



Artist, Joan Norris, 89, after a protracted illness, died peacefully in her husband's arms just after sunset on Saturday evening July 13, 2024 at her Vail, Colorado home.



Raised in southern California and after bringing up her family in Denver, Joan leaves a 40-year legacy as a much-loved painter of

evocative, expressionist still-life's, figurative portraits and landscapes, her vividly painted canvases recording the beauty of nature and cultural glimpses from her travels. Known as an artist and performer, gifted with a rainbow of talents, she enthusiastically embraced her artistic life and intense spiritual beliefs.

A highly regarded college fine arts instructor, Joan is remembered for the life changing appreciation and encouragement for the arts she brought to those who studied with her. She was a pioneering local media personality, co-anchoring the first news series produced on Vail public access television and appeared in numerous articles in print media. Joan was a determined advocate for the dignity of women in the arts, religion and her communities.

She and her artist friends worked tirelessly to gain recognition for their fellow local artists and performers, organizing numerous concert events and art exhibitions. An enthusiastic supporter of cultural events, Joan aspired to further the careers of local residents in the performing and visual arts. With humor and vibrancy, Joan took on tasks that continue to shape the artistic heart and spirit in her beloved communities. Joan, for her generation, is the embodiment of an intensely introspective creative life.

A collection of her visionary end of life inspired works follows. A bequeath from her numerous sojourns in Mexico. Created over a span of many years, it is an evocative portrayal of her spiritual journey through the end of her life.

Joan's infectious spirit remains engulfing and ever present. None are spared. Her wonderous spirit pervasive. There was no bleakness that could not be shattered by her hope and endurance for better days ahead. Privately, deeply serious, introspective, receiving inspiration and energy from her spirituality.

The mysteries contain in her Death and Dying paintings began when teaching fine arts in college. The series of painting strike emotional chords of growing old and dying. They are evocative and emotional.

Concepts began as one-line drawings appearing over time appearing in crayon and pastel sketches. The transition from sketches to full sized paintings took place upstairs in the meeting hall of a century old building, once used as a gathering place for hard rock miners and their families.

She began the collection in secret. They were painted over several years. Once completed, she was reluctant to view them herself and, while living, did not want them publicly shown.

Joan depicts in these painting her spiritual progression of departing life through the nightmarish torture of Purgatory. Her faith held firm by ever-present crucifix of salvation. Her despondent screams bring the protection of an archangel, San Michael, whose black wings ward off the attacks from lost souls. Faith escorts

her soul into paradise. Freed from earthly woes and fears she hurdles upward as a white winged angle, into the star strewn heavens. It begins with a mourner's grief at Joan's passing. It is followed by her passage through the end of life into the havens.



Mourner's Grief



Resignation – Journey to the end begins



Inevitable Looms



Pray for Mercy



Death Watch



Death Arrives



The Wake



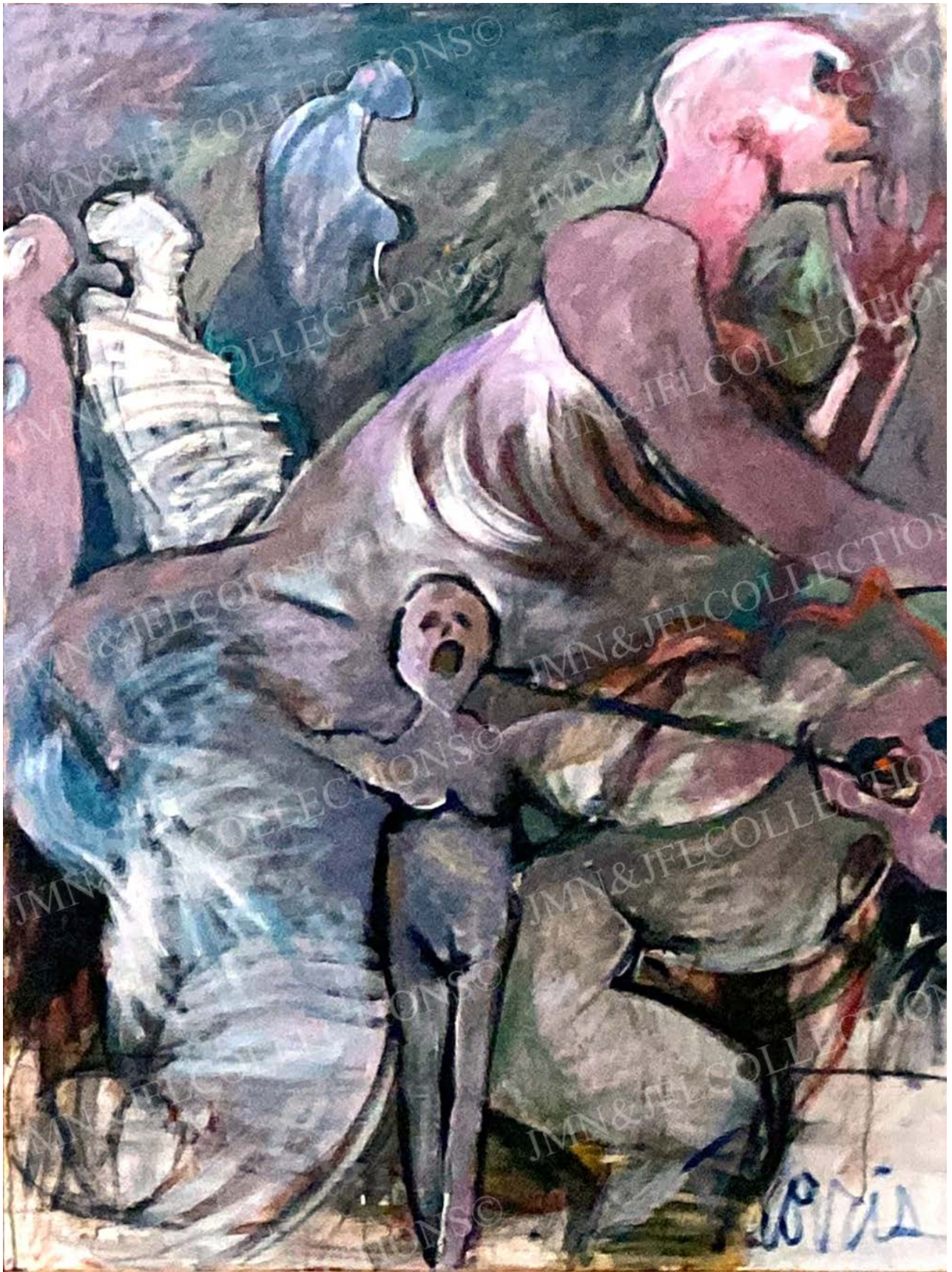
Body Snatchers Arrive



Purgatory - Among Lost Souls



Fear of the bone yard.
(Sold)



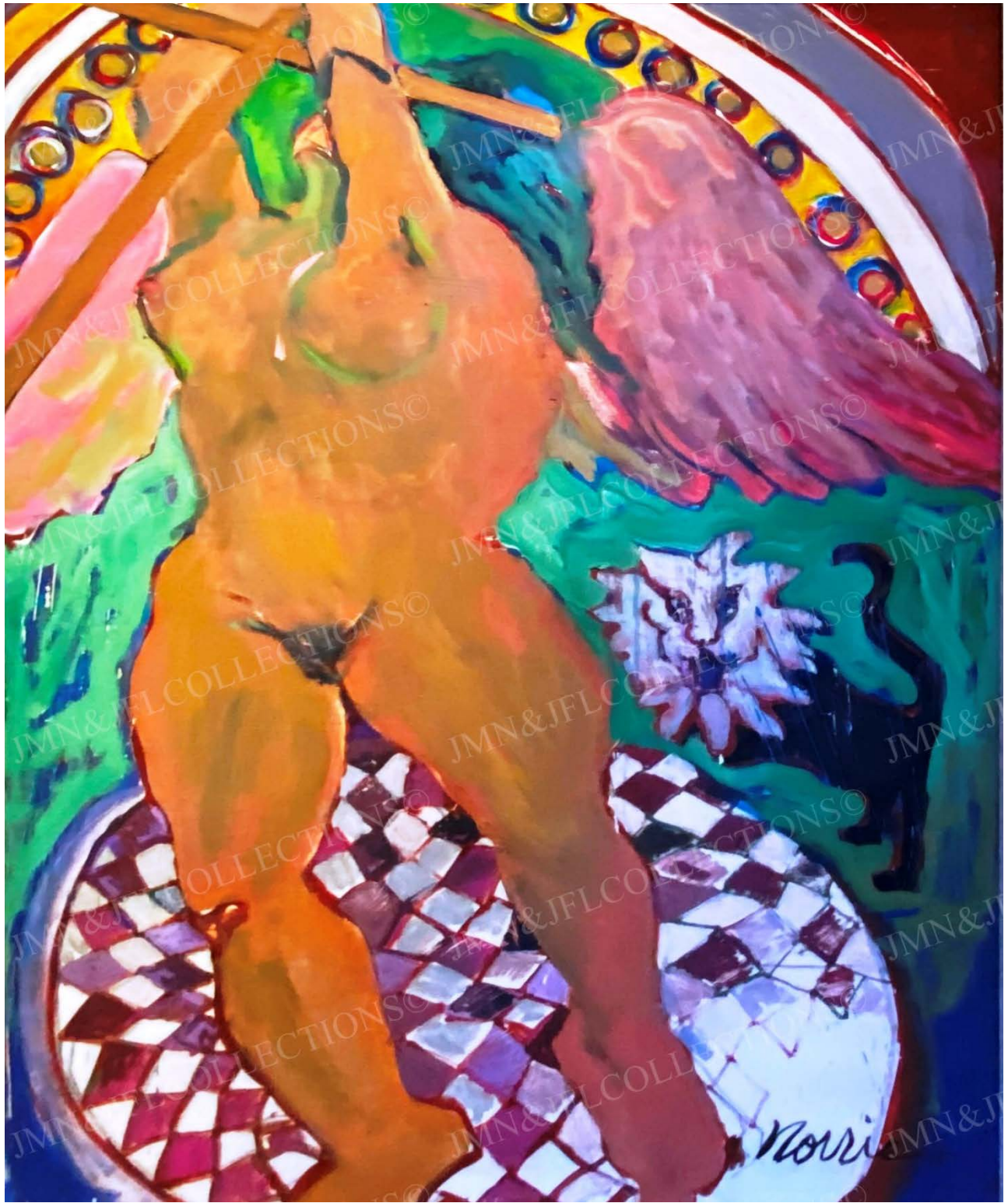
Silent Screams of Anguish



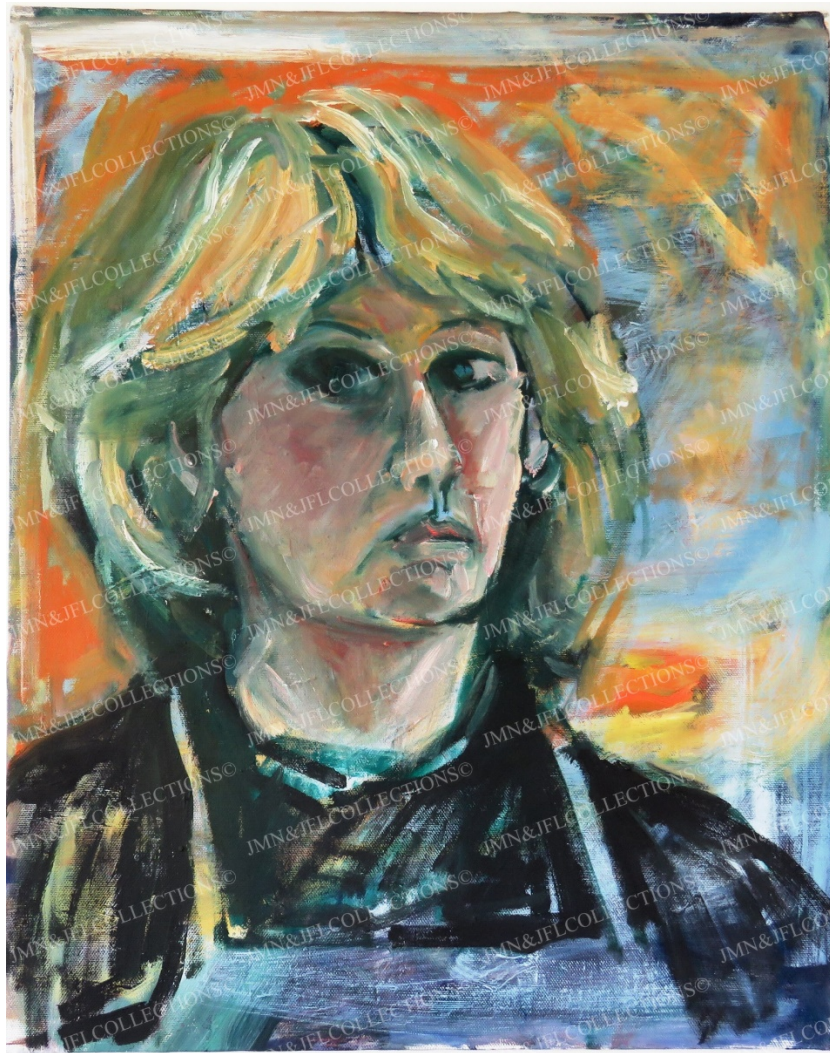
Absolution and Attainment



Rescuer and Escort - Saint Miguel



Assentation



Self-Portrait: Joan Marie Norris

Painting in this exhibition of Joan's portrayal of life's greatest transition was created in her studio after her death. With rare exception the series of paintings and sketches were created nearly 20 years prior to her passing. While living, she was uncomfortable showing these works in public because of the unsettling darkness they reveal. They raise disconcerting and emotional issues among those who believe in life-everlasting and those who do not.

The images are not representative of the expansive breath of Joan's artistic work for the joy of her spirit. Her intention as an artist is to connect introspectively in all mediums with the viewer. Her voice speaks of beauty and happiness, whether it be through the curvature of a simple flower or the intricacies of the human form. She is a story teller, laying out her character and emotions on canvases filled with color and drama.

Women are her heroines. She strove to improve her understanding of all things spiritual. Her life and art, proven through exemplary deeds. A testament to her influence, which is made all the more important by the inspired dignity of her death.

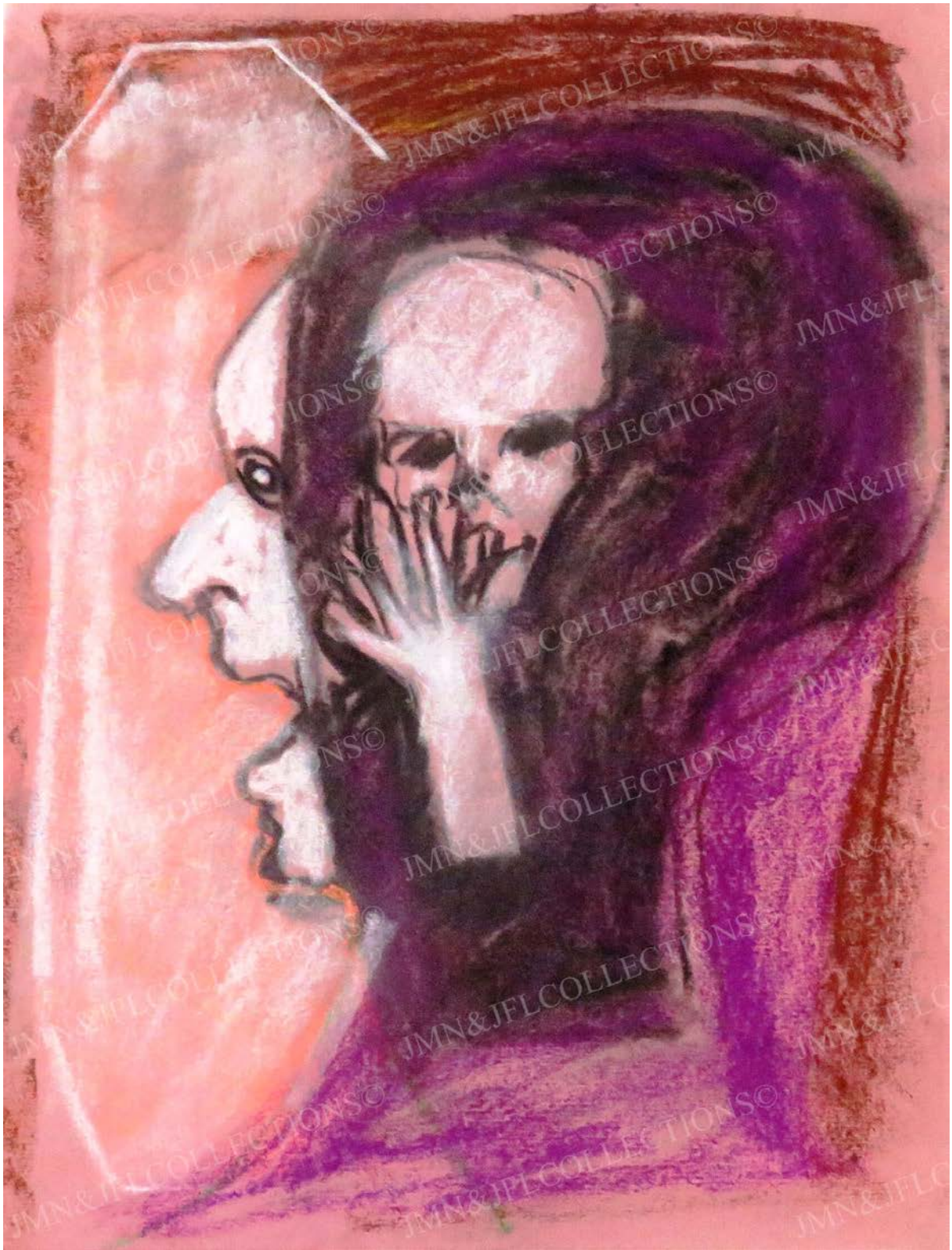
JMN Sketches:



Defiance









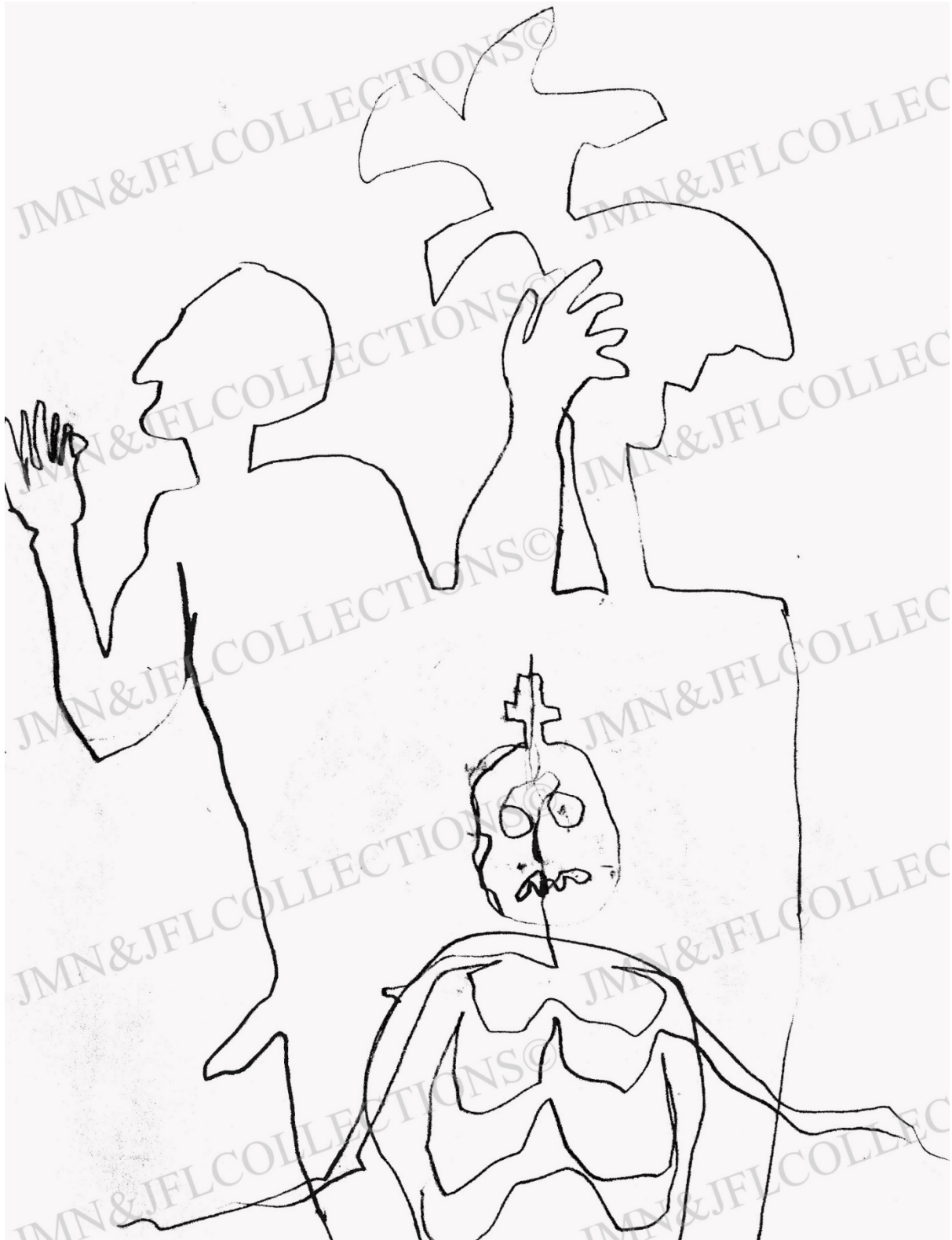








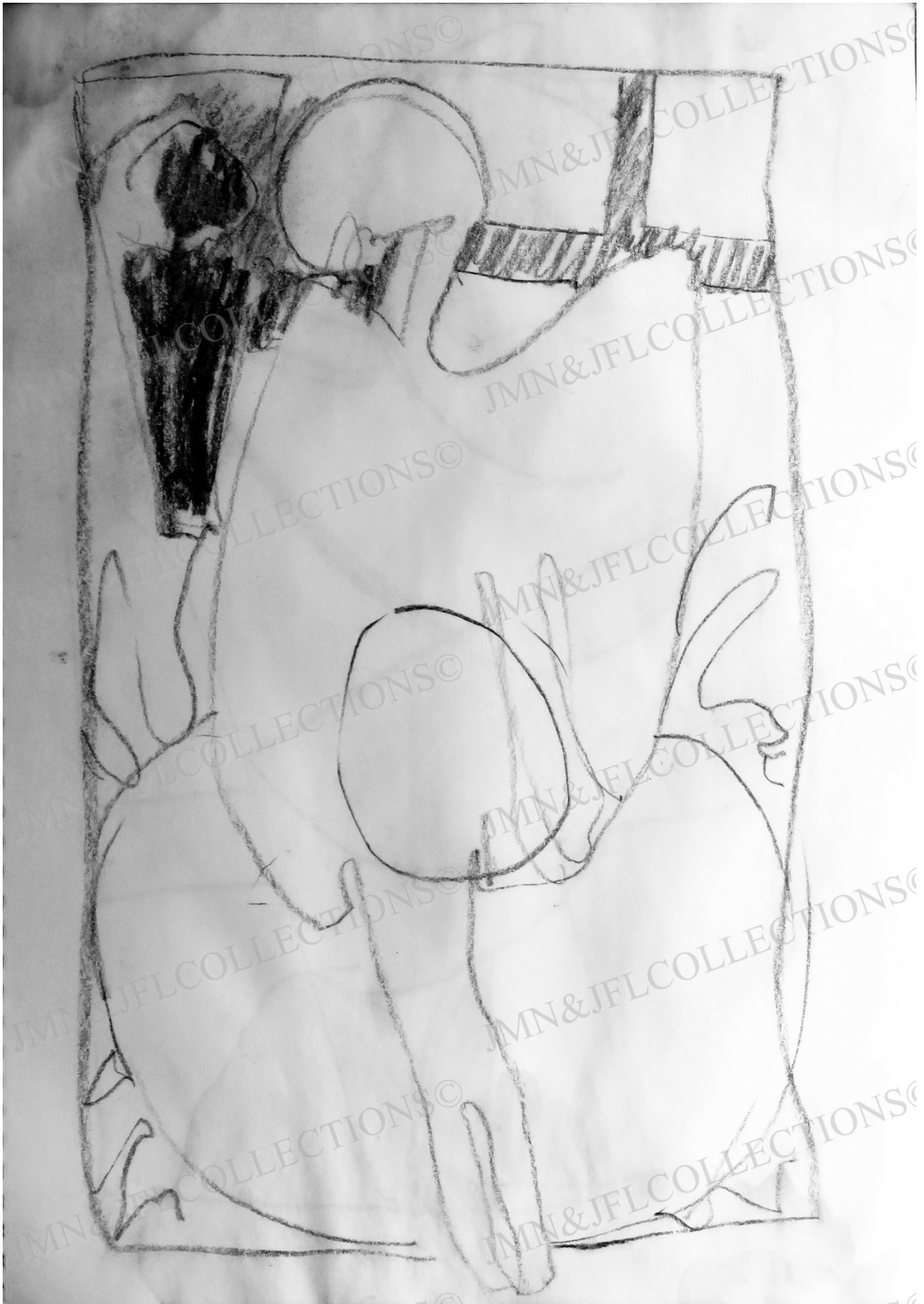








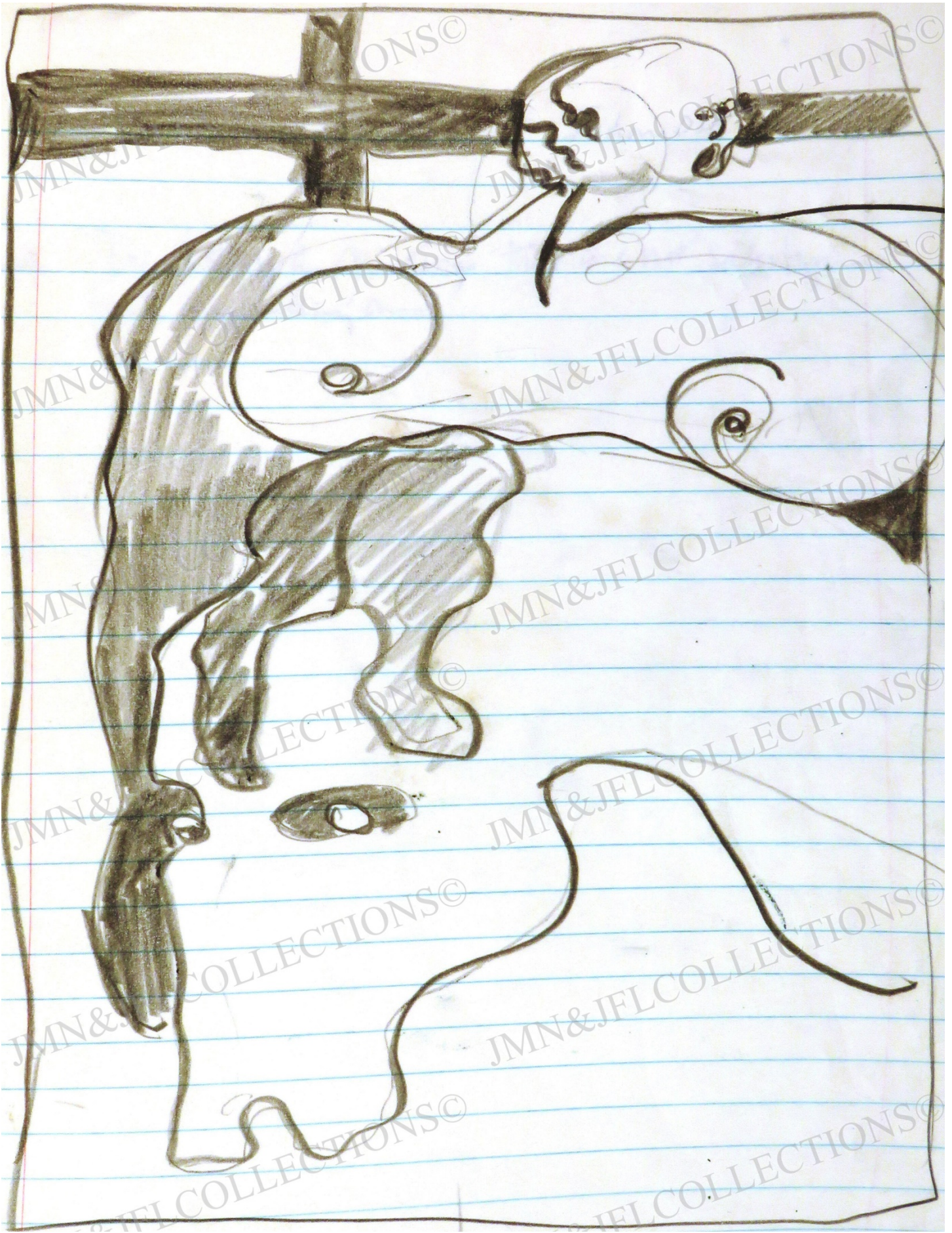
Maya Bayella — MANANA CON LOS OTROS











Music play by Beatriz Foncerrada (flute) and Scott Leather (piano) at Joan's celebration of life at her home in San Miguel de Allende:

Flute and Piano:

The Siciliano from Sonata No. 2 by Bach: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nKoTMI6Gpl>

Concerto Pour Une Voix - Saint-Preux <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5A-VKybWuE>

3rd is Cinema Paradiso <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UwHUrkTVibs>

Piano Solo:

Last is my 2nd Scherzo by Chopin <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQn34klqSQI>

Read by Val Ward Spoken at Joan Celebration of Life in San Miguel de Allende
11/24/24

Taken from Joan's handwritten note.

Speak softly now of angels wither the twilight's glow.
While earth is hushed and quiet and the sun is skinning low.
Speak softly now of peaceful things that sooth the troubled soul.
Prepare you hear for vespers upon some grassy knoll.
Speak quietly and listen for the still small voice of God.
Or the gentle rush of angel wings as the day begins to nod.
Speak kindly of your fellow men as you knell to pray.
And embrace the face of heaven as daylight fades away.
Speak softly now of angles and pack your cares away.
As you come into his presence at twilight time each day.

Lyrics 1

Gifted by Beatriz and read by Val.

If you would be in my eyes for a day
you would see the beauty that
floods with joy I find in your eyes
unaware of weather its magic or reality
If you be in my heart for a day
You would be able to have an idea
Of that which I feel when we
Embrace and chest to chest
We breath together

Protagonist of your love
I don't know if is magic or reality.

If you would be in my soul for a day
You would know how I feel inside of me
From the moment I fell for you
What I feel is only love

From that moment together with you,
What I feel is really love

Lyrics 2
Beatriz:

Call me when you have to feel my love
When your heart hurts
When your eyes cross mine
When you hear my song
When you can't find your way
Call me and you see
That I am the voice that transform
Into a woman
I am the orgia of being
Gestation of the world that you'll have
Hug me like this
And you will be happy again
You will revive again
You will return to me with love
Why is it like this?
Why will it always be this way?
Every time that you call me
Love

Val: Reading: 102124

I was not aware of the moment when I first crossed the threshold of this life.
What was the power that made me open put into this vast mystery like a bud in the forest at midnight?
When in the morning I looked upon the light I felt in a moment that I was no stranger in this world, that the inscrutable without name and form had taken me into its arms in the form of my own mother.
Even so, in death the same unknown will appear as ever known to me. And because I love this life, I know I shall love death as well.
The child cries out when from the right breast the mother takes it away, in the very next moment to find in the left one its consolation.

When I go from hence let this be my parting word, that what I have seen is unsurpassable.
I have tasted of the hidden honey of this lotus that expands on the ocean of light, and thus am I blessed - let this be my parting word.
In this playhouse of infinite forms I have had my play and here have I caught sight of him that is formless.
My whole body and my limbs have thrilled with his touch who is beyond touch; and if the end comes here, let it come - let this be my parting word.

Rabindranath Tagore

Document To be continued.
