

THE COMPANION WORKS

A NOVEL SERIES
OF DRAWINGS
PROVIDES
CONSIDERABLE
DETAIL ABOUT
AN EVEN LARGER
BODY OF WORK

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The Companion Works series was started while I was also working on several groups of sculpture, paintings and drawings based on grids and lattices in the late seventies including the Lattice Systems and the Color Tubes (sculpture), the Fabric Works (paintings) and the Line Grids (drawings). The name for the series came about for obvious reasons; they were accessory to the development of other groups of work. I think they are important because they contain basic concepts and ideas that have continued to show up in my work with grids and lattices ever since.

The series got started quite by accident. The Line Grid drawings were being done on board and because there were pieces of it around, I found it convenient to use them like a notebook or clipboard to do calculations, blot my line-making tools and sketch ideas about how the larger works might look. Eventually I noticed that the patterns and configurations of the calculations, blots, test marks and spills were, in and of themselves, interesting so I decided to try to confine such future scribbles to a specific drawing format.

It took more discipline than I expected because I had to be at least careful enough to confine what I was doing to the specific spaces I had set aside. I did this primarily by taping a mask to a board and using it when I found the need to make notes or figure



Some of the Companion Works have names but most are identified only with the letters "AW" and the work's number in the series. Shown are *AW-26*, 1976 (left) and *AW-64*, 2000. All the image sizes are 7 x 10 inches and all are on board, canvas or paper in pencil, ink, acrylic, wax crayon, collage and incidental other mixed mediums and materials.

something out. In some works the masked area became a clean border surrounding a central exposed drawing area that occasionally became smudged and blurred. Most of the early images were deliberate but later works are more casual sometimes starting out as palettes or becoming subjects for experimental techniques and treatments. The early works are more like drawings and the later ones are more like paintings.

The mathematical computations found in many of the early drawings were done, for example, to determine the amount of materials I needed to buy or the appropriate widths of the grid elements and the distances between them, especially in the Lattice Systems series where the long boards were themselves tapered and where the spaces between them varied. In the early Color Tubes, I experimented with varied angles and distances be-

tween the members measured in serial progressions. In the drawings these show up as numbers in what appear to be cumbersome charts and tables and boxes. Some of the works also contain labels and text.

I drew tiny pictures of paintings and sculptures in an effort to decide how various colors might interact, how to otherwise place the images on the canvas or to assemble the elements into a final work. Many of the colored elements in the drawings are the acrylics, wax crayons and other mediums being used at the time. The Companion Works reveal many more concepts than I have been able to execute as full-scale works and they also serve as something of a chronology of much of the work I have done over the years. I discontinued the series in 1981 but started it up again in 1996 and continued it until the 100th one was completed in 2002. ❖