



HIMMAT IN LONDON

36 BRONZE SCULPTURES



In association with *Namtech Fine Art*







































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This publication includes Himmat Shah's bronze sculptures, all editions of which have been commissioned by Namtech Fine Art and produced at the Bronze Age Foundry UK. Each bronze is an edition of 5 (+1 Artist Proof).



‘No discourse on Indian modernist sculpture would be complete without according a central position to Himmat Shah.’

—Gayatri Sinha, *An Unreasoned Act of Being*

Foreword

Himmat is like the wind. Those in his path are swept away by his gentleness and, at times, his ferocity; both, however, are as blameless as the wind itself. We have had the privilege of working with Himmat for nearly twenty years. In this time, he has worked at the Bronze Age Foundry in the UK at their sculpture studio in Limehouse Basin to create a body of bronzes during his many visits to London. This publication documents the 36 Bronzes he produced there between 2007–18.

It is often held against Himmat that he is starkly mercurial. This is part of his allure, and the variety and depth of his work is achieved through this mysterious and unpredictable flow that we know as Himmat.

When Himmat is at work he inspires the observer in a way that clay enthuses a child. Many at the foundry stood to see the magic which starts with Himmat moulding clay with his hands. Then his vast array of self-made tools become an extension the body, and together the clay is added to and taken from; poked, punctured and mended; caressed and compacted; revered like a deity and loved like a newborn and then he stops and walks away.

The clay then loses its organic form under the carefree presence of the artist and turns into a silicon rubber mould. It is then converted into a wax model and the finest quality bronze is melted and poured over the wax which is encased in a shell to create his bronze casts through the traditional lost wax process with the assistance of some of the best bronze casters in the world at the Bronze Age Foundry. The result is the highest quality of bronze casts that endeavour to stand for the beauty of Himmat Shah. It is a marvel to see how something so hard represents something so subtle.

Tanuj Berry and Saman Malik
March 2020
New Delhi



For most artists, their work is a reflection of their experiences—a tool, a means of expression for encapsulating their politics and philosophies. For Himmat, his art is his world.

Himmat's masterful capacity to understand and play with the many possibilities of the sculptural form is as powerful, nuanced, and diverse as the many mediums he has explored over the years. From murals in brick and cement to experiments in terracotta and clay and, finally, bronze, Himmat has pushed the tactile boundaries of each medium to develop an unparalleled vocabulary that is undoubtedly and uniquely his own. The 36 bronze sculptures in this series produced over the span of a decade are an extension of his previous work, but also a departure from it. Even now, at 87, Himmat is reinventing himself.

We share a long friendship with Himmat and are delighted to see this book come to fruition. It is our honour and privilege to be a part of it.

Minal and Dinesh Vazirani
Saffronart
March 2020
Mumbai

‘एक कविता हिम्मत शाह पे’
अमित कल्ला

कहीं बेहतर जानता वह
माटी का स्वभाव
तभी तो बेबाक बातें करता है
रोम-रोम छू लेते उसके हाथ
पकड़ लेते देह में सिमटी
मखमली परछाईयाँ
पत्थर, लोहा, कांसा, कांच
गढ़ते पिघलते निपजते
उसी माटी से
माटी हो जाने को
उसकी साँसों से संगत कर
मूर्त-अमूर्त काया की माया बनकर
आकृतियों के बहुरूप धर
सृष्टी की
अनुकृतियां हो जाने को
फिर तो क्या
गणित दिनों के हों या संवत्सर
अक्सर छोटी ही पड़ती जो गणनाएं
मन्वंतर की गोल चाक के चलने पर
कितनी साफ दिखती
देखो जरा
खुरदरी सतहों पर उँगलियों की छापों को,
पोर-पोर के स्पर्श
हथेलियों की लकीरें और सहसा जल से झांकती है कायाएं जिनके
दरमियाँ
यक़ीनन, यक़ीनन बतलाती मुकाम
दिशाओं पर लेटे अपने उस जागते सिरजनहार का
लगातार
कितना कुछ कहता जो
गहरी बुनियादें बना-बना कर
गहता, सहता है
व्यक्त-अव्यक्त सी धाराओं के बीच भवंर में
बूँद बूँद अनुभव चखकर बहता है
अंगारों की शब्द भरी भट्टी में
ताप तपी तन्मात्राओं-सा
अपने रहते असल समय के अर्थों को
सहता है, सहता है
कागज़ पर आग भरी स्याही से
बिंदु रेखा बिम्ब कोर कर
मधु मोम पत्थर होने की
एक कहानी कहता है
रंग भी उसको पाकर खिरते खुशबु बनकर बिखराते
करवट करवट सुरमयी लहरों संग
दौहराते दुनिया में अपने होने को
सूर्य चंद्रमा दोनों ही उसके संगी हैं
कतरा कतरा आसमान के तारे सारे
जहाँ साथ उसका
दिवा स्वप्न बन माया का
अब सबको इंतज़ार है
दृग के दृश्य बने जो
माटी के उस महतम को पा लेने का
अलबत्ता
फिर से कहता हूँ
कहीं बेहतर जानता है वह
माटी का स्वभाव
तभी तो बेबाक बातें करता
उसकी तासीरें चखता है
दृग बनकर इस दुनिया में
रमता फिरता है
दृग बनकर इस दुनिया में
रमता फिरता है।

A poem on Himmat Shah by Amit Kalla
Translated from the Hindi by Himanshu Vyas

He knows
so much better
the nature
of clay
that's why he talks honestly

every pore feels touched by his hands
discerns
the velvet shadows
hidden in the body
stone iron bronze glass
get sculpted melt emerge
from the same clay
to be a clay
to befriend its breath
be a Maya of the morphous amorphous body
behold the many-formed and become
forms following the creation
then even if the count be of days
or of the epochs
often the calculations fall short

when the aeons move their potter's wheel
just see
how lucid the fingerprints on rough surfaces,
touch of each and every fingertip
the lines of the hand
Suddenly
in between them bodies peek from the water
affirmatively give the address
of one's own creator
lying on the horizons
Continually
so much it says
the one who
furrowing deep foundations
absorbs and abstains
betwixt the streams of manifest–unmanifest
flows
tasting every drop of experience
in the word-filled furnace of embers
like the subtle elements baked in austerities
bears indeed bears

while he is
the meaning of true times
drawing
a dot a line an image
on paper with ink of fire
says a story of
being honey wax and stone
having him
colours too
wither
become fragrance
scatter
turning curving along with singing waves
repeat their being in this world
both are his companions
the sun and the moon
drop by drop every star of the sky

where his company
a daydream of Maya
now
everyone awaits
those who became the scene
of the seer
to be blessed with that majesty
of the clay
indeed
I say it again
much better he can discern
the nature of clay
that is why
talking honestly
tastes its many impressions
becoming a seer
wanders this very world
becoming a seer
wanders this very world



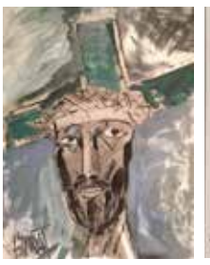


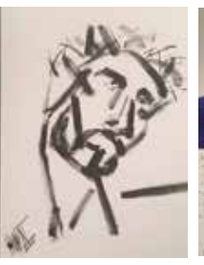
Bronze 88" x 42" x 38"

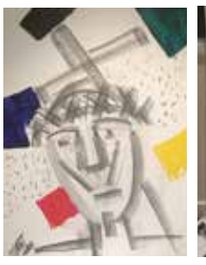
















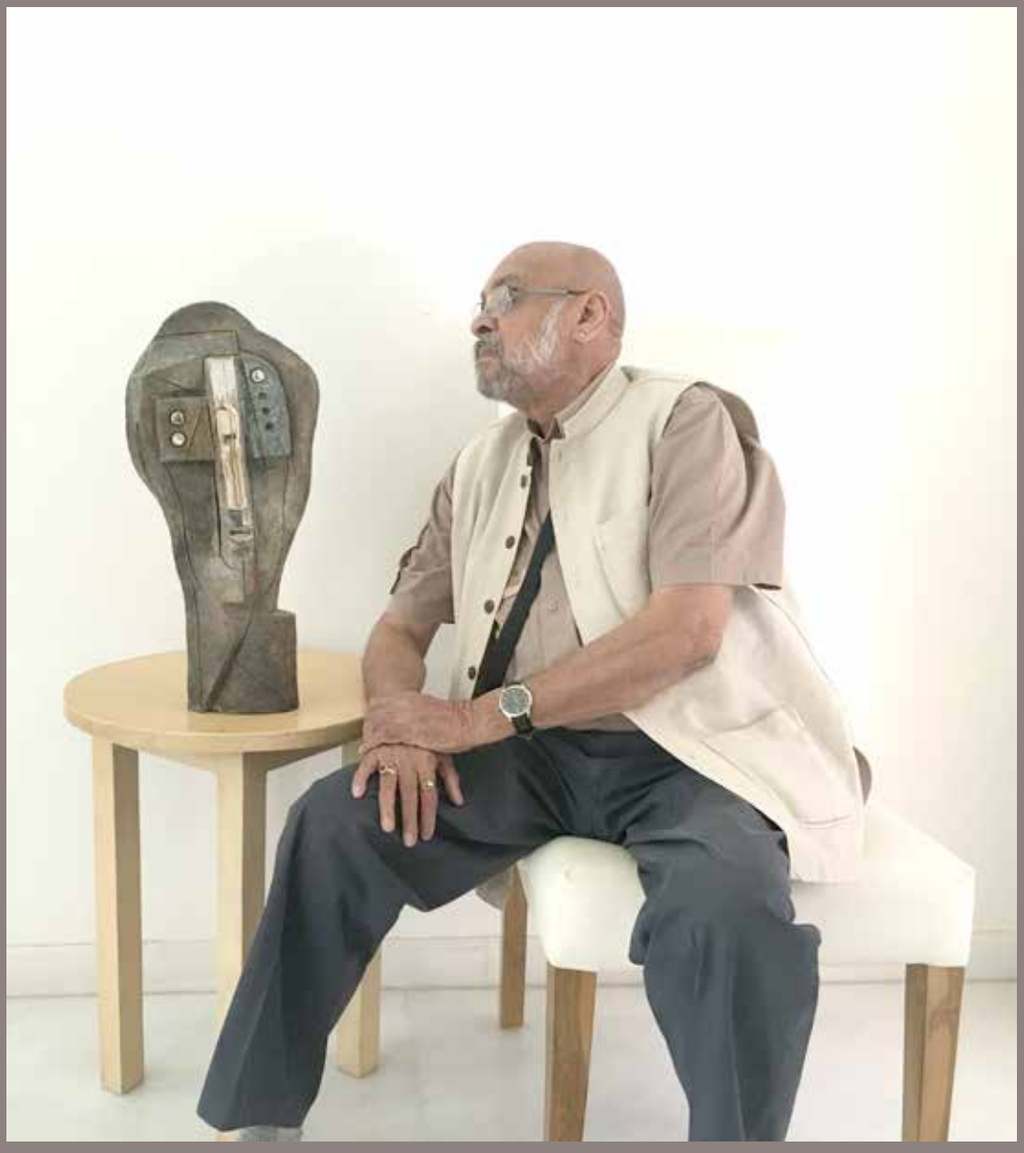






Bronze 20" x 9" x 7"

‘It is futile to attempt to decipher a work of art. Because then, you are letting reason mediate. Creativity is beyond reason; it is beyond craft and technique. You just have to experience it and enjoy it.’







Bronze 52" x 16" x 18"



Bronze 11" x 6" x 4"





Bronze 21" x 7" x 6"



‘Time acts on works of art, changing their colour and form, thereby completing them.’





Bronze 17" x 5" x 8"





Bronze 16" x 7" x 8"









Bronze 20" x 3" x 9"



Bronze 35" x 12" x 10"



‘I feel great joy in handling the medium. You cannot make anybody understand that joy. Only the person who creates can understand.’

Bronze 48" x 24" x 24"





Bronze 17" x 9" x 7"





Bronze 20" x 8" x 5"







Bronze 19" x 14" x 7"









Bronze 48" x 14" x 13"





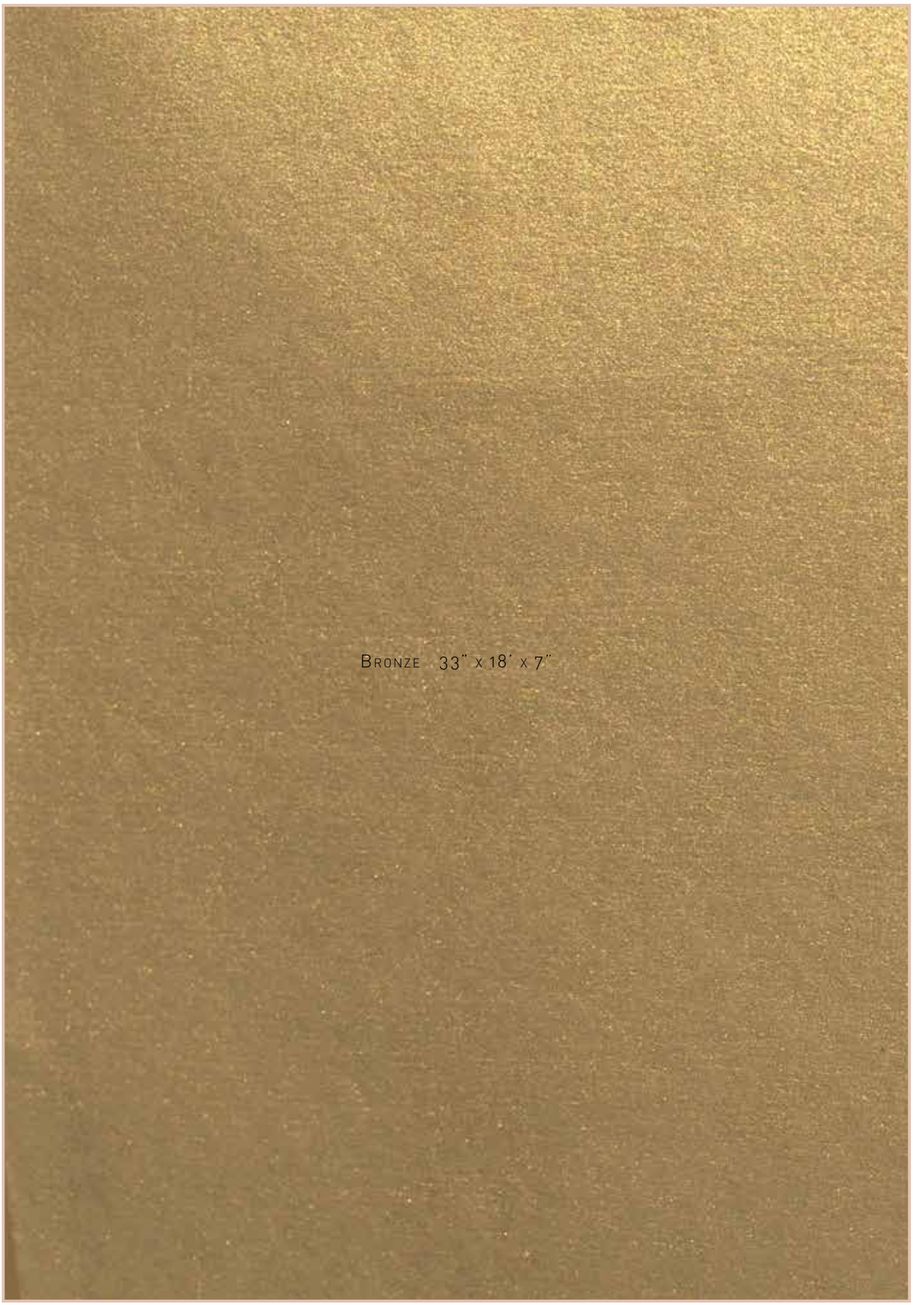
Bronze 22" x 15" x 3"





‘Himmat continues to revel in his aloneness.
He sums up his life in one line.
“My work is the only world I know and it is the only world I can live in.”

—Rubina Karode, *Drawings by Himmat Shah*



Bronze 33" x 18' x 7"





Bronze 13" x 10" x 8"





Bronze 120" x 75" x 36"











‘An artist sees
lines and forms in
the rocks of a cave.
These become a
part of his art.
A person who has
not seen a bird fly,
cannot think of
an aeroplane.’

Bronze 20" x 19" x 10"





Bronze 11" x 7" x 7"







Bronze 19" x 8" x 9"





Bronze 29" x 9" x 7"







Bronze 21" x 10" x 8"



‘There is a powerful affinity between the tribal icons which have held communties together in our country for centuries. You grew up amongst them and these powerful images have persisted in your memory and now appear in the guise of your sculpture.’

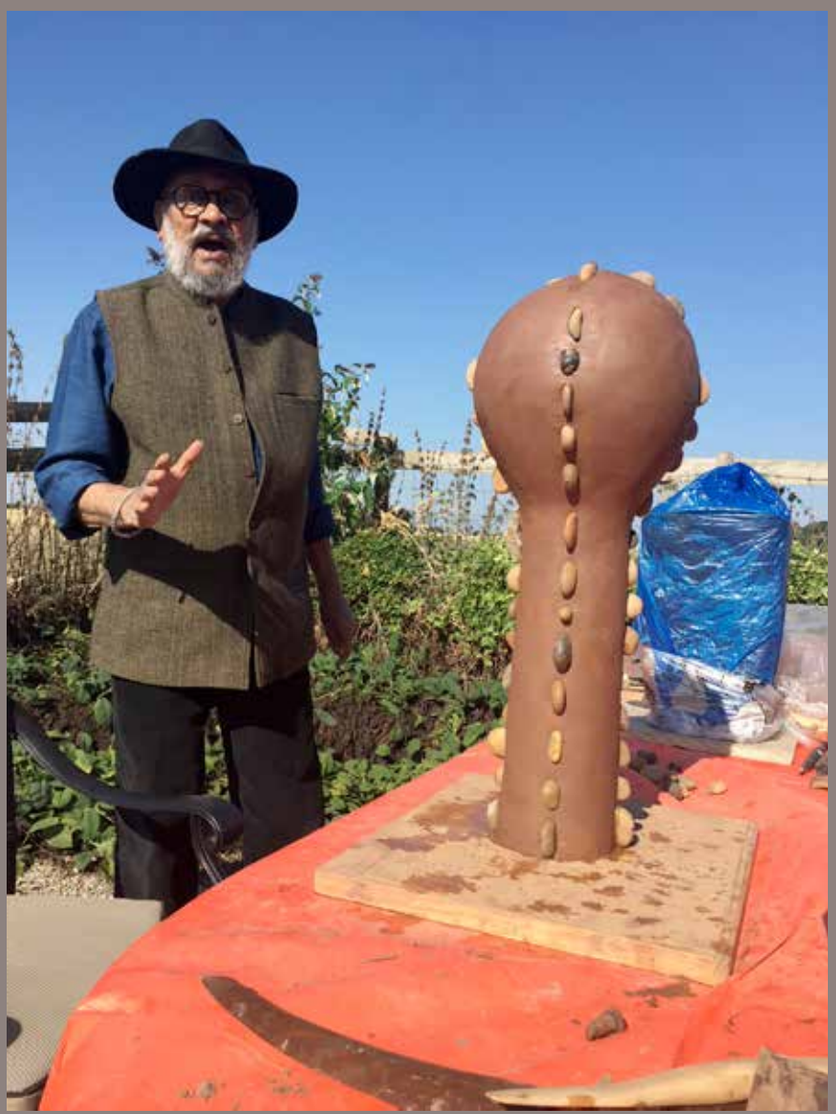
—Krishen Khanna



Bronze 19" x 7" x 7 "







‘You have to see something to create art. You should see without using your mind. Just look; don’t think about it. You forget yourself and completely become what you see.’



Bronze 14" x 6" x 4"









Bronze 27" x 7" x 7"





‘...In my heads you will see there is both fragility and transience of existence, the heightened relationship between different layers. Sculpture for me is about an intense connect and understanding of the materials and material world, and echoes of lost civilisations and cultures.’





Bronze 21" x 11" x 10"









Bronze 15" x 4" x 4"

Bronze 33" x 8" x 7"









Bronze 54" x 62" x 36"









‘Abstraction for me is to explore the conscious from the real, a desire to seek out and give shape to the primordial image.’





Bronze 15" x 4" x 6"





Bronze 12" x 9" x 8"





Bronze 23" x 16" x 18"



Bronze 12" x 7" x 7"







Bronze 16" x 8" x 7"

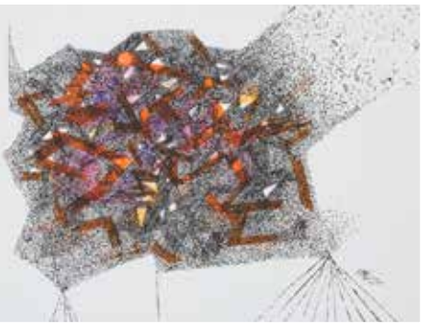

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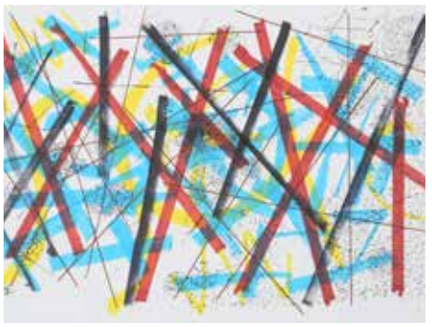
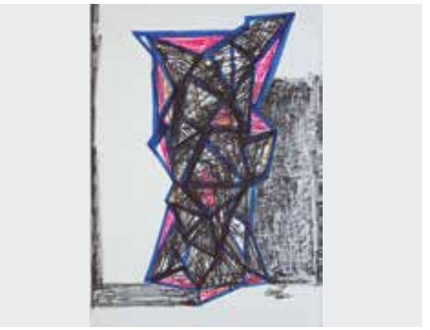


Bronze 12" x 5" x 7"



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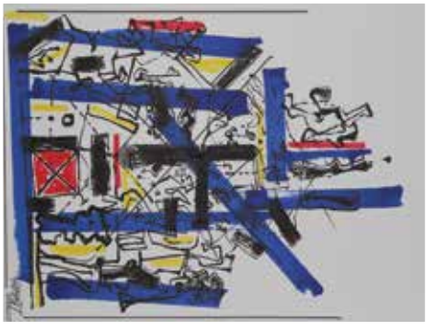



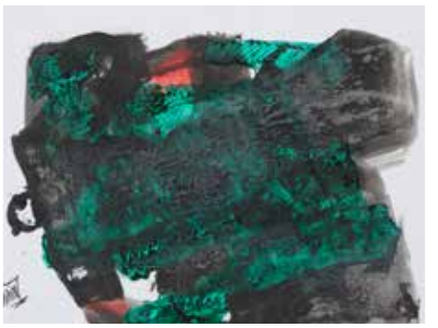








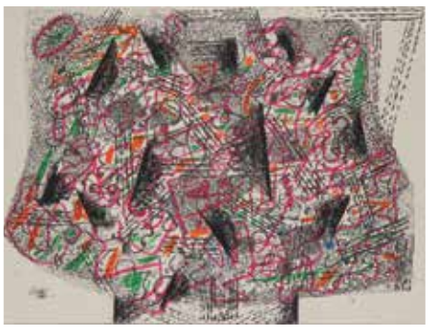


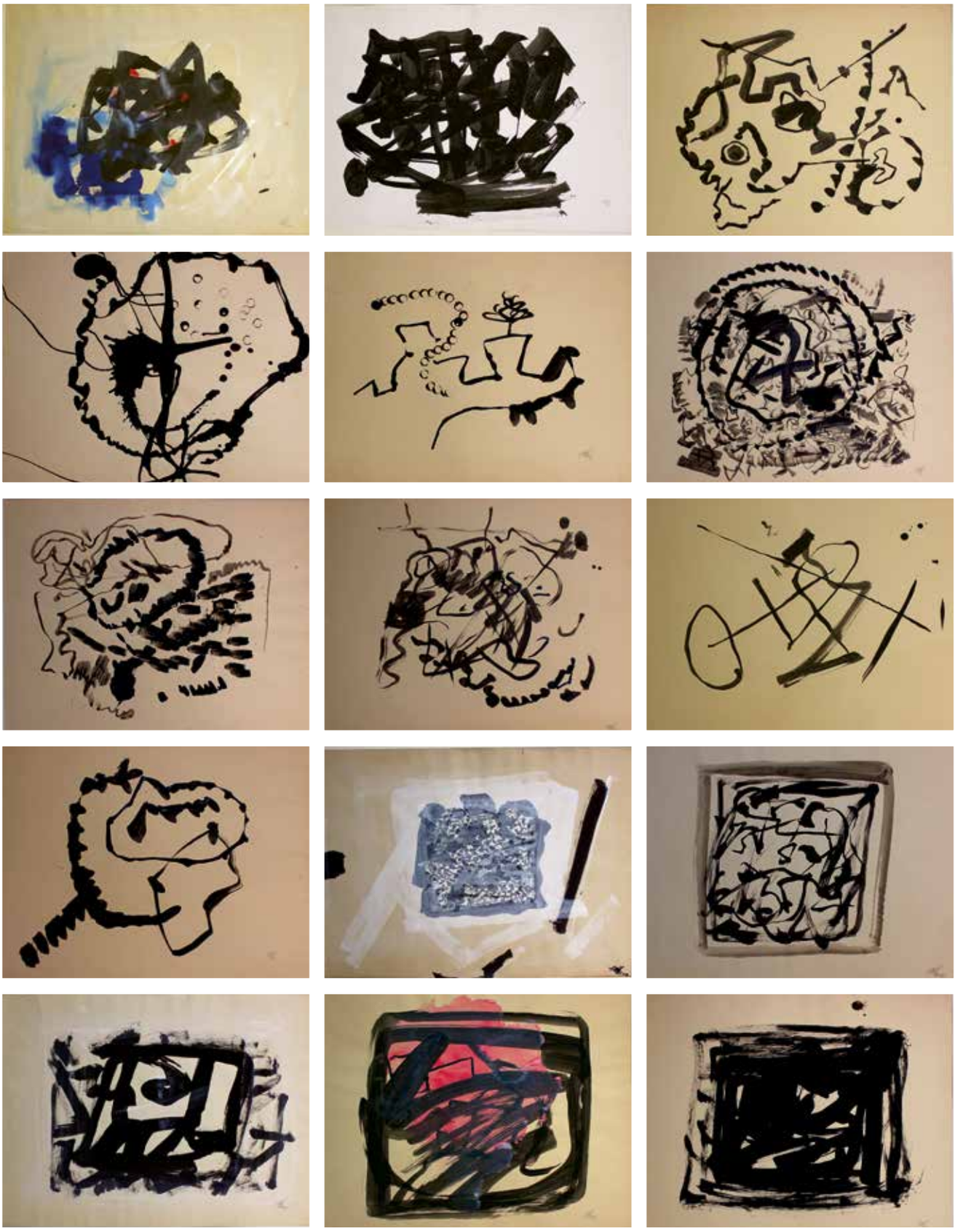








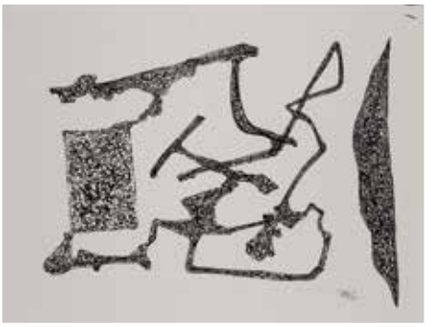



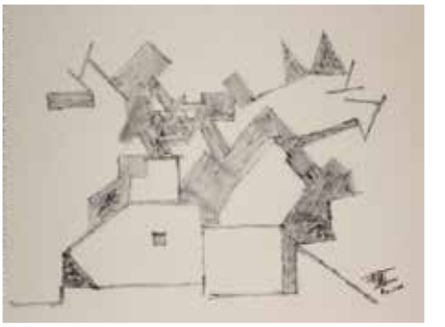
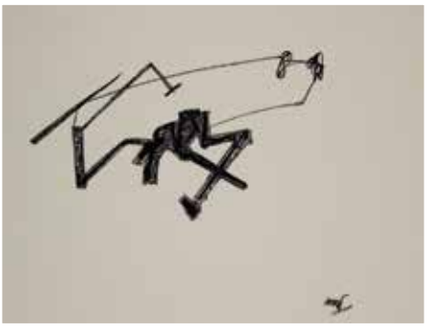



















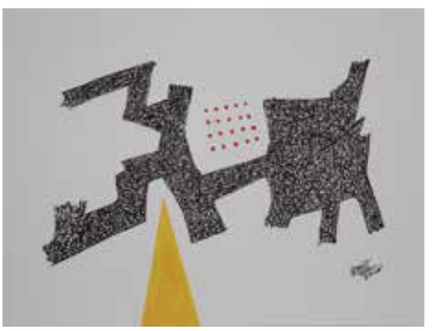


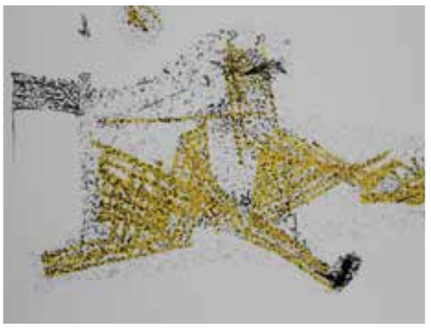
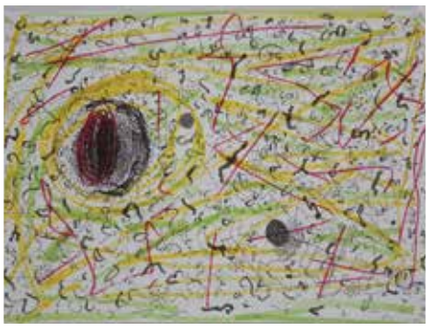


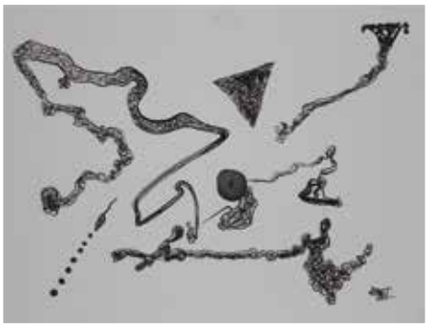


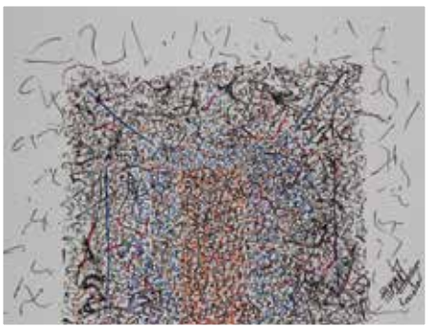


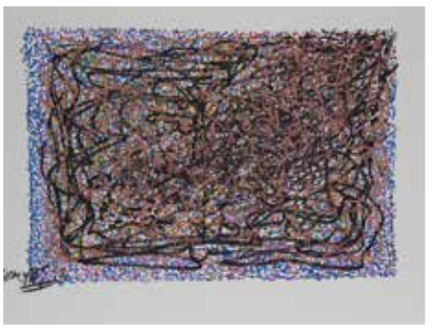




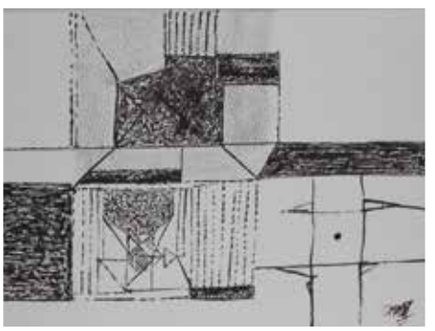


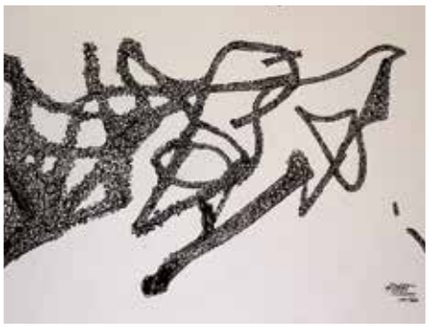
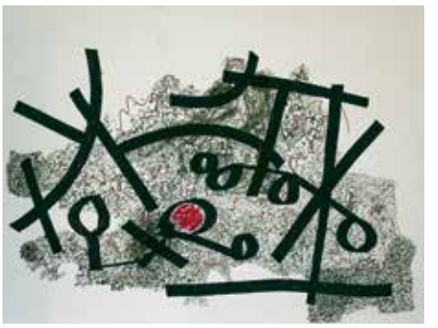




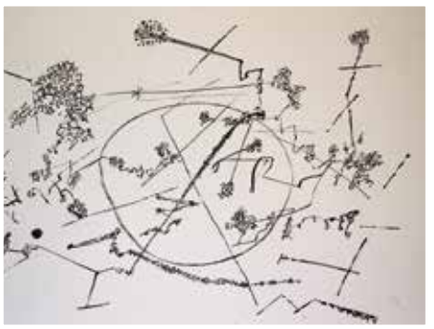




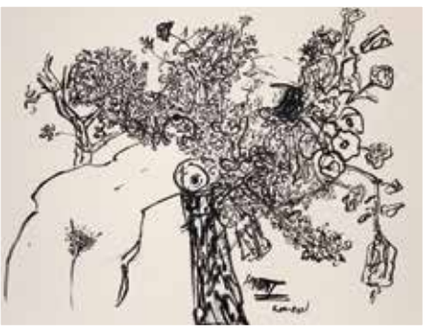




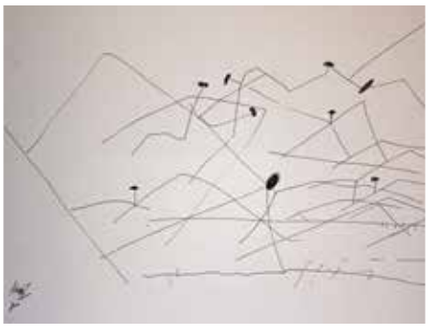



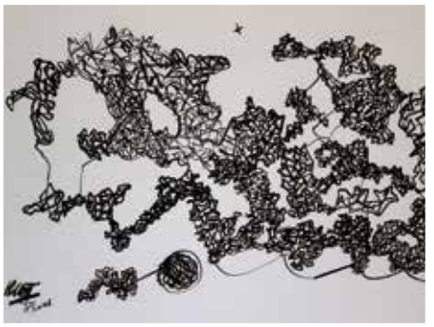


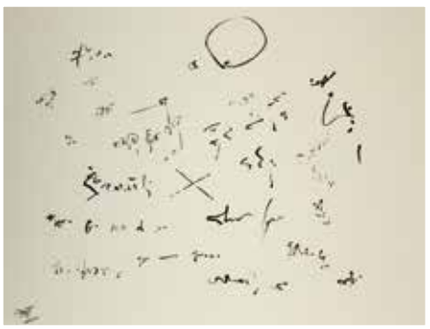


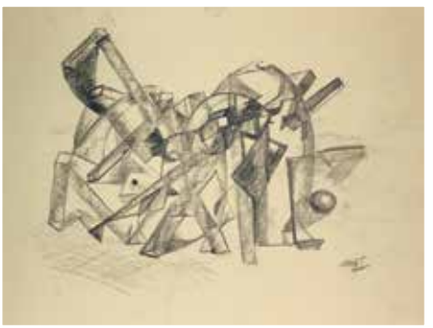


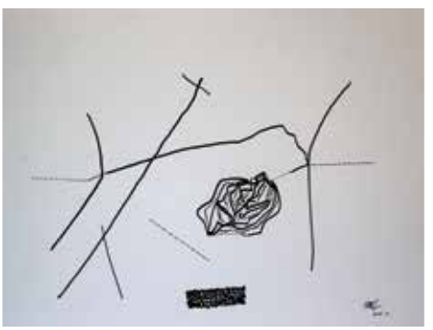



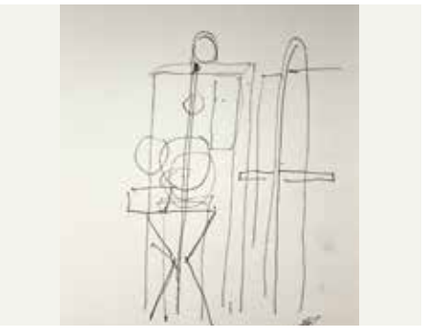



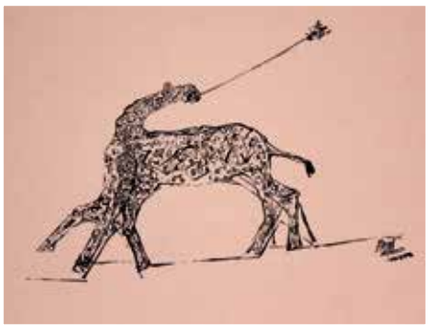






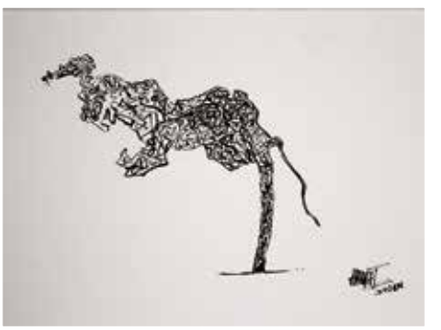





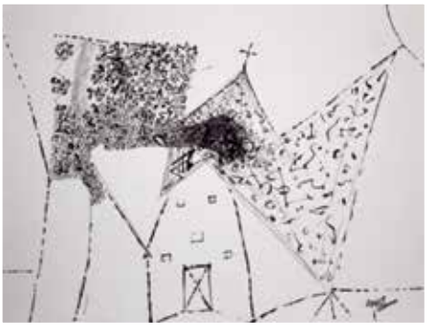
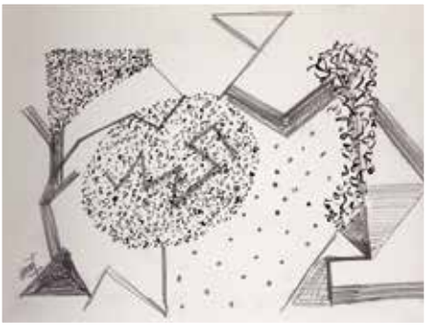




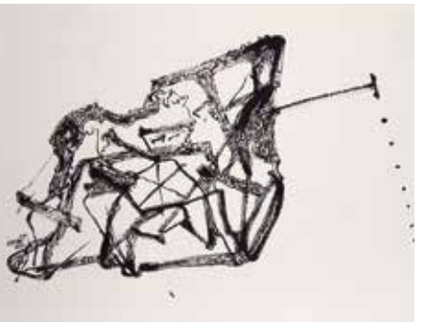


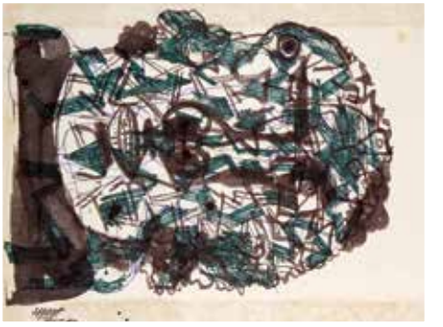




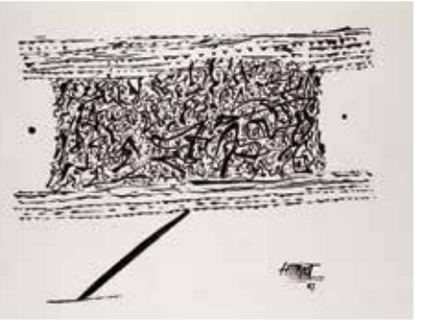


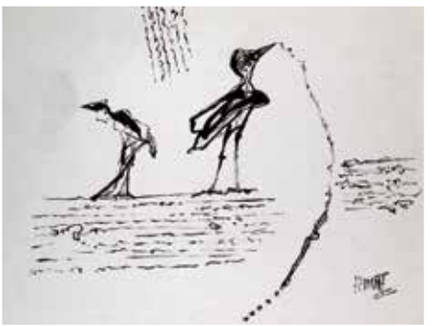
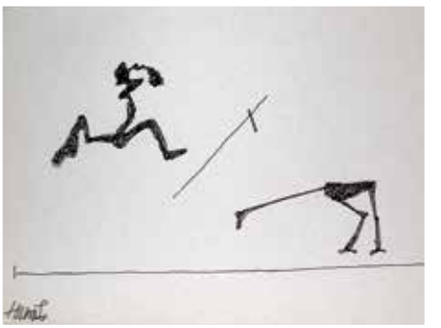


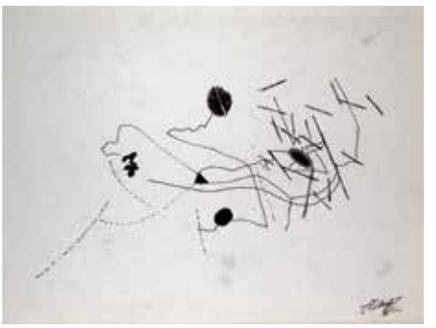
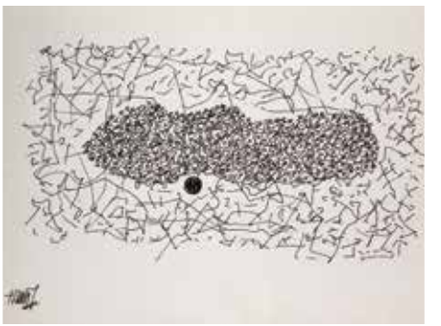







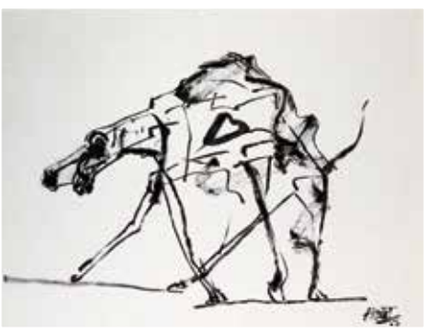
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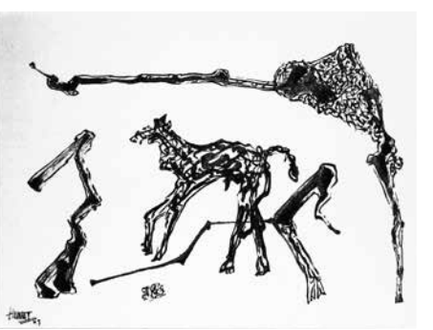




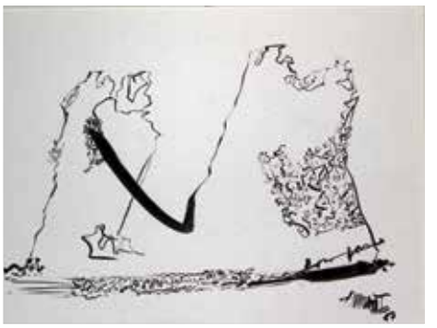
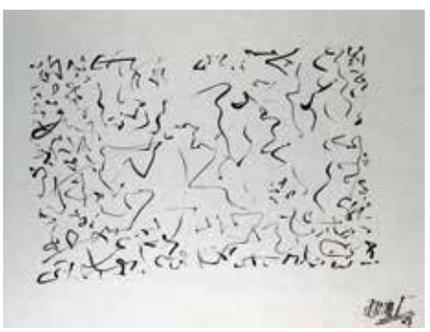


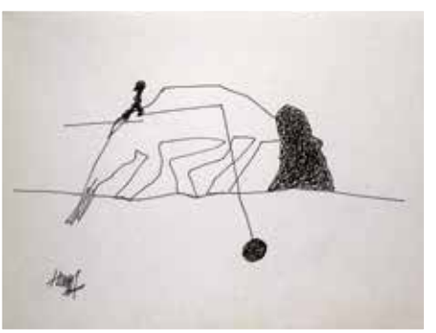


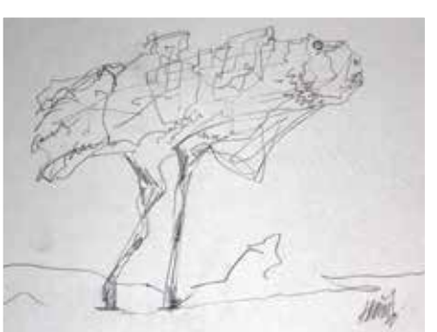


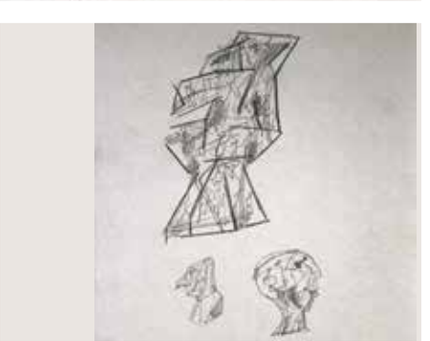



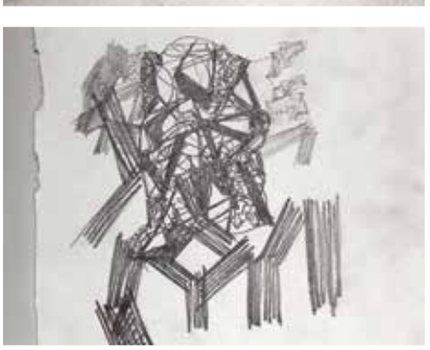


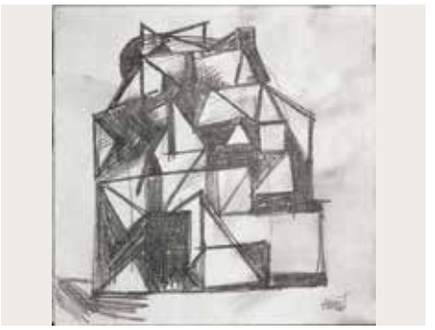
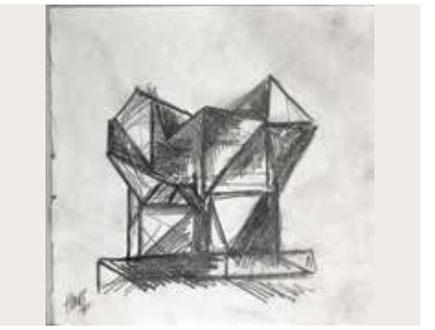
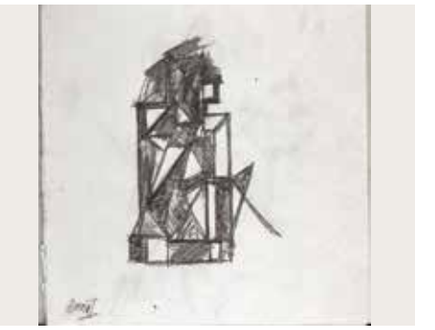
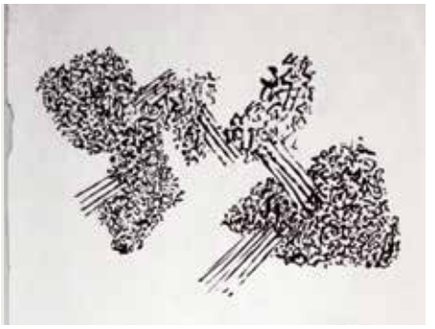




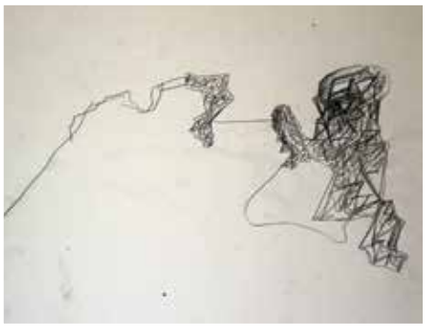


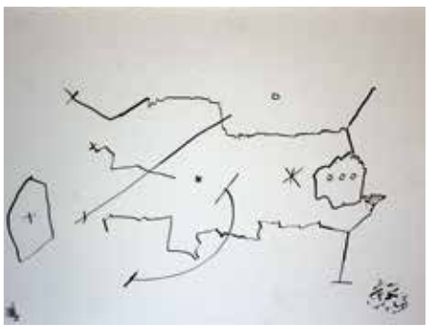
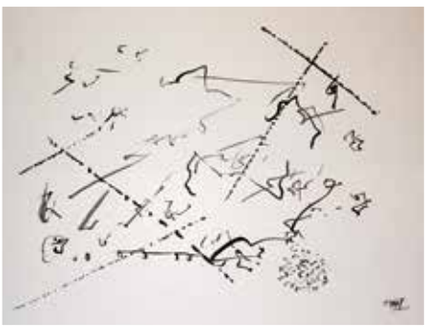
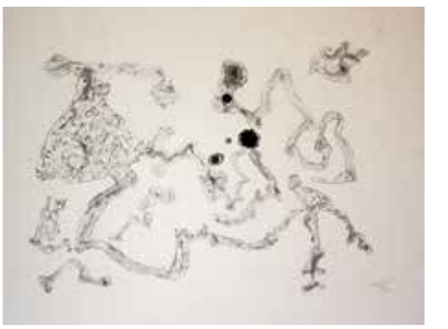


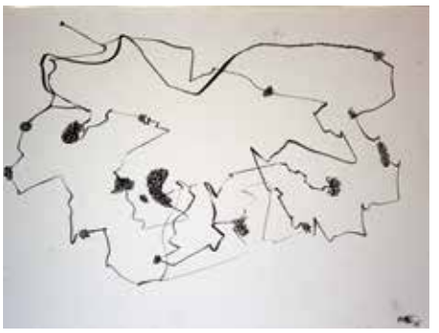
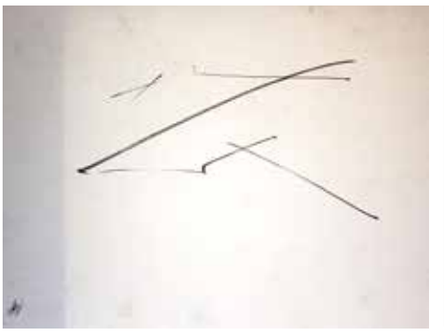


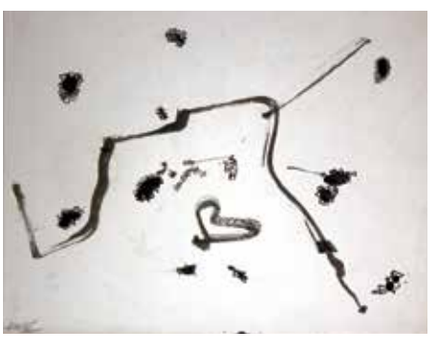
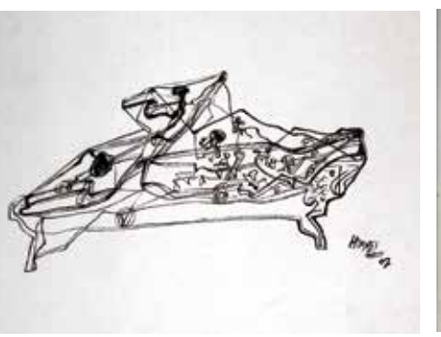
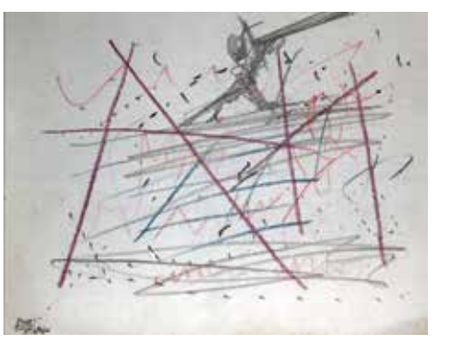


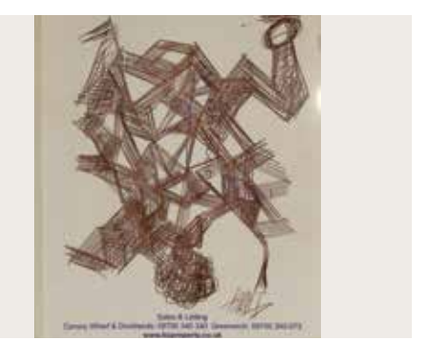
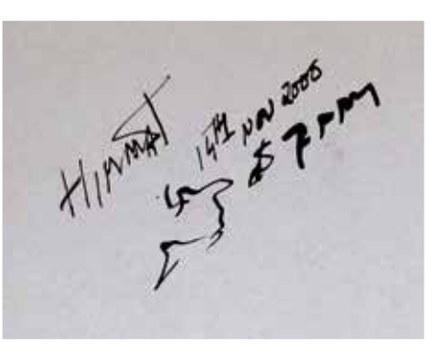


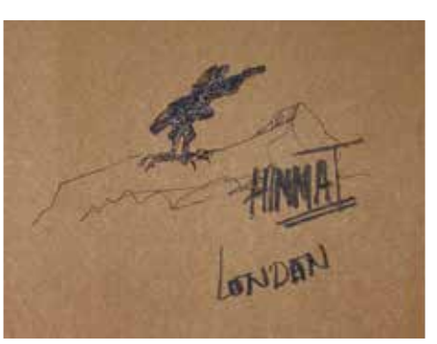









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