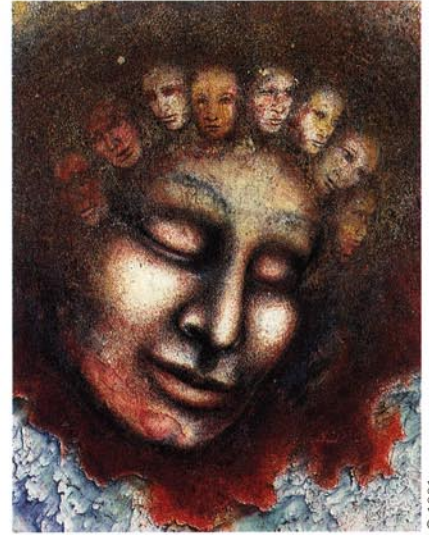
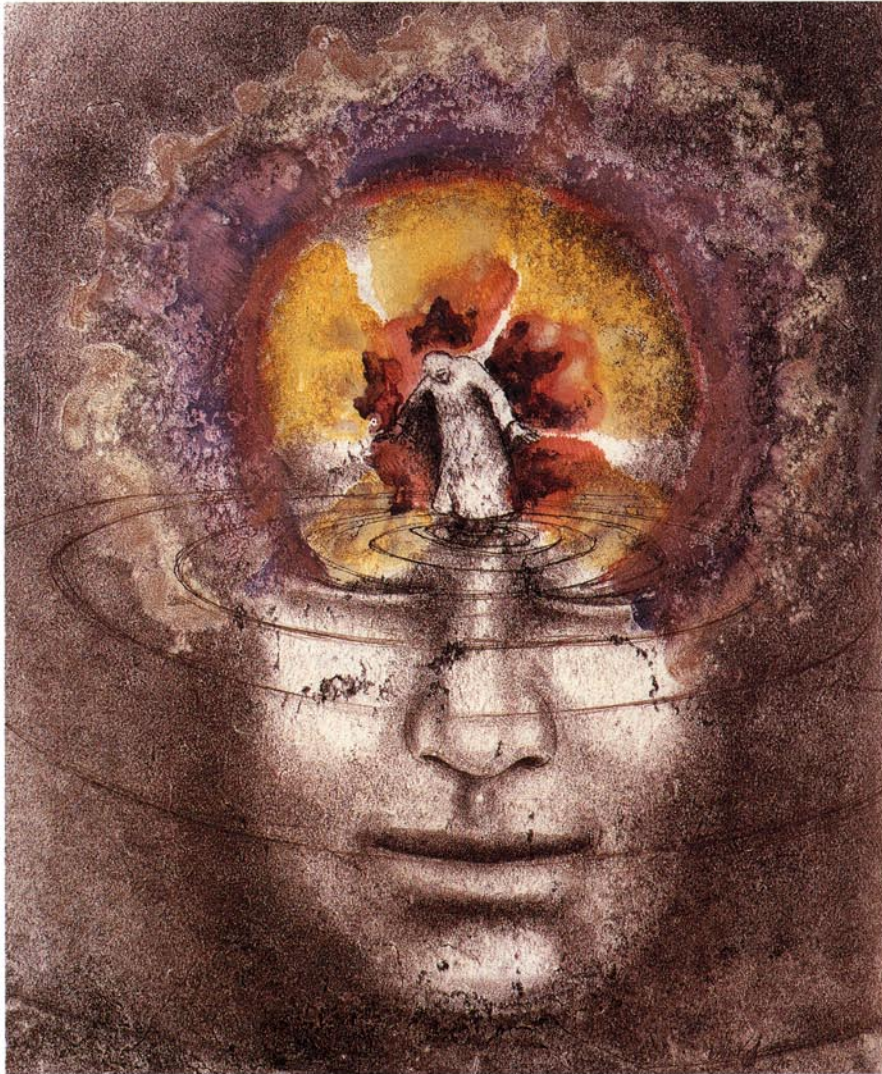


DEBORAH KOFF-CHAPIN  
THE CENTER FOR TOUCH DRAWING



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Touch Drawings, selected images from a series of 60 published as "SoulCards." Printers ink on paper.



"SURRENDERING TO SUCH  
PRIMAL EXPRESSION  
TAUGHT ME THE ART OF  
LISTENING WITHIN."

— Deborah Koff-Chapin

From my earliest awareness, I have felt a calling to express the depths of the soul through human images. During my years in art school, I became fluent in the language of abstraction. This was pure and essential, but foreign to the eyes of all but those educated in the esoteric knowledge of the art world. I was stunned into this realization one day when an old friend came to my studio and stared blankly at the abstract paintings on the wall. In the past I had shared the depths of my soul with friends through images. Where had I gone in those art school years to draw such a blank? The seed of an answer came one day as I

scribbled some words onto a page ... "What's wrong with drawing a face?" With a shudder of guilt, I tentatively doodled some raw, primitive heads. It felt as if as if I was drawing something "dirty." I tucked the embarrassing doodle away.

Within several weeks the seed that had been germinating in my being burst forth in the form of Touch Drawing. On the last day of my last year in school, I was helping a friend clean an inked glass plate in the print shop. Before wiping the ink off the plate with a paper towel, I playfully moved my hands over the towel, and lifting it, saw lines which had been transferred to the underside of the



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towel by my touch. Lines coming directly from my fingertips! I laughed hysterically with this discovery and crawled around on the floor, gathering up more discarded paper towels. In a state of ecstatic revelation, flowing lines poured from my hands. They were a natural extension of my being onto the page, a record of each moment as it passed. Within minutes I was drawing faces with both hands. My ever-changing soul was being reflected before me, childlike and primitive, honest and direct.

Although this experience had the appearance of simply being play, under the surface was something profound and powerful. It felt as if I was receiving a gift from outside of time, from an invisible knowing presence. I had a sense that Touch Drawing was being given for more than my own personal use. Along with this gift came a responsibility.

Somehow, I would have to share this process with the world. While sensing that I was acting on behalf of a great evolutionary force, I began to pour my soul into Touch Drawing. During difficult times I would turn to the drawing board to release emotions. As I accepted my feelings and allowed them to pour onto the page through my hands, I was drawn more deeply into myself. It was as if I was sculpting my own being — transforming, literally before my own eyes. At the end of a session I had a record of this transformation — images of my soul in motion. And I would feel clear and whole.

The images that emerged in the early days were personal and therapeutic. Surrendering to such primal expression taught me the art of listening within. Over time, I began to tap into a transpersonal consciousness. Gradually, I have become

again. It is confirmed each time I witness people who had been expressing fear and limitation, relax and dive into themselves through the mirror of the drawing board. It is confirmed each time I see hands moving on the page in an unselfconscious dance, and by the healing power that is unleashed through this pure act of creation. And it is confirmed by the deep satisfaction felt as people recognize the honesty, power and beauty reflected in their drawings, each other and themselves.

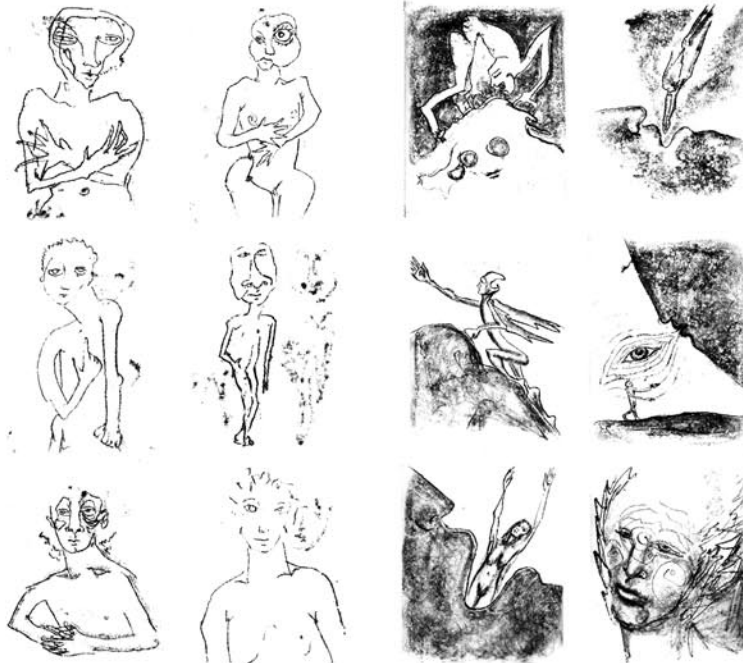
My hope is that Touch Drawing will sprout up in the gardens of so many lives that it will continue to reseed itself long after I am gone. My vision is that Touch Drawing becomes rooted in many facets of human culture through the natural seeding of person-to-person contact. My prayer is that Touch Drawing can

serve in the healing and blossoming of the human soul. I invite you to help make this a reality. The future use and development of Touch Drawing is in the hands of those who hear its call.

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Opposite page: Touch Drawing selected from "SoulCards," 1988



"Uglies," 1975

"Dive," 1995

*"In the early years of Touch Drawing, my images were primal expressions of emotion and body awareness. With time, the images began to emerge from a deep interior attunement."*

aware of a subtle overlighting presence as I draw. Now when I bring my attention to the drawing board, my hands trace the beginnings of a sensed image. In deep focus and trust, I abandon myself to the process and watch as an image emerges onto the page. When I rise to leave the drawing board, I realize that I am disengaging from a deep communion. Silently, I offer my thanks.

Through the years I have sought to answer the call to share Touch Drawing that came in the initial moments of its discovery. My original intuition that this process was not for myself alone is confirmed again and