

INTO  
THE  
MYSTIC

Freeport Art Museum | August - October 2023  
New Works by James Mahu for MOCI



Self-Portrait | 30 x 36 Inches | 2023 | Oil Pastel/Pencil

We  
were  
not  
invented  
for  
darkness.



Integral Source | 30 x 40 Inches | 2022 | Oil Pastel/Pencil

## Exhibition Monograph: *Into the Mystic*

Written by Mark Hempel

*I see a pattern, but my imagination cannot picture the maker of that pattern. I see a clock, but I cannot envision the clockmaker. The human mind is unable to conceive of the four dimensions, so how can it conceive of a God, before whom a thousand years and a thousand dimensions are as one?*

- Albert Einstein

It is a very difficult thing to write about someone like James Mahu. His work contains a personal vocabulary with words that have a meaning so abstract, as to make one's head hurt in insufficiency. To compound this, his work is also about music composition and visual art in service to his philosophical perspective, or what he refers to as his "core opinions on the key principles of life in spacetime."

Yet, when you distill it all down, it is really about the importance of behavioral intelligence so elemental to love. In other words, it is about behavior, not knowledge. Knowledge of the esoteric can be useful, but the trick, in Mahu's perspective, is to understand the one, many and all consciousness. If we acquire the esoteric understanding within us, very basic concepts arise, and if we align our behavior to those concepts, we bring more harmony to our small world, and in doing so, more harmony to the large world can occur.

We are so indoctrinated to choose a team, and in so doing, plunge into our separation as a species. Most people simply accept that we are separate from other species, even our planet, and certainly our universe. But separation is more obviously felt in our human culture, and it is both vibrant and subtle as to consume our daily affairs. We seldom even contemplate that we are interconnected with the human species and with other species — *all other species*.

According to Mahu, *philosophy is behavioral or it is not philosophy; it is abstract knowledge that is ungrounded*. It is like a helium balloon that is under the persistent forces of entropy and gravity. It will fall. Our inmost philosophy, to be valuable to ourselves and others, must find expression in our behaviors. It lives in our ability to create interconnections between ourselves and our every moment in spacetime. Nature creates interconnections. We are a part of Nature. Thus, to be true to ourselves, we must create interconnections, too. And to do this consciously is what Mahu's art is all about.

(1)



Interconnectedness is such an interesting word. Why not unity? Why not oneness? Does the word infer a physical relationship, as in an ecosystem of interdependence, where all life is interdependent, and therefore, interconnected? Or is it something more than that? Mahu is suggesting that there is an energetic transmission that all life exhibits, and this transmission is something that we intersect with in our spacetime.

Mahu has a name for this concept. He calls it the: one, many and all consciousness. There are really two fundamental principles in Mahu's work, whether it is his writing, visual art or music composition. They are:

- The Sovereign Integral;
- and the one, many and all consciousness.

The term, *Sovereign Integral*, was introduced in his mythological work, *WingMakers*, whereas the one, many and all consciousness is being brought out through his other mythological work: the *Movement of Consciousness and Interconnectedness (MOCI — Pronounced Mow-See)*. These two terms are of equal and related importance in his work, and are the main themes in all of his art.

The "one" represents the Sovereign, which is the thread of unity between lifetimes. It is the consciousness that we are, have been and will be. That consciousness is held within an infinite, exquisitely subjective, temporal succession of lifetimes in spacetime. Spacetime itself varies from one dimensional structure to another, it does not possess absolutism, other than its lack thereof. As James puts it: *The Sovereign is the spacetime of an individual facet of the jewel of interconnectedness, the Integral*.

The "many" represents our collective nature, within a species. For example, we operate in families and social groups. At a larger level, we are collective in cities, states and nations, in some cases, beneath flags of patriotism. And at the largest level we are the collective of a species. What is the blueprint of that complex social structure? It is, in the words of Mahu, the *hierarchy*.

The hierarchy imbues the social structures of the many with rules, principles, beliefs, practices, ceremonies, rituals, values and knowledge. These enable conformance and, equally important, distinction. The hierarchy is interested in attracting membership and then orchestrating the collective behavior and outcome of the membership. The "careful listeners" are the most coveted of their membership ranks, and if the careful listeners possess influence, they are all the more important. Every aspect of the hierarchy operates the same way. Thus, they are competing for the careful listeners who have influence.

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In this competition, the hierarchy generates the behavior of separation. It models this. It is, in effect, saying that what we value is better than what you value. The real structure of the many is the hierarchy. Now, is it something to be avoided? No, it is something to understand. It cannot be avoided, and even if this were possible, it provides our initial education and social integration. It is important and valuable.

The hierarchy is a group consciousness, fractalized. And while we are part of many groups, we learn, experience and express the values of our chosen groups. We see ourselves and our inner worlds as being vehicles of the group consciousness, instead of what we truly are: We are imaginative creators and intuitive listeners of life. More than this, we are that Sovereign consciousness that holds our infinitude within its hands, like a library holds its books.

The "all" is the part of the one, many and all consciousness that is ineffable, and unknowable to any senses or instrumentation, save our imaginations and intuitive sensibilities. We may have glimpses into these portals of realization where we sense our interconnectedness with Allness. Yet, if we are in spacetime, we are in duality. If we are in duality, we are in separation. If we are in separation our experience of Allness, at best, is temporally sensed and imagined.

The one, many and all consciousness is another expression of the Sovereign Integral identity experienced in spacetime as a human being. These are states of extra-dimensional awareness that are secured internally — from the very core of our being to the extra-dimensional reality of Oneness and Allness.

You might be wondering, why am I explaining all of this philosophical metaphysics when the exhibition, *Into the Mystic*, is primarily visual art? I would maintain that if we want to understand the visual work of Mahu, we need to understand his philosophical perspective. The visual art is simply another voice in his "choir of media", expressing, in its own way, the philosophic meaning that stands at the core of his work. In other words, the art and music are an effect of a philosophic cause.

To organize this philosophical cause, Mahu has founded the Movement of Consciousness and Interconnectedness (MOCI.life). The exhibit, *Into the Mystic*, is a part of MOCI. The movement is directed to the individual. It has no direct bearing on society or the hierarchy. MOCI is not trying to improve society. It has no agenda, no membership, no fees, everything is given away for free. It even has a document entitled: *The Non-Vision of MOCI*.



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MOCI is hyper-focused on the individual, bringing these two concepts of consciousness and interconnectedness to an artistic expression. And importantly, to ground these concepts into behaviors, and not simply head-knowledge or heart-faith. By being hyper-focused on the individual, MOCI is open to all points of inner experience as we evolve our understanding of consciousness and interconnectedness.

Mahu has provided the founding materials to MOCI, which includes its initial design and web presence. This exhibit is a part of that initial design. There are also more than 1,000 pages of written materials, additional paintings, music, social media, in addition to this exhibit. I thought it would be wise to mention these as well. The exhibit is part of a movement that is wholly "owned" by each of us. It is a movement on behalf of us as individuals, to choose consciousness and interconnectedness. To choose this philosophy internally. No one needs to know. No one needs to be converted. No one needs to change their life.

It is not chosen for a purpose, it is expressed as a behavior of love.

It is simply a matter of choosing a core philosophy. Of understanding our inmost consciousness through our imagination, our intuition and each other's creative expressions of this evolving understanding. That is the only path that MOCI travels. It strives to be agnostic, open, and inclusive. Its founder cannot be its leader, because that invites a single perspective, and a hierarchy is never far behind.

As Mahu has written: *We are part of the one, many and all consciousness. The same as all life — every form, in every spacetime. Our identities are larger than life itself. We are the amalgamation of an infinite stream of lifetimes that interconnect with all others through the medium of Nature. We are wrapped in the tapestry of wholeness.*

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Mahu's art speaks almost exclusively to this sense that we are a sovereign consciousness in an infinite expansion of lifetimes, and everyone in every form is the same in principle, yet absolutely different in practice. We are a consciousness that always lives, and is always interconnected with the life forms of our reality in the moment. It is not an abstraction to say this, and it is not some airy-fairy dream. It is precisely this, yet every single life form experiences this differently in their spacetime.

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His art attempts to reveal that. But there is a purpose to this, and this is harder to reveal in visual art or music, because this purpose requires the imagination of vocabulary. Of words that are perhaps uncommon, but necessary in order to bring forward the finer details that the art and music cannot resolve. A concept like the one, many and all consciousness, is not easy to portray in art and music, but in writing, it can be revealed to a point where the intention behind the visual art and music can be better understood.

This is why transmedia storytelling is effective for philosophical works. While I haven't gone through the tedious process of counting all of James Mahu's written pages, I would estimate it would be perhaps 5,000 pages of words. And yet, if you were to ask him which of those 2.5 million words are most important, I believe he would narrow it down to two: Sovereign Integral. This is the key construct of Mahu's philosophy: that we are simultaneously a uniquely infinite consciousness and an integral element of Allness that lives inside physical and energetic life forms of all kinds, and all spacetimes.

However, there is, in our case, a human "filter" that constrains that Sovereign Integral identity that we are, and our humanness is what we see and feel, and therefore believe to be our identity, held within a single lifetime. A single human ego. A single spacetime. Emerging from a genetic code and environment that creates a unique humanness in each one of us. Yet, underneath that unique humanness is the Sovereign Integral.

How do we become identified with the Sovereign Integral while embodying humanness? We contemplate the one, many and all consciousness. We use our imagination and intuition to understand this consciousness and how it expresses itself in spacetime through material embodiments, like human beings.

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When he was young, Mahu did have some influential teachers like the mythologist, Joseph Campbell, and the visual artist, Richard Pousette-Dart. His work has always danced between philosophy, psychology, physics, behavioral science, mysticism, futurism and of course, music, visual art and writing. And while he has large libraries where his mind has been nurtured, he has largely left those behind in favor of his more personal forays of curiosity into the unknown — the place he is most comfortable to lean against and learn from.



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The human culture of the unknown is probed by the left arm of religion and spirituality, and the right arm of science and logic. Coordinating these "arms" is a cumbersome task to learn. It takes practice to see how they can be partners that complement perspective rather than creating a posturing debate where there are winners and losers. Right and wrong. And Mahu is quick to remind anyone that everything that is invisible, inaudible, immaterial; it emanates from opinion, even among the wisest of our kind.

Even when we are in a state of Oneness, and all knowledge is accessible to us, it remains that it is an opinion. It is simply a collective one. This applies to each species. When it is summed up, and we can look through the lens of an infinite species, we are still looking at opinion upon the reality of existence. Only when we look through the lens of Allness — the sum of all species within all spacetime — can we understand the fullness of the Integral.

Mahu believes that art is a way to understand and express this multidimensional journey that we are each on. Through art, we can become more accepting of our journey to a higher understanding of ourselves, both as a species on planet earth, and an infinite consciousness that is interconnected with all species within the greater universe.

Art, especially that which is created from the personal domains of consciousness and interconnectedness, this kind of art is more exploratory in nature. It is agnostic. It has no agenda. It is so exquisitely personal that it is understood to be unattached, unmoored, and free. It is like a wild horse that has never seen a fence or border. It does not pretend to know for anyone other than its creator, and even in that sphere, it is understood to be an imperfect rendering of what was, is, and will be.

*"There is not six degrees of separation. There are no degrees of separation that are meaningful, except one, Sovereign consciousness."*

— James Mahu

Our "small world" isn't so small. What is within each of us is all of us. What is practiced within one, is introduced to all. This is the fundamental truth of behavioral intelligence. And this is precisely why love is intelligent. It understands this, but in order to understand this, we must perform it in our small world. We become performance artists in our spacetime to support and reinforce the circulation of love's intelligence within our behaviors and expressions.

The power is not from the big world to the small world or the small world to the big world. The power is from the small world to the *All* world. This is what we read in Mahu's words. What we hear in his notes and melodies. What we see in his forms and colors. He is introducing us to the *All* world. To that understanding that we are Sovereign and Integral in our small worlds, and that the practice of that simple thing, is all that is needed.

Everything else in the form of knowledge and experience is the artifice of being human. These two states — Humanness and Sovereign Integral — are not competing for attention, despite how it may seem. They are one thing. It is simply a matter of where we place our attention in a given moment of spacetime. What atoms are we lighting up in our small worlds? What fundamental intention do we carry with us wherever we go in spacetime?

James Mahu has brought his small world out to share with us. Some of us will recognize it as something that could have come from us. We could have said the very same things. Composed the same melodies. Painted the same images. And that is his point. It comes from us. *It is ours*. If you really understand Mahu's work, you will understand that. His work is ours, and the Movement of Consciousness and Interconnectedness (MOCI) is his way of putting an exclamation mark on that sentiment.

Where words fail, music and visual art can be the wings of the bird of flight and sight — our imagination. They can transport humanness to consciousness. They can reveal, even partially, our Sovereign. They can even make introductions. Music and art are twin partners in making these introductions, even if subconsciously. Music can open the heart and visual art can open the mind. When both are open at the same time, that is when we can truly understand our small world is not so small.

I use the term, *small world*, the same as Mahu uses the term, *local universe*. It is that very private, personal world where we are conscious of being conscious.



There is a portal between worlds. It can be sensed. Some people feel unprepared for it, others can't wait to enter it and pass through it. It is not a vision. It is not a trip outside of the body. It is not the pageantry of masters, saviors, and angels befriending you. It is the understanding of what love is in our spacetime within our small world. And in this understanding, we learn that it is all reduced to behavior and expression. It is all reduced to the intention of our infinite identity, the Sovereign Integral.

Visual art and music are the reminders for our heart and mind that there is more to this world than the big world of humanness. There is also the small world of consciousness and interconnectedness. One of the paradoxes that Mahu speaks of quite often is that the innermost part of us, that is our fundamental core, is the place where we are interconnected to Allness. It is like having an atom of our being, overlapping with the collective of all atoms in existence.

Into the Mystic, as an exhibition, is a facet of MOCI, just as the novel, *Copernicus*, or the 70+ paintings, or the music album, or the writings, the audiobooks, the social media platforms, and what is yet to come. Even if only one person understands it, and that one person is James Mahu, it is still for us. It is the only way it could be created and shared.



There is no hierarchy in truth. Truth can only be understood by one Sovereign in one lifetime in one spacetime. There is no intermediary. That spacetime is when all arbiters step aside, and the realization of love is understood. Truth is no longer carried like a membership card. It is not the province of learned masters who dangle it before us like a form of enchantment. It is ours and it has always been found in our nature. In our small world.

Mahu creates portals into these small worlds that can activate our imagination and intuition to come together and form an explicit pact or alignment. The specificity of this alignment is inalterably precise. It is to contemplate the one, many and all consciousness, and then to share this evolving understanding in our expressionary life. Our behaviors and expressions become our truth, in a world that seems to have lost truth altogether.

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I once asked Mahu, "What if your core opinions prove to be wrong?" His response surprised me.

He said, "Then I have lived my life, not as a lie, but as an aspiration. If it turns out that I had lived in a simulation run by aliens, then I will be okay, because I lived a life of evolution and aspiration. I found a way to activate my imaginative and intuitive senses, and in doing so, I could envision the nature of love. That we are here to be Sovereign and Integral. We are here to figure this out for all of us. No matter what is behind reality, I will remain aspirational, because the alternatives cannot express the future I want to be in."

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*I have a fundamental belief that we underestimate our fellow human beings because we see the dysfunction so clearly in our social institutions, and ascribe these same faults to individuals. As a group, we can do very stupid things. However, this doesn't reflect the individual consciousness – the whole of the being. Philosophy should be so simple that anyone can understand it, provided they possess an open mind. And it shouldn't take them years. It could be minutes or hours, but not months or years. Certainly not decades. The longer it takes to understand something the further from the Truth it has been flung.*

*The highest heart and the highest mind that we can imagine, have a place of overlap where they are equal partners in the learning of life and its expression. They can be both Sovereign and Integral at one moment and then the next. And the next. And the next... They can be in that state if we hold this feeling – an impression of the Sovereign Integral consciousness – that becomes our default perspective.*

*There, the philosophy is revealed. It's really that simple.*

*The highest heart and the highest mind that you can imagine, have a place of overlap where they are equal partners in the learning of life and its expression. It's worth repeating.*

– James Mahu



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*"We do not see things as they are, we see things as we are."*

– Anaïs Nin

Mahu realized early on that his work would encompass myth-making, not only the mark-making of visual art. This realization led him to the inevitable conclusion that art would become an interlocking component of something larger and more complex. Through his teachers, he became aware that artists could be philosophers, as much as they were painters, sculptors, poets, musicians or writers. While this may seem obvious in thought, it is not so obvious in practice.

In 1982, through a series of accidents, Mahu invented a creation process that employs four discrete layers of mixed media. This creation process enabled a more surrealist automatism, coupled with layered colors that formed a unique, jewel-toned, yet textured color palette and a more lyrical, organic line. From this inception he began developing the interior language of the collective unconscious in themes, subjects, pictographs, and words. Stylistically his work generally falls within the category of abstract surrealism.

Mahu considers himself a transmedia artist-philosopher. Transmedia, in the sense that he brings visual art, music, and writing together into a coherent story. Artist in the sense of writer, painter, and composer. Philosopher in the sense that he shares his core opinions of consciousness and interconnectedness, the two things he believes are the most important for each of us to evolve in our understanding.

If you zoom out far enough, at least in my opinion, Mahu is a storyteller. He has written six novels, dozens of papers, poetry books, all in service to two stories: His first story became a mythological work called WingMakers. More recently, he created a new story around consciousness and interconnectedness, and around these two fundamental principles, he has created MOCI, the Movement of Consciousness and Interconnectedness.

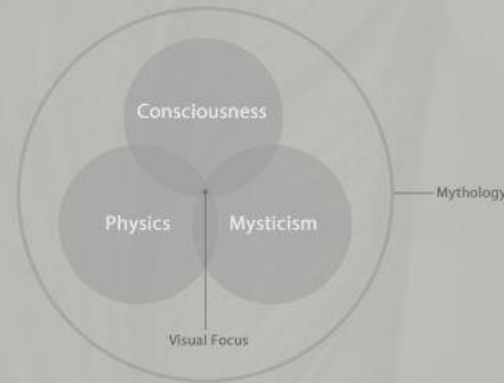
His music is a soundtrack to the "unmakeable film:" The Sovereign Integral. His music is the background to viewing his art or reading his many books and papers. WingMakers consists of 13 albums. MOCI will launch with one album, but may grow in time, as did WingMakers. The MOCI music is a departure from the WingMakers music. It is not beat-driven, but instead is very organic without a geometric structure, using instruments that are handbuilt in many cases, but also accompanied by piano and cello. Vocal tones and melody play a central role in the MOCI music.

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The music is felt. It is composed to help enable a partnership between the heart and mind. That is the elemental intention of the music.

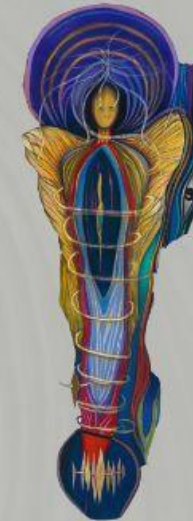
The majority of Mahu's visual work shares stylistic similarities to Georgia O'Keeffe, Wassily Kandinsky and Hilma af Klint. From a content perspective, his work is harder to categorize, owing to its influence from three disciplines: quantum physics, consciousness, and mysticism.

Having studied these interrelated disciplines for most of his life, he has found that these three subjects are very complementary to both his storytelling and his artistic embodiments, perhaps especially his writings. As a triad, the three disciplines are woefully underdeveloped in the world of visual art. From a pure aesthetic perspective, being able to bring these three subjects into a visual harmony, represents to Mahu, one of the greatest artistic aspirations.



#### Quantum Physics

Quantum fields were first proposed by Paul Dirac in the 1920s. This was when subatomic matter was thought to explain the nature of reality. However, it was becoming clear that the notion of a particulate universe was being replaced by the reality of a field universe. The universe, as physicists explained it, was made of subatomic fields (not particles), and these fields were all interacting and were cosmic in their expansiveness.



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#### Consciousness

These subatomic fields correlated to our understanding of consciousness as being different from the brain. The brain was being repositioned as the transmitter and experienter of consciousness, not its source. Consciousness was not contained in the brain (or body for that matter), but was rather using the brain from some indeterminate location in spacetime. Where and how consciousness originated was left a mystery. However, this is where the mystical and shamanic traditions stepped in and provided some experiential answers.

#### Mysticism

If we go back into prehistory (i.e., 50,000 BCE), human, nomadic tribes were guided by shamanic leaders. Humanity lived or died on its ability to find water and food resources. Spiritual leaders were tasked with the responsibility to contact "nature spirits" in order to help the tribe find water and food. These divinations and mystical abilities were curated through natural selection and the hand of time, becoming known as the "mystical experience" in a very small, specialized, yet vibrant subsection of humanity.

As religions sprouted, mysticism gradually receded out of view. Persecution from the religious quarters held that people weren't unified, that nature wasn't part of humanity, and that paranormal experience, outside of the purview of holy books, was patently evil. As a result, mysticism was placed on the dusty, too-high-to-reach library shelves of the human canon. This attitude prevailed well into the 19th century, but gradually lost momentum — birthing, as a result, the New Age or perennial philosophy.

Physics brought us quantum fields that assure us of human and Nature interconnectivity. Consciousness studies have shown us that the human brain is not the control center of the body. And mysticism, despite its persecution, has shown itself to be evolvingly resilient, and many of its primary realizations are now supported by modern science. The connecting thread of Mahu's work is to link the three aforementioned themes and represent an innovative and thought-provoking approach to how art can illustrate the intangible and highly subjective worlds in the cross-section of quantum physics, consciousness, and mysticism.

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Thematically, Mahu's art is rooted in the physics of consciousness and how we may be connected through a multitude of subatomic fields that permeate and intersect the universe. These fields interweave physics, consciousness, and mysticism as an engaging redefinition of what it means to be human outside of, or transcended from, material science and fundamental religion.

The prevailing beliefs that support a separation complex (i.e., religion, classical physics, identity politics, social normalization, etc.) can be suspended through this three-fold system of knowledge, but artistic renderings of this knowledge are sparsely represented in the artistic fields. This is largely because it is non-hierarchical. Yet, Mahu believes that when one is in contact with art, created in a transmedia format that applies these three interlocking disciplines, they can potentially understand that their consciousness is interconnected, not isolated.

And this understanding is not triggered by psychedelics or spiritual revelations or out-of-the-body experiences. It is not the result of scientific theories stacked atop one another, nor is it the result of philosophic inquiry with the arrow of logic leading the way. This understanding results from an immersion into an artistic representation of consciousness and interconnectedness. Mahu believes this immersion can cause and sustain a shift in understanding who we are.

Where do we shift? That depends on the individual. But we will notice a shift. And it is the intention of Mahu to make this shift not simply an intellectual experience, but also a shift in behaviors towards kindness and that prevailing sense of interconnectedness that draws from us a form of love that is what he calls the one, many and all consciousness.

*"An artist can become very good at imprinting their consciousness onto paper or canvas or clay or words or acting or music. This can be done a million different ways, or they do this by imagining the behaviors of a future humanity that has finally placed its mission on the discovery of consciousness and interconnectedness. Collectively, humanity can make the choice to pursue higher harmony, never satisfied that we had discovered the highest experience and expression of harmony."*

– James Mahu



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There is a surge in the public's appetite for the spiritual or mystical in art; witness the overwhelming success of Hilma af Klint's 2019 exhibit at the Guggenheim in NYC. Many people are seeking a more content-enriched and even intellectually challenging type of content that points to our interconnectedness rather than our superficial differences and tribal alliances deposited by generational persistence.

Mahu is a synthesist for the simple reason that he is braiding concepts together through an imaginative mosaic of subtle, nuanced ideas. He is not interested in untangling them through a process of left-brained analysis, seeking proof as the trail to the Holy Grail of the Theory of Everything. Mahu has long come to the indeterminate place of the unknown and unknowable, placing more importance on the unwavering belief that we are Sovereign Integrals living in the field of consciousness that is one, many and all.

The Integral represents interconnectedness — the intuitive sense that we are enmeshed in a fabric of spacetime that holds everything as one. We live in a human body that contains a brain divided into hemispheres — left and right — and these neural tendencies culminate in perspectives, biases, agendas, and to an extent, a struggle for control and identity.

Our humanness, according to Mahu, is composed of five primary factors:

1. The *physical body* and its senses, its analytical systems (brain/central nervous system), and the propensities of its DNA program.
2. The *mind* "reads" the brain and body, and interprets which parts of the brain-body system should be used for a particular goal. More importantly, it is the gateway of the imagination to probe the unknown.
3. The *ego* is that part of us that struggles to find purpose in a seemingly purposeless world. It is the sovereign of a single lifetime. It is the fractal, as Mahu puts it, that lives the material life in spacetime.
4. The *heart* provides the intuitive insights to partner with the mind's imaginative forays into the unknown. It creates a sense of purpose for the imagination to move into the unknown, yet knowable sphere of understanding.
5. The *subconscious* is that mythical, unknown part of us that absorbs reality in all of its details and fractal dimensions. The subconscious is our Sovereign's senses, just as we have five senses for our ego (single lifetime sovereign).

*"Colors are mixtures of other colors. It is always the blended color that is real. The most pure people I know are decidedly not pure. They are not one thing; it is more that they are everything, a real mixture, with deep textures of variegated color that gives them depth and uniqueness. They are mixtures that time has weathered and blended in some profound, never-before-seen color. And that is the palette I have sought to find."*

*"There is a certain muscularity — power, if you will — that this kind of color possesses that pure color doesn't. This power that it holds, is aligned to the concepts of inclusion and interconnectedness. Color is a dimension unto itself. Most people never realize this, and yet this is the nature of our world. This paradox of how the most impure thing that exists is consciousness, because consciousness inhabits all things, and this includes color, in some ways, especially color."*

— James Mahu

If there has been one consistency in Mahu's oeuvre, as a transmedia artist-philosopher, it has been the core concept of the Sovereign Integral. He is a believer in these states as simultaneous expressions of our innermost identity. We are a Sovereign consciousness that is infinite in its experience and expression of life, though it occupies, in spacetime, a single lifetime. But more than this, the Sovereign — our core identity — is also interconnected with all life. Thus, we are both an individual expression of the whole that retains its identity as a Sovereign, and we are interconnected to all of life.

This underlying philosophy informs all of his works, whether those are Mahu's philosophical papers, novels, poems, music compositions, paintings, websites, or mythologies, they all are vessels for this core, philosophical principle. Mahu believes that science will not prove this, though there are elements of biology, neuroscience, physics, mathematics, and even technology that are poking around the edges of our real identity. Its proof — to the extent proof is possible — is art, specifically art whose purpose is to reveal the Sovereign Integral consciousness.



All of these scientific incursions into the non-physical domains of consciousness and interconnectedness are like the six blind men touching the elephant. They are describing different parts, but none of them contain the whole. Wholeness is illusive. As Mahu has said, Allness is unknowable in humanness. Which is to say, we cannot perceive Allness, but we can imagine it. We can intuitively sense its reality. We can capture a sense of it in art, however subtle.

What we have been taught has only brushed across the surface of who we are. It has shined its spotlight on the surface for millions of years, and we have come to believe this surface or humanness is who we are. Mahu art and stories suggest that we are Sovereign Integrals living human lives on a planet we call earth in a spacetime we call the 21st century.

There are two fundamental qualities in existence: consciousness and interconnectedness. And perhaps the only way, within the 21st century, that humanity will understand this, is through art. Consciousness is the Sovereign, and interconnectedness is the Integral.

To understand this doesn't require an outside source. There isn't a YouTube video, a training course, a mantra, ceremony, drug-induced realization, guru, religious path or even a spiritual path that will bring us to this understanding. It is not purchasable with money. It is not won by effort. It is simply each of us going inside ourselves and unpacking this concept of the Sovereign Integral and the principle of the one, many and all consciousness. Of looking at it through fresh eyes, an open mind, and a willing heart.

There is a hierarchy that stands between the sovereign (ego) and the Sovereign Integral consciousness. This hierarchy is constructed from an unimaginably complex system of education, training, compliance programs, mastery, rote learning, and reinforcement. The hierarchy exists in every human endeavor: science, technology, business, arts, culture, academics, politics, religion and everywhere in between. This hierarchy is what Mahu has consistently pointed out as the thing that defines (or doesn't) who we are.

Mahu suggests that we move through the hierarchy. We see it for what it is — a valuable system of adaptation and relative harmony. However, it does not define us as a Sovereign Integral, nor does it draw out the behaviors of kindness and love implicit in the understanding of interconnectedness. Instead, the hierarchy creates separation and the tidal pools of identity, when indeed the ocean is only a few inches away, and in not knowing that fact, we languish in separation.

Mahu's work introduces an artistic synthesis of science and spirituality that is rooted in the arc of tensions implicit in the very ancient (mystical) and the very modern (quantum physics). This tension, by itself, is a very interesting "vein of gold" for artists to mine and share.

Roberto Matta is an example of an artist who attempted to express these other dimensions that unify, but perhaps fell short of expressing the tone of equality because he was drawing from the 4th dimension of psychism. It became his exclusive focus. Kandinsky was another artist who explored some of these ideas, particularly color theory. He was one of the first artists to associate feeling with color, and even assigned meaning to various colors. Kandinsky's seminal book: *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, elaborated on the meaning of colors and how they could be applied to not only express certain emotional states or moods, but also affect them in an observer.

Hilma af Klint, who more recently became anointed as the first of modern artists to create pure abstraction in association with concepts of imaginative inquiry. In Klint's case, she was, in effect, channeling her "higher self" through what artists of that time began to call automatism. She was also a spiritualist who invoked beings from other dimensions, inviting them to influence her artistic works.

Mahu does not "channel" anyone. He simply sees himself as a Sovereign, just as he sees everyone else, whether they are a human, animal or a plant. While he certainly understands the biological distinctions of a plant, as compared to a human, he does not see them as fundamentally different, simply contrasting facets of a Sovereign consciousness, whether embodied in humanness, antness, raccoonness or plantness. Whatever the life form, behind it is a Sovereign consciousness that is on the infinite and unique path to realizing the Integral nature of existence. Life itself.

This is fundamental to Mahu's work in every medium he touches: *We are equal parts of a whole.*

*The artist's challenge is to let loose the imagination of others to experience a wilderness of feeling, thought and imagination.*

– James Mahu



There are a wide variety of symbolic images that hold a significant role in Mahu's visual art. Perhaps the best example is the mandorla. Mandorlas are one of the most ancient symbols in humanity's history. In geometry, they are known as a Venn diagram, specifically, that part that overlaps and shows the relationship between two finite sets (circles). In religious iconography, the mandorla is often used to represent ascension from the physical to the spiritual realms. It defines that rarified space between the physical and spiritual, and is often considered the vehicle of transportation between worlds (i.e., interdimensional portal).

Portals are an important part of nearly every Mahu painting over the last 40 years. This is because they represent so many different things, ranging from fractals, synthesis, transformation and nonduality, to name a few. Portals are also equated to birth and death. The cycle of life at its beginning and end. And because of this, they are the alpha and omega. To Mahu, they represent completeness, synthesis, inclusiveness and understanding.

The word mandorla is Italian, meaning almond. This is a reference to its shape. However, the symbol itself holds many different meanings, among the most popular are:

- The all-seeing eye
- Sacred moments that transcend spacetime (i.e., mystical experience)
- The cosmos at the cross section of material and heavenly states
- The human aura

Mandorlas have a very dominant role in early Christian symbology, showing a human figure like Christ or a saint inside the mandorla represents their aura or the palpable influence of their persona. In Mahu's art they are used to express a portal-like interchange between dimensions. For example, the Chamber 2 painting of the Ancient Arrow series was the first mandorla he developed, but the theme remains present in nearly all of the art.

Mahu is careful not to depict the mandorla as a purely geometric form. They are organic shapes, perfect in the imperfections that bear life. One almost gets the sense that they are breathing and writhing in an intelligent energy that is yet to be embodied, and because of this unique characteristic, they can transport consciousness like conductors of a train. There is often a feeling of expansiveness to the mandorla, and Mahu achieves this by making concentric shapes that depict the various dimensions that a mandorla can transport consciousness. This equates to expansiveness.

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Often mandorlas are depicted in concentric color bands, signifying the higher dimensions of consciousness as one goes inward (also known as the seventh direction, in his novel, *Quantusum*). Mandorlas are the point of transformation, but they are also a "lens" into the quantum state or stillpoint.

Another form of the symbol is the halo or nimbus. While the mandorla may engulf the whole body, the halo is a featured symbol of holiness that encircles the head. The halo has been diminished, in Mahu's view, by its closed-off symbology that signifies that an individual is divine through their mind and not the wholeness of their humanity. It confers a sense of existential completeness and sanctity. It became a symbol of separation.

Mahu began to redefine the halo in Hakomi chamber paintings 3, 6, and 7. It was in chamber 9, however, that the halo was defined as more of a network of light above the head. This idea of a network was more consistent with connection and unity than the traditional, existential artistic representation of the halo. Over time this was further elaborated to show how this point of connection relates to the quantum fields and consciousness therein (i.e., infinity symbol).

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Color is a frequency or vibratory field in itself. It interacts with the eye-brain system in ways that activate the neural network of the brain to feel, sense, or otherwise realize an emotional state that only color can produce. Who among us has not been in awe of a crystalline, blue sky or the fresh spring greens of an aspen or elm tree? Color expresses a frequency, and this frequency activates regions of the brain and more generally the central nervous system, which in turn, activate the emotional state. There is quite literally a cascade effect from color frequency to heart-mind openness or closure.

How this is orchestrated is an ineffable process, and it is very similar to music and how it activates the ear-brain system. Color frequencies are like the notes of a musical composition. Color, shape, and context can all flow in coherence and harmony to orchestrate eye-brain-heart-mind resonance within an individual. These components can open new neural pathways. This is precisely why visual art and music are important activational sources, because they bypass the conscious, programmed mind system, and require no translation.



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Visual art, as a functional purpose within Mahu's overall work, is like a universal hand reaching out to our inner selves, inviting us to expand inwardly. To disconnect a little bit from the external hierarchy, and imagine how the one, many and all consciousness would feel like if we could bring our heart and mind together and express it through our humanness. It's a different kind of purpose for visual art, yet it is precisely what James Mahu has created. And I suppose, if any of us went deep enough into ourselves, and brought back that core insight and clothed it in words, images or notes, we would find a resonance with Mahu.

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The technique that Mahu uses for his visual art is something he has created over the course of 40 years. He begins with museum board. He takes a black oil pastel and lays down a basic structure. It would be akin to sketching, if it were not for the fact that oil pastel cannot be erased. Technically, Mahu does not sketch, because every mark is permanent with oil pastel. Nonetheless, he blocks in the prominent subjects.

He prefers vellum surfaces that are smooth. The tooth of the paper is one of the variables that he employs in his art. The toothier the museum board is, the deeper and more vibrant the colors will be. The smoother the board is, the colors will be more spatial, subtle and less vibrant.

Once the board is structured in black oil pastel, the oil pastels of a wide variety of color come into the work. In general, each piece will have 40-60 different colors, sometimes even more. Mahu is a bit of a colorist at heart, but more to his point, color is what creates the enchantment of a piece. It is the thing that instantly attracts or repels. Good visual artists know how to conduct color in a two-dimensional space. Most artists prefer to constrain their palettes, more like chamber orchestras. Mahu prefers a full orchestra.

He uses his oil pastels in different ways. He also employs eight different brands of oil pastel created all over the world, each with different chemistries, and therefore, different characteristics and qualities. Over the years he has come to understand how to combine them. He applies them differently, too. Some have hard edges and he will use the sides of the pastel, not the point. Anyone who has used oil pastel knows they are not a precise implement. They are less precise than a crayon. So detail is not possible. Their default depiction is impressionistic.

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Once he has completed the color stage of oil pastels. He artistically removes the oil pastel. This stage is a very physical one. He will use his fingers or a paper towel to wipe off all of the oil pastel residue and imprint the color into the museum board, giving it permanence. He will do this to the point of buffing the museum board to a fine luster.

Within this first layer, after the “sketch” is laid down, he knows how to encode imagery that is open to interpretation so that when the oil pastel is removed, something new emerges. This “wipe-off” stage is very important to the organic nature of his work. This stage, more than any other, is what imbues a lyrical, organic quality to his art creations. This is because of the natural viscosity of his chosen medium (oil pastel).

Once this is completed, and all the residue of the oil pastel is removed and buffed to a semi-gloss finish, the piece is then ready for its third layer, and this is the detailed layer of color pencil. Every nanometer of a 30 x 40 inch museum board is touched by pencil. The color of the oil pastel he uses is then transformed with color pencil. Mahu knows how to layer the colors to get the effect he desires. This is the longest of the stages. Usually, two to three weeks.

Once this is completed, then Mahu will apply a fixative and protective layer. After that, he is on to his next piece. I asked him once why he never gets artist’s block or writer’s block, and he said: “What is there to block? I want this. Why would I block it?” It was said as if he didn’t even understand the concept. But I suspect he understands, but in keeping with his philosophy, the hierarchy is the thing that blocks us, and when one steps out of it, the only force that remains, is our own.

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Whereas Mahu enjoys large “orchestras” of color, when it comes to music he prefers a “chamber” approach. His favorite instruments are the piano and cello. Around which he adds hand-built and ethnic instruments from around the world. In this album called MOCI, the compositions are sparse and are not beat-driven. When he writes music, it is to create a simple space so the melody can be understood by anyone.



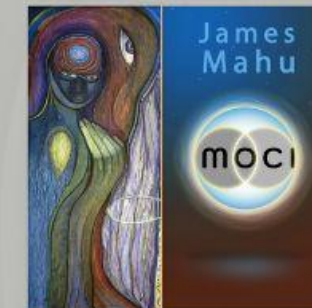
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The MOCI album is organic sounding. Nothing is quantized (a digital technique to make perfect timing between notes). To Mahu, this imparts a more mechanical sound. And while it is used throughout the music industry, “perfect” is not what he is striving for. He also does not use any loops or samples in the album, which simply means that every instrument is played without repeating. No note or measure is repeated in the same way or in the exact same timing.

In the MOCI album, one of the most important instruments is the voice of Elijah Ray. Mahu would compose and produce the song to its completion, and then share that composition with Ray, who would then add his vocal artistry to the composition. Those vocal tracks would be sent to Mahu, and then Mahu would edit those vocals, mixing them into the composition. Of the 14 songs on the MOCI album, all but one have the vocal touches of Ray.

Mahu, in his creation of MOCI has provided its founding materials in written works like his novel *Copernicus*, his story-book series, its vision, audiobooks, an album of original music, and 80 new paintings. All of these materials are free to anyone, anywhere. They can be downloaded in high resolution, and anyone can use these, non-commercially, as creative tools for their own expression.

The exhibit, *Into the Mystic*, will be inaugurated in Freeport, Illinois in mid-August 2023, and then it is hoped to become a traveling exhibition. At its inmost core, it is one individual’s expression of the two most important elements of life that — as human beings — we know the least about: consciousness and interconnectedness.



The MOCI Album can be downloaded at [MOCI.life](http://MOCI.life)



Detail from:  
*Inifnite Theater*

### Larger Intelligence

We are capable of such beautiful expressions of kindness and compassion. These expressions can give us hope. These can guide us in our decisions. These can be the deciding factor in which path we, as a species, generationally evolve towards. These can be our collective intention.

The real world callouses us. It is a cut-and-heal mentality that weighs on us, individually and collectively. There is a constant sense of compression of time and resources, a scarcity of money, of love. We are all living in this time, sensing the delicate balance we are in. We see how interconnected we are through technology, economies, social networks, and so on. What is more challenging to see, however, is how interconnected we are inwardly, as a collective intelligence.

As above, so below. Outward we see, inward we do. As inward we do, outward we see. We are interconnecting physically with our civilizations, our cultures, our languages, our science, our technology, our faiths, our governments. No one can dispute that we are organizing as a species. We are unclanking ourselves one individual at a time, which is the only way we can do it. It is a slow process at first, to transition from a species that is sovereign to one that is aware of its allness. Where it consciously chooses to integrate humanness — body, heart, mind, ego, subconscious — with the one, many and all consciousness.

It is interconnectedness that brings in the larger intelligence, and it is this larger intelligence that we may call the one, many and all consciousness. And to be clear, intelligence of this nature is not the recitation of information, data, knowledge or even wisdom. It is the alignment of human behavior to the one, many and all consciousness. The larger intelligence is what *enables* behavioral alignment, independent of external or internal conditions.

- James Mahu



Detail from:  
*Infinity Connectors*

*Our creations are not merely physical. They can be interdimensional. They can be of a different frequency than physical manifestation. So, we create all the time through our body, mind, heart, ego and subconscious. All of these parts of our humanness are creators. Each of these creates energetically, which can then manifest physically. They are our sovereign creators, and yet, the consciousness of the one, many and all, created our creators.*

*And yet, our creators are also creating the one, many and all consciousness.*





*Inmost Self* | 30 x 36 Inches | 2023 | Oil Pastel/Pencil

Detail from *Embodiments of Care*





One | 30 x 40 Inches | 2023 | Oil Pastel/Pencil



Sovereign Soln Integral

Heart and Mind  
30 x 36 Inches  
2022  
Oil Pastel/Pencil







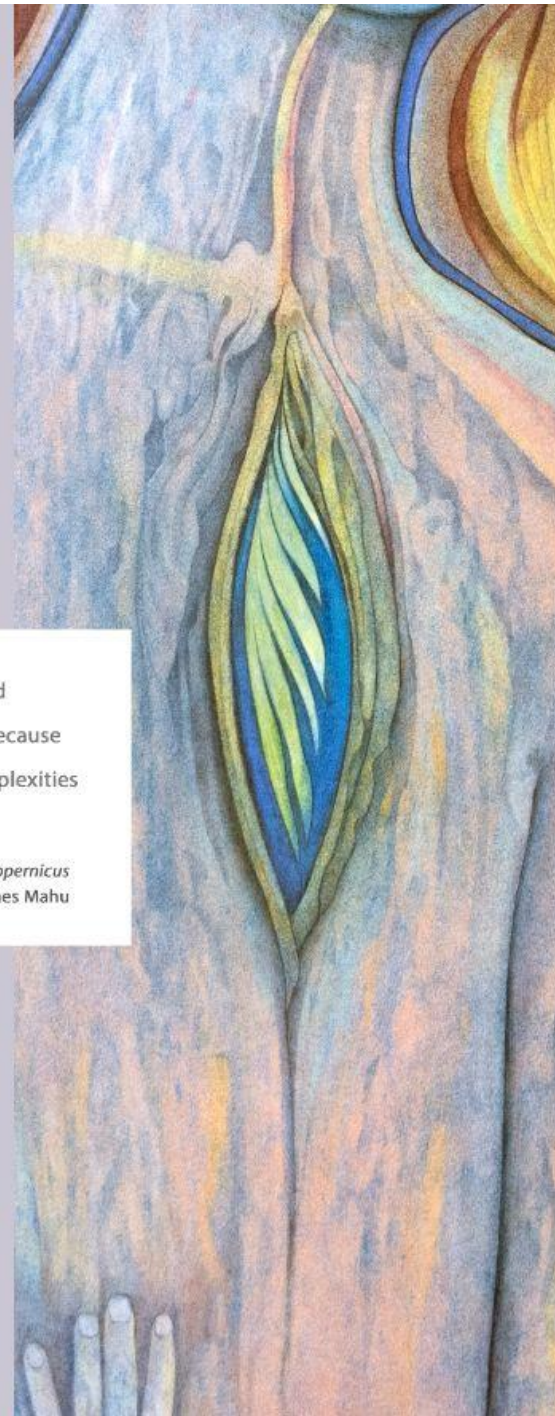
*Copernicus*  
30 x 37 Inches  
2022  
Oil Pastel/Pencil

"You underestimate your source, not only in yourself, but in all those life forms around you. Intelligence is not a thing to make sense of complexity, it is a thing that enables you to imagine the one, many and all consciousness and align to it by choice.

That intelligence is all around you. It is simply unnoticed because your attention is on the complexities of life."

- Excerpt from *Copernicus*  
A Novel by James Mahu

Detail from  
*Why We Are Here*





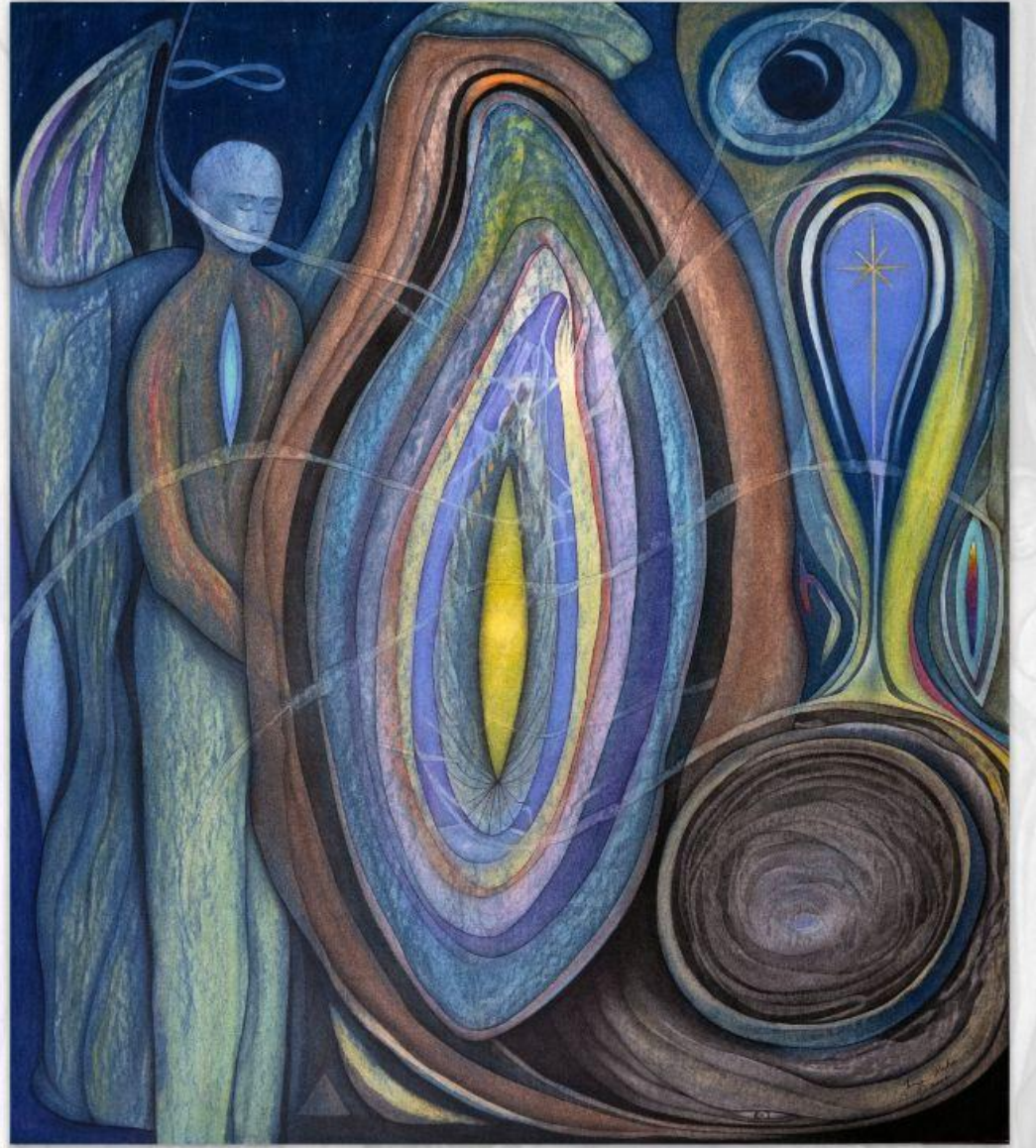
Nature of Consciousness | 30 x 40 Inches | 2023 | Oil Pastel/Pencil



Behind the overgrown weeds  
the song leads to  
I am we are.  
It may seem unlikely  
that what is small  
and commonly ignored is powerful,  
but root  
feeds leaf.  
True power waits in the whisper.  
Beneath the ground state.  
It is rested.  
It does not flex,  
pounce, grip, or grab,  
for it is not of muscle.  
Or bone.  
Or mind.  
Or even humanness.  
Remember that.  
Power is not  
what we have  
been taught.  
Power is  
the internal gaze  
that discerns  
the one, many and all consciousness,  
and then dresses our every deed  
in that finery  
and nothing more.  
In the same way that white light  
is nothing more than  
all colors.



Detail from: *Illusion of Separation*

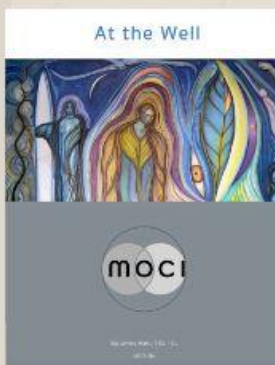


*Sovereign Reality* | 30 x 36 Inches | 2022 | Oil Pastel/Pencil

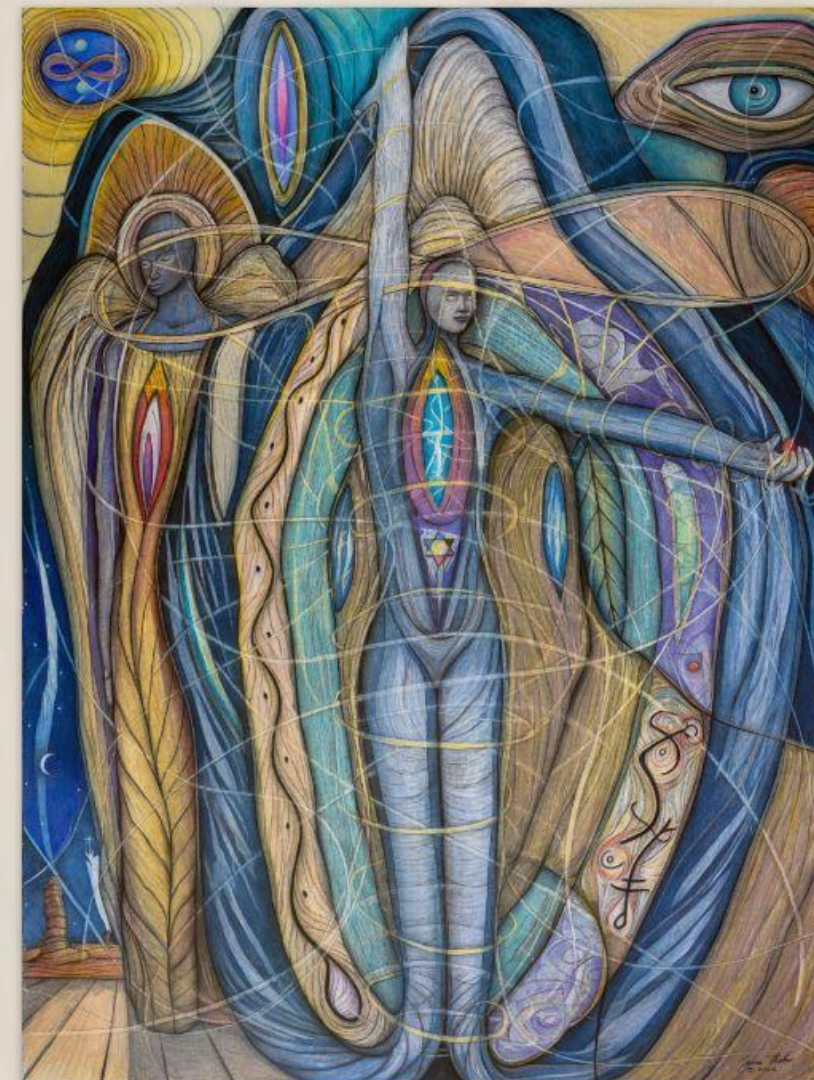
The man looked away, deepening his eyes as if they sought a new horizon. "Why do we bother to mine the words from our core reality? Hasn't this been done before, like a million times? Why do we share these words or actions or even our thoughts and feelings? Why?"

The woman smiled at his wonderment. "In a hundred years. In a thousand years. In ten thousand years. Do you not think that there will be humans mining these expressions in whatever form they take, and presenting them on the media of their spacetime? You see, the medium changes, and therefore the message changes. Our consciousness evolves and therefore the message evolves. This is as true for unity as it is for separation. As long as there is spacetime duality, there will be this evolution of medium and message.

"There will always be artists, poets, writers, scientists, philosophers, and intelligences yet to come. This is inevitable. And those who choose separation, they become the reason that those who choose interconnectedness return. And those who choose interconnectedness, they become the reason that those who choose separation return. It is all a very large dance between these two fundamental elements of duality, and how they express themselves through a species."

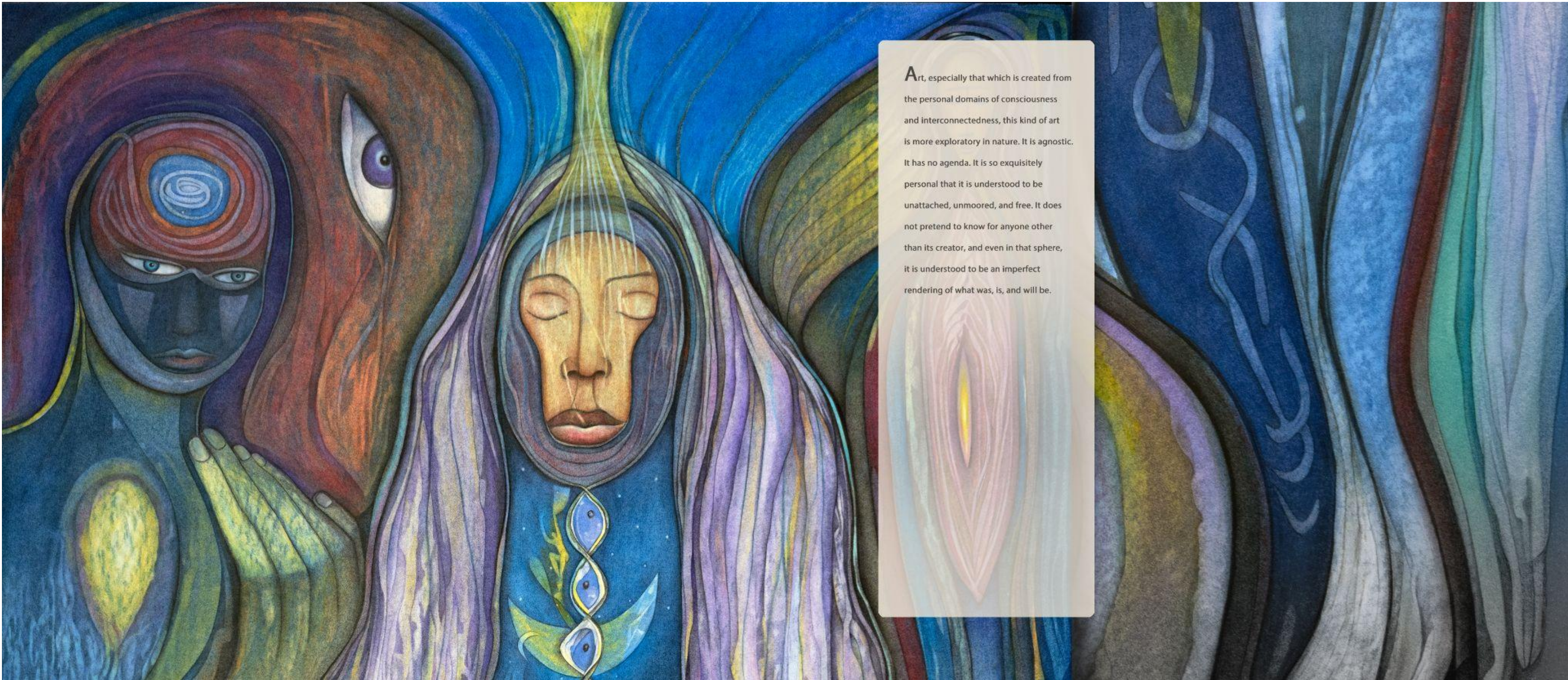


Excerpt from *At the Well*  
MOCI Storybook Series  
James Mahu



*The Endless We* | 30 x40 Inches | 2023 | Oil Pastel/Pencil

James Mahu  
© 2023



Art, especially that which is created from the personal domains of consciousness and interconnectedness, this kind of art is more exploratory in nature. It is agnostic. It has no agenda. It is so exquisitely personal that it is understood to be unattached, unmoored, and free. It does not pretend to know for anyone other than its creator, and even in that sphere, it is understood to be an imperfect rendering of what was, is, and will be.





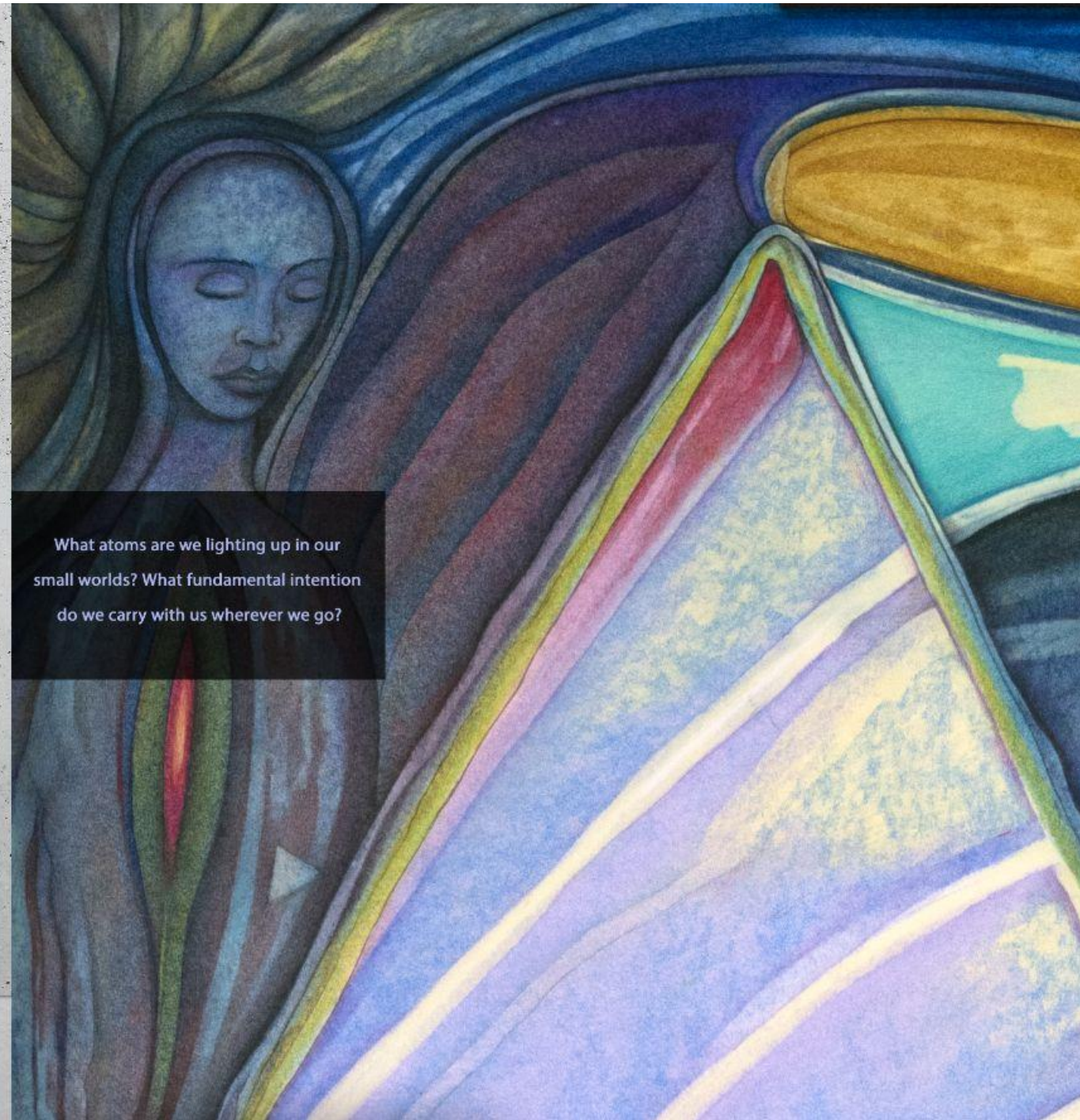
Truth in Flux | 32 x 40 Inches | 2021 | Oil Pastel/Pencil



Detail: Truth and Change



*Thread of Unity*  
30 x 36 Inches  
2022  
Oil Pastel/Pencil



What atoms are we lighting up in our  
small worlds? What fundamental intention  
do we carry with us wherever we go?



Why We Are Here  
30 x 35 Inches  
2022  
Oil Pastel/Pencil





When I began painting, and then some years later, discovered philosophy, it was a slow realization of the things I understood as a child, but lacked the vocabulary to articulate. I had to invent concepts like the Sovereign Integral and the one, many and all consciousness, as they were not codified in religious, philosophical or spiritual books that I had read. I then translated these concepts into art, music, poetry, paintings, and story, which became the "clothes" for the Sovereign to wear in my world.

Excerpt: *The Story Behind the Story*

*The Unity of Being* | 30 x 36 Inches | 2022 | Oil Pastel/Pencil





*Mirror of the Universe*  
32 x 40 Inches  
2022  
Oil Pastel/Pencil



Detail: *Mind Meets Heart*



*Survival and separation have obscured this story, not intentionally, but as a result of their design. However, the purpose lies within the arc of the story itself, not within our moments of reality. As humans, we live for roughly 2.5 billion seconds or moments of spacetime duality in a temporal body. The identity that lives across lifetimes, spacetimes, and the fractal-hood of reality will emerge in this world through us. That is the hopeful purpose embedded in this story.*

Excerpt: *The Story Behind the Story*



*Spectrum of Connection* | 32 x 40 Inches | 2020 | Oil Pastel/Pencil



*Sovereign Integral* | 32 x 40 Inches | 2022 | Oil Pastel/Pencil



Path To Wholeness | 30 x 40 Inches | 2020 | Oil Pastel/Pencil



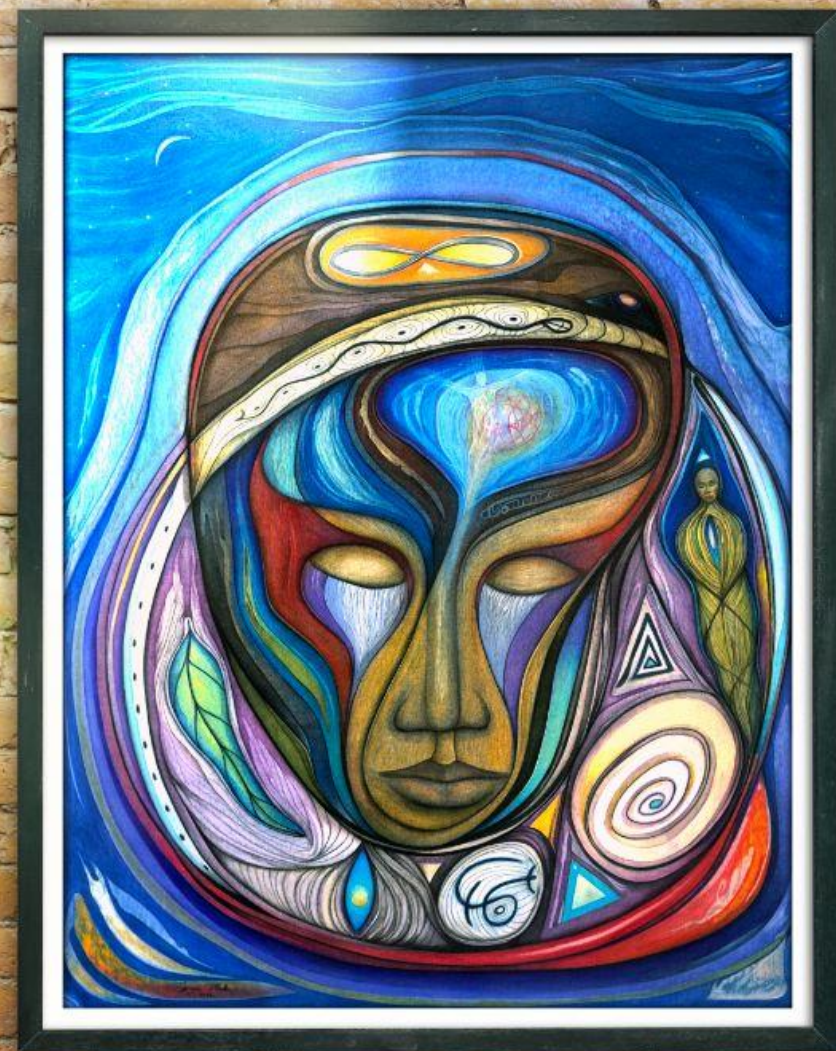
Spark of Creation  
32 x 40 Inches  
2020  
Oil Pastel/Pencil



Illusion of Separation | 30 x 40 Inches | 2021 | Oil Pastel/Pencil



Transition, Oil Pastel/Pencil  
32 x 40 Inches, 2021



Third Eye, Oil Pastel/Pencil  
30 x 40 inches, 2022



*Tapestry of Wholeness*  
32 x39 Inches  
2021  
Oil Pastel/Pencil

We are part of the one, many and all consciousness. The same as all life — every form, in every spacetime. Our identities are larger than life itself. We are the amalgamation of an infinite stream of lifetimes that interconnect with all others through the medium of Nature. We are wrapped in the tapestry of wholeness.



Detail: *Infinity Shaman*



*Imaginary*  
30 x 40 Inches  
2023  
Oil Pastel/Pencil



*The Unseen Connection* | 30 x 36 Inches | 2022 | Oil Pastel/Pencil



The man raised his hand in the air. "How does this story answer my question about the part of consciousness that you call the 'many', and how the many is a bridge between the one and all?"

"Consciousness is our core. Humanness is our surface. Consciousness is one, the sovereign. It is also the many, which is the sovereign in groups within a species. And it is the all, which is everything and everyone in every spacetime. The one, many and all consciousness includes separation and everything therein. The Sovereign Integral is the one and the all, but when it lives in a human reality, within spacetime duality, the Sovereign Integral becomes the many. It becomes neither a sovereign or an integral, rather, it becomes a human or a porcupine or a whale or an oak tree or a honey bee. It becomes these material embodiments.

"When it does this, it loses its memory of the Sovereign Integral, which quietly watches from the very core of reality. It observes the reality of separation. It finds ways to reach into the human reality of its sovereign self and that human part can then become a bridge between the worlds of the sovereign and the integral.

"In a way, it is the many — the sovereign within groups — that introduces the one and the all, and allows them to become interconnected within the sovereign. When this is done, the human identifies as a Sovereign Integral and their behavior is naturally aligned to interconnectedness. They do not reject separation as if it were a lesser reality, instead, they see separation as the bridge between creation and the source."

Excerpt from the Storybook Series: *At the Well*  
James Mahu

Opposite Page  
Detail: *The Rhythm of Being*  
30 x 40 Inches  
2022  
Oil Pastel/Pencil





Sf | 30 x 40 Inches | 2021 | Oil Pastel/Pencil



John P. Miller  
© 2022

The Inner World  
30 x 36 Inches  
2022  
Oil Pastel/Pencil



John P. Miller  
© 2022



*Dance of Creation* | 30 x 34 Inches | 2022 | Oil Pastel/Pencil



*Sovereign*  
30 x 37 Inches  
2022  
Oil Pastel/Pencil





Vision | 30 x40 Inches | 2023 | Oil Pastel/Pencil

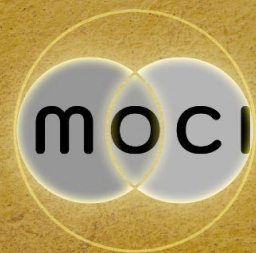
Detail:  
Inner Universe



*Art is our vocabulary. Science and mathematics, too. They are impressions from, and expressions of, the Intangible Proof. The thing that we hold in our deepest core is felt by our highest heart. and accepted with our highest mind. Completely incompletely. The proof of truth is a fractal desire that is never satiated. And yet, we can imbue the Intangible Proof within our creations and through our behaviors.*

*The evolutionary journey of All, is simply too vast to envision or even fathom its general purpose. If it could be summed up, written in language, I would postulate that its purpose would be the creation of a higher harmony through understanding who we are as an individual of a single life; as a Sovereign of infinite lives; as an Integral of all, and aligning those identities in partnership, even when we don't understand their totality or ultimate purpose.*

- James Mahu



Movement of Consciousness and Interconnectedness

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