

Watercolor Now

Contemporary Watercolor Art

Watercolor World

Before the invention of the camera, people used watercolours to document the world. Over the centuries, painters – both professional and amateur – created hundreds of thousands of images recording life as they witnessed it. Every one of these paintings has a story to tell, but many are hidden away in archives, albums and store rooms, too fragile to display. The Watercolour World exists to bring them back into view. We are creating a free online database of documentary watercolours painted before 1900. For the first time, you can explore these fascinating visual records on a world map, search for topics that are important to you, and compare watercolours from multiple collections in one place. We hope that this project will not simply preserve the watercolour record but revive it, sparking new conversations and revelations. By making history visible to more people, we can deepen our understanding of the world. We are a UK-based charity, but the project is truly global. We work with private and public collections from around the world to locate and publish their images, many of which have never been photographed before. There are thousands of watercolours still to add. If you think you can contribute, let us know.

www.watercolourworld.org

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hivfP3QLQTQ&t=57s>

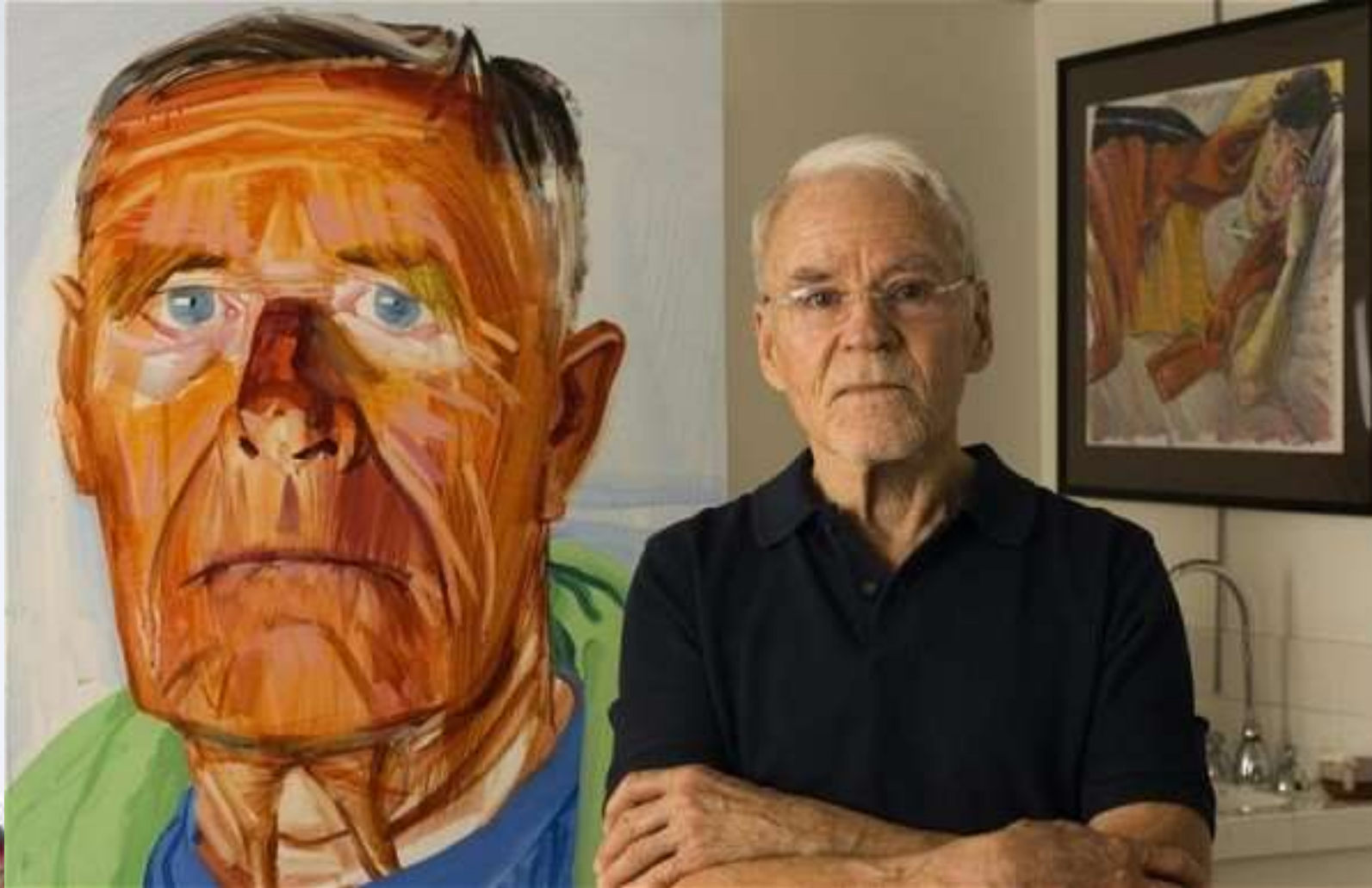
Don Bachardy

When someone says [Don Bachardy](#), many people instantly think “Hollywood”. It is the artist’s most famous collection of watercolor art, which features portraits of the most familiar faces of the biggest movie industry in the world. He started his career in the midst of Abstract Expressionism too, guiding his [portraiture](#) towards [figurative painting](#) of great visual impact. Ever since, Don Bachardy has been managing to transmit powerful emotions through the faces of many who were willing to sit for him, those often being pain, suffering, even anguish. This is all emphasised by a rather bold use of watercolors, in a manner that has turned this artist into one of the best in the field.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5dZX6FKWxQ&t=21s>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fw_2CUOi6WI



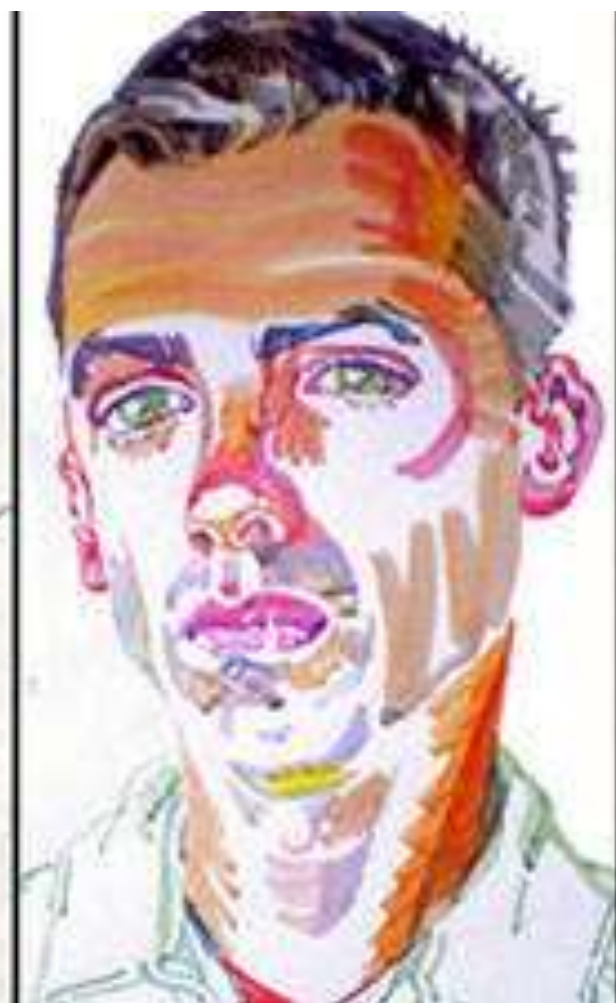
W.L. Lloyd's expression











Larry Bell

Best known for his glass boxes and large-scale minimalist illusionistic sculptures, Larry Bell also does intricate works of art on paper canvas, employing mixed media and watercolors. Primarily inspired by his inclination toward the post-World War II art movement of Abstract Expressionism, his works depict geometric compositions and stand right its cube combined three-dimensional glass form, known as Cube sculptures. Bell is also known to be the pioneer of 'vapor drawings' and 'mirage works', which involve the use of the technique of thin-film deposition and the coloring sheets of different paper materials, strips of polyester resin- PET and even laminate film. Very often, he produced a collage of these materials wherein the drawing occupied a small portion of their surface.

<https://www.hauserwirth.com/artists/2851-larry-bell/>

<https://vip-hauserwirth.com/gallery-exhibitions/larry-bell-new-work-london-2022/>











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Yun-Fei Ji

Yun-Fei Ji was born in 1963 in Beijing, China, and now lives and works in New York, Ohio, and Beijing. Using traditional Chinese painting techniques and addressing contemporary social, environmental, and political issues, Ji's work marries history with the present.

Having studied Song-dynasty painting practices, the artist moved to Arkansas in 1986, where he continued to paint in watercolor and ink, using his scroll-style works to depict narratives about industrialization and its attendant environmental destruction. Often described as disturbing and fantastical, Ji's work is inspired by the ghost stories his grandfather told him as a child, growing up on a collective farm. For the artist, however, ghosts function as a metaphor and means of satirizing human problems.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-qeU_GgwQo











Tracy Emin

The majority of Tracy Emin's work is not watercolor-based, but that has not stopped her from producing a large number of works in watercolor. The subject matter of Emin's work is inspired by her own lived experiences, and she has created a few collections with her watercolor artwork that are quite emotionally triggering.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rLaAy2YKwPo&t=146s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nDWjhrrscfo>



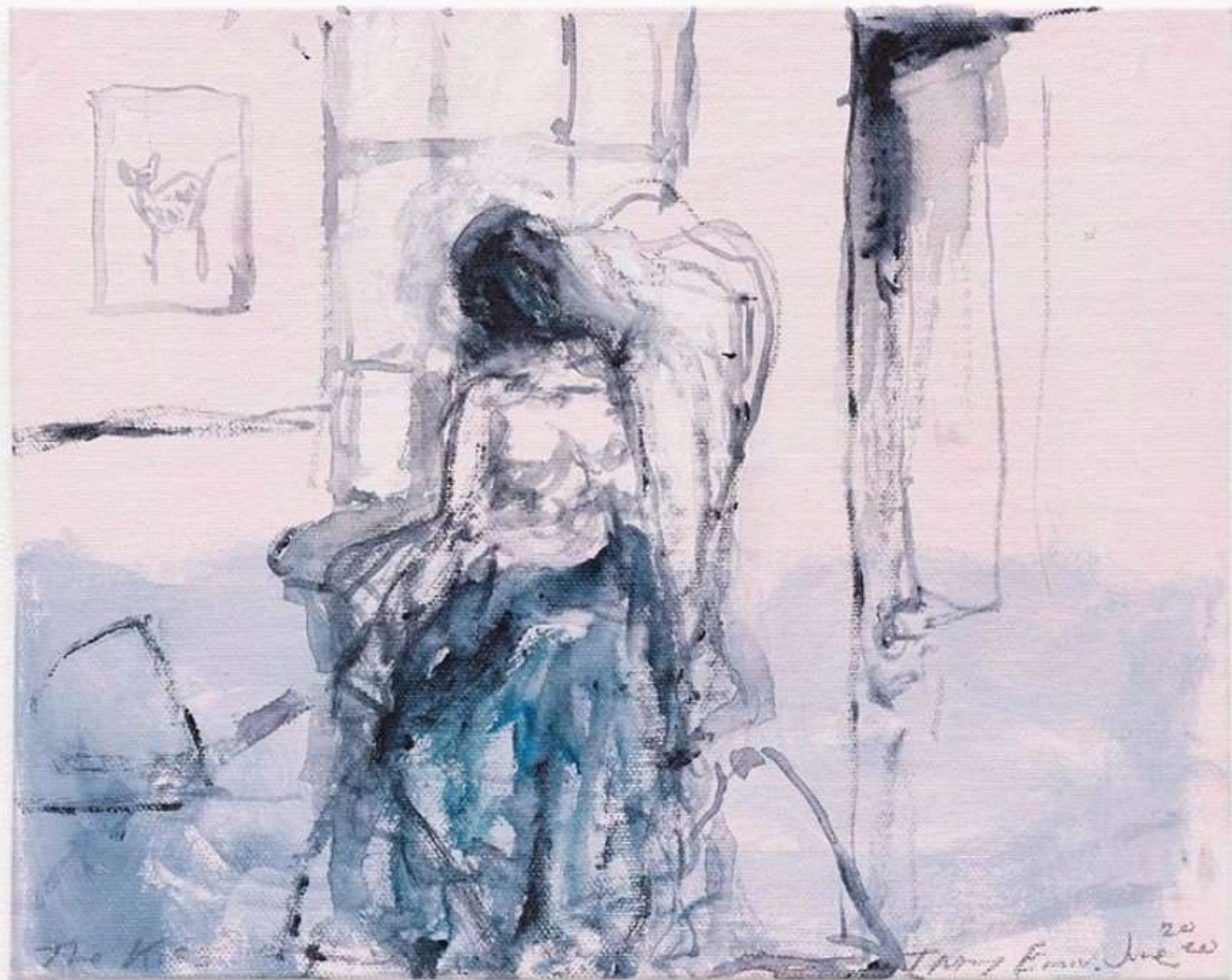








T. N. EMIW 1986



Nadine Faraj

Nadine Faraj's abstract watercolor paintings utilize just a touch more humanity in her approach to the subject of sex. This is possibly one of the oldest topics for artistic expression. In Faraj's painting, the watercolor is splattered, spilled, and washed across the canvas in a way that makes it appear that the colors on the canvas are moving. Humans are depicted in quite erotic scenes in her artwork, and this is what makes her art noteworthy and memorable.

- <https://vimeo.com/686765210>

















Ekaterina Smirnova

Katerina Smirnova is an American water painter who lives and works in Seattle. She is widely known for her large-scale watercolor paintings inspired by science, technology, and space. In the last few months, Smirnova has instigated incorporating electronic matter in her watercolor artworks.

Smirnova uses a large brush to create her creations, which can be up to 2.5 meters in height, onto which she sprays, wipes, washes, and splashes paint.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hdvRNjw7akg&list=PLv3SB6ToinXM7tSxKPgef6dSIYV4ZPLBM&t=9s>

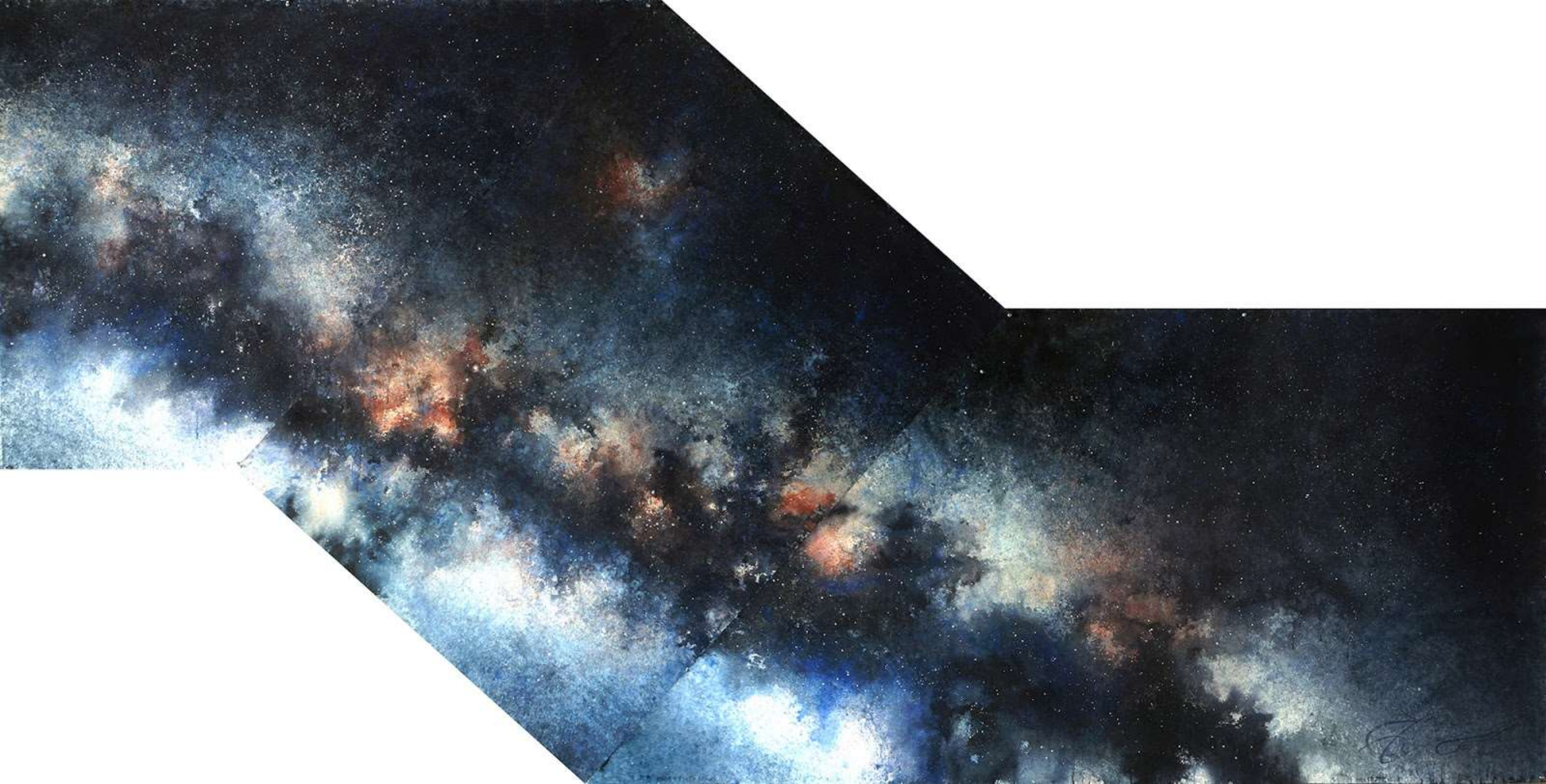














Cecily Brown

Cecily Brown is a British painter. Her style displays the influence of a variety of contemporary painters, from Willem de Kooning, Francis Bacon and Joan Mitchell, to Old Masters like Rubens, Poussin and Goya. Brown lives and works in New York.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fhtt8TklczA&t=1s>









Lou Benesch

Fantastic creatures with keen attitudes and fragments of human anatomy occupy the vivid watercolor illustrations of [Lou Benesch](#). From her studio in Paris, the French-American artist visualizes the characters that populate folklore, Greek myths, and classic fairytales through distinctive renderings of animal hybrids. Muscular spotted horses, shaggy wolf costumes, and a seemingly omnipresent third eye populate the surreal compositions, which are often framed by small archways and minimal backdrops.

<https://vimeo.com/303295240>









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Rithika Merchant

Rithika Merchant is an Indian artist born in Bombay (Mumbai). Her work explores the common thread that runs through different cultures and religions.

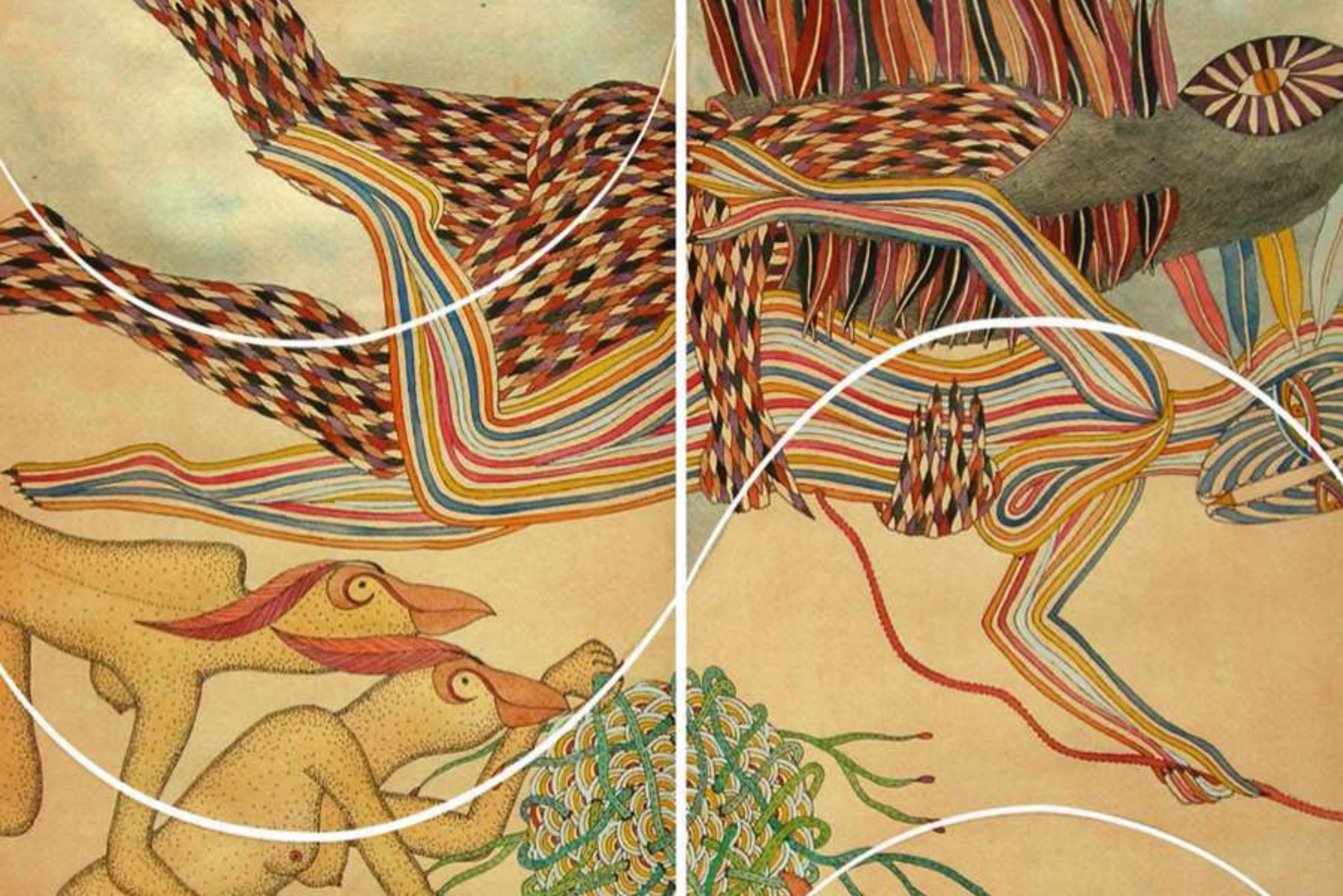
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_pSNGNe2w7c

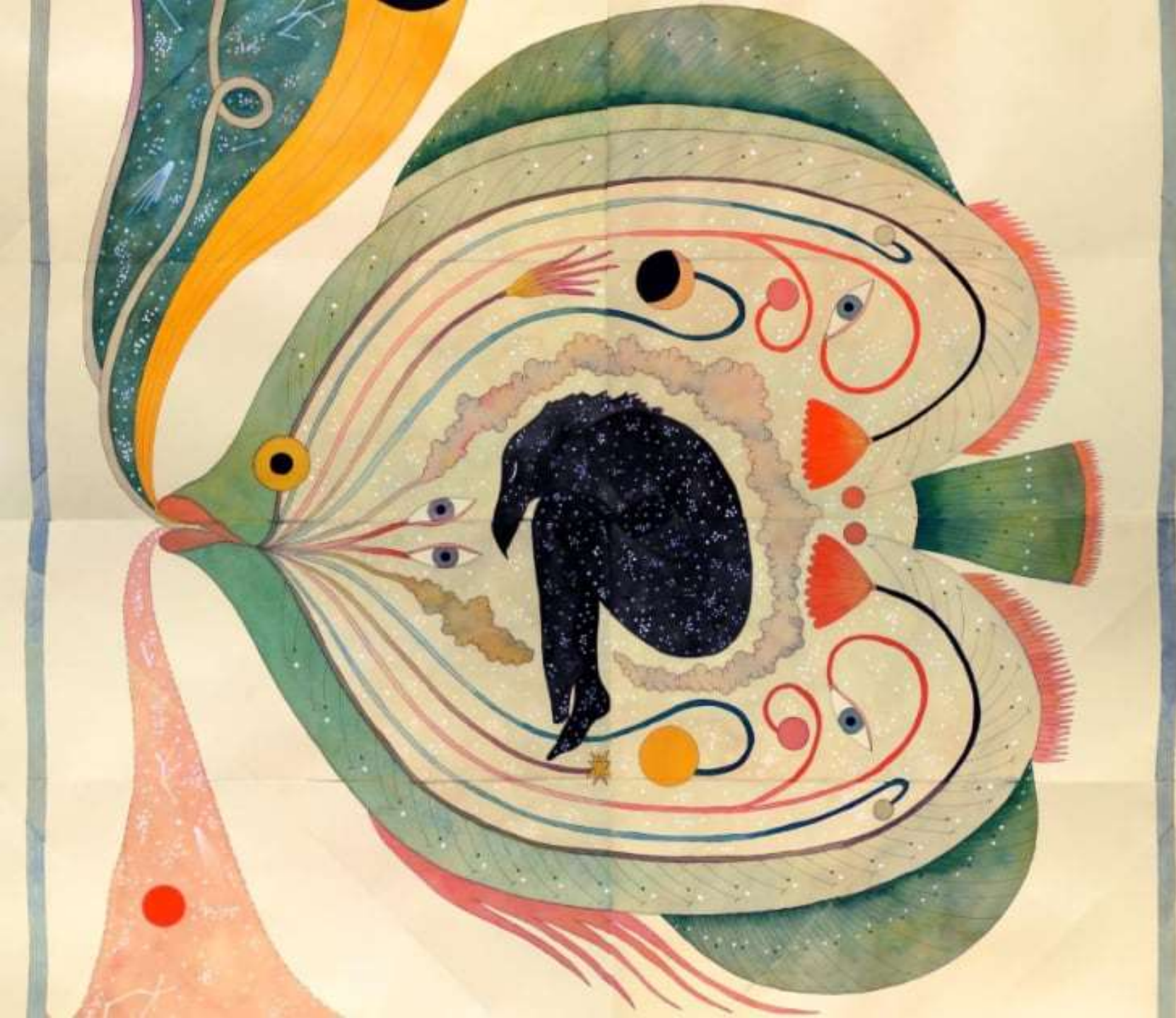
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYaARMxoNO4>













Judy Nunno

Nunno, a self-taught artist who developed her artistic skills through books, demos, workshops and experience, finds her meticulous approach entirely gratifying—although she admits that it requires “skill, patience and a great deal of time.” Elaborating on her detailed renderings, she says, “I’ve been told numerous times that I need to loosen up, but I’ve learned through years of experience that painting in a realistic style is what I most enjoy doing and what I do best.” All told, a single painting takes the artist an average of 40 to 50 hours to complete. “They say, ‘The devil is in the details,’ but not for me,” asserts Nunno. “I love the challenges involved in painting complicated subjects and the thrill of successfully capturing them. Being immersed in a complex work allows me to tune out the rest of the world and just enjoy the process of painting.”











Assignment Suggestions...

- Create an abstract watercolor wash and add ink linework after it dries
- Create watercolor swatches and then tear them up and incorporate them into a collage.
- Fold and crease a piece of watercolor paper and then paint on it