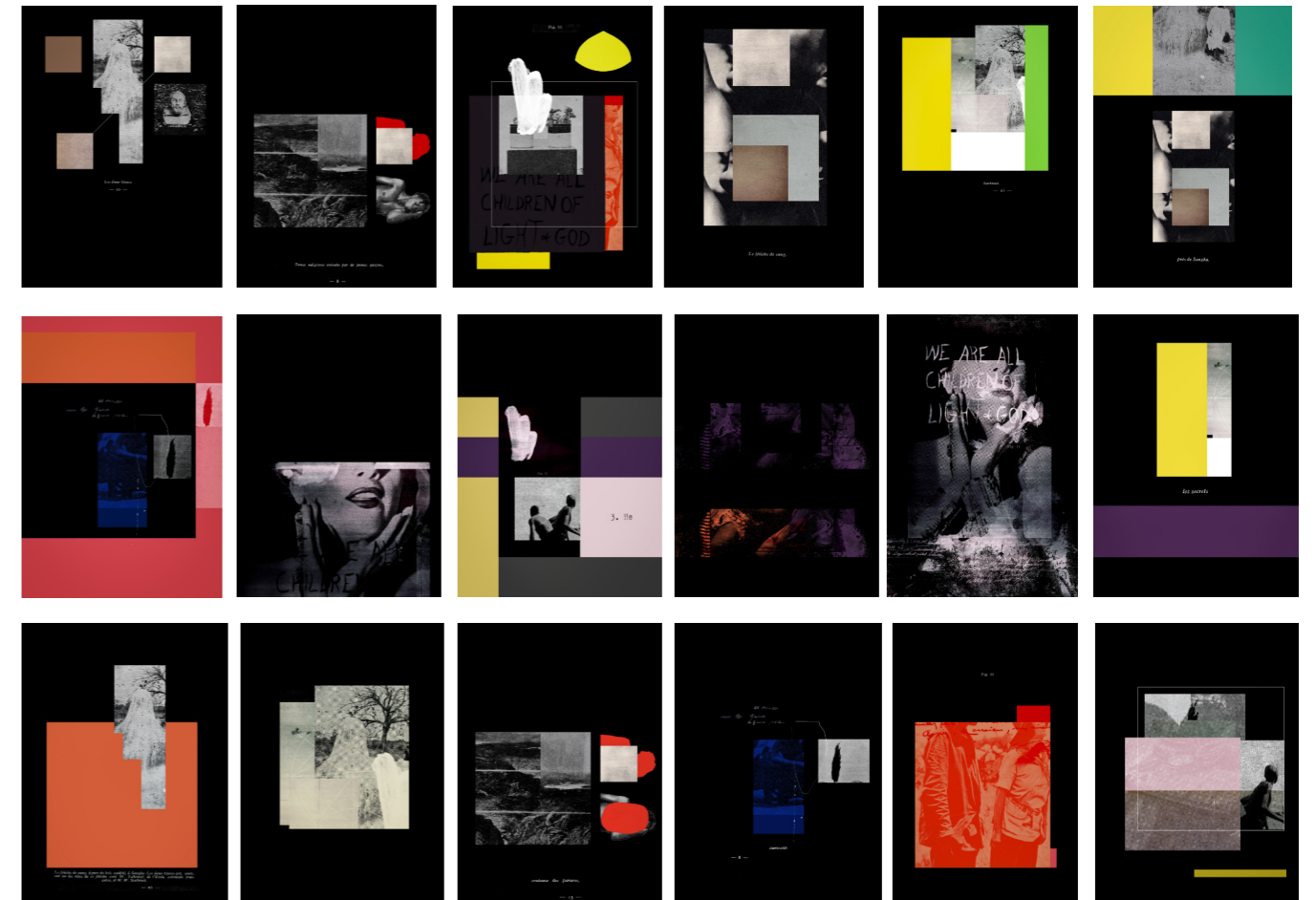




Hierarchies of Feeling: Structures of Sentiment and Refusal



Hierarchies of Feeling: Structures of Sentiment and Refusal

Author: Alex Williamson

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Alex Williamson



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Artist's Statement

This collection of works takes the form of a visual essay, an attempt to further explore ideas and themes found in Xine Yao's *Disaffected: The Cultural Politics of Unfeeling in Nineteenth-Century America* (2021), which presents unfeeling as a method for disrupting colonialism and other oppressive hierarchies. This collection of images comprises a series of digitally rendered collages that encourage and value uncertainty and mystery. The images in this series are speculative, abstract and non-linear, created in 'opposition to clarity', with the intention to reflect the idea of 'unfeeling' by withholding or refusing easy understanding.

As I was particularly drawn to Yao's discussion of tender violence, and the proximity of violence and oppression to sentimentalism, this series evolved as an exploration of graphic 'fragments' or printed artefacts drawn from an almanac of 1930's French anthropological publications, called 'Sciences et Voyages', purchased years ago in a flea market. *Sciences et Voyages* presents a colonial gaze that expresses ownership over the wider world.

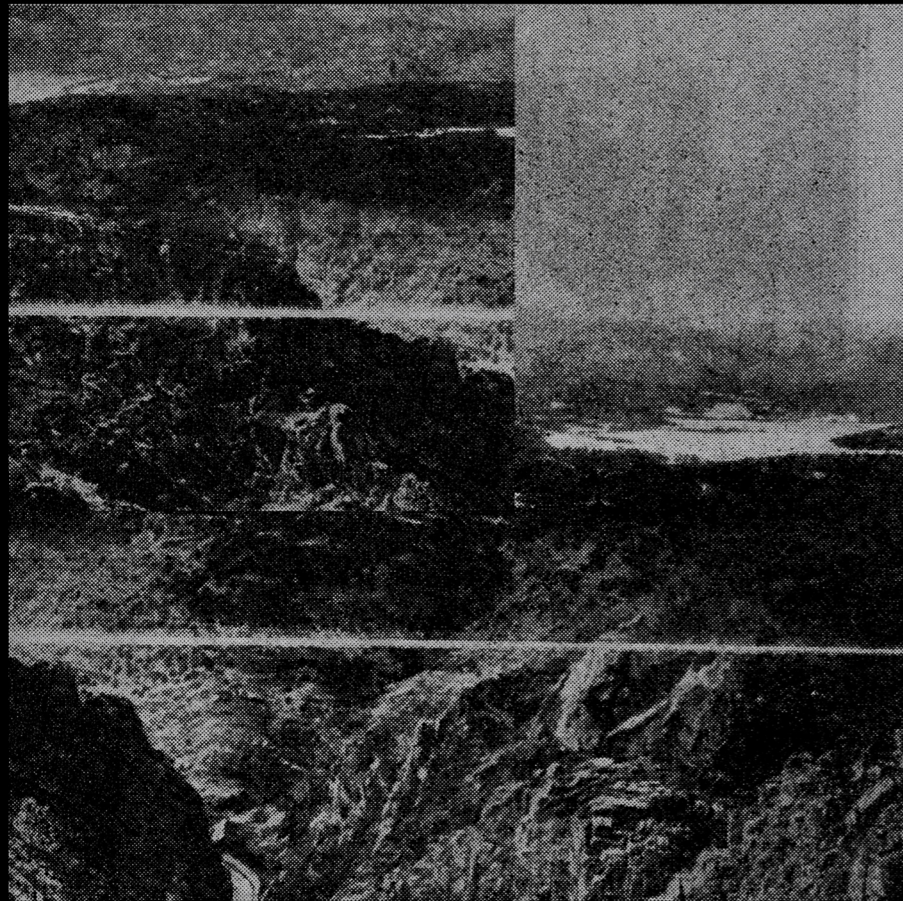
My collage technique combines found photographic imagery with graphic ephemera, textures and colours. It positions images and text fragments from these publications on each page (and within the sequence) to create new relationships and readings between objects that explore the impact and legacy of colonial intimacies, sentiments and hierarchies, drawing attention to lands that were taken and cultures / peoples that were exploited.

The composition and sequence of these pieces has been designed to recall objects in a collection or exhibit, but it consciously frames these graphic artefacts in alternative, illegible or ambiguous ways which simultaneously draw attention to both the violence and sentimentality of the colonial contexts in which they were originally produced.

Alex Williamson

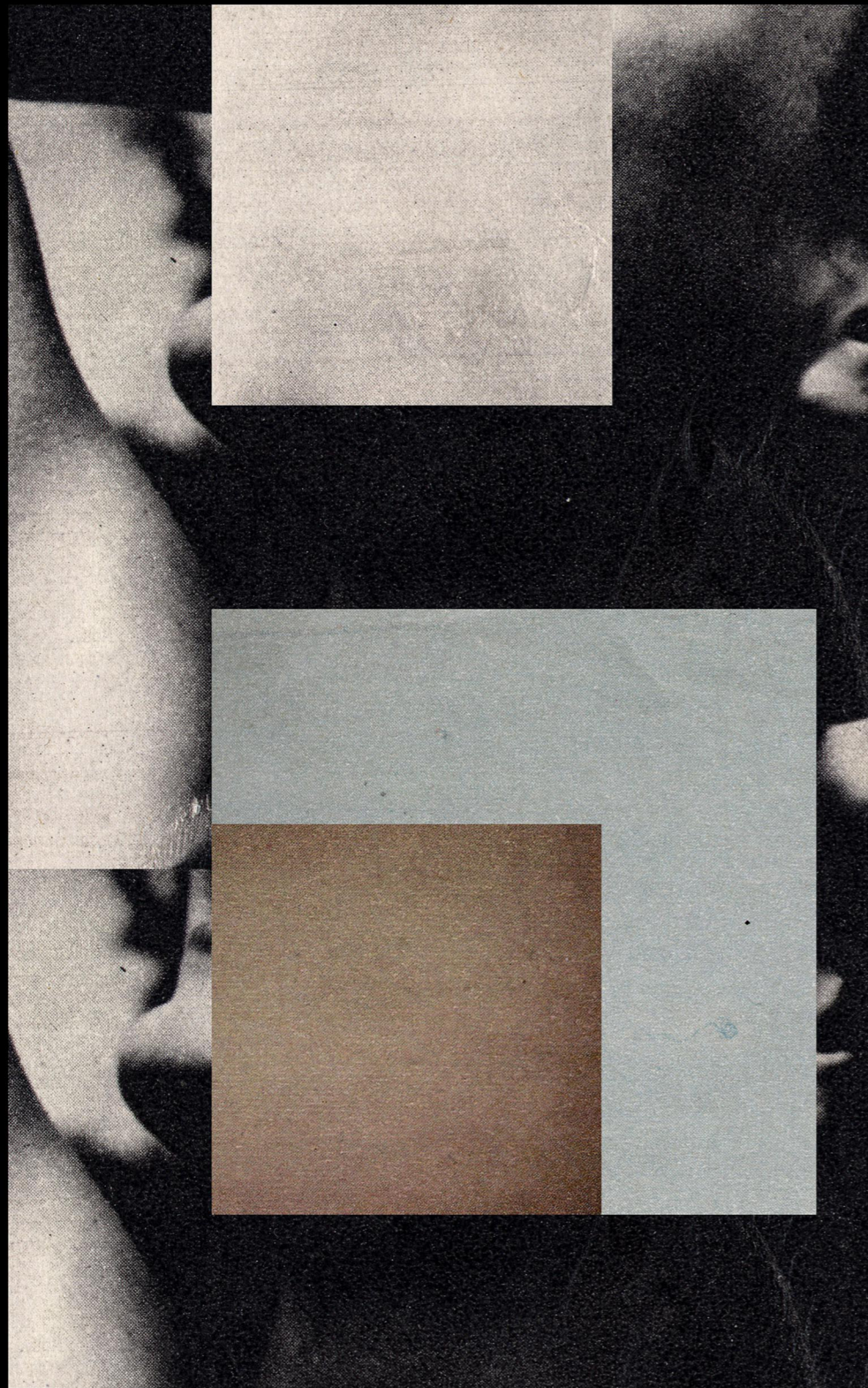


Les deux blancs



WE ARE ALL
CHILDREN OF
LIGHT & GOD

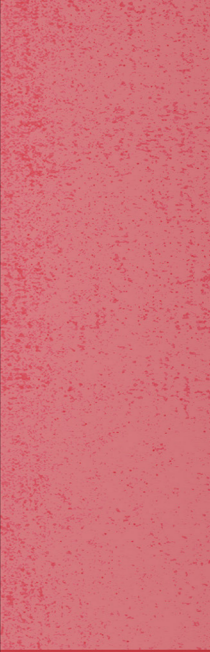
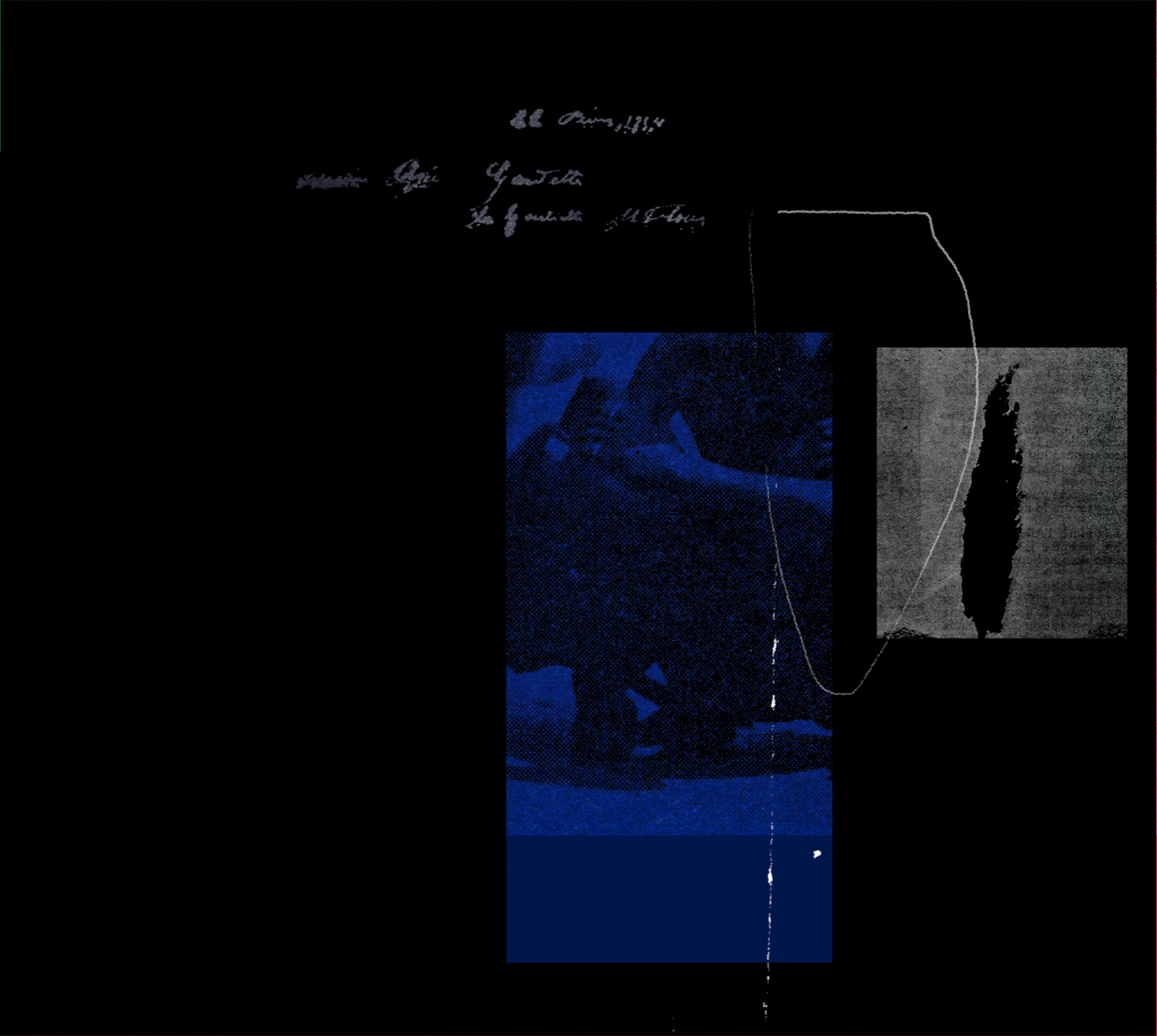
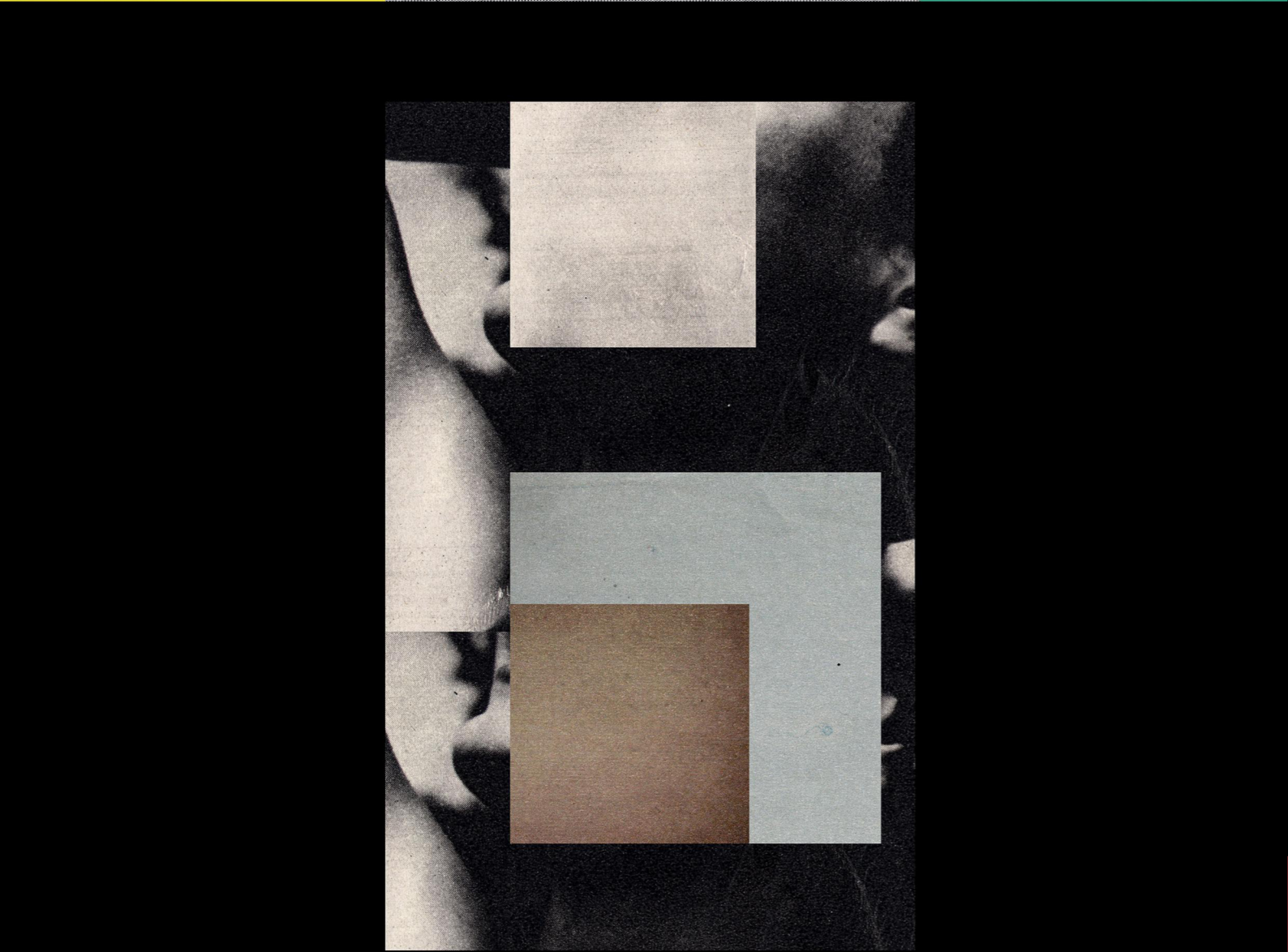
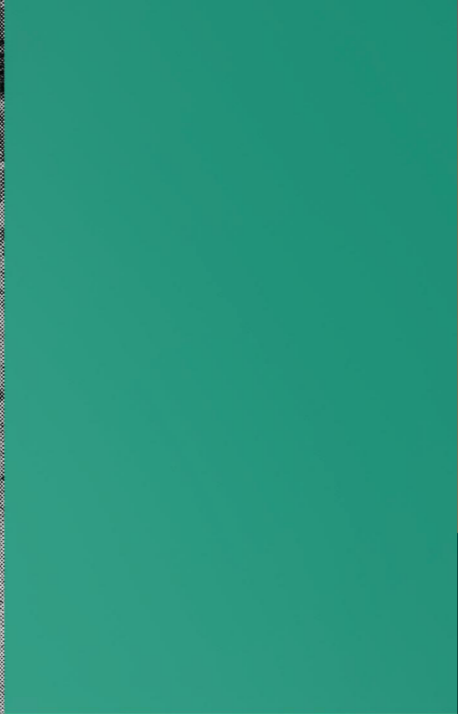
Danse religieuse exécutée par de jeunes garçons,



Le fétiche de sang,



Seabrook.



près de Sangha.



Fig. 11.



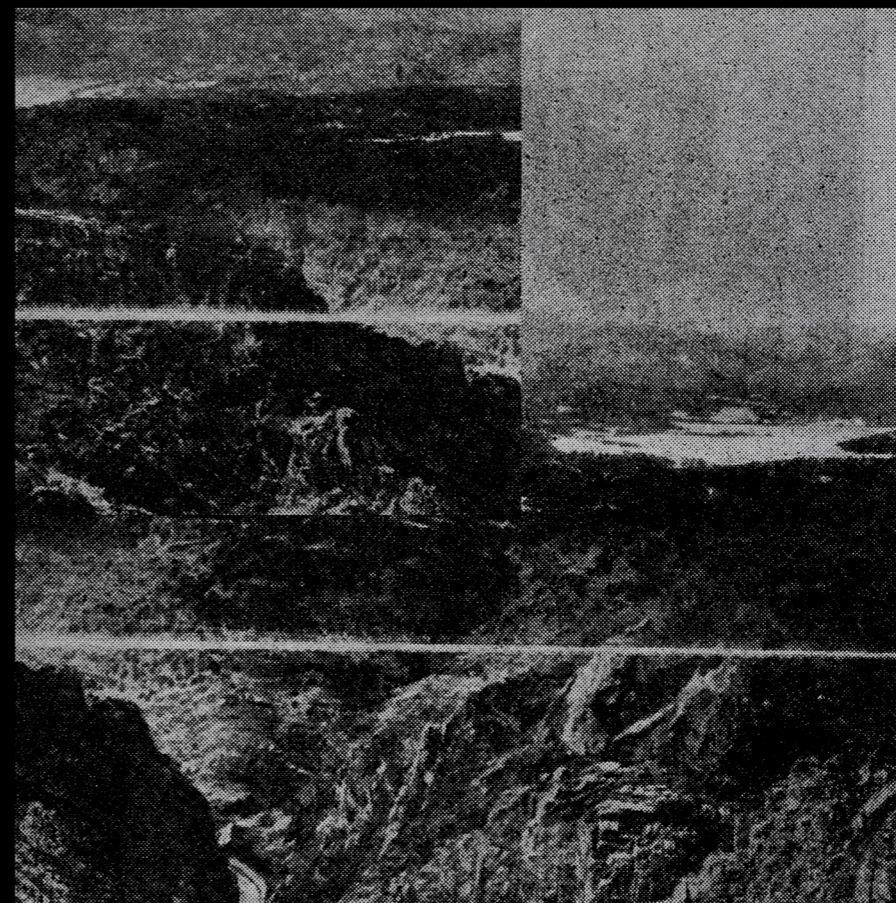
3. He



les secrets

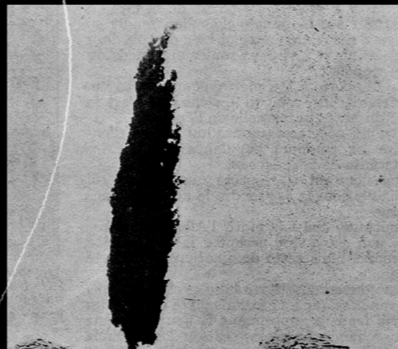
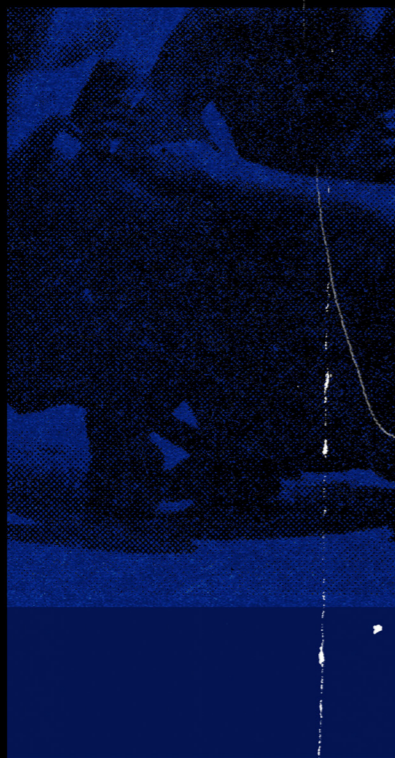


Le fétiche de sang, figure de bois sculpté, à Sangha. Les deux blancs qui, seuls, ont vu les rites de ce fétiche sont M. Labouret, de l'Ecole coloniale française, et M. W. Seabrook.



coutume des parures,

22 Mars 1954
Agnès Gaudet
de la maison 11 F. L...



curiosité.

Fig. 11.



