

HARLAN LEVEY PROJECTS

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Amélie Bouvier
The Sun Conspiracy

1.11 - 3.3.2018

The Sun Conspiracy is a term that refers to the solar storm of 1859, one of the strongest solar storms ever recorded. This storm has become the model used to predict the consequences that an extreme solar storm would likely cause on a global scale.

Cover and back cover: Some of the staff from the Harvard College Observatory, 1918.
From left to right: Ida Woods, Evelyn Leland, Florence Cushman, Grace Brooks, Mary Van Henrietta Leavitt, Mollie O'Reilly, Mabel Gill, Alta Carpenter, Annie Jump Cannon, Dorothy Black, Arville Walker, Frank Hinkely, and Professor Edward King.

Amélie Bouvier

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January 11th - March 3rd, 2018

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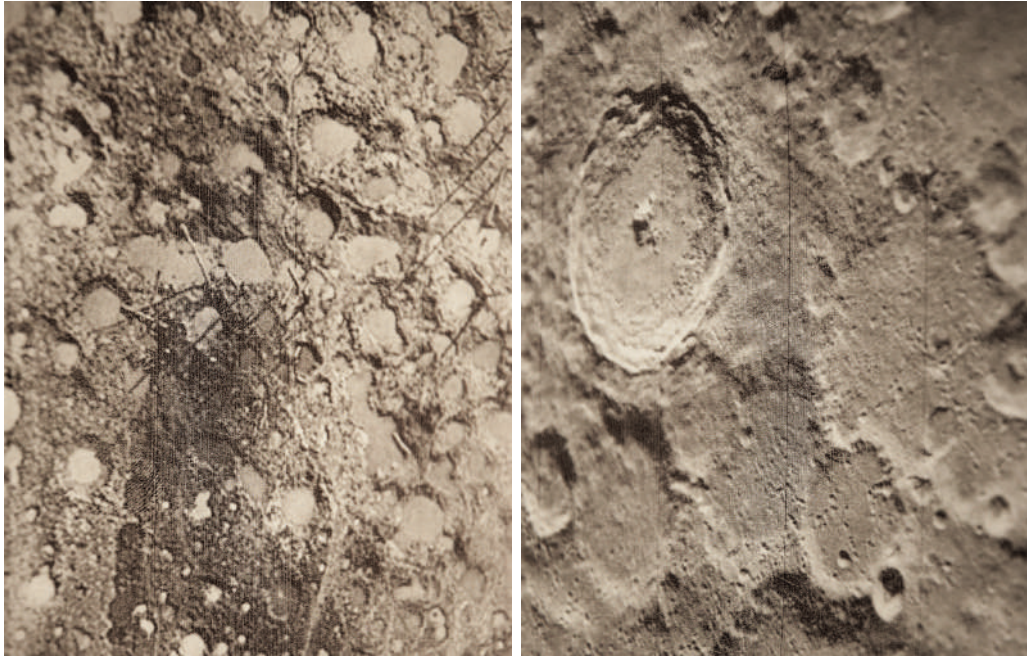


The universe in the hand, video still, 2017

Amélie Bouvier

The Sun Conspiracy

Models, predictions, errors and the unknown, informed by astronomy, aerial imaging techniques and the history of science, Amélie Bouvier works between material and metaphysical modes of perception. Through pictures, astronomers try to give form to what is visible only through calculation and deduction. Bouvier deconstructs and distorts this visual narrative by adopting strategies that mimic mechanical repetitions and mutate grids to magnify moments in science where error is unavoidable and often invisible. With the cosmos in consideration, works in this exhibition deal with problems of knowledge and how to know what is not known, cannot be known or has been forgotten. Drawings in “The Sun Conspiracy” build on previous series of work such as “Small Accidents” and “Place it High for More Impact,” commemorating historical information, events and ways of looking while transforming them. These are complimented by two sculptures and a single work with research documentation.



Impacts #5 (detail)
Marble and printed photography, 30x50cm / 11,8x19,6inch, 2017



Exhibition view of “The Sun Conspiracy” at Harlan Levey Projects

Upon entering the exhibition, a slab of marble has been cut to hold two photographs. Nature and culture collide in the political negotiation of limitless possibility versus imminent destruction.



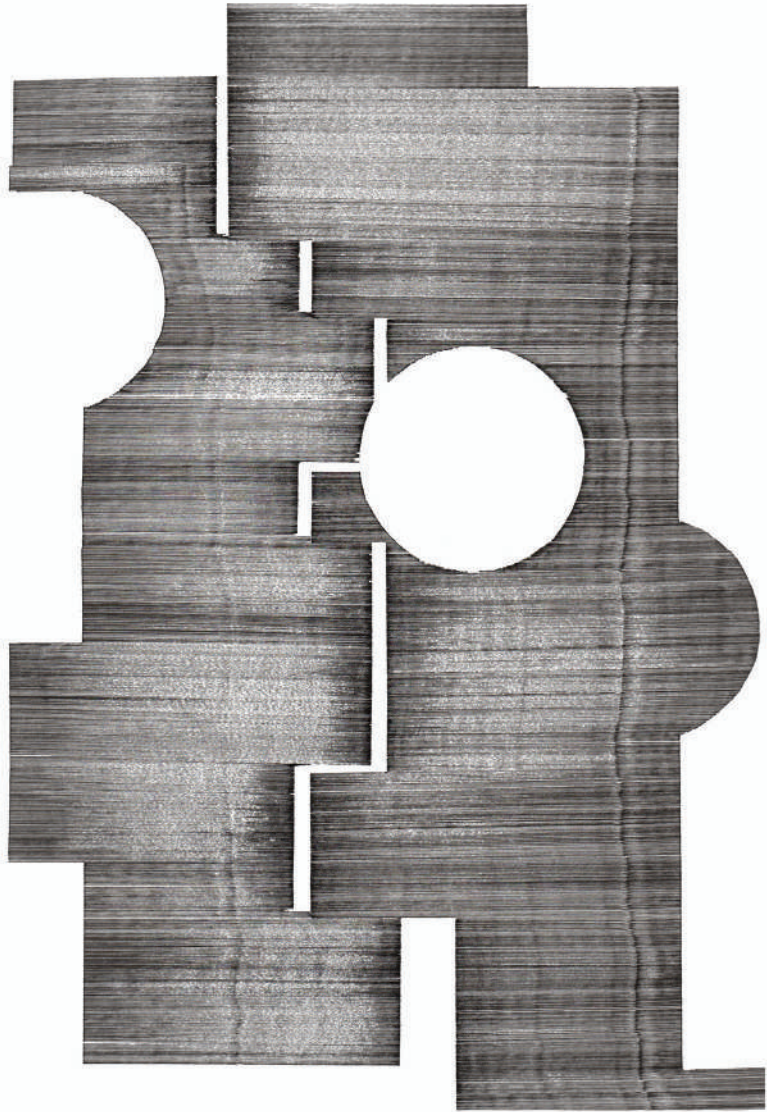
Exhibition view of "The Sun Conspiracy" at Harlan Levey Projects



Astronomer Edward Charles Pickering's Harvard computers, archive from Harvard College Observatory

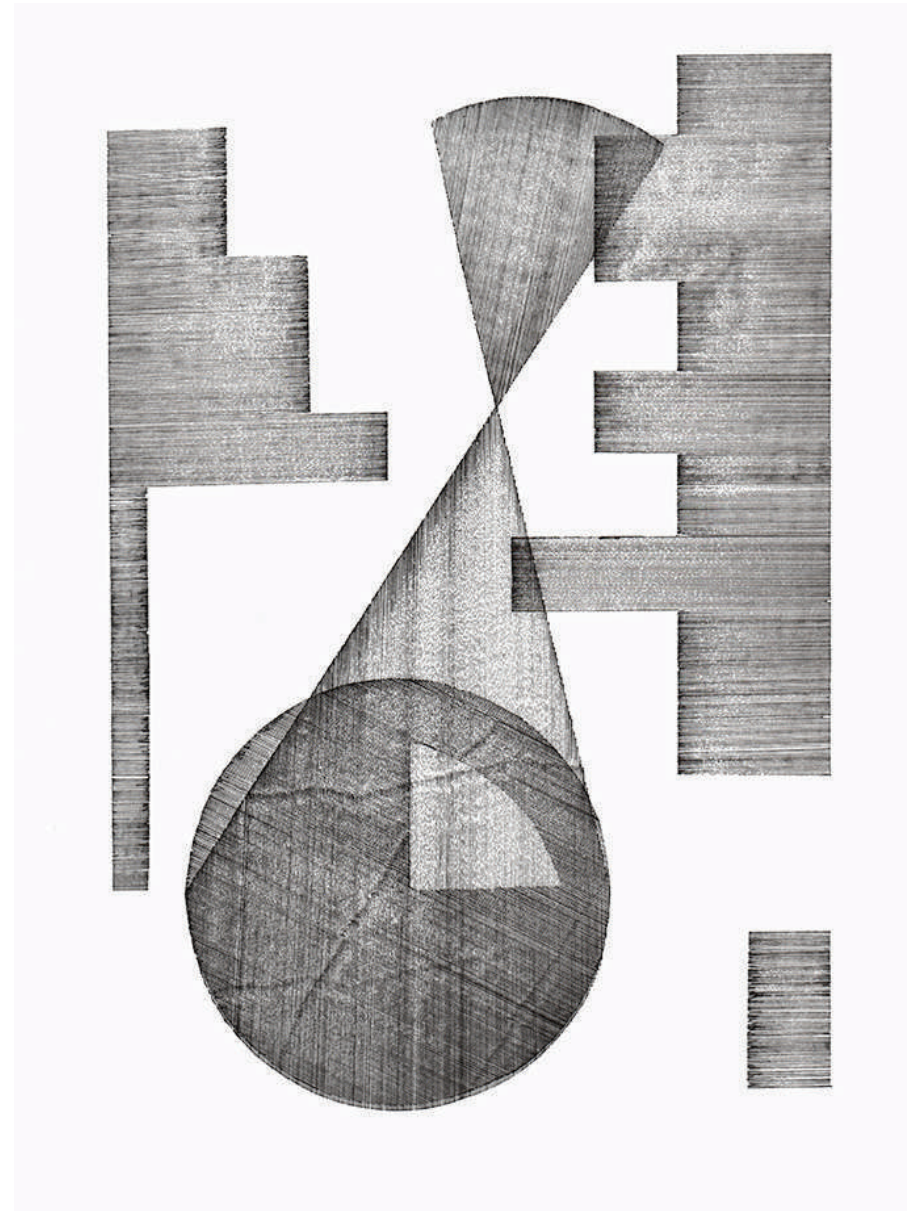
Edward Charles Pickering (director of the Harvard Observatory from 1877 to 1919) employed women to process astronomical data. The majority of these women are remembered not individually, but collectively by the moniker Pickering's Harem; a derogatory nickname that reflects attitudes in a time when women working outside the home was almost unheard of. According to "Smithsonian Magazine," at the turn of the 20th century science even warned against women and education. This did not stop some members of Pickering's team from earning degrees in Astronomy. These women usually earned between 25 and 50 cents per hour, more than a factory worker, less than a clerical employee.

This set of drawings is directly inspired by the work of these women, and their contribution to advances in science many of which are still in use today.



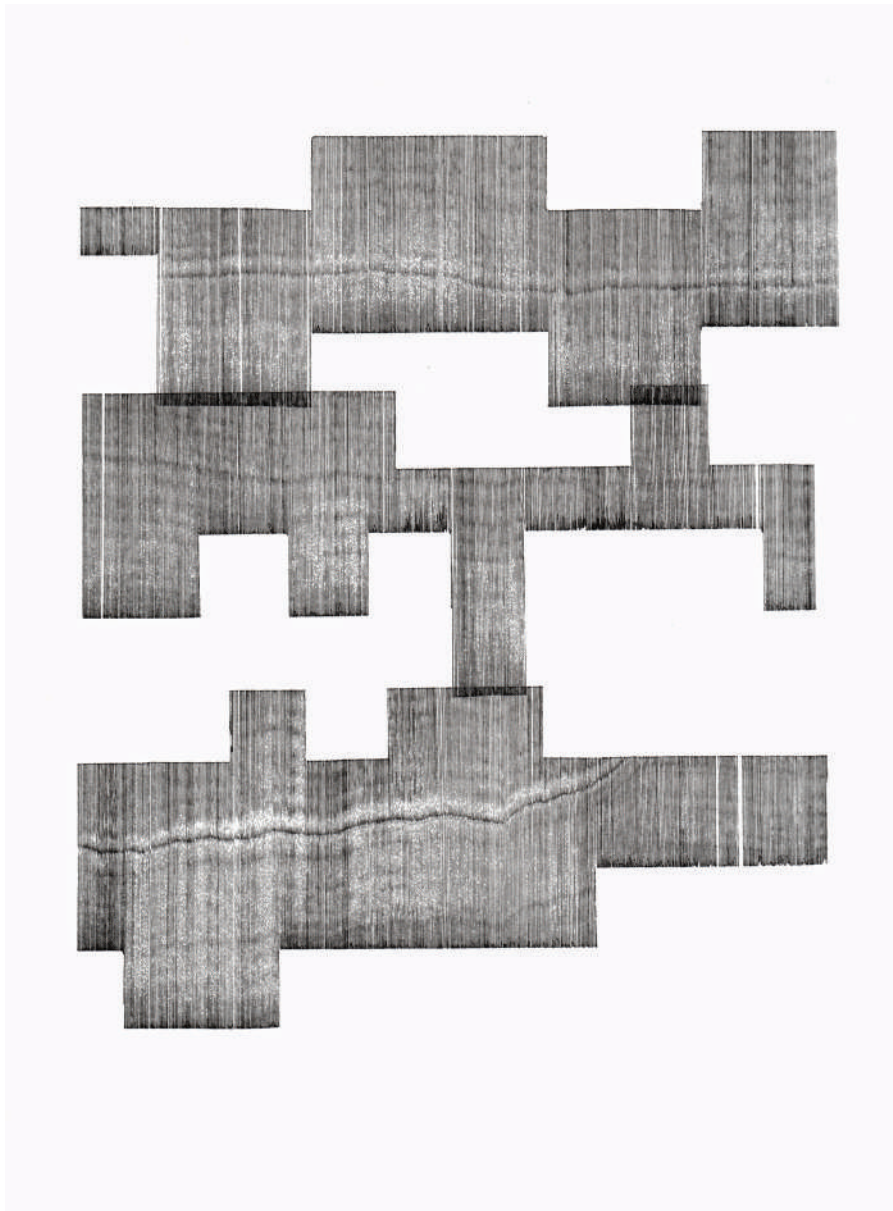
Pickering's Harem #1

Indian ink on paper, white aluminium frame, 32.5x24 cm / 12.8x9.5 inch, 2017



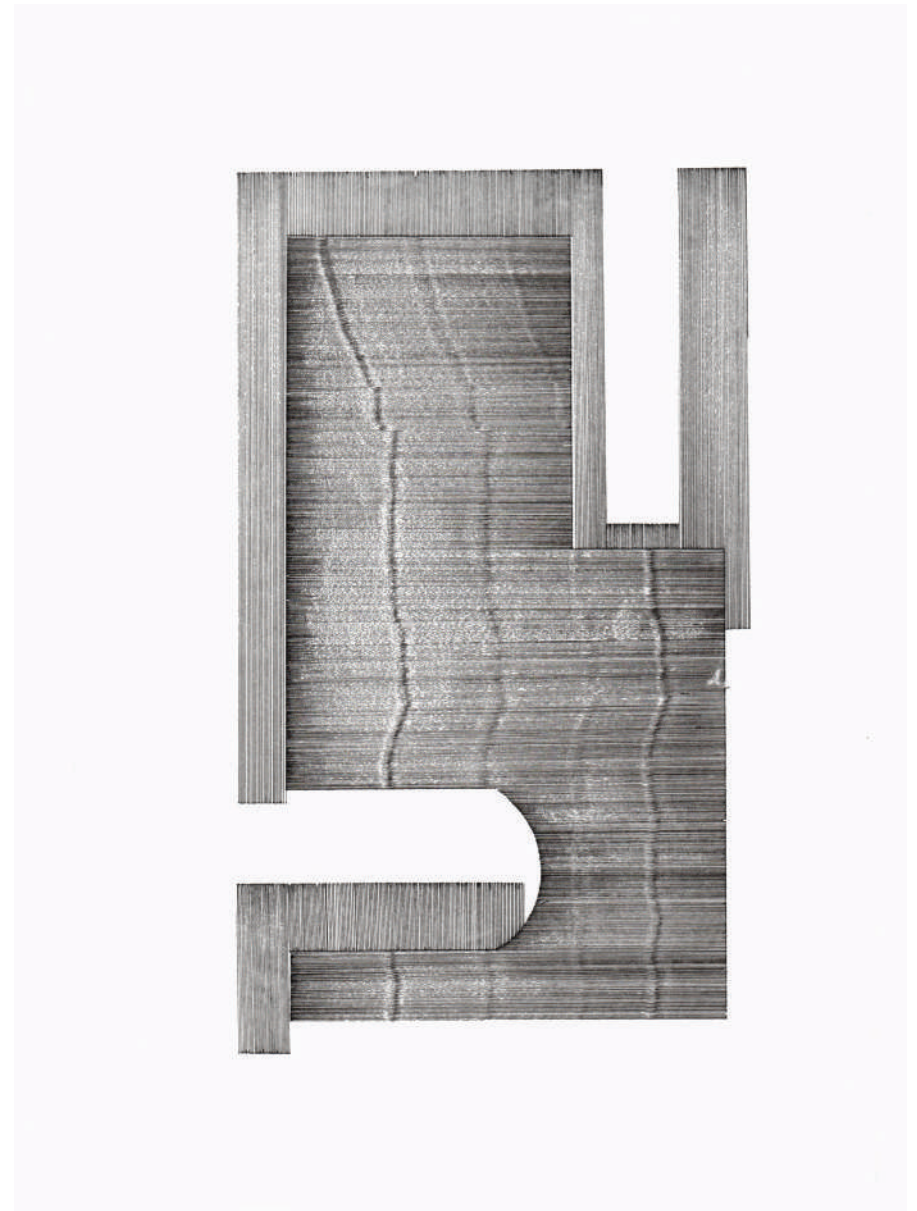
Pickering's Harem #2

Indian ink on paper, white aluminium frame, 32.5x24 cm / 12.8x9.5 inch, 2017



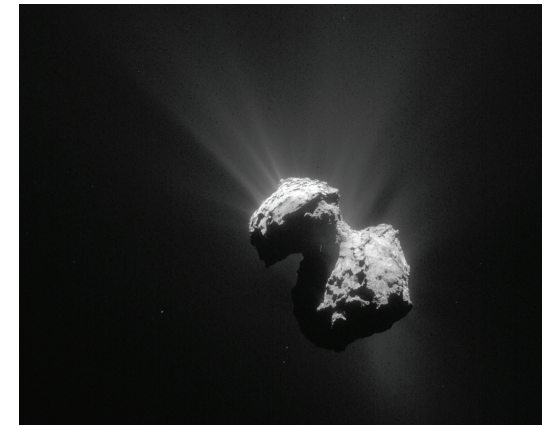
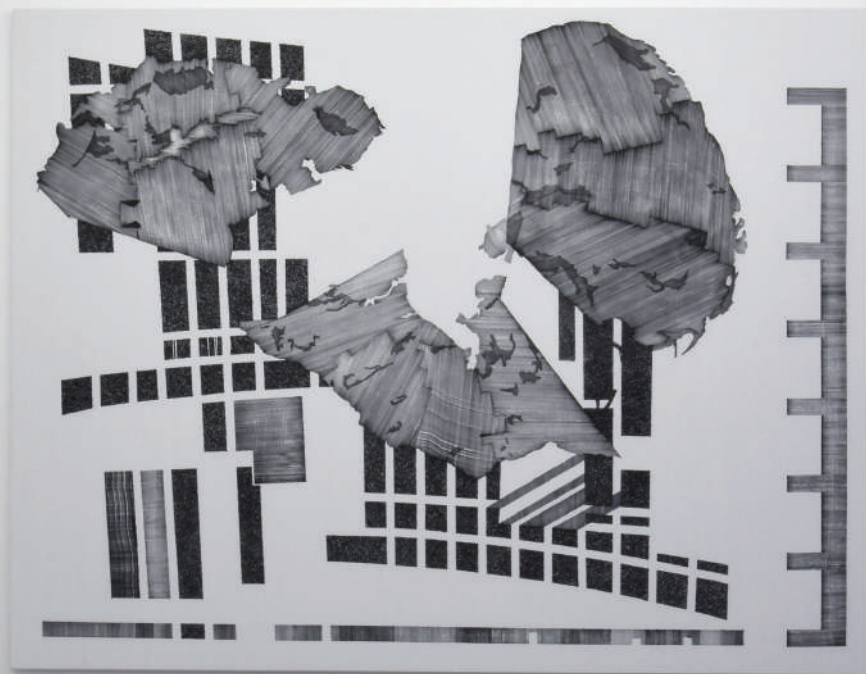
Pickering's Harem #3

Indian ink on paper, white aluminium frame, 32.5x24 cm / 12.8x9.5 inch, 2017

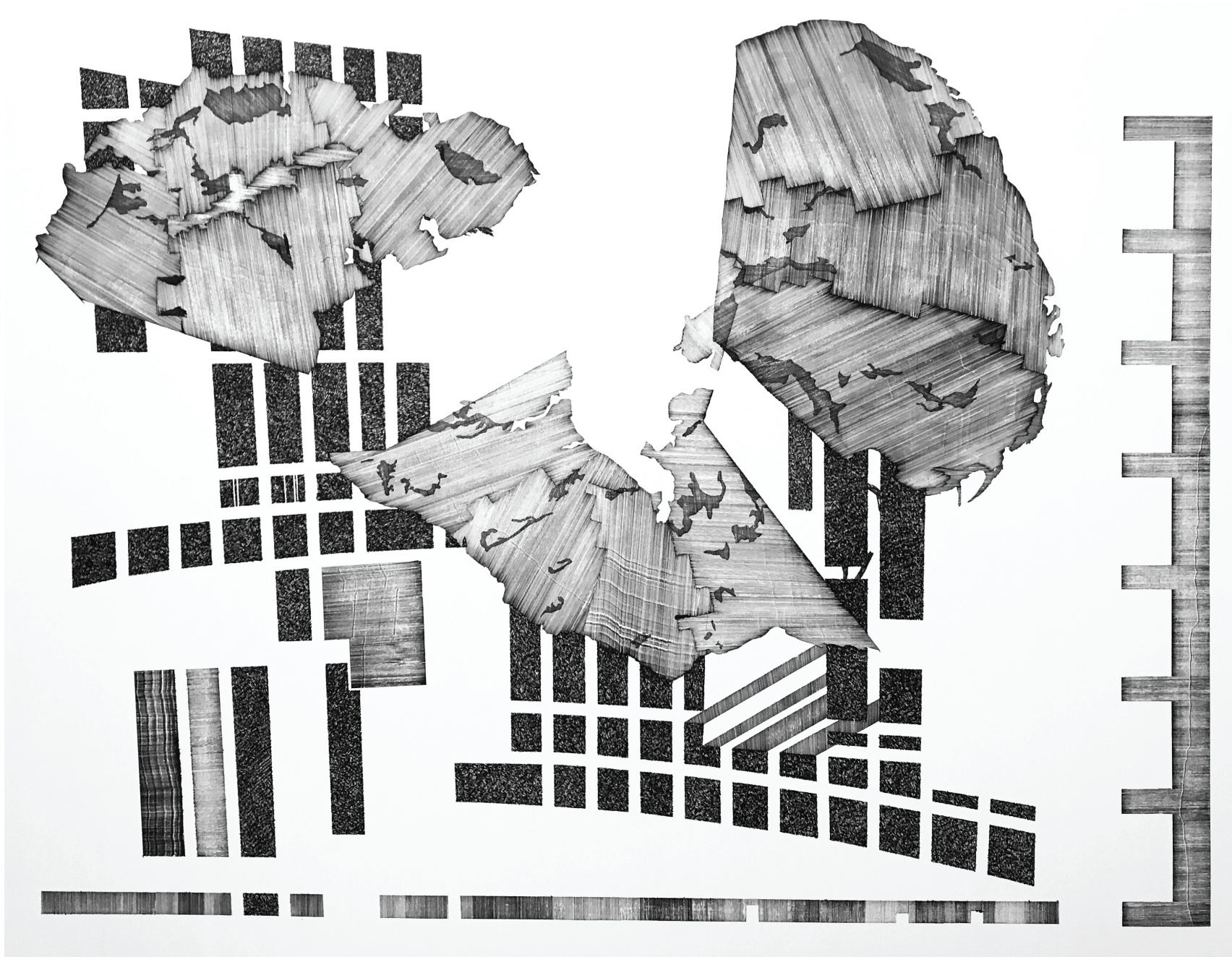


Pickering's Harem #4

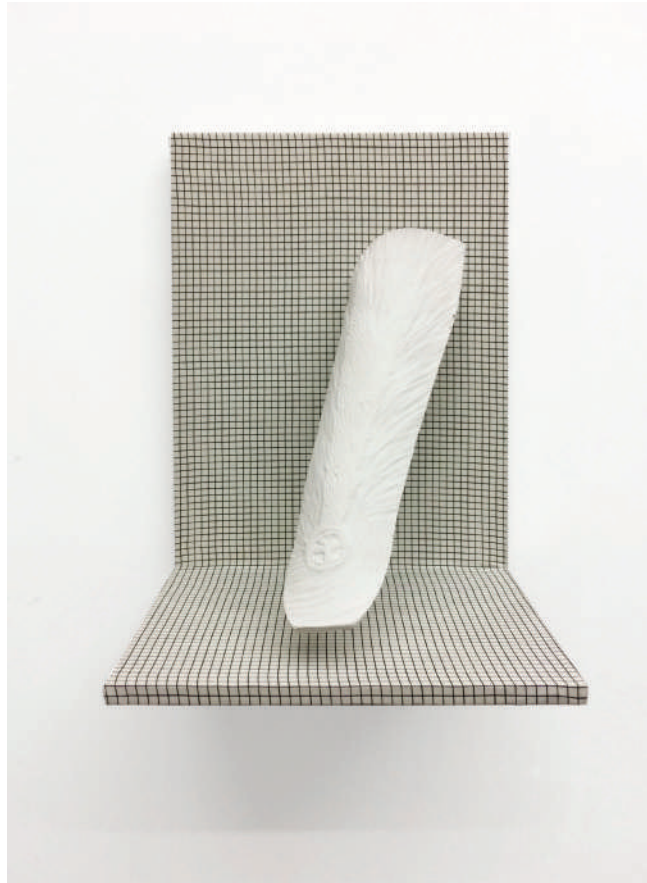
Indian ink on paper, white aluminium frame, 32.5x24 cm / 12.8x9.5 inch, 2017



Named after the Rosetta Stone, the European Space Agency's Rosetta Probe was the first spacecraft to fly close to Jupiter's orbit using solar cells as its main power source. Prior to this, the probe performed a detailed study of comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko. This large drawing imagines the comet from three different points of view, which are based on grids employed by Google Earth that construct space when actual images are absent. The grid is a conceptual system that allows for analysis.



67 P
Indian ink on canvas, 200x155 cm / 78.7x61 inch, 2017



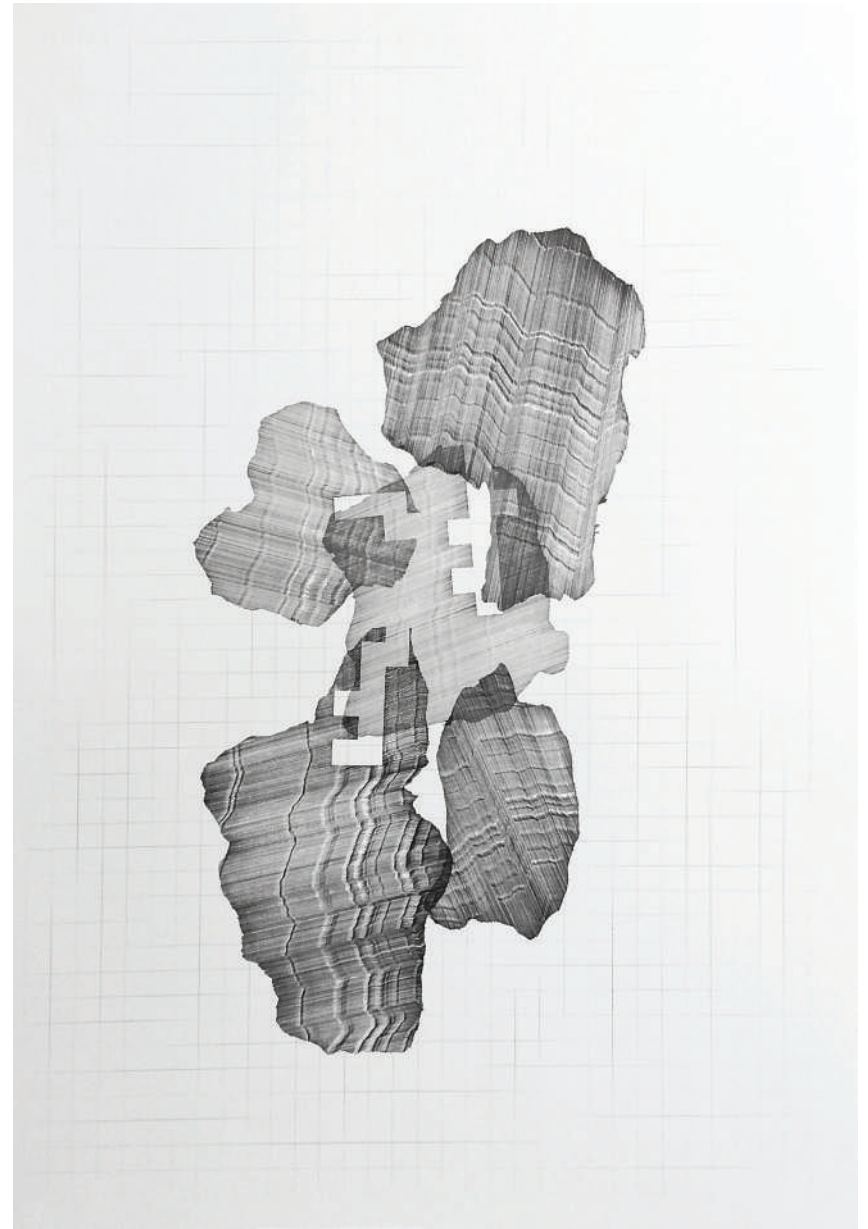
An outdated drawing is placed in a contemporary research context, illustrating the difference between speculation and observation.

(L) ***Falling Comet***

Plaster cast, steel, wood, fabric, 42x27x31 cm / 16.5x10.6x12.2 inch, 2017

(R) ***Magnetic Enlightenment***

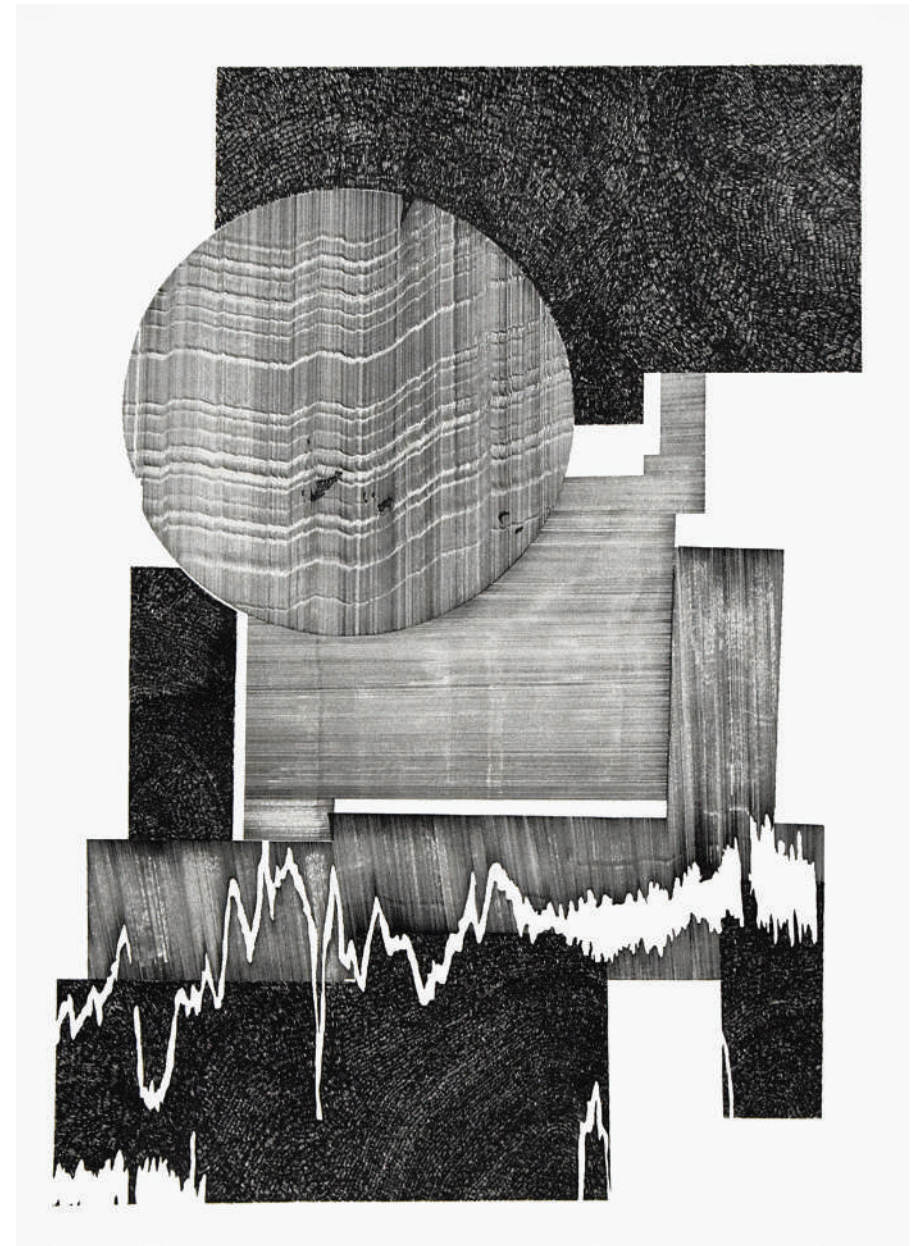
Indian ink on paper, frame in natural wood, 113x76 cm / 44.5x30 inch, 2017



This drawing focuses on a meteorite, which fell from the asteroid belt into the same region as the meteorite in the sculpture 'Gains & Losses.'

The storm of 1859 was noticed, because it heated the surface of the sun profoundly enough to change its flames into a “white light flare.”

If you were asked what sort of large-scale catastrophe concerns you, terrorism, climate change, banking collapses and even nuclear war might come to mind. A solar storm wouldn't be up there, but it should be. Scientists insist that it is going to happen at some point in the not so distant future.



White Light Flare

Indian ink on paper, frame in wood and lead, 103x73 cm / 40.5x28.7 inch, 2017

As solar explosions are continuously observed and measured, these majestic events go beyond our abilities to control, predict or manipulate natural occurrences.



Solar Storm
Indian ink on paper, frame in wood and lead, 103x73 cm / 40.5x28.7 inch, 2017

Meteorite impact can form craters. The Moon, Mars and Venus for example, are full of them. On Earth these have mainly corroded and disappeared. Earth however has similar markings from the devastating impact of bombs.



Future Archeology
Indian ink on paper, frame in wood and lead, 103x73 cm / 40.5x28.7 inch, 2017

With regards to space, we have often constructed perspectives of what could not be seen. How does truth differ from well-crafted imagination?



What We Thought We Saw
Indian ink on paper, frame in wood and lead, 103x73 cm / 40.5x28.7 inch, 2017



Astronomer Camille Flammarion offered his wife a ring with a meteorite instead of a diamond. Reflecting the unknown, meteorites are clearly valuable to the study of planetary science, but also to collectors. Some meteorites are currently worth more than gold and this has led to a global increase in meteorite hunting as the race for space is run on earth. In the sculpture, “Gains and Losses,” perspective changes the promise of this iron meteorite, which fell into the Sikhote Alin Mountains on February 12th, 1947.

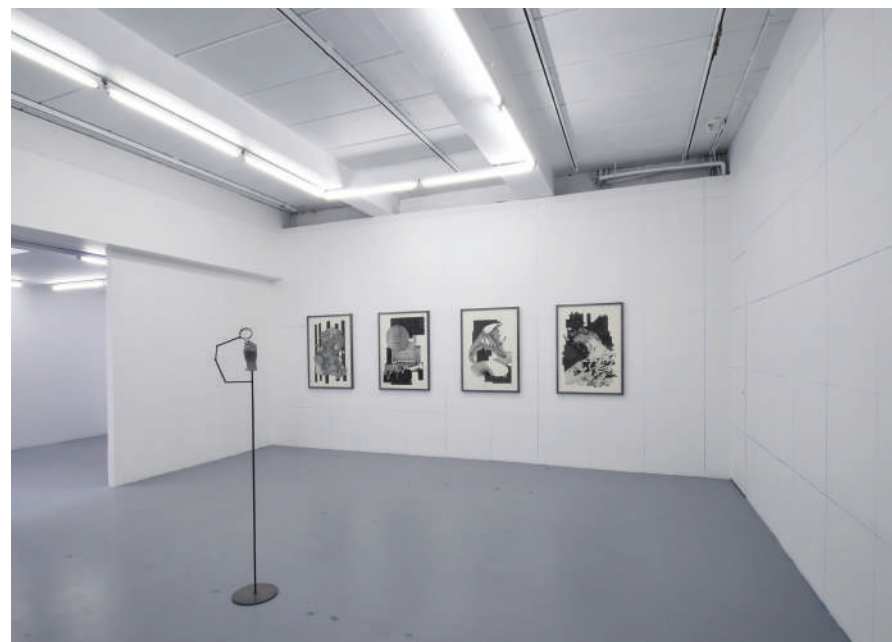
Iron meteorite
Fall date : February 12, 1947
Sikhote_Alin Mountains, Primorsky Krai
Far Eastern Federal district, Russia.



Gains & Losses
Steel, magnifying glass, silver, iron meteorite, 135x25x25 cm / 53.2x9.8x9.8 inch, 2017



(L)(R) Exhibition view of “The Sun Conspiracy” at Harlan Levey Projects



Amelie Bouvier (b.1982, France) lives and works in Brussels, Belgium. Her practice begins with the utilization of images and diagrams from various sources, such as scientific and military archives, Google and science-fiction material, exploring lines between real and imagined perceptions. Her laborious drawings transform images and specific details of events in order to provide new perspectives on the identity and agency of place, time and epistemological building blocks. She has had several noteworthy exhibitions including those at Museo Patio Herreriano (Valladolid, Spain), Carpe Diem Arte e Pesquisa (Lisbon, Portugal), Plataforma Revólver (Lisbon, Portugal), Sabrina Amrani Gallery (Madrid, Spain), the Verbeke Foundation (Kemzeke, Belgium), and at the Museu Da Cidade (Lisbon, Portugal). Her work has been included in the 16th Cerveira International Art Biennial and in the 6th Biennale of Art and Culture of São Tomé e Príncipe. She was selected for the ISELP prize “Hors d’Oeuvre” in Brussels and was named the best emerging artist at Just Mad in Madrid, as well as a finalist for the CIC’Art Prize. In addition to her personal work, Amelie is an active member in the project “Enough Room for Space.”

www.hl-projects.com
www.ameliebouvier.com

