

Marine Contemporary
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Dennis Koch
Standing Waves



Essay Claressinka Anderson

When I first did a studio visit with Dennis Koch, I was taken by his genuine interest for physics related theories and their direct connection to his artistic process. Actually, I cannot imagine him making anything other than what he does, as his work seems so deeply connected to the way his mind functions and his particular vision of the world. His interest in the theories of various savants in the field of physics, human consciousness, cosmology, parapsychology and the free energy movement put Koch in a very distinct position as an artist.

In the next ten years, we will witness a rate of technological advancement that is far quicker than anything seen in the previous thirty. This is something that fascinates Koch and continues to take his work on conceptual and visual journeys through the advancement of technology. Koch's meticulous and psychedelic color pencil drawings are a visual hybrid between op art, abstract expressionism and the geometric formalism of modern design. Although his work visually references the past, it is completely immersed in that which is yet to come, particularly the unexplained mysteries of the world.

Koch speaks with great enthusiasm about "Futants" - a term coined by Timothy Leary in the 1970's. The term combines the words "future" and "mutant" and refers to what Leary saw as the future scouts, inventors, philosophers, or sages for a given culture. Some of these "futants" include Nikola Tesla, Paul LaViolette, Bob Monroe, Terence McKenna, Nassim Haramein and Marko Rodin. Koch's drawings directly reflect some of their theories, but he is also clearly influenced by a group of artists that vary in period, yet all share common markers like minimalism, op art, abstract expressionism and an obsessive way of working. The most notable of these influences are Ed Paschke, Sol LeWitt, Yayoi Kusama, Agnes Martin, Mark Grotjahn, James Ensor, Bridget Riley and Frank Stella.

The density with which his color pencil drawings are rendered, help to solidify what appears to be a hidden visual language and coded system within the work. His ability to create visual shifts in depth, results in large part from Koch's mark making, which, though repetitive, dogged and even tedious in nature, produces an unexpectedly rich and saturated palette. The result of this multi-layered way of making marks on paper, results in dense and matrix-like color drawings that are at once forceful and disarming. Through the rigorous and time consuming process of layering, Koch's drawings take on a ritualistic and structured quality that operates in tandem with a looser, more fluid appreciation of form and color.



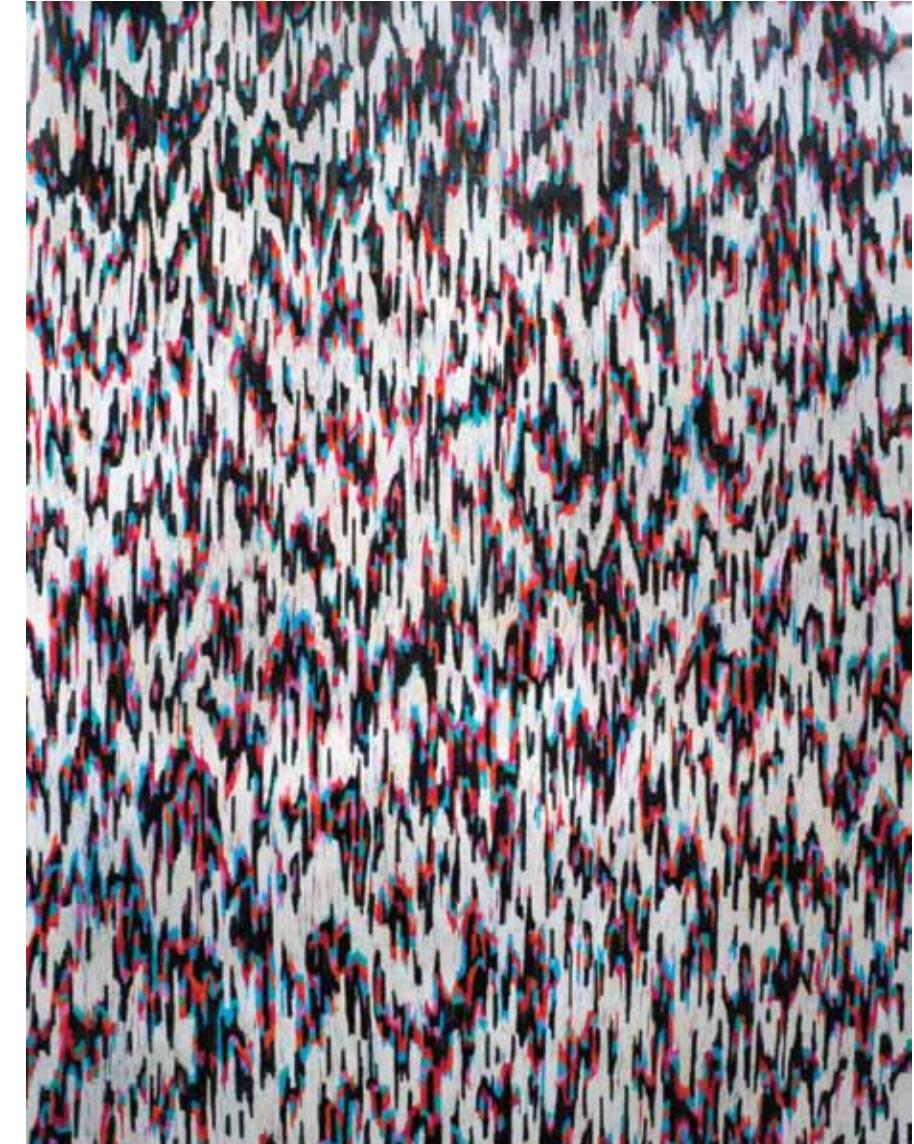
Untitled,
2010, color pencil on paper,
58" x 40"(detail)



Untitled,
2010, color pencil on paper,
58" x 40"

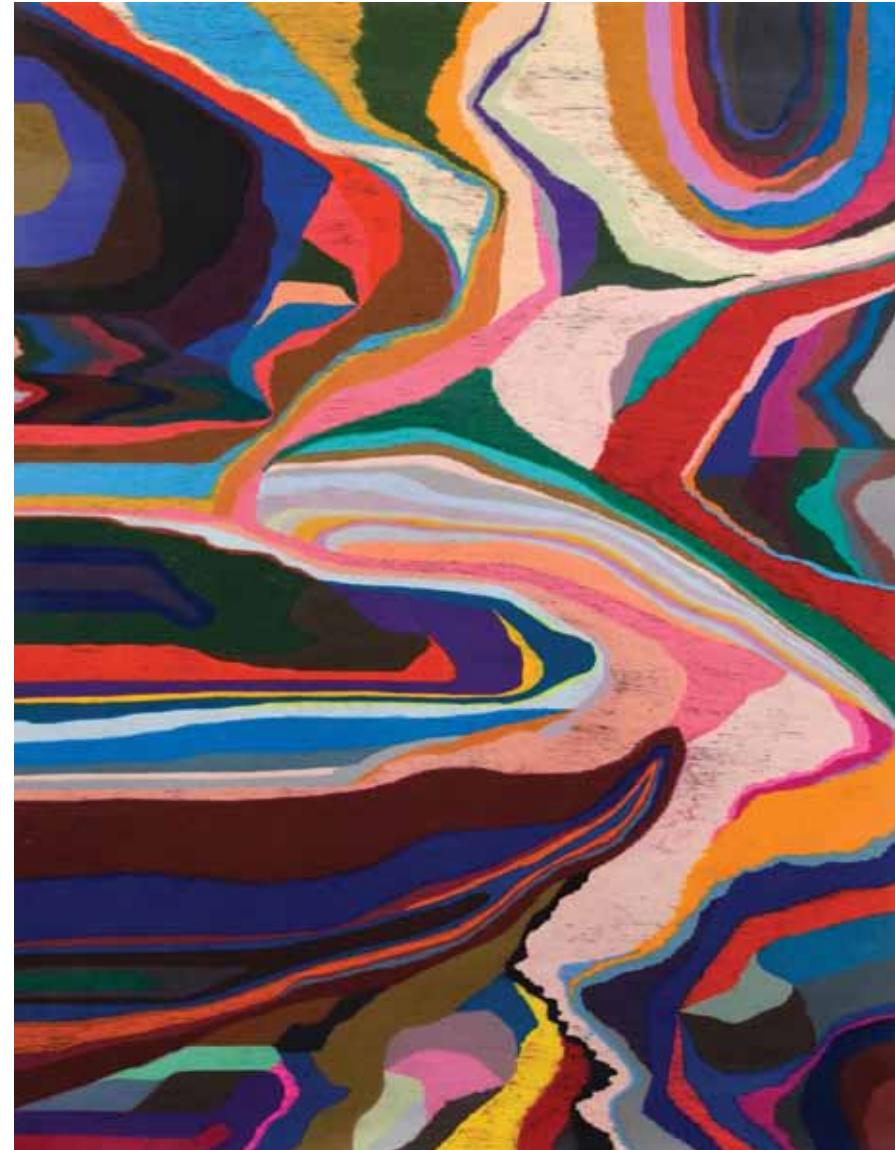
In Koch's earlier work, his love for geometric formalism was already apparent, although the work was less closely tied to physics and mathematical theorems. These works take on the appearance of fuzzed out, scrambled TV screens, with a melding of color that resembles a psychedelic experience, playing with the viewer's ideas of perception. With his use of vibrant lines and color swatches, Koch posits that everything necessary to comprehending the work of art is contained within the work itself.

Untitled,
2010, color pencil on paper,
70" x 50"





Scrambled Channel #3,
2008, color pencil on paper,
69" x 50"



Scrambled Channel #5,
2008, color pencil on paper,
69" x 50"

For this exhibition and in Koch's most recent body of work, his interests in the theories of physics are more fully realized. Standing Waves is a collection of abstract, colored pencil drawings and sculptures that appear to resonate; dipping and shifting in patterns of motion. Exploring the fractal vibratory qualities of Cymatics, the study of visible sound and vibration, Koch uses repetition and recursion to map subsystems of lines and color. He then layers, refracts, or creates interference patterns to observe the emerging self-organizing geometric patterns.

Referencing various physics related theories, Koch challenges the on-looker to decipher a visual language and coded system found within the work. Through applying the principles of Systems Theory to his own art making process, Koch's layering of multiple steps or subsystems accumulates to create the larger superstructure. It is through the experience of the repetition of these subsystems, that Koch intuitively generates a self-correcting feedback-loop to find the solutions to the greater whole. It is also through this rhythmic interplay of chaos and re-integration, that the artist renders the cohesive energy of each piece.

Each hexagonal "clock face" in the drawing Saturnian Time Matrix is subdivided into three or four black and white triangles. The black triangles merge with the underlying black hexagram matrix to create an undulating "sierpinski triangle" comprised of fractal triangles.

In Subatomic Spin, the interior particles break the boundary of each red circle, fragmenting the surrounding hexagrams. The hexagrams consist of two blue triangles pointing in opposite directions, and their slightly different tones create a vibratory effect. Similarly, in Galactic Super Wave, densely stacked lines create oscillating sine waves, evocative of theta brain waves.

The idea of visual parallel processing is a central theme in the Circle Set pieces. These works consist of two hemispheres, each with five vibrating rings encircling a white oculate. The rings challenge the viewer to process the distinct colors on each side, similar to how Robert Monroe's Hemi-Sync uses oscillating binaural auditory tones to stimulate brainwaves and promote altered states of consciousness.

Dennis Koch

(b. 1978, Cedar Falls, Iowa, USA)
Lives and works in Los Angeles.

Recent Solo Exhibitions include:

- 2010, Downy Head, Kantor Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2009, Circles, Karl Hutter Fine Arts, Beverly Hills, CA

Recent Group Exhibitions include: 2010

- Outside the Lines: Drawing in Contemporary Art, Royale Projects, Palm Springs, CA
- Bubble and Squeak, Happy Lion, Los Angeles, CA
- Salon No. 4, Marine, A Contemporary Art Salon, Santa Monica, CA
- Obsession, Heather James Fine Art, Palm Desert, CA

2009

- The Newest, Phil, Los Angeles, CA
- Construct and Dissolve: Works on paper by artists from Los Angeles, Galerie Sabine Knust, Munich, Germany

2008

- New Works: Dennis Koch & Claudia Nieto, High Energy Constructs, Los Angeles, CA

Koch has previously exhibited in Los Angeles with Happy Lion, Kantor Gallery, High Energy Constructs and has upcoming exhibitions in 2011 in Japan and Germany.



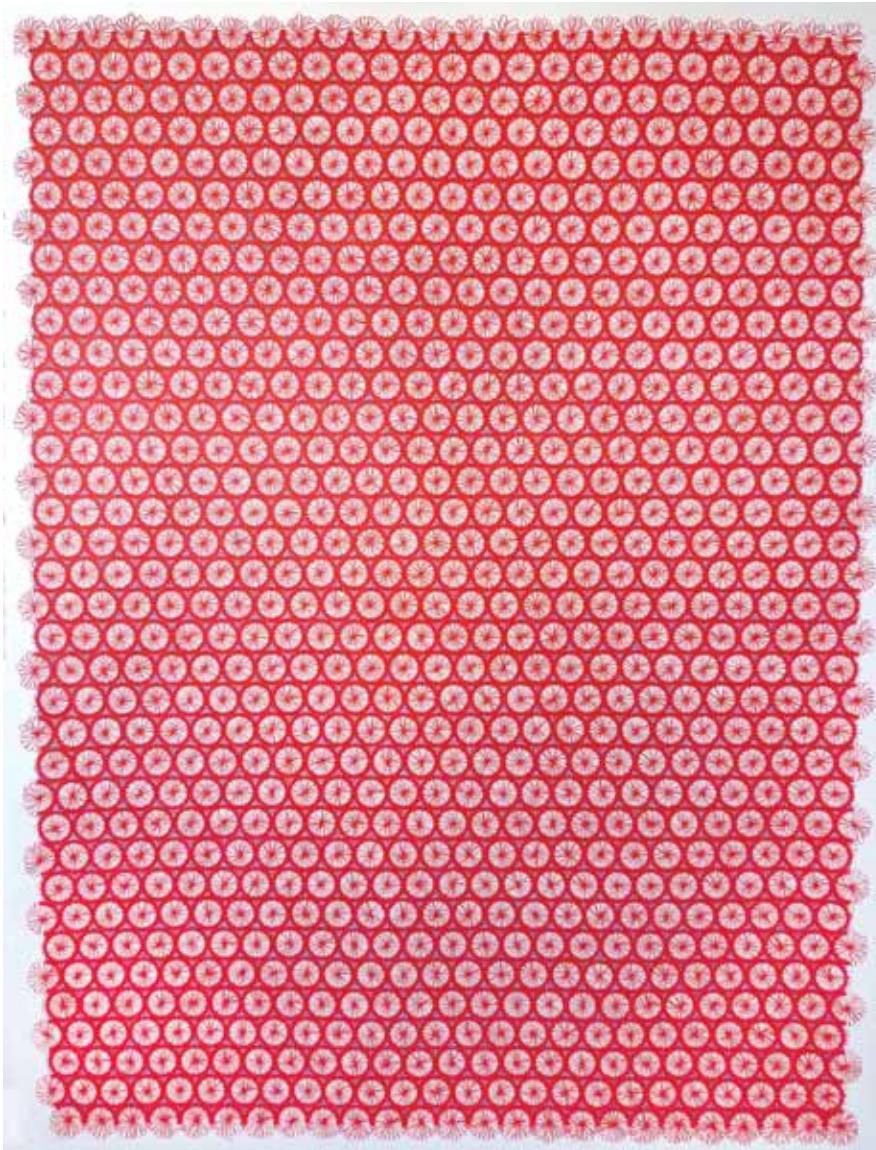
Saturnian Time Matrix,
2011, color pencil on paper,
60" x 40" (detail)



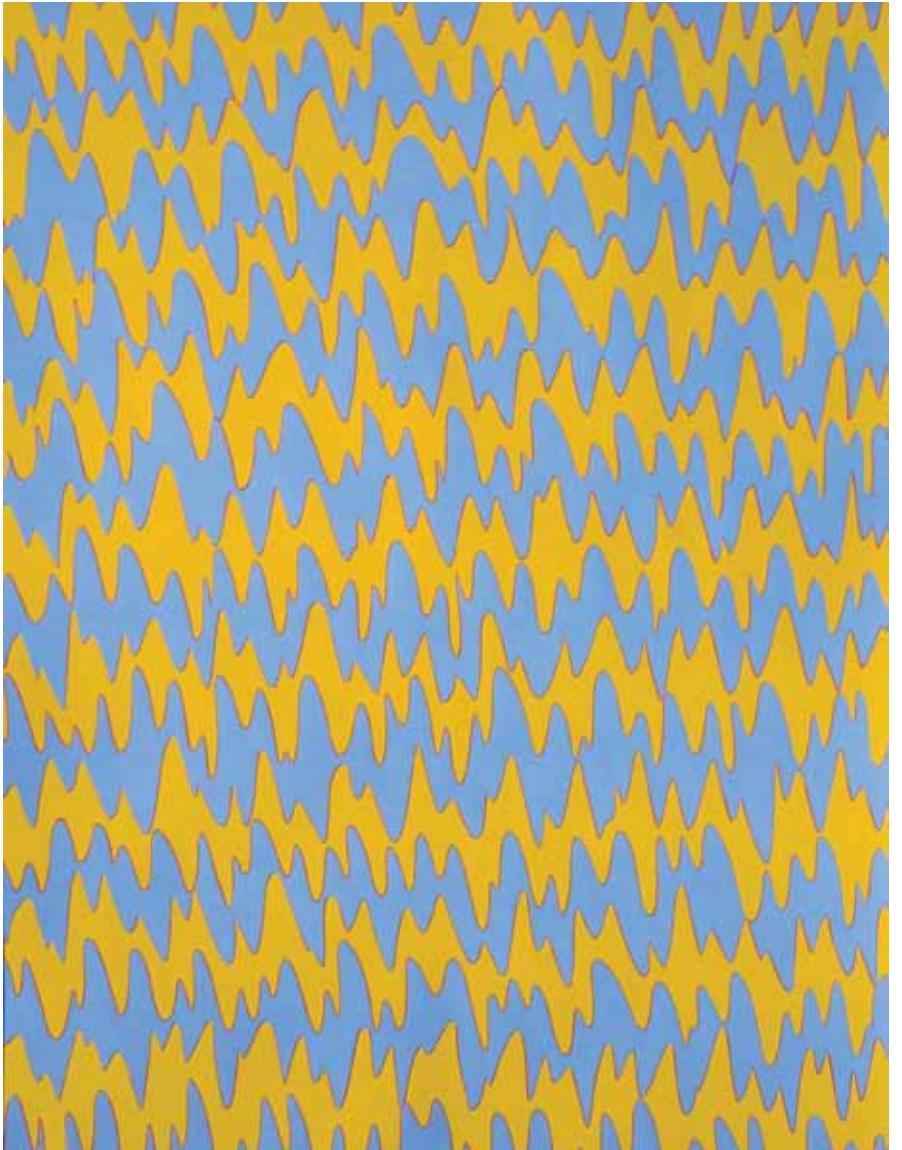
Saturnian Time Matrix,
2011, color pencil on paper,
60" x 40"



Subatomic Spin,
2011, color pencil on paper,
70" x 51" (detail)



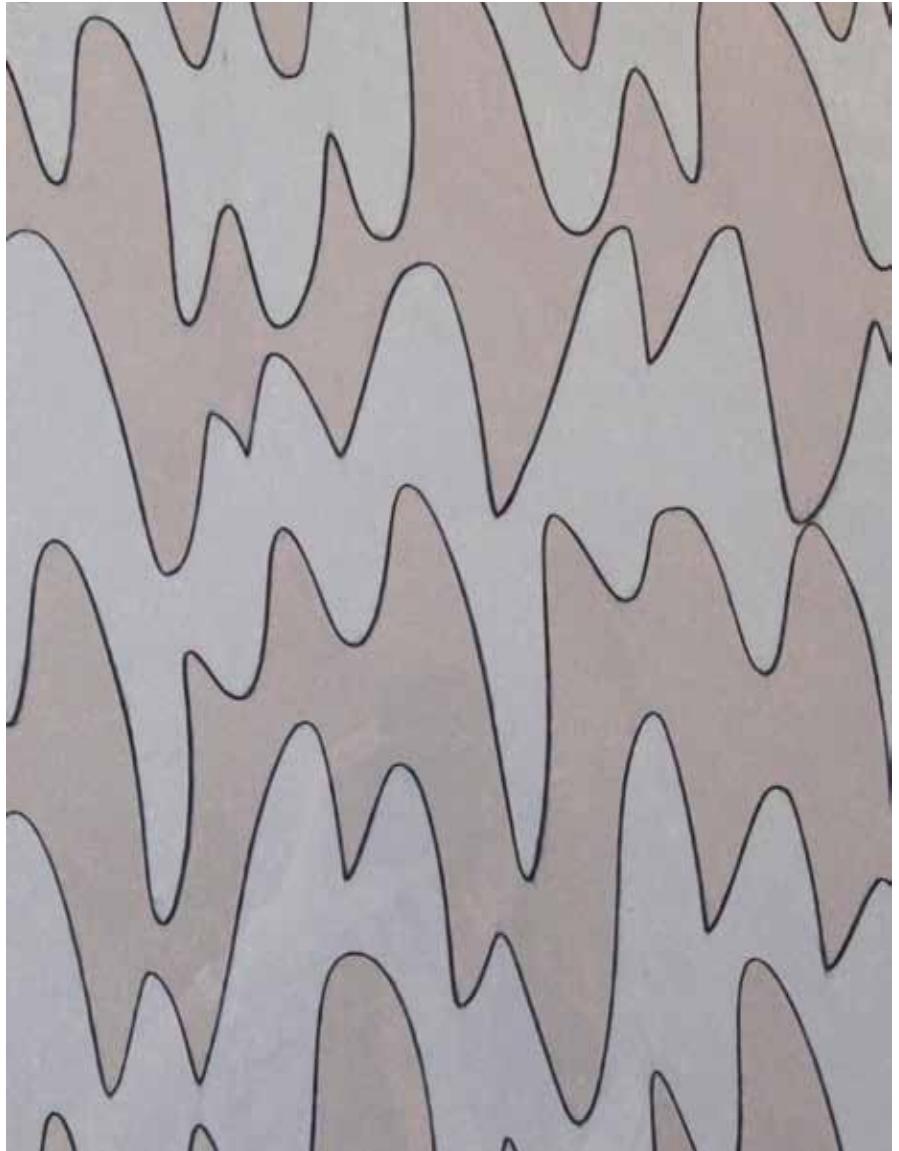
Subatomic Spin,
2011, color pencil on paper,
70" x 51"



Super Wave,
2011, color pencil on paper,
70" x 51"



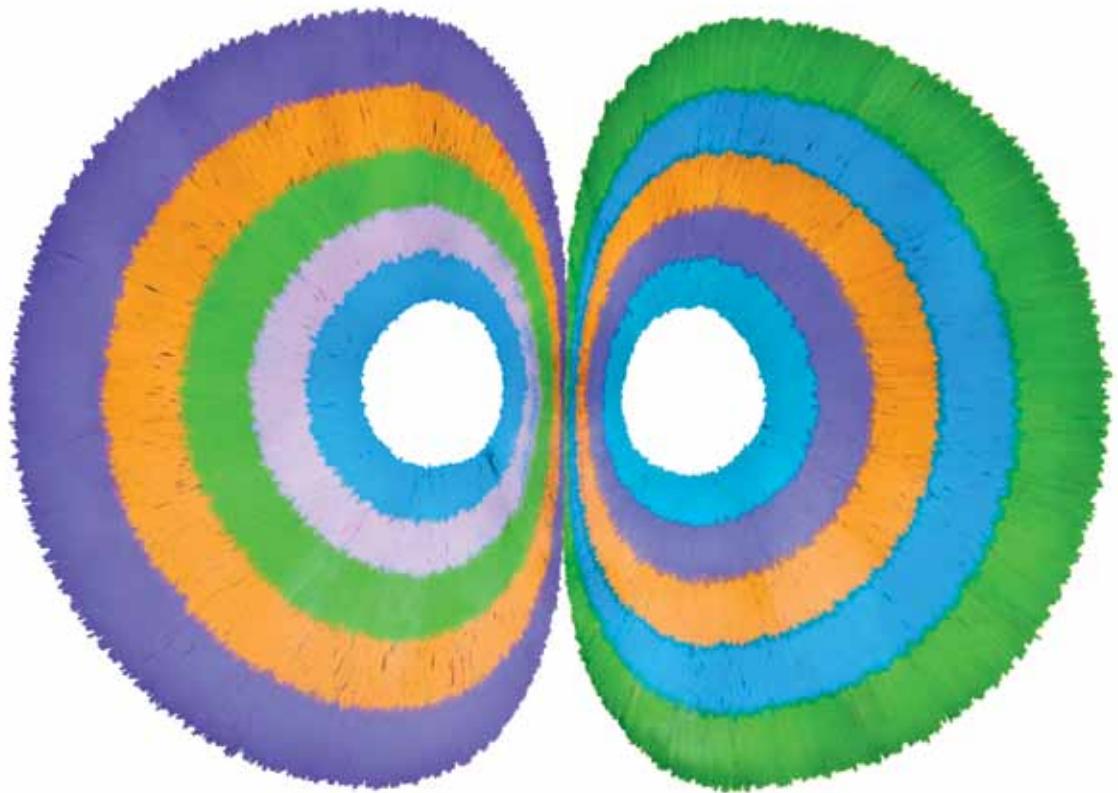
Standing Wave,
2011, (50% Warm Gray,
70% Cool Grey), color pencil
on paper, 60" x 40"



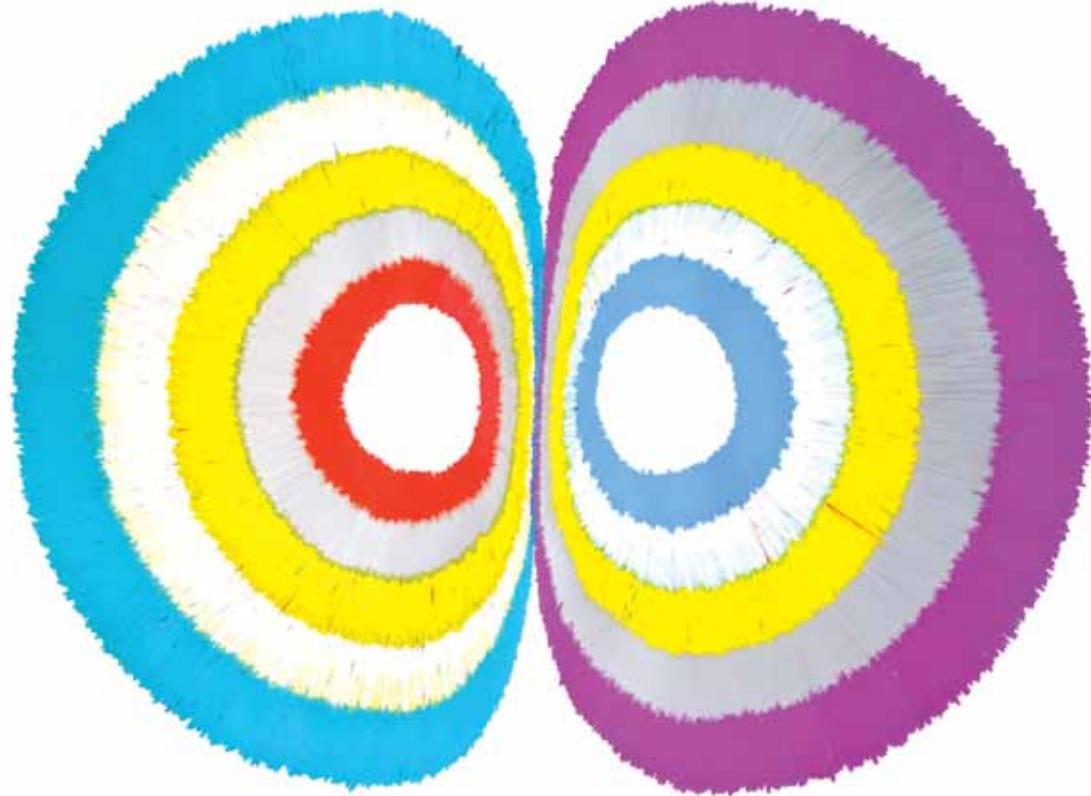
Standing Wave,
2011 (30% warm grey/ 50%
cool grey) Color Pencil on paper,
19.5" x 15"



Standing Wave,
2011 (50% warm grey/ 30%
cool grey) Color Pencil on paper,
19.5" x 15"



Untitled, (Purple-Green Hemi-Sync),
2011, color pencil on paper, 49 " x 51 "



Untitled (Multi-Colored Hemi-Sync),
2011, color pencil on paper, 49 " x 51 "



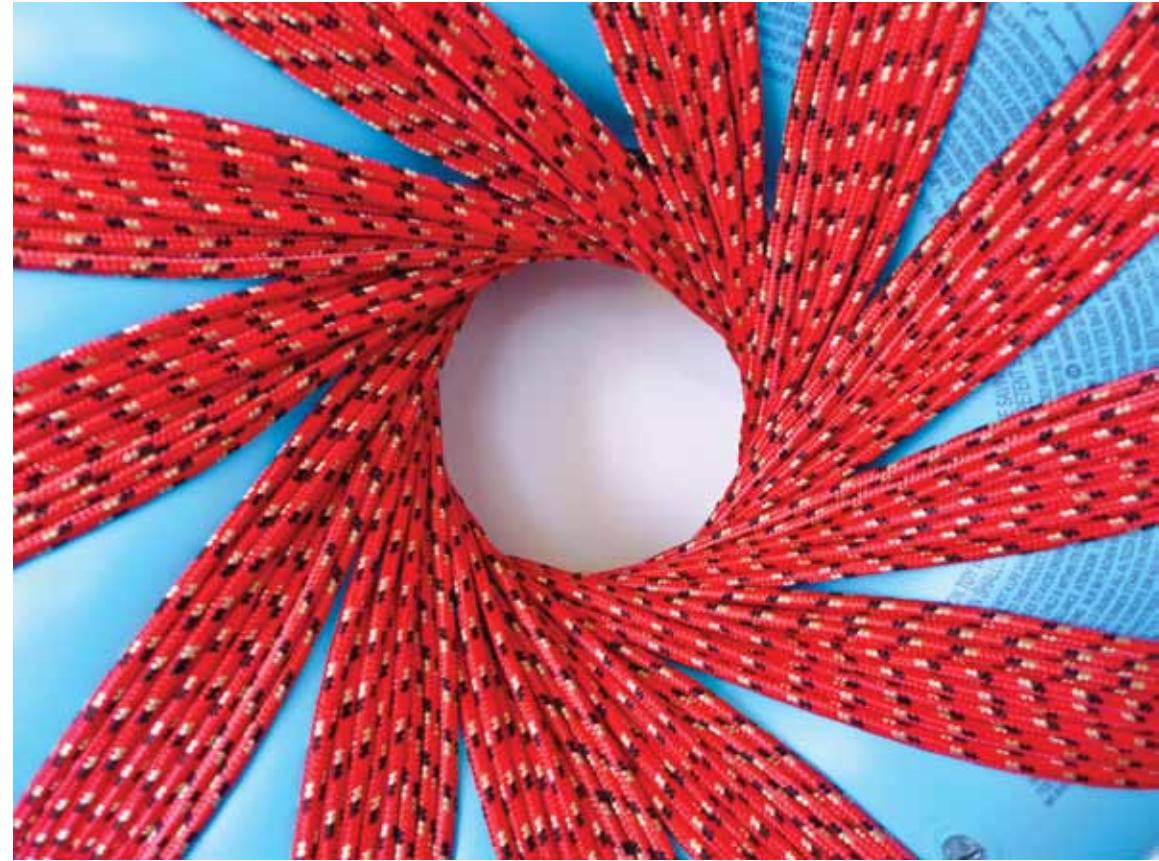
Binary Triplets (3 Novelty Vortex),
2011, Inner tube and rope,
33" x 99" x 11"

Binary Triplets (3 Novelty Vortex),
2011, Inner tube and rope,
33" x 99" x 11"

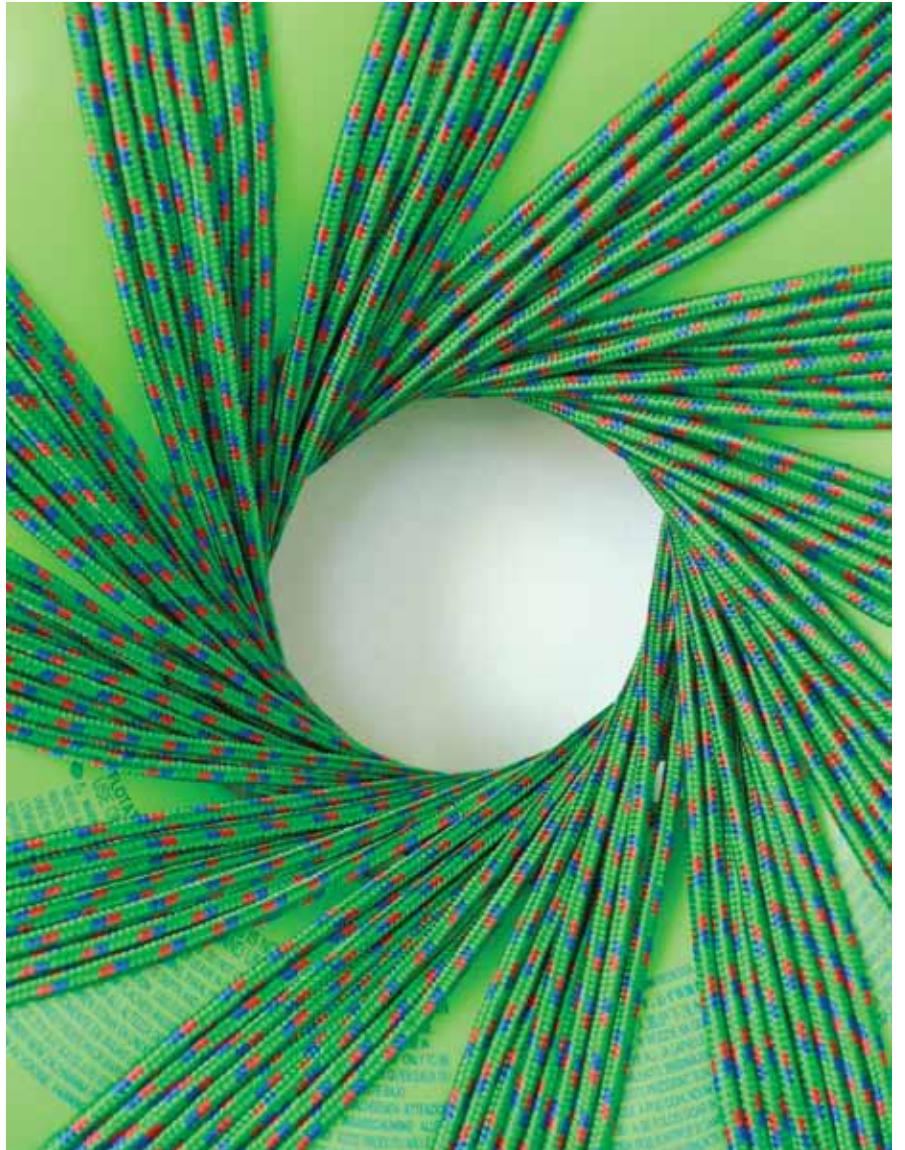




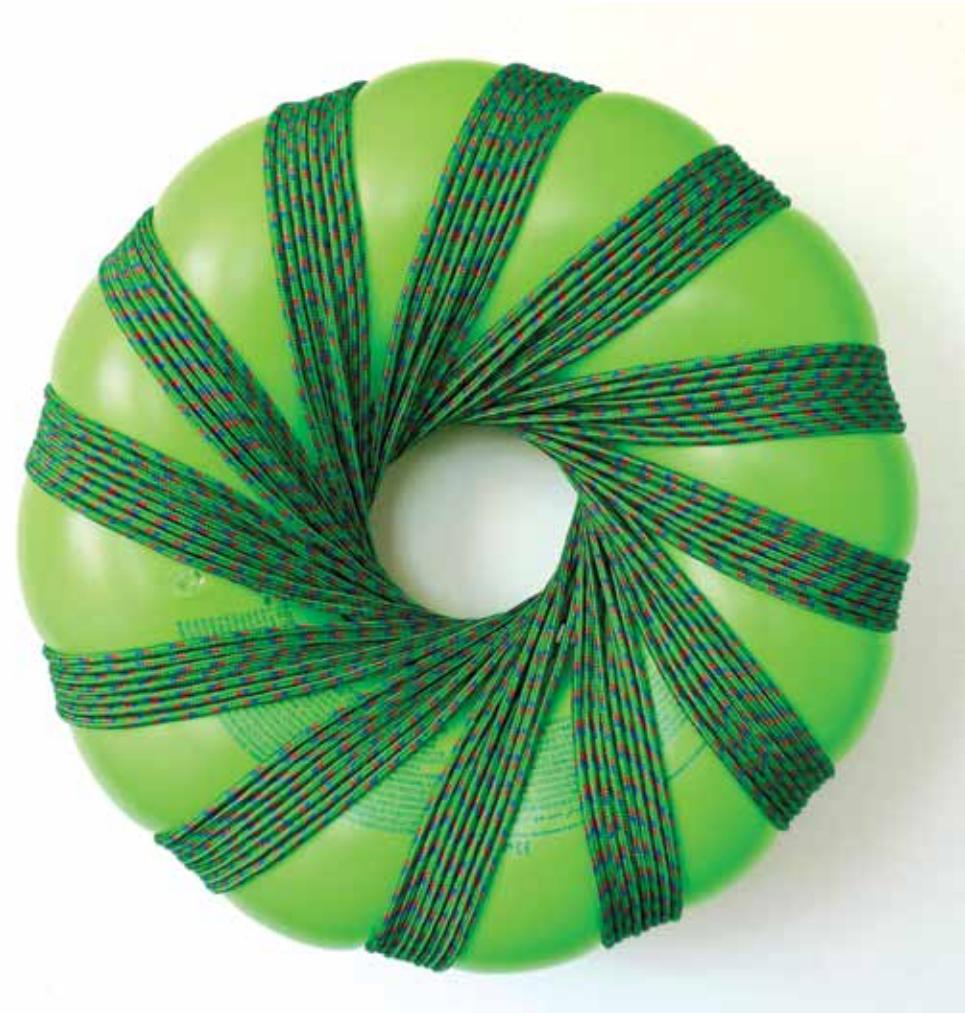
Novelty Vortex (Blue and Red),
2011, inner tube and rope,
33" x 33" x 11"



Novelty Vortex (Blue and Red),
2011, inner tube and rope,
33" x 33" x 11" (detail)

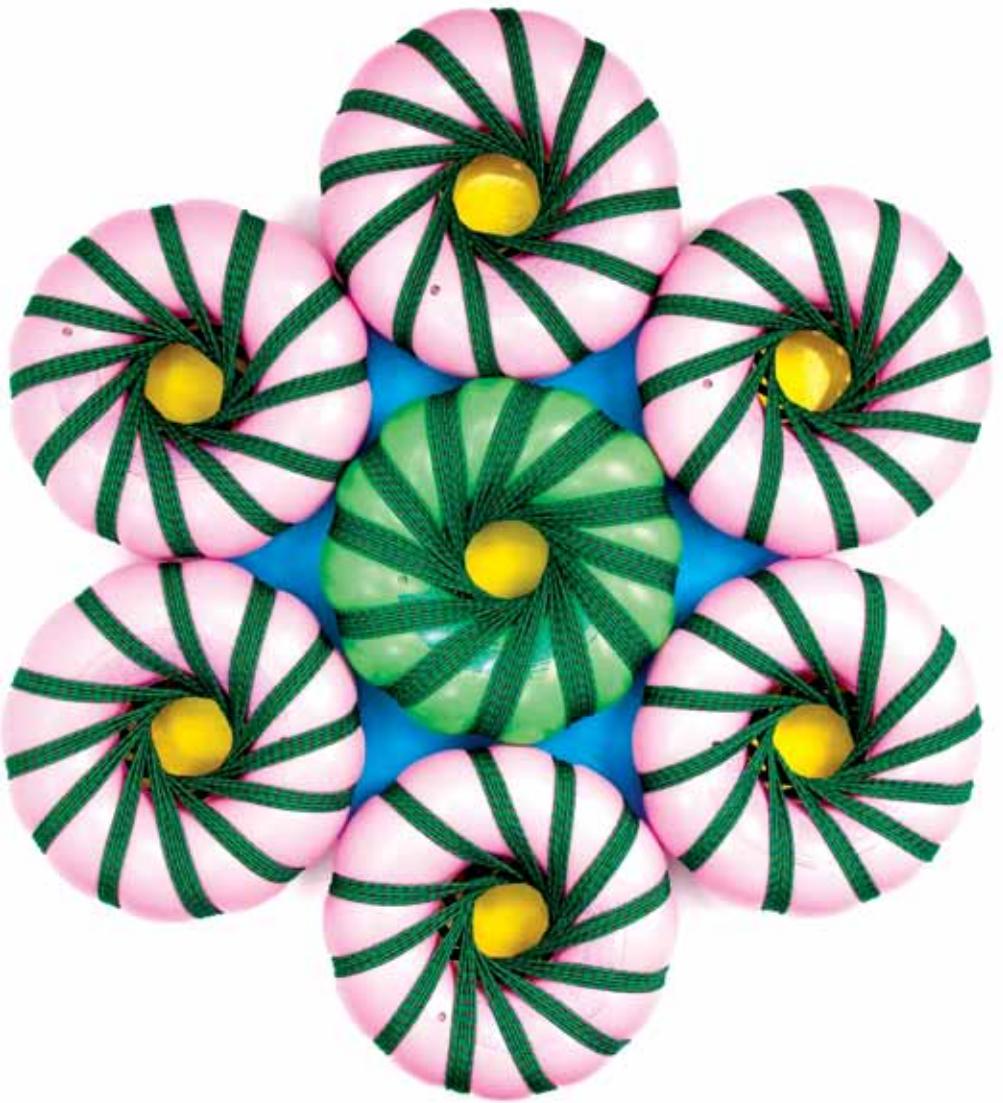


Novelty Vortex (Green and Green),
2011, inner tube and rope,
33" x 33" x 11" (detail)



Novelty Vortex (Green and Green),
2011, inner tube and rope,
33" x 33" x 11"

Torsion Field Flower (5 Novelty Vortex),
2011, Inner tube and rope,
88" x 99" x 11"



With Koch's exhibition, Standing Waves, he captures the interactive vibrations we do not see, but create in the world we experience. Although seemingly abstract, Koch's works are direct representations of theories and in that sense, not abstract at all, but instead the visual manifestations of a mathematical code. Of course, his works stand alone as purely formal objects and should be enjoyed as such. Koch cares not so much for the revelation of theoretical meanings through his drawings, but rather hopes that somewhere in our human psyche, viewing them might trigger a deeper recognition of these forms. A Koch drawing is not one that is to be taken in rapidly, but rather absorbed over time, revealing the many hidden layers of patterns and meaning. Through his work, Koch takes what is 'out there' and brings to light the hidden principles that underlie the world's natural processes.

Color Tone #6,
2011, color pencil on paper,
19.5" x 15"

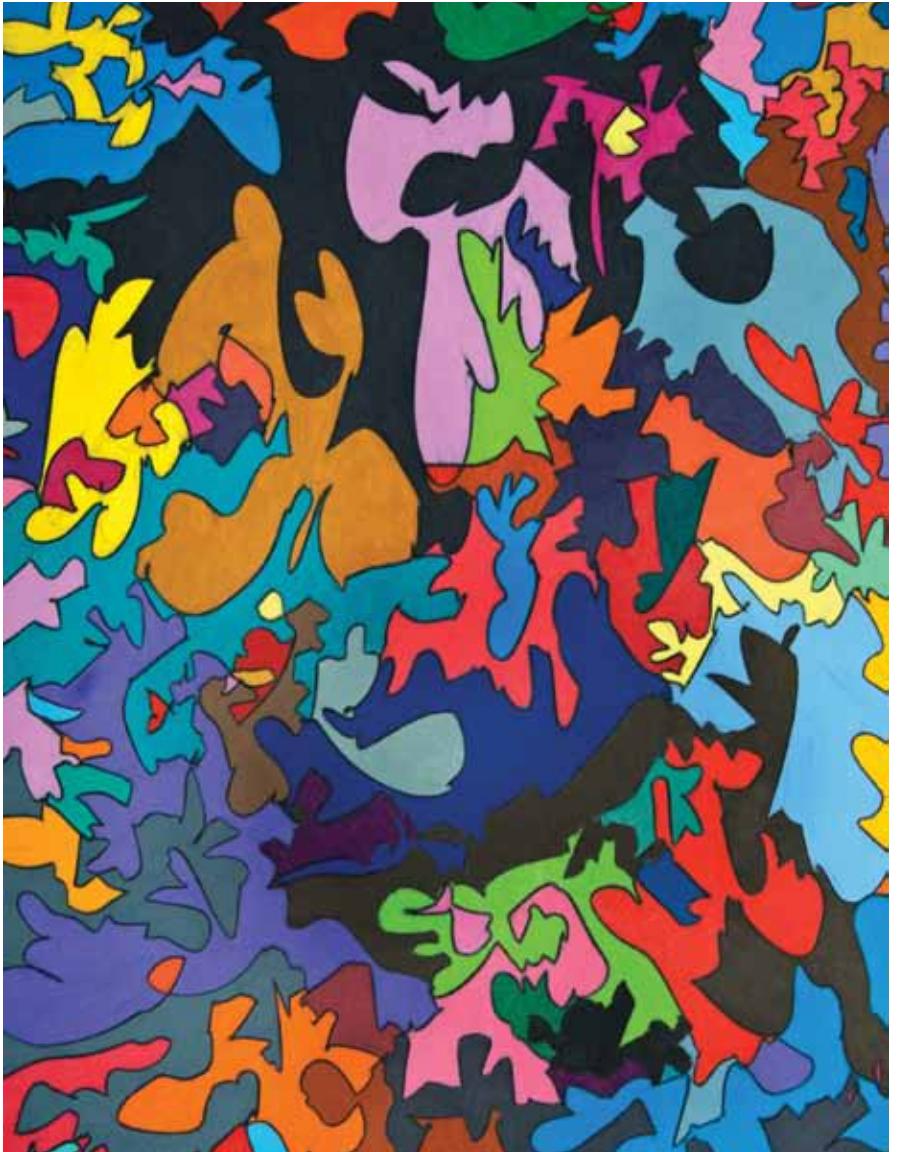




Color Tone #3,
2011, color pencil on paper,
19.5" x 15"



Color Tone #2,
2011, color pencil on paper,
19.5" x 15"



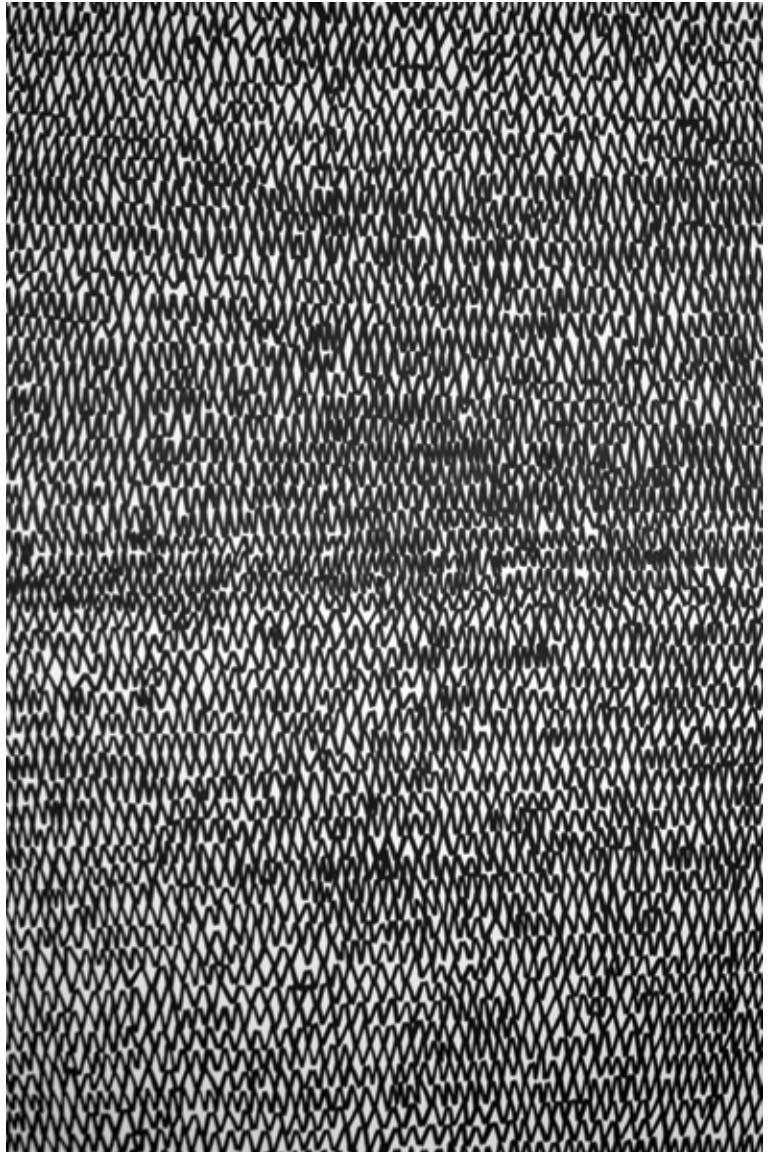
Multi-Man (Resultant Wave),
2011, color pencil on paper,
60" x 40", (detail)



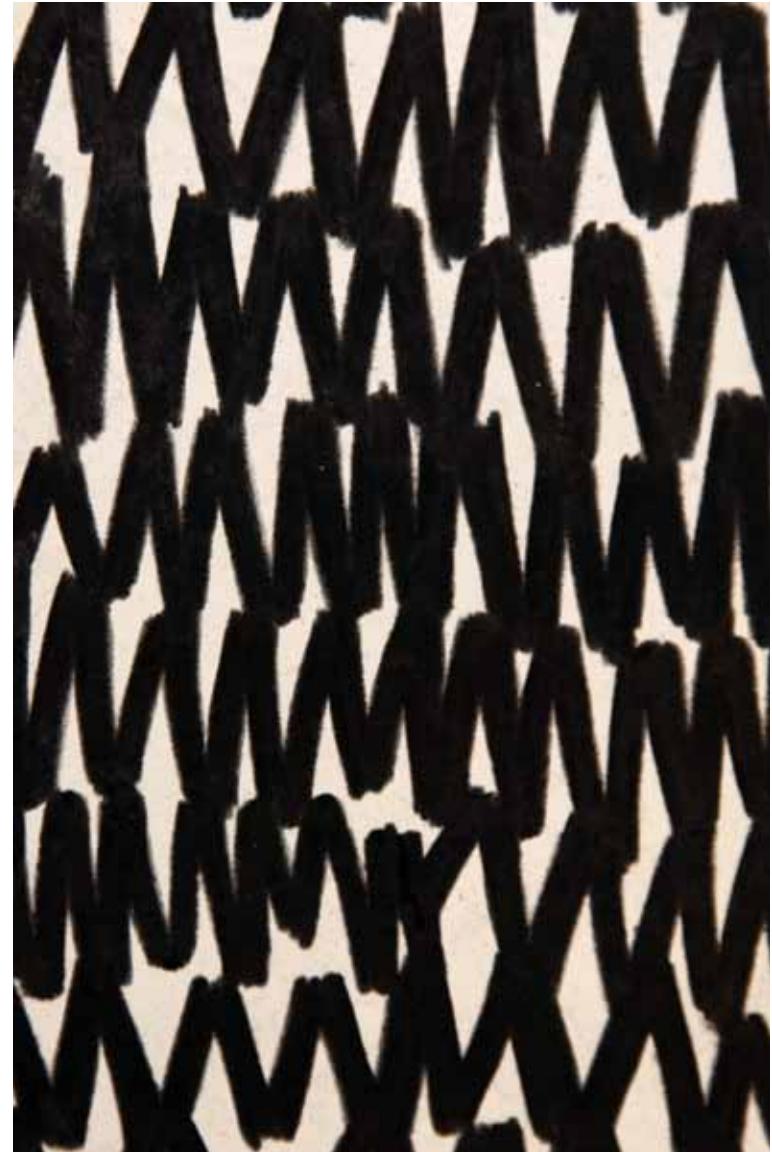
Multi-Man (Resultant Wave),
2011, color pencil on paper,
60" x 40"

Untitled,
2011, Color pencil on paper,
19.5" x 15"





Untitled,
2011, color pencil on paper,
58 " x 40"



Untitled,
2011, color pencil on paper,
58 " x 40" (detail)



Standing Waves
Installation





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Dennis Koch: Standing Waves

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