

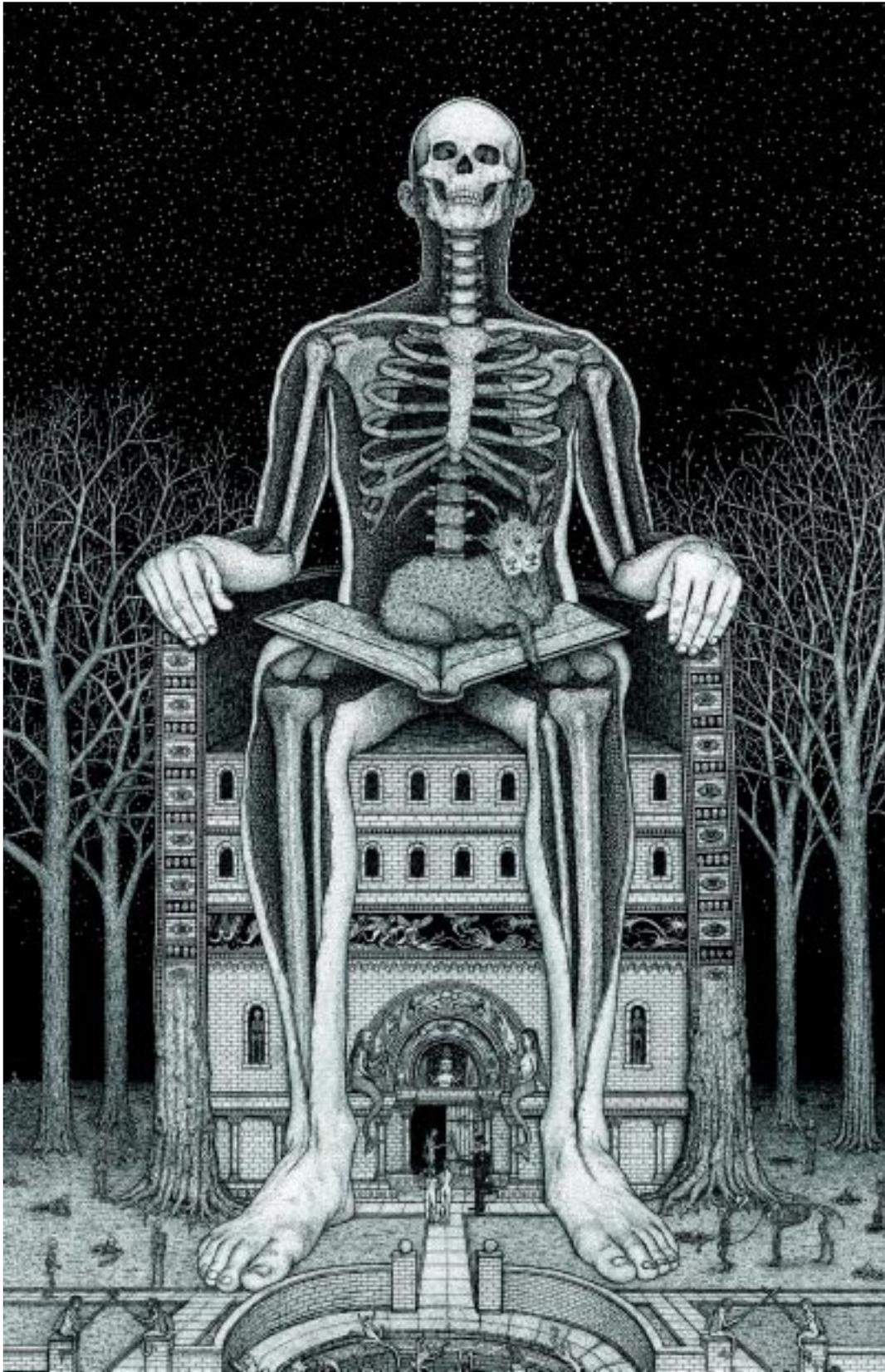
Self Portrait Ink on board 32" x 40"

Ben Tolman

I've been drawing from before I can remember. It's what I've always done. At first it was just for my own amusement, but for the last 10 years I've taken it more seriously, and have made a career out of it. I feel more alive, more connected to my humanity, when I'm drawing. I don't

think I could do anything different with my life.

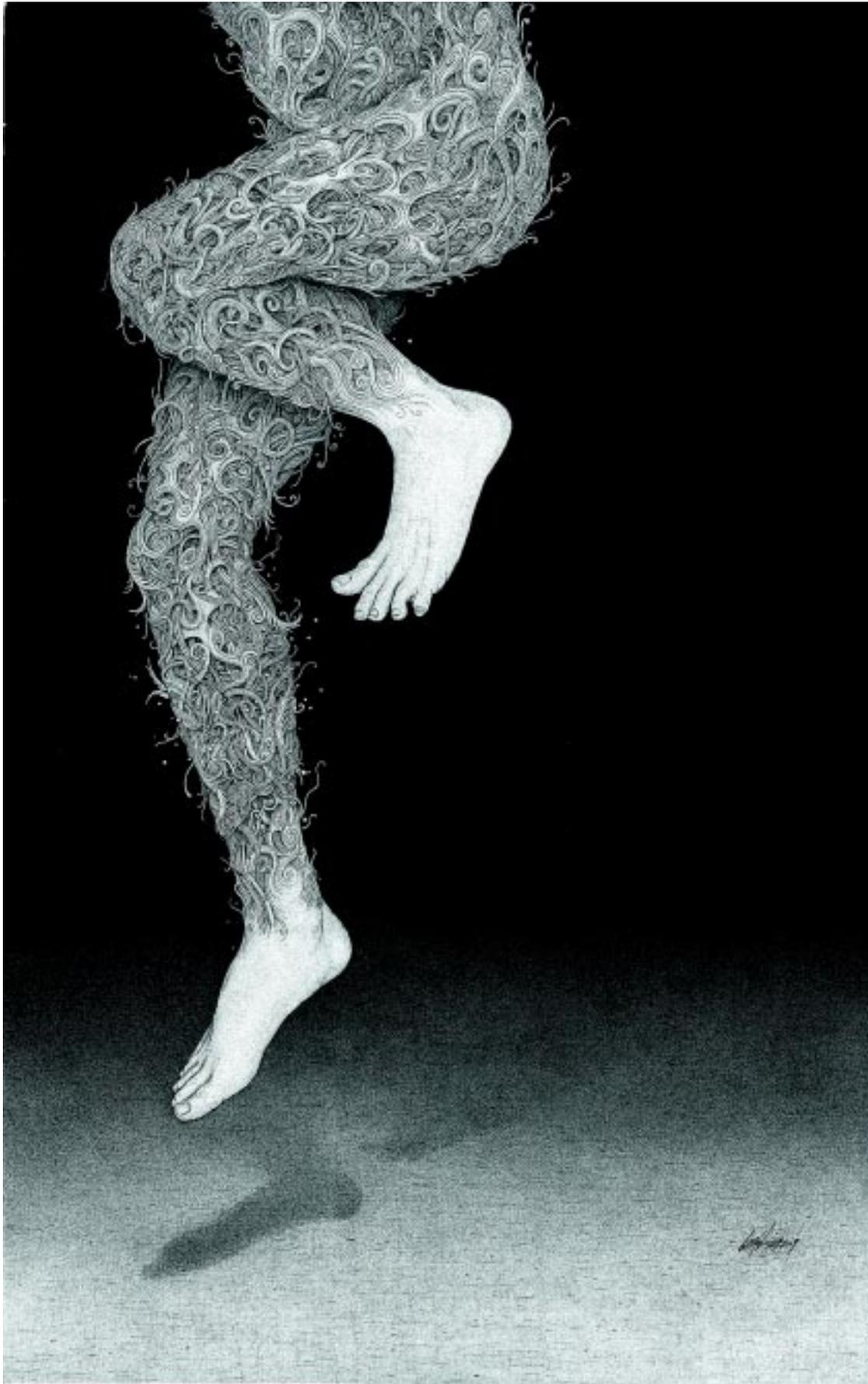
Ink is the media I am most comfortable with, and that I enjoy the most. I enjoy using ink and love the way it looks. I love the simplicity of black and white. Drawing is effortless for me and its easy to get lost in the creativity of it.



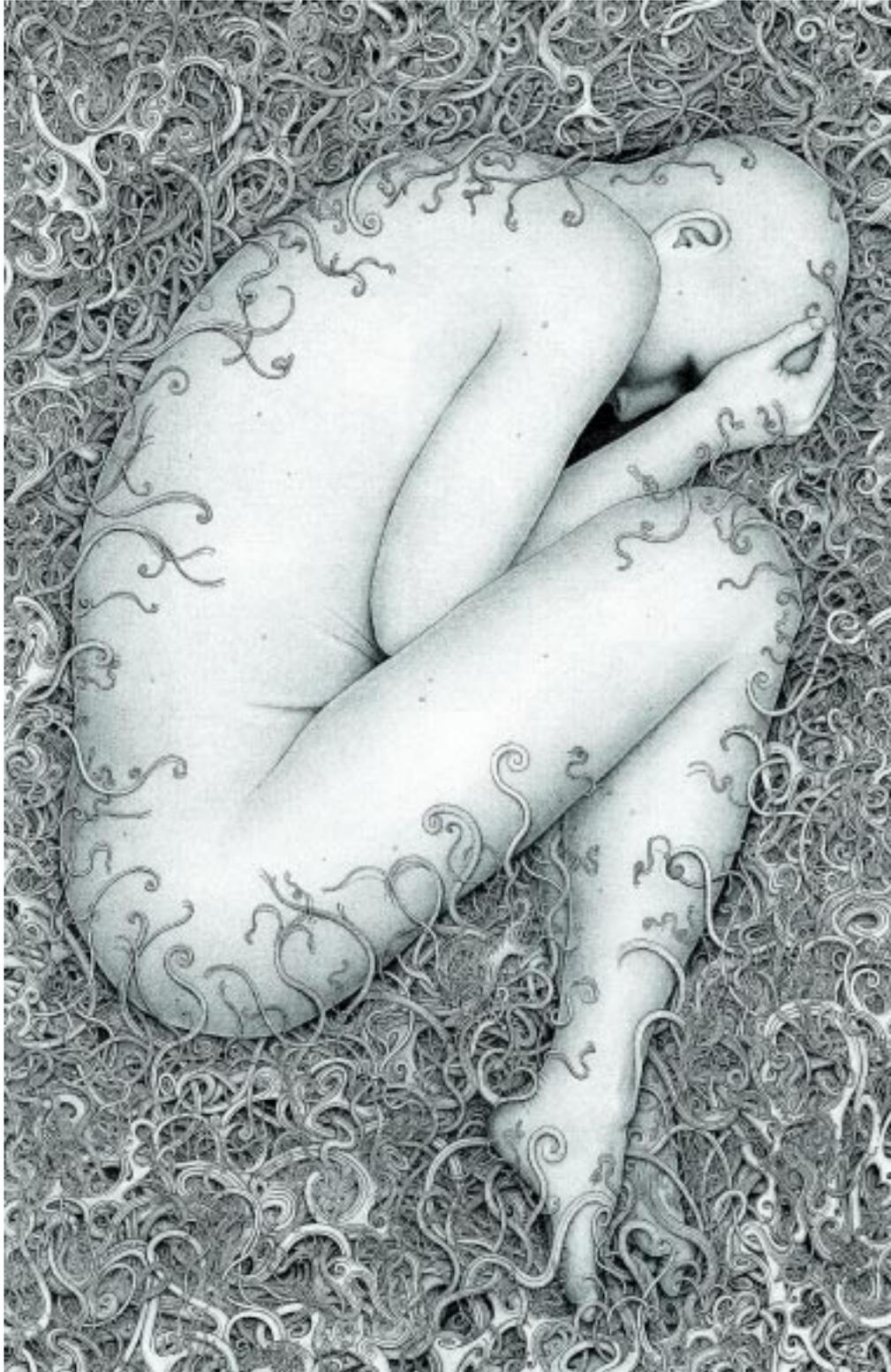
Death Ink on board 32" x 40"

I think about death a lot. I'm very aware of the fact that I only have so much time to get this stuff done before the game is over. In the big picture our lives are so short and our perspective is so narrow. I just want to communicate what my experi-

ence of being alive was like and add my tiny piece to the cultural pool. Art can be a signpost in time, giving a way to communicate with the future. I just hope I can make something meaningful enough to people that it will continue to be passed on.



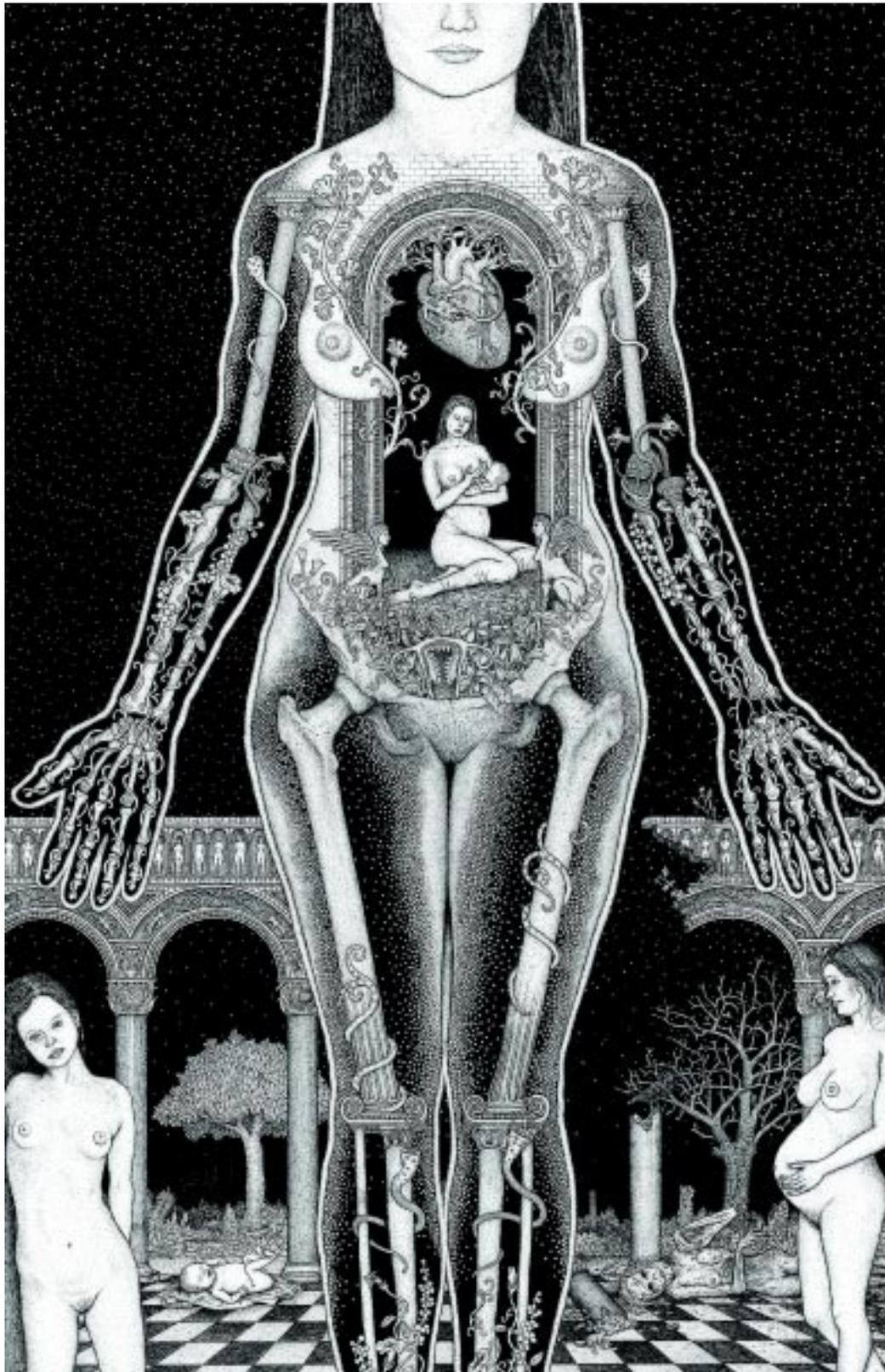
Jump Ink on board



Fetal Position Ink on board 32" x 20"

All of my work takes a long time to complete. Last year I finished my first solid body of work and had my first solo show. I worked on that series for four years. The new series I am working on now has to do with reflecting on my past work and searching for a new direction. I am still interested in many of the same ideas I was working on before, but I am trying to refine

my aesthetic approach. I have finished two drawings in this new series, Jump and Fetal Position. With both of these drawings I have tried to simplify the drawing down to only the essential elements, where as in previous work every corner had been stuffed with things to look at. I don't think one treatment is better than the other, but I enjoy trying something different.



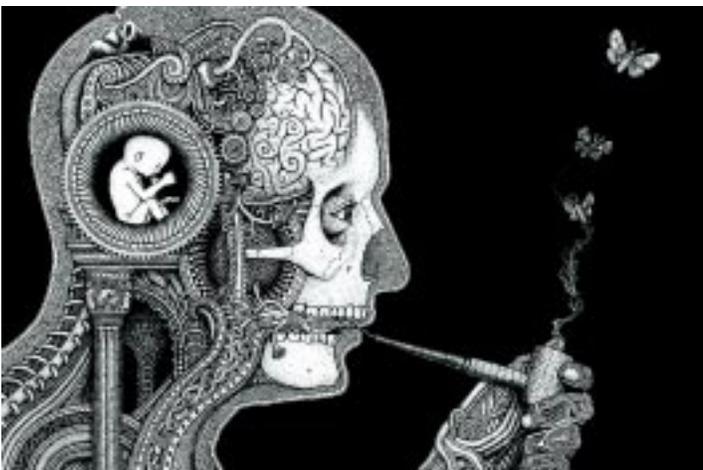
Lilith Ink on board

I'm inspired by life and everything I encounter. Life is so strange and complex. I am in constant amazement that life works and this whole strange project of existence continues to unfold so flawlessly. Long ago as a child I abandoned any cultural mythology as an ex-

planation for life. So I have the freedom to just reflect on the mystery of it all without any prejudice. The more I learn the more mysterious everything becomes, that's what keeps me motivated.



Theatre Ink on board



Ink on board

In life I question everything and never assume I'm right. With art I try to make exactly what I want to make regardless of how it's received by other people. I'm determined to never allow my work to be influenced by economic factors. I don't think it's hard to be a successful artist given enough time, but it is hard to be a good artist, to have something unique and meaningful to add to culture. I'm interested in learning as much as I can about the world and human culture's ongoing efforts to understand it. And I tend to be more interested in things that are on the fringes of our ability to understand.

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