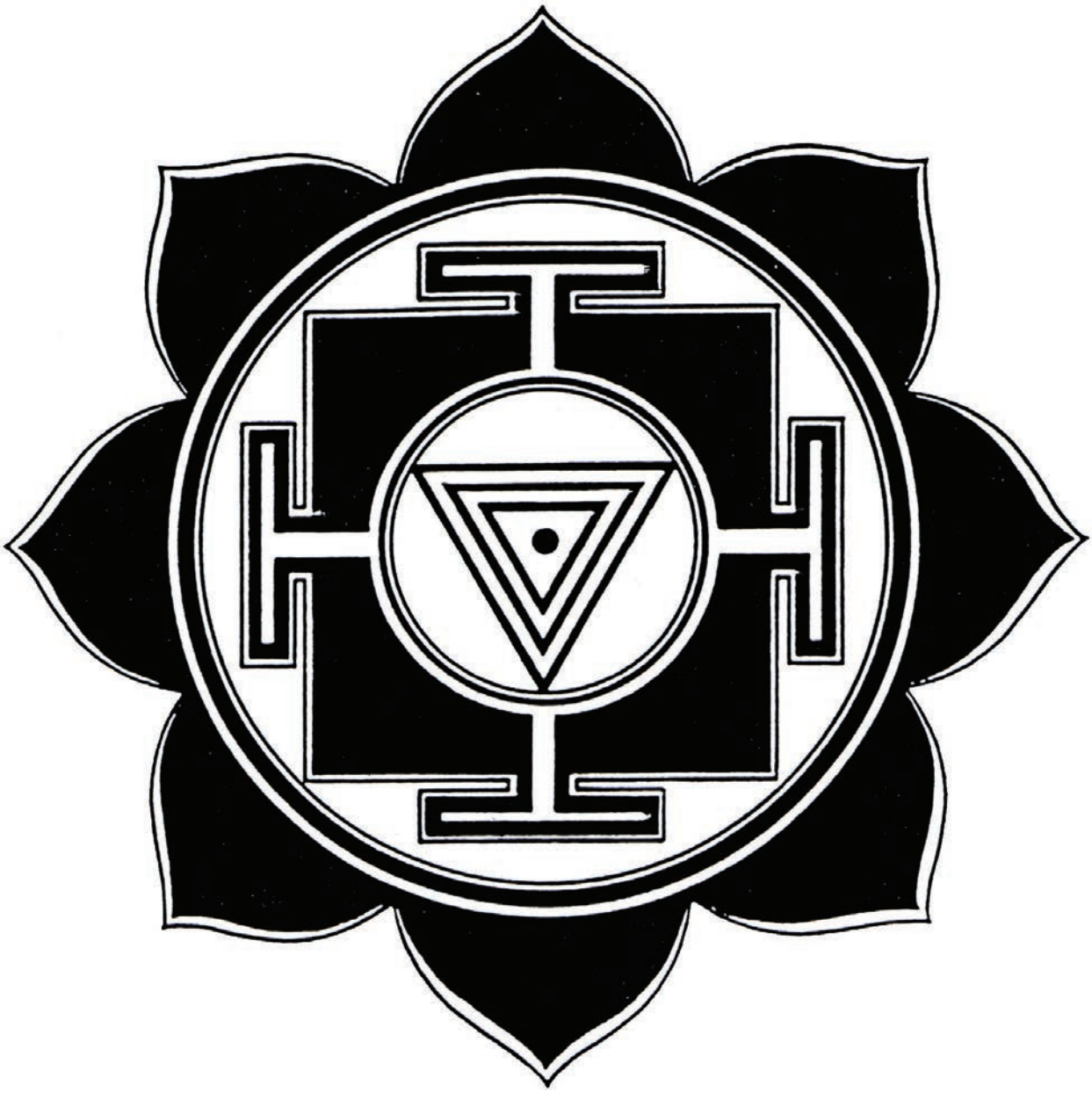

PAUL LAFFOLEY

THE LUMINOUS MIND

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The Luminous Mind

On view November 21, 2026 thru January 31, 2027
Saturdays & Sundays from 11 to 5

Price upon request

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PAUL LAFFOLEY

The Luminous Mind

Over the course of his 80 years, the American artist and Visionary Paul Laffoley had been a unique figure in the history of the visionary genre. To the best of my knowledge, no one has done anything vaguely resembling his integration of all aspects of human knowledge into such highly structured tableaux. My hope is that his work is remembered as passionately authentic inquiries.

> "*Everything, therefore, is present in his mind at once, as if each element were reflecting the light of all others, and at the same time emitting its own unique and unquenchable radiance. If there is any reason for him to be in this room now, it is because there is something inside him hungering to see it all at once, to savor the chaos of it in all its raw and urgent simultaneity*"

While *The Essential Paul Laffoley* (2016 University of Chicago Press) included 91 works, here I'm going to present only seven highly significant paintings which establish the foundation of an extraordinarily sophisticated oeuvre. Through a transdisciplinary fusion of cosmological systems, consciousness, dimensionality and time travel, science fiction to science fact, they embrace not only a unique visual language but also voluminous theoretical and intellectual utopian projections. In my 35 years with Paul, many of his speculations and projections became reality, and I believe they will continue to be proven true in the future. As provocatively witnessed by his *The City can change your life* (1962), he demonstrated unique predictive abilities

> *Even though there's plenty we don't know about apparently anomalous cognitive abilities, one thing seems clear. If they happen at all, they happen outside conscious control. For people used to rational meditation of experience, that can be a very frightening prescription. It means living outside the rules we rely on to make much of life safe. It means living in a world unconstrained by ordinary boundaries associated with space, time, and individual identity . . .*

Paul Auster, "The Invention of Solitude" from *Collected Prose* (New York: Picador, 2003), p. 118. *Laffoley further notes to me that this quote is a reference to the philosophy of the "Monad" by the German philosopher William Gottfried Leibniz (1646-1716). He invented calculus independently from Isaac Newton (1642-1727).*

Elizabeth Lloyd Mayer, *Extraordinary Knowing*, (New York: Bantem Books, 2007), p. 101



In the early sixties, while living in Manhattan Monday through Thursday, Paul was still commuting back to Belmont to paint in the basement of his family home in Belmont. Remarkably, it was in Belmont at that time that Laffoley's vision would begin to mature most notably with *The Kali-Yuga: The End of the Universe at 424826 A.D. (1965)* which was the first fully realized format which Paul would adopt and carry forward for the next fifty years. As founder of the Boston Visionary Cell (1971), Laffoley located his interests in the visionary and speculative genre. Paul's formal registration of "The Boston Visionary Cell" not only provided a nucleus for his own activities; it consolidated a community of inquisitive collaborators and friends. Although questioned by the FBI prompted by his use of "Cell" in the name, it was a vibrant period of organizing shows, lectures, and events for Laffoley. It was during this time that Paul began to create journals that were elaborately illustrated, all hand-written with voluminous texts that would become the basis for paintings of ever increasing complexity. Although never published before 2013, they document his early involvement with dimensionality, alchemy, and visionary possibilities. Through a methodology we have come to term "operating systems," Paul has attempted to illuminate a path to a more enlightened human potential beyond the known boundaries of our beliefs. As early as 1965, Laffoley's inclusion of text, whether specific in language or scientific notation, required the viewer to read the work. This act of reading, which is inherently a private act, he made more intimate through the deliberate choice of smaller scaled hand applied vinyl press type in works such as the *Kali-Yuga*, 1965 (plate 8) and *Alchemy: The Telenomic Process of the Universe,* 1973 (plate 32). Laffoley utilized the mandala format as a neutral diagrammatic system. The vertical and horizontal coordinates that he painstakingly renders, allows the viewer to locate the position of a mental point in a virtual field.

I'm grateful to the Peabody Essex Museum and the Phillips Library for their request to preserve his original journals and manuscripts into perpetuity. Most of these works have been constantly on loan to various public institutions, so it's with great anticipation that they (and we) can gather together for two months of close looking.

The imagination is all we have. It is behind everything we do or think. It is not based on any religion, scientific pursuit, or philosophical discussion. It is first in life with no equal. It operates while we are asleep, and when we rise. No one knows what it is, nor should that be of concern, except for learning how to not suppress it. Most of what we are made to learn in our schools is nonsense, and there is where the suppression begins. If someone tells you

that this or that can not be, ignore them and continue on as long as the motivation (the handmaiden of the imagination) lasts within you. And always have people around you that love you and let you work from your imagination. This is all that can be, and all that should be. And whatever you do, do not die. There is no percentage in being dead. You will miss out on what happens next.

Sincerely, Paul Laffoley (2012)



Portrait of Paul Laffoley, c 1964

The City can change your life.

THUD

THE CITY CHANGES YOUR LIFE

1962
Acrylic with vinyl letters on canvas
24 x 48 in. / 61 x 122 cm.

Subject: An Airplane Striking the Southern End of Manhattan.

Symbol Evocation: An Occasion of Pre-Perception of a Future Event

Comments:

I

As I think back over the 51 years since I did this painting, I cannot actually reconstruct the moment in time when I was motivated to paint this, and with such prophetic specificity. I believe the subject refers to the terrorist attack by plane on the New York's "World Trade Center" building: (The Twin Towers) on September 11, 2001. That day is when Muslims state that Jesus was born. That date makes more sense to me than December 25th, [a date that was adjusted to Pagan winter solstice festivals in order to draw more people into the fold of forming Christianity]. September 11th in the Middle East would have been rather warm at the 31 ½ st North Latitude in Bethlehem [Bayt Lahm], and a pregnant couple could have stayed in a barn very comfortably.

II

The visual structure of the painting consists of three separate panels. Your eyes move right to left with two lightning bolts aimed into the waters surrounding the island. Below the panels are displayed the Zodiac symbols to be read from right to left. Coming in from the right is a small propeller driven airplane painted violet which appears to grow larger in scale as it nears the island until it becomes monstrous in size in relation, until the plane lands with an audible thud.

III

The Symbolism begins its work from the right. At 3 minutes past 9:00 A.M. in the morning as the tension mounts, the plane moves toward the island. In the second panel the plane as it moves closer to the island and appears larger and larger, and the passengers feel heart broken about what is to happen to them. Soon the plane becomes huge in relation to the island as the plane dives straight down to the ground with a thud. The anxiety of time turns into the horror of heartbreak, and finally the finality of death.

IV

I think what happened to me was a precognitive dream on the night before I headed for New York City was a was a precognitive dream brought on by extreme anxiety of being "grand juried" out of "the Harvard Graduate School of Design" for "conceptual deviance."

V

In order to prove the age of this painting, I have often thought of submitting the layer of dust (my skin cells) for recombinant DNA examinations or by trans luminescence methodologies.

EXHIBITION

The Force Structure of the Mystical Experience. Kent Fine Art, New York, September 11 thru November 7, 2015

LITERATURE

Walla, Douglas, Katrina Neumann. Paul Laffoley: The Force Structure of the Mystical Experience. New York: Kent Fine Art, 2015, 142 pp 53 color plates. (pp. 6, 17, 18) https://kentfineart.net/publications/67-paul-laffoley-the-force-structure-of-the-mystical/

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THE COSMOS FALLS INTO THE CHAOS AS SHAKTI RELEASES THE UROBOROS
THE ELIMINATION OF VALUE SYSTEMS BY SPECTRUM ANALYSIS
THE AWARENESS OF INTUITION
GOOD
EVIL
THE AWARENESS OF FEELING
THE COMET OF...
THE END OF THE WORLD AN ANAGOGIC REFINEMENT OF THE UNIVERSE AFTER THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON 2000A.D.
"THE COMET OF DOOM SHALL HIT THE EARTH WITH SUCH AN IMPACT THAT THE EARTH WILL BE DISLODGED FROM ITS TRUE ORBIT AND FALL INTO THE SUN."
THE DELIVERANCE OF THE WORLD FROM THE AGE OF DARKNESS BY SHAKTI IN UNION WITH SHIVA WHICH IS THE MYSTICAL ACT OF THE POPULATION OF THE EARTH FORWARDS AND BACKWARDS IN THE TIME OF THE MAHA-YUGA TOWARDS THE TRUE NOW
THE GOAL OF THE UNIVERSE IS SELF-AWARENESS.
AWARENESS ITSELF IS ULTIMATELY DESTRUCTIVE.
TEMPORALITY AS THE MASCULINE PRINCIPLE OF THE UNIVERSE RULED BY SHAKTI
BOREDOM
POINT
LINEARITY
PLANEARITY
SOLID-VOID
INERT
EXTENTION TO INFINITY
INFINITE DIRECTIONLESS CLOSURE
MOVA AS VIBRATORY MOVEMENT
HISTORY AS A SET OF NON-REVERSIBLE EVENTS
TIME AS PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE
SEPARATE WILL
POSSIBILITY, CONNECTIVITY, AS CAUSALITY
CARE
SPATIALITY AS THE FEMININE PRINCIPLE OF THE UNIVERSE RULED BY SHIVA
SHIVA
BY HIMSELF HE IS ABSOLUTE PASSIVITY OF THE SPIRIT, IN UNION WITH SHAKTI HE IS THE DESTROYER OF THE UNIVERSE.
SHAKTI
THE GREAT GODDESS MANIFESTS AND SUSTAINS THE UNIVERSE BY COSMIC MOVEMENT, AT THE END OF TIME SHE WILL RE-ABSORB IT.
THE COLLAPSE OF SPACE INTO TIME PROVIDES THE HEAT FOR THE KUNDALINI OF THE TANTRIKA TO RE-UNITE WITH SHIVA, WHICH IS THE FIRE-BIRTH OF SHAKTI.
THE KALI-YUGA: THE END OF THE UNIVERSE AT, 424826 A.D. 3 P.M. G.M.T.
ALL SUFFERING IS THE APPARENT SEPARATION OF BOREDOM AND CARE
HOMAGE TO NOSTRADAMUS, H.P. BLAVATSKY, EDGAR CAYCE AND DEATH

THE KALI-YUGA: THE END OF THE UNIVERSE AT 424826 A.D. (THE COSMOS FALLS INTO THE CHAOS AS THE SHAKTI OROBOROS LEADS TO THE ELIMINATION OF ALL VALUE SYSTEMS BY SPECTRUM ANALYSIS)

1965
Oil, acrylic, vinyl lettering, and x-ray on canvas
73 ¾ x 73 3/8 in. / 187.33 x 186.37 cm.

Subject: The Night of Dissolution and the End of the Universe

Symbol Evocation: Shakti and Cosmic Energy: Shiva and Cosmic Passivity

Comments: The culture of India, which comprises a multitude of beliefs and traditions, is understood to be "Sanatana-Dharma": (the imperishable eternal unchanging essence of existence). It has three aspects: 1) The law or the eternal order of the Universe; 2) The righteousness or the basis of human morality and ethics; and 3) The foundation or basis of all religions.

This trimurti or three-form world-view was instantiated thousands of years ago as the divine trinity of the Gods. Vishnu (to the left) is called the preserver who maintains the harmony of the universe and Brahma (in the center) is the one ultimate Supreme Being, who is infinite-infintesimal and eternal and therefore the source of life. The world-soul (a conception of the divine as extended in space and time and including the world as its internal-external environment) and is present in all things as the At-man (the panentheistic soul having both absolute and relative aspects of being, consciousness and bliss); Shiva (to the right) the deity that represents the destroyer of Avidya (ignorance) and regeneration. Shiva is the Lord of the Universal Dance with his wife Shakti (also know of Amba – The Divine Mother, Durgā – the Unfathomable One, Kāli – the Black One, and the force of a-posteriori knowledge) as Shiva is the a-priori knowledge received entering into the natural world.

When the trimurti descends into time, the Mahanirvana Tantra says that the Universe endures an obscene oscillation between the Kalpa or the day of Brahma – the breathing out in which Shiva and Shakti do the universal dance in the structure of the Kalpa. Each Kalpa contains 10 Manvatara. Each Manvatara contains 100 Maha Yugas (or the great age). The structure of one Maha-yuga is made up of four parts totaling 4,320,000 Earth years. The first is the SaTya Yuga (1,728,000 Earth years) in which Shiva places four white dots on Shakti's Ājñā-Chakara. The second is the Treta Yuga (1,296,000 Earth years). Shiva places three red dots on the brow of Shakti. The third is the Dvapara Yuga (864,000 Earth years) with two yellow dots, and finally the fourth Yuga is Kali when the single black dot is placed at the beginning of the last 432,000 Earth years. These are the meanings of the female cast systems seen on the foreheads of the Hindu women.

According to Western reckoning we all live in the Fifth Manuatara and the Fiftieth Maha-Yuga. The beginning of our present Kali-Yuga began in 3120 BCE. The end of our present Kali-Yuga is at 426,872 AD. If you do the arithmetic there are 2,046 years unaccounted for. The end of the Universe is on 424,826 AD. The missing numbers are the points of change between the cycles of time.

The obscene oscillation ends with the Pralya or the sleep of Brahma-the breathing in. The Pralya is the same length of time in Earth years as the Kalpa – 4,320,000,000, but it has no divisions or parts. Brahma sleeps by means of the divine Yoga-Nidrā. Not only is he free of thought, desires and distractions, there are none of the human aspects of sleep such as hypnagogic or hypnopomic states, dreams, lucid dreams, and nightmares, no R.E.M. cycles, no sleeping to solve problems, etc.

The nearest I came to the "Night of Dissolution" was getting so drunk that I lost three days of memory, also when I had eight periods of electroshock therapy in a two month period, or when I was placed in a medical coma for a week to facilitate open heart surgery. In each case I received a taste of the "void," "the blessed, blessed oblivion" of that period of time before our birth Brahma sleeps in the Yoga-Nidra position on the back of the thousand headed serpent Shesha-Nāga. But just before the Pralya in the one thousandth Kali-Yuga, where evil and destruction reach a paroxysm, even boredom and care become indistinguishable.

EXHIBITIONS

Paul Laffoley, Playboy Club, Boston, 1971

Paul Laffoley: The Sixties, Kent Gallery, New York, 2009

Chasing Napoleon, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2009

Paul Laffoley: Secret Universe, Nationalgalerie im Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, 2011

Paul Laffoley: The Boston Visionary Cell, Kent Fine Art, New York, 2013

Paul Laffoley: Premonitions of the Bauharoque, Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, Washington, 2013

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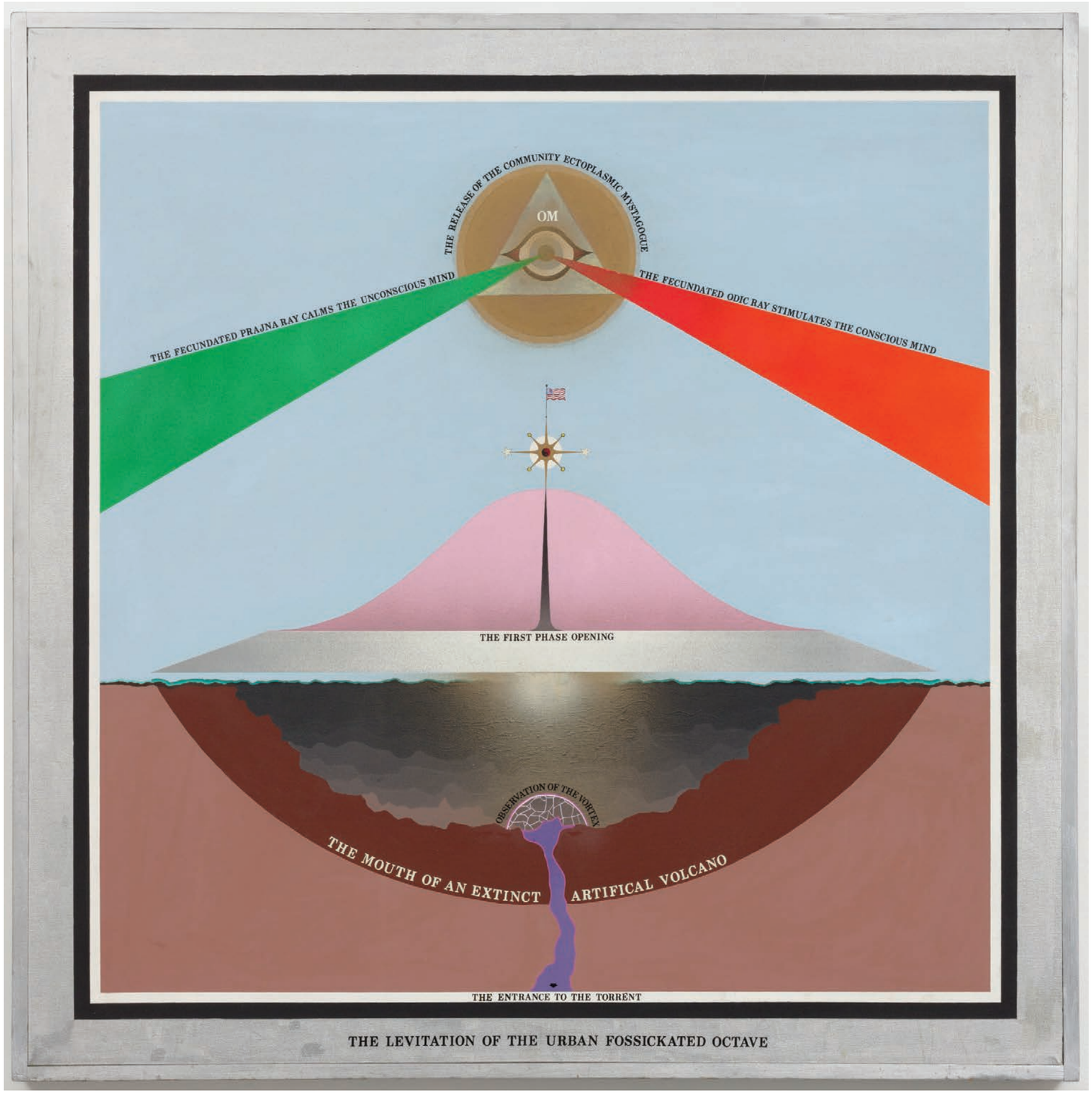

THE LEVITATION OF THE URBAN FOSSICKATED OCTAVE

THE LEVITATION OF THE URBAN FOSSICATED OCTAVE

1967
Acrylic, Ink, and hand set vinyl lettering on canvas
52 x 52 in. / 132.1 x 132.1 cm.

Subject: The Source of all that is Esoteric

Symbol Evocation: The Second Chance

Comments: The word *fossick* means to search for gold or gemstones, typically by picking over abandoned mines or workings. Every culture, philosophy or religion is based on the thought that somehow we (the human race) have been forsaken and that we still have the possibility of finding the path back home if we look again for clues in places that others have ignored or are not so brightly lit. An urban octave is the harmonious secret group of limited number that conducts that actual search. The image of the flying saucer is that of the alien that comes to help us out of our natural alien state.



THE MODALITIES OF POWER

THE MODALITIES OF POWER

1967
Acrylic, India Ink, and Paper Press Type on Museum Board
26 x 26 in. / 66 x 66 cm.

Subject: The Source of All Power in the Pluriverse

Symbol Evocation: A three-dimensional section of the hypersphere that demonstrates pulsating energy. Energy emanates both from the hypersphere outward, and energy inward without entering the centroid of the hypersphere

Comments:

I

The only historical reference to the reality of the hypersphere was provided by the German philosopher, Wilhelm Gottfried Leibniz (1646 - 1716). He began his philosophy through a number decisions:

1. There is an ontological unit as a center of force;
2. The so-called "atom" as the smallest particle of matter is meaningless;
3. Atoms have no extension; they are not in space;
4. Endowing this extensionless unit with force (on the grounds that the laws of motion so demand), he terms this unit "The Monad" (derived from the ancient Greek term (Monas);
5. The Monads are the simplest substance out of which everything is made;
6. Since the existence cannot be extensional it must be intentional. These centers are also centers of feeling, "perception" (from the outside) and apperception (from the inside);
7. Each Monad "mirrors" the entire universe and is, therefore, a microcosm;
8. Space is the order of possible co-existence, while time is the order of possibilities. They cannot co-exist, and therefore must exist successively. Space and time depend on the possibilities and the incompatibilities of the monads. In other words space and time are relative to each other;
9. There is a graded hierarchy of monads, hence a natural continuity of lack of consciousness and animation until you arrive at that total consciousness of "the God particle" or the perfect being;
10. The monads have no windows by which anything may go in or out. Each monad must have a career independent of all the rest. This accounts for the idea of free will with no restrictions on the concept.
11. Leibniz's doctrine defined the idea of connection between Monads as a "pre-established harmony which leads to the notion of the "best of all possible worlds," but it is not a perfect world because it contains evil. Nevertheless the good in the world prevails over the evil.

II

The monad or the hyper-sphere has within it three aspects of power; 1) the power to create, 2) the power to alter, 3) the power to destroy. All together these forces when mixed become the neuter, which unites the active forces with the passive. The active forces are manifest as time, which produce contraction (the within of things) and then conception. The passive forces are manifest as space which produce expansion (the without) and then reception.

III

The legitimate heir of Leibniz was the famous Jesuit scientist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955). His doctrine of evolution extended from an assumed inorganic realm through a biospheric meeting of cells of consciousness, and into his notion of noösphere which would lead to an Earth World Culture as a sphere of mind stuff. The noösphere would then climax at the "Omega Point" of time in which evolution would produce a hyper-personal consciousness that manifests as God in history. In other words, the union of the atoms of consciousness become more and more personal as they become closer and closer together. The total unity differentiates each cell. Teilhard also had another belief with Leibniz. Both men believed there were no people in the universe except for the Earth.

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Walla, Douglas, Linda Dalywimple Henderson, Steve Moscowitz, and Ariel Saiber. *The Essential Paul Laffoley*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015. 320 pp. illus in color plate 14 (pp. 84, 85) (publication)


THE VISIONARY POINT
HYPARXIS AS PURE WILL
ACTIVE
NEUTRAL
PASSIVE
FROM THE HYPARXIS, THE POINT BEYOND INFINITY, ETERNITY DESCENDS, PENETRATING
THE ASTRAL PLANE TO TOUCH THE HELIX OF TIME AT THE NOW OF THE VISIONARY POINT
TIME FORWARD FROM THE PAST
TIME BACKWARD FROM THE FUTURE
TIME MOVING FORWARD MEETS TIME MOVING BACKWARD AT THE VISIONARY POINT WHICH PRECEDES THE WORLD MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE. THE OMEGA POINT

THE VISIONARY POINT

1970
Oil and acrylic, ink, and Letraset on canvas
73 ½ x 73 ½ in. / 185.4 x 185.4 cm.

Subject: The connection between that which has no history and that, which has only history.

Symbol Evocation: The Instant of Revelation.

Comments: Plato (428-346 BCE) in *The Timaeus* (425 BCE) describes the three elements that compose the universe. These elements suddenly appeared out of nowhere as a result of the titanic clash between the two most cosmic principles: reason (*nous*) and necessity (*ananke*). Reason as causal predictability attempts to overrule necessity by persuasion. Necessity as brute fact attempts to resist reason by the unpredictability of its wandering or errant cause. The nature of the collision is somewhat similar to the thought experiment of Romantic 19th century physics, which only hints at what happens when the irresistible force finally meets the immovable object.

While this cosmology purports to explore fully the implications of the initial explosion, there immediately arise rejoinders on the part of the interlocutor, Timaeus of Locri. He recognizes the sublime terror one experiences approaching the very heart of revelation. The Triune that emerges is first: the realm of the unchanging forms, it is the domain of the uncreated, the indestructible, the unmodifiable, the uncombinable, the imperceptible to the physical senses and is known only by thought - in essence, that which has no history. Second, the realm of the copies which bear the same name as the form, but detected by the physical senses, comes into existence and vanishes from a particular place and time, and during its existence is in constant motion. This realm is apprehended by opinion aided by sense data - in essence; it is that which has only history. Third, the nurse of becoming, the receptacle, or space which is eternal and indestructible and provides a position for everything that comes to be, but unlike time which is ranked among the works of the intellect and has a form or archetype (eternal duration or aevum), space has no archetype and exists in its own right as does the realm of form.

There are, however, two direct portals to revelation in the exposition of Timaeus: First, the nature of the relationship of being with becoming or the forms and their copies. It is spoken of as follows: "and the things which pass in and out of it (space) are copies of the eternal realities whose form they take in a wonderful way. That is hard to describe - we will follow this up some other time." Timaeus never does! Second, the way in which we as humans know about space "which is apprehended without the senses by a sort of spurious reasoning and so is hard to believe in. We look at it indeed in a kind of dream and say that everything that exists must be somewhere and occupy some space, and that what is nowhere in heaven or earth is nothing at all. And because of this dream state we are not awake to the distinctions we have drawn and others akin to them and fail to state the truth about the true and unsleeping reality."

Timaeus is not indulging in metaphor. The dream state being referred to is the lucid dream brought to such a primordial and tupiodal (manifesting) state that we are placed in a position to witness universal creation and destruction directly. In the 18th century the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) took Plato's ideas of time and space and placed them on the same footing or ontic status. To the raw data of sensation, Kant held that we contribute the forms of space and time. Space is the form of the external sense, and time is the form of the internal sense. We never experience anything, said Kant, except that it is in space and time.

Yet we never *experience* either space or time. Space and time in which we order phenomena, therefore, must come not from sensation but from within. We are literal co-creators of the universe utilizing this capacity for revelation. I suspect that lucid dreaming or its variations is involved in how the copies are made from the platonic forms, thus explaining how becoming unites with being.

The Visionary Point, therefore, is that moment in time when a viable time machine begins to operate and has the capacity to access the entire past and future of human history from that fatal present. It is an instant of time that can be described as the meeting of time moving forward and time moving backward, and it becomes the point in time, which exactly precedes the beginning moment of the mystical experience of the entire earth.

EXHIBITIONS

Paul Laffoley: Secret Universe 2. Nationalgalerie im Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, 2011

The Force Structure of the Mystical Experience. Kent Fine Art, New York 2015

Paul Laffoley: The Visionary Point. Francis Naumann Fine Art, New York. 2018

Visionary New England. DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, MA. April 24 – September 13, 2020

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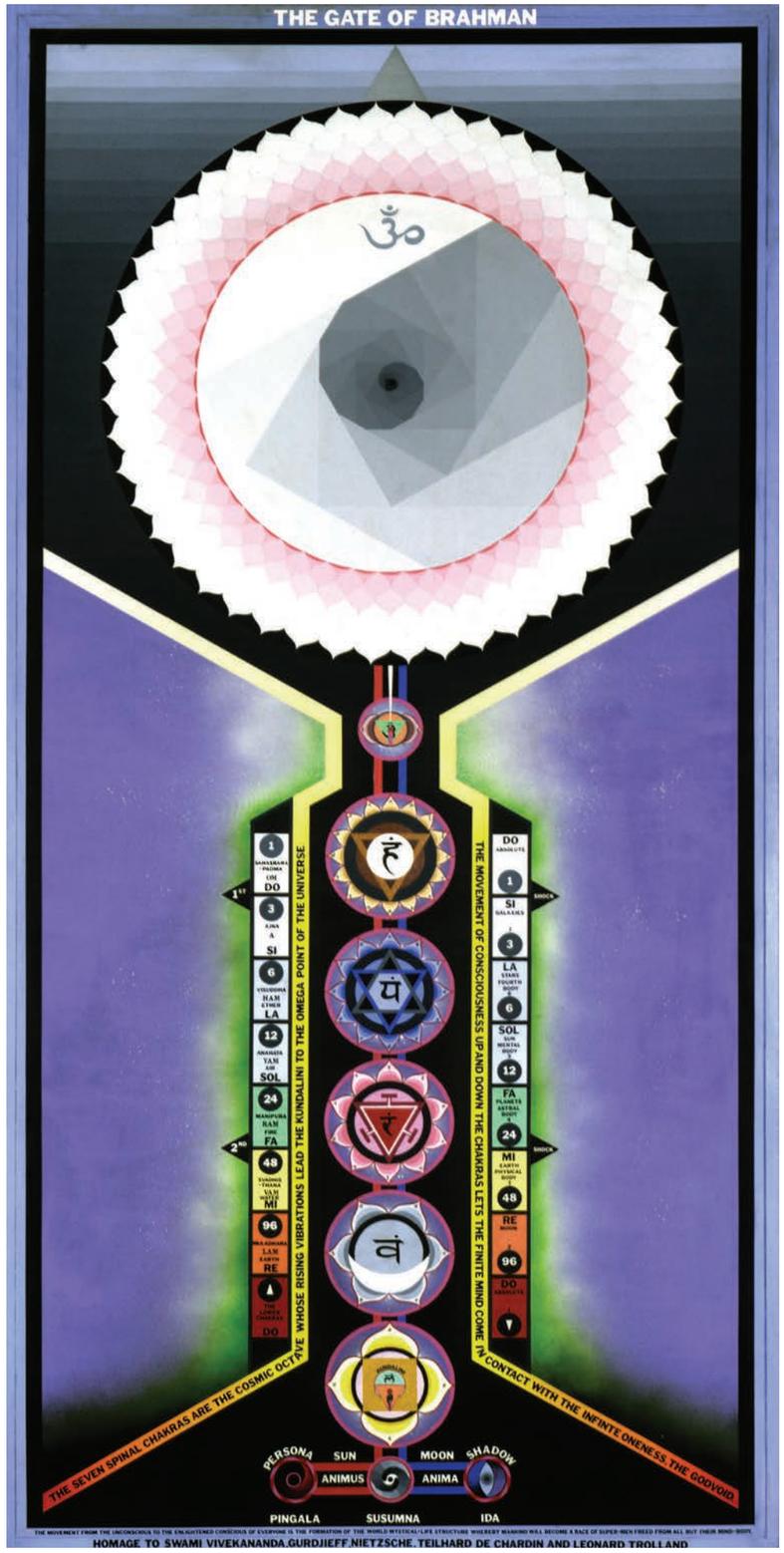

THE GATE OF BRAHMAN: THE COSMIC OCTAVE

1971
Oil, acrylic, and hand applied vinyl letters on canvas
98 x 48 in. / 248.9 x 121.92 cm.
Signed, titled and dated on the verso

Subject: The Eternal Imperishable Absolute, the supreme Brahman is the dual reality of the Vedanta. It has no equivalent in the religions of dualism, all of which require a personal god. This state of Nirvana does not mean mere annihilation but rather entry into another mode of existence. This is the abode of immortality. It is only accessible by the Mystical Experience. In the East this is called *Samadhi*. At its highest level it is known as *asamprajanya*, where one's personal karma is broken.

Symbol Evocation: The Seven Chakras (or wheels) are centers of subtle energies, which are activated without physical motion. These energies are often called *Prana or Kundalini*. They exist within the astral body of a person, and when activated they become the force structure of the mystical experience

EXHIBITIONS

The Force Structure of the Mystical Experience. Kent Fine Art, New York. September 11 – November 7, 2015

Visionary New England. DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, MA. April 24 – September 13, 2020

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ALCHEMY: THE TELENOMIC PROCESS OF THE UNIVERSE

THE MAGNUM OPUS



VISIT INTERIORA TERRAE: RECTIFICANDO INVENIES OCCULTUM LAPIDEM

HOMAGE TO HERACLITUS, EMPEDOCLES, ALBERTUS MAGNUS, RAYMOND LULLY, PARACELSUS, AND TITUS BURCKHARDT

ALCHEMY: THE TELENOMIC PROCESS OF THE UNIVERSE

1973
Oil, acrylic, ink, lettering on canvas
73 ½ x 73 ½ in. / 186.69 x 186.69 cm.

Subject: The Alchemical Process

Symbol Evocation: Traditional Western Magic

Comments: During the Middle Ages the magical practices of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome became codified as alchemy (the power and techniques of universal transformation) with the study of the Qabalah as its energy source. This is a perfect analogy of the way Christianity became the creative extension of Judaism. However alchemy, then at its mature power was considered just another Gnostic heresy, and the personal practice of it as an example of blasphemy. The distinction between magic and religion that was accepted by the medieval world was neatly summed up in 1920 by the synoptic chronicler of the occult, Lewis Spense, when he wrote, "It has been that religion consists of an appeal to the gods, whereas magic is the attempt to force their compliance." This is why alchemy is often called the confused precursor of the modern sciences of chemistry and physics - which it is not. Science appeals to the myth of invariance in nature (the "laws" of nature) in order to euphemize out of existence the gradual hubris as a result of attempting a complete control of nature (never the intent of alchemy). In a certain sense both chemistry and physics could be viewed as failed forms of alchemy.

When Leonardo DaVinci (1452-1519) separated alchemy into what we now call art and science, he not only began the Italian Renaissance and the modern world, but he also discovered a way to keep the enterprise of magic alive right under the nose of the church. The price that was paid by the rest of humanity was: 1) traditional magic had to go underground into secret organizations that became the world of the occult-- the hidden, and 2) over the next 500 years there occurred a very unhealthy separation between the intellect and the passions at the societal level. The operating nomenclature of alchemy as it applies to the major substances of transformation are: A) the Body, B) the Soul, and C) the Spirit, which were rendered as mass, consciousness and energy during the International Gothic period and into the Renaissance. The Church considered the Body, the Soul, and the Spirit to be its exclusive property, and its obvious attempt at the theological neutering of these sacred concepts into the secular forms, simultaneously accomplished two tasks: 1) it gave science, a new and fast rising bureaucracy of learning and authority,\ something of its own to chew on besides the Church's authority, and 2) allowed the Church the leverage to quietly push alchemy off the stage of knowledge and into oblivion - or at lest that is what it though that it did.

The final paroxysm of tension between thinking and feeling, which spiked at the end of the 19th century, was eloquently recorded by the philosopher/historian Sigried Giedion, in *Space, Time, and Architecture: Growth of a New Tradition* (1941-1967). Ostensibly a polemic for modernism in architecture, it became for me, one of the major influences in the current revival of alchemy, because it documents the transforming power of a willful and impassioned vision for a present and future world.

EXHIBITIONS

Paul Laffoley: Building the Bauharoque, Kent Gallery, New York, 1998

Architectonic Thought-Forms: A Survey of the Art of Paul Laffoley, Austin Museum of Art, Austin, Texas, 1999

Chasing Napoleon, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2009

Paul Laffoley: The Boston Visionary Cell, Kent Fine Art, New York, 2013

Paul Laffoley: Premonitions of the Bauharoque, Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, Washington, 2013

Visionary New England. DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, MA. April 24 – September 13, 2020

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Paul Laffoley, Jeanne Marie Wasilik, James Mahoney. *Architectonic Thought-Forms: Gedankenexperiemente in Zombie Aesthetics*. Austin, Texas: Austin Museum of Art, 1999, no. 6, ill. (color)

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