

JEHANGIR VAZIFDAR

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A 60 Year Retrospective



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Jehangir Vazifdar was born into an era where cubism and other defining forces of modernism were shattering the very boundaries of art. He was part of a resplendent period in modern Indian Art. The late 60s and 70s were a time when the Indian sensibility found fresh voice, a time when new styles, techniques and visions came into the arc-light. His work always reflected current ideas, yet remained unique and original.

Many people recognize Jehangir Vazifdar as the famous architect who gave the city of Mumbai some of its iconic buildings. However, only a few knew about his true passion for art. He refused to commercialise his art, because of which his works remained hidden for a long time. He was a visionary as much as an artist, who believed that to create something non-existent in nature, one must study the various forms created by nature and use the simplest shapes – straight lines, symmetrical patterns, uniformity of texture and the colour deep black.

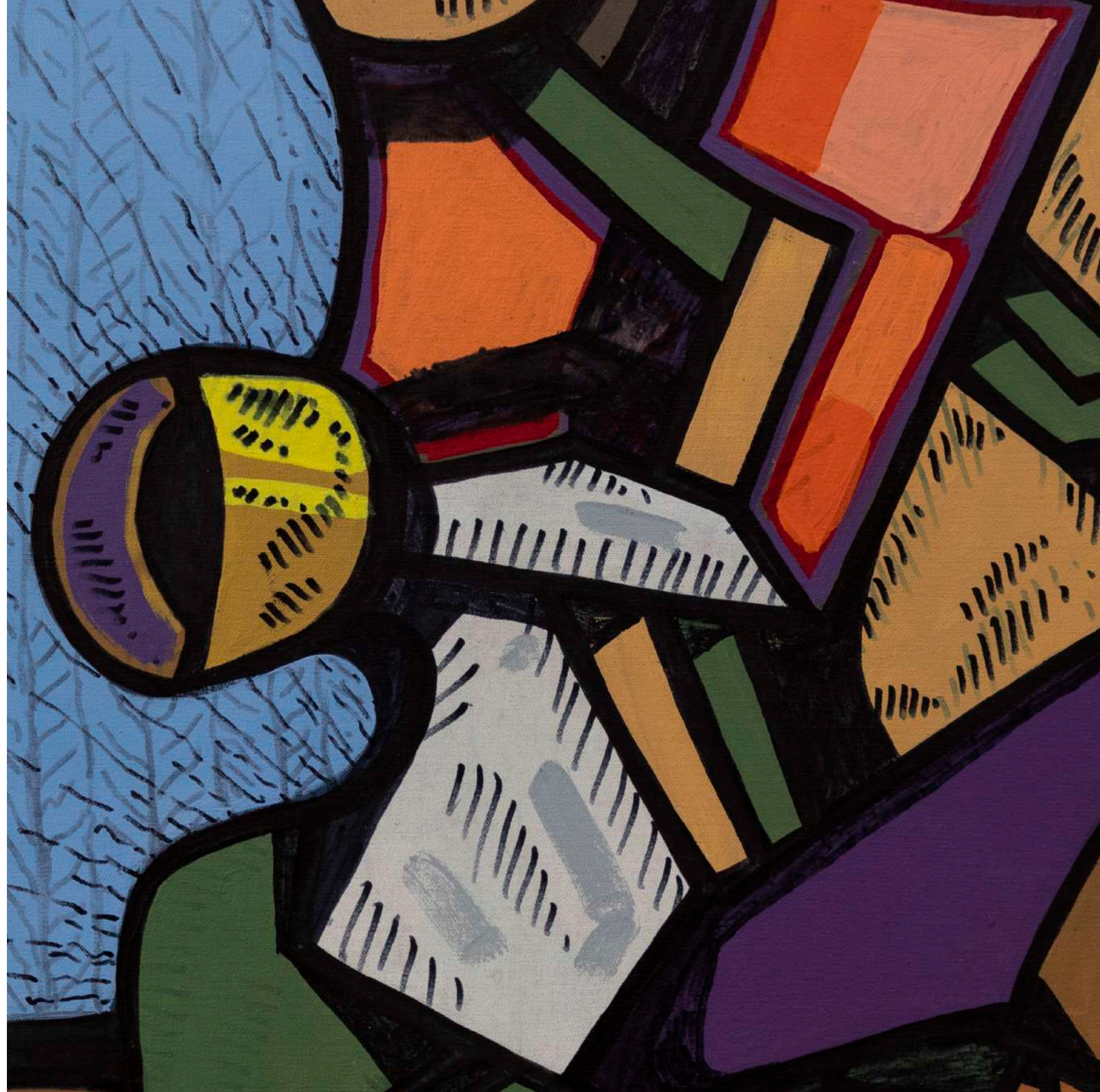
His works speak a unique language of colour, which allows people to read his paintings like a book. For example, he associated white with death, black with peace and a combination of the two colours with heaven.

His most prized technique is called 'Fake-proof', deriving its name from the fact that it is impossible to copy. This technique can primarily be seen in his portrait works. A combination of horizontal and vertical brush strokes along with thick strokes carved using a foot-rule, is the essence of this process, with colours which are directly applied from tubes on to the canvas.

Amongst collectors of Jehangir Vazifdar's oeuvre, special mention must be made of Abby Grey. An avid lover of Indian art and artists, she visited India frequently in the early sixties. Within a short time, her collection included several luminaries. She met Vazifdar in 1965, and described him as "by far the most astonishing artist" she had met on that trip. Despite his reluctance, she could acquire a single piece of work from him. Decades later, in 2015, the canvas was part of a major retrospective, 'Abby Grey and Indian modernism', serving as a vivid motif of a legendary era in Indian Art. Amongst the artists Jehangir Vazifdar showed with are Bhuppen khakkar, Vivasavan, Prabhakar Barwe & SB Palsiker, some legends of the art world.

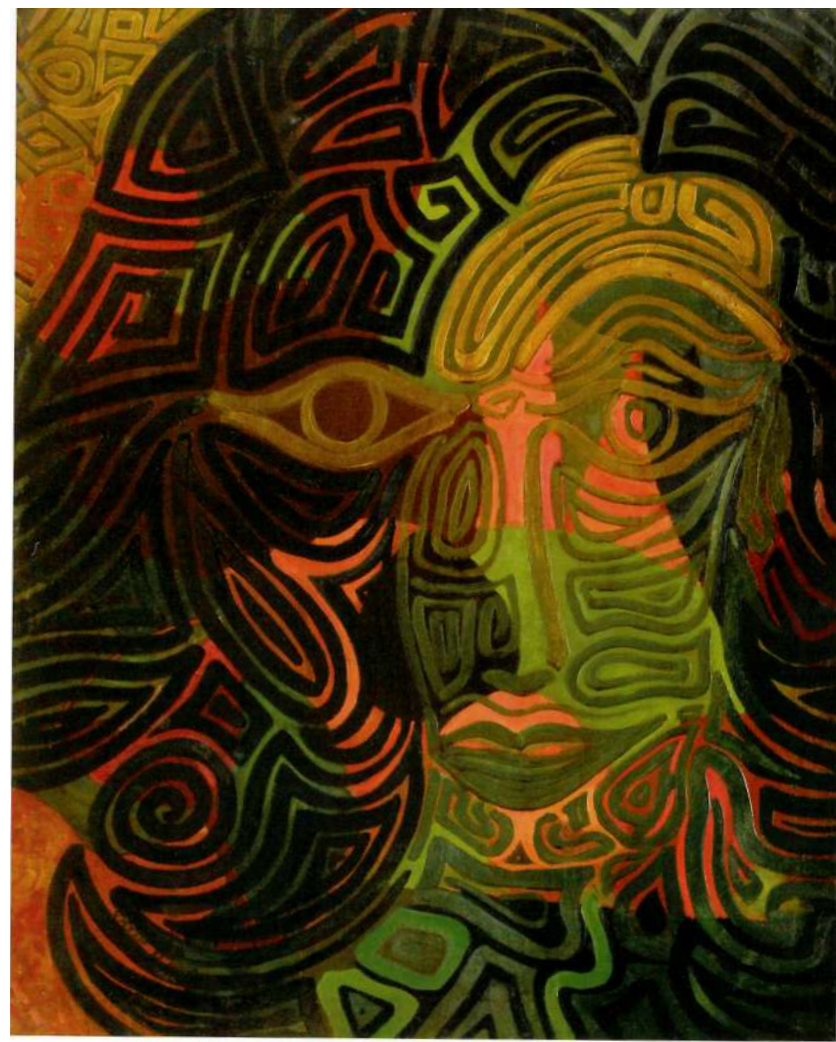


Ovoid Face - Face Series
1974
Oil on canvas
106 x 76 cm





Abstract Landscape
1971
Oil on canvas
102 x 76 cm



The Beautiful Girl
Oil on canvas
114 x 91 cm



Portrait of the Unknown Hero
1971
Oil on canvas
122 x 91 cm



Village
1973
Oil on canvas
102 x 76 cm



Swiss Village
Oil on canvas
91 x 122 cm

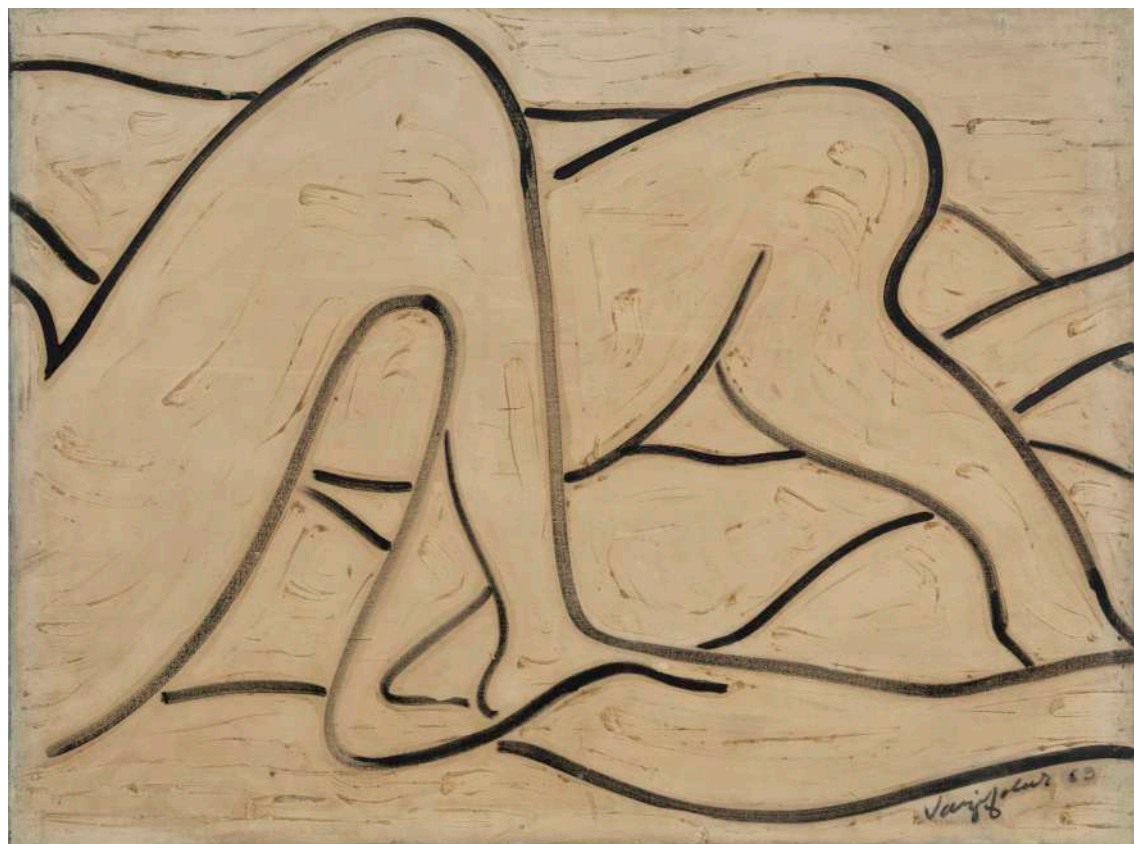




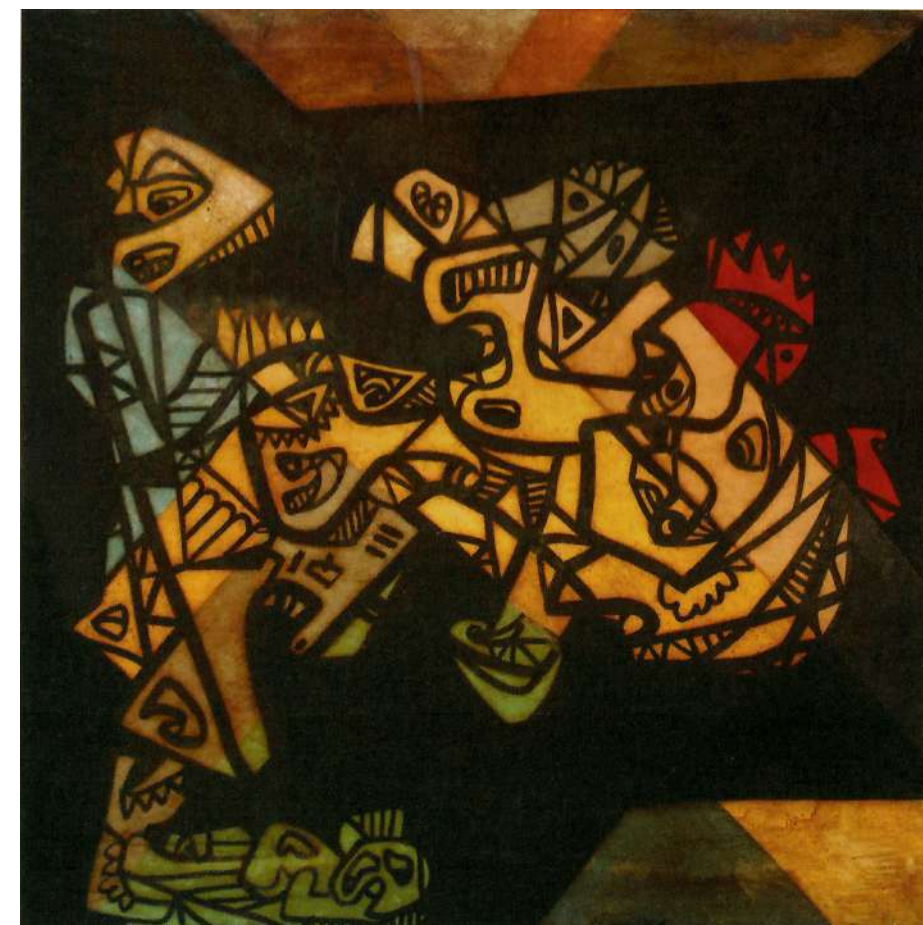
The Writer
Oil on canvas
86 x 71 cm



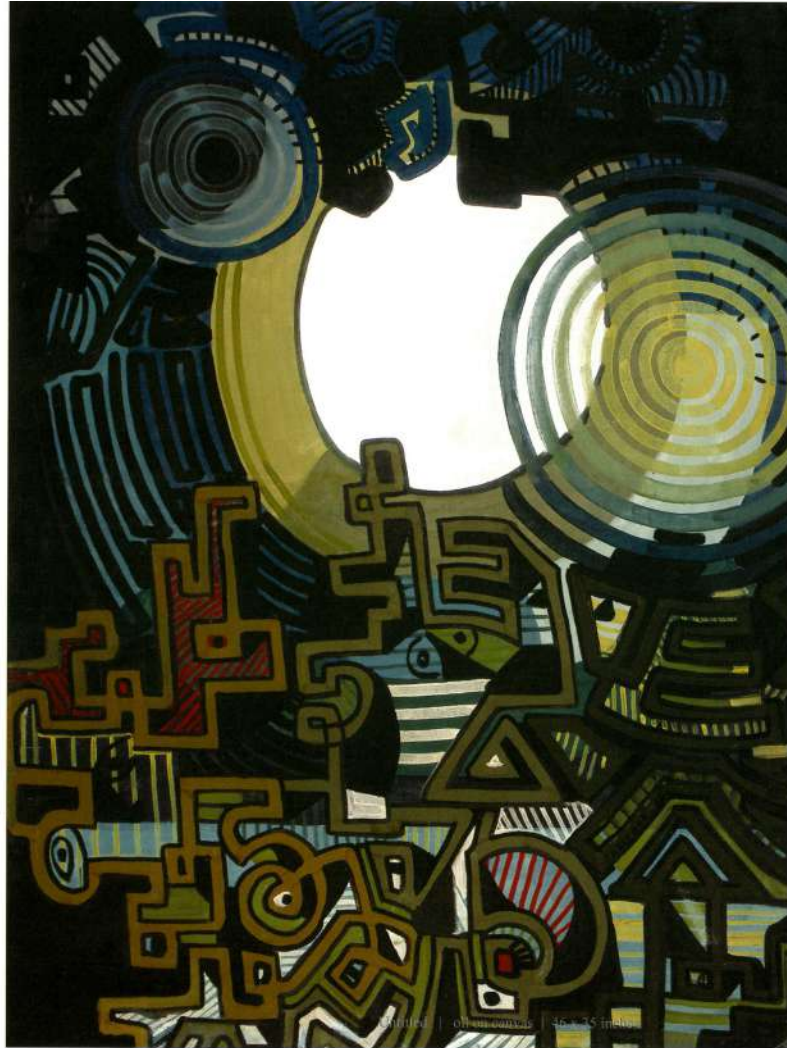
The Embrace
Oil on canvas
90 x 145 cm



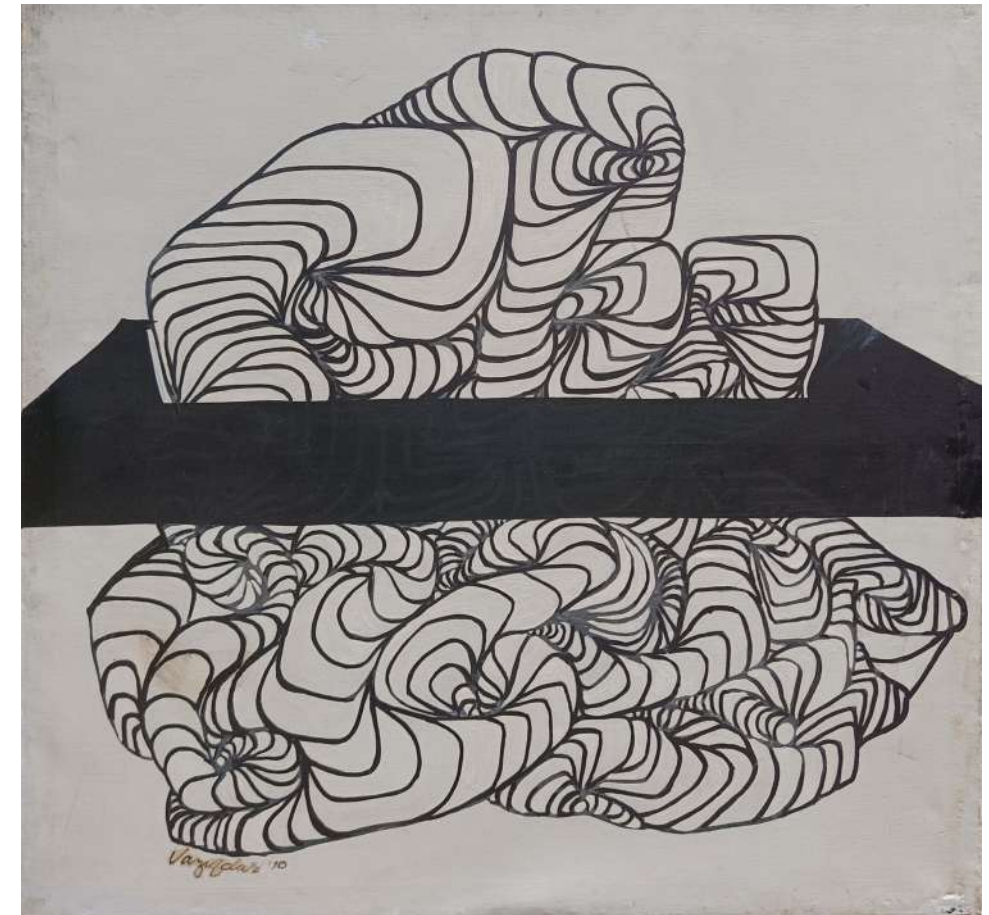
Relaxing on Beach
1969
Oil on canvas
91 x 122 cm



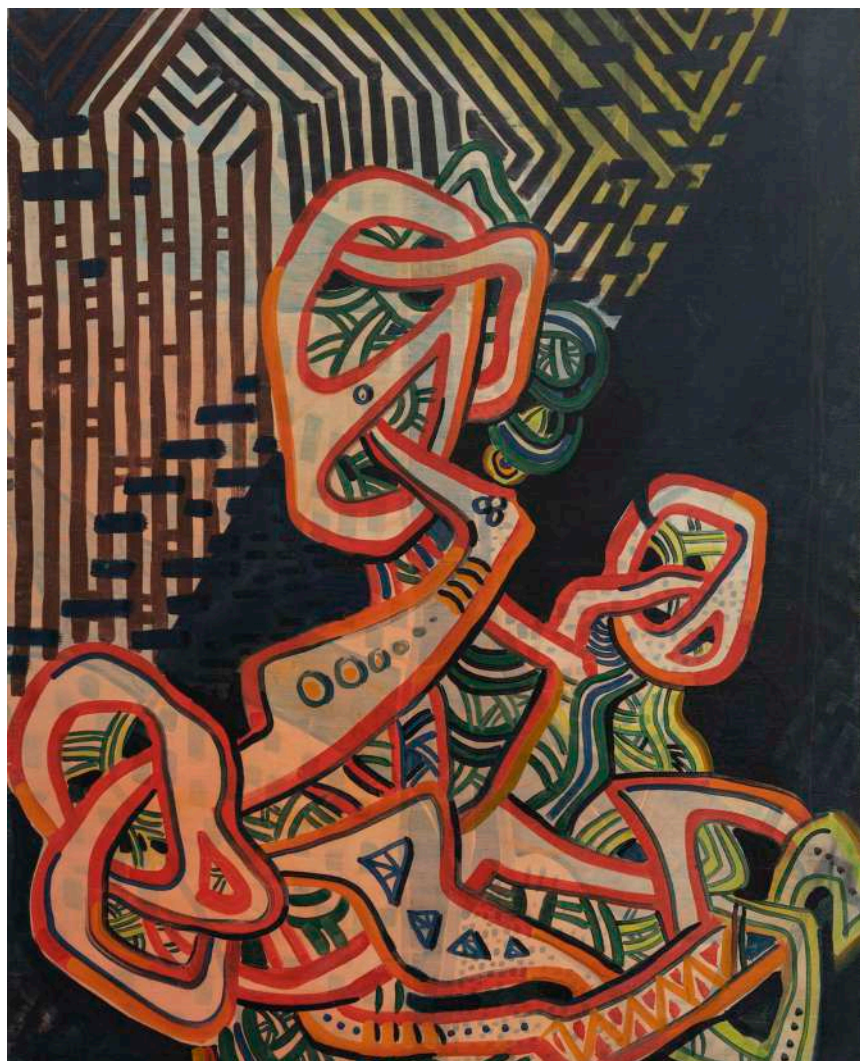
Untitled
Oil on canvas
122 x 122 cm



Untitled
Oil on canvas
126 x 99 cm



Confusion
1970
122 x 122 cm
Oil on canvas



Mother & Child
Oil on canvas
147 x 117 cm



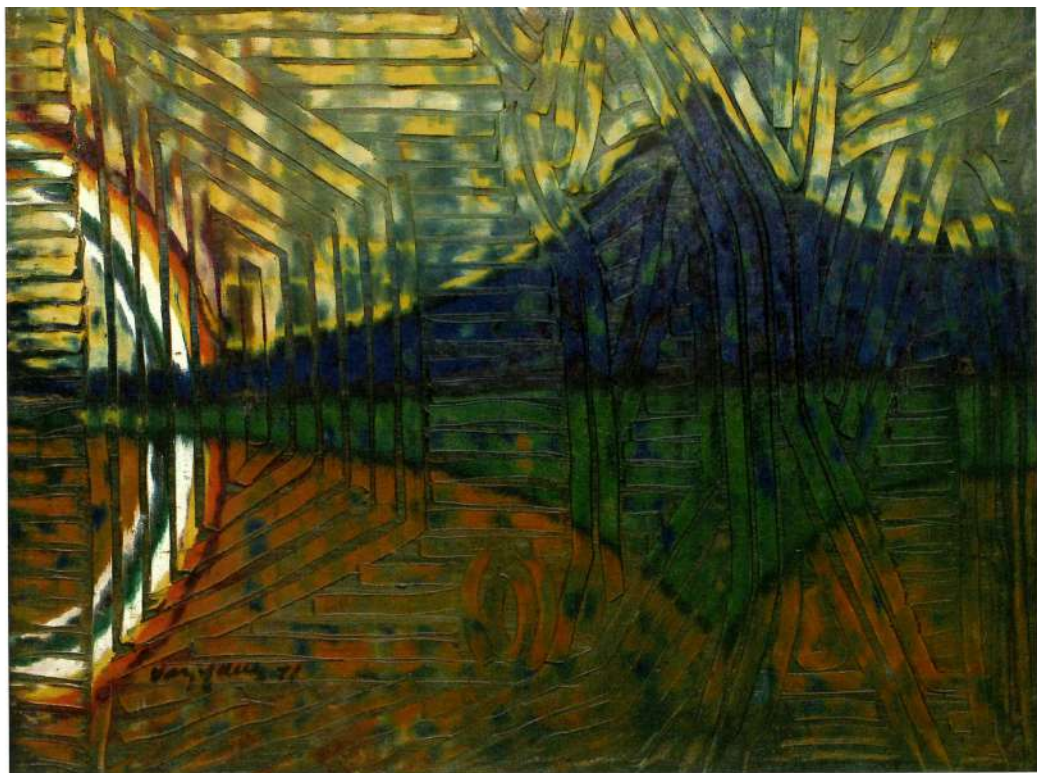
Untitled (couple series)
1987
Felt-tip on printed paper
120 x 90 cm



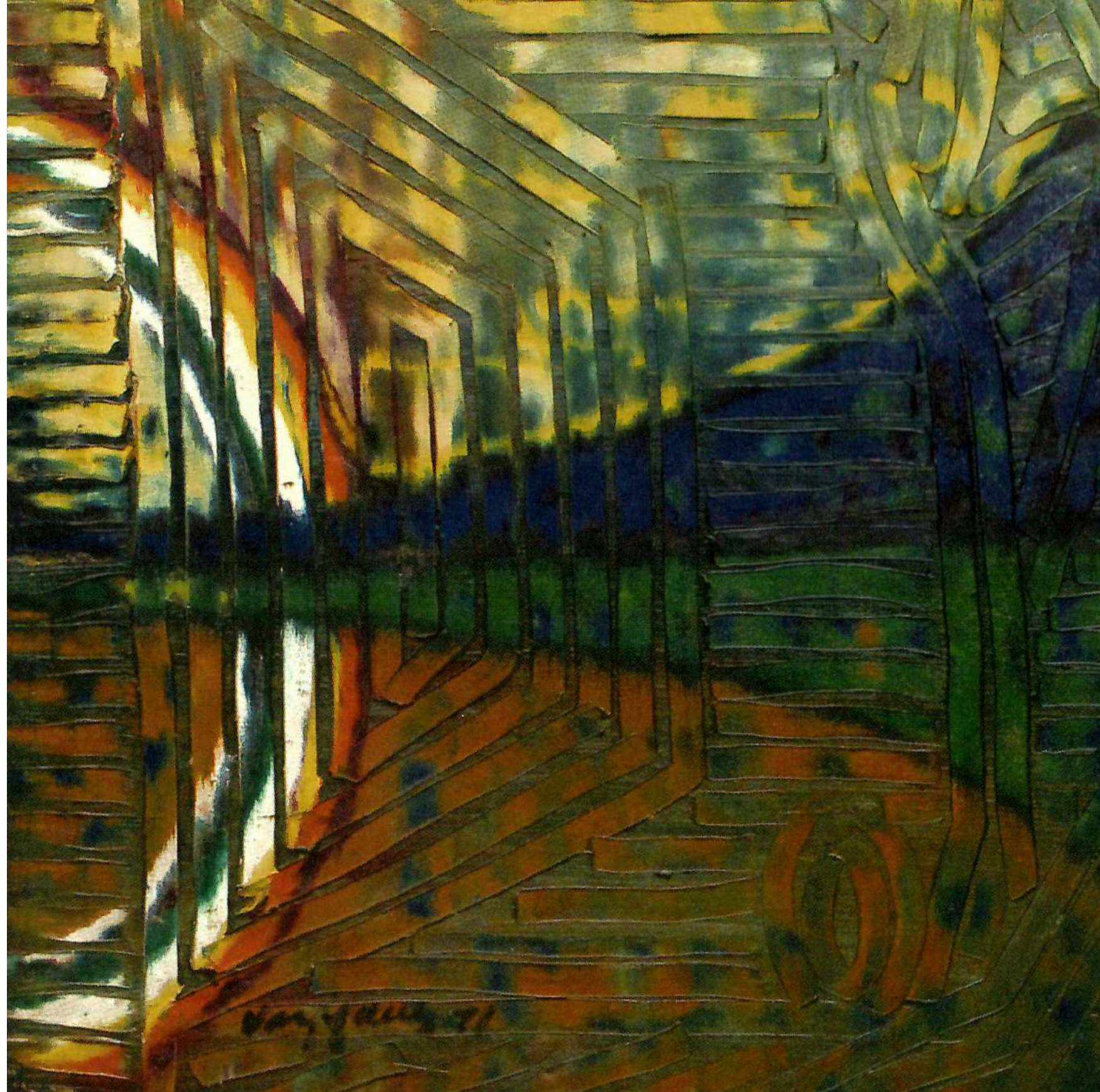
The Surreal Dream
Oil on canvas
140 x 115 cm



Journey
1986
Oil on canvas
102 x 76 cm



Scenery with a rainbow and reflection
1991
Oil on canvas
76 x 99 cm

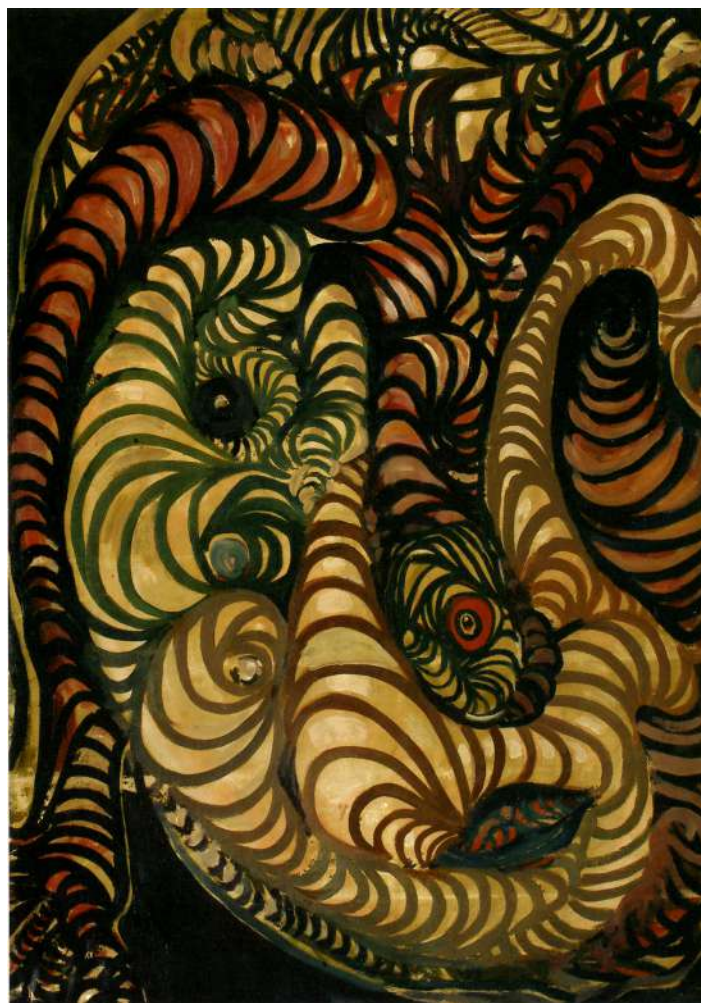




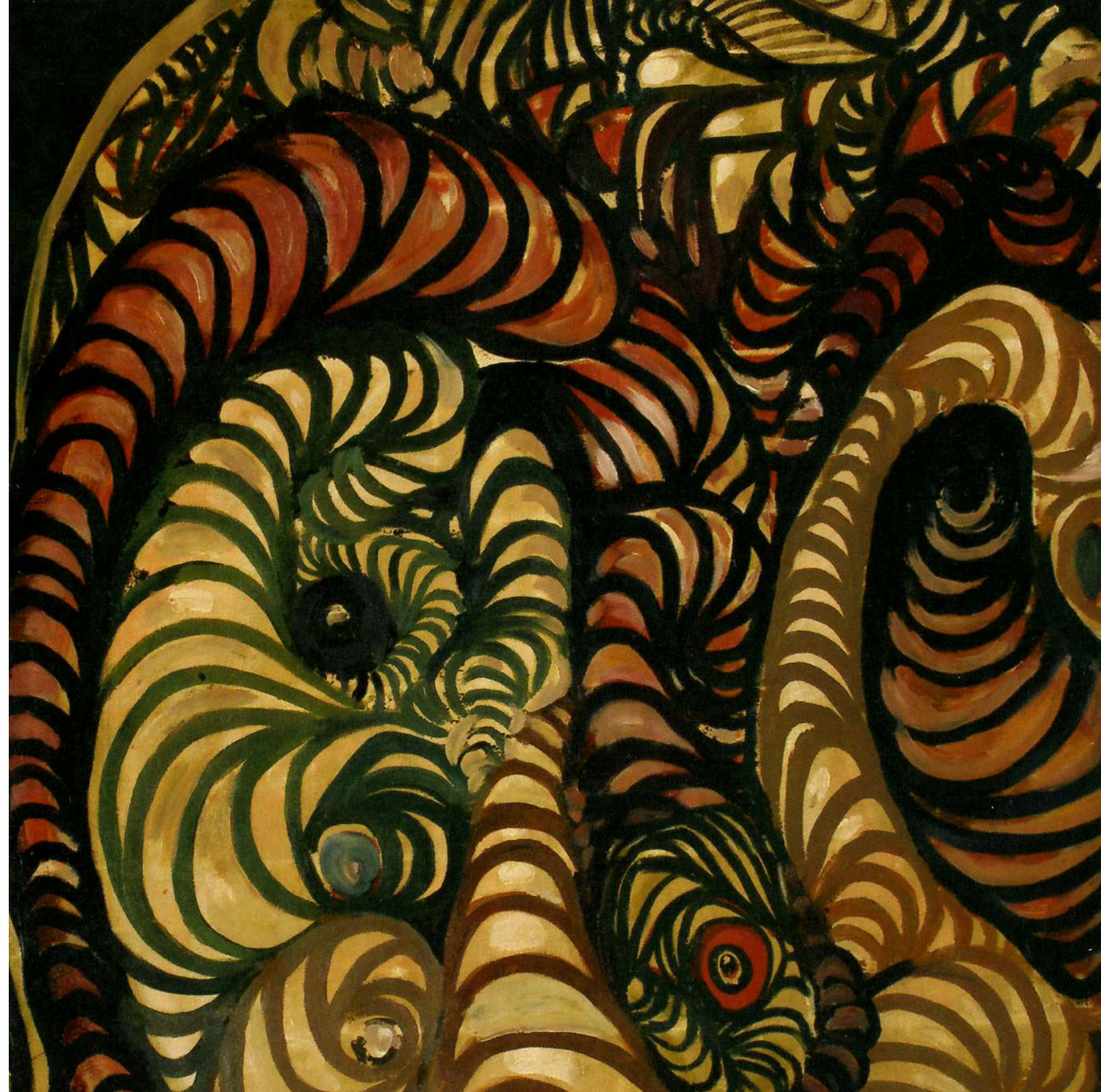
Dancing
102 x 81 cm
Oil on canvas

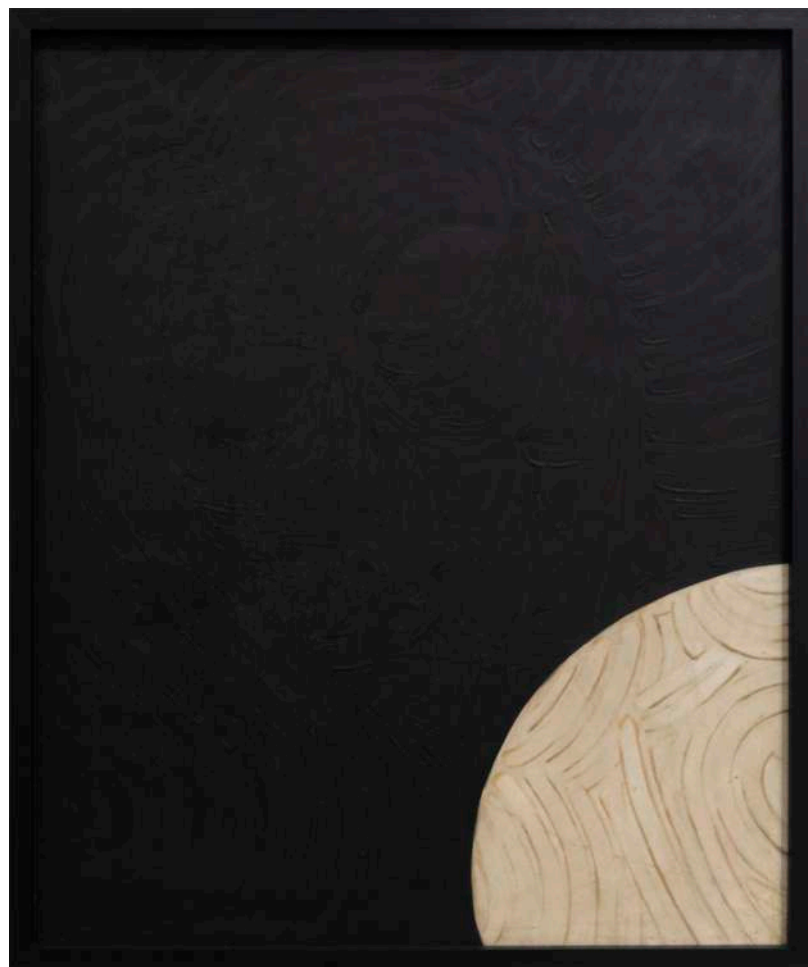


Running Horse
1991
Oil on canvas
91 x 122 cm

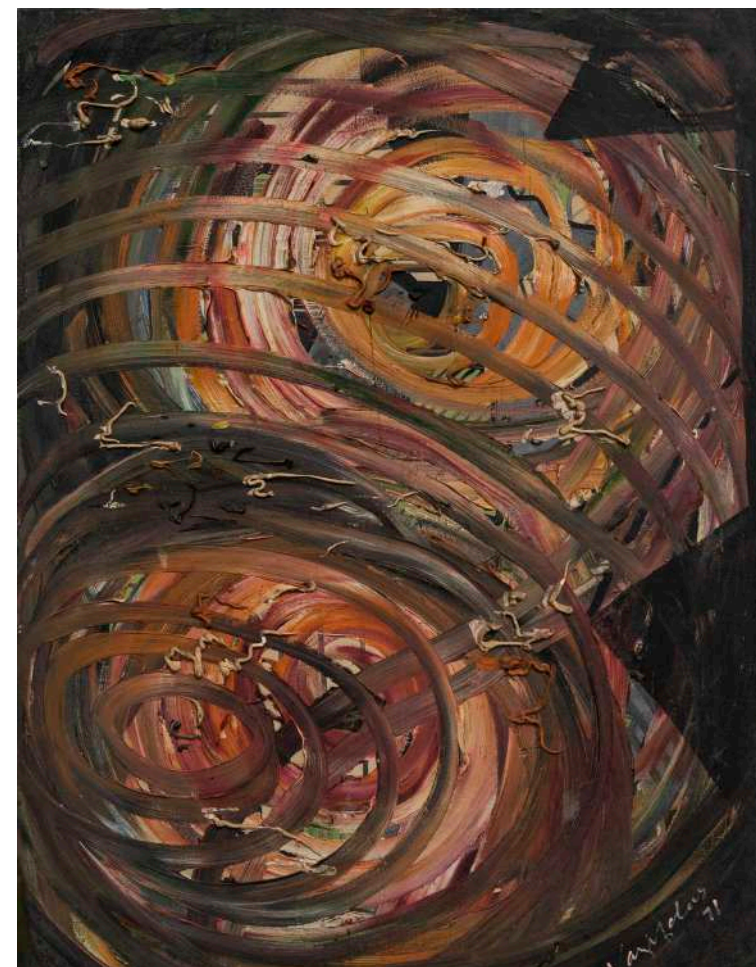


Audience
1967
Oil on canvas
109 x 77 cm





Serenity
Oil on canvas
140 x 112 cm



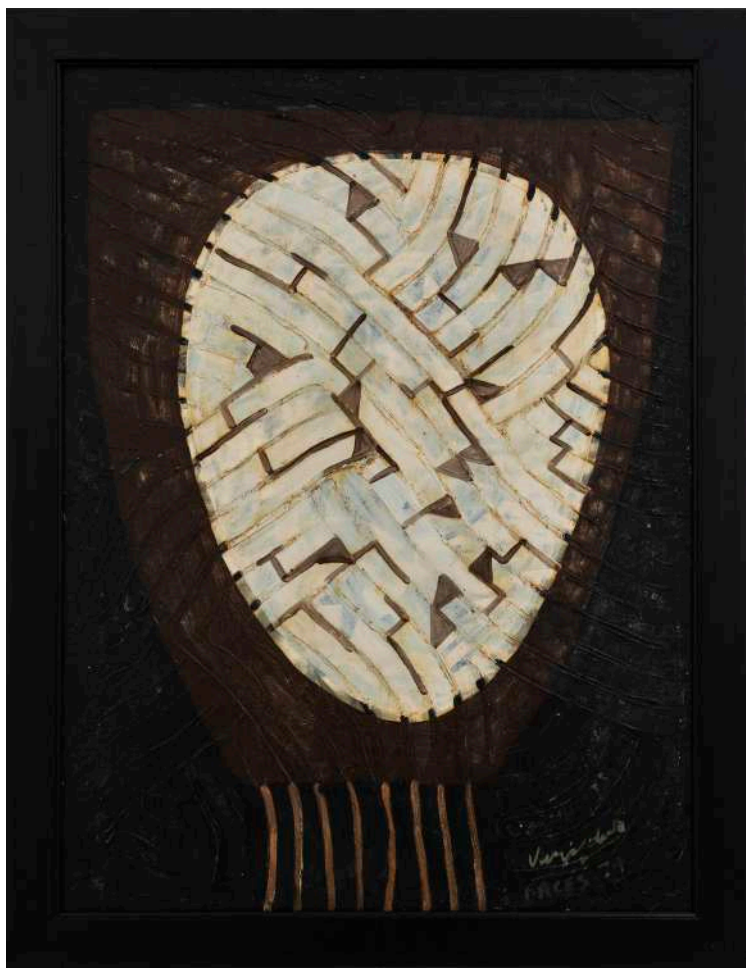
Foresight
1971
Oil on canvas
122 x 92 cm



The Last Supper
1967
Oil on canvas
102 x 76 cm



Horse
1972
Oil on canvas
102 x 77 cm

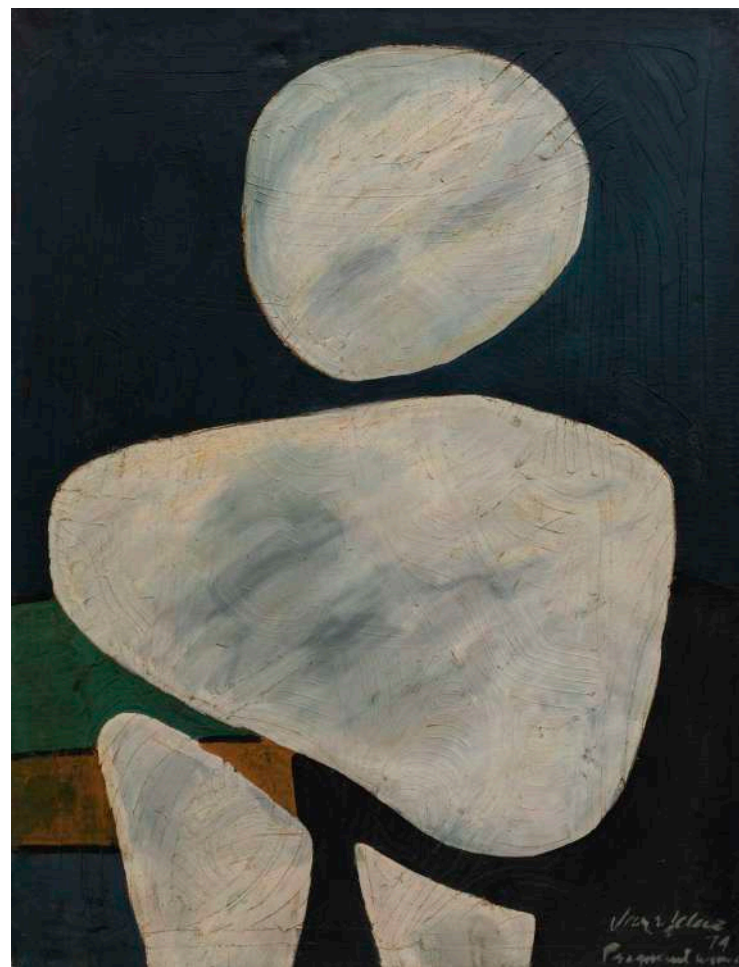


One Face - Face Series
1974
Oil on canvas
89 x 115 cm





Like a Viking Warrior
1973
Oil on canvas
91x 114 cm



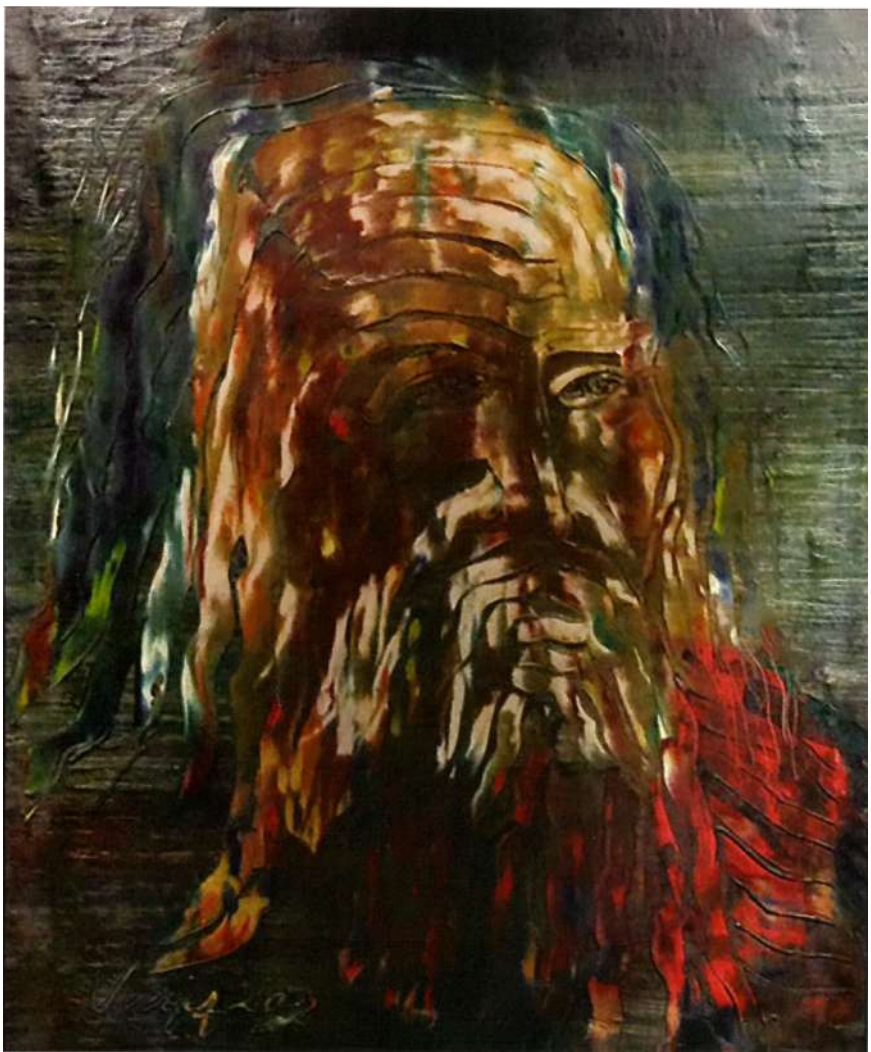
Primal Man
1974
Oil on canvas
89 x 117 cm



Mountain Ran
1969
Oil on canvas
107 x 76 cm



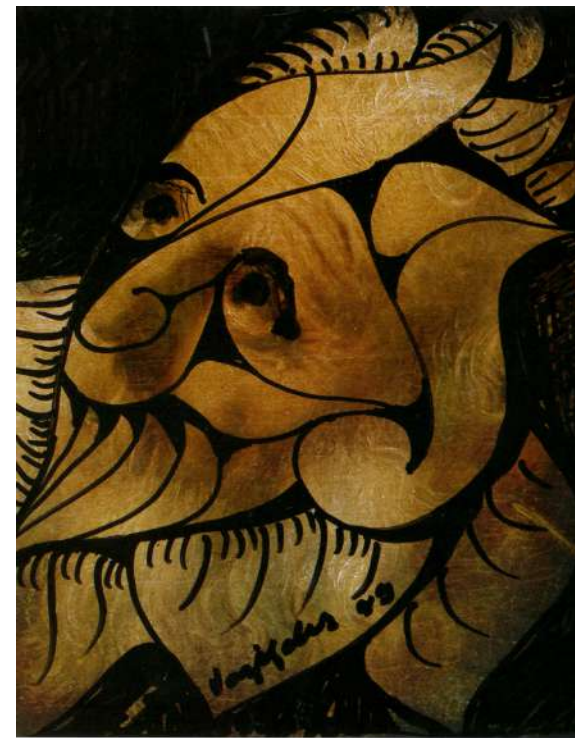
Traffic
1972
Oil on canvas
91 x 122 cm



Leonardo Da Vinci
1972
Oil on canvas
91 x 76 cm



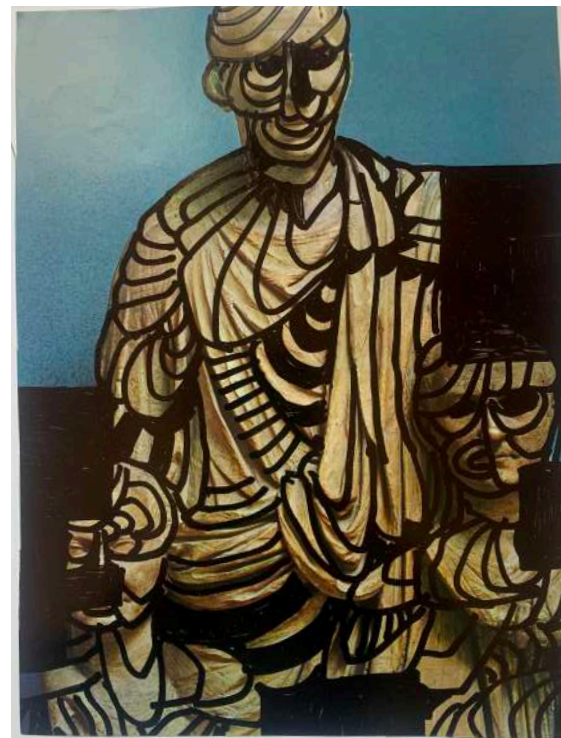
Untitled (Face Series)
1997
Felt-tip on printed paper
27 x 20 cm



Untitled
1998
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



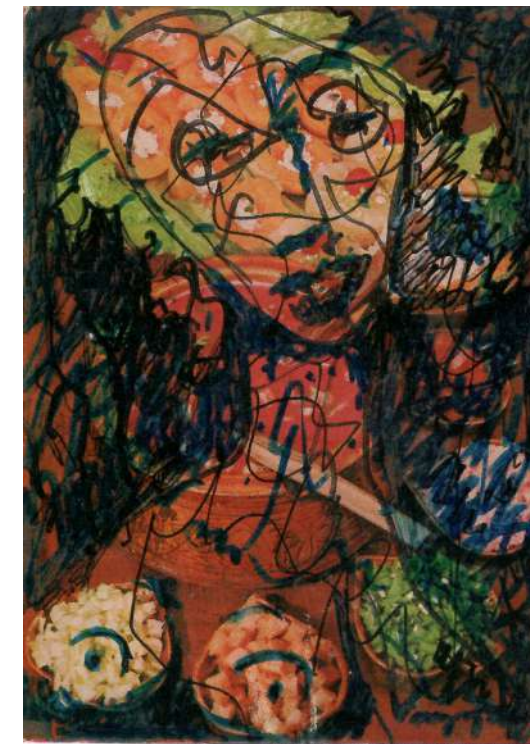
Untitled
1986
Felt-tip on printed paper
27 x 20 cm



Untitled
1995
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



Untiteld (Face Series)
1987
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



The Girl
1997
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



Untitled (Two faces)
1999
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



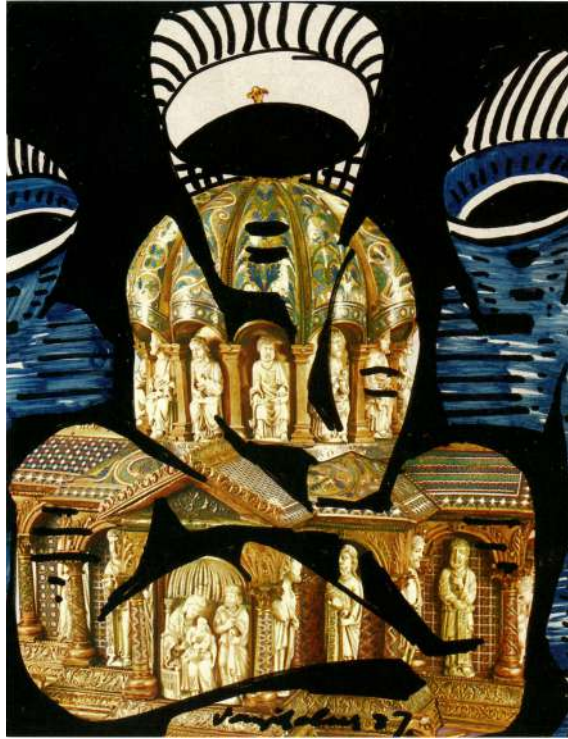
The Athletes
1992
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



Soldier
1990
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



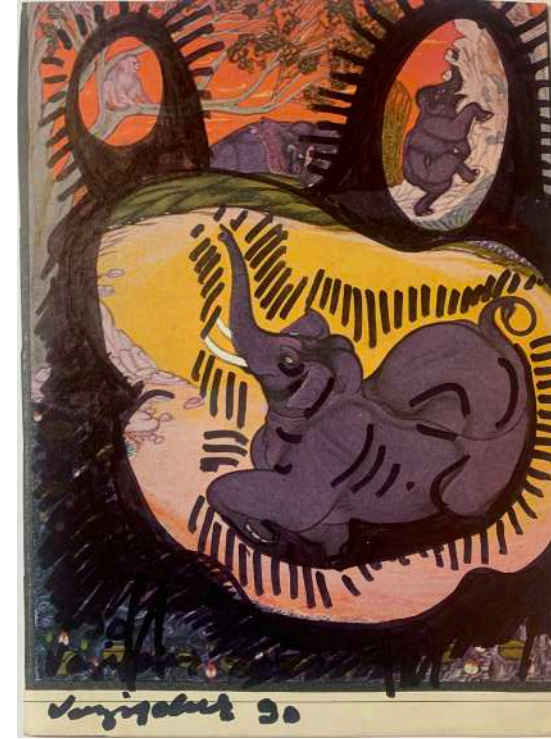
Untitled (Two Figures)
1987
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



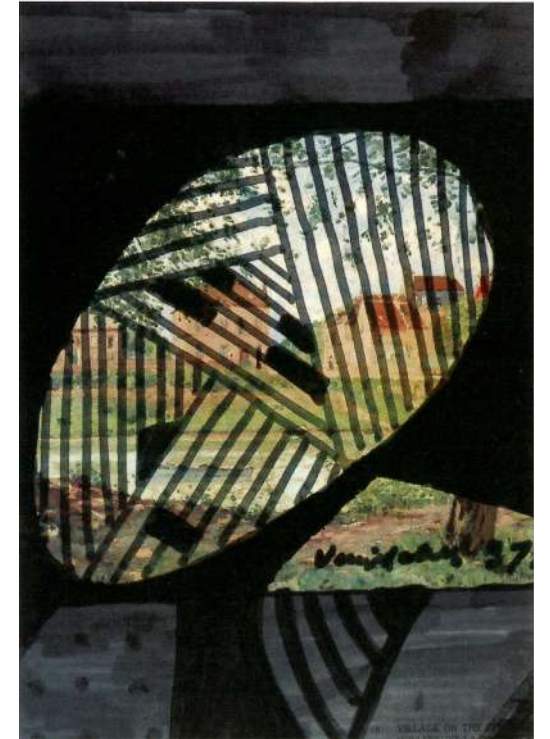
Monumental
1987
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



Untitled
1987
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



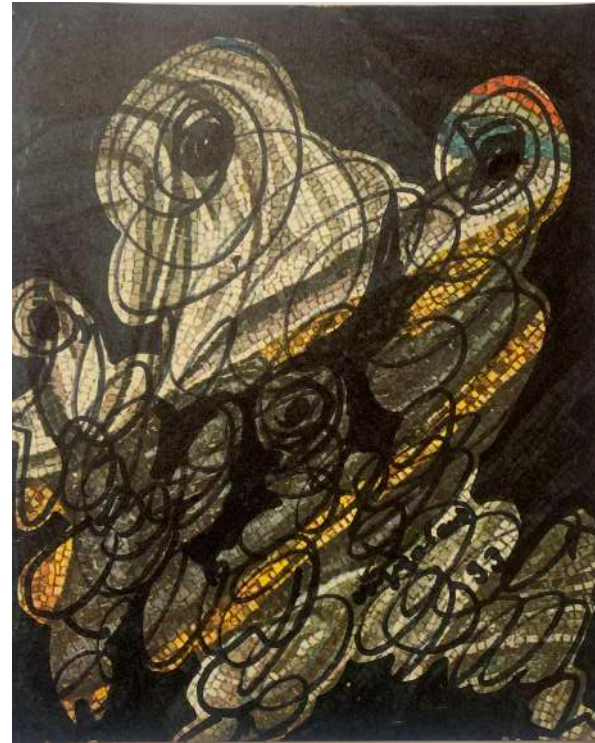
Untitled
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



Untitled (Face Series)
1997
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



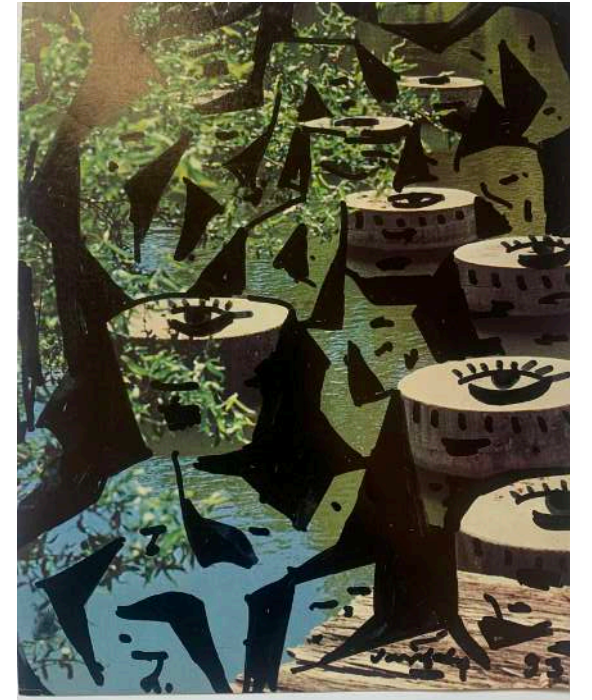
Untitled (Portrait)
1995
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



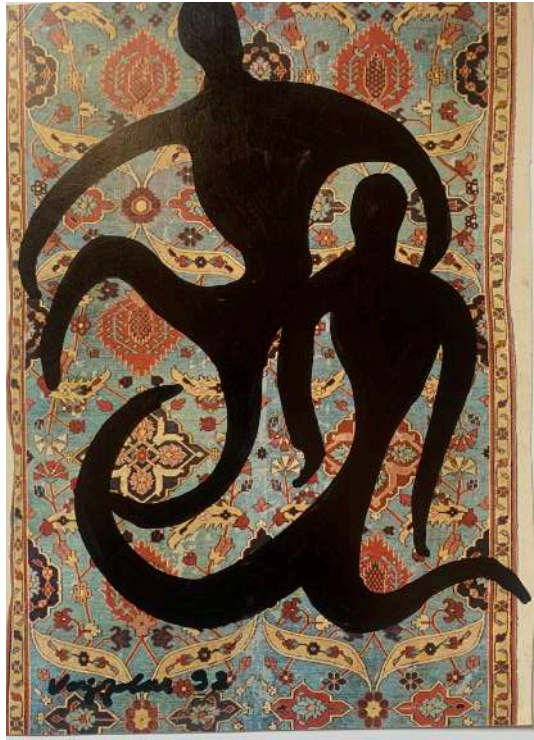
Untitled
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



Untitled
1998
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



Untitled
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



Untitled
1995
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



Untitled
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



Untitled (Portrait)
1995
Felt-tip on printed paper
21 x 29 cm



The Actor
1986
Felt-tip on printed paper
29 x 22 cm



The Girl
1985
Oil on canvas
24 x 70 cm



Untitled (couple series)
1999
Felt-tip on printed paper
27 x 21 cm



"Painting should have two functions, viz, To please the eye and satisfy the imagination of both the artist and the observer".

– Jehangir Vazifdar

Biography

Born in Bombay in 1920, Jehangir Vazifdar was a man of many refined talents. He made his living as a very successful architect, contractor and builder, but was also very active in post-independent India's art scene. Although remembered primarily as an architect and building contractor, he was a true innovator in the arts. He devised languages of colour, while correlating hues with various abstract concepts and emotions. These have been recorded in his unpublished 'Color Alphabet and Dictionary.' He dedicated his artistic career to producing works that could not be copied or otherwise forged.

He remained a practicing architect and builder of great reputation, founding his own architects' firm in the late '40s and early '50s. He then set up the Vazifdar College of Building Industries, a pioneering effort in the field of construction-related education.

In parallel, Jehangir Vazifdar continued to lead a fertile, inventive life as an artist. Jehangir Vazifdar held several exhibitions in Mumbai, the first one being at the Taj Art Gallery about 50 years ago. He had several group shows with the now famous artists like Bhupen Khakkar, Vivasvan and Barwe and was also part of the exhibition called Indian Modernism held at the New York University Museum put together by the Abby Grey Art Gallery. The famous art collector Abby Grey from New York had taken one of his paintings back with her in the 70s along with now famous artists like Maqbool Fida Hussein, Francis Newton Souza, Satish Gujral and Ram Kumar.

Past Exhibition

Taj Art Gallery
Taj Mahal Hotel
June, 1966

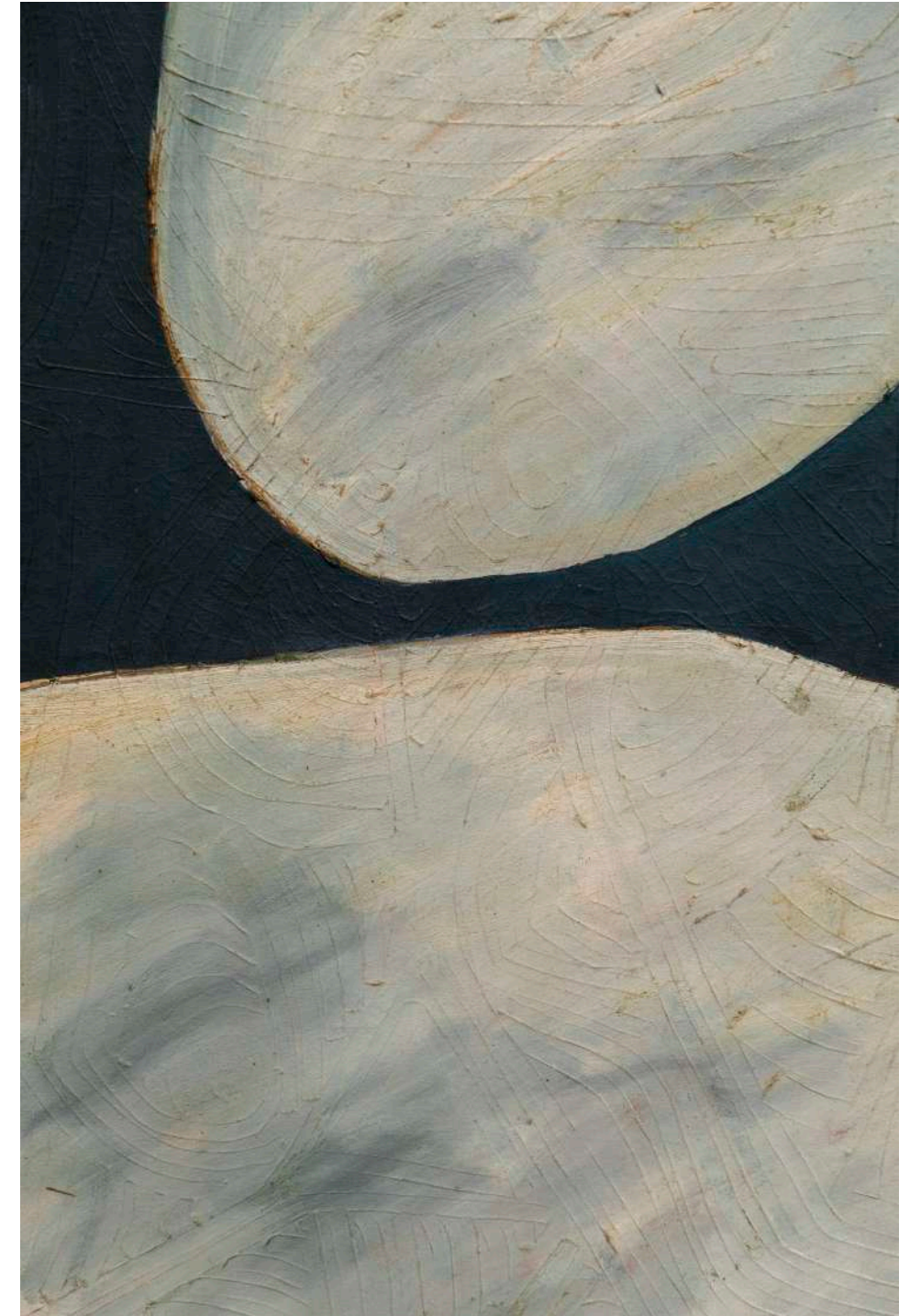
Taj Art Gallery
Taj Mahal Hotel
March, 1981

Taj Art Gallery
Taj Mahal Hotel
February, 1987

Jehangir Art Gallery
Kala Ghoda
November, 2004

Leela Kempinski
Near Airport
Studio Windsor Colaba
March, 2002

Abby Grey
New York, 2005



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