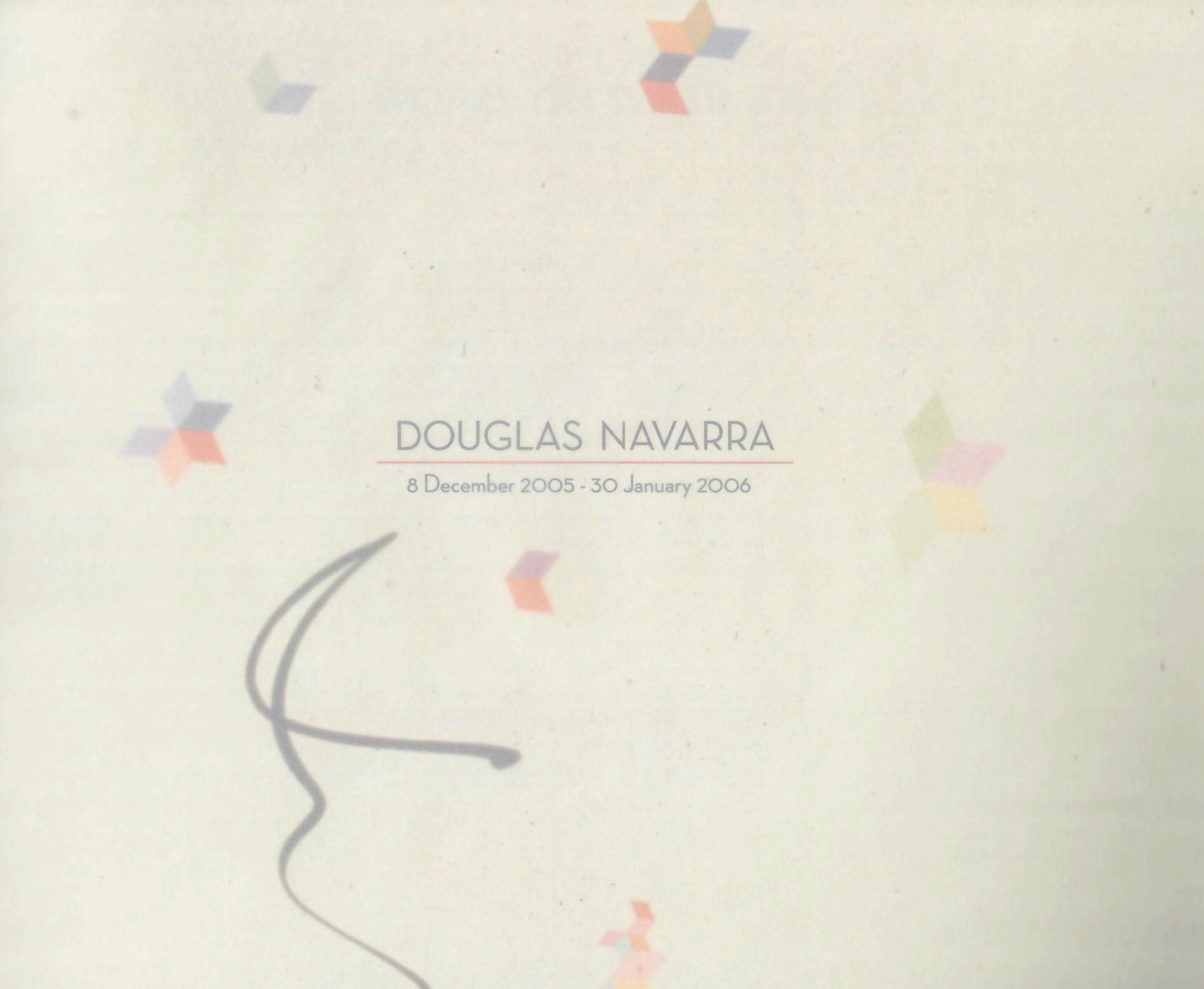


DOUGLAS NAVARRA

8 December 2005 - 30 January 2006



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Now based in Brooklyn, Doug Navarra holds an MFA from the University of Minnesota, and a BFA from the Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia. He has garnered several awards, including a Gottlieb Foundation grant, a Pollock-Krasner Fellowship, a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, and a Fulbright-Hays Fellowship in Venice, Italy.

previous page work :

Gouache on found paper.
22 x 30 in. 2004 (detail)

MARKING TIME: WORKS ON PAPER BY DOUGLAS NAVARRA

The idea that materials have within themselves intrinsic qualities that the artist must heed is not new; sculptors in particular are sensitive to this. Doug Navarra (a sculptor turned draftsman) believes that it is not simply a matter of what he brings to a drawing that counts -- the drawing surface is itself of equal importance.

In the mid 1990s, he found some Nepalese ledger sheets in an art supply store. Intrigued by the quality of line he found in these documents, Navarra responded by adding subtle marks of his own that set up a dialogue with the rhythmic and curving script used in the ledgers. Later, he came across a trove of colonial American documents at a flea market on 26th Street in Manhattan. As with the ledger sheets, these old deeds, indentures and pages from a "Cyphering notebook" containing mathematical problems and tables speak both of their great age and a design sensibility sharply distant from our own.

Responding to the linear quality of the penmanship, to original marginalia, or to stains and tears the sheets had accumulated over the centuries -- only rarely to the content of the document itself -- Navarra made increasingly elaborate "interventions"

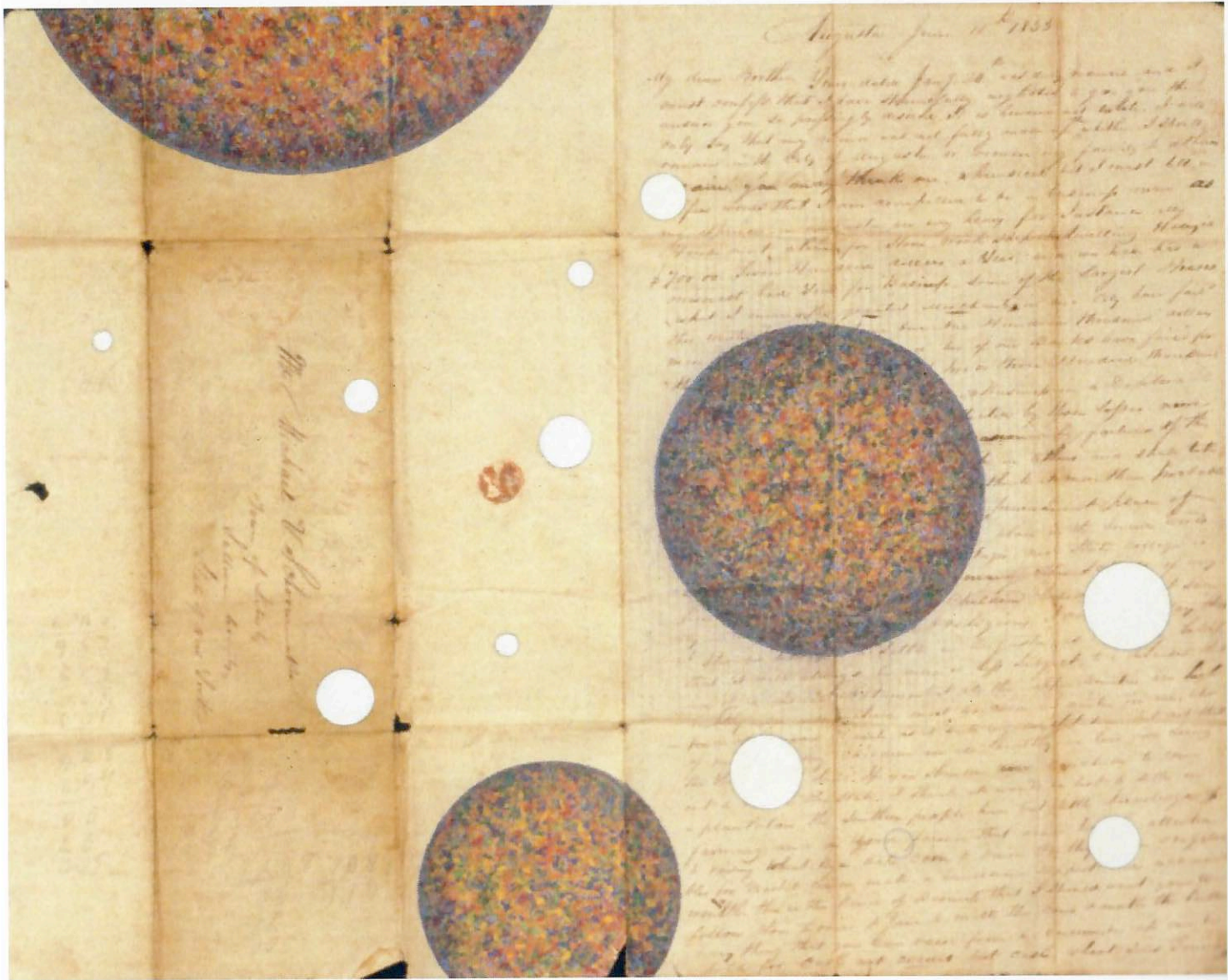
that played off the antiquarian and the modern. In his own words, "When my personal history as a 21st century artist is added to a 500 year old piece of paper, it transforms the context of the page from a minor historical record into a contemporary . . . work of art." His additions to the surface of a sheet reshape its relationship to history; he creates palimpsests across centuries of time that both differentiate and link "then" and "now."

More recently, Navarra has moved away from using existing documents as the armature for his work. Having begun by responding to the "givens" of the original, he wanted to learn how his drawing would function independent of both the historical context and the visual structure of the old papers. His earlier works taught us to see that an unmarked sheet is not only unused but without temporality. His newest works present geometric forms hovering in what we now realize is the timeless space of the blank page. In establishing a spatial presence, these drawings also set the clock ticking into the future. The line alone declares itself here; the rest is history.

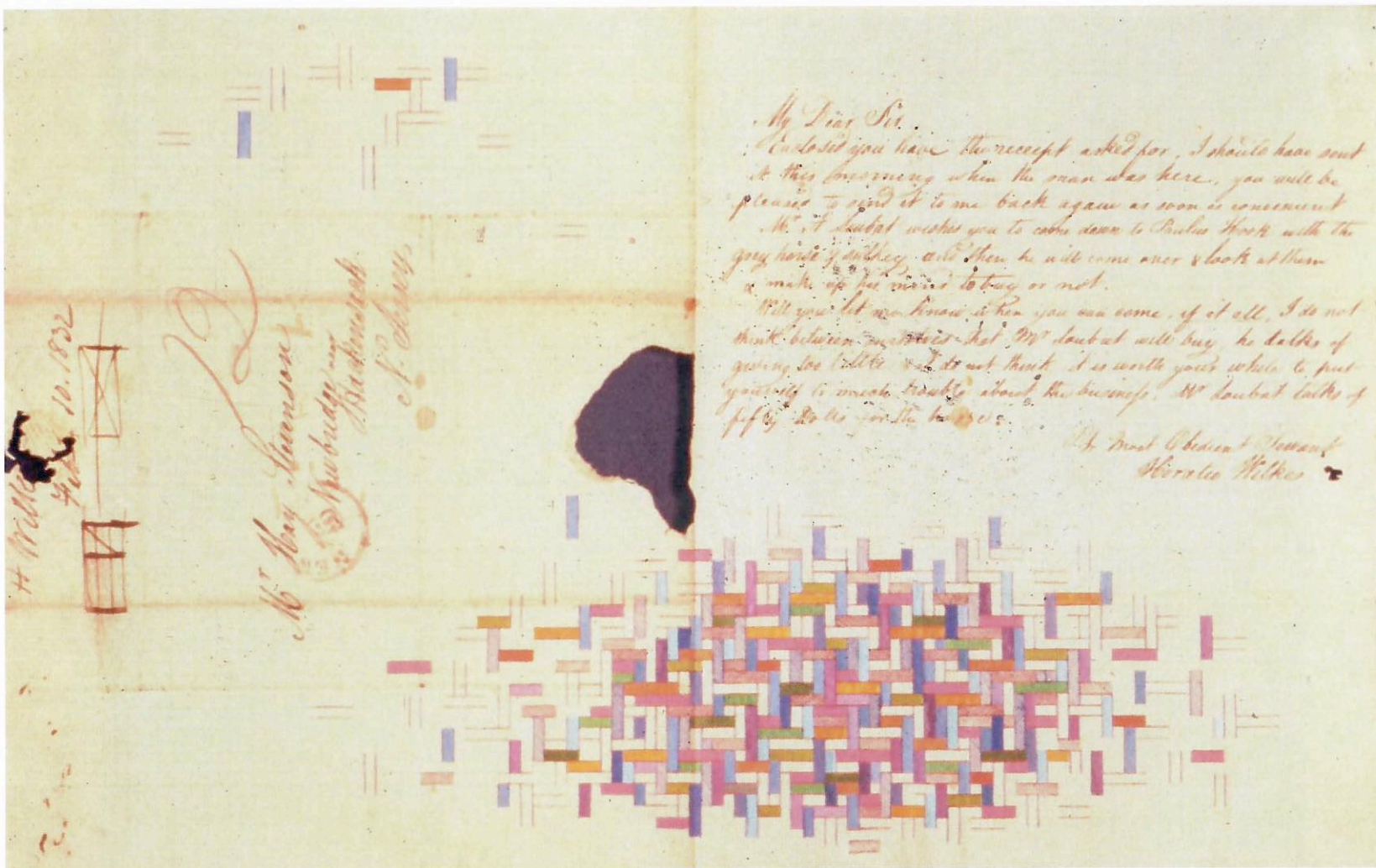
-- Preston Thayer



gouache and ink on found paper. 16 x 13 in. 1999

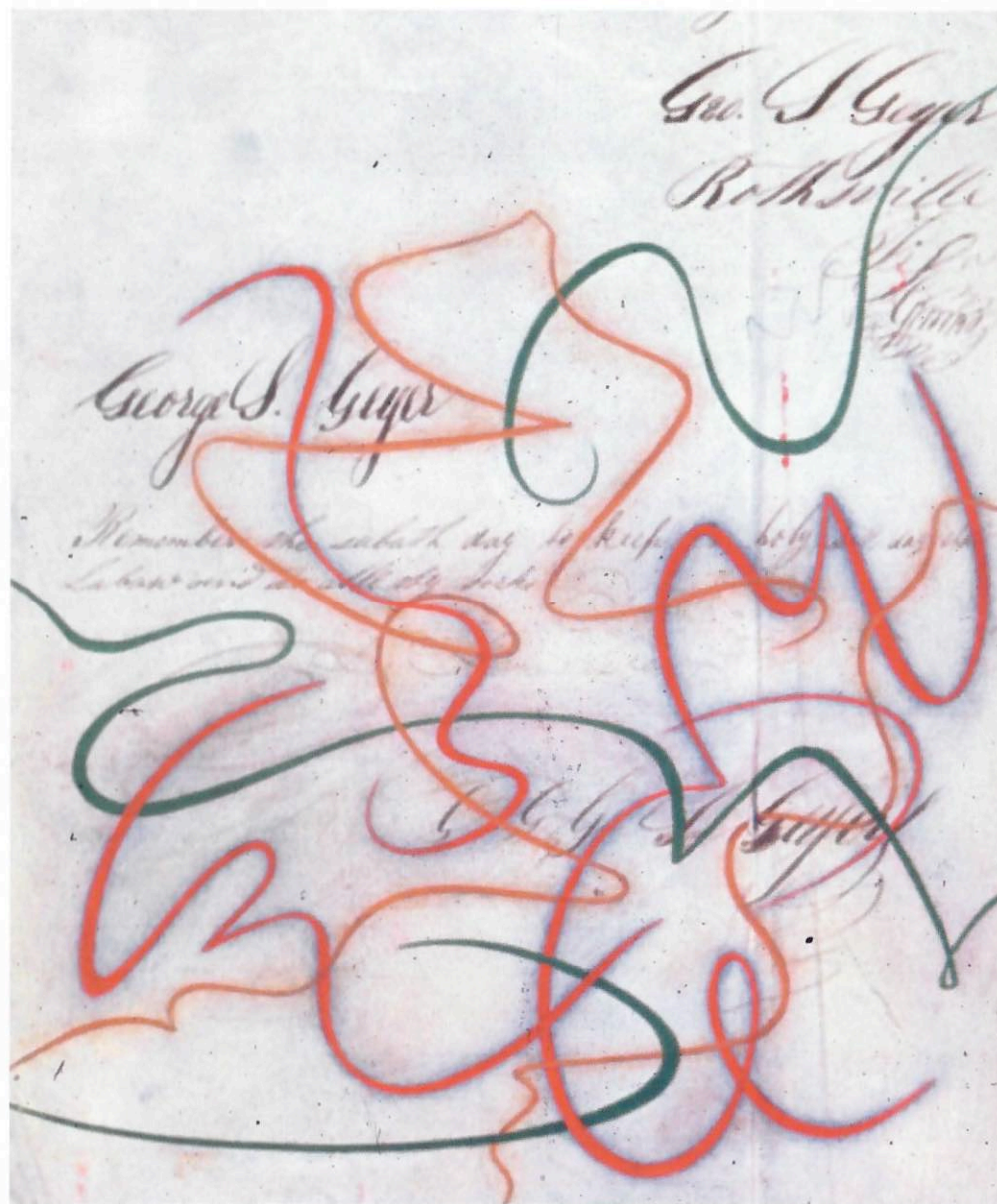


gouache and ink on found paper.
15.5 x 10 in. 2000



gouache and ink on found paper.

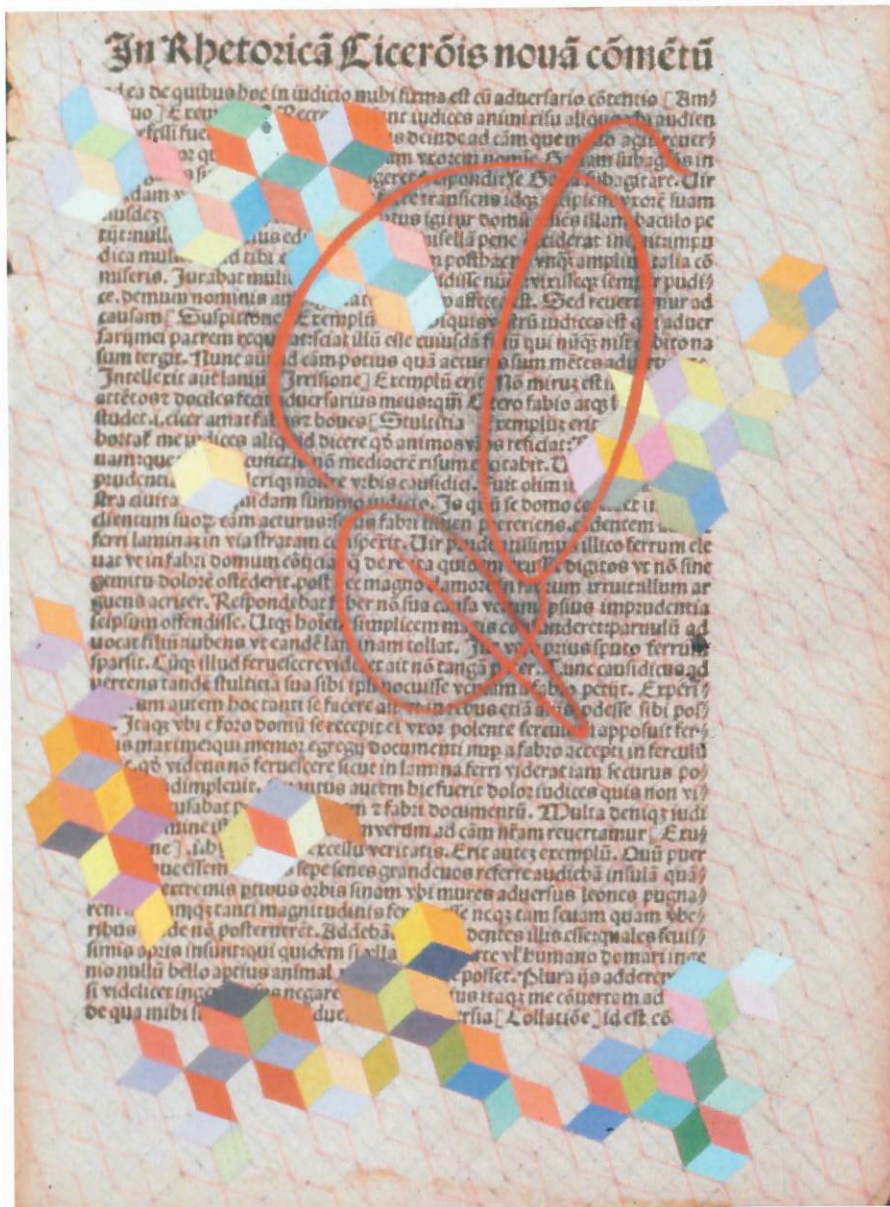
15.5 x 10 in. 2000



gouache and pencil on found paper.

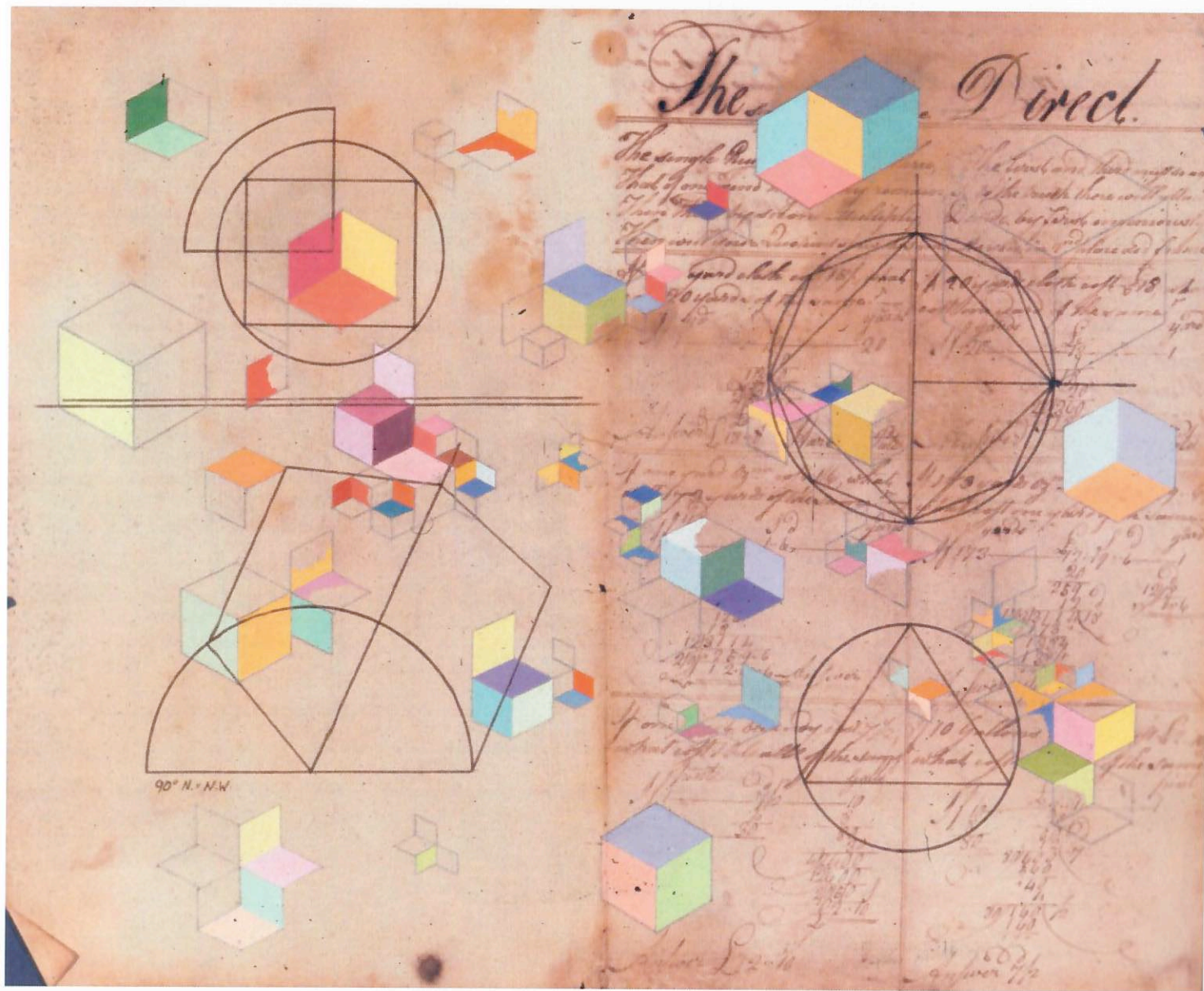
12 x 10.5 in. 2001

In Rhetoricā Licerōis novā cōmētū



gouache and pencil on found paper.

6 x 8.25 in. 2003

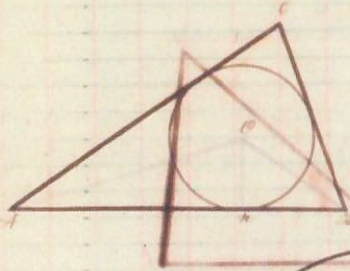


gouache on found paper. 14.5 x 12 in. 2003

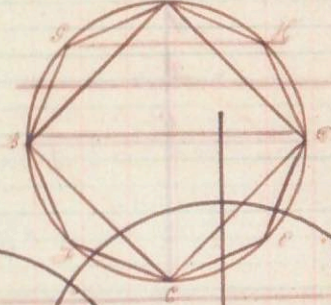
Practical Geometry

Continued

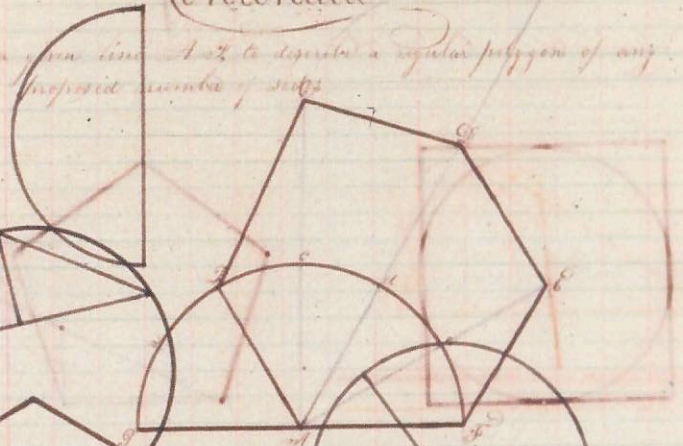
In a given triangle $A B C$ to
inscribe a circle.



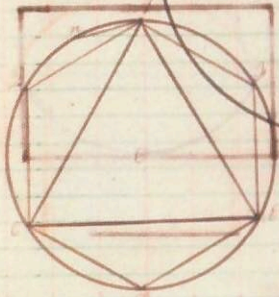
To describe a square, or an octagon
in a given circle.



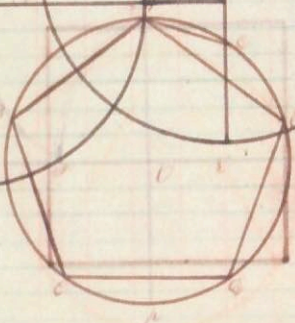
On a given line $A B$ to describe a regular polygon of any
proposed number of sides.



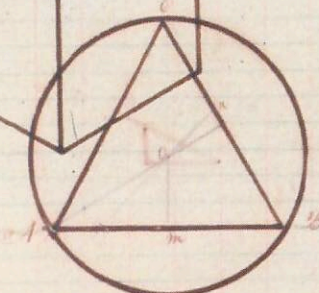
In a given circle to inscribe an equal-
sided triangle, a hexagon, or a
dodecagon.



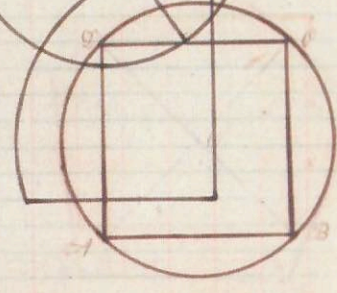
To inscribe a pentagon, or decagon
in a given circle.

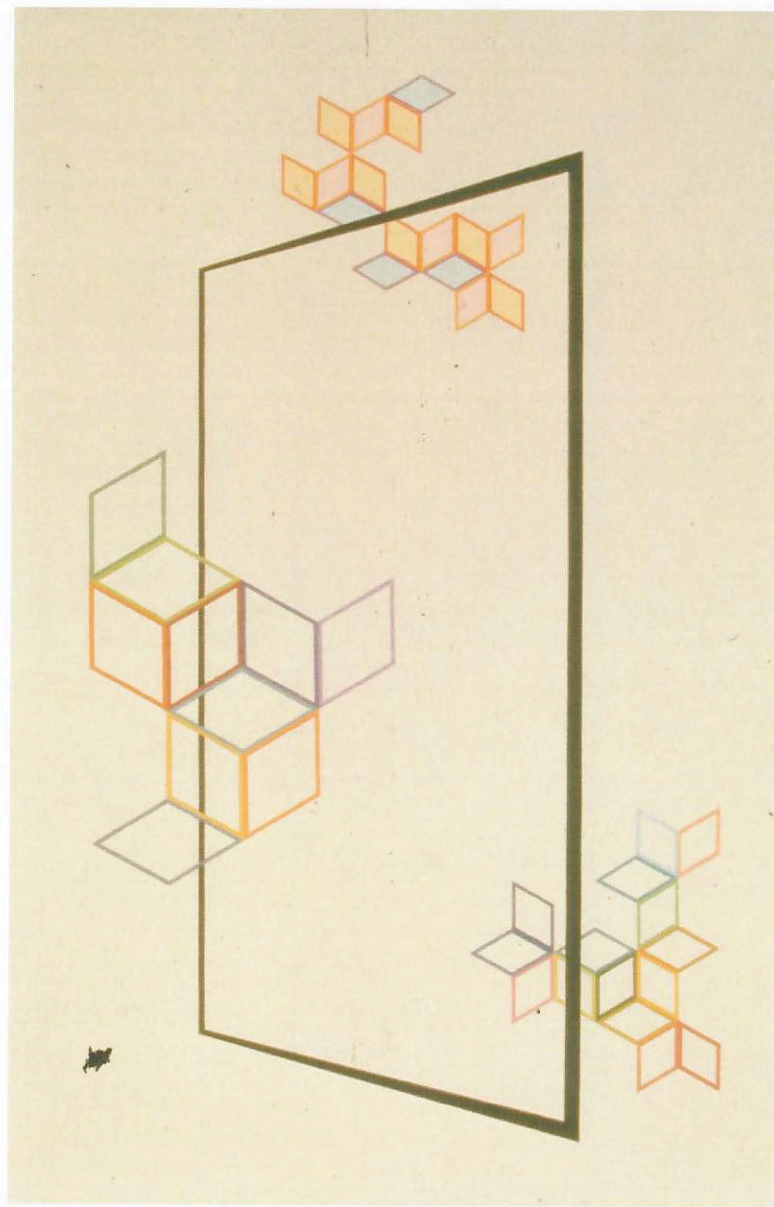


That a given triangle $A B C$
be circumscribed a circle.

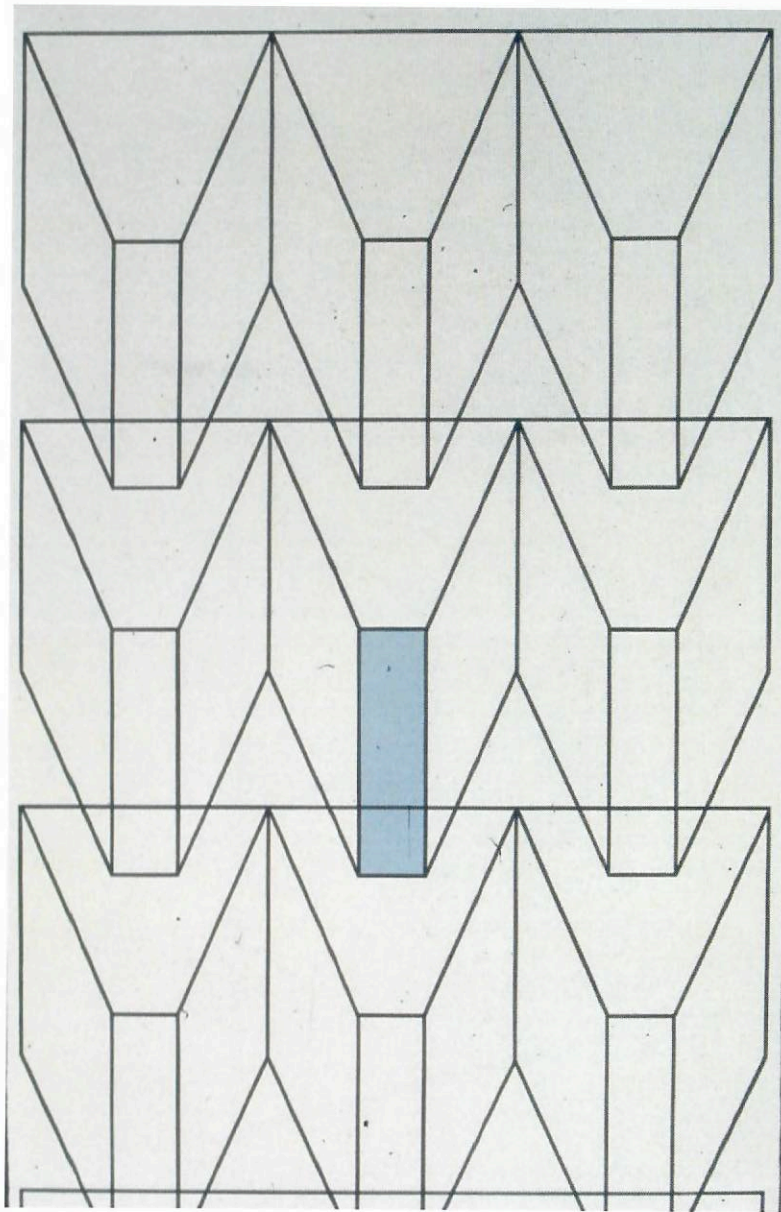


About a given square $A B C D$ to
circumscribe a circle.





gouache on found paper. 28 x 40 in. 2003



synthetic polymer on panel. 28 x 40 in. 2004



gouache on paper. 22 x 30 in. 2004

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