

# GRAHAM DAY

SELECTED WORKS 1969 - 2023

With commentary

Centralisation 1969

Sun Star 1970

Alphabet Star 1970

Dictionary 1971

Sri Cakra 1970-77

Directory of Rectangles 1970-73

Library of Babel (after Borges) 1974

Perspective Conventions 1975

The Aleph 1980

The Shape of Time 1985-8

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Moons of Jupiter 1998

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Chakra 2016

Heteroglossia 2000-2021

Self Portrait 2019-2023

## I. Centralisation 1969

Homage to the Hexagram No. 110

### Centralisation. A Recommended Ritual.

"The graphic representation of schemes of the Universe which are made in this manner serve, none the less, a Magic End, that of return, of Unification with the central point from which, as soon as it has been attained, is derived the omnipotence of him who has achieved this".

The Theory and Practice of the Mandala  
Giuseppe Tucci

Almost everybody has a base.

In addition almost everybody has a place that they regularly visit

The journey between the two is usually traversed by the most direct route.

Here follows an invitation; it consists of the suggestion that you choose between the two situations that one which you should wish as centric to the other which then becomes the first of the six periferal points.

Considering the journey between the one and the other as a radius connecting the two, comprehend the circle of this radius around the central point.

Determine the six points that this same radius would inscribe upon a circle,

that would result in each point lying equidistant from those adjacent to it and from the centre

This particular division of a circle suggests the figure of the hexagram, the six-pointed star, that which represented the world in ancient symbolism.

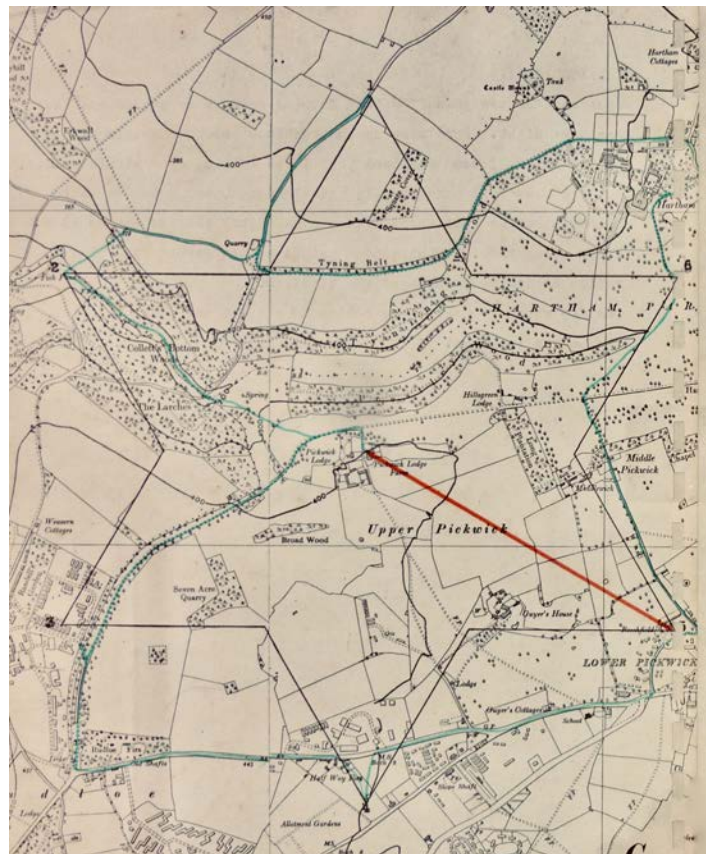
The true content of this work lies in the construction and consideration of this figure.

The six sites which envelope these points could be visited, either in person or by any form of communication, contemplation, etc.

Accompanying this sheet is a map illustrating the figure that was realised as a result of my activities during the winter of 1969/70.

Communication regarding any aspect of this invitation is welcomed.

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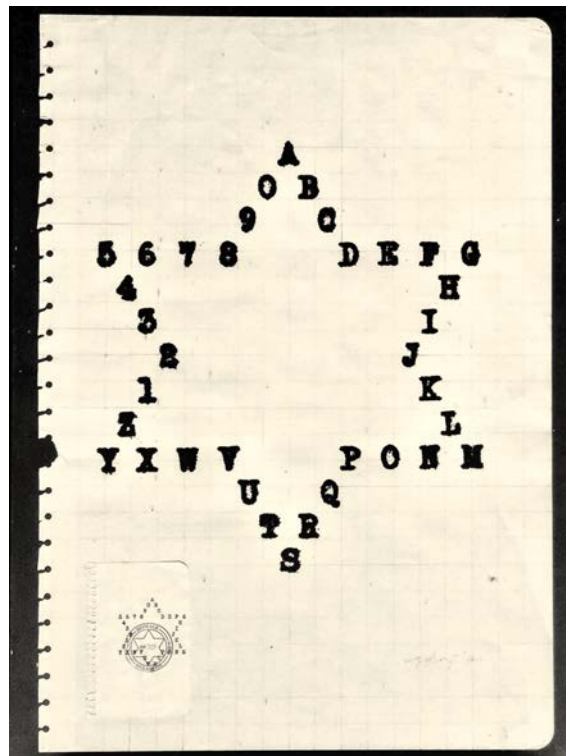
This early work derives from reading about Tantric meditative practice and combining such ideas with the image of a six pointed star that had interested me after reading Ouspensky's work *A New Model of the Universe* where the star is described as being a perfect interaction and balance between the three space dimension and the three time periods. Also I had moved to the countryside after only having known central London and wanted to establish myself in my new unknown location.

## 2. Sun Star 1970



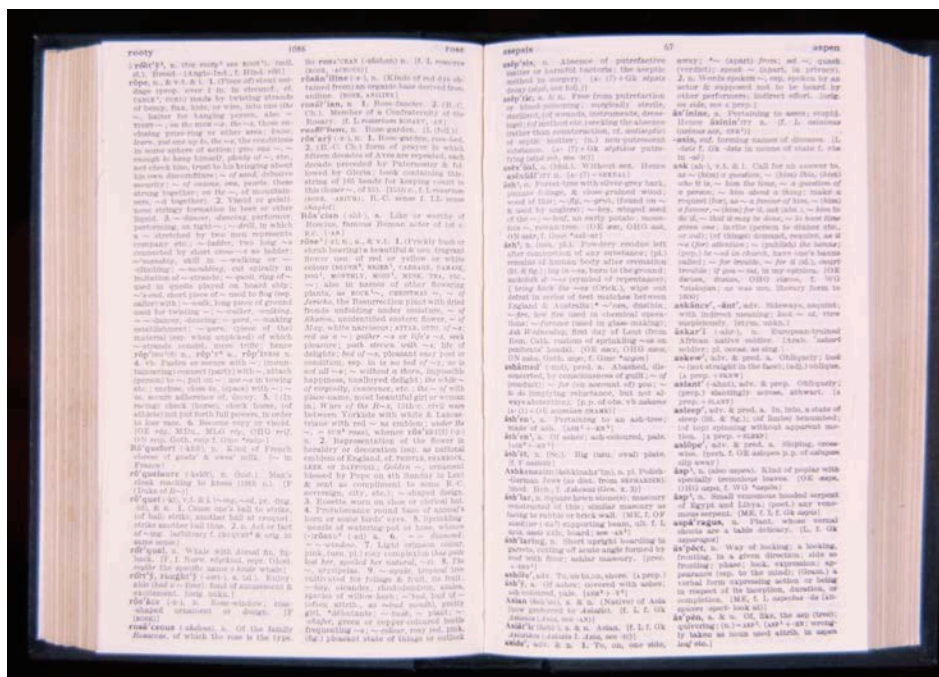
Working with the six pointed star I focussed on Ouspenski's dictum that "*we can never see a six pointed star*". I placed a cardboard cut out star on a sheet of fresh newsprint and left it in the sun for a couple of days, the unprotected paper darkened leaving the star bright, but on observing it you knew that it would catch up and disappear into the background if left exposed, the star was living, or maybe dying.

### 3. Alphabet Star 1970



Exploring thinking about the star being a completely unified perfect form led to me wanting to find a way to illustrate this. Using all of the letters of the English alphabet and the numbers 1-9, where anything and everything could be expressed seemed appropriate. Experimenting on my old manual typewriter I was amazed to discover that the exact shape of the star was built into it and came about by only moving the limited space and line adjustments. I wasn't surprised that the letters and numbers fitted the star exactly, it seemed as though the work was in the machine and just needed liberating. This was 1970, long before access to computers and image manipulation.

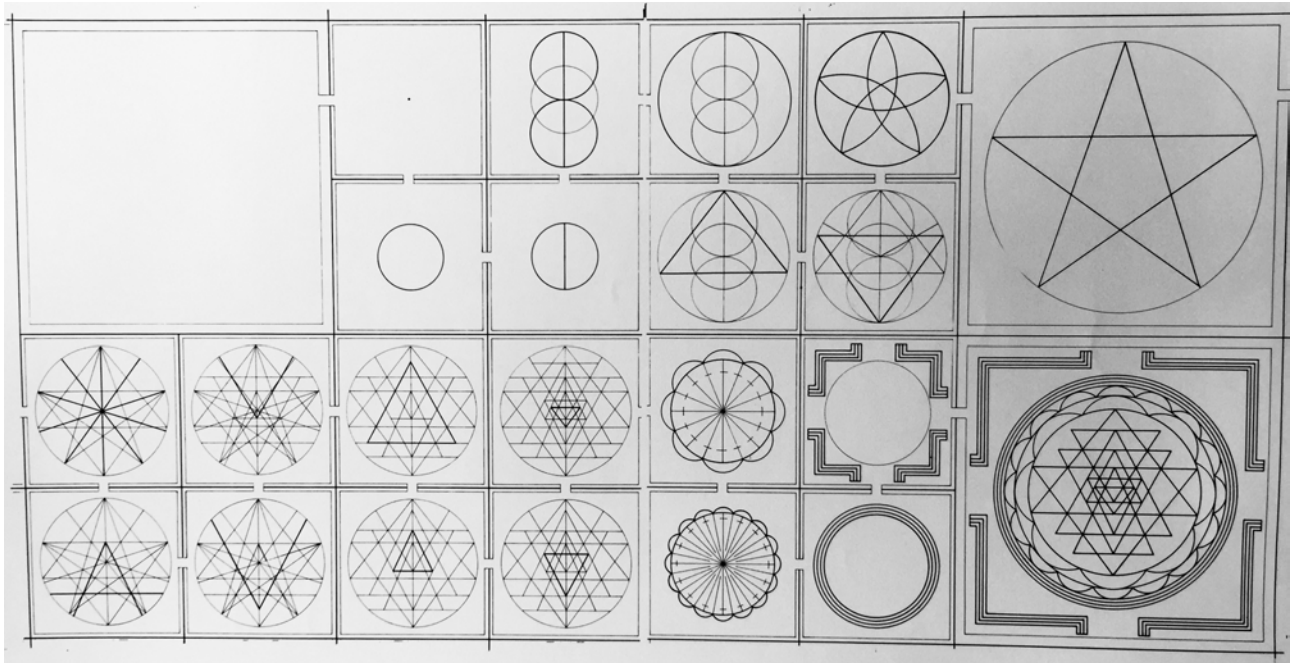
### 4. Concised Dictionary 1971





I was learning bookbinding and had to separate a sewn book to understand the construction and then rebind it. I thought of using John Cage's book *Silence* where it mentioned that Cage one day looking up the word music in a dictionary and noticed that the previous listing was mushroom which started him searching and eating fungi, one of which nearly killed him. I thought about the absence of intention and the arbitrary whims of chance. I chose the popular *Concise English Dictionary*, separated it into individual bifolios, threw them into the air a couple of times thoroughly mixing them then rebound it changing the title to *Concised*.

## 5. Sri Cakra 1970-77



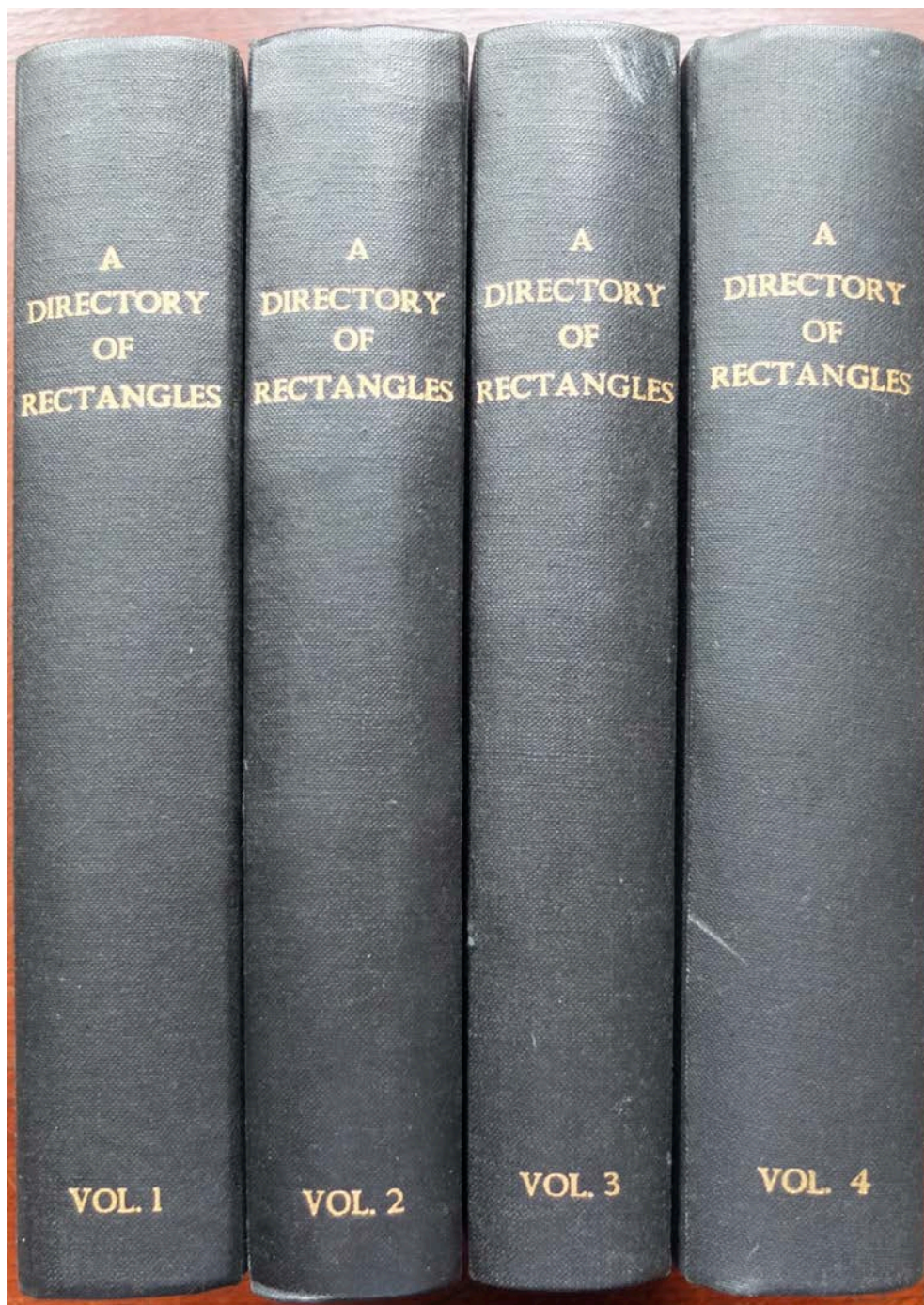
The Sri Chakra Yantra is an Indian meditative device that can be drawn on paper or metal. It consists of four upward pointing triangles and five downward locked in a precise arrangement surrounded by protective rings and a square enclosure with entrances on each side. To me it represented an elaboration of





the hexagram that had been the focus of my recent work. In the late (pre internet) 1960's there was very little information about its meaning or construction. I spent the next seven years working out and simplifying a method for drawing it accurately. Eventually in 1977 I printed and published my method of drawing it in a booklet that could be read in a western way with the image progressing from empty space to the complete image, or in the opposite eastern way, from right to left.

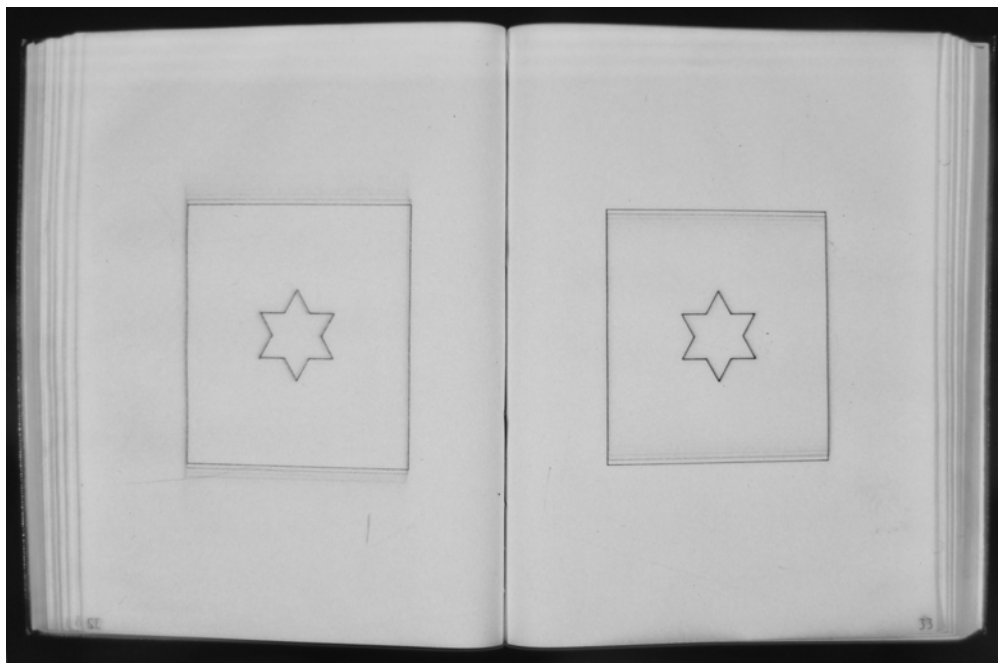
#### 6. A Directory of Rectangles 1970-73



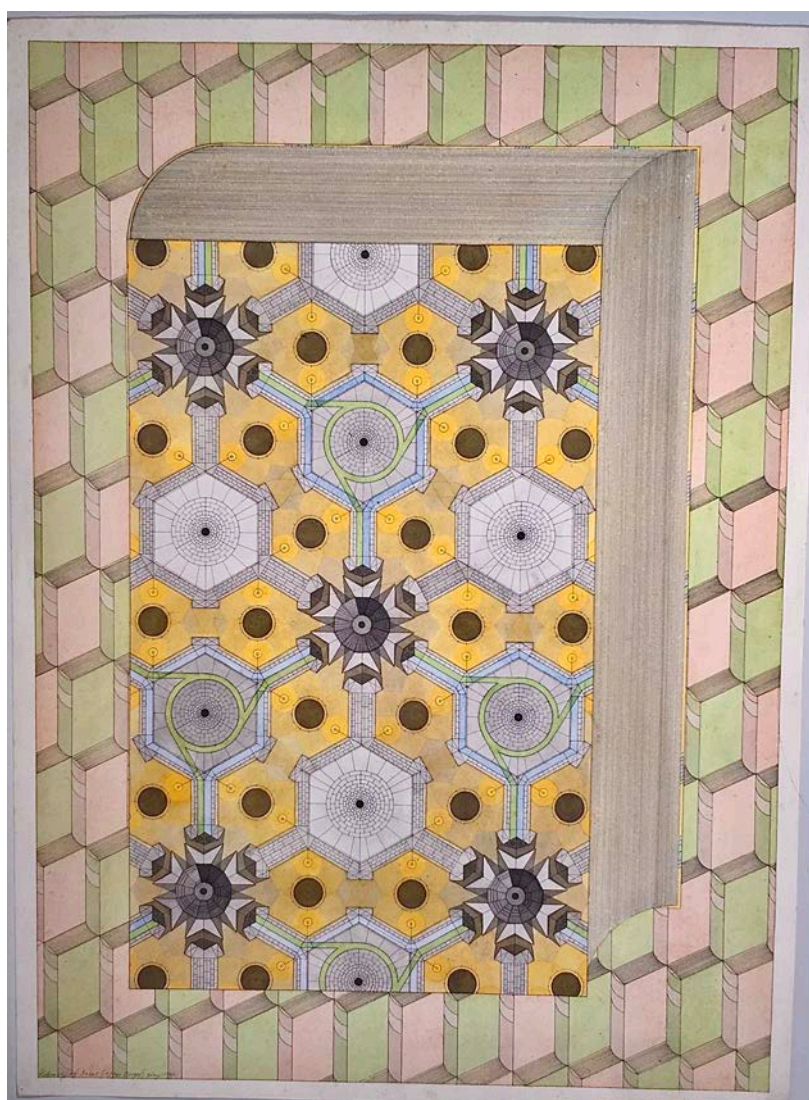
These four volumes contain two thousand ink drawings on tracing paper. Each page shows a six pointed star surrounded by a rectangle that reduces by two millimetres on successive pages. The purpose of this exhaustive sequence was to provide all of the possibilities of the relationship between the star and the



surrounding rectangle. The translucency of the tracing paper allowed the following pages to faintly show through. They were drawn ten pages per day.



7. Library of Babel (after Borges) 1974



This watercolour on handmade English paper is a possible visualisation of Borges' precise description of the library in his short story. The library contains all of the combinations of the letters of the alphabet, a number so huge it might as well be infinite.

## 8 Perspective Conventions. 1975



This suite of five watercolours depict the same scene in the five different perspective methods common to Western art and architecture.



9 The Aleph 1980



In his short story the Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges describes an object that displays everything. I have used the alphabet to suggest this. Arranged as a cube of three layers each with nine subdivisions, totalling twenty seven, which when stacked on top of each other hide the centre cube and show twenty six. Putting each of the letters of the English alphabet onto each square in a different font. Silkscreen in black and red oil based ink on paper mounted on a wood cube.

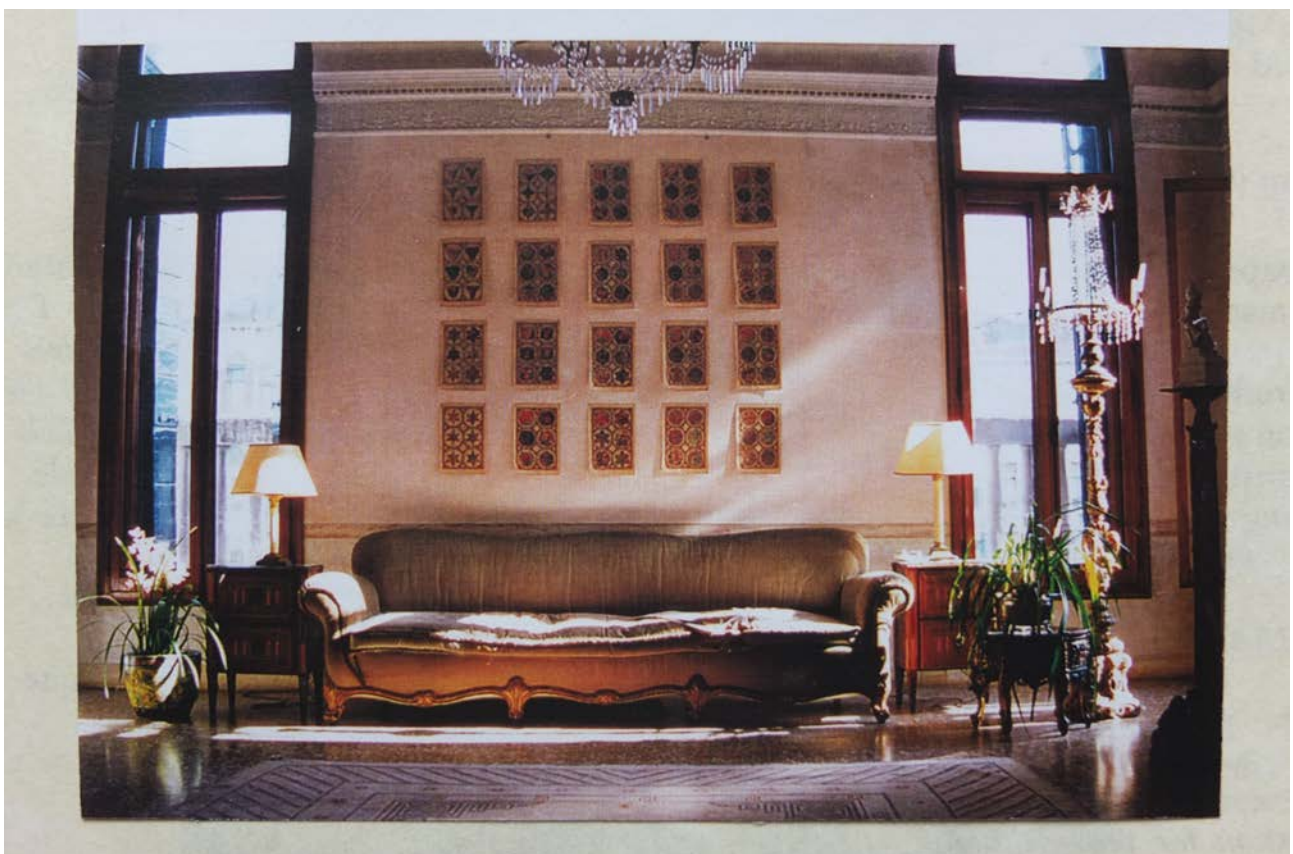
## 10 The Shape of Time 1985-88



Thinking about different methods of time management I made these paintings combining solar and lunar cycles. I took twelve common geometric shapes and divided their perimeter line into three hundred and sixty five units representing the daily divisions. Onto these I stuck in pins showing the full moons of each month of the particular year. I was seeking to find a geometric shape that would link the solar and lunar patterns.

Twelve paintings, gouache and metallic paints on Hannermule paper, contained in a portfolio with integral marbled title.

## 11 Perspectiva Corporum Regularium 1989-91







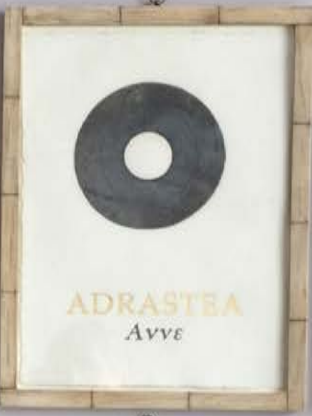
This work is a transcription from the book of perspective drawings of polyhedra by German Renaissance goldsmith Wenzel Jamnitzer, that were engraved by Jost Amman, published in 1568. I choose these famous illustrations as a coda to my research into the alchemical art of paper marbling that had occupied me for ten years. The facets of the shapes are marbled in different patterns, not by collage but by 'integral marbling' where selected areas are left unprotected by painted gum arabic masking that is washed off, the process repeated up to six times before the first colours are weakened by the later washing off of the gum arabic. Paper marbling, watercolour, ink, gold leaf on antique Cockerell paper.

## 12 The Moons of Jupiter 1998

These sixteen images depict people in my life to whom I am close. They are represented by a Chinese *bi* disc, a circular form found in Chinese burial sites from neolithic times onward. Their purpose is unknown. Made from jade, which is much revered, the circular shape, its central void and the intricate decoration on later examples are all laboriously drilled out. I gave them the latin names of the moons of Jupiter, which are characters from mythology and also their names in modern Greek, each with a number in white, these numbers arranged into the square of Jupiter where each row horizontally, vertically and diagonally add to the same total 34 which was my future wife's age when we met.

Paper marbling, inks, silver leaf, gold leaf, gouache, oil based silkscreen varnish on antique English paper, in custom made faux ivory frames.

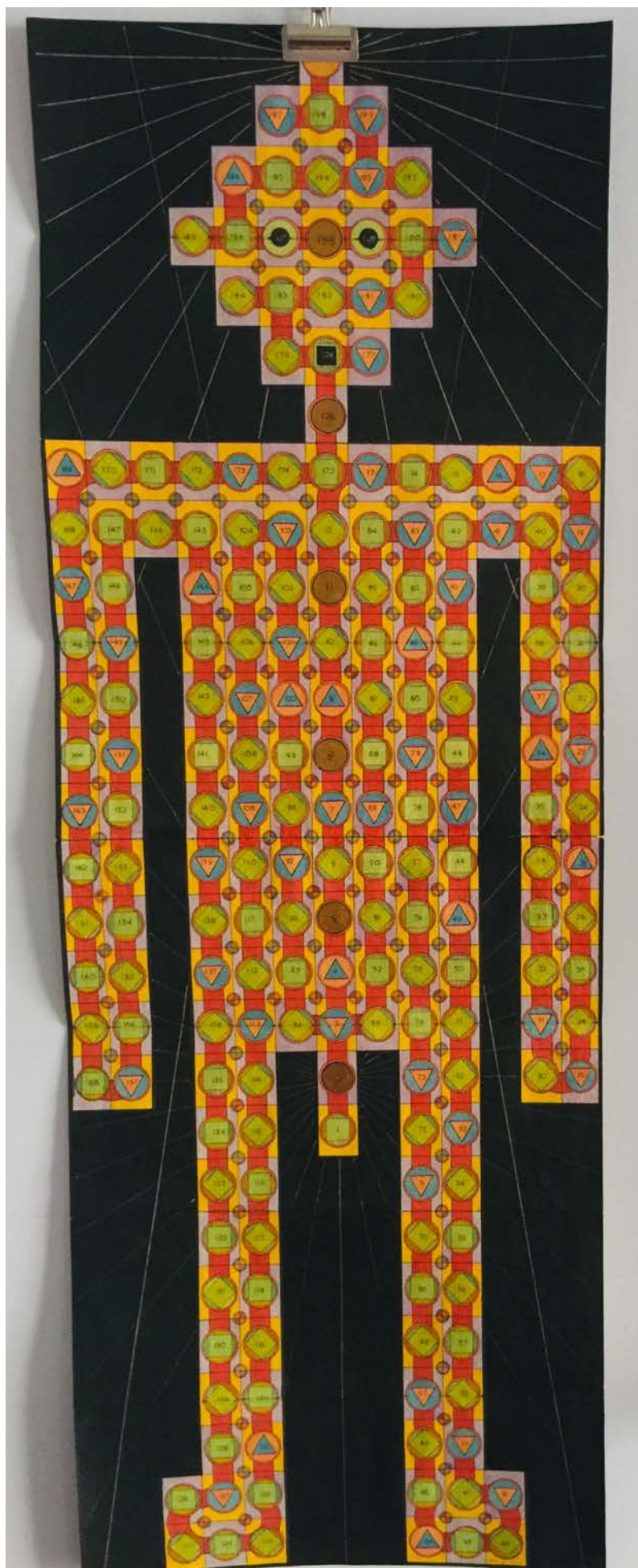






13 This group of objects, which all say the same thing in differing languages and calligraphy began when I was invited to exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art Tehran in Iran. Thinking about how Persian art and design had been influenced and formed by the east west cultural cross currents I decided to use text- Greek, Farsi, Chinese. Each saying in their unrelated letterforms "If you wish to be loved, love" a proverb attributed to the Roman stoic philosopher Seneca. The Greek was carved in marble, the Farsi a multicolored mosaic and the Chinese carved into wood and gilded. Just as the three works were about to be shipped to Iran in 2001 the two towers in New York were attacked (9/11). The exhibition was cancelled and the works, bereft of context, were put into storage. After a while it dawned on me to fill in the languages between the three already established. Each translation presented in an approximation of a national style. Paper, papyrus, vellum, textile, wood, marble, metal, paints, inks, gold leaf.







This painting is presented as a board game. Covering a male body, starting at the penis and ending two hundred moves later in the brain. The model is loosely derived from the Indian Jain images of the conception and depiction of the universe as a Cosmic Man or Woman, the Lokapurusha. My painting, played with dice like Snakes and Ladders progresses along the squares where prime numbers force you back a square, and square numbers push you forward a square, there are six golden squares, the Chakras that allow an extra throw of the dice. This and other related works were made when I was seventy and contemplating, just like the Jains- who am I, where am I going when I die, will my soul exist? Watercolour, inks, gold paint, gouache on paper, with box containing counters, dice and written rules.

15 Heteroglossia 2000-2021











EGAYOV  
PIHS DOOG  
YAD MAHARG  
DEVOLB  
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