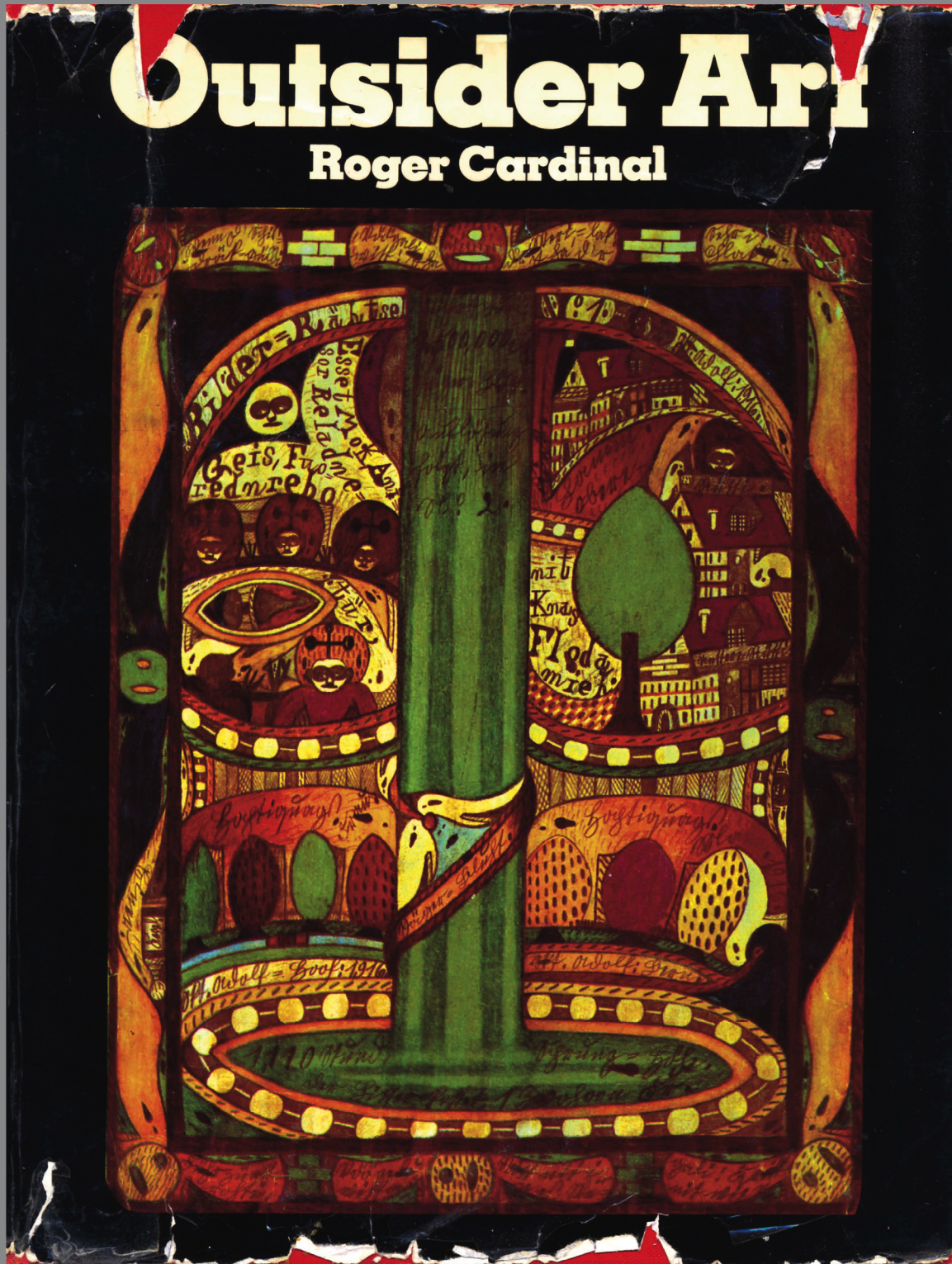


RAWVISION

O U T S I D E R A R T B R U T



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CARLO ZINELLI, RECTO VERSO

Collection de l'Art Brut, Lausanne, Switzerland
September 19, 2019 – February 2, 2020

For their inventive use of colour and form; their intriguing, stylised motifs; and the deeply personal, often impenetrable significance of their complex compositions, the gouache-on-paper paintings of Carlo Zinelli (1916–1974) long ago earned this Italian autodidact, who is also known simply as “Carlo,” a special place in the canon of *art brut*’s definitive créateurs.

With this substantive exhibition, this leading museum in its field is displaying all of its Zinelli treasures. Organised by staff curator Anic Zanzi, “Carlo Zinelli, recto verso” showcases those in which the artist used both sides of each sheet of paper that served as a support surface.

The Collection de l'Art Brut’s holdings of Zinelli’s works are the largest of any collection anywhere in the world. This exhibition presents 98 pieces, most of which bear images on both their front (recto) and back (verso) sides. In a few instances, instead of painted motifs, one side of each of several seemingly experimental pieces is covered with collaged, repurposed cigarette packets to create grid-like compositions. They derive their aesthetic energy from the

graphics of those printed wrappers.

Specially designed display racks allow visitors to closely inspect each side of each featured artwork; paintings are hung together in clusters so that the concentration of each grouping echoes the densely packed character of many of Zinelli’s compositions. Viewers may closely examine these cleverly mounted works and, figuratively speaking, step right into their pictorial space.

Zanzi has arranged the paintings on view in a chronological manner that allows the evolution of Zinelli’s art through several discernible phases to come into focus. In his earliest works, the artist used primary- and secondary-colour palettes and began filling his pictures with multiple motifs. Later, he extracted and enlarged some of those recurring elements, making them the central subjects of certain compositions. In time, bold colour gave way to the use of black alone, against white backgrounds, along with the appearance of unintelligible handwriting that functions as a strong graphic element within configurations of silhouetted human and animal forms, bicycles, and other vehicles and objects.

Along with its handsome catalogue, this illuminating exhibition, which introduces fresh research about Zinelli’s life and art, calls sharp attention to the sophistication and purposefulness of his creative approach.

Edward M. Gómez