

The UBS Art Collection Drawings

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Born 1938 in Riga,
lives and works in New York.

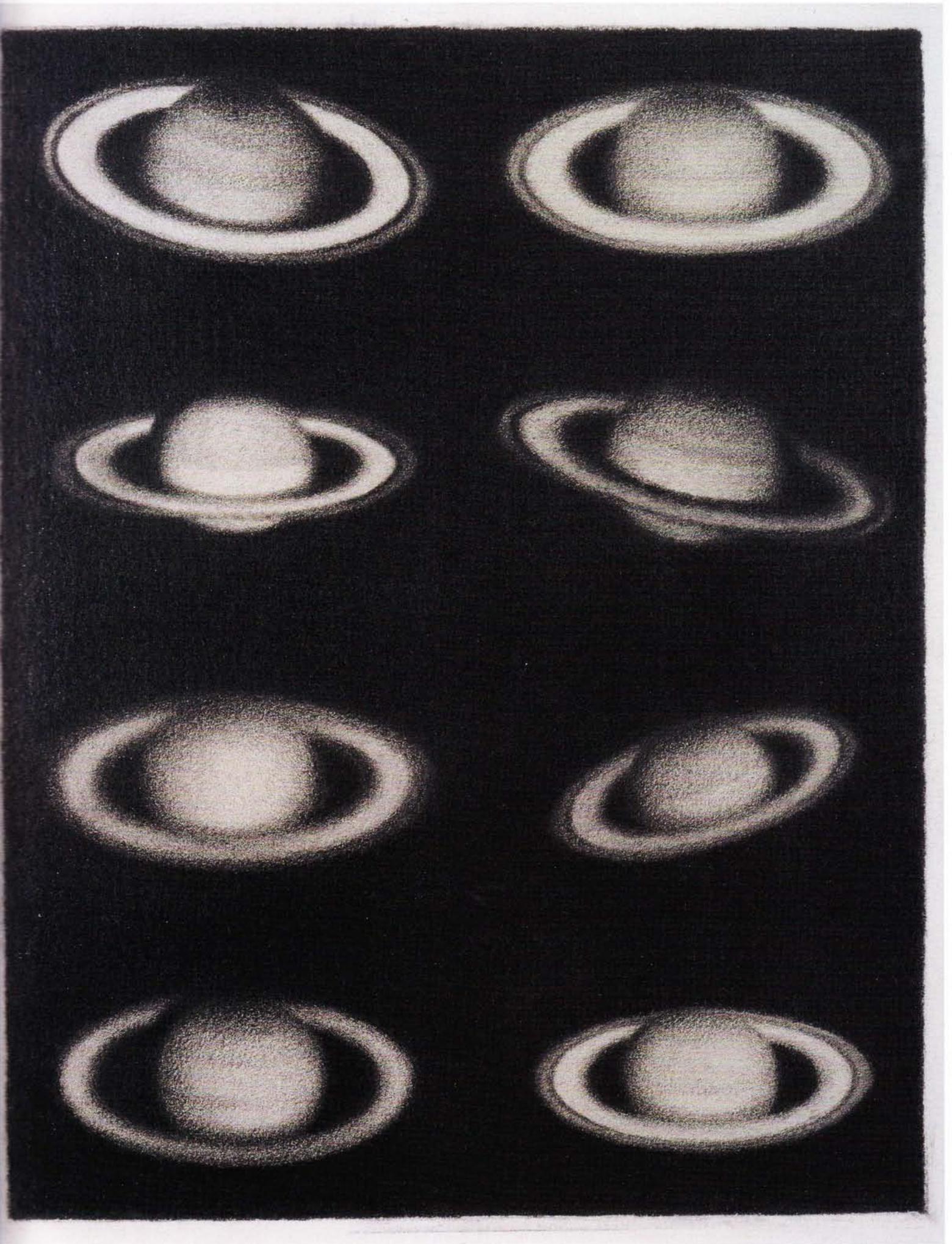
Vija Celmins is a Latvian-born American sculptor, painter and draughtswoman who began her career in the early 1960's painting appliances in her studio such as lamps and heaters on small canvases with a reduced palette but great intensity. She then moved on to paint and draw photographs of warplanes or disasters.

From 1967 onwards drawings occupied a very large and significant place in her work as the Centre Pompidou in Paris emphasized with its 2006 touring exhibition *Vija Celmins. Dessins/Drawings*. All four drawings in The UBS Art Collection were included in this prestigious survey, evidence of their importance within her oeuvre.

For a prolonged period Celmins concentrated on the depiction of great expanses such as oceans, deserts, night skies, clouds and later cobwebs. The first photographs available of the moon in the media at the end of the 1960's inspired her to choose the galaxy as one of her subjects, along with her observations of the sky from the pier at Venice Beach in Los Angeles and trips to Death Valley in New Mexico.

These highly detailed graphite drawings are about perception, about the experience of looking. Celmins transfers and compresses the intensity of staring at the night sky onto paper. The viewer is invited to refer in their mind from the microcosm of the drawing back to the macrocosm of the universe. Each version of the sequence of drawings on the Coma Berenices constellation is unique, a precise transcription of a point of view in relation to space and time. This realism is distilled into two dimensions, on a plane surface where it could practically be confused with an abstraction – rather like Monet's late paintings of *Nymphs*. The dense layers of crayon build up a thick grey and black surface, the white ground becomes the light source and stands in for the stars.

Drawing Saturn encapsulates the variations on a theme in one drawing recalling scientific demonstrations and illustrations in astronomy books. It wasn't until the nineties that Celmins made paintings of these subjects like *Night Sky #5*, 1992, also in The UBS Art Collection. She has talked about her fascination for the work of Cézanne who similarly revisited the Montagne Sainte Victoire in Provence incessantly. CH



Galaxy #1 (Coma Berenices), 1973
Graphite and acrylic on paper
81.1 x 38.7 cm (12 1/4 x 15 1/4 inches)



Galaxy #2 (Coma Berenices), 1975
Graphite and acrylic on paper
31.1 x 38.7 cm (12 1/4 x 15 1/4 inches)



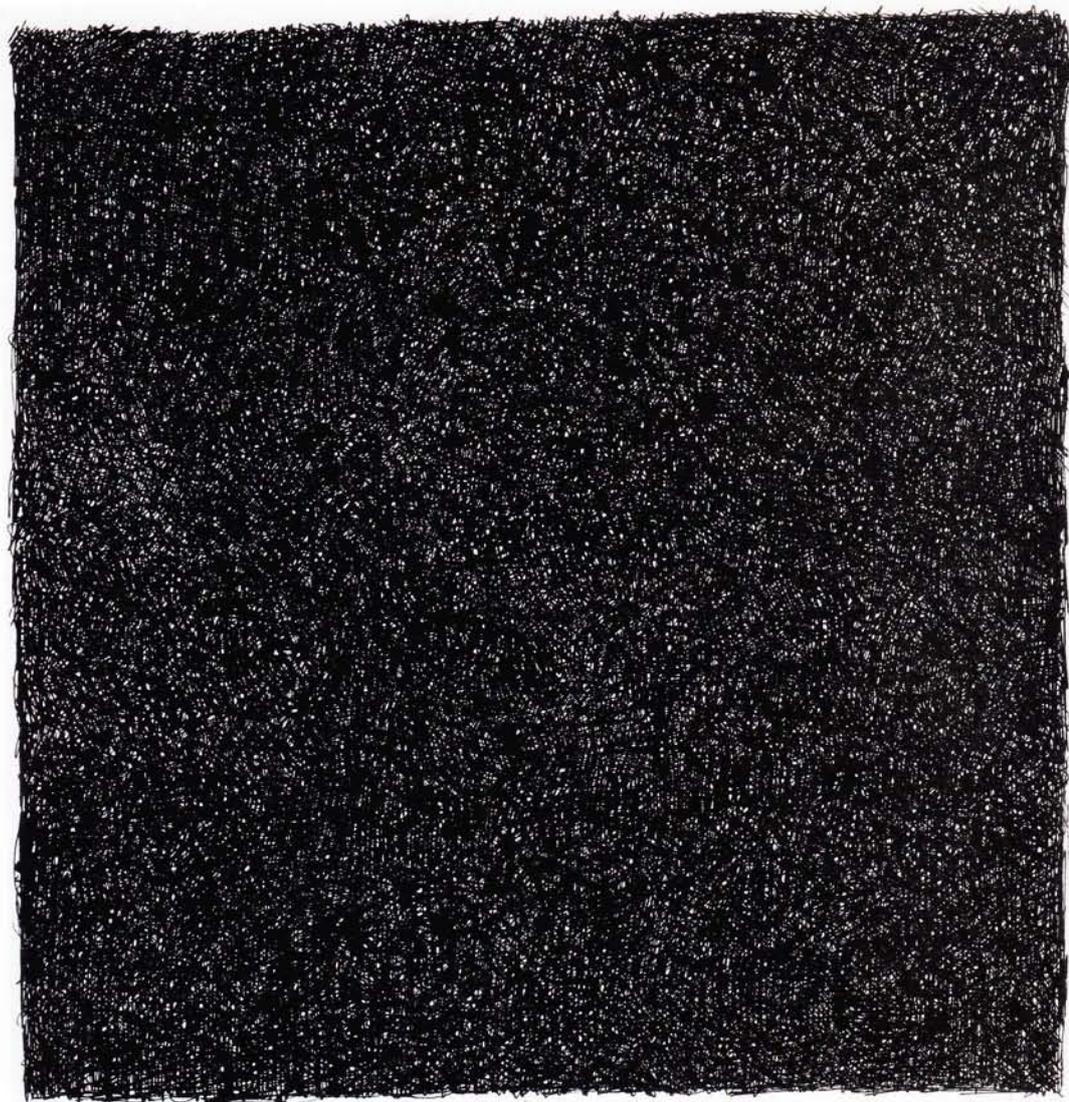
Born 1933 in Kansas,
lives and works in San Francisco.

Conner has intently nurtured a multifaceted and unpredictable body of work from assemblages to film, drawing, collage, photography and prints. After studying art, he moved to San Francisco in 1957 where he became part of the Beat community. First renowned for his nylon-stocking assemblages using found objects, he then produced some of the most important independent films of the late 1950's such as *A Movie* (1958), an experimental montage of found footage, and *Cosmic Ray* (1961), about Ray Charles. Having returned from a long sojourn in Mexico, he turned to photography and drawing in the sixties. The *Mandala* drawings and the *Maze* drawings are visually dense labyrinthine concentrations of lines.

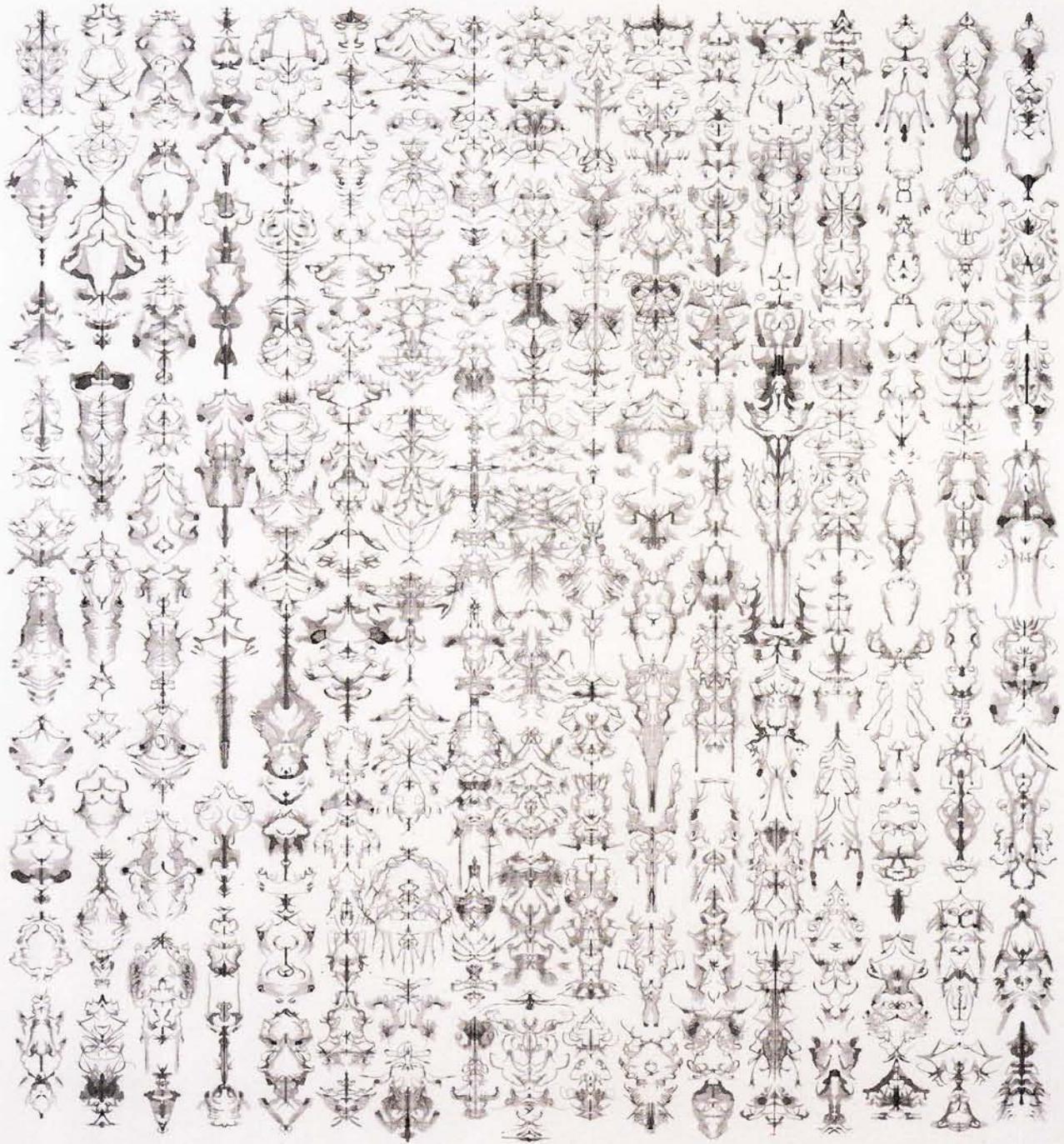
Conner's fascination for the dialogue between light and dark is evident in his choice of art forms and his focus on the story of Diogenes, the Greek philosopher who explored the world with a lantern to find an honest man. In the 1970's he produced *Angel*, a series of photograms using his body, and drawings in which the paper is completely covered in pen and ink markings. These are often known as the *Star* drawings, a title given to several versions along with *Night Clouds*; others remained associated with pure abstractions including *Untitled Drawing May 1972* in The UBS Art Collection. The intricate layering of lines recalls the technique of crosshatching used in engravings, a tradition with which Conner was simultaneously engaged in *The Dennis Hopper One Man Show* (1971-73), a series of collages made in the style of the Surrealist artist Max Ernst. The visual effect of the markings in *Untitled Drawing May 1972* is one of optical illusion, of a pulsating or undulating surface as light pushes through from the white ground.

The "Inkblot" drawing series was started in the early 1990's and continues to this day. The all over patterning is arrived at through another labor-intensive process of folding the paper in vertical bands and blotting the ink. Contrary to the method of psychological evaluation known as the Rorschach inkblot tests, to which these clearly make reference, Conner controls his mark making with extreme precision in a manner more akin to Asian calligraphy. The delicate spidery forms in *Sampler* are aligned in totemic sequences allowing for endless private associations. CH

Untitled Drawing, May 1972, 1972
Pen and ink on paper
27.9 x 27.3 cm (11 x 10 3/4 inches)



Sampler, 1991
Pen and ink on Strathmore paper
55.9 x 55.6 cm (22 x 21 7/8 inches)



Born 1967 in Chicago,
lives and works in New York.

Keith Edmier began training as an artist at the California Institute of the Arts, which he left in order to work in special effects for the cinema industry. Based in New York from the early eighties, he rose to international fame as a sculptor of hyper real figures and plants in the nineties. His knowledge of materials used for horror film simulations was applied to his artistic practice. Pink dental plastic, silicone rubber, polyester resins, and polyurethane are cast in what is otherwise a traditional sculptor's technique. Meticulously real on the surface, the acid colours of the plastics place the works within the legacy of Pop Art.

Obsessed with sublime natural phenomena and its symbolism, Edmier has realized sculptures of *A Dozen Roses*, *Orchids*, *Snowdrops* (all 1998) as well as a three meter high *Sunflower* (1996). His most famous sculptures are the equally tall giant water lilies (*Victoria Regia*, also dated 1998) in various stages of bloom. More recently he made *Cycas Oroge-ny* (2004), a palm-like tree, out of molten lava. The disturbing presence of these fantastical plants harks back to horror movies or oversized animated plants in cartoons, straight out of childhood nightmares.

Fireweed, also known as Rosebay Willowherb or *Epilobium Angustifolium*, lasts throughout the year and survives in harsh conditions such as recently burnt terrain. In some situations, it is considered to be a troublesome weed. Edmier's *Fireweed* drawing suggests a process of careful observation. In connection with the age-old tradition of botanical drawings collected in albums that have filled the archives of Natural History museums, *Fireweed* is a naturalistic study of a specimen of this plant on a neutral background. The willow-like leaves and pink flowers are typically hand coloured and drawn with precision. On the other hand, the surprisingly large scale of this drawing must have a physical impact on the viewer not dissimilar to that of Edmier's sculptures. The sprawling lines across the paper probably then hint at the menacing invasive characteristics of this plant. A painted vinyl sculpture in two parts called *Fireweed* was produced in 2002–03. CH



Born 1937 in Bradford,
lives and works in Bridlington,
London and Los Angeles.

David Hockney has spent a considerable part of this life in the United States – as referenced in these two drawings – which perfectly epitomize two key stages in his career: the early 1960's when he develops his own style between figurative Abstract Expressionism and Pop Art and the naturalism of the early to mid 1970's.

In the summer of 1961, after his second year at the Royal College of Art in London, Hockney made his first-ever trip to the States. On returning, he humorously relates his New York adventures in the famous series of etchings *A Rake's Progress* (1961–63). *To Queens, New York* is a very unique drawing from this defining moment. To avoid pure figuration as well as pure abstraction, he borrowed characteristics from cubist collages: the sketchily drawn, child-like figures are overlaid with words and numbers. According to the coding of the poet Walt Whitman whose work Hockney admired, the number 9 stands for the letter I, that is to say David Hockney himself.

His work was to become intricately linked with his life, surroundings and friends. This self-portrait shows him wearing the round glasses that were to become part of his pop persona and devilish horns as he confidently refers to his homosexuality. Just as the Love Paintings integrated London toilet graffiti, the word QUEEN had already appeared in seminal paintings such as *Doll Boy* (1960–61). Here it is also a destination arrived at via the subway (B.M.T. for Brooklyn-Manhattan Transit) and its signposting.

By incessantly using photography, drawing and watercolour to record his travels and adapting technology, styles and materials, Hockney has brilliantly captured the spirit of each decade he chronicles. Toying unsatisfactorily with naturalism in his paintings at the beginning of the 1970's led him to stop working in this medium until 1978. Nevertheless, he pursued this investigation in his exquisite coloured pencil drawings throughout this period.

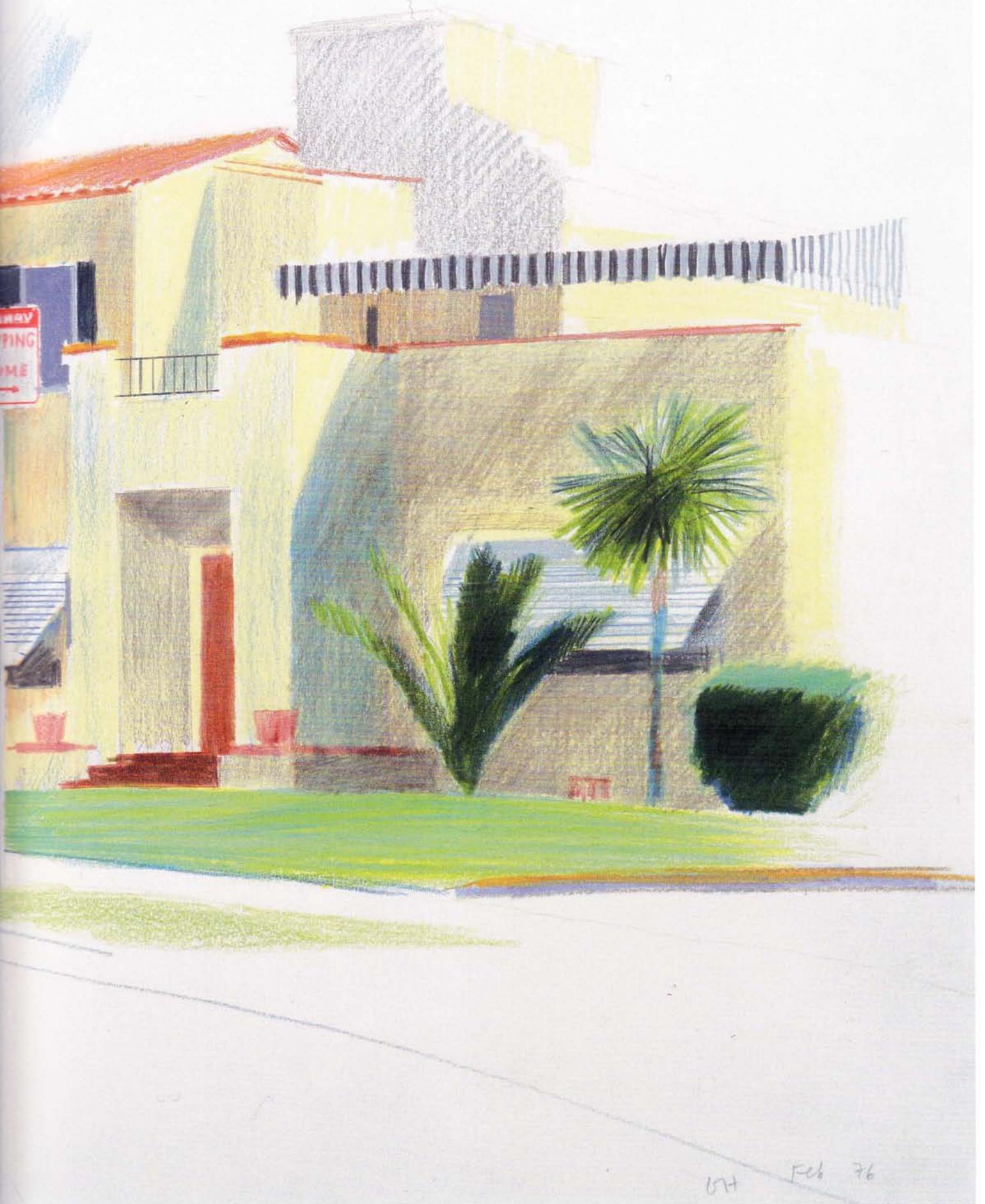
Back in Los Angeles in 1976, Hockney drew *House behind Chateau Marmont*, the grand hotel off Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, where Hockney sketched his friends and famously decorated the swimming pool. The brightly coloured three-dimensional illusion in this drawing differs entirely from the renderings of local architecture and palm trees that he made when he arrived in California in 1964, in which space was almost completely flattened. CH



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LH Feb 76

Born 1923 in New York,
died 1997 in New York.

Roy Lichtenstein's extensive use of drawing documents his creative process from its early stages in scrapbooks and sketchbooks to monumental finished paintings. The build up or rigorous simplification of an image to prepare for a possible serialization is revealed in these three drawings that span his career.

Crying Girl was made just a year after Leo Castelli's gallery presented Lichtenstein's first one-man show which included his first Pop artworks. Bringing the graphic devices of comic strips into high art became his trademark and the bold black outlines on plain white ground give maximum impact to this expressive close-up. Various portrayals of emotionally strained American beauties bear similar cartoon-like tear drops in their eyes (*Drowning Girl* or *Hopeless* both dating from 1963). A slightly different version of *Crying Girl* was made into an enamel edition.

From the late seventies onwards, Lichtenstein draws from old masters such as Cézanne, Matisse, Kirchner and Picasso and produces related series of still lifes, landscapes and seascapes. In *Final Study for Landscape with Figures and Sun* an outdoor scene is divided into blocks of colour as practiced by the German Expressionists or the Cubists. The compartmentalized colours and stripes are distinctive of Lichtenstein's own vocabulary as if he were using a colouring book technique to convert known art historical motifs into his own language.

In 1991 he began a series of interiors which are the stage for the merging of multiple references. Taking interior design advertising as sources, he continues to quote from art history and from his own work. *Interior with Hydraulic Table* is rendered in confident lines with absolute simplicity. The corner sofa is a recurring piece of furniture in this group of work here accompanied by two BRNO chairs, designed by Mies Van Der Rohe, and a sophisticated table. Modern art hangs fashionably on the walls. Lichtenstein was particularly interested in investigating the illusionism of pictures within pictures and paintings as windows onto the world, as is obvious in the painting *Post Visual*, 1993, also in The UBS Art Collection. CH

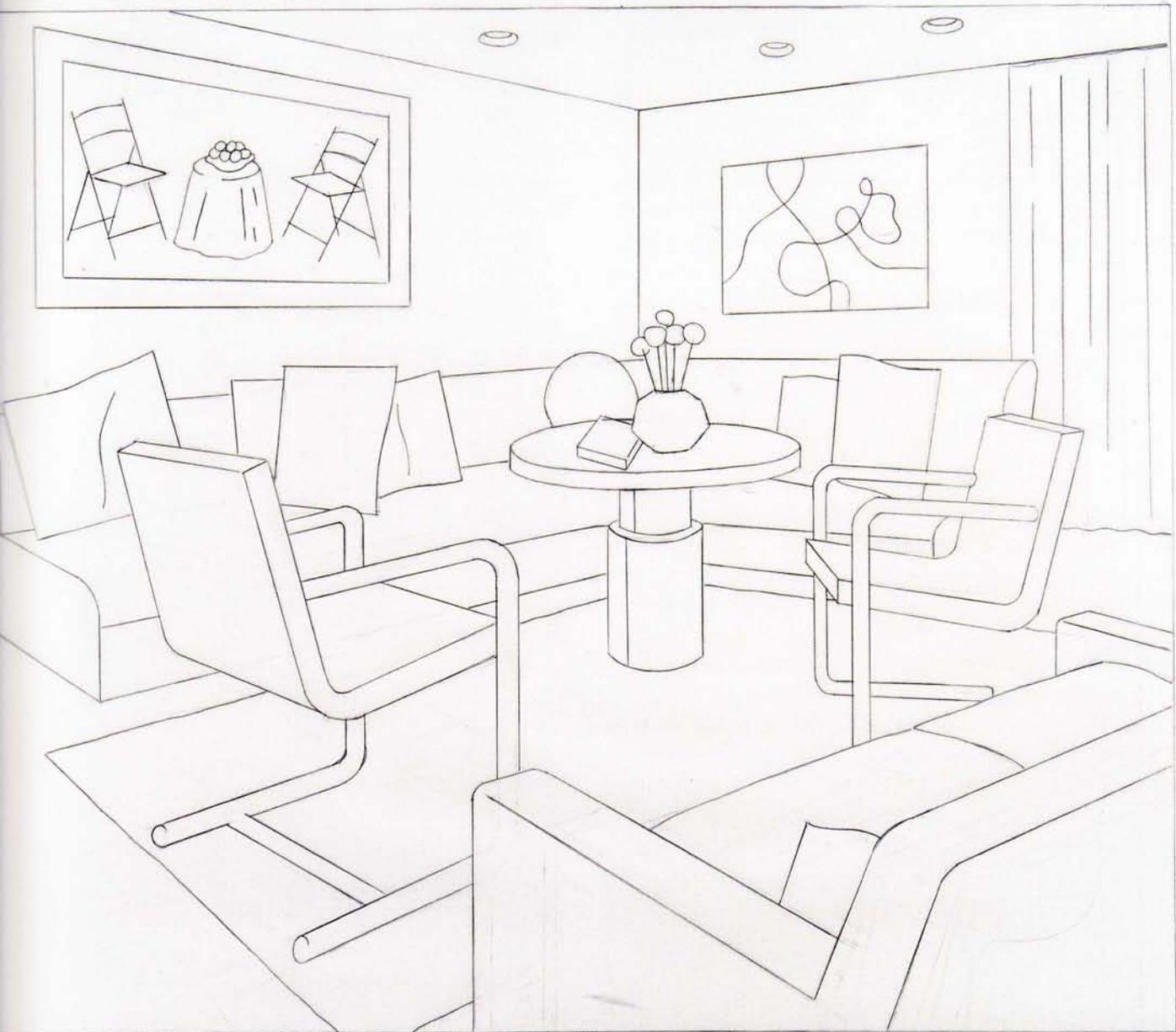


To share - of Lichtenstein 1963

Final Study for Landscape with Figure and Sun, 1980
Graphite and coloured pencil on paper
40.6 x 50.8 cm (16 x 20 inches)



Interior with Hydraulic Table, 1991
Graphite on vellum
99.1 x 120.7 cm (39 x 47 1/2 inches)



Born 1962 in Massachusetts,
lives and works in New York.

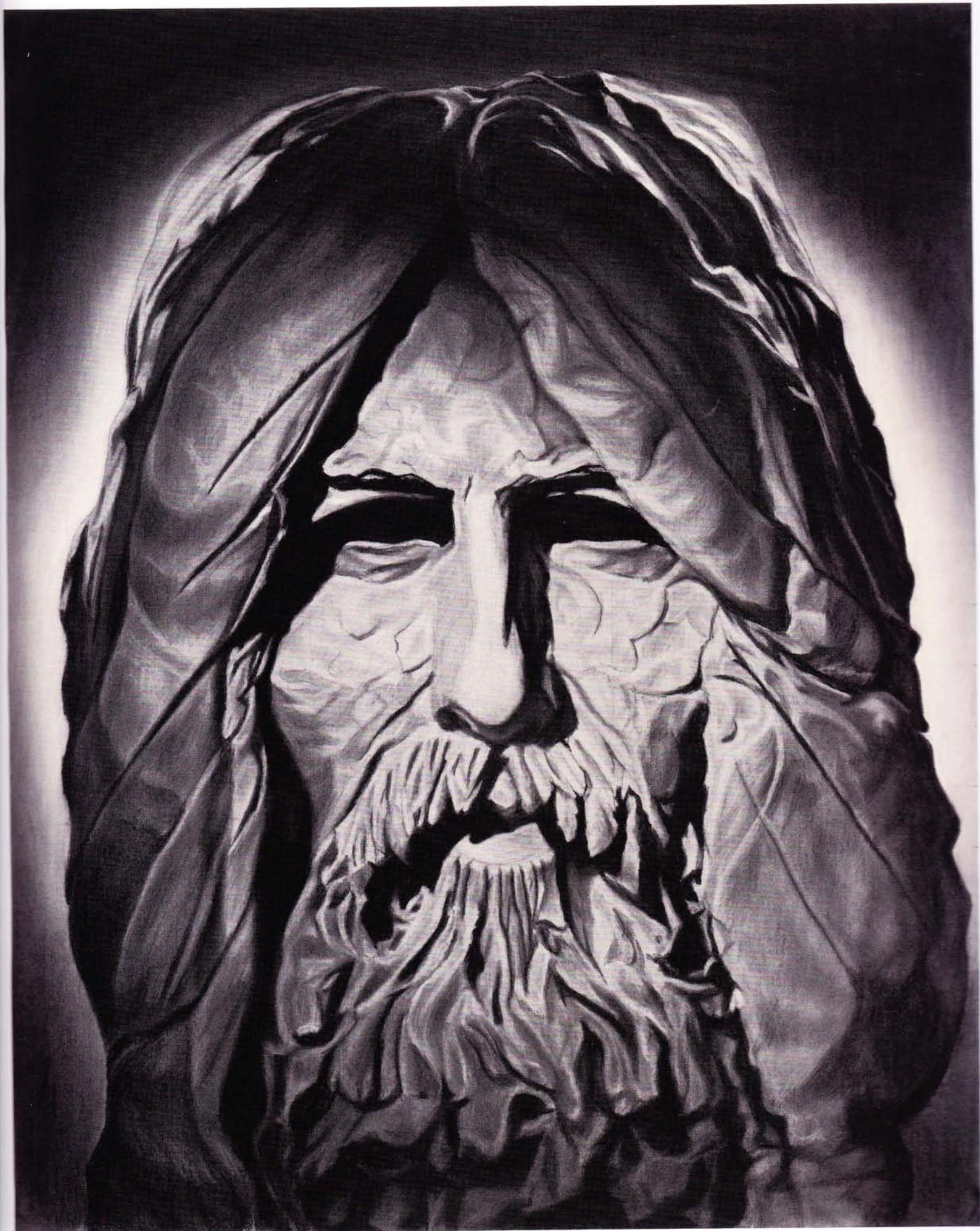
Richard Phillips studied painting in the mid eighties. Having worked in very different styles, he appeared at the Whitney Biennial in New York in 1997 with works that are characteristic of his current fame as a painter of the glossy image of America. Phillips merges the influences of Pop Art and Photorealism of the sixties and seventies with the resurgence of expressive painting of the eighties to great personal effect, keeping alive the legacy of American figurative painters such as Alex Katz, Mel Ramos and James Rosenquist.

The painting in The UBS Art Collection, *Riot (Matchabellian)*, 1998, is an example of his close-up portraits of seductive women inspired by cosmetics advertising campaigns from the sixties and seventies. His appropriation from popular culture extends to the realms of art, politics (George Bush in *The President of the United States of America*, 2001) and show business (Rob Lowe in *Portrait of God (After Richard Bernstein)*, 1998).

The Christ-like depiction of the English musician in *My Sweet Lord (George Harrison)* was allegedly inspired by a photograph in an old *Playboy* magazine. George Harrison (1943–2001), nicknamed “The Darkhorse”, was best known as the lead guitarist of The Beatles who went on to build a solo career. His first hit single was *My Sweet Lord* in 1970. His religious and spiritual life, particularly his attraction to Hinduism, was well known. Phillips manages to fuse innumerable references into his drawing by blending iconic Christian imagery with contemporary pop idolism and art history. This could be considered a very apt critique of society and of the power of communication strategies.

His technical virtuosity at handling charcoal and chalk to create the illusion of a stone carving is remarkable. The drawing’s resemblance to a low relief sculpture in a church adds a pertinent association with British traditions, placing George Harrison, the long-haired and bearded hippy of the seventies into the canons of national heritage.

For Phillips, drawing might be considered the medium for greater imaginative exploration compared to his hyper-real canvases. With his aptitude for changing styles, Richard Phillips is sometimes known as the David Bowie of painting. CH



Born 1955 in Chicago,
lives and works in New York.

Christopher Wool came to be known particularly for his paintings from the mid eighties at a time when the medium was experiencing a revival. Contrary to the mainstream trends of the time, Wool focused on the process of painting rather than the subject. Two conceptual paintings in The UBS Art Collection exemplify the statement or word paintings he is most renowned for, the stenciled letters respectively read out as AWOL and FLOAT LIKE BUTTERFLY STING LIKE BEE.

Wool's drawings are either works in their own right or articulations for a painting and exploit the same black and white abstract style. He uses alkyd (a synthetic resin paint that dries to a soft, even shine), the same medium as in his paintings, on paper, which is generally smooth, thin, crackly and absorbing.

Untitled, 1988, is an endless pattern of swirling lines covering the entire surface. By then he was applying stamps and rollers employed for wallpapers and home decorating specially choosing the more simple shapes and emulating the repetitiveness of this type of domestic mark-marking. This series of interlocking "S" shapes create a tightly knit weave potentially recalling the ornamental shapes of a wrought-iron gate. As such, this dense imagery somehow exudes a sense of enclosure and claustrophobia. Not dissimilar from the repeated images in Andy Warhol's silkscreen prints (an artist Wool admires), the imperfections of this grid point to those of mechanical reproduction as much as those of gestural painting (such as Jackson Pollock's all-over paintings) or drawing.

Untitled, 1990, was part of a series of images of birds and men shown in an exhibition at Luhring Augustine Gallery in New York that year (*Christopher Wool: Works on Paper*). The single motif of the eagle is also multiplied to form a vertical frieze-like composition. This large drawing could be conceived as a flag. It is likely that the choice of this specific eagle design is a mixture of different cultural references signifying America's emblem of nationhood as well as Native American symbolism. The latter fits best with the accompanying design of a running man but it seems clear that Wool is seeking to turn any association on itself, to drain the drawing of any clear meaning and interrogate the power of this image and picture-making in general. CH

Untitled, 1990
Alkyd on rice-paper
188 x 95.3 cm (74 x 37 1/2 inches)



Untitled, 1988
Alkyd on paper
152.4 x 90.8 cm (60 x 35 3/4 inches)

