



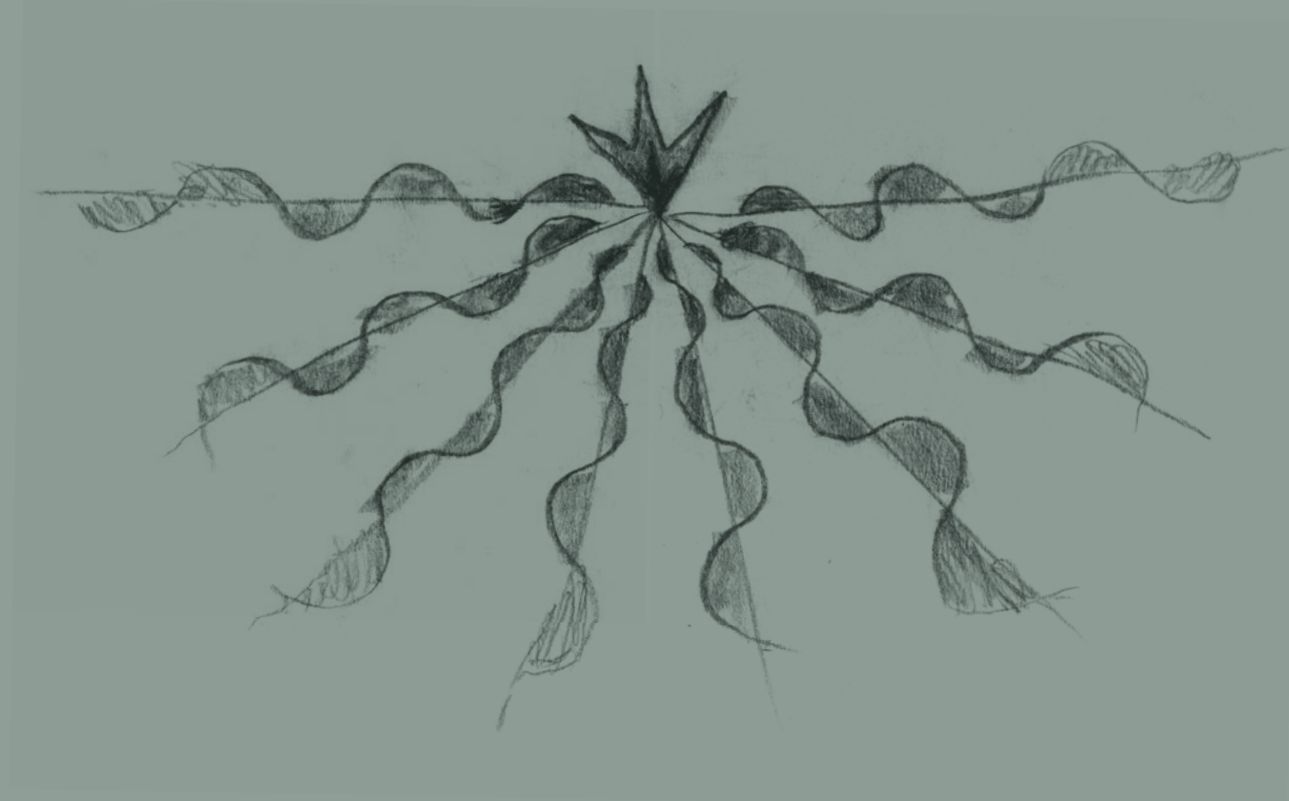
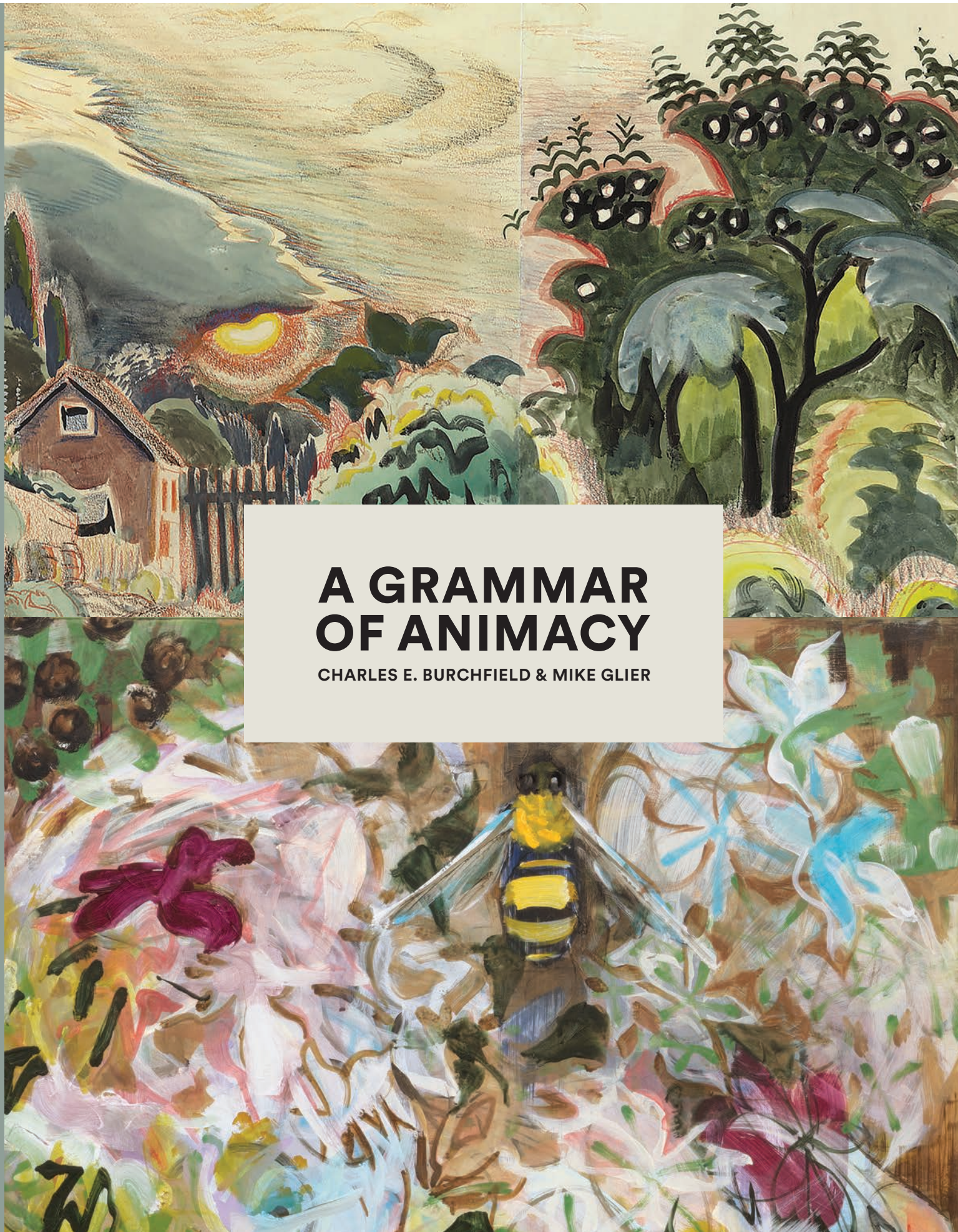
A GRAMMAR OF ANIMACY

WEEKLY & GLIER

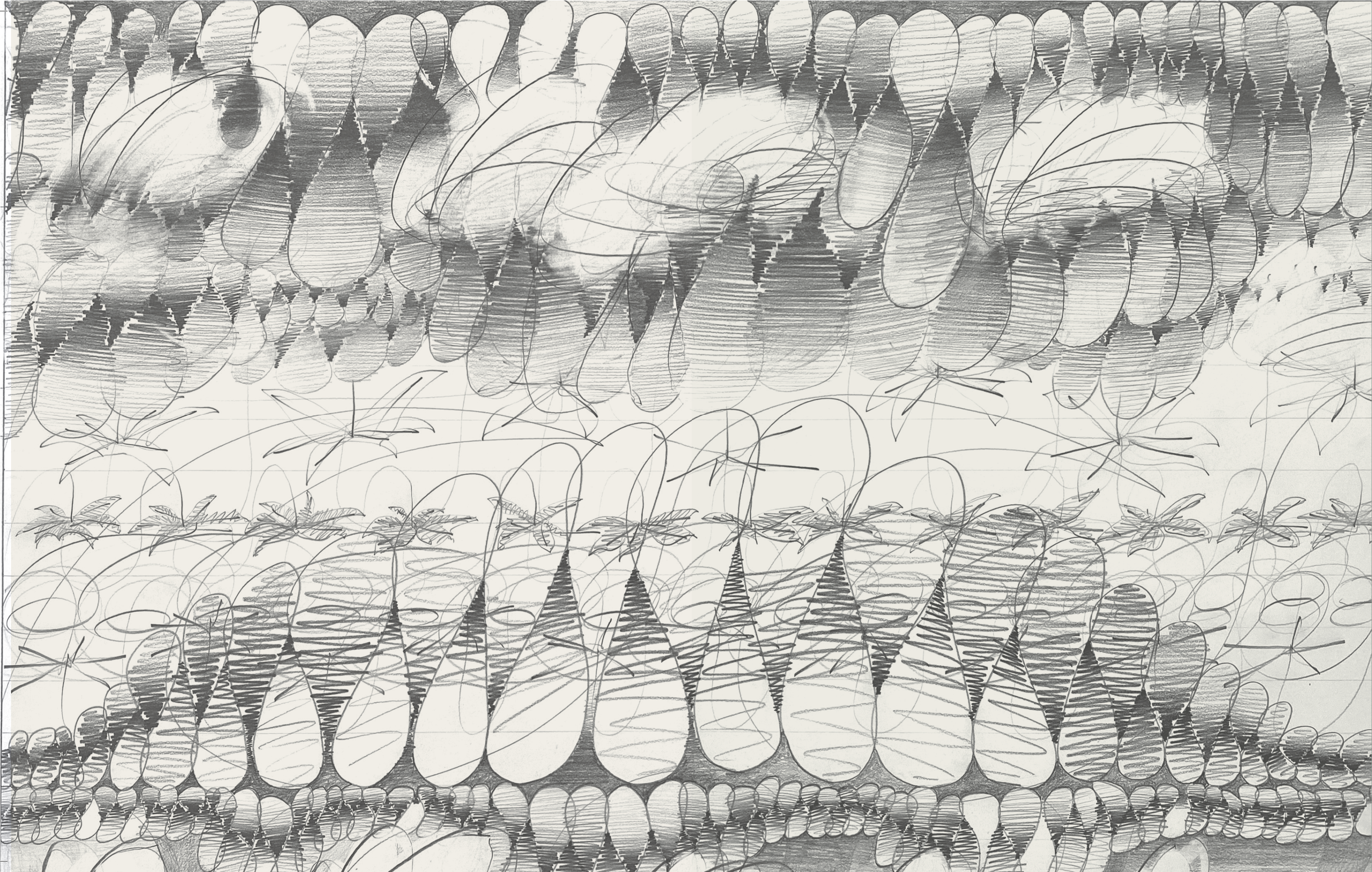


# A GRAMMAR OF ANIMACY

CHARLES E. BURCHFIELD & MIKE GLIER







cover top  
Charles E. Burchfield, *Sweet Pea Mood* (detail), 1917 (reworked 1954–55)  
Watercolor and crayon on joined paper, mounted on board, 23¼" x 33¾"

cover bottom  
Mike Glier, *Bees Finding Pleasure v.2* (detail), 2023  
Acrylic and charcoal on panel, 40" x 30"

cover flap  
Charles E. Burchfield, *Studio Doodling*, undated  
Conté crayon, graphite, colored pencil, and crayon on paper, 11" x 17¼"

cover flap interior  
Mike Glier, *A Grammar of Animacy v.7* (detail), 2021  
Pencil on paper, 22½" x 30"

Published on the occasion of the exhibition  
**A GRAMMAR OF ANIMACY:** *Charles E. Burchfield & Mike Glier*  
presented at the Burchfield Penney Art Center  
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The Burchfield Penney Art Center, accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, is a museum dedicated to the art and vision of Charles E. Burchfield and distinguished artists of Buffalo-Niagara and Western New York State. Through its affiliation with SUNY Buffalo State University, the museum encourages learning and celebrates our richly creative and diverse community. The Burchfield Penney is supported in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and Erie County. Additional support is provided by Buffalo State, the Elizabeth Elser Doolittle Trust, the Mary A. H. Rumsey Foundation, the James Carey Evans Endowment, and Burchfield Penney members and friends.

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# **A GRAMMAR OF ANIMACY**

**CHARLES E. BURCHFIELD & MIKE GLIER**

**Curation and dialogue by  
Burchfield Scholar Nancy Weekly & Artist Mike Glier**

Exhibition Catalogue 2024  
Burchfield Penney Art Center



Hi, Nancy.

Hello, Mike.

Why is this  
exhibition titled  
*A Grammar  
of Animacy?*

*A Grammar of Animacy: Charles E. Burchfield & Mike Glier* is part of an ongoing series exploring the connections between Burchfield and living artists. The Center invited Glier to the museum for a residency in 2022 to explore Burchfield's art more deeply, and from that opportunity this exhibition evolved. Resident Burchfield Scholar Nancy Weekly and Glier curated the exhibition together to explore thematic connections through visual groupings as well as through conversation, which can be accessed in the exhibition by QR code or in this exhibition catalogue.

The title, *A Grammar of Animacy*, comes from a concept created by Robin Wall Kimmerer in her book, *Braiding Sweetgrass*. As a botanist and citizen of the Potawatomi Nation, she describes the linguistic attributes of the Potawatomi language as rich with verbal phrases rather than simple nouns to describe the ceaseless exchange between all living things. This parallels how Burchfield and Glier both use an abstract visual language, derived from plein air observation, to describe an intimate, reciprocal relationship between themselves and their subject, nature.

Burchfield died fourteen years after Mike Glier was born, so they are generations apart, but they both engage a full range of the senses, improvising with color, motif, and repetition to evoke abstract representations of sound, smell, and touch to describe the dynamic, multisensory experience of perception. It is here, in the act of translating the sensory experience that nature provides, that the two artists model a kind of reciprocity between artist and subject that reflects a vision of the natural world as partner rather than resource for exploitation.

Mike Glier, *Farm Dogs Barking at a Distance* (details), 2020  
Pencil on paper, 11" x 14"





Charles E. Burchfield, *Untitled ("to Earl Wolfe")*, undated  
Graphite on paper, 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" x 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Expanding the ideas and impact around the vision and work of Charles Burchfield is core to the Burchfield Penney Art Center's mission. We are thankful that support from our founding director, Dr. Edna M. Lindemann, provides us with resources to host residencies for artists to expand their knowledge and understanding of Burchfield. Through this work, we are all enriched.

*A Grammar of Animacy: Charles E. Burchfield & Mike Glier* is presented through generous support from the Charles E. Burchfield Foundation. For their meaningful support in memory of Harriet and Mortimer Spiller, we gratefully acknowledge Lora Spiller, Jill Underwood, and Harley Spiller.

Additional support comes from The W.L.S. Spencer Foundation, The Cameron and Jane Baird Foundation, Claudia Sloan, AG Rosen, and the Avis Charitable Fund. The support of these sponsors allows us to create publications like this, adding to the rich conversations that involve Mike Glier and Charles Burchfield's work.

Scott Propeack

*Director*

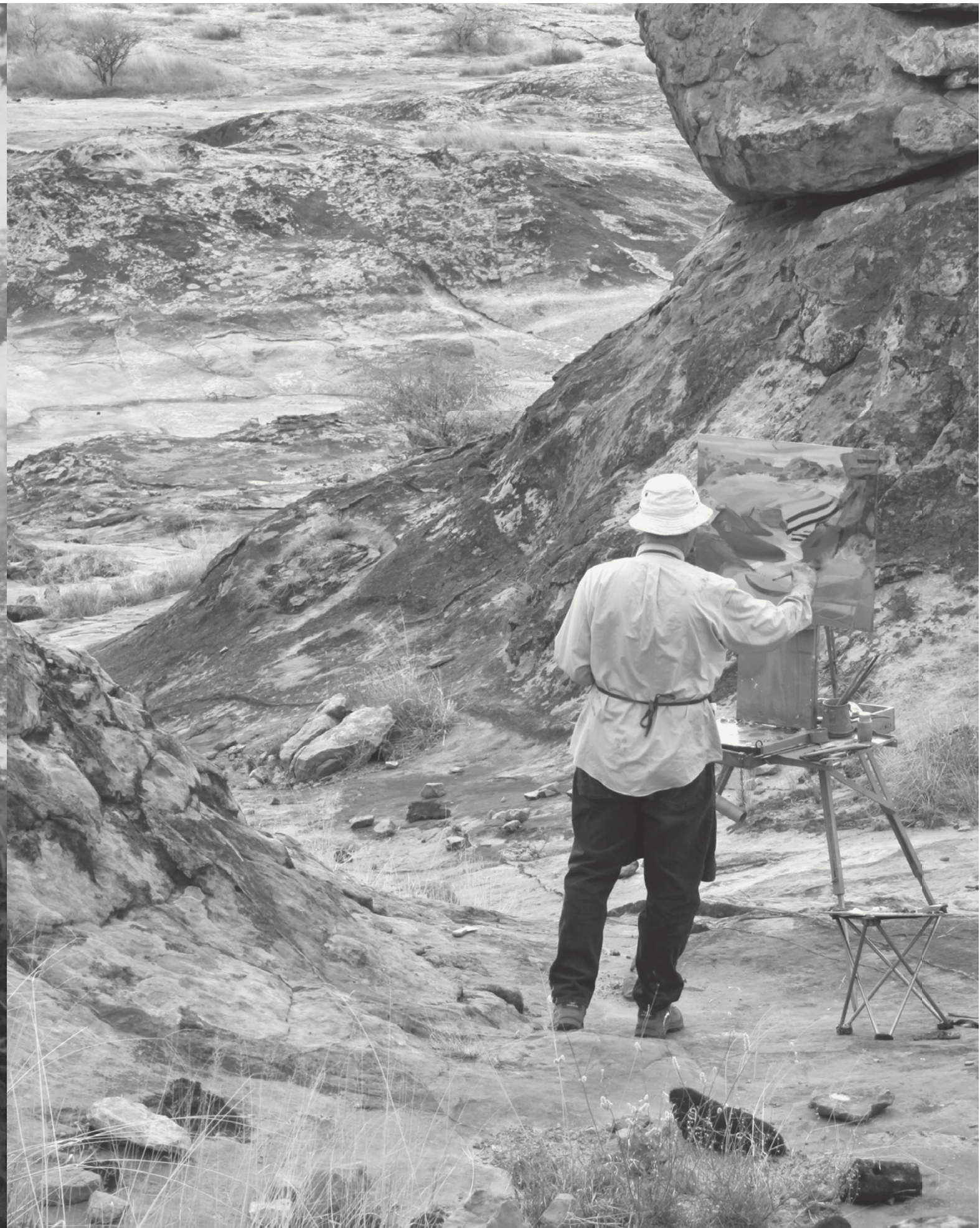
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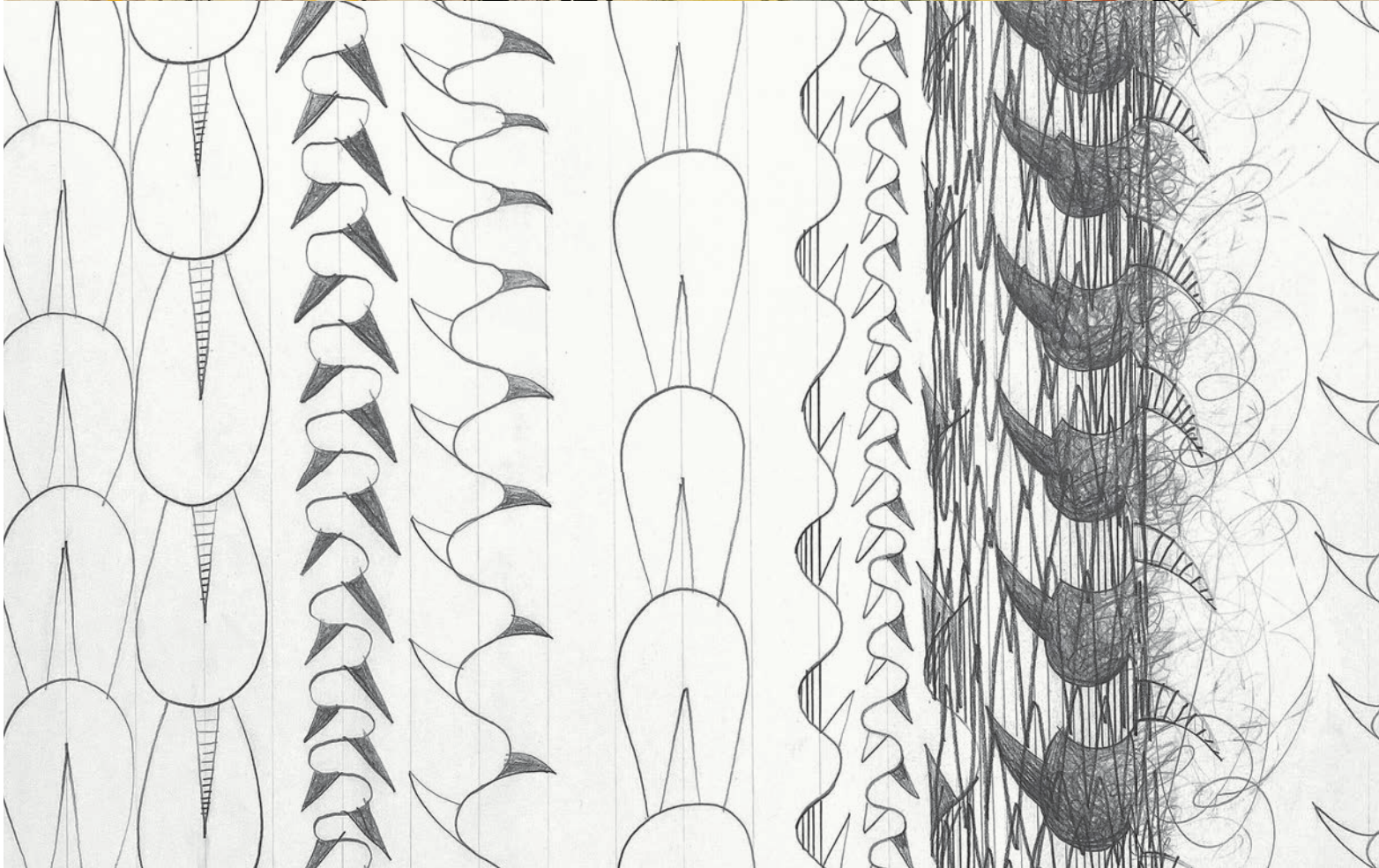
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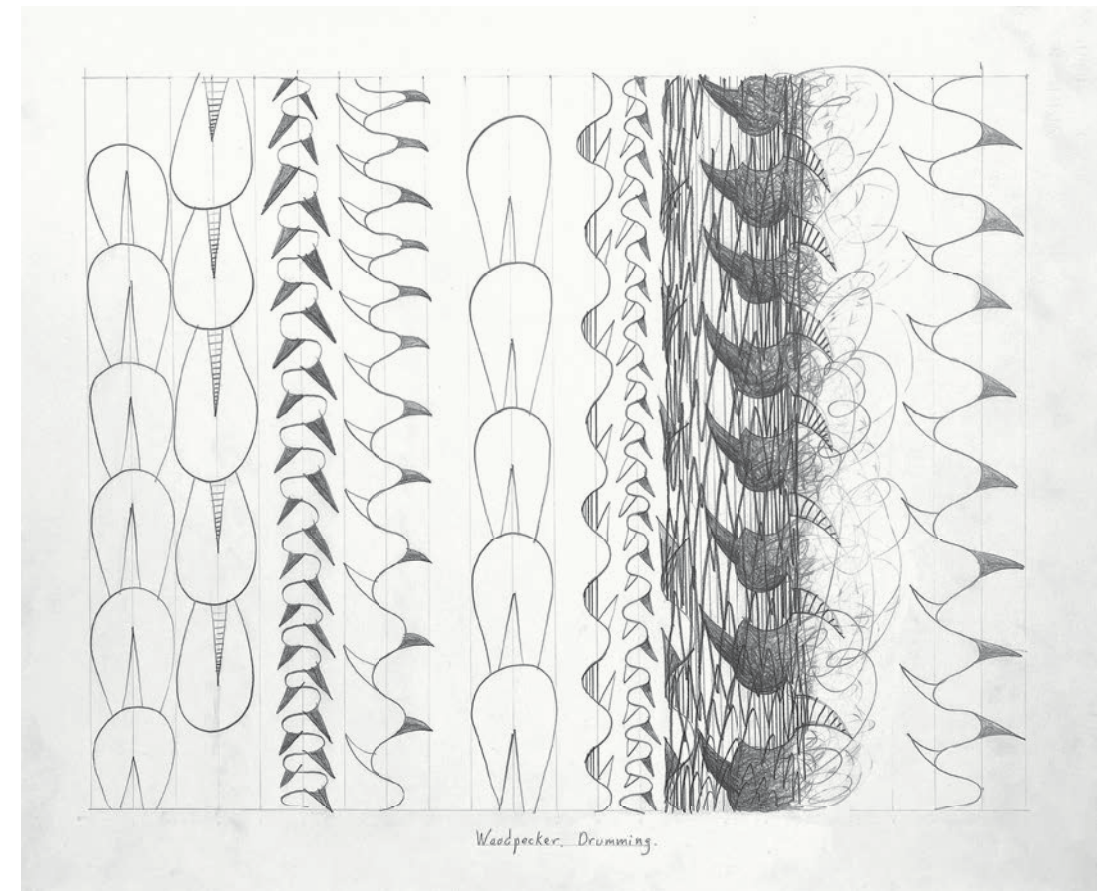
## A GRAMMAR OF ANIMACY

# 01





Charles E. Burchfield, *The Red Woodpecker*, 1955  
Watercolor on paper, 22" x 17"



Mike Glier, *Woodpecker Drumming*, 2021  
Pencil on paper, 20" x 26"



... endless  
verbs to  
describe the  
ceaseless  
exchange  
between  
all things.

**MG** Hi Nancy.

**NW** Hello Mike. Why did you suggest “A Grammar of Animacy?” for the exhibition title?

**MG** *A Grammar of Animacy* comes from a favorite book, *Braiding Sweetgrass*. The concept was created by Robin Wall Kimmerer, botanist and citizen of the Potawatomi Nation, to describe the linguistic attributes of the Potawatomi language. She noted that 70% of the words in Potawatomi are verbs, compared to English in which the ratio is 30%. There are verbs in Potawatomi for “to be a hill,” “to be red,” and “to be a long sandy stretch of beach,” which is very different from English, a noun-based language, that seems very well suited for a culture of things. Kimmerer described Potowatomi as a “grammar of animacy” since it has few nouns to indicate uniqueness, but endless verbs to describe the ceaseless exchange between all things. I thought it was a good title to summarize the process that Burchfield and I go through to make pictures.

**NW** Kimmerer’s book is so moving. I’ve recommended it to many people and found that several artists, writers, and naturalists admire it as well. I’m so pleased she gave us permission to use *A Grammar of Animacy* as our title. The ensemble of drawings on the entrance wall are all examples of interpreting non-visual experiences of landscape into visual forms. Since we decided to let visitors have fun finding examples of scent, touch, and sound on their own, let’s explore the exhibition and talk about your drawing, *Woodpecker Drumming*, that we paired with Burchfield’s synesthetic watercolor, *The Red Woodpecker*. Will you explain how you infuse the concept of a “grammar of animacy” in your artmaking?

**MG** I made my woodpecker drawing while sitting under the low branches of a tree at the edge of a bright meadow in Northern New Mexico. I was watching a coyote hunt for mice when I heard a woodpecker drumming very loudly in the distance. Soon, another woodpecker responded and the two of them carried on like percussionists at a jazz club smack-down. While they were performing, I drew the sound, using a lot of pointed shapes to represent the impact and intensity, but also waves to describe the undulations, and balloon shapes to capture the echoing volume. Zigzags in a column represent tree bark that was being hammered to shreds as I listened. This process is like building a grammar to communicate a special moment, but with visual abstractions instead of words.

This process is like  
building a grammar  
to communicate  
a special moment,  
but with visual  
abstractions instead  
of words.





# 02

## MOTIF, REPETITION, AND RHYTHM





Charles E. Burchfield, *Sun and Snowstorm*, 1917  
Watercolor, gouache, and pencil on joined paper, 19½" x 27"



Mike Glier, *Ice Splitting Light v.2*, 2023  
Acrylic and pencil on linen, 45" x 72"



Repeating  
elements  
and varying  
the intervals  
between  
them is a  
good way to  
represent  
the pulse  
of the living  
world.

**MG** This Burchfield, *Sun and Snowstorm*, makes me cold! I was an art teacher for a long time, so forgive me if I nerd out and talk about how Burchfield made me shiver, involuntarily. First of all, he uses converging lines at the bottom of the picture to swoop me right into the middle of the maelstrom, where I stand flanked by two trees, whose contours are broken by blasts of swirling strokes. The swirl is a motif, which repeats throughout the bottom half of the picture, suggesting that there is no place to hide from the cold wind. There is another motif in the background, a short spiky wiggle in blue-green, that creates a restless background. This same anxious wiggle is repeated in the central yellow sunburst, which glows with harsh winter light. It's typical of Burchfield to settle into a few motifs, the swirl and wiggle in this case, and then repeat them rhythmically throughout the composition. Few artists use motifs as effectively to create continuity and movement in their pictures. On this account, he is the equal of Rembrandt and van Gogh.

**NW** Burchfield's motif for blinding light during a blizzard was meant to convey "a feeling of continuous roar & clash" where "we don't know where to look." The sun battles the wind's fury in a vortex of snow. A few years ago, when Burchfield's granddaughter Peggy visited during a wild winter storm, we stood in front of this painting for a selfie because it epitomized what she experienced trying to travel to the museum.

**MG** *Ice Splitting Light* is as cold but not as furious! I used an acute angle arranged radially in three dimensions around a center point to create a simple crystal. Like the swirls and wiggles in *Sun and Snowstorm*, the picture is built from a motif that is repeated with varying rhythms. Repeating elements and varying the intervals between them is a good way to represent the pulse of the living world.

Charles E. Burchfield, *Tree and Queen Anne's Lace* (detail), 1963  
Charcoal and Conté crayon on paper, 19<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" x 13<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>"







## THE ASAHI ILLUSION

03





Charles E. Burchfield, *Afternoon in the Grove*, July 11, 1916  
Watercolor, gouache, and graphite on paper, 14" x 20"



Mike Glier, *Frost Settling*, 2023  
Acrylic and charcoal on linen, 36" x 72"



When  
fumbling  
around  
with paint,  
I noticed  
that white  
will glow  
when  
surrounded  
by a light,  
saturated  
yellow.

**MG** Charles Burchfield swallowed the sun it seems, since many of his paintings glow from within. Although the effect is otherworldly, the experience is entirely biological and rooted in our brains. When fumbling around with paint, I noticed that white will glow when surrounded by a light, saturated yellow. This seemingly supernatural effect is heightened when the yellow, itself, is surrounded by dark hues. The yellow brings out the blue notes in the white creating a complementary contrast, and the surrounding dark hues accentuate this effect through a contrast of value, which Joseph Albers illuminated in *The Interaction of Color*. There is, however, more to this illusion than Albers can account for. *The New York Times* recently published a report, “This Optical Illusion Has a Revelation About Your Brain and Eyes,” by Richard Sima, about how the brain anticipates situations in which your pupils constrict, such as looking at the sun through a filter of leaves. (This effect is known as the Asahi illusion.) Notice how bright the sun seems to be in *Afternoon in the Grove*; brighter than other white areas, even though they are actually the same white. By emulating the light on a woodland walk, Burchfield takes advantage of our brain’s tendency to make assumptions on what it is seeing based on past experiences; our pupils constrict in anticipation of bright light, and therefore we experience bright light even though nothing in the real world has changed. Burchfield did not know of the Asahi illusion, but he knew how to use the principle to create an experience of illumination with all the philosophical and spiritual notions attached.

**NW** I’m sure you’re correct that Burchfield would not have known the term “Asahi illusion,” but he certainly tried to represent the sun’s brilliance and the moon’s glow in his paintings. In *Afternoon in the Grove*, a pulsing sun pierces dense, black treetops. Rings of yellow, red, gold, and green create a strobing effect. Near the ground, a narrow line of golden sunlight shimmers through a rhythmic pattern of slender tree trunks to enhance the effect with a cinematic flicker of movement. Having broken through the lacy treetops, the sun catches the outermost leaves of a maple in the foreground. Our eyes dart back and forth through the triangular highlights, further animating the scene. Turning to your painting, I notice it also engages the Asahi illusion in the flickers of frosty light. How did you conceive of frost as such intertwined, prismatic ribbons?

**MG** Frost is water vapor that transforms directly into ice, skipping the liquid stage. As the vapor comes in contact with cold surfaces, it leaves fabulous crystal patterns on grass and ground. “Fabulous” is a funny adjective to use, since it often describes extravagant luxury, like a Fabergé egg, but frost colors and forms are easily the equivalent of a decorated egg! This process is called deposition, or “frost settling” in the vernacular. So, I made an image of prismatic bands of chilly layers of air drifting to the ground, sparking light as they settled.

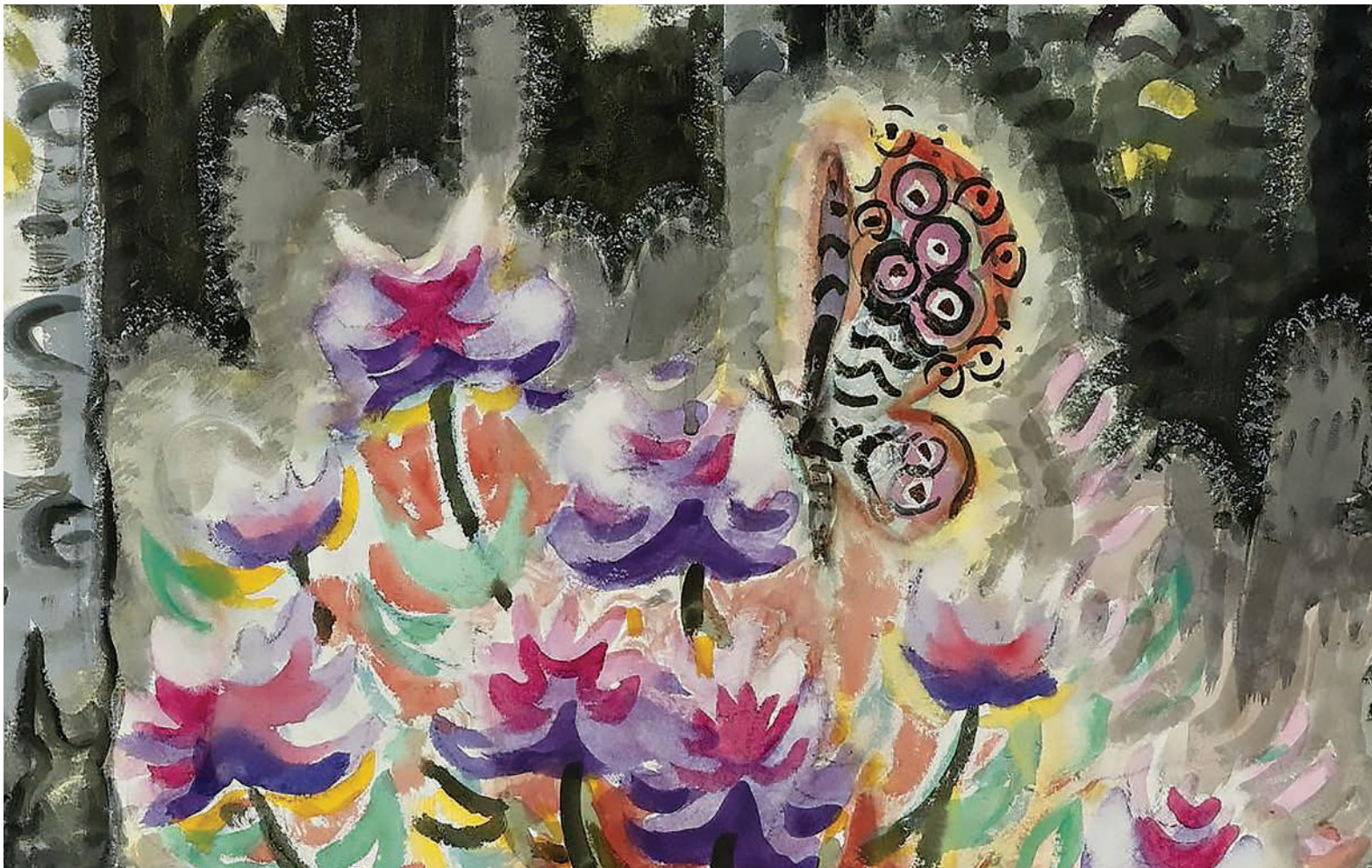
**NW** Burchfield also tried to depict snow as “Winter Diamonds”—a fantasy-land vision when bright sunlight on a very still morning sets a snowy landscape into a treasure trove of billions of sparkles. His iridescent icicles by the entrance to a dark cave in *Retreat of Winter* glint with tiny spots of green.

**MG** Few of us have lots of diamonds and jeweled eggs, but anyone can enjoy frost! Burchfield is wonderful at challenging materialistic values, insisting that common natural events are the most extraordinary.

**NW** Indeed, in 1962 he declared: “There is nothing commonplace in the world of nature—The shadow cast by a weed on the ground is as elemental and wondrous as the most violent thunderstorm.”

Few of us have lots of  
diamonds and jeweled eggs,  
but anyone can enjoy frost!





# 04

**MODERNISM,  
BEAUTY,  
UGLINESS,  
AND MAGIC**





Charles E. Burchfield, *A Dream of Butterflies*, 1962  
Watercolor on joined paper, 32" x 39"



Mike Glier, *The Evensong of Animals*, 2023  
Acrylic on linen, 48" x 84"



... an image  
so powerful  
he was  
compelled  
to paint it.

**MG** I am very excited to have *A Dream of Butterflies* in the exhibition!

**NW** Me too! I have never seen *A Dream of Butterflies* in person. Dream imagery like this is so vivid and joyful, the brain's way of manifesting and intensifying actual experiences. Charles and Bertha Burchfield's serendipitous trip to the countryside on June 22, 1962, reflects a plausibly influential event. They packed a picnic lunch and ventured to a quiet spot. He sets the stage by noting: "We enjoyed watching the various insects busy here—orange-tan and brown skippers, 4 or 5 of them; tiny young grasshoppers; a miniature tree frog, and beautiful small dragon-flies with invisible wings, rich cerulean at the head graduating to metallic emerald blue-green at the tail, the brilliant color cut by narrow segments of dark gray—these were a delight to watch." Not only was this visually idyllic, but lilting sounds also enriched their experience. "From the depths of the woods close by a wood-thrush sang intermittently. Once a 'blue' (butterfly) fluttered in erratic flight past us." This resonated in his unconscious mind because he dreamt of "Albino" Monarchs—an image so powerful he was compelled to paint it.

**MG** This painting is modern and so beautiful. On the first count, it's clear that Burchfield's design sensibilities are modernist in that he limits volumetric forms in favor of flat shapes and creates the illusion of depth by overlapping forms and softening edges and contrasts as he develops deep space. Linear perspective is left at the door and replaced with dramatic changes of scale to suggest spatial relationships. But like all good modernists of the twentieth century, he plays with these variables in unexpected ways, like making the butterflies and the flowering plant enormous in relation to the trees!

**NW** Burchfield was first identified as a modernist in April 1930, when Director Alfred H. Barr, Jr. gave him the first solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art. Established November 7, 1929, MoMA was "the first institution anywhere in the United States to devote itself exclusively to Modern art." The exhibition focused on his early watercolors from 1916–1918. Barr admired how Burchfield's "romantic qualities or vices" were overshadowed by strong design, conviction, and youthful inventiveness.

**MG** Ha, "vices"! High Modernist critical language was bracing!

**NW** *A Dream of Butterflies* demonstrates how that aesthetic continued. He resists being a realist because there is so much more to the experience that mediates the senses and enters a more symbolic realm. In this work, he sets up a pattern of black woodland depths dancing across a stand of beech trunks. Cascading golden leaves move rhythmically in counterpoint to the butterflies. Looking closer, note how the eye patterns and radiating crescents on butterfly wings mimic tree eyes and leaf edges, and the linear articulation of flowers and stems that float into the air. Even the grass quivers.

**MG** *The Evensong of Animals* is also beholden to modernist principles of design, and like Burchfield, I'm totally happy moving from traditional representation to abstraction when it feels right. On this front, Burchfield looks a bit ahead of his time, since he ignored 20th-century pressures to conform to modernist style, and pursued a visual style that tripped lightly through the conventions of representation and modernism, choosing flexibility over conformity.

**NW** Tell me more about what you are representing.

**MG** My painting began on a spring night when the peepers in the pond in front of my house were in full chorus. It was a full-throated mating song, loud enough to travel up into the sky. I imagined the sound floating up into space, past the atmosphere to travel forever. My imagination is wrong, of course. Sound waves need a medium like air, and space is a vacuum. Nevertheless, I continued with the fantasy and began to think about all the sounds that animals make as they prepare for the transition from day to night, and the great chorus of growls, snuffles, roars, and tweets that rise into the sky.

**NW** You both represent imaginary scenes. While Burchfield's depends on viewers being drawn in by identifying with its exuberance, you challenge them to suspend reality in order to realize wider implications.

He resists  
being  
a realist...



Magic is  
a way for  
humans to  
understand  
and have  
agency in  
a chaotic  
and often  
hostile  
world,  
so why not  
use it to  
prevent  
more  
chaos and  
destruction?

**MG** Both pictures in this comparison are fantasies formed in observation of the natural world; the Burchfield is beautiful to my eye, and I tried to make mine beautiful as well. But beauty is a troubled subject in modern art. The argument, greatly simplified, goes something like this: The ancient Greeks established an equivalency between physical beauty and moral perfection. A symmetrical face and a well-proportioned body were physical manifestations of virtue and order. This fallacy was transmitted to the Roman era and then to the Renaissance and persists into the present, not as marble statues of graceful Venuses and hunky Davids, but as a tool of capitalism, which uses beauty to seduce the public and sell fantasies.

But beauty, like a storm, is amoral and apolitical. It can be used by capitalists, fascists, or communists alike to promote ideology. Some have proposed that ugliness, by virtue of it being the opposite of beauty, is morally superior, and that ugly art is virtuous. Horse manure!! Ugliness can also be used to manipulate and promote hateful ideology. Art that is abject, chaotic, and ugly is important, since it can embody human experience, but it is not inherently virtuous!

The third painting in this group, *When the Last Monarch Leaves New York This Painting Will Shake and Moan*, definitely uses the beauty of the monarch butterfly to sell my ideology!

**NW** Your message about the monarch butterfly is sure to connect with viewers concerned about climate change. The monarch has become iconic in representing fragility and vulnerability, the proverbial canary in a coal mine. As someone fortunate enough to have witnessed a spectacular “butterfly tree”—when literally thousands of monarchs cover a single tree to rest during their migration from North America to Mexico—I am attuned to their threatened existence.

**MG** I don’t believe this painting will shake and moan; I don’t believe in magic, but in this painting it seemed fair to employ the power of this primordial, human delusion to fight for preservation of the natural world. Magic is a way for humans to understand and have agency in a chaotic and often hostile world, so why not use it to prevent more chaos and destruction?



Mike Glier, *When the Last Monarch Leaves New York This Painting Will Shake and Moan*, 2023  
Acrylic on panel, 36" x 48"





## WAVEFORMS

05





Charles E. Burchfield, *Light Coming into a Woods*, 1954  
Watercolor on paper, 39½" x 29½"



Mike Glier, *Fox Listening*, 2022  
Acrylic on panel, 36" x 48"



The ovals  
are a motif  
derived  
from  
studying the  
movement  
and sound  
of water  
through  
boulders in  
a shallow  
river.

**MG** Nancy, waveforms are ubiquitous in Burchfield's work. What do you think they represent?

**NW** I think of Burchfield's waveforms as continuity. They appear as representations of the landscape's evolution over millennia, light waves floating through mist, nature's essential curvilinear form, sound waves from distant rippling streams, birdsong, insect choruses, and spring peepers—each a form of energy.

**MG** If the wave is a manifestation of energy that courses through the natural world, *Light Coming into a Woods* brings us closer to understanding the forest as a dimensional field of atoms vibrating at different frequencies. I think Burchfield, the animist, knew this intuitively. The lively marks and permeating motifs that animate his pictures express his deep understanding that everything—rock, air, water, plant, and muscle—is alive and intermingled, and that boundaries between things are simply misperceptions on our part due to the inadequacy of our perceptual apparatus.

**NW** *Fox Listening* has both linear waves and waves of multicolored ovals. What captures the fox's attention?

**MG** In *Fox Listening*, I used the wave to suggest several things, including cool air circulating, the shape of the river behind my house, and most importantly, the sounds that are engaging the fox. The ovals are a motif derived from studying the movement and sound of water through boulders in a shallow river. The fox appears twice in the picture, once in close-up and once at a distance, sitting on a riverbank. I wonder how differently the fox perceives the sounds of a riverine environment from what appeals to human ears?

Charles E. Burchfield, *Song of a Pond in Spring* (detail), 1954  
Conté crayon on tracing paper, 14" x 20"







## FRAGRANCE AND THE UMWELT

06





Charles E. Burchfield, *Sweet Pea Mood*, 1917 (reworked 1954–55)  
Watercolor and crayon on joined paper, mounted on board, 23¼" x 33⅞"



Mike Glier, *Bees Finding Pleasure v.2*, 2023  
Acrylic and charcoal on panel, 40" x 30"



I tried to  
imagine  
myself  
as a bee,  
burying my  
fuzzy face  
in a cloud  
of color  
and scent,  
greedily  
licking up  
flavors.

**NW** For much of his adult life, Charles Burchfield searched for wild sweet peas that he remembered from childhood. To capture this indelible memory, he painted *Sweet Pea Mood* in 1917—his “Golden Year” of inventive experimentation. Yet, decades afterward, he often remarked that he couldn’t find “anything like my memory of them.” Their significance is quite apparent in Chapter I of his autobiographical manuscript, titled “Wild Sweet Peas,” which begins with his first years of life in Ashtabula Harbor, Ohio. He reminisced about this “mystical flower—incredibly soft & velvety” that he discovered on a lane leading to a Lake Erie beach: “Here in the soft yielding sand grew the wild sweet peas, which have persisted in my memory, as being rich mauve in color—The vague memory of these flowers may be taken as the symbol of all the elusive memories of earliest childhood.” Could his memory have been skewed?

Gloriously, on a visit to Ohio, he found the variety known as “beach peas” so he expanded and reworked *Sweet Pea Mood* in 1954–55. Studies show his intention to express how “The pink color is felt everywhere, on [the] barn, etc.” Their radiant scent permeates all aspects of the painting, including “How a tree appears when smelling sweet-peas.” His wife Bertha asked him how he knew that trees could smell, and he simply answered, “A good question.” The writhing tree in the upper right corner is absorbing the floral perfume from giant pink and red flowers quite a distance away. The whole scene seems intoxicated.

Mike, you often depict scents in your paintings. How have you conceived this invisible sense?

**MG** As I made *Bees Finding Pleasure v.2*, I tried to imagine myself as a bee, burying my fuzzy face in a cloud of color and scent, greedily licking up flavors. Clearly, I had to paint as lusciously as I could muster to get this across.

**NW** I can picture you doing that! Trying to conceive the world from the perspective of insects is a typical Burchfield notion. Spiders, crickets, butterflies, and moths appear exaggerated in scale, so we feel shrunk to their size. Distortions in the view beyond hint at an alternative reality—where the scents, sounds, and weather are primary parameters of being.

**MG** To suggest scent, I surrounded the bee with little cloud shapes, since scent is delivered as an aerosol to the nose, but scientifically speaking this was a dumb move, since bees smell with their feet! Can you picture what the world would be if we could smell with our feet? I think I’d like my bedroom flooring to be made from eucalyptus and cinnamon wood. This funny exercise in bee empathy is a potent way to understand the Umwelt, a proposal that the world is not a stable picture, but that every species experiences the earth a little differently. The blue sky, warm sun, and sloshing ocean that we humans think are so universal are in fact a creation of our human senses and other living things may know an entirely different earth! This blows my mind.

**NW** Ed Yong’s widely praised book, *An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us*, taught me so much about the concept of the Umwelt. Yong’s explorations based on the most recent scientific findings are simply amazing, proving that humans are only beginning to comprehend how complex and diverse the world is. It’s astonishing that scientists have the means to make these discoveries that dispel antiquated observations and assumptions. Since you read it first, why don’t you explain Umwelt.

**MG** Umwelt is the idea that animals all experience the world differently from one another, since they have distinct perceptual abilities. For the bee, the sense of touch is so sensitive that it engages another sense, that of electroreception (a sense shared with electric eels!). Even the slight electrical charge of a flower is enough to move its fuzzy hairs and trigger a nervous signal. By measuring the electrical field surrounding the flower, the bee can tell if the flower has been recently visited, or if it is untouched and full of nectar. The Umwelt of bees differs from that of humans in other ways, as well. Bees also taste with their feet, and can see into the ultraviolet range to experience colors we can only imagine. We can never fully enter the Umwelt of other creatures, since our own Umwelt limits what we can know. Science of course greatly extends our perceptual capacity, as does imagination, but still, the world is assessed, interpreted, and navigated by other living beings in endless ways, many different from our own. To realign humanity with the remainder of the living world, it is necessary to decenter human experience, and nothing does so more persuasively than the concept of Umwelt.

Umwelt  
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have distinct  
perceptual  
abilities.





07

## SOUND AND THE UMWELT





Charles E. Burchfield, *Song of the Tree Cricket*, 1959–60  
Watercolor, gouache, chalk, and charcoal on paper, 43¼" x 26½"



Mike Glier, *Fawn Exhaling*, 2022  
Acrylic on canvas, 48" x 82"



...makes  
me think  
that this  
picture is  
from the  
insect's  
point  
of view.

**MG** Every time I see *Song of the Tree Cricket*, I think about tapestry, so woven is the little cricket into its dense summer bower. Its embeddedness makes me think that this picture is from the insect's point of view. The cricket seems to have no sense of place or self, but perceives place and self as a continuous thing, unlike human perception, which is always parsing things.

**NW** How interesting that *Song of the Tree Cricket* makes you think of tapestry. I feel it beautifully illustrates Burchfield's long-standing fascination with the sounds and patterns of nature, made visible through his sound-sight synesthesia. On a late summer's night, you hear the tree cricket chorus, but you don't see the tiny insects themselves—they are indeed woven invisibly into tree canopies. I've only ever seen one during daylight hours. The diminutive snowy tree cricket is only 1/2 to 5/8 of an inch long, has a pale green body, and a pair of red spots mark where antennae attach to its head. The males' continuous trilling sounds attract females for mating. (In 1897, physicist Amos E. Dolbear came up with a formula for "The Cricket as a Thermometer." In this geographic area, the temperature in Fahrenheit can be estimated by counting the chirps in 13 seconds and adding 40. Charles and Bertha Burchfield tested "Dolbear's Law" many times and found it to be remarkably accurate.) But I digress.

**MG** More digressions like this, please!

**NW** Every year Burchfield would visit his backyard willow tree to hear the "Tree-cricket chorus in full song." For his painting, he conveyed the loud, rhythmic sounds that dominated his experience. A vertical column of chevrons emerges from a horned black and red shape punctuated by a pair of tiny white dots. The audio-cryptogram expands into a split "M" which resembles his 1917 *Convention for Abstract Thoughts* for "Morbid brooding." It radiates sideways in semi-circular forms echoed in tiny down-turned crescents. In later years, he attributed this shape to mean "astonishment, wariness, foreboding, sadness, nostalgia"—the emotions we share as we realize summer is coming to an end. The planet Jupiter and sparkling stars peek through upper willow branches, providing dramatic contrasts between the artist's notion of infinity and the yearning song of a tiny insect.

This painting is the tree cricket's Umwelt—its wild, instinctive acoustic world embedded within its reproductive cycle critical for survival.

**MG** On our farm, a parcel of once-cultivated land has been left to grow wild for 50 years. Unimaginatively, we call it the "Wild Spot," and one day, walking within it, I saw a fawn curled up in a little clearing under tall bushes, surrounded by undergrowth, and I got to wondering what she saw and smelled and heard and how she processed all this. I try to give animals agency when I put them into pictures so that they are more than an object of human curiosity and entertainment. Accordingly, I chose a title that is about the fawn doing something, "exhaling," so we start to think about her experience rather than ours. In this picture, I hope one might have a moment of empathy and get a sense of being under the bushes, avoiding danger by hiding in the goldenrod, and using the sense of smell to learn about what lies beyond.

**NW** You captured this so well. I love how the camouflaged fawn's warm exhalation, filled with scents and moisture, swirls around her and enters our space.

In this picture,  
I hope one  
might have  
a moment of  
empathy...





## PERCEPTION AND THE UMWELT

08





Charles E. Burchfield, *New Life*, first state 1919 (destroyed, recreated 1963)  
Watercolor and charcoal on paper, 18 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 24 $\frac{3}{4}$ "



Mike Glier, *Bluebirds Flocking as Fall Approaches*, 2022  
Acrylic and charcoal on canvas, 45" x 72"



He  
wondered  
how  
flowers,  
trees,  
and birds  
perceived  
the world.

**MG** Nancy, the concept of the Umwelt was first developed by the German biologist von Uexküll in the late 19th century. Is there any indication that Burchfield might have known about the Umwelt? And if he did not know specifically about the concept, did he demonstrate interest in understanding how other living things might perceive the world differently from humans in accordance with their unique perceptual capabilities?

**NW** Good questions... Burchfield never used the term “Umwelt” in his journals, even though he studied German in school. A term he did use frequently is “Vorfrühling,” which translates to “Early Spring.”

Burchfield’s empathetic connection to the natural world made him curious. He wondered how flowers, trees, and birds perceived the world. In fact, in 1919, after his military service during World War I, he painted a series about life from the perspective of birds. His dealer convinced him that the series was not a viable subject, so he destroyed them in March 1932, noting he burned some “atypical works from 1919, such as the series depicting life from the perspective of birds or that used birds as metaphors for nature’s seasonal rhythms.” Regretting this, he recreated some of those paintings in 1963 from memory because such lingering ideas persisted.

**MG** Do we have images of the 1963 remakes?

**NW** Yes! The Burchfield Penney Art Center owns *New Life*, which he described as a “Birdling inside a bud greatly enlarged.” The backdrop is a hilltop filled with crocuses overlooking an uninhabited, primordial landscape view that resembles much of Thomas Cole’s grand panorama, *View from Mount Holyoke, Northampton, Massachusetts, after a Thunderstorm—The Oxbow* (1836).

**MG** The concept of Umwelt is such a profound way for human beings to reassess other living creatures and learn to respect them for their awesome powers that often surpass our own. The diversity of life is a marvel and a little humility is in order! Burchfield claims that this picture is from the perspective of the baby bird, but I’m not sure I see it? Do you?

**NW** Yes. First consider the surrealism of an X-ray vision of the red sumac revealing the hatchling as if a plant could give birth to a bird. Or, could what appears to be sumac be the bird’s perspective of its mother’s protective wing? Is this a bizarre union of flora and fauna? However we interpret this scene, it’s clearly not the perspective of a human being.

**MG** One thing is for certain, Burchfield rarely puts humans into his landscapes. I’m interested in decentering the human image in art and consider Burchfield a herald of this contemporary idea. Humans have been the center of artistic expression forever, so in this time of ecological emergency, perhaps it’s time to put other living things at the center of discussion.

**NW** I think Burchfield’s paintings are timeless, unlike work by many of his contemporaries, because he chose the symbolism and metaphors of trees, wildflowers, birds, insects, and other creatures to represent humans. He knew what he wanted to accomplish by the age of 21, saying “I hereby dedicate my life and soul to the study and love of nature, with the purpose to bring it before the mass of uninterested public, that they may see and become familiar with the endless number of nature’s beauties, wherein lies my greatest happiness. If I can bring only a few serious-minded people to see how vital nature is, besides being beautiful, I shall be content.” He wanted the public to see through his eyes and share the experience. Human figures would diminish the effect. I sense a similar attitude in your work, like in your bluebird painting.

**MG** On an October morning I walked through a flock of bluebirds along a hedgerow that was full of asters and goldenrod. The bluebirds did not rise up as a group as I walked amongst them. Instead, individuals lifted and settled a few yards ahead, and then hopscotched back as I continued to approach, resettling where they had been. It was like passing through a cloud whose molecules were stirred, but whose shape and position were unaffected by my passing. I made *Bluebirds Flocking as Fall Approaches* to commemorate the moment. If I’d included myself surrounded by the flock, the picture would have been about a man engaging nature. Without me, the protagonists are the birds and the picture is about their behavior as a group, which I find more interesting and urgent as a subject.

...perhaps  
it’s time  
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## TREES SHARING INFORMATION

09





Charles E. Burchfield, *Dawn of Spring*, c. 1960s  
Watercolor, charcoal, and chalk on joined paper, mounted on board, 52" x 59½"



Mike Glier, *Trees Sharing Information v.6*, 2022  
Acrylic and charcoal on panel, 60" x 40"



... the forest  
is not simply  
a place of  
competition  
for  
resources,  
but also  
a place of  
interspecies  
cooperation!

**MG** Nancy, when I first read about trees sharing information in Richard Power’s novel, *The Overstory*, I was completely taken by the idea that the forest is not simply a place of competition for resources, but also a place of interspecies cooperation! Intrigued, I read more about Suzanne Simard, the forest scientist whose groundbreaking research started this revolution. Evidently, trees communicate underground through fungal networks, facilitating the exchange of carbon, water, nutrients, and defense signals between them. Moreover, some dying trees don’t just rot, but share up to 40% of their carbon with neighboring trees to support the health of the forest before they die. Trees also communicate through volatile organic compounds that are released into the air to notify trees downwind of insect attack! Simard’s book, *Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest*, is a good source for more information, as is *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben. More recently, scientists are exploring the role of electrophysiology and sentience in plants.

**NW** Learning that you painted several versions of *Trees Sharing Information* immediately struck a chord with me as a nod to Suzanne Simard’s groundbreaking research and phenomenal book. I first learned about her work through her 2016 TED Talk, “How trees talk to each other,” broadcast on NPR.

**MG** Nancy, how does this research affect your understanding of Burchfield’s oeuvre, and more specifically, *Dawn of Spring*?

**NW** Burchfield’s reverence for trees, the cycle of life, and earth’s invigorated seasonal changes are exemplified in *Dawn of Spring*. Conifers like the black spruce can grow up to 60 feet tall. They can propagate when heavy snow forces the tree’s lowest branches to touch the ground, which take root and create a ring of small trees around its base. Suggested in the drawing on the left side of the painting, a desiccated tree trunk that Burchfield planned to add to the expanded composition represents an elder in this life cycle, whose decomposition in an old-growth forest will feed and harbor a microscopic world of life forms. An arc of warm sunlight on the horizon announces dawn approaching, its warm glimmers heralding the rebirth season.

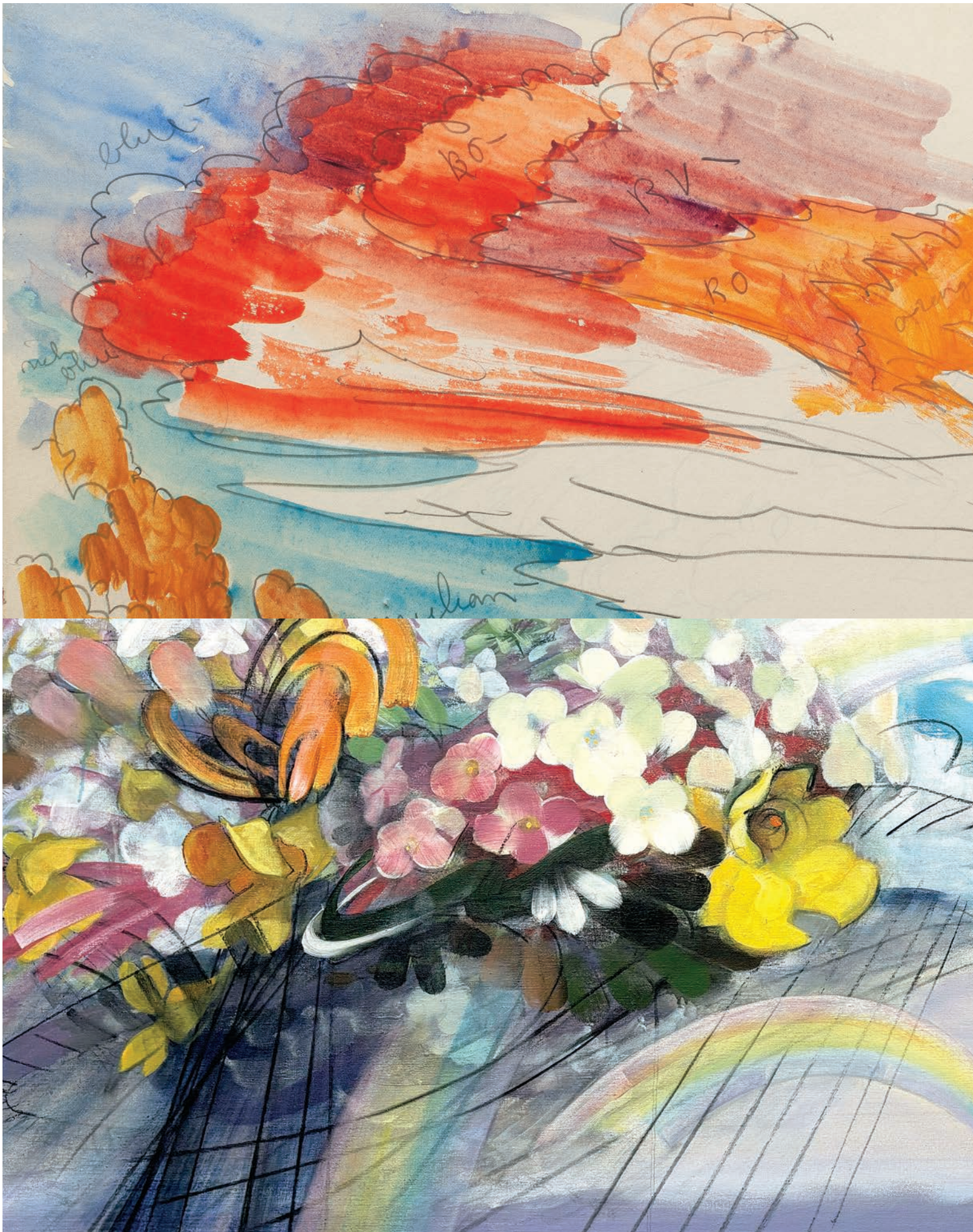
**MG** Artists can support science by creating images that tell the story of their research and help spread the word.

**NW** As a forest ecologist, Simard also used a bit of humor, coining the term “the wood wide web” in a 1997 article in the journal *Nature*. It rolls off the tongue easier than saying, “the complex ways that trees and mushrooms communicate and share resources through mycelium networks, or mycorrhizal fungi.”

**MG** Since Dr. Simard first published her findings in 1997, Burchfield most certainly did not know that trees can share information and resources. But to look at *Dawn of Spring*, you’d think he’d just run from her classroom, and in an excited rush, visualized her research! The Mother Tree is haloed and bristling with spikes and scimitars that extend into the air and soil in which she is rooted. To suggest familial bonds, the sapling has these same motifs. They express his animist proclivities; the dirt, the snow, the wood, and the air all vibrate with the energy of the woods that Burchfield felt rather than saw. His artistic practice is an example of how imagination can be a form of speculation that can lead to rational investigation and fact. I like how these tree pictures parallel a truth about human culture; competition is necessary, but not as essential as cooperation. The trees are telling us to get it together and talk to one another and to share resources, since it’s ultimately good for everyone!

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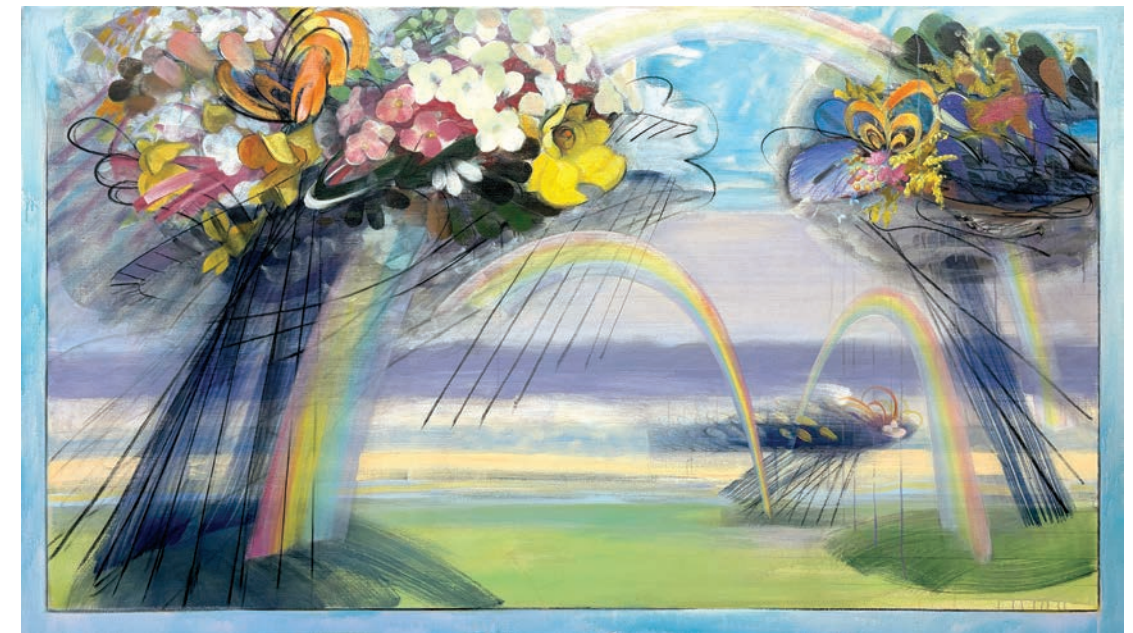
**WORKING  
FROM LIFE**

**10**





Two studies:  
Charles E. Burchfield, *Flaming Orange Northern Sky at Sunset V-4*, July 16, 1915  
Watercolor and graphite on mounted paper, 11" x 17" (each)



Mike Glier, *Storms Splitting Light*, 2024  
Acrylic and charcoal on linen, 48" x 84"



You really  
don't know  
how much  
color there  
is in a  
shadow  
under a  
bush until  
you try to  
paint it!

**MG** We have three cloudscapes to consider here; the Burchfields were made from observation, and mine was imagined. I've enjoyed years of painting outside, making studies, not unlike Burchfield's *Flaming Orange Northern Sky at Sunset*, and there is no better way to learn about color, form, and movement than working from life out of doors. You really don't know how much color there is in a shadow under a bush until you try to paint it!

**NW** These brilliantly colored cloud studies probably document the aftereffects of a volcanic eruption that occurred on May 22, 1915, at Lassen Peak in California. We learned this in 2011, when Stephen J. Vermette, Ph.D., a climatologist and professor of geography in the Geosciences Department at SUNY Buffalo State, provided a scientific perspective. Burchfield created both cloud studies in Salem, Ohio, on July 16, 1915, about two months after the "Great Eruption of 1915." A vintage postcard shows its enormous pyroclastic cloud, filled with hot gas, ash, and rock debris. The particulates traveled westward on dense currents, causing more vivid sunsets because the "scattering of the short [sunlight] wavelengths are depleted before reaching the viewer (the blue light simply cannot make it)."

**MG** Since Burchfield began his career on the heels of the Impressionists, and in the good company of other plein air American painters like O'Keeffe, Hartley, and Marin, his habit of working outdoors was familiar and even fashionable in the early- to mid-twentieth century. But the practice fell out of favor and was later considered passé, even reactionary. Now, the contemporary art world is more accepting of varied methods for making art, and I wonder if it's a good time to reassess the contemporary relevance of plein air painting, particularly plein air painting that engages abstraction.

**NW** Artists, like you and Burchfield, acknowledge predecessors while creating new unique work. How did your vision and practice evolve?

**MG** I lived in New York City in the early 1970s and 80s and loved it, even with the garbage smells and crime; but I left New York because of art theory! I was a reader of *Artforum* and *October* magazine, and a

student of the brilliant Rosalind Krauss, who was its editor. Within these pages, arguments were made that we modern humans do not have a core, unique self, but are vessels that are filled up and shaped by mass media and the capitalist entities that construct our identities (apologies to the Octoberists for this oversimplification!). These theories animated the work of some exceptional artists, like Cindy Sherman and Richard Prince, who wisely kept some distance from theoretical assertions. While the theory was compelling, it was presented as a totalizing frame that ignored the input of biology. Each of us is a library of genetic information whose original entry is the first day of life. Such a vast resource is never idle but is always in conversation with the world around us, shaping our perceptions, often in unique ways. Sure, the way I see is shaped by photographs and paintings I have studied, but it is also shaped by the evolution of the eye itself. Culture and biology are always mixing it up. Since the possibilities are endless, it stands to reason that each of us grow into creatures whose perceptions are, at least in part, unique.

I was deeply distressed by the theoretical assertions that I had no unique self, so I set out to disprove it by eschewing photography and other forms of advanced mediation, moving to the country and working entirely from direct observation with the simplest of mediating tools: charcoal, pencil, and paint. Although it might have seemed like a reactionary move, I thought I was investigating a future that is inoculated from alienation by rediscovering intimacy with myself and other living things. I started painting out of doors in 2005. Working in the fresh air brought a new level of complexity and serendipity to painting. The light was always in flux, constantly changing the colors of things and their shadows. Shapes could no longer be isolated. Instead, they were elements in the terrain, and the transition from one thing to the next was as interesting as the things themselves. Birds flew by, bugs stuck to the pictures, and the wind tried its best to upend everything. Insecurity became a part of the process, requiring me to respond quickly. Deliberation gave way to improvisation. Observation was replaced by estimation. And the intellectual satisfaction of realizing a goal dissolved into the physical joy of making something unexpected.

Each of us  
is a library  
of genetic  
information  
whose  
original  
entry is  
the first  
day of life.



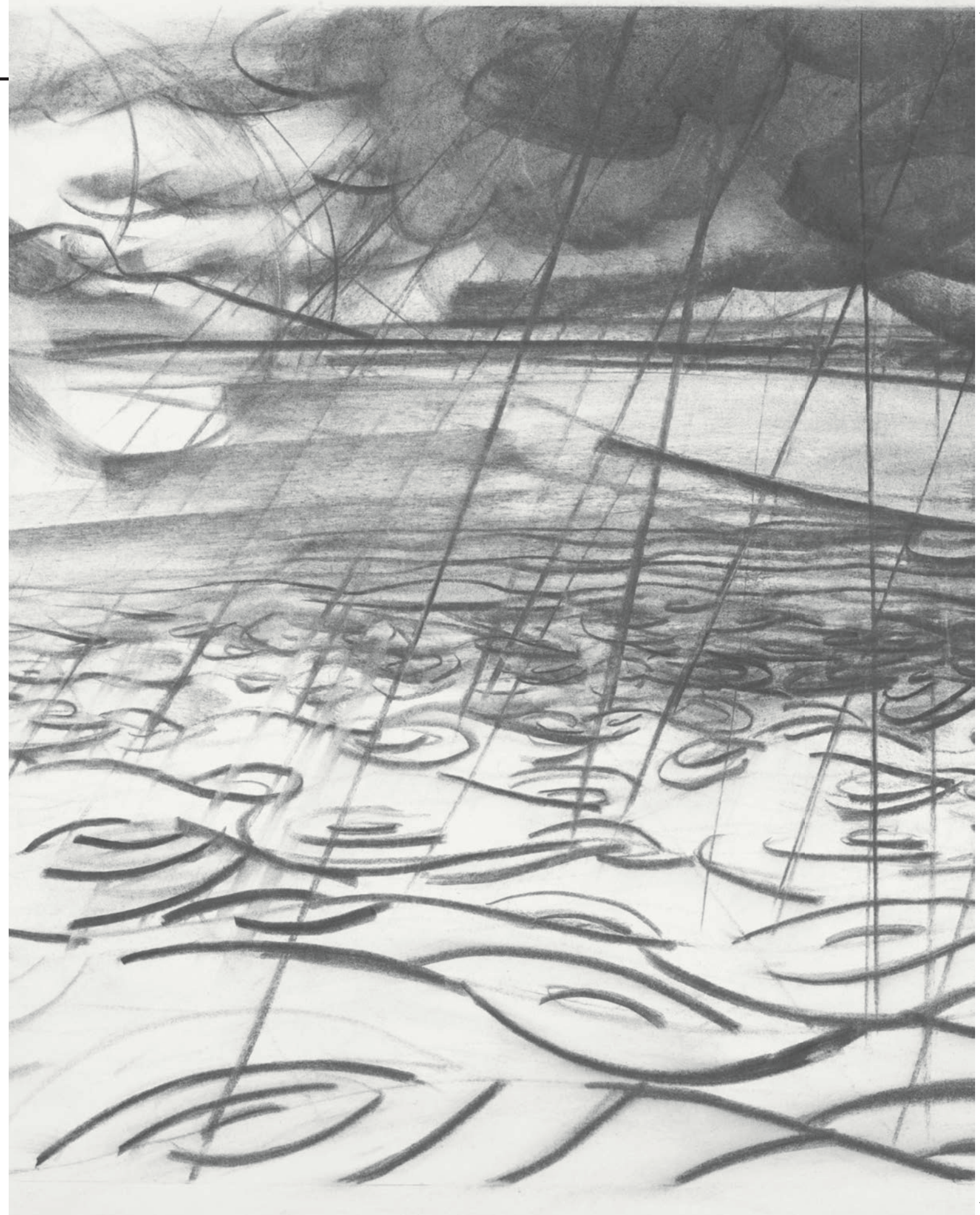
In the best moments, there is no lag between the movement of the sun and the wind and the response of the brush and the palette knife.

When drawing and painting out of doors, there isn't a break between thinking and doing. In the best moments, there is no lag between the movement of the sun and the wind and the response of the brush and the palette knife. Stimulus and response become a single thing, and the experience is one of feeling very connected with the subject. It's a reciprocal relationship in which the natural world gives a prompt, like a breeze, a vivid red, or bird call, and the artist gives a response in the form of a gesture, a color choice, or a shape. The experience is particularly intense when working abstractly, since the subject of the picture is not the landscape anymore, but the imaginative dialogue between the artist and the landscape. And here is Burchfield, the landscape painter, whose finest work favors improvisation over representation to express his ecstatic relationship with the living world. He pioneered a creative method in which his subject, the living world, became an active partner in a reciprocal relationship. This is exemplary and, for me, a guide. He models a way of being that is fit for the ecological challenges of the future.

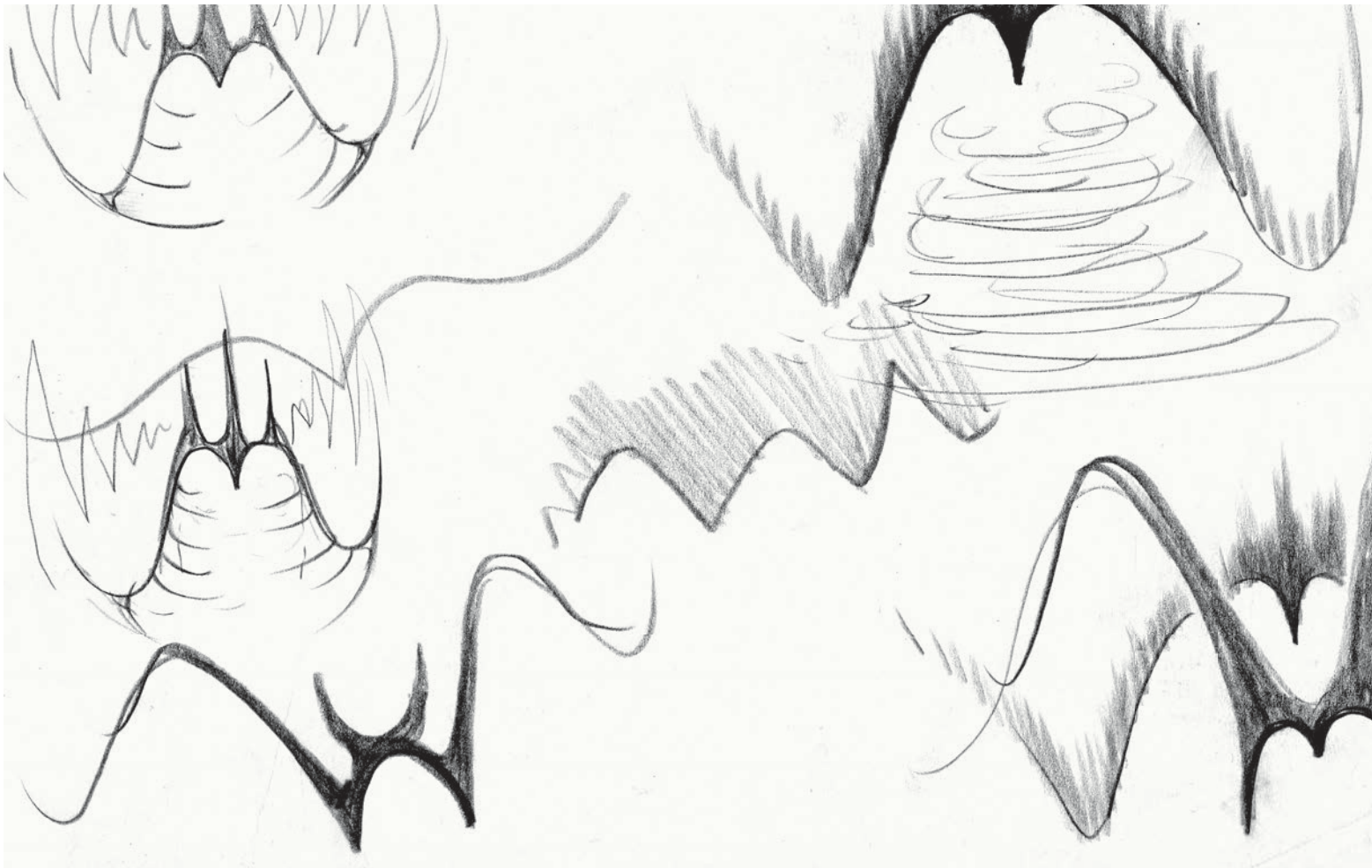
**NW** In many respects, Charles Burchfield was clearly ahead of his time. I've gained insight into your work seeing which of Burchfield's works attract you. There are so many! Burchfield's cloud studies pair aesthetically with many of your drawings.

**MG** My drawing, *July 24, 2011; Eagle Lake, Blue Mountain, NY*, installed on the exhibition's title wall is a plein air study for *Storms Splitting Light*. The study helped me understand the forms and their scale relationships. I enjoy storms' various forms and colors, but this painting was also a response to anthropomorphizing weather by giving storms proper names. When I hear my local weatherman say, "After causing historic floods in central Europe, Storm Boris continues to bring devastating weather," I think of Boris as a personality, driving around the landscape in a dark cape, tossing thunderbolts. The three storms in my painting are sweeter than Boris and are having a fine time dividing white light into prisms.

Mike Glier, *July 24, 2011; Eagle Lake, Blue Mountain, NY* (detail), 2011  
Charcoal on paper, 22½" x 30"



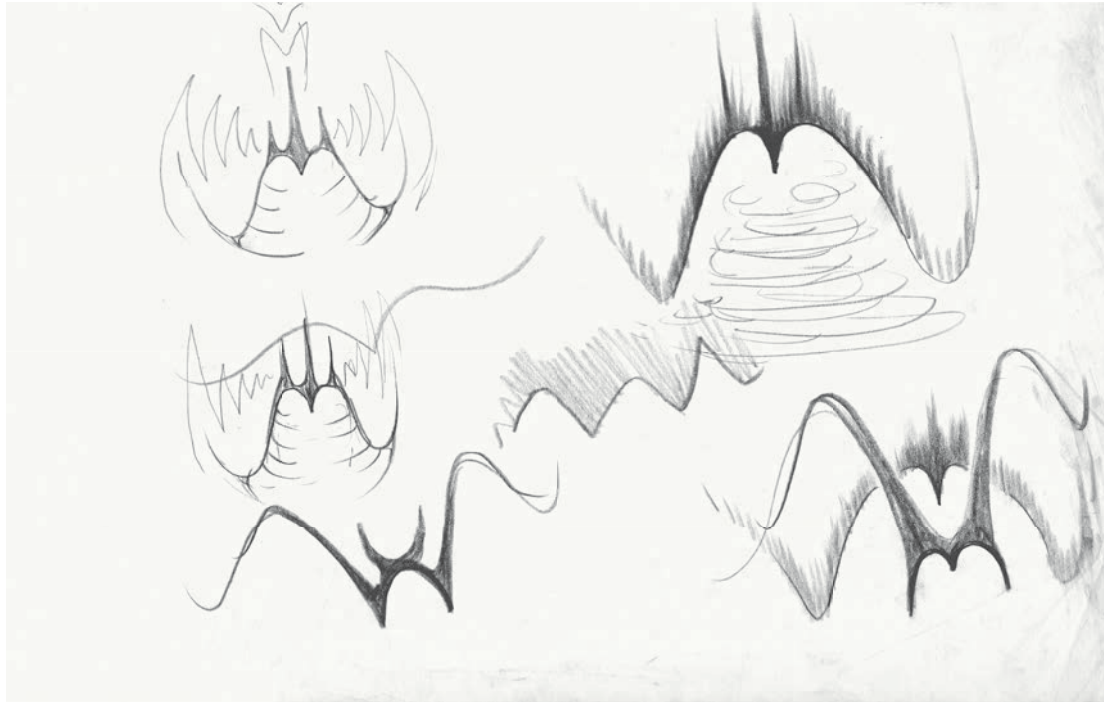




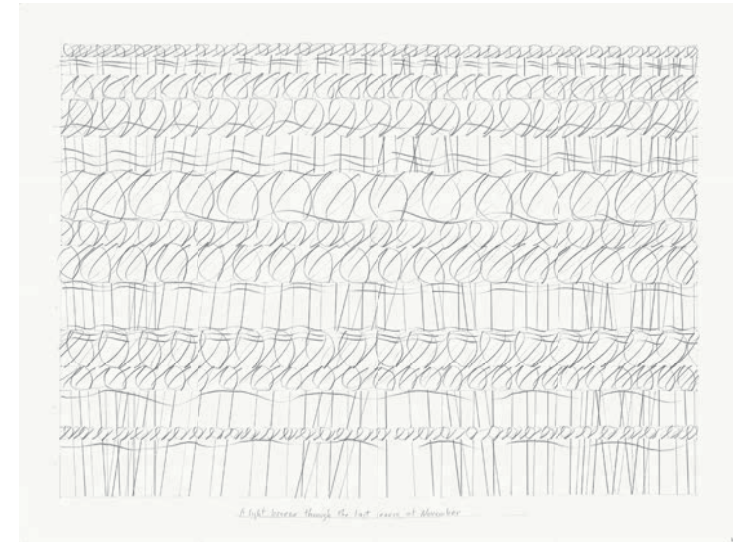
## SEASONALITY

# 11

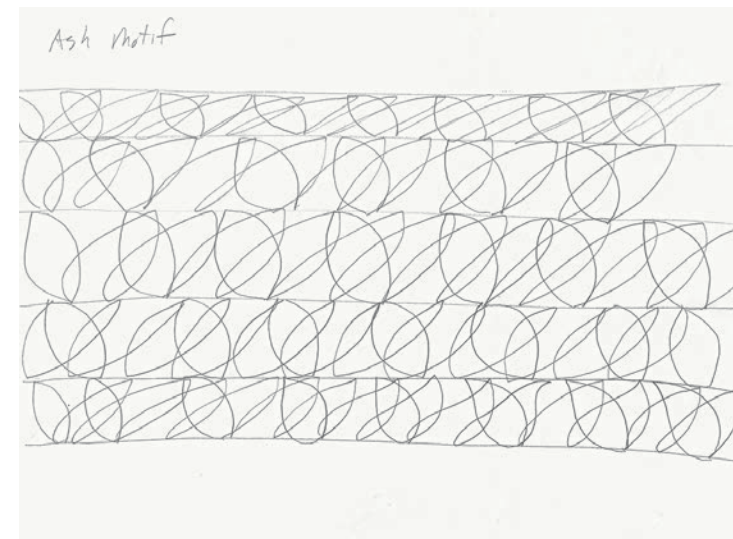




Charles E. Burchfield, *Untitled (Crow Conventions)*, undated  
From the folio: *SPRING – WIND – FANTASY – MOOD – FF*  
Conté crayon on paper, 11" x 17¼"



Mike Glier, *A light breeze through the last of the leaves in November v.1*, 2020  
Pencil on paper, 22½" x 30"



Mike Glier, *Ash Motif*, 2020  
Pencil on paper, 9" x 12"



...record  
something  
so vast  
that it is  
beyond  
perception.

**MG** There are a few topics to consider in this grouping. Let's start with the three drawings. The smallest is a field sketch of an ash leaf that I made into a rhythmic pattern as if it's waving in the wind. My larger drawing, *A Light Breeze... v.1*, is a studio drawing in which I elaborated on the field sketch by adding vertical elements to suggest trees. The Burchfield drawing is similar in that a complex natural form, a crow, is reduced into a simple descriptive shape. But unlike most artists who use abstraction, Burchfield often overlays his simplified forms with metaphor.

**NW** Burchfield's menacing forms relate to his 1949 watercolor, *Clatter of Crows in Spring Woods*, and his 1952 lithograph, *Crows in March*. Fascinated with the wildness and independence of crows, he felt: "There was a savagery about their angry cawing as they settle into the tree, that was very thrilling, even spine chilling—" The motifs have precedents in his 1917 collection of symbolic drawings, *Conventions for Abstract Thoughts*, specifically *Aimless Abstraction (Hypnotic Intensity)*, that looks like a child's flying bird abstraction, and *Fear*, which resembles a double-horned serpent's head. Abstraction, which he preferred to call "conventionalization," condenses sensory effects and symbolic meaning.

**MG** I certainly feel the "hypnotic intensity" and "fear"! This drawing also feels chilly, like it's a crow in winter. It's funny, but I can't work on a picture out of season. If I have a winter picture, for example, that's not finished as the warm weather moves in, I have to wait six months until the earth cools and the rainbow colors disappear to finish up. Was Burchfield like this?

**NW** Absolutely—he even waited decades for similar weather and light to trigger the right moment to return to a particular work.

**MG** There's something very grand about working seasonally for artists whose practice is based in the direct observation of nature. Plein air paintings are responsive to a particular place at a particular time and, as such, appear to have modest intentions. But dedicated observers of nature like Charles Burchfield, who draw and paint through the seasons, record something so vast that it is beyond perception, i.e. the yearly tilt of the earth on its axis as it travels around the sun; it is an event so large that it can only be perceived indirectly as shifts in light and temperature.

**NW** Burchfield also painted specific months, works suggesting compass points, and mid-season transitions, showing vital, perceptual changes between the seasons, regardless of calendar dates. These concepts were inspired by Chinese scroll paintings he saw in 1914. Their fascinating portrayal of time-based narratives led him to create progressive transitions of seasons uniquely within a single, large artwork. Among his most ambitious works are anticipatory visions in which the foreground represents one season, while, through lacunae, we can see pale elements in the distance predicting the future season. He reversed that effect in *Early Spring*, where an endless field of cadmium yellow dandelions, like miniature suns, force remnants of snowy winter to creep back into sinister cathedral woods in the distance.

**MG** As you noted, all my work in this show was created around the period of my residency at the Burchfield Penney, and most of it is from a single series entitled *Answer Music*. "Answer music" is another term for "call and response," a form of worship in which the preacher makes a declaration, and the congregation responds with fervid unity. *A Light Breeze...* is a good example of the parameters of the series. I compose these pictures on horizontal bands as if I am writing a musical score, and I think of musical terms that have an equivalent in visual art, like rhythm, repetition, harmony, contrast, motif, volume, chord, and color. When I'm out making sketches for the paintings, I try to create motifs that I can write as a line, like a script. This picture has two leaf scripts, one based on an ash leaf and the other on burning bush (euonymus). Into these, I inserted a repetitive line of trees in varying intervals. Like a bass line, a waveform is woven through them. Improvisations of form and color in the leaf scripts provide a harmonic melody.

...I think  
of musical  
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like rhythm,  
repetition,  
harmony,  
contrast,  
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chord,  
and color.



**NW** Like you, Burchfield made countless field studies of landscape details from which he would build the structure of his paintings. Sounds and scents were as important as visual observations. We own thousands that provide insight into his process, augmented by color notes and other shorthand comments made directly on his sketches, as well as journal accounts, memories, and review of folio contents of similar subjects. Ultimately, he wanted to create art that goes far beyond the visual realm to share spiritual, experiential connections to Nature with a capital N.

**MG** When I draw outside, I feel like the place in which I am sitting is giving me little gifts. It gives me shapes, textures, colors, sounds, and sensations as prompts, and with appreciation, I return the gift in the form of a drawing or painting. I am reluctant to describe this exchange as if it were a relationship with another sentient being, since it suggests I've gone a little nutty, and strayed from rationality to favor magic! But there is something here worth considering, and it's not necessarily at odds with rational thinking, that drives science and provides so many good things. Imagining the human relationship with nature as one of reciprocity, or more simply, thinking of it as a culture of gift exchange, may be the turn of mind necessary to counter the extremes of rationality that have provided argument for taking too much and depleting the natural world to the point of crisis. For me, Burchfield is the leading example of an artist conceiving the natural world as a collaborator in creation, who highlights, through multisensory abstraction, a profound exchange. He also makes his love and respect for his partner evident in every picture!

When I draw outside,  
I feel like the place  
in which I am sitting  
is giving me little gifts.



Mike Glier, *A Light Breeze Through the Last of the Leaves in November v.9*, 2023  
Acrylic on linen, 48" x 84"



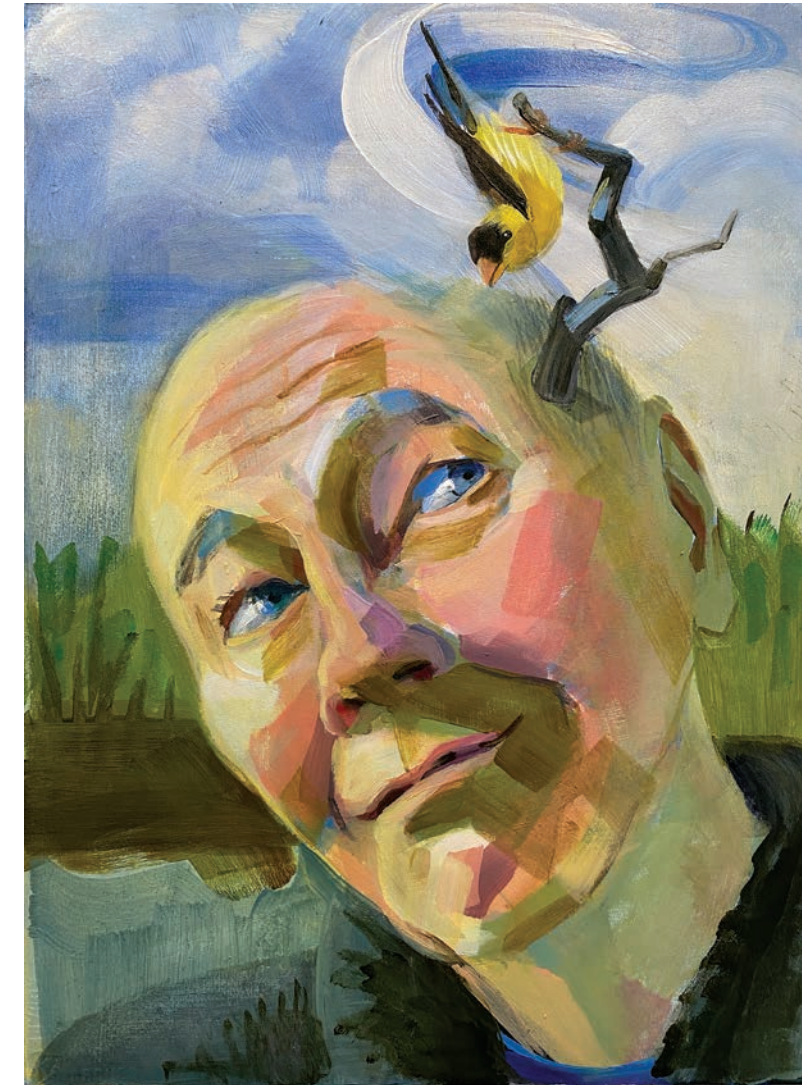


# INTERGENERATIONAL 12





Charles E. Burchfield, *Self-Portrait*, January 1916  
Watercolor, pencil, and Conté crayon on paper, 19<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" x 13<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>"



Mike Glier, *What the goldfinch said (Self-Portrait)*, 2021  
Acrylic on paper, 15" x 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>"



I wonder  
if he thought  
of his tie  
as being  
a wearable  
equivalent  
of a moth.

**MG** Burchfield looks like a dapper, young man in his self-portrait. He is serious and clean-cut, but with flair. The tie says it all; it contrasts with his mustard shirt; it is tightly knotted but floppy and it is covered with polka dots! Nancy, what was he doing at this stage of his life?

**NW** He was gaining confidence in becoming an artist, about to embark on the final semester of his senior year at the Cleveland School of Art. I wonder if he thought of his tie as being a wearable equivalent of a moth. He loved the crescent moon patterns on cecropia moth wings. He observed all kinds of insects and spiders, admiring camouflage patterns, bulging cicada eyes, ratcheting cricket legs, and so much more. Beyond that, he created what I call “audio-cryptograms” for the distinctive sounds they make. In his paintings, we can hear them even if we cannot see them.

**MG** I taught a remote painting class in 2021, and I made a demonstration video about portrait painting, and this self-portrait is the result. It was a dreary time of isolation for many, so I wanted to make something cheerful, but I also wanted to signal to the students that portraiture need not be dull. Goldfinches are common at my house, particularly around the feeder in the winter where they argue with flutter and twitter. The perch coming out of my head is uncomfortable, like growing an antler, but it serves as a support and a connection to the bird and its vitality.

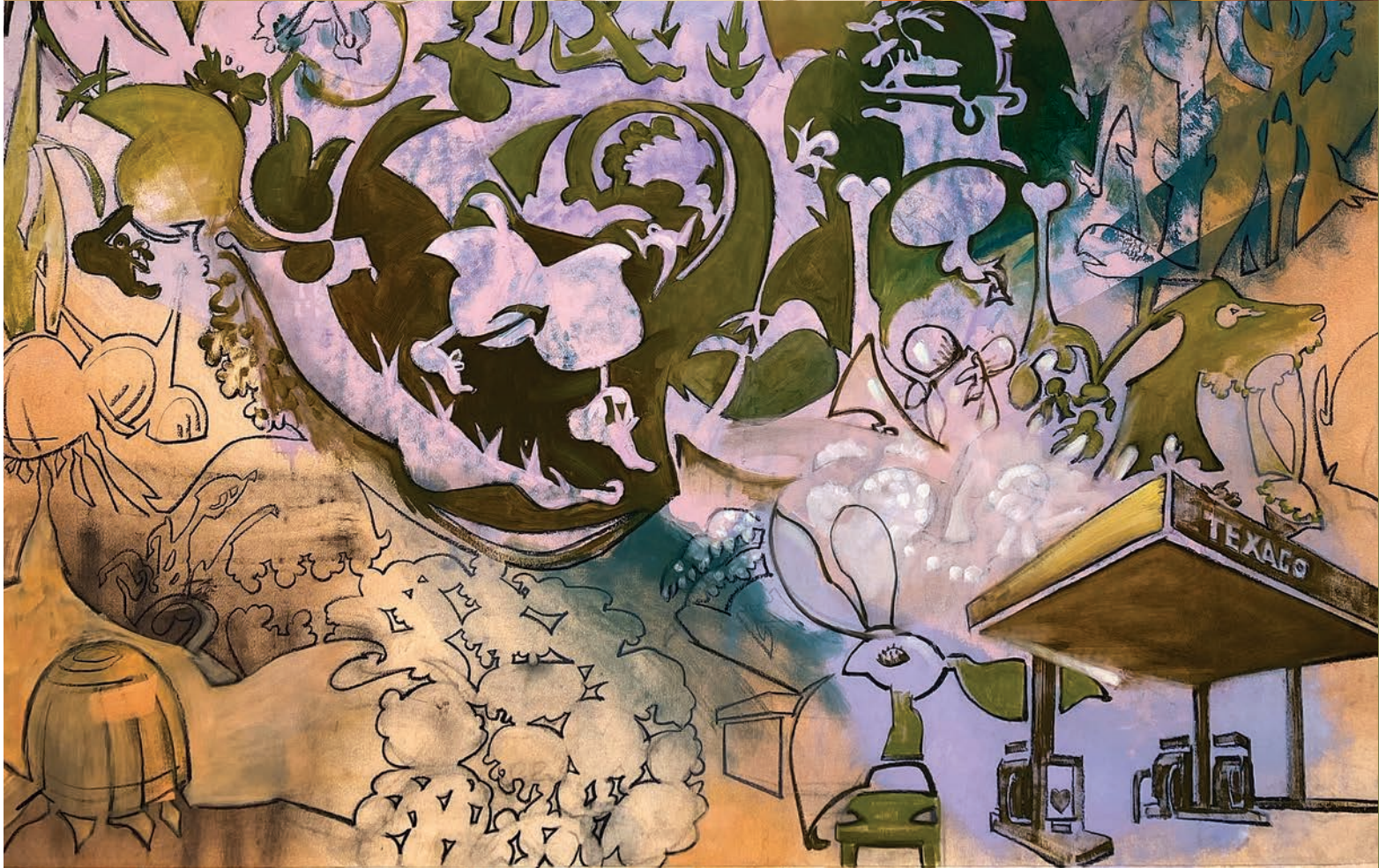
**NW** Goldfinches are among Burchfield’s and my personal favorites. The male’s brilliant yellow and black coloration reflects sunlight in their looping, chirping flights from tree to tree. I just visited friends who live by a grove of trees next to an open field and was stunned by the size of the goldfinch flock flitting from tree to tree, wildflower to wildflower. I find it fascinating that their colors fade to olive green, like the female’s color, during autumn and winter months. But pairing your portrait with Burchfield’s brings up more than a common love of birds. When we first began discussing an exhibition you could have opted for a solo show, but you preferred to exhibit alongside Burchfield. Why?

**MG** Artists are never alone in their studios; other artists from the past and present are always there in conversation, commenting, and even guiding the action. Burchfield has been a mentor for me, admittedly a ghost of a mentor, but present and alive in my imagination. In the 20th century, when the Avant-Garde was at play, it was important for artists to rupture with the past and make things that seemed radically new. This approach was necessary, since artists were shaking out the attitudes that brought so many wars into being. But we are in a different place now, one with dangerous social divisions and partisanship, and the response from artists needs to be one of inclusion rather than rupture. In this spirit, it’s a good idea to acknowledge the people from whom you have learned and celebrate the passing of knowledge from one generation to another. Participating in an intergenerational show with Burchfield is not only a great honor, but also a celebration of cultural continuity.

**NW** I think of your work as being an empathetic conversation with Burchfield. You get him. You understand the role of the artist to bring ideas to others. To teach, yes, but also to celebrate what gives meaning to you. This dance of words around pairs of paintings would surely have delighted Burchfield, though the modest man would probably blush with the attention.

Artists are never alone in their studios;  
other artists from the past and present  
are always there in conversation,  
commenting, and even guiding the action.





# 13

## COMMENTARY





Charles E. Burchfield, *Rising Smoke*, February 22, 1917  
Watercolor with pencil on paper, 19½" x 13½"



Mike Glier, *There Is a Faint Odor of Petroleum and the Birds Are Singing v.2*, 2021  
Oil and charcoal on paper, mounted on fabric, 72½" x 49½"



The design  
is so lyrically  
beautiful  
that you're  
easily drawn  
in before  
getting  
hit by the  
message.

**MG** We selected these paintings as examples of a critical approach to landscape painting. The plumes of smoke in the Burchfield are beautiful, if you ignore the pollution that is spreading. Only four decades before this picture was painted in 1917, Pissarro and Monet were celebrating smoky factories and steamy train stations as signs of modern progress. Are we sure that Burchfield had critical intentions with *Rising Smoke*?

**NW** In this case, yes, Burchfield had critical intentions to show how close local factory smoke came to his modest Salem, Ohio, neighborhood. Some of his steam engine paintings, like *The White Plume*, reflect a nostalgic romanticism for train travel and westward expansion. This early-20th-century optimism fed the misconception that industrialization would ease the travails of manual labor. However, more often, he presented disturbing images of desecrated landscapes with hellish visions of burning hillside coke ovens, sinister coal mines in stark surroundings, dye- and chemical-tainted waterways, and factories belching dark, acidic smoke.

Your painting also partially conceals the pollution until you consider the brown passages and read the title. The design is so lyrically beautiful that you're easily drawn in before getting hit by the message.

**MG** My picture was composed in England. I was sitting on the banks of the River Brue, drawing the snowdrops, watching birds, and listening to the sounds of the river. It was bucolic, but for the faint odor of the gas station hidden in trees across the street. The pretty pink, lavender, and blue in the bottom half are the colors of light on an oil slick. Like I said before, beauty is amoral.

Mike Glier, *August 7, 2017, Swallows and Darkening Sky, Oudolf Field, Bruton, England, 61°F* (detail)  
Pencil on paper, 23" x 30"







**VIOLATION**

**14**





Charles E. Burchfield, *Still Life—Scrap Iron*, 1929  
Watercolor and charcoal on paper, 21 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 29 $\frac{5}{8}$ "



Mike Glier, *The Ocean Depositing Trash*, 2023  
Paper collage and acrylic, mounted on panel, 12" x 12"

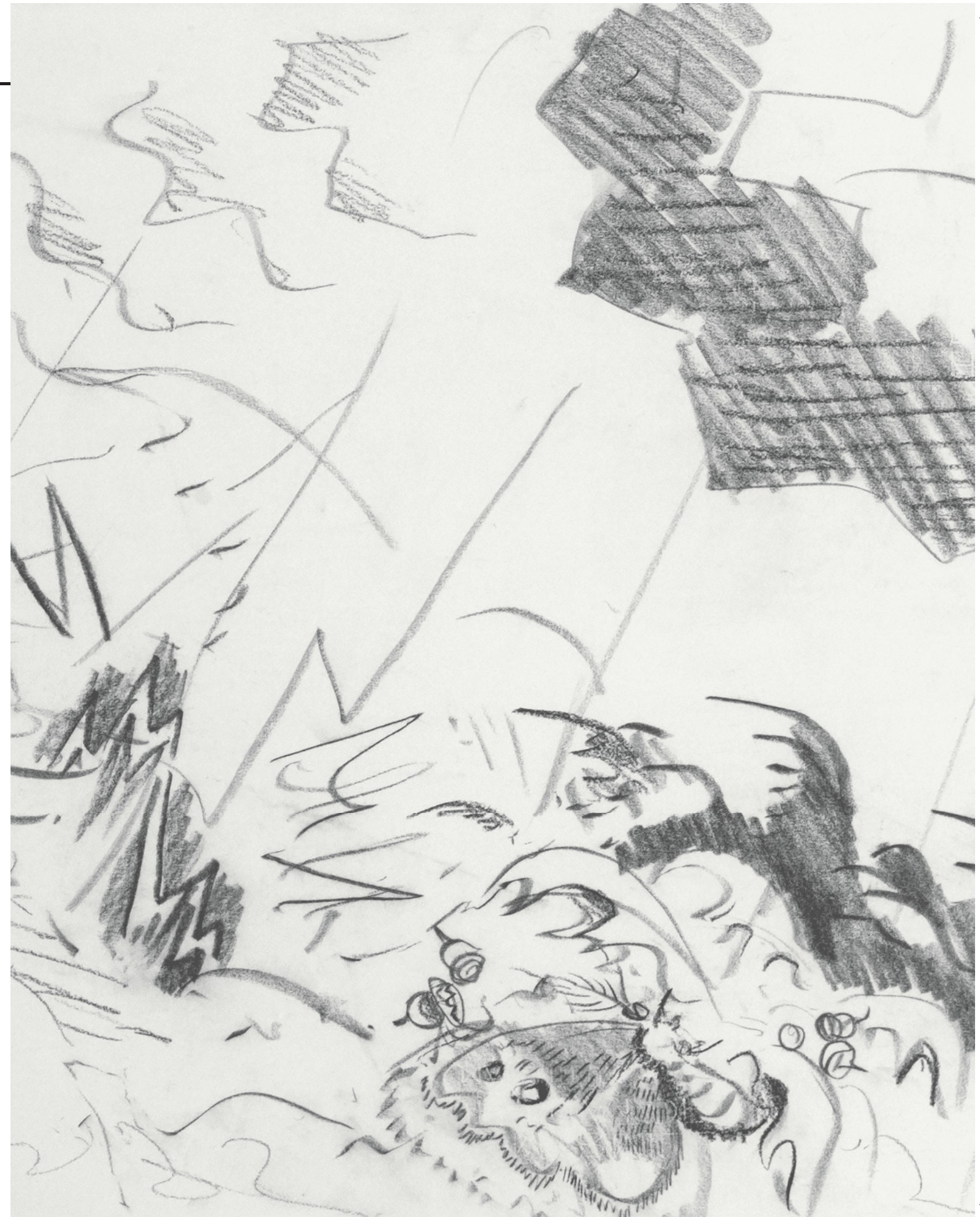


**MG** Nancy, you once wrote about *Still Life-Scrap Iron*, “Burchfield transforms discarded industrial material into a composition of unexpected beauty.” I agree with your assessment. The rusty pipes and kettles have a satisfying heft and surface, qualities that Richard Serra put to use. But I think the beauty here is used to land a critique of waste. The volume of disposed metal, piled into a small mountain, is clearly an image of waste. Rusty steel is not at all reflective, so it is safe to say that Burchfield strayed from realism and used white highlights on the rust to exaggerate the volumes in order to dramatize the amount of discarded material, which itself pushes against the fence as if to overflow into a cleaner place. True to Burchfield, the clouds loom in the back like the chorus in a slow-moving tragedy.

**NW** You make a good point about rusty steel not being reflective, but I think Burchfield was painting in a transparent watercolor tradition for this work, leaving white to show the glare of the sun. He also left a section of ground colorless when it surely would have been grimy. By making it aesthetically pleasing, like you say, he draws the viewer in to recognize the scale of this scrapyard pyramid, especially when you compare its scale with the fence and telephone poles. Smell the acrid air. Clouds picked up the dust. And yet he couldn’t resist adding a few wisps of grass, struggling to find a place to survive. He created this 94 years before your painting, *Ocean Depositing Trash*. Both paintings carry a rebuke for human violation of the land. You use color and sweeping ocean waves breaking on shore to entice viewers to take notice of the accumulation of detritus that keeps on returning. How tragic that we’re caught in a never-ending pollution dilemma of our own making.

**MG** *Ocean Depositing Trash* is a response to a visit to one of the Bahama islands, where the north shore was inundated with plastic crap, tide after tide depositing yet another layer of debris. It’s fitting that the ocean delivers a small portion of waste back to us, as if it is a diligent volunteer environmentalist who relentlessly keeps the issue front and center or a parent on repeat saying, “Clean up your own mess!”

Charles E. Burchfield, Study for *The Moth and The Thunderclap* – D (detail), 1961  
Conté crayon on paper, 13<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" x 19<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>"



And yet  
he couldn't  
resist  
adding a  
few wisps  
of grass,  
struggling  
to find  
a place to  
survive.





**EFFICACY**

15





Charles E. Burchfield, *Early Spring*, 1966–67  
Watercolor, charcoal, and chalk on joined paper, mounted on board, 37 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 42 $\frac{1}{4}$ "



Mike Glier, *Doe Inhaling Spring*, 2023  
Acrylic on linen, 36" x 72"



I'm always  
debating  
with myself  
about how  
to support  
this change  
in thinking.

**MG** Since we were talking about Umwelt, *Doe Inhaling Spring* is another attempt on my part to imagine how an animal might experience the world differently. According to Clint A. McCoy, DVM, whitetail olfactory epithelium is reported to have 297 million olfactory receptors, and we have only 5 million, so it's safe to say that the doe's sense of scent is much more intense. Since she seems to be smelling colors, maybe she is a synesthete, like Burchfield?

**NW** What a great concept! She, like foxes and other animals and birds, can probably smell plants hidden under snow. Maybe she sees scents as colors through her dark brown eyes, as her long muzzle inhales the air. So much of the world is concealed by our blunted senses or, simply, lack of perception.

**MG** Although it's not always obvious, I think of myself as a politically motivated artist, since I want my artwork to change people's attitudes. More specifically, I want to be a part of a legion of people who publicly reject the notion that we have dominion over the earth and all its creatures and replace it with stewardship. I'm always debating with myself about how to support this change in thinking. Is it best to be confrontational and report on abuses, or is it more effective to be celebratory and provide a sense of hope?

**NW** Scathing critiques can be effectively dramatic. As a young man, Burchfield revealed the destructive magnitude of hellish coke smelting and other polluting industries in Ohio. After he moved to Buffalo, he created some works about the massive steel industry along the Buffalo River. *Black Iron* (1935), showing mammoth counterweight bridges over the contaminated Buffalo River, is widely considered the best work of his middle years. "I wanted it to look completely hard-boiled and uncompromising," he said in a Smithsonian interview, "the water itself looked as though it might be liquid iron. It was black and oily and shiny..."

But I would argue that Burchfield's transcendental paintings of his later years are the most inspirational. His way of expressing the complexities sometimes tapped his synesthesia—bringing sensory experiences on multiple levels into a visual language. It's what we notice in his "grammar of animacy." If people would only pay attention to how beautiful even the smallest detail can be, they might work harder to oppose industrialization and senseless destruction and try to preserve the landscape.

**MG** Do you think Burchfield's approach to representing the natural world was political?

**NW** Yes. Political in the same sense as your politics of concern and engagement. Many of us have quoted his famous creed: "An artist must paint not what he sees in Nature, but what is there. To do so, he must invent symbols, which, if properly used, make his work seem even more real than what is in front of him. He does not try to bypass Nature; his work is superior to Nature's surface appearances, but not to its basic laws."

**MG** It looks like we agree that both approaches, the critical and the inspirational, are necessary. But in the end, I find Burchfield's ecstatic love to be most compelling. In the current ecological context, a work like *Early Spring* is a blast of hope, a motivating blast of hope, that might inspire reverence and the will to preserve the living world. His most joyful works are brilliant propaganda. I'd like to see a million tee shirts printed with *Early Spring* and a collection of baseball caps emblazoned with Burchfield's bird song abstractions!

**NW** I'm all for it—I'll be the first in line to wear them.

His most joyful works  
are brilliant propaganda.





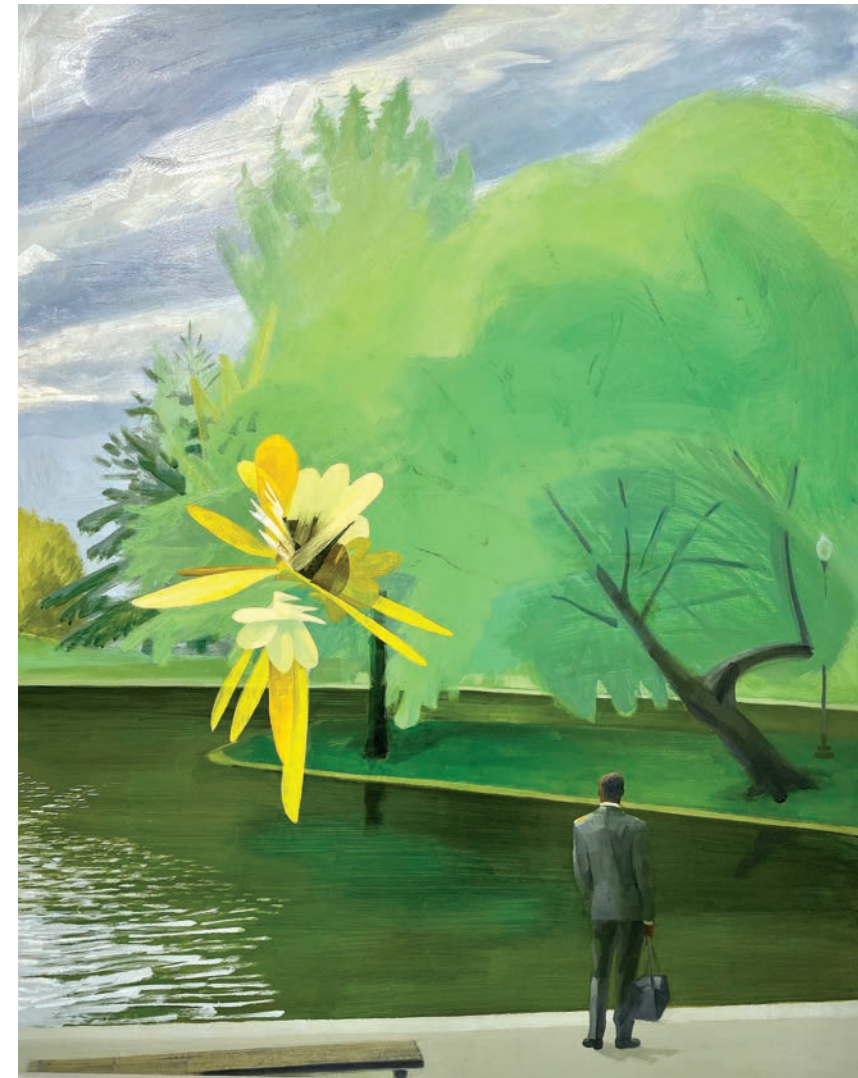
## CREATING HOPE

# 16





Charles E. Burchfield, *Sunshine and Rain*, 1946–47  
Watercolor, gouache, and graphite on paper, mounted on board, 42 $\frac{9}{16}$ " x 38 $\frac{1}{16}$ "



Mike Glier, *Song Sparrow Singing in the Boston Public Garden*, 2020  
Oil on aluminum panel, 40" x 32"



**MG** So, here we are at the last pairing. *Sunshine and Rain* is a thriller, which is a funny way to describe a picture of a rainy day! Where is this and what kind of tree do you think it is?

**NW** It's a pear tree that belonged to the Albarella family who lived next door to Burchfield. It appears in several paintings, but to my mind, the title is a clue to a far more significant subject. Sunshine and rain are essential ingredients for life. Nothing exists without them. And if you're lucky, you will see a rainbow as the rain dissipates.

**MG** The pear tree is igniting with bloom! The magic is once again in the motif, here a repeated blade shape, tipped with flares of yellow and green that radiate from the central trunk. It reminds me of the resurrection panel of Grunewald's Isenheim altarpiece, where Christ is rising from the tomb in a burst of light with a shroud trailing like a celebratory flag. But this time, the awakening figure is a tree that draws from the dark resources of the soil to exploit the light and air for its need to set fruit. The story of the Resurrection is a necessary story for many human beings, but Burchfield makes his secular version primordial, humorously set in his neighbor's backyard!

**NW** I'm surprised to hear such a Christian interpretation. I agree with the Whitney's former director, John I. H. Baur, that Burchfield was truly a pantheist. He struggled with embracing organized religion for decades, finally conforming to society's pressures and joining his pious wife's Lutheran church a few days before his fifty-first birthday. The event, which included his son Arthur joining the church too, was documented in eleven words in his journals. However, four days later, he and Art took a trip to Gowanda and were "in complete harmony" exploring the canyon and woods, skipping stones, watching a hawk, crossing a ravine, and splashing in water—the event chronicled in 631 words. What a contrast.

I think the pear tree mimics the shape of its leaves. The sturdy trunk bursts with his "flame of spring" effect, so every tiny, yearning branch captures life-giving light and water, as do the dandelions dancing across the foreground.

**MG** I take your point about the shape. But the burst of light from within the tree is common in religious pictures of the Resurrection, as is the upward gesture of the arms of Christ, which is similar to the upward arc of each branch of the tree. I don't think artists need to be religious to quote effective pictorial devices used in religious painting. My painting, *Song Sparrow Singing*, is also about renewal, and to my surprise, I also used conventions of religious art. It's spring, and a man has paused to listen to a bird call, which appears as a collection of golden feathers in a cross shape suspended in mid-air like Gabriel hovering before Mary. I chose gold and the cross shape because they felt uplifting. Only later did I recognize the historical source for my choices. It's important, I think, that the man in my picture is dressed for business, briefcase in hand, but stands relaxed in a classic contrapposto, as if the song has provided respite from a busy day. This is a secular scene that relies on conventions of religious art for its emotion.

**NW** I read the song sparrow form more like a woodland fairy from a children's book. In other works, Burchfield represents birdsong notes, chirps, and trills in undulating waves into the air. Unconsciously, he foreshadows today's spectrograph documentation.

**MG** I'm glad we are ending on a hopeful note. In fact, I'd argue that both pictures intentionally create hope. Hope may be a delusion, but a necessary one for our species to face adversity and carry on. Hope has usually been the panacea of religions, which have marshaled its healing power through resonant storytelling. But being human institutions, religions are political in nature and sometimes use hope for purposes with which I do not agree. So, it's important to find hope in secular places as well. If I had to say one thing that most inspires me about Burchfield, it is the ability to create hope. Of course, he makes gloomy pictures as well; he understands that hope and despair are two sides of a coin that is the human condition. He's realistic. But in the end, he celebrates the miracle of life on the planet and the joy of being a part of it like few artists have done before or since.

[following spread](#)

Charles E. Burchfield, *Study for Midsummer Caprice (Cicada and Trees)*, c. 1945  
Charcoal or Conté crayon on paper, 12¼" x 18½"

Hope may be a delusion, but a necessary one for our species to face adversity and carry on.

The magic is once again in the motif.







CHECKLIST

Listed below are selected Drawings & Studies by Charles E. Burchfield and Mike Glier.  
These Drawings & Studies are featured on the title wall of the exhibition, and featured in full or as details throughout this catalogue.

Drawings & Studies by Charles E. Burchfield (1893–1967)  
Burchfield Penney Art Center Collection

(full spread, pages 112–113)  
Study for *Midsummer Caprice (Cicada and Trees)*, c. 1945  
Charcoal or Conté crayon on paper, 12¼" x 18½"  
Gift of the Charles E. Burchfield Foundation, 1975

(detail, page 21)  
*Tree and Queen Anne’s Lace*, 1963  
Charcoal and Conté crayon on paper, 19⅞" x 13½"  
Gift of Charles Rand Penney, 1994

(not illustrated)  
*The Cricket House*, November 8, 1917  
Graphite on paper, 7⅝" x 10⅞"  
Estate of Dr. Edna M. Lindemann, 2007

(detail, page 41)  
*Song of a Pond in Spring*, 1954  
Conté crayon on tracing paper, 14" x 20"  
Gift of the Charles E. Burchfield Foundation, 1975

(detail, page 99)  
Study for *The Moth and The Thunderclap – D*, 1961  
Conté crayon on paper, 13⅞" x 19⅞"  
Gift of Charles Rand Penney, 1994

(not illustrated)  
*Untitled [Storm Clouds and Lightning No. 1]*, c. 1915  
Graphite on paper, 6" x 9"  
Gift of the Charles E. Burchfield Foundation, 1975

(cover flap)  
*Studio Doodling*, undated  
Conté crayon, graphite, colored pencil,  
and crayon on paper, 11" x 17¼"  
Gift of the Artist, 1967

(not illustrated)  
*For Fall to Winter #2*, c. 1964–66  
Study for *Autumn to Winter*, c. 1964–66  
Conté crayon on paper, 9½" x 11"  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Edna M. Lindemann, 2007

(page 4)  
*Untitled (“to Earl Wolfe”)*, undated  
Graphite on paper, 10⅝" x 7¾"  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Edna M. Lindemann, 2007

Drawings & Studies by Mike Glier (b. 1953)  
Various Collections

(detail, cover flap interior)  
*A Grammar of Animacy v.7*, 2021  
Pencil on Arches watercolor paper, 22½" x 30"  
Courtesy of Downing Yudain, North Stamford, CT

(not illustrated)  
*Approaching Humidity, Tesuque 76°*, 2018  
Pencil on paper, 11" x 14"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

(detail, page 93)  
*August 7, 2017, Swallows and Darkening Sky, Oudolf Field, Bruton, England, 61°F*,  
Pencil on paper, 23" x 30"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

(not illustrated)  
*The Sound of Wind in My Ears*, 2015  
Pencil on paper, 12" x 9"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

(details, page 2)  
*Farm Dogs Barking at a Distance*, 2020  
Pencil on paper, 11" x 14"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

(detail, page 73)  
*July 24, 2011; Eagle Lake, Blue Mountain, NY*, 2011  
Charcoal on paper, 22½" x 30"  
Courtesy of Downing Yudain, North Stamford, CT

(page 118)  
*Squirrel Noise, Scolding*, 2020  
Pencil on paper, 12" x 9"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

(page 117)  
*Plaintive. Two Beat Whistle of a Chickadee*, 2020  
Pencil on paper, 12" x 9"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

**Photographs of the Artists**

(page 8)  
Sally Burchfield (1925–2002), *Charles E. Burchfield*, 1941  
Scan from black-and-white photograph  
Burchfield Penney Art Center; Courtesy of Charlie Ferris

(page 9)  
Meleko Mokgosi (b. 1981), *Mike Glier Plein Air Painting*  
Color photograph, converted to black-and-white

Listed below and on the following page are works by Charles E. Burchfield and Mike Glier, presented in curated pairings  
in the exhibition *A Grammar of Animacy*, and throughout this companion catalogue.

**Pairing 01** (pages 10–15)

Charles E. Burchfield, *The Red Woodpecker*, 1955  
Watercolor on paper, 22" x 17"  
Private Collection

Mike Glier, *Woodpecker Drumming*, 2021  
Pencil on Arches watercolor paper, 20" x 26"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

**Pairing 02** (pages 16–21)

Charles E. Burchfield, *Sun and Snowstorm*, 1917  
Watercolor, gouache, and pencil on joined paper, 19½" x 27"  
Young Sloan Collection

Mike Glier, *Ice Splitting Light v.2*, 2023  
Acrylic and pencil on linen, 45" x 72"  
Courtesy of Downing Yudain, North Stamford, CT

**Pairing 03** (pages 22–27)

Charles E. Burchfield, *Afternoon in the Grove*, July 11, 1916  
Watercolor, gouache, and graphite on paper, 14" x 20"  
Burchfield Penney Art Center  
Gift of Tony Sisti, 1979

Mike Glier, *Frost Settling*, 2023  
Acrylic and charcoal on linen, 36" x 72"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

**Pairing 04** (pages 28–35)

Charles E. Burchfield, *A Dream of Butterflies*, 1962  
Watercolor on joined paper, 32" x 39"  
Private Collection

Mike Glier, *The Evensong of Animals*, 2023  
Acrylic on linen, 48" x 84"  
Courtesy of Downing Yudain, North Stamford, CT

Mike Glier, *When the Last Monarch Leaves New York This Painting Will Shake and Moan*, 2023  
Acrylic on panel, 36" x 48"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

**Pairing 05** (pages 36–41)

Charles E. Burchfield, *Light Coming into a Woods*, 1954  
Watercolor on paper, 39½" x 29½"  
Private Collection

Mike Glier, *Fox Listening*, 2022  
Acrylic on panel, 36" x 48"  
Private Collection

**Pairing 06** (pages 42–47)

Charles E. Burchfield, *Sweet Pea Mood*, 1917 (reworked 1954–55)  
Watercolor and crayon on joined paper,  
laid down on board, 23¼" x 33⅞"  
Private Collection

Mike Glier, *Bees Finding Pleasure v.2*, 2023  
Acrylic and charcoal on panel, 40" x 30"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

**Pairing 07** (pages 48–53)

Charles E. Burchfield, *Song of the Tree Cricket*, 1959–60  
Watercolor, gouache, white chalk,  
and black charcoal on wove paper, 43¼" x 26½"  
Burchfield Penney Art Center  
Purchase and gift made possible by John Sacret Young, 2003

Mike Glier, *Fawn Exhaling*, 2022  
Acrylic on canvas, 48" x 82"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

**Pairing 08** (pages 54–59)

Charles E. Burchfield, *New Life*, first state 1919  
(destroyed, recreated 1963)  
Watercolor and charcoal on paper, 18⅝" x 24¾"  
Burchfield Penney Art Center  
Gift of the Charles E. Burchfield Foundation, 1975

Mike Glier, *Bluebirds Flocking as Fall Approaches*, 2022  
Acrylic and charcoal on canvas, 45" x 72"  
Courtesy of Downing Yudain, North Stamford, CT

**Pairing 09** (pages 60–65)

Charles E. Burchfield, *Dawn of Spring*, c. 1960s  
Watercolor, charcoal, and white chalk on joined paper,  
mounted on board, 52" x 59½"  
Courtesy DC Moore Gallery, New York

Mike Glier, *Trees Sharing Information v.6*, 2022  
Acrylic and charcoal on panel, 60" x 40"  
Courtesy of Downing Yudain, North Stamford, CT



CHECKLIST

Pairing 10 (pages 66–73)

Charles E. Burchfield, Two studies: *Flaming Orange Northern Sky at Sunset V-4*, July 16, 1915  
Watercolor and graphite on mounted paper, 11" x 17" (each)  
Burchfield Penney Art Center  
Charles E. Burchfield Foundation Archives  
Gift of the Charles E. Burchfield Foundation, 2006

Mike Glier, *Storms Splitting Light*, 2024  
Acrylic and charcoal on linen, 48" x 84"  
Courtesy of Downing Yudain, North Stamford, CT

Pairing 11 (pages 74–81)

Charles E. Burchfield, *Untitled (Crow Conventions)*, undated  
From the folio: *SPRING – WIND – FANTASY – MOOD – FF*  
Conté crayon on paper, 11" x 17¼"  
Burchfield Penney Art Center  
Charles E. Burchfield Foundation Archives  
Gift of the Charles E. Burchfield Foundation, 2006

Mike Glier, *A light breeze through the last of the leaves in November v.1*, 2020  
Pencil on Arches watercolor paper, 22½" x 30"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

Mike Glier, *Ash Motif*, 2020  
Pencil on paper, 9" x 12"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

Mike Glier, *A Light Breeze Through the Last of the Leaves in November v.9*, 2023  
Acrylic on linen, 48" x 84"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

Pairing 12 (pages 82–87)

Charles E. Burchfield, *Self-Portrait*, January 1916  
Watercolor, pencil, and Conté crayon on paper, 19⅓⁄₁₆" x 13⅝"  
Burchfield Penney Art Center  
Gift of Charles Rand Penney, 1994

Mike Glier, *What the goldfinch said (Self-Portrait)*, 2021  
Acrylic on Arches paper, 15" x 11½"  
Courtesy of Downing Yudain, North Stamford, CT

Pairing 13 (pages 88–93)

Charles E. Burchfield, *Rising Smoke*, February 22, 1917  
Watercolor with pencil on paper, 19½" x 13½"  
Burchfield Penney Art Center  
Collectors Club Fund, 2021

Mike Glier, *There Is a Faint Odor of Petroleum and the Birds Are Singing v.2*, 2021  
Oil and charcoal on Arches watercolor paper, mounted on fabric, 72½" x 49½"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

Pairing 14 (pages 94–99)

Charles E. Burchfield, *Still Life–Scrap Iron*, 1929  
Watercolor and charcoal on paper, 21⅝" x 29⅝"  
Burchfield Penney Art Center  
Gift of Charles Rand Penney, 1994

Mike Glier, *The Ocean Depositing Trash*, 2023  
Paper collage and acrylic, mounted on panel, 12" x 12"  
Courtesy of Krakow Witkin Gallery, Boston

Pairing 15 (pages 100–105)

Charles E. Burchfield, *Early Spring*, 1966–67  
Watercolor, charcoal, and white chalk on joined paper, mounted on board, 37⅞" x 42¼"  
Burchfield Penney Art Center  
Gift of Charles Rand Penney, 1994

Mike Glier, *Doe Inhaling Spring*, 2023  
Acrylic on linen, 36" x 72"  
Courtesy of Downing Yudain, North Stamford, CT

Pairing 16 (pages 106–111)

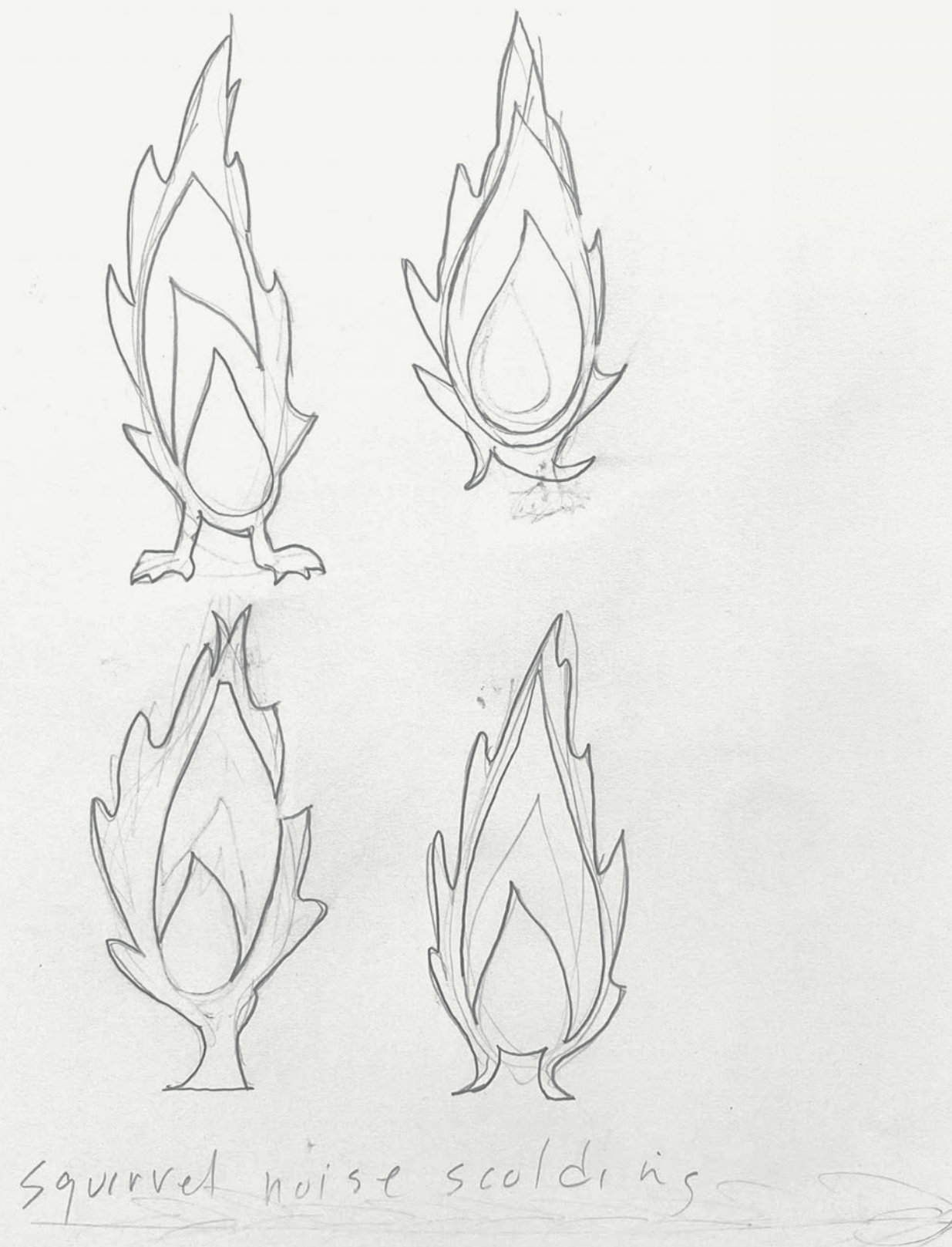
Charles E. Burchfield, *Sunshine and Rain*, 1946–47  
Watercolor, white gouache, graphite under-drawing on white wove paper with segment of an embossed papermaker's stamp (AN) at upper right corner, assembled in five pieces, laid down to a thick sheet of millboard, 42⅞" x 38⅜"  
Private Collection

Mike Glier, *Song Sparrow Singing in the Boston Public Garden*, 2020  
Oil on aluminum panel, 40" x 32"  
Collection of Gabriella Ojeda-Badillo and Benjamin Schwartz

Mike Glier, *Plaintive. Two Beat Whistle of a Chickadee*, 2020  
Pencil on paper, 12" x 9"







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Mike Glier, *Squirrel Noise, Scolding*, 2020  
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