Art That Moves

The Evolution of Kinetic Art

Making Art Move

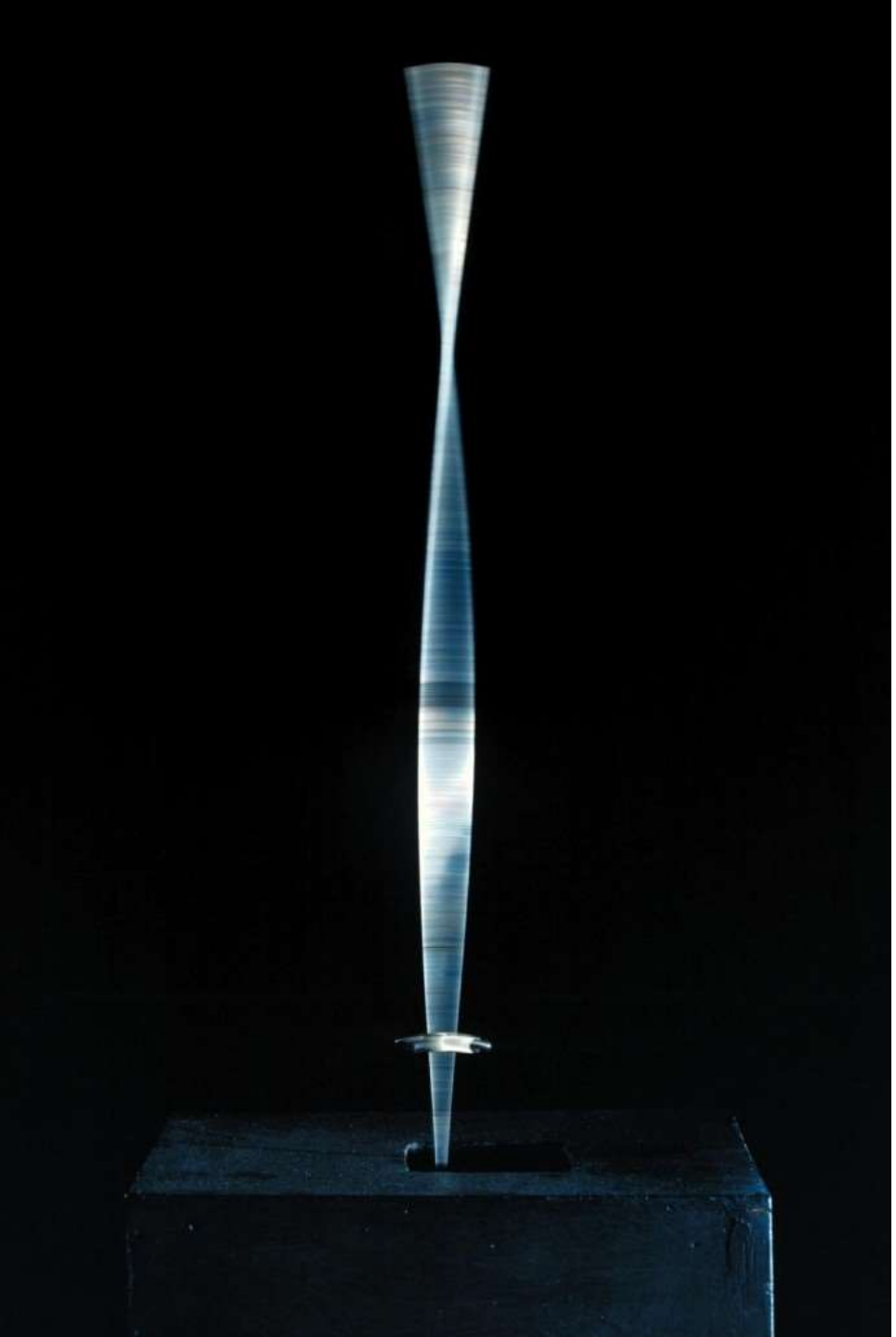
Kinetic art has a fascination with motion which potentially can encompass a wide spectrum of modern and contemporary art from Impressionism onwards. In presenting works of art which move, or give the impression of movement—from mobiles to mechanized sculptures to Op art paintings which contain optical defects or illusions that seem to rotate or vibrate in front of the eyes—Kinetic artists offered us some of the most quintessential expressions of modern art's key intersections with the technological facets of the modern age itself.

Naum Gabo (1890-1977)

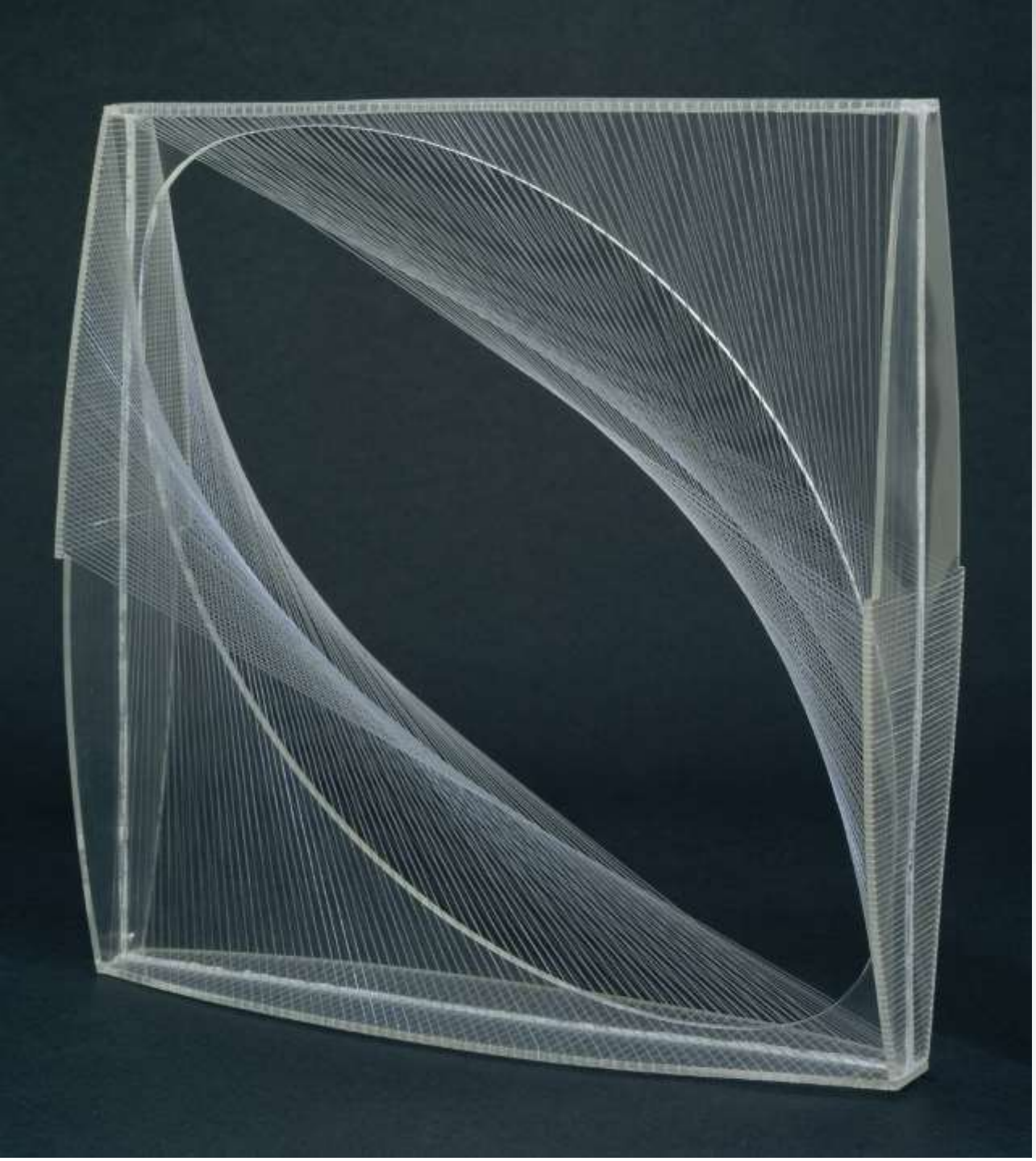
One of Gabo's most important discoveries was that empty space could be used as a key compositional constituent of sculpture. Constructing his sculptures from sets of interlocking components, rather than carving or molding them from blocks of inert materials, allowed him to incorporate space in his work more readily, where void and form were enabled to complement each other in new ways. By incorporating moving parts into his sculpture, or static elements which strongly implied movement, Gabo's work stands at the forefront of a whole artistic tradition, emblematic of the kind of technological progress we associate with the twentieth century, Kinetic Art. His Kinetic Construction of 1920, constructed of metal and wood with an electric motor, is often considered the first work of Kinetic Art.

- https://www.facebook.com/BBCArchive/videos/556002364927939/
- https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/naum-gabo-1137/naum-gabos-constructivist-ballet

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wKMCmJNQCro
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PNRzaiolUp8



Kinetic Construction (Standing Wave) is a mechanical sculpture consisting of a plain steel rod emerging from a small black wooden base, now encased for protection in a clear acrylic box. When activated by the press of a button, the machine springs to life: through the rapid oscillations caused by a hidden electric motor in the base, it forms the illusion of a sinuously twisting, three-dimensional shape. The image generated through these movements, with its quivering transparency, is that of a ‘standing wave’: a term taken from the field of physics, familiar to Gabo through his studies in natural science and engineering.



Designer: YONGSIK HWANG

Vladimir Tatlin (1885-1953)

Tatlin achieved fame as the architect who designed the huge Monument to the Third International, also known as Tatlin's Tower. Planned from 1919 the monument was to be a tall tower in iron, glass and steel which would have dwarfed the Eiffel Tower in Paris (the Monument to the Third International was a third taller at 400 meters high). Inside the iron-and-steel structure of twin spirals, the design envisaged three building blocks, covered with glass windows, which would rotate at different speeds (the first one, a cube, once a year; the second one, a pyramid, once a month; the third one, a cylinder, once a day). For financial and practical reasons, however, the tower was never built.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=folYGBvA9sI

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dlWdEJiv0TI

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4QOgnViAKhA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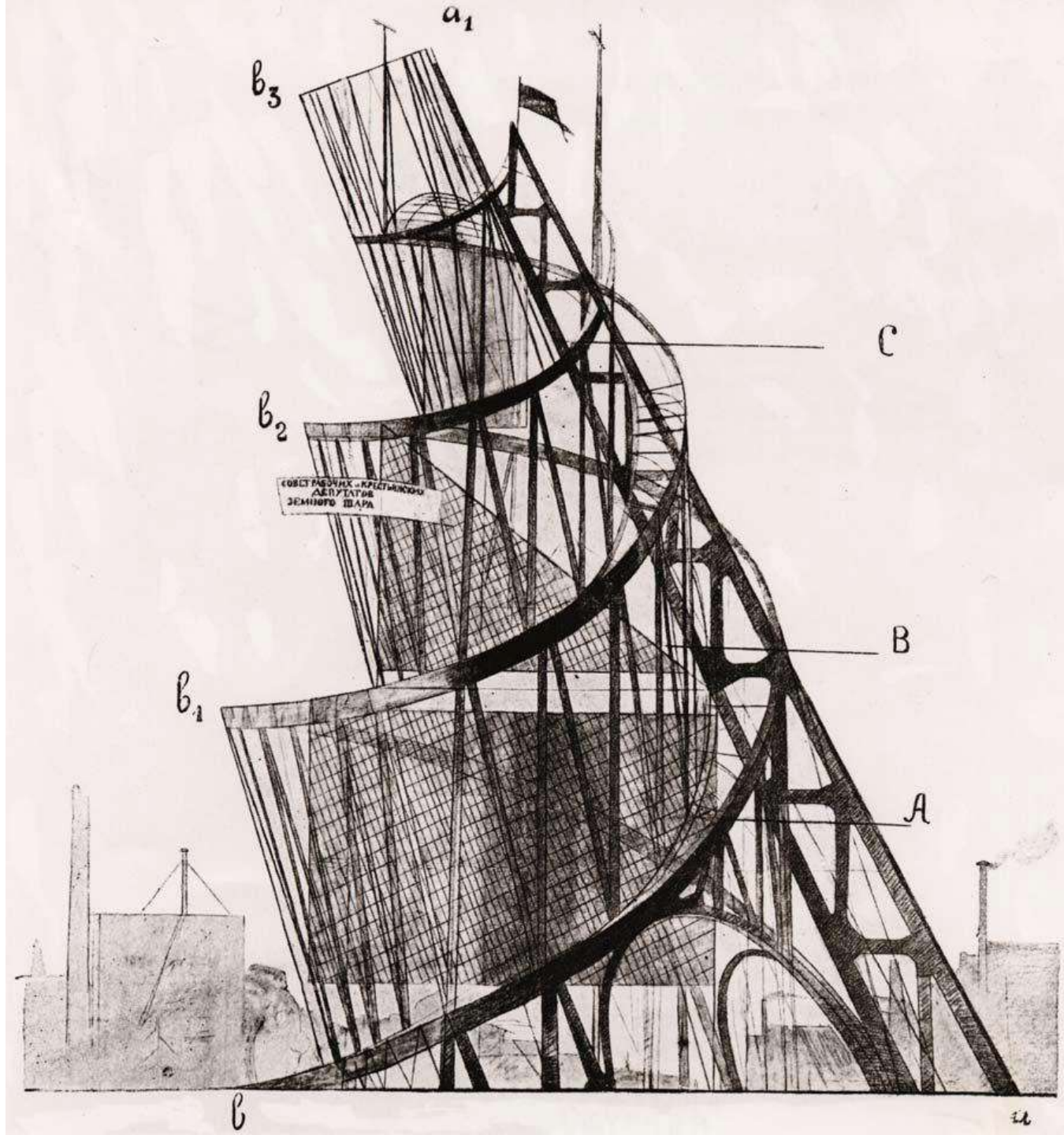
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Alexander Calder (1898-1976)

Alexander Calder was an American sculptor who is best known for his innovative mobiles that embrace chance in their aesthetic and his monumental public sculptures. Born into a family of artists, Calder's work first gained attention in Paris in the 1920s and was soon championed by the Museum of Modern Art in New York. One of the towering figures of twentieth century modernism, Calder was a key figure in the introduction of movement into works of art. He began this innovation by making wire sculptures of figurines. Instead of making drawings on the page, he made drawings of figures in space. Many artists made contour line drawings on paper, but Calder was the first to use wire to create three-dimensional line "drawings" of people, animals, and objects. These "linear sculptures" introduced line into sculpture as an element unto itself, the malleable outlines of which seemed to provide animating qualities to the figures themselves. In the next stage of his evolution Calder shifted from figurative linear sculptures in wire to abstract forms in motion by creating the first mobiles. Composed of lengths of wire, pivoted on central frames of skeletal support wires and counterbalanced along their lengths and at their ends with thin metal plates, discs and fins, the appearance of the entire piece was randomly arranged and changed compositional appearance constantly simply because the constituents moved in relation to each other. During the course of his long career the scale and ambition of these mobile sculptures was breathtakingly augmented to include massive constructions of seemingly weightless grace.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FUchd9wwBoI

https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/exhibition/alexander-calder-performing-sculpture

https://www.levygorvy.com/artist/alexander-calder/

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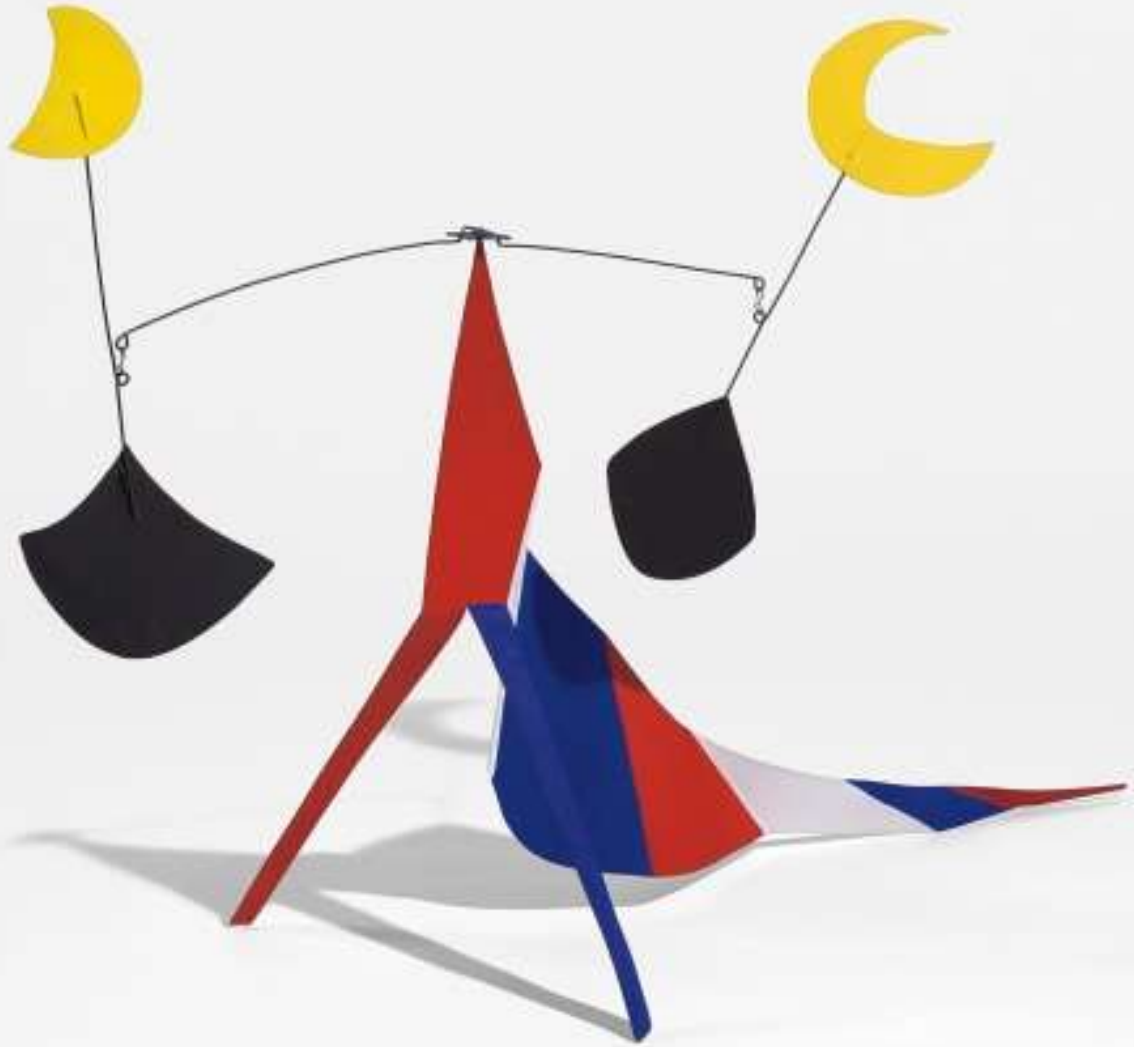
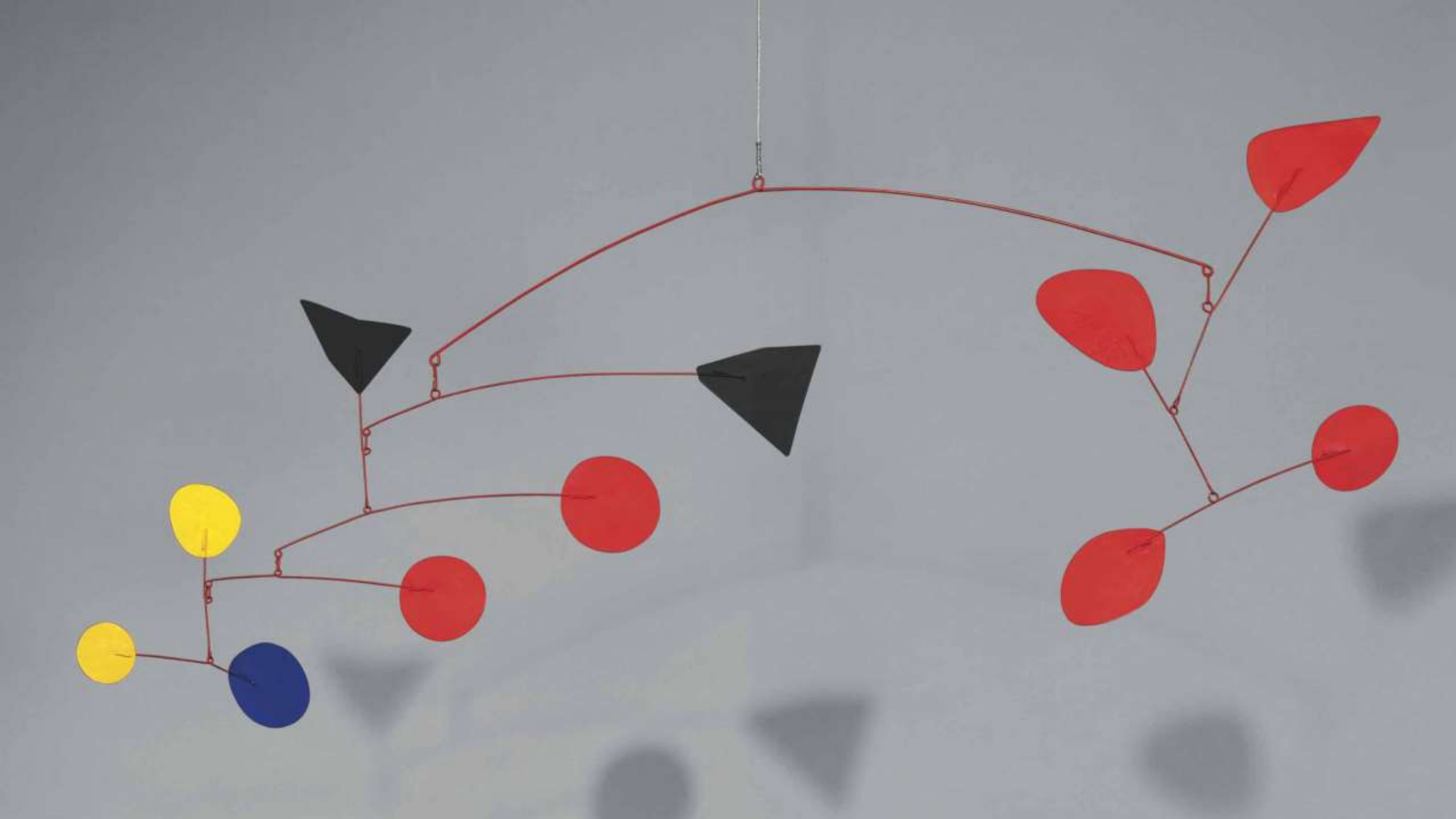
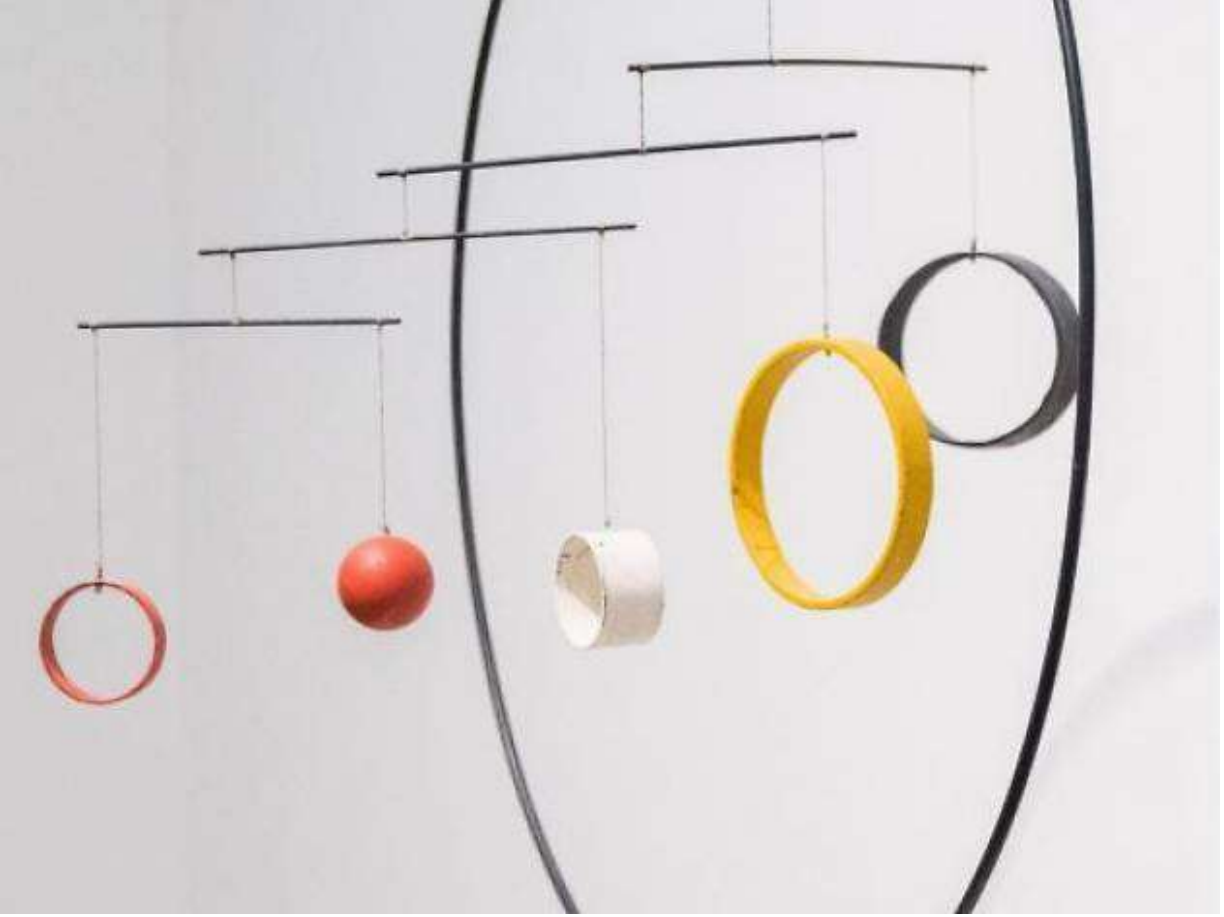
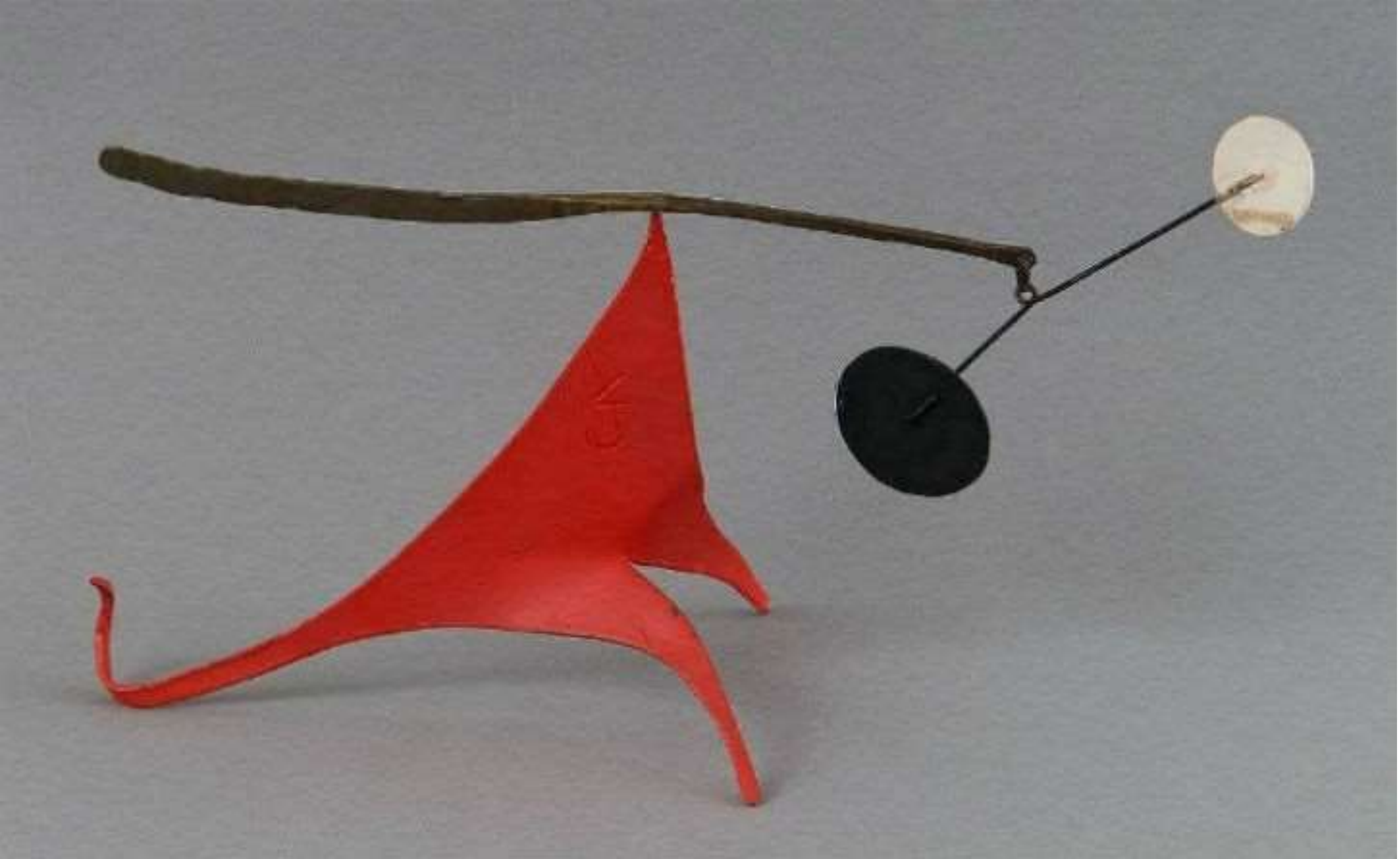
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6jwnu8Izy0








Calder




Calder

Jean Tinguely (1925-1991)

Jean Tinguely was a Swiss sculptor best known for his kinetic art sculptural machines (known officially as metamechanics) that extended the Dada tradition into the later part of the 20th century. *Tinguely's* art satirized automation and the technological overproduction of material goods.

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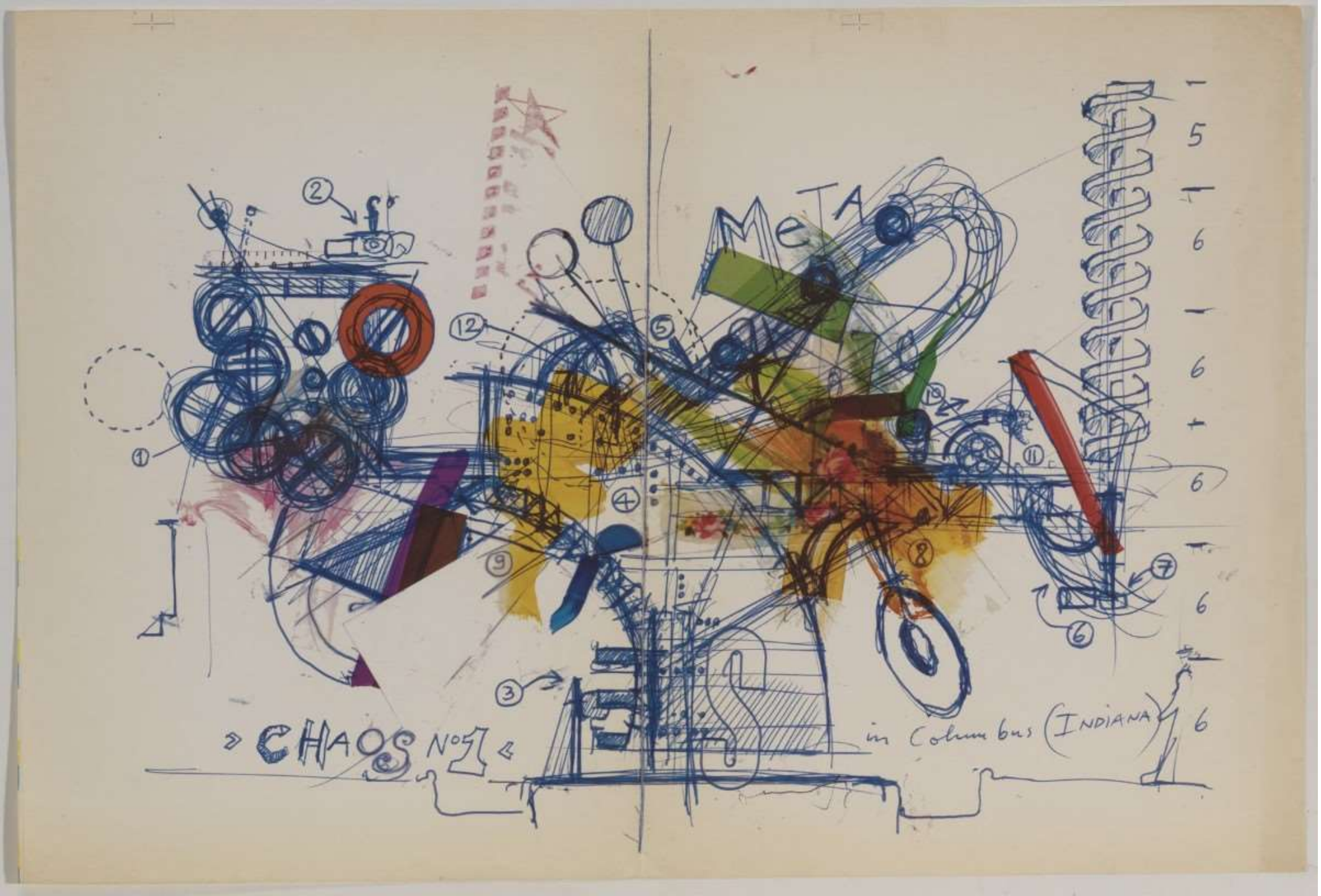
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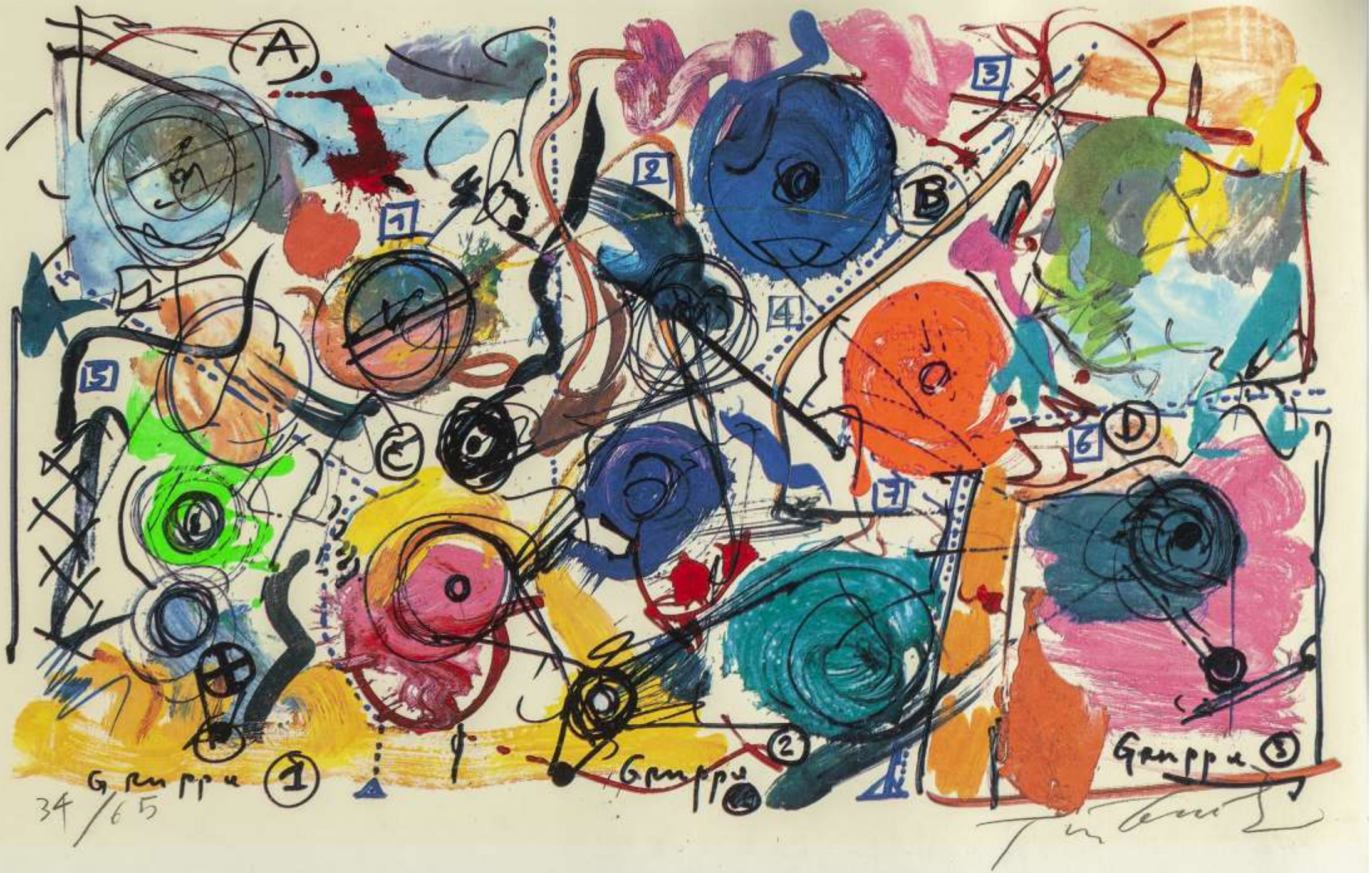
Jean Tinguely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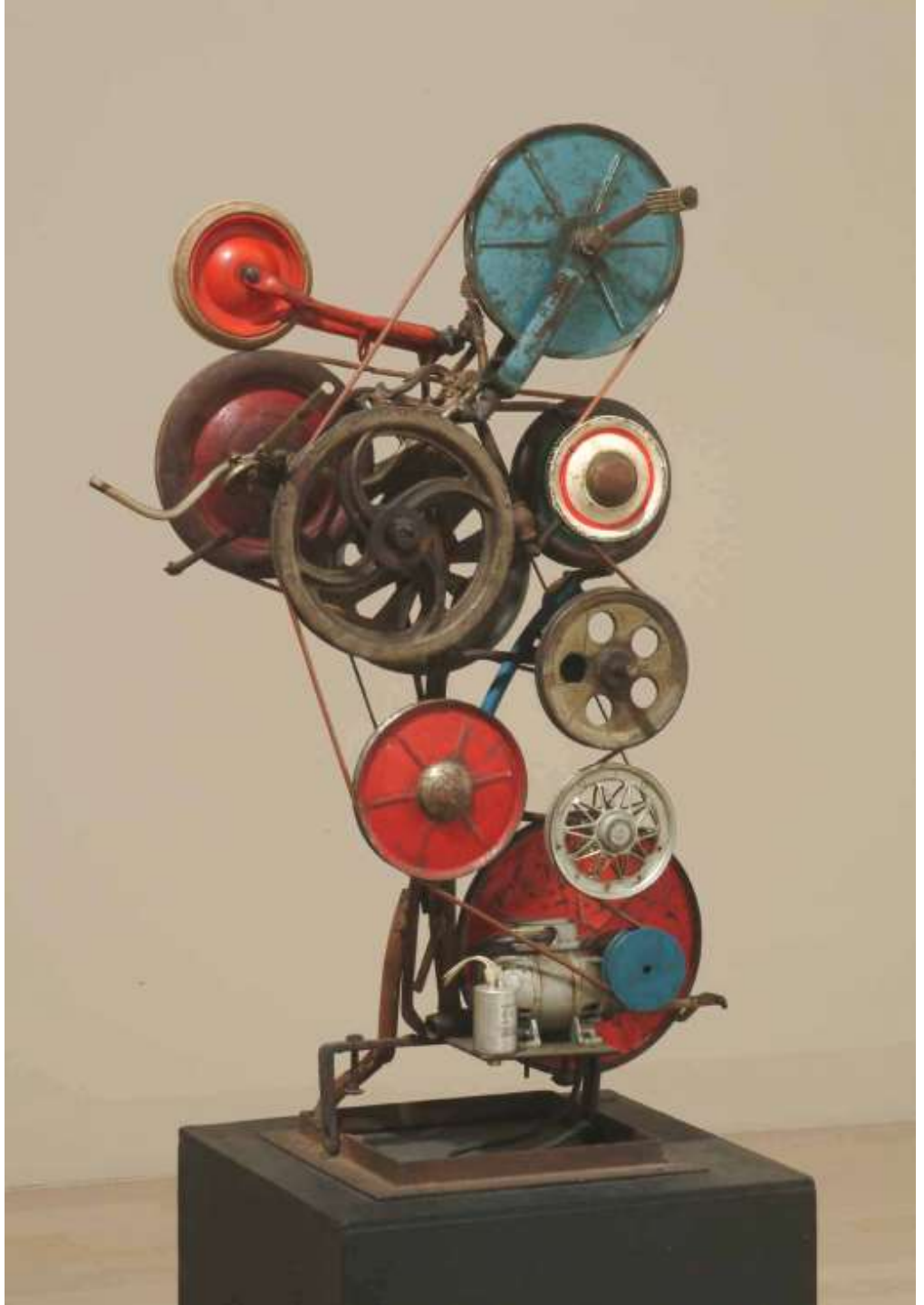
RETABLE de l'ABONDANCE occidentale
& DU MERCANTILISME TOTALITAIRE...

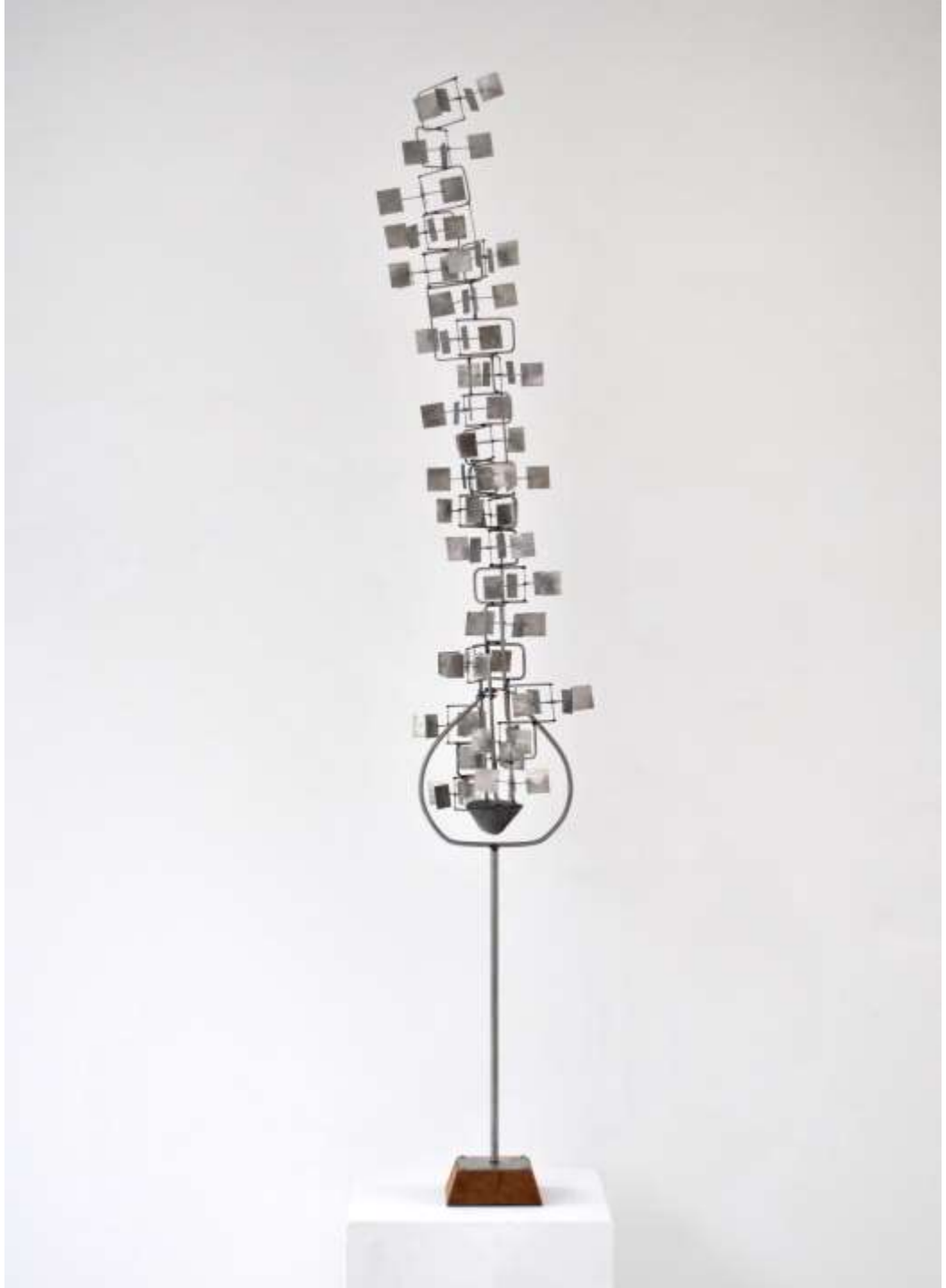


George Rickey (1907-2002)

George Rickey was an American sculptor whose Kinetic Art works used simple armatures of steel, that moved and pivoted in often counter intuitive ways. “The object was for the pieces to perform as they could, and I wanted their movement to be slow, unhampered, deliberate—but at the same time unpredictable,” Rickey once explained. “As for shape, I wanted only the most ordinary shapes—simple, hackneyed, geometrical. I wanted whatever eloquence there was to come out of the performance of the piece—never out of the shape itself.”

George Rickey is best known for what he called his “useless machines.” Carefully crafted kinetic sculptures made of reflective stainless steel, these graceful, precisely calibrated sculptures move with the wind at unpredictable intervals, calling attention to the effects of wind, light, and the changing surroundings.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5y6yNNLwJAQ

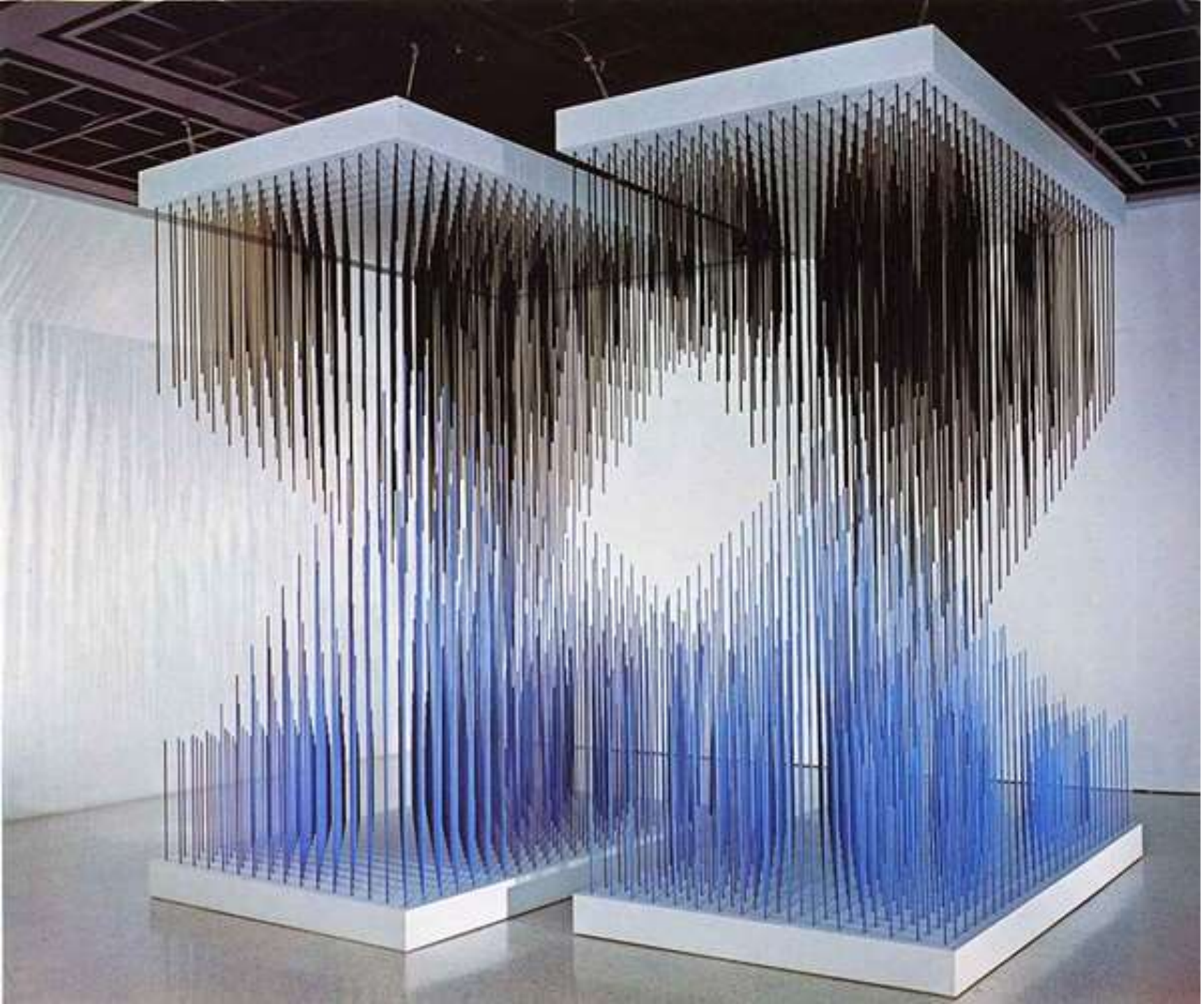


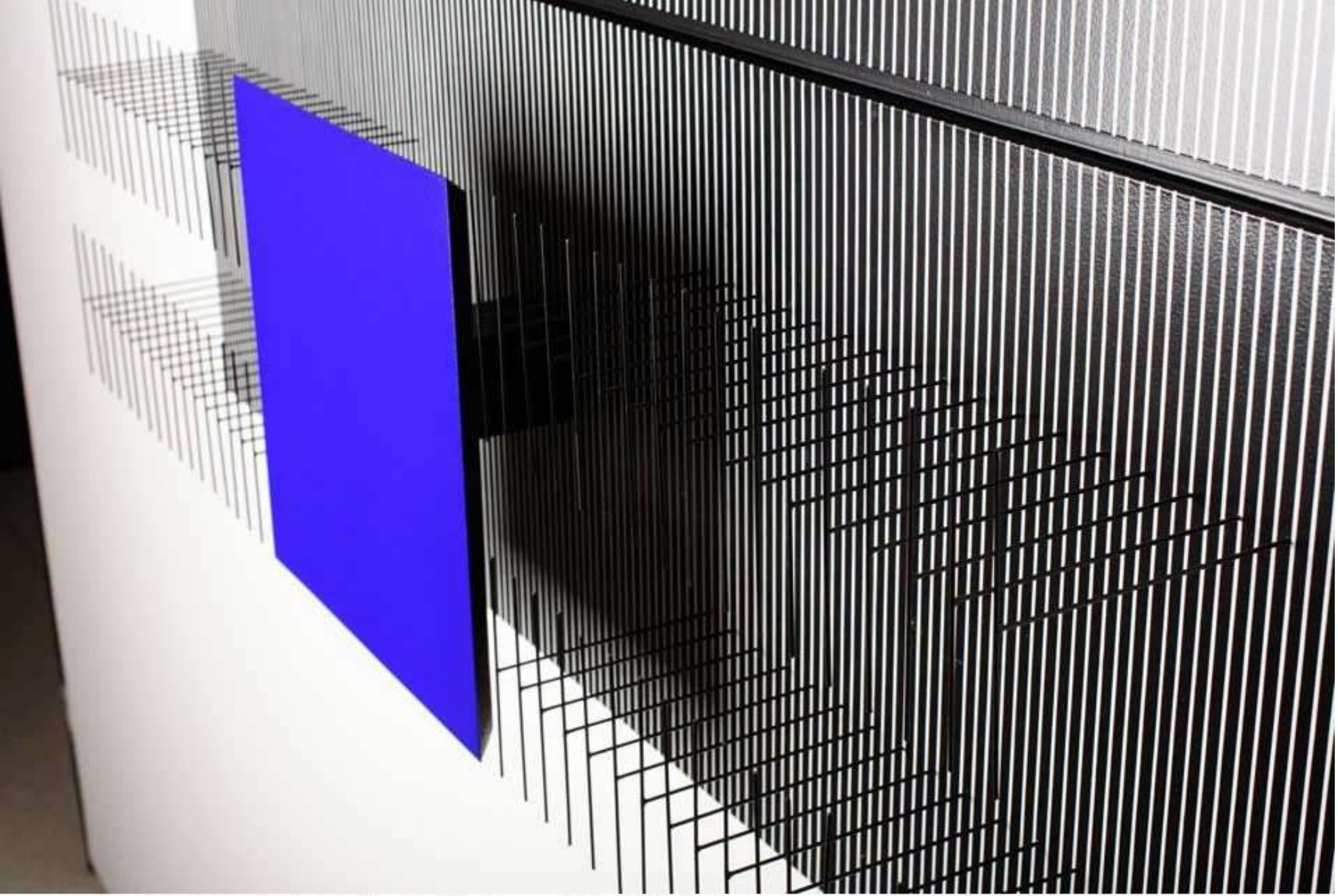
Jesús Rafael Soto (1923-2005)

Jesus Rafael Soto was a Venezuelan artist whose work combines LED lights, often in enormous quantities, with encoded computer programming to create illuminated displays. The work is premised on stripping systems down to their essence, often in a reductive way to focus on lowest common denominators such as pixels or the zeros and ones in binary code. As Villareal builds and layers the arrangement of LEDS, he programs them to move, change, interact and ultimately grow into complex organisms that are inspired by mathematician John Conway's work with cellular automata and the Game of Life.

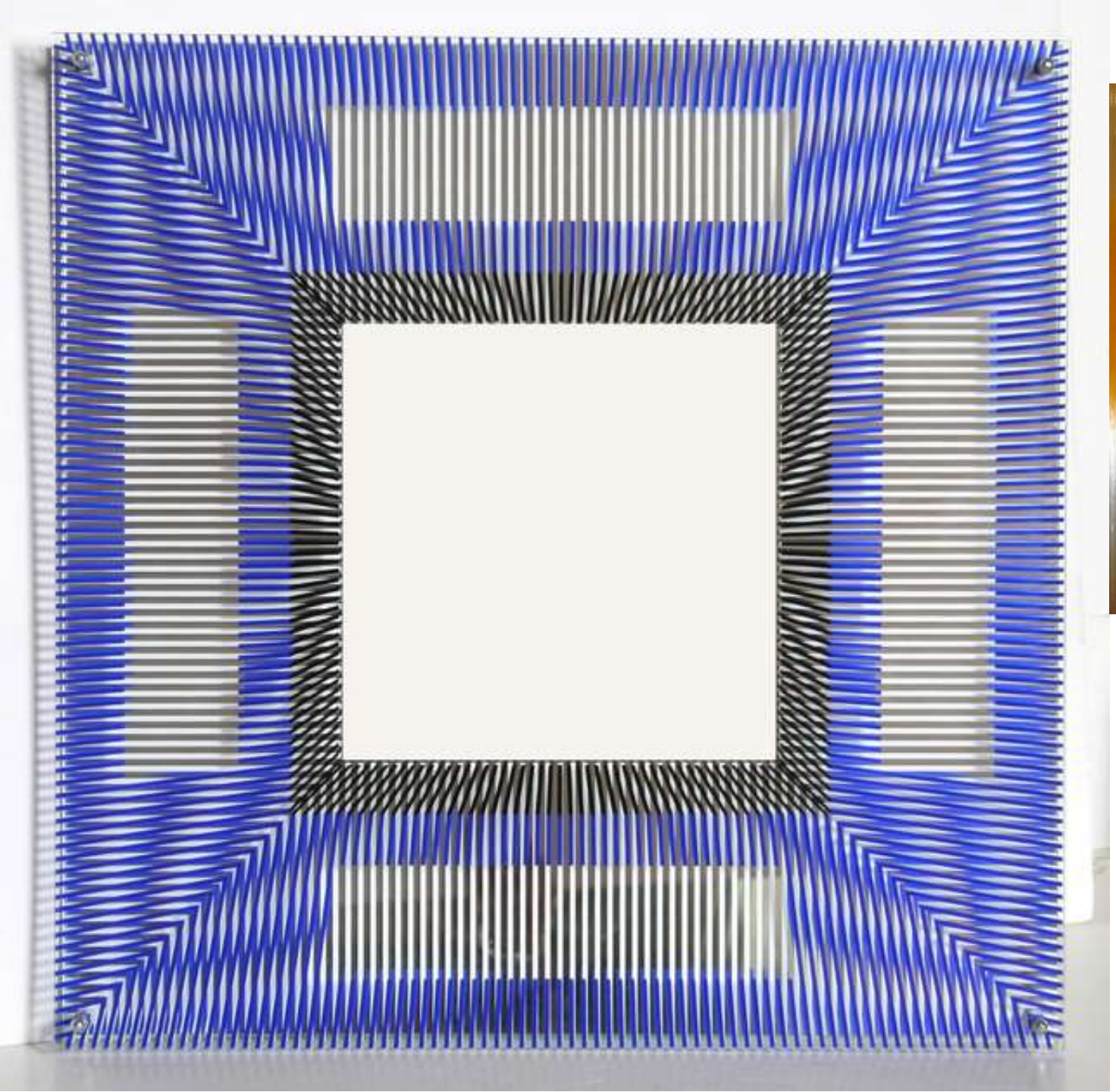
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7zW2y9tqJBo&feature=emb_logo

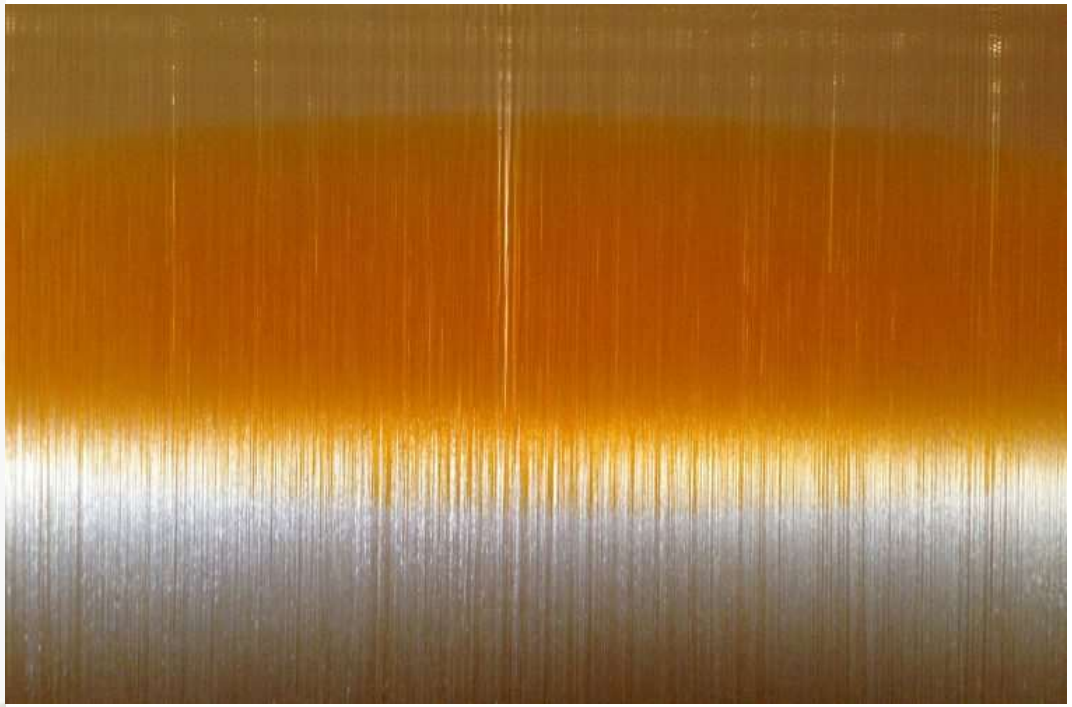
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=976Ghk1Ue4E

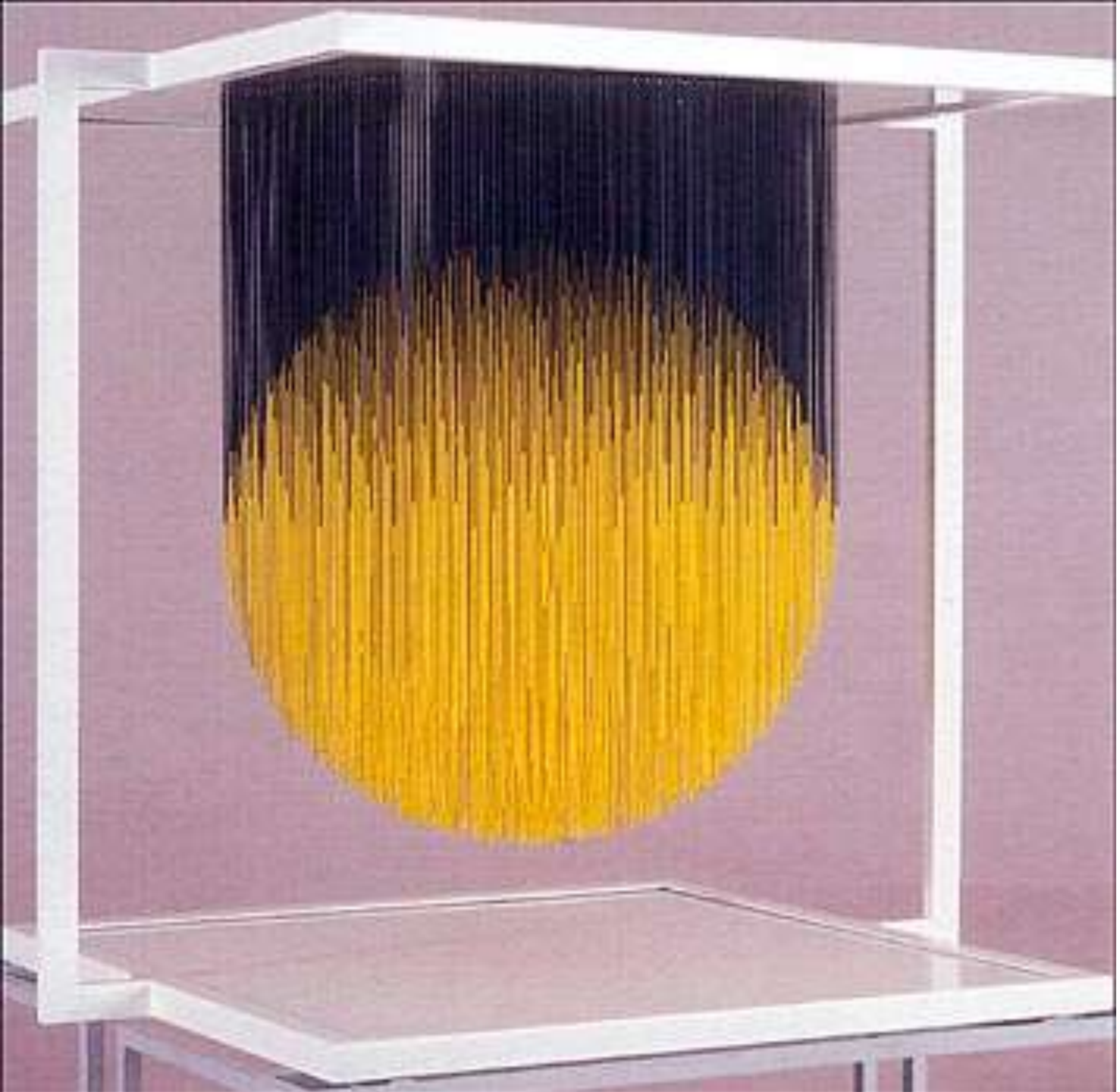




Jesus Rafael Soto - Cuadrado Azul con Tes (Blue Square with Tes), 2004 - Paint on wood and metal, 40 1/2 x 40 1/8 x 6 3/4 in. (103 x 102 x 17 cm.)








gettyimages
Harold Cunningham
477326944

Christian Moeller (1959-

Christian Moeller is a sculpture and installation artist, professor and Chair of the Department of Design Media Arts at University of California, Los Angeles UCLA He was born in Frankfurt am Main, Germany where he lived and worked until moving to the United States in 2001.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_ZbWLfeHuI

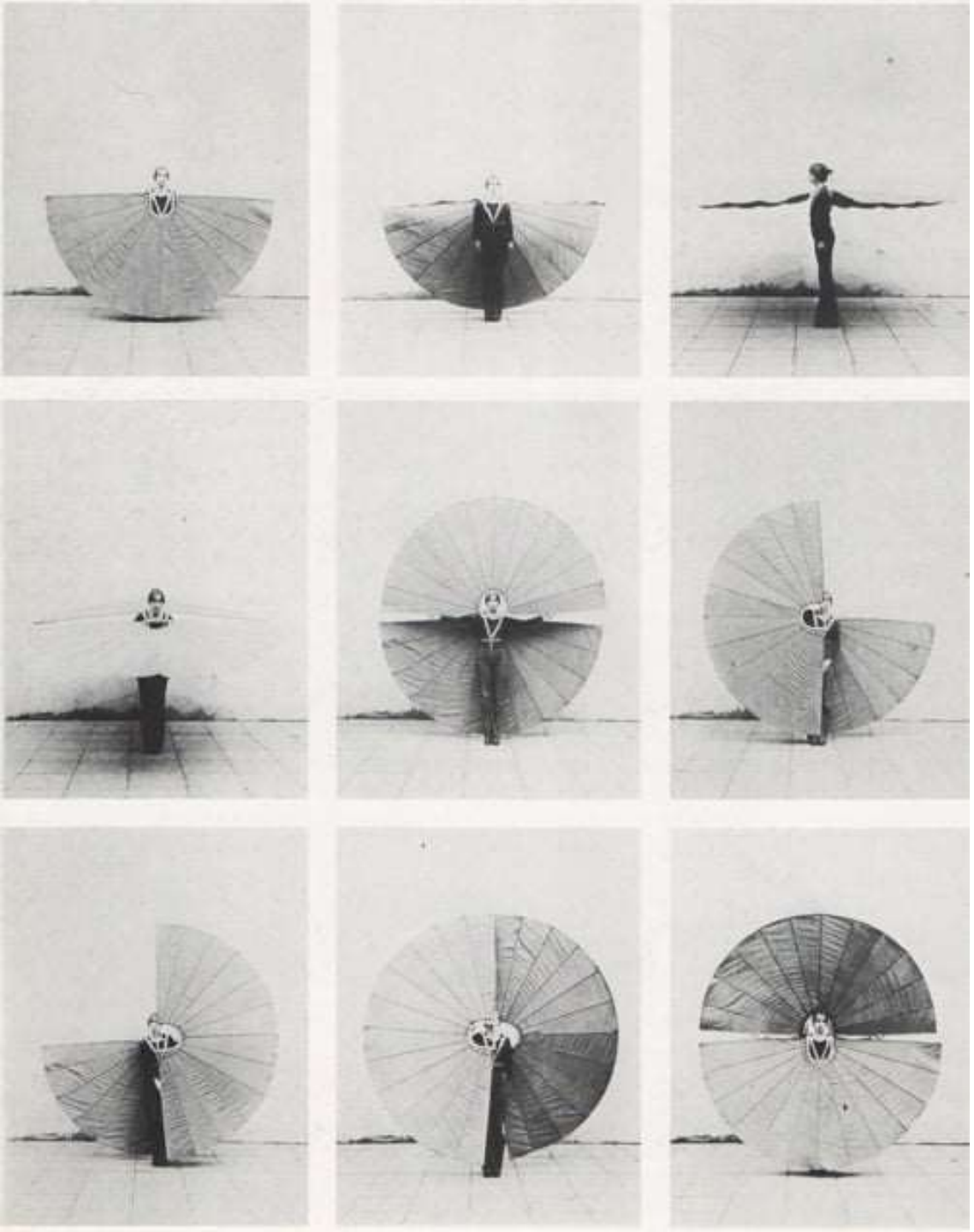
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73HkgVI43oA

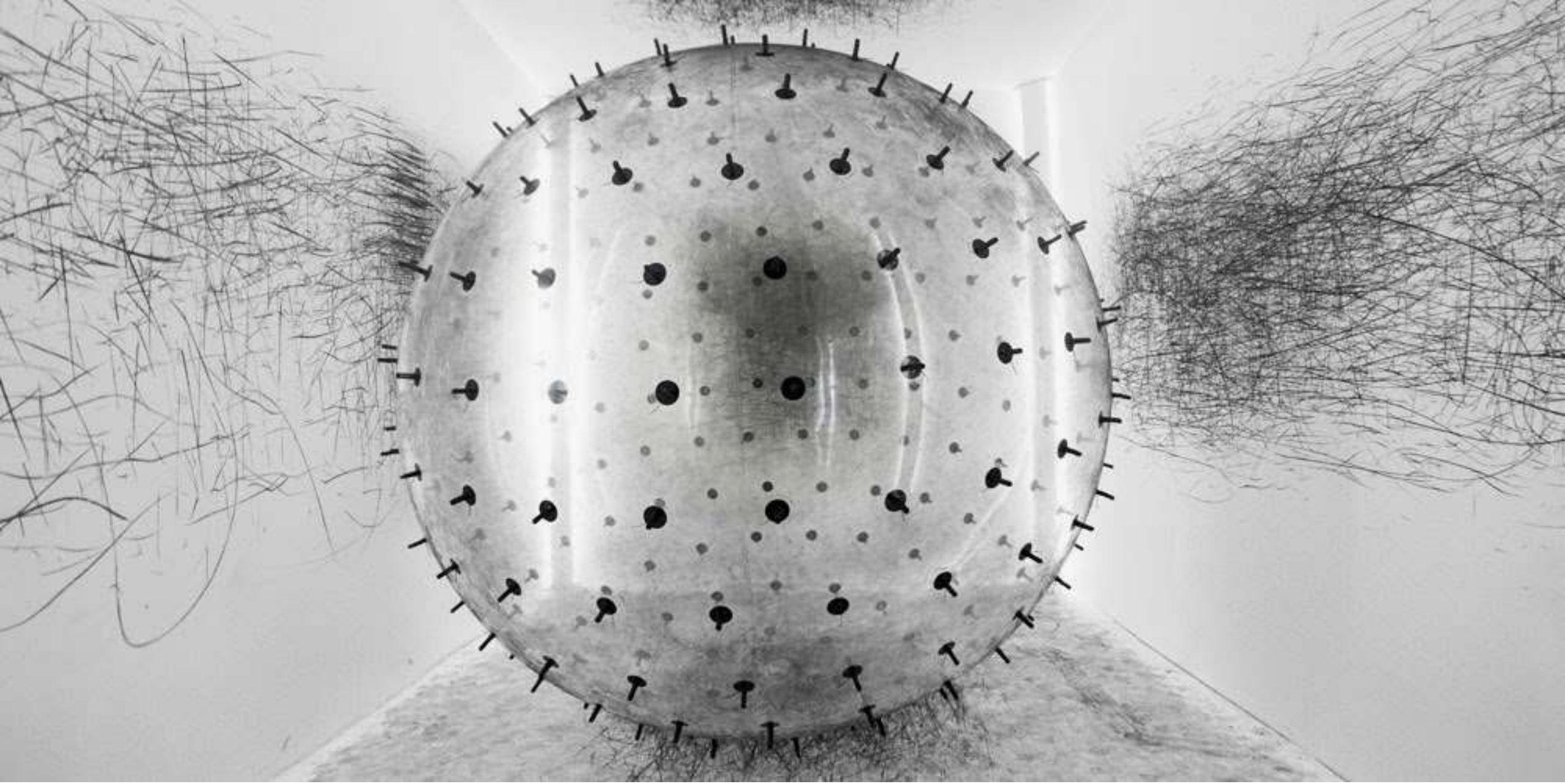
Rebecca Horn (1944-

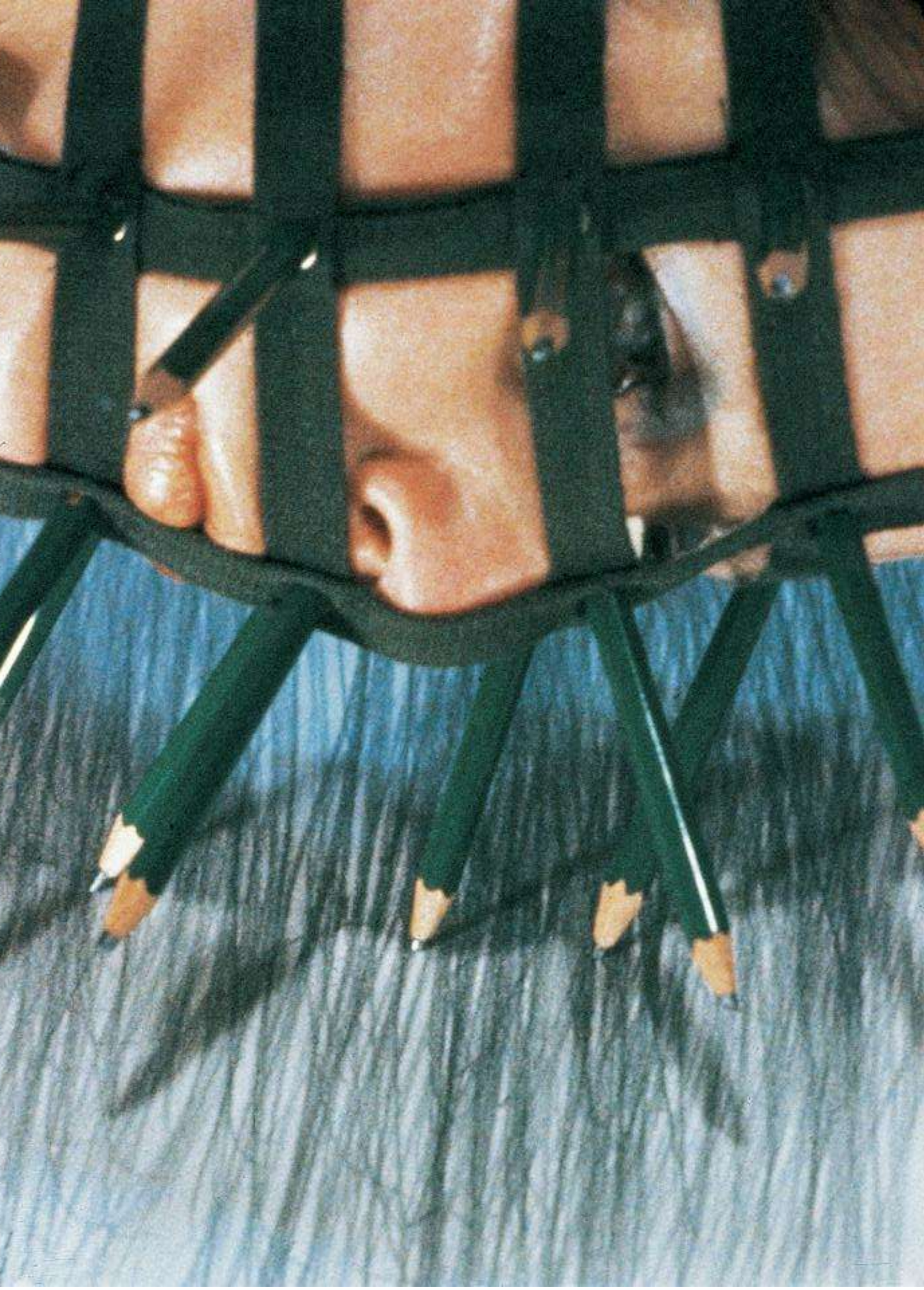
Since the beginning of the 1970s, Rebecca Horn has created a highly diverse body of work including conceptually based, process-oriented, prosthetic performances, numerous films, feathery and kinetic metal sculptures, vast installations, loose drawings, self-documentary performance photographs, and painting machines. Her work often literally or metaphorically inhibits or extends the (usually female) body into space. Frequently, component parts of her art can serve as mechanical replacements for the body suggestive of works that have a life of their own, autonomous from either a body or a controlling force.

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l5vCZHZfrmQ

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6uEkq3IBIf0
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwAsMMqFy4w
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hyyEpe6psdA
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=so1rfLd_OiM
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ef_0c_zACmA
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFjv-mSsqX8
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwAsMMqFy4w





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Theo Jansen (1948-

Theodorus Gerardus Jozef "Theo" Jansen is a Dutch artist. In 1990, he began building large mechanisms out of PVC that are able to move on their own and, collectively, are entitled, Strandbeest. The kinetic sculptures appear to walk. His animated works are intended to be a fusion of art and engineering.

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ZePhxfXlns
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LewVEF2B_pM
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vTDxJIKGnMs
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXiquZQUNKk

Anthony Howe

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RshSaF_juGs
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXYukSGzCCE
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PIbk4AKFMTc

Assignment suggestions

- Paint the wind
- Make a mobile
- Make (or design) a useless machine
- Paint an object in motion
- Capture a sense of play in an artwork