

ANN DIENER

THE INVENTED LAND



Tapestry Project (detail), 2016,
jacquard weaving, 108 x 72.5 in.
See also pages 56–57

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Andi Campognone

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Victor Gonzales

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Mark Arax
Shana Nys Dambrot
Ann Diener
Ian James
Leslie Jones

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THE INVENTED LAND

Bakersfield Museum of Art
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*Wire olive trees attached to Greenhouse
Structure (detail), See also pages 70–79*

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Introduction

Andi Campognone



Studio View, 2023

AS A LIFELONG CURATOR and museum director, I’ve had the privilege of experiencing an extraordinary range of art—stylistically, creatively, and culturally. Over the past 35 years working with artists, I’ve encountered practices that span from decorative beauty to urgent activism. Among them, Ann Diener’s work has stood out for decades. She approaches artmaking with a deep sense of purpose—fusing problem-solving, critical thinking, and aesthetic beauty to spark action and remind us of the impact we have on the world around us.

The Invented Land is Diener’s powerful blend of personal memory, keen observation, and environmental call to action—an especially urgent conversation here in Southern California, where our landscapes are constantly shaped by both nature and human hands. Through her intricate drawings and layered collages, she documents the land with the sensitivity of a steward and the insight of an anthropologist. Her reflections on agriculture, technology, and the use of resources are transformed into visual narratives that invite us to think critically about climate change, sustainability, and our shared responsibility.

This exhibition and book align closely with the Bakersfield Museum of Art’s commitment to environmental awareness and the thoughtful use of resources—issues that resonate deeply across our region, from coastal cities to inland valleys. Conversations about sustainability often begin with data or policy, but here they begin with images—rich, complex, and impossible to ignore.

This second edition of *The Invented Land* includes new works that expand on Diener’s vision as both artist and activist. My hope is that you not only find inspiration in these pages, but also feel empowered to see our Southern California landscapes—both natural and built—with fresh eyes, and to imagine how we might protect them for generations to come.

Foreword

Victor Gonzales
Curator of Collections and Exhibitions
Bakersfield Museum of Art

THE BAKERSFIELD MUSEUM OF ART is honored to present *The Invented Land*, an exhibition that speaks directly to the spirit of Bakersfield and the San Joaquin Valley. For over six decades, BMoA has sought to celebrate the diverse stories that define our region, and in Ann Diener’s remarkable work we find an artist whose vision resonates deeply with this place we call home.

Diener, a Southern California descendant of a farming family, brings with her an understanding of land that is both intimate and expansive. Her work explores the constant state of change that shapes California’s landscapes, particularly the ways water and population growth alter the very ground beneath us. This second iteration of *The Invented Land* draws Bakersfield into sharp focus, with the Kern River as its lifeline—an ecological, cultural, and symbolic thread that connects past to future.

At first glance, the exhibition dazzles as a visual feast: intricate drawings, layered tapestries, and a sculptural installation that merge abstraction with representation. But beyond their beauty, these works are transformative. Diener creates landscapes where memory, history, and imagination converge—worlds that feel at once ancient and futuristic, personal, and collective. Her alchemical use of pattern and texture reflects both order and chaos, echoing the rhythms of life in our valley and the broader challenges facing California today.

For Bakersfield, *The Invented Land* is more than an exhibition. It is an opportunity to see ourselves within a larger story of resilience, adaptation, and hope. It affirms that the land we inhabit is not static but continuously invented and shaped by forces of nature, human intervention, and the dreams we carry forward.

As a museum, BMoA is committed to preserving and amplifying such stories, ensuring that our community’s experiences are recognized within the broader cultural conversation. Exhibitions like this reaffirm our mission: to inspire and engage through art while celebrating the artists whose work captures the complexities of California’s identity.

I hope this exhibition and catalogue serve as both inspiration and reflection, inviting our audiences—here in Bakersfield and beyond—to consider their own connections to land, memory, and place.

Unruly Course (detail), 2025, Graphite, ink, gouache and cut paper on paper, 52 x 144 in. See also pages 114–119



The Invented Land

Ann Diener



Drawing in Studio 2, 2022



Drawing in Studio 1, 2022



Headshot, 2022

AS A FOURTH-GENERATION DESCENDANT of a Southern California farming family, I have a deep connection to the land and am fascinated with its continual state of change. Several years ago, while visiting my late grandparents' farm, I was struck by how abruptly and significantly this land had changed. No longer was I able to recognize my old haunts or familiar landmarks; the crops and trees were gone, the roads were reconfigured, and fertile farmland was covered in a shroud of industrial farming operations. Those fields I explored as a child have since been transformed into a tessellation of suburban development, a sprawl of quotidian Southern California tract homes, strip malls, and gas stations. The fields that remain are farmed by large conglomerates—often owned by private equity firms in faraway places—the land a commodity to be maximized for profit. Seeds are scientifically engineered and food is grown on massive stretches of land or in enormous greenhouse structures. Producing food in this manner lies at the cutting edge of science and as with any perturbation to the natural order, renders environmental and social consequences. Technology remains as intrinsic to California's agricultural future as artificial intelligence and the innovations of Silicon Valley. The ecosystems this technology generates are at the core of my work, resulting in intricate architecture and stunning complex visual landscapes.

Bearing witness to this transformation started me thinking about the shifting nature of the land: agrarian to industrial, natural to man-made, organic to planned, and flat to stacked. As each generation occupies a place, it adjusts its use of the land and re-registers the spaces. Points of view change, needs and resources adjust, figure-ground relationships shift, and time collapses. These perceptible changes to my former backyard signaled not only the modernization of how we grow food but also the significant transformations we have made to the environment

and our society. California’s verdant farmland plays a significant role in the use of natural resources, our global food supply, and population demographics; however, the way it was used for many generations is rapidly transitioning with our physical needs and changes in climate. As such, the fields I explored in childhood must be considered within a broader global and political context.

As an artist, I am interested in recording these intricate landscapes and structures through drawing. My drawings are an additive process; I layer one image on top of another along with cutouts of smaller drawings, maps, digital images, prints, and photographs. Connections arise among the unrelated sources to reflect how place is experienced both currently and historically, how identity is tied to place, and how politics influence the systems that structure our lives. Investigating and drawing images of land, water, and the architecture of modern-day factory farming is my way of interpreting ecological decline, man’s imprint on the land, natural cycles, and the changing climate.

This series of work focuses on California’s San Joaquin Valley, the fertile land in the middle of the state, which grows a substantial portion of the world’s food supply. I decided to focus on this area because it epitomizes all the elements of industrial agriculture, both good and bad.

On the surface, it is a bucolic postcard - fruit crate images of almond and pistachio groves glistening in the sun, planted in straight lines as far as the eye

can see. However, behind this pastoral façade lies the reality of agri-business and factory farming. It is a land of stark social, racial, and economic inequalities. Industrial agricultural operations in their zeal to maximize production often overdraft aquifers causing land to subside and leaving gaping holes in the earth. These influential and entrenched interests exert

control over water banks to the detriment of smaller traditionally family-owned farms. I seek for my work to serve as a visual simulacrum of this inequality illustrating the chasm between the few who control the capital and resources and the low-income families, peripatetic immigrant labor, and small farmers.

The paramount issue of California agriculture is water. California built the greatest agricultural machine in history, employing technology to grow food in massive amounts to feed the world’s growing population largely by controlling where water flows. However, this approach has dealt with overarching environmental consequences—primarily water shortages caused by overuse,

flooding, soil erosion, and subsidence. The huge rainfalls in 2022 and 2023 resulted in additional problems, including the flooding of fields and towns. Tulare Lake, once the largest body of water west of the Mississippi, reappeared with the recent rainfall—its waters previously diverted for farming and contained by dams. While the reappearance of Tulare Lake is a welcome sight to the Tachi-Yokut Tribe, it is an existential threat to nearby towns like Corcoran,

which faces the danger of submersion. At the same time, there are farms and homes in the San Joaquin Valley today that remain without any water, forcing some communities to rely solely on bottled water and farmers to abandon their farms altogether.

The adaptation of industrial agriculture to a changing climate represents a metaphor for climate change on a larger level. It creates a parable of the need to respond to environmental shifts to continue to produce food for a growing human population. A changing climate requires judicious use of water, rehabilitating depleted soil, rotating crops, planting cover crops, and growing in places that were previously unsuitable for farming. Joan Didion writes

in *The White Album*, “Some of us who live in arid parts of the world think about water with a reverence others might find excessive.” Despite the recent rains, which bolstered this year’s snowpack and raised the diminished aquifers, California continues to experience a slow and steady aridification.

With my drawings, I attempt to demonstrate this complex, evolving landscape, telling the story of these topics of inequality, water, and the vicissitudes of climate change through the complexities of modern-day agriculture. I intend for this body of work to spark awareness and action to ameliorate the changes we have imposed on our landscape.

The Invented Land, Bakersfield

Ann Diener

THIS ITERATION of *The Invented Land* focuses on the Kern River. Fed by snowmelt from the southern Sierra Nevada, the Kern is a vital artery that flows through Bakersfield, nourishing its farms and serving as both a symbolic and environmental touchstone for the city. It is a critical resource that shapes policies on conservation, recreation, and urban development. At its core, this exhibit seeks to explore the pressing issues of water use, scarcity, and control in the Southern San Joaquin Valley.

The original version of this exhibit centered on the broader Central Valley of California, examining the role of water in its agricultural history within the context of its see-saw patterns of droughts and floods. This updated presentation builds upon that foundation, introducing new works focused specifically

on the Kern River. Through a combination of images, maps, and drawings, I bring together both realistic and abstract interpretations of the landscape’s topography—its rivers, waterways, and patterns of land use.

The works on display, including drawings, tapestries, and maps, are intentionally layered and complex, much like the issues surrounding water use itself. They are not meant to create a realistic simulacrum, but rather to elicit a sense of place and history. My hope is that these pieces encourage viewers to reflect more deeply on the relationship between land, water, and the ways in which we interact with our environment—both in our daily lives and through the policies that influence local land use.



Inspiration Corner, 2023

Liquid Gold (detail), 2022, graphite, ink, colored pencil and cut paper on paper, 120 x 52.5 in.
See also pages 48–51

Cornucopia Asunder: Ann Diener's 'Invented Landscape'

Leslie Jones



“DON’T ALMONDS NEED A LOT OF WATER TO GROW?” That is the question that arises whenever I mention the orchards my family has cultivated for more than a century in California’s northern Central (Sacramento) Valley. While the almond is not necessarily “thirstier” than other crops (like alfalfa, for example), the nut has become a scapegoat that reflects the divisiveness brought about by drought: urban vs. rural, north vs. south, liberal vs. conservative, vegans vs. meat eaters.¹ The question is a valid one motivated by concerns for water security in the state, but to focus on one (highly nutritious) crop and its growers as somehow negligent or indifferent to the drought conditions is to overlook the extremely complex and convoluted history of water and agriculture in California. Author and journalist Mark Arax (who has also contributed an essay to this catalog) has unraveled this history in his expertly researched book *The Dreamt Land* which served, in part, as an inspiration for artist Ann Diener’s ambitious and thought-provoking exhibition “The Invented Land”. The drawings, installation, and tapestries that make up the exhibition offer a visual commentary on the issue of water and agriculture in the southern Central (San Joaquin) Valley (where water is especially scarce), calling attention to a California issue with a global and environmental impact.

In addition to poring over Arax’s book, Diener did much of her own groundwork including primary research in the local libraries and historical societies of Kern and Fresno counties and the Earth Sciences and Map Library at UC Berkeley, along with making a site visit to an almond grower in Mendota. Evidence of her findings, including maps of waterways (natural and man-made) and documentation of land subsidence in the region, is displayed on what the artist describes as the exhibition’s “research wall” Another wall includes maps that the artist bedazzled and collaged; rhinestones embellish the water sources and routes and

clippings from her drawings of plant life and organic matter enliven the otherwise diagrammatic imagery, suggesting the preciousness of water and the potential for life wherever it flows.

These works help to contextualize others in the exhibition that delve more abstractly into the subject and are rendered in Diener’s distinctive style and visual language developed over thirty years as an artist. Her drawings are often characterized by bold, sweeping compositional lines creating a sense of dynamic energy that, up close, reveal images of plant life as well as a variety of patterns derived from her research. According to the artist: “Over time I have developed an eccentric and introspective vocabulary of gestures, symbols, and forms that move between representation and abstraction. They are images of spirals, hoops, dots, architectural forms, and vegetation that move forward, backward, and sideways, indoors and out through past, present, and future, a meandering personal rumination.”²

In the diptych *Reinvention*, for example, expansive arcs traverse the composition defining a sort of arbor for climbing foliage and clusters of flowers. However, Diener’s plant-centric depictions diverge from conventional human-made displays of nature, as in a botanical garden or Teleflora bouquet. They are far more untamed and menacing and the tumescent pods, creeping roots, and barbed vines reminiscent of the work of surrealist artists like Max Ernst who also explored the uncanny potential of forms found in nature.³ They hint at nature’s potency and generative force which can be tenacious and overpowering at times. (A fact that anyone who has ever had to fight back weeds or manage overgrowth will understand.) Respect is due, Diener suggests, which she expresses through her thoughtful and detailed drawings in graphite based on observation but executed intuitively.

Diener’s “ruminations” also address the complex and often tenuous relationship between humans and nature, as in the exhibition’s four large-scale drawings devoted to the essential elements of agricultural production: water, soil, food, and factory farming. In *Liquid Gold*, for example, clusters of ovoidal, teardrop, and circular shapes suggest grapes as well as water droplets, while vine-like arteries meander throughout, occasionally “sprouting” leaves. Or are they electrical cords plugged into some unseen artificial, man-made network that, along with the trellis-like grids depicted in the lower half, seek to control the natural world?



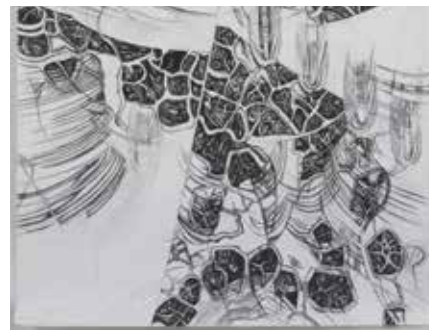
Reinvention, 2021, graphite, gouache, ink, colored pencil, and cut paper on paper, 60 x 80 in. (two panels each 60 x 40 in.) *See also pages 54–55*



Liquid Gold, 2022, graphite, ink, colored pencil and cut paper on paper, 120 x 52.5 in. *See also pages 48–51*



Industrial Garden (detail), 2023, graphite, colored pencil, ink and cut paper and Yupo on paper, 120 x 52.5 in. *See also pages 40–43*



Precarious Terrain (detail), 2023, graphite, colored pencil, ink and cut paper and Yupo on paper, 120 x 52.5 in. *See also pages 52–53*



Labor's Gold (detail), 2023, oil paint, silk scarves and beads on canvas, 120 x 52.5 in. *See also pages 44–47*

The drawing titled *Industrial Garden* and devoted to the subject of factory farming (a somewhat contradictory term in itself) is dominated by ominous black forms that refer to farm machinery and express the “heavy hand” of industrial agricultural practices. In the upper portion, a large array of hooks (based on those used for moving trays suspended on wires) bear an uncanny resemblance to disembodied fingers or claws. Other rotating and gyrating forms suggest the mechanical processing and movement of produce through the factory before it’s shipped off to consumers. Like industrialization in general, factory farming is designed to minimize cost and maximize production, which is not inherently a bad thing. “Feeding the world” is a big job and involves technological innovation to make the entire process—from planting to harvesting to packaging—as efficient as possible with the aid of machines.⁴ Diener herself has described her experience on a factory floor as “amazing” and, like the Futurist artists of the early 20th century, conveys machinery’s impressive velocity and force in her works of art. Yet her sense of awe is tempered by knowledge of profit-driven motivations of “Big Ag” and their potentially negative impacts, especially on the environment.⁵

In *Precarious Terrain*, Diener’s graphic ruminations are based on her research into the California drought and the issue of land subsidence in particular. There are patterns derived from images of dry, cracked earth as well as curved crop rows that echo the whirlpooling lines in the center of the composition and indicate downward motion. On the lower right, drill-like forms appear to penetrate a circulatory system suggestive of roots and/or mycelium. Not only is the land sinking due to excessive pumping of groundwater but it may also be disrupting unseen underground worlds essential to the ecosystem.

Even in the drawing *Labor’s Gold*, which celebrates nature’s bounty with enticingly-colored, rhinestone-encrusted depictions of pomegranates, grapes, figs, oranges, plums, and almonds, one senses an artificial (or non-organic) presence represented by the checkered-pattern squares cascading from top to bottom of the drawing that, according to Diener, relate to planting flats used to germinate seeds while also evoking the patterned handkerchiefs worn by field laborers to protect themselves from the sun.⁶ In this way, Diener also raises questions about the working and living conditions of farmworkers which, since the protests and strikes of the 1960s and 70s led by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta, remain a central social issue for the region. The people in the fields (who, notably,

are doing the work that machines cannot) are essential to the propagation and harvesting of fruits, nuts, and vegetables that help feed the country, and yet they are also the ones with the most to lose (ie. their jobs) in times of drought.

Extending from the floor to more than ten feet in height, each of the drawings just discussed encapsulates the viewer and echoes human proportions. While most depictions involving nature and landscape are horizontally oriented—encouraging the viewer to step back and behold—Diener’s works are vertical, like doors, inviting one to step through and enter an alternative representation of a particular ecosystem. Her previous projects have addressed how the control of water has shaped California’s history in other ways, from the development of strawberry cultivation in Ventura County to William Mulholland’s diversion of water from Owens Valley that fostered the growth of Los Angeles and also resulted in the worst man-made disaster in California’s history: the 1928 collapse of the San Francis Dam that killed at least 431 people. Diener uncovers “lost” histories and recharges them in her energetic drawings to call attention to the source of issues that affect people still today. In her words: “Through drawing, I map the layered history of place, unearthing histories of the built environment, detecting geographical patterns of movement, analyzing the ways that spaces are re-invented over time, and challenging preconceived notions of how one occupies, creates, challenges and defines space.”⁷

Diener’s work deals with history but remains open to the possibility of change because, like the imagery, everything is always in flux. With this project, Diener also expands on the notion of space by introducing the third dimension with a walk-in installation that serves as a focal point of the exhibition. With a soaring roofline reminiscent of a chapel, the greenhouse-like structure is wrapped with the artist’s drawings, creating a translucent scrim, the entrance thus becoming an actual portal into a fantastic, topsy-turvy domain. Leafless trees made from copper-like wire are suspended from the ceiling upside-down, their twisted and gnarled branches reminiscent of those seen in dead almond orchards in the southern valley (along Interstate 5 most notably) when water shortages forestalled irrigation. Melancholic associations are diverted by colorful “fruits” and “seed pods” and the shimmering of dangling metallic “leaves” and chandelier crystals that capture the light creating a “jewel-box” experience. While architecture is often depicted in her



Studio Wall, 2023

drawings (symbolically as a reference to human intervention and/or as a compositional device), this greenhouse-cum-chapel envelops viewers and expresses, in a palpable way, the wonders access to water can produce, and the sense of destruction and dismay when there’s not enough. By calling attention to the life or death situation of water access that faces farmers and farmworkers in the valley, Diener appeals to viewers to engage more directly with issues related to the growing of the food they consume. In her words: “I think a lot of people. . .just go to the market. They don’t know about the valley and the water and where the food is coming from and how it’s processed. . . .I want to bring the issue to light. . . To [get people] think about who’s growing this food. Big farmers? Small farmers? Do they have enough water? Who’s been displaced? What can I do to make it better? What do I teach my kids?”⁸

Diener’s work raises questions and highlights the complexity of a situation for which there are no clear answers. Yes, “Big Ag” needs to consider sustainability, the environment, and its labor force as well as profit, but development and expansion are inevitable in a growing world. As described in her statement, when visiting her ancestral farm (now partially paved over) Diener can’t help be nostalgic, but she also acknowledges that “(a)gricultural technology will be as intrinsic to California’s future as artificial intelligence and the businesses of Silicon Valley.”⁹ How we, the consumers (as well as the farmers and state officials), negotiate the change is really what is at stake. To “travel” through her work is to experience the dynamic tension between the generative force of nature and the man-made powerhouse that is industrial agriculture. With the awareness of how water access has shaped the current San Joaquin Valley, it is also an invitation to reinvent the landscape with every trip to the produce section or farmer’s market.

Leslie Jones is an art writer and independent curator. She was Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art from 2005 until 2023 where she organized numerous exhibitions including *Coded: Art Enters the Computer Age, 1952-1982* (2023), *Ed Moses: Drawings from the 1960s and 70s* (2015), *Drawing Surrealism* (2012) and *John Baldessari: Pure Beauty* (2010). Jones is also the author of *Allen Ruppersberg: Drawing* (Christine Burgin, 2014) and *Derek Boshier: Drawings* (forthcoming, Hat & Beard Press).

1 See, for example, Richard Gonzales, “How Almonds Became a Scapegoat for California’s Drought,” Morning Edition on NPR, 2015. Transcript and recording: <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2015/04/16/399958203/how-almonds-became-a-scapegoat-for-californias-drought>

2 From Diener’s fellowship application to The Bogliasco Foundation which she received in 2016.

3 I’m thinking in particular of Ernst’s *Jardin Gobe-Avions* series of paintings as well as some of his frottage works.

4 The claim that agricultural production in the Central Valley “feeds the world” is an exaggeration but it is the most productive agricultural region in the world with approximately 250 different crops. For more statistics on Central Valley agriculture, see <https://ca.water.usgs.gov/projects/central-valley/about-central-valley.html> (accessed September 5, 2023)

5 Industrial farming often involves the use of chemicals and monocropping, both of which deplete soil health. Exposure to chemicals also affects the health of the farmworkers and others living in rural communities. See, for example, Hanna Li & Vanya Srivastava, “Environmental Health in California’s Central Valley: A Data Visualization Summary, 2021: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b7138e6b01374b46b9d5f0b6c8821f04>. For additional studies on the effects of pesticides on health, see the Environmental Health Perspectives website: <https://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/>

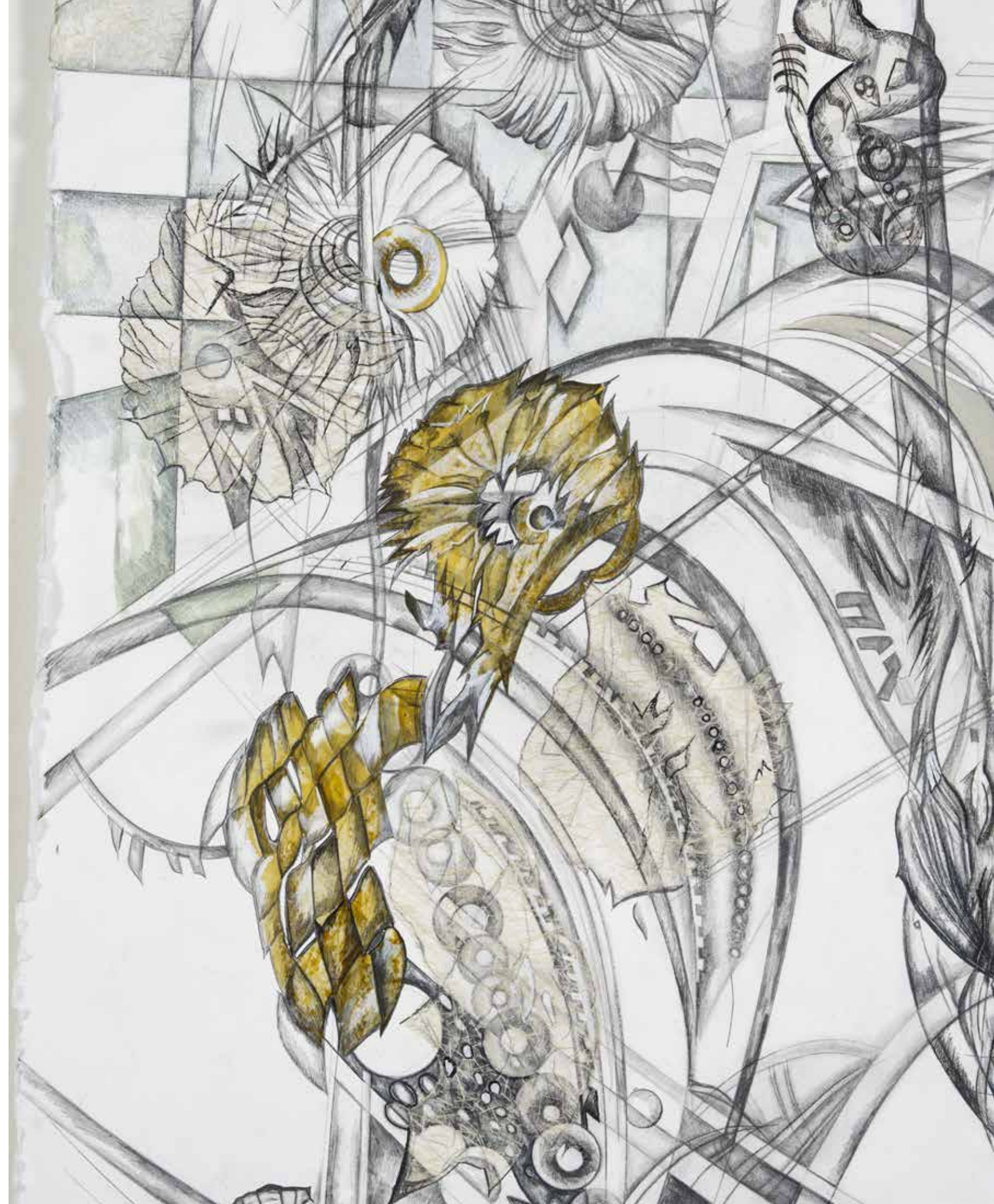
6 Email correspondence with the artist. August 7, 2023.

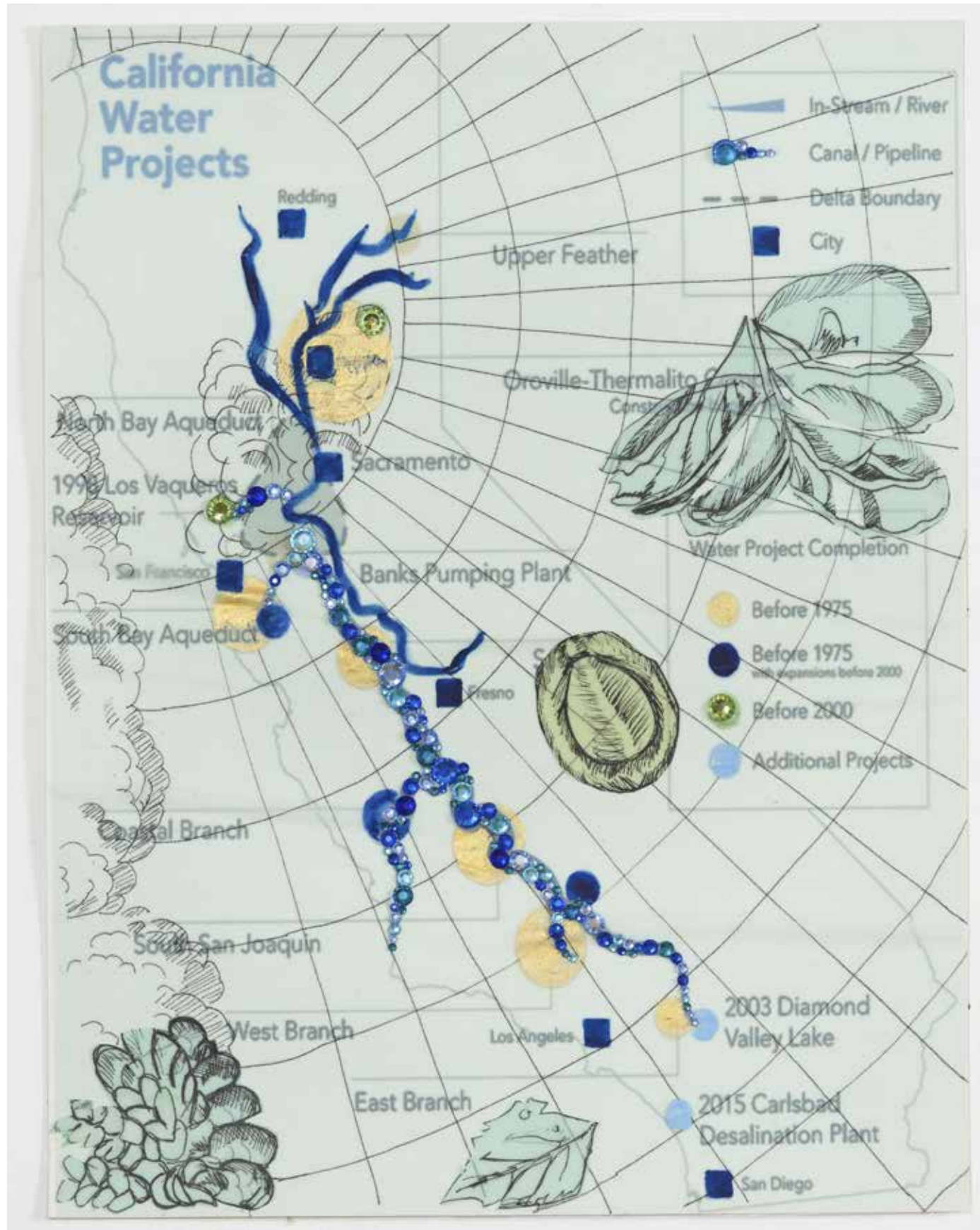
7 Ann Diener, “Artist Statement,” *Now Be Here* website: <https://nowbehereart.com/artist/ann-diener/>

8 Interview with the author, June 5, 2023.

9 See Ann Diener’s Statement, *The Invented Land*, p. 8.

Liquid Gold (detail), 2022, graphite, ink, colored pencil and cut paper on paper, 120 x 52.5 in. See also pages 48–51





California Water Projects, 2022, acrylic ink and beads on printed map, 11 x 8.5 in.

I GREW UP BELIEVING that irrigation canals were an essential feature of every American town. They ran alongside streets, shot through neighborhoods, flowed through farmland, carved a path of such infinite reach and intricate pattern that the whole of their design could only be appreciated from an airplane. With their main canals and branch canals, their headgates and weirs and turbine pumps, their dams at the source of it all, they were gifts of man's bent for engineering and perhaps his bent for art, too, tracing back at least eight thousand years, to the plains of Mesopotamia.

Once notched into the land, they did not give up their place.

As a kid, I never considered that our town, Fresno, was unusual in the totality of its commitment to the irrigation canal, or the plain old ditch for that matter. Whenever my parents took us for a drive south down Highway 99, lacing the agricultural towns of the San Joaquin Valley: Fresno, Fowler, Selma, Kingsburg, Tulare, and Bakersfield, the rivers we crossed were almost always sand. To find their water, we'd have to go looking in a thousand canals and ditches in the orchards, vineyards, and fields beyond.

For many years, I did not question where the flow actually came from, to whom it was going, and by what legal or moral right. These were the arteries that carried the lifeblood of our place, and for all I knew every other place from California to New York. Like clockwork, the canals filled with cold water in late spring. By midsummer, as the heat made shimmers of the asphalt, our canals, riverlike, held children in thrall with a gravitational pull that murmured, "Climb the bank, stride to the edge, jump in, cool off. Or, better yet, go grab a friend and a couple inner tubes and hurry back."

The gravity of waterflow scared the hell out of my grandmother Alma Arax, even as my grandfather Aram was creating his own miniature

version of irrigation’s latticework in his backyard. With manicured furrows and drip-drip of hose, he was growing tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, melons, okra that flew past the roofline, and Armenian cucumbers, *gootah*, that could grow two inches after a day of irrigation and a night of sleep. My grandfather, the old Thompson grape farmer, was half blind; it became my duty to part the sticky cucumber leaves and find the nutty *gootah* before another irrigation blew it up into rank gourd.

They lived on Garland Avenue at the edge of a neighborhood named Fig Garden, though the fig trees had been long plowed under. At block’s end, just two doors down from their house, a big irrigation canal ran diagonal and stopped cold the street. “Don’t ever go near that canal,” my grandmother warned me. This was a different register of caution than the one that compelled her to tell me not to sit under the framed artwork of grandpa in his garden painted by my father’s sister Jeanette because the painting might “fall on your head.” Grandma’s warning about the canal was conveyed as a matter of survival.

It was true that each summer our canals and ditches, unfenced and completely accessible, became dramas that too often ended in tragedy. Kids, mostly children of farmworkers who had no swimming pools on their side of town, heard gravity’s sweet talk and could not resist. The water wasn’t flowing fast, or at least it didn’t appear to be. And who knew about the terrific undertows hiding beneath the placidity? The canal’s sides were too steep and too slippery to find a place to hold onto, let alone crawl to safety. It sometimes took days for a body to be fished out.

No votes of the city council or board of supervisors ever called for the canals to be fenced. In the growing season, grandma told me, no one heard the child’s cries and no one was present to shut off the valves. When I asked her why, she said the flow of one irrigation canal meant more to the valley than the body of one silly boy.

xxx

Not counting those instructions on what to fear, which I absorbed completely, I grew up oblivious to my place. Though I wasn’t a child without curiosity, I hardly knew the questions to ask. Like every other kid in Fresno, I had the misfortune of attending a school system that didn’t consider our ignorance an affliction worth rectifying. Civic dumbness wasn’t the German measles, after all. Much later, it would occur to me that



Fresno Canal, 2023, from Google Maps

none of it was accidental. Our teachers, principals, the superintendent of schools, and the district’s board of trustees, to say nothing of our parents, were dumb, too. They knew almost nothing about the capture and control of waterflow, an act of immeasurable violence that had remade the valley and invented California. Or perhaps they had a good idea of what had been done in their names, for the sake of growth and progress, and chose to look the other way, for it could not be undone. From gold rush to land rush, a handful of men had gone and seized God’s snowmelt. That waterflow was a resource that belonged to everyone, by the legal doctrine of public trust, no less, was a fact our elders chose to forget.

I attended a junior high named Tenaya and our rivals in sports were Wawona, Tioga, and Ahwahnee. Who among us 7th, 8th, and 9th graders knew that these names belonged to the indigenous, that Tenaya was the diehard chief of the Ahwahnee tribe and Wawona was the great wise owl that guarded the Sequoia trees, and Tioga the swift current where water in the rivers forked? Our history lessons focused instead on the Catholic missions that ran along the El Camino Real, the “Royal Road,” from San Diego to San Francisco. This is where the Spanish friars in their gray robes bravely tamed the wild by erecting crude dams and ditches and bending rivers to enable snowmelt to irrigate the first wheat fields, vineyards, and orchards. Behind the walled enclosures of the missions—whose replicas we constructed as part of our fourth-grade history projects—the padres set about the righteous cause of civilizing the dwellers of the wild, the *diggers* they were called. The padres turned them into neophytes first and then workers and then good Catholics.

By outright dodge or nimble contortion I don’t recall, but our teachers passed right over the erasure of a 10,000-year-old culture that cleared the way for American settlement. What happened to the natives—was it the crime of genocide?—was never spoken about. Not at Tenaya Junior High, not at Bullard High, not at Fresno State University.

Call it a spell. Call it a gauze laid upon the eyes. For most of us, it would be a lifelong condition. Only if you were given a chance at a young age to leave the confines of the valley, and you made a life for yourself in Washington D.C. and New York City and Baltimore and Los Angeles, and then you returned home in your thirties for the sake of family, were you granted a fresh set of eyes. I know because this was the road I had taken. Those first months back home, driving up and down Highway 99, seized by a weird state of wonder, I found myself struck with one question and

then another. The answers, the language to tell the story, would entail a longer and more trying journey. Each book I wrote answered a question, but not until the most recent book, “The Dreamt Land,” did I see what had eluded my parents and find the truth in my grandmother’s fear.

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The writer and artist rendering place go about their tasks in similar ways. An interrogation precedes the evocation. The interrogation might take years. The evocation itself does not spill out whole. Its layer upon layer upon layer eats up its own good time. Writer and artist bring everything in their game to the chore. Ann Diener came up and over the mountain from Southern California to create her latest exhibition of drawings, tapestries, and installation—what she collectively calls “The Invented Land.” She crossed the West’s Mason-Dixon line when she entered the state’s vast middle, a place not only geographically exiled from the rest of California but psychically exiled, too. The middle has its own politics, its own method of business, its own greed and hubris, its own code of arrested ethics, and its own debased calculation.

It was dirt rich and dirt poor. Diener could see that a century and a half of industrial agriculture had polluted the groundwater and air something rotten. The land was sinking by the foot—and taking with it roads, canals, ditches, and the great aqueduct itself—because the farmer’s nut and citrus trees needed water and the only water to be had in drought was the water beneath his feet. His wells fashioned with powerful pumps had chased an aquifer one hundred feet deep and then five hundred feet deep and now 1,500 feet deep. He was digging a hole all the way to China. How does the artist capture such a magnitude of extraction, and the cornucopia and indignity

squeezed from it? How does the writer convey it on the page? You start by driving down Highway 99, the flat road that takes you through the fertile earth where crops and poverty, and the sky meet.

Here, one of the most dramatic alterations of the earth’s surface in human history took place. The hillocks that existed back in Yokut Indian days were flattened by a hunk of metal called the Fresno Scraper. Every river busting out of the Sierra was bent sideways, if not backward, by a bulwark of ditches, levees, canals, and dams. The farmer corralled the snowmelt and erased the valley, its desert, and its marsh. He leveled its hog wallows, denuded its salt brush, and killed the last of its mustang, antelope, and tule elk. He emptied the sky of tens of millions of geese and drained the eight hundred square miles of Tulare Lake dry.

He did this first in the name of wheat, then beef, milk, raisins, cotton, and nuts. Once he finished grabbing the flow of the five rivers that ran across the plain, he used his turbine pumps to seize the water beneath the ground. As he bled the aquifer dry, he called on the government to bring him an even mightier river from afar. Down the great aqueduct, by freight of politics and gravity, came the excess waters of the Sacramento River. The farmer commanded the distant flow. The more water he took, the more crops he planted, and the more crops he planted, the more water he needed to plant more crops, and on and on. One and a half million acres of the valley floor, greater than the size of Rhode Island, are now covered in almond trees.

I pity the outsider trying to make sense of it. My grandfather, a survivor of the Armenian Genocide, traveled 7,000 miles by ship and train in 1920 to find out if his uncle’s exhortation—“The grapes here are the size of jade eggs”—was true. My father, born in a vineyard outside Fresno, was a raisin grower before he became a bar owner. I grew up in the suburbs where

our playgrounds were named after the pioneers of fruit, and canals of irrigation shot through our neighborhoods to the farms we did not know. For half my life, I never stopped to wonder: How much was magic? How much was plunder?

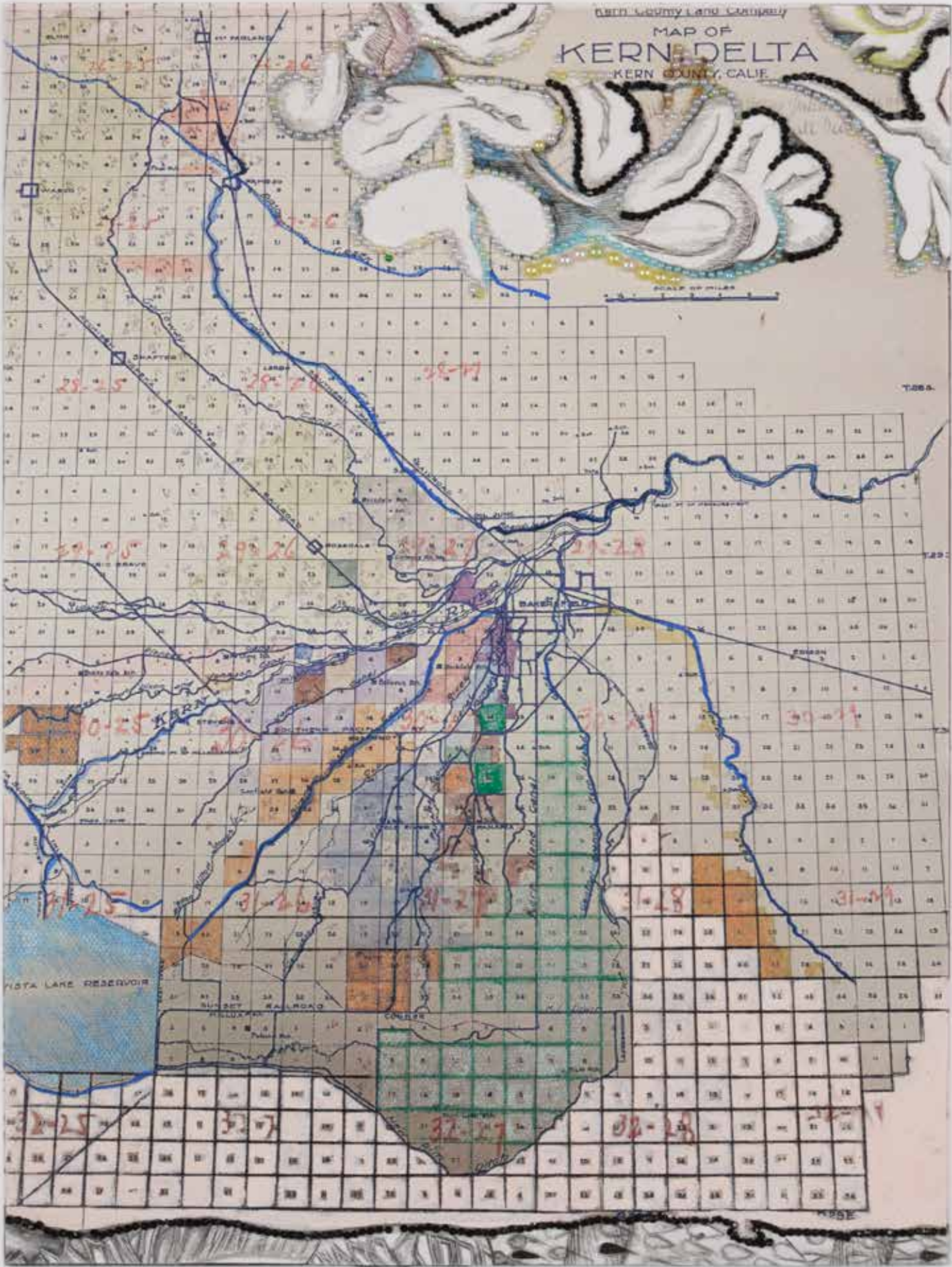
Mark Arax has been called a “21st Century John Steinbeck” for his books that pry open the soul of California. A writer of essays, history, biography, and journalism, his most recent work, “The Dreamt Land,” is a national bestseller hailed by critics as one of the most important books ever written about the West.

Tulare Lake, Courtesy of the Earth Sciences and Map Library, University of California, Berkeley



The Kern River, liquid gold

Ian James



Kern River, 2025, Acrylic, ink, beads and cut paper on paper, 12 x 9 in.

THE KERN RIVER takes shape high in the southern Sierra Nevada, where snowmelt trickles down granitic rocks and nourishes pines and junipers. Its birthplace is a rugged landscape sculpted by ancient glaciers, where streams cascade among boulders. The watershed covers more than 3,600 square miles, with the river’s main branch, the North Fork, coursing through its canyon on the flank of Mt. Whitney. The waters flow through alpine meadows and stretches of steep-sided canyon, taking in tributary streams that branch out across the mountains like the veins of a leaf.

The river teems with life. There are dragonflies, stoneflies, great blue herons, tricolored blackbirds, beavers and several types of trout, among them native California golden trout. In its wetlands, yellow butterflies flutter through cottonwood trees. In its riffles, ospreys dive as they hunt for fish.

Like an actor assuming different roles, the Kern shows changing faces, from stretches of slow-moving water to crashing maelstroms. The rapids that form in steep sections make the Kern a prime destination for whitewater rafting. The river’s power demands respect and attention to safety. Next to the mouth of the Kern River Canyon, there are signs that warn of the dangers and present a count of the lives lost in the river since 1968, a toll that stands at 342. Yet, find a calm river pool on a summer day, and families will be out with chairs arranged on the sandy banks in the shade of willow trees, children wearing life vests as they stomp and splash in the water.

People come to fly-fish, paddle a kayak, float in a tube, or cool off on a shady beach where they can wade into tranquil water. Listening to the burbling flow or watching flies hover along the banks can offer reminders of our connections to nature. And for some frequent visitors, the connections discovered along the river create an enduring bond.

I feel fortunate to have spent time over the last few years learning about the Kern River from people who have an intimate knowledge of the watershed and who have witnessed its changes over the years. Some of them have shared reflections about what the river means to them personally.

A fly-fishing guide who moved to the area three decades ago said being out on the water is a magical experience, and one of the great joys of his life.

A veteran whitewater rafting guide described the river as “my spiritual home.”

And a Native tribal elder shared that she often comes to sit on a boulder by a riffle to relax and find peace. As she described it, seeing and hearing the flowing water “strengthens you.”

Just as the Kern is appreciated as a life-giving artery, however, it is dammed, diverted and heavily tapped. Like the brown signs that declare the Sequoia National Forest a “Land of Many Uses,” the Kern is a river of many uses. At power plants along the upper river and at Isabella Dam, water is routed to turbines to generate electricity. Miles downstream, after the river emerges from its canyon into the San Joaquin Valley, some of its water is used to supply homes and businesses in Bakersfield. Most of the river’s water, however, is diverted to supply agriculture. Shunted into irrigation canals, the water flows to farms that produce almonds, pistachios, oranges, grapes and other crops.

For years, so much water has been routed into canals that the river usually doesn’t reach downtown Bakersfield.

Beside cottonwoods and willows on the northeast side of town, the Kern River dwindles in shallow ponds among reeds. There, one of California’s great rivers disappears, leaving miles of dry, sandy riverbed.

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IN HER ART, Ann Diener insightfully explores how California’s water has been used to build the agriculture industry of the San Joaquin Valley. She depicts our natural streams and our networks of artificial waterways, connecting California’s natural abundance to the food-producing powerhouse the region has become. The patterns of water use that have drained much of the Kern River’s water in the valley are reflected and interpreted in her works, and underlined in the title of her drawing *Liquid Gold*.

For more than a century, the river’s water has been used and coveted as if it were liquid gold — transforming what were once vast wetlands and shallow lakes into expanses of farmland.

In the 1800s, Indigenous Yokut people lived along the Kern River and its tributaries, using ditches to irrigate crops and gathering wild seeds and acorns. The valley’s marshes and lush vegetation supported herds of tule elk, packs of wolves and millions of birds.

That changed with the arrival of settlers, who in the 1850s and 60s began diverting water from the river and drying up the valley’s wetlands. A dispute over the river’s water led to a landmark 1886 court decision on water rights, and that was followed by an 1888 agreement between wealthy land barons that divided the river. Over the years, that foundational agreement has been modified several times.

In the 20th century, as more water was diverted to serve agriculture, Buena Vista Lake and Kern Lake dried up, as did Tulare Lake, which was once the largest freshwater lake west of the Mississippi.

After Isabella Dam was built in 1953, the river’s flows in Bakersfield diminished further.

For decades, parts of the river have sat parched next to neighborhoods. Where there were once swimming holes, there are now sandy

depressions marked with footprints. Stretches of desiccated riverbed snake through the landscape near other symbols of extraction: the pumpjacks that nod across thousands of acres of Kern’s vast oil fields.

For a vocal group of people in Bakersfield, the depletion of the river has been a longstanding grievance and a rallying cry. In the last few years, the chronic dewatering of the river has prompted a legal dispute, with some arguing it’s time to bring back a flowing river in the city.

Nature intervened in 2023, when a massive snowpack blanketed the Sierra and sent abundant runoff streaming from the mountains and flowing through Bakersfield.

The river’s revival was short-lived, however. In 2024, flows were suddenly shut off upstream, and the Kern abruptly dwindled to a dry riverbed once again. I visited the river with a local ecologist and one of her students as they surveyed the stretches of bare sand and cracked mud.

Where there had been a pond days earlier, they found masses of dead fish scattered on the riverbed — non-native species including bass, catfish and mosquitofish. Flies buzzed around the carcasses, and a stench of decay drifted in the air.

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AS I HAVE LEARNED about the Kern River, one of my most memorable experiences was a daylong outing with Delia “Dee” Dominguez, a leader of the Yowlumne Yokuts tribe. She led me to a bluff overlooking the river canyon, a spot where her great-great-grandfather once fished.

Looking out over the river, she took a clapper stick made from an elderberry branch and began to tap a rhythm, singing a “gathering song.”

Then we drove to a spot by the flowing river, where she regularly comes to sit on a boulder,

surrounded by rushing water.

“It’s a very special place here. I know that there were village sites in this spot. And I often come here for comfort,” she told me. “I come here when I want to clear my head.”

In her childhood in the 1950s and early ‘60s, she visited the river frequently with her family. She remembered she would wade into the water to play.

When she returned to that wading place beside a bridge, she walked on the dry riverbed. Bending down, she picked up several clamshells and held them in her hands.

“The river means so much to me,” she said. “The river needs water, and we need the water, too.”

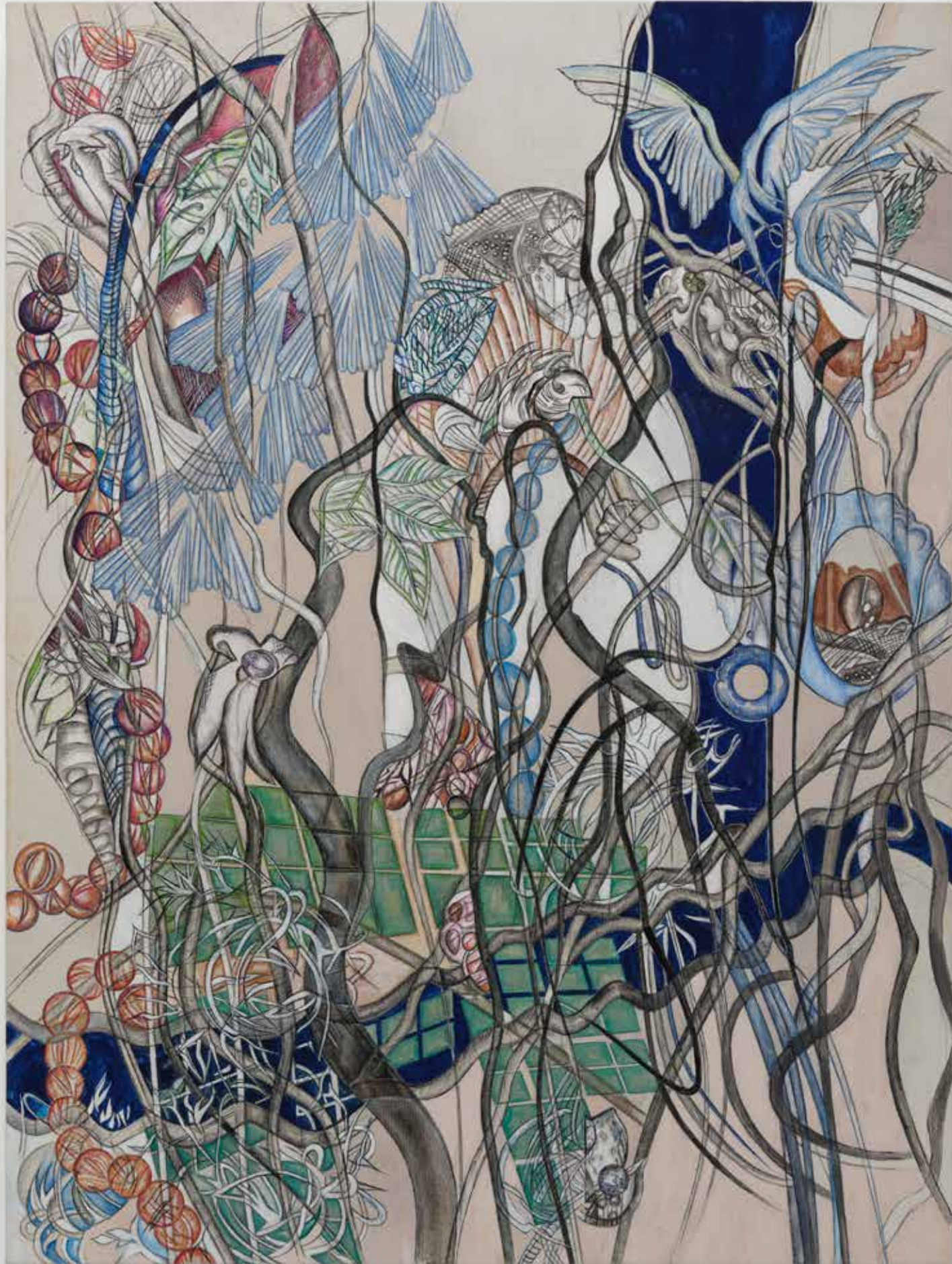
“Our community needs it. The birds need it. And our children will appreciate the birds when the trees come back with the water.”

How such a balance might be struck one day is a question that remains contentious. But as California grapples with how to curb the overuse of water and adapt to the worsening effects of climate change, the Kern River might be one of the places where Californians manage to find solutions.

As I have explored the watershed, one aspect of the Kern I have come to appreciate is how it connects the water and landscape of the High Sierra to the valley floor — a conduit of life that nourishes and sustains as far as it reaches.

The steep-sided canyon creates a channel not only for water but also for air. If you stand by the river on a hot afternoon, a warm breeze will blow upriver through the canyon, as if the San Joaquin Valley below were exhaling its sun-scorched breath.

Farther downstream, where water continues to flow, the riparian vegetation forms a lush, shady corridor, cooling the air. If a solution is found to keep more of the river flowing farther, a green oasis extending into the valley could take root once again.



Ann Diener: The Invented Land (Bakersfield Edition)

Shana Nys Dambrot

ANN DIENER'S *The Invented Land* is a project about transformation—of landscapes, of societies, of the past, of studio materials, and ultimately, of ourselves. Conceived in the collision of memory and new realities, this dynamic of neverending palimpsestic change manifests in both her direct subject—the oppressive entropy of California's agricultural interior—but in the physical way in which the work itself is made, and out of what.

First presented in 2024 at the Lancaster Museum of Art & History, *The Invented Land* began as a deeply personal and analytically rigorous response to the artist's family history farming in Southern California and the larger story of land use, climate change, and resource extraction in the state. That body of work created a foundation for understanding the landscape as a site of both memory and consequence. Now, with its expanded re-installation at the Bakersfield Museum of Art, the project enters a second, equally urgent phase—one that transfers its focus to a new locale, while retaining its defining sense of intimacy amid ambitious material explorations.

Diener's techniques and methodologies for layering, mapping, and drawing exist in direct, durational, research-based relationship with the part of the world that receives her regard. As she transfers her approach to a less autobiographical, her differently intentional engagement is with the specific set of systems, histories, and physical evidence of environmental stress and socioeconomic inequity that define Kern County and the southernmost stretch of the San Joaquin Valley. The transition is not a shift in Diener's essentially anthropological practice, but a new articulation of circumstance, turned with precision toward a different aspect of the state's troubled soil.

The works draw viewers into vertically scaled pictorial sweeps that function more like portals than planes. Towering drawings such as

Wavering Course, 2025, Acrylic ink and oil on canvas on board, 40 x 30 in.

Industrial Garden, *Precarious Terrain*, *Liquid Gold*, and *Labor's Gold* reach up like architectural gateways, inviting the viewer to step through and into complex, layered ecosystems. In *Industrial Garden*, heavy machinery silhouettes and claw-like metal forms emerge from a muted graphite ground like fossils of the industrial age, nested among ghostly botanical motifs, checkered hatch marks, and structural lines that hint at conveyor belts and tray systems. In *Precarious Terrain*, the surface churns with spiral vortices and topographic slices that mimic parched earth and ruptured soil, while diagrams of root systems and speculative strata coalesce into visual metaphors for collapse.

She composes with the logic of sediment and the imagination of a world-builder, embedding symbols and systems, flora and infrastructure into densely orchestrated surfaces that feel at once hand-drawn and data-driven, private and archival. *Liquid Gold* flows like a hybrid between vascular map and crop yield diagram, its shapes somewhere between droplets and grapes, festooned with leaf forms, tangled grids, and iridescent beads that catch the eye like dew on wire. *Labor's Gold* reads like an allegorical still life rendered in opulent, unnatural hues—rhinestone-studded fruits appear overripe, luxurious to the point of rupture, offset by gridded patterning that references both planting trays and the bandana prints of laborers. These visual elements are simultaneously celebratory and cautionary—emblems of bounty bruised by the violence of extraction.

These monumental, topographical, fantastical drawings are built over time, layered like geological strata—graphite, ink, and colored pencil laid over cut-paper fragments, printed maps, and photographic tracings. Working this way requires a patient, longer-term presence in situ and a multipronged scheme of observation in order

to perform the site-specificity with authenticity. Emotion, scientific and social research, historical archive-diving, open-minded material explorations, sculptural architectural interventions, and the welcome intrusions of childhood memories, all have a role to play in her quest for the total fusion of narrative, science, history, and art.

The Bakersfield works build on the conceptual grammar established in Lancaster—map-based collage as narrative, cartography as indictment, ornament as intervention—but introduce new iconographies and configurations, anchored in research and field observation specific to this place. Water, of course, remains the throughline. In Bakersfield, as in the rest of the Valley, the politics of water are both literal and symbolic—a material force that organizes labor, capital, and geography. Diener's representations of canals, aquifers, and irrigation lines are not diagrammatic in the technical sense; they are interpretive systems that show the dissonance between nature and policy, between flow and control. Her linework meanders and cuts like a floodplain or fissure, marking both movement and rupture. In several of the new (2025) works, she integrates cross-sections of earth and collapsed terrain, referencing the phenomena of land subsidence caused by decades of overpumping groundwater. Other pieces appear stitched together from aerial surveys and hand-drawn embellishments, charting the rise of industrial agriculture and the decline of sustainable cycles.

What sets the Bakersfield iteration apart is its fierce attention to locality. While the earlier works hovered more broadly over the idea of transformation—industrial farming, suburban sprawl, the evolution of family farms into corporate nodes—the new work dives into Bakersfield's specific landscape of oil fields, citrus groves, labor routes,

and water diversions. The maps are not generic; they are sourced from regional archives and contemporary agricultural data. The overlays are not abstract; they include visual references to machinery, monoculture planting trays, and the iconography of labor—headscarves, gloved hands, shaded silhouettes. Her intricate patterning is not mere design; it reflects irrigation algorithms, planting grids, and the entropic chaos of drought-ravaged topographies.

And then there is the greenhouse. In the original installation at MOAH, Diener built a walk-in sculptural structure—a chapel-like greenhouse of wood, with suspended wire branches and chandelier crystals, somewhere between reliquary and ruin. Wire olive trees hang inverted, their coppery branches adorned with glinting seed pods and metallic leaves that shimmer in shifting light. The space becomes a sanctuary of fragility, equal parts jewel-box and cautionary tale. It remains a keystone gesture of the exhibition: a space of beauty and contemplation that is also fragile, precarious, and utterly permeable. Inside, the viewer is not a passive observer but a participant, surrounded by the environmental metaphors that frame both the project and the regions it describes.

The tension between beauty and critique is one of the defining strengths of Diener's work. She does not bludgeon the viewer with crisis, but neither does she flinch from the evidence. The aesthetic seduction—rich mark-making, luminous surfaces, ornamental excess—is always balanced by analytical weight. Her drawings are acts of attention, of excavation and assembly, and their visual density demands an equivalent cognitive engagement. The viewer is asked to decipher, to draw connections, to see the invisible systems that govern both landscape and livelihood in this part of California.

That balance—between formal elegance and

political urgency—is especially potent in the new pieces that center on labor and land access. In these works, we see not only the machinery of production but the social scaffolding it rests on. Agricultural infrastructure becomes a metaphor for exploitation and resilience, for the simultaneous abundance and inequality embedded in the Valley's economy. Diener has often said that she draws to understand how a place is occupied and re-occupied over time. In Bakersfield, that question becomes more than academic—it is a matter of survival.

The newer works exist in dialogue with the original body while asserting their own necessity. There is no break in the visual language—only an intensification. The familiar motifs remain: sinuous lines, spiral seeds, cracked ground, grid overlays, ghosted architectural frames. But they now orbit different coordinates, guided by updated research and sharper urgency. Bakersfield is not an afterthought; it is an axis. It crystallizes the stakes of *The Invented Land* in a place where history, climate, and policy collide with particular force. Continuing to resonate with prescience, the questions posed in the original exhibition have only gained in urgency, and that art can serve as both archive and proposition in the face of environmental precarity.

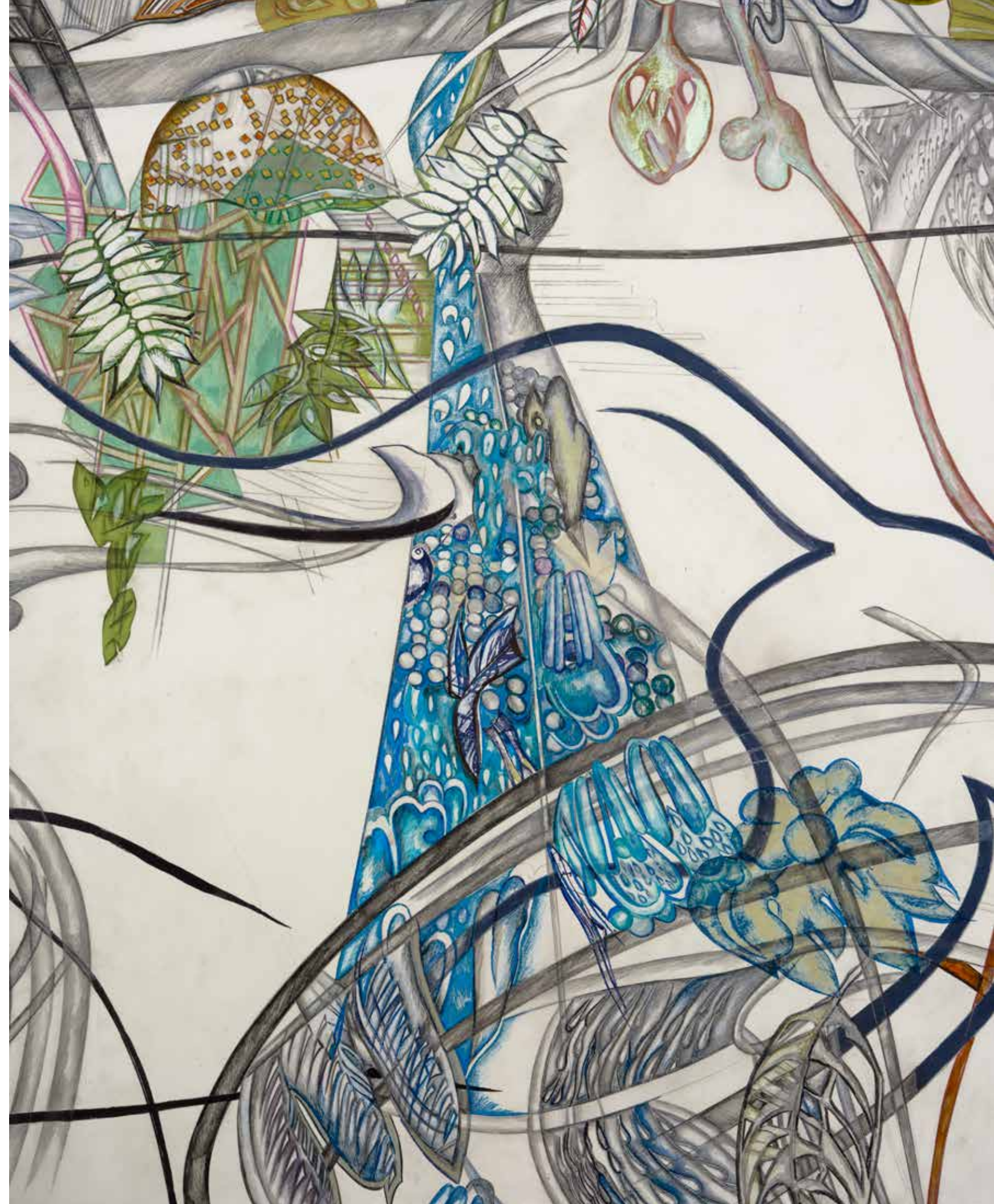
As this project continues to grow, it will likely shift again—toward new geographies, new systems, new iterations. But the Bakersfield edition marks an inflection point. It is not merely an expansion; it is a deepening, a test of method and meaning against a backdrop that resists simplicity. In these new works, Diener holds her position as both witness and maker, tracing the tension between invention and erasure, between land and landscape, with an eye trained equally on beauty and consequence. She draws not just what is there in this moment, but everything that brought this moment into being. *The Invented*

Land began as a way to understand the dusty fate of a family farm and the powerful yearning for what is lost; but it's generated a vision of the landscape as a living history—mapped not just in topography, pictures, data, and critique, but in labor, desire, time, reverence, memory, and invention.

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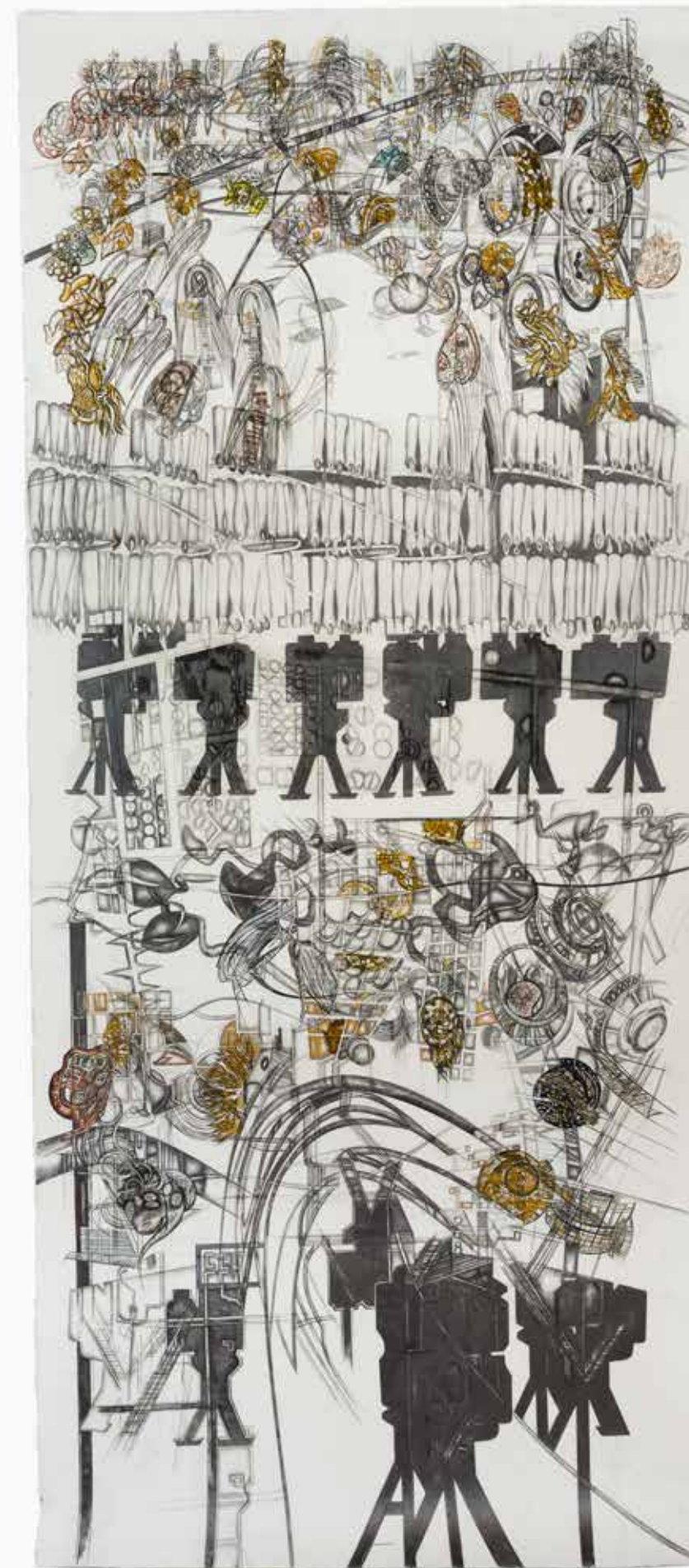
Shana Nys Dambrot is an art critic, curator, and author based in Downtown LA. She is the writer/co-founder of 13ThingsLA—a weekly Substack of curated exhibition reviews and recommendations in Los Angeles. Formerly the Arts Editor at the *L.A. Weekly*, her work appears in the *Village Voice*, *Flaunt*, *WhiteHot*, *Alta Journal*, *Palm Springs Life*, and other culture publications. She is the recipient of the Rabkin Prize for Art Writing, the Mozaik Arts Writers Prize, and the LA Press Club Critic of the Year award.

Unruly Course (detail), 2025, Graphite, gouache, ink and cut paper on paper, 40 x 30 in.





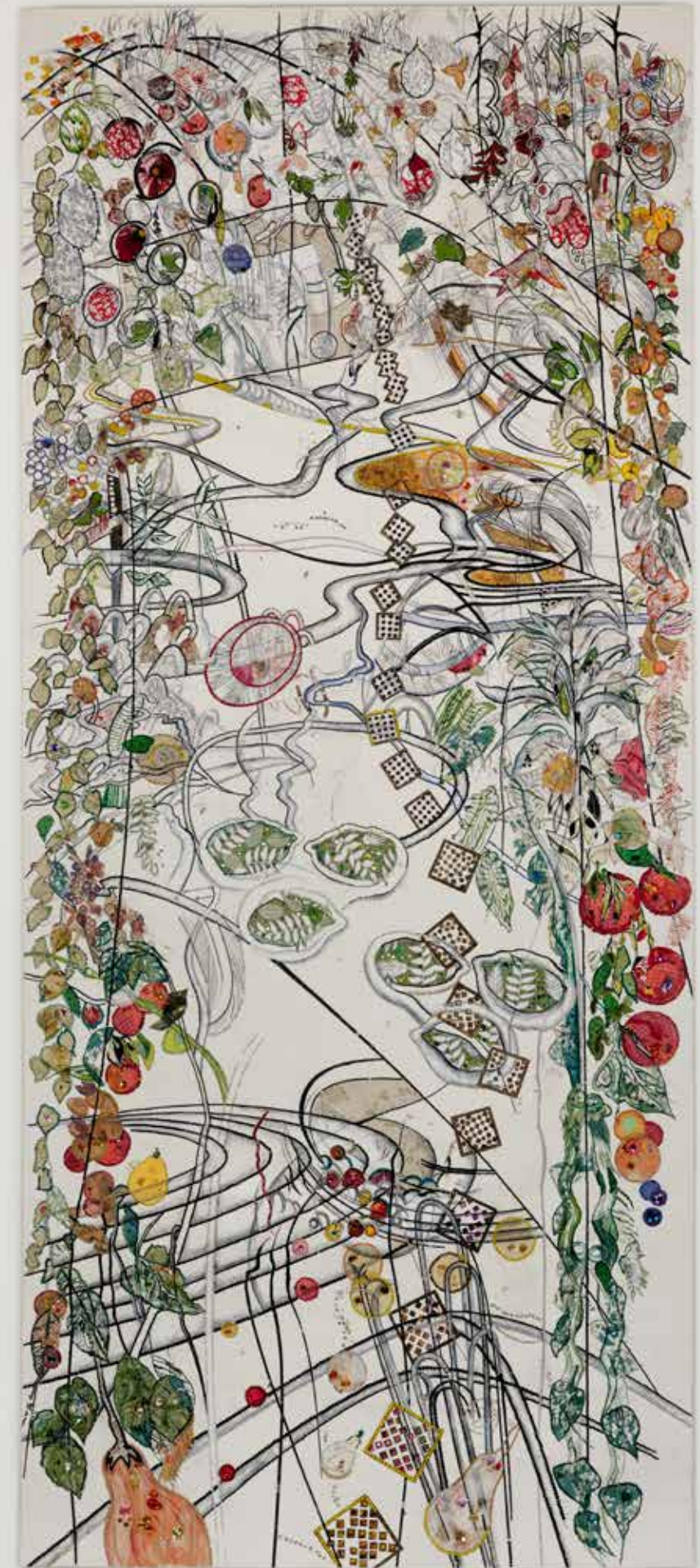
Industrial Garden, 2023, graphite, colored pencil, ink and cut paper and Yupo on paper, 120 x 52.5 in.





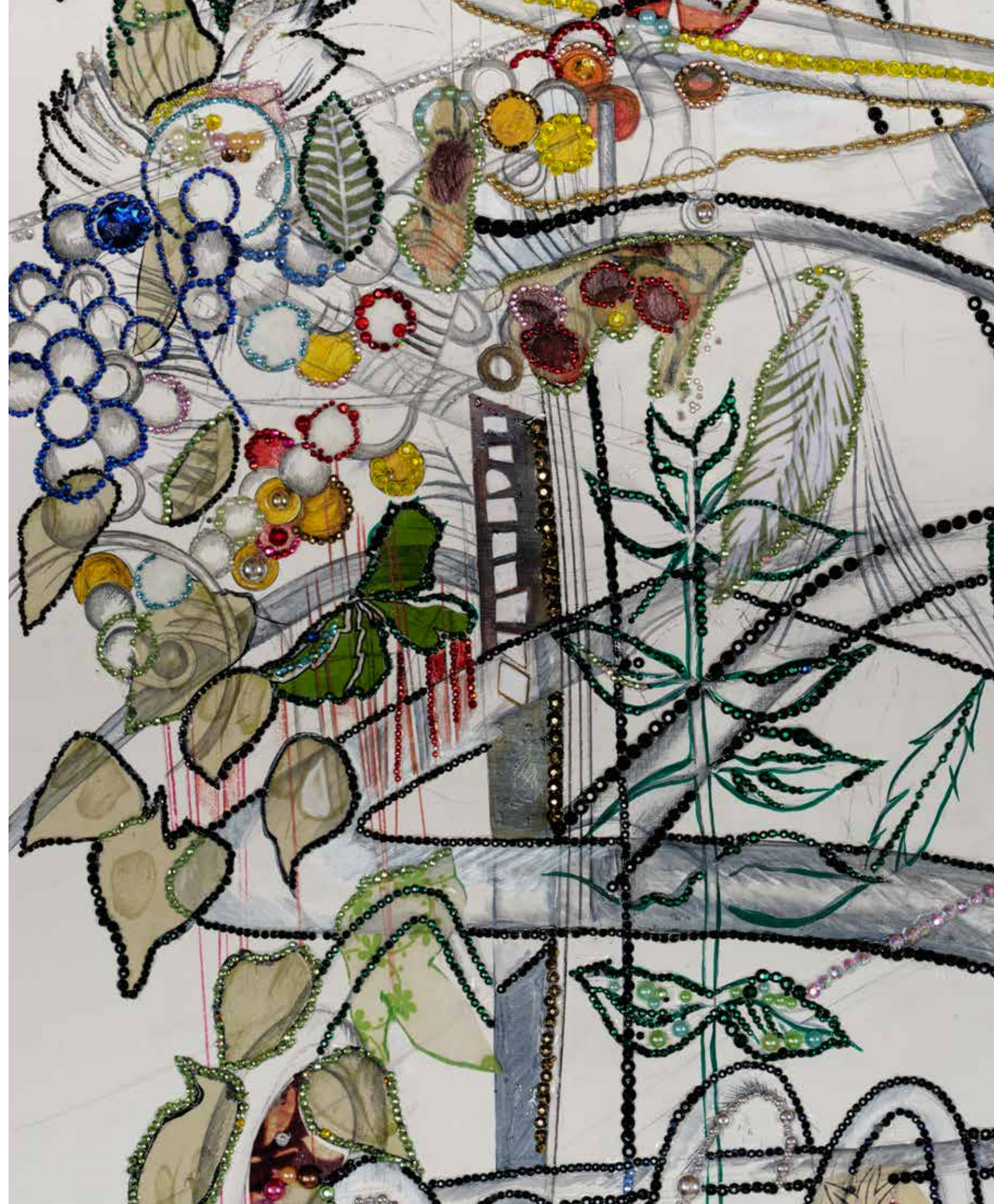
Industrial Garden (details), 2023

Labor's Gold, 2023, oil paint, silk scarves and beads on canvas, 120 x 52.5 in.



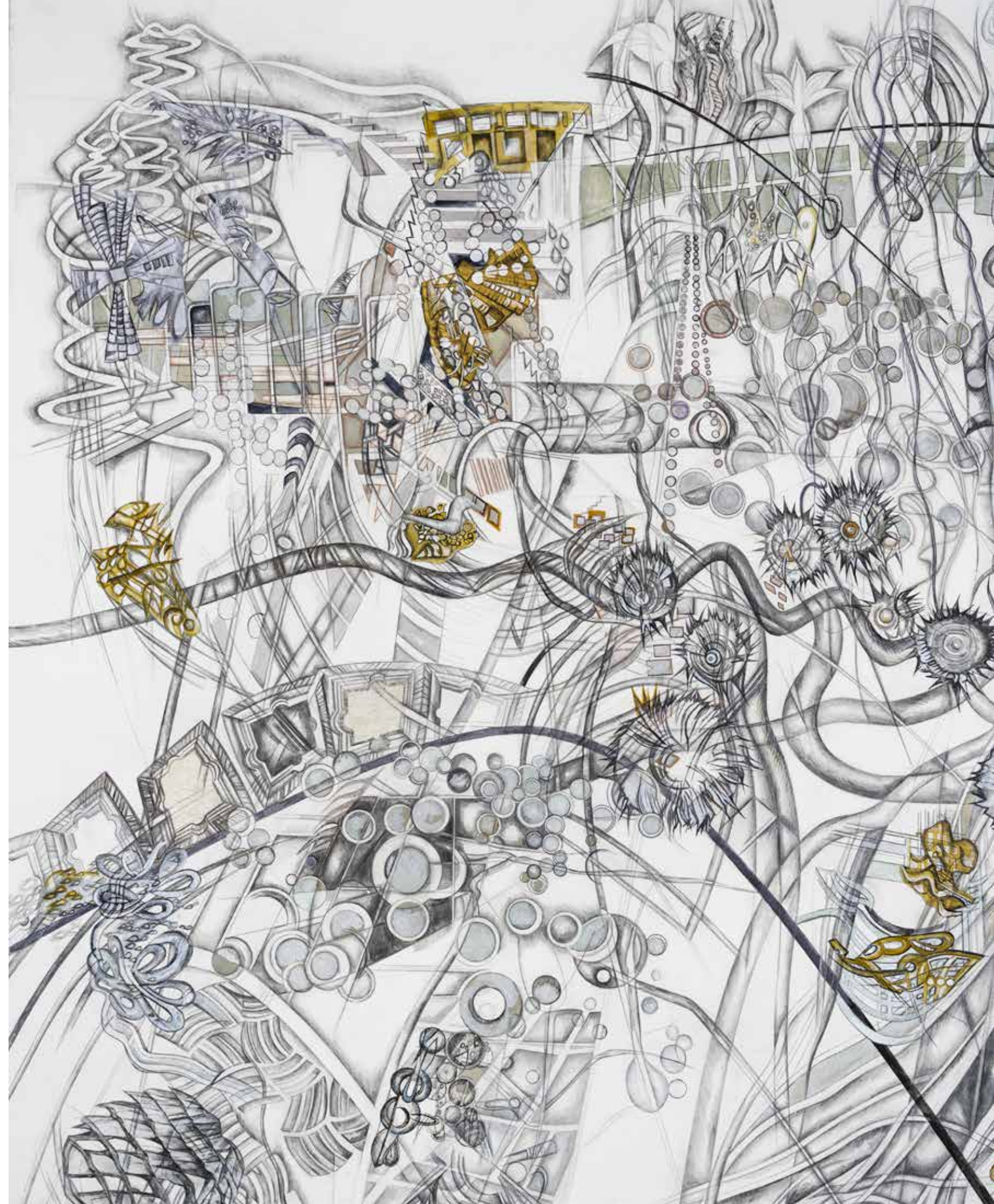
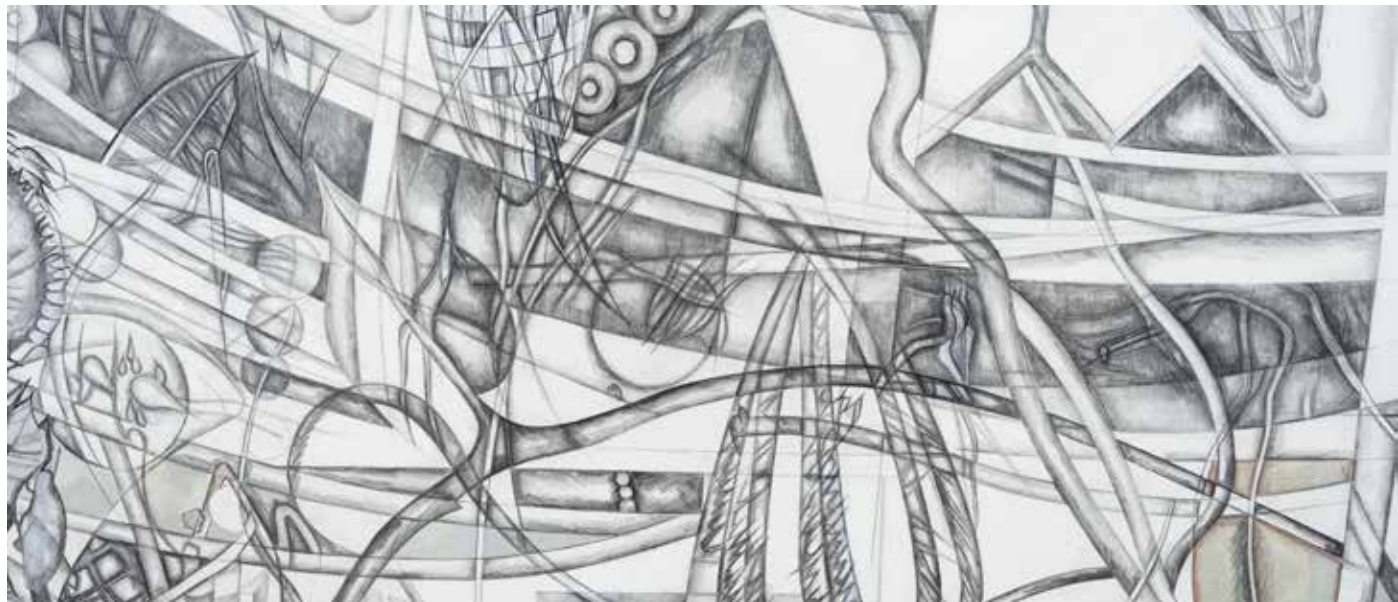


Labor's Gold (details), 2023



Liquid Gold, 2022, graphite, ink, colored pencil and cut paper on paper, 120 x 52.5 in.



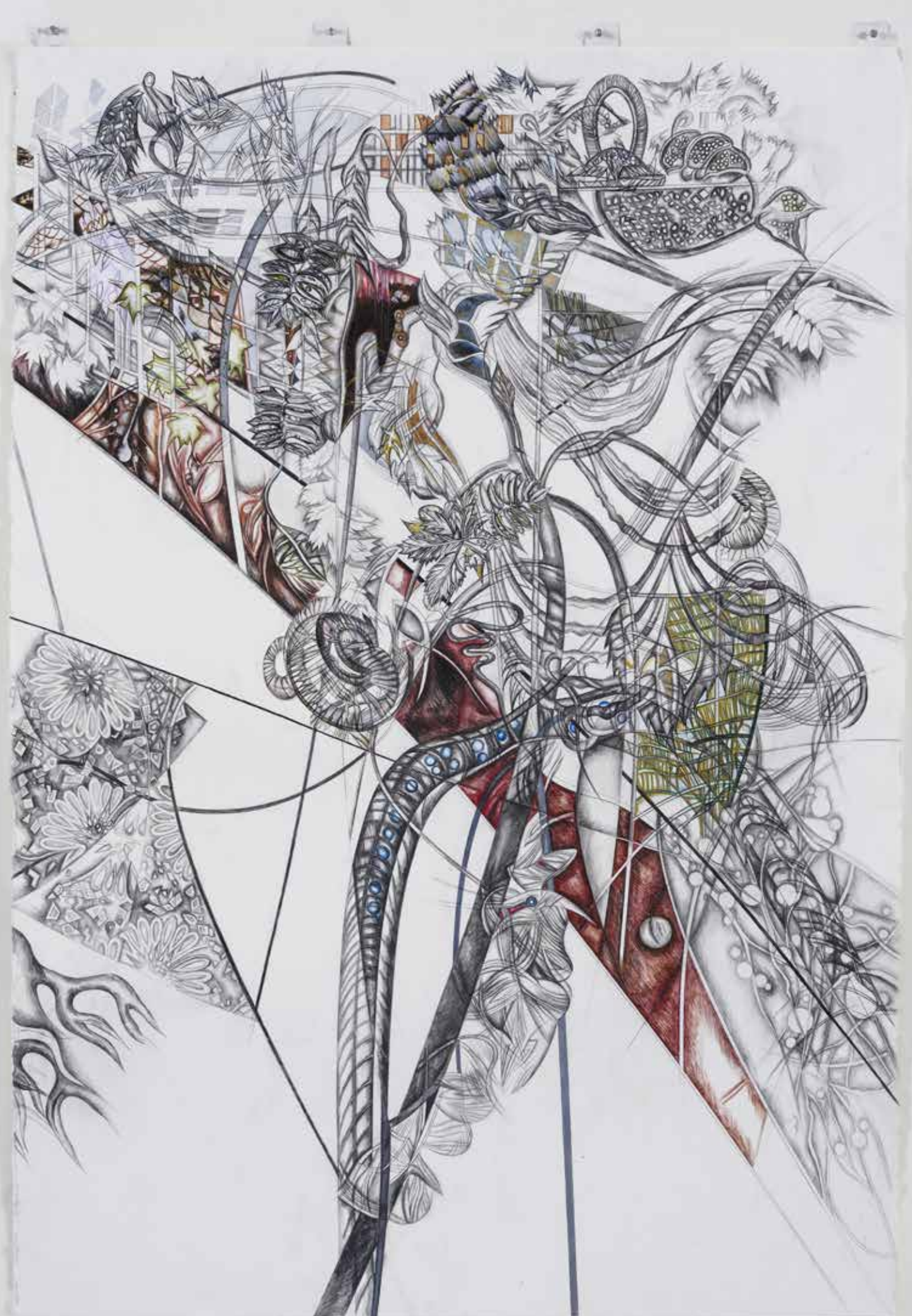


Liquid Gold (details), 2023

Precarious Terrain, 2023, graphite, colored pencil, ink, and cut paper and Yupo on paper, 120 x 52.5 in.

NEXT TWO PAGES:
Reinvention, 2021, graphite, gouache, ink, colored pencil, and cut paper on paper, 60 x 80 in. (2 panels each 60 x 40 in.)

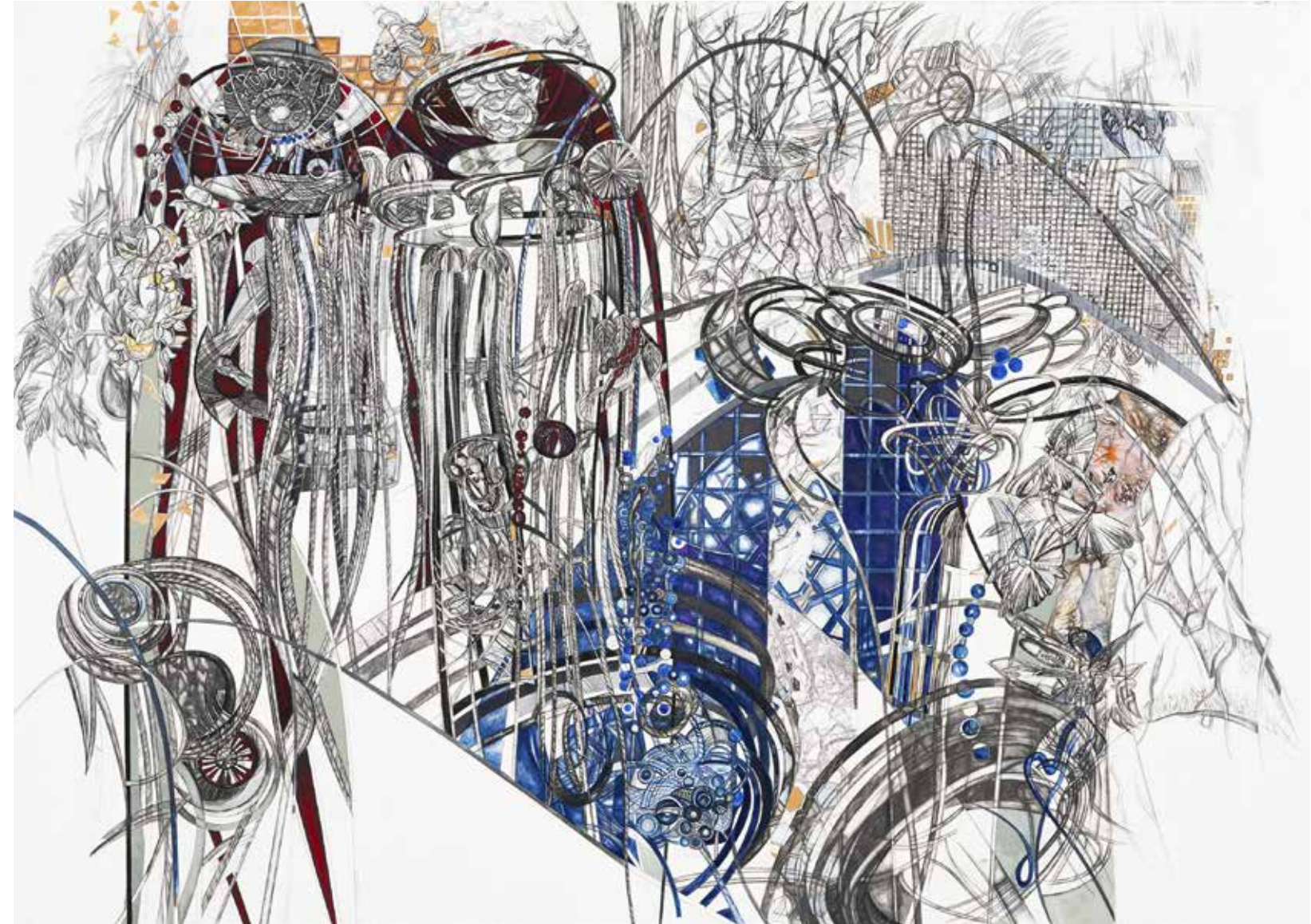




Tapestry Project, 2016, jacquard weaving, 108 x 72 in.



Evolving Terrain, 2019, graphite, colored pencil, gouache, and cut paper on paper, 49.625 x 70 in.

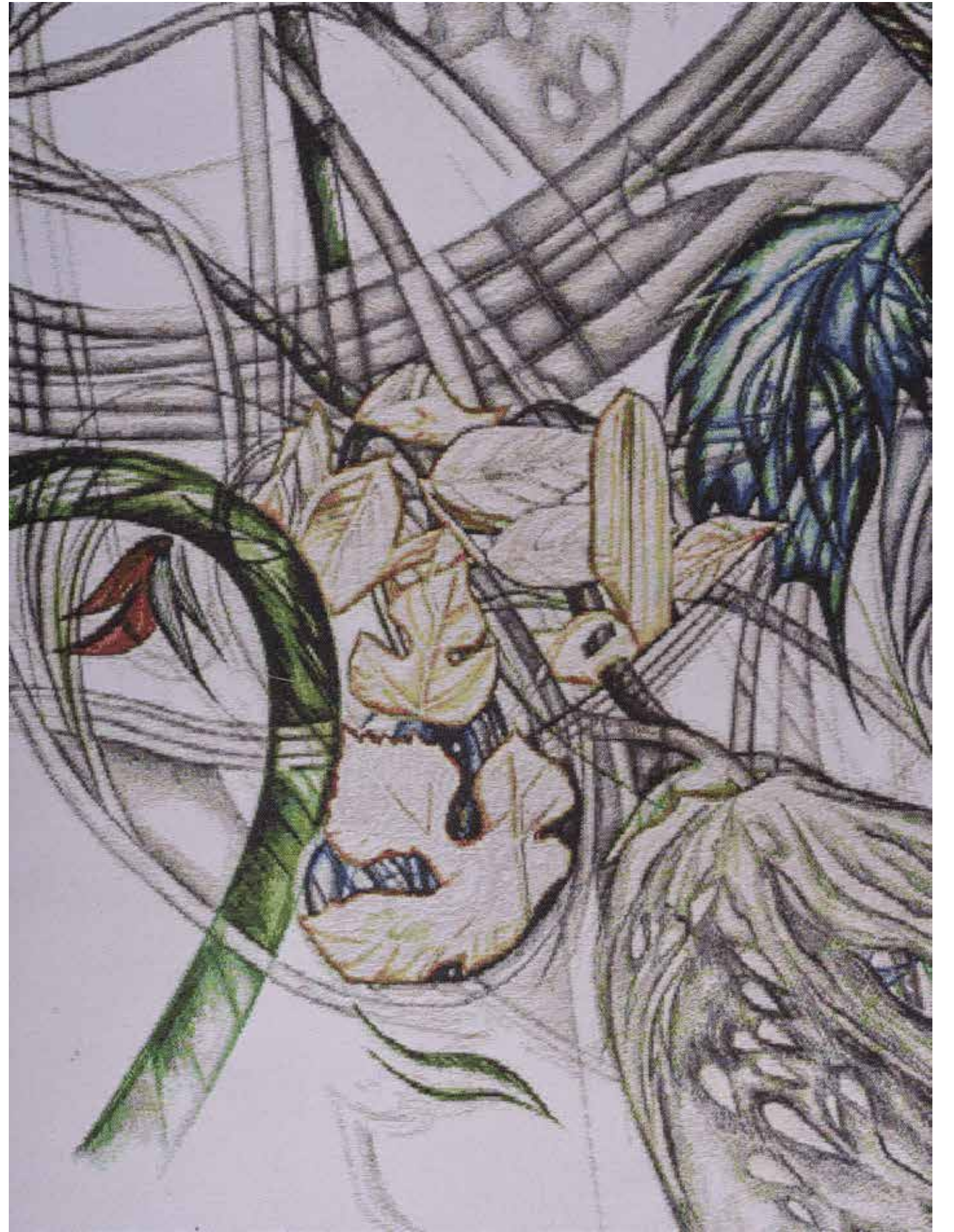


Perilous Network Tapestry, 2021, jacquard weaving, 108 x 72 in.

FOLLOWING PAGES:
Perilous Network Tapestry (details)









Tulare, 2025, Acrylic, ink, beads and cut paper on paper, 12 x 9 in.



Greenhouse Structure, 2023

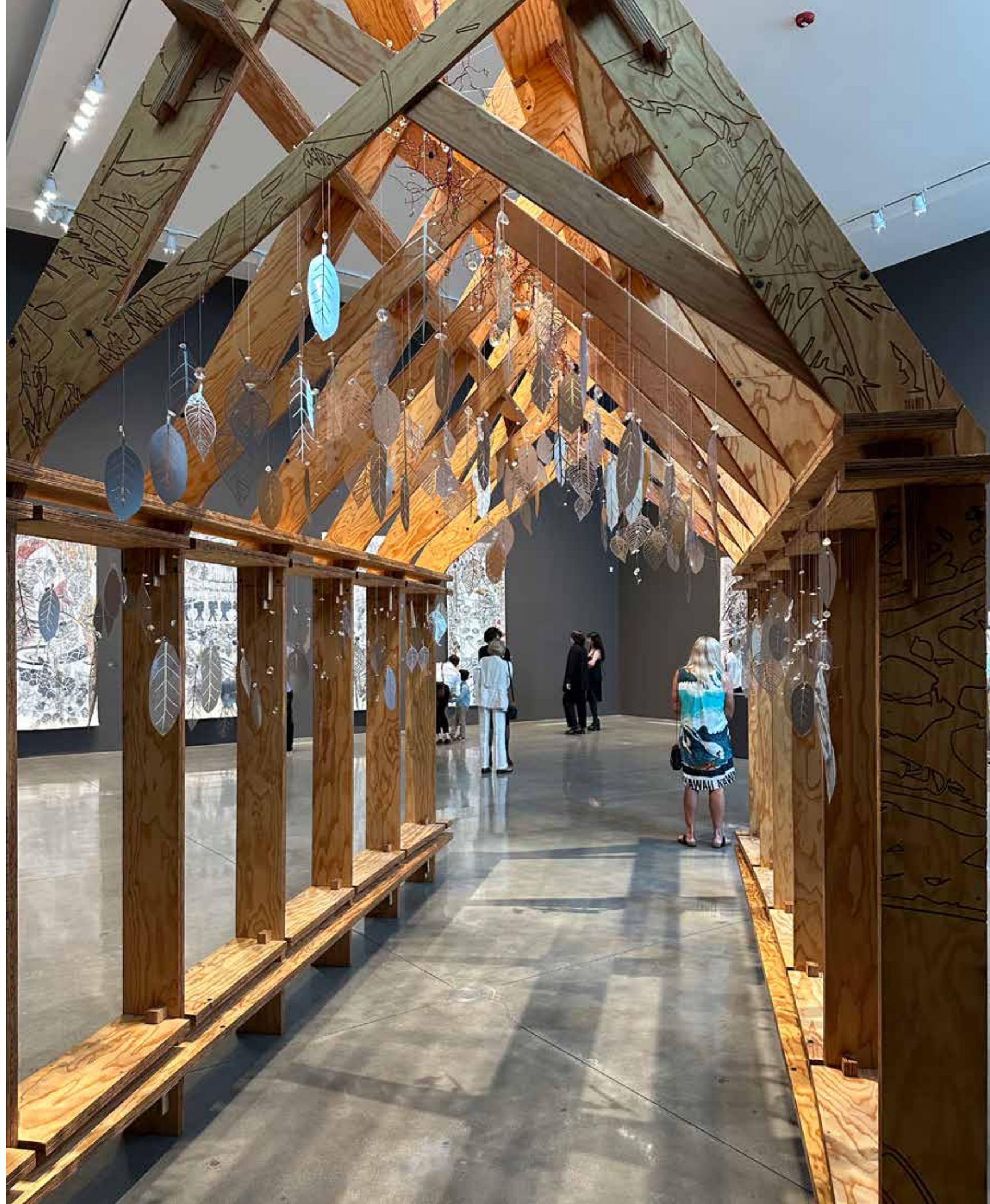
FOLLOWING PAGES:
Greenhouse Structure (details)







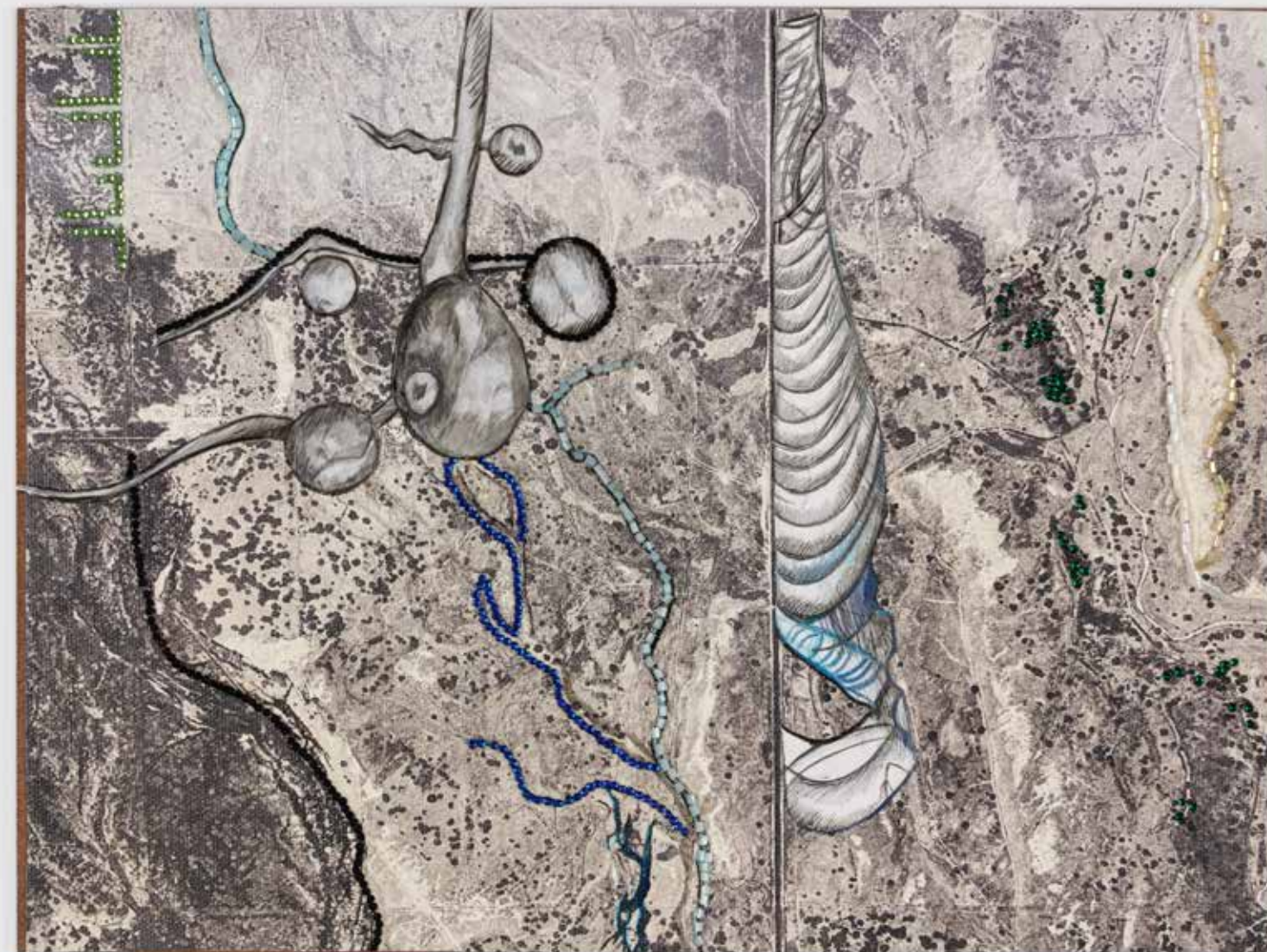




Aerial View #5, 2025, Paper, acrylic and beads on found map, 9 x 12 in.



Aerial View #2, 2025, Paper, acrylic and beads on found map, 9 x 12 in.



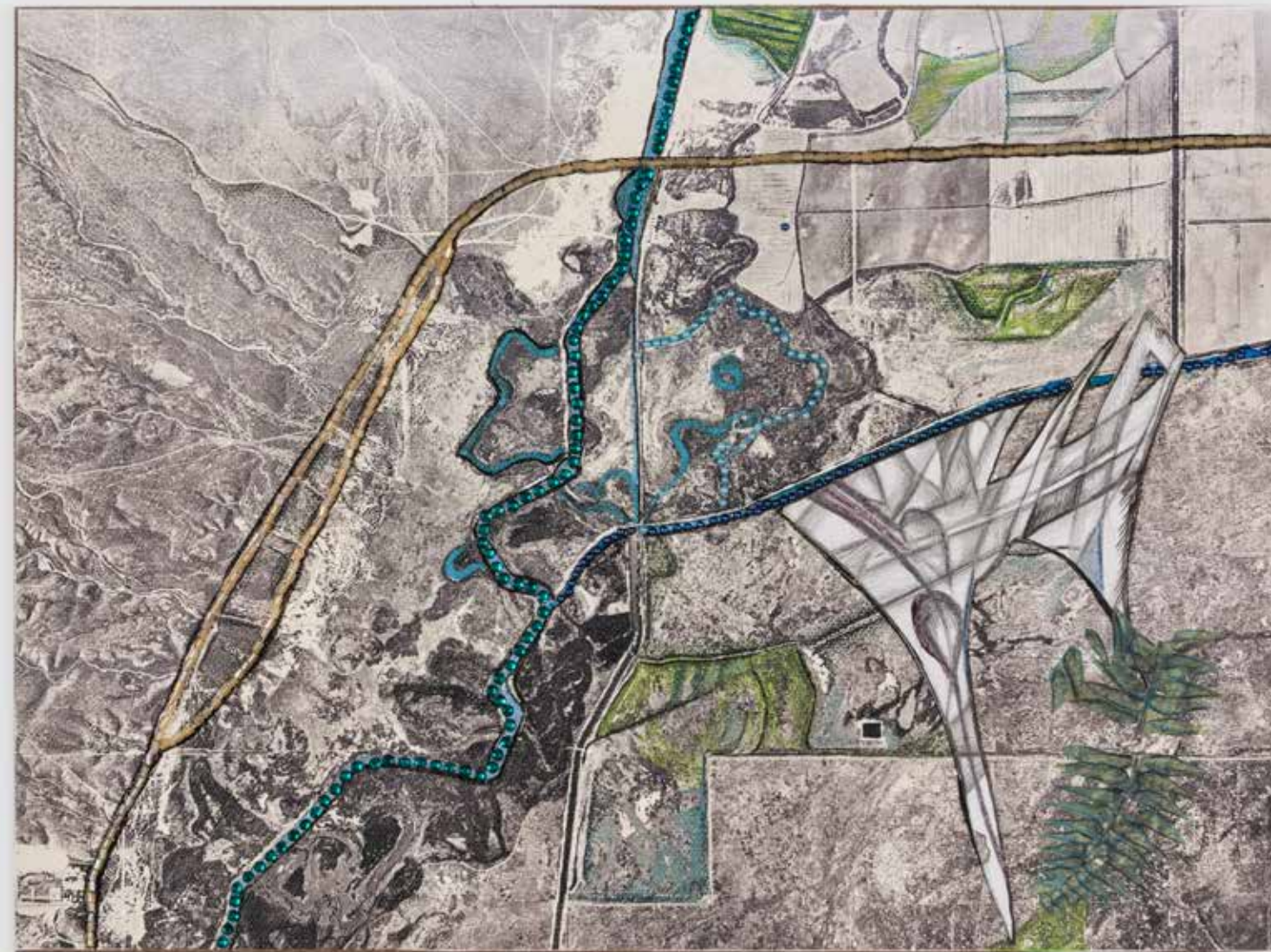
Aerial View #4, 2025, Paper, acrylic and beads on found map, 9 x 12 in.



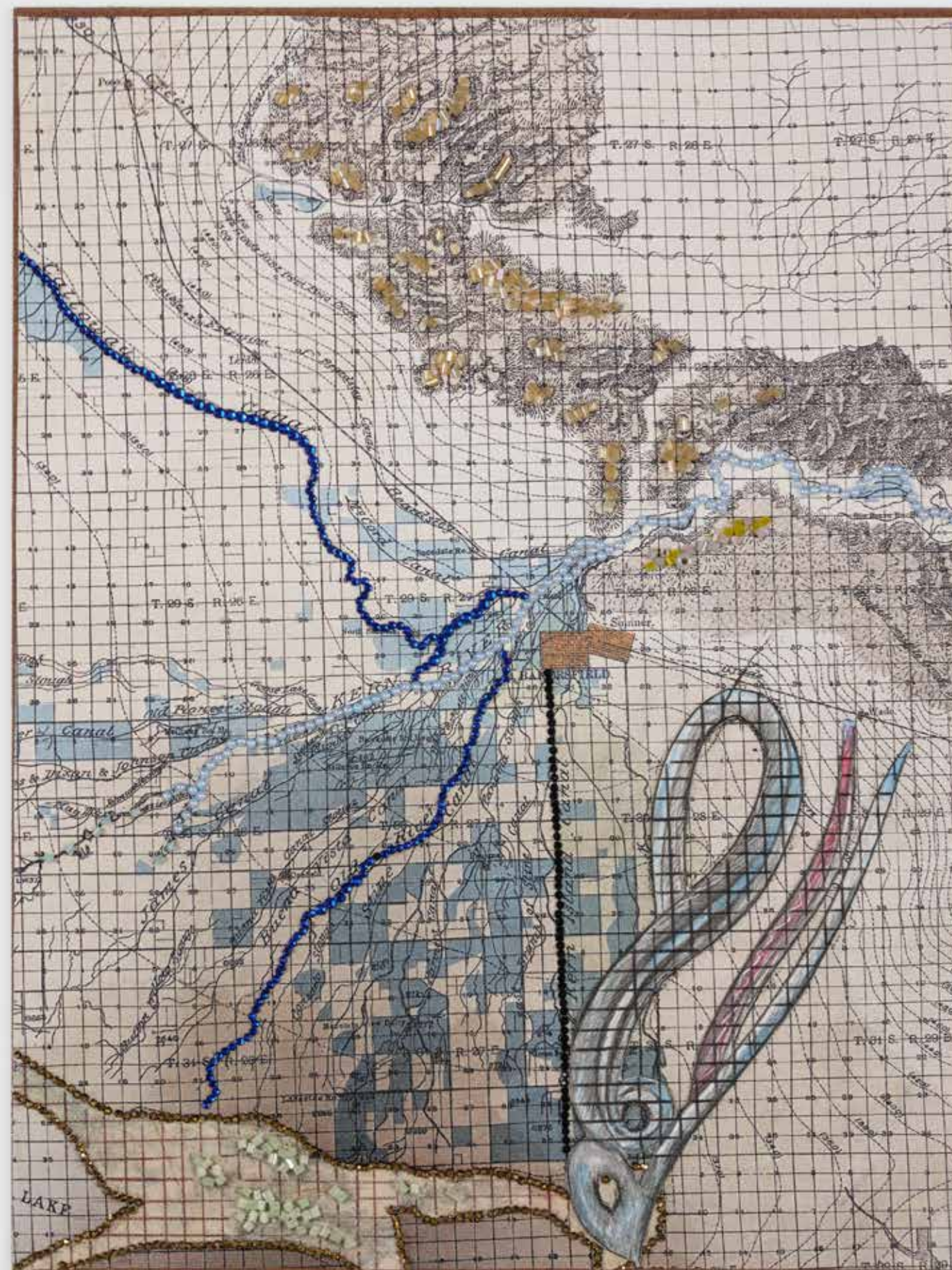
Aerial View #6, 2025, Paper, acrylic and beads on found map, 9 x 12 in.



Aerial View #3, 2025, Paper, acrylic and beads on found map, 9 x 12 in.



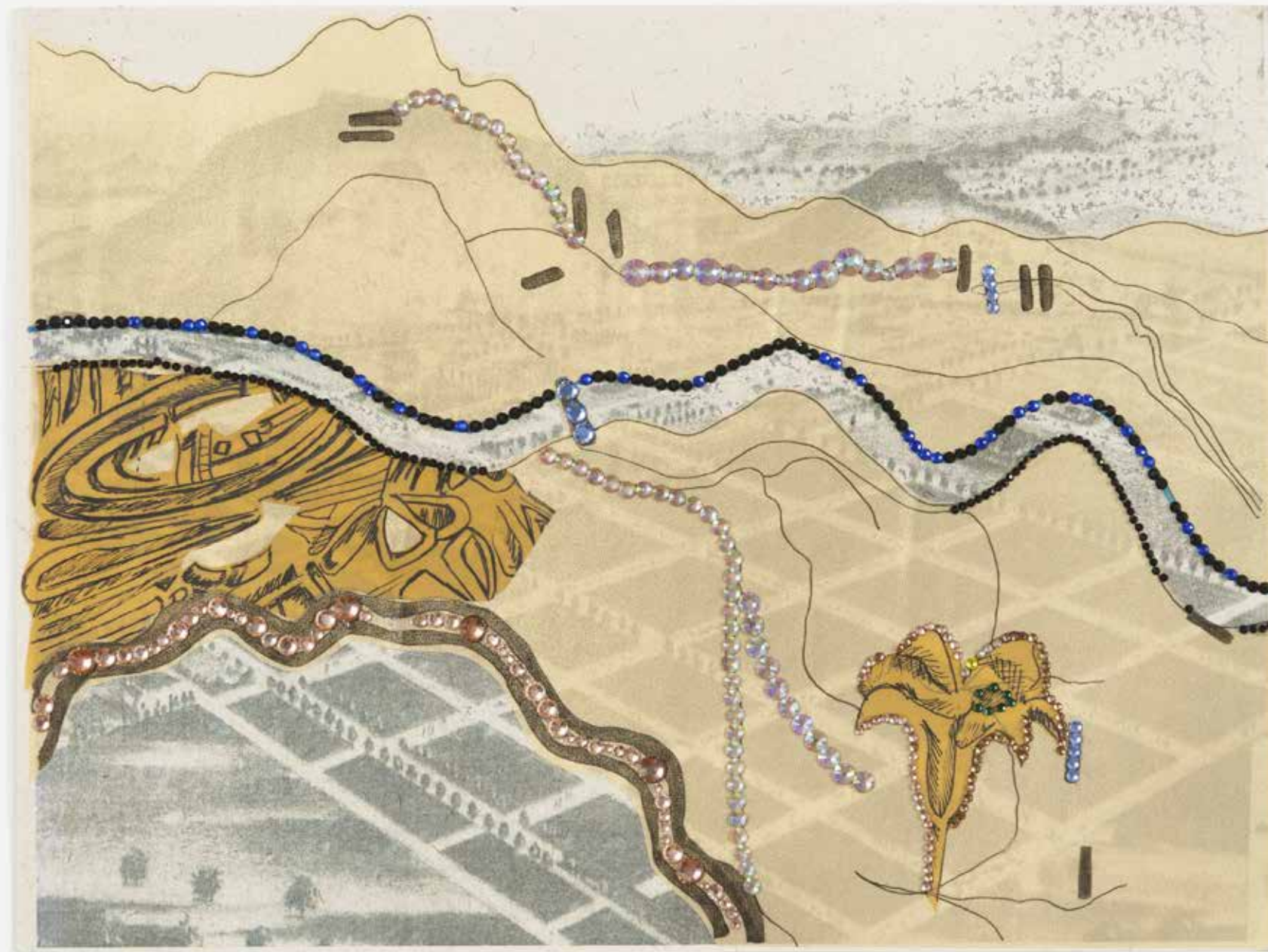
Aerial View #1, 2025, Paper, acrylic and beads on found map, 12 x 9 in.



Agricultural Product Map - San Joaquin Valley, 2022, acrylic ink and beads on printed map, 8.5 x 11 in.



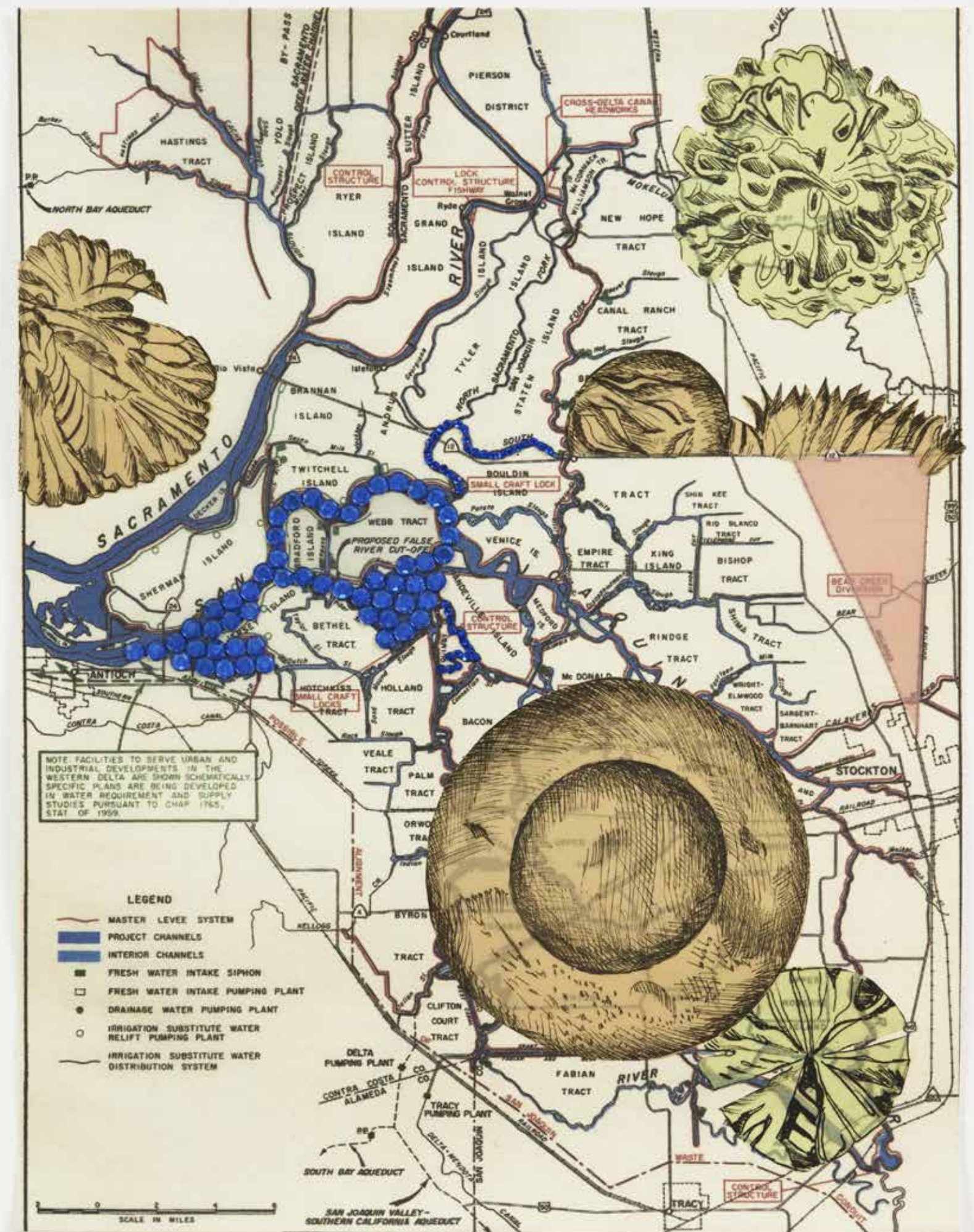
San Joaquin Valley Water Bank, 2022, acrylic ink and beads on printed map, 8.5 x 11 in.



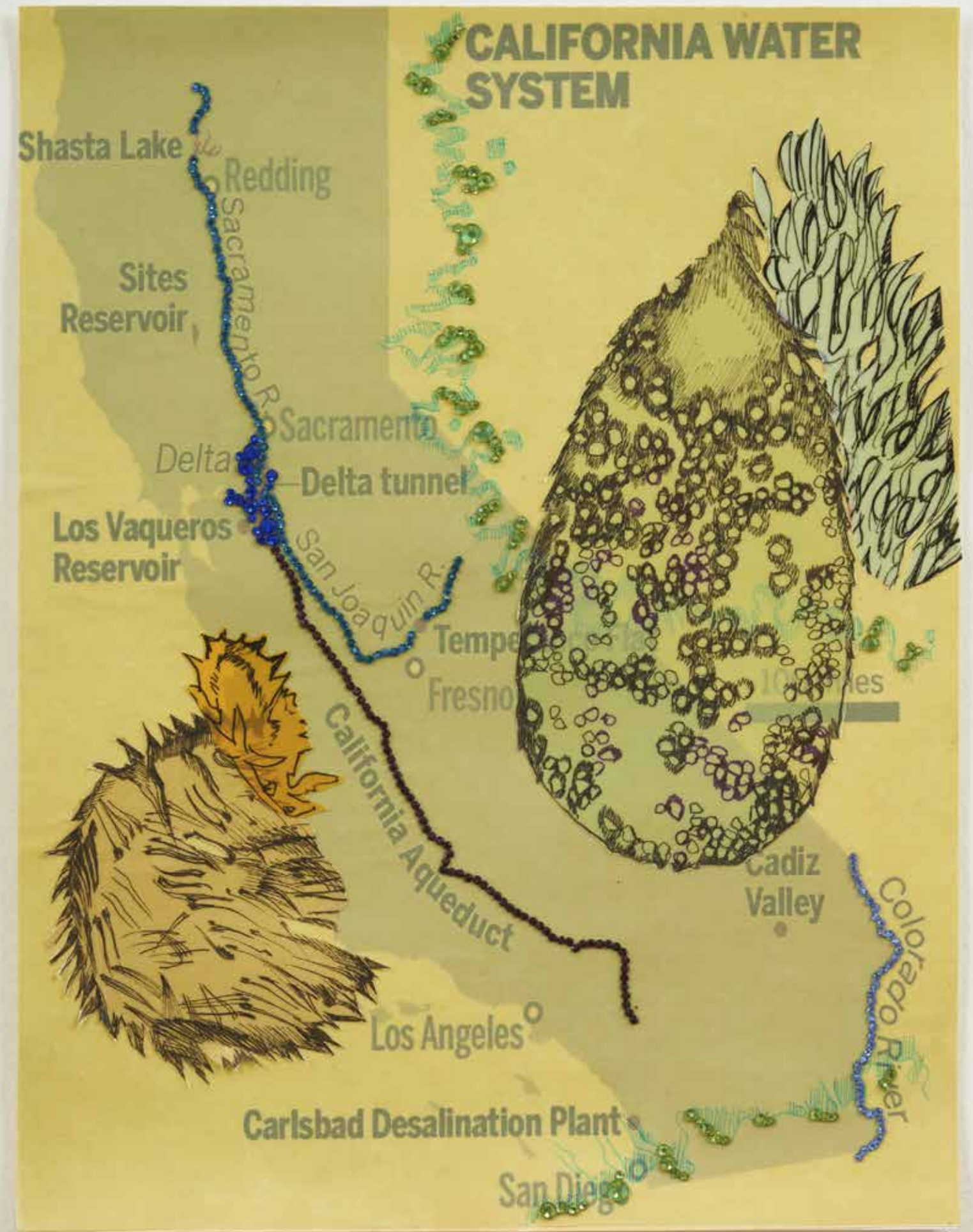
San Joaquin River Waterways 1, 2022, acrylic ink and beads on printed map, 8.5 x 11 in.



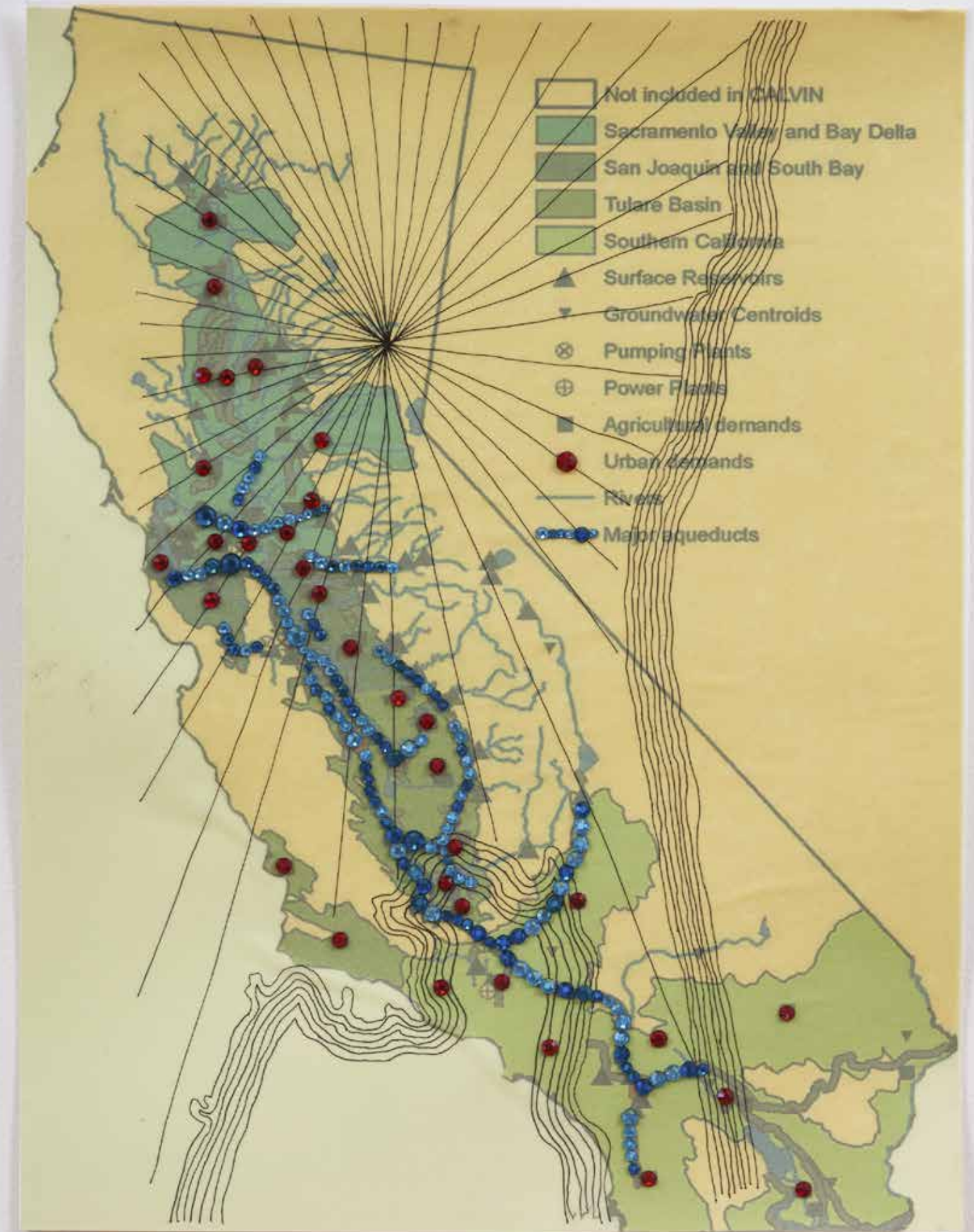
Project and interior channels of the Sacramento River, 2022, acrylic ink and beads on printed map, 11 x 8.5 in.



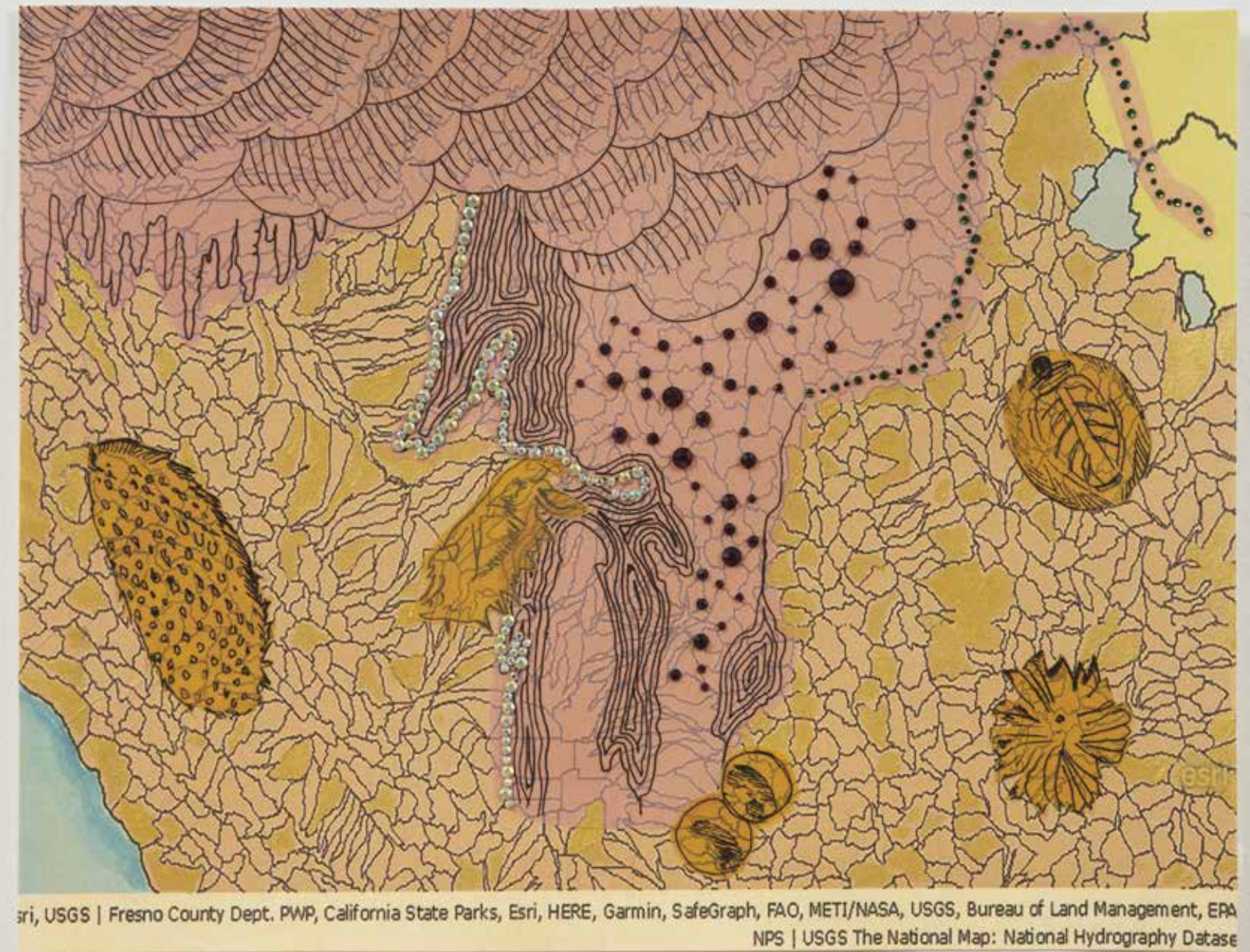
California Aqueduct, 2022, acrylic ink and beads on printed map, 11 x 8.5 in.



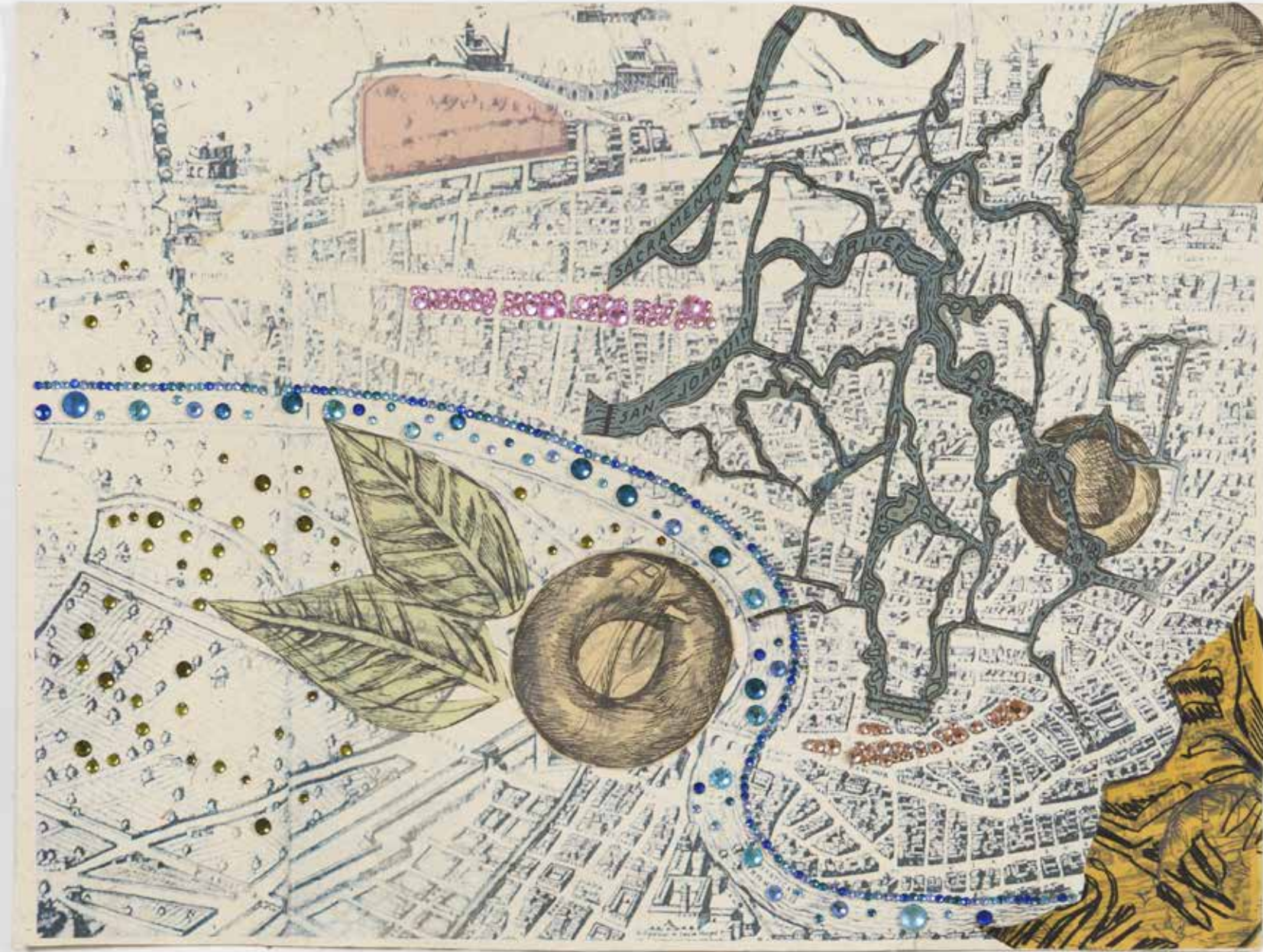
California Water System - Hydroeconomic Perspective, 2022, acrylic ink and beads on printed map, 11 x 8.5 in.



Fresno County Watershed, 2022, acrylic ink and beads on printed map,
8.5 x 11 in.



San Joaquin River and Connecting Waterways, 2022, acrylic ink and beads on printed map, 8.5 x 11 in.



Tributary #1, 2025, Paper, acrylic and beads on canvas over board, 12 x 9 in.



Tributary #2, 2025, Paper, acrylic and beads on canvas over board, 12 x 9 in.



Tributary #3, 2025, Paper, acrylic and beads on canvas over board, 12 x 9 in.





Unruly Course, 2025, Graphite, ink, gouache and cut paper on paper, 52 x 144 in.



Unruly Course (detail), 2025, Graphite, ink, gouache and cut paper on paper, 52 x 144 in.





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