mentor and friend. Although he could have left Salem for Portland or elsewhere, he chose to spend his entire life here, referring to it as “Islandsalem” and developing close associations with its people and institutions. His fascinating mixed-media works range from drawings and constructions to templates and grids created from recycled cardboard, old maps, different types of paper, and stamps and often suggest building documents, architectural plans, city grids, and objects of quiet contemplation.

I didn’t know Dan May well. I would often see him walking around town or at the Salem Public Library, one of his favorite places in Salem, and he was a frequent visitor to the Hallie Ford Museum of Art. We would always stop to chat. The late Roger Hull and his wife, Bonnie, were good friends with Dan, and Roger organized an exhibition of Dan’s templates in the Study Gallery in 2000. I included Dan’s work in a group exhibition of recycled art at the Hallie Ford Museum of Art in 2006, and Aleesa Pitchamarn Alexander, who was an undergraduate art history student at Willamette, organized an exhibition called *D. E. May: The Artist as Archivist* in the Print Study Center in 2008. Moreover, over the years, we acquired a large body of Dan’s work for the Hallie Ford Museum of Art’s permanent collection.

When I heard that Jane Beebe at PDX CONTEMPORARY ART in Portland had a large inventory of Dan’s work and was interested in organizing an exhibition and book for her longtime gallery artist, I decided that if anybody was going to assemble a Dan May exhibition, it had to be the Hallie Ford Museum of Art. I

*Reservoir District (224)*

2001

Mixed media

12 × 9 in.

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art,  
Willamette University, Gift of John Casey in memory  
of Larry J. Stobie, 2001.035

knew that my dear friend and colleague Linda Tesner was interested in writing about Dan and his work, and with my impending retirement from Willamette University in the fall of 2026, I knew I wanted a Dan May exhibition and book to be among my last projects as director of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art. With my outstanding professional staff—many of whom knew Dan May personally and admired him greatly—I felt we had the perfect group of professionals to produce an outstanding exhibition and book.

*D. E. May: Postcards from Islandsalem* and the accompanying book, *The Art of D.E. May*, are the latest in an ongoing series of exhibitions and books intended to chronicle and celebrate the art history of our region and yet another example of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art's commitment to the art and artists of the Pacific Northwest. This is our forty-first book published in twenty-four years, a monumental achievement for an institution of our size. Other regional artists featured in previous exhibitions and books include Carl Hall, Rick Bartow, Jan Zach, Charles Heaney, Frank Boyden (one exhibition, two books), George Johanson, Joe Feddersen, Harry Widman, Marie Watt, Henk Pander, Manuel Izquierdo, Richard Elliott, Mel Katz, Nelson Sandgren, Russell Childers, Louis Bunce, Lucinda Parker, Clifford Gleason, and Tom Prochaska, among others.

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and students at Willamette University and myself, I want to thank a number of individuals without whose help this project would not have come to fruition. I would like to thank Jane Beebe at PDX CONTEMPORARY ART in Portland for her commitment and dedication to Dan as an artist. I am most grateful to my friend and colleague Linda Tesner, whom I have known since the early 1980s, for agreeing to curate the exhibition and to write the essay in the accompanying book. I am further indebted to Nathan Anderson, who works with Jane at PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, for organizing Dan's photographs and making sense of this complex and diverse body of work; Phil Kovacevich for creating a brilliant book design that honors Dan's artwork and is a work of art itself; Nick Allison for his careful editing of the Dan May book; and proofreader Carrie Wicks for her skillful review of the final text and Phil's page layouts.

In addition, I would like to thank Jane Beebe and the many private collectors who agreed to lend their Dan May objects to the exhibition, as well as those collectors who believed in Dan as an artist over the years and acquired his work. At the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, I would like to thank my dedicated, talented, and hardworking staff for their help with various aspects of the project: collections

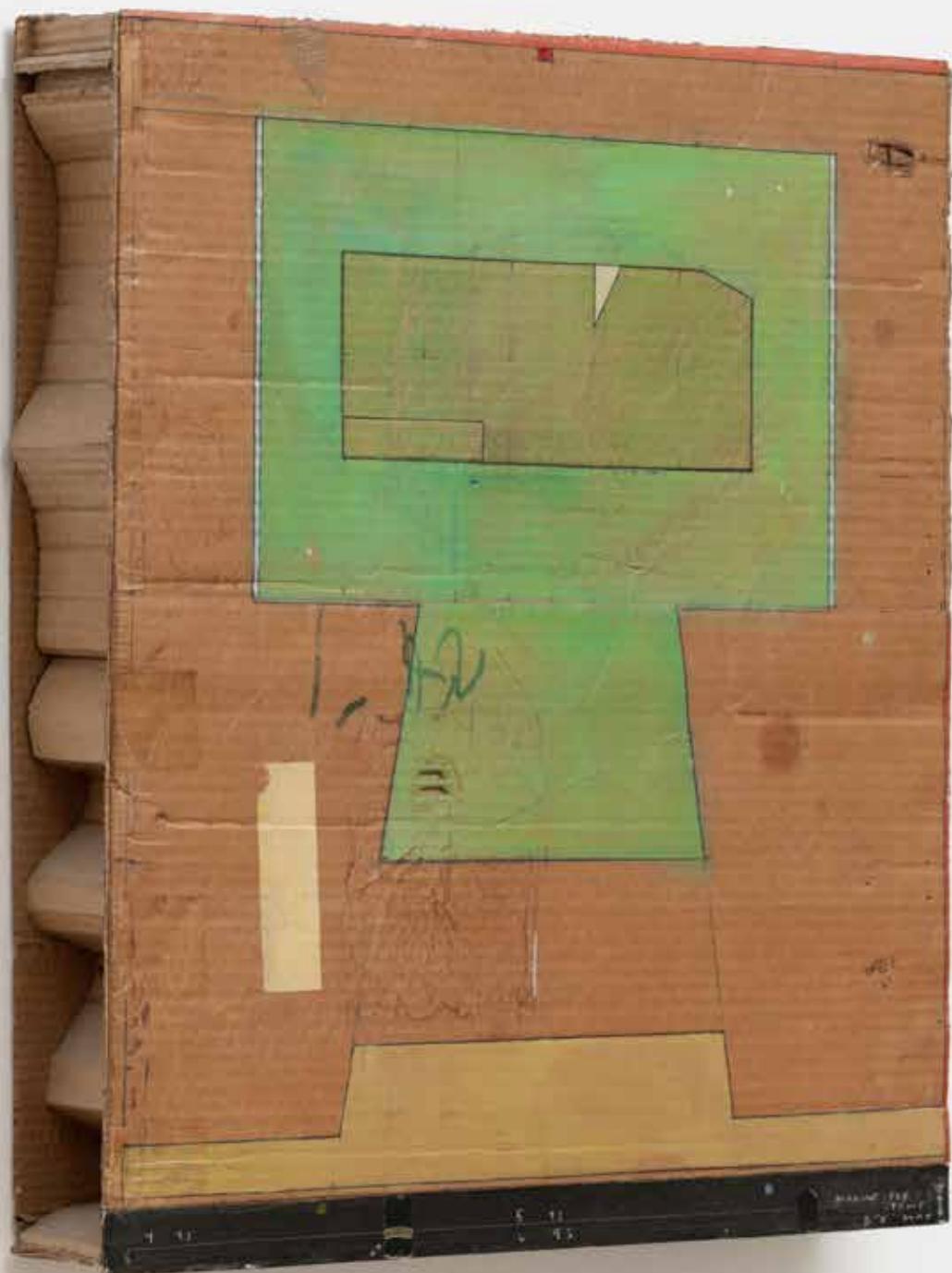
and exhibitions curator Jonathan Bucci, registrar Sara Swanborn, assistant to the director Vanessa Hopt, front desk receptionists Julia Jennings and Rich Swanger, security officer Jason Lanzafami, and custodian Maria Valdez. As always, I want to express my thanks and appreciation to contract preparator Silas Cook for his beautiful design and installation of the exhibition.

The Hallie Ford Museum of Art would not have been able to organize *D. E. May: Postcards from Islandsalem* or publish the accompanying book, *The Art of D. E. May*, without significant financial support, and I want to express my thanks and appreciation to Pamela Johnson '76, a former student of the late Roger Hull, who provided funds in Roger's honor to support projects that he would have been interested in; a Dan May exhibition with accompanying book is certainly one of those. In addition, I want to thank those donors who support the HFMA Exhibition Fund with their charitable contributions, both large and small, as well as *The Oregonian/Here Is Oregon*, the City of Salem's Transient Occupancy Tax funds, and the Oregon Arts Commission for their ongoing support of our exhibitions, programs, and related services.

Last but not least, I want to acknowledge the late Maribeth Collins, who established the Maribeth Collins Art Exhibition Fund to support regional art exhibitions and publications. Maribeth would have loved Dan May's artwork and his commitment and dedication as an artist. Indeed, if it were not for the generosity and support of our many contributors as well as remarkable philanthropists and friends like Maribeth, these important exhibitions and books would not be possible.

**JOHN OLBRANTZ**

**THE MARIBETH COLLINS DIRECTOR**



# INTRODUCTION

ONE DAY IN 1989 I walked into the Jamison/Thomas, a Portland gallery where I worked, and there, leaning against the wall, were four amazing, small artworks. Terry Schneider, a friend of the artist brought them in for us to consider, something D.E. May would have been reluctant to do himself. Immediately it was apparent that the art was highly individual, not like anything I'd seen, yet at the same time it seemed familiar.

These were abstract drawings/collages with an emotional content: not happy or sad but conveying depth of feeling and knowledge, clearly made by an artist who was private. They were housed in thrift-store frames that the artist had adapted and painted to suit the art they were to contain. They are magic.

I was certainly not the only person to recognize Dan May's talent at first glance. Artists, art dealers, curators, and knowledgeable collectors were and still are his collector base.

Soon enough I met the artist, D. E. May . . . Dan. He had long and wild black hair, a lanky body, a roughly handsome face, and a quiet voice. He was reticent but quick to laugh. When talking about his art he was modest, yet he believed his art was important. It was important and it still is. He was important and he still is. He was completely committed to making art, with no separation between his daily life and his studio practice.

Dan's body left this earth but his spirit remains in his artwork, as well as with his friends and acquaintances. Dan's friends and I hope this book will impart something of D. E. May's spirit to those who knew him, those who knew of him or his art, and those who do not yet know. This is a world to discover.

JANE MAGAVERN BEEBE

*Untitled*  
1994  
Collage  
55<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 47 in.



# POSTCARDS FROM ISLANDSALEM

LINDA TESNER

D. E. May's worktable at the Regionaires Club.  
Photo by Francis Lombardi, 2021.

**HOW CAN AN OBJECT BE SIMULTANEOUSLY FAMILIAR** yet inexplicably enigmatic—like a faded memory or an ungraspable longing? What is it that makes D. E. May's studio output resonate as immensely authentic and also as unique in the canon of contemporary art?

His geometrically based works whisper a reference to the Constructivists, and his collages and assemblages recall Joseph Cornell, but never slavishly and only slightly. He loved Marcel Duchamp, but he was hardly a Surrealist. Was May an outsider artist? I say absolutely not. A regionalist? Not exactly. May was devoted to his hometown of Salem, Oregon—its history, its idiosyncrasies, its denizens. He was inspired by Salem and often mourned the inevitable erosion of those attributes that made Salem unique—the disappearance of certain people, places, and things that slowly robbed Salem of its intrinsic place in time.<sup>1</sup> OK, perhaps one could call out the regional nature of May's work, so Salem-centric it was, but it was never, ever provincial. May's creative output did not seek to replicate any particular aspect of his locale—his oeuvre contains no nostalgic representational paintings of place.

These are the inquiries that have intrigued me in viewing May's work over many years. May himself was a contradiction: humble yet uncommonly sophisticated. He used the most modest materials—literally cardboard castoffs and stray discarded paper, often found on the street weathered by Salem drizzle. Paper and wood, primarily, the mass-produced commodities of his own environment. His work is decidedly non-narrative but often emotes a sense of a backstory—as if it could be the arcane delineations sprung from an engineer's imagination, or

maybe a template found on the floor of a fine carpenter's woodshop. His small sculptures—constructions, he called them, usually no larger than what could be held in one's hand—conjure ancient artifacts. May's prodigious correspondence in the form of letters and vintage postcards recalls Ray Johnson and the New York Correspondence School, and the Fluxus movement of the 1970s, but May sent forth his missives with no expectation of a reciprocal gesture from his recipients. He once remarked, "A number of years ago a musician was in my workroom holding one of my constructions in his hand and commented, 'It looks like it has always been this way.' I carry that observation with me like a compass."<sup>2</sup> May consistently, insistently revered the *objectness* of his work and never pretended that it was anything more.

I don't know a suitable term that defines the opposite of a compartmentalized life—"integrated," maybe? If there is such a word, May's would be an excellent example. His work life, his personal life, his social life—there was a seamlessness that was unusual and distinctive. May was quite emphatic about not wanting to discuss his artwork or its origins—not at all in the flippant way that some artists insist that "the work speaks for itself," but because his life was lived with such congruence that to call out his studio output separately from his other quotidian activities would be disingenuous. May was a master of the twin arts, or rather the intertwining arts, of creating visual work and making a life.

One portal into understanding May's work comes from knowing a bit about his life and his treasured community. He was born in Keizer, a suburb of Salem. Despite being the state's capital and home to Willamette University, the oldest university in the western United States, Salem was then essentially a blue-collar town. During May's youth, the town's economy centered on a paper mill and produce canneries (Salem was once known as "the Cherry City"). Salem is also



D. E. May  
*Untitled (Regionaire E Islandsalem)*  
Date unknown  
Ink on cardstock  
4½ × 3½ in.

the site of the Oregon State Penitentiary and the Oregon State Insane Asylum, inspiration for Ken Kesey's classic *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1962). This is the backdrop of May's youth. May's family was working-class; his dad, Bill, was a bit of a gruff rounder. He drove trucks for a living, and on occasion May would flag for him, driving behind him in the flagging car if his dad was hauling two trailers. May's mother, Lucille, worked at a department store and was known for her garden. The elder Mays used to go dancing at the Eagles Club in downtown Salem and head to the Oregon Coast to go crabbing. Craig Klyver, one of May's oldest friends, insisted that he learned a lot about hospitality from his parents, so welcoming were they of their son's cohort.

Even as a child, May was compelled to draw; in elementary school he was known for replicating Ed "Big Daddy" Roth Kustom Kulture characters on T-shirts. May studied art at the Oregon College of Education in Monmouth, Oregon. His professor and mentor, Larry Stobie, was a transplant from the Bay Area who brought to rural Oregon a certain cosmopolitan sensibility that engaged May. Early on, May opened his own gallery, the Big Sleep (1977–79); later he opened the Yellow Front (c. 1984–85) with his friend and fellow artist Monte Shelton and her then-partner, Ellie Carrithers. He used to draw individual exhibition announcements and then deliver them to his pals by hand.

May's fondness for Salem is storied, and he lived there for most of his life, with very short interludes in Portland, Spokane, and Los Angeles. He legendarily called his hometown "Islandsalem." His friends tend to agree that this was metaphorically in reference to his being a bit of a lone wolf, as an artist and geographically. (He was hardly a loner, however; he had friends and admirers in every corner of the city.) Salem is, indeed, apart from the metropolitan art community of Portland, and even more so from the so-called art centers of Los Angeles and New

York. But May was especially delighted to learn that there is a historical antecedent that lends credibility to “Islandsalem” as a name for a town bifurcated by the Willamette River. Flooding has historically played a significant role in shaping the geography of Salem, particularly along Mill Creek, a tributary that empties into the Willamette at Salem. In earlier years, during large flood events, the creek overflowed its banks, creating temporary islands. The Great Flood of 1861 literally carved the topography of downtown Salem that remains in evidence today.

Moreover, Salem was May’s fountainhead of inspiration and, literally, where he sourced his media. His daily routine involved walking throughout the city, mostly at night, traversing alleys and byways instead of using main thoroughfares. The prima materia for his drawings and constructions faithfully came off the street—discarded cardboard, faded and stained scrap paper, odd lost ephemera, bits of wood. He lived on Ferry Street, directly east of the Boise Cascade paper mill (formerly Oregon Pulp and Paper; the mill closed in 2007). Boise Cascade made kraft paper and corrugated cardboard, and one would commonly find scraps of that manufactured product generously scattered around, sometimes even blowing in the winter winds.

Salem provided other rich sources for inspiration as well. May was a frequent visitor to the Salem Public Library and of the Book Bin, where he could pick up inexpensive back issues of *National Geographic*. He trolled secondhand shops for vintage postcards, and he liked to take the bus to Salem Coin and Stamp to collect vintage face-value stamps for his postcard missives. Moreover, it seems like everything May saw offered an opportunity to reflect upon its essential aesthetic, and this often led him into a more serious inquiry. Every friend of May’s that I interviewed commented on this. He might open a bottle of beer and then reflect on the shape and function of the bottle cap. Or see a car and comment on



May collecting corrugated cardboard supplies at Pacific Packaging and Shipping Supplies.  
Photo by Craig Klyver.



Collected objects from the Regionaires Club.  
Photo by William Bragg, 2008.

the particular patina of the paint. He loved soap-box racers and what he called “Bauhaus toys,” especially the wooden figures and village structures designed by Lyonel Feininger. At one time, back in the ’70s, he became immersed in vintage golf clubs, in particular how the drivers were hand-shaped from wood into such elegant forms. Then there was a time when he was intrigued by 1960s British Mini Coopers, particularly the famous design element of having the speedometer located in the middle of the dashboard. Or his fascination with the New York fashion designer Charles James, because James notoriously designed the “Taxi” dress in the 1930s, spirally constructed to ease a woman’s ingress and egress when traveling by cab.

MAY WAS A BIT OF A PLAYFUL TRICKSTER, especially with language. The artist Bonnie Hull remembers how she met May; it was because she saw a television feature on an Oregon survey show at the Portland Art Museum in the early '70s. May was an artist in the exhibition who called himself "Tree Falling in America," a riff on the Richard Brautigan stream-of-consciousness *Trout Fishing in America* (written in 1961; published in 1967). Brautigan's novella traces his own impoverished upbringing in Eugene and details the most modest elements of daily life, a literary parallel to May's keen observations of Salem. May had a habit of adopting all sorts of metaphoric monikers too. When he had a vehicle, an old 1953 Chevy pickup with a camper on the back that he and his dad built out together, he called the truck "Mescalito."<sup>3</sup> He often used the pseudonym "Maygrey" when he signed off letters and postcards, a play on his own name and that of the fictional French police detective Jules Maigret created by Georges Simenon.<sup>4</sup> He didn't particularly like his given middle name (Earl), and his friend Francis Lombardi once suggested "Evinrude," like the outboard motors, as an alternative. When he mentored Pacific Northwest College of Art BFA student Natalie Hargreaves, he referred to himself as "Mr. Notes" because, when they met, he scrupulously documented their discussions on little notepads. And at the end of his life, when he lived for about a year and a half with Kellie and Francis Lombardi, he referred to their home as "the Lantern," and his room there as "the Moth."

May was cleverly playful in other ways too. In 2006 he was asked to participate in a group exhibition called *Shrines to the Environment* at the Mary Lou Zeek Gallery in Salem. The premise was that one hundred artists were invited to embellish a small wooden shrine to be auctioned off to benefit SOLV (Stop Oregon Litter and Vandalism). May's cheeky contribution was a color photocopy of the wooden shrine, attached to a small specimen bag containing charred wooden bits



*Souvenir*, 2005, wood, photocopy, and ashes, 8 × 5 in., collection of Francis and Kellie Lombardi. This was May's contribution to a fundraiser exhibition in support of SOLV at the Mary Lou Zeek Gallery, Salem.





May at his worktable at the Regionaires Club.  
Photo by William Bragg, 2008.



List of ideas from May's studio

I THINK YOU CAN TELL A LOT ABOUT AN ARTIST BY THEIR STUDIO—or, in May's case, his workroom, housed in the minuscule apartment he called the Regionaires Club, as if his tiny home were a fraternal organization. There he had no kitchen or bedroom. No doorbell or telephone either, so if someone wanted to visit, they would stand below his window and yell up, "Hey, Dan!" The reference to his workroom was deliberate—he thought of his creative space in blue-collar terms, a place for a *maker*, analogous to a cobbler's workbench or a machinist's shop.

The interior of the Regionaires Club was completely appointed and hand-crafted by May out of found materials—a lowbrow cabinet of curiosities. He used a perforated sheet of Masonite as a window covering to create a dim and dappled shadow pattern falling across his worktable. The surface of his desk was, again, cardboard, which, over time, took on an aged, dappled effect. Towering above his desk was a citadel of small corrugated-cardboard cubbies—sixteen across and fifteen high—the lower cubicles racking, distorted from the overload. The cubbies housed all manner of items, from art materials to functional objects to personal souvenirs: a library of woodblocks, spools of twine, a multi-tooled pocketknife, stacks of cardboard, tiny boxes of paper clips and vintage cigarette tins, glass bottles of spent chalk, a bottle of ink, funny figurines, a baseball. Also in Regionaires were warrens of drawers identified by labels, either handwritten in white ink on black ground or made by a retro embossing vinyl label maker. Here May carefully—reverently—sorted his supplies: tools, paints, templates, hardware, colored pencils, rulers (mostly advertising giveaways), sandpaper, paintbrushes, magazine cutouts, plastic pages, envelope openers, clips designed to attach a pencil to one's shirt pocket, sewing gauges, thumbtacks, rings of wire. Other drawers and folders sorted various concepts and potential art ideas: "mapwork," "the role of water," and "lighthouses," while stacks of blank cardboard pizza-style boxes housed a

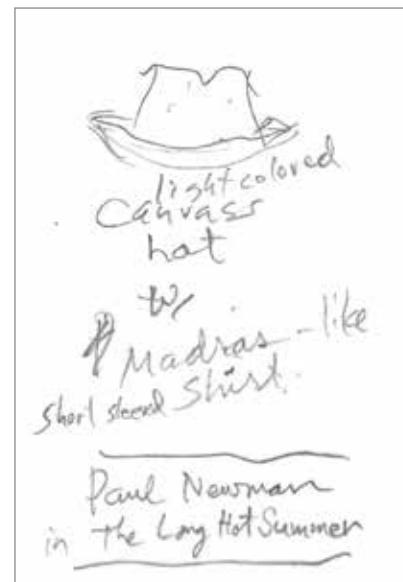
lifetime of correspondence, denominated by sender. And then there were collections: “Postcards that inspire artwork,” vintage matchbooks, batches of old calling cards from long-gone businesses. In case of company, May’s desk had a pullout bar stocked with libations and rocks glasses. May appreciated a conversation over a drink.

And then there are quickly jotted sketches for future reference. Ideas for men’s fashion: “a light-colored canvas hat and a Madras-like short-sleeved shirt, like Paul Newman in *The Long, Hot Summer*.” Proposed names for bars: the Scrape, the Moth, the Has Been, Owl Erie [*sic*], Mud’s Satin, South of Polite. Proposed names for taverns: the Caveman, Carson Dial, Empire 2-2779, Log Rhythm, Hanover (*Destroyed*), the Silent Butler. Quickly rendered, simple sketches of unknown people with invented backgrounds, often based on Salem history (the last man to ride the Wheatland Ferry under T. Bowden’s stewardship).<sup>8</sup>

It is clear from a visit to May’s workroom that lists were an important part of his process. He was a bit of a diarist, archivist, and collector all folded into one, not in any traditional sense, but as a collector who traced his own experiences by the casual detritus of life lived. Besides old hangman games, notated with the name of the player and the bar where they played, the workroom was chock-full of lists. He liked to make lists of the essential places that he could easily reach on foot from his workroom. Besides the capitol, the university, the old hospital, the prison, the cannery, and the paper mill he added the bus station, the train station, a gas station (for late-night beer or cigarettes), a bike shop, the library, bookstores, a record shop, antique shops, the post office, the grocer, the stationery store, bars, restaurants, the lumberyard, the hardware store, his mom’s house, and the homes of many of his friends. (Interestingly enough, an art-supply store was never included on these lists.) There were lists of future artwork to make, decorative art design



List of imaginative tavern names



A suggestion for a summer gentleman's ensemble

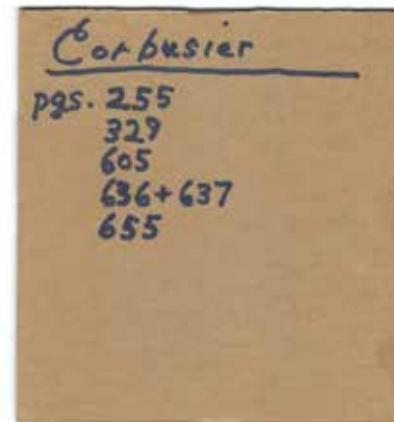
May at his worktable at  
the Regionaires Club.  
Photo by Jake Shivery,  
2009.



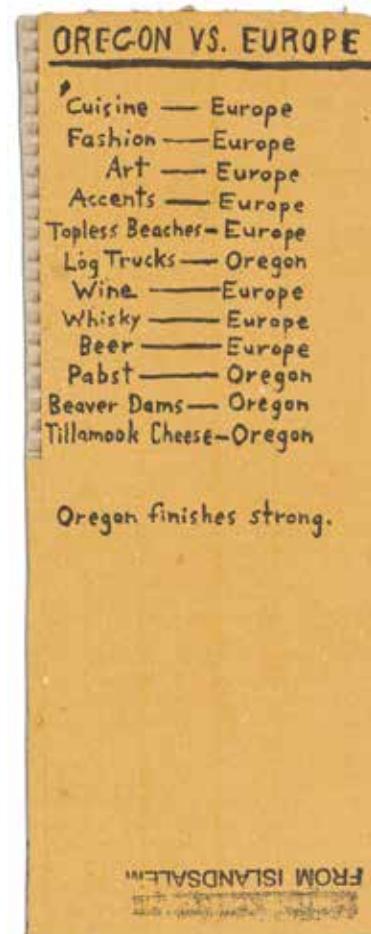
ideas, reminders of visual source material. A single list, written in black pen on cardboard, notes five specific pages in a favorite tome, *Le Corbusier: Le Grand*. The page numbers correspond to pages of quick architectural sketches drawn by Le Corbusier that inspired May. Then there are funny comparisons documenting May's observations, like his *Oregon vs. Europe* list.

May was first consigned at the William Jamison Gallery in Portland in the late 1980s; after its closure he was represented by PDX CONTEMPORARY, where he became closest of friends with his gallerist, Jane Beebe. Before commercial representation, May augmented his occasional art sales by working as a janitor at various Salem businesses, like Ruth Hudgen's Off Center Café, where nightly he left sketches for Ruth on server notepad paper. For much of his life, he did not own a car, but he often rode a bike. No one remembers him ever owning a computer. He was even known to head to the berry fields, if money got tight.

But I would never say that May led a "simple life." In fact, it appears that May's inner life was so marvelously and richly complex that he must have had a constant running dialogue in his head, cross-referencing everything that he saw and heard. He had a delightful habit of linking visual material with all manner of other cultural expressions, say, films or song lyrics. Here's an example. I knew May loved logging trucks—a fairly common sight in present-day Oregon, but ubiquitous in the 1950s and '60s when May was a kid. I once sent him one of those oversized vintage postcards of a logging truck. He responded by sending me a postcard of a flatbed truck transporting a gigantic tree trunk—the kind where men are dwarfed by a single immense log. The text reads: "This 13,000 board feet specimen is typical of the giants still found in the virgin forests of Oregon. A lot of lumber in this one." For postage on this note May used vintage face-value stamps commemorating YMCA Youth Camping (1985) and the Civilian Conservation



Page references from *Le Corbusier: Le Grand*



*Oregon vs. Europe*, 2008, ink on cardboard, 10 × 4 in., collection of Dan Schmidt and Helen Atsma

Front and back of a postcard sent by May to Tesner,  
May 21, 2018



Corps (1983). May's distinctive print lettering in black ink paraphrases the lyrics from Dave Dudley's "Six Days on the Road" (1963):

*There's not a cop in sight,  
I can run those scales alright  
Six days on the road  
And I'm gonna make it home tonight.*

To this May added two additional references: "The Ballad of Thunder Road," the theme song for the 1958 noir film *Thunder Road*, sung by Robert Mitchum; and



The “Moth,” May’s room at the “Lantern,” the home of Kellie and Francis Lombardi. Photo by Francis Lombardi, 2019.

mention of Tom Waits’s recitative narrative “Big Joe and Phantom 309” (1975). The postcard is essentially a concise, handheld essay in unpretentious images and pop culture allusions. But this example is hardly a one-off. This is how May thought about the world and communicated his observations to others.

Here’s another instance. When his friend Dan Schmidt moved to Brooklyn, Schmidt happened to comment on some vintage linoleum he encountered, knowing that May would be able to envision it. In a reply postcard to Schmidt, Dan commented, “Linoleum must agree with you. I love the damn stuff myself, especially the Mondrian, Kandinsky, and El Lissitzky years found in those Yachats, Oregon, cottages.” It is a visually acute and nimble mind that threads old floor covering to abstract visual language to vernacular beach architecture.



Among May's innumerable ideas for artwork are sketches for monuments to unknown historical figures. Tom Bowden was a senior operator of the Wheatland Ferry for thirty-six years, starting in 1940. The ferry is still in use, crossing the Willamette River connecting Marion and Yamhill Counties in Oregon.

THE FOLLOWING IS A VERY PARTIAL LIST of films, documentaries, and TV shows that May loved, in chronological order by date of production:

*The Big Sleep* (1946)

*Perry Mason* (1957)

*The Spirit of St. Louis* (1957)

*Route 66* (especially season 3, episode 7, called "Across Walnuts and Wine," in which Tod Stiles and Buz Murdock work in a paper mill; the episode was filmed in Oregon City) (1962)

*The Ipccress File* (1965)

*The Rockford Files* (1974)

*The Tonight Show* reruns, especially when Johnny Carson interviewed Rodney Dangerfield (c. 1979)

*Blade Runner* (1982)

*Inspector Morse* (1987)

*The Race for the Double Helix* (1987)

*The Fabulous Baker Boys* (1989)

*Havana* (1990)

*Maigret* (1991)

*The Darling Buds of May* (1991)

*Cadfael* (1994)

*Nobody's Fool* (1994; the Paul Newman one)

*Lone Star* (1996)

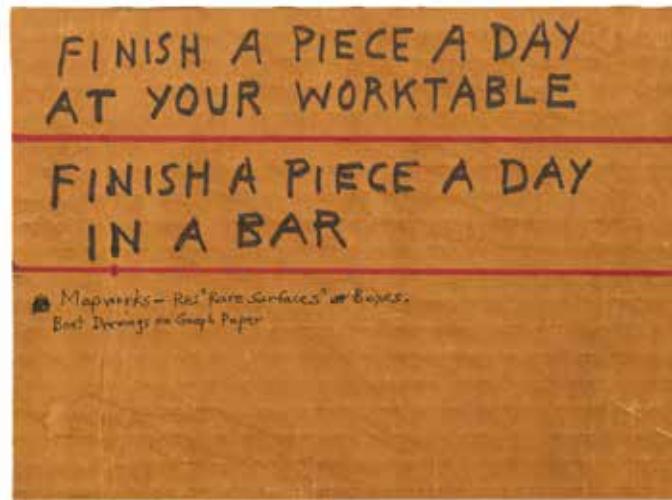
*Foyle's War* (2002)

*The Fog of War* (2003)<sup>9</sup>

*Lost in Translation* (2003)

*Murderball* (2005)

*California Typewriter* (2016)



These are just the cinematographic works that May's friends specifically mentioned to me, or that I came across in a selected reading of May's writings. Why do I include them here? It is because it's almost impossible to overstate the importance of time-based visual media in May's life. He was similarly familiar with and engaged by music of infinite genres, from country to jazz to garage bands.<sup>10</sup> I do not want to imply that film and music were source materials per se for May's studio practice. But the cultural dialogue that wove through May's life was inordinately fecund. He quoted references such as these with common frequency. And, I would suggest, if one recognizes the reference, they are breadcrumbs that cast a light on his artwork. The last time I visited May in the Moth at the Lantern, he had a black-and-white film running on a portable television set on his coffee table, the audio silenced so we could chat. I think there was something about that which was simply comforting to him, having that particular visual material within his peripheral vision. He was drawn to visual material that echoed his own world—the whiskey and cigarette smoke in *Nobody's Fool*, the lists and graphs illustrated in *The Fog of War*. May was notoriously avoidant about discussing his own artwork, but he would invoke allusion by way of self-reference. During his very last days in the hospital, he was visited by fellow artist Bonnie Hull. He told her to track down a documentary about the Wright Brothers.<sup>11</sup> Imbedded in that movie, he said, there is a piece from an engineering company about the structure of the airplane wings. "That little piece will tell you about my entire career," May told her.

*Untitled (Finish a Piece a Day)*

Date unknown

Ink on cardboard

5¾ × 7¾ in.

May at Smalls. Photo by Francis Lombardi, 2015.



MAY ONCE COMMENTED, “If you brush out all those varnishes until they get milky and cloudy and just really worn out—then those surfaces start to look okay.”<sup>12</sup> Abigail Susik, associate professor of modern and contemporary art history and theory at Willamette University, wrote, “It was the Oregon artist D. E. May (1952–2019) who taught me this difficult and redemptive lesson over the past decade: his art would never be fully knowable as a result of the depths of its idiosyncratic essence. Don’t let the languages of modernist abstraction so often present in this artist’s work across media—from drawings, to collages, to assemblages, and mail art—fool you. There is no empathetic experience there to comfort or console, no moment of peaceful respite from yourself, nor even an anonymous surface onto which you can project.”<sup>13</sup>

I sympathize with the unknowable nature of May’s work. Writing about it is like nibbling at the edges, trying to make sense of artwork that the artist himself was loath to explain. It’s impossible to define his aesthetic—a word he likely would never have used himself. He had a very specific palette—luminous colors slightly faded as if by time—and a distinct vocabulary of shape, composition, and materials. Yet it is difficult to place May within any specific context of art history outside his own sphere. May was authentically *sui generis*, singular, in a class alone, without peer.

That still does not answer my original question of what it is about May’s work that is so appealing. What are the inherent qualities that compel us to look deeper? I have already mentioned that May’s work often looks as if there is a backstory. I have become convinced that the “backstory” is the way May conducted his life with genuine regard for his place and his community. These qualities transfused into his studio output. I have come to believe that each work of art made by May is a visual rebus for a complete thought. His drawings, collages, constructions, even his simple-seeming yesteryear postcards cause one to draw in for a closer look, like having to lean in to hear someone who speaks in measured tones.



Exhibition of D. E. May's work.  
Photo by William Bragg, 2008.

I happened upon an undated quote by Mason Williams, written by May, as if he intended to memorize it. The text is in pencil on cardboard:

“When you explain things, you rob them of their mystery. Questions are far more interesting than answers. There’s no meaning to the universe, but you might say our job is to give it meaning. But that’s for our amusement. The universe could care less.”<sup>14</sup>

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A number of Dan May's closest friends shared memories and thoughtful insights about May's life and work with me. I am deeply grateful. Thank you to Jane Magavern Beebe, Rob Groenendaal, Natalie Hargreaves, Bonnie Hull, Craig Klyver, Kellie and Francis Lombardi, Bryan Null, John Olbrantz, Dan Schmidt, Terry Schneider, and Monte Shelton.

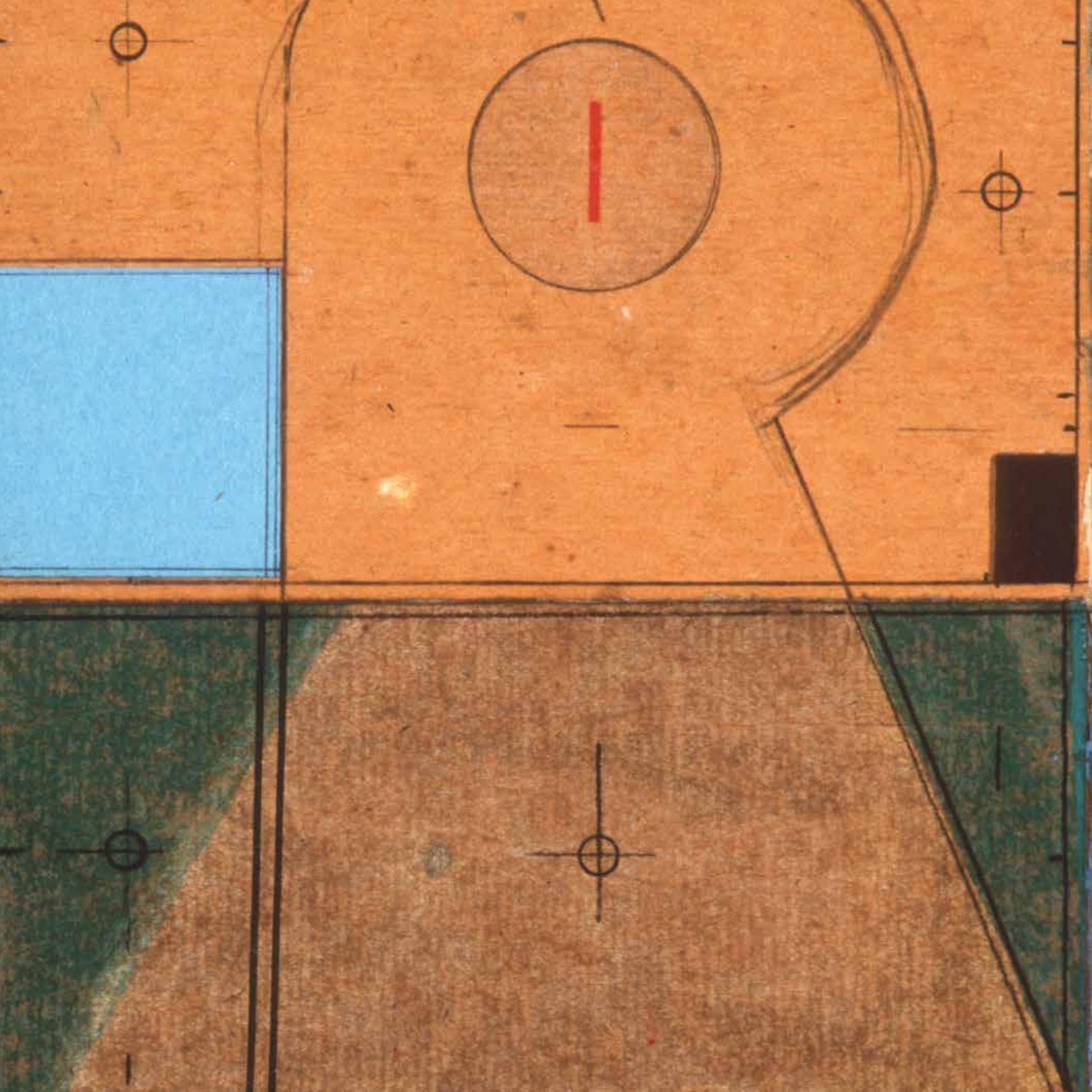
## NOTES

- 1 May frequently commented on how Salem changed with the times, noting when a building was removed or a business folded. One example is found in a September 1, 2006, letter to Dan Schmidt in which May writes, "I walked along the waterfront park just 3 blocks from my workroom. I took my time around what was once the quietly beautiful Boise Cascade Acid Ball which is now the refaced 'Eco Ball,' the city fathers' monument to correctness." The Acid Ball refers to a well-known landmark in Salem, a functional acid storage ball originally owned by Boise Cascade. In 2003, the gigantic sphere was converted into an outdoor public sculpture depicting a world globe, designed and painted by students and volunteers from Salem's art community. The sculpture's title is *Eco-Earth Globe*.
- 2 *The Template Files: Works by D. E. May* (Portland, OR: Publication Studio, 2011), p. 17 (unnumbered).
- 3 "Mescalito" was most likely a reference to Carlos Casteneda's book *The Teachings of Don Juan*, in which "Mescalito" is the name given to the spirit or teaching presence that Casteneda attributes to peyote.
- 4 Georges Simenon wrote seventy-five novels and twenty-eight short stories featuring Jules Maigret; several of these have been produced in film.
- 5 May, in an undated letter to Dan Schmidt.
- 6 Also known as Slap.
- 7 Also known as Farkle.
- 8 The Wheatland Ferry, a cable ferry crossing between Yamhill and Marion Counties, continues to operate today. It was established in 1850.
- 9 In a letter to Dan Schmidt dated July 13, 2005, May wrote about seeing *The Fog of War*: "You may have seen it. It's called *Fog of War*—based on interviews with former Secretary of Defense, Robert S. McNamara. The S stands for Strange—literally. Truly compelling story, but what really nailed me were the visuals. I swear the director, Errol Morris (*Thin Blue Line*) and his three editors have been thumbing through the same *Mechanix Illustrated* and *Nat'l G's* that I've violated for so many years with my exacto knife."
- 10 At Smalls (see "A Postscript from the Regionaires Club," p. 201) there remain the vinyl records that May owned: Tom Waits, jazz, Lou Reed, the Doors. His favorite song, according to his friend Bryan Null, was "Yes, the River Knows" on the Doors album *Waiting for the Sun*.
- 11 He was almost certainly referring to "The Wright Stuff: The Life of Orville and Wilbur Wright," an episode of *American Experience* written and produced by Nancy Porter, 1996.
- 12 Dan May, written on the back of an undated envelope addressed to Dan Schmidt.
- 13 Abigail Susik, "D. E. May and the Gift of Unknowable Intimacy," *Drain Magazine* 18, no. 1 (2022): 20, <https://drainmag.com/de-may/>.
- 14 From *California Typewriter* (2016). Mason Williams and Ed Ruscha famously enacted an art piece and published a book called *Royal Road Test*, in which they threw a vintage Royal typewriter out of a speeding Buick (1967).

## Artists Statement

I look at much  
of what I do  
as preliminary  
and resolved  
simultaneously.

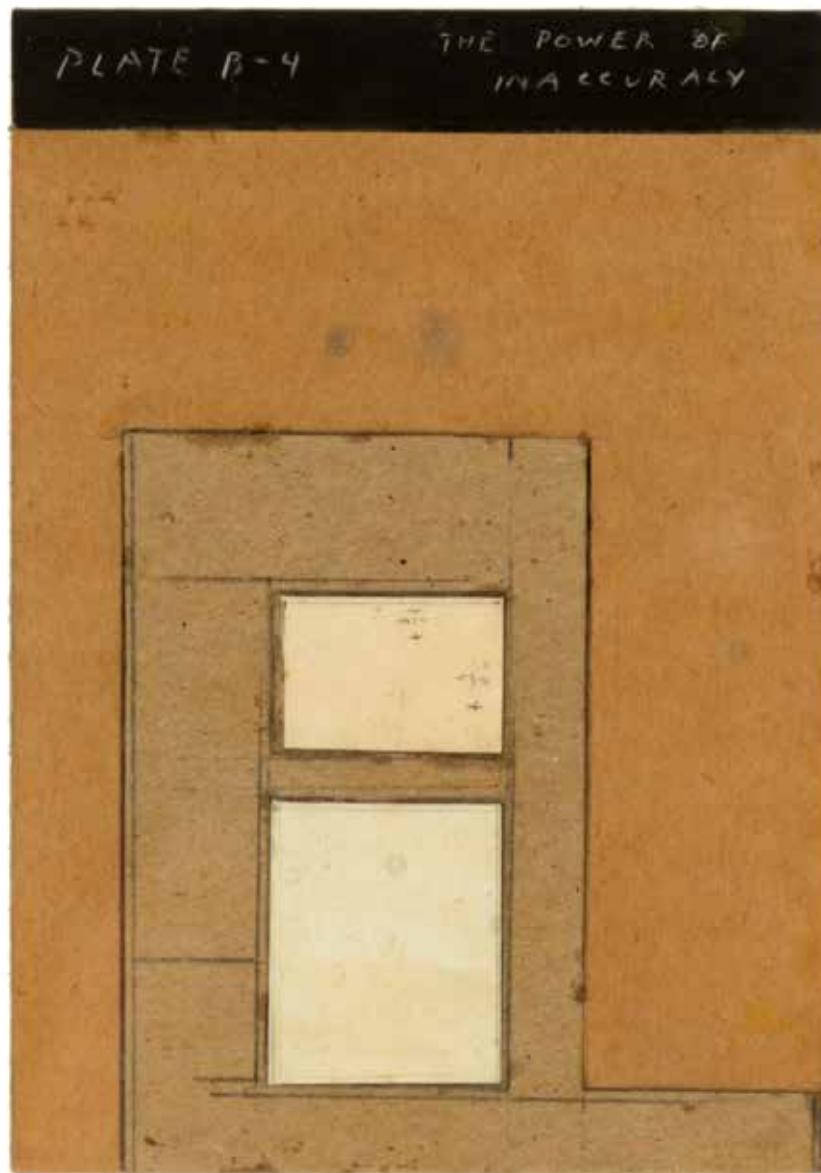
D. E. May



**COLLAGE**



*Untitled*  
1988  
Collage  
4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 3 in.



*Untitled*

Late 1980s, early 1990s

Mixed media

6 × 4 in.

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette  
University, Gift of William A. Mosser, 2018.035.002



*Untitled*

1988

Collage

5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 3<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

Collection of Jane and Spencer Beebe Trust



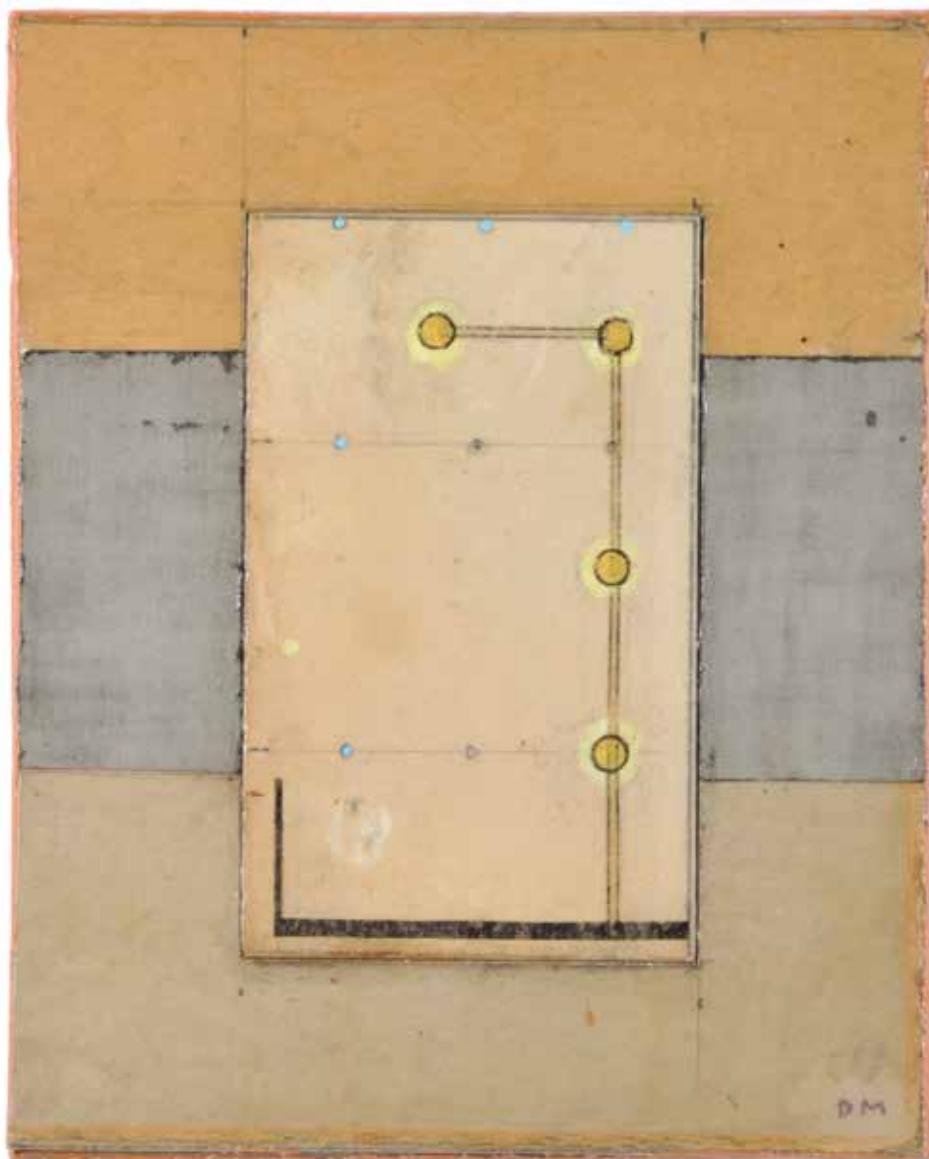
*Untitled #103*

1988

Collage

7¼ × 3½ in.

Collection of Jane and Spencer Beebe Trust



*Untitled*

1992

Pigment and varnish on paper and cardboard

7 × 5 in.

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette  
University, Elmer Edwin Young Purchase Fund, YNGAF93.04



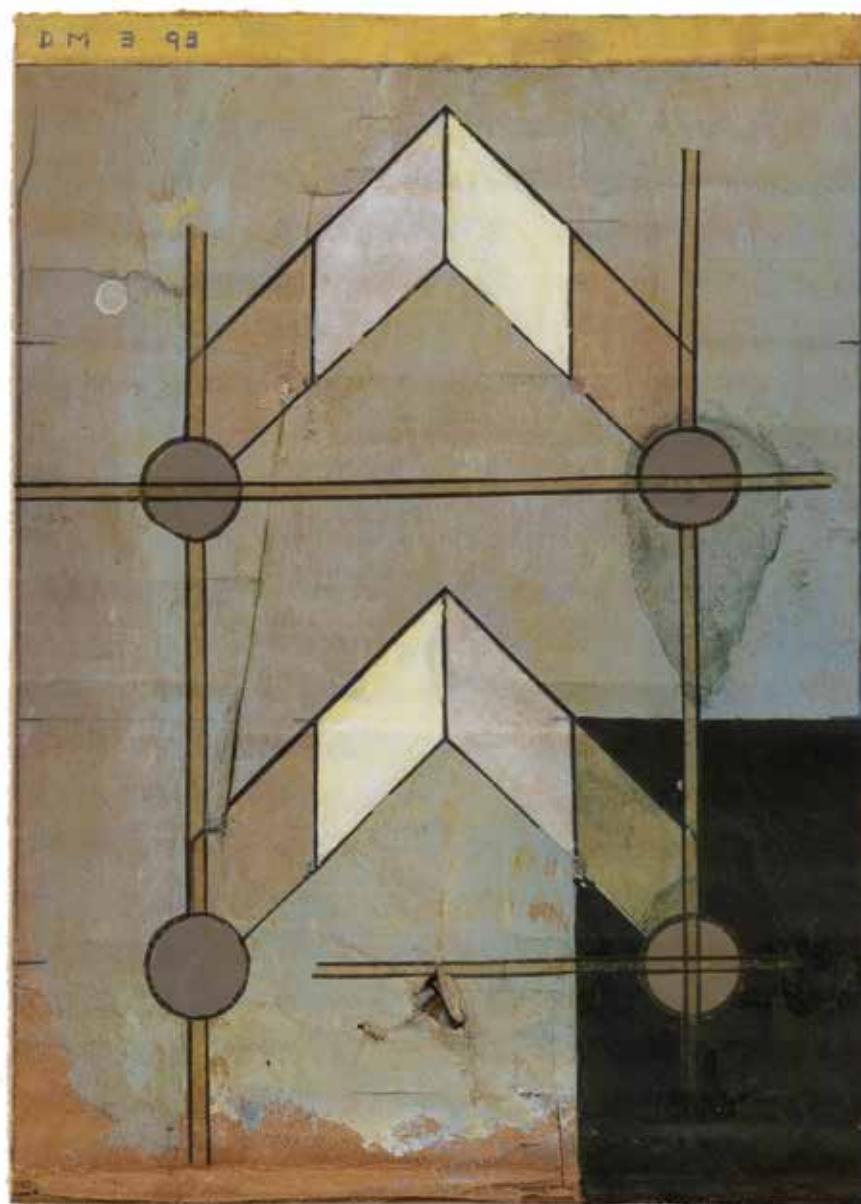
*Untitled*

1993

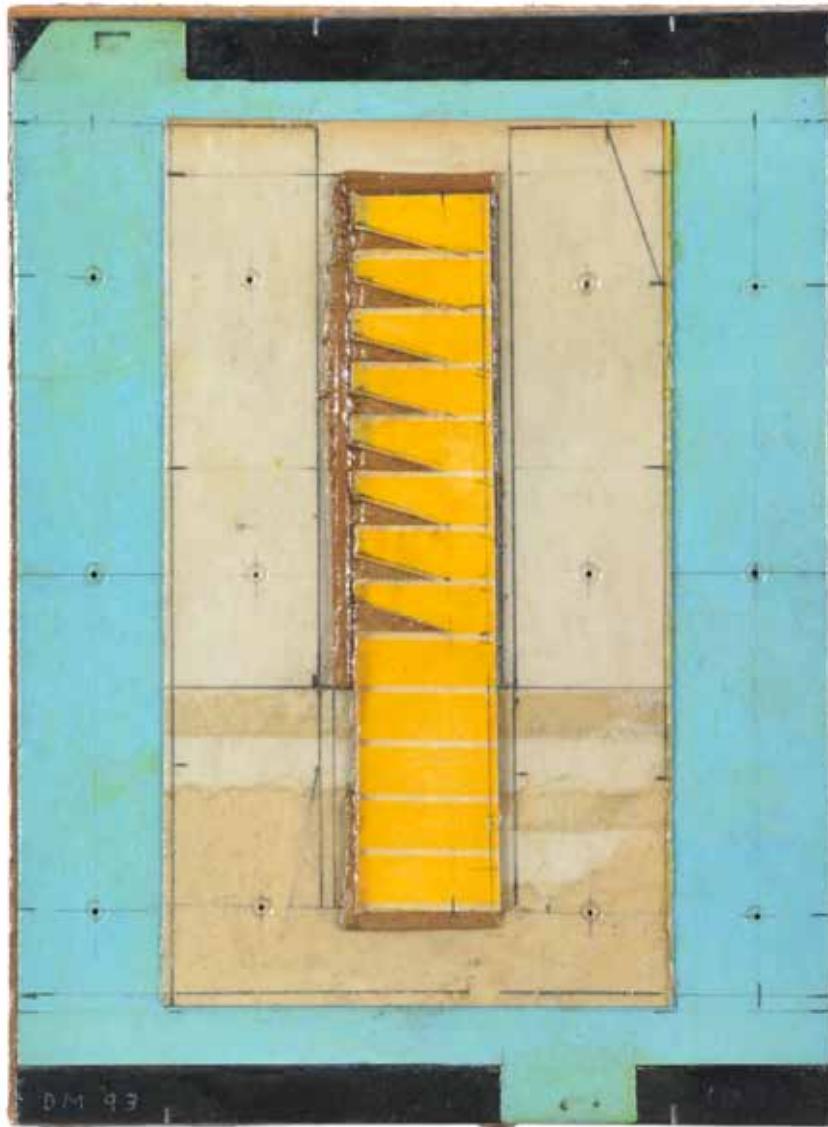
Ink and paint on found cardboard

5½ × 7⅛ in.

41



*Untitled*  
1993  
Paint and fabric pattern paper on cardboard  
7 × 5 in.  
Collection of Jane and Spencer Beebe Trust



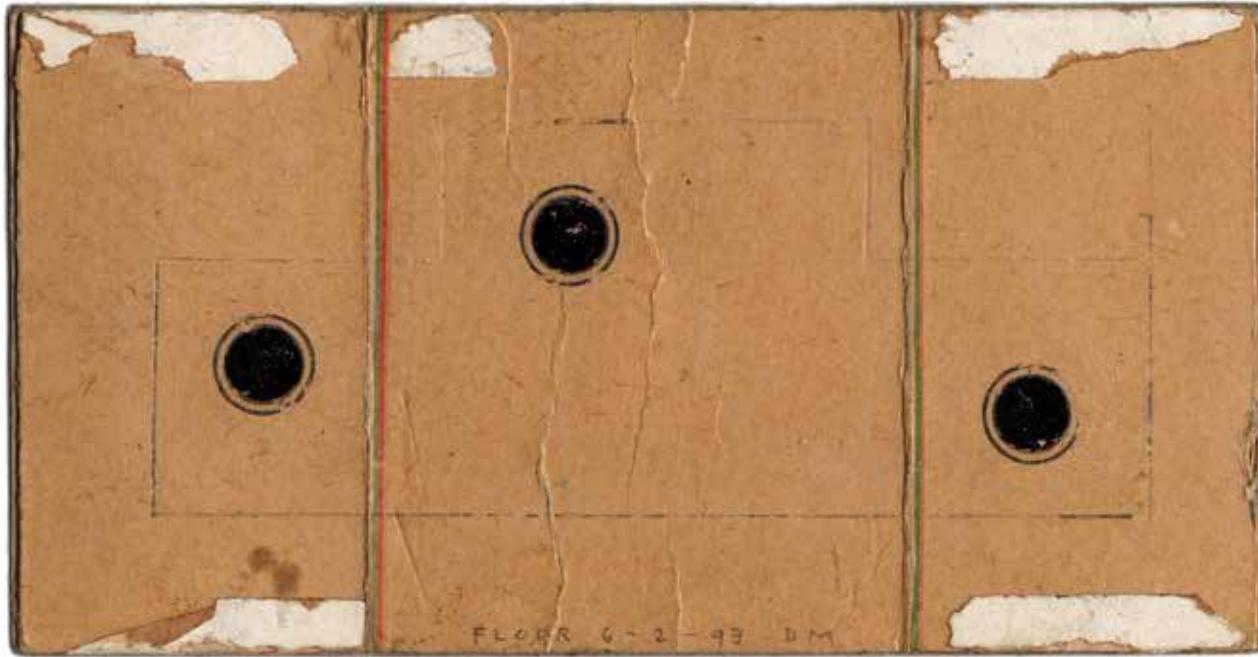
*Untitled*

1993

Mixed media on cardboard

5 × 6¾ in.

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette  
University, Gift of William A. Mosser, 2018.035.003



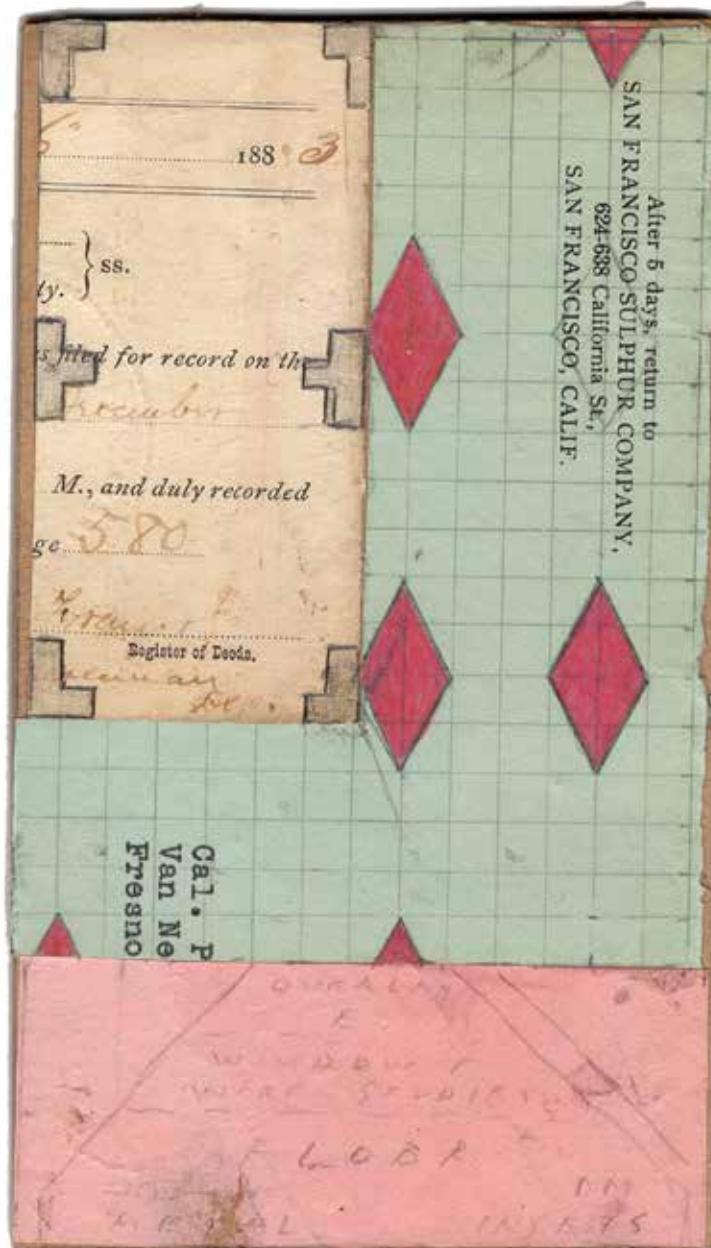
*Untitled (Floor)*

1993

Graphite, ink, and found paper on cardboard

$3\frac{1}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$  in.

Collection of Linda and John Tesner



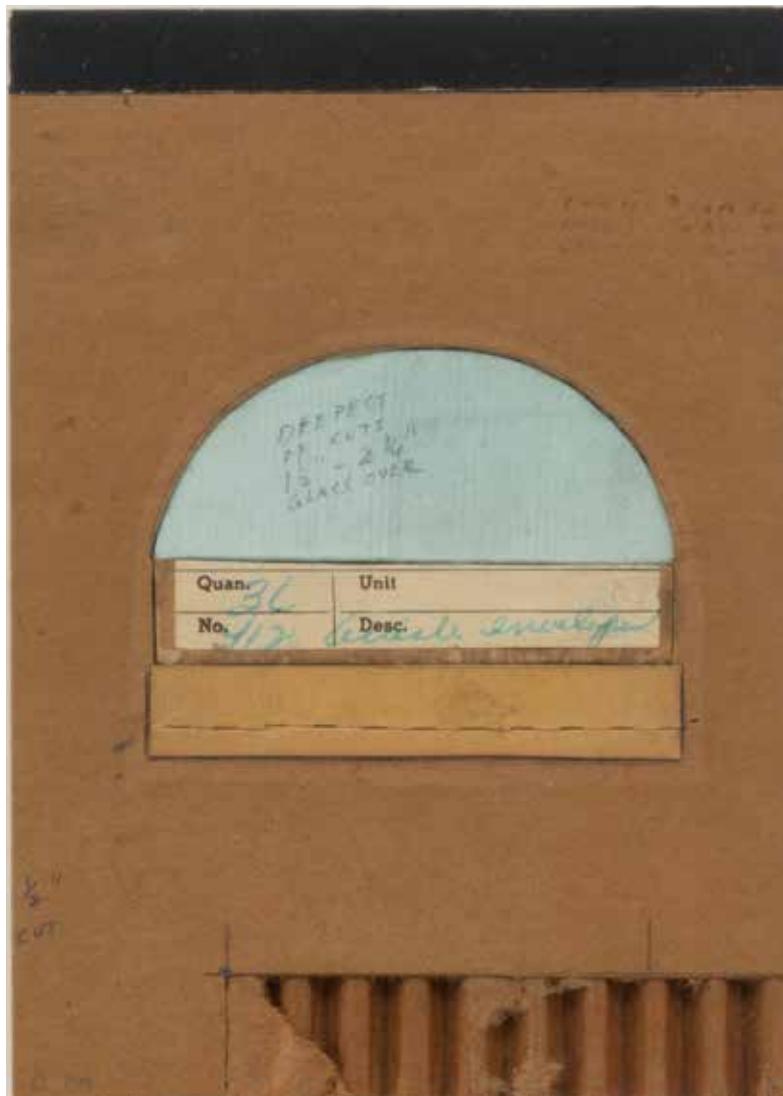
*Untitled*

Date unknown

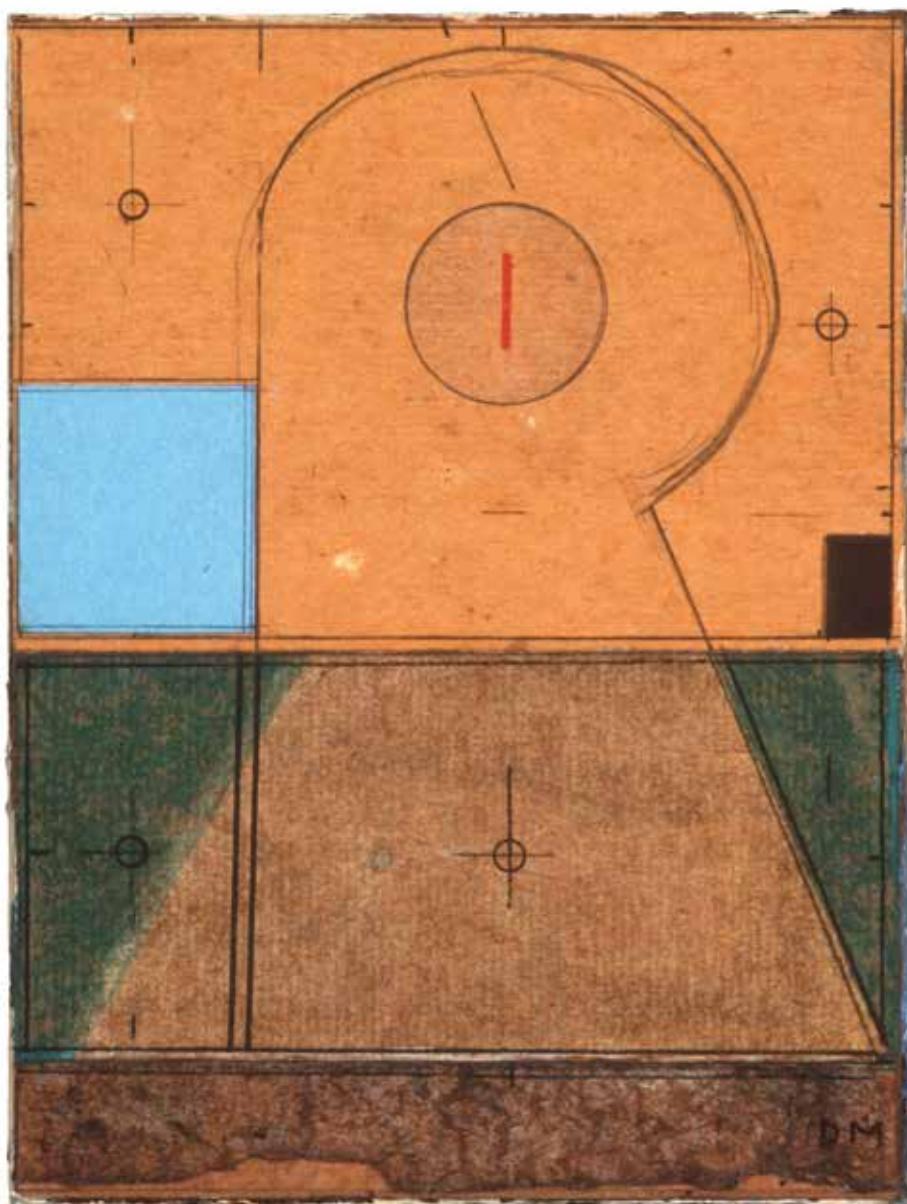
Graphite and collage on cardboard

6 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 3 $\frac{5}{8}$  in.

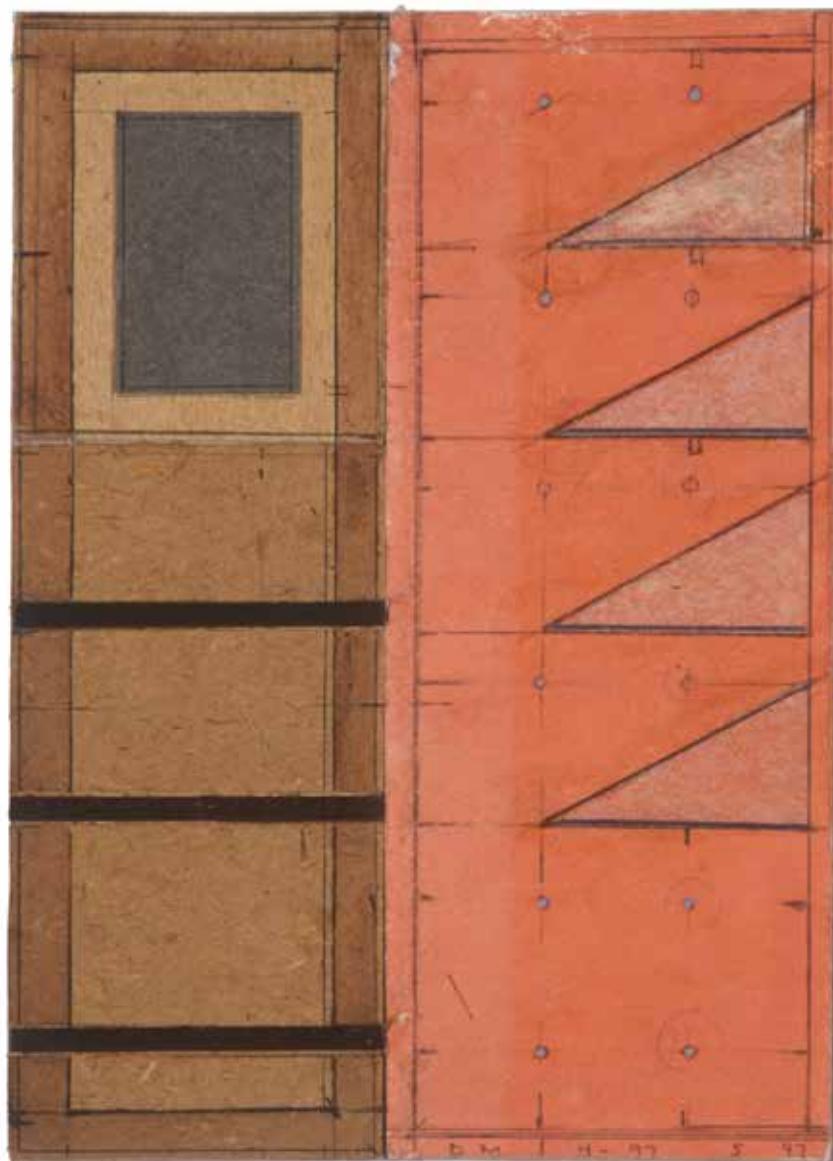
Collection of Linda and John Tesner



*Untitled*  
1995  
Mixed media  
5½ × 4 in.  
Collection of Silas Beebe



*Untitled*  
1996  
Mixed media  
6 × 4½ in.



*Untitled*  
1997  
Mixed media  
6 × 4¼ in.



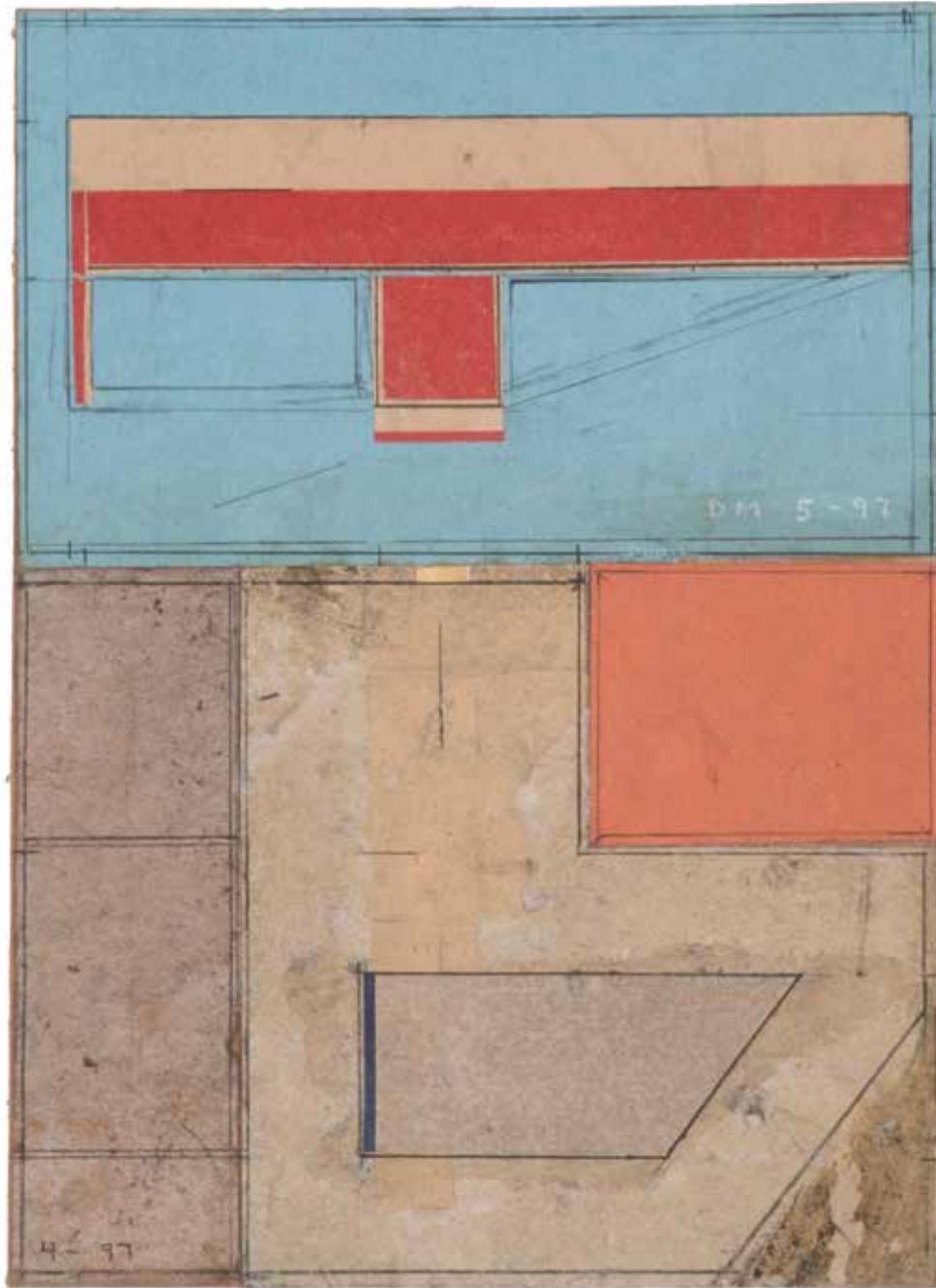
*Untitled #273*

Date unknown

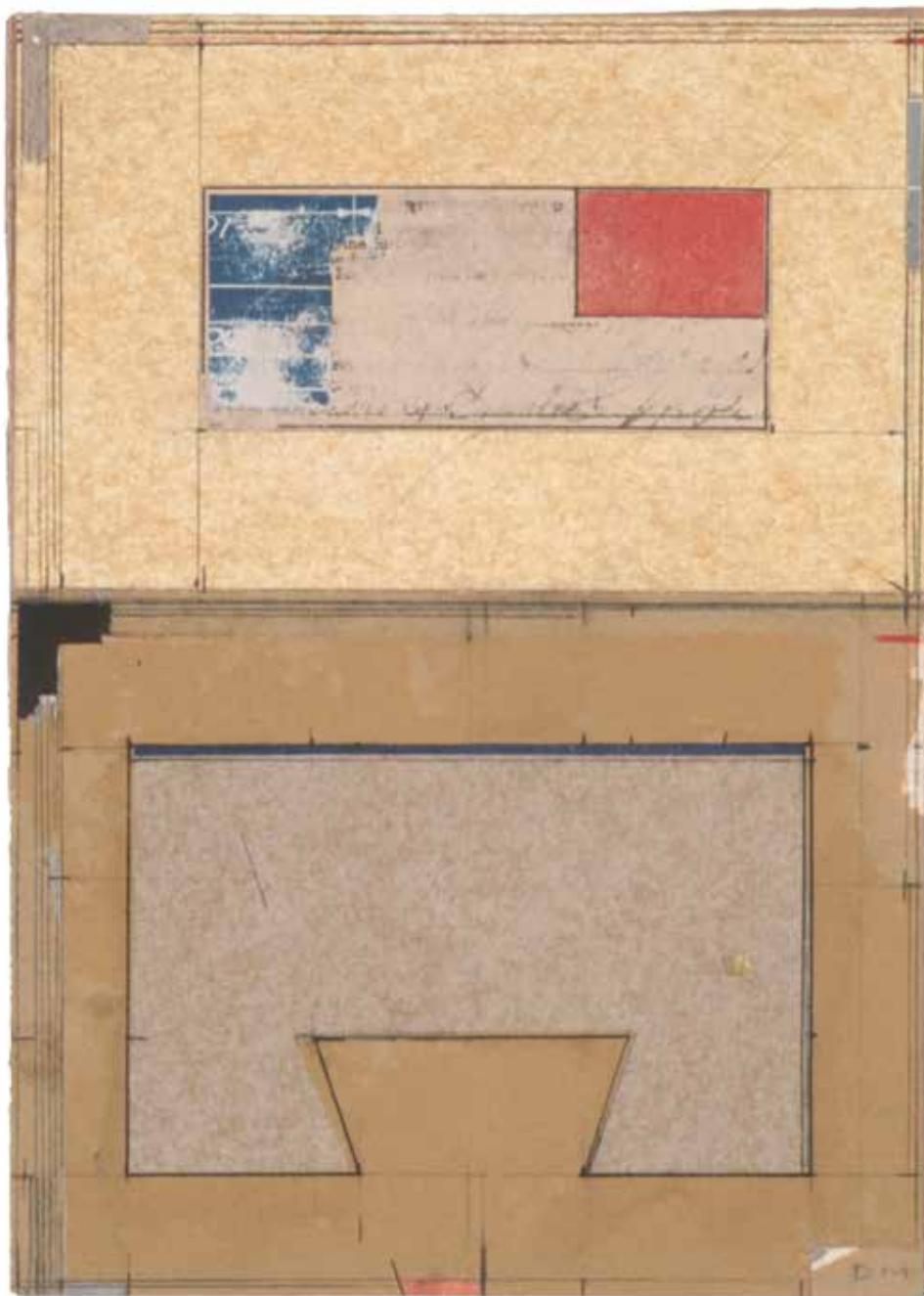
Ink, gouache, found papers, tape, and graphite on cardboard

7¼ × 5 × 1¾ in.

Collection of William Ittmann Jr. and Andrew Kerr III



*Untitled*  
1997  
Mixed media  
7 × 5 in.



*Untitled*

1997

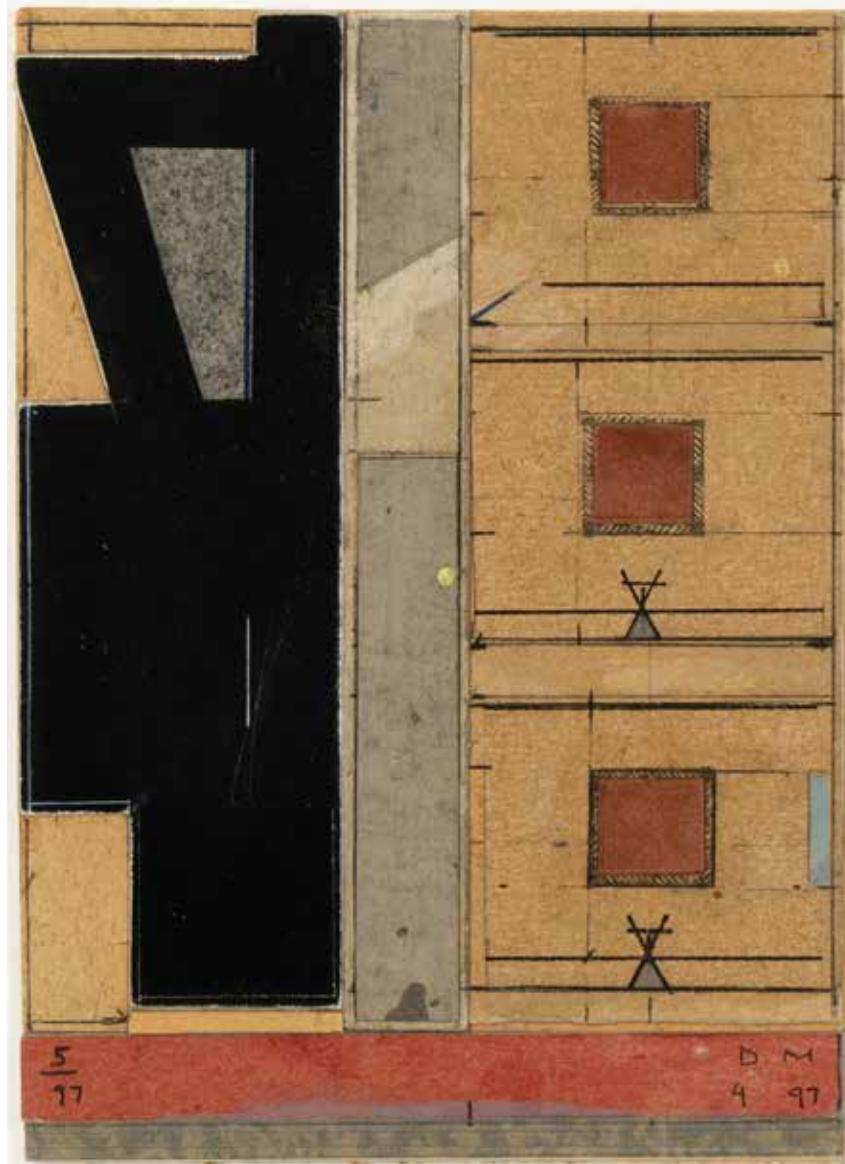
Graphite on found cardboard and paper, collage

7 × 5¼ in.

51



*Untitled*  
1997  
Graphite, fabric pattern paper, and glass on wood  
8 × 4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.



*Untitled*

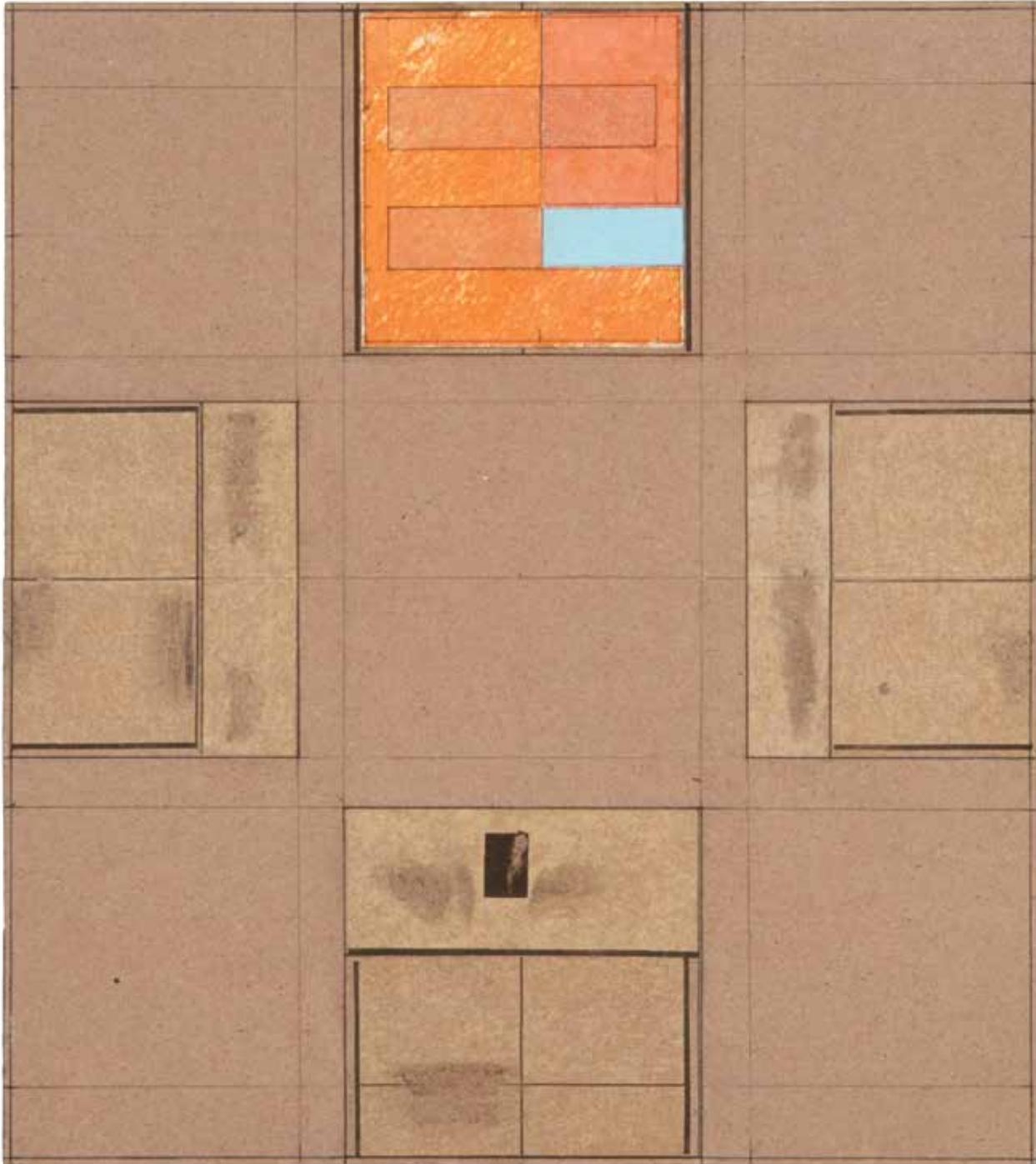
1997

Mixed media

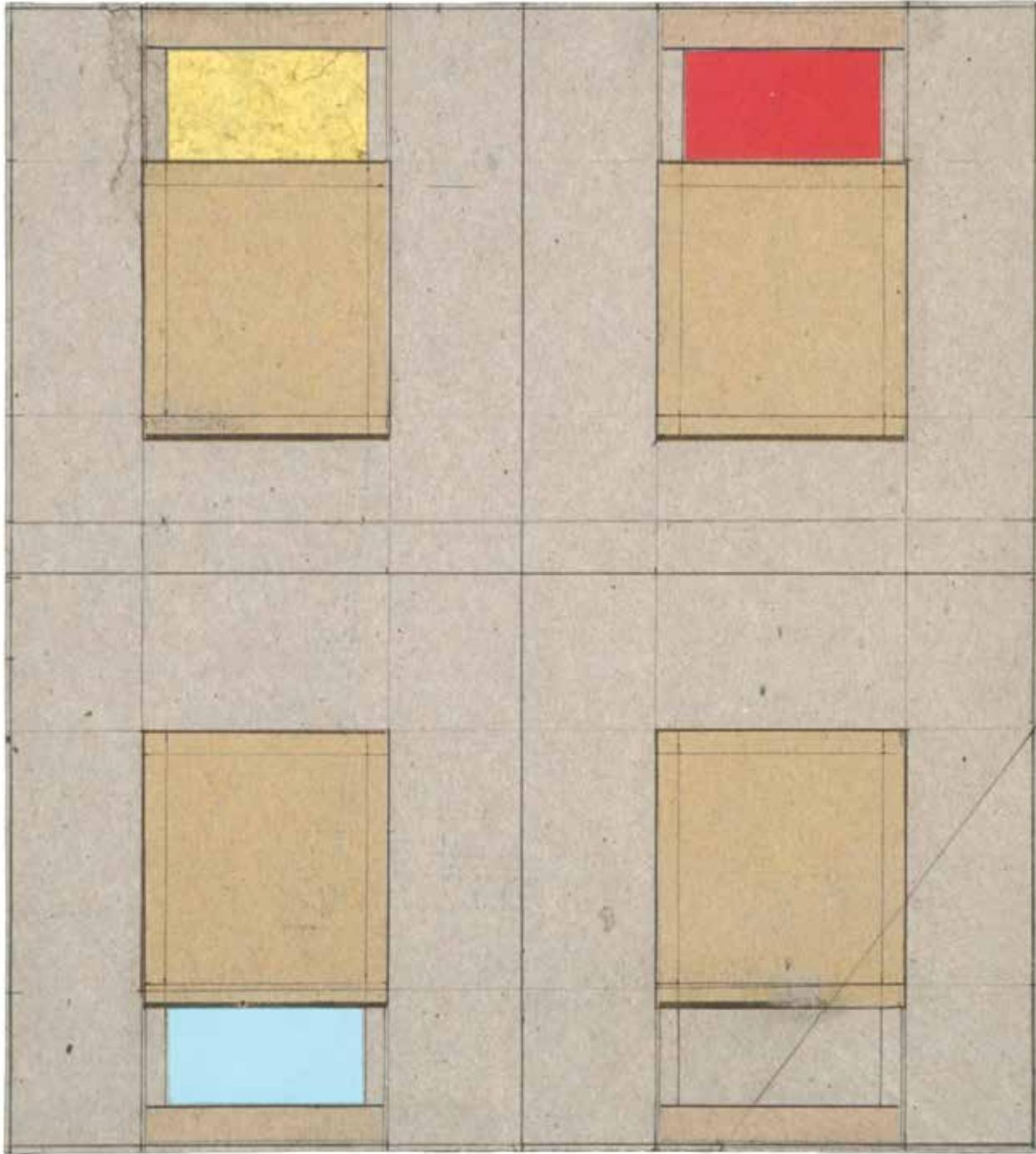
6 × 4¼ in.

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette

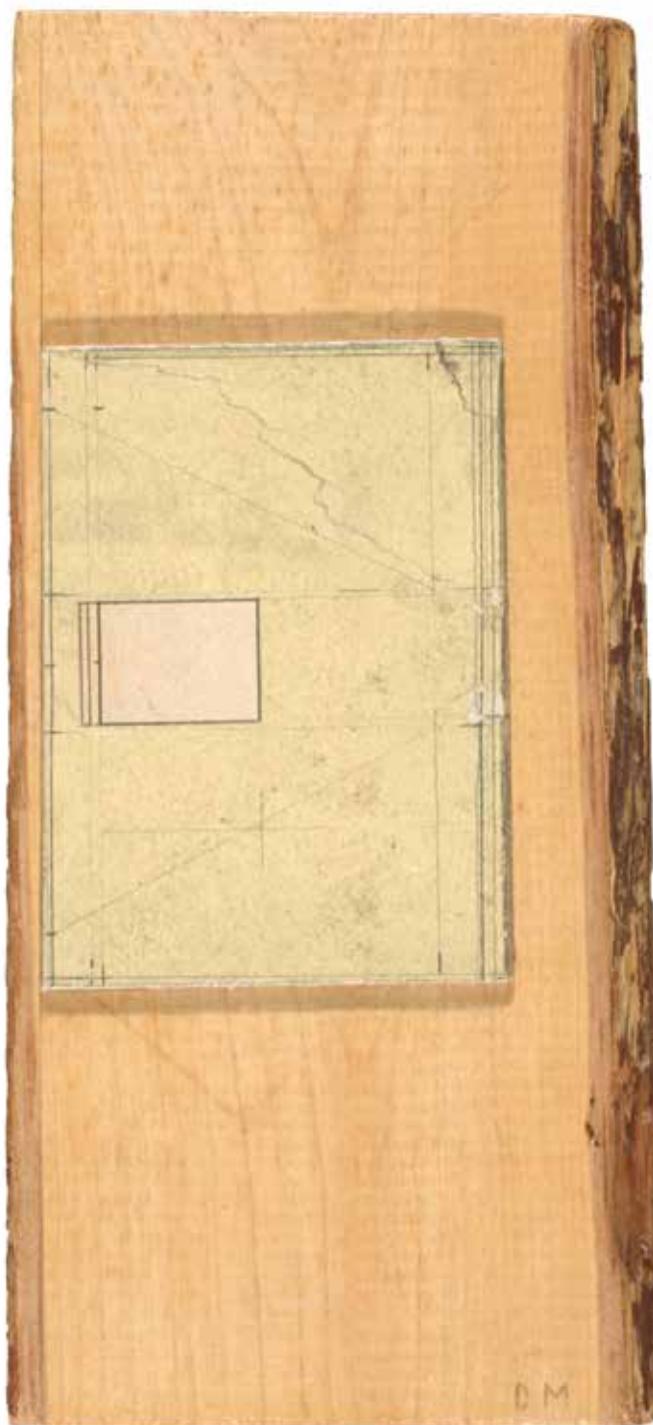
University, Maribeth Collins Art Acquisition Fund, 2001.029.001



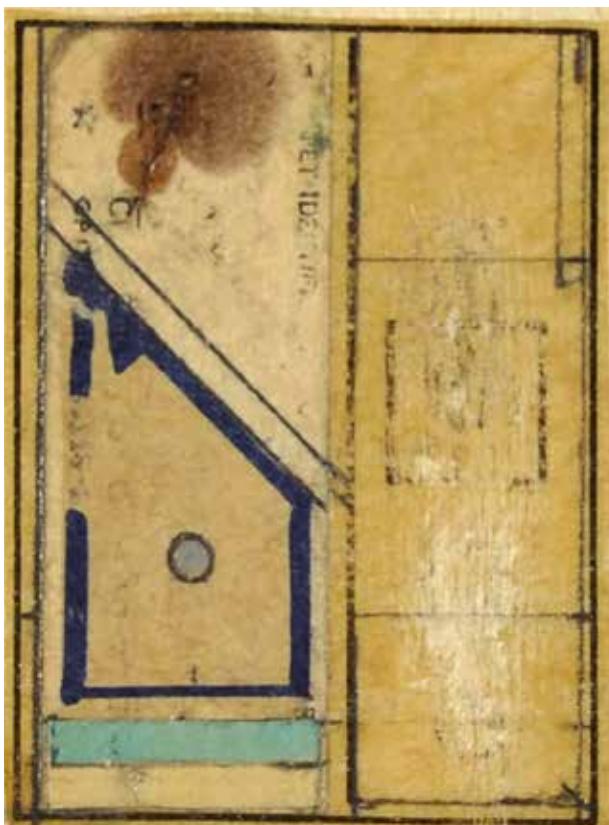
*Untitled*  
1998  
Mixed media  
13 × 11<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.



*Untitled*  
1998  
Mixed media  
12<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 11<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.



*Untitled*  
1999  
Graphite and found papers on wood  
10 × 4<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.



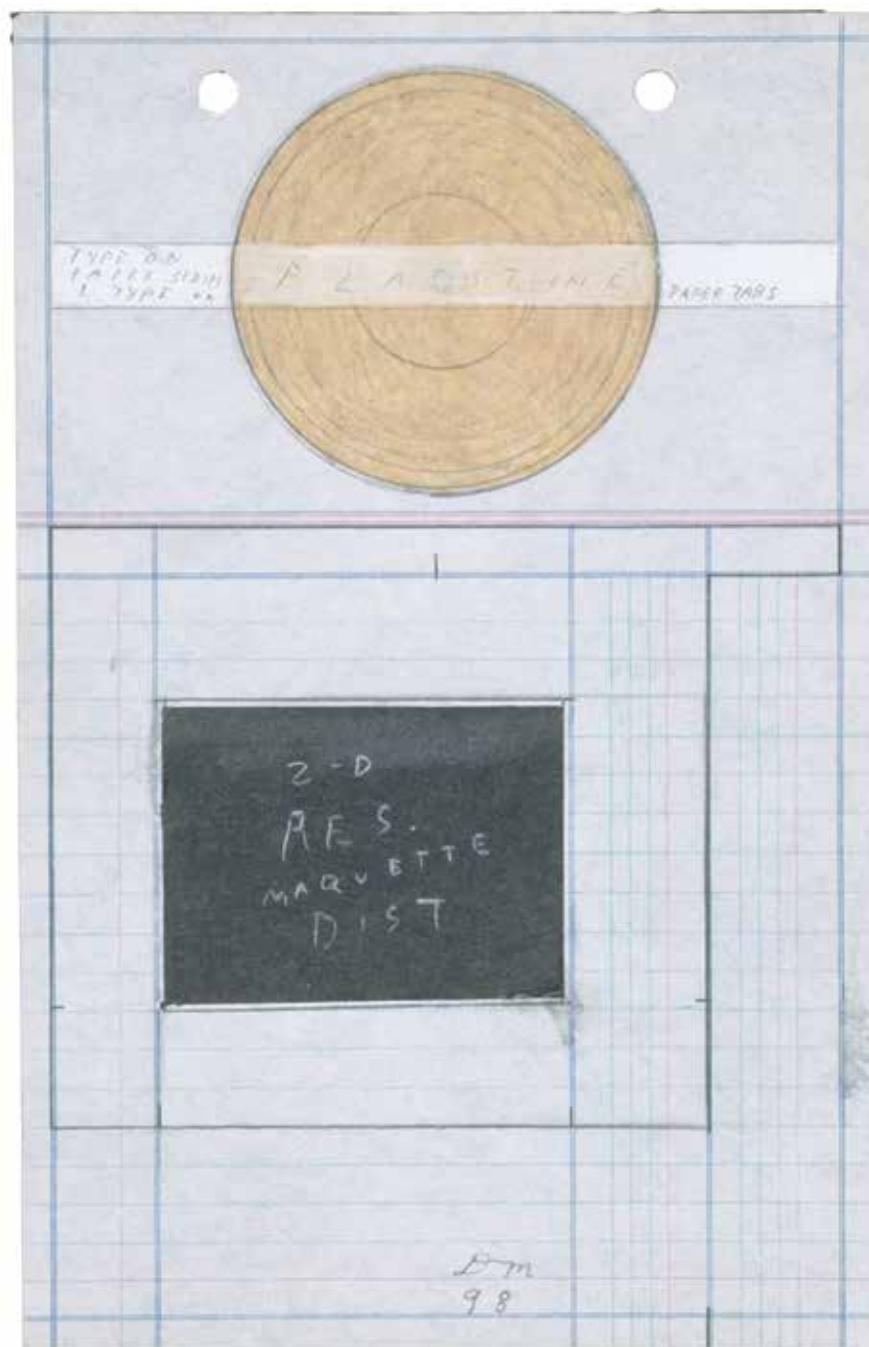
*Untitled*

Date unknown

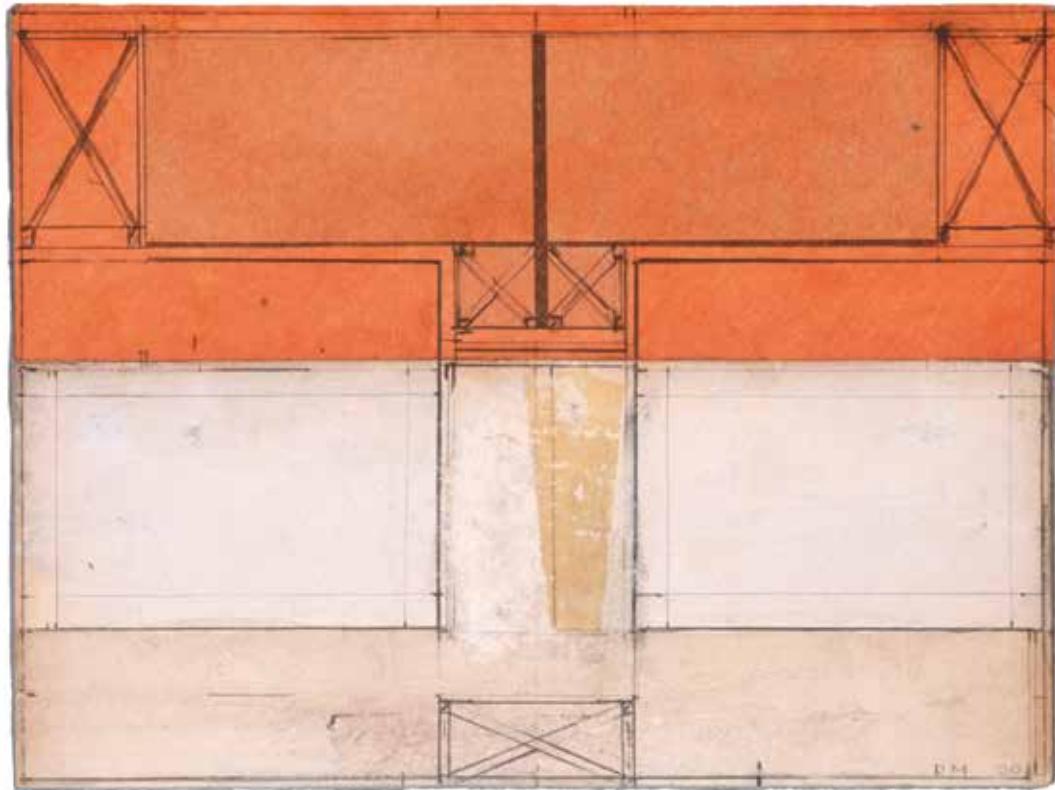
Collage on wood

2¼ × 1½ in.

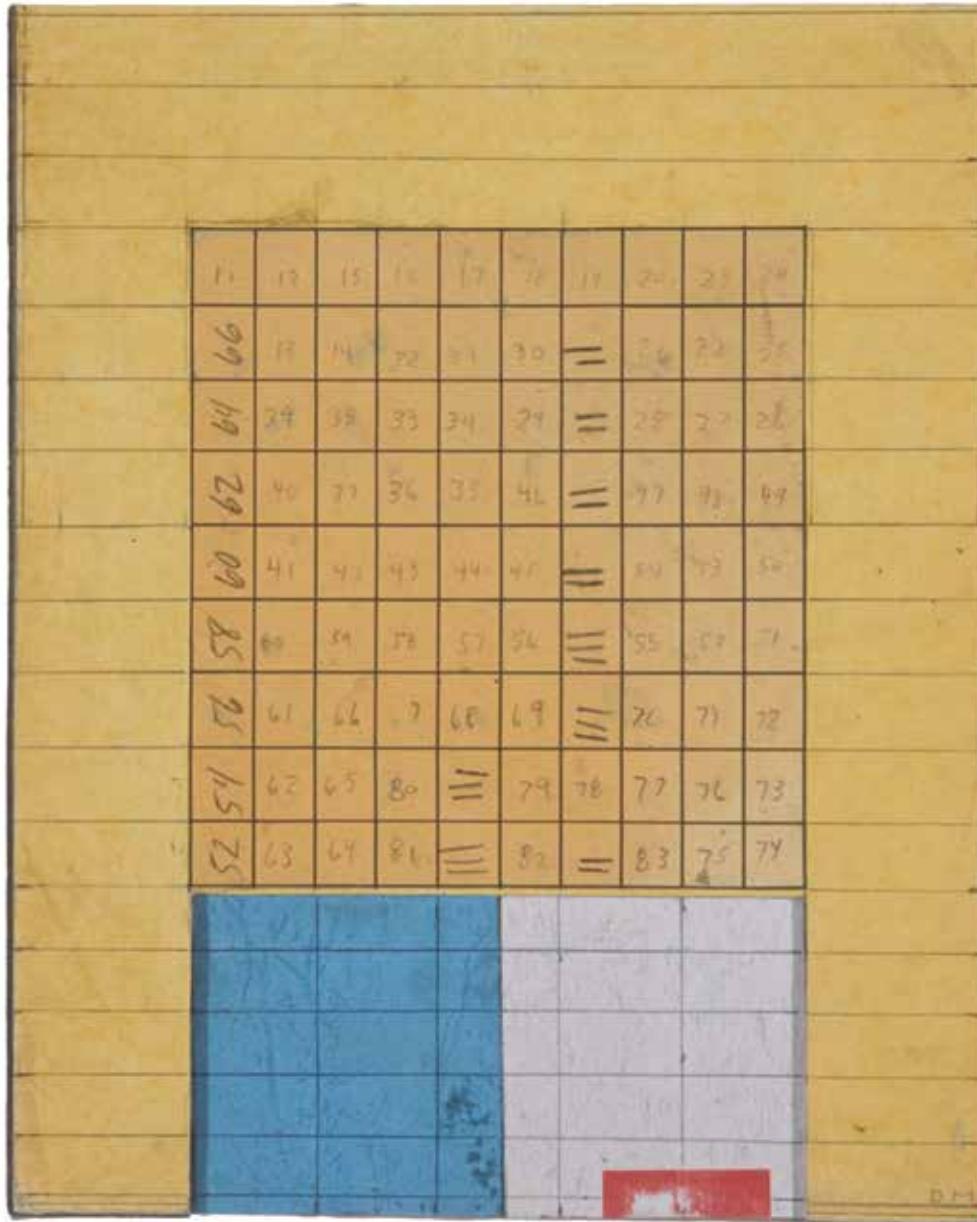
Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette  
University, Gift of Leo Michelson, 2004.077.003



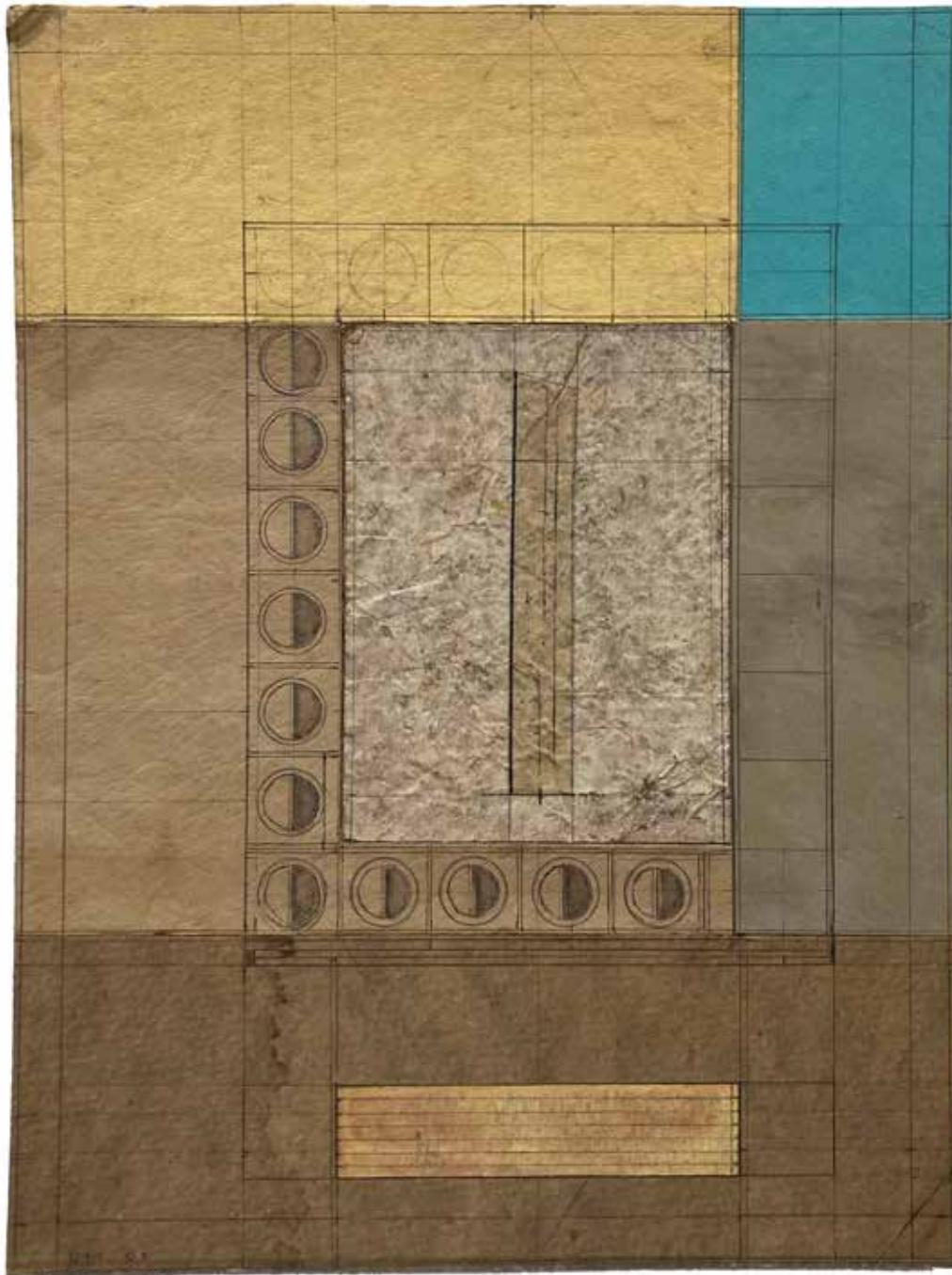
*Untitled*  
1999  
Mixed media  
8½ × 5½ in.



*Untitled*  
2000  
Mixed media  
6 × 8 in.



*Reservoir District*  
 2001  
 Mixed media  
 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 5<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.  
 Collection of Eric and Robin Busch



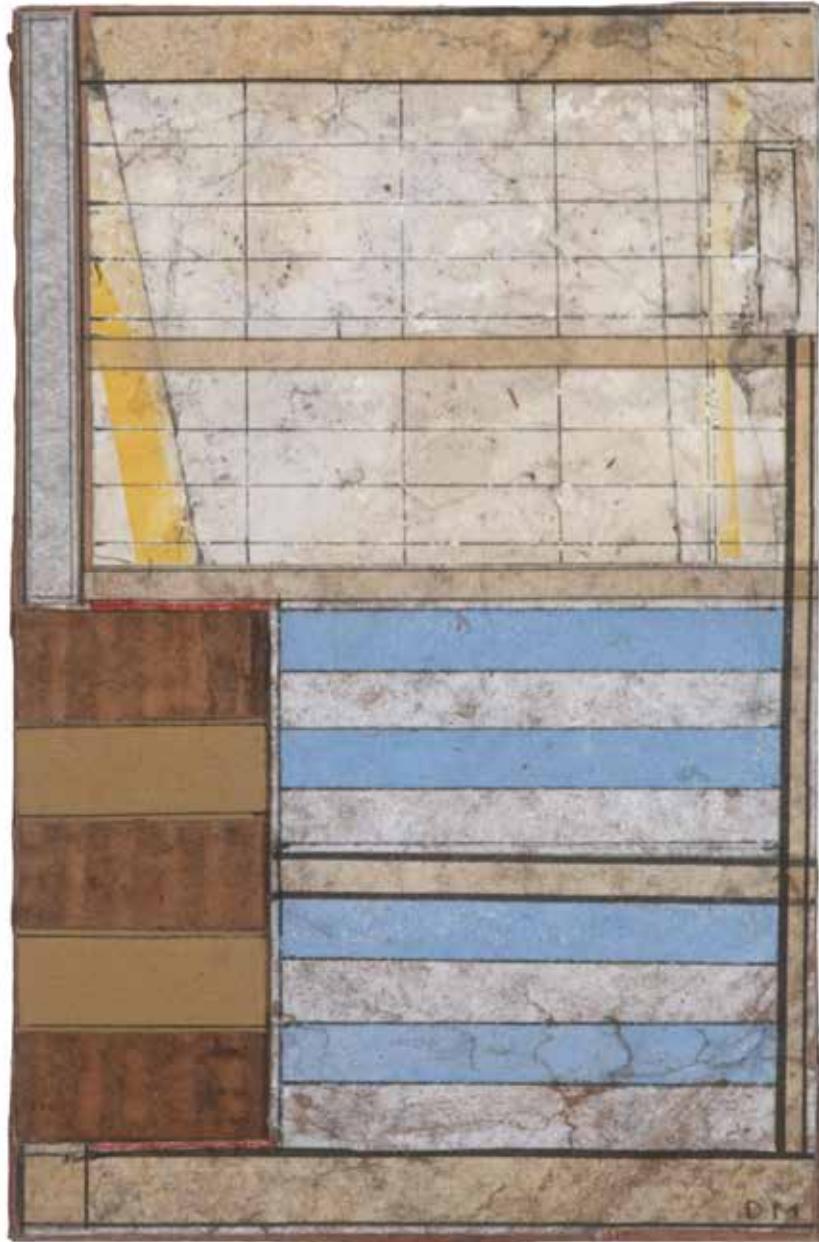
*Untitled (242)*

2001

Mixed media

12 × 9 in.

61



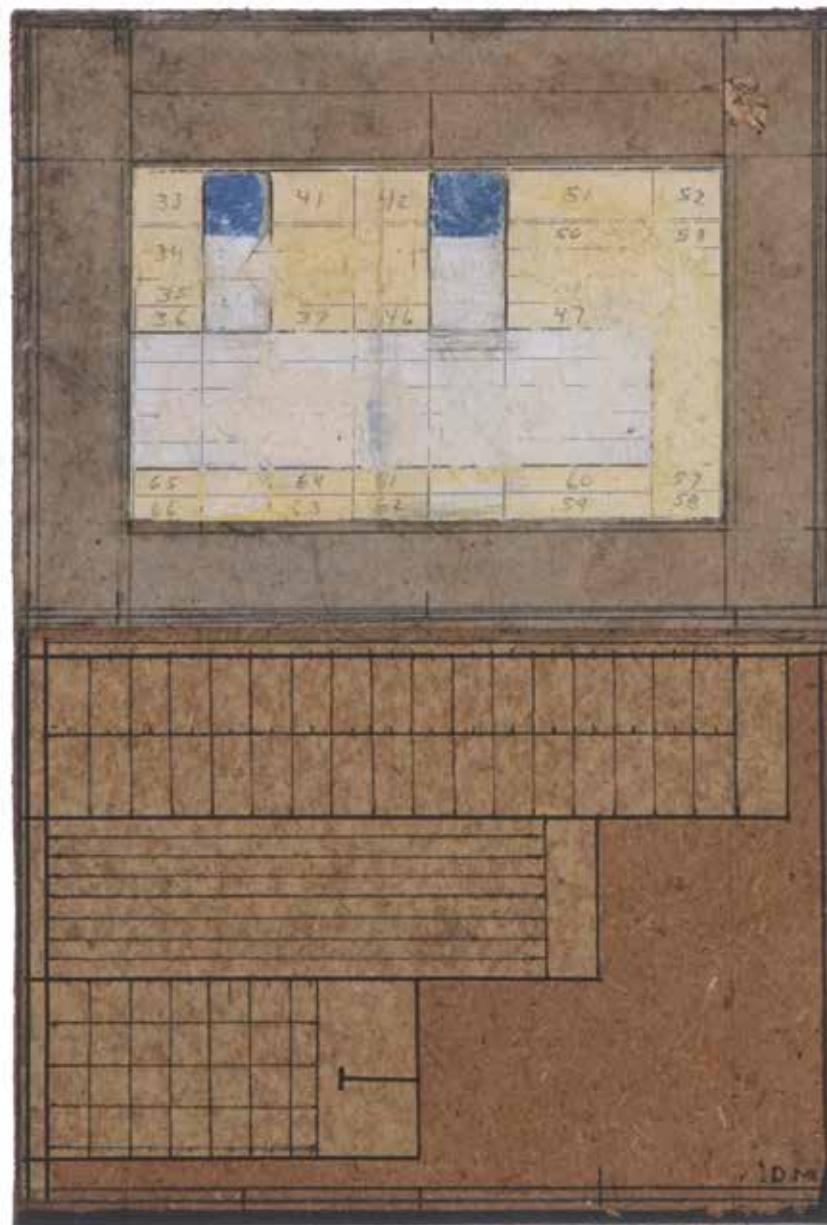
*Reservoir District*

2001

Mixed media

8 × 5¼ in.

62



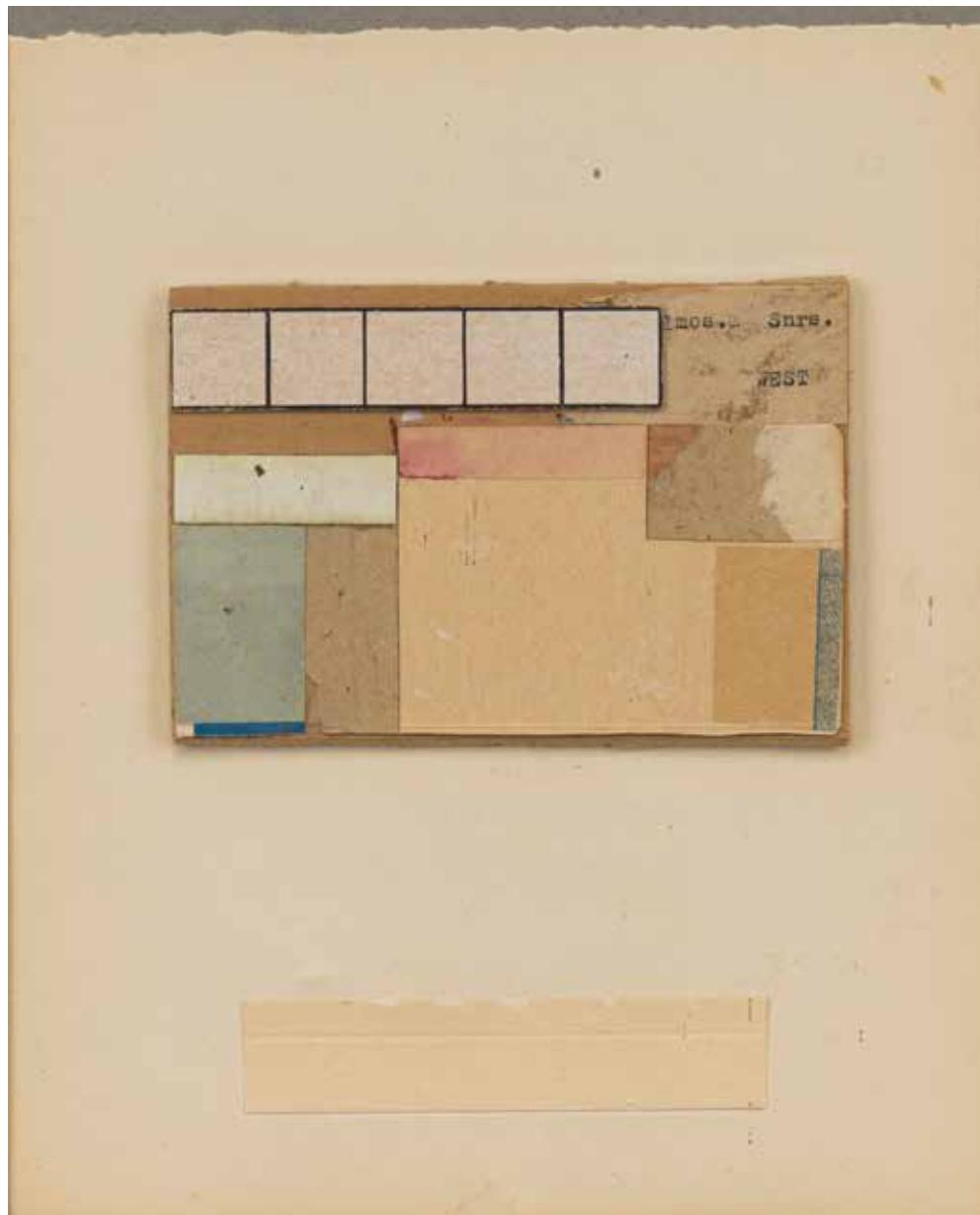
*Reservoir District*

2001

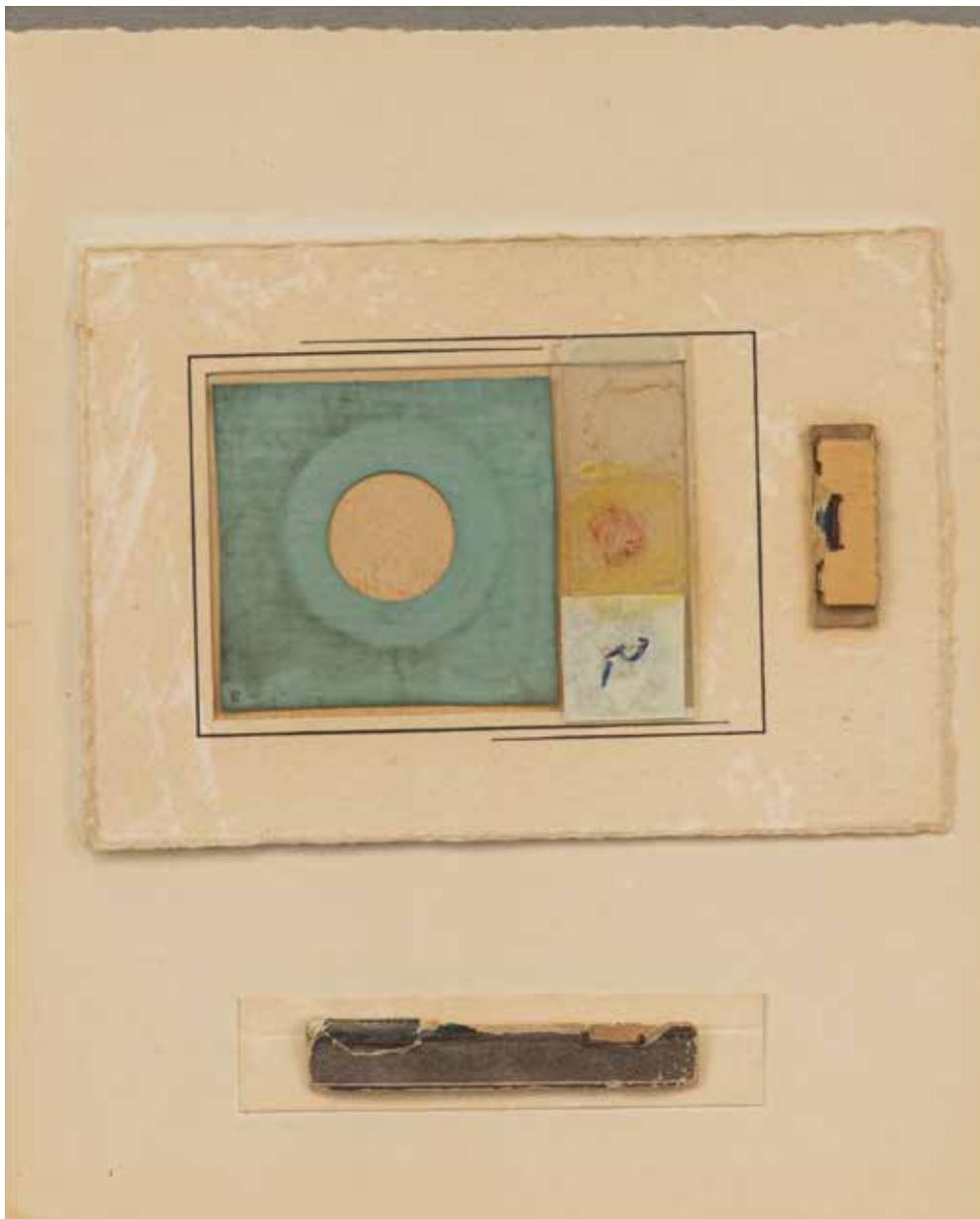
Mixed media

7½ × 5½ in.

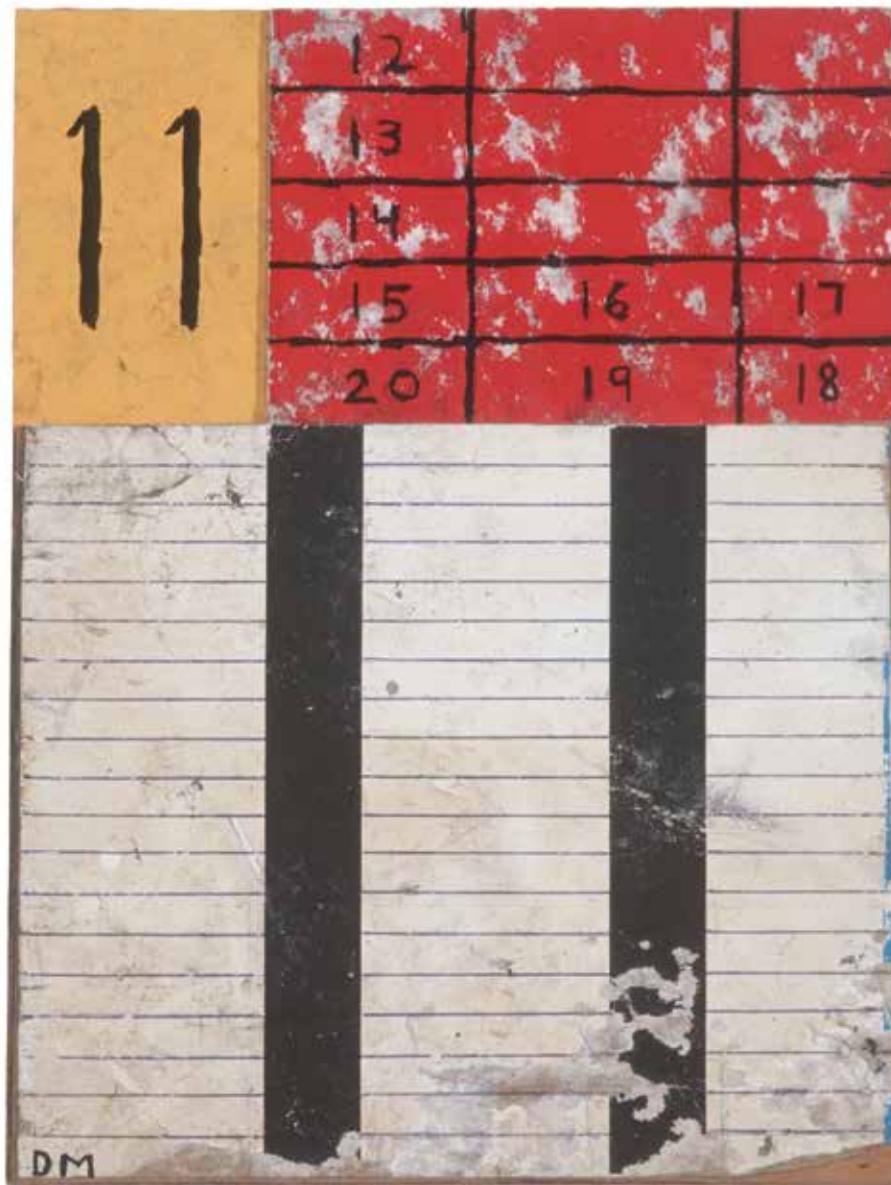
63



*Untitled*  
Date unknown  
Mixed-media collage  
9½ × 8¾ in.  
Collection of Terrence Schneider



*Untitled*  
Date unknown  
Mixed-media collage  
9½ × 8¾ in.  
Collection of Terrence Schneider



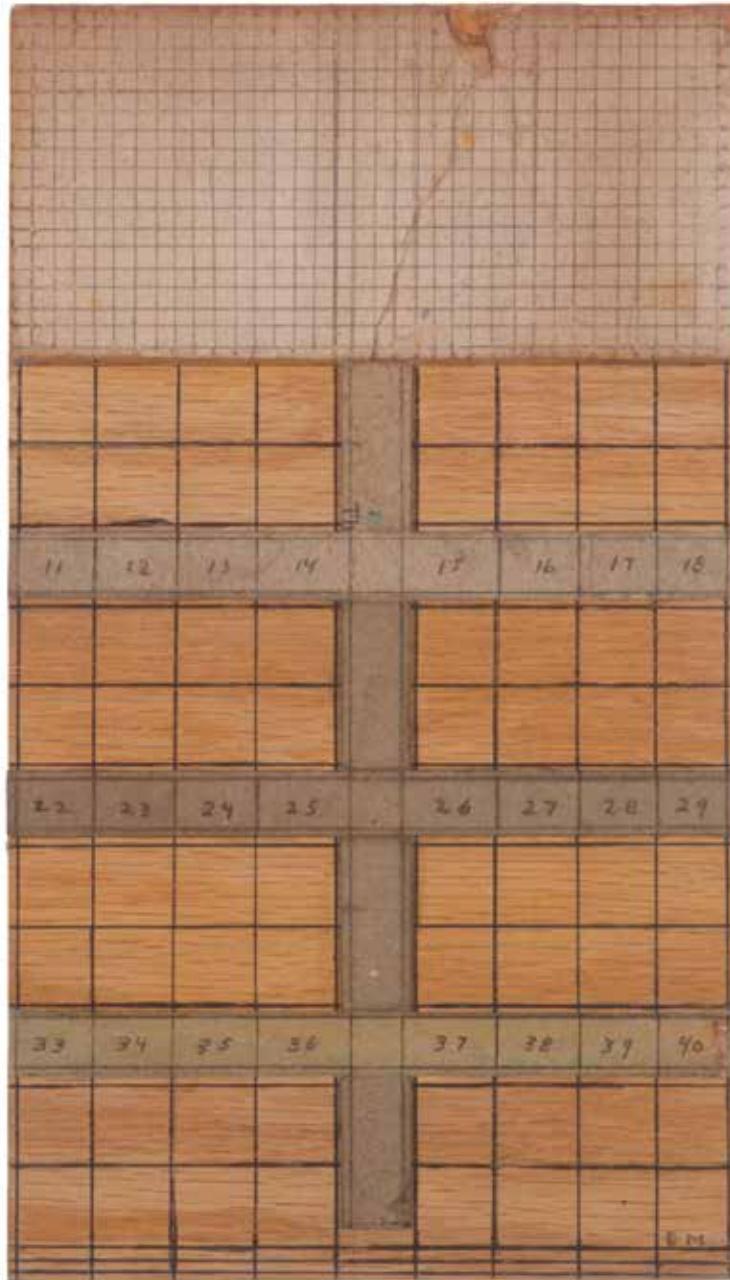
*Reservoir District*

2001

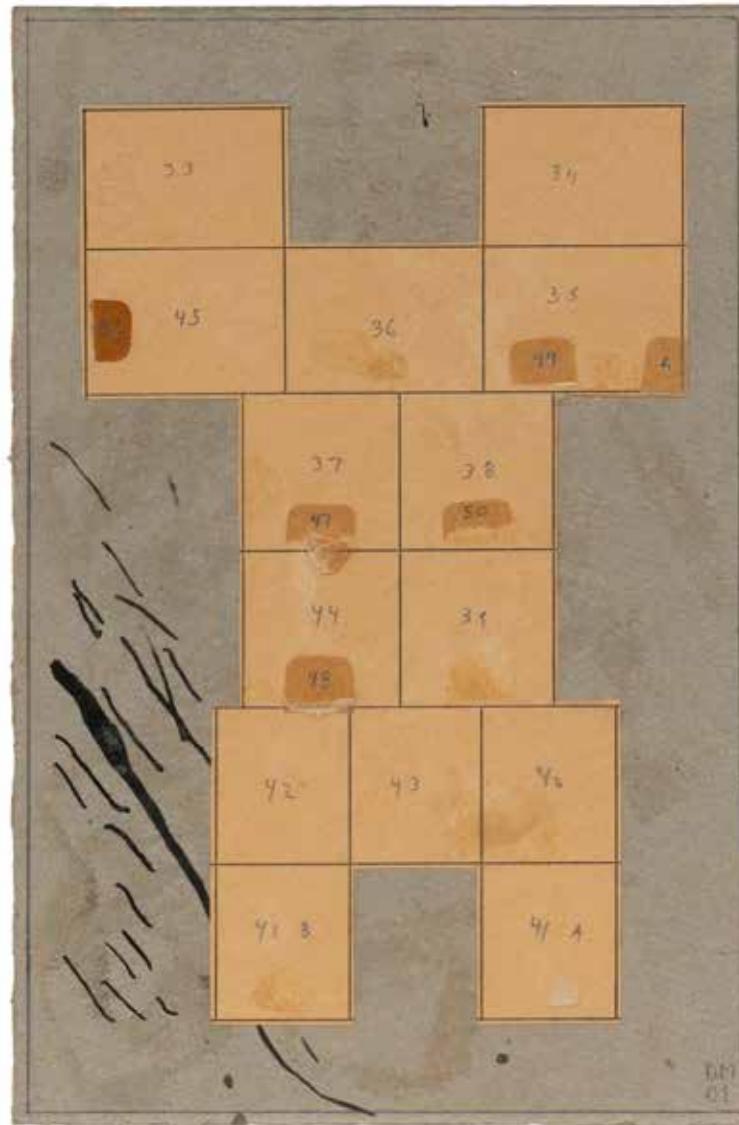
Mixed media

7<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.

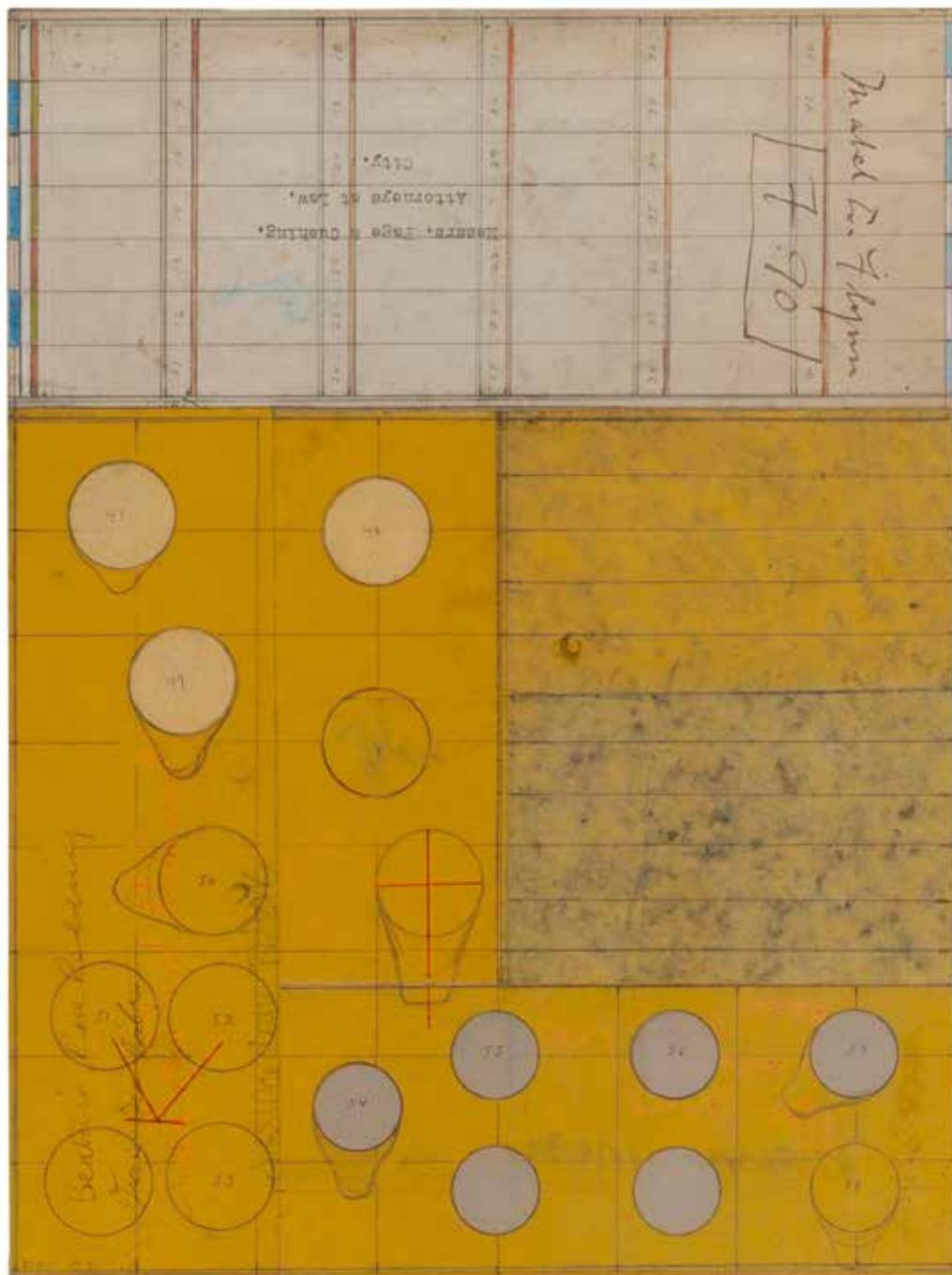
Collection of Marie Watt and Adam McIsaac



*Reservoir District*  
2001  
Mixed-media collage on wood  
8 × 4½ in.



*Untitled*  
2001  
Mixed media  
8½ × 5⅝ in.



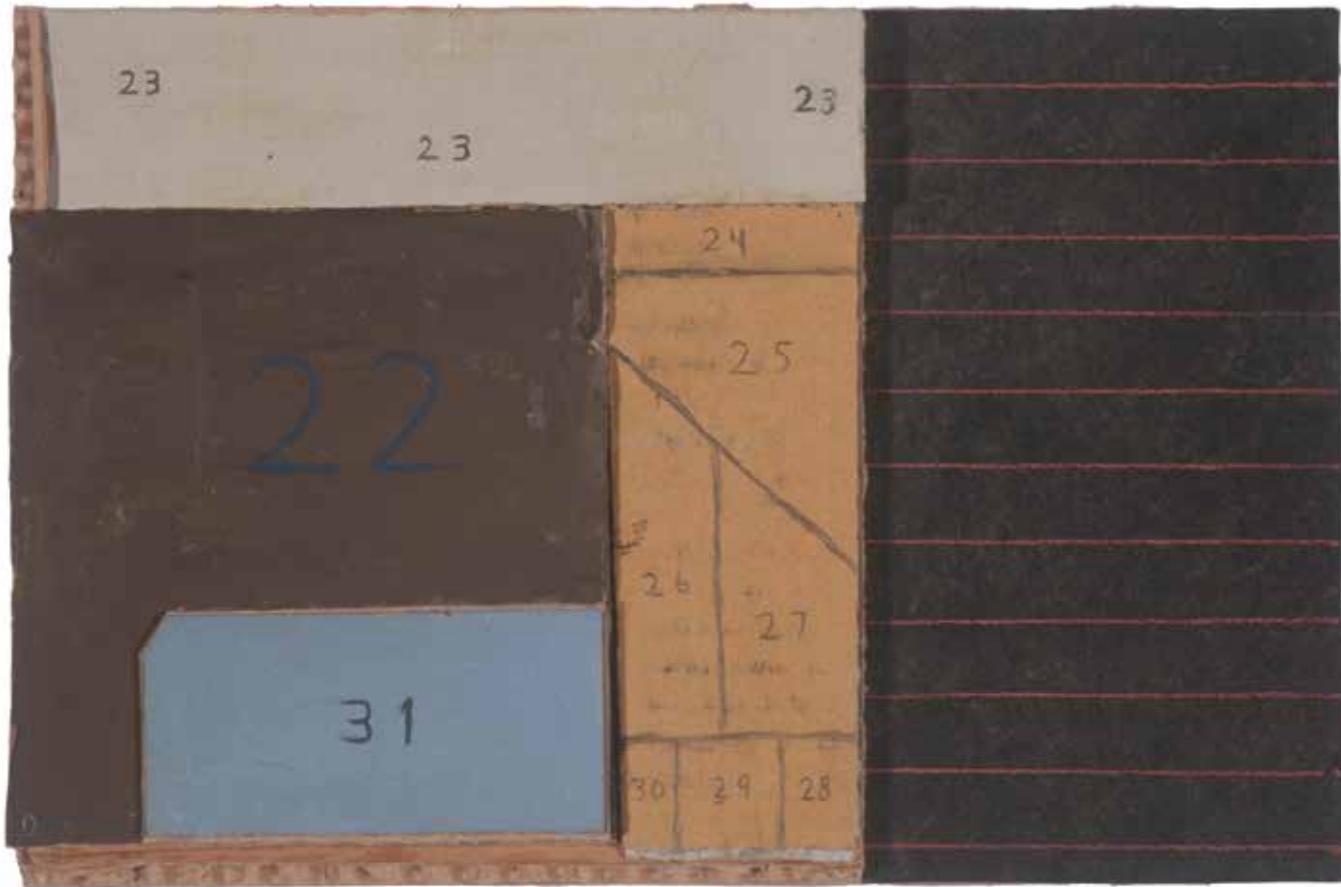
*Reservoir District (225)*

2001

Mixed media

12 × 8½ in.

Collection of Jane and Spencer Beebe Trust



*Reservoir District*

2001

Mixed media

5¾ × 8½ in.

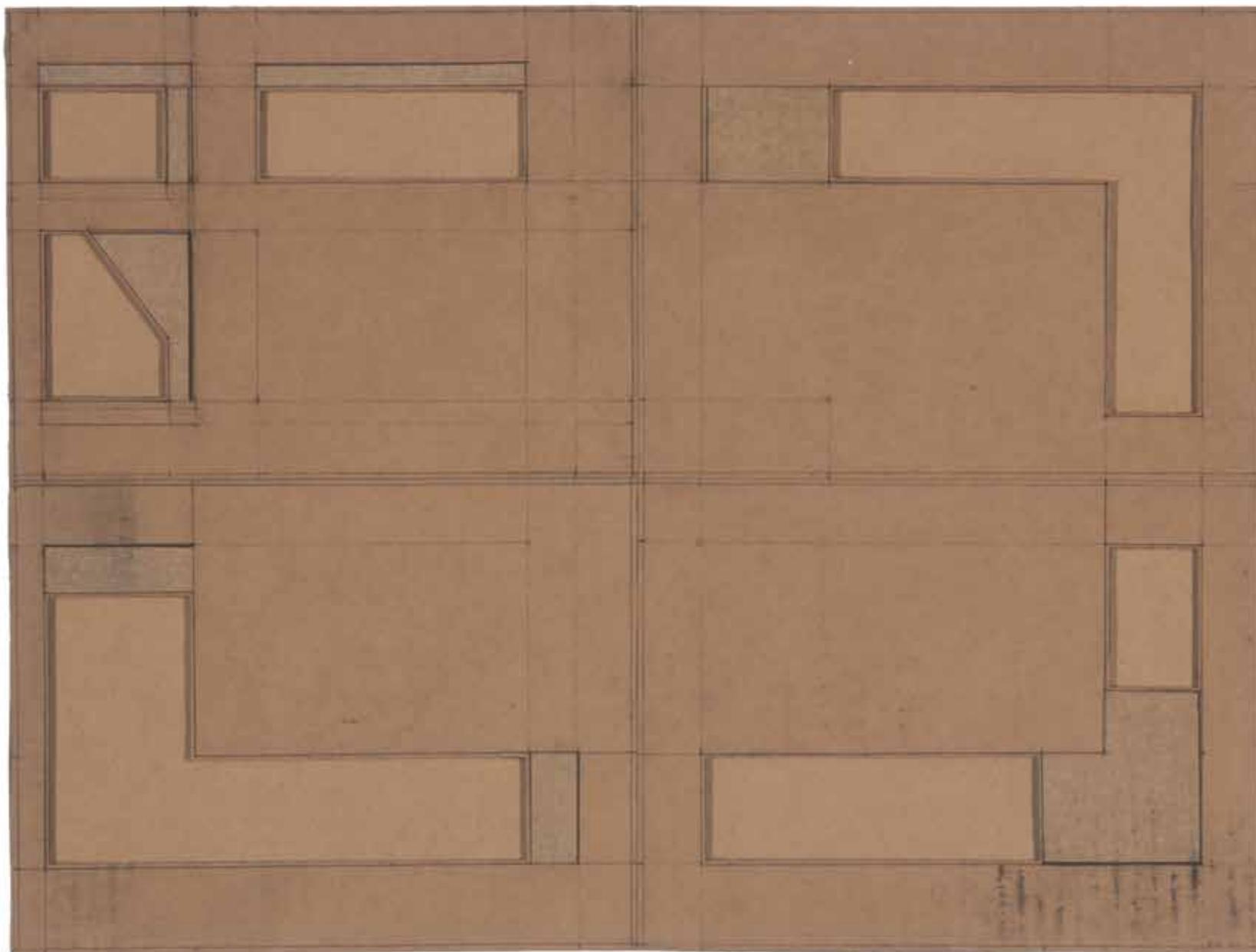
Collection of Eric and Robin Busch



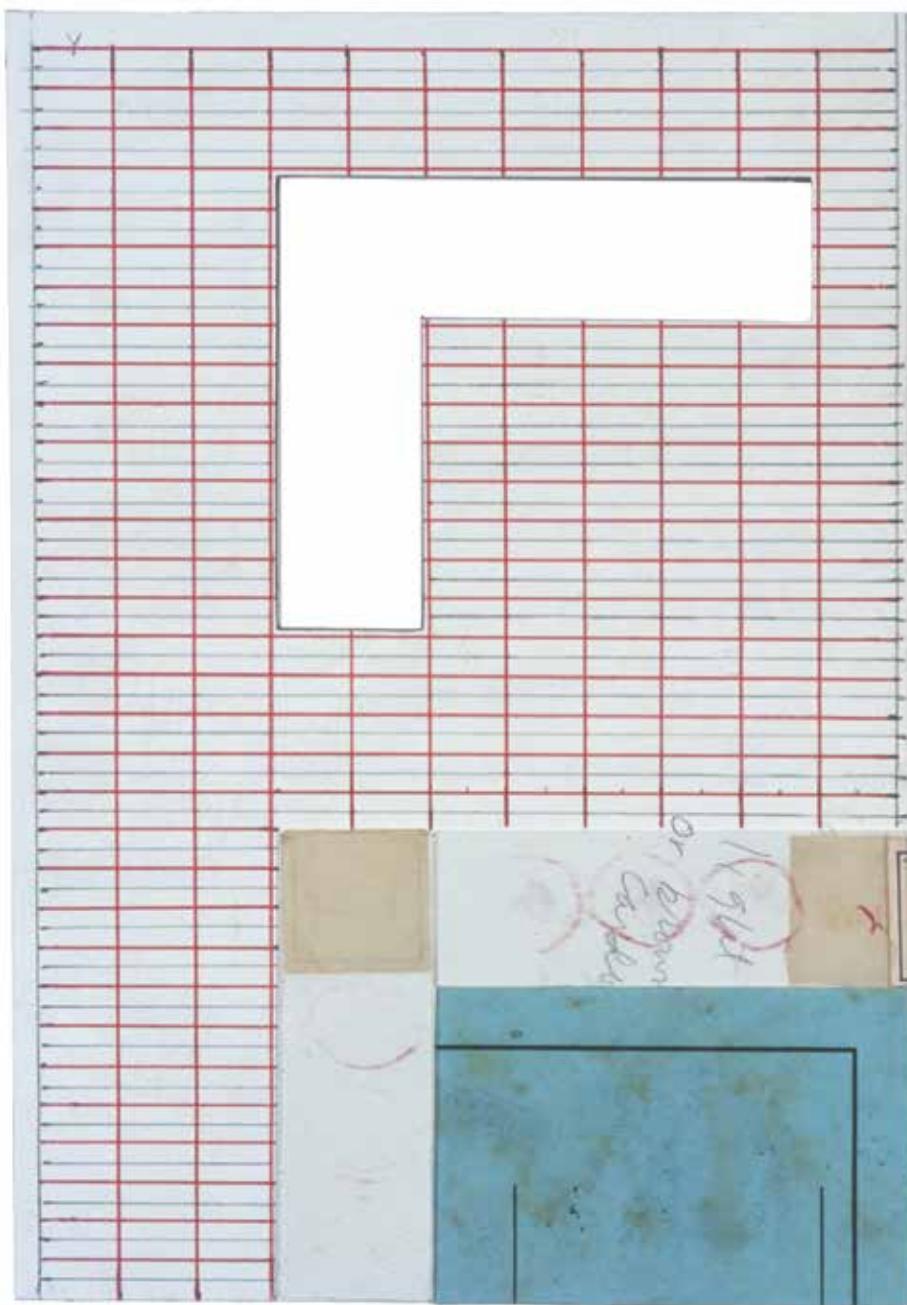
*Untitled*  
2002  
Mixed media  
6¼ × 3½ in.



*Untitled*  
Date unknown  
Graphite on found cardboard and paper, collage  
3 $\frac{1}{8}$  × 7 in.



*Untitled*  
2004  
Graphite on cardboard  
16 × 20 × 1 in.



*Untitled*

2004

Mixed media

8¼ × 5¾ in.

Collection of Marie Watt and Adam McIsaac



*Untitled*

2006

Collage, paper, and wood

6 × 4 in.

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette  
University, Maribeth Collins Art Acquisition Fund, 2009.006



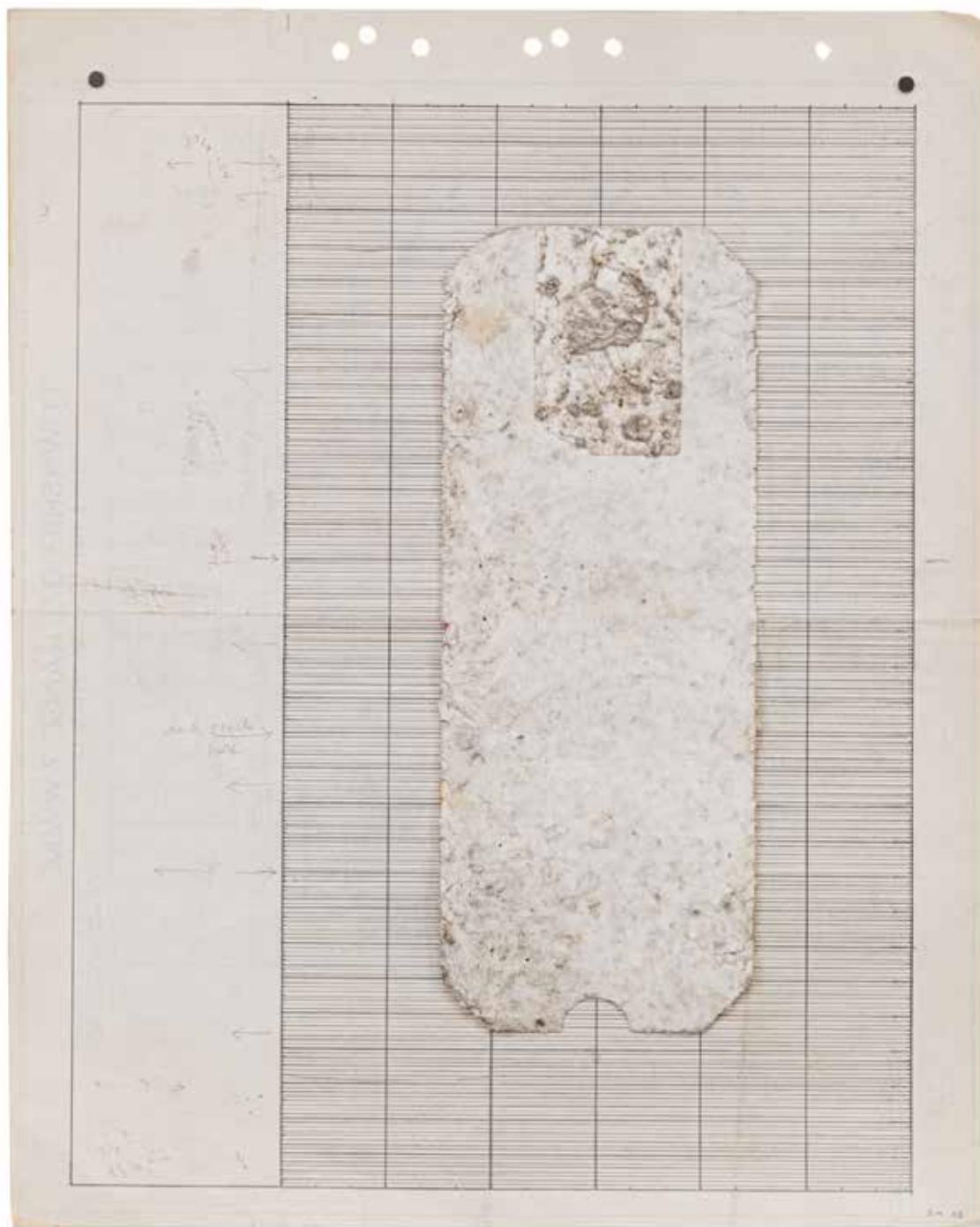
*Untitled*

2006

Mixed media

5<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 4 in.

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette  
University, Maribeth Collins Art Acquisition Fund, 2007.038



*Untitled*

2008

Ink and graphite on paper

17½ × 14 in.

Collection of Mary Dick



*Barrens*

2013

Found paper, cardboard, plaster of paris, and acrylic

$2\frac{1}{2} \times 5 \times \frac{3}{4}$  in.

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette  
University, Maribeth Collins Art Acquisition Fund, 2013.038.003



*Tinder*

2013

Found paper, cardboard, plaster of paris, and acrylic

3 × 5 × ¾ in.

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette

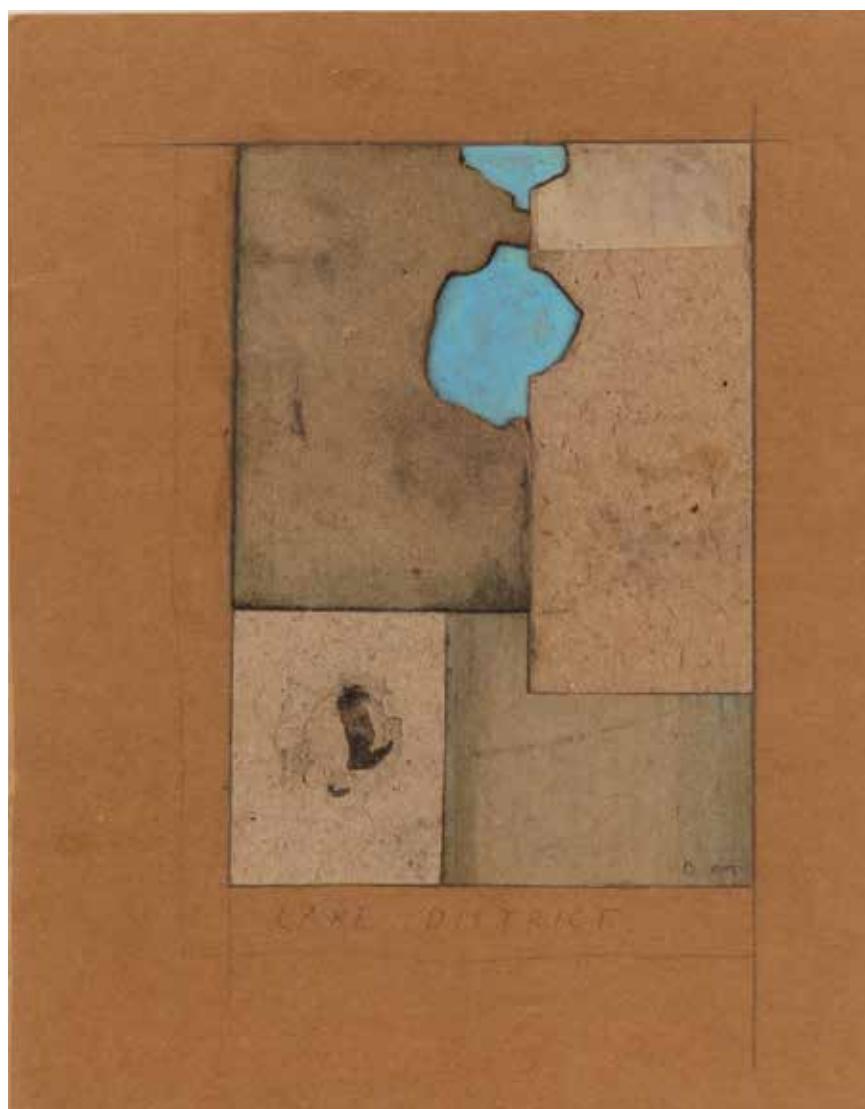
University, Maribeth Collins Art Acquisition Fund, 2013.038.001



*Yures*  
2013

Found paper, cardboard, plaster of paris, and acrylic  
4 $\frac{1}{4}$  × 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  ×  $\frac{3}{4}$  in.

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette  
University, Maribeth Collins Art Acquisition Fund, 2013.038.002



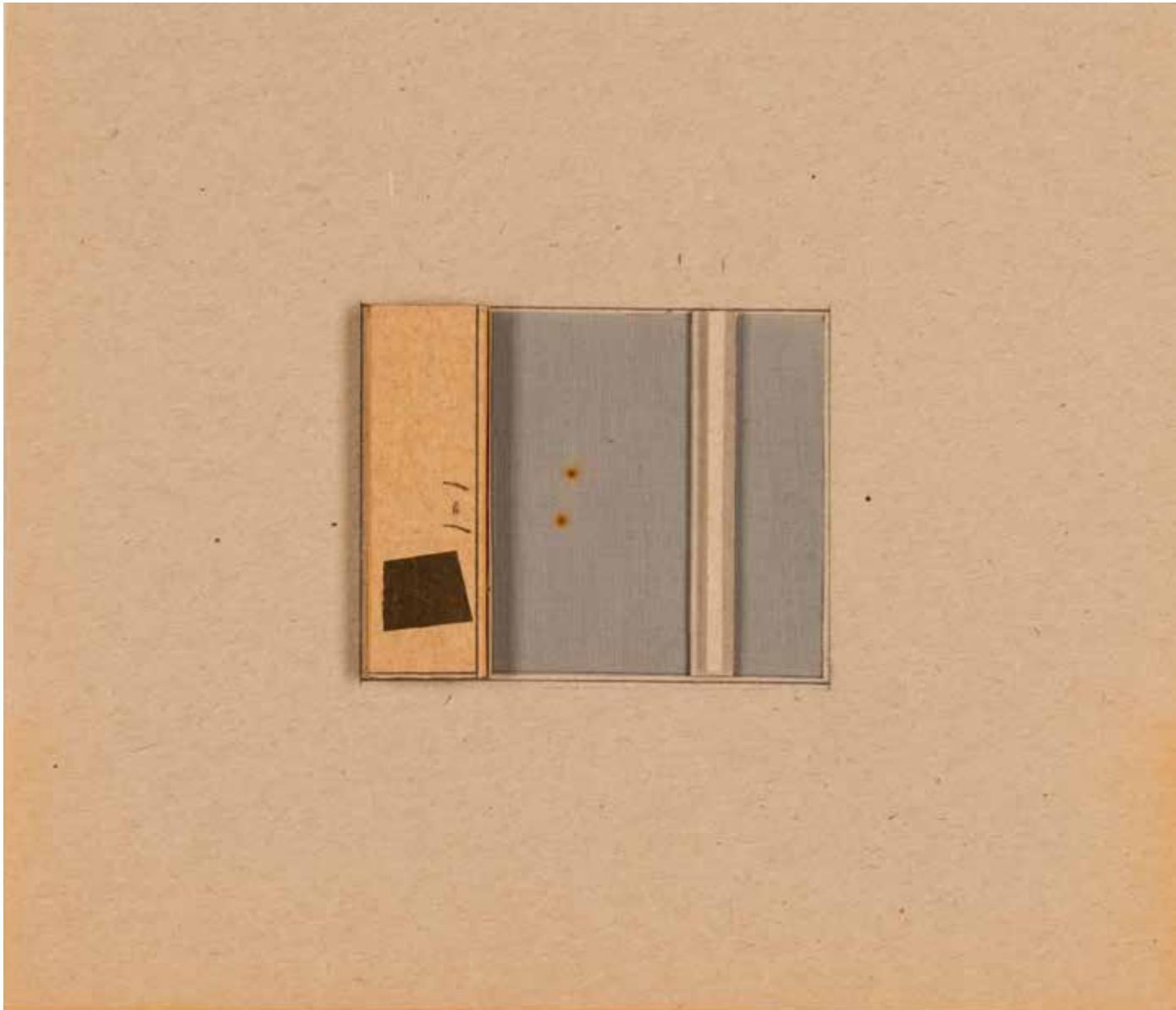
*Untitled*

Date unknown

Graphite, paint, and found paper on cardboard

6½ × 5¼ in.

Collection of Jane and Spencer Beebe Trust



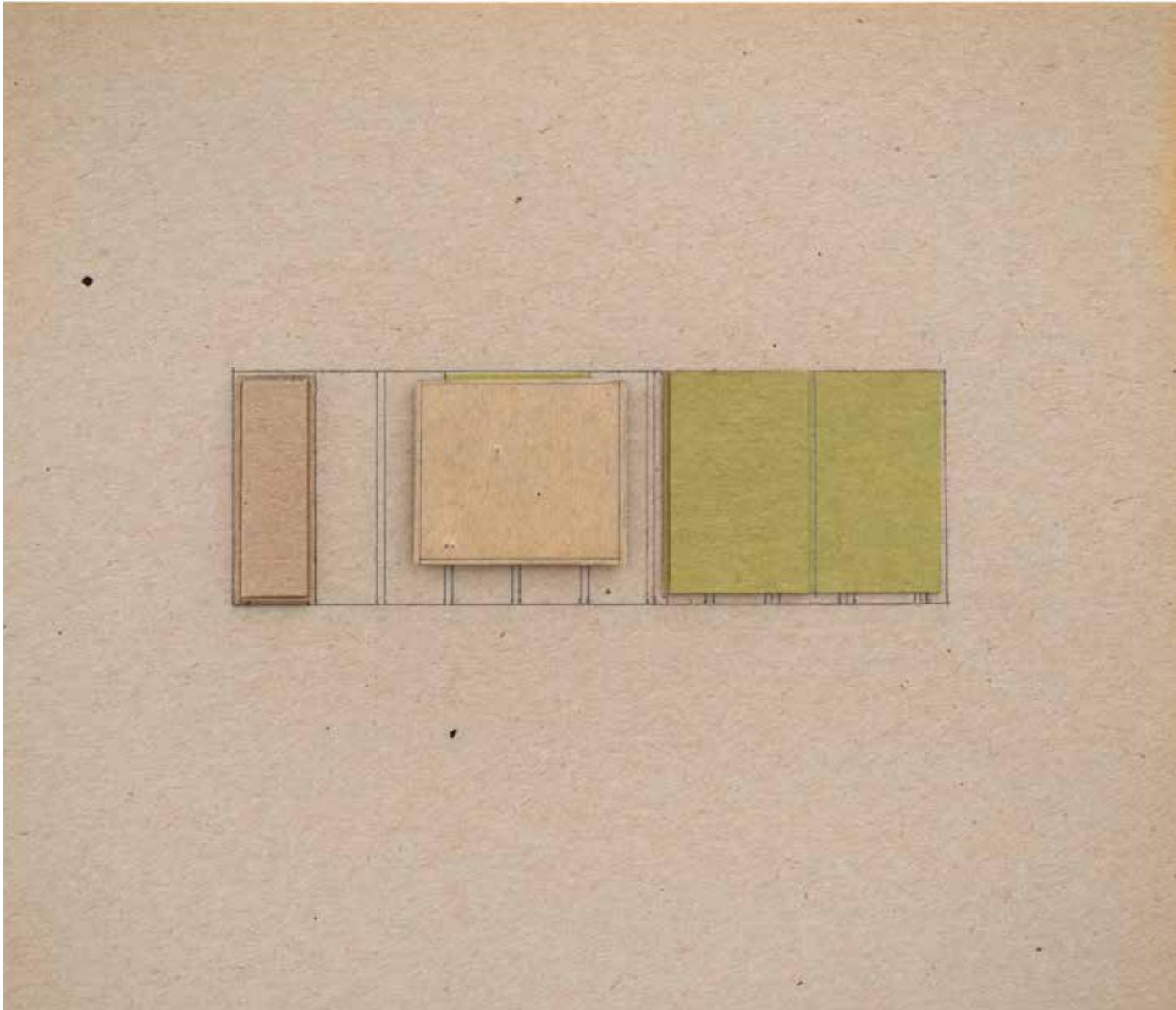
*Inner Meyer (Partition Study)*

2015

Cardboard, construction board, fabric, tissue, and graphite

8½ × 10¼ in.

Collection of William Ittmann Jr. and Andrew Kerr III



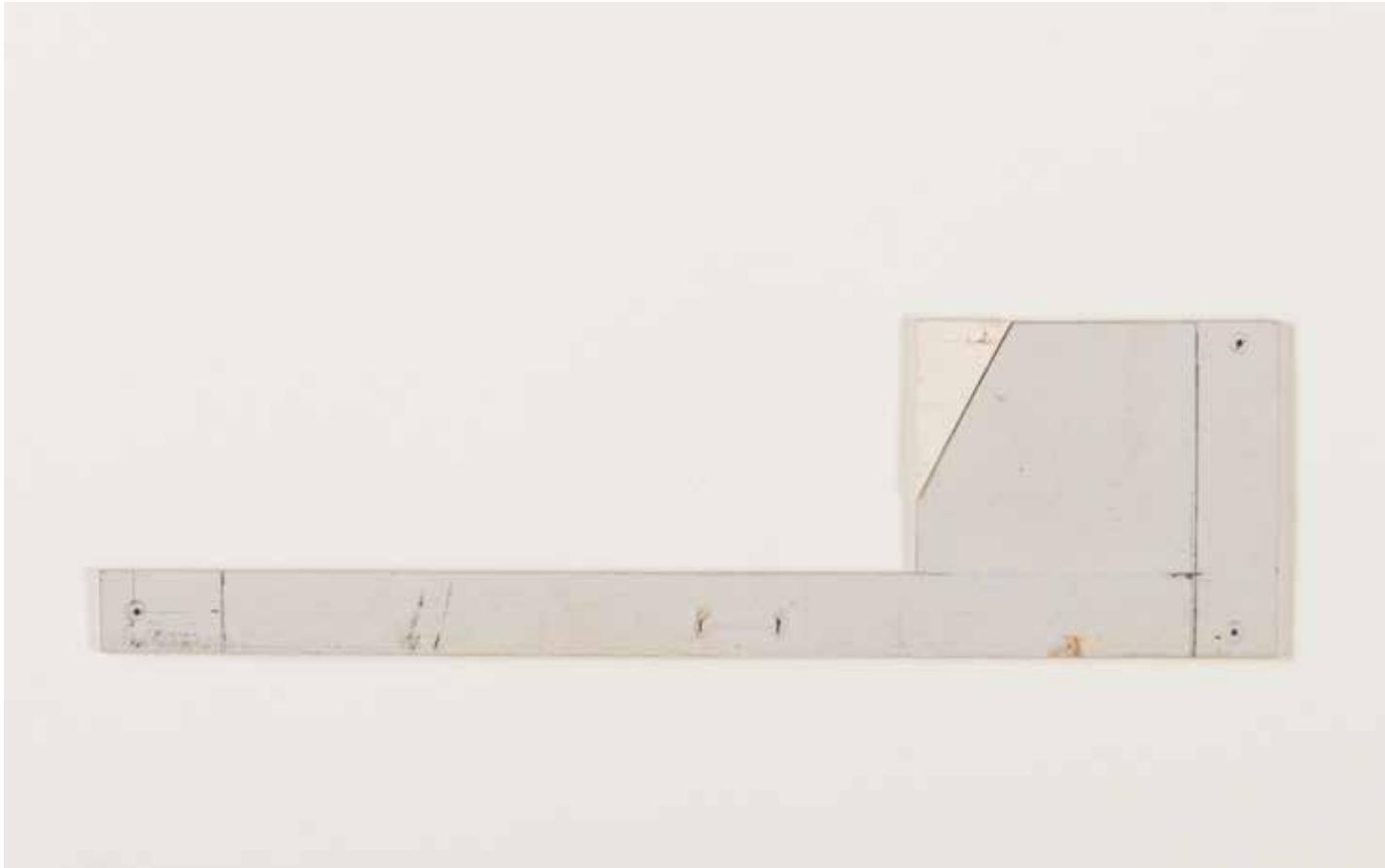
*Bar Mill (Partition Study)*

2015

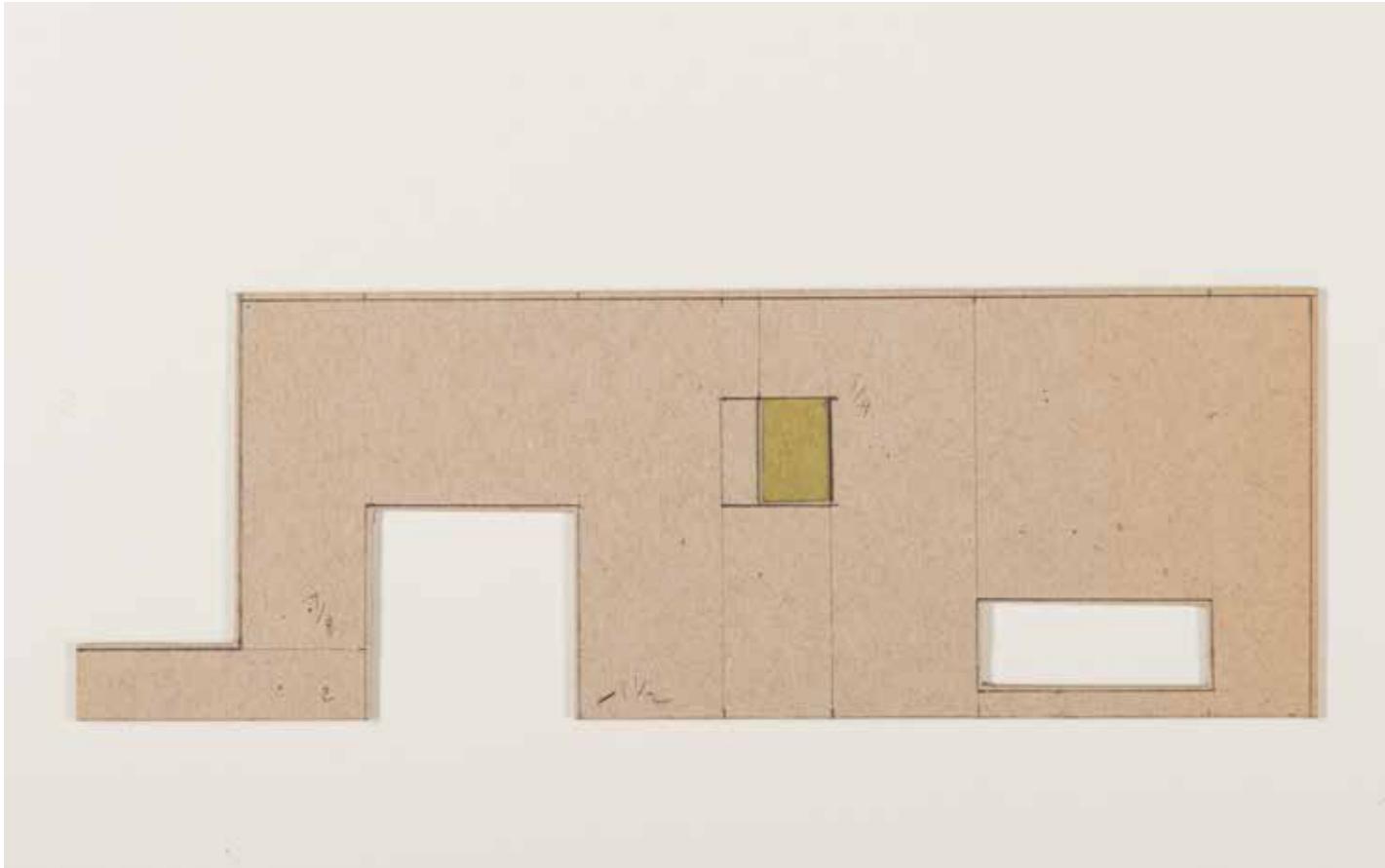
Cardboard, construction board, fabric, tissue, and graphite

8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

Collection of Brad Ford



*Dutch Furlong*  
2015  
Construction board and graphite  
2 × 7¼ in.



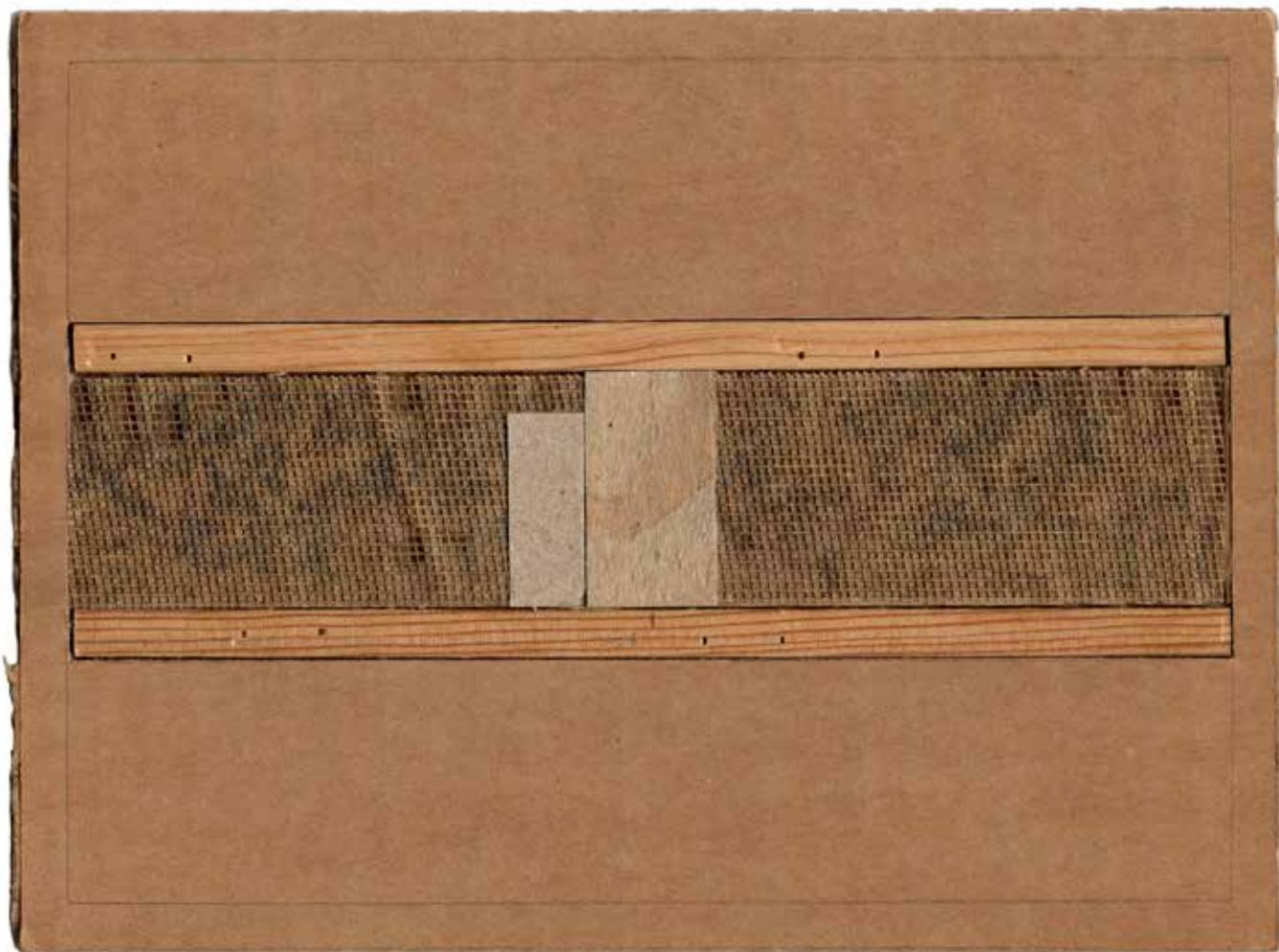
*E. Wareham*

2015

Construction board and graphite

3 × 8<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

85

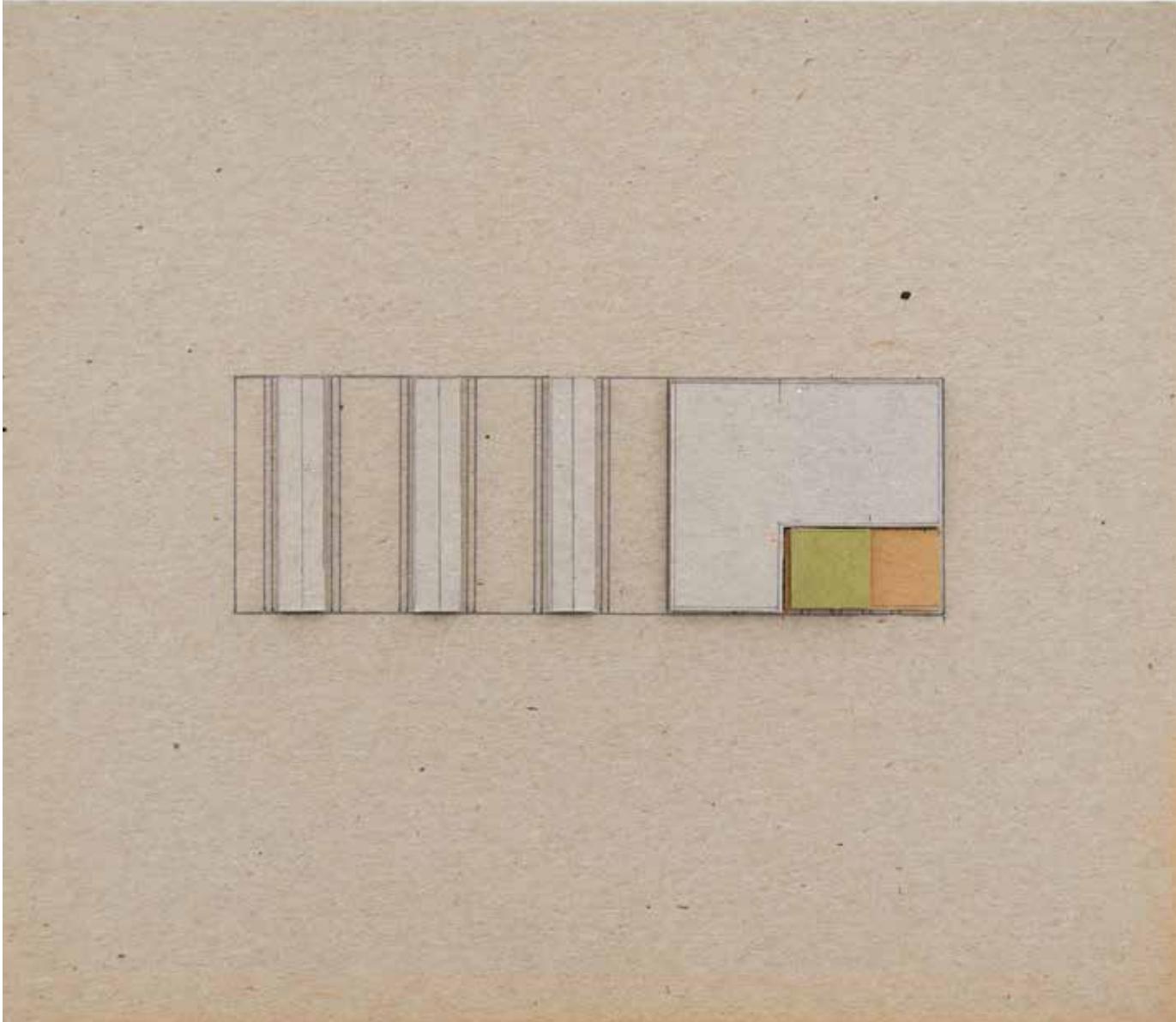


*Untitled*

Date unknown

Graphite, found papers, and wood on cardboard

6 $\frac{1}{16}$  × 8 $\frac{1}{8}$  in.



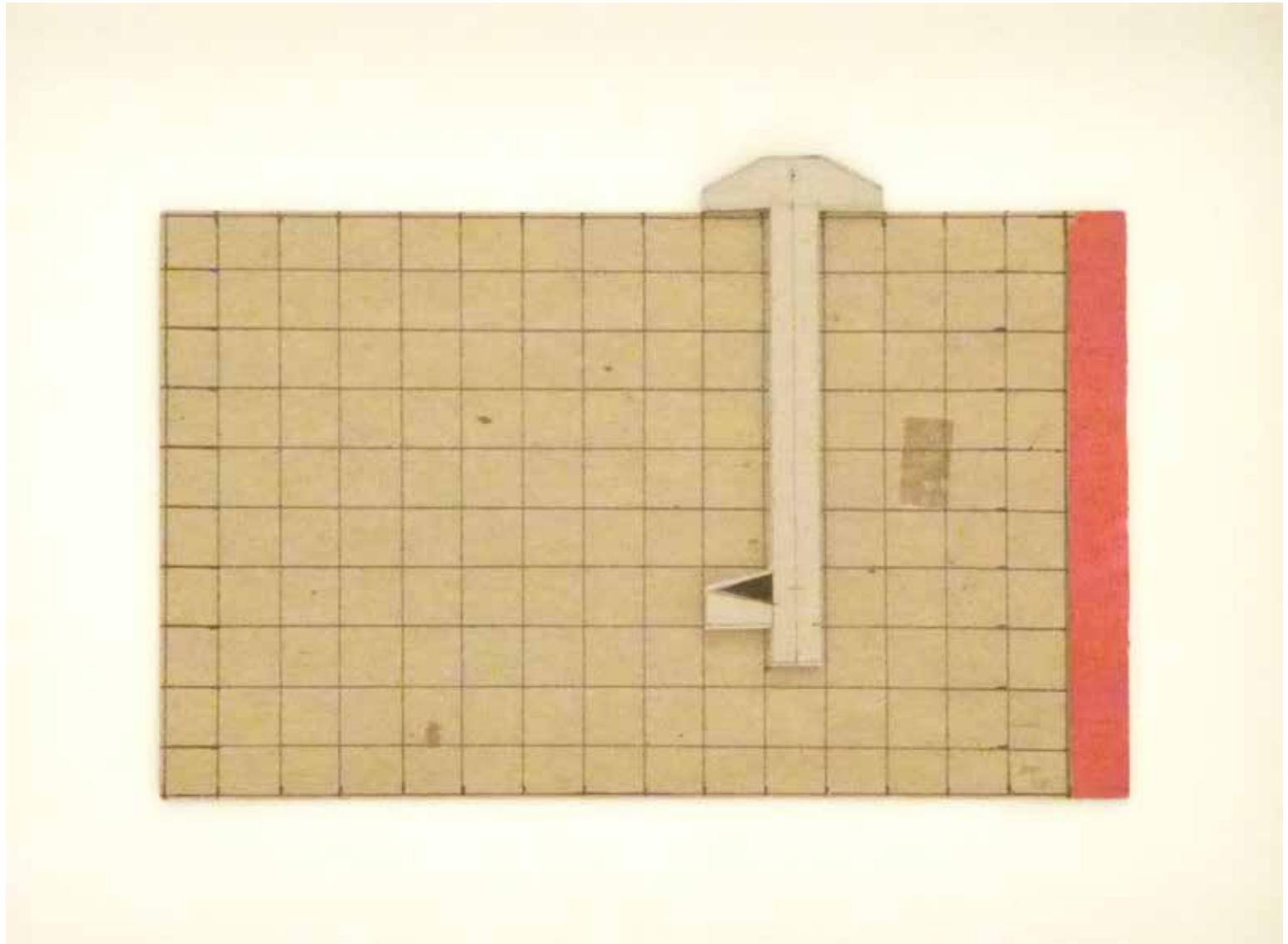
*Channel Cat (Partition Study)*

2015

Construction board and graphite

8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

Collection of William Ittmann Jr. and Andrew Kerr III

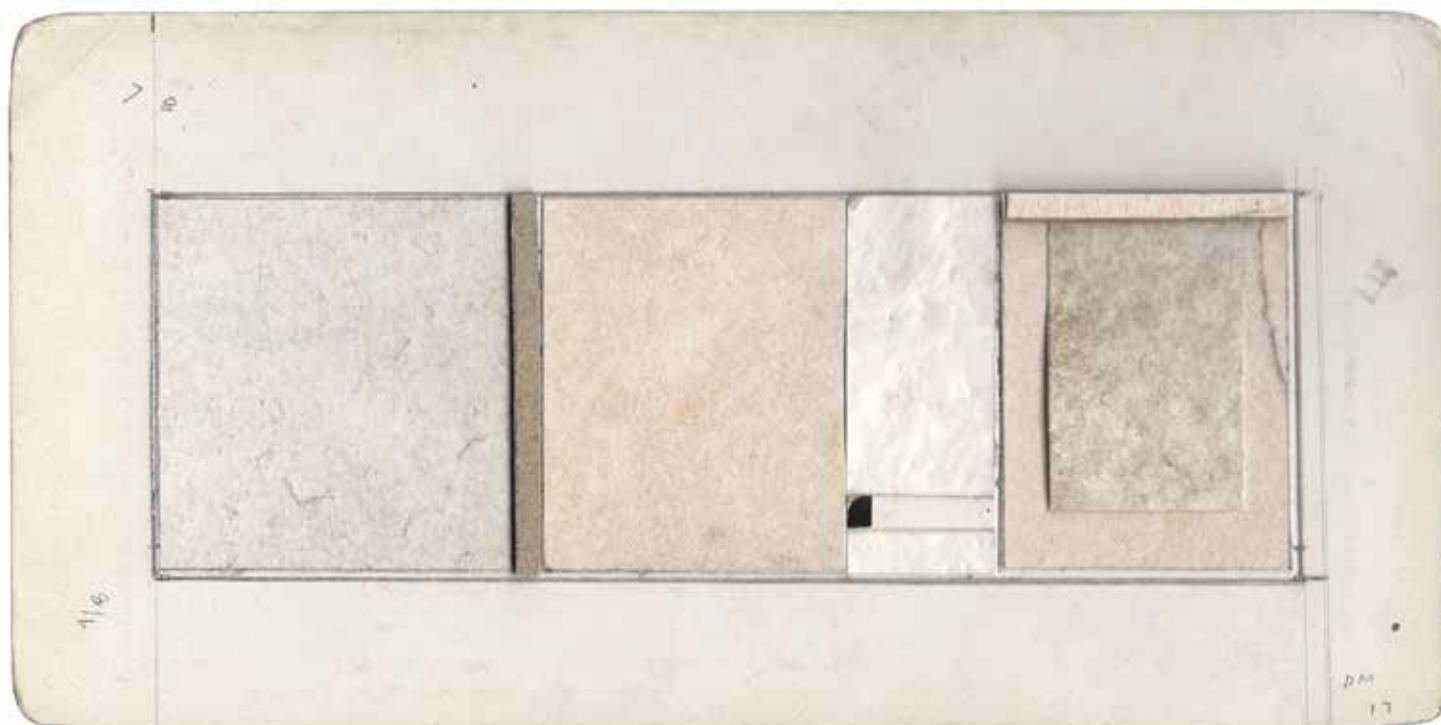


*Untitled*

2015

Ink, graphite, cardboard, tape, and paper

21 × 48 in.



*Untitled*

2018

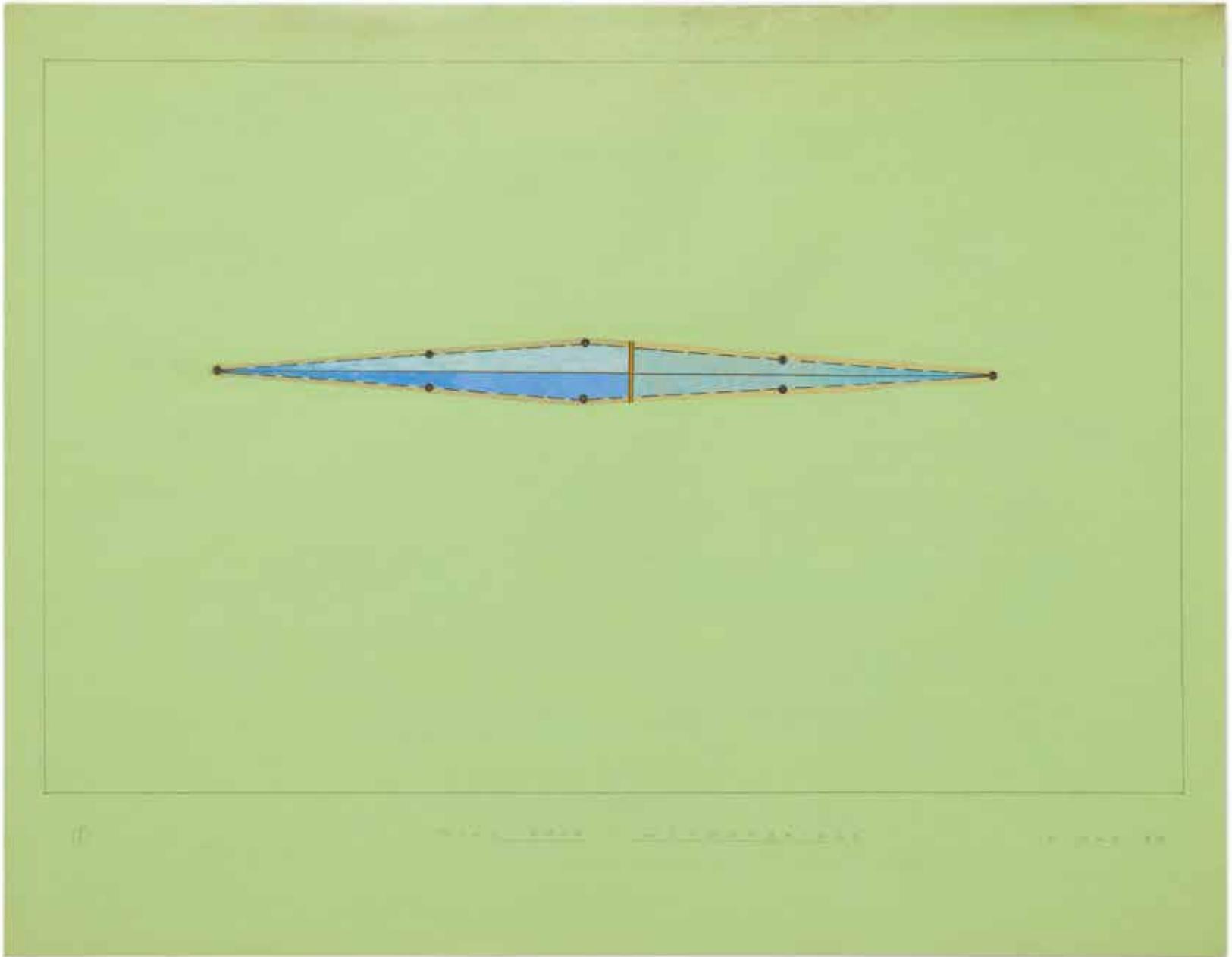
Graphite, paper, and construction board on found stereograph card

3½ × 7 in.

Collection of William Ittmann Jr. and Andrew Kerr III



**DRAWINGS**

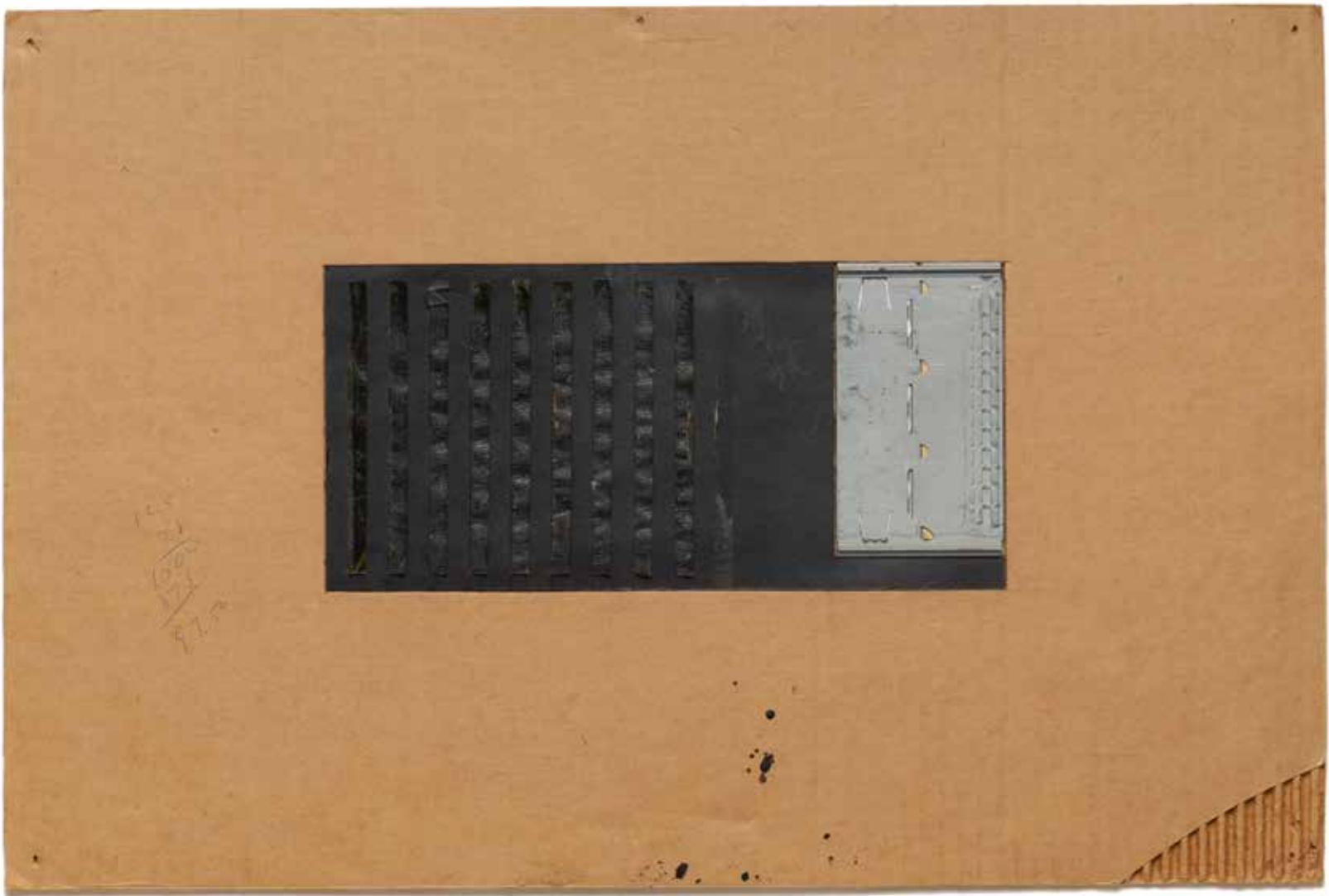


*Untitled (Mill Race w/ Footbridge)*

1980

Pattern paper, colored pencil, and graphite on found paper

17<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 23<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.

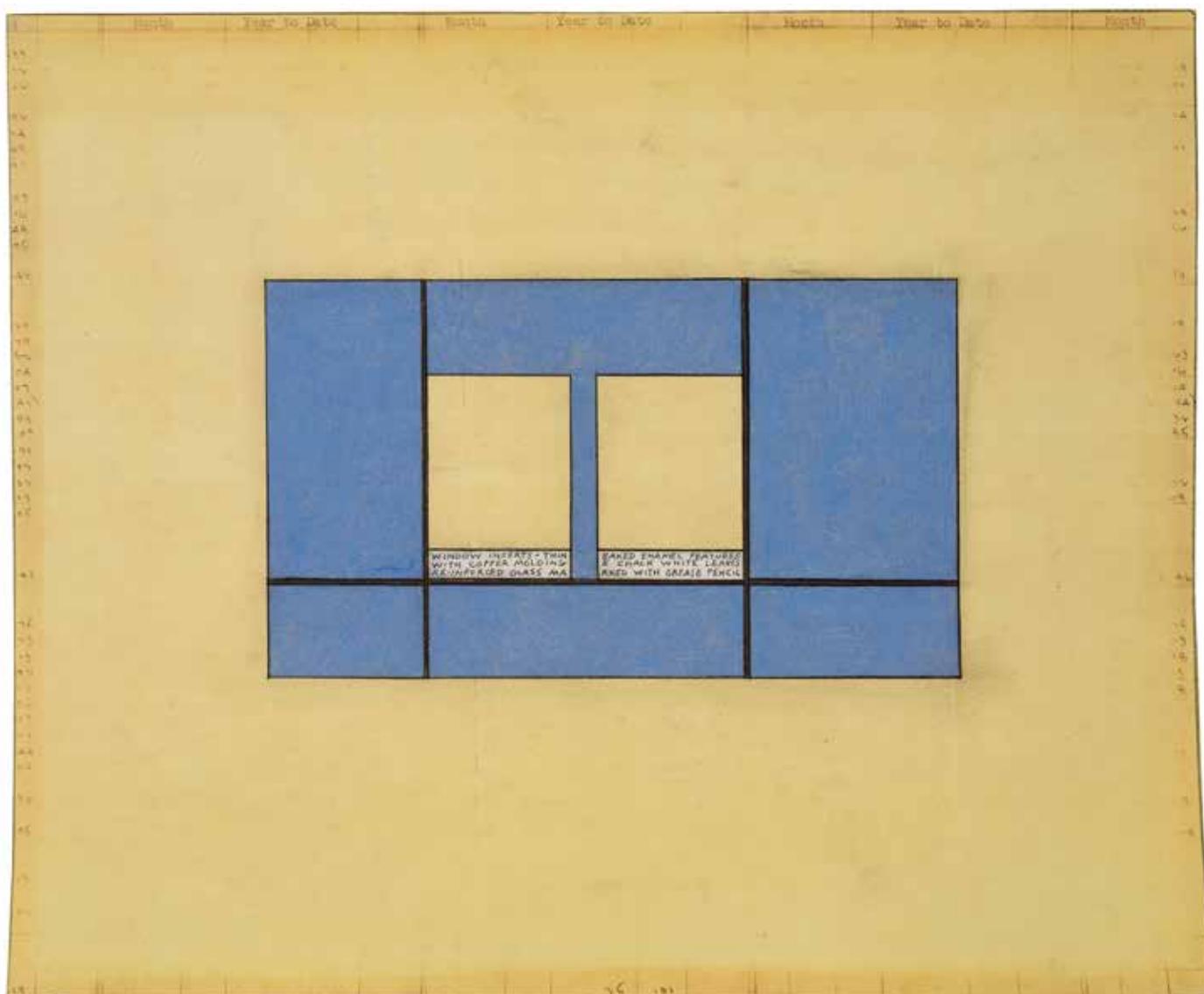


*Untitled*

c. 1985

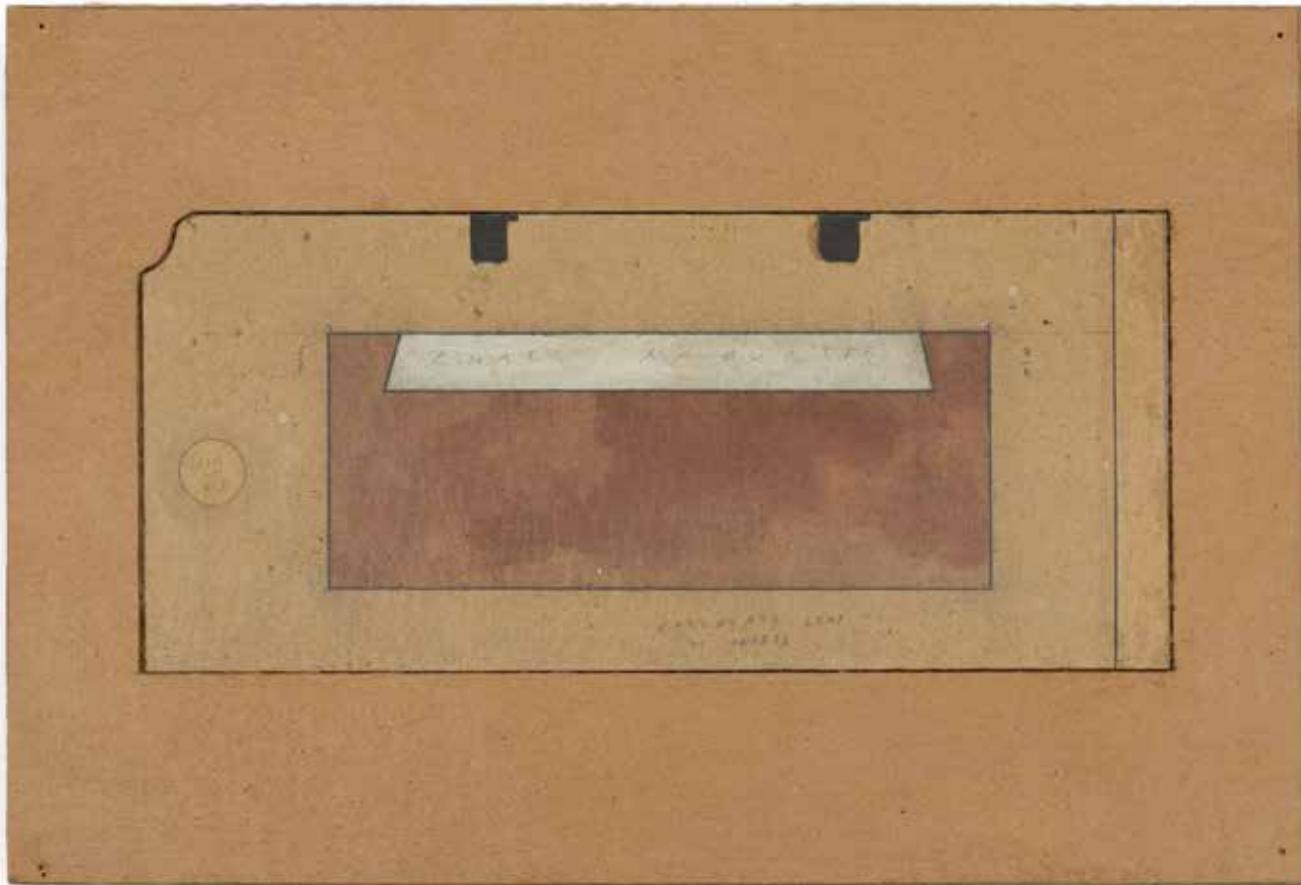
Cardboard, graphite, and found paper

11<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 17<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.



*Untitled*  
1988

Watercolor and collage on paper  
12½ × 14½ in. (31.75 × 36.83 cm)  
Collection Buffalo AKG Art Museum.  
Gift of Samuel D. Magavern, 1989 (1989:9).



*Untitled (Chalk Maquette)*

1988

Graphite, paint, Mod Podge, and ink on cardboard

9 $\frac{3}{4}$  × 14 in.

95



*Untitled*

2000

Graphite and found papers on wood

20 × 16 in.



*Untitled*

2000

Graphite and found papers on wood

20 × 16 in.

97



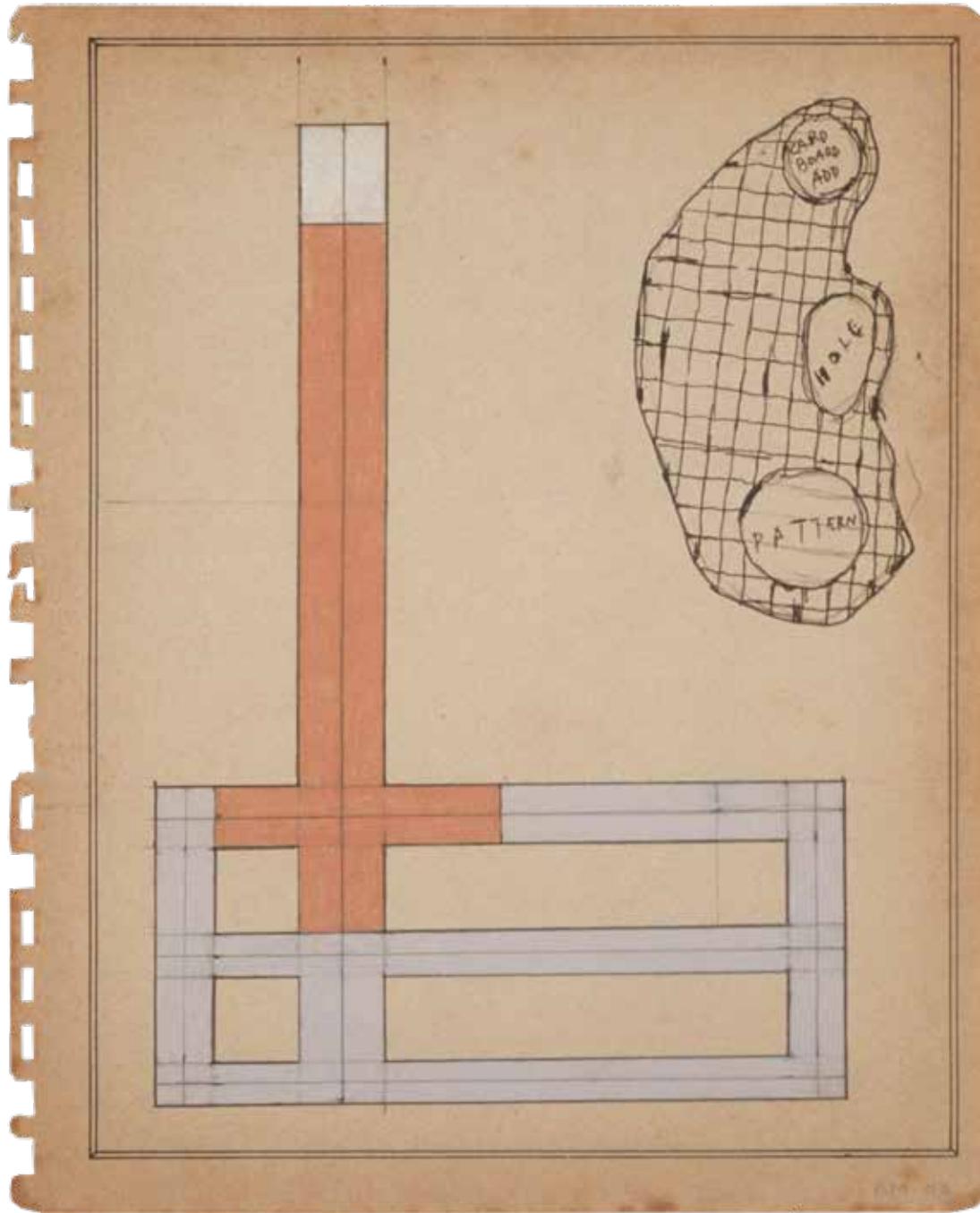
*Untitled*

2000

Mixed media on envelope

7 × 3<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

Collection of John and Janet Jay



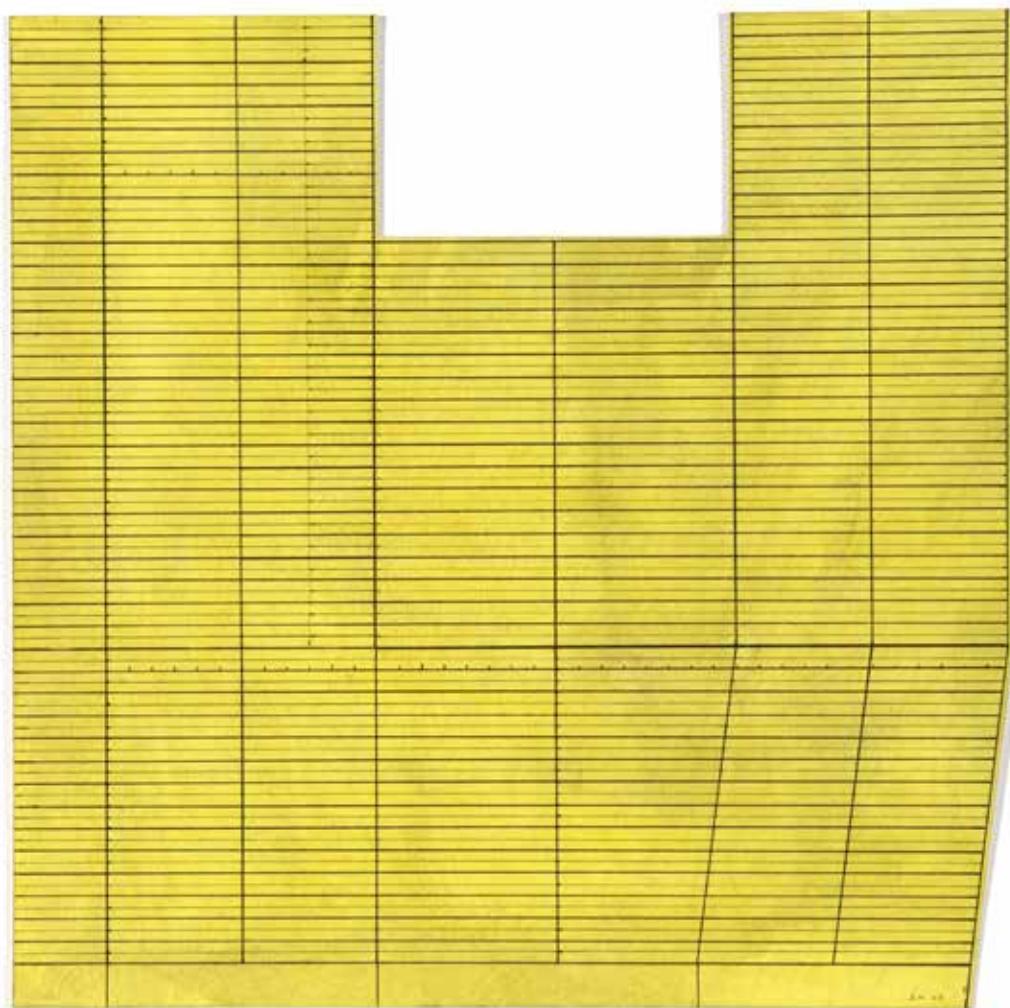
*Untitled*

2002

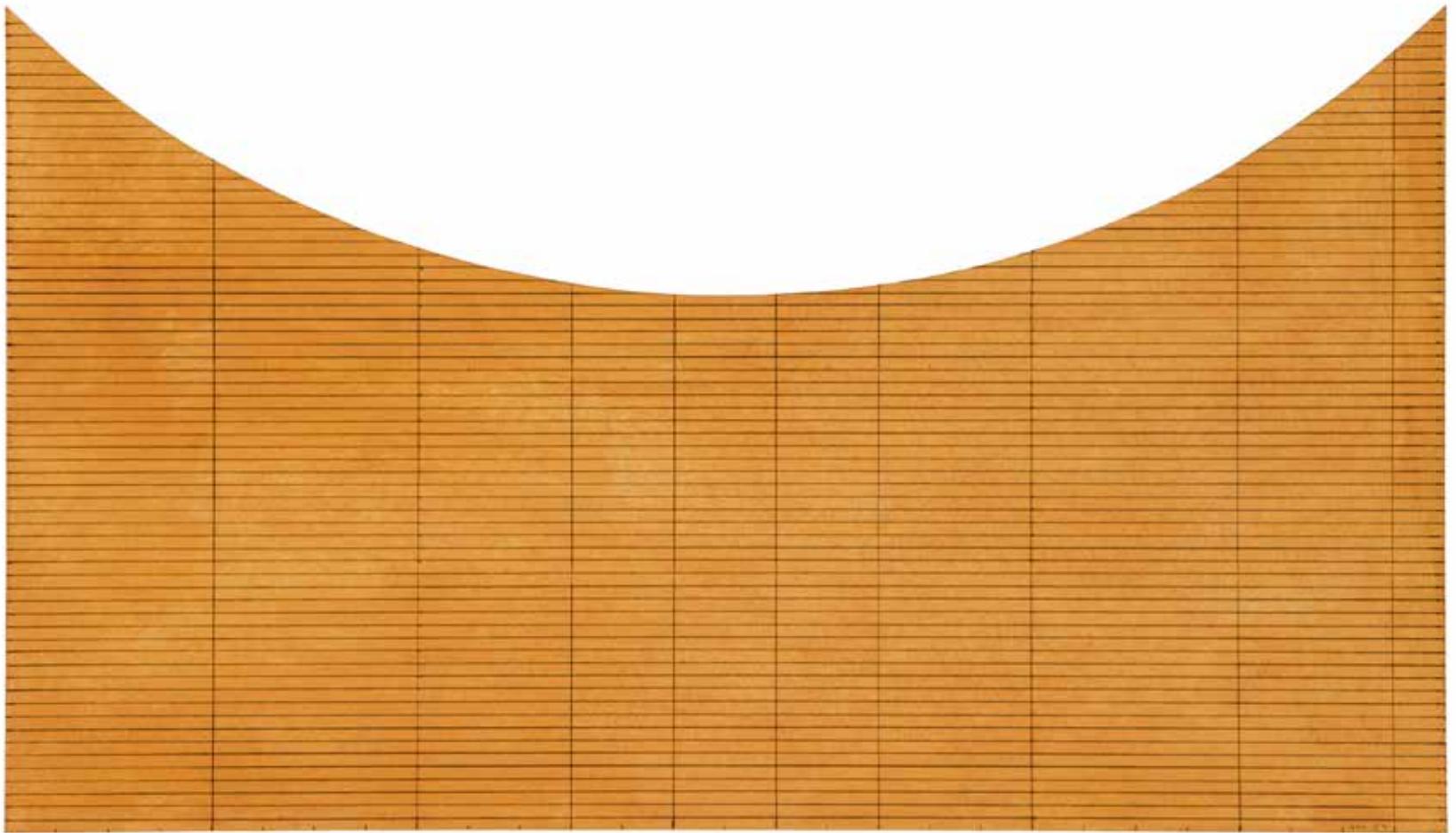
Ink and colored pencil on paper

10½ × 8½ in.

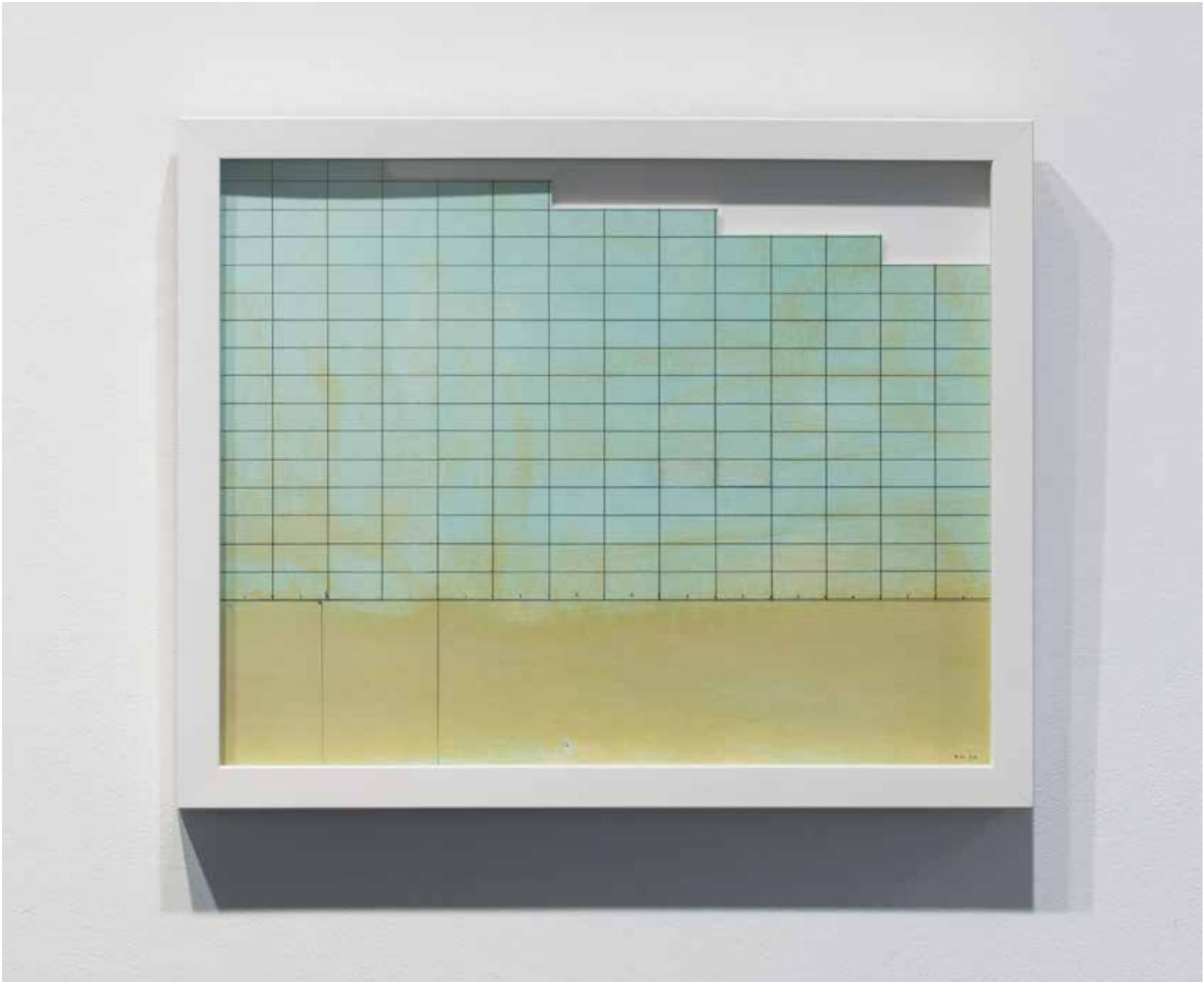
Private Collection



*Template*  
2007  
Mixed media  
11 × 11 in.



*Untitled*  
2007  
Mixed media  
8 × 14 in.  
Private Collection



*Untitled (Template)*

2008

Cardboard, found paper, and wood

10<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 14 in.

Collection of William Ittmann Jr. and Andrew Kerr III



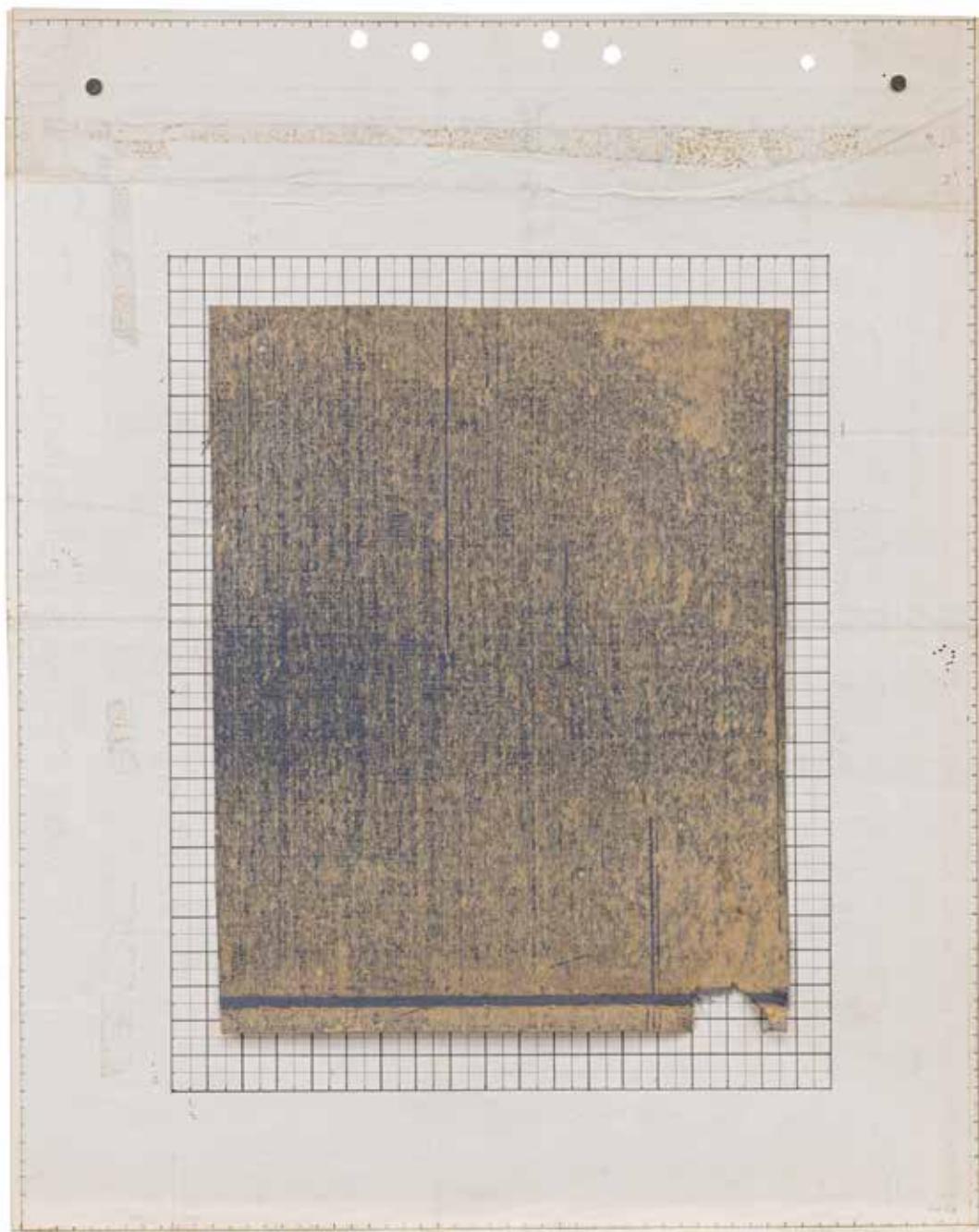
*Untitled (Template)*

2008

Cardboard, found paper, and wood

10<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 13<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

Collection of William Ittmann Jr. and Andrew Kerr III



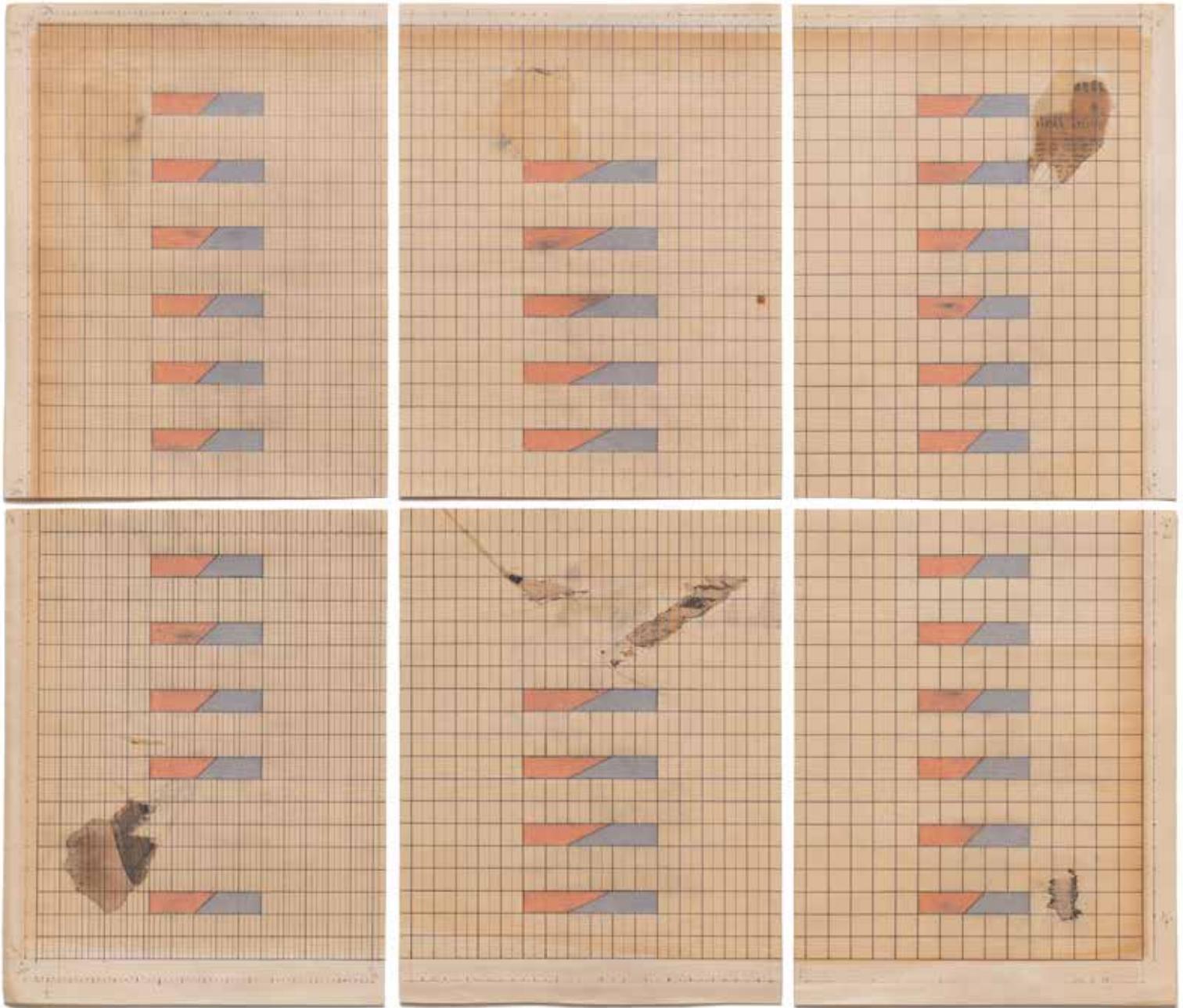
*Untitled*

2008

Ink and graphite on paper

17½ × 14 in.

Collection of Mary Dick



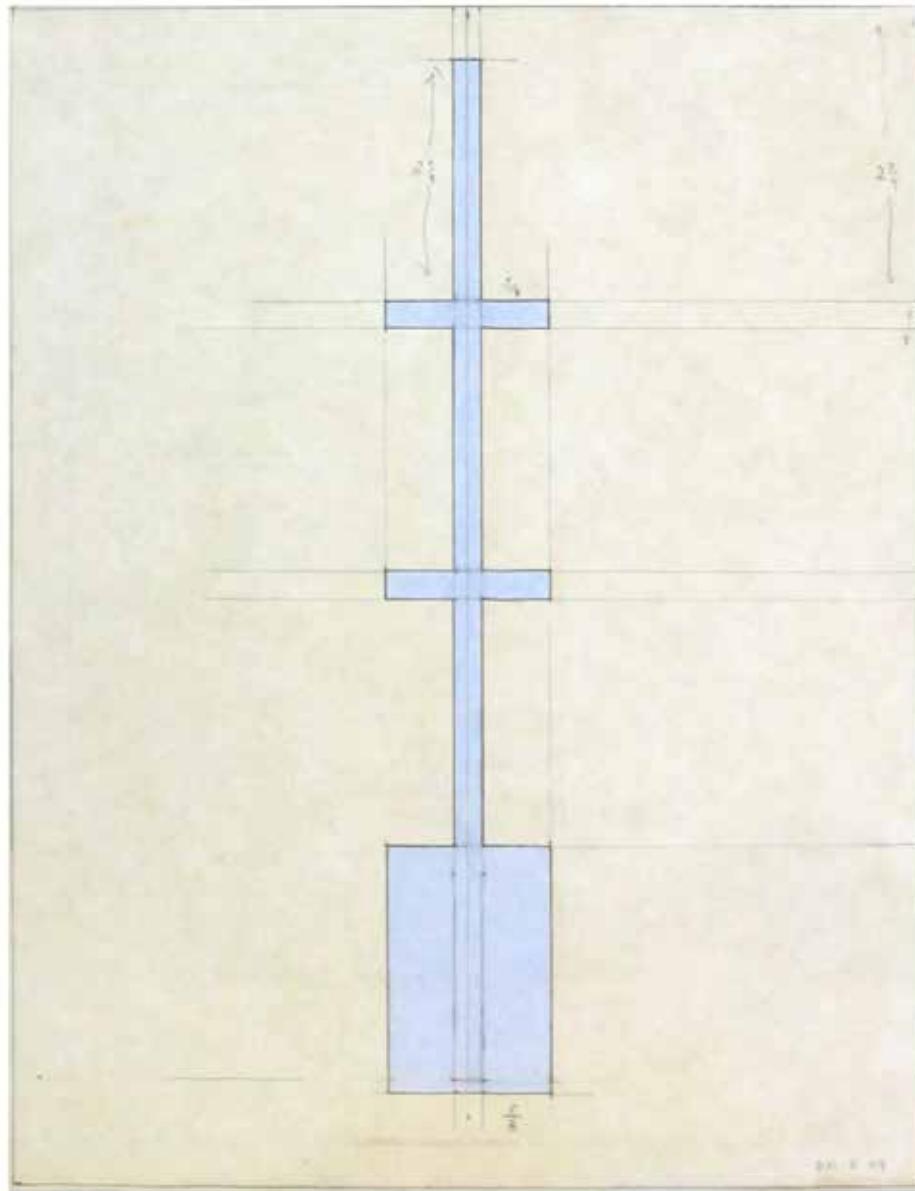
*Untitled*

2009

Graphite and colored pencil on paper

22¼ × 26 in.

105



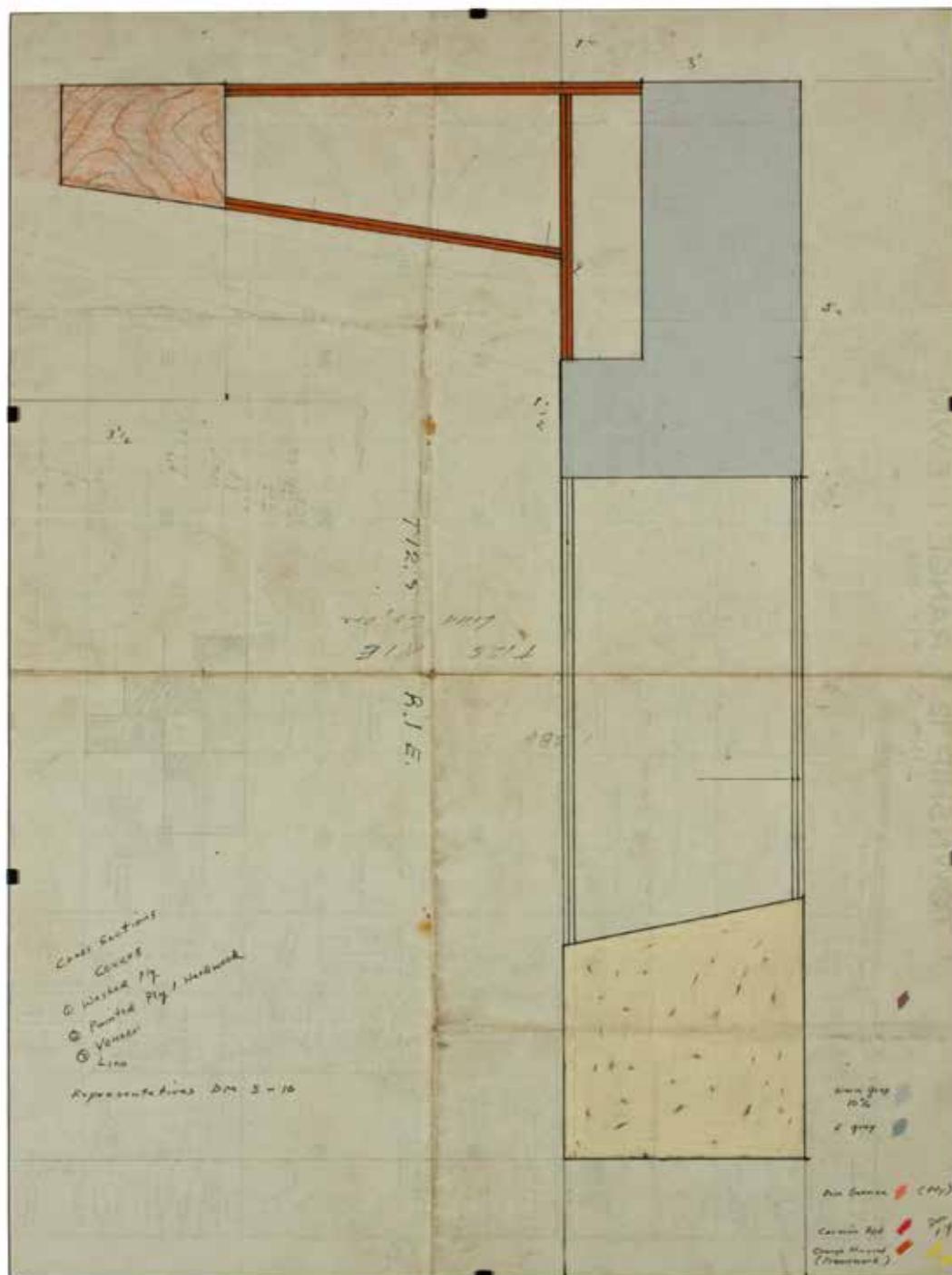
*Tarrenton (Template)*

2009

Graphite and colored pencil on found paper

11 1/2 x 8 7/8 in.

Collection of William Ittmann Jr. and Andrew Kerr III

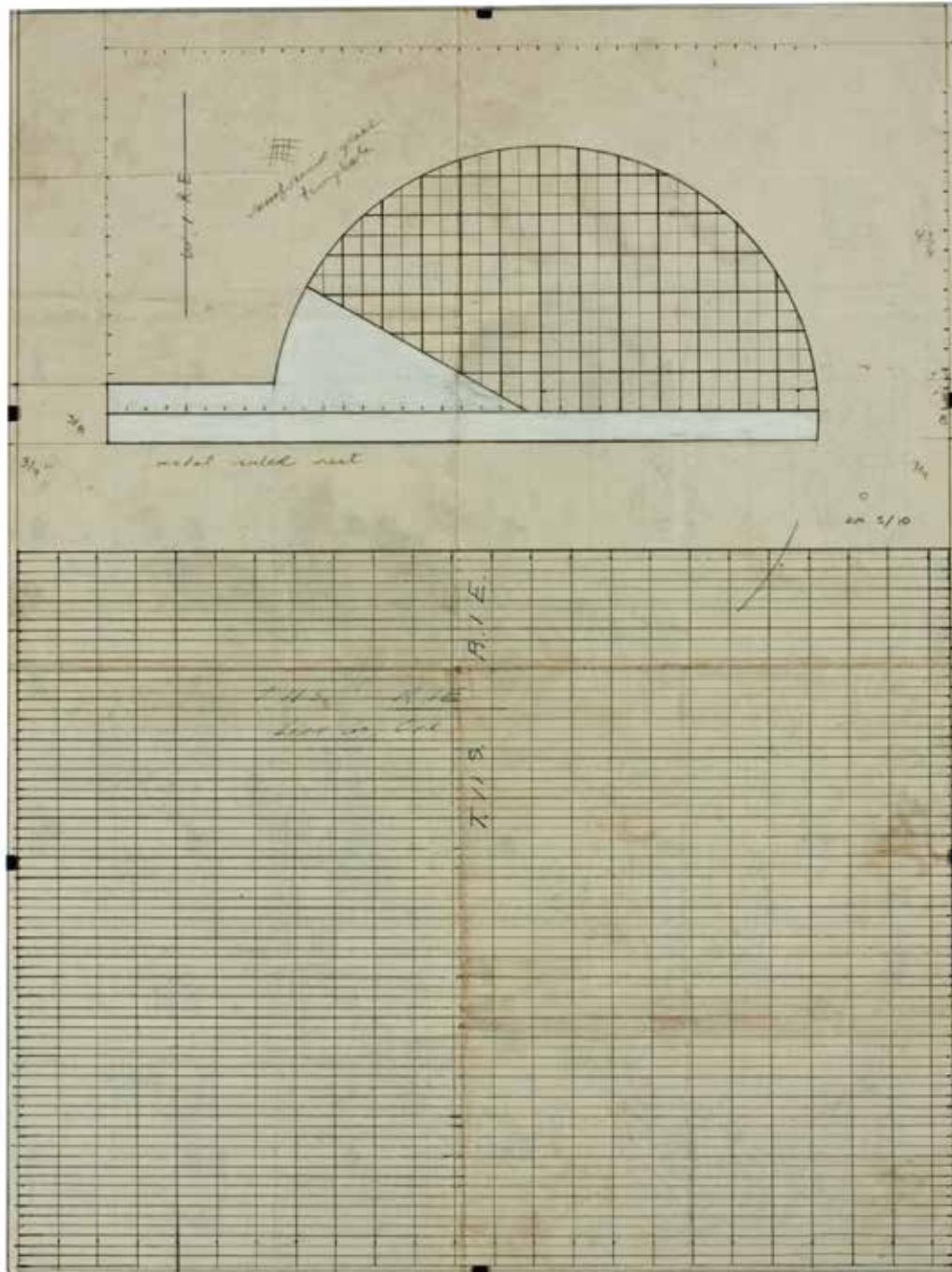


*Covers*

2010

Graphite and colored pencil on paper

16 × 12 in.

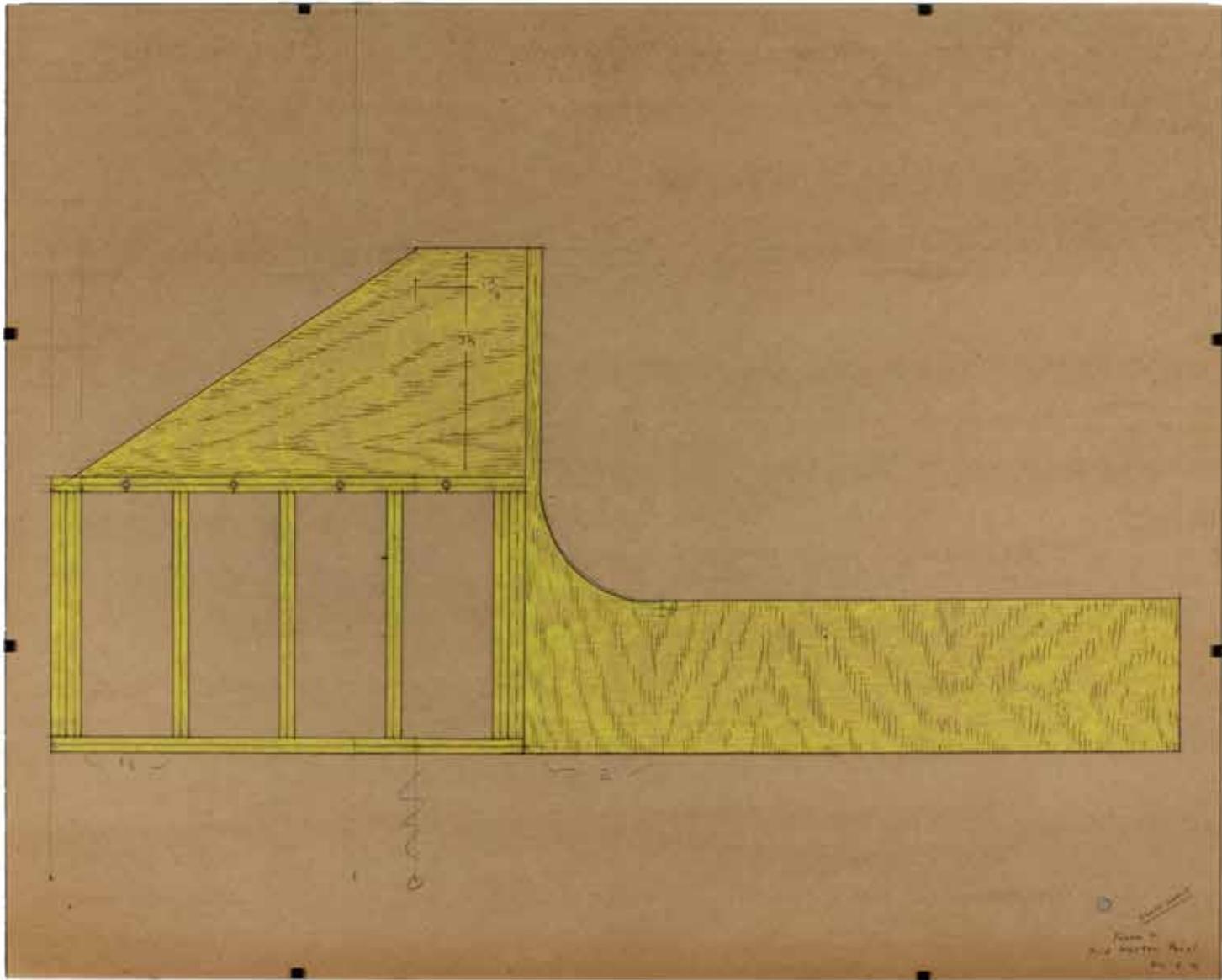


*Glass Template*

2010

Graphite and colored pencil on paper

16 × 12 in.



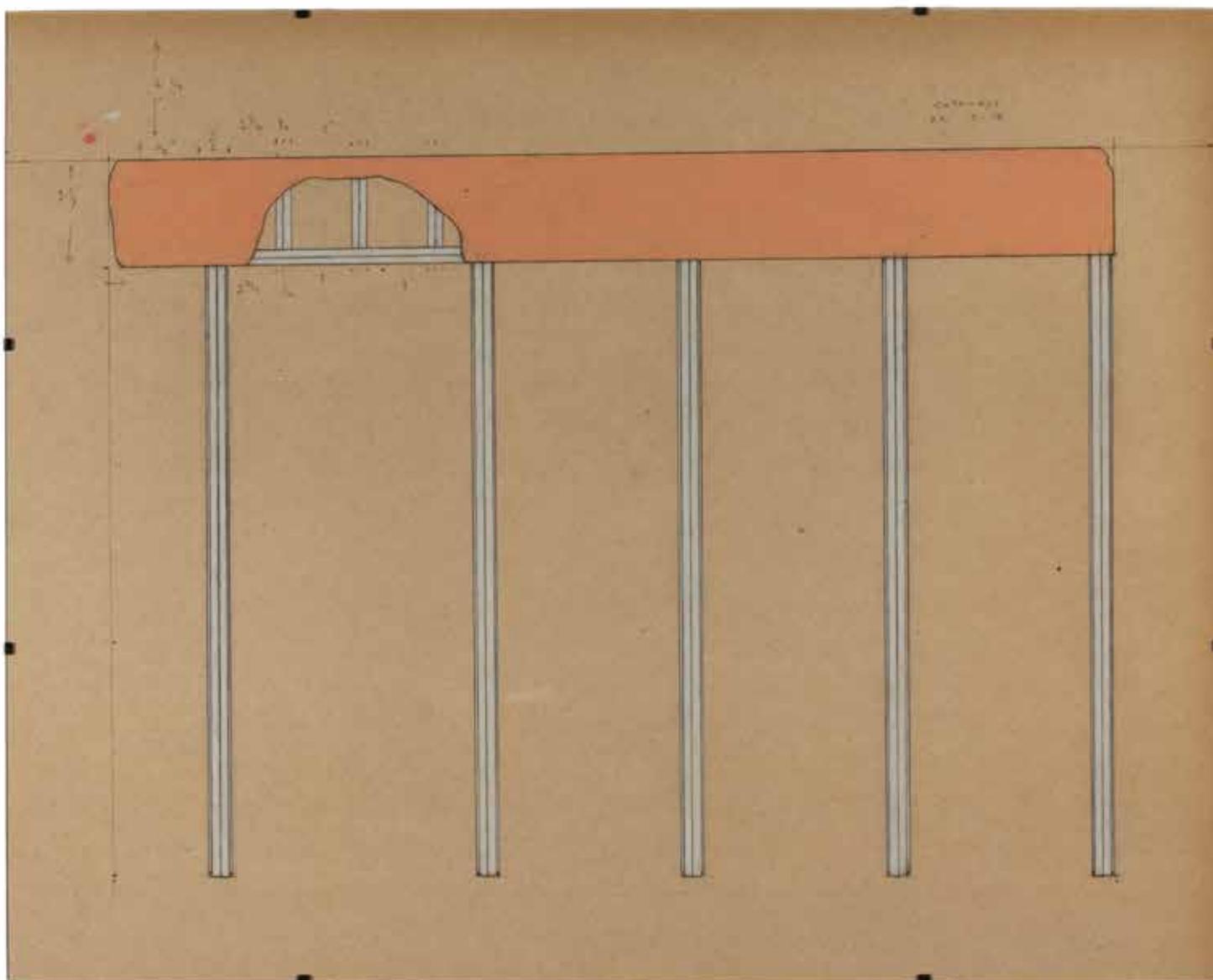
*Cross Grain*

2010

Graphite and colored pencil on paper

16 × 20 in.

109

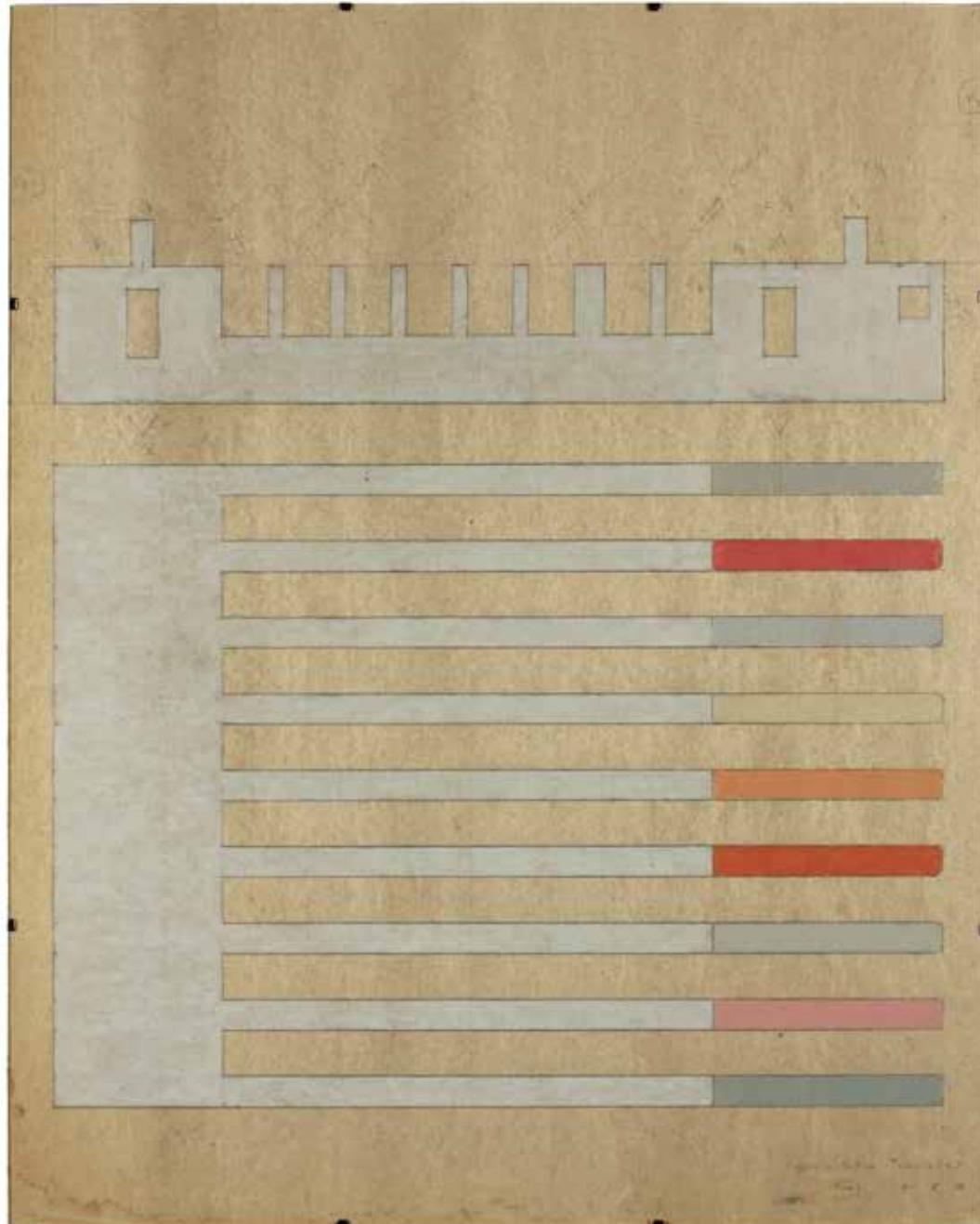


*Cutaway*

2010

Graphite and colored pencil on paper

16 × 20 in.



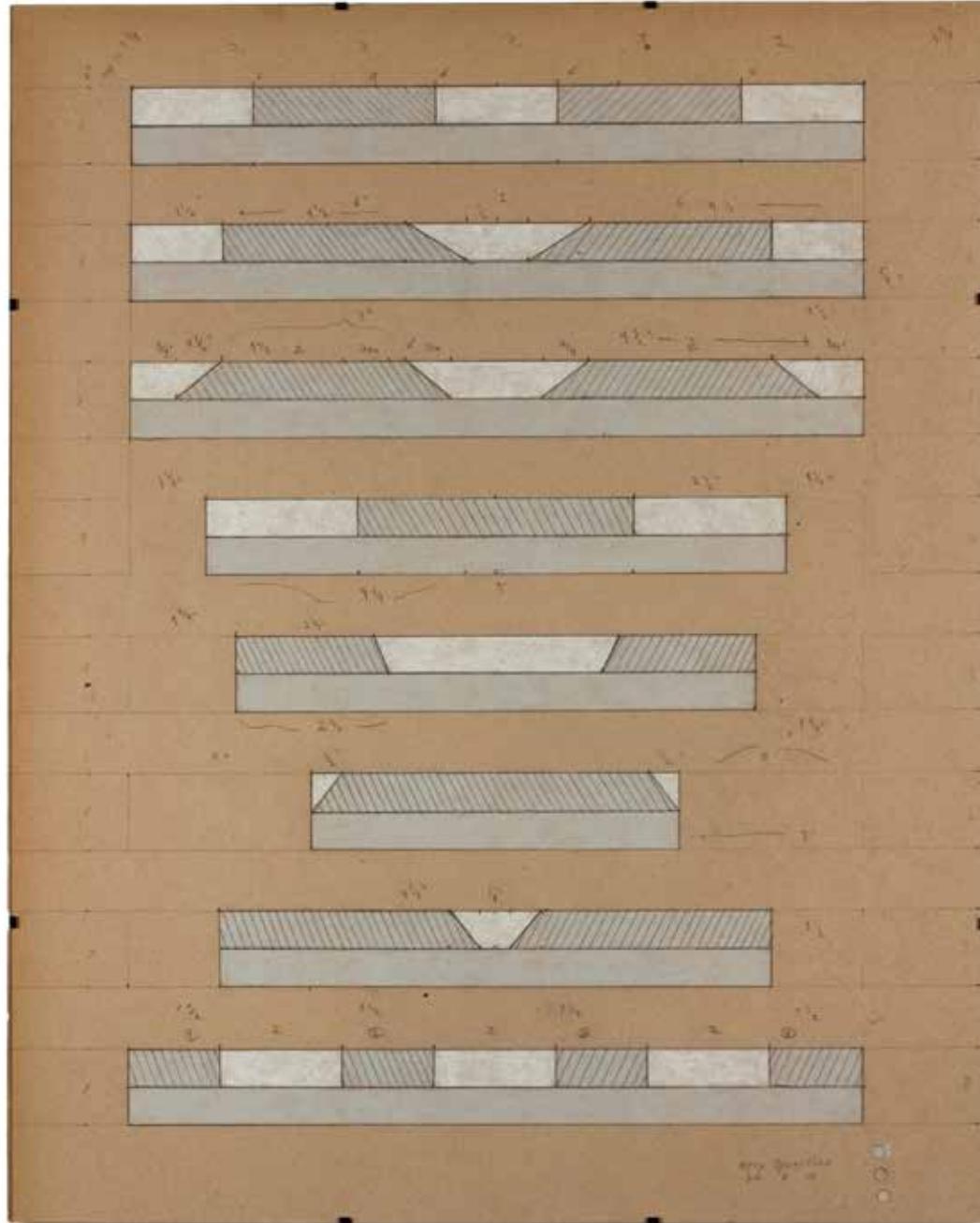
*Representative Template*

2010

Graphite and colored pencil on paper

20 × 16 in.

Collection of Werner Kramarsky



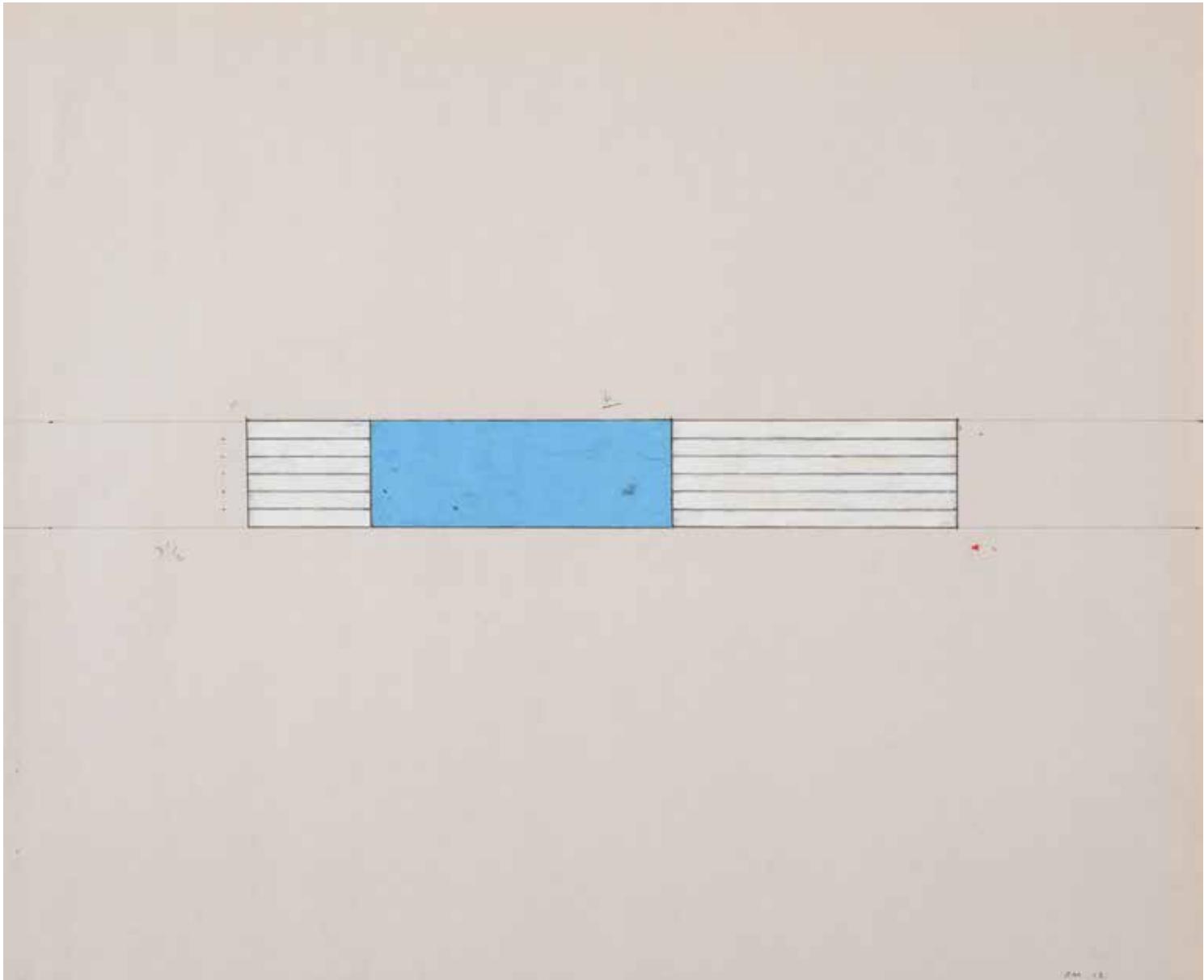
*Grey Specifics*

2010

Graphite and colored pencil on paper

20 × 16 in.

Collection of Fidelity Investments



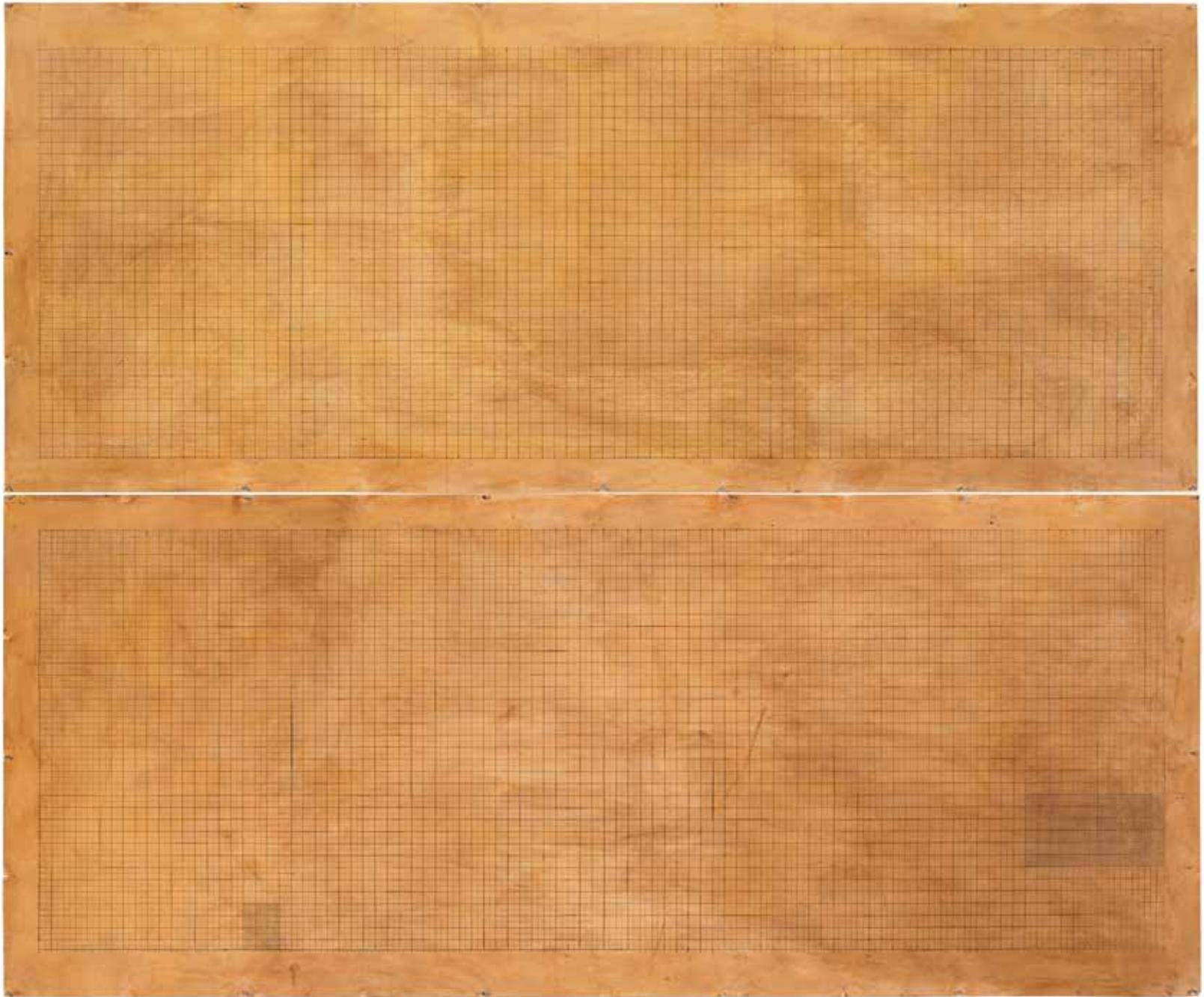
*Deighton*

2012

Colored pencil and graphite on paper

14 × 17 in.

113



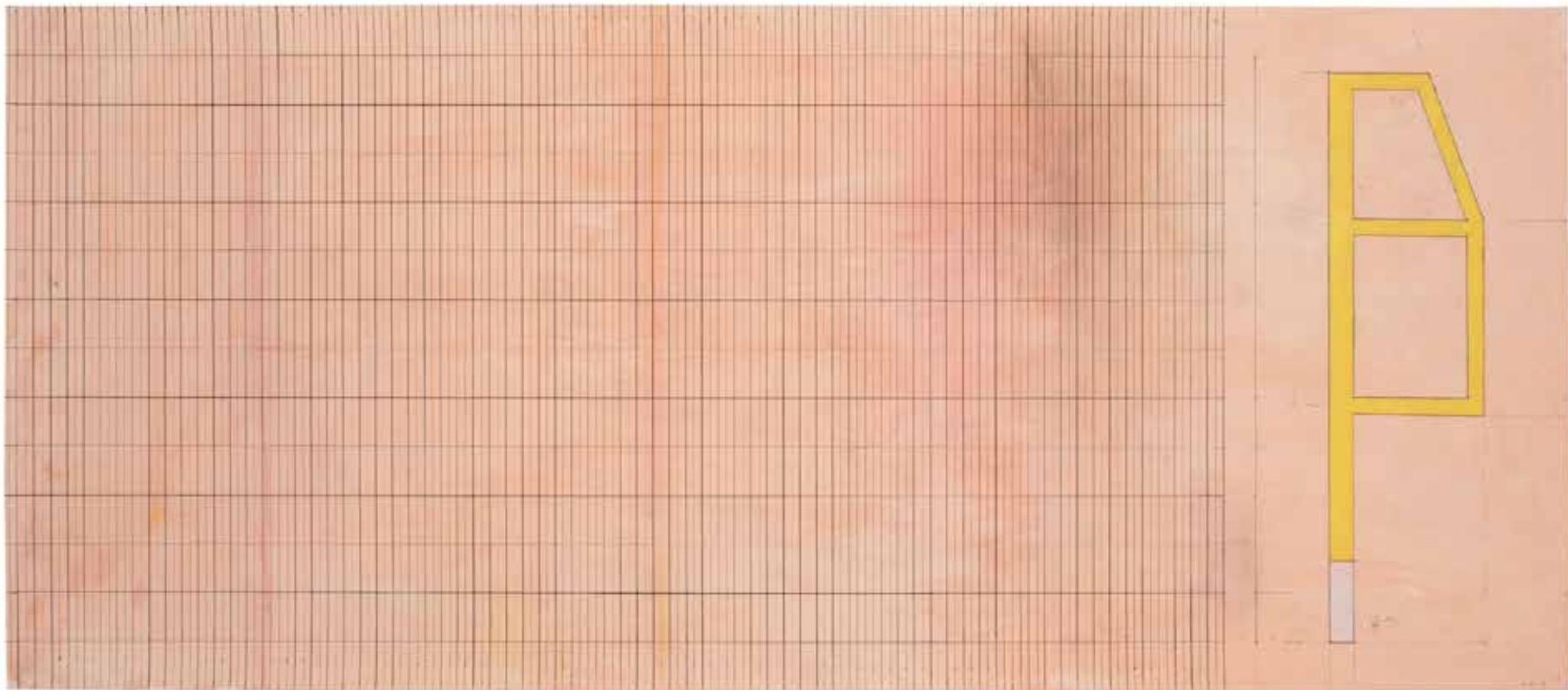
*Template*

2013

Graphite and water-based media on paper

84 × 102 in.

Private Collection



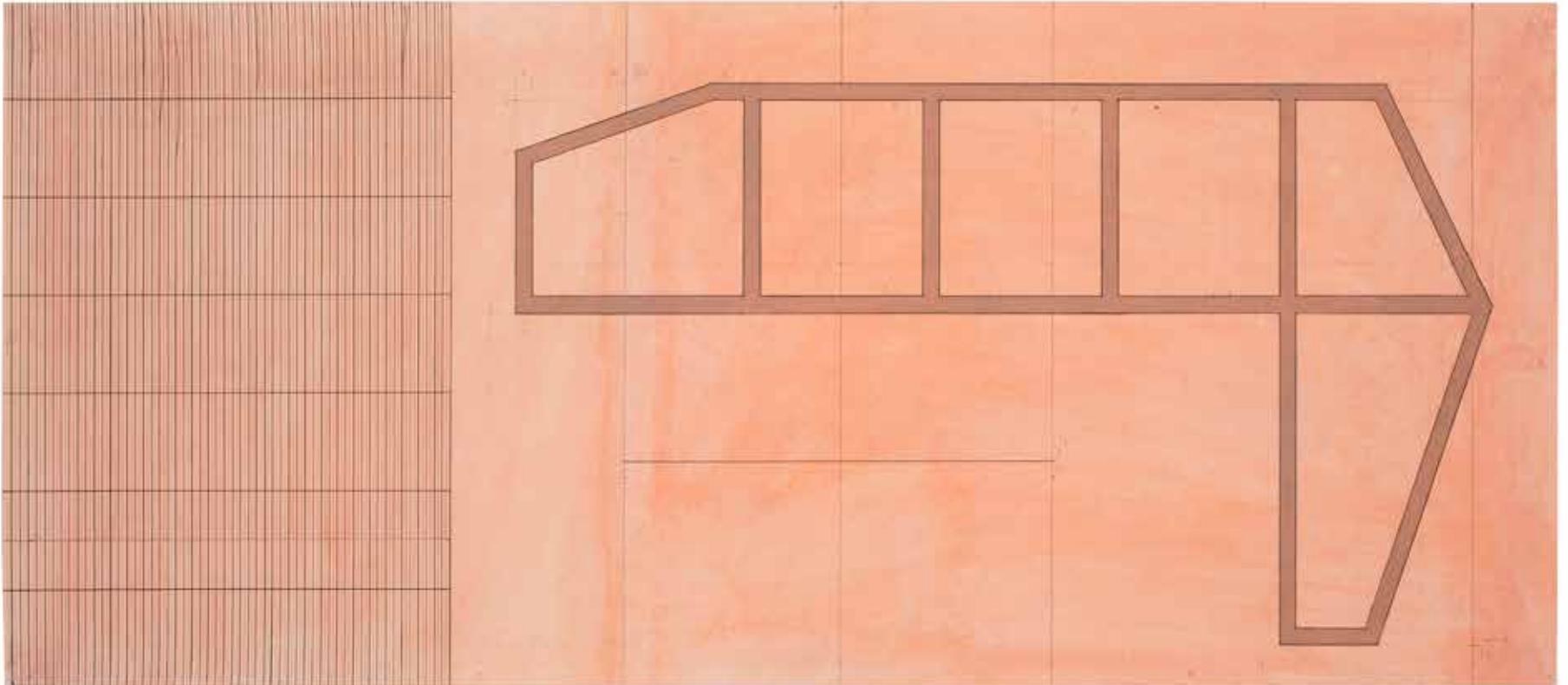
*Right Isolate (Template Study)*

2013

Acrylic wash, colored pencil, and graphite on paper

21 × 48 in.

115



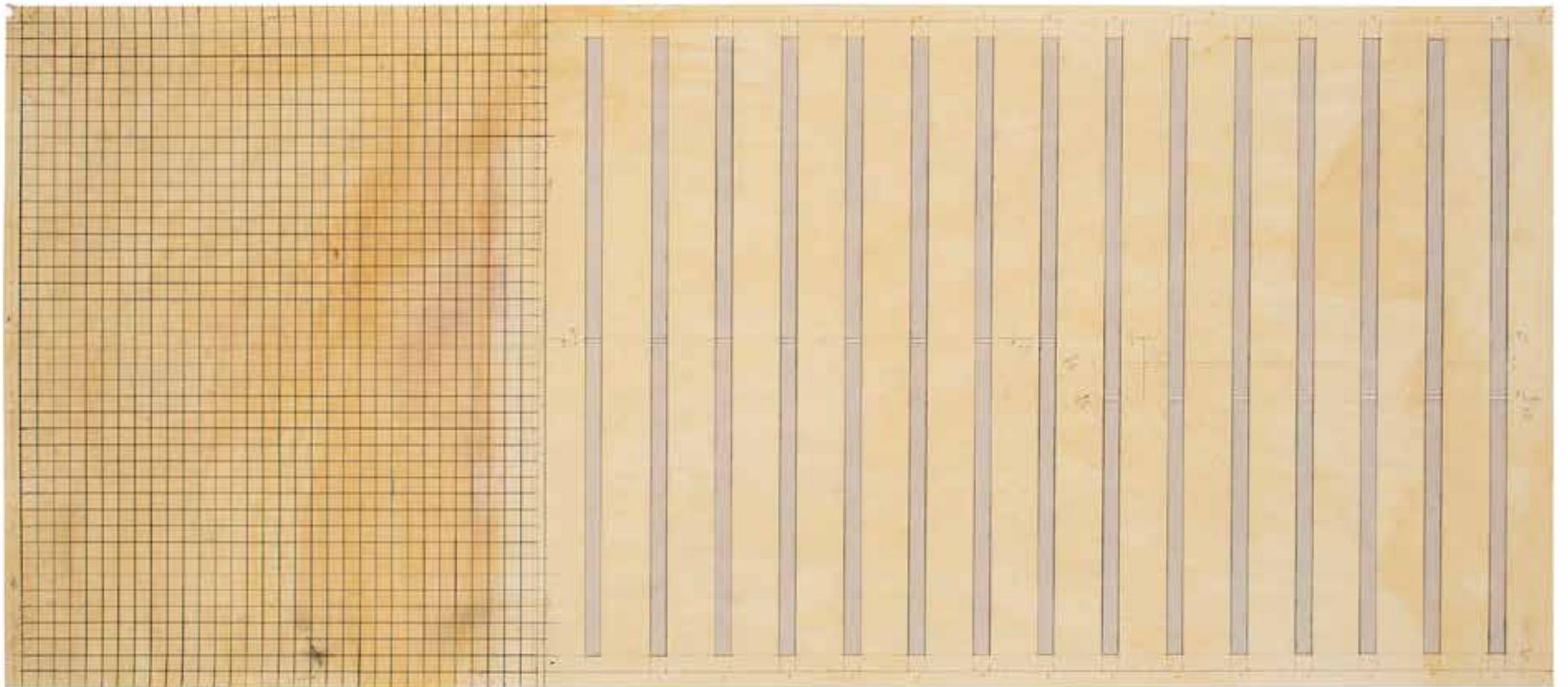
*Corner Rib (Template Study)*

2013

Acrylic wash, colored pencil, and graphite on paper

21 × 48 in.

Private collection



*Full Secondaries*

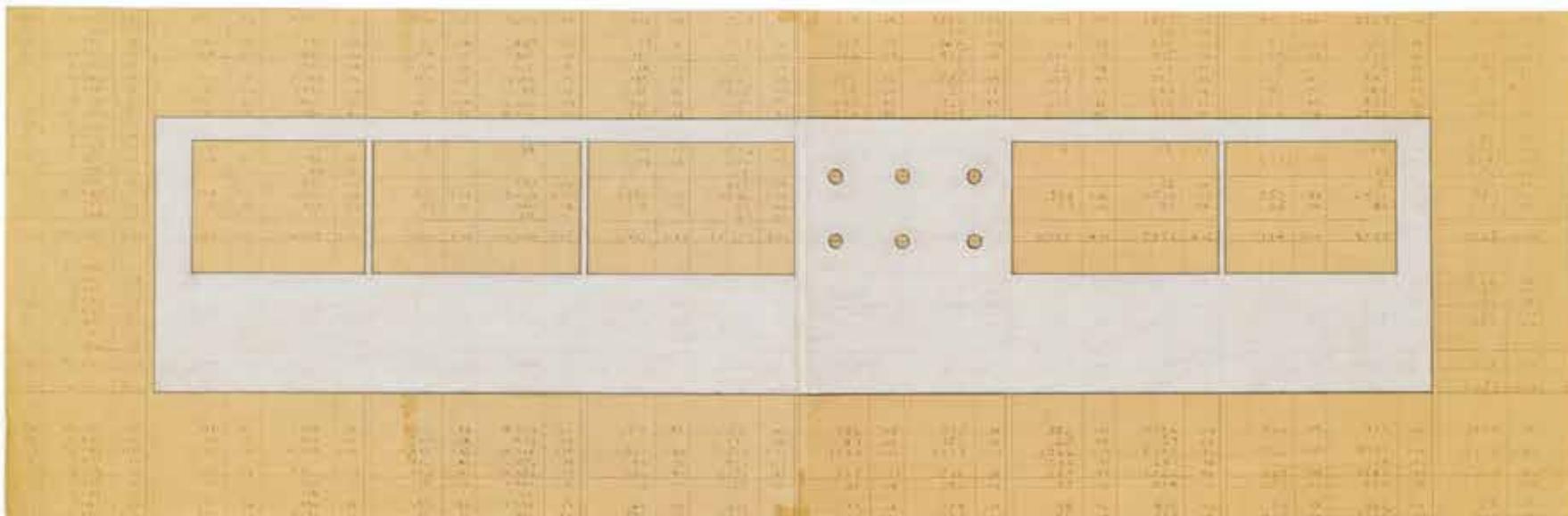
2013

Acrylic wash, colored pencil, and graphite on paper

21 × 48 in.

EXPENSE STATEMENT	PORTLAND				SALEM '2				SALEM '5				EUGENE				CORVALLIS			
	Jan	Apr	July	Oct	Jan	Apr	July	Oct	Jan	Apr	July	Oct	Jan	Apr	July	Oct	Jan	Apr	July	Oct
<b>PURCH</b>																				
General	100.00	50.00	150.00	80.00	120.00	60.00	180.00	90.00	140.00	70.00	210.00	110.00	160.00	80.00	240.00	130.00	180.00	90.00	270.00	150.00
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
<b>BUYING</b>																				
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
<b>SELLING</b>																				
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
<b>DELIVERY</b>																				
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
<b>TOTAL</b>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

*Untitled*  
 Date unknown  
 Colored pencil and ink on found ledger paper  
 11 x 18¾ in.  
 Collection of John and Karen Hoke



*Untitled*

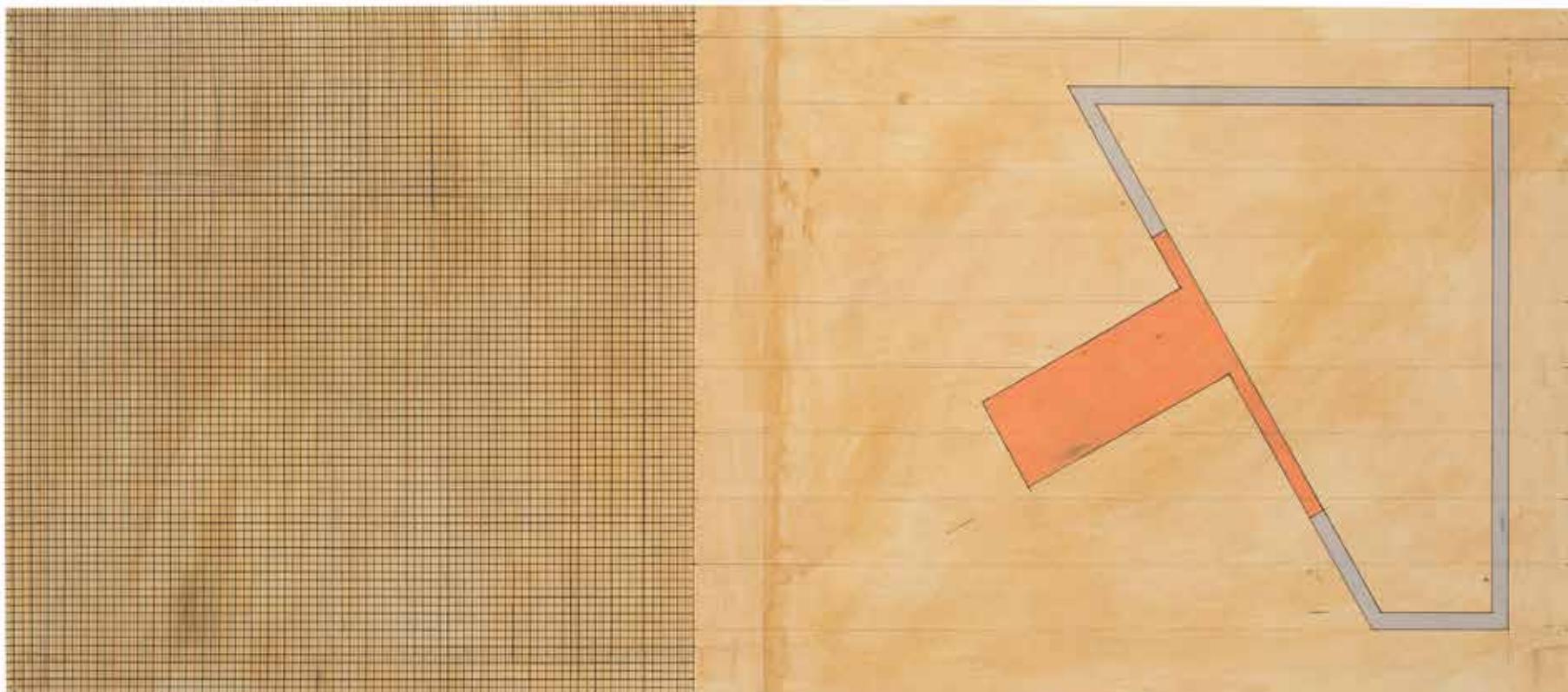
Date unknown

Colored pencil, graphite, and tape on found ledger paper

$7\frac{7}{8} \times 24\frac{1}{16}$  in.

EXPENSE STATEMENT	PORTLAND				HALEM 72				HALEM 71				EUNICE				CORVALLIS			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total				
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE</b>																				
Salaries - Administrative	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00
Salaries - Field Work	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00
Expenses - Office	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00
Expenses - Travel	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00
Expenses - Printing	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00
Expenses - Postage	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00
Expenses - Telephone	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00
Expenses - Miscellaneous	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	500.00	500.00	500.00	1500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	1500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	1500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	1500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	1500.00
<b>SECURANCE</b>																				
Salaries - Security	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00
Salaries - Insurance	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00
Expenses - Security	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00
Expenses - Insurance	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	300.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	400.00	400.00	400.00	1200.00	400.00	400.00	400.00	1200.00	400.00	400.00	400.00	1200.00	400.00	400.00	400.00	1200.00	400.00	400.00	400.00	1200.00

*Untitled*  
 Date unknown  
 Colored pencil, graphite, and masking tape on found ledger paper  
 10 × 19<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.  
 Collection of John and Karen Hoke



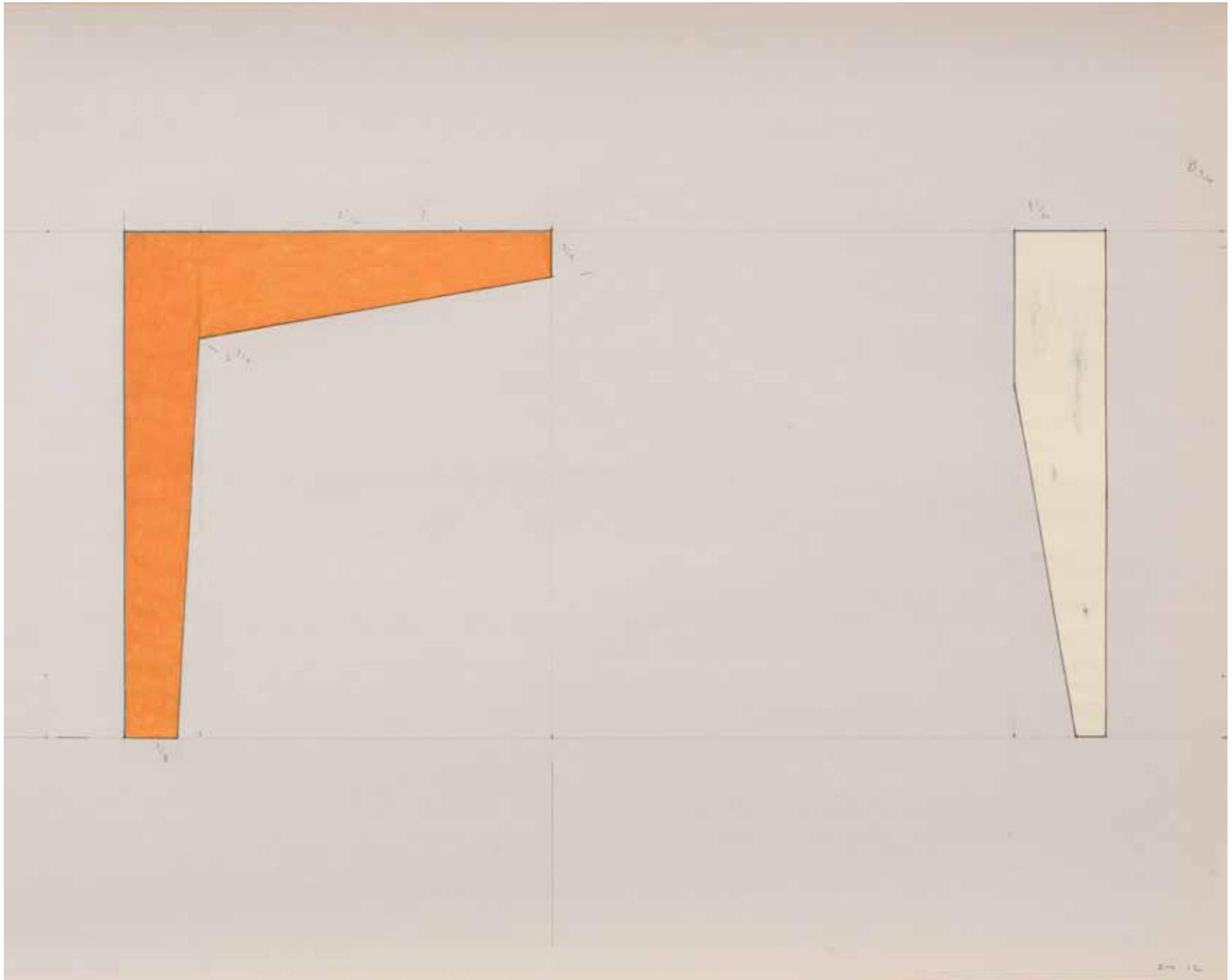
*Boundary Template with Addition*

2013

Acrylic wash, colored pencil, and graphite on paper

21 × 48 in.

Collection of Belinda Kielland



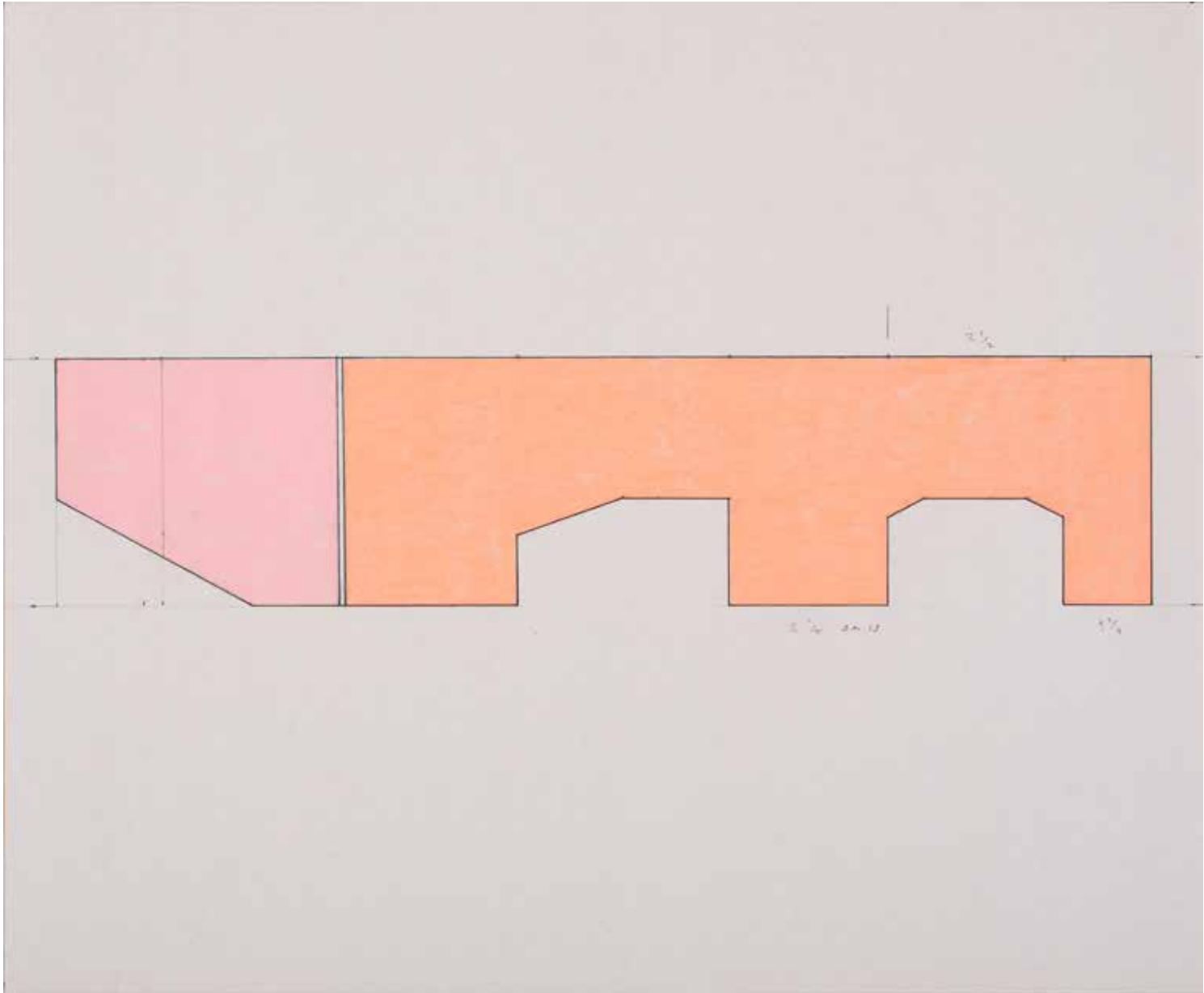
*Untitled*

2012

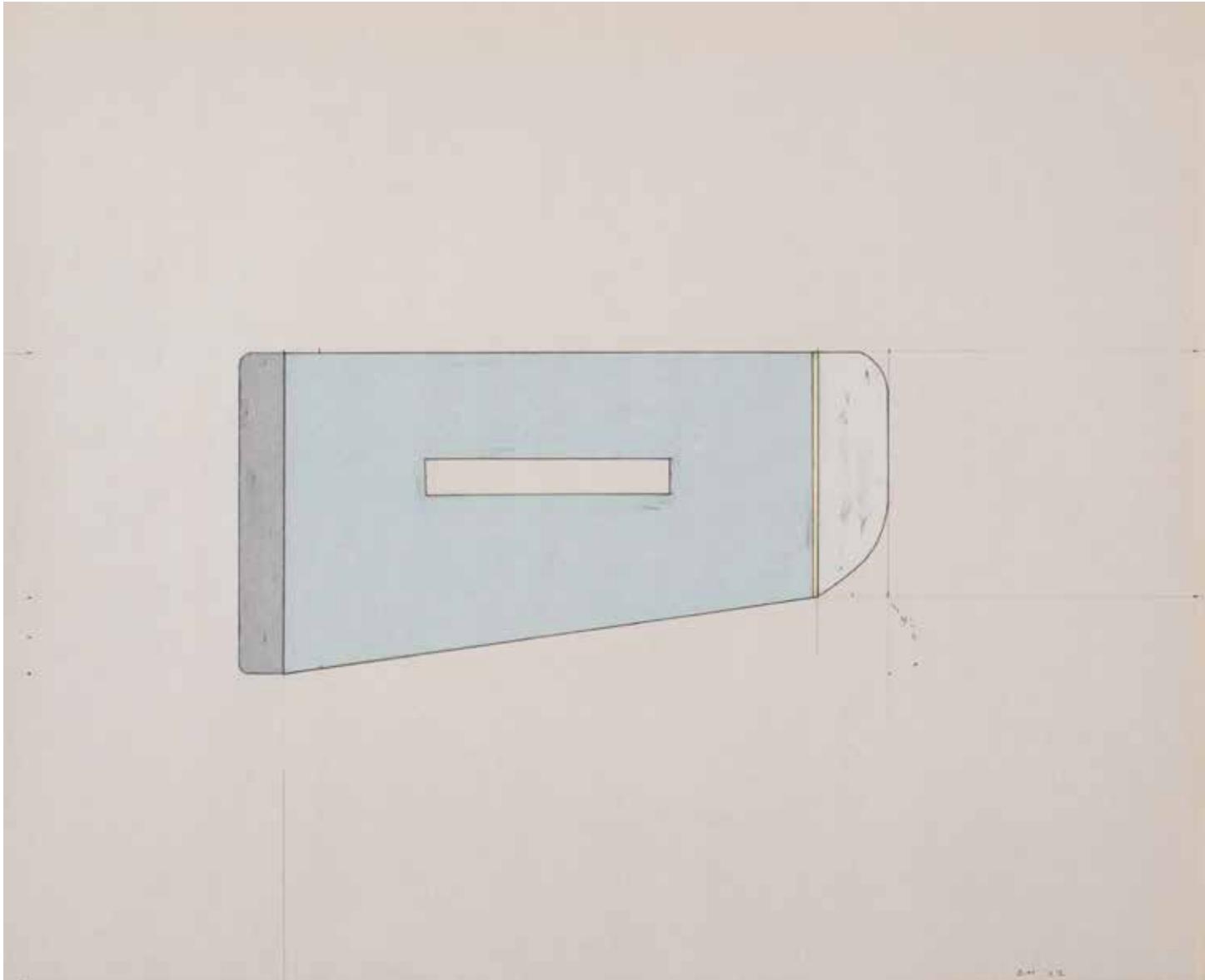
Colored pencil and graphite on paper

16 × 20 in.

122



*Untitled*  
2013  
Colored pencil and graphite on paper  
14 × 17 in.



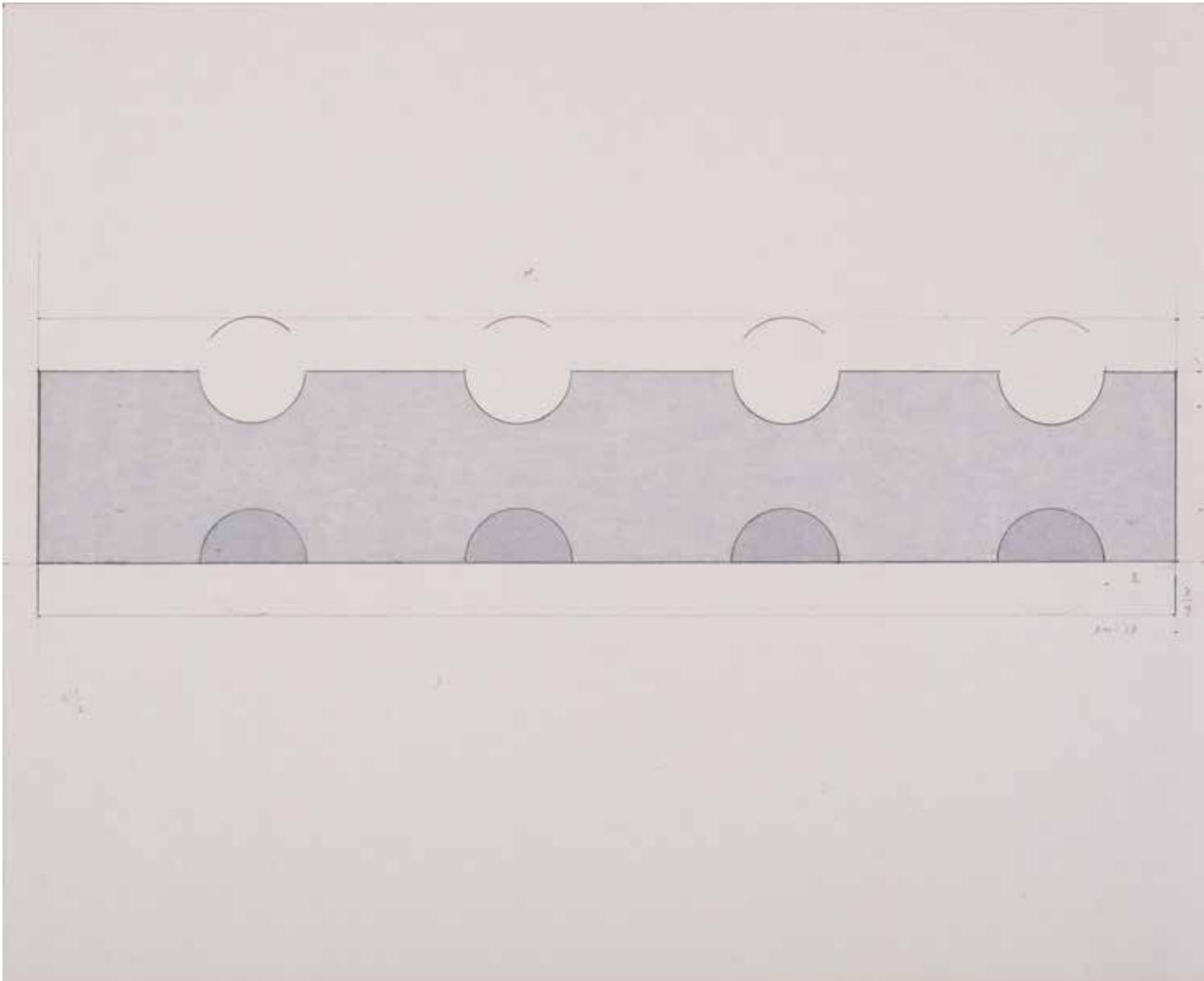
*Stoddard-West*

2012

Colored pencil and graphite on paper

14 × 17 in.

124



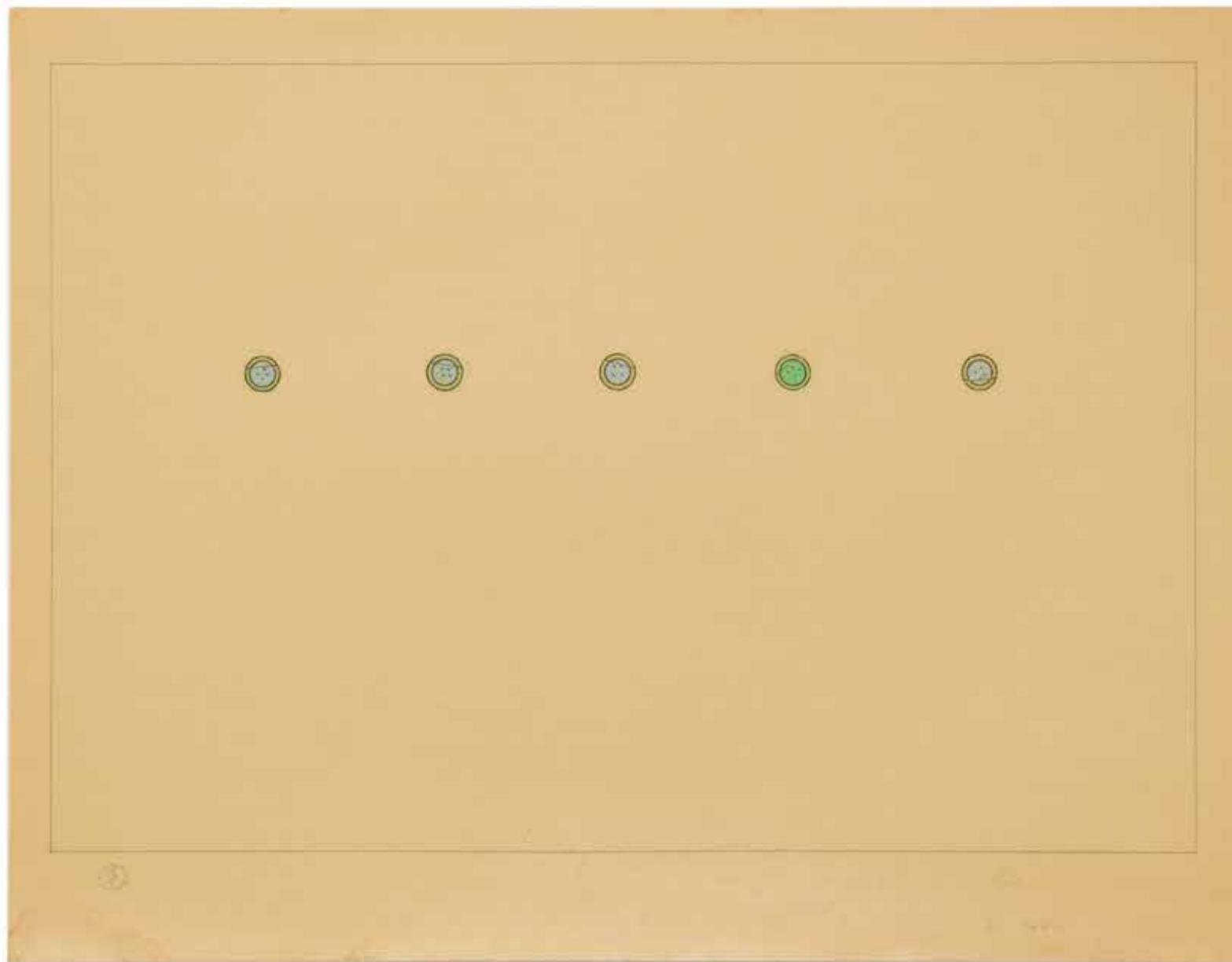
*Untitled*

2013

Colored pencil and graphite on paper

14 × 17 in.

125



*Untitled*  
Date unknown  
Pattern paper, colored pencil, and graphite on found paper  
17½ × 22½ in.

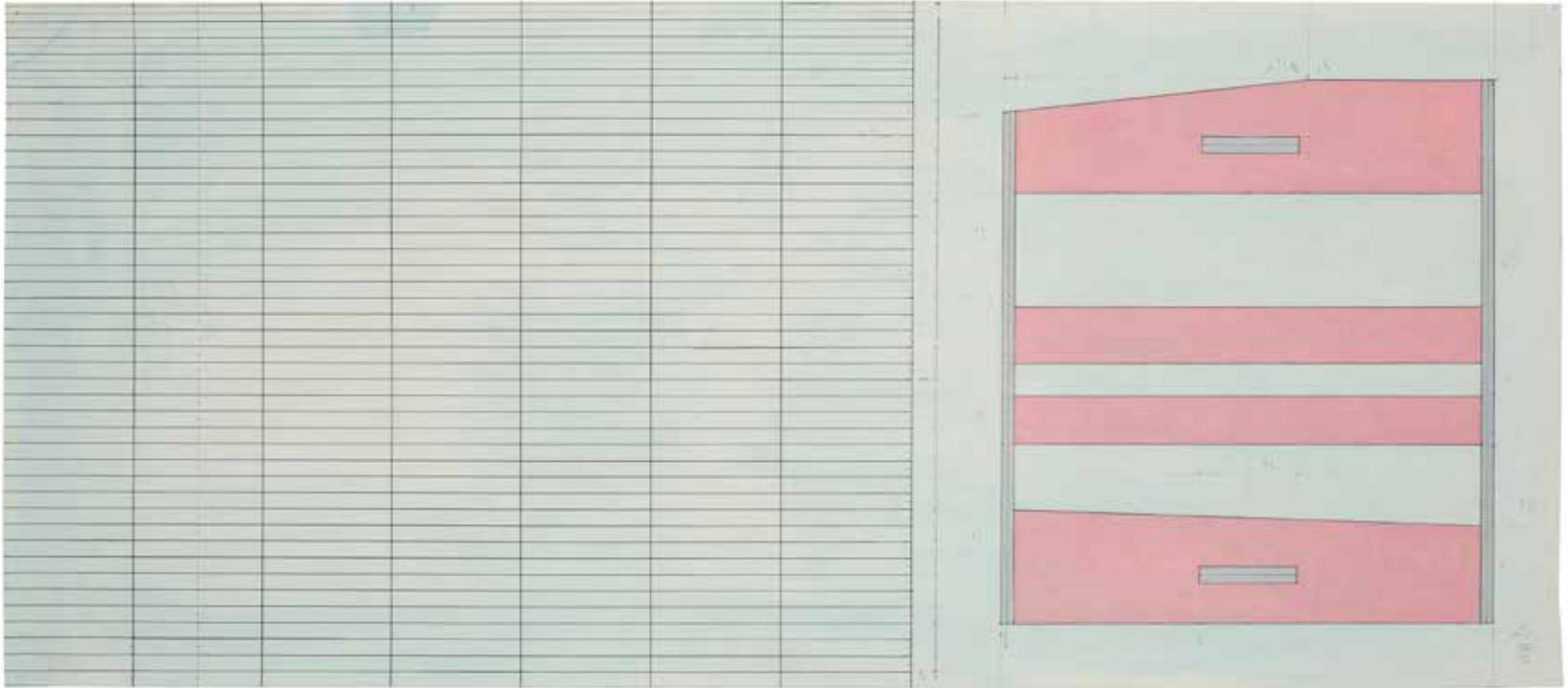
INCOME STATEMENT S-I-C-C	SALEM #2 ①				SALEM #5 ①			
	Date YEAR ENDED 1-31-54		Date YEAR ENDED 1-31-55		Date YEAR ENDED 1-31-54		Date YEAR ENDED 1-31-55	
	Month	%	Year to Date	%	Month	%	Year to Date	%
Sales, Own Depts., Net	791,705.70		827,561.60		874,071.88		877,088.76	
Cost of Sales:								
Merchandise	570,404.50	44.6	579,176.91	44.9	549,020.20	43.6	605,016.51	44.0
Workroom Costs, Net	773.25	1	700.74	1	6,292.89	1.6	7,860.7	3
Purchase Discounts	(17,266.81)	(2.2)	(19,426.87)	(2.2)	(7,322.85)	(2.7)	(7,620.37)	(2.4)
Total Cost	553,246.94	44.5	560,979.93	44.7	546,020.24	43.3	605,256.91	43.4
Gross Profit on Sales	277,738.76	36.5	306,481.67	35.3	277,047.26	31.7	272,051.85	31.4
Leased Department Income	-		-		10,618.25	1.2	14,754.76	1.4
Gross Profit on Operations	277,738.76	36.5	306,481.67	35.3	287,665.51	32.9	286,806.61	32.8
Operating Expenses:								
Administrative	31,527.38	4.0	32,405.29	3.7	33,346.99	4.3	36,430.79	4.2
Occupancy	32,831.87	4.1	33,870.04	3.4	41,707.08	4.8	44,146.47	5.0
Publicity	48,527.37	6.2	56,256.50	6.4	46,833.36	5.4	60,088.77	6.7
Buying	27,781.21	3.6	28,700.77	3.4	34,700.71	3.9	34,570.61	3.9
Selling	16,716.48	2.1	20,720.19	2.5	16,812.88	1.9	16,304.41	1.8
Delivery	28,588.00	3.6	-	-	16,702.44	1.9	16,147.74	1.8
Allocated	18,000.00	2.3	14,260.00	1.6	18,000.00	2.1	14,750.00	1.6
Total Expense	224,431.75	28.5	230,322.19	27.2	260,104.46	29.5	288,908.76	32.6

Untitled

Date unknown

Ink, colored pencil, and tape on Xerox copy of found ledger paper

6 7/8 x 8 7/8 in.



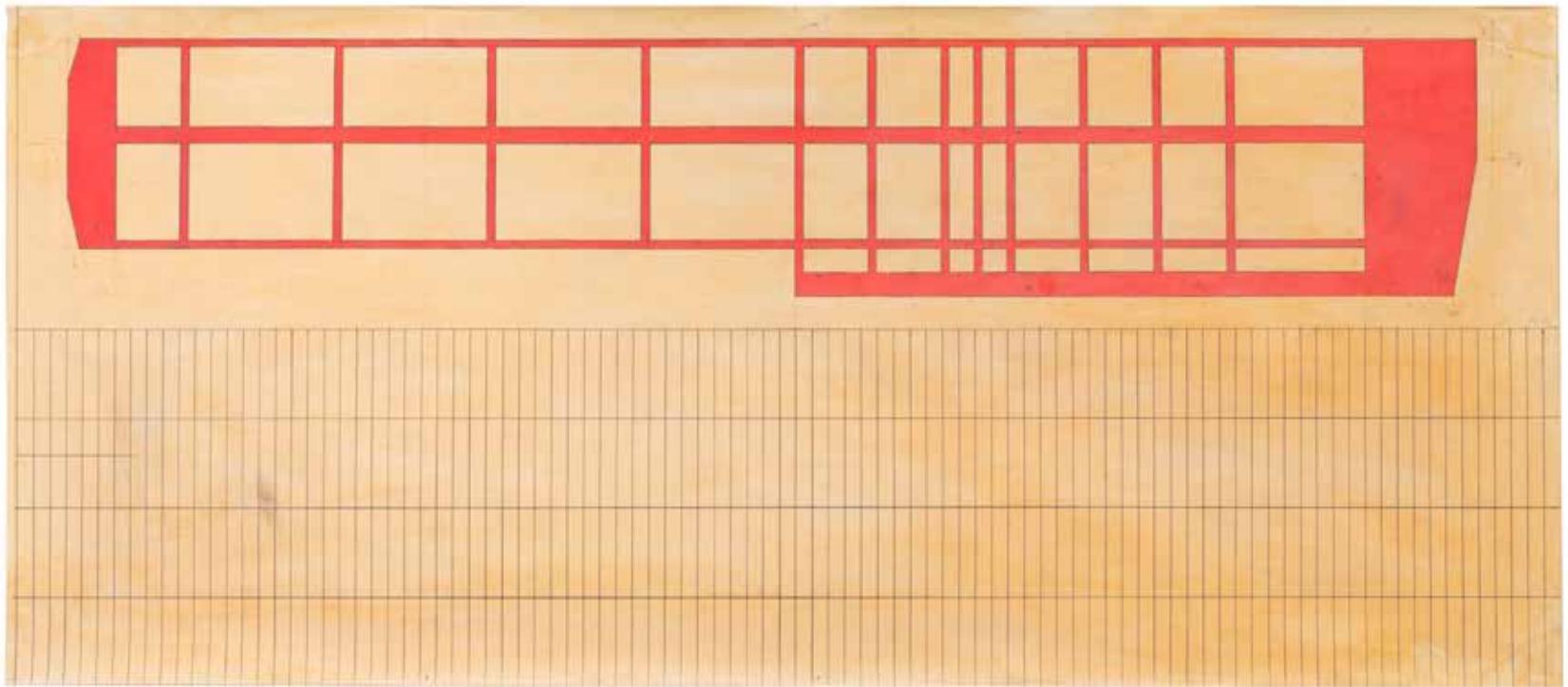
*Temporaries (Template Study)*

2013

Acrylic wash, colored pencil, and graphite on paper

21 × 48 in.

Collection of Bitsie Tulloch



*Hollow Spar (Template Study)*

2013

Acrylic wash, colored pencil, and graphite on paper

21 × 48 in.

Collection of James Defeo



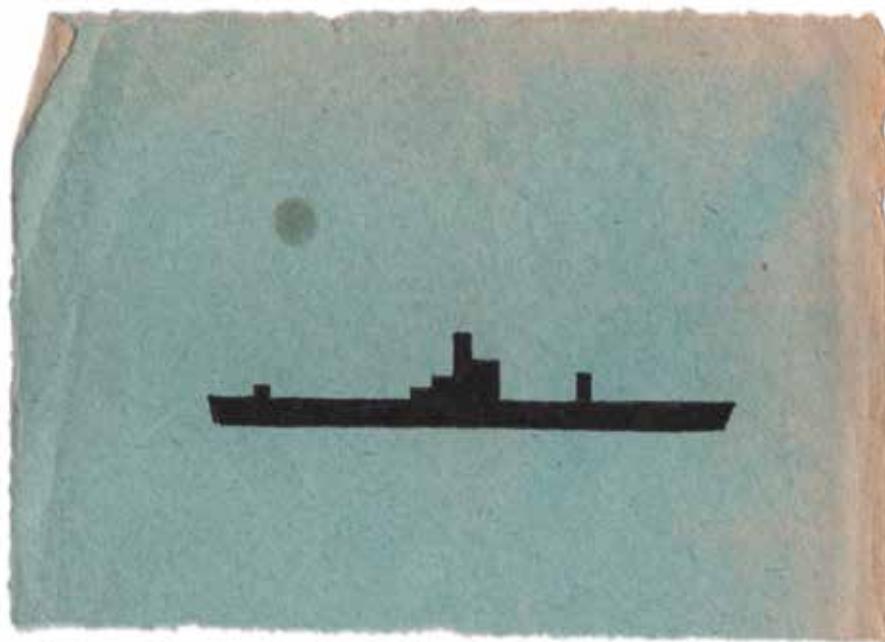
*Untitled*

2015

Ink and colored pencil on found paper

4¼ × 3½ in.

130



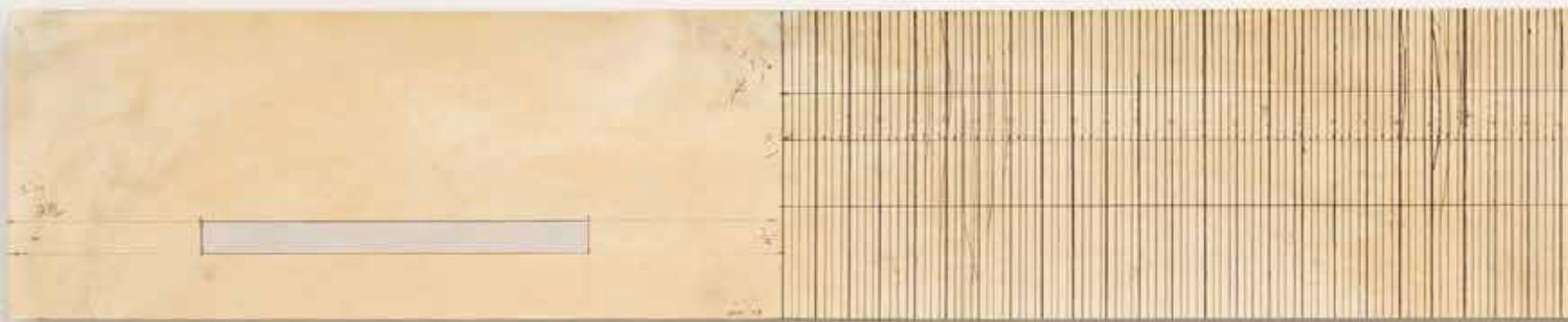
*Untitled*

2015

Ink on found paper

3¼ × 4½ in.

Collection of John and Karen Hoke





*Untitled*

2018

Graphite, colored pencil, and ink on paper

4<sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> × 4<sup>7</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.

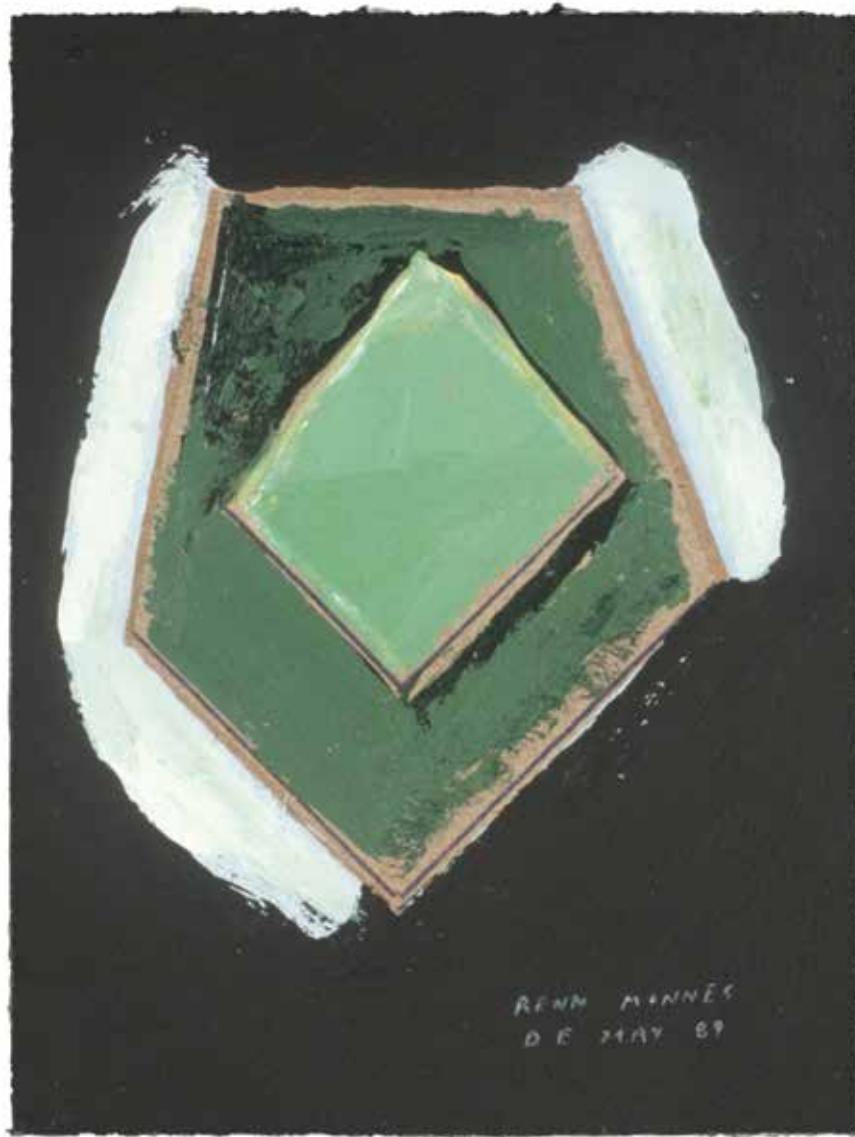
133



**PAINTINGS**



*Incinerator*  
1989  
Mixed media  
7 × 4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 2 in.



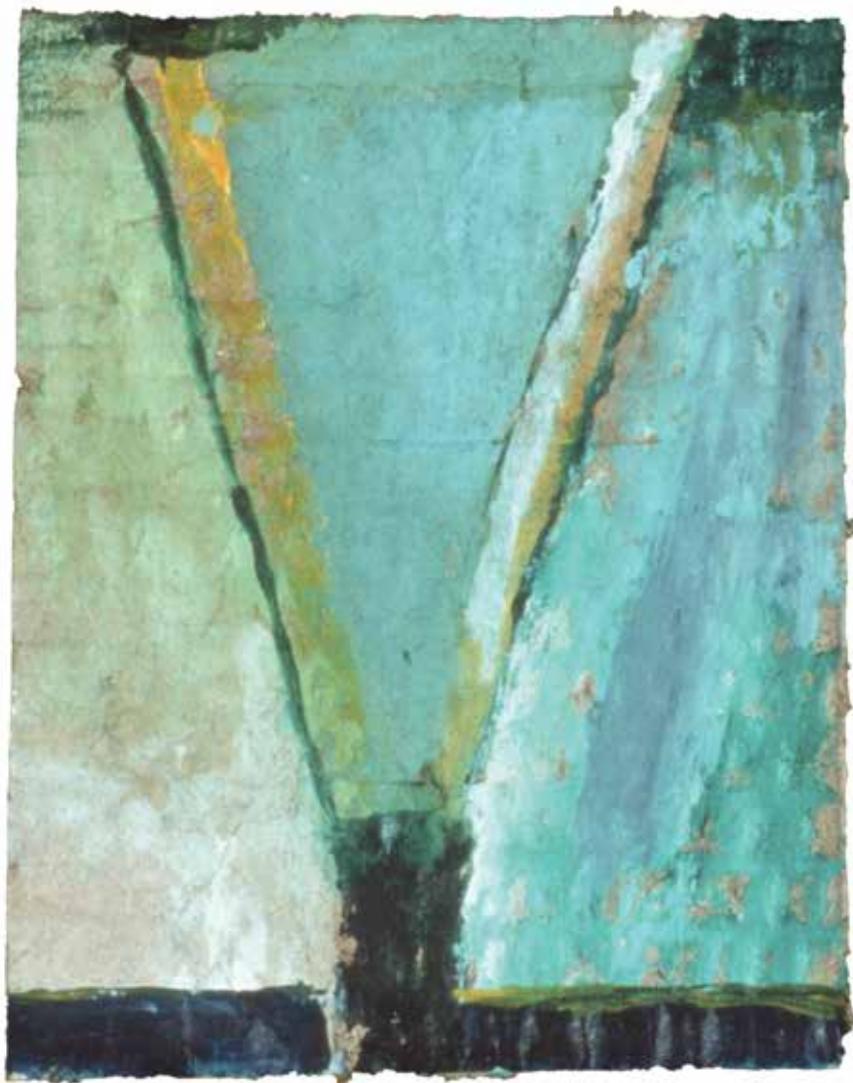
*Renn Monnes, islands in the City, Leslie S-E island Salem*  
1989  
Mixed media  
5 × 3¾ in.



*Untitled*  
1989  
Mixed media  
5 × 3¾ in.



*Untitled*  
1989  
Mixed media  
8½ × 5½ in.



*Untitled*  
1989  
Mixed media  
8½ × 5½ in.



*Untitled (Islands in the City)*  
Date unknown  
Graphite and acrylic on paper  
11¾ × 7⅞ in.

B V H I  
F L

KITZBOURN - THE MOST DIFFICULT DOWNHILL  
IN THE WORLD - THE GREAT STRENGTH OF DOWNHILL  
IS SKIING - STRAIGHT DOWNHILL, GATES, PRACTICE  
FILMS OF MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN, STRUCTURES, A  
VIBRANT HISTORY OF THE MOUNTAIN, A GREAT  
REPLICA OF THE GREAT BOXES OF FUNCTIONAL WORK

THE  
OF  
THE  
THE

**SCULPTURE**



*Research Island*

1989

Mixed media

6 × 4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.

Collection of Jane and Spencer Beebe Trust



*Reservoir District*  
2001  
4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.  
Cardboard and ink  
Collection of James Defeo



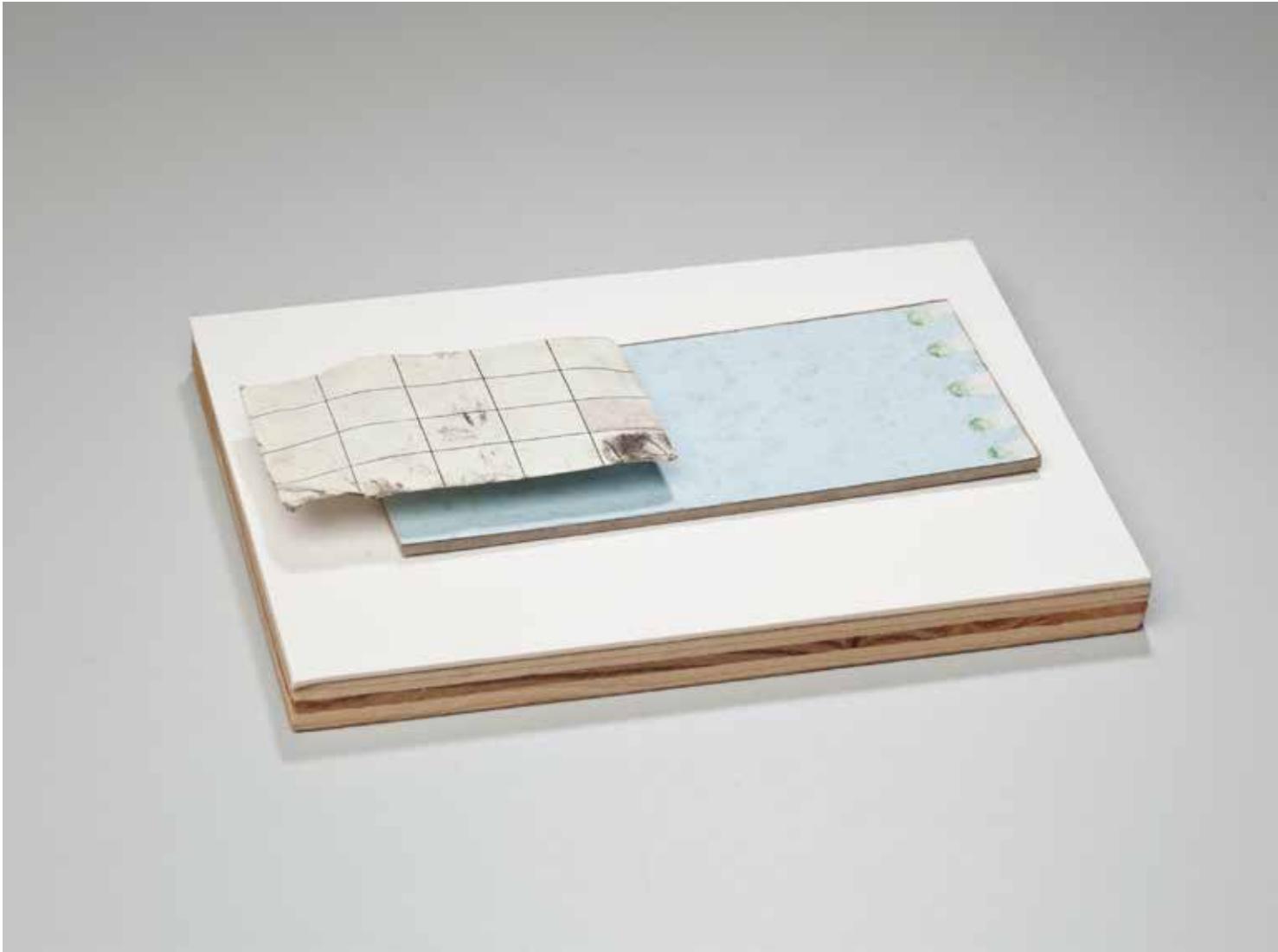
*Untitled*

2002

Mixed media

5½ × 7⅝ × 2⅛ in.

Collection of Mary Josephson-Grenon



*Tsukuba*

2011

Davey board, found paper, wood

$\frac{5}{8} \times 6\frac{3}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$  in.

Collection of Billy and Agnes Peelle

147



*Frei Dense*

2013

Found papers and materials, cardboard, plaster of paris, acrylic,  
watercolor, ink, and graphite

1 $\frac{7}{8}$  × 4 $\frac{1}{2}$  × 1 in.



*Indmere*

2013

Found materials, cardboard, plaster of paris, acrylic, and varnish

$2\frac{1}{8} \times 5\frac{3}{16} \times 1$  in.

149



*Paramor*

2013

Found paper, cardboard, plaster of paris, acrylic, watercolor,  
ink, and graphite

$1\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{5}{16} \times 1$  in.

Collection of Kandis Brewer Nunn and Robert Nunn



*Sinnes*

2013

Found papers, cardboard, plaster of paris, acrylic, watercolor, and ink

$2\frac{7}{8} \times 3\frac{15}{16} \times \frac{7}{8}$  in.

Collection of Belinda Kielland

151



*Terezi*

2013

Found papers, cardboard, plaster of paris, acrylic, watercolor, and ink

$1\frac{7}{8} \times 4\frac{3}{4} \times \frac{7}{8}$  in.

Collection of Dorothy Lemelson Estate



*Untitled*

Date unknown

Colored pencil and found objects

21 $\frac{3}{4}$  × 32 × 2 in.

Private Collection



*Pinehurst Motel/Lane Oak Tavern*

2016

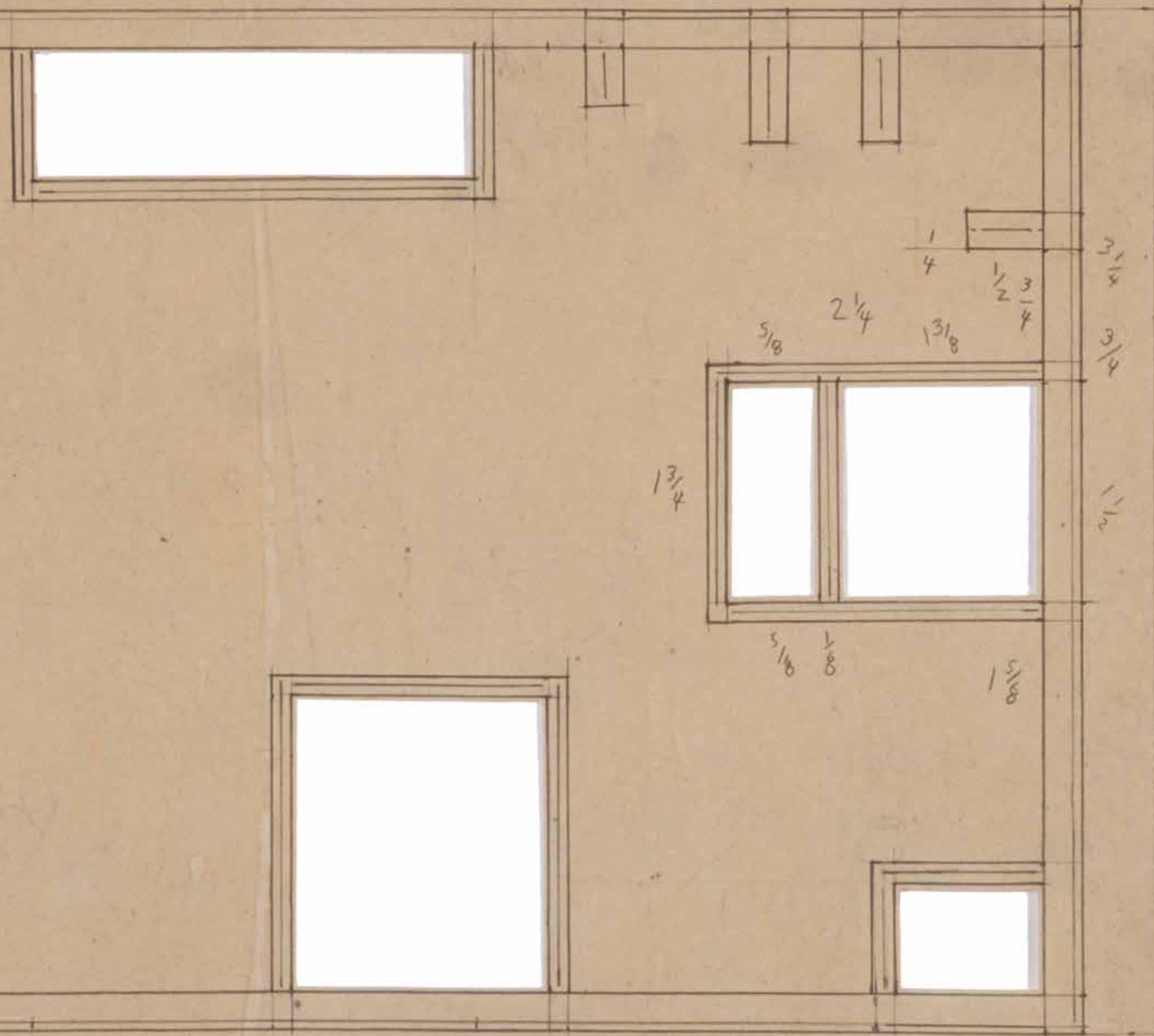
Cardboard, graphite, acrylic, and wood

$1\frac{1}{8} \times 7\frac{3}{8} \times 7\frac{1}{16}$  in.

Collection of Beth Rudin DeWoody

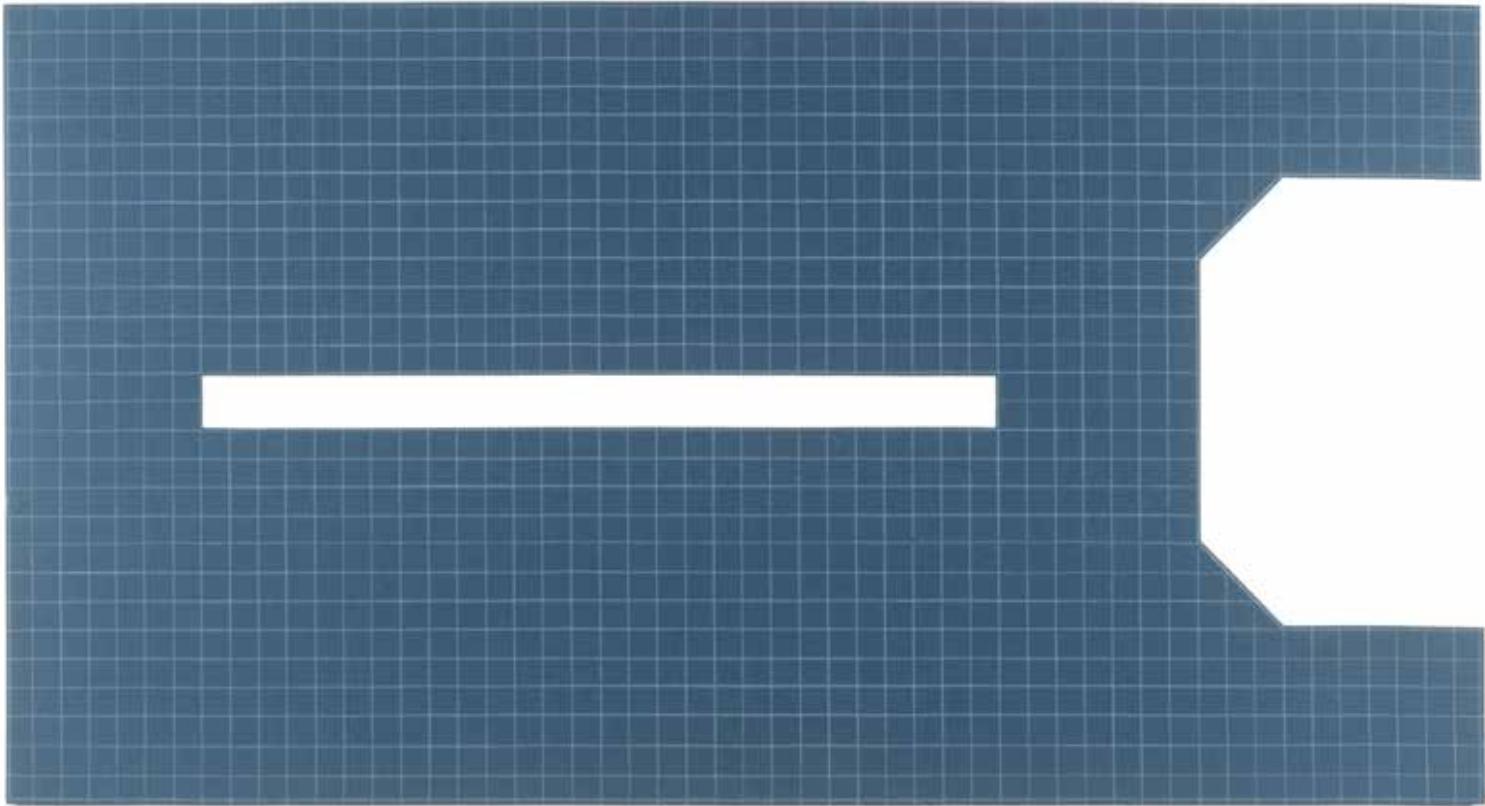


*Casablanca*  
Date unknown  
Ink, cardboard, and wire  
 $2\frac{1}{8} \times 7\frac{5}{8} \times 1$  in.  
Collection of Bryan Null



10  
10

**TEMPLATES**



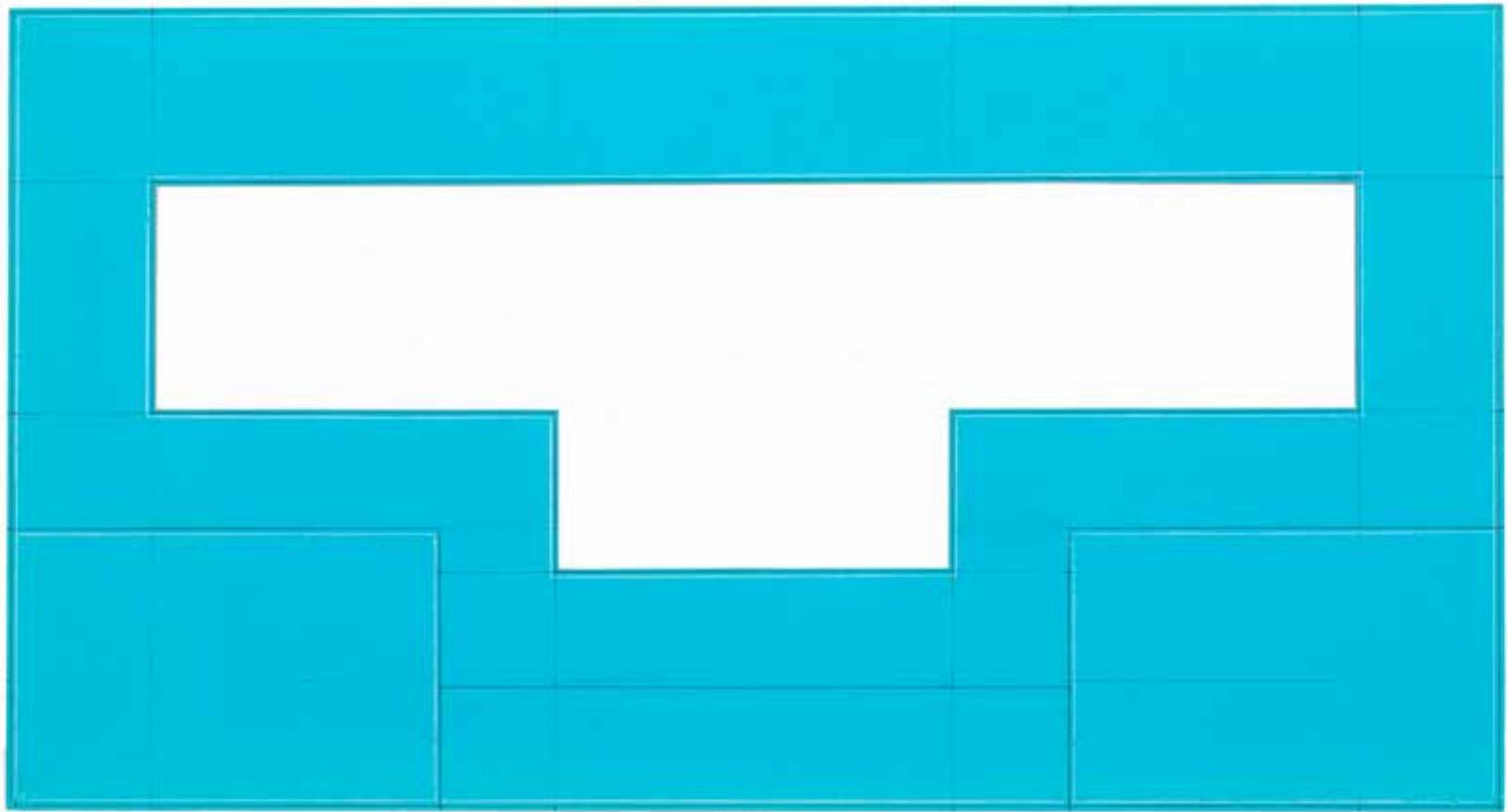
*Untitled (Template)*

1999

Mixed media

14 × 26 in.

158



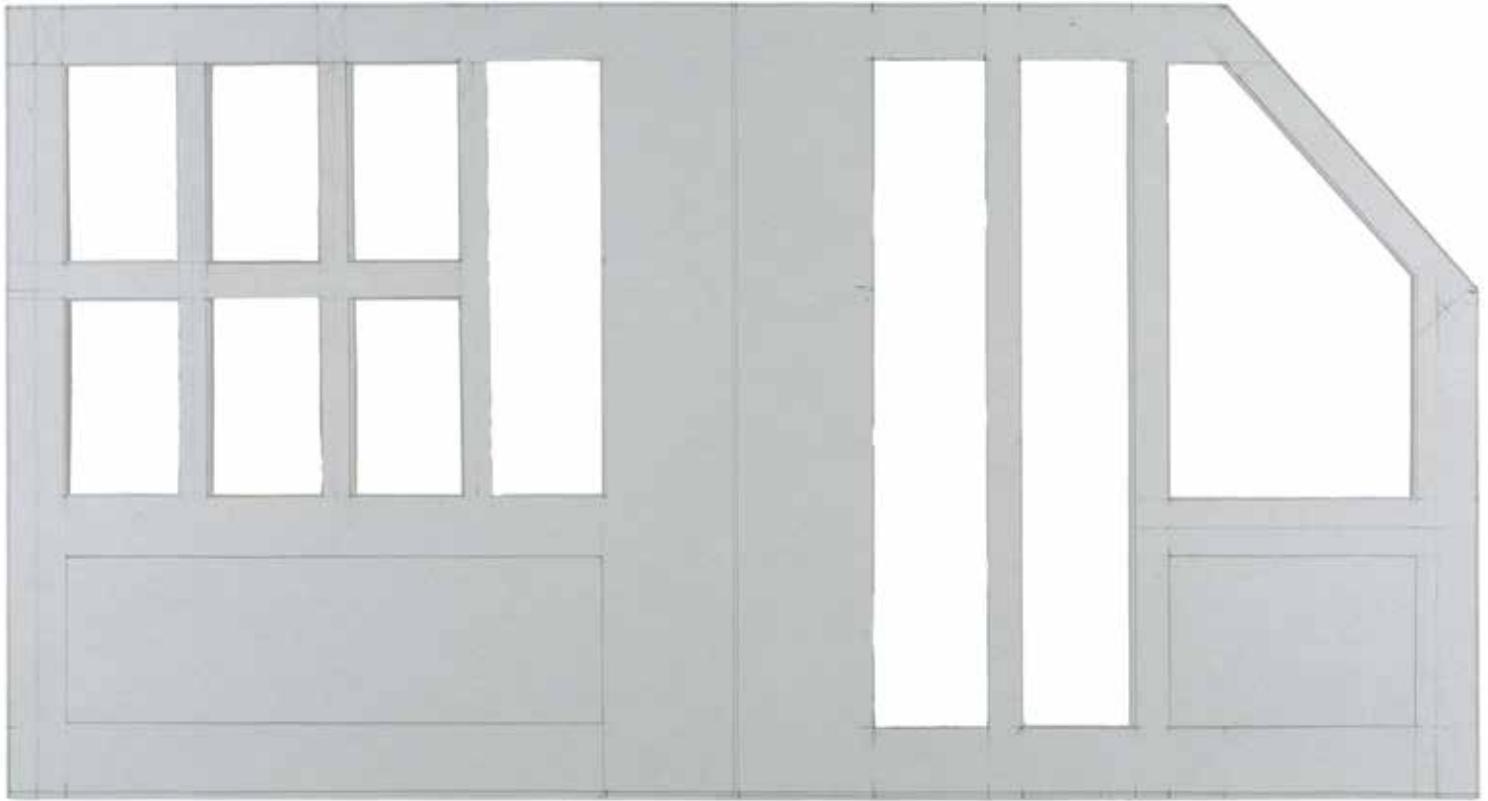
*Blue Timber*

1999

Mixed media

14 × 26 in.

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette  
University, Maribeth Collins Art Acquisition Fund, with additional  
contributions from individual donors, 2000.072.004



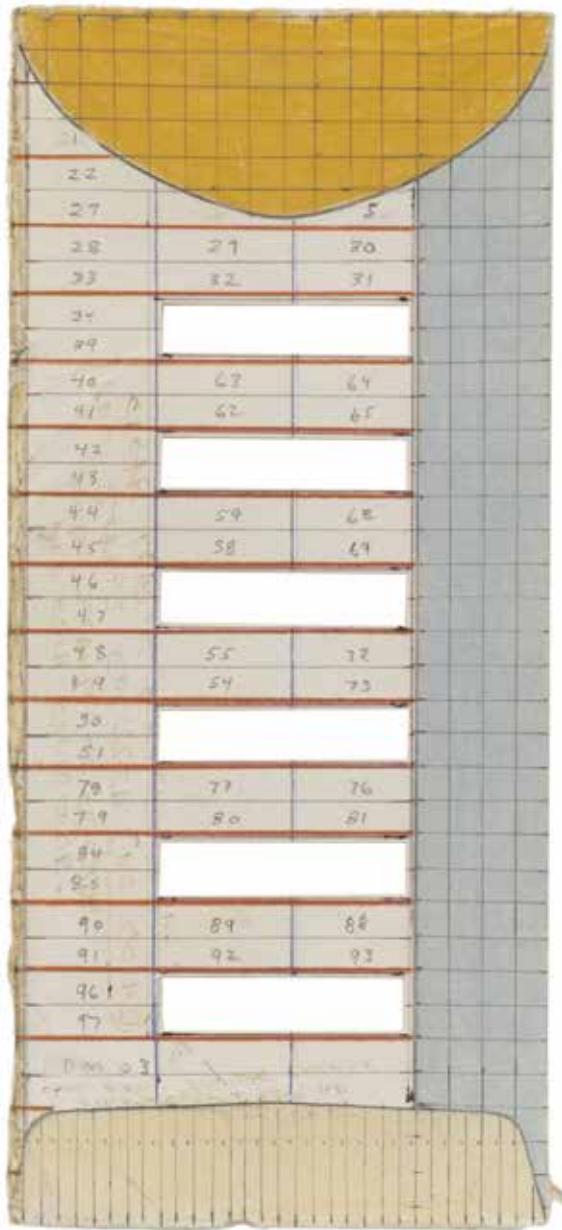
*Untitled (Template)*

1999

Mixed media

14 × 26 in.

160



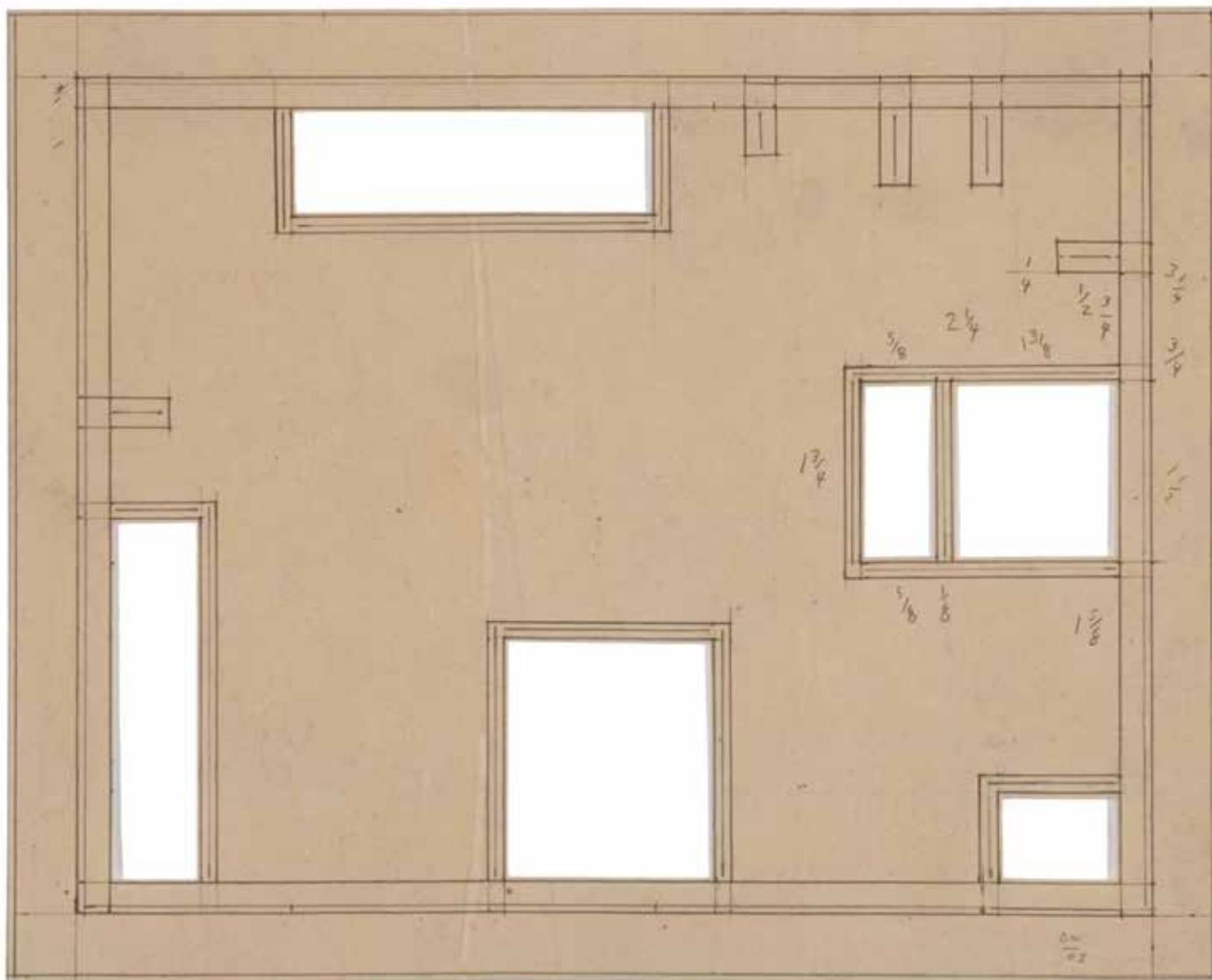
*Template*

2003

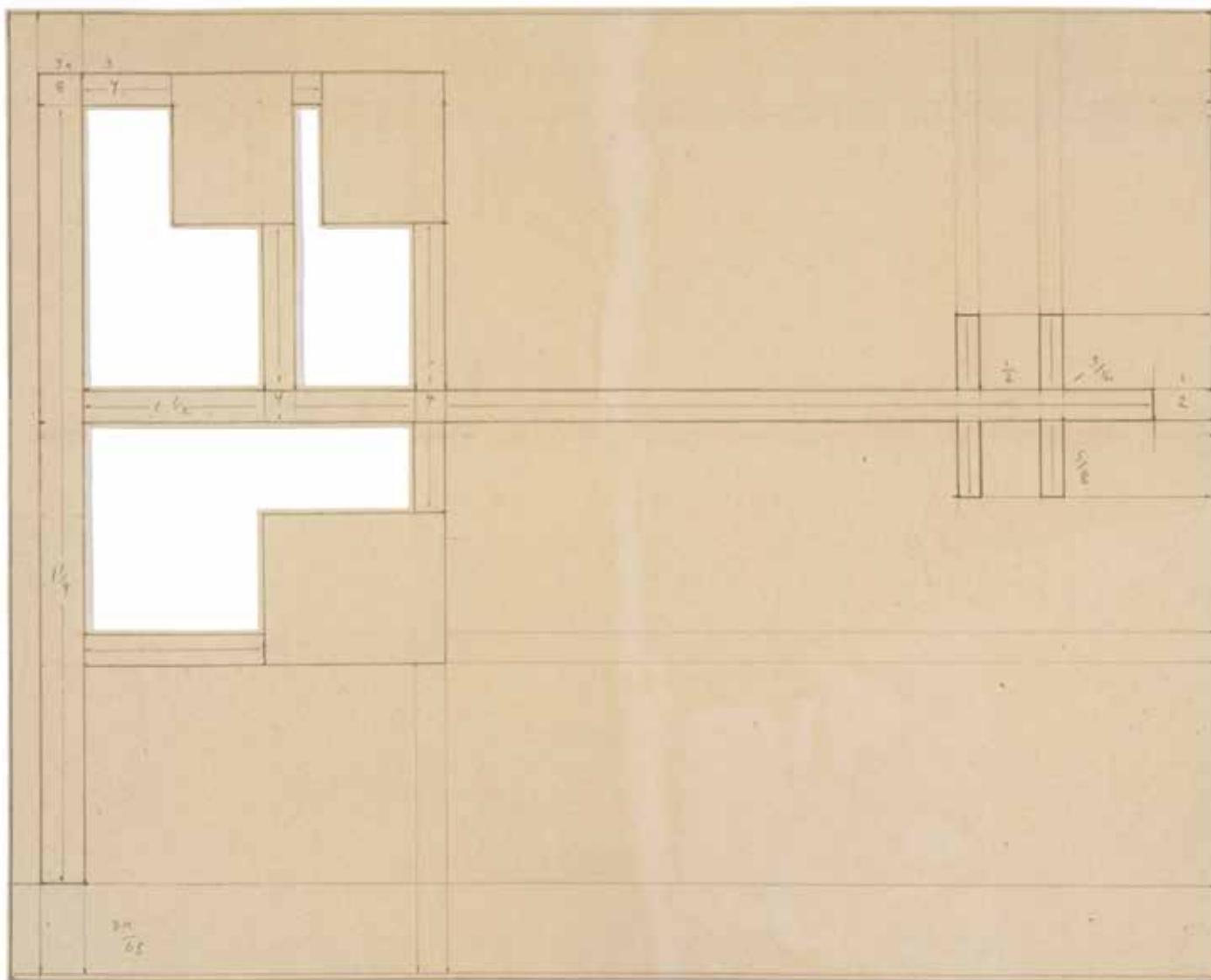
Mixed media

8 $\frac{3}{8}$  × 4 in.

Collection of Silas Beebe



*Untitled*  
2005  
Graphite on paper  
8 × 10 in.



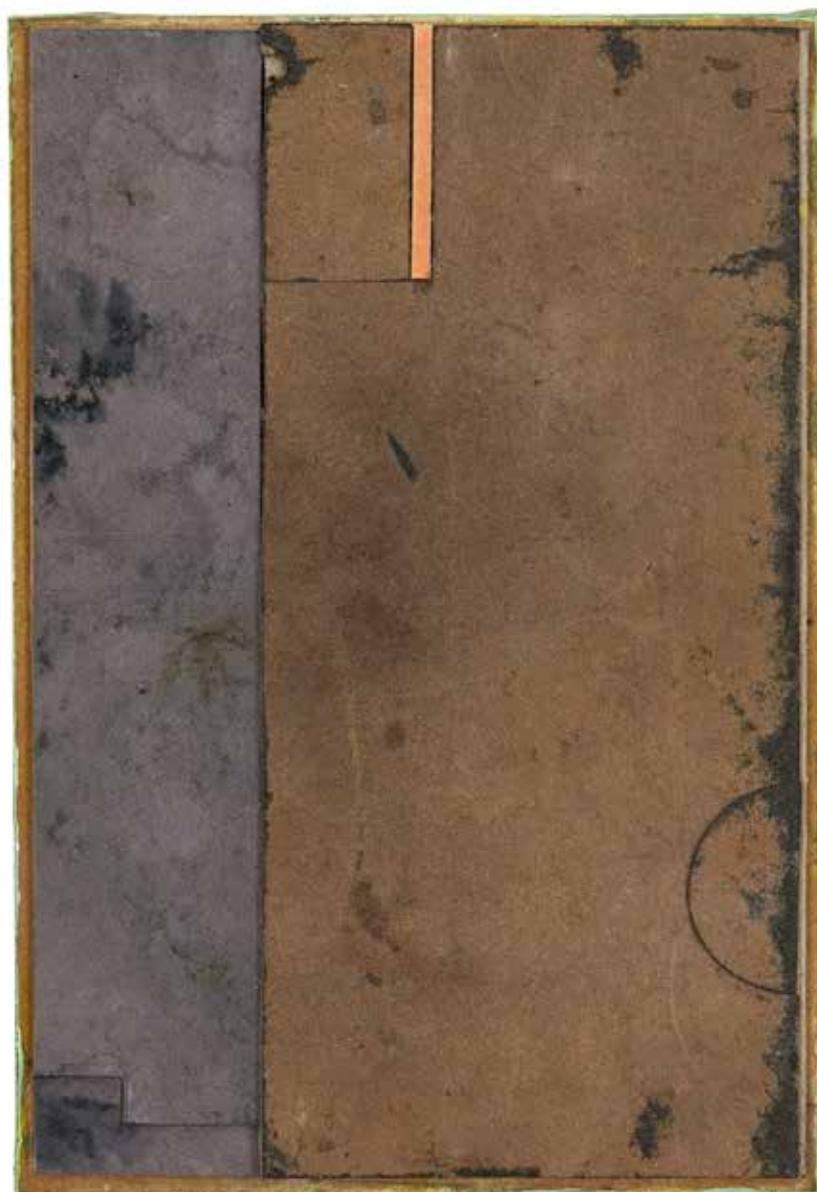
*Untitled*  
2005  
Graphite on paper  
8 × 10 in.



TESTBEDS  
2 & 1/16 X 6 & 1/16 X 7/16  
DM - 03 - 07 392



**TESTBEDS**



*TESTBED (F)*

2014

Found papers and materials, cardboard, plaster of paris, acrylic,  
watercolor, ink, and graphite

6 × 4<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

166



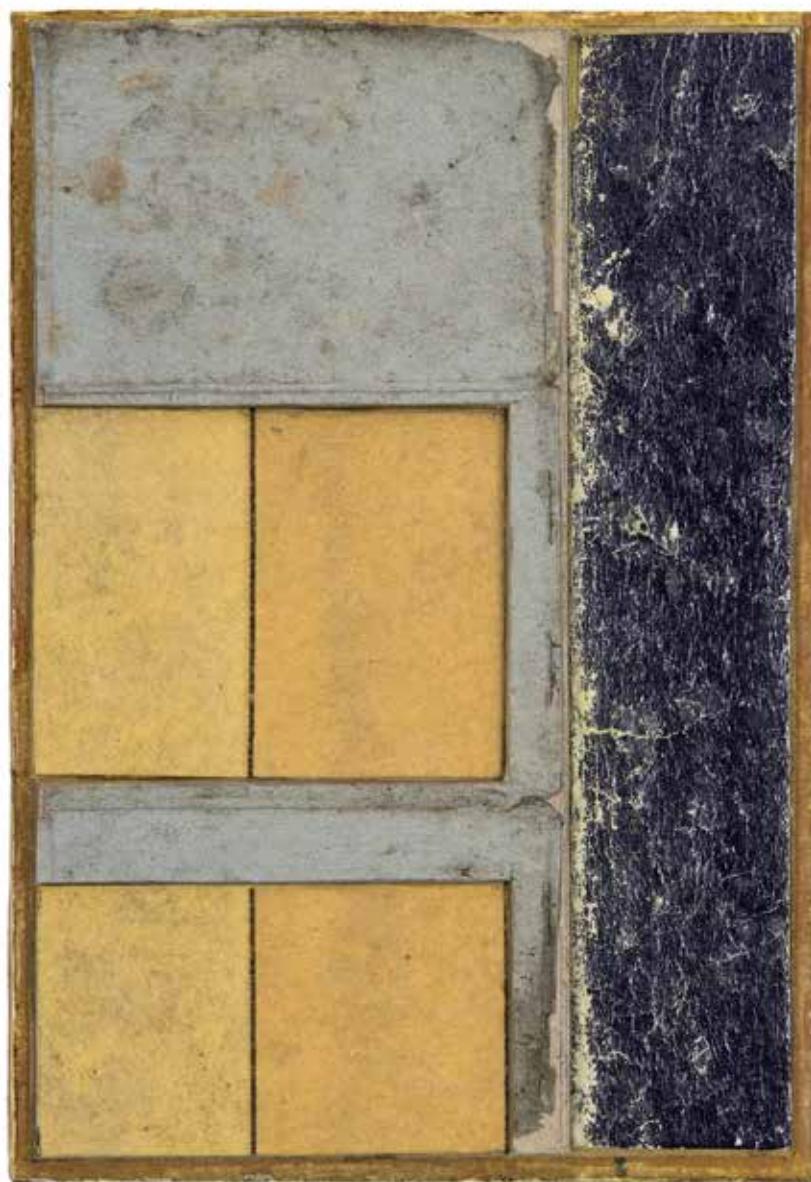
*TESTBED (J)*

2014

Found papers and materials, cardboard, plaster of paris, acrylic,  
watercolor, ink, and graphite

6 × 4½ in.

Private Collection



*TESTBED (L)*

2014

Found papers and materials, cardboard, plaster of paris, acrylic,  
watercolor, ink, and graphite

6 × 4½ in.



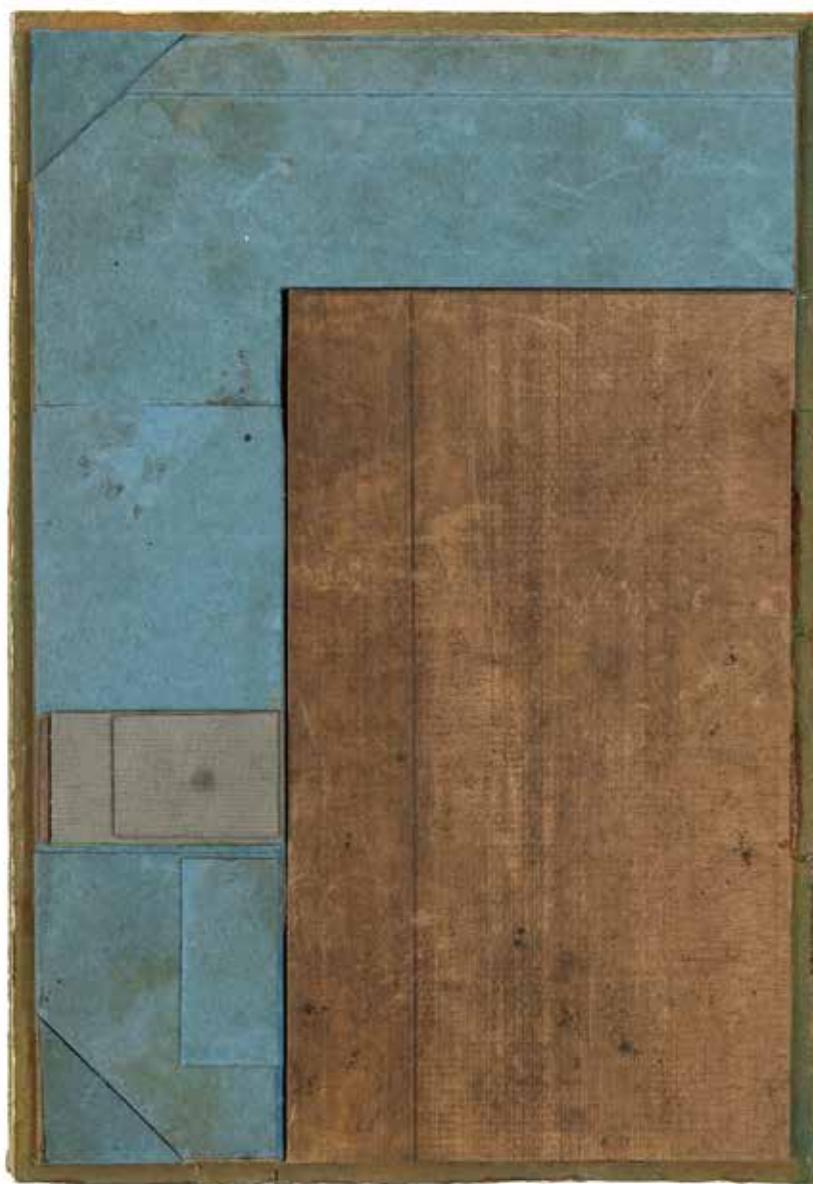
*TESTBED (V)*

2014

Found papers and materials, cardboard, plaster of paris, acrylic,  
watercolor, ink, and graphite

6 × 4½ in.

169



*TESTBED (U)*

2014

Found papers and materials, cardboard, plaster of paris, acrylic,  
watercolor, ink, and graphite

6 × 4½ in.

Collection of Belinda Kielland



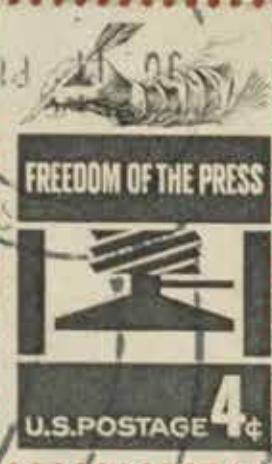
*TESTBED (W)*

2014

Found papers and materials, cardboard, plaster of paris, acrylic,  
watercolor, ink, and graphite

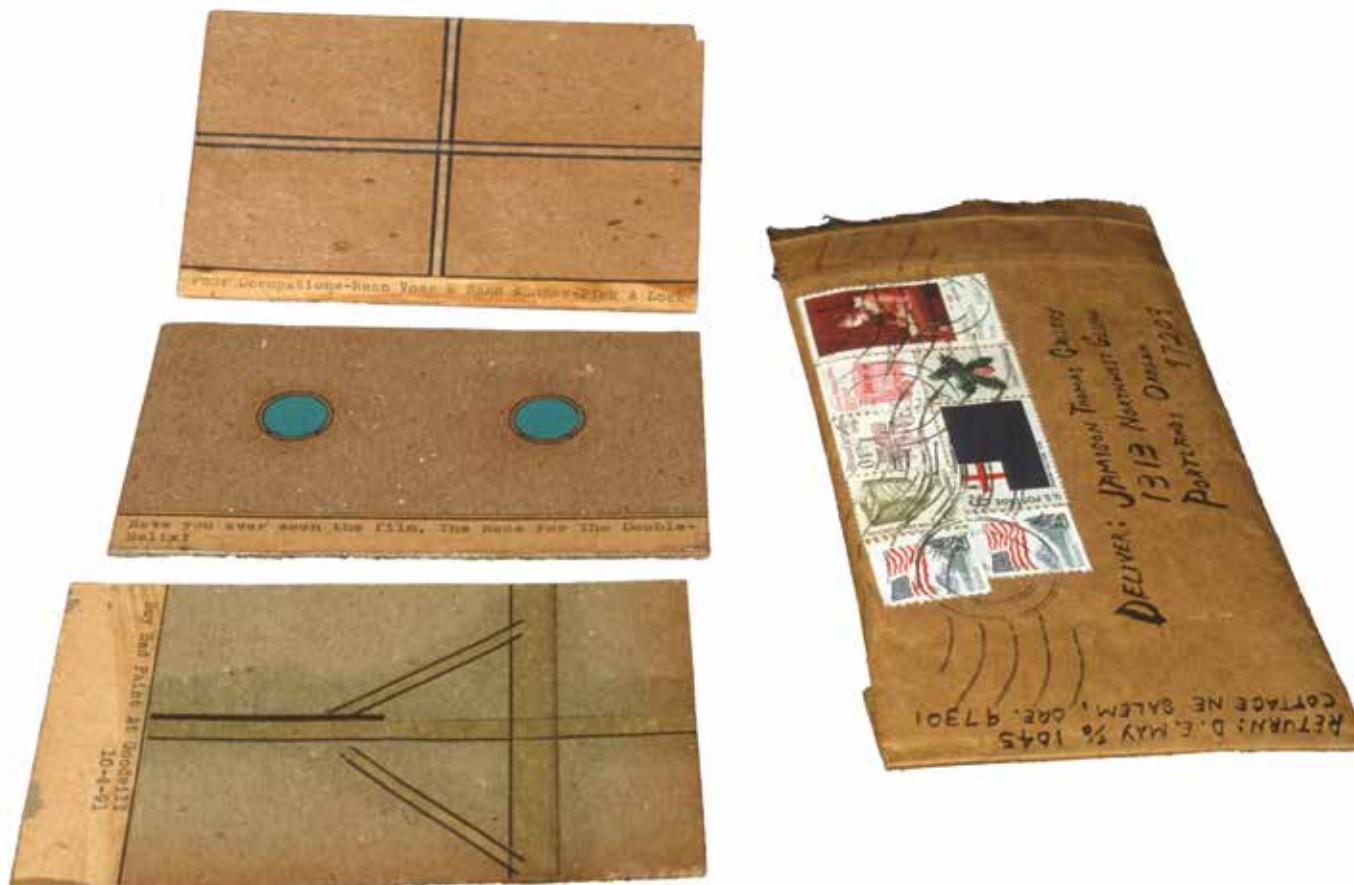
6 × 4½ in.

171



Deliver: Jamison Thomas Gallery  
1313 Northwest Glisan  
Portland, Oreg. 97209

MAIL ART



*Pick a Lock, Double Helix, and Goodwill*

1991

Mixed media

3½ × 5½ in. each

174





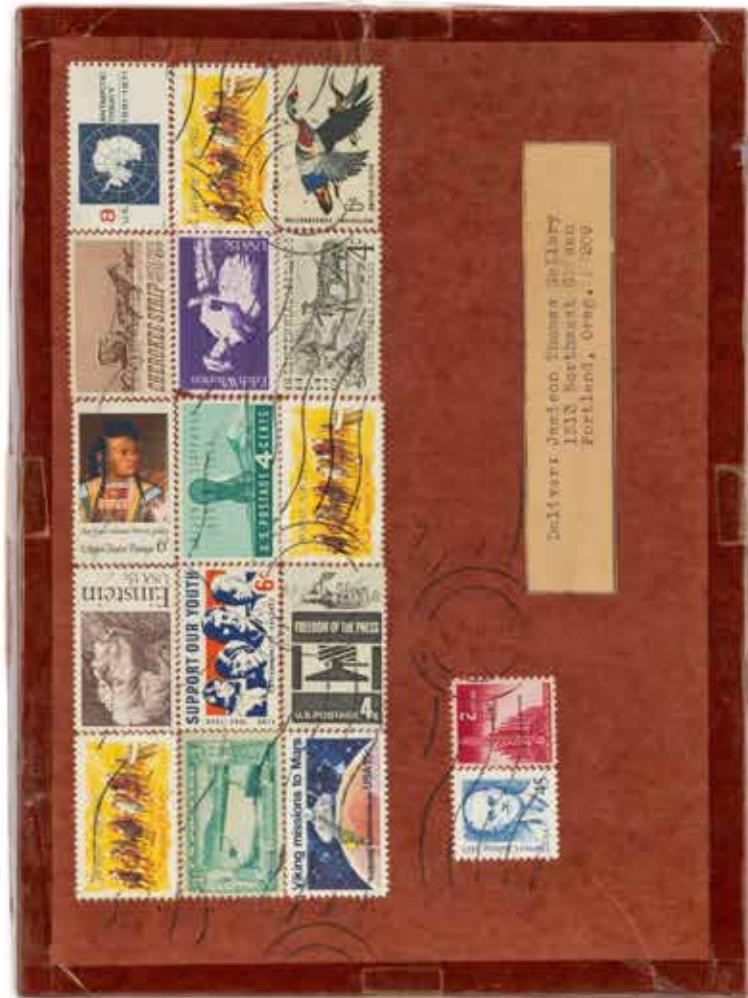
*Untitled #247*

1991

Ink, gouache, sewing pattern paper, and tape on cardboard

7 $\frac{1}{8}$  × 5 × 1 in.

Collection of James Defeo



*Untitled #243 (Renn Monnes)*

Date unknown

Ink, gouache, and found paper on cardboard

8¾ × 6¼ in.



*Untitled*  
1991  
Mixed media  
7¼ × 5¾ in.



*Untitled*  
1991  
Mixed media  
5¼ × 7¼ in.



*Untitled #224 (Lake District)*

1991

Ink, gouache, adhesive, and sewing pattern paper on cardboard  
mounted on black matte board

6 × 5¼ × 1 in.

Collection of William Ittmann Jr. and Andrew Kerr III

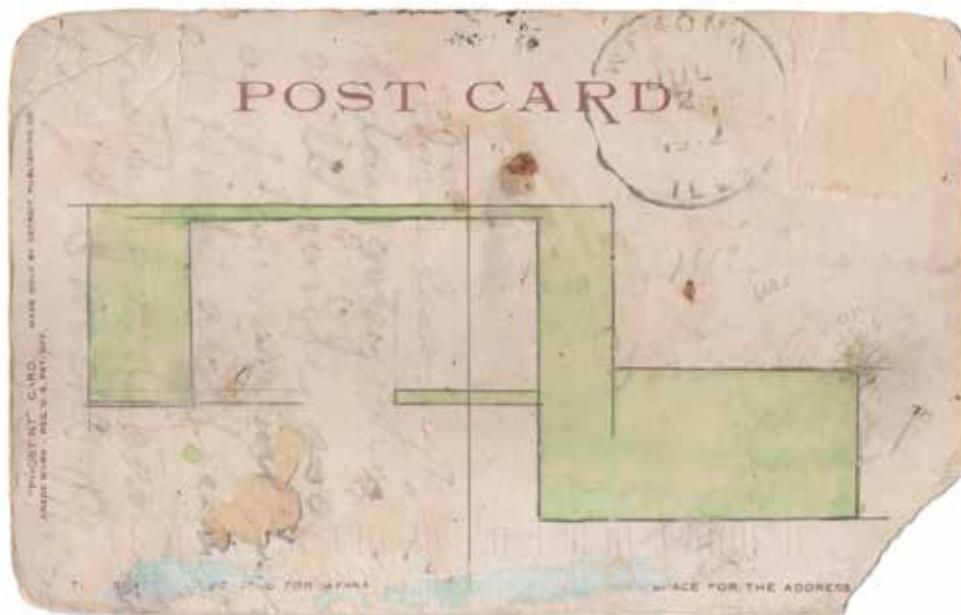


*Untitled*

Date unknown

Graphite, colored pencil, and ink on found postcard

3½ × 5¾ in.

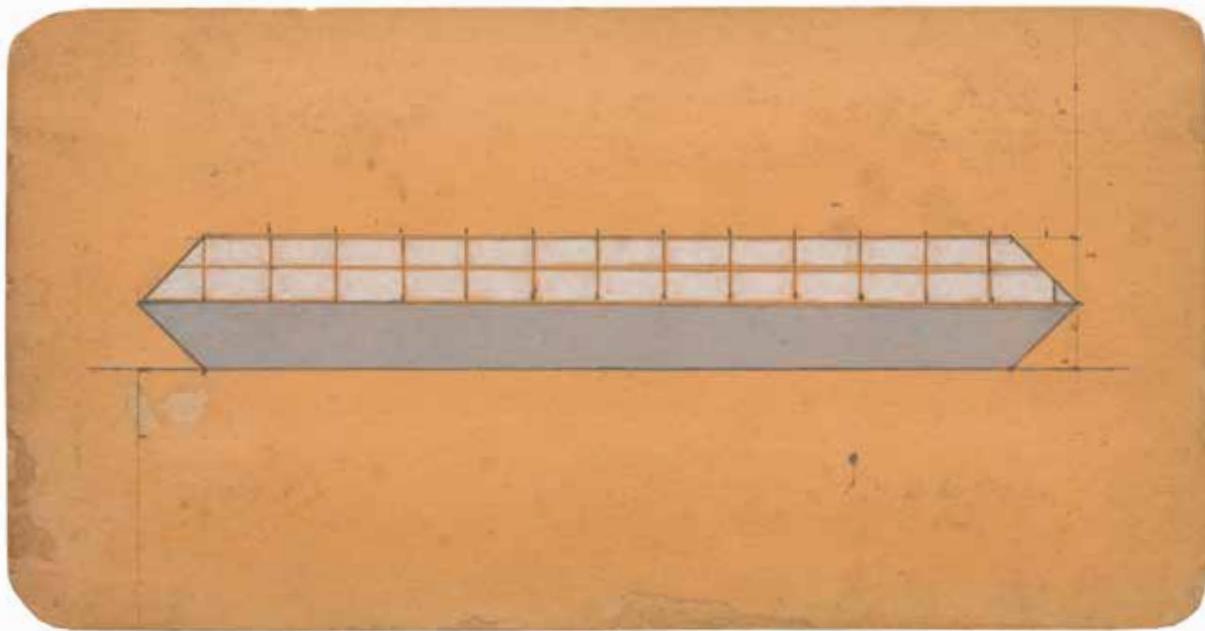


*Untitled*

2015

Graphite, colored pencil, and ink on found postcard

3½ × 5⅜ in.



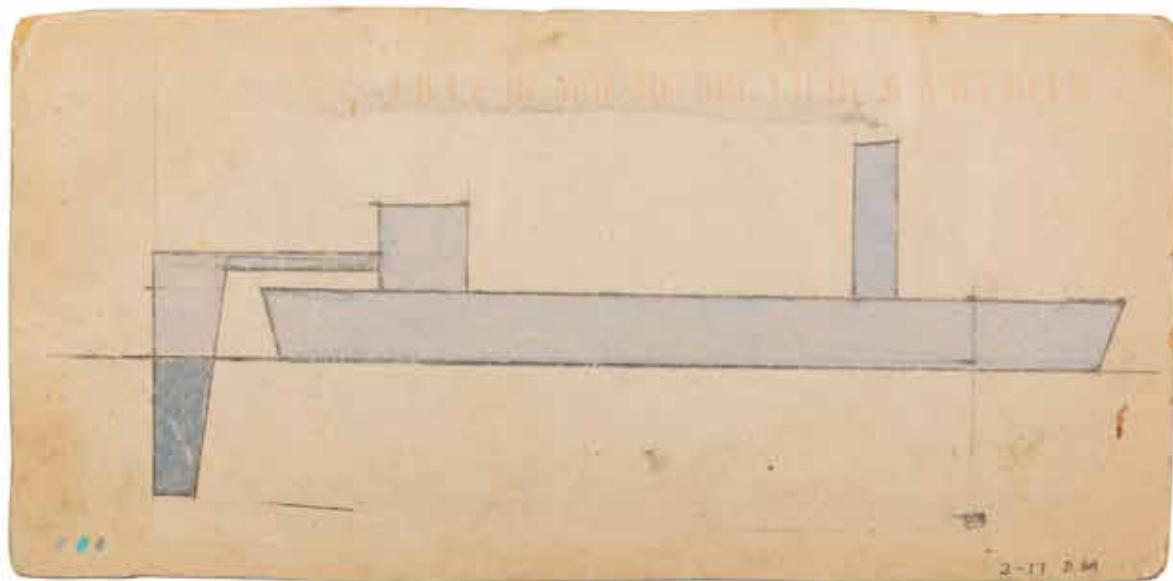
*Untitled (Boat Drawing)*

2016

Graphite, colored pencil, and ink on found stereograph card

3 $\frac{1}{16}$  × 6 $\frac{7}{8}$  in.

183

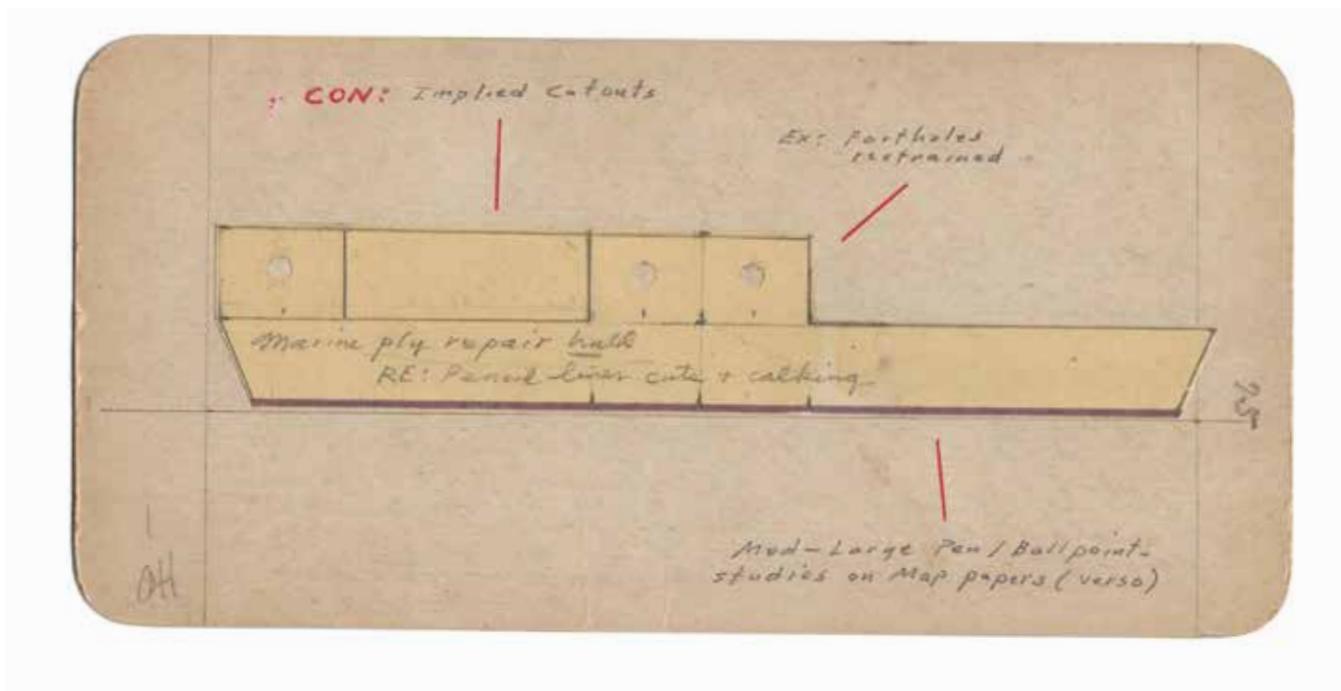


*Untitled (Boat Drawing)*

2017

Graphite, colored pencil, and ink on found stereograph card

3 $\frac{3}{8}$  × 6 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.



*Untitled (Boat Drawing)*

2018

Graphite, paper, and ink on found stereograph card

3 $\frac{3}{8}$  × 7 in.

185



**AND THEN...**



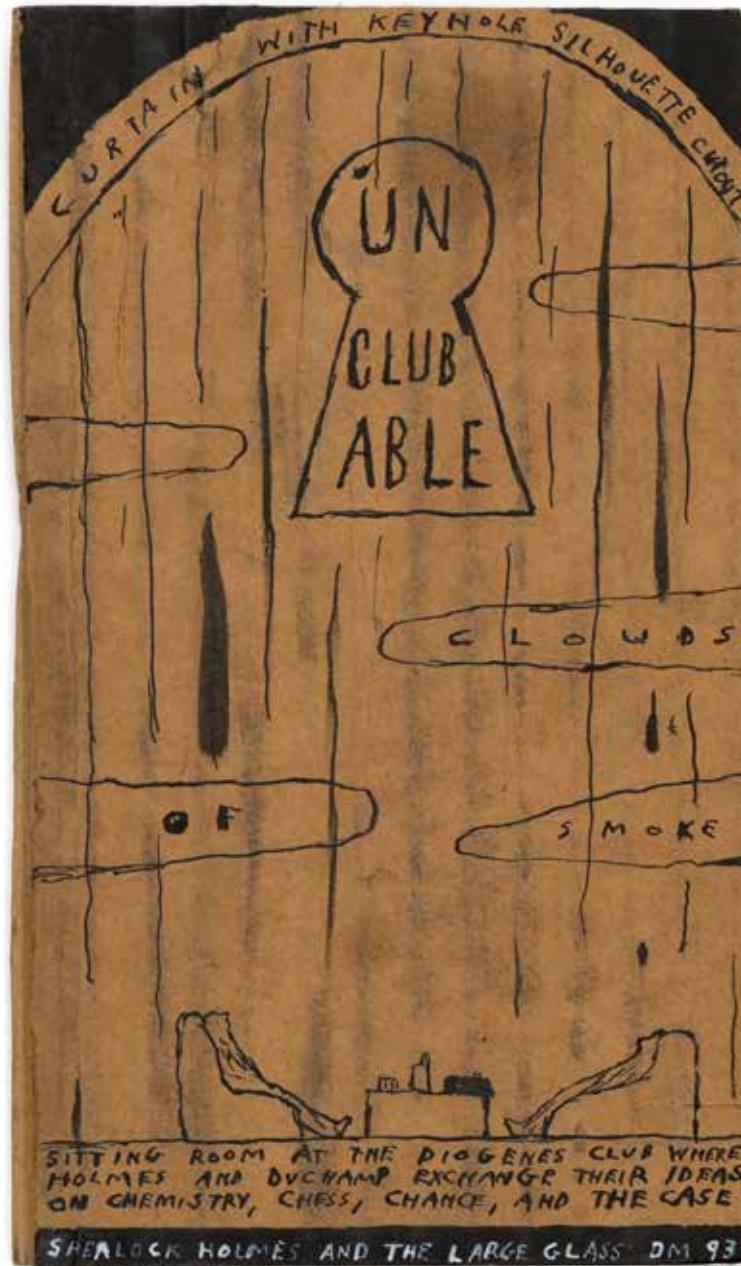
206 *Radio Cabin*

c. 1980s

Mixed media

4 × 3 in.

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette  
University, Gift of Kent Sumner and Claudia Cave, 2023.031.009



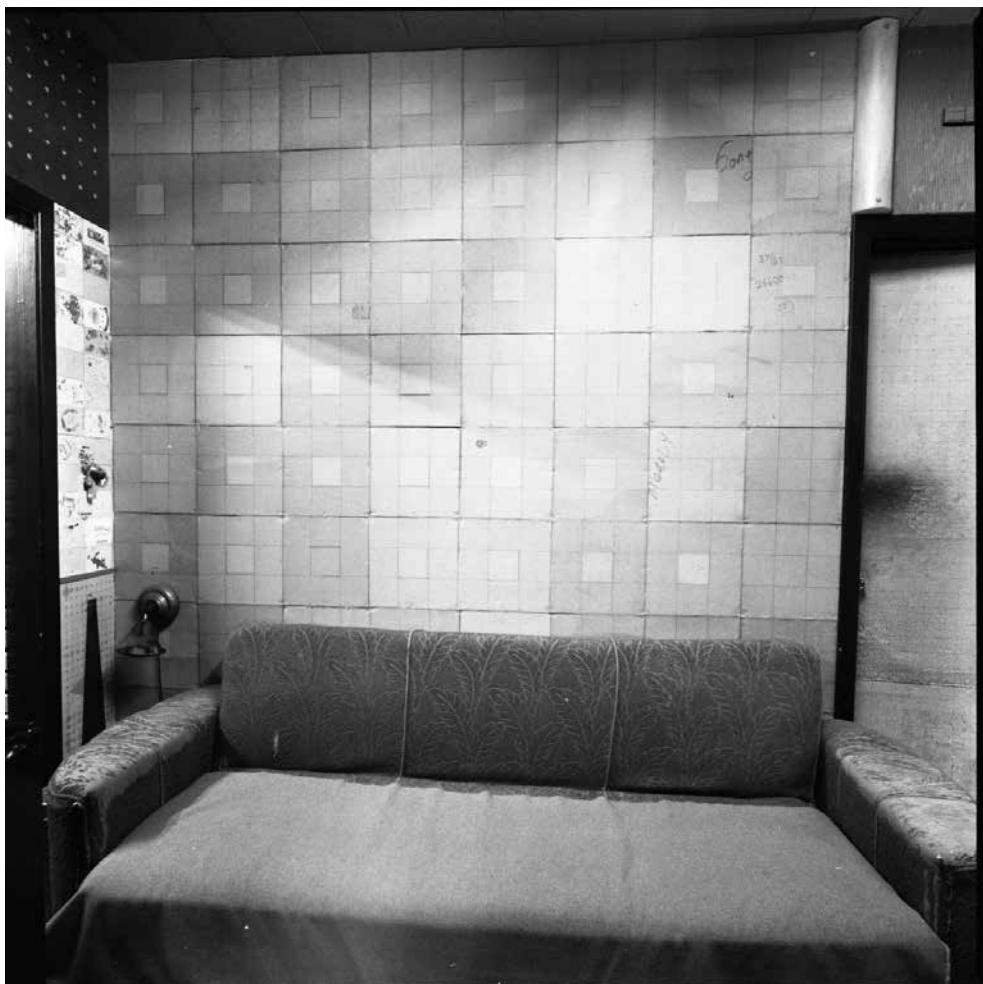
*Unclubable—Storyboard for “Sherlock Holmes and the Large Glass”*

1996

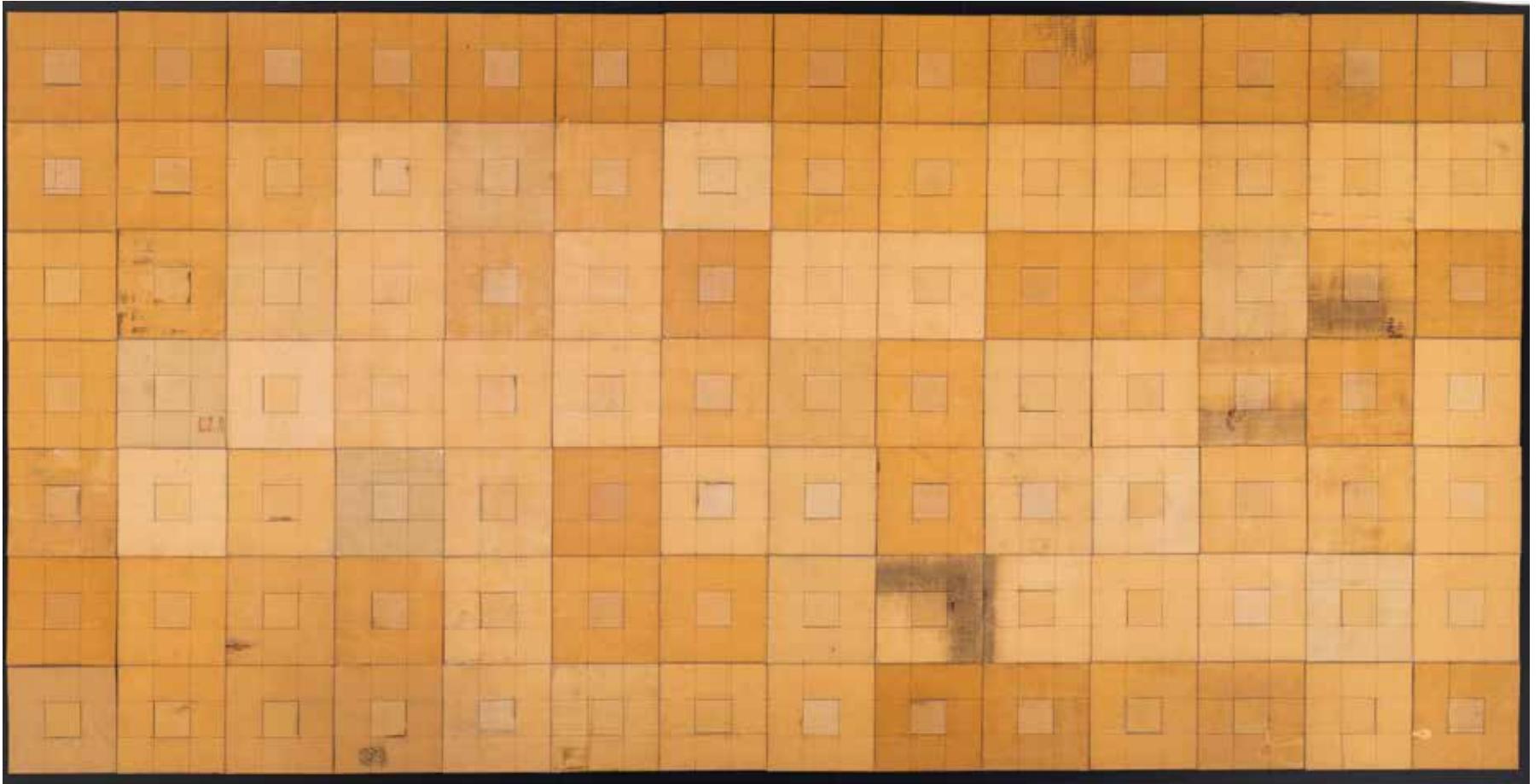
Ink on cardboard

7¼ × 4¼ in.

Collection of Francis and Kellie Lombardi



Inspired by an exhibition at PDX CONTEMPORARY called *Dark Cabinet*, long-time collector and friend, Carol Smith Larson, commissioned May to create an installation for her bedroom. May created a backdrop for her bed, a wall of cardboard tiles, titled after his gallery exhibition. Photo by Francis Lombardi.



*Dark Cabinet*

1998

Collage on cardboard

84 × 168½ in.

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette  
University, Gift of Carol Smith Larson, 2021.047.002



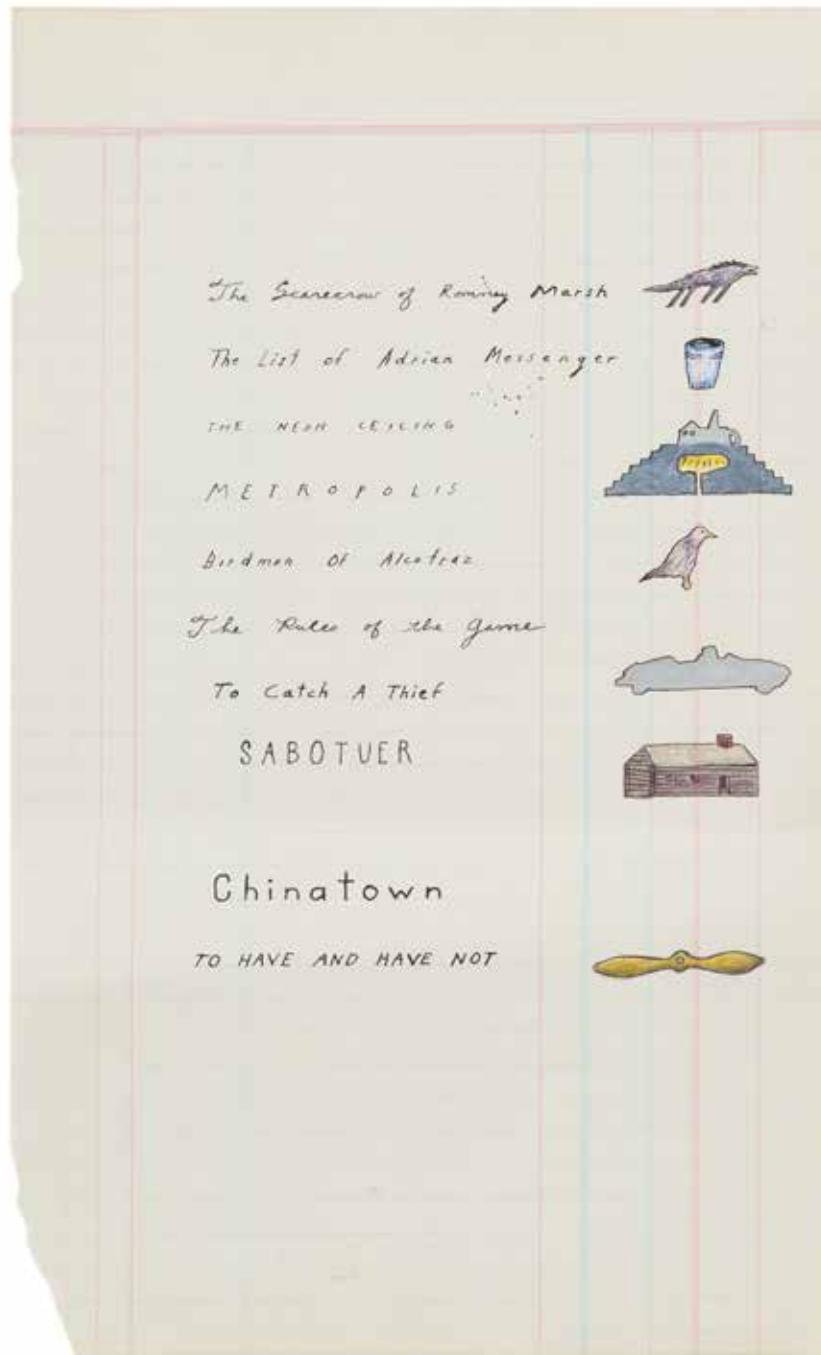
*Urbans 9-12 Grid of Sixteen*

2009

Mixed media

4¾ × 3½ × 1¼ in.

Collection of Bonnie Hull

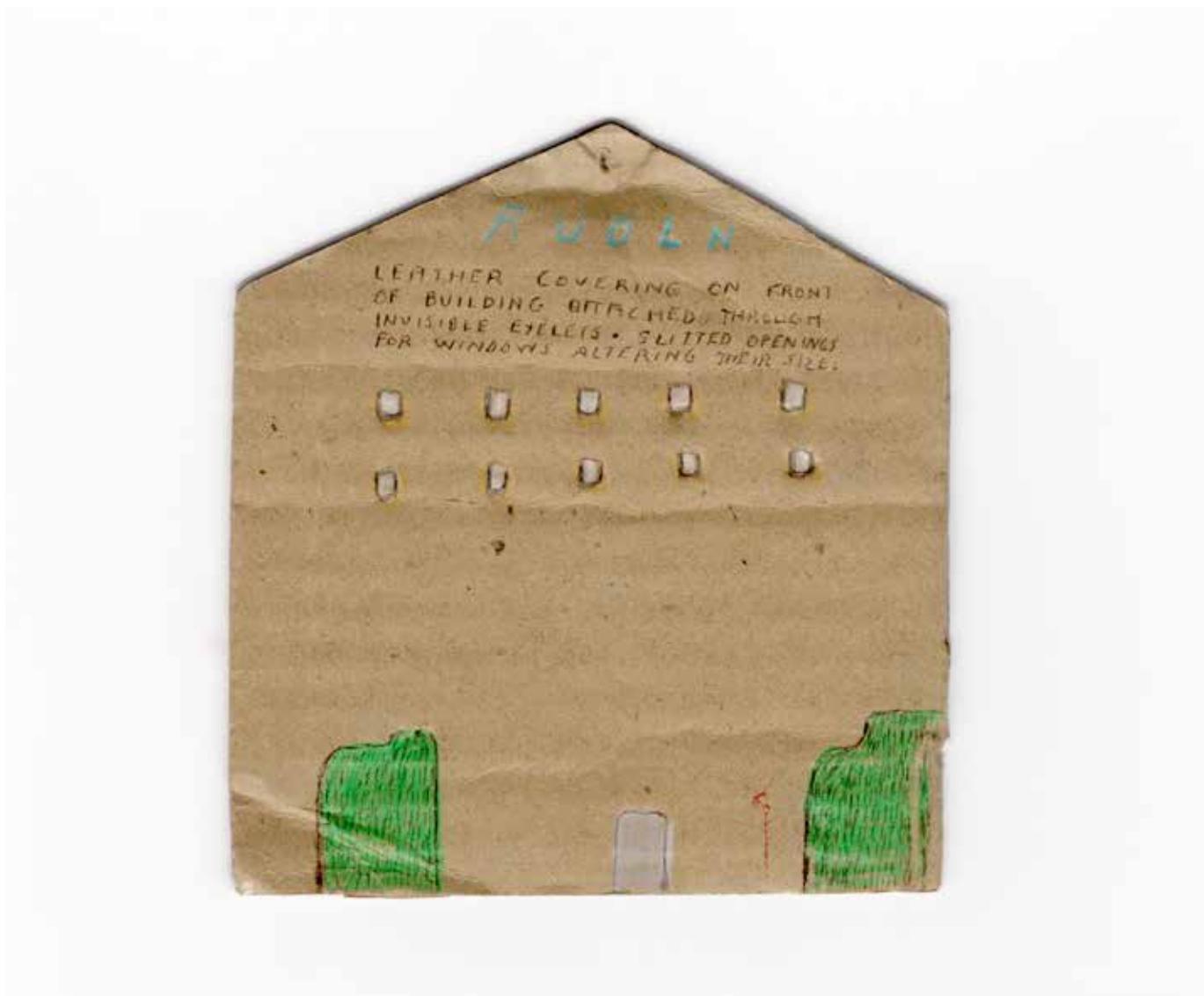


*Untitled (To Have and Have Not)*

Date unknown

Ink, colored pencil, and graphite on paper

11<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.



*Untitled (RUDLN)*

Date unknown

Graphite and colored pencil on cardboard

4 × 3¾ in.



*Untitled #371*

1993

Ink on cardboard

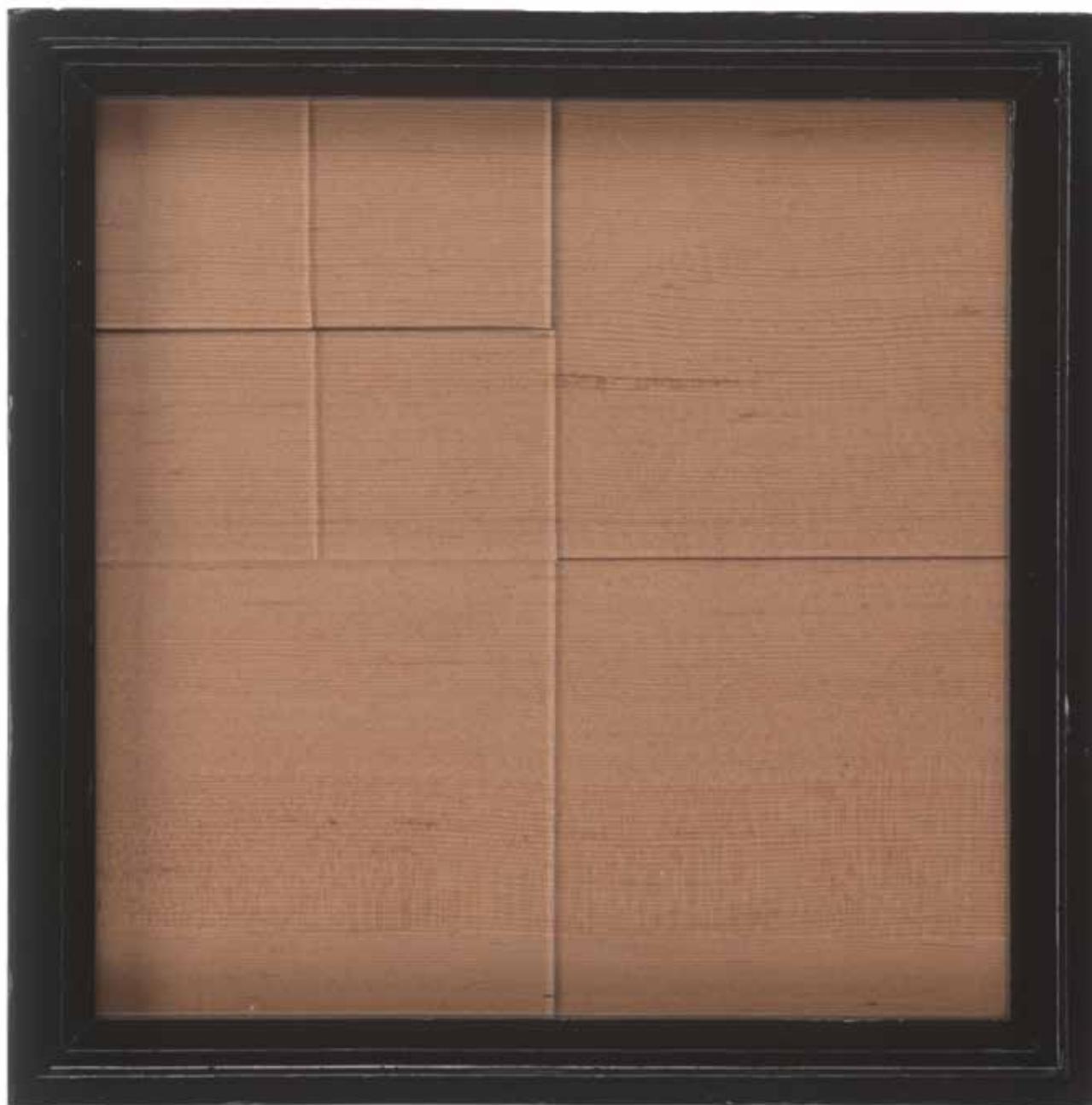
4 × 5½ in.

Collection of John and Karen Hoke

195



*Untitled*  
1999  
Ink on cardboard  
8½ × 7½ in.



*Untitled*

2002

Glass and wood

8½ × 8½ in.

197



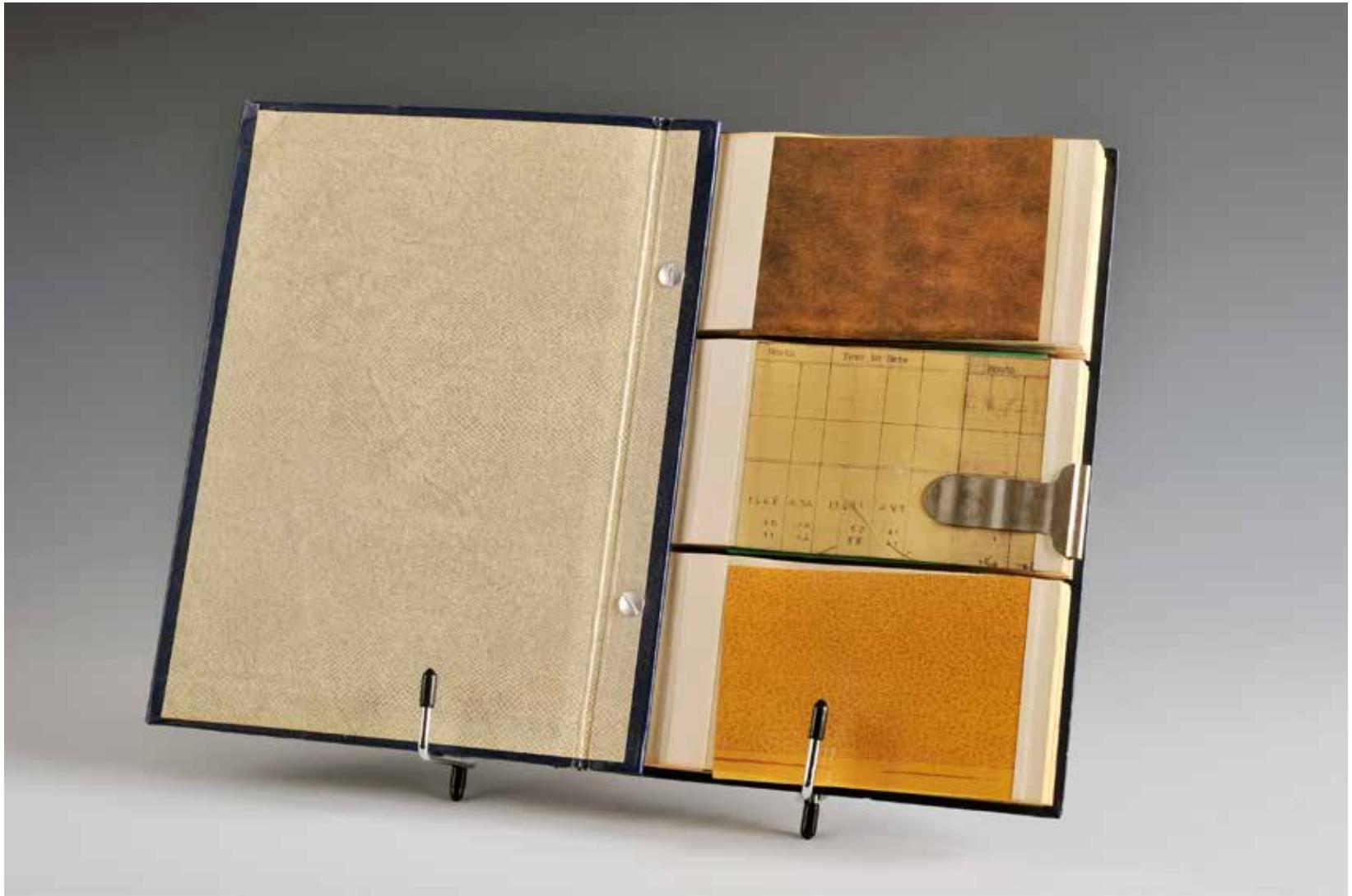
*Sample Book*

2015

Mixed media

6 $\frac{7}{8}$  × 5 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette  
University, Gift of Jane Beebe, 2015.054.001



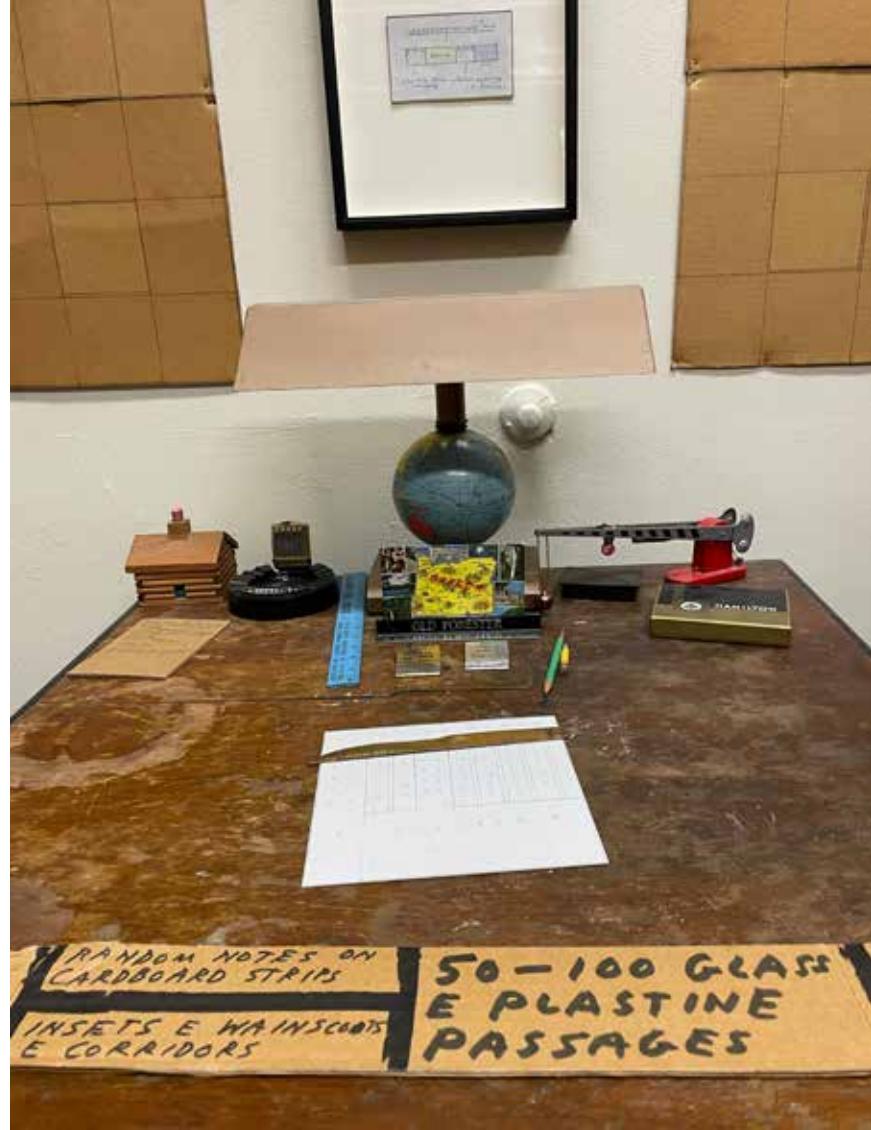
*Notebook*

2011

Graphite and colored pencil on paper

10¼ × 7 in.

Collection of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette  
University, Maribeth Collins Art Acquisition Fund, 2011.017



# A POSTSCRIPT FROM THE REGIONAIRES CLUB

LINDA TESNER

SOON AFTER D. E. MAY RECEIVED THE HALLIE FORD FELLOWSHIP in 2013, he was able to rent a modest space on the second floor of an office building at 180 Commercial Street NE in downtown Salem. As May's career evolved and flourished, he needed a more professional and public environment in which to show his artwork. This is where he met potential collectors and curators. He called the space Smalls.

After May died on February 27, 2019, his home and workroom—the Regionaires Club—remained intact, as if the artist had just stepped away from his tasks. The careful construction of May's residence had become, for many, a three-dimensional simulacrum of May's approach to his life and to his art. The idea of deconstructing May's residence seemed too poignant, like razing a magnum opus by May that was decades in the making. The future of the Regionaires Club was uncertain—until nearly four years later when, on February 22, 2023, the flat roof of the building sustained a clogged drain during a heavy rainstorm. May's dear friend Bryan Null and his son, Joshua Null, realized that water was rapidly encroaching upon May's cardboard desk and cubbies. Under duress, the Null men quickly photographed the Regionaires Club in detail, dismantled it, then transferred the components into a room at Smalls. In that initial effort to save the Regionaires Club, the Nulls worked through the night, leaving Smalls at about six in the morning to find Salem blanketed in snow. It eventually took another two months to painstakingly reconstruct the Regionaires Club as accurately as possible.

Smalls remains something of a memorial to May, but it is equally a work of art made by May's hand. His cardboard-constructed desk and shelves, supplies, collections, archives, and carefully organized lifetime of correspondence exist as May himself had arranged them. Smalls is an installation that preserves May's considerable reference material and documents his creative process. It is intended that Smalls will remain intact for the foreseeable future, available to be experienced by appointment.



## D. E. MAY

1952–2019 Salem, Oregon

## EDUCATION

1971–76 Studied under Larry Stobie at the Oregon College of Education, Monmouth, Oregon

## SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2026 *D. E. May: Postcards from Islandsalem*, Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, Oregon; curated by Linda Tesner
- 2023 *From the Archives: Notes and Plans*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2022 *D. E. May Archive Project*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2019 *Dan May: Artworks by D. E. May*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2015 *No Specific Region*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2014 *Half Distance*, LAXART, Los Angeles
- 2013 *Memory of Line: Grids, Templates and Miniatures*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon  
VOLTA NY, New York, with PDX CONTEMPORARY ART
- 2010 *The Template Files*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2009 *Black Page*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2008 *The Artist as Archivist*, Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, Oregon; curated by Aleesa Pitchamarn Alexander
- 2007 *Testbeds*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2006 *drawing(s): 40+ artists/200 works: A 25th Anniversary Exhibition*, Art Gym, Marylhurst University, Marylhurst, Oregon
- 2005 *template – grid – inset*, Pavel Zoubok Gallery, New York
- 2004 *Wood*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2003 *D. E. May: The Occupations*, Art Gym, Marylhurst University, Marylhurst, Oregon; curated by Terri Hopkins  
*Alloys and the Role of Water*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2001 *Reservoir District*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2000 *D. E. May: The Role of Water*, Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, Oregon; curated by Roger Hull

- 1999 *Small Timber, the Templates*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon  
*Drawing Space*, Suyama Space, Seattle
- 1998 *Dark Cabinet*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 1997 *Small Timber*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 1994 *Reservoir District*, Jamison Thomas Gallery, Portland, Oregon
- 1993 *Recent Work*, Jamison Thomas Gallery, Portland, Oregon
- 1992 *New Works*, Jamison Thomas Gallery, Portland, Oregon
- 1990 *D. E. May, Paintings and Constructions*, Jamison Thomas Gallery, Portland, Oregon
- 1985 *Floor Plans*, The Yellow Front, Salem, Oregon
- 1984 *The Four Berlins*, The Yellow Front, Salem, Oregon  
*Gstaad—Haunts of the Very Rich*, The Yellow Front, Salem, Oregon
- 1982 *Hide Outs*, Hallie Brown Ford Gallery, Salem, Oregon
- 1979 *The Lost Weekend*, The Big Sleep Gallery, Salem, Oregon  
*Nightlights and Paperweights*, The Big Sleep Gallery, Salem, Oregon
- 1978 Willamette University, Salem, Oregon  
*Expeditions*, The Big Sleep Gallery, Salem, Oregon  
*Handline*, The Big Sleep Gallery, Salem, Oregon
- 1977 *Fort Ord Logic*, The Big Sleep Gallery, Salem, Oregon
- 1976 Willamette University, Salem, Oregon
- 2022 *Indie Folk: New Art and Sounds from the Pacific Northwest*, Schneider Museum of Art, Southern Oregon University, Ashland, Oregon; curated by Melissa E. Feldman
- Indie Folk: New Art and Sounds from the Pacific Northwest*, Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington; curated by Melissa E. Feldman
- 2021 *Time in Place: Northwest Art from the Permanent Collection*, Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, Oregon; curated by Jonathan Bucci
- Walking*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- The Color of Breathlessness*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- Megan Murphy, D. E. May, Jenene Nagy*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2020 *River*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon  
*Pivot: Drawings*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- Indie Folk: New Art and Sounds from the Pacific Northwest*, Adams and Ollman, Portland, Oregon; curated by Melissa E. Feldman
- 2019 *Uses of History*, studio e gallery, Seattle
- 2018 *Along the Edge*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2017 *Dislocation*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2016 *I Want to Do to You What Spring Does to the Cherry Trees*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon  
*A Stand of Pine in a Tilled Field: 21 Years at PDX*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon

#### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 *Indie Folk: New Art and Sounds from the Pacific Northwest*, Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, Oregon; curated by Melissa E. Feldman
- 2023 *Out of Salem: D. E. May & Friends*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon  
*You belong among the wildflowers*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon  
*Indie Folk: New Art and Sounds from the Pacific Northwest*, Museum of Craft and Design, San Francisco; curated by Melissa E. Feldman
- 2014 *We Tell Ourselves Stories in Order to Live*, traveled to Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon; Sheppard Contemporary, University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada; Mary Elizabeth Dee Shaw Gallery, Weber State University, Ogden, Utah; Pendleton Center for the Arts, Pendleton, Oregon  
*PORTLAND2014: A Biennial of Contemporary Art*, Disjecta, Portland, Oregon
- 2011 Pulse Miami, Miami, with PDX CONTEMPORARY ART

- 2010 *Northwest Artists Draw*, Sun Valley Center for the Arts, Sun Valley, Idaho
- 2008 *A Gather of Gifts: Relationships That Build Our Collections*, University of Alaska Museum of the North, Fairbanks, Alaska
- 2008 *Kinda Like a Buffet*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2007 *meta*, Miller Fine Arts Center, Linfield College, McMinnville, Oregon; curated by T. J. Norris
- 2007 *Mixed Company*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2006 *Recycled Art*, Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, Oregon; curated by John Olbrantz
- 2005 *drawing(s): A 25th Anniversary Exhibition*, Art Gym, Marylhurst University, Marylhurst, Oregon
- 2004 *Next*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 2004 *Group Exhibit*, Ute Barth, Zurich, Switzerland
- 2001 *Collecting Words on and off the Page*, Gallery 114, Portland, Oregon; curated by Nancy Palmer
- 2001 *Oregon Biennial*, Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon; juried by Bruce Guenther
- 2000 *Abstracts on Paper and Mixed Media*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 1998 *Abstract Geometric Show*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 1997 *Gallery Artists*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 1996 *Drawings . . . An Annual Bi-Coastal Invitational*, Meyerson & Nowinski, Seattle, Washington
- 1996 *Bellevue Art Museum Pacific Northwest Annual*, Bellevue Art Museum, Bellevue, Washington; curated by Kathryn Kanjo
- 1996 *Square Painting / Plane Painting*, Center on Contemporary Art, Seattle
- 1996 *Willamette Valley Juried Exhibition*, Corvallis Art Center, Corvallis, Oregon
- 1996 *Gone but Not Forgiven*, Michigan Gallery, Detroit
- 1996 *Fire and Ash*, PDX CONTEMPORARY ART, Portland, Oregon
- 1996 *The Tool Show*, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Portland, Oregon
- 1995 *Oregon Biennial*, Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon; juried by William Fagely
- 1994 *Fifteen Years*, Jamison Thomas Gallery, Portland, Oregon
- 1994 *The Dress as Form and Symbol*, Jamison Thomas Gallery, Portland, Oregon
- 1994 *Only the Shadow Knows: Revelations from the Unconscious*, Art Access Gallery, Salt Lake City, Utah
- 1993 *Recycling with Imagination: Art from Detritus*, Metro Regional Center, Portland, Oregon
- 1993 *Public Encounters*, Bush Barn Art Center, Salem, Oregon
- 1993 *Oregon Biennial*, Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon; juried by Kristy Edmunds and John Weber
- 1992 *Sign of the Cross*, Jamison Thomas Gallery, Portland, Oregon
- 1992 *On a Small Scale*, Susan Cummins Gallery, Mill Valley, California
- 1991 *Spirit of the West: A Celebration of the Arts*, West One Bank, traveled to venues in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho; curated by Kristin M. Poole
- 1991 *Dreams and Shields: Spiritual Dimensions in Contemporary Art*, Salt Lake Art Center, Salt Lake City, Utah; curated by Frank McEntire
- 1991 *Intimate Relations*, Jamison Thomas Gallery, New York
- 1989 *Sum of the Parts*, Jamison Thomas Gallery, New York
- 1989 *Artquake*, Portland, Oregon; juried by Mary Beebe
- 1989 *Small Works*, Jamison Thomas Gallery, Portland, Oregon

#### GRANTS AND AWARDS

- 2013 Ford Family Foundation, Hallie Ford Visual Arts Fellowship
- 2008 Contemporary Northwest Art Awards finalist, Portland Art Museum
- 1996 Juror's Award, Willamette Valley Juried Exhibition, Mary Ann Deffenbaugh, Juror
- 1995 Juror's Award, Oregon Biennial, William A. Fagaly, Juror
- 1992 Art Matters Grant

## SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York  
ArtColl Trust, Seattle, Washington  
Blanton Museum of Art, University of Texas, Austin, Texas  
Boise Art Museum, Idaho  
City of Portland Portable Works, Oregon  
Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, Salem, Oregon  
Oregon Arts Commission, Salem, Oregon  
Portland Art Museum, Oregon  
Seattle Art Museum, Washington  
Tacoma Art Museum, Washington  
University of Alaska Museum of the North, Fairbanks, Alaska

## SELECTED PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

Martin Brest, Los Angeles  
Blake Byrne, Los Angeles  
Brad Cloepfil, Portland, Oregon  
James Defeo, Astoria, Oregon  
Isabelle Dervaux, New York  
Beth Rudin DeWoody, New York  
Sylvia Engelman, Grand Blanc, Michigan  
Margaret Hargraves, New York  
Sandy Harthorn, Boise, Idaho  
John Hoke, Portland, Oregon  
William Ittmann, Jr. and Andrew Kerr III, Cannon Beach, Oregon  
Dennis Katayama, Berkeley, California  
Tim Kerr, Portland, Oregon  
Werner Kramarsky, New York  
Dorothy Lemelson, Lake Tahoe, Nevada  
Richard Levy, Albuquerque, New Mexico  
David Lewis, Seattle  
Kevin Longe, Dover, New Hampshire  
Nancy Lorenz and Doug Schwalbe, New York  
Marilyn Murdoch, Portland, Oregon  
Megan Murphy, Portland, Oregon  
William and Agnes Peelle, West Hartford, Connecticut  
Linda Shostak, Sausalito, California  
Carol Smith-Larson, Portland, Oregon  
Driek Zirinsky, Boise, Idaho

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- 2026 Linda Tesner. *The Art of D. E. May*. Salem, Oregon: Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, 2026.
- 2024 David Bates. "Indie Folk' at the Hallie Ford Museum of Art: Rethinking the Line Between Fine Art and Craft, with a Northwest Twist." *Oregon ArtsWatch*, November 26, 2024.  
"Indie Folk: New Art and Sounds from the Pacific Northwest." *Brushstrokes*, Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, vol. 27, no. 2 (July–Dec. 2024).
- 2023 Georgina Ruff. "Fertile Ground: Pendleton Center for the Arts." *Oregon ArtsWatch*, September 11, 2023.  
Briana Miller. "Winter Visual Arts Showcase Contemporary Visions, Interactive Opportunities." *Oregonian*, January 5, 2023.  
Abigail Susik. "From Regional Art History to the Regionaires Club: Roger Hull, Bonnie Hull, and D. E. May," in Ricardo DeMambro Santos and John Olbrantz, eds., *Unfolding Forms: Studies in Honor of Roger Hull*, 40–49. Salem, Oregon: Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University, 2023.
- 2022 Abigail Susik. "D. E. May and the Gift of Unknowable Intimacy." *drain magazine, (un)built* 18, no. 1 (2022).  
Briana Miller. "10 Shows in Portland Area Museums and Galleries to Stretch the Mind and Eyes in 2022." *Oregonian*, January 11, 2022.
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Page 1: D. E. May photographed at the Regionaires Club. Photo by Francis Lombardi.

Frontispiece: D. E. May's studio at the Regionaires Club. Photo by Francis Lombardi, 2021.

Page 4: D. E. May's worktable at the Regionaires Club. Photo by Francis Lombardi, 2021.

Page 34: D. E. May. *Untitled* (detail), 1996. Mixed media, 6 × 4½ in.

Page 90: D. E. May. *Untitled* (detail), date unknown. Colored pencil and ink on found ledger paper, 11 × 18¾ in.

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Page 200: Photos by Phil Kovacevich, 2025.

Page 202: Photo by William Bragg, 2008.

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