

Riccardo Arena

**Duplici morte Ellero
ed ecosistema visivo**

Project B - Argentina

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to present the project I am developing in Argentina which is in full preparation.

My personal artistic experience allowed me to reflect on the value of the cognitive processes involved in creative activity, a practice whose main objective is learning through its own action. Thus, the work is considered as a tool for understanding and works become a direct consequence of the path to knowledge.

To this end, I have devoted myself to the development and creation of independent projects in different countries. Completion times and content, not preset from the start, are outlined in a series of accidental events that arise during the research process.

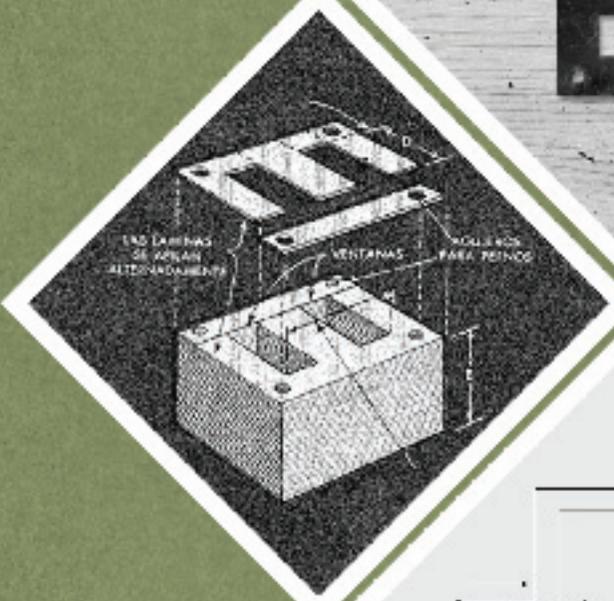
The suggestive dimension of the possibilities result in the potential necessary for the development of a "work" whose main function is to be a cognitive vehicle for both the artist and those who come into contact with her at any stage.

The first among these works, "The Four Times Tree" - Project A was based on an architecture of an urban disaster through the composition of a Chinese garden. The project was developed between 2006 and 2008 in China and concluded with a show in Shanghai at the 1918Artspace gallery that same year. Then in 2009 shows in Milan, Italy, at Mayr3 and the Allegra Ravizza Art Project galleries followed.

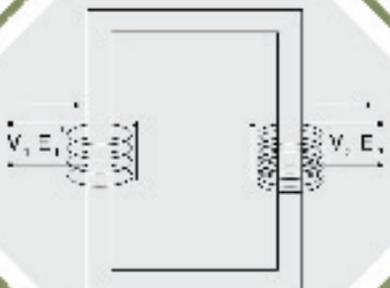
The choice of Argentina as a country of interest for the creation and development of the second project was born during a trip to Tibet. On one occasion I found myself in a remote police station following the theft of my camera by a false monk.

During an identification check the police officers made an impression of my fingerprints. Months later the image of this scene led me to the research of early criminological identification techniques. This way I discovered that the first system of criminal identification through fingerprinting was created in the late nineteenth century. The creator was Juan Vucetich, a police inspector in the city of La Plata, in Argentina.

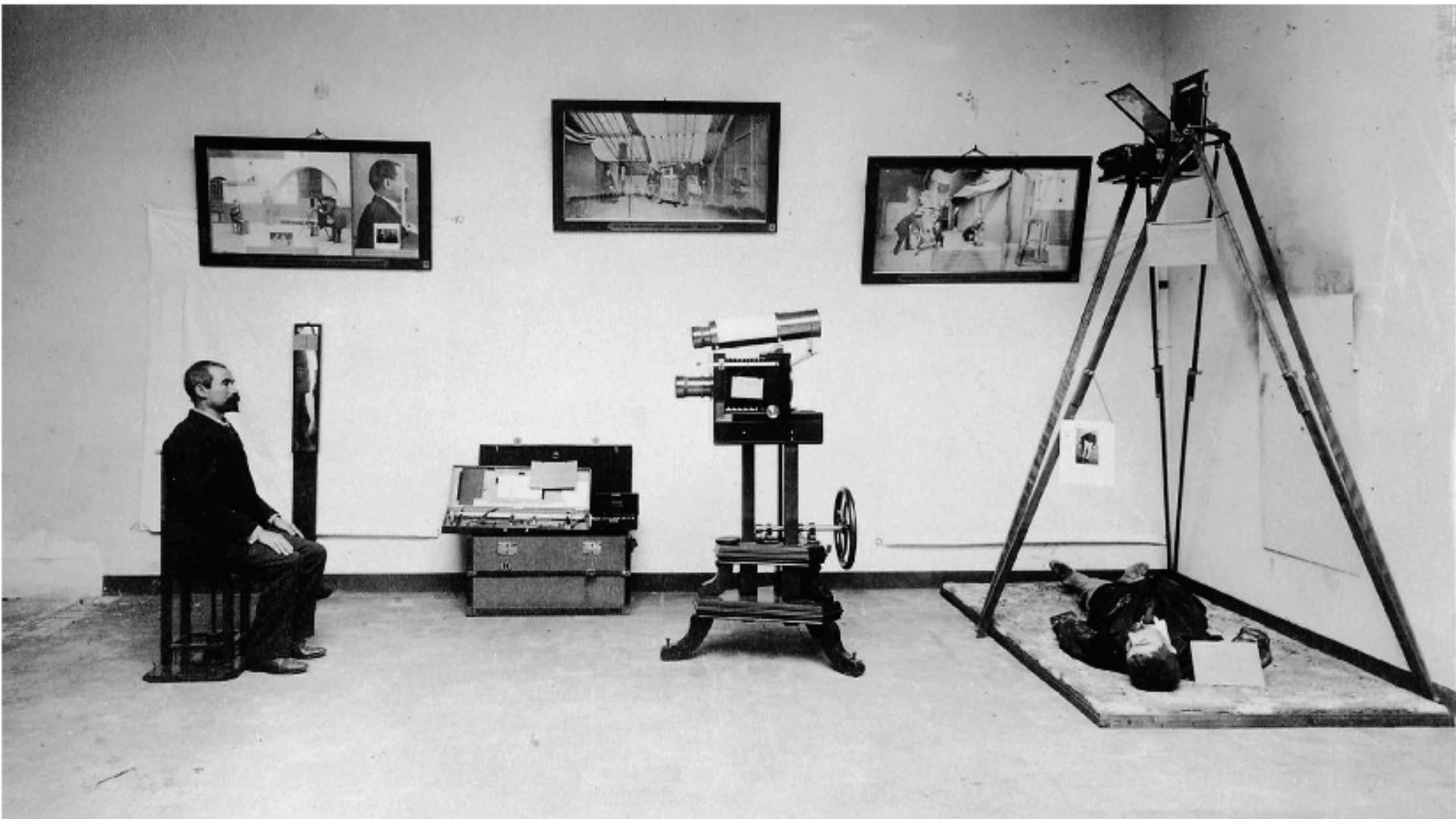
On 3 November 2009 at nine o'clock landed in Buenos Aires. That same day in the afternoon, during my first tour of the city, I picked up from the street an element in the shape of an E. It was a metal plate, as I discovered months later, which constituted the core of an electric power transformer. Since that first hint thirteen months have gone by, months of intensive searches carried out mainly in Buenos Aires and in the Bolivian province of Charazani. So Project B was born - "Ellero Dual Death and Visive Ecosystem.



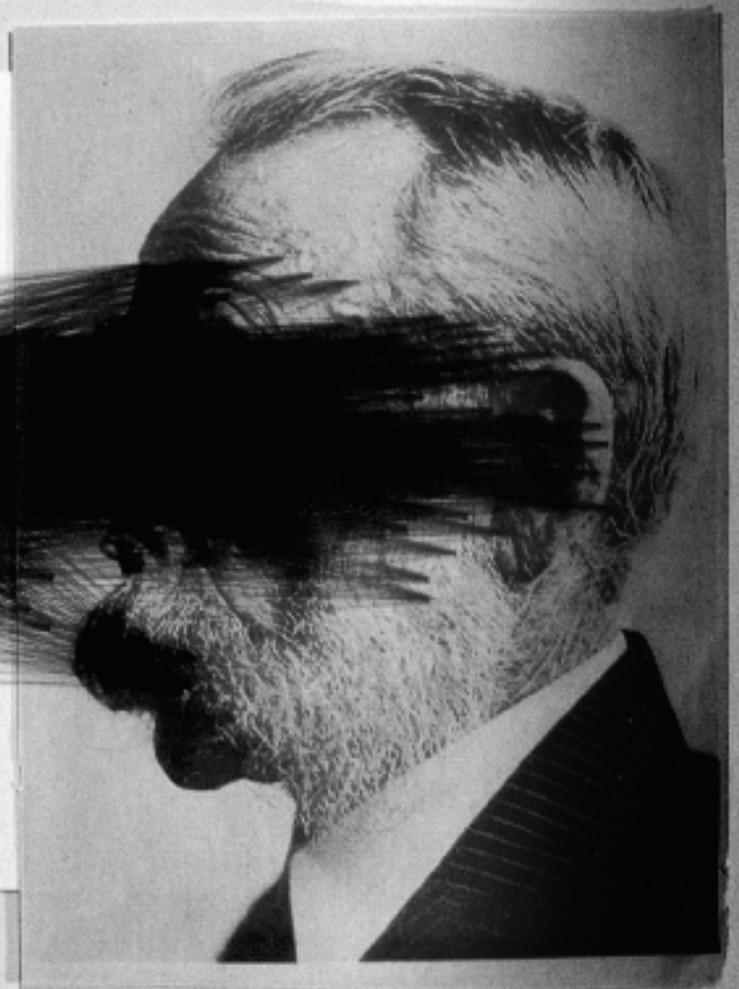
V



E



A photograph from Alphonse Bertillon's photo album from his exhibition at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.



Duplici morte Ellero ed ecosistema visivo

*"God does not want everything He has created for the good of man to remain hidden.
But, if He has concealed anything, He has not deprived it of private signals.
God gifted each thing of external signs that count as particular signals of His essence."*

Paracelsus

"... Men have become so blind in their powers of observation."

Plutarch

"The antithesis are never absolute, only logical extremes of an undivided form."

Ananda Coomaraswamy

*"... a reality of a certain order that is represented by a reality of various kinds,
of which the latter is a symbol."*

Rene Guenon

Identification was based on contact of similarity and can be of 3 types:

1. Absolute similarity: namely, equality. It can not exist in nature nor in the works of art because two things can not be equal in all aspects if they are two different ones.
2. Expressive imitation is not comparable with the original, but is a stimulus to remember what it represents. The words are a perfect example.
3. The similarity imitative or analog, is judged by comparing the copy with the original, as photography.

From the moment man was forced to leave his community of belonging, he had to demonstrate his identity to "others", i.e. expose "who he was". In today's society "the individual exists only as an individual through identification,"¹ and the latter becomes objective only from the moment that their physical and administrative features match.

Physiognomy sciences and later on phrenology sciences were adopted hundreds of years ago to link the somatic and cranial traits to the personality and innate propensities of the individual who bore these. The aim was to identify the internal movements of the soul with the outer shapes of the body.

In the modern sense, the identification process is the final design and construction by mid-nineteenth century, the heyday of positivism, with the systematization and compilation of photographs integrated to statistical sciences, or the photographic archive.²

"The archive is a vast substitution set, providing for a relation of general equivalence between images. The universal mimetic language of the camera yielded up

1. Allan Sekula – The Body and the Archive (1992).

2. Although with different purposes, the two key figures who contributed to the creation of this system of organization are: Alphonse Bertillon and Francis Galton. The former through his "Portrait Parlé", identification cards combining signage photography with anthropometric data of the subject to create a system that would allow police officers to re-identify repeat offenders. The latter, Galton, via compositions through exposure of many pictures in a single photograph, aimed to identify the physical features shared by different criminals.

a higher, more cerebral truth, a truth that could be uttered in the universal abstract language of mathematics ... it promised to reduce nature to its geometrical essence"³

Project B - "Ellero Dual Death and Visive Ecosystem " (DM) has been developed through a narrative scheme built on the reorganization of a series of investigations which, through visual and textual anatomy, reflect on the concepts of identity, individuation and equality at a historical and symbolic level.

The logic of the narrative is structured through an "archive paradigm", within which, studies, journals, notes and views are rearranged in a kaleidoscopic game of substitution and rearrangement of parts.

The project foresees the making of a video 30/40 minutes long associated with a series of art works made with different techniques and a book that will state the stages of the development of the project.

The DM is the representation of the investigation carried out by detective V (informant matter), whose objective is to reconstruct the identity of a suicide victim of whom we only know the initial of his name, the letter E (the informant idea).

E's suicide has been executed through a complex mechanism which, by the simultaneous action of two pistols, was meant to match the impact of two bullets in a single, precise point of the head.

The energy of the impact resulted in both the dissolution of the physiognomic connotations of E and the brief appearance of a "Lichtenberg figure"⁴ over his body, an electric figure that in rare cases can occur in people struck by lightning.

3. Allan Sekula – The Body and the Archive (1992).

The functioning of this structure is inspired by the "Ellero Twins," a system of cameras used in signage photography from the beginning of the twentieth century, designed by the Italian Umberto Ellero. It allowed for the capture of the subject's face from two different angles using two cameras positioned at 90 degrees and whose shutters were operated simultaneously by a pneumatic system to avoid possible alterations of facial expression.

V is the detective in charge of taking the fingerprints of E, and identify his face.

The structural dynamics of the suicide is a ritual and symbolic map, a Yantra⁵, an "access device" that will lead the investigation to a new grand cognitive order, since the image of that face was "intended to be used, not examined ... the image before any resemblance to an organizational structure is not the reflection of something that may have been physically seen, but an intelligible form or formula".⁶

By understanding the real meanings hidden in that "intelligible formula" V will commence an internal reconstruction destined to the transcendence of the illusion of differentiated forms to the essence that originates them. This bridge across

4. In 1777 the Pathology scholar George C. Lichtenberg, obtained figures by putting lycopodium powder on a plate of an electroscope capacitor, this rudimentary experiment gave life to the study of images quickly called "electro photography". 200 years later they led Semyon Kirlian to develop the "Kirlian photography"

5. In Hindu and Buddhist tradition, the Yantra, like all aniconic figures are "a geometric representation of a divinity, a display of power that instantly fill the entire visual field in a simultaneous vision where the eye is not induced to wander in vision, as in photographic documentation, a means for contemplation, a spatial way of thinking, incorporeal and intangible, whose parts are not organically connected, but ideally." Ananda Coomaraswamy - Il Grande Brivido.

6. Ibidem.

7. As masterfully highlighted by Coomaraswamy, together with these symbols, the "shocking pitfalls", the "Solar Center," the "Brahmarandhra" of the Vedic tradition, which find an immediate architectonic reference in the center of the dome of the Pantheon, represent the Forum of

which the boundary between observer and observed will be sublimated, participating in a single state of identity.

The mimetic operation of V / E must necessarily go through an entry point, the point where the two shells converge, the apex of the pyramid in which all voltages are cancelled. The same point is represented in the ancient mythology of the "Active Gate", the "self perforated stones," the "Cranial Foramen"⁷ where the hero must travel to achieve reunification with the Self, that which Plato called "The First Denominator" beyond which all opposites and dualities are resolved.

The DM is an articulated set of symmetries among different levels of reality that come together to share the same meanings, an optic ecosystem where each part reset everything. This is so in hologram pictures: unlike traditional photography, if a holographic image is cut in half and then illuminated by a laser we find that each of the halves still contains the whole image, i.e. each unique part contains all the information of the whole film.⁸

the cosmic house roof that allows the passage and ascension of the "spiritual exhalations", a transit zone that allows man to meet with "the divine arbiter, where the forms generated are reunited with the "indiscriminate" essence that created them.

8. The operation of the hologram is the basis of the "holographic theory of the universe", a reality model advocated by the physicist and mathematician David Bohm based on Allan Aspect's experiments on the non-location of the particles (the universe is governed by a principle of "non-location"- term cloned from quantum physics by which the phenomena occur as if each thing was in direct and continuous contact with each other). According to this theory, the sensible reality results in a very detailed hologram, a perceptual illusion within which all things are intimately connected and the separation that we perceive is assimilation that relies on our state of consciousness.

"While human nature seeks to categorize, classify and subdivide the various phenomena of the universe, each subdivision is necessarily artificial and all of nature is nothing but a vast network without interruption" - David Bohm

WORKS

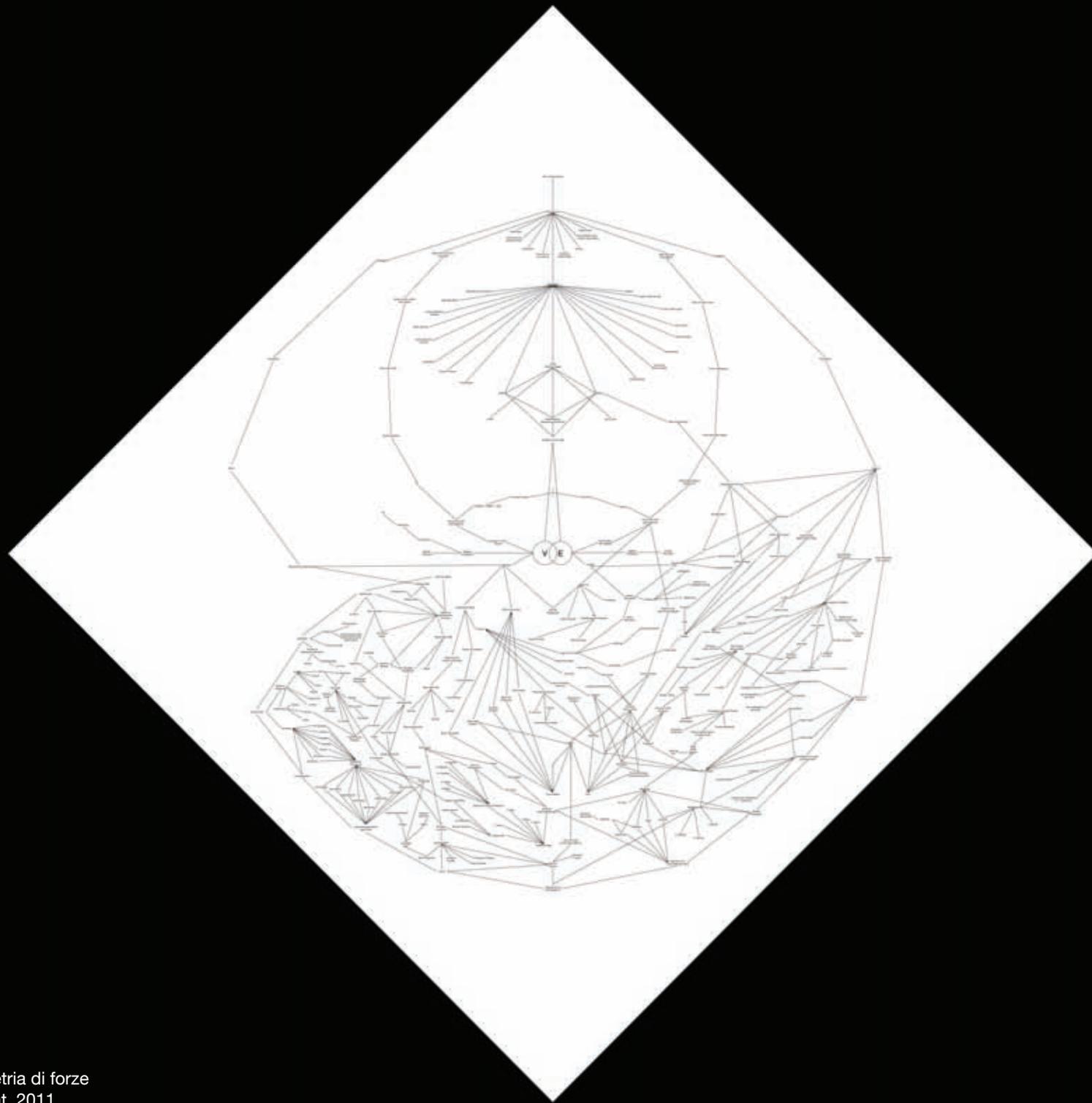
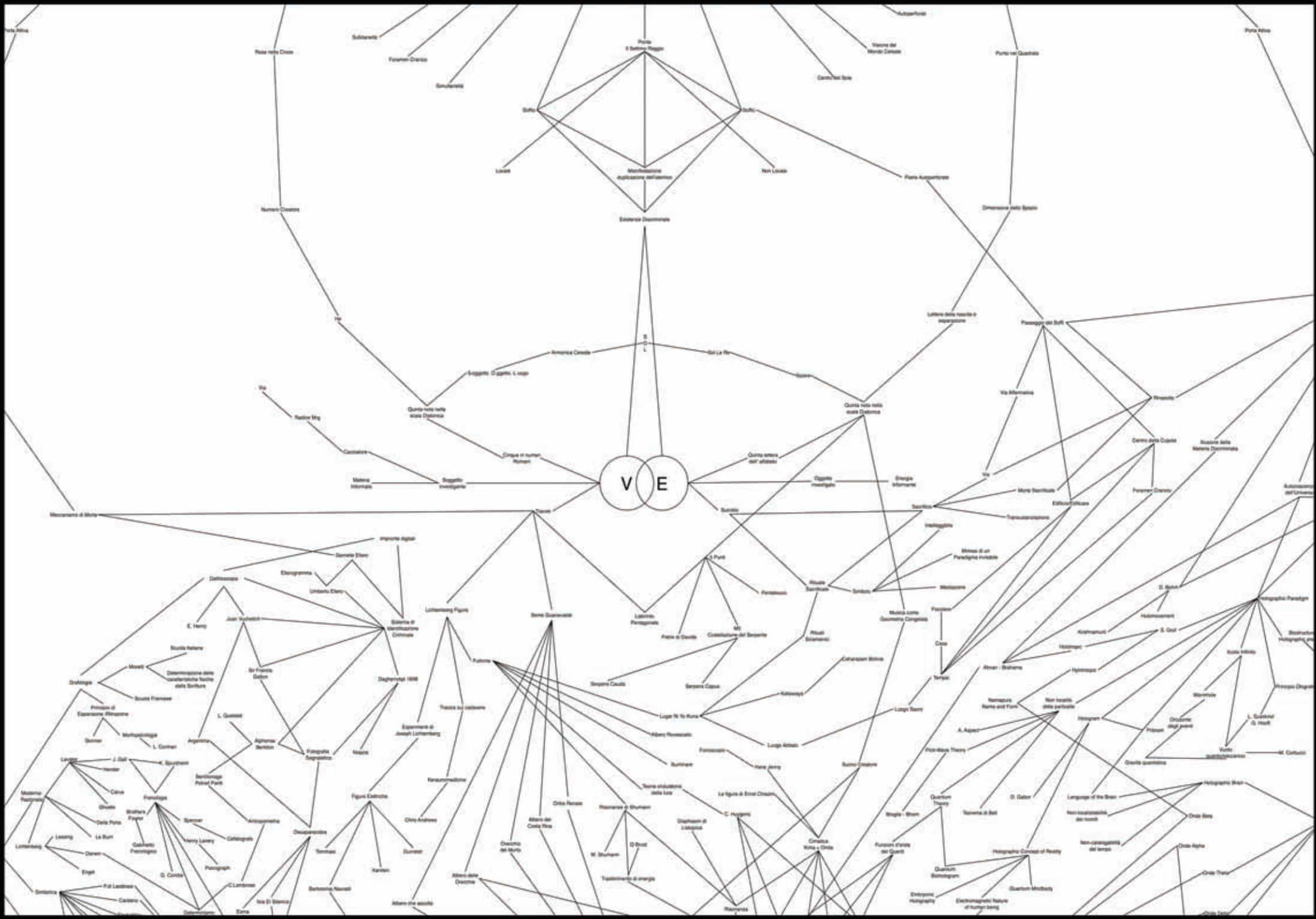
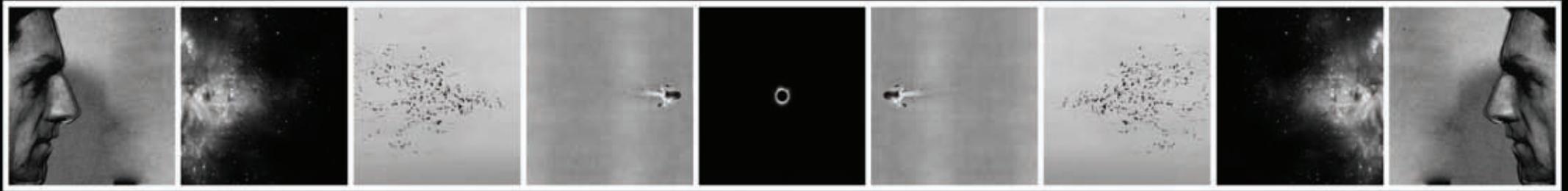


Figura di Parola - Geometria di forze
155 x 155cm, Digital Print, 2011





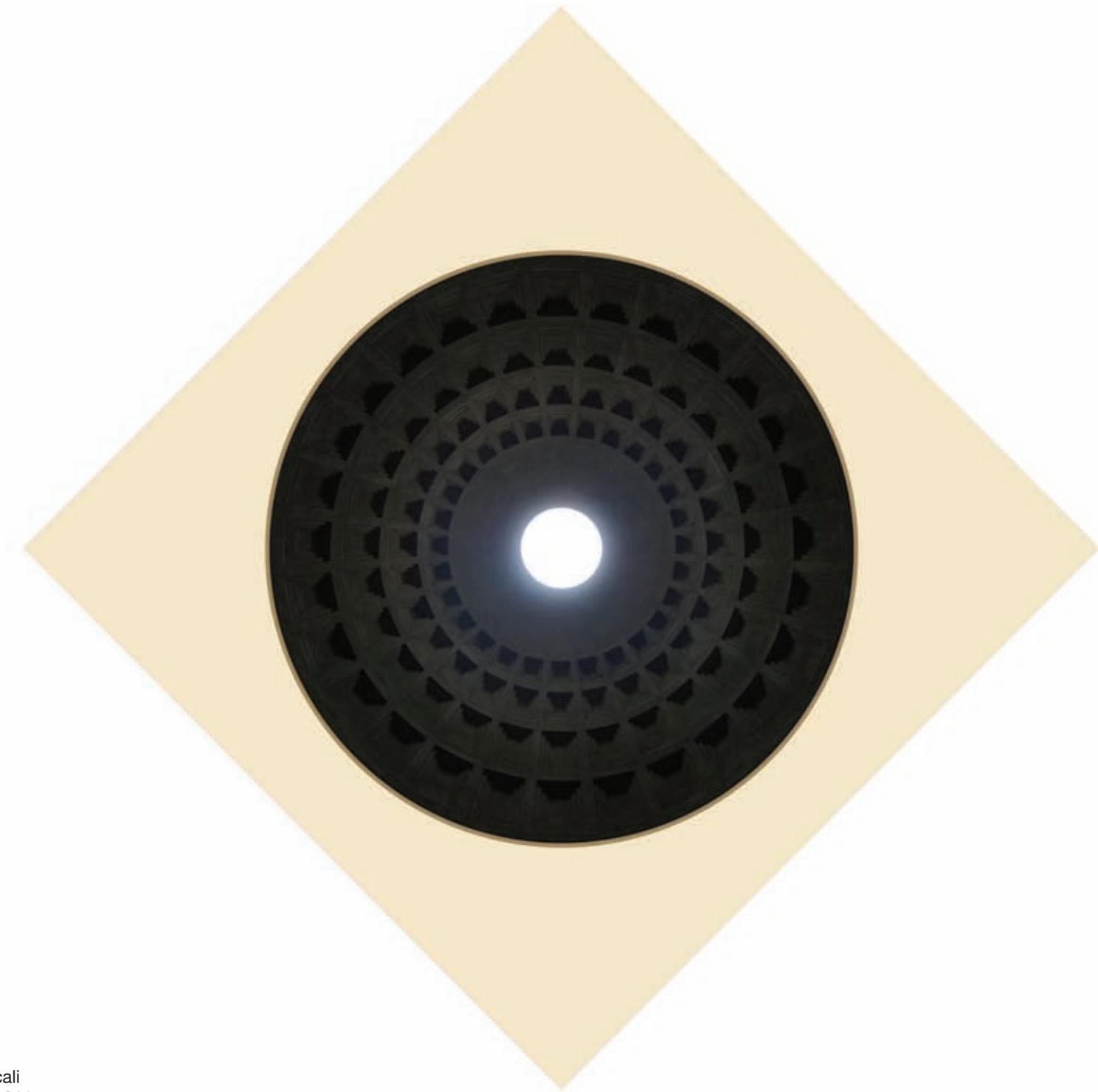
Sacrificio - Aceso - Reunificación
15 x 135cm, Digital Print, 2011





Foe destroyer
50x 65c m, Pa perc utc ollage, 2011





Passaggio dei soffi verticali
80x 80c m, DigitalPrint, 2011





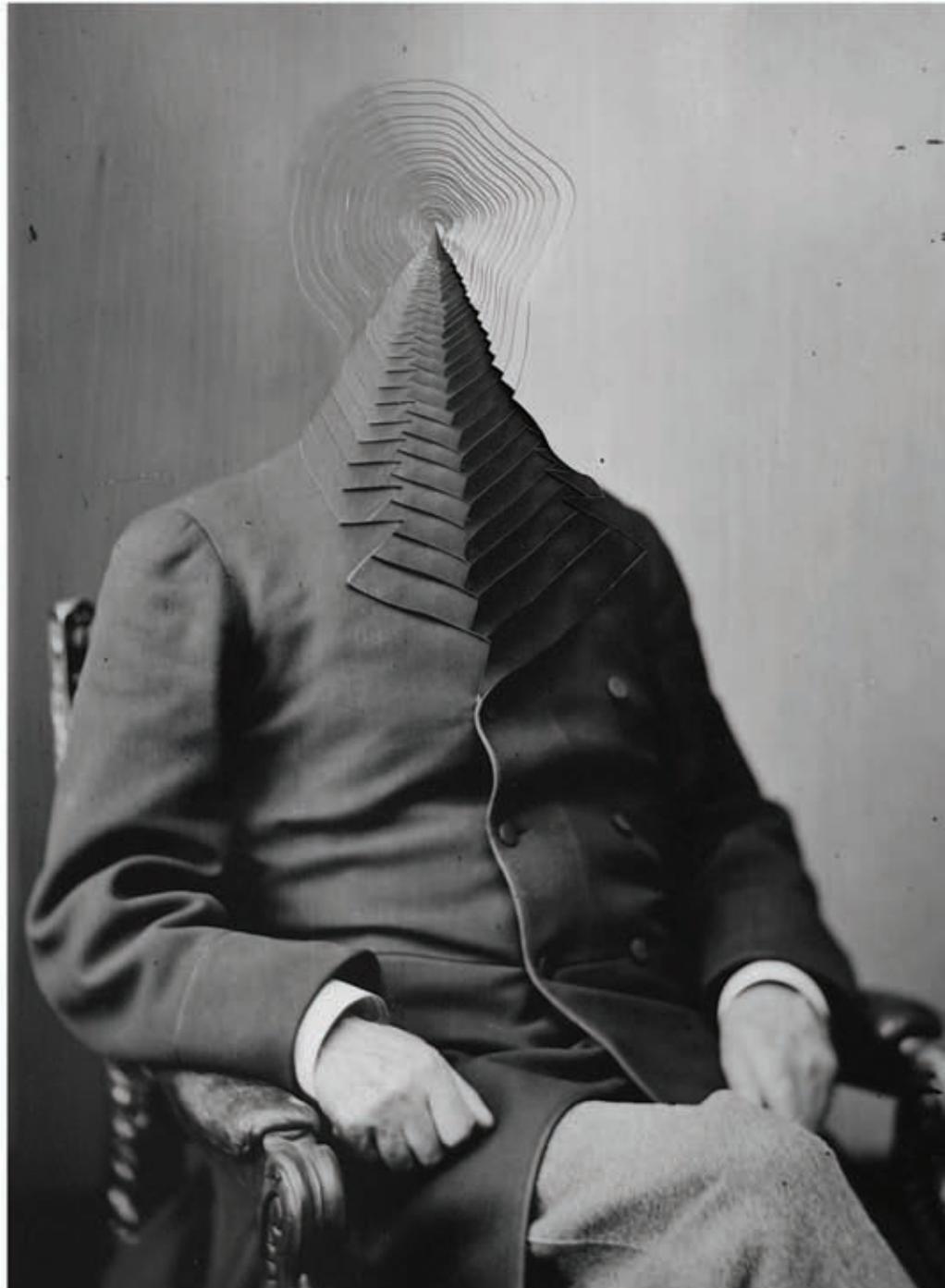
La columna de Hércules - Vuelta a la Casa vacía
80x 60c m, Di gitalPri nt, 2011



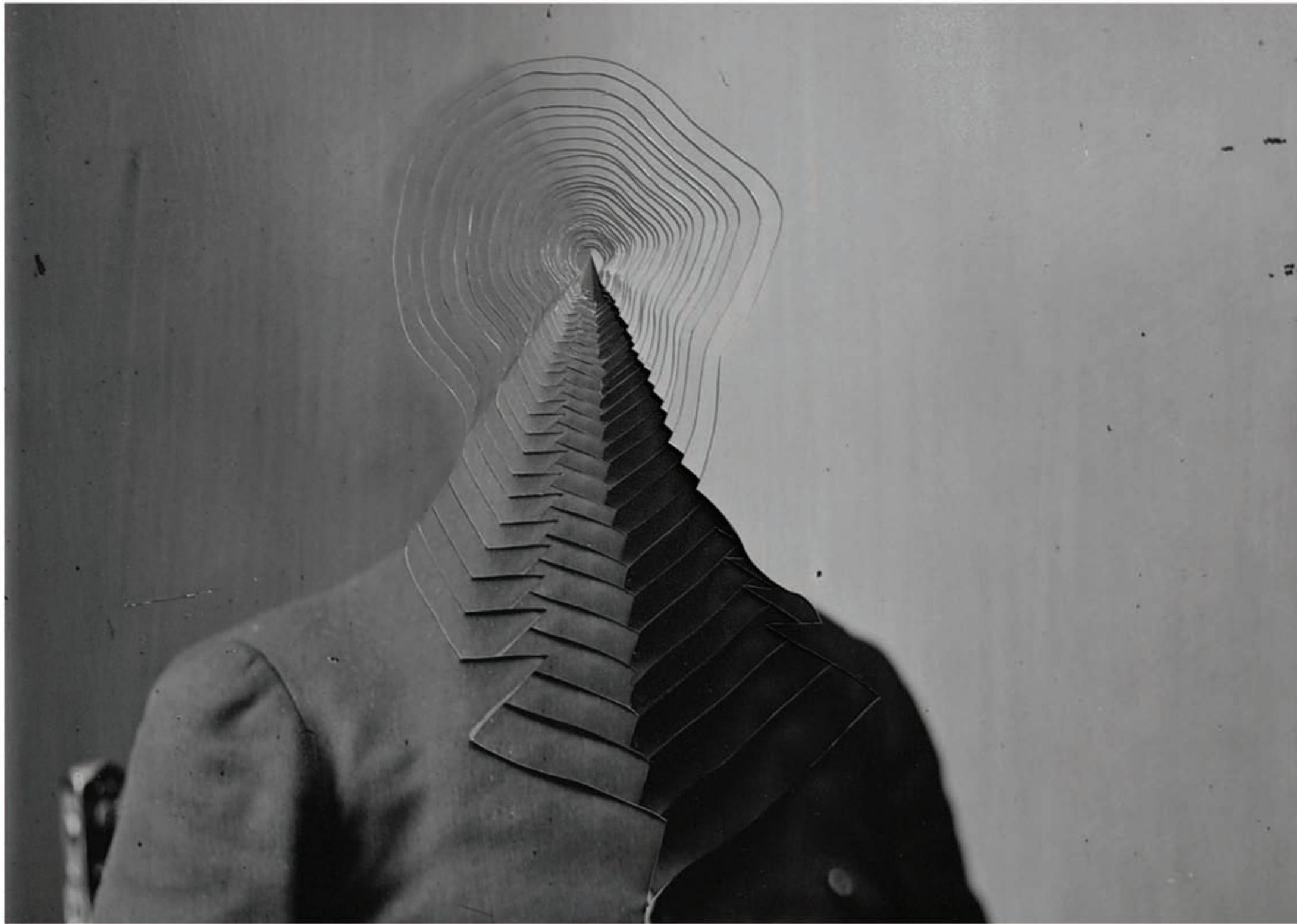


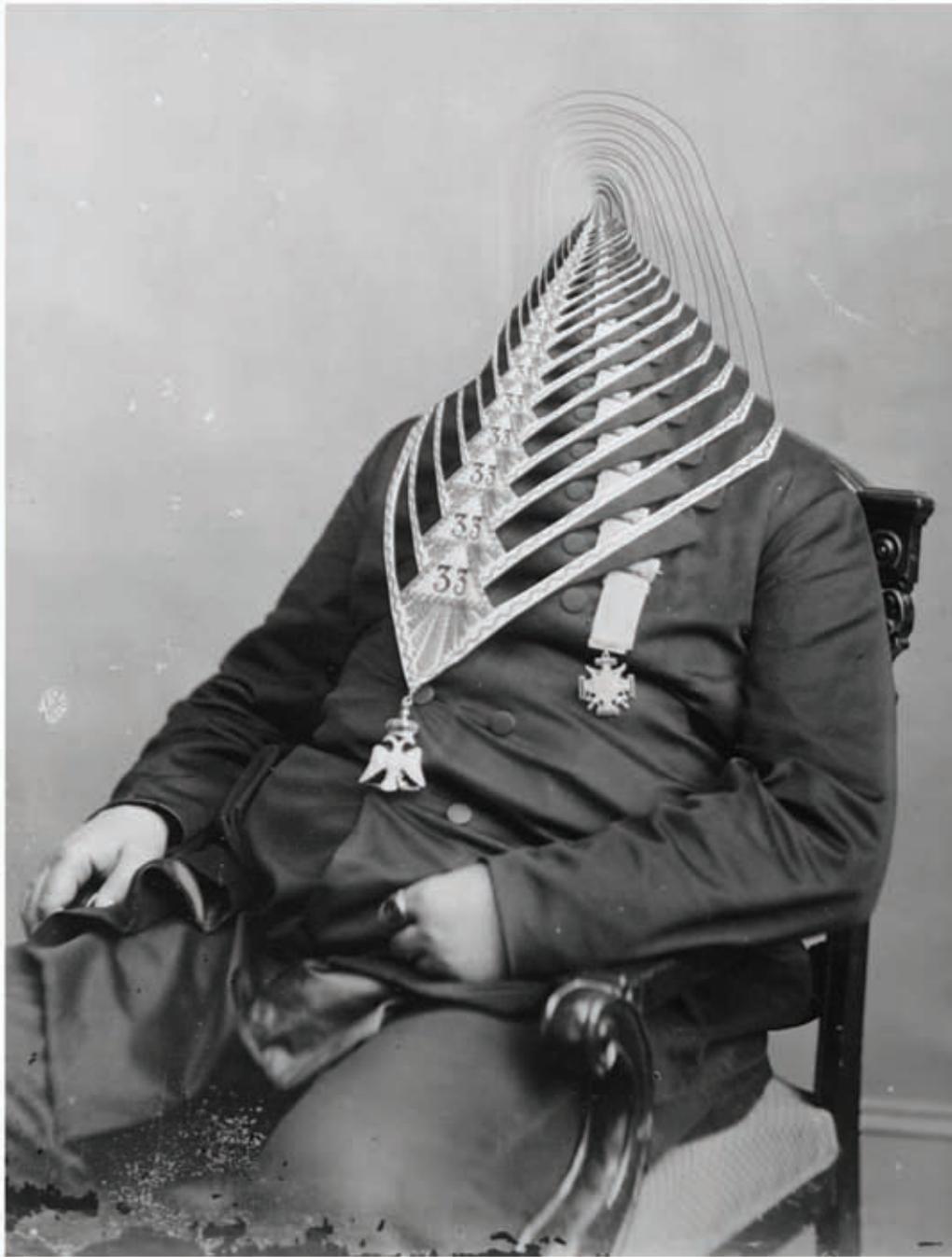
Foramen Cranico
72x 72c m, Digital Print, 2011



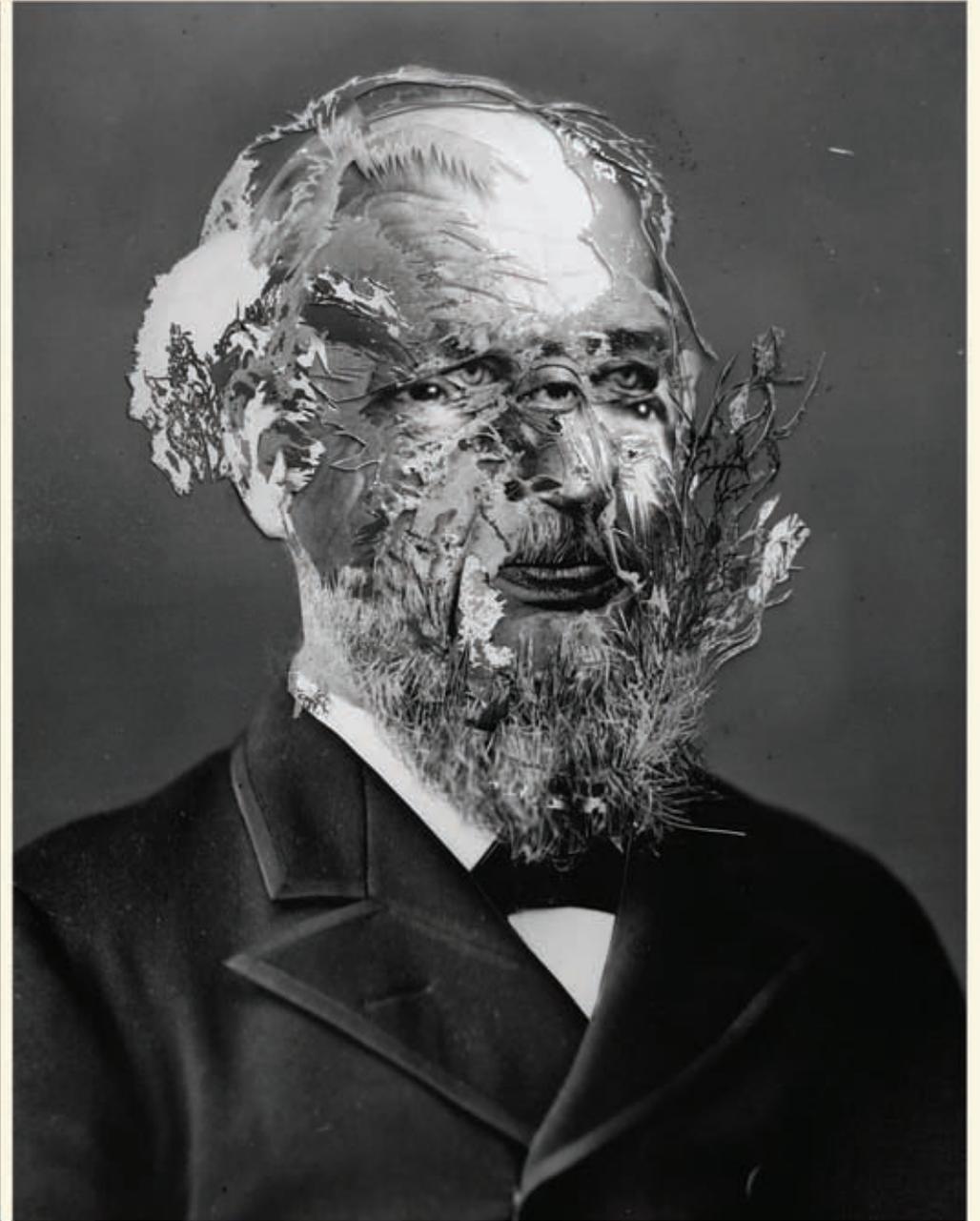


Lichtloch#1
50x 40c m, Pa perc utc ollage, 2011



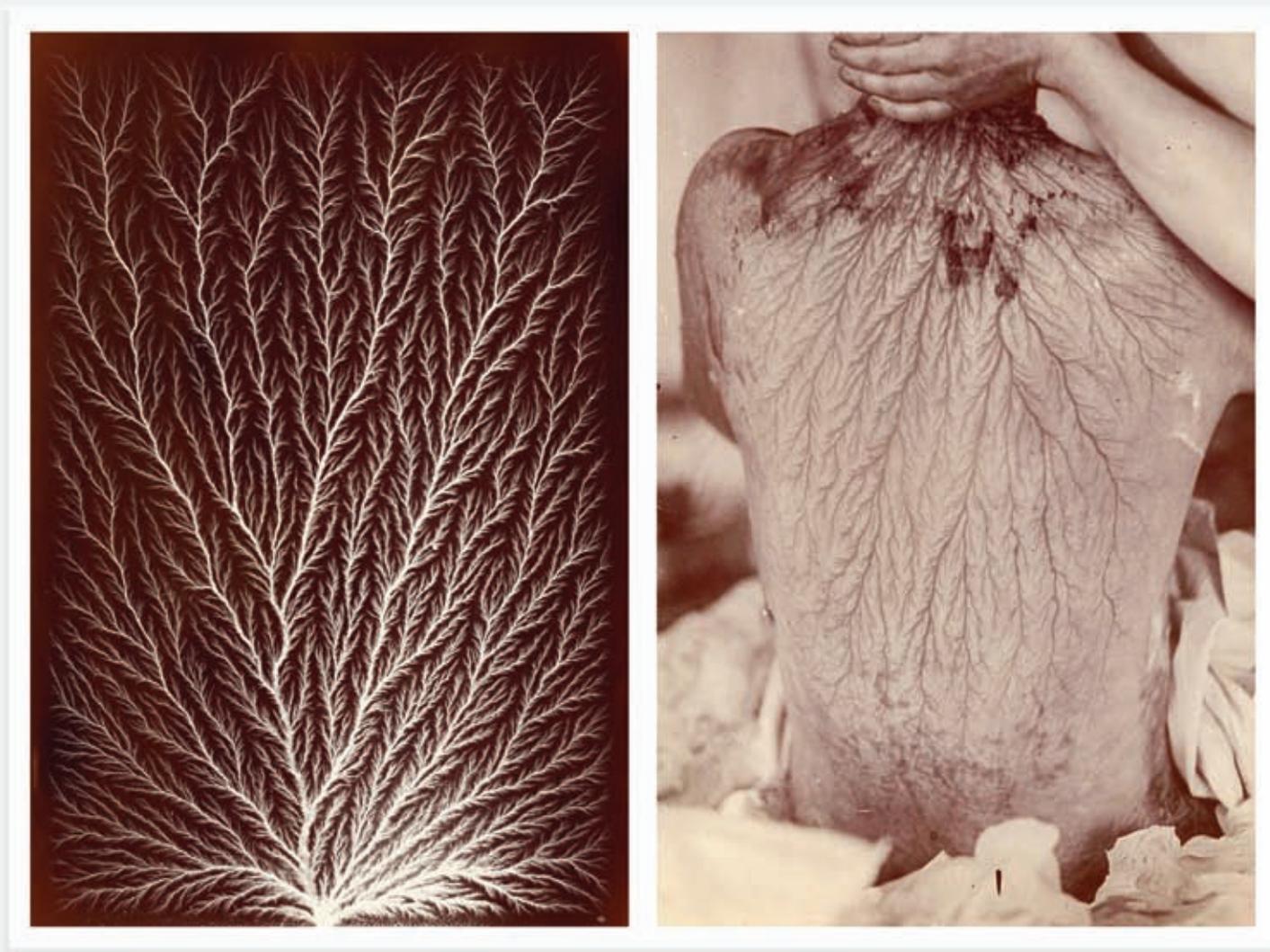


Lichtloch#2#3
50x 40c m,Pa perc utc ollage,2011

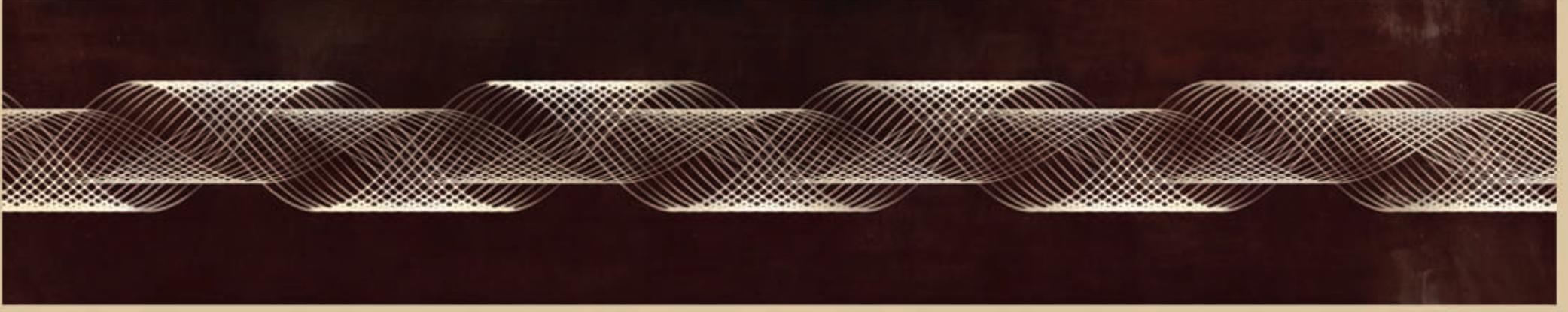


Physiognomic Investigation #1 #2
50x 40c m,Pa perc utc ollage,2011





Lichtenberg Tree's
30x 40c m, Digital Print, 2011



LaPa rolad egliU ccelli
60x 90c m,Di gitalPri nt,2011





Geode - Cristallizzazione
50 x 50cm, Digital Print, 2011





Colui che non è più alcuno
135x 135c m, Pa perc utc ollage, 2011





VIEW FROM THE WINDOW AT LE GRAS

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Prologue

View from the window at Le Grass | HD - Colour | Sound | 16min. | 2012



