PERFORMANCE
PHILOSOPHY

GALAXIES → EVENTUALLY THERE WILL BE NOTHING

MATT MARTIN ARTIST

ReView - Timothy Ferris' *Galaxies* *(eventually there will be nothing)*

→ Matt Martin's *eventually there will be nothing* *(Galaxies)*

In the context of the traditional review, where a critical evaluation is made through an inspection or examination in regards to some criteria, the palimpsest *(a formal device that creates a correspondence between two things)*

could in contrast be used to create this criticality through action *(a critical doing)*

and allow for the rhetoric of evaluation to be substituted for a more dialectical method.

Historically, a palimpsest is a manuscript or piece of writing material on which the original writing has been effaced to make room for later writing but of which traces remain; or by analogy, anything reused or altered but still bearing visible traces of its earlier form. Although this practice was most often done with little regard to the

PERFORMANCE PHILOSOPHY VOL 4, NO 1 (2018):297–324
DOI: https://doi.org/10.21476/PP.2018.41193
ISSN 2057-7176

original, primarily serving a pragmatic purpose not to waste parchment, it can instead be utilized as methodology for a sort of physical sublation, as it both preserves and changes the original. Or put another way, critically doing a palimpsest allows the physical *(literal)*

alteration to become the dialectic interplay *(function)*

between the original and some other term, concept, or object. If contextualized then as a review, this process retains the basic premise of analysis, but changes it from a form of external evaluation to one of synthesis.

Specifically, I altered *Galaxies*, *(images of space)*

a large coffee-table book from the late 1980s *(a time of only ground-based telescopes)*

into the palimpsest *eventually there will be nothing.* *(spaces of space)*

In this alteration, issues of authority *(authorship)*

and time *(loss)*

are addressed, as in other comparable projects, such as Tom Phillips' *A Humument* or Robert Rauschenberg's *Erased de Kooning*.

In *eventually there will be nothing*, I start with the figurative raw material of the universe, and remove humanity's explanation of it. *(physically cutting out all the text)*

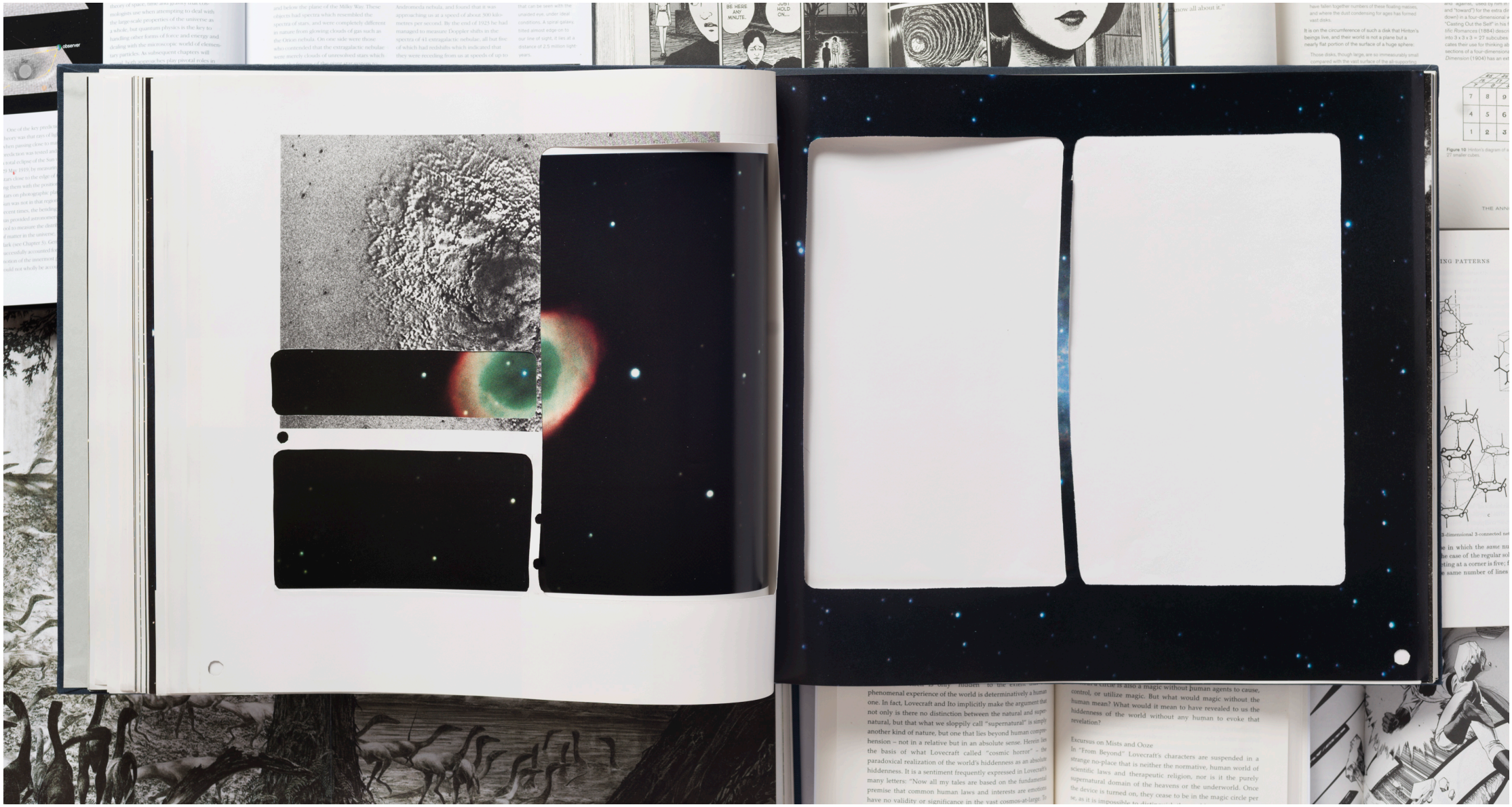
This can be seen as similar to the actions of Phillips and Rauschenberg in that it recontextualizes the authority of what it has removed.

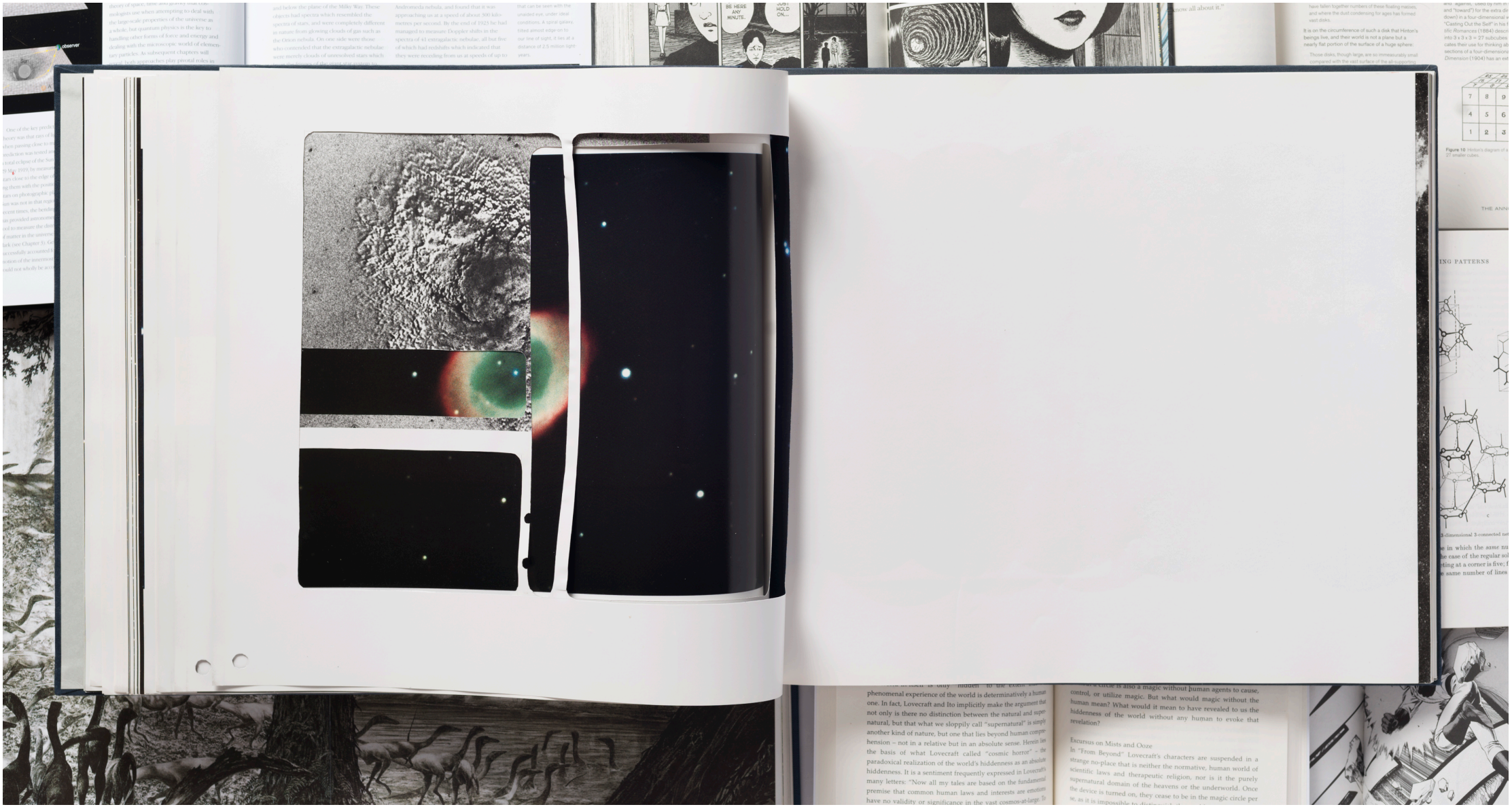
However, where in *A Humument* and *Erased de Kooning* are alterations of literature and art, *eventually there will be nothing* is an alteration of a scientific, albeit non-scholarly, text.

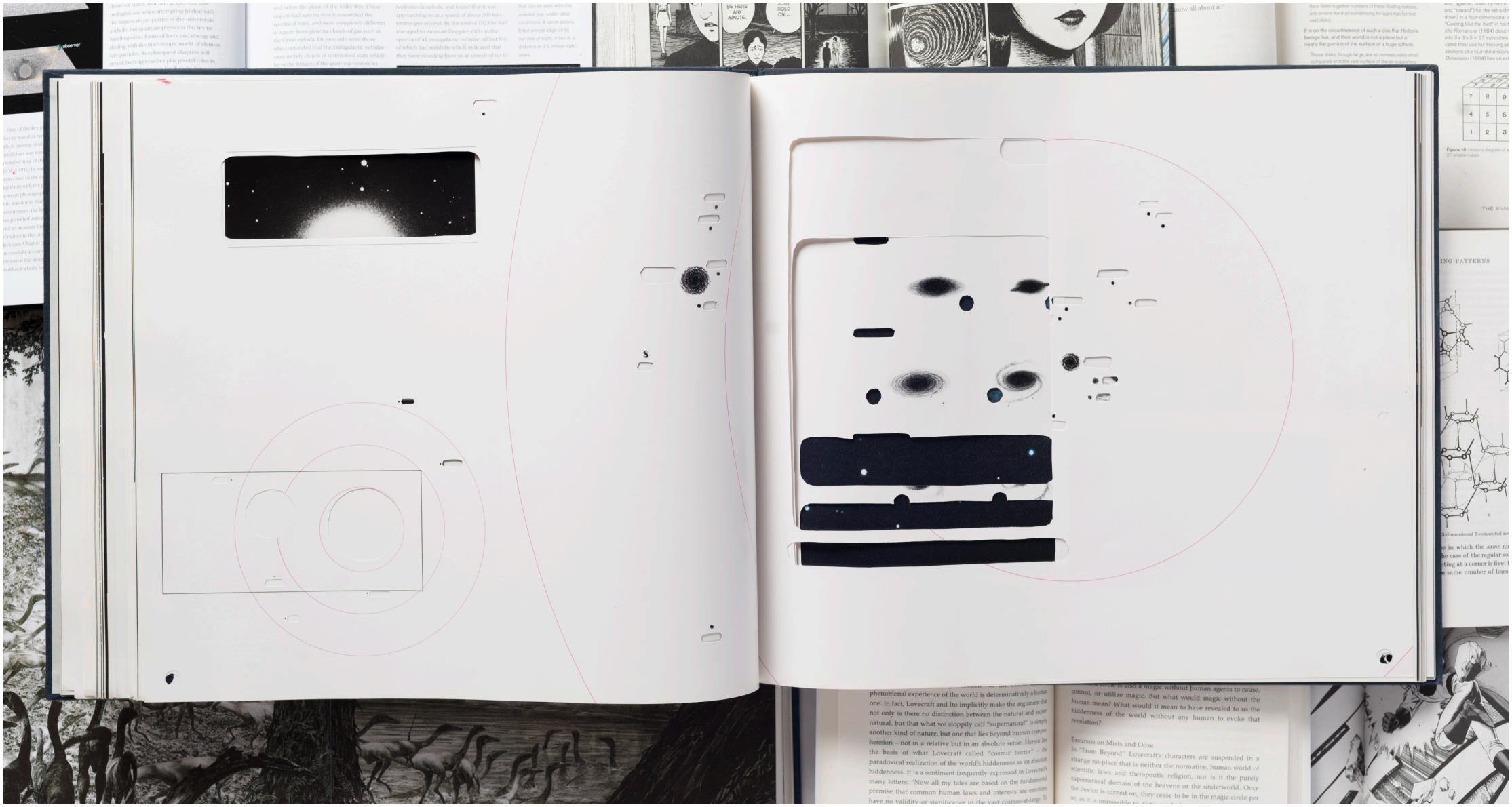
Enacting this kind of process within this context gives it more of a fundamental severity—there are few things that seem more fixed or certain than explanations based on scientific rigor—and it is easy to read the performative act of removal in this case as commenting on the scale of human thought in regard to the grandness, physically and temporally, of the universe, as it lumbers on long after us.

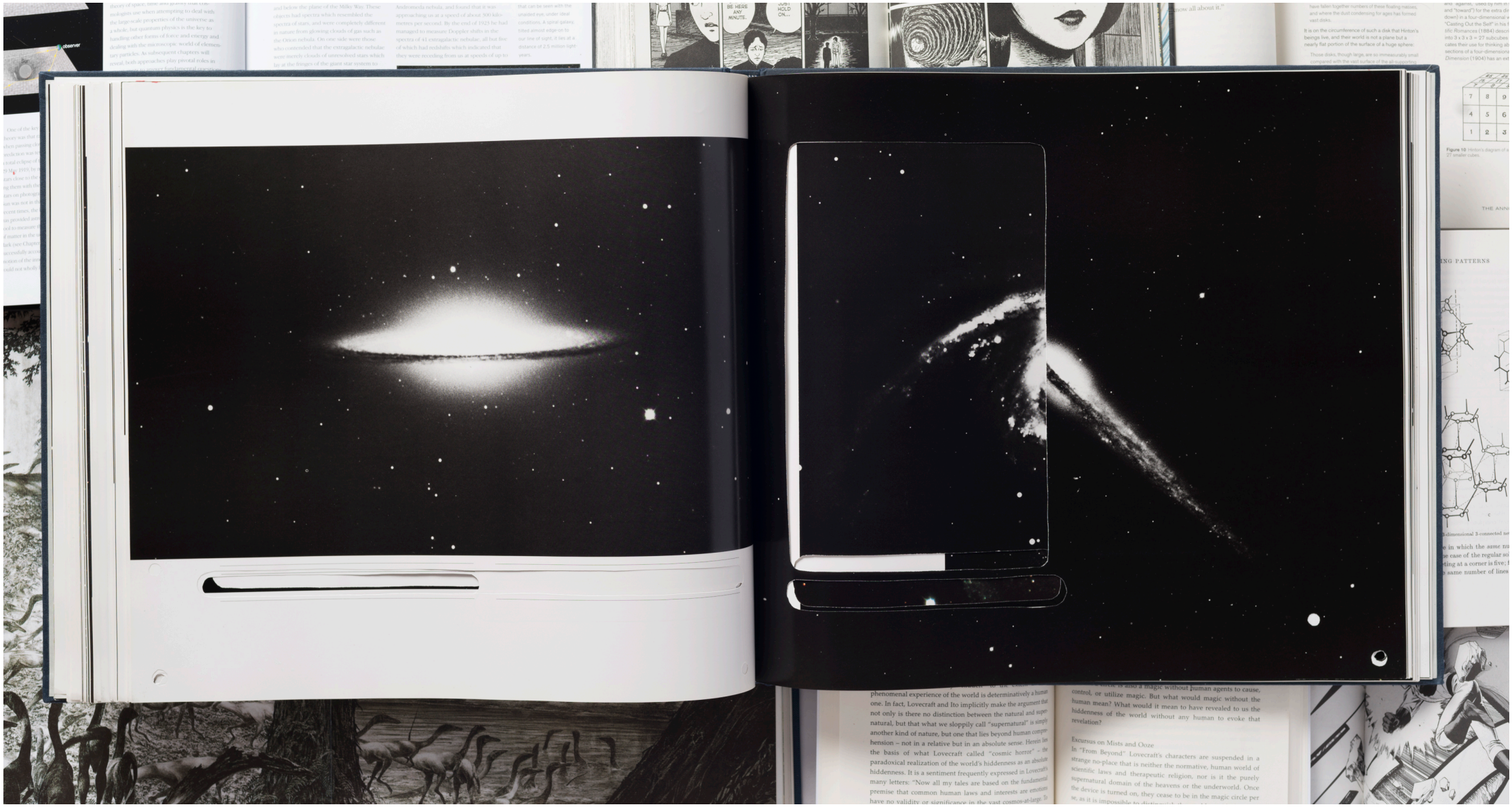
(long before us)

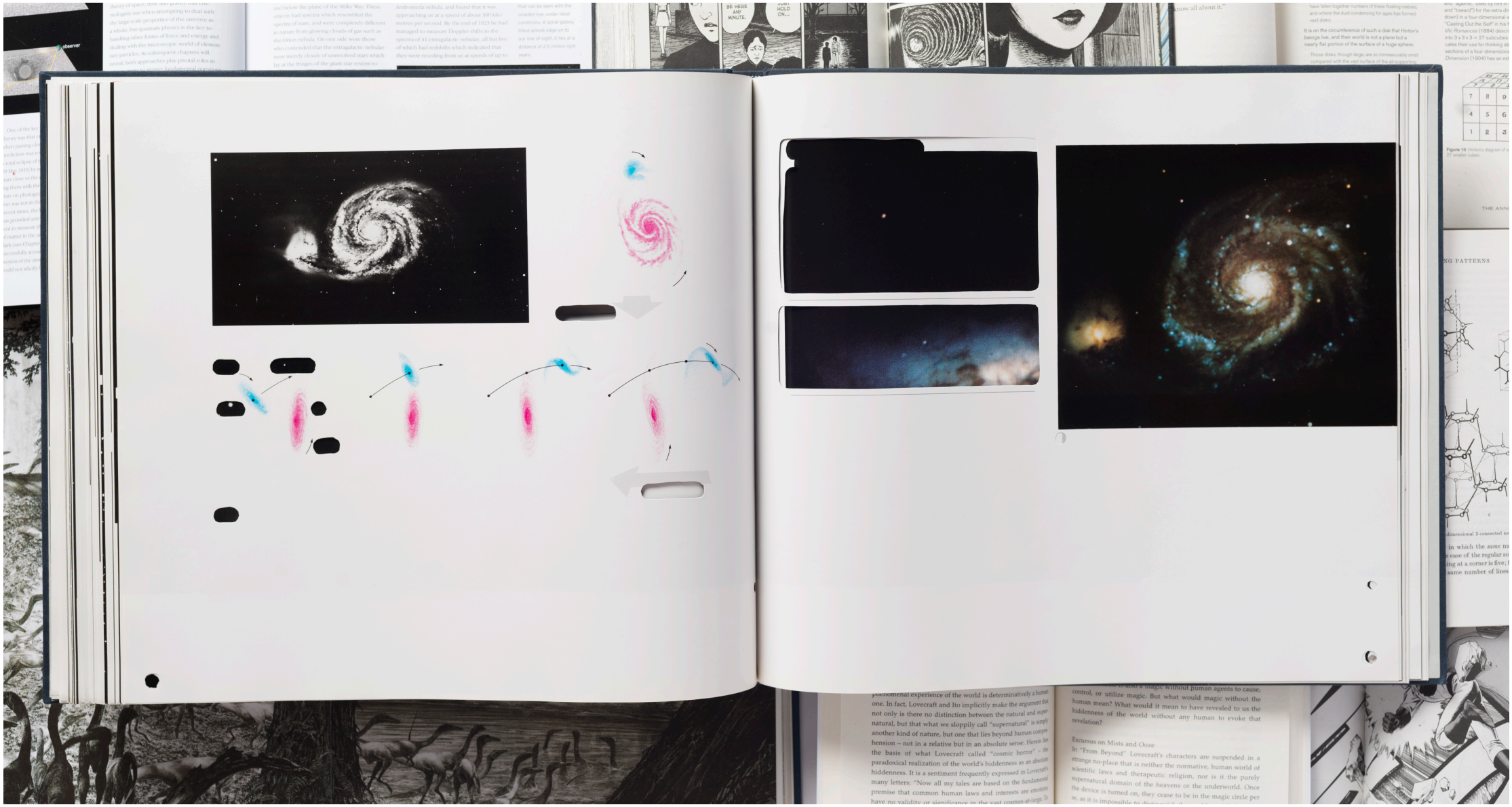

observer
Sun
BE HERE ANY MINUTE.
JUST HOLD ON...
phenomenal experience of the world is determinatively a human one. In fact, Lovecraft and Ito implicitly make the argument that not only is there no distinction between the natural and supernatural, but that what we sloppily call "supernatural" is simply another kind of nature, but one that lies beyond human comprehension – not in a relative but in an absolute sense. Herein lies the basis of what Lovecraft called "cosmic horror" – the paradoxical realization of the world's hiddenness as an absolute hiddenness. It is a sentiment frequently expressed in Lovecraft's many letters: "Now all my tales are based on the fundamental premise that common human laws and interests are emotions have no validity or significance in the vast cosmos-at-large. To
control, or utilize magic. But what would magic without the human mean? What would it mean to have revealed to us the hiddenness of the world without any human to evoke that revelation?
Excursus on Mists and Ooze
In "From Beyond", Lovecraft's characters are suspended in a strange no-place that is neither the normative, human world of scientific laws and therapeutic religion, nor is it the purely supernatural domain of the heavens or the underworld. Once the device is turned on, they cease to be in the magic circle per

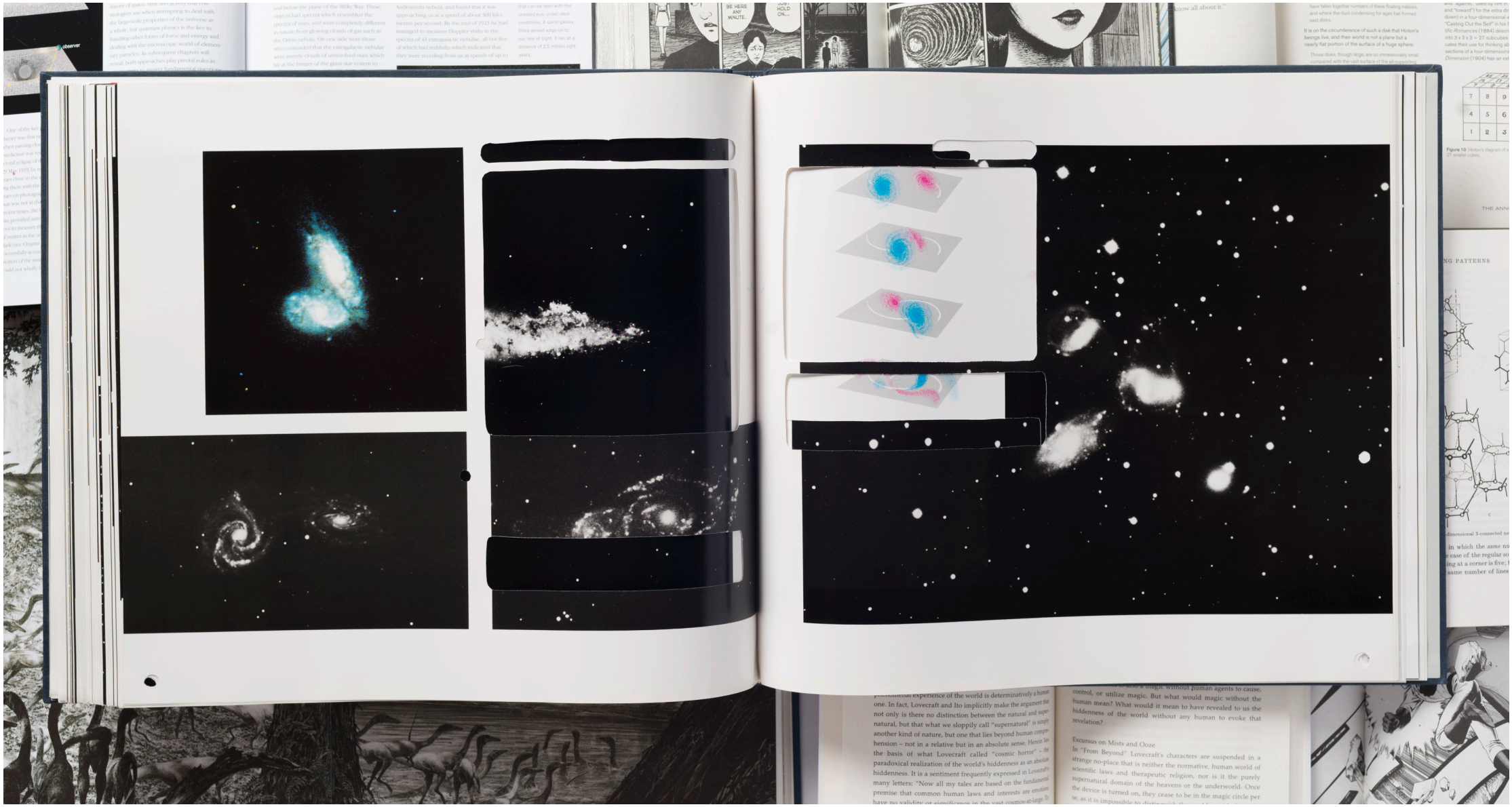


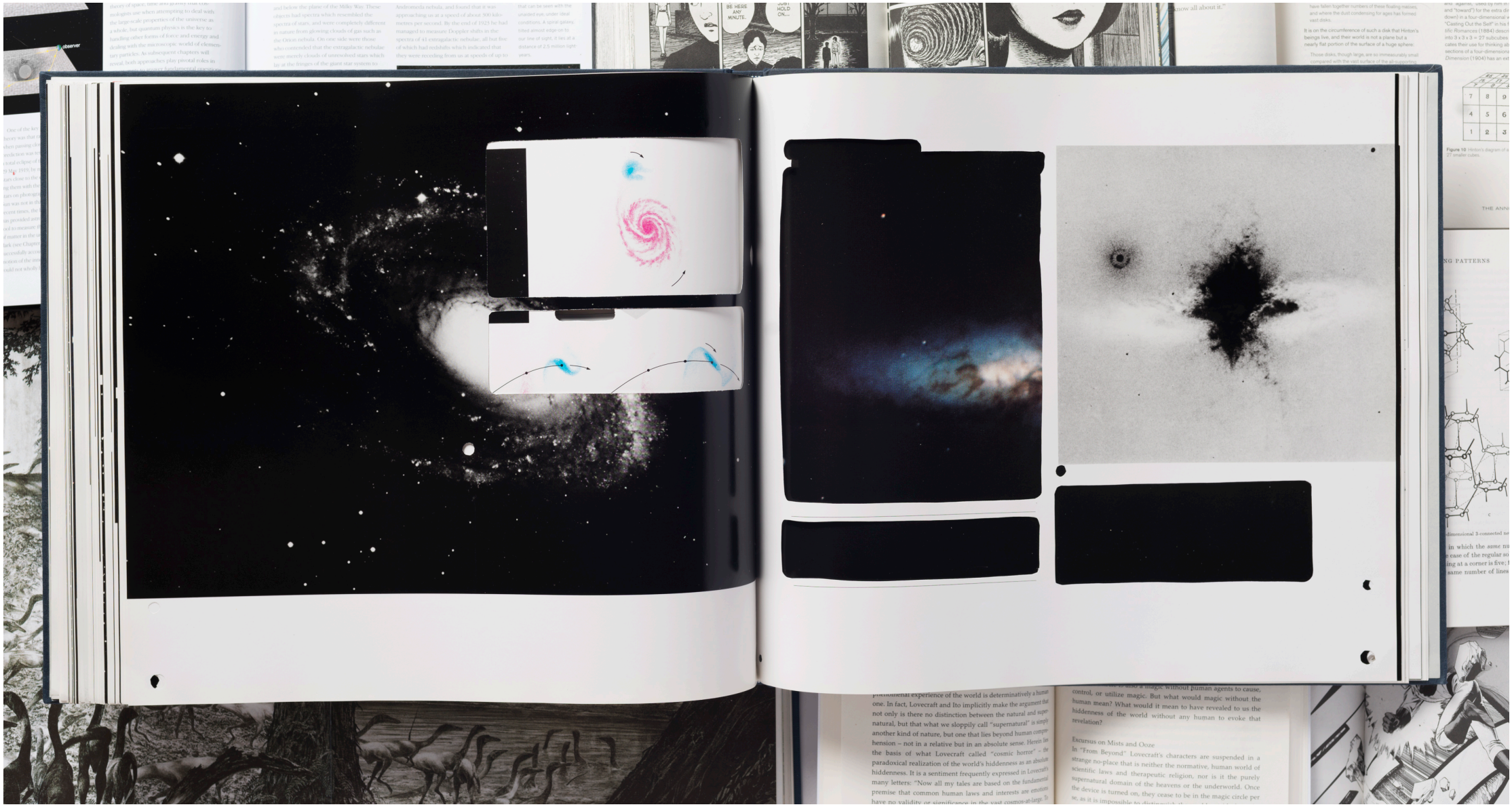


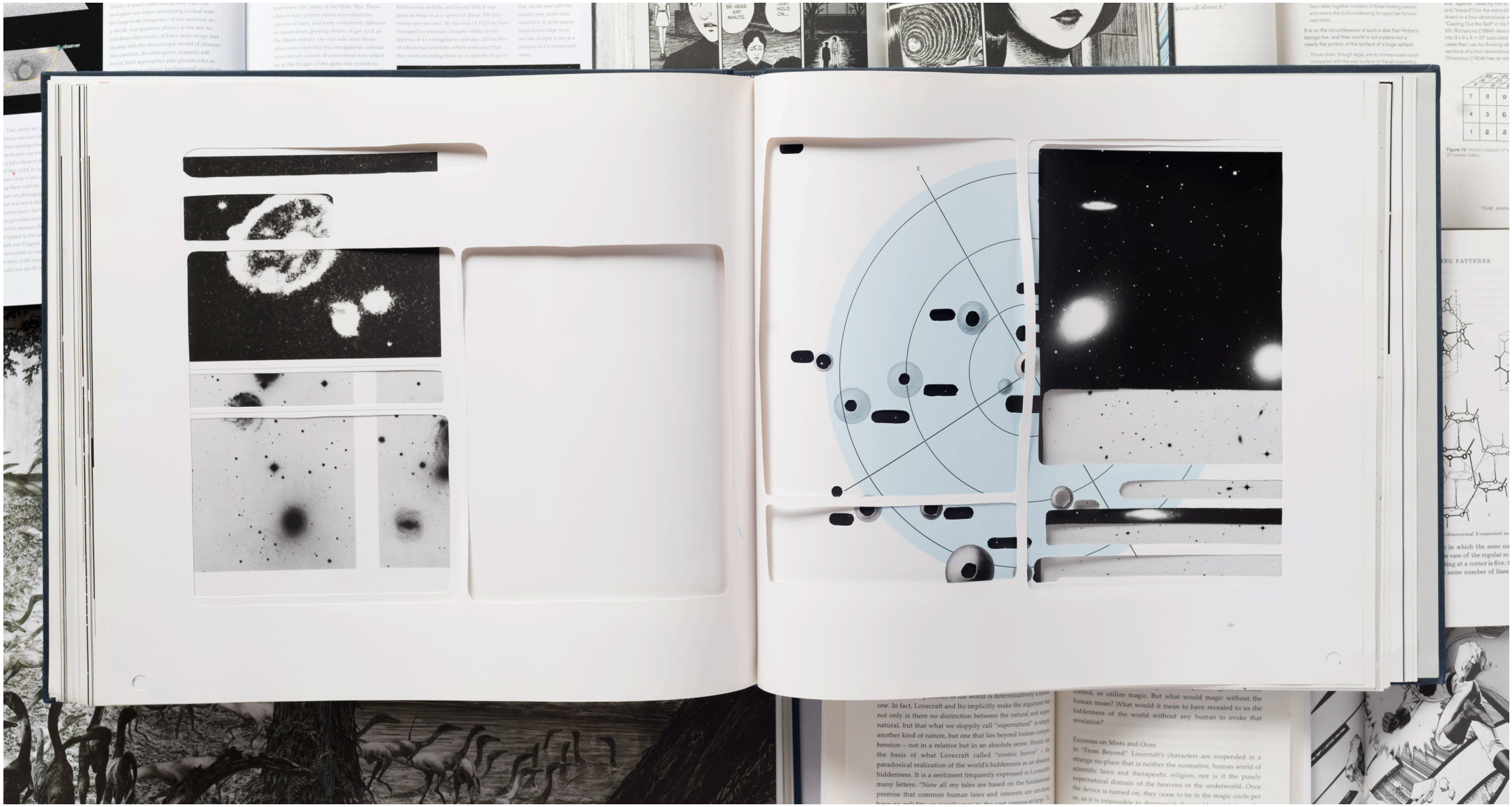


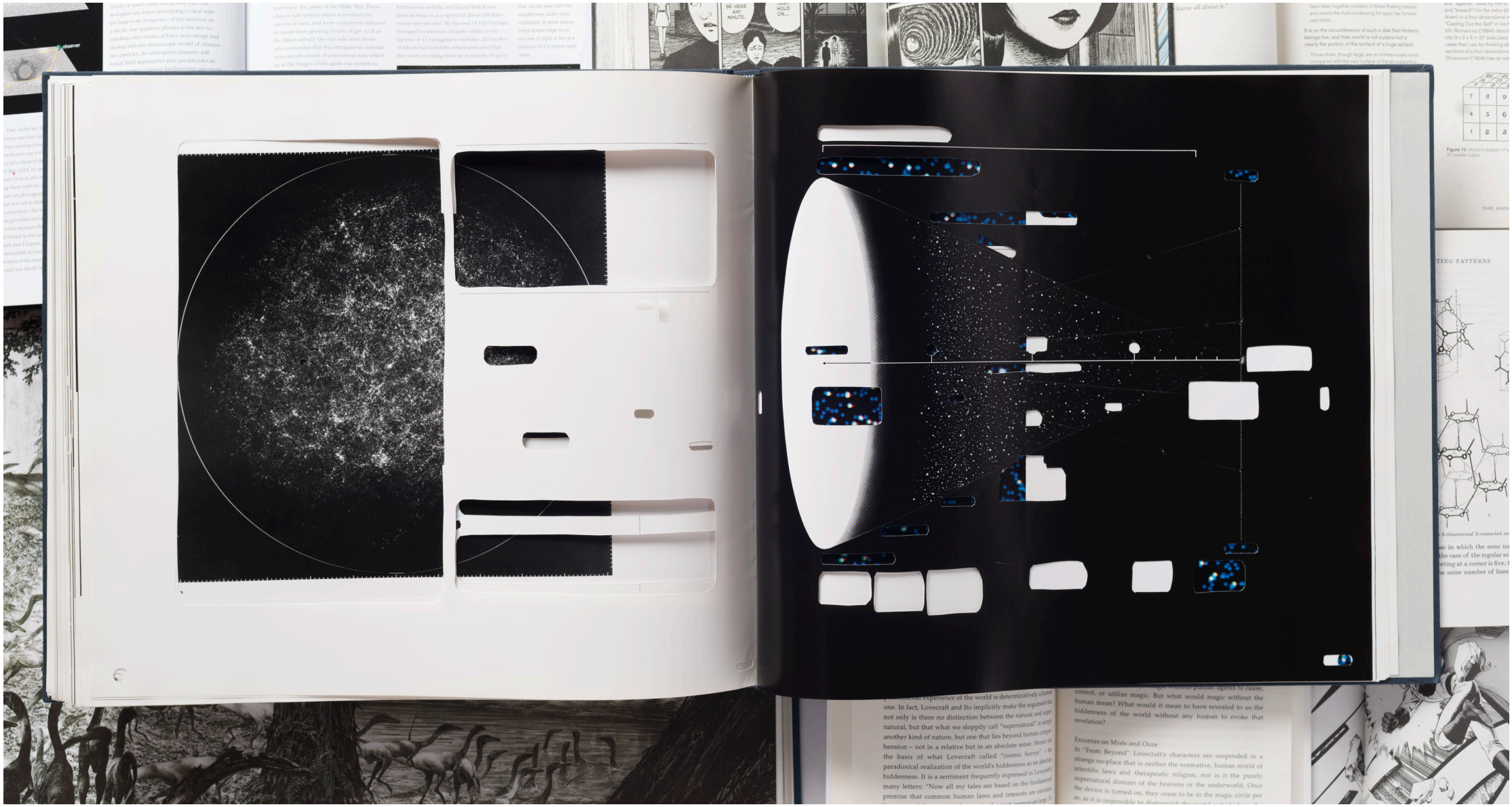












Works Cited

Ferris, Timothy. 1987. *Galaxies*. New York: Harrison House.

McCabe, Chris. 2012. "A Little White Opening Out of Thought." *Poetry Review* 102 (3). Accessed February 2018. http://www.tomphillips.co.uk/humument/essays/item/5862-a-little-white-opening-out-of-thought-by-chris-mccabe.

Phillips, Tom. 1970. *A Humument*. London: Thames & Hudson.

Roberts, Sarah. 2013. "Erased de Kooning Drawing." Rauschenberg Research Project, July 2013. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Accessed February 2018. https://www.sfmoma.org/artwork/98.298/essay/erased-de-kooning-drawing/.

Biography

Matt Martin is a Chicago-based artist whose projects are generally concerned with metaphysical questions of scale, indeterminacy, and recursive states; and are engaged with material and object intra-relations, primarily through two and three-dimensional assemblages and installations. www.acrylicsuperhero.com