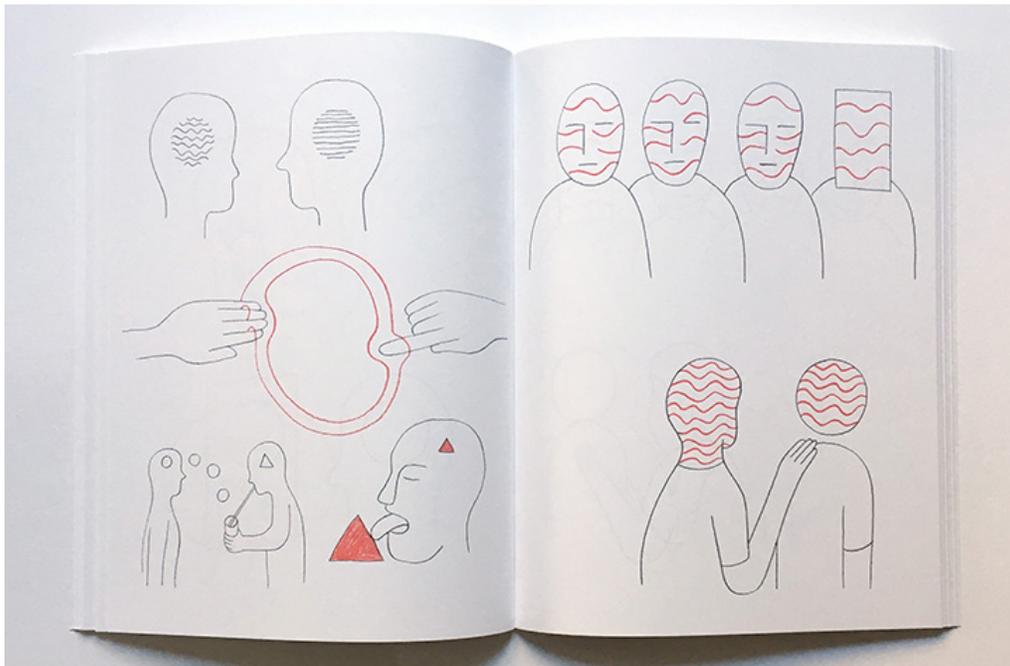


# It's Nice That

Joshua Liner Gallery

“I’m a believer in form’: Geoff McFetridge on his new book of introspective drawings”  
By Matt Alagiah / December 11, 2018

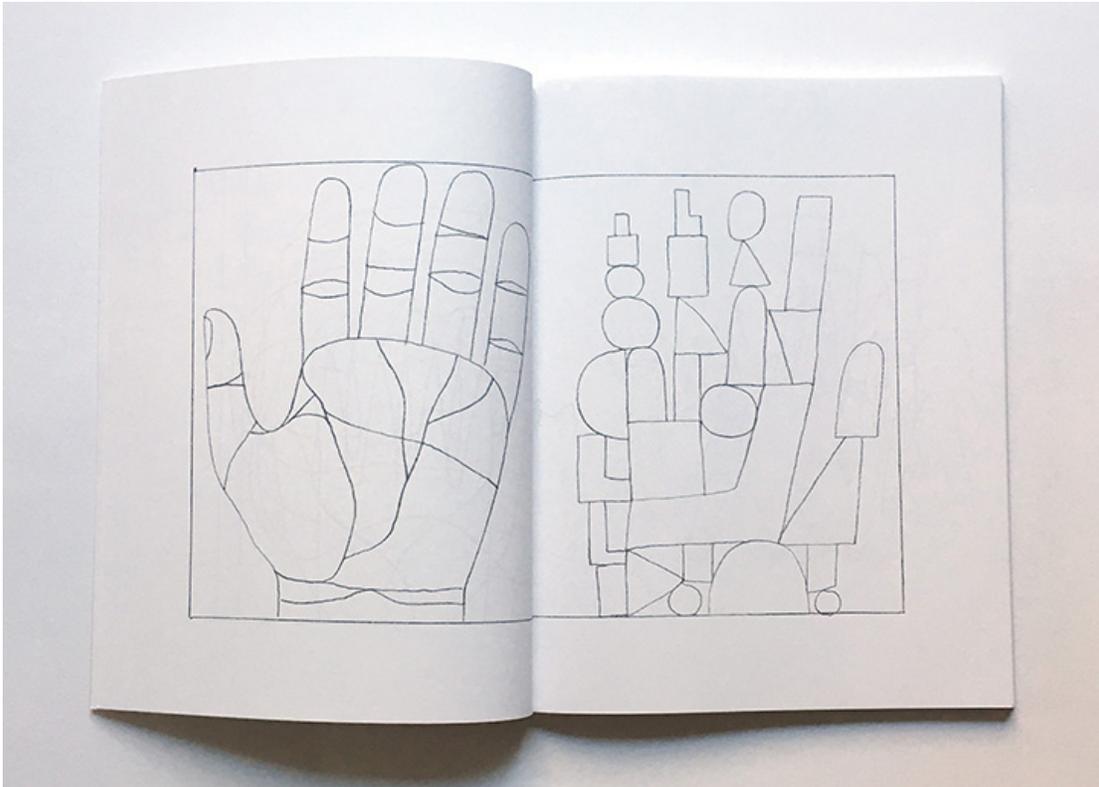


Geoff McFetridge: Coming Back Is Half The Trip

Anyone who knows Geoff McFetridge’s work will know that his unique use of colour is often what makes his paintings particularly striking. Yet it turns out that reaching that final expression actually takes a lot of work involving very little colour at all. “The process for making the paintings involves doing a lot of work on paper,” the Los Angeles-based artist tells us. “The images are developed on paper by doing many drafts of the same images. So once I start to paint I am no longer thinking about the image, the entire focus becomes about colour.”

Many of Geoff’s drawings have never seen the light of day – until now, that is. “I thought it would be interesting to show some of the piles of drawings in my studio,” he says. “To show how I conceive of work through drawing.” So he’s produced a book with Swiss publisher Nieves called *Coming Back Is Half The Trip* that sheds light on this aspect of his creative practice and reveals the process behind some of his most thought-provoking paintings and sculptures. “I have had a hard time including the drawings in shows, so a book is a nice way for them to be seen,” he says.

Do these sketches have a life of their own without reference to the larger works they developed into? “What is often good about the drawings is that they are unlike the paintings,” he says. “The paintings have obviously been put through a vice-like process of refinement. So the drawings are a chance for some of the images to live in a less constricted way.”



And just as the paintings are often mostly about colour, so the drawings are focused on form. “I am a believer in form,” Geoff says. “I use form to get to places that I can’t get to any other way.” As in his work more generally, a couple of formal themes recur in these sketches. To take just one, figures and animals often stalk in circles around one another in his work. “Generally, I’m a circular thinker,” he explains. “I write in circles. I speak in circles. I like a thought that takes you somewhere new but is essentially inward looking. I use figures, and animals, like typography. They are more like pictograms, or Chinese letterforms than they are like actual things. The form made of letters is important to the poet, just as the poetry of form is important to me.”

Looking through the sketches collected and artfully printed in this book by Nieves, the question arises: Where does that name come from? Geoff gives us a clue: “I often find myself refining a painting and working it up in colour with the goal of making it as good as the drawing it is based on,” he says. “The drawings are sort of the summit and the summit is only half the trip.”