

# Nathan Brujis: Spirituality and the Subconscious



DR. BERNARD HELLER MUSEUM  
HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION  
NEW YORK

# Nathan Brujis: Spirituality and the Subconscious

January 30-June 26, 2025

Nathan Brujis was born in Lima, Peru in 1971, the grandson of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. He studied art and philosophy at Brandeis University and graduated from the American University, Washington D.C., with a master's degree.

He was awarded the Deborah Josepha Cohen Memorial Award for Excellence in Painting in 1992; the New York Studio School Faculty Award in 1994; and il Premio per la Pittura Lorenzo il Magnifico at the Florence Biennale d'Arte Contemporanea in 2001 and 2003. He has exhibited extensively in New York, Peru, and Italy, and now lives and works in New York. He is represented by Spanierman Modern Gallery.

His Jewish heritage is evident in his early work of the 1990s, seen here in *Menorah, Paracas, and the New York School, Adam and Eve*, and *Spirit Light Through the Temple Window*. In much of his work during the early 2000's through 2015, he experimented and produced drawings and watercolors on paper. His paintings created since 2020 are the result of an on-going act of discovery rather than a planned design. As Brujis works on a painting he thinks about the space, the colors, and their reactions to each other. And so, the painting grows, and becomes a whole. In art mirroring the power of the subconscious and the spiritual, his recent works speak to the artist's interest in the sciences and philosophy and how they intersect with and affect art.

Nancy Mantell, *Curator*

Susan H. Picker, *Assistant Curator*

## 1. Menorah, Paracas, and the New York School, 1996

Oil on canvas, 72" x 45"

(BACK COVER)

This window into Brujis's world portrays the disparate cultures that have been formative in the artist's life: Jewish, Peruvian, and American. A Peruvian paracas design frames a modernist menorah holding up an abstract representation of a man and a woman—an Adam and Eve. Paracas textiles are intricately woven textiles made by a pre-Incan people who lived on the south Pacific coast of the Andes about 2,500 years ago.

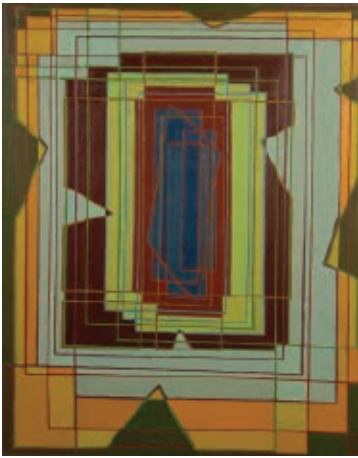
## 2. Adam and Eve, 1996

Oil on canvas, 22" x 36"

This portrayal of Adam and Eve is a further exploration of the artist's concept of the window. Brujis experiments with windows inside windows, creating depth and flatness at the same time. As the protrusions and indentations represent the transition from one space to another, Brujis depicts Adam and Eve creating the future through multiplication.



3  
—



### 3. Spirit Light through the Temple Window, 1997

Oil on canvas, 50" x 40"

Brujis experienced a white light coming through a window that seemed to push him back at his father's funeral. His father's company had manufactured the window. After this experience, he began arranging windows, or simple rectangles, in groups of three. They are inserted into each other to represent spiritual light in motion.

4  
—



### 4. Unification Theory—New Child, 2003

Oil on canvas, 60" x 70"

This painting brought many avenues of exploration together for Brujis, adding circles, triangles, and sails to the earlier rectangles. Eventually, the shapes became three-dimensional. In this work, mirror images abound: the window represents home, the shapes inside represent the family surrounding a child at the center. The artist says, "*Unification Theory* is about bringing Astro physics and quantum physics together into one coherent theory. In my work I allude to those concepts through art."

5  
—



### 5. Searching for Self, 2010

Mixed media on Indian hand-made paper, 12" x 16.5" each

These works were made at a transitional time in the artist's life, when he was searching to find himself as a person and artist, after suffering both a divorce and financial distress.

6  
—



### 6. The Flood, 2014

Mixed media on paper, 22.5" x 30"

During the period when the artist was struggling to redefine himself and his art, the geometry of his earlier work was increasingly replaced by abstraction.



7

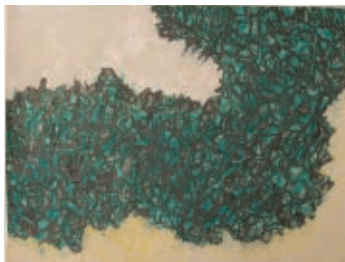


### 7. Creation, 2019

Mixed media on paper, 22" x 30"

In this work, Brujis returned to painting abstract geometric and biomorphic shapes.

8



### 8. Controlled Nature, 2019

Mixed media on paper, 18" x 24"

The artist's reaction to the world of chaos and restrictions created by the Covid-19 pandemic is expressed in this biomorphic work.

9



### 9. Inside the Mind, 2020

Oil on canvas, 95" x 78"

Brujis investigates the psychological effects of Covid-19 in this work. Conveying feelings of isolation and fear, there is also the freedom of expression that can come from being at the very edge of life and death.

### 10. Waves, 2022

Oil on linen on board, 11.5" x 25.5"

This work is a study of flowing energy, with the thrill of riding a wave in the ocean.

10

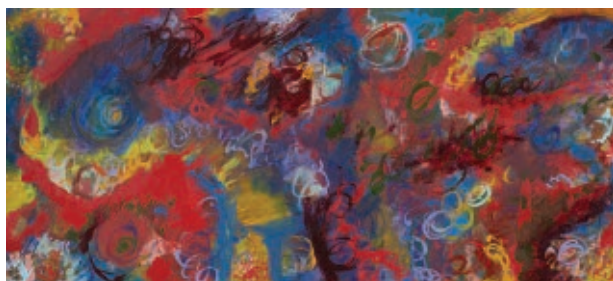


### 11. Entangled Gravity, 2022

Oil on linen on board, 11.5" x 25.5"

Created simultaneously with *Waves*, this work explores a similar chromatic scheme of warm color details on the cool hues of the water. Like *Unification Theory—New Child* it makes reference to the artist's ideas about the concept of a unified theory of physics.

11





12

## **12. Epic Journey through Space-Time, 2022**

Oil on linen, 49" x 66"

This work is part of the artist's new biomorphic pictorial language. According to Brujis, the painting is "like a birds-eye view of a landscape or a map of an adventure."



13

## **13. Never Again, 2023**

Oil on linen, 48" x 72"

The artist's reaction to the devastating events of October 7, 2023 is expressed in this painting. It conveys "never again" to the death, suffering, sadness, and shock experienced on that day.



15

## **14. Multiple States of Pictorial Matter in Conversational Metaphor, 2023**

Oil on linen, 6.5' x 8'

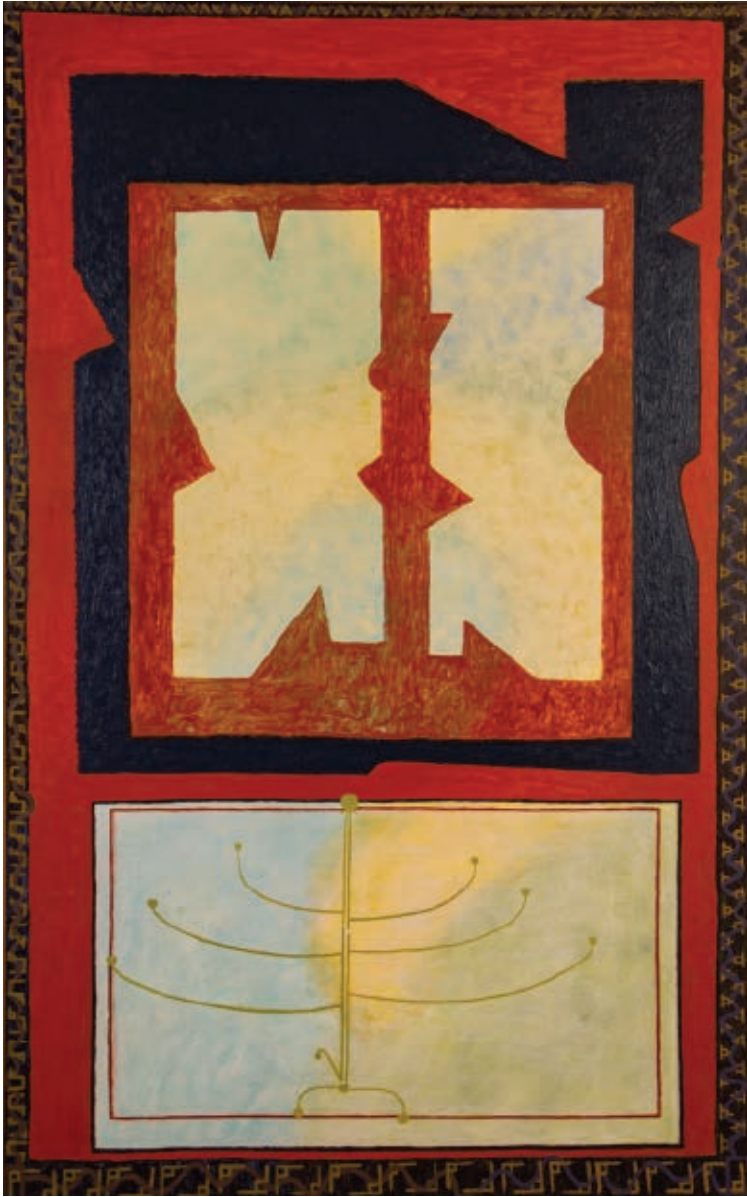
**(FRONT COVER)**

Brujis investigates the character of his "energy clusters." The clusters are in a night sky, and seem to be in conversation with each other.

## **15. Moonlit Celestial Surf, 2024**

Oil on linen, 24" x 36"

In this lyrical exploration of the ocean at night, moonlight allows the clusters to dance, break apart, and re-form.



Brookdale Center, One West Fourth Street, New York, NY 10012