



**EUGENE VON BRUENCHENHEIN**

**“FREELANCE ARTIST—POET AND  
SCULPTOR—INOVATOR—ARROW  
MAKER AND PLANT MAN—BONE  
ARTIFACTS CONSTRUCTOR—  
PHOTOGRAPHER AND  
ARCHITECT—PHILOSOPHER”**

**AMERICAN FOLK ART MUSEUM**



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**BRETT LITTMAN**

**WITH A PREFACE BY MARIA ANN CONELLI**



Published in conjunction with the exhibition

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# LENDERS TO THE EXHIBITION

American Folk Art Museum, New York

Barbara Blank and Barry Shapiro

Jill and Sheldon Bonovitz

Lewis and Jean Greenblatt

John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Selig and Angela Sacks





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# PREFACE

The American Folk Art Museum first acquired artwork by Eugene Von Bruenchenhein (1910–1983) thirteen years ago, in 1998, when Anne Hill and Edward V. Blanchard Jr. gifted a painting and two ceramic objects by the Milwaukee artist. The museum's collection of ceramic vessels by Von Bruenchenhein further grew the following year through a substantial gift of Jill and Sheldon Bonovitz. Also in 1999, Lewis B. Greenblatt gave the museum Von Bruenchenhein's iconic *Gold Tower*. Over the following half decade, Mr. Greenblatt and his wife, Jean, made an unparalleled contribution to the museum when they gifted dozens of the artist's photographs and a large number of his paintings and concrete sculptures. Without the generosity of these Von Bruenchenhein enthusiasts, some of whom also lent objects from their private collections, the retrospective "Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: 'Freelance Artist—Poet and Sculptor—Inovator—Arrow maker and Plant man—Bone artifacts constructor—Photographer and Architect—Philosopher'" would not have been possible.

The most rewarding aspect of being a museum director is the opportunity to share exceptional and little exhibited works of art with the public. I am proud to be working with creative and talented individuals who helped make Von Bruenchenhein's multifaceted oeuvre accessible to a large audience.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to guest curator Brett Littman, executive director of The Drawing Center, New York, who organized the exhibition. Brett brought a unique perspective, giving particular emphasis to the rarely seen drawings of the artist.

Thanks go to the lenders to the exhibition: Barbara Blank and Barry Shapiro; Jill and Sheldon Bonovitz; Lewis and Jean Greenblatt; the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin; and Selig and Angela Sacks.

My thanks also to the staff of the American Folk Art Museum who tirelessly worked on this project: Stacy C. Hollander, senior curator and director of exhibitions, and Ann-Marie Reilly, chief registrar and director of exhibition production, who collaborated with Brett Littman on the mounting of the exhibition; Courtney Wagner, manager of photographic services, who oversaw the acquisition of photography for the catalog; and Tanya Heinrich, director of publications, and Mareike Grover, managing editor, who lent their editorial expertise to the development of exhibition wall texts and every part of this book. To the rest of the museum staff, who each play a role in the successful opening of an exhibition, my sincere gratitude. I would also like to acknowledge the generosity of our trustee Jacqueline Fowler for her support of the exhibition and this publication.

Last but not least, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Joanna Ahlberg and Peter J. Ahlberg of AHL&CO for producing this handsome catalog with enthusiasm, style, and professionalism.

— Maria Ann Conelli  
Executive Director, American Folk Art Museum



Von Bruenchenhein house, Milwaukee, 1983

Photo courtesy John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin ([www.jmkac.org](http://www.jmkac.org))





# **EUGENE VON BRUENCHENHEIN: “FREELANCE ARTIST—POET AND SCULPTOR—INOVATOR—ARROW MAKER AND—PLANT MAN—BONE ARTIFACTS CONSTRUCTOR— PHOTOGRAPHER AND ARCHITECT—PHILOSOPHER”**

Eugene Von Bruenchenhein was one of the most complex and multifaceted American self-taught artists. Born in Marinette, Wisconsin, he was from an early age self-identified as an artist. Over a fifty-year period, between the late 1930s until his death in 1983, Von Bruenchenhein produced expansive bodies of work in poetry, photography, ceramics, sculpture, painting, and drawing. The exhibition documented in the pages of this book focuses on the formal leitmotifs of leaves and floral patterns as organizing principles in Von Bruenchenhein’s multidisciplinary oeuvre.

“Genii” is the moniker Von Bruenchenhein appointed his creative ego. It is the plural form of “genie” and of “genius,” suggesting both powers of conjuring and a multivalent intellect; it is also a pun on the artist’s own name, Gene. The term “Genii,” at least phonetically, recalls the Greek root *gen-*, meaning “offspring,” perhaps a nod to the wildly inventive, diverse, and ever-growing output of a man whose 1,080 paintings—alongside thousands of photographs, drawings, and sculptures, including objects made from chicken and turkey bones— inundated his small house in Milwaukee by the end of his life, but which were known only to family and close friends.



*Untitled (Kitchen Plaque)*, n.d.  
John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin ([www.jmkac.org](http://www.jmkac.org))

# CACTUS GARDEN

Von Bruenchenhein's connection to the natural world was fostered at an early age through his stepmother and mentor, Elizabeth Mosey, a vibrant polymath who penned treatises on theories of evolution and reincarnation and painted floral still lifes in Von Bruenchenhein's childhood home. The artist's enthusiasm for botany carried through to young adulthood, when he worked for a period in a floral shop and even dubbed himself a "horticulturalist." In the late 1930s, Von Bruenchenhein began to amass his own collection of cacti and other exotic flora inside a hand-built backyard greenhouse—perhaps the first intersection of architectural enterprise with his interest in plants. Over time, Von Bruenchenhein's home featured a quirky landscape of vegetation interspersed with up to four-foot-tall concrete masks inspired by pre-Columbian imagery that the artist manufactured from rough molds and often painted.





# PHOTOGRAPHS

Von Bruenchenhein created some of his earliest visual work as an amateur photographer working in the privacy of his home and utilizing a makeshift darkroom in his bathroom. Between the early 1940s and the mid-1950s, he would construct tableaux of drapes, wallpaper, costumes, and props as backdrops for thousands of portraits of his wife, Marie. The photographs, which are reminiscent of pinups of the period, also show Von Bruenchenhein's deep interest in a rococo glamour far removed from the couple's modest lifestyle. The artist's predilections for eclectic, accretive environments and floral designs reemerge in his later collection of drawings superimposed on the pattern samples in a wallpaper swatch book.

The processes of composition in the works beg comparison to the practice of flower arrangement. Bouquets even feature as props in a few of the images. Von Bruenchenhein's photographic reproduction of an early floral still life painting is a conspicuous anomaly within the collection; it reappears in the background of a photo in which Marie poses in a stiff half-curtsy, exposing the rolled edges of her stockings and her upper thighs (page 18). Floral patterns consistently dominate the visual fields of the photographs, recurring in wallpaper backdrops, drapes and upholstery, hairpins, and coquettishly displaced sashes and sarongs.

The vignettes reveal a dialogue between artist and subject; Marie's countenance never quite manages to detach from the atmosphere of what was probably a guileless private game of dress-up. She is more often ingenue than prima donna, with far-from-coy glances and untrained, slightly awkward poses that reveal a poignantly naïve interaction between husband and wife. Some of the muted blue- and mauve-tone photos, with skewed strands of plastic beads continuing the damask tracery just beyond Marie's bare shoulders, cast her as a showgirl reclining backstage in a fin-de-siècle Parisian nightclub.

Others are distinguished by their tropical exoticism; amid patterns heavy with spiked palms and hibiscus, Marie poses topless with flowers tucked into her loose curls and layered lei-like chains lying between her breasts. Fluctuating between Tahitian queen and Technicolor glamour model, Marie is Von Bruenchenhein's tireless muse and accomplice in conjuring a dynamic, *déagé* sphere of fantasy that extends both to the psychological and the material underpinnings of the photographs.



*Untitled, c. 1940s–mid-1950s*



*Untitled, c. 1940s–mid-1950s*











*Untitled, c. 1940s–mid-1950s*





*Untitled, c. 1940s–mid-1950s*

# CERAMICS

Von Bruenchenhein's artistic relationship with ceramics began relatively early in his career and reached its high point during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Gathering his raw materials from construction-site clay deposits, Von Bruenchenhein manually sculpted hundreds of small foliate forms, firing the finished products in his home's coal oven.

The earliest clay specimens were tiny individual florets in various states of bloom, rising lithely on vertical stems from fingernail-indented bases to form bursting-chalice shapes. Many of these were left unpainted, as were some of his truncated blossoms: splaying pods positioned directly on the ground, with sinuous stamens and pistils coiling upward like the tendril forms so prominent in Von Bruenchenhein's chimerical paintings.

From the 1960s through the early 1980s, "leaf pots" were the predominant form among Von Bruenchenhein's ceramic works. The artist was inspired by Mayan censer vessels that were used to emit fragrant, cleansing smoke. With the "leaf pots," Von Bruenchenhein developed the core elements of his early objects toward more complex structures. Leaf figures become modules in the clay pots, constituent pieces multiplied and tessellated to generate foliate vessels, which he finished by applying salvaged paint samples in brilliant or milky, opaline hues. Von Bruenchenhein also experimented with crown and headdress forms, probably a product of his conviction that he and his wife were of royal descent. (He sporadically inscribed artworks with noble titles such as "King," "Duke of Saxony," or "Edward the Durable.") Like his vessels, each vaulted headpiece is a modular structure constituting a patchwork of individual leaves coated with a metallic sheen. Both vessels and crowns clearly inherit and develop the forms of Von Bruenchenhein's early buds and single-leaf sculptures, gradually incorporating latticework and escalating arches to create their own interior spaces, while always maintaining an upward visual sweep.



*Silver Crown, c. 1965–1975, and Vase with Heart Design, c. 1960s–1980s*



Marie Von Bruenchenhein in the Von Bruenchenhein house, 1983

Photo courtesy John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin ([www.jmkac.org](http://www.jmkac.org))







Tabletop display in the parlor of the Von Bruenchenhein house, 1983  
Photo courtesy John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin ([www.jmkac.org](http://www.jmkac.org))



*Vessel with Glass Jar, c. 1960s–1980s*





*Leaves and Flowers*, c. 1940s–1970s







*Vessel*, December 24, 1980



*Vessel*, c. 1960s–1980s

# BONE SCULPTURES

Perhaps the most decadently unorthodox of Von Bruenchenhein's artworks are his bone sculptures, completed in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The sculptures are also the most patently architectonic of his works, comprising hundreds of model-like miniature thrones and towers pushing five-foot altitudes. Each was painstakingly constructed from the refuse of chicken and turkey dinners, which Von Bruenchenhein soaked in ammonia, dried on his stove, and cobbled together with tweezers and model-airplane glue. He then applied a metallic luster—leftover automotive paint donated by friends—with homemade brushes constructed from tufts of Marie's hair stuck through pen barrels and straws.

There is some indication that Von Bruenchenhein was aware of and impressed by Simon Rodia's *Watts Towers* in Los Angeles, seventeen interconnected, cement-coated steel helixes built between 1921 and 1954 largely from discarded materials, such as bed frames, bottles, ceramic tiles, scrap metal, and seashells. Local Milwaukee modernist architecture, such as Donald Grieb's glass-and-aluminum conoid domes completed in 1967 to house the city's horticultural conservatory, might have also galvanized Von Bruenchenhein's interest in angular, geometric patterns and building design. Though markedly more sober than his dynamic paintings and ceramics, the bone sculptures are similarly modular and revamp organic symmetries into zany, precarious towers or tiny macabre thrones that pose the potential of infinite elaboration.



*Gold Tower*, c. 1970s, and *Gold Throne*, c. late 1960s





Bone thrones suspended from wire against a painted wall inside the Von Bruenchenhein house, 1983  
Photo courtesy John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin ([www.jmkac.org](http://www.jmkac.org))







*Chair*, c. late 1960s





*Chair*, c. late 1960s

# PAINTINGS

The decade between 1954 and 1963 was marked by a shift in Von Bruenchenhein's concentration from photography to painting. During this profusely fertile period, the artist completed roughly 950 paintings. The works were executed with Von Bruenchenhein's characteristic innovation and thrift, often at his kitchen table on Masonite or discarded cardboard-box panels salvaged from the bakery where he worked at the time. In 1954, Von Bruenchenhein reached a major technical watershed when he began using his fingers to apply paint directly to the surface. By training himself to use his hands and other improvisational implements, such as sticks, leaves, combs, cardboard, burlap, tar paper, and crumpled paper, Von Bruenchenhein cultivated a more tactile and immediate process conducive to the dynamic imagery of his paintings, which were often completed in a single night. The artist's dexterous, uninterrupted execution was grounded in developing a regular, rhythmic vocabulary of shapes. The natural indices of fingerprint and fingernail are especially well suited to rendering patterns analogous to the foliate patchworks of his ceramic vessels and, moreover, the simulated stone- and brickwork of the later paintings.

The paintings in this exhibition focus specifically on Von Bruenchenhein's architectural impulse, manifest mostly in a body of work produced near the end of his life, in the late 1970s and early 1980s. With the exception of three works from the mid-1950s—including the apocalyptic, Bruegelian *The Pile of Andrius* (opposite)—the paintings on view consistently depict ethereal citadels profiled against a flat, clouded sky, some even dissipating into the background as illusory figments. Von Bruenchenhein disregarded interior details to generate a series of architectural gestalts conforming to a persistent vertical symmetry. A ruddy, molten spectrum fills the contours of each building, obscuring its infrastructural depth gradations and setting it off from the vivid blue beyond. Most paintings feature fairly simple combinations of towers, but recognizable in a few are the complex gossamer patterns of Von Bruenchenhein's bone sculptures and the accruing arches of his clay vessels.



*The Pile of Andrius, December 31, 1954*



*Untitled*, November 5, 1978





*Edison Complex, July 1978*





*Untitled*, December 4, 1978



# DRAWINGS

*Art Work By Eugene From A Thousand and one Nights—Drifting Through the Years*, a large square folio of commercial wallpaper swatches containing more than one hundred meticulous ink drawings, is the least known and least researched work in Von Bruenchenhein's variegated oeuvre. The period of its creation, c. 1964–1966, spans the small interval between the artist's decade of painting and his turn to sculpture.

Unlike the volatile, fluid imagery of his paintings, Von Bruenchenhein's ballpoint outbursts are rigorously composed. Their mechanical precision suggests the use of a compass, a protractor, or a french curve, although there is no evidence that the artist owned drafting utensils. The drawings' kaleidoscopic distortions register more closely with mathematics than with craft. Von Bruenchenhein's penchants for wildlife and ornament persist, and the arabesques warp into cursive floral organs, gyrating squid, or avian plumage; series of concentric arcs yield leaflike pointed ovals and budding whorls. Some of the more angular constructions bear a resemblance to the "insect rockets" of Von Bruenchenhein's Sputnik-inspired space paintings of the late 1950s and 1960s, with their arachnid appendages, flaring antennae, and pincer-like brackets.

A considerable number of works incorporate architectural icons (stairs, doorways, and steeples), rendering futuristic ziggurats or perplexing hyperbolic landscapes. Unlike architectural blueprints, which translate imagined three-dimensional forms to paper, the jutting, cantilevered planes and polyhedral protuberances in Von Bruenchenhein's drawings, with their networks of lines and their infinite combination to create complex shapes, seem to be products of an open-ended, generative experimentation.

Von Bruenchenhein's drawings, in particular, unify two salient strands of his thinking—the botanical and the architectural—synthesizing the organic and the rational forms that underpin much of his work across mediums.

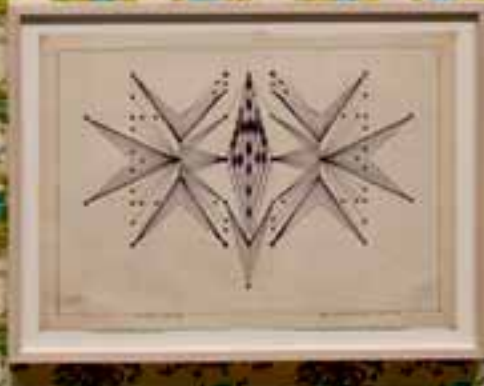


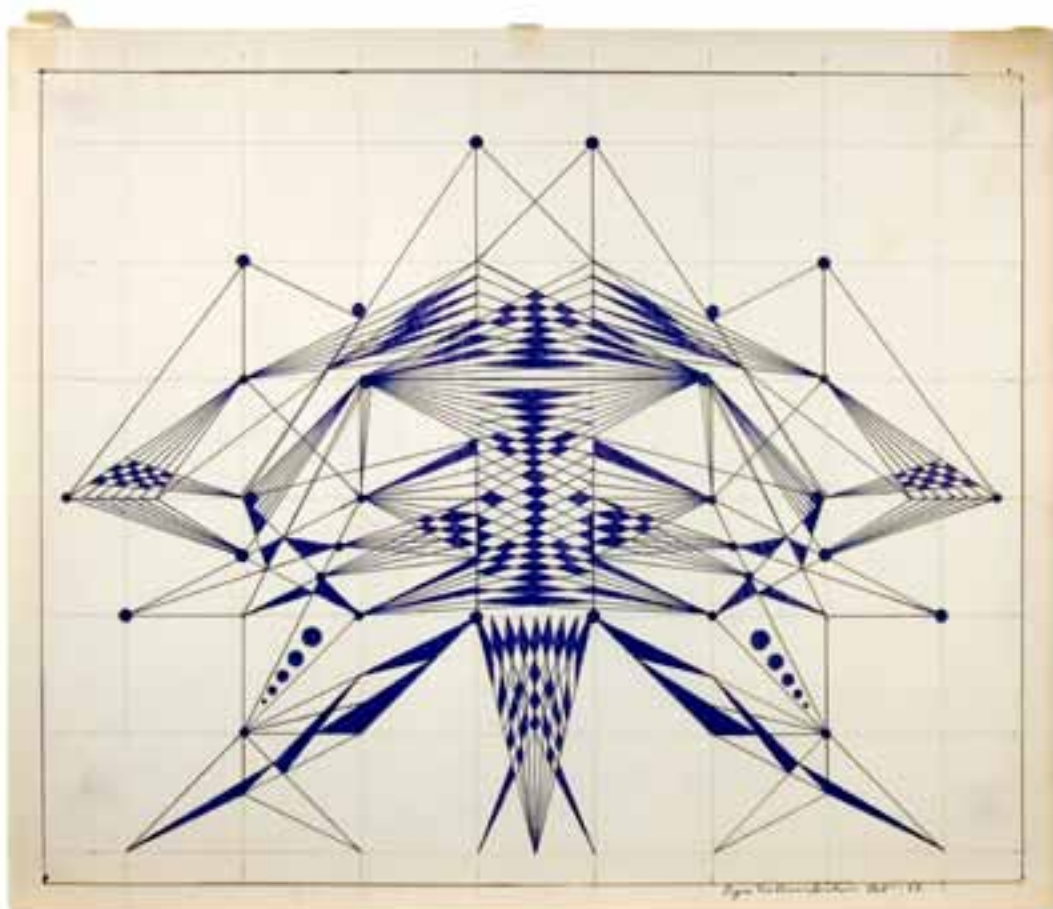
*Untitled*, September 18, 1965



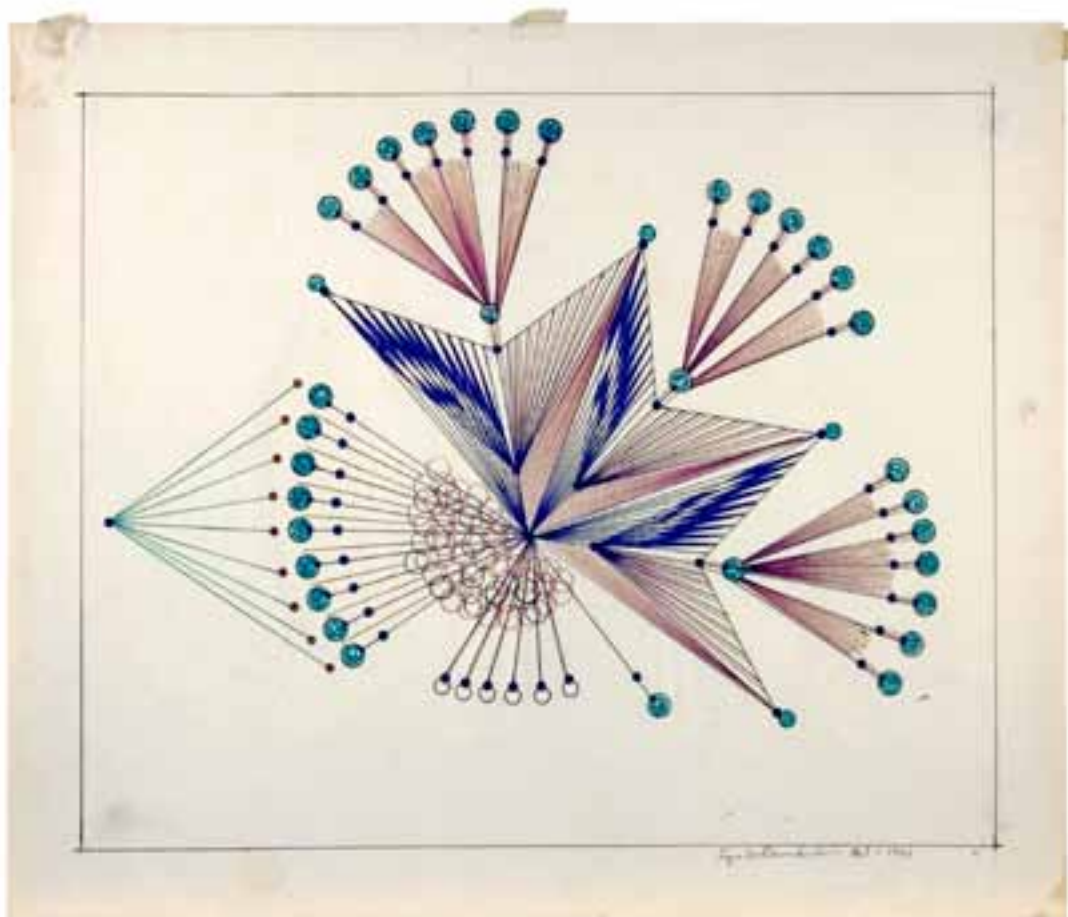






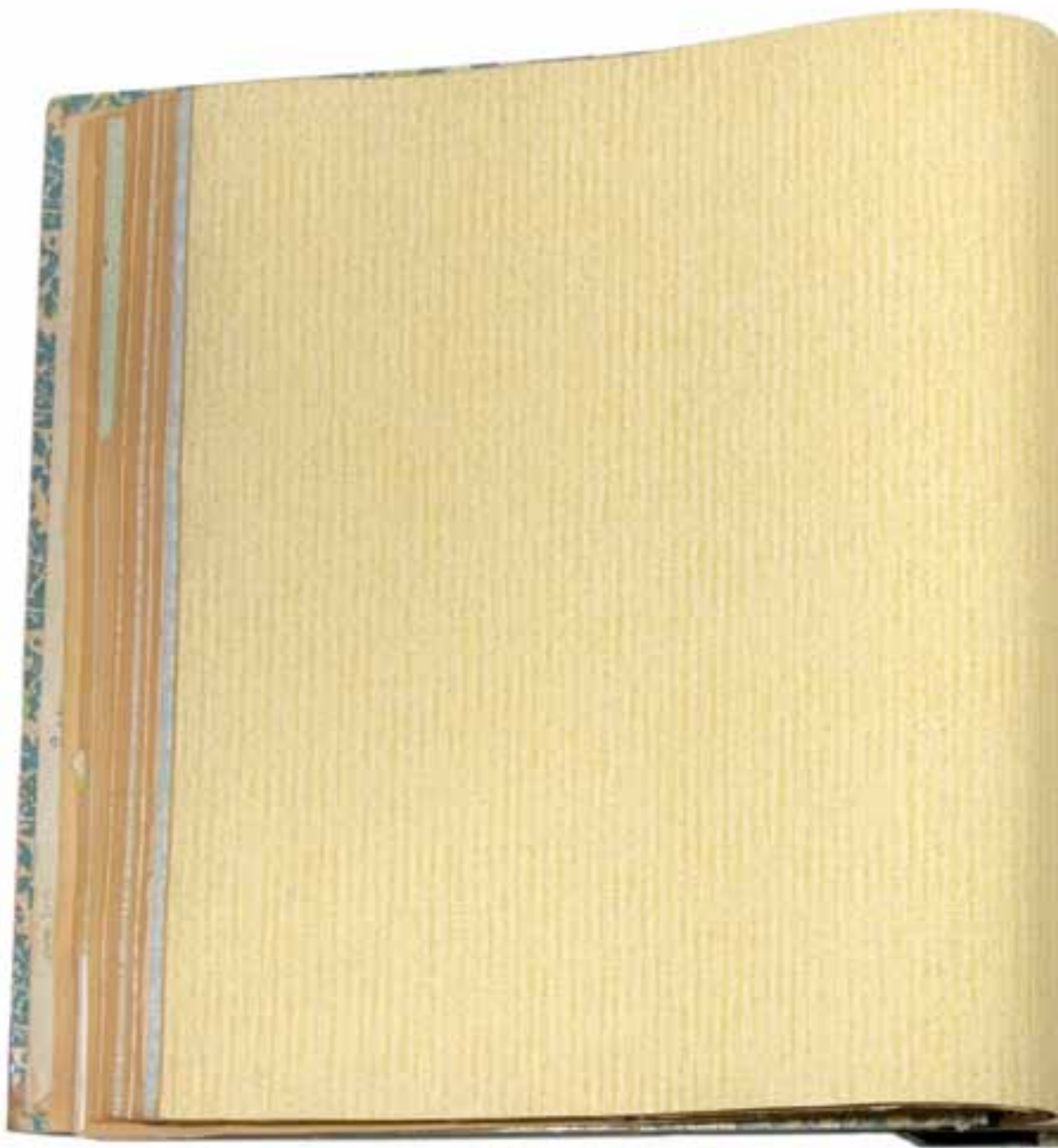


*Untitled, October 1, 1965*



*Untitled, October 5, 1965*





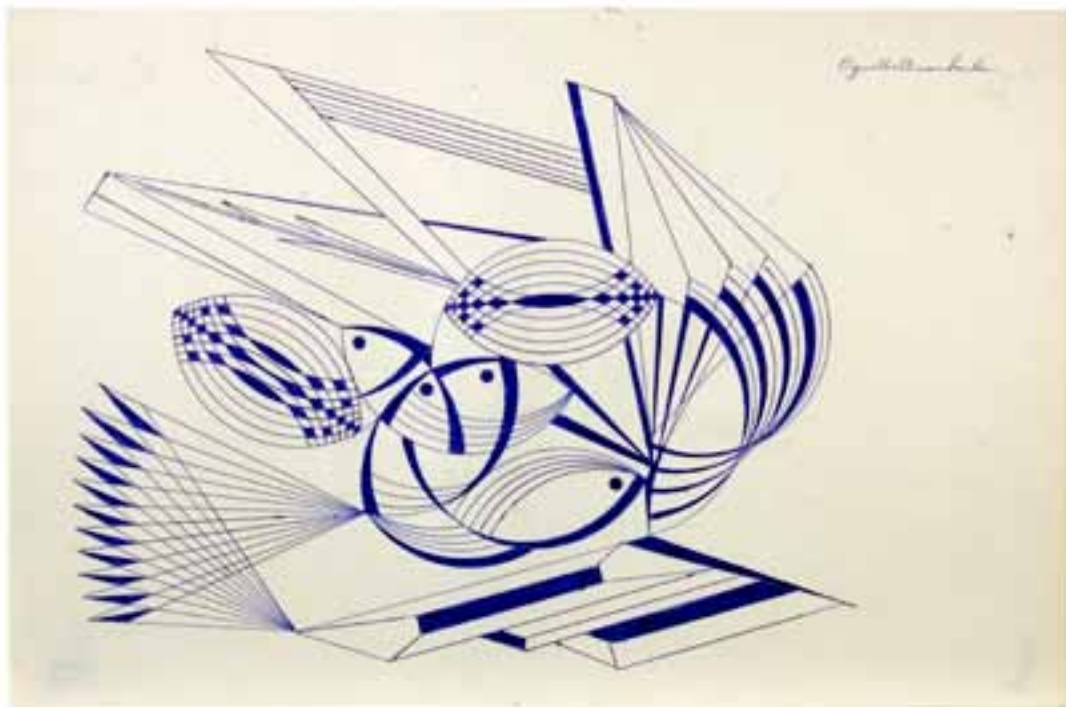
Page spread from *Art Work By Eugene From A Thousand and one Nights—Drifting Through the Years*, c. 1964–1966







*Untitled, c. 1964–1966*



*Untitled, c. 1964–1966*



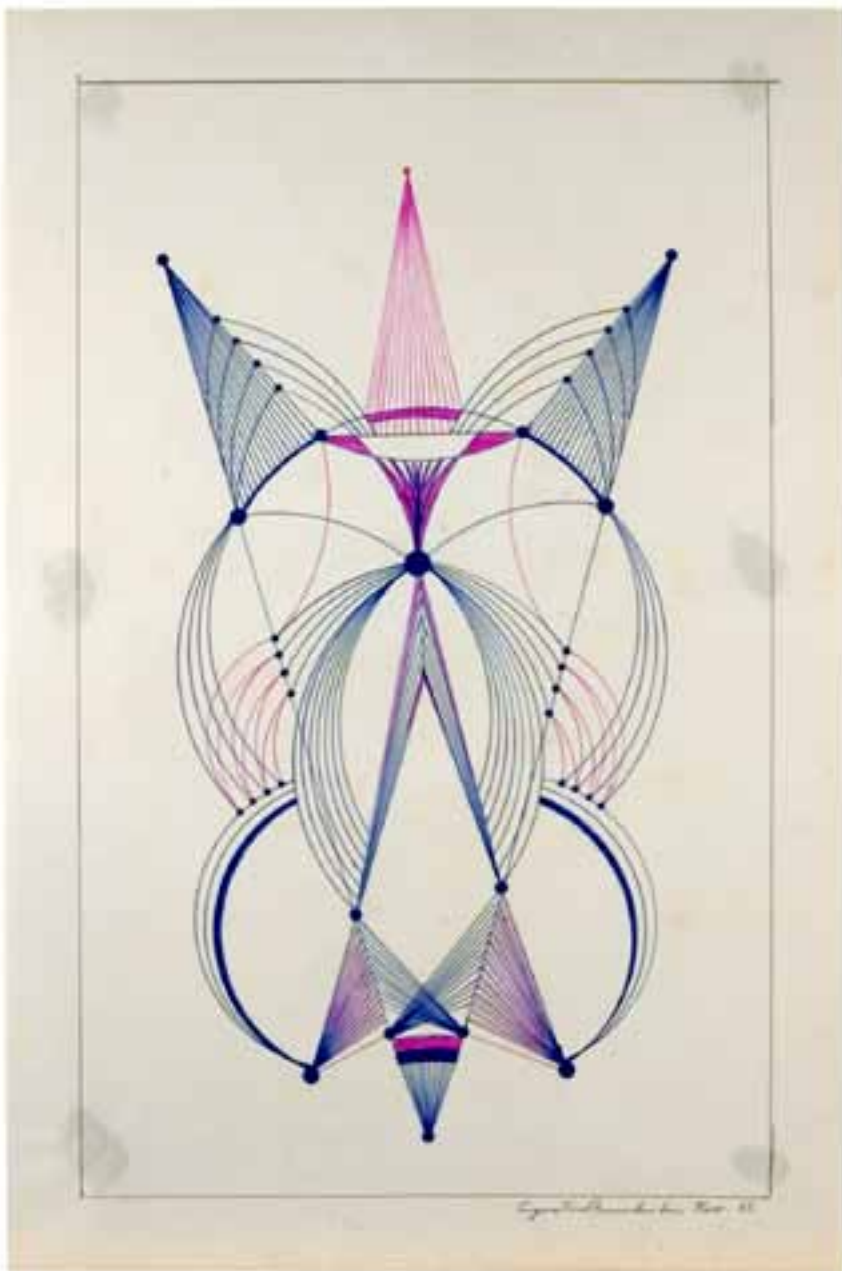
Page spread from *Art Work By Eugene From A Thousand and one Nights—Drifting Through the Years*, c. 1964–1966



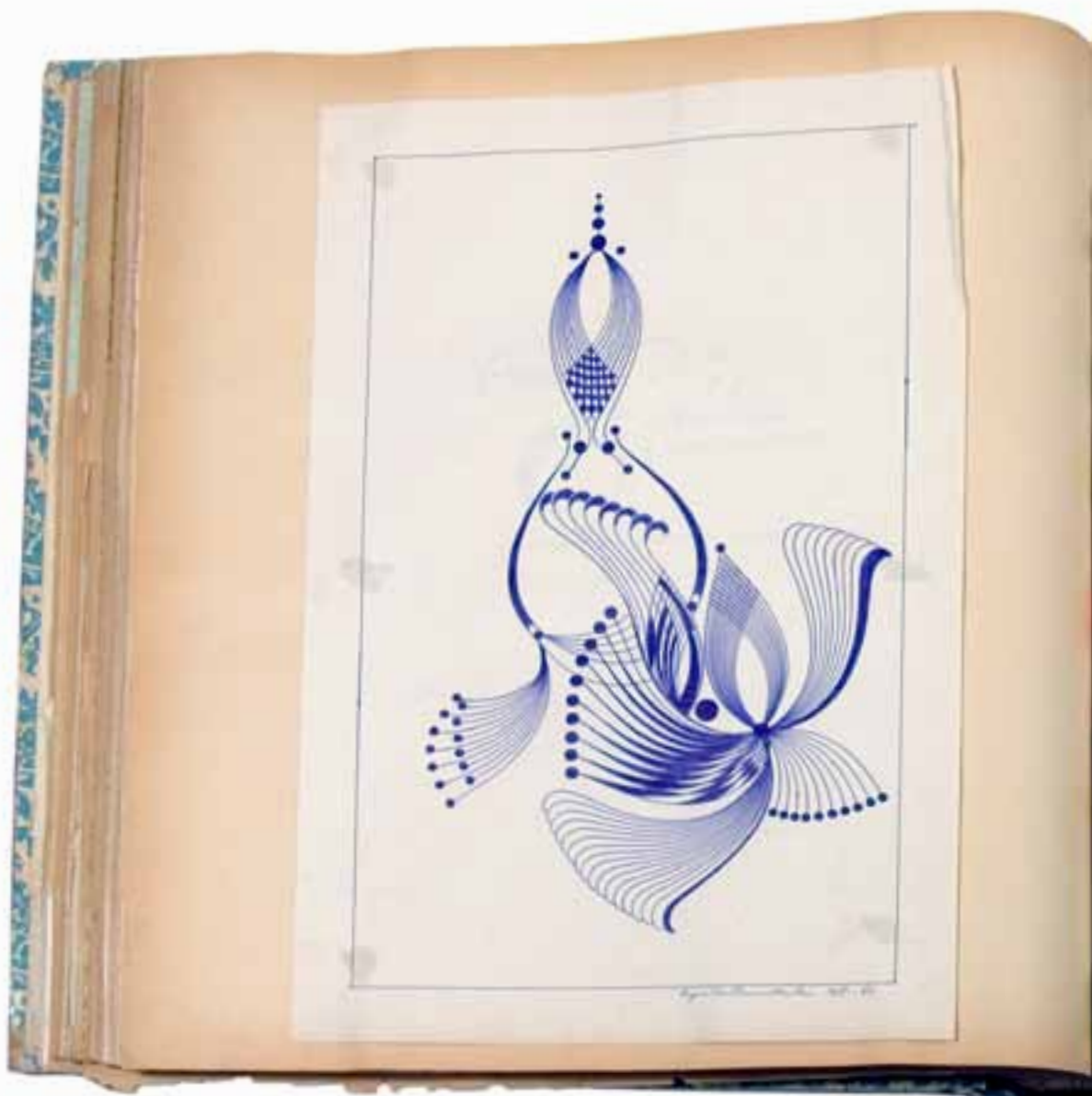


*Untitled, c. 1964–1966*





*Untitled, November 1966*



Page spread from *Art Work By Eugene From A Thousand and one Nights—Drifting Through the Years*, c. 1964–1966



# EXHIBITION HISTORY

## 2010–2011

“Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: ‘Freelance Artist—Poet and Sculptor—Inovator—Arrow maker and Plant man—Bone artifacts constructor—Photographer and Architect—Philosopher,’” American Folk Art Museum, New York

“Out of This World: A Centennial Celebration of Eugene Von Bruenchenhein,” American Visionary Art Museum, Baltimore

“Wild Kingdom” (group show), John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wis.

## 2010

“Eugene Von Bruenchenhein,” Cavin-Morris Gallery, New York

“Eugene Von Bruenchenhein,” The Douglas Hyde Gallery, Trinity College, Dublin

## 2009–2010

“Approaching Abstraction” (group show), American Folk Art Museum, New York

## 2009

“Dirt on Delight: Impulses That Form Clay” (group show), Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis

## 2008–2009

“American Masterpieces” (group show), John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wis.

## 2008

“After Nature” (group show), New Museum, New York

## 2007–2008

“Sublime Spaces & Visionary Worlds,” John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wis.

## 2007

“Kim Keever, Graham Parks, Eugene Von Bruenchenhein” (group show), Feigen Contemporary, New York

## 2006

“Subject: Contemporary Portraiture” (group show), Lyman Allyn Art Museum, New London, Conn.

## 2005–2006

“The Ceramic Art of Eugene Von Bruenchenhein,” John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wis.

## 2005

“Self and Subject” (group show), American Folk Art Museum, New York

## 2004–2009

“Folk Art Revealed” (group show), American Folk Art Museum, New York

## **2004–2005**

“Create and Be Recognized: Photography on the Edge” (group show), Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, and the George Eastman House, International Museum of Photography and Film, Rochester, N.Y.

## **2004**

“Eugene Von Bruenchenhein,” Feigen Contemporary, New York

“Genesis: Gifts and Promised Gifts to the Permanent Collection” (group show), Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art, Chicago

## **2003–2004**

“Recent Gifts to the American Folk Art Museum: A Collection Sampler” (group show), American Folk Art Museum, New York

## **2003**

“Wisconsin Outsiders” (group show), Wright Museum of Art, Beloit College, Beloit, Wis.

## **2002–2003**

“American Anthem: Masterworks from the American Folk Art Museum” (group show), American Folk Art Museum, New York

“Concrete Ideas” (group show), John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wis.

## **2002**

“Identity and Desire” (group show), Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art, Chicago

“Strip & Tease” (group show), Aeroplastics Contemporary, Brussels

## **2001**

“Living in the Backyard of Space,” Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago

## **2000**

“Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: Botanical Explosions,” Ricco/Maresca Gallery, New York

“Our Wisconsin Home” (group show), John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wis.

## **1999–2000**

“Eugene Von Bruenchenhein,” Aurel Scheibler, Cologne, Germany

## **1999**

“Obsession” (group show), Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne, Germany

## **1998–1999**

“Art Outsider et Folk Art des Collections de Chicago” (group show), Halle Saint Pierre, Paris

“Self-Taught Artists of the 20th Century: An American Anthology” (group show organized by the American Folk Art Museum, New York), Philadelphia Museum of Art; High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Ga.; Amon Carter Museum and Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Tex.; Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester, N.Y.; and Wexner Center for the Arts, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

“Self-Taught Artists of the 20th Century: Perspectives on Patterning” (group show), American Folk Art Museum, New York



## 1998

"Ceramic Sculptures: Eugene Von Bruenchenhein," Fleisher/Ollman Gallery, Philadelphia  
"Naked" (group show), Ricco/Maresca Gallery, New York

## 1997

"Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: Journey to the Edge of the Universe," John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wis.  
"Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: Selections from the Collection," John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wis.  
"Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: Works in Clay," Fleisher/Ollman Gallery, Philadelphia

## 1996

"Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: Looking Beyond the Mirror," Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago  
"Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: Paintings," Ricco/Maresca Gallery, New York  
"Off Center: Outsider Art in the Midwest" (group show), Minnesota Museum of American Art, St. Paul

## 1995

"Obsession: Photographs by Eugene Von Bruenchenhein," Michael Lord Gallery, Milwaukee  
"A World of Their Own: Twentieth-Century American Folk Art" (group show), The Newark Museum, Newark, N.J.

## 1994

"Experience the Fantasy," Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago  
"Marie, an Obsession: The Photographs of Eugene Von Bruenchenhein," Ricco/Maresca Gallery, New York

## 1993

"Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: Fotografien," Galerie Susanne Zander, Cologne, Germany  
"Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: Photographs," Edward Thorp Gallery, New York  
"Wisconsin Tales: The Premiere of a Permanent Collection" (group show), John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wis.

## 1992

"Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: Utopic Dreams," Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago

## 1991

"Dreams, Lies, and Exaggerations: Photomontage in America" (group show), The Art Gallery, University of Maryland, College Park, and John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wis.

## 1990

"Eugene Von Bruenchenhein," Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago  
"Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: Paintings and Photographs," Edward Thorp Gallery, New York  
"Outsiders: Artists Outside the Mainstream" (group show), Octagon Center for the Arts, Ames, Iowa  
"Visions: Expressions Beyond the Mainstream from Chicago Collections" (group show), The Arts Club of Chicago

## 1989

"Departures: Photography, 1924–1989" (group show), Hirschl & Adler Modern, New York  
"Paintings of Utopic Vision," Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago

## **1988**

“Eugene Von Bruenchenhein,” Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago

“Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: Obsessive Visionary,” John Michael Kohler Arts Center,  
Sheboygan, Wis., and Milwaukee Art Museum

## **1987**

“Chairs” (group show), Expressways Children’s Museum, Chicago

“Chairs as Art /Art as Chairs” (group show), The Arts Club of Chicago

“Material Obsessions” (group show), Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago

“A Thousand and One Nights” (group show), Landmarks Gallery, Milwaukee

## **1986**

“Eugene Von Bruenchenhein,” Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago

## **1984**

“Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: Wisconsin Visionary,” John Michael Kohler Arts Center,  
Sheboygan, Wis.

“Von Bruenchenhein: A Retrospective,” Landmarks Gallery, Milwaukee

## **1983**

“Remains to Be Seen,” John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wis.

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# CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

ALL ARTWORKS BY EUGENE VON BRUENCHENHEIN  
(1910–1983), MILWAUKEE. HEIGHT PRECEDES WIDTH  
PRECEDES DEPTH.

*Untitled*  
10 x 8"  
2000.1.8

*Untitled* (Kitchen Plaque)  
n.d.  
Incised aluminum on fiberglass ductboard  
7 1/4 x 11 3/8 x 1"  
John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin  
[Page 13]

*Untitled*  
7 x 5"  
2000.1.12

*Untitled*  
10 x 8"  
2000.1.13

## CONCRETE SCULPTURE

*Untitled*  
1960  
Concrete  
37 1/2 x 22 x 3"  
American Folk Art Museum, gift of Lewis and  
Jean Greenblatt, 2004.26.5  
[Page 15]

*Untitled*  
10 x 8"  
2000.1.14

*Untitled*  
10 x 8"  
2000.1.15

*Untitled*  
10 x 8"  
2000.1.16

## PHOTOGRAPHS

C. 1940S–MID-1950S, UNTINTED GELATIN SILVER  
PRINTS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, COLLECTION  
OF THE AMERICAN FOLK ART MUSEUM, GIFTS OF  
LEWIS AND JEAN GREENBLATT

*Untitled*  
10 x 8"  
2000.1.3

*Untitled*  
10 x 8"  
2001.23.1

*Untitled*  
10 x 8"  
2001.23.2  
[Page 19]

*Untitled*  
10 x 8"  
2000.1.4

*Untitled*  
10 x 8"  
2001.23.3

*Untitled*  
7 x 5"  
2000.1.5

*Untitled*  
10 x 8"  
2001.23.4

*Untitled*  
10 x 8"  
2000.1.6

*Untitled*  
Hand-tinted gelatin silver print  
7 x 5"  
2001.23.5



<i>Untitled</i> Hand-tinted gelatin silver print 10 x 8" 2001.23.6	<i>Untitled</i> 10 x 8" 2006.22.1
<i>Untitled</i> 10 x 8" 2004.26.6	<i>Untitled</i> 10 x 8" 2006.22.3
<i>Untitled</i> 6 3/4 x 10 3/4" 2004.26.7	<i>Untitled</i> 4 1/2 x 2 3/4" 2006.22.9 [Page 22]
<i>Untitled</i> 10 x 8" 2004.26.8	<i>Untitled</i> 4 1/2 x 2 3/4" 2006.22.11
<i>Untitled</i> 10 x 8" 2004.26.9	<i>Untitled</i> 10 x 8" 2006.22.15
<i>Untitled</i> 7 x 5" 2004.26.10	<i>Untitled</i> 4 1/2 x 2 3/4" 2006.22.19 [Page 18]
<i>Untitled</i> 4 1/2 x 2 3/4" 2004.26.13	<i>Untitled</i> 4 x 2 1/2" 2006.22.22
<i>Untitled</i> 4 1/2 x 2 3/4" 2004.26.14	<i>Untitled</i> Hand-tinted gelatin silver print 3 1/2 x 2 3/4" 2006.22.27
<i>Untitled</i> 4 1/2 x 2 3/4" 2004.26.15	<i>Untitled</i> 4 1/2 x 2 3/4" 2006.22.29
<i>Untitled</i> 4 1/2 x 2 3/4" 2004.26.21	<i>Untitled</i> 4 1/2 x 2 3/4" 2006.22.37 [Page 23]
<i>Untitled</i> 4 1/2 x 2 3/4" 2004.26.22	<i>Untitled</i> 4 1/2 x 2 3/4" 2006.22.38
<i>Untitled</i> 4 1/2 x 2 3/4" 2004.26.23	<i>Untitled</i> 2 3/4 x 4 1/2" 2006.22.40
<i>Untitled</i> 4 1/2 x 2 3/4" 2004.26.24	

*Untitled*  
4 1/2 x 2 3/4"  
2006.22.41

*Untitled*  
4 1/2 x 2 3/4"  
2006.22.42

*Untitled*  
4 1/2 x 2 3/4"  
2006.22.43

## CERAMICS

PAINT ON CLAY UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

C. 1940S–1970S, COLLECTION OF JILL AND SHELDON BONOVIKZ

*Flower*  
1 1/2 x 4 1/2 x 4 1/2"

*Flower*  
1 1/2 x 5 x 5"

*Flower*  
1 1/2 x 3 1/2 x 3 1/2"

*Flower*  
1 x 3 x 3"

*Flower*  
1 1/2 x 3 1/2 x 4"

*Flower*  
4 x 4 x 2"

*Flower*  
1 1/2 x 4 x 4"

*Flower*  
2 x 4 x 3"

*Flower*  
2 x 5 x 4"

*Flower*  
2 x 5 x 3 1/2"

*Flower*  
2 x 4 x 3"

*Brown Flower*  
1 1/4 x 4 1/4 x 4 1/4"

*Gold Flower*  
1 1/2 x 4 x 4"

*Pink Flower*  
1 1/4 x 4 x 4"

*Pink Flower*  
1 1/2 x 4 1/2 x 3"

*Leaf*  
1/2 x 7 x 3 1/2"

*Leaf*  
1 x 8 x 3"

*Leaf*  
1 x 7 x 3"

*Leaf*  
2 x 6 3/4 x 4"

"GOD IS OUR SHEPHERD" Coiled Pot with Flowers  
6 3/4 x 4 3/4 x 4 3/4"

*Dark Green Vessel with Four Openings*  
5 1/2 x 4 x 4"

*Green Botanical Wall Hanging*  
2 1/4 x 5 x 8 1/2"

COLLECTION OF THE AMERICAN FOLK ART MUSEUM

*Red-and-Brown Vessel*  
c. 1960s–1980s  
6 1/8 x 4" diam.  
Blanchard-Hill Collection, gift of M. Anne Hill and  
Edward V. Blanchard Jr., 1998.10.56

*Brown Stand*  
c. 1960s–1980s  
5 x 5" diam.  
Blanchard-Hill Collection, gift of M. Anne Hill and  
Edward V. Blanchard Jr., 1998.10.57

*Vase with Heart Design*  
c. 1960s–1980s  
12 1/2 x 4 1/2" diam.  
Gift of Jill and Sheldon Bonovitz, 1999.19.1  
[Page 25]

*Vessel*

c. 1960s–1980s

8 x 5" diam.

Gift of Jill and Sheldon Bonovitz, 1999.19.3

[Page 33]

*Silver Crown*

c. 1965–1975

5 x 6 x 8"

Gift of Jill and Sheldon Bonovitz, 1999.19.5

[Page 25]

*Vessel*

December 24, 1980

Paint on clay mounted on jar lid

13 x 4 3/4" diam.

Gift of Jill and Sheldon Bonovitz, 1999.19.2

[Page 32]

COLLECTION OF SELIG AND ANGELA SACKS

*Vessel with Glass Jar*

c. 1960s–1980s

Paint on clay mounted on glass jar filled with

glass arrowheads

17 x 4 7/8" diam.

[Page 29]

*Green Tower*

c. 1960s–1980s

19 x 6 1/4 x 5 1/2"

*Red-and-Brown Vessel*

1961

14 3/4 x 6 1/4 x 4 1/4"

## BONE SCULPTURES

PAINT ON CHICKEN BONES AND TURKEY BONES

COLLECTION OF THE AMERICAN FOLK ART MUSEUM

*Gold Throne*

c. late 1960s

5 1/2 x 4 1/2 x 4 1/2"

Promised gift of Barbara Blank and Barry Shapiro,

P15.2000.1

[Page 35]

*Gold Tower*

c. 1970s

37 x 6 x 7"

Gift of Lewis B. Greenblatt, 1999.22.1

[Page 35]

COLLECTION OF SELIG AND ANGELA SACKS

*Chair*

c. late 1960s

6 1/2 x 3 x 5 1/4"

[Page 38]

*Chair*

c. late 1960s

7 x 4 3/4 x 4 1/2"

[Page 39]

## PAINTINGS

COLLECTION OF THE AMERICAN FOLK ART MUSEUM

*The Pile of Andrius*

December 31, 1954

Oil on corrugated cardboard

13 x 15 1/2"

Gift of Lewis and Jean Greenblatt, 2000.1.24

[Page 41]

*Edison Complex*

July 1978

Oil on corrugated cardboard with masking-tape binding

40 x 19"

Gift of Lewis and Jean Greenblatt, 2000.1.19

[Page 43]

*Tower of Hope / a Complex / Stone, steel, and glass—*

*Caroline Meadow*

September 18, 1978

Oil on paperboard

32 x 20"

Gift of Lewis and Jean Greenblatt, 2000.1.20

*Untitled*

November 5, 1978

Oil on corrugated cardboard with masking-tape binding

20 1/4 x 19 1/4"

Gift of Lewis and Jean Greenblatt, 2001.23.9

[Page 42]

*Untitled*

December 4, 1978

Oil on corrugated cardboard with masking-tape binding  
43 x 21"

Gift of Lewis and Jean Greenblatt, 2000.1.18

[Page 44; detail page 45]

OIL ON CORRUGATED CARDBOARD, COLLECTION OF  
LEWIS AND JEAN GREENBLATT

*CONFEDERATION OF STONE AND STEEL—*

*Imperial City—DISTANT VIEW*

June 1978

33 1/2 x 29 1/4"

*Untitled*

November 1, 1978

33 1/8 x 19 1/4"

*Untitled*

November 18, 1978

36 1/4 x 20 5/8"

*City of Cibola*

April 1981

39 7/8 x 24 1/4"

OIL ON BOARD, COLLECTION OF  
SELIG AND ANGELA SACKS

*Untitled*

July 6, 1955

18 1/4 x 16 1/2"

*Untitled*

July 13, 1955

17 3/8 x 15 1/2"

## DRAWINGS

C. 1964–1966 UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, BALLPOINT PEN  
ON PAPER, COLLECTION OF SELIG AND ANGELA SACKS

*Art Work By Eugene From A Thousand and one Nights—*

*Drifting Through the Years*

Emblem Collection wallpaper sample book with  
inserted drawings

19 1/2 x 20 x 2 1/4"

[Front and back cover and pages 52–53, 56–57, 60–61]

*Untitled*

October 1964

14 x 19 1/4"

*Untitled*

October 1964

15 1/2 x 18"

*Untitled*

September 18, 1965

14 x 18"

[Page 47]

*Untitled*

September 20, 1965

18 x 13 3/4"

*Untitled*

October 1, 1965

15 x 18"

[Page 50]

*Untitled*

October 2, 1965

15 x 18"

*Untitled*

October 4, 1965

15 x 18"

*Untitled*

October 5, 1965

15 1/6 x 18"

[Page 51]

*Untitled*

October 8, 1965

15 x 18"

*Untitled*

October 11, 1965

15 x 18"

*Untitled*

October 12, 1965

14 x 18"

*Principal of Design*

October 13, 1965

14 x 18"

*Untitled*  
April 21, 1966  
15 x 18"

*Untitled*  
October 9, 1966  
14 3/4 x 18"

*Untitled*  
November 1966  
17 3/4 x 11 3/4"  
[Page 59]

*Untitled*  
November 1, 1966  
17 3/4 x 11 3/4"

*Untitled*  
November 3, 1966  
11 3/4 x 17 3/4"

*Untitled*  
December 1966  
17 3/4 x 11 3/4"

*Untitled*  
11 3/4 x 17 3/4"  
[Page 54]

*Untitled*  
11 3/4 x 17 3/4"  
[Page 55]

*Untitled*  
17 3/4 x 11 3/4"  
[Page 58]

*Untitled*  
11 3/4 x 17 3/4"

*Untitled*  
14 x 18 1/4"

*Untitled*  
11 3/4 x 17 3/4"

*Untitled*  
11 3/4 x 17 3/4"

*Untitled*  
11 3/4 x 17 3/4"

*Untitled*  
17 3/4 x 11 3/4"

*Untitled*  
11 3/4 x 17 3/4"

*Untitled*  
11 3/4 x 17 3/4"

*Untitled*  
11 3/4 x 17 3/4"

*Untitled*  
11 3/4 x 17 3/4"

*Untitled*  
15 3/8 x 18"

*Untitled*  
11 3/4 x 17 3/4"

*Untitled*  
11 3/4 x 17 3/4"



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

BRETT LITTMAN has been the executive director of The Drawing Center in New York since 2007. Previously he was the deputy director at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, a Museum of Modern Art affiliate, and managing director of wps1.org (now artonair.org). Prior to that, he was the co-executive director of Dieu Donn  Papermill, New York, and associate director of UrbanGlass, Brooklyn. Littman is also an active art and design critic and a member of AICA/USA (International Art Critic Association), and has written numerous catalog essays and articles for a wide variety of international publications. He has lectured nationally and internationally on design, craft, art, and the history of the alternative space movement in New York.

# ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTOR

MARIA ANN CONELLI is the executive director of the American Folk Art Museum. She was previously dean of the School of Graduate Studies at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York and, prior to that, chair of the Smithsonian Institution's graduate programs in the History of Decorative Arts in New York and Washington, D.C. Conelli holds a PhD in architectural history from Columbia University and an MA from the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. She has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the J. Paul Getty Postdoctoral Fellowship in the History of Art and the Humanities, and is a fellow of the American Academy in Rome. Conelli has taught in the United States and in Europe, organized exhibitions, and lectured widely on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century architecture and landscape design.





