



Workstation

'Aesthetic Jam', satellite project, 9th Taipei Biennial (Taiwan)
October 2014

The piece was developed on invitation by curators Henk Slager and Hongjohn Lin, in the context of 'Aesthetic Jam', a satellite project at Taipei Biennial 2014.

The curators organized a project that would continuously transform and adjust the ground floor of the Taipei Fine Art Museum, as a result of work made by participating artists. The project departed from a so-called 'zero degree situation', a presentation in which a few works were exhibited that provided the basis for the additions to come.

After the opening five artists were invited to produce new work in the exhibition space, for a period of three weeks. During the work process the five artists were expected to discuss the realization of a new presentation in the space, including the newly produced works and selected works from the zero degree arrangement. After the working period of three weeks the artists would leave, and the exhibition would be 'stable' for two weeks, after which a new group of artists would arrive.

I was part of the second group of artists to work in Taipei. I arrived on October 18.

Very often, if not always, my work deals with nature and its endless variations. Due to this feature of limitless permutations in the phenomena I observe and depict, I usually have to define artificial boundaries; more or less arbitrary parameters, in order to get a grip on the matter and be able to draw it. The concept for this exhibition and its proposed presentation mode allowed me to deal with this element in

quite a different way, as the idea of visualizing process itself formed a contextual part of the exhibition.

In response to the proposal I created a 'workstation', consisting of a multifaceted table that functioned both as a display system and a platform to produce work. The workstation is a self-contained device that serves to create the work (containing drawing instruments such as light boxes, scrolls, tracing areas and tools for observation) as well as storage devices related to the creation of the works, such as drawers and various compartments. At the same time, both of these 'functional' devices also serve as a platform for the visualization of the works and the process of working.

The process started before my trip to Taiwan by asking colleagues working in the field of biology about field research carried out in the region. Through my inquiries with Stuart Davies from the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, I became acquainted with the work of I Fang Sun from the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies at the National Dong Hwa University, and (via Erik J. van Nieuwerkerken, Camiel Doorenweerd and Menno Schilthuizen from the Naturalis Biodiversity Center) with Shipher Wu from the Biodiversity Research Center of Academia Sinica, Taiwan. They work in quite different areas of research.

Prior to my arrival in Taipei, and together with I Fang Sun and Shipher Wu, we organized two short research trips that would get me acquainted to the (forest) landscape and collect material to later observe and draw in detail at the workstation.

process



Dr. I Fang Sun guided me during the first trip, to the 25 ha Fushan Forest Dynamics Plot at the Fushan Botanical Garden. The 25 ha Fushan Forest Dynamics Plot is one of the newest additions to the CTFS (Center for Tropical Forest Science, Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute) network.

Fushan FDP is managed by the Taiwan Forest Research Institute. The plot is located in northern Taiwan at an elevation of 600 m. in warm, temperate, evergreen broad-leaf forest. The first census counted over 114,000 individuals from 110 species. With the patient explanations of Dr. I Fang Sun, I gained a great understanding of that forest, how it functions and how it reacts to its environment.

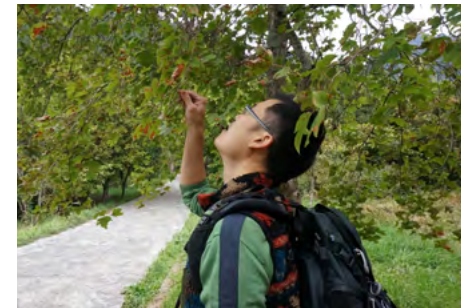
On the second trip Shipher Wu from the Biodiversity Research Center took me across different places in the areas of Wuling & Siyuanyakou and showed me how and where he collected research material. On this trip our purpose was to collect leaf miners.

A leaf miner is the larva of an insect that lives in, and eats the leaf tissue of plants. The vast majority of leaf-mining insects are moths, sawflies and flies, though beetles and wasps also exhibit this behavior.

The tunnels they create while eating produce endless visual variation and are extremely appealing to draw. When situated within the chaos and vastness of the forest's natural elements, the eye needs to adjust to be able to identify the leaf miners. Expertise is required and Shipher Wu guided me through the places and systems that would allow me to find and work with such tiny but nevertheless relevant aspects of nature.

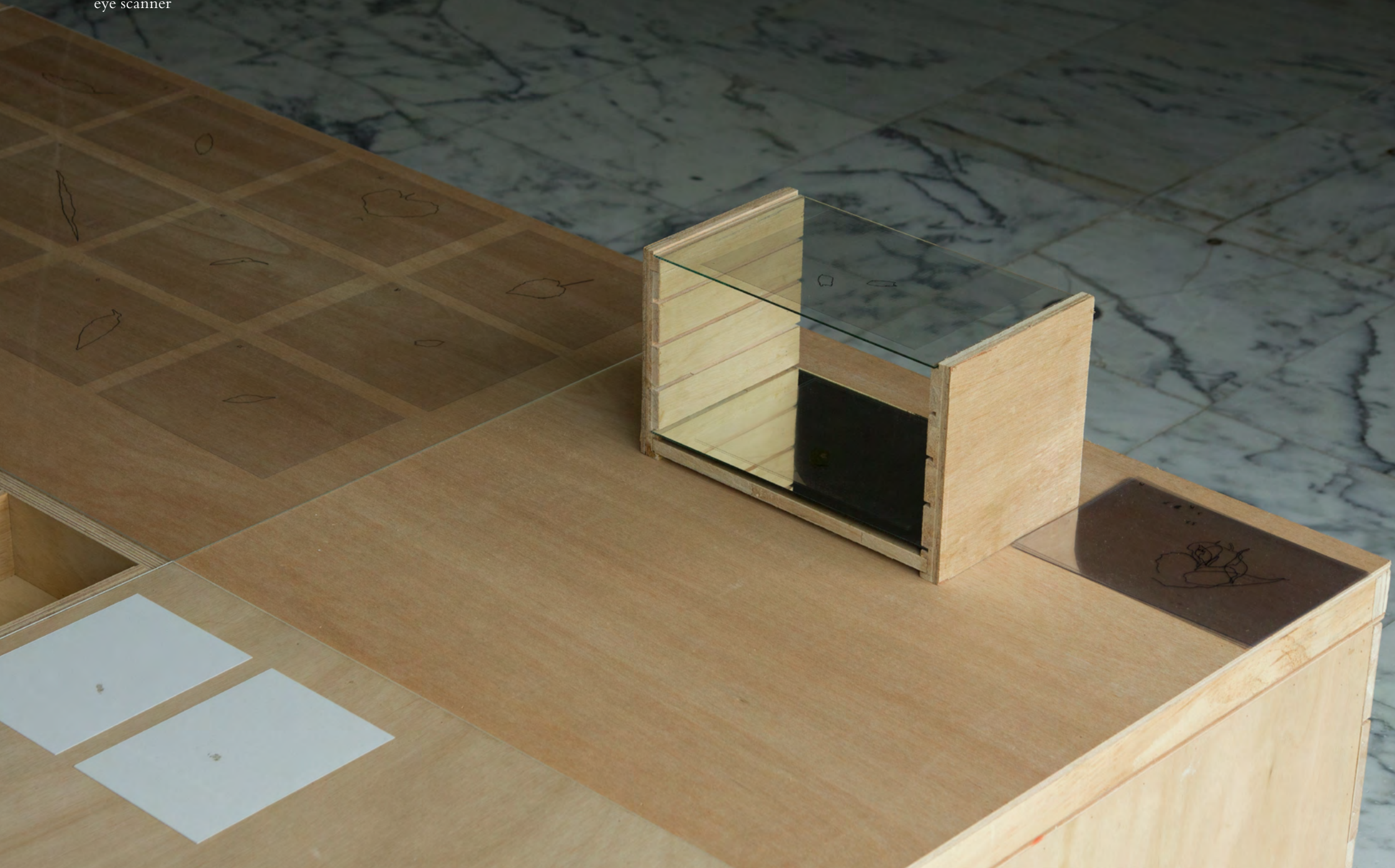
During these two field trips I collected material and notes that were elaborated on in further detail, and in drawing, at the exhibition venue using the workstation in its multifaceted functions.

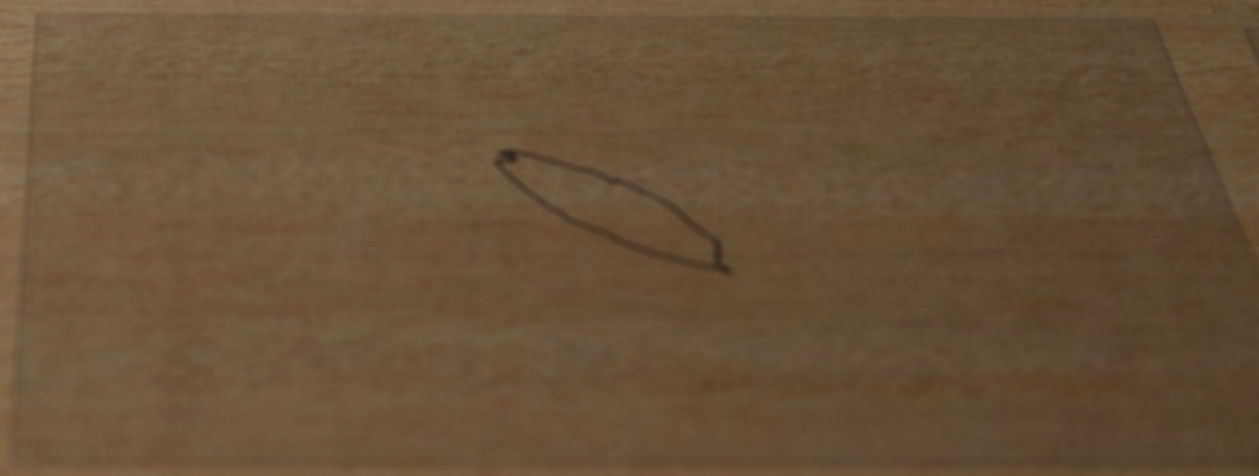
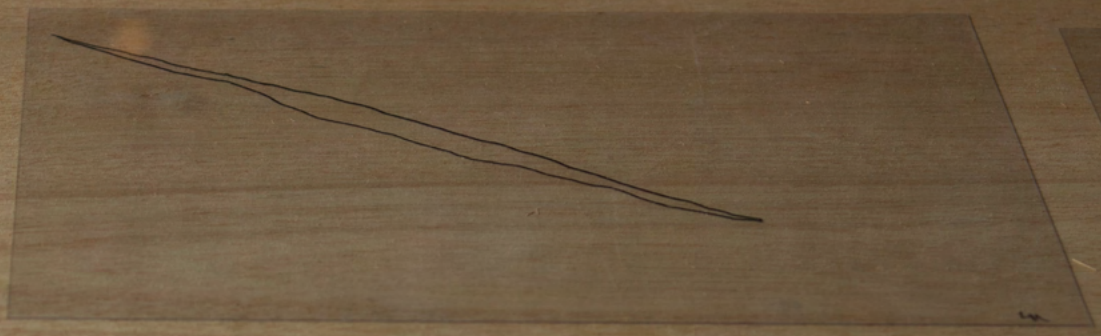
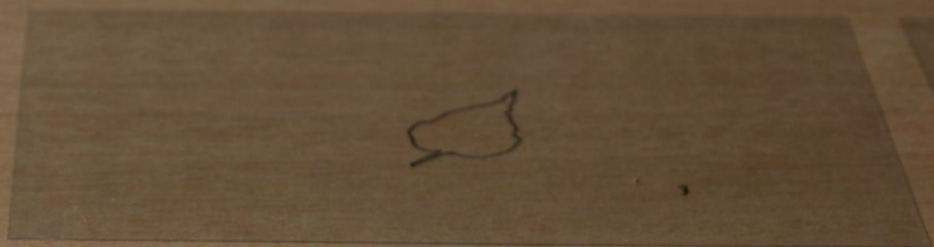
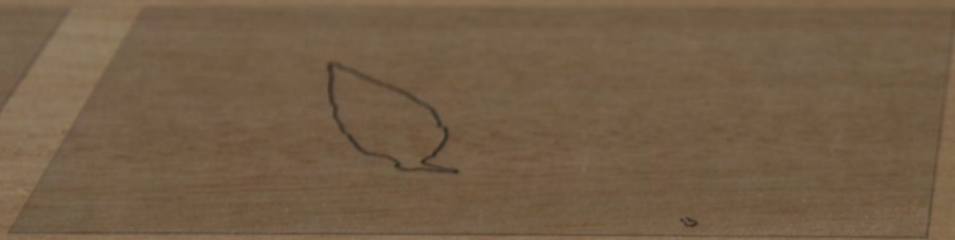
field trips

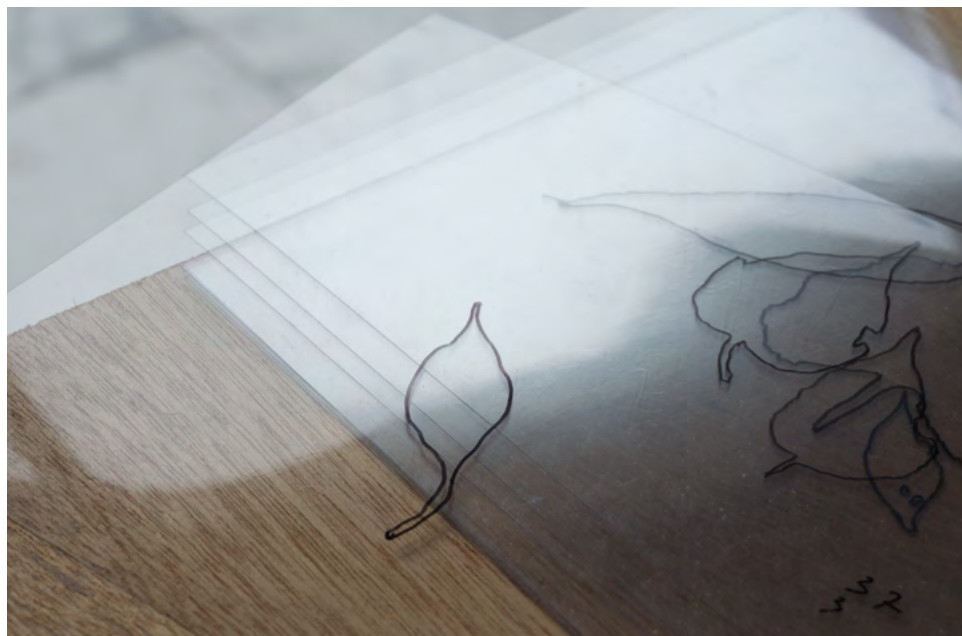
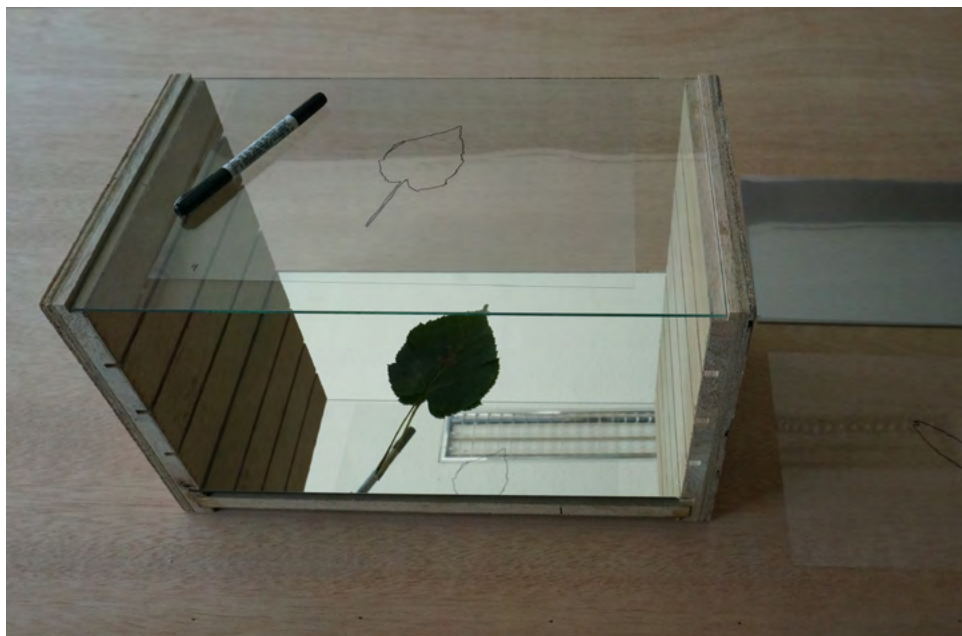




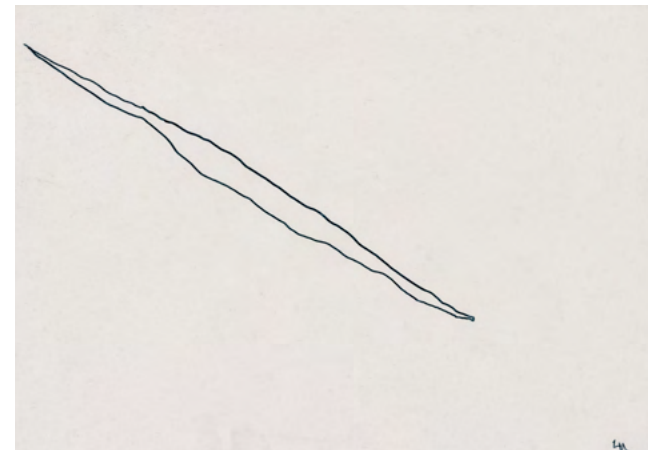
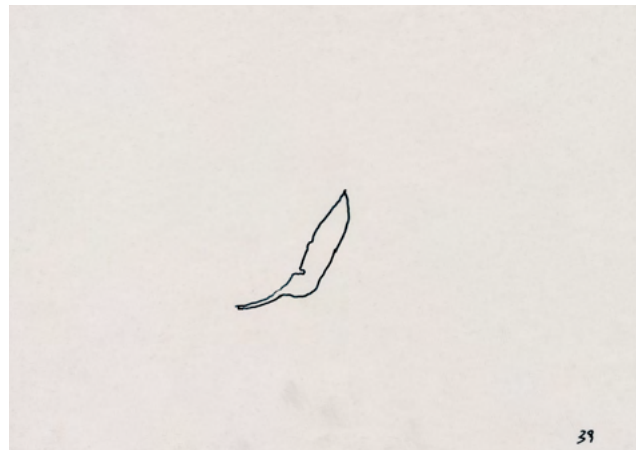
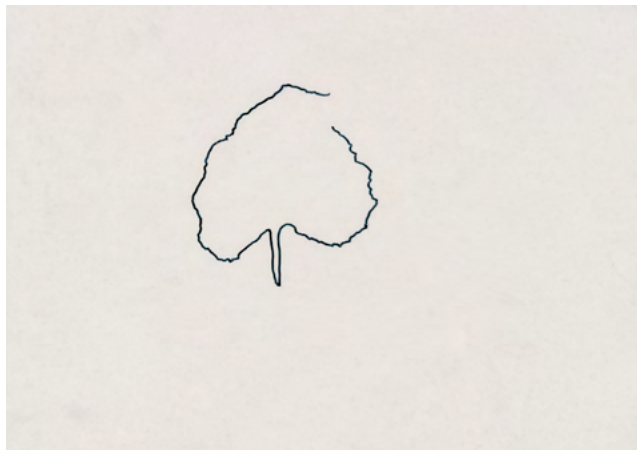
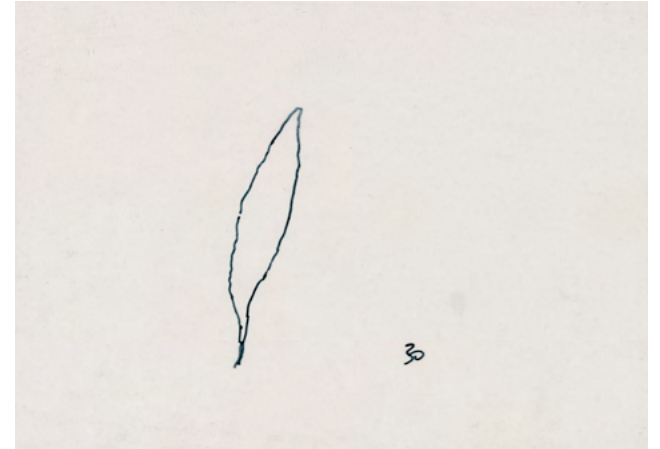
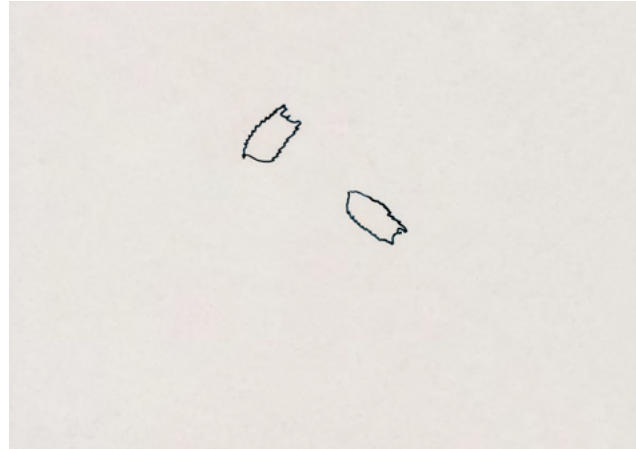
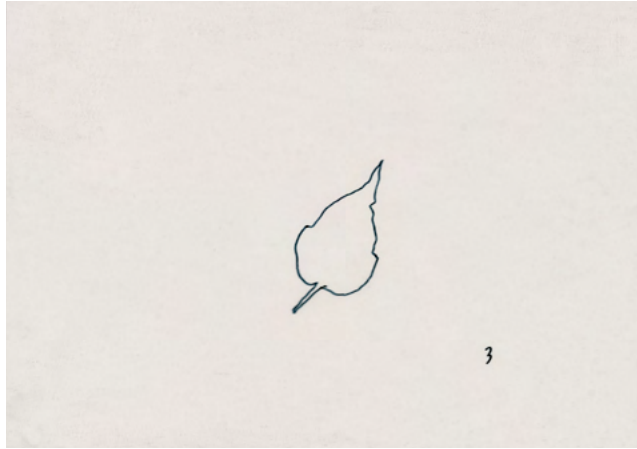
Section I
eye scanner

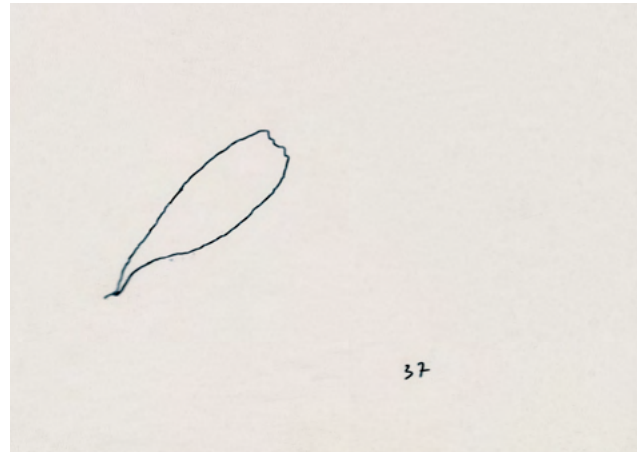
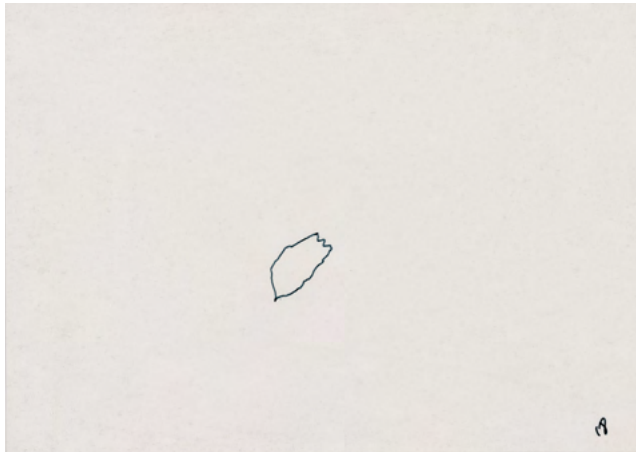
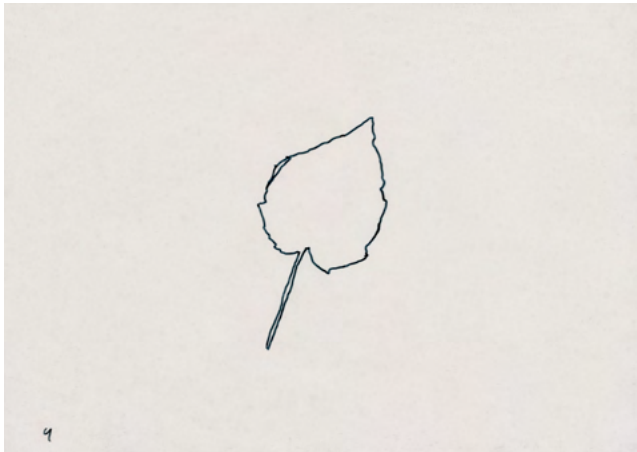
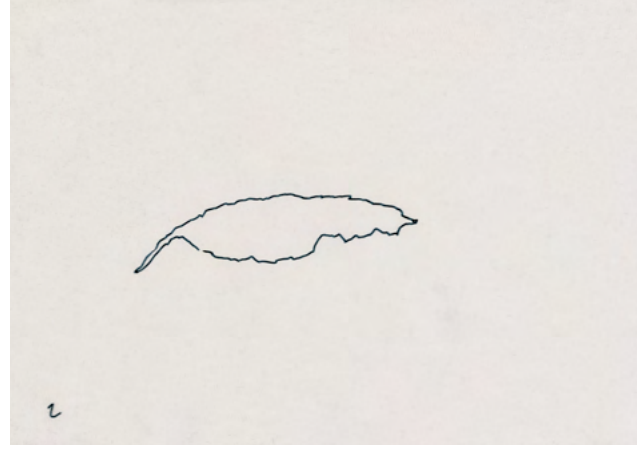
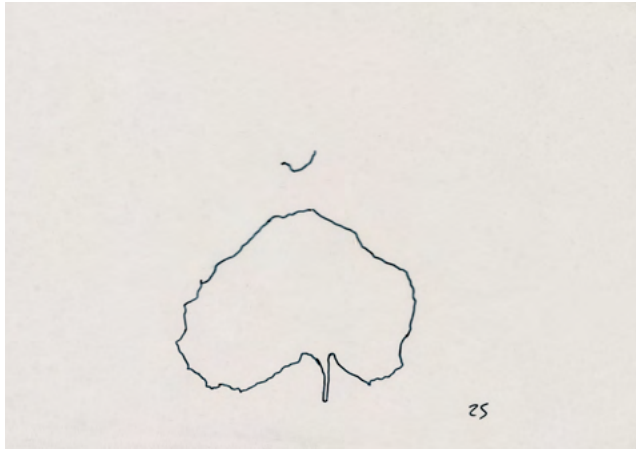


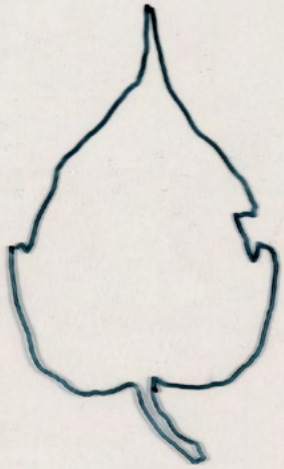




I
20 drawings
21 × 29.5 cm
waterproof pen on acetate sheet





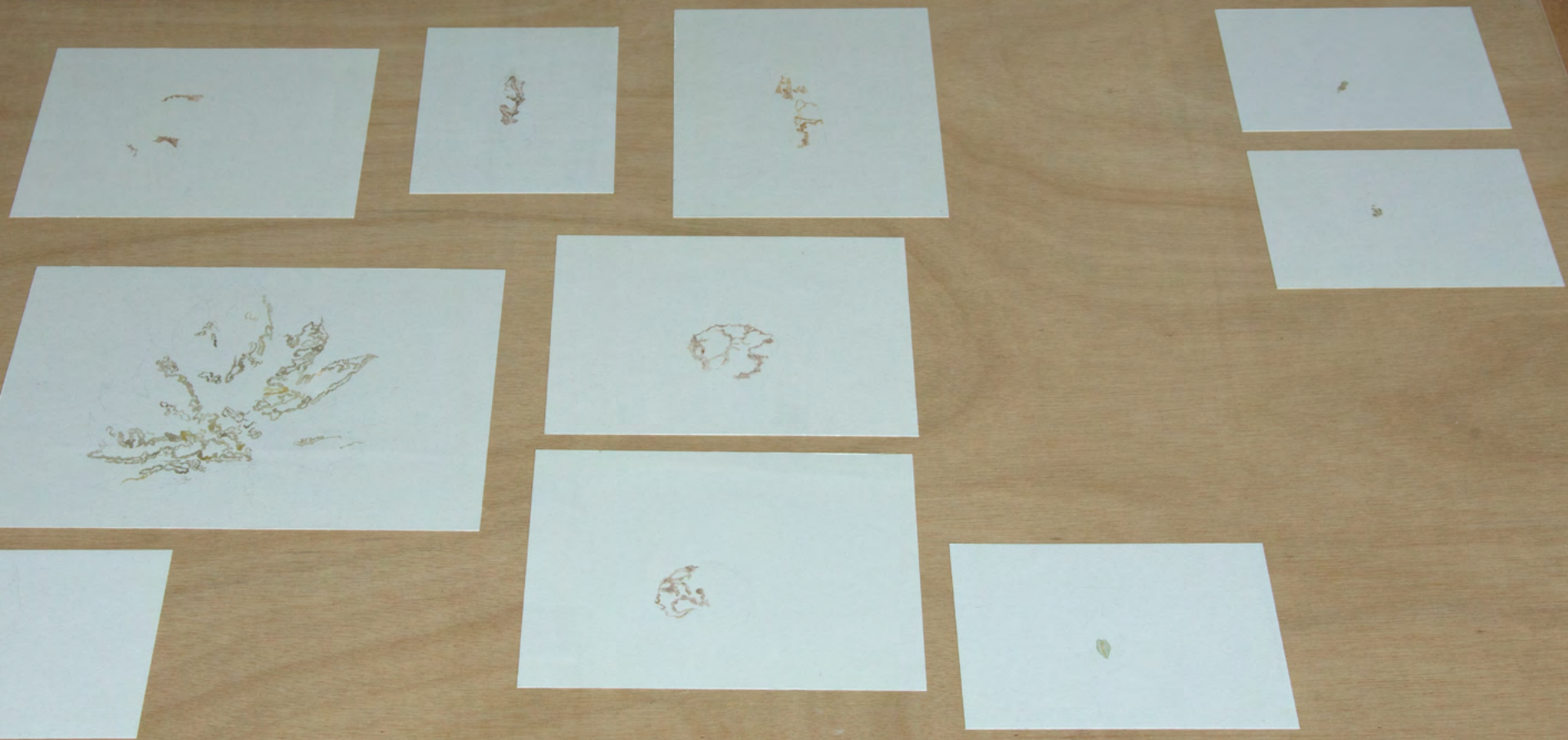




Section II
watercolors



II
18 drawings
variable sizes
watercolor on paper





II
2 drawings of 30 × 40 cm

process



II
2 drawings of 40 × 30 cm



II
3 drawings of 24 × 30 cm



II
3 drawings of 30 × 24 cm

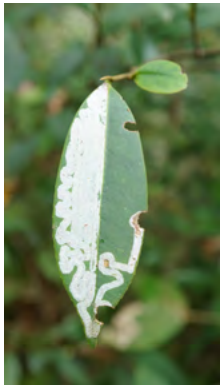


II
3 drawings of 18 × 24 cm



II
5 drawings of 24 × 18 cm

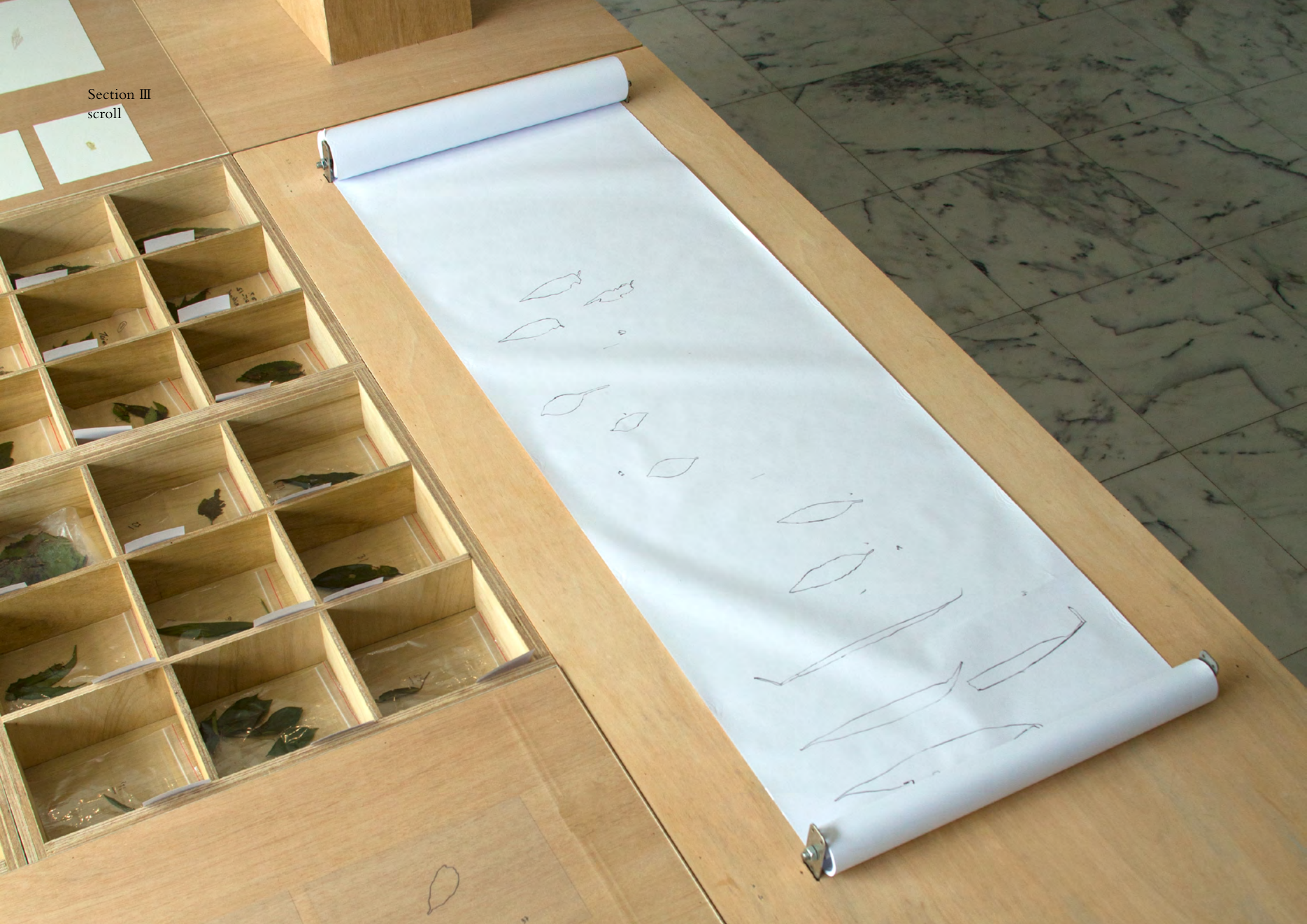
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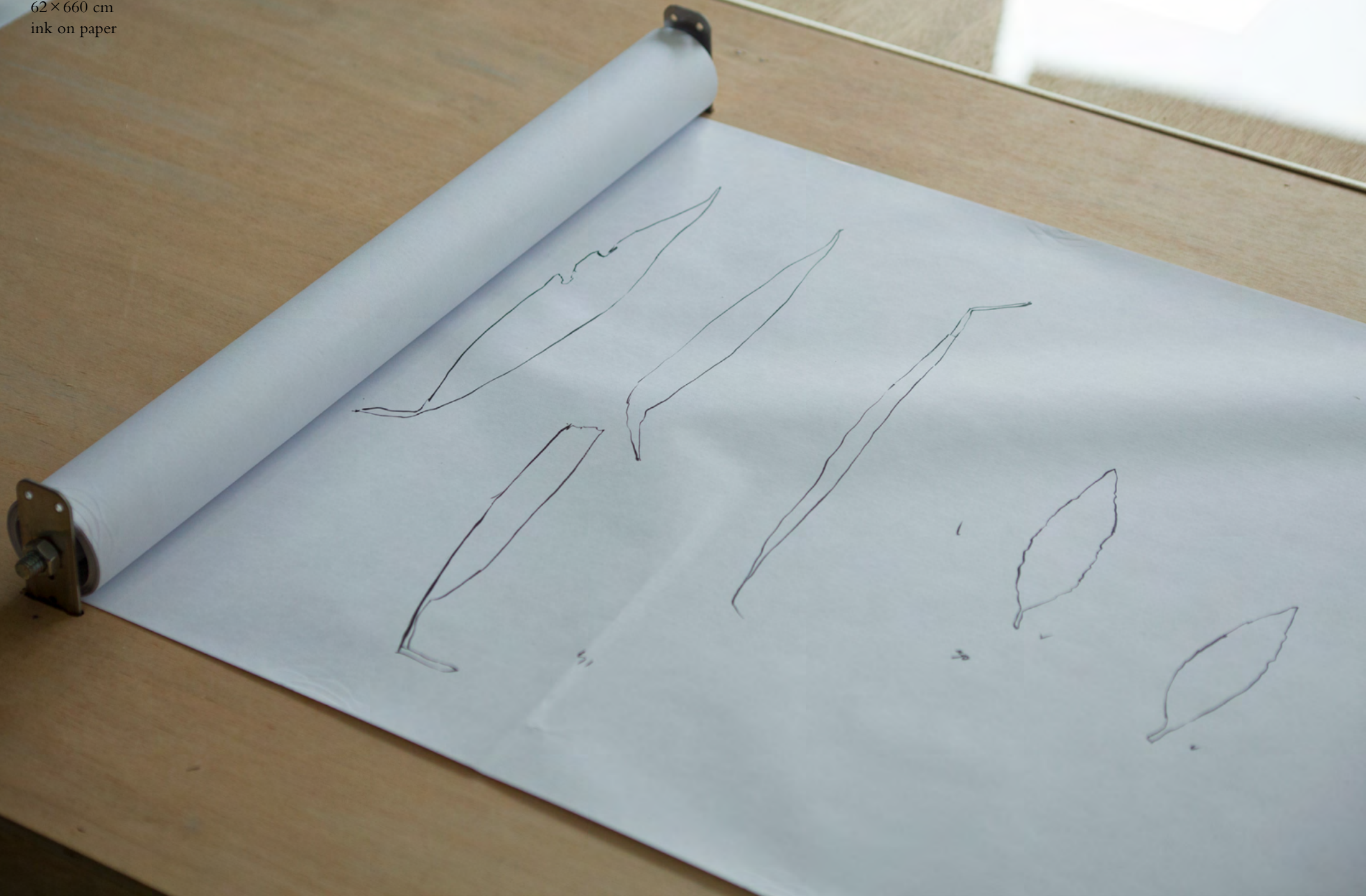


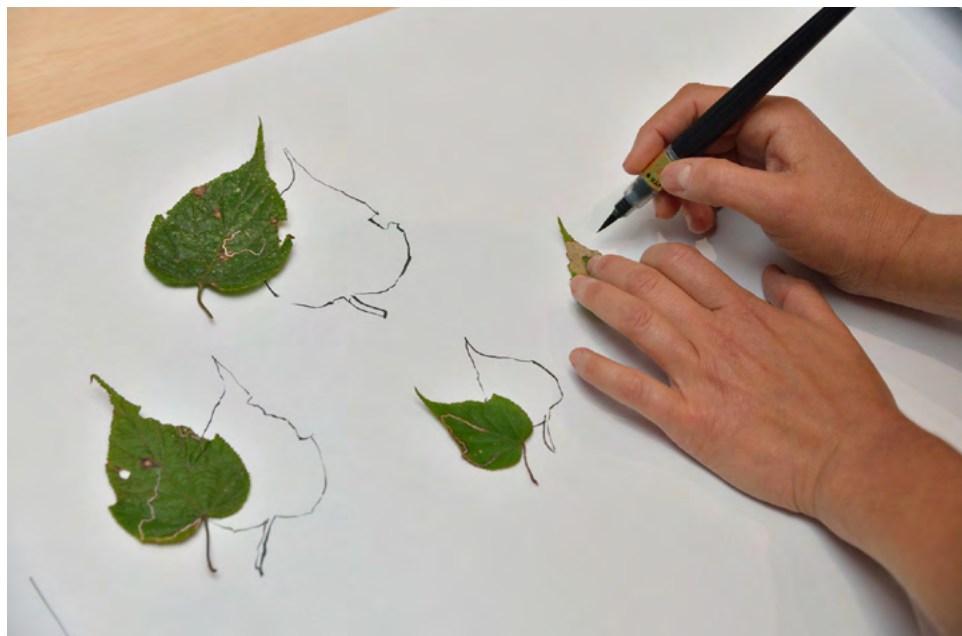


Section III
scroll



III
62 × 660 cm
ink on paper





storage device



Irene Kopelman
Workstation

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Henk Slager and Hongjohn Lin

Credit documentation of the exhibition:
Wei-Lung Lin

Documentation work in progress:
Shipher Wu Design

Design PDF:
Ayumi Higuchi

Sponsored by:
Monriaan Fund, HKU University of the
Arts Utrecht, and Taipei National University
of the Arts

Special thanks:
Shipher Wu (Biodiversity Research Center,
Academia Sinica, Taiwan); Erik J. van
Nieukerken, Camiel Doorenweerd and
Menno Schilthuizen (Naturalis Biodiversity
Center and Leiden University, Leiden);
I Fang Sun (Department of Natural Resources
and Environmental Studies, National Dong
Hwa University); Stuart Davies (Smithsonian
Tropical Research Institute) and Henk Slager