

GALLERY
WENDI NORRIS

ART BASEL MIAMI BEACH | ALCHEMY OF THE SOUL
María Magdalena Campos-Pons & Remedios Varo
Booth G7 | December 6-8, 2024



MARIA MAGDALENA CAMPOS-PONS & REMEDIOS VARO | ALCHEMY OF THE SOUL
PRESS RELEASE

Alchemy of the Soul exhibits the two artists alongside each other for the first time—María Magdalena Campos-Pons and Remedios Varo, whom Campos-Pons considers her artistic reincarnation—and explores their shared interest in the transformative power of science and spirituality.

Campos-Pons' large-scale blown glass sculpture, *Alchemy of the Soul*, anchors the booth, drawing on forms found in the abandoned sugar mills and rum factories of Campos-Pons' native Cuba. Originally commissioned by the Peabody Essex Museum, this newly-produced variation by the same glass blowers in Northern California, takes inspiration from the scientific vessel depicted in Varo's iconic masterpiece *La creación de las aves* (in the collection of the Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City). Campos-Pons' captivating sculpture traces the painful history of the transatlantic slave trade while also offering a space for healing through the regenerative powers of alchemy. Also on view are rare and significant works by Varo, including the four masterful gouaches from her installation piece *Homo Rodans* (1959), which illuminate the booth with magical and alchemical motifs.

Both deeply spiritual, Campos-Pons and Varo examine the healing potential of transformation within their bodies of work. Botanical motifs feature prominently in their narratives, with Campos-Pons taking from her family lineage of healers and Varo crafting lush, enchanted worlds adopted from her earliest days documenting flora and fauna for scientific publications. The exploration of complex knowledge systems, transcending boundaries between art, science, and the supernatural, establishes these migratory artists as pioneers in their respective times.

Gallery Wendi Norris has represented Campos Pons since 2016, placing her work in over a dozen museum collections and coordinating her first traveling museum survey exhibition, *Behold*. The gallery has worked with Varo's art since 2004 and has been the only gallery to present solo exhibitions—*Indelible Fables* (2012), *Remedios Varo: Encuentros* (2023), and *A Visionary Line: Remedios Varo Drawings* (2024)—since 1963, the year Varo passed away.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

María Magdalena Campos-Pons (b. 1959, Matanzas, Cuba) is a descendant of Hispanic and Chinese immigrants to Cuba and of Nigerians brought to the island and enslaved in the 19th century. Informed by the traditions, rituals, and practices of her ancestors and Santería tradition, her work is deeply autobiographical. From the beginning of her practice, Campos-Pons has combined traditional artmaking mediums with installation and time-based mediums including video, film, and performance.

Campos-Pons has received a swell of critical, market and curatorial acclaim in the past decade, demonstrated in part by recent acquisitions by the Museum of Modern Art (New York); Smithsonian American Art Museum (Washington, DC); Speed Art Museum (Louisville); Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University; J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles); Museum of Fine Arts (Boston); Institute of Contemporary Art (Boston); Museum of Fine Arts (Houston); Tate Modern (London); among others. In 2023 Campos-Pons was awarded the MacArthur Fellowship, also known as the MacArthur “genius” grant. In the Fall of 2023, the Brooklyn Museum presented the critically-acclaimed *María Magdalena Campos-Pons: Behold*, a sweeping survey exhibition that traveled to the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, the Frist Art Museum, and will open in February 2025 at J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles.

Campos-Pons graduated in 1980 from the National School of Art in Havana, Cuba. She went on to study painting at Havana’s Universidad de las Artes (ISA). In 1988, she earned an MFA in Media Arts from Boston’s Massachusetts College of Art and Design. In the late 1980s, she taught at the Universidad de las Artes (ISA) in Havana. There she gained an international reputation as an exponent of the New Cuban Art movement, which arose in opposition to Communist repression on the island. In 1991, she immigrated to Canada and onto Boston in 1993, where she taught at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University and received numerous prizes and honors for both her teaching and her artistic practice. In 2017, she became the Cornelius Vanderbilt Endowed Chair of Fine Arts at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, where she now resides.

Remedios Varo was born in 1908 in Anglès, Spain, and passed away at age 54 in Mexico City, Mexico in 1963. Raised by a Catholic mother and an agnostic engineer father, these two forces—the spiritual and scientific—greatly influenced Varo’s artistic career. A Spanish artist who played an integral role in the Mexico City-based Surrealist movement, Varo is known for her enigmatic paintings which unite scientific technical precision with esoteric and feminist subject matter.

After the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936, she fled to Paris where she became deeply involved with the Surrealists, exhibiting in *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism* at The Museum of Modern Art, New York (1936), as well as multiple early Surrealist exhibitions around the globe. With the outbreak of the Second World War, Varo left for Mexico City, connecting with other exiled artists such as Alice Rahon, Wolfgang Paalen, and Leonora Carrington, who became her closest friend and colleague.

In 1956, Varo had her first major solo exhibition in Mexico City, catapulting her to the forefront of the art scene. She continued to exhibit widely thereafter before her premature death in 1963. In 2023, Varo was the subject of the solo exhibition *Remedios Varo: Science Fictions* at the Art Institute of Chicago. Her work has been acquired by museums worldwide, including The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Art Institute of Chicago; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Detroit Institute of Arts; and National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh.

Varo has had solo shows at the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C. (2000); Mexican Fine Arts Museum, Chicago, (2000); Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City, (1971, 1983, 1994, 2001, 2016, 2018); and Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (Malba), Argentina (2020). Most recently her work was included in *Surrealism Beyond Borders*, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2021) and Tate Modern, London (2022); *Surrealism and Magic: Enchanted Modernity*, Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, Italy (2022) and Museum Barberini, Potsdam, Germany (2022); the 59th Venice Biennale, *The Milk of Dreams* (2022); and the current *Surréalisme*, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France (2024).

ABOUT GALLERY WENDI NORRIS

Gallery Wendi Norris is a leading international art gallery with headquarters in San Francisco, California. The gallery holds decades-long relationships with 20th-century luminaries such as Leonora Carrington, Dorothea Tanning, Wolfgang Paalen, Remedios Varo, and Alice Rahon, artists whose nomadic and visionary practices interrogated the aesthetic, scientific, and philosophical movements of their times. The gallery also represents María Magdalena Campos-Pons, Enrique Martínez Celaya, Chitra Ganesh, Julio César Morales, Ranu Mukherjee, Eva Schlegel, Peter Young, and other contemporaries, artists whose work similarly flows across disciplines, continents, and generations as they speculate on the present moment.

Opened in 2002, Gallery Wendi Norris remains committed to its founding principles of rigorous programming, development of artists' legacies, public accessibility, and cultural significance. To those ends, the gallery hosts visiting academics, sponsors artist talks, and publishes highly-researched books with original contributions from international scholars. The gallery actively supports artists in engaging new audiences through influential commercial, biennial, and institutional collaborations. Pioneering an offsite exhibition model in 2017, the gallery produces public-facing artworks and shows wherever they might reach the widest viewership and provide the deepest impact. Working in concert with major museums, private collectors, and innovative curators, Gallery Wendi Norris builds enduring, well-represented collections for its respected array of international clients.

MARÍA MAGDALENA
CAMPOS-PONS



Installation View, Alchemy of the Soul: Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA, 2016

Alchemy of the Soul, 2015

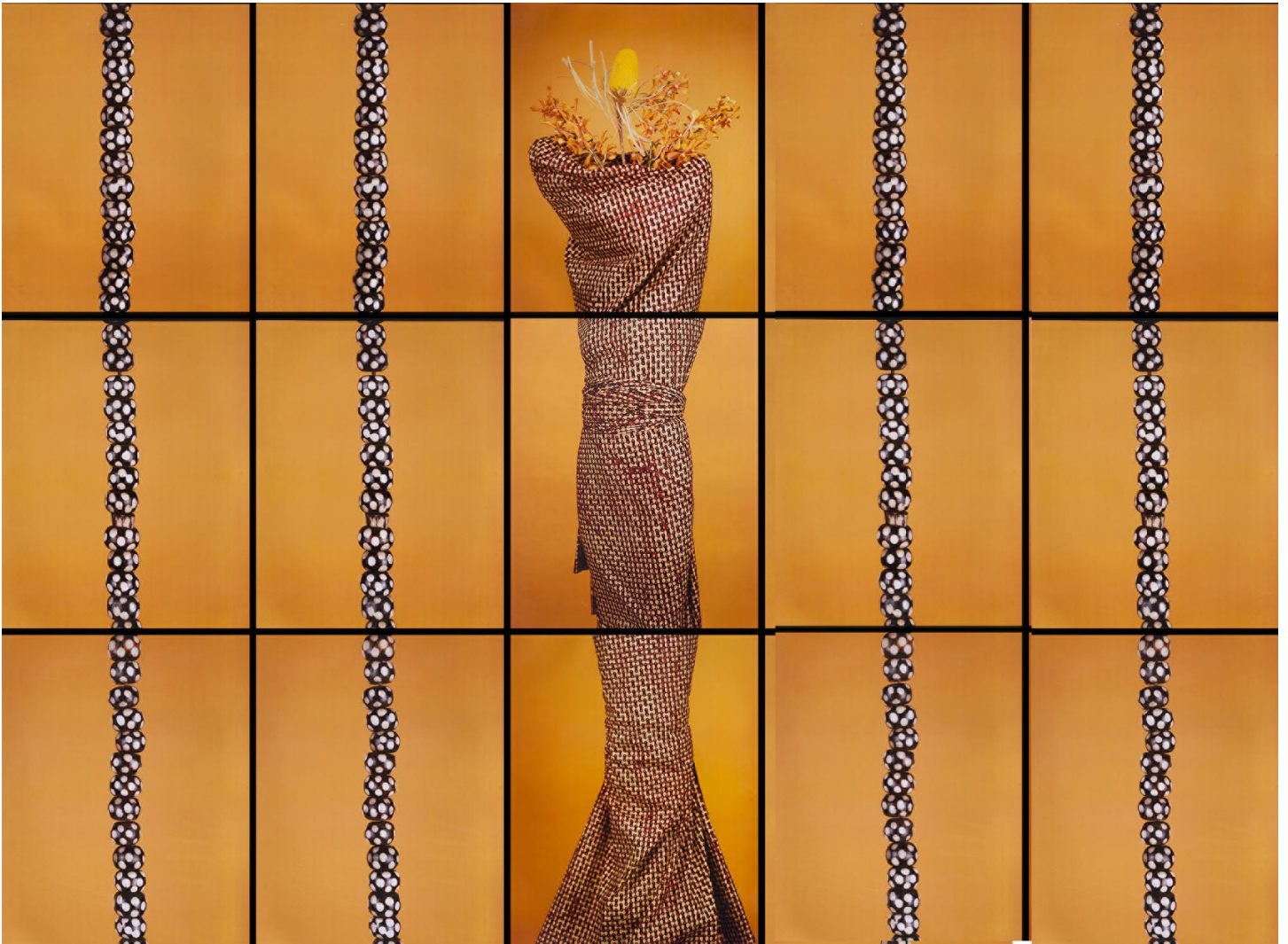
Glass and steel

Variation 2 of 3

78 x 48 x 92 2/5 inches

(198.1 x 121.9 x 234.7 cm)

MMCP0074.2



Classic Creole, 2003

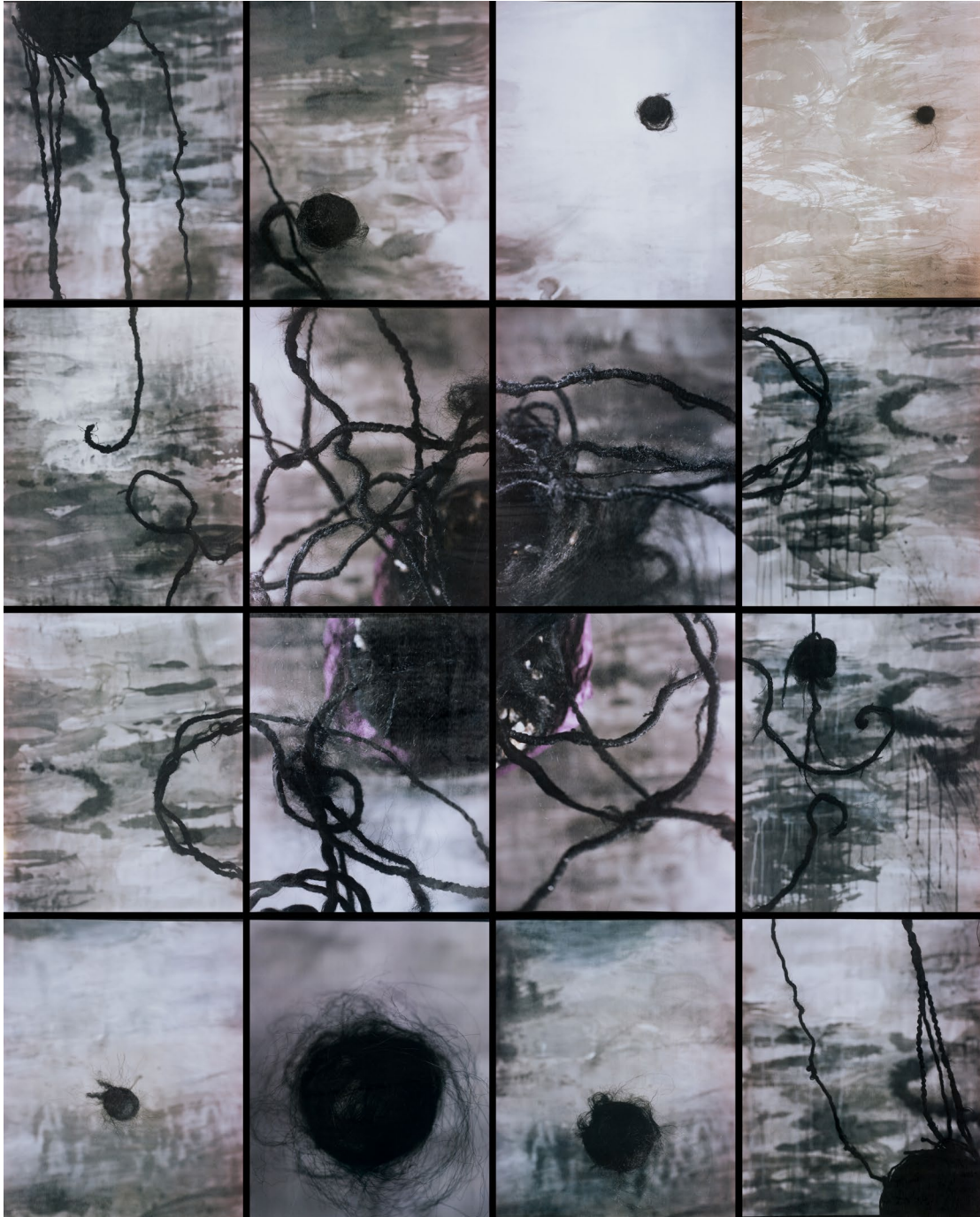
Composition of 15, Polaroid Polacolor

Pro 24 x 20 photograph

72 x 100 inches (182.9 x 254 cm)

MMCP0062





Constellation, 2004

Composition of 16, Polaroid Polacolor

Pro 24 x 20 photograph

96 x 80 inches (243.8 x 203.2 cm)

MMCP0010





When I Am Not Here/Estoy Allá,

Tríptico I, 1996/2013

Polaroid Polacolor Pro 24 x 20 photograph

24 x 60 inches (61 x 152.4 cm)

MMCP0077





**The Truth Doesn't Kill You (La
Verdad No Mata), 1991**

Marble base, wood, nails, hatchet,
glass, and wire

90 x 76 x 5 inches

(203.2 x 193 x 12.7 cm)

MMCP0007



REMEDIOS **VARO**



**Homo Rodans, Cabeza de Homo
Rodans, Pterodáctilo (Animal
prehistórico), Animal fantástico, 1959**

Set of 4

Ink, gouache, and acrylic on paper

11 3/8 x 8 3/4 inches (29 x 22.2 cm)

RV0059

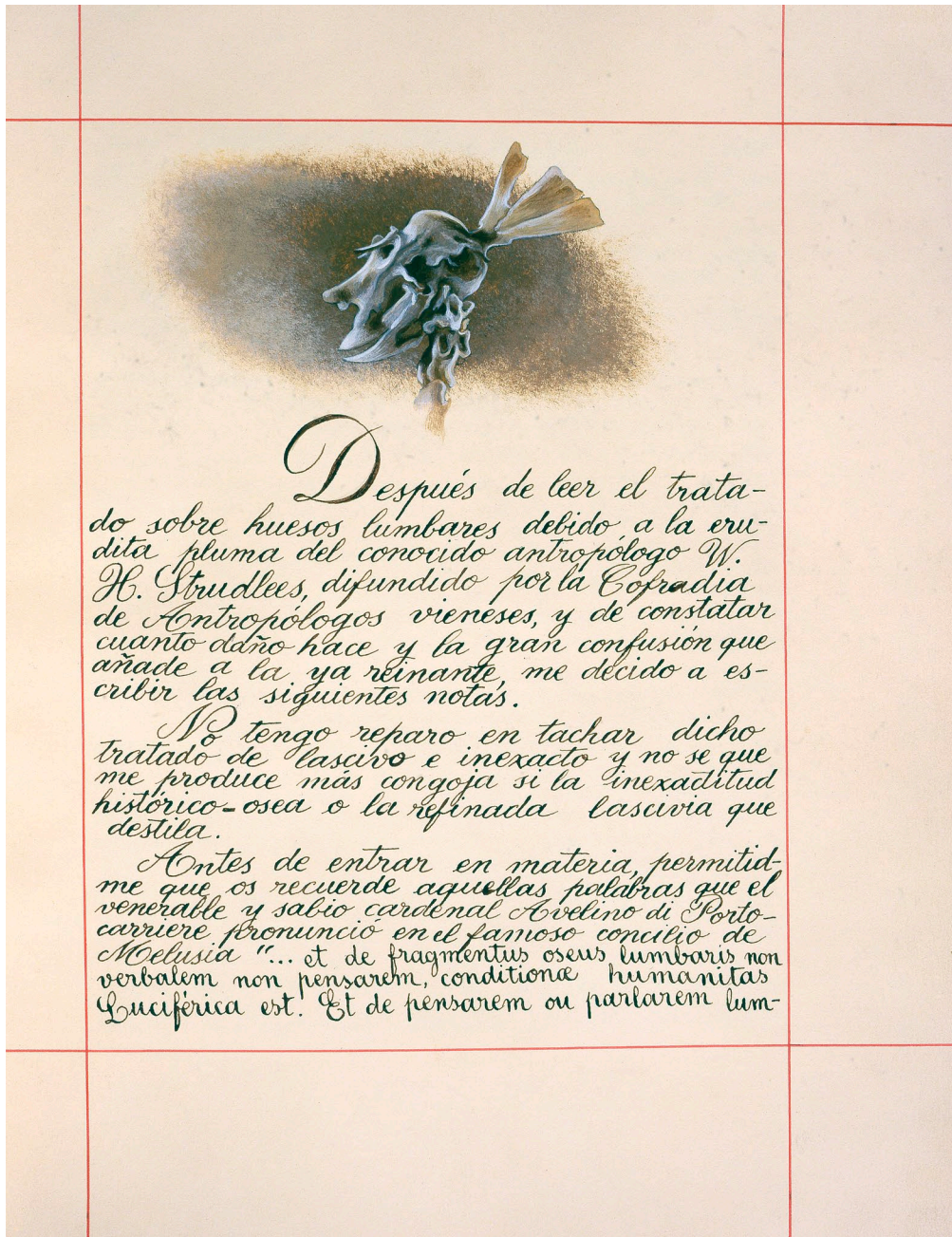


Homo Rodans, 1959

Ink, gouache, and acrylic on paper
11 3/8 x 8 3/4 inches (28.9 x 22.2 cm)
RV0059a



R. VARO



Cabeza de Homo Rodans, 1959

Ink, gouache, and acrylic on paper

11 3/8 x 8 3/4 inches (28.9 x 22.2 cm)

RV0059b





Pterodáctilo (Animal prehistórico), 1959

Ink, gouache, and acrylic on paper
11 3/8 x 8 3/4 inches (28.9 x 22.2 cm)

RV0059c



R.VARO

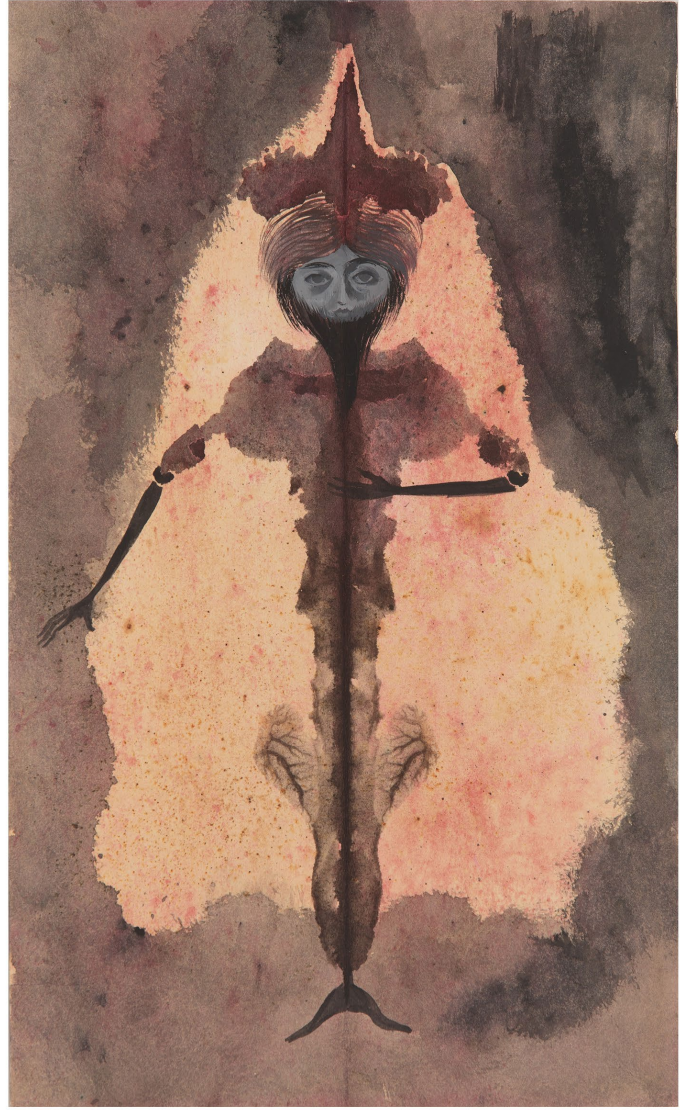


Animal fantástico, 1959

Ink, gouache, and acrylic on paper
11 3/8 x 8 3/4 inches (28.9 x 22.2 cm)
RV0059d



R.VARO



**Personaje perchero and Personaje
con botas, 1960**

Set of two gouaches, ink and
gouache on paperboard

12 1/2 x 7 1/2 inches (32 x 19.5 cm)

RV0086

below

Nacer de nuevo, 1960

Oil on masonite
31.89 x 18.5 inches (81 cm
x 46.99 cm)

Private Collection

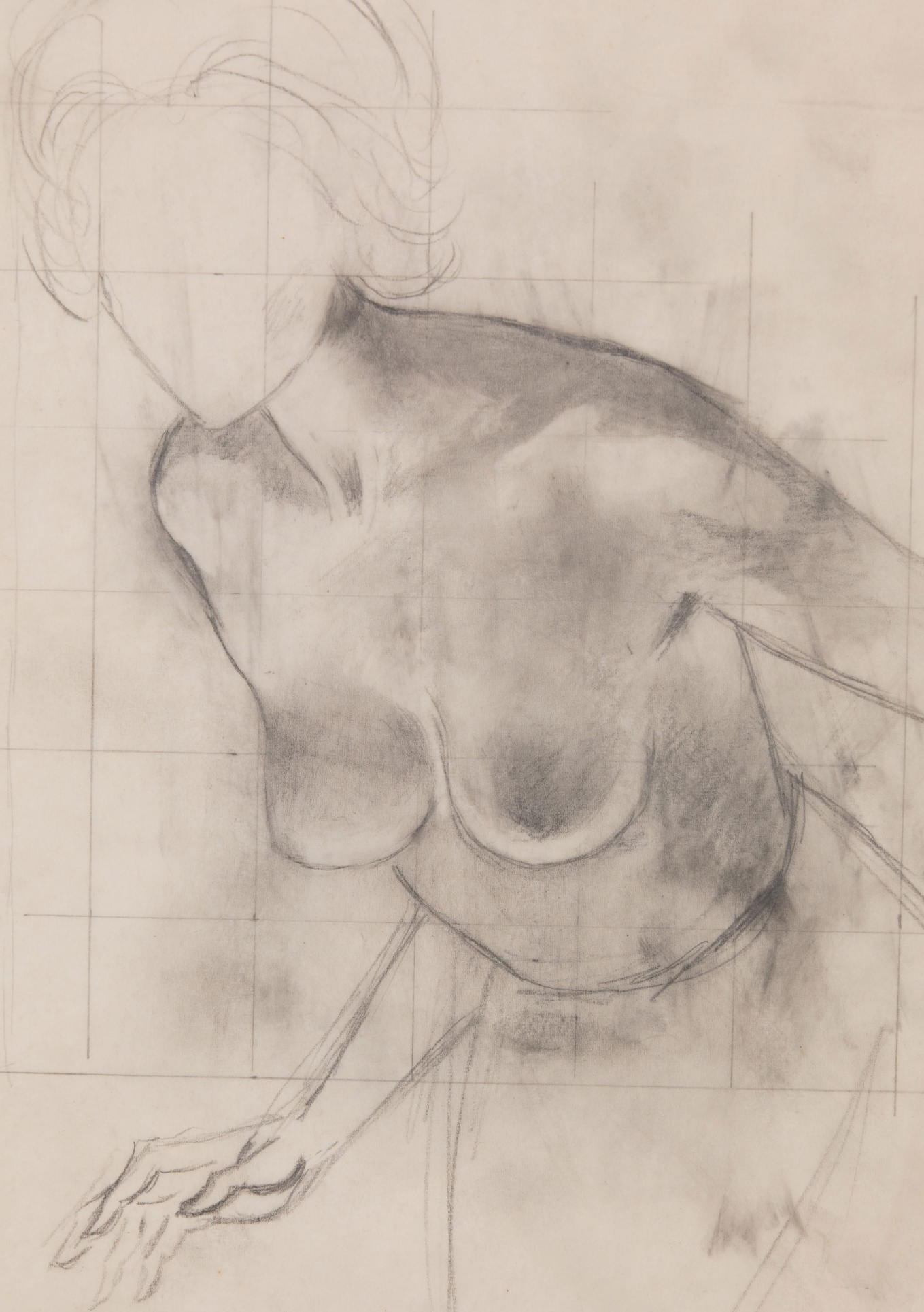


Study for "Nacer de nuevo", 1960

Pencil on paper

11 x 9 inches (27.9 x 22.9 cm)

RV0067





Personaje alado, 1959

Pencil on paper

9 in x 6 1/2 inches (22.9 x 16.5 cm)

RV0072

below

Coincidencia, 1959

Oil on canvas

31.5 x 21.7 inches (80.01 x 55.12 cm)

Private Collection



Study for "Coincidencia", 1959

Pencil on paper

17 1/2 x 12 1/2 inches (44.5 x 31.8 cm)

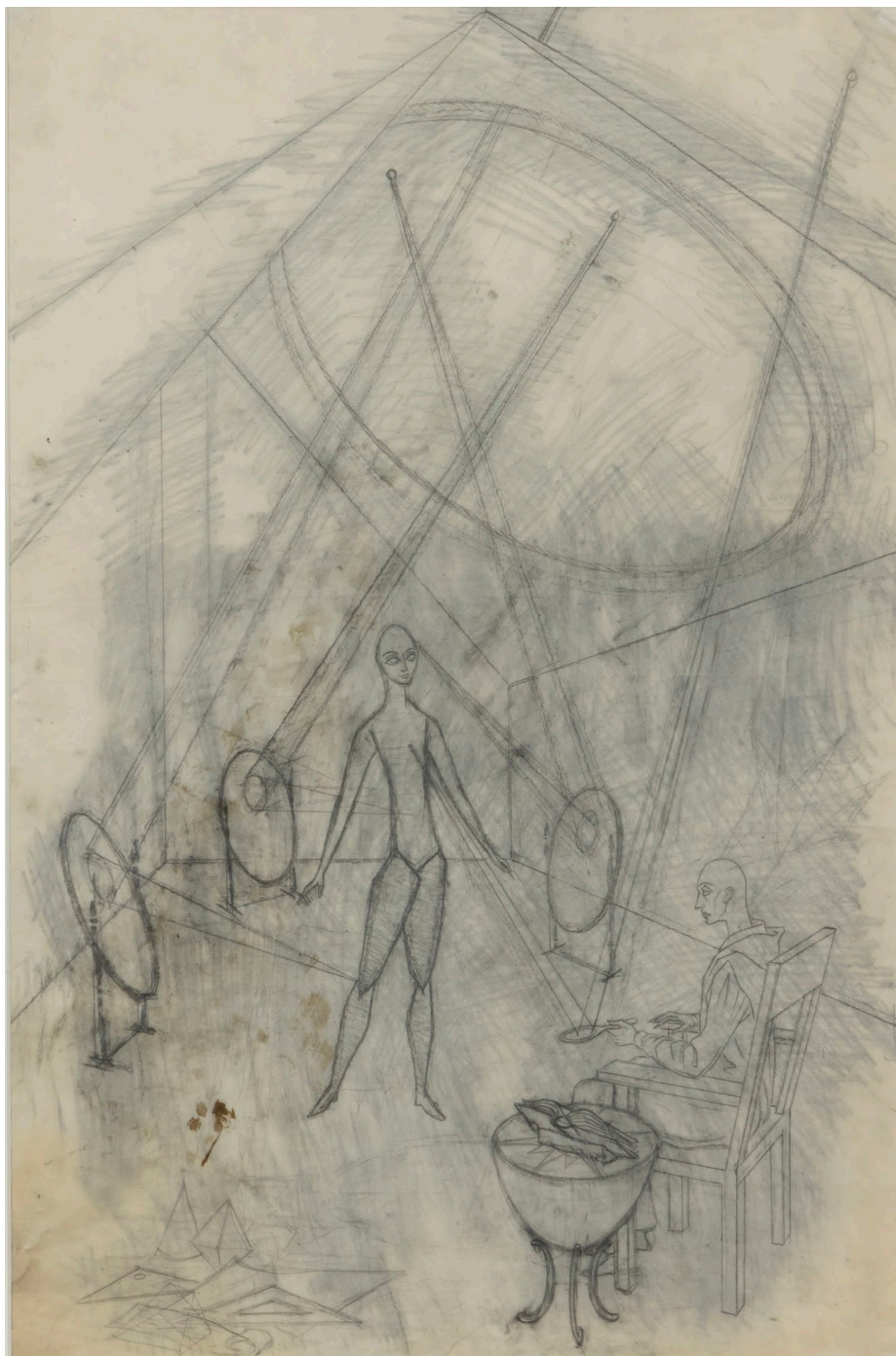
RV0071



below

**Creación con rayos
astrales, 1955**

Oil and tempera on masonite
26 1/2 in x 17 inches
(67.3 cm x 43.2 cm)
Collection unknown



**Study for "Creación con rayos
astrales", 1955**

Pencil on tracing paper
24 x 16 inches (61 x 42 cm)
RV0089



below

El flautista, 1955

Oil and mother-of-pearl on masonite

30.32 x 37.4 inches (77.01 x 95 cm)

Collection of the Museo de Arte

Moderno, Mexico City, Mexico



Study for "El flautista", 1955

Pencil on paper

8 11/16 x 6 inches (22.1 x 15.2 cm)

RV0088



below

Revelación o El relojero, 1955
Oil on masonite
27.95 x 33.07 inches (71 x 84 cm)
Private Collection



**Study for “Revelación o El
relojero”**, 1955
Pencil on paper
8 11/16 x 6 inches (22.1 x 15.2 cm)
RV0087





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GALLERY
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ART BASEL MIAMI BEACH | Additional Works

Booth G7 | December 6-8, 2024



AMBREEN BUTT

The Floral Offerings, 2023

Watercolor, collage, and gold pigment on
tea-stained paper

30 x 22 inches (76.2 x 55.9 cm)

\$20,000

AB0041





MARÍA MAGDALENA CAMPOS-PONS

When We Gather, 2023

Text on Arches Cover Cream, Epson
Premium Luster at 20 x 30 photograph

Edition of 35

21 x 31 inches (53.3 x 78.7 cm)

\$10,000

MMCP0066.01



GALLERY
WENDI NORRIS



ENRIQUE MARTÍNEZ CELAYA
The Wind-Turn, 2023
Oil and wax on canvas
63 x 57 inches (160 x 144.8 cm)
\$75,000
EMC0003





CHITRA GANESH

In Media Res, 2024

Acrylic, watercolor, gouache, and
embroidery on paper mounted on linen

40 x 30 inches (101.6 x 76.2 cm)

\$22,000

CG0192





LEO MARZ

I Contain Multitudes, 2024

Acrylic on canvas

49 x 38 inches (124.5 x 96.5 cm)

\$13,000

LMZ0010





RANU MUKHERJEE

dark water, 2024

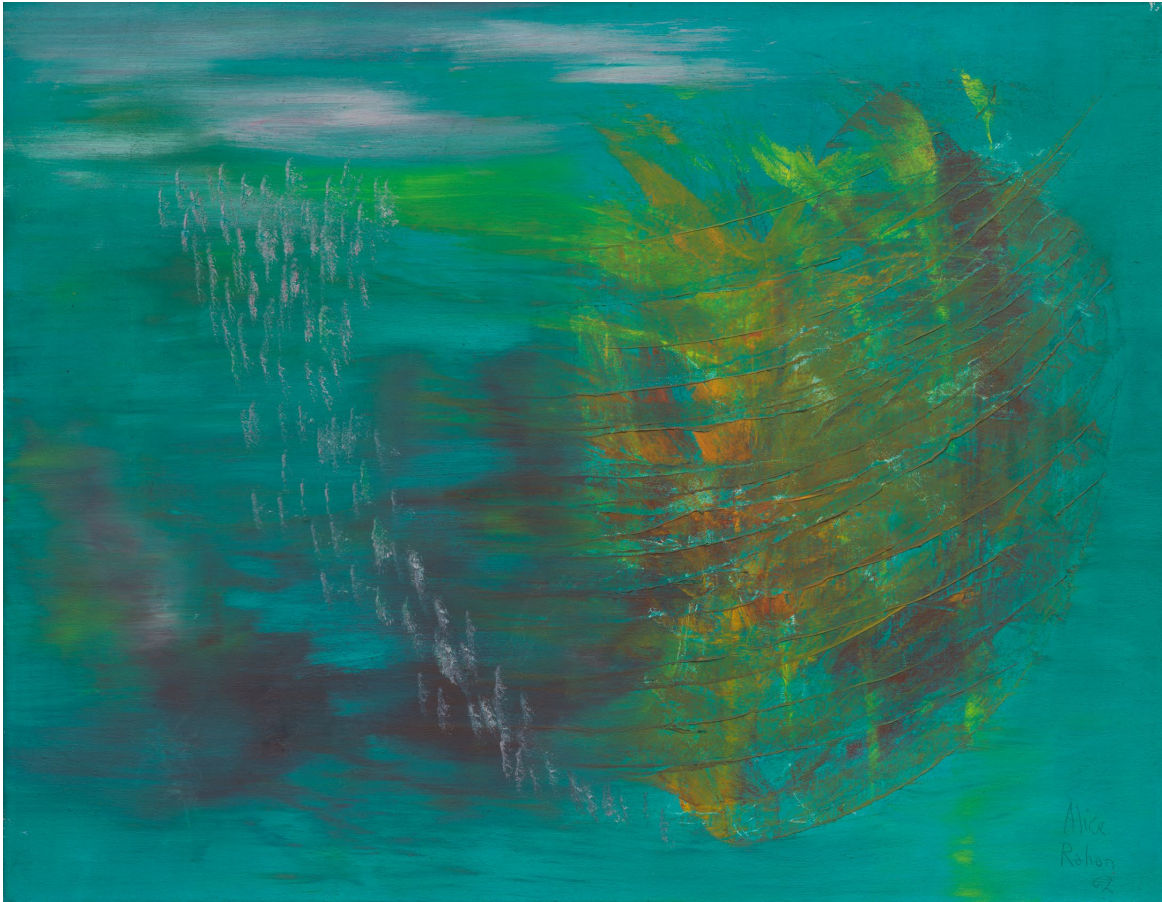
Pigment, crystalina, and UV inkjet print on
silk and cotton sari fabric on linen

36 x 36 inches (91.4 x 91.4 cm)

\$16,000

RMU0216





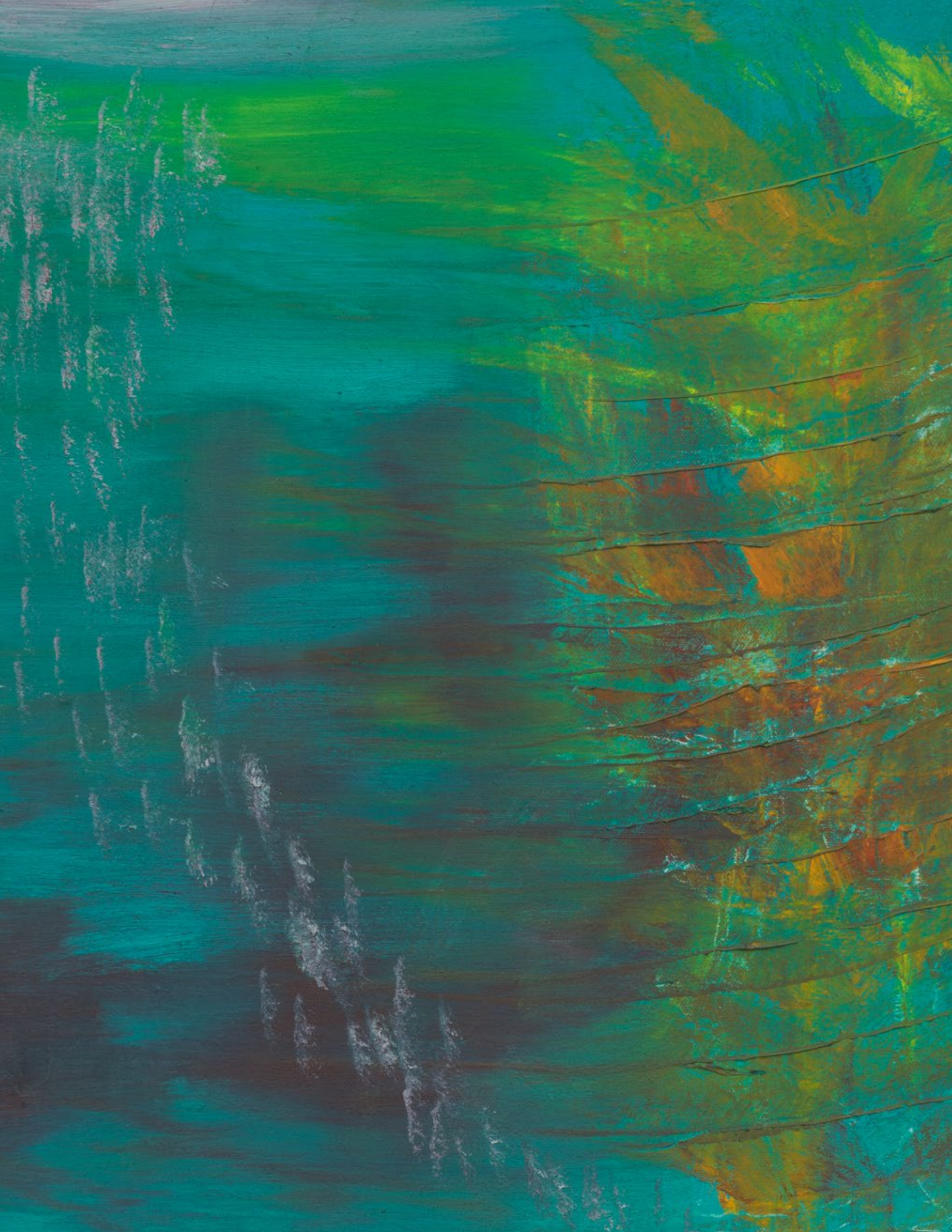
ALICE RAHON

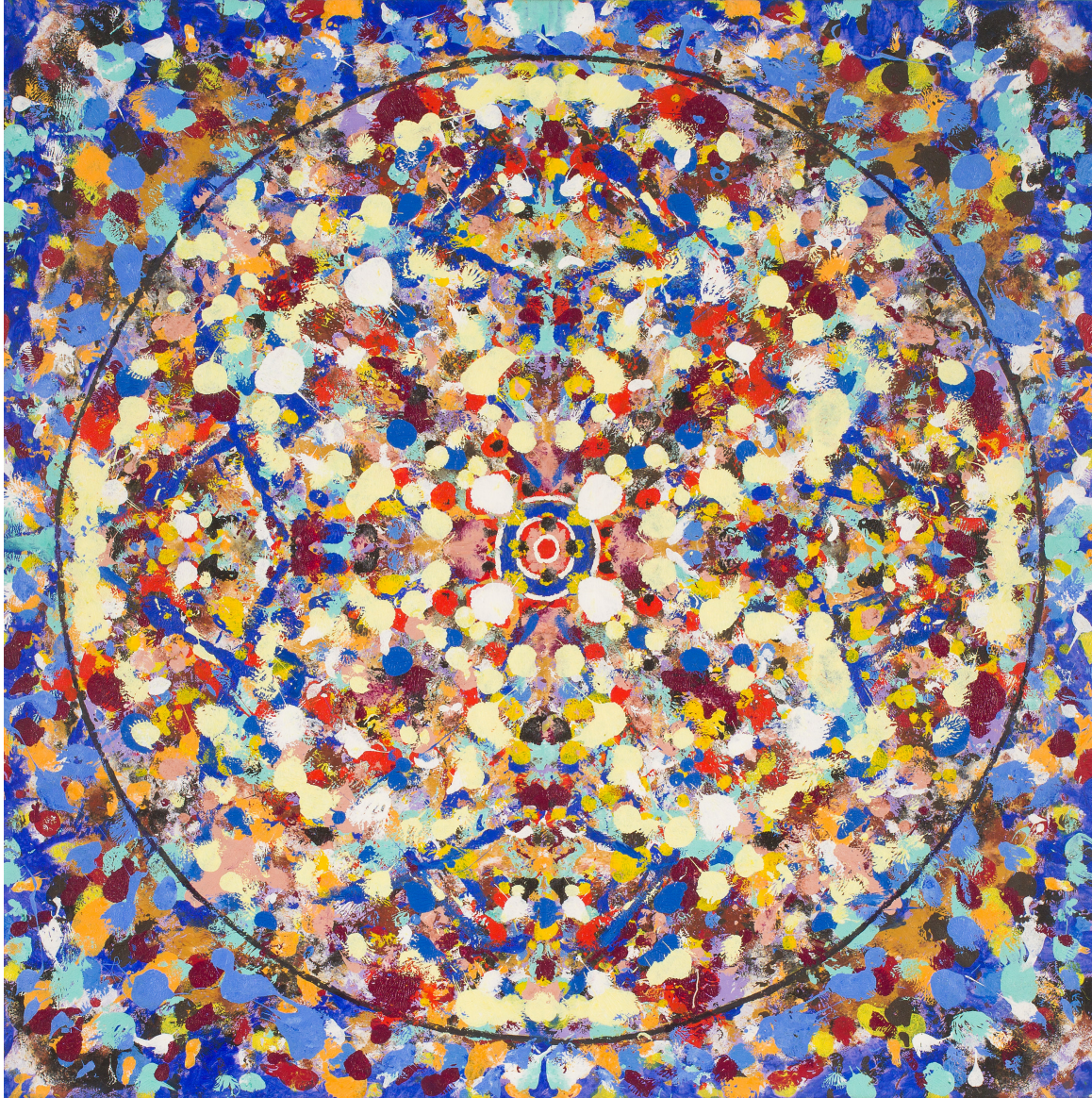
Amancer en el fondo del mar, 1962

Oil and sand on canvas

27 1/2 x 35 1/2 inches (69.9 x 90.2 cm)

AR0052





PETER YOUNG

#41 - 1974, 1974

Acrylic, ink, and graphite on canvas

43 x 43 inches (109.2x 109.2 cm)

\$35,000

PY0048



