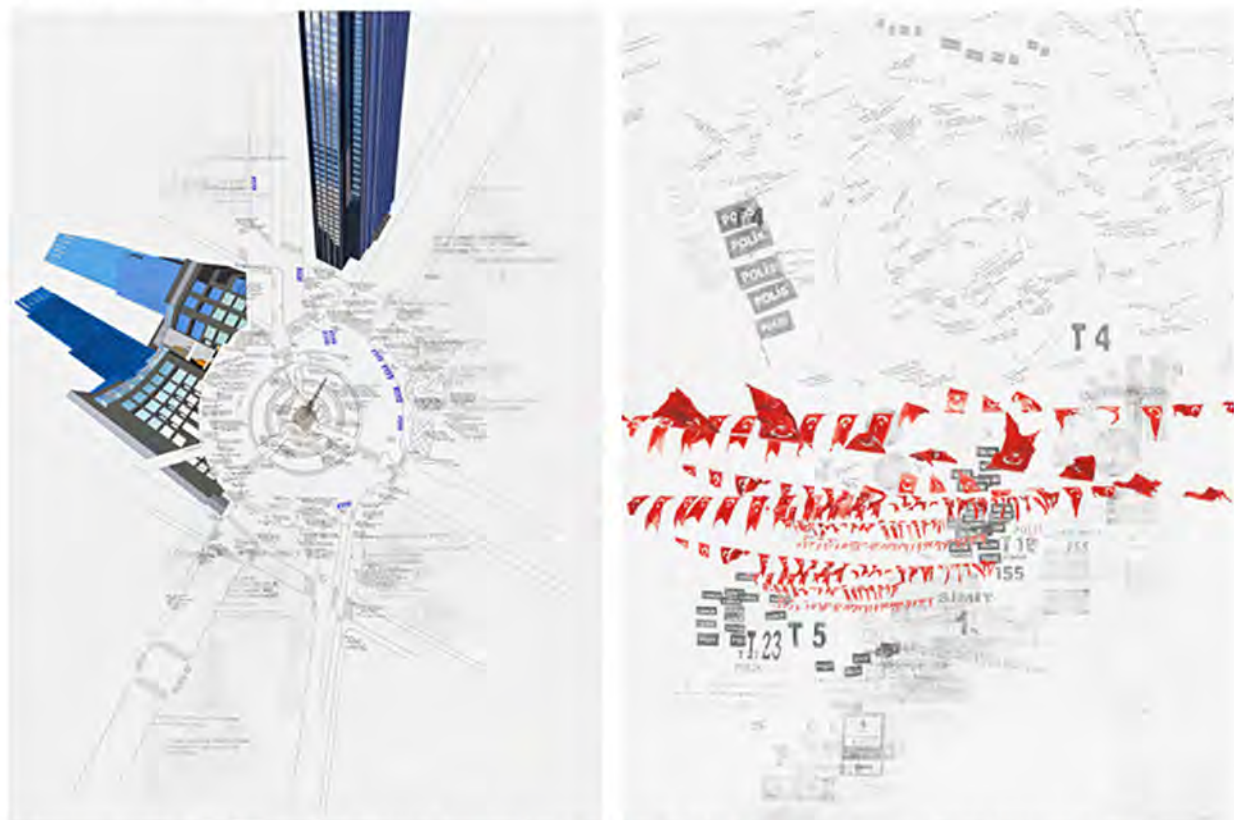


## Larissa Fassler

### 93 - Sketch

Vanessa Morisset



Colombus Circles, NYC I, 2017-2018; Taksim Square: March 31-June 9, III, detail, 2015. Photos: Galerie Jérôme Poggi



At first glance, the drawings and paintings of Larissa Fassler, a Canadian artist living and working in Berlin, look like scientific studies, and, in fact, they are the result of detailed analyses of the movements and micro-events that take place in high-traffic areas of large cities. Yet when one looks more closely at the details, an entirely subjective poetry begins to emerge. No doubt because Fassler's observations and surveys have no aim or because movement and life have been frozen in graphic representations, in contemplating them we experience the melancholy inherent to considering vanitas. This is particularly true for the preparatory drawings done in ink or pencil on paper, in which the movement is rendered almost perceptible by the fragility of the line. In this regard, we could generically rename them by borrowing the analytical and poetic title of Guy Debord's film *On the Passage of a Few Persons Through a Rather Brief Unity of Time*, in which life seems frozen in a photograph only to be gradually reanimated. Similarly, in Fassler's drawings, we expect things to start moving at any moment. Her most recent series – made in 2017–18 in New York and exhibited in *The Armory Show* – focuses on the large Columbus Circle intersection and follows from her previous work while also taking on a more polemical aspect than usual. In these works, in the midst of the notations of events and the everyday gestures of anonymous passersby, the statue of Christopher Columbus literally casts a menacing shadow. By drawing this dark shape in pencil and disproportionately elongating it relative to the representation of the statue, Fassler points to the presence, in the centre of the American metropolis, of this controversial historical figure who embodies the violent European colonization of America. In so doing, she throws into the fray, automatic actions and nonchalance of the everyday, a meditation on the burden of history as manifested in the urban landscape.

Translated from the French by Oana Avasilichioaei