

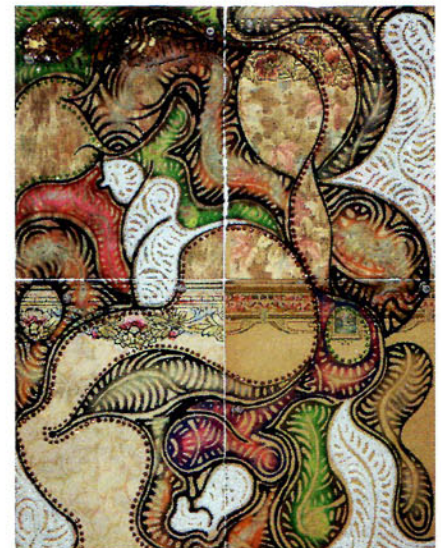
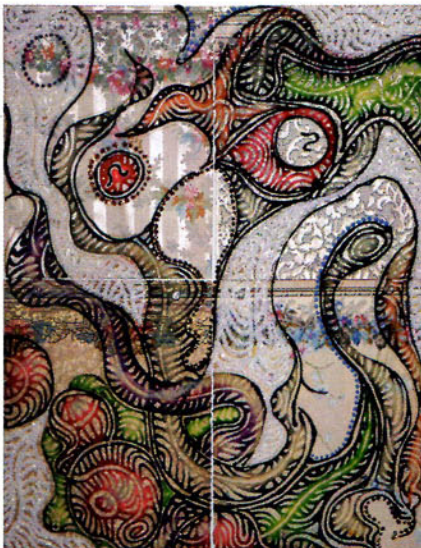
Art & ANTIQUES

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drawn together

NEW EXHIBITIONS OF MODERN AND
CONTEMPORARY WORKS ON PAPER
OFFER AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONSIDER
THE STATUS OF DRAWING AS A GENRE.

By Edward M. Gómez



Three mixed media drawings
by Christopher Tanner.

DRAWING IS TO THE visual and design arts what mathematics is to the sciences—a lingua franca that serves, across disciplines from painting and sculpture to fashion, architecture and industrial design, as a widely expressive language in which creative types of all kinds can jot down their ideas and efficiently share them with each other. Traditionally, drawings have been works made with various media on paper, including different kinds of cardboard.

However, watercolor paintings on paper also have been considered to be drawings, as have traditional East Asian

ink paintings on paper, which are often simultaneously visual-art and literary works, combining skilled draftsmanship in the making of images and the calligraphic rendering of texts. In the West, drawings have traditionally been, for the most part, preparatory versions or plans of works an artist intends to execute in more elaborated ways in other media.

Against this art-historical backdrop, can—or should—drawings ever be regarded as complete productions in and of themselves? If so, what are the qualities or characteristics that make a drawing a finished work in its own right, one that, as the 19th-century British aesthete John Ruskin proposed, is marked by and conveys a sense of its own intrinsic “organic unity”?

. . . . *excerpt*

In New York, the artist Christopher Tanner, who has made large-scale, mixed-media assemblage paintings using giant sequins and colored stones to unabashedly celebrate beauty and glamour, has also made drawings using found paper. Tanner says, “I’ve made abstract works derived from figure studies—I still draw from live models—using wallpaper samples from the 1920s as my support surface. I’m intrigued by the mix of textures and patterns in these works, in which recognizable shapes emerge through the dense lines.” In these drawings, Tanner renders some of his sinuous, sensuous forms using colored sand flecked with glitter.