The m x n Series Charles West superamanojaku@gmail.com

When I was in my senior year of high school, the final assignment of the art majors was to come up with your own idea and execute it from start to finish. Many students struggled with the total freedom, but I didn't. In fact, I liked the idea so much that, in between high school and heading off to college, I gave myself another "assignment" as we called them back them.

The year was 1986, and the assignment I gave myself was to draw the universe. Because everything in the universe was not known or discovered at the time, nor could it be drawn in my lifetime even it was, I made the immediate artistic choice that my universe would be an abstraction of the real one. Even though it was an abstraction, I felt that this drawn universe should have many of the same characteristics as the "real" one. I saw this as a kind of truth if the model behaved similar to real thing. One characteristic I was concerned with above all others was infinity because, at that time, I mistakenly thought that the universe. What I arrived at was not a definition per se so much as a reduction of the universe. It is either One Thing and Everything Else in the universe, or More Than One Thing and Everything Else in the universe, then I would have a working model of the universe as I had defined it.

The One Thing would be expressed by one dimension, m, and Everything Else in the universe would be expressed by the dimension, n. My choice of letter designations was totally arbitrary. I was just trying to avoid the usual x and y or a and b. On a grid of one by one, I would show the relationship of m to n and n to m. The bold lines are one to one correspondences on the grid m to m, and n to n. I simultaneously imagined the $m \ge n$ Series to be 2D paintings (they were drawn to a 1:1 scale) and 3D sculpture and 4D computer images. In 3D, the bold lines are extruded into the 3rd dimension.

I showed the drawings once in 1987 to less than positive "criticism". One person said that I was a Martian. Another said the series looks like Mondrian's famous paintings. I've always thought that a room full of these paintings at the intended scale would make quite an impression as would the complexity of the sculptures. As for Mondrian, I suppose it was nice to be mentioned with him, although it was probably a backhand compliment as if I were derivative of him somehow. I've always thought the comparison was uninformed as I was not influenced by him at all and my work doesn't have any color squares and rectangles. The Mondrian paintings I saw were also quite small in scale.

m and n, once given values, generates everything about the painting. These drawings are all studies for paintings. The numbers you see on the drawings were guidelines for myself to avoid confusion in drawing the pattern of bold lines.

Initially, I would go to the few places in New York that I thought would be interested in my work and I learned the hard way that the art world does not nurture talent (quite the opposite). Still, I've never given up on my work and I occasionally stroll the Internet to see if there was ever anything similar to what I had created. Slowly, it occurred to me to look for forums where I could finally show my work.

I'm pleased that the Internet has finally given me an opportunity after all these years to finally show this work to a wider audience. The world has changed so much in the 27 years since I created this series that I don't even know how I would execute the paintings or what materials I would use for the sculpture today.



m×n series n=4 n=5

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M×n SERIES M=9支 N=2



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m=6 n=3







MXN SERIES M=5 N=7





mxn SERIES m=≩ 4 PANELS MISSING n=⊥ D m×n SERIES 3-D le4 h=5 w=3





mxn Series 3-D 1=4 h=5 w≈3 m×n SERIES 3-D l=4 h=5 N=3











MXN SERIES GROWING M=5 N=3





mxn SERIES GROWING m=6 n=6 man series growing m=g n=3









MXN SERIES TOROID M=S A=2





m x n Series Big Bang Type, m = 3, n = 4



m x n Series Radian, Big Bang Type, m = 3, n = 2

