

# ESOPUS SPACE

THE ESOPUS FOUNDATION LTD.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **“Dwight Ripley: Travel Posters”**

**September 10 – October 24, 2009**

**Opening reception: Thursday, September 10, 6–8pm**

New York, NY (August 6, 2009): Esopus Space is pleased to present “Dwight Ripley: Travel Posters,” an exhibition of thirteen ink-and-colored-pencil drawings from 1962 by artist, poet, linguist, botanist, and arts patron Dwight Ripley (1908-1973).

Ripley is perhaps best known as the early financial backer of Tibor de Nagy Gallery, which debuted the work of Helen Frankenthaler, Larry Rivers, Alfred Leslie, and other pivotal artists of the '50s and '60s. With his companion, botanist Rupert Barneby, he was part of a wartime and postwar circle that also included Peggy Guggenheim, Clement Greenberg, and filmmaker Marie Menken. Ripley was noted in this circle for the wit of his poems and drawings, and his steadfast, pioneering use of colored pencil. Guggenheim presented his work at her famous gallery, Art of This Century, in 1946 and De Nagy mounted five shows of Ripley's drawings during the years 1951 to 1962.

Ripley's art was fed by a passion—shared with Barneby through their 48 years together—for rare and exotic plants. The couple traveled the world to find unusual specimens (they are credited with discovering 74 new plant species), many of which they collected to grow in celebrated gardens at their farmhouse outside Wappingers Falls, New York.

A collecting trip through Spain and Portugal in March 1962 served as inspiration for the “Travel Posters” series. Each drawing advertises a location on the couple's itinerary (stops in Aranjuez, at the Torcal de Antequera, in the Sierra Nevada). In elegant, overlapping longhand Ripley assembles each landscape from the scientific names of its indigenous plants. Underscoring his mastery of line and color are knowing, even playful nods to Surrealism and abstract art. Equally suggestive are the appropriation of a “hobbyist” medium—colored pencil—and the prescient intelligence of an environmentalism and eco-tourism to come.

Ripley never showed the drawings. They were discovered in a trunk 25 years after his death, and were unknown to the public until a single drawing was displayed at Poets House in 2006 and a selection **featured in *Esopus 11*** last fall. The series has never before been exhibited.

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*Esopus Space is an exhibition and performance venue operated by the Esopus Foundation Ltd., which also publishes **Esopus** magazine. It is open to the public Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 12-5pm, and also by appointment. For more information, **visit [esopuspace.org](http://esopuspace.org)**, send inquiries to **[info@esopuspace.org](mailto:info@esopuspace.org)**, or call Tod Lippy at 212-473-0919.*

## “DWIGHT RIPLEY: TRAVEL POSTERS”

SEPTEMBER 10—OCTOBER 24, 2009 AT **ESOPUS SPACE**



Dwight Ripley, *Loulé-Algarve*, 1962, ballpoint pen and colored pencil on paper, 20 by 14 inches



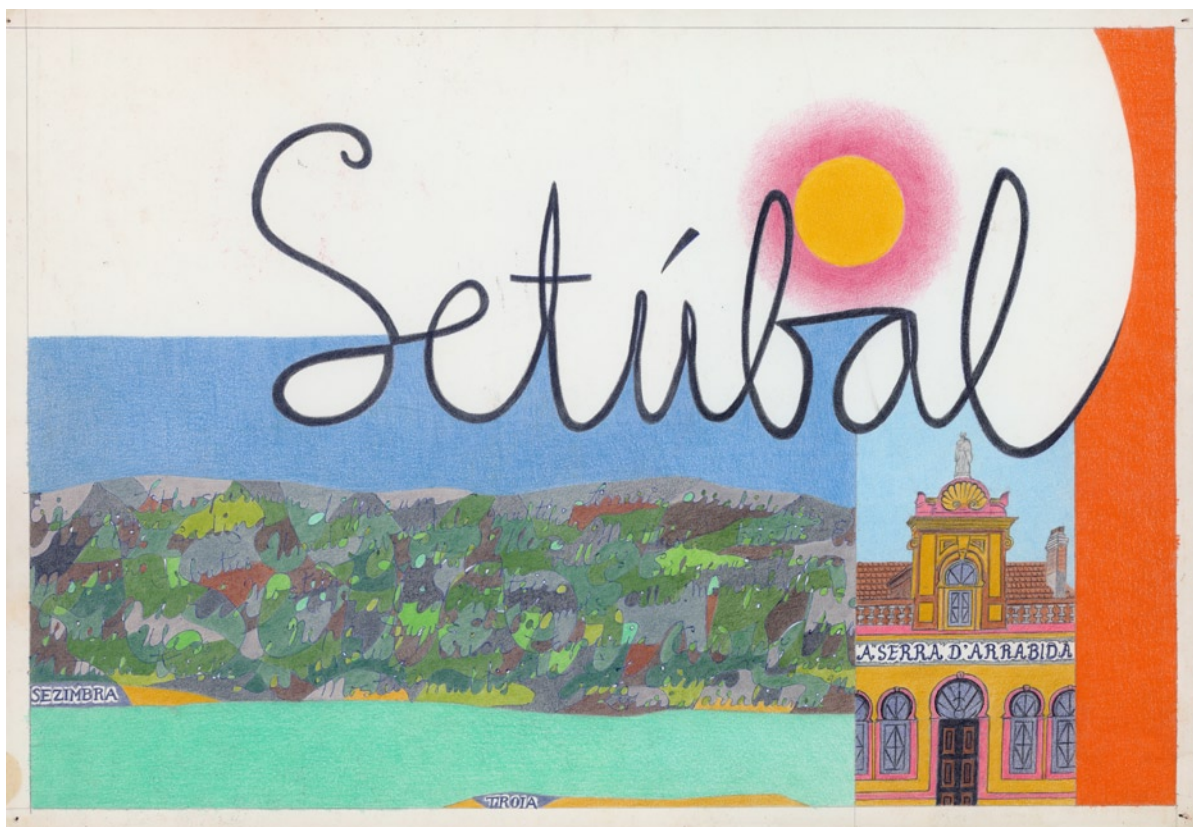
Dwight Ripley, *Monte Gordo*, 1962, ballpoint pen and colored pencil on paper, 20 by 14 inches



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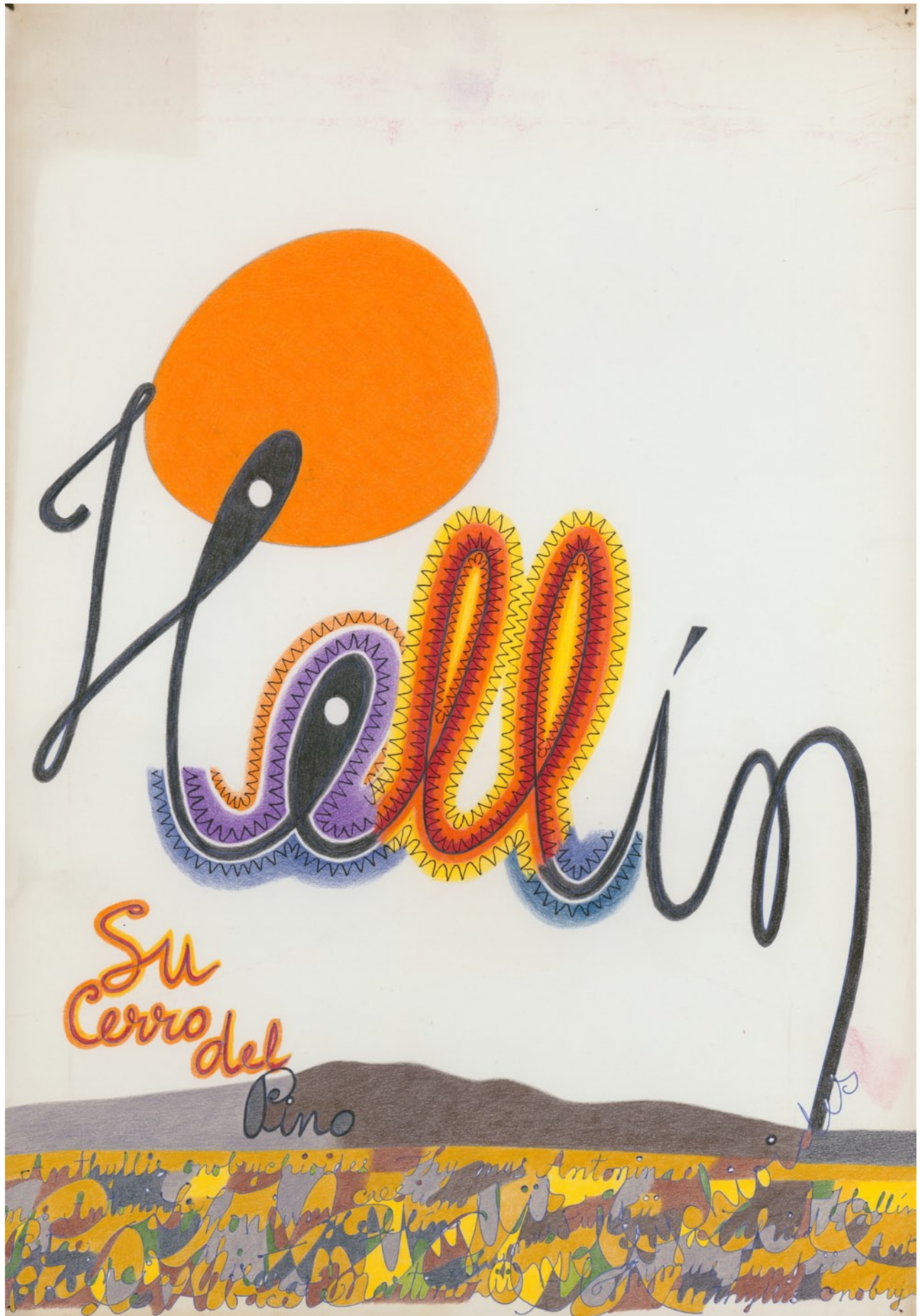


Dwight Ripley, *Torcal de Antequera*, 1962, ballpoint pen and colored pencil on paper, 20 by 14 inches



Dwight Ripley, *Setúbal*, 1962, ballpoint pen and colored pencil on paper, 20 by 14 inches





Dwight Ripley, *Hellín*, 1962, ballpoint pen and colored pencil on paper, 14 by 20 inches