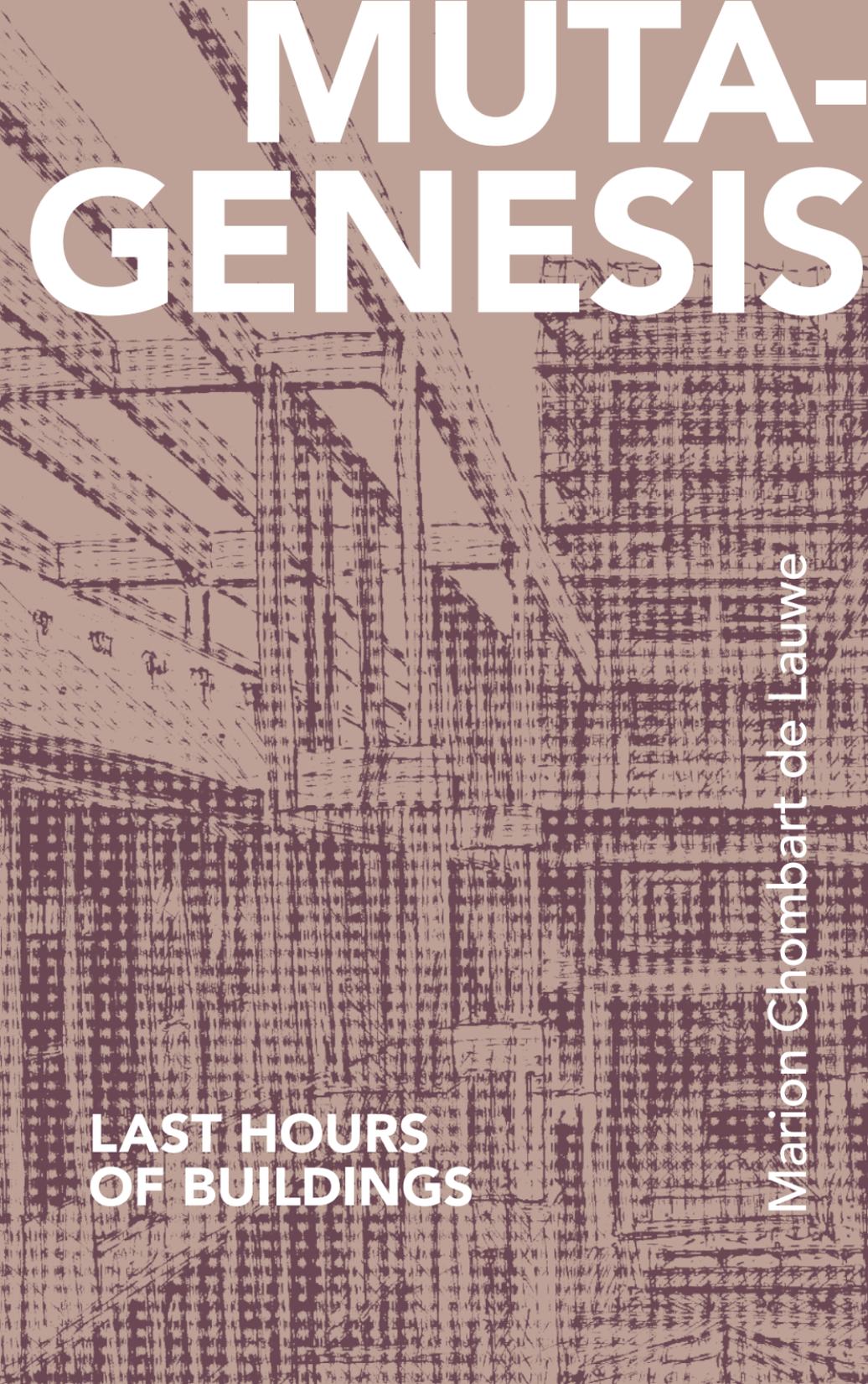


MUTA- GENESIS



LAST HOURS
OF BUILDINGS

Marion Chombart de Lauwe

Mutagenesis

Last hours of buildings

⋮

The purpose of this document is to present the project and its foundations. This is a diary that puts into light my approach around territory, metamorphosis and memory. It is updated according to the evolution of the project to give an overview: its development, its actuality and its prospects...

Last hours of buildings

Project presentation

Through the buildings, I approach a territory or a place with a particular point of view: its disappearance; and present it as a provisional state, a fragile instant between two stable moments. Drawing the last hours of the buildings following their demolition process and writing the trace of those places on what remains of them is a way to actualize the future of a mutated space, in the perspective of thought about its disappearance, memory and transformation.

Rite of passage

For each building, I put in place the same working protocol: I spot the places and then adapt myself according to the evolution of the building site. In permanent dialogue with the demolition actors, decisions makers such as workers; I am rooted in the reality of the work to be at the heart of my subject.

A demolition has something dramatic and brutal, but there is also a lot of mystery and poetry. Such immersion allows me to navigate the boundaries of those two feelings. This moment perceived as brutal, will it finally reveal the place?

The integration of a work in the newly created space is the testimony of what has been, the trace of a ritual of passage undergone by the territory.

In situ drawing and collection

With a notebook and a pen, it is through drawing that I try to capture the ephemeral snapshots states of buildings. A way to feel the palpitations of the building site at work, to better understand the metamorphosis of places. Time and perseverance are necessary because I must be present, throughout the demolition. At the same time, I identify and collect materials from buildings. Each place brings its wealth of materials. The workers, become my allies, help me in this quest. Sound and photographic collections complete this drawn inventory.



Memory plate from the building

Steel plate from the building's guardrails. Cutting with the blowtorch. Laser cutter engraving from an original line drawing made *in situ*. 15 cm x 30 cm.

Printing of the memory of the places and installation

Far from the construction site, as if to impose a necessary distance from the creation, a new adventure begins: the engraving. The laser cutter is my main tool in the workshop, and, diverted from their primary functions, the collected materials become experimental media. Sorted, cut, engraved: the material is revealed. Metal, wood, strata of paint, etc., become works. At an agreed location, they permanently integrate the new space, commemorating the missing buildings.

A changing world

So far, I have invested five places: the urban heating plant of La Villette in Paris (1960s), the old warehouses of the Chamber of Commerce in Pantin (1929), the former ice factory in Nantes (20 years), the castle of Romainville (seventeenth century) and recently the former factory of Rhodiacéta Besançon. These are different stories, different scales, where adaptation is imperative. Each building exploration allows me to renew and evolve my project. Thus, I myself create my field of action and creation, in the continuity of my studies of anthropology, my practice of theater, graphic design, drawing or even engraving; different approaches and experiences that allow me to capture the complexity of a world in perpetual change.



Drawing-reflection on the demolition with jack

The top of the building is moved by cylinders, its center of gravity moved from the fulcrum serves as «ram» crushing its lower part, collapsing on itself.

Landscapes in works

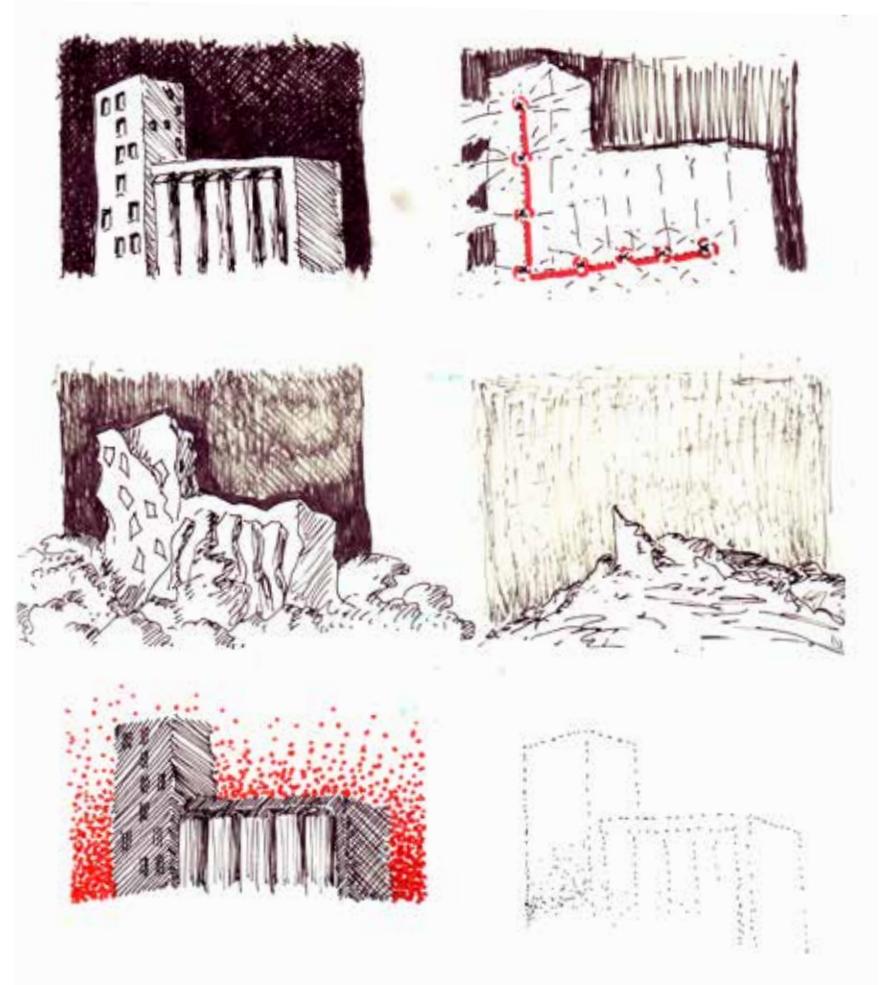
Urban apoptosis

The places emit a signal and disappear. To be on spot at a given moment that can not be reproduced.

It was during an architectural exhibition in Montreal that this project emerged. I stopped for a long time watching videos of demolition with explosive. Repetitive and haunting images, the buildings had their own way of falling and disappearing, they seemed to change a moment of nature, their fall was singular. The deformation revealed an ultimate signature and the mark of a definitive metamorphosis that seemed to express an important part of their essence.

A brick building seemed to become liquid, angles and perspectives collapsing in cascade. The Seattle Kingdome, meanwhile, suddenly revealed his points of support under the signal of explosives, meticulously orchestrated, before collapsing on himself at the rupture of his joints. These gigantic mass movements remind me of the magnitude of great myths like the fall of the titans, disappearing from the landscape in a short and elusive time.

How to account for this fragile moment between two stable moments, two delimited spaces? How to represent the game of these moments at the edges of things?



Drawings and reflection for project in a state of uncertainty

Explosives are placed at specific points that characterize the strength points of the structure. Triggered in a particular order, they allow the orientation of its fall. There is in this movement a tragic, mythological, universal essence.

Stencil bomb
on a wall of
a repeated
image: the
fall of a city



Drawing the last hours of buildings it is almost an ironic formula, a kind of anthropomorphism: tribute to the Unknown Soldier (under the triumphal arch in Paris) applied to buildings.

There is a connection with the image of wars through memories, medias, walls of cities (Mostar, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Dresden, Baghdad, the World Trade Center ...). Repeated images, updated images. We have sometimes the feeling, the illusion or the fantasy of witnessing the last hours, witnessing the disaster. Extinction of species, environmental degradation, climatic and nuclear disasters. Overstating media or

transition era? We are in any case in a dialectic of apocalypse which, if it belongs partly to our imaginary, is none the less alive and animated.

September 11, 2001 sucked all the eyes of the world, creating a phenomenon of obsessive images, galvanizing fantasies and fears. Wars are often inscribed in the walls; I saw it in Mostar, in Sarajevo ... when nobody wants to talk about it, the streets and the front lines are expressed by their terrible bites.

The attraction for the ruins and the mark of chaos is not simply the place of a macabre fantasy and destruction, it is also a principle of renewal and formulation of something in the making. A curiosity and a need to understand and perceive our limits. Revealing strength points is also a way to think about our weaknesses. Vulnerability is not a fatality, it is a contact with the limits of being, in space and time. The story of the extinction of the dinosaurs is also the story of our development, the emergence of other species ... would we give way today to others?

In this project, there is the desire to make visible the invisible, to witness a space transformation: engraving it somewhere in itself and in us, like a ritual of passage that marks the body of the landscape.

District heating plant

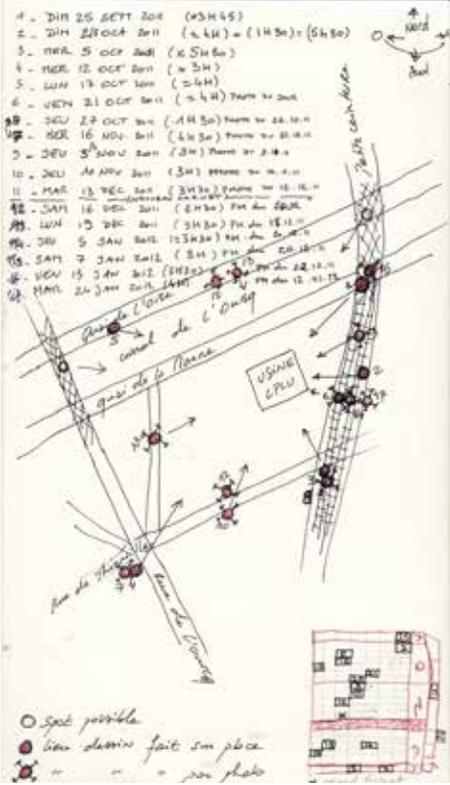
First project and experimentation

The plant built by CPCU in the 60s along the Ourq canal in Paris in the district of La Villette will be deconstructed in 2011-2012.

The demolition process began several months ago when I started to follow this construction site in September 2011. I follow it and drew until January 2012, the moment of the complete disappearance of the building.

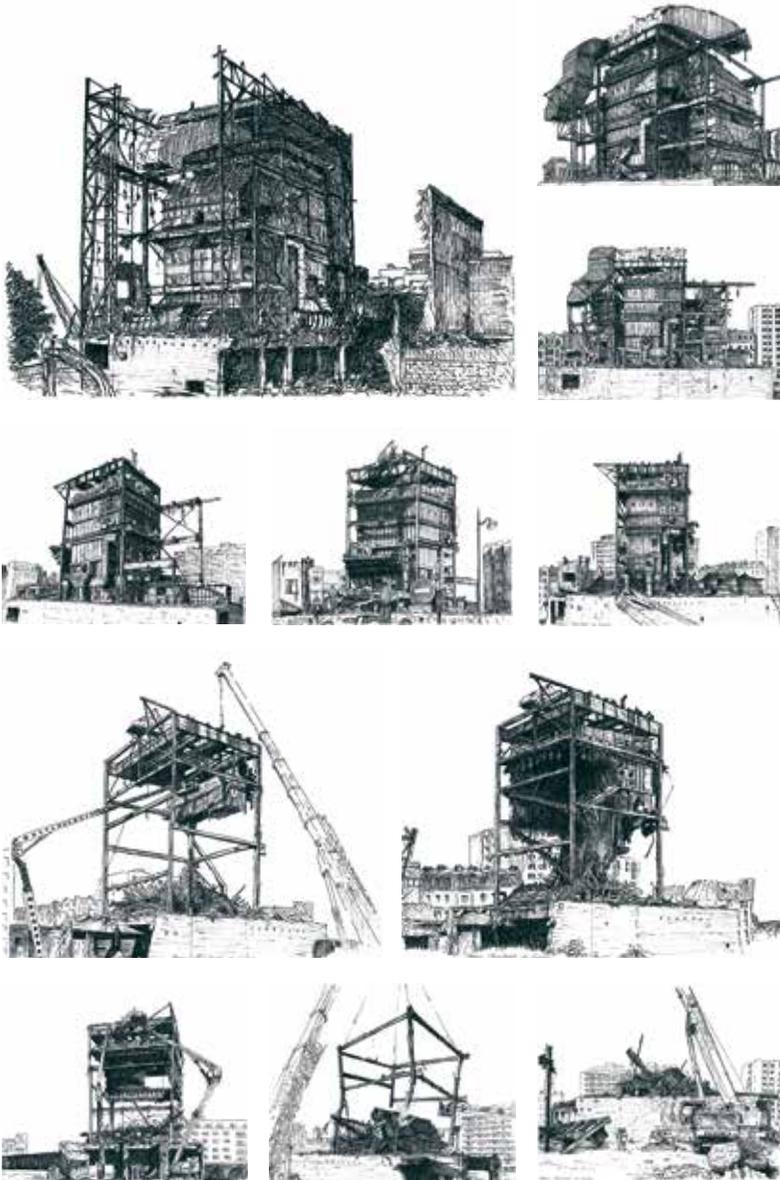
Capture scheme, space and time references

A method:
I am looking for points which will give the angle by which I grasp, then I roll with the movements of the building site, the constraints of the moment, the light ... It is at the same time structured by the framing and a kind of temporal linearity but also chaotic and spontaneous.



Line drawings

Extract of series: Urban Heating Plant of La Villette



Printing of the memory of places

Metal engraving

The disappearing process is printed on recovered materials from the site.

During the production of the drawings, and with the help of the workers who were on the site, I retrieved metal plates from the building to print the demolition drawings. It was at the fablab Artilect in Toulouse that I started this work of engraving with laser cutting experimentally.

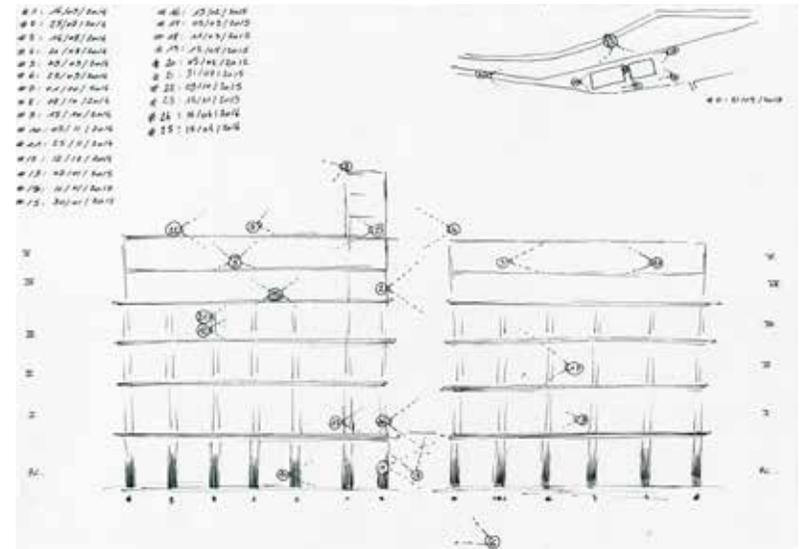


General Stores

New skin

The building that housed the old warehouses of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Paris in Pantin were rehabilitated in 2016. I went through these spaces throughout their metamorphosis.

The rehabilitation of the building lasted two years. The structure is preserved but undergoes many transformations.

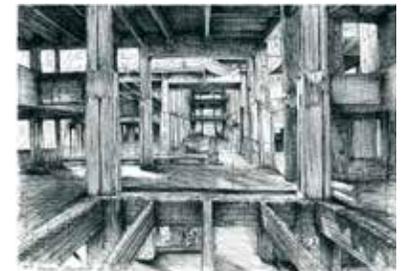
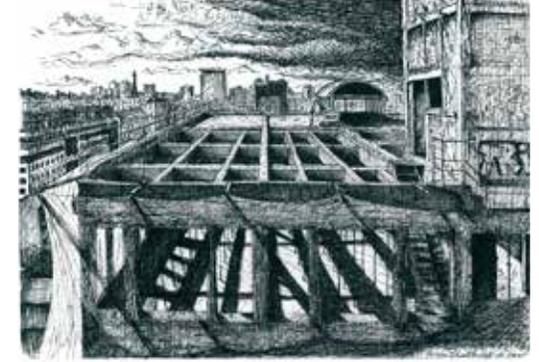
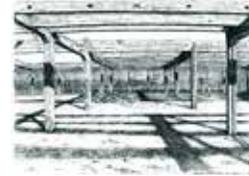
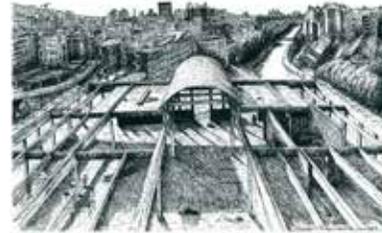
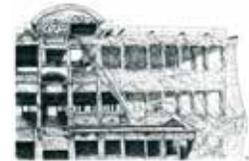


Building diagram

Plan and dates selected moments for the realization of line drawings.

Line drawings

Series 2: General Stores in Pantin





Instant #18

The original drawings are executed in ink on paper.
Dimensions: 21 x 29.7 cm.

Paper and ink as a matrix

The drawing serves as an impression

In this process of printing on material from buildings - here steel - the drawing becomes the matrix and the metal plate the final support.



The engraving uses the plate — often metal (zinc, copper, steel) — as a matrix for the printing on paper. Here it is paper via digital tools which becomes a medium between the moment captured and the finalized work.

Memory plate a ritual of passage

Experimentation on material



To mark this moment of transition when buildings are preparing for a new life, the selected elements (the revelators of a past essence) impose their physical and plastic potential. The chosen materials present constraints and induce particular techniques to give them shape. The stage of printing with the laser cutting is sometimes enough to underline the meeting between the drawing and the materials. Some plates are carved through the different layers of coating.

Memory plate 1 instant #6

First steel plate from buildings of about 2 kilos, for 32 cm wide and 15 in height.

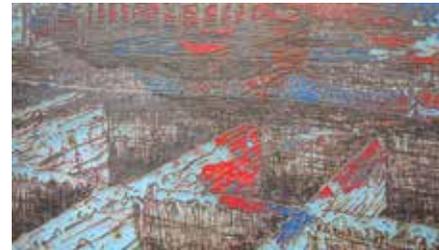
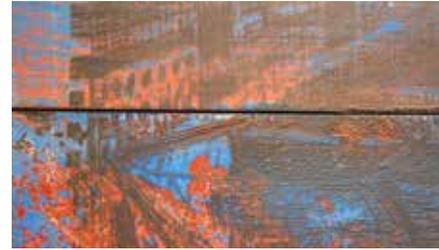
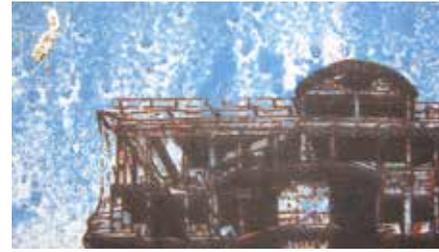


Work step of a platePlaque 6
Instant #10: 15 x 32 cm.

Work in progress

Experiments on steel skirting from the building site

Variations on a set of parameters: coating treatment, material addition and extraction, etching, oxidation and its evolutions, patina, formats, sections...



Work details

Zoom on the encounter between material, drawing and digital translation by laser.



Memory plate 48 instant #21

Steel plate from the building's guardrails. Cutting with the blowtorch. Laser cutter engraving from an original line drawing made *in situ*, then carving in the layers of the original coating and patina. About 1 kilo 700, 15 cm by 30. 2015.



Memory plate 58 #21
30 x 32 cm.

Presence in the public space

Six permanent works on the Place de la Pointe in Pantin

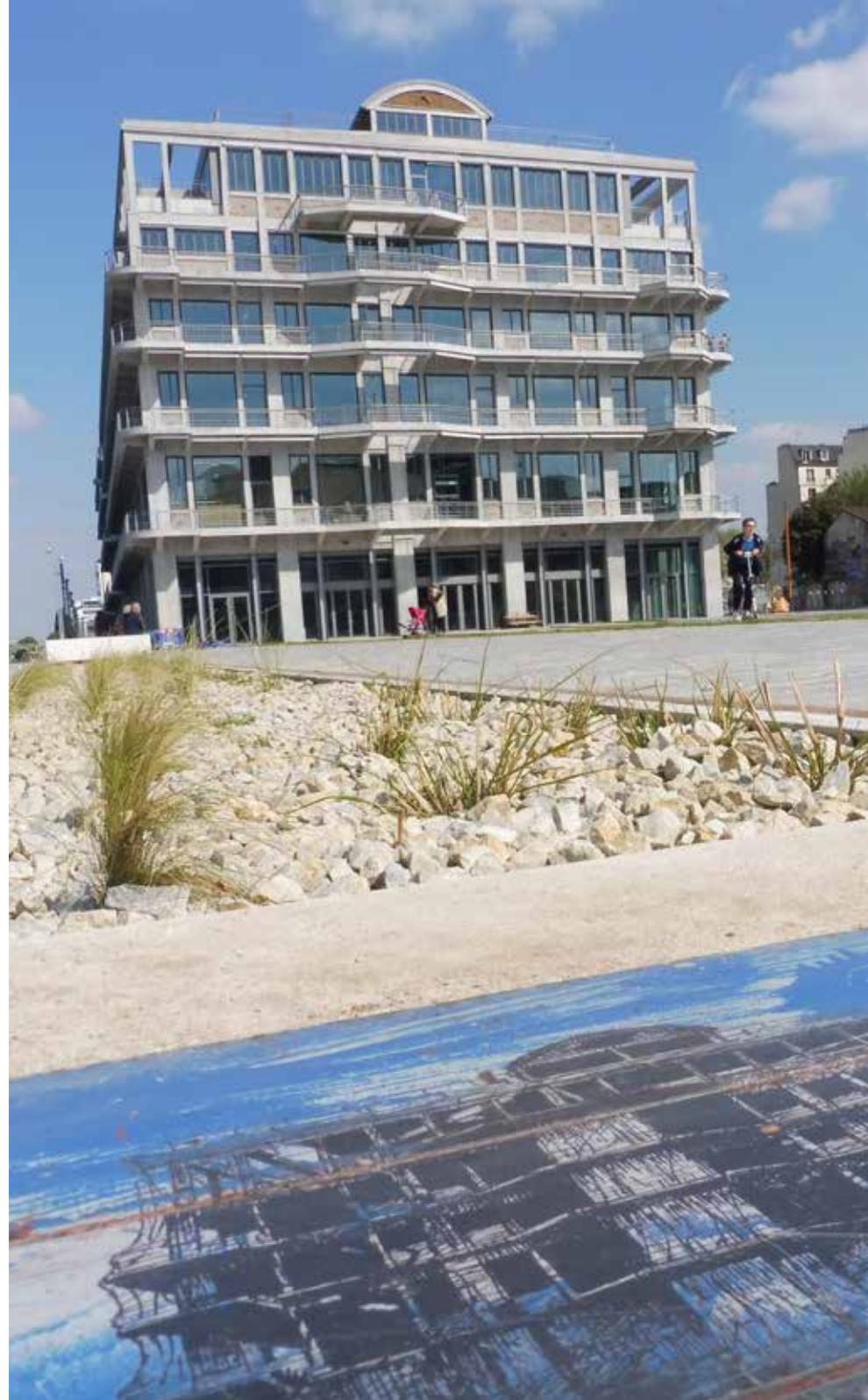
Six works are permanently present in the public space in Pantin next to the transformed buildings.

The final fulfillment of this project is to install the artwork closer to the buildings on the public space. Those who walk through these urban landscapes will find some footprints of the mutated spaces at the turn of their walk. That would be an imaginary sign for a future archeology.



Memory plate 90 et 106

Two of the six plaques installed on December 31, 2016 at the Magasins Généraux on the Place de la Pointe in Pantin.
Dimensions: 75 cm by 45.



Invisible performance

Circulation in transitional ground

The process of exploration and production of images that will achieve the final work, takes place *in situ* as the site progresses.

In my field work, I assimilate the progression *in situ* to the play of theater actor where the place of action is not symbolic like the stage of a scene of spectacle, but real.

I explore immense and chaotic scenery, then restores remnants of metamorphosis that can be trophies witnessing the vicissitudes of a fall.

The hybrid objects made - simultaneously representation and debris - are reloaded and reintegrated. Buildings become actors by their movement.

If neither the image nor the object expressly testifies of this performance, its singular technique and the mere presence of the object and its stigma may unfold the story.

Construction site photos

General stores of Pantin



Ice factory

Nantes

Between two waterways for many years (between river and ocean), the Ice Factory on the Island of Nantes was demolished during the winter of 2016.

This place dating from the 1920's, beyond its industrial past linked to the activities of the shipyards of the city, was also a symbolic place of Nantes's world culture during the 90s where abandoned wastelands became the playground for artistic projects in need of space.



The ice factory
Memory plate 14

Works in the public space

Island of Nantes in 2023



Appointment in 8 years, with the memory of the disappeared places

Four plaques of 85 cm by 45 cm are intended to be installed in the surrounding public areas in 2023.

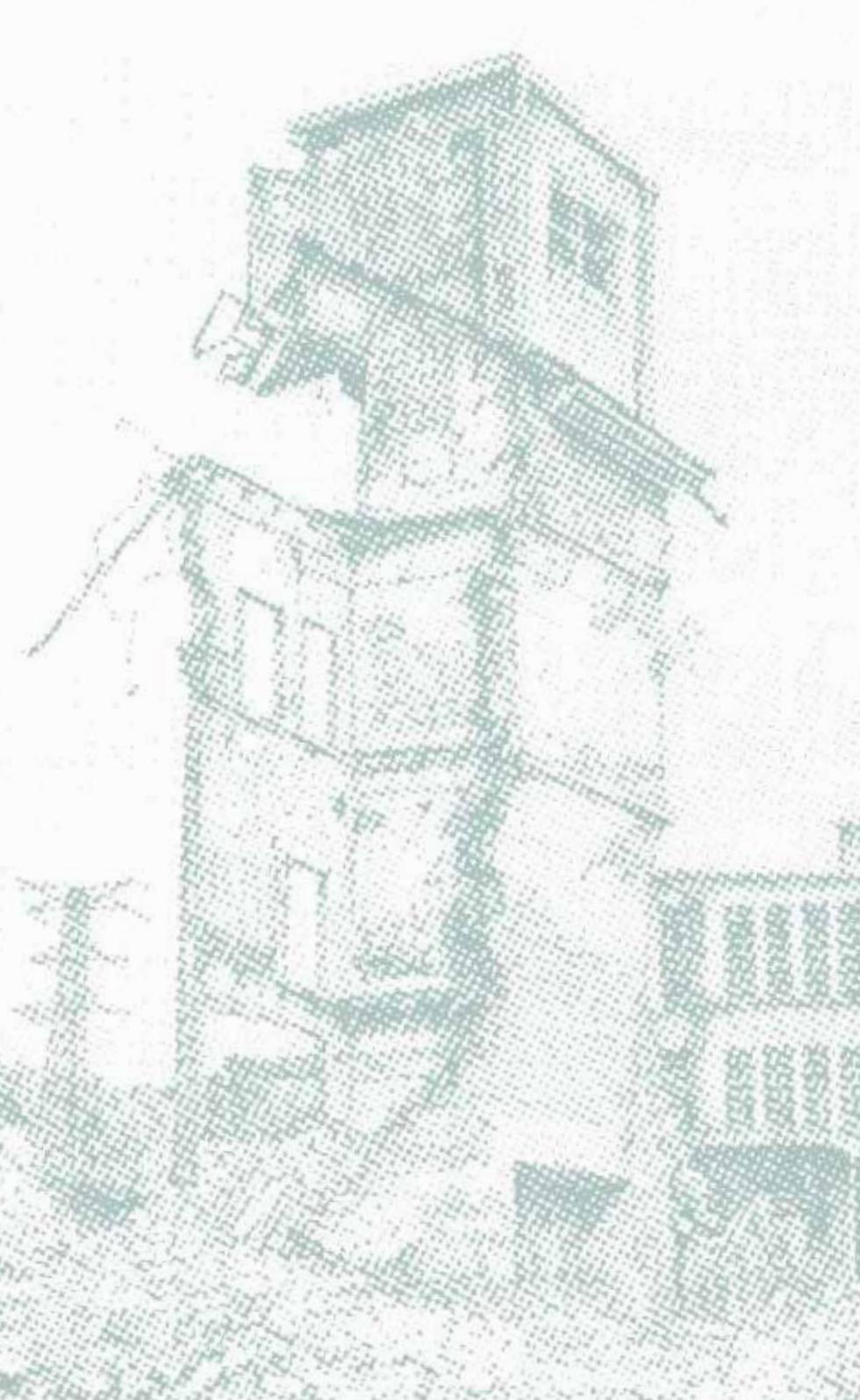
Engraving on building materials

Plate Extracts Series # 3: Ice Factory



Memory plate 12

Plasma cut plates
from a door.



The Rhodia factory

Besançon

The Rhodia (Rhodiaceta), a former textile factory, has a very strong history in many ways. It marks a transition where the sons of peasants became workers. His 1967 workers' movements led Chris Marker to film them: *The Medvedkine group* was born from this meeting.

Its disappearance process began in early 2018, my presence on the construction site began in the spring. Following field work and meetings with former workers, residents and users of the site, I was able to measure their wish to keep track of this industrial history. I hope to be able to install some of Rhodia's artworks in its future landscapes, the common spaces.

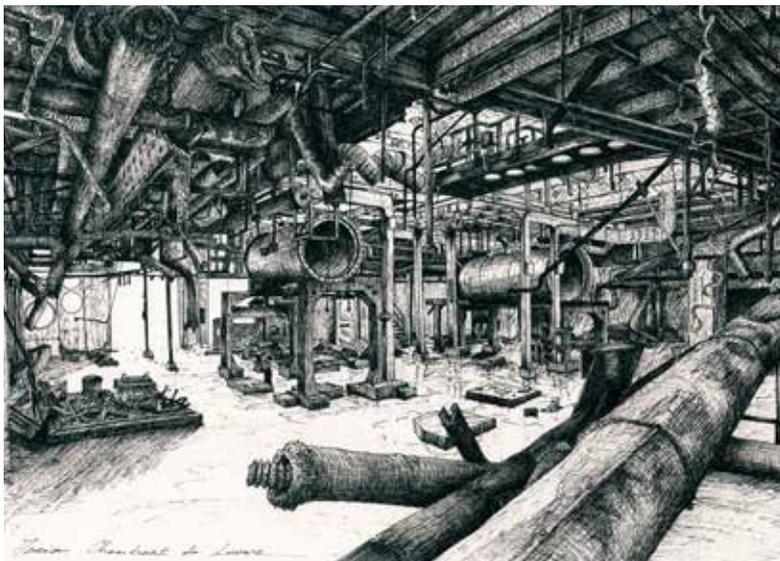


La Rhodia à Besançon

Line drawings

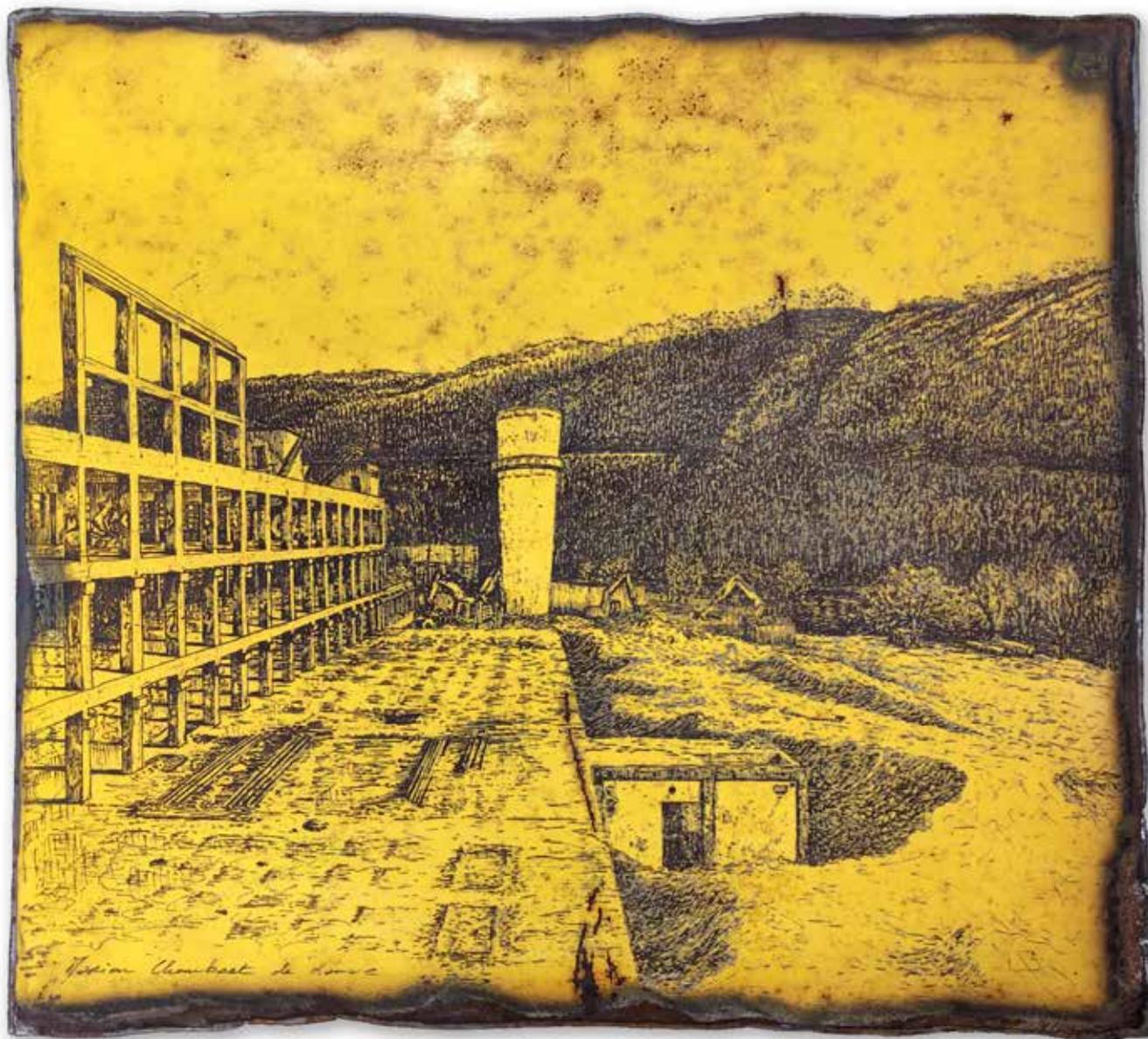
Line drawings

Series Excerpt # 5: Rhodia factory



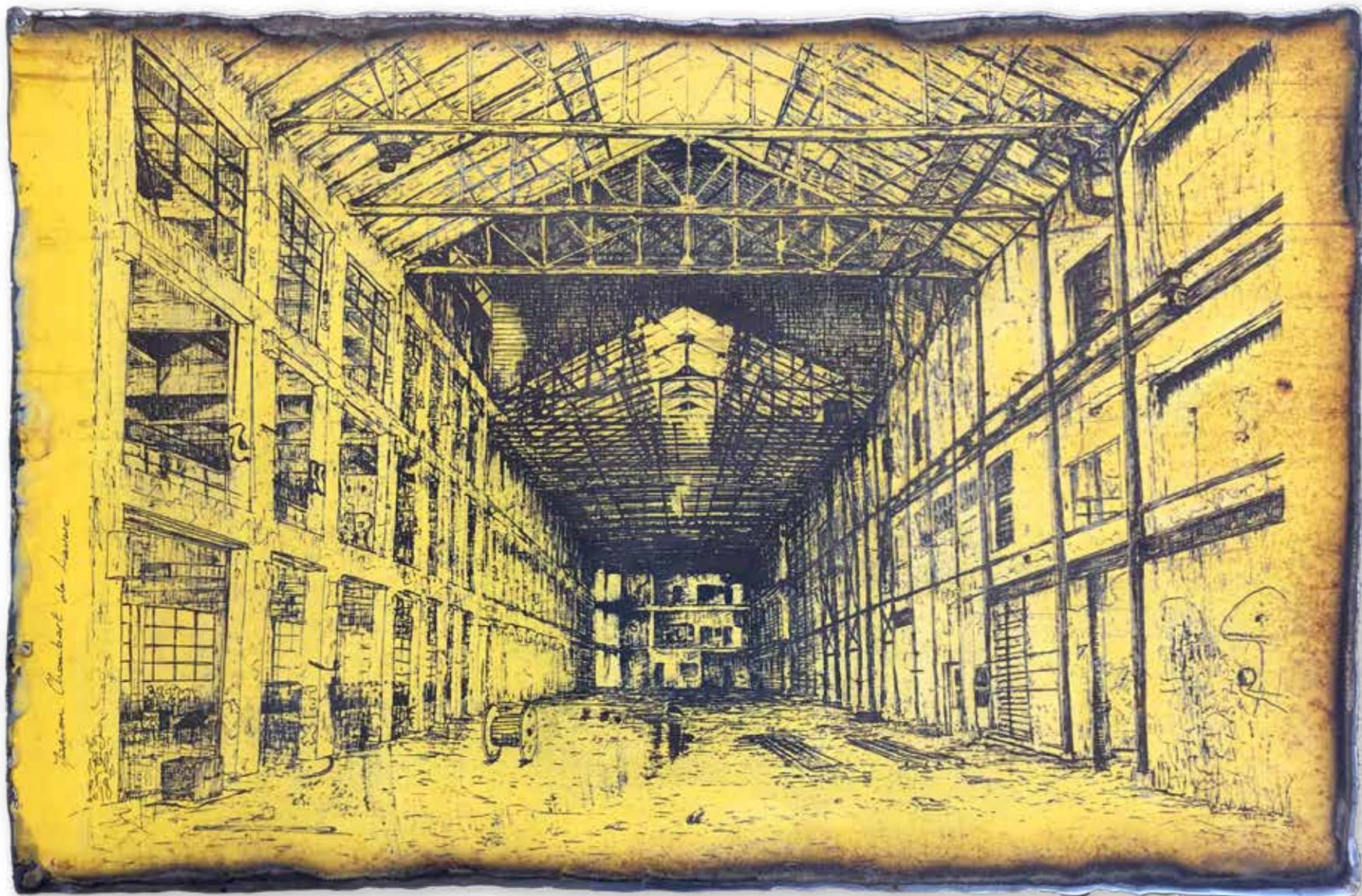
Drawing on steel

Piece of factory



Memory plate 7 #19

67 cm x 59 cm x 2 mm,
5,6 kilos, 2020.



Grande Chambre de Laine

Memory plate 5 #4
62cm x 94 cm x 2 mm,
14 kilos, 2020.



Castle of Romainville

A story with multiple layers

The castle of Romainville dated from 1630, too damaged, it was demolished in spring 2017.

Difficult to access and worn out by time, the building collapsed in a dazzling way at the beginning of the intervention of the demolishers. Leaving little time for the drawing of its transformation. The restitution of these moments thus required some detours through memory. The writing and composition of the images became semi-fictional. In a way, this puts forward an underlying question in my approach: the construction of memory.



Line drawing of the castle

Ink on paper, 29.7 x 42 cm

Line drawings

Series Excerpt # 4: Romainville Castle





Memory plate 6#6
On castle materials



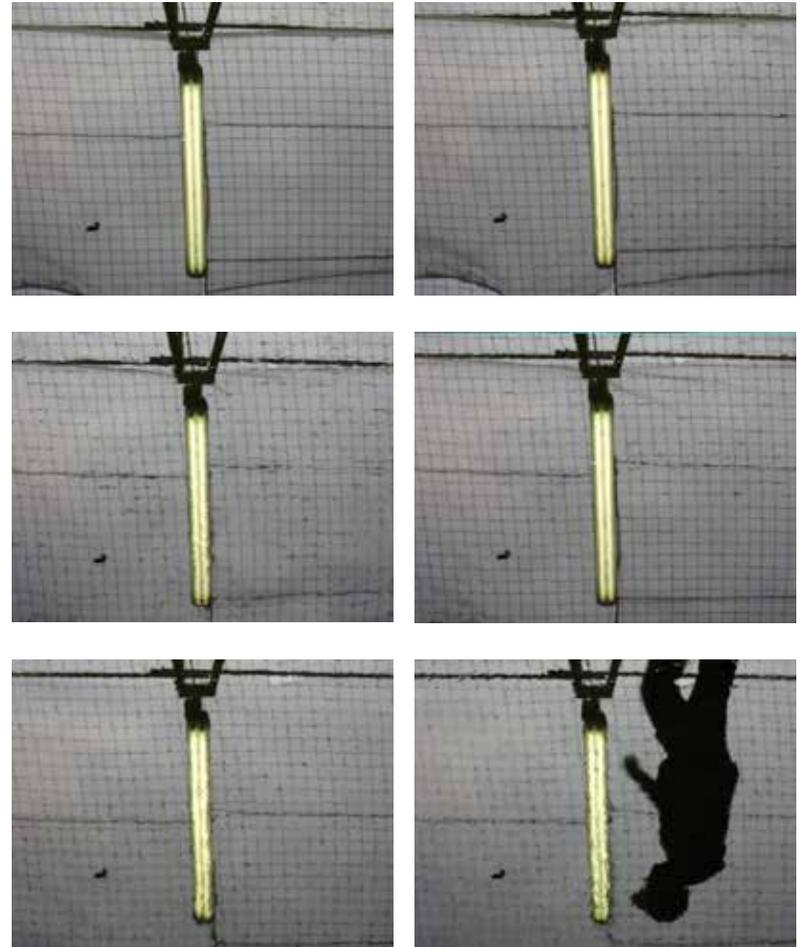
Outlook

Everywhere... the world

The prospects for this project are unfolding as it develops. A process of accumulation of materials considerably enriches the possibilities of exposing it, of reading it, of experiencing it. The places are told and remembered, possibly offering a supernatural encounter with a space-time disappeared that we could touch, feel...

It will develop in different contexts and environments, where the work of memory is witness to radical and definitive changes. Keeping track through printed plates, publications, sound creation, interviews and also through organising unique and ephemeral moments: exhibition, scenography, video, installation, performance ...

All around mundane or remarkable landscapes, I hope to make this work live by paying tribute to the poetry of the spaces, the imaginary world of the places that one leaves, the hope generated by the spaces which they release...



Video capture: extracts

Sound and vibration effects of the building transmitted by the water, read by the lines of the safety net.

RADIO / TV / PRESS PUBLICATION

:: Tv: France 3 ::

Reportage in the television news « Marion Chombart de Lauwe immortalise les destructions industrielles ». Le 4 juin 2019 à 12h08.
https://www.francetvinfo.fr/culture/art-marion-chombart-de-lauwe-immortalise-les-destructions-industrielles_3481043.html

:: Radio: France culture ::

Les nouvelles vagues of Marie Richeux « Suivre le lieu à la trace ». 27th september 2016 at 14h, 1 hour.
<https://www.franceculture.fr/emissions/les-nouvelles-vagues/les-lieux-24-suivre-le-lieu-la-trace>

:: Radio: France culture ::

Les carnets de la création of Aude Lavigne. « Marion Chombart de Lauwe, artiste de terrain ». The 7th september 2018, 5 minutes.
<https://www.franceculture.fr/emissions/les-carnets-de-la-creation/les-carnets-de-la-creation-du-vendredi-07-septembre-2018>

:: Review: 'A'A' (L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui) ::

Architecture review. Bilingual article « Inspiration: Marion Chombart de Lauwe » of Fanny Légglise. N° 388, p.102-105. March 2012.

:: TV: Museum Tv ::

Documentary report. « Femmes artistes sur terrain masculin ». 2018, 30 minutes.

:: Radio: World radio Paris ::

A sunday at the atelier by Christina Maximoff « First broadcast ». 2016, 10 minutes.

:: Radio: Radio campus Besançon ::

Meeting with « Marion Chombart de Lauwe » in the show *La plage*, le 2018 at 12h, 30 minutes.

:: Newspaper: Romainville ::

Municipal newspaper. Article « Portrait ». N°63, p. 30-31. April 2016.

:: Newspaper: Le Parisien ::

Newspaper. Article « Cette artiste croque les dernières heures des bâtiments » of Elsa Marnette. 16 mai 2017.

EXHIBITION IN THE PUBLIC SPACE

:: Place de la Pointe ::

Six works from the project are permanently visible in the public space in Pantin, on the Place de la Pointe (between the Halage Road and the rue de l'ancienne Canal), ready for the buildings represented: the General Stores.

EVENT INFORMATION

:: Site internet ::

Page updated with current events and exhibitions in the "Infos" tab of the site www.mcdl.net
<https://mcdl.net/news>

:: Social networks ::

Recent news and photos published frequently on facebook and instagram via: Marion Chombart de Lauwe

Marion Chombart de Lauwe

www.mcdl.net

06 82 75 78 71

contact@mcdl.net

