

COSIMA TRIBUKEIT

« Partout maintenant » (a journal) Encounter with the artist Cosima Tribukeit

Cosima Tribukeit, a German prizewinner of the Résidences Croisées (Crossed Residencies) Strasbourg / Dresden, is inviting us to discover the different creation phases of Partout maintenant (a journal), an artwork she made during her stay in Strasbourg from April to June 2018. Composed as an artist's book, this project is based on a selection of ancient manuscripts from the collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale Universitaire (National University Library) of Strasbourg, which she combines with her drawings, inspired by her photographs of the town.

Alongside with her unprecedented presentation of this object, the artist will also unveil a projection of her photographs of town, copies of manuscripts, as well as carbon copies derived from her creative process.

Since 2005, the City and Eurométropole of Strasbourg have offered this "Résidences Croisées" program, in link with several foreign partner cities, aiming to encourage mobility and exchanges between European artists. As part of this arrangement, the City and the Eurométropole of Strasbourg is supported by a network of partners, the Centre Européen d'Actions Artistiques Contemporaines (European Center of Contemporary Artistic Actions) and Apollonia, which are associations specialised in the plastic arts and in international artistic exchanges, as well as the Haute Ecole des Arts du Rhin and the DRAC Grand Est.

- INTERVIEW -

Born in Berlin, Cosima Tribukeit is an artist who lives and works between Berlin and Dresden. She currently is in a residency in Strasbourg as part of the artists' Résidences Croisées (Crossed Residences) supported by the City of Strasbourg with the help of its partners including the CEAAC.

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Tell us about your career, your ambitions, whether or not you have always wanted to be an artist, or if it is something that you realised over time?

My ambition - to be an artist - started to develop during my teen years. I grew up in East Berlin and, during the 90s, after the fall of the wall, I found myself surrounded by people who practiced street-art and who were really into the subculture. From there, I started doing graffiti in abandoned buildings in the afternoon after school, and then we all did some serigraphy in a building squatted and run by us. It is from there that I realised that my artistic practice would allow me to lead a free lifestyle. Afterwards, I became interested in diverse techniques such as bookbinding, which is now part of my work during this residency in Strasbourg; then, I chose to take the competitive examination from the graphic design school, a field that, at first, seemed to me close to typography. However, once at school, it was all about learning a trade, it was

very academic and I could not be as free as I used to be. I thus decided to apply to the Fine Arts School of Dresden, in painting first, but I eventually was selected in sculpture, which suited me better. And ever since, I have mastered very diversified techniques.

How come that you came to Strasbourg for a residency program? Have you ever done any other residencies?

Indeed, it is not my first residency, but it is only the second! However, in these circumstances, it is my first residency, that is to say with an official structure accompanying and supporting me. I had done a project-residency-exhibition in Indonesia in 2011 during three months, but we had to finance the project ourselves with my group. This year, I have been invited by the city of Dresden to do an exchange with Strasbourg, and the CEAAC is involved in this partnership. Because we are so close, I was very enthusiastic about coming to France because the French artistic scene interests

me a lot. I like Strasbourg a lot, because it is a medium town that allows you a better visibility, and contacts between actors of the artistic scene are a lot easier made. Also, there is no long commutes or drives, which makes moving around more efficient.

After having browsed your portfolio, I noticed in your work the recurrence of verticality and the use of wood. Can you elaborate on your inspirations and on your techniques?

Basically, I am very interested in verticality in architecture such as poles, towers, and columns as well as in the urban furniture. It may come from my practice of graffiti, during which I was very close to the urban landscape. It is very dear to my heart and the gothic style inspires me a lot as well, to be honest. According to me, verticality is attractive; we always start at the bottom to go upward, and there maybe is, through that, a journey to the sky, to the infinite and to what is greater than us and beyond us. It is a symbol of the infinity of the cosmos, just like in Brancusi's Colonne sans Fin (1938). Regarding wood, it is a medium out of which anything can be made and very easily, and on top of that it is quite affordable. For some of my projects, I had in mind to mingle diverse mediums, such as wood with

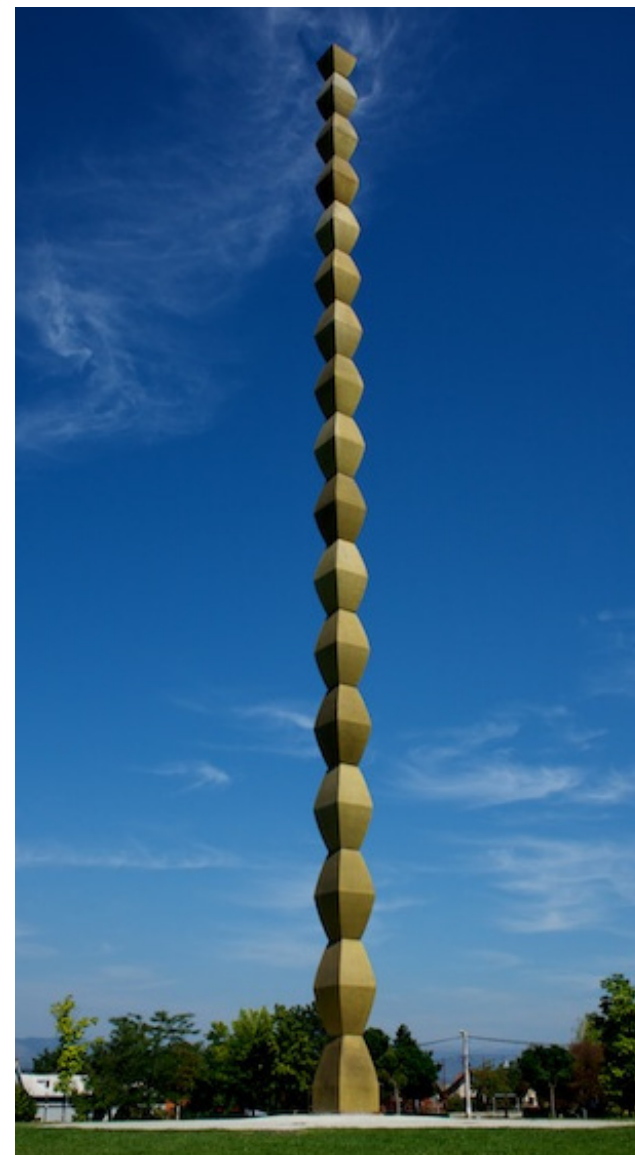
chip wood and even with wood imitations. The concept of fake has interested me for a long time and in my project Every You Is Every Me, I tried to question the worth of eternity that we expect from sculpture through its medium and its form, but as well as its temporal evolution. It is thus a reflection about the passing of time that is recurrent in my work, especially through the symbol of verticality.

About your affection for the gothic art, do you have a background in art history, and if you did it shape your approach to art?

Philosophy and art history were compulsory classes at my school, and they helped me shape a conscious outlook on my art and on others'. Today, for instance, all of this internalised knowledge allowed me to be interested, in my current project, in archives of ancient manuscripts. I am focused on the symbolism behind the act of turning a page; turning a page of history, turning a page of one's life, time passing by, etc. And thus, my studies have helped me to have this outlook.

Can you tell us more about your current project?

I currently work on an artist's book. I composed



Constantin Brancusi, *La Colonne sans fin*, fonte, h:29,33 / 1937, Târgu Jiu, Roumanie

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it from manuscripts that I chose at the Bibliothèque Nationale Universitaire [National University Library] of Strasbourg; I have made an excerpt of thirty-four manuscripts to which I react with a drawing, inspired by photographs I took of the town. Eventually, it will be a book about seventy pages long. I want to create a very graphic dialogue with the

cultural heritage of Strasbourg; there will be no writing, only images that the spectator will have to read by himself or herself. Moreover, the theme of the palimpsest interests me a lot, because in my book, each page would display its reverse because of its transparency. There always is a relationship between the pages, it is a game. Visually, it will feel like a sculpture

with the overlapping of the sketches and of the carbon copies, which creates, in the end, a true volume.

That is a very philosophical thematic. Is there a writer who inspired you?

In my work, I operate with personal reflection first. It was during my studies that I learnt I should first draw inspiration and curiosity from myself. I do not think it necessary to be accompanied by an author or an artist to create. However, I enrich myself with many readings to complete my artistic reflection.

It is noticeable that in your work, you seem to go against the current of what is called today "contemporary art", meaning that you don't deal with exacerbated themes nowadays, such as sexism, overconsumption, global politics etc. Your work goes back to problematics less social than human. Why?

First of all, it is something purely wilful. Second of all, I think that in today's world of art, artists tend to deal with over publicised themes, so much that it could become journalism more than a real plastic art creation. To a certain extent, contemporary art is very committed to anything that is "trendy", if I may say so.



Every You Is Every Me, installation view, Kunstkraftwerk, Leipzig 2015

@ Photo : dotgain



MYSPEACE, pyrography, 2008
240 x 34 x 34 cm

To be in the system, even in art, you have to be trendy. There also is a moralising tendency, according to me, in some contemporary exhibitions that I have been to. This leads me to wonder about the future of plastic art creation: will artistic creation ever bow before journalistic art? Will the world of art ever end up falling into the consumer system? For instance when I see some artists involved in "social working", even though the intention is good according to me, how can they still be considered as artists? What I mean is that it is important to dissociate once again the artistic work from the social work.

What is your position in this problematic?

Personally, I prefer to resist to this consumer system. I would rather not just mirror to people what I see and what they can all see already; I wish to share my perception of things. Nowadays, we live in a world where everything goes fast, where everything is consumable and consumed. I, however, try to create things that take time to be "consumed", precisely. I devote time to everything I do, I put myself in it.

Then, what would your definition of an artist be?

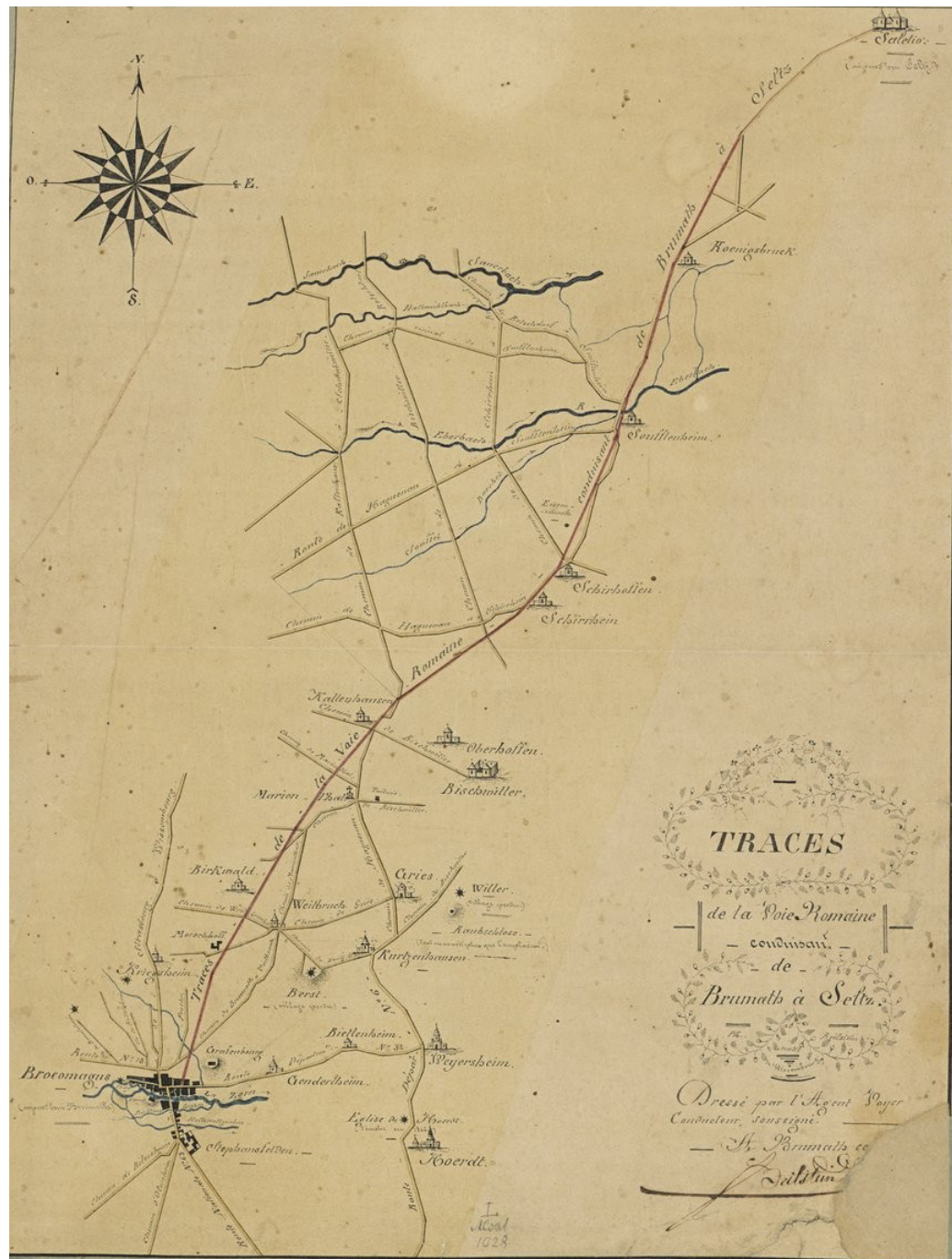
According to me - but that would only be the sketch of a definition - an artist is someone who is sensitive to the world and who understands what surrounds him or her, with an objective outlook; and this is how he or she is able to create art from universal themes. The artist speaks the unspoken, engages through his or her artworks a dialogue between humans. Also, this person is wishfully a critical entity, like a great wise man or woman, but who produces something.

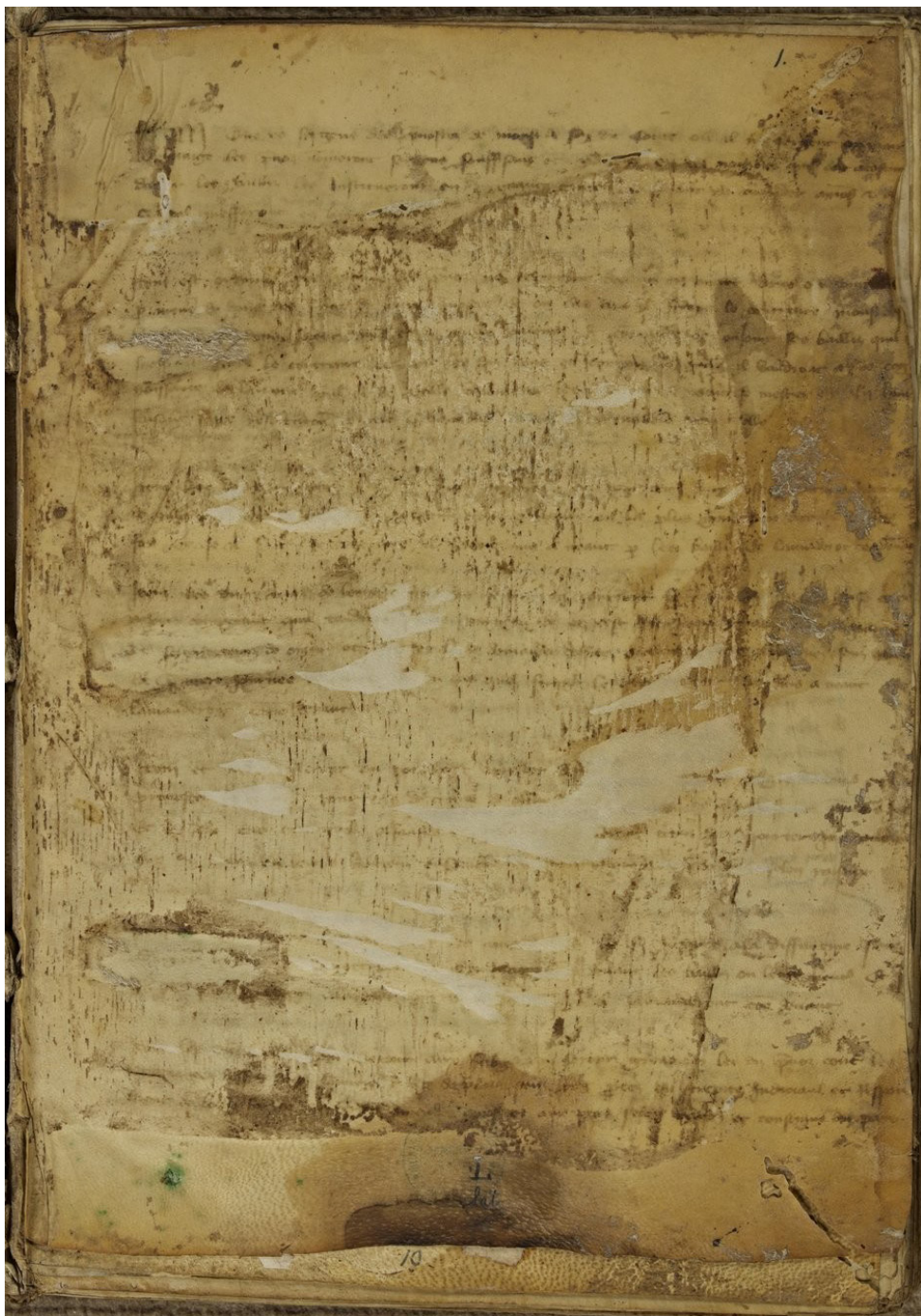
Any last word to conclude about your residency?

I would say that artistic exchanges are a fantastic invention, because nothing replaces being elsewhere and nourishing from that elsewhere. To meet new people, to discover new places, to grasp them and to be inspired by them, and then to create, it takes some time; and thus I think that a two-month residency, it is great!

*Interview by Alexia Husser and
Frédérique Ratsimiseta
With the participation of Caroline Deloire
and Joffrey Piguet*

- IN SEARCH OF THE
MANUSCRIPTS -





This image shows a manuscript page with a large, colorful illustration at the top and text in French below. The illustration is framed by a decorative border and depicts a city with a castle and a scene of judgment. In the foreground, a man in a red tunic and green hat is being struck by a hammer, while another man in a blue tunic and green hat is being struck by a mallet. A man in a blue tunic and white hat is kneeling in prayer. In the background, a city with a castle and a church is visible. The sky is filled with various creatures, including a dragon, a griffin, and a unicorn. The text below the illustration is in French and discusses the nature of the world and the importance of the book. The text is written in a medieval Gothic script and is decorated with a large initial letter 'D'.

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ques de mettre principalement ces paroles
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Et non pas de touchier ad ce qui regarde
la theologie. ¶ Car telz choses ne chet
pas en copon qui aut a nous Mais chent
a disputer a la chose et a determiner
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**- PHOTOGRAPHIC
RESEARCH -**













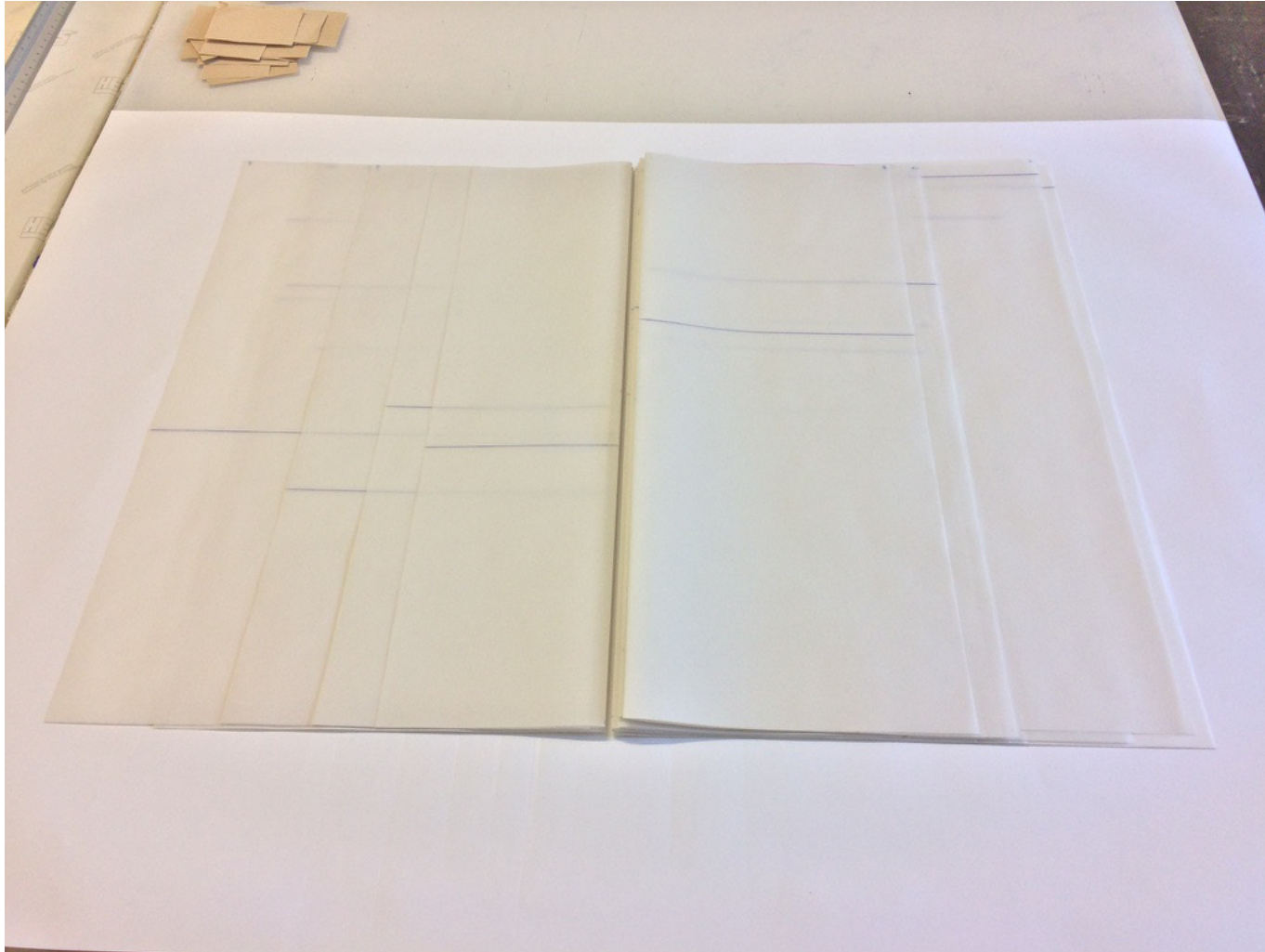




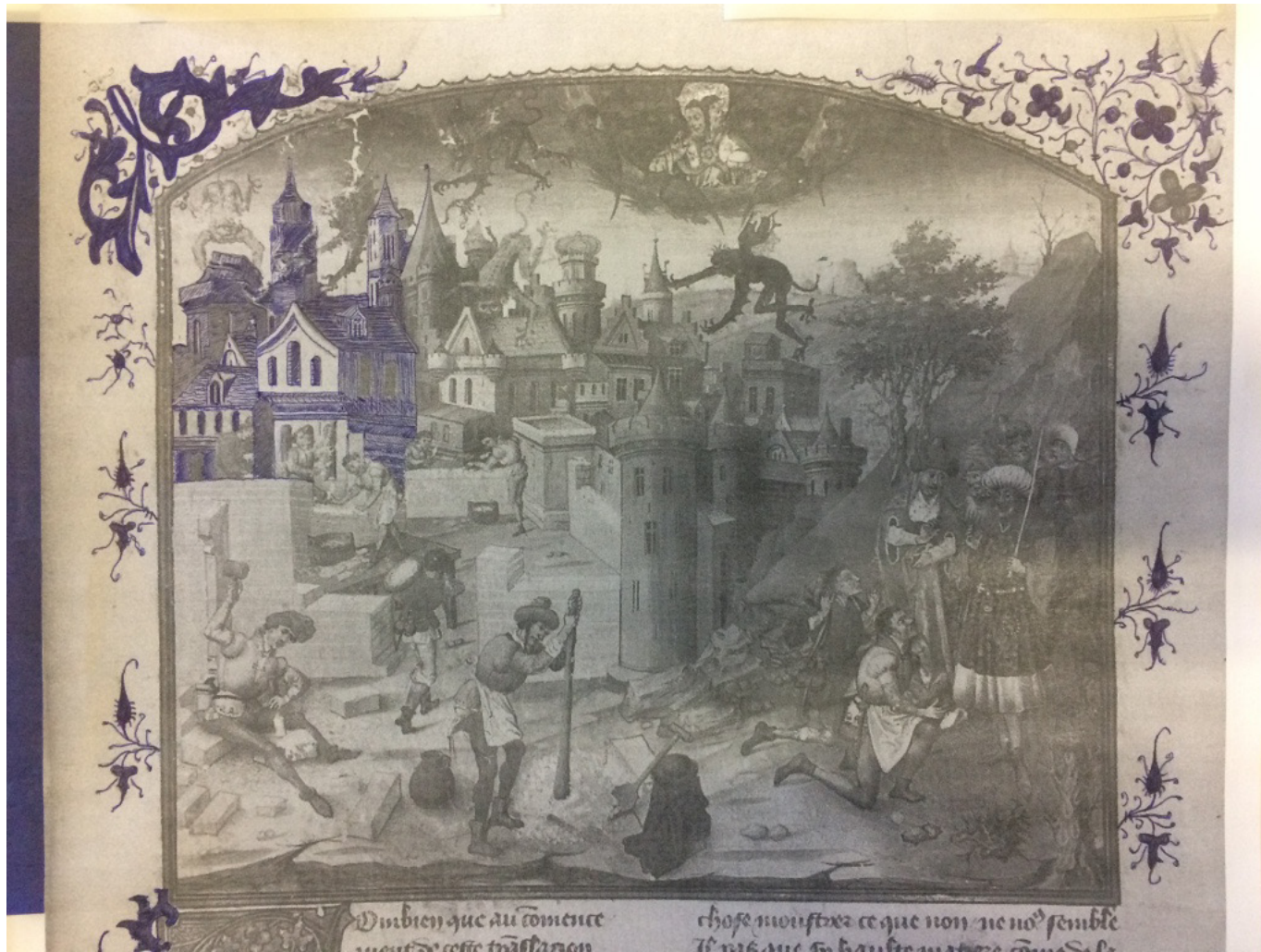




**- IMAGES OF THE
PROCESS -**

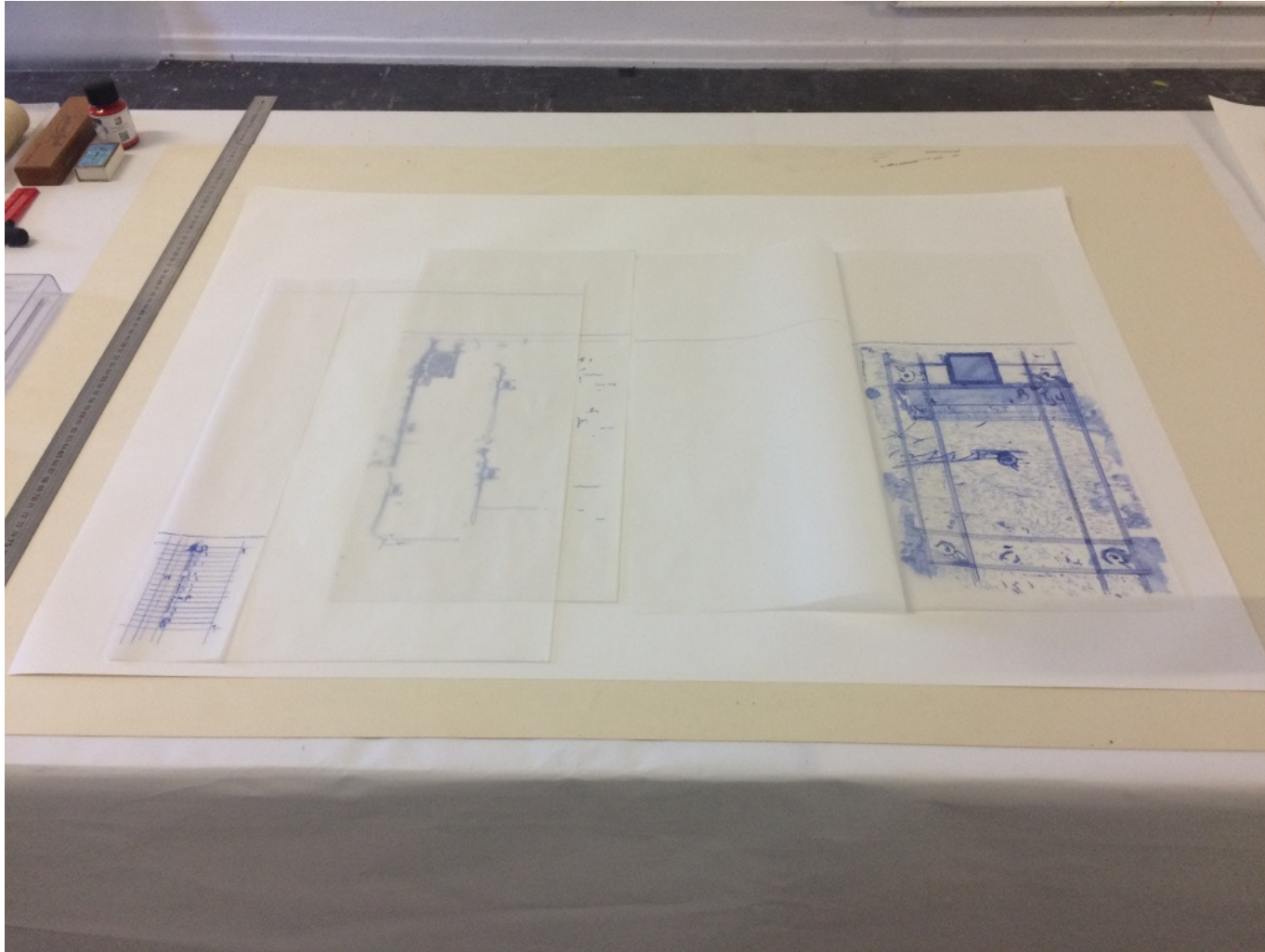






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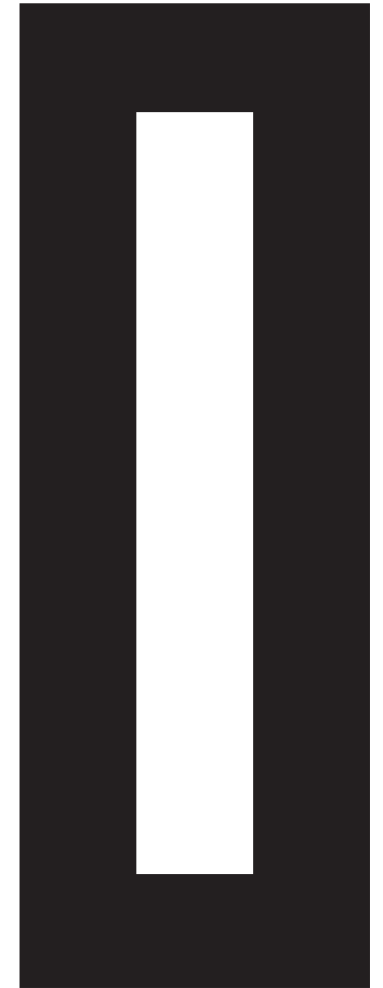


CONTACTS

Artist : Cosima Tribukeit
Website : www.cosimatribukeit.de
Email : post@cosimatribukeit.de

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