

Seed for History and Form - Tebhaga

Curated by Sumesh Sharma, Clark House Initiative, Bombay

Exhibition February 23rd – March 25th, 2017

Press Preview & V.I.P. Reception: Thursday, February 23rd 6:00pm – 8:00pm

35 Great Jones St., New York NY 10012

Aicon Gallery is pleased to present *Seed for History and Form - Tebhaga*, a group exhibition curated by Sumesh Sharma, co-founder of Clark House Initiative, Bombay, featuring work by **Amadou Badiane, Richard Bartholomew, Jyoti Bhatt, Biren De, Haren Das, Aurélien Froment, Laxma Goud, Somnath Hore, M. F. Husain, Mohammad Omar Khalil, Rachid Koraïchi, Mary and Roop Krishna, Aurélien Mole, Somnath Mukherjee, Bita Razavi, Krishna Reddy, Armanath Sehgal, and Michael Kelly Williams.**



Krishna Reddy, *Violence and Sorrow*, 1995, Color engraving on paper, 14 x 19.5 in.

Survey shows deflect us from histories of art that engage in cross-pollination of ideas, form, and techniques across geography, language, and culture. Such seeds, often ignored and misunderstood due to endogamous art research, lead to untold histories and biases towards a linear understanding of the arts. Inclusion into art history and its long serving linear timeline to the occident, that is fattened as it descends through survey shows and geography-specific exhibitions, only continues to serve an understanding of history that suffers from the lack of translation. In art history, the act of translation should not be an act aided simply by a dictionary and etymology, but one that makes us rethink relationships to color, form and the idea of the visual.

Conceptualism had its early history when Pablo Picasso and the Polish Avant-Garde were looking at face masks in the colonial collections that are now to be seen in the Musée du quai Branly in Paris. There was an idea of translation in this looking that gave birth to many etymologies. The etymology of modernism is a distinct idea in India, one that may manifest itself today in the homes Indians build for themselves, claiming them to be modern homes. If Joseph Beuys was the Shaman who performed a radical act that changed the possible definitions of the term artist, thereby allowing those heretofore outside the linear art history of North America and Europe leeway to enter, then these middle-class Indians may also define their own modernism.

What were the geo-political translations of a few men and women who gathered each year to teach printmaking through a series of workshops on the Atlantic coast of Morocco? This exhibition discusses those seeds of form, tracking geography from Santiniketan in Eastern India, to Dakar in Senegal, and ending in New York. It spans the life and work of **Krishna Reddy** and **Mohammed Omar Khalil**, and listens to the songs of Amadou Badiane and Somnath Mukherjee through **Aurélien Froment's** cinema, while **Michael Kelly Williams** narrates the objectivity of form in sculpture that began in printmaking, and we study what makes Somnath Hore's etchings both minimal and viscerally political. Does a drought effect conceptualism and modernism? **Haren Das's** woodcuts narrate life in rural Bengal. How do blacksmiths in Dakar challenge form and materiality through history, like the standing sculpture of an ancient Surya (Sun God) or a stone Buddha from ancient Gandhara?



Michael Kelly Williams, *Wadakota*, 2016, Mixed media sculpture, 54 x 30 x 12 in.

The right to land after the Bengal famine, described as the Tebhaga movement, where sharecroppers asked for a reduction in rent in return for giving grain to the landlords, was supported by the artists of Bengal. In this exhibition, a painting from the 1960s by **M. F. Husain** defines the seeds of India's modernism as one based on the independence a nascent nation, depleted of its strength through colonialism, but now somewhat lost in its circumstances. **Jyoti Bhatt** celebrates M. F. Husain, who was later vilified by the Indian right for his art, by making a portrait of Hussain in the tricolors of the India flag. **Aurélien Mole** makes a poignant critique on India's Progressive Artists Group, by inviting Akbar Padamsee's muse, Arai Kesava Naidu, to the National Gallery of Art in Mumbai for her first time, despite her body being a source of that artist's forms. **Biren De's** drawings move from cubist renditions of pastoral Bengal to ones that circle out to tantric meditation and spiritualism, an element now celebrated in museum exhibitions of Indian modernism.

Laxma Goud, coming from the arid part of the Indian Andhras, puts a form to Indian erotica and an artist's vision to vocabulary, camouflaging erotica in deep lines of cubist rendition uncovering many surprises. **Rachid Koraïchi's** calligraphed ceramic hand in Arabic announces New Year wishes to the residents of the city of Saint Denis, a Parisian suburb. As the city welcomes 2017, it leaves behind the

travesties of 2016 by celebrating an Algerian artist. Diasporas have created forms of conceptual intrigue in their role as a constant influence on creative thought. The Progressive Artist Group in Bombay was catalyzed by two Jewish refugees, Rudy Von Leyden and Walter Langhammer, who had fled Europe to Bombay and brought the rejection of classical form to the students of the Sir JJ School of Arts, among whom was M. F. Hussain. Like the sharecroppers of Bengal, artists ask for their share in art history not through representation but adequate translation that hears their narrative.

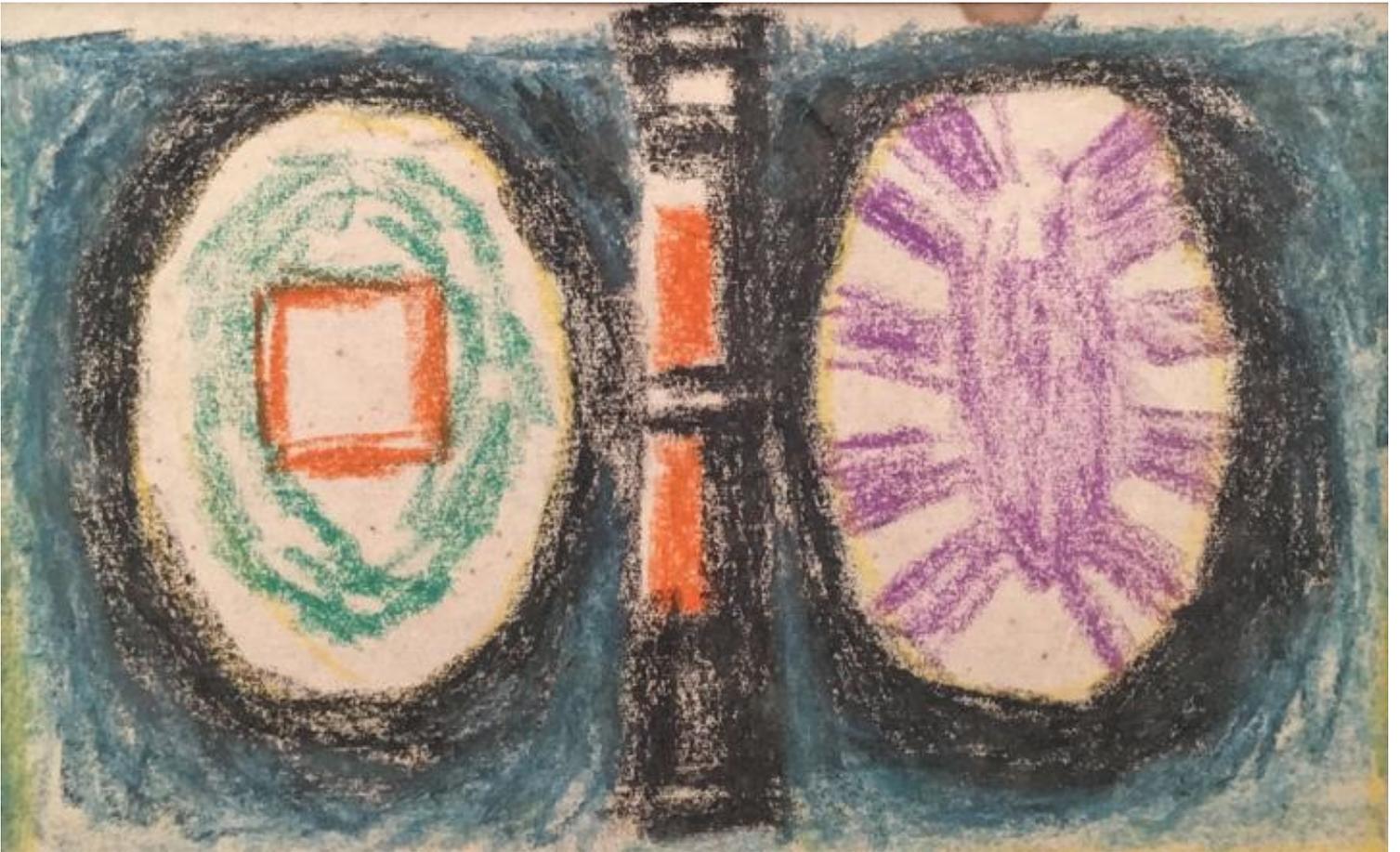
Please contact Aicon Gallery (NewYork@Aicongallery.com) for more information.

Biren De



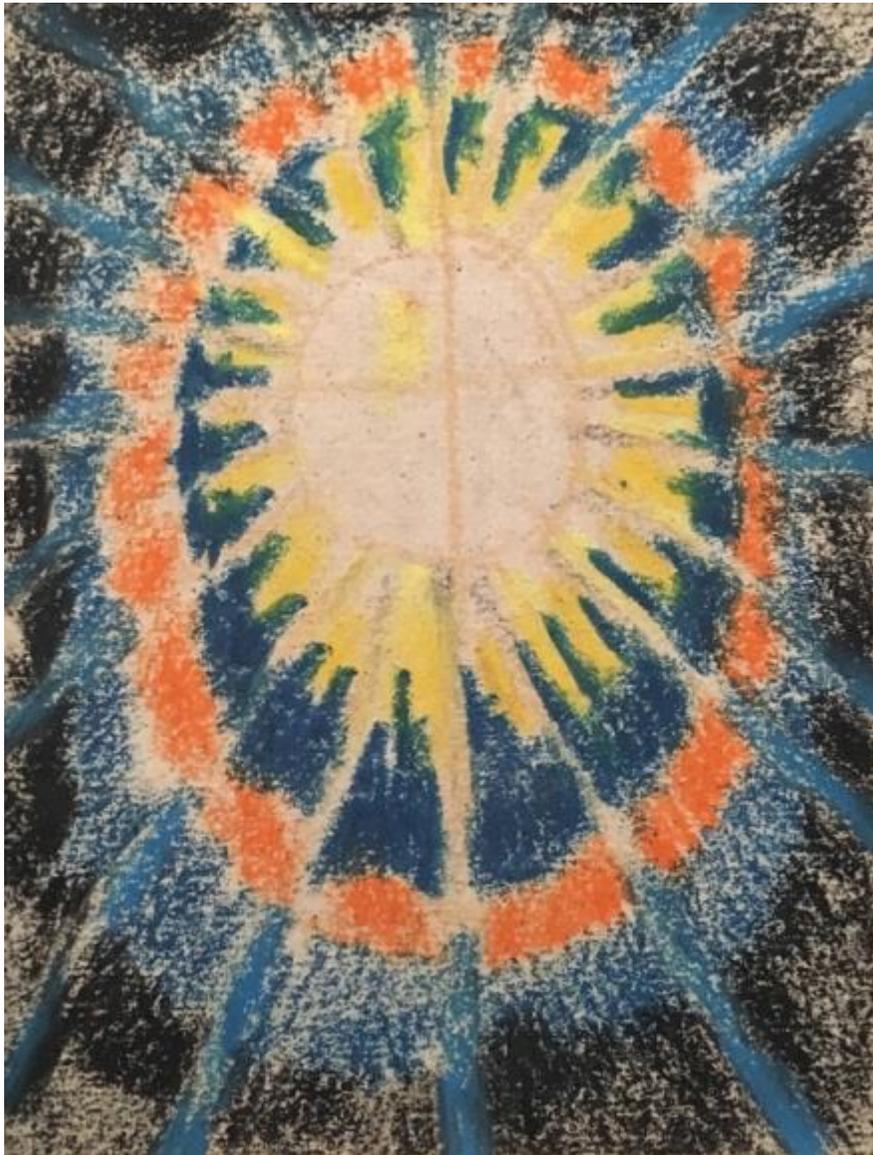
Biren De
Untitled (5)
Crayon on paper
3 x 3.5 in.

Biren De



Biren De
Untitled (7)
Crayon on paper
4 x 7 in.

Biren De



Biren De
Untitled (16)
Crayon on paper
5 x 4 in.

Biren De



Biren De
Untitled (21)
Crayon on paper
3 x 4 in.

Biren De



Biren De
Untitled (26)
Crayon on paper
5 x 2 in.

Biren De



Biren De
Untitled (34)
Crayon on paper
5 x 4 in.

Biren De



Biren De
Untitled (52)
Crayon on paper
5 x 4.5 in.

Biren De



Biren De
Untitled (54)
Crayon on paper
4.5 x 5 in.

Biren De



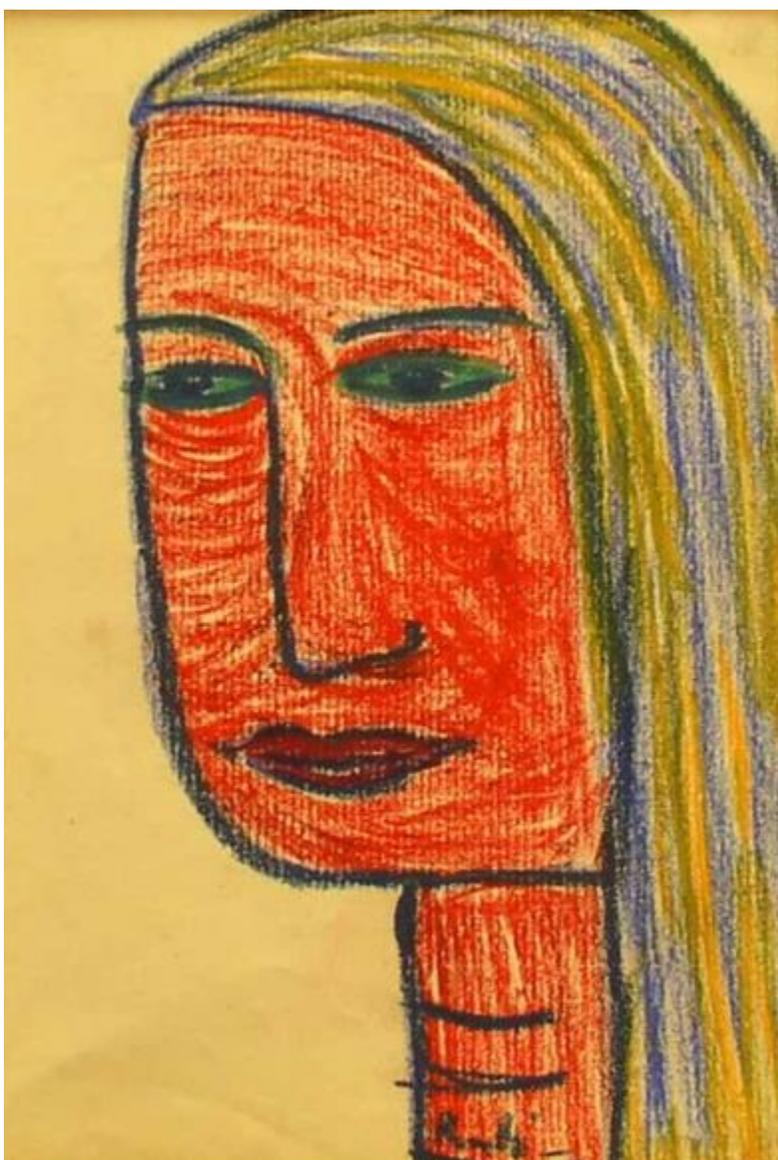
Biren De
Untitled (76)
Crayon on paper
3.5 x 5.5 in.

Biren De



Biren De
Untitled (77)
Crayon on paper
5.5 x 4.5 in.

Richard Bartholomew



Richard Bartholomew
Untitled (Sketch of a Woman - II)
Crayon on paper
8 x 6 in.

Haren Das



Haren Das

Homage to Abanindranath

Linocut print on paper

13 x 7 in.

Haren Das



Haren Das
Homewards
Etching on paper
6 x 12 in.

Haren Das



Haren Das

In the Kitchen

Linocut print on paper

9 x 11.5 in.

Haren Das



Haren Das
Joint Effort
Woodcut print on paper
6 x 5 in.

Jyoti Bhatt



Jyoti Bhatt

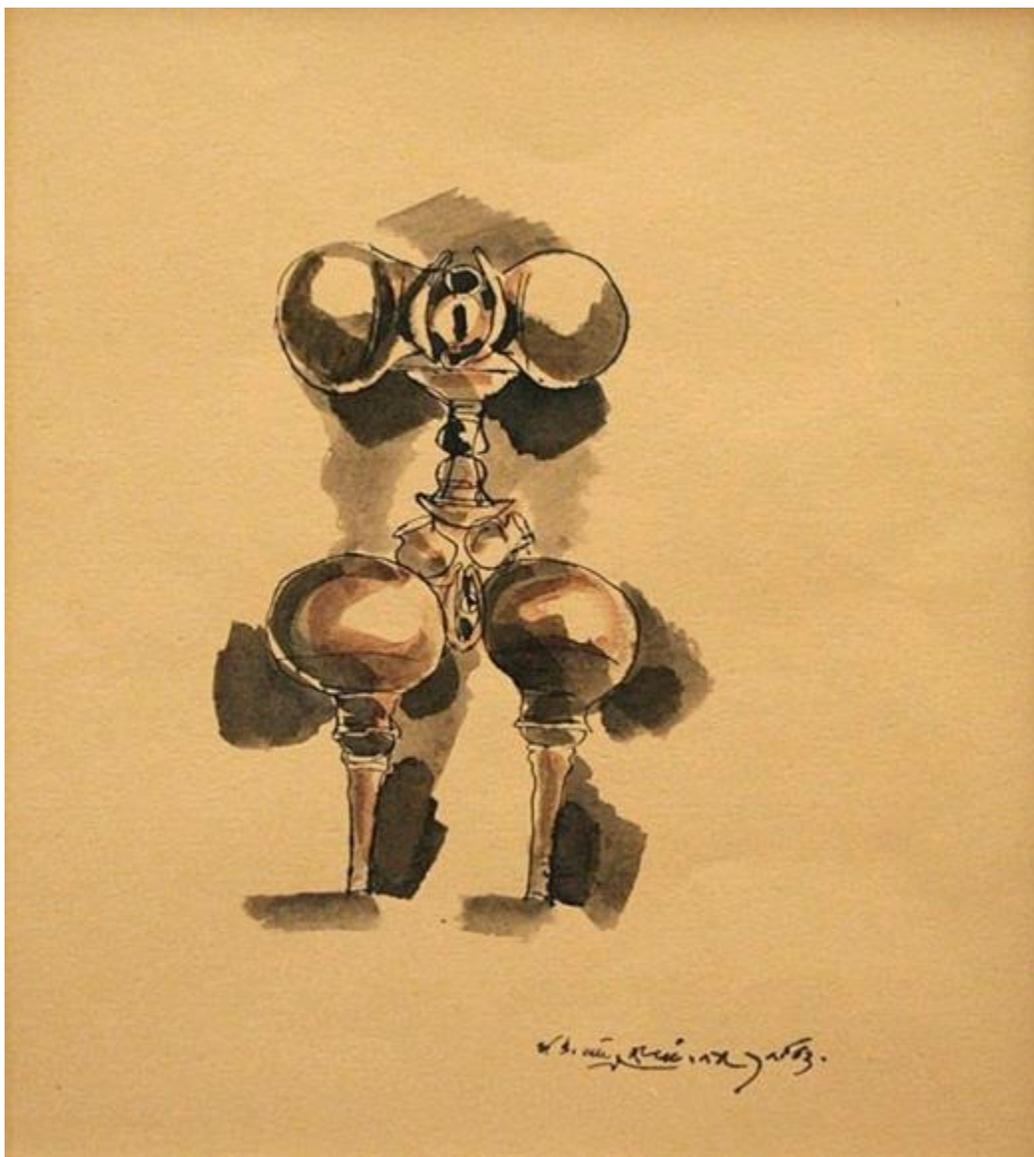
Tri-colored Face

1976

Lithograph print on paper

10 x 7 in.

Laxma Goud



Laxma Goud

Untitled (Ceramic Series - 1)

1980

Gouache and ink on paper

9 x 7.5 in.

Laxma Goud



Laxma Goud

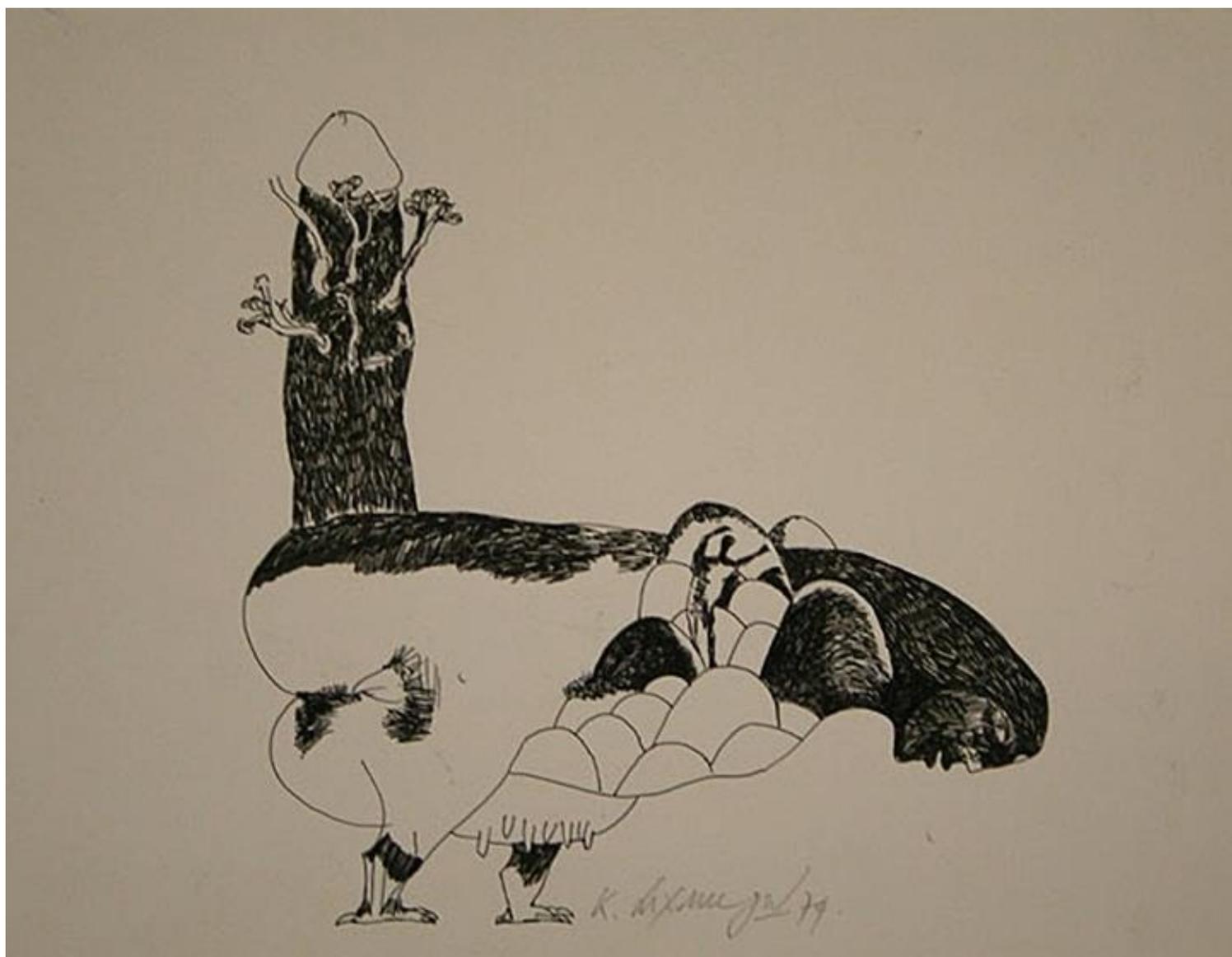
Untitled (Ceramic Series - 2)

1980

Gouache and ink on paper

9 x 11 in.

Laxma Goud



Laxma Goud

Untitled (Female Cow Hybrid)

1974

Ink on paper

7.5 x 9.6 in.

Laxma Goud



Laxma Goud
Untitled (Goddess in Temple)
Ink on paper
9 x 7 in.

Laxma Goud



Laxma Goud

Untitled (Head Between Legs)

1977

Ink on card

4 x 7.5 in.

Laxma Goud



Laxma Goud

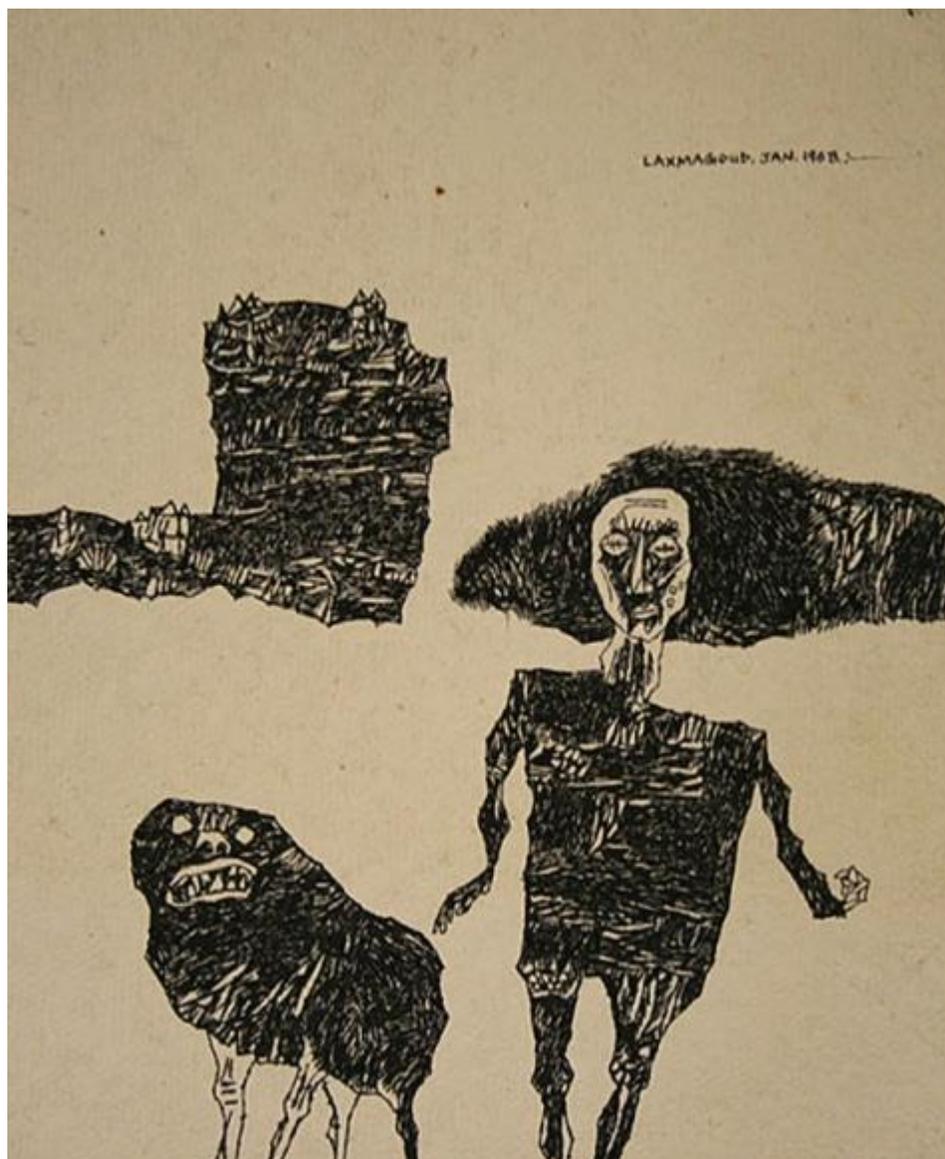
Untitled (Man with Two Trees)

1975

Ink on card

11 x 13 in.

Laxma Goud



Laxma Goud
Untitled (Man, Beast, City)
Ink on card
10 x 8 in.

Laxma Goud



Laxma Goud

Untitled (Penis with Woman's Figure)

1975

Ink on card

9.5 x 13.5 in.

Somnath Hore



Somnath Hore

Cosmos

1967

Intaglio print on paper

9.5 x 7.5 in.

Somnath Hore



Somnath Hore

Famine - 1

1978

Mixed media on paper

13 x 16 in.

Somnath Hore



Somnath Hore

Polite Conversation

1978

Mixed media on paper

13 x 16 in.

Somnath Hore



Somnath Hore
Untitled (Bearded Man with Owl)
1982
Etching on paper
7 x 6.5 in.

Somnath Hore



Somnath Hore
Untitled (Lady with Cat)
1982
Etching on paper
6.5 x 7 in.

Somnath Hore



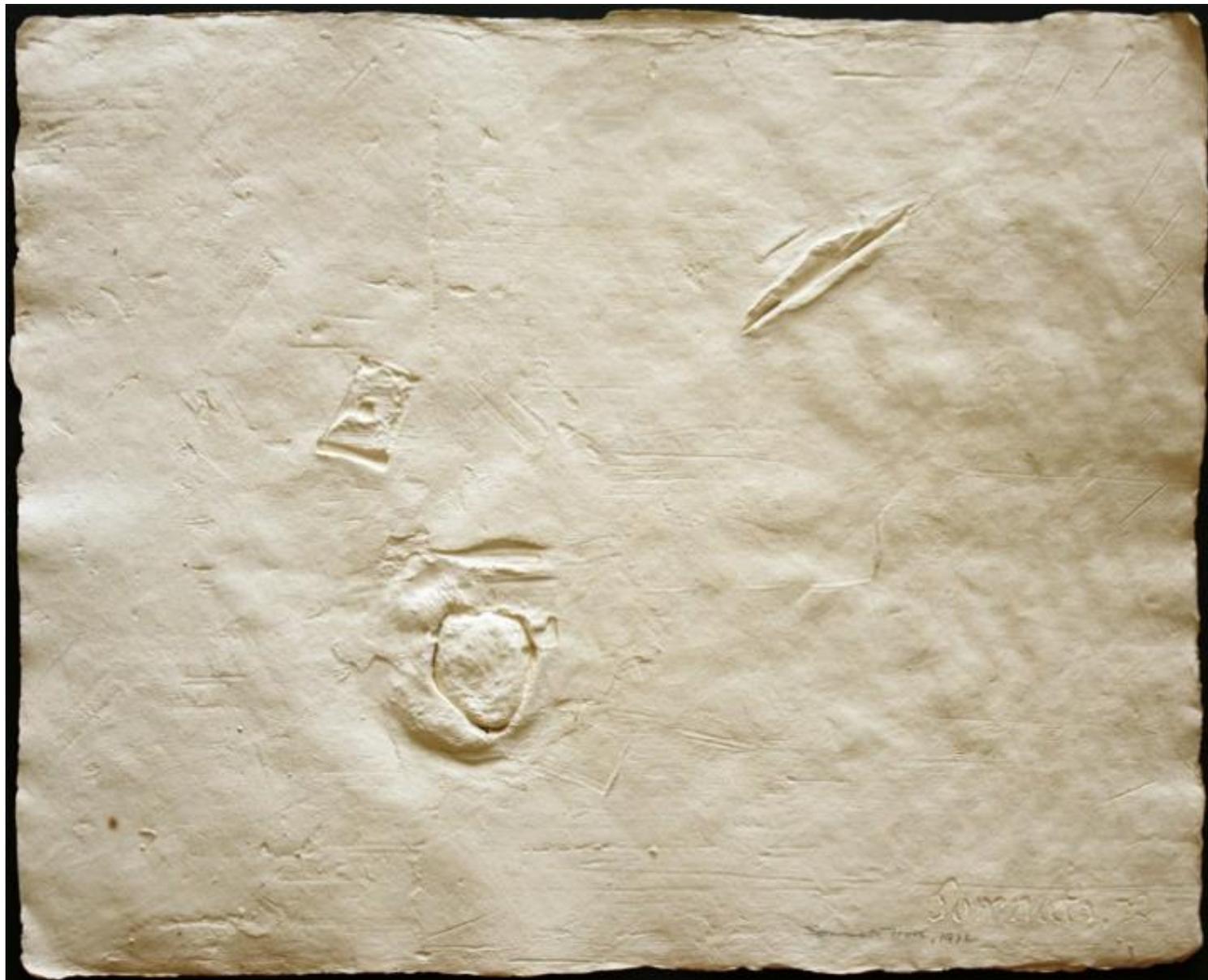
Somnath Hore
Untitled (The Pondering Man)
1982
Etching on paper
6.5 x 7 in.

Somnath Hore



Somnath Hore
Untitled (The Slaughter)
1982
Etching on paper
6.5 x 7 in.

Somnath Hore



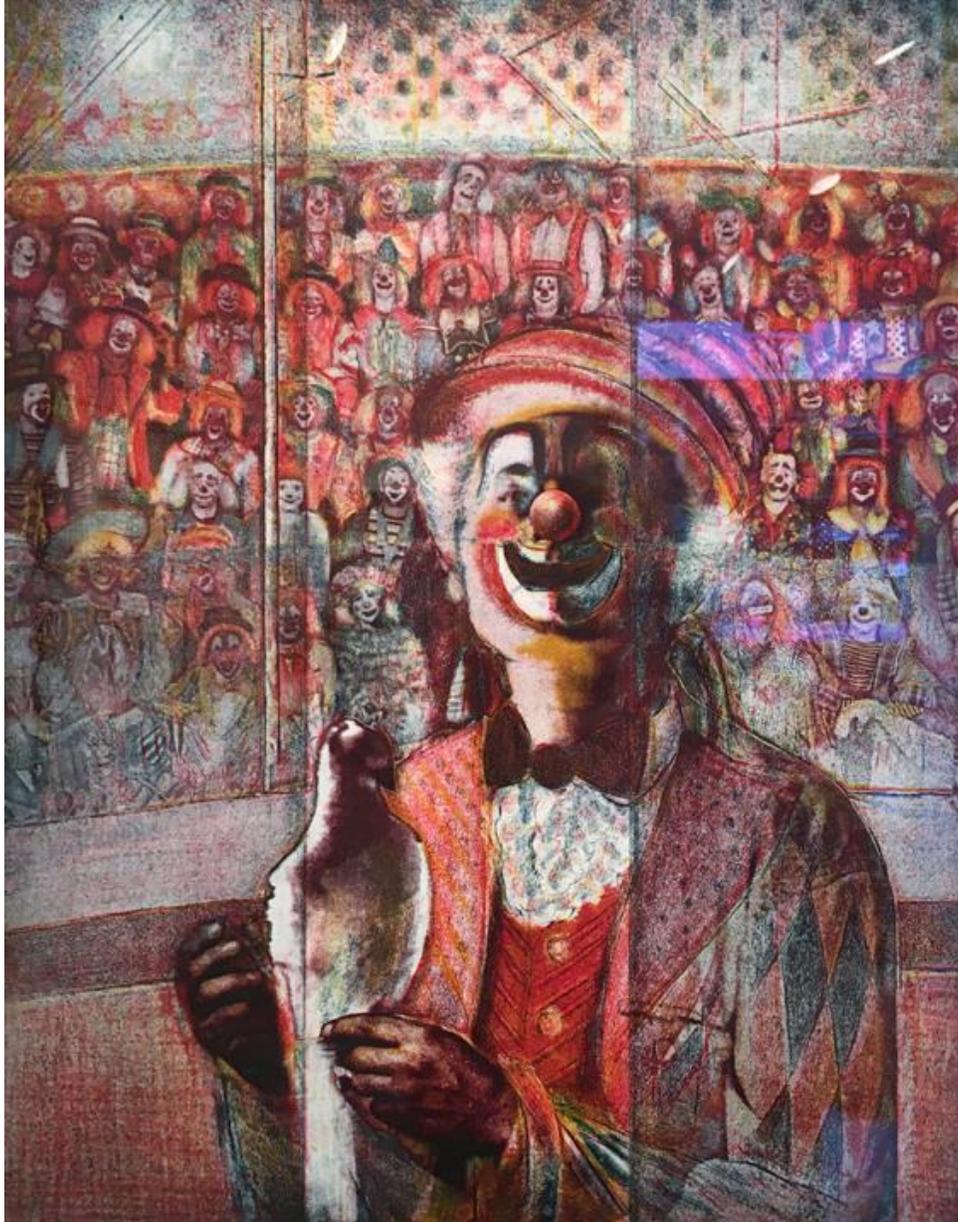
Somnath Hore
Untitled (Wound Series 5)
1972
Cast handmade paper
19.5 x 24 in.

Somnath Hore



Somnath Hore
Untitled (Wound Series 6)
1972
Cast handmade paper
19.5 x 24 in.

Krishna Reddy



Krishna Reddy
Clown with Pigeon
Lithograph print on paper
16 x 12 in.

Krishna Reddy



Krishna Reddy

Dawn Worship

1973

Color engraving on paper

13.5 x 17.5 in.

Krishna Reddy



Krishna Reddy

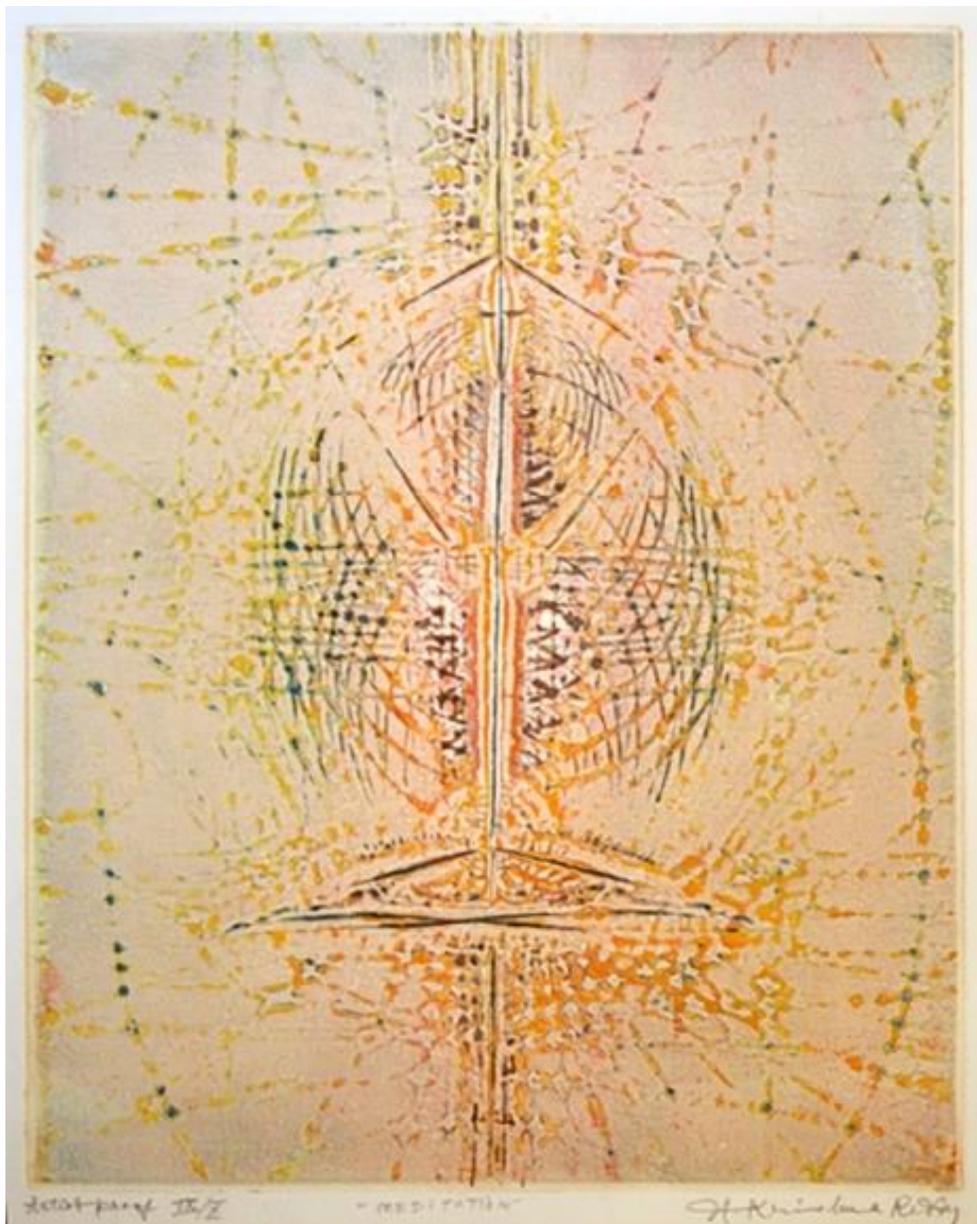
Demonstrators

1968

Color engraving on paper

13.5 x 17.5 in.

Krishna Reddy



Krishna Reddy

Meditation

Color engraving on paper

17.5 x 14 in.

Krishna Reddy



Krishna Reddy

Praying Woman

1975

Color engraving on paper

17 x 13.5 in.

Krishna Reddy



Krishna Reddy

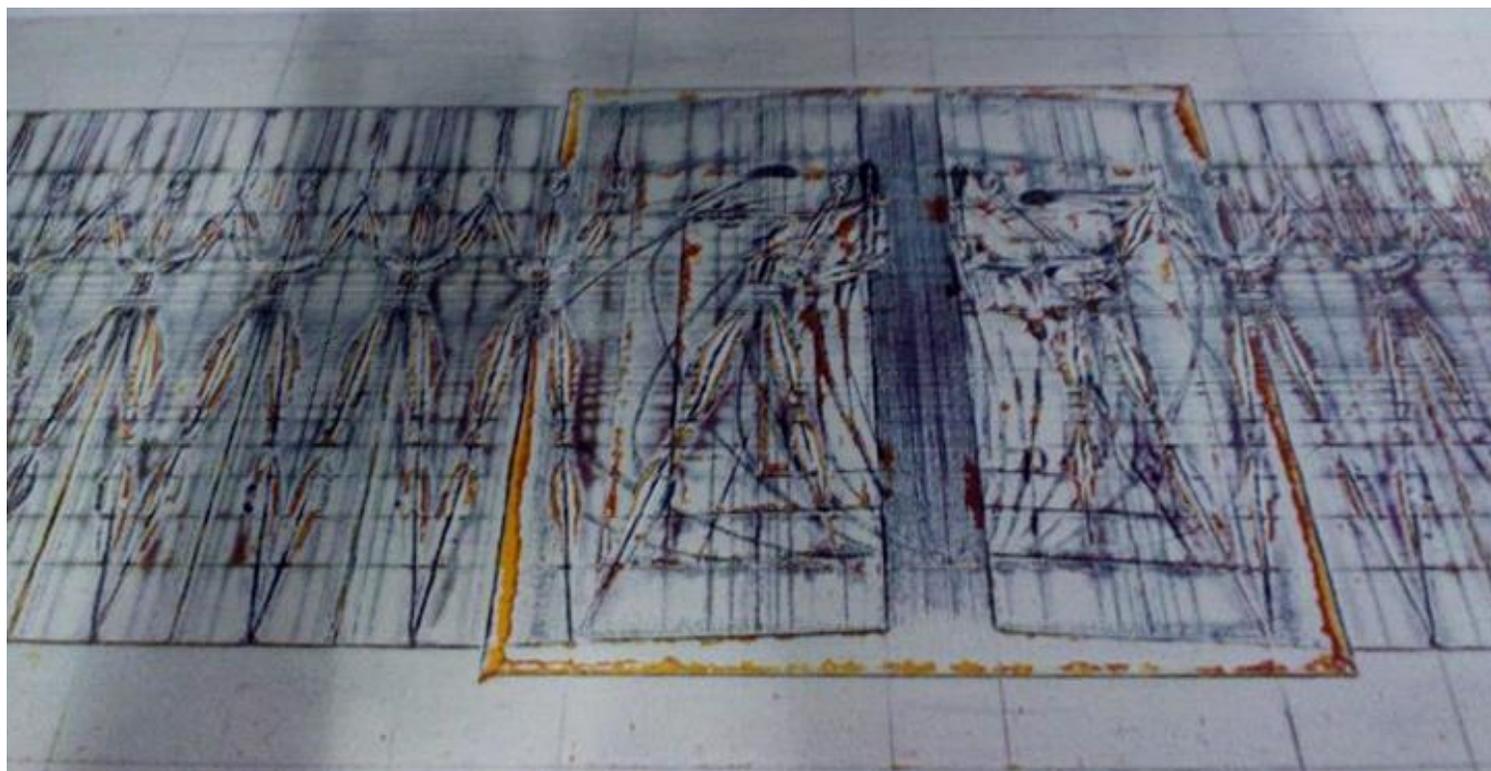
Sun Worshipper

1975

Color engraving on paper

13.5 x 17 in.

Krishna Reddy



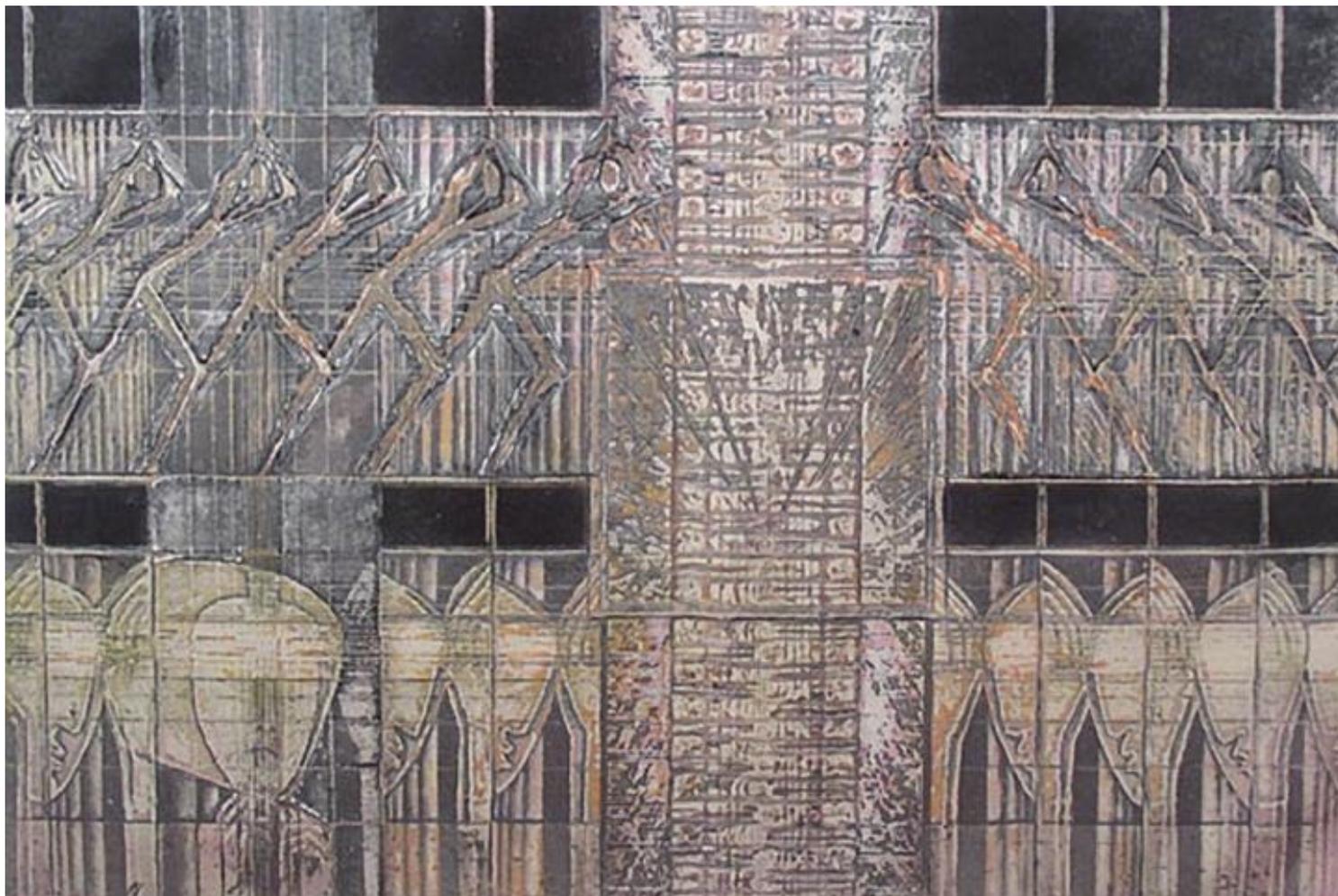
Krishna Reddy

Untitled

Intaglio print on paper

14 x 20 in.

Krishna Reddy



Krishna Reddy

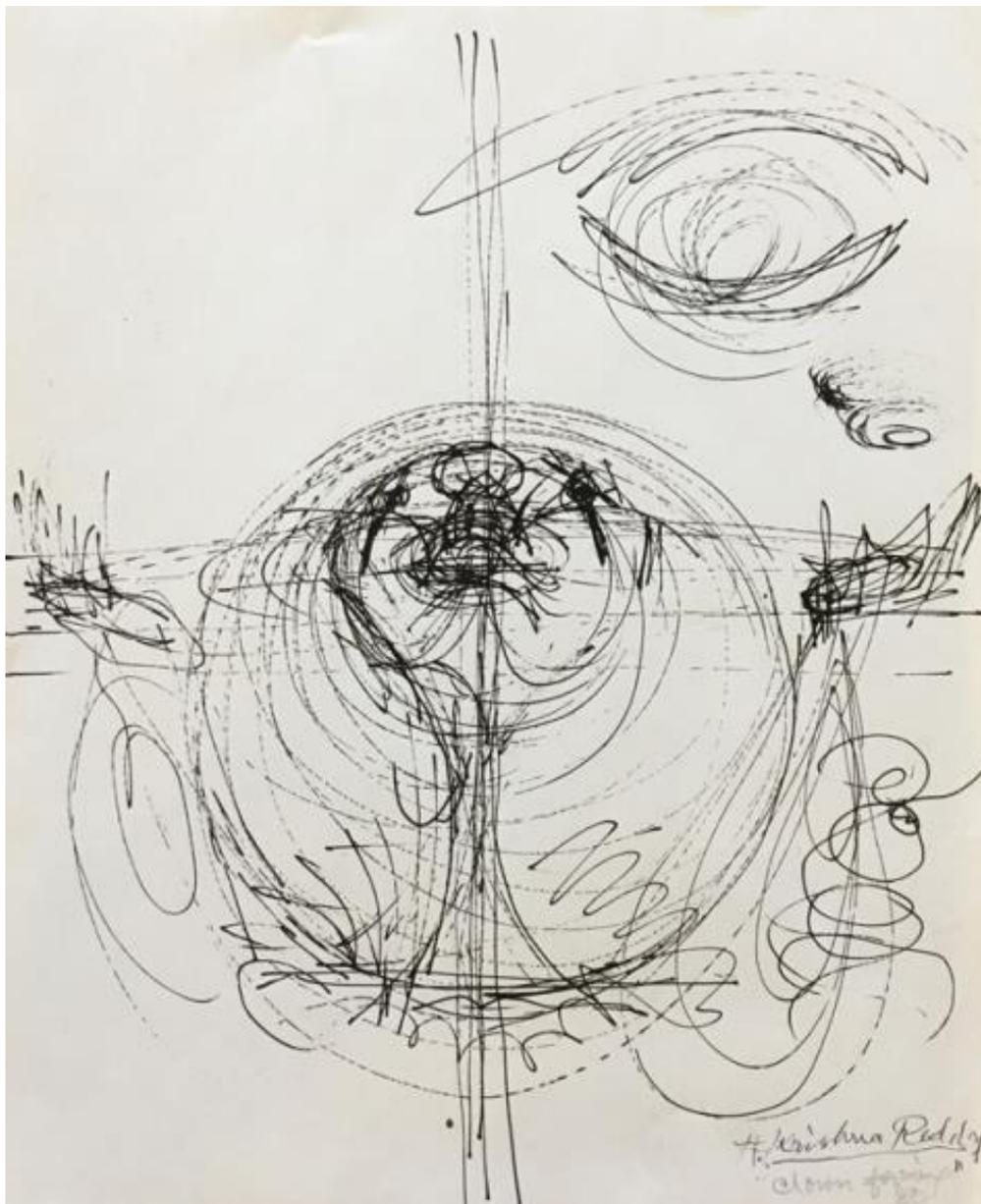
Violence and Sorrow

1995

Color engraving on paper

14 x 19.5 in.

Krishna Reddy



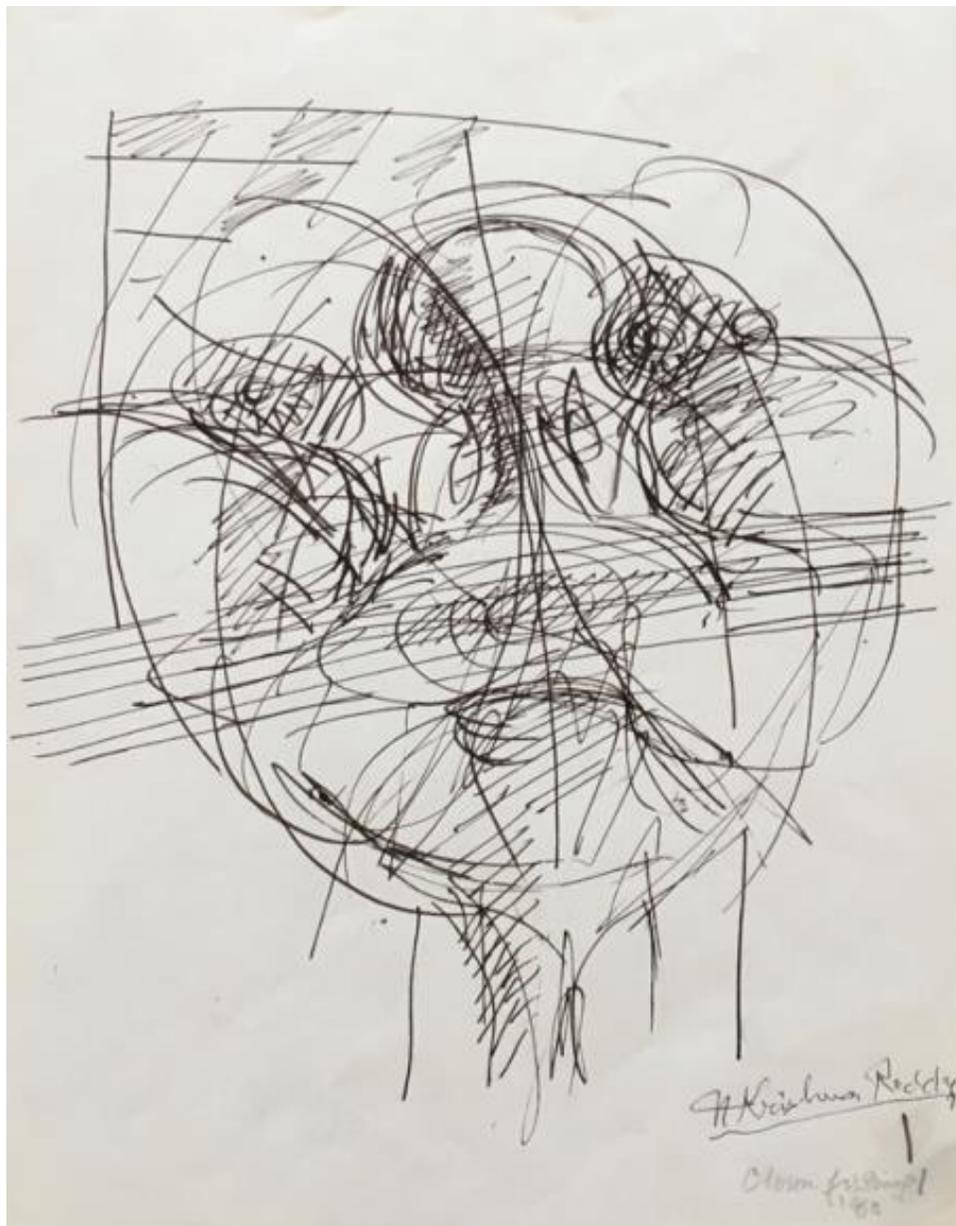
Krishna Reddy
Clown Forming (1)
1980
Ink on paper
12 x 9 in.

Krishna Reddy



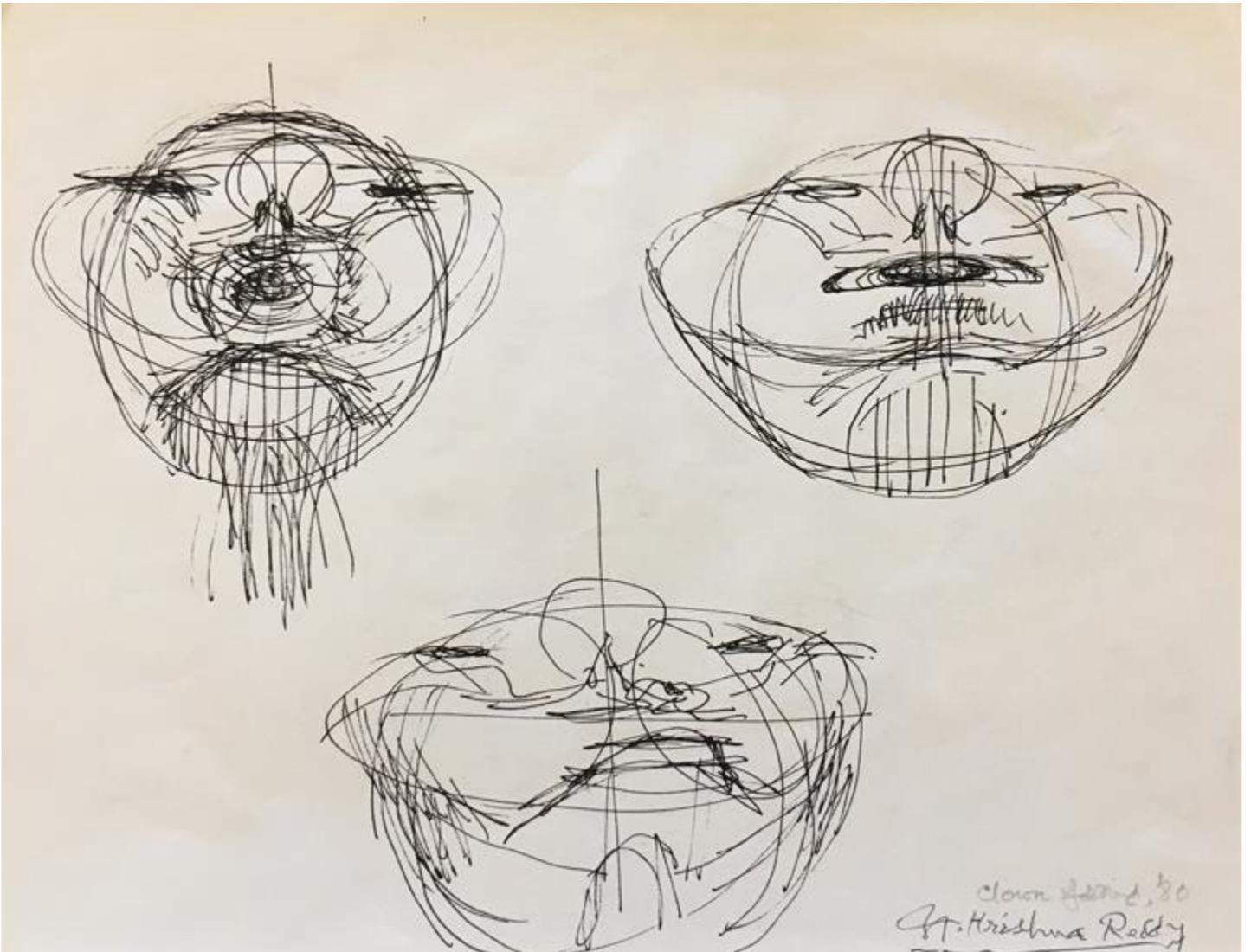
Krishna Reddy
Clown Forming (2)
1980
Ink on paper
11.5 x 8 in.

Krishna Reddy



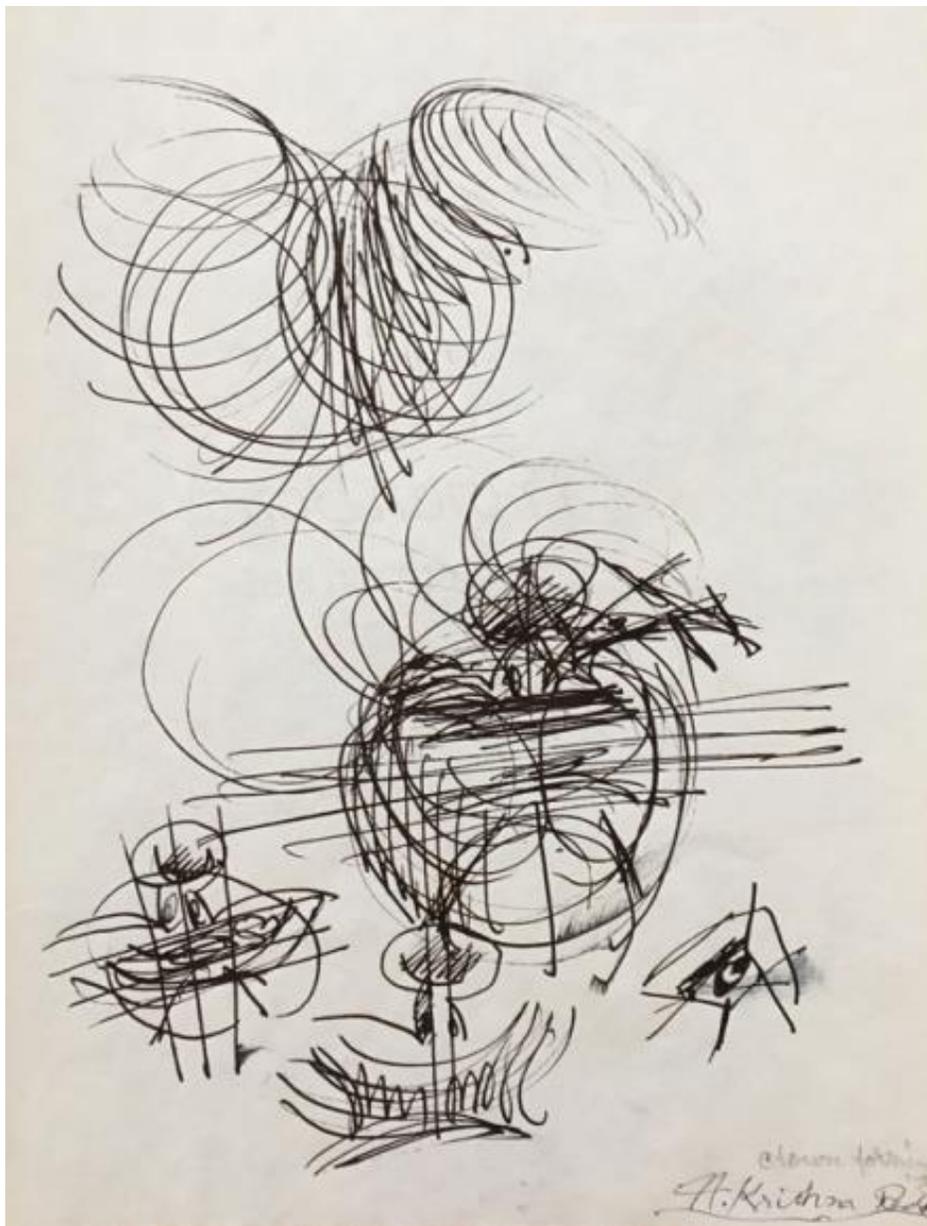
Krishna Reddy
Clown Forming (3)
1980
Ink on paper
11.5 x 8 in.

Krishna Reddy



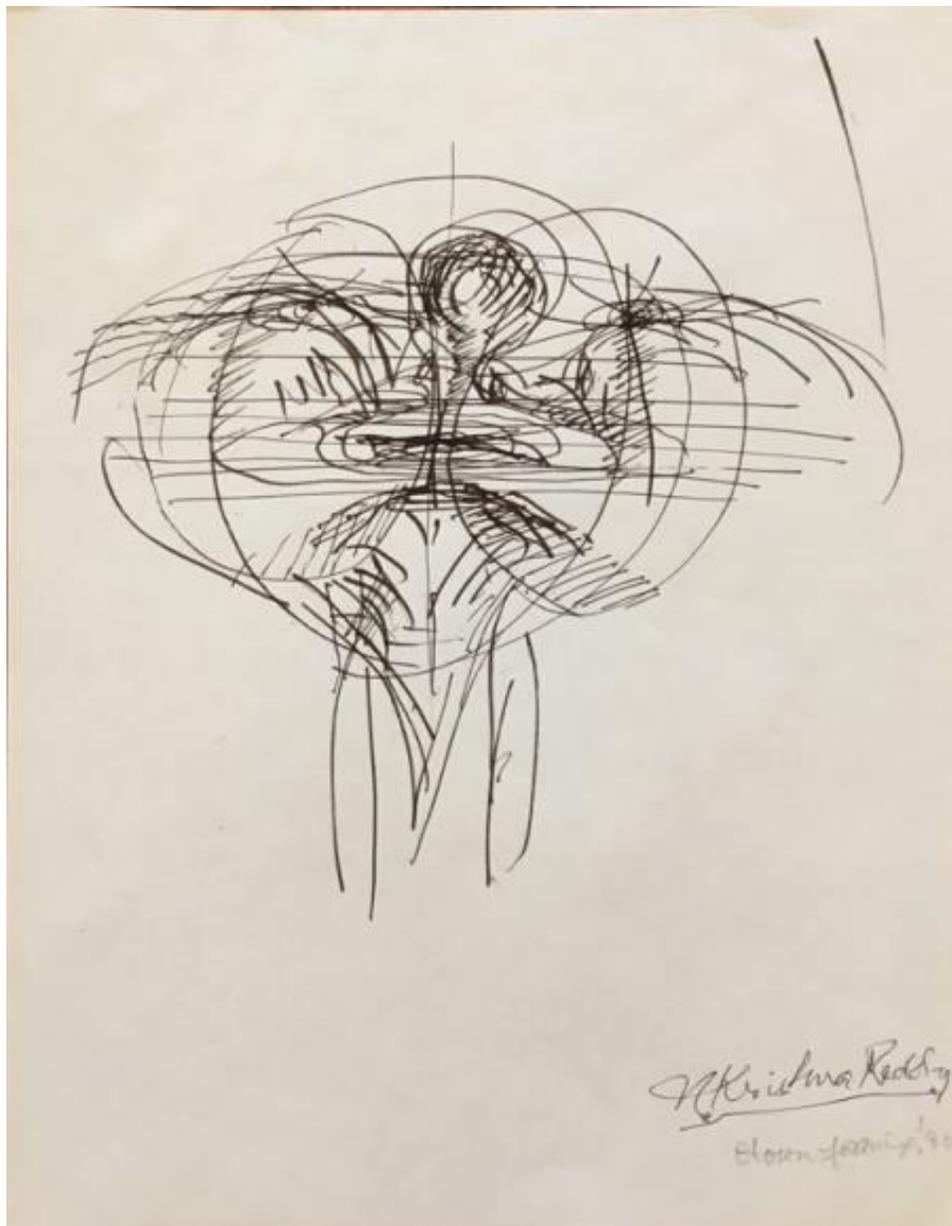
Krishna Reddy
Clown Forming (4)
1980
Ink on paper
8 x 11.5 in.

Krishna Reddy



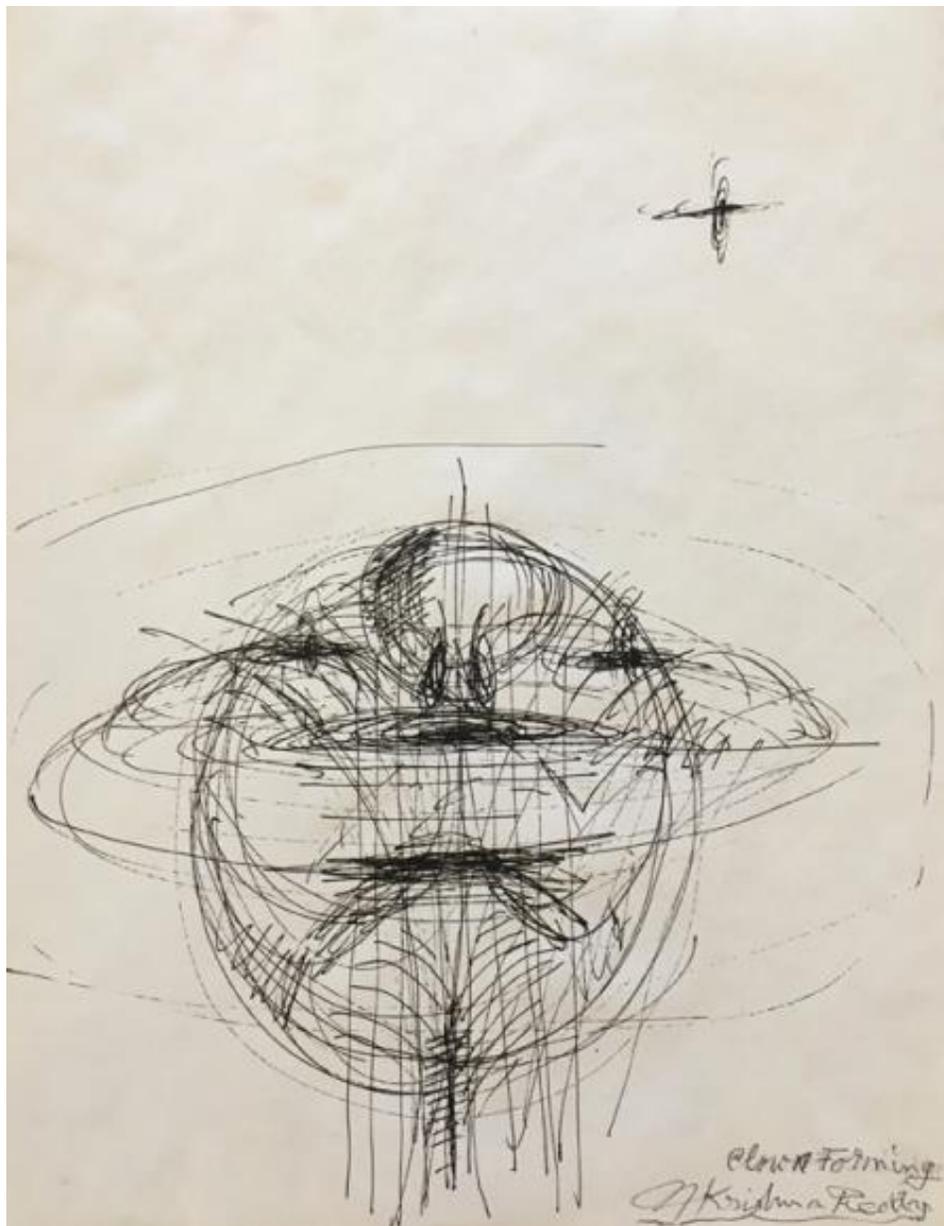
Krishna Reddy
Clown Forming (5)
1980
Ink on paper
11.5 x 8 in.

Krishna Reddy



Krishna Reddy
Clown Forming (6)
1980
Ink on paper
11.5 x 8 in.

Krishna Reddy



Krishna Reddy
Clown Forming (7)
1980
Ink on paper
11.5 x 8 in.

M. F. Husain



M. F. Husain

Drought

1973

Acrylic on canvas

67.5 x 89.5 in.

Mohammad Omer Khalil



Mohammad Omer Khalil

Idiot Wind

1986

Etching, Softground, Sugarlift

48 x 36 in.

Mohammad Omer Khalil



Mohammad Omer Khalil

It Ain't Me Babe

1986

Etching, Softground, Sugarlift

36 x 24 in.

Mohammad Omer Khalil



Mohammad Omer Khalil

Tangled Up in Blue

1986

Etching, Softground, Aquatint, Spitbite

36 x 48 in.

Mohammad Omer Khalil



Mohammad Omer Khalil

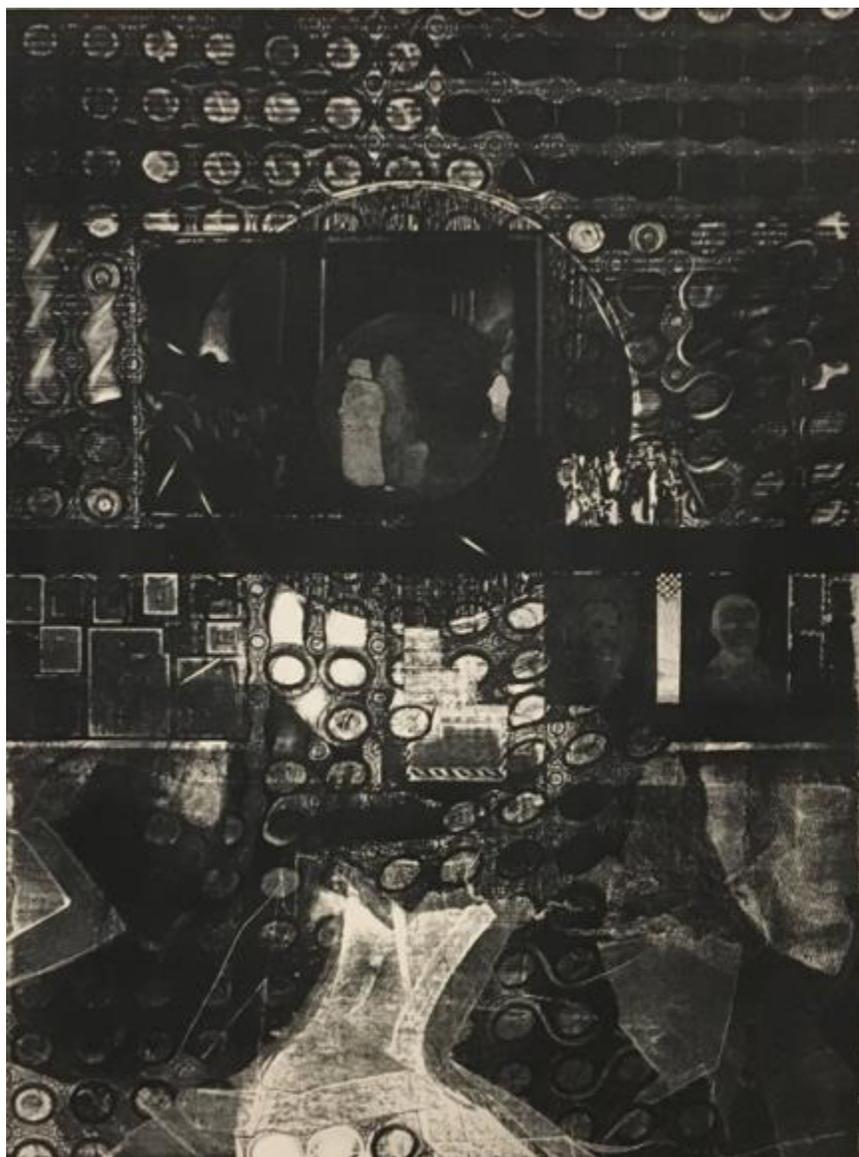
Tombstone Blues

1986

Etching, Softground, Aquatint, Spitbite

36 x 48 in.

Mohammad Omer Khalil



Mohammad Omer Khalil

Untitled (1)

1986

Etching, Softground, Phototransfer

36 x 24 in.

Aurélien Mole



Aurélien Mole
La Muse (Amma Kesava Naidu)
2016
Digital print on archival paper
8 x 5 in.

Aurélien Mole



Aurélien Mole

Le Sujet (Amma Kesava Naidu - I)

2016

Digital print on archival paper

8 x 5 in.

Aurélien Mole



Aurélien Mole

Le Sujet (Amma Kesava Naidu - II)

2016

Digital print on archival paper

8 x 5 in.

Aurélien Mole



Aurélien Mole

Le Sujet (Amma Kesava Naidu - III)

2016

Digital print on archival paper

8 x 5 in.

Aurélien Mole



Aurélien Mole

Le Sujet (Amma Kesava Naidu - IV)

2016

Digital print on archival paper

8 x 5 in.

Aurélien Mole



Aurélien Mole

Le Sujet (Amma Kesava Naidu - V)

2016

Digital print on archival paper

8 x 5 in.

Sumesh Sharma



Sumesh Sharma

Untitled (Satyr Installation)

2017

Cast aluminum sculpture and mixed media installation

Dimensions variable

Aurélien Froment



Aurélien Froment

Le Chant du monde

2017

HD video projection

20:50 min.

Ed. of 5

Aurélien Froment



Aurélien Froment

Non alignés (Hema Malini-Sy, Daouda Ndao)

2016

HD video projection

8:43 min.

Ed. of 5

Aurélien Froment



Aurélien Froment
Non alignés (Ousmane Diallo)
2016
HD video projection
3:37 min.
Ed. of 5

Aurélien Froment



Aurélien Froment
Non alignés (Fatim Diop)
2016
HD video projection
6:12 min.
Ed. of 5

Aurélien Froment



Aurélien Froment

Bharat-Pehchane (04-08) - With Hema Malini-Sy
2016

Archival pigment print on paper
14 x 11 in.

Aurélien Froment



Aurélien Froment

Bharat-Pehchane (06-10) - With Binette Aw
2016

Archival pigment print on paper
14 x 11 in.

Aurélien Froment



Aurélien Froment

Bharat-Pehchane (07-06) - With Amadou Badiane
2017

Archival pigment print on paper
14 x 11 in.

Aurélien Froment



Aurélien Froment

Bharat-Pehchane (07-08) - With Somnath Mukherjee
2017

Archival pigment print on paper
14 x 11 in.

Michael Kelly Williams



Michael Kelly Williams

M'Boom

2016

Steel, wood, iron, acrylic, glass, brass, and paint

44 x 21 x 15 in.

Michael Kelly Williams



Michael Kelly Williams

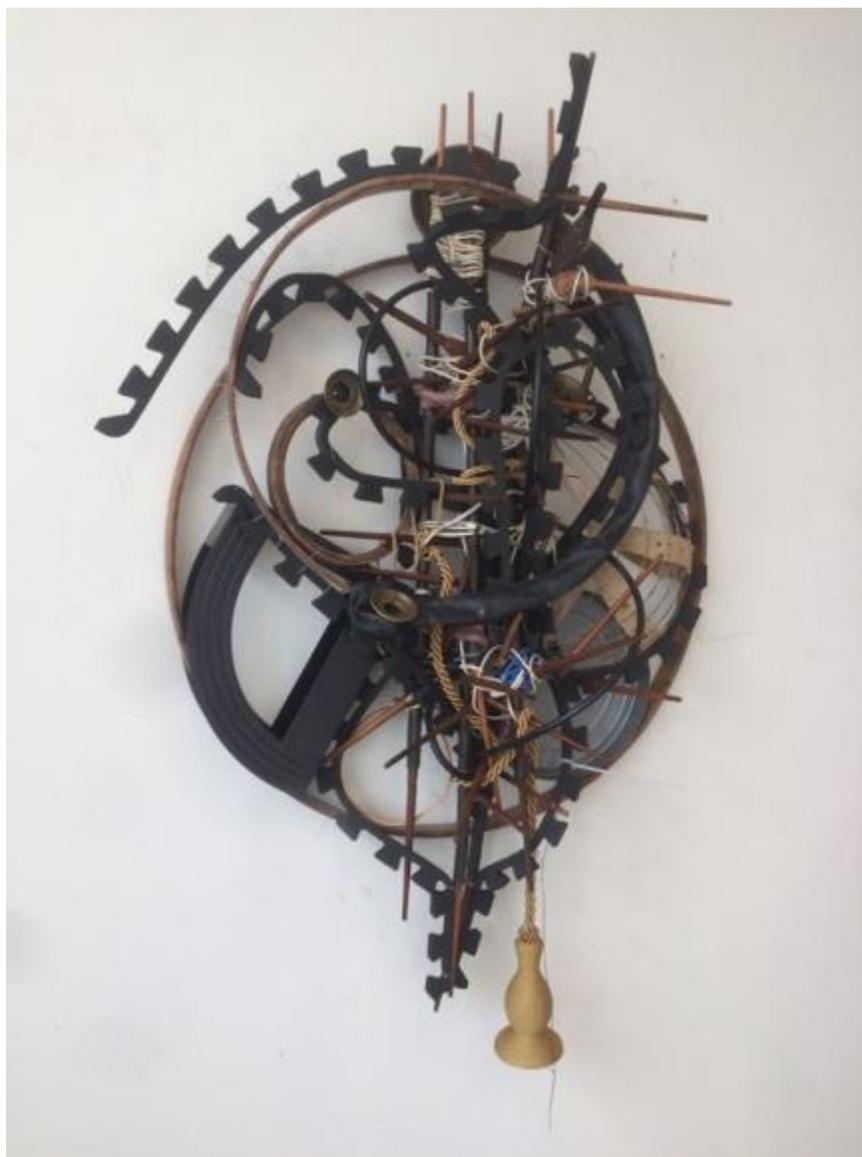
Wadakota

2017

Wood, leather, plastic, wire, and metal

54 x 30 x 12 in.

Michael Kelly Williams



Michael Kelly Williams

Many Blessings

2017

Wood, rubber, plastic, brass, wire, rope, and cloth

48 x 34 x 12 in.

Michael Kelly Williams



Michael Kelly Williams

The Mystery

2016

Steel, wicker, glass, iron, paint, wood, and rubber

28 x 12 x 12 in.

Michael Kelly Williams



Michael Kelly Williams

Opus

2016

Metal, cardboard, aluminum, cloth, beads, rubber, brass and plastic

38 x 28 x 28 in.

Michael Kelly Williams



Michael Kelly Williams

Untitled (Sitar)

2017

Wood, metal, bone, and painted fiberglass

50.5 x 18 x 12 in.