

# RAMKUMAR

Drawings from 60's





All the drawings are previously un-exhibited, pen & ink on paper from 1960's. 13.8" x 8.4"

# **RAMKUMAR**

Drawings from 60's

August 1 – 30, 2014

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Aakriti Art Gallery

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# Drawings of Ramkumar

## Multiple Happenings in a Meditative Space

Drawings of Ramkumar, done in pen and ink, on paper, have a mesmerizing presence, with a substance, which touches our heart and mind, the moment we fix our gaze at them. The lines, with an immediacy of their own, start taking us to a journey, and alert us with each drawing, that we will be experiencing a visually, as well intellectually stimulating sojourn. The lines do not seem to represent any particular object, or figure, in an abstract mode, but are in themselves witnesses or vehicles, through which certain 'passing' moments are being captured intently, and are being transmitted, to us like a telegraphic message. Thus, these lines make us curious, and encourage us to view them intensely assuring us that the intensity of our gaze will be rewarded aesthetically, and the movement of the lines, will go on creating an enchanting rhythm within ourselves. These lines may not necessarily refer to any musical 'mode' but have also a 'musical' pattern of their own, which is not to be missed.

The drawings belong to the celebrated 'Varanasi phase' of Ramkumar's career, which transformed his 'figurative period' into a non-representational one, and his paintings moved towards 'abstract' landscapic forms and images, where colors also started playing a sensuous, luminous role, and evoked

many a memories and emotions in the viewer. Yet, these drawings of the same early sixties period have a different tale to tell. Here no landscape, how so ever abstract, is being formed; instead what one finds in these drawings is that they create in themselves a 'demographic' statement of the sensations and thought and ideas, which may have been in the artist's mind, while he was creating these works. Thus the ultimate formations, created in these drawings of criss-cross and 'merging', 'submerging' lines, have a 'reality' of their own, which attracts us. And we want to come back to them again and again. Sheer beauty, and refined shape of thin, and not so thin lines, is captivating, and even without 'distilling' any signifiers from them, we can rejoice in their aesthetic substance itself. These drawings form separate areas, then create their own 'bridges' which join them. Thus in the sojourn a viewer, passes through many winding and unwinding paths, and bridges. the drawings are in black & white only, with shades of greys; and without attempting any consciously done tonal variations, Ramkumar succeeds each time in giving an organic and natural look to these drawings. This aspect of Ramkumar's drawings, subtly transmits into us a Saundarya of a rare quality.

Some of the drawings show the traces of architectural



constructs, and some images, shapes and figures emerge in certain drawings, some contain a geometrical familiarity, but even these have a germinal essence of their own; and do not seem to carry any external Weight of 'seen' objects. A lightness of being pervades here, yet, this lightness has the capacity to carry in it, a 'discourse' and dialogues created out of the lines, to remember and to be taken forward.

Ramkumar has observed once: "An artist shows the entry point to his creative world and the rest depends on the onlooker, what he sees, feels and interprets. He has to make an effort to find for himself what he is seeking and what the artist wants him to see".

The entry point' in these drawings is not ordained, in-fact there are multiple entry points, and one may seek entry from any angle and from any spot of these drawings this is one more quality of the ultimate 'structure' these creations have to offer. This makes these drawings truly 'open ended'; there are no barricades or divisions as such, and the eyes have an easy access to the any area, any spot they would like to rest for a while, and rejoice in the marvelous formations of their choice.

Ramkumar has in-fact created here a meditative space by the use of lines, where one can also build and re-build one's own space to ponder over one's feelings, and thoughts, and along-with can cherish the feel one gets from these superb lines.

In our modern/contemporary art scene, lines have been used by

many artists, including the artists of Ramkumar's generation and by the younger ones, in various ways strikingly, stunningly, violently, overtly but in the lines of Ramkumar and likes of Nasreen Mohammedi, one finds a refreshing course that is to use line in a sophisticated, delicate, and mild manner, to chart, to map, and to navigate the inner feelings, and emotions, in an unobtrusive manner.

For Ramkumar, if the Varanasi phase or that period has been a turning point in his paintings, it has been no less an inspirational period, for his drawings, which came on their own magnificently; giving him an 'expressive way' to grasp and say certain things, which could not be transmitted by his paintings. We know that Ramkumar has written many a stories in Hindi, with masterly perfection at one time, and with uniqueness has given Hindi short story, ways of rendering complex relations, and situations, in unfailing way. If in his stories he stands apart from other writers, in the same way his paintings and drawings also have his unique and 'separate' imprint on them. Thus, these drawings 'independently', and intently, have unique flavor, and flair within the oeuvre of Ramkumar. To be with them is to be with serene, calm, and sublime feelings; and is to enter spaces, where multiple movements, 'happenings', gatherings (of sensations) are awaiting us.

**-Prayag Shukla**



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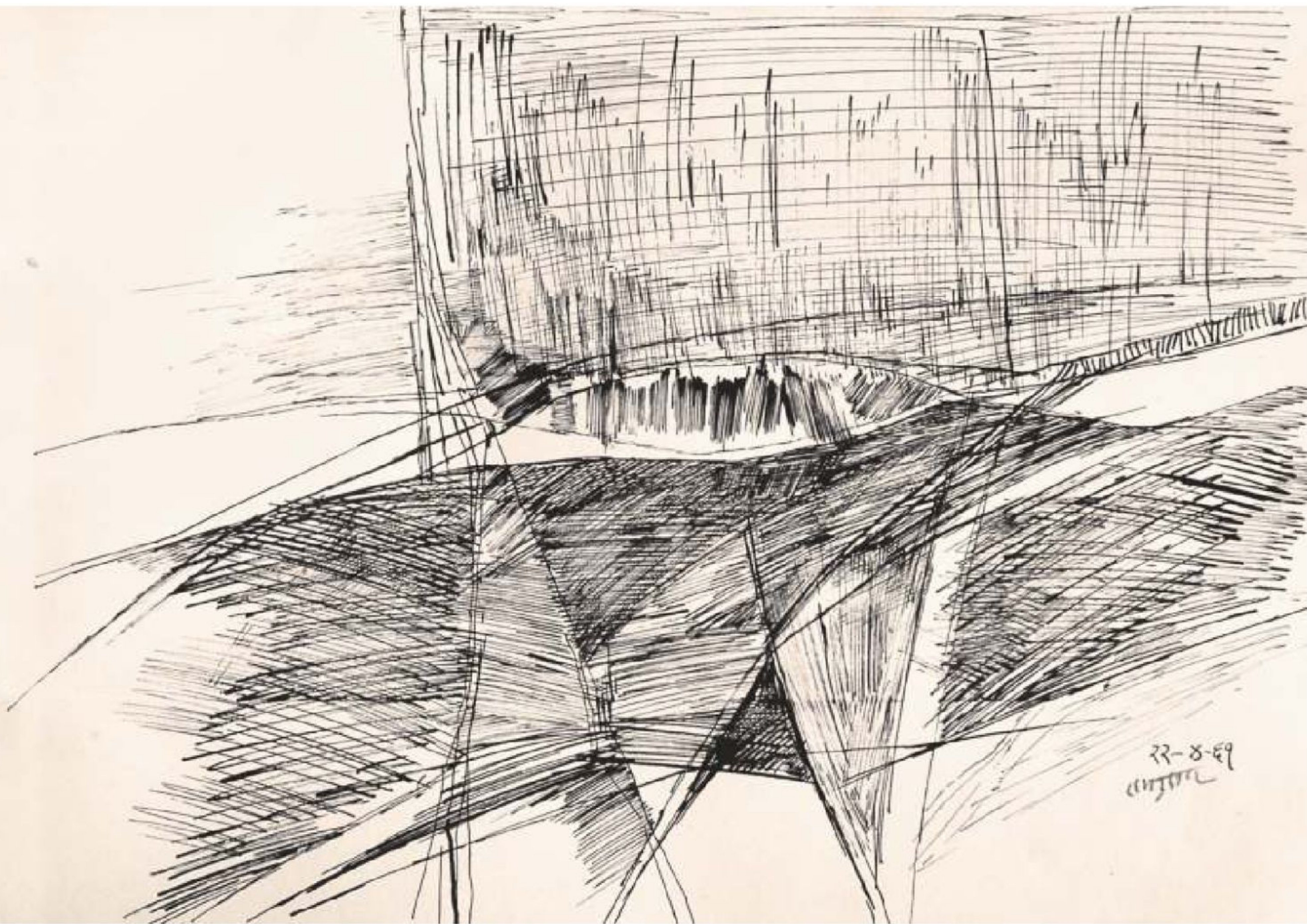




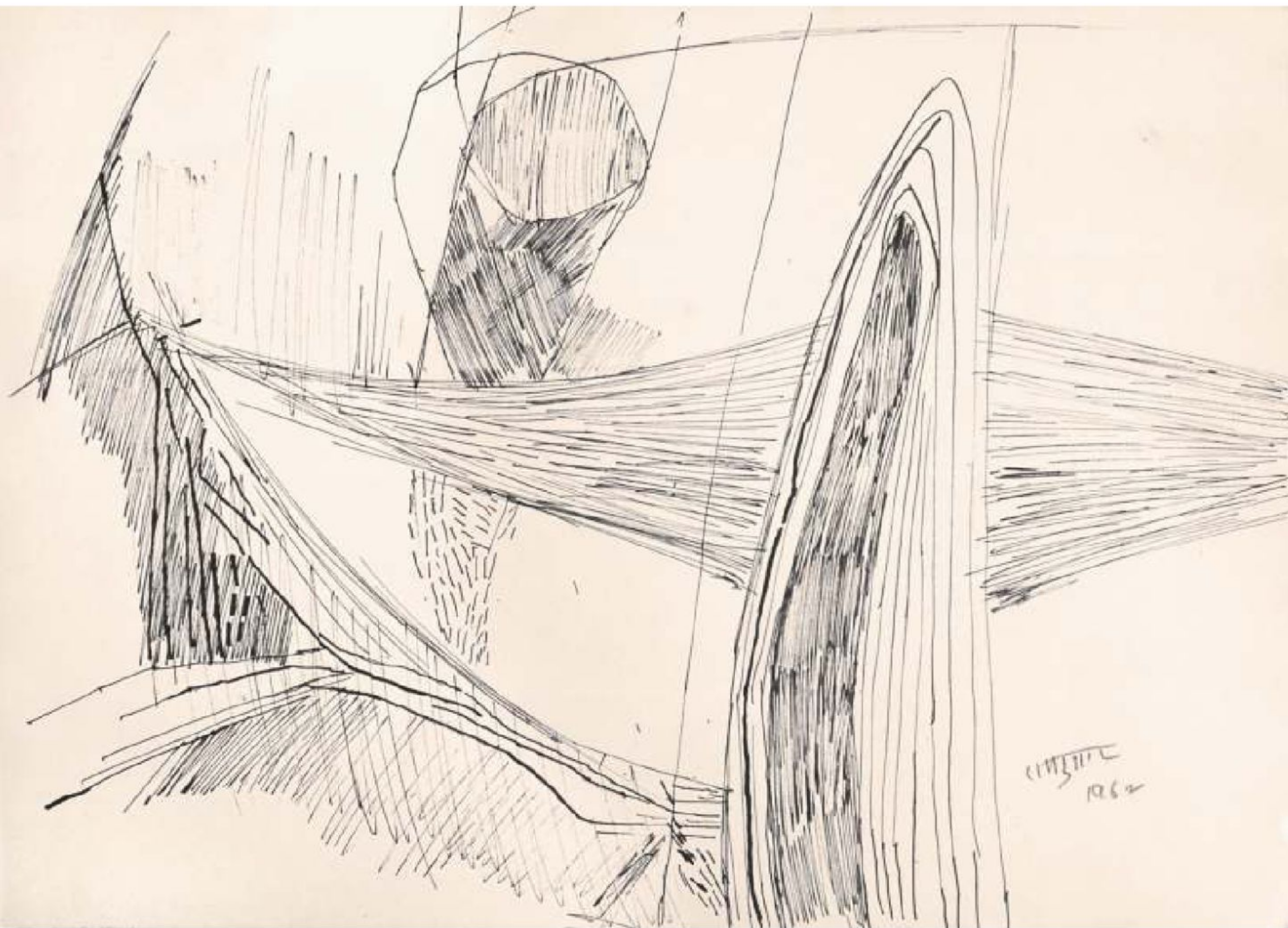










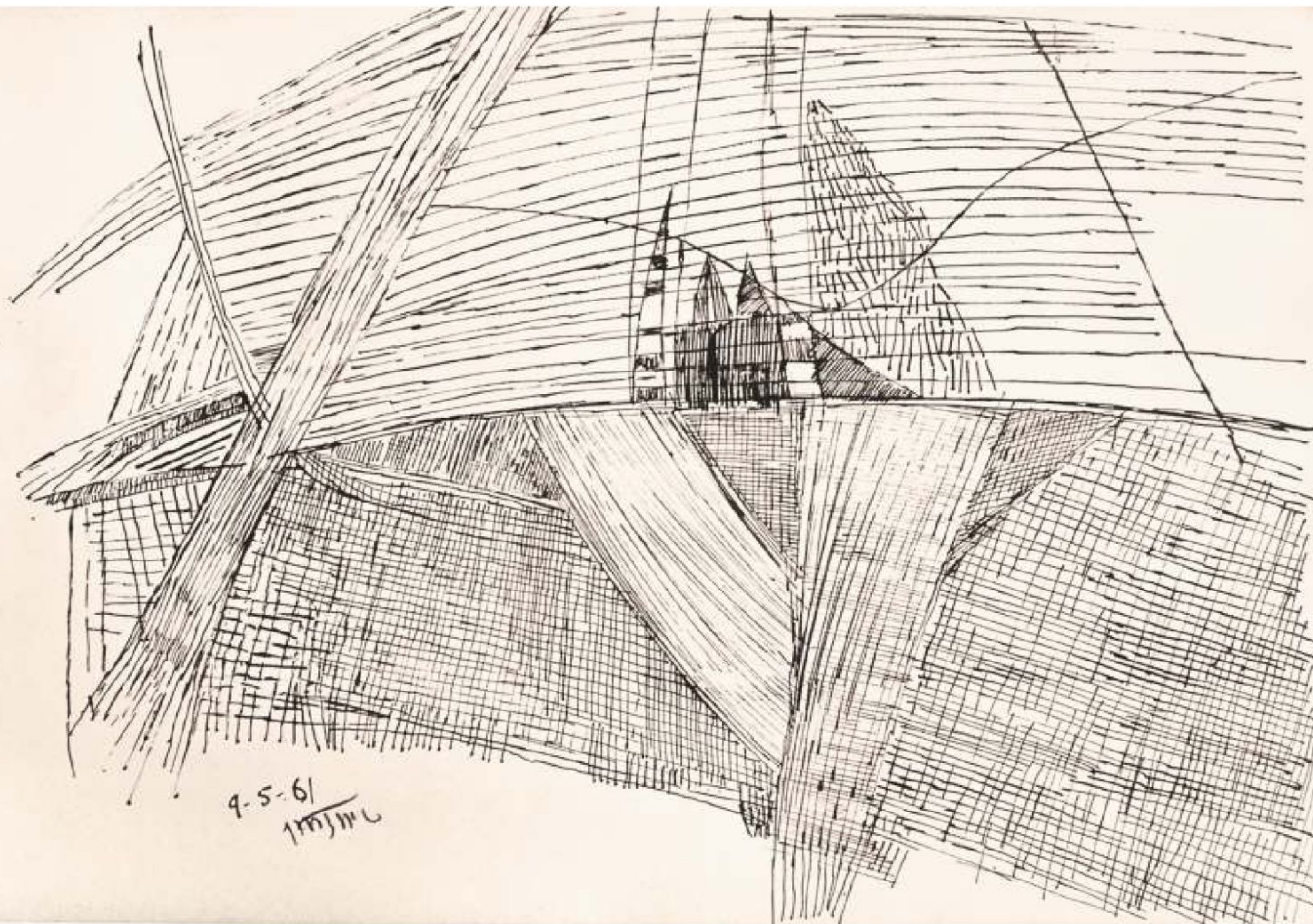




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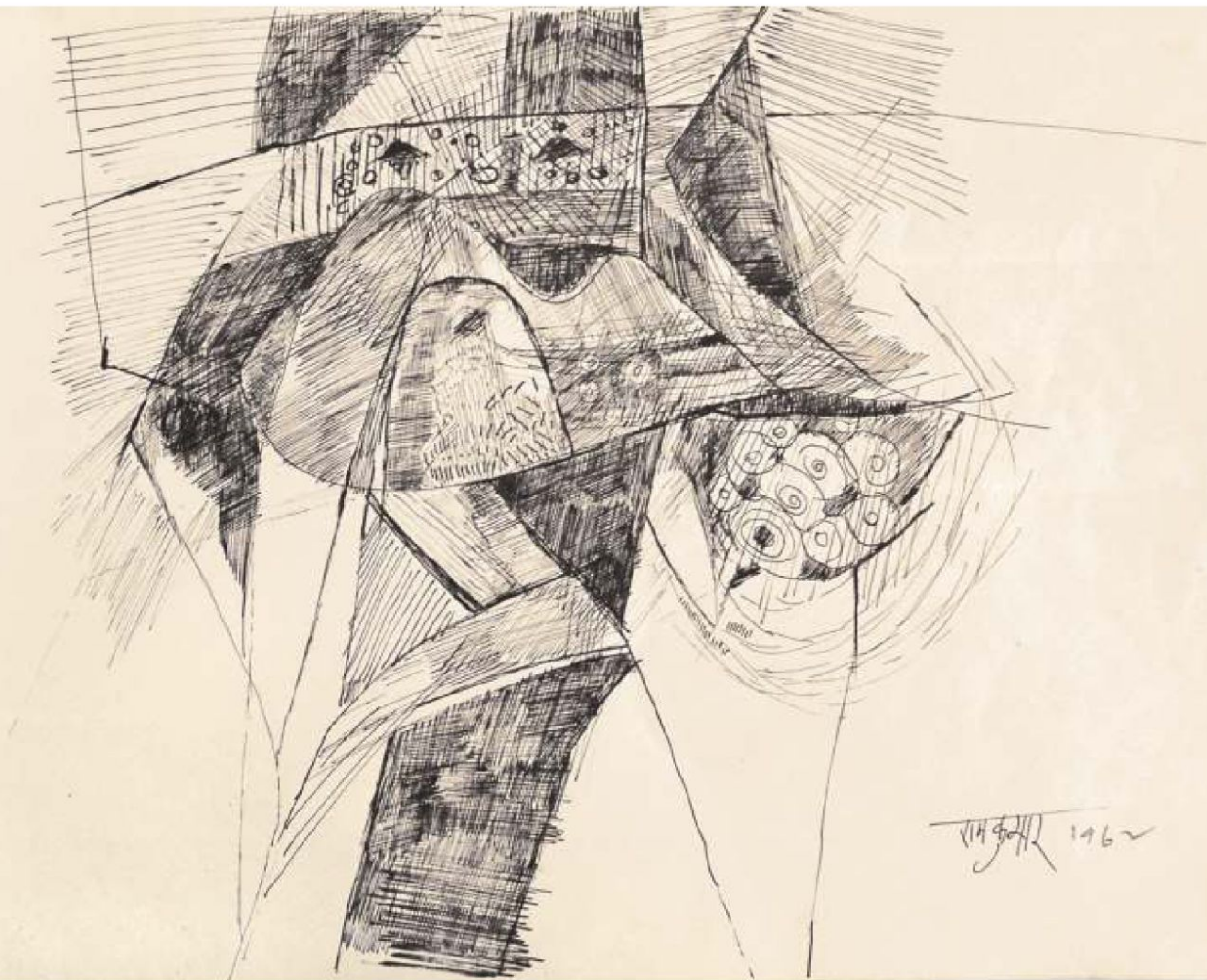






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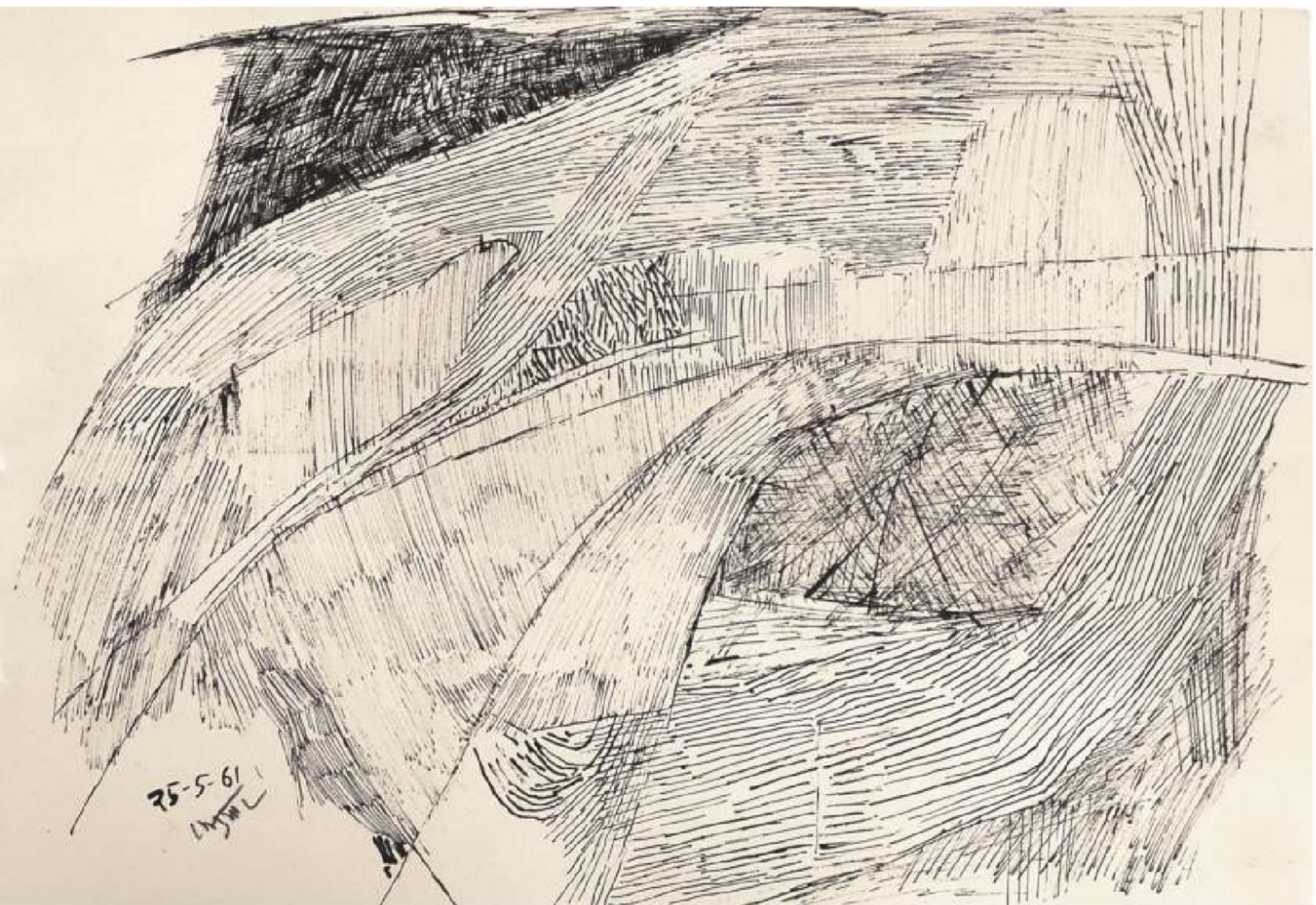




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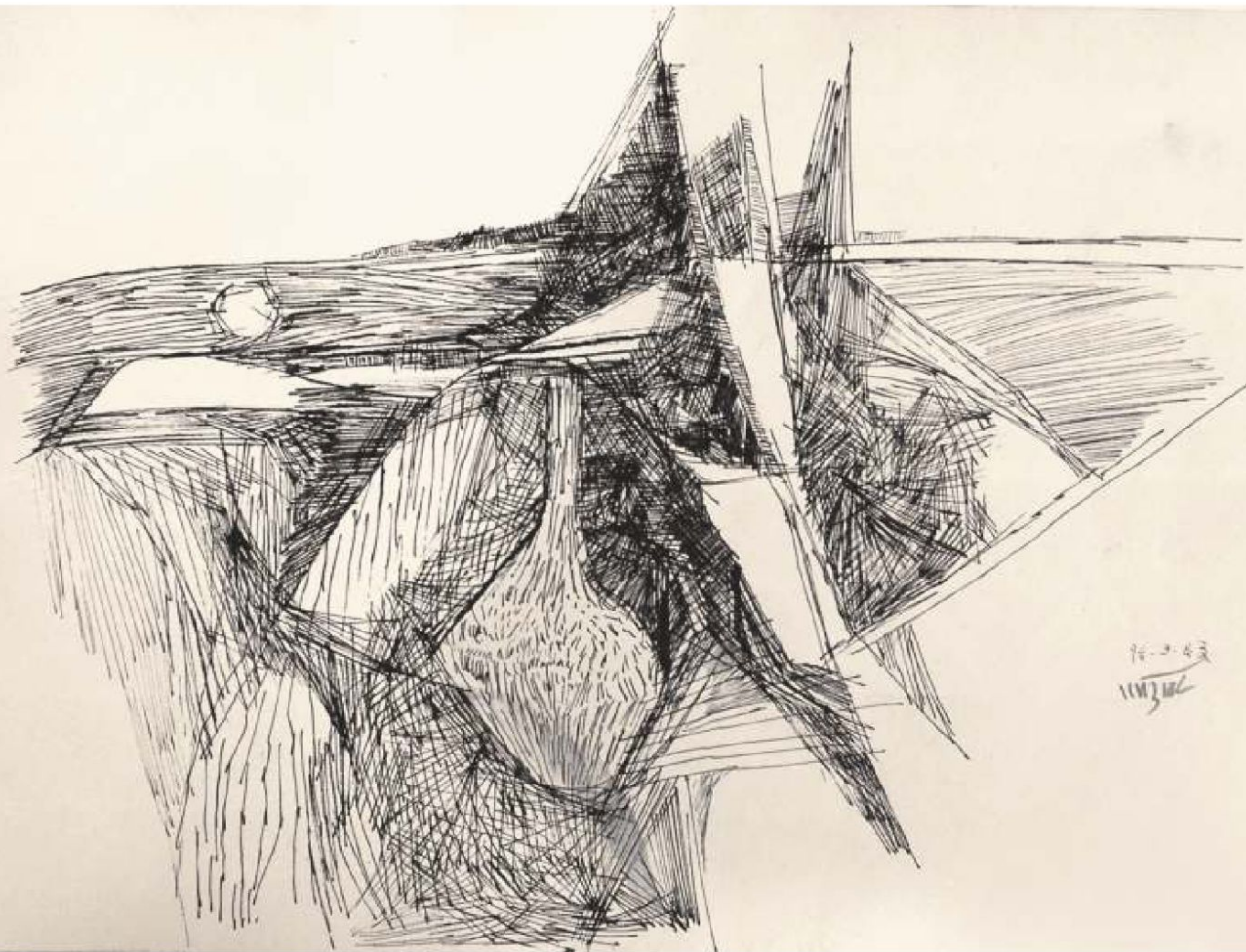
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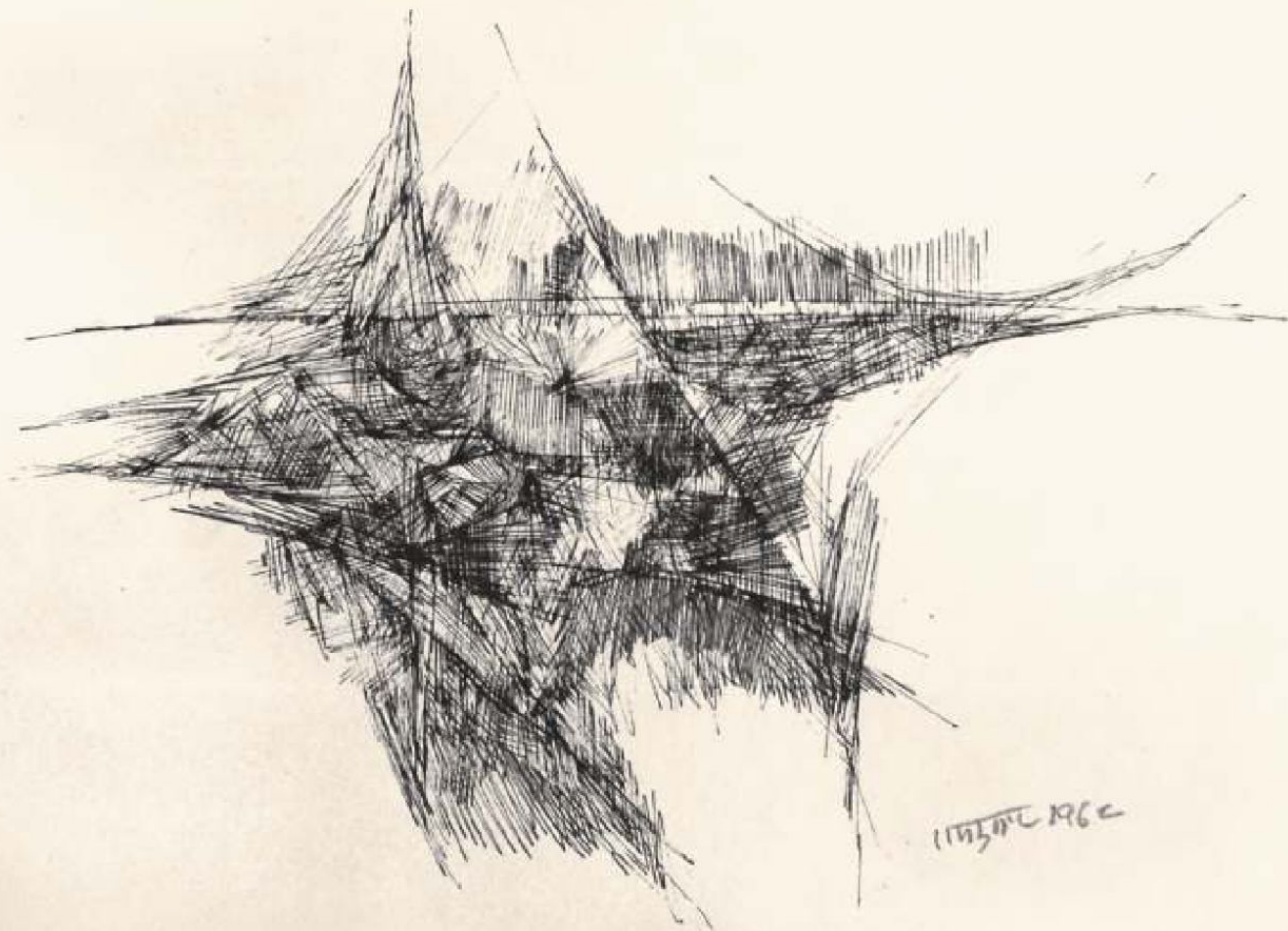




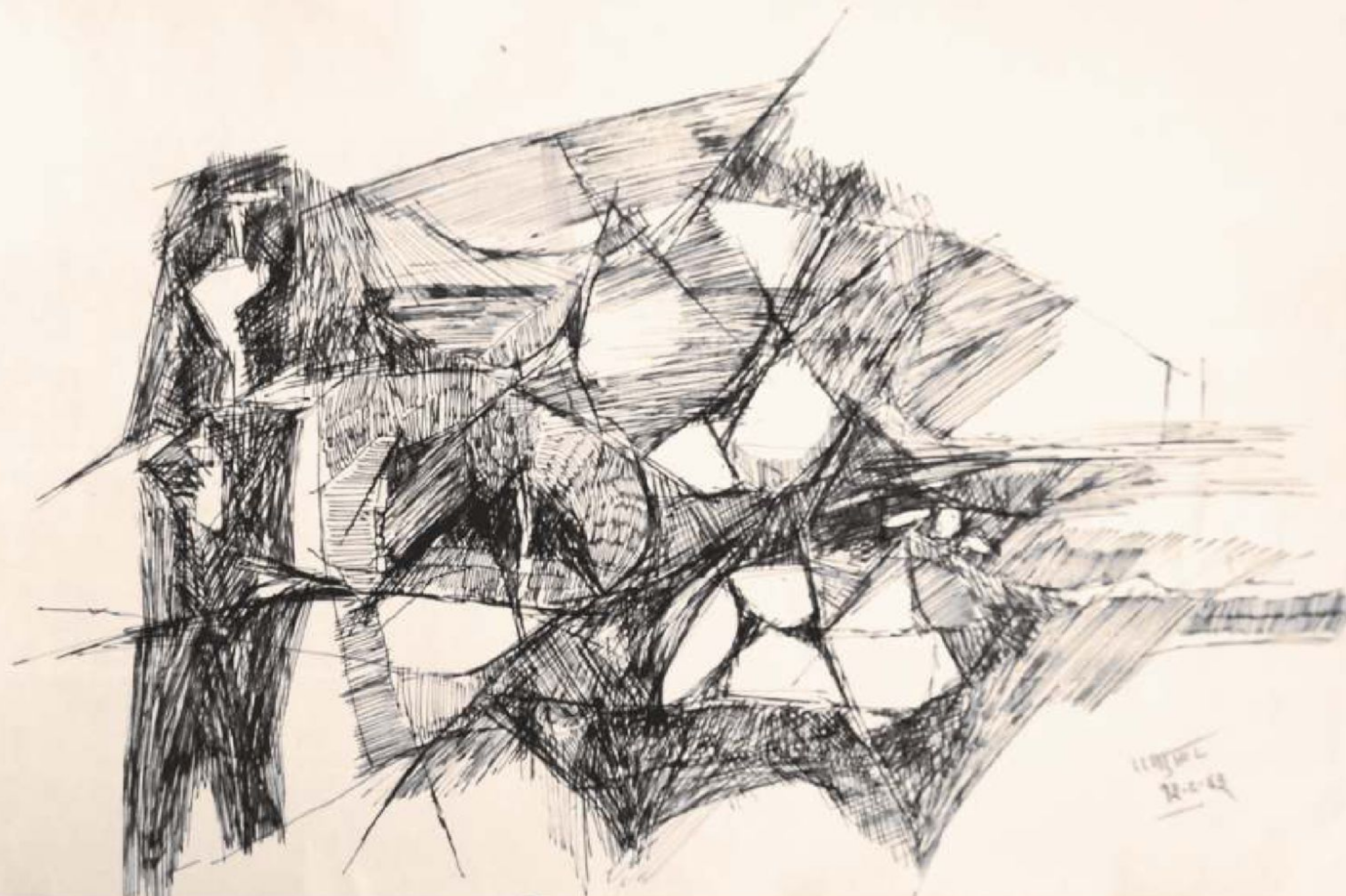
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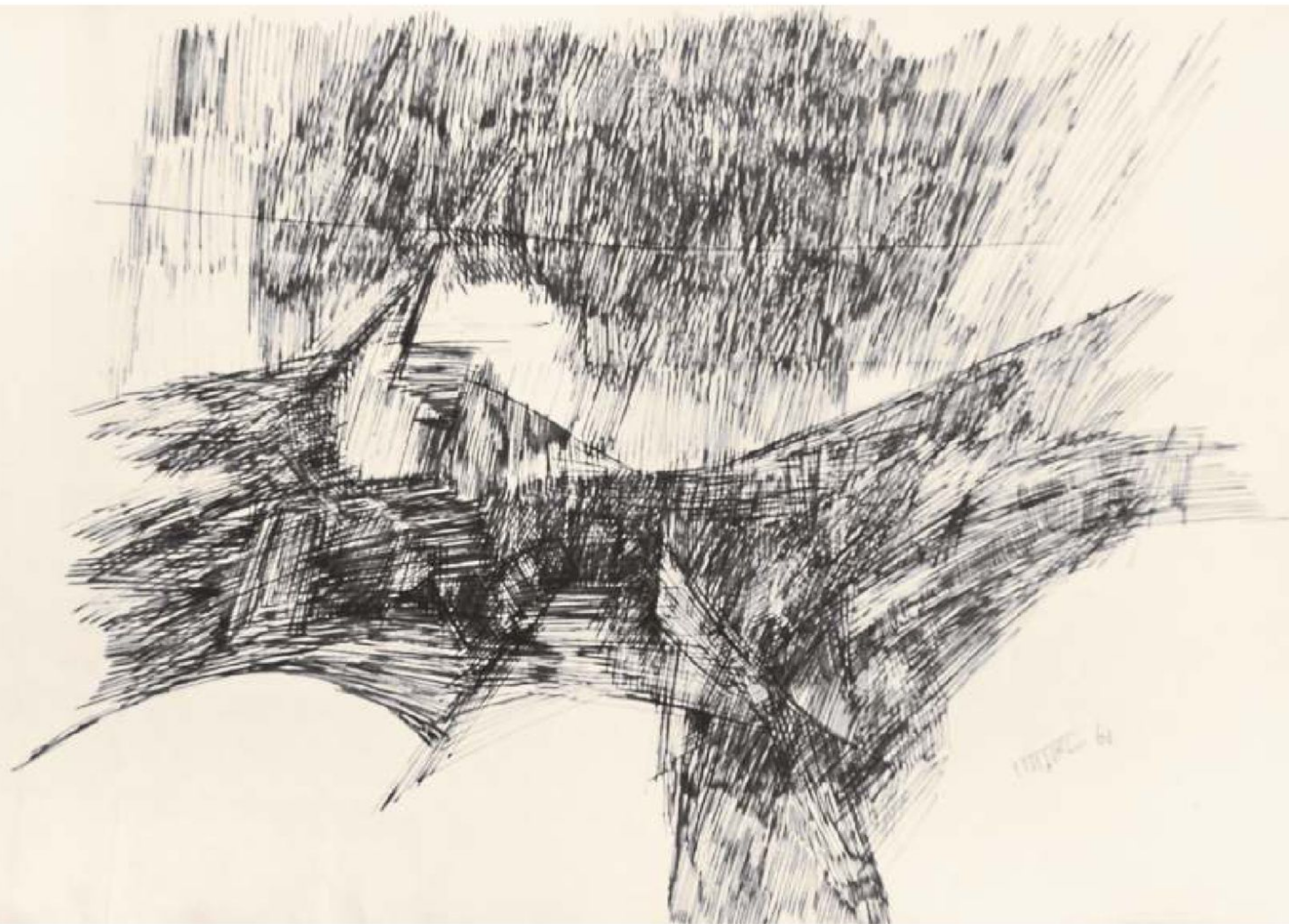










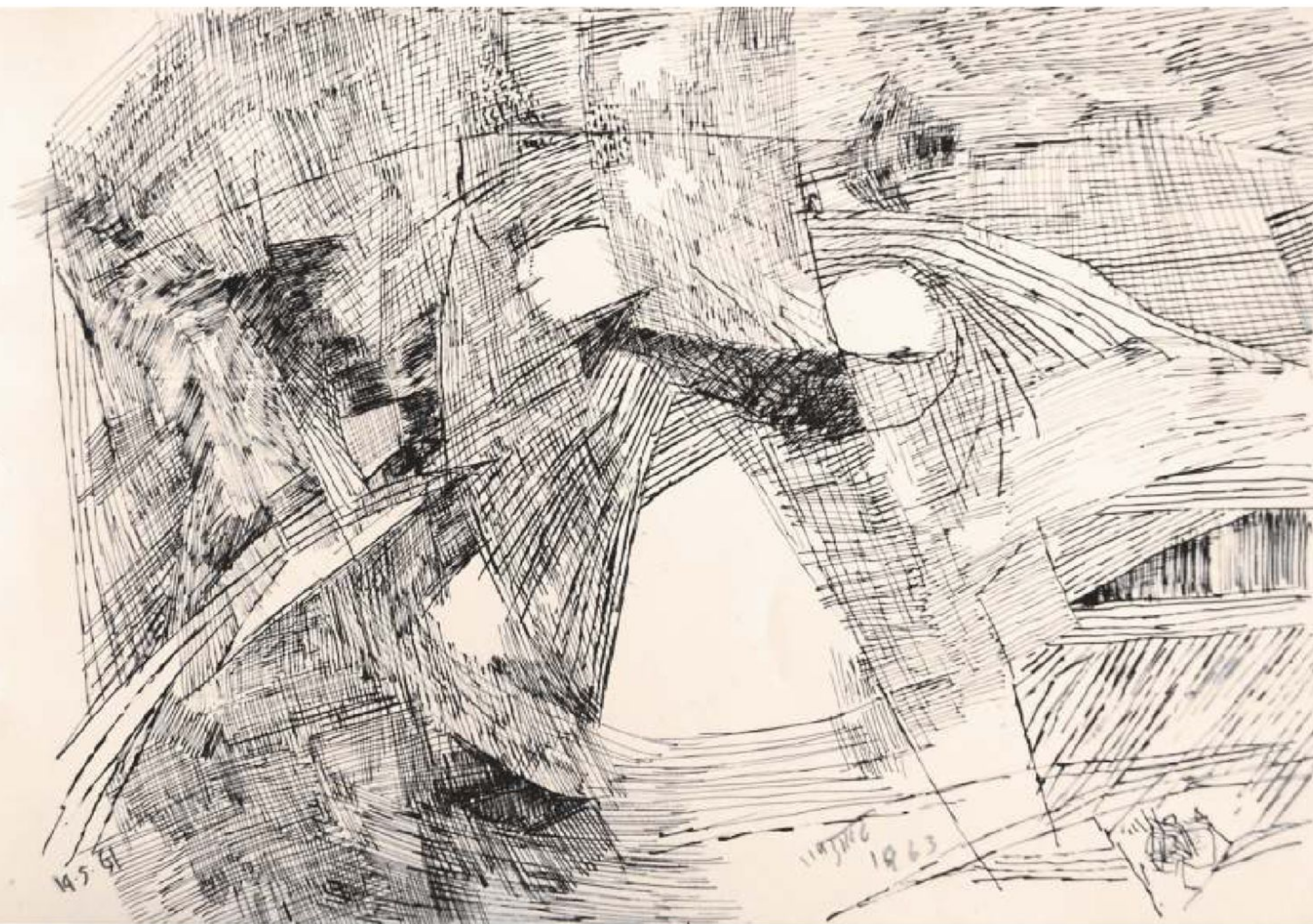






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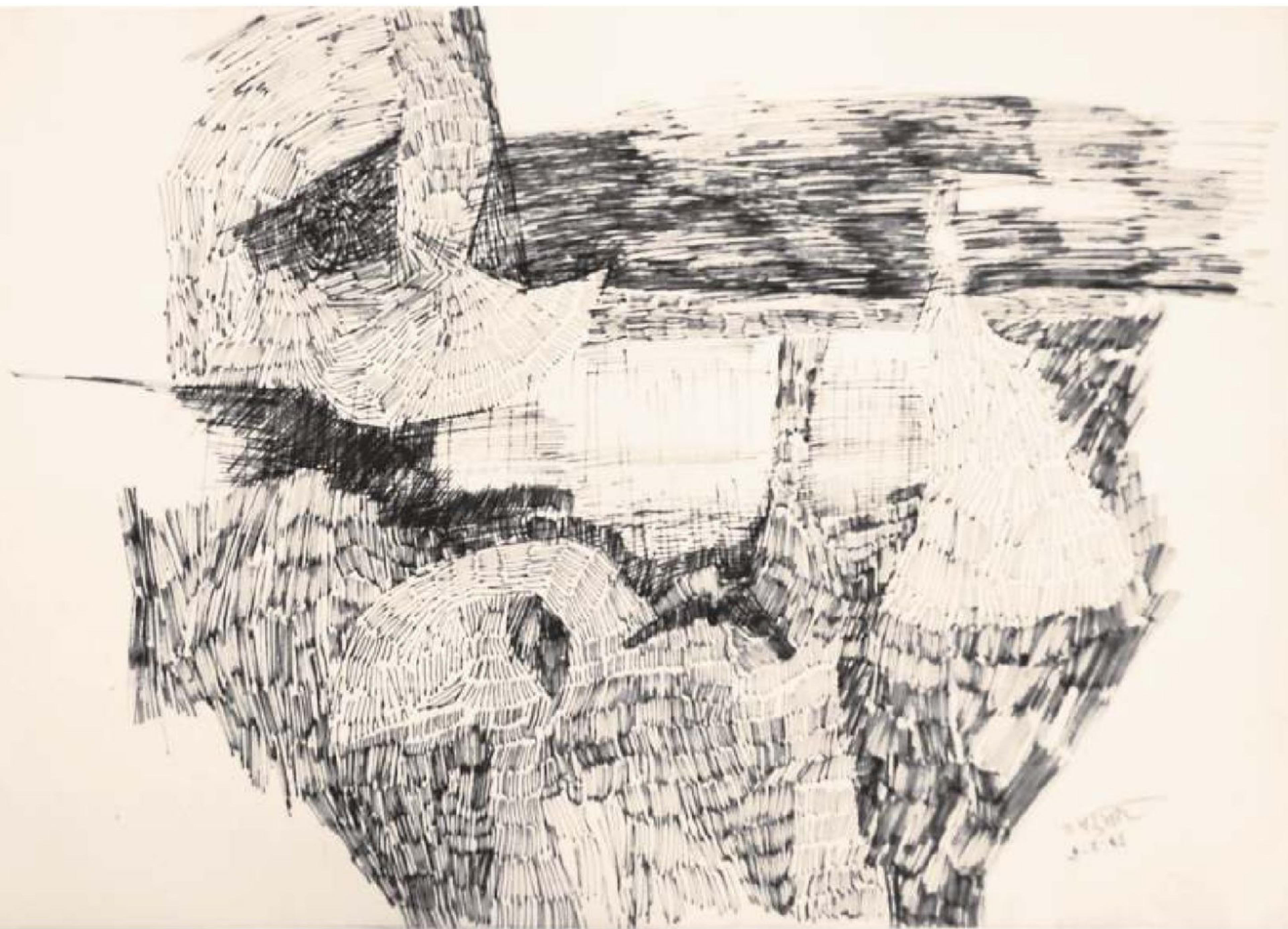


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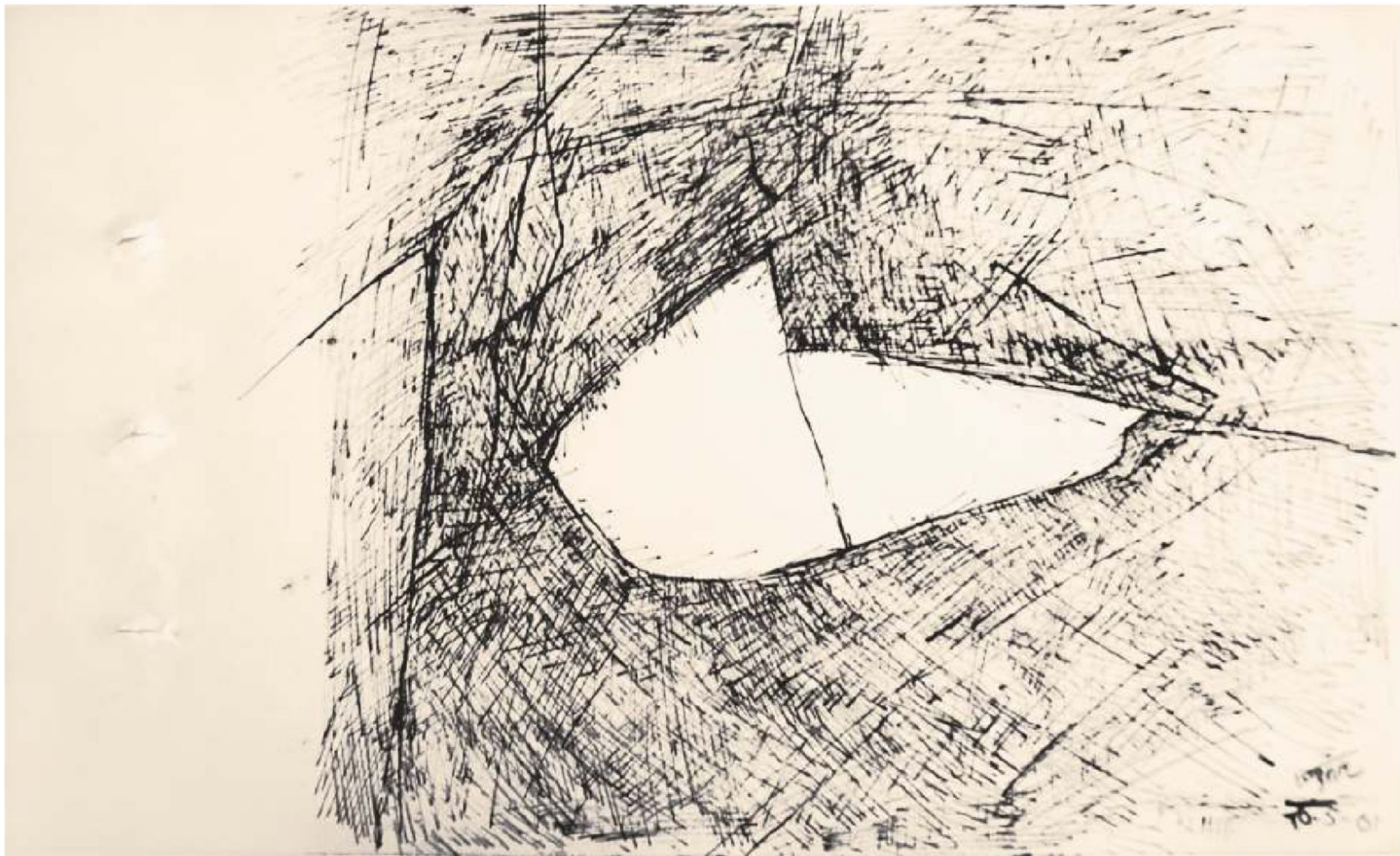
















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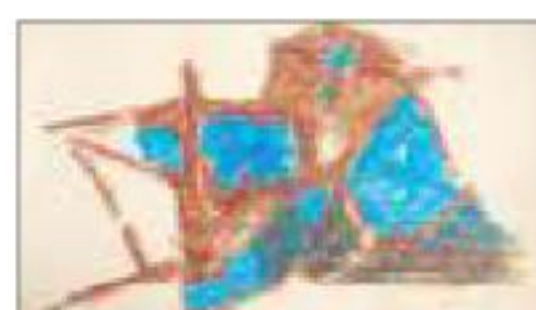
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