

Bird Talk

Raised as a New Yorker, trained on abstract expressionism, then minimalism, there was a huge question forming in me about how to approach that which is real, in the language of the art world I found myself in.

For this talk, given the collaboration with Karen, I decided to look at those questions from the point of view of the work I have done with birds.

After all, my favorite quote speaks of the importance of how you pose the question.



Rockhopper, 1976-78, mixed media



Black Spring, 1982



Dual Nature, 1986, 62 x 42

In the drawing "Praying While Smoking" the text reads:

I remember the story of two zen monks, both prodigious smokers. Concerned about the question of smoking during their prayer time, they decided to consult their superiors. While one was given a pat of encouragement, the other was given a stern reprimand. The unlucky one, greatly puzzled, asked his friend exactly how he had posed his question. He replied "I asked whether it was permissible to pray while smoking."



"Praying While Smoking", 1986 Chalk, gouache and ink
on paper 41" x 55"

me 24. mca. - The heron has a great deal of light.
It is like working on 4 pieces within one.
Each view different (a heron is an F.F.) Need
to use something stronger than wheat paste and
rice paper.

The key to how to approach it is in
alchemy from ~~the~~ away of working. To
bring attention to the work in the studio -

HERON
Notes

The heron is about seeing a form in
the distance - how to make it look like
the essence of what I see off in the
marsh. Not the long necked heron or
even a portrayal of the actual form
but the feeling of the form from
how close I can get to it from the
view I have of it.



Drawing in journals
What I call "wake up drawings"

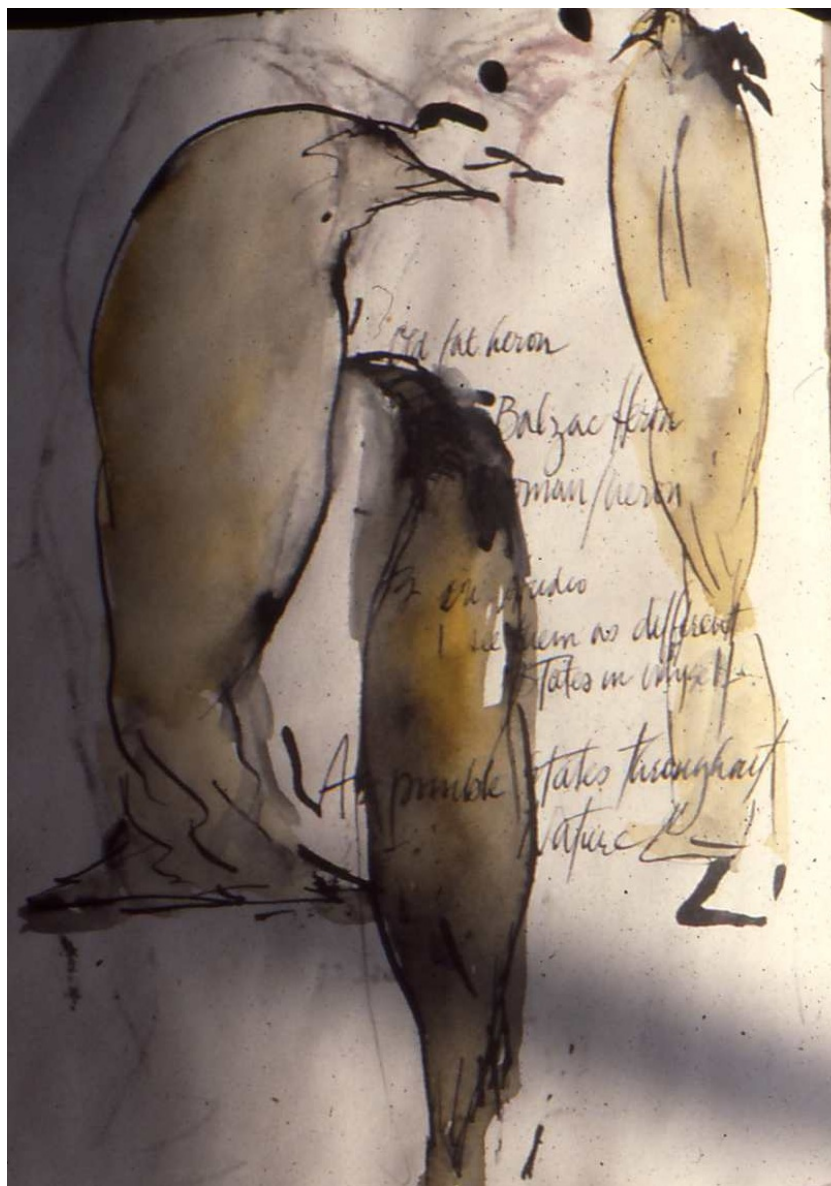
Forming Series, 1987



Black Crowned Night Heron, 1986



White Heron, 1986



Use two pieces
as one

A figure and



Use Giotto color
for the Heron series

I see them as
the essence of
different states

looking
watching
lean
up



MORNING DOVE

WHITE BIRCH
SPOTS ON TAIL
PALE SIENNA
LEADS
PAVING GREEN
BARK

What colors are there from

MORNING DOVE
HAWK ARE.
SIENNA
GREY

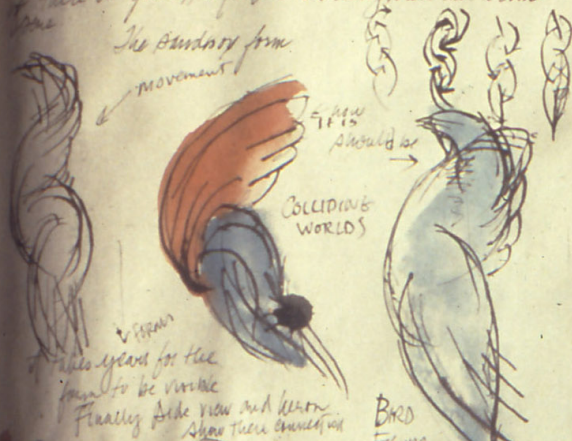


BIRD
ORGANIC
HAND
FIGURES
BODY

May 2 1936.

Andy's or young last night. The fore-escape
the heat of the sun. Having a hangover from
some hours before Andy's red comes! 3 lbs or enough
there is focus, action. Conclusions are not a time
time

The Boundary from
movement



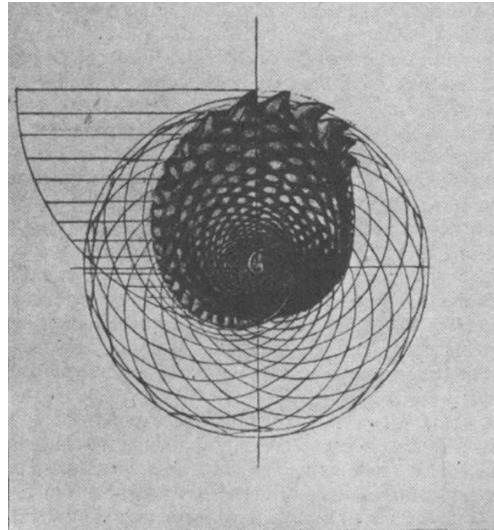
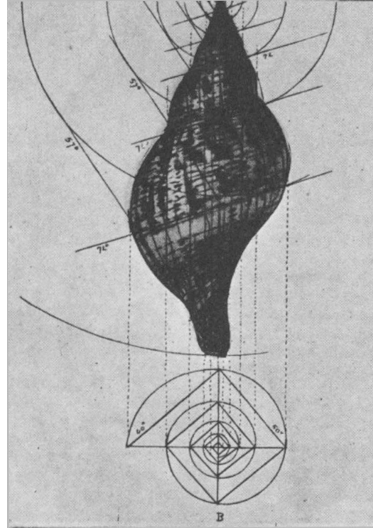
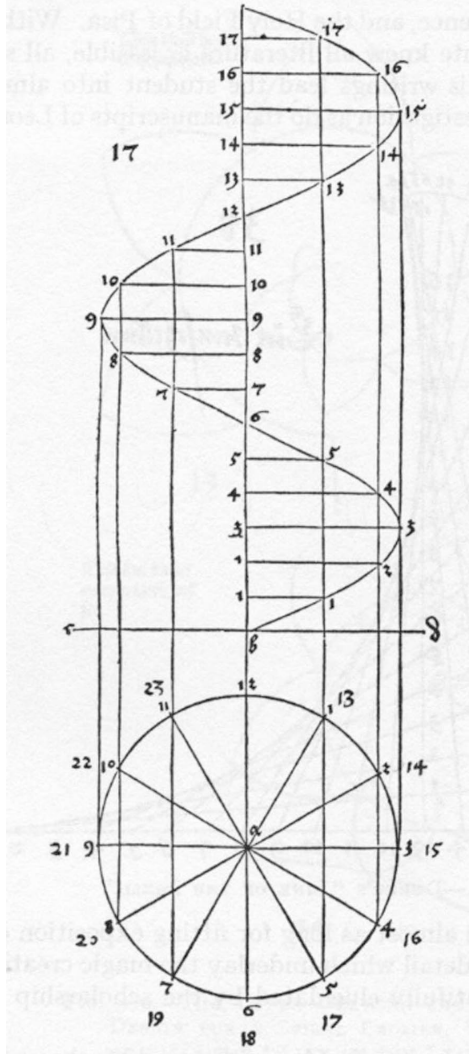
What is it that is my own?




Forming, 1985



Closed Wing, 1986







A Love hate
Relationship
with sand

Slave above and below

Slave
above
and
below

Before Birds
Self portraits
neither planted
nor flying

Oak Island Studies, 1988



"Oak Island Studies" at Grace Borgenicht Gallery, New York, 1988

Oak Island Wednesday August 12

Something is changing. I sense it but cannot name it. The drawings begin to show it. There is an inclusion of an atmosphere pervading the drawings, a desire to include the water and the seeing of it while crabbing – of the sky early morning and late afternoon, of the marsh, of how the light hits the marsh or that it glows. The different qualities of air, how the light comes through when it is humid and hazy vs. when it is dry and clear.

Or when the light is from the east and the wind from the north vs. when the light is from the west and the wind from the south. I sense it is like that in me too only I don't have a compass and so it seems so much less visible.

Also something in me feels limited by drawing in line the outward form of things. Yet I still do not understand that. Is it possible to give a sense of the inner life of a form through the outward form of the gesture? And does that inner life have a possibility of including all that I sense in the weather.

Also, in my "art" am I not trying to express what I see in nature, how to find something larger behind the form. Am I not exploring at least the possibility of this? Not usually. Usually it is completely automatic. I see a cardinal and use red ink yet it appeals to something in me as does the Black Crown Night Heron – but I still do not understand what exactly it appeals to.



Falcon, 1987



Egyptian Hawk, 1987



Bittern, 1988



Plume, 1988

The sun, the moon, the stars, which we see, are cross sections of spirals which we do not see. These cross sections do not fall out of the spirals because of the same principle by reason of which the cross section of an apple cannot fall out of the apple."-- P.D. Ouspensky *A New Model of the Universe*



Sun Moon, 1989



Cranes, 1989
42" x 84"



Stalagmite, 1989



Horus, 1989



Paul's Crow, 1989



Freestanding 1988

When you see a fish, you don't think of its scales do you? You think of its speed, its
 floating, flashing body seen through the water.... Well, I've tried to express just that. If I
 made fins and eyes and scales, I would arrest its movement and hold you by a pattern or
 a shape. For I don't want just the flash of its spirit.

-Brancusi



28



29



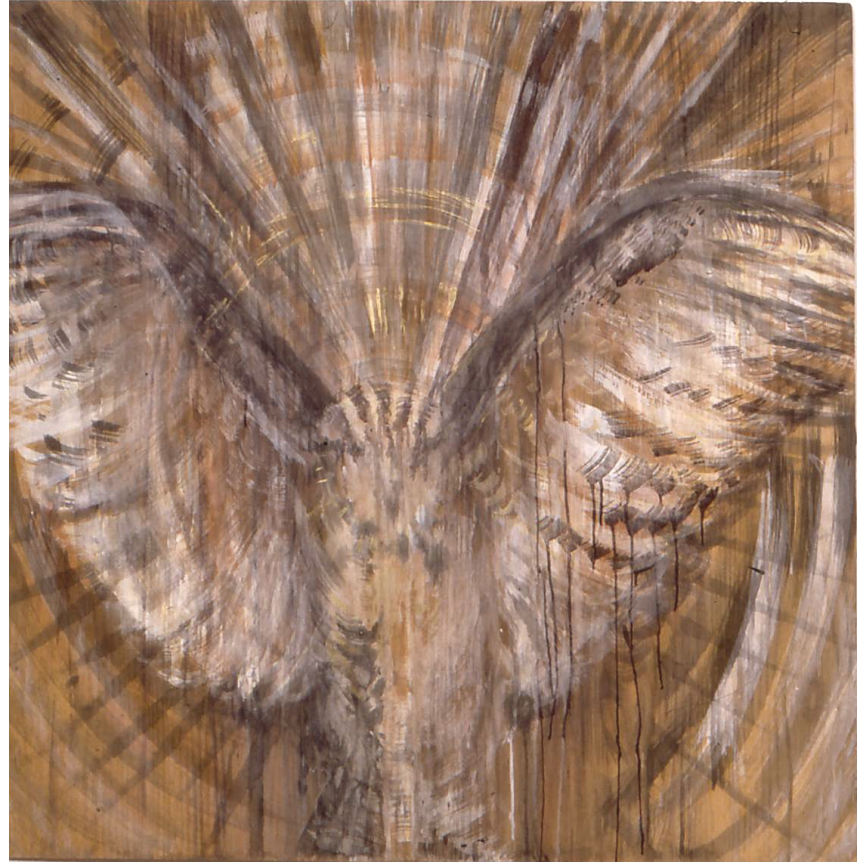
30

















Installation view of the show "Better Nature" at Grace Borgenicht Gallery, New York, 1993
"Boat / Beak", collection of the Brooklyn Museum (left) and "Left Wing / Right Wing" (right)

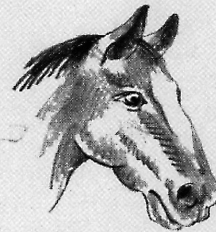
HOW TO DRAW GEOMETRIC SHAPES



STEP 1



STEP 1



STEP 1



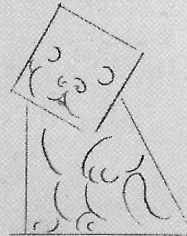
STEP 2



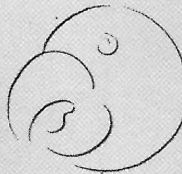
STEP 2



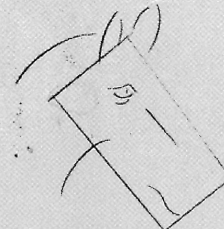
STEP 2



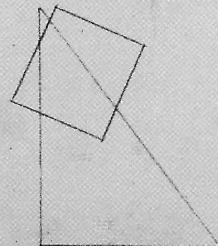
STEP 3



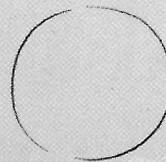
STEP 3



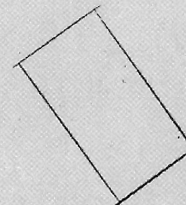
STEP 3



STEP 4



STEP 4



STEP 4

And here is one from Hokusai I just read quoted in an essay by Kenneth Clark

"All I have produced before the age of seventy is not worth taking into account. At seventy-three I have learned a little about the real structure of nature, of animals, plants, trees, birds, fishes and insects. In consequence when I am eighty, I shall have made still more progress. At ninety I shall penetrate the mystery of things; at one hundred I shall certainly have reached a marvelous stage; and when I am a hundred and ten, everything I do, be it a dot or a line, will be alive. I beg those who live as long as I to see if I do not keep my word. Written at the age of seventy five by me, once Hokusai, today Gwakto Rojin, the old man mad about drawing."





Birds with Gamut, 2007