

Anil Revri

Faith and Liberation Through Abstraction

Anil Revri

Faith and Liberation Through Abstraction

American University Museum at the
Katzen Arts Center, Washington, DC

**Anil Revri: Faith and
Liberation Through
Abstraction**

First published by Anil Revri in 2011 in conjunction with the exhibition *Anil Revri: Faith and Liberation Through Abstraction*, American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center, Washington, DC.

All rights reserved under international copyright conventions. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any other information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Publication:
© Copyright
Anil Revri 2011
ISBN 1-879383-78-0

Contact:
Anil Revri
Apartment 802
3201 Wisconsin Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20016
United States of America

anilrevri@anilrevri.com
www.anilrevri.com

Introduction:

Jack Rasmussen. Director
and Curator, American
University Museum at the
Katzen Arts Center.

Essay:

Donald Kuspit. Art critic,
historian, and professor
emeritus of art history and
philosophy at the State
University of New York
at Stony Brook.

Images/design:

© Copyright Anil Revri

Project coordinator:
Nuzhat Sultan

Project editors:
Catherine Gannon
Mary Schellinger

Photography:
Neil Greentree

Printer:
Anaconda Press

Sculpture:
Mega Sign Inc.

This catalogue is funded
in part by the American
University Museum at
the Katzen Arts Center,
Washington, DC.



Dedicated to my mother

Rekha Revri Malhotra

Contents

Introduction	7
Jack Rasmussen Director and Curator, American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center	
Essay	13
Donald Kuspit Art critic, historian, and professor emeritus of art history and philosophy, State University of New York at Stony Brook	
Works	
<i>Ram Darwaza</i> , 2008–Present	29
Mixed media on canvas	
<i>Veiled Doorways 8</i> , 2000	48
Mixed media on canvas	
<i>Pages From A Manuscript</i> , 1996–Present	51
Mixed media on handmade paper	
<i>Cultural Crossings</i> , Suite I, 1998–2001	67
Mixed media on Arches paper	
<i>Cultural Crossings</i> , Suite II, 1998–2001	81
Mixed media on Arches paper	
<i>Cultural Crossings</i> , Suite III, 1998–2001	95
Mixed media on Arches paper	
List of works	109
Biographical information	115
Credits/acknowledgements	129
About the authors	135

Introduction

Jack Rasmussen

Director and Curator, American University

Museum at the Katzen Arts Center

Introduction

It is professionally and personally gratifying to present *Anil Revri: Faith and Liberation Through Abstraction*. I have gotten to know the artist and his work over the past several years, and this process has led me to believe that Revri's art is about experience. What makes his paintings unique is that they invite us into their perspectival depth not as viewers, but as participants.

Labeling the work Geometric Abstraction is rather like calling the lotus flower a pollen delivery system: accurate, but not illuminating. Certainly, Revri's paintings are constructed on a grid, and the repetition of finely detailed geometric elements offers viewers numerous optical rewards, but Revri's paintings have functions that lie beyond what we ordinarily expect from Geometric Abstraction and from contemporary art in general.

Revri's paintings serve a dual function. They are simultaneously visual aids in meditation and meditations in themselves. Even as the works are beautiful and their craft breathtaking, it is important to remember that these aesthetic qualities merely serve as a vehicle to transport us into the depths of psychic space. Revri's art is successful because it furthers us and the artist along the path to self-realization.

We call our new art Post-Modern, but it is the multicultural, -racial, and -sexual breakthroughs that are fueling our culture today. The information super highway has exposed us to art from different corners of the world, and slowly but surely we are embracing all manner of genres and styles. Yet it is always a challenge to be confronted with the shock of the new.

Anil Revri's exhibition demonstrates the need to expand our visual vocabulary by introducing the West to works that address spirituality in a non-Western context. Artists like Wassily Kandinsky and Piet Mondrian, for example, certainly created works inspired by their spiritual beliefs. But it is Tantric Art, and its distant relation the Byzantine

icon, where we find works that function analogous to that of Anil Revri's paintings.

Byzantine icons were thought to be windows to heaven, and through them the viewer could experience divinity. It was expected that the Byzantine iconographer would lead a life of prayer, meditation, and fasting. For Revri, too, as a Tantric artist, painting is a spiritual act that requires discipline and devotion.

When I experience Revri's paintings, I give myself over to their space and time. The geometric grid with its deep perspective directs our attention from the outer edges of the painting into the peaceful center of the mandala where we come to rest as if in a daydream. And if we allow ourselves to slow down and let go, we just may find ourselves moving toward the light.

How does Revri deliver this artistic and spiritual experience? His extraordinary skills as a technical draftsman allow him to construct two-dimensional spaces that resonate with the spiritual dimension we cannot see but must believe to enter. Revri uses metallic paint the way Byzantine iconographers used gold leaf almost two millennia ago. The loosely brushed space behind the complex grid, what Donald Kuspit calls "sacred atmosphere," lies beyond the everyday, the here and now. The human scale and dimensions of his canvases engage us, and we recognize the doorway and the metaphor.

The result is a vibrant window within a window format with different planes that seem to move in and out of each other depending on the viewer's position in relation to the painting. At times it is difficult to distinguish the separate planes, but the longer one looks at them, the more one sees. Line and color are used to accentuate surface tension making it harder for the viewer to locate the hidden doorway that leads to the void. For Revri this void holds the key to our deepest emotions — love, fear, and desire among them. The paintings merely serve as a platform to help the viewer make the transition between the conscious and unconscious state of mind.

Every exhibition is a collaboration involving dozens of individuals and institutions. I must first thank Donald Kuspit, whose learned and elegant essay gave the exhibition its name and shape, and gave me an education. I must also thank H. E. Ambassador Nirupama Rao, Ambassador of India to the United States, and H. E. Ambassador Arun K. Singh, Deputy Chief of Mission for their support in bringing *Anil Revri: Faith and Liberation Through Abstraction* to the American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center. Last but not least, I would like to thank Mr. and Mrs. Liaquat Ahamed, Ms. Kathleen Tilmans and Mr. Jan Bove, Ms. Aradhana Kumar and Mr. Karan Capoor, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Mr. and Mrs. Girish Jindia, Mr. and Mrs. Pradman Kaul, Dr. Joyce Robbins and Dr. Kenneth X. Robbins, Ms. Nuzhat Sultan, and Mr. and Mrs. Sharad Tak for loaning the works for this exhibition.

Finally, I must acknowledge the great gifts of Anil Revri, and the role the students, faculty, staff, and board of American University play in making their museum a place for open and serious discussions on peace and international understanding.

Jack Rasmussen

Essay

Donald Kuspit

Art critic, historian, and professor emeritus,
State University of New York at Stony Brook

**Faith and Liberation Through Abstraction:
Anil Revri's Paintings**

...the eternal repetition of the fundamental rhythm of the cosmos: its periodic destruction and re-creation. From this cycle without beginning or end, man can wrest himself only by an act of spiritual freedom...all Indian soteriological solutions can be reduced to preliminary liberation from the cosmic illusion and to spiritual freedom.

Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos and History*¹

And in our day, when historical pressure no longer allows any escape, how can man tolerate the catastrophes and horrors of history...if beyond them he can glimpse no sign, no transhistorical meaning?

Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos and History*²

...our view of the world is based on the interaction of two spatial systems. One of these systems may be called cosmic, the other parochial.

Cosmically we find that matter organizes around centers, which are often marked by a dominant mass. In the vastness of astronomical space the rotating galaxies and the smaller solar or planetary systems are free to create such centric patterns, and in the microscopic realm so are the atoms with their electrons circling around a nucleus. Even in the crowded world of our direct experience, inorganic and organic matter occasionally has enough freedom to follow its inclination and form symmetrical structures — flowers, snowflakes, floating and flying creatures, mammalian bodies — shaped around a central point, a central axis, or at least a central plane. The human mind also invents centric shapes, and our bodies perform centric dances unless this basic tendency is modified by particular impulses and attractions....

But that is not the world we see when it surrounds us. In the parochial view of its small inhabitants, the curvature of the earth straightens into a plane surface, and the

converging radii become parallels....It is a view that has an order of its own, the simplest and most perfect order the mind could seek. Parallelism and right-angled relation yield the most convenient framework available for spatial organization, and we cannot be grateful enough for living in a world that, for practical purposes, can be laid out along a grid of vertical and horizontals....

The Cartesian grid is the second of the two spatial systems....It is helpful not only for mathematical calculation but for visual orientation as well.

With all its virtues, the framework of vertical and horizontals has one grave defect. It has no center, and therefore it has no way of defining any particular location.

Rudolf Arnheim, *The Power of the Center*³

Again and again one sees the grid in Anil Revri's paintings, whether as a dominating, virtually "totalizing," over-all structure, as in the *Veiled Doorways* series, 1996–2000, or, in many of the paintings in the three *Cultural Crossings* suites, 1998–2001, as the center of the space. In the *Geometric Abstractions*, 2000–2005, the grid is simultaneously central and over-all. Everything points towards it and it encompasses everything. That series is all the more remarkable — perceptually noteworthy — because of its use of gestural elements (or, as Anton Ehrenzweig calls them, "non-gestalt" impulses). Seemingly drifting aimlessly across the surface like vaporous clouds, they in fact are organized around the center, and lead our eye into it the same way orthogonal lines lead our eye into distant space. They too are part of the grid, reminding us that perspective is built into its gestalt, complicating its simple geometry. Simultaneously a flat grid and a perspective construction — a one-dimensional parochial space and a multidimensional cosmic space seamlessly integrated (the multidimensional perspectival space seems to lie both within and beyond the one-dimensional grid space, that is, to be immanent within yet transcendent of it, suggesting inner transcendence of

the outer world) — Revri's abstractions are conceptual and perceptual paradoxes. It is easy to go through the *Veiled Doorways* and *Cultural Crossings* windows — they are both passageways, openings into the unknown, as it were — but hard to come back out, not only because one is lost in one's own inner space, but because it is continuous with and indistinguishable from outer space. The two systems of space are implicated in each other in Revri's abstractions, so much so that they not only seem inseparable, but different facets of the same unfathomable space.

The elusive, atmospheric, fragile nature of the peculiarly expressionistic, apparently spontaneously generated gestures also reminds us that the grid is constructed of peculiarly immaterial material — lines, light, shadow, and often delicate color. It is composed of nuances, as it were, and thus has as much unconscious as cognitive appeal, and sensuously vibrates however geometrically static. There is something peculiarly seductive about the grid, for all its precision — its mathematical aloofness, one might say. The "mystifying" device of the free-floating gesture makes an early appearance in *Veiled Doorways* 9, 2000. There, too, the grid holds its own — remains stable and intact, and with that emblematic of pure consciousness — as though in defiance of the unstable gestures that seem to threaten it with their obscurity. The grid eternally abides despite the presence of the transient gestures, signs of a clouded consciousness. Initially experienced as blemishes on the grid's perfect geometry and the smooth skin of the painting, they in fact highlight its perfection and Revri's perfectionism: the flawlessness of his execution, adding to the dialectical eloquence of his grid, simultaneously flat and in deep perspective. The grid retains its paradoxical integrity despite the free-floating, formless, non-gestalt details, adding another dialectical touch to it with their ironic imperfection.

In all these works there is a kind of repetitive rigor, even when the grid seems to dissolve into chaos, as in the *Even in the Quietest Moments* series, begun in 2000 and ongoing. Straight lines become curves, the Cartesian coordinates collapse, that is, horizontals and verticals disappear, making

for a more consummate all-overness and flatness. But the curves are rhythmically entangled in each other, indeed, ingeniously merge, suggesting a kind of ornamental patterning, and implying a musical gestalt. Influenced by the rhythmic chanting of the Gayatri mantra, as he acknowledges, Revri offers a new model for so-called musical painting. The idea of abstract painting as visual music, initiated by Kandinsky — influenced by Wagner's operatic music, with its use of unresolved chords and leitmotifs, and later by Schoenberg's atonal music, with its dissonances, he endorsed Walter Pater's famous idea that all art aspires to the condition of music ⁴ (abstract art modernizes visual art by rejecting the traditional idea that it must emulate verbal art) — takes a timely new revitalizing turn with Revri's abstract paintings. Revri's "referencing" traditional Indian music rather than modern Western music breathes new spiritual life — new Geistigkeit or mindfulness, to refer to Kandinsky's *Über das Geistige in der Kunst*, the Bible of pure abstraction or non-objective (and non-literary) visual art — into abstract art, which as many artists and art historians have argued, has become tired, old, and impotent, not to say decadent (certainly no longer "avant-garde"), its possibilities exhausted after a hundred years of exciting development. But Revri's Tantric abstractions show that it still has creative momentum and restore the aspirational import and spiritual conviction it once had.

Abstract art must look to the East if it is to have a future, however much it arose in the West, all the more so because the West is losing its cultural credibility, along with its socio-economic power, to the East, and with that becoming past history. There is a serious need for a truly international — not just Euro-American — and with that truly universal abstraction, and Revri's abstraction answers the need, all the more so because it is grounded in archetypal rhythms and structures — the music of the spheres, one might say — rather than avant-garde novelty. Revri is not pursuing the shock of the new, which is invariably momentary and quickly passing whatever its art historical significance — abstraction has become comfortably art historical and habitual, as it were, which is why it is no longer as shocking and controversial as it was at the beginning of

the twentieth century — but what Mircea Eliade calls timeless archetypes or primordial paradigms, which have transhistorical significance. Revri ritually articulates them, recovering their significance in a creative act of epiphanic recognition, and, one might say, meditative worship, for they have a certain sacred significance, as the timelessly real always does.

The grid has become a staple of abstraction, acquiring positive, transcendental significance with Mondrian's abstract paintings, which elevated it into an icon, conferring spiritual significance on it. It became a sacred presence — a sort of stand-in for divinity and emblematic of the cosmic order that manifests, expresses, and symbolizes it. The turn away from the outward to the inward was decisive for Mondrian. Without it abstraction is mere formalism — idle if ingenious play with what Clement Greenberg called the "formal factors" of visual art, making for some exciting if empty perceptual moments, aesthetically unfulfilling because they have no inner content. In words that have become gospel, Mondrian declared: "When we show things in their outwardness (as they *ordinarily* appear), *then* indeed we allow the human, the individual to manifest itself. But when we plastically express the inward (through the plastic form of the outward), then we come closer to manifesting the spiritual, therefore the divine, the universal."⁵ Mondrian's idea that there is a "higher intuition" seems convincing, but the nature of what he variously called the spiritual, the divine, the universal is unclear, yet it seems clear that he associated it with Christianity, as his early use of the church façade — Revri's doorways and windows certainly have an affinity with it — suggests. (Mondrian's first work was in fact for a church in Amsterdam.) The *Church at Domburg* series, 1910–11, emphasizing the stripped down look of the Protestant church, clearly suggests the puritanical, even ascetic character of Mondrian's abstraction, ambiguously self-repressive and determined to liberate the self from worldly indulgences. His acknowledged pursuit of purity is at once a rejection of Catholicism, with its use of natural, worldly — and so for Mondrian impure — appearances to suggest a realm of supernatural spiritual reality.

If Kandinsky's expressionistic — "instinctive" — apocalyptic landscapes, as Wieland Schmied calls his "breakthrough" abstract paintings, are imbued with the unrestrained colorfulness of Russian Orthodox churches (as Kandinsky acknowledged), then Mondrian's geometrical grid paintings, with their restricted use of color — pure primary colors — and cunning simplicity, evident in their asymmetrical arrangement of horizontals and verticals, convey Protestant sobriety (even Calvinist efficiency, as some interpreters have argued). Both use abstraction to dramatize their inner self — reveal their inner necessity, as Kandinsky called it — but the selves they dramatize differ as much as their gestural abstraction and geometrical abstraction. Nonetheless, these pioneers of abstraction saw abstraction in a positive — spiritual — light, which is why they regarded it as profounder and riskier — and more dialectically ambitious, not to say adventurous — than representational art. For it struggled to represent what is inherently unrepresentable, even as it cries out to be represented. And to liberate — separate — the self from the world, suggesting a certain disillusionment with it and inability to cope with it, as Wilhelm Worringer thought: both sought refuge in abstraction to survive, indeed, to maintain a sanity in an insane world, even as the contradictory elements that informed their art, and which remained unresolved (thus Mondrian's tense asymmetry and what Kandinsky called his "dissonance"), revealed, in schematic form, the basic dynamics of that insanity.

Spiritual disillusionment with the world leads to the spiritual illusion of transcendence. For Kandinsky and Mondrian transcendence was more of a hope and an ideal than a reality, however much they thought they achieved and experienced it through their art. It was what Gilbert Rose calls a necessary illusion — an illusion that was emotionally necessary but objectively absurd. It emerged in the course of their rebellion against what they experienced as spiritually stultifying — blindly materialistic — society. But Revri shows that transcendence is not a wishful artifact of social misery but involves intuitive identification with archetypal reality and with that experience of the overarching symmetry, harmony, and calmness of the cosmos. Such an

experience is never quite conveyed by the abstractions of Kandinsky and Mondrian; they remain peculiarly disjointed, unsettled, incoherent — charged with conflict, for all their so-called equilibration of opposites. The conflict between the grid, perspective, and gesture is artfully resolved by Revri — they align and integrate in a comprehensive abstraction — and with that the blindness of materialism is replaced by a vision of the archetypally given and confident transcendence effected. “The peace that surpasseth understanding” is realized.

But this positive view of transcendence, and the conviction that it could be achieved through pure abstraction, evident in Kandinsky and Mondrian — despite all the anxiety and uncertainty they projected into it — did not last, as Arnheim makes clear. Both gestural and geometrical abstraction became entropic — de-spiritualized — and thus negative in import. I will argue that Revri’s Tantric abstraction — abstraction grounded in Indian rather than European spirituality — reverses this entropy, making for a new anabolic abstraction, conveying a post-religious idea of spirituality, that is, separating cosmic spirituality from parochial religion. This is the subliminal point of Revri’s *Cultural Crossings* suites, with their different sacred texts from different traditional religions — Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism. The texts are presented in the same format, in effect reconciling them. The “pages” are sacred spaces in which the same invisible divinity becomes visible in different verbal forms. Revri’s introduction of sacred texts into the abstract space of the atmospheric grid is a unique innovation. Not only does it restore abstraction to spiritual credibility — hammer home the view that if it does not have spiritual meaning it is meaningless however formally “interesting” it may be — but shows that abstraction can be as creatively daring and spiritually exciting as it was in its heyday. Indeed, the gestural letters (each in effect a module, however different in form) and the geometrical page are inseparable — in contrast the gestures and grid in the *Geometric Abstractions* look separate and distinct — overcoming the split consciousness of the sacred that unwittingly subverted transcendental abstraction from the start. Establishing a higher order of abstraction,

Revri saves abstraction from itself, and reconceives its spirituality: in his art it is no longer a failed attempt to awaken from “the nightmare of history,” as James Joyce called it, and thus a failed spirituality — failed because it does not liberate the self from the pathological conflicts of history, which remain alive in the formal conflicts of Kandinsky’s and Mondrian’s art — but to articulate a trans-historical state of mind, that is, a conflict-free state of mind, a state of mind that not only rises above conflict but experiences it as illusion.

The entropic collapse of abstraction that its conflicted consciousness eventuates in is brilliantly described by Arnheim: “the increase of entropy is due to two quite different orders of effect; on the one hand, a striving toward simplicity, which will promote orderliness and the lowering of the level of order, and on the other hand disorderly destruction.”⁶ The former leads to “the emptiness of homogeneity,” exemplified by the seriality of the grid, an “eternal return” — compulsive repetition? — of the module, a sort of reduction of everything that exists to the same anonymous, empty, undifferentiated (uni-)form, and with that the total serialization of the cosmos, that is, its reduction to a homogeneous grid. Mondrian’s grid barely succeeds in avoiding this entropic fate. The latter leads to the “disintegration” of “organized structure... either by corrosion and friction or by the mere incapacity to hold together.” Kandinsky’s pre-World War I abstractions — especially what he called his improvisations — attack the organized structure of representational art; they are apocalyptic — disintegrative — in more ways than one. The gestural fragments — *memento mori*, as it were — that are ruins of representation barely hold together, even when, in his post-World War I abstractions, Kandinsky reifies them geometrically. In their different ways, Kandinsky and Mondrian devolve the highly evolved coherence of traditional representational art, leaving us with so-called “eccentric abstraction,” a failed attempt to raise the level of order — as though to suggest that a precarious unstable order was better than none — hinting at an underlying disorderliness.

Arnheim adds:

“Disintegration and excessive tension reduction must be attributed to the absence or impotence of articulate structure. It is a pathological condition, on whose causes I can hardly speculate here. Are we dealing with the sort of exhaustion of vital energy that prophets and poets proclaimed and decried in the last century? Is the modern world socially, cognitively, perceptually devoid of the kind of high order needed to generate similarly organized form in the minds of artists? Or is the order of our world so pernicious as to prevent the artist from responding to it? Whatever the causes, these products [modern works of art], although often substandard artistically, reveal strong positive objectives: an almost desperate need to wrest order from a chaotic environment, even at the most elementary level; and the frank exhibition of bankruptcy and sterility wrought by that same environment.”⁷

One of the things that makes Revri’s abstractions unique — a major development in the history of abstraction — is that they articulate, with confident vision, the high order of abstraction — the exquisitely differentiated yet seamlessly unified structure — modern abstract art lacked from the start. It was perhaps incomprehensible to Mondrian and Kandinsky, but they yearned for it even though they never realized it: it was always beyond them, however much it unconsciously beckoned. Revri’s abstractions look like modern abstractions at first glance — their use of the grid and gesture suggest that they are modern — but their sublime coherence is trans-modern, indeed, an archetypal emblem of eternal order.

It is what Eliade calls a sacred space — “an absolute reality” — made manifest in an artistic hierophany.⁸ “The hierophany reveals an absolute fixed point, a center” — a consecrated center, as it were, for it is the abstract place where the sacred abides, and sometimes appears in the form of sacred texts or symbolic architecture, both evident in Revri’s *Cultural Crossings* suites. Indeed, Revri’s grid is what Eliade calls a “cosmological structure,” that is, a geometrical cathedral and abstract temple, “hence holy place above all others.”⁹ It is the abstract space of spiritual

freedom, where one becomes liberated from “the fundamental rhythm of the cosmos: its periodic destruction and re-creation,” to refer to the first epigraph, even as its repetitive rhythm ironically evokes that rhythm. But the rhythm of Revri’s sacred space, however complex, is orderly, with traces of destruction and disorder — the vaporous gestures — reduced to a minimum and put in cosmological perspective, as noted earlier, and thus given a place in the eternal transhistorical order. Given structural significance, the vaporous gestures — ghostly traces of the gods, hinting at their presence, reminding us that they haunt a temple? — become a sort of sacred atmosphere, purifying the space like smoke from a censer. What Roger Fry calls cosmic feeling, which he thought was aroused by the best art, pervades Revri’s abstractions, confirming their aspirational character.

It seems possible to argue that Revri returns abstraction to the theosophical roots it had in Kandinsky and Mondrian, but it makes more sense to see his abstraction in the light of Tantrism, an acknowledged influence on him. Tantrism, Heinrich Zimmer writes, “continues the orthodox Vedic line...that the ‘One is both at once.’ ...All beings are members of a single holy family, proceeding from the one and only divine substance. And this view involves...on the one hand a devaluation of the peculiarly personal nuances of individuality, but on the other hand a bold affirmation of all that may ever come to be.”¹⁰ Are the modules the members of a single holy family, devoid of “personal nuances of individuality,” but made one in the grid, as though to confirm the fact that they are in fact one and the same impersonal module repeated ad infinitum?

Not exactly. The rich, jewel-like surface and sensual colors of the *Geometric Abstractions* — the dots look like inlaid jewels and the atmosphere is peculiarly lush — suggest something more is at stake than purity in Revri’s abstractions. Or rather that transcendental purity — what Zimmer calls the “ecstatic, egoless, beatific bliss in the realization of transcendent identity” — is paradoxically achieved through passionate desire. “There is a peculiar and essential trait of the Tantric Yea which distinguishes it from

the earlier philosophies," that is, the orthodox Indian religions. "The ideal of Tantrism is to achieve illumination precisely by means of those very objects which the earlier sages sought to banish from their consciousness....Hence the candidate for [Tantric] wisdom does not seek a detour by which to circumvent the sphere of the passions....Quite the contrary: the Tantric hero goes directly *through* the sphere of greatest danger....The creature of passion has only to wash away his sense of ego, and then the same act that formerly was an obstruction becomes the tide that bears him to the realization of the absolute as bliss." Thus, Zimmer adds, "sex, in Tantrism, has a high symbolic role." "It requires a hero to confront and assimilate, in perfect equanimity, the whole wonder of the World Creatrix — to make love, without hysterical reactions, to the Life-force, which is the sakti of his own entirety." Revri's *Tantric Chakras*, 1977–81 and *Freud/Jung* series, 1975–80 — all drawings — make the symbolic importance of sex and the World Creatrix — sex with a woman who is the symbol of the World Creatrix, an embodiment of destruction and creation — in Tantrism transparently clear.

So where is the sex — the passion — in Revri's abstractions, suggesting that they are not unequivocally pure however transcendent their geometry? Slowly but surely, in a number of line drawings and sketches made during the same early period as the *Tantric Chakras* and *Freud/Jung* series, naked female figures, and sometimes male and female figures engaged in sexual activity, are transformed into abstract configurations. They become peculiarly bodiless — streamlined abstractions (abstract fantasies, as it were) — however sometimes dense with dark lines, which give them mass and volume, creating an illusion of bodiliness. The figures are in effect purified by being rendered abstractly, suggesting a certain detachment from them and their sexuality, however much both are acknowledged as facts of life. The leap to the cosmological structures of the "new millennium" work, as it can be called, is anticipated in the series of *Untitled Landscapes* that Revri painted from ca. 1975 through 1995. The romantic richness of these landscapes becomes the erotic subtext of the Tantric abstractions. Their rhythms, colors, and atmosphere are

imbued with desire. The transcendental geometry is suspended in it and couldn't live without it. The signs of desire, abstracted into pure forms, are handled with the same dispassionate intensity as the geometrical structure, which is why they are just as blissful, enlightening, cosmic, and complicated. It is faith that intervenes in history, Eliade writes, and Revri has faith in the transhistorical — transcendental — meaning and liberating power of desire. Its rhythm is not an illusion, but cosmically structured, which is why it is the foundation and substance of Revri's cosmological structure.

In sum, Revri's abstractions heal the wound Kandinsky and Mondrian unwittingly inflicted on abstraction by dividing it into irrational gestural and rational geometrical parts. They thus symbolize what T. S. Eliot famously called the dissociation of sensibility, that is, the separation of irrational passion and cognitive reason, setting them in seemingly perpetual conflict. Eliot regarded the dissociation of sensibility as the disease of modernity, and the sign of mental disease in general, suggesting that Kandinsky's violently irrational and Mondrian's ingeniously rational abstractions are peculiarly diseased, and as such spiritually defective. In contrast, Revri's abstractions are spiritually effective, for they eloquently synthesize passionate feeling and geometrical reasoning, a marriage made in artistic heaven that brings with it a sensation of blissful transcendence, which is what we experience when we become fully conscious of Revri's intense abstractions. His Tantric abstractions show the paradoxical way to mental health.

Donald Kuspit

NOTES

1. Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return* (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), 115.

2. Ibid., 151.

3. Rudolf Arnheim, *The Power of the Center* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1982), vii-viii.

4. Walter Pater, "The School of Giorgione," *The Renaissance* (New York: Modern Library, n.d. [1873], 114 famously asserted: "It is the art of music which most completely realises this artistic ideal, this perfect identification of matter and form. In its consummate moments, the end is not distinct from the means, the form from the matter, the subject from the expression; they inhere in and completely saturate each other; and to it, therefore, to the condition of its perfect moments, all the arts may be supposed constantly to tend and aspire. In music, then, rather than in poetry, is to be found the true type or measure of perfected art."

5. Quoted in Harry Holtzman and Martin S. James, eds., *The New Art — The New Life: The Collected Writings of Piet Mondrian* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1986), 15.

6. Rudolf Arnheim, *Entropy and Art: An Essay on Order and Disorder* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1971), 52.

7. Ibid., 55.

8. See Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York and Evanston: Harper & Row, 1959), for a discussion of sacred space and cosmic religion.

9. Ibid., 59.

10. Heinrich Zimmer, *Philosophies of India* (New York: Pantheon, 1951), 575. All subsequent quotations from Zimmer are from this book.

Works

Ram Darwaza

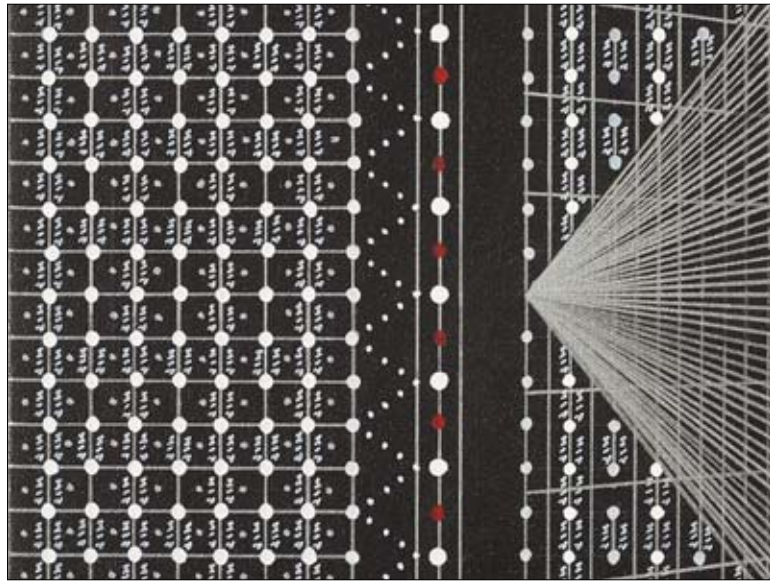
Mixed media on canvas

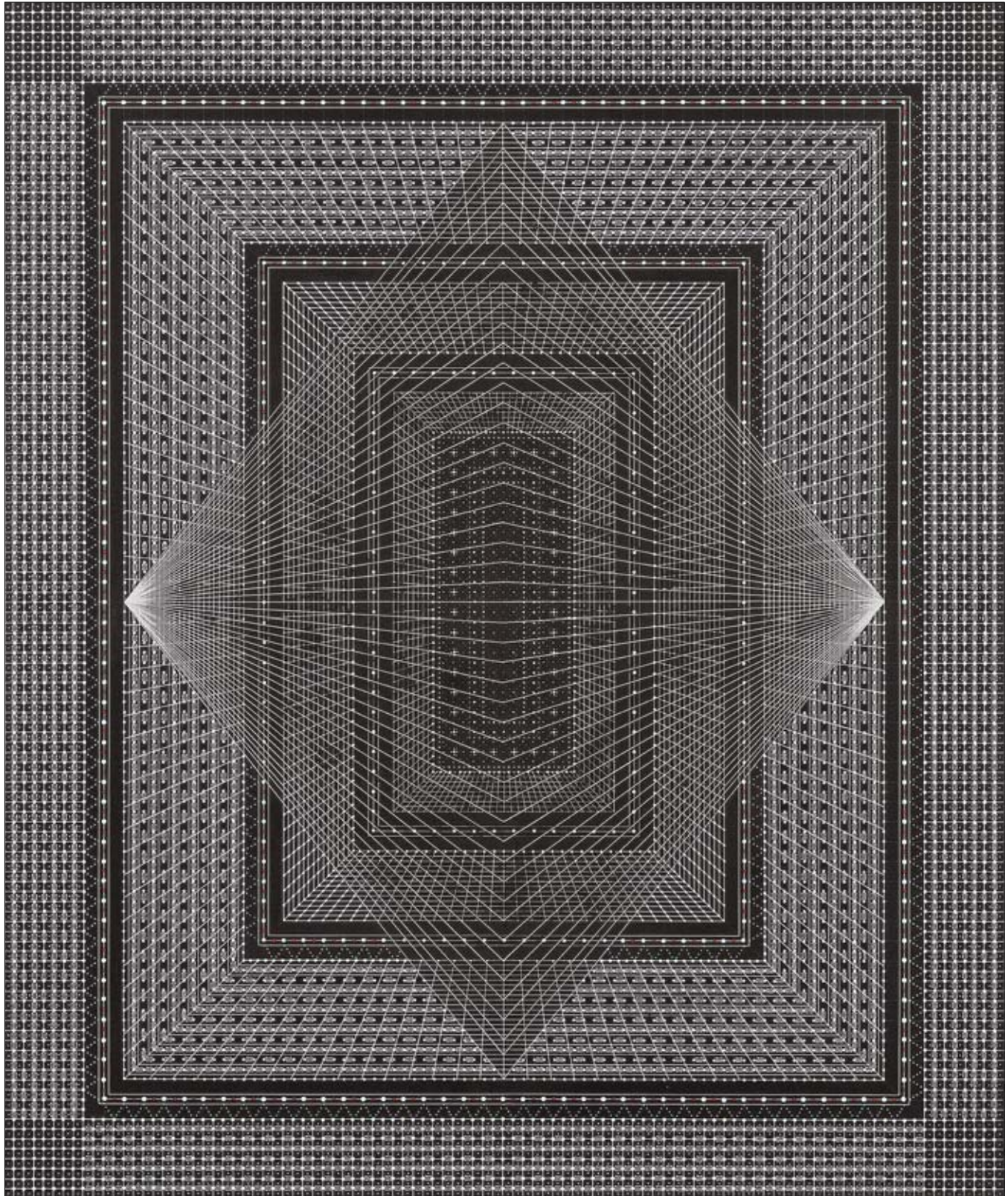
60 X 50 in. (152.4 X 127 cm.)

Veiled Doorways 8

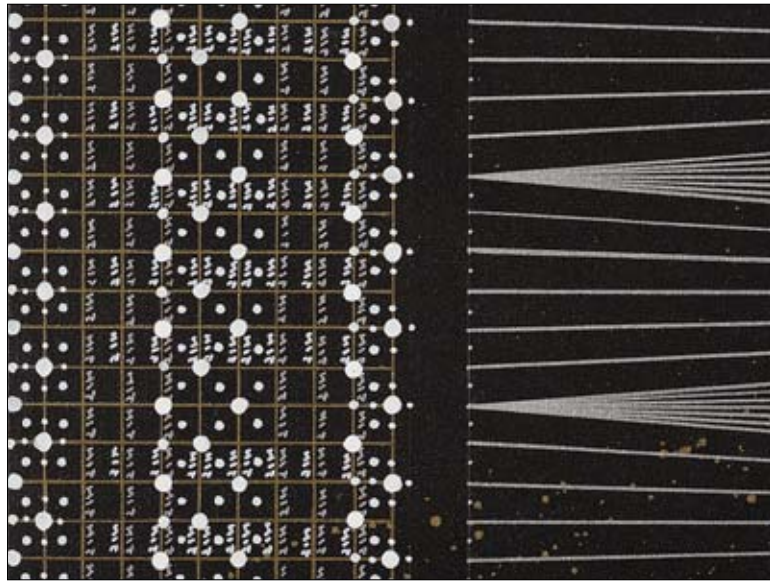
Mixed media on canvas

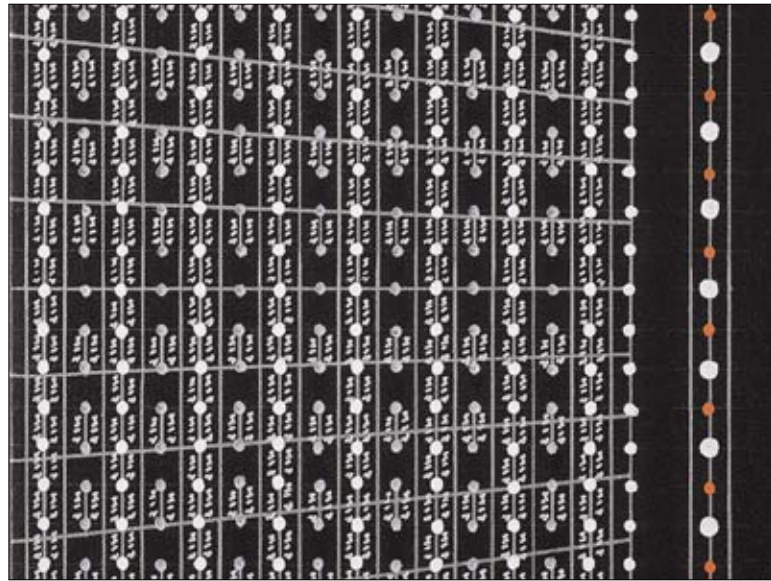
60 X 50 in. (152.4 X 127 cm.)

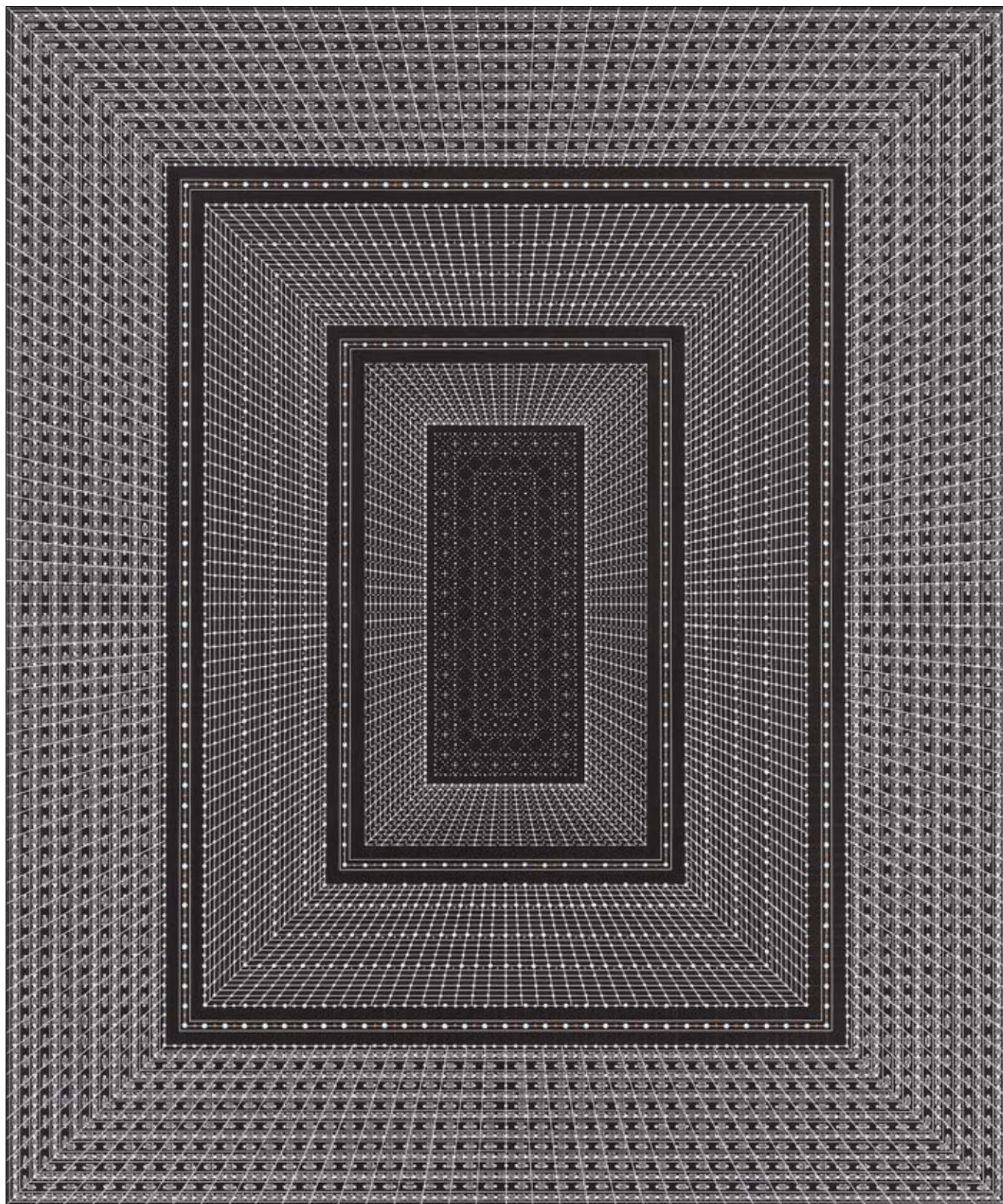


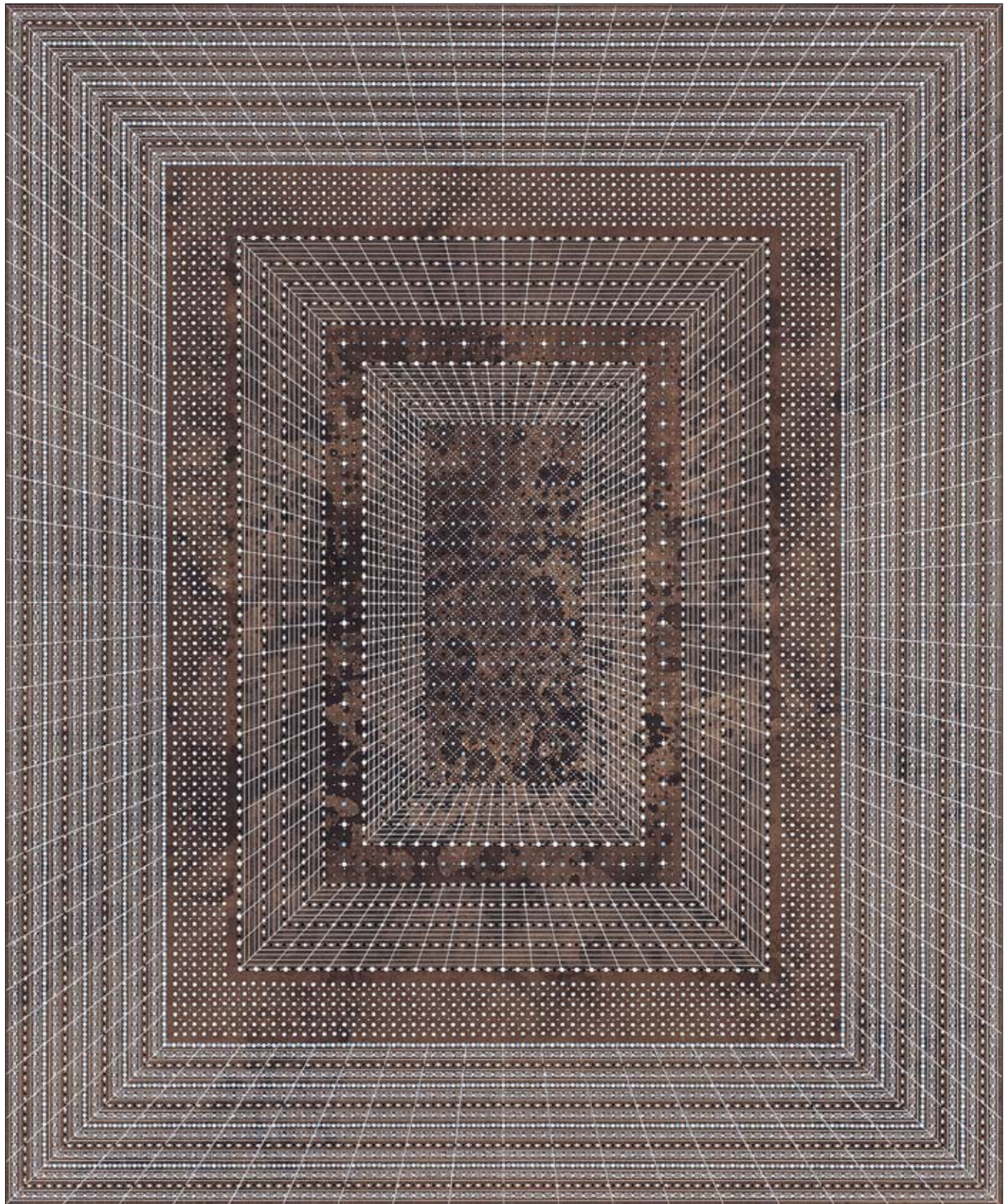


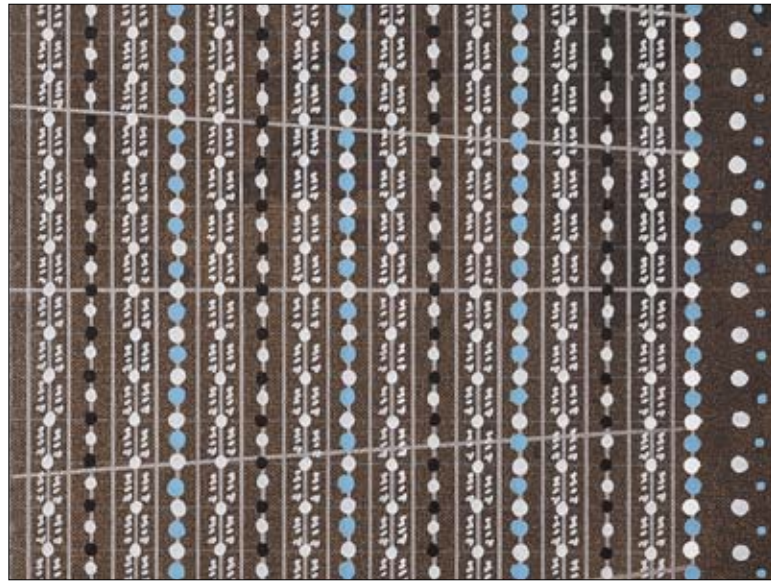


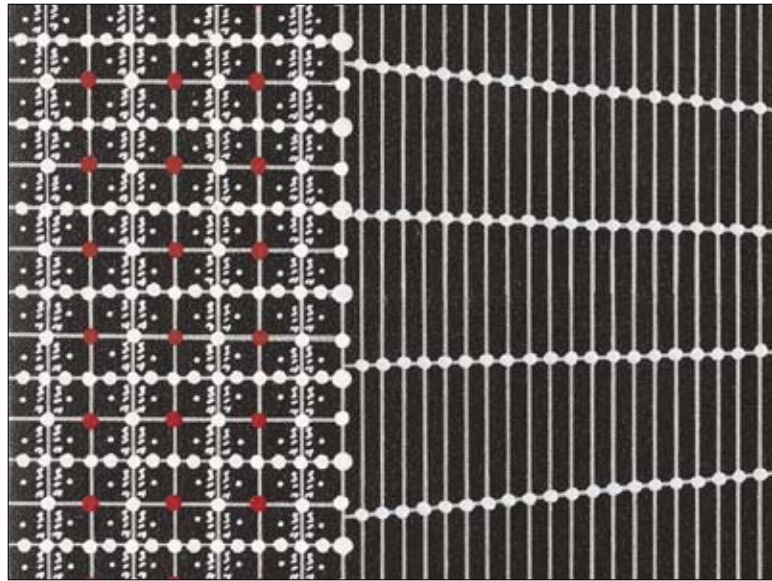


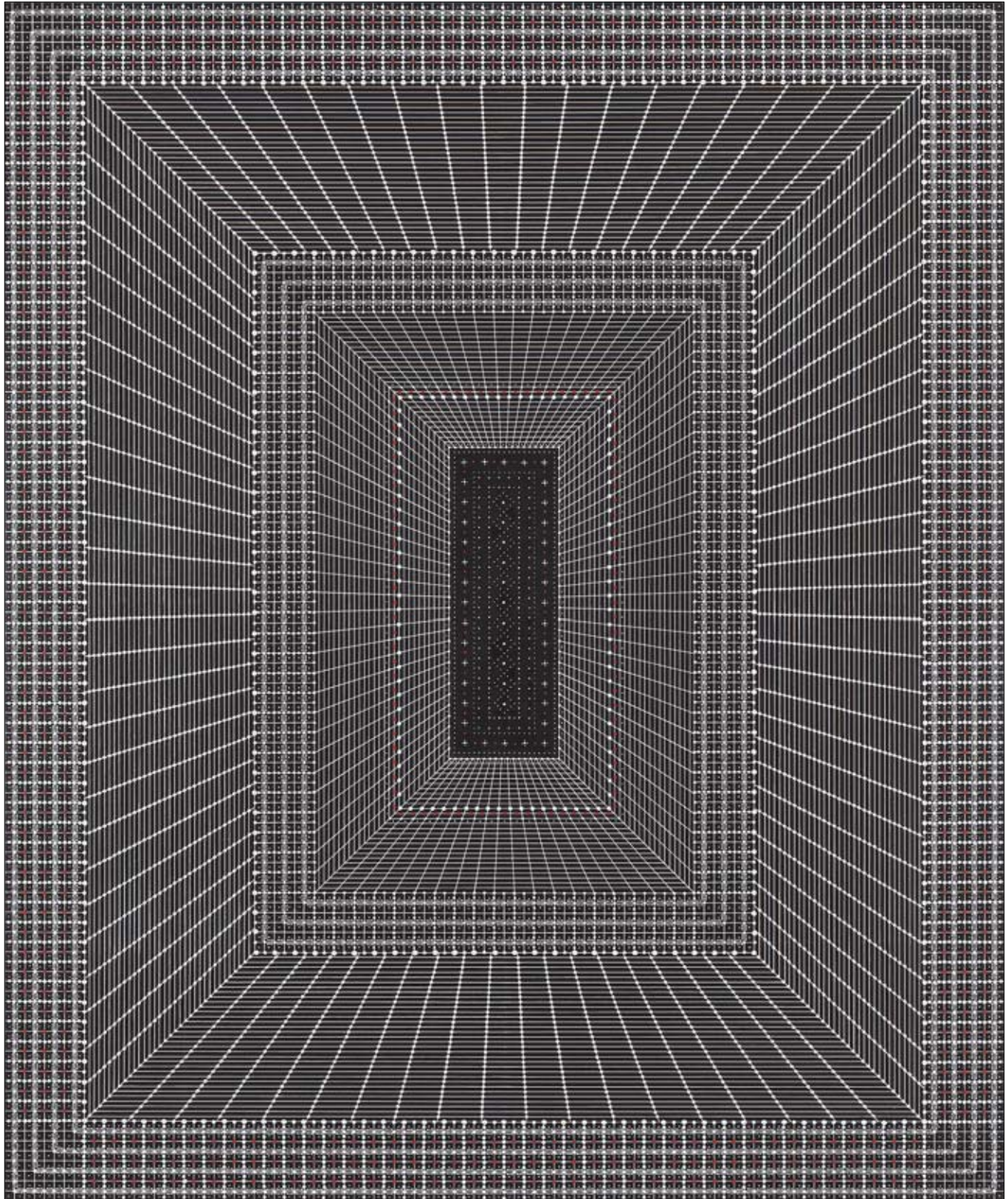


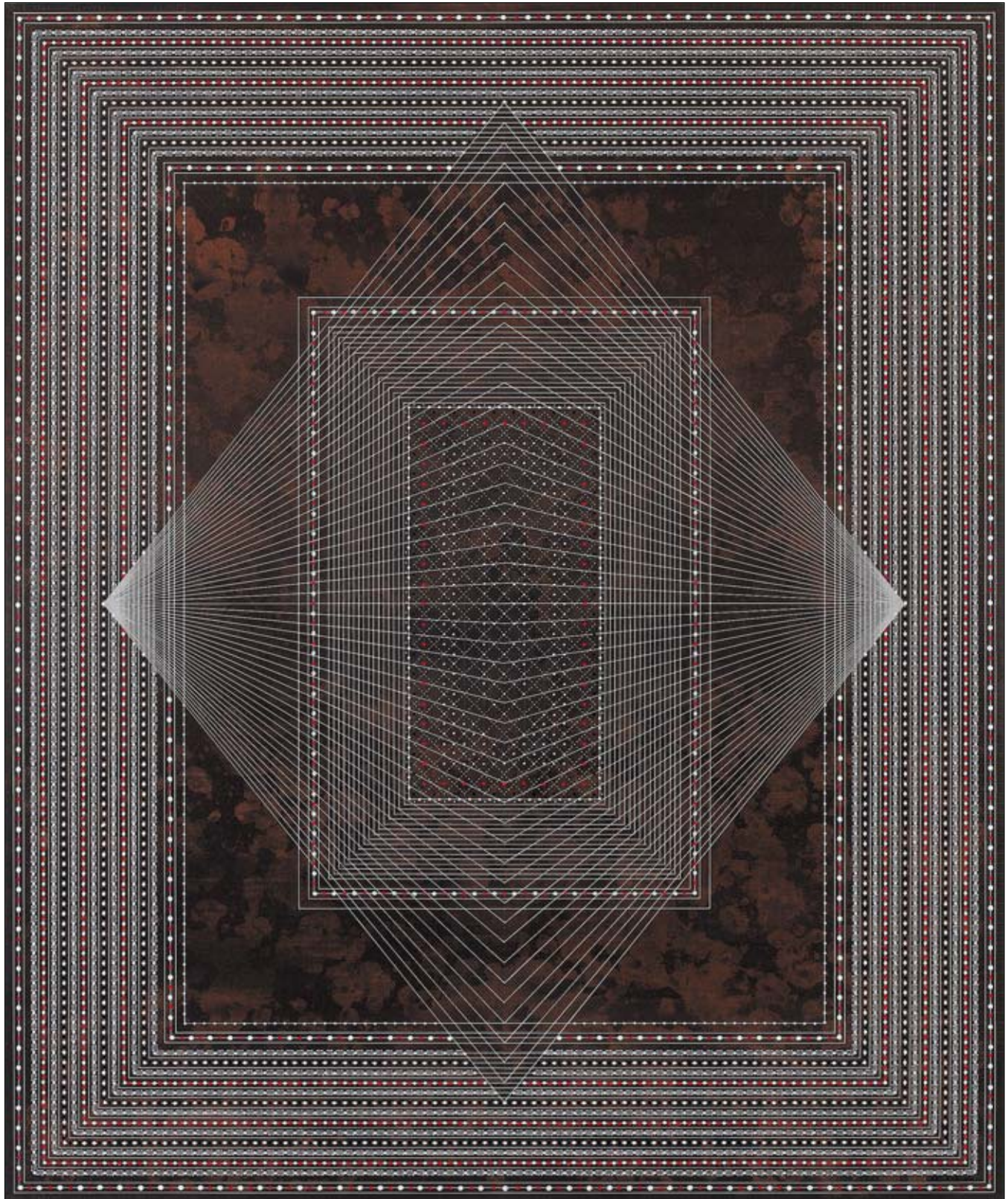


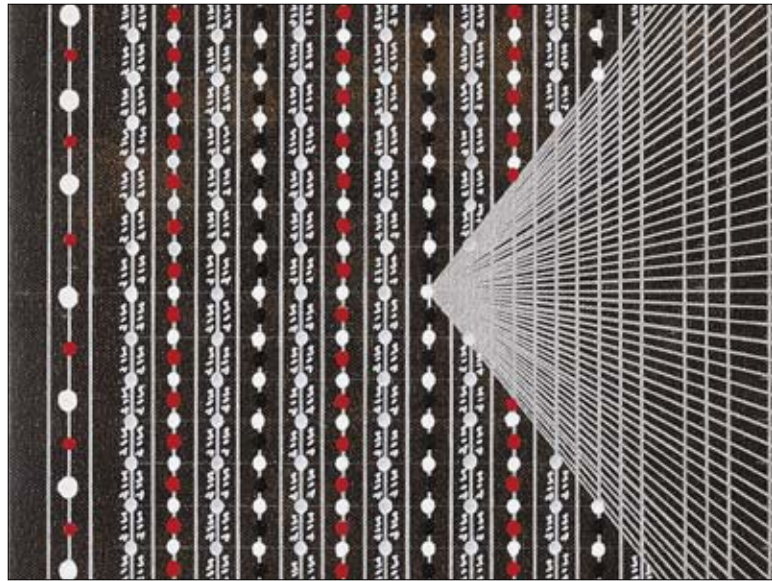


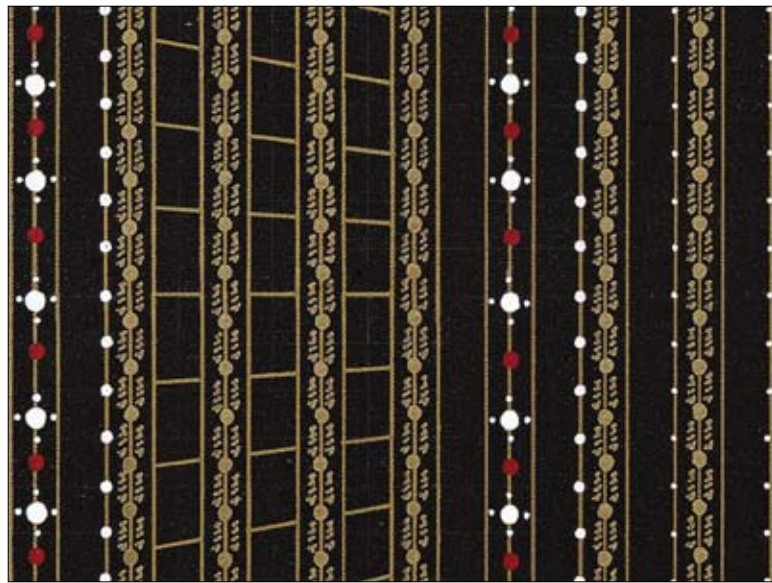


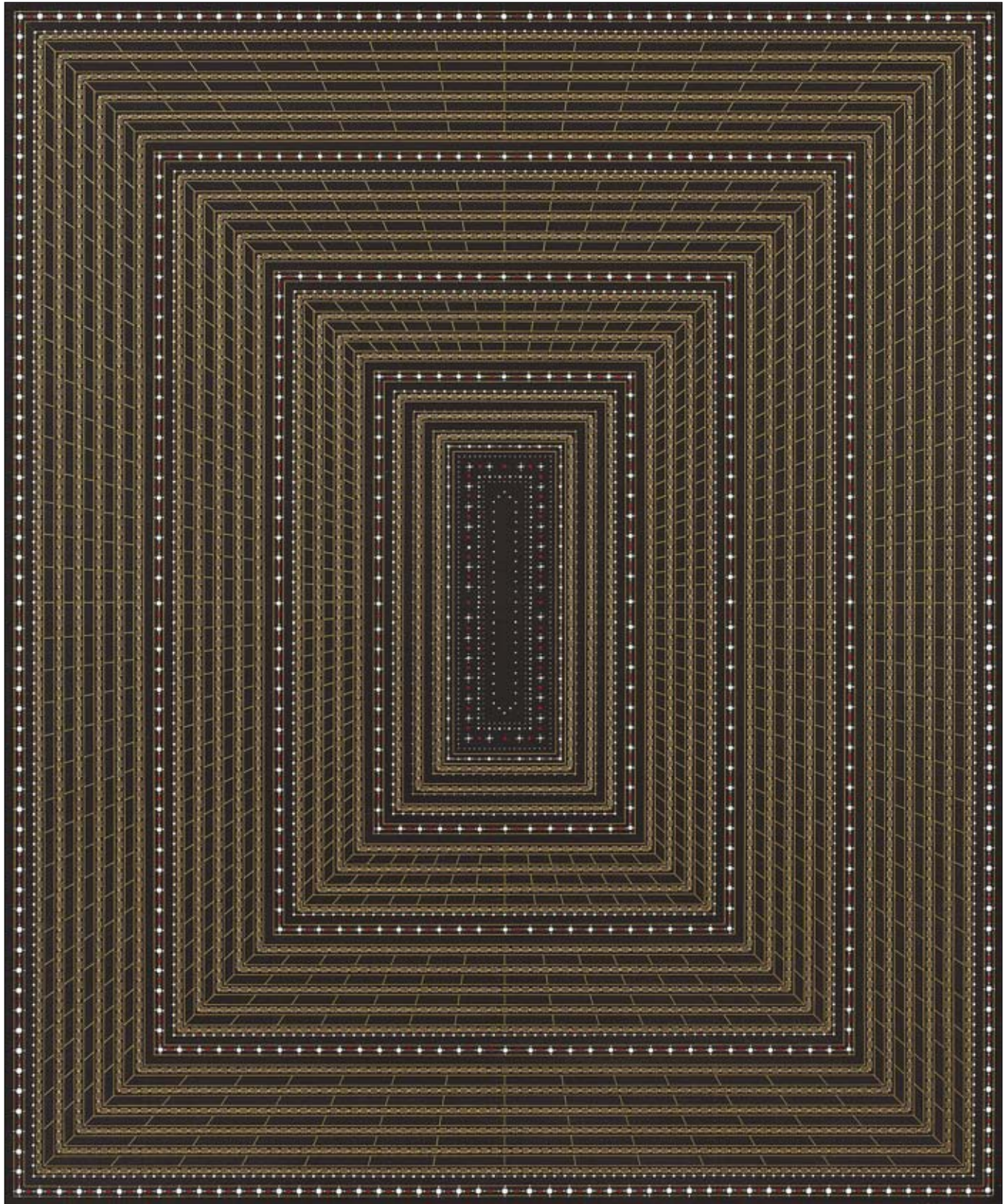


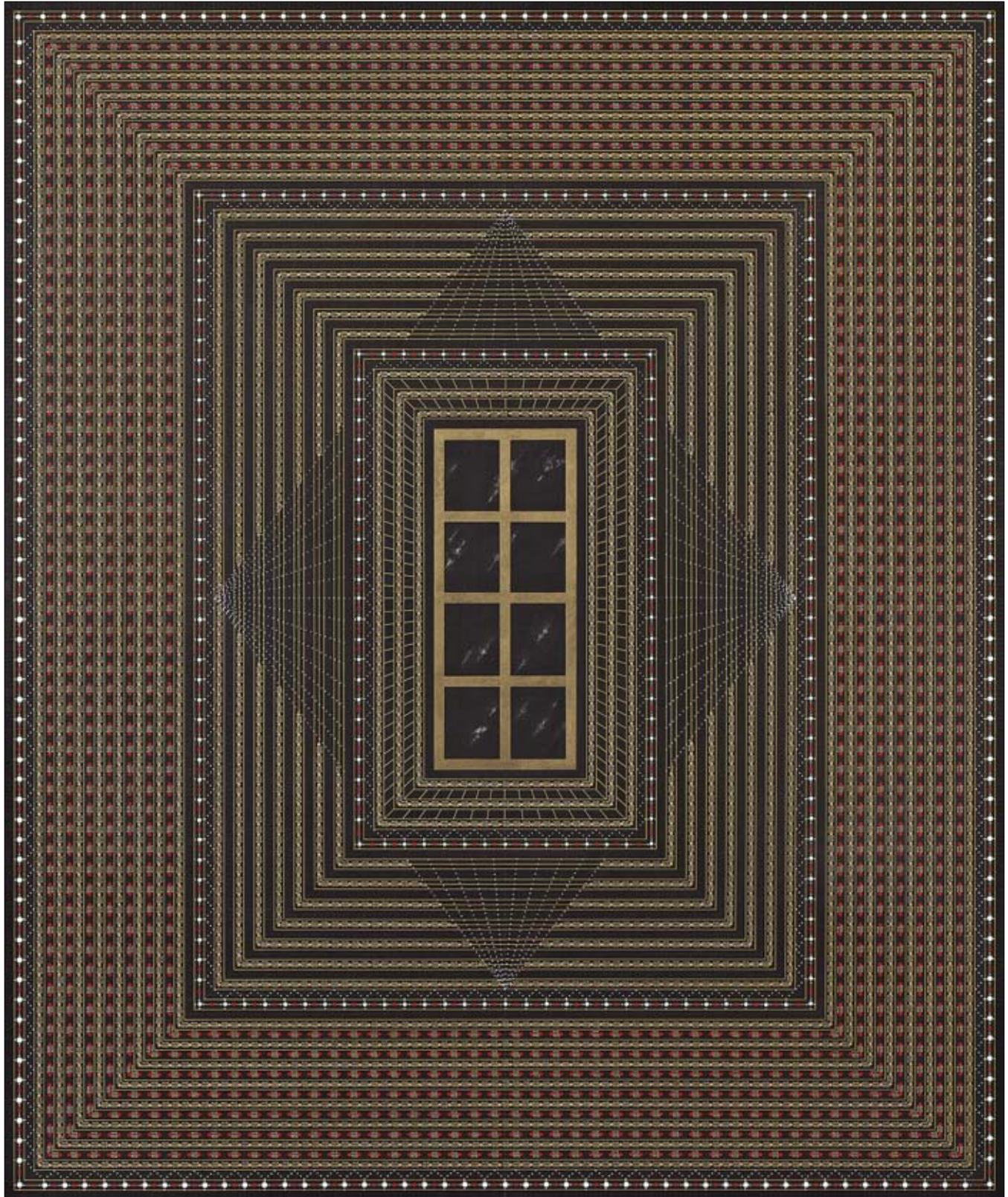


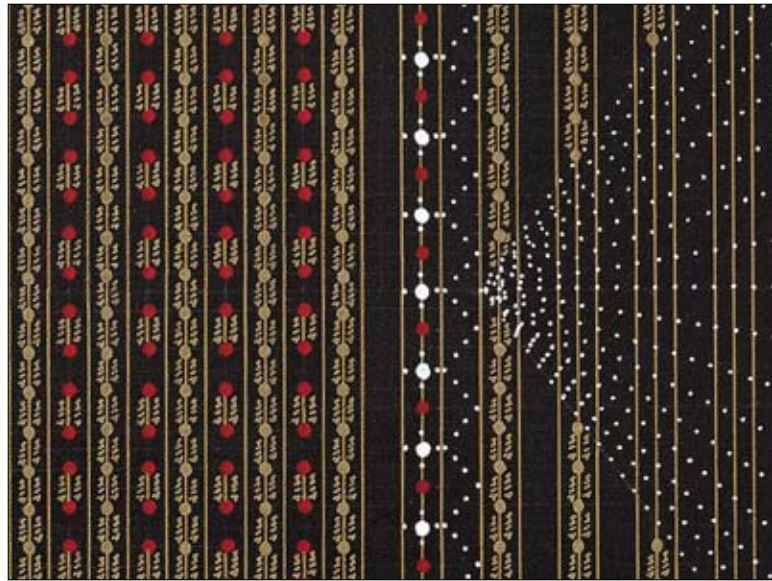


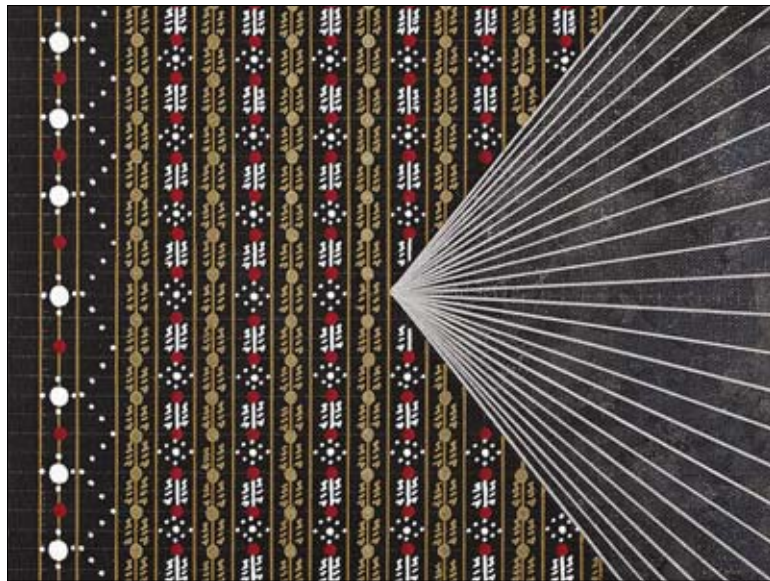


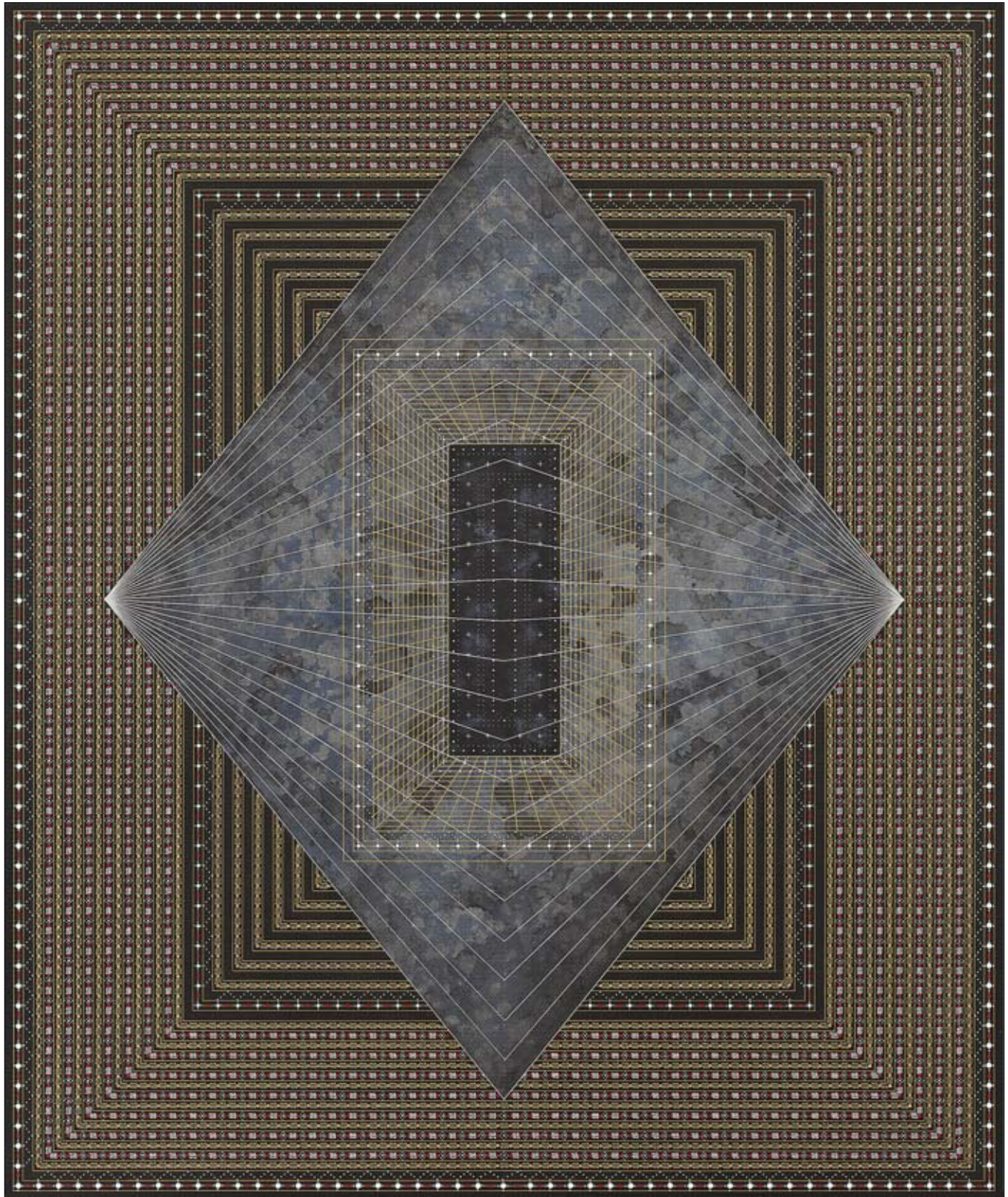


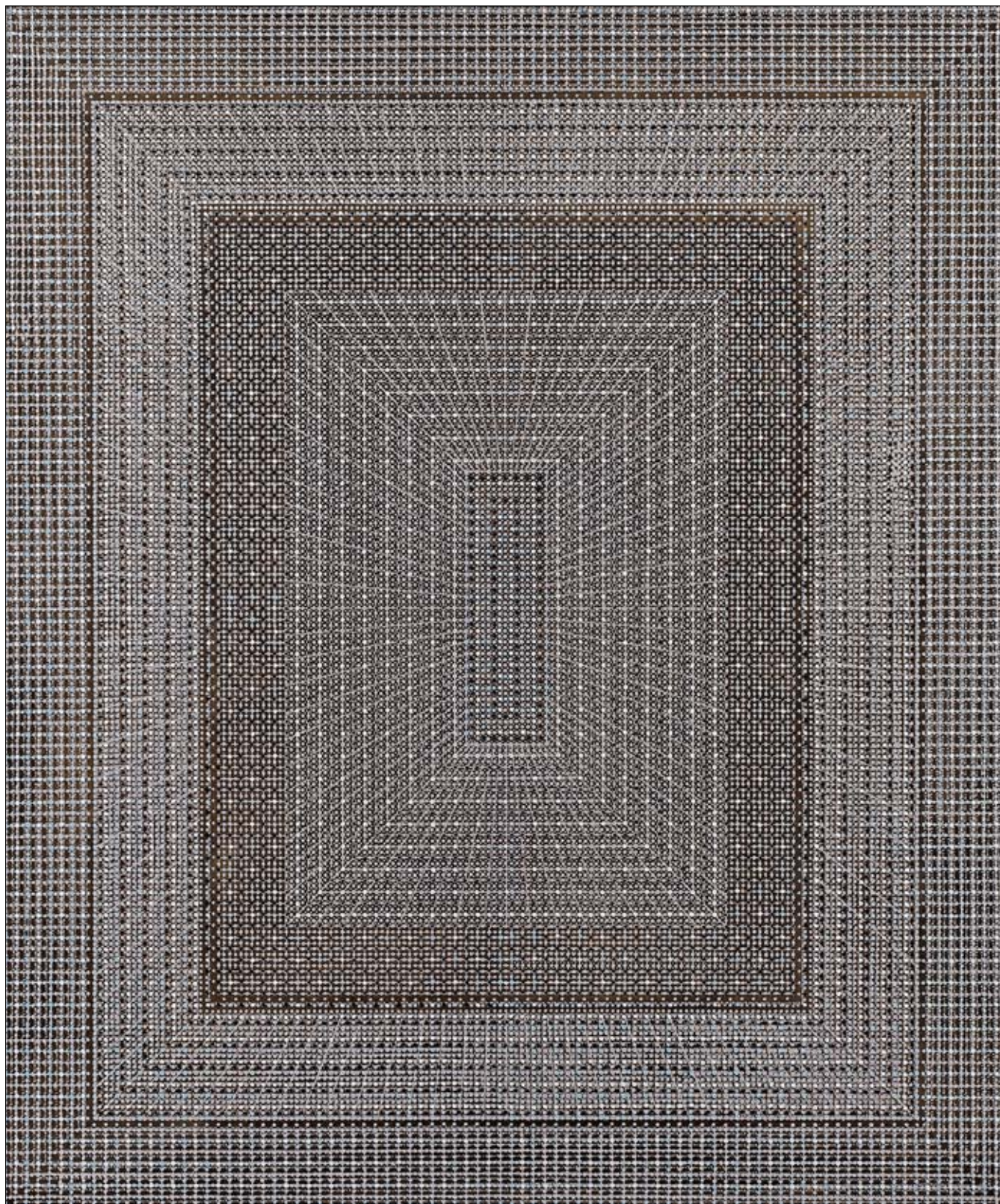














Works

Pages From A Manuscript

Mixed media on handmade paper

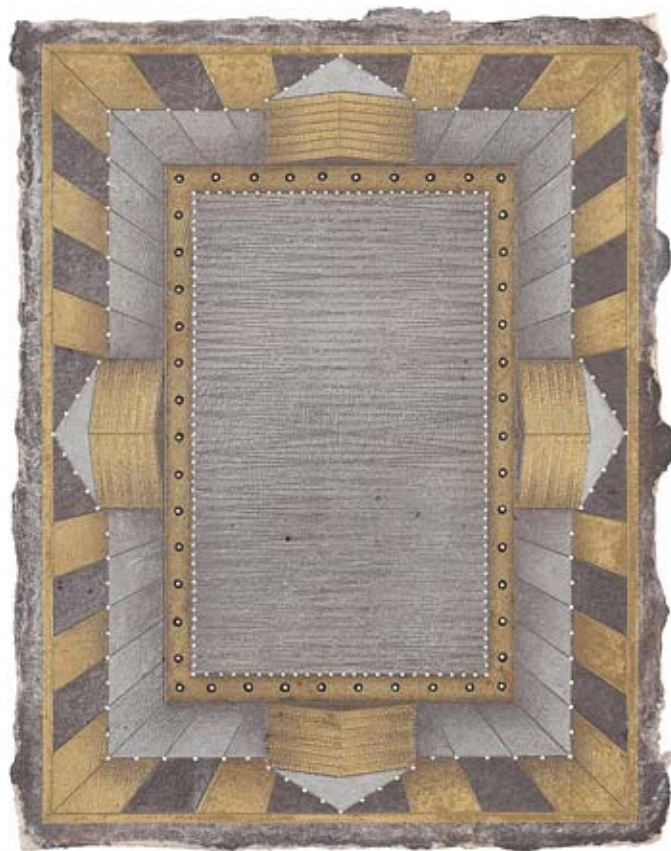
12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.)





























Works

Cultural Crossings, Suite I

Mixed media on Arches paper

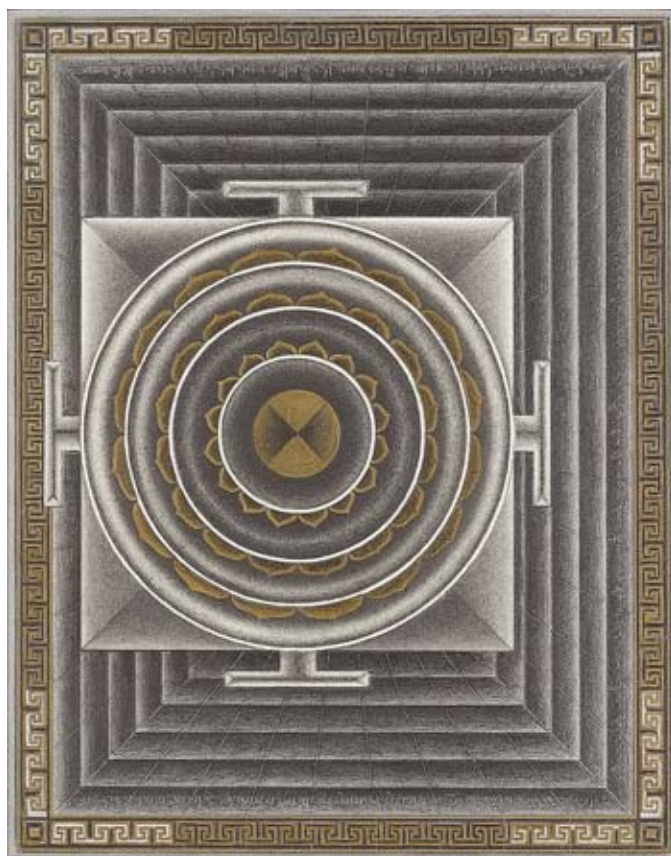
12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.)

མཚན་གྱི་སྐལ་པ་བར་མ་ལ །
 དེ་དག་བྱམས་པ་སྒོམ་གྱར་དེ །
 སེམས་ཅན་གྱི་བ་བརྒྱ་མང་པོ །
 བོན་སེམས་མེད་ལ་འཛུགས་བར་བྱེད །
 གཡུལ་ཆེན་འབྲེན་པའི་ནང་དུ་ནི །
 དེ་དག་ཕྱོགས་ལ་མཉམ་པར་འགྱུར །
 བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་དཔའ་སྟོབས་ཆེན་ནམས །
 འདུམ་ཞིང་འདུ་བར་དགའ་བར་བྱེད །

During the short eons of swords,
 they meditate on love,
 introducing to nonviolence
 hundreds of millions of living beings.

In the midst of great battles
 they remain impartial to both sides;
 for bodhisattvas of great strength
 delight in reconciliation of conflict.

Buddhism - *Holy Teaching of Vimalakirti* 8





NOLITE CONFORMARI HUIC SAECULO,
SED TRANSFORMAMINI RENOVATIONE MENTIS,
UT PROBETIS QUID SIT VOLUNTAS DEI,
QUID BONUM ET BENE PLACENS ET PERFECTUM.

Do not be conformed to this world,
but be transformed by the renewal of your mind,
that you may prove what is the will of God,
what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Christianity - *Nova Vulgata* Romans 12.2

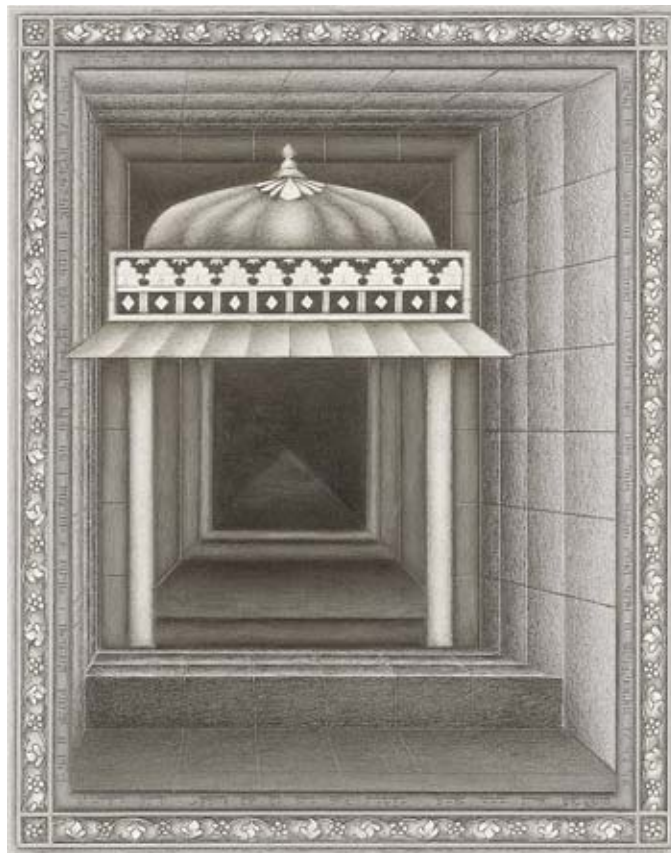
श्रीभगवान् उवाच ।

अहंकारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम् ।
विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥
ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् ॥

Having abandoned selfishness, power, arrogance, anger,
and desire, possessing nothing of his own and having
attained peace, he is fit to join the Eternal Spirit.

And when he becomes one with the Eternal, and his soul
knows the bliss that belongs to the Self, he feels no desire
and no regret, he regards all beings equally and enjoys
the blessing of supreme devotion to Me.

Hinduism - *Bhagavad Gita* 18.53-54





بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم وإن طائفتان من المؤمنين
اقتتلوا فأصلحوها بينهما فإن بغت إحداهما على الأخرى
فقاتلوا التي تبغي حتى تفيء إلى أمر الله فإن
فأءت فأصلحوها بينهما بالعدل وأقسطوا إن الله
يحب المقسطين صدق الله العظيم

If two parties of believers fall to fighting, then
make peace between them. And if one party of
them does wrong to the other, fight that wrong-doer
until it returns to the ordinance of God; then, if it
returns, make peace between them justly, and act
equitably. Lo! God loves the equitable.

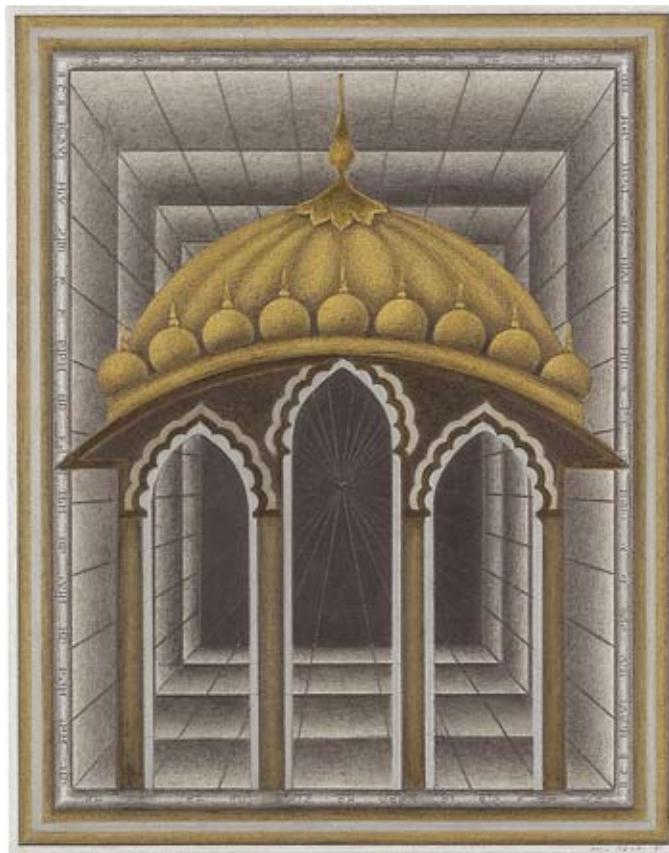
Islam - *Qur'an* 49.9

ח הוא הִיָּה אוֹמֵר מְרֻבָּה בְּשׂוֹר מְרֻבָּה רִמָּה
מְרֻבָּה נְכֻסִים מְרֻבָּה דְּאָגָה מְרֻבָּה נְשִׁים
מְרֻבָּה כְּשָׁפִים מְרֻבָּה שְׂפָחוֹת מְרֻבָּה זָמָה
מְרֻבָּה עֲבָדִים מְרֻבָּה גָּזֵל. מְרֻבָּה תוֹרָה
מְרֻבָּה חַיִּים מְרֻבָּה יְשִׁיבָה מְרֻבָּה חֲכָמָה
קָנָה שֵׁם טוֹב קָנָה לְעַצְמוֹ קָנָה לוֹ דְּבָרֵי
תוֹרָה קָנָה לוֹ חַיֵּי הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא :

Hillel used to say,
"More flesh, more worms;
more wealth more care;
more women more witchcraft;
more maidservants more lewdness;
more menservants more thieving;
more Torah more life;
more assiduity more wisdom;
more counsel more understanding;
more charity more peace."

Judaism - *Mishnah* Abot 2.8





ਰਸੁ ਸੁਇਨਾ ਰਸੁ ਰੁਪਾ ਕਾਮਣਿ ਰਸੁ ਪਰਮਲ ਕੀ ਵਾਸੁ ॥
ਰਸੁ ਘੋੜੇ ਰਸੁ ਸੇਜਾ ਮੰਦਰ ਰਸੁ ਮੀਠਾ ਰਸੁ ਮਾਸੁ ॥
ਏਤੇ ਰਸ ਸਰੀਰ ਕੇ ਕੈ ਘਟਿ ਨਾਮ ਨਿਵਾਸੁ ॥੨॥

Pleasure lies in gold, silver, women,
and delectable objects; pleasure lies in mounts,
soft beds, mansions, and attractions of the palate.
With all such pleasures, how may the
Name find place in the mind?

Sikhism - *Adi Granth* Sri Raga, M.1

Works

Cultural Crossings, Suite II

Mixed media on Arches paper

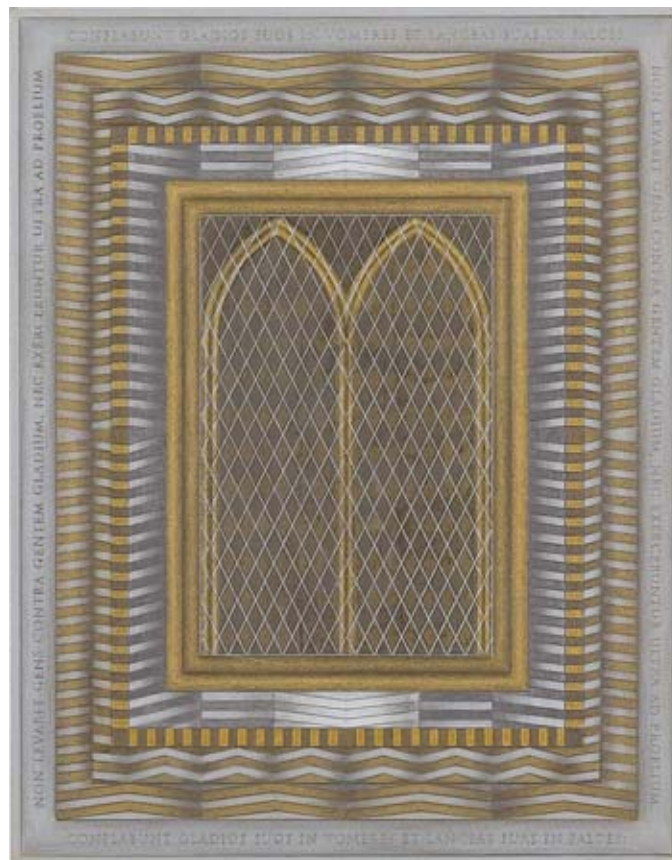
12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.)

། རྒྱལ་བྱེད་ཚལ་དུ་འོ།
། བཞུགས་དཀའ་བ་དུག་པ་འེ་མེད་པ་འདི།
། འཇིག་རྟེན་ནི་ཞི་བུ་སྤྲུམ་གཟིར་བ།
། མེ་རྟོག་ལས་ཞི་ཆུ་ཐིག་བཞིན།
། དེ་ལས་མུ་དན་རབ་རྒྱུ་ལྟོང་ །

Spoken in the Jetavana Grove —
Whoever in this world overcomes this [desire]
vicious craving so hard to transcend
will find that suffering falls away like
drops of water from a flower.

Buddhism - *Dhammapada*





CONFLABUNT GLADIOS SUOS
IN VOMERES ET LANCEAS SUAS
IN FALCES; NON LEVABIT
GENS CONTRA GENTEM
GLADIUM, NEC EXERCEBUNTUR
ULTRA AD PROELIUM.

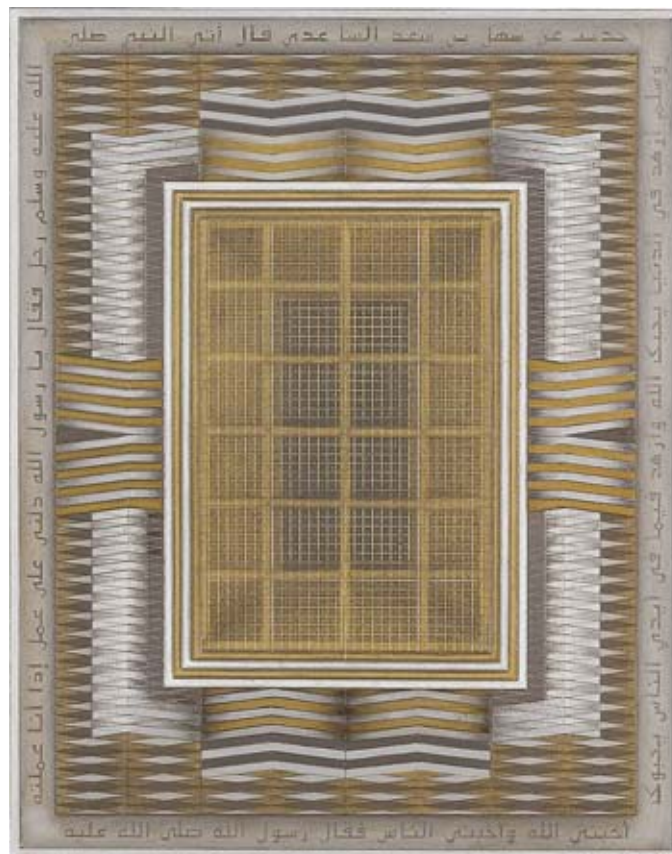
They shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they war any more.

Christianity - *Nova Vulgata* Isaiah 2.4

काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः ।
महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनम् इह वैरिणम् ॥
धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथा दृशो मलेन च ।
यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदम् आवृतम् ॥
आवृतं ज्ञानम् एतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा ।
कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरेणानलेन च ॥
इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिर् अस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते ।
एतैर् विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानम् आवृत्य देहिनम् ॥
तस्मात् त्वम् इन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।
पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥

The Blessed Lord spoke —
This force is desire, this force is anger;
its source is the rajas guna.
Voracious and greatly injurious,
know this to be the enemy.
As fire is obscured by smoke,
and a mirror by dust,
as the embryo is enveloped by the membrane,
so the intellect is obscured by passion.
O Arjuna, the knowledge even of the wise
ones is obscured by this eternal enemy,
having the form of desire,
which is an insatiable fire.
The senses, the mind and the intellect
are said to be its abode;
with these, it confuses the embodied one,
obscuring his knowledge.
Therefore, restraining the senses
first, O Arjuna,
kill this evil demon
which destroys knowledge and discrimination.

Hinduism - *Bhagavad Gita* 3.37-41



حديث عن سهل بن سعد الساعدي قال أتى النبي
صلى الله عليه وسلم رجل فقال يا رسول الله دلني
على عمل إذا أنا عملته أحبني الله وأحبني الناس
فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ازهد في الدنيا
يحبك الله وازهد فيما في أيدي الناس يحبوك

A man came to the Prophet and said,
"O Messenger of Allah, direct me to an
act which, if I do it, will cause Allah to
love me and people to love me." He said,
"Renounce the world and Allah will love you;
renounce what people possess and people will love you."

Islam - *Kitab al-Zuhd* Sunan of Ibn Majah

וְשִׁפְטוּ בֵּין הַגּוֹלִים וְהוֹכִיחוּ לְעַמִּים רַבִּים
וְכָתְּבוּ חֲרֻבוֹתָם לְאַתִּים וְחֲנִיתוֹתֵיהֶם
לְמִזְמְרוֹת לֹא-יִשָּׂא גּוֹי אֶל-גּוֹי
חֶרֶב וְלֹא-יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה:

They shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they war any more.

Judaism - *Old Testament* Isaiah 2.4





ਆਸਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਜੰਮਿਆ ਆਸਾ ਰਸ ਕਸ ਖਾਇ ॥
ਆਸਾ ਬੰਧਿ ਚਲਾਈਐ ਮੁਹੇ ਮੁਹਿ ਚੋਟਾ ਖਾਇ ॥
ਅਵਗਣਿ ਬਧਾ ਮਾਰੀਐ ਛੂਟੈ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਨਾਇ ॥੨॥

In desire is man born;
from desire he consumes objects of various tastes;
by desire is he led away bound,
buffeted across the face.
Bound by evil qualities is he chastised —

Sikhism - *Adi Granth* Sri Raga Ashtpadi, M.1

Works

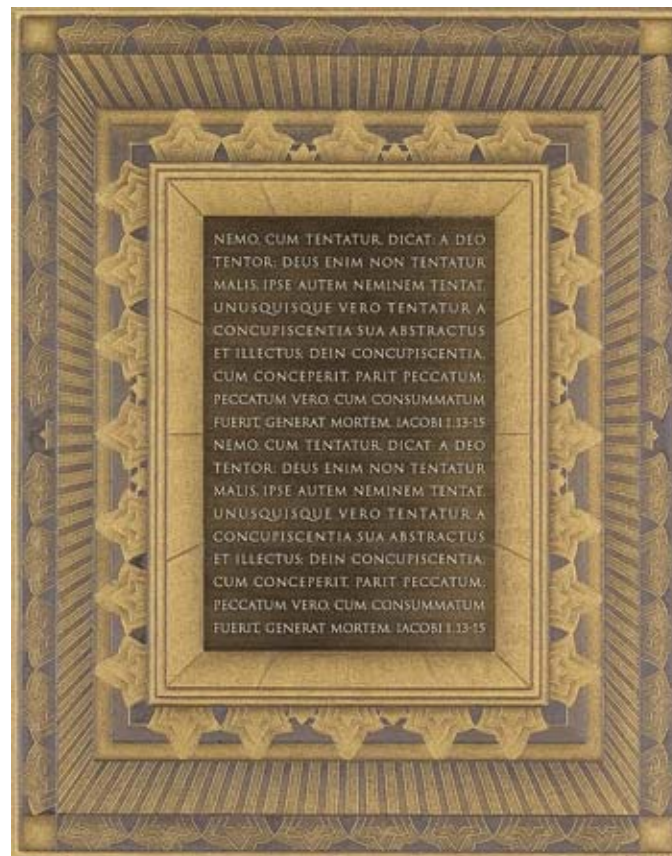
Cultural Crossings, Suite III
Mixed media on Arches paper
12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.)

འོད་མའི་ཚལ་དུ་འཇིགས་མེད་ལའོ །
གྲུལ་པོ་འི་ཤིང་རྟ་ཁྲ་བོ་བཞིན །
འཇིག་རྟེན་འདི་ཉིད་བལྟ་བ་སྟོན །
གང་ལ་བྱིས་པ་ཆགས་གུར་ཀྱང་ །
ལེགས་པར་དགོངས་ནས་ས་ཞིན་མཡིན །

Come, behold this world which is
like unto an ornamented royal chariot,
wherein fools flounder, but for
the wise there is no attachment.

Buddhism - *Dhammapada* 171





NEMO CUM TENTATUR DICAT A DEO
TENTOR. DEUS ENIM NON TENTATUR
MALIS. IPSE AUTEM NEMINEM TENTAT.
UNUSQUISQUE VERO TENTATUR A
CONCUPISCENTIA SUA ABSTRACTUS
ET ILLECTUS. DEIN CONCUPISCENTIA
CUM CONCEPERIT PARIT PECCATUM.
PECCATUM VERO CUM CONSUMMATUM
FUERIT GENERAT MORTEM. IACOBI 1.13-15
NEMO CUM TENTATUR DICAT A DEO
TENTOR. DEUS ENIM NON TENTATUR
MALIS. IPSE AUTEM NEMINEM TENTAT.
UNUSQUISQUE VERO TENTATUR A
CONCUPISCENTIA SUA ABSTRACTUS
ET ILLECTUS. DEIN CONCUPISCENTIA
CUM CONCEPERIT PARIT PECCATUM.
PECCATUM VERO CUM CONSUMMATUM
FUERIT GENERAT MORTEM. IACOBI 1.13-15

NEMO, CUM TENTATUR, DICAT: A DEO TENTOR;
DEUS ENIM NON TENTATUR MALIS, IPSE AUTEM
NEMINEM TENTAT. UNUSQUISQUE VERO TENTATUR
A CONUPISCENTIA SUA ABSTRACTUS ET ILLECTUS;
DEIN CONUPISCENTIA, CUM CONCEPERIT,
PARIT PECCATUM; PECCATUM VERO, CUM
CONSUMMATUM FUERIT, GENERAT MORTEM.

Let no one say when he is tempted,
"I am tempted by God;" for God
cannot be tempted with evil and
he himself tempts no one; but
each person is tempted when he is
lured and enticed by his own desire.
Then desire when it has conceived
gives birth to sin; and sin when
it is full-grown brings forth death.

Christianity - *Nova Vulgata* James 1.13-15

ध्यायतो विषयान् पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।
सङ्गात् संजायते कामः कामात् क्रोधो ऽभिजायते ॥
क्रोधाद् भवति संमोहः संमोहात् स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात् प्रणश्यति ॥
रागद्वेषवियुक्तस्तु विषयान् इन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादम् अधिगच्छति ॥

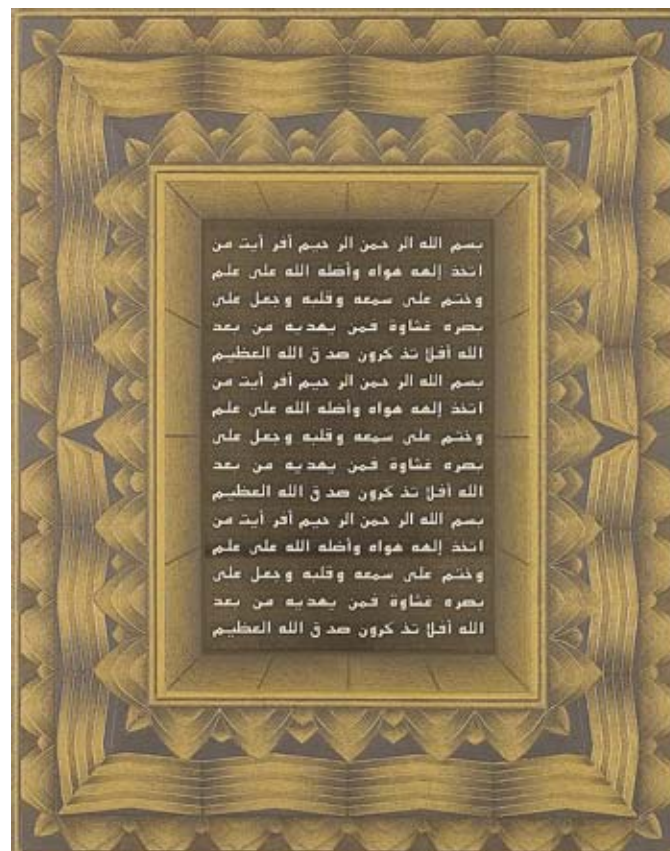
O Arjuna! When a man dwells on the objects
of sense, he creates an attraction for them;
attraction develops into desire,
and desire breeds anger.

Anger induces delusion; delusion, loss
of memory; through loss of memory,
reason is shattered; and loss of reason
leads to destruction.

But the self-controlled soul, who moves
amongst sense objects, free from either
attachment or repulsion, he wins eternal Peace.

Hinduism - *Bhagavad Gita* 2.62-64





بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم أقر أبيت من
اتخذ إلهه هواه وأضله الله على علم
و ختم على سمعه و قلبه و جعل على
بصره غشاوة فمن يهديه من بعد
الله أفلا تذكرون صدق الله العظيم

Have you seen him who makes his desire
his god, and God sends him astray purposely,
and seals up his hearing and his heart, and
sets on his sight a covering? Who, then, will
lead him after God [has condemned him]?
Will you not then heed?

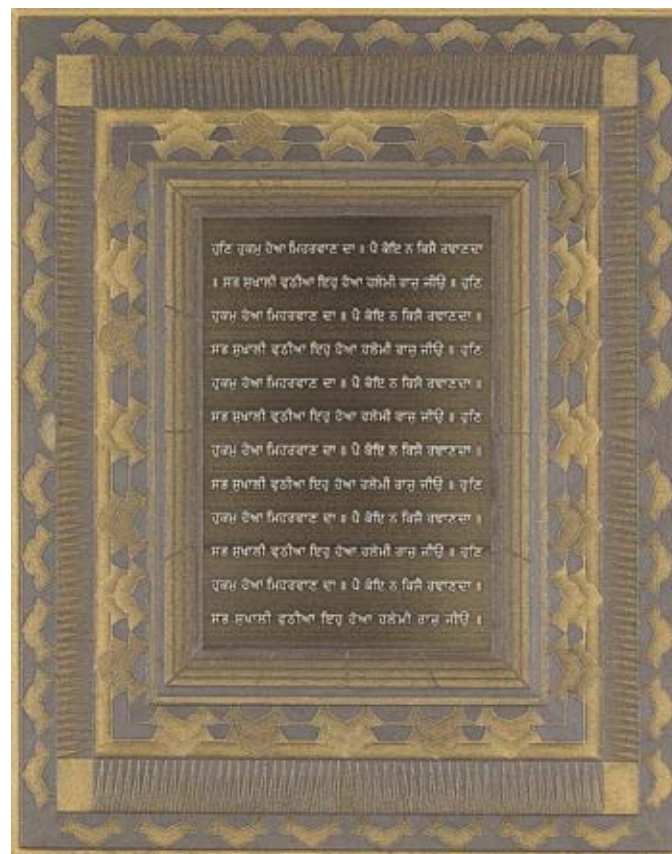
Islam - *Qur'an* 45.23

כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים יִגְעִים לֹא־יִכָּל אִישׁ לְדַבֵּר לֹא־
תִשְׂבַּע עֵין לְרֹאוֹת וְלֹא־תִמָּלֵא אָזֶן מִשְׁמָע:

All things are full of weariness;
a man cannot utter it;
the eye is not satisfied with seeing,
nor the ear filled with hearing.

Judaism - *Old Testament* Ecclesiastes 1.8





ਹੁਣਿ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਹੋਆ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਣ ਦਾ ॥
ਪੈ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਕਿਸੈ ਰਵਾਣਦਾ ॥
ਸਭ ਸੁਖਾਲੀ ਵਠੀਆ ਇਹੁ ਹੋਆ ਹਲੇਮੀ ਰਾਜੁ ਜੀਉ ॥੧੩॥

Now is the gracious Lord's ordinance promulgated,
no one shall cause another pain or injury;
all mankind shall live in peace together,
under a shield of administrative benevolence.

Sikhism - *Adi Granth* Sri Raga, M. 5

List of works

Ram Darwaza

Pages 30–31
Detail + *Ram Darwaza 1*,
2008 • Mixed media on
canvas 60 X 50 in.
(152.4 X 127 cm.)
Private Collection

Pages 32–33
Detail + *Ram Darwaza 2*,
2009 • Mixed media on
canvas 60 X 50 in.
(152.4 X 127 cm.)

Pages 34–35
Detail + *Ram Darwaza 3*,
2009 • Mixed media on
canvas 60 X 50 in.
(152.4 X 127 cm.)

Pages 36–37
Detail + *Ram Darwaza 4*,
2010 • Mixed media on
canvas 60 X 50 in.
(152.4 X 127 cm.)
Private Collection

Pages 38–39
Detail + *Ram Darwaza 6*,
2010 • Mixed media on
canvas 60 X 50 in.
(152.4 X 127 cm.)

Pages 40–41
Detail + *Ram Darwaza 7*,
2010 • Mixed media on
canvas 60 X 50 in.
(152.4 X 127 cm.)

Pages 42–43
Detail + *Ram Darwaza 9*,
2011 • Mixed media on
canvas 60 X 50 in.
(152.4 X 127 cm.)

Pages 44–45
Detail + *Ram Darwaza 10*,
2011 • Mixed media on
canvas 60 X 50 in.
(152.4 X 127 cm.)
Private Collection

Pages 46–47
Detail + *Ram Darwaza 11*,
2011 • Mixed media on
canvas 60 X 50 in.
(152.4 X 127 cm.)
Private Collection

Pages 48–49
Detail + *Veiled Doorways 8*,
2000 • Mixed media on
canvas 60 X 50 in.
(152.4 X 127 cm.)
Private Collection

Pages From A Manuscript

Page 52
Pages From A Manuscript 2,
1996 • Mixed media on
handmade paper 12 X 9 in.
(30.48 X 22.86 cm.)
Private Collection

Page 53
Pages From A Manuscript 4,
1997 • Mixed media on
handmade paper 12 X 9 in.
(30.48 X 22.86 cm.)
Private Collection

<p>Page 54</p> <p><i>Pages From A Manuscript 1,</i> 2003 • Mixed media on handmade paper 12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.) Private Collection</p>	<p>Page 60</p> <p><i>Pages From A Manuscript 2,</i> 2011 • Mixed media on handmade paper 12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.)</p>
<p>Page 55</p> <p><i>Pages From A Manuscript 2,</i> 2004 • Mixed media on handmade paper 12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.) Private Collection</p>	<p>Page 61</p> <p><i>Pages From A Manuscript 3,</i> 2011 • Mixed media on handmade paper 12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.)</p>
<p>Page 56</p> <p><i>Pages From A Manuscript 2,</i> 2008 • Mixed media on handmade paper 12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.)</p>	<p>Page 62</p> <p><i>Pages From A Manuscript 4,</i> 2011 • Mixed media on handmade paper 12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.)</p>
<p>Page 57</p> <p><i>Pages From A Manuscript 1,</i> 2010 • Mixed media on handmade paper 12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.) Private Collection</p>	<p>Page 63</p> <p><i>Pages From A Manuscript 5,</i> 2011 • Mixed media on handmade paper 12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.)</p>
<p>Page 58</p> <p><i>Pages From A Manuscript 2,</i> 2010 • Mixed media on handmade paper 12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.) Private Collection</p>	<p>Page 64</p> <p><i>Pages From A Manuscript 6,</i> 2011 • Mixed media on handmade paper 12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.)</p>
<p>Page 59</p> <p><i>Pages From A Manuscript 1,</i> 2011 • Mixed media on handmade paper 12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.)</p>	<p>Page 65</p> <p><i>Pages From A Manuscript 7,</i> 2011 • Mixed media on handmade paper 12 X 9 in. (30.48 X 22.86 cm.)</p>

Cultural Crossings

Pages 68–79

Suite I, 1998–2001

Mixed media on Arches

paper 11.75 X 9.25 in.

(30.48 X 22.86 cm.)

Collection of the Corcoran

Gallery of Art

Pages 82–93

Suite II, 1998–2001

Mixed media on Arches

paper 11.75 X 9.25 in.

(30.48 X 22.86 cm.)

Private Collection

Pages 96–107

Suite III, 1998–2001

Mixed media on Arches

paper 11.75 X 9.25 in.

(30.48 X 22.86 cm.)

Collection of the artist

Sculpture: *Wall For Peace*

LED panels on aluminum

frame displaying transla-

tions of scriptures related

to Peace from Buddhism,

Christianity, Hinduism,

Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism

88 L X 75.6 H X 25 D in.

(223.52 X 192.02 X

63.5 cm.)

Biographical information

Education

1995
BFA graphic design.
Corcoran College of Art +
Design, Washington, DC

1977
BFA interior design. Sir
J.J. School of Art, Mumbai

Museum shows

OAS, Art Museum of the
Americas, Washington, DC

Baltimore Museum of Art,
Baltimore, MD

Corcoran Gallery of Art,
Washington, DC

F. Donald Kenney Museum,
St. Bonaventure University,
St. Bonaventure, NY

Fort Worth Museum,
Dallas, TX

Jane Voorhees Zimmerli
Museum, Rutgers University,
New Brunswick, NJ

American University
Museum at the Katzen Arts
Center, Washington, DC

Peabody Essex Museum,
Salem, MA

Tempra Museum, Malta

Solo shows

2012
*Anil Revri: Faith And
Liberation Through
Abstraction*. American
University Museum at the
Katzen Arts Center,
Washington, DC

2011
India Art Summit, New
Delhi. Represented by The
Fine Art Company, Mumbai

2007
Prakriti. Sundaram Tagore
Gallery, New York, NY

Vadehra Art Gallery,
New Delhi

2005
Quantum. Sundaram Tagore
Gallery, New York, NY

2004
*In Search of Self: Paintings
and Drawings by Anil Revri*.
Corcoran Gallery of Art,
Washington, DC

*In Search of Self: Paintings
and Drawings by Anil Revri*.
Sundaram Tagore Gallery,
New York, NY

2002
*Cultural Crossings: First
Anniversary of 9.11*. The
IndoCenter of Art &
Culture, New York, NY

2001	Architects Headquarters Gallery, Washington, DC
<i>Cultural Crossings</i> , Fourth Presbyterian Church, Chicago, IL	1992 National Arts Club, New York, NY
<i>Cultural Crossings</i> , F. Donald Kenney Museum, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, NY	1991 New India House, New York, NY
2000	
<i>Cultural Crossings</i> , Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spritual Leaders, Waldorf- Astoria, New York, NY	1990 India International Centre, New Delhi
1999	1987 Shridharani Gallery, New Delhi
<i>Cultural Crossings</i> , Arts Club of Washington, Washington, DC	1985 Festival of India, M. Darling Ltd., New York, NY
IMF Gallery, Washington, DC	1981 Foyer du Beffroi, Tours, France
1997 American Institute of Architects, Washington, DC	Meridien Hotel, Paris
1996	1980
Indian Council for Cultural Relations, New Delhi	India House, London
	India Tourist Office, Paris
India International Centre, New Delhi	Alliance Française de Delhi
1995	Taj Art Gallery, Mumbai
Mount Vernon College, Washington, DC	1978 Galerie 't Atelier, Eindhoven, The Netherlands
1993 American Institute of	

Gallery Chemould, Mumbai	<i>Scope</i> , Basel. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery
1977	
Bhulabhai Memorial Institute, Mumbai	<i>Continuum</i> . Sundaram Tagore Gallery, Hong Kong
Cymroza Art Gallery, Mumbai	<i>India Art Summit</i> . Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery
Academy of Fine Arts, Calcutta	2010 Singapore Art Fair.
Shridharani Gallery, New Delhi	Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery
1976	<i>The Sacred Arts of Asia</i> . Curated by John Ford. Asian Arts & Culture Center, Towson University, Towson, MD
Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai	
Group/juried shows/ art fairs	
	2009
2011	<i>Here and Now</i> . Sundaram Tagore Gallery, Hong Kong
<i>Art Miami</i> . Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery	
	2008
Asian Art Fair, Hong Kong. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery	Zurich Art Fair. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery
<i>Pulse</i> , Los Angeles. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery	Toronto Art Fair. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery
Houston Fine Art Fair. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery	<i>In Your Mind's Eye</i> . Sundaram Tagore Gallery, New York and Hong Kong
Aspen Art Fair. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery	<i>Checkpoint 3, Ilgen</i> , Berlin. Works by Christina Barroso, Ali Hassan, Fré Ilgen and Anil Revri in conjunction with a talk on global art

<i>Lights and Shadows: Art from Asia and the West.</i> Sundaram Tagore Gallery, Beverly Hills, CA	Contemporary Art Fair. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery
	2006
<i>Art Chicago.</i> Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery	Asian Art Fair, Shanghai. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery
International Art Fair, New York, NY. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery	<i>Heart of DC.</i> City Hall Art Collection, Washington, DC
<i>Art Dubai.</i> Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery	<i>Next Level.</i> Sundaram Tagore Gallery, New York, NY
2007	
Florence Biennale, Italy	<i>East/West.</i> Sundaram Tagore Gallery, New York, NY
Asian Contemporary Art Fair, New York, NY. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery	Asian Art Fair, Hong Kong. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery
Toronto Art Fair. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery	Chicago Art Fair. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery
<i>Of Paper.</i> Montpelier Arts Center, Laurel, MD	Asian Art Fair, The Armory Show, New York, NY. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery
<i>Colors.</i> Sundaram Tagore Gallery, New York, NY	
<i>Gateway Bombay.</i> Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA	<i>Collaboration as a Medium: 25 years of Pyramid Atlantic.</i> Maryland Art Place, Rockville, MD
DC Art Fair, Washington, DC. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery	2005
<i>Art Miami.</i> 17th International Modern +	<i>Searching for a Path: Contemporary Expressions by Seven Artists.</i> Asian Arts

Gallery at the Asian Arts & Culture Center, Towson University, Towson, MD	2002 <i>India: Contemporary Art from Northeastern Private Collections</i> . Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Museum, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
<i>Secret Places/Silent Journey: The Art of Kit-Keung Kan, Yuriko Yamaguchi, Juliane Min, Foon Sham, Anil Revri, and Chul-Hyun Ahn.</i> CapitalOne Headquarters Gallery, McLean, VA	2001 <i>Lichtenstein and Beyond: Recent Acquisitions of Modern Prints and Drawings</i> , Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC
<i>Collaboration as a Medium: 25 years of Pyramid Atlantic</i> . PEPCO Gallery, Washington, DC	2000 All Media Juried Show. Arlington Arts Center. Juror: Jane Farver, Regional Curator, 2000 Whitney Biennial and Director of the List Visual Arts Center at MIT, Boston, MA
<i>Art Miami</i> . Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery	
Chicago Art Fair. Represented by Sundaram Tagore Gallery	
2004 <i>Erasing Borders: Passport to Contemporary Indian Art of the Diaspora</i> . Curated by Sundaram Tagore at the Indo-American Arts Council, Inc., New York, NY	1999 <i>Grolla D'oro</i> , Italy Malta Bienalle, Malta <i>Pyramid Atlantic: Washington Area Artists</i> . Arts Club of Washington, Washington, DC
2003 <i>About Time</i> . Corcoran Alumni Invitational Show, Embassy of Canada, Washington, DC. Juror: Ms. Lisa Messenger, Curator of Modern Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY	Fellowship Recipient Exhibition. DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities/ NEA, Washington, DC 1998 <i>Pyramid Atlantic: A Study in Collaboration</i> . Curated

by Mary Anne Goley, Director, the Federal Reserve Board Exhibitions. The Federal Reserve Board, Washington, DC	Wallace Galleries, New York, NY
Contemporary Print Fair, Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD. Represented by Pyramid Atlantic	<i>Watermarks</i> . The Athenaeum, Arlington, VA. Jurors: Willem de Looper, artist and former curator of the Phillips Collection and William Kloss, art historian
<i>Neighbors: The Corcoran at the OAS</i> , the Art Museum of the Americas, Washington, DC. Jurors: Ana María Escallón, Director, OAS and Samuel Hoi, Dean, Corcoran College of Art + Design, Washington, DC	Mansion Art Gallery, Rockville, MD
21st Annual Art on Paper, MFA. Gallery on the Circle, Annapolis, MD. Juror: Eliza Rathbone, Curator of Contemporary Collections, the Phillips Collection, Washington, DC	Juried Exhibition, Arlington Arts Center, Arlington, VA. Juror: Howard Fox, Curator, Contemporary Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA
International Juried Show '98. New Jersey Center for Visual Arts, Summit, NJ. Juror: Nan Rosenthal, Consultant, 20th Century Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY	1995 Fourth Annual Corcoran Alumni Exhibition. Corcoran Gallery of Art. Jurors: Sally Troyer, Troyer Fitzpatrick Lassman Gallery and Marsha Mateyka, Marsha Mateyka Gallery, Washington, DC
1996 <i>December in Japan</i> . Japan Information & Culture Center, Washington, DC	Penn State University Juried Exhibition. Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts. Juror: Tom Nakashima, Professor of Painting, Catholic University, Washington DC
	Laurel Art Guild Juried Exhibition, Montpelier Cultural Arts Center. Juror: Barry A. Nemett, Chairman, Painting Department,

Maryland Institute and
College of Art

Grants

2000

Songs of Tagore. Set design
for Battery Dance Company,
New York. Exhibited at
Alliance Française, New
York, NY; Marvin Theatre,
George Washington
University, Washington,
DC; Fort Worth Museum,
Dallas, TX; Labuda Theatre,
Allentown College,
Allentown, PA; Sofia Music
Weeks Festival, Bulgaria;
Varna Summer Festival,
Bulgaria and the Malta
Festival, Poland

Exhibition Sponsors for
Cultural Crossings at the
Millennium World Peace
Summit of Religious and
Spritual Leaders, Waldorf-
Astoria, New York, NY:

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas F. Cullen

Mr. & Mrs. Shoaib Hashmi

Embassy of India

Mr. & Mrs. John D. Mussells

Washington Art Associates

1994

Gallery 84, Inc., New
York, NY. National Juried
Exhibition. Juror: Theodore
F. Wolfe, Art Critic, the
Christian Science Monitor

1998

Visual Arts Fellowship, DC
Commission on the Arts
and Humanities/NEA

1997

Light. Capitol Hill Arts
League, Washington, DC.
Juror: Margery E. Goldberg,
Director, Zenith Gallery,
Washington, DC

Small Projects Grant, DC
Commission on the Arts
and Humanities/NEA

Northern Virginia Fine Arts
Festival, Reston, VA

Sponsors for the American
Institute of Architects
exhibition catalogue:

DCAC, First Anniversary
Exhibition, Washington, DC

American Institute
of Architects

The Boeing Company

1980

Punjab Lalit Kala,
Chandigarh, India

Mr. Steve Drill

Fox River Paper Company

<i>Interior's & Lifestyles</i> , India	Graphis <i>Promotion Design 1</i>
Textron	invitation design for the Friends of the Corcoran Gallery of Art
Washington Art Associates	1998
1996	14th Mayor's Arts Awards
Air India travel grant	finalist, Washington, DC
Indian Council for Cultural Relations, New Delhi	1997
1985	Graphis <i>Poster Annual</i> 1997, two posters: <i>Homage to Tadanori</i> <i>Yokoo and Homage to</i> <i>Yusaku Kamekura</i>
Air India travel grant	
1981	
Indian Council for Cultural Relations, New Delhi	1995
Sanskriti, India	Annual Show. Art Directors Club of Metropolitan Washington, Washington, DC
Awards/publications	
2001	1994
Graphis <i>Poster Annual</i> 2001 poster design for Georgetown University, Washington, DC	<i>Real Show</i> . Art Directors Club of Metropolitan Washington, Washington, DC
2000	Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, USA
51st Annual Show. Art Directors Club of Metropolitan Washington, Washington, DC	1980
1999	First Prize, Punjab Lalit Kala, Chandigarh, India
First Prize, <i>Grolla</i> <i>D'oro</i> , Italy	Selected collections
First Prize, Malta Biennale, Malta	Alliance Française de Delhi
	Air India, Mumbai
	Baroda Rayon, Mumbai

Battery Dance Company, New York, NY	Trident Exports, New Delhi
Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC	US Department of State. Art in Embassies Program, US Consulate, Mumbai
DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Washington, DC	The John A. Wilson Building, City Hall Art Collection, Washington, DC
Foray International, New Delhi	Selected reviews
Great Eastern Shipping Co., Mumbai	2011 Jain, Madhu. "Anil Revri." <i>Take on Art</i> , July/August.
ITDC Hotels, India	2007 Jain, Madhu. "Living the American Dream." <i>Washingtonian Magazine</i> , December.
Library of Congress, Washington, DC	Rajagopalan, Meera. "Gateway Bombay." <i>INDIA</i> <i>New England</i> , 16 July.
Ministry for Broadcasting, New Delhi	Jain, Madhu. "In a Bombay State of Being." <i>DNA</i> , 21 June.
Ministry for Energy, New Delhi	2005 Amy, Michaël. "Anil Revri at the Corcoran." <i>Art in</i> <i>America</i> , January.
Oberoi Hotel, New Delhi	2004 McLaughlin, Caitlin. "Painter Of All Times." <i>Asian Art News</i> , November/December.
Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi	
Sanskriti, New Delhi	
Smart Technology, LLC, Naples, FL	
Tata Sons Ltd., Mumbai	
Tempra Museum, Malta	
Teximpor, Paris	

- O'Sullivan, Michael. 1996
 "Anil Revri's Doors of Perception at Corcoran." *The Washington Post Weekend*, 23 June.
 Chopra, Suneet. "Art Equity: Opt for Indian Images." *The Financial Express*, 22 December.
- Sirohi, Seema. "Om is where the Art is." *The Telegraph*, Calcutta, 20 June.
 Chopra, Suneet. "Weaving Realities." *The Hindustan Times*, 21 December.
- 2001
 Shaw-Eagle, Joanna. "Print Masters at Corcoran." *The Washington Times*, 8 December.
 Malik, Keshav. "Getting Away from Memory." *The Sunday Times of India*, 15 December.
- Prakash, Uma. "Keeping Faith." *Asian Art News*, March/April.
 1990
 Mago, P. N. "Pictorial Beauty: The Chinese Way." *Patriot*, 23 April.
- 2000
 Mahoney, J. W. "Anil Revri's Inner Order." *Washington Review*.
 1987
 Chaitanya, Krishna. "Classicism Marks Revri's Snowscapes." *The Hindustan Times*, 8 November.
- 1997/8
 "Portraits of Achievement in the Asian-American Community." *Avenue Asia*.
 Mohan, Jag. "Anil Revri's Essays and Poems Through Paints." *Mainstream*, 21 November.
- 1997
 Ravenal, Cornelia. "Coming in from the Cold." *Interiors & Lifestyles*, India Biannual.
 1981
 "Anil Revri au Beffroi." *L'ESPOIR*, 9 May.
- "The 500 Most Influential Asian Americans." *Avenue Asia*.
 1980
 Vasudev, Uma. "In Muted Colours, Muted Pain." *The Hindustan Times*.
- "The Malta Biennale in the US." *Sunday Times*, 2 November.

Caur, Arpana. "Call of the Unknown." <i>The Sunday Standard</i> , 13 July.	1996 <i>Amul India Show</i> . TV interview, New Delhi
1978 "Landschap: Kunstenaar uit India een week in 't Atelier." <i>Eindhoven Dagblad</i> , 12 August.	1991 Voice of America. Radio interview, New York
R. G. K. "Anil Revri." <i>The Illustrated Weekly of India</i> , 23 April.	1985 <i>Eye on Asia</i> . TV interview, New York
1977 Sanghvi, Vir. "A Search for Expression." <i>Economic Times</i> .	1980 BBC TV interview, Manchester, UK
"Anil Revri." <i>The Statesman</i> , Calcutta.	1978 Radio Brabant, The Netherlands
"A Touch of Anil." <i>The Junior Statesman</i> , Calcutta.	BBC Radio interview, Manchester, UK
	Door Darshan. TV interview, New Delhi
TV/radio	
2007 <i>The Frank Islam Show</i> . TV interview, Arlington, VA	1976 Door Darshan. TV interview, Mumbai
2007 CNN-IBN. <i>The Art of Investing: From International Strokes to Desi Shows</i> . TV interview, New Delhi	
2000 <i>Vision of Asia</i> . TV interview, Fairfax, VA	

Credits/acknowledgements

Reference materials

An-Nawawi's Forty Hadith. Ibrahim, Ezzeddin and Johnson-Davies, Denys, trans. Damascus: Holy Koran Publishing House, 1977.

The Bhagavad Gita. Sargeant, Winthrop, trans. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.

The Bhagavad Gita. Swami, Shri Purohit, trans. London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1978.

The Dhammapada. Babbitt, Irving, trans. New York: New Directions, 1965.

Dhammapada. Berkeley CA: Dharma Publishing, 1985.

The Ethics of the Talmud: Sayings of the Fathers. Herford, R. Travers, ed. New York: Schocken Books, 1925, 1962.

The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. New York: National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, 1946, 1971.

The Holy Teaching of Vimalakirti. Thurman, Robert A. F., trans. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976.

The Interlinear NIV Hebrew-English Old Testament. Kolenberger III, John R., trans. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987.

The Meaning of the Glorious Qu'ran. Pickthall, Muhammad Marmaduke, trans. Mecca and New York: Muslim World League, 1977.

Nova Vulgata, Bibliorum Sacrorum Editio. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998.

Sri Guru Granth Sahib, 4 vols. Talib, Gurbachan Singh, trans. Patiala: Publication Bureau of Punjabi University, Patiala, 1984.

World Scripture: A Comparative Anthology of Sacred Texts. A Project of the International Religious Foundation. St. Paul, MN: Paragon House Publishers, 1995.

Text for sculpture

and enjoys the blessing of
supreme devotion to Me.

Buddhism

During the short eons of
swords, they meditate on
love, introducing to nonvio-
lence hundreds of millions
of living beings. In the
midst of great battles they
remain impartial to both
sides; for bodhisattvas of
great strength delight in
the reconciliation of conflict.

Bhagavad Gita 18.53-54

Islam

If two parties of believers
fall to fighting, then make
peace between them. And
if one party of them does
wrong to the other, fight
the wrong-doer until it
returns to the ordinance of
God; then, if it returns, make
peace between them justly,
and act equitably. Lo! God
loves the equitable.

*Holy Teaching of
Vimalakirti* 8

Christianity

They shall beat their swords
into plowshares, and their
spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword
against nation, neither shall
they war any more.

Qur'an 49.9

Judaism

They shall beat their swords
into plowshares, and their
spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword
against nation, neither shall
they war any more.

Nova Vulgata Isaiah 2.4

Hinduism

Having abandoned selfish-
ness, power, arrogance,
anger, and desire, possess-
ing nothing of his own and
having attained peace, he is
fit to join the Eternal Spirit.
And when he becomes one
with the Eternal, and his
soul knows the bliss that
belongs to the Self, he feels
no desire and no regret, he
regards all beings equally

Old Testament Isaiah 2.4

Sikhism

Now is the gracious Lord's
ordinance promulgated, no
one shall cause another
pain or injury; all mankind
shall live in peace together,
under a shield of adminis-
trative benevolence.

Adi Granth Sri Raga, M.5

Special thanks

Gretchen Schermerhorn

American University
Museum at the Katzen
Arts Center

Arun K. Singh, Ambassador
(DCM) of India to the
United States

Pyramid Atlantic

Maina Chawla Singh

Leslie Buhler and
Robert Berendt

Nuzhat Sultan

Nancy Swallow

Barbara Eagle

Kelly and Sundaram Tagore

Berthe and John Ford

Mahinder and Sharad Tak

Faina Goldstein

Russell Whitehead

Giselle and Ben Huberman

Bruce Wick

Embassy of India

Lenders to the exhibition

Madhu and Krishen Jain

Meena and Liaquat Ahamed

Donald Kuspit

Kathleen Tilmans and
Jan Bove

Stanley Lee

Susan McCaffrey

Aradhana Kumar and
Karan Kapoor

Julia Occhiogrosso

Corcoran Gallery of Art

Virander Paul

Indu and Girish Jindia

Nirupama Rao,
Ambassador of India
to the United States

Sunita and Pradman Kaul

Joyce and Ken Robbins

Ana and Jack Rasmussen

Nuzhat Sultan

Benjamin Rosenblatt

Mahinder and Sharad Tak

Lida Saeedian

About the authors

Jack Rasmussen

A native of Seattle, Washington, Jack Rasmussen grew up in San Jose, California, and earned his BA in Art from Whitman College, Walla Walla, Washington. Rasmussen then moved to Washington, DC, in 1973 and completed an MFA in painting, an MA in arts management, and an MA and PhD in anthropology at American University. He worked in the Education Department of the National Gallery of Art before becoming the assistant director of the Washington Project for the Arts (WPA) when it opened in 1975. He left this position to open the Jack Rasmussen Gallery, one of the first commercial galleries to move to downtown Washington, and then launched Rockville Arts Place, served for ten years as the executive director of Maryland Art Place in Baltimore, and three years as executive director of the di Rosa Preserve: Art and Nature, a contemporary art museum, natural habitat, and sculpture garden in Napa, California. Rasmussen is the first director and curator of the American University

Museum at the Katzen Arts Center in Washington, DC, which opened in 2005. He has curated or organized exhibitions of contemporary art from Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Japan, Lebanon, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Norway, Russia, Serbia, Syria, and every Spanish and Portuguese speaking country in the world. Rasmussen currently serves as the president of the Board of the Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums.

Donald Kuspit

Donald Kuspit is a distinguished professor emeritus of art history and philosophy at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. In 1983, he received the Mather Award for Distinction in Art Criticism from the College Art Association, and in 1997 the National Association of the Schools of Art and Design gave him a Citation for Distinguished Service to the Visual Arts. He has received five honorary doctorates and grants from the Ford Foundation, Fulbright Commission, National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, Guggenheim Foundation, and Asian Cultural Council, among other organizations. In 2000, he delivered the Getty Lectures at the University of Southern California, and in 2005 he was the Robertson Fellow at the University of Glasgow. He has written numerous articles, exhibition reviews, and catalogue essays. His most recent books are *The End of Art* (Cambridge University Press) and *A Critical History of 20th Century Art* (ebook, artnet).

