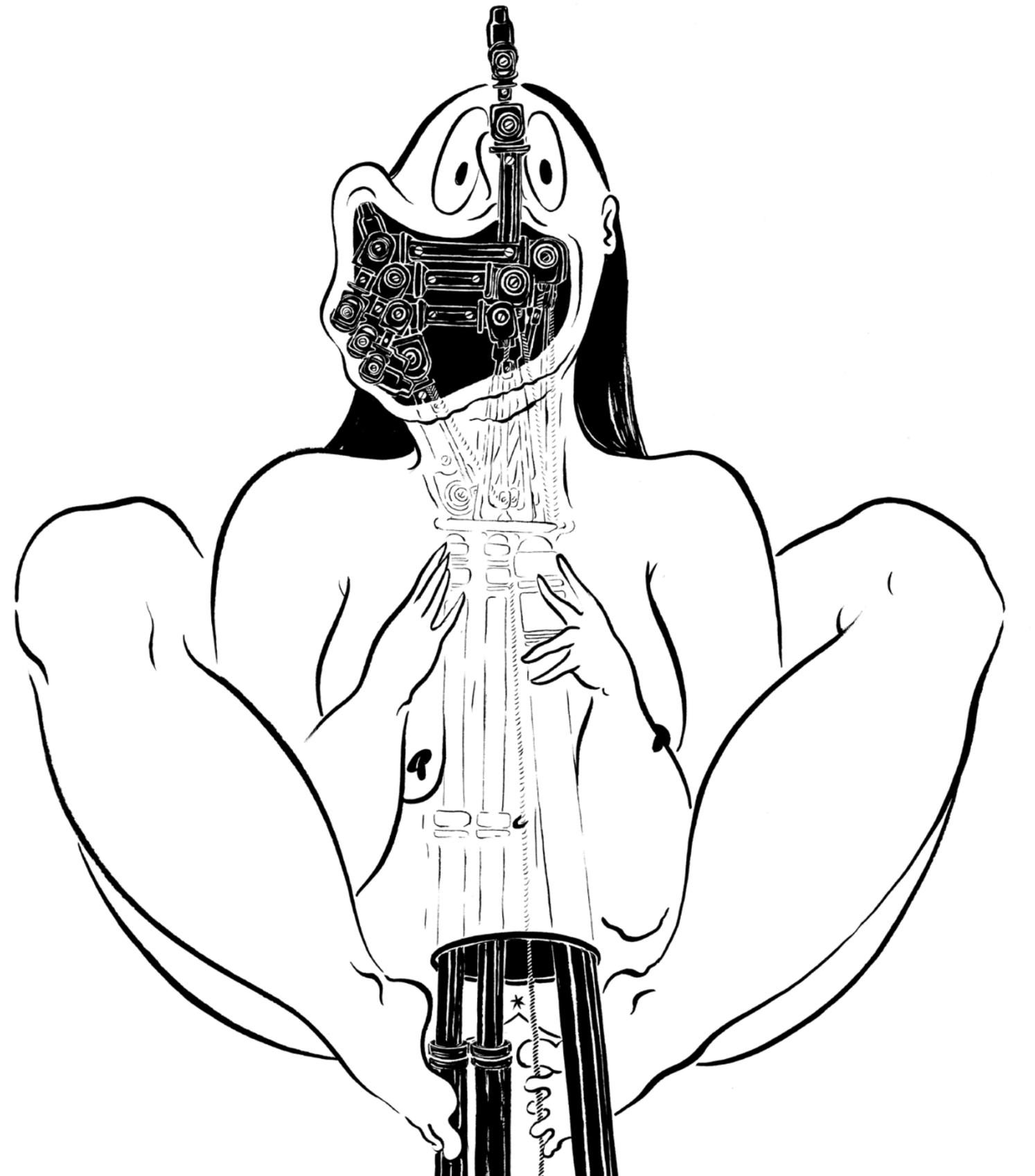
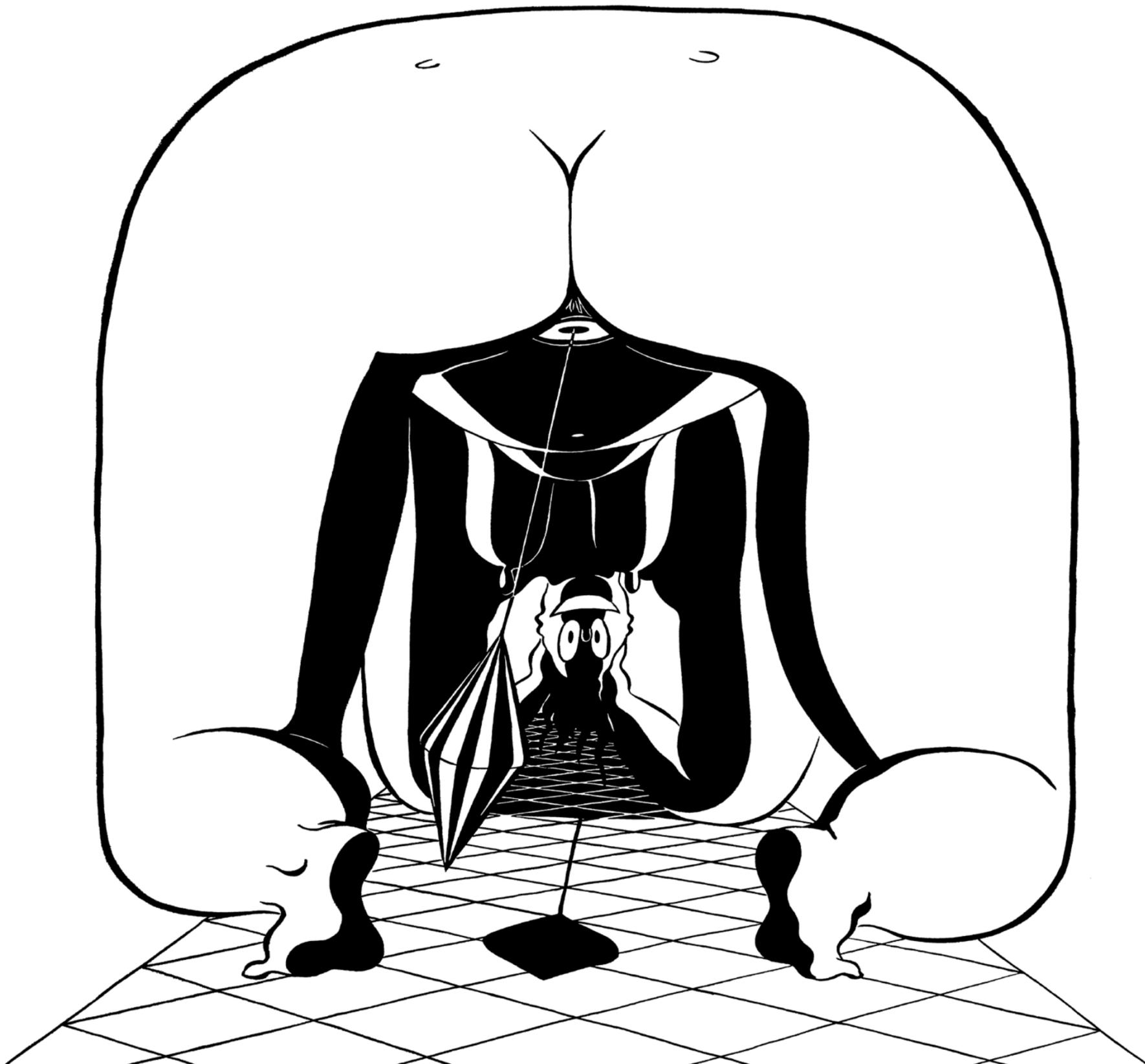
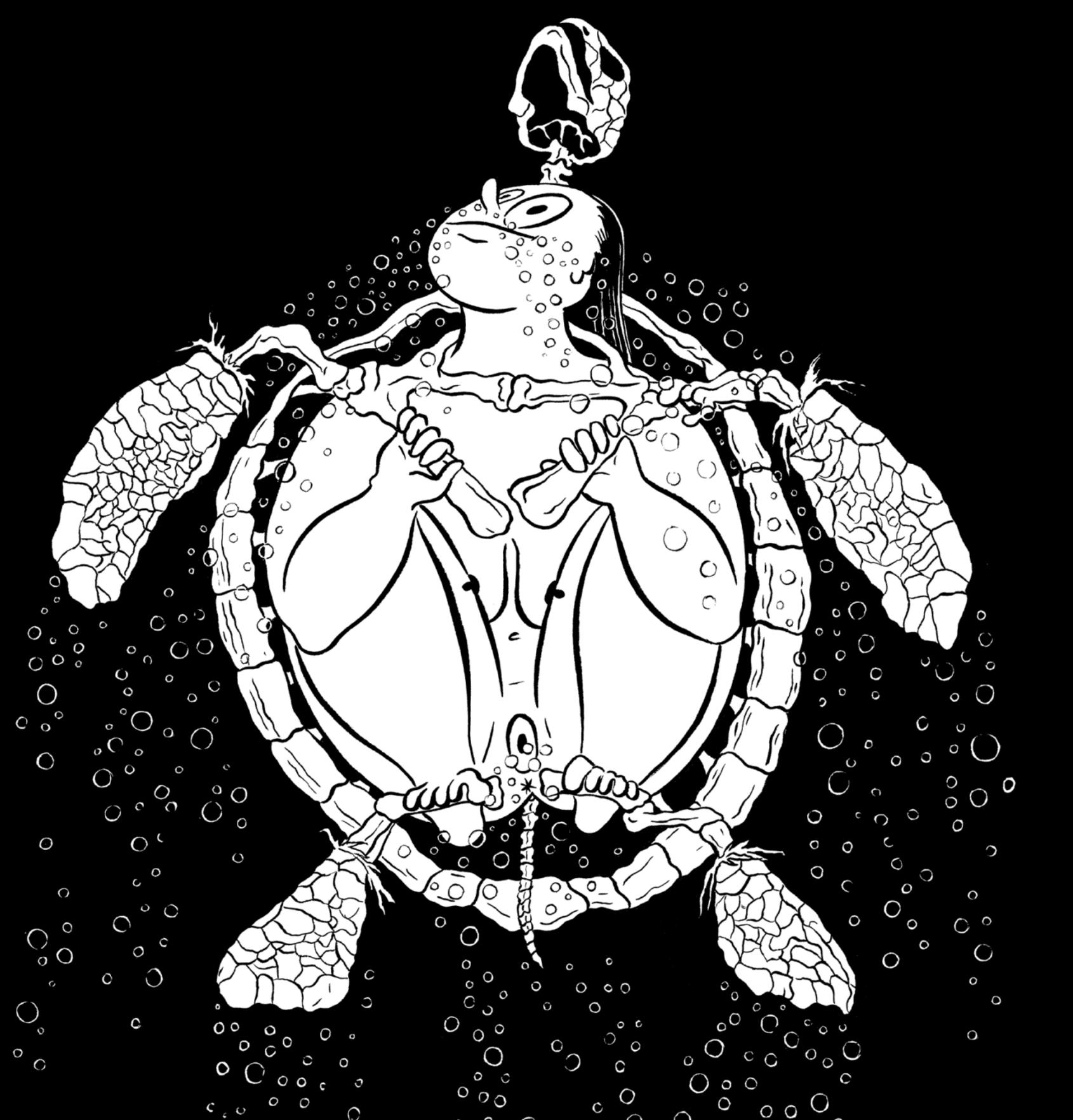
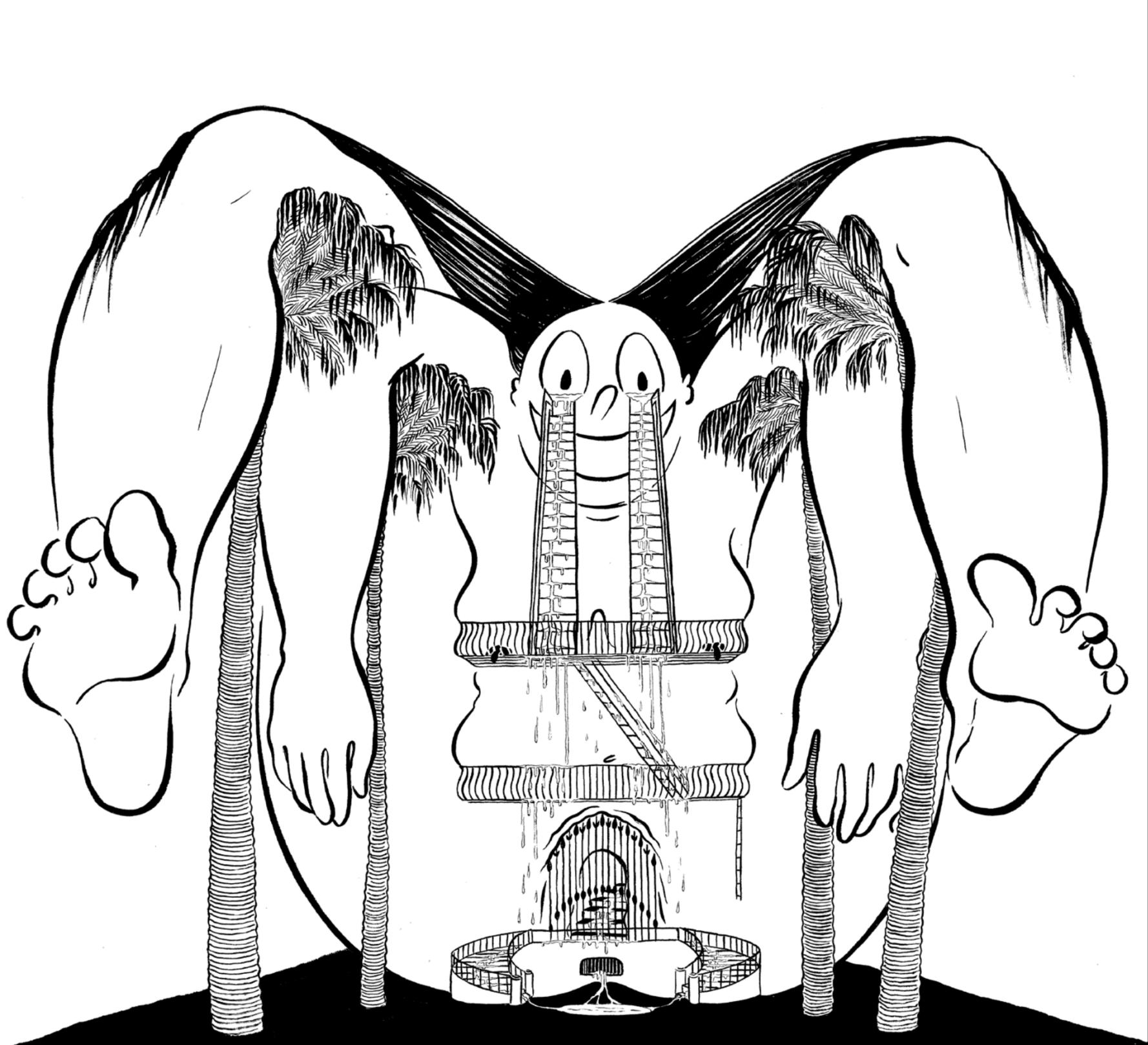
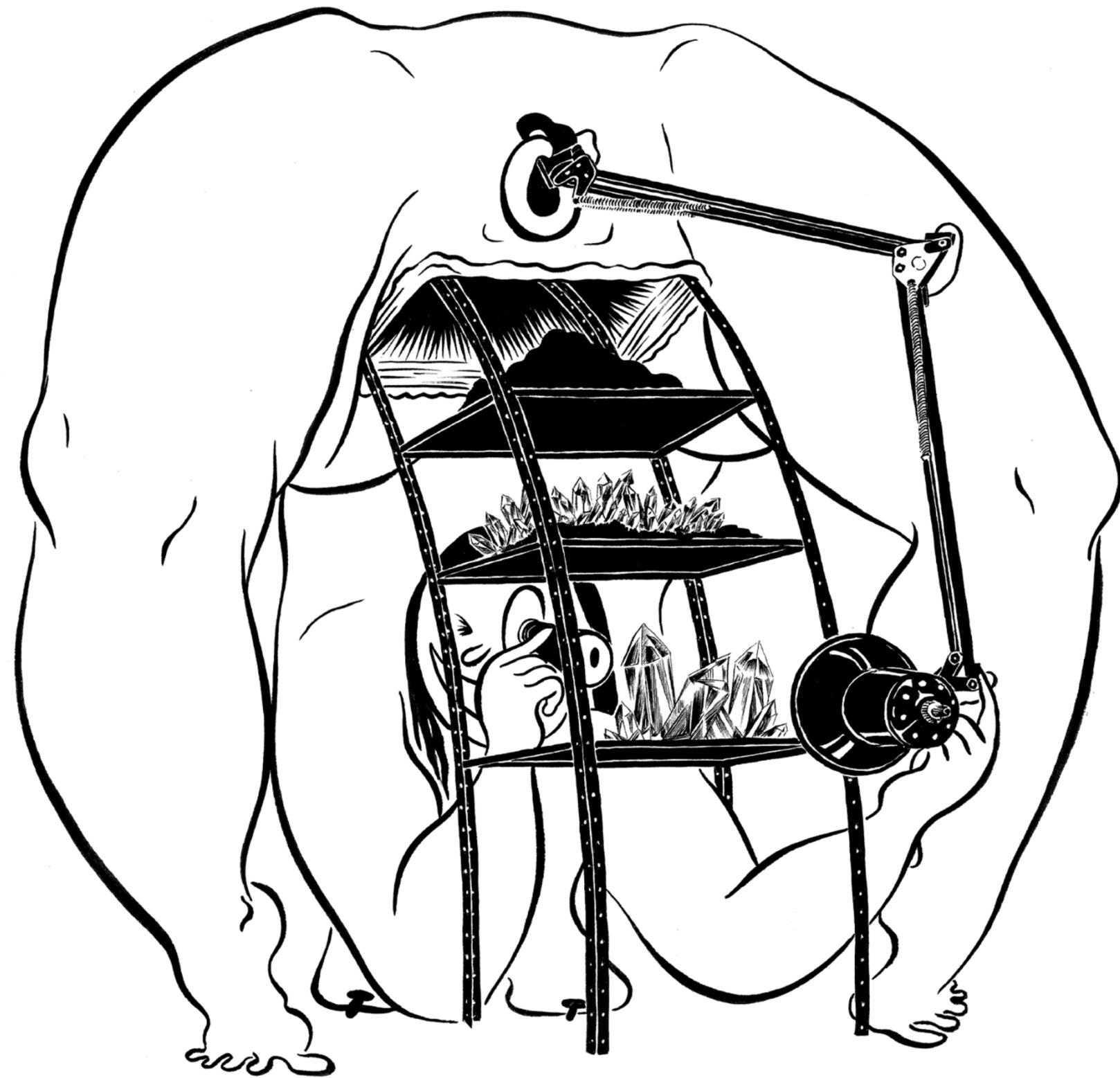
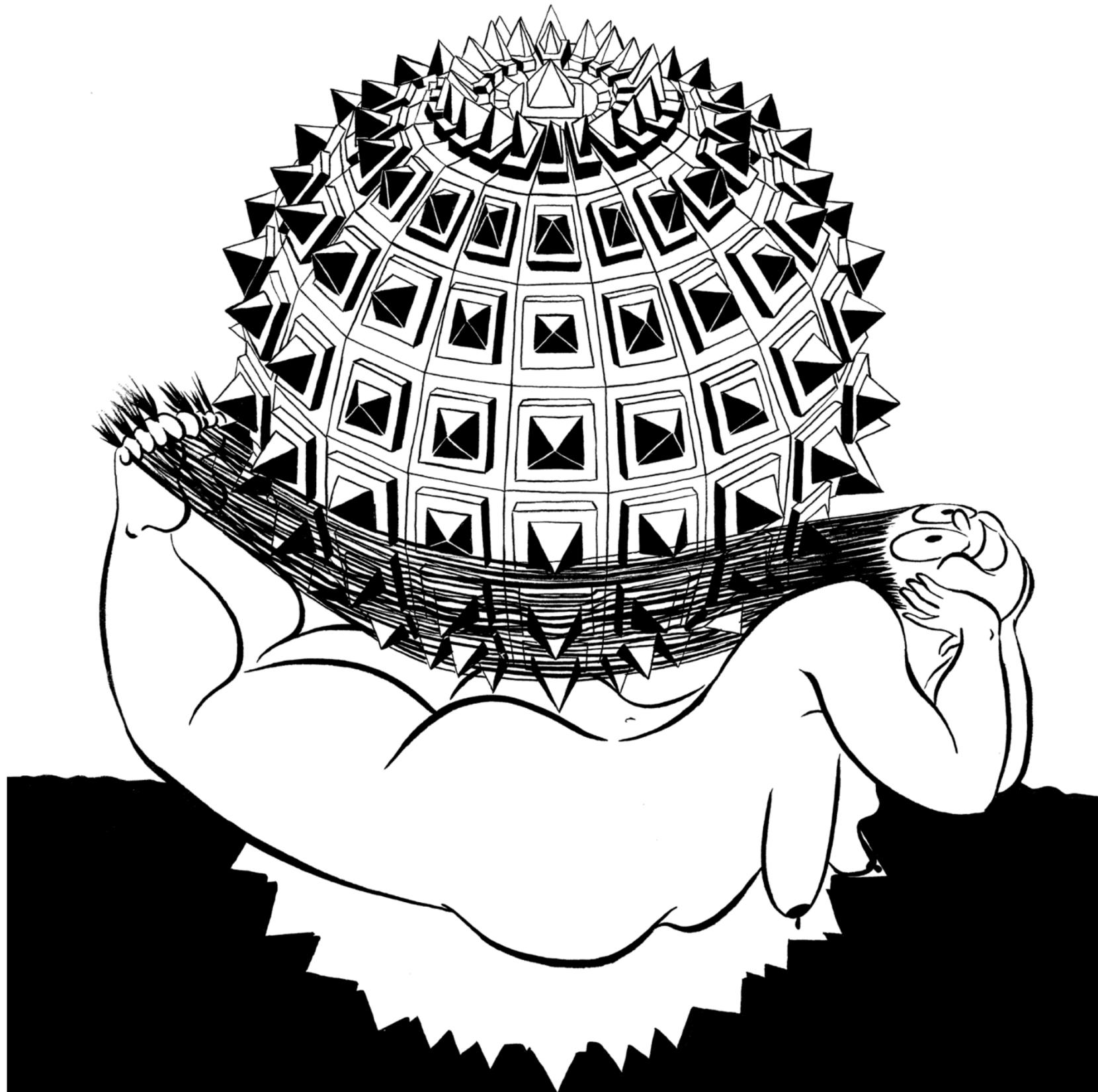


**PROJECT
EBECHO MUSLIMOVA**









Page 181: Ebecho Muslimova, *Fatebe Mold*, 2018, sumi ink on paper, 10 × 10".

Page 182: Ebecho Muslimova, *Fatebe Pendulum*, 2018, sumi ink on paper, 10 × 10".

Page 183: Ebecho Muslimova, *Fatebe T2*, 2018, sumi ink on paper, 10 × 10".

Page 184: Ebecho Muslimova, *Fatebe Sad Hilltop Hotel*, 2018, sumi ink on paper, 10 × 10".

Page 185: Ebecho Muslimova, *Fatebe Sea Turtle*, 2018, sumi ink on paper, 10 × 10".

Page 186: Ebecho Muslimova, *Fatebe Complex Body Sphere*, 2018, sumi ink on paper, 10 × 10".

Page 187: Ebecho Muslimova, *Fatebe Crystals*, 2018, sumi ink on paper, 10 × 10".

Opposite page: Ebecho Muslimova, *Untitled*, 2018, sumi ink on paper, 10 x 10".

IN THE FIRST IMAGE of this project, Fatebe emerges from the bivalve mold a disheveled, decidedly immodest Venus. She reclines in the nude, legs akimbo and pudenda proudly displayed, her rumpled flesh impervious to reification or containment. Born in 2011, Fatebe is the precocious child and loose-jointed alter ego of artist Ebecho Muslimova. Muslimova draws her perpetually naked, pleasantly zaftig second self into innumerable graphic scenarios, her elastic body functioning as a vehicle for dirty jokes and insuppressible energies. In a recent exhibition at Magenta Plains in New York, Fatebe swallowed a bushel of asparagus while urinating on a pyramid of toilet paper; she kebabed herself on a roll of quarters; she filmed the staircase scene from Hitchcock’s *Vertigo* inside her extraordinary, capacious vagina; she tumbled—tits first—down a staircase into a pool of brown liquid.

Muslimova’s quicksilver ink drawings variously recall the woozy “rubber hose” animation of Depression-era Fleischer Studios cartoons; the sophisticated obscenities of Aubrey Beardsley; the spry, witty caricatures of Al Hirschfeld; and even the jolly surrealism of Dr. Seuss. Yet Fatebe (a portmanteau of “fat” and “Ebe,” the artist’s nickname) is not a product of cultural nostalgia, but rather one of personal exasperation. Muslimova began drawing the character as a pleasurable escape from the critical discourses and professional anxieties of art school, where she studied sculpture. With her extravagant abjection and cheerful onanism, Fatebe proved to be a surprisingly expressive form and inexhaustible engine of breakdown and recuperation. Originating as an inside joke for the artist and her friends, Muslimova’s Zeligesque avatar grew into an ambitious long-term practice.

Throughout Fatebe’s seven-year life, she has evolved from a solitary actor set against an existential white ground to the protagonist of increasingly complex physical comedies. In this portfolio for *Artforum* (all works 2018), her body engorges to fill the square format of the printed page. In *Fatebe Pendulum*, her

thighs and buttocks contort, Flubber-like, into a proscenium arch through which she and the viewer enjoy the theater of her body. She presents her ass to the page’s surface, gazing out from between her legs at the titular pendulum swinging hypnotically from her vagina. The drawing’s aggressive single-point perspective calls attention to one of the oldest tricks in the Western draftsman’s playbook, inverting the masculinist optics famously crystallized in Albrecht Dürer’s *Artist Drawing a Nude with Perspective Device*, 1525. Fatebe’s invulnerability to scopic violence and irrepressible self-display are made more explicit in *Fatebe Complex Body Sphere*. Here, she assumes a recumbent pinup pose, blithely indifferent to the barbs of an enormous spiked polyhedron—recalling the ferocious geometries of Lorenzo Sirigatti’s 1596 treatise *La pratica di prospettiva* (The Practice of Perspective)—nested in the curve of her back.

Critics have understood Fatebe as expressing a feminist, body-positive politics, yet her feminism isn’t grounded in the production of affirmative representations, but rather in her capacity to embody profuse desublimating fantasies, to assimilate and master humiliation by transforming it into scenes of ambivalent, polymorphous perversity. In *Fatebe Crystals*, her vagina stretches into a rectangular box, discharging a steel shelving unit stocked with gemstones. She examines these treasures, illuminated by a work lamp mounted to her anus, through a jeweler’s loupe. In *Fatebe T2* (titled after the 1991 *Terminator* sequel), she is penetrated by a tripod-like apparatus that drills upward through her body and out her contorted mouth, exposing the metal armature of Arnold Schwarzenegger’s android-assassin fist. However, Fatebe’s protean antics also invite comparison to Schwarzenegger’s nemesis in that film, the liquid-metal T-1000: indestructible and able to assume the form of almost anything it touches. □

—Chloe Wyma

