

# BEGINNER'S Mind

the art of the very small  
by Lesley and Solomon Maclean

**A WHOPPING TEN MONTHS** into his life and Solomon still doesn't know he's an artist. No impediment of course for his ever-determined mother who offers pen and paper as he sits on the floor chewing the side of a cardboard box. Much as he does with any other object within reach, Solomon takes the pen from me and waves it around.

I introduce a crisp sheet of white paper to intersect his playful investigations. Without a moment's hesitation, he fills the page with sudden jerky squiggles, excited jabs and several surprisingly confident signature-like marks. Not bad.

I cannot help but compare this to my own experiences in drawing—so often hammered down by a stern and mocking internal editor. It takes me hours of practice to produce anything close to the natural gestures my son has effortlessly produced. Of course Solomon doesn't know or care about this. He returns to his cardboard box.

Armed by this encouraging experience and already mentally framing my son's first series of works on paper, I produce, two days later, another sheet of paper and a crayon. Ten minutes later there are orange waxy chips spraying from his mouth and an empty page. Perhaps I'll wait a month or two.



Solomon Maclean, now 10 months old can handle his own art materials—thank you very much—but is more inclined to eat them. Paint is clearly out of the question.

Above: *My first drawing*, ballpoint pen on paper.