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A STRANGE BOOK OF  
INCOMPREHENSIBLE NONSENSE:  
OR HOW I BECAME AN  
INTERTEMPORAL AVANT-GARDE ARTIST  
AND  
WENT COMPLETELY BATSHIT INSANE



AN EXEGESIS PRESENTED  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
OF  
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ABSTRACT: This exegesis is an account of the author's time-travel trip to meet the 15th century painter Piero della Francesca. It complements the thesis for this project, which consists of two sets of paintings: 'Before meeting Piero' and 'After meeting Piero'.

Piero is first visited in 1437, just after he had been commissioned to paint *The Baptism of Christ*. The exegesis contains a close analysis of Piero della Francesca's painting *The Baptism of Christ*, the circumstances of its commissioning, and the factors in Piero's personality and background that determined its form and content. The exegesis presents an original geometric analysis of the pictorial construction of Piero's *Baptism* and shows how and why Piero developed it.

Piero's *Baptism* is presented as an example of an *intertemporal avant-garde* art work. The exegesis defines the intertemporal avant-garde as an ahistorical phenomenon, where structural affinities are more important than relative spacetime co-ordinates. As demonstrated in the exegesis, the defining feature of the avant-garde is antagonism, especially towards academic and official art institutions.

The exegesis also discusses the author's intertemporal avant-garde movement, common-sense nihilism.

I dedicate this work to practitioners of psychiatric medicine in general,  
and to the staff of the Tory St Mental Health Clinic, Wellington,  
in particular, as evidence of my recovery.

And, of course, to the long-suffering Rosemary J. Miller.

*AUTHOR'S NOTE: Everything in the following account is as accurate as I can make it. I have compiled it from notes made during or soon after the events in question as well as from interviews with the main participants. However, all opinions and interpretations, as well as any factual errors, are entirely the author's own. No-one else is to blame for any of this.*

*Anyway, I've had enough: those who don't understand will never understand and those who do understand, since someone has to understand, have no need of me.*

– Francis Picabia

It all started when I accidentally fell into a transdimensional black square conduit through the ur-dimension and time-travelled to meet Piero della Francesca, the best painter of the 15th century.

Fuck it was strange.

The first time I met Piero was in the early summer of 1437. It was getting dark by the time I got to Borgo San Sepolcro, so I went to his home. I handily knew where it was from historical sources.

I had intended to big-note by introducing myself as a time-traveller from the future and fondly imagined Piero's stupefied reaction. Instead, he welcomed me as someone he'd known all his life.

Known me all his life? Turned out I was the one stupefied.

Piero, on the other hand, was pretty excited and talking rapid-burst.

'I've got those books you wanted me to get for you. And the herbal preparations. Oh! And you were right! I did get the commission for the *Baptism*!!! Just the other day. You always show up at the craziest times. Wait till you see my plans! We'll go

see the frame again first. You remember eh? It's been all prepared and sitting there empty in the church for ages. I can't wait to actually begin painting. I'm going to concentrate on the tondo and central panel, and Matteo will do the rest. Wait till you see the drawings and models for it. Hey, do you want to be one of the Magi?"

I went with Piero to his workshop in Borgo, picking up his apprentice Matteo di Giovanni along the way. We got pissed while they talked me through their [well, Piero's] plans for the *Baptism*.

The shop was pretty cramped. It was open on to the street [once Piero managed to unlock the shutters — his custom lock didn't quite work as planned] and jammed in between similar shops. Most of the interior was taken up by tool benches and works in progress. And the chickens bedded down in the straw on the floor didn't help. [They were there to provide eggs for the egg tempera and gold leaf etc.]

There wasn't much room left for us. I felt like I was all knees and elbows bumping into everything around me. Needless to say, I hadn't even started drinking before I smashed one of Piero's clay model figurines, about which he kept on making snarky remarks the entire night, no matter how much I told him to just let it go. Arsehole. Matteo found it highly amusing.

At the start Piero talked mostly about the overall scheme of the altarpiece.

*Troubles divide into responsible germ  
If the miner in his heart of hearts  
Strikes the priming five or six times  
That is to say the neurasthenia of peculiar obsessions*

– Francis Picabia

The art historians have no idea when to date Piero's *Baptism of Christ*. There is no documented date, so they try to date it 'stylistically' – that is, according to their 'sensitivity' and 'connoisseurship'. Needless to say, as a consequence, everyone ends up with a different date to everyone else. The best that can be said is that most agree that it's 'early'. By which they mean the 1450s or 60s.

Take that, art historians!

Numpties.

Here was Piero della Francesca in 1437, before he'd met Domenico Veneziano and before he'd gone to Florence, kicking everyone's arses with something radical and new, the likes of which had never been seen before or since.

And that is why he is a stone-cold avant-garde genius.

Piero's *Baptism* is an unusual picture. Art historians point to several features of the painting as problems that need solving. Their solution to these problems informs their explanation of the painting as a whole. The three problems that are usually identified are the angels on the left of the painting, and especially the handshake between two of them; the spectators in the background on the right, who are dressed in oriental robes and pointing at the sky; and the way the river that Christ is standing in appears to dry up at his feet.

However, there are more oddities that need explanation than these three.

The picture we call the *Baptism* is usually reproduced in isolation. It hangs as a stand-alone painting on a wall in the National Gallery in London. However, it was originally the central panel of a polyptych altarpiece, now broken up and dispersed. A tondo of God the Father that was above the central panel has been lost.

Several things immediately stand out. A baptism is an unusual subject for the central panel of an altarpiece. The gold background of the predella and side panels (and presumably the tondo) creates a strong contrast with the cool colours of the central panel. The saints in the side panels are much larger than the figures in the central panel, even though the latter are much more important.

What is perhaps most remarkable is the sense of pictorial depth in the central panel, as opposed to the flatness of the side panels.

Despite superficial appearances, however, the central panel is not out of place. The altarpiece as a whole has a coherent conceptual scheme. Although the painting of the predella and side panels is attributed to Matteo di Giovanni, he painted them according to a scheme Piero designed.

The crown pieces – the circular paintings above the saints and between the tondo and central panel – are of the annunciating angel and the Virgin Mary. In the centre of the predella, on a direct line under God the Father, the Holy Ghost (in the form of a dove), and Jesus Christ, is the crucifixion. Together, the central panel, crown pieces, and central predella panel show the preordained sequence (emanating from God through the Holy Ghost): the annunciation, the baptism, the crucifixion.

What we have is a representation of Christian cosmology. If we draw a line from one crown piece to the other and another from the tondo through the dove and Christ to the crucifixion, we see that this representation of Christian cosmology itself forms a cross.

The central panel is Earth at the centre of the universe (symbolised by a square), surrounded by a spiritual realm (represented, as was traditional, by the gold background). The sky is an intermediate realm between Heaven and Earth (the circle is a symbol of the infinite), occupied by the Holy Ghost. The cloud that overlaps the gold strip surrounding the semicircle at the top of the central panel supports this interpretation (and the presumption that the tondo's background was gold rather than blue).

Note that the frame covered some of these details. They were painted for the eyes of God, not the eyes of men.

The tondo and central panel form the sequence circle, semicircle, square: the infinite, the intermediary, the world.

This cosmological scheme explains the choice of a baptism as subject for the central panel. The viewer, kneeling before the altar to take the sacrament, is reaffirming their membership of the church, which they originally joined when they were baptised and through which they get to God by becoming part of the body of Christ. In Christian mythology, the baptism of Christ was the first manifestation of the Trinity.

As a baptism, the central panel has several unusual features. The viewer is placed in the middle of the River Jordan, which Jesus is getting baptised in. The river has gone dry at his feet. There is a very prominent tree next to him. Behind it, a road leads to Borgo San Sepolcro.

On the other side of the tree are three angels. But rather than holding Christ's clothes, the traditional role angels played in baptism paintings, they are involved in a complex set of gestures and glances. Two of the angels are shaking hands.

On the opposite side of Jesus to the angels, a young man is taking off his clothes before being baptised himself (or perhaps putting them back on after). In the background behind him, there is a group of four figures dressed in oriental robes, one of whom is pointing towards the sky and attracting the attention of his companions.

That's me.



Ye gods, that was boring, wasn't it? Let's try to not do that again. Made this seem almost academic, and we don't want that. I'm not an academic, nor am I an art historian. You won't be finding any footnote references here. No, no. I am an artist. A batshit insane artist.

As the night wore on, and we sampled some of his 'herbal preparations' along with the wine, Piero started talking about his plans for the central panel, which were still in a pretty unresolved sketchy form.

Piero kept on going on about Sassetta's commission for the San Francesco altarpiece, which should've been his after his deadbeat business partner Antonio d'Anghiari lost it through being such a deadbeat. Piero kept on mentioning how his *Baptism* had to blow whatever Sassetta did out of the water. Otherwise Piero'd be pelted with rotten vegetables in the street. Or worse.

And he knew how he was going to do it.

Sassetta would just do a standard Sienese altarpiece, same as he'd always done. Piero, on the other hand, was going to show him, and that deadbeat Antonio d'Anghiari, what the division of the picture surface into triangles, squares, and circles can do. He was pretty big on the triangles in particular, going on about how different angles represent different distances, and how infinity is all different distances in one. Or something like that.

According to Piero, the three keys to the secrets of the universe are harmony, measure, and proportion. Proportion is the most important of these, 'the quality which alone penetrates the inmost being of the most high and undivided Trinity'.

Piero grabbed up a slate and a piece of chalk to illustrate this statement, which had been delivered in a portentous tone, eyes wide, with a candle held under his chin for extra spookiness. On his slate, he overlaid triangles, squares, and circles, intertwined them into a maze of chalk lines, and dotted letters about, 'deploying them as if in line of battle' [as Erasmus would put it], then did it all again in reverse

order, to dizzying effect. Then he showed me how he'd used elements of this idea to plan the *Baptism* composition.

He'd divided the square part of the central panel of the *Baptism* into a grid of smaller squares, then assigned each of those smaller squares a number. The numbers were so arranged that no adjoining numbers were sequential and so that each horizontal and vertical row added up to the same number: a 'magic square'.

Piero then used those numbers to build a complicated pattern of triangles within the square. That pattern formed the basis for the composition. Jesus would be in the centre, and his height would set the measure [Piero reckoned he knew exactly how tall Jesus really was]. The square was also divided into thirds, and the vertical division into thirds would determine the placement of the tree and other figures. And so on and so on, more and more lines overlaid on top of each other, the whole thing getting more elaborate all the time.

When I asked Piero where he'd got this from, he looked indignant and tapped his forehead furiously. Matteo rolled his eyes and pulled out a large volume. It was not complete, about half filled with tiny spider-like writing and diagrams and drawings, the first part of which was done in a child's hand. It was a compendium of extracts Piero had copied out, sometimes from manuscripts — but mostly from what people had remembered reading in manuscripts, dictated to Piero from memory. It was his *Book of Everything*.

Flicking through, it was business accounts and painting-related recipes and instructions, mixed with endless mathematical problems and games, puzzles, card tricks, and jokes. Even some magic tricks. And, as Piero proudly pointed out, small extracts from Witelo's *Perspectiva* and Fibonacci's *Liber abaci*, along with fragments of Ancient authors [mostly Pliny the Elder]. There was even a section on chess problems, with different solutions for variant moves for knight and queen. These were the 'books' he had for me. A blank copy of this volume for me to copy out.

These explanations and demonstrations went on for quite a long time, with Piero talking really fast and jumping from one thing to another, suddenly and without warning.

*Borders of madness*

*Nasty remarks*

*Desires*

*I want my existence for myself.*

– Francis Picabia

In his *Theory of the avant-garde*, Peter Bürger defines the historical avant-garde as Dada, Surrealism, and Constructivism, while classifying such movements as Cubism as modernist. According to Bürger, what distinguishes an avant-garde movement from a modernist one is that the avant-garde rejects aestheticism, an exclusive concern with formal qualities, in favour of a utopian integration of art and life.

Bürger contends that the historical avant-garde failed to achieve this goal. He argues that the neo-avant-gardes of the 1950s and 1960s were a farcical repetition of this failure. For Bürger, the historical avant-garde's failure was heroic, but the neo-avant-garde's repetition of that failure actively works against the goals of the historical avant-garde.

Hal Foster gives an example: 'Thus, if readymades and collages challenged the bourgeois principles of expressive artist and organic art work, neo-readymades and neo-collages reinstate them.'

However, this alleged common aim of the avant-garde to integrate art and life is obviously bullshit. Yes, there were avant-garde artists who did have that aim, but there was also others who didn't – and yet were still quite clearly avant-garde artists. Having the utopian aim of integrating art with life is not necessary for something to be an avant-garde art work, artist, or movement.

Ask Picabia if his aim was either aestheticism or the utopian integration of art and life! He'd laugh in your face and answer 'Neither, of course!'

In his *Theory of the avant-garde*, Renato Poggioli takes a much more sensible approach than Bürger. Poggioli identifies four essential features belonging to the avant-garde:

1. alienation from bourgeois capitalist society
2. activism and antagonism towards the public and public institutions, especially official and academic art
3. a fundamental break with the past
4. self-consciousness as an elite vanguard of the future.

According to this theory, all you need is a bourgeois capitalist society with official and academic art institutions, and certain attitudes towards those institutions and that society.

What matters is not whether a particular art work was made in 1910, 1960, or 2010 (or the early 15th century) but whether it exhibits Poggioli's four features.

Rather than 'the historical avant-garde' and 'the neo-avant-garde', there is the intertemporal avant-garde.

The idea behind the intertemporal avant-garde is that these kind of structural affinities are more important than relative spacetime co-ordinates. Linear time and historical progress are illusions. It's about grouping things according to *what* they are rather than *when* they were.

This is why I classify Piero della Francesca as an intertemporal avant-garde artist. As the son of a leather tanner, he was alienated from the proto-bourgeois society in which he lived. He had an antagonistic relationship with the official art establishment (both with the art-commissioning patrons of Borgo and with the 'centre' of contemporary art, Florence). He fundamentally broke with the art of the past, innovating throughout his career (for example, he began experimenting with technique as an apprentice, he invented not one but several methods for constructing perspective schemes, and he was one of the earliest Italian artists to adopt the new oil medium). Finally, he consciously saw himself as a vanguard of the future, laying the foundations for a new society, one informed by mathematical proportion, a new society to rival that of the Ancients.

Avant-garde artists in the early fifteenth century, such as Piero, have more in common with avant-garde artists in the early twentieth century, such as Picabia, than with non-avant-garde artists in their own time, such as Antonio d'Anghiari. Both Piero and Picabia responded to the radical change their respective societies were going through with a radically new painting that challenged the prevailing academic orthodoxy.

The circumstances that were so propitious for the early fifteenth and early twentieth century manifestations of the intertemporal avant-garde also hold in the early twenty-first century.

And, of course, all intertemporal avant-garde artists are in transdimensional telepathic contact with the avant-garde home-world, dimension 0.0.000.0.0. Each historical manifestation of the intertemporal avant-garde interprets that contact using the categories and concepts available in the society it inhabits.



Oh crap, I've done it again. And now I'm even going on about theorists! Dreadful. It's all this time-travelling messing with my head. I'm not interested in what theorists have to say. I'm interested in what *paintings* have to say.

So, back to 1437, and Piero's workshop. In the *Baptism's* central panel, Jesus would be getting baptised in the Tiber, the local landscape that Piero knew so well and Sassetta didn't, with Borgo in the background. All the most significant triangles underlying the composition would be centred in his body. The Body of Christ comprising the world — and, through the Mystery of the Trinity [i.e. divine proportion], eternity: Jesus as Light of the World.

Just as the viewer contemplating it transmutes their mind ['soul?'] into eternity, from mortal into immortal. No longer thinking about transient everyday things, but existing on a higher plane entirely, an eternal unchanging plane, the realm of numbers. Piero wanted to construct a machine for transforming people into immortals. An immortality machine!

Imagine getting baptised in front of that! How cool would that be?

I had to admit it would be pretty cool, yes.

Here, Piero started getting abstruse again, talking about how God is the infinite, the limitless, the boundless, the circle without beginning or end. The world was made by the interaction of the Void, limit, with the limitless, chopping the infinite up into a sequence of numbers, which interact in harmonious proportion to become the things we see around us, the triangle and the square.

The Magi in the distance [no straight lines in the landscape, no gridded pavements, no no, nothing like that] would be pointing at the dove, the intermediary between heaven and earth. The baptism of Christ, the first manifestation of the Trinity, is the promise of the Star of Bethlehem fulfilled. The acorn grown into a tree [the World Tree no less, separating the Earth Mother and the Sky Father].

At this point, I jumped up and struck a pointing pose, Magus stylz. I also struck both my hand and my pointing finger against the low-lying beams in the ceiling.

Hard. I sat down again, heavily. Everyone is so bloody short in this bloody century!

God the Father, in the tondo above the central panel, would be pointing down, rays of gold light [literally gold] emanating from his finger down to the dove and on to Christ.

Piero went on about how the stars are the intermediary between the eternal, unchanging divine realm and the world, the transient world of flux. Piero's dove is the sun. [Astronomy is indistinguishable from astrology at this time, as chemistry is from alchemy. Everyone talks like this. Well, maybe not quite like this.]

The angels, beings of light like the stars, witness the baptism, the compact between man and god, welcoming the new member of the church, ready to lead the way. Upwards! To the stars and beyond!

The rapid string of jokes between Piero and Matteo about who they were going to cast as the angels went totally over my head. I think they might've been talking about male prostitutes. Or actors. Or maybe they were the same. I couldn't keep up.

I asked what Don Niccoluccio, the rector of the church the altarpiece was commissioned for, would have to say about this, but they both assured me he'd be into it. When they weren't laughing too hard.

So God in the tondo is the boundless infinite, the dove in the semicircle is the intermediary realm of unchanging number [the limitless limited, divided into a sequence of numbers], and the figures in the landscape in the square make up the world, the transient world of change.

Piero also wanted to use some optical effects he'd read about for the river [he wanted to throw everything in there, everything he could], but he wasn't sure how that would work. Some problem with the viewpoint having to be in a ridiculous place.

I couldn't help it. I laughed out loud.

'You think I should just do it like that, don't you?' he asked suspiciously.

I drained my cup and made a show of finding more wine [almost destroying a

whole group of carefully arranged [and lit] clay figurines in the process, sitting there precariously on their model landscape on a board on a bench, I mean, just asking to be toppled!]. Luckily, Piero, after glaring at me, changed the topic of conversation himself, which was handy cos I'd been drawing blanks.

He and Matteo taught me a local drinking game. That's the last thing I remember of that night.

*But I'm telling disinterested lies*

*It's almost the same thing*

*The soul's truth*

– Francis Picabia

Common-sense nihilism holds that there is no intrinsic meaning in the world – that is, neither gods nor science provide meaning. Science can tell us *how* things appear to be, but not *why* things appear to be. The world is indifferent. It is hostile and contingent.

Individuals cannot construct meaning, because any such meaning would be fictional, valueless, an empty illusion. The whole point to finding meaning in the world is to give meaning to your life. A fictional meaning to life would be very hollow indeed.

And, since no other meaning is possible apart from intrinsic and constructed meaning, the inevitable conclusion is that the pursuit of any meaning to life is futile. Which leads us to the conclusion that the only way to live life free from illusions is to embrace its meaninglessness.

When everything is meaningless, you might as well have some fun!

However, the individual is embedded in society, a *meaning-making machine*.

Society is a battleground where bogus ideas, constructed meanings, vie for supremacy. Every society goes through periods of being more or less ridiculous and stupid, during which more or less ridiculous and stupid ideas hold sway. But in every society at all times, most people are ridiculous and stupid, and believe ridiculous and stupid ideas. The particular ridiculous and stupid ideas a person believes depends on the kind of person they are and the environment they were brought up in. Political ideas, scientific ideas, religious ideas, artistic ideas – all are a sham, nonsense with which to fool ourselves and others in the vast inter-related con game we call culture.

In our society, a large proportion of people have allowed their minds to be enslaved by particularly ridiculous and stupid ideas: the inhuman computing processes of control machine thought viruses.

No society has been stupider than ours. We've comprehensively fucked the planet. And ourselves.

The dominant ideas of our society – inhuman control machine thought viruses – inform, and are expressed by, the official and established academic art of our time. It is a managerial, corporatised art, a 'post-object' art, where what matters is the 'network' between academics, curators, and other arts 'professionals'.

As an intertemporal avant-garde art movement, common-sense nihilism inoculates against the control machine thought virus. Common-sense nihilism is the most ridiculous and stupid idea of them all!

*Have nothing to do with beliefs, whatever they might be!*



The next order of business after 1437 was obviously to go back and do things in order. So back to 1412 it was.

Piero was born in the della Francesca family home on the corner of Via Aggiunte and Via Borgo Nuova. His father Benedetto had married Romana di Renzo di Carlo da Monterchi in 1410. Romana was from Monterchi, from a fairly fast and loose family in Monterchi.

But then Benedetto was from a pretty dodgy family himself. Benedetto was a leather-working artisan trying to get away from his origins. This was because no-one wants to live anywhere near the leather tanners, nor spend any time with a guy who spends all day at the tanners. Leather tanning *stinks*.

Benedetto's father and mother had been bitter and hard as a result. Benedetto didn't want to end up the same, shunned by all the right-thinking citizens and forced to be semi-criminal just to feed the family. And he succeeded. None of his children ever worked as leather-working artisans. Later in his life, he arranged marriages for his younger children [and the second marriage of his older son Marco] with Borgo's social elite — the town's most prominent noble and merchant families — as an equal, despite his dodgy past.

In the winter of 1412, Romana gave birth to her first child, Piero della Francesca. The family had brought her bed into the main, and only heated, room of the house [which Benedetto's father Pietro had split into two separate, connected residences before he died, leaving one half to Benedetto and the other to his widow, Francesca].

I used high technology from the future to spy on the scene [hidden cameras].

The family members who happened to be there in the comings and goings of their daily lives were gathered around the bed in front of the fire, quiet, faces ashen and drawn. After all, childbirth for a working class woman [and every other woman] in early 15th century Italy was an arduous, painful, and above all dangerous activity.

Someone had gone to fetch Benedetto from the leather-tanning shop he had inherited [along with his tools] from his father Pietro. The only sounds, apart from the crackling of the fire and those coming from Romana and the busy intersection outside, were the clattering dishes and nervous laughter of Benedetto's younger sister Simona in the kitchen, heating water on her mother Francesca's orders. Needless to say, Grandmother-to-be Francesca had the situation firmly under control.

Benedetto arrived just after Piero was safely delivered. The celebrations went on all night. All the neighbours came to pay their respects. There was dancing in the snow in the street. I joined in, introduced myself to a very elated Benedetto. Exalted even.



It looks like, as a species, we've established pretty clearly that, from an evolutionary perspective, carrying around these silly big brains and producing this silly babble from our mouths was not such a good idea after all.

The birds communicate with each other much better, but then they've been around for a lot longer than we swaggering apes. It's important to remember we're just animals acting out of instinct. None of the findings of our neuroscience would surprise Nietzsche. He realised the rationalisations are just superfluously added on afterwards.

Both your self and your free will are illusions, wild imaginings of your mind, to be enjoyed as such but never taken seriously, no, never taken seriously.

I make pictures because I think they're the only worthwhile contribution our species has made to the world (along with maths and possibly music and architecture – oh, and philosophy and theoretical physics, but just for the laughs). If we didn't make pictures, no-one else would.

And a great picture is such a glorious thing.

Making pictures is what separates our human ancestors from our non-human ancestors. Not anything else. The first human was the first genetic mutant to scratch the ground or pile a rock on top of another, and ascribe meaning to it. And ascribe meaning to it.

The first concept was '2'.

I reckon a good painting shares the same properties as a good mathematical proof – elegant simplicity. A good painting, like a good proof, does the most things with the fewest possible elements.

With figurative painting, elegant simplicity operates in terms of both content and form – with what is represented and with how it is represented.

Piero puts it like this:

'Painting comprises three principal parts which we call drawing, measurement, and colouring. By drawing we mean the outlines and profiles actually contained in the objects. By measurement we refer to these same outlines and profiles when they are placed proportionately in their proper places. By colouring we think of the way colours show up on the various things, that is, light and dark and how they change according to the light.'

These three elements make up the form of a painting. Each element conveys its own meaning (for example, a smooth outline conveys something different than a broken outline and a balanced composition something different than a jumbled one).

The best paintings are those where those three elements, the form of the painting, and the content mutually reinforce each other. In Piero's *Resurrection*, for example, the soldiers guarding Christ's tomb and the columns of the architectural frame are painted in perspective, with a low viewing height (to suit the painting's position high on the wall of Borgo's city hall). Jesus clambering out of his tomb, however, is rendered front on, not in perspective.

He confronts the viewer directly, no matter their position, whether up high or ever so lowly. All through the elegantly simple use of line and colour. Form and content reinforcing each other so that the sum is greater than the parts.

Nothing else matters. The battle-cry: Lines and colour on a flat surface!

*Blind and mute mechanism*

*We shall find the wings that live according to Plato*

*In the appearances of realities.*

– Francis Picabia

Contrary to the assumptions of many art historians, Piero did not attend an abacus school to learn mathematics as a child — for the simple reason that there wasn't one in Borgo at the time for him to go to. In fact, he did not attend any school. His father had other plans for him. Piero's younger brother Francesco, who was destined for the Church, went to school, to learn Latin.

The 8-year-old Piero who didn't go to school was an intellectually curious child, maybe somewhat serious, who was fascinated by the natural world around him and who wanted to understand how it worked. He cribbed his Latin from Francesco's notes.

If Piero was somewhat serious, though, he wasn't too serious. He was in no way socially withdrawn. He ran wild with a pack of similarly aged children from similar backgrounds. Piero's best friend, Francesco da Borgo, was also intelligent and capable, and would also grow up to become a highly respected well-educated professional, despite his working class origins.

As well as being a painter, Piero turned out to be a historically significant mathematician who made several major contributions to the field [including a couple of firsts, one of which was the first mathematical proof of perspective]. As a small child, Piero showed a propensity for mathematics that Benedetto wanted to capitalise on to further his ambitions for the family.

Little things, such as Piero working out the fundamentals of double-entry book-keeping, so that Benedetto could keep track of his expanding business interests. Little things like that. At the time, people used Roman numerals for their accounts, which were very unwieldy.

But Piero came across a different symbolic system — Hindu-Arabic numerals. He immediately recognised the benefits. Using these symbols allowed him to

easily add, subtract, multiply, and divide both whole numbers and fractions. With Roman numerals, multiplication was so difficult that it was the preserve of [expensive] university-trained experts. Division was impossible. Hindu-Arabic numerals gave the della Francesca family business a huge competitive advantage over their rivals.



Okay, so I lied before. This all really started when I Rose and I were horribly hungover and at a loose end in Masterton [of all places], while it was pissing down with rain. I went into a second-hand bookshop and came out with a book.

Idling at the back of the shop, I plucked the book at random from a small shelf of uniformly cloth-bound books from the early twentieth century. If any of the spines had had titles on them once, they didn't now.

I opened the book I'd plucked and looked at the title page, which was awesome. I've no idea how long I stood there staring at it. *The Temple-Builders of Ancient Mu* by Winifred Conrad Smith MD, published by Ouroboros Press in Wellington in 1922. Someone had done a great job with the decorative borders. I flicked through the rest of the book and, sure enough, those borders were the promise of even better pictures inside. All exquisitely engraved with a flowing line, especially the maps and the drawings of carvings.

I flicked back to the title page. In pencil in the top right corner was the price: \$55.

Hmmm, I thought. If I bought it, I'd have to hit up an already unhappy Rose for more cigarettes. On the other hand, however, I would never find another copy of this, nor, knowing Murphy, would it still be here next time we visited.

Decision made.

It was the craziest motherfucking book I have ever read, a fascinating account of an archaeological expedition to the Auckland Islands in 1911. I say 'archaeological', which is how Old Winnie, as I took to calling the author, pitched it, but pseudo-archaeological would be a whole lot more accurate.

Old Winnie finished the first chapter by making some outrageous claims about the 1911 expedition discovering a supposed ancient pre-Maori civilisation. In the Auckland Islands. Uh huh. Came from Antarctica apparently. Hilarious. That saved it from being the usual racist pseudoscientific conspiracy nonsense [sort of]. Totally batshit insane. I loved it.

I excitedly read some of the more lurid bits out to Rose, who made disparaging remarks about the cost of cigarettes and wastes of money. She can be a little disappointing that way sometimes. She couldn't help but agree that the pictures were amazing but.

Ye gods, having a smoke and reading that stuff. I got the shivers, even while lying baking in the hot sun and all.

Get this:

So the builders of the temple hidden on the Auckland Islands were architect-priests from Ancient Mu [Antarctica] who used transdimensional engineering techniques based on their advanced science [the degenerate legends of which we call myth and magic]. Ancient Mu finally destroyed itself, after 12,000 years of continuous civilisation on this and other planets, around 8000 BCE.

According to Winnie, the indigenous populations of Central and South America, Polynesia, and Australia are the direct heirs of this destroyed ancient civilisation, and Ancient Egypt, China, India, and the Celts are indirect heirs. How this is meant to work with what has been scientifically established about how those populations aren't actually related in anything like that way at all I don't know. But then Winnie was writing in 1922, when all sorts of mad speculation was going on, underwritten by all sorts of nasty racist theories about the 'natural' hierarchy of peoples.

In reality, of course, there's only one race: *Homo sapiens sapiens*. A very successful species that's spread around the world and adapted to live everywhere from the Sahara Desert to the North Pole: tropical jungles and coral islands, high mountains and arid plains, on rivers and in the swamps, and a shitload else besides.

The idea that a bunch of ignorant farmers from a dismal corner of Europe are better than everyone else is just laughable.

But I digress.

I found what Winnie had to say about ancient stone arrangements the expedition allegedly found hidden in caves on the Auckland Islands actually being feats of transdimensional engineering fascinating, absolutely fascinating. What's more, the book included her attempts at translating the carvings and lay-out of the stone temples they found [which no-one else has ever heard of, let alone seen, as far as I can find out], using the equations and diagrams of 1922-era theoretical physics and mathematics — that is, equations from the new relativistic and quantum physics [which Winnie claimed to have reconciled!] and diagrams from non-Euclidian geometry [which Winnie claimed to have 'completed']. Not bad, I thought.

Needless to say, my plan was to rip this all off for my painting. Brilliant! Maybe I should even go to art school and do it for my MFA!!!

When I suggested this to Rose, she surprised the fuck out of me by getting all enthusiastic. Sometimes I get the impression all she cares about is the mortgage and that she thinks my painting is silly self-indulgence. I often think similar things myself. It'd be nice to only have to worry about some office job and what to have for dinner and what to watch on the telly...

I am digressing once more. I do that, ever since I went gibbering insane.

*Whims what joy  
I'm doing quite well  
Haphazardly.*

– Francis Picabia

Piero began his apprenticeship as a merchant at age 13 in 1425, to a [only slightly dodgy] business partner of Benedetto's. It was here that Piero received his first mathematical training. In a time before standardised weights and measures, everyday transactions required some serious mathematics. However, the mathematical training Piero received as a merchant's apprentice was extremely rudimentary. It was ad hoc and incidental, and not at all structured.

Let's skip ahead a little for a moment, to around 1450, when, because of this need for structured mathematical training, a senior member of the Pichi family commissioned Piero [who by this time was recognised as an authority on the subject] to write *On the abacus* as a textbook for the abacus school the Pichi wanted to found in Borgo. In this book, Piero gives an exercise to illustrate the rule of three:

'There are two men who want to barter; one of them has cloth and the other has wool. The piece of cloth is worth 15 ducats and he puts it up for barter at 20 and also wants one-third in money. And a *cento* of wool is worth 7 ducats in money. What price must [the man with wool] put it up for barter so that neither will be cheated?'

In the Borgo in which Piero grew up, this was the kind of thing you had to do in your head, on the spot, in public, while bargaining with an opponent — for every transaction you made every day of your life. And you could only do it after you had successfully agreed how much cloth and wool you each had, which involved calculating areas and volumes, also in your head and on the spot.

Last we saw, in 1425, Piero had had some rudimentary second-hand schooling in Latin and had been apprenticed to a business partner of his father's, where his duties consisted almost exclusively of escorting goods on perilous journeys to other towns. How did he end up as an advanced painter and mathematician, acknowledged as such by the most educated people of his time?

The story was that Piero pretty quickly spat the dummy on the merchant apprenticeship with Benedetto's business partner. He confronted his father in his

office at home one day, after a particularly harrowing, not to mention particularly perilous, winter trip, and pointed out how this was getting them nowhere. It appears he was pretty eloquent on the subject and put his case well.

This confrontation happened in 1427, and as a consequence Benedetto agreed to arrange for Piero to be apprenticed to the heraldic painting workshop of Antonio d'Anghiari and Ottaviano Nelli in the nearby town of Anghiari. Piero had met them on one of his delivery trips.

I stood across the street watching the 15-year-old Piero lingering in the workshop after he'd delivered his prepared hides, a bleak future staring him in the face, avidly watching as Antonio laid out the drawing of a coat of arms on the prepared surface of a banner made out of those hides' predecessors. And I heard Antonio say, when Piero finally had to go, 'Well, why don't you ask your dad?'



Eventually, after reading Winnie's book and doing a bit of digging around, I found my way into and around the reality-substrate transdimensional black square conduit network. This process was immeasurably improved by enlisting Francis Picabia [the best artist of the 20th century, much maligned and hard done by by art historians, and extremely good company]. We had a car made to hoon down the tunnels in, a car that could project temporary portals in and out of the reality-substrate transdimensional black square conduit network.

This was heaps better than wandering around on foot trying to find already existing portals [whether natural or artificial], let alone trying to project them directly out of your head! Now we could go anywhere and anywhen — and actually get to where we wanted to go, rather than somewhere or -when else entirely! Brilliant!!!

I'd started by creating an intertemporal black square portal in my studio, which led to 1911 Wellington. From there, I travelled to Dunedin, met a young Winifred Conrad and her fiance Dr John Smith — and, you guessed it, organised an archaeological expedition to the Auckland Islands to search for a lost temple in the cliff-top caves! But that's a story for another time.

*Stupidity reveals the madness of our days*

– Francis Picabia

Piero's first documented appearance as a painter is as an independent contractor working with Antonio d'Anghiari in Borgo. Antonio arrived in Borgo in 1430. On 27 May, he received 45 lire for painting the coat of arms of the town and of the new papal governor Bishop Didicus on the town gates. The 1430s were a particularly turbulent time politically for Borgo, which meant lots of commissions to repaint new coats of arms on banners and city gates, each time the town changed hands, which was a lot.

During the early 1430s, Antonio d'Anghiari and Piero carried out a series of commissions that included painting the facades of the palaces of the most influential confraternities of the town. As we shall see, the commission from the confraternity of San Francesco in 1430, for which Piero did the preparatory work and Benedetto supplied the materials, and about which Piero was so bitter when I got pissed with him in his workshop, would prove to be the undoing of the partnership between Piero and Antonio years later.

Meanwhile, however, Benedetto began an association with the Baglioni family of Perugia and bought land and a garden next to the family home for 12 florins.

On 29 December 1432, Antonio d'Anghiari agreed that he owed Benedetto della Francesca 56 florins for the work Piero had done as an independent contractor since June gessoing and preparing the altarpiece of San Francesco. The debt also included the loans Benedetto had made to Antonio for materials for that altarpiece.

At this stage at least, it seems Piero's apprenticeship to Antonio had been a sensible business decision.

To prepare the altarpiece, Piero first covered the panels with carbon black mixed with gesso, before adding layers of gesso and glue. This was an innovation. Piero

adapted this technique from Antonio's method of preparing stone walls for painting, as documented in Cennini.

On 19 March 1433, Benedetto della Francesca witnessed a concord between Don Niccoluccio di Nicoloso dei Graziani [an old business associate and friend of Benedetto's] and Don Luca di Meo di Manaria resolving a conflict over who would be rector of San Giovanni Battista [St John the Baptist]. Benedetto brokered the agreement [for Don Luca to renounce his claim for 30 florins], as he had close relationships with both men, including a family relationship with Don Luca. As soon as he became rector, Don Niccoluccio began arranging for a new polyptych altarpiece for the high altar of San Giovanni Battista.

On 21 December 1433, Benedetto del Cera, father of Piero's childhood friend Francesco da Borgo, contracted to make a frame for an altarpiece for San Giovanni Battista by April 1434. This construction would become Piero's *Baptism*. And right from the start, long before he actually got the commission to paint it, Piero took a great interest in it, especially in measuring it out. Benedetto del Cera, Francesco da Borgo, and Piero spent many a long evening in Benedetto del Cera's workshop planning its proportions.



Sometime in 1995 – I fondly think of it as April Fool's Day, though it probably wasn't – I started a drawing programme based on my reading of the painting manuals of Cennini, Piero, Alberti, and Leonardo. I was living in this kind of anarchist commune thing just north of Dunedin, you see, and some young guy who'd taken too many psychedelic drugs freaked out and claimed I was the devil. Seriously. 'All he does is sit there and fuck with people's heads,' he cried as he was restrained.

I thought, 'That's true. I suppose it's time I started doing something with my life.' True about sitting around, I mean. I do not resile from fucking with people's heads. Back then, I still tried to persuade people of things. When some idiot says to you, 'Don't worry about the future because, when the UFOs come, they'll save all the vegans,' I felt compelled to tell them exactly why that is a vile proposition.

So, in accordance with the advice I'd read, I set about learning to paint by drawing after the best paintings I could find and from nature. When I left school in 1987, you see, my

head was full of silly ideas such as that painting was dead and the only valid art forms for a late capitalist society were punk rock videos and science fiction short stories. So I did art history and philosophy as preparation for writing science fiction. And look how that turned out, ha ha!

Funnily enough, when I left school in 1987, Mum was doing an industrial psychology course and, being of an experimental bent, tried out some measurement tools on me. She was a little dismayed when I scored 0 out of 10 for ambition. That's cos the stupid test measured ambition solely in terms of career success. I am actually quite ambitious, and was then, though that ambition has changed – I want to do the first fresco on Mars, for fuck's sake!

Being a batshit insane rambling git, I've drifted far from the point. Which I need to take a moment to recollect. Oh yeah!



In 1437, Benedetto della Francesco was elected one of four conservators of Borgo, the highest office available to citizens of the town. At the same time, Piero was in high demand as a legal witness. On 20 June, he witnessed the testament of Don Niccoluccio di Nicoloso dei Graziani, an old family associate who happened to be still looking for someone to paint the altarpiece that had been sitting in his church — the church dedicated to John the Baptist that Benedetto had helped him become rector of — all white and empty, since sometime in 1434.

Don Niccoluccio di Nicoloso dei Graziani commissioned Piero to paint the *Baptism of Christ* for San Giovanni Battista at this time, two days before I met Piero. And as Piero told me at length, a commission in his own right was something he needed quite urgently right about now. Because Antonio d'Anghiari was a deadbeat and dragging Piero down with him.

Let's peer into Piero's future again slightly, shall we?

In September 1437, the friars and lay supervisors of the church of San Francesco, upset at Antonio d'Anghiari's lack of progress on the altarpiece they had commissioned in 1430, entered into a series of contracts to recover one of the two houses Antonio had been assigned as payment for the altarpiece. They reassigned

the commission to the painter Sassetta from Siena. As part of these contracts, debts the confraternity owed to Antonio were transferred to Benedetto della Francesca to cover debts Antonio owed to Benedetto.

On 8 January 1438, because Piero and Benedetto blamed Antonio for Piero not getting the commission for the San Francesco altarpiece instead of Sassetta, Piero and Antonio entered into a series of contracts that severed all relations between them. Antonio was living in Anghiari by February and in Arezzo by June. He and Piero had no further contact.

That was fine by Piero. Antonio disappeared from history at this point. The height of his career was working with Piero in and around Borgo in the 1430s. Even during that height, however, because of the many children he had to feed, Antonio was constantly fending off financial disaster. It seems he had enough on his plate simply doing things the way he had been taught.

He did not need, nor want, to innovate, unlike Piero, who saw possibilities in the geometric construction of paintings that Antonio simply could not understand. Piero also knew that realising those possibilities would realise his father's ambitions for the family. Antonio simply wasn't interested in any of this. He had his hands full as it was. It was a constant source of argument between them.

Sometime in early 1438, Benedetto used his association with the Baglioni family of Perugia to arrange for Piero to work in Perugia with Domenico Veneziano on a *Madonna and child* and for Braccio Baglioni in his palace. Piero had already met Domenico, with whom he would travel to Florence in 1439.

I'm not sure but I think Piero sought Domenico out as a representative of the new painting coming out of Florence after reading Leon Battista Alberti's *On painting*, which Piero discussed extensively with someone who had read it soon, a few months even, after it was published in 1435 [yeah, so that was me too]. It was a hot topic of conversation in the workshop, and exactly the kind of thing Piero wanted to read. But he didn't get his hands on a copy until 1438.

In any case, whether reading Alberti spurred Piero into meeting Domenico or whether meeting Domenico spurred him into reading Alberti, the end result was the same. For the purposes of looking at the *Baptism*, it doesn't really matter — Piero had already been commissioned to paint and had already begun planning the altarpiece. The composition was not informed by Alberti, Domenico Veneziano, or visiting Florence. It was informed by the ideas Piero had developed on his own during the 1430s.

Although Piero learned some mathematics as first a merchant's and then Antonio's apprentice, neither apprenticeship included anything like formal structured mathematical training. Rather, Piero learned to do certain calculations as and when they were required in his day-to-day work. So how did Piero become the leading mathematician of his day? Simple. He taught himself by reading anything and everything related to mathematics generally, and to geometry in particular, that he could get his hands on.

Piero's cribbing of Francesco's Latin notes as an 8-year-old unable to attend school himself formed the model for his self-education in his 20s.

*Painters are painters, nothing more, and that's what interests me.*

– Francis Picabia

Okay, so one of the standard arguments against time travel goes something like this. Let's say at some point in the future time travel is invented. It doesn't matter when. Unless the civilisation that produced the inventor is suddenly wiped out immediately after the invention, people from that civilisation would start travelling in time.

Every single future person from that point on who travels into the past to witness a certain historical event, such as the crucifixion of Jesus, was at that historical event. However, billions of time travelling tourists didn't attend all the big significant historical events.

You'd think someone would've noticed if they had.

The only reason, the argument goes, they aren't there is because at no point in the future does anyone invent time travel.

Now, the problem with this argument is that it assumes that time is one fixed block-like whole. That isn't, however, the way the world is. Consider instead that time is fluid, made up of multiple, dynamic, interacting timelines. The way that modern physics tends to see it.

In this model, a time machine is an *alternate world creator*. Every trip into the past splits off a separate timeline. Therefore, even if a civilisation builds time machine factories producing billions of time machines over thousands of years, each such time machine is at the centre of a conglomeration – or nest – of timelines it's created.

Or to put it another way, from the perspective of one particular world (such as ours) out of the infinity of alternates, there can only ever be one time machine in operation, not billions.

And it's mine.



When I finally got back to the reality-substrate transdimensional black square conduit network, I found Picabia waiting with the car. He said he'd only just got there.

He reckoned he'd been chased by a gang of Ancient Muian priests in a hoversled. But he out-drove them. Lost them and then doubled back.

I looked at him sharply, wondering if he was having me on. But he assured me he wasn't, and he described the priests and the hoversled in quite a bit of detail.

It was quite a long trip home. So I told Picabia all about the altarpiece I wanted to do. A homage to Piero. He laughed and laughed.

Poor old Piero. I hadn't had the heart to tell him that he wouldn't complete the *Baptism* for another two decades. Events would intervene. In 1440, the people of Borgo would fight on the losing side of the Battle of Anghiari. As a consequence, the Florentines would take over the town once more and put through a series of punitive reforms that would transform the town. If the 1430s had been turbulent, the 1440s would be grim.

Piero would miss all this though. He'd spend the 1440s wandering around northern Italy, painting. Visiting Florence in 1439 would be an eye-opener. Seeing Masaccio's *Trinity* finally, studying Alberti's *On painting*, endless conversations in taverns and workshops. Then there were the other sights. The costumes of the Byzantine delegation especially. They would keep on showing up in Piero's paintings, especially the hats. He loved the hats. He said they were like the world. [Riiight.]

The upshot of all this would be that Piero would only ever use the magic square method of perspective construction for the *Baptism*. Based on his study of Masaccio and Alberti, and endless discussions with anyone and everyone, Piero would develop a much more sophisticated and rigorous method, one that, as he put it, 'distinguishes all quantities proportionately, as a true science' and that constructs images on the the picture surface 'like the real things seen by the eye', all through using 'the force of lines'. One that incidentally provided the first ever mathematical proof of perspective.

Although Piero's method of constructing perspective changed over the years, his metaphysical conception of mathematics never did. He considered perspective to be a profoundly 'true science', one that uses exactly the same underlying laws as we use to see objects in the world.

And that led him to ask some disturbing philosophical questions.

To construct a perspective scheme, the necessary first step is to locate the position of the viewer. When I visited an elderly Piero at his seaside cottage in Rimini, he told me about the sleepless nights this requirement had given him.

For it means that the position of objects in space is not absolute but relative, relative to the position of the viewer. Their shape, their size, and their relation to each other are all determined by where the viewer's eye is looking at them from. And this means that size, shape, and relation are properties, not of the object, but of the mind of the viewer.

That blew Piero's mind.

It had massive implications for geometry. Piero had assumed, much as Plato did, that geometry was the underlying structure of the world. But if what we see is a product of our minds, if the objects in the world are products of our minds, where does that leave geometry?

This was something he discussed extensively, especially with his friend Nicholas of Cusa, whom Piero first met in Rome in 1450.

The only sensible answer is that geometry too is a product of the mind.

Late in life, Piero had come to the radical conclusion that the world around us is an illusion. It doesn't actually exist [though that doesn't mean it is unknowable — the illusory world is internally consistent and operates according to laws]. He saw living things as sparks of divine light trapped in a corrupt world of darkness and confusion. And, because of this, he considered his immortality machines more important than ever.

He was always a good Franciscan Christian, you see.

But then, he was pretty depressed. He'd hoped to give the people the tools to transform themselves. Instead, Piero's tools had been appropriated and distorted by men on the make, who only cared about worldly honours and titles and accumulating personal wealth. Even a Franciscan monk! Piero's best collaborator, Fra Luca Pacioli, who Piero was sure was eyeing up the *Book of Everything* [the one Piero had been compiling all his life] and intending to publish it under his own name as soon as Piero karked it.

'I'm worried about the future, David,' he said. 'If things continue this way, we'll end up with a cold dead world where no-one cares about the good, the true, and the beautiful, but only whether they can make a profit. A world where people know the cost of everything but value nothing. A world in thrall to the great god Money, a god I helped create. Bloody Pacioli and his double-entry book-keeping.'

I didn't want to tell him that that was the world I came from. One that had been almost entirely destroyed by the unrestrained greed for profit. Piero had no idea,

no conception whatsoever, how close to destruction the world would come in only 500 years.

I wish I could write down here every aspect of everything Piero and I discussed. But the written word is a crude, limited way of conveying knowledge. No, the best way to convey meaning is to divide a surface into circles, triangles, and squares, and go from there. Describing a painting in words is a mug's game.

But Picabia knew where I was coming from. He too had paid attention to what Piero had to say in his paintings. He too scoffed at the foolish pronouncements of art historians. He too had painted immortality machines [his Amorphist paintings, based on his close study of Nietzsche].

Neither Picabia nor I were religious but we still responded to Piero's evocation of the Mystery. The stillness. It fit in with what we knew of the structure of Actuality, of which the reality-substrate transdimensional black square conduit network is just a part.

Piero's is a contemplative art. It is the painting of light: meaning constructed through line and colour. The stillness of the figures, even in the battle scenes, is because those figures exist on another plane, the plane of pictorial space, beyond temporal change.

That's the kind of painting I want to do.

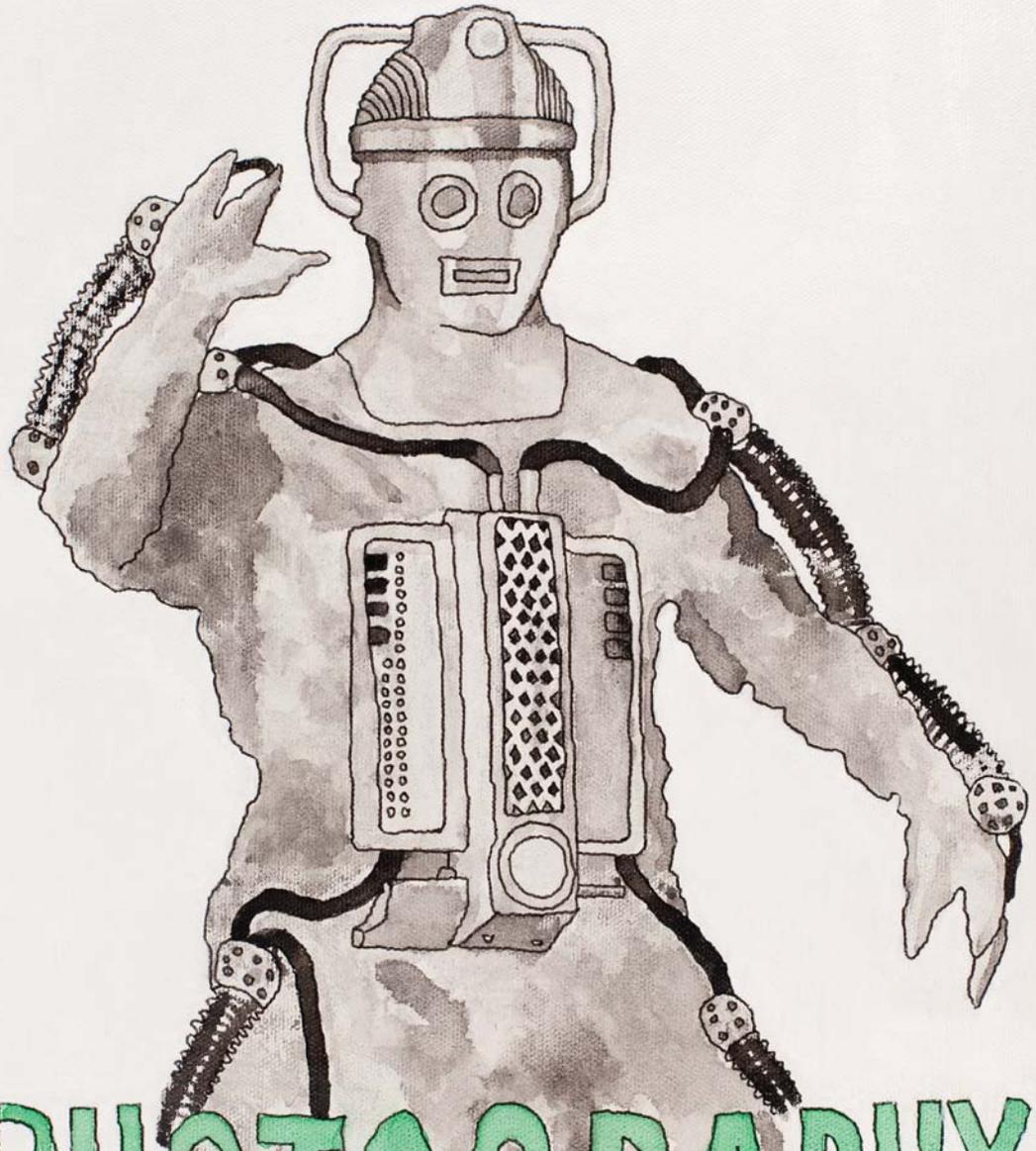
So, to cut a long story abruptly short, I came back to 2011 Wellington and painted up a storm, applying the lessons Piero taught me. I was a whole lot skinnier than I had been and stark raving bonkers, but I had a great time nonetheless. And here they are, two lots of paintings. Before and after visiting Piero.



PART ONE:  
BEFORE MEETING PIERO

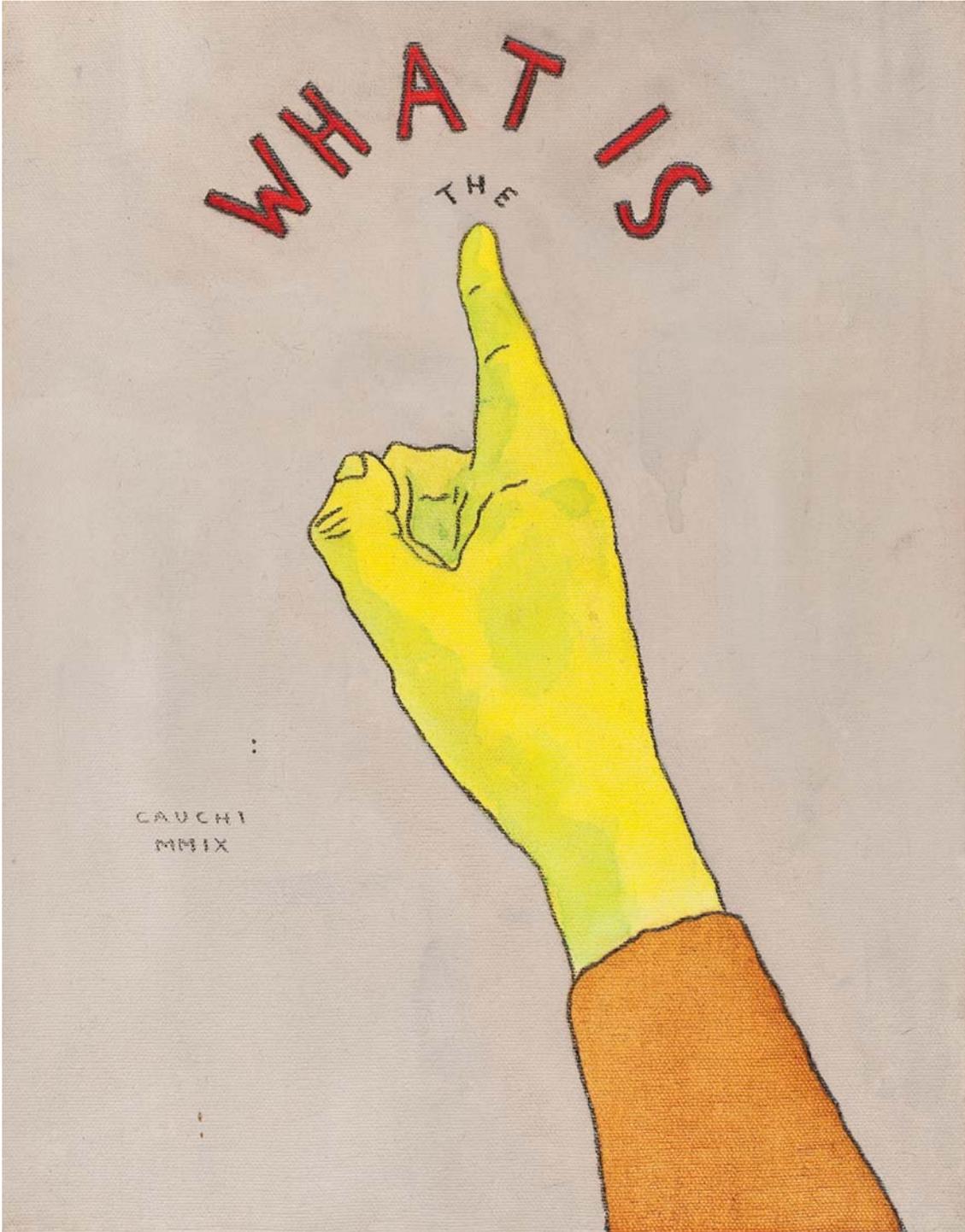
*Photography*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
35.5 x 28 cm  
Ivan Anthony Gallery  
2011

CAUCHI MMXI



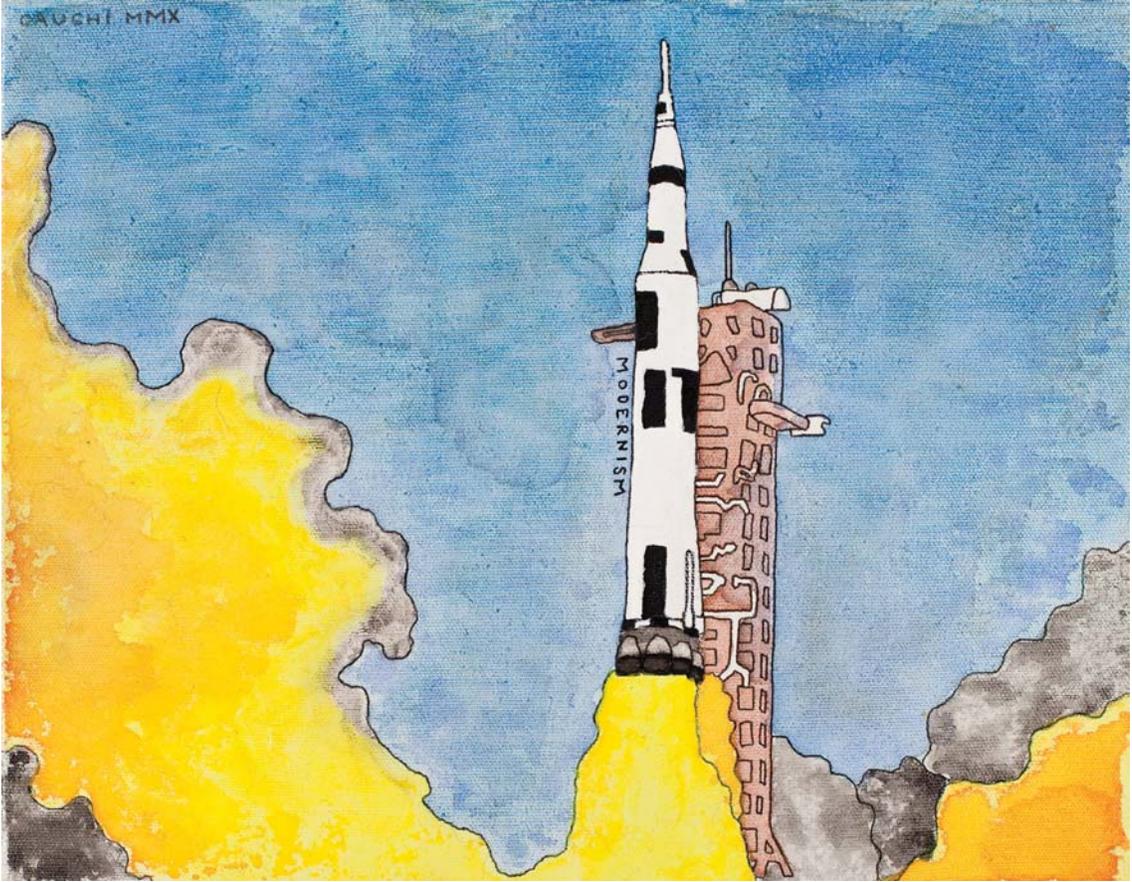
PHOTOGRAPHY

*What is*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
35.5 x 28 cm  
private collection  
2009



CAUCHI  
MMIX

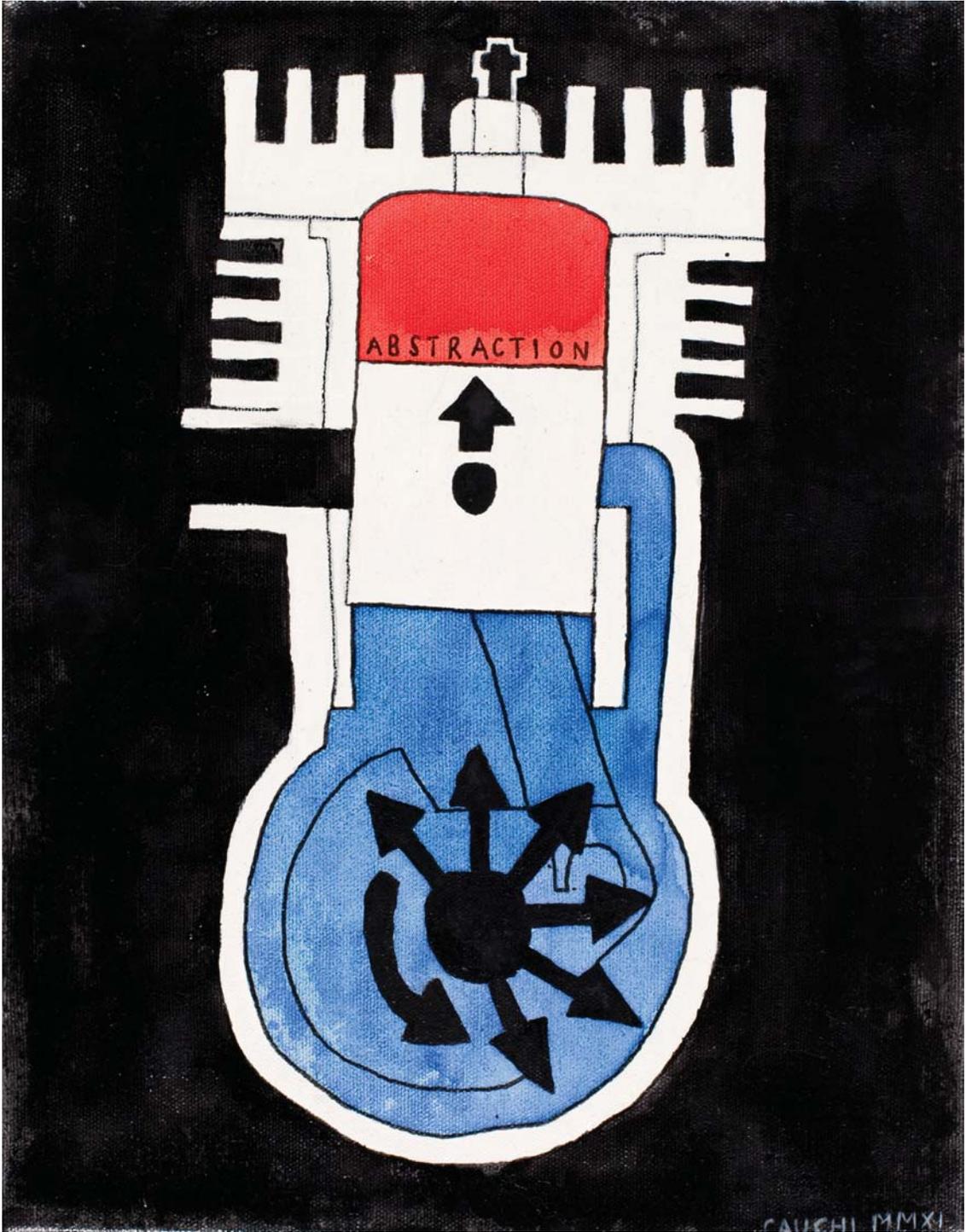
*Modernism*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
28 x 35.5 cm  
Ivan Anthony Gallery  
2010



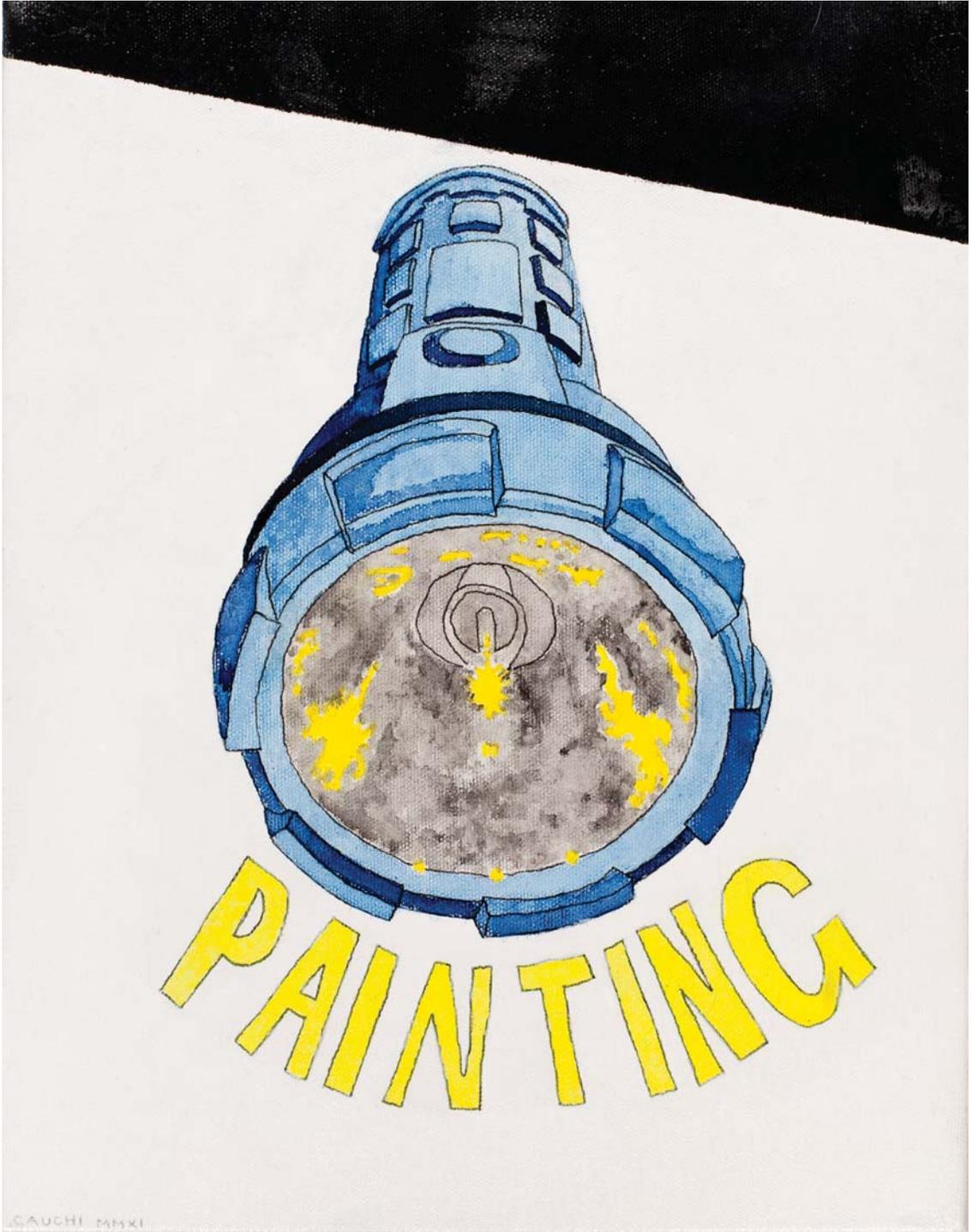
*Ridiculous self-portrait*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
35.5 x 28 cm  
private collection  
2011



*Abstraction*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
35.5 x 28 cm  
Ivan Anthony Gallery  
2011



*Painting*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
35.5 x 28 cm  
Ivan Anthony Gallery  
2011



*Futurism*

ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas

35.5 x 28 cm

Ivan Anthony Gallery

2011



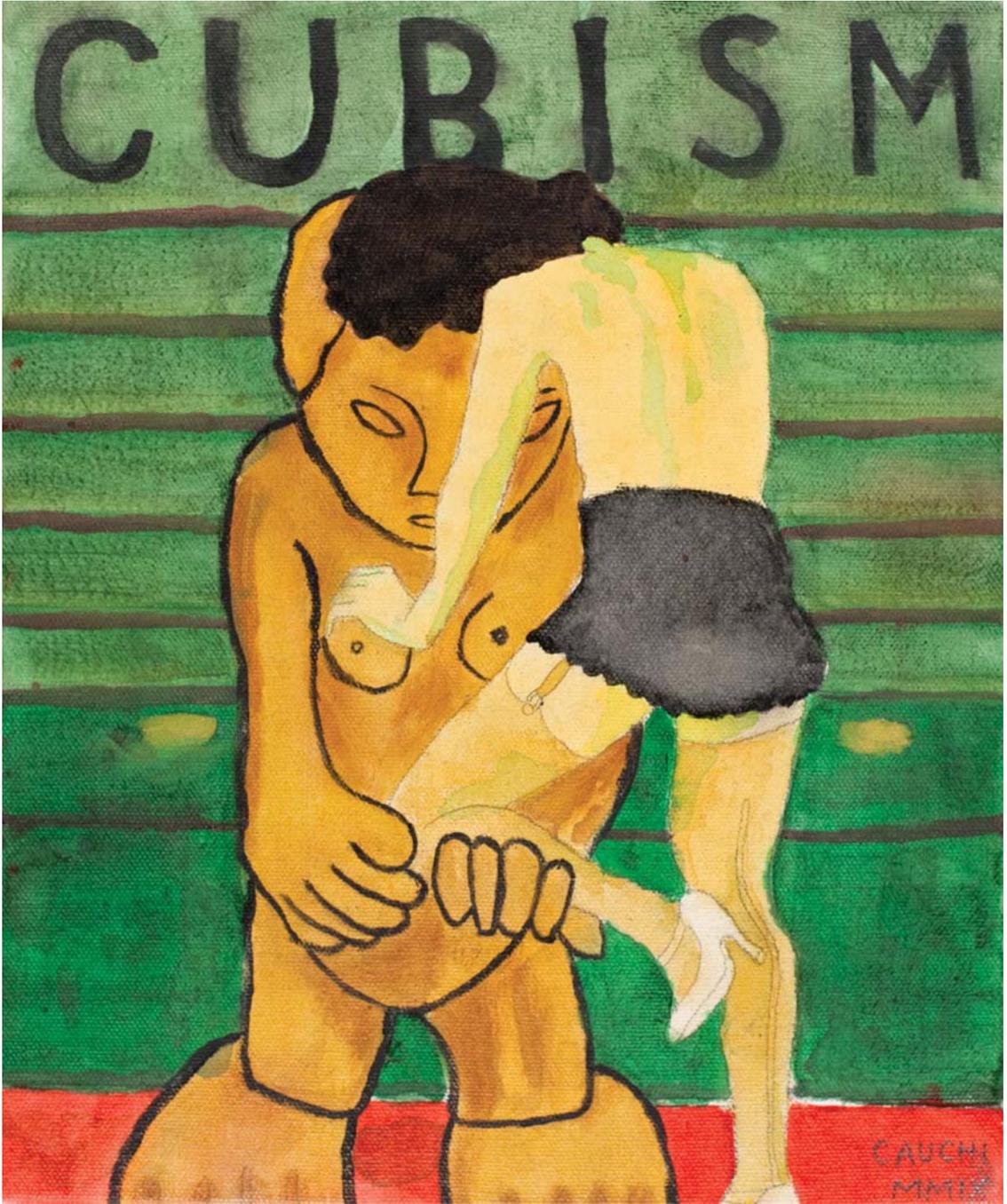
*Cubism*

ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas

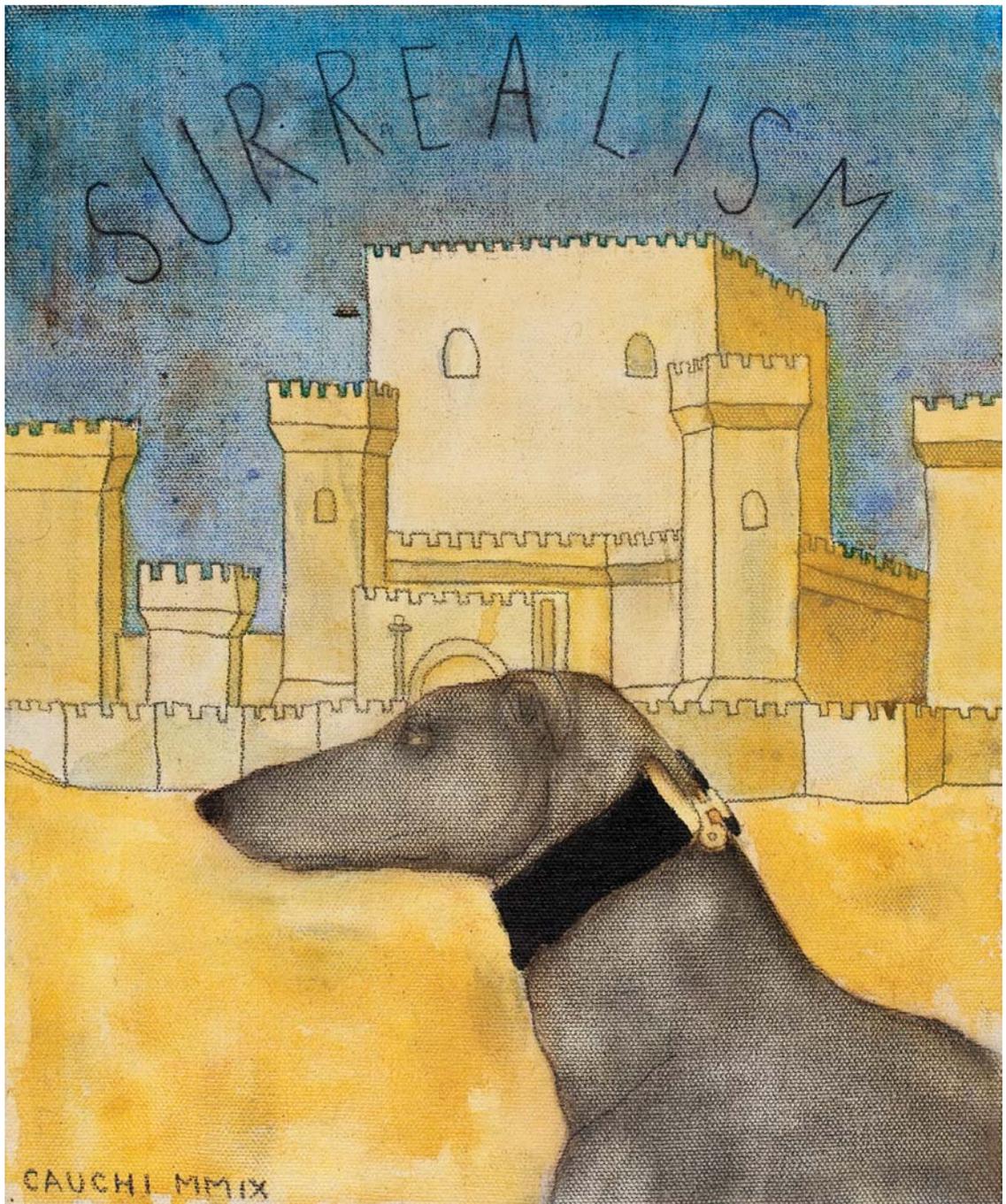
30 x 25 cm

Ivan Anthony Gallery

2009

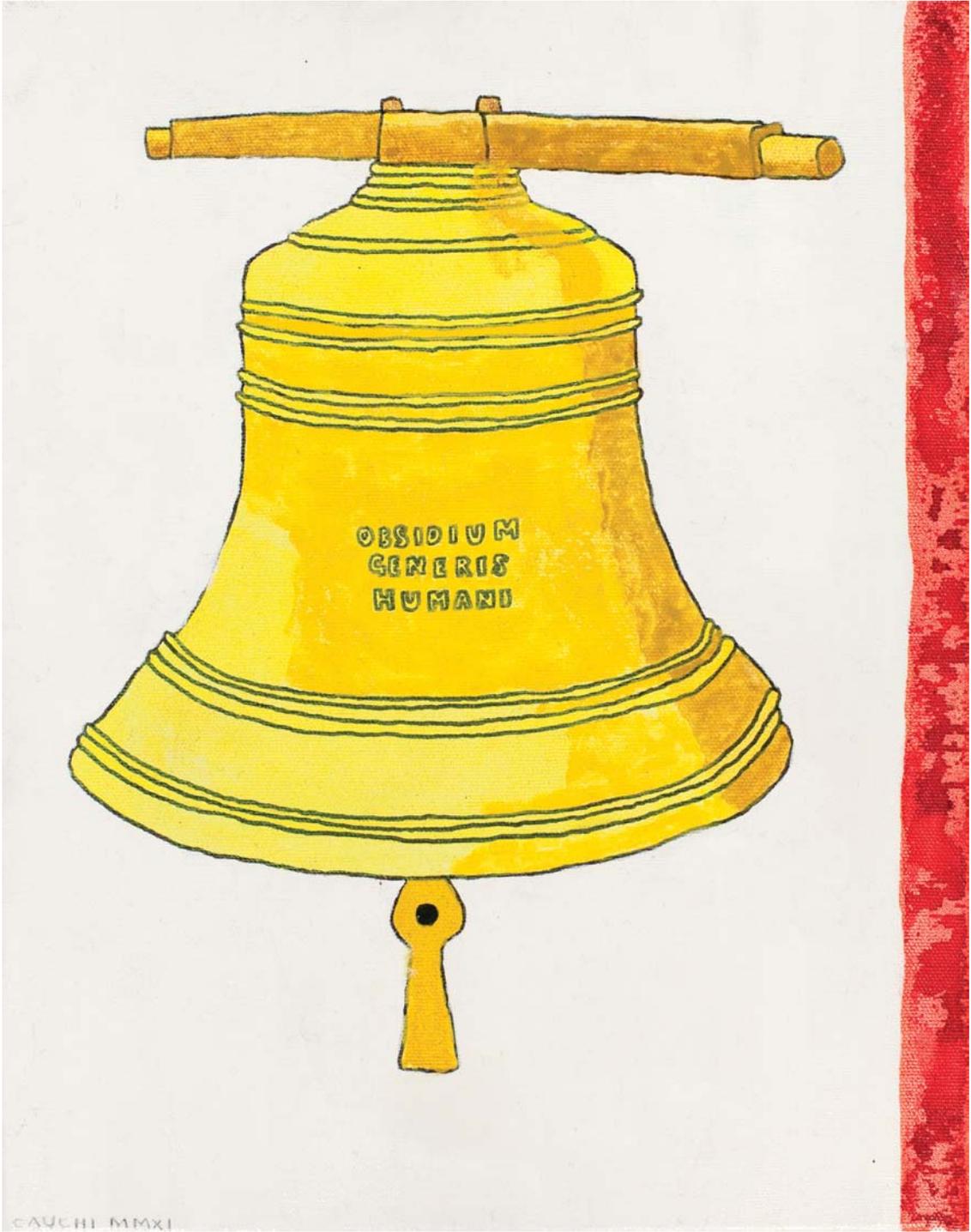


*Surrealism*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
30 x 25 cm  
Wallace Collection  
2009



CAUCHI MMIX

*Obsidium generis humani*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
35.5 x 28 cm  
Ivan Anthony Gallery  
2011



*Academic art*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
35.5 x 28 cm  
private collection  
2011



*Impressionism*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
35.5 x 28 cm  
Ivan Anthony Gallery  
2011



*You*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
35.5 x 28 cm  
Ivan Anthony Gallery  
2011



*Direct your hate here*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
28 x 35.5 cm  
Ivan Anthony Gallery  
2011



*Symbolism*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
35.5 x 28 cm  
Ivan Anthony Gallery  
2011



*The fall*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
35.5 x 28 cm  
private collection  
2010

THE FALL

CAUCHI MMX



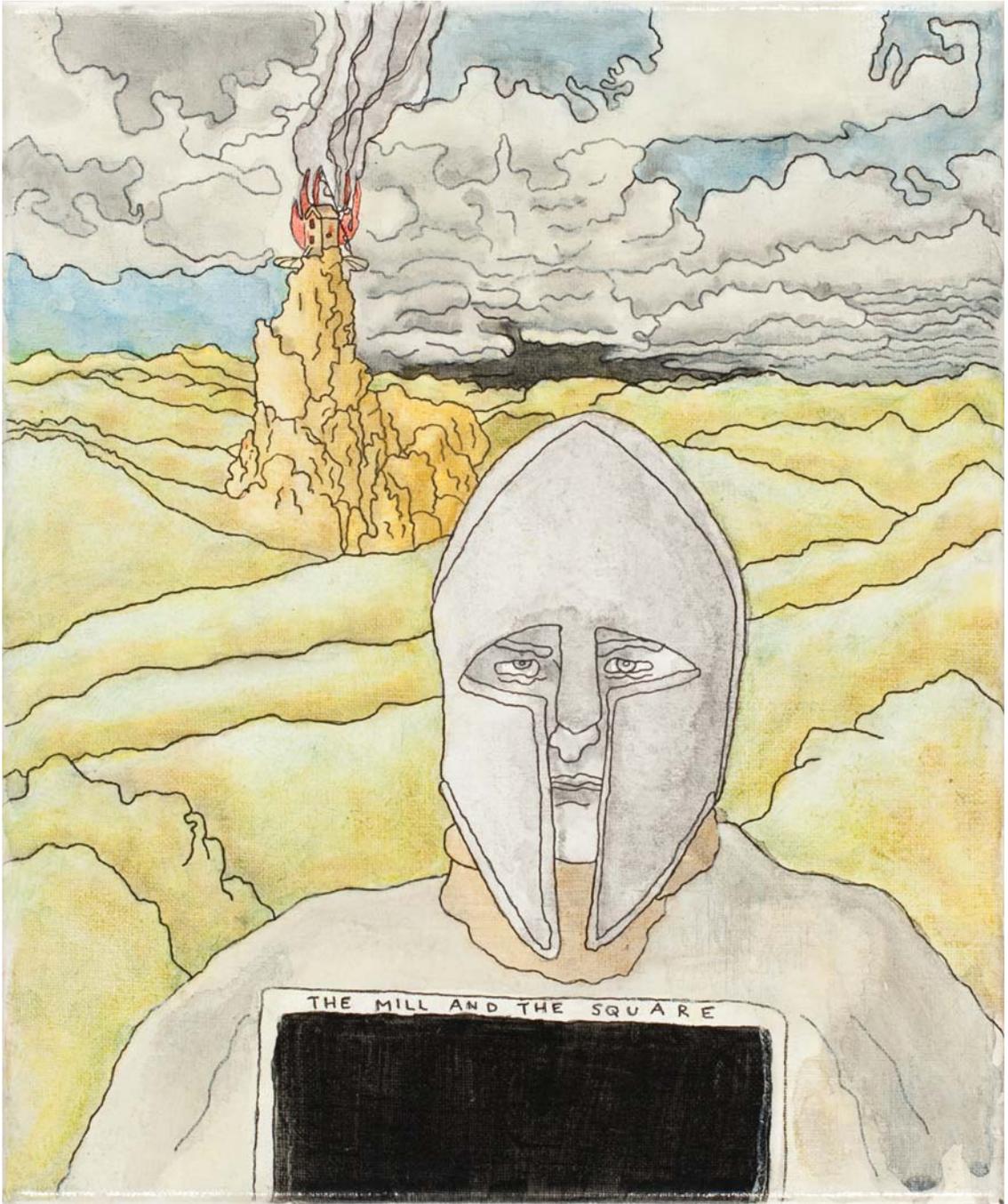
*Conceptual art*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
35.5 x 28 cm  
Ivan Anthony Gallery  
2011





PART TWO:  
AFTER MEETING PIERO

*The mill and the square*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on linen  
30 x 25 cm  
Robert Heald Gallery  
2011



*The mirror*

ink, watercolour, and oil on linen

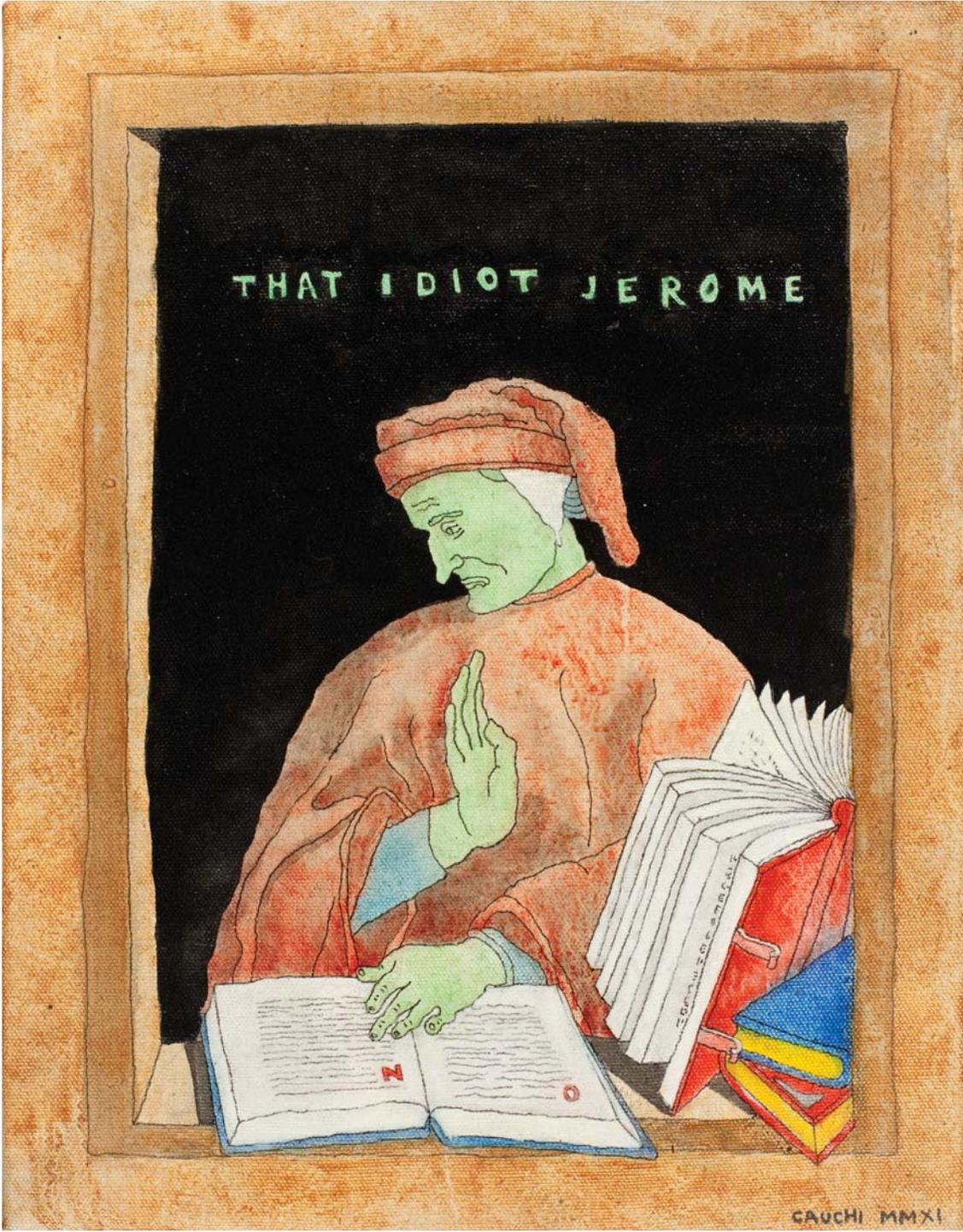
30 x 25 cm

Robert Heald Gallery

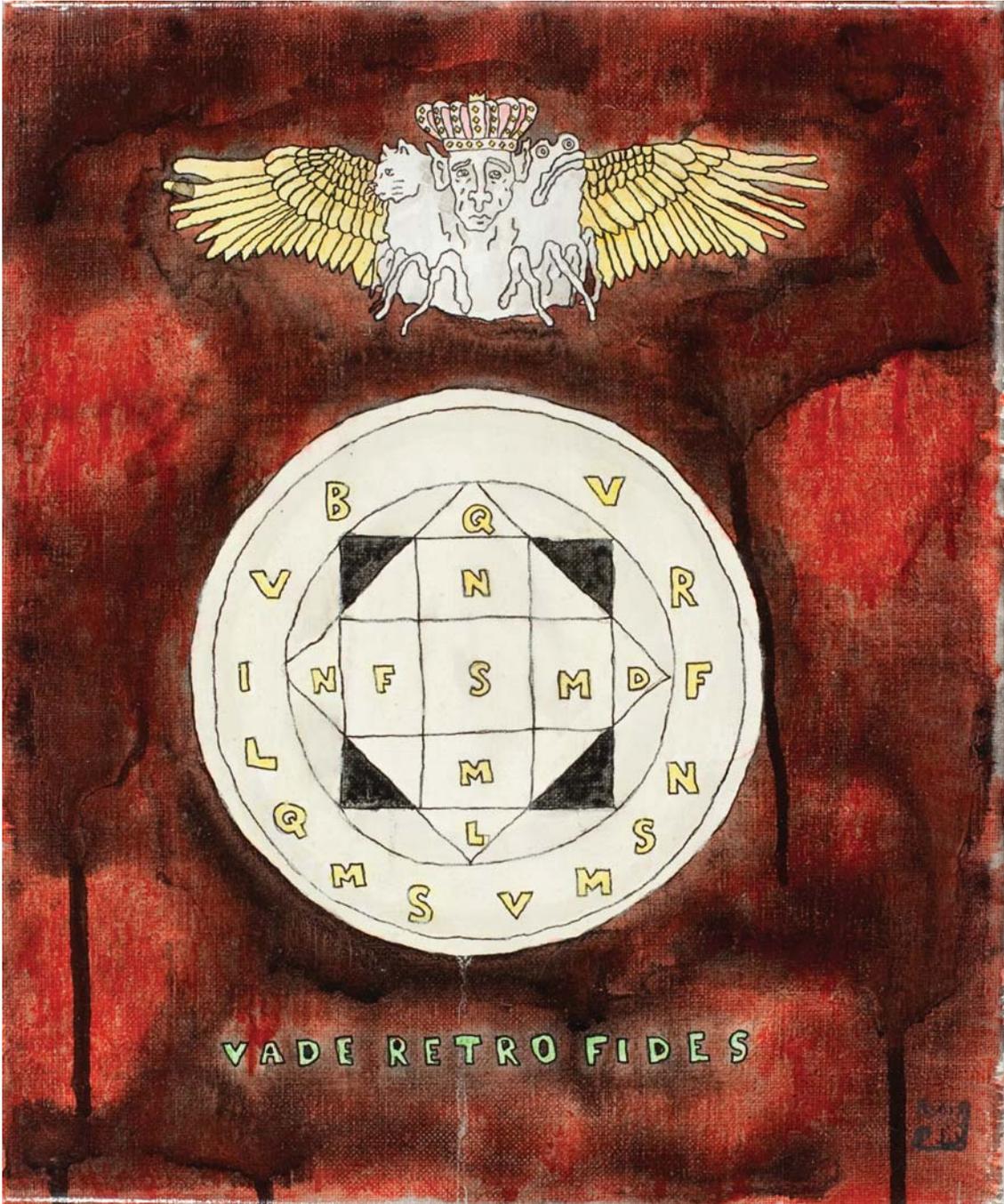
2011



*That idiot Jerome*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on canvas  
35.5 x 28 cm  
Robert Heald Gallery  
2011



*Vade retro fides*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on linen  
30 x 25 cm  
Robert Heald Gallery  
2011



*Future is past*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on linen  
30 x 25 cm  
Robert Heald Gallery  
2011



*Cauchi contra mundum*

wall drawing; ink, watercolour, and oil on linen; and oil on canvasboard

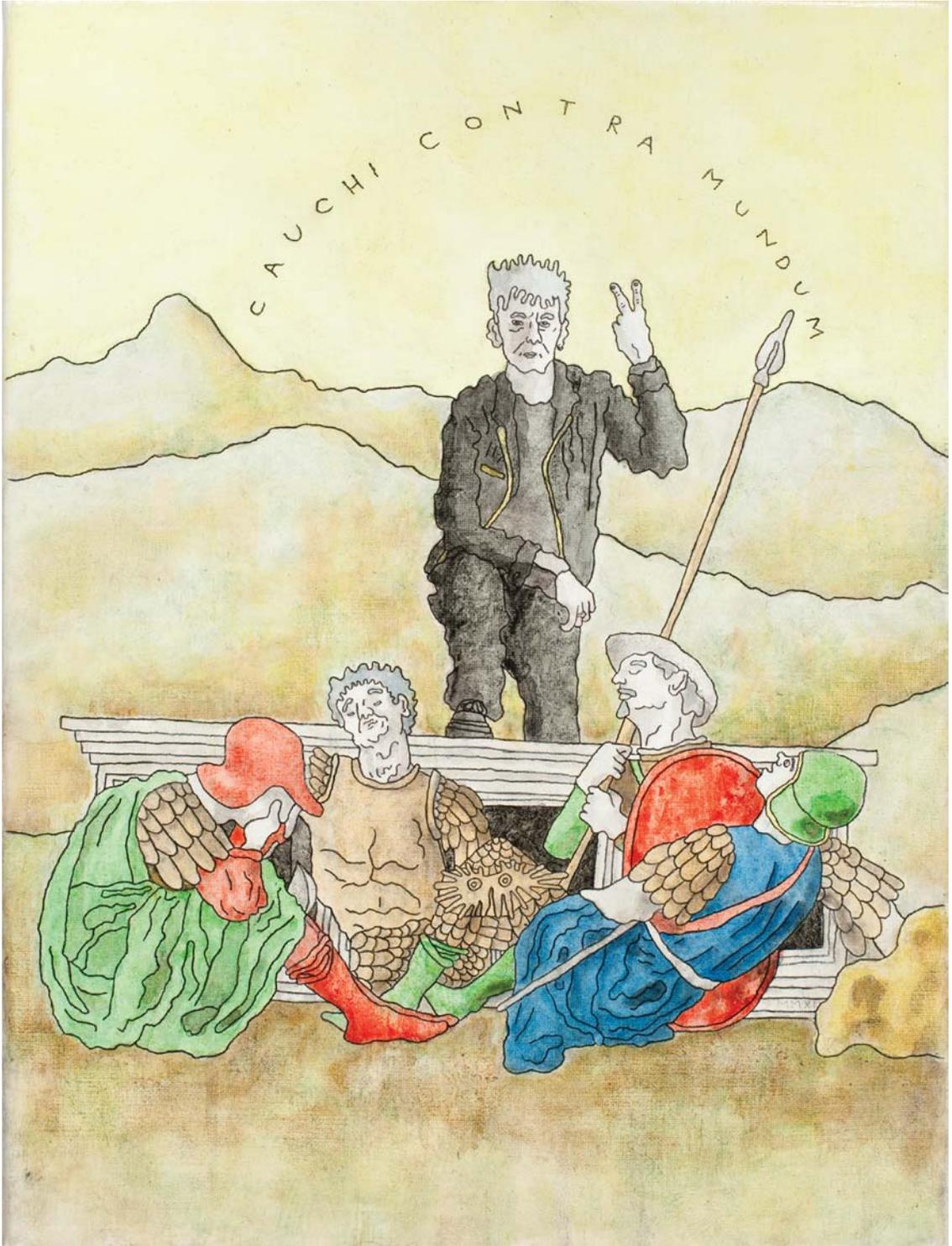
dimensions variable

Robert Heald Gallery

2001–11



*Cauchi contra mundum*  
40 x 30 cm  
(detail of central panel)



*Cauchi contra mundum*  
13 x 18 cm each  
(details of predella panels)



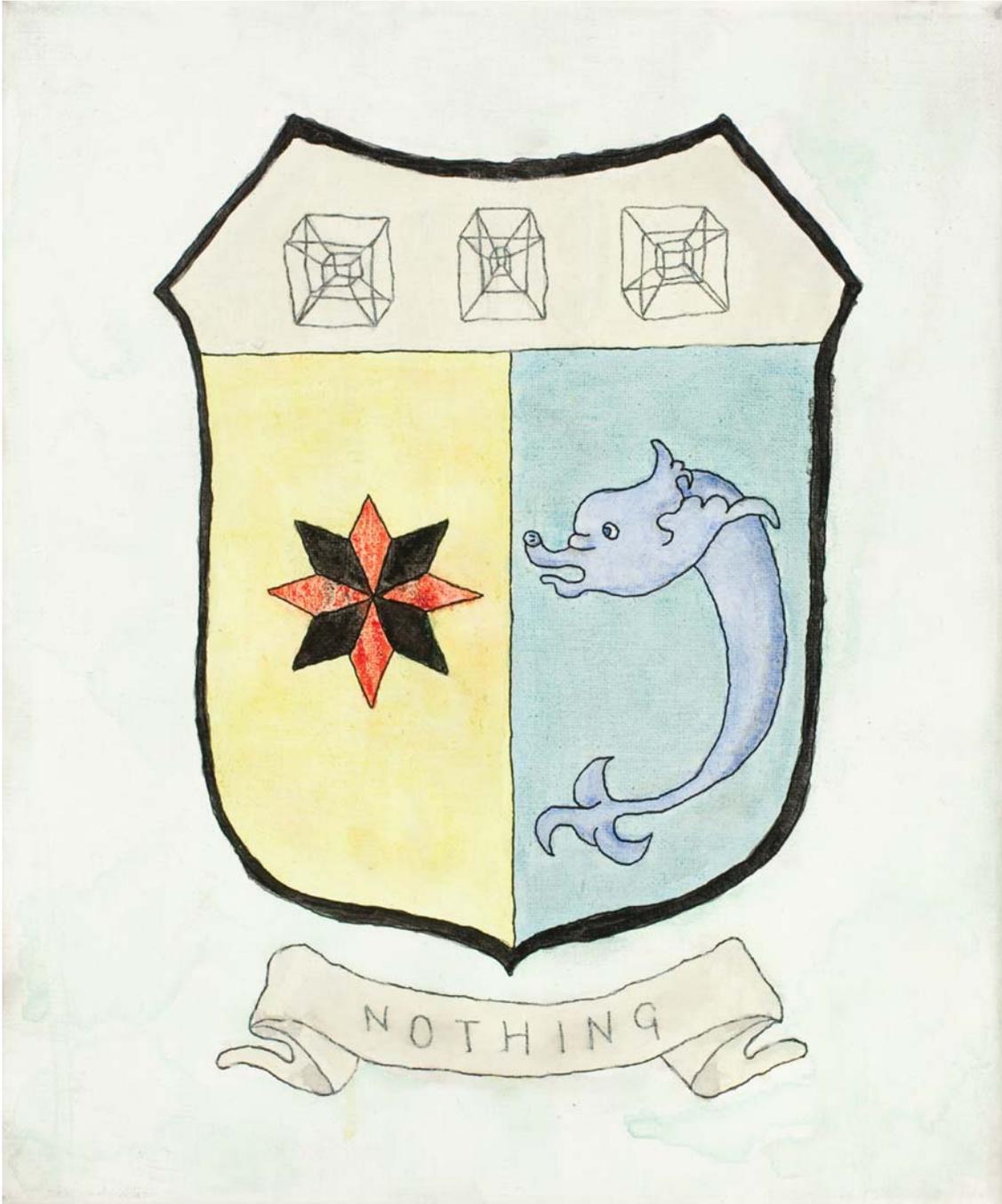
*Nothing*

ink, watercolour, and oil on linen

30 x 25 cm

Robert Heald Gallery

2011



*The Cauchi Wight and Bloody Mary*

(detail of the Cauchi Wight)

ink, watercolour, and oil on linen

30 x 25 cm

private collection

2011



*The Cauchi Wight and Bloody Mary*

(detail of Bloody Mary)

ink, watercolour, and oil on linen

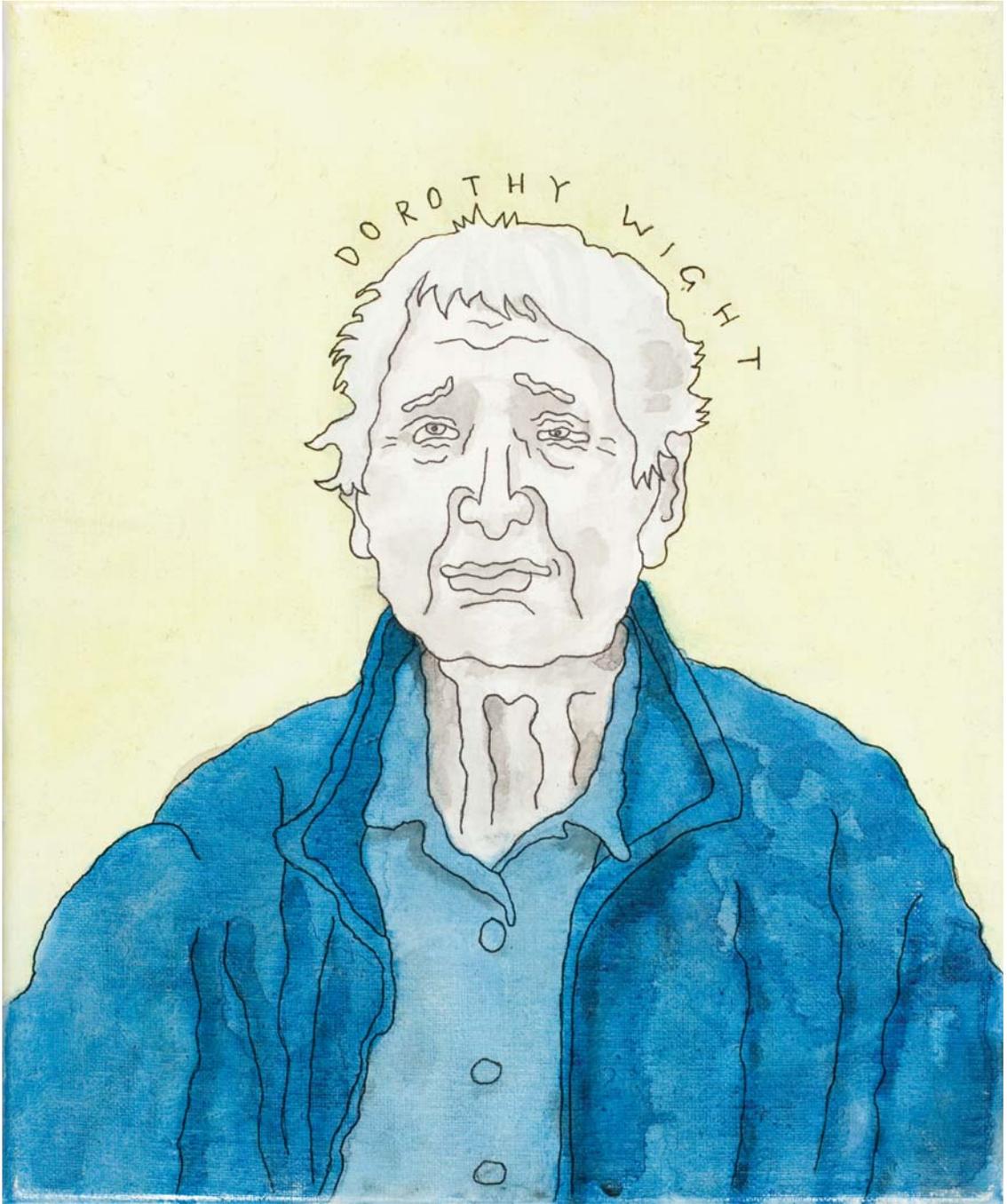
30 x 25 cm

private collection

2011



*Dorothy Wight*  
ink, watercolour, and oil on linen  
30 x 25 cm  
private collection  
2011





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