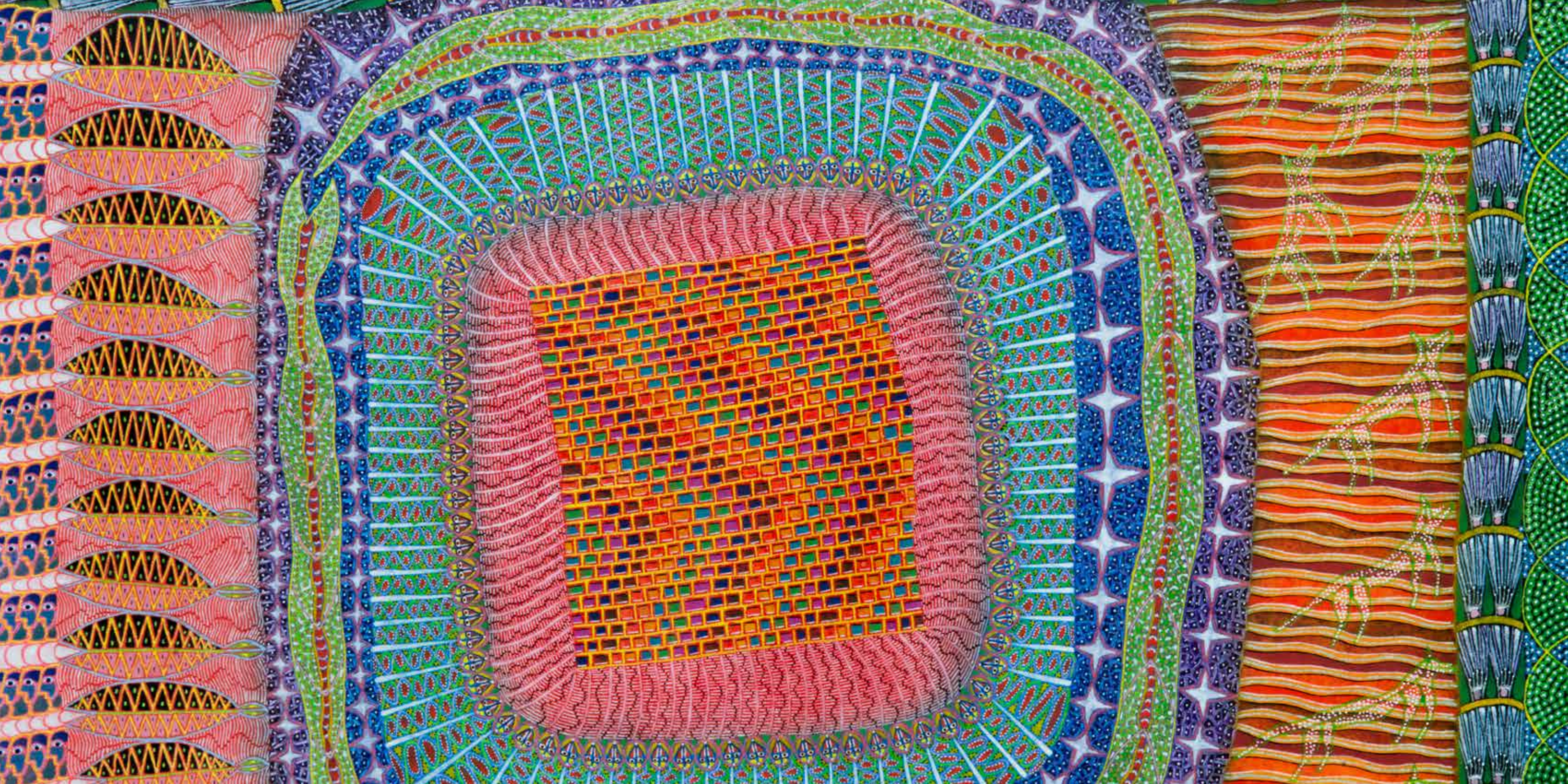


Domenico Zindato: Recent Drawings





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Andrew Edlin Gallery
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January 18, 2014

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Edward M. Gómez

The producer of any work of art becomes the creator of a universe whose form and expanse are literally those of the materials of which it is made and of the pictorial or sculptural space it fills. Time is also an invisible, sometimes nuanced element in the visual arts; consider the time it takes to apprehend the presence and meanings of a work, or for artists' creations to communicate whatever messages their makers might have intended for them to convey.

Perhaps nowhere can this sense of the raw power of artistic creation be so vividly felt as in the work of the most singular self-taught artists. The most original autodidacts are the masters of the universes they conjure up on paper, canvas or old scraps of board, or that they fashion out of clay, wood and the most unlikely combinations of found materials. Self-taught artists' most compelling concoctions offer unexpected depictions or interpretations of the familiar, perceivable world; sometimes, in the strangeness of their forms or visions, they can seem tantalizingly otherworldly, too.

In this way, the Italian artist Domenico Zindato's ink-on-paper drawings offer eye-seducing vistas of imaginary worlds within worlds. They are mysterious, luscious and executed with the painstaking precision of expertly crafted jewels. Each of his luminous images resembles a large-scale magnification of some kind of unusual, multicolored specimen seen under a microscope, revealing densely packed, semi-abstract, meandering ribbons and patches of random patterns. If Zindato's compositions appear ready to spill right off the surfaces of the sheets on which they are drawn into self-generating, endless pictorial space, that may



Untitled, 2009
ink and pastel on paper
28.5 × 7.8 inches (72.4 × 19.7 cm)
Collection Susan Crawley



Untitled, 2008
ink and pastel on paper
7.8×28 inches (19.7×71.1 cm)
Collection Judy Saslow

well be because the creative impulse that shapes them is one that bemuses even the artist himself. “I never start a drawing with a particular composition in mind,” he has observed. “Each composition grows at its own pace, in its own way, organically.”

Zindato’s work certainly has evolved since he presented his first solo exhibition in New York, at the Phyllis Kind Gallery, in 2000. At that time, his drawings were smaller. Large patches of color and his signature, symbol-like motifs figured in those earlier pictures, but they were less densely compacted than they appear today. As his drawing surfaces grew bigger, the images he created on them did not automatically grow larger in scale, too; that is, he enlarged his compositions’ background swaths of solid colors but he continued to render the lines and sizes of his repeated, random-pattern motifs—hands, eyes, snakes, heads, birds and more—as tiny and as meticulously as ever. As a result, seen from a distance, Zindato’s works of recent years read visually as rhythmic plays of abstract, colored forms. Up close, they pull viewers into thickets of finely elaborated patterns, made up of the artist’s tiny figures, which are set against those dynamic fields of color.

Zindato’s palette, with its hot pinks, tropical yellows and oranges, electric greens and blues, and other vibrant hues, has been influenced by the colors of Mexico, where he has lived for more than a decade. It has also been informed by his travels to such places as India and Haiti, and his explorations of their rich artistic traditions. Born and brought up in Reggio Calabria, a city at the southern tip of Italy, across the Strait of Messina from Sicily, Zindato comes from a family of

attorneys and, for a brief period in the 1980s, in Rome, he studied law. However, he soon switched to cinema and theater studies before cutting short his academic career to set out and travel, and to make art without allegiance to any school or style, and unfiltered through any aesthetic-critical theories.

The artist settled in Berlin one year before Germany’s post-Cold War reunification and stayed there for eight years. During that period, he traveled to India, Morocco and various European cities. He had begun painting with colored inks and fine-haired brushes on watercolor paper, Japanese *washi* (papers made with various kinds of plant fibers in their pulps) and other kinds of handmade paper.

In Berlin, Zindato helped manage a discotheque that served as a venue for musical, visual and performance artists. The scene was urban avant-garde and as theatrical and audacious as Zindato’s own art today. With its strong formal vocabulary and an air of reverie, it is quiet and meditative. Open-ended in form and meaning, his semi-abstract images never shout. Instead, they whisper and hum, and the artist has said that, when he is making his drawings, he feels as though he is in a trance, his creative energy following the flow of his lines and his mark making as much as it propels them. At his home in Cuernavaca, he works on them daily, outdoors, in natural light, on a table set up on a terrace. He never starts a new drawing until his current picture-in-progress is finished.

Zindato is keenly aware that his art has come to reflect a kind of introspective sensibility, and that, in its free-floating, hard-to-pin-down blend of allusions



Untitled, 2008
ink and pastel on paper
12.3 x 12.1 inches (31.1 x 30.8 cm)
Collection Kelly Colasanti

to ancient spirits and eros, magic and dreams, primordial forces and restless yearning, it may offer viewers a soulful, transcendent lift. “It moves me in that way,” he says, “and this is why, for example, I’ve titled a series of three round drawings in this exhibition ‘To the Life Which Is Within.’” Zindato encountered that awkward-sounding phrase in an old book he found a few years ago about Sufi music and the transmission of spiritual energy through patterns in art or musical rhythms, using certain instruments. “The book had been published in the early twentieth century,” Zindato recalls, “and the style of English in which it was written sounds odd today.”

Inspired, in part, by what he discovered in that old volume, Zindato says of his newest works, “I feel that, in effect, I co-created these drawings along with whatever you would like to call it, that most basic creative energy that lies deep within us. It’s as though it flowed through me when I was making these drawings, and I was merely the agent or messenger of this force, which might be described as something spiritual.”

As Zindato sees it, that essential, eternal, deeply human creative spirit “expands and circulates even more when it is expressed through art; now, through these drawings, it can touch viewers, who also become aware of it and bring their own creative energy back to the art.” If that kind of multidirectional flow of art-inspiring and art-savoring energy echoes the gentle gyrations within Zindato’s compositions, it also delights him.

“Making these new drawings was a very nourishing experience,” he says. “This relationship between myself and the creative force—of course, it’s present in the life of any artist, but now I’m more consciously aware of it than ever before, and, in a way, this awareness of this energy is the real subject of my work.”

Evidence of it is here, in these newest works, with their constellations of shapes resembling sea urchins, jellyfish, burning flames, fuzzy insects and overlapping vines, and their compositions that bring to mind antique maps, rare mandalas, aerial views of strange crop formations or cross sections of unknown biological specimens. It’s here, in the obsessive-flamboyant character of Zindato’s drawing.

Graphic designer, critic and journalist Edward M. Gómez is the author or co-author of numerous books about art and design subjects, including *Le dictionnaire de la civilisation japonaise*, *Yes: Yoko Ono*, *The Art of Adolf Wölfli: St. Adolf-Giant-Creation*, *Hans Krüsi* and *La Wilson: Five Decades*. He has written for the *New York Times*, *Art & Antiques*, *Art in America*, *Art + Auction*, *ARTnews*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Metropolis*, *Sculpture*, *Hyperallergic.com*, *Raw Vision* (UK), *Reforma* (Mexico), the *Japan Times* and other publications.



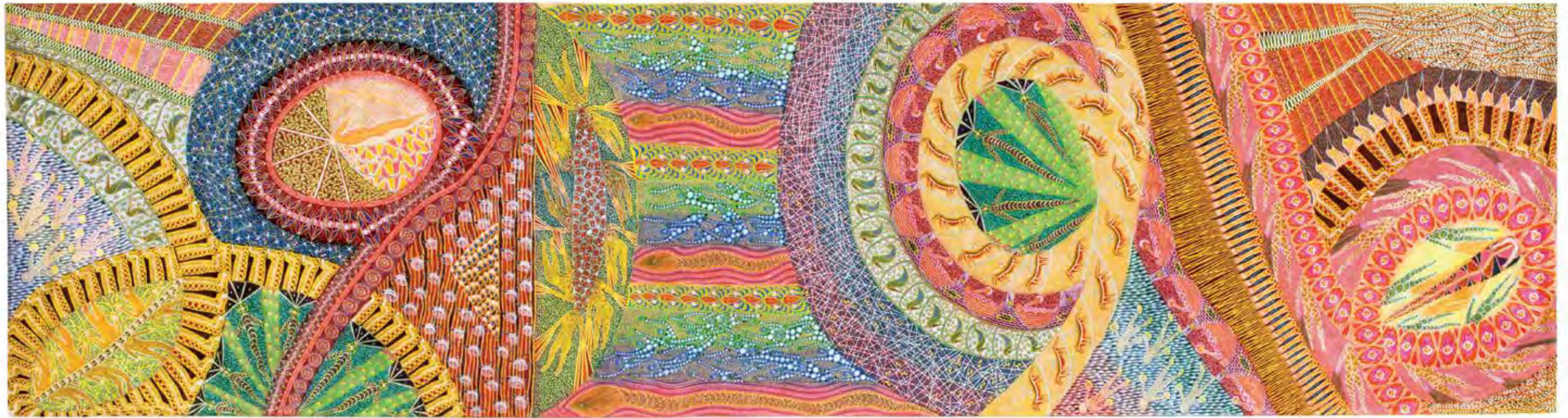
To the Life Which is Within 2, 2012
ink and pastel on paper
16.5 inches in diameter (42 cm in diameter)



To the Life Which is Within 3, 2013
ink and pastel on paper
16.5 inches in diameter (42 cm in diameter)



To the Life Which is Within 1, 2013
ink and pastel on paper
16.5 inches in diameter (42 cm in diameter)

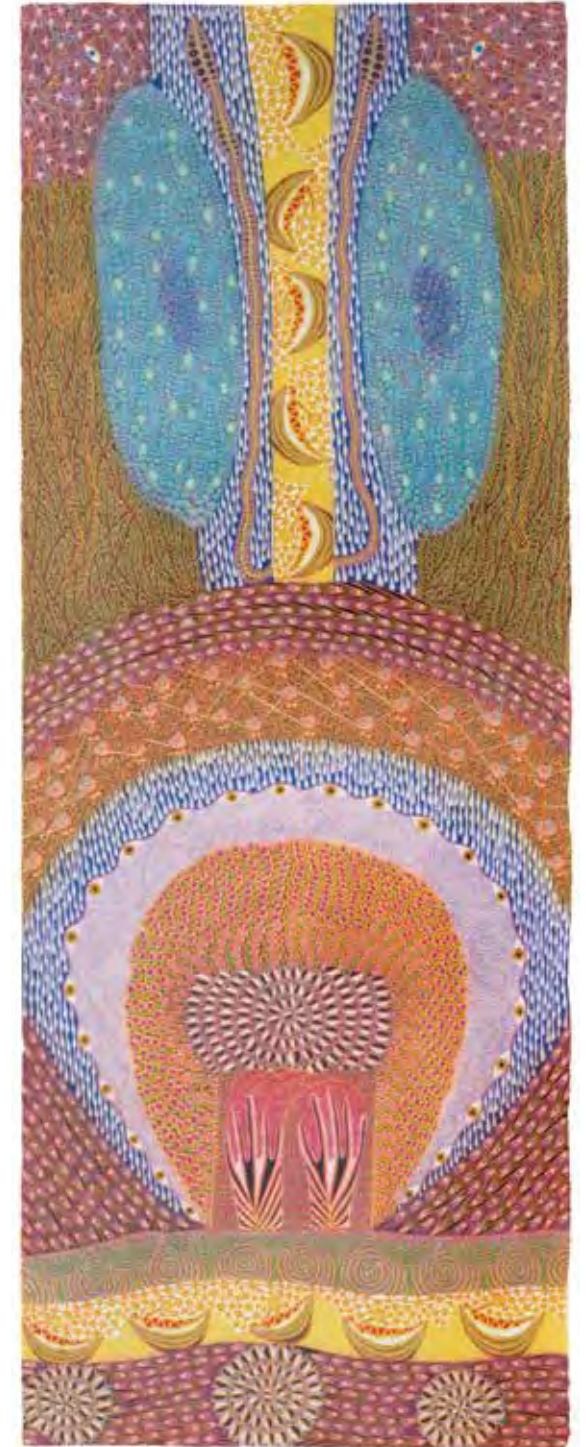


Untitled, 2011
ink and pastel on paper
19 × 73 inches (48.3 × 185.4 cm)
Collection Mark Dickstein



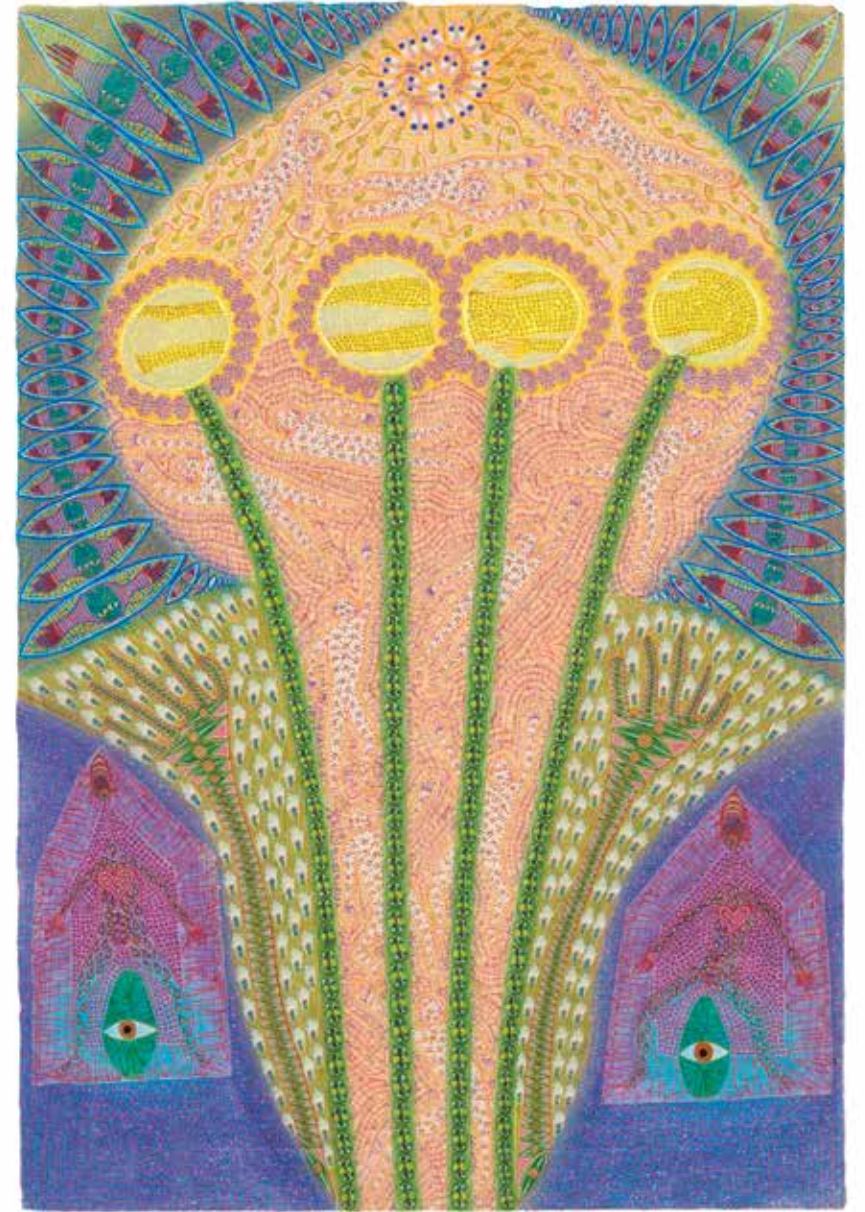
Untitled, 2011
ink and pastel on paper
19 x 73 inches (48.3 x 185.4 cm)
Collection Mark Dickstein

Looking from the Distance of a Breath, 2013
ink and pastel on paper
44.5 × 20.5 inches (113 × 52.1 cm)



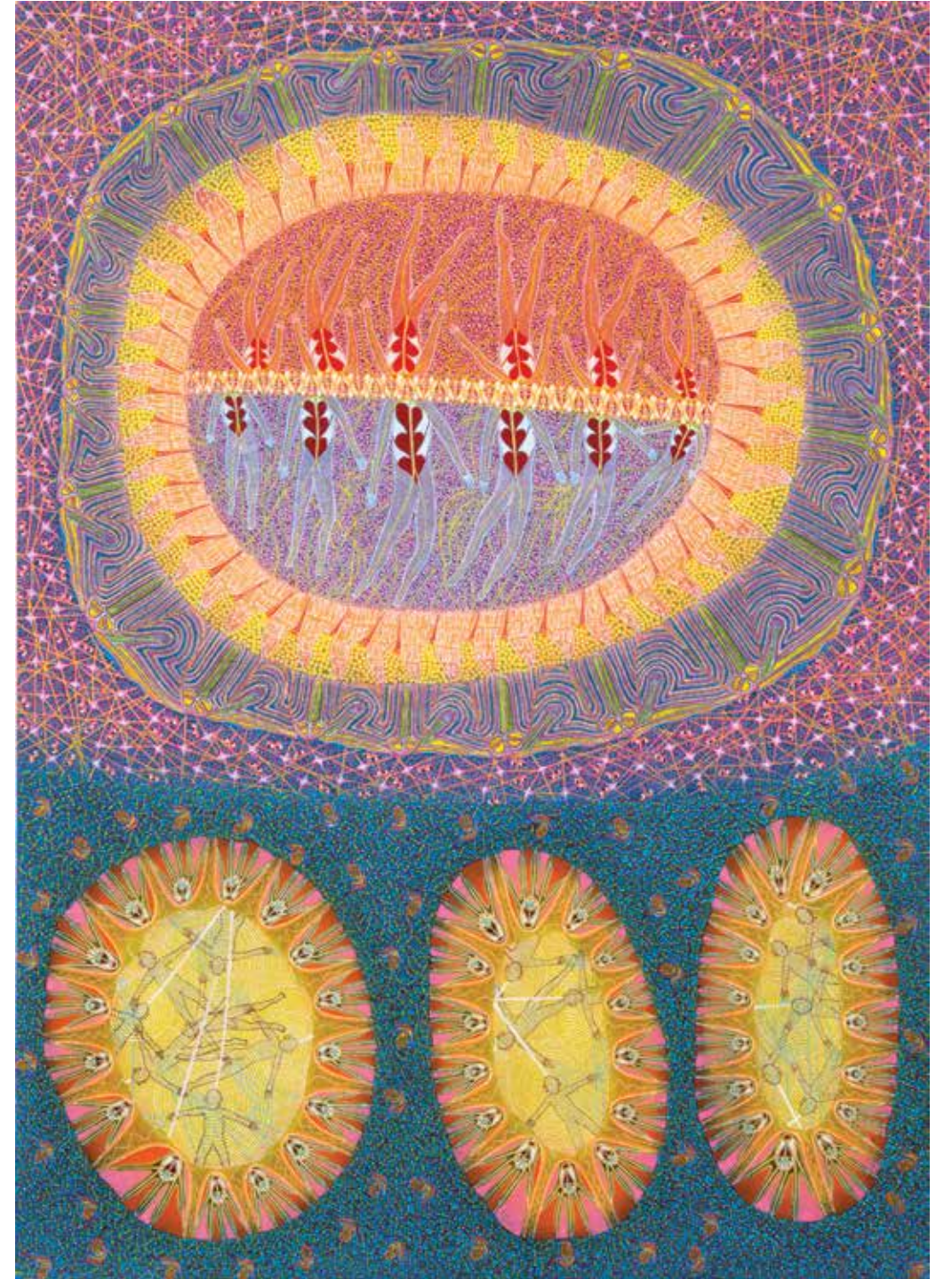


Purposes and Prayers of the Coloured Mind Pouring Drops of Love Over the Feelings of Woven Worlds of Intuitions, 2013
ink and pastel on paper
79.5 x 45 inches (201.9 x 114.3 cm)



Untitled, 2005
ink and pastel on paper
19.7 × 13.8 inches (50 × 40 cm)

Untitled, 2011
ink and pastel on canvasboard
27.6 x 19.7 inches (70 x 50 cm)



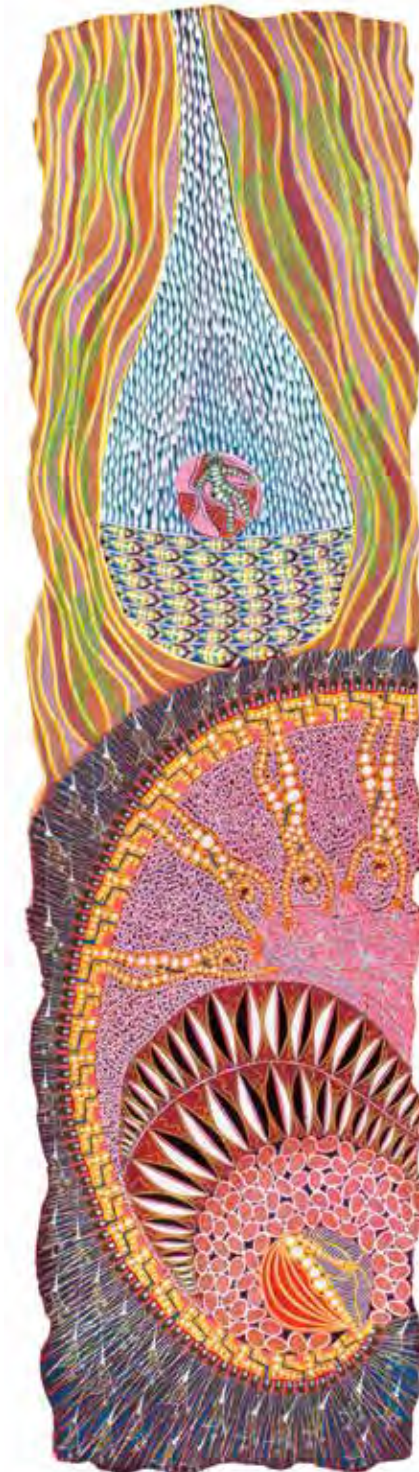


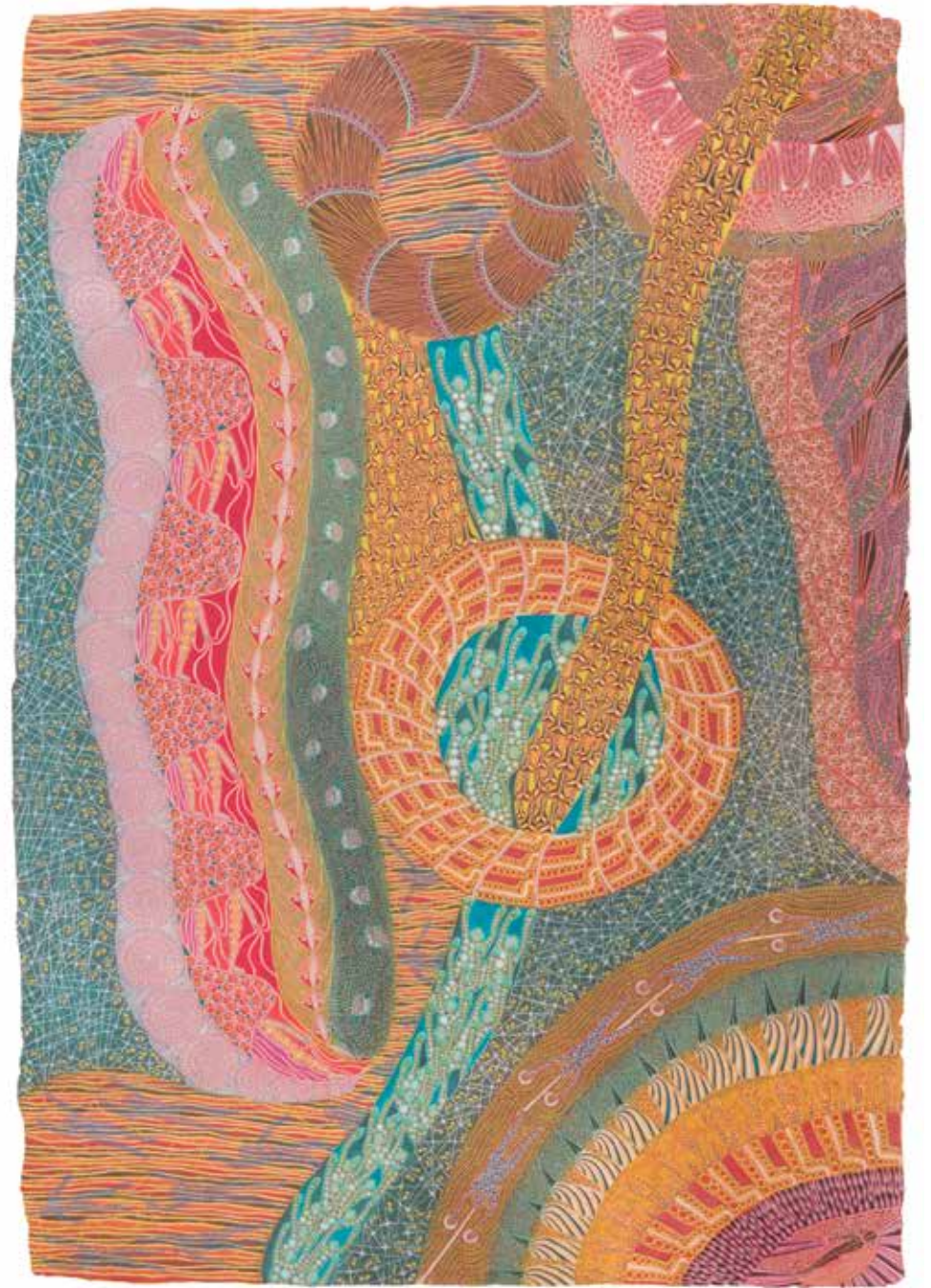
Untitled, 2011
ink and pastel on paper
25 x 40 inches (63 x 100 cm)



We are Returned to Ourselves Through the River of Life, 2013
ink and pastel on paper
20.5 × 83 inches (52.1 × 210.8 cm)

Untitled, 2011
ink and pastel on paper
28.4 × 7.9 inches (20 × 72 cm)
Collection Mark Dickstein





Untitled, 2010
ink and pastel on paper
44.5 x 32.3 inches (113 x 81.9 cm)

Untitled, 2009
ink and pastel on paper
38.8 × 15 inches (98.4 × 38.1 cm)
Collection Curtis Jensen

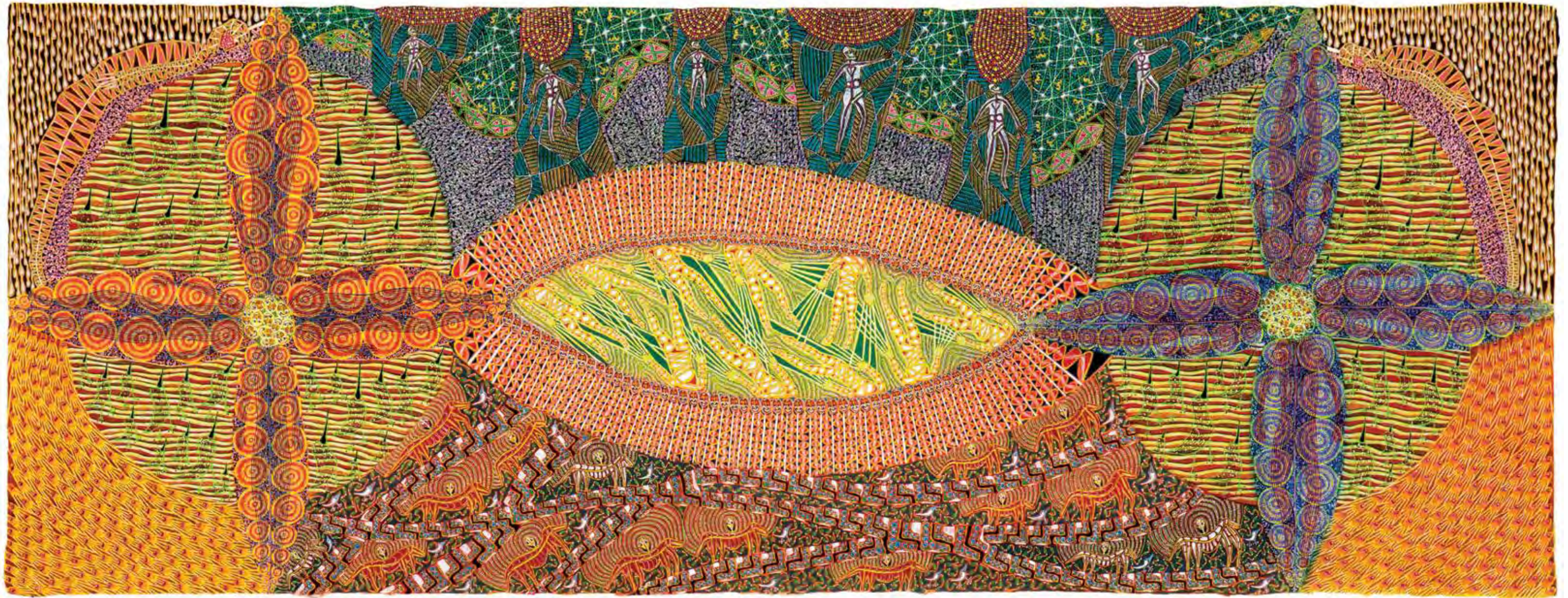


Untitled, 2008
ink and pastel on paper
38.8 × 14.8 inches (98.4 × 37.5 cm)
Collection Betty Sheets





Untitled, 2012
ink and pastel on paper
11.8 x 11.8 inches (30 x 30 cm)



Untitled, 2011
ink and pastel on paper
14.8 x 38.5 inches (37.5 x 97.8 cm)

Untitled, 2011
ink and pastel on paper
38.8 × 14.8 inches (98.4 × 37.5 cm)
Collection Matthew Ross



Untitled, 2010
ink and pastel on paper
38.8 × 14.8 inches (98.4 × 37.5 cm)





Untitled, 2012
ink and pastel on paper
three panels, each 38.5 x 14.8 inches (97.8 x 37.5 cm)
Collection Mark Dickstein



Untitled, 2012
ink and pastel on paper
74 × 39.5 inches (188 × 100.3 cm)
Collection Mark Dickstein



Untitled, 2011
ink and pastel on paper
39.5 × 15.8 inches (40 × 100 cm)
Collection Matthew Ross



Untitled, 2009
ink and pastel on paper
25.6 x 18 inches (65.1 x 45.7 cm)
Collection Robert Gender





Untitled, 2009
ink and pastel on paper
38.8 × 15 inches (98.4 × 38.1 cm)
Collection Curtis Jensen



Dates

1966 Born, Reggio Calabria, Italy

Education

1984–88 Studied law, theatre, film and literature, Sapienza, Università di Roma, Rome, Italy

Solo Exhibitions

2013 Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York

2010 Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York

2007 Galérie Objet-Trouvé, Paris
Phyllis Kind Gallery, New York

2004 Phyllis Kind Gallery, New York

2000 Phyllis Kind Gallery, New York

1998 Galeria 127, Mexico City

1995 SOMA in KunstlerhausBethanien, Berlin

1993 Gallery OZ, Paris

1992 Boudoir, Berlin

1991 Gallery Loulou Lasard, Berlin

1990 Gallery Loulou Lasard, Berlin

Selected Group Exhibitions

2012 *Accidental Genius: Art from the Anthony Petullo Collection*, Milwaukee Art Museum

2010 Art Forum Berlin, Andrew Edlin Gallery, Berlin
Approaching Abstraction, American Folk Art Museum, New York

2007 *Winteropstelling*, Galerie Hamer, Amsterdam
OttoVolteQuattro, Galleria Fuorinorma, Verona, Italy
ArtVerona, Galleria Fuorinorma, Verona, Italy

2005 *Interior Motives*, Phyllis Kind Gallery, New York
Was up man? Selections from the Shein collection, Palmer Museum of Art, Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania
Abuso de conciencia, Convento ExTeresa, Mexico City
Galeria El Estudio, Mexico City

2003 *Write on*, Webb Gallery, Waxahachie, Texas

2001 *Hands Across the Sea*, Phyllis Kind Gallery, New York

1999 *Outsider Art*, Museum Charlotte Zander, Bonnigheim, Germany

1995 *Facing Holiness*, Gallery Spektrum, Olmnitz, Czech Republic
Occhio.Concetti del Disegno, Noire Arte Contemporanea, Torino, Italy

1994 *Boudoir at P.S.1*, Long Island City, New York

1993 *Livres et Objects d'art*, Isabelle Bongard, Paris

1991 *The Fourth Biedermaier*, W139, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Selected Press

2011 Edward M. Gomez, "On the Border", *Art & Antiques*, February

2008 Edward M. Gomez, "Domenico Zindato at Phyllis Kind," *Art in America*, April

2007 Edward M. Gomez, "Domenico Zindato's Mystical, Mysterious World" *Raw Vision* (No. 58)
N.F. Karlins, "Force of Nature," *artnet*

2004 Edward M. Gomez, Review of exhibition at Phyllis Kind Gallery, *Raw Vision* (No. 46)
N.F. Karlins, "Outsider Art Fair 2004," *artnet*

2001 Roberta Smith, "Art So Out It's Almost In," *The New York Times*, January 19, 2001

2000 Edward M. Gomez, "Discovering Art With the Aura of the Outsider," *The New York Times*, February 2000
N.F. Karlins, "Outsider report," *artnet*
Pamela Scheinman, "Domenico Zindato's World Music on Paper," *Fiberarts Magazine*

1995 *Switch magazine*, Tokyo (No. 10)

1992 Jens Pepper, "Spreeflorenz," *NeueBildendeKunst* (No. 6)

1990 D. Kuhlbrodt, "Rexdildo in Loulou Lasard," *TAZ Berlin*, August 22, 1990
Elke Melkus, "Verborgene Phantasien," *PRINZ magazine*, Berlin, August 15, 1990
E.A., "Bizarre Lust" *TIP magazine*, Berlin (No. 17)

Publications

2012 *Accidental Genius: Art from the Anthony Petullo Collection*, Milwaukee Art Museum (catalog)

2011 Charles Russell, *Groundwaters: A Century of Self-taught and Outsider Artists*, Prestel

Public Collections

Milwaukee Art Museum
Philadelphia Museum of Art
American Folk Art Museum, New York
Collection de l'Art Brut, Lausanne
Museum Charlotte Zander, Bonnigheim, Germany

Domenico Zindato

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Cover: Untitled (detail), 2011, ink and pastel on canvasboard, 27.6 × 19.7 inches (70 × 50 cm)

Frontispiece: *Purposes and Prayers of the Coloured Mind Pouring Drops of Love Over the Feelings of Woven Worlds of Intuitions* (detail), 2013, ink and pastel on paper, 79.5 × 45 inches (201.9 × 114.3 cm)

P. 56: Untitled (detail), 2009, ink and pastel on paper, 38.8 × 15 inches (98.4 × 38.1 cm), Collection Curtis Jensen

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