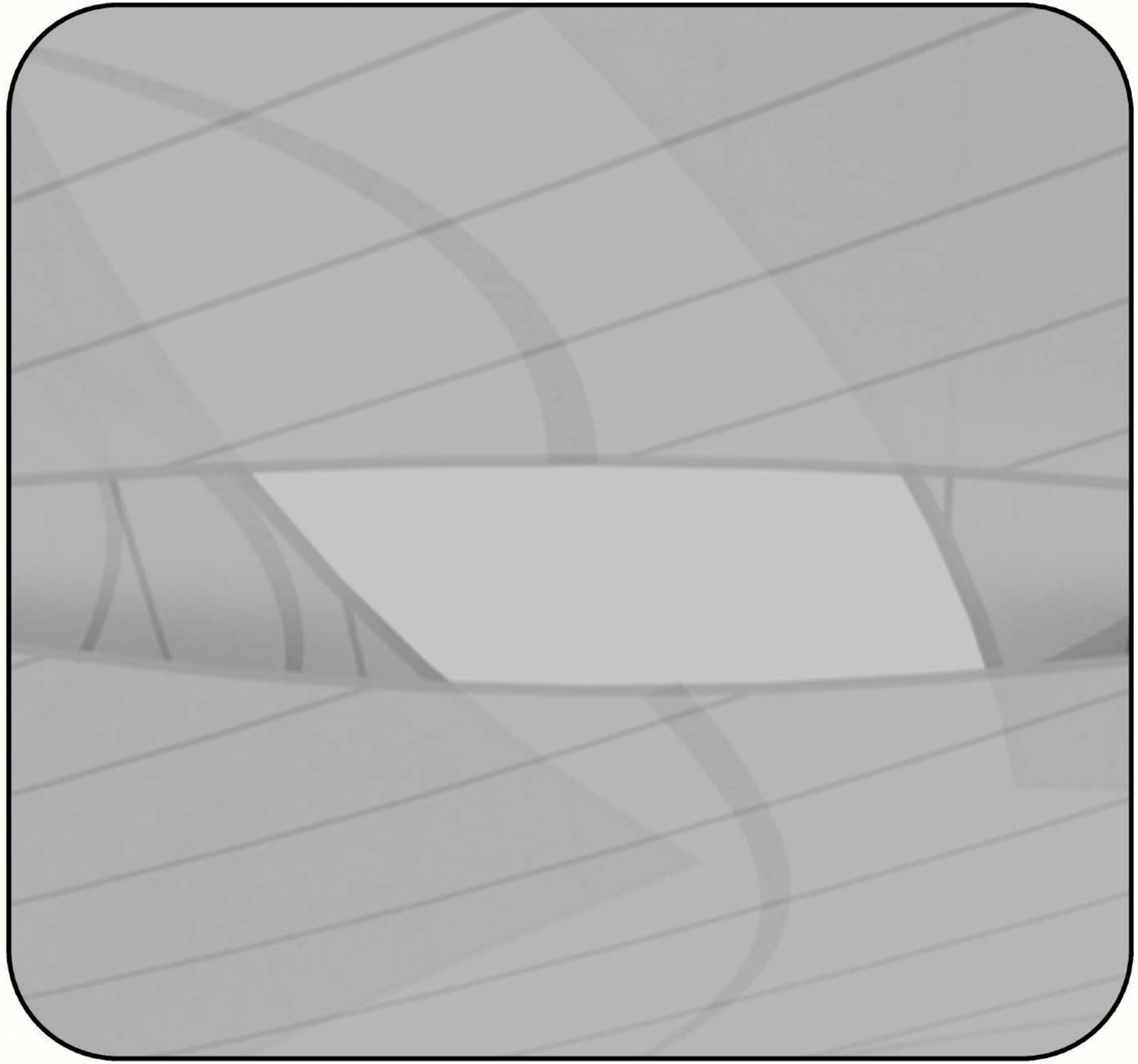
# LES BATTANTES

MORZINE - STADE NAUTIQUE

ADRIEN AUDRY





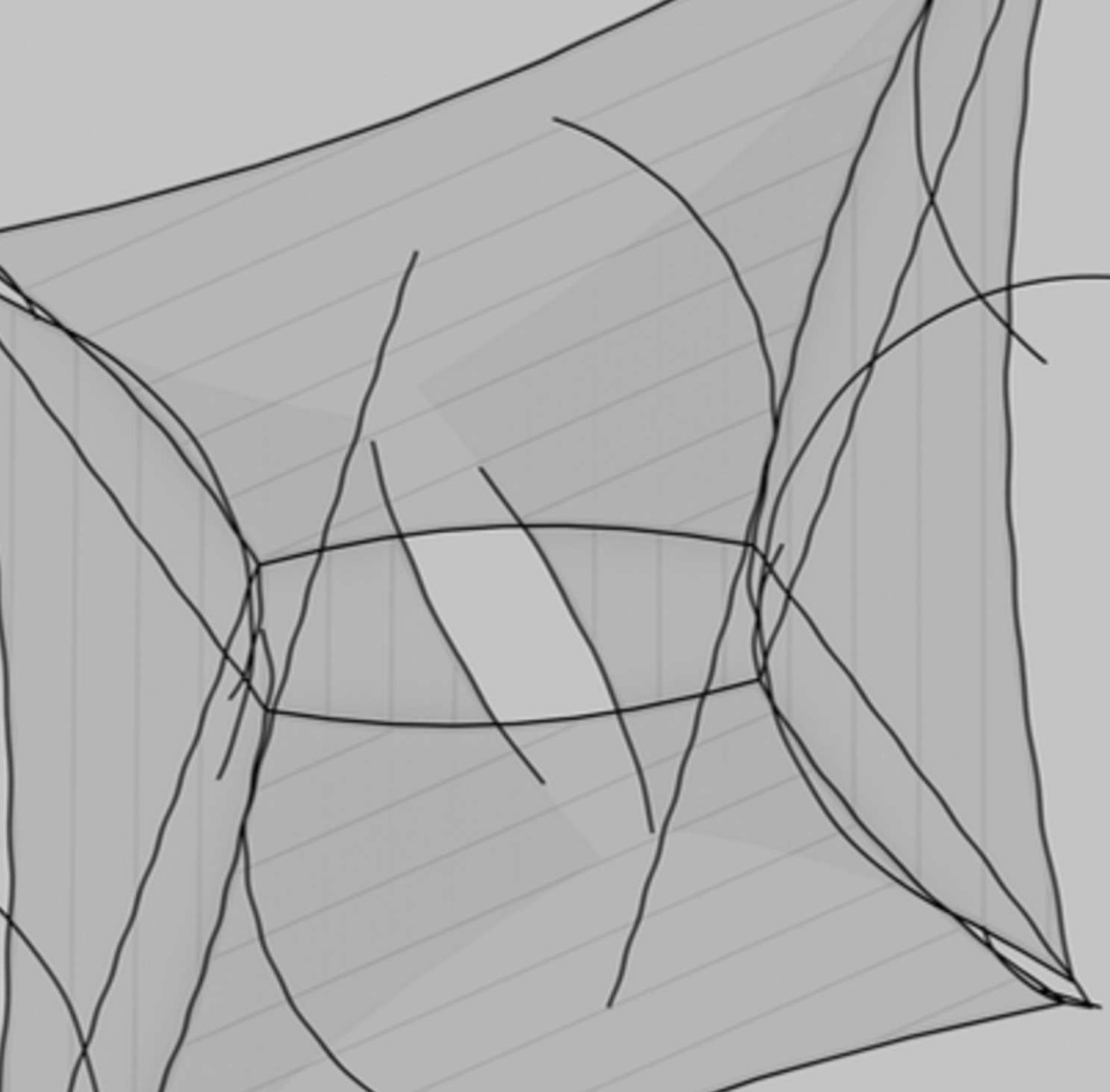
Here, water worked before us.

At the end of the 19th century, forty-two mills turned on the Dranse.

Suspended wooden channels — the bézières — crossed the village to carry water to the wheels. Sawmills, flour mills, hemp crushers: everything Morzine made, the river made. On the other side of the bank, La Battante was still striking wood in 1914.

The mills fell silent. The Dranse still flows.

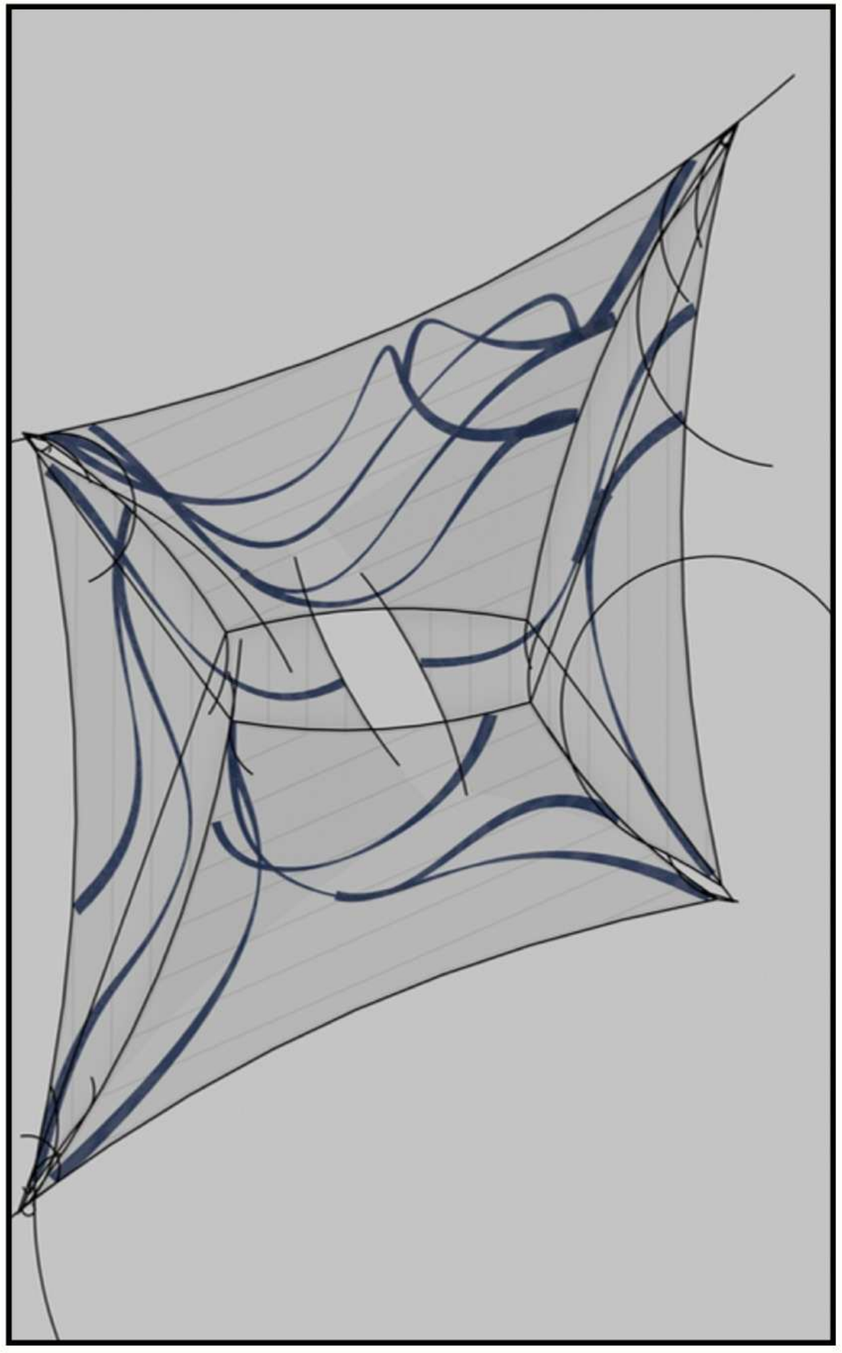




# The encounter

I cross it every day, this Dranse — between Évian and the mountains. Water has never left me. It was there in Provence, by my river; it is there in the stream that runs past my house; it is there on Lake Geneva when I go sailing.

When I discovered that this aquatic centre was built on the foundations of the Village des Moulins, I did not have to look for inspiration. It was already in the ground, in the current. Things happen because they have no choice but to happen.





# THE WORK

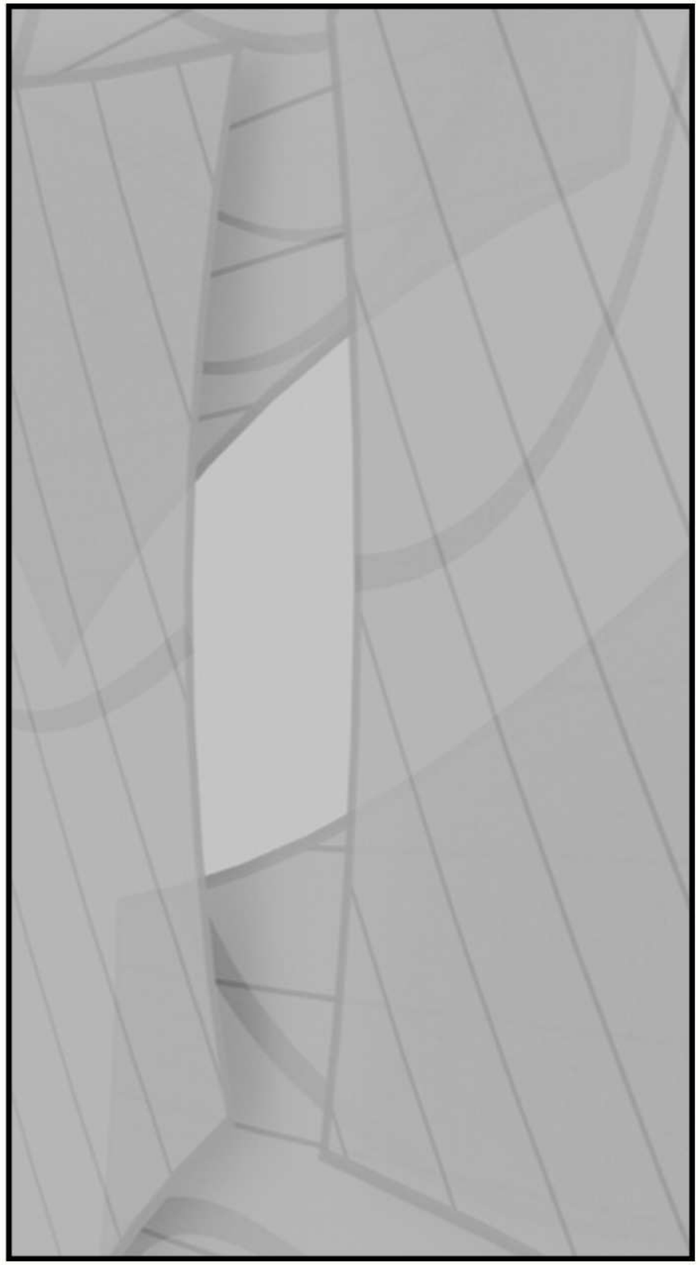
Les Battantes are eight sails arranged in two constellations of four. Their form — four petals stretched around a central void — takes up the forgotten geometry of water wheels.

This void at the centre is not an absence. It is the hollow hub that turns the wheel.

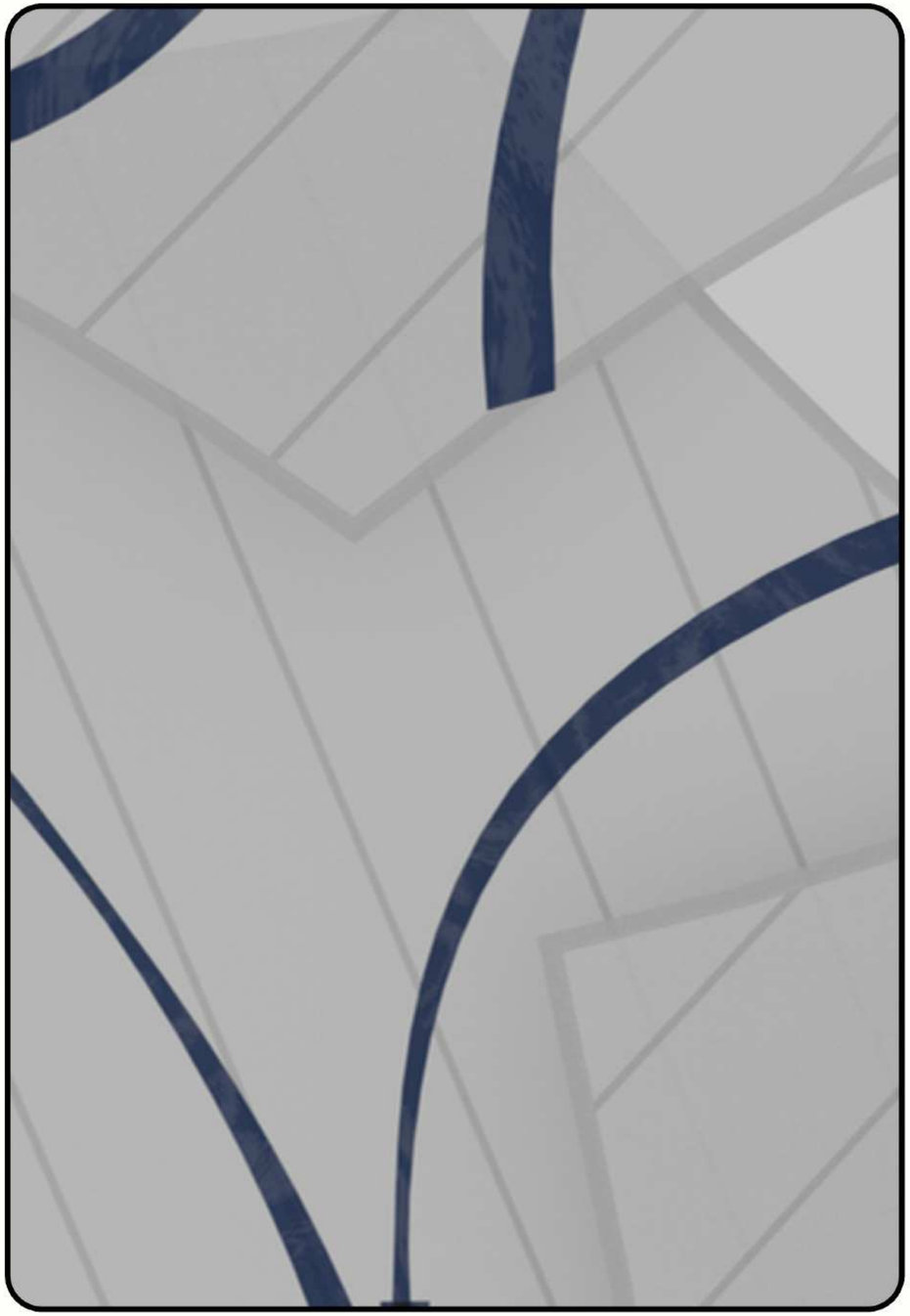
It is the void that makes the work useful.

# THE GESTURE

On each canvas, hand-painted curves trace the movement of water. Painted, not printed — because the gesture matters. As a practitioner of Taoist medicine, I paint the way water writes on stone: without forcing, until the form appears of its own accord.





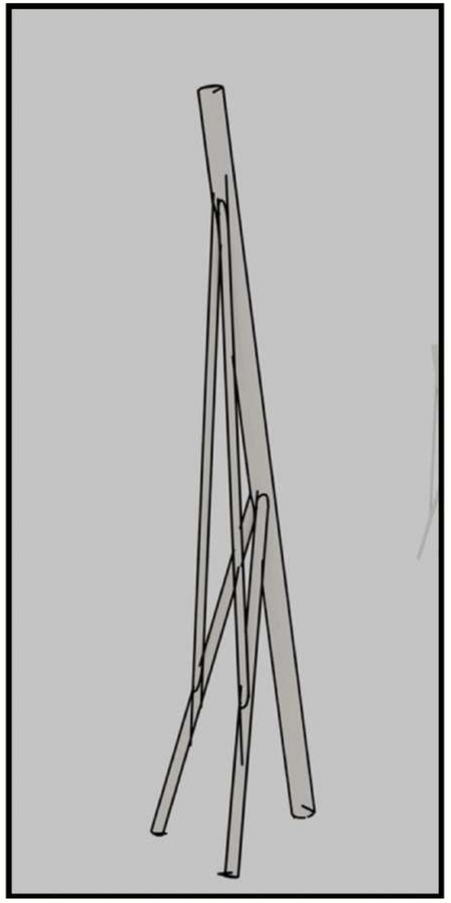


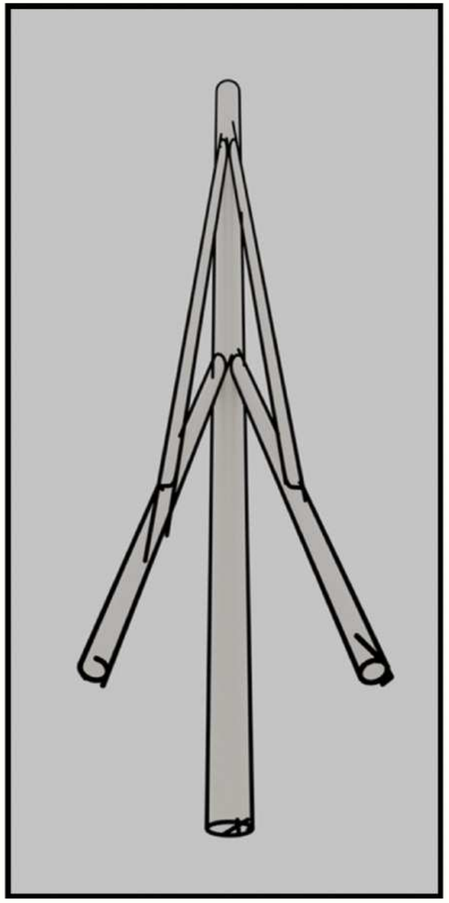
# THE READING

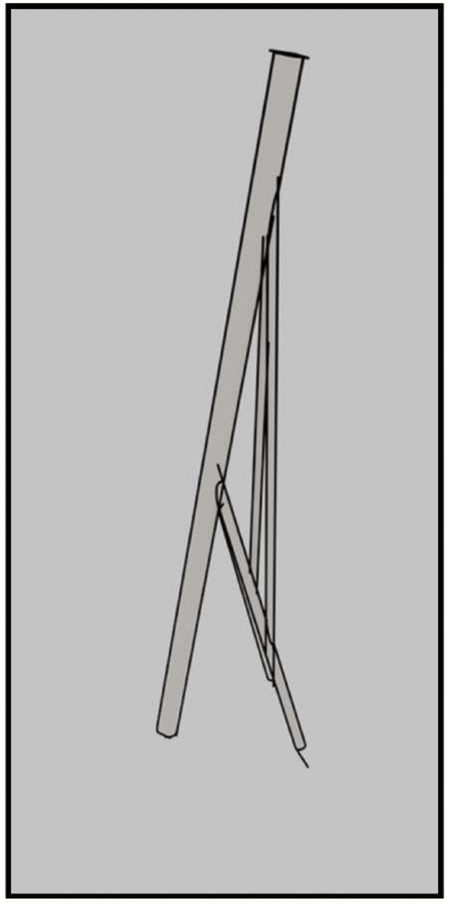
The work is read twice.

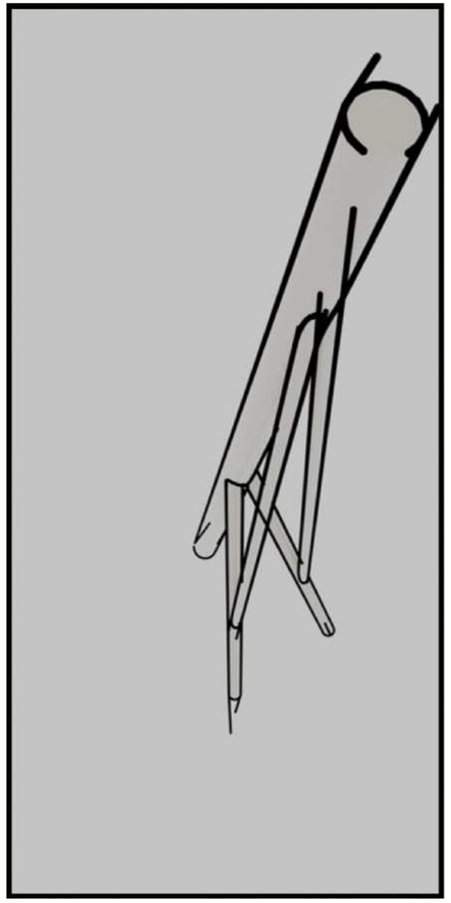
From the pool, swimmers look up and swim beneath a sky of flowing ink. They are in the current, in the cast shadow of the river — beneath the wheel.

From the François-Baud footbridge, thirty metres above, the sails become what they are once more: two motionless wheels set in the light. The pattern reveals its meaning. The Dranse is still turning.







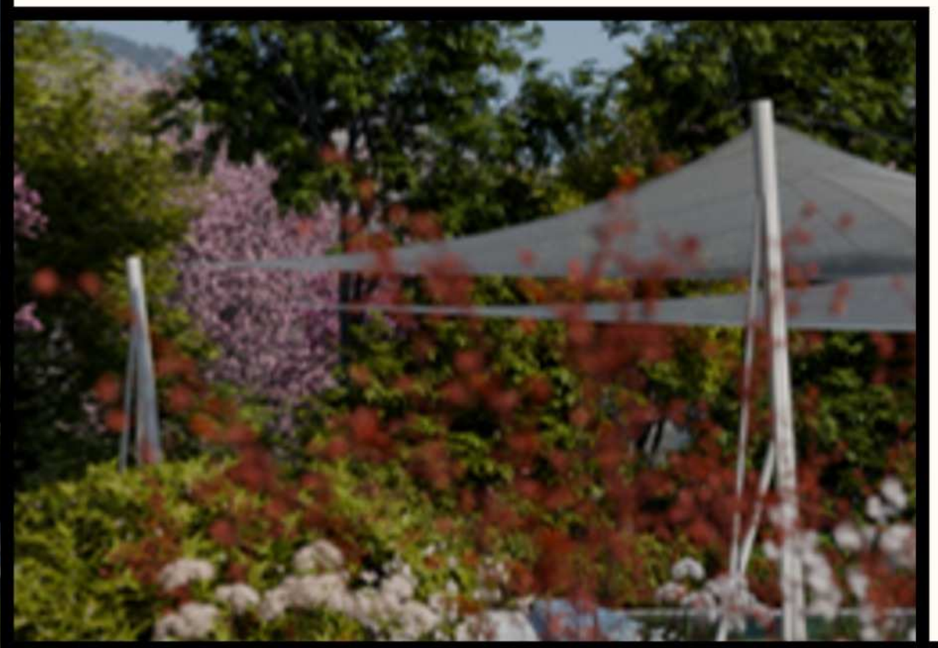


# THE MAST

Each mast is a load-bearing sculpture. Several powder-coated steel rods converge at the top towards a single point and flare out towards the ground, crossing one another — the silhouette of the bézières, the wooden trestles that once carried water to the mills. The crossing of the rods recalls alpine timber framing. Contemporary steel speaks the same language as the larch of old.


230+







# MEMORY

Les Battantes do not quote the mills. They are their living memory. Where water once turned grain into flour and trunk into plank, the canvas turns light into shade. The force has changed its nature. The movement remains.

I draw and sculpt the sails so that they remain here over time, as if they had always been there. This work exists only here — above this water, beneath this bridge, between these mountains.



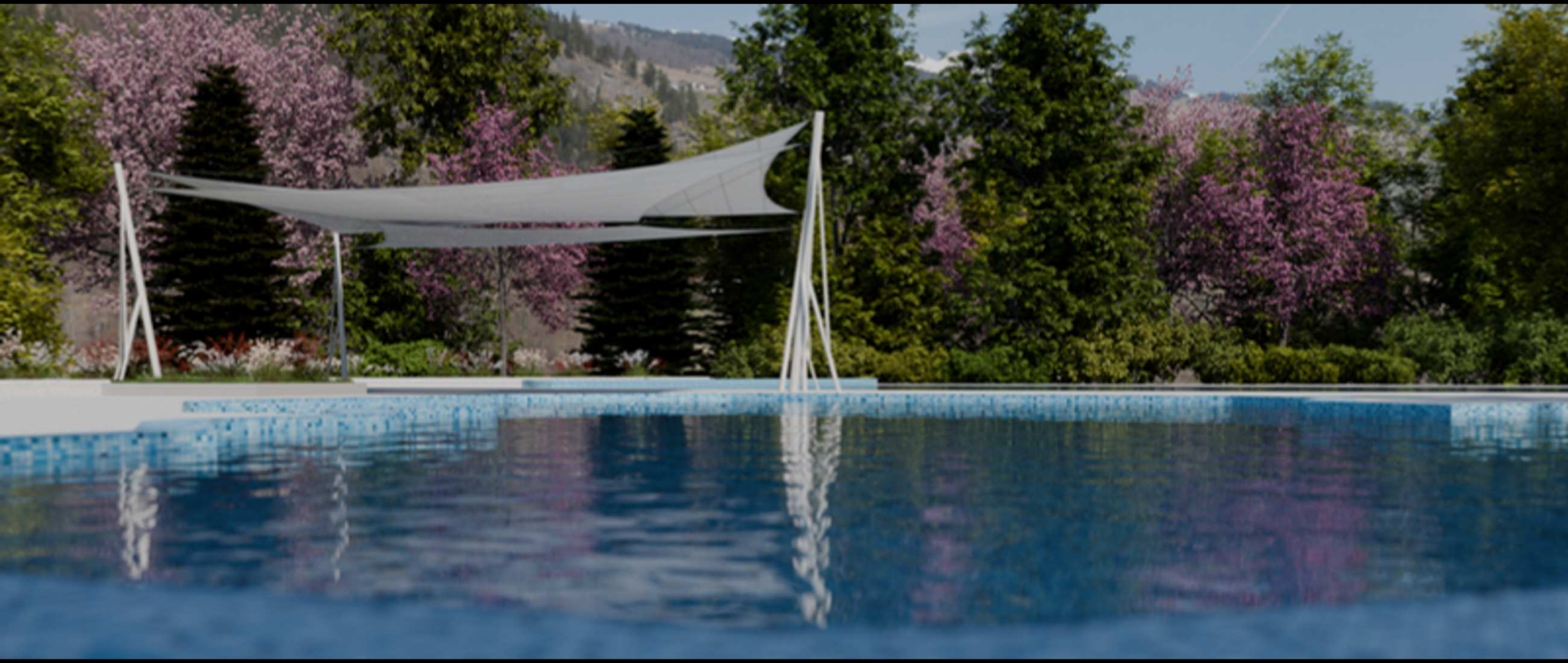






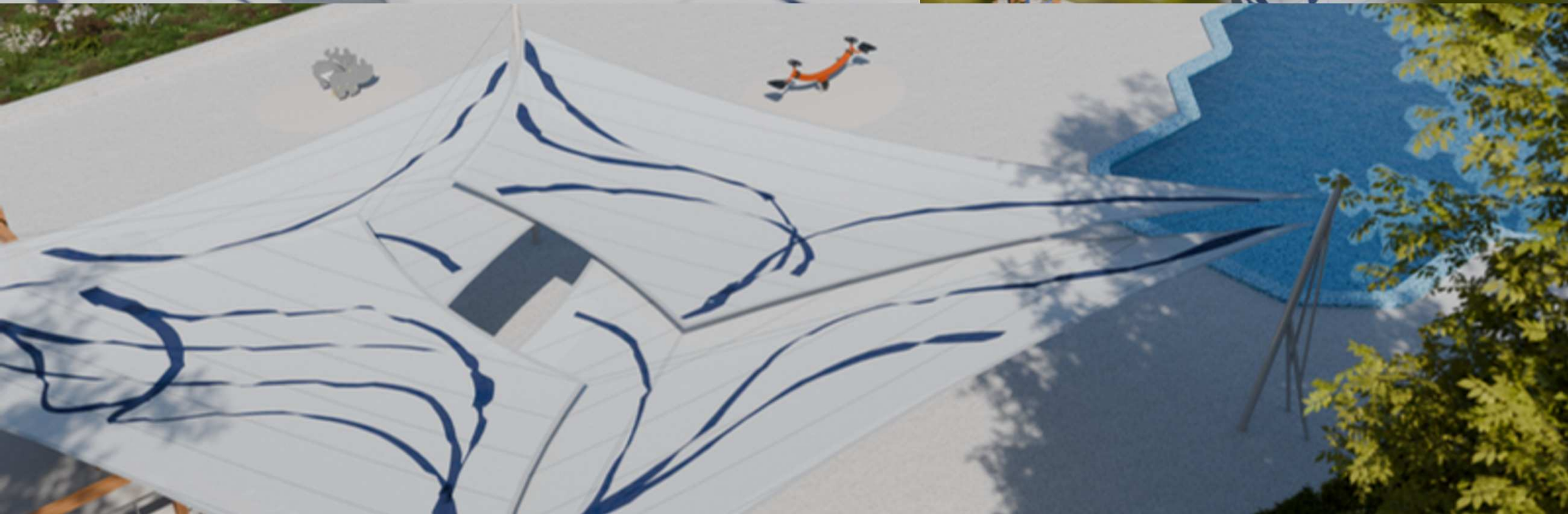
























01/07/2026 à 14h



15/07/2026 à 14h



31/07/2026 à 14h



15/08/2026 à 14h



31/08/2026 à 14h

Les Battantes are not placed on this site. They come from it. Forty-two mills turned here before a single swimmer dived in. Water sawed, crushed and fed this village for centuries. Then came the silence. The sails take up the gesture where the wheels left off. They transform light as the mills transformed the current. They carry on their canvas the writing of the Dranse. And from the François-Baud footbridge, thirty metres up in the sky, they are still turning.

**Adrien Audry**

