

ILLUSTRASIA

BY BRENT STURLAUGSON

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**ILLUSTRASIA**

A THESIS

Presented to the Department of Architecture  
And the Honors College of the University of Oregon

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of  
Bachelor of Architecture

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An Abstract of the Thesis of  
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Title: **ILLUSTRASIA**

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor Lisa Freinkel

Within the confines of static, two-dimensional representation, sensory tools are limited to visual cues, thus demanding the maximum output of symbols. Combining words and images taps multiple perception levels in the audience, creating a greater chance for perspicuity of a concept. Illustrasia is an exploration in graphic communication, employing words and images in sequential panoramas that seek to expand the confines of the chosen format. The communication of anonymous specificities serves as the method for transposing experience through printed media. Insinuations of time and place vaguely ground the work, but by avoiding labels to culture, time, and geography, a wider identification may be achieved.

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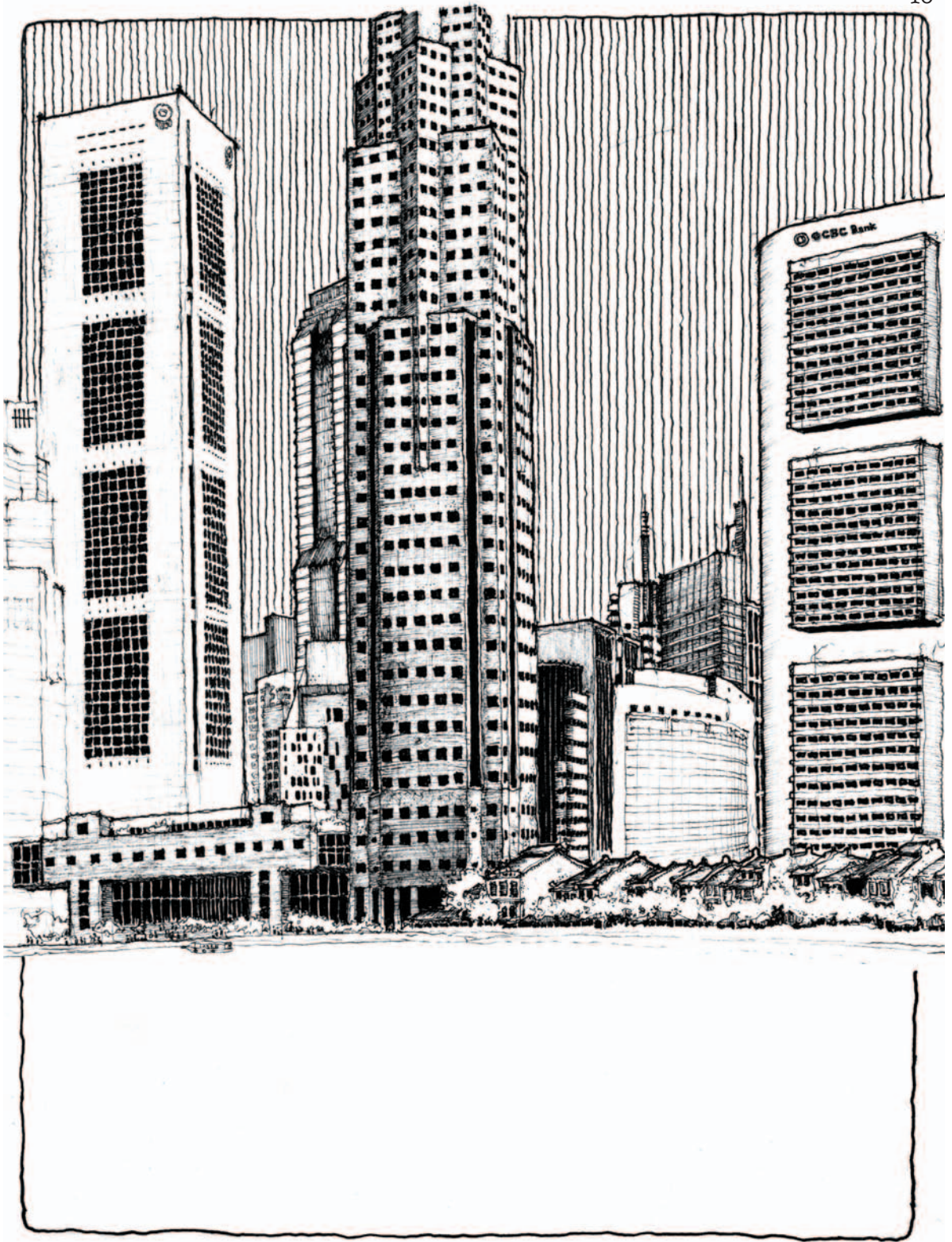
Dwelling in a singular setting for an extended period allows the environment to resume its natural tendencies as if unobserved. At this point, an unfiltered awareness emerges, a compelling state of authenticity that propelled a twelve month excursion through South-east Asia. For the duration of the journey, illustration served as the agent for understanding the particulars of place, utilizing a minimal palette of ink and paper as means of expression. Adhering to a disciplined system of documentation enabled parallels to be drawn between seemingly disparate events through a consistent treatment of media.

The resulting words and images exist in vacuity of specific reference as to gain wider application. The writing includes no definitive subject, and the drawings incorporate no identifiable figures. Such ambiguities are of non-exclusive nature, accommodating an audience of diverse experience. In the absence of subjectivity, the viewer is encouraged to take possession of the material and assume responsibility for the resulting discoveries. This is not a vehicle for vicariate experience; it is an experience in itself. The material acts merely a prompt to which the viewer is encouraged to respond. Please respond accordingly.

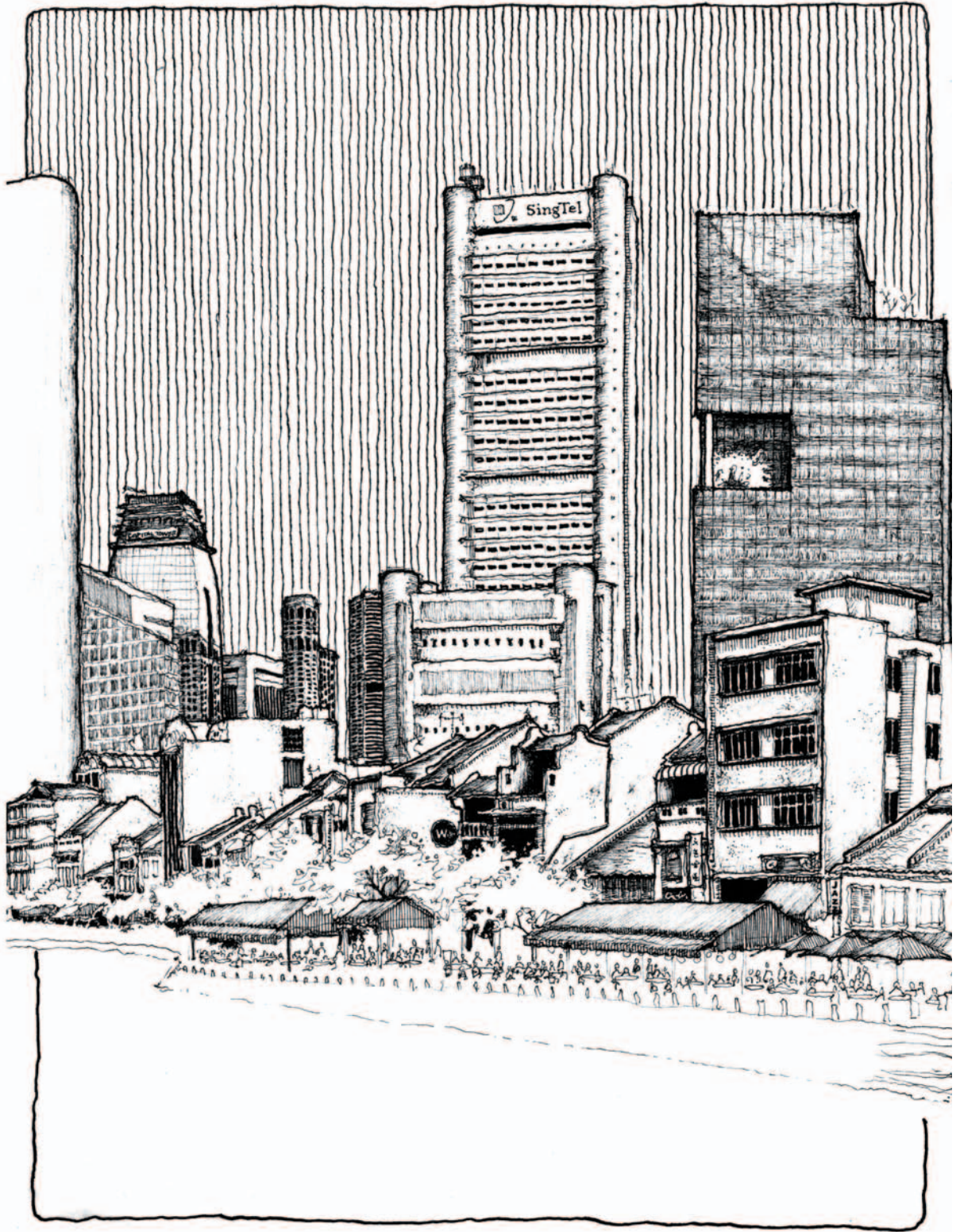
Complimentary ingredients creating synergistic soup



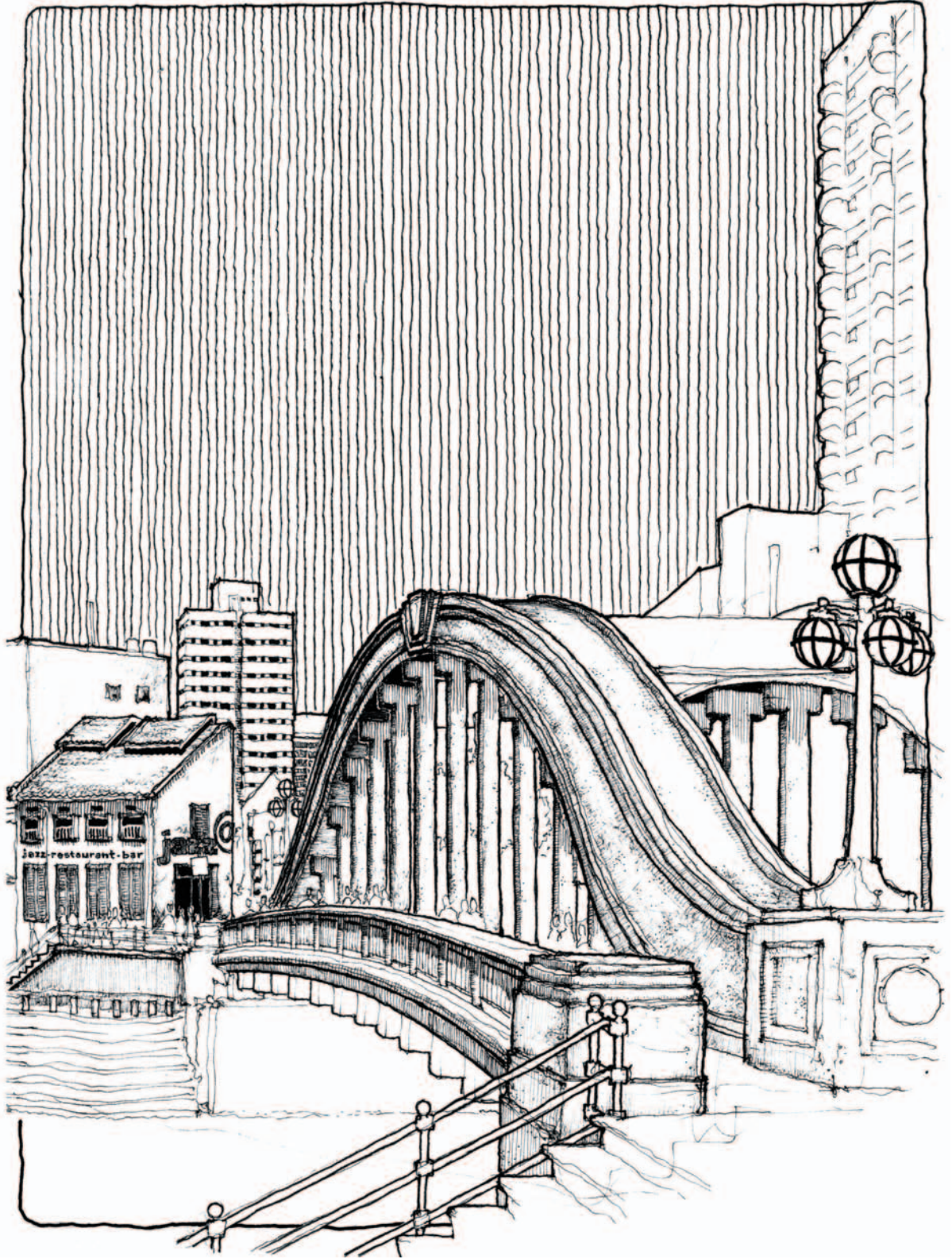








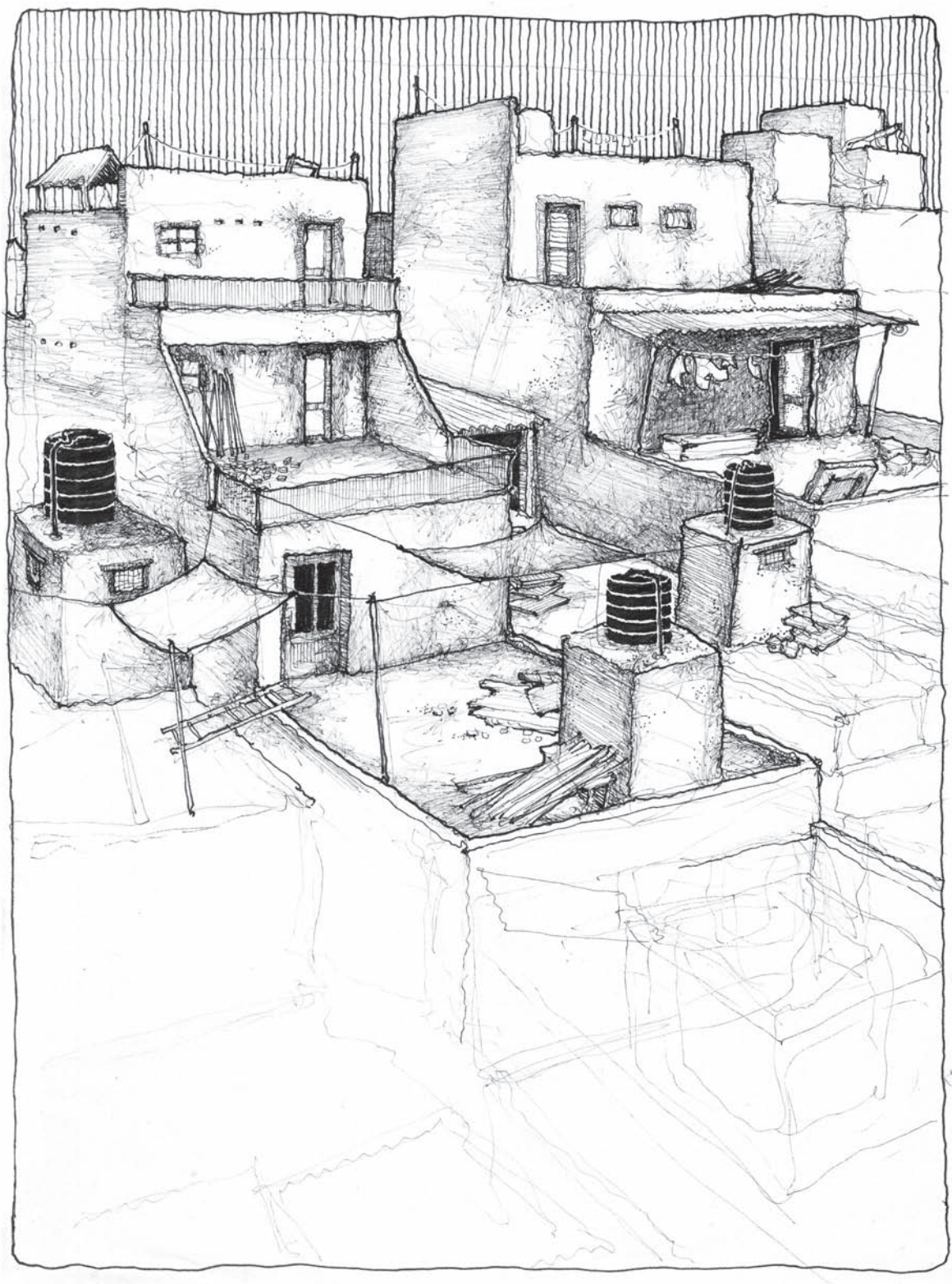




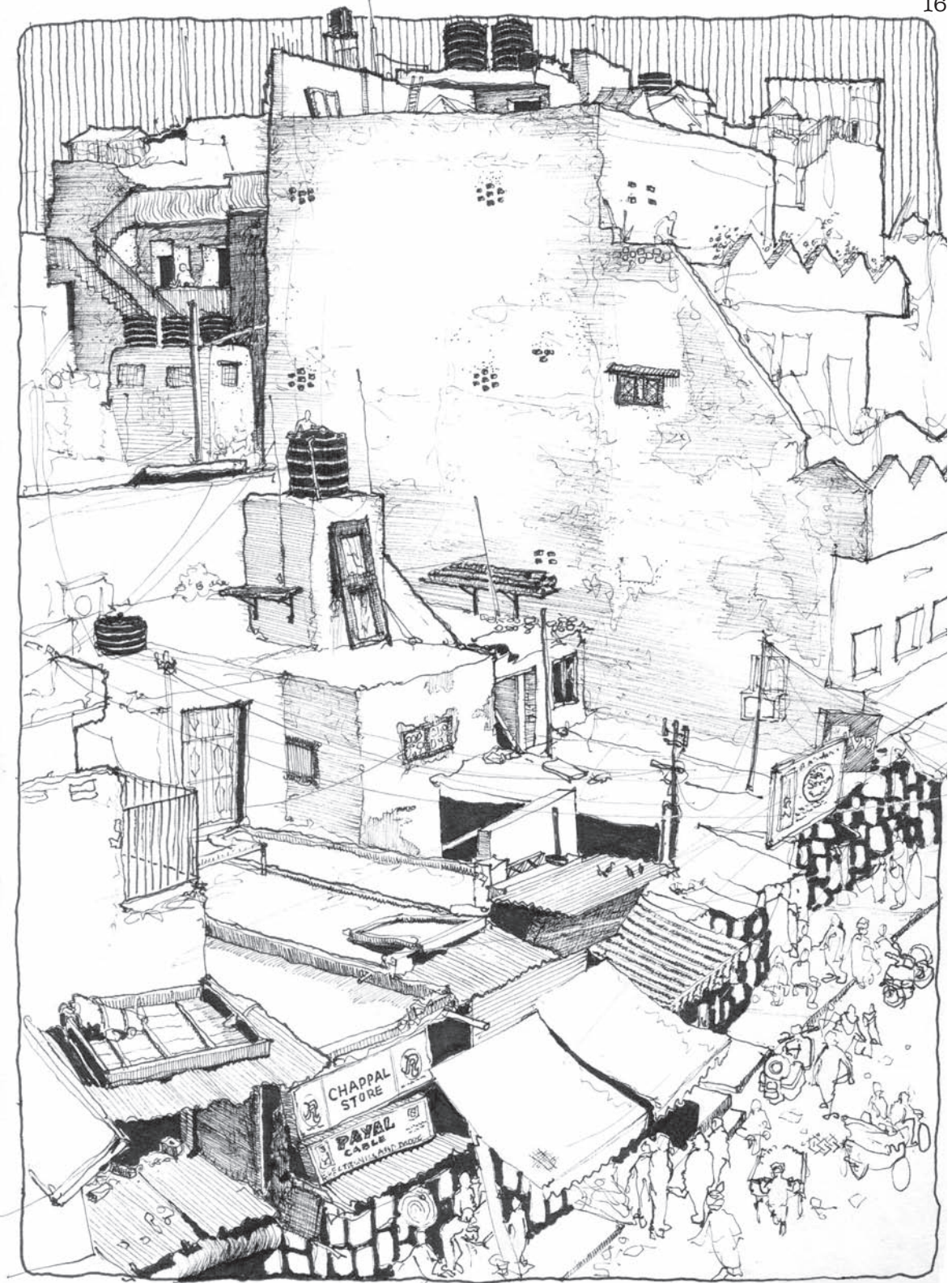
simmering in syncopation.

Continents briefly colliding



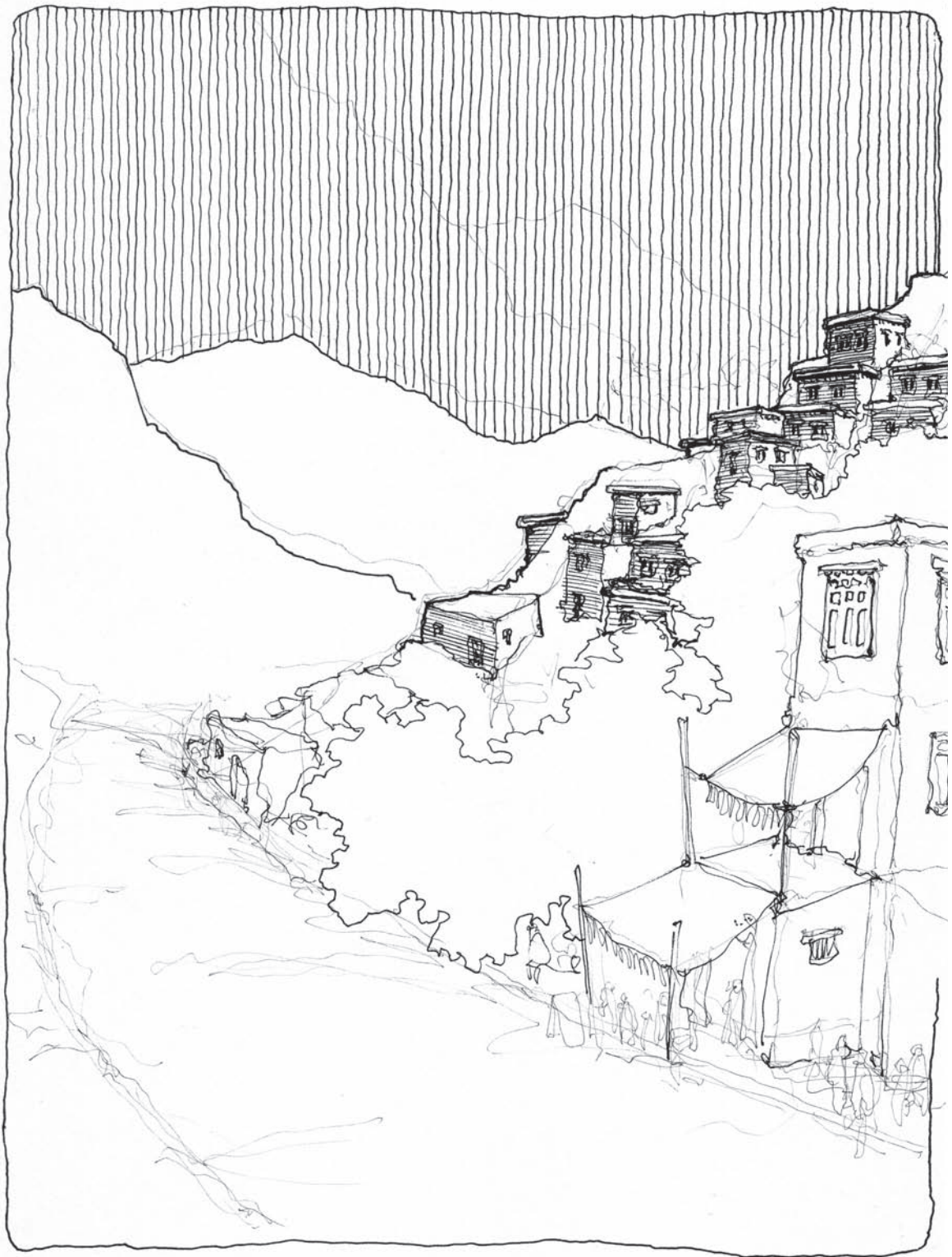






harmonizing clamor.

Running in place with all motions exaggerated



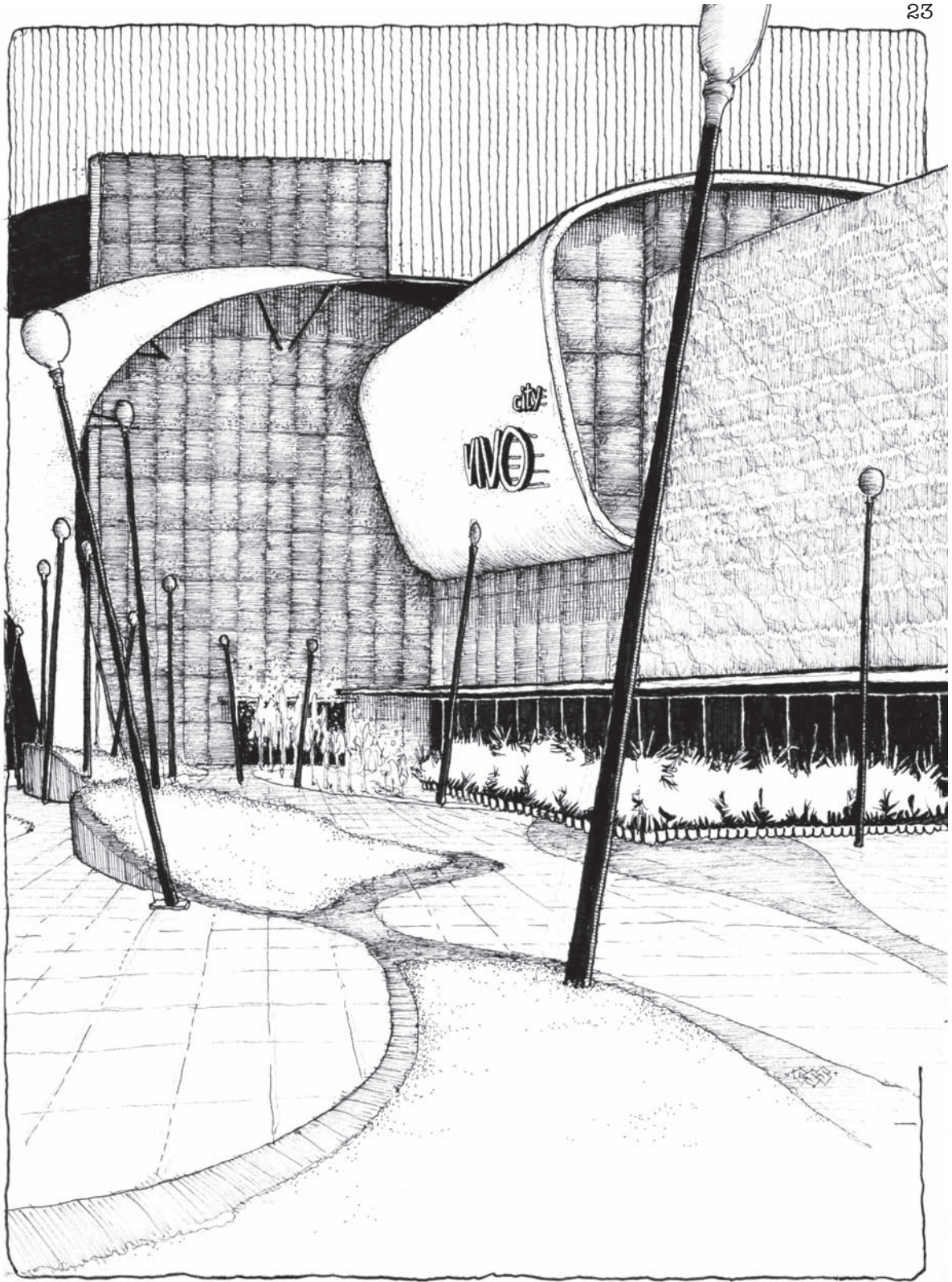




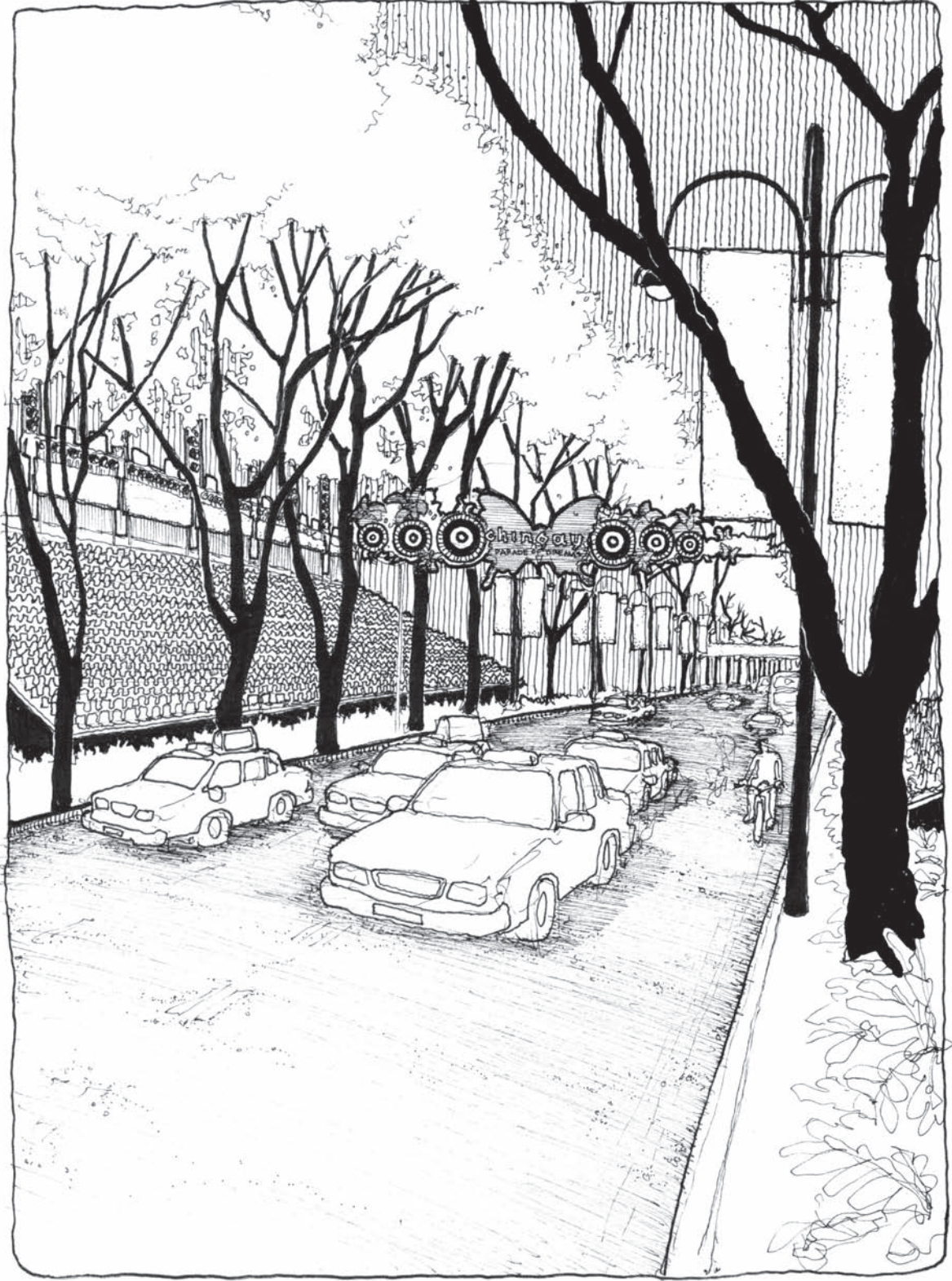
acknowledging the literal and figurative ups and downs.

Commodities presiding over necessities





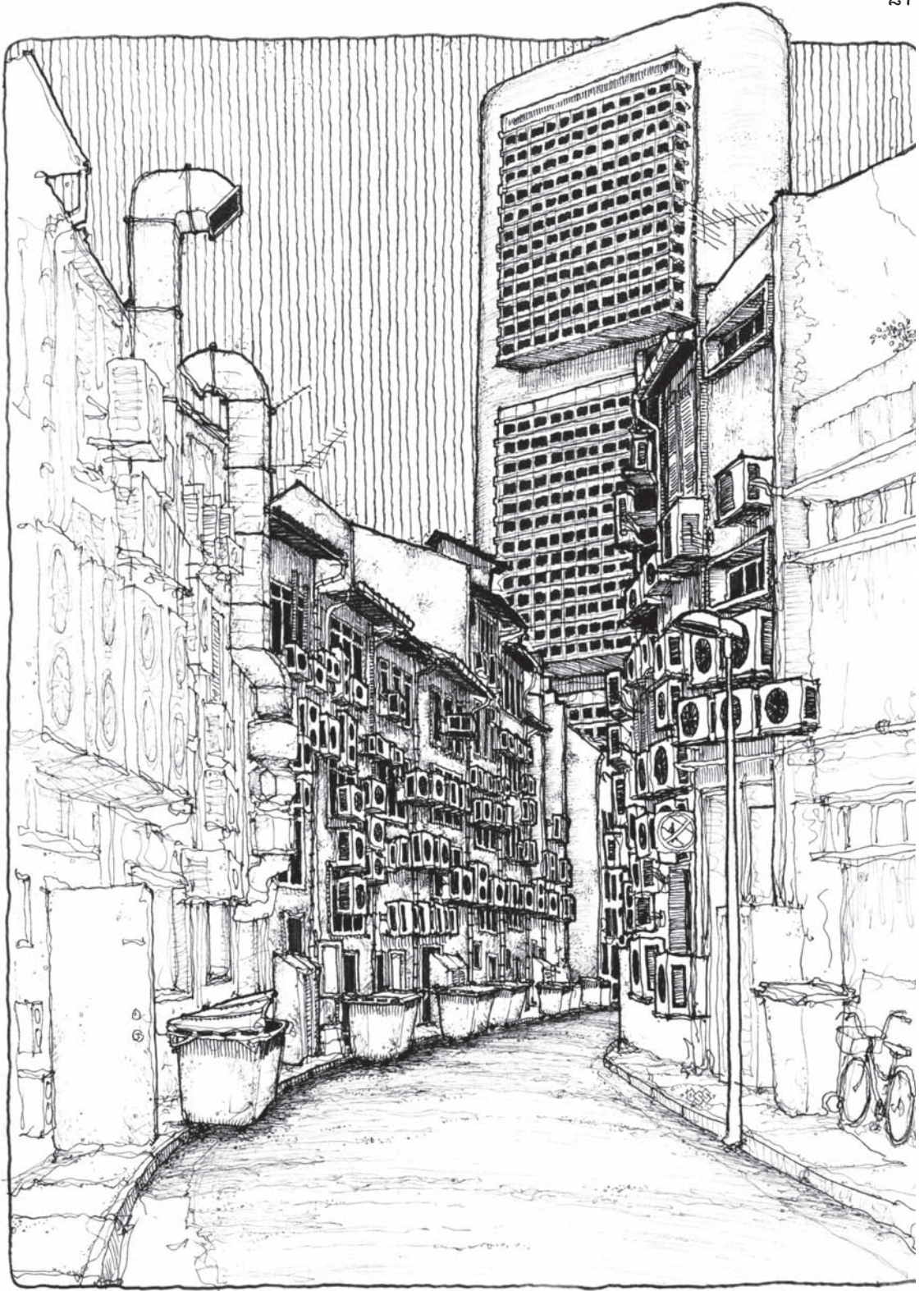


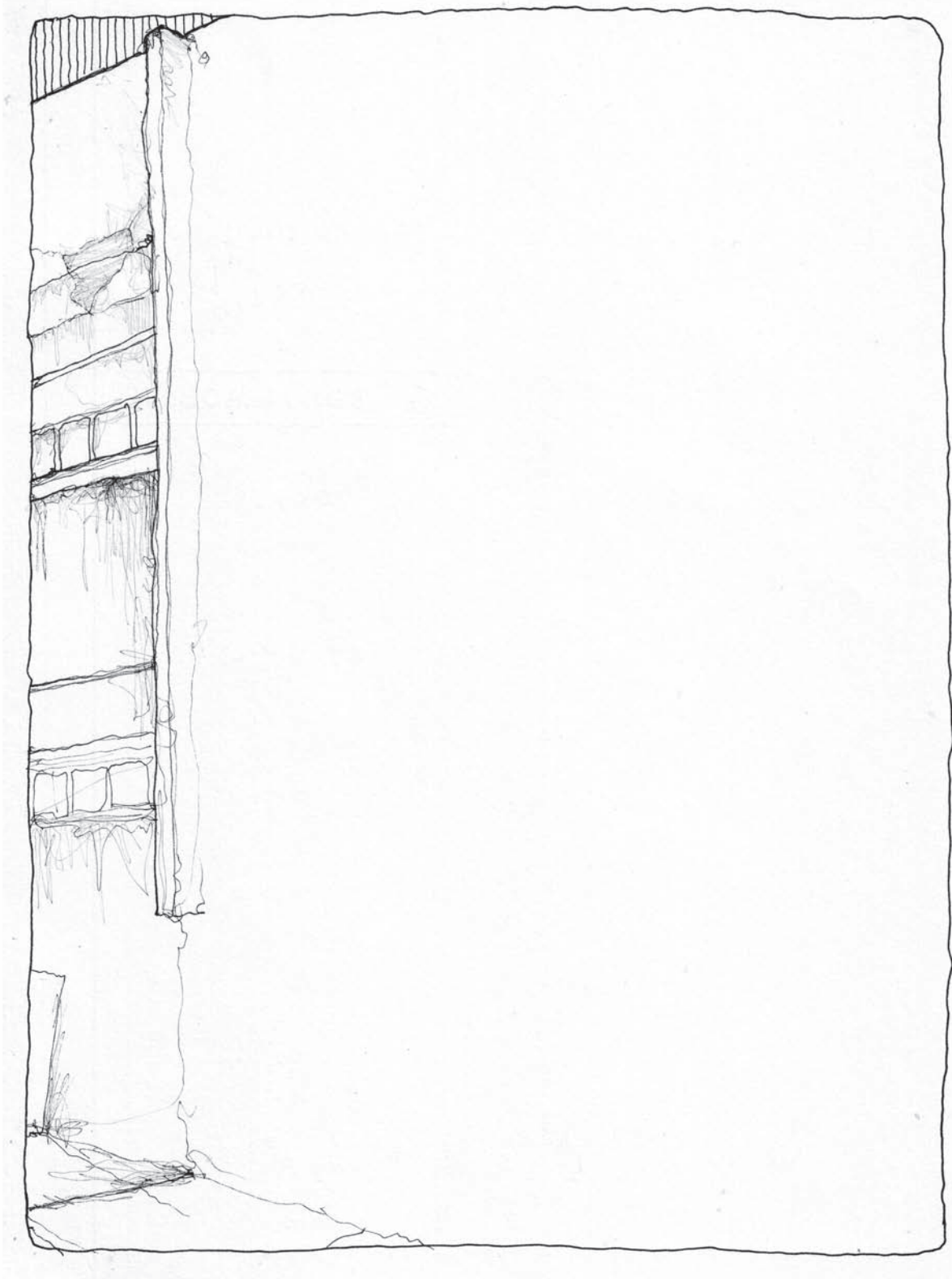




superficiality obscuring reality

Introspectively abhorring observable qualities

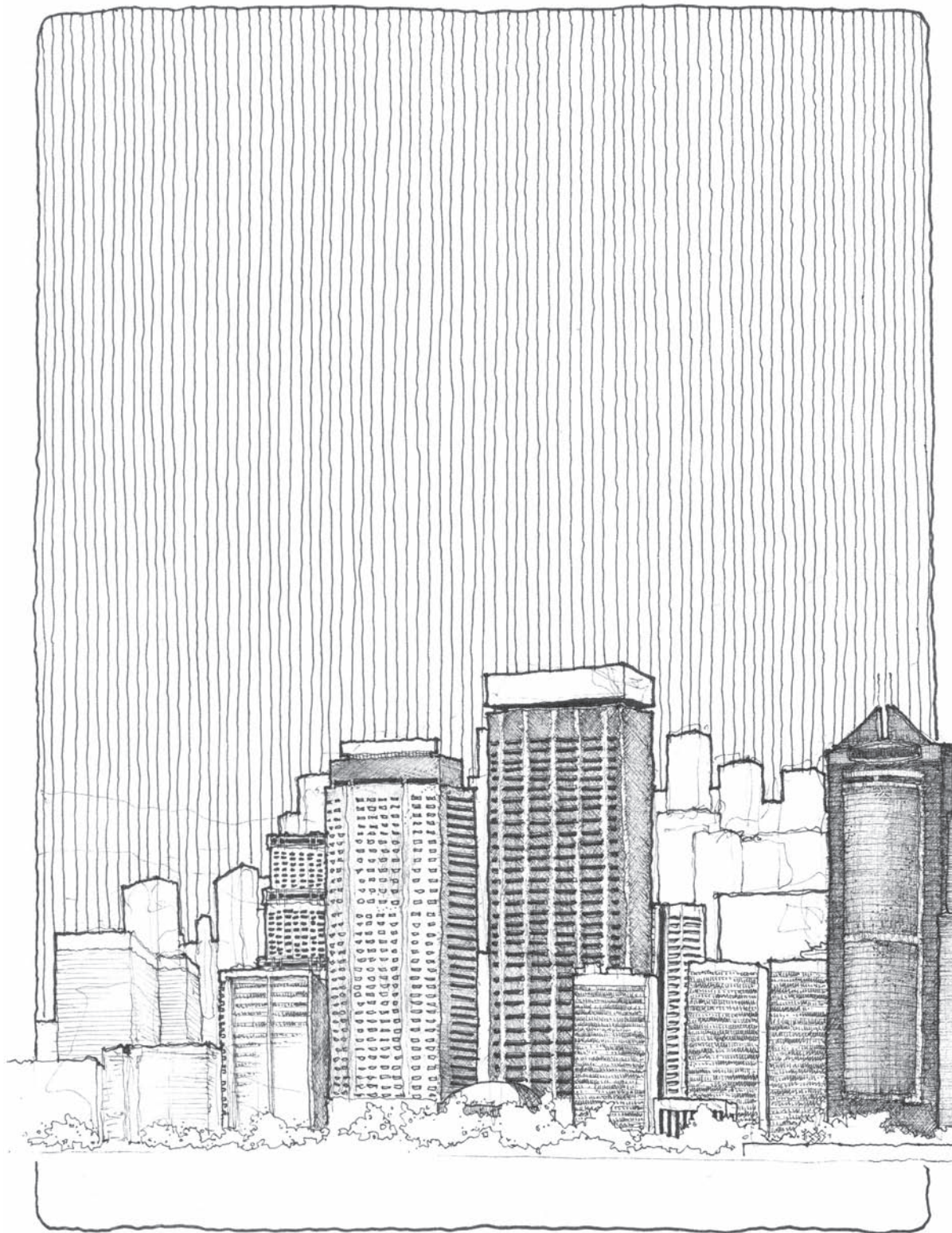




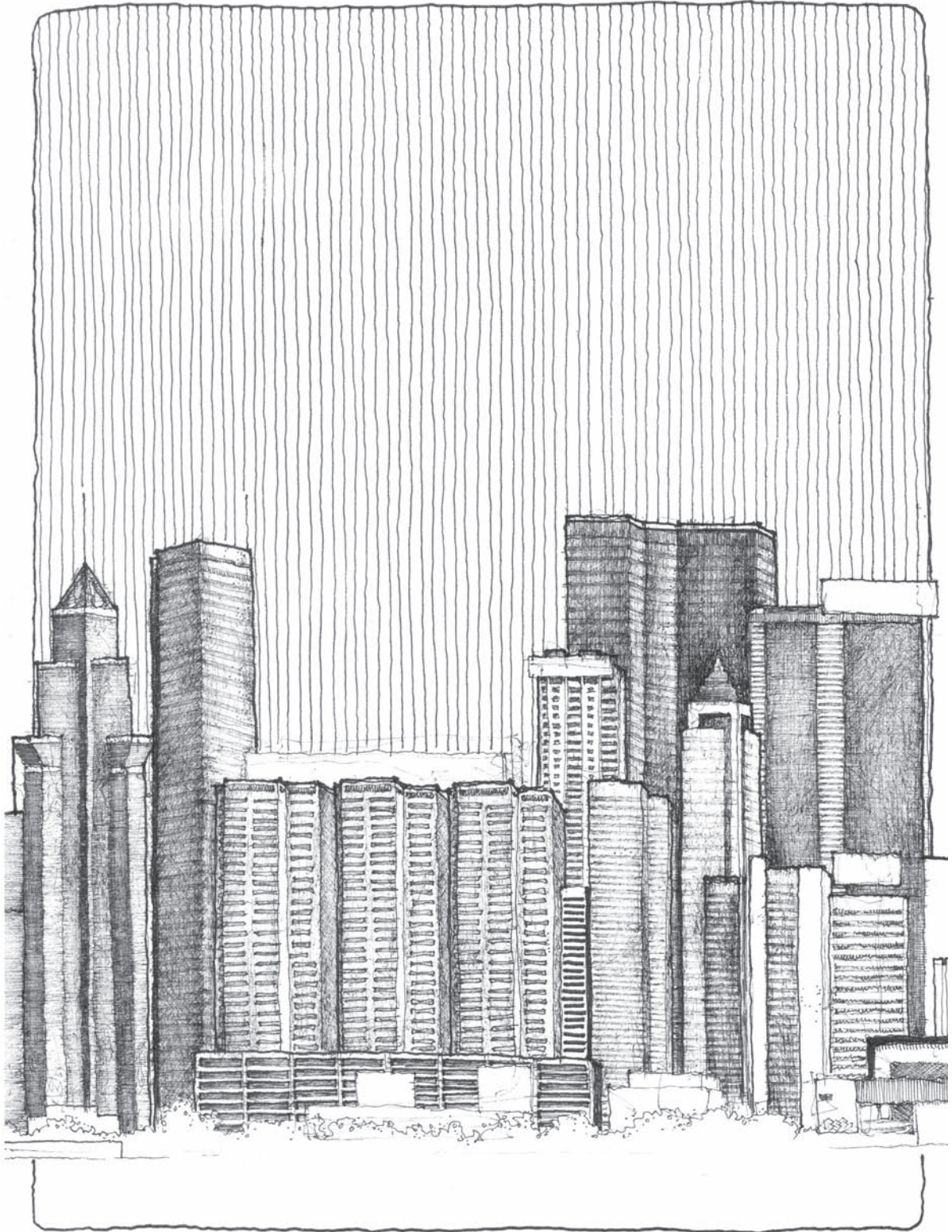


resonating historical frequencies.

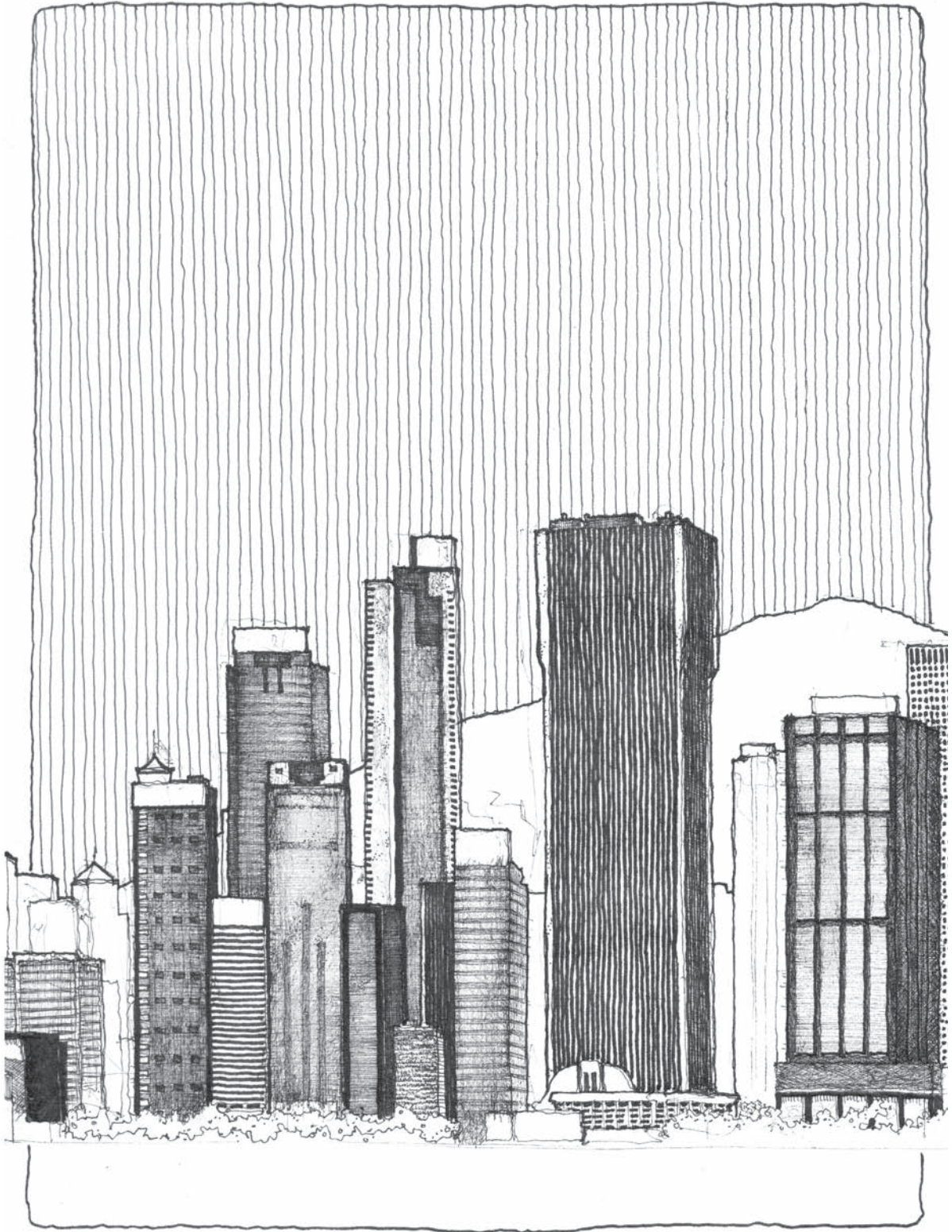
Either far more or far less compelling than the truth



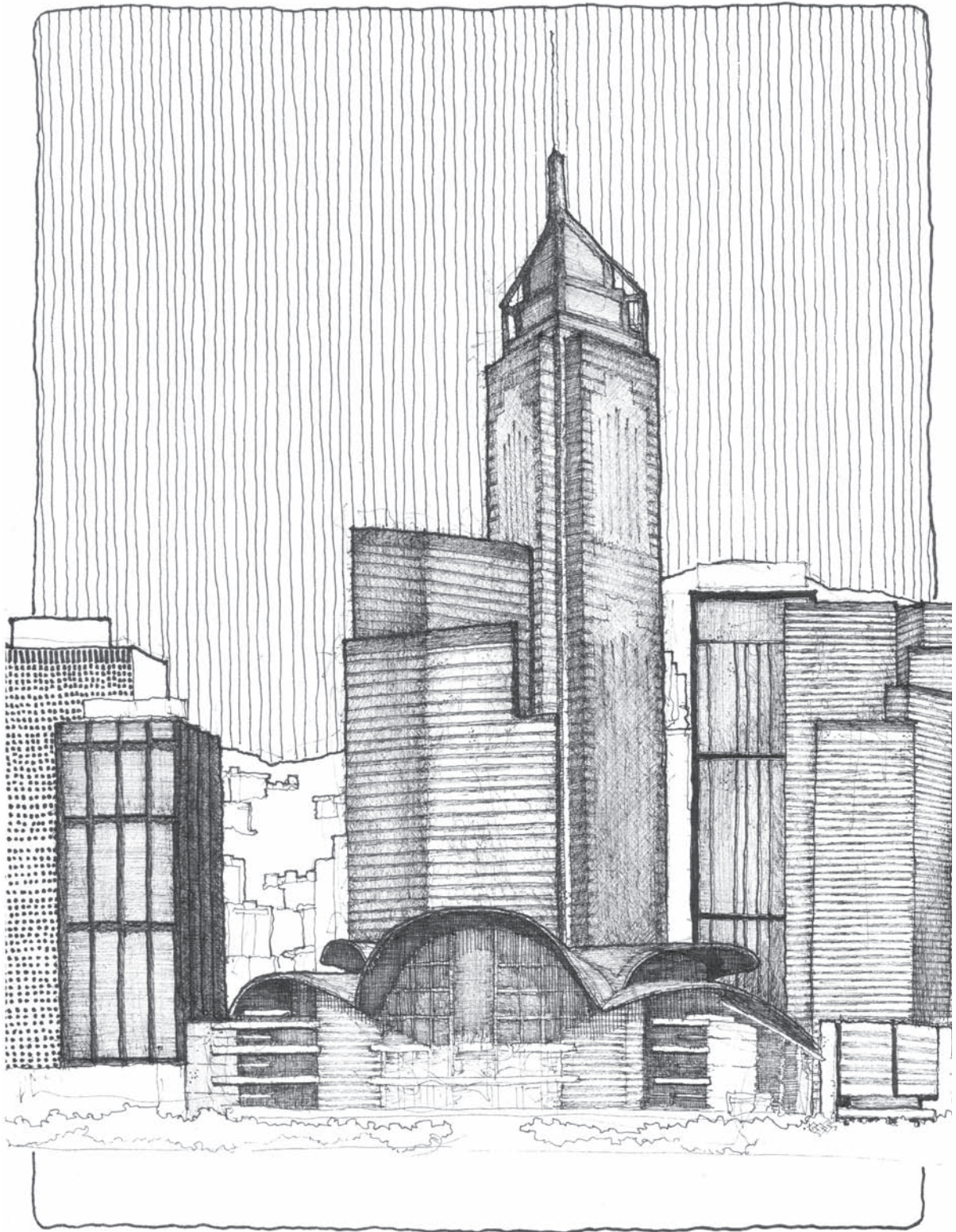




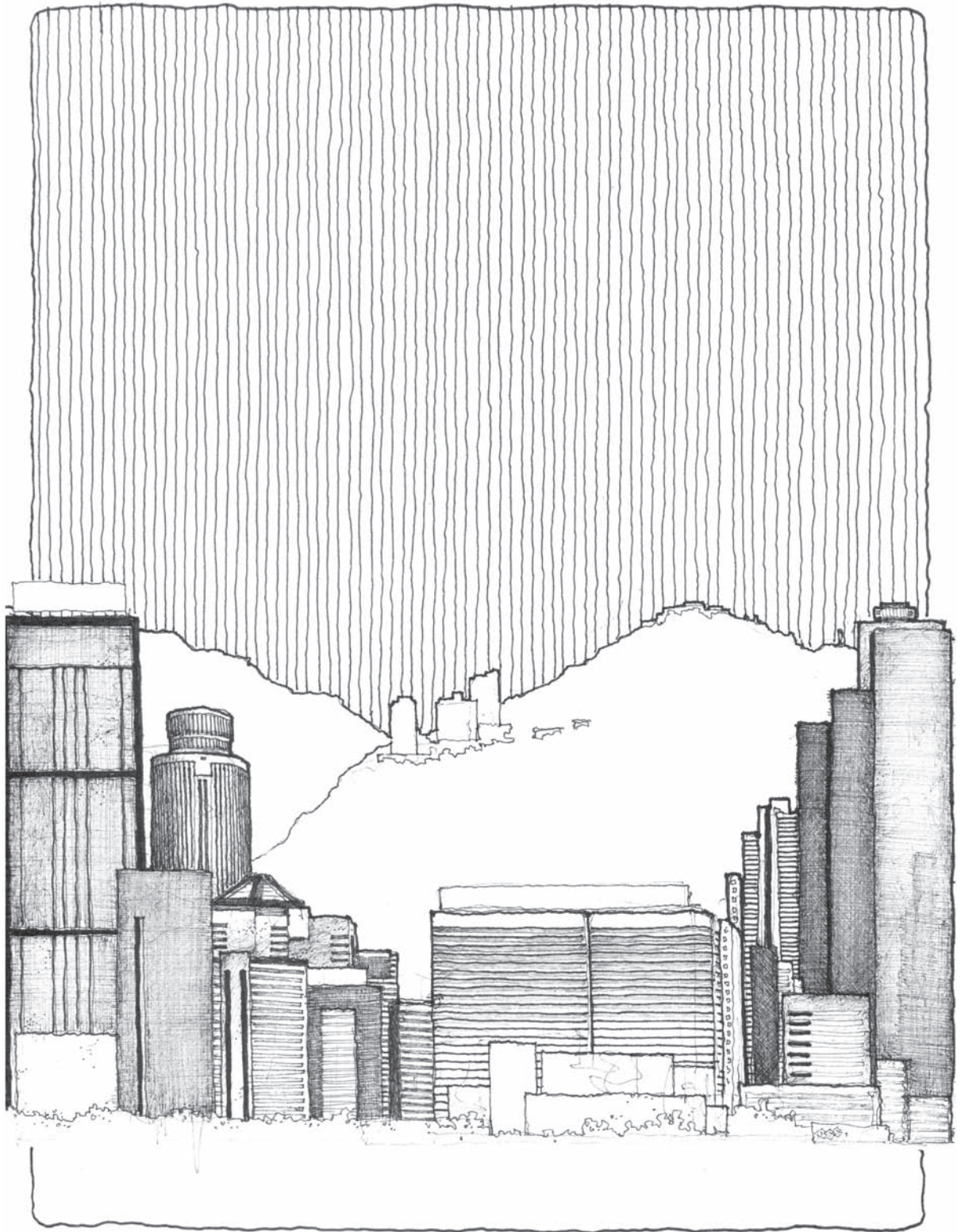


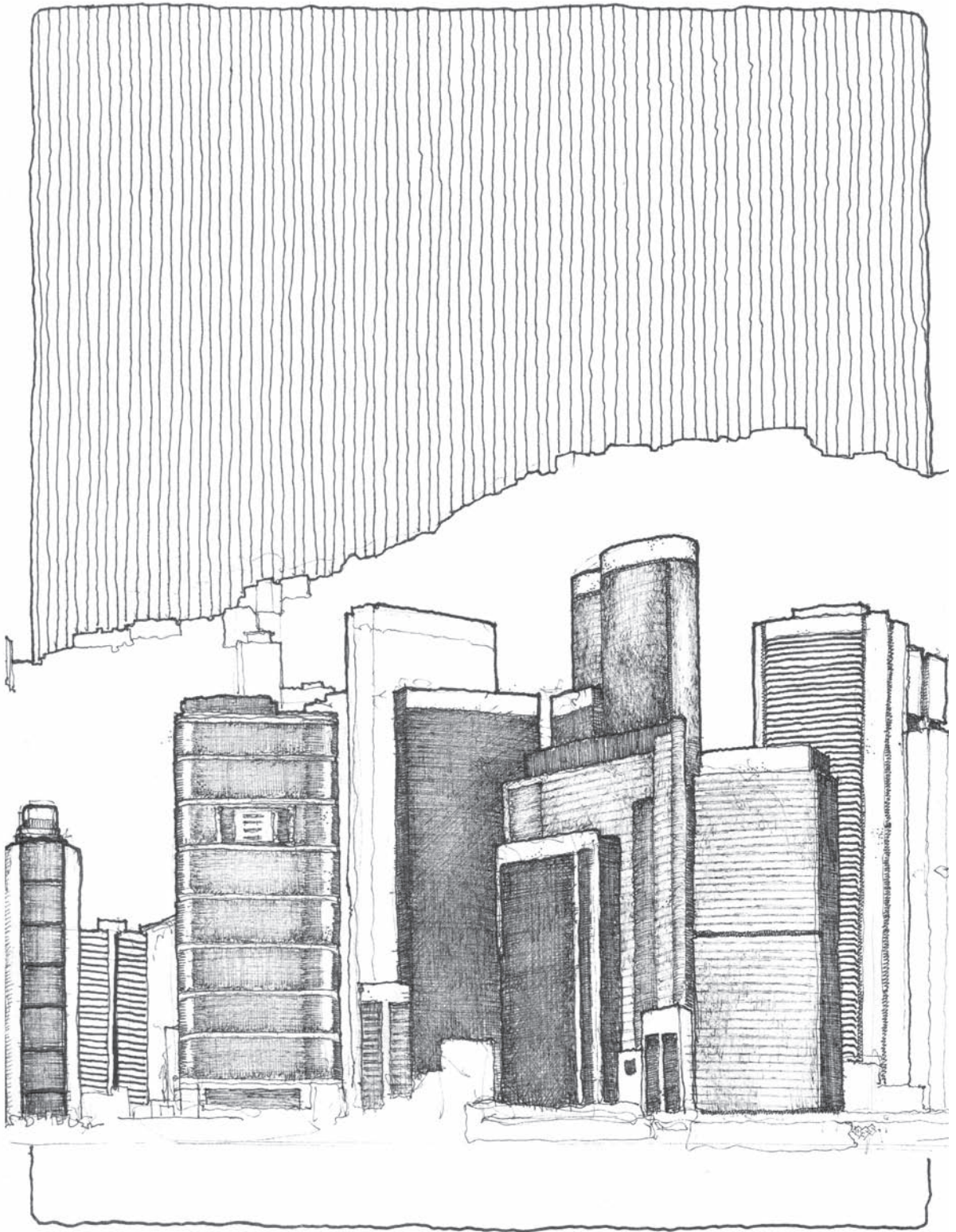




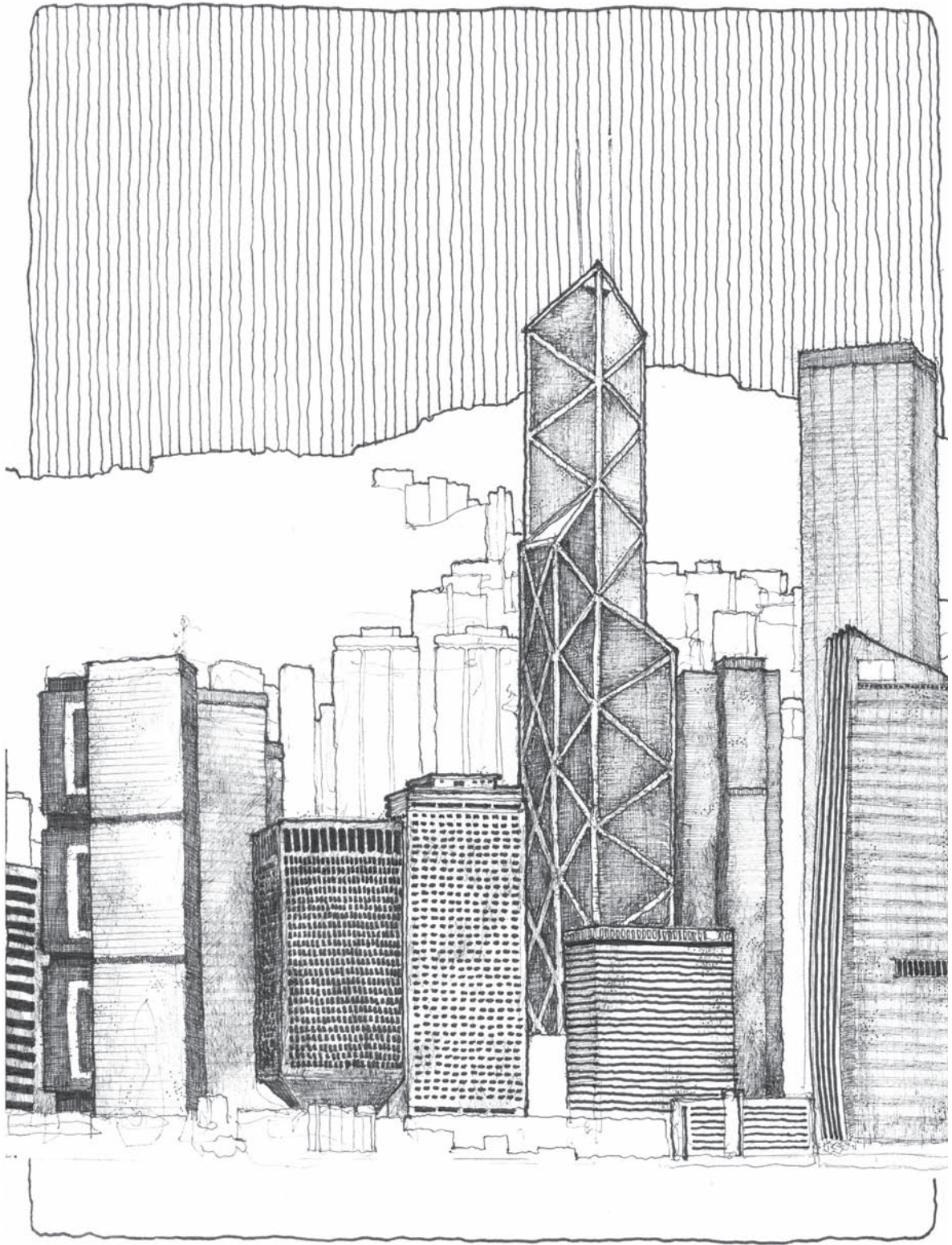




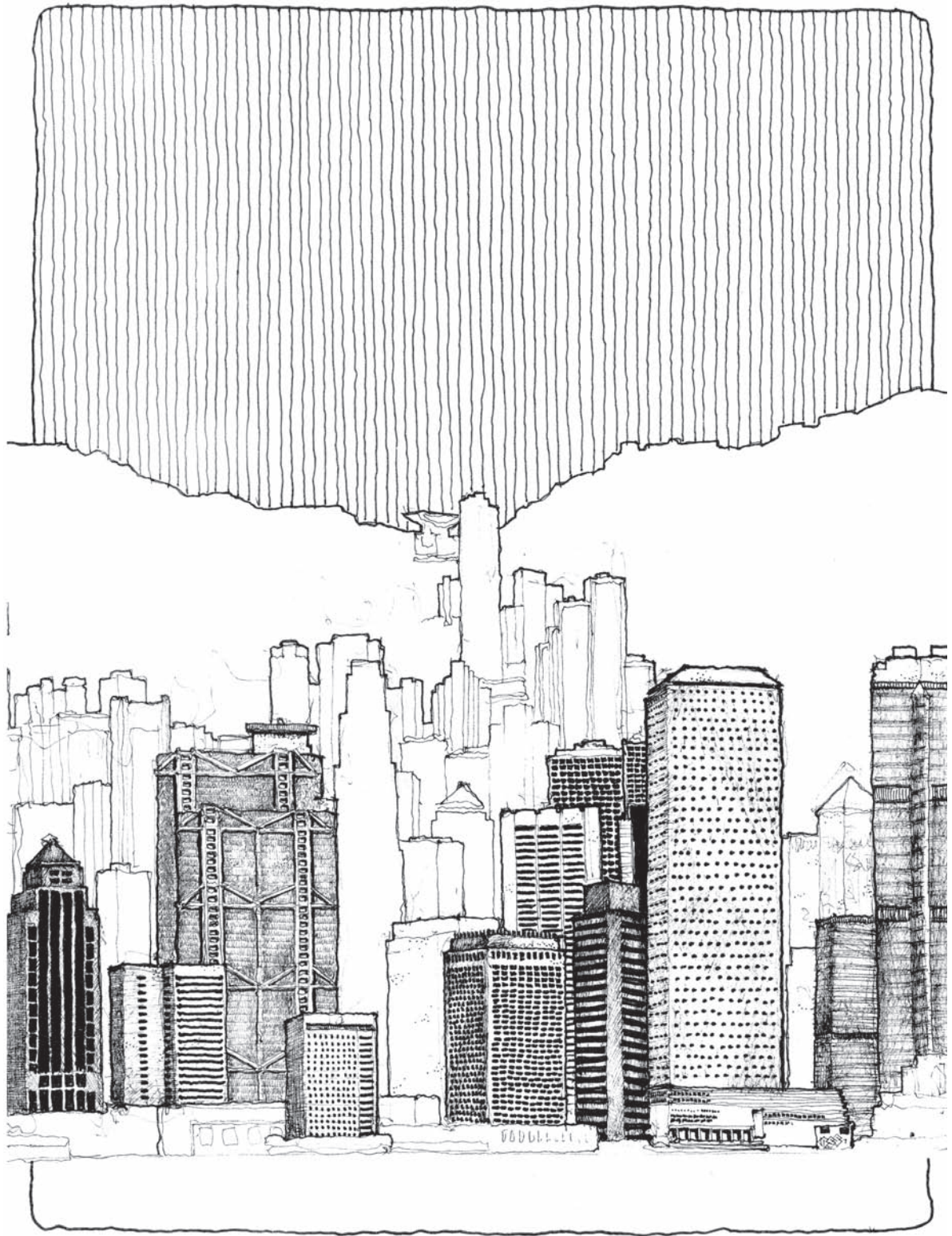




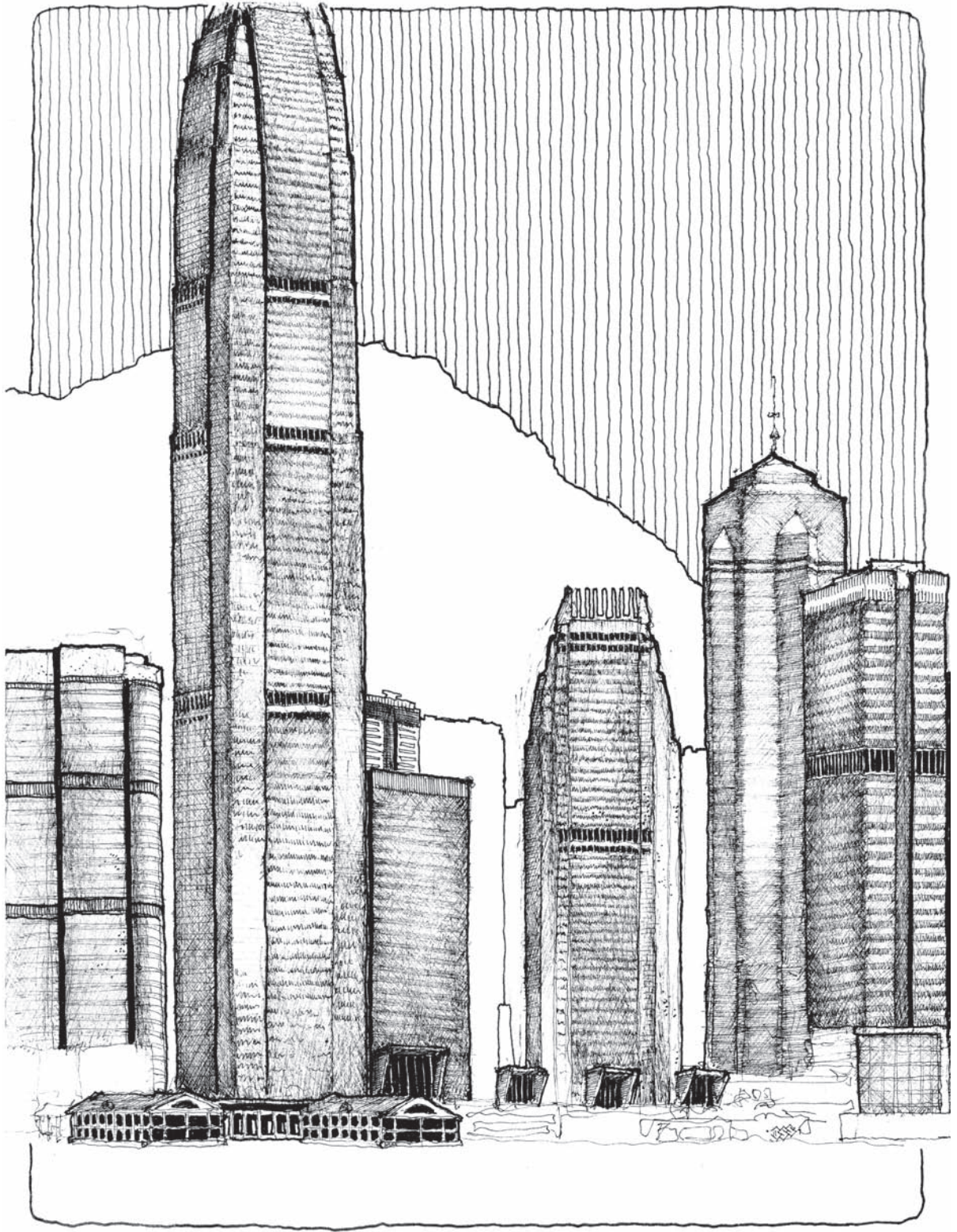




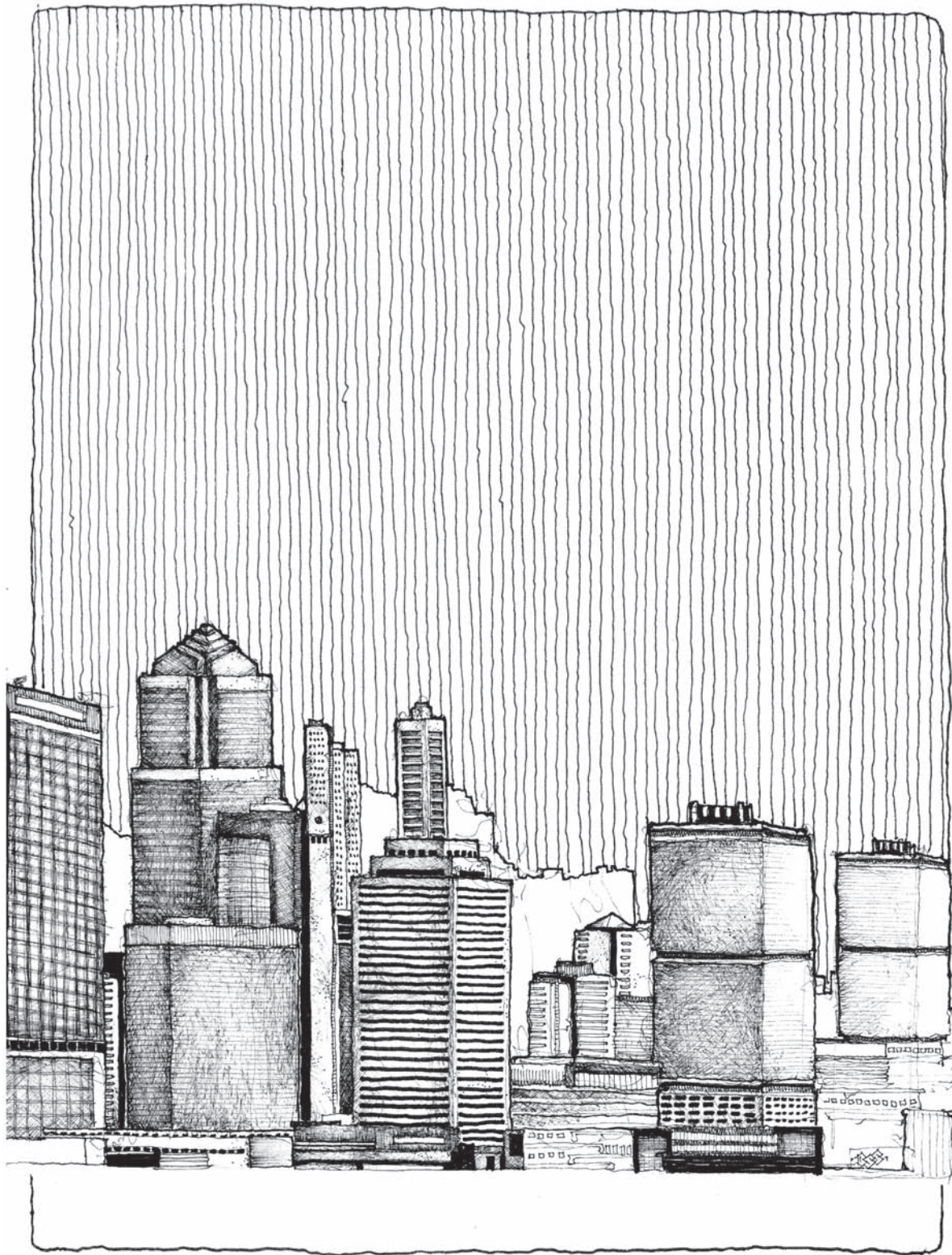








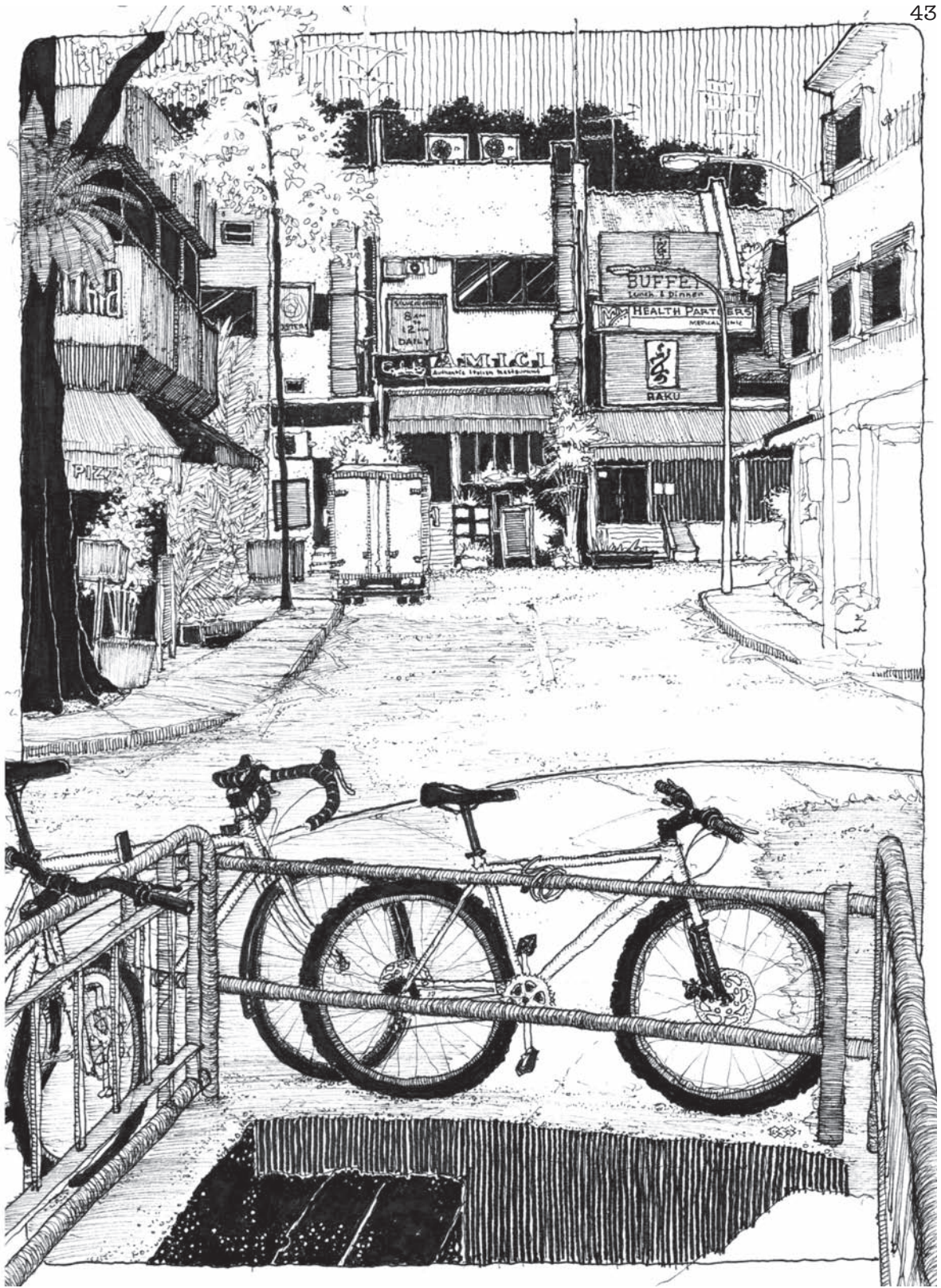




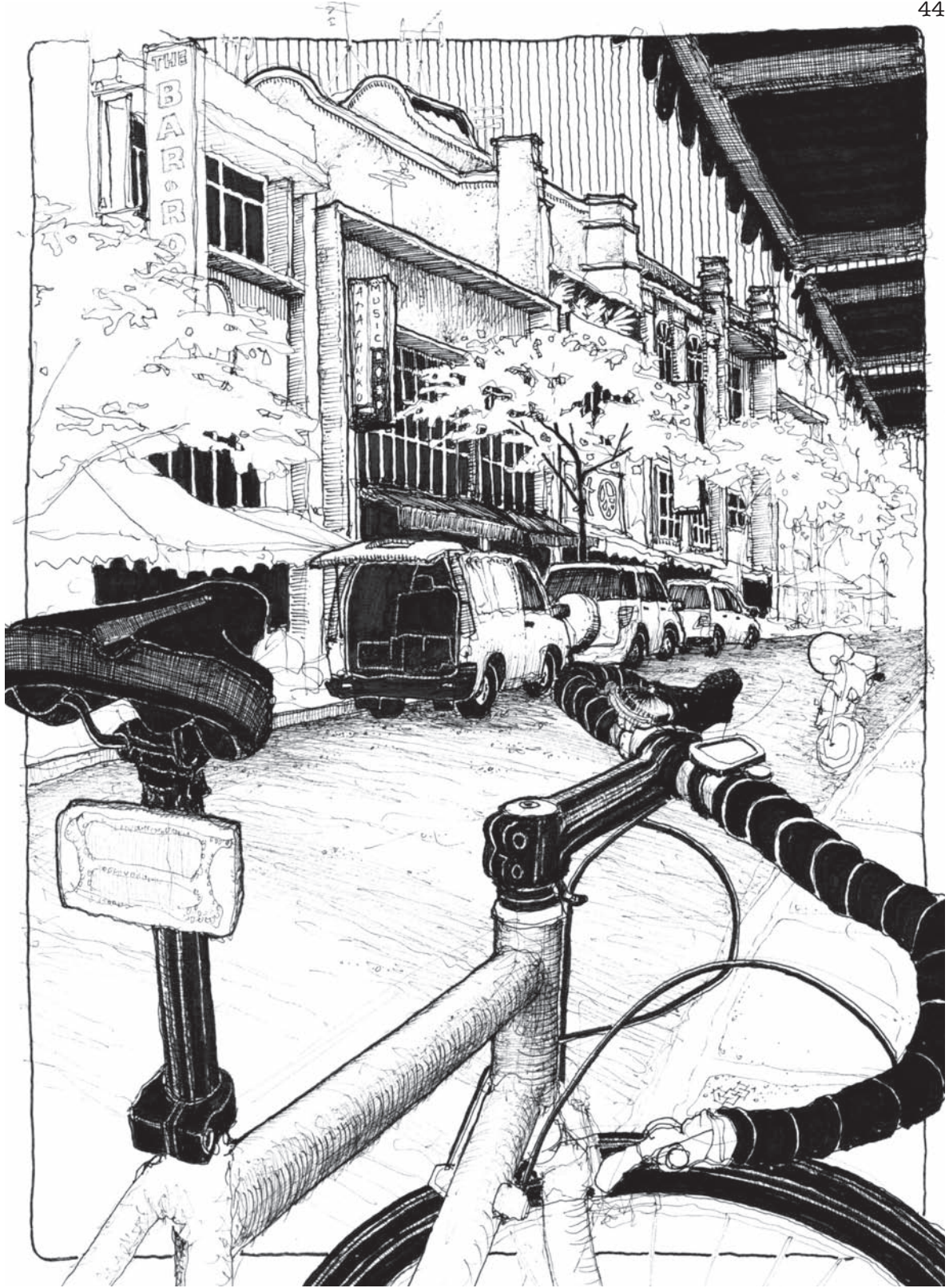


dwelling in the overwhelming demand of deliverables.

Smiling out loud







maintaining composure on the brink of losing it.

Embracing transitions









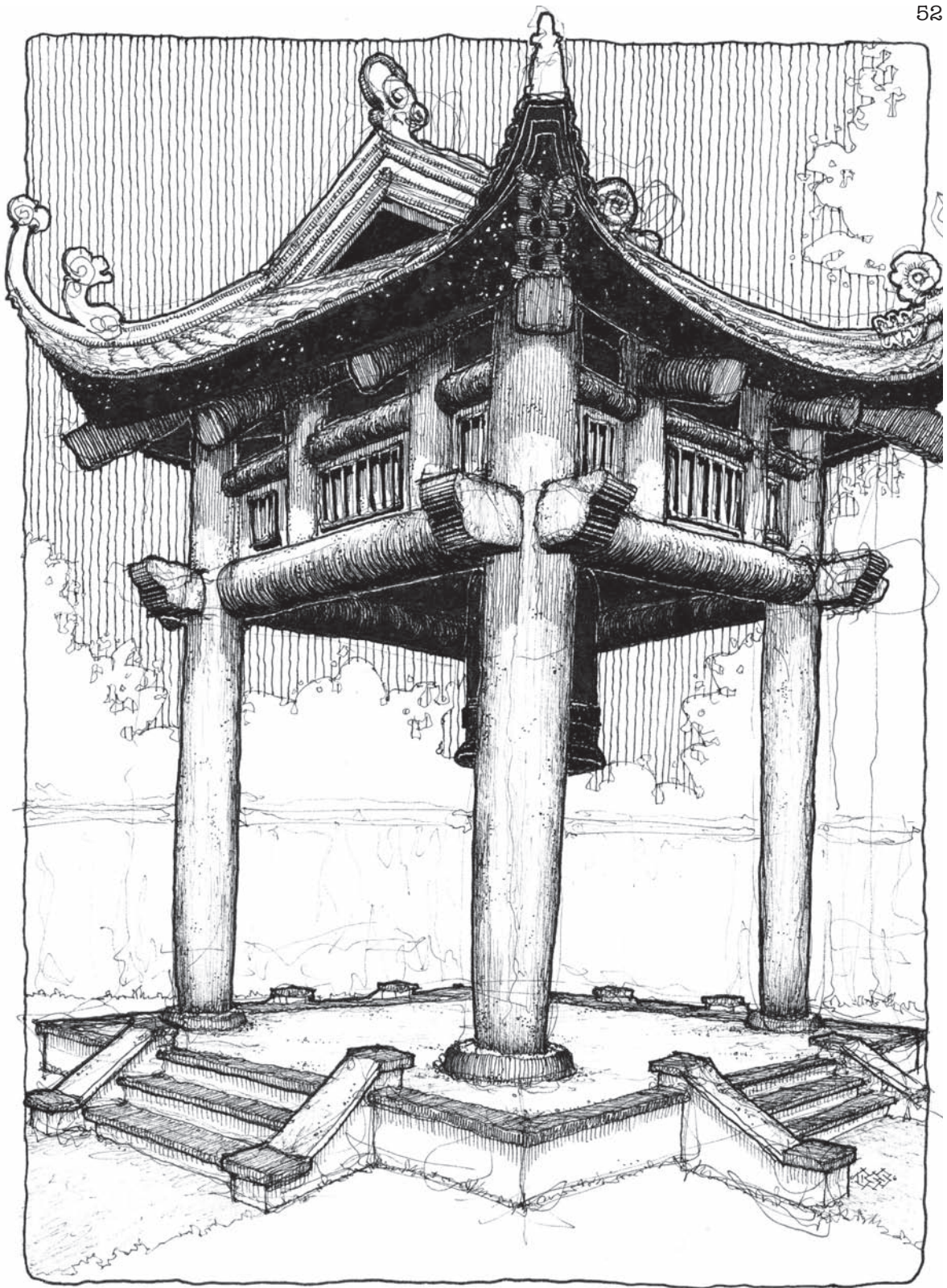
relishing in the solace of daylight.



Believed to be the purest act of expression



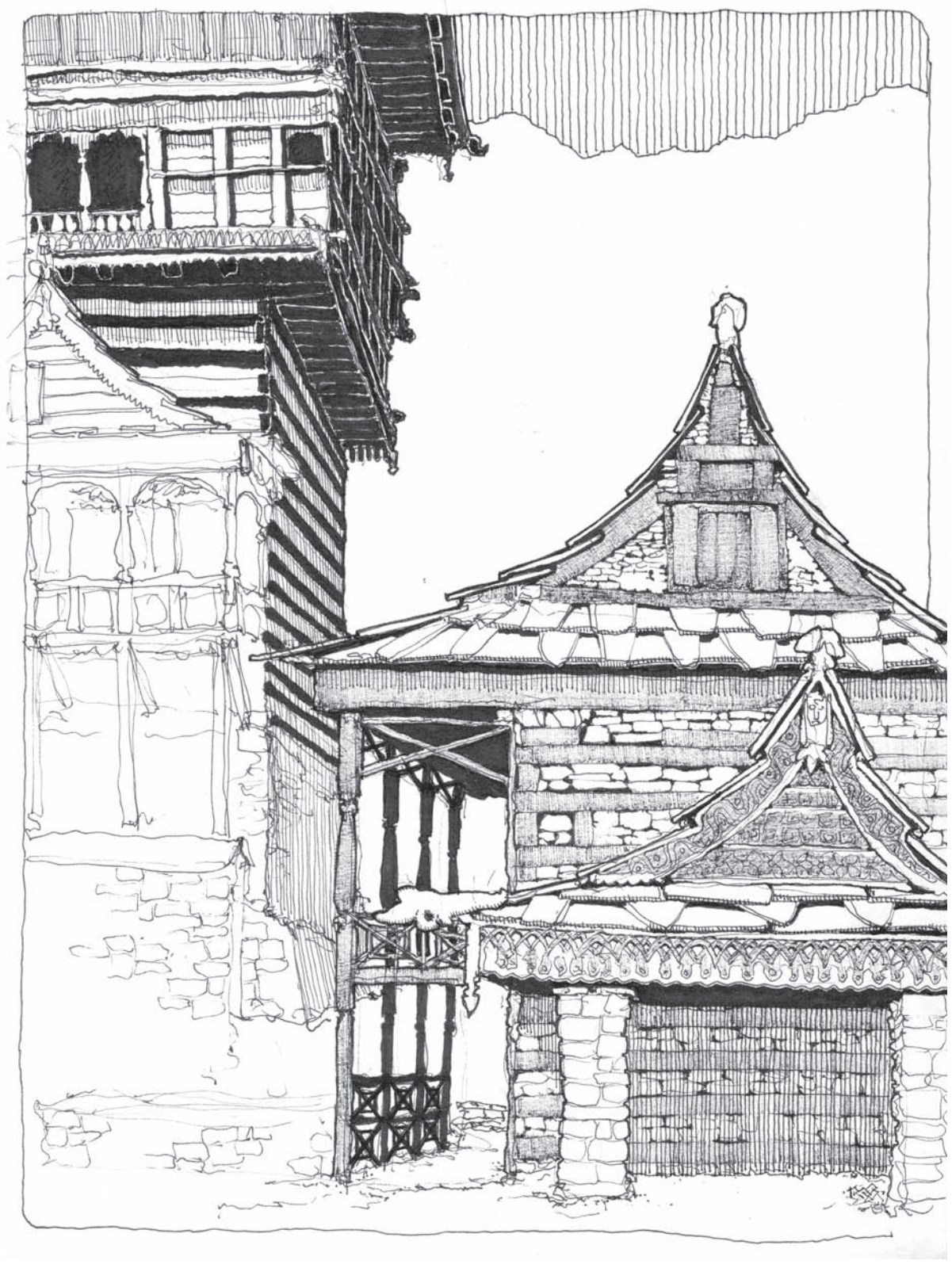




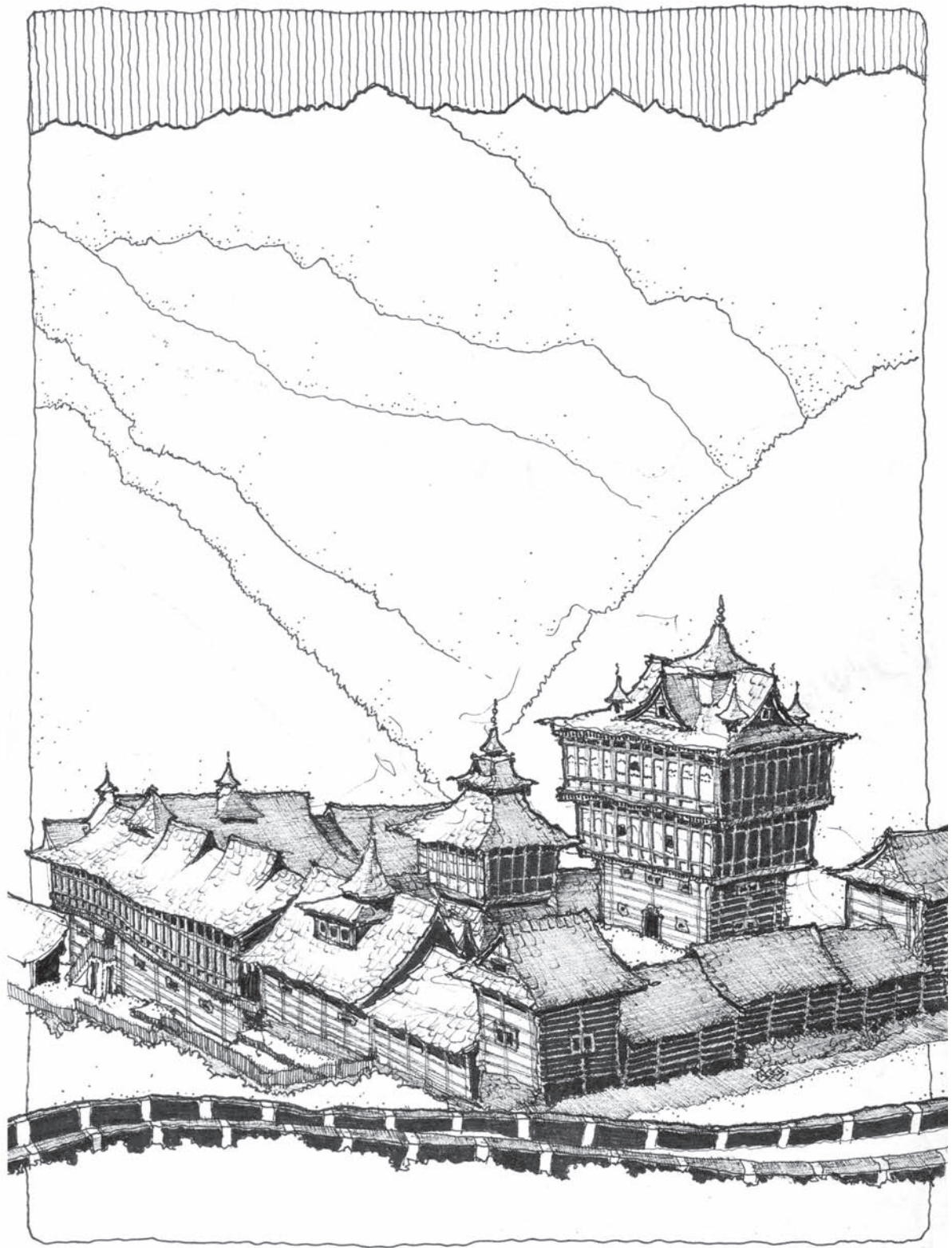


meaning Very Special Things.

Remembering days when patterns were followed













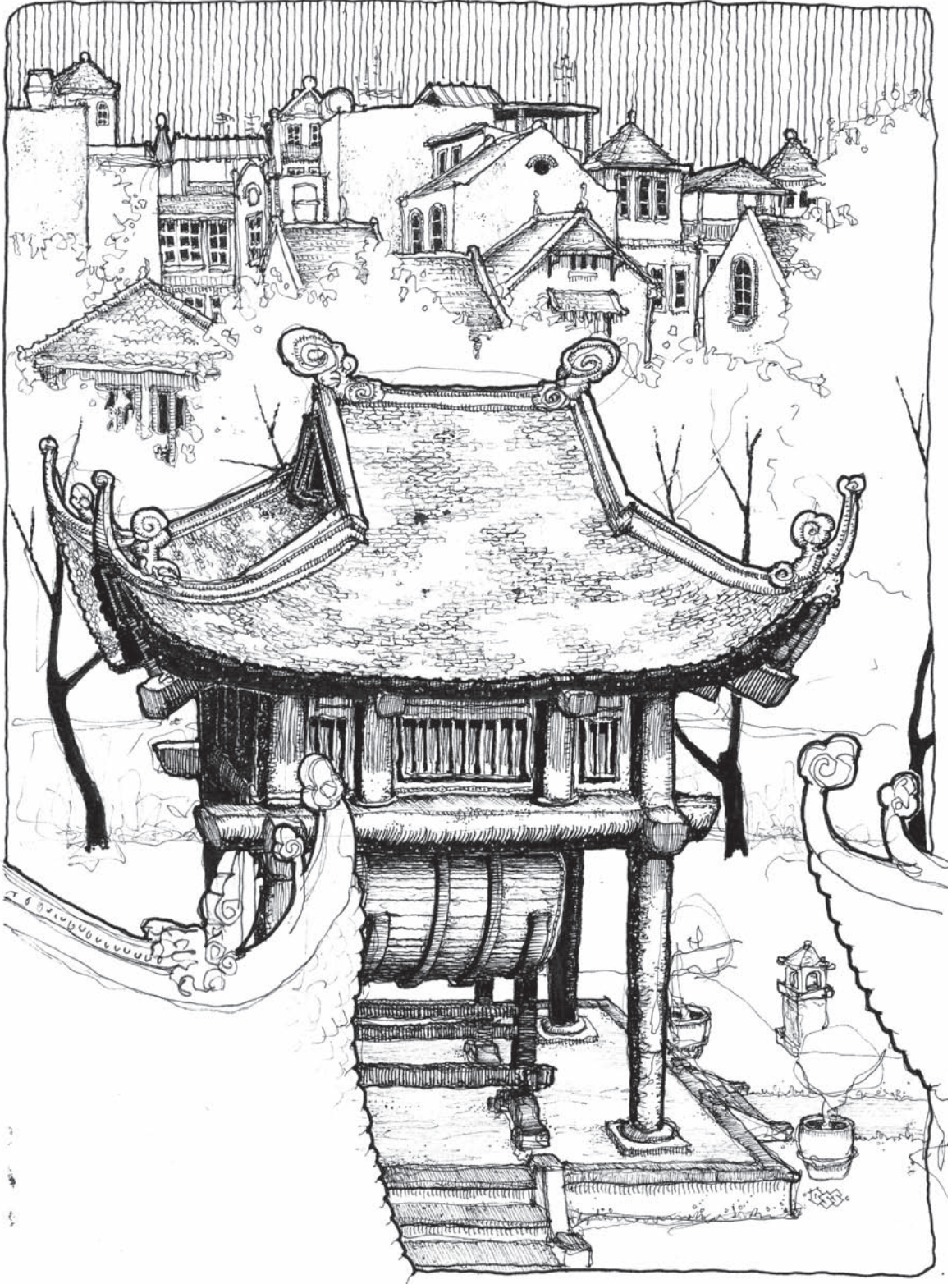


peering into a full-sensory microscope.

Evidence embedding itself into the products



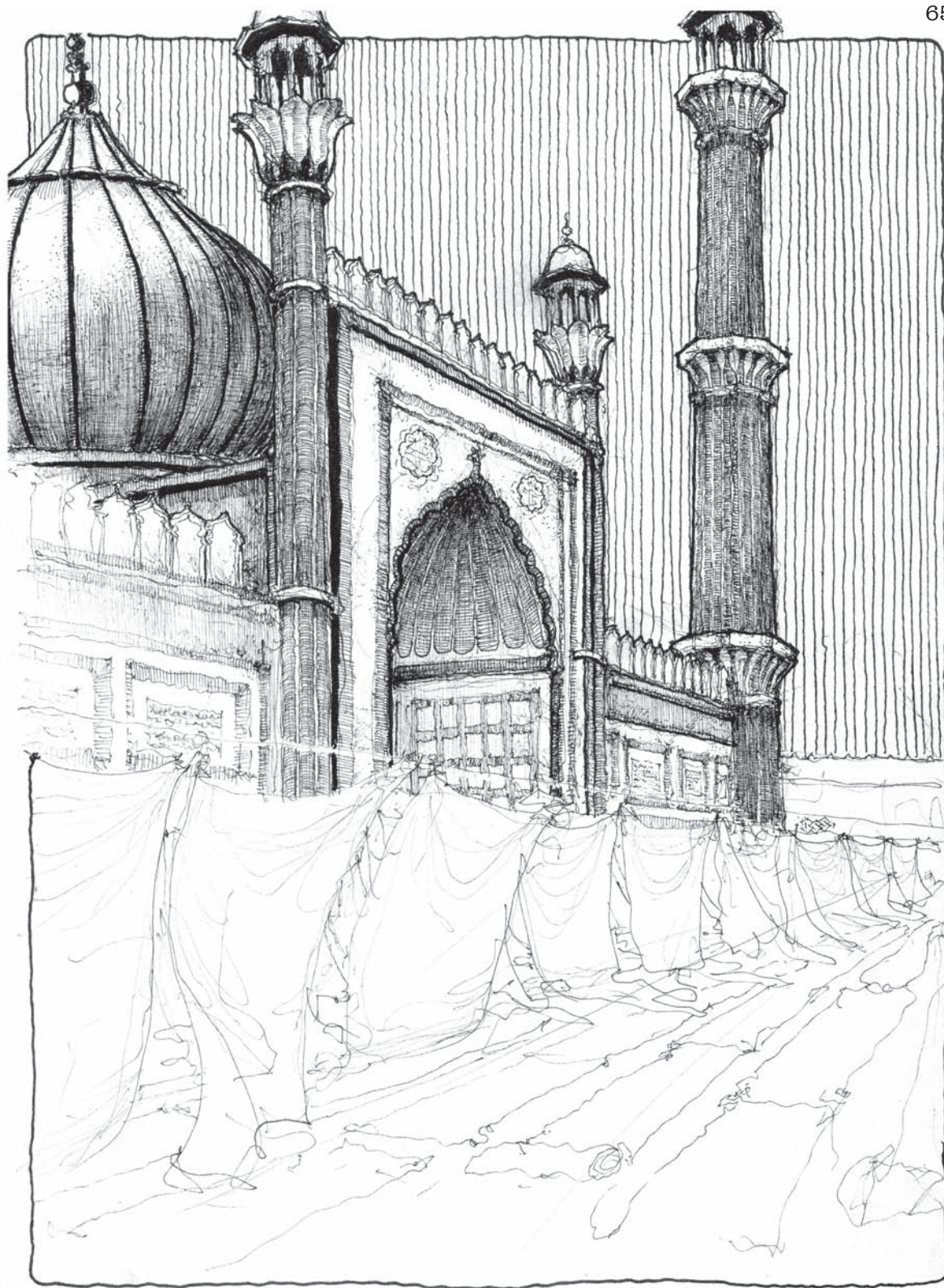




knowledge seeping like sap.

Muscles awaking with stiff indignation









moshing bowels.



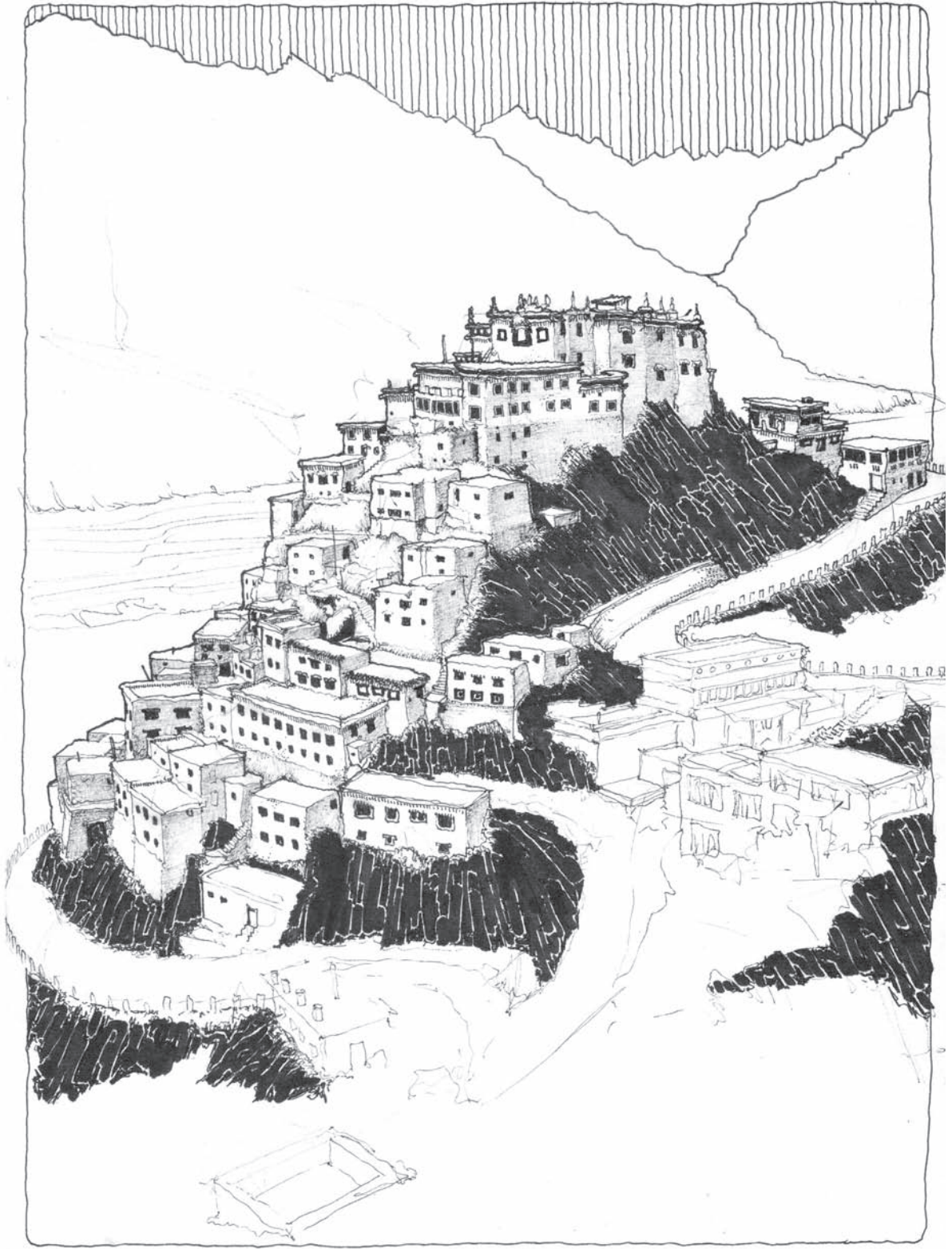
Time disintegrating







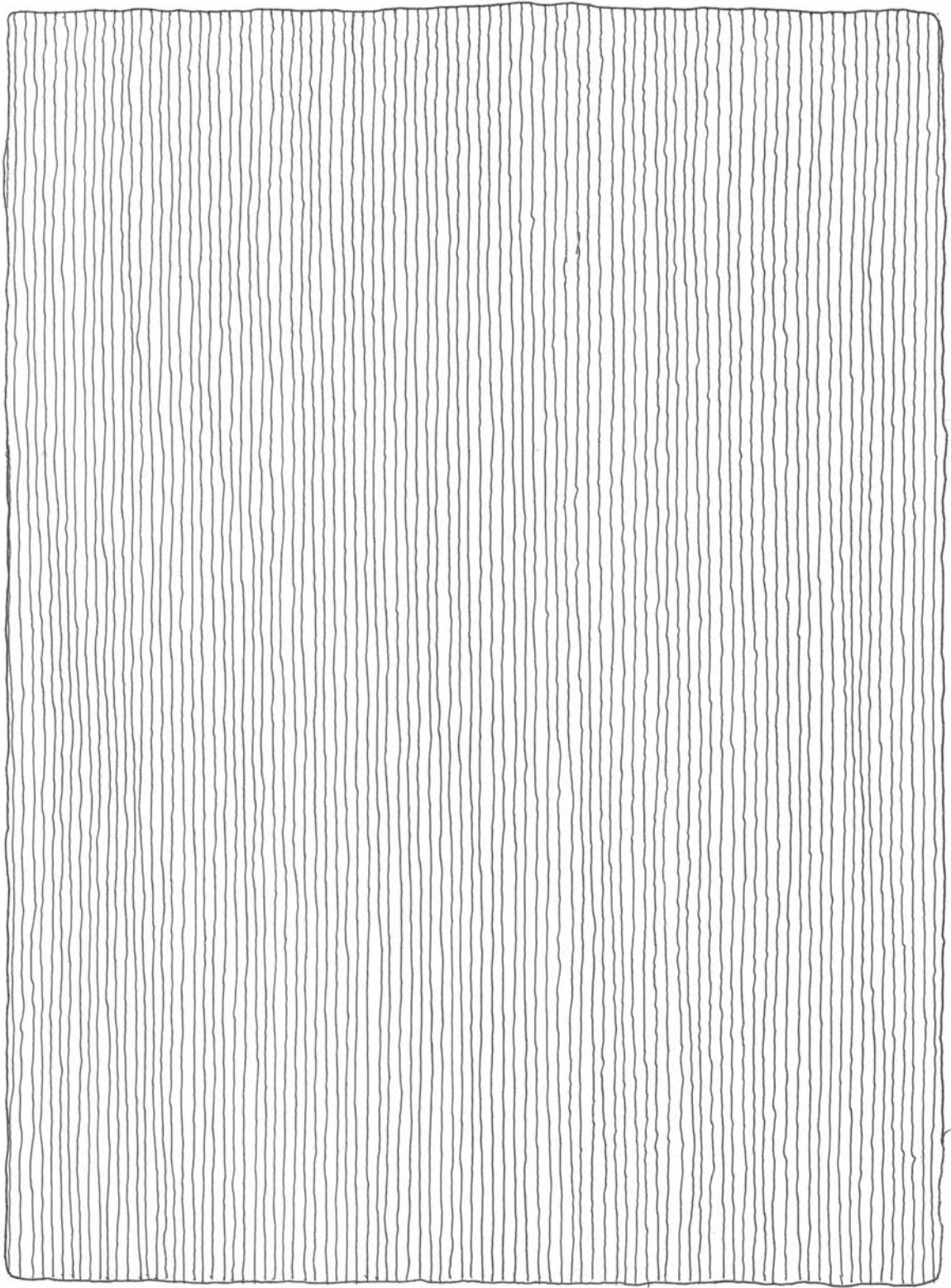


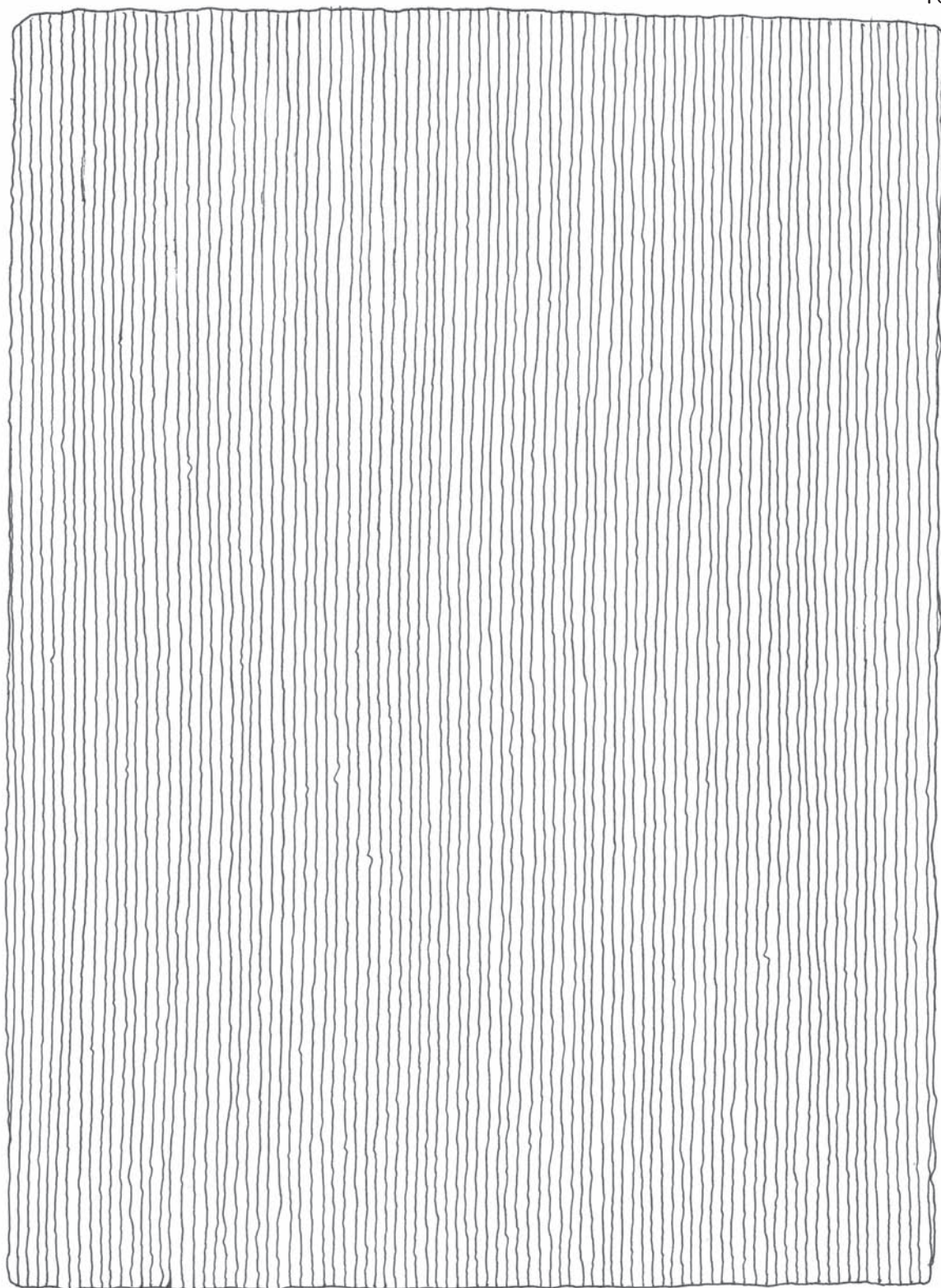


becoming infinitely simpler.

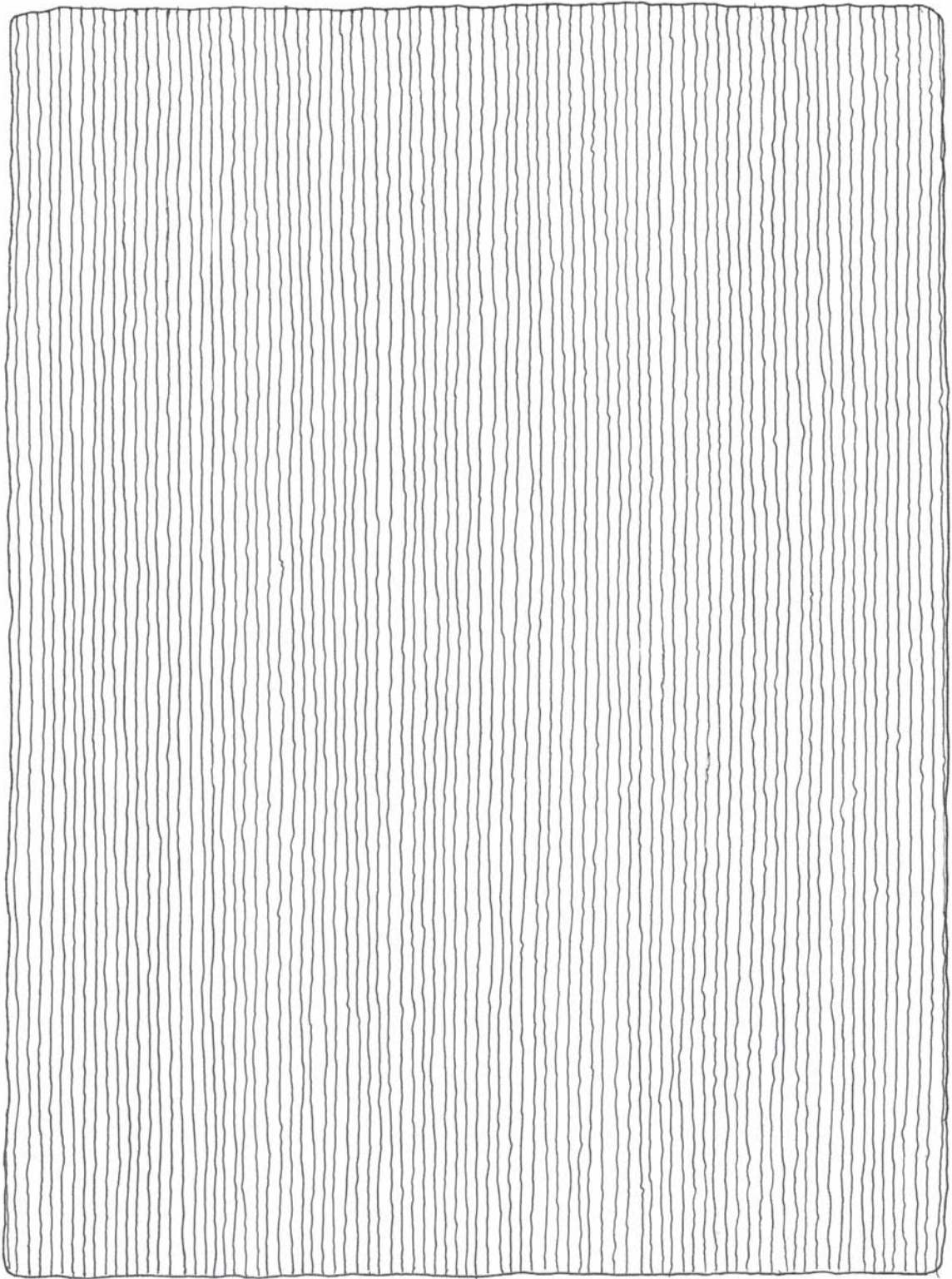


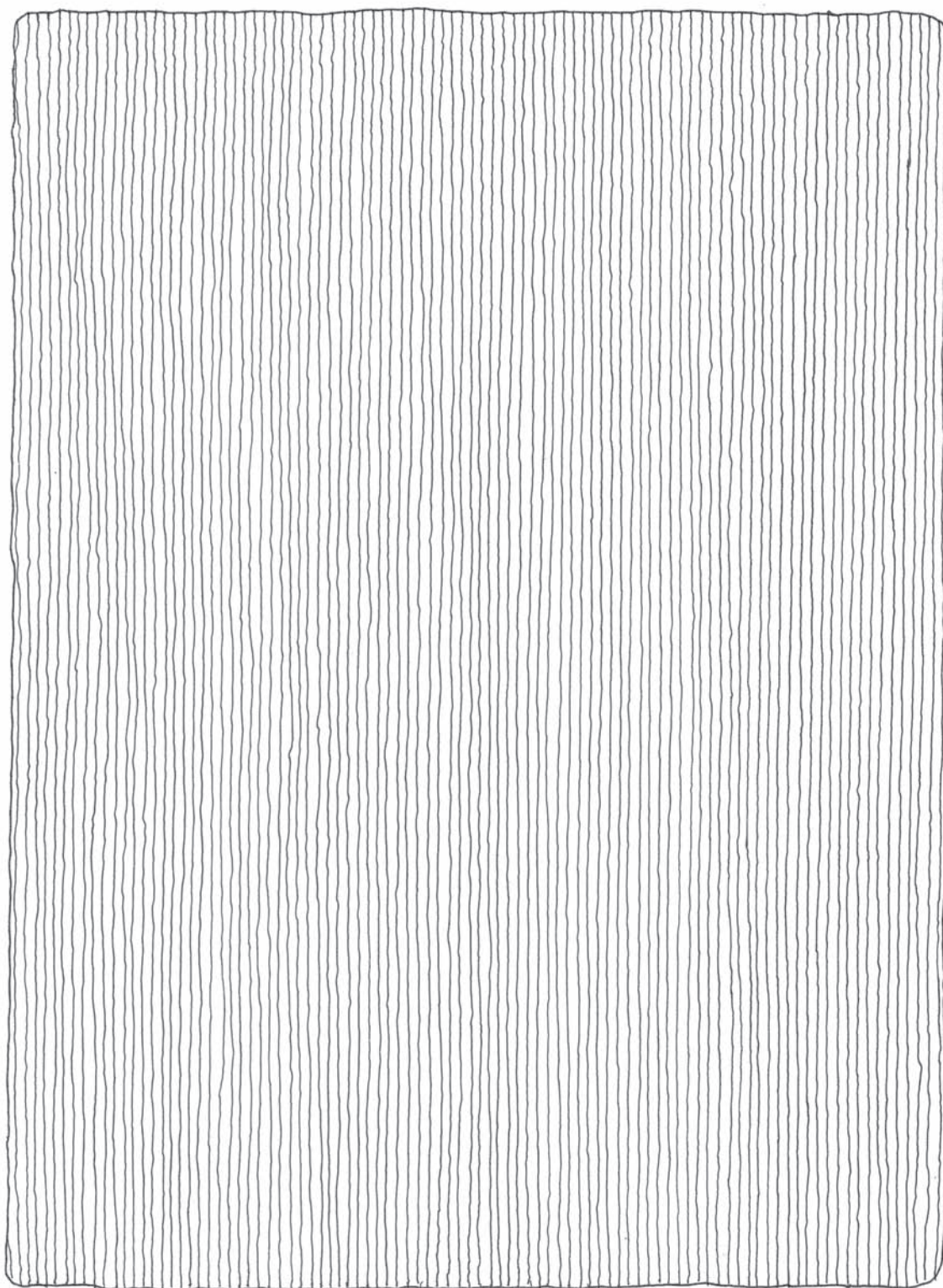
Feeling the tide recede











becoming animate.



The psychological reverberation of each exploding shell



















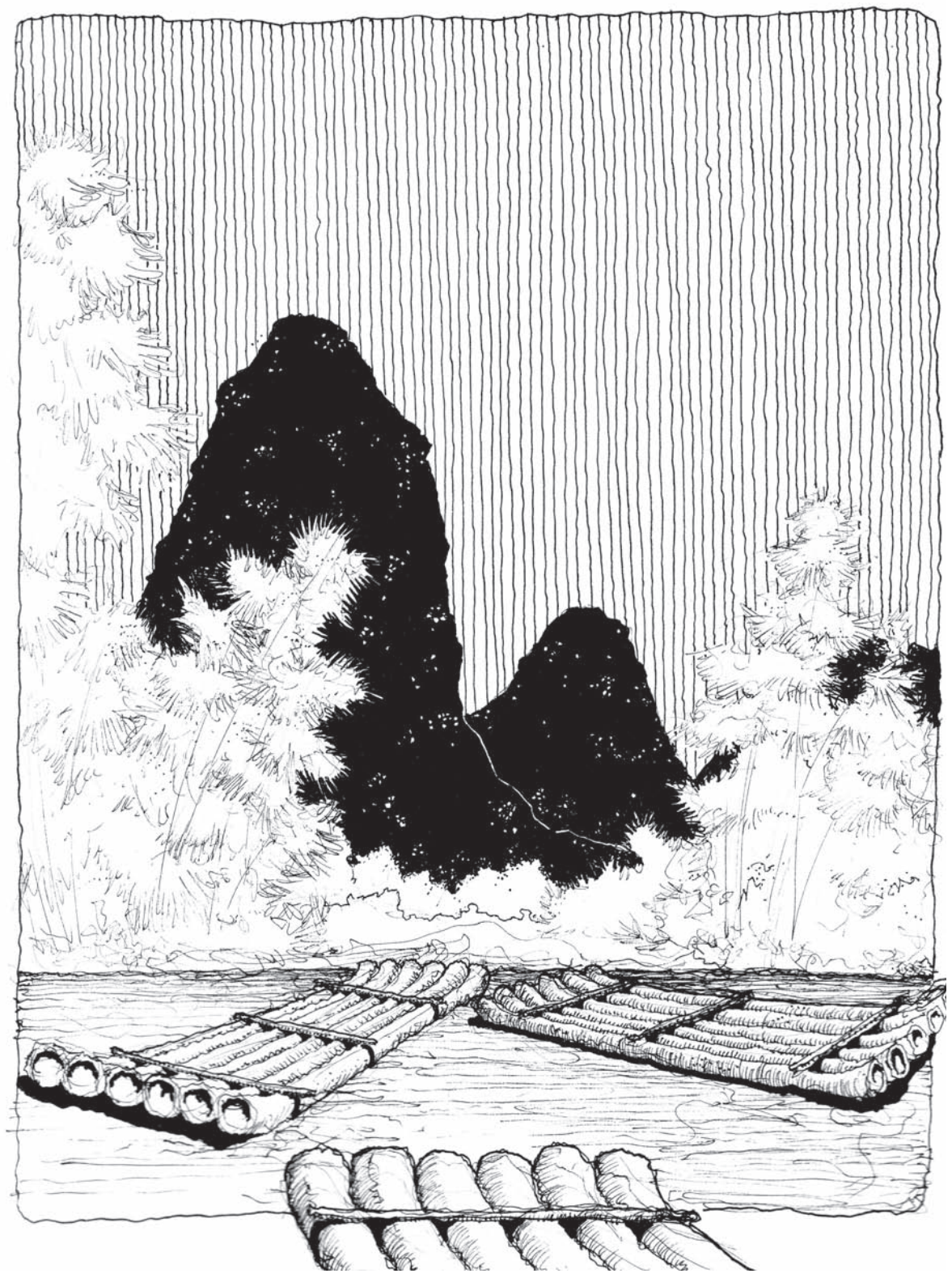




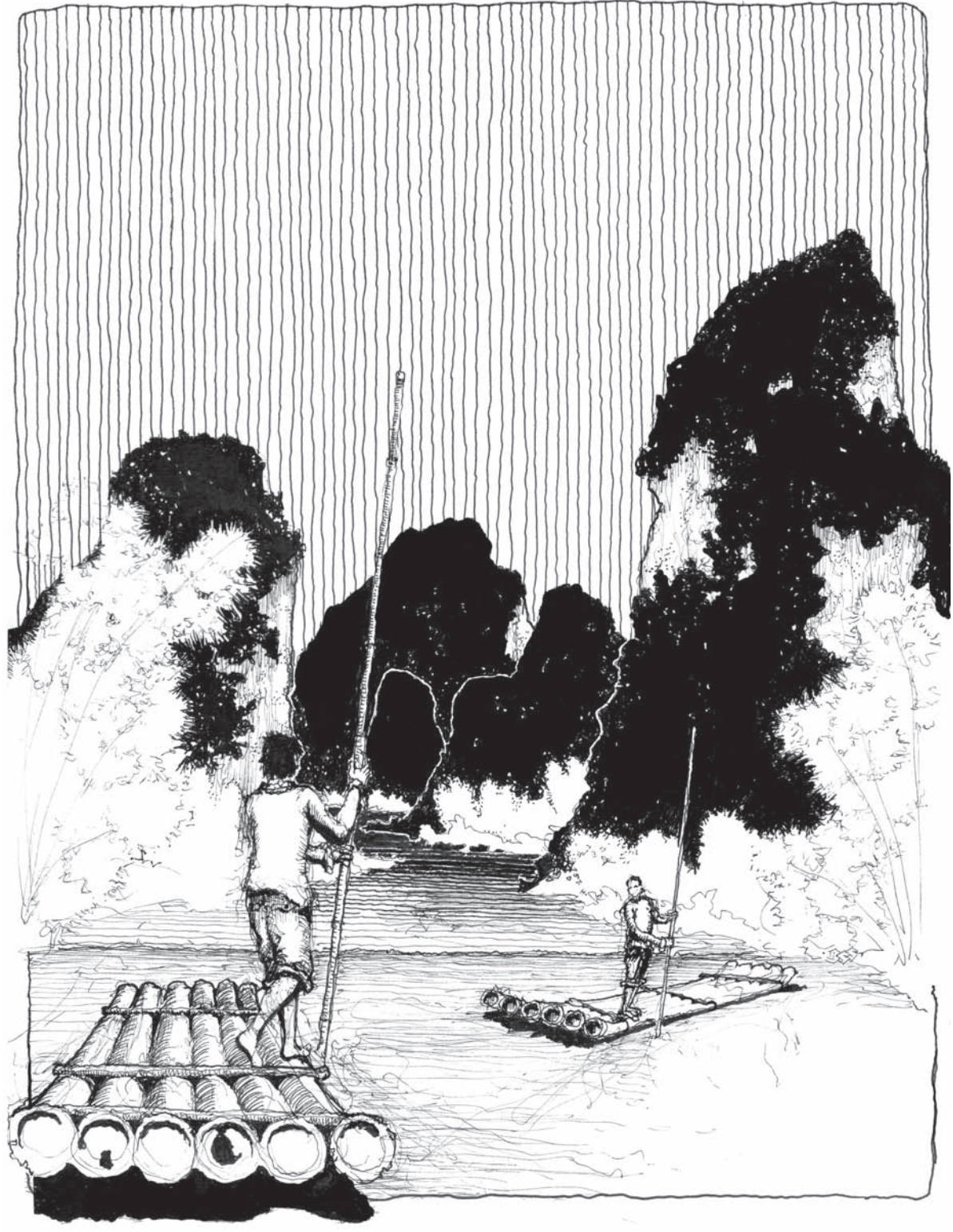
hairs remaining erect despite the impending heat.

Geology pausing

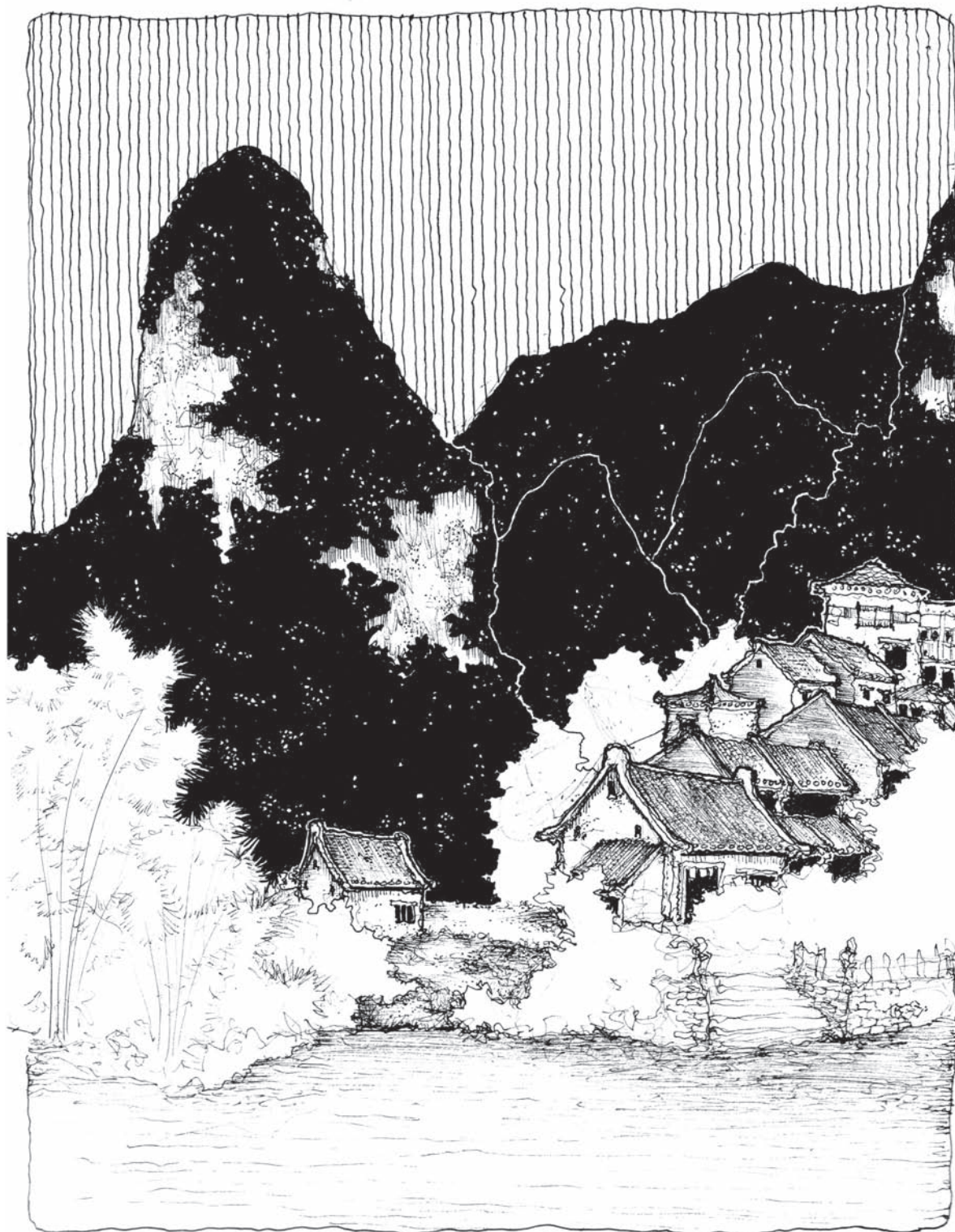




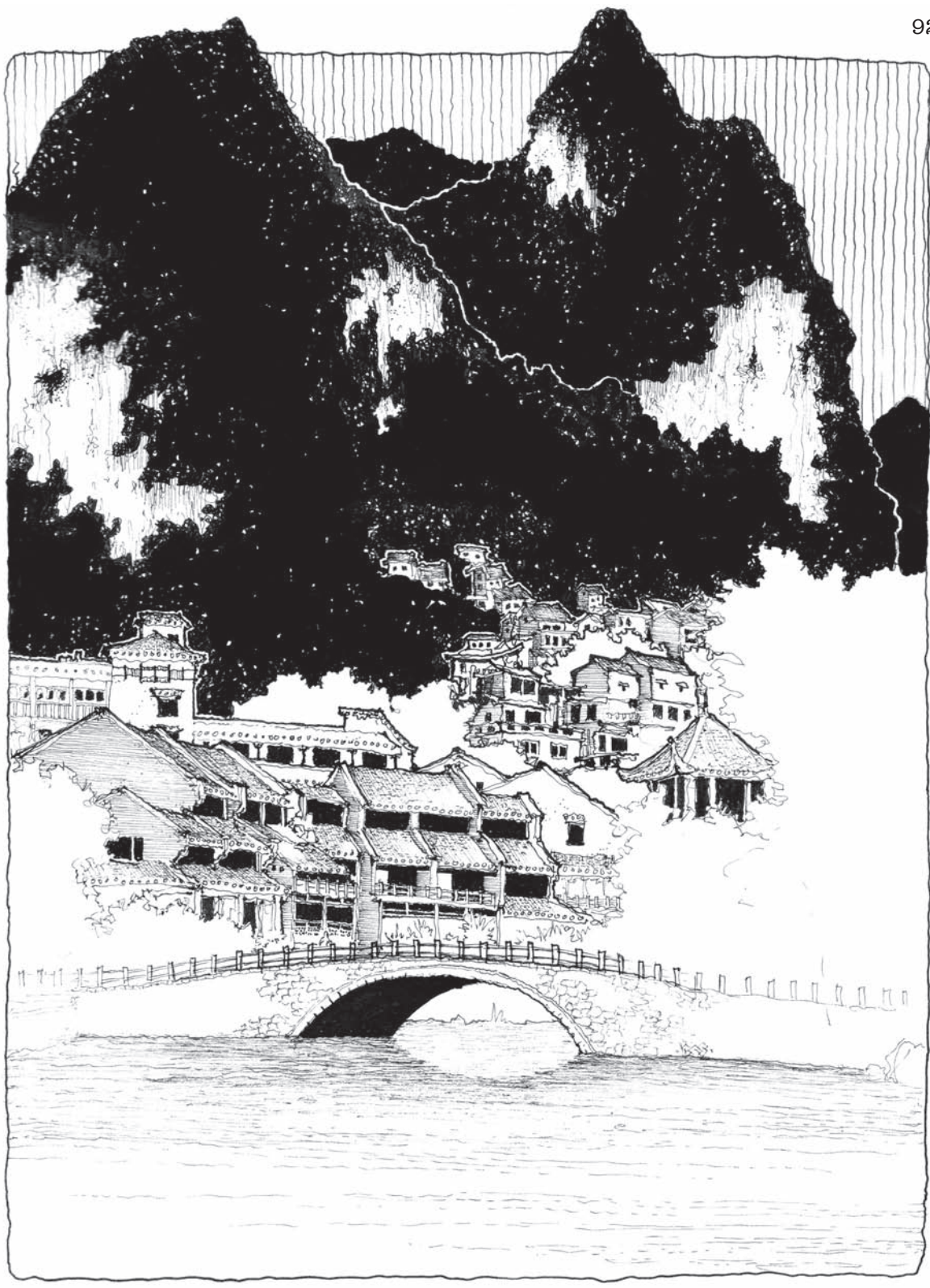


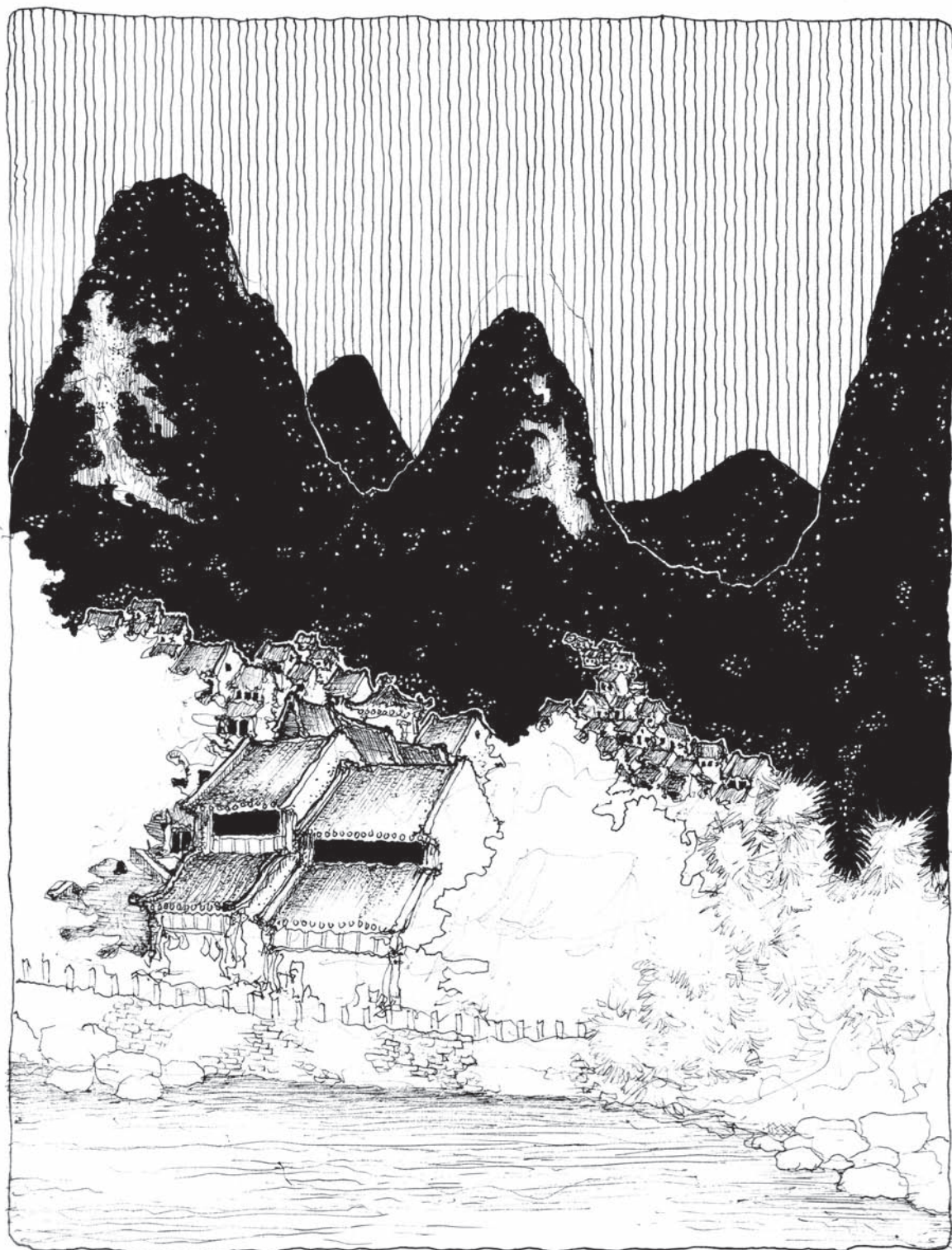




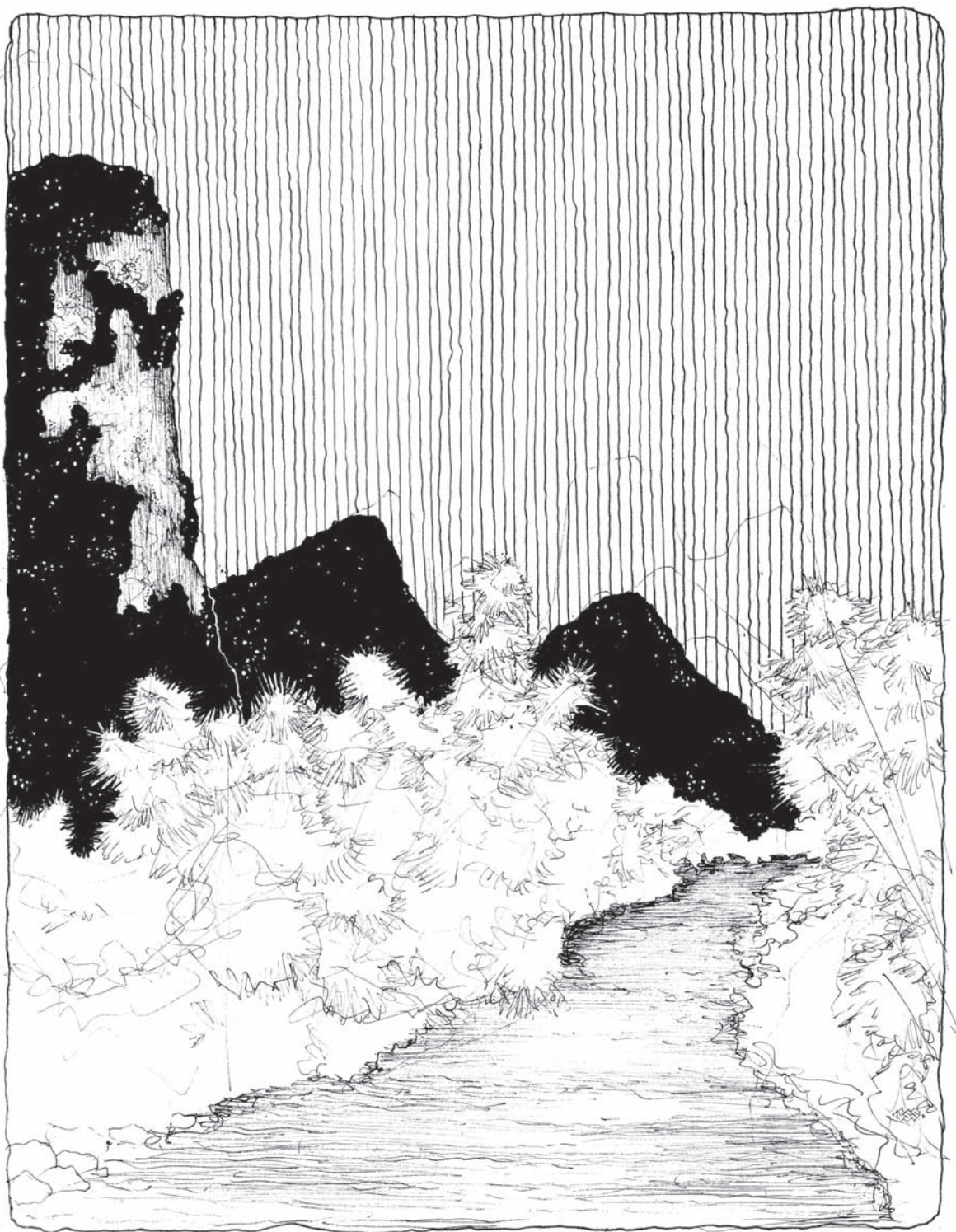














leaving morphological remnants.

Being still

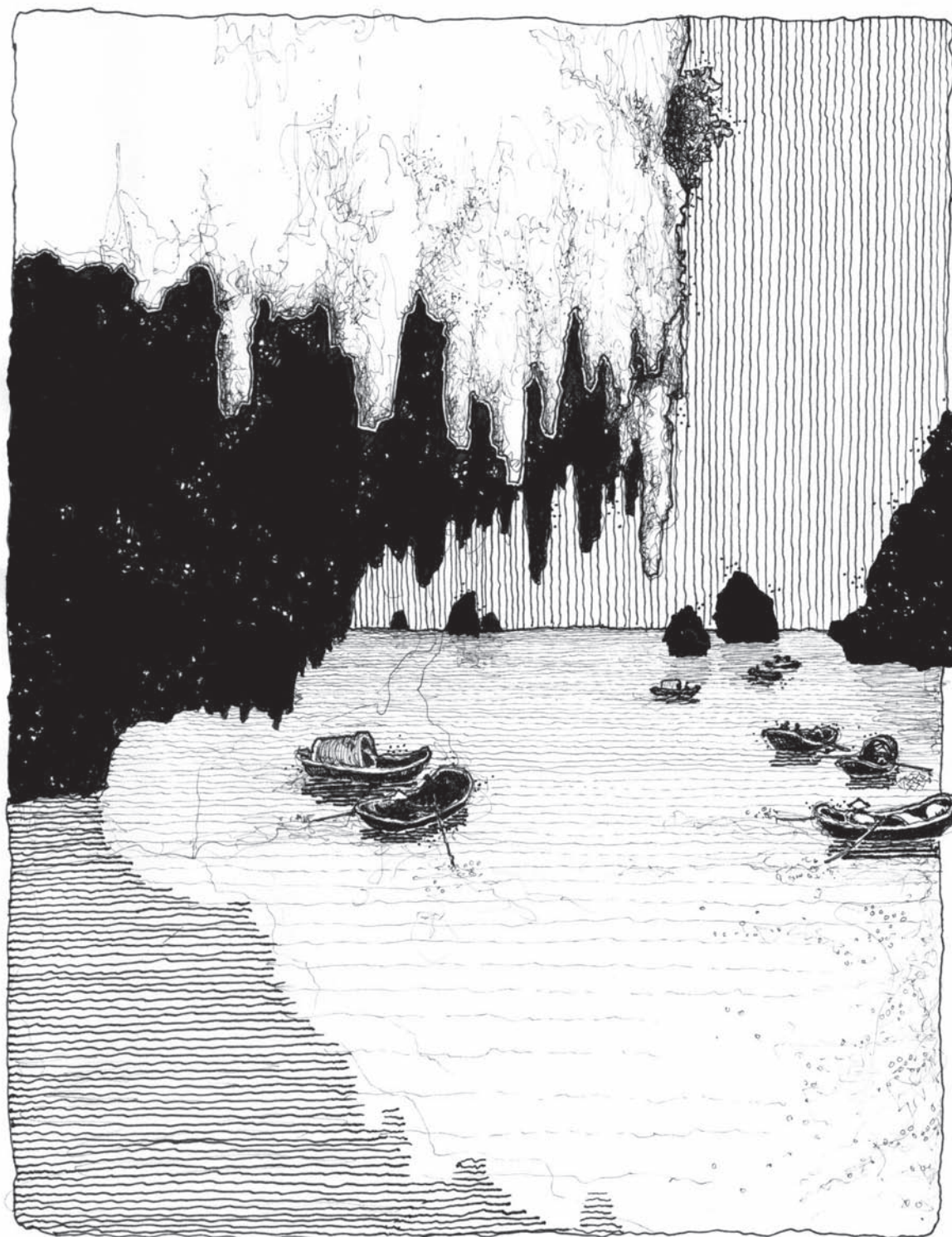




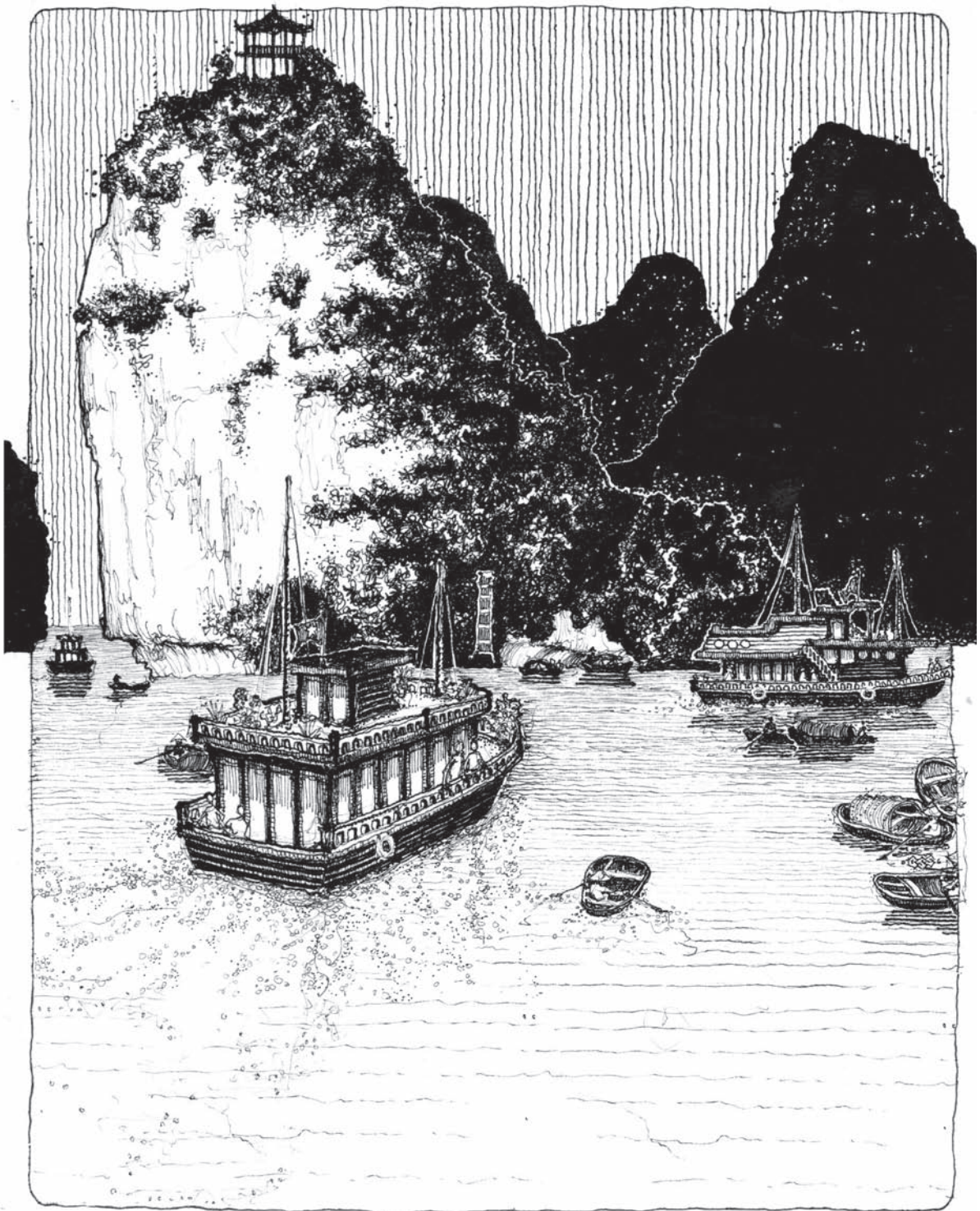






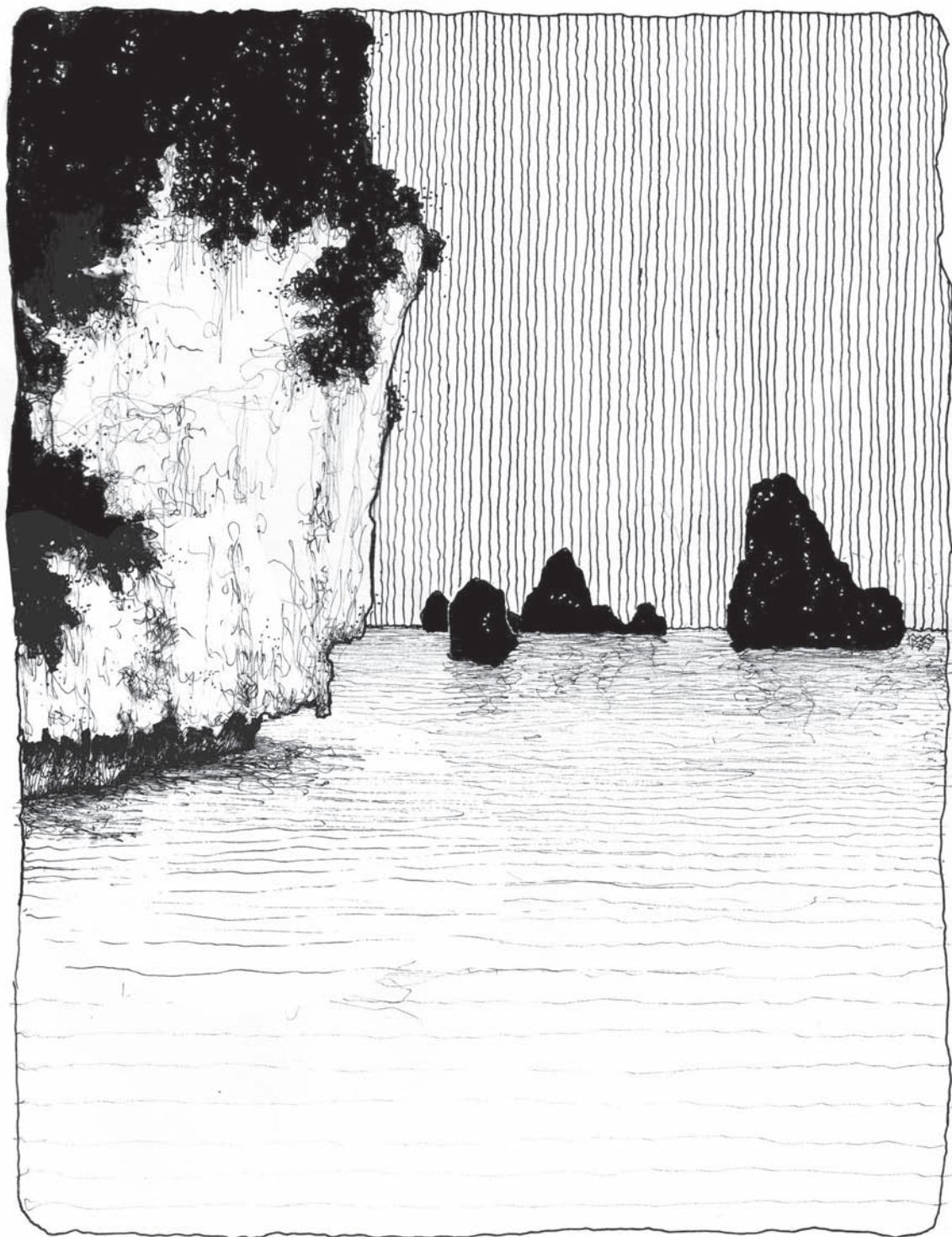




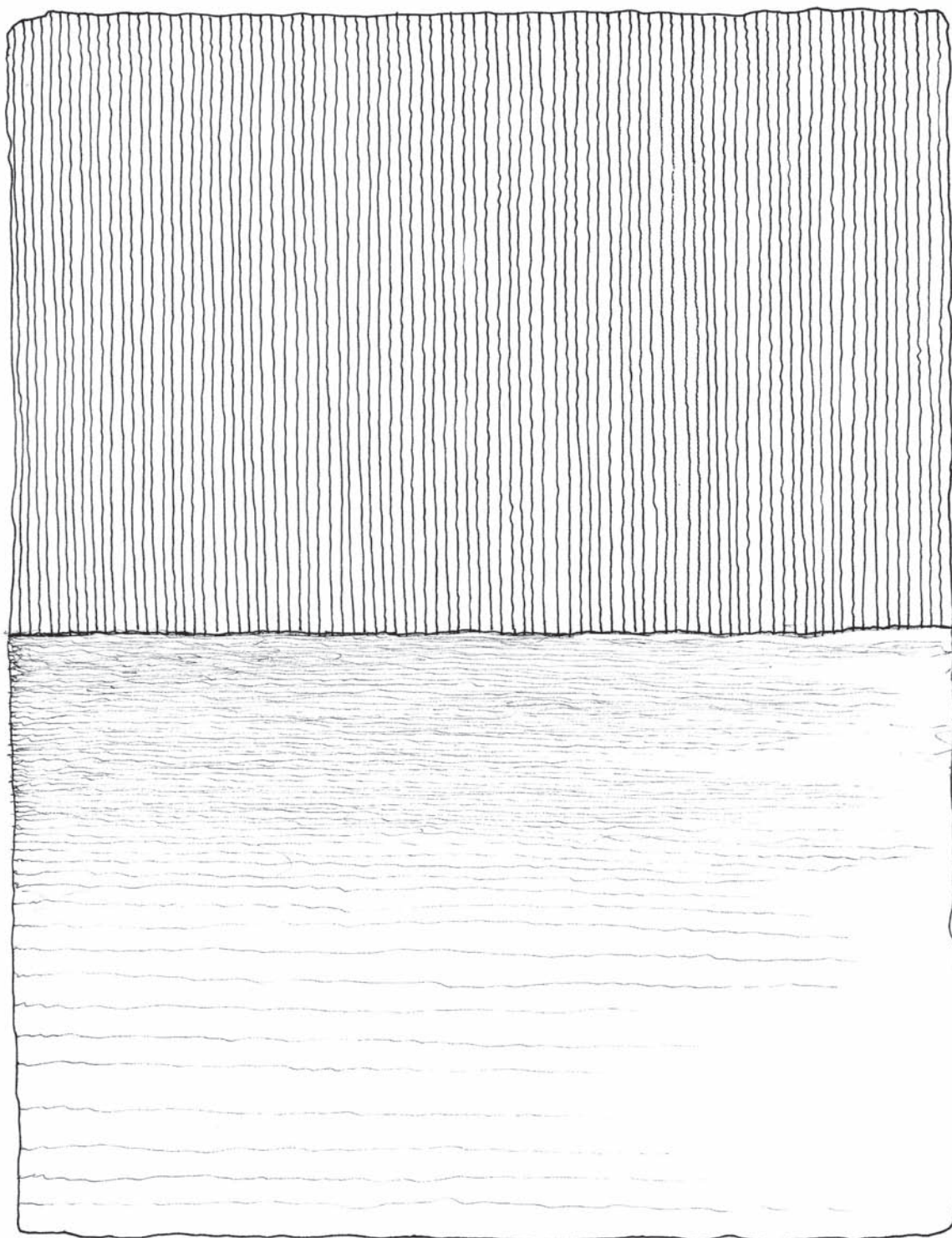












caught midflight.





The events that initiated these illustrations began with a series of preparatory measures, the first of which involved a collaboration between the Clark Honors College at the University of Oregon and the University Scholars Programme at the National University of Singapore. In recent years, the relationship between these institutions has established an exchange program that facilitates reciprocal cultural immersion. Ranked among the top twenty-five universities in the world, the National University of Singapore offers a diverse international education within an intricately organized center in Southeast Asia. The cultural discrepancies between continents offers a unique opportunity for students from each institution to experience an entirely new context.

Embedded within the exchange program is a tuition scholarship that alleviates the financial strain of studying abroad, and as the first Oregon student to participate in the exchange, extensive support came from affiliated faculties. Additional funding came from the Institute of International Education, providing a Freeman Award for Study Abroad in Asia that seeks to promote learning opportunities in Asian countries. Further financial incentive came from the biannual Louis C. Rosenberg Scholarship, given by School of Architecture and Allied Arts to support cultural exploration and encourage visual documentation. Together, these financial fortunes contributed to two semesters of structured academics in design and culture that provided the framework for boundless learning in Southeast Asia.

Twelve months of improvisation commenced immediately upon landing in Singapore. A Tuesday was lost in transit across the Pacific Ocean, and the density of activity in the following year meant to reclaim the lost day. Time was at a premium with a 355 day ticket; not a moment was to be relinquished, not even to the International Date Line. The academic agenda to which the opportunity was attributed held significant importance, but an incurable itch to travel forced an immediate reevaluation of intentions. Often, the syllabic instruction was supplemented, even replaced, with unorganized escapades in neighboring countries that included non-traditional instruction on bioluminescence, paralanguage, and culinography. When establishing the framework for a

year abroad, the prescriptive measures were kept to a minimum, realizing the limited potential for discovery within extensive logistical confinement. In place of planning, a toleration of ambiguity bred spontaneity, allowing for the eventual infill of content that emerged as a result of impulsive behavior. Iterations of seemingly irresponsible acts proved to be unabatedly beneficial in intellectual development as the flexible rubric of improvisation allowed for revelations that reached far beyond the confines of a typical classroom.

Modes of transport greatly influenced the quality of intermittent adventuring in Southeast Asia. Public transportation began as the preferred method of movement, but attitudes changed after realizing the compromised authenticity of dependent traveling. When reliant upon currency for transportation and accommodation, the initial cultural encounter is contingent upon an economic exchange of goods or services. Instead, a self-propelled means provided a more effective method of absorbing the positive aspects of place. Assuming the bicycle as the primary mode of transport replaced the economic introduction with a humanistic one. Exposure to culture grew increasingly genuine as the pace slowed to a digestible rate. Through the elongation of experience between destinations, doors were opened, meals were shared, tears were shed, and laughs were had.

Methods of documentation also influenced the level of cultural exposure while traveling in unfamiliar areas. Cameras carried connotations of wealth and were often treated as additional catalysts for economic interaction, but after being unwillingly relieved of two digital devices, the association of an elevated status dissolved. The devolution of technology proved again to be beneficial in gleaning the positive aspects of place. The authenticity of experience was further amplified by actively engaging the setting through the process of drawing and writing. This act of delineation demanded a similarly stretched-out encounter with a place, illuminating cultural curiosities through a humanistic form of documentation. Assuming the confines of static, two-dimensional media limited the communication devices to visual cues, thus demanding the maximum output of graphics for a greater chance of perspicuity. Within this format, the juxtaposition of words and

images enabled the transcription of experience through a codified language of available symbols, expanding each mode beyond its singular capacity.

Adopting a stylistic language was central to the propagation of a coherent body of words and images. The development of a graphic style was inspired by a collection of etchings by Louis C. Rosenberg. Rosenberg traveled the world with the eye of an artist, architect, educator, and author. In his travels, spanning the early decades of the twentieth century, he created intricate etchings that exemplify spatial delineation. The diversity of lineweights, the gradient of values, and the accuracy of perspective render his work as technically magnificent representations of place.

Another influential figure in the evolution of a visual identity was Matteo Pericoli. His eccentric linework exudes charm, and his panoramic compositions expand the confines of standard publication. The slight distortion of the constructions suggests a playful environment, one in which the consistency of detail diminishes hierarchy and amplifies the whole. Both Rosenberg and Pericoli were educated as architects, each applying his education in the graphic representation of place.

The author who most significantly influenced the treatment of writing was Jonathan Safran Foer. The mastery with which he utilizes words enables a reading that goes beyond the typical understanding of text. Foer cleverly arranges the space between type, as seen in the intermittent application of vast punctuation and periodic condensation of letters. Imagery is also incorporated into his work as thought provoking parallels to the tightly wound narrative. Innovative combinations of printed media mark Foer's work as an intermediary between literary and graphic arts.

An esoteric combination of words and images is pronounced in the work of Paul Madonna, a San Francisco based artist. Madonna's work incorporates a technically precise rendering of light in an energetic rematerialization of structures. Hand-lettered phrases applied directly on the image imply an understanding of the work through snapshots of thoughts or conversations. The illusory qualities of the setting are enhanced by floating



phrases of challenging correlation. Together, these artists contributed to the development of a stylistic language that informed subsequent compositions.

The tools used in arranging orchestrated inkblots on reconstituted trees included a variety of inscriptive devices and a variable quantity of undifferentiated receptive surface; namely, white paper and black pens. The unfaltering faith and predictability of these traveling companions cooperated well with the preferred mode of transport, weighing unnoticeably on a sufficiently loaded bicycle. For the duration of the Asian excursion, the tools were close at hand. Only when entering a holy place were they left unattended, accompanied instead by a pile of footwear outside the temple grounds. At all other times, the pens, nibs, ink, paper, and covers were close at hand.

The subject matter drew on impulse, as did most other things throughout the experience. A critical level of intrigue served as the criteria for documentation. Certain depictions began in the soaring temperatures of Delhi during the height of summer, in the humbling presence of the towering mosque minarets and searing stone floor which were hastily covered with burlap before prayer. Others required a fast pen stroke as the sun set on the teeming seedy streets of Bangkok as the light changed from a polluted gradient to a neon kaleidoscope. Elsewhere, a pervasive mist nearly obscured the ruins of Angkor, leaving barely enough visibility to render the massive Buddha effigies that populate rural Cambodia.

Depending on conditions, the on-site composition ranged from 30 minutes to 3 hours. When the oxygen-depleted air at 18,380 feet began stirring with frigid winds as an approaching storm crept over the Karakoram, the pens and paper quickly found their way back into the bicycle bags and readied themselves for an 80 mile decent into the dunes of the long-forgotten Silk Route, now restricted by glacial warfare. Other scenarios presented a much more accommodating setting in which to dwell and draw, times such as those spent on the shores of Pulau Tioman, listening to the salt-saturated breezes wisp through the palm canopy while the pulse of the calmly cresting waves cascaded onto the

bright white sands of the uninhabited beach.

All drawings began on-site as a way of understanding a place through an extended engagement of a singular setting. Light pen strokes of gestural quality arranged the initial composition while progressively denser strokes of increased fortitude rendered a range of lineweights and a gradient of values. Certain swatches reached full development on-site while other portions remained unfinished. Additional visual information was internalized until ample time was available to complete the drawing, at which point the missing information was revisited with degrees of interpretation. The loose lines gradually condense to create an identifiable setting, revealing the process of graphic development while establishing graphic hierarchy. The energetic linework implies levity and animation while the rigorous perspective suggests order and composure. Juxtaposing these qualities renders an environment realistic enough to inhabit but stylized enough to allow fantasy. Slightly exaggerated features enhance the fictional quality and obscure literal references while maintaining an atmospheric glee. A consistent treatment of the sky acts as a symbolic representation of sameness that unifies seemingly disparate settings. The mannerisms remain consistent in their application, adhering to a system of rendering that suggests idiosyncrasies among diverse subjects. Limiting the color palette to shades of black and white demands the utmost information from the lines themselves, and the uniformity with which the drawings are treated allows for comparisons of content before cosmetics. Confined to the application of duotone media, an idealized setting is created by manipulating materials and rearranging reality to achieve a state that exists only on paper.

The intensity of an event also became the criteria for written documentation, which in turn expressed the extremities of emotion experienced while in unfamiliar settings. Visible collisions of illegible lines recall the inscription process atop Kunzum La, written with fingerless gloves that offered little protection against the frigidity of a shelterless night on a pass exceeding 14,900 feet. Another entry depicts jostled fragments of an indecipherable language as the Malaysian train crawled over tight topography on

an overnight, over-air-conditioned jaunt through a prehistoric jungle. Others relate the overwhelming kindness of strangers who sacrificed vast resources for another's well-being. Inscribed in ecstasy or monotony, desperation or elation, the writings captured the intensity of an event during defining moments of character.

The daily entries that recorded the sensually stimulating environment were later distilled to their essential qualities. If in the distillation process the material was found to be laden with representative content, the words and images were arranged in rhythmic phrases that embodied the theme from which they came. The words hint at actuality, but fragmentation challenges the conventions of verbal communication. The fragments become lenses through which the corresponding images are interpreted. The space allocated to the phrase emphasizes its importance, suggesting an inordinate gravity upon each word. Also, the words act as a graphic device by aligning with the horizon of the corresponding image sequence, placing the viewer in a comfortable position to inhabit the corresponding series of images. The images suggest roots in reality, but certain techniques render them fictitious. They are arranged sequentially in a panorama that expands the confines of standardized formatting in an active role of discovery with each turning page. The opening and closing phrases resonate in a rhythmic fashion, between which the images are free to dance. The sequence is constructed along thematic lines instead of chronologic or geographic paths whereby the closing phrase dispatches the reading into a related sequence of words that correspond with similarly themed imagery. The theme begins naive and energetic in urban settings of electric quality. The progression parallels the lessons learned in diversity, tolerance, patience, theme progresses through triumphs and challenges, while learning things about patience, love, understanding, virtue in the process. The concluding sequence implies a continuation rather than a stasis, as to signify the perpetual growth on an exponentially ascending learning curve.

The combination of words and images presents an oblique relationship that seeks the attention of the viewer. Words relate to the corresponding images on a synaptic level, avoiding blatant signification that would inevitably reduce each constituent to less than



it is. Instead, an enigmatic relationship stripped of subjective references suggests a correlation of greater depth. Prescriptive measures remain few while insinuating references abound, establishing a framework for diversions and discoveries that are self-directed and unique to each viewer. Taking possession of the material licences the viewer to explore the visual and verbal environment with few restrictions of where to go and how to get there.



sketchbooks



drawings



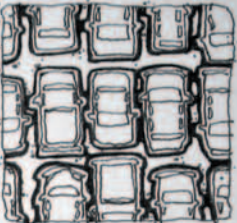


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DESIGN SEVEN

2006

CULTURAL NETWORKS: ART IS NON-DOGMATICAL, A RELIGION THAT EVERYONE SUBSCRIBES TO, APPROPRIATELY PLACED AS A HUB, POSSIBLY ON MIDDLE ROAD, DRAWING FROM THE SITE STUDY ANALYSIS OF THE SACRED AND PROFANE. THE SACRED NETWORKS OF QUEEN ST. INCLUDES INSTITUTIONS SUCH AS CHURCHES, MUSEUMS, AND ACADEMIA. TIME DOES NOT MEANS PARTICIPATION OR IT BRINGS DIVINITY, REVERENCE, INTERACTION. THE PROFANE WRAPS THE SITE WITH A NECESSARY COMPONENT TO SUSTAIN ART DESIGN AT THE QUEEN STREET.



7-15 Day 02, PAMUN, INDIA  
 ROLLING WHEELS INTO TOWN LAST, WHO SHOULD BE THE FIRST PERSON I ENCOUNTER BUT PETER? WITH A CIVIL GREETING AND A LONG DINNER, WE MET AGAIN IN PAMUN, ONLY TO MEET YET AGAIN IN SPRINGFIELD FROM THIS ENCOUNTER, DRAWING OF A FESTIVAL AT KARSHI GOMPA, DRAWING VILLAGERS FROM THE ENTIRE ZANGSAR COMPLEX TO AN INTIMATELY PROPORTIONED POSITION AT THE HEART OF A PROUDLY SLOPED COMPLEX ON THE ROCKY SLOPES OF VALLEY'S EDGE. CONTRARY TO HIS GUESTS WERE RESPECTFUL AND THE PERFORMANCE BY THE POWERFUL JUDGING BY THE SUN-CURED WOMEN THAT LOSE UNDER THEIR BUSHY BROWN EYEBROWS SHOULD HAVE IT THIN WOULD DISAPPEAR AT THIS POINT WITH THE WILLOW BEYOND ME. MY FATHER FINIS REPAIR OF MY



IONS MUCH LIKE THE REVELATIONS OF TELL ADDITIONAL ART GALLERY SHOULD COMBINE A "SOUL" TO THE DISTRICT, NOT ONLY A MUSEUM, BUT A VEHICLE FOR THE REALIZATION UP UNTIL PRESENT DAY. PRESENT A SOLUTION, IT GOES MORE SUBTLE. QUEEN STREET HAS MUSEUMS IN SINGAPORE SHOULD BE THE ASPECT. WHAT DOES A HEART, WE ARE WITH THAT WAYED. NOW AND ANSWER/ASKION, LACK OF ASPECT. THE MUSEUM SHOULD IT BE TO THEM, MAKE IT

TRANSIENT TRANSITION FROM NORTHERN MALAYSIA TO ITS SOUTHERN NEARLY SINGAPORE PRODS FAR MORE INTERESTING AND ANNOYING THAN CALD INTERESTED EMERGING FROM THE DISTRICT FROM LONG BENCH THAT BATTLE AND ORGAN, THE ROAD TO THE SINGAPORE WITH OPTIONS TO GO AT THE LEGAL WITH PROMISING THE DISTRICT WITHIN OF SINGAPORE FROM A FINE OLD GROUNDWORK, LOOKED POSSIBLE. RESISTING TO I WASTED WITH EXHAUSTING ME FAIRLY MOUNTAIN WITH HIS HEART HE INTELLECTUAL LIGHTS ALL ENTRANCE THAT WOULD BE SURELY COMING TO THE SURFACE OF THE SINGAPORE



ITS BEEN THE STEERING CREATIVE... ELEVATE, REVEAL, SINGAPORE TRIES BEFORE WRITING SOMETHING GOOD SENIOR PRODUCES SOMETHING GOOD PRIZE WILL FOLLOW, SINGAPOREANS THE ART-LOVING COMMUNITY, BUT THEY'VE TO PRACTICE. FOCUS ON A NOBEL WORTHY STORY, NOBEL WINNER PACKAGE HIS OR HER PRIZE. SINGAPORE CANNOT BE BRANDED, IT CAN BE CURATED. THE SPACE CAN A BRAND FOR THE PRODUCT, A RITE OF PASSAGE, A FRAMEWORK THAT ELEVATES BRANDS ART AND AN ENVIRONMENT THAT FOSTERS LOCAL ART, ONE CANT BE REALIZED WITHOUT A JUNCTAPOSITION AT ITS COUNTERPART. USE MULTIPLE SITES AROUND SINGAPORE.

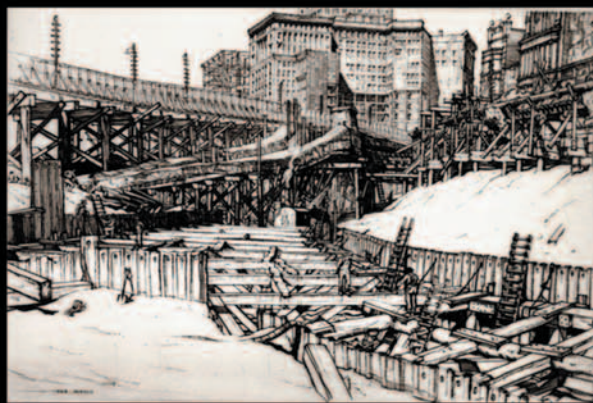
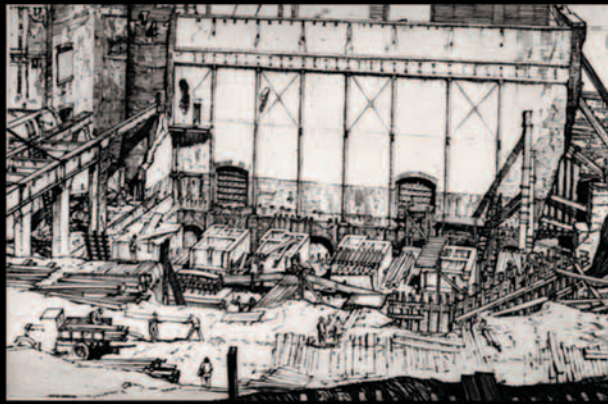
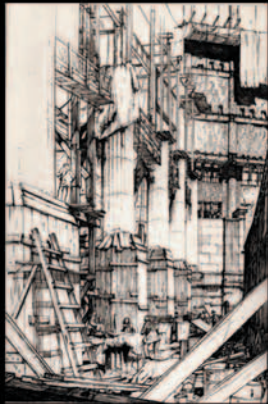
3-2 (54)  
 CONSUMERS ARE IDIOTS AND I'LL BE DAMNED IF I NURTURE PRODUCTS THAT CYCLE OF BUYING, SELLING AND TOSHING. THERE IS NO SHRED OF INTEREST IN MY WHOLE BEING TO MAKE THE GOOD LIVES OF THE MATERIAL WORLD OF THE HAVING SPENT SO MUCH TIME AND ENERGY ON A PENTITE EDUCATION TO OCCUPY MY FEEL OBVIOUS TO FEEL THESE LESS REVEALED.

writing



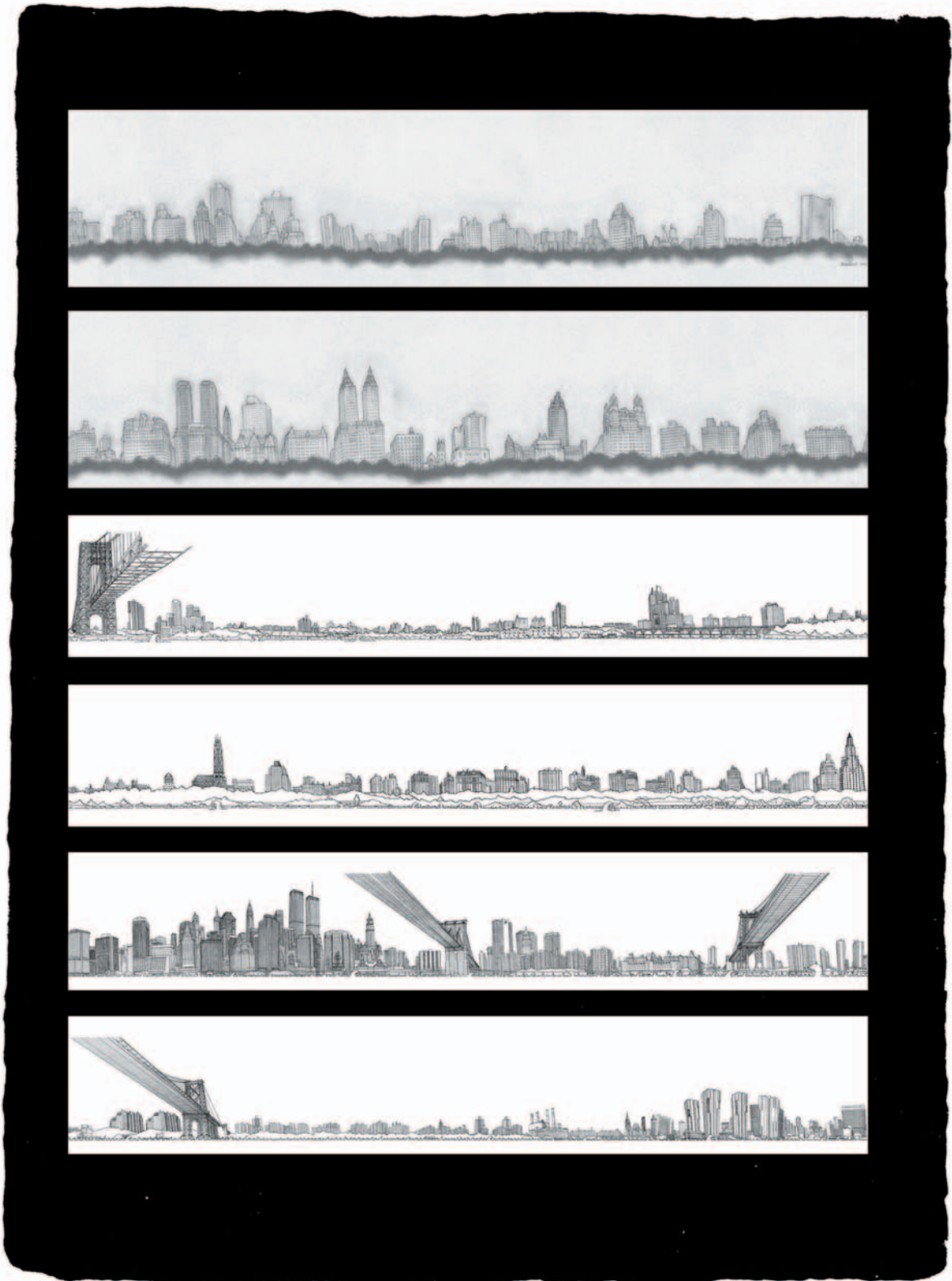
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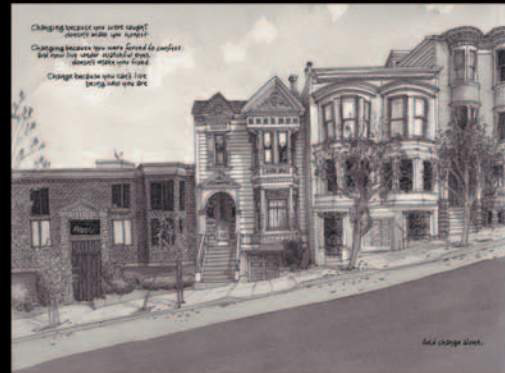
Louis C. Rosenberg





Matteo Pericoli





Paul Madonna



