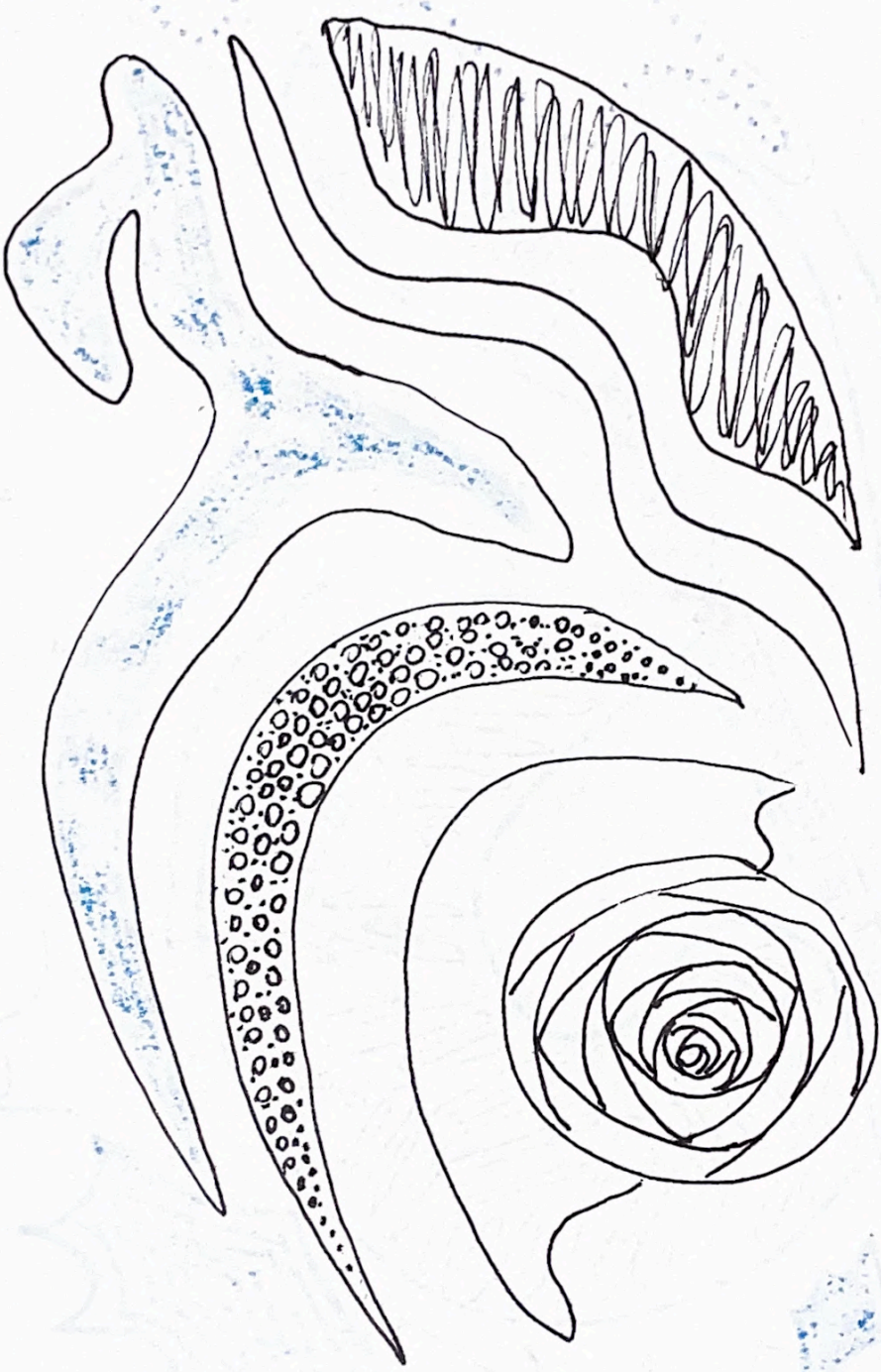


sasha demina

messy, vulnerable, unscripted

lisbon, 2024 - 2025

hey,

it's sasha. i'm a queer twenty two years old dance artist, dance teacher. an immigrant. i grew up in russia, in a small provincial city, kirov. at the age of eighteen, i moved to germany and then lived there for two years, in cologne. i was studying dance, doing different jobs: from cleaning houses and babysitting to performing on stage, teaching contemporary to kids, teens, adults, and choreographing dance performances. whatever was making sense for me and bringing money.

after that, i moved to lisbon, portugal. first, as an exchange student, and then decided to stay. which meant i quit my studies in germany (that were for a while already making me depressed), registered as a freelancer in portugal, and applied for a residence card (which i'm still waiting for). after doing that, i started to build a new life here. again.

first, i was working in bars. later, i found places where i could teach dance and started slowly applying for art residencies and going to auditions. so that's where i'm currently at. finding my way through life by the coast.

in this book, i want to share with you some of my reflections, thoughts and feelings, worries and fears, joys and excitements, and everything else that has been channeling through me in the last couple of years. i just took some time to take those words out of my head, write them down in notes, and then finally put it all together—in this book you're holding.

also, i'm glad to share with you my drawings, which i did in random moments and places. whenever it felt like my hand had to draw something in order to regulate my nervous system.

well,
here we go...

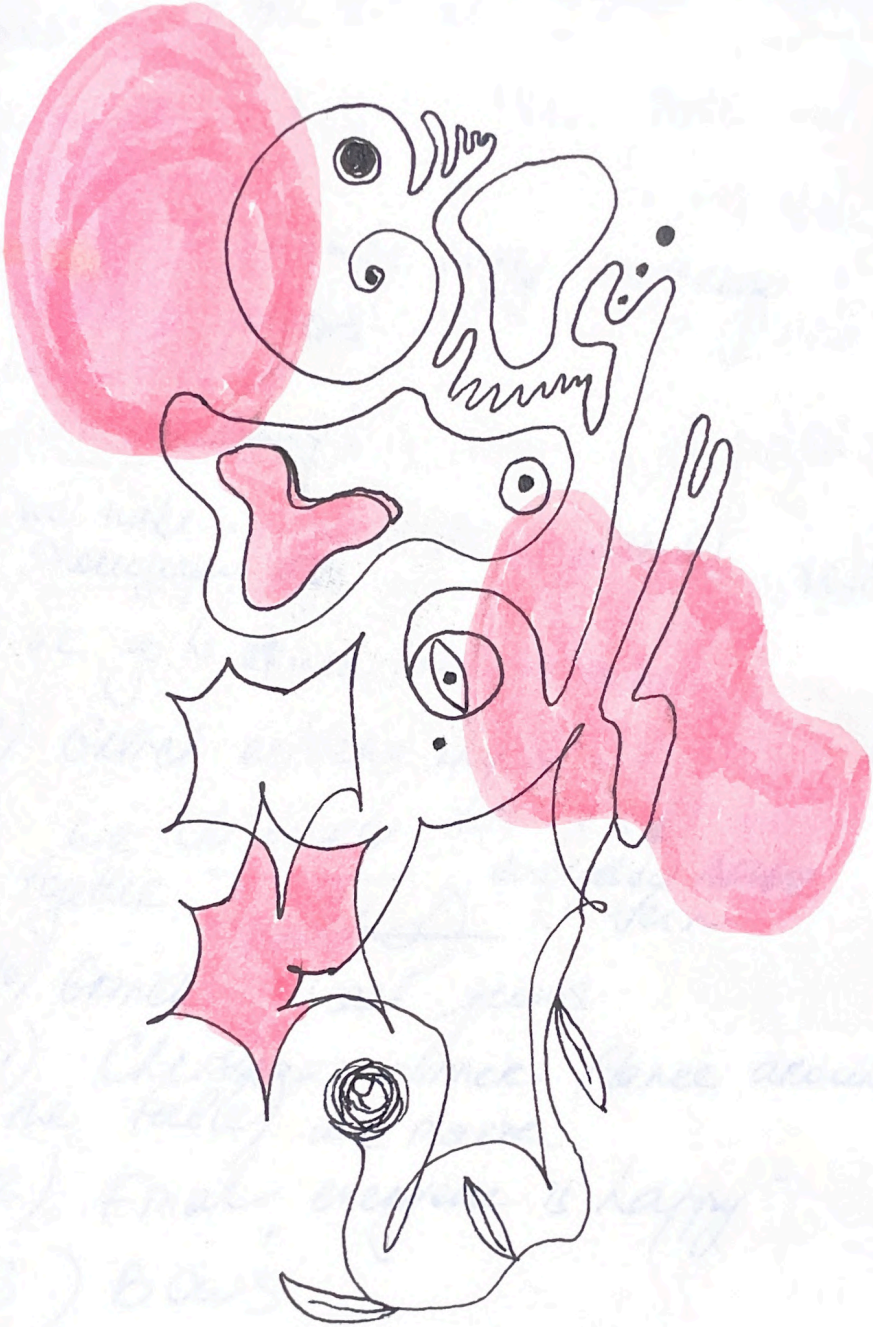


— before i start —
here is this beautiful piece from The Keeper of Sheep V by the portuguese writer fernando pessoa that, in a way, goes opposite to how i usually exist (i mean—constantly overthinking). and i like this poem a lot, probably because of that, and would like you to read it.

the mystery of things? I have no idea what mystery is!
the only mystery is that someone thinks there's mystery.
whoever's in the sun and shuts their eyes
starts not knowing what the sun is
and begins to think of many things filled with warmth.
but opens their eyes and sees the sun,
and can no longer think of anything at all,
because the sun's light is worth more than the thoughts
of all philosophers and all poets.
the sunlight doesn't know what it's doing,
and that's why it never goes wrong — it's simple and good.

"inner constitution of things"…
"deeper meaning of the universe"…
all of it is false, none of it means anything.
it's amazing anyone can think of such things.
it's like pondering reasons and purposes
when morning is breaking
and a soft golden shimmer creeps through the trees,
dissolving the night.

thinking about the inner meaning of things
is adding too much — like thinking about health
when you're healthy,
or carrying a cup to a spring.
the only inner meaning of things
is that they have no inner meaning at all.



i can't control and maintain
the peace of the entire world.
though the inner peace
i'm the only one
who can take care of.

and it's constant inner work
being responsible for it.
i need to see what
i should say bye and leave.

this work can be painful sometimes
it hurts - it heals - it recovers.
and there is a better version of u
slowly building surrounded by flowers.

the beauty of them
brings the world to a better place.

having your inner peace
for me means:
on the planet Earth
being a better piece.



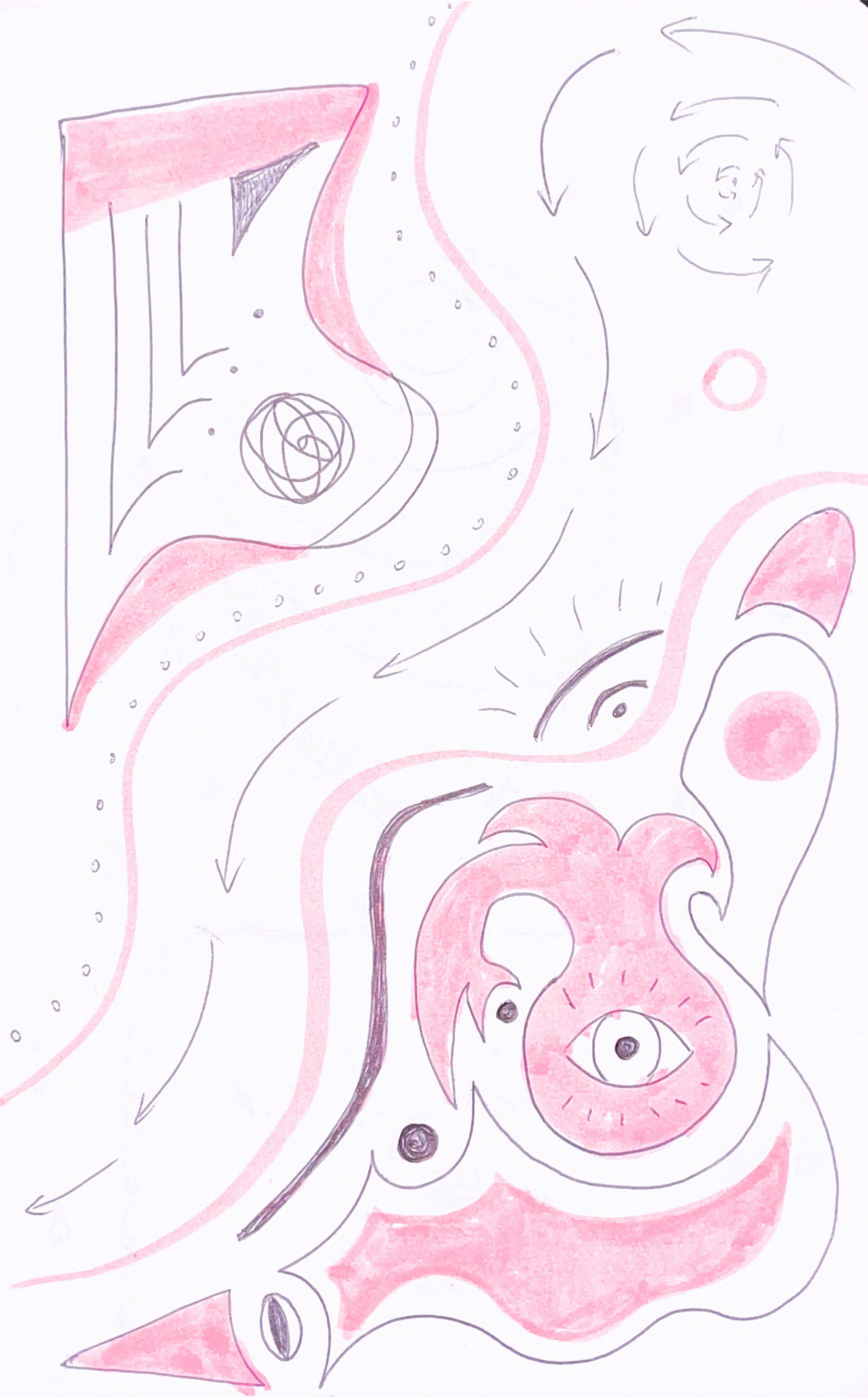
planet earth!
why am i here?
is it a proof that im supposed to
try it out
give it a chance?..

to be honest with u,
 i feel grateful that
 i can experience
This
damn weird thing
 - life -
and to do things,
and to see places,
and to feel
with my
 - sometimes -
too wild open heart.

u know,
i just feel the presence of death
very close
and it's difficult to explain why.

it's a strange feeling
but also
kinda brings meaning to life.

as an anxious person
i like being spiritual
to tell myself that some things
u just can't have control over
and u need to trust the Universe
and to keep it chill
and cool
and calm.



i feel used, confused,
left behind.
i feel like i have no value,
like i was a play toy.
it's okey to let me cry
it's okey to leave me.
do u actually care?
u just used my energy,
took my wisdom,
my morality,
my positive thinking.
u used my kind heard,
u spat in my soul.

i want to learn this lesson properly
i will protect myself from these traps
Never again

please
i just want to be in piece

