

Matta

By William Rubin

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by William Rubin

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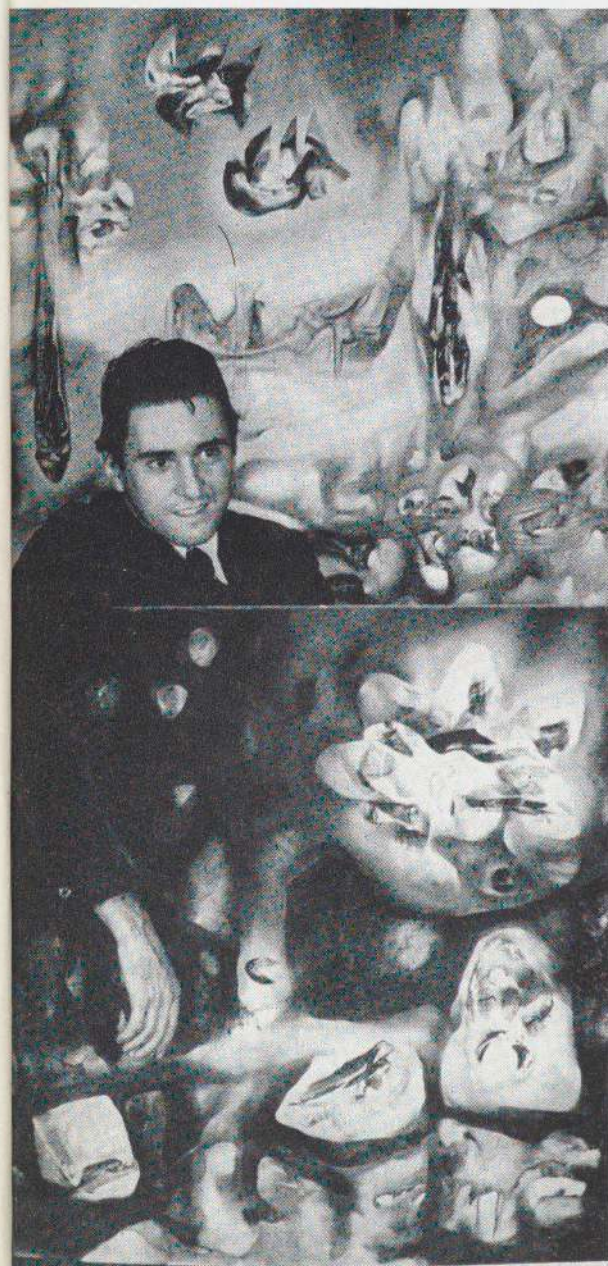
Andrew Carnduff Ritchie, Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, has given his valuable advice and attention throughout; Sam Hunter, Associate Curator, has generously helped with all phases of the preparation of the catalogue and exhibition, and Alicia Legg, Assistant Curator, has worked tirelessly meeting the endless practical problems that arise.

James Thrall Soby had long ago made available to me his extensive Matta file. His long familiarity with Matta's work has made his help in reading and discussing the manuscript invaluable.

The artist himself has spent many hours discussing his work with me and has put large amounts of private material at my disposal.

William Rubin

Photograph of Matta by Sidney Janis, 1941



Periods of great anxiety and tension have often been marked by the emergence of visionary painters. Amid the uneasy revelations of our scientific age many familiar social, spiritual and artistic concepts seem exhausted, and a widespread feeling persists that their elaboration can no longer substitute for fresh ideas. It is in this context that the surrealist and allied painters of the last thirty years have sought to discover a wholly new picture of ourselves and of our universe which might help to resolve the contemporary conflict of values. The unique vision of Matta is the most recent and, in its cosmic focus, the most far-reaching that this manner of painting has proposed.

The background of Roberto Sebastian Antonio Matta Echaurren is almost as variegated as his work. Born in Santiago, Chile in 1912, of mixed Spanish and French descent, Matta has lived and worked in South America, France, Mexico, the United States, Italy, Spain and England. Although he has explored the literary and spiritual heritages of all these areas, his art is less international than supra-national; his philosophy is essentially hermetic, and the vision he discovers within himself is more imposed upon his surroundings than derived from them.

At the insistence of his parents, for whom the study of architecture seemed more practical than that of painting, Matta enrolled as an apprentice in Le Corbusier's Paris office in 1934. It was a mistake from the start. Architecture did not afford adequate scope for his restless fantasy and, as the years passed, Matta spent less and less time in Corbusier's office and more in the company of his surrealist friends, whose group he joined in 1937. That same year Matta did a number of colored drawings, but it was not until 1938 that he began painting, completing fewer than a dozen small canvases, a limited production characteristic of his work until around 1944.

The Morphology of Desire of 1938 (page 10) establishes the atmosphere of continuous metamorphosis that characterizes Matta's first period. His amorphous forms are engulfed in an endless series of transformations through vaporous, liquid, and crystalline states. Here jewels of pigment pile up on one another, there they eddy away, melting into the open spaces. In the pure spots, palette-knife strokes and running pigment Matta is beginning to recognize the cosmic structure of experience. As though this vision were coming into better focus,

the shapes become more discrete in the *Inscapes* of 1939 (page 11) where a tenuous horizon line suggests a fantastic landscape. As the title implies, it is a "landscape" discovered within the self, constituting what Matta calls a "psychological morphology." Unlike the surrealist forms of Tchelitchew and Dali, Matta's are not realistic images of anything. They do not come from the world of the visually experienced, and though they suggest many things, they can be identified with nothing. The material substance of his forms seems a new and universal element, linking the artist's pictorial and psychic worlds.

In *Prescience* (page 12), painted after he had immigrated to the United States late in 1939, Matta explored new possibilities in the use of pigment as a vaporous wash, forming membranous walls occasionally laced with fragile webs of lines. Some of the amorphous shapes recall Tanguy. Others have a complex and open character, a delicate and instantaneously achieved equilibration, which significantly influenced many future Abstract Expressionists, particularly Arshile Gorky. At this time Matta was established at the center of a group of painters who formed the nucleus of the so-called New York school. His impact on this art has been overlooked in recent years, partly owing to the fact that Matta remained within the framework of a symbolic iconography, whereas his colleagues developed into more purely non-representational painters. But if Matta's influence in terms of painterly values and techniques was considerable, he was perhaps even more important as a personality of extraordinary intellectual perspicacity and conversational brilliance, who acted as a catalyst in stimulating adventurousness among young painters during the war, and as a bridge between them and such avant-garde expatriates of the older generation as Tanguy, Ernst and Duchamp.

In 1941 Matta traveled to Mexico, where he studied volcanic landscapes and absorbed the burning sunlight and bright colors of the South. Subsequently, he charged his "inscapes" with paroxysms of flaming yellows, oranges and greens—the color scheme of *The Earth is a Man* of 1942 (page 17), his first large picture and the brilliant synthesis of all his early discoveries. The sun, partially obscured by a disintegrating red planet, illuminates a primordial landscape of apocalyptic splendor. It is the beginning of the universe—it is also the end. Suspended somewhat above the terrain, we look down upon strange hills and volcanoes against whose melting surfaces are silhouetted exotic shapes connoting in Matta's iconography primeval birds and flowers. Whereas the rationalist Greeks had used the external image of man (microcosm) to represent the order, logic, and finite mechanical perfection of the universe (macrocosm), Matta invokes a vision of galaxies to suggest the infinity and mystery within man.

The quiet of the nocturnal *Anguish of Trembling*, a pendant to *The Earth is a Man*, is filled with the foreboding of the anxious terror that breaks forth in *The Disasters of Mysticism* (page 15), the most expressionistic of Matta's early works, notable for the richest handling of impasto in his entire oeuvre.

Two other pictures completed in the singularly inventive year of 1942 represent an important departure in their repression of the horizon line. The title of *Here Sir Fire, Eat* (page 18) refers to the voracious character of the painter's creative energies, which he feels surging within his body as fire under the earth's crust and to which he offers himself as a sacrifice. At this time Matta was deeply involved with mystical speculations deriving from his interest in magic, the cabala, and tarot deck from which *The Hanged Man* (page 14) derives its name. Free association to this card induced in Matta's mind an image of the foetus "hanging" in the abdomen of his pregnant wife. A series of drawings in his notebook demonstrated the fantastic metamorphosis of these forms all contained within the realistically drawn silhouette of the female anatomy (page 6). Much less constrained in composition and technique, *The Hanged Man* shows Matta fully exploiting the possibilities of accident. Spilled pigment is mixed with a rubbing of the liquid color by a loosely held cloth in order to produce the feathery, membranous passages of yellows and light blue which constitute the environment of the forms. The semi-automatic character of this and many of Matta's other works is bound up with the Surrealists' interest in the concept of chance. The success of each work is based upon a spontaneously discovered magic of relationships which transcends formula, and being of a wholly qualitative order, cannot be duplicated. "The game is being played," wrote Nicholas Calas, "with dice as many-faceted as diamonds. Sometimes the golden number does turn up and all that we see sparkles with a new and powerful light."

The Prisoner of Light, the second of Matta's large canvases, was completed in 1943. A diagrammatic expression of the iconography of the tarot deck, the painting suffers from a somewhat compartmentalized character. Developing from the right hand section denoting "Mind" in the tarot system, *Elliminonde* of 1943 (page 19) serves as a transition to a wholly astral world. The mountain tops of our fantastic terrain are just barely visible as we float upward into a region of limitless space articulated by planet-shapes and tilted planes which in turn become the total environment of the large *Vertigo of Eros* of 1944 (page 22), the most profound of Matta's work and the central image of his oeuvre. This is the cosmic Matta who, in the evocation of infinite space, suggests simultaneously the vastness of the universe and the profound depth of the psyche.

The title, *The Vertigo of Eros* (*Le Vertige d'Eros*), a pun on the phrase "*Le Vert-Tige des Roses*" (The Green Stem of the Roses), relates to a passage in which Freud located all consciousness as falling between Eros and the death wish—the life force and its antithesis. Afloat in a mystical light which emanates from the deepest recesses of space, an inscrutable morphology of shapes suggesting liquid, fire, roots and sexual parts stimulates an awareness of inner consciousness such as we trap occasionally in reverie and dreams. Yet this image is wholly opposed to Dali's "hand-painted dream photographs" or Magritte's dreamlike mutations and confrontations of objects in external reality. The components of everything



Artists in Exile. Exhibition at Pierre Matisse Gallery, March 3-28, 1942.

Seated from left to right, first row: Matta Echaurren, Cissip Zadkine, Yves Tanguy, Max Ernst, Marc Chagall, Fernand Léger; second row: André Breton, Piet Mondrian, André Masson, Amédée Ozenfant, Jacques Lipchitz, Pavel Tchelitchew, Kurt Seligmann, Eugene Bermann. Photo by George Platt Lynes



Notebook sketch, showing a fantasy of the foetus, which is the nucleus of *The Hanged Man* of 1942, page 14. Sketch not in the exhibition.

we "see" in a dream, whatever their juxtaposition or distortion, are present in waking life. The flames and giraffes of Dalí's noted enigma are in themselves visually commonplace. But Matta's language transcends this ultimately prosaic level of imagery. His invented shapes constitute a new morphology that reaches back behind the level of dream activity to the central and latent source of life, forming an iconography of consciousness before it has been hatched into the recognizable coordinates of everyday experience.

Light rather than color is the unifying factor in *The Vertigo of Eros*. It is light that suggests its unfathomable spaces, represses or exposes its symbols. By 1944 the colorful mountain flames and congealed elements of the "inscapes" have dissolved into an *a priori* continuum of light in which float a galaxy of smaller and more tenuously linked forms. Simultaneously astral and genital egg shapes are foci or energy centers, articulating a vision in which light forms a common denominator like that divined by Eliphas Levi, a mystic for whose speculations Matta felt a deep affinity. In his *History of Magic* Levi writes:

"There exists a mixed agent, natural and divine, corporeal and spiritual, a universal plastic mediator, a common receptacle of the vibrations of movements and the images of form. . . . The universal agent of the works of nature is *astral light*."

Whatever stability had previously been afforded by a horizontal line is here abolished in favor of a sensation of suspension in space. Having penetrated deeply into human consciousness, Matta recognized that Eros, or "the spirit of life," produces vertigo, and man's problem is that of remaining erect in the grip of this force, achieving physical and spiritual equilibrium. Equilibrium in Matta's art, like equilibrium in life, is a continuing dramatic factor. It is constantly being "lost" and must be regained. The delicate equilibrium of *The Vertigo of Eros* is a solution bound to the alignment of psychic forces in the moment of its creation. It does not derive from formula, nor does it produce an ordering that can be repeated in other circumstances.

In *To Escape the Absolute* of 1944 (page 20), the crimson-brown tonality of *The Vertigo of Eros* is retained, but the luminous space is more crowded with iconographic elements and the linear component is greatly enriched. The parallel concentric linear devices already present in the later "inscapes" (partially inspired by Matta's study of contour maps) are here complemented by a unique ornamentation of some diaphanous planes with enigmatic patterns recalling the strange drawing-board designs in de Chirico's *The Endless Voyage* and *The Astronomer*. *The Revolt of the Contraries* of 1945 prepared the way for the taut and intricately wired *Onyx and Electra* (page 23), the synthesis of Matta's experiments with linear space. We are a long way from the brilliantly colored "inscapes." Grey, white and lemon prevail in a surface brushed on with comparative contempt for the medium. Gem-like clusters of pigment appear only as sparse accents implementing the perspective system and acting as nodes or terminals for the nervous linear circuit. Though but minor accessories

to the colored shapes of the "inscapes," lines have now become the framework of the image, fulfilling the prophecy of the intricate webs that began multiplying in the paintings of late 1942. Reflecting the continued influence on Matta of a show of non-Euclidean geometry he had seen in Paris in 1937, this linearity was also inspired, as James Thrall Soby suggests, by Duchamp's installation of the large surrealist exhibition of 1942 held in the Reid mansion, New York City.

Duchamp had strung the main gallery with a fantastic network of white cord which, with the patterns of the cracks in his "Big Glass" (*La Mariée mise à nue par ses célibataires, même*), suggested new linear possibilities to Matta.

In *The Onyx of Electra* the deep space of the psyche has become a more intimate area, where the life force is transformed into mental and nervous energy. In this "electrical" system of the mind we feel all the tensions, ambiguities, contradictions and frustrations of reality. The space is fraught with static fortfalls and sudden obstructions. Linear convergences pull us in opposite directions, through planes whose diaphanous surfaces bend deeply under our impact, past pairs of icons suspended in sympathetic vibration. Unlike traditional perspective, this space does not focus on a single goal, nor does it form an independent continuum, but needs rather to be organized and completed by the response of the spectator. "I want to show the contradictions involved in reality," said Matta to this writer. "It is the space created by contradictions, the space of that struggle, which interests me as the best picture of our real condition. The fault with most pictures today is that they produce an *a priori* freedom from which they have eliminated the contradiction, all resemblance to reality."

Surrealism's founder, André Breton, had been close to Matta since their days together in Paris, and with a fantastic portrait of his mentor called *A Poet* of 1945 (page 25), Matta initiated a radical change in his art leading to a whole demology of "creatures" that have populated his paintings ever since. Something obsessional in the jowled face of this figure transcends its humorous connotations. Breton had always looked to Matta like "a sort of lion with horns on his head. . . fixed in a position to carry a mirror." The gun he carries refers to a passage in the Second Surrealist Manifesto, in which Breton had described the ideal surrealist act as shooting at random into a crowd on the street. But this gun is also the figure's navel and has the shape of a key-hole through which we unlock the enigma of the man.

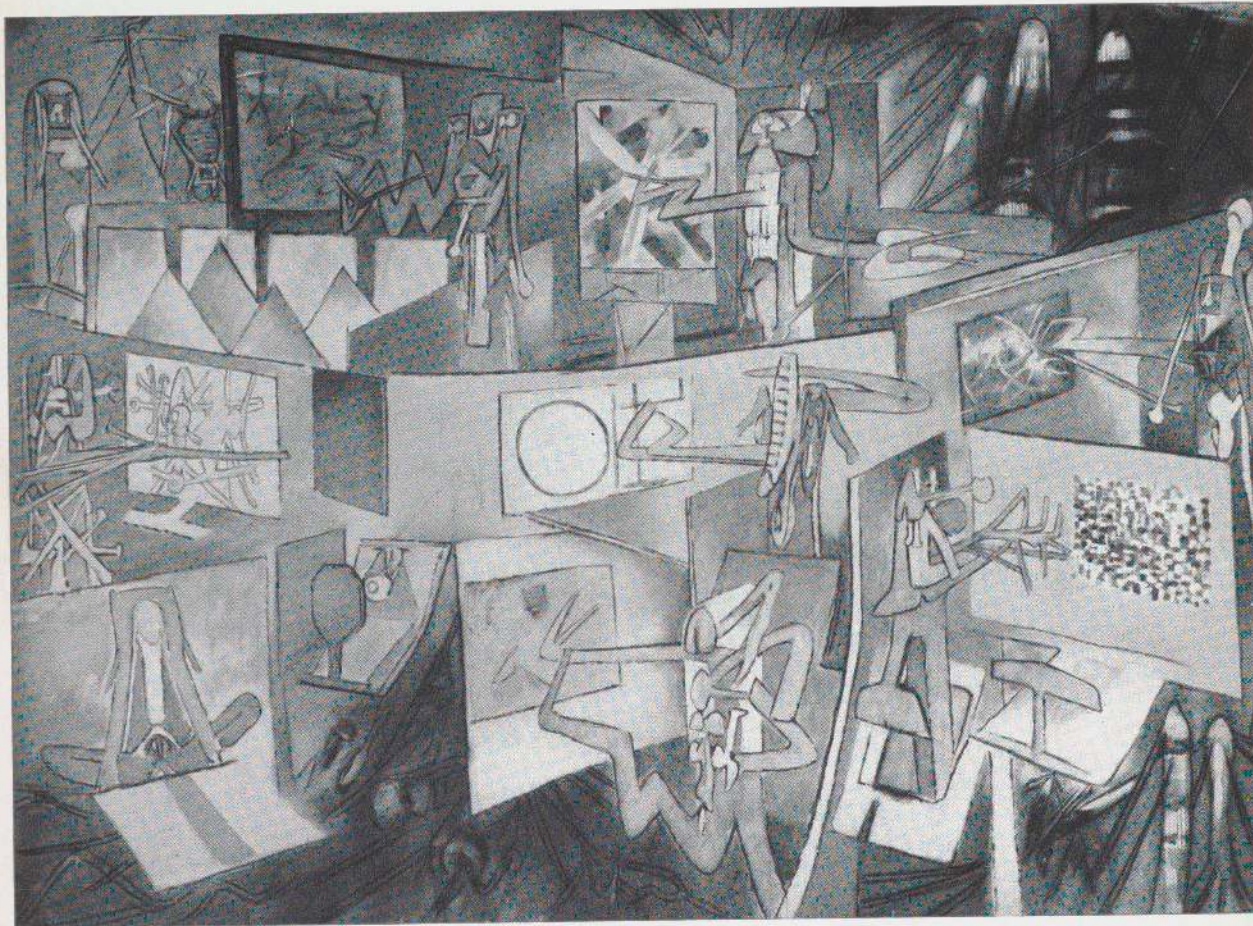
Veiled anthropomorphic suggestions are discernible even in Matta's earliest canvases, though they are never explicit. Creatures seem to lurk as mysterious presences behind the "inscapes," dependent on a selective reading of the shapes and light-dark patterns to manifest their influence. Fantastic anthropomorphic beings had always been common in his drawings, but like so much of the iconography of the early years (including a virtual surrealist bestiary), they never found their way onto canvas. That Breton should have been the first "creature" seems appropriate in view of the catalytic character of his reference to beings which he named "The

Great Invisibles" in the *Prolegomena to a Third Surrealist Manifesto*, published in 1942 and illustrated by Matta. There Breton wrote:

"Man is perhaps not the center, the focus of the universe. One may go so far as to believe that there exist above him . . . beings whose behavior is alien to him . . . completely escaping his sensory frame of reference. . . . This idea surely affords a wide field for speculation, though it tends to reduce man as an interpreter of the universe to a condition as modest as the child conceives the ant to be when he has overturned the ant-hill with his foot. Considering perturbations like the cyclone, in the face of which man is powerless to be anything but victim or witness, or like war, on the subject of which notoriously inadequate views have been advanced, it would not be impossible . . . even to succeed in making plausible the complexion and structure of such hypothetical beings, which obscurely manifest themselves to us in fear and the feeling of chance."

The figures in *The Heart Players* of 1945 (page 24) seem incarnations of these "Great Invisibles." Two fantastic creatures play a fatalistic game of three-dimensional chess whose pieces are the straight-edged planes and solar eggs of the previous year's iconography. These syntactical elements of Matta's language of the psyche are suddenly discovered to be pawns in the hands of inexplicable and uncontrollable crystallizations of causality. The picture was painted following Julien Levy's exhibition on the theme of chess, in which Max Ernst, Man Ray, Marcel Duchamp and others participated and for which Matta made a drawing which became the basis of *The Heart Players*. There the game contained a new piece, the "Matto," meaning "madman" in Italian and an obvious play on the painter's name and role. It was distinguished from the other pieces by being the irrational one. It followed no fixed rules but rather developed them by practice, and it had the power to destroy the game. This drawing finds Matta echoing surrealist belief that the crisis of modern experience can be resolved only when the importance of the irrational element in human affairs is adequately appreciated and more clearly pictured.

Release from the constraints of everyday logic, and the real picture of the complex and contradictory character of thought are the themes of *Splitting the Ergo* (page 26), completed early in 1946. In this painting, Matta is indebted to the conventions Duchamp had created to "picture" movement and the internal impact of an event. For the *Passage de la Vierge à la Mariée*, Duchamp used forms related to those of the Cubists and Futurists, but within the framework of fantasy, and it is from this picture in particular that Matta found his way toward *Splitting the Ergo*. Here the dynamism of the play of forms is counterpointed by the athleticism of the execution, contrasting with the tighter, more painstaking realization of Matta's early work. This broad "fresco" style demanded large canvases as adequate fields for a motor brushwork deriving rhythms from the whole body and bound up with the increasing interest among younger painters in what came to be



La Banale de Venise. 1956, Oil on canvas, 78 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 118 $\frac{1}{8}$ ". Owned by the artist. Not in the exhibition.

called "Action Painting." Thus, if through 1944 Matta painted only three large pictures, outsize canvases have been frequent ever since and usually represent the best statements of whatever themes have occupied him.

Later in 1946 the spun, shuffled and splayed planes of *Splitting the Ergo* were synchronized with creatures in *A Grave Situation* (page 27) and *Being With* (page 28), an immense canvas and a climactic summary of Matta's early demonology.

Whereas the figures in *The Heart Players* are simple manipulators of fate, these creatures constitute a phantasma of aggression and exploitation second only to Picasso's *Guernica* in violence. With their semaphoric gestures, their half-insect, half-machine forms, they seem monstrous cybernetic embodiments of the hidden forces that seek to control our lives. Their genesis*, influenced by the drawings of André Masson and such early figures of Giacometti as *The Void* (1936), was necessitated by Matta's desire to express situations and relationships involving the artist and the outside world, or, as Breton put it in psychological terms, "the region of the ego and super-ego . . . the site of the elaboration of anxiety." "My main preoccupation," Matta has said, "through the period of *the Vertigo of Eros* was looking within myself. Suddenly I realized that while trying to do this I was *being with* a horrible crisis in society. My vision of myself was becoming blind for not being made one with the people about me, and I sought to create a new morphology of others within my own field of consciousness."

The intense reactions engendered by the last years of the war and the revelations of horror which its end brought seem to have relaxed somewhat in 1948, as suggested by the less agitated rhythms and delicate coloring of *Crucisphère* (page 30). But a crisis in Matta's private life led to his return to Europe in 1949, and from May, 1948 through the following two years he worked only sporadically. Of the few canvases he completed during that time, *Against You, Dove Assassins* is the most comprehensive and indicates a return to a social consciousness which was to permeate his imagery during a later sojourn in Italy. Here the angularly juxtaposed planes suggest a world in integration under the impact of attack by a squadron of highly mechanized Martian creatures. The swiftly executed swirls that activate the central surface foreshadow the proliferation of staccato touches in pictures subsequently painted in Italy. The surface of *The Spherical Roof around Our Tribe* (1952 (page 31), for example, is like an electromagnetic field in which the charged activity of the white strokes counter-

points the vibrations of a composite creature and a fleet of buzzing insectile heads.

The imagery of these pictures, as, indeed, of most of Matta's work, reflects his interest in science and his belief that the artist must interpret in subjective human terms the technological and spiritual impact of its discoveries. From the beginning, the microscopic-telescopic realities of the universe stimulated Matta's visionary process, and this interest in science represents a major distinction between him and the more psychologically oriented Surrealists.

Biological growth, the poetry of germination conceived in terms of a botanical fantasy, is the theme of the "Dawn" variations that occupied Matta from the end of 1952 until just recently. The concern with social injustice, which he felt deeply during his stay in Italy, particularly in Sicily, brought him to the need for what he calls "renaming the world." This desire to see earth as earth and not as real estate, to see a tree as a plant and not as wood, led to an iconography of botanical forms which burgeon in *To Cover the Earth with a New Dew* of 1953 (page 32). As the sun rises beyond the horizon, there is a flurry of activity amid the flora; roots spread and pistils discharge clouds of seeds. On the left huge blossoms of color burst forth in joyous renaissance under the nourishment of sun and dew. It is like a speck of soil from the vast *Earth Is a Man* suddenly subjected to a poetic microscope. In the first of these "Dawns" the bright colors appear as accents against a prevailingly grey ground, but, as though the sun were ever increasing its intensity, bright yellows, greens, and reds have gradually dominated the pictures of the last few years, recalling the explosive coloring of 1940-42.

During the past year Matta has elaborated a non-anthropomorphic "synoptic" creature which gives graphic expression to man, not as an isolated being, but as a complex of biological and social interactions within his world. At the right in *The Unthinkable* of 1957 (page 33) flowers a glowingly colored totem, like a battery of the mind providing energy to charge and set in motion the synoptic creature on the left. Through the creature's interpenetration of the surrounding planes we see how its primitive sentiments or ideas are metamorphosed in various applications to the realities around it.

Matta's recent introspective explorations suggest a refocussing on the ultimate goal of his painterly odyssey. He has always wished to demonstrate his belief that "one can see within one's self." This is the "inscape" idea. But it is extremely difficult, and from time to time he meets obstacles or goes off on byroads. Toward the end of the war he was drawn from seeing within by "being with" a society that bred war and concentration camps. A second such period resulted from his experience of conditions in post-war Europe and the politics of the cold war. To speak about these things, and relate his vision to that of others, Matta created the convention of his creatures. The "Dawns" represent a renewal of hope and the return to an inner search enriched by the painter's sojourns in the regions of man's external dilemmas.

The specific anthropomorphologies of Matta's creatures suggest an attempt to re-present man with a form that reflects the impact on his being of the event he is living at the moment. Thus the ordinations and rhythms of creatures in an embrace (they might be "all arms") would differ from those eating or fighting. An interesting example of such morphological relationships is Matta's recent spoof of non-figurative painting (page 8), in which the formulation of each creature is bound to the style of image he has executed.

The Morphology of Desire (Psychological Morphology No. 37). 1938. Oil on canvas, 28¾ x 36¼". Collection Gordon Onslow-Ford, Mill Valley, California



Inscape (Psychological Morphology No. 104). 1939. Oil on canvas, $28\frac{3}{4} \times 36\frac{1}{4}$ ". Collection Gordon Onslow-Ford, Mill Valley, California

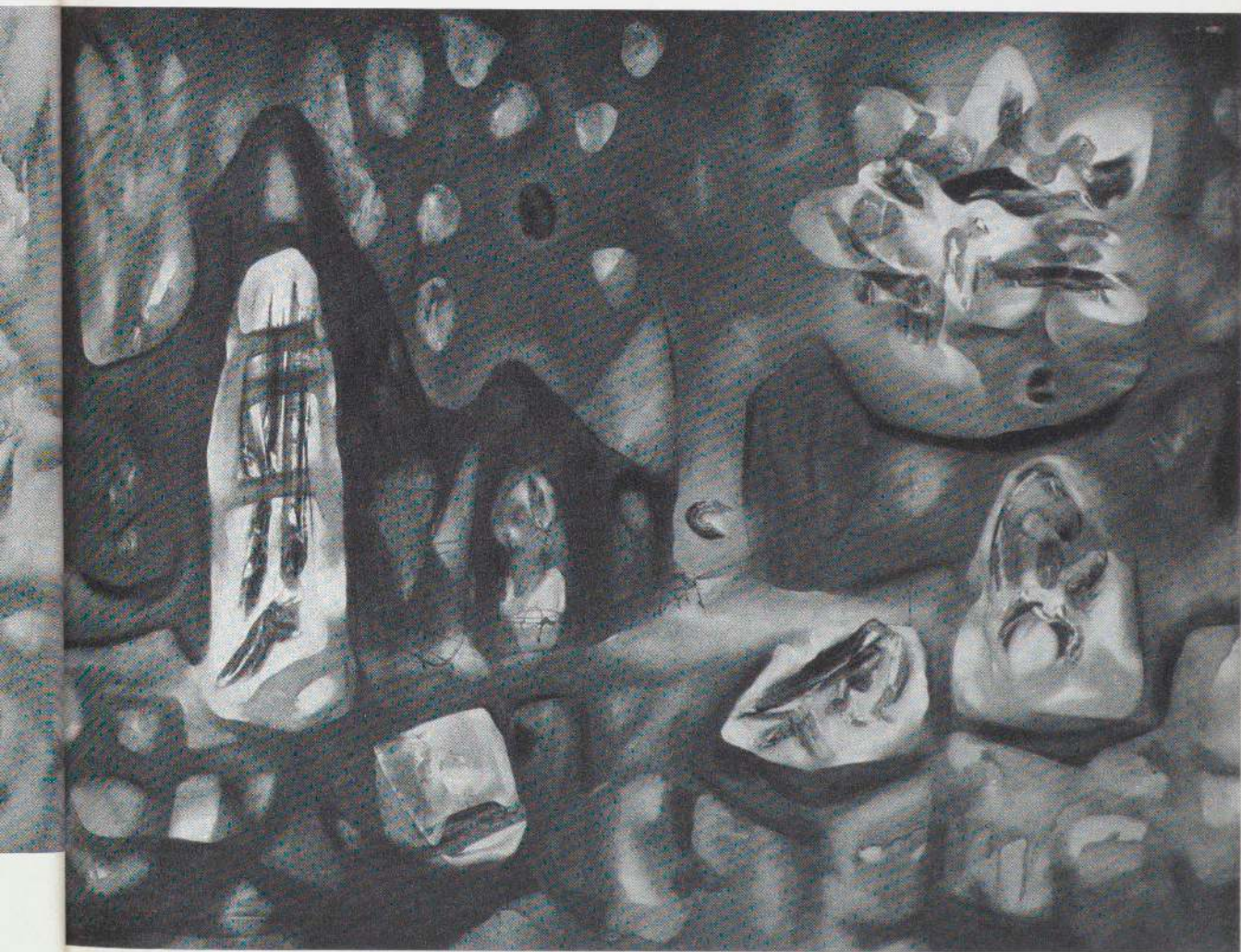


Prescience. 1939. Oil on canvas, 36 1/4 x 52". Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Conn., Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary
Callin Sumner Collection



¹Rain. 1941. Oil on canvas. $34\frac{3}{4} \times 45\frac{1}{2}$ ". Lawrence Art Museum, Williams College, Williamstown, Mass.

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The Hanged Man. 1942. Oil on canvas, 38 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 51 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". The Museum of Modern Art, New York, gift of Charles E. Merrill



The Disasters of Mysticism. 1942. Oil on canvas, $38\frac{3}{8} \times 51\frac{1}{2}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. James Thrall Soby, New Canaan, Conn.



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The Earth is a Man. 1942. Oil on canvas, 72¼ x 96". Private collection, New York



Here Sir Fire, Eat. 1942. Oil on canvas, 56 x 44". Collection Mr. and Mrs. James Thrall Soby, New Canaan, Conn.



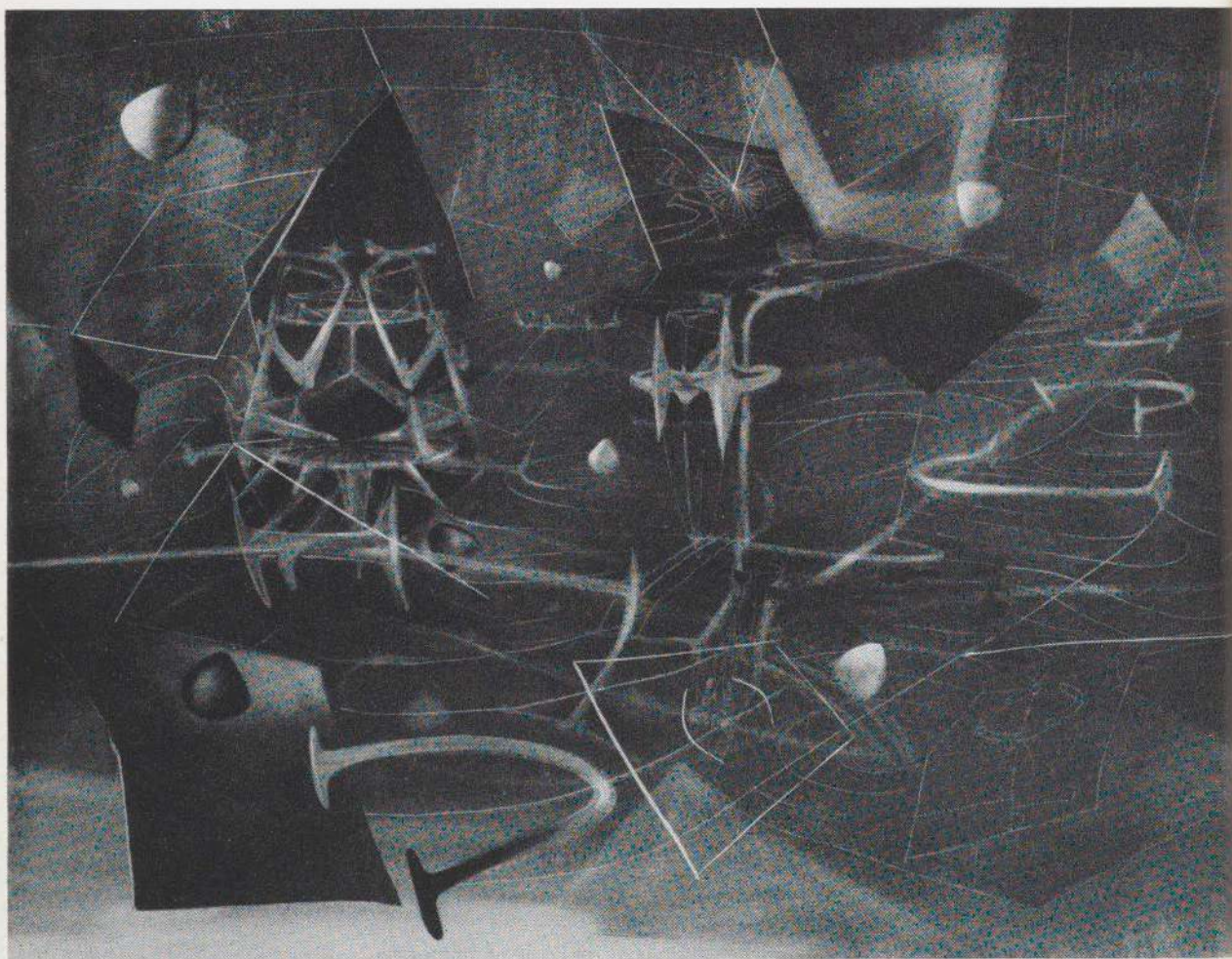
Ellminonde. 1943. Oil on canvas, $49\frac{7}{8} \times 37\frac{7}{8}$ ". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Thomas C. Adler, Cincinnati

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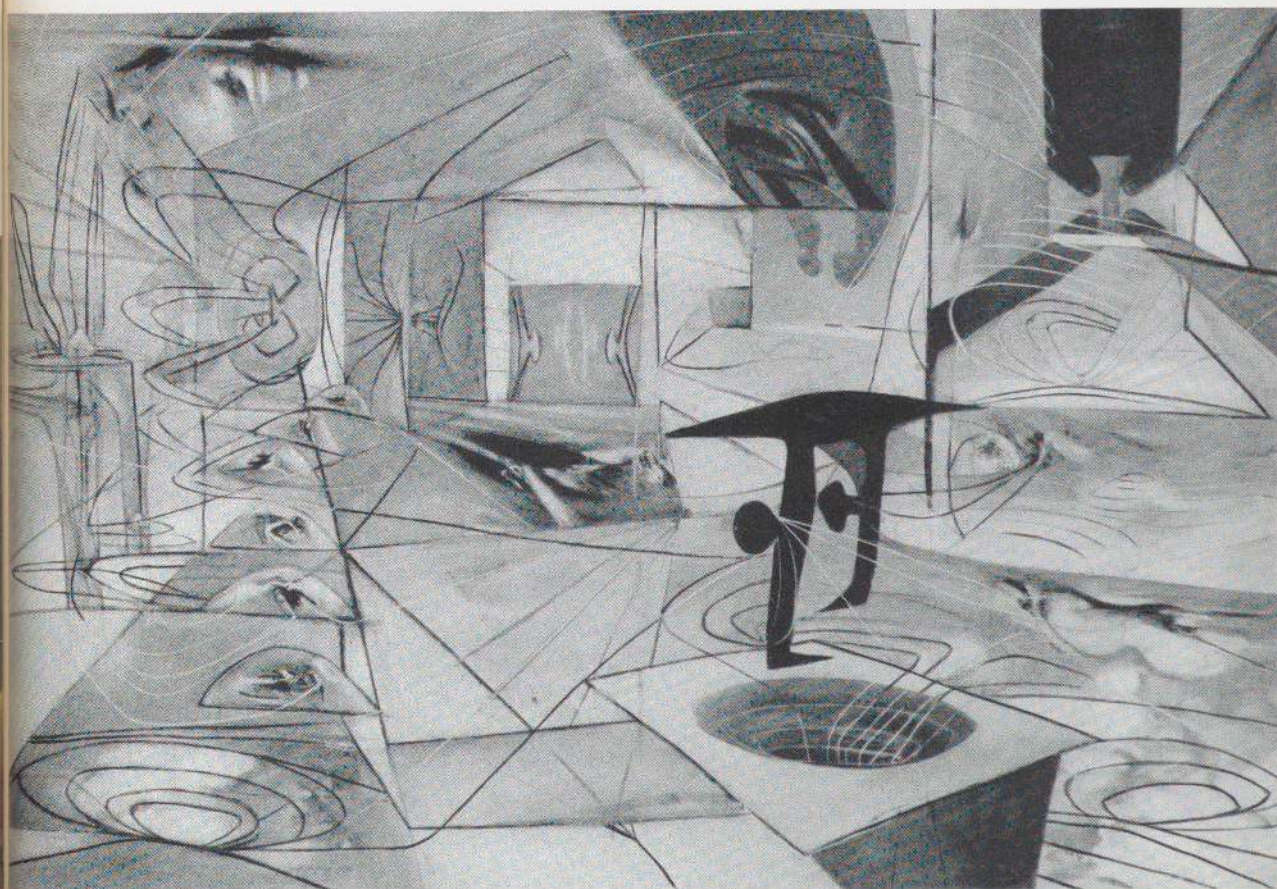
To Escape the Absolute. 1944. Oil on canvas, 38 x 50". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Slifka, New York



The Vertigo of Eros (Le Vertige d'Eros). 1944. Oil on canvas, 77 x 99". The Museum of Modern Art, New York, given anonymously



The Onyx of Electra. 1944. Oil on canvas, $49\frac{7}{8} \times 71\frac{7}{8}$ ". Private collection, New York

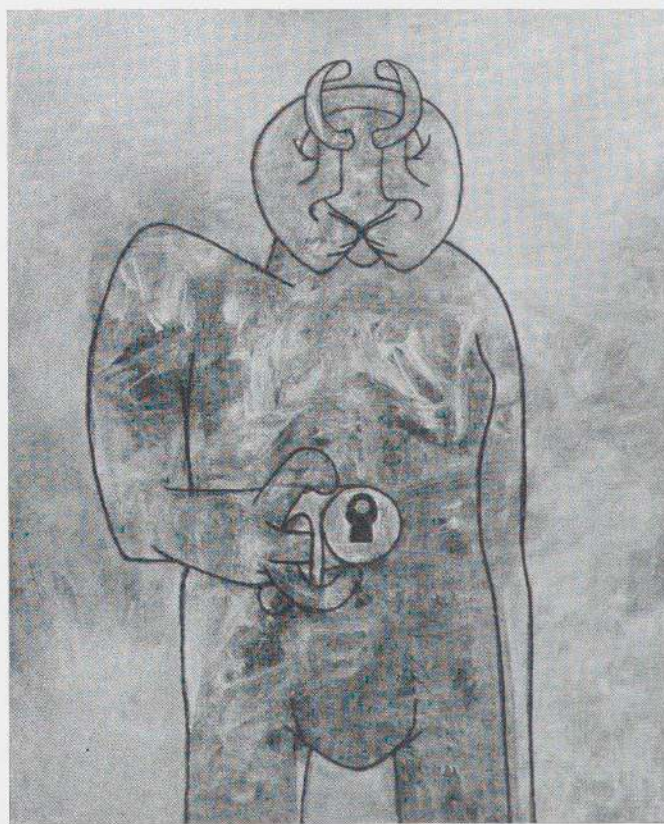


The Heart Players. 1945. Oil on canvas, 77 x 99". Collection Wright Ludington, Santa Barbara, California



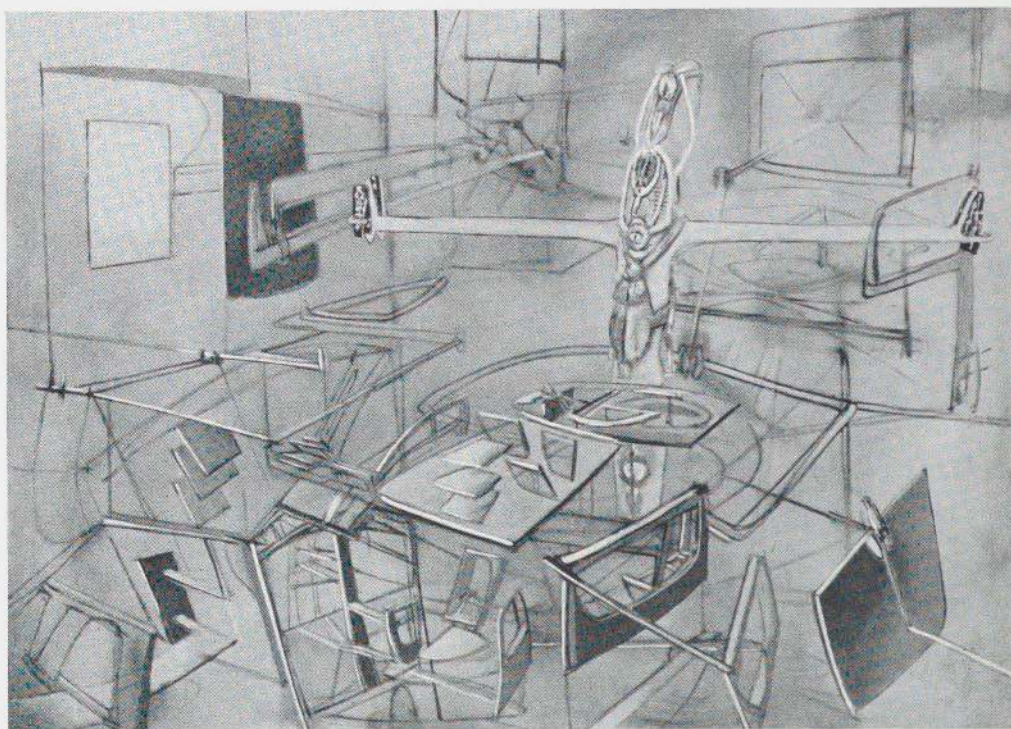
21 Poet (Portrait of André Breton). 1944-45. Oil on canvas, 37 x 30". Owned by the artist

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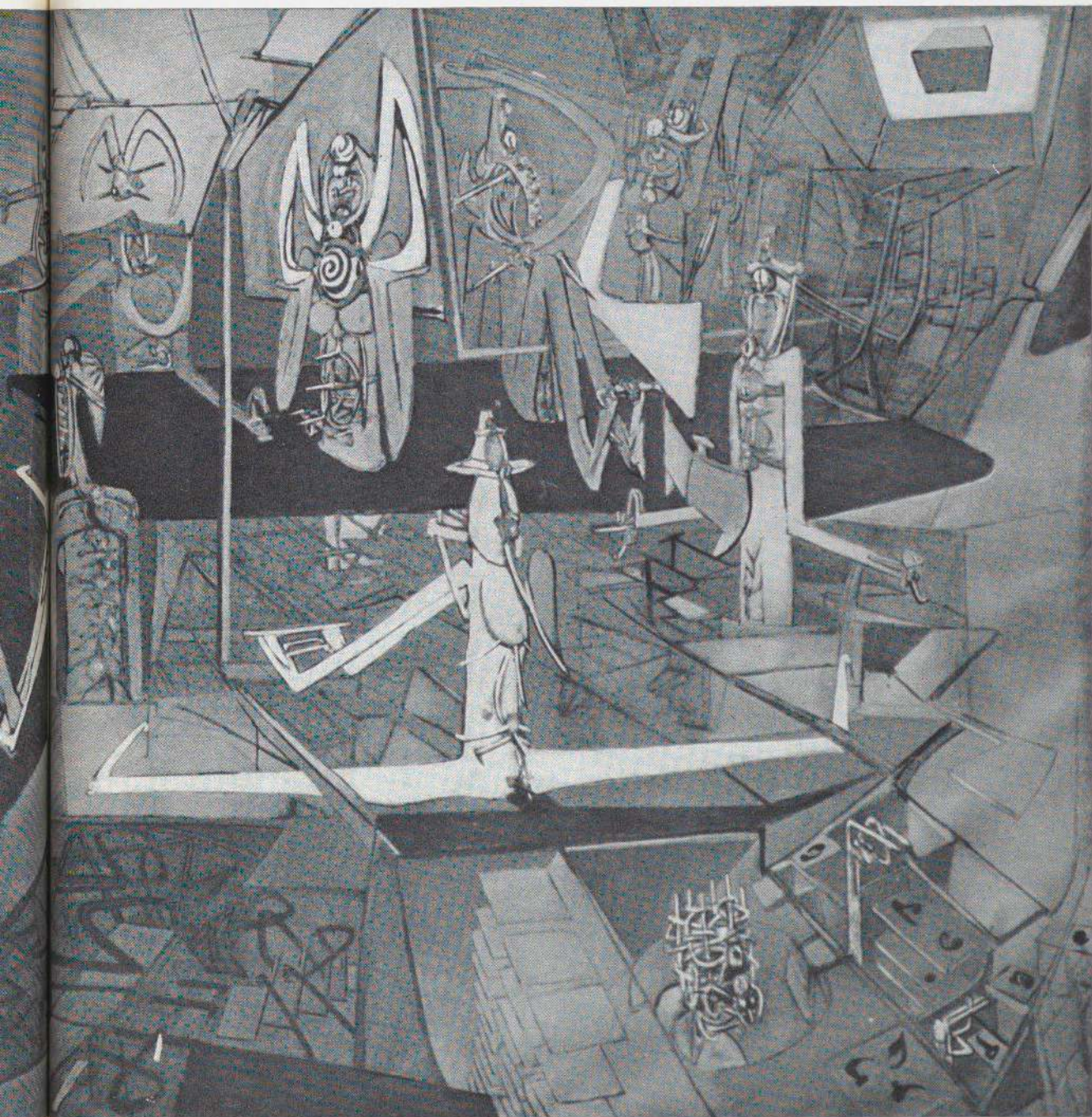


Splitting the Ergo. 1946. Oil on canvas, 77 x 99". Collection Mr. and Mrs. Burton G. Tremain, Meriden, Conn.

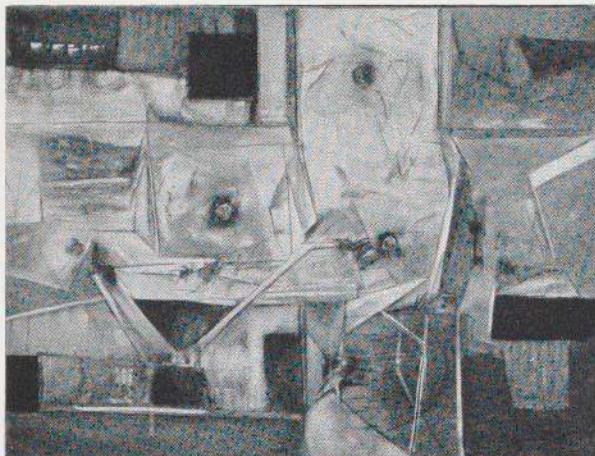




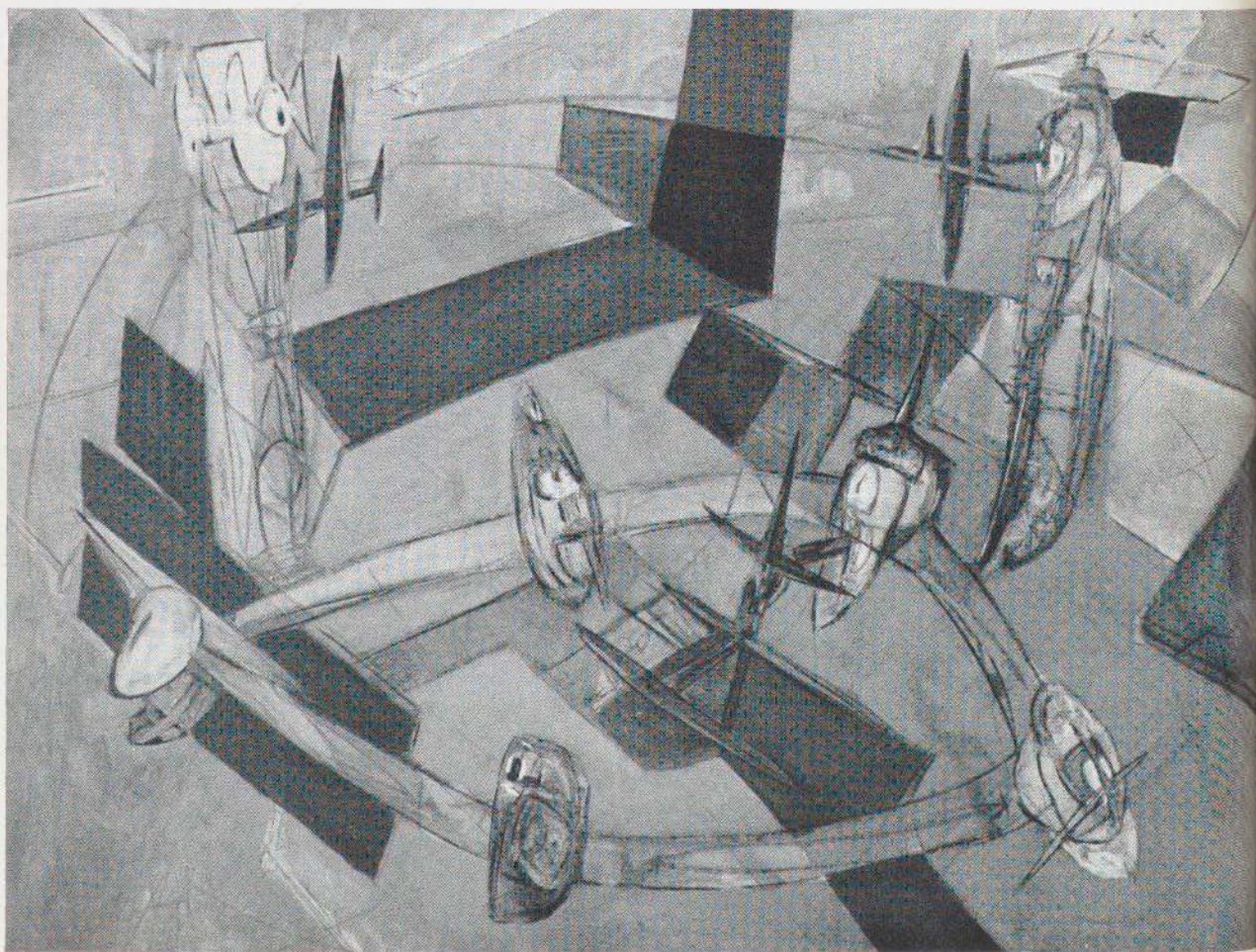




Let's Phosphoresce by Intellection, II. 1950. Oil on canvas, 35 x 46 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Friends of Art Collection

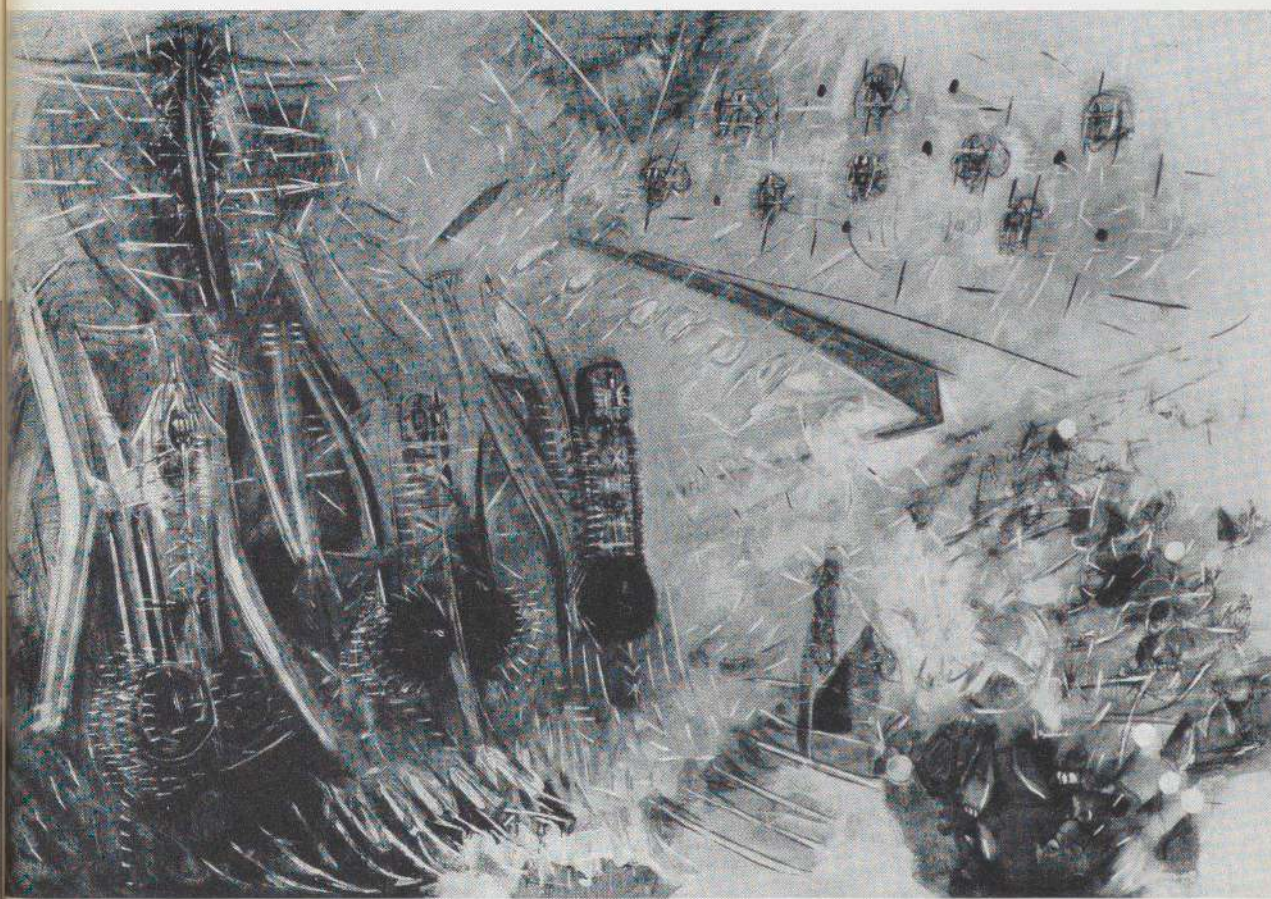


Crucisphere. 1948. Oil on canvas, 50 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 69". Private collection, New York



30 The Spherical Roof around Our Tribe. 1952. *Tempera on canvas, 6'6 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 9'7 $\frac{1}{8}$ "*. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, gift of Mr. and Mrs. John de Menil

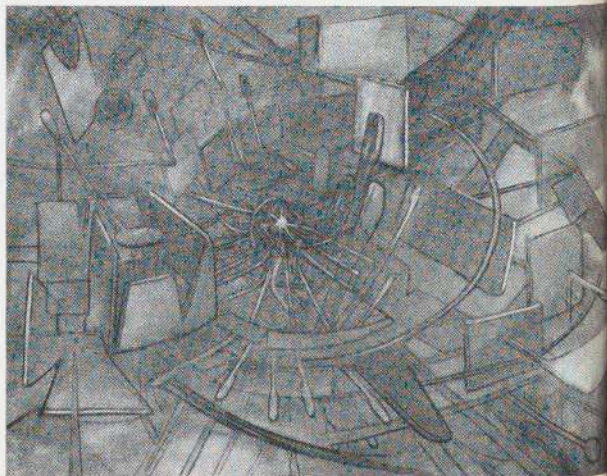
31



To Cover the Earth with a New Dew. 1953. Oil on canvas, 6'7½" x 9'6". City Art Museum of St. Louis

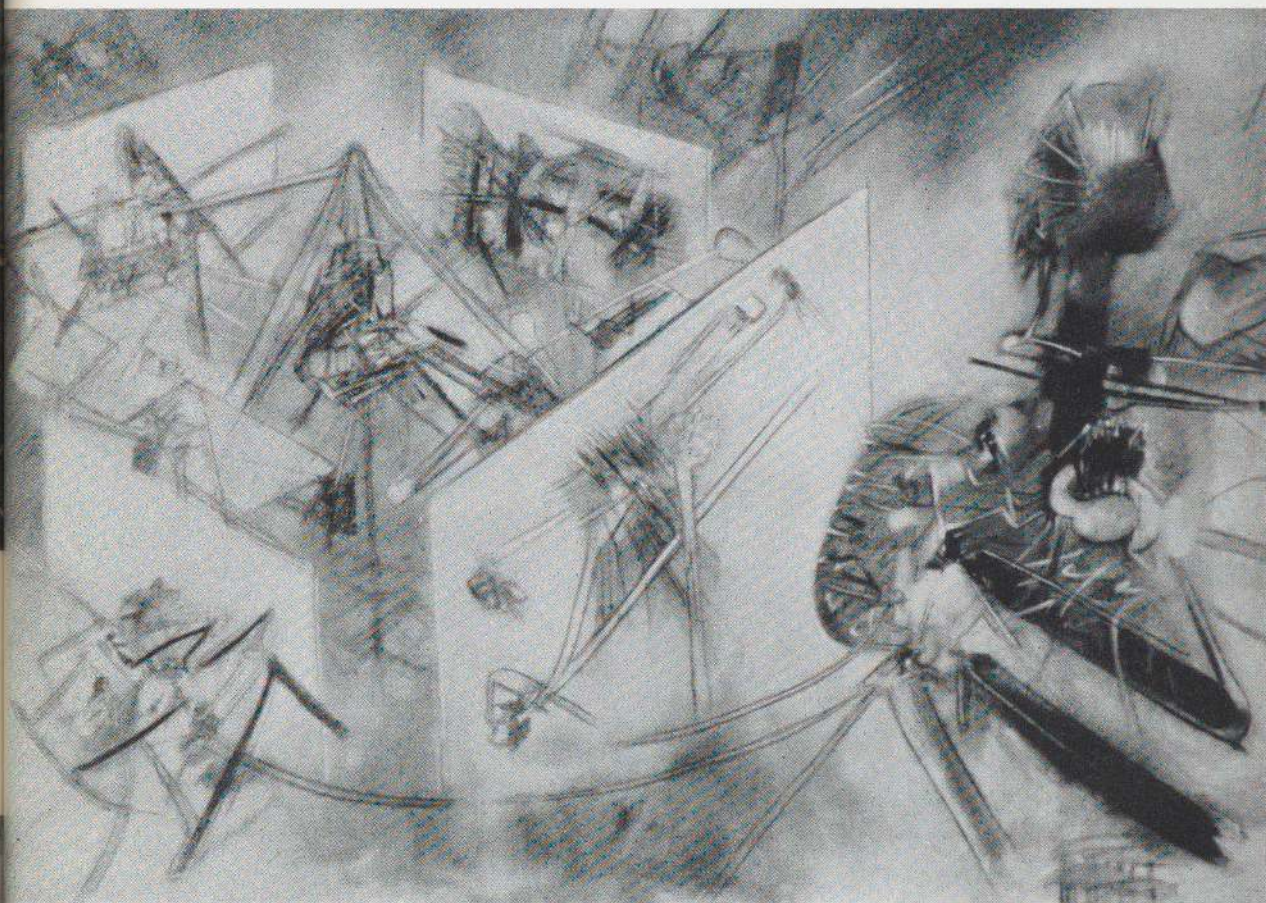


The Turning of the Earth. 1955. Oil on canvas, 55 x 75". Allan Frumkin Gallery, Chicago



32 The Unthinkable. 1957. Oil on canvas, 6'8" x 9'10". Alexander Iolas Gallery, New York

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LENDERS TO THE EXHIBITION

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas C. Adler, Cincinnati, Ohio; Edgar J. Kaufmann, Jr., New York; Mr. and Mrs. Earle Ludgin, Chicago; Wright Ludington, Santa Barbara, California; Matta Echaurren, Paris; Gordon Onslow-Ford, Mill Valley, California; Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Slifka, New York; Mr. and Mrs. James Thrall Soby, New Canaan, Connecticut; Mr. and Mrs. Burton G. Tremaine, Meriden, Connecticut

Baltimore Museum of Art; Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut; Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Missouri; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; City Art Museum of St. Louis, Missouri; Lawrence Art Museum, Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts

Allan Frumkin Gallery, Chicago; Alexander Iolas Gallery, New York; Ruth Moskin Gallery, New York

CATALOGUE OF THE EXHIBITION

Works marked with an asterisk are illustrated. In dimensions height precedes width.

- *1 The Morphology of Desire (Psychological Morphology No. 37). 1938. Oil on canvas, $28\frac{3}{4} \times 36\frac{1}{4}$ ".
Collection Gordon Onslow-Ford, Mill Valley, California. Ill. p. 10
- *2 Inscape (Psychological Morphology No. 104). 1939. Oil on canvas, $28\frac{3}{4} \times 36\frac{1}{4}$ ".
Collection Gordon Onslow-Ford, Mill Valley, California. Ill. p. 11
- *3 Prescience. 1939. Oil on canvas, $36\frac{1}{4} \times 52$ ".
Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Conn., Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin Sumner Collection. Ill. p. 12
- 4 Rocks. 1940. Oil on canvas, 38×60 ".
Baltimore Museum of Art, Saidie A. May Collection
- *5 Rain. 1941. Oil on canvas, $34\frac{3}{4} \times 45\frac{1}{2}$ ".
Lawrence Art Museum, Williams College, Williamstown, Mass. Ill. p. 13
- *6 The Hanged Man. 1942. Oil on canvas, $38\frac{1}{4} \times 51\frac{1}{4}$ ".
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, gift of Charles E. Merrill. Ill. p. 14
- *7 The Earth is a Man. 1942. Oil on canvas, $72\frac{1}{4} \times 96$ ".
Private collection, New York. Ill. p. 17
- *8 Here Sir Fire, Eat. 1942. Oil on canvas, 56×44 ".
Collection Mr. and Mrs. James Thrall Soby, New Canaan, Conn. Ill. p. 18
- *9 The Disasters of Mysticism. 1942. Oil on canvas, $38\frac{3}{8} \times 51\frac{1}{2}$ ".
Collection Mr. and Mrs. James Thrall Soby, New Canaan, Conn. Color plate p. 15
- *10 Ellminonde. 1943. Oil on canvas, $49\frac{7}{8} \times 37\frac{7}{8}$ ".
Collection Mr. and Mrs. Thomas C. Adler, Cincinnati, Ohio. Ill. p. 19
- 11 The Prisoner of Light. 1943. Oil on canvas, 77×99 ".
Collection Edgar J. Kaufmann, Jr., New York. (Exhibited in New York and Minneapolis.)
- *12 The Vertigo of Eros (Le Vertige d'Éros). 1944. Oil on canvas, 77×99 ".
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, given anonymously. Color plate p. 22
- *13 To Escape the Absolute. 1944. Oil on canvas, 38×50 ".
Collection Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Slifka, New York. Ill. p. 20
- 14 The Revolt of the Contraries. 1944. Oil on canvas, $38\frac{1}{4} \times 50$ ".
Private collection, New York
- *15 The Onyx of Electra. 1944. Oil on canvas, $49\frac{7}{8} \times 71\frac{7}{8}$ ".
Private collection, New York. Ill. p. 23
- *16 A Poet (Portrait of André Breton). 1944-45. Oil on canvas, 37×30 ".
Owned by the artist. Ill. p. 25
- *17 The Heart Players. 1945. Oil on canvas, 77×99 ".
Collection Wright Ludington, Santa Barbara, California. Ill. p. 24

- *18 Splitting the Ergo. 1946. Oil on canvas, 77 x 99".
Collection Mr. and Mrs. Burton G. Tremaine, Meriden, Conn. Ill. p. 26
- *19 A Grave Situation. 1946. Oil on canvas, 55 x 77".
Collection Mr. and Mrs. Earle Ludgin, Chicago. (Exhibited in New York only.) Ill. p. 27
- 20 Pilgrim of Doubt. 1947. Oil on canvas, 76 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 99".
Private collection, New York. (Exhibited in Minneapolis and Boston.)
- *21 Being With. 1946. Oil on canvas, 7'4" x 15'.
Owned by the artist. Ill. pp. 28, 29
- *22 Crucisphere. 1948. Oil on canvas, 50 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 69".
Private collection, New York. Ill. p. 30
- 23 Against You, Dove Assassins. 1949. Oil on canvas, 6'6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 8'7 $\frac{1}{4}$ ".
Alexander Iolas Gallery, New York
- *24 Let's Phosphoresce by Intellection, II. 1950. Oil on canvas, 35 x 46 $\frac{3}{8}$ ".
Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Friends of Art Collection. Ill. p. 30
- *25 The Spherical Roof around Our Tribe. 1952. Tempera on canvas, 6'6 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 9'7 $\frac{7}{8}$ ".
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, gift of Mr. and Mrs. John de Menil. Ill. p. 31
- 26 Mining Consciousness. 1952. Oil on canvas, 47 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 68".
Ruth Moskin Gallery, New York
- *27 To Cover the Earth with a New Dew. 1953. Oil on canvas, 6'7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 9'6".
City Art Museum of St. Louis. Ill. p. 32
- *28 The Turning of the Earth. 1955. Oil on canvas, 55 x 75".
Allan Frumkin Gallery, Chicago. Ill. p. 32
- *29 The Unthinkable. 1957. Oil on canvas, 6'8" x 9'10".
Alexander Iolas Gallery, New York. Ill. p. 33

Drawings

- 30 Pulse of Life. 1939. Crayon and pencil on paper, 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 19 $\frac{5}{8}$ ".
Ruth Moskin Gallery, New York
- 31 Drawing. 1941. Crayon and colored pencil on paper, 19 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 25 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".
Private collection, New York
- 32 Joan of Arc. 1942. Colored crayon and pencil on paper, 23 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 29 $\frac{1}{8}$ ".
Collection Mr. and Mrs. James Thrall Soby, New Canaan, Conn.
- 33 Drawing. 1943. Crayon and colored pencil on paper, 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 17 $\frac{5}{8}$ ".
Private collection, New York
- 34 Oeficiency. 1951. Colored crayon and pencil on paper, 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".
Ruth Moskin Gallery, New York
- 35 Drawing. 1951. Colored crayon and pencil on paper, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 13".
Alexander Iolas Gallery, New York

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