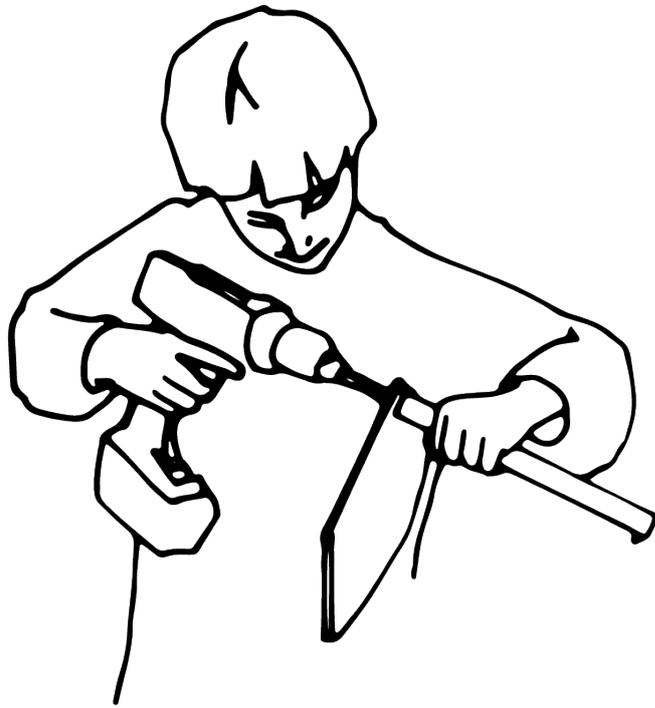


**Make your own**

*Make your own*

Make your own

W P Thomas 2018



**The obstinacy with which he held onto his precise, lucid principles throughout the years, while also managing to produce a great deal, is particularly impressive.**

*You call this is a series of mediocre drawings outlining a (faulty) process of making a (pointless) object.*

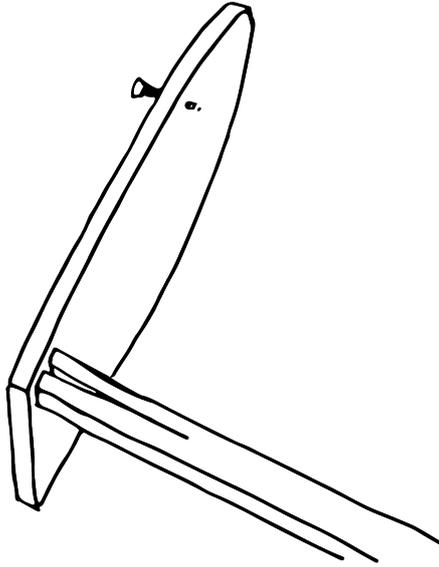
She thinks the word *Enquiry* sounds very rigorous and prescribed. She doesn't go into the studio and think 'now I'm going to "enquire"'. .



**It gives his art a solid foundation; and it is the force of his obstinacy that makes the foundation more and more solid.**

*You said you wanted to fabricate some of your door- / window-movement diagrams.*

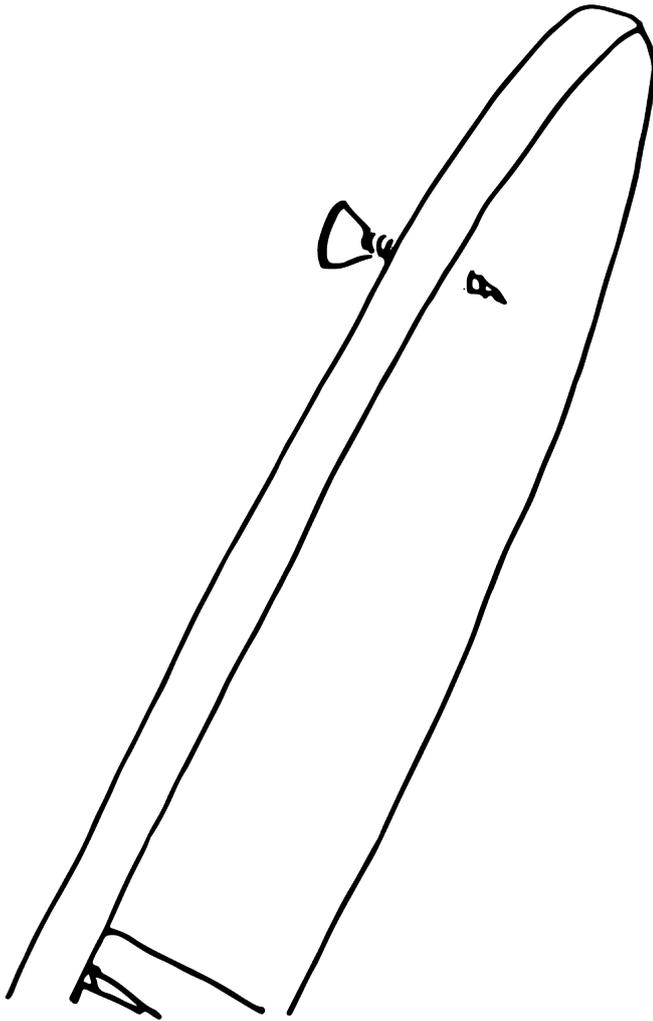
For her, the environment of the studio, its chaos, where things are sort of thrown down or a bag is opened, old bits of wood get stacked or things get cut and left as they fall, can generate new things.



**This inner conviction is morally exemplary - the conviction that art is not a divertimento or a frivolous excursion to thousands of possibilities.**

*These diagrams are of imagined (never realised) structures, describing the movement of a door or window.*

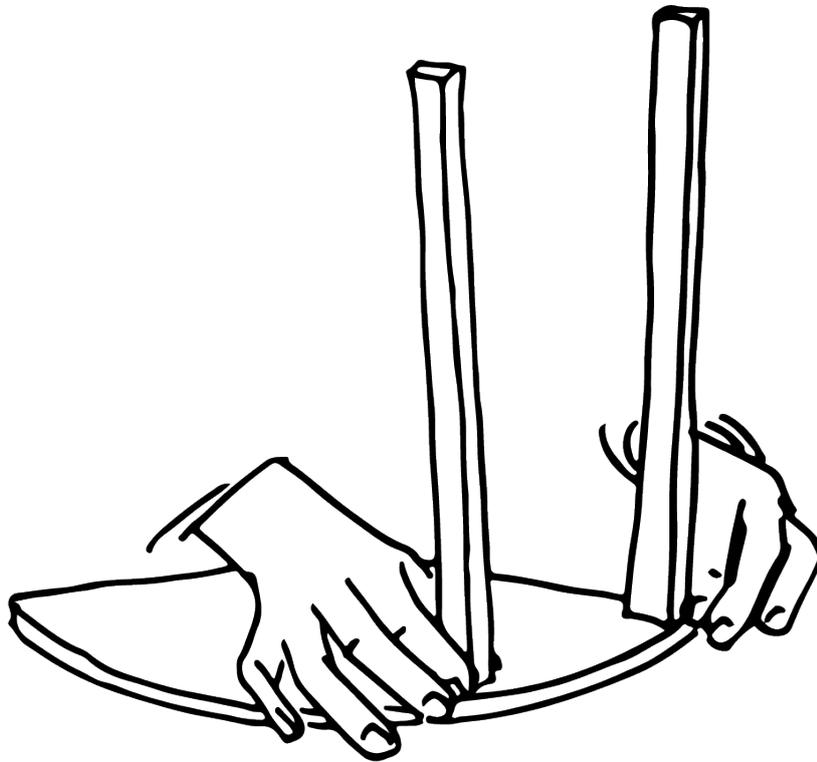
She thinks that the debris of the studio is a great resource, the coming and going and the shuffling of stuff around - often the enquiry isn't an intellectual thing,



**He adheres to his program with the plain and noble dedication of a farmer who ardently works his land year in and year out.**

*They're based on your misreading (wilful, I think) of the visual codes used in architectural technical drawing.*

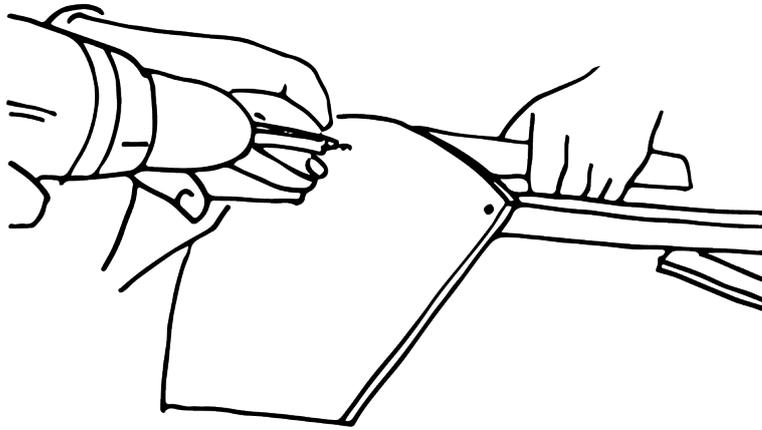
it's more a stumbling process where she's trying to find something that makes these things become almost like... take on a new existence - it's almost like a taming process.



**He has ceased to rely on inspiration and coincidental impulses, just as the farmer does not hope for a miracle but places his trust in concrete insight and experience.**

*Fabricating them was (yet) another thing you found challenging, to the extent that all you managed to make was a small maquette of a 25 cm high imagined window, 'moving' about a third of a full circle of movement (about 120°).*

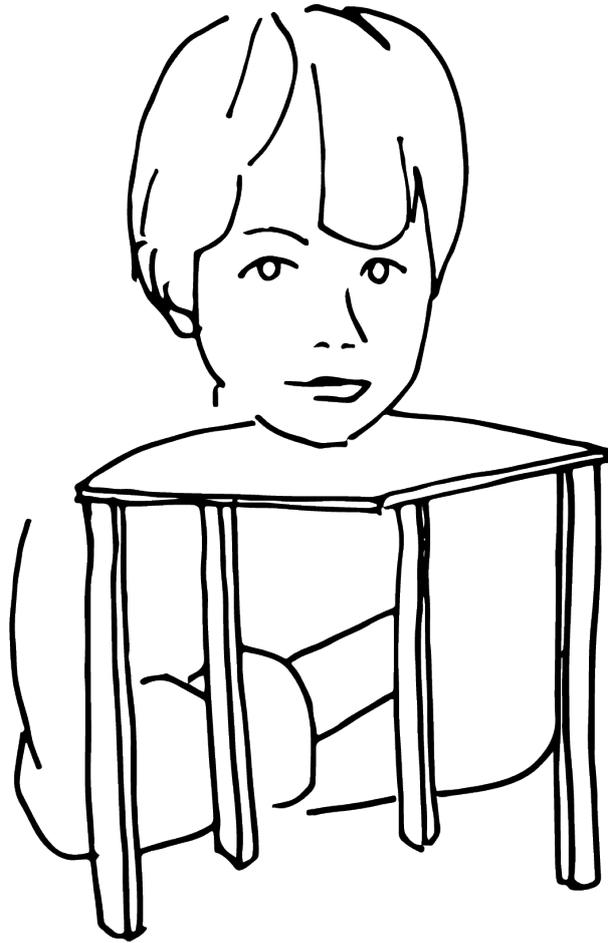
It doesn't have any specificity, other than it's got these materials; it could go this way up or that way up, etc., etc. until there is an approximate 'okayness' about it.



**It is as though all of the forms and constructions have long been part of the personal program;**

*The finish of the maquette is rubbish; you said you feel ashamed of it. But given your skill level, and the tools and material you have to hand, I think it would be hard for you to improve on the quality of the finish.*

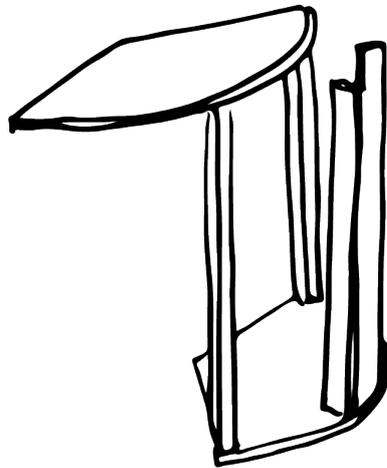
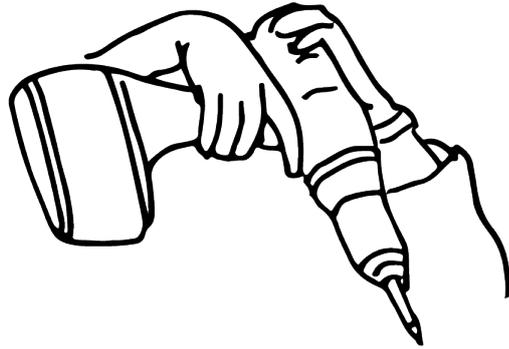
She's fascinated with approximation. That there could be another way but she's just decided that this is it for the moment.



**they are simply waiting here for the conditions that will bring them into reality.**

*You said that you think this shitness is worth exploring, rather than something to dismiss or correct.*

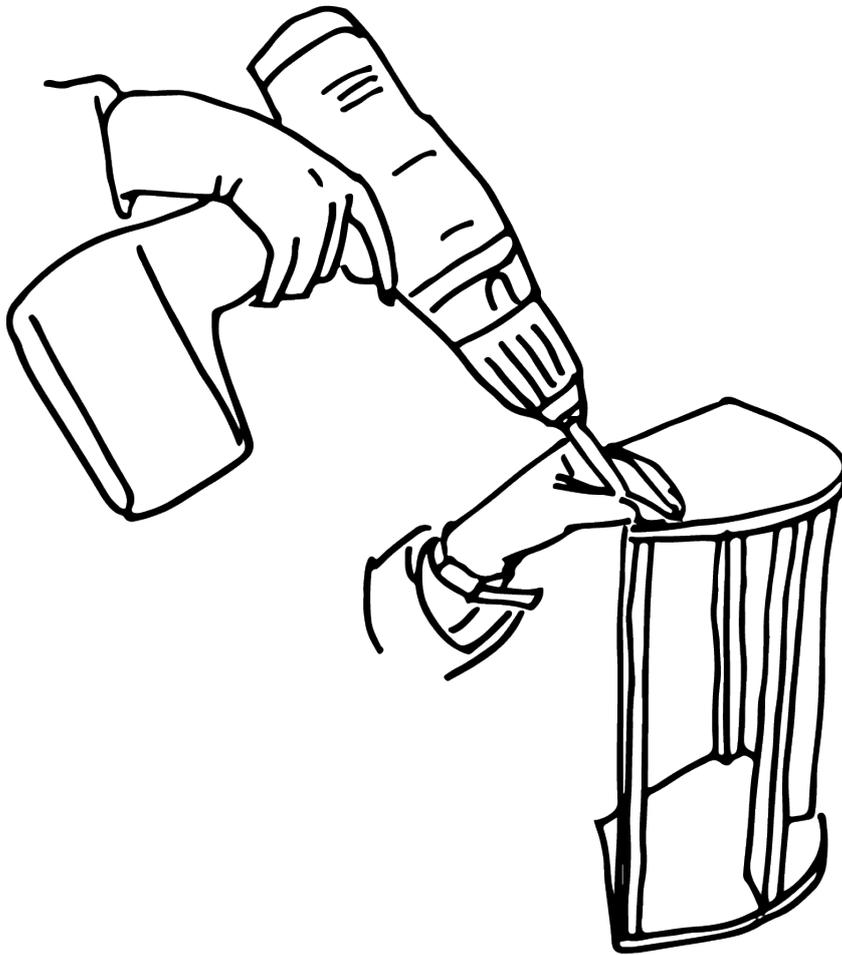
She's not a perfectionist and approximation lends itself to unfinishedness.



**The works give the impression of having arisen from a calm ability for aptness and thus never seem to be chance discoveries.**

*You decided to reconstruct the window-movement piece (having taken it apart shortly after fabricating it for the first time), with the help of your son and daughter (then 8 and 6 years old).*

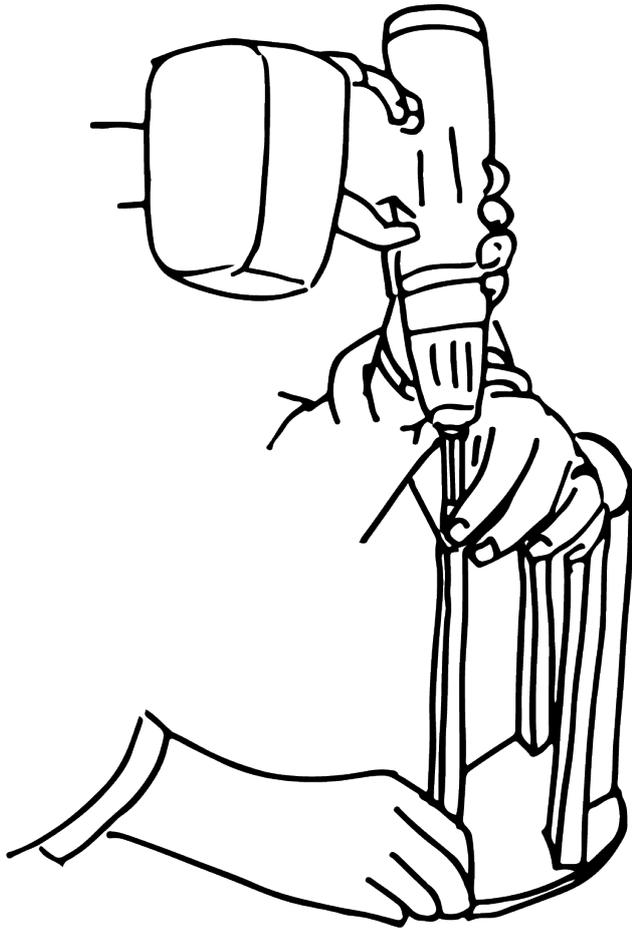
There is a point where she says she can accept that this is as it should be, it's an approximation of something that could be even better, but she doesn't know what that is.



**It is a way of doing and approaching without real aesthetic premise; the principle is therefore not compulsive in anyway whatsoever.**

*You documented the stages of making, including mistakes you made, and attempted to put together a series of instructional drawings - a 'how to make a useless maquette of a sculpture depicting movement in an irrelevant way, based on a deliberate misinterpretation of visual codes, badly' or 'the truth'.*

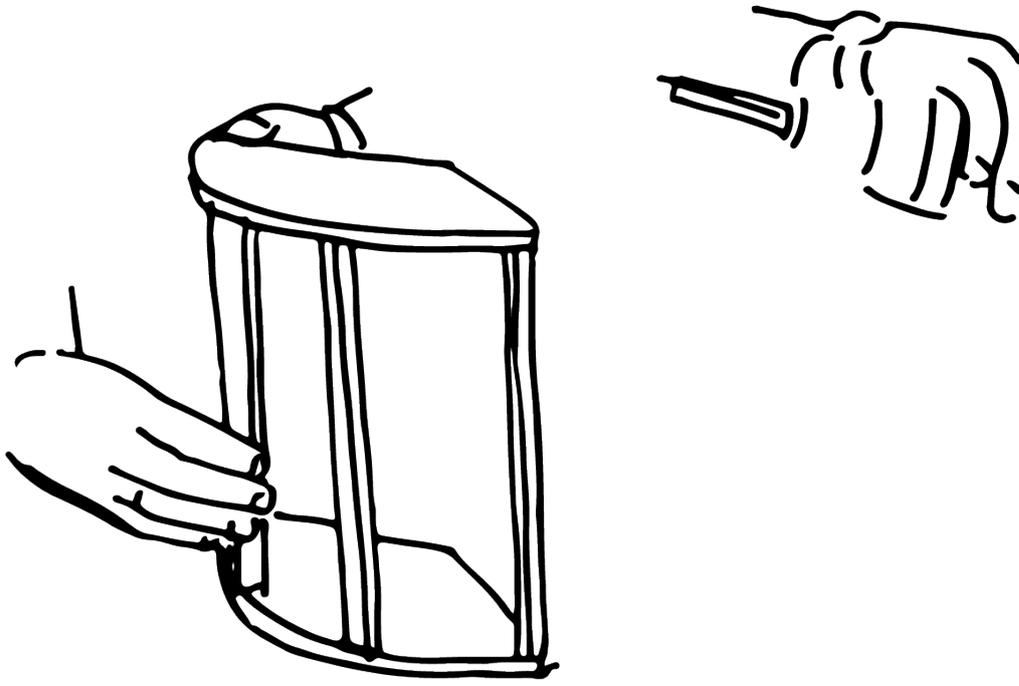
She goes into the studio without a formal sense of enquiry but almost a mixture of dread and also expectation, a very peculiar balance between those two; will anything happen today? Or will it be at no-go day - which does happen.



**That strongly professed principle, however, never assumes and orthodox character.**

*The selection of what to include/exclude in the drawings was based on a balancing of clarity and ambiguity, relevance and irrelevance.*

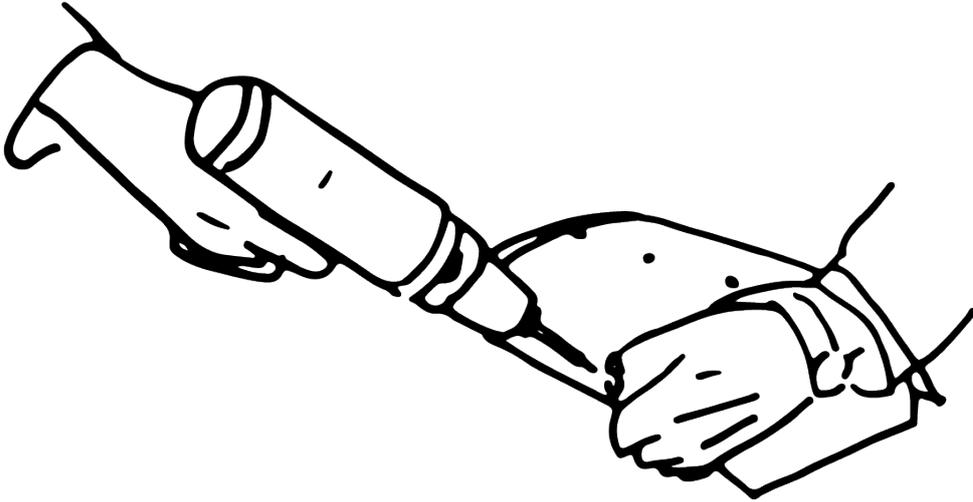
And having children can put a lot of pressure on what happens in the studio; it's not this joyous creative thing, it's actually quite fraught, you know.



**His work comes into the world, not as brilliant variants but as the end results of unwavering inner vision.**

*Relevant/irrelevant to what though? Including the faces of your son and daughter is not relevant to the explanation of the process of construction, but it is relevant to the reality of the record of your process.*

She said 'I need to go into the studio' and he said 'go now, for 10 minutes' and she went in the studio for 10 minutes. Because it's attached to the house it was possible.



**Perhaps his way of working can also be compared to that of an architect, who first formulates a building as a vast idea and then fills in the details.**

*Where the work felt kind of humorous to you, when you looked at it with them in mind it felt almost unethical that you should be exposing people who you love and regard as precious to this poor quality activity. But you carried on.*

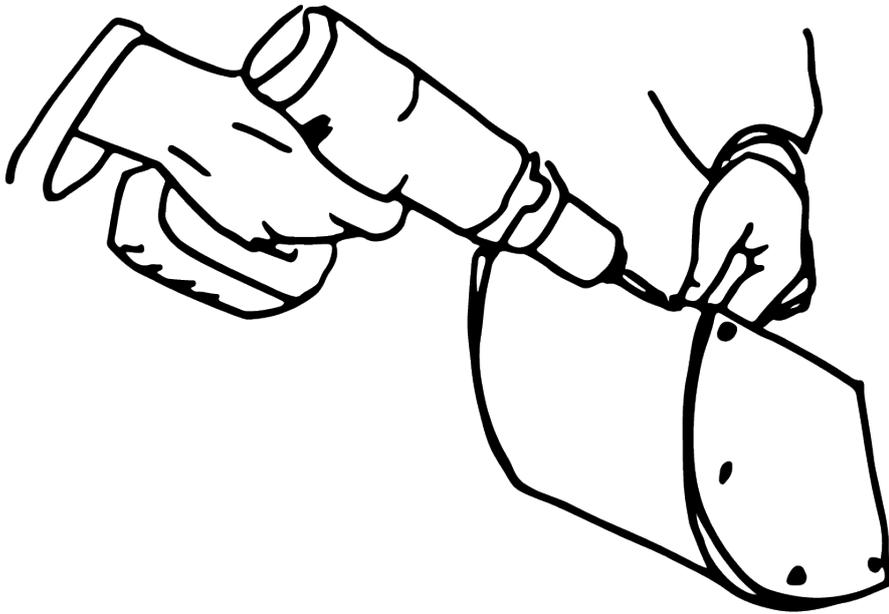
She was absolutely terrified. She didn't know what to do, at all.



**His work rests on the strength of enormous experience and knowledge which continue to grow.**

*You told me you like the potential danger of the images of your son with the drill (although it's really just a screwdriver), and the wonkiness of the drawing of the sculpture he's making.*

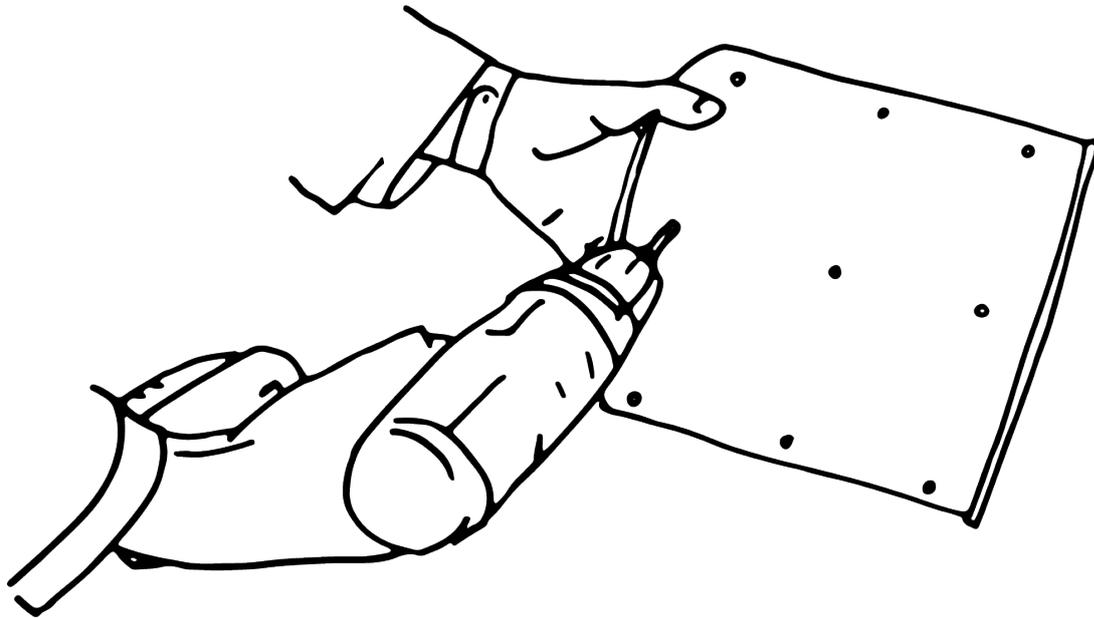
And then after a week, that 10 minutes became 20 minutes, and slowly she was able, so to speak, to get back on the horse.



**The degree of diversity among his works is striking – even though we can see that they are all products of a highly disciplined attitude.**

*You characterised them as shit drawings of a shit object being made by an earnest and wonderful boy who is trying his best and believing in his dad.*

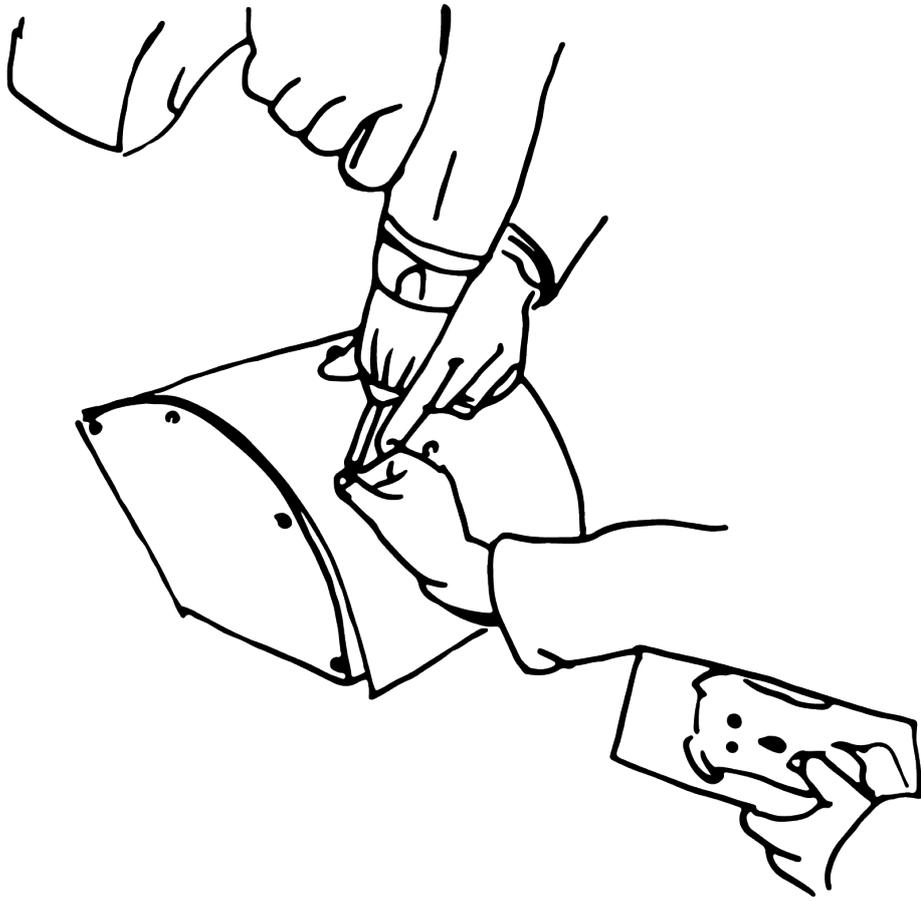
Something like that tested her creative identity, because it's like walking into the void, there was nothing in the studio to comfort her or any kind of reward at that moment; but she knew she had to do it.



**For the true artist there is only one possibility, which he has seen and which he must defend as a personal revelation.**

*You wanted to include your children in this because you said they were often in the studio when you were, and often asked what you were doing.*

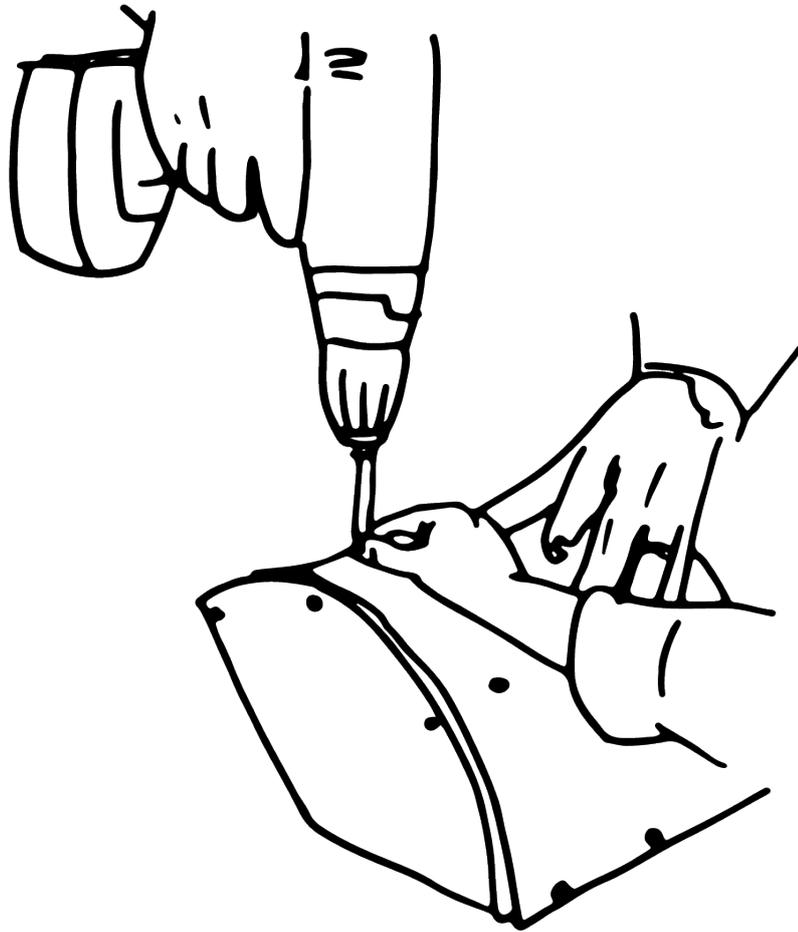
She mentions that there can be tricky moments when the assistants argue back, or they want to do things another way.



**When I consider the patient and thought out work as a whole I moreover have to think of the Divine Comedy of Dante.**

*When they did so, you said they pulled into focus the pointlessness of your work. Not because they said as much, but because that's how it felt, when you described what you were doing.*

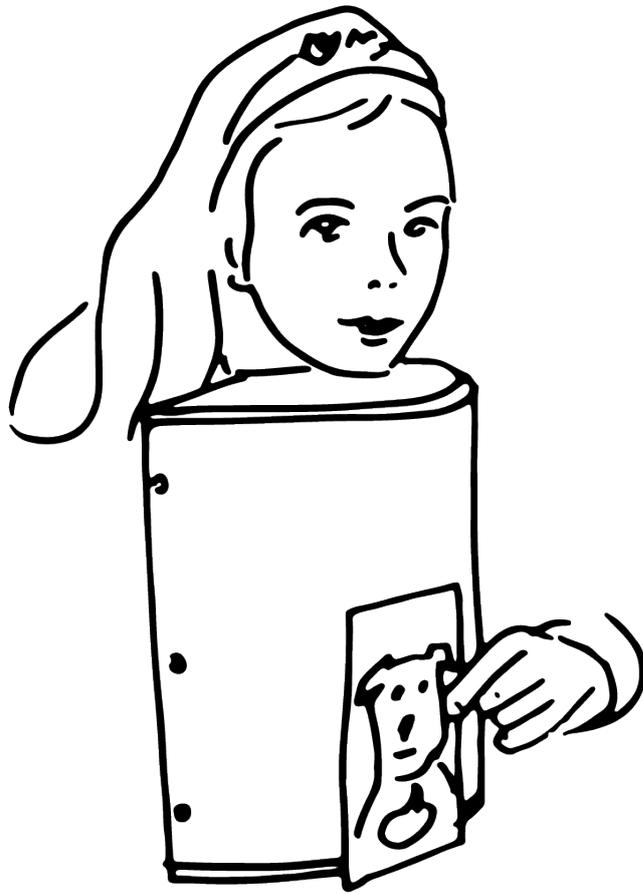
Some of them find these cack-handed processes really challenging there are times when things haven't gone right...



**No matter where one starts to read, each fragment is a gem in itself, hard and clear as crystal.**

*As you explained your work to them, you said it felt that you were misleading them, or mis-educating them, or something. You felt wilfully irresponsible.*

*'...you stand before the pictures, as before answers, for which the questions have been lost.'*



## **He is our Dante...**

*No wonder neither of your children is at all interested in being an artist now they're older.*

She just loves that. Instead of this kind of rather tedious refrain that 'Art asks questions' the author has reversed it and says there is the answer, go and find the question.

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