

# Casey Ruble: Everything That Rises

## LESSON PLAN



Bringing art and people together

## HIDDEN HISTORY

**Suggested Grade levels/subject:** 8-12; US History, Social Studies, English/Language Arts

**Time required:** One to three 40 minute period(s), depending on time spent on art creation

**Essential Questions:** How can art tell a story?  
Who decides whose story gets preserved in history?

### Objectives

- Students will analyze and interpret artwork with peers.
- Students will justify stories they think artwork tells with concrete details from the work.
- Students will determine how stories and sites get preserved through history.
- Students will be able to understand the historical context of the eras related to artwork (Civil Rights era and Civil War era).

### Materials

- Images from *Everything That Rises: Untitled (Timbuctoo)* and *They said they'd rather die here than in Vietnam* (printed out postcard size, for each student)
- Drawing paper or other blank paper
- Colored pencils, watercolors, other art supplies as available
- NY Times article about Plainfield unrest
- Computer access (with audio, if possible)

### Vocabulary

Collage	Primary source
Underground Railroad	Secondary Source
Riots	Middle Ground
Civil Unrest	Background
Foreground	Perspective
Point of view	Composition

### Instructions

1. Explore with students how we learn about current events. They may say via Facebook, YouTube, Internet, the news, other social media, etc. Ask them *How do we learn about the past? How do we know what it looked like in the past?* (TV news footage,

photographs, drawings, etc.) Explore with students the definitions and differences between a primary and secondary source, with examples.

2. Have students look at the two artworks (see above) and decide if these are primary or secondary sources. *What makes them say that?*
3. Have students list on the sticky note or index card words that describe these artworks to them. Encourage the use of descriptive adjectives.
4. Tell students that something historically significant took place at the site each of these works of art depicts. These artworks are based on current photographs of the site, which the artist, Casey Ruble, took and then used them as references to create these collages. On the blank paper, have them draw or write what they think happened in the past at each site. (NOTE: You can expand this part of the lesson to go beyond this class period by discussing more about color, mood, media, etc.)
5. Break students into two groups. Have one group listen to the audio about Timbuctoo (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=128754990>) and the other group read the NY Times article about the Plainfield riots (attached). When they reconvene, have them share the “hidden history” of the site they learned about with the other group. *How does their perception of the image of the site change now that they know its history?*
6. Have students do a Think-Pair-Share for the following essential questions: *Why do they think this history is “hidden?” Who decides what story in history gets told?*

### **Wrap-up**

Have students create a bumper sticker about one of the sites that would help share the message they got out of this lesson with New Jersey and beyond. Remind them that a bumper sticker has to be succinct and could contain an image but it must read well from a distance. You could provide them with paper the size of an actual bumper sticker to complete their design.

### **Extension Activities**

- Have students choose two more artworks from *Everything That Rises* and repeat the activity.
- Students could brainstorm how they might let a broader public know about the history of the sites depicted in *Everything That Rises*. They could do a podcast, news report, blogpost, create a class website posting the photos of the bumper stickers, commentary regarding their findings, etc. More information about the sites and the artwork is available in the catalog ([http://issuu.com/artcenternj/docs/ruble\\_catalogue](http://issuu.com/artcenternj/docs/ruble_catalogue)) published by the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey.

### **Background Information for the Educator**

Casey Ruble is a New Jersey artist and resident who, after researching sites of civil unrest and the Underground Railroad in her home state, photographed the sites as they are today. She used these photographs to create paper collages that rather than become faithful reproductions, convey the mood and emotion of the place. Some of the titles of her work come from

newspaper accounts of the event that took place at the site. For more see [www.caseyruble.com](http://www.caseyruble.com).

*Untitled (Timbuctoo)* was an African American community of free blacks and escaped enslaved people near Camden. In November 1860 armed slave catchers raided the home of Perry Simmons. Neighbors who heard his family's cries for help came to their rescue and drove away the men with guns, knives and axes. For more, see <http://historiccamdencounty.com/ccnews11.shtml> Late scholar Giles Wright debunks some Underground Railroad myths – audio about Timbuctoo also on this site.

*"They said they'd rather die here than in Vietnam."* depicts the site of a popular black hangout in Plainfield where a fight broke out between two young men. A white Plainfield police officer serving as a security guard there refused to intervene or call an ambulance, and black youths began marching in the streets and violence escalated over what they saw as another example of racism. For several days, violence increased and there were fatalities. For more, see Sugrue, Thomas, and Goodman, Andrew. "Plainfield Burning: Black Rebellion in the Suburban North." *Journal of Urban History*, Vol. 33 No. 4, May 2007, pp. 568-601.

## **Standards Alignment**

### **Social Studies**

**6.1 U.S. History: America in the World:** All students will acquire the knowledge and skills to think analytically about how past and present interactions of people, cultures, and the environment shape the American heritage. Such knowledge and skills enable students to make informed decisions that reflect fundamental rights and core democratic values as productive citizens in local, national, and global communities.

- 6.1.4.D.11- Determine how local and state communities have changed over time, and explain the reasons for changes.
- 6.1.8.D.4.c - Explain the growing resistance to slavery and New Jersey's role in the Underground Railroad.
- 6.1.12.C.13.c- Evaluate the effectiveness of social legislation that was enacted to end poverty in the 1960s and today by assessing the economic impact on the economy (e.g., inflation, recession, taxation, deficit spending, employment, education).
- 6.1.12.D.13.a - Determine the impetus for the Civil Rights Movement, and explain why national governmental actions were needed to ensure civil rights for African Americans.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

**1.1 The Creative Process:** All students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles that govern the creation of works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.

- 1.1.8.D.1 -Describe the intellectual and emotional significance conveyed by the application of the elements of art and principles of design in different historical eras and cultures.
- 1.2 History of the Arts and Culture: All students will understand the role, development, and influence of the arts throughout history and across cultures.
- 1.2.8.A.3 - Analyze the social, historical, and political impact of artists on culture and the impact of culture on the arts.

**1.4 Aesthetic Responses & Critique Methodologies:** All students will demonstrate and apply an understanding of arts philosophies, judgment, and analysis to works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.

- 1.4.8.A.1- Generate observational and emotional responses to diverse culturally and historically specific works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art
- 1.4.8.A.5 -Interpret symbolism and metaphors embedded in works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art.
- 1.4.8.A.7 - Analyze the form, function, craftsmanship, and originality of representative works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art.
- 1.4.12.A.2- Speculate on the artist's intent, using discipline-specific arts terminology and citing embedded clues to substantiate the hypothesis.
- 1.4.12.A.3- Develop informed personal responses to an assortment of artworks across the four arts disciplines (dance, music, theatre, and visual art), using historical significance, craftsmanship, cultural context, and originality as criteria for assigning value to the works.

For more information about programs for educators and students please contact Cara Bramson, Director of Education and Community Engagement, at [cbramson@artcenternj.org](mailto:cbramson@artcenternj.org) or 908.273.9121 x 213.



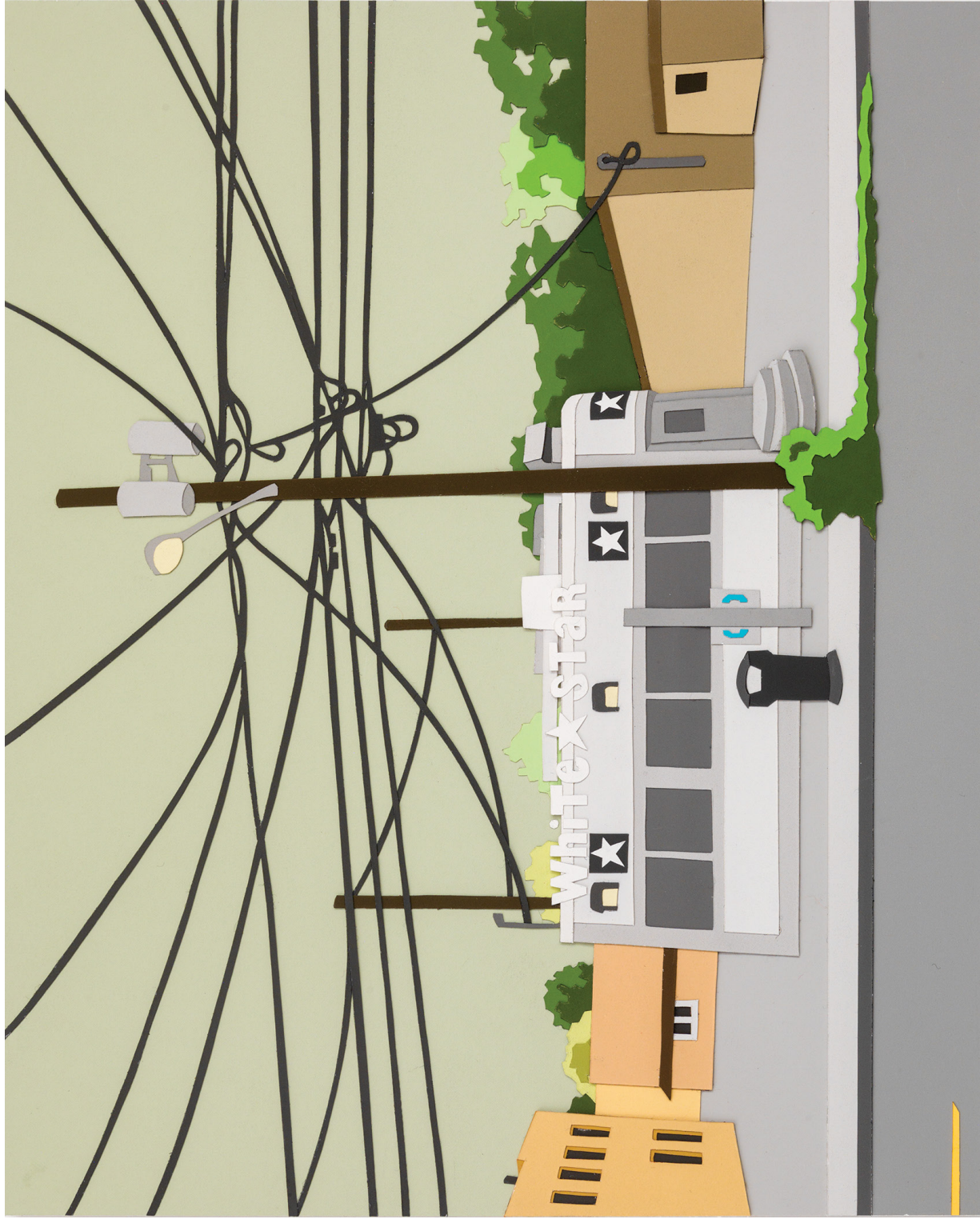
NEW JERSEY COUNCIL  
FOR THE HUMANITIES

The exhibition, Casey Ruble: Everything That Rises, and related programs were made possible by a grant from the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, a state partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this exhibition, website and exhibition catalog do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities or the New Jersey Council for the Humanities.



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Casey Ruble  
*"They said they'd rather die here than in Vietnam."*, 2015  
Paper collage  
6 1/2 x 8 inches





Casey Ruble  
*Untitled (Timbuctoo)*, 2014  
Paper collage  
6 x 8 inches





# FIRES AND LOOTING PLAGUE PLAINFIELD

## Incidents Reported Near 2 Negro Housing Projects

By VAL ADAMS

Special to The New York Times

PLAINFIELD, N. J., Sunday, July 16—Four fires were reported set by Molotov cocktails, and many stores were looted in the area around two Negro housing projects in the west end of town last night and early this morning.

It was the second night of looting by gangs of Negro youths. The looting was mostly confined to neighborhood food and liquor stores.

The police said that 18 persons had been arrested.

Muhlenberg Hospital reported treating nine injured persons. One was a fireman, Lloyd Huff, 50 years old, of 719 East Sixth Street, who suffered burns of the hands and face.

The eight others were Negroes, aged 16 to 23 except for one 36-year-old. They suffered burns, cuts and lacerations. There were no fatalities.

The first calls for help came at 11:45 last night. Later, the police told the hospital to "stand by."

Plainfield is about 18 miles southwest of Newark. Its 50,000 population is about one-quarter Negro.

### Rocks and Bottles Hurled

Cars full of youths throwing rocks and bottles raced through the littered streets sporadically. "It's hit and miss," one policeman said.

The police from neighboring Westfield were called in to help control the disorder.

The fireman was injured when a Molotov cocktail struck a fire truck, Chief of Police Milford Payne reported. About 75 policemen, including state troopers, were on duty in the square-mile area of disorder, from Madison Avenue to Clinton Avenue and including sections of Second, Third and Fourth Streets, the chief said.

Assisting policemen were called from the neighboring towns of Westfield, Scotch Plains, Fanwood, North and South Plainfield and Piscataway.

Chief Payne said that, as far as he knew, no guns had been fired during the looting.

Two Negro Councilmen who successfully dispersed a group of 30 to 40 Negroes who had broken three store windows Friday night, tried again last night, but failed.

### Other Minor Disorders

There were reports of minor disorders in Rahway, East Orange and Elizabeth.

After Friday's looting in Plainfield, in which "several" Negro teen-agers were arrested, a meeting was held yesterday afternoon at the Teen-Age Center in the west end section. Mayor George F. Hatfield heard the grievances of a small group of Negro youths about the operation of the center.

Friday night, gangs of 150 to 200 youths moved toward the business district, but the police forced them back into the areas surrounding the West End Gardens and Elmwood Gardens housing projects.

In Rahway, a gang of teen-agers smashed the window of an auto-supply store at Monroe and Essex Streets last night. No arrests were made.

Twelve arrests, mostly of Negro teen-agers, were reported in Elizabeth yesterday as two fire bombs were tossed and several store windows were broken in the First Street business area.

The East Orange police reported that they found five Molotov cocktails ready to be used on the porch of a home at 205 Tremont Avenue near the Newark line at 10:23 P.M. yesterday.

The occupants of the house, who said they knew nothing about the fire bombs—soda bottles filled with gasoline with cloth wicks stuffed in them—said they called the police when they had found them.

### Mayor Seeks Guardsmen

Friday night, the Mayor of East Orange said he had asked Gov. Richard J. Hughes to provide National Guard and state troopers in any emergency.

"They will be brought in at my discretion and I have not ordered them in yet," said Mayor James W. Kelly Jr. "The state troopers would come in first and then the National Guard. I just want them available in the city to protect our people."

East Orange is directly adjacent to Newark, and several main thoroughfares are common to both cities. The population of East Orange is about 85,000, and 25 to 30 per cent of the population is Negro, a minority group that is increasing.

"I do not expect trouble from the nonwhites in East Orange," Mayor Kelly said. "I have the greatest respect for them. Many own their own homes. I'm optimistic we will not have any trouble, but there is always the possibility of someone coming in from outside."

### Few Isolated Incidents

The East Orange police said there were a few isolated incidents of rocks thrown through store windows, which they attributed to youthful mischief. Liquor stores and taverns, which reopened Friday morning after having closed early Thursday night, were again ordered closed by the police early Friday night.

All vacations and days off for the East Orange police had

been canceled, and daily tours of duty have been extended from the normal eight to 12 hours. Some policemen here and in other surrounding towns cut short their vacations and returned to duty after learning of the emergency.

Another tense town—afraid not of its own people but outsiders—is Irvington, which borders both Newark and East Orange. The population of Irvington is 65,000, and only a tiny percentage is Negro, according to Acting Chief of Police Edward J. Oleksik.

"The Negroes in this town would look the other way in case of trouble," said the chief. "There are no destitute Negroes here."

### Watching for Snipers

The Irvington police have been extremely alert along the dividing line that separates it from Newark. Thursday night an Irvington policeman manned a post that topped the highest apartment building and used binoculars to watch for snipers atop buildings in Newark.

When he spotted the source of sniper fire, he passed the word to the Newark police.

"I think we have been successful in preventing a spill-over from Newark because of our constant patrolling and our cooperation with the Newark police," said Chief Oleksik. "Maybe the rioters knew they couldn't get anywhere here."

Chief Oleksik said several white men in two cars carrying shotguns were arrested in Irvington late Thursday night. He said that they apparently had been trying to find a street that would get them into Newark after the riot-torn city's curfew went into effect at 10 P.M.

Liquor stores and taverns remained closed in Irvington since before 3 P.M. Friday, in accordance with the state-of-emergency proclamation by Mayor Harry Stevenson.

In South Orange, liquor stores and taverns reopened for a short time Friday morning but then closed again. In Nutley the sale of alcoholic beverages was shut off at 7 P.M. Friday.



New Jersey Council for the Humanities & Visual Arts Center of New Jersey

**TEACHER SURVEY FORM**

*Hidden History*

*Complete this survey and receive a free Membership to the  
Visual Arts Center of New Jersey at the Individual Level!*

Please return the completed survey to: Visual Arts Center of New Jersey, Attention: Cara Bramson, 68 Elm Street, Summit NJ 08901 or [cbramson@artcenternj.org](mailto:cbramson@artcenternj.org).

1. Overall, I found the quality of this lesson plan to be:

☐ Excellent ☐ Very Good ☐ Average ☐ Disappointing ☐ Unsatisfactory

2. Did the lesson plan align with your curriculum? ☐ Yes ☐ No  
How or why?

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3. Please tell us what impact the lesson had on your students. (Check all that apply)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learned something new about the topic        | <input type="checkbox"/> Reflected on the topic from a new perspective      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engaged in a meaningful discussion           | <input type="checkbox"/> Explored an issue of importance to their community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inspired to learn more about the topic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Explored how art can impact other disciplines      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expressed a desire to visit a gallery/museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Other <hr/>  |

4. Do you plan to share ideas from this lesson plan with other teachers. ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Did you know about the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey prior to using this lesson plan? ☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Do you plan to visit the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey within the next year? ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Was NJCH acknowledged for its support of this lesson plan? ☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Additional Comments/Suggestions:

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continued on next page

9. How would you describe yourself?

Age: ☐ Adult (19-39) ☐ Adult (40-64) ☐ Senior (65+)

Ethnicity: ☐ African American ☐ Asian ☐ Caucasian ☐ Latin/Hispanic ☐ Other

Gender: ☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Other

10. I would like more information from ☐ Visual Arts Center of New Jersey ☐ New Jersey Council for the Humanities

Name (First and Last) \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

# *Casey Ruble: Everything That Rises*

Exhibition Artwork





Casey Ruble

*Everyone here is aware of what has happened but they also want to forget as quickly as possible.*, 2014

Paper collage

8 x 6 inches





Casey Ruble  
*Music. Even laughter. And always the gunfire., 2015*  
Paper collage  
8 1/4 x 6 inches





Casey Ruble  
*Untitled (Burlington)*, 2014  
Paper collage  
8 13/16 x 6 5/8 inches





Casey Ruble  
*Untitled (Jersey City)*, 2015  
Paper collage  
8 x 6 inches





Casey Ruble  
*What happened?*, 2015  
Paper collage  
7 x 7 inches

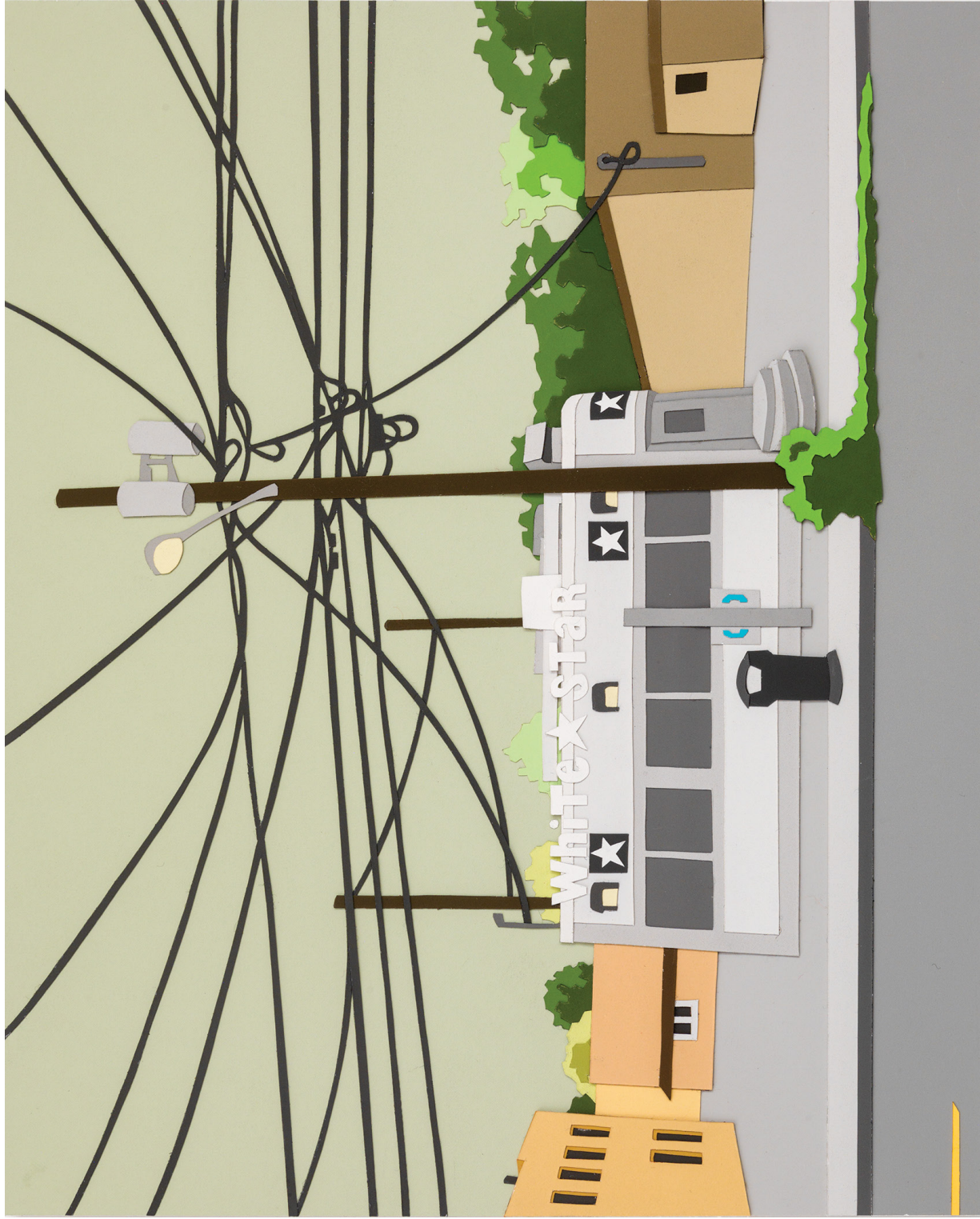


Casey Ruble  
*Untitled (Swedesboro)*, 2015  
Paper collage  
8 x 6 inches





Casey Ruble  
*Untitled (Jersey City)*, 2014  
Paper collage  
6 x 8 inches



Casey Ruble  
*"They said they'd rather die here than in Vietnam."*, 2015  
Paper collage  
6 1/2 x 8 inches





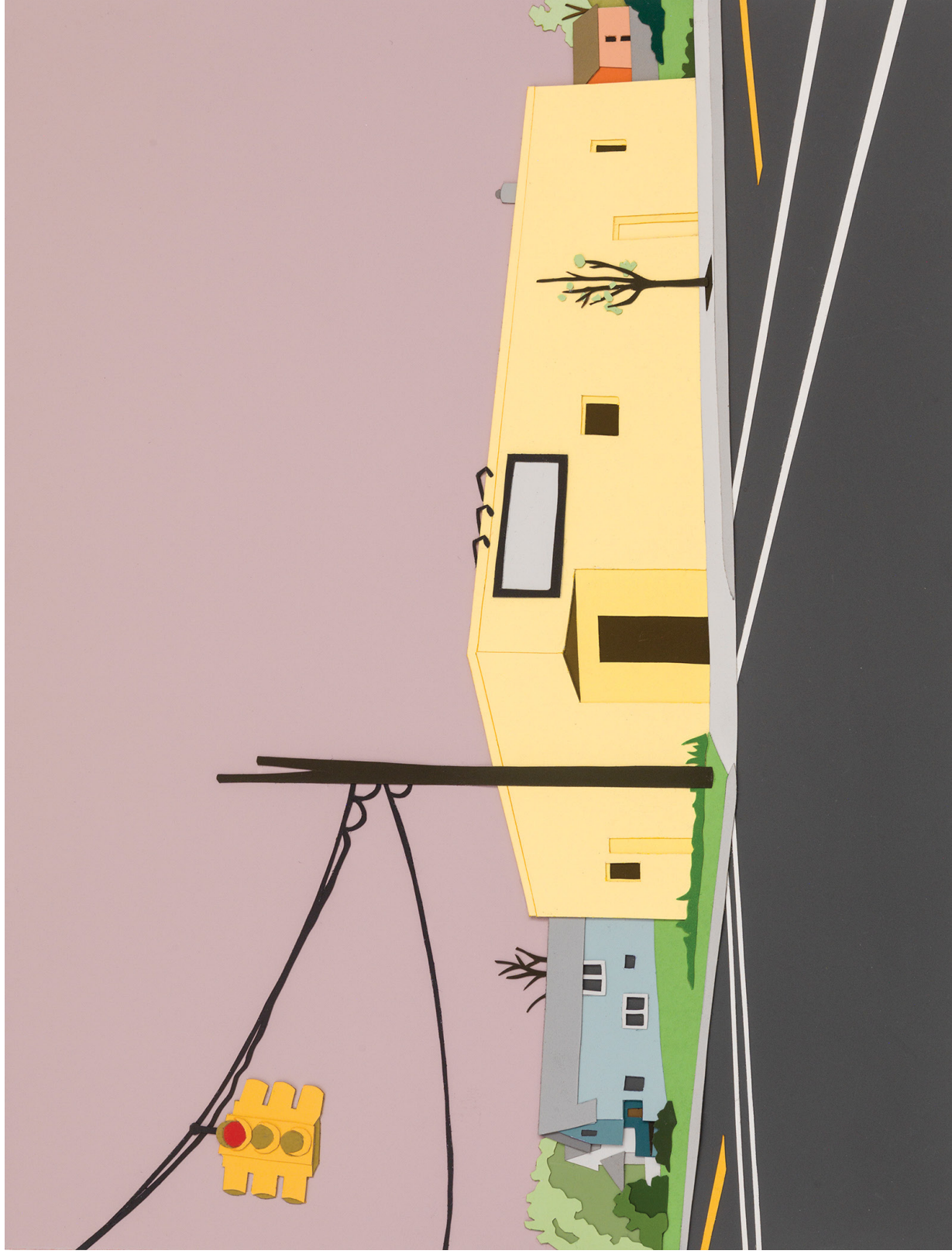
Casey Ruble  
*Untitled (Allentown)*, 2014  
Paper collage  
6 x 8 inches





Casey Ruble  
*Untitled (Cherry Hill)*, 2015  
Paper collage  
6 x 8 inches



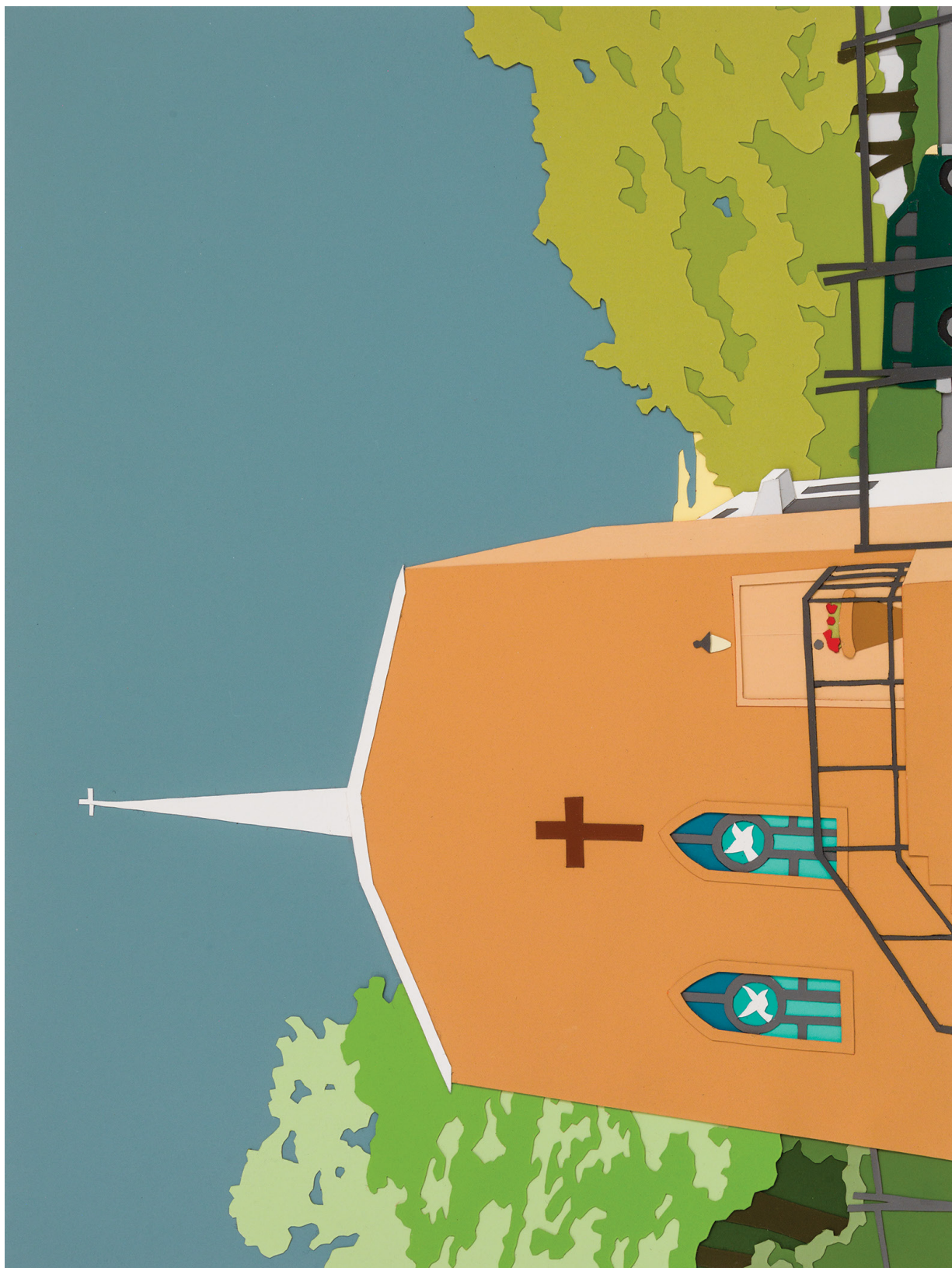


Casey Ruble  
*The wind was out of the west at 20 m.p.h., 2014*  
Paper collage  
6 x 8 inches



Casey Ruble  
*Untitled (Boonton)*, 2014  
Paper collage  
6 x 8 inches





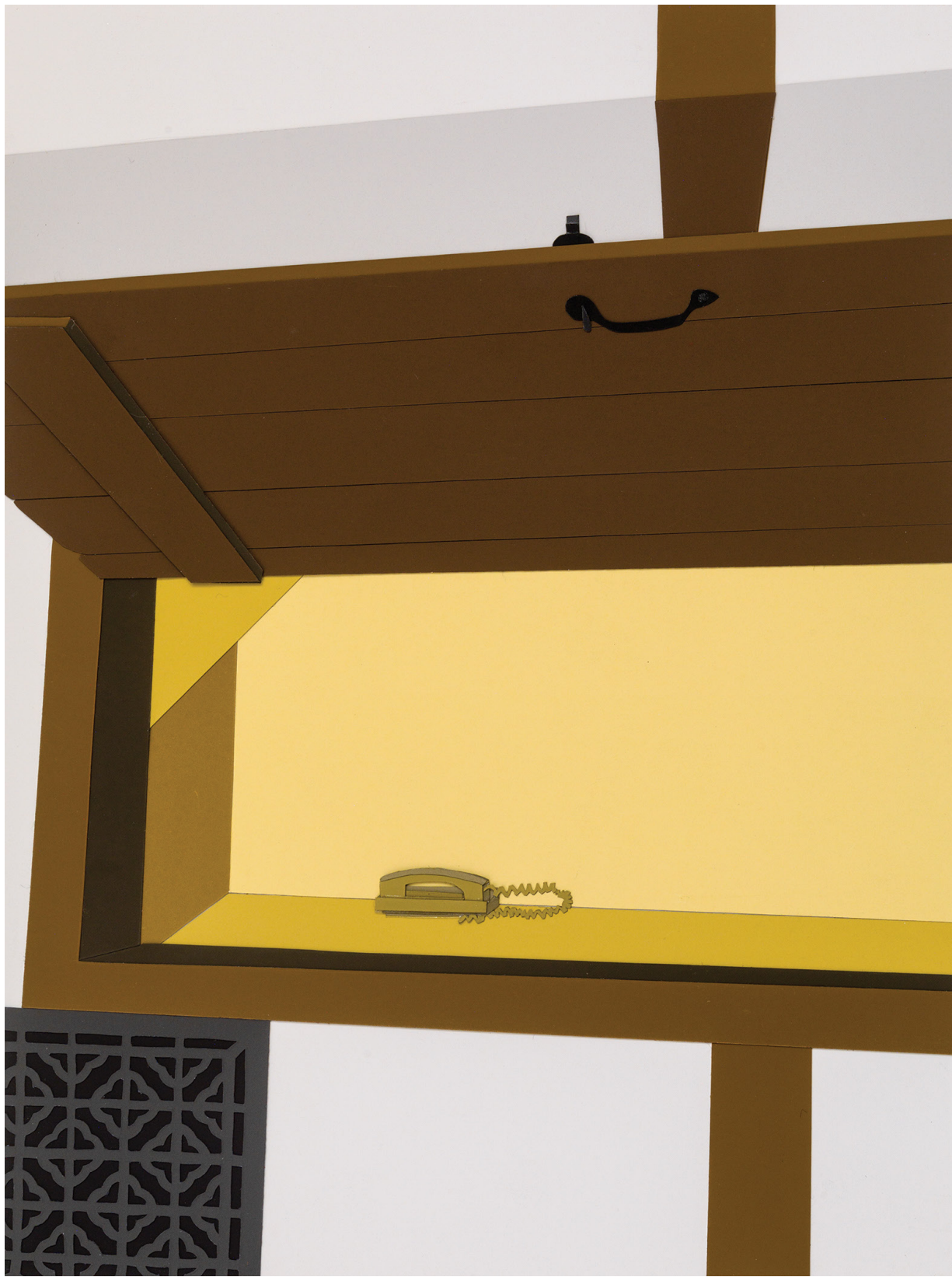
Casey Ruble  
*The governor answered "no" when asked about any Communist instigation of the riots.*, 2014  
Paper collage  
6 x 8 inches





Casey Ruble  
*Untitled (Timbuctoo)*, 2014  
Paper collage  
6 x 8 inches





Casey Ruble  
*Untitled (Lawnside)*, 2015  
Paper collage  
6 x 8 inches