

ADRIENNE JOY

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University Art Gallery  
State University of New York at Binghamton  
September 2 – October 2, 1983



cover:

*Aftermath, no.1* 1982

Charcoal pencil/Arches cover; 19 × 27

*All dimensions are format size given in inches; height  
precedes width.*

*All works are in the collection of the artist unless otherwise  
noted.*

Catalog design: Barbara Perkins  
Photography: Christopher Focht  
Printing: University Print Shop  
Typesetting: The TypePeople



## ON DRAWING AND STILL LIFE

I settled with drawing while waiting for drawing to prepare me for a serious medium. I waited too long and became inextricably involved in working with pencil and paper. It seems now that this was always my intention. Drawing is most naturally suited to the ambiguity of my visual experience: highly abstract and highly specific. It has the fragile quality of the moments I attempt to translate.

There is no choice other than abstraction in art. Drawing is an extreme form of abstraction. Graphite or charcoal and paper provide limited tangible qualities: a range of grays, a slight softness and gold tint. The result is very flat. Yet it is possible to indicate form, light, space, color, motion, and sound with these limited qualities. It is possible to do so with great precision.

The potential for evoking illusion is most successfully exploited through drawing. Its tangible substance does not call as much attention to itself as that of painting or sculpture. The sensuality of drawing is limited by modest materials; by restricted interactions and vibrations of line and value. This substance may tend to disappear, leaving illusion as the primary experience.

The illusion of literal reality is not, however, evocative of experience. It is at once not enough and too much. It can be translated verbally and it therefore not appropriate to drawing.

My work is to draw the medium between tentative implication and explicit deception. The suggestive illusion — that the images described are other than what they appear — emerges. I do not think of my drawings as realistic except in the sense that they most honestly express my visual experience.

My first memories, all my most vivid and enduring memories, are of visual moments that lift themselves out of context. These are not photographic, not impressionistic. They are specific in an evocative sense but inexplicable. They are not understood. The only certainty is that of recognition. I believe in an inherent content in forms that transcends psychology. The drawing provides a lens to focus the unfamiliar, that which is not directly associated.

The language of forms, values, and relationships I employ came naturally as a result of a lifetime receptivity to the apparently ordinary visual experience. The oddly intimate yet strange nature of objects enlarges their scale in my visual memory. I had a difficult time seeing the Grand Canyon. I looked at it. It is fixed in my memory as a postcard, 4 × 6".

I choose objects on the basis of an attraction that has little to do with their beauty or function. During much of the time I spend looking at them, they seem quite dull. But, over a period of time, they repeatedly assert a transient presence that is mysterious and startling.

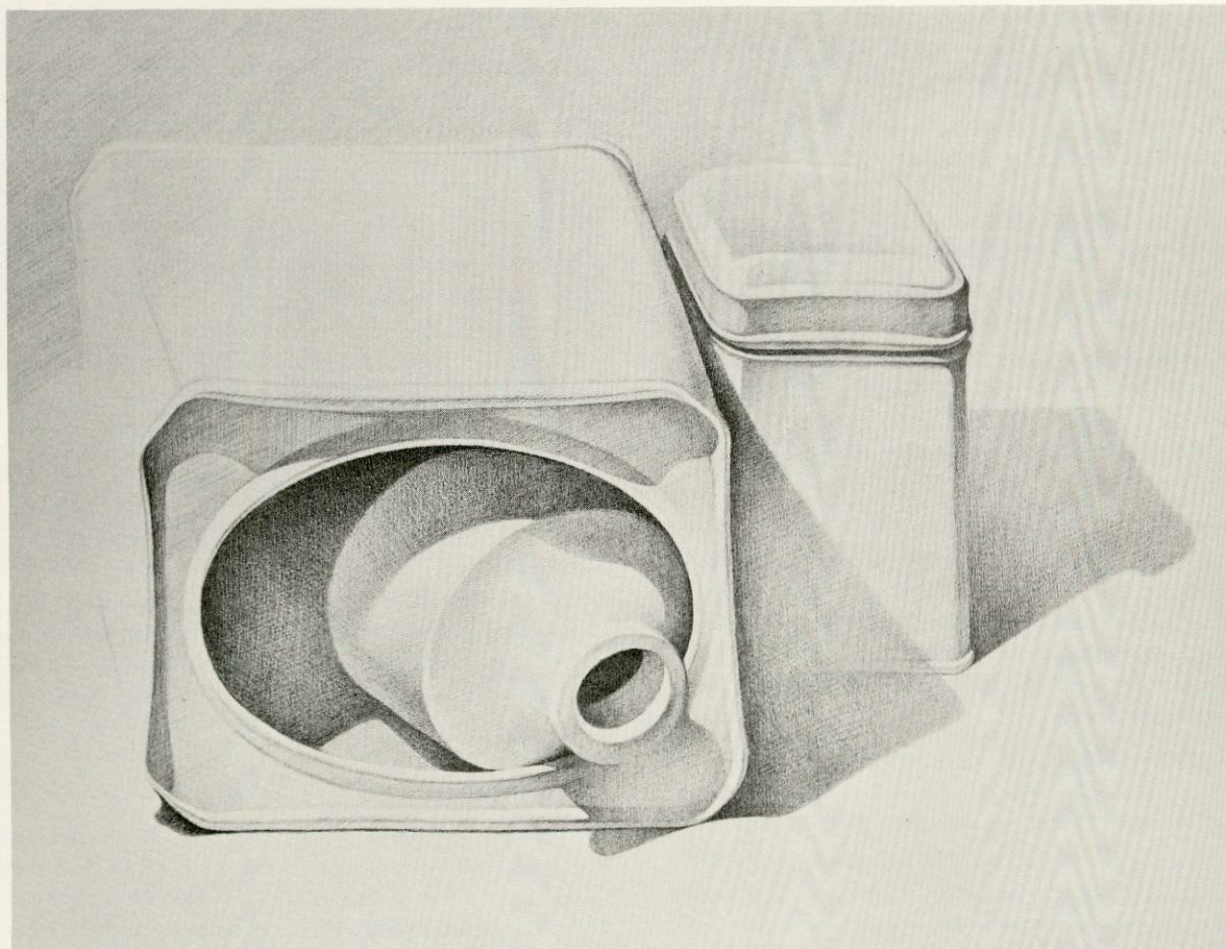
I have worked most consistently with vessels — abstract, geometrical forms. They are the most receptive of objects. They hold light and space. They freeze an arrangement of gestural shapes that can be read in much the same way as sheet music.

The vessels are not the subjects of the drawings. They convey what is about to happen and what has just happened. The subject is the transitional moment in a dramatic sequence from another context. The other things I draw may be closer to portraiture in the staged tradition: portraiture that implies something about the life of the forms. The meticulous attention I devote to detail is misleading.

I retain the English term, "still life," as an appropriate classification for my work. I do not think of it as Webster defines it. The words carry an inherent ambiguity that makes them, perhaps, the most accurate verbal expression of the subject matter's potential.

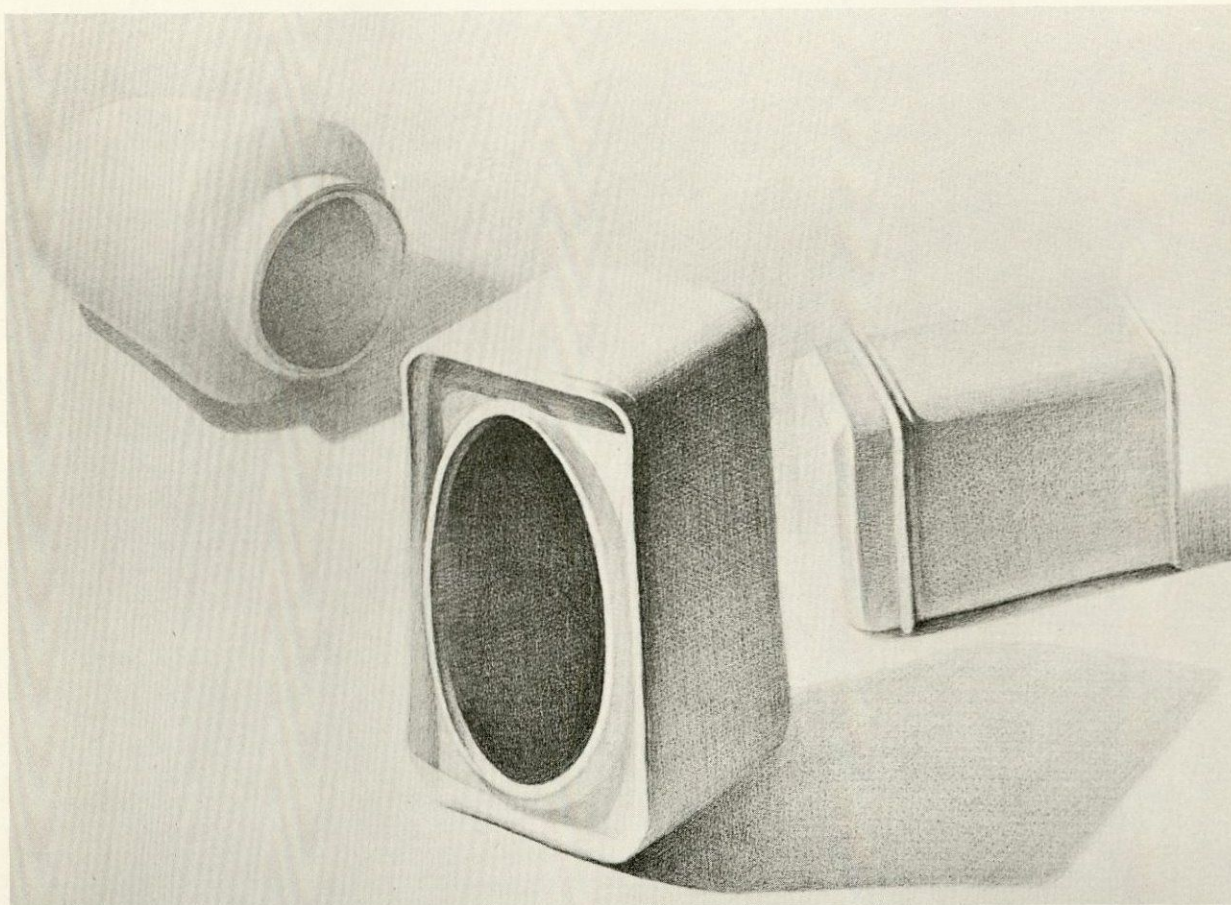
*Adrienne Joy  
June 1983*





*Vessel Series II: Settler* 1979  
Charcoal pencil/Arches cover; 14½ × 19





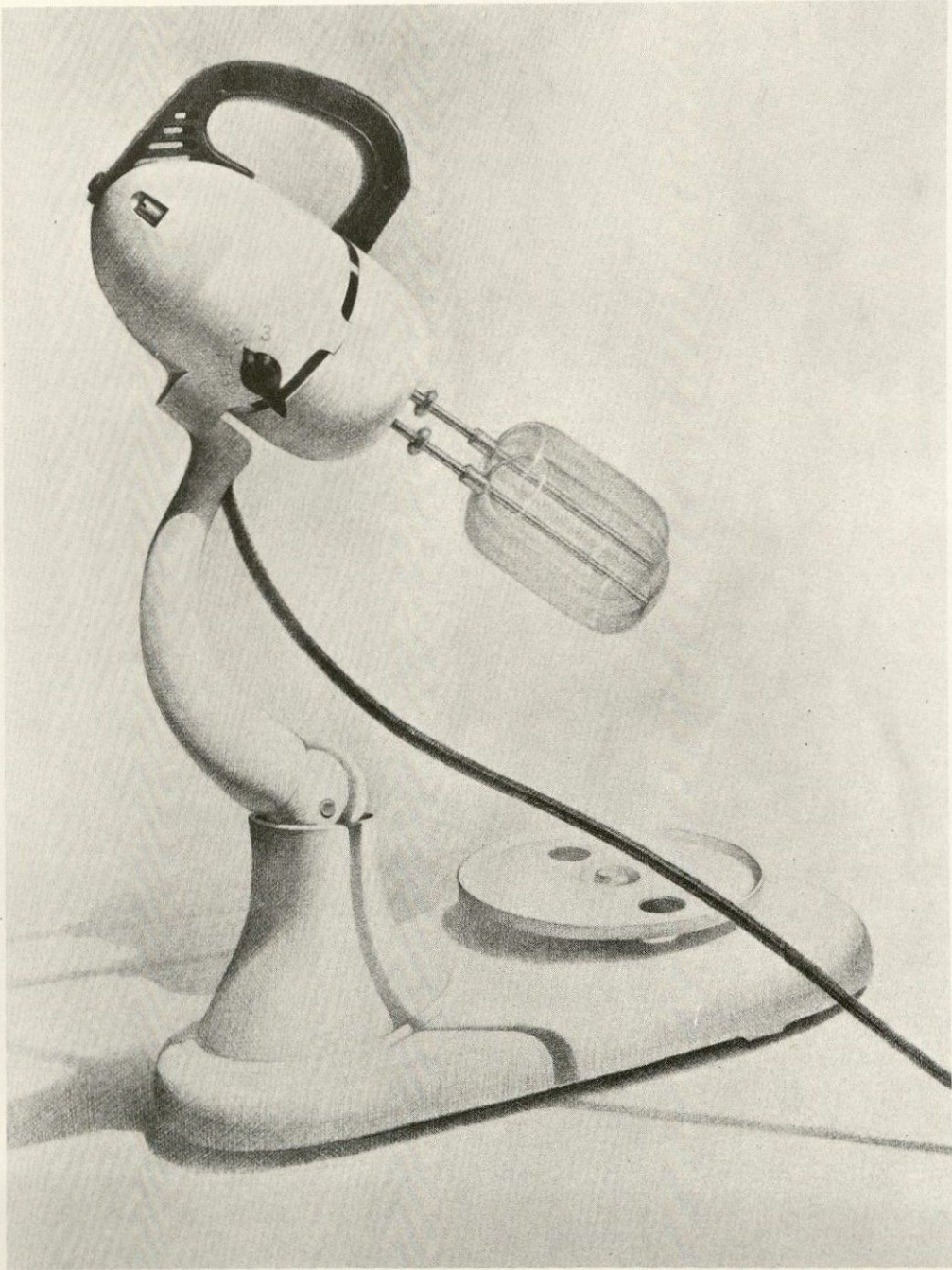
*Vessel Series V: Aria* 1976  
Charcoal pencil/Arches cover; 14½ × 19





*Mixmaster III: Model 3002, no. 2* 1983  
Graphite/Stratmore; 27 x 21





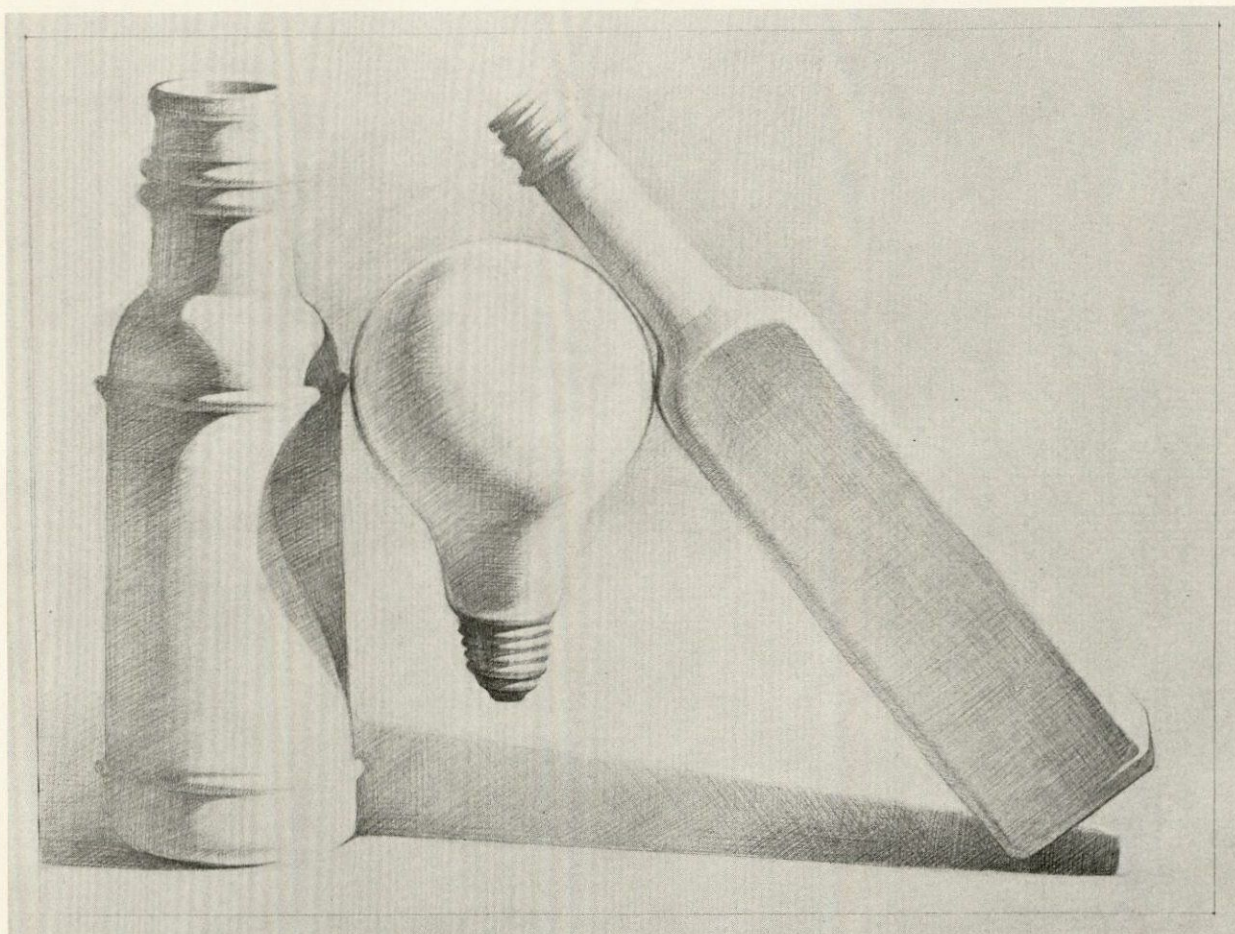
*Mixmaster III: Model 3002, no. 3* 1983  
Graphite/Stratmore; 27 × 21





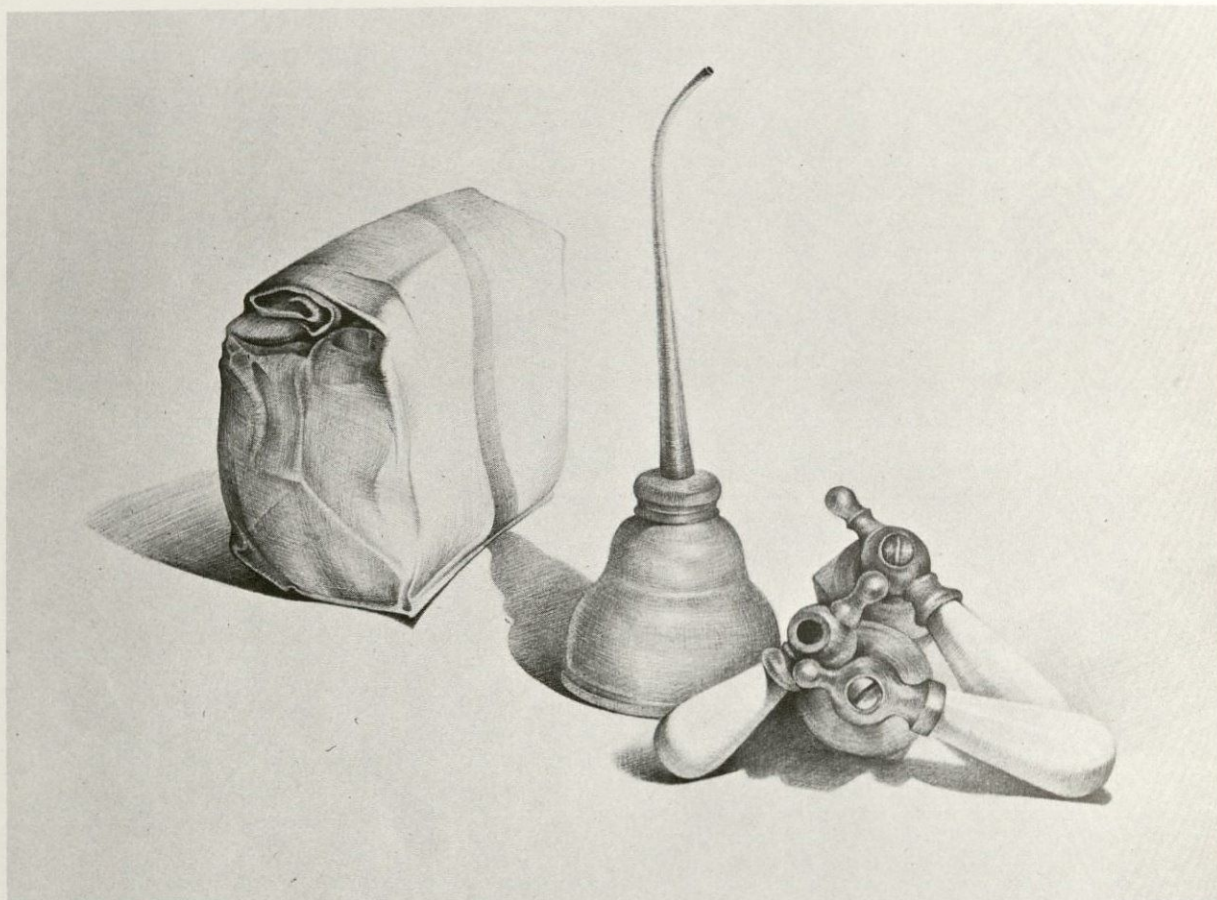
*Inkpot, Eggshells* 1981  
Charcoal pencil & graphite/Arches cover; 12 × 10





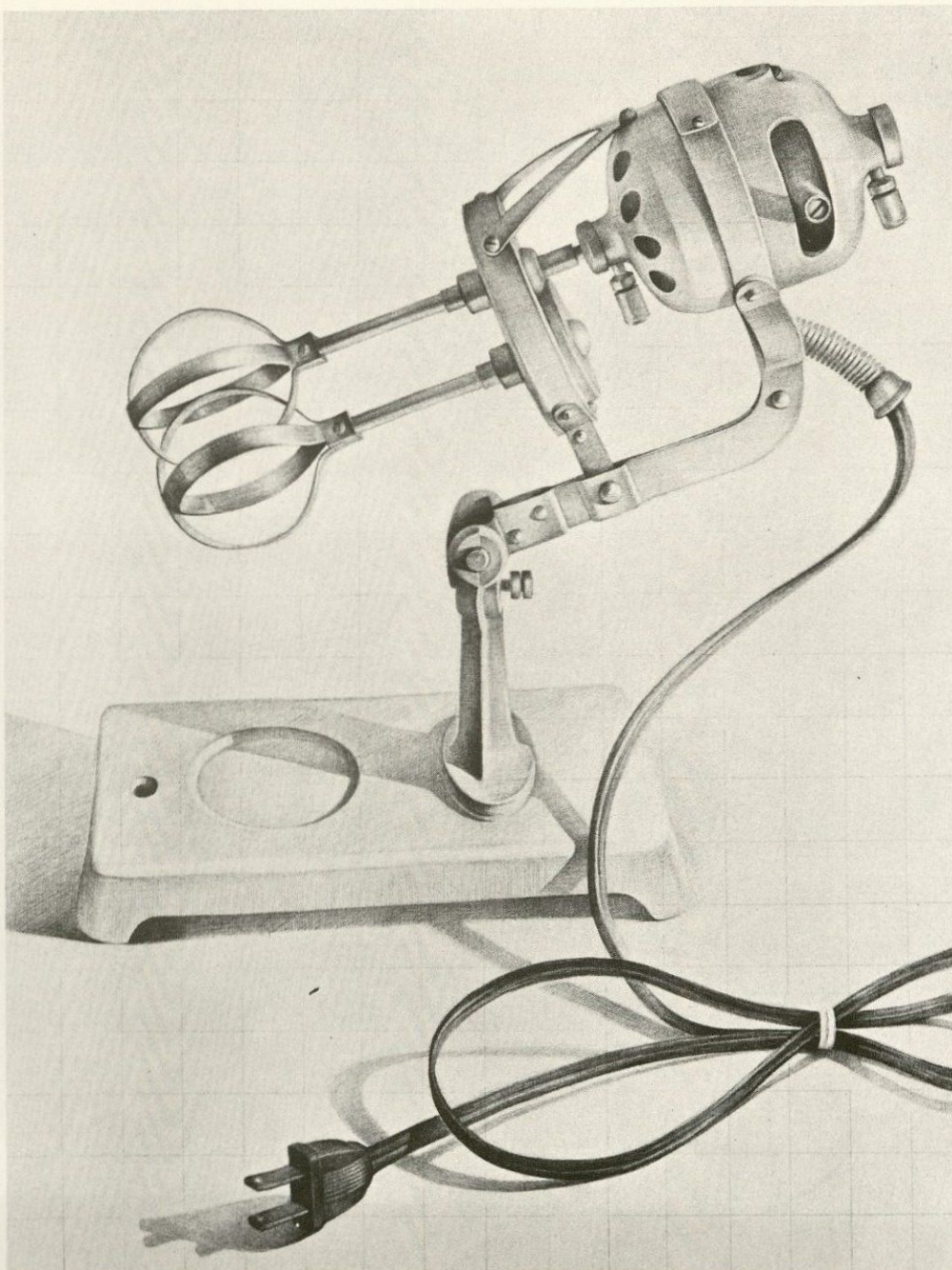
*Notions, Study* 1983  
Graphite/Stratmore; 14½ x 19





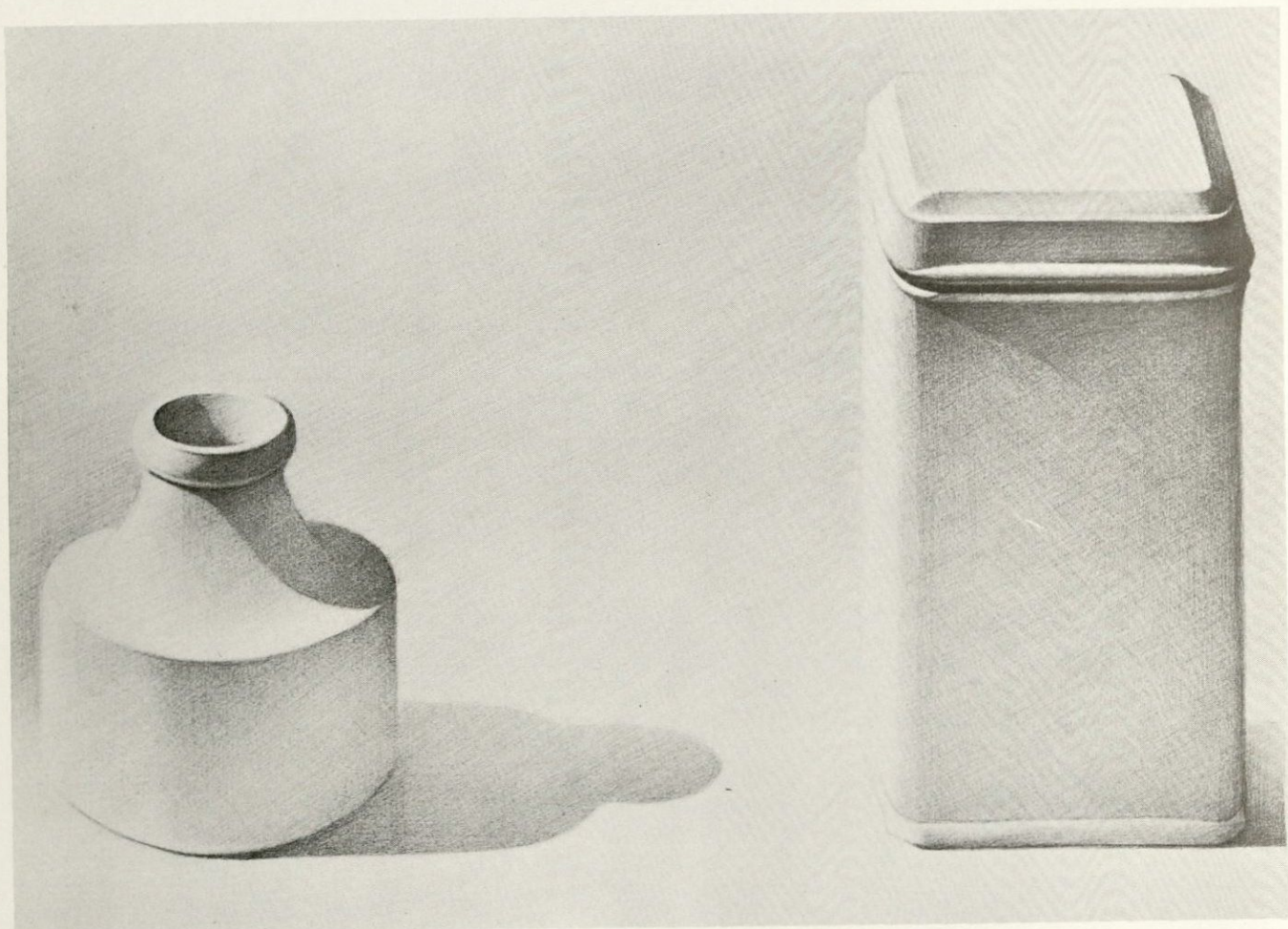
*Project 1981*  
Charcoal pencil & graphite/Arches cover; 14 x 19





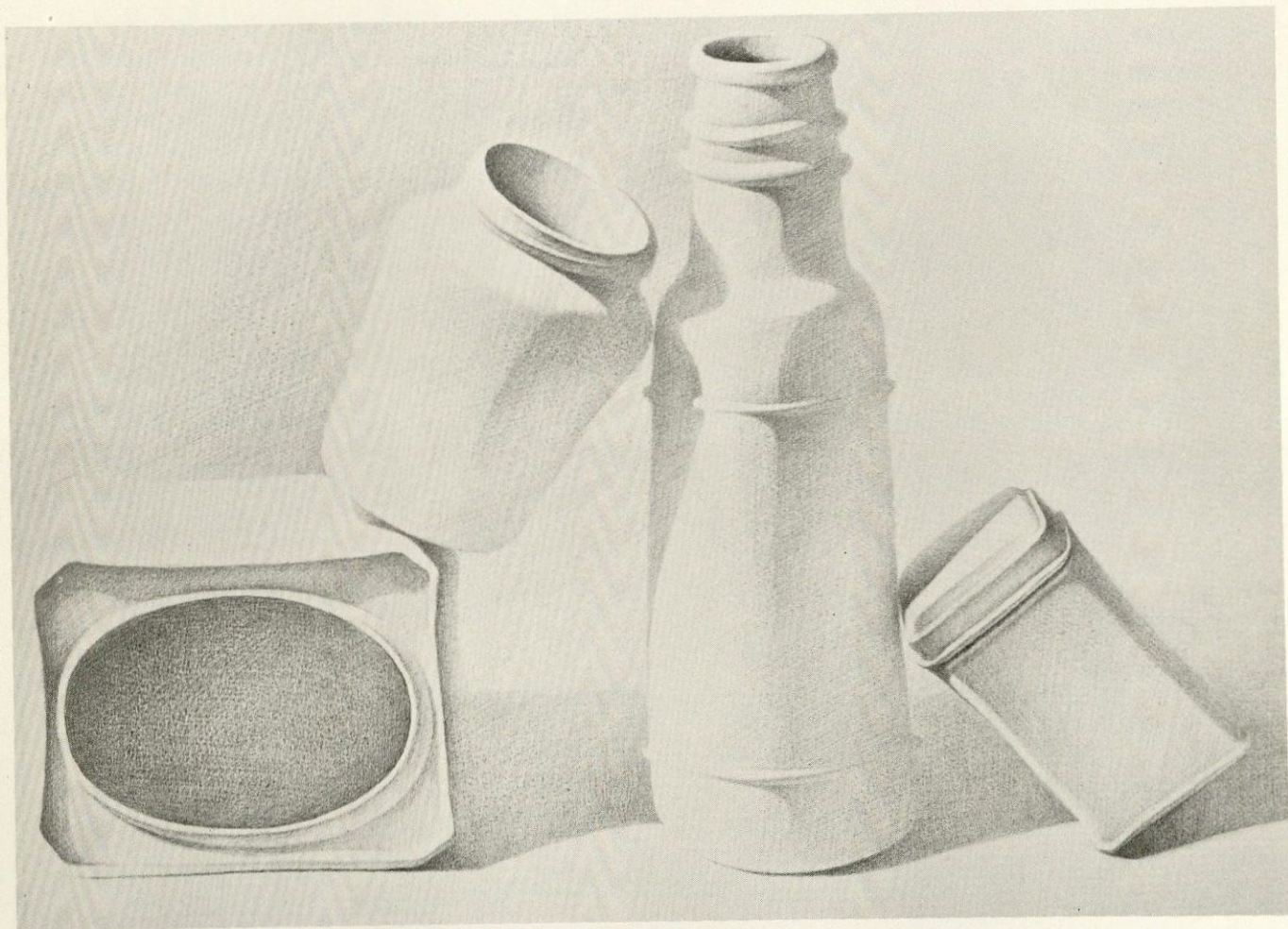
*Mixmaster I: Universal Electric Mixabeater* 1981  
Graphite/Stratmore; 20½ × 16





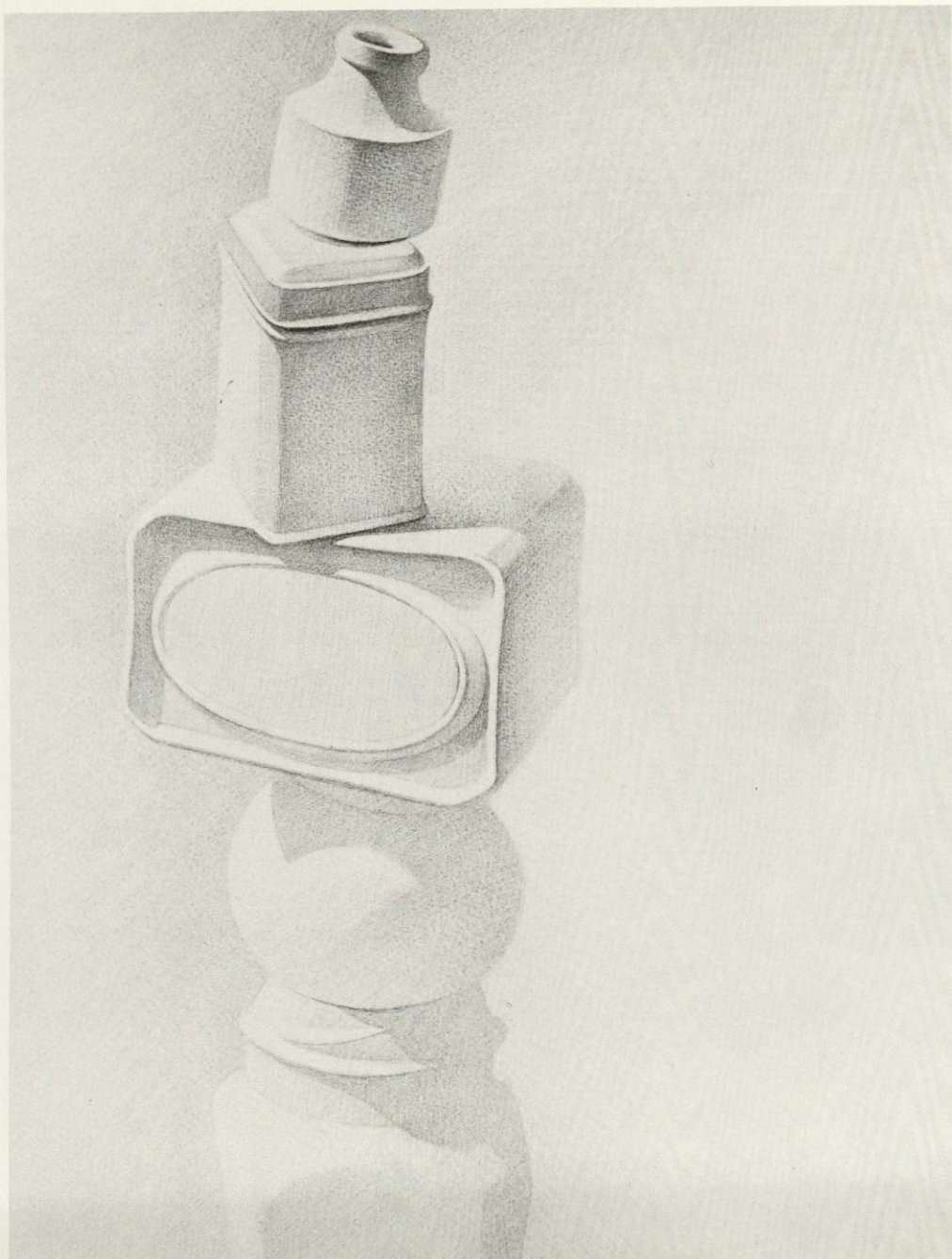
*Vessel Series I: Pandora's Box, no. 1* 1976  
Charcoal pencil/Arches cover; 14½ x 19





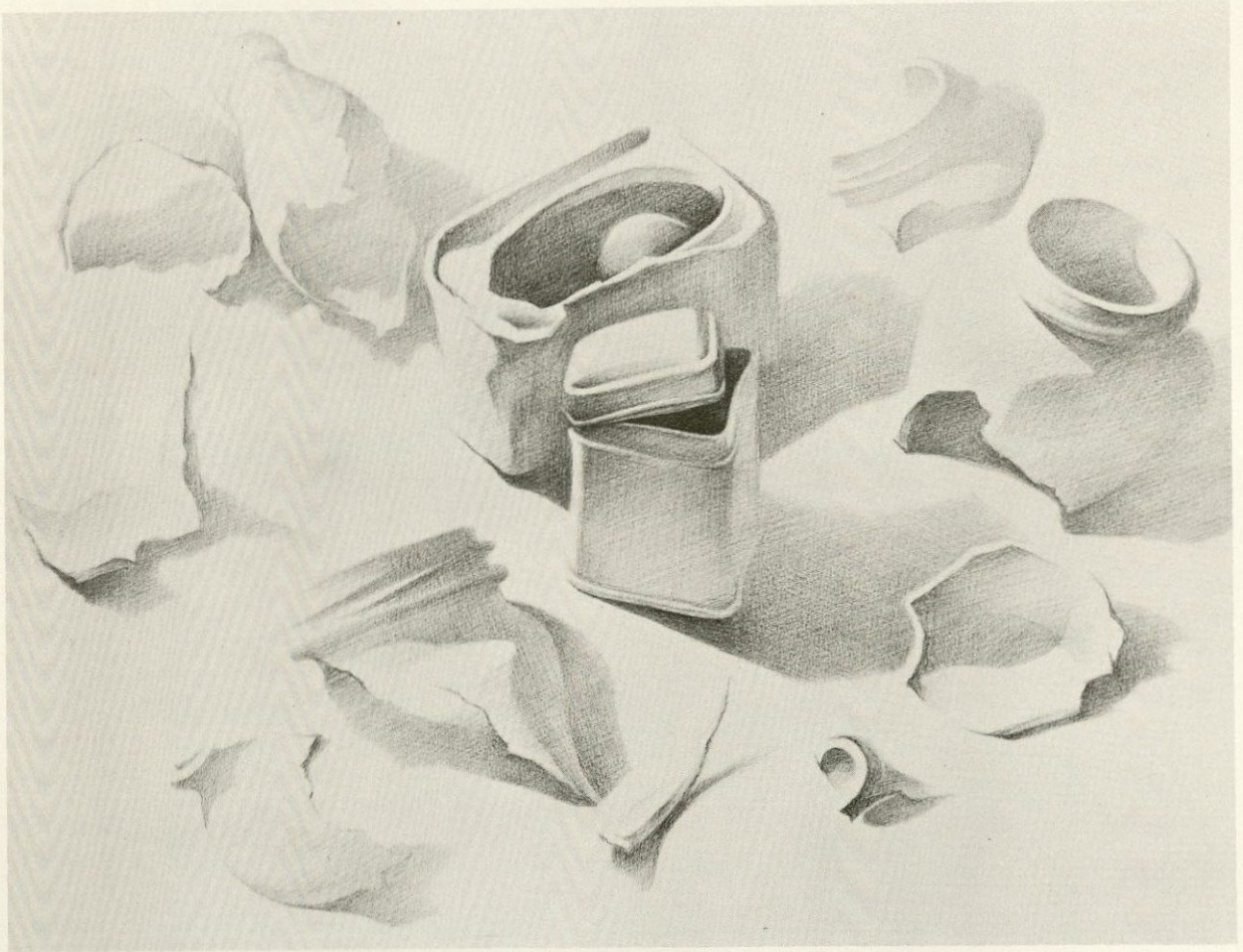
*Vessel Series IV: Union* 1976  
Charcoal pencil/Arches cover; 14½ × 19





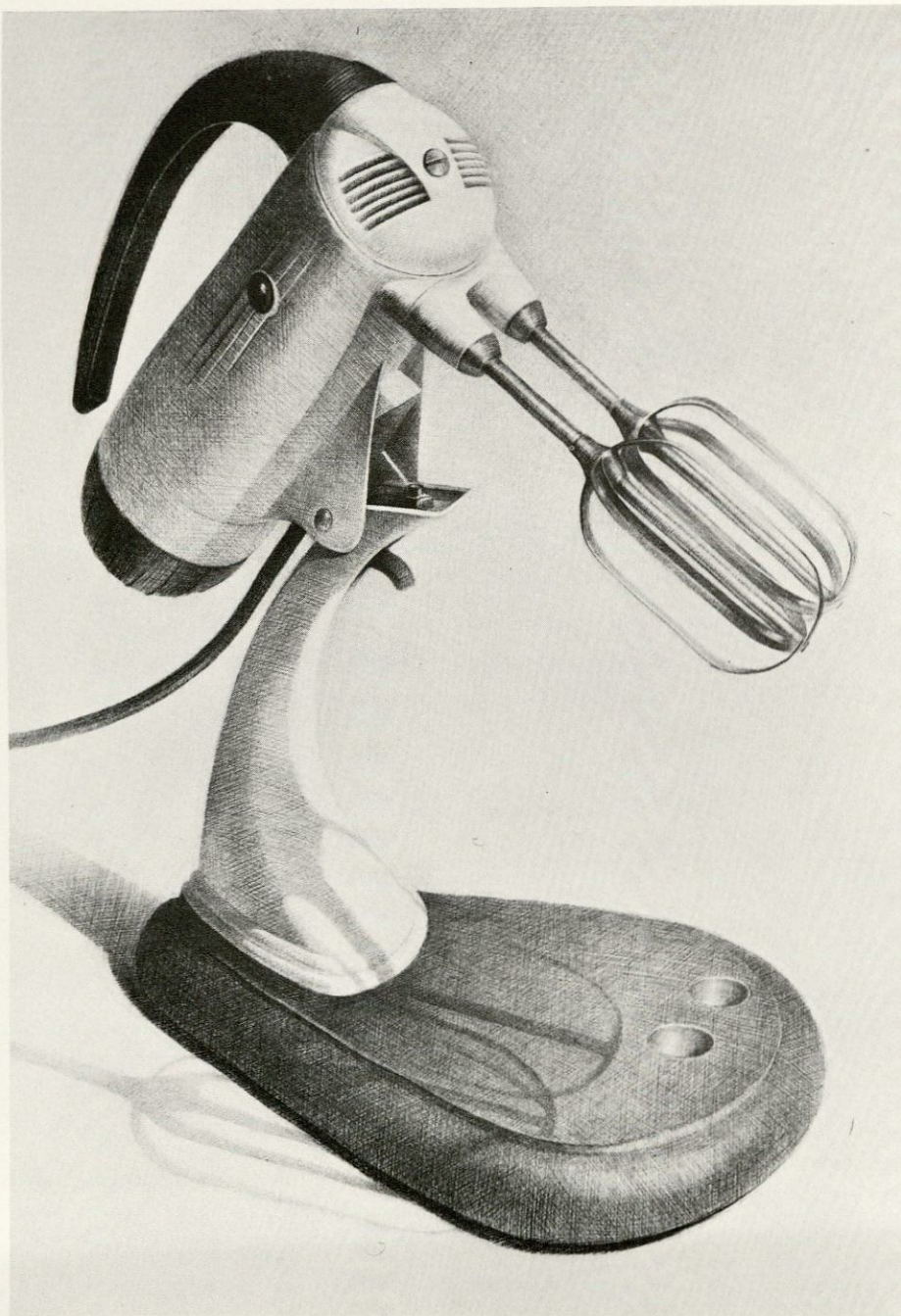
*Vessel Series VIII: Masterbuilder* 1977  
Charcoal pencil/Arches cover; 18½ × 14½





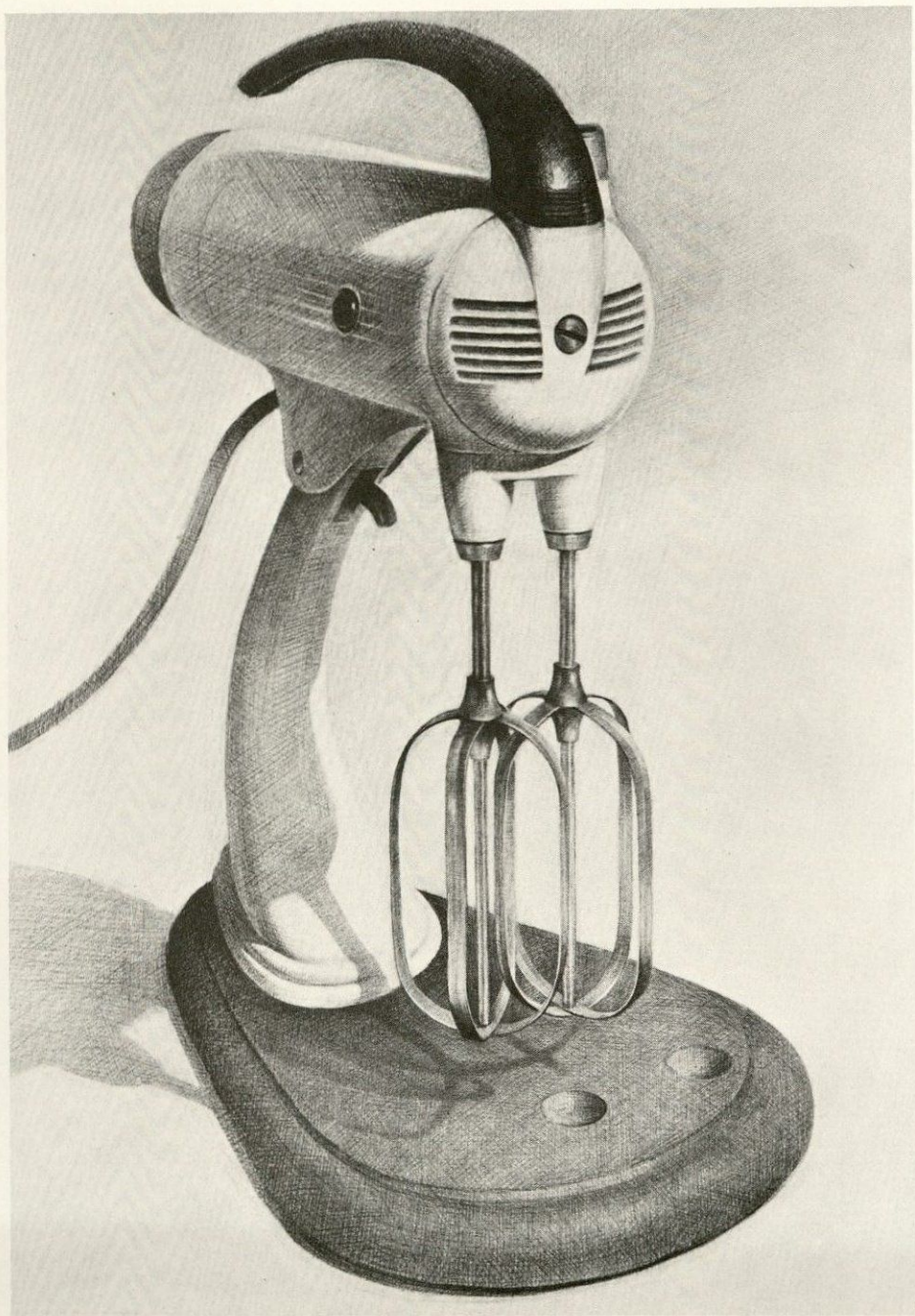
*Vessel Series XII: Pandora's Box, no. 2* 1977  
Charcoal pencil/Arches cover; 14½ x 19  
Coll; Quentin and Annabelle Joy





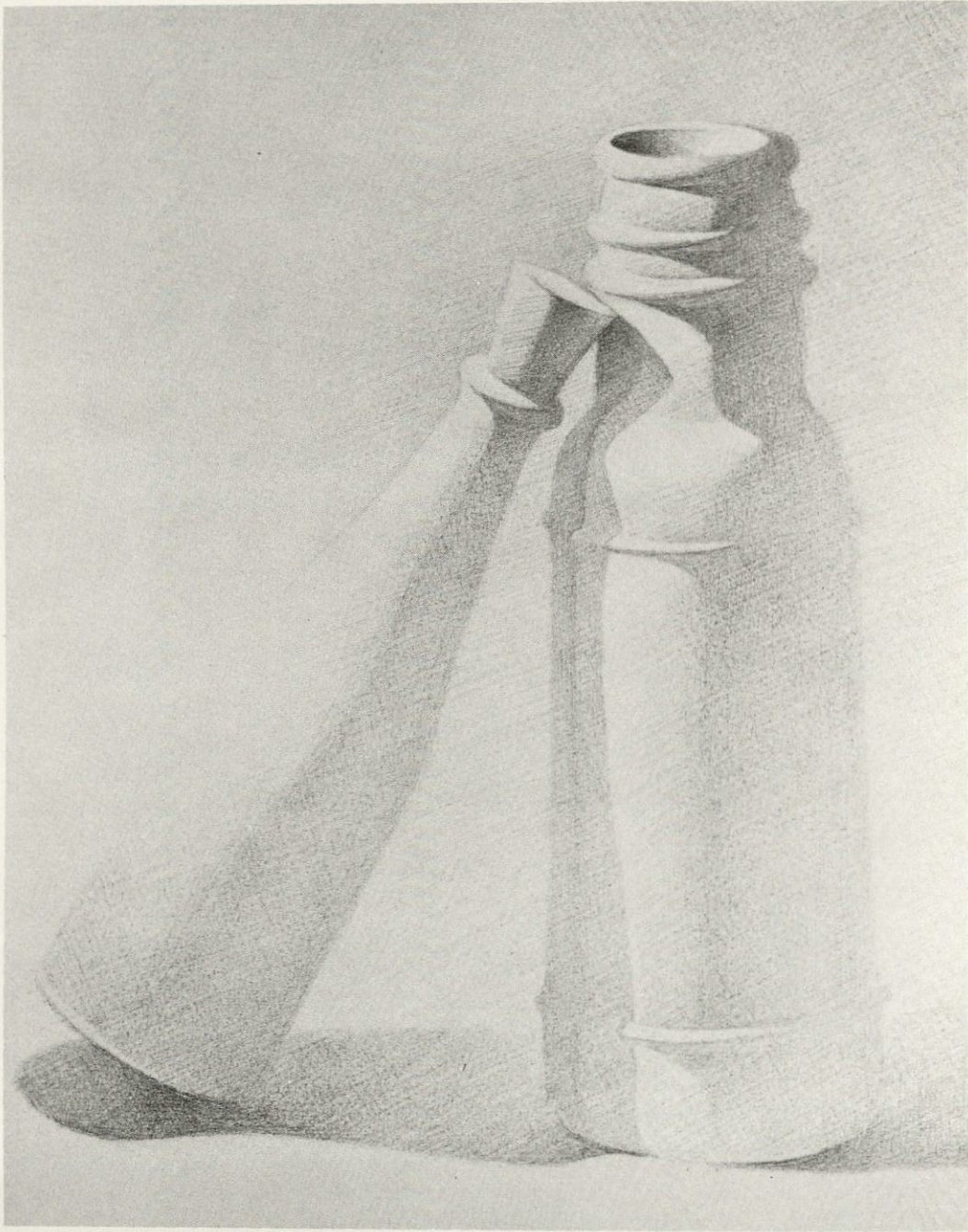
*Mixmaster II: Sunbeam, no. 1* 1982  
Graphite/Stratmore; 29 x 21





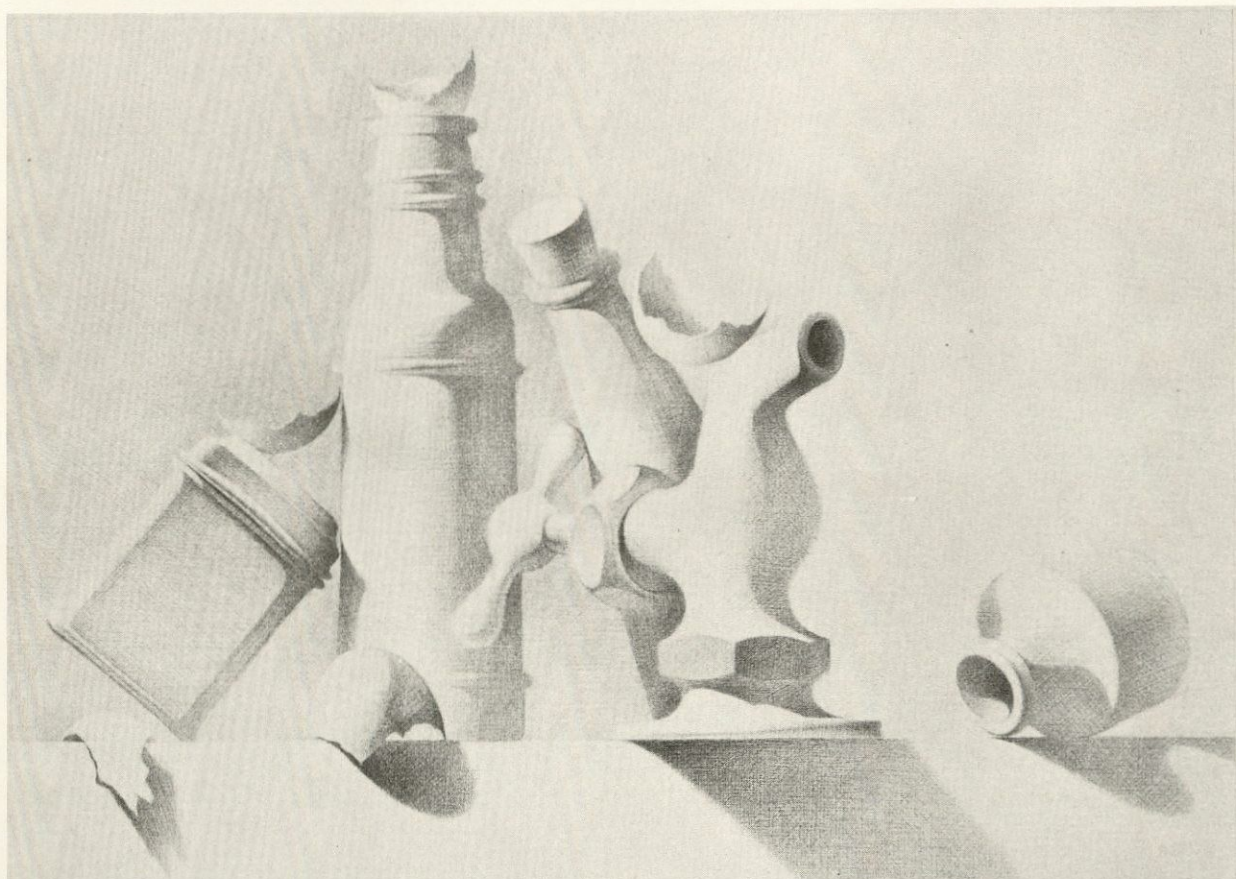
*Mixmaster II: Sunbeam, no. 2* 1982  
Graphite/Stratmore; 29 × 21





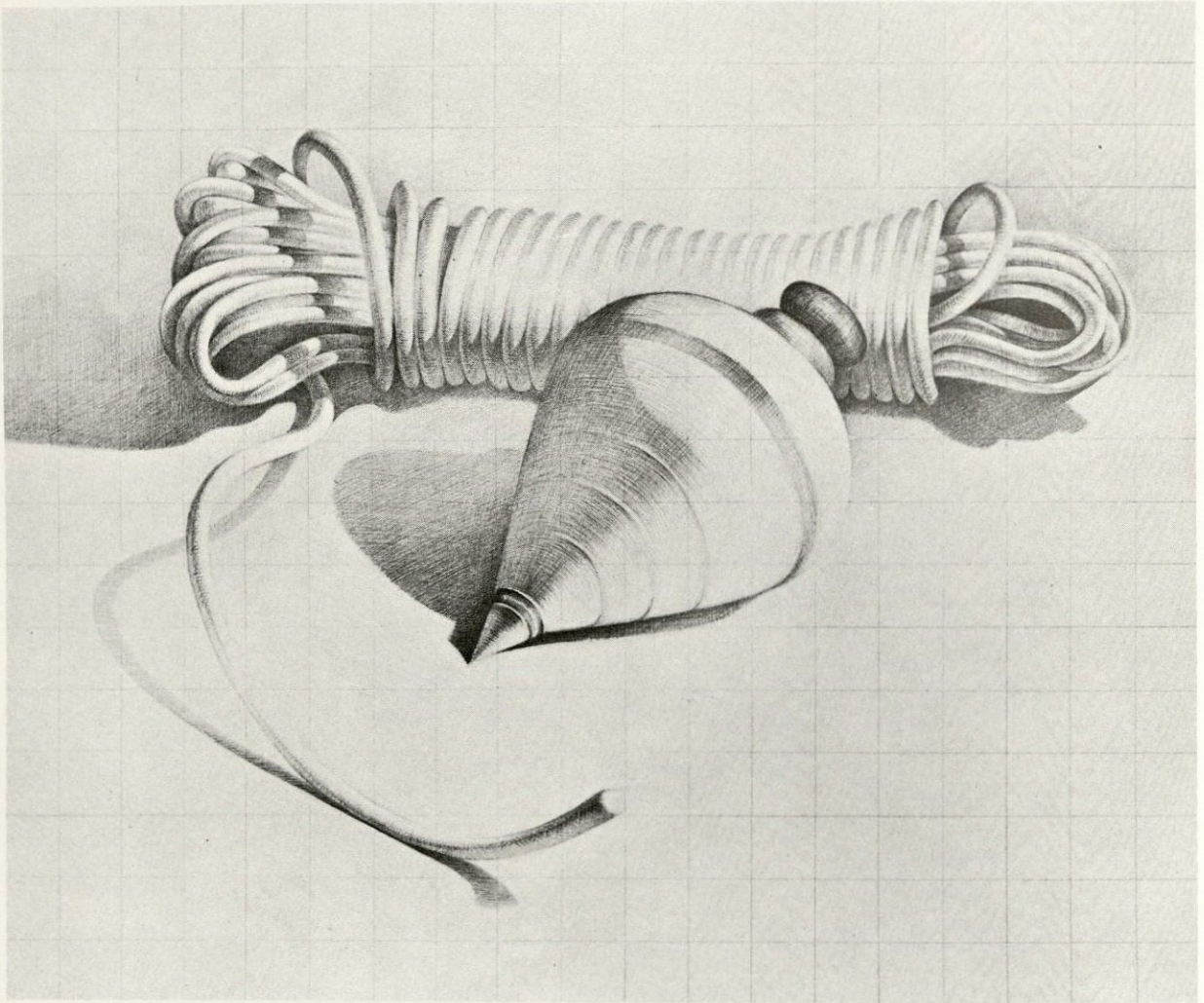
*Couple* 1977  
Charcoal pencil & graphite/Arches cover; 12 × 10  
Private Collection





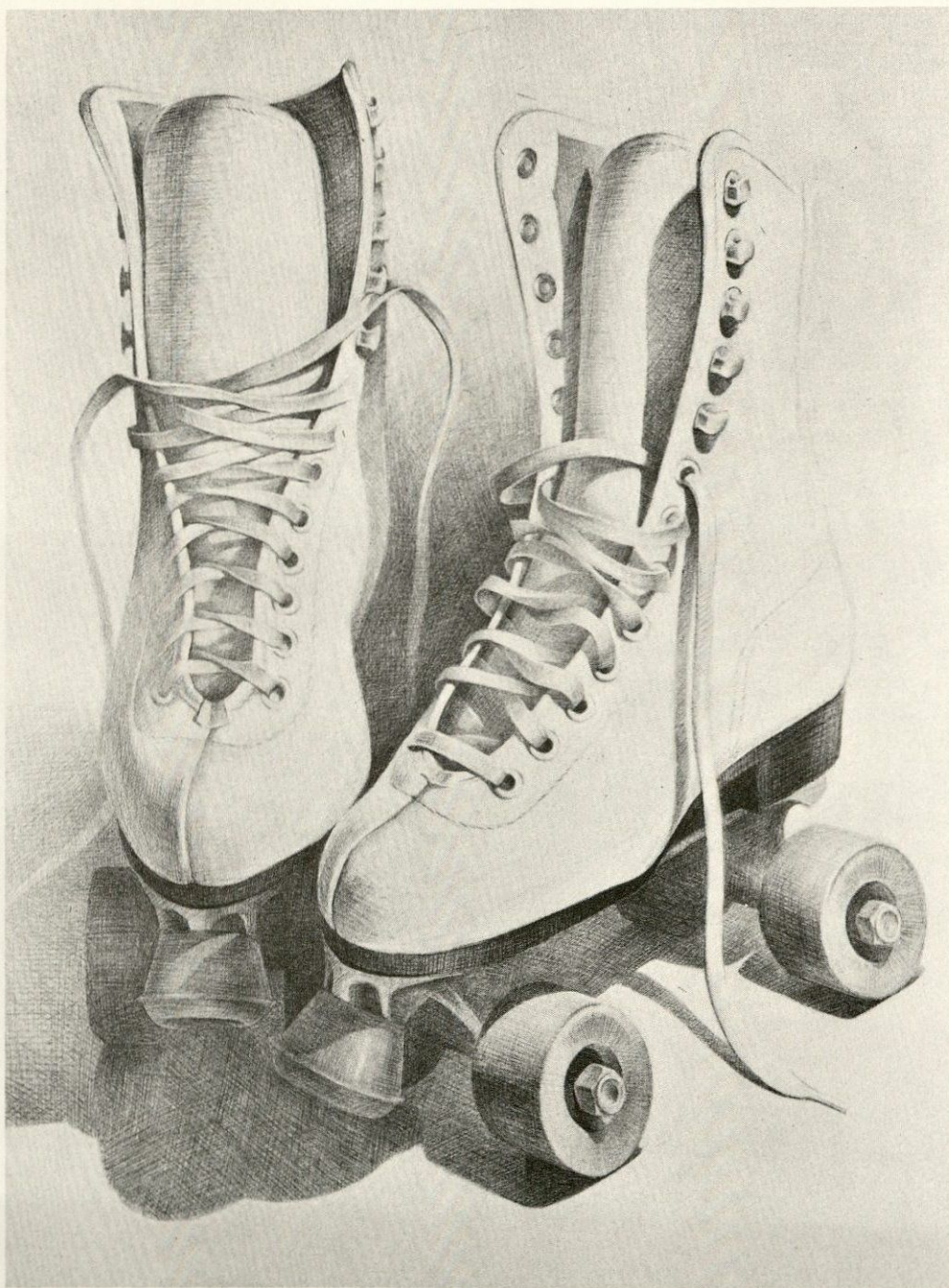
*Gathering* 1983  
Charcoal pencil/Arches cover; 20½ x 27





*Rope II: Games*  
Graphite/Stratmore; 16 x 19





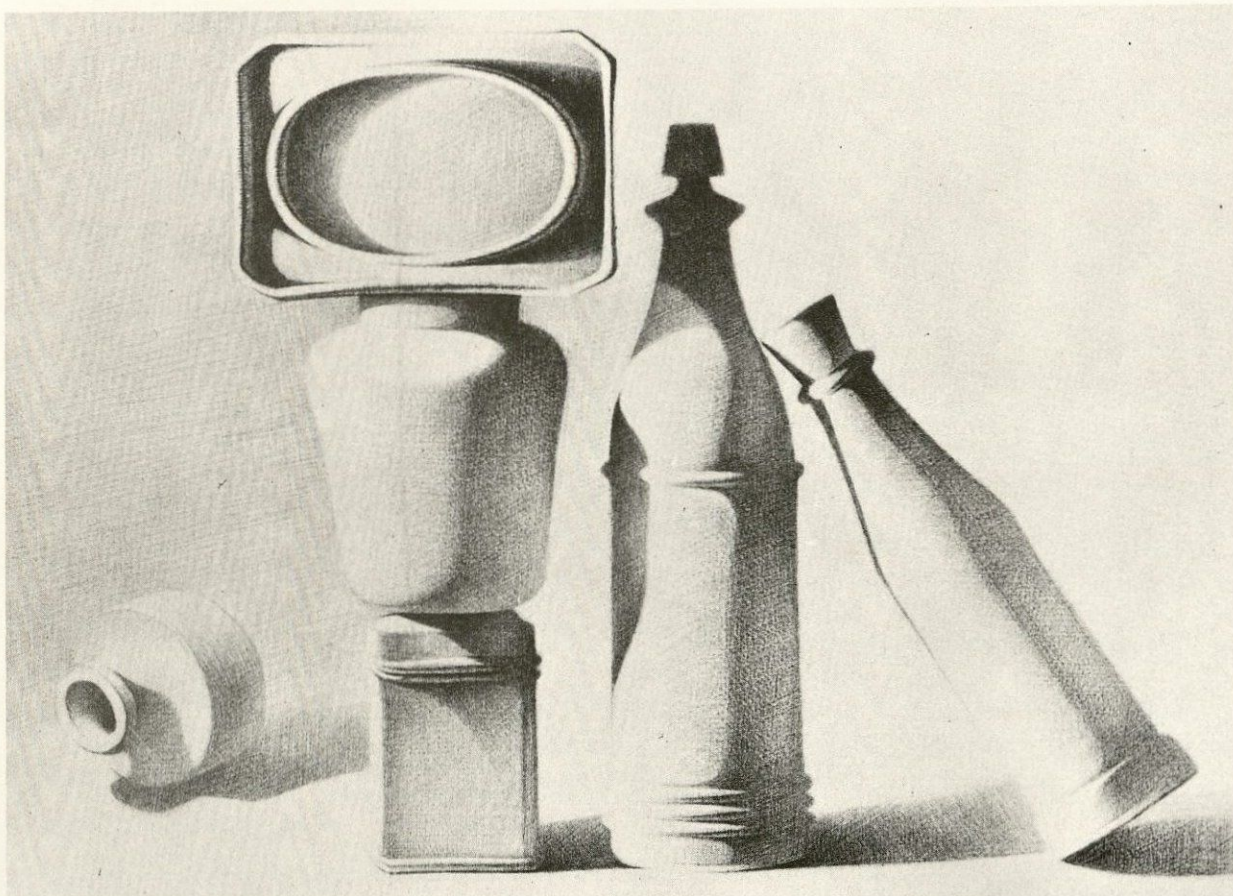
*Rollerskates* 1983  
Graphite/Stratmore; 26 × 20





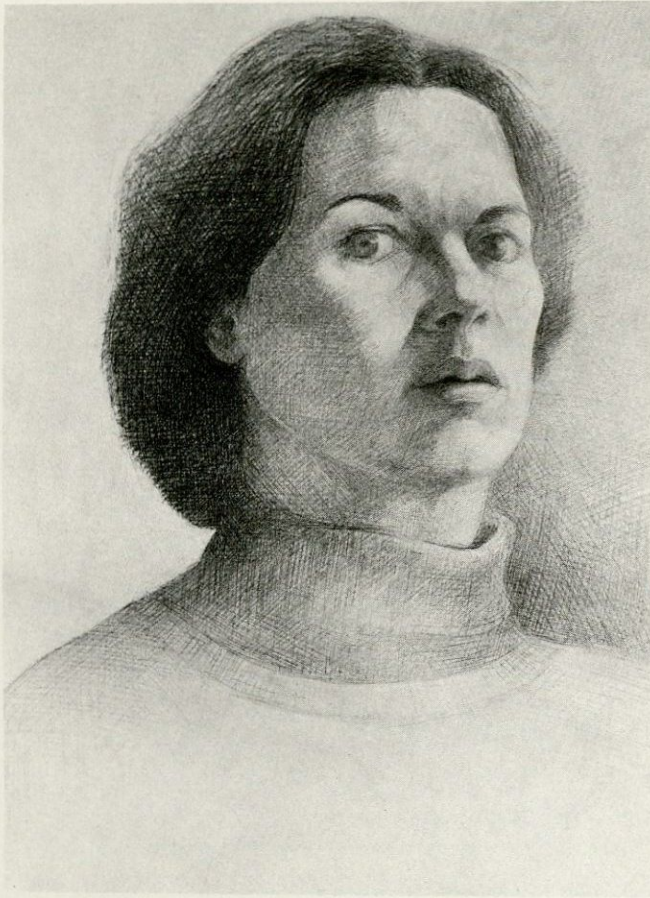
*Vessel Series III; Poet* 1976  
Charcoal pencil/Arches cover; 14½ × 19





*Vessel Series IX: Beacon* 1983  
Charcoal pencil/Arches cover; 14½ x 18





*Self Portrait* 1982  
Graphite/Stratmore; 21 × 16

### **BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

- Born:* Oakland, California, 1950
- Studied at:* Santa Rosa Community College  
University of California, Davis  
State University of New York at Binghamton
- Studied with:* Wayne Thiebaud  
Don DeMauro