

Perception/Deception

Seeing is Believing?

The Dress: How Your Brain Interprets Color

The brain **uses light signals detected by the retina's cone photoreceptors as the building blocks for color perception.** Three types of cone photoreceptors detect light over a range of wavelengths. The brain mixes and categorizes these signals to perceive color in a process that is not well understood.

- <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/video/how-your-brain-interprets-color/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GlnwvlSH-I&t=5s>
- <https://www.amnh.org/explore/ology/brain/seeing-color>

Monet—Waterloo Bridge

Eight paintings from this series of London fogs are the centerpiece of the Memorial Art Gallery's exhibition [*Monet's Waterloo Bridge: Vision and Process*](#). A recognized master of landscape painting, Monet was an integral founder of the Impressionist movement, which embraced the philosophy of expressing the fleeting sensory effects in a scene.

But how does Monet depict the same scene at different times of day and in various conditions? And how does a viewer see an artist's brushstrokes of color as a cohesive image, and vastly different colors as the same bridge?

With each of the [paintings in the series](#), Monet manipulates viewer perception in a way that scientists at the time did not completely understand. Today, research such as that conducted at the University of Rochester's [Center for Visual Science](#), founded in 1963, provides insight into the complexity of the visual system, illuminating Monet's processes and the intricacies of his work.

- <https://www.rochester.edu/newscenter/the-science-of-seeing-art-color-354182/>



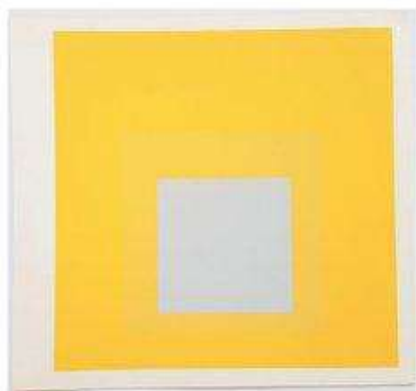
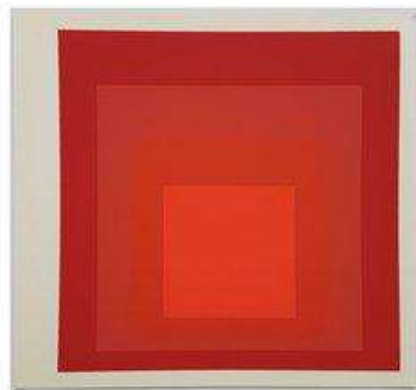
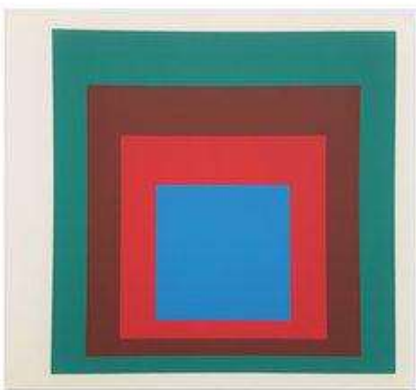




Joseph Albers—Homage to the Square

Accomplished as a designer, photographer, [typographer](#), [printmaker](#), and poet, Albers is best remembered for his work as an [abstract](#) painter and [theorist](#). He favored a very disciplined approach to [composition](#), especially in the hundreds of paintings and prints that make up the series *Homage to the Square*. In this rigorous series, begun in 1949, Albers explored [chromatic interactions](#) with nested squares. Usually painting on [Masonite](#), he used a [palette knife](#) with oil colors and often recorded the colors he used on the back of his works. Each painting consists of either three or four squares of solid planes of color nested within one another, in one of four different arrangements and in square formats ranging from 406×406 mm to 1.22×1.22 m

- <https://otis.libguides.com/specialcollections/InteractionOfColor> (start here--app)
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FpTr_BDVjFI (homage to the square)
- <https://vimeo.com/666118269> (demonstration)
- <https://www.albersfoundation.org/alberses/teaching/josef-albers/logic-magic-of-color> (examples explained by Albers himself)

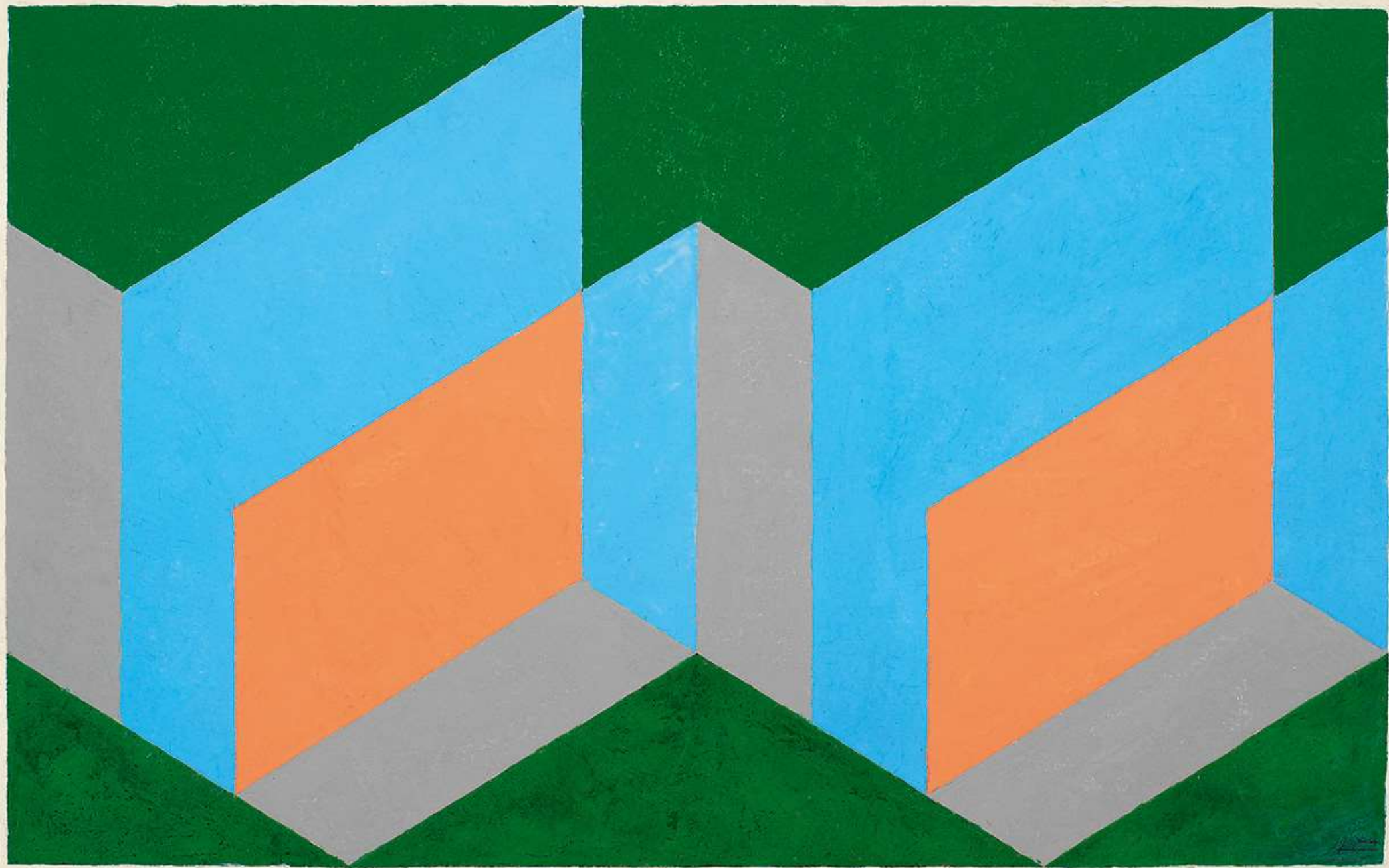


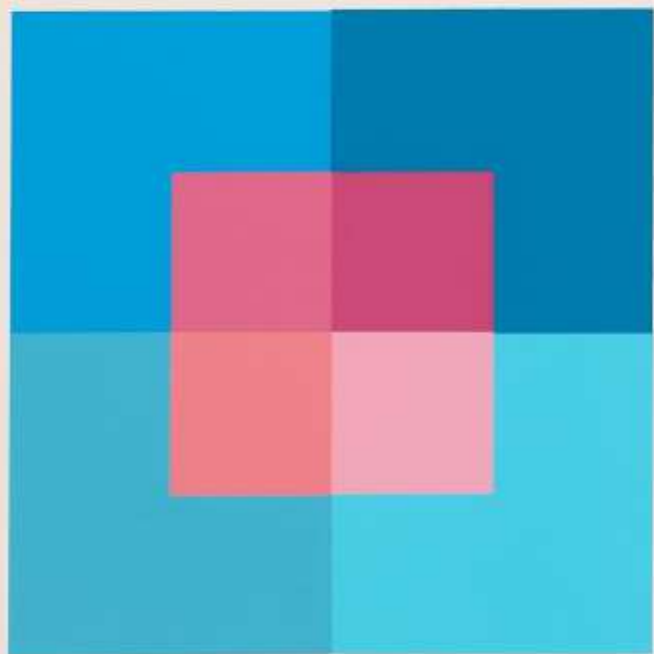
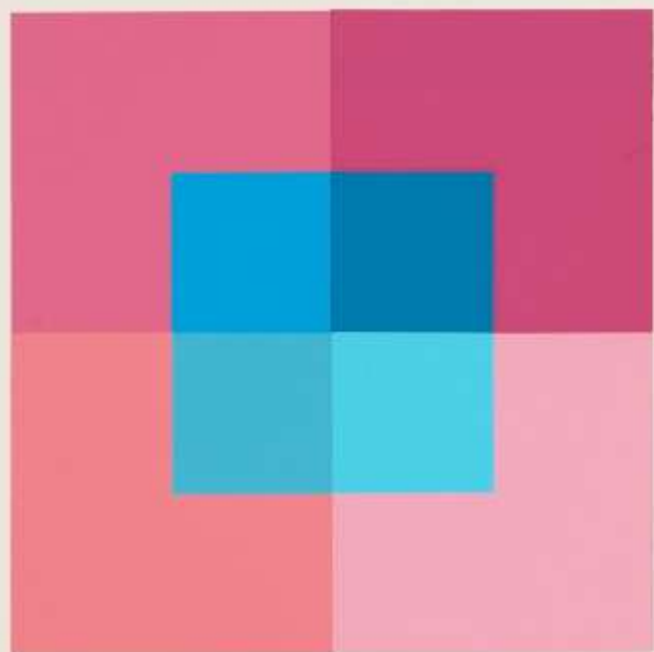
Interaction of Color

Josef Albers

Unabridged text and selected plates
Revised edition







Nathan Walsh

Accomplished as a designer, photographer, [typographer](#), [printmaker](#), and poet, Albers is best remembered for his work as an [abstract](#) painter and [theorist](#). He favored a very disciplined approach to [composition](#), especially in the hundreds of paintings and prints that make up the series *Homage to the Square*. In this rigorous series, begun in 1949, Albers explored [chromatic interactions](#) with nested squares. Usually painting on [Masonite](#), he used a [palette knife](#) with oil colors and often recorded the colors he used on the back of his works.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DfjYub5GK0U&t=11s>











Cinta Vidal

It's all about perspective in the multifaceted murals of [Cinta Vidal](#), several of which the artist recently completed in Italy, Portugal, Germany, and Denmark. While some works focus on architectural details such as gable ends jutting out at unexpected angles or clustered together in mind-bending proportions, other pieces emphasize the relationships between people and their interactions within space or with each other as they navigate their shifting surroundings.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HeDbN23GpAU&t=94s>









Bernard Pras

Fooling the eye — with trick-niques like anamorphic sculpture, *trompe l'oeil* paintings and other optical illusions — is a centuries-old artistic pursuit.

From the [ancient frescoes](#) of Pompeii through [Rene Magritte](#), [M.C. Escher](#) and [Salvador Dali](#), certain visual experimenters have wrangled with reality in a special way.

Such tricks are also up-to-the-minute contemporary. Take a look at this video of a clever 2013 anamorphic installation — by French artist [Bernard Pras](#). It morphs from a portrait of a man to a mundane pile of objects, depending on how you look at it.

<https://www.artistaday.com/?p=19348>

- <https://www.npr.org/sections/theprotojournalist/2014/12/05/367412559/the-fine-art-of-deception>





Yaacov Agam

Yaacov Agam is an Israeli [sculptor](#) and experimental artist widely known for his contributions to [optical](#) and [kinetic art](#).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-r7f_mY5PUw (use this)

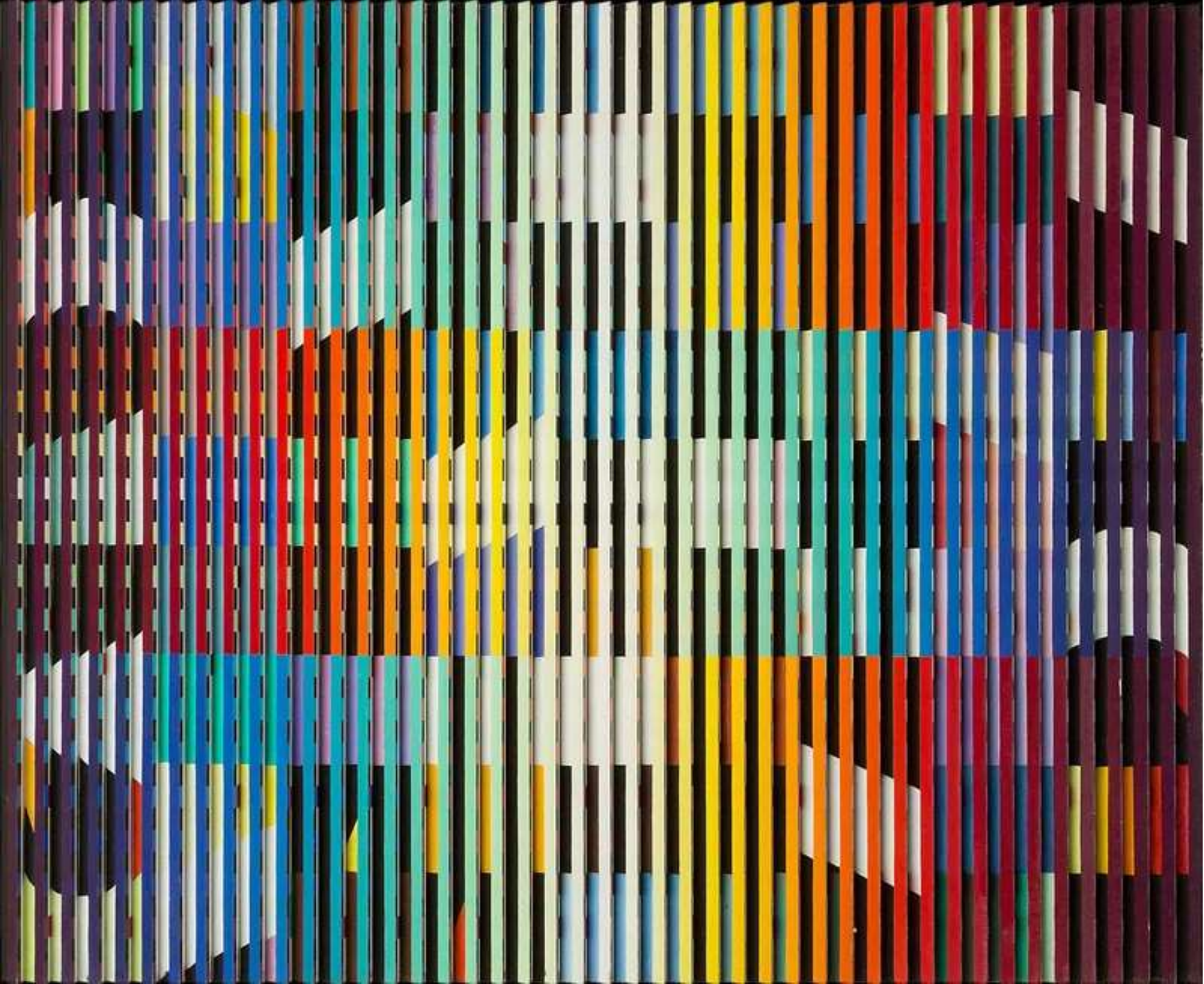
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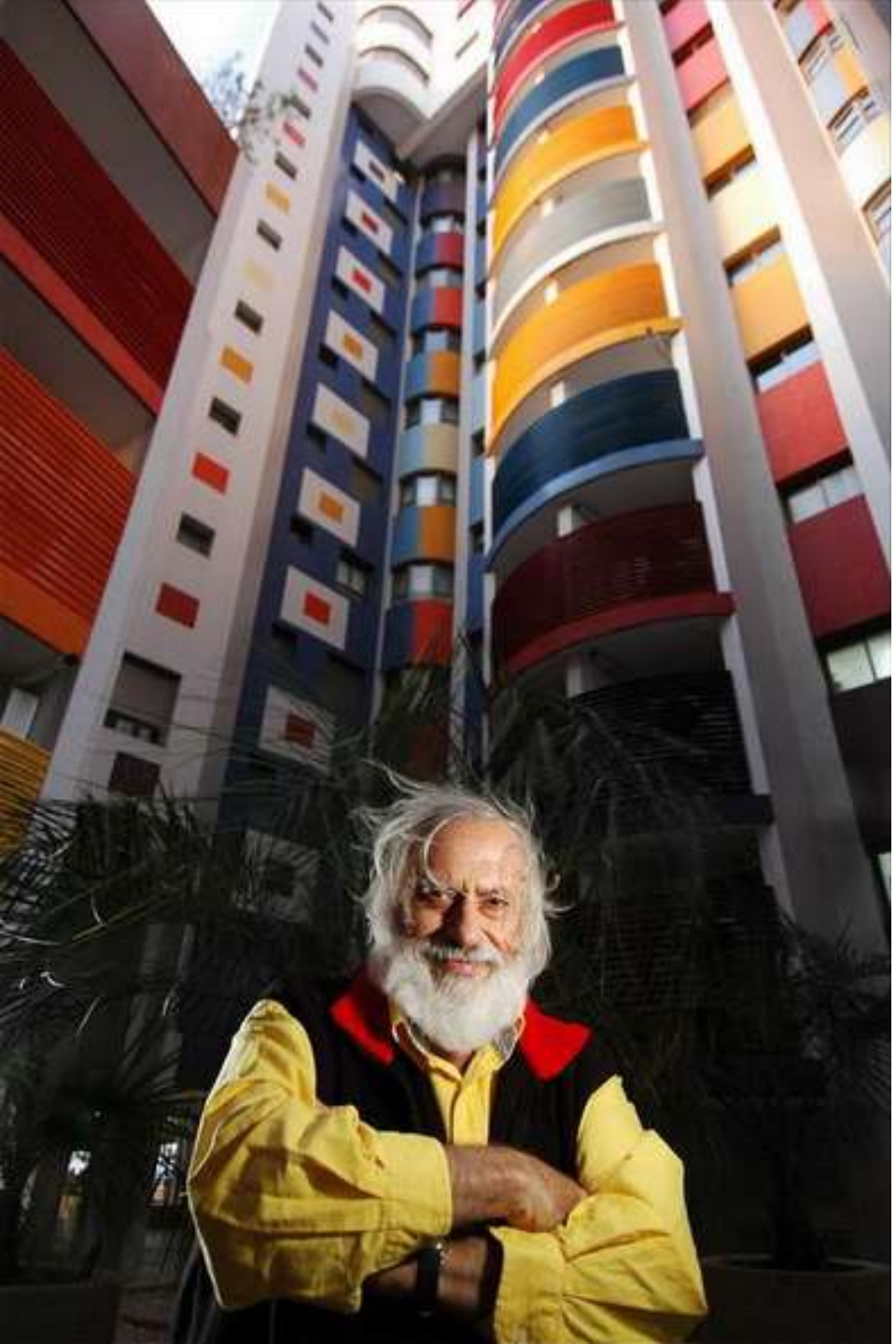
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCLrNxCd-G0>

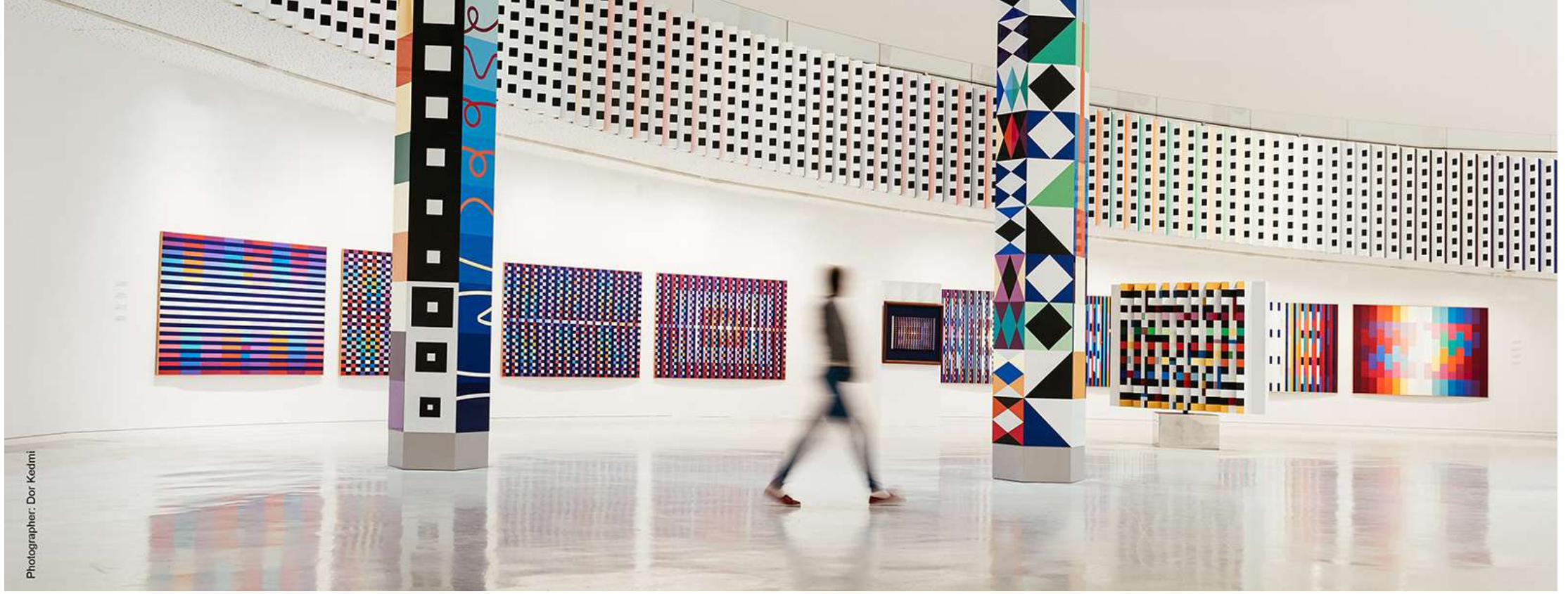




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Photographer: Dor Kedmi

Mary Temple

Mary Temple (b. 1957, Arizona) received both her B.F.A. and M.F.A. from the University of Arizona. Though trained as a painter, her works, many of which are conceptual installation pieces, blur the boundaries between painting, sculpture, and drawing. Her practice deals with themes such as informational spin, false documents, and verisimilitude.

Temple's painting in the Hassenfeld Center's consultation room is a meditative and peaceful painting that depicts light casting shadows of trees across one wall of the room. "Increasingly, the architectural environment became an important component in my process of art making. At this point, conceptual and physical spaces provide a structuring framework for my thinking. I'm interested in identifying, and at times modifying, aspects of environmental perception. The choice of material is specific to the nature of each piece. Paint remains a viable means of conveying ideas for me, but just as often it seems that alternative media may more adequately describe the work's sensibility."

Temple's works have been shown in multiple locations including the San Francisco Museum of Contemporary Art, Sculpture Center (New York), MASS MoCA (North Adams), and the Rice Gallery (Houston). She lives and work in Brooklyn, NY.

<https://vimeo.com/20354492>







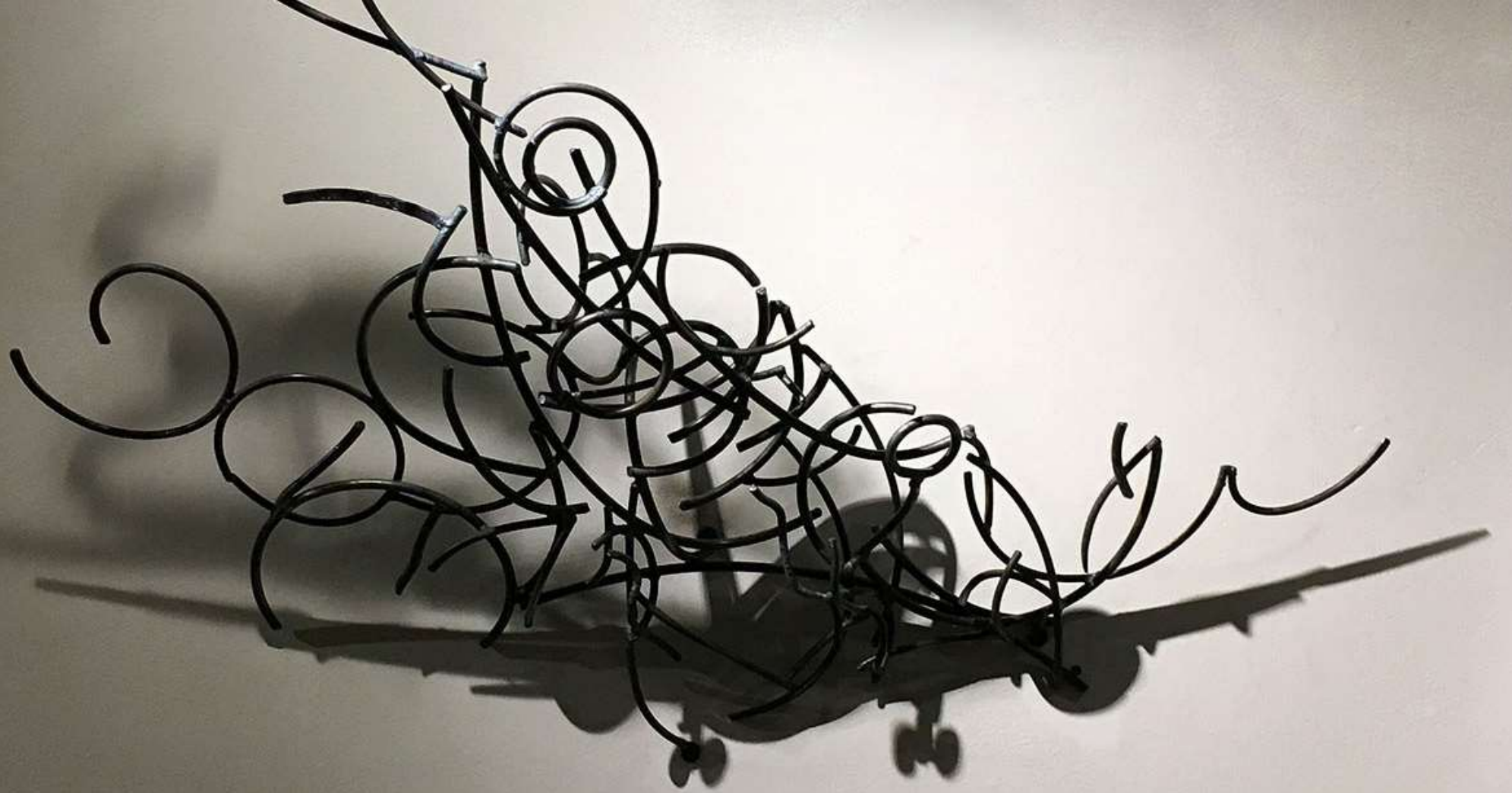


Larry Kagan

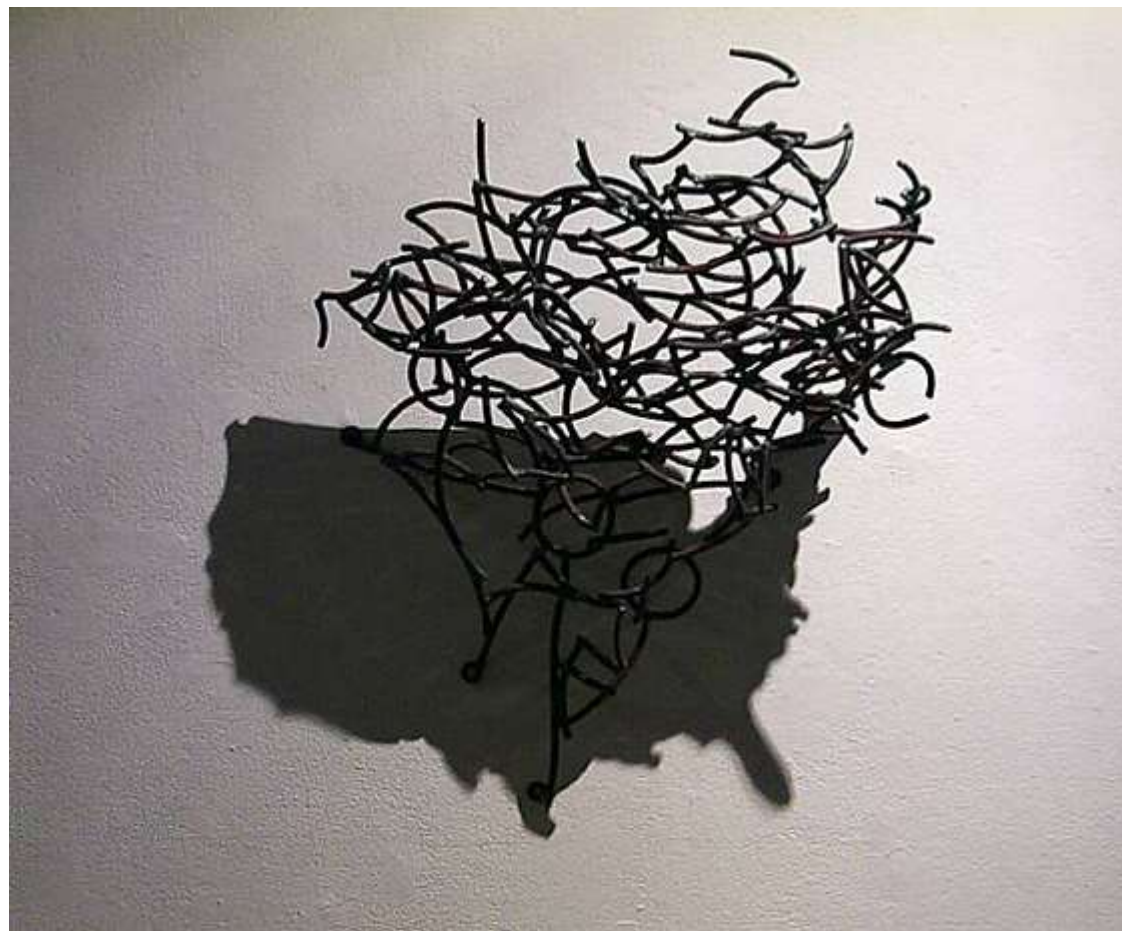
Larry Kagan (b. 1946, Germany) is an American sculptor who uses steel, cast light and shadow as a creative medium. Winding and welding a tangled web of steel wires, Kagan is able to “draw” with shadows. The focus of his work is not the abstract mass of wires he creates, but rather the shadows that emerge onto the wall when light is cast upon them. His subjects vary from figures to objects to animals and geometric planes.

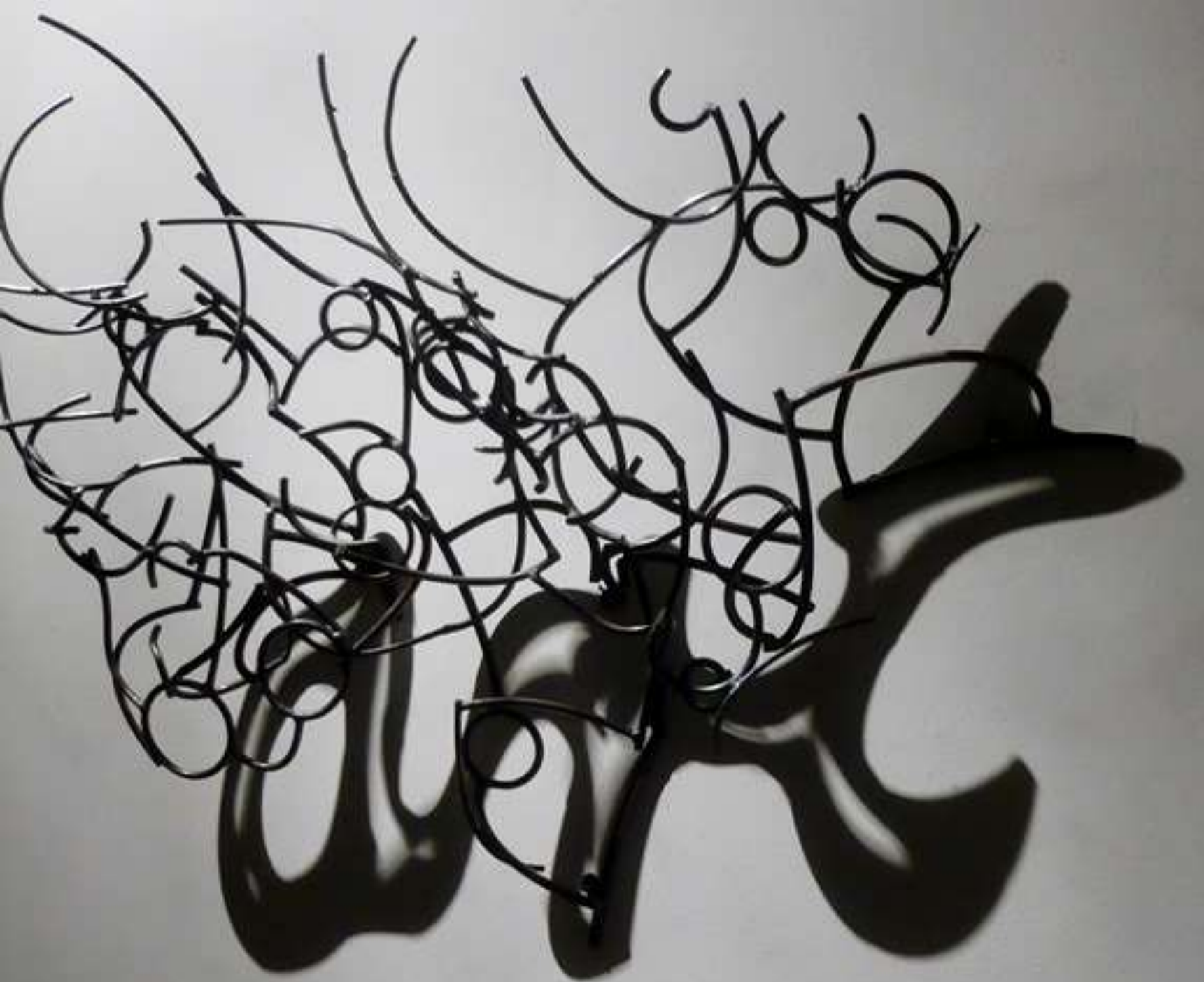
Larry Kagan received a B.S. from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and a M.A. in Studio Arts from the State University of New York at Albany. Kagan’s work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, and he is represented in numerous private and public collections, including the Flint Institute of the Arts, Flint, MI, the Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, OH, and the Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena, CA, to name a few. Most recently, Kagan’s work was featured at the Montclair Art Museum.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSdkrzkcu20>









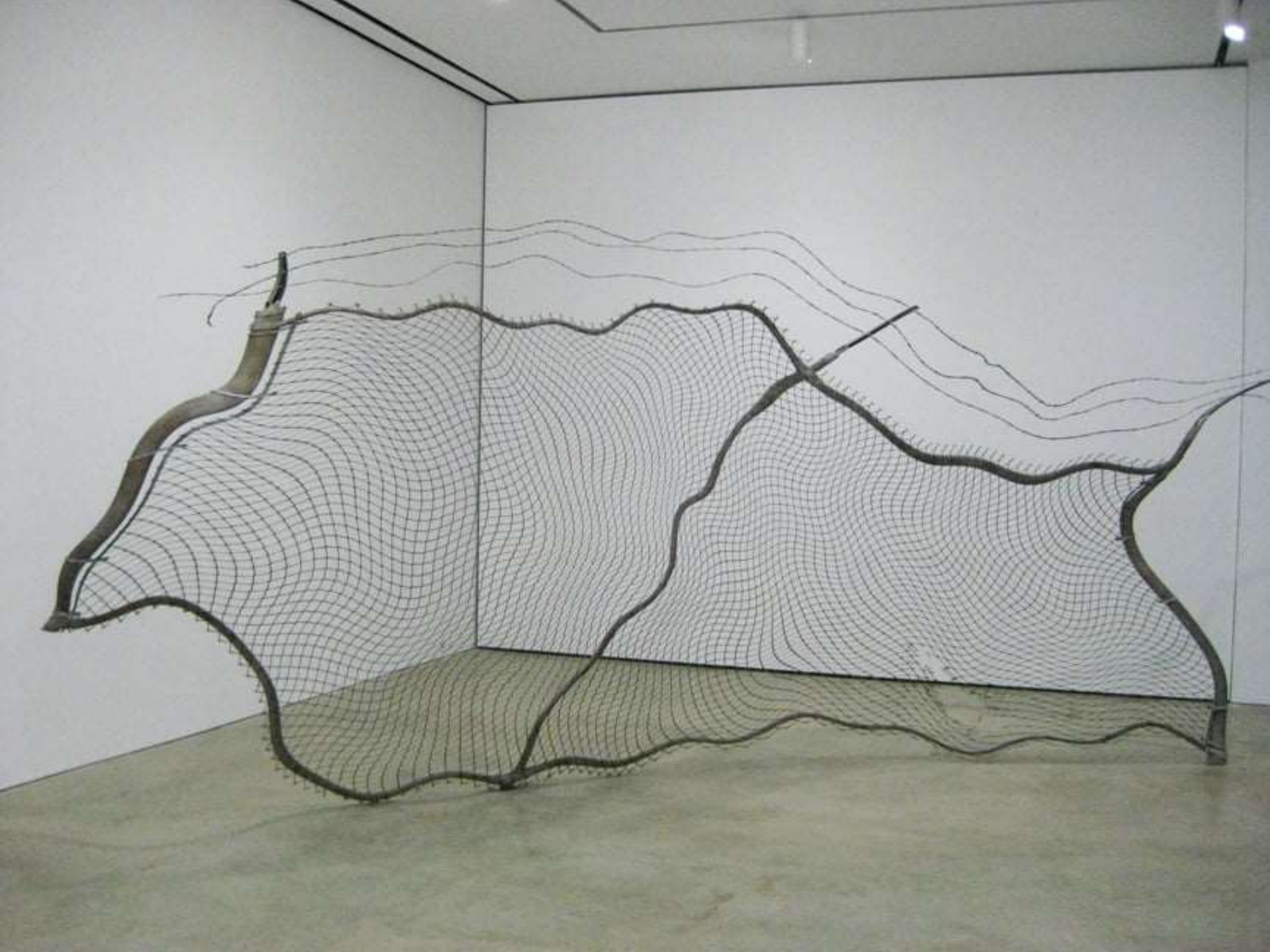
Robert Lazzarini

Primarily a sculptor, Lazzarini is best known for making common objects that have been subjected to compound distortions which have the effect of confusing visual and haptic space, or rather complicating the space of pictures and the space of things. Lazzarini also alters the physical spaces in which these objects are seen — the "ground" to the object's "figure" — which adds to the "disorienting"^{[1][2]} effect that the work exerts on its audience. Offering no ideal point of view and so compelling its viewers to walk around the work, Lazzarini's sculptures trace their lineage back to the 1960s, [minimalism](#) and to the introduction of [phenomenology](#) into the discourse of art.^[3] Additionally, all of Lazzarini's sculptures are created out of the same materials as the things on which they are based; for example, the *skulls* (2001), which Lazzarini first exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art, were created out of cast bone.

<https://artelectronicmedia.com/en/artwork/payphone-robert-lazzarini-2/>





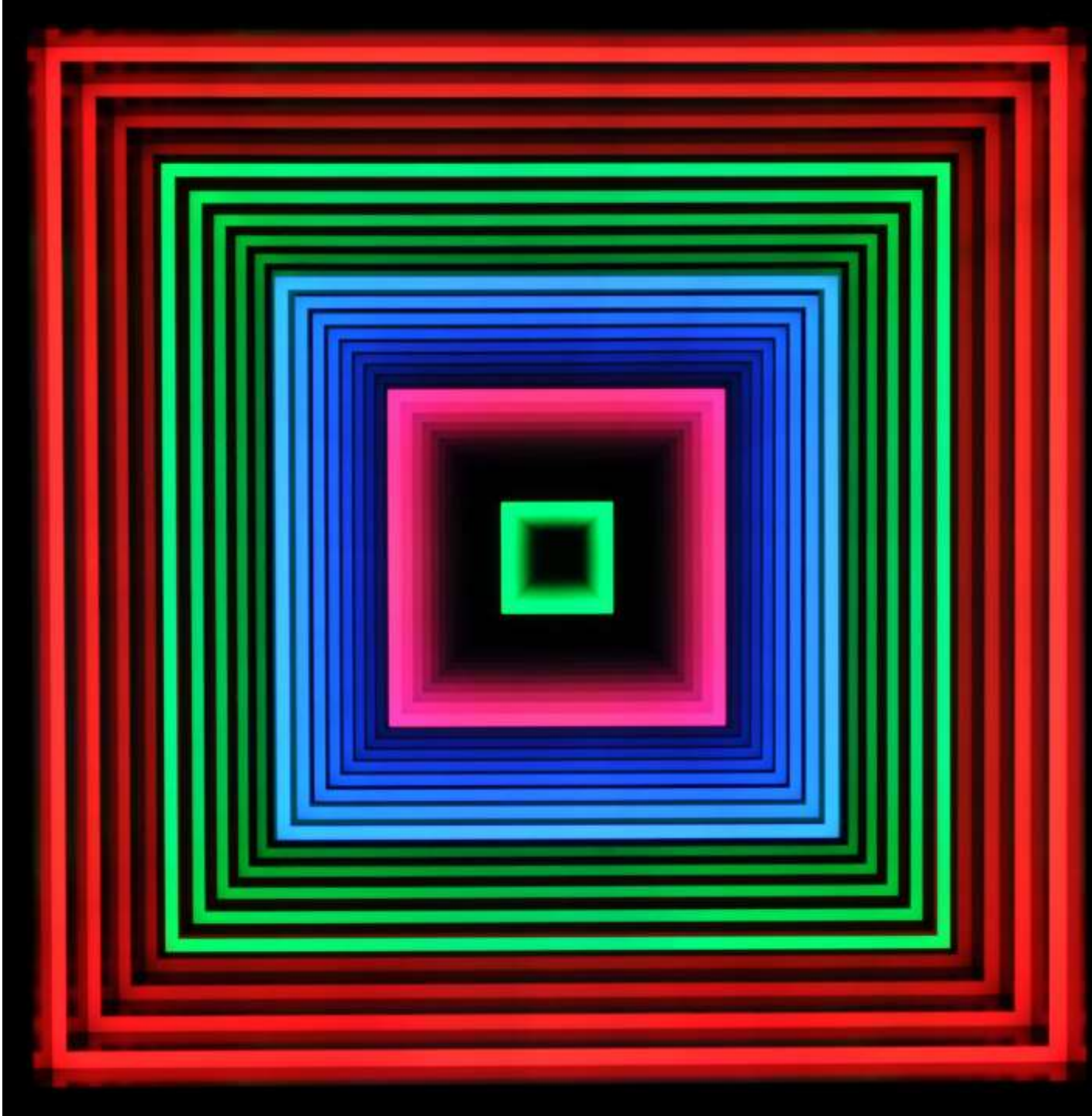
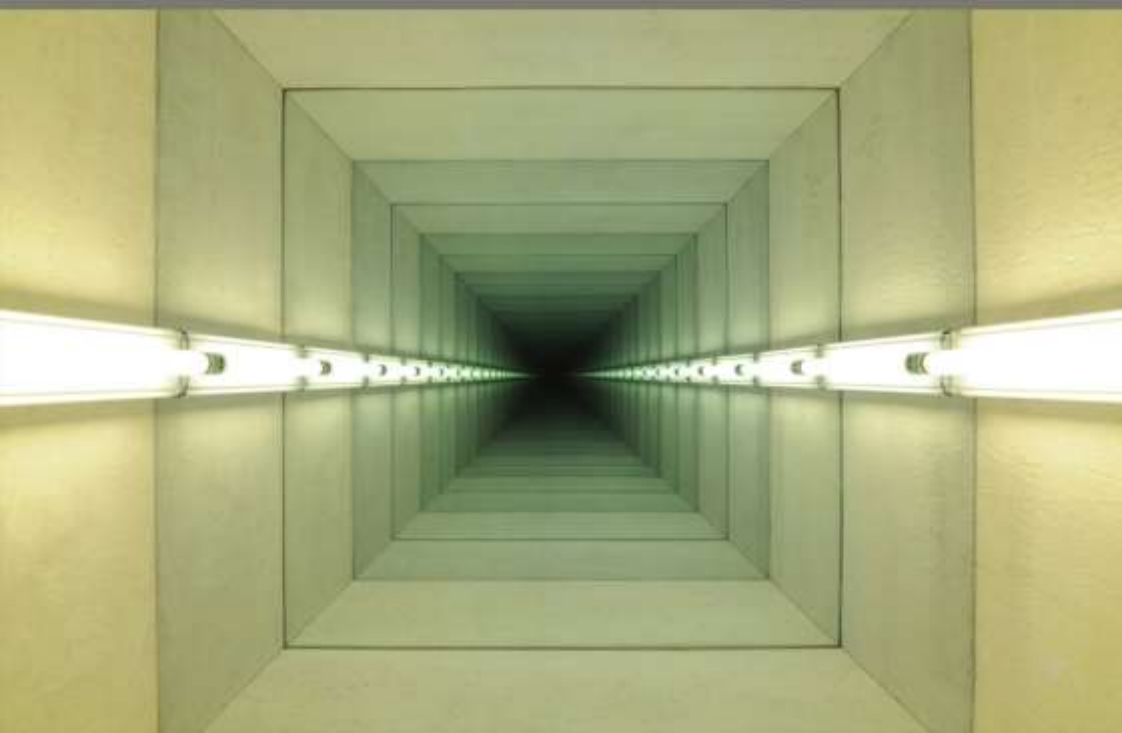


Chul-Hyun Ahn

Korean artist Chul Hyun Ahn investigates infinite space through his use of light, color, and illusion. His interest in the gap between the conscious and subconscious compels him to construct illusionistic environments, providing a spaces for contemplation. Ahn's sculpture urges the viewer to consider man's boundless ability for physical and spiritual travel while exploiting notions of infinity and the poetics of emptiness.

Ahn has translated geometric painting and the Zen practice of meditation into an art of light, space, and technology, enticing the viewer to look deeply into his frame of environments. His works create an optical and bodily illusion of infinity through apparent limitless space. The notion of the void distinguishes his work amid the vast panoply of ways that artists have used light as a medium since the experiments of the 1920s and particularly since the 1960s.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xlqBdvrJ4VE>





Olafur Eliasson

With the support of his interdisciplinary studio, Olafur Eliasson produces epic, technically sophisticated sculptures and installations, using natural elements like light, water, and air to alter viewers' sensory perceptions. From 120 foot tall waterfalls floating above New York's East River to chunks of arctic ice installed in a Parisian plaza, his immersive environments, public installations, and architectural projects are motivated by the belief that art has the power to make viewers think differently about the world. Expanding the role of the artist, Eliasson contemplates how art can function as a "civic muscle," offering solutions to global problems like climate change and renewable energy.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FaYdmuG_0Rw&t=9s

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SsaRL6eqgU> (13 mins Art 21)





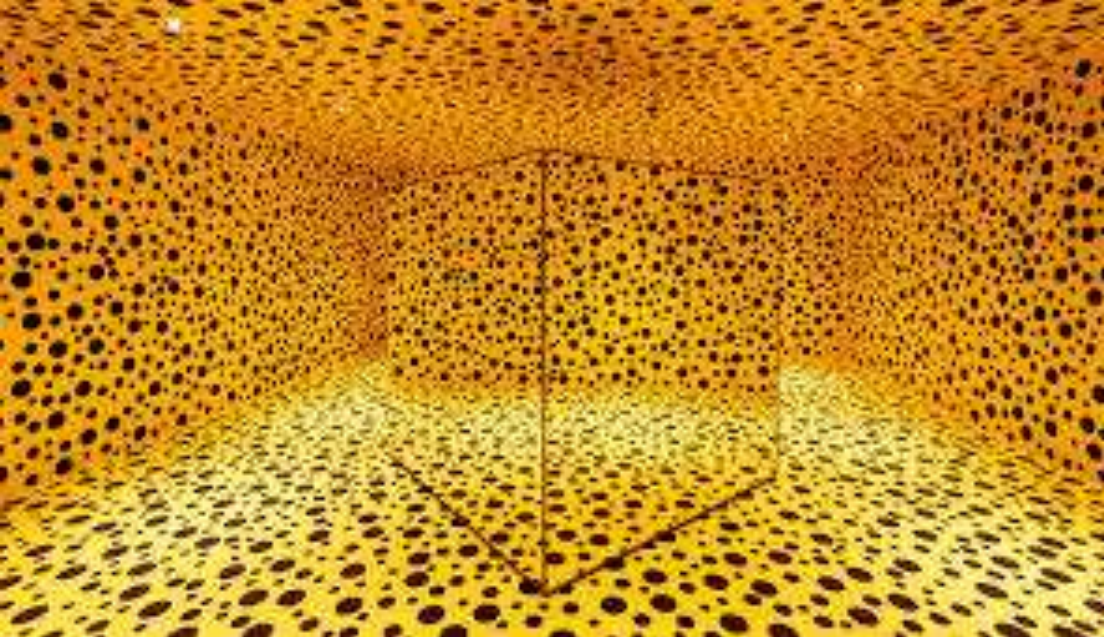
Yayoi Kusama

Yayoi Kusama had a breakthrough in 1965 when she produced *Infinity Mirror Room—Phalli's Field*. Using mirrors, she transformed the intense repetition of her earlier paintings and works on paper into a perceptual experience.

[Yayoi Kusama](#)'s interactive *Obliteration Room* begins as a white space which visitors are invited to cover with stickers. Over the course of a few weeks the room is transformed from a blank canvas into an explosion of colour, with thousands of spots stuck over every available surface.

TateShots produced this timelapse video of *The Obliteration Room* covering the first few weeks of its presentation at Tate Modern. It was conceived as a project for children, and was first staged at the Queensland Art Gallery in 2002.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rRZR3nsileA&t=20s>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3k-86WrmHQ> (good)
- <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/yayoi-kusama-8094/yayoi-kusamas-obliteration-room>







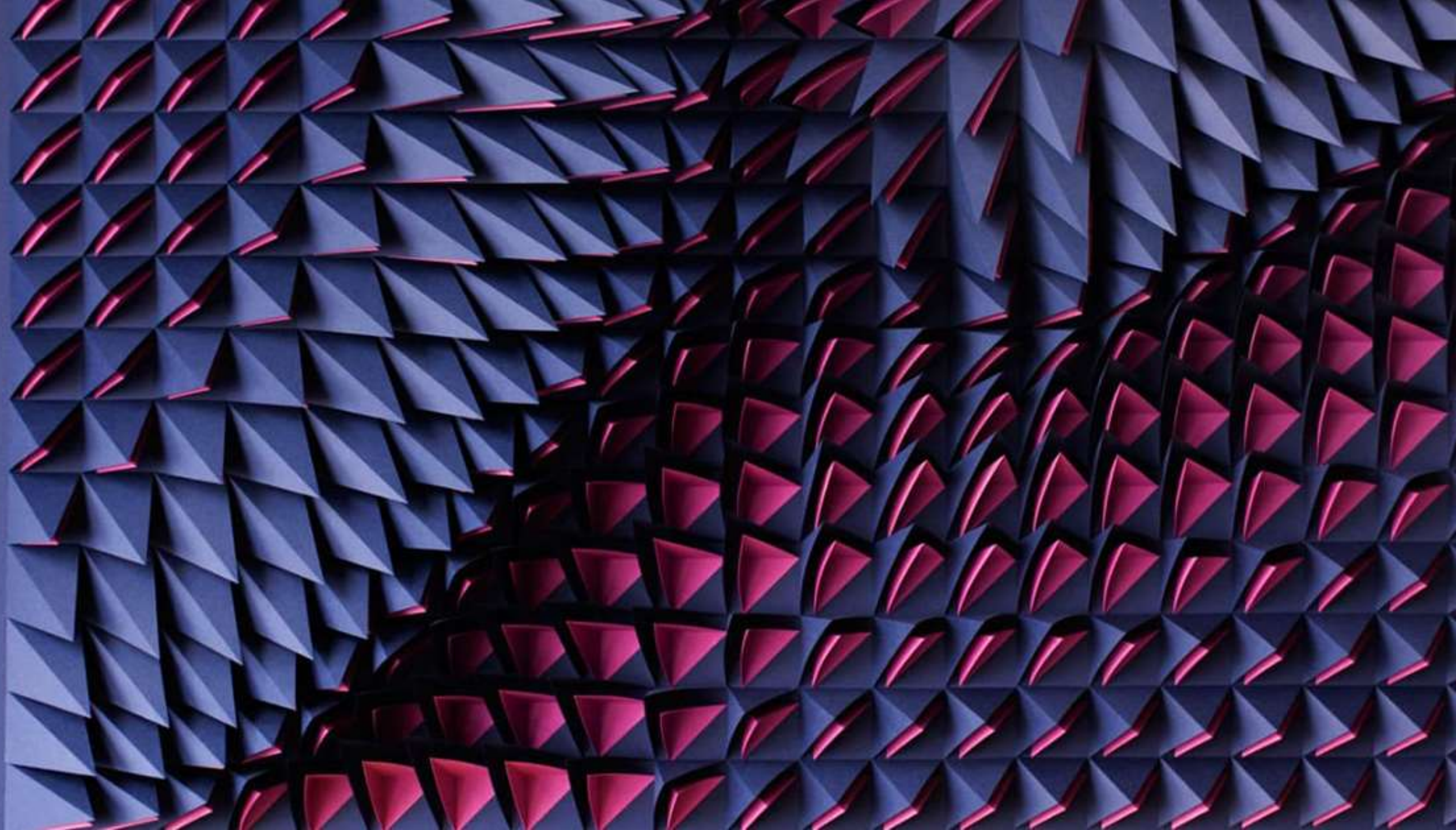


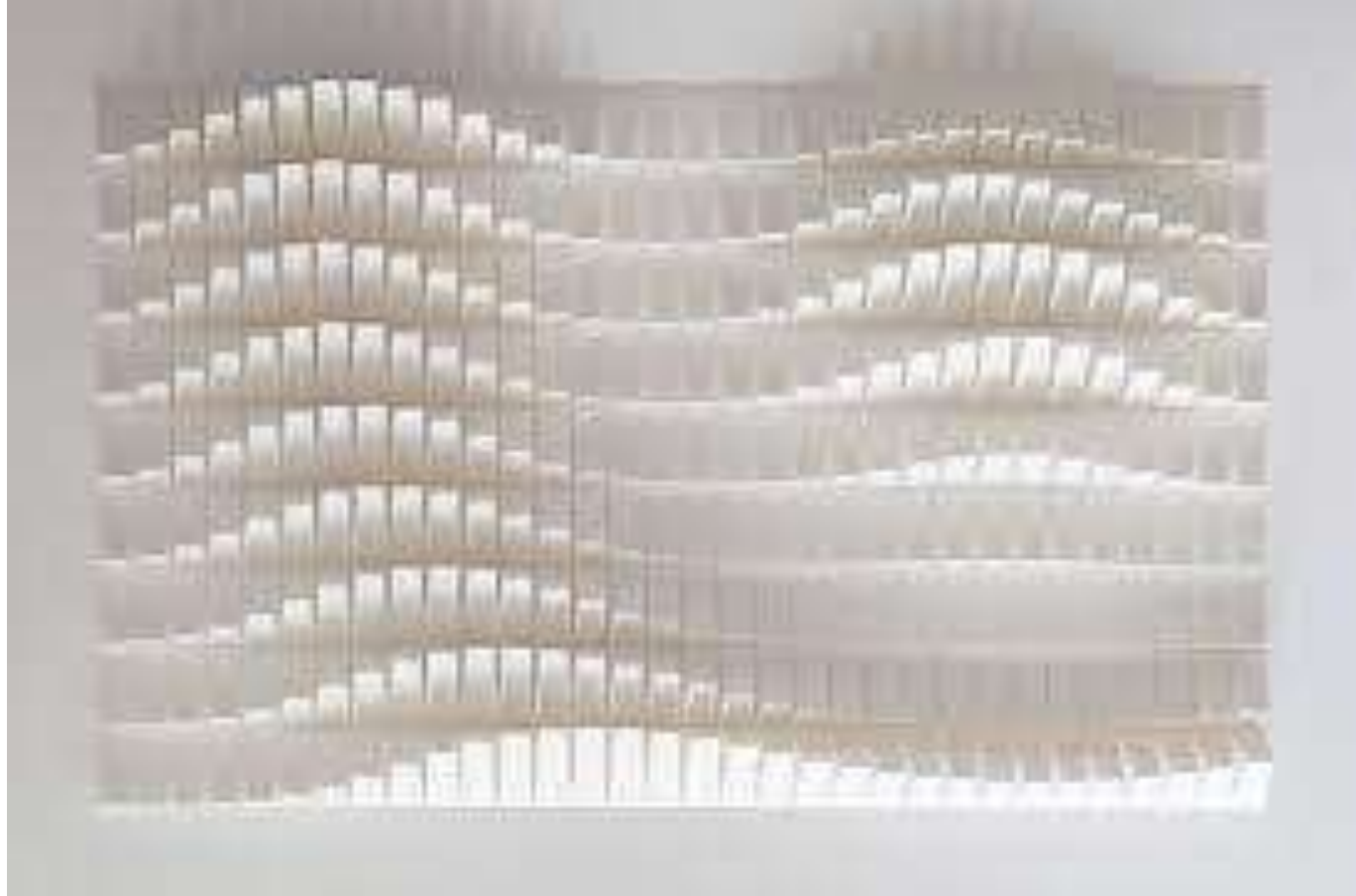
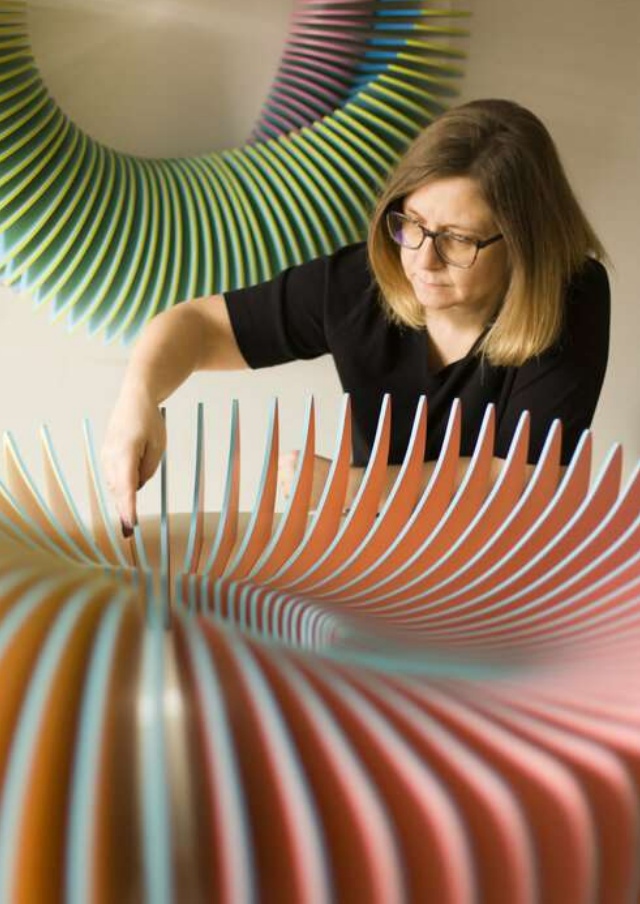
Anna Kruhelska

In the meticulous folds of [Anna Kruhelska](#)'s paper sculptures, contrasts of light, shadow, and hue give the impression of undulating motion. An abiding interest in form, symmetry, and space developed from the Lodz-based artist's work as an architect, combining precise engineering and design skills with an interest in geometry and origami.

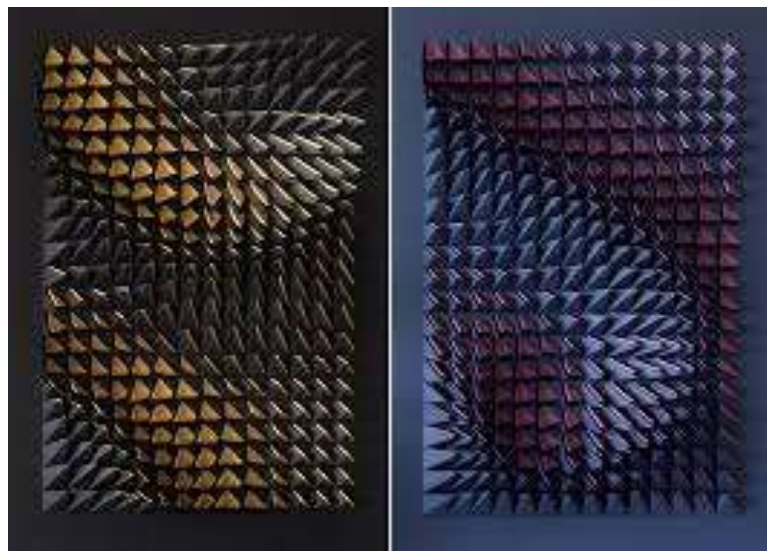
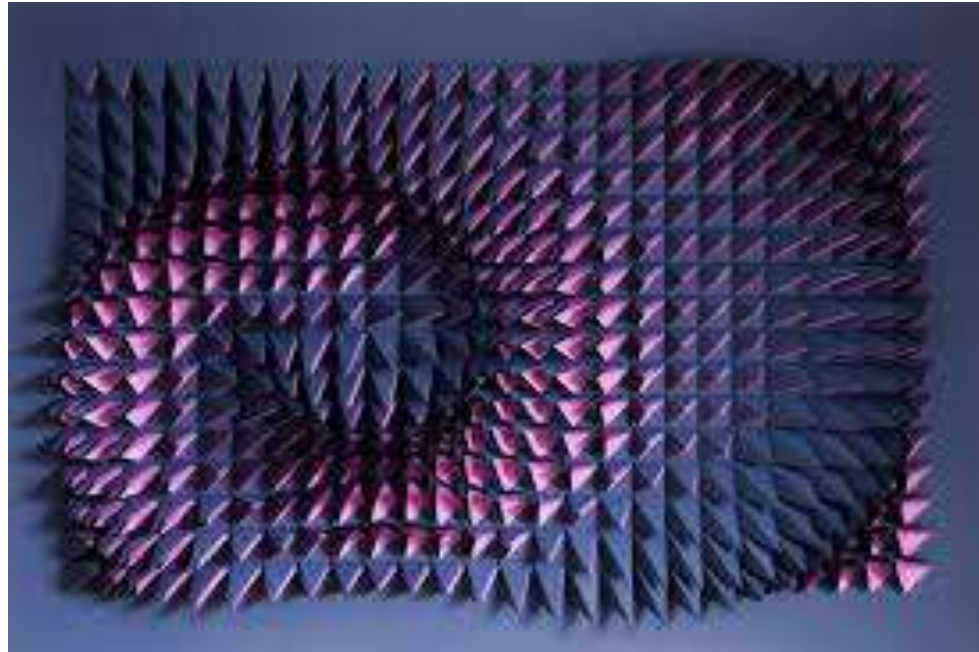
Reminiscent of the spatial explorations of [Günther Oecker](#), humble materials form delicate patterns to create perception-bending, three-dimensional wall pieces.

<https://vimeo.com/438980716>









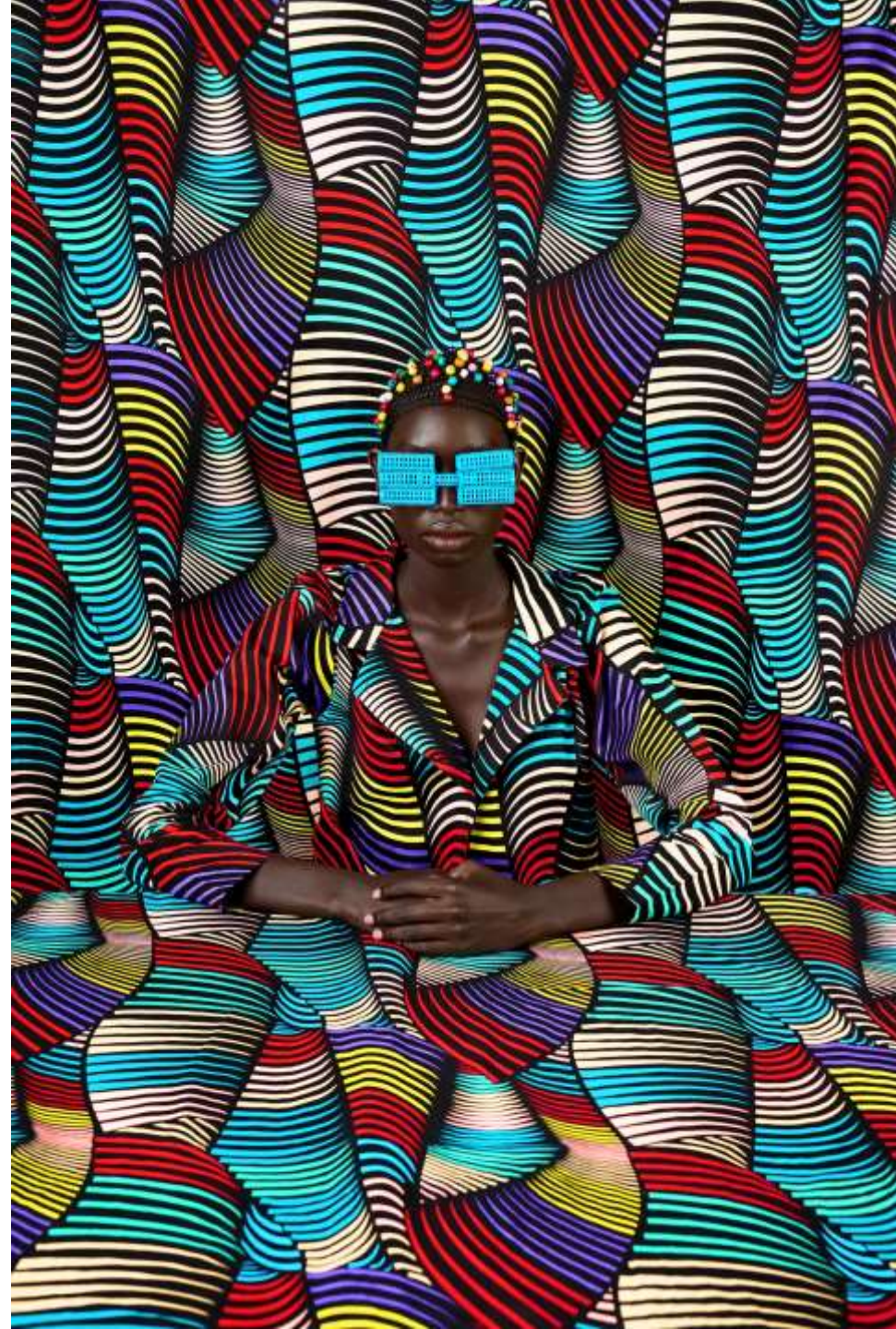
Thandiwe Muriu

Thandiwe Muriu's work showcases Africa's unique mix of vibrant textiles, cultural practices, and beauty ideologies. Creating surreal illusions that are not digital manipulations but rather pure photography, she confronts issues surrounding identity and self-perception while seeking to redefine female empowerment through the application of her choice of materials, such as fabric and common household items. Her work is marked by precision and intentionality from the conception of a piece through to its final printed form. She completes her visual illusions by printing on special paper, making the work appear more like paintings rather than photographs.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O_FwH1TYfTk&t=8s





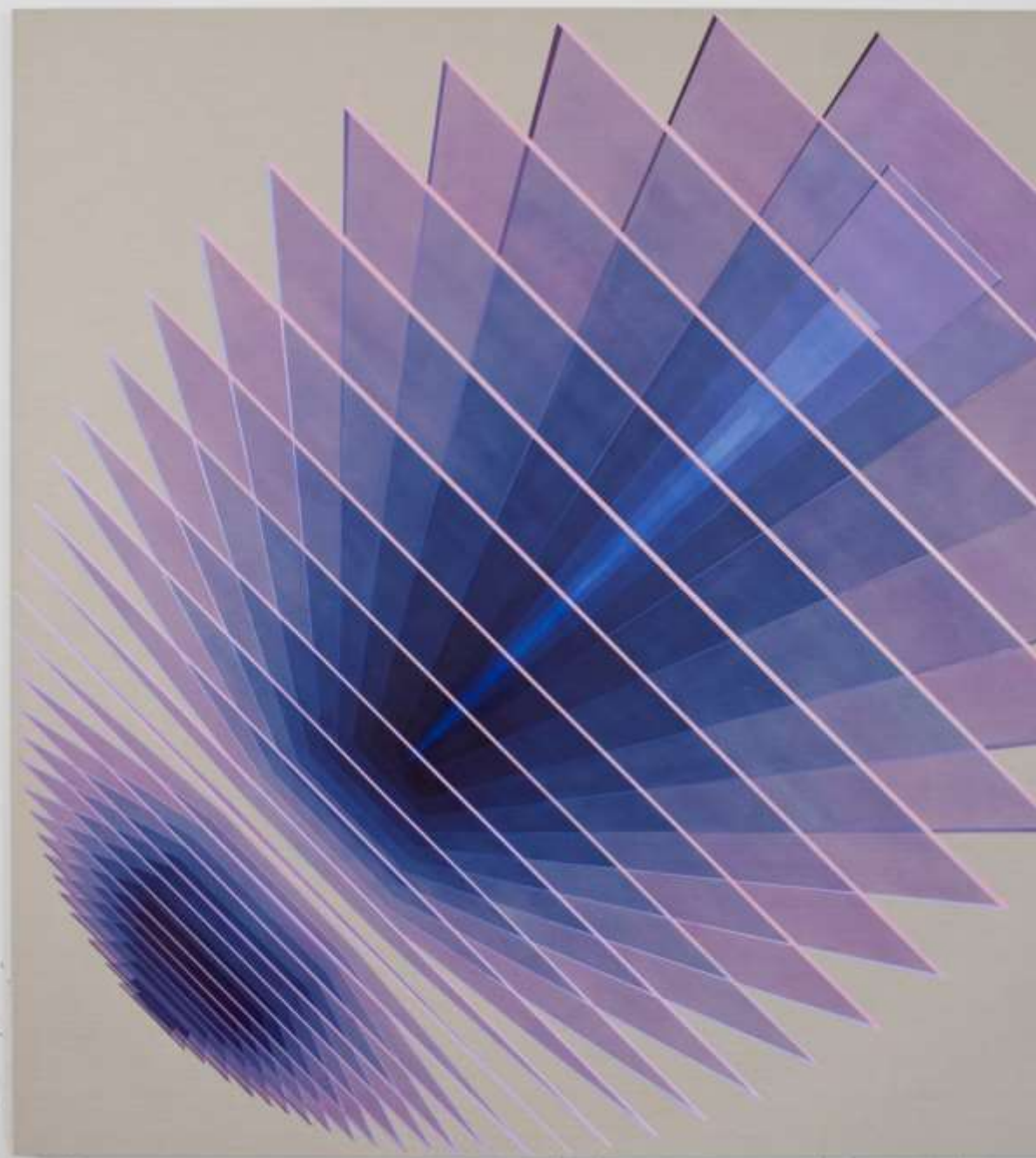
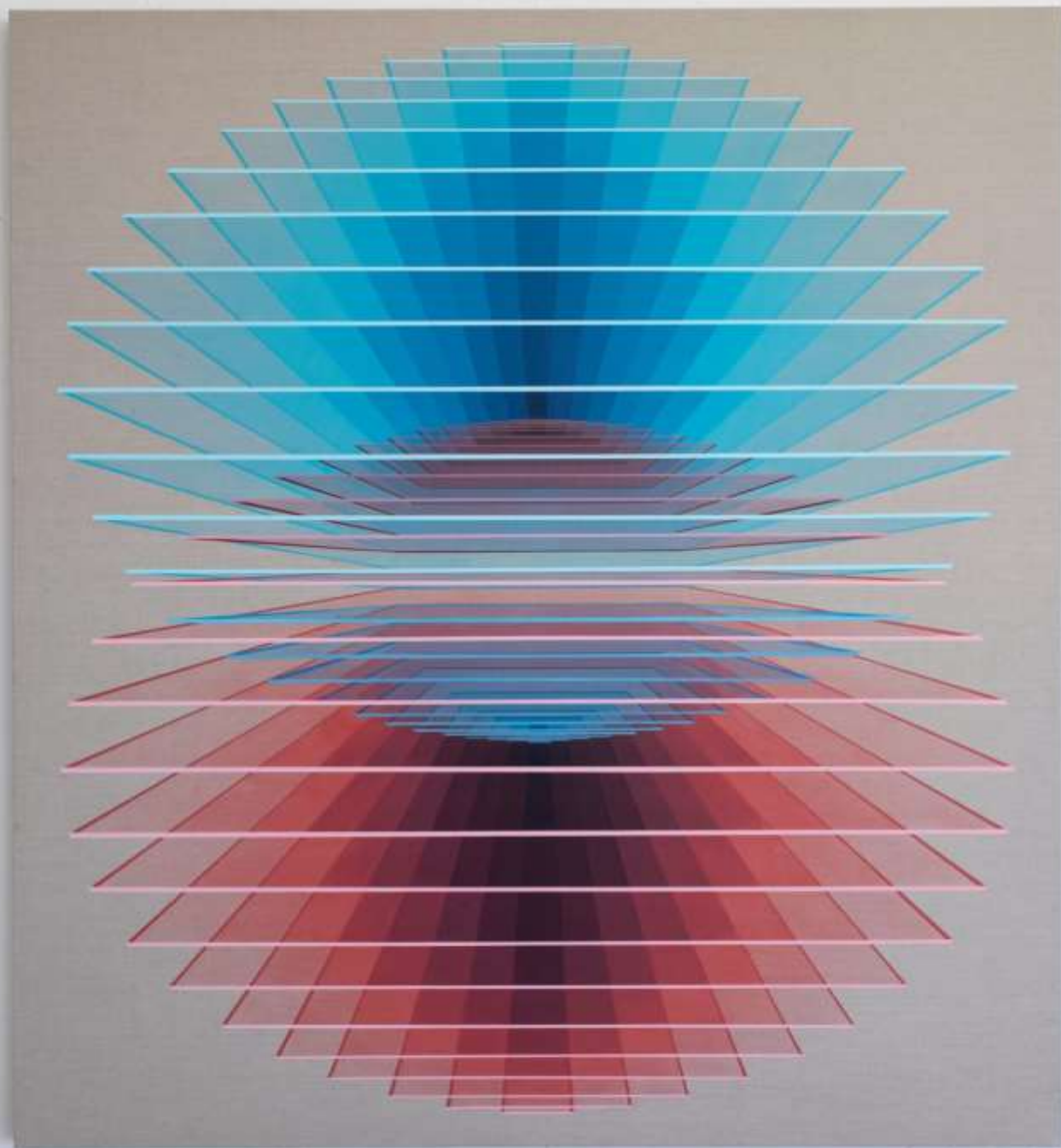


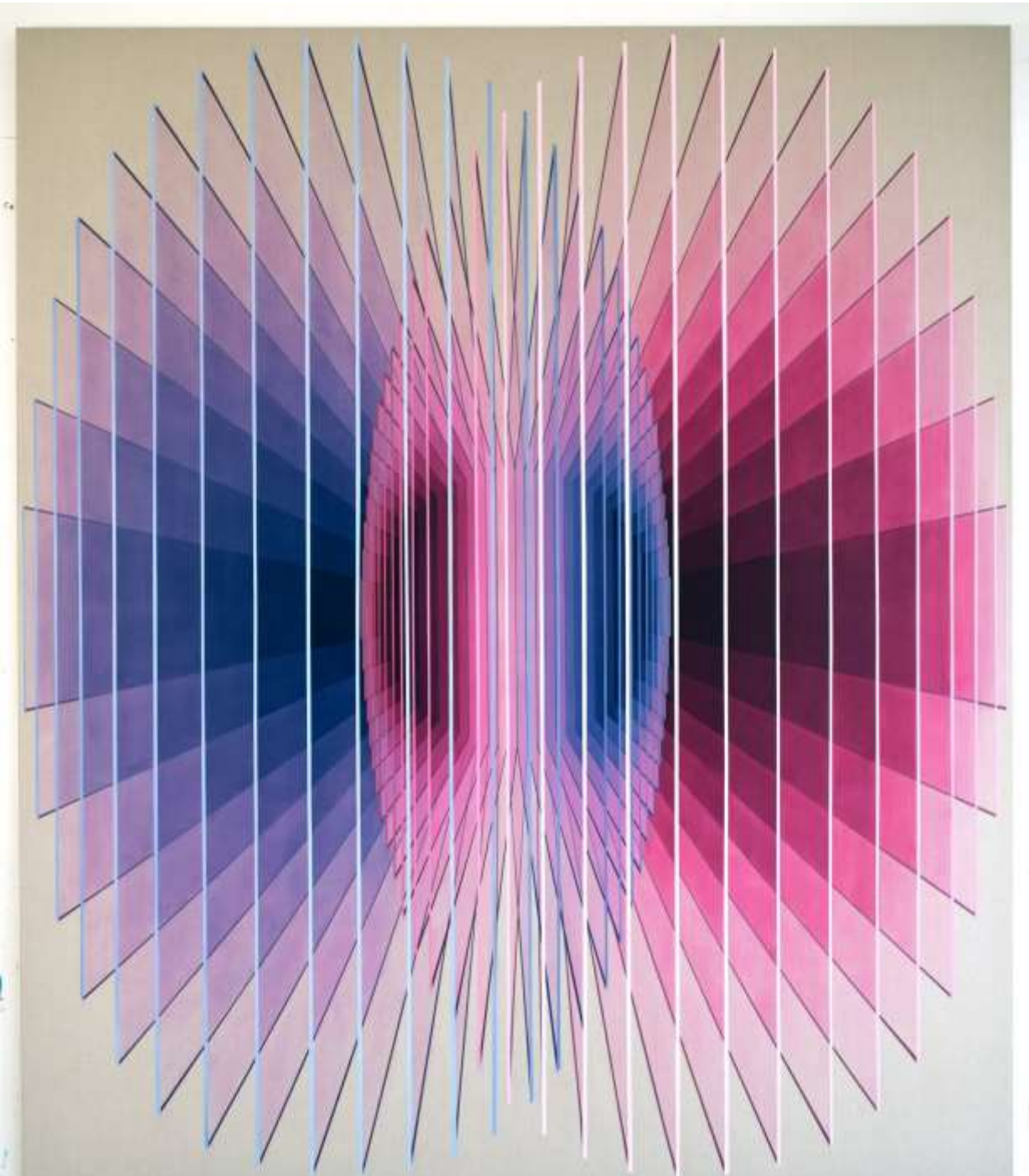
Daniel Mullen

What are the visual impacts of converging planes of color? This question is central to Scottish artist [Daniel Mullen](#)'s most recent series of paintings, which displays stacks of thin, rectangular sheets in exacting, abstract structures. "I am looking more at Rothko's body of work and studying the vibrations of color and the almost alchemic effect that his work has on the sense," the Rotterdam-based artist tells Colossal.

Comprised of meticulous angles and lines on linen, the acrylic paintings are studies of precision, geometry, and perception, allowing each element to collide in a mathematically aligned composition. Mullen's process involves measuring and taping the individual planes before laying the slight, translucent marks. "In this way, the work is built up slowly over time, incorporating irregularities, brush strokes, and bleeding paint into a work that breathes, floats, and expands through the energy of color."

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= PC2lhwIPwA&t=6s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PC2lhwIPwA&t=6s)





Alicja Kwade

Alicja Kwade is a Polish-German contemporary visual artist. Her sculptures and installations focus on the subjectivity of time and space. Kwade lives and works in Berlin.

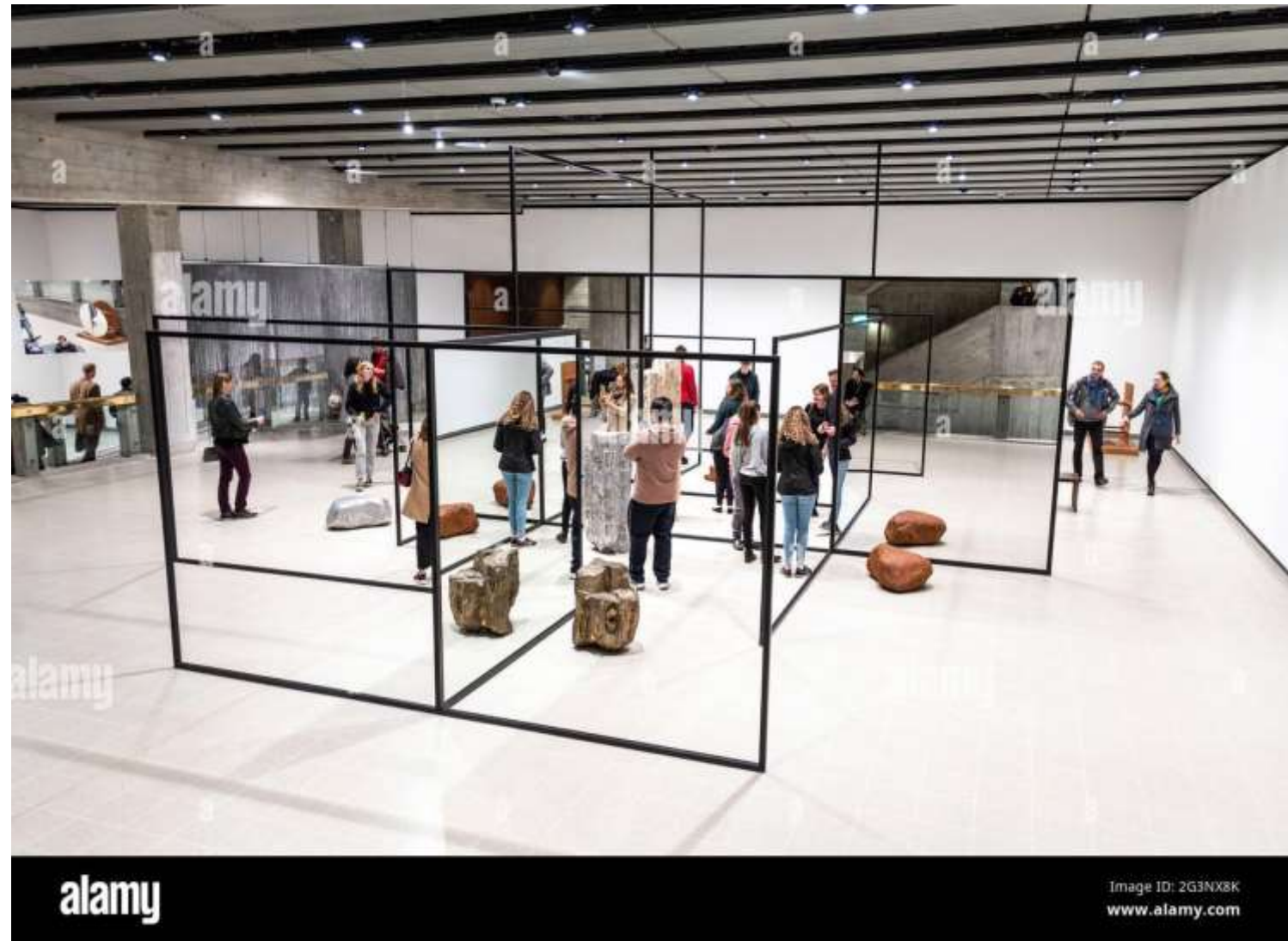
In her large-scale installation *WeltenLinie* 2020, commissioned by the NGV, nothing is quite what it seems. Using double-sided mirrors and carefully placed, paired objects, Alicja Kwade achieves the illusion of sudden and surprising material transformations. Mirrored panels reflect part of an object, yet at the same time, a mirror image of the same object is revealed. In this way a new, illusionary object is created through the overlaying of reality and appearance.

As viewers move around and through Kwade's steel-framed hexagonal structure, the way one reads and understands the objects within it shifts dramatically, depending on perspective. *WeltenLinie* is more of an experience than a static installation, which comes to life through the viewers movement within the structure.

In her cross-media work, Alicja Kwade deals with perceptual structures and basic physical laws. Optical experiences and their deceptions characterize her creations, which regularly transgress and question habitual ways of perception.

- <https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/alicia-kwade-weltenlinie/>





alamy

Image ID: 2G3NX8K
www.alamy.com

Robert Peek

Rotterdam-based photographer [Robert Peek](#) creates ghostly photographic stills of botanical forms that wouldn't look out of place on Miss Havisham's festering dining room table. On first inspection, Peek's work resembles paintings with smoke dripping from the flowers' petals and leaves. Colors are drawn out and enhanced, while other hues are shrouded in the white veil. With his perception-bending methodology, close-ups of lavender and thistle heads are transformed into mythical creations that peek out from the hazy background.









Chris Soal

South African artist [Chris Soal](#) combines concrete and other industrial materials with found objects such as toothpicks and [bottle caps](#) to create conceptual sculptures. Often set in contrasting textural elements, thousands of single-use objects take on a new identity and aesthetic as part of a collective. The works are a commentary on the destructive relationship humans have with nature while also reflecting notions of value and perception.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ES13KhXkVm0&t=104s>





Sebastian Brajkovic

Amsterdam-based designer [Sebastian Brajkovic](#)'s ([previously](#)) distorted sculptural forms look as though traditional French furniture has been pulled through a time loop. Brajkovic's work—part furniture, part sculpture—explores the process of distorting interior designs and the effect his skewed pieces have on human perception and emotion.

- <https://vimeo.com/463761669>





Sam Jaffe

- <https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2015/06/new-england-caterpillars-sam-jaffe/>
- <https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2013/09/illusion-science-gallery/>

Assignment Suggestions...

- Play with color relativity: Cut out different colored objects and place them on different backgrounds. Arrange the photographs side-by-side
- Create an artwork that confuses foreground and background
- Create an artwork with distorted or differing perspectives
- Obliterate an image in dots
- Create an artwork that fools the eye