

THE CONFINEMENT PAPERS
Recent Drawings by Mario Rivoli

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BIOGRAPHY

Mario Rivoli is a New York artist who has lived in Denver for 35 years, an artist of wide-ranging creativity, comfortable working with a variety of artistic media. In addition to his drawings, paintings, and posters, and book illustrations, he is a brilliant creator of sculptural assemblages which often marry both two- and three-dimensional elements within the same piece. His beaded flower constructions and floral arrangements transform this one-time kitsch activity into an art of sophisticated elegance.

Rivoli's work is in many distinguished private, corporate, and public collections, including those of Elton John, the late Leona Helmsley, The Whitney Museum of Art in New York, The Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe, and Kaiser Permanente in Denver. He has exhibited at galleries in Colorado, New York, Maine, and California. He curated a show of his various "Collections of 100 Things" at the Art Museum in Pueblo, Colorado. Mario's work was included in Julie Dale's landmark book "Art To Wear," and in the 2020 show "Off the Wall: American Art To Wear" at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

After graduating from High School of Arts in 1961 Mario took a job doing apartment layout diagrams for a real estate company. He stayed with it for a week, and has been on his own ever since...not rich or famous, but earning a living as an artist in many media, as a leading dealer in Bakelite jewelry, and as the proprietor of a Denver antiques shop.

In March 2020 Mario suffered a serious stroke; as he recovers he has returned to drawing. The new drawings are very different from his earlier work. Done in colored pencils they are imaginative, bizarre, funny, brilliantly colored, and technically assured.

ARTIST STATEMENT

This was Mario's Artist Statement for an Exhibition of his work at Republic Plaza in Denver in 2014:

My very early life living with mom of the East Side of Lower Harlem in New York City was very easy, involving a local murder or two, and forever an adventure. Recalling this sounds like Charles Dickens: the cobblestone pavers on Second Avenue, the old Italian women with their toy shovels and pails picking up manure from under the horse-drawn carts.

My "Greatest Show On Earth" was mom waking me at pre-dawn to delight me with "The Elephants Are Coming!" Marching downtown to Madison Square Garden for the Circus was a line of elephants linked trunk and tail, with showgirls riding atop in full feather costumes, waving and blowing kisses...WOW!! Musclemen lifting weights on caged wagons with a glimpse of wild jungle cats. A pillow was placed on the the window sill for comfortable viewing.

But the best adventure was the rare trip to visit the Godparents in the Bronx, Aunt Titzie and Uncle Louie. They lived across the street from the Bronx Zoo. Aunt Titz. ie and Uncle Louie called me Mahdioochie, the diminutive of Mario. They were a dear Italian couple, he wirh his high-waisted belt, she with her constant plea to EAT, EAT, EAT! On a small round table covered with a stained pink tablecloth stood a seltzer bottle, a bottle of home-made red wine, and a group of small jelly glasses - mine was the one with the circus theme design.

I looked forward to a very diluted spritzer - light pink - to go with the cookies. We would stay for early dinner, after which Uncle Louie would pull up his pants higher than before and ask

if I wanted to go for a walk around the Zoo, which I always anticipated with great excitement.

He would ask "What should we find today?" He would say "what about a red clown and a blue elephant?" I would agree, and we were off. One of his sayings was "Always look down..looking up is for religious people, but looking down is how you always find things." Sure enough, under a piece of trash was a red clown... further up the street was a blue elephant. Much to my amazement he was always as surprised as I was. It took me years to realize that he had planted the tiny treasures hours before, and cleverly guided me to the discoveries....WOW!!

Aunt Titzie and Uncle Louie were the essence of love and caring for me, which truly shaped my aesthetics and influenced me so very early in my life. Many decades later I still to find that rusted bottle cap perfectly squashed by traffic. The simplest things give me so much joy! Making a disparate family is what you see on these walls...organized chaos, contained madness, whatever... it is my Art.

Because of my limited situation I have started to eye things like the tops of salt and pepper shakers (as stencils for circles and eyeballs...) the bottom of the sugar container, the laminated menu card (for straight edges) the opening of the pencil box for a perfect oval and hot chocolate residue as a stain to randomize the pure white paper (latest treat is dragging my fork in it)... the outcome is always a surprise and sparks an idea! Recently I asked the kitchen for a dinner plate to make an outline of a large circle, they asked if I wanted a salad plate as well ! Everything and anything for art! Tops of desks, nurses stations (surgical tape , a loose marker, med containers , cardboard....

ANIMALS



Tiger With Monkey Mask





Scared-E-Cat



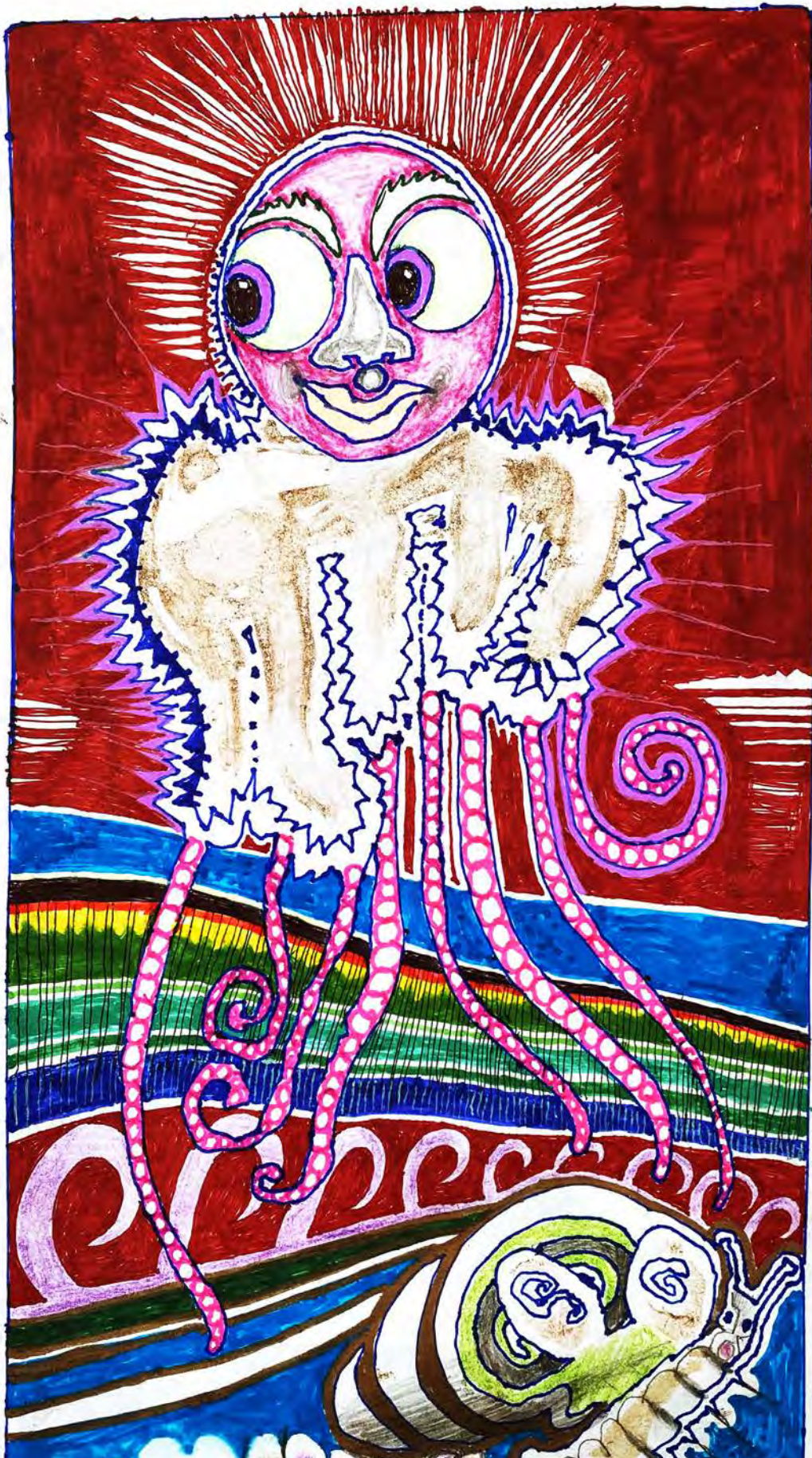
Decorative Panel for a Children's Book



Sock Monkey



Yenta



The Octopus and the Squid



Killer Squirrel

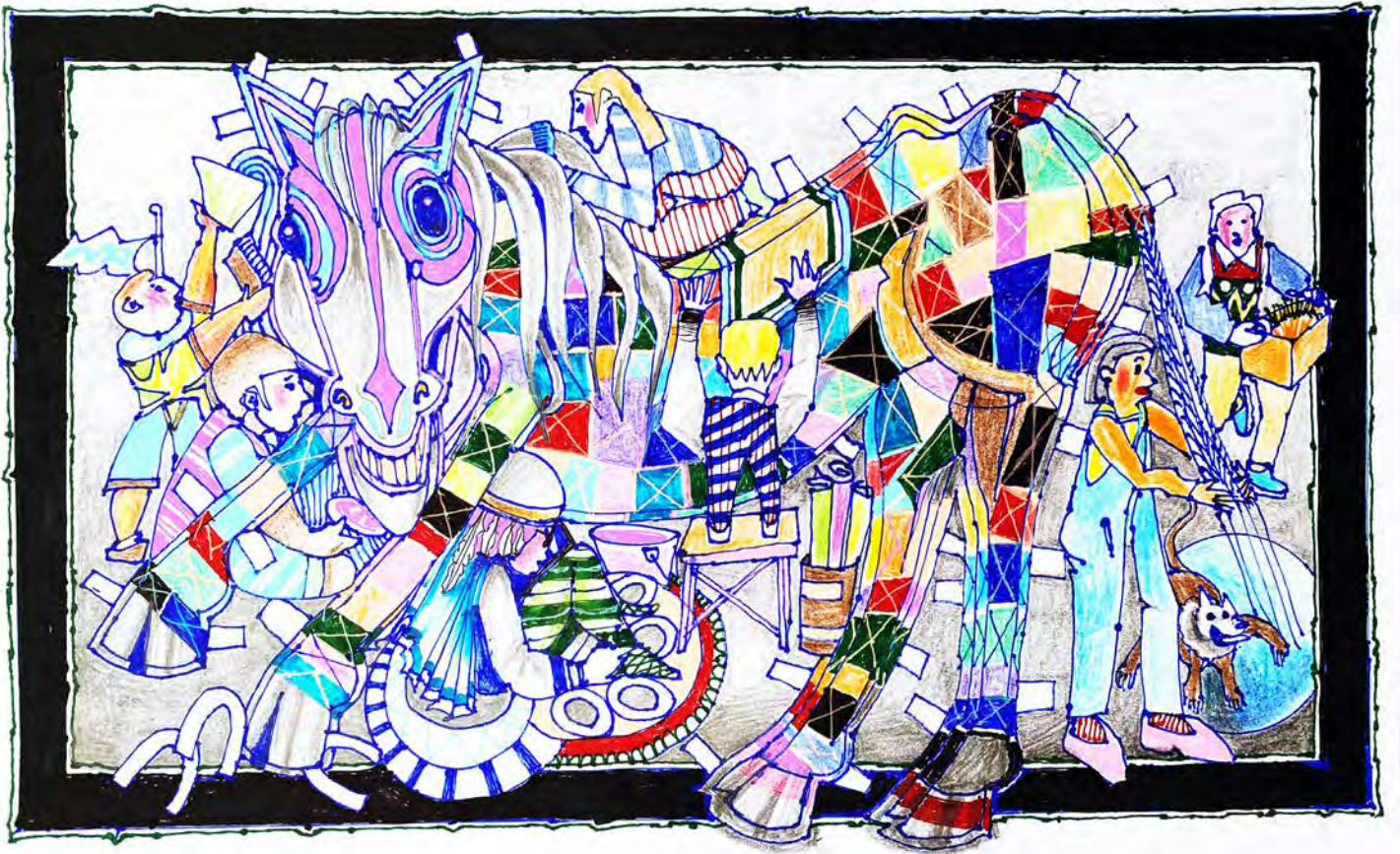
Verhinder 20/20



Dragon Sitting on its Tail



Creature



Patchwork Horse With Assistants



Andriani/2020

Thirsty Lion Cub

BIRDS OF A FEATHER



Baby Birds Eating Worms



Bird With Fancy Feet

MARVOH/2020



Feather Preening



Dapper Bird



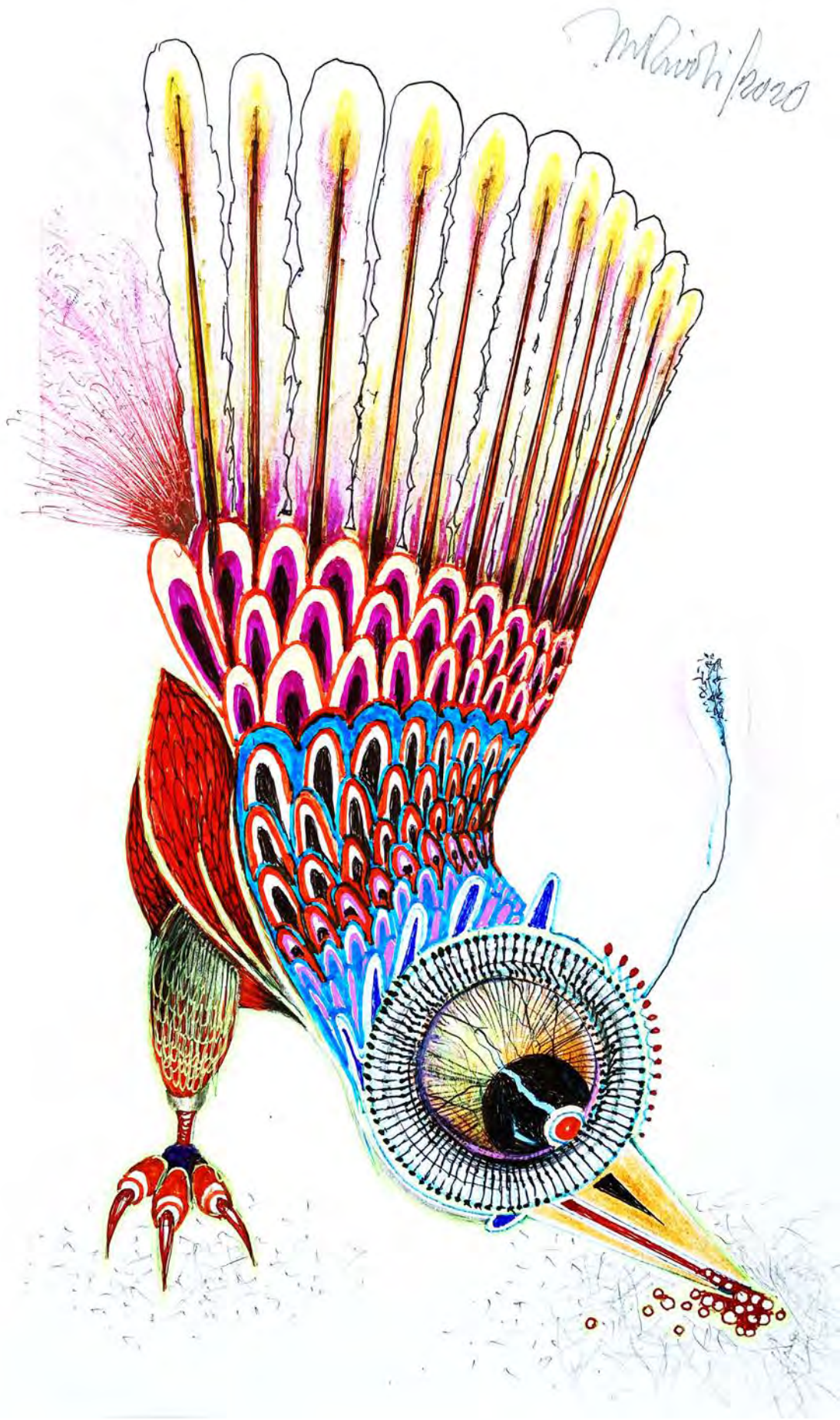
Anxious Owl



Proud Poppa



Owl



Cranberry Eater



Ostrich Frenzy



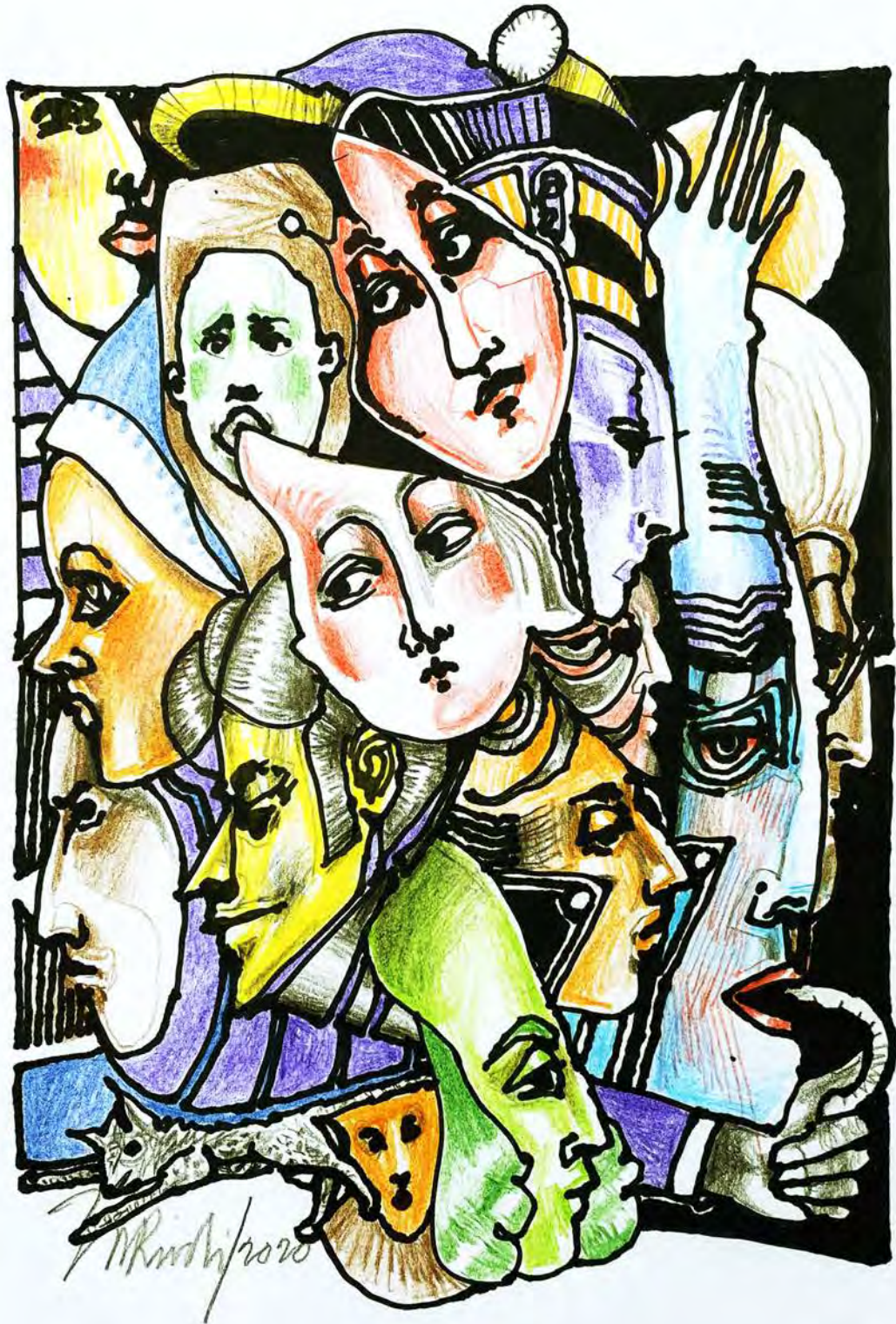
Statesman Bird



Bird Playing Twister

FANTASY CHARACTERS





Cast of Characters



Characters

Lovers

M. P. W. / 2020



April 2020



Masks



Male Models

M. P. 2020



Living Tree



Ghosts





Evolution



Family Pets





Dynasty

IMAGINARY FACES



Jointed Man Wearing Many Hats

MRwidi/2020



Dragon Cap



Princess With Head Jewelry



Face Flowers



McRivoli/2020

Contemplation



Pierced Girl



Three Masks



NurKivdi/2020/Rm 29



Untitled #6

MYSTICALS



Diety Eating Weeds



Mushroom Heads



Rehab Diaries



Rooster Ride



Party Animals



Party Animals



Holding Hand



M. Pirodi/2020

They All Came



Fantasy Affairs

W. Rivoli / 2020 / Km 29



Interpretive Dancer



Striptease Artist

PORTRAITS



Bird Spotter - Never Let a Peacock See its Feet



Hunter



Girl Waiting For Schoolbus



Hectoro



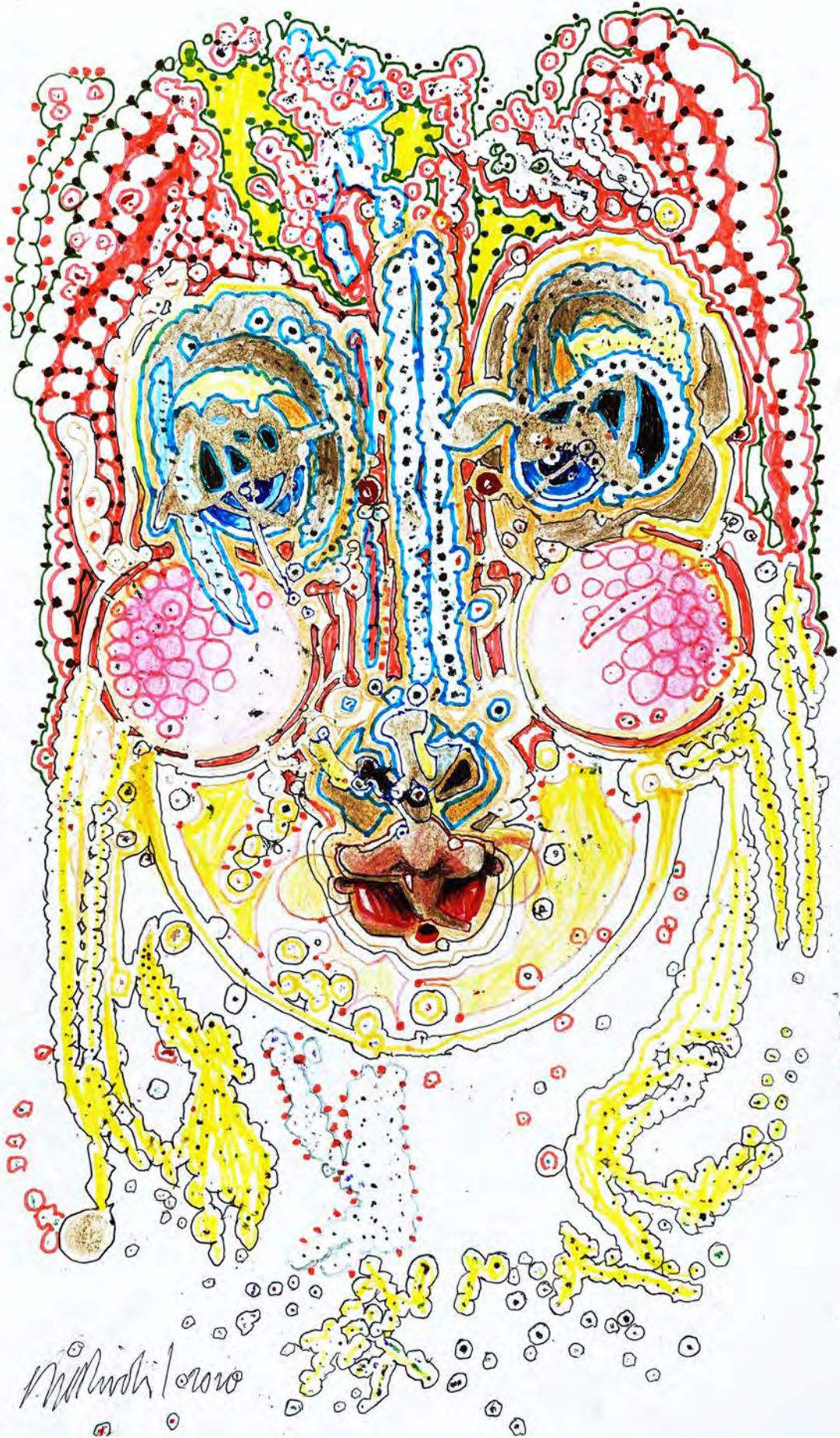
Sweaty Man With Tattoos



Yasmine is Expecting



Girl Circa 1910



William L. Lewis

Portrait of Goldilocks

WHIMSICALS



Toys and Amusements



Centaur and Friends



Space Babies

M. K. 2020



Scrap Doll



Girl with People in her Head



Fashion Statement



Kimono



Baby Geisha



Pekingese Stripper



Egyptians



Carnival

100 copies of this book have been numbered
and signed by Mario Rivoli

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to my friends who helped to produce this book. Thanks to the Staff at Vibra Rehabilitation Hospital of Denver and Wheatridge Manor Care Center for providing me with basic materials for the earliest drawings, to the staff at Amberwood Court Rehabilitation and Care for their continued support of my work, to Michael Horsley and Michelle Wecksler for photographing the drawings, to Rollin Leonard for undertaking all aspects of the design and production of the book, to Diane Georgopoulos for categorizing and ordering the images, to Edward Pollack for coordinating everyone's efforts and undertaking the publication and distribution of The Confinement Papers, and to my many friends everywhere who have given me love, support, and encouragement throughout.