

STILL LIFE | NATURE MORTE
FABIENNE FRANCOITTE

still life — nature morte
2022

Fabienne Francotte's work looks at what remains in the aftermath of trauma, abuse and migratory displacement. In *Still Life | Nature Morte*, she situates the human body as the site of these afflictions. Working with abuse victims, Fabienne created this collection over several years, often informed by her creative workshops. These drawing projects took place in circumstances ranging from mental hospitals and children's development centres in Sri Lanka to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and troubled youth in Belgium. *Still Life | Nature Morte* questions how we, as a society, speak about invisible wounds, hidden traumas and pervasive power structures in our communities.

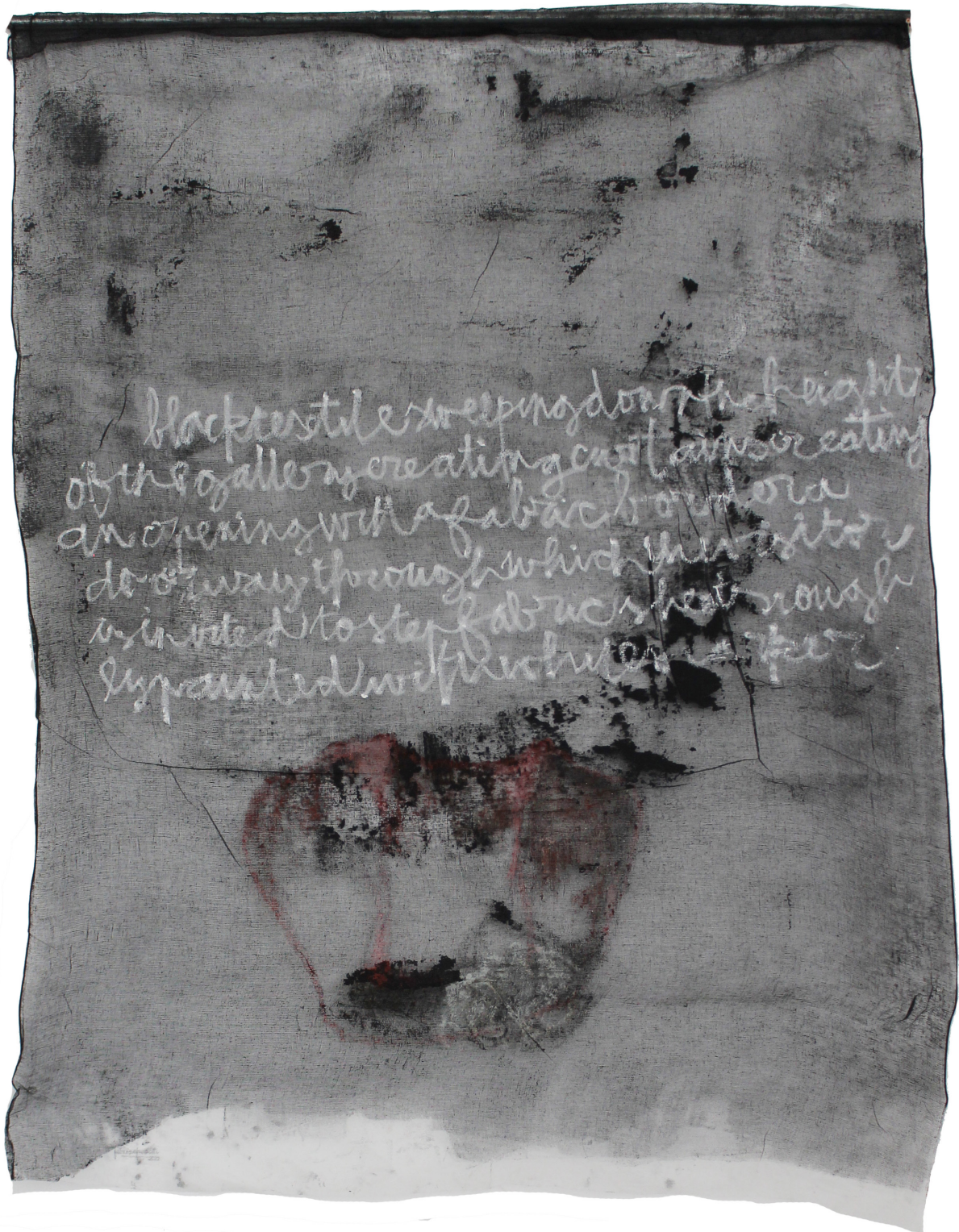
Art has the voice to highlight the range and expansiveness of hardship. It is around the thematic of the unspoken and the invisible that Fabienne centres this exhibition. Populated with portraits, installation drawings and anatomical sculptures, she presents a framework by which the audience can access an insightful perspective on a complex topic. *Still Life | Nature Morte* means still life in French, Fabienne's native language; in the artistic tradition of still life imagery, stillness takes on the appearance of something unmoving and silent. However, in working with vulnerable, that which is silent and suppressed often rises to the surface to face itself when given a chance. These opportunities for release were evident in her drawing sessions at the Institute of Mental Health in Angoda, Colombo, where Fabienne would visit patients twice a week over two years. The patients suffered from a range of abuse: physical, sexual, verbal, psychological and cultural. Often, the stigma associated with these topics is an unspoken language in and of itself. However, in Fabienne's experience, the primacy of making art transcends language boundaries: a non-verbal relationship would often establish itself without a shared spoken tongue. Her instinct for understanding the vulnerability of human beings propels her to examine the patterns of behaviour that enable the universal experience of suffering.

Still Life | Nature Morte contains discomfiting imagery that people often cannot identify with completely but can relate to emotionally. An installation of black fabric titled *The Curtains* reveals hidden stories of trauma and abuse; the writing on the artwork becomes a form of mark-making and creative energy. This force is not well-defined or complete; it is an experience and a healing process. The drapes signify the intentional hiding away of something; in contrast, the display of kneecap bone sculptures, titled *Bones Don't Lie*, comments on the body's resilience. As our muscles and memories have the flexibility to both hold and release deep tensions, the skeletal structures of our bodies present a different narrative. They are rugged, dense and compact, and their aesthetic qualities reveal the capacity to possess suffering and grace simultaneously. Fabienne focuses on the kneecap to reflect how one can metaphorically walk again after suffering defeat, as the bone joint is pivotal in movement. The idea for the sculptures emerged during the pandemic, and they show the fractures and traces of the production process. This process implies that such faults cultivate the more nuanced aspects of beauty over time. Fabienne interrogates the paradoxical qualities of natural beauty by juxtaposing the macabre and the colourful. In *The Fragmented Body*, a series of mixed media work on brown cardboard sheets, she depicts disembodied segments of the male and female human bodies.

Phantom limbs float in thoughtful spaces blushed with reds and blues. On closer inspection, the arms, legs and torsos carry a darker and bloodier story of violence, hurt and mutilation. Fabienne quotes the artist Louise Bourgeois stating that "blue represents peace, meditation and escape"

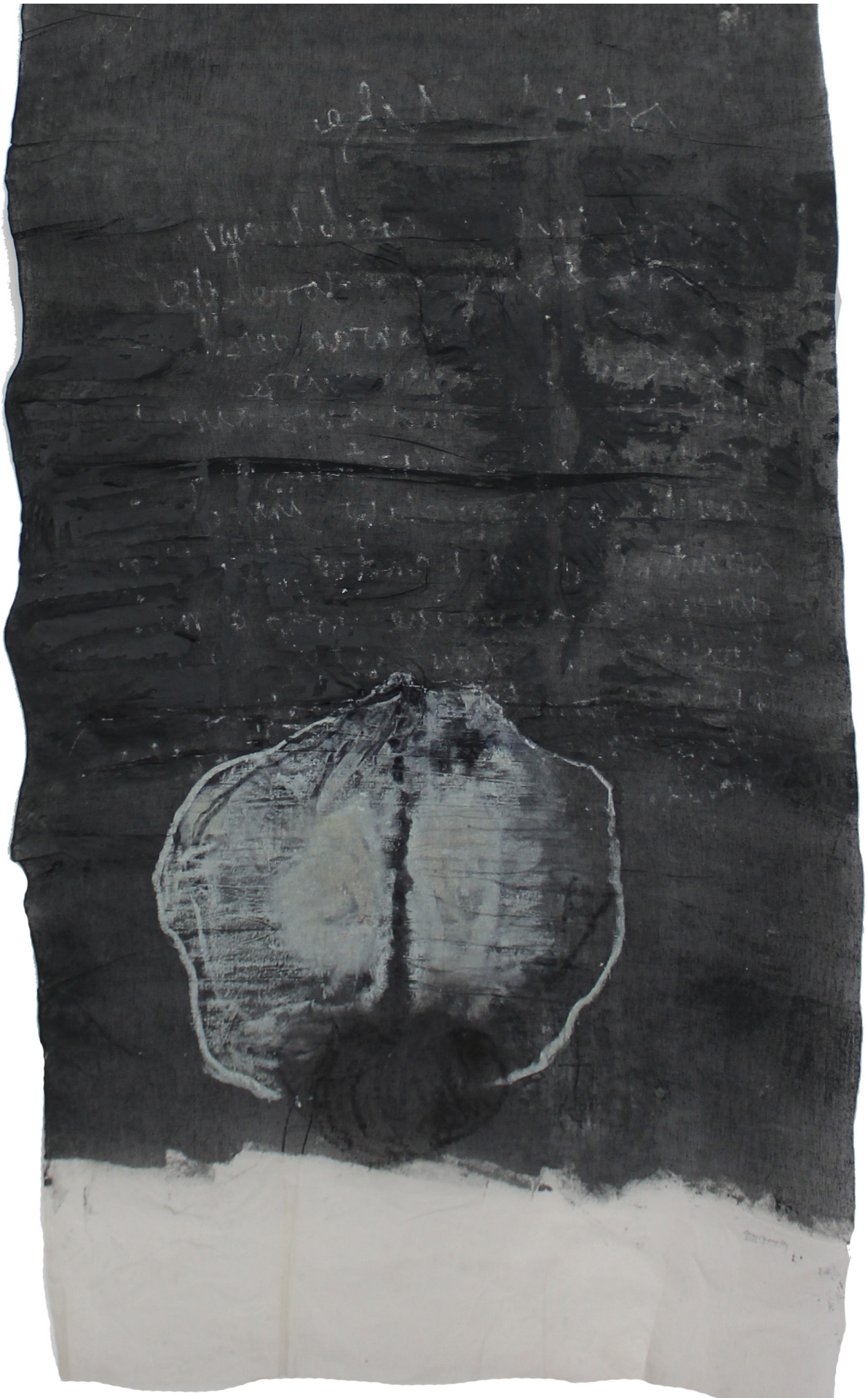
The pictures provide an outlet for hurt and despair by giving the act of suffering a voice; conversely, they create a space for the audience to participate in a transformative thinking process. Fabienne explores these storytelling elements further in a series of imaginary portraits titled *It Did (Not) Happen*. This portrait series makes conceptual leaps in balancing realistic impressions of facial features with calligraphic and gestural brushwork and painterly abstraction. Language boundaries are surpassed here as facial expressions and the eyes, in particular, speak volumes that the mouth and the spoken tongue cannot. The termite-ridden textures of the canvas suggest a passage of time and a repetition of relapses and traumatic episodes necessary for the complex healing process.

The communication of emotion and feeling is crucial in Fabienne's work. *Still Life | Nature Morte* is a physical translation of painful and overwhelming experiences people have suffered. A self-taught artist, Fabienne's relationship with her art practice extends beyond academic intellectualism and delves deeply into what it means to connect with people. Her work is about being human in what seems to be a primarily dehumanised world devoid of moral values. She sees the marginalised and creates bridges between worlds.



blackestile
of the gallery creating an opening
an opening with a fabric
down way through which
is intended to step
separated with

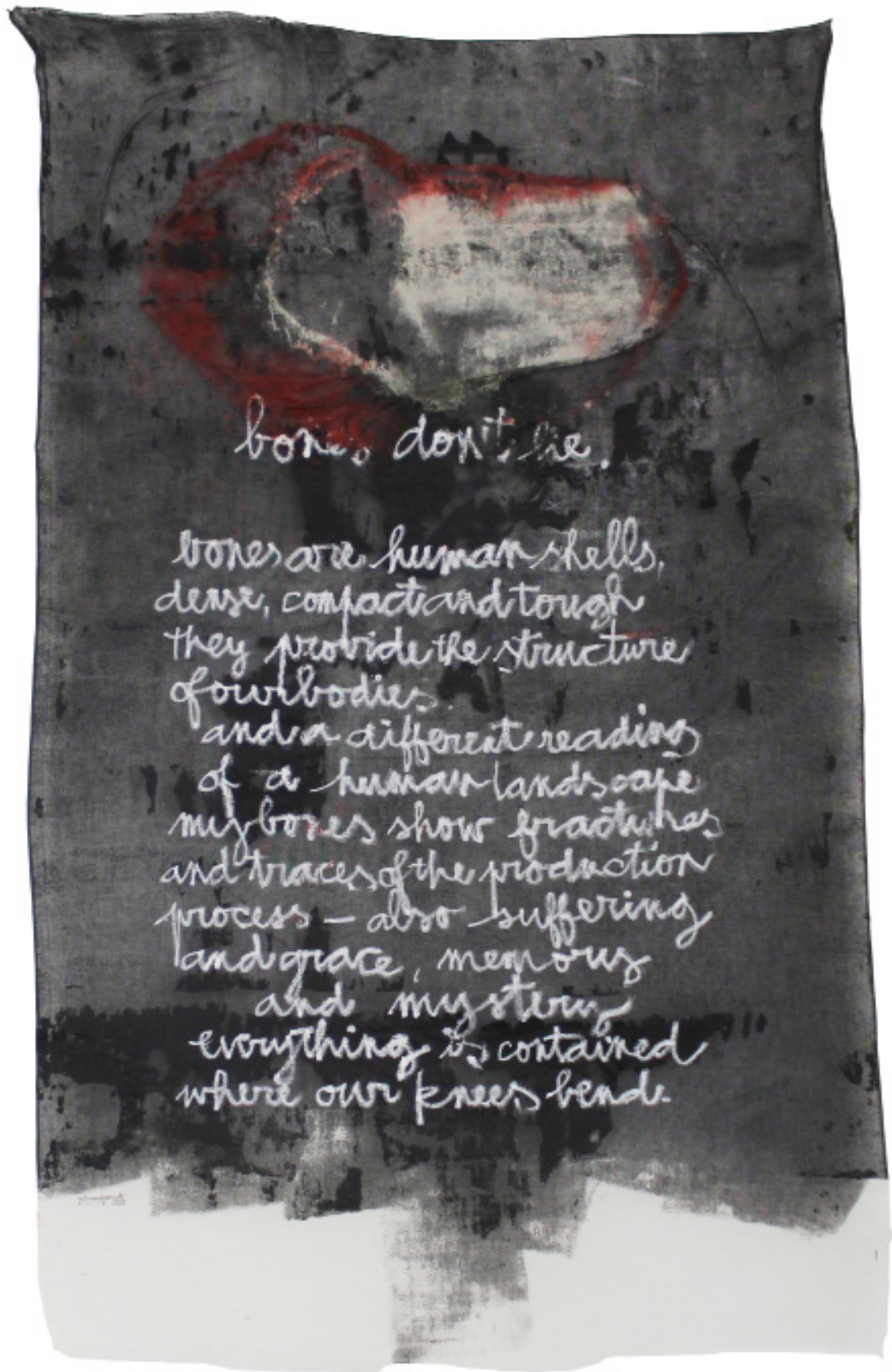
A Doorway, 2022, Emulsion Paint on Tarlatan, 176cm x 137cm



Still Life, 2022, Emulsion Paint on Tarlatan 272cm x 127cm



Otherness, 2022, Emulsion Paint on Tarlatan, 248cm x 142cm



bones don't lie.

bones are human shells,
dense, compact and tough
they provide the structure
of our bodies
and a different reading
of a human landscape
my bones show fractures
and traces of the production
process - also suffering
and grace, memory
and mystery
everything is contained
where our knees bend.

the drapes

there is nothing wrong
like nothing ever happened
as if nothing has changed
pretending that what
changed the situation
never existed
the room was airless
what happened behind the
drapes, remains un-noticed.

Recs#

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it's so in force obtain
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ation 20 marks 20 g
are about in force obtain
that speaks of a feeling and a
person and an instance
itself it's not about an
explanation it's a sensation.



This Did (Not) Happen 3, 2021, Mixed Media on Canvas, 109 cm x 109 cm



This Did (Not) Happen 4, 2021, Mixed Media on Canvas, 109 cm x 110 cm



This Did (Not) Happen 5, 2021, Mixed Media on Canvas, 109 cm x 117 cm



This Did (Not) Happen 2, 2021, Mixed Media on Canvas, 101 cm x 92 cm



This Did (Not) Happen 9, 2021, Mixed Media on Canvas, 109 cm x 115 cm



This Did (Not) Happen 7, 2021, Mixed Media on Canvas, 109 cm x 115 cm



This Did (Not) Happen 8, 2021, Mixed Media on Canvas, 109 cm x 119 cm



This Did (Not) Happen 11, 2021, Mixed Media on Canvas, 109 cm x 114 cm



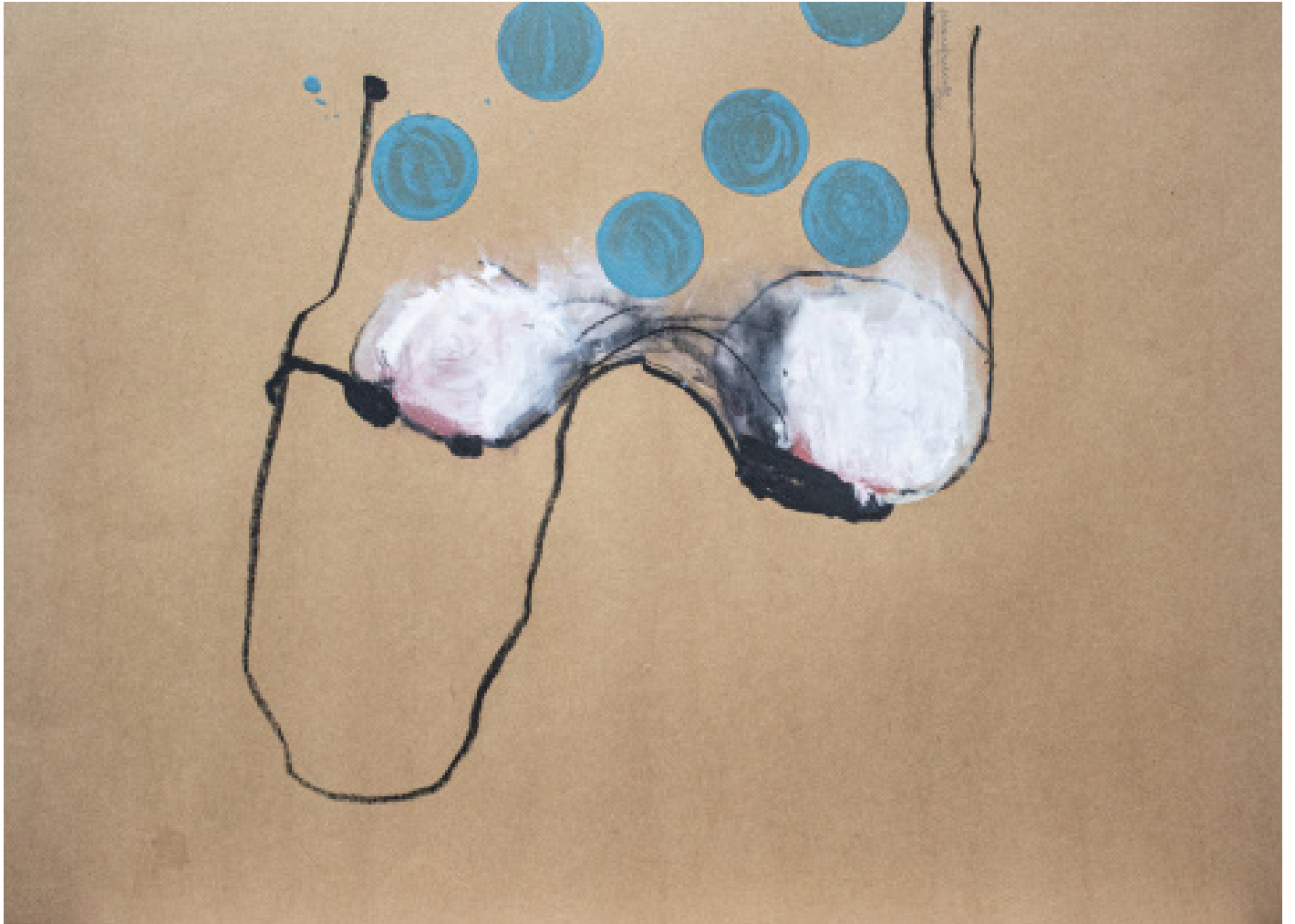
This Did (Not) Happen 6, 2021, Mixed Media on Canvas, 109 cm x 110 cm



This Did (Not) Happen I, 2021, Mixed Media on Canvas, 113 cm x 107 cm



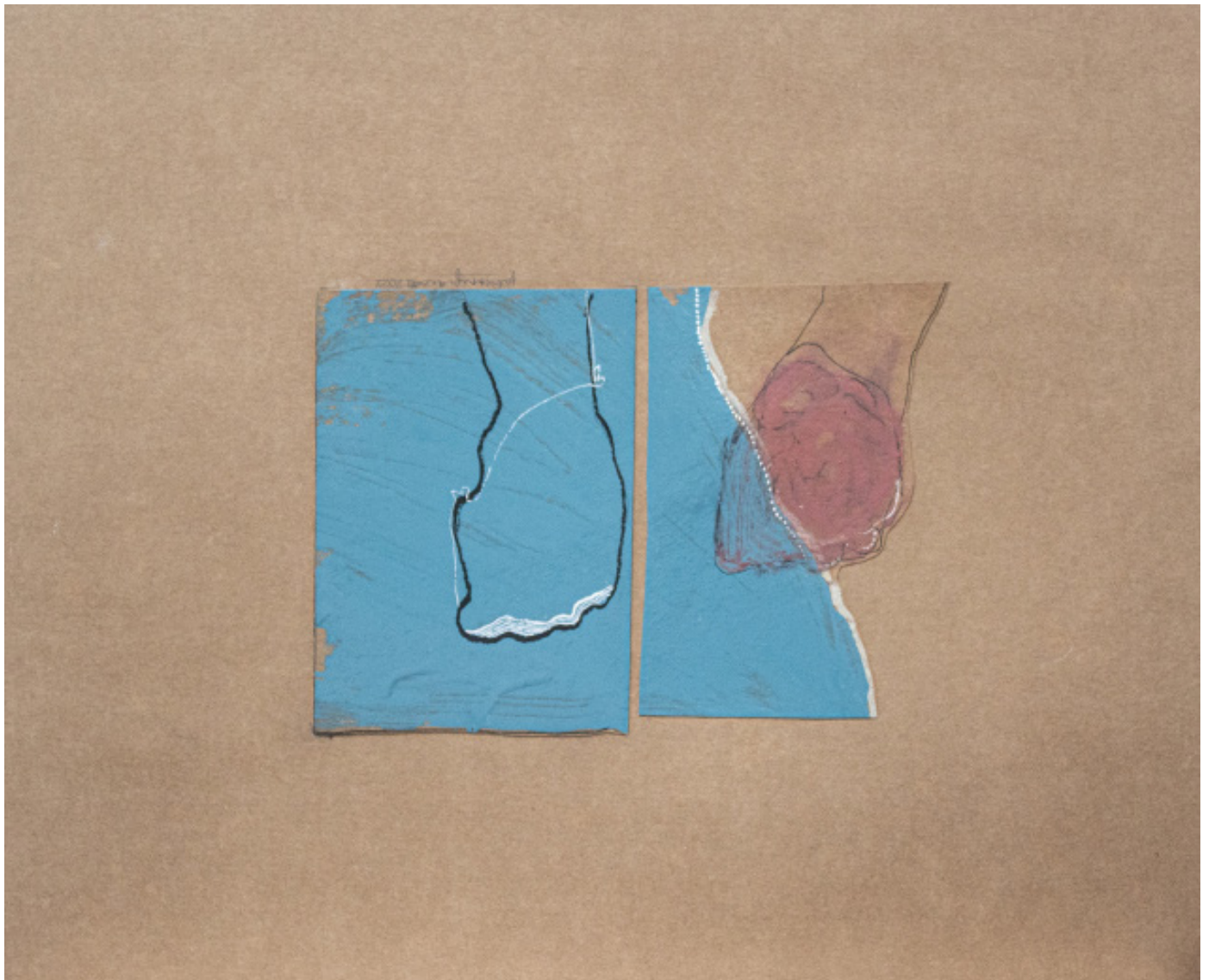
This Did (Not) Happen 10, 2021, Mixed Media on Canvas, 109 cm x 118 cm



The Fragmented Body 6, 2022, Mixed Media on Cardboard, 52 cm x 72 cm



The Fragmented Body 7, 2022, Mixed Media on Cardboard, 52 cm x 72 cm



The Fragmented Body 5, 2022 ,Mixed Media on Cardboard, 54 cm x 66 cm



The Fragmented Body 8, 2022, Mixed Media on Cardboard, 54 cm x 66 cm



The Fragmented Body 3, 2022, Mixed Media on Cardboard, 47 cm x 84 cm



The Fragmented Body 2, 2022, Mixed Media on Cardboard, 55 cm x 84 cm



The Fragmented Body 4, 2022, Mixed Media on Cardboard, 54 cm x 66 cm



The Fragmented Body I, 2022, Mixed Media on Cardboard, 84 cm x 55 cm





a different reading of a human landscape. [05]



FRAGILE



testone

01

(Left to Right) Still Life | Nature Morte 14, 2022, Ceramic, (Left to Right) Still Life | Nature Morte 14, 2022, Ceramic, 17 x 10 x 5 cm, Drawing 01,





test four 04

(Left to Right) Still Life | Nature Morte 16, 2022, Ceramic, 12 x 7 x 6 cm Drawing 04, 2022, Mixed Media on Paper, 25 cm x 18 cm



ANNOTATED
ILLUSTRATIONS

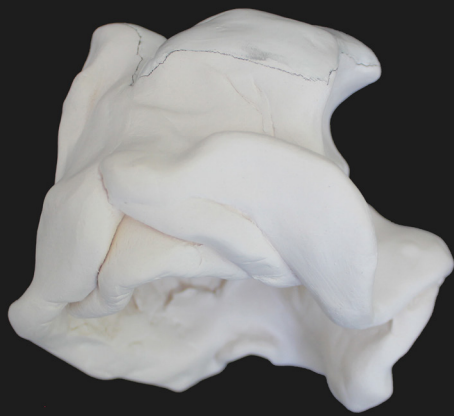


09



(Left to Right) Drawing 09, Mixed Media on Paper; 25 cm x 18 cm, Still Life | Nature Morte 24, 2022 Ceramic, 17 x 7 x 4 cm







(Left to Right) Still Life - Nature Morte 22, 2022, Ceramic, 9 x 7 x 6 cm, Still Life - Nature Morte 23, 2022, Ceramic, 7 x 6 x 3 cm, Still Life | Nature Morte 2, 2022, Ceramic, 8 x 7 x 8 cm, Drawing 07, 2022, Mixed Media on Paper, 25 cm x 18 cm





(Left to Right) Still Life | Nature Morte 15, 2022 Ceramic, 8 x 8 x 4 cm, Nature Morte 21, 2022, Ceramic, 7 x 8 x 4 cm, Drawing 11, 2022, Mixed Media on Paper, 25 cm x 18 cm



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PROVOKE
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RE EMPA
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MY ROLE
AS INDIVI
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ROLE AS
INDIVIDUAL
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OF WOMEN
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TALK ABOUT
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USING DRA
WINGS AND
WRITINGS
AS LOUDSP
EAKERS.

test
07.

TO BE
CONTINUED







(Left to Right) Still Life | Nature Morte 5, 2022, Ceramic, 20 x 7 x 3 cm Drawing 08, Mixed Media on Paper, 25 cm x 18 cm





10

(Left to Right) Still Life | Nature Morte 7, 2022, Ceramic, 24 x 8 x 6 cm Drawing 01, 2022, Mixed Media on Paper, 25 cm x 18 cm



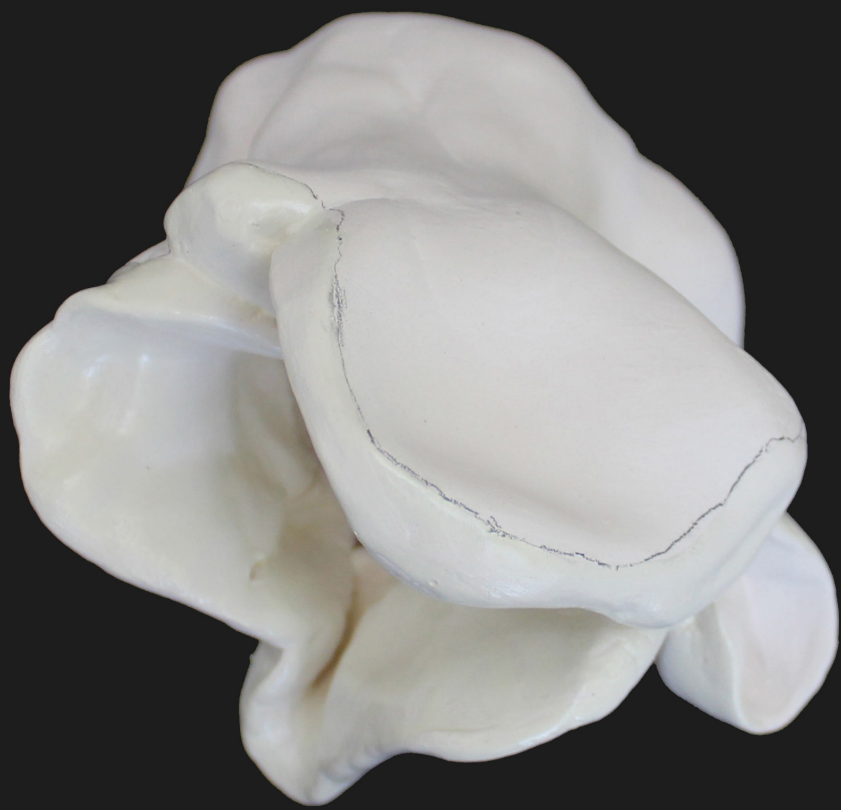
03

test three - "close to the fragment".

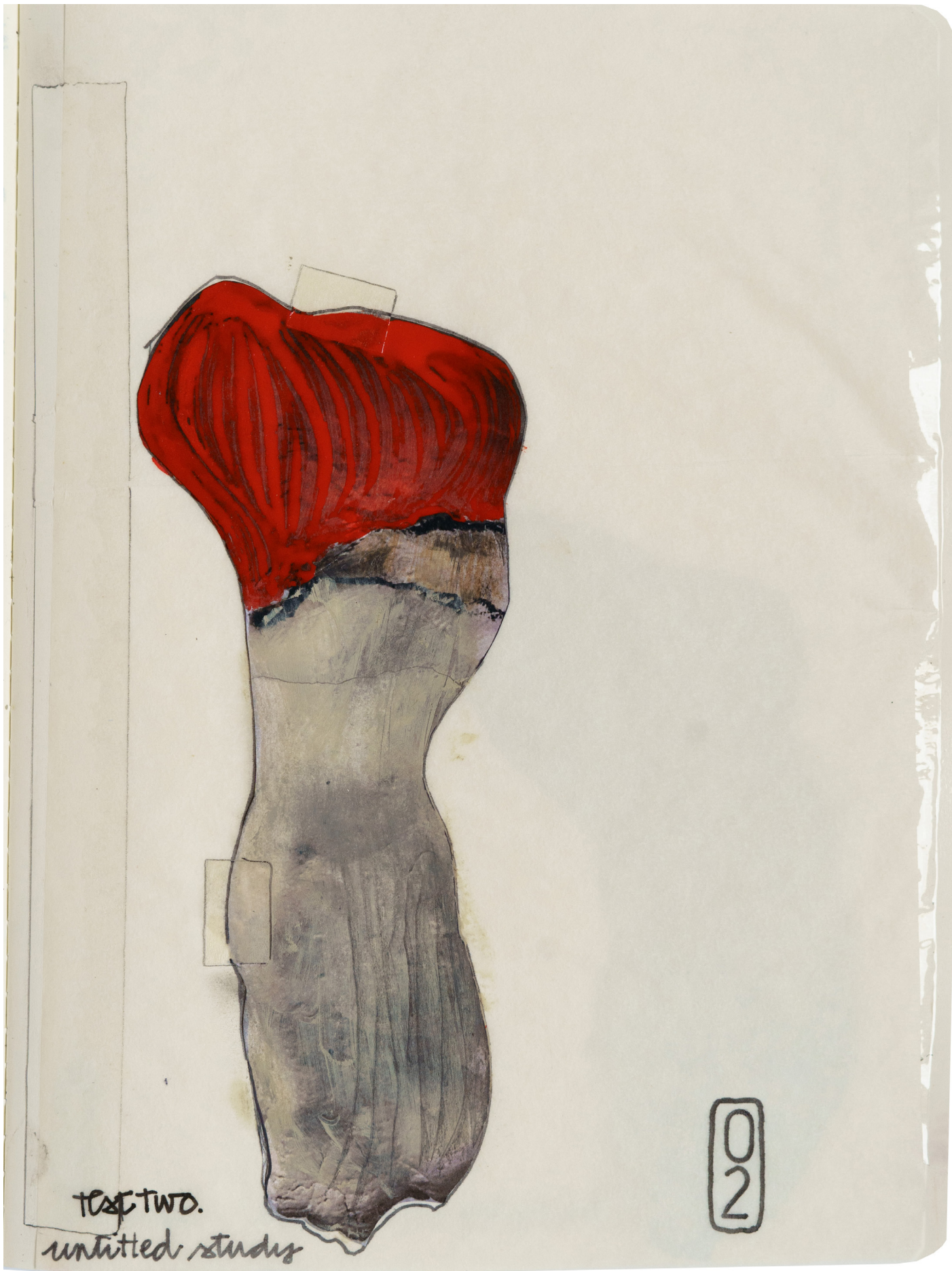




(Left to Right) Drawing 13, 2022, Mixed Media on Paper, 25 cm x 18 cm, Still Life | Nature Morte 7, 2022, Ceramic, 9 x 7 x 6 cm







test two.
untitled studies

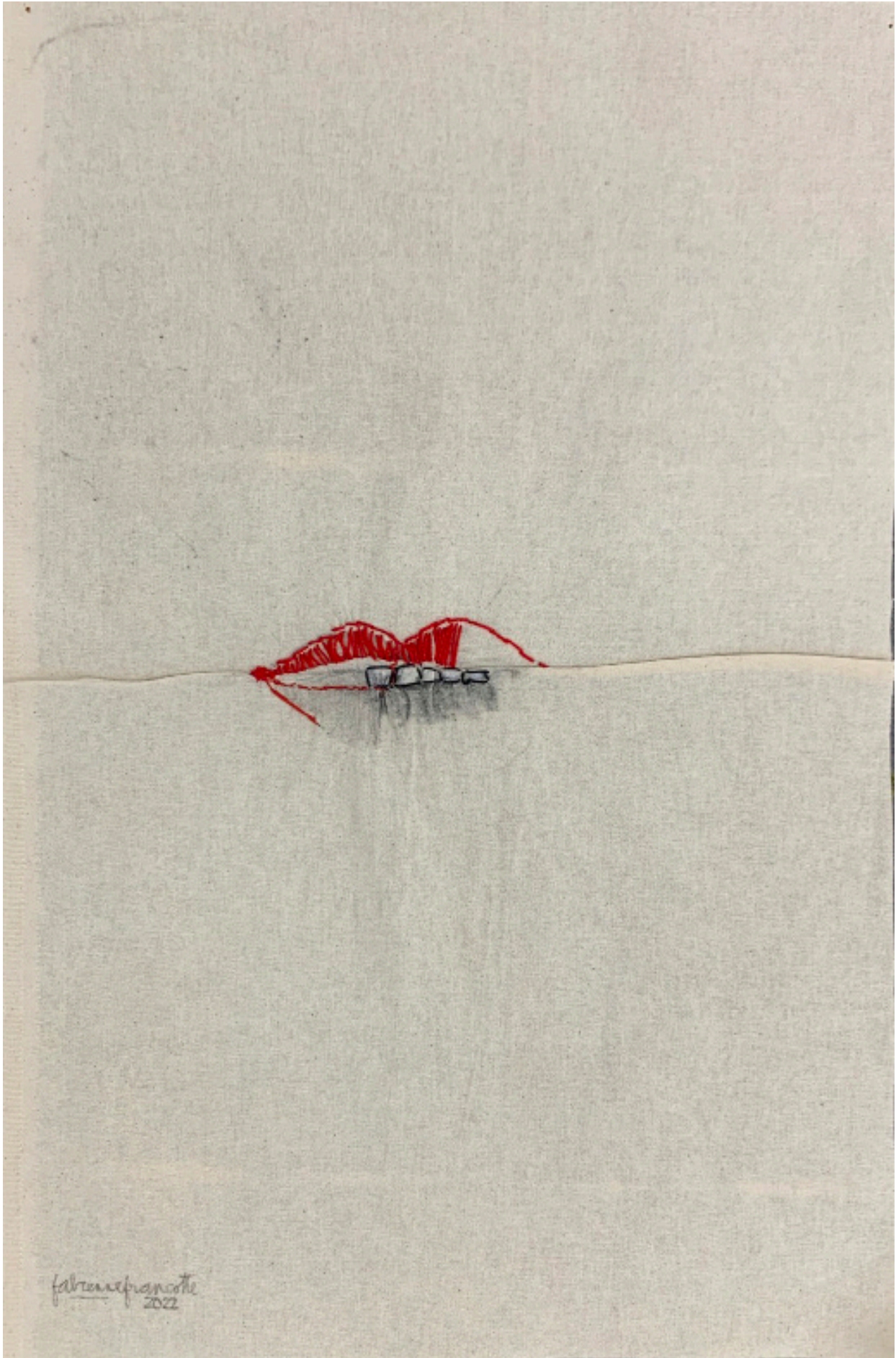
02

(Left to Right) Still Life | Nature Morte 6, 2022, Ceramic, 24 x 4 x 7 cm, Drawing 02, 2022, Mixed Media on Paper, 25 cm x 18 cm

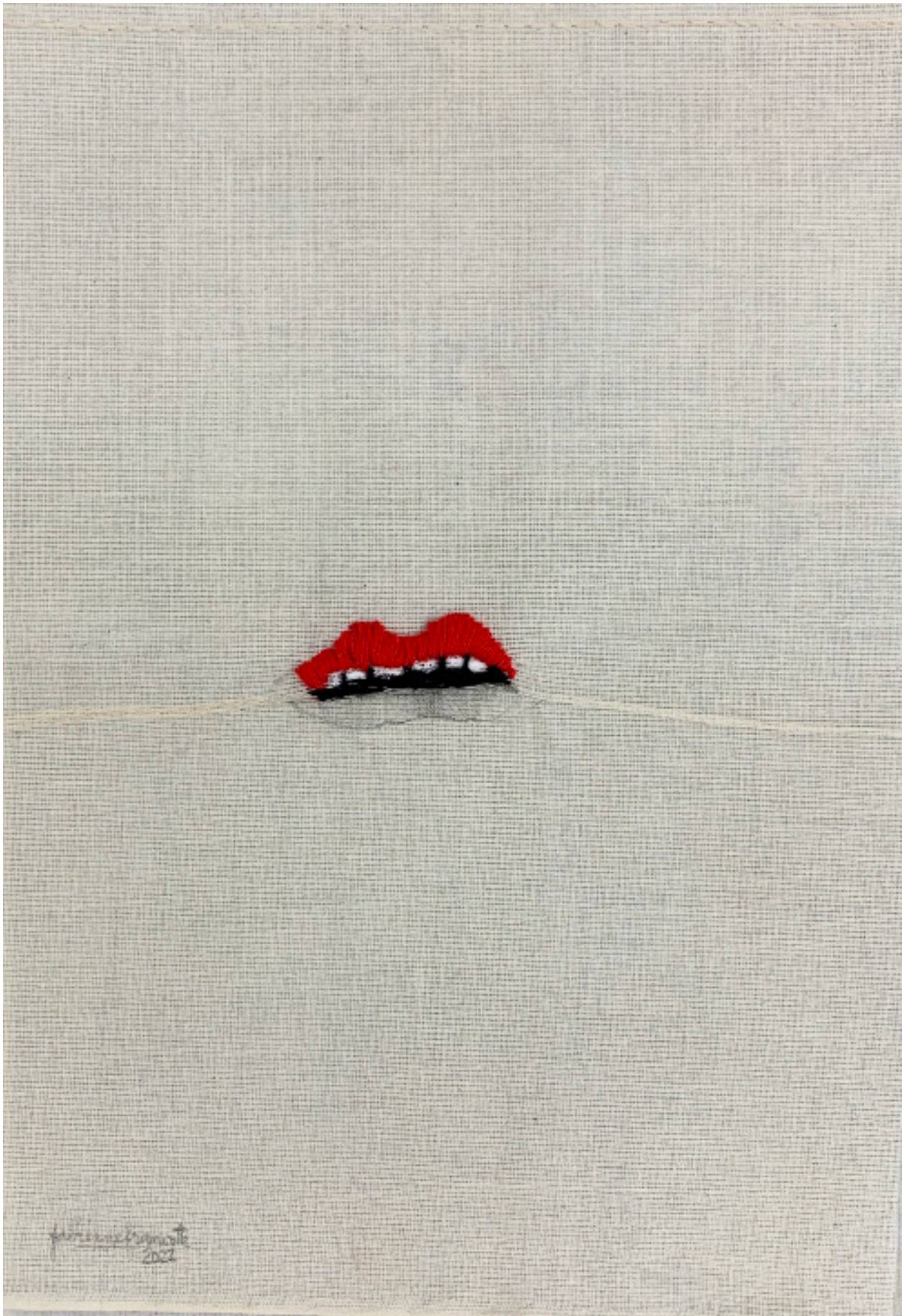




unknownd drawings - text six



The Invisible Worlds 01, 2022, Mixed Media on Cloth, 44cm x 31 cm



The Invisible Worlds 02, 2022, Mixed Media on Cloth, 44cm x 31 cm



The Invisible Worlds 03, 2022, Mixed Media on Cloth, 44cm x 31 cm



The Invisible Worlds 04, 2022, Mixed Media on Cloth, 44cm x 31 cm



The Invisible Worlds 05, 2022, Mixed Media on Cloth, 44cm x 31 cm



The Invisible Worlds 06, 2022, Mixed Media on Cloth, 44cm x 31cm

FABIENNE FRANCOTTE b.1959

Education

2000 Arab calligraphy at Maison du Livre, Brussels

Solo Exhibitions

2020 I Don't Know But I Remember I Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka

2019 Being the Other | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka

2019 Being the Other | Reflecting on the Five Day Drawing Project with the Rohingya community of refugees | Edge Gallery, Dhaka, Bangladesh

2019 Being the Other | Reflecting on the Five Day Drawing Project with the Rohingya community of refugees | Bangladesh National Museum, Dhaka, Bangladesh

2019 Galle Literary Festival (arts trail) | Galle, Sri Lanka

2018 It's Like Someone Took My Soul | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka

2016 Huis Clos | Galerie Diptyk Nantes, France

2016 Camere con Vista Interna | Galleria Arte Trenta Sette, Matera, Italy

2015 Le Langage de la Rupture | Galerie Espace Blanche, Brussels, Belgium

2015 Centre Culturel de Glossa | Skopelos, Sporades, Greece

2013 Chambres à Part | Galerie Diptyk Nantes, France

2012 All is Forgiven | Galerie Espace Blanche, Brussels, Belgium

2011 Early Morning With All My Respect | WIELS Museum + BOZAR Museum, Collective Exhibition "Canvas Collection", Brussels, Belgium

2009 I Lost My Head As Well As My Sex | Galerie Espace Blanche, Brussels, Belgium 2007 Le Trait Donne le "La" | Galerie Espace Blanche, Brussels, Belgium

2004 45 characters | Galerie ABC, Brussels, Belgium

Group Exhibitions

2019 Colomboscope: Sea Change | Colombo, Sri Lanka

2016 Out of Africa | curated by Anne-Catherine Kenis and Damien De Lepelre, Brussels, Belgium

2015 Résonance d'un État Brut | Maria Clara Art Point, Brussels, Belgium

2004 45 Characters | Atelier B, Vence, France

2002 Peintigrature | with Nathalie van de Walle, Galerie Talent, Paris, France

2002 Peintigrature | with Nathalie van de Walle, Galerie 2016, Brussels, Belgium

2002 100 artistes pour les 100 ans de la Ligue des Droits de l'Homme | with Nathalie van de Walle, Brussels, Belgium

