

JOY IN LINES



FINAL REPORT

by Stefan Zsaisits

THE DRAWING CAFE

Project and Artist Residency
Yokohama, 2025 / 09 / 01-30



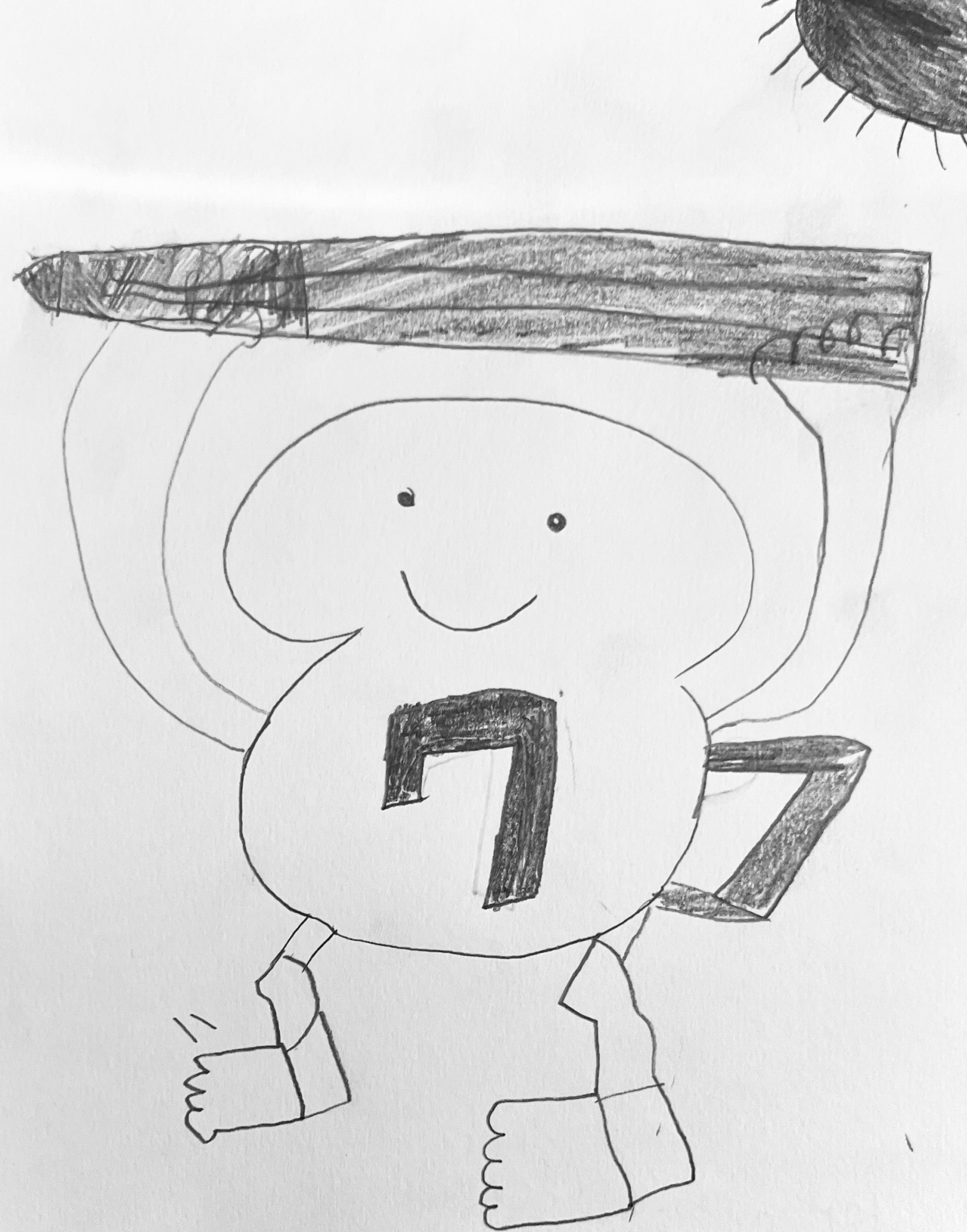
**You can't use up creativity.
The more you use,
the more you have.**

Maya Angelou

A space, an environment where people could join a creative process without pressure or expectations. This was the idea, the baseline around which the project „The Drawing Cafe“ grew. First in my head and then in reality. A universal, non-verbal language of expression should be spoken there, in form of an easy accessible technique everybody knows: drawing.

With simple materials — paper and pencils placed on every table — visitors of 7artscafe were invited to draw freely and contribute their works to a collective archive of creativity and imagination.

So over the course of four weeks, The Drawing Cafe evolved into more than just an exhibition or studio space; it became an open dialogue between people, where creativity could unfold naturally through everyday encounters. While spreading the joy of drawing, creativity and community interaction were encouraged, and intercultural exchange was invited and welcomed.



Drawing made by a guest of The Drawing Café
Pencil on paper, 2025

Process



One of the final drawing boxes

Preparation and Setup

Each table in the cafe featured a Drawing Box containing pencils, paper and necessary materials, along with an information flyer introducing *The Drawing Café*.

The flyer invited visitors to draw freely and explained that every submitted drawing would be entered into a raffle for an original artwork. The simple setup made participation spontaneous and accessible to everyone.

Daily Routine and Artistic Practice

I was present in the cafe at least three days a week for around three to four hours. The rest of the time, I was able to work on my own drawings and projects in a shared studio in Koganecho. The contrast between the quiet, concentrated atmosphere of the studio and the lively, open environment of *The Drawing Café* was at first challenging but became more and more important for me, inspiring and joyful.

While the studio offered solitude and focus, the cafe provided personal interaction and exchange. The open drawing sessions in 7artscafe often turned into personal encounters - touching, inspiring, and funny. Meeting people, hearing their stories, and observing their creative process became a deeply rewarding part my residency.

Help

The cafe staff kindly introduced guests to the project and encouraged them to join. Their help was especially important on the days I was not at the cafe, as the project continued even without my presence.

Participation

An estimated 70 small drawings were created by guests during the project, and every single one was hung on the walls of 7artscafe, regardless of the artist's experience or skill. Together, they formed a collective portrait of everyone who took part. In this way, the exhibition grew slowly and naturally over time.



Exhibition View

Who joined

Participation was higher than I expected. People of all ages and skill levels joined - from experienced artists to those who hadn't drawn since childhood - making the collection diverse and authentic. Participants included locals, tourists, students, and other artists. This mix created an open and welcoming atmosphere in the cafe.

The 15 winners of the price raffle received each one small original artwork created during my drawing sessions at the cafe. The raffle was conducted as a blind draw, ensuring that every participant had an equal chance.

How people engaged

Visitors responded best when the project was briefly explained and then left open to their interpretation and pace. Some drew confidently, others hesitated - but what touched me most were the moments that followed: quiet concentration, animated conversations, and laughter shared among friends.

These experiences showed me how creativity can bring people together, and how the act of making is at least as valuable as the pursuit of "art."

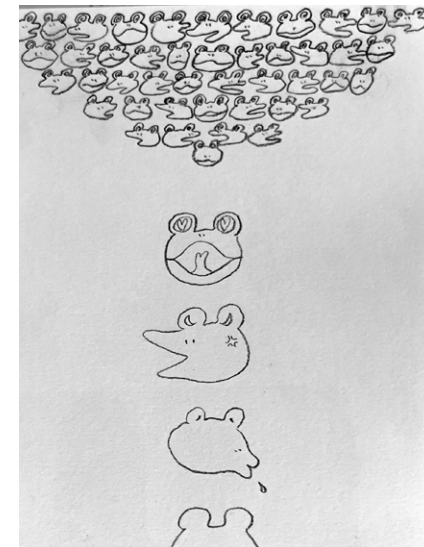
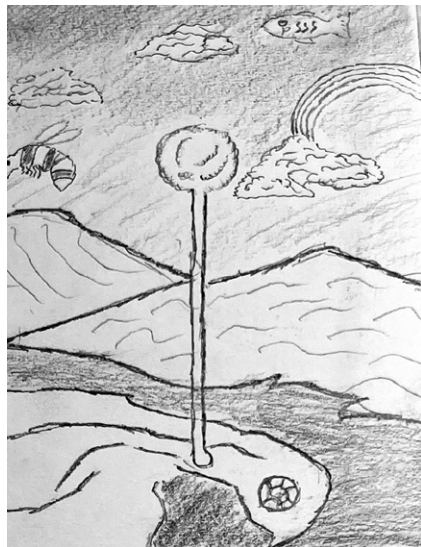
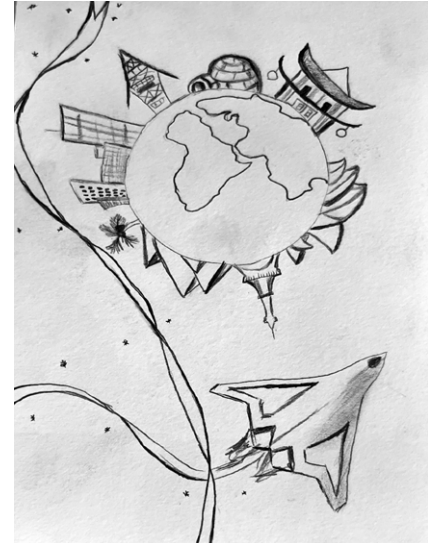
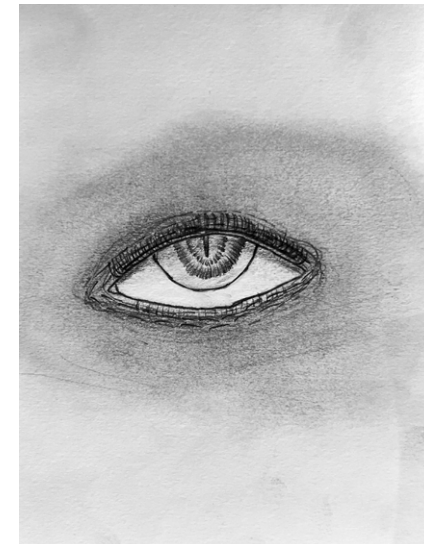
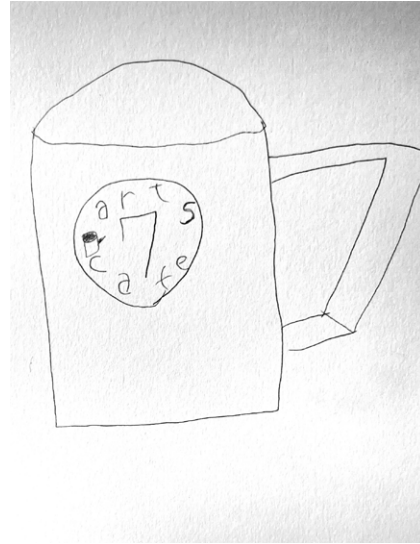
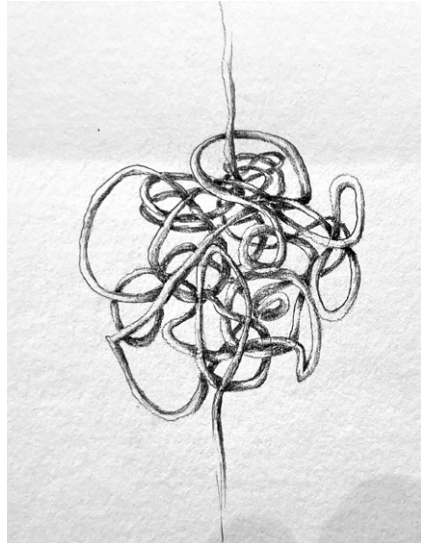
The subjects varied widely - from portraits, flowers, animals, and coffee cups to abstract and surreal compositions. Some drawings were simple doodles, others surreal or precisely rendered - but each one revealed something personal.



Exhibition View

Gallery

Here are just very few examples of the many wonderful drawings and diverse ideas created in The Drawing Cafe, showcasing the wide range of motifs and styles.



Recap



The cooperation with Joseph and his team at 7artscafe was excellent - I felt welcome from the first day, and they trusted me with all decisions related to the project, which was very valuable.

Since *The Drawing Cafe* was only a temporary project and all that remained were shared memories, I was very happy to be trusted with creating permanent pieces - a drawing on a door inside 7artscafe and one by the window. It means a lot to know that I was able to leave a small part of my work in a place and city I loved spending time in.

Although the time was limited, I was able to work independently on my own art and even participated in Shodo and Sumi-e workshops, which helped understanding the technique and materials behind it. Furthermore, I gained insight into the local art scene around Koganecho, meeting and connecting to several other interesting, inspiring artists in residence as well.

Furthermore: The project budget was generous and covered all needs. It allowed me to organise and carry out *The Drawing Cafe* with the needed flexibility and care.

„I'm Leaving my Hands“
Pencil on wooden door
2025, 7artscafe

Challenges

In my view, the planning and preparation months ahead together with 7artscafe made the project run smoothly from start to finish.

Coming from a small village somewhere in the Austrian countryside, I naturally had to adjust to life in a city like Yokohama. At first it was challenging. But after a few days, I got used to the rhythm of the city and began to enjoy both its quiet corners and its bustling streets, along with all the impressions it had to offer. Walking through the city every day became one of the experiences I cherished most and will remember for hopefully a long time.

If I had to name one obstacle or challenge that I underestimated, it would be the language barrier. Many local people were shy about speaking English, and I often wished I could communicate more easily. If I would get the chance to do a similar project in Japan again, I would spend much more time learning Japanese beforehand so I could at least communicate on a basic level.

But!

At the same time, the project showed that art and creativity form a universal language! Even without shared words or cultural background, it was possible to connect, collaborate, and understand one another on a non verbal level through enjoying art and the act of making.

Finally

The Drawing Cafe showed how open and collective creativity can build genuine connections between people. When everyone is invited to take part, creativity becomes a shared experience rather than just an individual act. It creates space for dialogue, play, and mutual understanding.

Working in another culture, far from home, reminded me how art can cross language, social, and cultural boundaries. Most of all, it reminded me why I chose art as the lens through which I try to understand the world: we learn from one another - not only about our differences, but, most importantly, about what we have in common.

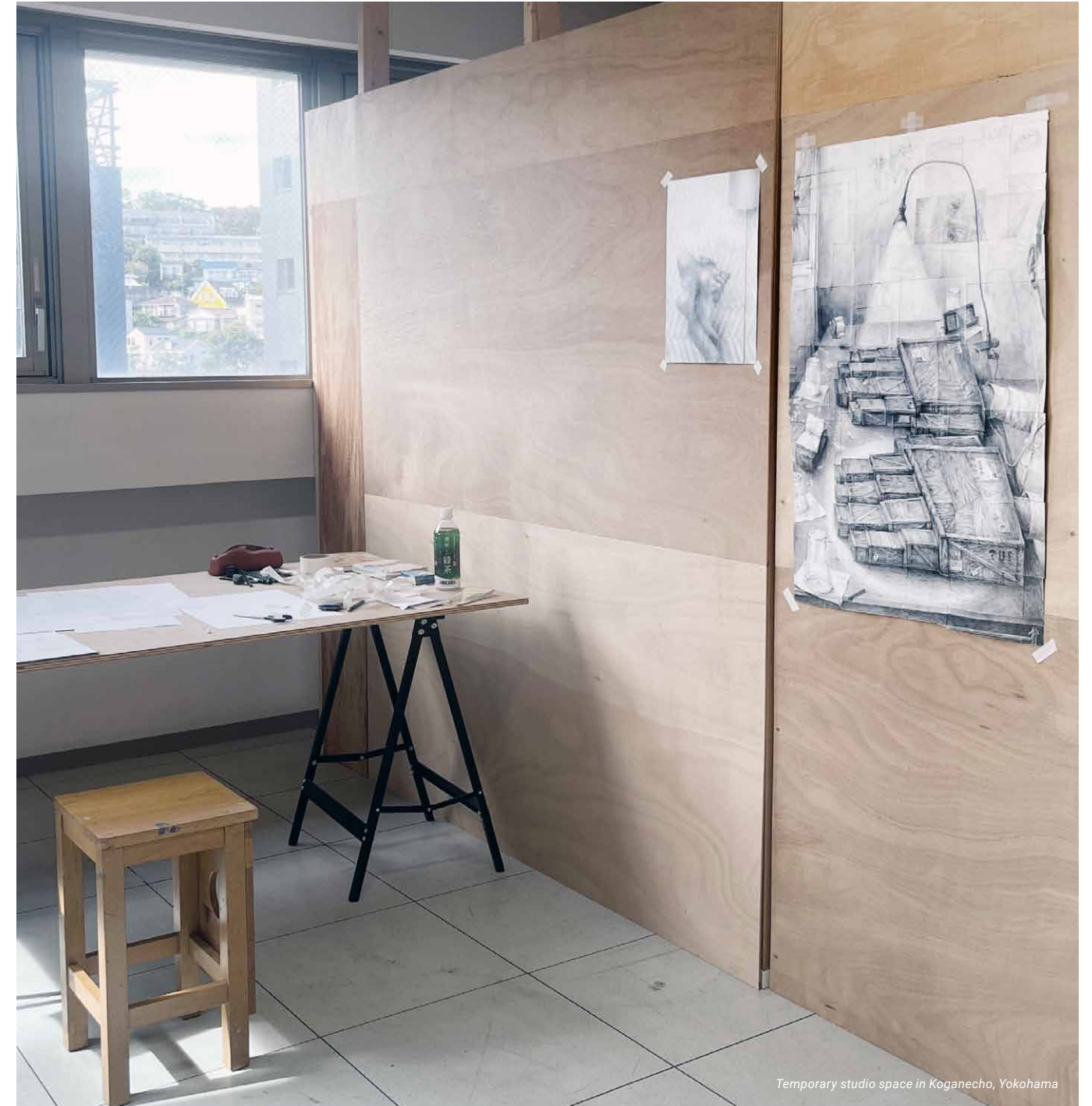
Thanks

Thanks to the Edeiken International Artist Foundation and 7artscafe for making this dream come true and for trusting me throughout the process.

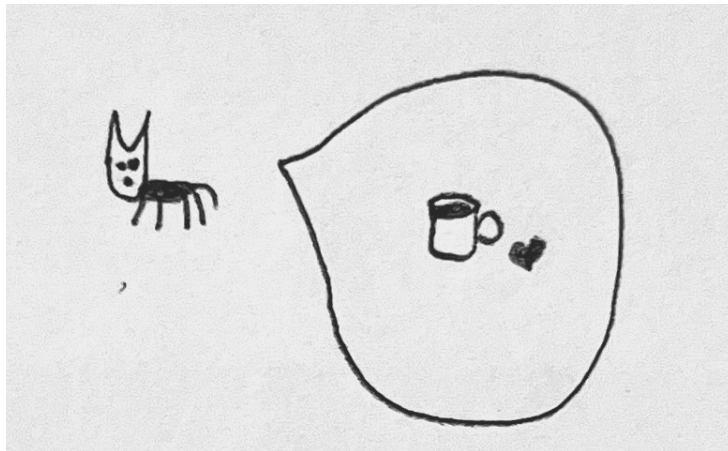
Thanks to everyone who joined *The Drawing Cafe*, took the time to create a drawing, and helped making the project a success.

And thank you, Yokohama, for your kindness throughout my time there. I loved every moment spent wandering your beautiful streets, the quiet and the bustling ones.

A special thanks to: Nicole Edeiken, Joseph Amato, Gabi & Kaori, Glenn Scoggins, Kumiko Hamilton, Sammy Asami, Kimiko, and all the people around 7artscafe who made my stay so wonderful.



Temporary studio space in Koganecho, Yokohama



www.7artscafe.co.jp

www.zsaitsits.com