

**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.

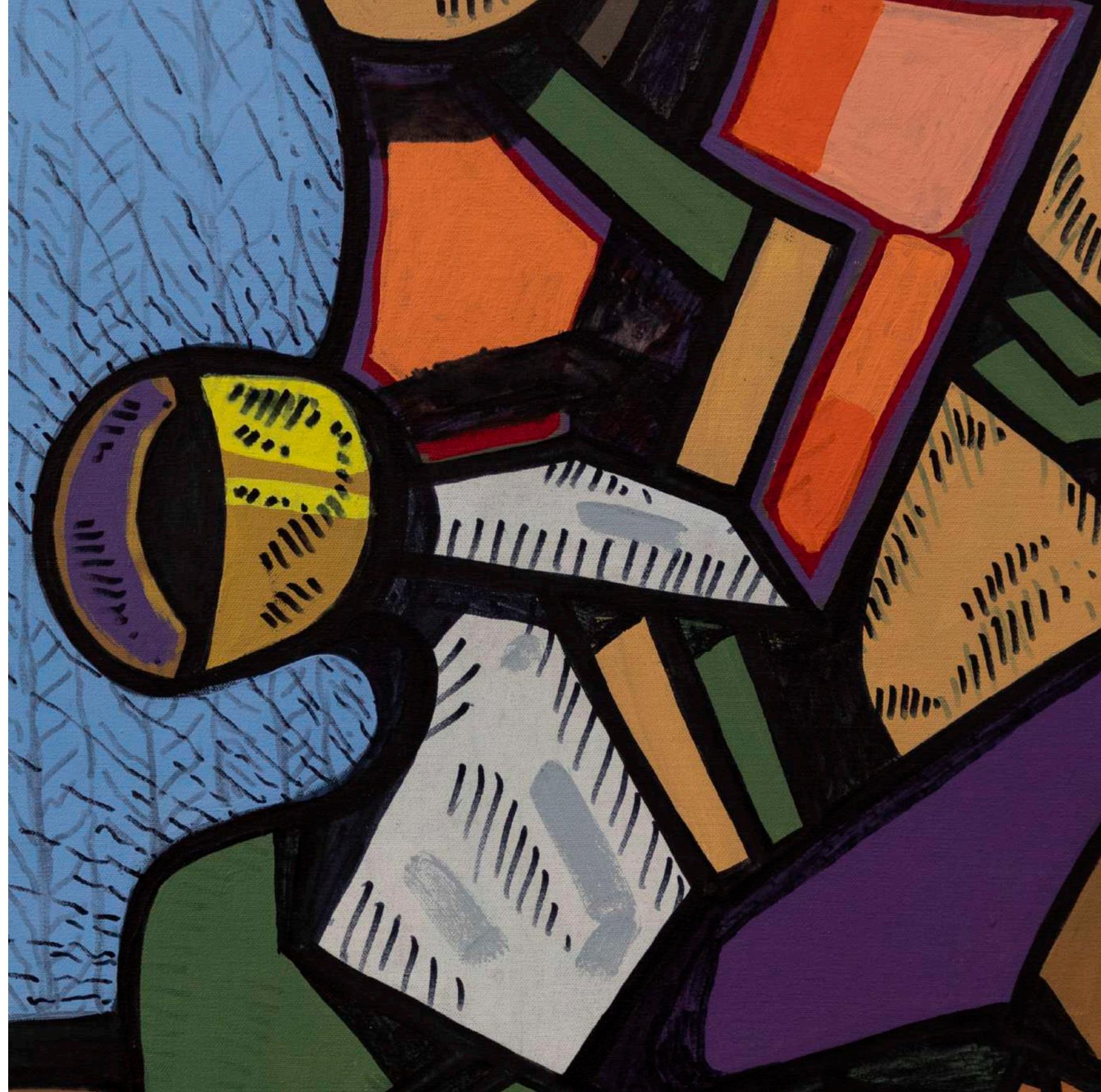
His works speak a unique language of colour, which allows people to read his paintings like a book. For example, he associated white with death, black with peace and a combination of the two colours with heaven.

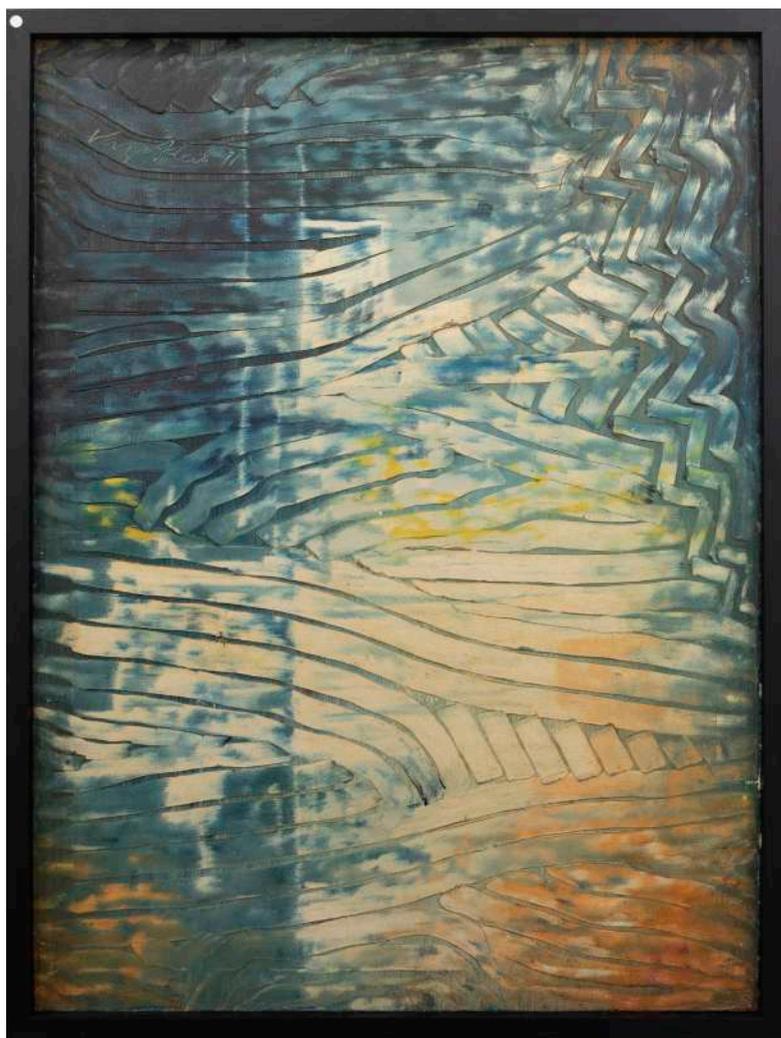
His most prized technique is called 'Fake-proof', deriving its name from the fact that it is impossible to copy. This technique can primarily be seen in his portrait works. A combination of horizontal and vertical brush strokes along with thick strokes carved using a foot-rule, is the essence of this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

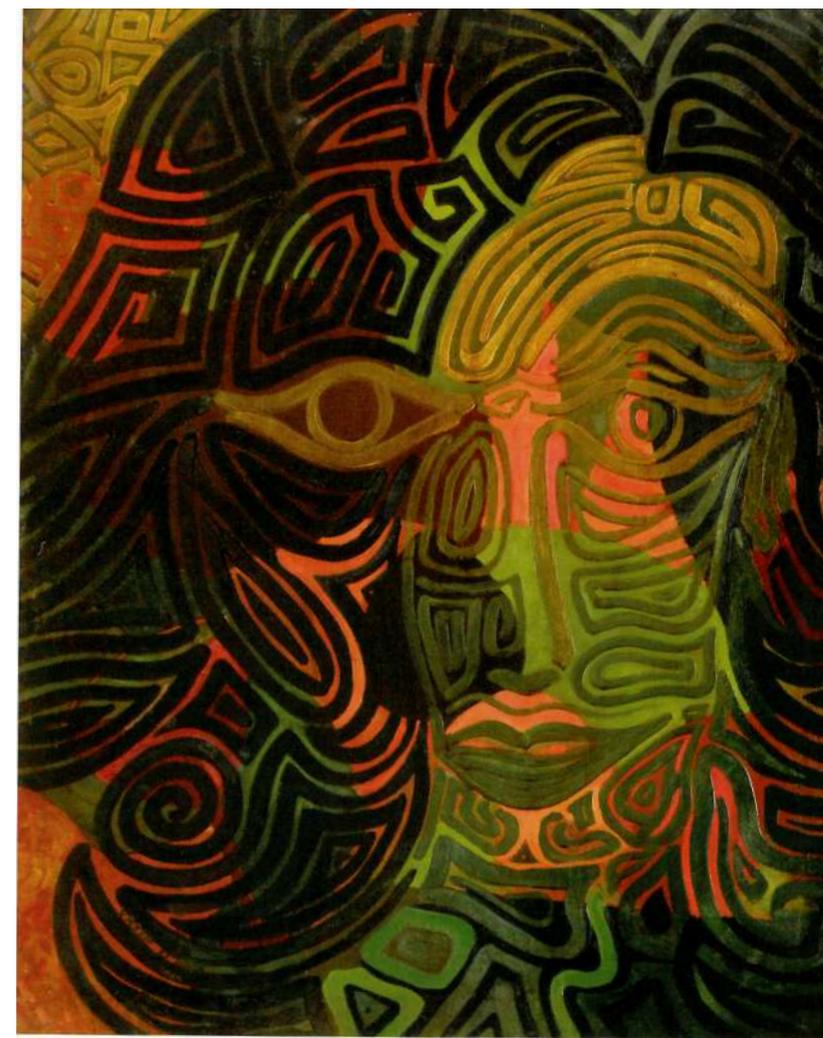


Ovoid Face - Face Series  
1974  
Oil on canvas  
106 x 76 cm

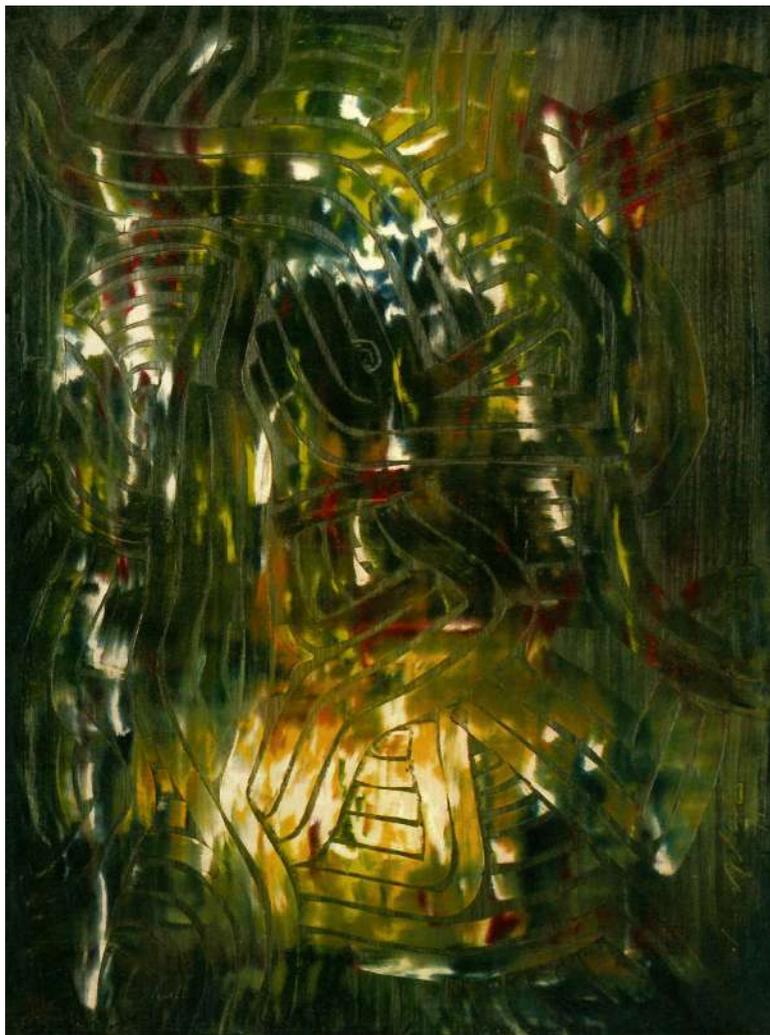




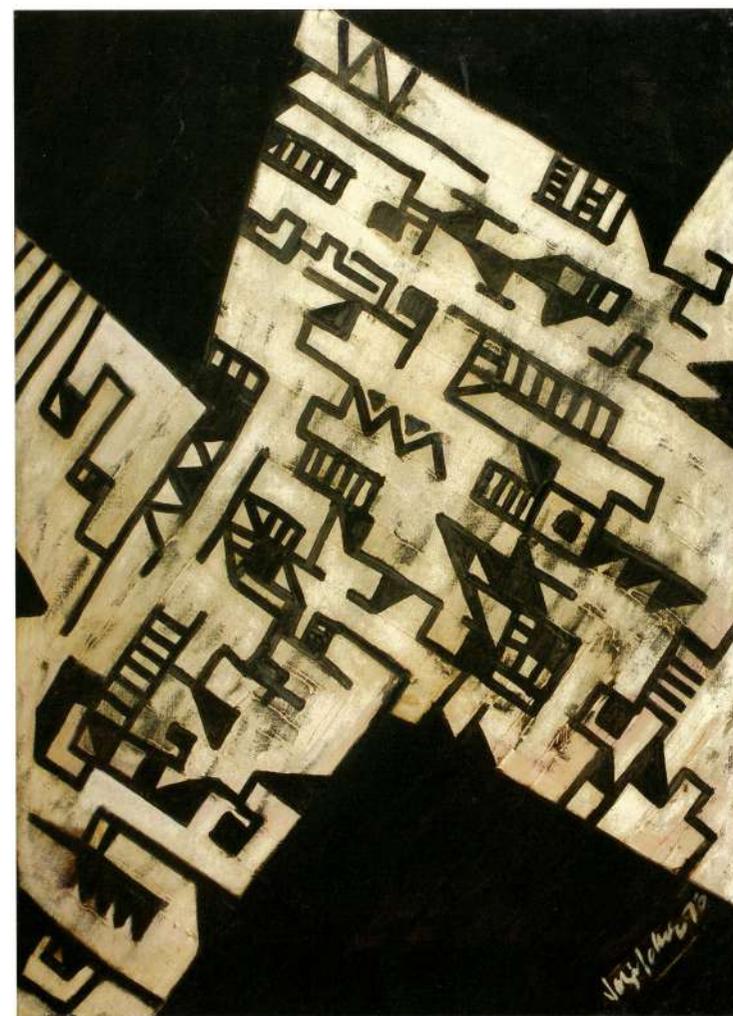
Abstract Landscape  
1971  
Oil on canvas  
102 x 76 cm



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

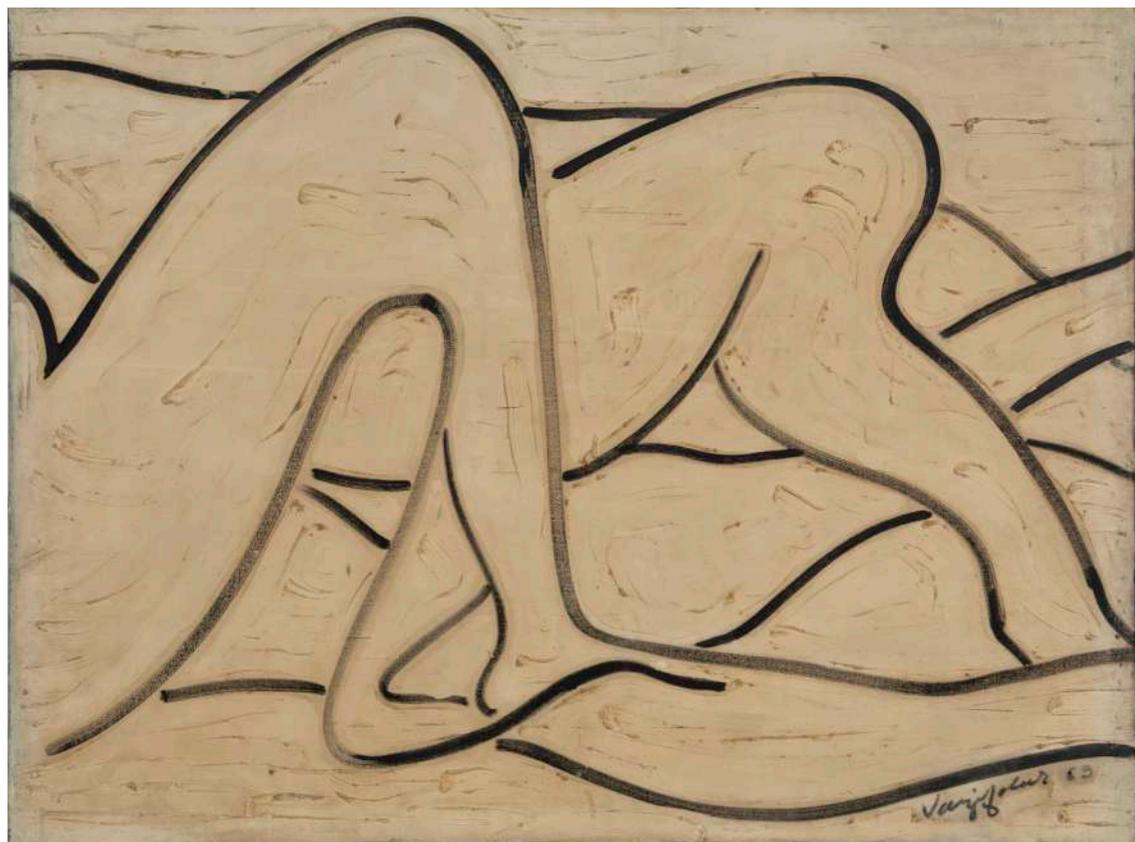




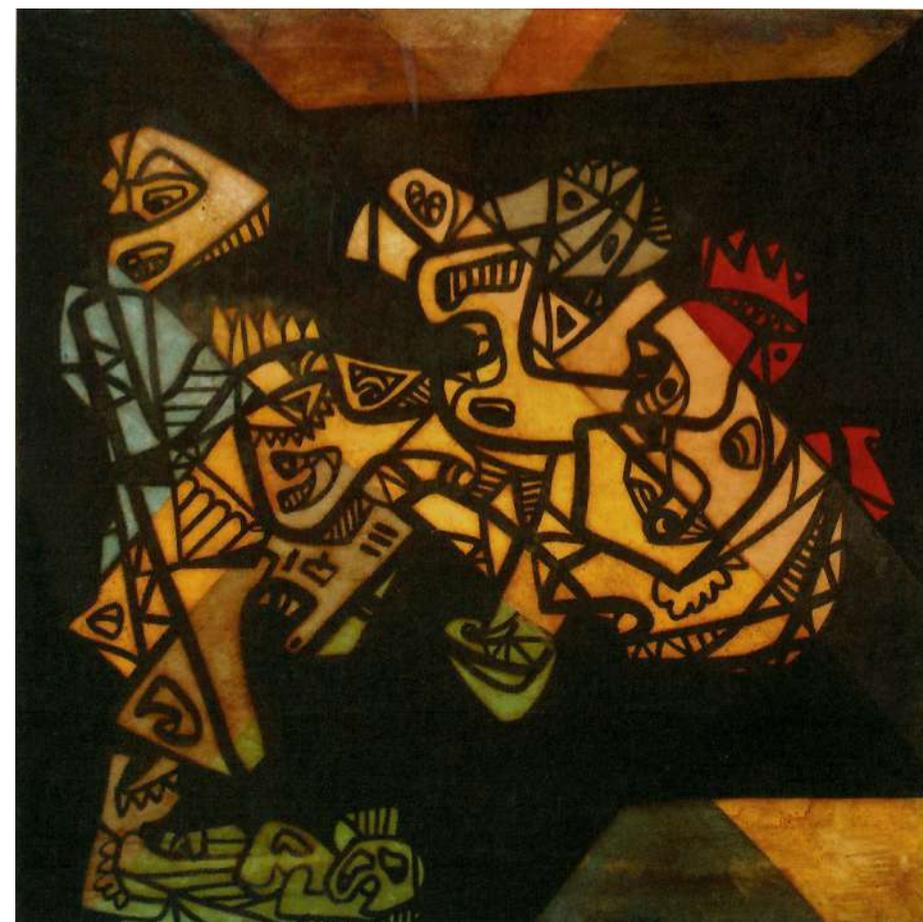
The Writer  
Oil on canvas  
86 x 71 cm



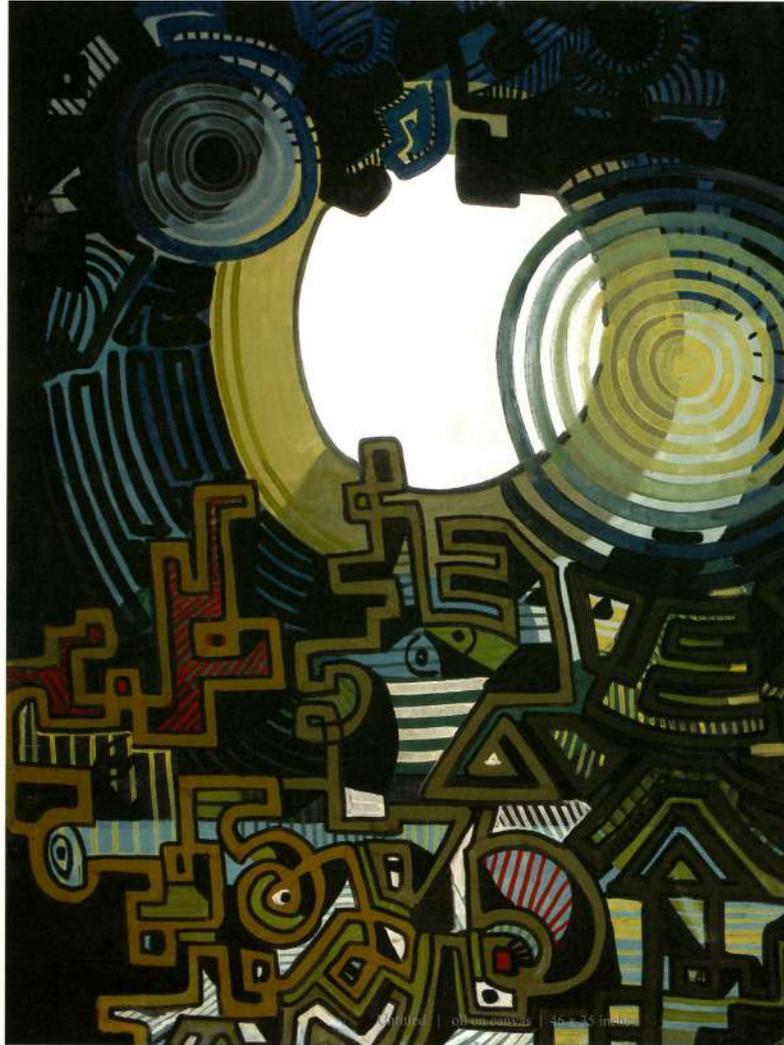
The Embrace  
Oil on canvas  
90 x 145 cm



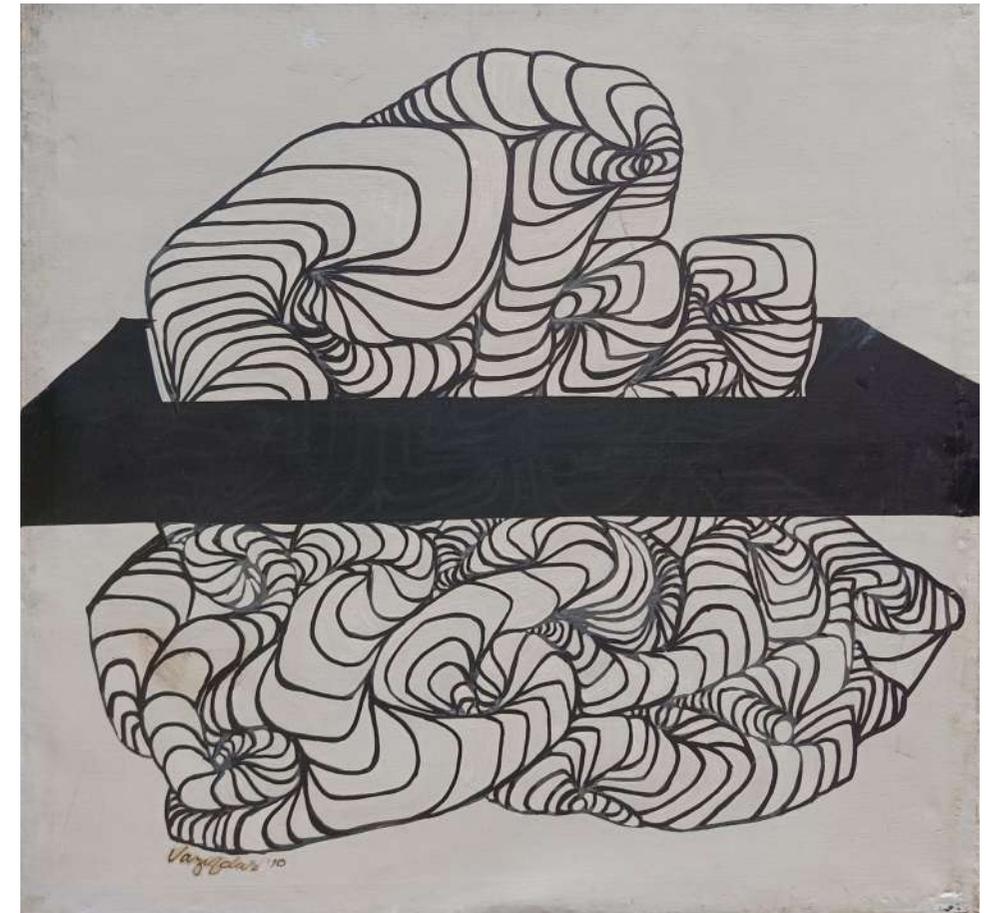
Relaxing on Beach  
1969  
Oil on canvas  
91 x 122 cm



Untitled  
Oil on canvas  
122 x 122 cm



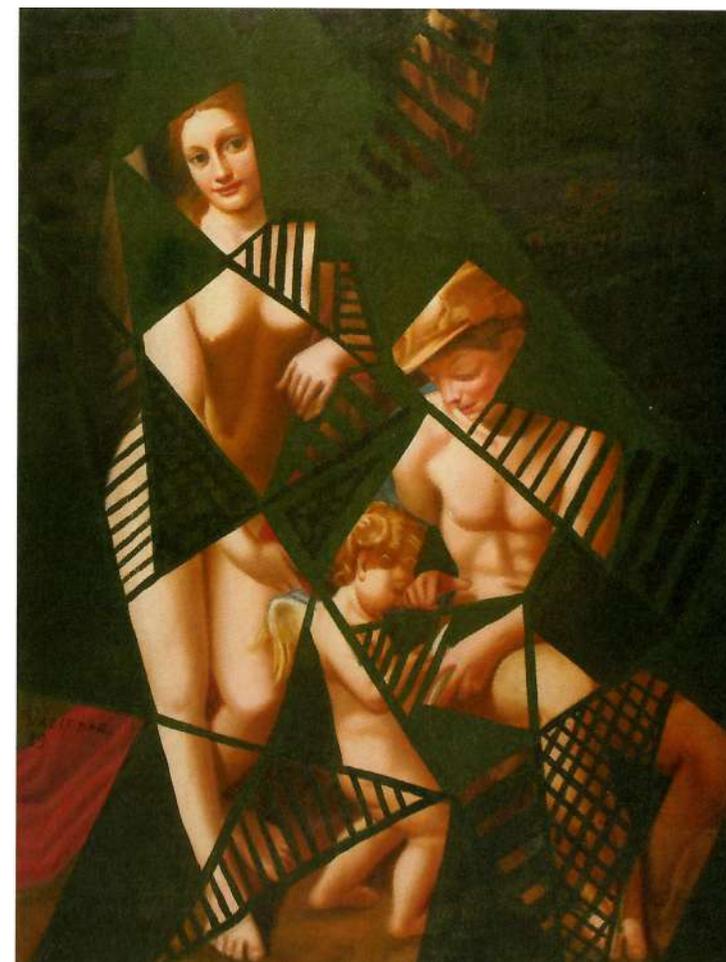
Untitled  
Oil on canvas  
126 x 99 cm



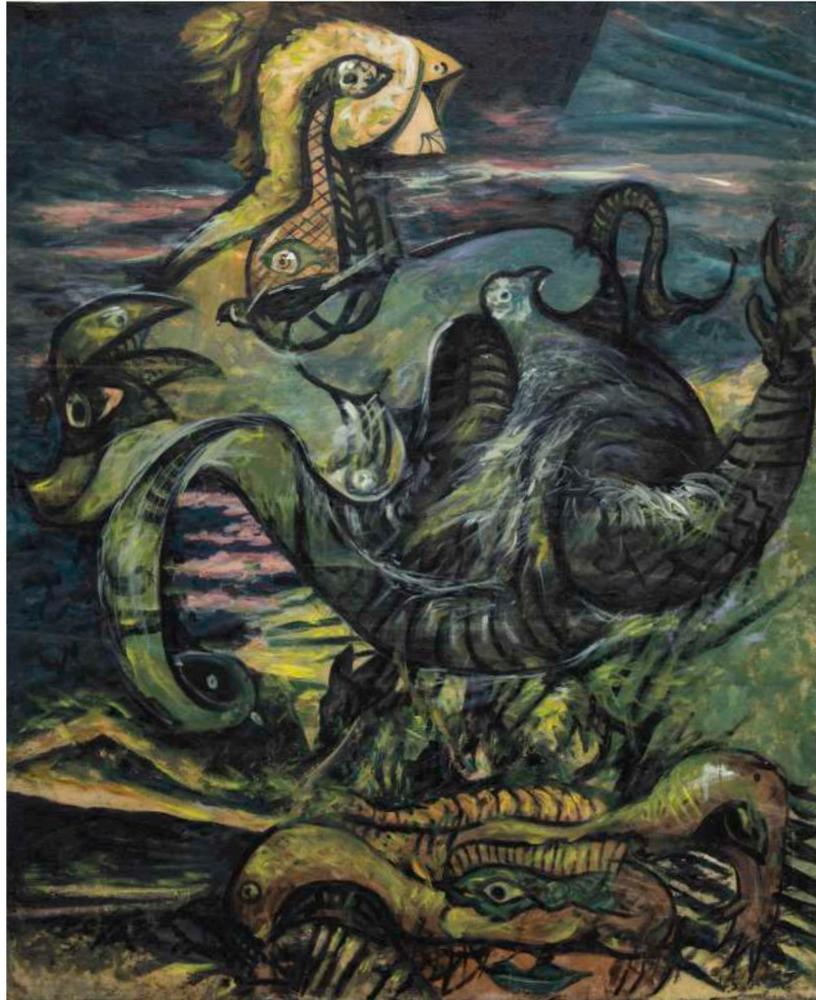
Confusion  
1970  
122 x 122 cm  
Oil on canvas



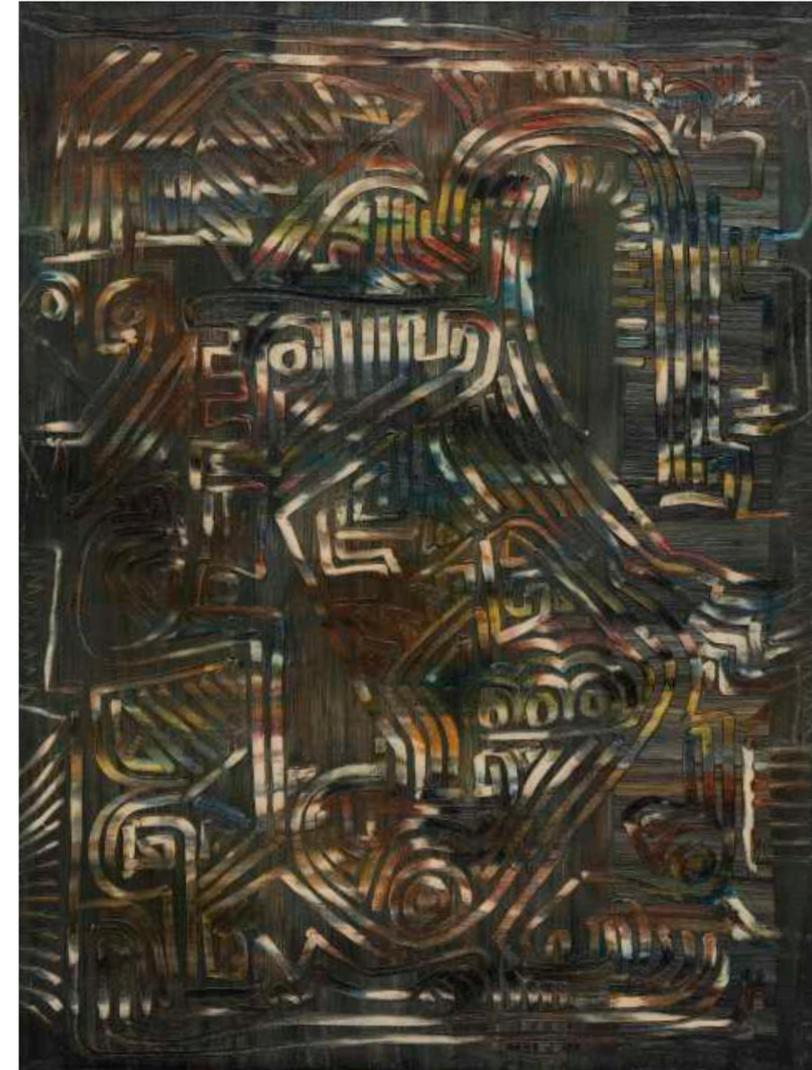
Mother & Child  
Oil on canvas  
147 x 117 cm



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



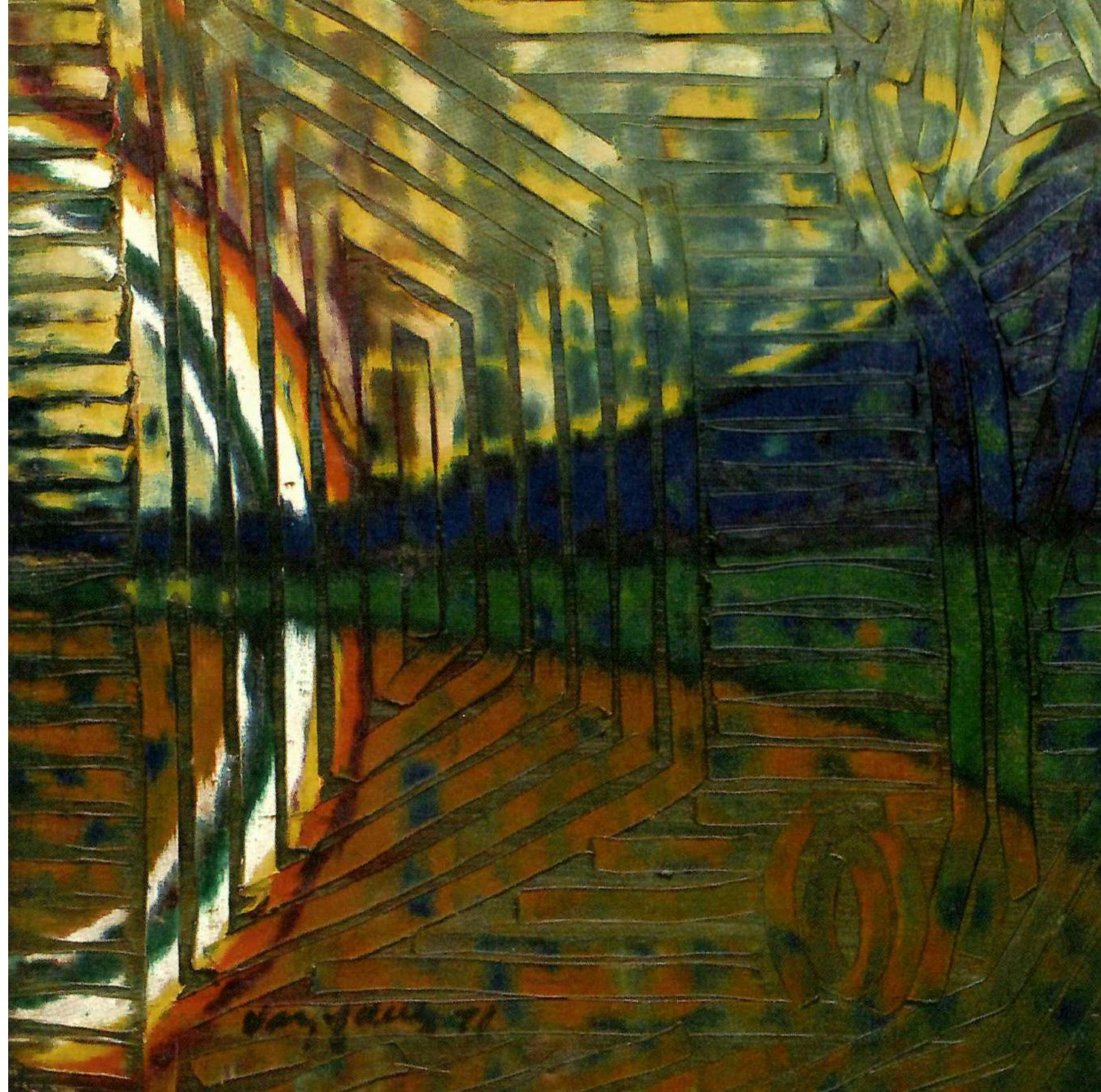
The Surreal Dream  
Oil on canvas  
140 x 115 cm



Journey  
1986  
Oil on canvas  
102 x 76 cm



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

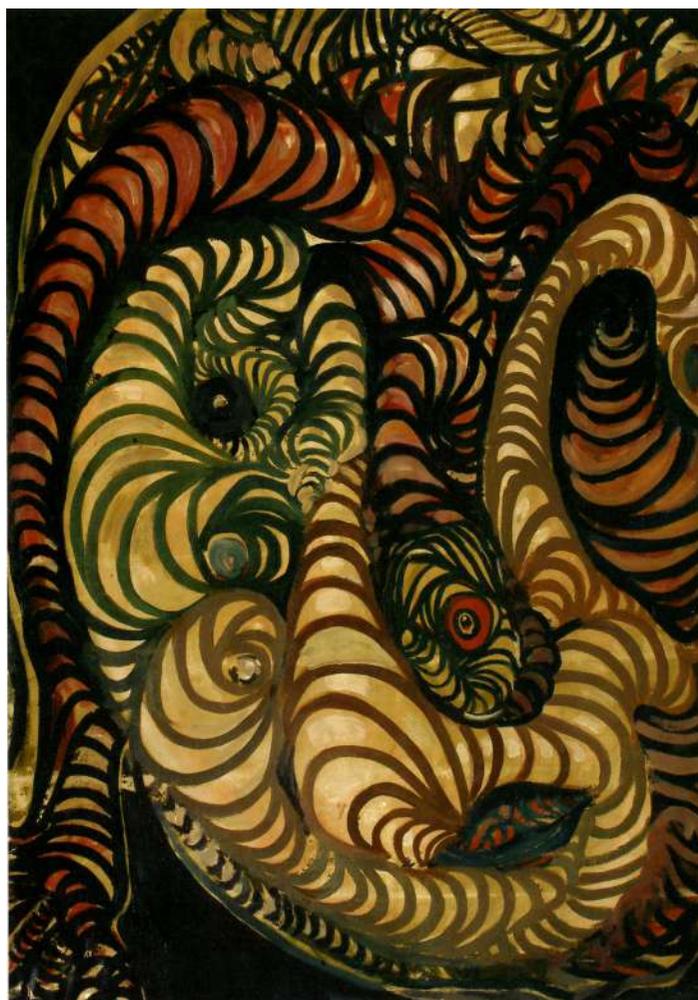




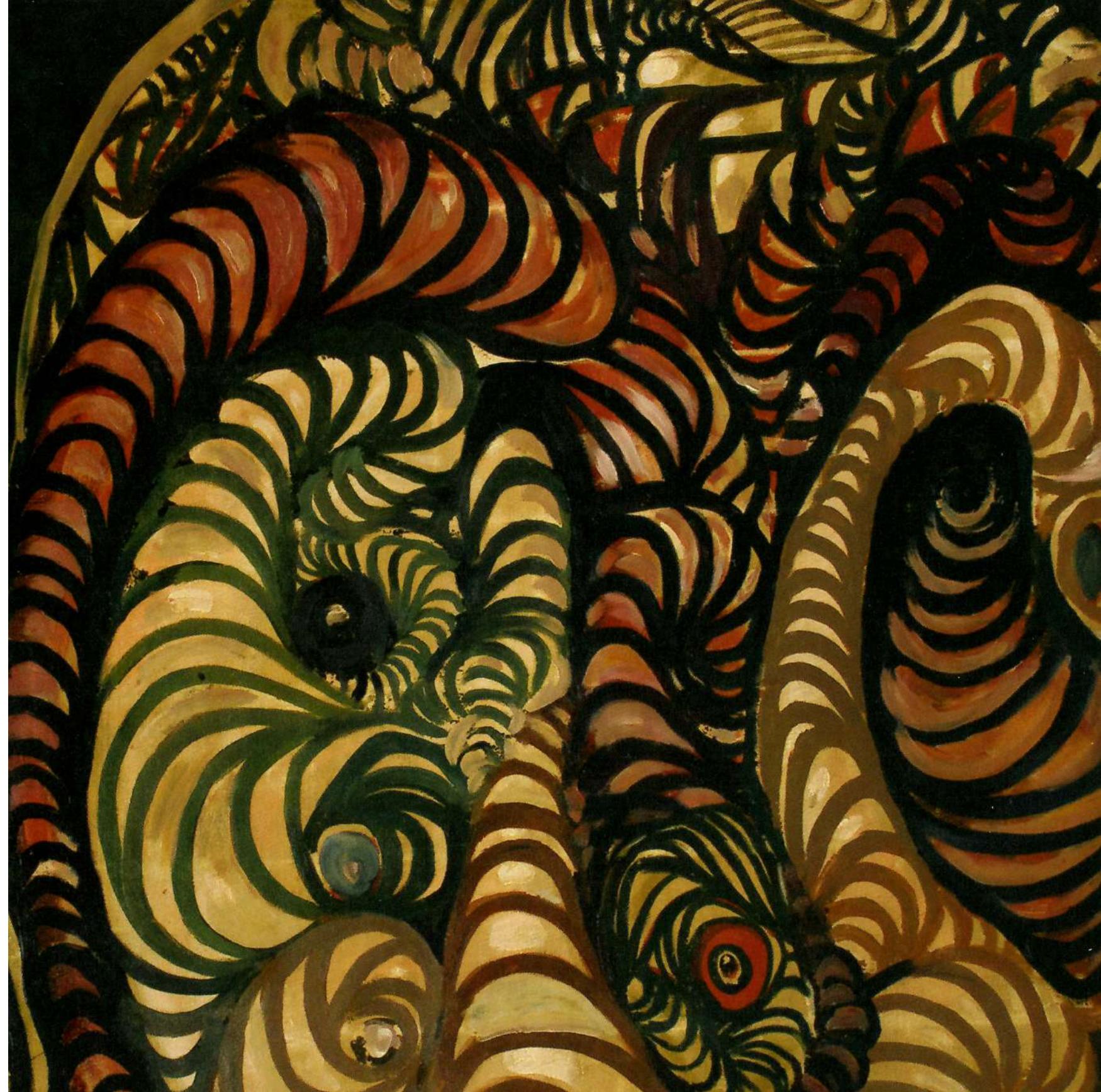
Dancing  
102 x 81 cm  
Oil on canvas



Running Horse  
1991  
Oil on canvas  
91 x 122 cm



Audience  
1967  
Oil on canvas  
109 x 77 cm





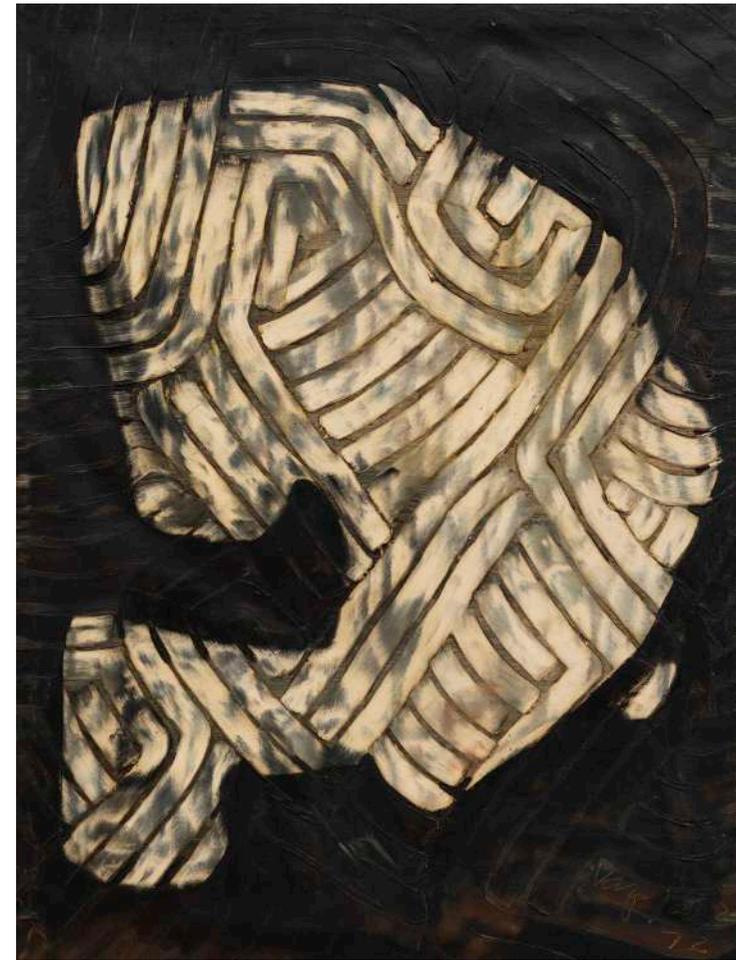
Serenity  
Oil on canvas  
140 x 112 cm



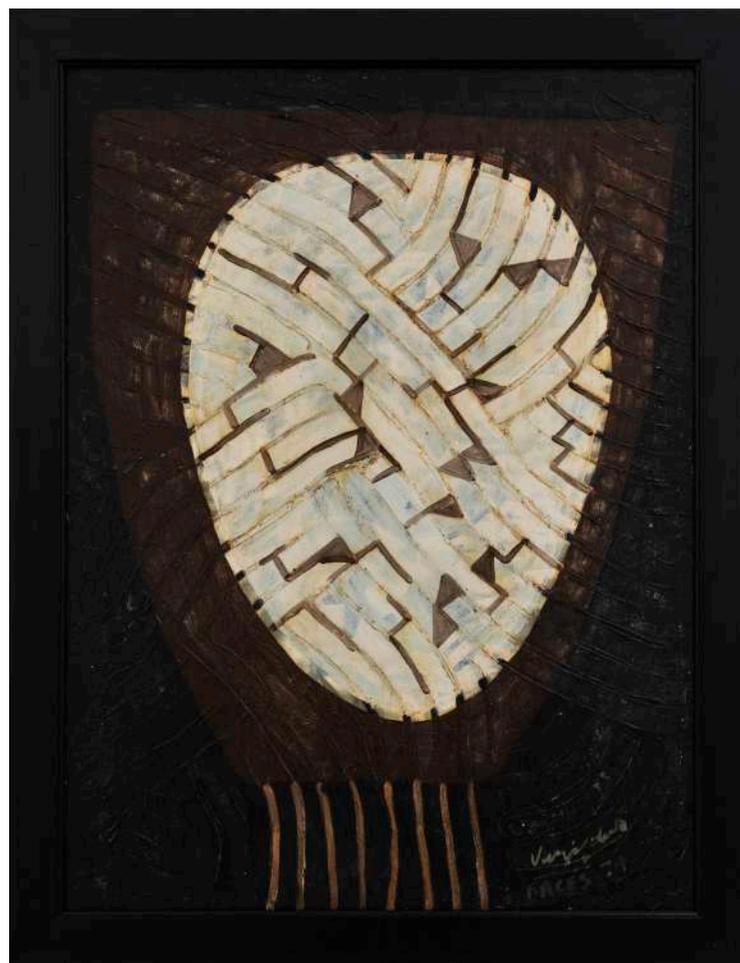
Foresight  
1971  
Oil on canvas  
122 x 92 cm



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



Montain Ran  
1969  
Oil on canvas  
107 x 76 cm



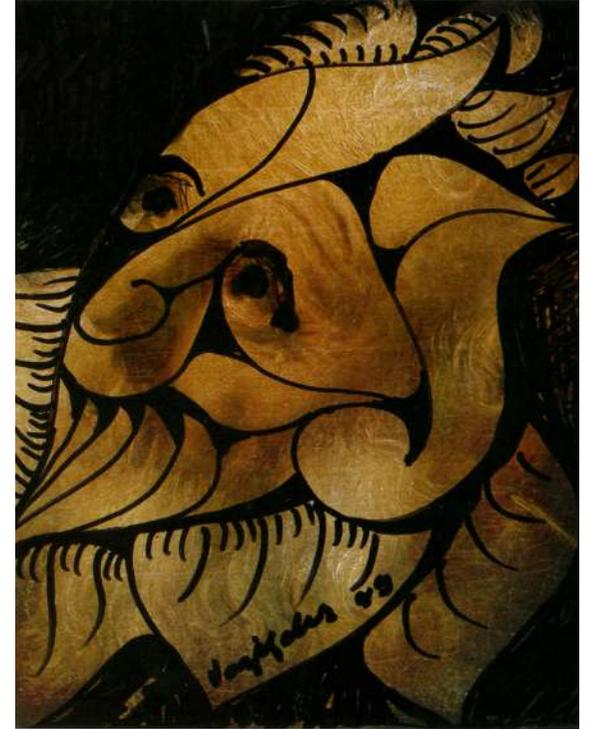
Traffic  
1972  
Oil on canvas  
91 x 122 cm



Leonardo Da Vinci  
1972  
Oil on canvas  
91 x 76 cm



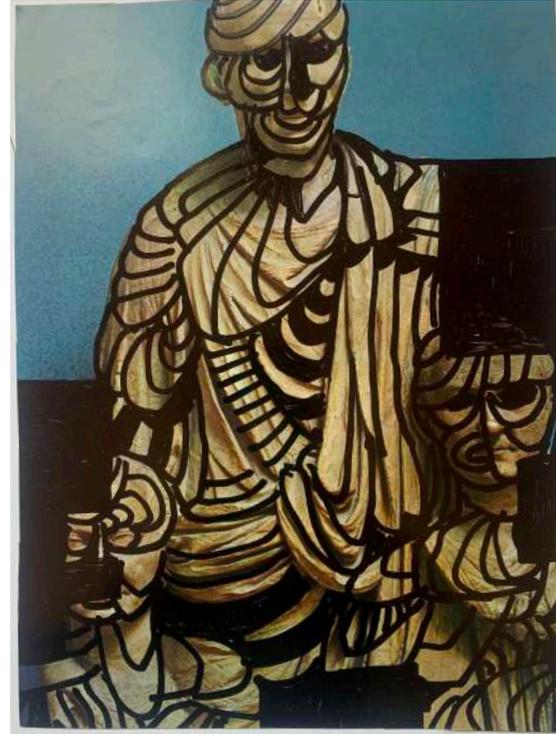
Untitled (Face Series)  
1997  
Felt-tip on printed paper  
27 x 20 cm



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



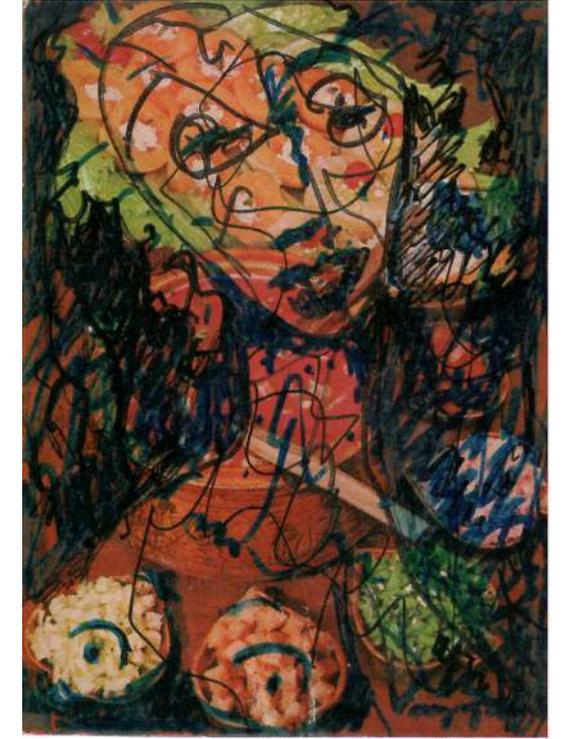
Untitled  
1986  
Felt-tip on printed paper  
27 x 20 cm



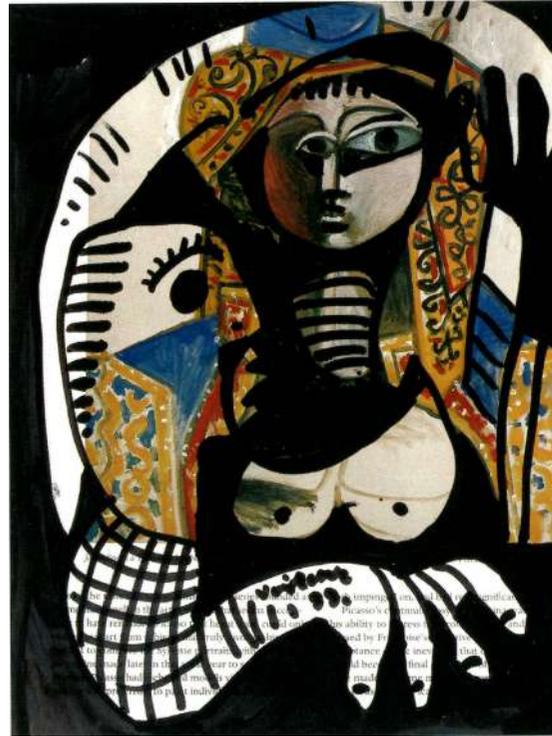
Untitled  
1995  
Felt-tip on printed paper  
21 x 29 cm



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



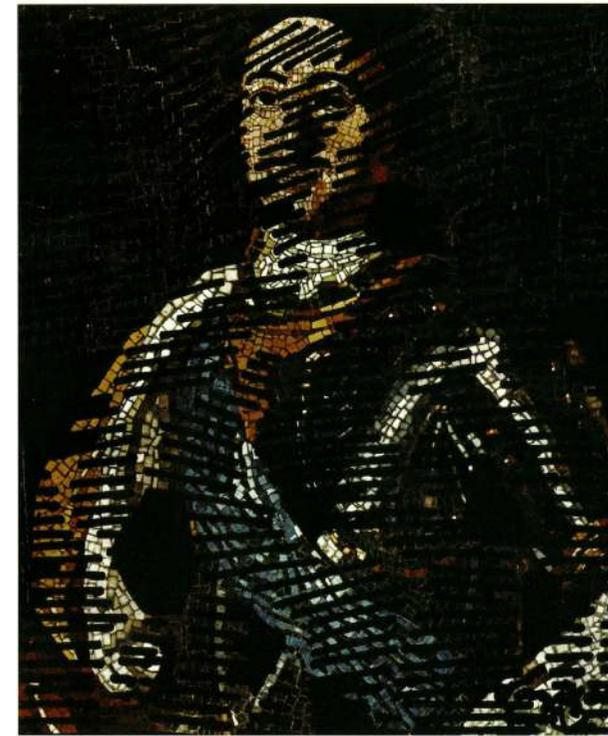
The Girl  
1997  
Felt-tip on printed paper  
21 x 29 cm



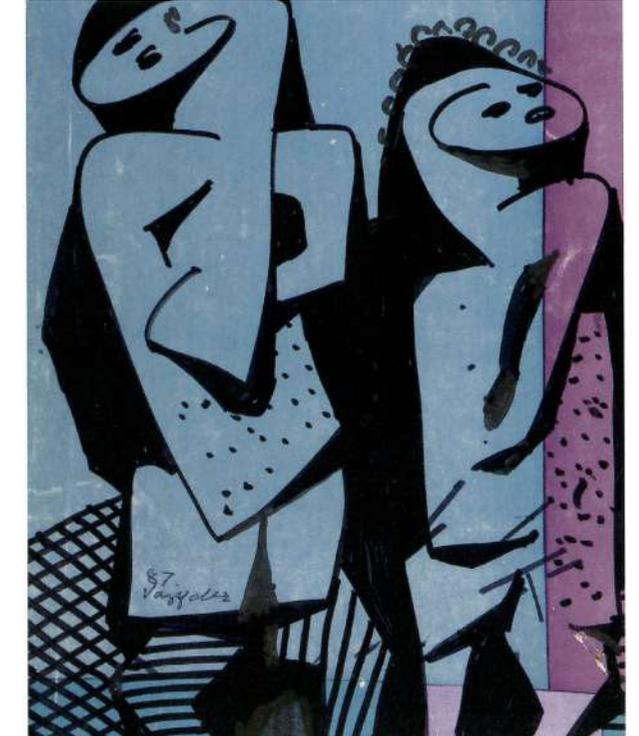
Untitled (Two faces)  
1999  
Felt-tip on printed paper  
21 x 29 cm



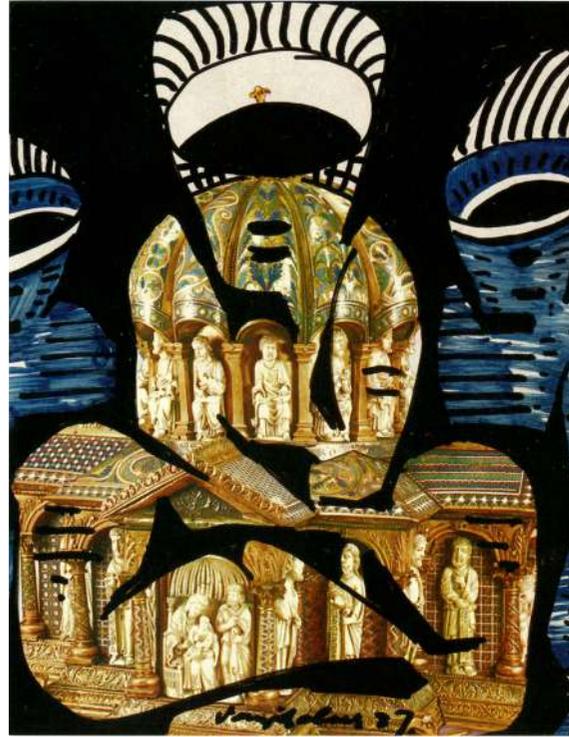
The Athletes  
1992  
Felt-tip on printed paper  
21 x 29 cm



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



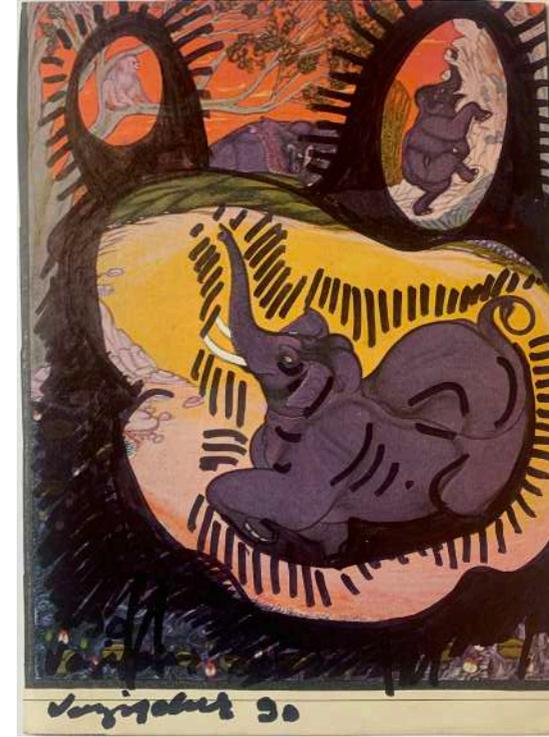
Untitled (Two Figures)  
1987  
Felt-tip on printed paper  
21 x 29 cm



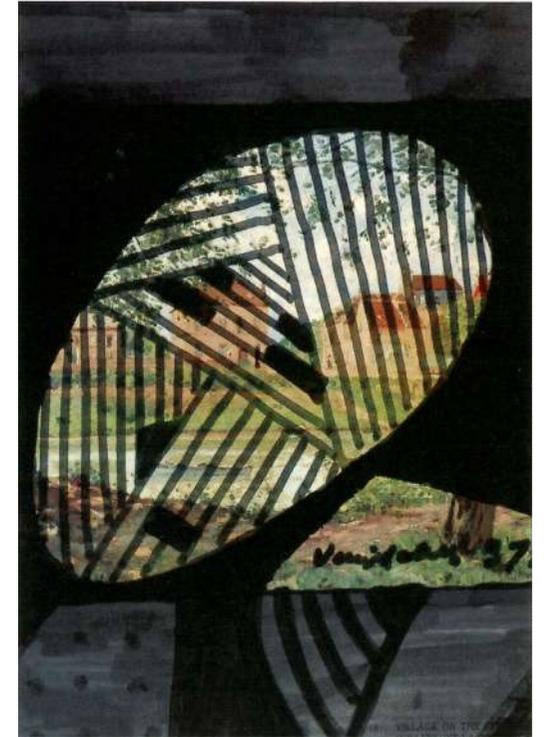
Monumental  
1987  
Felt-tip on printed paper  
21 x 29 cm



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



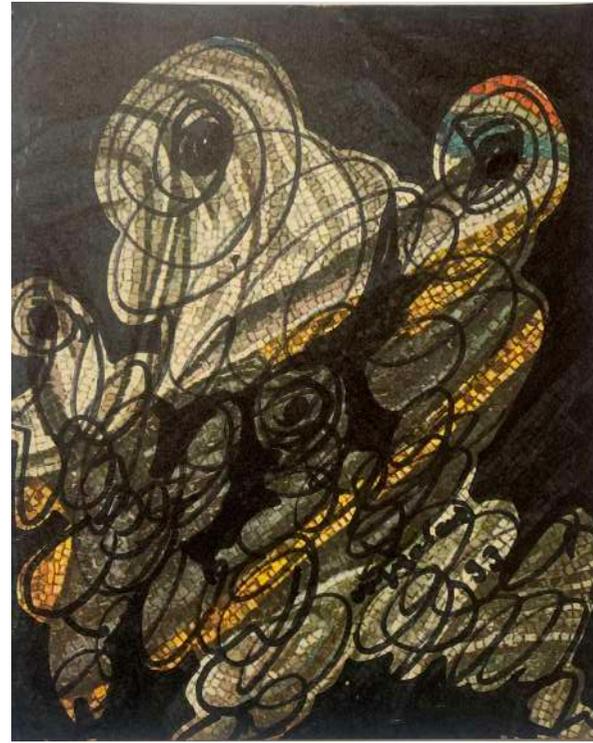
Untitled  
Felt-tip on printed paper  
21 x 29 cm



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



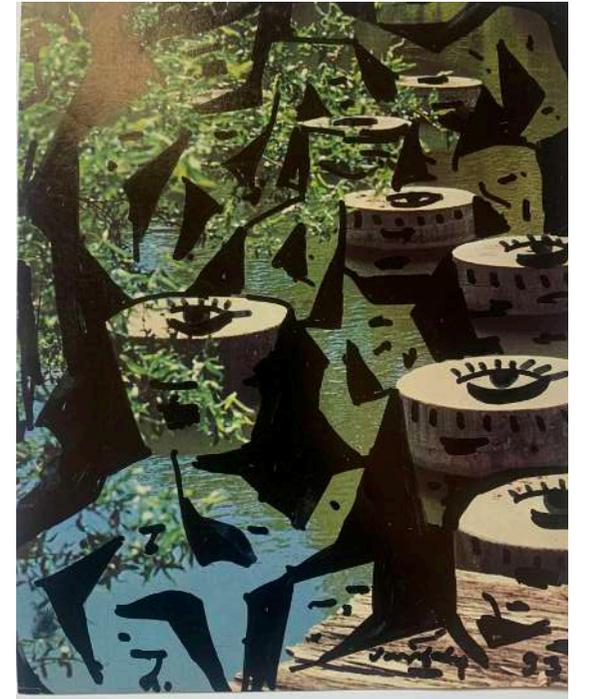
Untitled (Portrait)  
1995  
Felt-tip on printed paper  
21 x 29 cm



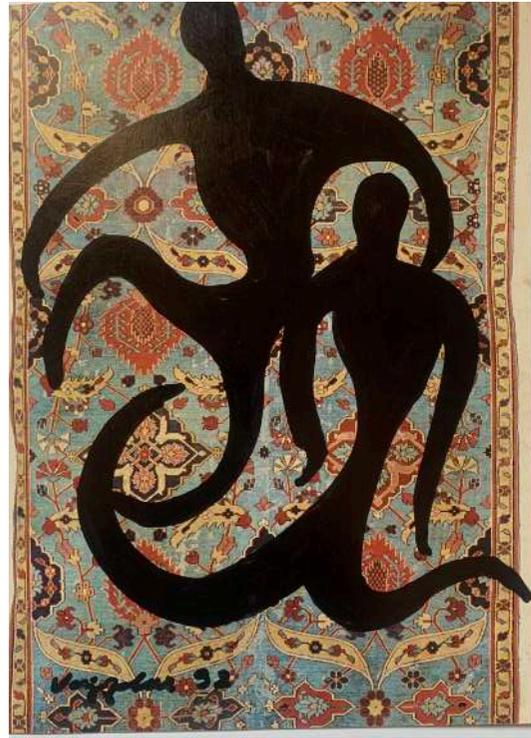
Untitled  
Felt-tip on printed paper  
21 x 29 cm



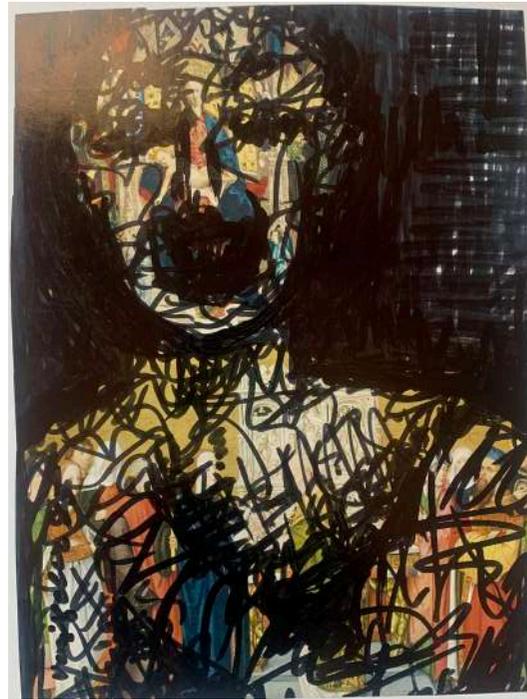
Untitled  
1998  
Felt-tip on printed paper  
21 x 29 cm



Untitled  
Felt-tip on printed paper  
21 x 29 cm



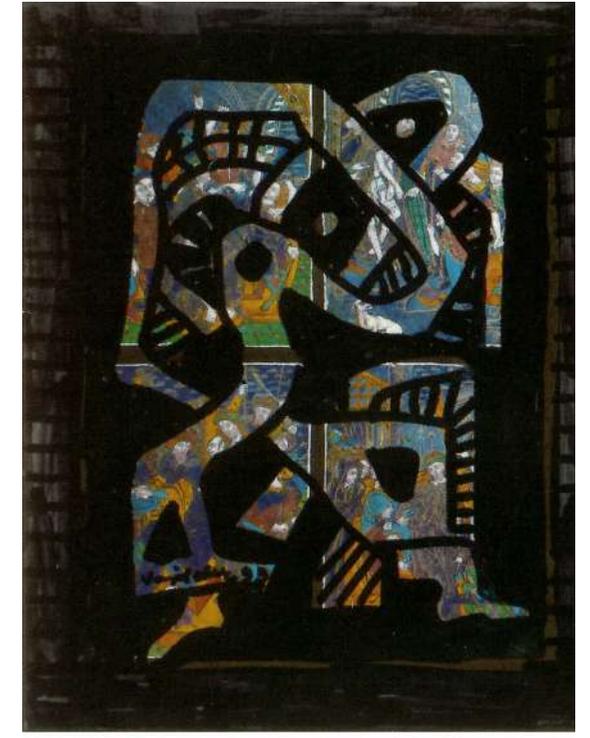
Untitled  
1995  
Felt-tip on printed paper  
21 x 29 cm



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

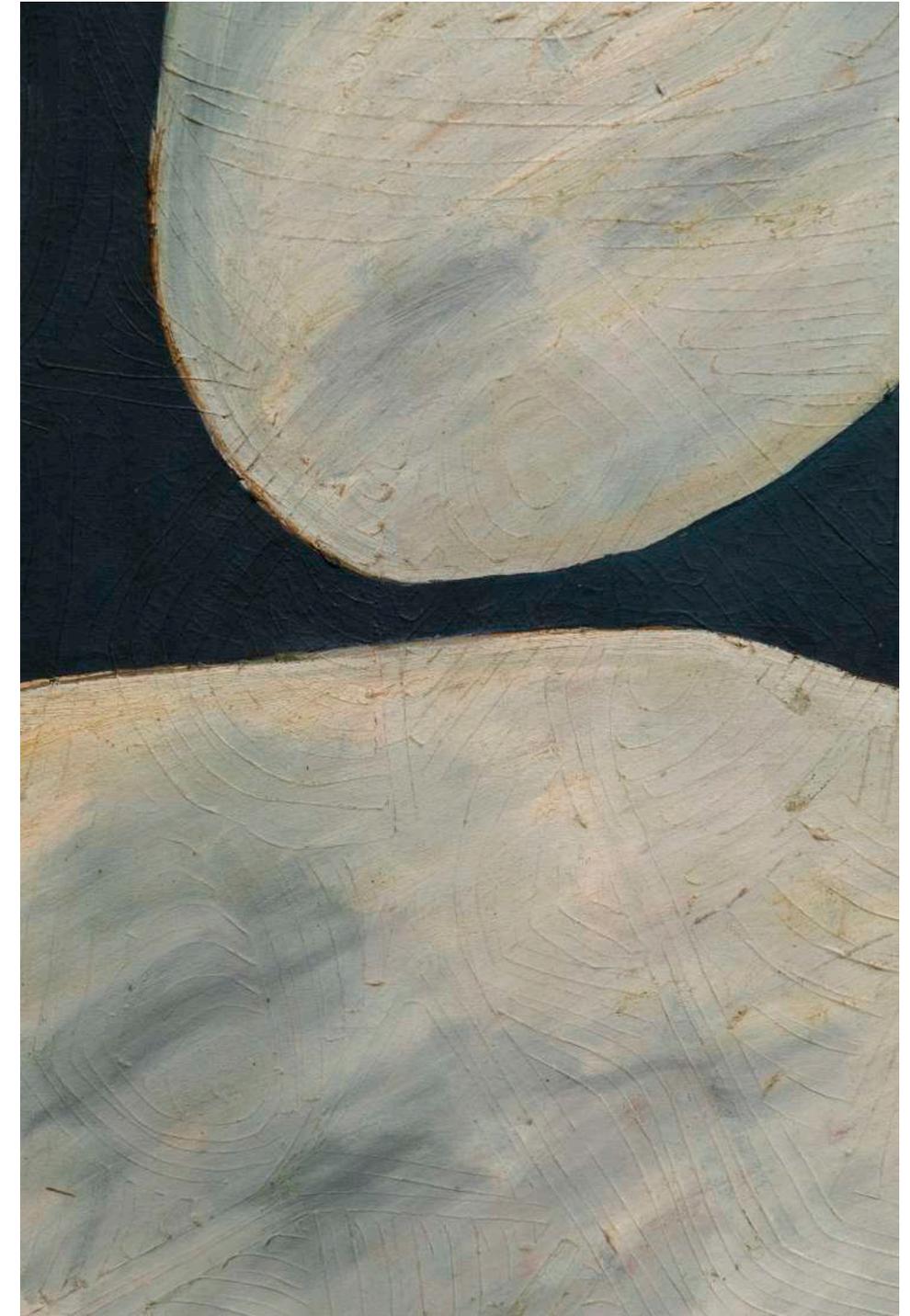
Taj Art Gallery  
Taj Mahal Hotel  
March, 1981

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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Images courtesy of the artist  
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Cover Image: *Untitled, Oil on canvas, 126 x 99 cm*

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