



THE BOOK OF

# yes



## AN ARTIST'S ANSWER TO No

by Lorraine Schechter

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*Life has one ultimate message: Yes!  
repeated in an infinite number  
and variety.*

—George Leonard

**THE BOOK OF YES** is my answer to “no” and to all those inner and outer forces that would contain, restrict, silence or deny our authenticity and its fullest expression.

As an artist, I’ve rarely been without inspiration, but several years ago I found myself feeling aimless, looking for a focus for my mixed media paintings. I wanted my work to be more accessible to those who have difficulty relating to abstract art. I let my question simmer and got very quiet. Then, while hiking in the hills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in early spring, I had the idea of making paintings based on the word *yes*. They would be an answer not only to my conscious question, but also to my increasing awareness of the harmful nature of negative thinking. Filled with enthusiasm, I returned to the studio and began a drawing that changed my life.

I had already been exploring the use of calligraphic marks, and began turning these into the word *yes*. I repeated it in a different style, then in another color. I changed its size. Soon the whole page was dancing with a rainbow of *yes*-es. I continued to the next page and the next, and felt that inner click that said YES, and the foundation for my next body of work was laid. Each piece would include the word *yes* as either a calligraphic mark, the foundation for the design, or to develop texture. To keep the project fresh, I chose to risk doing something new with each page: a color I rarely used, a different way of forming the composition, or experimenting with surface textures. The images needed to be the same size (11” x 15”) to create a sense of consistency and relatedness.

As the pages continued and my investigations into *yes* deepened, I

made a commitment to do one page a day for one year and observe how it evolved. Fourteen months later I had a collection of 368 mixed media paintings, pages whose sequential and related images wanted to be seen together. I was invited to hang the pages as an installation at the Santuario de Guadalupe in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The exhibition was wildly successful and accessible, and led to collecting them into *The Book of Yes: An Artist’s Answer to No*, from which the images on these pages have been selected.

May they be a source of beauty, encouragement, pleasure, and inspiration for you.

