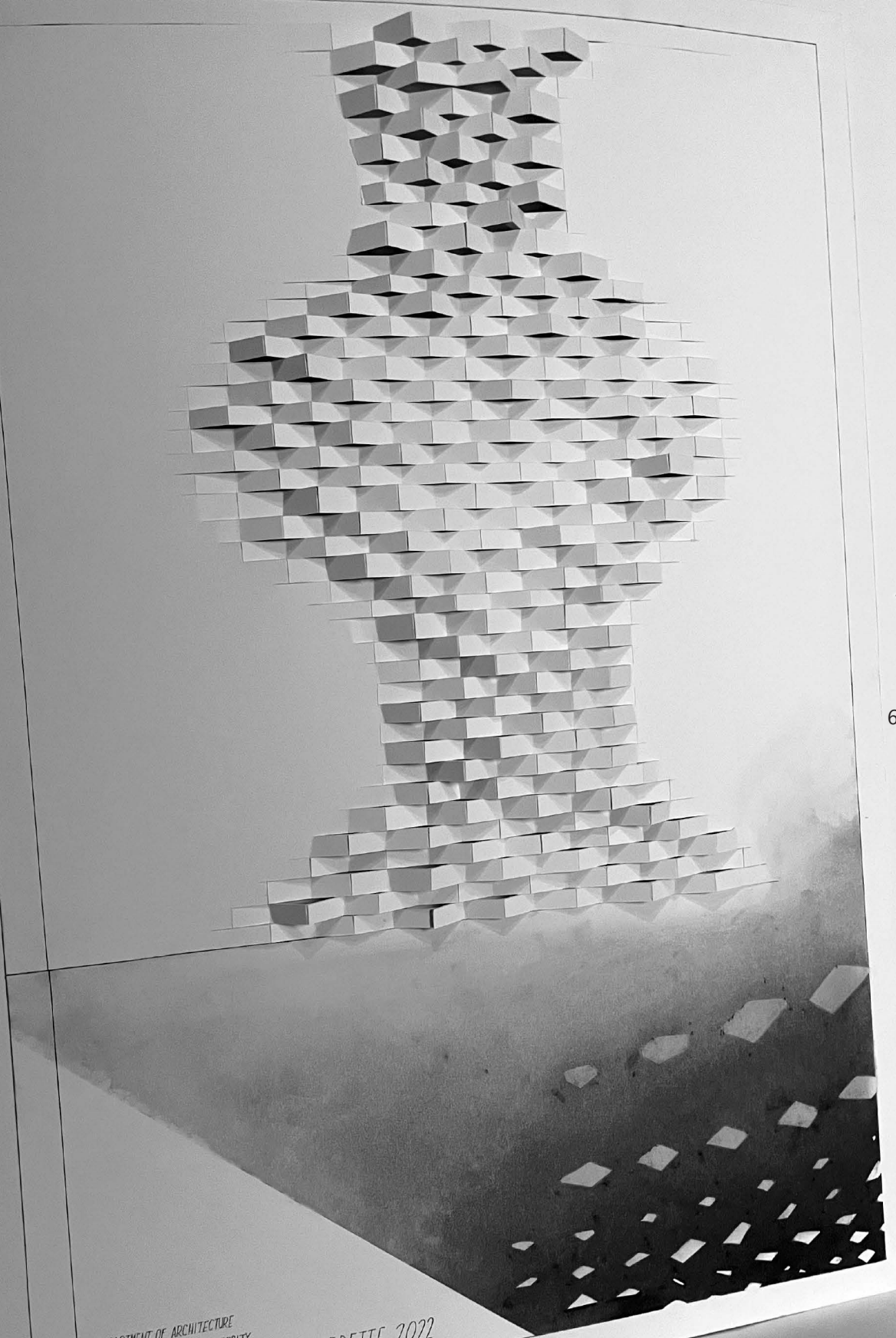


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There is no doubt that with today's technology and desire for efficiency that freehand drawing is being replaced by digital software like CAD. In my opinion, most technical drawings are better off being completed digitally, rather than being hand drawn; however, freehand drawing, or sketching, is a skill that is irreplaceable. I think that sketches are the easiest way to communicate a concept or idea. The average person, or client, can look at a plan drawing and understand nothing, but understand completely when presented with a 3D drawing. Similarly, knowing how to draw freehand will help to sell ideas. I also don't think you have to be good at drawing to become an architect. Being good enough to communicate your ideas to someone else is all it takes. When you complete drawings digitally, the most important part is the end result—the completed drawing. When you hand sketch, the process is just as important as the end result.

When we hand draw, the lines we draw aren't perfect, they aren't complete, and they aren't fixed. These imperfect lines will ultimately settle into place, and then a digital software can be used to produce the final drawings. I believe that a project should always be started with a pencil. Jumping straight into digital software can make a project seem more finalized than it actually is, even when it could be developed further. Freehand drawing gives us the opportunity to try multiple variations of an idea in a short amount of time.

Having the ability to freehand sketch is useful in instances where fleeting ideas may come to mind, and we need a way of remembering these ideas. I know many people who do not go anywhere without a sketchbook because you never know when an idea may come to mind. But by the time it takes to set up a new CAD document, the thought could be gone.

In an age where freehand drawing is under unstable conditions, threatening to be completely replaced by digital software, it is important to remember these benefits. As aspiring architects, we should be proficient in both mediums of design.