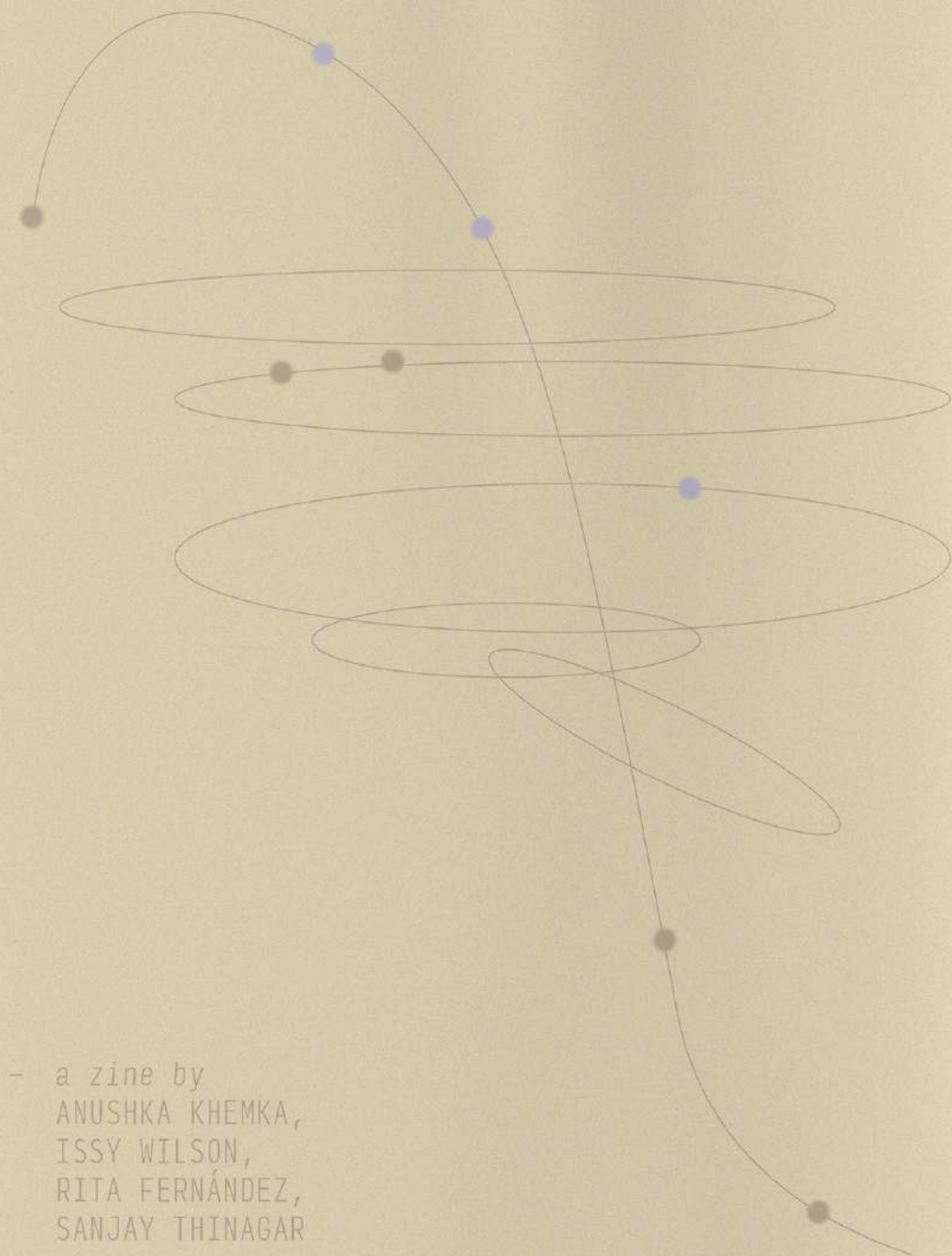


PLANTAE ANIMILIA KINGDOM

a zine by
ANUSHKA KHEMKA,
ISSY WILSON,
RITA FERNÁNDEZ,
SANJAY THINAGAR

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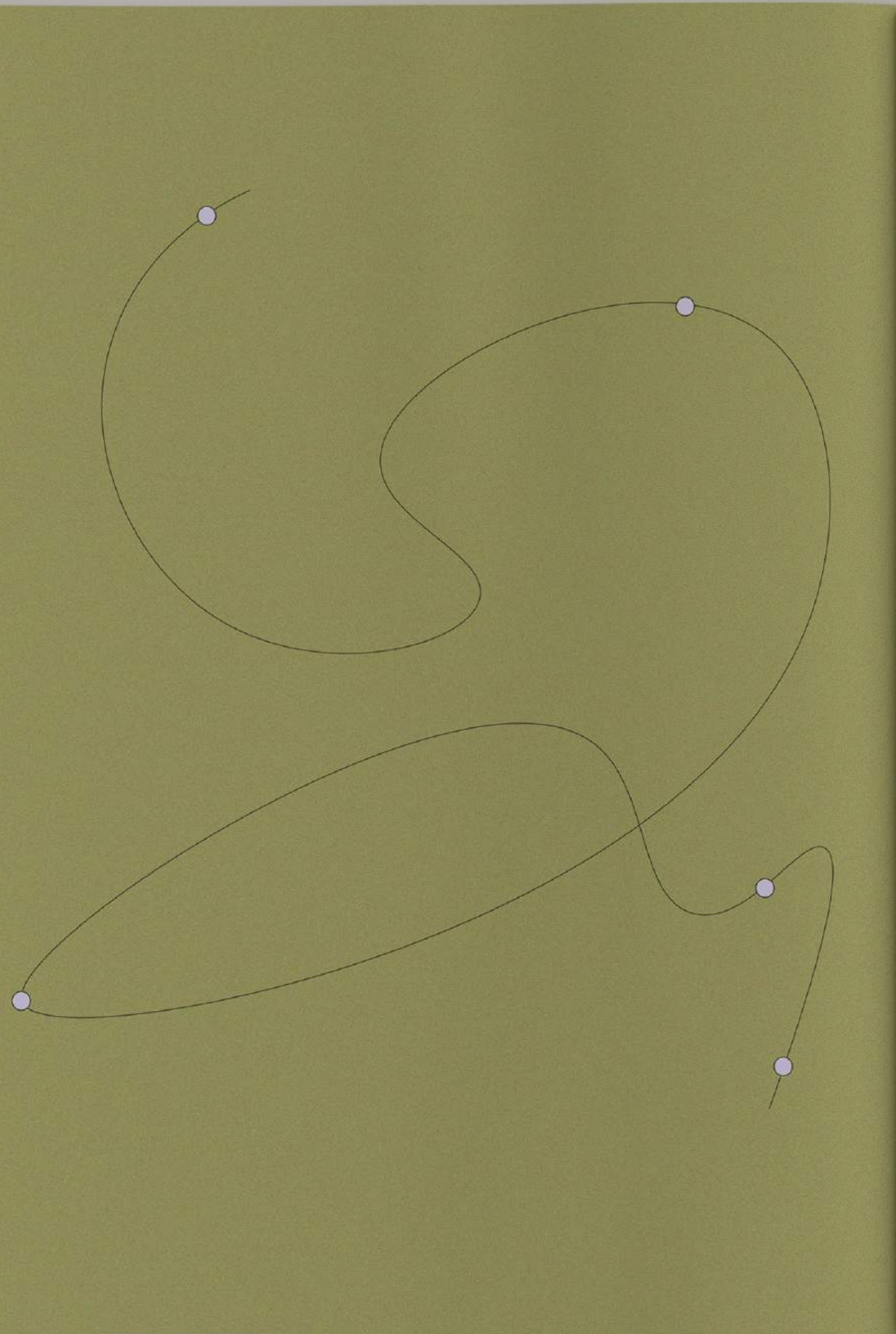


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CONTENTS

- INTRODUCTION
- SOLAR ENERGY VS FOOD ENERGY
 - SOLARPUNK MANIFESTO
 - FILM
 - GENERATIVE DRAWINGS
- SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIPS/MULTI-SPECIE ORGANISM
 - ECOFEMINISM
 - DRAWINGS
- ASEXUAL REPRODUCTION
 - DRAWINGS
- POP CULTURE/HISTORICAL REFERENCES
- BIBLIOGRAPHY



INTRO

Our project began with speculating about a future where hu-mans form a symbiotic relationship with plants to use solar en-ergy in combination with our caloric intake. we wondered what this world would look like - what advantages would this give us? how do the plants benefit (or not)? and what are the disadvan-tages to becoming more plant-like?

Becoming-with plants would allow us to reduce food production as our need for produce decreases. we could potentially con-sume co2 and be better adapted for rising temperatures on the planet. however, these adaptations could also limit our mobility as we become more 'rooted' to our natural habitat. there could be a loss of culture and community that comes from sharing food, and we could potentially run the risk of building harmful or parasitic relationships. in this artist book, we share our research and speculate what some of these futures of adapting could look like, along with both the favorable and the unfavorable.



ISSY WILSON, THE SUNBATHER II

PEN, PENCIL AND
WATERCOLOR ON PAPER

60X80CM, 2021

SOLAR VS. FOOD ENERGY

One of the main factors for wanting to be more like plants is the constant need for energy. If humans are able to utilize solar power for part or all of their caloric needs, then we realized this would drastically reduce the use of land that is currently allocated for food production-crops, dairy, and meat. By reducing the water and energy used to produce all of the food, then we would dramatically reduce our carbon footprint and have significantly more freshwater. We also wondered if the adaptations that allow us to convert solar energy to calories would be a device - something that we would potentially need to pay for like a subscription. Or could an actual symbiotic relationship with a plant allow us to be "solar-powered"? While these cyborg-adaptations could be beneficial for the planet, we lamented the loss of food, the socializing that surrounds eating, and the cultural significance of specific cuisines.



SOLARPUNK MANIFESTO

Solarpunk is a speculative & optimistic genre that envisions a future where society embraces sustainable technologies, renewable energy sources and ecological harmony. Rooted in the ethos of environmentalism, solarpunk seeks to counter dystopian narratives by portraying a world where humanity coexists with nature and prioritizes renewable resources.

At the core of solarpunk lies the solarpunk manifesto a set of principles that guide its vision and ethos. While there isn't a single universal manifesto, solarpunk themes generally emphasize decentralized renewable energy, regenerative agriculture, and community resilience. It advocates for the democratization of technology, encouraging open-source solutions and local empowerment. Solarpunk envisions cities adorned with greenery, rooftop gardens, and sustainable infrastructure, promoting a harmonious relationship between urban environments and nature.

The Solarpunk Manifesto often encourages a shift in societal values, emphasizing collaboration over competition, and the celebration of diverse cultures. It fosters a mindset that prioritizes sustainability, ecological responsibility, and the wellbeing of both people and the planet. Ultimately, solarpunk challenges us to reimagine and actively work towards a future where humanity thrives in harmony with nature, powered by sustainable innovation and a collective commitment to a greener world.

ACROSS RCA

CLIMATE CRISIS

RAZOR BLADE

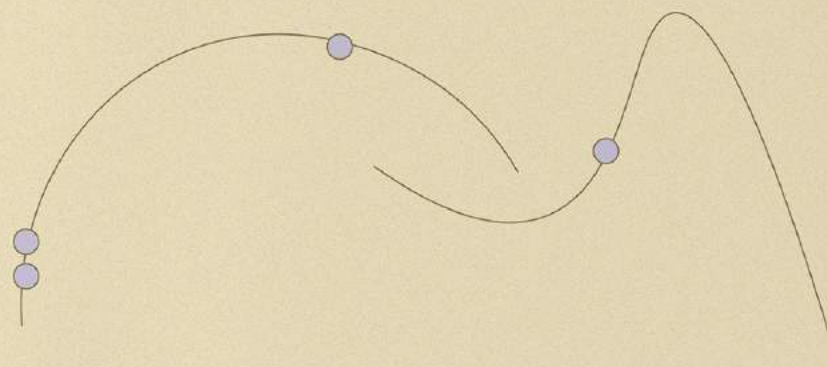
ANUSHKA KHEMKA · ISSY WILSON · RITA FERNÁNDEZ · RU GAJADEERA · SANJAY THINAGAR

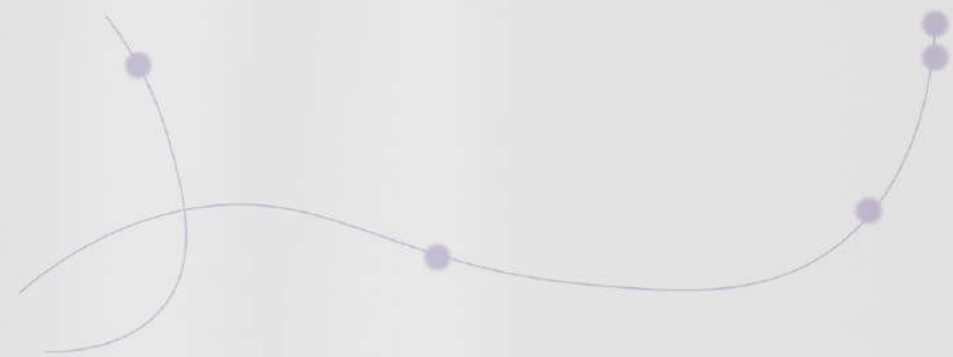


ALICIA DEL PINO DOLZ ART
@ALICIA.DEL.PINO

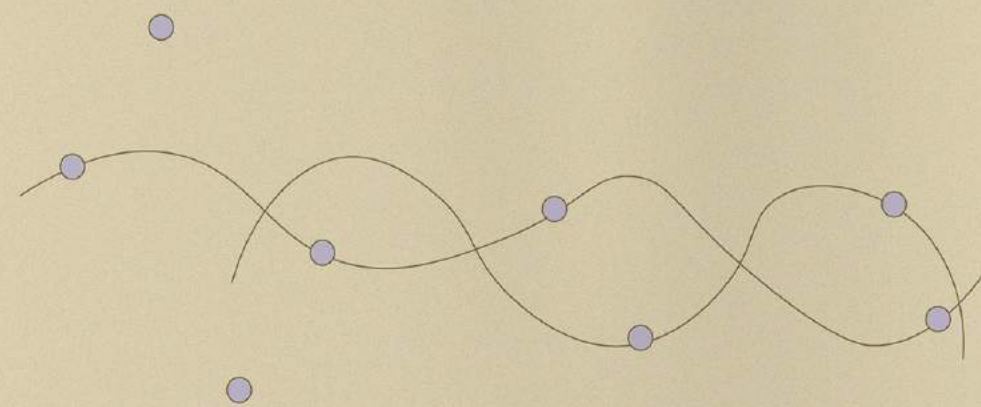
FILM BEGINNINGS

Initially, we began our project by imagining our outcome as a short film about a solar-punk future. In this world (about 50-100 years in the future), we were going to focus on the main character, "Razor," who is celebrating her birthday with friends. In this world, the future humans wear a device attached to their bodies to convert absorbed solar energy into nutrition and no longer need food in the same way to meet their caloric needs. However, on special occasions like this one, the group of friends is sharing a meal to show the significance of food for social and cultural importance. After further speculation, we decided to convert the project into this artist book. We realized that investigating the variety of plant adaptations and questioning the benefits of each of those changes more expansively explored this speculative future, as compared to the film that required us to choose one version.





SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIPS



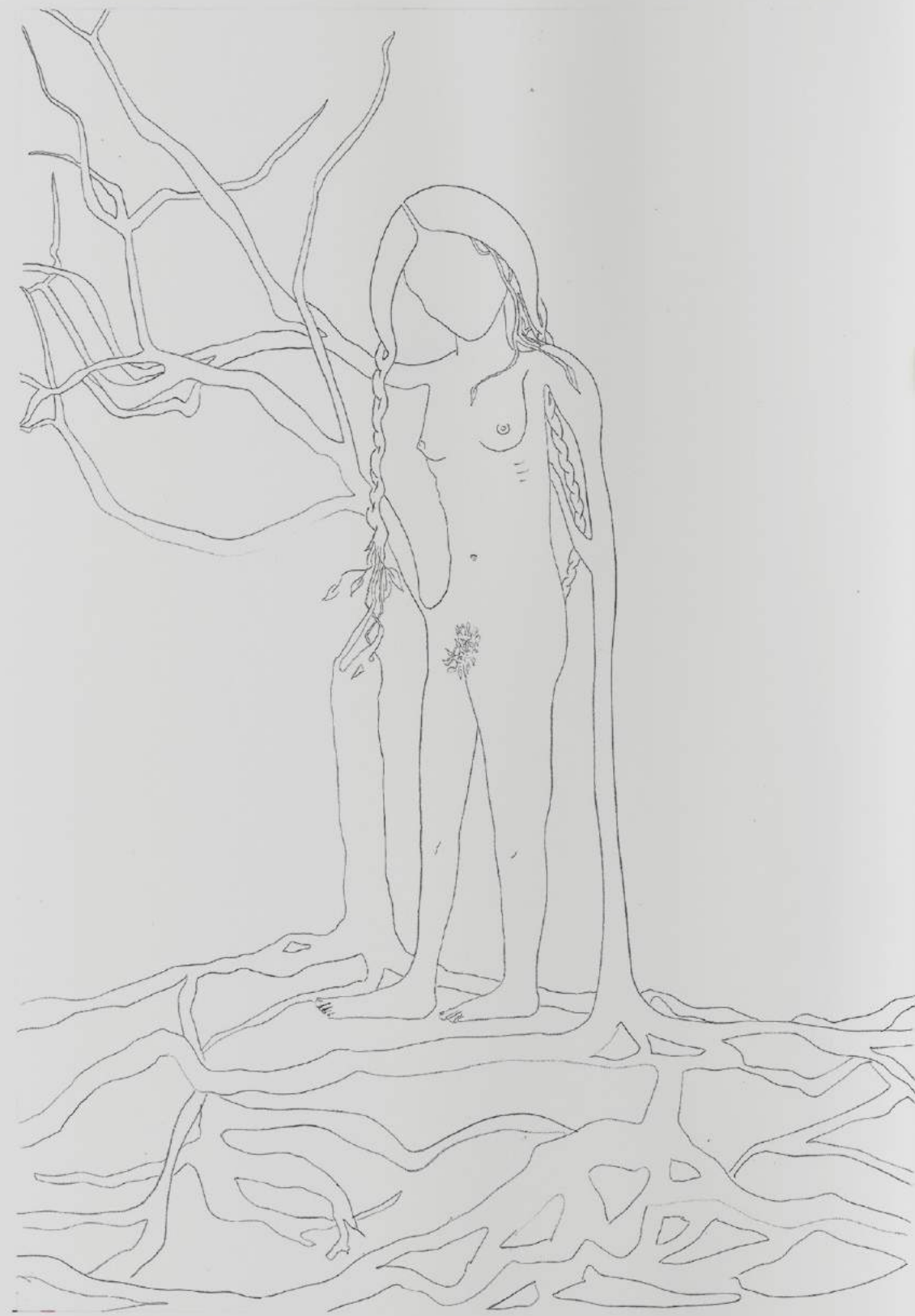
After moving on from the film production of our solar-punk future, we determined that we were more interested in exploring how humans could become-with plants to form a plant-human hybrid in the new "Plantae-animalia Kingdom." In this instance, we would form multi-species organisms with plants and hopefully a symbiotic relationship to utilize solar energy. What is particularly interesting about these speculations is the way that it challenges the individual nature of humans and the way that we frequently see ourselves as "other" from the animal and plant world. Additionally, we questioned our future mobility and if the advantages of using solar-power would reduce our ability to move around-would we actually need to root down in a particular place, move slower, or have some combination of "rooting" and movement. Our mobility is potentially one of the advantages that we could offer to the plant counterparts in this relationship as we also become pollinators.

ISSY WILSON,
FLOWER FRIENDS



PEN, PENCIL,
AND WATERCOLOR ON PAPER

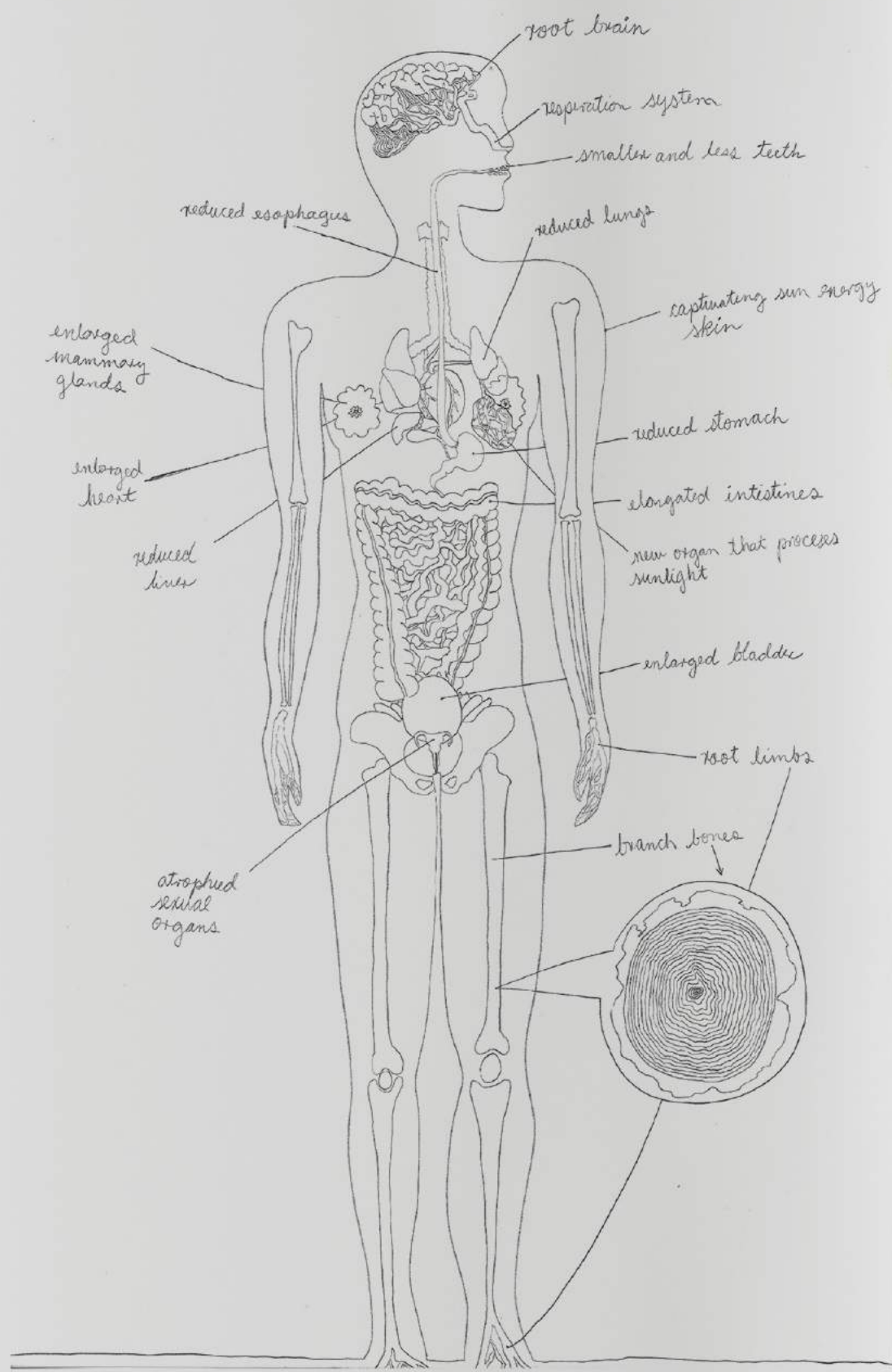
22X30CM, 2021



ECO- - FEMINISM



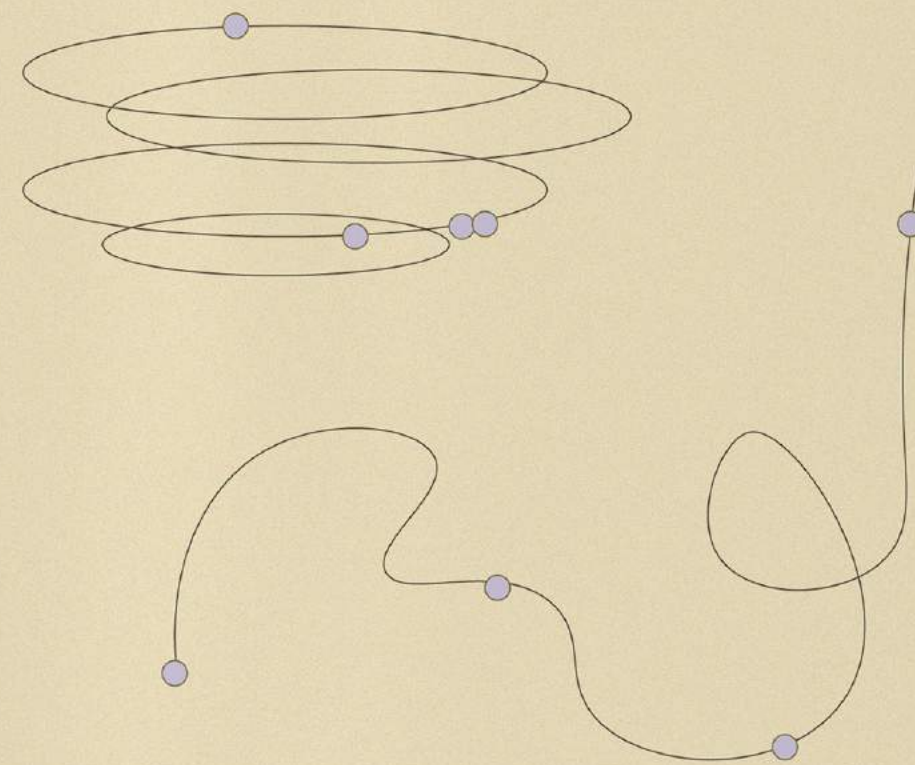
From the beginning, our group expressed an interest in ecofeminism. Ecofeminism is a movement linking the feminist movement with the environmentalist movement and sees them as deeply intertwined through the oppression of both women and nature in current society. In the book, "Ecofeminism as Politics: Nature, Marx, and the Postmodern," Ariel Salleh writes that "by bringing ecology to established feminisms, ecofeminism encourages a new orientation and synthesis. Through deconstruction of the Man/Woman=Nature equation, ecofeminism 're-inscribes' those oppressive links." And so, ecofeminism challenges the so-called "natural" order prescribed by capitalism, one in which women and nature are viewed as resources to be exploited. By restructuring these assumptions, society can ideally start to find ways for humans, regardless of gender, to form more symbiotic and reciprocal relationships with nature.



These speculative beings present scarce and smaller teeth, since the human food consumption has decreased, all of the human organs and vehicles for food ingestion have either decreased, atrophied, or completely disappeared. For instance, the oesophagus has become thinner and less flexible as well as the stomach and other metabolic organs (such as the liver, pancreas, etc.). Their skin has developed a new function to optimise the absorption of the solar energy into their system. A new inner organ capable of metabolising solar energy into calories has appeared right next to the right human lung. These beings also have atrophied sexual organs because asexual reproduction is much more convenient and efficient. Instead, the bladder has become larger to store all the water needed for this symbiotic organism and takes the place where a normal-sized uterus would be. Veins and arteries have commenced to look and act like tree roots do underground. Another important change is the new "root-brain", which mirrors the neuronal synapse with the way water and nutrients flow through the roots of a tree. The inner organs connect with the outsides, the rest of the trees, plants and hybrids are all connected with one another, like Deleuze's rhizome, everything is related in some way to everything else.



The Mushroom Heads live in the swamps where they become-with the plant species that inhabit that space. The plant-human cyborgs differ in appearance and anatomy based on their environment. This could be a new kind of "plantism". They don't contain any chlorophyll due to which they take on the role of parasites where they depend on other plants to make food for them. An umbilical cord connects them to the ground, which also serves as a passage for absorbing nutrients. Their skin has evolved to protect them from thorns. They have also found new ways to accessorize and use leaves they find on their travels as ornaments that slowly become attached to their bodies.



ASEXUAL REPRODUCTION

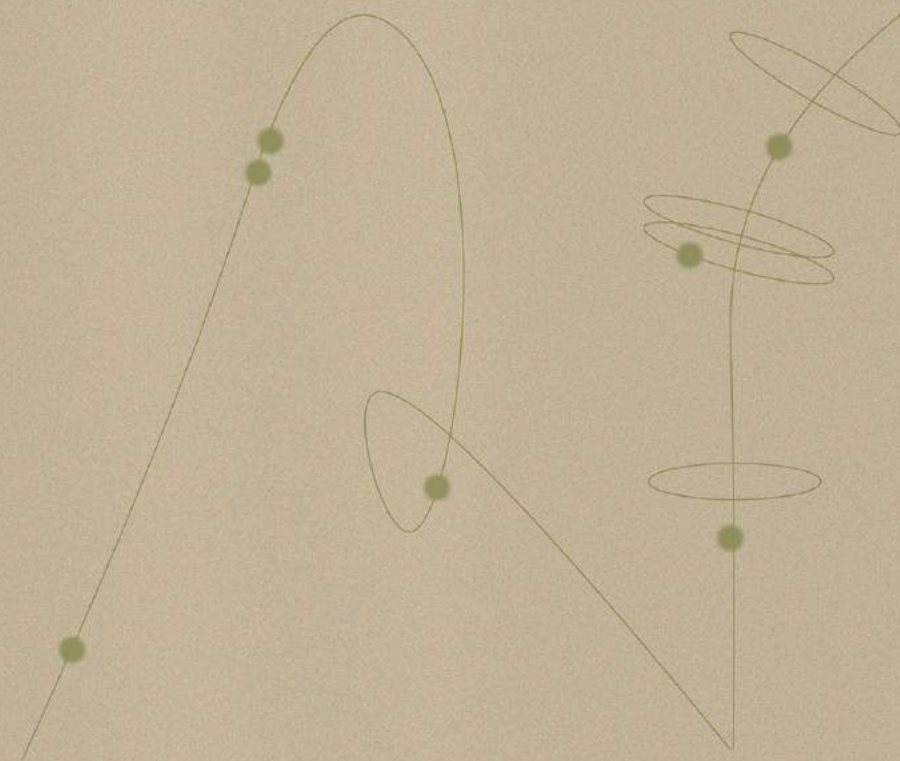
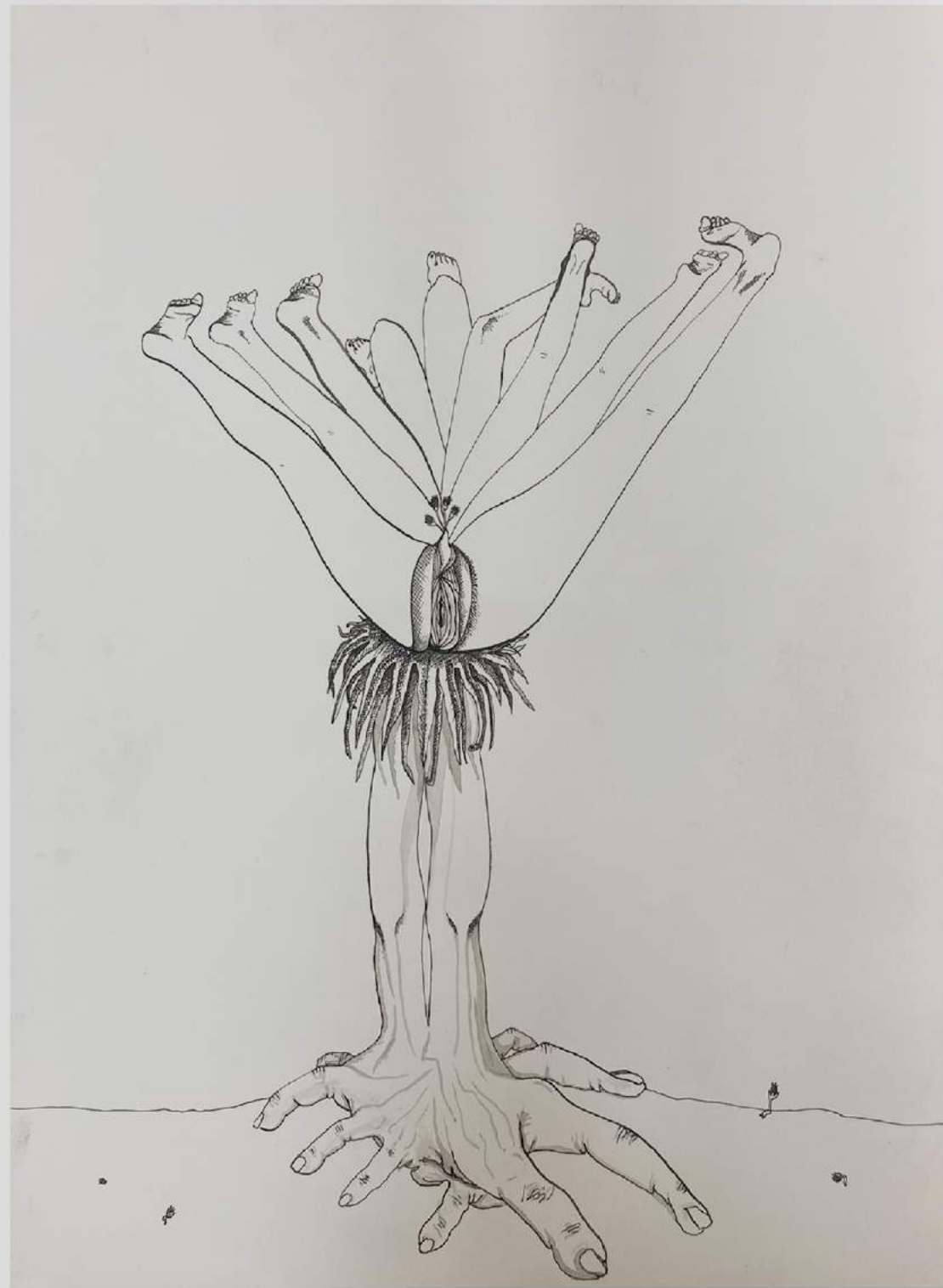
22X30CM, 2021

While the main consideration for these plant-human hybrids was the need for solar energy, another plant-like element that we've considered is new methods of reproduction for humans. Many plants reproduce in a variety of ways with some being more traditionally "heterosexual" with male and female plants, some more hermaphroditic with an individual plant possessing both the "male" and "female" parts, and some reproducing with asexual methods like vegetative propagation. Vegetative propagation is what happens when you can take a clipping from a plant and then that grows into another clone of that plant. All of these methods would change our current reproductive abilities by getting rid of any gestational period, imaging more queer futures and relationships, and/or the ability to reproduce asexually. For instance, if we are able to cut off a limb to create another organism, then this would be an action of new growth and repair instead of a dangerous and violent act.

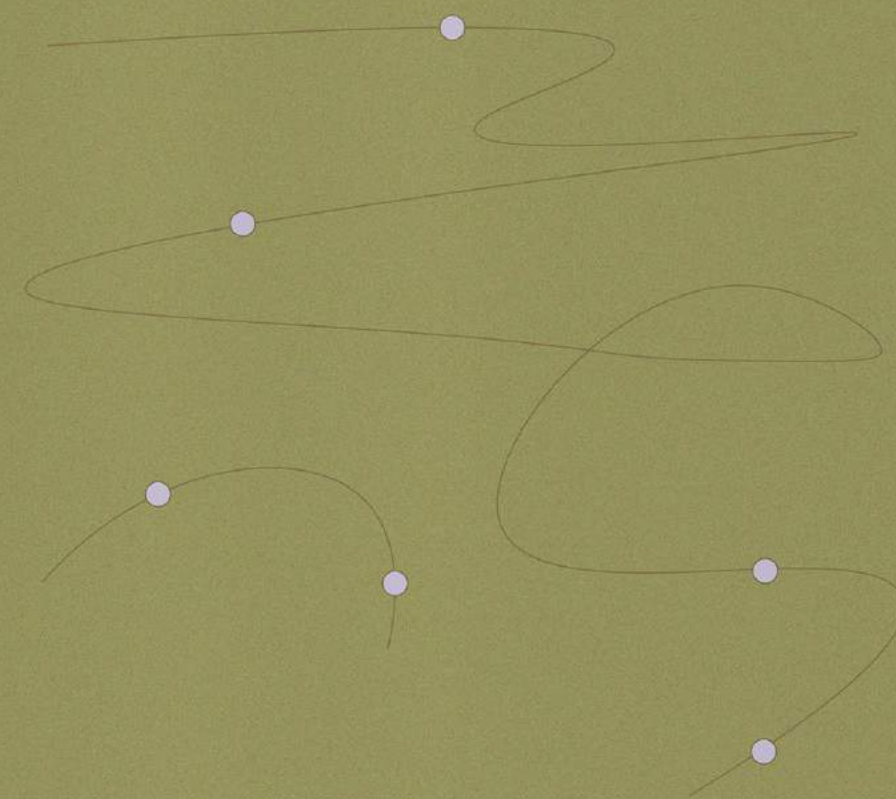
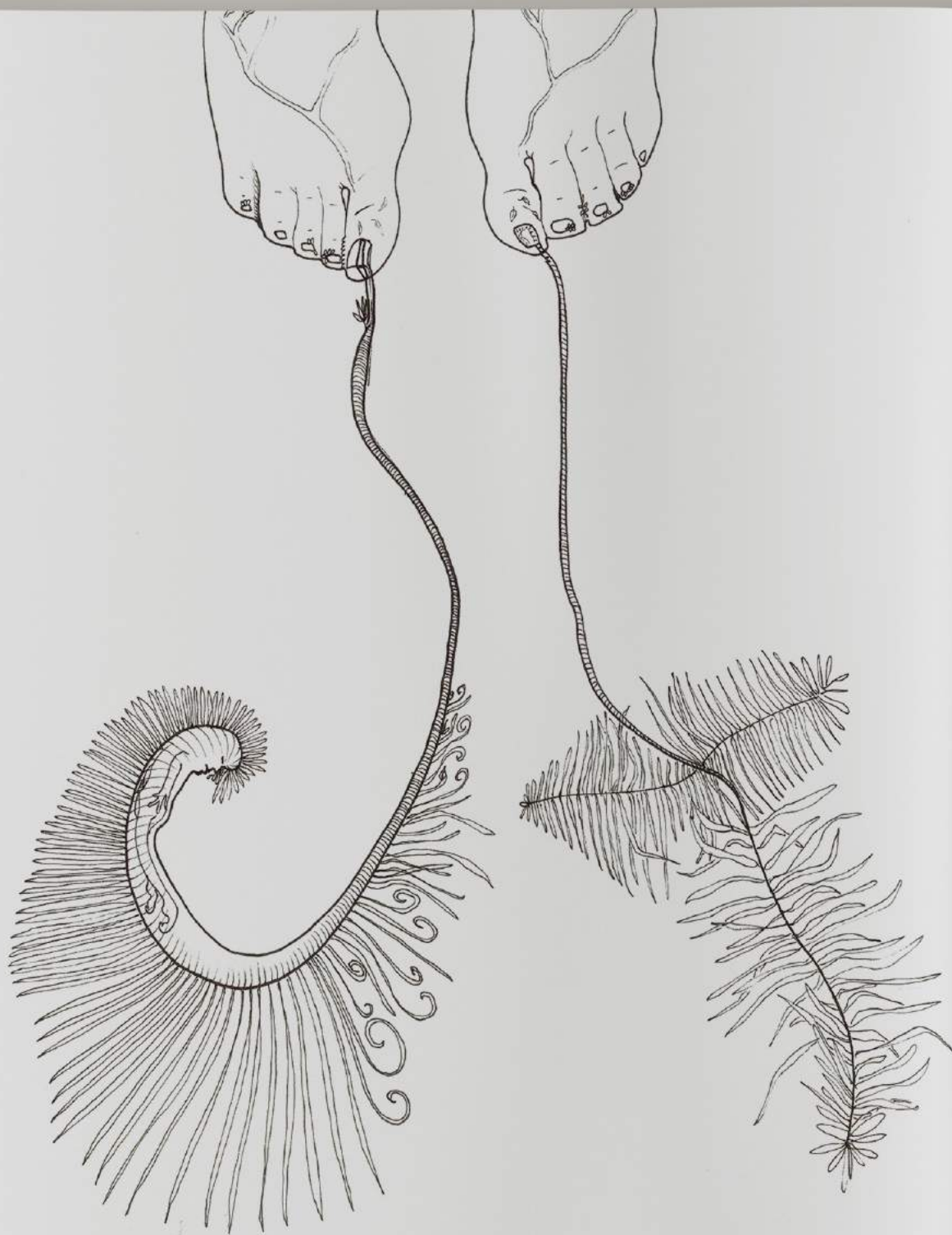
ISSY WILSON, >>
THE GARDENER

PEN, PENCIL,
AND WATERCOLOR
ON PAPER





When we started thinking about how asexual reproduction could look like in humans the first thing that came to mind was the obvious analogy between a vulva and the delicate petals of a flower. This hybrid human has an exposed sexual organ with an enlarged clitoris-pistil and multiple legs that act as petals in a flower. The exposure of the clitoris-pistil is necessary for the cross fertilisation necessary in plant reproduction through pollen. This physical trait responds not only to the asexual reproduction purposes, but also to the possibility of pleasurable stimulation through the pistils. We thought that the existent sexual pleasure in these hybrids would help us to turn around the common-place analogy between vulvas and flowers, and rather convert it into an empowering resemblance.

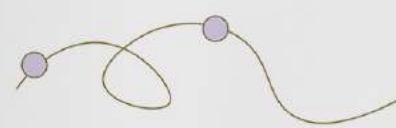


We switched the narrative around the asexual reproduction by thinking about how plants could be the ones to be physically carrying and nurturing these speculative beings, as if they were their seeds and fruits. In this image, a blossoming hybrid is growing inside of the leaves of a fern, a fern that is simultaneously flourishing from the feet of another hybrid creature. These speculative human hybrids depend upon recursive relationships like this one.

ARTISTS/ POP CULTURE

During all of these speculations, we frequently found many references to other human-plant hybrids in films, text, paintings, myths, and so much more. This idea of a human-plant is far from new and is something that humans will continue to imagine as we question and investigate our relationship with the planet. Here are a few of the plant-human creature references that we discussed as a group:

The "Flower People," as seen throughout the text, come from a series of works by Issy Wilson in 2021. After hiking on the Ap-palachian Trail in the United States for over four months, she created this character based on the experience. The "Flower People" reflect the joy, excitement, and wonder of experiencing the forest, while also showcasing the mental fatigue and aching pains of constant walking. Some of the themes explored in her drawings, like sunbathing, gardening (or growing more "Flower People"), and relationships, related to this topic of human-plant creatures and felt fitting to reference as another iteration of what a plant-human hybrid could look like.





GIUSEPPE ARCIMBOLDO
VERTUMNUS

OIL ON CANVAS

70CM×58CM, 1591

FIRELEI BÁEZ,
HOW TO SLIP OUT OF YOUR BODY QUIETLY

GOUACHE ON PAPER

177.8CM×299.7CM, 2018



FRIDA KAHLO
ROOTS

OIL ON CANVAS

30.5X499CM, 1943



ALICE IN WONDERLAND
TALKING FLOWERS



GRANDMOTHER WILLOW
POCAHONTAS

THE WOMPING WILLOW



HARRY POTTER



ENTS

LORD OF THE RINGS



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ANIMILIA
KINGDOM