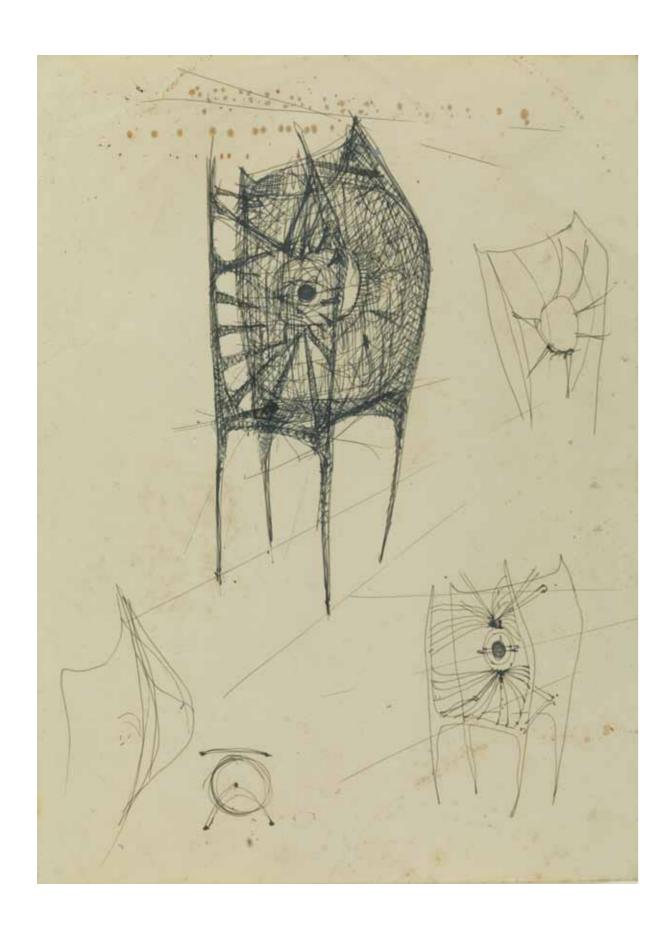


Lynn Chadwick draughtsman

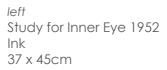
2015



Natural Draughtsman

The process of drawing was of major importance to Lynn Chadwick and was central to his art. His solo show representing Britain at the Venice Biennale of 1956 exhibited as many drawings as sculptures and we are very fortunate to be able to include some of these landmark drawings in our exhibition.

Chadwick's natural facility for drawing was encouraged at school and later put into professional practice when working as a technical draughtsman with the architect Rodney Thomas. The lack of expression inherent in technical drawing eventually proved unfulfilling to Chadwick and the lure of independence through designing and making his own constructions and sculptures eventually led him to leave his employment and branch out on his own. An opportunity to design for Aschers, the textile company, provided the needed escape route from the rigid routine of plans and elevations, a release from the constraints of perspective. Chadwick's sketchbooks of the time exult in this new freedom with an exuberant use of line, colour and shape. From his very first mobile, Chadwick kept a notebook in which he catalogued each sculpture. He gave it an opus number and illustrated it with a 'shorthand' sketch, listing its dimensions and material. For him, drawing the object was the most direct means of remembering and identifying the sculptures and recording what



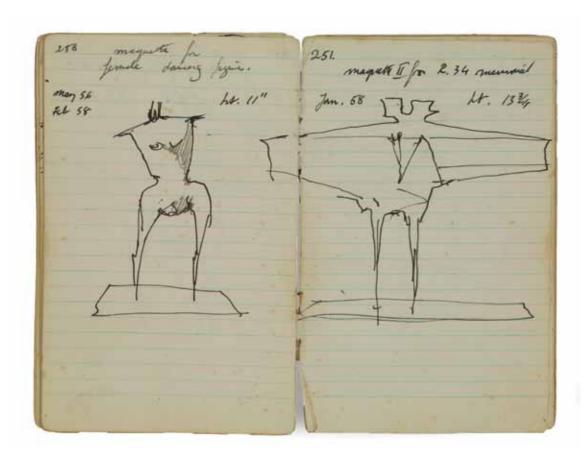
Pages from Chadwick's textile sketchbook 1946 Ink & gouache



they looked like. These initial thumb-nail sketches were the precursors of all the familiar drawings he went on to make.

Drawing from Classical sculpture was in the past a ubiquitous exercise for students at Art School. The pre-worked sculptural masses had a certain robust simplicity about them and creating a two-dimensional interpretation of this broke down complex forms into their basic grammatical structure. Chadwick did not go to Art School but in a similar vein, by drawing his own sculptures, he had a means of reassessing what he had just achieved through an instinctive process of making in three-dimensions. This visual thinking is different from verbal-based thought; it means that line, angle, stance, texture, shape, rhythm, weight and movement can all be considered, compared and explored in a simple, direct and image-based way. In effect, Chadwick was exploring the grammar of his own sculptural language.

The vacuum left in the mind after completing a sculpture can often provide a reflective and thoughtful period. Drawing and re-drawing



Pages from Chadwick's notebook 1958



Chadwick in his studio at Lypiatt Park 1984 © Lypiatt Studio Limited

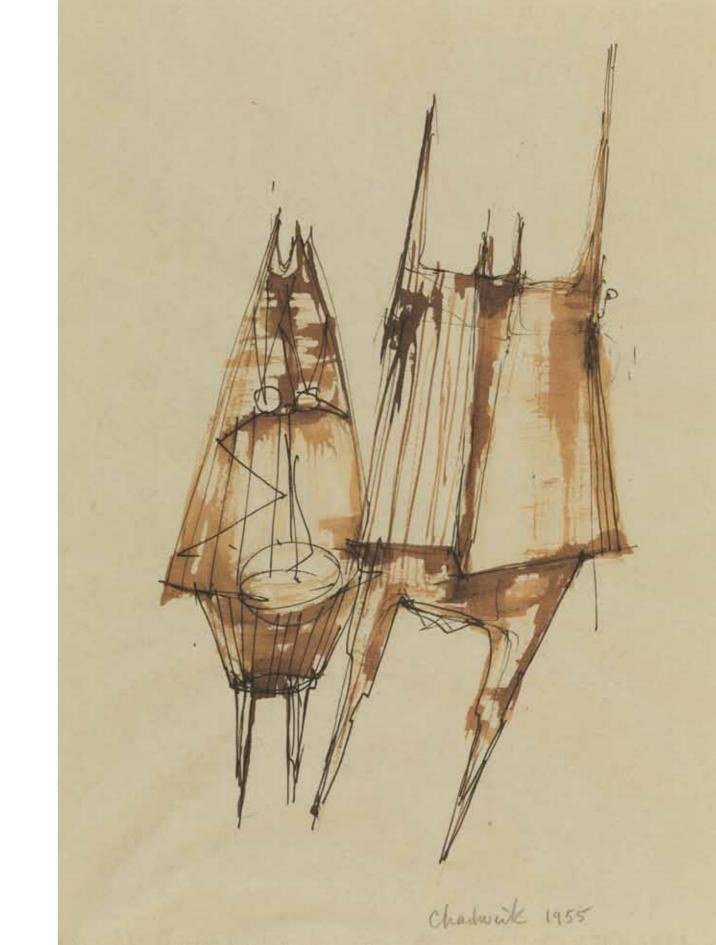
the image can continue the visual thinking process, assessing the success or otherwise of the forms and developing the themes. Chadwick made the majority of his graphic work in this way. Occasionally however, he drew during the construction process. The small sketches of the "Inner Eye" are not variations after the object but show Chadwick trying out components incorporating different elements from biological diagrams of an eye into his iron constructions and testing in advance how the forms might evolve. These sketches are rare in Chadwick's oeuvre, as he much preferred to let his sculptures take shape while he made them with minimal pre-conception.

There are several graphic variations on the 'teddy boy and girl' theme included in this exhibition which clearly demonstrate how relatively small changes to the basic square and triangle composition can completely alter the nature and feel of the image. Chadwick's quest for what he termed 'attitude' pervades all his sculpture and drawing. It is the way in which he composes forms in a set relationship to each other: poised, dynamic, in tension or harmony, forms in visual balance. Chadwick relied on physical balance for his early works, the mobiles and stabiles, and although these gradually evolved into static sculptures the principle of a visual balance remained elemental. This is true of his two-dimensional works as well as his sculptures.



British Pavilion, XXVIII Venice Biennale, 1956 © La Biennale di Venezia, Archivo Storico delle Arti Contemporanee

right Teddy Boy & Girl IV 1955 Ink & wash 40.5 x 50cm



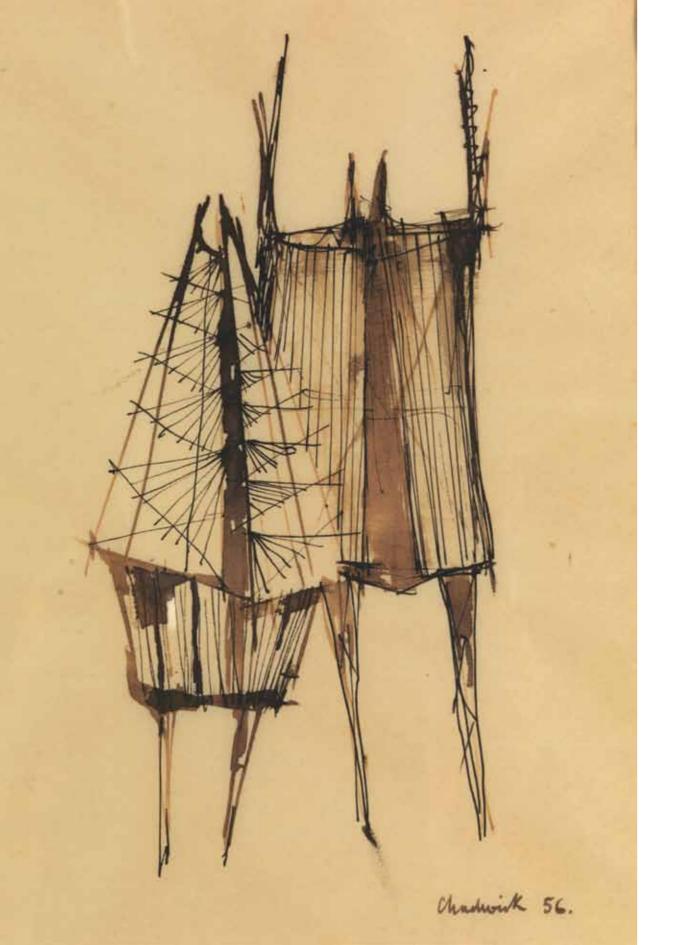
Pen, pencil, ink and wash, as well as monoprinting, all feature in Chadwick's drawings. He enjoyed and utilised the accidental effects created on paper by running washes, waxing or by inking wood, plastic or glass shapes. These accidents often initiated an image and could be overlaid with ink or pencil lines. The lines themselves might be the multiple prints of an inked ruler's edge, delineating a form or expressively fanning out across the shapes, echoing the structural fanned rods of his sculptures. Other drawings retain a calligraphic quality as the width of an inked nib defines and redefines edge, shape and texture.



Teddy Boy & Girl II 1956 Ink & wash 42 x 50cm

right Teddy Boy & Girl V 1955 Ink & wash 40.5 x 50cm







left Teddy Boy & Girl I 1956 Ink & wash 42 x 50cm

Teddy Boy & Girl 1956 Ink, wash & wax resist 37 x 54.5cm Chadwick's method of sculpture construction, drawing in space with iron rods, lends itself particularly well to two-dimensional interpretation; his sense of geometry and the way in which the juxtaposition of flat triangular elements can create a sense of solid form. In Chadwick's series of monoprints from the sixties, his characteristic wit is evident through the figures, beasts and monolithic abstract forms closely allied to his sculpture of that same period. The direct use of pre-cut wooden shapes, inked and then printed straight onto paper, is as simple a technique as a primary school potato-print. These monoprints are perhaps the purest expression of Chadwick's preferred method of making, starting with a simple single triangle and elaborating the image by repeating the print one block at a time, following his impulse. Modular construction was



Christmas card 1950's Linocut Edition unknown 33.5 x 38cm



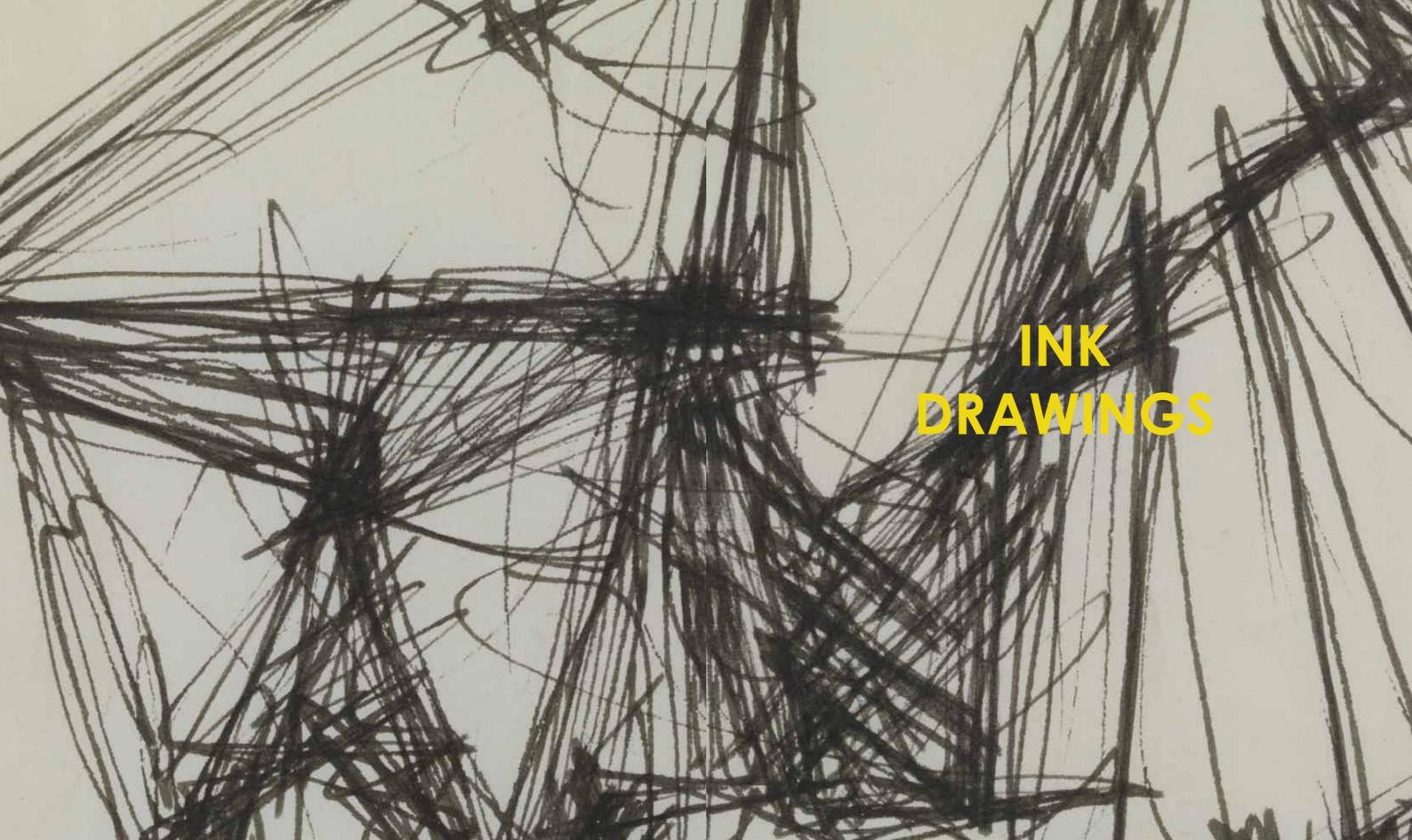
fairly standard after the war, however creating his biomorphic or anthropomorphic images in this way was another of Chadwick's particular inventions. Print-making also captured his imagination and Christmas cards sent from the early days in Pinswell are frequently wood or linocuts, hand-coloured with ink or printed over with blocks of colour. Later lithographs made with the involvement of professional printing houses exploit effects Chadwick used in his drawings as well as the graphic techniques of the printing process.

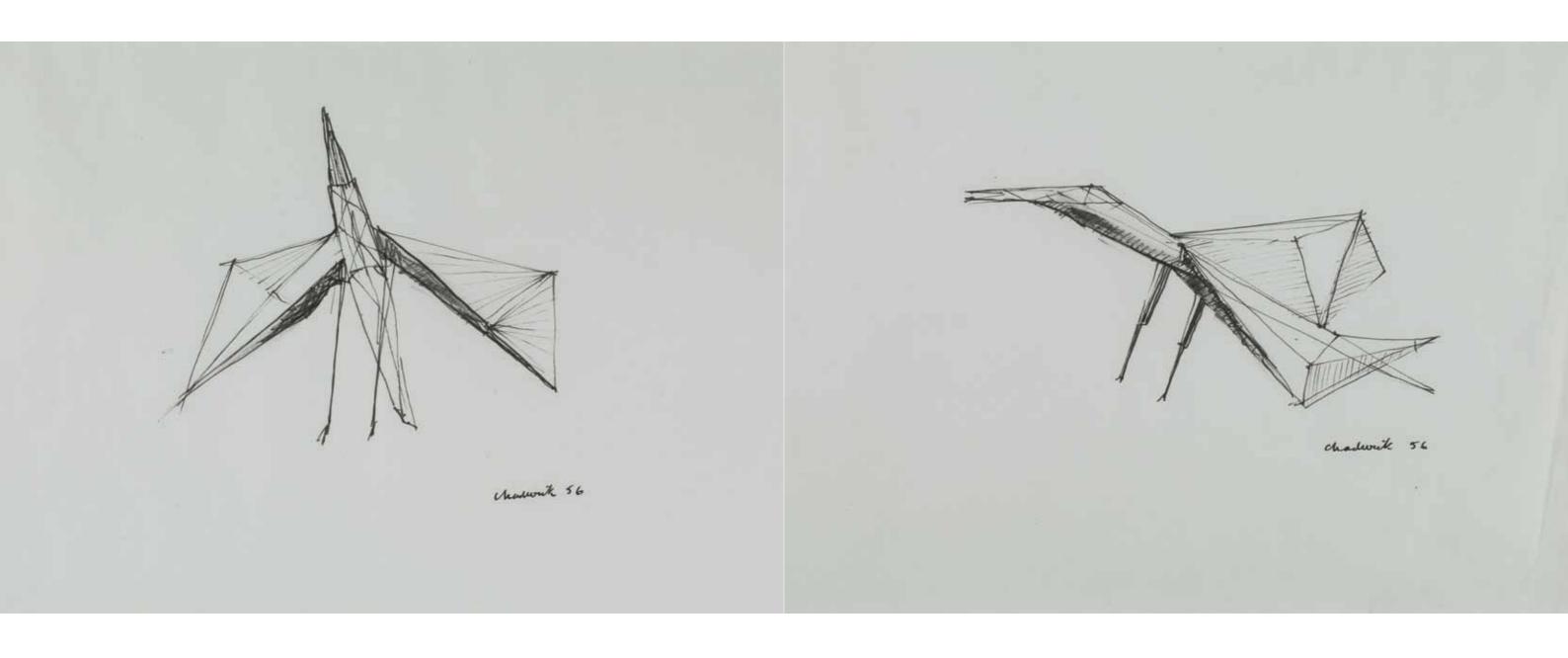
During the 1970's and 1980's Chadwick re-employed some of his architectural drawing techniques, exaggerating perspective and distorting it, setting his figures into surreal or fanciful environments. These works on paper are on the whole monochromatic, although in many of his prints, coloured stripes or exotic landscapes create a stage animated by images of his sculptures. He emphasises their apparent solidity whilst retaining his lightness of touch and sense of humour, so typical an aspect of his character. Late in life Chadwick made a series of delicate watercolour drawings, often still-lifes, flowers in a vase, fruits in a bowl or an apron hanging on a chair. He also painted and drew landscapes showing his house and sculpture, carefully observed from life, with crisp, sharp pencil lines flooded with washes of colour, a great contrast to the drawings of the fifties with their bold and deliberate ink lines.

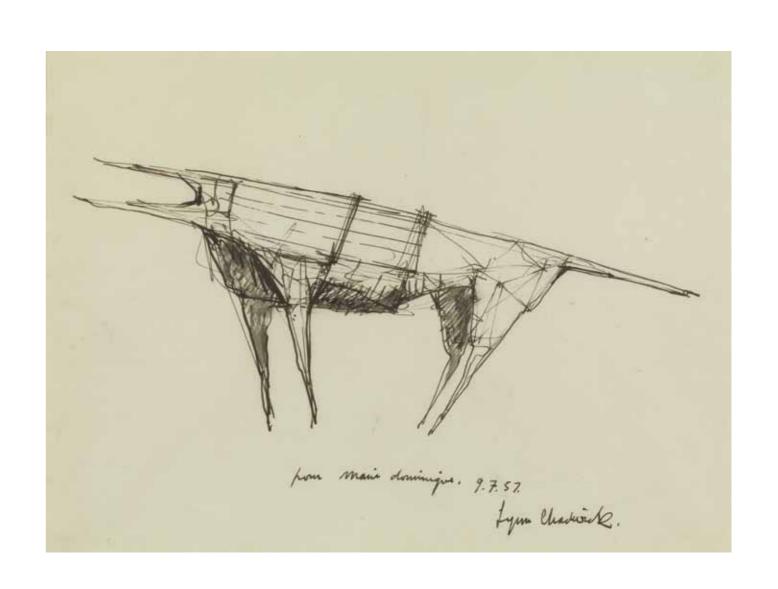
Stranger 1962 (detail) Ink, wash & monoprint Chadwick's drawings give us an intimate and wonderful insight into his making practice. Famously private, he rarely allowed anyone into the studio during work time. However, in these distinctive and exceptional images, his method and process are clearly discernible. His deft lines and the directness of the image-making reveal a fresh view of his sculpture. Seldom shown in their own right, I hope the drawings we have brought together for this exhibition add new depth to his oeuvre and illustrate further the diversity of his unique language. Lynn Chadwick was, in the true sense, a natural draughtsman.

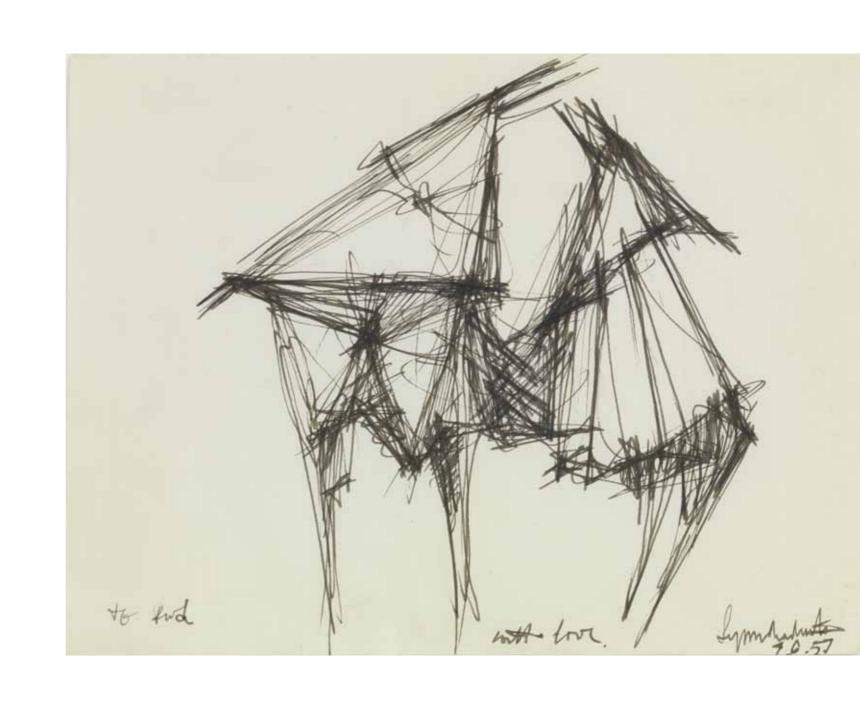
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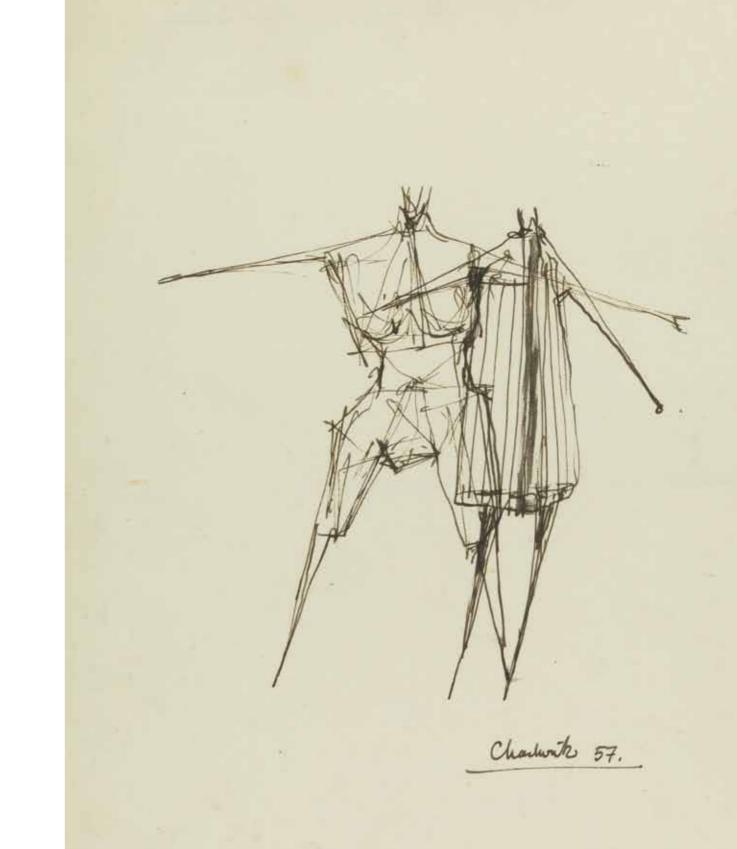


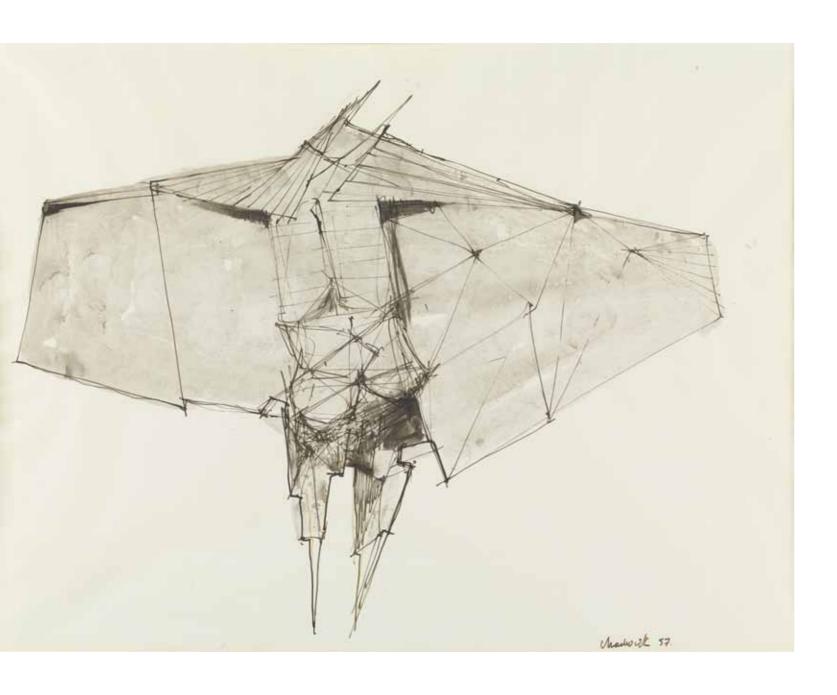








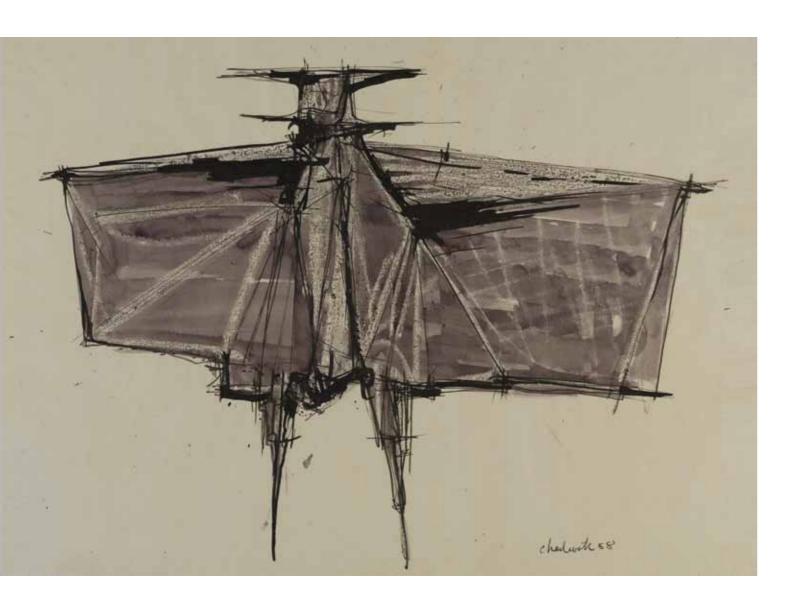


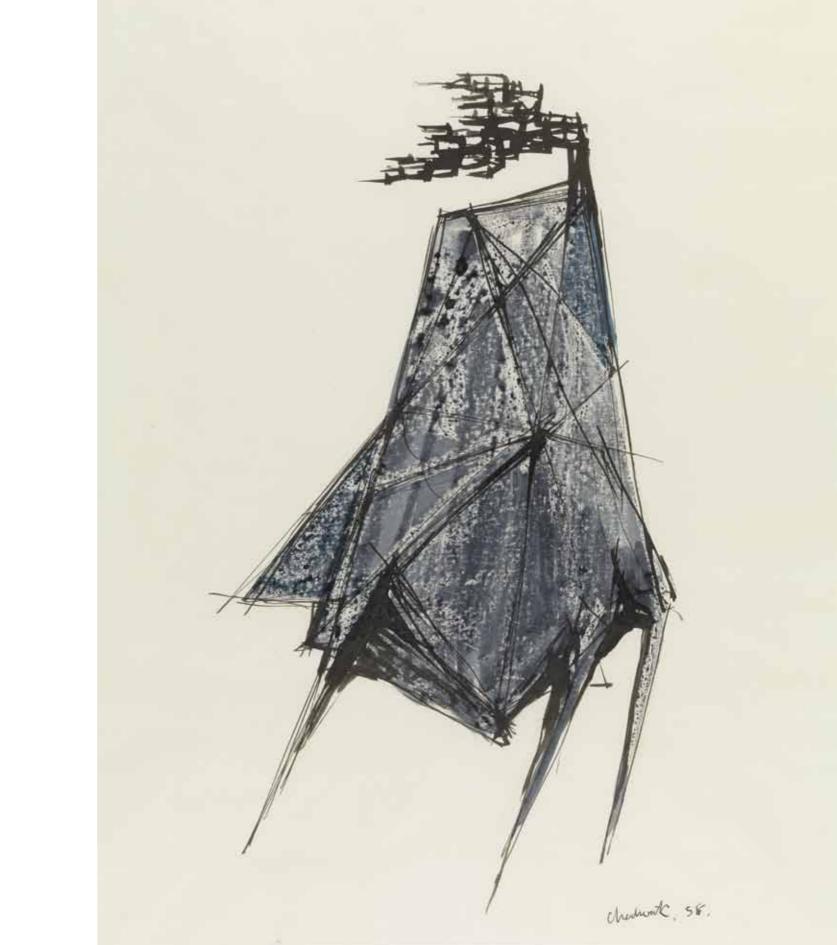




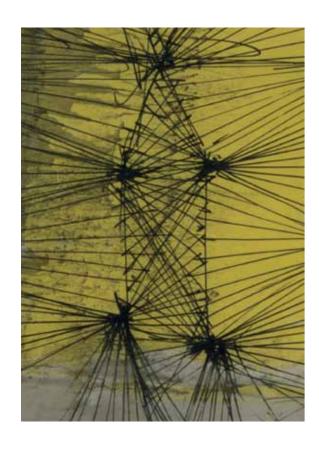






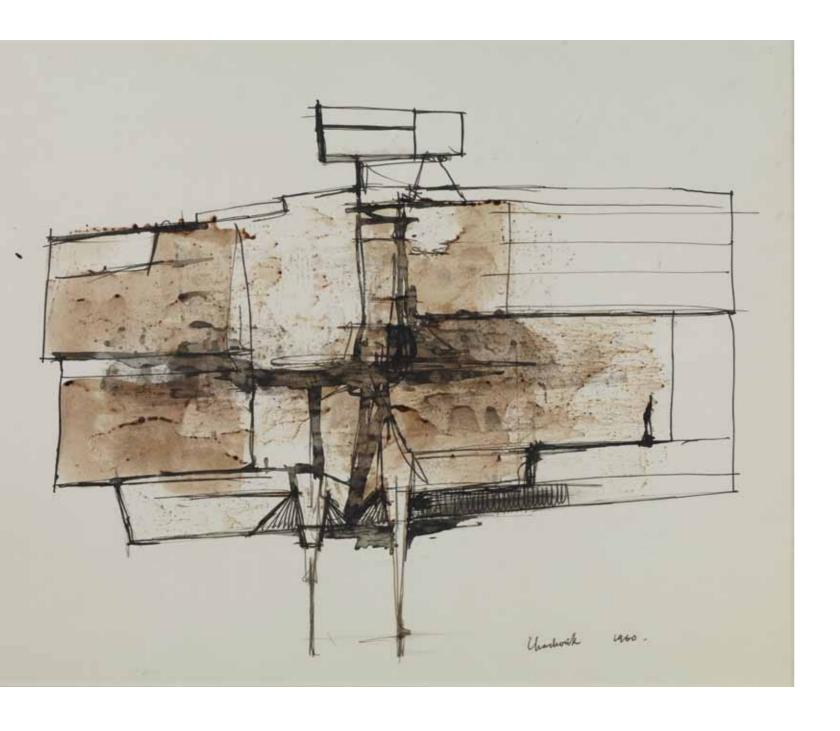








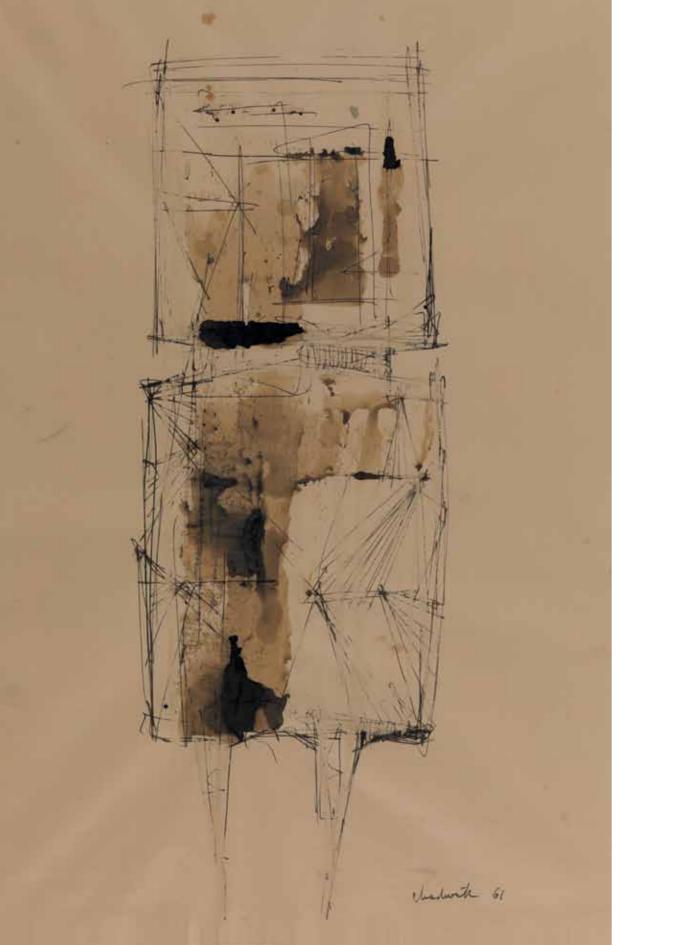








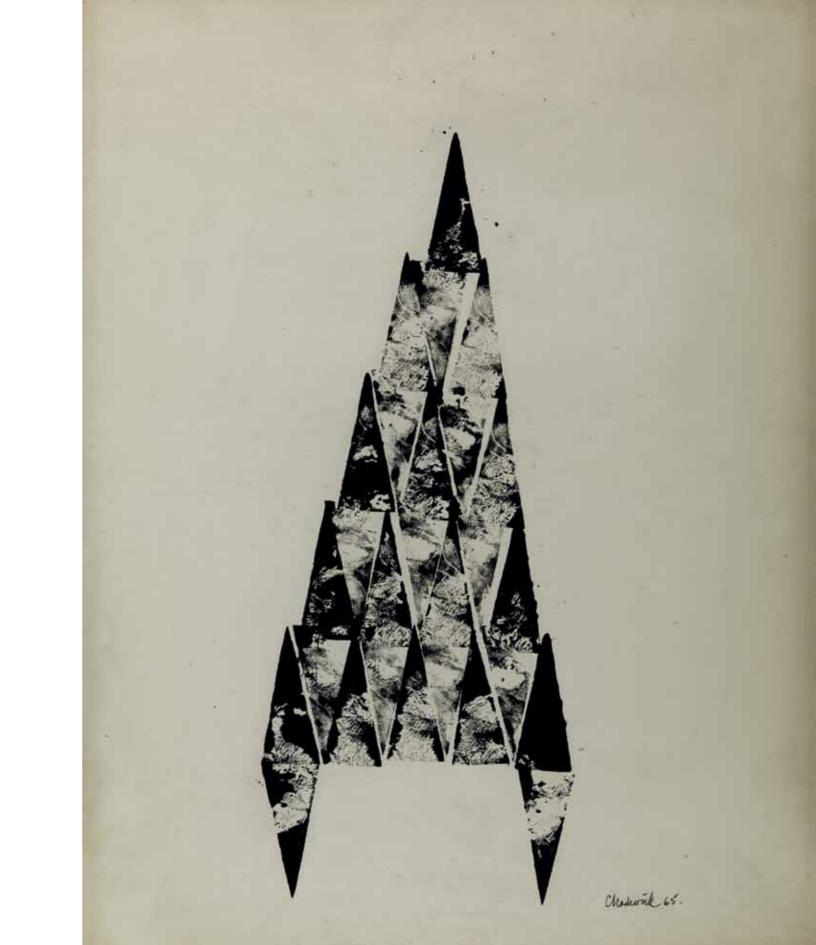


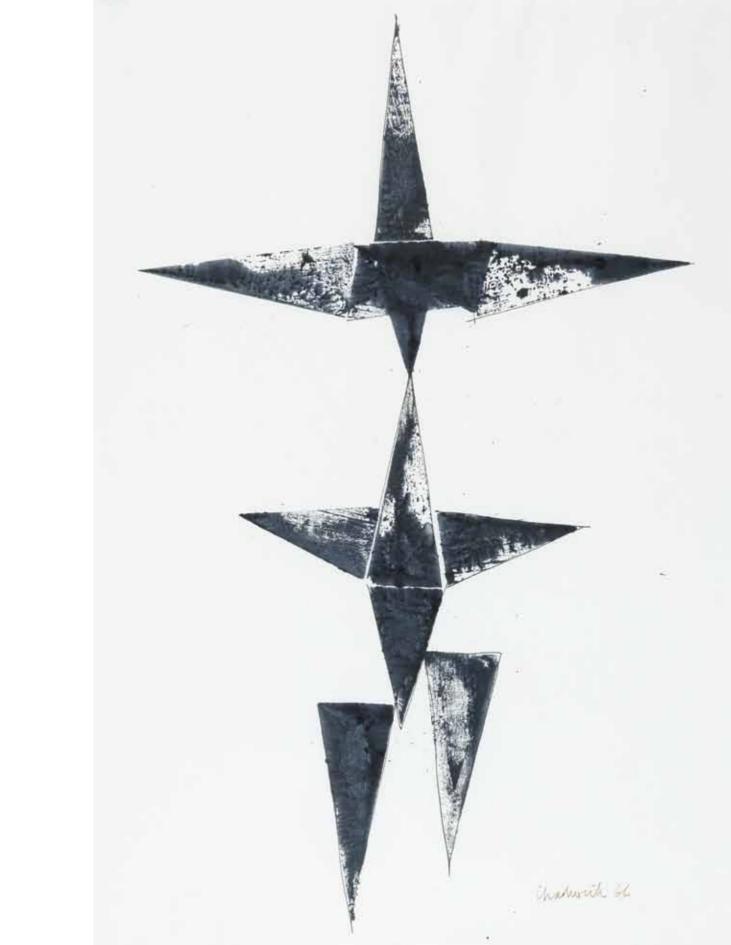


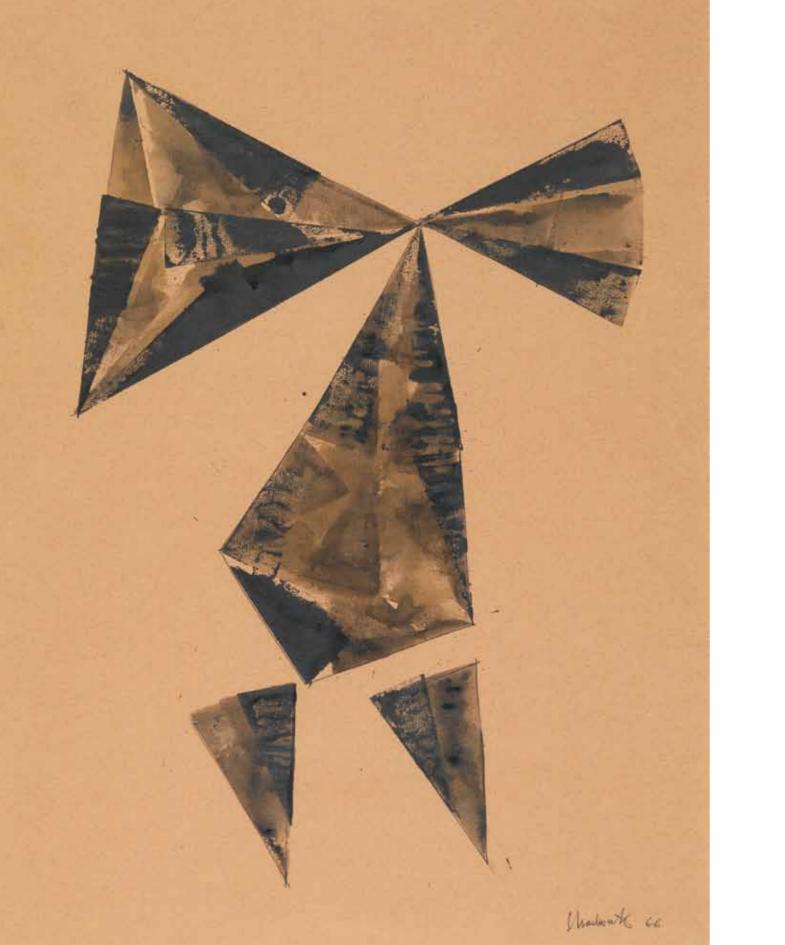










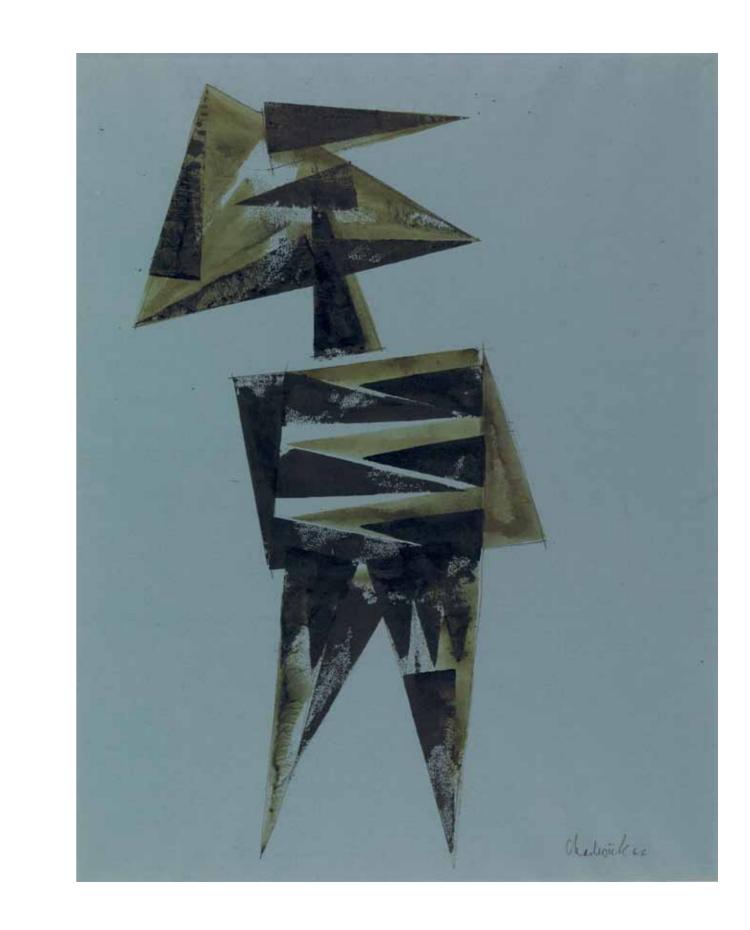




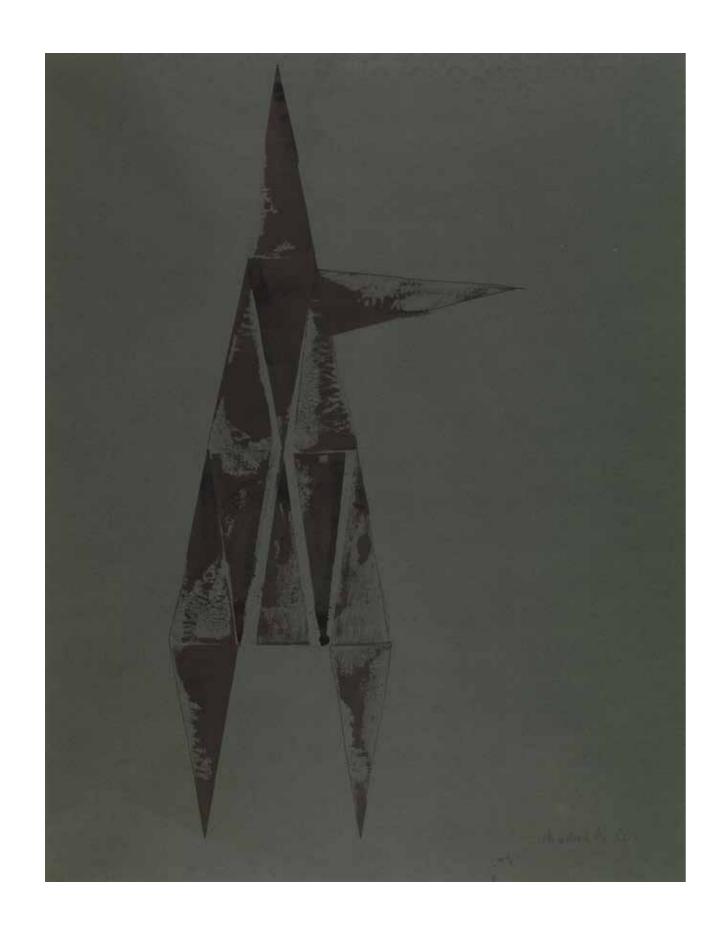






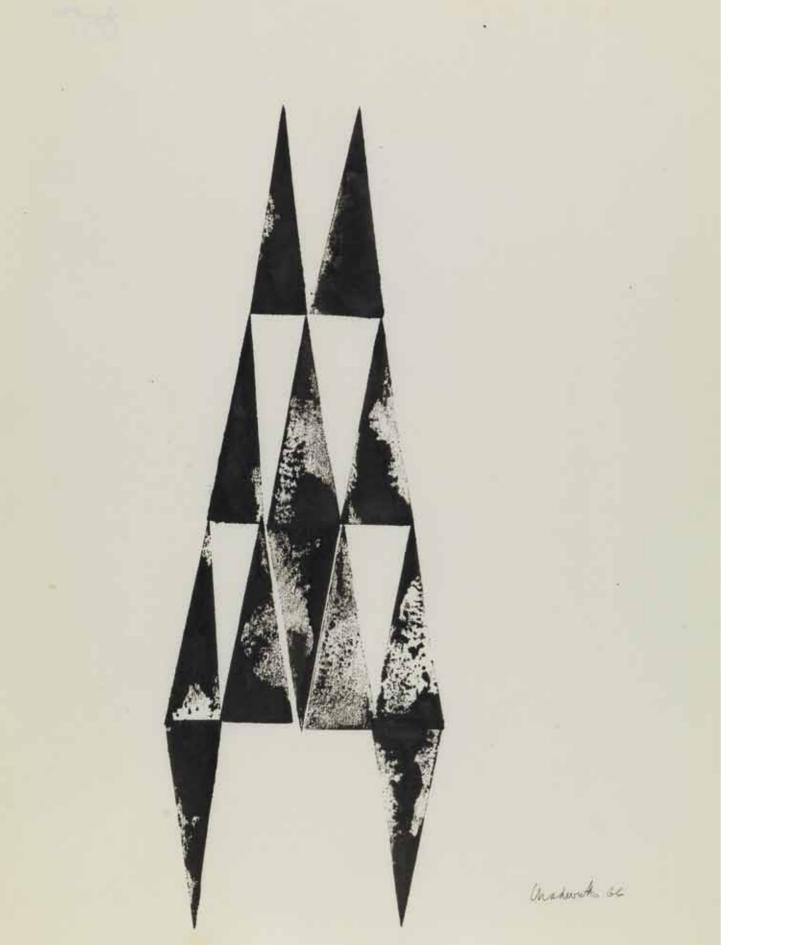


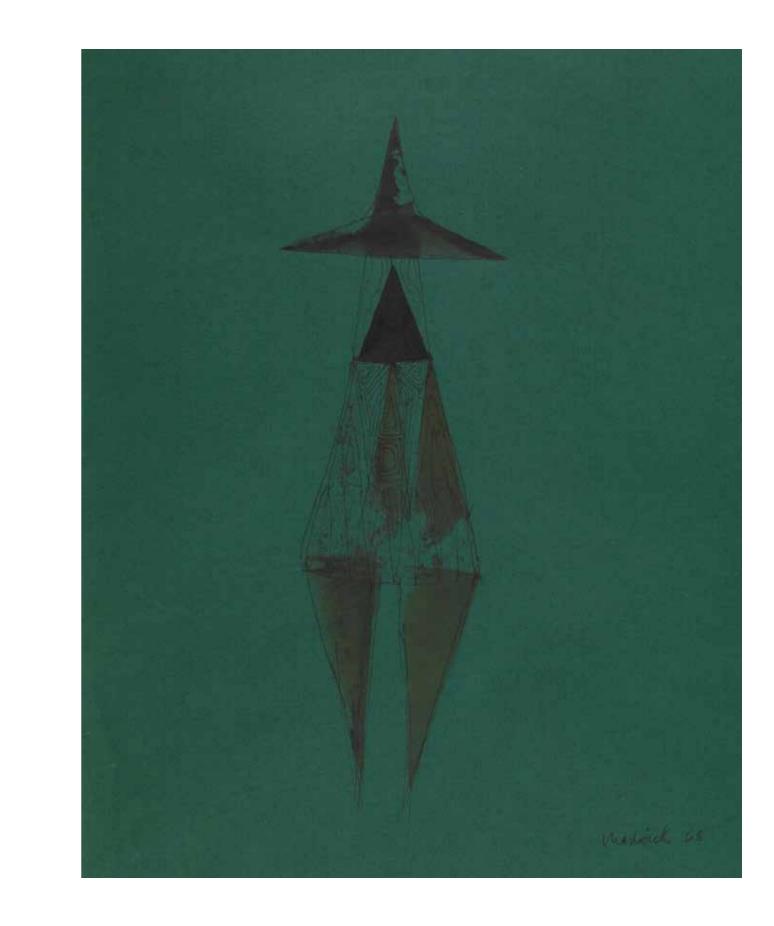




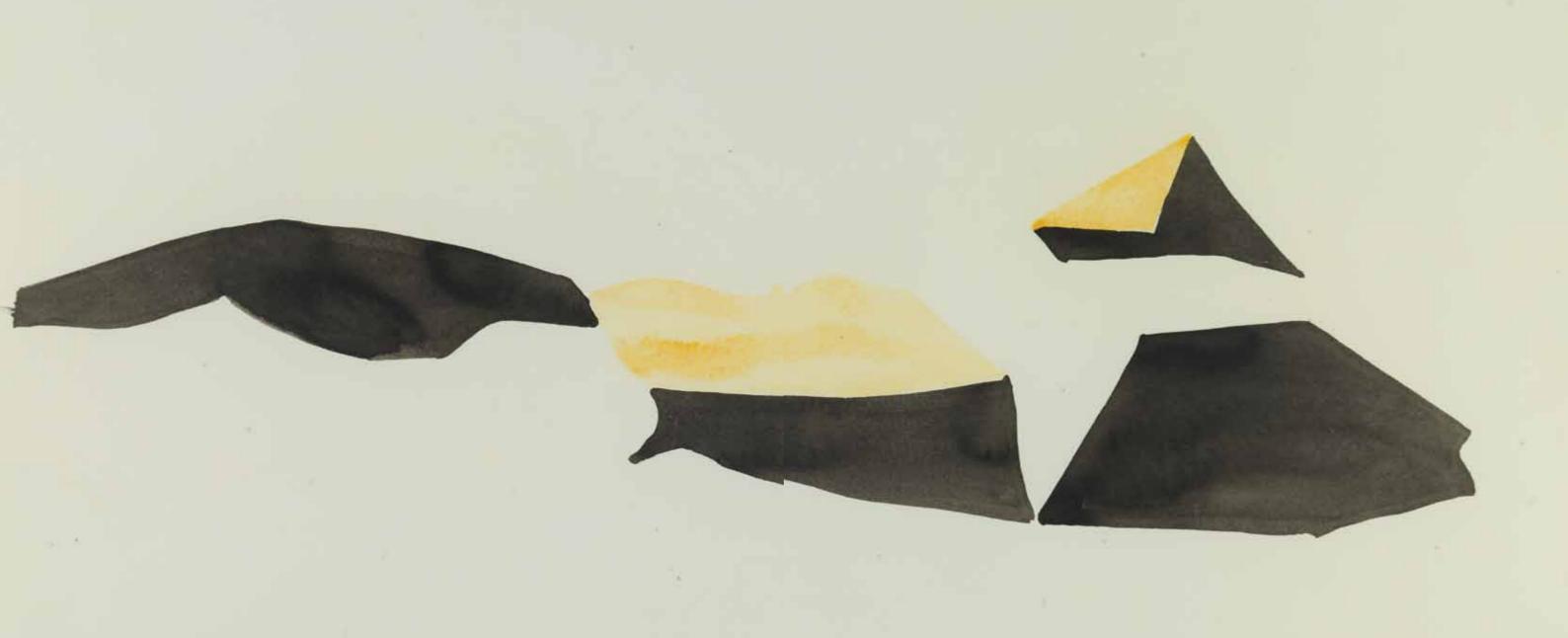












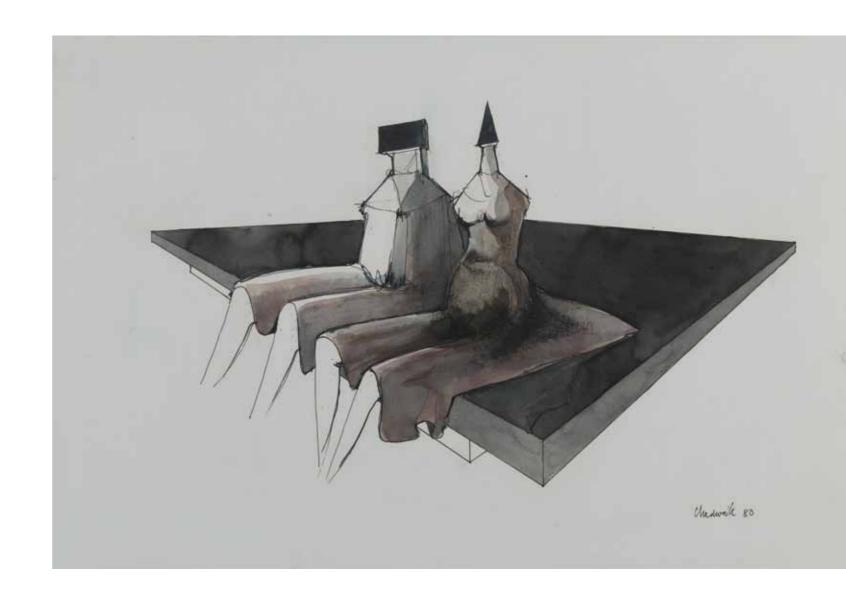


previous page Reclining Elektra 1969 Watercolour 88 x 67 cm

> Sitting Couple 1971 Ink & wash 64.5 x 84.5cm







Gallery Pangolin would like to thank all those who have kindly lent drawings and other works on paper for this exhibition and especially Lypiatt Studio Ltd for their continued assistance and support.

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