

IRVIN TEPPER

EVIDENCE OF PHANTOMS
MADE REAL BETWEEN THOUGHTS



Wheels to Salvation, 2018
1962 Oldsmobile Ninety-Eight with vinyl wrap

Installation view at the Station Museum of
Contemporary Art, Houston, TX, 2019.

IRVIN TEPPER
EVIDENCE OF PHANTOMS
MADE REAL BETWEEN THOUGHTS

Exhibition Curated by Ann Harithas

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November 17, 2018—February 24, 2019

Station Museum of Contemporary Art · Houston, Texas
October 12, 2019—January 12, 2020

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FOREWORD

BY SOPHIE ASAKURA

All of Tepper's work is experimental. Despite the mastery of ceramics and drawing that Tepper undoubtedly possesses, his art is an extension of his vision. In both drawings and ceramics, Tepper's processes are intuitive, he allows the material to take shape organically. Deformation and randomness are built into his creative process. The results of each experiment are never honed to a traditional understanding of perfection, rather the value of the experiment is that it is in itself an invitation; for chance to enter into the dance between artist and medium as a third partner. In that all the works depend on chance encounters or accidents between artist and medium, chance itself becomes a vital element. Tepper has turned his back on the idea of artist as autocrat. For him, the creative process is a democratic exchange between artist, medium (be it porcelain or computer), and chance. The medium has the autonomy to collaborate in a way that produces totally unexpected and beautiful results.

The exhibition of the recent work of Irvin Tepper, *Evidence of Phantoms Made Real Between Thoughts*, at the Station Museum of Contemporary Art consists of several components. An eerie and beautiful Oldsmobile Ninety-Eight greets the viewer, interior glowing red, its body covered in a dance of white lines. Around the corner is a broken white porcelain cup, sagging and jagged, surrounded by blue and white drawings of wet porcelain. In the main space, the walls are lined with monumental digital drawings which engulf the viewer into the black and white abstract compositions. In the center of the space is an altar with a long table that displays colorful porcelain sculptures that appear almost biological. In the back of the museum, Tepper's video, *Mystery of Chance*, is projected.

Irvin Tepper's work invites appreciation on many levels. It invites the viewer to speculate on process and subject matter. In the museum, we constantly hear people naming the works, especially the large drawings, by what they think they see: a horse, a spine, an abyss. The visual ambiguity of the work invites viewers to speculate about what they are seeing. In his description of the show, Tepper asks the viewer, "Why try to make phantoms real? If you start out attempting to create a phantom it would probably resemble a cartoon and what was imagined, because a phantom is a fleeting perception and creation of the mind." The phantom of the ceramics and monumental drawings is a non-thought. It's the name at the tip of your tongue that never materializes; it's the mathematical limit you can infinitely approach but never arrive at; it's déjà vu.

In these works, Tepper has provided a curtained stage or window, behind which the phantom lurks in shadow. The viewer experiences a rush of anticipation, the feeling of a mystery that's not soon to be solved. The phantom, however, never walks onstage into the sterile light of figuration. We wait, guessing its name but always falling short. Surprisingly, the wait is not frustrating. Tepper, in allowing the phantom to remain veiled, has opened up infinite avenues of thought. The absence of a name or a categorization opens space for the viewer to fill in the blank. The viewer experiences their own Rorschach test. The ceramics crawl and squirm, contorting themselves in and out of familiarity. The inky blacks and shocking whites of the drawings slither until they become a mirror. We see in the work only what we bring with us.

In the cup series, by contrast, the invitation works in the opposite direction. The cups are inductive rather than deductive. The viewer is provided the final product, the reference: a cup; and is invited to use their imagination. In its repetition and manipulation, the cup takes on other meanings. The viewer is flung into orbit, into a fluid space of association and movement but is always tethered to the cup. In *Mystery of Chance*, the cup becomes wet clay, being molded and remolded, or a Tibetan singing bowl humming a meditation. The white cup *The Triumph of Mystery*, rests precariously on a pedestal. Despite being broken, the object maintains a kind of delicacy and elegance. It catches the light like cloth, folding into itself and whipping upward in a breeze. Tepper makes the viewer forget the idea of the cup and focus instead on the materiality of the cup. The cups are like sugar cubes or a familiar word said too often; they dissolve without disappearing.

Tepper's work carries considerable political weight. In a world of dogma and authoritarianism, the truest radicality is freedom of thought and Tepper's work celebrates just that. He has offered to the viewer fields of unfettered imagination and association. His work is not only non-figural, but an invitation to personal association. In his work, Tepper offers moments of contemplation that expand imaginative thought and reveals that there is freedom and power in giving oneself up to chance.



Large Porcelain, 2018

Installation view at the Station Museum of Contemporary Art, Houston, TX, 2019.



SACRED VESSELS

BY JAMES HARITHAS
DIRECTOR OF THE STATION MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART
HOUSTON, TX

Irvin Tepper's best known contributions to contemporary art are the ceramics and the bronzes, drawings, and photographs inspired by the common coffee cup. Tepper's cups are transformed into sacred vessels because, although broken, they are redeemed by the artist's aesthetic and by the rightness of their form, the purity of their color, and the beauty of their porcelain surfaces.

To create his cups, Tepper relies on intuition, gesture, ritual, and his instinct for the spiritual. His unique approach also derives from his mastery of ceramic technique, his free use of accident, his constant experimentation with a broad range of media, and his striving to improve his inner life.

His dynamic, black and white cup photographs project an atmosphere of mystery. The artist photographs the cups against an unusual background of burnt and mutilated cardboard, so that there is a startling illusion of movement.

Tepper's masterful drawings are mandala-like evocations of the cup's place at the center of his artistic universe. The cup represents the union of opposites; that is, it structures emptiness and contains fullness. Tepper's cups are not useful as containers of anything but his profound visual insights and spiritual aspirations. The drawings are the artist's painstaking meditations on space and linear structure. The portrait heads that he sometimes draws and his usual subject, the cups, become transcendent through linear multi-faceted constructs that relate Native American spirit lines to Cubist structure.

Besides being an expression of his spiritual self, the cups reflect Tepper's world-view. They are metaphors for our bombed and broken world, a world that is rejuvenated by the artist's skill and his abstract approach to form. The influence of Peter Voulkos is evident in Tepper's art. Voulkos elevated punctured and broken ceramic sculpture into urgent masterpieces of personal expression. Tepper's vision is more intimate, his materials more fragile, and his sense of form far less traditional.

His other photographic projects are of a different order altogether, revealing a social or political reference. His photographs of sleeping homeless men and women show them at their most vulnerable, making them less of a threat. His handsome photographs of hand-painted food signs reveal the American fixation on fast food; at the same time, they are a record of an authentic folk art tradition. Tepper has also documented the classic American car in Cuba and the destruction of the World Trade Center, in addition to many hundreds of works of art of professional interest to himself and for use as teaching aids.

Unlike most artists who rarely stray far from the art world, Tepper is an inveterate traveler. He has crisscrossed the American continent, wandered the back-roads of the Far West, and explored the Third World. Out of a trip to Central America came a series of photographs that not only document the poverty of the indigenous people of the war-torn region but also reveal the horror of the military occupation of their villages. Once when surrounded by hostile soldiers with their weapons at the ready, Tepper continued taking their pictures. Even though his life was in danger, he would not be deterred from pursuing his art.

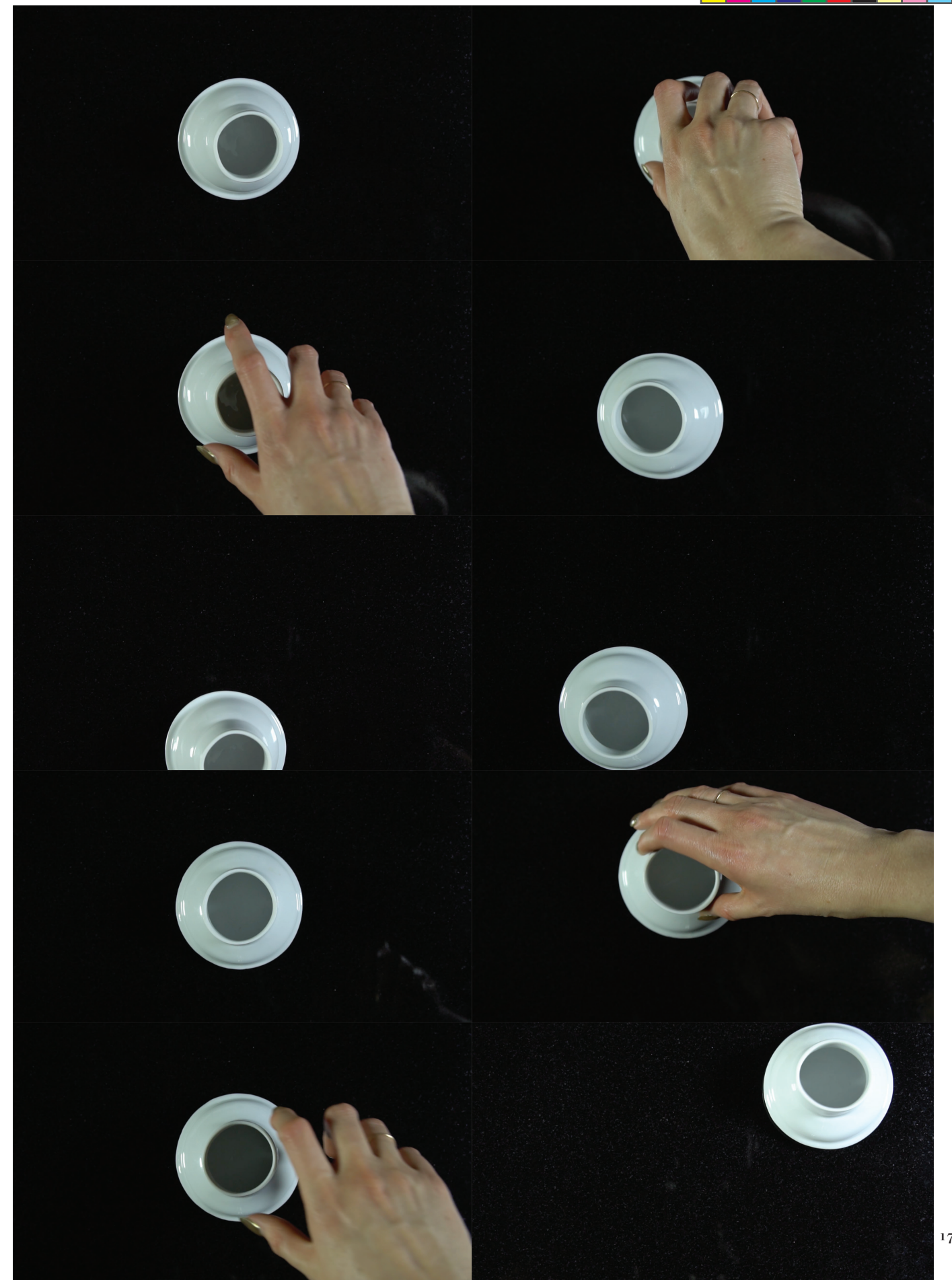
In or outside of his studio, Tepper works incessantly at making art. He excels in an impressive range of media: ceramics, video, painting, photography, sculpture, and drawing. He is also an innovative collector, connoisseur, writer, and art professor. His struggle for inner clarity is fundamental to his work as an artist, and to his vision as a teacher and as man of the world. His sacred vessels are an important contribution to the art of his time, precisely because of their beauty as works of art and their power as symbols of rejuvenation.

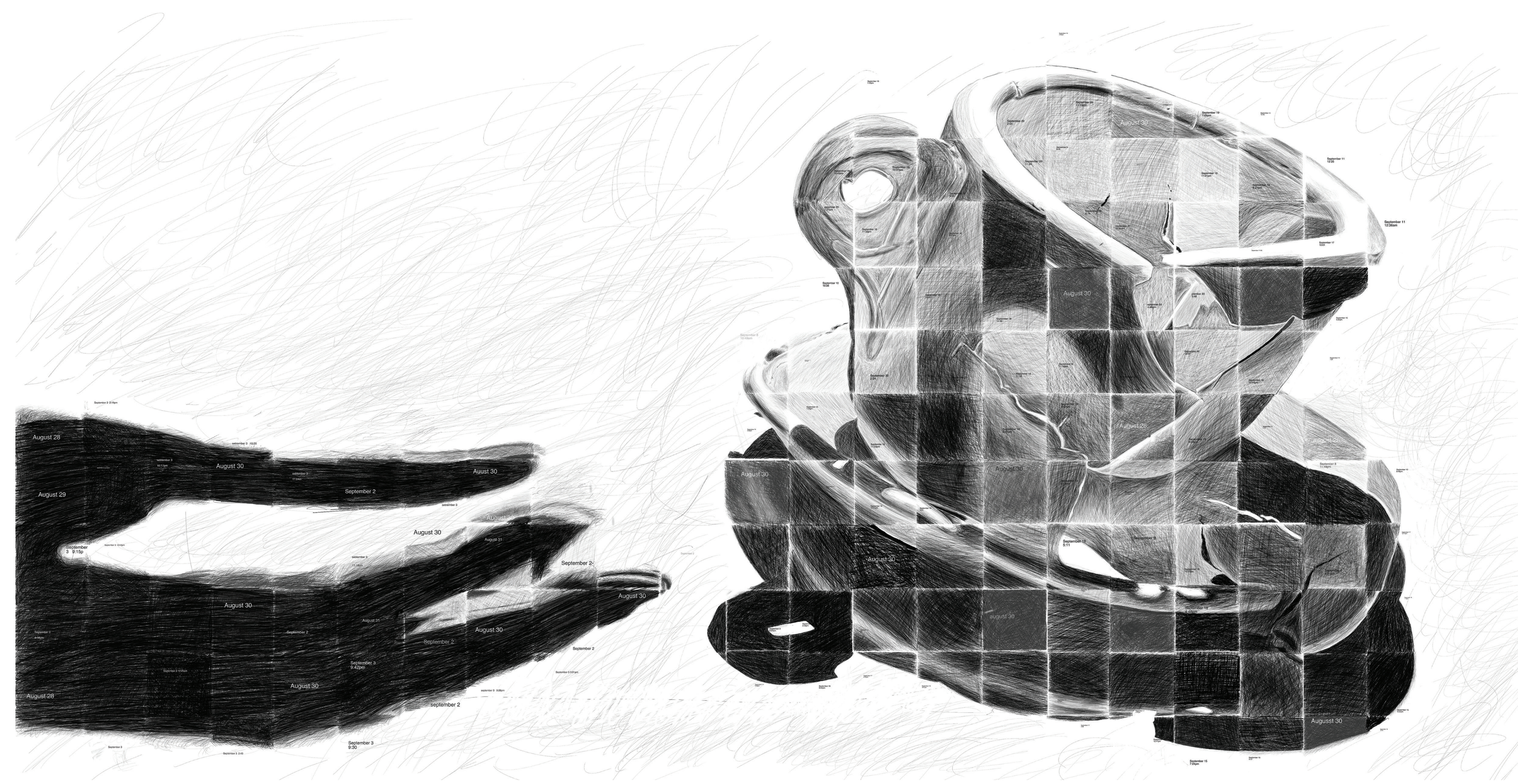


Video stills from:

Dreaming in a World of Chance Part I, 2018
Video, 12:25 minutes

Dreaming in a World of Chance Part II, 2018
Video, 21:26 minutes





The Triumph of Mystery, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
72" x 56"



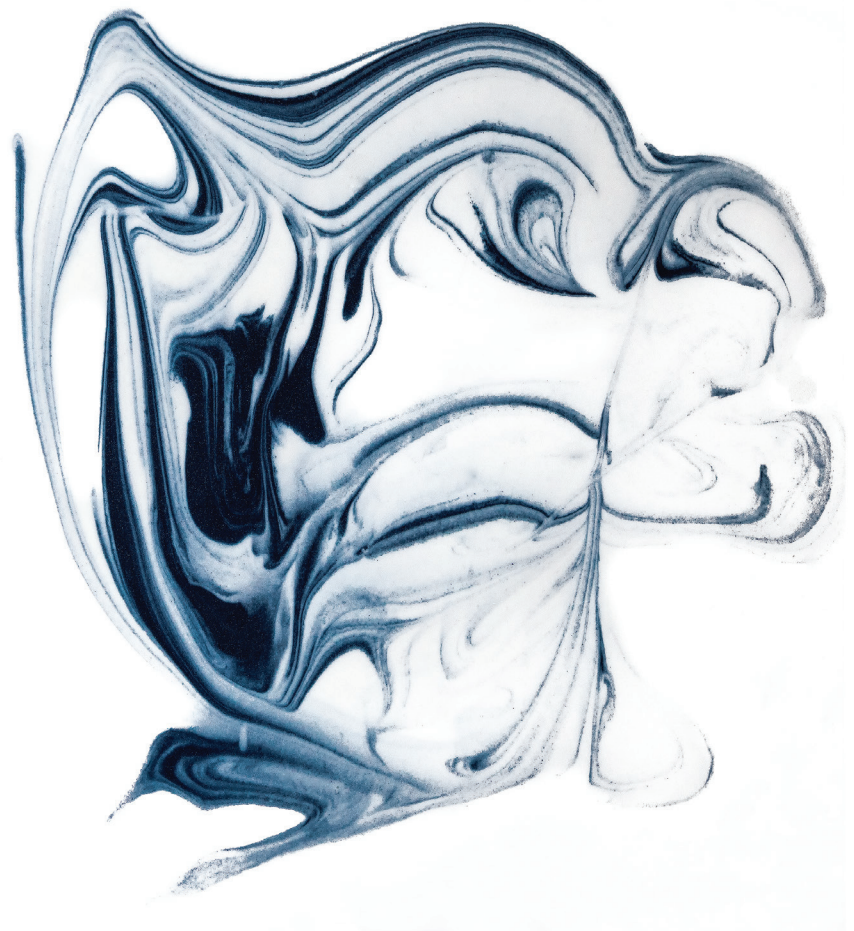
The Triumph of Mystery, 2018
Porcelain





Paintings from Porcelain 1-9, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 5

Installation view at the Station Museum of
Contemporary Art, Houston, TX, 2019.



Paintings from Porcelain 4, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 5
24" x 28"



Paintings from Porcelain 6, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 5
24" x 28"



Paintings from Porcelain 2, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 5
24" x 28"



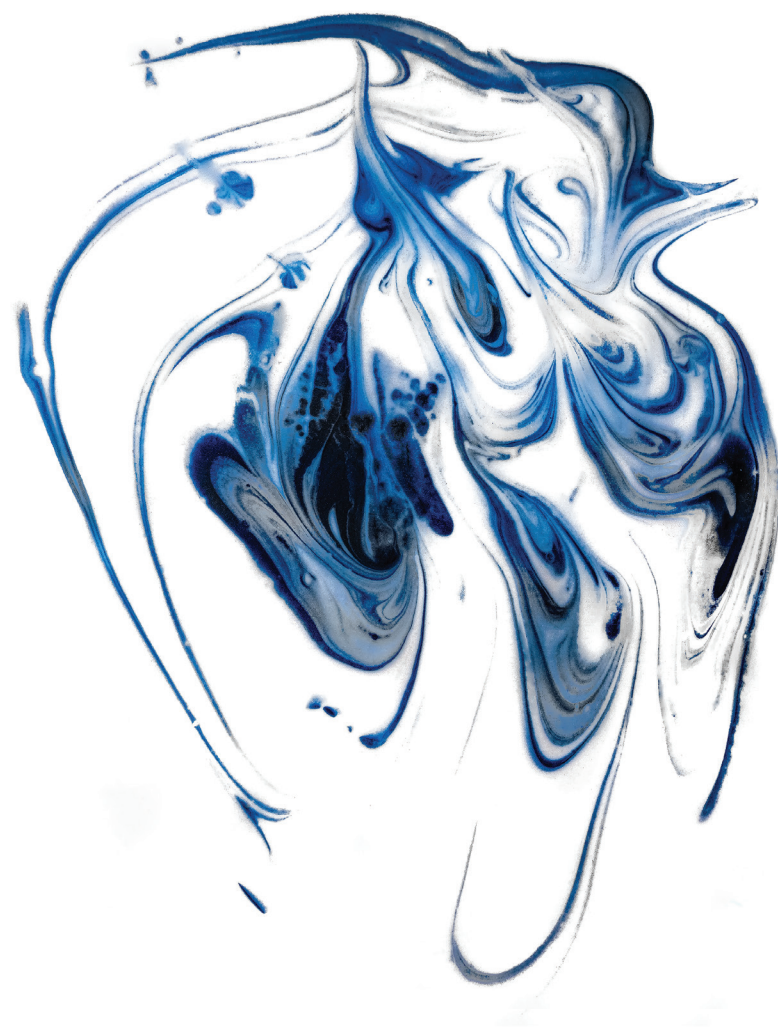
Paintings from Porcelain 8, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 5
24" x 28"



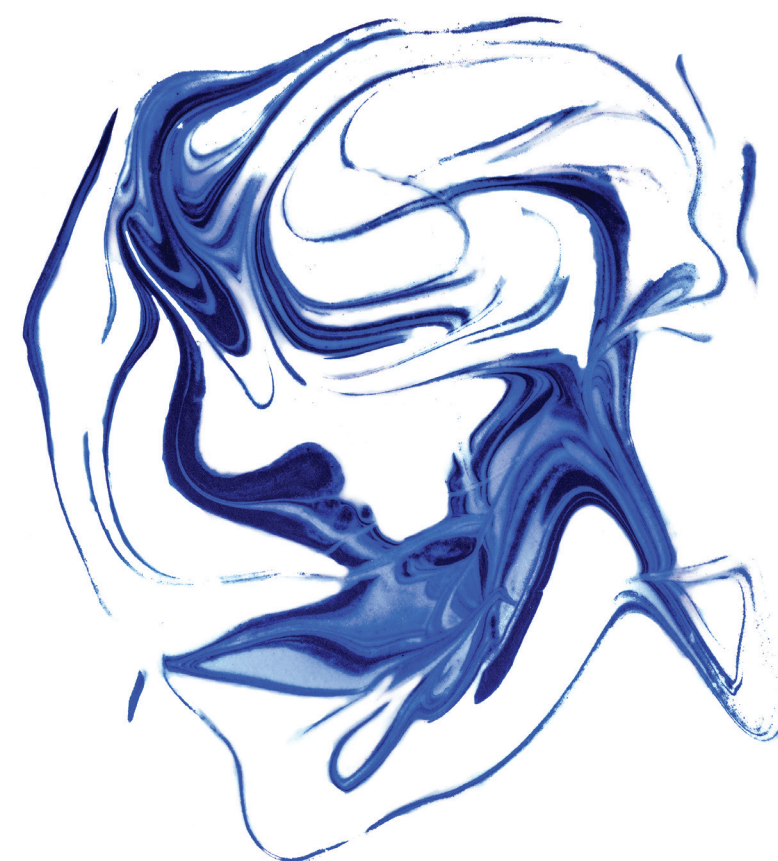
Paintings from Porcelain 5, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 5
24" x 28"



Paintings from Porcelain 3, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 5
24" x 28"



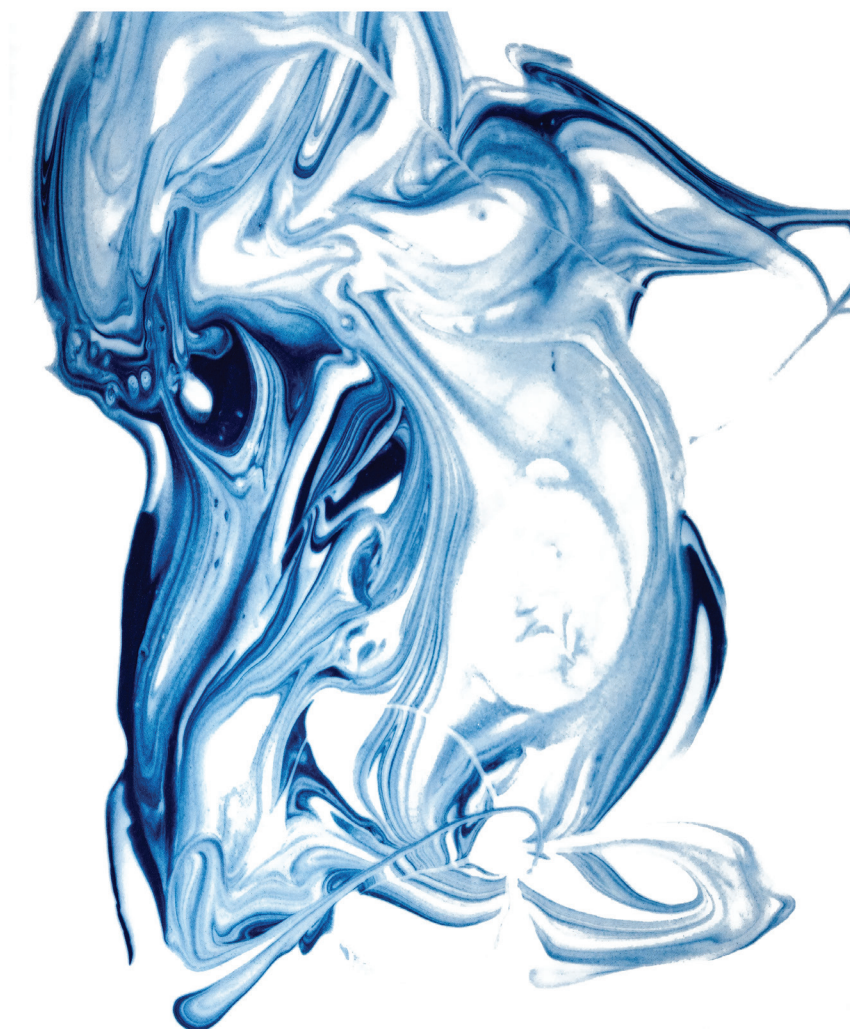
Paintings from Porcelain 7, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 5
24" x 28"



Paintings from Porcelain 1, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 5
24" x 28"



Paintings from Porcelain 9, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 5
24" x 28"







IRV TEPPER

SPIRITS IN THE MATERIAL

BY GARTH JOHNSON

PAUL PHILLIPS AND SHARON SULLIVAN CURATOR OF CERAMICS
EVERSON MUSEUM OF ART

Along with his life as an artist, educator and collector, Irvin Tepper is a first-rate obsessive about music. I hope he'll pardon me for cribbing my title from Police lyric. To look at Tepper's artwork (or his collection of cups or music, for that matter) is to see a high-touch, process-intensive throughline—one whose end result is filled with technical mastery so subsumed in scuffed, erased, and reworked layers that his virtuosity is perhaps more felt than seen. Whether working in clay, video, or more recently, digital drawings, countless unseen work hours help mainline the work into the viewer's central nervous system.

Like most of Tepper's devoted fans, I can still remember the first time I came face to face with one of his pieces. I was a young college student in Nebraska in 1995 when one of my classes organized a road trip to Kansas City to see a retrospective of the legendary potter Ken Ferguson at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. I liked it just fine. After we were done, we headed to the nearby Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art to check out a companion exhibition, *Keepers of the Flame: Ken Ferguson's Circle*.

The work in that exhibition hit me like a ton of bricks. Many of the artists who studied with Ferguson would be my future mentors and colleagues. Most of the artists in *Keepers of the Flame* are represented in the museum collection of the Everson Museum of Art, which I now oversee. One piece stands out in my memory, and it was created by Irv Tepper.

The Kansas City piece was one of his signature cup forms. At the time, I didn't have all of the information to process what it was, what it meant, or how it was made. All I knew was that it cast a spell over me with its translucency and combination of lacy edges and industrial design curves. It was somehow entirely familiar, and entirely alien, just as Tepper's work remains to this day. As I struggled to decode the cup's meaning, my teacher could only offer up something that she had heard about obsessive sanding. Needless to say, I still had more questions than answers.

The Kansas City Art Institute and Ken Ferguson are embedded in Irvin Tepper's DNA. Over the decades that I have spent in the art world, I have encountered countless KCAI graduates. I even married one. For those of you who don't know anything about the Art Institute, allow me to explain. For at least the last half century, the school has mainly taken in talented, hard-working, earnest midwestern students. The freshman foundations program (now helmed by Ken Ferguson's son Russell) instills in them a virtually peerless work ethic, which is balanced by how weird and *art damaged* the place is. Sculptor Nick Cave is the perfect example of a KCAI alum—his *Sound Suits* each contain hundreds of hours of intricate embroidery and hand work, they incorporate bizarre found materials, they disrupt the social order wherever they are incorporated into public performances... yet they remain accessible, even relatable to the public.

The porcelain cup that I encountered in Kansas City was created by slip casting, a process that belongs equally to industry and the hobby world—it is simultaneously responsible for Eva Zeisel's most sublime design work, as well as every hand-painted clown figurine from your local "paint your own pottery" joint. To slip cast an object, a negative plaster mold must be created. Specially-prepared liquid clay (slip) is poured into the mold, and the plaster wicks the moisture from the clay. After a time, the excess slip is poured out, leaving a hollow positive form when the plaster mold is removed.

Since the inception of Tepper's cup explorations in the 1970s, he has experimented with every component of the slip casting process to create his elegantly disfigured work. Rather than following hundreds of years of best practices that have evolved from factories and studios like Meissen and Sevres, Tepper purposefully removes the cast forms from their molds while they are still wet, leaving them vulnerable to cracking and collapse. These imperfections help to imbue each cup with an individual, quirky personality. This wobbly high-wire act in porcelain is made even more precarious by countless hours of rigorous sanding when the forms are at their most vulnerable. Sandpaper in hand, Tepper gently sands the cup until parts are eggshell thin, rendering them translucent when fired to their final temperature.

Instead of dramatic, sweeping Archipenko-like sculptures, Tepper has always tended toward prosaic, even *lumpen* forms. The new body of ceramic work being exhibited in *Evidence of Phantoms Made Real Between Thoughts* is a dramatic departure from his cups that continues to bear all of the hallmarks of his obsession with process and unseen labor. The introversion of the forms

shouldn't be seen as lacking in ambition—they come, after all, from an artist prone to greatly expanding the scale of diner cups in his sculptural work. Tepper's new works, like his cups, appear unassuming at first glance, but upon further inspection, open up material rabbit holes.

His formal pottery training from the Kansas City Art Institute reveals itself in unexpected ways—perhaps most subtly is how the sculptural forms rest on the ground. Whether or not Tepper believes it (at least in his hands), he exemplifies British potter Bernard Leach's exhortation that functional pots should have "life and lift". As with his Art Institute teacher Ken Ferguson, Tepper has strayed significantly from the path of function. Still, his sculptures, which retain only a vestigial connection to pottery, lift themselves from the ground, undulating like the legs of a centipede. Any pottery aficionado worth their salt immediately turns a cup or bowl over to inspect the foot. These sculptures do not disappoint.

Beginning in the late 1980s, sculptor Kenneth Price began creating surfaces built from multiple painted layers that were delicately sanded to accentuate edges and textures. This technique reached its zenith decades later in his undulating forms painted with seemingly endless layers of highly lickable candy-coated autobody paints. These techniques were foreshadowed by some of Irv Tepper's earliest slipcast cup forms from the late 1970s—Tepper layered his white porcelain with colored porcelains, which became translucent and phantasmagoric when subjected to his sanding process. Where Price's surface became a beckoning candy shell, Tepper's became ethereal.

For *Evidence of Phantoms Made Real*, Irv Tepper has diverged from the industrial slip casting techniques that have sustained him for nearly five decades. Where once steps involving plaster casting and mold pouring put him at a slight remove from his creative process, he has now found direct ways to achieve a symbiosis of form and material that resonates with his sensibilities. Rather than creating molds, Tepper now impregnates cast-off material like cardboard boxes and packing foam with his porcelain slip. He manipulates the sodden materials much as a balloon sculptor would—adding twists, voids, bulges and curves, then allows them to dry. Once they have dried in position, the forms can then be dipped in multiple layers of slip prior to the all-important sanding process.

Through his all-important ritual sanding of his work Tepper is transforming an object constructed from everyday materials and imbuing it with material depth and physical connection. The sculpture only becomes his after dozens of "love hours" are sanded into its surface. It is important to note that through sanding, he has found a deeply conceptual way to engage in a practice that he has steadfastly maintained throughout his career—drawing. By sanding through thin layers of colored slip, Tepper is engaging in a three-dimensional dance between form and surface.

In his best-known drawings of his cups, executed over the span of weeks, or even months, Irv Tepper marks time by dividing a composition into sections, then noting the date in which the section was drawn. Often, fleeting thoughts

and bits of narrative are added to the section, bringing the elements of time and narrative that transform a drawing into a durational performance. For most viewers, a drawing in graphite or charcoal belongs to a pre-defined category, like Tepper's beloved diner cups, nearly invisible in the domestic landscape. Whether by temperament, training, or wily conceptual bent, all of his ceramic objects and drawings are invested with complex surfaces that must develop through time, labor, or most often, both.

The word materiality (like the words Anthropocene and identity) is having its moment in the sun, as artists use it as permission to explore the formal qualities of the materials with which they work. From the dawn of his career, Irv Tepper has put material exploration front and center—pursuing it with the patience and diligence that he brings to his sanding. His love of materiality extends to the new digital drawings in *Evidence of Phantoms Made Real Between Thoughts*.

During a recent studio visit, I was fascinated by the digital drawings, which share their saturated surfaces and miasmic edges with their ceramic counterparts. Each digital drawing, whose linework is executed using a stylus and digital tablet, is painstakingly constructed in Photoshop, as Tepper mirrors and repeats linear segments to form mandala-like repeating patterns. Like the thickness of slip and the tenacity of his sanding, complex surfaces can be built up through endless erasures and adjustments to opacity. Sometimes as many as 50 layers come together to create a drawing that, like the muqarnas added to a mosque, alternately reveal and obscure structure, bringing the viewer into a type of third space, where contemplation and communion with something larger than themselves becomes possible.

Like all of the elements of *Evidence of Phantoms Made Real Between Thoughts*, the scale of Tepper's drawings are carefully considered. The drawings that I viewed in his studio were small, and meant to be held in the hand; they became jewel-like as I brought them closer to my eyes. I was altogether unprepared for the experience of relating to them bodily—something Tepper and the curators at the Station Museum of Contemporary Art (as well as Ann Harithas at the Five Points Museum in Victoria, Texas before them) carefully and purposefully made possible. By creating a cathedral-like sanctuary in the center of the gallery, the Museum invited close viewing and created a sense of intimacy with the large-scale prints, allowing the viewer to enter them. The end effect was similar to the aforementioned muqarnas, or to perhaps invoke another immersive experience, the *iconostasis*, or wall of icon paintings in an Eastern Orthodox church that separates the nave from the sanctuary. Like the iconostasis, Tepper's prints overwhelm the viewer with a level of detail that invites contemplation, and ultimately, transcendence.

There have always been spirits at play in Tepper's artwork. With their invocation of skulls, portraits, and mandalas, the digital drawings have made the connections literal, but Tepper's work has long existed in harmony with the idea that objects, whether handcrafted or not, are woven into the fabric of our

existence. Many cultures believe that spirits can incorporate objects. Japanese Shinto beliefs (which have an outsized influence on western pottery culture through the influence of Leach, Hamada, and Yanagi) revolve around kami, the powers that flow through the natural world, ancestors, or even inanimate objects. *Tsukumogami* refers to tools or useful objects that have acquired a kami, or spirit. Whether consciously or unconsciously, Irvin Tepper's work has always evoked these spirits, whether through the thousands of conversations overheard by a diner mug, or the transference of power to an object through repeated use or refinement.

Irvin Tepper is a living lightning rod for psychometric emanations, whether they come from artwork, diner cups, or even (or perhaps especially) music. His two hands have created a peculiar cosmology of objects, drawings, photographs, and videos that overflow with love, with labor, and with his unmatched curiosity about worlds seen and unseen. Just as water has the capacity to erode land and polish stones, Tepper's every motion with sandpaper or stylus builds psychic heft. If you repeat something that is seemingly insignificant often enough, it slowly gathers weight. As the great philosopher Gordon Sumner once said:

WE ARE SPIRITS IN THE MATERIAL WORLD
ARE SPIRITS IN THE MATERIAL WORLD
ARE SPIRITS IN THE MATERIAL WORLD
ARE SPIRITS IN THE MATERIAL WORLD
ARE SPIRITS IN THE MATERIAL WORLD
ARE SPIRITS IN THE MATERIAL WORLD

Large Porcelain No. 13, 2018
Porcelain
14.75" x 12.5" x 8"





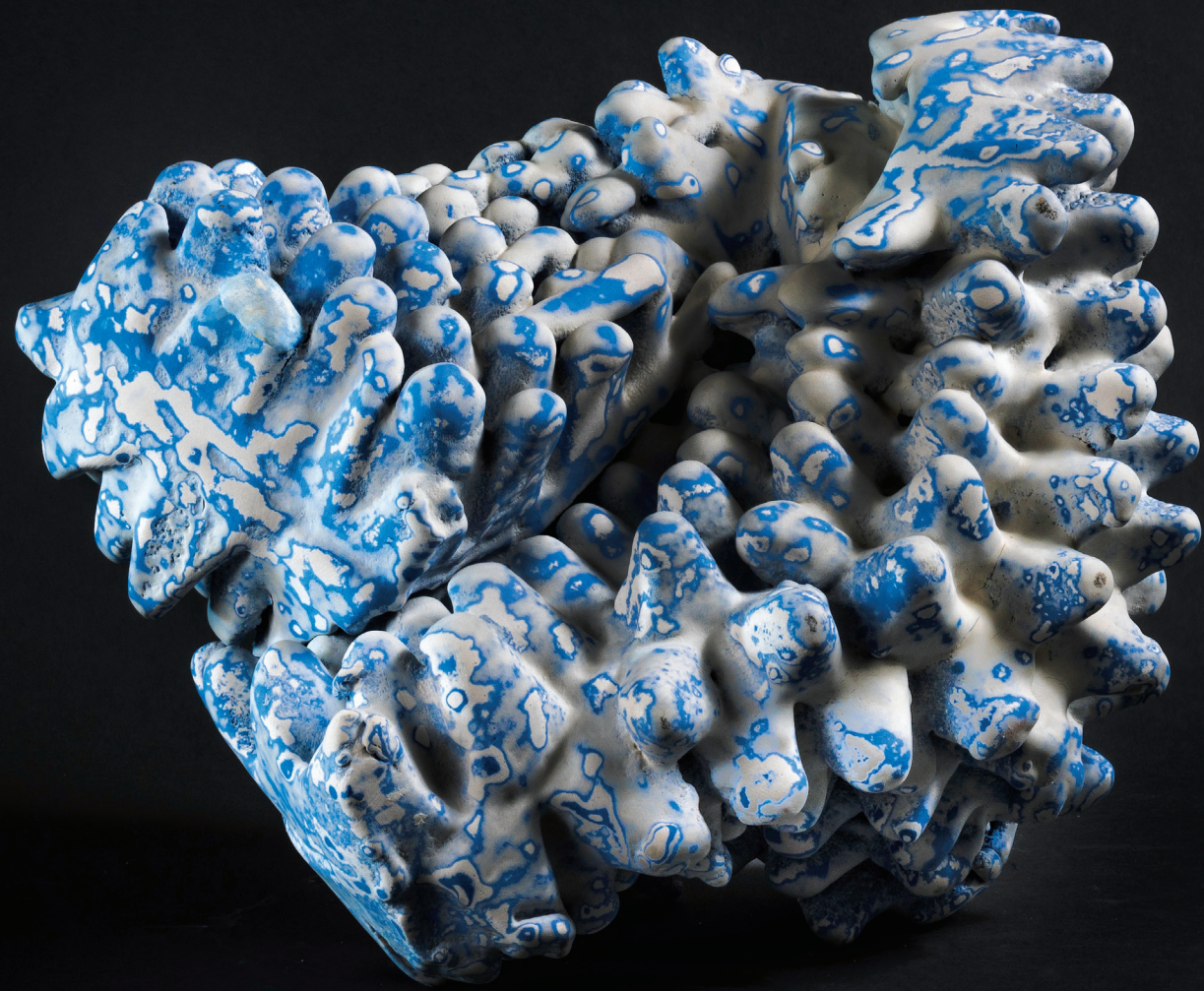
Large Porcelain, 2018

Installation view at the Station Museum of Contemporary Art, Houston, TX, 2019.



Large Porcelain No. 17, 2018
Porcelain
13.75" x 15.5" x 15"





Large Porcelain No. 12, 2018
Porcelain
13.25" x 15" x 12"



Large Porcelain No. 16, 2018
Porcelain
22" x 15" x 16.25"



Large Porcelain No. 19, 2018
Porcelain
13" x 18" x 17"



Irvin Tepper: Evidence of Phantoms Made Real Between Thoughts.
Installation view at the Five Points Museum of Contemporary Art,
Victoria, TX, 2018.





Left:
Small Porcelain No. 1, 2018
Porcelain
8 1/4" x 7" x 5 1/2"

Small Porcelain No. 2, 2018
Porcelain
9" x 7 3/4" x 7 1/4"

Small Porcelain No. 3, 2018
Porcelain
12" x 8" x 8"

Small Porcelain No. 4, 2018
Porcelain
11" x 10 1/2" x 8 1/4"

Small Porcelain No. 5, 2018
Porcelain
8" x 7" x 5"

Small Porcelain No. 7, 2018
Porcelain
6 1/2" x 4" x 6"

Right:
Small Porcelain No. 6, 2018
Porcelain
7" x 6" x 6.5"

Small Porcelain No. 9, 2018
Porcelain
6" x 5 1/2" x 4 1/2"

Small Porcelain No. 8, 2018
Porcelain
7 3/4" x 5 3/4" x 5"



Irvin Tepper: Evidence of Phantoms Made Real Between Thoughts.
Installation view at the Station Museum of Contemporary Art,
Houston, TX, 2019.



IN THE SEARCH FOR PHANTOMS

BY IRVIN TEPPER

Why try to make phantoms real? If you start out attempting to create a phantom it would probably resemble a cartoon and not what was imagined, because a phantom is a fleeting perception and creation of the mind.

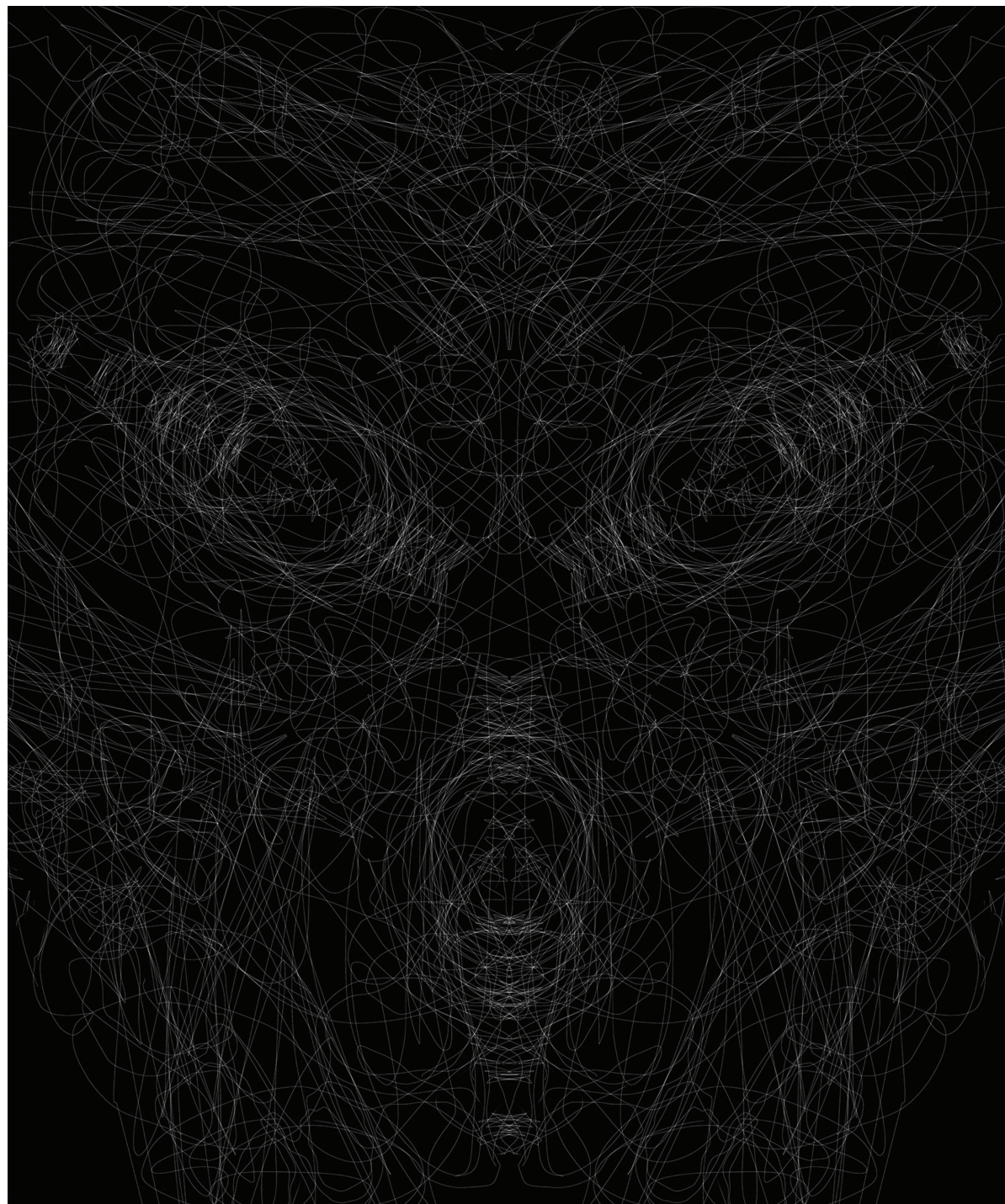
Often, when creating a work of art, an artist starts with an idea, image, or form in mind and then proceeds to make that idea real and concrete executed in whatever medium of the artists choice. These are works of intention, made to be interpreted by the viewer through symbols of matter that both the artist and viewer mutually understand. The subject matter like landscape, figure, color and shape can evoke a range of ideas and emotions that may be political, sentimental, Historical, or commercial.

Relying on the freedom of the mind's fundamental conscious ability to recognize and resonate unencumbered by accepted material visual cues of form and content. These are the ephemeral moments of identification that I try to build on over time where each recognition builds on the next.

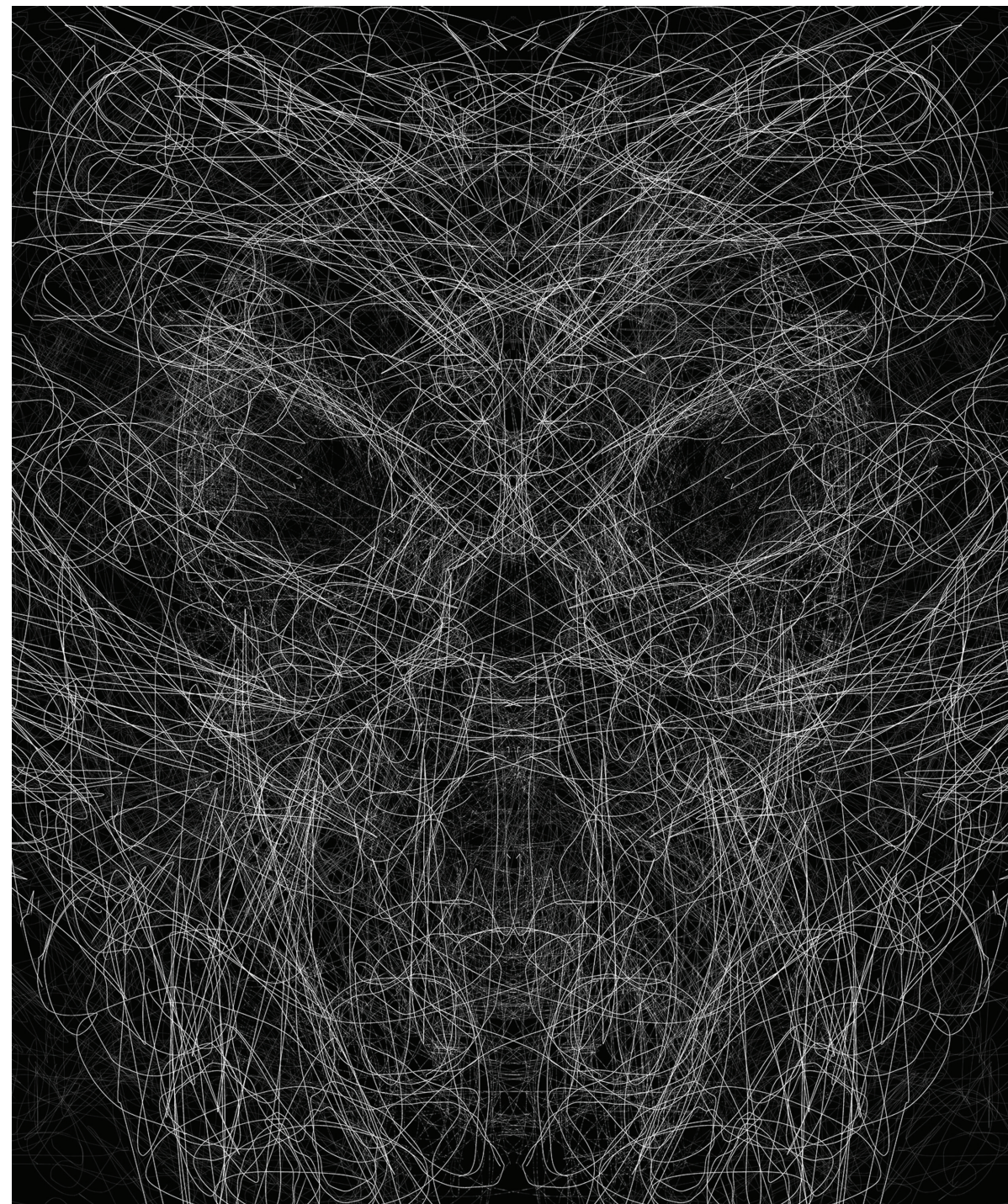
In both my sculpture and drawings I neither plan the work nor make any preparatory drawings for a specific work. I do not have a particular form or icon in mind. Instead I choose materials and techniques that force me to think with the material and struggle with all its limitations until the work speaks to me.

My process for both the drawings and sculptures in this exhibition has no map or direction to achieve the final result. It is more about recognition, discovery, and collaboration with the material in a dialogue, attempting to push its limitations to find unexpected results.

In this body of work it is my aim to shoot a spiritual arrow directly into the viewer's fundamental conscious mind passing through the visual cues of matter and finally landing in a place where the minds freedom can explore.



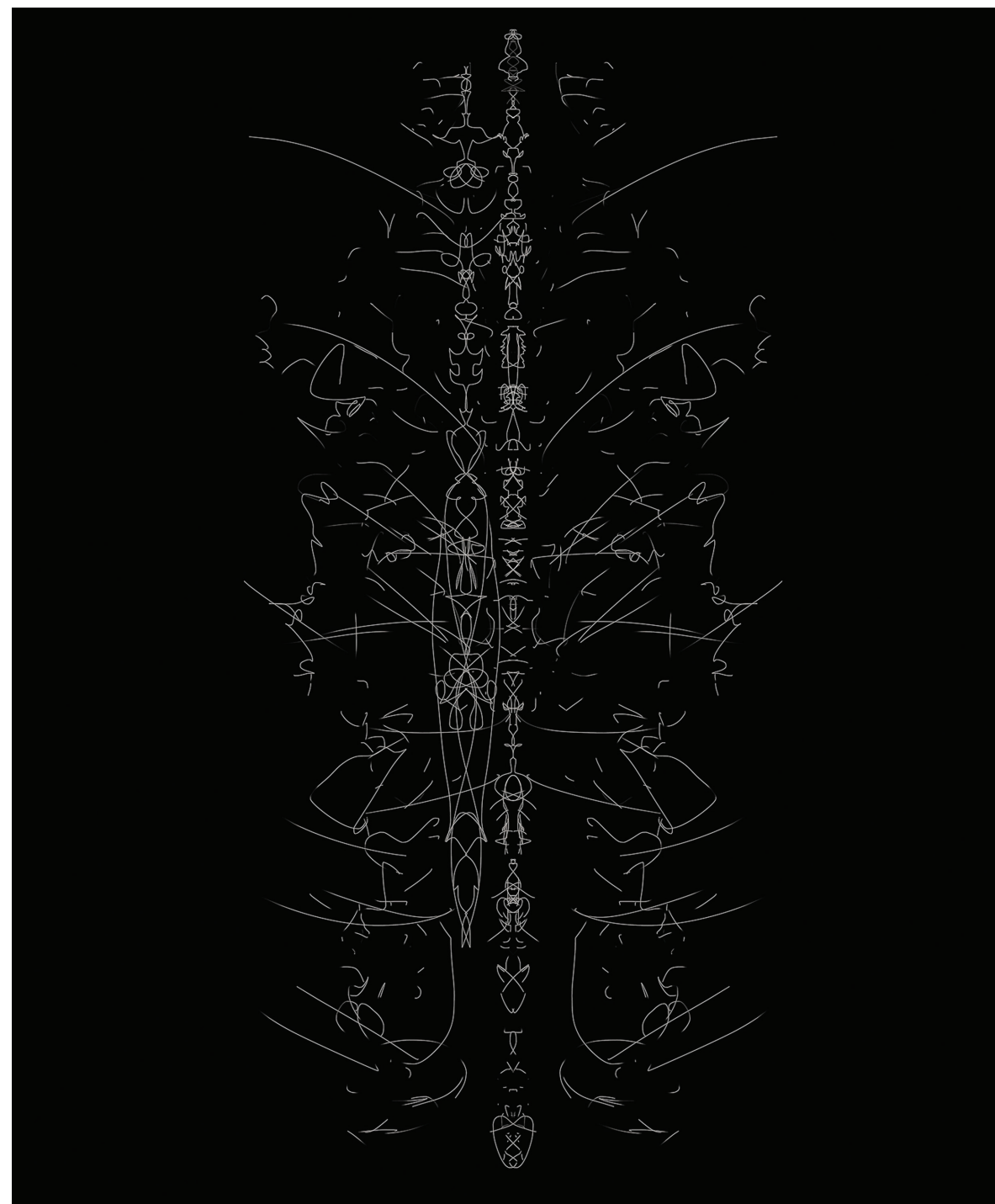
Drawing No. 6c, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 3
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 6b, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 3
59" x 70.8"

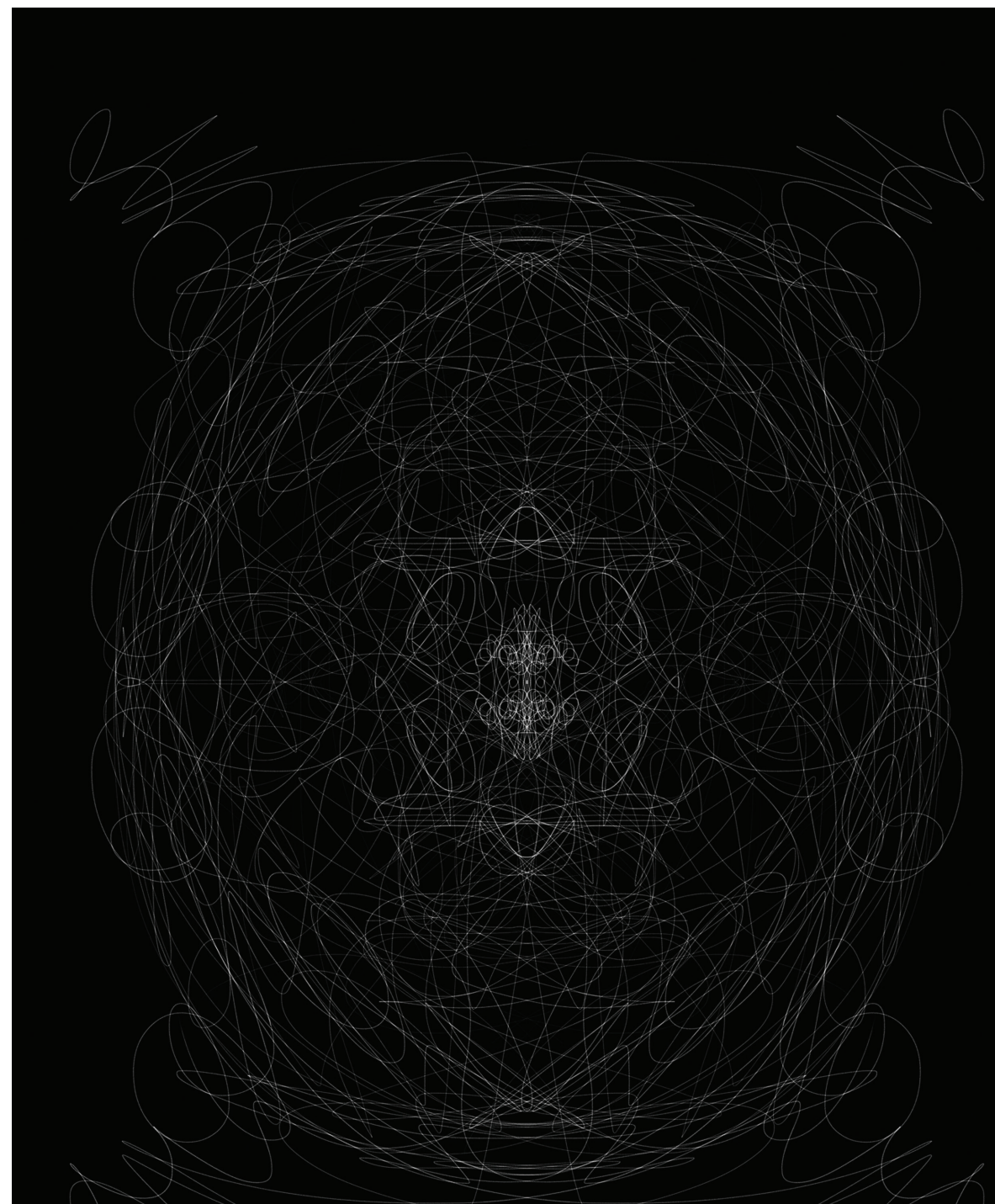


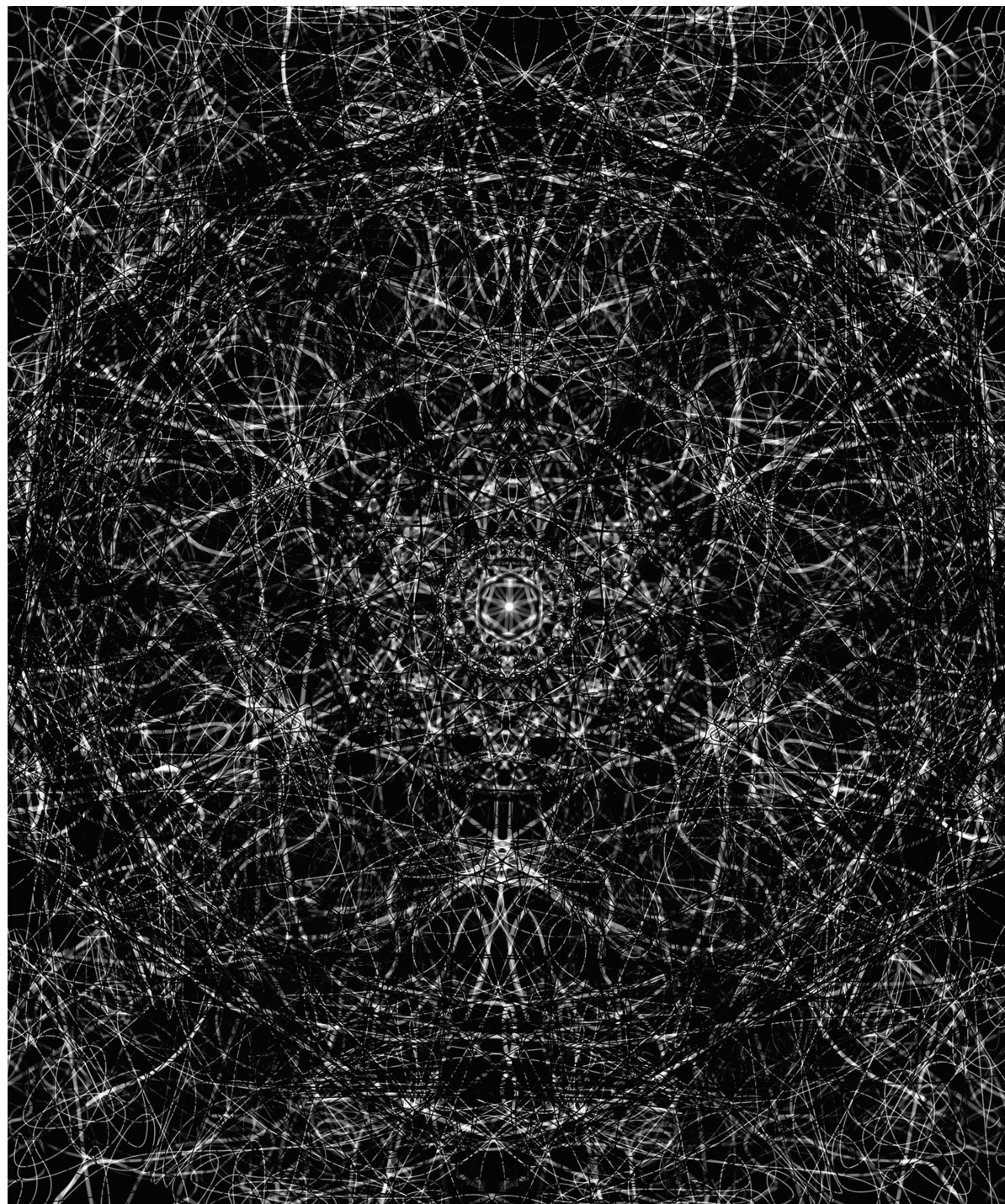
Drawing No. 2a, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



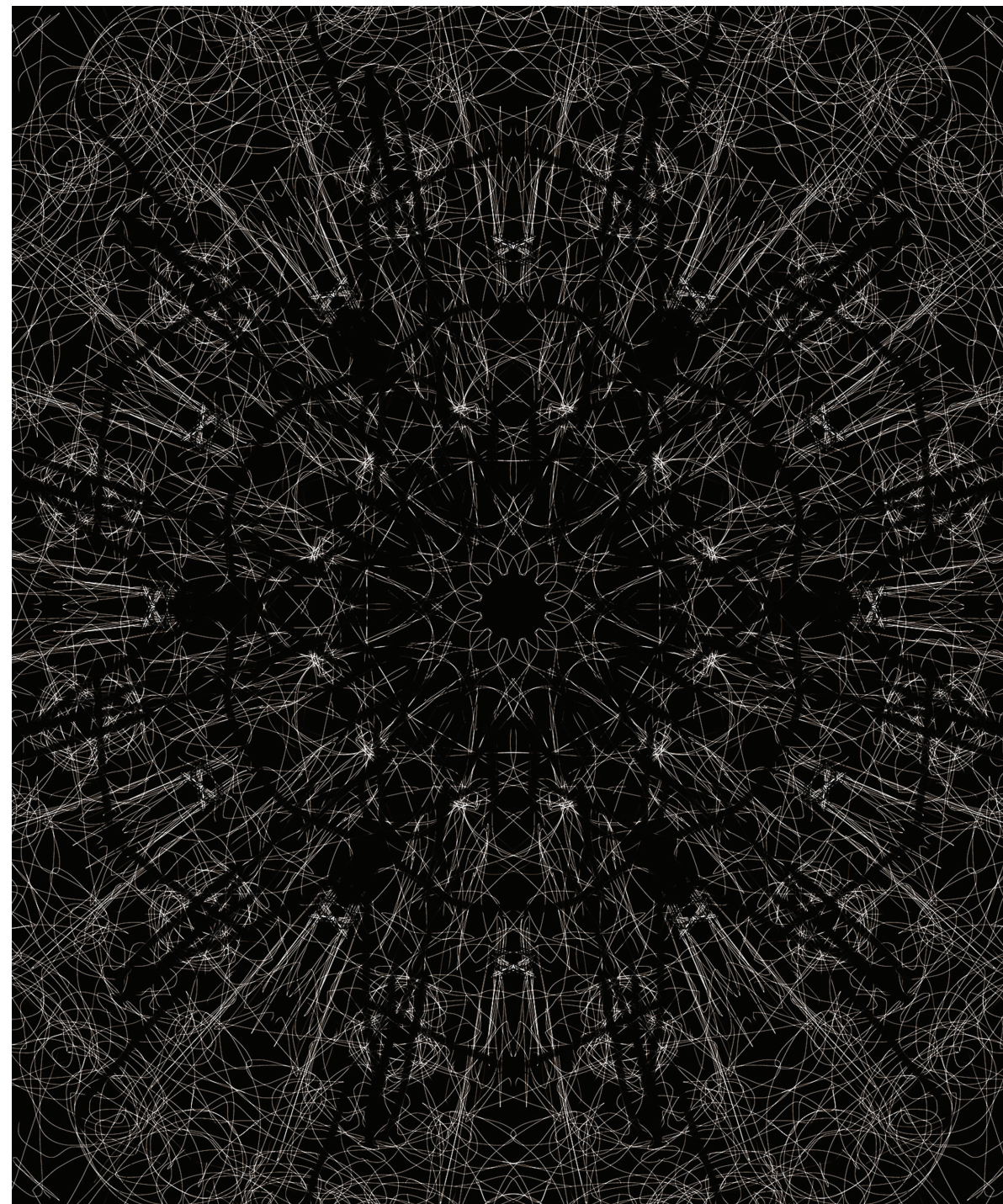


Drawing No. 10a, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"

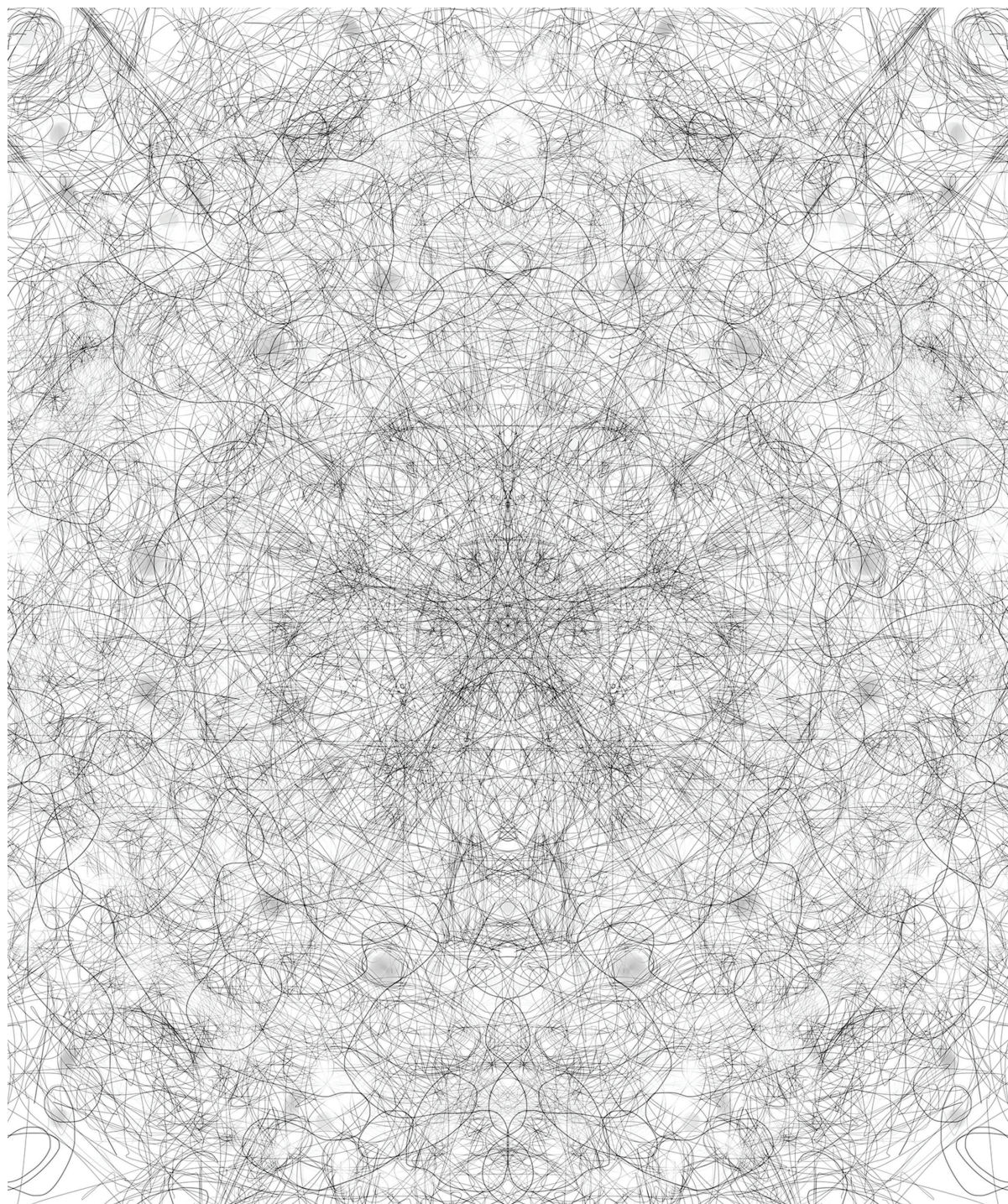




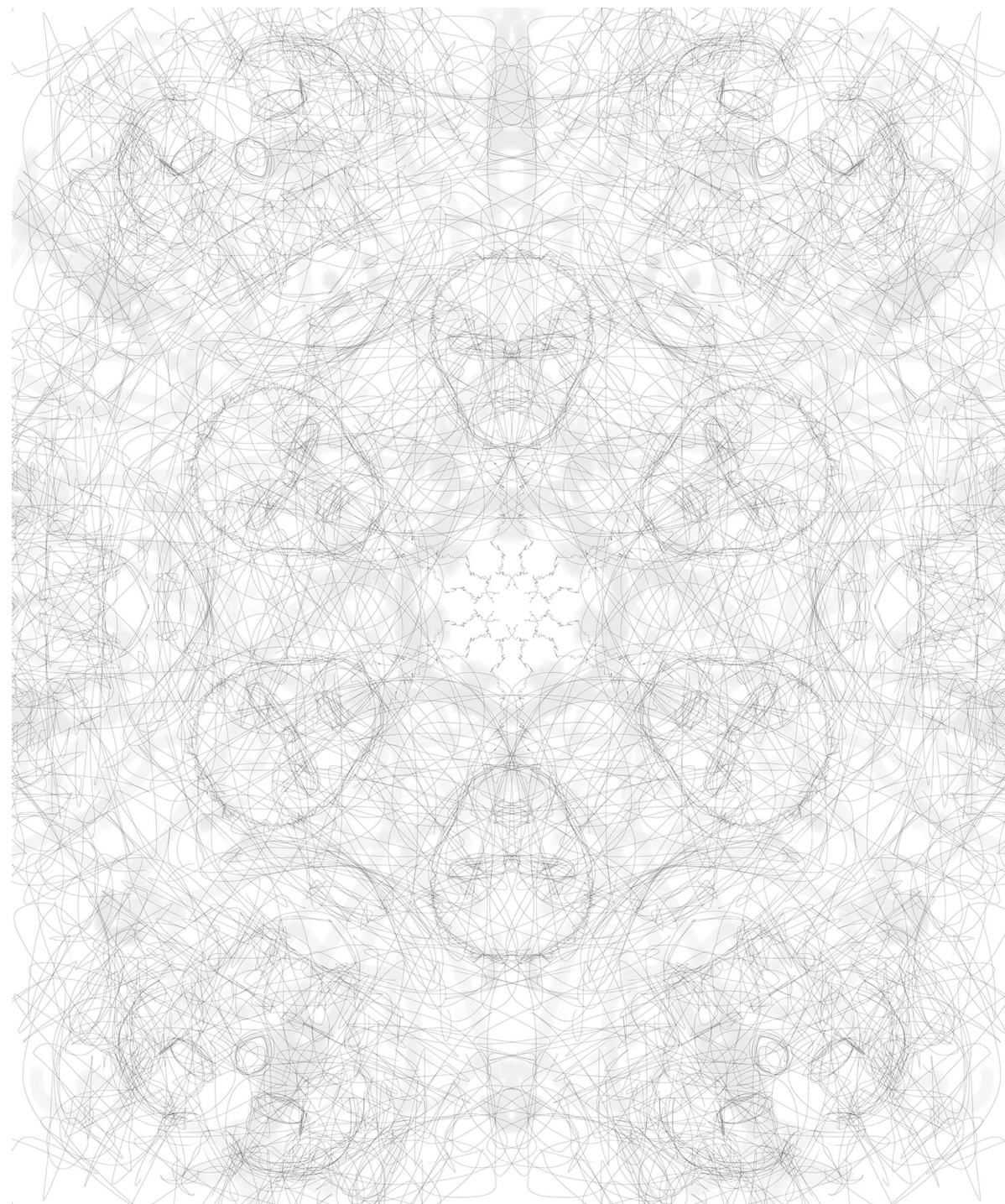
Drawing No. 9a, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 3
59" x 70.8"



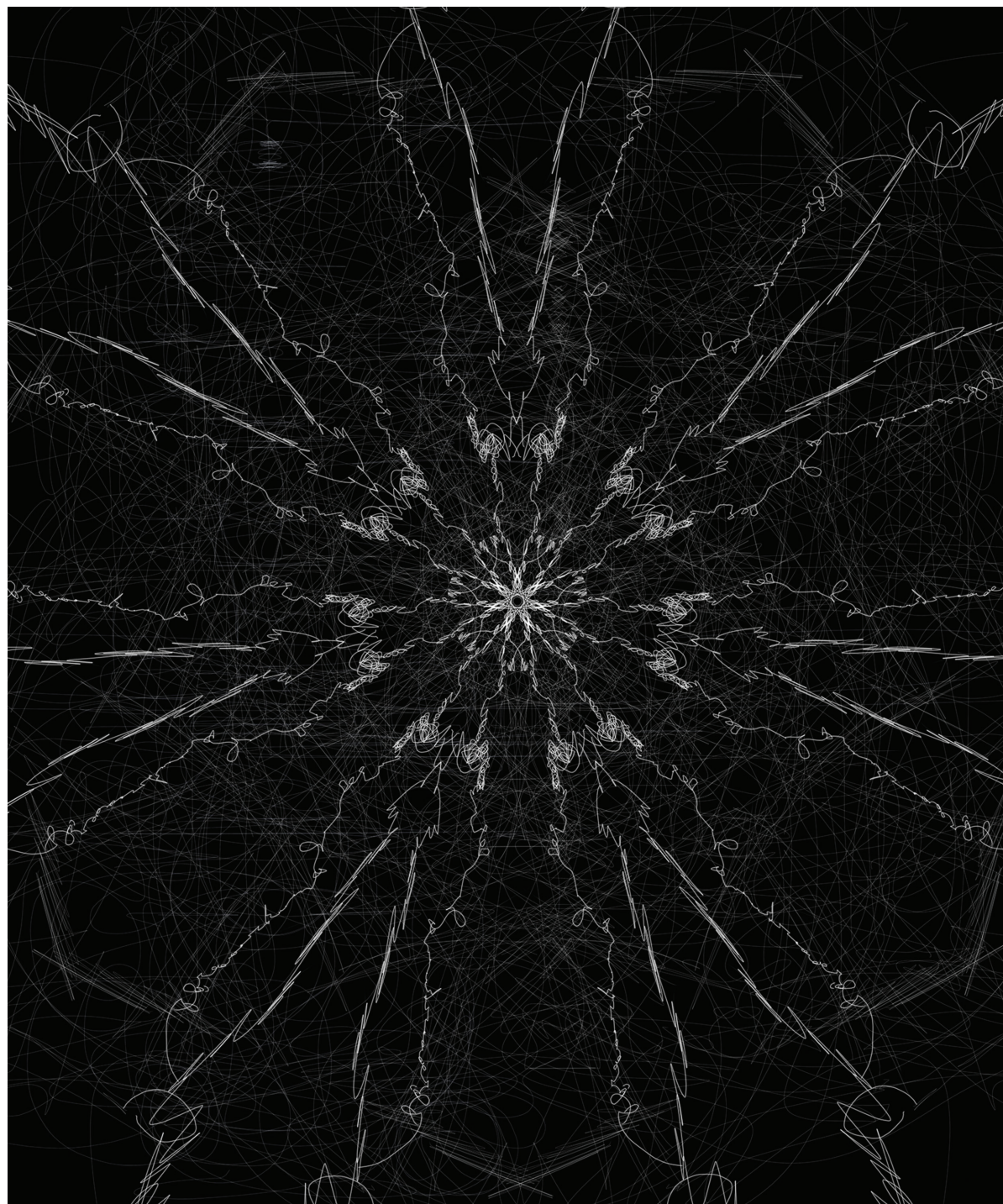
Drawing No. 15, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 3
59" x 70.8"



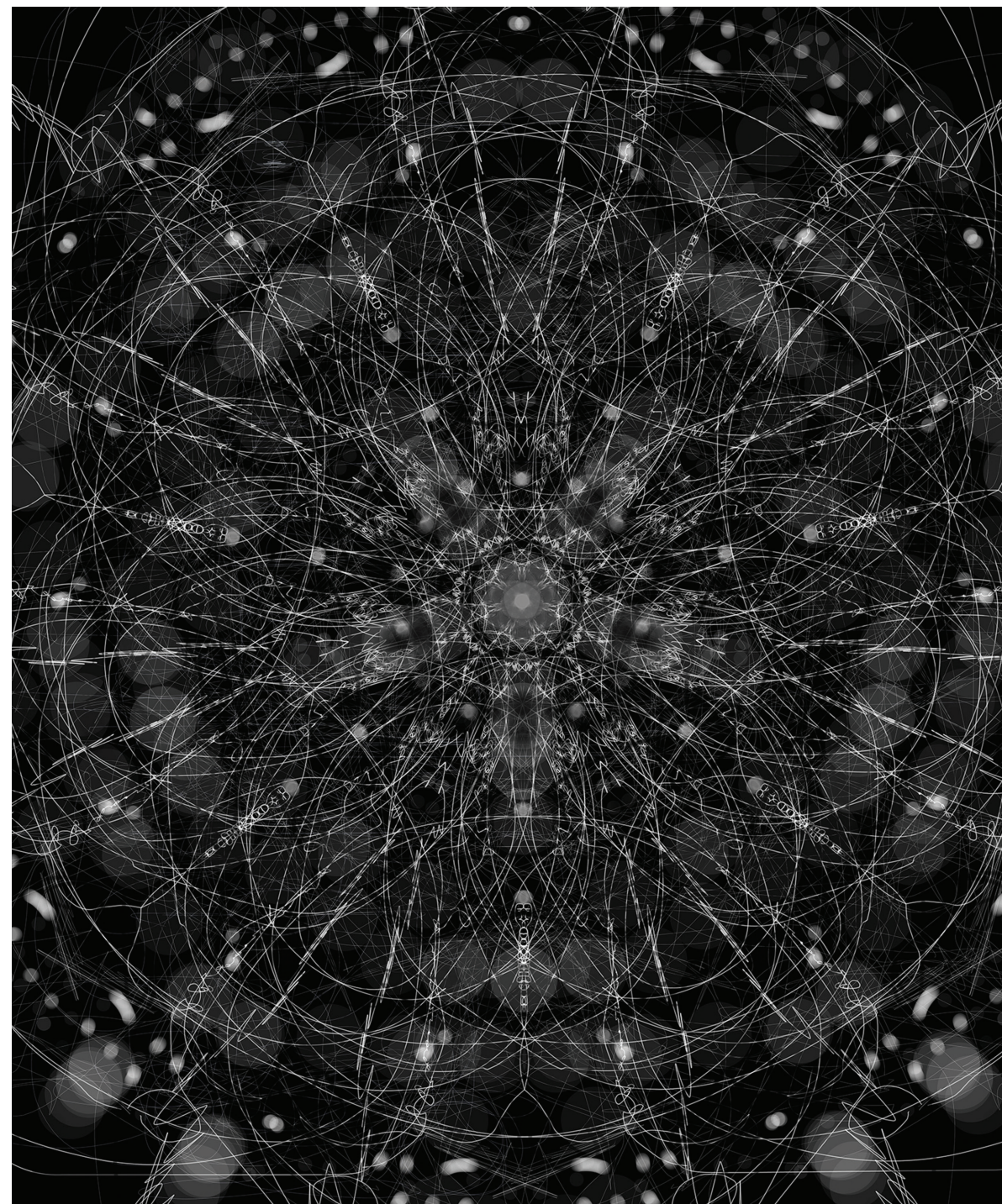
Drawing No. 16b, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 33ab, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 17a, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 17, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"

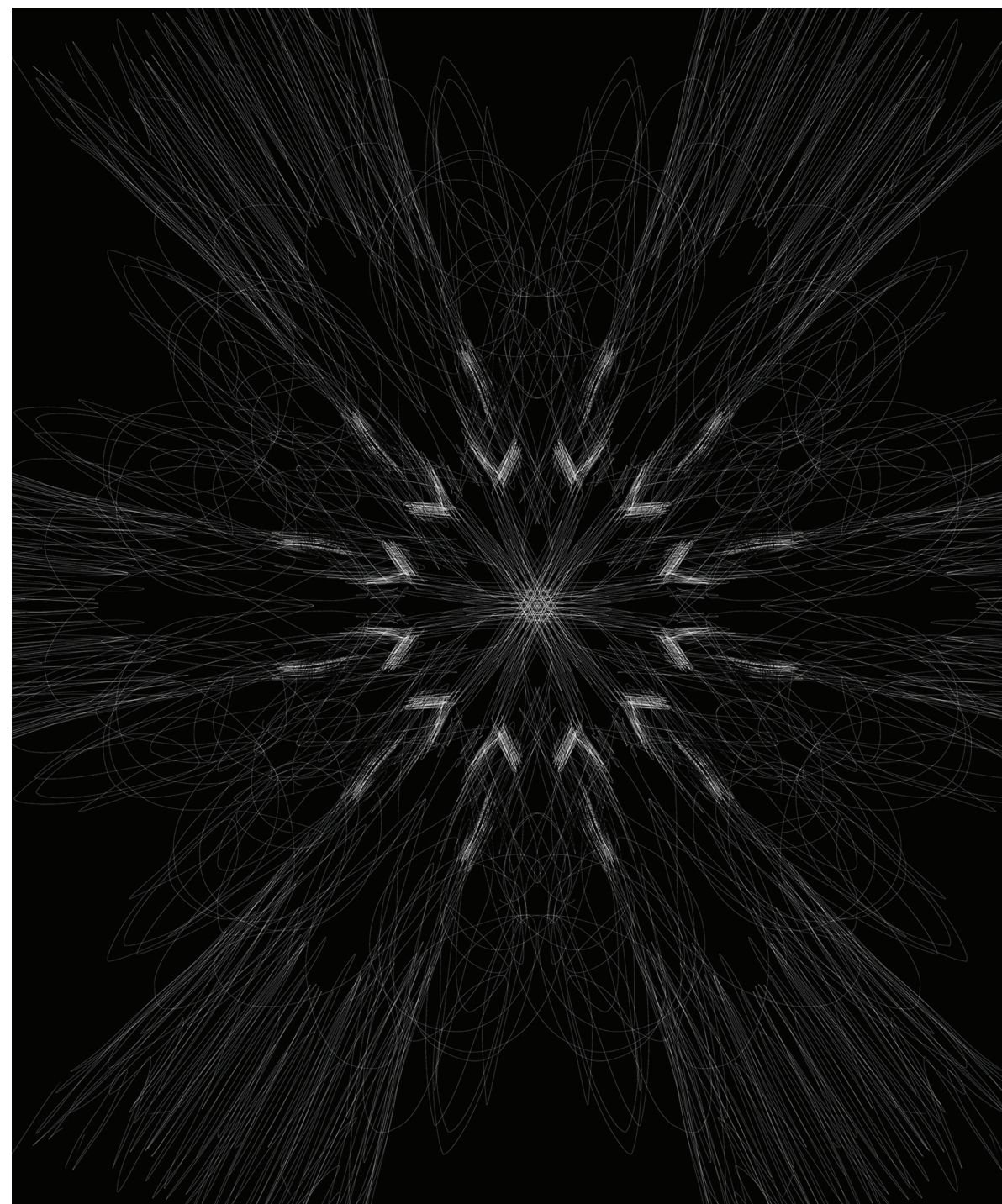


Drawing No. 24c, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"

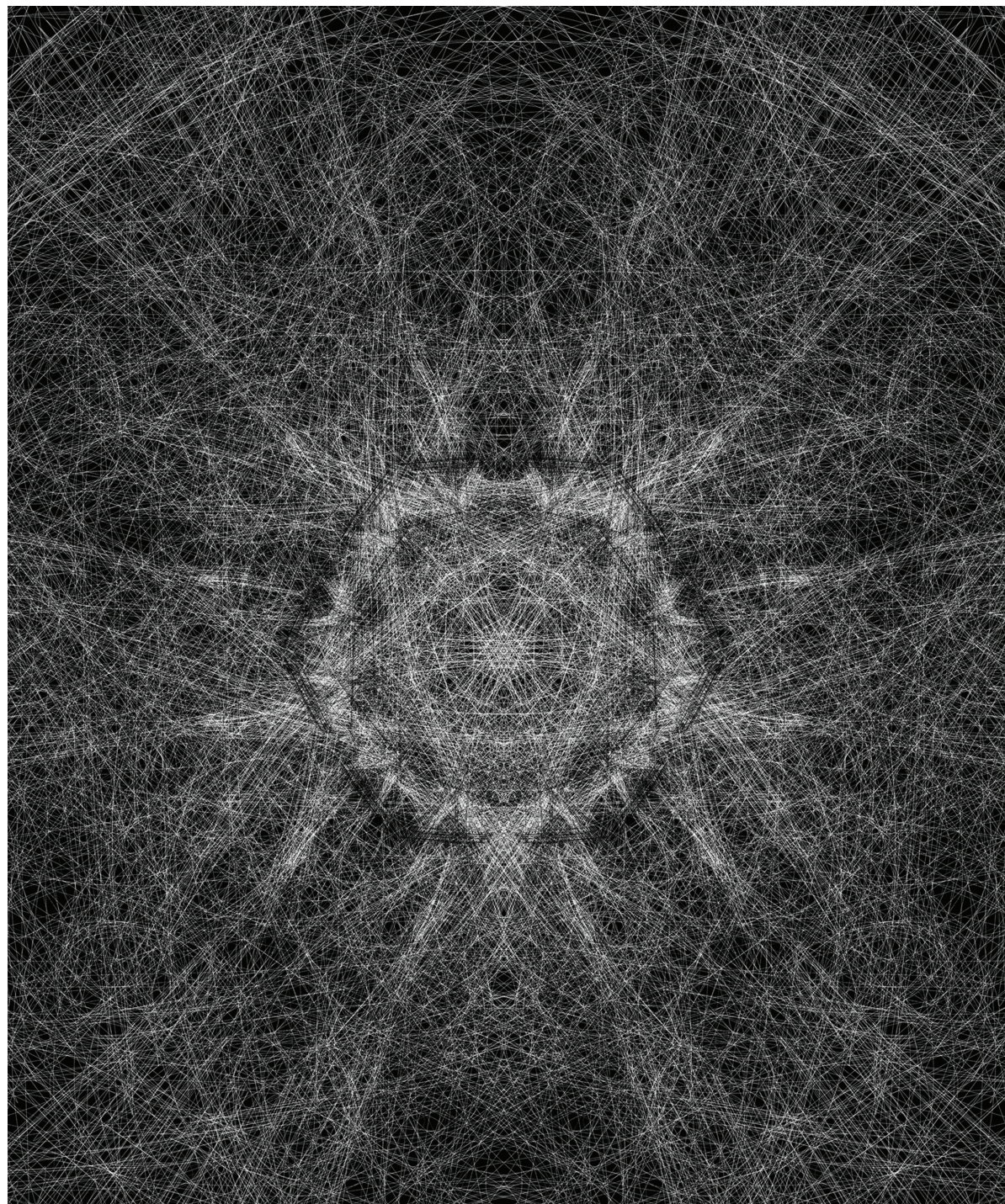




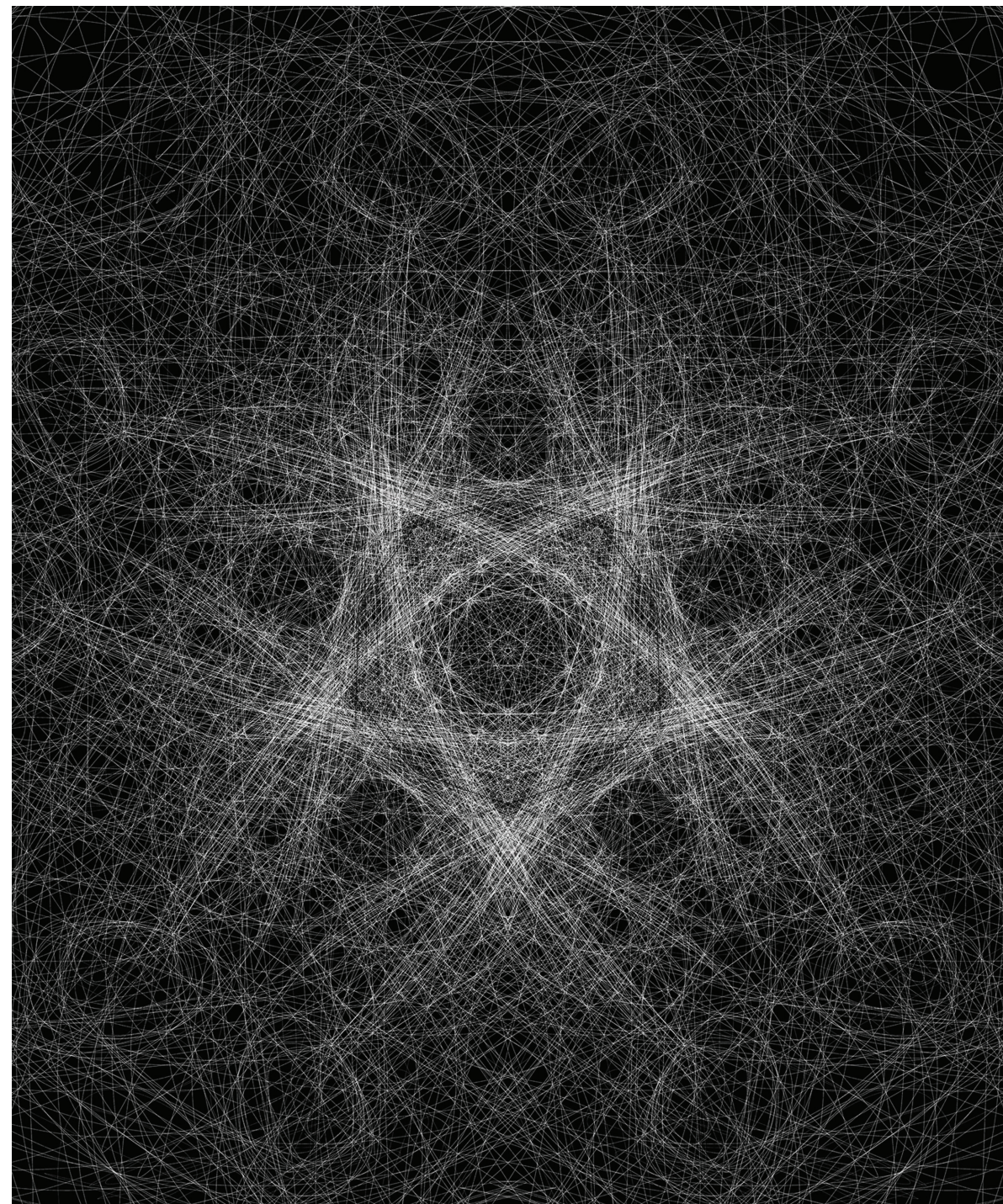
Drawing No. 28a, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 32a, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



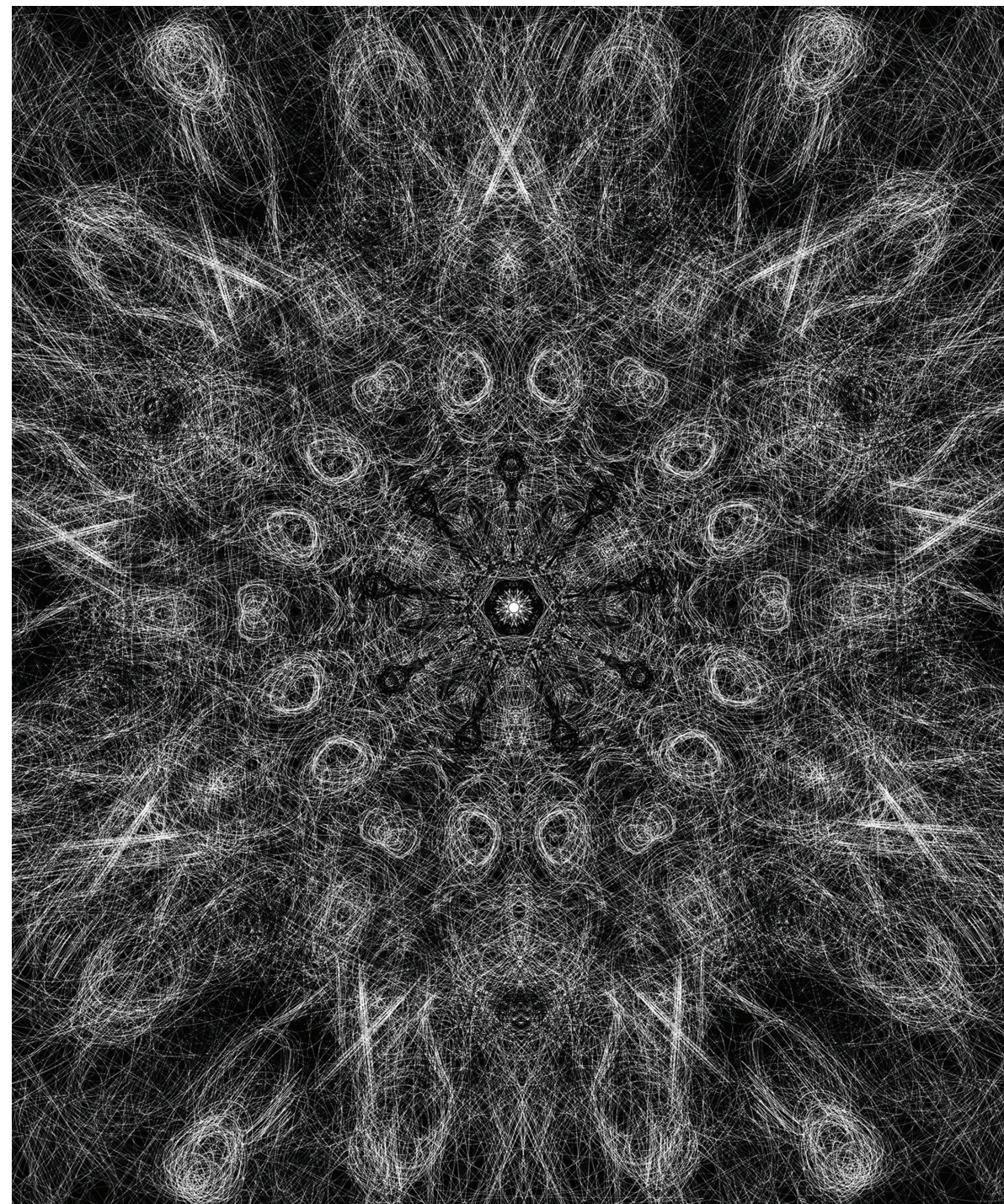
Drawing No. 32b, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 32c, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"

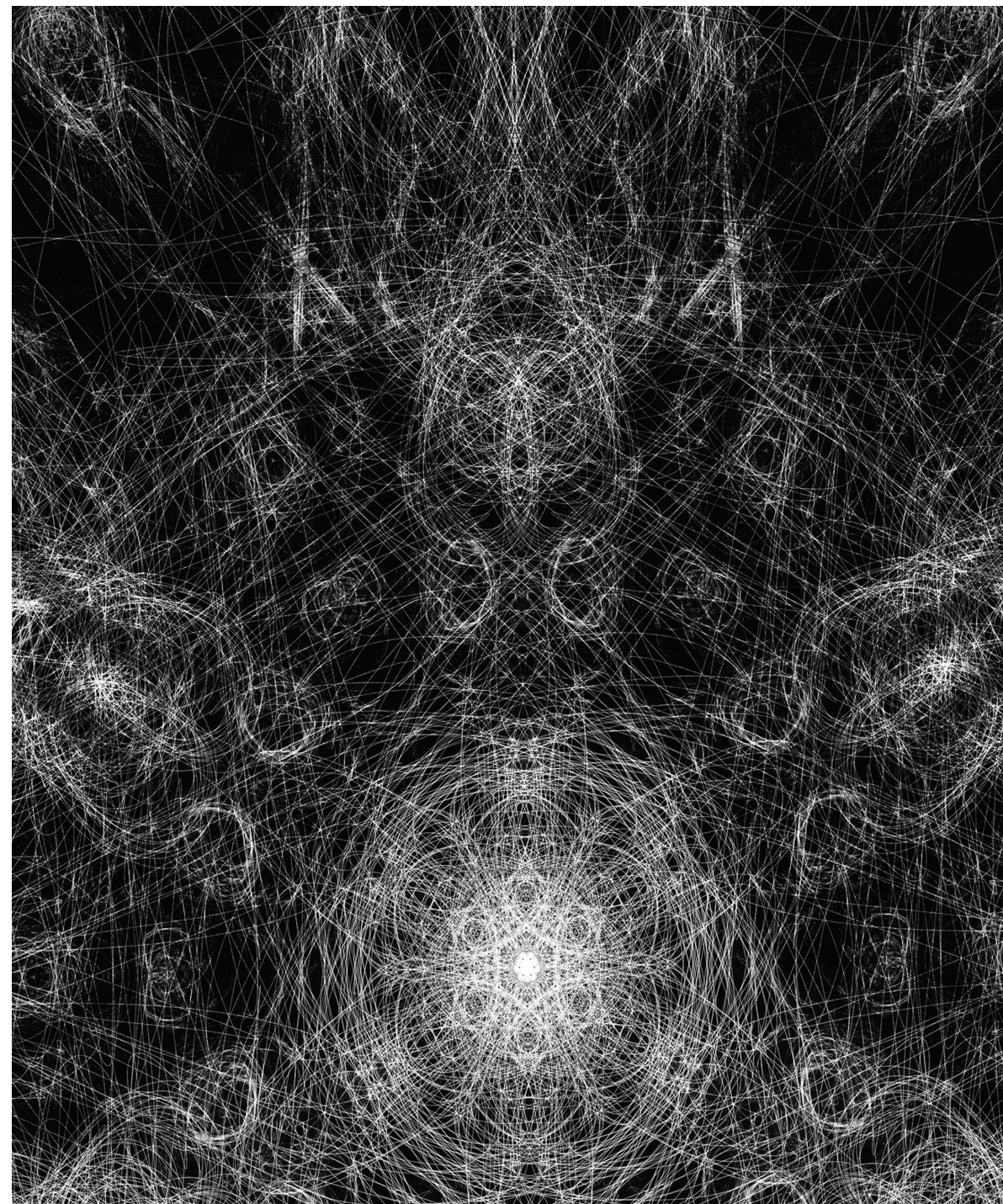


Drawing No. 36a, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"





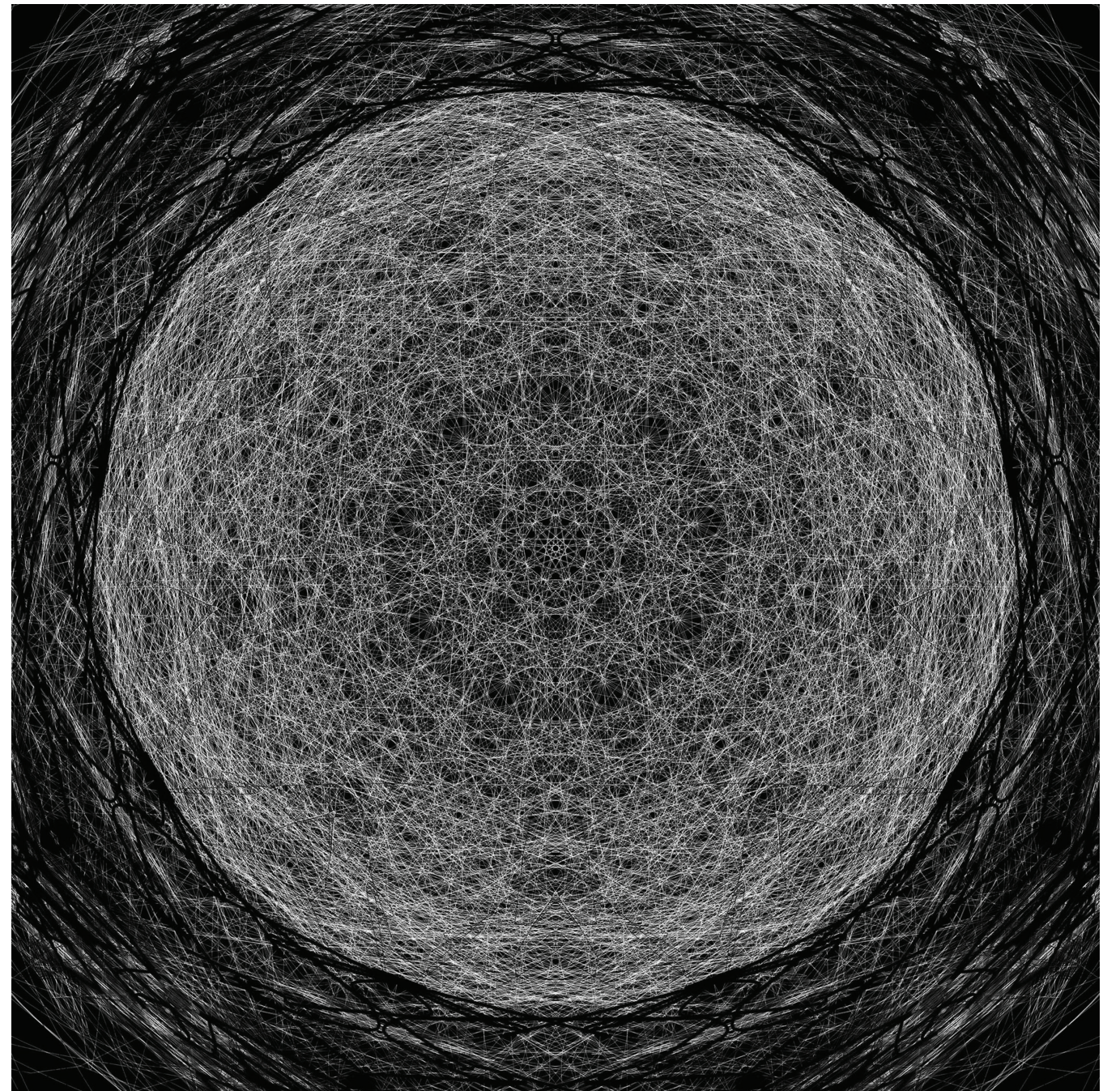
Drawing No. 36b, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 36c, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 38a, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 59"





Irvin Tepper: Evidence of Phantoms Made Real Between Thoughts.
Installation view at the Five Points Museum of Contemporary Art,
Victoria, TX, 2018.



Wheels to Salvation, 2018
1962 Oldsmobile Ninety-Eight with vinyl wrap

Installation view at the Five Points Museum of Contemporary Art,
Victoria, TX, 2018

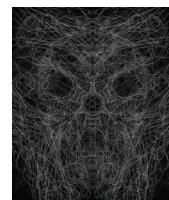
IRVIN TEPPER

EVIDENCE OF PHANTOMS MADE REAL BETWEEN THOUGHTS

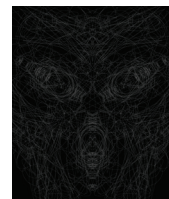
EXHIBITION CHECKLIST



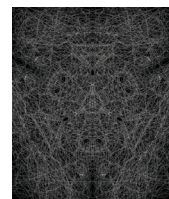
Drawing No. 2a, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



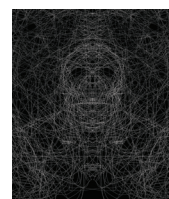
Drawing No. 6b, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



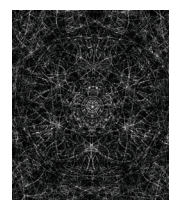
Drawing No. 6c, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 6e, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



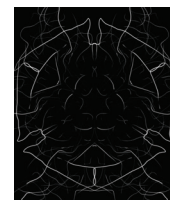
Drawing No. 6f, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 3
45.5" x 52.2"



Drawing No. 9a, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"

Drawing No. 9b, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"

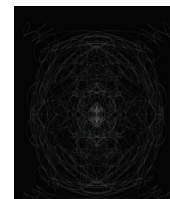
Drawing No. 9c, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



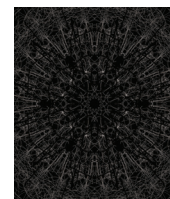
Drawing No. 10a, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



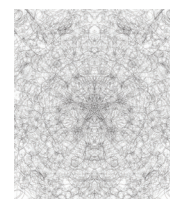
Drawing No. 15, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 16b, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 17, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 17a, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 24c, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 28c, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"

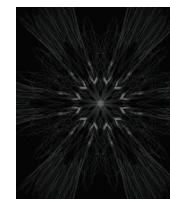
Drawing No. 32a, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



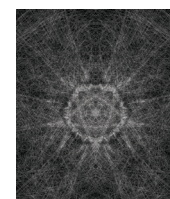
Drawing No. 32b, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



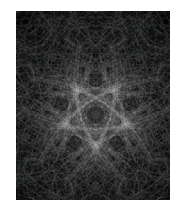
Drawing No. 32c, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



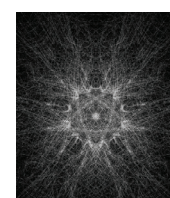
Drawing No. 32d, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



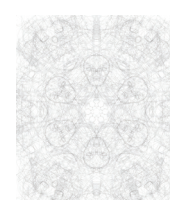
Drawing No. 33ab, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 35b, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 36a, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



Drawing No. 36b, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"

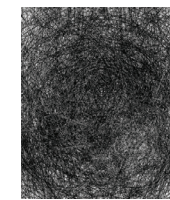


Drawing No. 36c, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"

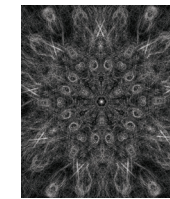


Drawing No. 37c, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"

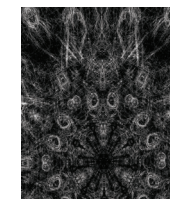
Drawing No. 37d, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 70.8"



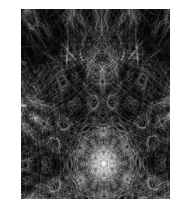
Drawing No. 38a, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 5
59" x 59"



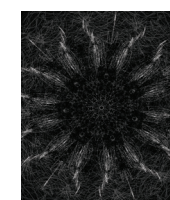
*Dreaming in a World of Chance
Part I*, 2018
Video, 12:25 minutes



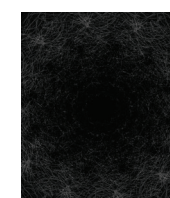
*Dreaming in a World of Chance
Part II*, 2018
Video, 21:26 minutes



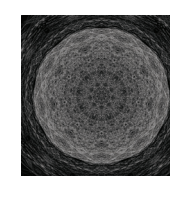
Large Porcelain No. 7, 2018
Porcelain
14.75" x 12.5" x 8"



Large Porcelain No. 8, 2018
Porcelain
8 7/8" x 20" x 17"



Large Porcelain No. 12, 2018
Porcelain
15.25" x 15" x 12"



Large Porcelain No. 13, 2018
Porcelain
14.75" x 12.5" x 8"



Large Porcelain No. 14, 2018
Porcelain
14.5" x 17" x 12.75"

Large Porcelain No. 16, 2018
Porcelain
22" x 13" x 16.25"

Large Porcelain No. 17, 2018
Porcelain
15.75" x 15.5" x 15"

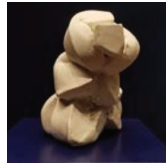
Large Porcelain No. 19, 2018
Porcelain
15" x 18" x 17"



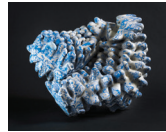
Mask No. 1, 2018
Porcelain
12.5" x 8.25" x 5.5"



Mask No. 2, 2018
Porcelain
11.5" x 9.5" x 4.25"



Mask No. 3, 2018
Porcelain
7" x 7.25" x 4.25"



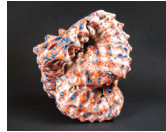
Mask No. 4a & b, 2018
Porcelain
(a)12.5" x 8.5" x 4" & (b)
9.5" x 8.25" x 6.5"



Mask No. 5, 2018
Porcelain
8.25" x 6" x 1.75"



Mask No. 6, 2018
Porcelain
9.75" x 6.75" x 1.75"



Mask No. 7, 2018
Porcelain
8" x 7.75" x 5.5"



Mask No. 8, 2018
Porcelain
11.5" x 9" x 5.5"



Mask No. 9, 2018
Porcelain
11.5" x 9" x 5.5"



Paintings from Porcelain 1, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 3
24" x 28"



Paintings from Porcelain 2, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 3
24" x 28"

Paintings from Porcelain 3, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 3
24" x 28"

Paintings from Porcelain 4, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 3
24" x 28"

Paintings from Porcelain 5, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 3
24" x 28"

Paintings from Porcelain 6, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 3
24" x 28"

Paintings from Porcelain 7, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 3
24" x 28"

Paintings from Porcelain 8, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 3
24" x 28"

Paintings from Porcelain 9, 2019
Giclée print. Edition of 3
24" x 28"

Small Porcelain No. 1, 2018
Porcelain
8 1/4" x 7" x 5 1/2"

Small Porcelain No. 2, 2018
Porcelain
9" x 7 3/4" x 7 1/4"

Small Porcelain No. 3, 2018
Porcelain
12" x 8" x 8"

Small Porcelain No. 4, 2018
Porcelain
11" x 10 1/2" x 8 1/4"

Small Porcelain No. 5, 2018
Porcelain
8" x 7" x 5"

Small Porcelain No. 6, 2018
Porcelain
7" x 6" x 6.5"

Small Porcelain No. 7, 2018
Porcelain
6 1/2" x 4" x 6"

Small Porcelain No. 8, 2018
Porcelain
7 3/4" x 5 3/4" x 5"

Small Porcelain No. 9, 2018
Porcelain
6" x 5 1/2" x 4 1/2"

The Triumph of Mystery, 2018
Porcelain

The Triumph of Mystery, 2018
Giclée print. Edition of 3
72" x 56"

Wheels to Salvation, 2018
1962 Oldsmobile Ninety-Eight
with vinyl wrap

BIOGRAPHY

Irv Tepper was born in 1947, in St. Louis, Missouri. He received his BFA at the Kansas City Art Institute in 1969. In 1971, he earned a MFA at the University of Washington in Seattle. Working as a sculptor, draftsman, and photographer, he has had more than 20 solo exhibitions in museums and galleries across the United States.

EDUCATION:

- 1971** M.F.A. University of Washington, Seattle
1969 B.F.A. Kansas City Art Institute, Missouri

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS:

- 2019** Irv Tepper, *Evidence of Phantoms Made Real Between Thoughts*, Station Museum of Contemporary Arts, Houston, Texas
- 2018** Irv Tepper, *Evidence of Phantoms Made Real Between Thoughts*, Five Points Museum of Contemporary Art, Victoria, Texas
- 2016** Irv Tepper, *Digital Drawings and Porcelain*, Susan C and Gerald C. Eckert Art Gallery, Millersville University, Millersville, Pennsylvania. *Lowriders of Corpus Christi, Texas*, FotoFest, Art Car Museum, Houston, Texas. *Lowriders of Corpus Christi, Texas*, Video Interviews (with Ernesto Leon), Five Points Museum, Victoria, Texas
- 2015** *Lowriders of Corpus Christi, Texas*, Photos, Video, Book, Nave Museum, Victoria, Texas
- 2014** *Art Cars and Friends Rendezvous in Victoria*, Nave Museum, Victoria, Texas
- 2012** *The Fragility of Hope*, Project Row House, Houston, Texas
- 2011** *Art Car Central and Irv Tepper*, Nave Museum, Victoria, Texas
- 2005** *Recent Sculpture*, Franklin Parrasch Gallery, NY
- 2004** *Eat, Drink*, Franklin Parrasch Gallery, NY
- 2002** *When Cups Speak: Life With the Cup, a 25-Year Survey*, Natalie and James Thompson Art Gallery, School of Art and Design, San Jose State University, San Jose, CA
- 2000** *Two Masters of Modern Ceramics--Irv Tepper and Jun Kaneko*, Judy Ann Goldman Fine Art, Boston, MA
- 1999** *Tears for the 20th Century*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Washington, D.C
- 1998** *Vehicles of Havana*, Art Car Museum, Houston, TX (Traveled to Bowling Green university, Bowling Green, OH)
- 1997** Sybarus Gallery, Royal Oak, MI
- 1993** Morgan Gallery, Kansas City, MO
- 1992** California State University, Hayward, CA
- 1991** Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA

- 1990** Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA
- 1989** Morgan Gallery, Kansas City, MO
- 1988** Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA, *Recent Ceramics, Sculpture and Drawing*, San Francisco International Airport, San Francisco, CA
- 1987** Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA Southwest Craft Center, San Antonio, TX
- 1985** Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA
- 1984** Vanderwoude/Tananbaum, New York, NY
- 1983** Morgan Gallery, Kansas City, MO Turnbull Lutjeans Kogan Gallery, Costa Mesa, CA; *Irv Tepper: Cups, Drawings, Stories*, Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, CA; traveled: University Art Museum, Berkeley, CA; California State University, San Diego, CA
- 1982** *Ursula Schneider--Irv Tepper*, Kunstmuseum, Bern, Switzerland (two- person exhibition)
- 1979-80** St. Louis Museum of Art, St. Louis, MO
- 1979** SITE, San Francisco, CA
- 1975** And/Or, Seattle, WA
- 1974** And/Or, Seattle, WA
- 1973** de Saisset Museum, University of California at Santa Clara
- 1972** James Manolides Gallery, Seattle, WA
- 1971** James Manolides Gallery, Seattle, WA

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS:

- 2015** *But Justice is Just This...*, rhizome Gallery, Las Vegas, Nevada
- 2014** *Time for Tea, Contemporary Ceramic Teapots*, Racine Art Museum, Racine, Wisconsin
- 2013** *Stark Contrasts: Black and White Ceramics from the Collection*, Racine Art Museum, Racine, Wisconsin
- 2012** Fotofest 2012, Houston, Texas
- 2011** *Under the Big Black Sun: California Art, 1974-81*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California
- 2010** *(RE) Form*, H&R Block Artspace at the Kansas City Art Institute, Kansas City, Missouri
- 2009** *Object Factory*, Museum of Art and Design, New York
- 2008** *Bay Area Ceramic Sculpture*, di Rosa Preserve, Napa, California
- 2007** *Alone In The Jungle*, Mandarin Gallery, Los Angeles, California
- 2005** *A Cup Sized History of the West Coast Ceramics: 1950s-1970s*, Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington.
- 2004** *From Rosanjin to Voulkos*, Franklin Parrasch Gallery, NY; *Eat, Drink...*, Franklin Parrasch Gallery, NY
- 2002** *Legacy of Innovation--A Tribute to Ken Ferguson*, Dolphin Gallery, Kansas City, MO; *9/11--Pratt Artists Respond*, Schafner Gallery, Pratt Intitute, Brooklyn, NY

2001 *I Love New York Benefit*, Franklin Parrasch Gallery, New York, NY; *Recent Acquisitions*, Renwick Gallery, National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

2000 Franklin Parrasch Gallery, New York, NY; *Selections from the Allan Chasanoff Ceramic Collection*,” Mint Museum of Craft & Design, Charlotte, NC; “*Color and Fire--Defining Moments in Studio Ceramics, 1950-2000*,” Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; traveled to: Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO; Tucson Museum of Art, Tucson, AZ; Memorial Art Gallery, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY; *Fotofest 2000*, Art Car Museum, Houston, TX

1999 Franklin Parrasch Gallery, New York, NY; *The Art of Craft*, Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco

1997 *Forms and Transformations, Current Expressions in Ceramic Art and Industry*, New York, NY

1996 *Cups II*, Sybaris Gallery, Royal Oak, MI; *Drawings and Objects*, Nancy Margolis Gallery, New York, NY

1995 *Keepers of the Flame*, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO

1993 *Legacy: Five Perspectives*, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

1992 Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, CA

1988 Chicago International Art Exposition, Chicago, IL

1987-88 *Clay Revisions: Plate, Cup, Vase*, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA; traveled: Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR; Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; Gibson Gallery, Potsdam, New York; Scottsdale Center for the Arts, Scottsdale, AZ; Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA

1986 *Material and Metaphore: Contemporary American Ceramic Sculpture*, Chicago Public Library Cultural Center, Chicago, IL

1985 *New Art, Modernism*, San Francisco, CA; *Kansas City Art Institute Centennial Exhibition*, Nelson/Rockwell Museum, Kansas City, MO; *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area: 945-80*, The Oakland Museum, Oakland, CA; *Contemporary American Ceramics: 10 Artists*, Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, CA

1984 *Review/Preview*, Vanderwoude/Tanabaum, New York, NY; *California Drawing*, Modernism, San Francisco, CA

1983 *Funny/Strange*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA

1982 *New, New York*, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL; traveled: Metropolitan Museum of Art Center, Coral Gables, FL; Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, AZ

1981 *Stay Tuned*, New Museum, New York, NY

1980 *The Annual: San Francisco Art Institute*, H.M. de Young Museum of Art, San Francisco, CA; *On Paper*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA; *1 + 1 = 3*, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, IL; *San Francisco International Video Festival, 1980*, several museums and art spaces, San Francisco, CA

1979 *Hassan and Speicher Fund Purchase Exhibition*, American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, NY

1978 *American Narrative/Story Art 1967-77*, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX; traveled; *Arts for Binary Vision, And/Or*, Seattle, WA

1977 *Fifth National Invitational Drawing Show*, Central Washington State College, Ellensburg, WA

1976 *A Conceptual Minute*, Cable Television Broadcast Channel Six, San Francisco; subsequently part of *A Tight Thirteen Minutes*, Museum of Conceptual Art, San Francisco, CA; *San Francisco Arts Festival*, Civic Center, San Francisco, CA

1974 *South of the Slot*, 63 Bluxome Street, San Francisco, CA

1973 *Statements*, The Oakland Museum, Oakland, CA

1972 *The Cup Show*, David Stuart Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; *A Decade of Ceramic Art 1962-1972*, from the Collection of Professor & Mrs. R.J. Monsen, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA; traveled

1971 *Collector's Choice: The Robert Plannebecker Collection*, Swarthmore College Art Gallery, Swarthmore, PA; *Contact Northwest*, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA; *San Francisco Art Institute Centennial Exhibition*, M.H. de Young Museum, San Francisco, CA; *27th Ceramic Invitational*, Lang Art Gallery, Scripps College, Clairmont, CA

1969 *Young Americans*, Contemporary Crafts Museum, New York, NY

1968 *25th National Ceramic Competition*,” Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, NY

SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS:

Art Car Museum, Houston, TX
 Charles A. Wustum Museum of Fine Arts, Racine, WI
 Contemporary Art Museum, Honolulu, HI
 di Rosa Preserve, Napa, CA
 Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA (promised bequest)
 Fort Worth Art Museum, Fort Worth, TX
 Kunstmuseum, Bern, Switzerland
 Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA
 Mint Museum of Craft + Design, Charlotte, NC
 Monterey Museum of Art, Monterey, CA
 Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA
 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA
 Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA
 Renwick Gallery, National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC
 San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA
 St. Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, MO
 University Art Museum, Berkeley, CA
 Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England
 Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton, MA

SELECTED BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS:

- 80 Langton Street: Documentation/The First Year 1975-76. San Francisco: 80 Langton Street, 1977
- Agetstein, Stephen, ed. "San Francisco International Video Festival Catalog." San Francisco: Video 80, 1980.
- Alpert, Richard. *South of the Slot*. San Francisco: Richard Alpert, 1975.
- Betti, Claudia and Teel Sale. *Drawing, A Contemporary Approach*. New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1997, pp. 92-95.
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PRIZES & REWARDS:

1996 The Orange Show/Houston Arts Festival, Houston, TX. Honorable Mention – Photography

1992 National Endowment For The Arts, Washington, DC. Visual Arts Program – Crafts, Individual Artist's Fellowship

1989 Djerassi Foundation, Woodside, CA. Agnes Bourne Fellowship Award

1978 San Francisco Arts Festival, San Francisco, CA. Video Prize

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

1997–present Pratt Institute, New York, NY; Graduate Program, Fine Arts and Industrial Design

1995 Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI; Sculpture

1995 Anderson Ranch Arts Center, Snowmass Village, CO; Sculpture

1991–94 San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA; Interdisciplinary Studies and Sculpture

1989 San Francisco Art Institute; Sculpture

1989 Kansas City Art Institute, Kansas City, MO; Visiting Artist, Foundation Program

1989 Anderson Ranch Arts Center; Drawing

1987–89 University of California, Berkeley, CA; Sculpture, Video and Performance

1987–88 San Francisco Art Institute; Ceramics and Figure Molding With Clay

1986 Anderson Ranch Arts Center; Ceramics

1985 San Francisco Art Institute; Drawing

1984 Maryland Art Institute, Baltimore, MD; Visiting Artist, Seminar

1982 New York University, New York, NY; Ceramics

1977 California College of Arts and Crafts, Oakland, CA; Advanced Photography

1972–79 University of Santa Clara, Santa Clara, CA; Photography, Ceramics, Sculpture

1971–72 California State University, Hayward, CA; Printmaking and Ceramics

1969–71 University of Washington, Seattle, WA; Teaching Assistant; Ceramics

1969 Kansas City Art Institute; Ceramics



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is one thing to sit alone at a computer exploring the randomness of my drawings and “mining” the various layers until the image on screen resonates a certain satisfaction. The same can be said about my porcelain sculptures which go through repeated kiln firings until I recognize something in their transformations. It is quite another level of satisfaction to have my work recognized, presented, and installed in an exhibition.

For that achievement, I owe a great deal of thanks and gratitude to Ann Harithas, Founder and Director of the Five Point Museum of Contemporary Art, and Curator of this exhibition. She gave me total freedom to install the work and utilize the entire museum to my specifications. All exhibitions at the museum, located in an old automobile dealership, required that an automobile must be included. From Ann’s art car collection, I chose her father’s low-mileage, 1962 Oldsmobile 98, he had only driven it from the family ranch to church and back. She not only allowed me the use of the car, but also chose one of my drawings to be put on it (the car’s title “Wheels to Salvation”).

Every detail, arranging the numerous aspects to bring this exhibition to the Five Points was overseen by its Chief Curator, Maurice Roberts. His calm, steady demeanor, and sense of detail, made everything go smoothly and appear effortlessly executed by the museum’s able staff, including Magdalena Kuykendall, Russell Fowler, Mike Uresti, and Katherine Mulholland. It was a pleasure to work with them, I now am honored to count them as friends.

For the installation at the Station Museum, its Director, James Harithas, a genius at making art installations come alive, contributed his unique expertise in exhibition installation, contributing a number of great ideas as to design of the final layout, suggesting construction of an altar structure in the middle to house the large porcelain sculptures, and a theatre to exhibit the video (“Mystery of Chance”) as a large projection.

The staff of the Station Museum were a joy to work with, they helped actualize the ambitious concepts as an installation. Alan Schnitger, Chief Curator, designed the catalog, and brought a lot of sensitivity to the drawings presentation and projection of the video better than I had imagined. The Assistant Director Joshua Poole, was instrumental in organizing and caring for the work. The Assistant Curator, Sophie Asakura, in her press release and subsequent Foreword for this catalog, revealed rare insight into my work and personal development as an artist. The Curator Alex Tu, always came through in any emergency.

In my New York studio, a lot of credit goes to my assistant, Nicole McKenna, who was instrumental in the making the porcelain sculpture, she also contributed her interior design expertise to preparatory design drawings for the construction of the altar. Beecher Smith-Stackhouse gave freely of his time and digital knowledge in laying out the pattern for application on the car. Amy Seabolt lent her manicured fingernails, hand, and time to make the video. Corinne Greiner helped to edit my writing and mistakes in my grammar. I thank everyone mentioned above for helping to make my work come alive.

—IRVIN TEPPER

