



Photos by Georg Gisel

**MAX GISEL** 27.08.22 - 31.08.22

## BUILDING THE BASEMENT

Architectural abstract paintings  
Mixed media on paper and cardboard

As a kaleidoscopic accrochage Max Gisel's first exhibition Building the Basement consists of numerous works on paper and cardboard. Gisel's figurative, sketch-like depictions of urban environments are traces of his work in the studio from the past three years. While we are used to the aesthetics of glossy representation of metropolitan cities with modern architecture, the artist's drawings reveal a more vulnerable and fragmented gaze. Recalling a skyline, the dense hanging creates a spatial collage and the individual works are confronted like different built environments.

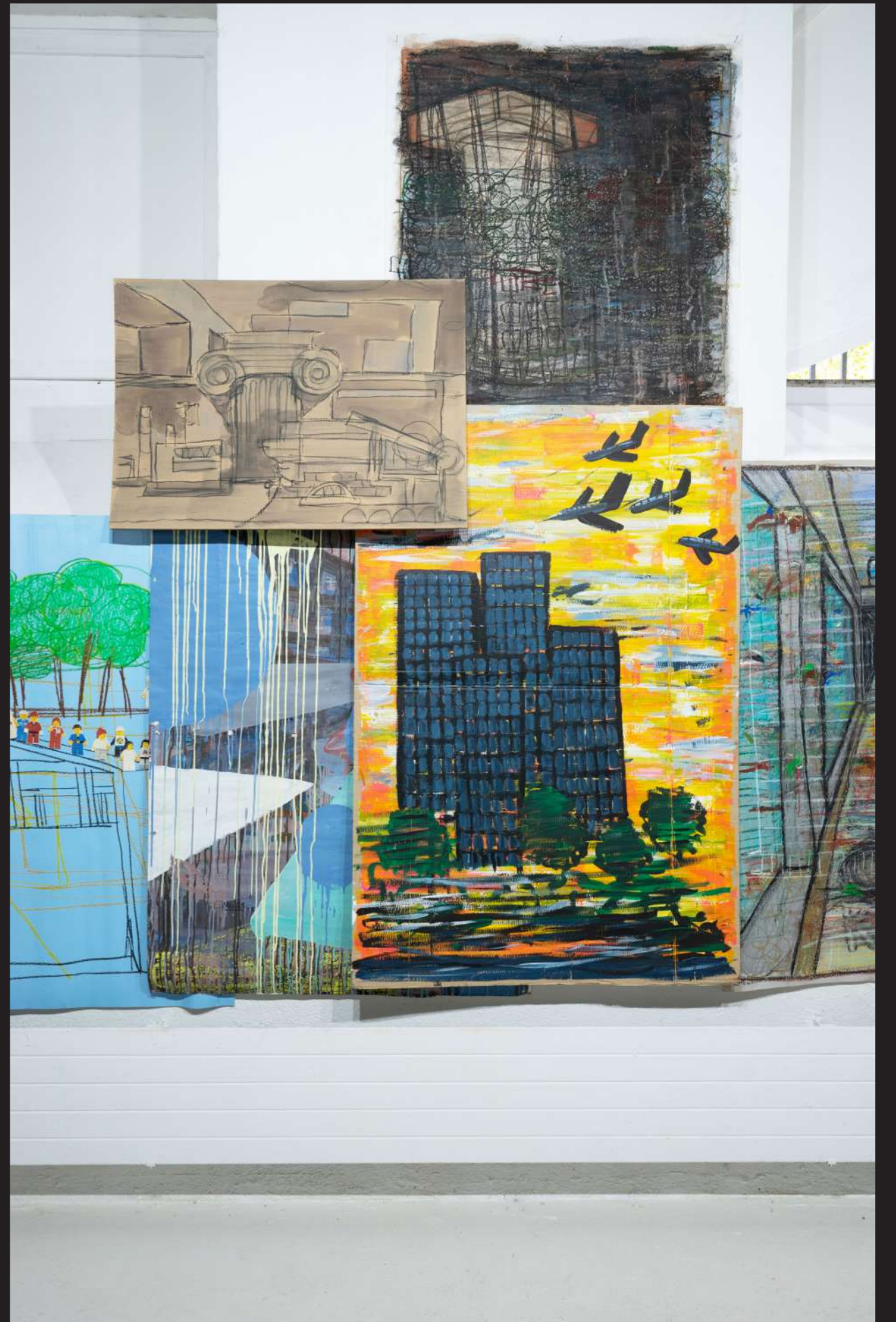
Gisel's first paper works date back to the beginning of the pandemic where the promise of the urban was threatened. In this time of confinement with ghostly emptied public space he started to work on capturing the phantom of modern cityscapes. Rather than using the flat surface of a screen to follow his investigation - unlike the way cities are commodified as variable greenscreens - Gisel's practice derives from work. As if the buildings he fantasizes and encounters wouldn't exist he sketches them anew.

His layered drawings however express an ambiguity, rather than opaque, rigid renderings, the compositions work with the collision of different readings and layers of meaning. By this they display simultaneously a melancholic *dérive* and an excitement opposing an ongoing gentrification of not alone our cities, but as well our minds.

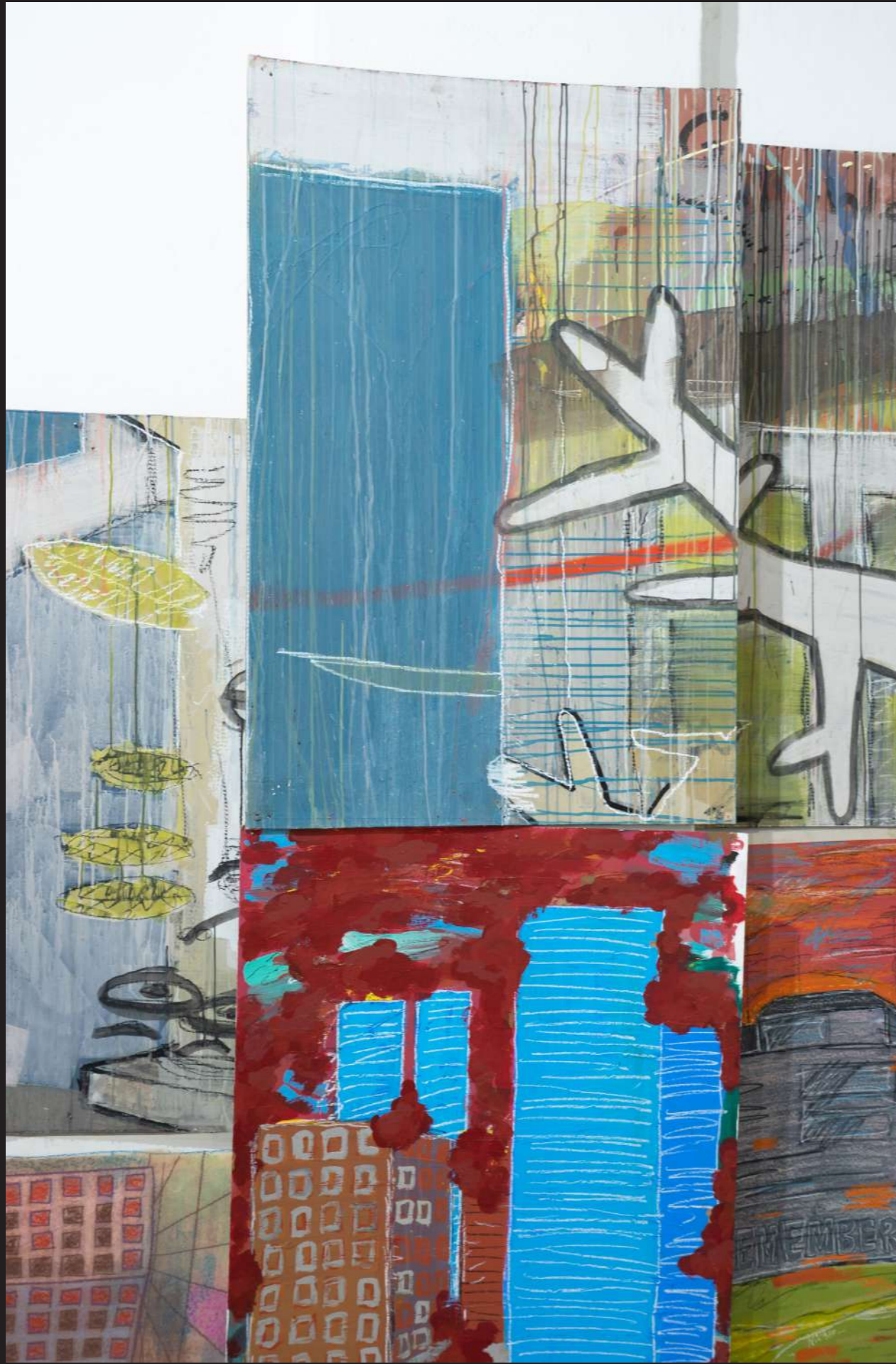
Niels Olsen, 26 August 2022

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