



# EARTHLY DELIGHTS

Thinking Through Drawing

Laurel McLeod

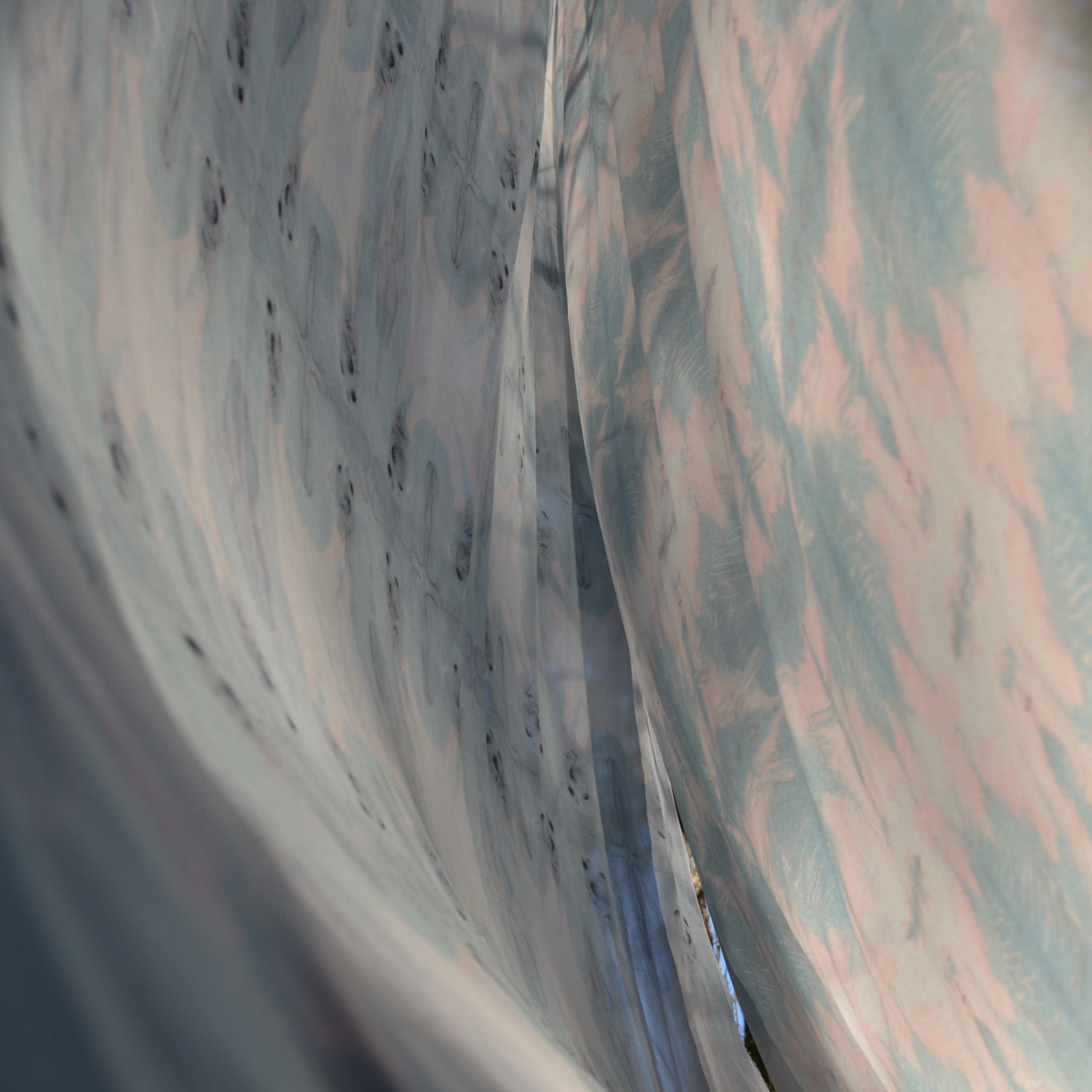




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*For a little Bean*



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## ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Toronto-based artist Laurel McLeod explores, through drawing, an expanded conceptualization of nature, creating both small and large scale works on paper and silk. Having completed her BA at the University of Guelph, she is pursuing her MFA at OCAD University in the IAMD program. McLeod has recently participated in the Florence Contemporary Residency (2019) and participated in the group exhibition, *COR3*, at Gallery 1313 (2019).

## EXHIBITION STATEMENT

*Earthly Delights*, presented by OCAD University, is an MFA Thesis Exhibition by Laurel McLeod. Audiences will have the opportunity to explore natural environments and their processes in a new way in the second-floor gallery of the Gladstone Hotel in due course. Works on paper and silk encourage a reworking of what it means to experience nature and what is natural. The drawings explore a delight in seeking connections to nature, which can be seen through photographs in this book. This is to challenge thoughts about our place as humans existing as part of environmental spaces. What results is a created, speculative experience with an imaginable call to action.





## ABSTRACT

*Earthly Delights: Thinking Through Drawing* encourages human individuals to explore natural environments in a new light by transforming the spaces in which we encounter them, namely by bringing the exterior world of nature into interior spaces. In doing so, I work to encourage a reworking of our current understanding of what it means to experience nature and what it means for something to be natural. Beginning with an initial understanding of the natural environment as that which operates within the context of the outdoors, this text and accompanying artwork work to make sense of the different ways through which people remain part of rather than separate from the natural world, one that often goes overlooked.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to Nicole Collins, my Primary Advisor, for always listening and providing unwavering support. You have helped me turn my ideas into a tangible reality taking the form of a thesis paper, artist book, and soon as an exhibition. A heartfelt thank you to Diane Pugen, my Secondary Advisor, who encouraged me to try new things not only in the studio but outside in the field.

My gratitude goes to the OCAD University faculty and administration for your guidance throughout this experience. Program Director Dr. Martha Ladly, you have been an inspiration to me during my time here. Daniel Solomon, thank you for your kind words of encouragement. Dr. Barbara Rauch, Jessica Wyman, and Michelle Gay, thank you for your time and all of your advice. Thank you to my committee members, Maya Desai and Cole Swanson, for your much-appreciated interest and involvement during an especially tricky time.

To family and friends, thank you for your support and for always cheering me on in my artistic pursuits. You might not all be “artsy,” but you still lent me eyes, ears, and hands, and for that, I am grateful. To my IAMD cohort, you have given me endless motivation, care, and friendship. I hope I do not give too much away in the next few pages!



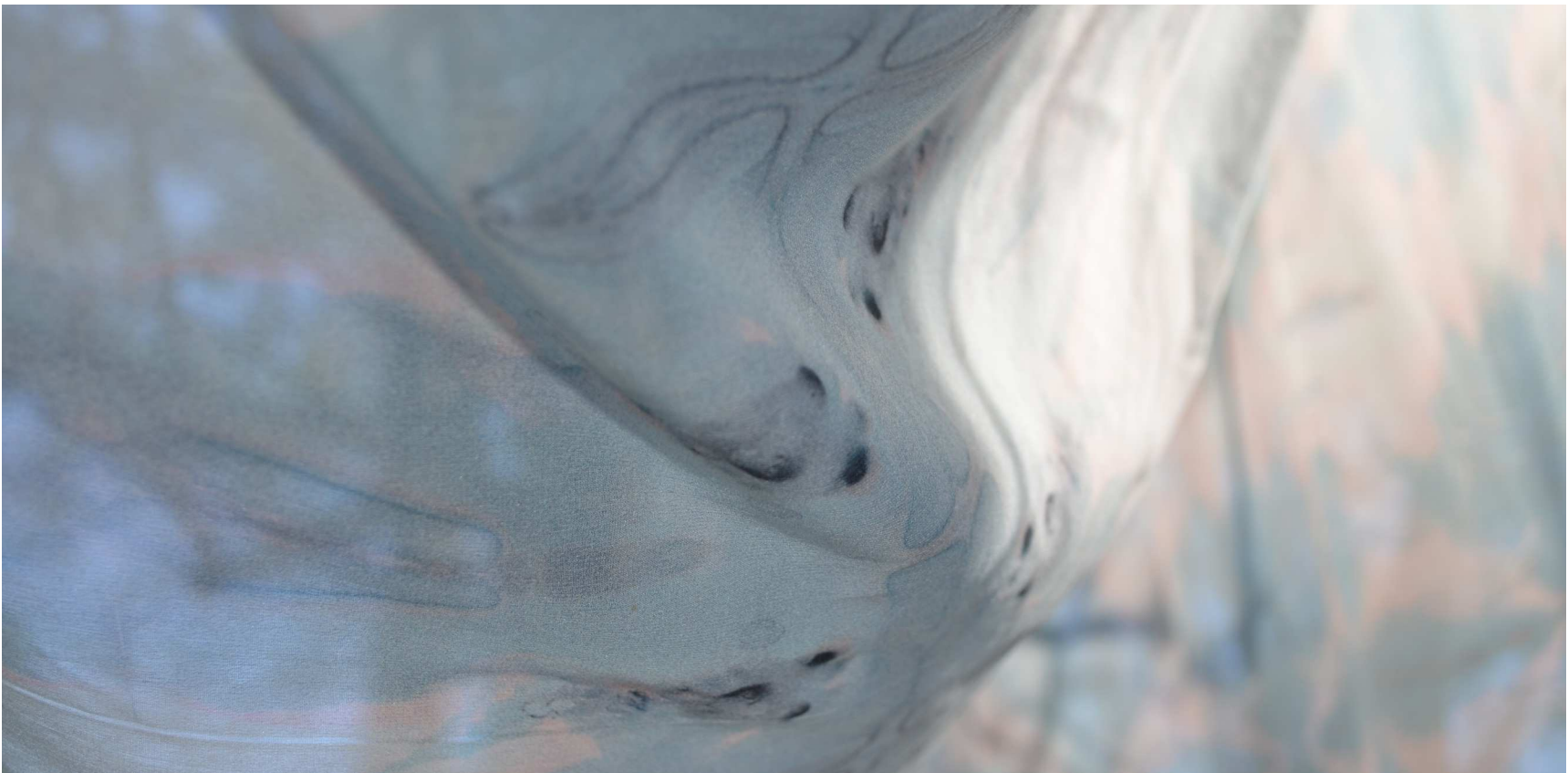


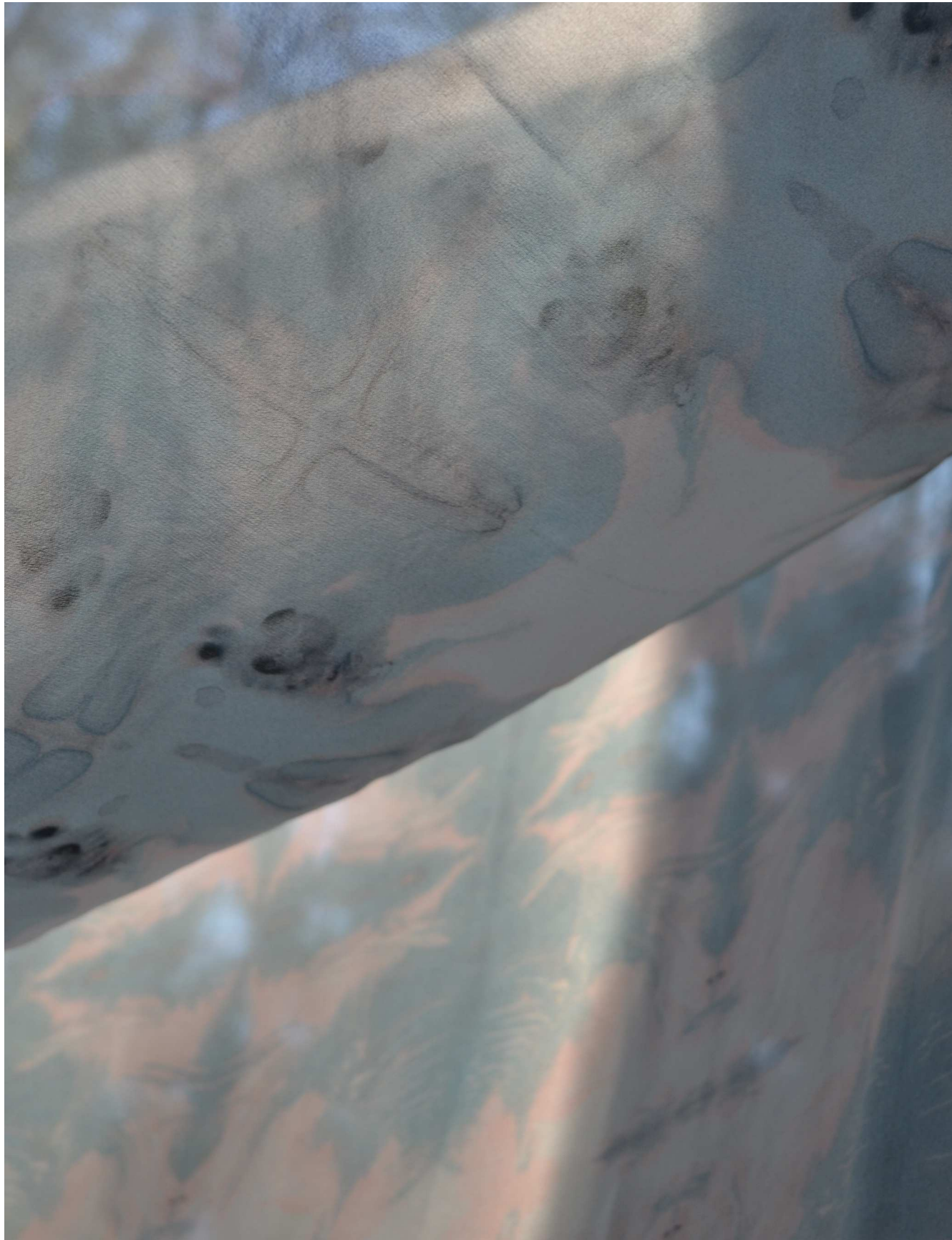




*Untitled, Digital Print on Silk Georgette, 2020*

These silk works created through drawing, and then transformed through digital printing, further engage the individual through their immersion into the transformed space. The movement of the large, lightweight silk speaks to the elements of mystery and secrecy that I so often encounter while exploring the outdoors.





*Untitled, Digital Print on Silk Georgette, 2020*



W

A

T

E

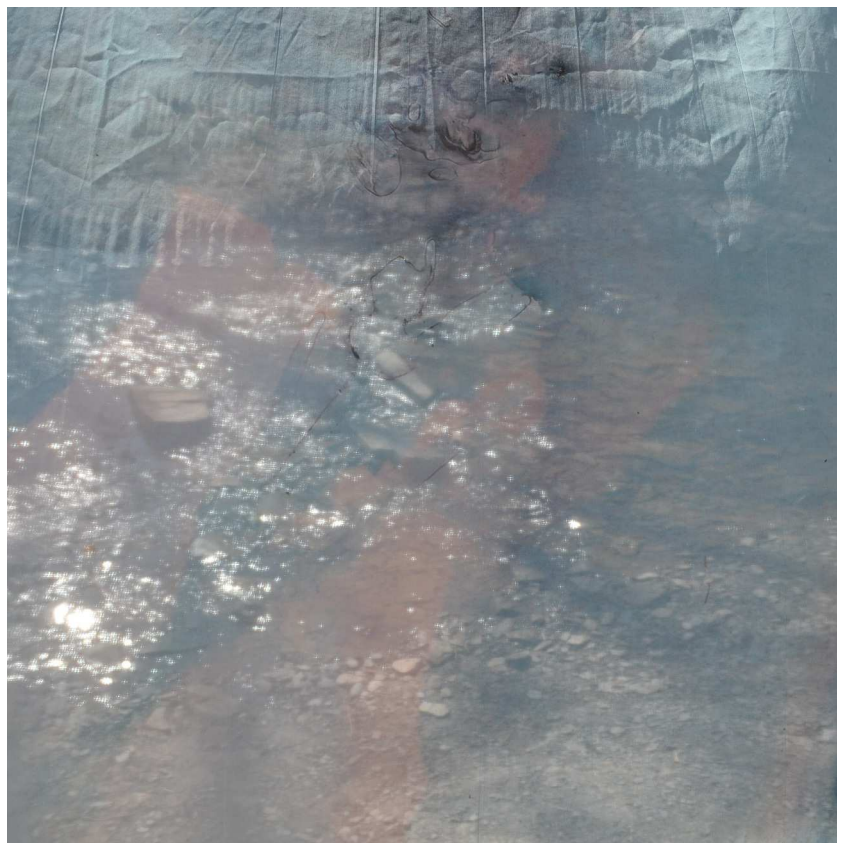
R

A low-angle photograph looking up at several bare trees against a clear blue sky. The trees' branches are dark and intricate, creating a complex pattern. In the lower-left foreground, a white sheet or tarp is draped, partially obscuring the view. The text "I am not waterproof." is centered in the middle of the image in a white, italicized font.

*I am not waterproof.*




*Water, Digital Print on Silk Georgette, 2020*



F  
I  
R  
E





*Squishing and squelching by scrunching my feet in saturated sand. My extremities reduced to prunes. Admitting icy saltwater causes cruel little stings, smarting my toes.*






*Fire, Digital Print on Silk Georgette, 2020*

E  
A  
R  
T  
H



A photograph of a forest floor. In the foreground, a large, weathered log lies horizontally, showing its textured, layered wood grain. The ground is covered with dry, brown leaves and twigs. A large, translucent grey overlay covers the left side of the image, creating a diagonal split. The text is centered in the lower half of the image, overlaid on the log and the forest floor.

*I lie in the sand and make snow angels instead. I  
want to become you but I settle for wearing you  
instead. It suits me.*



*Earth, Digital Print on Silk Georgette, 2020*

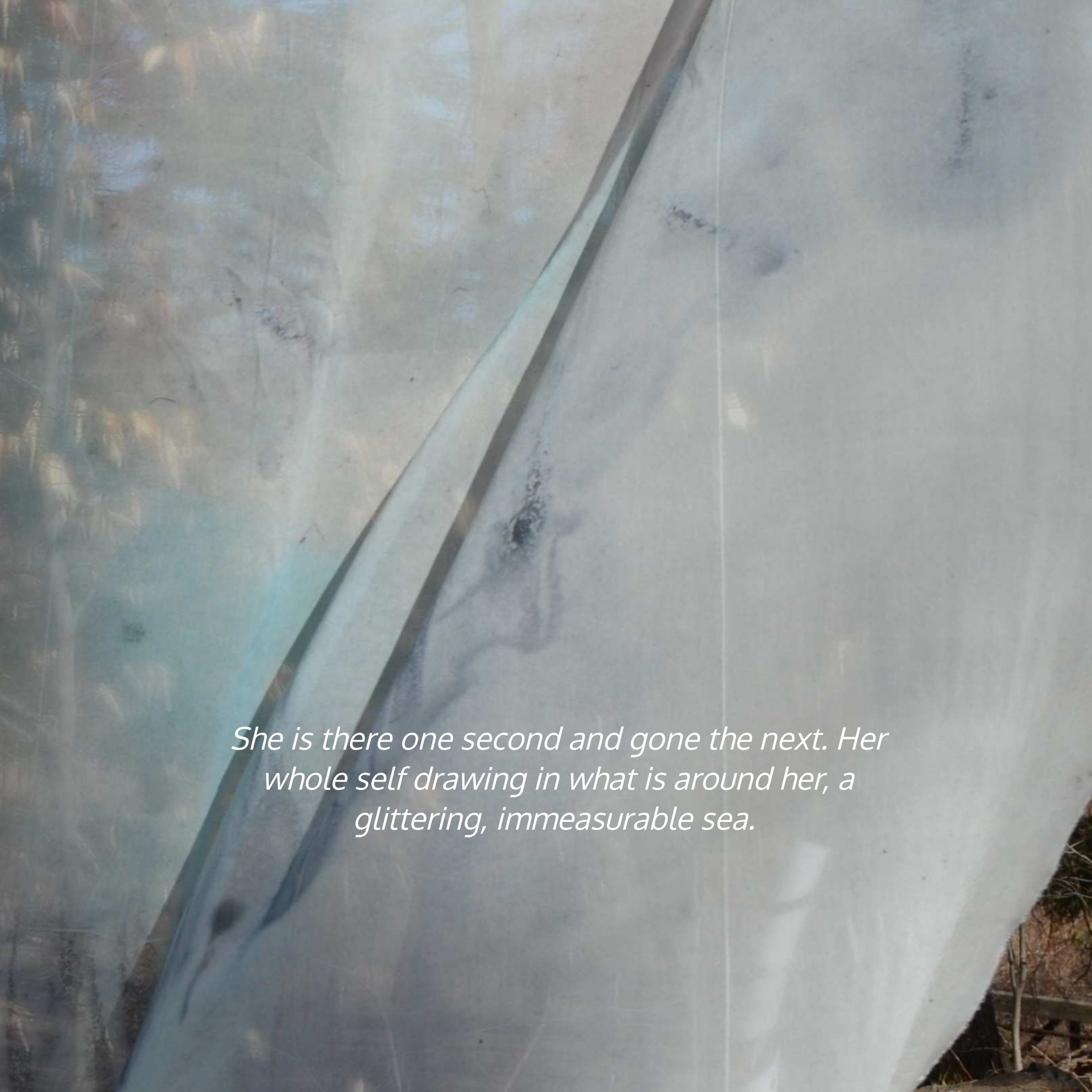


A large white sheet is spread out on the ground, with shadows of trees cast onto it. The shadows are dark and intricate, showing the branches and leaves of the trees. The sheet is slightly wrinkled and has a soft texture. The background is a mix of green grass and brown earth, with some trees visible in the distance.

A

I

R



*She is there one second and gone the next. Her  
whole self drawing in what is around her, a  
glittering, immeasurable sea.*





*Air, Digital Print on Silk Georgette, 2020*



***SHOOT***



While in Florence, Italy, for a residency, I had used my camera to document the weird and wonderful plants I was observing. These drawings exist as a thought process being instinctively completed and come from a desire to understand nature that my determined self believes I can do through hours of dedicated, meticulous drawing.



*Shoot (Details), Willow Charcoal on Paper, 2020*



*IRIS*







*Iris (Details), Willow Charcoal on Paper, 2020*



***BUD***





*Bud, Willow Charcoal on Paper, 2020*

