

Checklist of Works

	26	25		
1	27	24		28
		23		
		22		
		21		
2	9-20			
	3		4	
8		□		5
7		□		6

1. **Cold Mountain (Forms)**, 1990
Ink on paper (Arches Satine)
22 1/2 x 28 inches
Collection Barbara and Richard S. Lane
2. **Group of Five, Cold Mountain**, 1988
Ink on paper (Twinrocker)
Each: 9 3/4 x 12 7/8 inches
Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery,
New York
3. **Cold Mountain 3**, 1989/91
Oil on linen, 108 x 144 inches
Courtesy Plane Image Inc.
4. **Cold Mountain 4**, 1989/91
Oil on linen, 108 x 144 inches
Courtesy Plane Image Inc.
5. **Cold Mountain 1 (Path)**, 1988/89
Oil on linen, 108 x 144 inches
Courtesy Thomas Ammann, Zürich
6. **Cold Mountain 5 (Open)**, 1989/91
Oil on linen, 108 x 144 inches
Courtesy Plane Image Inc.
7. **Cold Mountain 6 (Bridge)**, 1989/91
Oil on linen, 108 x 144 inches
Courtesy Plane Image Inc.
8. **Cold Mountain 2**, 1989/91
Oil on linen, 108 x 144 inches
Courtesy Plane Image Inc.
9. **St. Barts 1**, 1990
Ink on handmade paper
10 3/4 x 16 inches
Courtesy Plane Image Inc.
10. **St. Barts 2**, 1990
Ink on handmade paper
10 3/4 x 16 inches
Collection Ralph and Helyn
Goldenberg
11. **St. Barts 3**, 1990
Ink on handmade paper
10 3/4 x 16 inches
Private Collection
12. **St. Barts 4**, 1990
Ink on handmade paper
10 5/8 x 16 inches
Collection PaineWebber Group Inc.,
New York
13. **St. Barts 5**, 1990
Ink on handmade paper
10 3/4 x 16 inches
Private Collection
14. **St. Barts 6**, 1990
Ink on handmade paper
10 5/8 x 16 inches
Courtesy Plane Image Inc.
15. **St. Barts 7**, 1990
Ink and gouache on handmade
paper
10 3/4 x 16 inches
Private Collection

16. **St. Barts 8**, 1989
Ink on handmade paper
10 3/4 x 16 inches
Courtesy Plane Image Inc.
17. **St. Barts 9**, 1989/91
Ink on handmade paper
10 3/4 x 16 inches
Collection Linda and Howard
Karshan
18. **St. Barts 10**, 1989/91
Ink on handmade paper
10 3/4 x 16 inches
Collection Elaine and Werner
Dannheisser
19. **St. Barts 11**, 1989/91
Ink and gouache on handmade
paper
10 3/4 x 16 inches
Private Collection
20. **St. Barts 12**, 1989/91
Ink and gouache on handmade
paper
10 3/4 x 15 7/8 inches
Courtesy Plane Image Inc.
21. **Rain**, 1991
Ink on paper (Arches Satine)
25 7/8 x 34 3/8 inches
Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery,
New York
22. **Cold Mountain (Song)**, 1991
Ink on paper (Arches Satine)
25 7/8 x 34 3/8 inches
Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery,
New York
23. **Han Shan Goes to the Tropics**, 1991
Ink on paper (Arches Satine)
25 7/8 x 34 3/8 inches
Private Collection
24. **Third Study**, 1991
Ink on paper (Arches Satine)
25 7/8 x 34 3/8 inches
Courtesy Plane Image Inc.
25. **Bridge Study**, 1991
Ink and gouache on paper (Arches
Satine)
25 7/8 x 34 3/8 inches
Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery,
New York
26. **Forms 2, Cold Mountain**, 1991
Ink on paper (Arches Satine)
25 7/8 x 34 3/8 inches
Courtesy Plane Image Inc.
27. **Cold Mountain Series, Zen Studies
1-6**, 1991
Etching, aquatint, sugar lift aquatint,
spit bite aquatint, and scraping on
Whatman paper
Each: 21 x 27 1/2 inch, plate size
Each: 27 1/2 x 35 1/4 inches, sheet
size
Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery,
New York
28. **Cold Mountain Studies 1-35**,
1988/90
Ink and gouache on paper
Each 8 1/8 x 10 inches
Courtesy Plane Image Inc.

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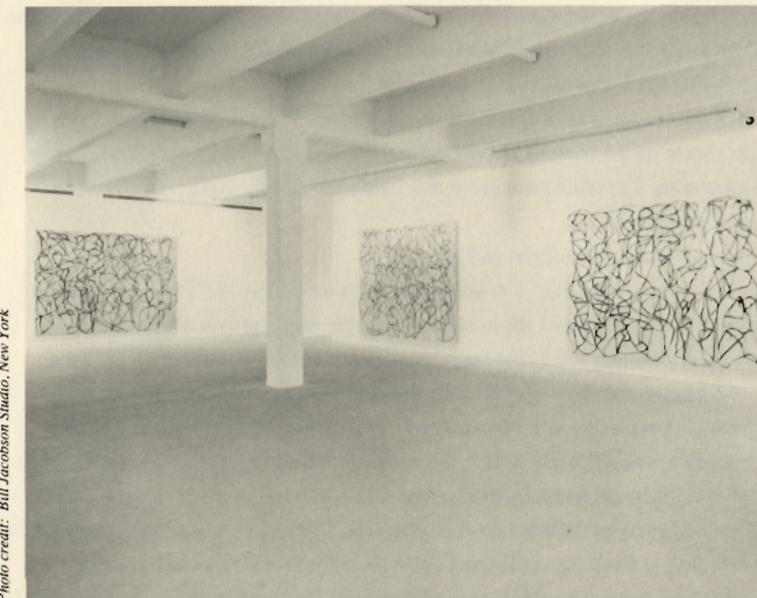
Cold Mountain

Photo credit: Bill Jacobson Studio, New York

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548 West 22nd Street New York City

BRICE MARDEN

AN INTERVIEW WITH BRICE MARDEN BY PAT STEIR

PS: *Tell me about your relationship to the book Cold Mountain. To the poet and the poems.*

BM: I was working with calligraphy, and looking at a lot of Chinese calligraphy. Getting poems by chance, I found the Red Pine translation at a bookstore. It has the Chinese characters and the translations in it. It was that form that I picked up on—four couplets, and five or ten characters per couplet. In the beginning I did drawings using the form that the poems take in the Chinese, then I started joining image and calligraphy, using the shape of the poem as a skeleton. I'm becoming more and more interested in the ideas of the Tao and of Zen. The Cold Mountain poems are very much about that.

PS: *I see in this work your interest in landscape.*

BM: These are not pictures of specific places or things. But yes, there is an interest in landscape. Some of the drawings have been started in front of landscape. Later I work them in the studio. There's a palm grove that I worked in, in St. Barts. The St. Barts drawings were started there.

PS: *Do you see these drawings as calligraphy?*

BM: It's not a form of writing. I'm *not* trying to make a language. I think of Chinese calligraphy as simply the way I see it, not knowing the language....But if someone translates a piece for me, and I hear the relationships I am affected by that. I use the form of calligraphy, then it disappears, but, it's always there, in some way. I start out with a formal structure—couplets or whatever. Then I take it from there. It's about joining things up, making relationships, but at the same time letting the drawing itself do the work. They start out with observation and then automatic reaction, and then back off, so there's layering of different ways of drawing. I'll start with, say, five characters to a line, three, four or five lines, and [then] I start joining or refining what I've done.

Maybe going back, again and again refining the image. I impose a kind of grid on it, and after a while it starts breaking out and becoming its own. Ideally, the drawing is working and I'm working with it. The drawings now look more like Chinese landscape and less like calligraphies. But then, who knows? I'm looking more at the Chinese. And I'm looking more at the landscape. Before I was looking at Greece. The only Western art I've been investigating has been Pollock. I used to not want to have anything to do with Oriental art or Asian art. I thought, I'm Western, I just can't understand a different philosophy. I guess that's one of the things about coming through middle age. You don't feel you have to restrict yourself anymore.

PS: *Do you think art carries some spiritual thread?*

BM: Definitely. In a way, Beuys was very helpful in clarifying a lot of that....The Abstract Expressionists were very good, but also, they were embarrassed to deal with those issues. If you accept certain unknowns, it becomes easy to accept an idea of the

spiritual. But you can't go about making spiritual painting. Say you're drawing a tree and you feel there's an energy there that is just not exactly what you're seeing, you try to get some of that into the drawing, whatever you call it. I think one of the things art does is lead you to forget the rules. So it isn't only pedagogical. It really takes you back to yourself. That's really important. That's my involvement with making art. [For me, drawing's] an intimate medium. It's very direct, it's very close. There's less between the artist and the art. There is real closeness, direct contact. A painting is about refinement of image. And drawing isn't. I don't think drawing is less than painting.... I love the kind of layering I can do. A lot of those drawings were about moving from place to place. Staying in one place one night, and drawing the tree, and then the next day going some place and just sitting in a hotel room, I would draw a seashell on the same drawing, and then go back into it and draw another tree. Just layering all those observations. The less you have between you and what you're making the better. The best drawing instruments are the ones where you are what your hand is. When the hand moves with the least resistance. In a way, pencil is much less resistant than a brush.

PS: *Tell me how you started to draw with sticks, and why you use them now.*

BM: There was always something about a picture of Matisse working on drawings for his chapel. I think he made them with charcoal attached to bamboo. By getting farther away, with a delicate instrument,...in a way it becomes closer: the slightest move is reflected. There's also accident, and I use it. That's the Abstract Expressionist thing. That's really part of the whole vocabulary—my whole vocabulary. I think that's a very important point. What one is physically...I am 5' 8 1/2", and I weight this much, and I am left-handed, and I'm a certain age. That has a big effect on what the thing looks like. The kind of mark I can make physically. If everybody tried to draw the same line, they just couldn't do it.

I keep finding I want to work with longer and longer sticks, to get further and further away, and to get a different swing into the drawing. Instead of using fingers and wrists, I want to have a little bit more arm and shoulder. But I find that painting doesn't have the fluidity that the drawing has. And that's always, to me, the battle, to get fluidity into the painting.

PS: *For some ancient Chinese landscape painters the task was to become a medium for Nature.*

BM: To me, one of the greatest twentieth-century statements is Pollock's saying "I am Nature." I mean, that is so hard to deal with, in terms of working from Nature....

What happens in the paintings is I'll paint, then I'll paint things out, make corrections by painting out with white paint. The paintings, in a funny way, are very realistic, because there's no way I can take anything out. The things that get painted out suddenly become images on their own. I erase with the gouache, but then that starts becoming an image itself.

PS: *I love the fact that I can see everything you did and that nothing was hidden.*

BM: Yes, it's funny. They are quite organic in their way...

PS: *Do you think that sometimes drawings are about grace and paintings are about hard work.*

BM: Yeah. It's like air and dross. A painting, you know, it's all dirty material. But it's about transformation. Taking that earth, that heavy earthen kind of thing, turning it into air and light. The transformation, you know, that's what it's about. Working on these paintings there's always an idea which is an ideal. It's always impossible....But I think every time, maybe, I just get closer to some impossible thing....

PS: *Why do you make the etchings? How do the etchings relate to the drawings?*

BM: Etching, you know, has a more physical resistance to it than drawing. For me etching becomes something between drawing and painting. I like to work etchings along with the paintings. Things have happened in the etchings that have gone back into the paintings.

PS: *Most people think your work is beautiful. Is the beauty of the object a consideration for you?*

BM: I really relate to form. If the form is resolved, it's beautiful. The idea of beauty can be offensive.

PS: *What do you mean?*

BM: Maybe beauty is too easy. It doesn't deal with issues; political issues or social issues. But an issue that it does deal with is harmony....One of the reasons I wanted to do this work was that by using the monochromatic palette in the past basically all I could get were chords. I wanted to be able to make something more like fugues, more complicated, back-and-forth renderings of feelings.

Adapted by Lynne Cooke from the interview in *Brice Marden Recent Drawings and Etchings*, Matthew Marks Gallery, New York, 1991.

Selected Bibliography

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Brice Marden, New York: Dia Center for the Arts and Houston: Houston Fine Arts Press, Text by Brenda Richardson, forthcoming.

Brice Marden was born in Bronxville, New York, October 15, 1938. He currently lives in New York City and Hydra, Greece. Since his first solo exhibition in 1964, he has exhibited widely, in numerous shows.