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Sandler, Irving, 1925-2018

Madison, Wisconsin: Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2003

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Judy Pfaff

Judy Pfaff

by Irving Sandler

Introduction by Russell Panczenko

For the past thirty years Judy Pfaff's irreverent, idiosyncratic installations have regularly challenged expectations to produce an art of great originality and strong emotional impact. In *Judy Pfaff* the artist's unusual choice of materials, spontaneous approach, and vast creative energy are strongly displayed, inviting readers into a world as much about her commitment to "being and becoming" as it is about the art that results.

In this important monograph emphasizing the distinctive installations for which Pfaff is best known, the full range of her career is explored, from the mid-1970s to the present. Originating in a highly successful exhibition at the Elvehjem Museum, this engaging treatment of Pfaff's work expands to contain a thorough essay by Irving Sandler, the curator responsible for Pfaff's first gallery show in New York, as well as a complete exhibition history and an extensive bibliography on the artist and her work. More than eighty illustrations complete the first comprehensive look at the career of this influential artist.

Irving Sandler is the co-founder of Artists Space, in New York. Russell Panczenko is Director of the Elvehjem Museum of Art, in Madison, Wisconsin.

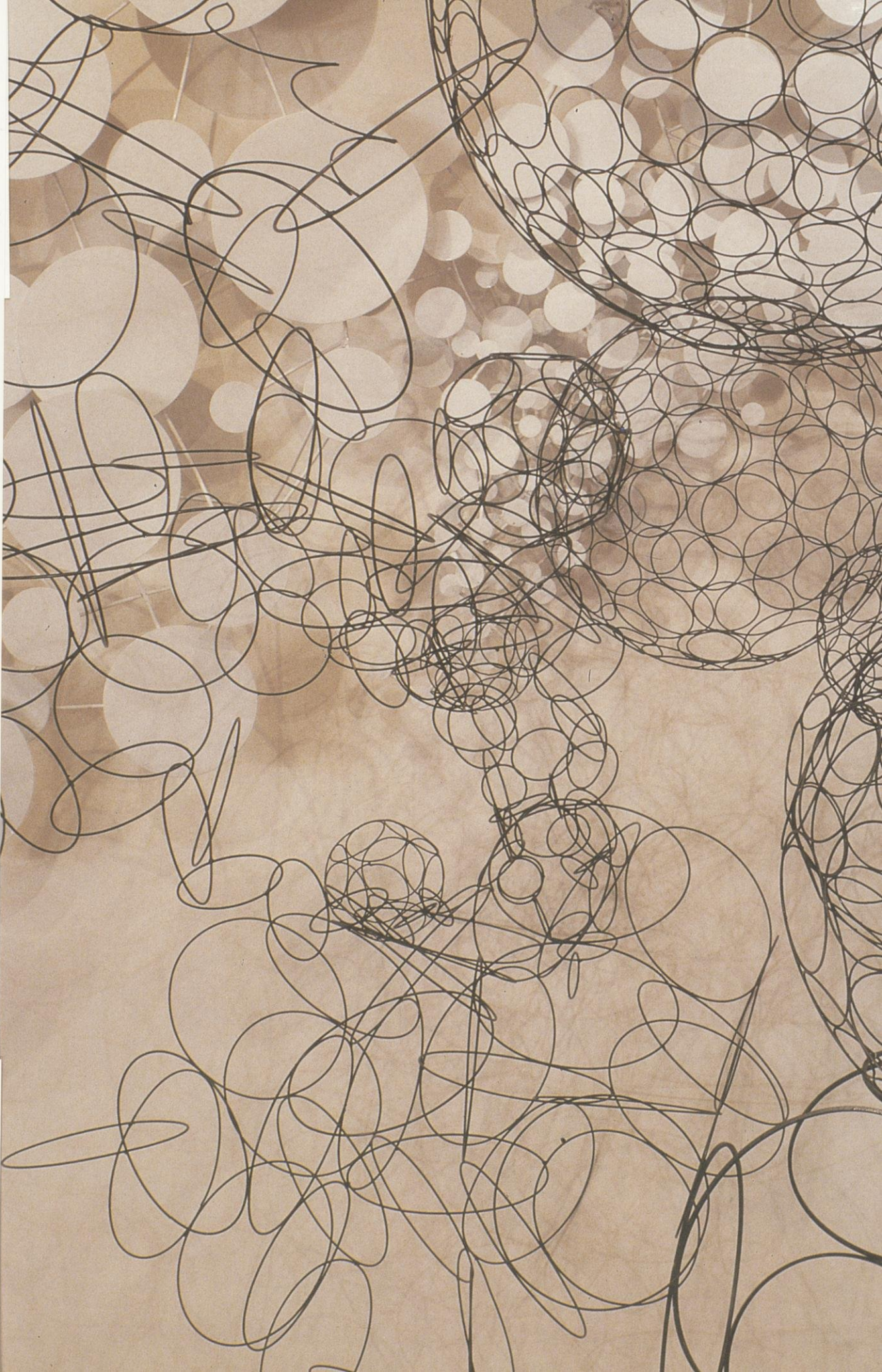
cover:

N.Y.C. - B.Q.E. (BROOKLYN QUEENS EXPRESSWAY), 1987

Painted steel, plastic laminates, fiberglass, wood, paint, lawn furniture, awnings

15 x 35 x 9 feet

Installation: *Biennial Exhibition*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY







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HUDSON HILLS PRESS
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in association with ELVEHJEM MUSEUM OF ART,
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

First Edition

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Frontispiece: Judy Pfaff in her Kingston, NY, studio, 2001.

Photo by Miron Russell Panczenko.

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INTRODUCTION

The present monograph resulted from the exhibition of Judy Pfaff's sculpture, drawings, and prints, *The Art of Judy Pfaff*, which the Elvehjem Museum of Art presented from April 28 through August 12, 2001. The exhibition also included the site-specific installation *If I Had a Boat*, which had been created in the Elvehjem's Paige Court in August 2000 and remained on view through the closing of her exhibition the following August.

By the time Judy created her installation in Paige Court, her art was already familiar to Madison collectors and museum audiences. In the spring of 1995, the museum had presented an exhibition of the prints produced at Crown Point Press starting in the late 1980s. In February 1996, Tandem Press, an affiliate of the Department of Art at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, invited her to Madison as artist-in-residence. This initial visit to Tandem proved so mutually satisfactory that Judy subsequently returned to Madison numerous times. The Elvehjem Museum of Art was also a direct beneficiary of these highly productive visits. As the official archive for Tandem Press, the museum received an impression of each of the editioned prints into its permanent collection. Over time, this intense exposure to the artist and her work gave rise to a desire to see more of her work and put the Tandem Press prints into a broader context.

THE INSTALLATION

Installations are and always have been the heart of Judy Pfaff's art. Early in 1998, during one of her visits to Madison, I invited her to consider creating an installation in the Elvehjem's Paige Court. I was, in many respects, presenting her with a daunting opportunity. The Chicago architect Harry Weese, who designed the Elvehjem facility in the late 1960s, had a distinctive style. Fur-

opposite page

IF I HAD A BOAT, 2000

Mechanical steel tubing with copper patina, expanding urethane foam, plaster, plant matter, dye, cable, ball chain, lead

40 × 63 × 40 feet

Installation: Paige Court, Elvehjem Museum of Art,
University of Wisconsin–Madison

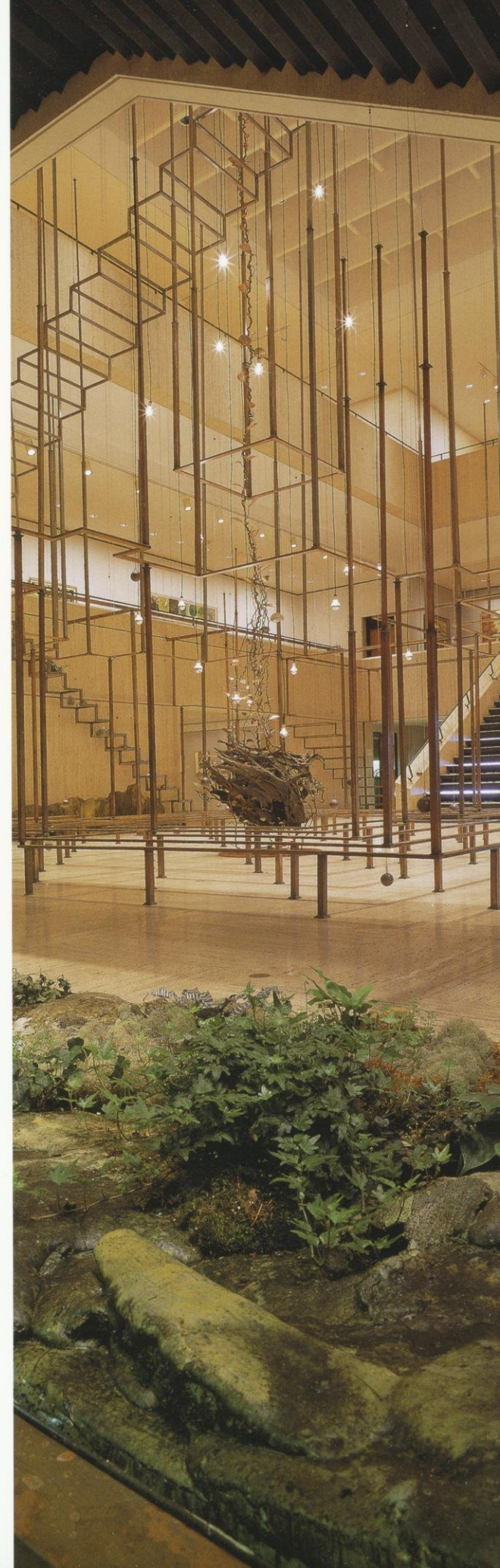
thermore, Paige Court, where the installation was to be located, is where the architect expressed his aesthetic values most emphatically. Staircases and open balconies dominate this spacious public area: a grand staircase leads from Paige Court up to the main exhibition galleries on the third floor while a floating staircase overhead ascends from that floor to the one above. Surrounding balconies on each of the upper levels open onto the court below.

Creating a site-specific installation in such a distinctive setting was challenging enough. However, the museum stipulated several additional considerations. Given the open nature of the architecture of Paige Court, the museum did not want an installation that would be a solid mass in the middle of the space, closing off sight-lines from one side of the building to the other. Public access to the grand staircase in Paige Court had to be maintained at all times, which meant that work on the installation, for the most part, would have to be carried out in public view. And the integrity of the travertine wall surfaces had to be respected. The building itself imposed a final constraint: because the museum does not have a loading dock it is impossible to bring in large prefabricated sections. The piece had to be constructed right in Paige Court. Other than the enumerated considerations, the artist was given *carte blanche*.

Judy responded enthusiastically to the proposal and over the next two years, we shipped scale models of the site to her studio in Kingston, New York, and brought her back to Madison several times to study the space itself. During one of these exploratory visits, she inquired about the possibility of using living plants in the installation. And, two weeks before she actually began work on it, she telephoned to announce that the installation would be some kind of maze. Knowing that Judy works intuitively I did not press her for a detailed plan or drawings. It was tacitly understood between us that this was not her way. We accepted the fact that the installation would only be created in situ. The long gestation period primarily served to generate a reserve of energy within the artist that would explode in intense creative activity on arrival.

Judy appeared in Madison on the first of August in 2000 with two trucks filled with materials, tools, and several assistants. She even brought an outdoor barbecue grill to entertain her crew. Work began immediately. Judy's energy and organizational skills were indeed amazing. By midmorning of the first day, she had converted the adjacent Oscar Mayer Gallery that had been vacated for her use into a fully functional advanced metal shop. By the morning of the second day, students from the UW-Madison Department of Art were cleaning rust from hundreds of feet of square steel tubing in an open area adjacent to the museum building. At the same time, in Paige Court, her assistants began welding together the fundamental maze. Later that same day, consultants began to arrive from several departments on campus to advise on the survival of various plants and mosses.

Construction progressed steadily and quickly. Steel spires, also made of square steel tubing, but of lesser dimension, sprang up from the maze; next meandering horizontals wove them into an urbanlike fabric. A second generation of thinner spires soon rose from the first. When the spires themselves could reach no higher, a wire attached to the tip of each continued the journey upward toward the skylights overhead. Once draped over the skylights, the wires dropped back downward stopping at various levels throughout the installation. To the end of each wire was at-



tached a cast lead cannon ball, whose weight kept its related spire erect. Finally, a number of architectural features, stairs, platforms, some actually functional, others merely mimicking the real, filled in the open the spaces of the installation. The plants, mosses, and stones with their accompanying grow lights anchored the whole to the earth. Judy installed them just before returning to her teaching obligations at Bard College in early September.

The dramatic centerpiece of the Paige Court installation, a gnarled tree stump, suspended from the skylight above by a steel vine with broad copper-colored leaves just above the floor, touching it here and there with one or another of its hanging roots, appeared the following year. It was installed for the opening of Judy's Elvehjem exhibition in the spring of 2001. The late appearance of the centerpiece refreshed the impact of the installation on audiences that were already familiar with it and visually linked it with some of the works that were included in the exhibition. I must record one additional observation about Judy's installation in Paige Court: it was site-specific in the truest sense of the term. She worked out the overall composition as well as the details of the installation in direct response to the surrounding architecture. Her respect for and desire to interact with, and even playfully engage, the existing architecture of Harry Weese were evident both in the progress of the installation as well as in the final outcome. Her steel stairlike forms deliberately ran counter or perpendicular to the existing staircases of Harry Weese, moving the eye and the imagination from level to level, the same way as do the actual staircases, and blurring the distinction between installation and existing architecture. She chemically stained the steel tubing that she used throughout the piece to a copper hue in chromatic consonance with the travertine surfaces of the architecture. She filled the space but kept it visually open as the architect originally intended it. She also tweaked him a little by the introduction of living plants to, as she put it, "warm up the somewhat cold effect of all that stone."

The most frequent comment from visitors about the installation *If I Had a Boat*, after the initial reactions of both pleasure and awe, was "it looks as if it were always here." And, one year later, after its removal, museum staff members were subjected to numerous passionate expressions of loss. The strong site-specificity of the installation was a very important factor in its successful public and critical reception, and it more than justified the Elvehjem's program of inviting artists periodically to take creative advantage of the opportunities inherent in the architecture of Paige Court.

THE EXHIBITION

On April 28, 2001, the Elvehjem opened *The Art of Judy Pfaff*. The exhibition, which continued through August 12, included sculptures, drawings, and prints from the late 1970s through 2001, the year of the Elvehjem's installation. Intended as an overview of Judy's work to place *If I Had a Boat* into context, the exhibition was not without its challenges.

A significant percentage of Judy's work consists of installations. A large number of these, given that they are as resolutely site-specific as the Elvehjem's *If I Had a Boat*, cannot be

re-created. Other kinds of installations consist of amalgamations of her drawings, prints, or even sculptures; each configuration of these potentially independent elements is for her a new work of art. In this kind of installation, Judy uses her earlier works as another artist might use found objects. It is also rarely possible to re-create these installations as they are seldom documented in detail. Furthermore, many of the components have long passed into private and public collections and are not readily available. A few of Judy's installations can be re-created for a particular exhibition, as was the case with *Flusso e riflusso*. However, Judy, as is the case with many artists, is

FLUSSO E RIFLUSSO (STATE 1), 1992

Cedar driftwood, steel, woven wire, umbrella frames, cable
12 × 25 × 20 feet

Installation: Max Protetch Gallery, New York, NY



EIGHT DRAWINGS (left to right, top to bottom)

Untitled, 1999, encaustic, 15 × 95 ¼ inches (framed)

The Portals IV, 1999, collage and encaustic, 16 ¼ × 56 ¼ inches (framed)

The Portals VII, 1999, collage and encaustic, 13 ½ × 43 ⅝ inches (framed)

Untitled (from *Los Libros* series), 1995, ink and oil stick on paper, 15 × 32 ½ inches (framed)

Untitled #3 (from *Los Libros* series), 1995, ink and oil stick on paper, 15 × 33 ¼ inches (framed)

Untitled, 1999, ink, oil stick, and encaustic on paper, 11 ⅞ × 22 ⅝ inches (framed)

Untitled, 1999, ink and encaustic on paper, 11 ⅞ × 40 inches (framed)

Las Manos, Los Píedres II, 1995, ink, oil stick, and encaustic on paper, 14 ¼ × 32 inches (framed)

Installation: Elvehjem Museum of Art,
University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2001

less interested in accurately recapturing the original; for her, installation means the process of creation and she feels free to make changes in her own work. Thus, for example, *Flusso e riflusso* as presented in the Elvehjem's exhibition of 2001 differs from its original presentation at the Max Protetch Gallery in 1992 due to the introduction of blown-glass components. During the intervening period, Judy had spent time at the Pilchuck School in Seattle, an experience that moved her profoundly. Perhaps, in the case of this kind of work, it is appropriate to talk about "states" of the sculpture as one talks about "states" in printmaking.

The Elvehjem's exhibition included nine sculptures from Judy's personal collection. For Judy the line between sculpture and installation is permeable. Most of her sculptures are complex, large in scale, and for the most part must be reassembled at the time of presentation. However, unlike the installations, Judy fixes the composition of each sculpture at the time of its conception and, except for minor accommodations necessitated by the exhibition space, she makes no further changes. Also the sculptures retain their autonomy and, as of this writing, have not been in-





corporated into a larger installation as frequently happens with her drawings and/or prints. That said, it should be kept in mind that Judy feels very strongly about being involved in the design of her exhibitions; in her mind an exhibition of her work is primarily a larger and more complex installation and an opportunity to respond to yet another environment.

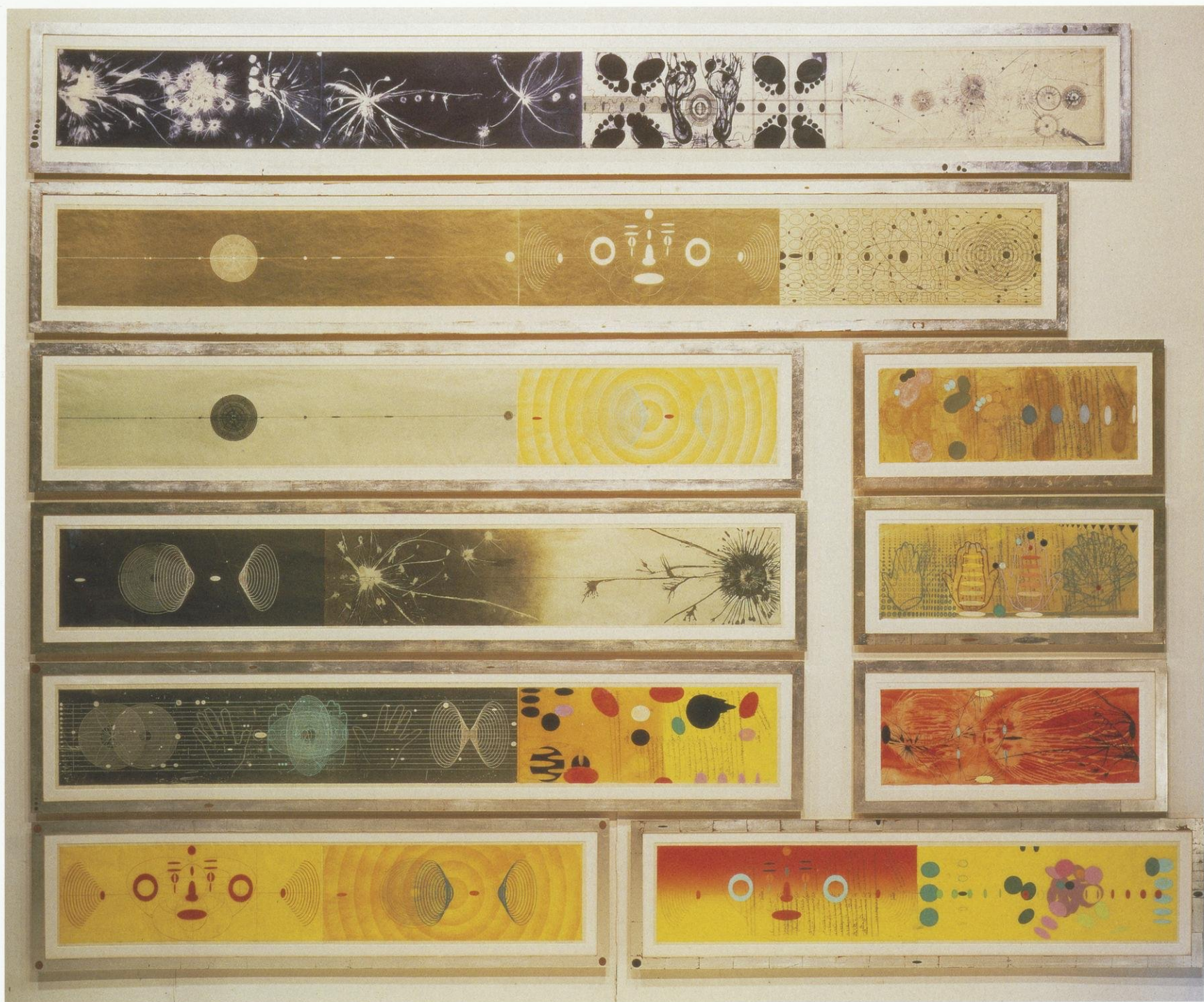
Of the twenty-four drawings that were in the Elvehjem's exhibition, all borrowed from Judy's own holdings, only two large ones were presented as individual works of art. The artist composed the others into a number of clusters, each of which became, in effect, a new work of art. The individual drawings participated in them merely as component parts. The clusters were not pre-planned; they were made up of whatever drawings were available. Although the drawings in any single such composition were generally from the same time period, chronological consistency was not a primary concern for Judy; she focused entirely on the aesthetic effect of the whole. In some instances, although this did not happen at the Elvehjem, Judy has even painted gallery walls to link better the various components into an aesthetic whole. For Judy this clustering is the preferred approach to exhibiting her works on paper and, in fact, the display of the thirty-five prints in the Elvehjem exhibition was handled in the same manner. These cluster compositions are very much part of Judy's art. It is unfortunate that so few of them are documented. Also, since the individual pieces eventually are dispersed into various public and private collections, the clusters cannot readily be reconstructed.

Ultimately, the Elvehjem's exhibition proved to be a wonderful opportunity to see a large and diverse body of Judy's artwork assembled in one place. The experience was both enlightening and exhilarating. In its presence, one could not help but become conscious of and overwhelmed by

COMPLETE WORKS (left to right)

Drawing for Horror Vacui, 1988; *Great Glasses*, 1988; *Fuji*, 1985.

Installation: *The Art of Judy Pfaff*, Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2001. Photo by Rob van Erve.



the boundless creative energy that is at the very center of her art. Everything is dependent on spontaneous organic growth. For Judy, art is about being and becoming much more than about making.

THE CATALOG

The Elvehjem Museum of Art had always planned to publish a catalog in conjunction with its exhibition of Judy Pfaff's work. With time, however, we came to the conclusion that both the artist and her public would be better served with a more far-reaching publication. Thus the illustrated, chronological checklist, which includes installations, sculptures, drawings, and prints, together with the excellent essay by Irving Sandler, is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the artist's career from the late 1970s up to the time of publication. However, it should be noted that when selecting the works to be included in this publication, we gave preference to Judy's installations. Unlike the drawings, prints, and sculptures, which will survive in public and private collections, the installations were temporary creations. An important purpose of this publication is to document them for posterity. Unfortunately, because of this decision, many wonderful drawings and prints could not be included. Hopefully, in the future, someone will produce a publication specifically dedicated to Judy's two-dimensional work.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The three separate but integrated projects—the installation *If I Had a Boat*, the exhibition *The Art of Judy Pfaff*, and the present monograph—required the hard work and dedication of numerous individuals.

Judy Pfaff, of course, was the creator of the exceptional installation *If I Had a Boat*. Jessica Perlitz, Laura Gail Tyler, and Rob Flottesmesch who came with her from Kingston, New York, very ably assisted her. The Elvehjem's technical crew, led by our excellent exhibition designer Jerl Richmond, consisted of Steve Johanovich, Melissa Buchanan, and three graduate students from the UW–Madison Department of Art, Ryan Cowan, Paul Fuchs, and Erin John (EJ) Sullivan, they also contributed to the success of the project. One additional person who requires special recognition is Richard Bartleme from Felly's Flowers of Madison. He graciously advised on the selection of plants and mosses that could survive in Paige Court for the duration of the installation and carefully nurtured them throughout the following year.

Like all exhibitions, *The Art of Judy Pfaff* required a concerted team effort. Again, a heartfelt thank you to Judy Pfaff for interrupting her activities and giving us so much of her valuable time to reassemble the pieces that comprised the Elvehjem's exhibition. Thank you to Jessica Perlitz and Josh Pelletier, who assisted Judy with the preparation of the works for travel in Kingston, New York, and then helped to install them in Madison, Wisconsin. Invaluable museum staff support for the exhibition project was provided by the members of our technical team named in the paragraph above and the museum's registrar, Andrea Selbig, assisted by Jennifer Stofflet.

opposite page

TEN PRINTS (left to right, top to bottom)

The Planet on the Table, 1996, etching on Crown Kozo paper, 14 ¼ × 114 ⅝ inches (paper size)

A Considerable Speck, 1996, etching on Crown Kozo paper, 14 ¼ × 107 ½ inches (paper size)

Ar-oo-m, 1996, etching on Crown Kozo paper, 14 ¼ × 80 ½ inches (paper size)

Kaia, 1996, etching and lithograph on Crown Kozo paper, 10 × 27 ¼ inches (paper size)

Eavesdrop, 1996, etching on Crown Kozo paper, 14 ¼ × 79 ¾ inches (paper size)

Hand in Hand, 1996, etching and lithograph on Crown Kozo paper, 10 × 27 ¼ inches (paper size)

The Drum and the Dance, 1996, etching and lithograph on Crown Kozo paper, 14 ¼ × 80 ½ inches (paper size)

Eye to Eye, 1996, etching and lithograph on Crown Kozo paper, 10 × 27 ¼ inches (paper size)

Croon, 1996, etching on Crown Kozo paper, 14 ¼ × 59 inches (paper size)

Rattatoo, 1996, etching and lithograph on Crown Kozo paper, 10 × 54 ½ inches (paper size)

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Installation: Elvehjem Museum of Art,
University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2001

For the present catalog, first of all, I wish to acknowledge the contribution of the scholar and critic Irving Sandler. He graciously agreed to contribute the excellent essay on Judy's work even though he had many other projects awaiting his attention. The Elvehjem's editor, Patricia Powell, as usual, meticulously checked and rechecked the facts and dates that necessarily appear in a publication such as this. Thank you also to Laura Gail Tyler who spent many hours searching through Judy's voluminous archives for publications and photographs.

A very special thank you must here be extended to Joen Greenwood whose generosity made this publication possible. Ms. Greenwood, a UW-Madison alumna who is dedicated to the promotion and support of women in the arts, has quietly been contributing funds over the past several years to support a singular Elvehjem project. She came to Madison to see Judy Pfaff's installation and exhibition and responded to them with enthusiasm and generosity. We are all indeed grateful for this munificence.

I also wish to offer a final and personal note of appreciation to Judy Pfaff herself. It has been a both a pleasure and a privilege for me to become better acquainted with her and her art during the past several years. She is truly an outstanding artist.

Russell Panczenko
Director, Elvehjem Museum of Art
University of Wisconsin-Madison

JUDY PFAFF

TRACKING THE COSMOS

by Irving Sandler

My first encounter with Judy Pfaff was a near-disaster. It took place in 1974 at Artists Space, a not-for-profit gallery founded by Trudi Grace and me. The gallery's mission was to exhibit little-known or neglected artists who were chosen by better-known artists. Pfaff had been selected by Al Held. She phoned to tell Grace and me that she would like to make her piece in situ. We agreed, of course. When she arrived, the first thing she did was to chop holes into three of the gallery's walls, walls we had labored long and hard to get perfectly angled, smooth, and pristine white. We stood by, beside ourselves, but silent.

Working within and on the surface of the walls as well as in the three-sided space of the room, Pfaff used a welter of heterogeneous materials, plaster, concrete, wire, wood, and even light bulbs. Her forms were abstract, composed primarily of open and closed rectangles and circles (anticipating the basic shapes in her subsequent installations). The process was improvisational, and the work in progress looked like a disaster area almost to the opening day. Then Pfaff spent an entire night alone in the gallery. The following morning, when Grace and I arrived, she declared that the installation was finished. It was stunning. I remember thinking, "I haven't seen anything like this before."

In the middle of the installation I became aware how much the experience of walking into a room-size environment differed from standing off and looking at a painting or sculpture. Before an art object the viewer is *distanced*. Within an installation one is *immediately all-enveloped*, physically encompassed by a world of the artist's imagination. In fact, in order to see Pfaff's work you had to *be in it*.

**The hardening of the categories
causes art disease.**

HARRY HOLTZMAN'

I later asked Pfaff how she knew when to stop. She replied that she needed something unexpected—some “gift.” That happened during the all-night stint. At one point she had turned off the gallery lights and, as if by magic, there appeared on the floor in the middle of her installation a round pool of green light. She had no idea how it got there, and it took her time to discover that the source of the light was outdoors, and that it was shining in through a window. That was the finishing touch, although she was the only one who would see it. Pfaff titled the work *J.A.S.O.N.- J.A.S.O.N.*, an acronym of the first letters of the ten months she had been in New York City.



J.A.S.O.N.-J.A.S.O.N. (JULY, AUG., SEPT., OCT., NOV.), 1975

Plaster, sheet metal, lights, paint, wire, wood

Approx. 11 × 60 × 20 feet

Installation: Artists Space, New York, NY

Pfaff's site-specific installation at Artists Space announced the course her work would take for the next third of a century. She would work in between—and synthesize—drawing, painting, collage, printmaking, sculpture, construction, architecture, and environment. And her imagery would combine figuration and abstraction. A young artist could not have undertaken a more ambitious enterprise. Her art was constructive but also deconstructive because, as Pfaff said, “I’m at war with conventions,” and “I’m against what’s expected, what’s safe.”²

Pfaff had begun to break down artistic categories while a graduate student at the School of Art at Yale from 1971 to 1973. She was encouraged by Al Held, a professor there who became her mentor and would remain a life-long friend. When she said to him that painting on canvas

struck her as too “restricted” and that she did not want to be confined by “a frame,” he told her to spread her work around the walls, and she followed his advice. To open up her work even more, she visited the studios of her fellow students, picked up cast-off bits and pieces of whatever was lying around, and affixed them to her own works. For her master’s thesis she built an installation. She said:

It was about illusion, the play of shadows on such elements as sticks and glass. I used very little paint. I wanted to see the effects of shadows on natural colors. These random “events” covered a 20-foot wall, and you could see scattered shadows as well as the geometric progression of shadows all criss-crossing each other.³

Pfaff’s Master of Fine Arts degree was awarded in 1973, and she moved to New York City.

Pfaff said that in the work she made at Yale and in her first year or so in New York City she was engaged in “a conversation” with modern and contemporary art. Among the ideas that interested

her, as she recalled, were Cubist fragmentation and layering of forms; the implied motion of Futurism; the Abstract Expressionist "big picture," in particular Jackson Pollock's wall-size poured painting as well as his theatrical "performance" of painting on glass as seen from below in Hans Namuth's film; the drawing in space of Julio González, David Smith, Alexander Calder, and the Russian Constructivists; the junk Assemblage of Robert Rauschenberg and Jean Tinguely; the Environments and Happenings of Allan Kaprow, Claes Oldenburg, Jim Dine, and Red Grooms as well as the "performances" of Yvonne Rainer, Richard Foreman, Trisha Brown, and Robert Wilson; and Italian Arte Povera installations. Pfaff was also inspired by individual works, such as Alexander Calder's *Circus*, Kurt Schwitters's *Merzbau*, Marcel Duchamp's *Sixteen Miles of String*, which criss-crossed a New York gallery, and Edward Kienholz's tableaux.

As a student Pfaff had shuttled between New Haven and Manhattan in a beat-up truck (frequently ferrying fellow students). She had been excited by the works of Lynda Benglis, Barry Le Va, Alan Saret, and other young avant-garde artists who were generally labeled Postminimalists. In New York, they became her friends.⁴ In fact, she had in mind Benglis, Le Va, and Saret while she was working on *J.A.S.O.N.- J.A.S.O.N.* Just as they had, she reacted against Minimalism's preoccupation with "objecthood" by dematerializing the art object. Benglis and Le Va made floor works; Benglis poured polyurethane foam, and Le Va scattered bits and pieces of felt often topped with shattered glass. Saret crumpled wire sprinkled with pigment into meshes—Pfaff called it "fantasy architecture." She was influenced not only by Postminimalist sculpture but by the discourse around it. Le Va, Robert Morris, and Robert Smithson, for example, were "involved with the ideas of entropy, randomness, and chaos. [A] lot of my work came out of these words, trying to create an active field, in every way: visually, physically, spatially,"⁵ that is, a field of nonfocused and nonhierarchical events.

Roberta Smith has pointed out that Postminimalist sculptures on the whole retained "an undercurrent of Minimalist purity in the way they [were] consciously limited [to] one, or at most, two materials . . . and a carefully predetermined forming method."⁶ So was *J.A.S.O.N.- J.A.S.O.N.*, but Pfaff would soon refuse to set any limit—literally cracking Minimalism wide open. Indeed, Pfaff's environments would become so profuse and complex that, as she said, "I bump into an awful lot of people when I make a work."⁷ One critic even found Mondrian lurking in a couple of them.⁸

Although in creating *J.A.S.O.N.- J.A.S.O.N.* Pfaff had both penetrated into the interior of Artists Space's white walls and projected components out from the walls into the room, the wall surfaces themselves continued to assert their presence strongly, calling attention to their traditional function as supports for painting. While Pfaff was at Yale, the issue of whether Modernist painting, that is, painting that valued flatness, had become outworn was being debated in the art world. As early as 1967, Al Held had rejected Modernist flatness and using a variety of perspectival systems had created a disjunctive illusionistic space. Then, in 1971, Frank Stella declared that in his painting he had come "up against the wall," to use an apt slang expression. Stella had been the enormously

influential innovator of Minimal Art and had made flatness a guiding principle of abstract painting, and he himself appeared to have made his own as flat as painting could be. Now, Stella changed his mind and announced that in order for abstract painting to become revitalized, it needed what he termed "working space." Unlike Held, who continued to work within the parameters of two-dimensional painting, Stella projected his "picture" physically into actual space—in increasingly high relief. Held's work and conversation was of vital importance to Pfaff. However, rather than continuing to paint on canvas, she took her cues from Stella's move off the wall. Yet, unlike Stella, who built portable pieces, Pfaff used the wall as a kind of springboard into the actual space of the room, transforming the entire site into a construction in space.

Just as Pfaff was thinking about how she might reanimate painting by making it sculptural and environmental, she was also concerned with what she thought sculpture needed. "I want to blow apart some of the confines in sculpture."⁹ She would add that she wanted to open up sculpture's "language for myself as far and as wide as I can in terms of materials, colors, and references; I tried to include all the things that were permissible for painting but absent in sculpture."¹⁰ In exploding sculpture, she made it pictorial and coloristic.

The next Pfaff installation I saw was *Reinventing the Wheel*, constructed at the Neuberger Museum of Art of the State University of New York at Purchase in the fall of 1979.¹¹ Having been shocked by *J.A.S.O.N.- J.A.S.O.N.* at Artists Space, I was astonished anew by the development in her work. I would not have been quite as stunned had I been able to follow the four installations she made from 1976 to 1978 but they were executed outside of New York City.¹²

Unlike *J.A.S.O.N.- J.A.S.O.N.*, which was abstract and austere, *Reinventing the Wheel* was peopled by stick figures, composed of vividly colored Plexiglas and contact paper, aluminum, Styrofoam, and wood. These humanoids had first appeared in graph-paper drawings and tape-on-paper collages and then in two installations—*Prototypes* at L.A.C.E. in Los Angeles in 1978 and an untitled work in Santa Barbara, California, in 1979. Why the figure? To make her installations more "inclusive" and to rethink the relationship between abstraction and figuration.

Pfaff was not alone in her move toward recognizable imagery. The liveliest artists of her generation, among them so-called New Image painters Elizabeth Murray (who was Pfaff's close friend), Susan Rothenberg, Neil Jenney, Donald Sultan, and Robert Moskowitz, and sculptors Joel Shapiro, Nancy Graves, and Bryan Hunt, felt that abstract art had become impoverished and was in crisis. To say more in their work, they combined abstraction and representation.

The figures in *Reinventing the Wheel* were "portraits" or, more accurately, fanciful renderings of Pfaff's friends and acquaintances abstracted to essential gestures. These inhabitants of what Richard Armstrong called Pfaff's "psycho-sexual figurescape"¹³ were often funny, about to topple over, sitting without a chair, sprawling awkwardly on the floor, or walking into a wall. Barbara Noah wrote that they "were so unexpected and so readily identifiable with oneself or one's friends, that affectionate laughter was natural. At the same time, serious consideration of motion, stress, weight, and shape were satisfyingly evident."¹⁴



Pfaff placed her characters in relation to one another so that they called to mind “actors,” turning the cavernous gallery (30 × 100 × 50 feet) in which they “performed” into a kind of stage in which the viewer moving in and around the sculptures became part of the *mise en scène*. The sense of a theatrical situation was further augmented by clusters of forms composed of contact paper, wood bricks, patterned linoleum, Mylar paper that glistened like television screens, and other “props” scattered on the floor, and painted shapes like stage backdrops on the walls.

As a student at Yale, Pfaff had followed the controversy over the issue of theatricality in the visual arts. That had given rise to an art-critical war that had been raging since the late 1960s. One camp declared that in order to be valid and “high,” a work of art had to be autonomous, present

REINVENTING THE WHEEL, 1979

Wood, plastics, contact paper, Styrofoam, aluminum

Approx. 30 × 100 × 50 feet

Installation: *10 Artists / Artists Space*, Neuberger Museum, SUNY, Purchase, NY

in its entirety, dependent only on internal relationships and thus separate from anything external to itself. The other camp maintained that it was proper for a work to be "theatrical," opened-ended both in space and time, subject to changes in light, the position of viewers, etc., in short, a work in which a viewer became both actor and observer. So heated had the controversy become that Michael Fried, the leading standard bearer of formalist art, proclaimed that "theater is now the negation of art" and thus was the enemy that had to be defeated.¹⁵ Opposed to Fried's esthetic, Marcia Tucker and James Monte curated *Anti-Illusion: Procedures/Materials* at the Whitney Museum in 1969. As Monte wrote,

The radical nature of many works in this exhibition depends . . . on the fact that the acts of conceiving and placing the pieces takes precedence over the object quality of the works. [The] very nature of [a] piece may be determined by its location in a particular place. [The location functions] not merely as a site for the work, but as an integral, inextricable armature, necessary for the existence of the work.¹⁶

PROTOTYPES (STATE 1), 1978

Wood, contact paper, Styrofoam, aluminum, concrete

Approx. 45 × 45 × 12 feet

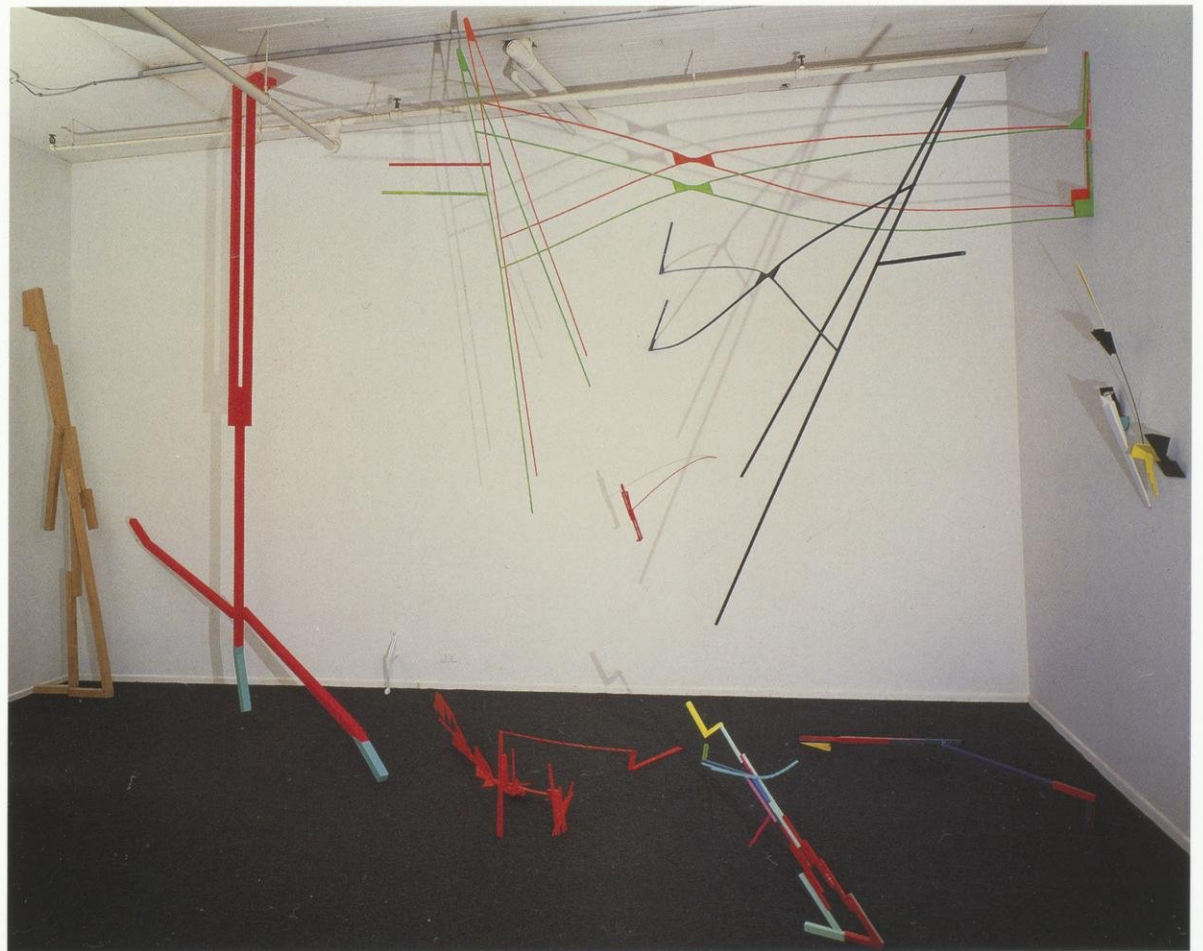
Installation: L.A.C.E. (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions Gallery), Los Angeles, CA

PROTOTYPES (STATE 2), 1979

Balsa wood, maple, willow, paint

Approx. 12 × 20 × 20 feet

Installation: Saatchi and Saatchi, London, England



Works in the show were also intended to make the viewer aware of “real time,” that is, the passage of time as the pieces were experienced. To stress this, Tucker and Monte also included composers Philip Glass and Steve Reich, and filmmaker Michael Snow.

The issue was still being fought over in the late 1970s. In 1979, for example, Douglas Crimp, in an update of the catalogue of a seminal show titled *Pictures* he had curated at Artists Space in 1977, remarked that the work of the artists included, which incorporated “photographs, film, video, performance, as well as traditional modes of painting, drawing, and sculpture,” had been deliberately theatrical in that it was preoccupied with time. Referring to “Fried’s fears,” Crimp claimed that temporal art was on the upswing. Crimp was interested in art that responded to the mass media and naturally did not include Pfaff. Nevertheless, it is significant that his update should have appeared at the same time as her *Reinventing the Wheel*.

Seeking to enlarge the language of sculpture and to be more inclusive, Pfaff would use an astonishing variety of urban and industrial materials, many of which were new to sculpture. In the process of realizing the some thirty temporary and permanent installations made since 1973, she would find her materials in odd-lot shops, hardware stores, and lumber yards, most often on Canal Street—she called the street her “cornucopia.”

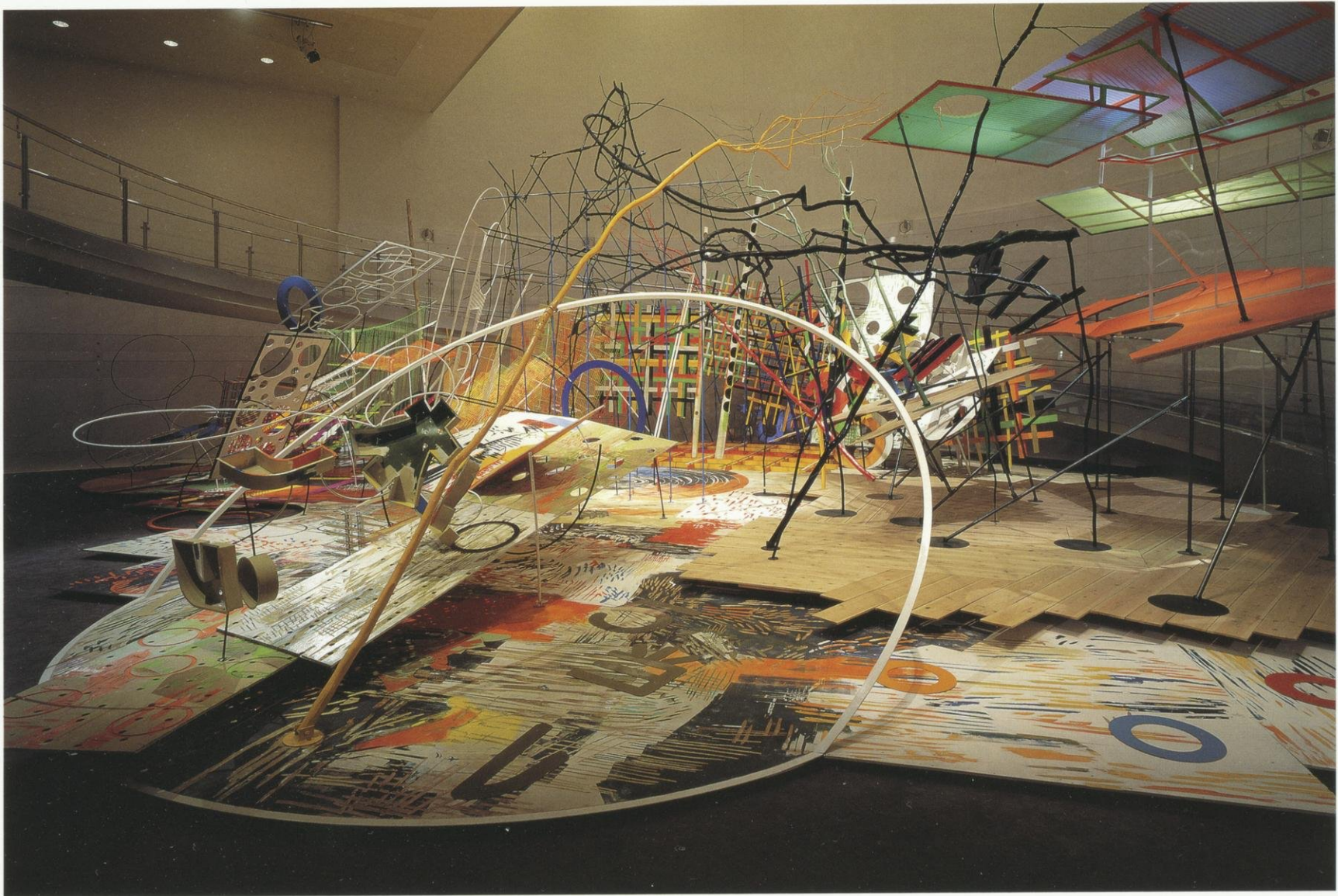
In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the techniques Pfaff had mastered, namely pasting, carpentry, and basic welding, determined the materials she would use. Hence, they tended to be light in weight. Among them were contact paper, Mylar tape, diverse wood veneers, linoleum, wood, plaster, colored plastics of all kinds, fiberglass resin, colored Lucite, chicken wire—and of course, paint. In the mid-1980s, Pfaff added sheet tin and aluminum, tree trunks, branches, and roots, other plants and organic substances, as well as readymades, such as advertising signs, lamps and furniture, plastic fruit and fish, woks, and what she called “street stuff.” In the 1990s, Pfaff introduced even heavier materials, such as steel piping and rods, as well as hand-blown glass.

When Pfaff was invited to create installations in various parts of the United States and abroad, for instance, Brazil, Japan, and Italy, she made it a practice to use materials (and images) culled from the locations in which she worked—extending her sculptural vocabulary even more. For example, in *Gu, Choki, Pa* (1985) at the Wacoal Art Center in Tokyo, she included bamboo, store signs in Japanese, and other local materials.

Generally New York artists who have used found objects have preferred rubbishy ones. So had Pfaff while at Yale. But she soon decided that using trash to make art had become too commonplace. After all, Richard Stankiewicz and Robert Rauschenberg first pieced together Assemblages made of detritus of city origin in the mid-1950s, and they had as precedents the collages of Kurt Schwitters. Stankiewicz and Rauschenberg soon spawned a pack of followers in whose hands this kind of sculpture had become estheticized, overrefined, and outworn. Moreover, found materials, such as newspaper and magazine clippings or discarded pipes and boilers,



PROTOTYPES (STATE 1), 1978 (details)



above and opposite page

GU, CHOKI, PA, 1985

Steel, wood, plastic, organic materials, bamboo, lattice, signs, veneer paneling, Formica, steel grating, paint
20 x 40 (diameter) feet

Installation: *Vernacular Abstraction, Spiral* / Wacoal Art Center, Tokyo, Japan

carried with them the nostalgia of old things. Pfaff preferred new materials because they were devoid of other people's traces, sentiments, and ideas. They were first- rather than second-hand. Nonetheless, Stankiewicz and Rauschenberg gave Pfaff the permission to use found objects, although in her case, they were discovered in stores. And like their materials, hers evoked the city.

Pfaff was not alone in her use of commonplace new materials. In Italy, artists in the Arte Povera group had done so since the late sixties. The Arte Povera artists wanted their materials to look poor, but they ended up looking elegant. In contrast, Pfaff used often expensive materials, but they tended to appear tacky and even chintzy. As she once lamented, she has "a reverse Midas touch."¹⁷ Indeed, she can be considered a kind of scavenger of brand-new "junk."



While a student at Yale, when Minimalism still held sway, Pfaff recalled that “you couldn’t use color and be intelligent.”¹⁸ In *J.A.S.O.N. - J.A.S.O.N.* the broad surfaces of walls were muted in hue and the drawing on them was mainly in pastel and pencil. There were bold colors but they were confined to small cuts in the wall and equally small three-dimensional components on the floor. In her subsequent works Pfaff gave a high-keyed palette free rein, in part because many of the materials she had begun to use were brightly colored, their built-in color constituting a new palette in art. Moreover, Pfaff applied paint to enhance the readymade color of the materials.

Critics have written of Pfaff’s color as “decorative,” but in my opinion, there was more to it than that.¹⁹ She has used color to complicate structure, solidify or scatter it, or suggest implied motion. She has also sought to make color “self”-expressive, that is emotional, a lesson she learned from Abstract Expressionist painting and from Elizabeth Murray’s relief-paintings.²⁰ Moreover, she has found that color could be “spiritual . . . ecstatic—and clairvoyant [as it was] in a Catholic church, a Buddhist temple, or any place that’s reaching for a higher ground.”²¹

I received my third shock from a Pfaff installation in the fall of 1980 on walking into the Holly Solomon Gallery in New York City.²² A dizzying wall-to-wall, floor-to-ceiling jumble of colored tangles, growths, webs, sprays, and streamers, twisted from wires and reeds (among other materials), floated (physically as well as figuratively) from the ceiling, often erupting from or trailing on the floor, and poking out from Action-Painted walls, the whole seeming to be in motion, in metamorphosis. Pfaff’s work had become so profuse, seemingly formless, and helter-skelter that it looked chaotic.

However, once I got my bearings, I realized that the installation had been inspired by nature. The spare geometry of *J.A.S.O.N. - J.A.S.O.N.* could still be made out but had been subsumed in the mélange. The figures of such installations as *Reinventing the Wheel* that Pfaff had been making for a year and a half had been abandoned.

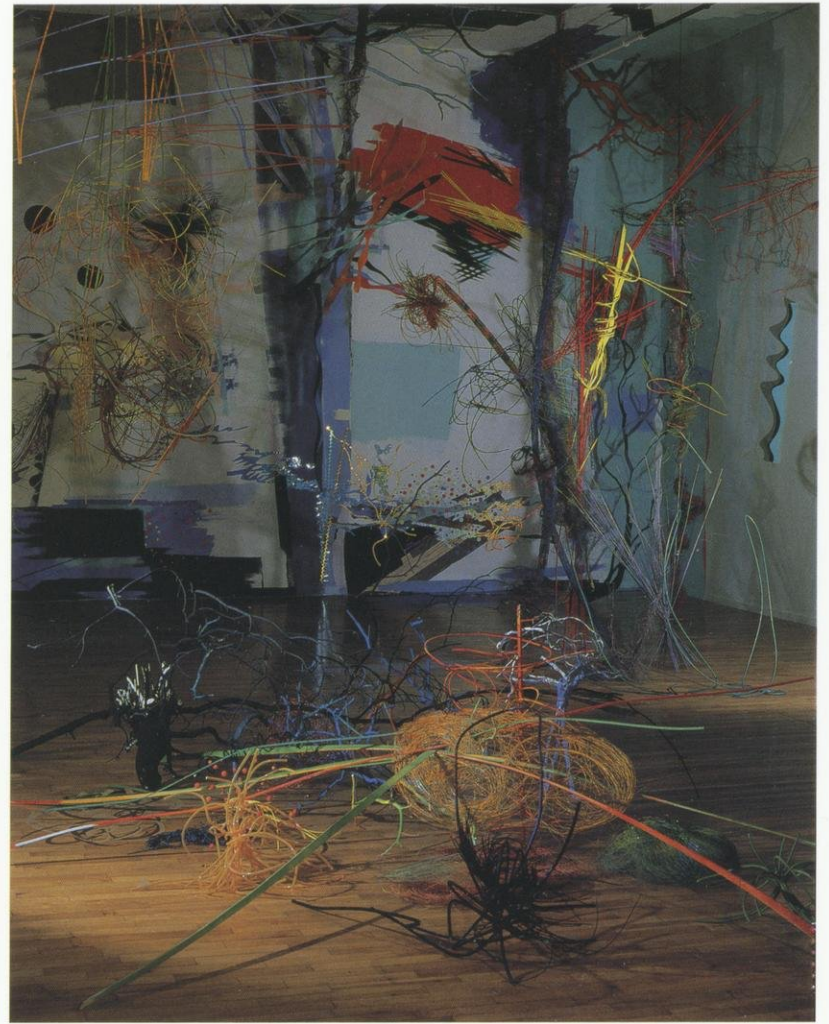
Deepwater, as the work was titled, was an underwater phantasmagoria.²³ Pfaff conceived it during a Caribbean trip, in the course of which she went snorkeling. She was struck by the way that aquatic fauna and flora, materializing and dematerializing in ever-changing shimmering patterns, came at her from all directions, comingling “weightlessness with mass, beauty with desolation, and volume with emptiness.”²⁴ She wrote that in *Deepwater* she wanted to capture “a feeling of going down instead of across. It was to be over your head.”²⁵ Elsewhere she said, “I wanted to create an environment of drifting, . . . of tremendous yielding power. I was *not* making an aquarium.”²⁶ Al Held called Pfaff’s fluid antigravitational construction, “elastic space.” Submersion under water defies the natural order and is befuddling. Pfaff found her experience of free-floating in a liquid environment “terrifying” and wanted to suggest that feeling in the space of *Deepwater*.²⁷ I recall finding the work vertiginous and disorienting—and yet enjoyable.

Responding to the Minimalist requirement that sculpture be dense, opaque, and “real,” Pfaff said:



Who cares? I was trying to make things totally transparent, so that you could see through the work, be aware of the overlaps, the confusion, with larger patterns emerging. *Deepwater* was not planned from one position; one of the pleasures of doing the piece is that I have to walk all around. The piece only works if there is not one view or focus that is the "right" one; you have to experience it.²⁸

I was engulfed in the complexity of *Deepwater*—the variety and abundance of materials of which it was composed and the inexhaustible "views" that it provided. Even the architecture lacked fixity. Pfaff had dematerialized the walls through vigorous brushwork, creating what her friend, Gordon Matta-Clark, labeled "anarchitecture." Complexity enabled her to activate and enrich the space of the installation and is central to all of Pfaff's subsequent works. She had been inspired by the discontinuous and unfixed space in Al Held's abstractions. She also recognized that she was drawn to her professor's painting because of her disposition to complexity—her "personality," as she put it. "I do everything a bit too much. I want everything to be spectacular."²⁹ She added that she wanted to make "as complex a visual statement as [she] could handle. Weaving as many



DEEPWATER, 1980

Wicker, rattan, wire mesh, paint, organic matter: tree parts, various woods

12 × 60 × 24 feet

Installation: Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY

languages in and out: 2-D, 3-D, architectural, metaphorical, allegorical, literal, and abstract.”³⁰ In fact, Pfaff’s conversation is studded with the words “inclusive,” “permissive,” “open-ended,” and particularly, “generous.” In fact, she equates complexity with generosity, the more complex the more generous.

Pfaff challenged the austerities of Minimalism at a time when the art world was becoming engaged in a heated controversy over Modernism and Postmodernism, that is, whether Modernism had become an outdated historic period and had been superseded by a Postmodern condition. If Modernist art was exemplified by Minimalist reductiveness and “purity,” Postmodernist art was defined by heterogeneity and “impurity.” If the logical venue of Modernist art was the gallery as a white-cube, Postmodernist art shattered its confines. Naturally, Pfaff became identified as an exemplary Postmodernist. Indeed, she “entered” the art world when, as Kim Levin declared in 1979, Modernism had gone out of style. “[All] the words that had been hurled as insults for as long as we could remember—illusionistic, theatrical, decorative, literary—were resurrected, as art became once again ornamental or moral, grandiose or miniaturized, anthropological, archaeological, ecological, autobiographical, or fictional. It was defying all the proscriptions of Modernist purity. [We] were finally bored with all that arctic purity.”³¹

Despite *Deepwater’s* seeming disorder, randomness, and kaleidoscopic lack of focus, it was painstakingly structured, part to part to whole. The viewer could chart the hectic movement of forms and colors. For example, a circle metamorphosed from a simple line drawn or painted on the wall or formed in wire into solid columnar or hollow megaphonelike cones, into elaborate meshlike globular structures. Thus, within the seeming maelstrom, Pfaff provided “signposts” and “paths” of related motifs and repeated forms and colors. These brought the installation into focus formally and led viewers through the piece. As Pfaff said, “Formal concerns . . . color, form, light, time, space . . . dominate the decisions in the work. What appears to be the subject of the work is undisciplined energy. Ironically, what keeps me involved with the work is the juggling of formal complexities.”³² From her own words then Pfaff could be viewed as a formalist artist. But if she was, she carried structure to the edge of chaos, and this constitutes an original contribution to formalist sculpture and three-dimensional construction.

Stunned by the seeming formlessness of *Deepwater*, Linda Nochlin wrote:

Thin, flexible, stick-like forms cantilevered from the walls, wavered like elongated stalks of coral-pink, pale lemon, yellow, and red. A tangled deep-sea mesh of the same unidentifiable material dangled mid-air; other clusters and hazy raffia spokes—blond and pale blue and scarlet—spurred up from the floor, rippling in non-existent currents, or zig-zagged from the ceiling. [The walls were] smeared and streaked with enormous brush strokes of red, blue and more aggressive black paint. [The upshot] was a kind of three-

dimensional *déreglement des senses* ... daring, risky, on the brink of chaos, if not completely overboard, yet in some sense paradigmatic of a new and inventive kind of ordering.³³

Deepwater suggested an underwater environment, but it also incorporated the branches of trees—elements of landscape. Their natural structures also suggest human arteries and other body networks.³⁴ Equally significant, the linear organic forms are contrasted with bundles of metal wires. The juxtaposition and synthesis of the natural and the human-made in *Deepwater* would become a theme running through most of Pfaff's subsequent work.

From the first Pfaff tried to work without preconceptions and expectations, but her earlier installations were only a prelude to the unrestrained improvisation in *Deepwater* and subsequent environments, a sign of her growing confidence and daring. Pfaff's light-weight and malleable materials lent themselves to rapid-fire decision-making. Indeed, in its "action-y" appearance, her work drew close to the Action Painting side of Abstract Expressionism, closer than any sculptor of her generation. Like Pollock and de Kooning, Pfaff balances the conflicting pulls of chaos and order. And like them, she is adept at whipsawing between control and noncontrol in the unpremeditated process of art-making. Pfaff also works on a scale identified with the Abstract Expressionist "big picture"—actually larger, since the size of her installations approaches that of architecture.³⁵

Compared to Action Painting on a two-dimensional surface, "painting" in a three-dimensional space revealed the process of art-making from an infinite number of angles. Pfaff was free to move through a work, this way and that, thinking her way through physically and mentally—in a kind of hyperactive stream of consciousness. While working, Pfaff entertained what George Sugarman, an older sculptor and friend of hers, termed a "what-if" attitude, an experimental, "let's see what happens if I do this."

Pfaff has said, "I structure my work more the way films are put together; it's like quick splices and dissolves in films, particularly those of the Russian avant-garde [such as] Dziga Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera*. You don't know exactly why, but when you're in the work you get excited, even panicked by the structuring of the scene." Just as Pfaff moves through a work, so must viewers, since its manifold views must be experienced in real time.

As part of her on-the-spot improvisation—indeed, a major part—Pfaff insists on plotting and composing the profuse welter of components rigorously—and laboriously—with attention to every detail. As she said, "It's not just a process. There is much structuring even though my work looks casual. It's totally structured even to a fault."³⁶ The upshot is a structured chaos. When Pfaff was asked when a work is finished, she replied: "It is important that the work has a balance of enough artifice and enough casualness, and enough surprise and enough reason."³⁷

Pfaff's installations have been interpreted in a variety of (often contradictory) ways. From one vantage point, she could be viewed simply as an artist following her own inclinations, which led her to make innovative moves in art and in the process deflected art in a new direction. Formalists might think of such a deflection as her ambition, an extraordinarily ambitious one, I might add. And Pfaff has succeeded in "making it new"—that Modernist slogan—and that was sufficient in itself. But there is more.

Some meanings in Pfaff's work have been suggested by Pfaff herself. However, early in her career she had been indifferent to the private or social content that inhered in her work. She recalled that for the first two years after leaving Yale, when asked what her work meant, she said, "Nothing." But in her studio, at the end of a work session, she would think, "That's what it is at this moment." She soon recognized that her work had multilayered meanings.

Pfaff's installations have an autobiographical aspect. When asked recently, "What does it mean?" she replied, "My early life was so disjointed that perhaps, subconsciously, I am trying to build . . . a special nest for myself."³⁸ It is also significant that as a girl in London's impoverished East End—she was born in 1946—she collected detritus in bombed-out and abandoned houses and built for herself "never-never lands."³⁹ She recalled that one of her girlhood fantasies was passing into another world, as Alice had through the looking glass.⁴⁰ As for her attraction to store-bought paraphernalia, Pfaff said that she felt close to "all that stuff . . . that's no longer valued."⁴¹ Her "low-life language," as she termed it,⁴² was a metaphor for her working-class roots. Indeed, autobiographic events—the latest manifestations of which are her experiences in the locations in which she works—thread through all of her works.

Pfaff's materials not only have autobiographical meanings but social ones as well. Calling to mind their Canal Street origin, her pieces both constitute and represent a slice of urban reality—New-York-Cityscapes. The restless flow of space in Pfaff's installations is a metaphor for the tumult and clutter of street-level life. She said that she wanted to make "sculpture that would act on you . . . the way the city acts on you, a kind of very active and kinetic space . . . that keeps you spinning and surprised."⁴³ Pfaff also said that her work was "a kind of editing and splicing of the complex freneticism I see around me. We live in an unsettled, unstable world. It is raucous and staccato. . . . And an installation, with its total openness, allows me to plunge into that spacy void and edit the chaos into a dramatic and sensual environment."⁴⁴

Pfaff began to create installations at the moment in the early 1970s when feminism was gaining momentum in the art world. Critics have suggested that her sense of herself as a woman may have contributed to the move in her work from two into three dimensions. Arthur Danto has written that rather than painting, "women were remarkably inventive in finding new genres or new combinations of existing genres" because painting as a medium "was a 'guy thing,' not necessarily suited as an expressive medium to women." In Pfaff's case, yes and no. She certainly broke down the

barriers between the visual arts, but she would not abandon painting. More than that, she promoted painting at a time when as a medium it seemed threatened by sculpture. As Danto observed, in order for painting to survive, it had to find alliances with sculpture.⁴⁵ Indeed, Pfaff made painting sculptural as no other artist had.

Linda Nochlin also speculated about the role of gender in Pfaff's installations. She wrote:

There has always been a tendency to equate artistic "formlessness" in the sense of a rejection of rigid structure with femininity. . . . as though the woman artist qua woman artist were incapable of order, of imposing a strict—i.e., intellectual—formal discipline on the inchoate fancies of her mind. . . . French theoreticians have argued for the specificity of feminine expression: Luce Irigaray, for instance, maintains that woman's . . . style "resists and explodes all firmly established forms, figures, ideas, concepts." Clearly, there is a tendency in the critical discourse to equate the feminine and the "chaotic," whether the latter is seen as a negative or positive characteristic.

Nochlin then differentiated the female notion of chaos from that of the male, using Jackson Pollock as the exemplar of the latter. Pollock was a "chaos-tamer, positioned as the existential world-champion of the inchoate, wresting a hidden order from [it], mastering his own unconscious impulses and making them jump through hoops." In contrast, Pfaff was an artist who "might well think [of chaos as] the stuff of interesting creation."⁴⁶

Pfaff recalls that *Deepwater* gave rise to this kind of discourse—and not to the installation's advantage. Female friends criticized it for lacking in specific references to the condition of women, claiming it was not feminist enough. Male friends found it too formless and hence too feminine.

Beginning with *Deepwater*, Pfaff's environments have often been viewed as abstract analogs of landscapes. In 1994, for example, she was included in an exhibition titled *Visions of America: Landscape as Metaphor in the Late Twentieth Century*. The show brought together contemporary artists who conceive of "landscape as a phenomenon beyond the purely descriptive" and represent it "in inventive, frequently provocative, ways," as Martin Friedman wrote. He went on to say that several of the participants, and Pfaff in particular, "think of landscape not just as a physical manifestation but as an extension of their bodies and psychological states."⁴⁷

Natural substances, such as plants in all of their shades of greens and browns, and synthetic materials, such as garishly colored high-tech plastics, are intertwined repeatedly in Pfaff's work. Thus, she pictures the American landscape as it actually is, no longer the pristine primordial wilderness but a landscape most of which is circumscribed by its inhabitants, often in ecologically devastating ways.

In another sense, the repeated commingling and contrast of the natural and the manufactured seems peculiarly American. It is as if Pfaff were attempting to bring together two antithetical vi-

sions that have threaded through the history of the United States. As Leo Marx observed in his book *The Machine in the Garden*, there is, on the one hand, the pastoral belief in America as the New Eden in which its inhabitants would lead simple lives close to nature, as evoked in the writings of Henry Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson, and, on the other hand, the high regard for industrial progress, which has had an equally powerful hold on the American consciousness.

If the sprawl of Pfaff's environments is reminiscent of the American landscape, it also echoes the open field paintings of Jackson Pollock, which can be viewed as abstract metaphors for the Great Plains. Comments by Pollock and his fellow painters Clyfford Still and Barnett Newman about their own work would seem to apply also to Pfaff's installations. Pollock: "There was a reviewer . . . who wrote that my pictures didn't have any beginning or any end. He didn't mean it as a compliment, but it was."⁴⁸ Still: "To be stopped by a frame's edge was intolerable. [It] had to be annihilated, its authoritarian implications repudiated."⁴⁹ Newman said: "For me space is where I can feel all four horizons . . . the sensation of complete space."⁵⁰

Even when Americans design formal environments, they tend to avoid central focuses. Central Park in New York, the creation of Frederick Law Olmsted, as Adam Gopnik pointed out, "has many centers, and was meant to. [All] provide an experience of the center without actually being one. This aspect of the Park troubled people . . . the slack structure drove them crazy." There was considerable pressure on Olmsted "to make the Park look like a park: to give it a shape, a layout, a fixed form, [for example] to have a grand 'Cathedral avenue,' a single central allee of trees, run, Versailles style, from end to end of the park. Olmsted's objection was not merely that such an allee would break the illusion of a forest in the middle of the city but that it would give a false, forced, European-style unity to what was meant to be a non-centered, American design. Unifying elements were exactly what wasn't wanted."⁵¹

Because Pfaff shops for her materials, her works call to mind our contemporary consumer society. They are of this time. Consequently, they do not feel like the "junk" sculpture of Stankiewicz and Rauschenberg, which evokes the poverty of the Depression thirties and the lack of merchandise in the war-time forties. Pfaff's work has been viewed as a commentary on consumer culture, although it is not clear what her message is—certainly neither a critique in the vein of Barbara Kruger, nor a tribute, like Koons's remades. The built-in obsolescence of Pfaff's temporary installations might be considered a statement of sorts, although she would prefer that they were permanent. In my opinion, the "message" of her store-bought commodities is that they can be transformed into high art, more specifically, high abstract art.

Although *Deepwater* was perceived as an aquatic fantasy by many critics—and Pfaff herself—it had such energy, seemingly anarchic energy, and visual clamor that other critics likened it to punk rock music, labeling it "visual punk." A critic for *Flash Art*, for example, wrote that Pfaff's "installation as a whole is supposed to evoke a sense of the mystery of underwater life, but seems more

directly keyed to the mystery of disco nightlife."⁵² Punk music was in the air in the late seventies. In 1978, it achieved its first prominence in the art world with a two-week run of rock bands at Artists Space. Its visual counterpart reached a high point of sorts with the *Times Square Show* in 1980. In that year, Michael Shore wrote a major article on punk in *ArtNews* in which he featured Pfaff's *Deepwater* in a half-page illustration and identified Pfaff's dealer, Holly Solomon, as a champion of the new punk culture.⁵³

It is significant that many artists and art-world professionals should have identified Pfaff's work with punk rock, the art that many younger artists, e.g., Robert Longo, and critics, e.g., Michael Shore, believed was more vital than painting and sculpture.⁵⁴ But Pfaff herself looks back ruefully at the punk rock interpretation. She said, "my color was seen as an explosion in a glitter factory. I was kind of horrified by that."⁵⁵ And besides, her work had no glitter in it.

Pfaff achieved art-world recognition with *Deepwater*. In May 1981, her photograph was featured on the cover of *ArtNews* to introduce a series of articles on "Who Are the Artists to Watch?" The magazine's critics were asked to select artists "whose work of the past season had for the first time impressed them with its new level of seriousness and mastery."⁵⁶ In her essay on Pfaff, Ellen Schwartz concluded that "sculpture may never be the same."⁵⁷ Robert Hughes wrote in *Time*: "A few more artists like her and the '80s might be an interesting decade." As Pfaff said of the recognition she received: "It put me on the critical firing line. It made me a contender."⁵⁸

The complexity that Pfaff values in each piece also extends over time from work to work. Each issues from a different experience, often inspired by the particular place she happens to be in, and each expresses a different mood or sensation, reflecting a different psychological state, ranging from elation to melancholy, from hedonism to pain.

If *Deepwater* was metaphorically waterswept, *Dragon* (1981), at the Whitney Museum, whose components were painted orange-red, evoked fire in a cavelike environment. Roberta Smith commented that compared to Pfaff's earlier installations *Dragon's* parts were "bulkier, heavier in color, and darker in emotional tone. Painting on the walls becomes much more plentiful. Pfaff has said she wanted to remove any 'fun house' suggestion from the work."⁵⁹ From another point of view, but with *Dragon* in mind, Richard Armstrong noted that Pfaff had expanded the traditional idea of landscape by introducing references to "geography, botany, architecture, [and] celestial space."⁶⁰ The installation was a harbinger of even more heterogeneous imagery.

In improvising *Rorschach* (1981) at the John and Mable Ringling Museum in Sarasota, Florida, Pfaff's imagination was triggered by patterns on plywood she was using in the work. Painting assumed a new prominence in this installation. Michael Auping related its free-wheeling brushwork to the newly emerging, so-called Neo-Expressionist painting of Julian Schnabel, Georg Baselitz,

DRAGON, 1981

Balsa wood, wild grape vines, rattan, woven wire: wire fencing and wire mesh, paint

Approx. 18 × 30 × 30 feet

Installation: *Biennial Exhibition*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

Photo by Eyris Productions





RORSCHACH, 1981

Plywood, tree roots, paint, Plexiglas, wood veneers, wood paneling

15 × 54 × 57 feet

Installation: *Installations, Collages, and Drawings*, John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, FL





BOA, 1982

Wood, tree roots, wood veneer, paint, steel

8 × 10 × 60 feet

Installation: University Art Gallery, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Amherst, MA

Photo by Julius Kozlowski

Francesco Clemente, and Sandro Chia. *Boa* (1982) at the University of Massachusetts was as vigorously painted as *Dragon* and *Rorschach*—and even more complex. Walking through *Boa*, installed in a wide corridor nearly sixty feet long, was, in Pfaff's words, "like moving through a giant intestine."⁶¹



Pfaff's installation at the Venice Biennale in 1982 was titled *Either War*, and war was very much on her mind. The work, whose space was fractured and snarled, was inspired by the Falkland War and the troubles in Lebanon. Pfaff recalled, "there was all this *noise* going on in the world and I was working in a kind of bombed-out space anyway, so the installation should disquiet visitors with a quality of lunacy and noise."⁶² As Pfaff was constructing *Either War* she recalled stories she

EITHER WAR, 1982

Sheet metal, poplar veneer, steel, gesso, cement, sign painters enamel, paint

Approx. 20 × 30 × 20 feet

Installation: *Art Venture / XL Biennale de Venezia*, Old ship building yard, La Giudecca, Venice, Italy

had been told as a child about the London Blitz with its searchlights and sirens."⁶³ She also had the Italian Futurists in mind and meant her installation to be an homage to them because like her they celebrated dynamic motion (but not because they glorified war).⁶⁴

Roberta Smith wrote that in the Venice piece "big, horn-like cones, covered with gaudy pseudo-expressionistic brushwork, were cantilevered off the walls, usually above eye level. Pfaff wanted 'everything to be up in the air.'"⁶⁵ Conelike shapes had been used by Pfaff in her earlier work as a formal device to extend circles into three dimensions, either by connecting two wire circles of different diameters with straight wires, or by constructing solid conical forms. In *Either War*, these forms took on the aspect of megaphones. They could be viewed as metaphors for broadcasting Pfaff's "message to the world." As such, they functioned like the light bulbs in Picasso's *Guernica*, which were meant to illuminate the carnage of aerial bombardment.

In 1982, while building *Rock / Paper / Scissors* at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Pfaff encountered the museum's great collection of Abstract Expressionist paintings. That inspired her to emphasize vigorous brushwork both on walls and three-dimensional forms. As in other installations, the site contributed to the conception. The work started quietly in a stairwell with soft pastel colors painted on the wall, and as it climbed up the steps three-dimensional forms grew denser and more frenetic. Progressing into the gallery space, the colors turned increasingly harsh and disquieting. As in *Either War* the dominant components were conelike shapes that protruded from all the surfaces, but now in the Albright-Knox work, they suggested funnels, signifying the open-ended flow of physical, nervous, and mental energy, of the natural and the human-made, and of one art medium into another. The cones, as vortexlike shapes, seemed to signal and echo the suggested whirling motion of the profuse and diverse materials.⁶⁶

3-D at the Holly Solomon Gallery at the beginning of 1983 followed *Rock / Paper / Scissors*. It was Pfaff's most intricate, packed, and all-encompassing installation to date. She said that it contained everything she knew: "The installation was about memory, with an art-historical span that encompassed primitive cave paintings (rock-face imagery in plastic), Chinese landscape painting, and Cubism,"⁶⁷ or, as she once put it, a "speeded-up Cubism."⁶⁸

Pfaff aimed "to achieve a sense of spinning, being thrown visually as well as physically into the work."⁶⁹ Even more than in earlier installations, moving through *3-D* was to experience a confusing conglomerate of segments and incidents, as from moment to moment one caught multiple views of parts that changed in configuration, direction, color, scale, and density. So great was the overload of mutating visual information that as one progressed only bits and pieces of what had just been seen remained in one's memory. Yet, if at first *3-D* seemed jumbled and claustrophobic one quickly realized that all of the fragments added up to a coherent whole. Once oriented, one saw how the crowded components were related and how artfully Pfaff had provided narrow paths to lead viewers through the seeming clutter. However, the strongest impression of *3-D*, as in *Rock / Paper / Scissors* and other works of the mid-eighties, was of being swept up in a whirlwind.



While working on her installations, Pfaff continued to make drawings on graph paper and collages composed of a variety of adhesive papers and tapes. In 1980, she began to expand the size of her collage-drawings and to enrich them by adding colored patterned Mylar and other substances. In order to complicate these works even more she built them up layer by layer. As portable pictures, they would encourage her to create portable sculptures.

Moreover, as the 1980s progressed, Pfaff began to resent the destruction of the temporary installations she had worked so hard to create. She was increasingly frustrated by the ephemeral nature of her environments. She would continue making them, but she also yearned for something more lasting. (In time, she would receive commissions to create permanent installations.) Studying fragments of dismantled pieces, Pfaff saw that they could be developed into finished reliefs. Making wall sculptures freed her from the constraints of working to a specific timetable and al-

ROCK / PAPER / SCISSORS, 1982

Steel, Plexiglas, sheet metal, wood paneling, contact paper, paint, tin

Approx. 16 × 30 × 30 feet

Installation: Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY



3-D, 1983

Steel, perforated steel, plywood, wood veneers,
Plexiglas, contact paper, tin, wire, paint

12 x 22 x 35 feet

Installation: Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY





lowed her to distill, edit, refine, and intensify ideas culled from her transitory installations and to introduce new themes.

The reliefs were more ordered and less ambiguous than the installations. They made clear that the central motifs in all of Pfaff's works had been circles and rectangles, the latter often taking the form of lattices or grids. Pfaff was now able to explore the layered meanings of these forms: the circle as globe, breast, mandala, target; the square and grid as icons of modernist abstraction; and the lattice, which as a rectangular form composed of vertical or horizontal slats, is both a variant of the abstract grid and the image of shutters and fences found in the environment. Nevertheless, as Nochlin observed, "the central impulse . . . a rage for chaos . . . remains in these relatively calmer pieces," the desire, as Pfaff said, "to be in the middle of the vortex, to be in the whirlwind."⁷⁰

As the reliefs grew larger and more elaborate Pfaff complicated them even more by projecting them from the wall with frameworks of metal rods, thus creating more space with which to work. *N.Y.C.-B.Q.E* (1987), shown at the Whitney Museum, was cantilevered into the gallery some twenty feet. Pfaff's artistry is most evident in the intricate armatures that support the projecting forms. Indeed, functioning as "bases" (generally the least interesting forms in sculpture), they are esthetic tours de force where one would least expect them.

Although Pfaff's wall sculptures remained primarily abstract, in the mid-1980s she introduced still-life and furniture motifs, such as bowls of fruit on a table, sometimes real furniture, and pop motifs, such as actual advertising signs. In 1986, Pfaff exhibited *Apples and Oranges* at the Holly Solomon Gallery, the subject of this relief a still life. A medley of high-keyed, two-dimensional open wire circular forms, Plexiglas and wood discs, dozens of painted woks, and three-dimensional spheroids, some of them artificial fruits, in a variety of sizes, at various shallow depths that spin around plastic letters A and O (for apple and orange). Geometry was playfully transfigured into fruit salad.

Roberta Smith found a feminist dimension in Pfaff's frequent use of spheres and hemispheres. They "suggest both fruit and fruit bowls; their domesticity is reinforced by occasional





'real' plastic fruit, lampshade forms, . . . and sundry other details. But these still lifes are not only abstracted; they are, on a material level, shot through with references to the industrial and the commercial—these spheres of activity which keep domestic life in motion—and this gives them a particular edge."⁷¹

(As she was constructing her large-scale reliefs Pfaff made prints as well. Apples and oranges, for example, became the subject of a series of six woodcuts, titled *Six of One*, produced at Crown Point Press in 1987–1988. She would later enclose these prints in heavy carved wood frames, adding a sculptural dimension to the pictorial.)

As in *Apples and Oranges*, Pfaff introduced fragments of readymade commercial signs and letters into her reliefs "because of a fascination with the urban."⁷² In some works the references are to a particular city location. For example, the signage in *N.Y.C.-B.Q.E.* is low-tech, alluding to the street-life of the impoverished Brooklyn neighborhood in which her studio was located. It also called to mind whizzing along the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, the highway she traveled from her apartment to her studio and back.

APPLES AND ORANGES, 1986

Painted wood, steel, plastic, signage
113 × 192 × 72 inches

opposite page

N.Y.C. - B.Q.E. (BROOKLYN QUEENS EXPRESSWAY), 1987

Painted steel, plastic laminates, fiberglass, wood, paint,
lawn furniture, awnings

15 × 35 × 9 feet

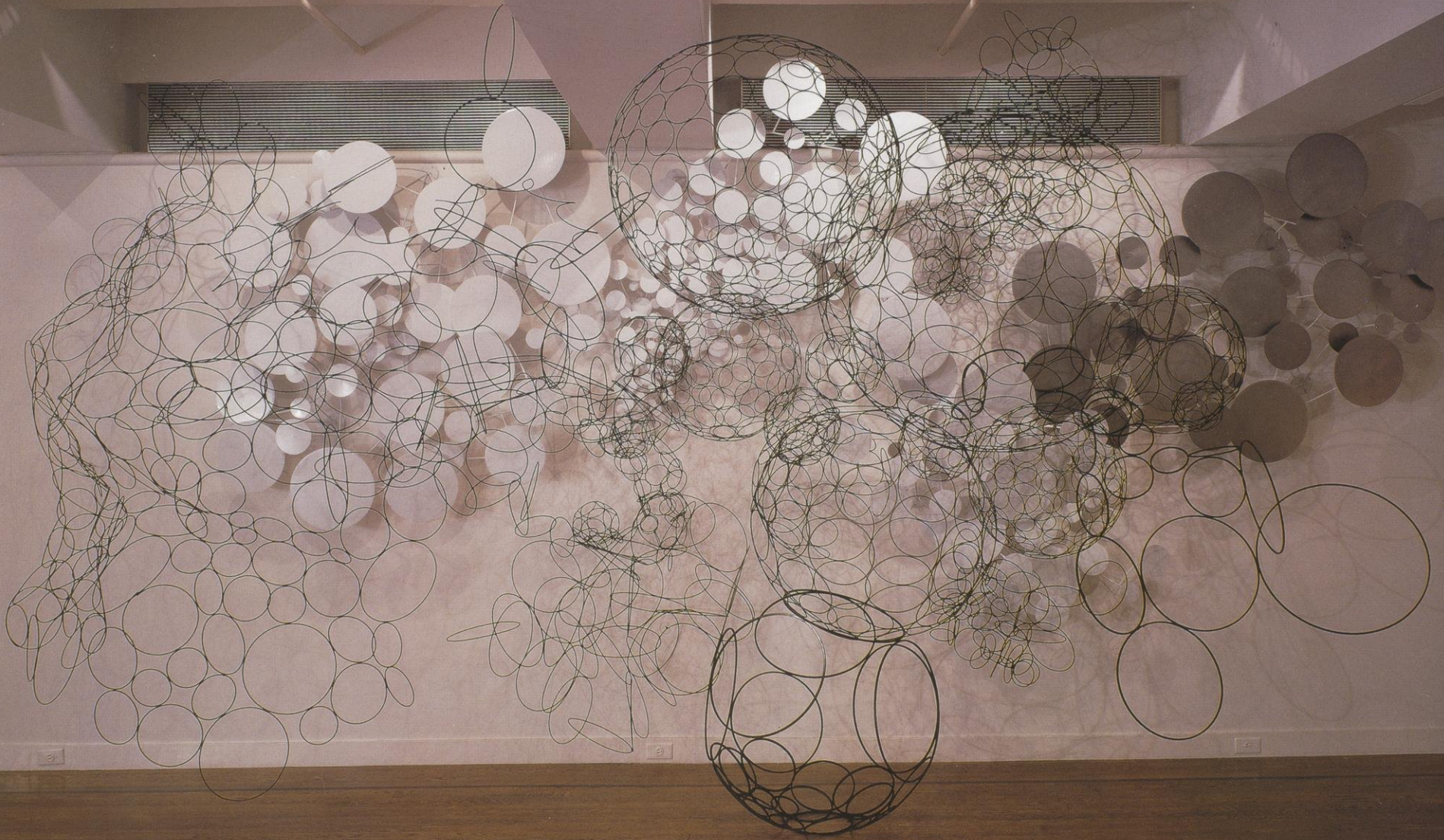
Installation: *Biennial Exhibition*, Whitney Museum of
American Art, New York, NY

It is noteworthy that "appropriation" was in the air in the early and middle 1980s. Indeed, if the art of that decade can be characterized by any one technique, it would be the "pirating" of existing images or commodities, whether in the photoworks of John Baldessari, Sherrie Levine, and Barbara Kruger, the paintings of David Salle, or the sculpture of Jeff Koons and Haim Steinbach. Like these "scavengers," Pfaff wanted to deal with what was going on in the world; unlike them, however—and more like Rauschenberg—she incorporated chunks of reality into larger, essentially abstract compositions. For example, in an eye-rocking *Superette* (1986), circles, half circles, hemispheres, and spheres are interspersed and contrasted with signs—PIONEER, BARB QUE—and rectangular planes composed of diagonal slats that resemble Venetian blinds. Playing "impure" readymades off against "pure" geometric forms, Pfaff's wall pieces "partake of a raunchy vernacularization of abstraction."⁷³

The signs and other urban objects and images in Pfaff's works and their frenetic tempo call New York City to mind. So does the manner in which they require the viewer to experience them. Because of information overload, one is always aware of what occurs on the periphery of vision. Brian O'Doherty characterized this mode of seeing as the "vernacular glance," that is, "the city dweller's rapid scan, rather than the art audience's stare. . . . The vernacular glance is what carries us through the city every day, a mode of unconscious, or at least, divided attention. . . . It tags the unexpected and quickly makes it familiar. . . . It dispenses with hierarchies of importance, since they are constantly changing according to where you are and what you need. . . . The vernacular glance is . . . extraordinarily versatile in dealing with experience that would be totally confusing otherwise."⁷⁴

Like Pfaff's installations, the reliefs are extraordinarily diverse. Unlike works such as *Apples and Oranges*, which have specific subjects, *Horror Vacui* (1988) is nonobjective. A monochromatic abstraction, it consists of hundreds of mostly open flat circular forms in complexes of different sizes and densities varied with a medley of solid black and white discs. The entire work seems to float off the wall, casting intricate shadows in varying grays, the shadows functioning as forms.

Before 1987, Pfaff's reliefs tended to be frontal, that is composed of planar elements that are suspended from a structure of rods—a "skeleton," as she called it—in the background. In her subsequent reliefs, Pfaff brought the "engineering" up front. The work becomes linear rather than planar. *Los Voces* (1992), hung from a trestlelike framework, is composed of wire mesh made up of different consistencies, ranging from a heavy open wire complex threaded with thin wires that create a spider web to gossamer tangles, the thickness of hairs. The title of *Flusso e riflusso* (1992; see page xi) comes from a commentary on water in one of Leonardo da Vinci's notebooks. Suspended in mid-air from two points on the gallery's ceiling and extending twenty-five feet, the work evokes a great wave that crests in an airy spray of meshlike wire at one end, ebbs in a web of wires, and rises again in a tangle of roots. Gliding through the work is a blown-glass fish. The hammocklike *Flusso e riflusso* was the first work in which Pfaff dispensed with walls and used the ceiling. It would lead to many others.



Toward the end of the 1980s, Pfaff began to introduce new and increasingly assorted images into her installations, reliefs, free-hanging sculptures, drawings, prints, and particularly, collages. If it had been her ambition in the past to be as inclusive as she could in her use of materials and forms, now she desired to be encyclopedic in her imagery. She found her visual "information" in books and magazines on physics, medicine, biology, zoology, astronomy, and Western and Eastern religions, among other sources, selecting images in a kind of stream of consciousness akin to the open-ended improvisation of her installations. Pfaff would leaf through texts, picking and choos-

HORROR VACUI, 1988

Painted steel, wire

118 × 258 × 108 inches

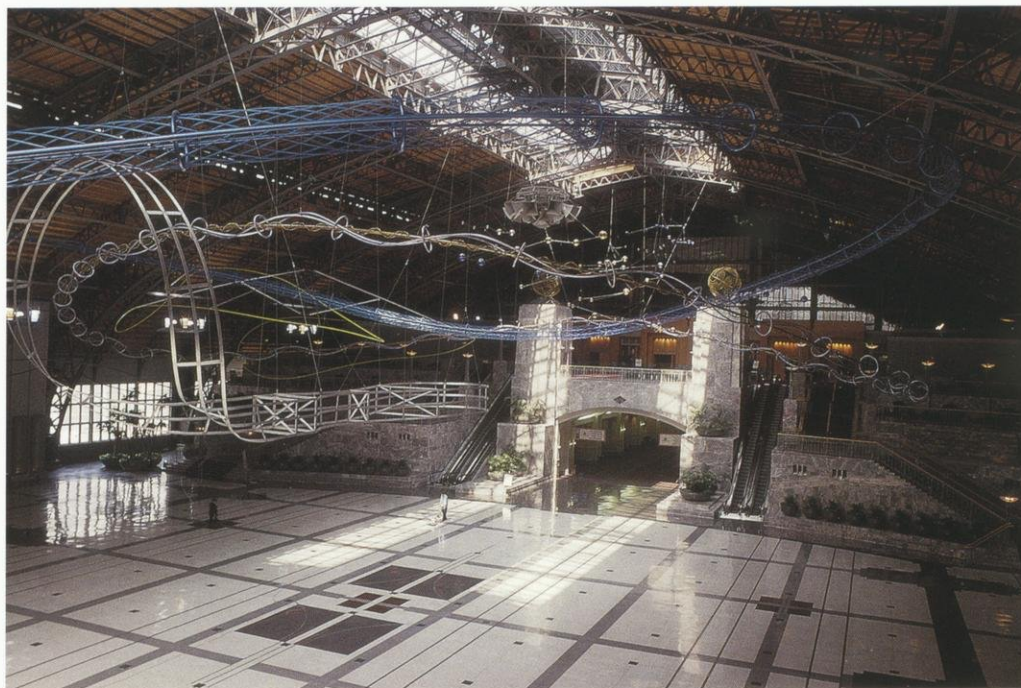


ing illustrations that struck her, accumulating knowledge, not systematically but intuitively. As she viewed it, in one way or another, everything in the universe is linked. The imagery she collected constituted a kind of visionary chart or model of universal knowledge.

Among the prodigious motifs in Pfaff's cosmology were maps, astral constellations, microscopic views of the earth, biological cells, cell nuclei, membranes, chromosomes, plants, herbs, snakes, shells, bones and viscera, body images, details of Islamic architecture, Tibetan and Indian Buddhist and Hindu mantras, mandalas, and medical illustrations, the beadwork of Native Americans, and palmistry diagrams. *Untitled* (1993), for example, is a palimpsest of comic strips, an old manuscript, and drawings of dinosaur skeletons, all overlaid with stains and drips of pigment and soot smears perforated with holes burnt through the surface.

During the 1990s, Pfaff created a number of her most monumental installations. Like her earlier environments each is different in feeling and concept.

In 1994–95, Pfaff was commissioned to create a permanent installation in the Philadelphia Convention Center, which formerly had been the Reading Railroad Terminal. The main space, said to be the world's biggest room when it was built in 1892, confronted her with her most daunting challenge to date.⁷⁵ For structural reasons, the basic material would have to be steel. Pfaff had worked with steel before, but never on this scale. In *cirque*, *CIRQUE*, as she would title the work, she would have to use steel "the thickness of elephant tusks." As she said, there was "a hell of a lot of fitting going on. Bending small diameters is one thing but bending tubing four inches in diameter is a different story."⁷⁶



opposite page

LOS VOCES, 1992

Lacquered steel, steel, aluminum wire

96 × 123 × 96 inches

cirque, CIRQUE, 1994–1995

Steel, aluminum, stainless-steel cable, blown glass,
automotive lacquer, paints

40 × 250 × 210 feet

Permanent installation: Pennsylvania Convention Center,
Philadelphia, PA

Photo by Rob van Erve

Looking up 100 feet at the ceiling of what had been a railroad terminal, Pfaff was reminded of the ceiling of New York City's Grand Central Station with its paintings of constellations. She also thought, what would the architect Antoni Gaudi have done? Pfaff found the soaring space so beautiful that she decided that whatever she did, she would not cramp its expansiveness. With this in mind, she suspended high above the viewer's heads nine miles of steel tubing that looped in expanding and contracting curvilinear rhythms through the vast interior. The undulating linear elements, many of them projected through circles, loop-the-loop, evoked flying trapezes or lions jumping through hoops, hence the title of the piece. However, the floating configuration, which was punctuated by hanging blue- and yellow-tinted glass globes, suggested the paths of stars and planets. It took Pfaff three years to complete the transformation of 700,000 square feet of raw space into fantasy architecture.

Carl Belz described Pfaff's arrival in 1995 at Brandeis University to create an installation she would later title *Elephant*. Accompanied by several assistants, she brought

a truckload of materials that included copper wire, fiberglass resin, steel pipes, plastic ducts and tubes, vines, tree roots, dried lily pads, tools of all kinds for bending and cutting and welding the metal, buckets for dyeing the fiberglass and vats for coating it with resin, arcane books illustrating Tibetan medicine and natural history, a coffee maker, a small TV, a new boom box along with plenty of tapes, and about a dozen of her own mixed media drawings that would augment the installation.

At Brandeis Pfaff was confronted with a site that had two floors of galleries surrounding a light well at the bottom of which was a pool that had been covered with plywood, which she immediately had removed. The problem was to integrate the different levels. Improvising this way and that, she could find no solution, at least not until she encountered on the Brandeis campus a 40-foot gray birch tree that was slated to be removed. With permission, she had her crew dig it up, roots and all, lug it into the building, and hang it on its side from the ceiling in the light well. The tree's naked branches, interwoven with meshes of fiberglass and resin and set off against copper pipes and plastic hose, reached out into the upper galleries. It hovered above the pool on whose reflecting surface she floated pods composed of plastic ventilation tubes whose edges she had covered with moss from which flowering water plants sprouted. Pfaff also added grape vines dripping with water that extended from the upper to the lower galleries. In his account, Belz added that the tree's "roots [were] positioned against the gallery's back wall where paint was wildly splashed and spattered over the trunk and limbs as well, looking altogether like a giant artist's brush that had been wielded with intuitively expressionistic abandon."⁷⁷ The final touch was the inclusion of Pfaff's drawings downstairs on the walls surrounding the pool.



Pfaff's titles just come to her while a piece is in progress, or after it is completed. In the case of *Elephant*, she said that, "It was like the seven blind men walking around an elephant and each one touching a different part and describing it. They all had real information. But the thing was too big for anyone to get a handle on. I liked that about it."⁷⁸

In 1997, Pfaff created an installation at the Andre Emmerich Gallery in New York City. Titled *Round Hole, Square Peg*, it filled the entire space. The walls of the entry room framed a rectangular arrangement of metal pipes, like a jungle gym, comprising the lineaments of a room within a room, although some pipes ran out of the gallery into the "real" world. In the center of the room, Pfaff and her crew poured plaster and rubber circles, some resting on the floor, others affixed to the walls. Pfaff recalled that the built-up plaster discs were first suggested by raindrops. Then she remembered the famous photograph of a drop of milk taken by Harold Edgerton.

As at the Convention Center in Philadelphia, unlike most earlier works in which the confining walls were more or less obliterated, the Emmerich piece entered into a dialogue with its encl-

ELEPHANT, 1995

Birch tree, fiberglass resin, steel, woven copper wire, duct tubing, plant materials, water

Approx. 50 × 50 × 50 feet

Installation: Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA

Following spread

ROUND HOLE, SQUARE PEG, 1997

Mechanical steel tubing, plaster, pigment, tree stumps, wood, cast rubber, expanding urethane foam, pencil

Five galleries, main gallery approx. 10 × 10 × 25 feet

Installation: Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, NY

Photo by Rob van Erve





sure by echoing the room. While calling attention to the architectural setting Pfaff also subverted it humorously, for example, making a corner where two walls meet “melt” into a gloppy mound of plaster. She also punched holes into the walls, like keyholes, enabling the viewers to spy from one room to the next as well as through partitions covering the gallery windows out onto the traffic-clogged street. As she said, “the holes unified the entire installation: you can see through the walls. . . . My work extends out; it doesn’t have an object center. You can see through—through the piece, through the wall, through the window, and out. Its center is the world.”⁷⁹

The complex of metal pipes and rods reached past two side rooms into the large second room of the gallery where it began to undulate. If the first room was predominantly rectangular, the second was curvilinear. In one of the side rooms, a massive tree suspended sideways sprouted gnarled branches and roots into some of whose ends were wedged metal pipes—a shotgun wedding of the man-made geometric and the biomorphic. Pfaff said that the root was “a human metaphor. The tree, like the ginseng root or the mandrake always has had the equivalence with the body. [Churches] were based on cosmologies, on the ordering of the planets and the person. . . . The same form can hold all this metaphor.”⁸⁰ Nature, as Pfaff views it, has humanlike qualities, perhaps even God-like, suggesting that underlying her work is a pantheistic attitude. In the other side room, Pfaff had sited a minimal open cube composed of mechanical tubing. Within it, she had enshrined a large stupalike plaster form, which echoed the circles in the large room.

Circles were everywhere throughout the installation, as drawings on the walls, voids drilled through the walls, and as solid forms. Flat, the circles are abstract metaphors for celestial bodies and mandalas; solid, they call to mind both stupas and breasts.

In order to complicate further *Round Hole, Square Peg* Pfaff drew parallel lines on the walls and overpainted them with semitransparent washes of pigments. Passing through a gatelike framework, reminiscent of a Japanese temple gate, one encountered a wall of pictures and diagrams, some of which were on rice-paper scrolls and others on Indian Sanskrit ledger books. Of the latter, Pfaff said, “it’s beautiful paper, in long rectangles with the folds burnished in.”⁸¹

Round Hole, Square Peg was a summation of all of the ideas Pfaff had been working with—the interaction of the natural with the machine-made and the cultural, the meeting of East and West, the union of the worldly and the “spiritual.” The installation was indeed a virtual cosmology.

In 1998, Pfaff was selected as the United States representative to the São Paulo Bienal.⁸² The theme of the show was the way different cultures devour and are devoured by other cultures, focusing on the mutual impact of the first and third worlds on each other. As the exemplary visual cannibal, Pfaff was a logical choice. She chose to work on site at the end of a vast glass-walled extension of Oscar Niemeyer’s modernist building. The space—120 feet long, 24 feet wide, and 20 feet high—was bordered on three sides by trees and shrubbery of a surrounding park, the largest in São Paulo and one of the favorite recreation spots for the inhabitants of the city. The park was visible from every angle through the pavilion’s floor-to-ceiling windows. Inspired by Brazil

and its Catholicism, Pfaff titled the work *Coroa de Espinhos* (crown of thorns) after a plant that grows everywhere in São Paulo, believed by many of its inhabitants to be the plant that formed the crown that Jesus wore on the way to Calvary.

Viewers entered the installation from its center and encountered in the middle of the space a large circle twenty feet in diameter composed of plaster poured directly on the floor. At its center was a stupalike form. Pathways from this complex drew viewers to the right or left further into the work.

Moving to the left, viewers were invited to weave through a circular complex of upside-down trees whose roots reflected the park and evoked both Brazil's jungles and the crown of thorns. This tree-scape was juxtaposed against an assertive grid-pattern of window mullions. At the right, Pfaff had laid out a Greek cross. At its central square she had spread a layer of soil of a singular "bloody" color and crumbly texture that is found only in Brazil and which its inhabitants identify with their nation.

Above all this was a curvilinear structure of bent-steel tubing from which a catwalk was suspended twelve feet over the ground. This swaying footway provided a variety of aerial views of the tripartite *Coroa de Espinhos* for spectators intrepid enough to climb up and navigate it.

Although on the whole Pfaff's works have been complex and profuse, an installation titled *Notes on Light and Color* (2000) at Dartmouth College, looked minimal, at least on first viewing. Entering the room Pfaff had been confronted with a semicircular wall. Struck by the resemblance of the wall to the human retina, she created an optical environment. It consisted of large luminous circles painted on three walls of a gallery which surrounded a row of three round plaster sculptures, the two outer ones, low flat-topped mounds, the center one, an hourglass-shaped volume rising to the ceiling. The components of the piece were related and lit so that the eye could not focus. Indeed, the entire room seemed to vibrate, pulsate, and flicker. Viewers became acutely aware of the very mechanics of their seeing, of their own perception. *Notes on Light and Color* looked simple but, as in other of Pfaff's installations, created visual confusion and disorientation. At the same time, the environment seemed otherworldly, evoking the music of the spheres.

In the spring of 2000, Pfaff was commissioned by Russell Panczenko, the director of the Elvehjem Museum of Art in Madison, Wisconsin, to create an installation in the vast atrium of the museum. She called the work *If I Had a Boat* (see pages vi and ix), the title taken from a song by Lyle Lovett. Coming into the atrium, I was enveloped by a vast construction consisting of a large, low metal maze on the floor; an airy forestlike or cathedrallike aggregate of slender steel tubes that soared upward to what seemed to be four or five stories (it actually was forty feet); and, surmounting the installation, a ceiling composed of a heavy checkerboard of cylindrical light fixtures (each six feet in length).

Looming through the vertical shafts were two flights of floating but massive travertine stairs that ascended in two diverging stages to the third story of the museum. In front of these stairs,





This page and opposite page

COROA DE ESPINHOS, 1998

Mechanical steel tubing, trees and root systems, wood,
plaster, terra roux

24 × 120 × 20 feet

Installation: *1998 Bienal de São Paulo*, Bienal Pavilion,
São Paulo, Brazil

Photos by Rob van Erve

NOTES ON LIGHT AND SHADOW, 1999

Plaster, expanding urethane foam, cast acrylic, poplar, steel; 2nd room: burnt trees, steel, dye, wax

North Gallery: 14 × 22 × 28 feet; East Gallery: 14 × 29 × 29 feet

Installation: *Presage of Passage*, Marian Adelaide Morris Cannon Galleries, Museum of Art at Brigham Young University, Provo, UT

Photos by Rob van Erve





This page and following spread

NOTES ON LIGHT AND COLOR, 2000

Plaster, dyes, UV fluorescent and incandescent lights,
contact paper, pencil, glass

11 1/2 x 70 x 30 feet

Installation: Jaffe-Friede and Strauss Galleries,
Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH

Photos by Rob van Erve





Pfaff had suspended an open framework of steel stairs which crisscrossed the travertine stairs in a kind of counter rhythm. She had also built other flights of stairs that were either free-hanging or positioned close to the walls and pointed in differing directions. The entire space was dominated by stairs—the heavy stone stairs of the building and Pfaff's open stair-constructions.

My peripheral vision registered a biomorph of sorts in the center of the maze, as well as plants and plantlike substances, and hanging balls and light bulbs. So much for the rush of first impressions. An installation as complicated as *If I Had a Boat* could only reveal itself slowly. Indeed it seemed to demand a leisurely walkabout. Taking my cue from the maze and the stairlike forms, I retraced my steps to the museum's entrance and began to make my way through the piece anew.

Entering the museum from outdoors, I walked up a steep flight of heavy travertine steps, whose railing was topped by one-inch square bronze-colored metal tubing, smack into the stark underside of another flight, this of open-slatted stairs rising above my head. The encounter was startling, and so it had seemed to Pfaff. To soften the harsh effect of the metal stairs, she had installed a rock garden beneath them, which, as she said, also "grounded" her work.

To the left was a counter manned by a museum guard, so it was natural to turn right where Pfaff had built a open metal stairway floating parallel to the wall, beneath which she attached a wall-frieze of organic foam and plaster substances and alongside, a bench for viewers to sit on. Further on down there was another smaller open stairlike framework, several steps of which supported plants and rocks.

Turning into the atrium I was struck by the way in which the stairs Pfaff constructed echoed the building's stairs. It was clear that she had taken her cues from the architecture, which had, as she remarked, "a lot of personality." Despite the complexity of *If I Had a Boat*, it seemed quieter and airier than most of Pfaff's earlier environments, which exuded anarchic energy. This was intentional, as she explained, done out of respect for the employees of the museum who had to "live" in her creation, as it were. It couldn't be jarring or "in your face." Thus, Pfaff would not only take into account the Elvehjem's architecture but the requirements of its staff.

The maze on the atrium floor was about a foot high. It was constructed of dozens of one-inch square vertical steel tubes, which echoed the linear metal tubes on the travertine railings on the stairs. Pfaff had also given the steel tubes a bronze patina to reflect the railings' color and the beige tonality of the museum interior. The right-angled maze was new in Pfaff's work although it related to the paths through the junglelike labyrinths of her earlier installations, but now geometricized.

The low height of the maze enabled me to see through the entire work and step out of it if I pleased. But it felt more natural to thread my way through—warily lest I trip. The gridlike arrangement called to mind the Minimal sculptures of Carl Andre and Sol LeWitt. Indeed, the Minimalist references of the building's checkerboard ceiling had inspired Pfaff's maze, itself a grid of sorts,

in the first place. However, in its intricacy and multidirectionality, the maze was non- or anti-Minimalist.

In building the Elvehjem maze, Pfaff joined a long tradition that harked back to circa 2,500 B.C. Mazes have been found in Neolithic, Greco-Roman, medieval French and English, Hopi, among many other cultures, suggesting that their appeal is universal. In one of the most famous myths in classical mythology, Theseus navigates a labyrinth to slay the fearsome mythic minotaur. More directly, Pfaff was inspired by cathedral mazes, which symbolize pilgrimages, that is, the "Road to Jerusalem." On the one hand, making one's way through the maze is a meditative practice, a journey inward to one's spiritual core. On the other hand, in an update of the minotaur myth, the passage enacts Christ's ouster of the Devil. At Chartres Cathedral, the maze was related to the rose window, the earth-bound nature of the one balancing the heavenly light of the other. In medieval thought, mazes were also related to moon images and astronomical charts, both of which had appeared often in Pfaff's cosmological drawings and collages. Furthermore, medieval mazes were dedicated to architects and/or master masons. Pfaff was delighted when I told her this. "The masons deserve it, if their labor was anything like what it took me to construct *If I Had a Boat*," she said. "You have to have the tenacity, the discipline, to keep solving problems day after day, how to make clear, fluid systems, structural systems, and much more. I don't think that gets noticed."⁸³

The purpose of a pilgrimage is to reach a sacred place. In the center of Pfaff's maze she installed a biomorphic complex, consisting of a Gaudi-like gnarled cedar root, studded with bronze-patinated steel leaves. Entwining and rising from the root were steel vines, which, like the bronze leaves, were human-made components that resembled plants. Climbing to the ceiling, the vines were organic counterparts to the omnipresent stairs. With "nature" as god or minotaur, ensconced in its center as a kind of animistic icon, the geometric maze became a mandala as well as a "guardian of the secret," the title of one of Jackson Pollock's seminal paintings.

In order to counteract the heaviness of the architecture, particularly the travertine staircase and the massive grid of light fixtures that topped it, Pfaff filled the towering open space of the atrium with an airy array of dozens of slender vertical steel shafts. Extended upward from the grid, they reached varying heights almost to the ceiling three storeys above. This multitude of uprights was reminiscent of the piers and spires of late Gothic cathedrals.

Hanging down from the light fixtures and intertwining with the shafts were cables tipped with lead balls, fishing sinkers, and light bulbs whose bottom halves were silvered. The solid lead balls and delicate light bulbs contrasted with and echoed each other—and four small blue light bulbs near the ceiling. The downward pull of the balls and sinkers countered the vertical thrust of the uprights, but at the same time their weight served to hold the shafts aloft since, as I observed from the upper story, the shafts were not attached to the ceiling but hung freely from the checkerboard structure of light fixtures. Indeed, the whole upper structure was physically afloat.

Beyond the maze were two rectangular beds of plants and on the far wall, a complex, composed of a short flight of stairs, a platformlike walkway, another short flight, which was interwoven with steel vines and hanging plants. But the dominant feature on this wall was a large viscous moss-like organic frieze, composed of poured expanded foam. At one and the same time, the frieze resembled an Abstract Expressionist painting and a grotto within an architectural setting. As in much of her earlier work, Pfaff contrasted three-dimensional construction "sculpture" with a two-dimensional illusionistic "painting."

What did *If I Had a Boat* mean? It seemed clear that the flights of stairs and vines were metaphors for movement heavenward, the sense of ascension accentuated by the profusion of vertical shafts. Passing through the maze made me aware of my mundane nature and, in making a pilgrimage—a spiritual journey—transcending it. Moreover, the installation contrasted and synthesized the human-made with the natural, although much of the "nature" had been fabricated by Pfaff, for example, the vines and plantlike images on the wall. Thus, the work suggested that much of what looks natural today has been mediated by people and is actually artificial. Perhaps Pfaff's message is that the organic—even if dead, as her root is, or fabricated, as the vine—has to be protected, the function assigned in her work to the geometric maze.

When Pfaff began to make environments in the early 1970s, installation art was a marginal tendency in the art world. Since then, it has become central, in large part because of Pfaff's works. Now, in the new millennium, many of the most interesting younger artists, among them Polly Apfelbaum, Ann Hamilton, Nancy Rubins, Cornelia Parker, Jessica Stockholder, Jason Rhodes, and Sarah Sze, artists who have received their "permission" from Pfaff, are creating exceptional new installations. And so is Judy Pfaff.

NOTES

1. This remark was first made by the painter Harry Holtzman at the Artist Club in the late 1950s.
2. Sheila Bermel, "Talking with Judy Pfaff," *The Load* (SUNY Purchase), (October 20, 1982): 9.
3. Paul Gardner, "Blissful Havoc," *ArtNews* 82.6 (Summer 1983): 74. While at Yale, Pfaff "experimented with making small fragile objects using wire, sticks, foil and other simple materials devoid of color. [She dealt with] problems such as the construction of twenty sculptures each made out of two lines or made with forms that had only sixty-degree angles. [She] made sculptures designed to be viewed from various unusual perspectives—from the floor, a chair, or while moving." Susan Krane, "Pfaff's Installations: Abstraction on the Rebound," in *Judy Pfaff* by William Currie and Susan Krane (Buffalo, NY: The Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, 1982), 9.
4. Pfaff also found an extended "family" in New York which included Ron Gorchoy, Nancy Graves, Gordon Matta-Clark, Elizabeth Murray, Ellen Phalen, Joel Shapiro, Judy Rifka, Alan Shields, and Joan Snyder, and in the other arts, Palestrina and Yvonne Rainer. As Pfaff said, "The scene was teeming with ideas and energy." The work of Eva Hesse was also important to her. Older artists that were her friends, aside from Al Held, were George Sugarman and Sylvia Stone.
5. Bermel, "Talking with Judy Pfaff," 9.
6. Roberta Smith, "Judy Pfaff: Autonomous Objects," in *Judy Pfaff: Autonomous Objects* (Charlotte, NC: Knight Gallery, Spirit Square Center for the Arts, 1986), 4.
7. Krane, "Pfaff's Installations: Abstraction on the Rebound," 8.
8. David Cohen, "Mondrian and the Third Dimension," *Sculpture* 15.2 (February 1996): 32.
9. Bermel, "Talking with Judy Pfaff," 9.
10. Judy Pfaff, quoted in "Talking Objects: Interviews with Ten Young Sculptors," by Wade Saunders, *Art in America* 68.9 (November 1985): 131.
11. Pfaff's installation at the Neuberger Museum delighted me not only because of Pfaff's installation but also because the show was an homage to Artists Space and I was able to write one of the catalogue introductions.
12. The four installations are *Brier*, Tyler School of Art, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pa.; *Charlemagne*, Hallwalls, Buffalo, 1976; *The World Is Flat*, University of South Florida, Tampa, 1977; and *LA CUIDAD DE LOS ANGELES*, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, 1977.
13. Richard Armstrong, "Westkunst: Judy Pfaff," *Flash Art* (Summer 1981): 41.
14. See Barbara Noah, "Los Angeles: Judy Pfaff at L.A.C.E.," *Art in America* 66.5 (September 1978): 129.
15. Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood," *Artforum* 66.5 (Summer 1967): 15, 19–20.
16. James Monte, Introduction to *Anti-Illusion: Procedures/Materials* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1969), 4–5.
17. Judy Pfaff, Irving Sandler's handwritten notes of a public conversation with Irving Sandler, at the Delaware Art Museum, April 17, 1994.

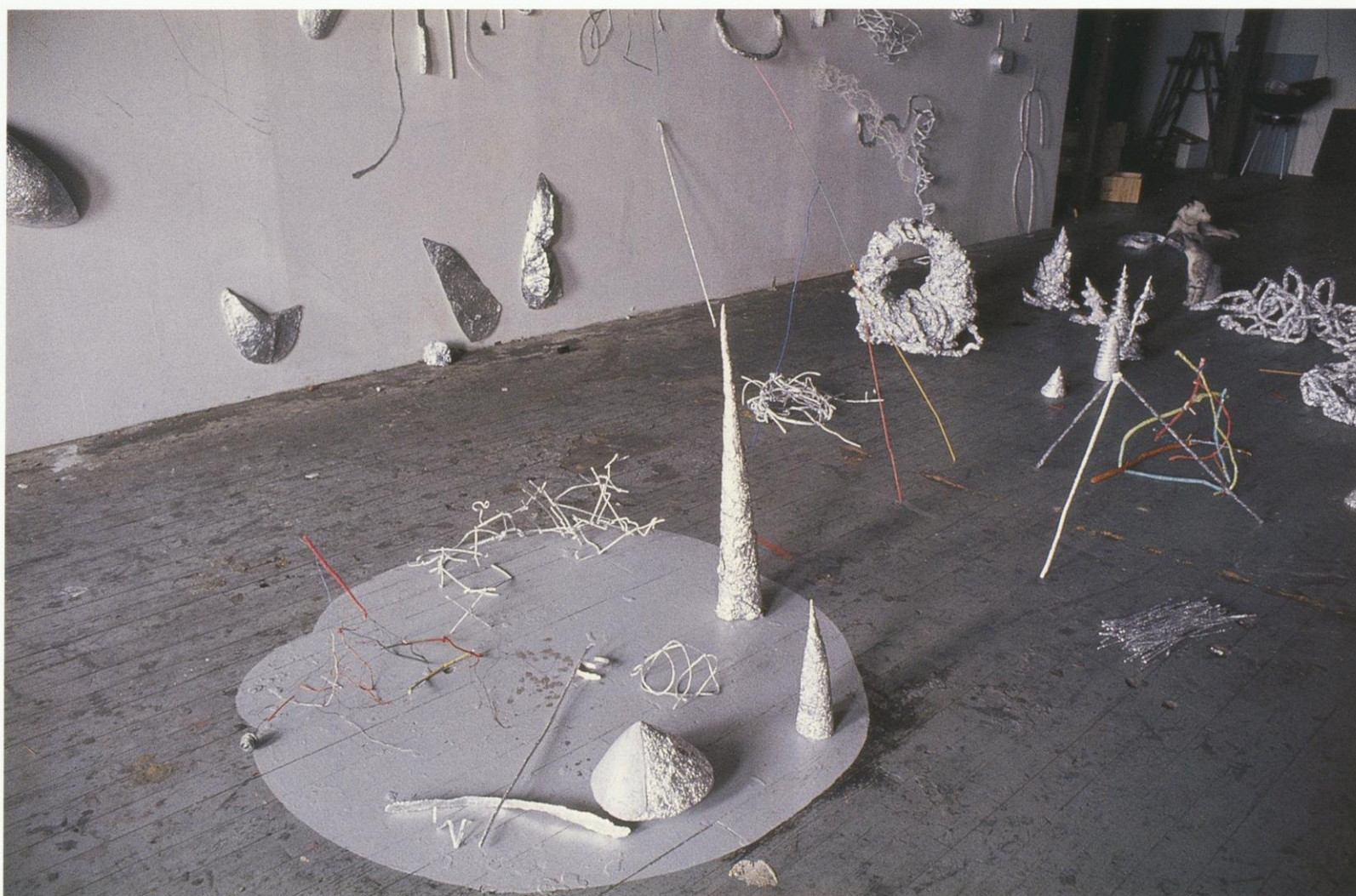
18. Armstrong, "Westkunst: Judy Pfaff," 41.
19. Pfaff's color may have been thought of as decorative because she exhibited in the Holly Solomon Gallery, which featured Pattern and Decorative Painting.
20. Armstrong, "Westkunst: Judy Pfaff," 41.
21. Jan Garden Castro, "Poetry out of Chaos, A Conversation with Judy Pfaff," *Sculpture* 17:2 (February 1998): 27.
22. Pfaff's dealers Holly and Horace Solomon helped promote her work, but even more important, they became her patrons, advancing her money to make her installations.
23. The underwater scene became the primary image in other of Pfaff's work at the time: *Quintana Roo* (1980) at the Cincinnati Contemporary Art Center, and *Kabuki* (1980–81) at the Hirshhorn Museum.
24. Martin Friedman, "As Far as the Eye Can See," in *Visions of America: Landscape as Metaphor in the Late Twentieth Century*, by Martin Friedman et al (Denver: Denver Art Museum; Columbus: Columbus Museum of Art; Abrams: 1994), 16.
25. Bermel, "Talking with Judy Pfaff," 9.
26. Gardner, "Blissful Havoc," 72.
27. Bermel, "Talking with Judy Pfaff," 9.
28. Linda Nochlin, "Judy Pfaff, or the Persistence of Chaos," in *Judy Pfaff* (New York: Holly Solomon Gallery; and Washington, DC: National Museum of Women in the Arts, 1989), 7.
29. Bermel, "Talking with Judy Pfaff," 9.
30. Ibid.
31. Kim Levin, *Beyond Modernism: Essays on Art from the 70s and 80s* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 3.
32. Helaine Posner, "A Conversation with Judy Pfaff," in *Judy Pfaff* (New York: Holly Solomon Gallery; and Washington, DC: National Museum of Women in the Arts, 1989), 16.
33. Nochlin, "Judy Pfaff, or the Persistence of Chaos," 6–7.
34. See Miranda McClintic, "Outside/Inside Landscapes," (New York: Independent Curators International, 1998), 73. [24th International Biennial of São Paulo, Brazil, 1998]
35. Armstrong, in "Westkunst: Judy Pfaff," p. 41, wrote that Pfaff is "one of the last artists of her generation with any real connection to the original New York school."
36. Bermel, "Talking with Judy Pfaff," 9.
37. Richard Marshall and Robert Mapplethorpe, *50 New York Artists*.
38. Gardner, "Blissful Havoc," 74.
39. See McClintic, "Outside/Inside Landscapes," 65–66.
40. See David Frankel, "Judy Pfaff: Andre Emmerich Gallery," *Artforum* 36 (February 1998): 89.
41. Richard Whittaker, "Conversations: Judy Pfaff, Hands On," *Works + Conversations* 1 (1998): 13.
42. Judy Pfaff, Irving Sandler's handwritten notes of a talk at the Whitney Museum of American Art, February 3, 1994.
43. Michael Auping, "Judy Pfaff: Turning Landscape Inside Out," *Arts Magazine* 57 (September 1982): 75.
44. Gardner, "Blissful Havoc," 74.
45. See Arthur C. Danto, "The Scholar and the Workman," *TLS* (December 3, 1999): p. 18.
46. Nochlin, "Judy Pfaff, or the Persistence of Chaos," 9.
47. Friedman, "As Far as the Eye Can See," 14–15.
48. "Unframed Space," Interview with Jackson and Lee Pollock, *New Yorker* (August 5, 1950): 16.
49. Ti-Grace A. Sharpless, "Freedom . . . Absolute and Infinitely Exhilarating," *ArtNews* (November 1963): 37.
50. Ibid.
51. Adam Gopnik, "Olmsted's Trip," *New Yorker* (March 31, 1997): 101. Olmsted also designed Stanford, Prospect Park, and the Biltmore Estate, in North Carolina; the area around the United States Capitol; and preservation plans for Niagara Falls and Yosemite.
52. Thomas Lawson, "New York: Judy Pfaff, Holly Solomon," *Flash Art* 100 (November 1980): 45.
53. Michael Shore, "Punk Rocks the Art World: How Does It Look, How Does It Sound?" *ArtNews* 70.11 (November 1980): 70–85.
54. Ibid.
55. Castro, "Poetry out of Chaos," 27.
56. Ellen Schwartz, "Judy Pfaff: Sculpture May Never Be the Same," *ArtNews* 80.5 (May 1981): 80.
57. Ibid.
58. Gardner, "Blissful Havoc," 72.
59. Smith, "Judy Pfaff, Autonomous Objects," 8. Smith also had in mind *Kabuki* (Hirshhorn Museum, 1981).
60. Armstrong, "Westkunst: Judy Pfaff," 41.
61. Smith, "Judy Pfaff, Autonomous Objects," 10.
62. Gardner, "Blissful Havoc," 74.
63. Smith, "Judy Pfaff, Autonomous Objects," 10.
64. Gardner, "Blissful Havoc," 74.
65. Smith, "Judy Pfaff, Autonomous Objects," 10.
66. See Richard Armstrong, "Judy Pfaff," *Artforum* 21.7 (March 1983): 79.
67. Gardner, "Blissful Havoc," 72.

68. Ibid.
69. Press Release (New York: John Weber Gallery, June 1986), n.p.
70. Nochlin, "The Persistence of Chaos," 12.
71. Smith, "Judy Pfaff, Autonomous Objects," 16.
72. Posner, "A Conversation with Judy Pfaff," 16.
73. Smith, "Judy Pfaff, Autonomous Objects," 16.
74. Brian O'Doherty, *American Masters: The Voice and the Myth* (New York: Ridge Press, Random House, 1973), 201.
75. Nancy Princenthal, "Judy Pfaff: Life and Limb," *Art in America* 86.10 (October 1998): 100.
76. Whittaker, "Conversations: Judy Pfaff," 9.
77. Carl Belz, "Notes on *Elephant*," in *Judy Pfaff: Elephant* (Waltham, Mass.: Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, 1995), 4, 7–8.
78. Whittaker, "Conversations: Judy Pfaff," 12.
79. Castro, "Poetry out of Chaos," 23.
80. Ibid., 27.
81. Ibid.
82. Pfaff's piece in São Paulo was curated by Miranda McClintic.
83. Irving Sandler, handwritten notes of a conversation with Judy Pfaff, Madison, Wisconsin, April 27, 2001.



Judy Pfaff working on *Elephant*, 1995,
Brandeis University, Waltham, MA

Judy Pfaff



1. **UNTITLED WORK IN PROGRESS, 1976**

Aluminum foil, wire, approx. 10 × 25 × 15 feet

Installation: Artist's studio, Tribeca, New York, NY



2. PANAMINT (DETAIL), 1977

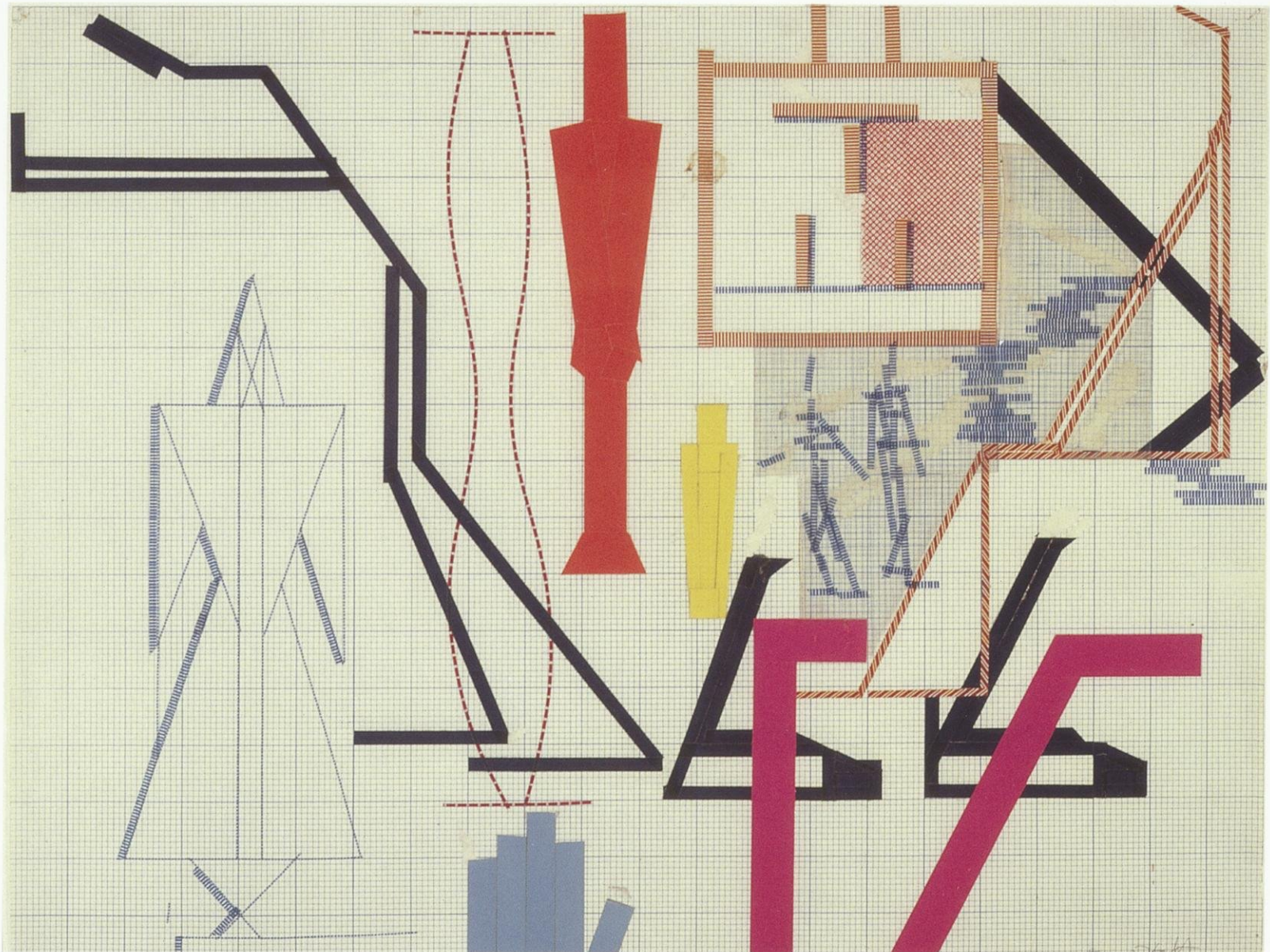
Contact paper, papier mâché, Styrofoam, paint, approx. 15 × 30 × 30 feet

Installation: Artist's studio, Cal Arts, Valencia, CA



3. CHARMS, 1980

Glitter, wood, balsa wood, wire, contact paper, paint, approx. 20 x 75 x 30 feet
Installation: *Extensions*: Jennifer Bartlett, Lynda Benglis, Robert Longo, Judy Pfaff,
Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX



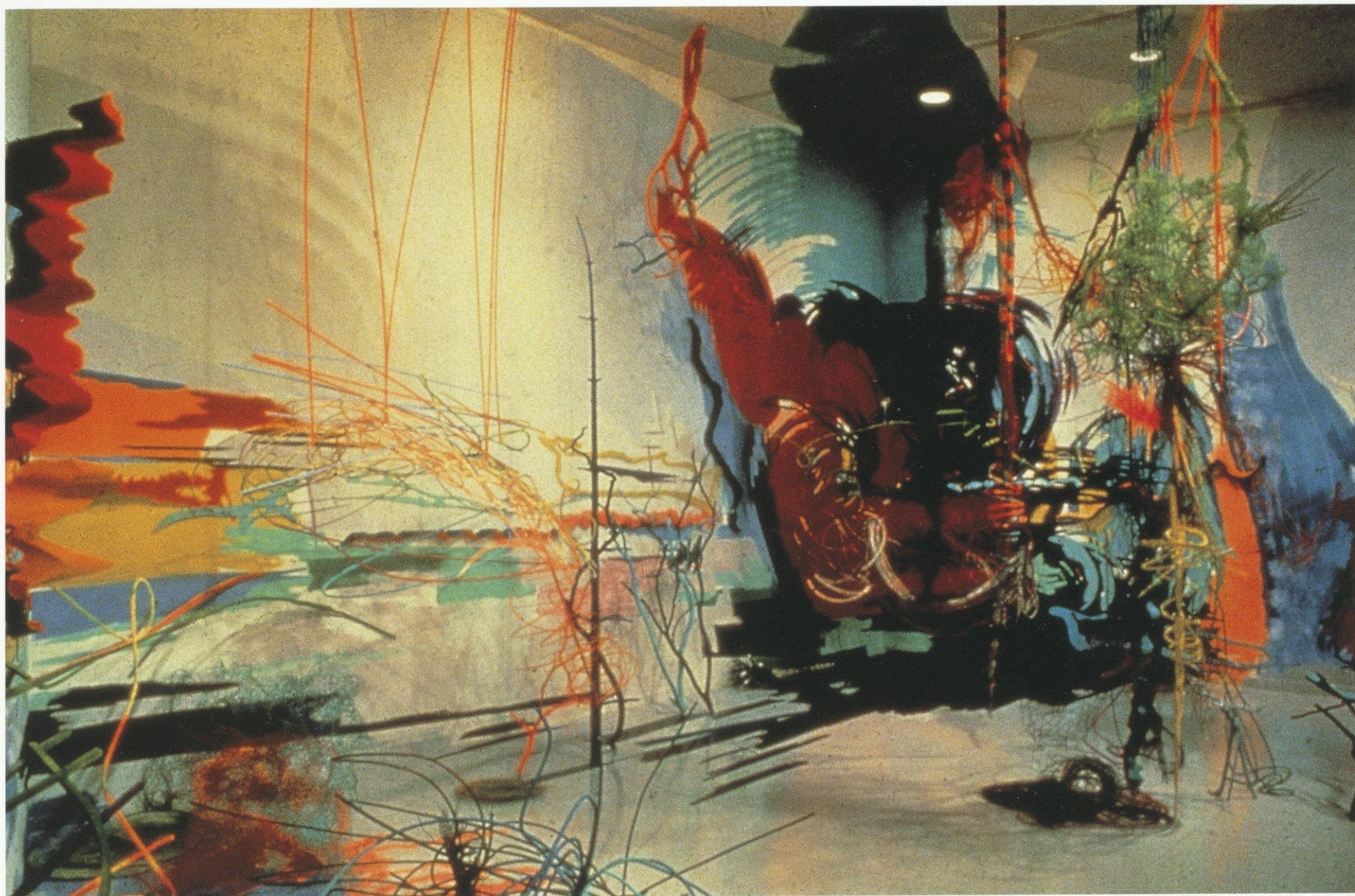
4. UNTITLED, 1980

Mixed adhesive plastics on graph paper, 17 × 22 inches



5. **UNTITLED, 1980**

Mylar, contact paper and plastic, 44 × 116 inches (framed)



6. **KABUKI, 1981**

Wicker, rattan, balsa wood, wire mesh, paint, 13 × 28 × 25 ½ × 9 ½ feet

Installation: *Directions 1981, (Formula Atlantic)*, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC





7. **ZIGGURAT, 1981** (left and right pages)

Wood veneers, Plexiglas, organic matter, balsa wood, paint, approx. 14 × 40 × 40 feet
Installation: *Zeitgenössische Kunst seit 1939*, Museen der Stadt Köln, Cologne, Germany



8. UNTITLED, 1981

Wood, wood paneling, balsa wood, tree stump, paint, approx. 16 × 20 × 20 feet

Installation: *Body Language: Figurative Aspects of Recent Art*, Hayden Gallery, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA



9. **FOUR MINUTE MILE, 1982**

Wood paneling, wood, tin, plastics, approx. 12 x 30 feet

Installation: *Guy Goodwin, Bill Jensen, Louise Fishman, Stuart Diamond, Judy Pfaff,*
Suzanne Lemberg Usdan Gallery, Bennington College, Bennington, VT

Photo by Julius Kozlowski



10. MALO, STATE 1 (FROM BADLANDS SERIES), 1984
Painted plywood, poplar, and steel, 96 x 132 x 72 inches



11. FRIO (FROM BADLANDS SERIES), 1984

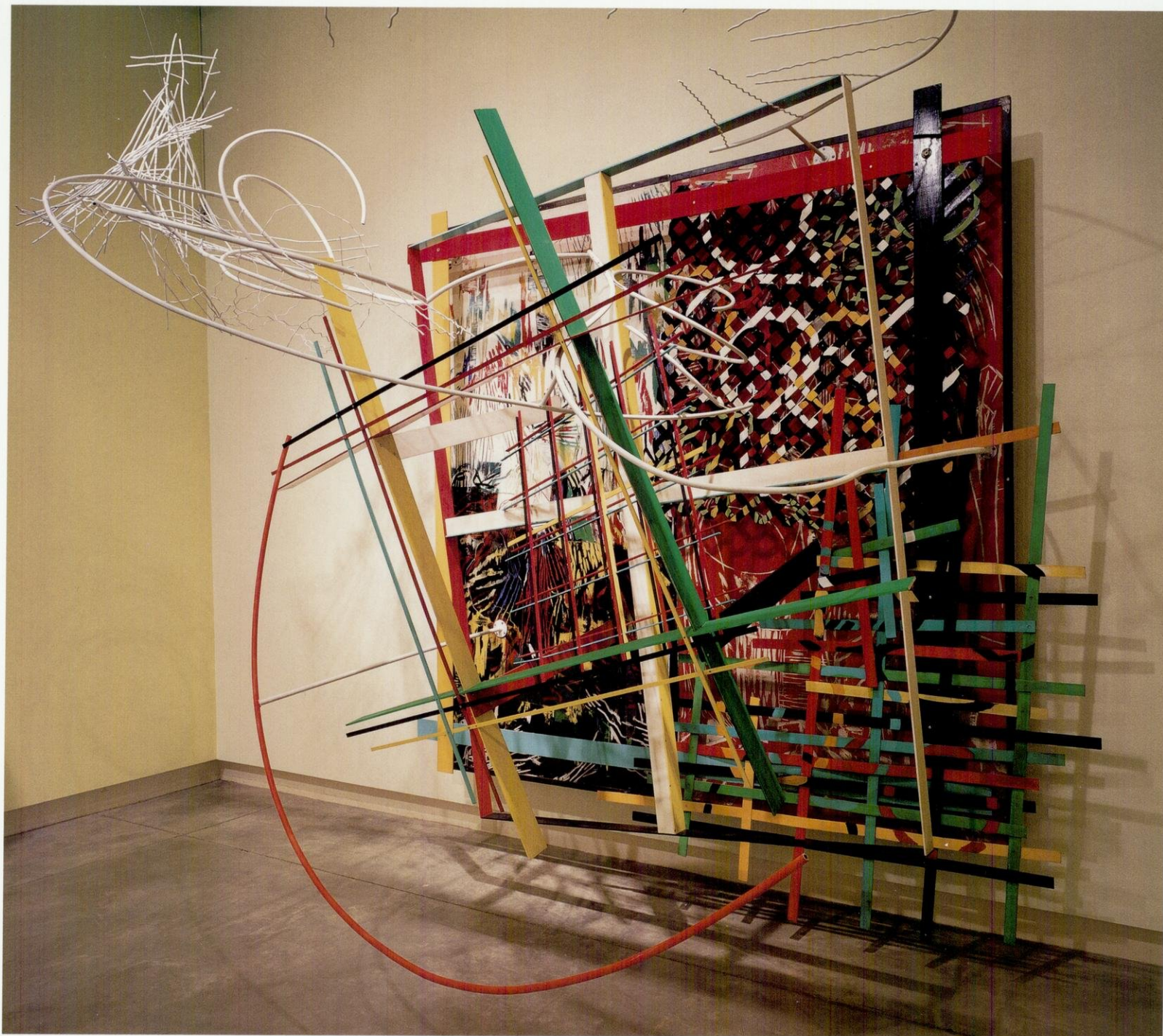
Painted wood, poplar and steel, 132 × 108 × 72 inches



12. YOYOGI II, 1985

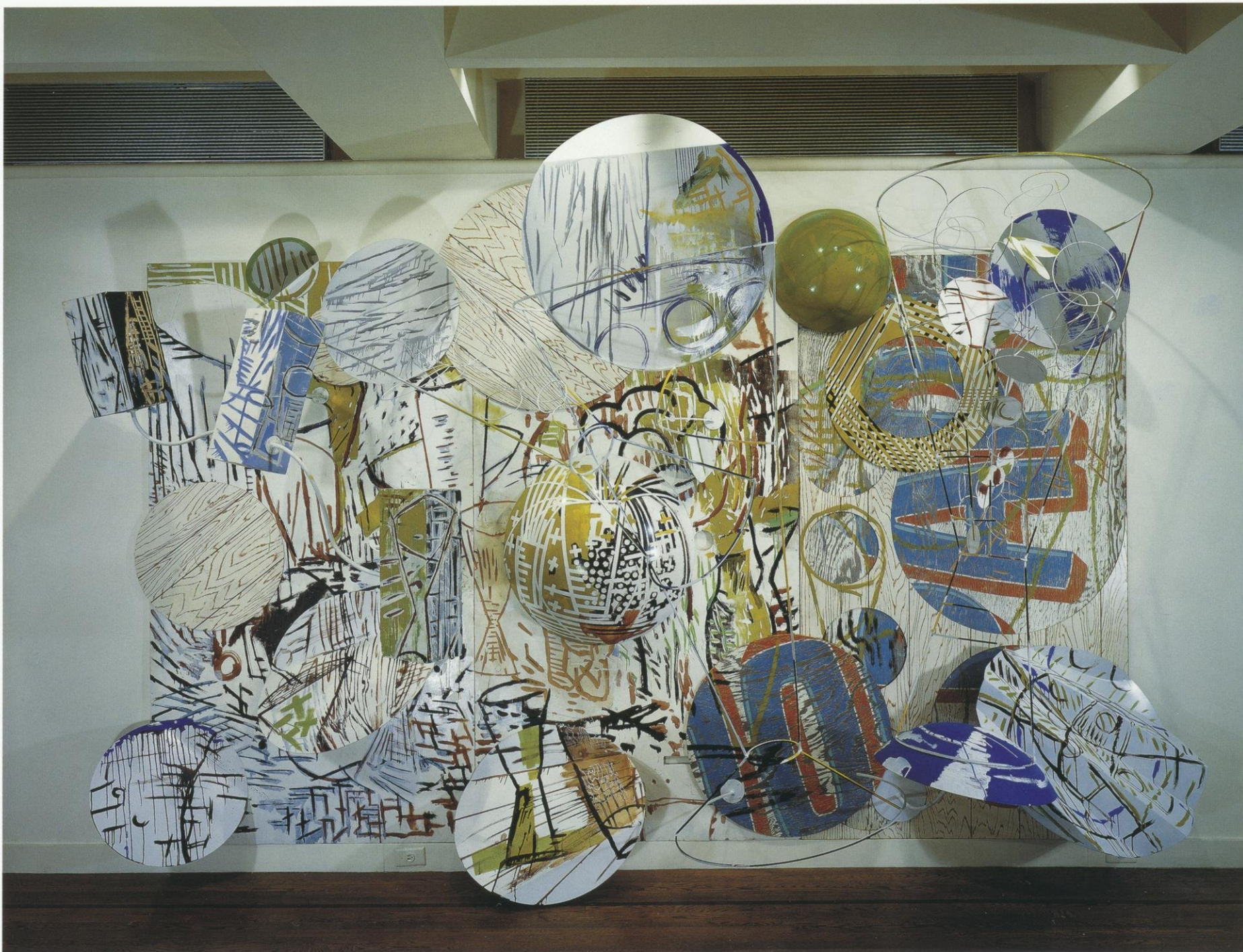
Color woodcut, 31 3/4 x 36 inches (paper size)

Published: Crown Point Press, edition of 75



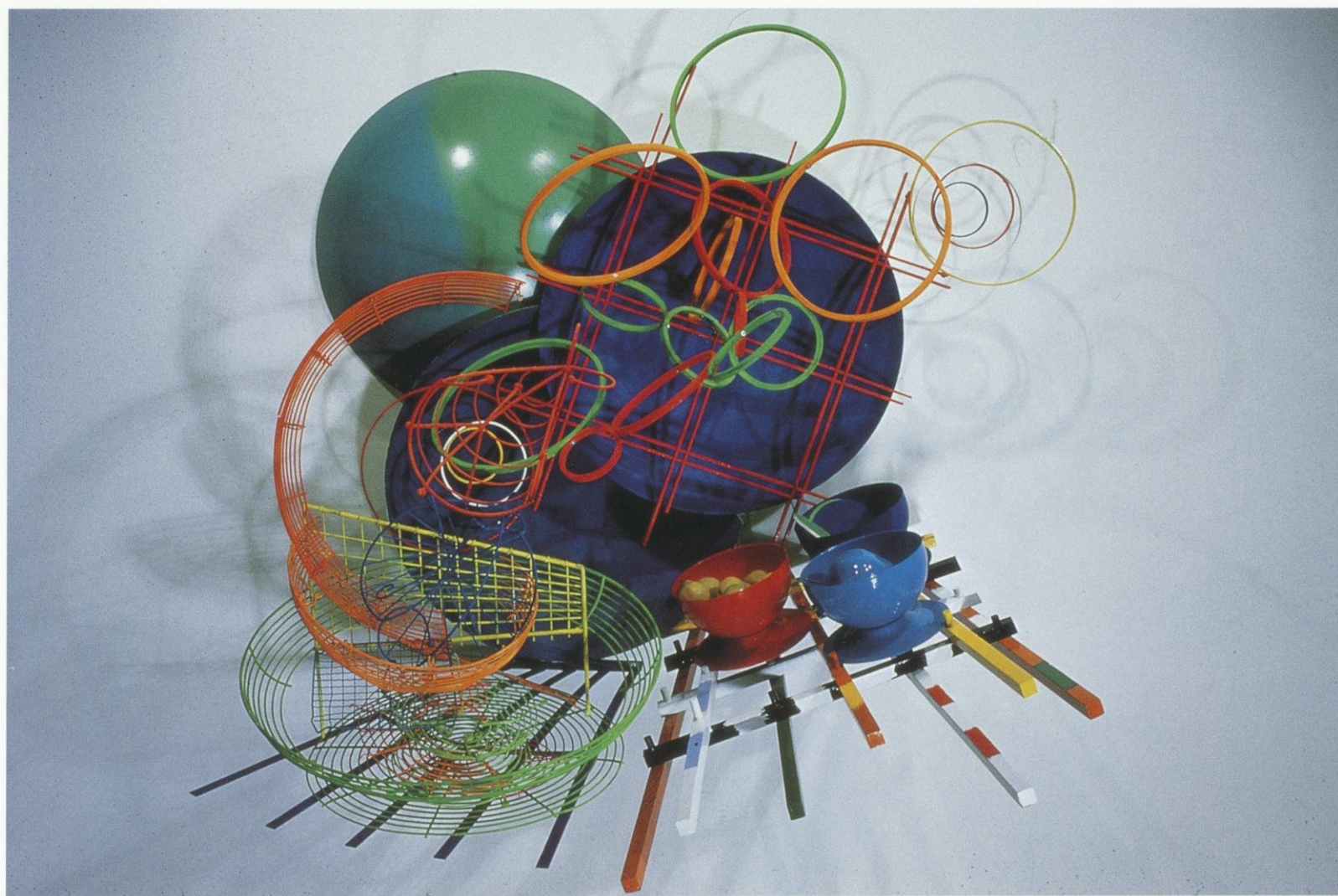
13. FUJI, 1985

Painted wood and steel, 136 × 122 × 104 inches



14. CHAMPAGNE, 1986

Painted wood, steel and woks, signage, 104 x 156 x 50 inches



15. **SUZIE Q, 1986**

Painted woks, found objects, and wood, 55 × 61 × 40 inches



16. HONEY BEE, FOR HOLLY SOLOMON, 1987

Painted metal and wood, found objects, plastic, 99 1/2 x 118 x 35 inches



17. UNTITLED, 1986

Mixed adhesive plastics with aluminum on pegboard, 61 × 48 × 3 inches



18. 11211, 1987

Steel tubing, fluorescent light, street and highway signage, 25 x 30 x 40 feet
Installation: *Art in the Anchorage*, Anchorage of the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn, NY
Photo © 1987 Dorothy Zeidman



19. SCOPA #1 (SETTE BELLO), 1988

Mixed adhesive plastics on Mylar graph paper, 35 1/4 x 47 inches (framed)



20. **UNTITLED, 1988**

Mixed adhesive plastics on Mylar with wood and painted metal
106 × 82 ½ × 5 inches (framed)



21. **GREAT GLASSES, 1988**

Painted steel and wood, found objects, 108 × 96 × 60 inches

Photo © 1988 Tom Barr



22. **LOAVES AND FISHES (TEN DRAWINGS FROM THIS SERIES), 1988**

Each drawing: mixed adhesive plastics on Mylar graph paper

Various sizes; back wall approx. 12 × 35 feet

Installation: *10,000 Things*, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY

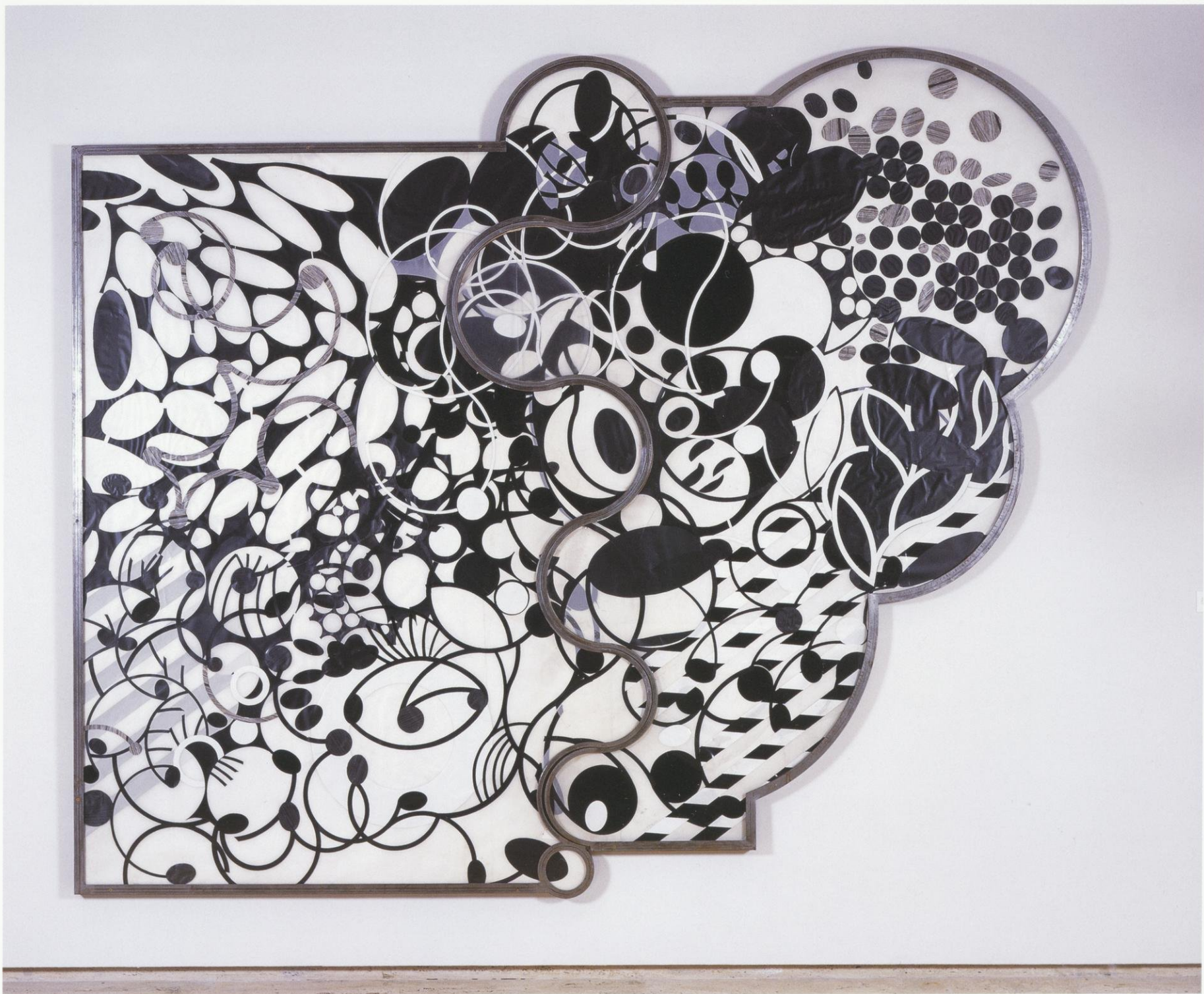


23. N. E. W. S. (NORTH, EAST, WEST, SOUTH), 1988
Painted steel, found objects, plastic, 109 x 96 x 43 inches



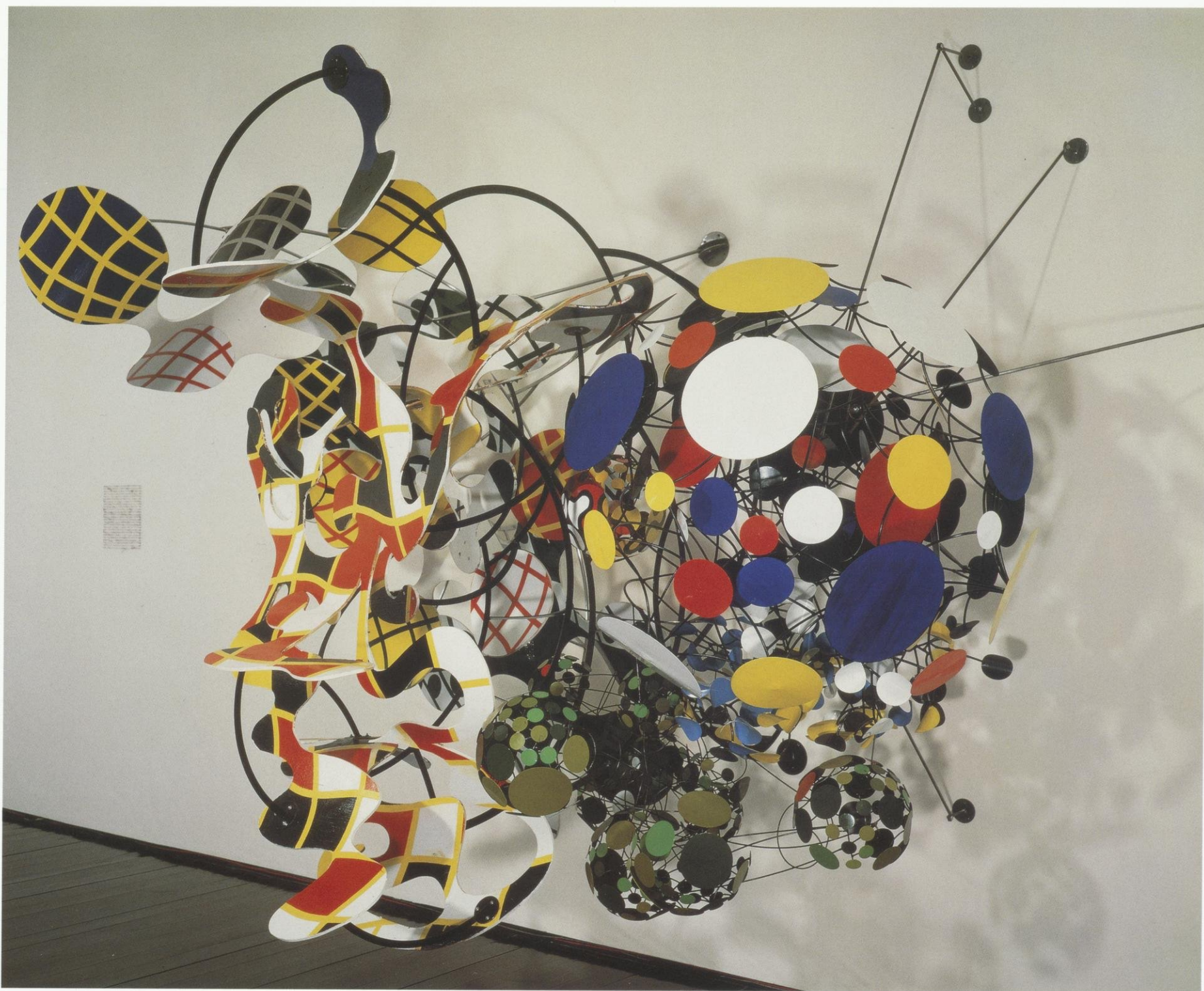
24 . IL GARDINIERE, 1988

Painted steel and wood, 120 x 120 x 120 inches



25. DRAWING FOR HORROR VACUI, 1988

Mixed adhesive plastics on Mylar with iron frame, 103 3/4 x 124 inches (framed)



26. **ES POSSIBLE**, 1989

Painted wiggle board and steel, 96 × 144 × 48 inches



27. **¾ TIME, 1990**

Painted wood, steel, Plexiglas, found objects, 84 × 109 × 48 inches



28. PLANETARY TIME, 1990

Painted wiggle board, steel, and vacuum formed hemispheres, 156 x 62 x 56 inches



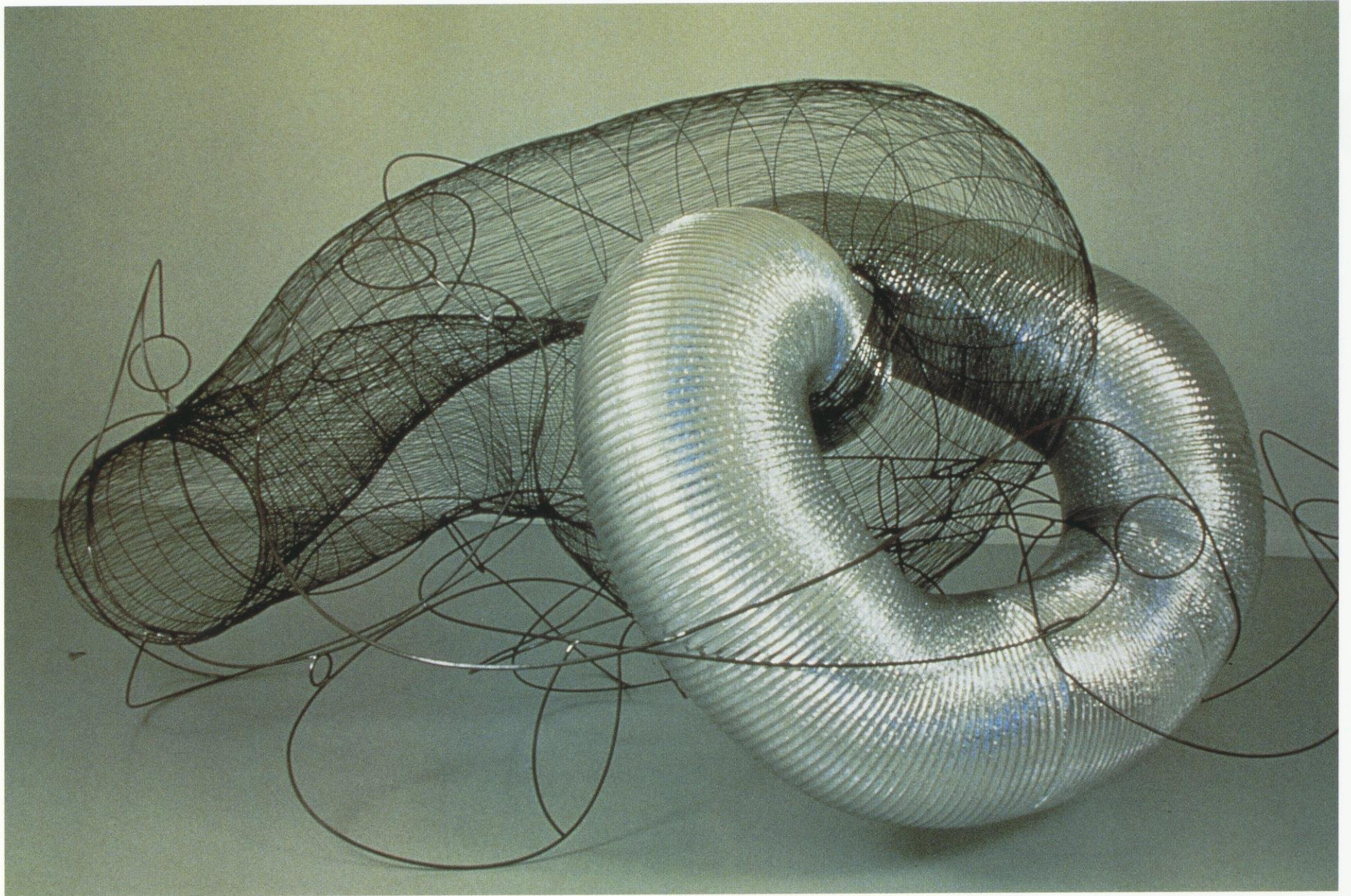
29. BARCELONA, 1990

Steel, plastic, glass, table and chairs, 168 × 168 × 168 inches



30. **STRAW INTO GOLD, 1990**

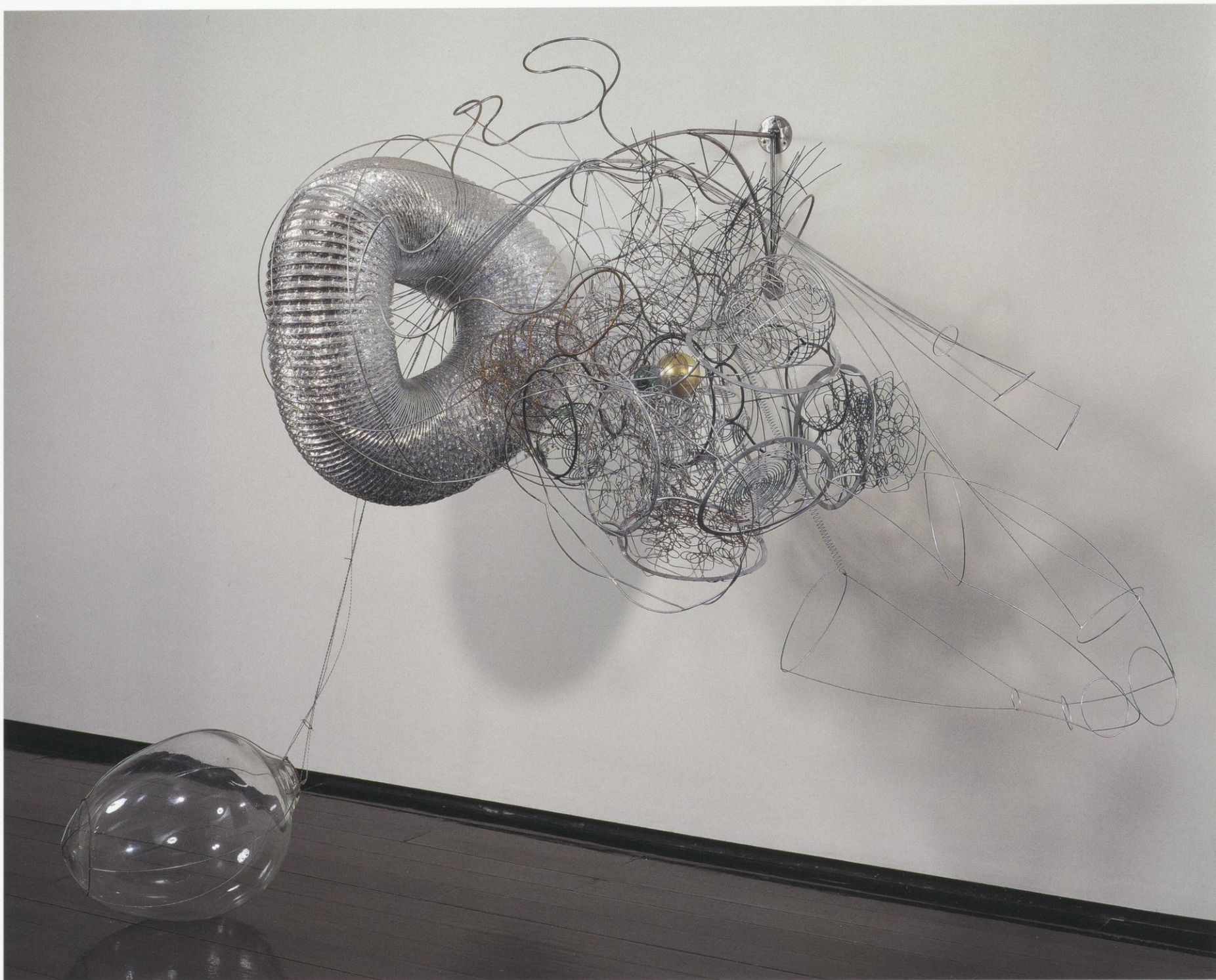
Painted steel wire, tin cans, bedsprings, blown glass, 114 × 118 × 100 inches



31. **COMPULSORY FIGURES I, 1991**

Painted steel, woven wire, aluminum duct, 66 × 133 × 107 inches

Photo © Will Brown



32. MILAGRO, 1991

Wire, aluminum duct, plastic, blown glass, 78 x 60 x 102 inches



33. **UNTITLED, 1991**

Cedar driftwood, lacquered steel, 17 × 7 × 7 feet

Installation: Whitney Museum of Art at Philip Morris, New York, NY

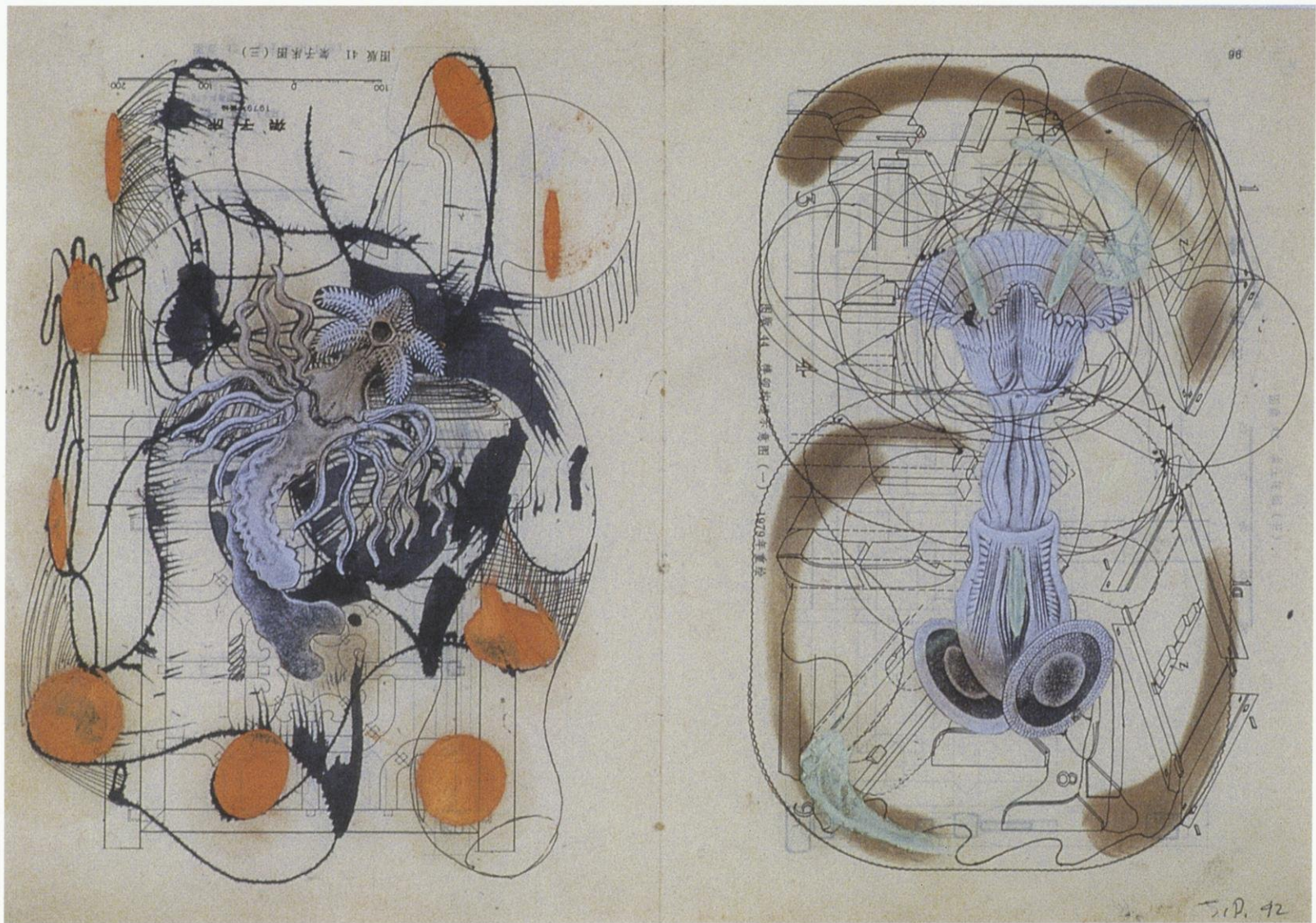


34. DEL FLUSSO E RIFLUSSO (FROM HALF A DOZEN OF THE OTHER SERIES), 1992

Color drypoint with spit bite and sugar lift aquatints, soft ground etching and relief printing

42 7/8 x 50 3/4 inches (paper size)

Published: Crown Point Press, edition of 20



35. THE BIVALVES A, 1992

Ink, oil stick, collage on paper, 10 ¼ × 14 ¼ inches



36. MATTARELLO, 1992

Woven magnet wire, steel, blown glass, 95 × 125 × 75 inches



37. **FOUR DRAWINGS** (left to right):

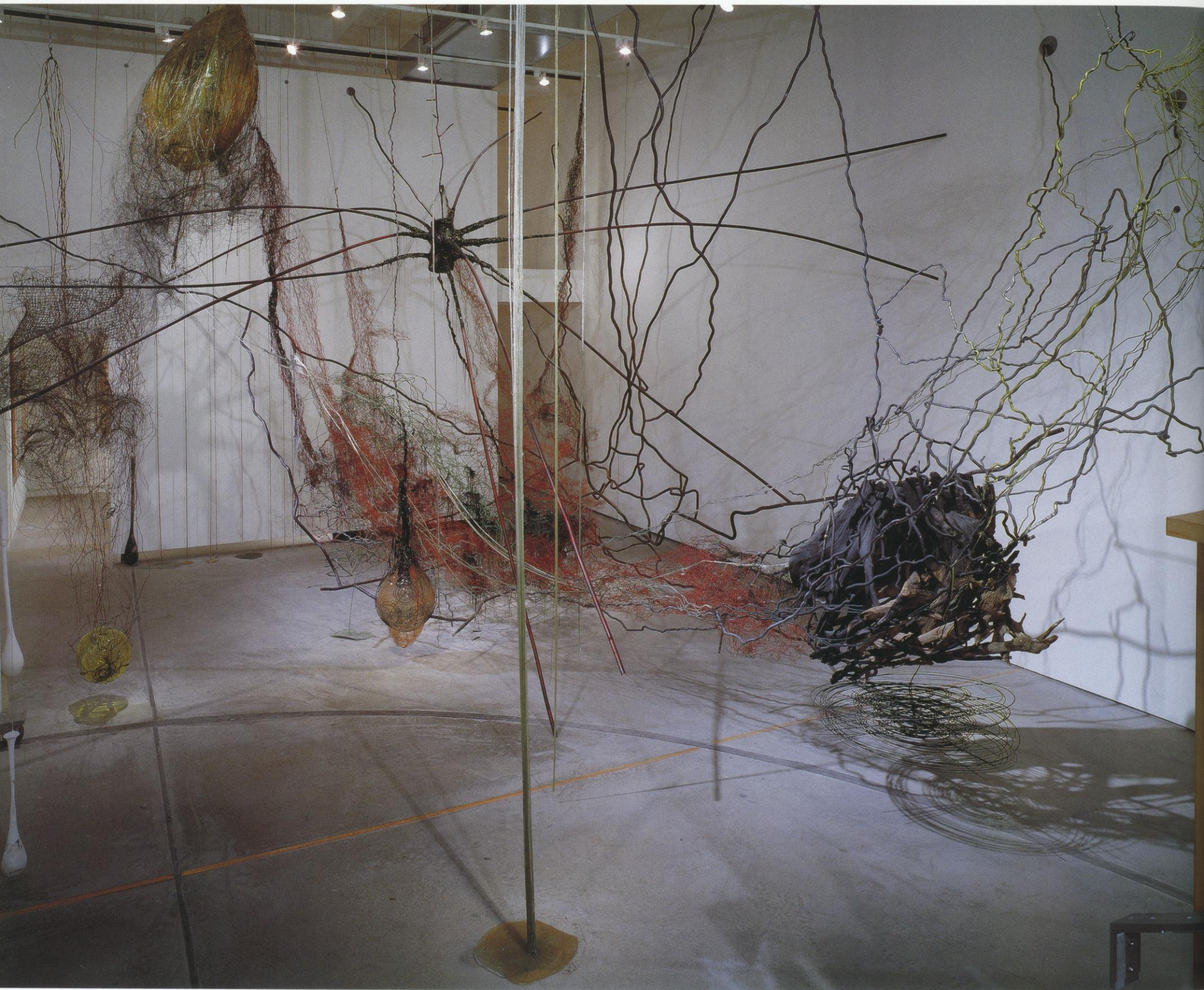
Bang, 1993, Burn marks, oil stick, wax, Xerox on Hoshō paper, 89 × 55 inches (framed)

Untitled, 1993, Xerox, oil stain, soot, wax on Japanese paper, 97 × 40 inches (framed)

Diadem, 1993, Oil stain, soot, Xerox, oil, 95 × 40 inches (framed)

Untitled, 1993, Encaustic, burns, Xerox, acrylic resin, 106 × 53 inches (framed)

Installation: Artist's studio, (Williamsburg) Brooklyn, NY





38. **CORPO ONBROSO, 1993** (left and right pages)

Steel, driftwood, fiberglass, blown glass, tar, wire mesh, approx. 15 × 20 × 20 feet

Installation: The Rotunda Gallery, Brooklyn, NY





39. **MOXIBUSTION, 1994** (left and right pages)

Fiberglass resin, blown glass, tar, bedsprings, lotus leaves, steel, 14 × 35 × 20 feet

Installation: Exit Art, New York, NY



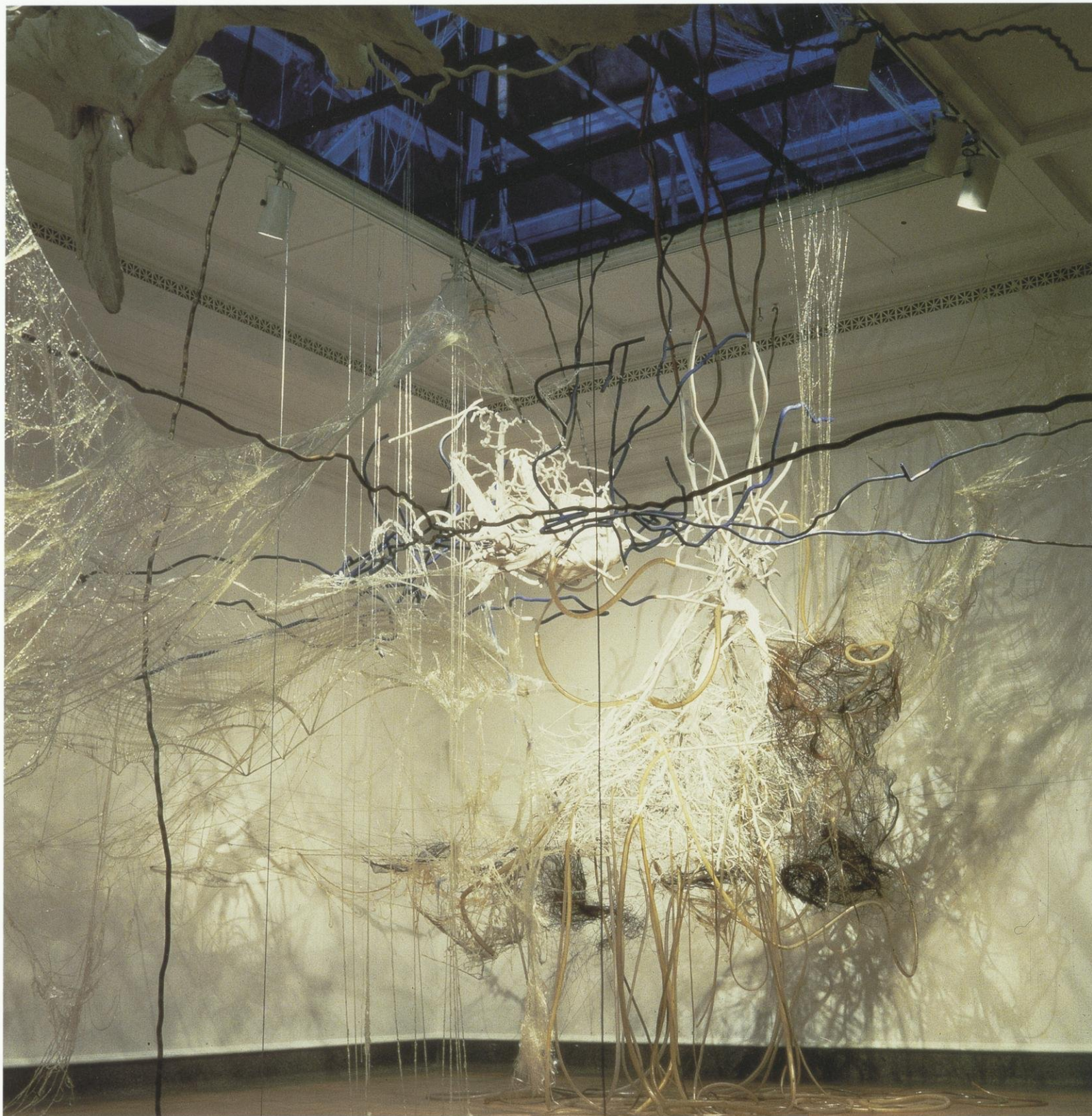


40. **CIELO, 1994** (left and right pages)

Steel tubing, spun steel, trees, tree stumps, tar, latex rubber, and fiberglass, approx. 20 × 100 × 30 feet

Installation: *Landscape as Metaphor*, Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO





41 **CIELO REQUERIDO, 1994** (left and right pages)

Fiberglass resin, steel and rubber tubing, tree roots, steel cable, UV lighting, 30 × 38 × 35 feet

Installation: *Landscape as Metaphor*, Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH

Brooklyn Studio, 1994
Preparation for Cielo





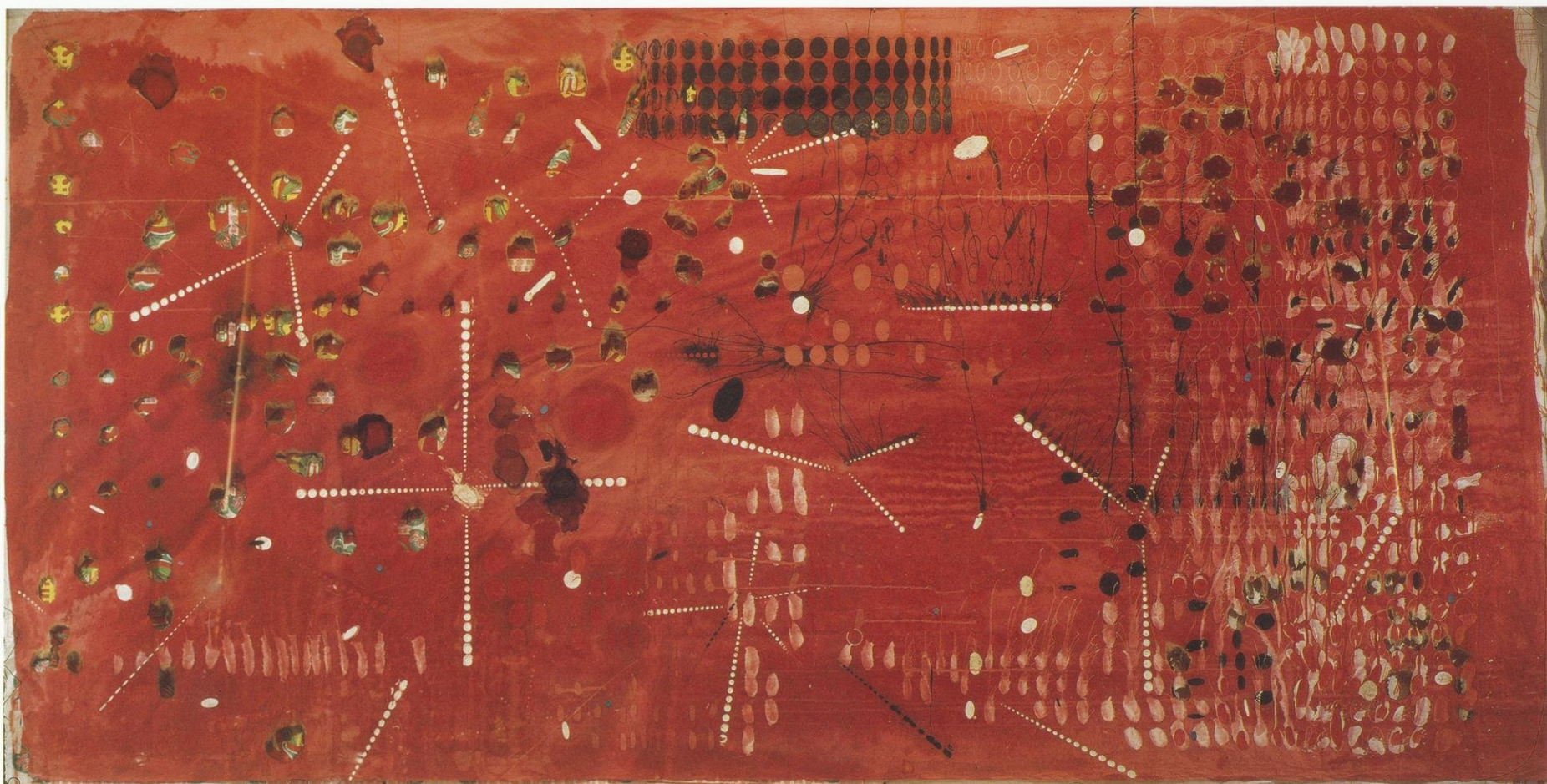
42. EAR TO EAR, 1995

Steel tubing, cable, plastic tubing, eucalyptus trees, plaster, lead weights, silver leaf, oil stick, encaustic, pencil, 20 x 80 x 40 feet
Installation: Alyce de Roulet Williamson Gallery, Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, CA



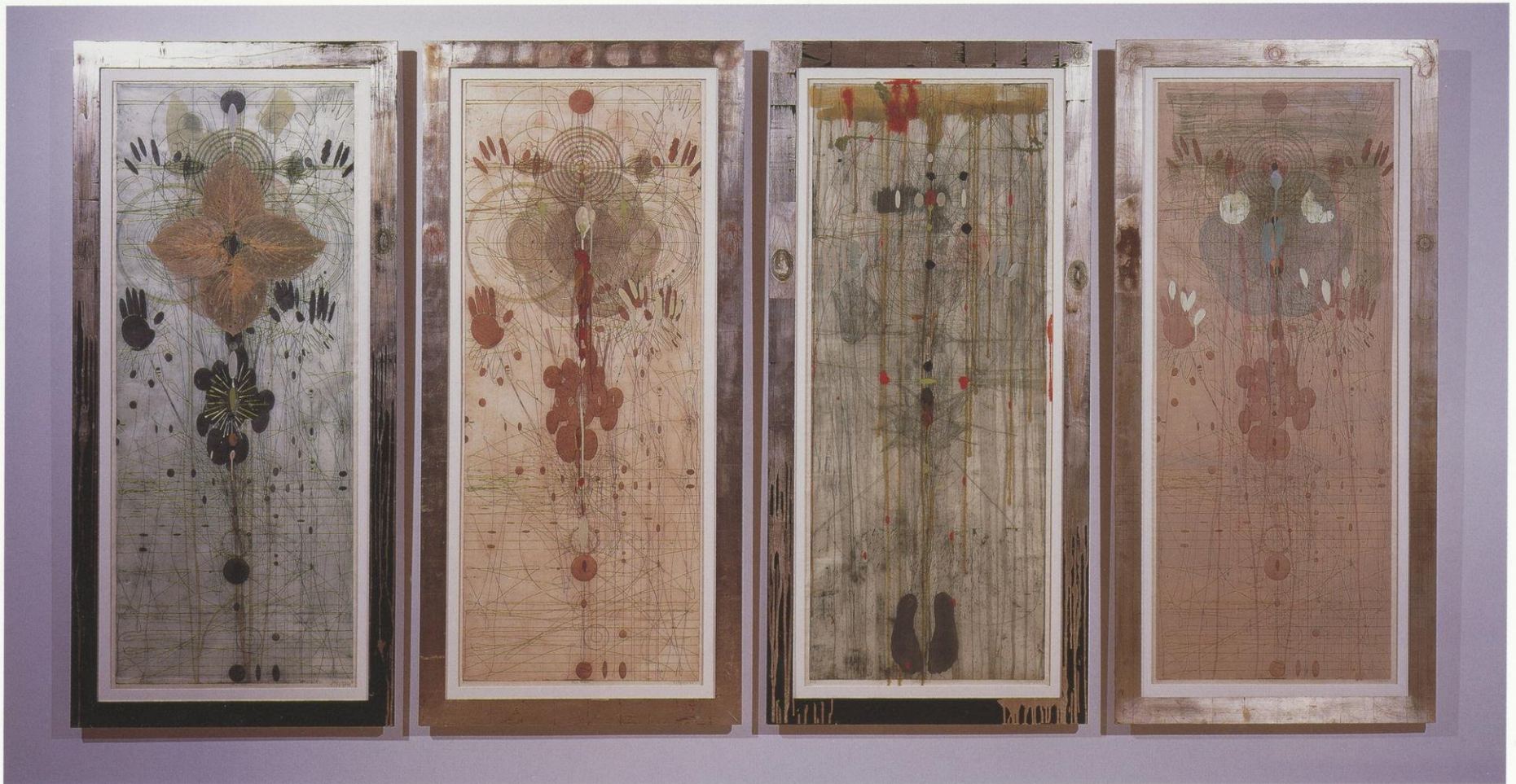
43. UNTITLED, 1996

Watercolor, wax, encaustic, gauze, burn marks, collaged paper, 97 3/4 x 107 3/4 inches



44. UNTITLED - F, 1997

Watercolor, encaustic, burn holes, gouache on Japanese paper, 47 × 94 ½ inches (framed)



45. **FOUR PRINTS** (left to right)

The Other, 1998, etching, encaustic, hand dye, waxed hosta leaves, 71 3/4 x 31 3/4 inches (paper size)

The Mirror, 1998, etching, encaustic, 71 3/4 x 31 3/4 inches (paper size)

Feet First, 1998, etching, encaustic, 71 3/4 x 31 3/4 inches (paper size)

The Double, 1998, etching, encaustic, 71 3/4 x 31 3/4 inches (paper size)

Published: Tandem Press, University of Wisconsin–Madison, edition of 30

Installation: *The Art of Judy Pfaff*, Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2001



46. UNTITLED, 1998

Oilstick, encaustic, organic matter, photograph, approx. 48 x 80 inches (framed)



47. CHARHAR BAGH, 1999

Encaustic, ferns, burns, magazine pages, appliqués, ink, pencil

53 ½ x 97 ½ inches (framed)



48. **CHRYSANTHEMUM, 1999-2000**

Encaustic, ink, acrylic resin, photographs, burns, approx. 48 x 120 inches (framed)

Photo by Rob van Erve



49. UNTITLED, 2000

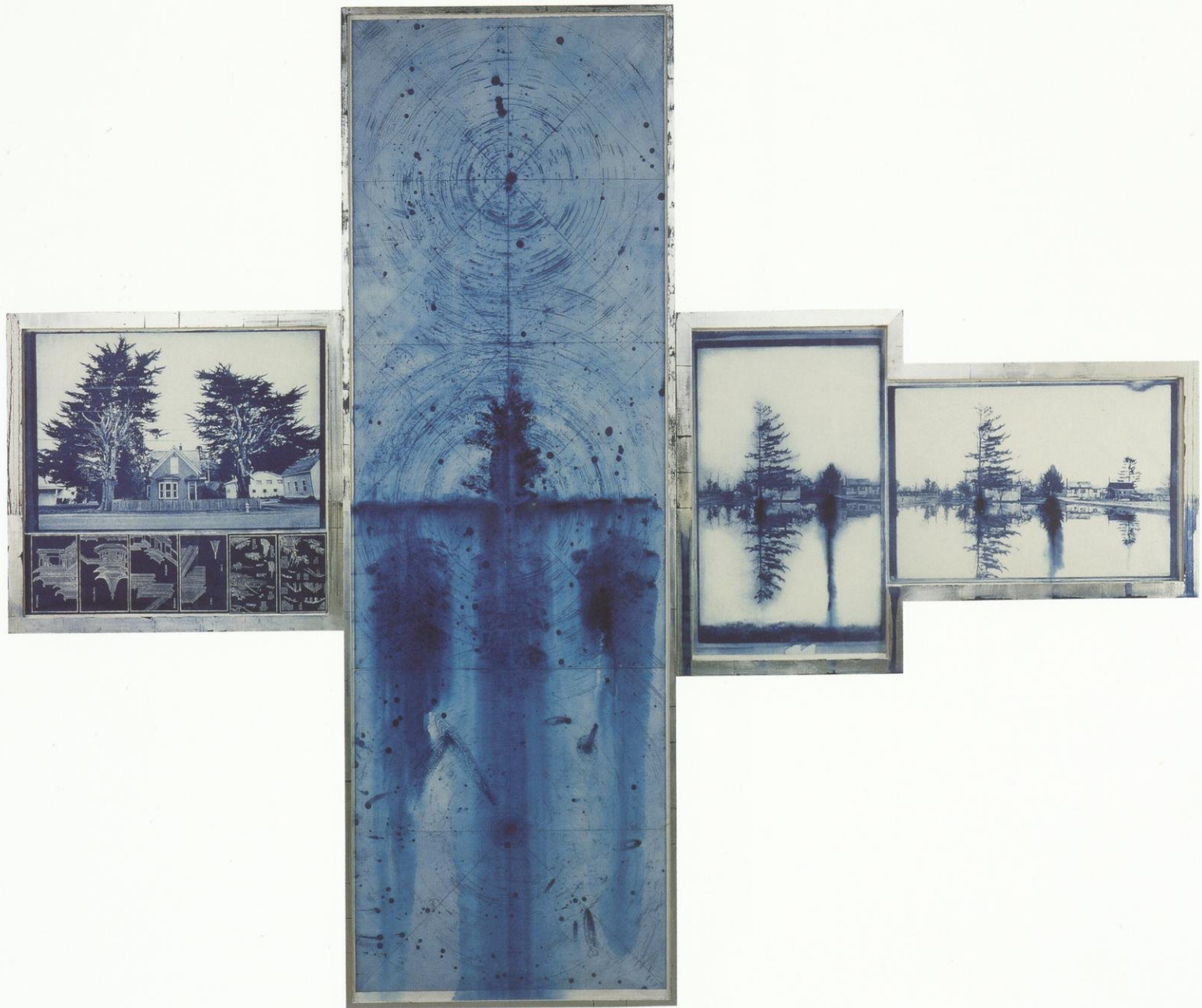
The sculpture *Fuchi no iro*, three untitled drawings, UV fluorescent lights, approx. 11 × 25 × 15 feet

Installation: *Can Chaos Have a Theory?*, The Rubelle & Norman Schafler Gallery, Pratt Manhattan Gallery, New York, NY



50. UNTITLED, 2000

Encaustic, magazine pages, pharmacy receipts, 47 3/4 x 12 1/4 inches (framed)



51. **END OF RAIN** (left to right)

End of Rain A, 2000, photogravure, woodcut on Crown Kozo paper, 32 ½ × 35 inches

End of Rain B, 2000, etching, dye on Crown Kozo paper, 109 × 37 inches

End of Rain C, 2000, photogravure on Crown Kozo paper, 37 × 61 inches

Published: Tandem Press, University of Wisconsin–Madison, edition of 30

Installation: *The Art of Judy Pfaff*, Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2001



52. **TIL SKOGEN, 2000**

Photogravure, dye, beeswax on Crown Kozo paper
30 × 104 ½ inches (paper size)





53. **SQUARES OF SAVANNAH, 2002** (left and right pages)

Steel, plaster, expanded foam, drawing, watercolor, wood, approx. 12 × 21 ¾ × 32 ¼ feet

Installation: Baron Pinnacle Gallery, Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, GA



54. **SIX DRAWINGS** (left to right, top to bottom)

Untitled, 2002, photo positives, 15 ¹⁵/₁₆ × 121 ¹/₂ inches (framed)

Untitled, 2002, photo positives, 17 × 123 inches (framed)

Untitled, 2002, oilstick, doilies, cast acrylic, gouache on embroidery transfer paper, 26 ⁵/₈ × 103 inches (framed)

Untitled, 2002, ink on ledger paper, photo positives, cast acrylic, 18 ³/₈ × 122 inches (framed)

Untitled, 2002, oil, encaustic, watercolor, pencil on Japanese paper, wax, fern leaves, cast acrylic, 53 ⁷/₁₆ × 53 ³/₈ inches (framed)

di Trastevere, 2002, ink on paper, photo positives, cast acrylic, 53 ³/₈ × 125 ¹/₂ inches (framed)

Installation: American Academy of Arts and Letter, New York, NY



55. SAIDEE BROWN, 2002

Watercolor, oilstick, doilies on Japanese paper, 53 3/8 x 101 3/8 (framed)

56. **TWELVE PRINTS** (left to right, top to bottom)

Green's Garden, 2002, Kodalith, lithograph, 21 × 98 inches

This Garden Was Enchanted, 2002, acrylic, stencil, Kodalith, 48 × 94 inches (varied edition of 10)

Cyclopædia, 2002, lithograph, wax, resin, 27 × 110 inches

Chapel Street, 2002, etching, relief, oil stick, acrylic dye, 120 × 37 ½ inches

Twaalfskill, 2002, etching, relief, silver leaf, 120 × 37 ½ inches (edition of 20)

Sweet Lilly, 2002, photogravure, relief roll, 16 ½ × 112 inches

When the Moon Is Full, 2002, photogravure, collograph, 27 × 93 inches

Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius, 2002, etching, relief, 17 × 101 inches (edition of 45)

a Venezia, 2002, photogravure, spitbite, relief roll, 16 × 100 inches

Ukbar, Uqbar, Ooqbar, Oukbar, Oukbahr, 2002, etching, relief, 13 ½ × 89 inches (edition of 45)

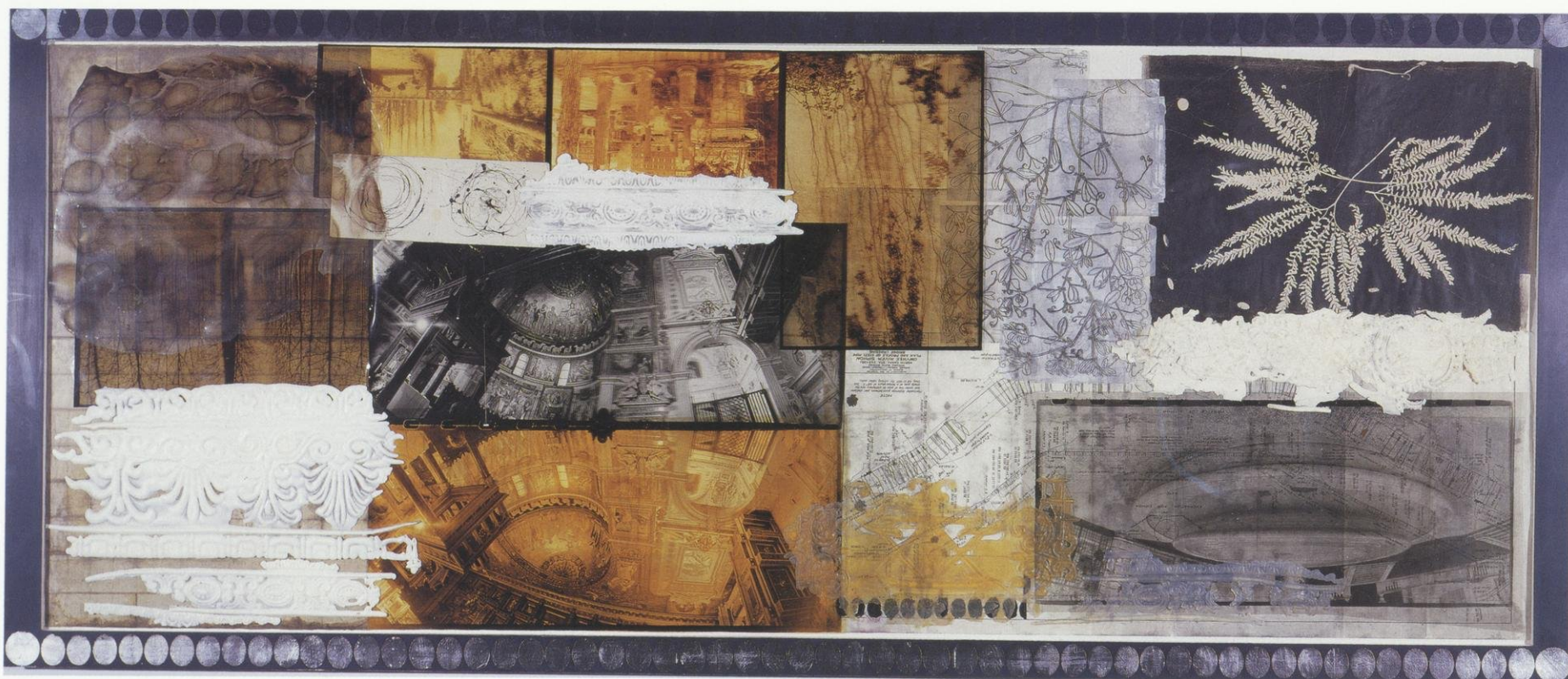
Queen Anne, 2002, etching, relief roll, 22 × 51 ½ inches

Garden of Forking Paths, 2002, etching, collograph, wax, 38 × 38 inches

Published: Tandem Press, University of Wisconsin—Madison; edition of 30, unless otherwise indicated

Installation: Tandem Press, University of Wisconsin—Madison, 2002





57. DI TRASTEVERE, 2002

ink on paper, photo positives, cast acrylic

53 3/8 x 125 1/2 inches

SOLO EXHIBITIONS / INSTALLATIONS

* indicates a major installation within a group exhibition

1974

Webb and Parsons Gallery, New Caanan, CT

1975

J.A.S.O.N. / J.A.S.O.N., Artists Space, New York, NY

**Blue Wabe in 2*, installation in *Biennial Exhibition*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

W.S.S.F., installation, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH

1976

Brier, installation, Tyler School of Art, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA

**Charlemagne*, installation in *Approaching Painting, Part III*, Hallwalls, Buffalo, NY

*Untitled installation in *New Work / New York*, Fine Arts Gallery, California State University, Los Angeles, CA

1977

The World is Flat, installation, Theater Gallery, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL

**La Ciudad de Los Angeles*, installation in *Faculty Exhibition*, School of Art and Design, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, CA, April 19–May 22

*Untitled installation in *14 Women Artists*, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

*Untitled installation in *Space Window: Man in Space and Space in Art*, Woods-Gerry Gallery, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI

1978

Prototypes, installation, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, April 10–29

1979

*Untitled installation in *Judy Pfaff, Martha Boyden, Arlene Bayer, Eugenia Cucalon* Gallery, New York, NY

**Reinventing the Wheel*, installation in *10 Artists / Artists Space*, Neuberger Museum of Art, SUNY, Purchase, NY and Artists Space, New York, NY

**Mixed Emotions*, installation in *Food / Framework*, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY

*Untitled installation in *Canal Street*, Barbara Gladstone Gallery, New York, NY

1980

**Charms*, installation in *Extensions: Jennifer Bartlett, Lynda Benglis, Robert Longo, Judy Pfaff*, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX, January 20–March 2

**Quintana Roo*, installation in *Walls!*, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH

Deepwater, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY

**Red Hot*, installation in *Watercolors*, P.S.1 Museum, Long Island City, NY

1981

**Kabuki*, installation in *Directions 1981, (Formula Atlantic)*, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, February 12–May 3

**Rorschach*, installation in *Installations, Collages, and Drawings*, John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, FL, July 16–August 30; Polk Museum, Lakeland, FL, September 18–October 16; Museum of Art & Sciences, Daytona Beach, FL, October 23–November 22

**Ziggurat*, installation in *Zeitgenossische Kunst seit 1939*, Museen der Stadt Köln, Cologne, Germany

**Dragon*, installation in *Biennial Exhibition*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

*Untitled installation in *Body Language: Figurative Aspects of Recent Art*, Hayden Gallery, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA; The Fort Worth Art Museum, Fort Worth, TX; University of South Florida Art Gallery, Tampa, FL; Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH

1982

Either War, installation in *Art Venture / XL Biennale de Venezia*, Venice, Italy

**Four Minute Mile*, installation in *Guy Goodwin, Bill Jensen, Louise Fishman, Stuart Diamond, Judy Pfaff*, Suzanne Lemberg Usdan Gallery, Bennington College, Bennington, VT, March 16–April 6

Boa, installation, University Art Gallery, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA

Rock / Paper / Scissors, installation, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY, September 17–October 30

*Untitled installation in *Collages and Construction*, Hallwalls, Buffalo, NY, September 24–November 14

1983

Installation and Collages, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY, January 8–29

3-D, installation, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY

Wind Devil, set design for Nina Weiner & Dance Company, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, NY

*Untitled installation in *The Sixth Day: A Survey of Recent Developments in Figurative Sculpture*, The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago, Chicago, IL

1984

Untitled commissioned installation, Spokane City Hall Foyer, Spokane, WA

Recent Work, Daniel Weinberg Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, March 14–April 14

1985

**Prototypes*, installation in *A New Beginning*, Hudson River Museum, Yonkers, NY, February 3–May 5

**Gu, Choki, Pa*, installation in *Vernacular Abstraction*, Spiral / Wacoal Art Center, Tokyo, Japan, August 5–October 15

**The Italians*, installation in *Figurative Sculpture*, Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, MI

1986

**Superette*, installation in *Wall Works*, John Weber Gallery, New York, NY, June 7–28

*Untitled installation in *Indoor / Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition*, El Bohio, New York, NY

Autonomous Objects, Knight Gallery, Spirit Square Center for the Arts, Charlotte, NC, September 12–November 8

Apples and Oranges, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY, May

1987

Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, MI, January 31–March 28

N.Y.C.-B.Q.E., installation in *Biennial Exhibition*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

11211, installation in *Art in the Anchorage*, sponsored by Creative Time at the anchorage of the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn, NY

1988

Six of One, Half a Dozen of Another, Crown Point Press, San Francisco, CA, May 14–July 2

New Work, New York, Carnegie Mellon University Art Gallery, Pittsburgh, PA, June 4–July 3

10,000 Things, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY, November 11–December 3

Forefront: Judy Pfaff, installation, The National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC, November 21, 1988–January 22, 1989

1989

Currents 41, Saint Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, MO, October

1990

Prints & Drawings, The College of Saint Rose Gallery, Albany, NY, February 25–March 25

Equinox, Max Protetch Gallery, New York, NY, September 22–October 27

Dessins, Thomas Solomon's Garage, Los Angeles, CA

Judy Pfaff: Sculpture and Works on Paper, Dana Art Center, Loyola University, New Orleans, LA, September 16–October 12; Cleveland Center for Contemporary Art, Cleveland, OH, November 16, 1990–January 18, 1991

1991

Judy Pfaff, Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, MI, February 23–March 30

The Fabric Workshop, Philadelphia, PA

Bandas de Acero, installation, Morris Gallery of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, PA

1992

Flusso e Riflusso, Max Protetch Gallery, New York, NY, May 18–24

Zygmunt, collaborative installation in *Incisions / Collisions / Juxtapositions: Judy Pfaff & Ursula von Rydingsvard*, Life after Post-modernism series at The Cultural Space, New York and Neuberger Museum of Art, SUNY Purchase, NY

Sweet Water, Heat Lightning, commission for GTE, Irving, TX

1993

Judy Pfaff: Recent Sculpture and Drawings, Nancy Drysdale Gallery, Washington, DC

Corpo Onbrosso, installation for inaugural exhibition, The Rotunda Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, January 27–March 13

1994

cirque, CIRQUE, commission for the Pennsylvania Convention Center, Philadelphia, PA

Aquavitae, commission by Miami Art in Public Places for the Miami Beach Police and Court Facility, Miami Beach, FL

Lobby Sculpture Exhibition at the Community Gallery, Brooklyn Union Gas Company, Brooklyn, NY, April–September

**Cielo*, installation in *Landscape as Metaphor*, Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO, May 14–September 11

New Works on Paper, Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, NY, June 7–July 15

Cielo Requerido, installation in *Landscape as Metaphor*, Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH, October 16, 1994–January 8, 1995

1995

Elephant, Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA, January 26–March 5

Madison Print Club, Madison, WI, February–May

Judy Pfaff: Prints, Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin–Madison, May 12–August 12

Sculpture and Drawings, Bellas Artes, Santa Fe, NM, June 30–August 5

Mixed Media Works on Paper, Linda Farris Gallery, Seattle, WA, July 6–July 30

Ear to Ear, installation, Alyce de Roulet Williamson Gallery, Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, CA, October 29–December 21

1996

Judy Pfaff: New Work, Bellas Artes, Santa Fe, NM, June 27–August 10

Judy Pfaff, Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, NY, September 4–October 4

New Prints, Drawings and Sculpture, Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, MI, September 17–October 26

1997

An Installation of Drawings, Adobe Krow Archives, Bakersfield, CA, April 5–May 13

Judy Pfaff: Recent Drawings, Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, Cornish, NH, June 7–July 6

Round Hole, Square Peg, installation, Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, NY, September 4–October 4

1998

**Drop in the Bucket*, installation in *Drawings: Judy Pfaff & Jane Rosen*, Kendall Art and Design, Hudson, NY, February 5–March 8

Judy Pfaff: Cha Drawings, Galerie Deux, Tokyo, Japan, May 22–August 5

Judy Pfaff: Sculpture and Drawings, Bellas Artes, Santa Fe, NM, July 2–August 17

Jardin de los Cuervos, installation, Bellas Artes, Santa Fe, NM, October 4–December 13

**Coroa de Espinhos*, installation in *1998 Bienal de São Paulo*, São Paulo, Brazil, October 4–December 14

1999

Ya-Wa, Commission for ODS Tower, Portland, OR

Judy Pfaff: Drawings and Prints, Karen McCready Fine Art, New York, NY, January 14–February 27

New Prints, Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, MI, August 11–September 11

Drawings and Prints, Robischon Gallery, Denver, CO, October

**Notes on Light and Shadow*, installation in *Presage of Passage*, Marian Adelaide Morris Cannon Galleries, Museum of Art, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, November 3, 1999–March 18, 2000

2000

**Notes on Light and Color*, installation, Jaffe-Friede & Strauss Galleries, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH, May 2–17

New Work, Bellas Artes, Santa Fe, NM, June 15–August 5

If I Had a Boat, installation, Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin-Madison, September 2000–September 12, 2001

Transforming Traditions, Schneider Museum of Art, Southern Oregon University, Ashland, OR, October 20, 2000–January 20, 2001

New Drawings, Robischon Gallery, Denver, CO, October 28–December 30

2001

Judy Pfaff: Photogravures, Flanders Gallery, Minneapolis, MN, March 9–April 14

The Art of Judy Pfaff, Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin-Madison, April 28–August 12

Doppelgangers, Red Gallery, Savannah, GA, October 9, 2001–January 9, 2002

2002

2D: An Installation of Works on Paper, Sarah Moody Gallery of Art, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL, April 12–June 7

Judy Pfaff: Chapel and Brook, Bellas Artes, Santa Fe, NM, August 13–September 14

Squares of Savannah, installation for Contemporary Masters Exhibition Series, Baron Pinnacle Gallery, Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, GA, January 3–March 11

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1975

Group Indiscriminate, 112 Greene Street, New York, NY
John Doyle Gallery, Chicago, IL

1976

Scale, Fine Arts Building, New York, NY

Recent Works, Johnson Gallery, Middlebury College, Middlebury, VT

1977

Faculty Exhibition, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, CA, April 19–May 22

1978

Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, MI

Prototypes, L.A.C.E. Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

1979

Two Decades of Abstraction: New Abstractions, installation, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL

Small Works, Art Latitude Gallery, New York, NY

Sculptural Perspectives: An Exhibition of Small Sculpture in the 70s, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA

Judy Pfaff, Janis Provisor, Marianne Stikas, Lynton Wells, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY

Sixth Anniversary Exhibition: Laurie Anderson, Jon Borofsky, Scott Burton, Lois Lane, Ree Morton, Judy Pfaff, Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt, Barbara Schwartz, Charles Simmonds, John Torreano, Artists Space, New York, NY

1980

Other Media, Visual Arts Gallery, Florida International University, Miami, FL

Drawings: The Pluralist Decade, installation, Institute for Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

Drawings: The Pluralist Decade, United States Pavilion, Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy; Kunstforeningen Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark; Henie-Onstad Kunstsenter, Baerum, Norway; Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid, Spain; Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon, Portugal

Penthouse Exhibition, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY

1981

Bill Jensen, Louise Fishman, Judy Pfaff, Stuart Diamond, Guy Goodwin, Suzanne Lemberg Usdan Gallery, Bennington College, Bennington, VT

New York in Black and White, Art Lending Service, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY

Variants: Drawings by Contemporary Sculptors, Sewall Art Gallery, Rice University, Houston, TX; Art Museum of South Texas, Corpus Christi, TX; Newcomb Gallery, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA; The High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA

Art for ERA, Zabriskie Gallery, New York, NY

Selected Drawings, Ben Shahn Center for the Visual Arts, William Paterson College, Wayne, NJ

Works on Paper, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA

Carol Getz Gallery, Miami, FL

New Directions: A Selection of Works by Sam Hunter from the Commodities Corporation Collection, Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, FL; Oklahoma City Art Museum, Oklahoma City, OK; Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA; Grand Rapids Art Museum, Grand Rapids, MI; Madison Art Center, Madison, WI; Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Montgomery, AL

Post-Modernist Metaphors, The Alternative Museum, New York, NY

Contemporary Drawings in Search of an Image, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA

Aspects of Post-Modernism: Decorative and Narrative Art, The Squibb Gallery, E. R. Squibb & Sons, Princeton, NJ

35 Artists Return to Artists Space: A Benefit Exhibition, Artists Space, New York, NY

1982

New York Now, Kestner Gesellschaft, Hanover, Germany; Kunstverein für die Rheinland und Westfalen, Düsseldorf, Germany.

36.18.6.1, Sarah Lawrence College Art Gallery, Bronxville, NY

New York Generation, Origrafica, Davidshallsgatan, Malmö, Sweden

Energie New York, ELAC Centre d'Échanges, Lyon, France, January 15–March 15

Nature as Image and Metaphor: Selected Works by Contemporary Women Artists, Green Space, New York, NY

Dynamix, The Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH

Quilts and Collages, Randolph-Macon Women's College, Lynchburg, VA

Aspects of Post-Modernism, Fay Gold Gallery, Atlanta, GA

Black and White, organized by Art Lending Service, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, for Freeport Company

The Americans: The Collage, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX, July 11–October 3

Cuts, University of Missouri Art Gallery, Kansas City, MO

Gallery Group Show, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY

1983

Back to the USA, Kunstmuseum, Lucerne, Switzerland; Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Bonn, Germany; Kunstverein, Stuttgart, Germany

Three-Dimensional Photographs, Castelli Graphics, New York, NY

A Contemporary Collection on Loan from the Rothschild Bank Ag, Zurich, La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla, CA

The Next Wave: BAM, Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, NY

An Historical Overview, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY, September 20–October 5

New Work, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY, October 15–29

Daniel Weinberg Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

1984

Chromatics: A Sculpture Exhibition of 20 Artists, organized by the Modern Art Consultants, Inc., The Mendik Company, New York, NY

Three-Dimensional Photographs / Three-Dimensional Paintings, Carl Solway Gallery, Cincinnati, OH

Current Expressions, Fuller Goldeen Gallery, San Francisco, CA

Out of Square, Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, MI

Contemporary Drawings as Idea: Concepts, Records, Projects, Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, NY

An International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY

The Innovative Landscape, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY

Arte, Ambiente, Scena / XL Biennale di Venezia, The Garden, Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy

A Decade of New Art, Artists Space, New York, NY

Summer Group Exhibition, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY

The National Midyear Exhibition, The Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, OH

Art on Paper: 120th Weatherspoon Annual Exhibition, Weatherspoon Art Gallery, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, NC

Viewpoint '84: Out of Square, Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, MI

Figurative Sculpture, Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, MI

Maximalism, Tweed Gallery, Plainfield, NJ

1985

Deconstruction / Construction (Sculpture), Museum School Gallery, School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA

An American Renaissance: Painting and Sculpture since 1940, Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, FL

Illuminating Color: Four Approaches in Contemporary Painting and Photography, Pratt Institute, New York, NY

A Summer Selection: Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures, Prints, Photographs, Castelli Gallery, New York, NY

Abstract Relationships, Charles Cowles Gallery, New York, NY, June 6–July 12

The Razor Show, Organization of Independent Artists, Jayne H. Baum Gallery, Hudson Center Galleries, New York, NY
Eddies, Visual Arts Museum, New York, NY
Eccentric Edges, The Rotunda Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
New Dimensions—Painting, Nina Freudenheim Gallery, Buffalo, NY
Plastics, Marilyn Pearl Gallery, New York, NY
Gloria Luria Gallery, Miami, FL
Ten, University Gallery, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA
Innovative Still Life, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY
Selections from the Art Advisory Committee, Museum of Modern Art, Members Dining Room, New York, NY
Working in Brooklyn / Sculpture, The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY, October 18, 1985–January 6, 1986

1986

Sculptors' Drawings, University Art Gallery, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, CA; Prichard Art Gallery, University of Idaho, Moscow, ID; Dexter Art Gallery, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, CA; St. Louis University Art Gallery, St. Louis, MO; California State University, Stanislaus, CA, February–October
Objects Observed, Summit Art Center, Summit, NJ
Janie Beggs Fine Arts, Wheeler Opera House, Aspen, CO
An American Renaissance: Painting & Sculpture since 1940, Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, FL
Baskerville & Watson Gallery, New York, NY
Homeworks / Public Works, Gallery Camino Real, Boca Raton, FL
Recent Acquisitions, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; Sorkin Gallery, New York, NY
Boston Collects: Contemporary Painting and Sculpture, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA
Viewpoint '86: Painting and the Third Dimension, Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, MI
Text & Image: The Wording of American Art, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY, December 11, 1986–January 3, 1987

1987

The Level of Volume, organized by Judy Pfaff, Carl Solway Gallery, Cincinnati, OH, April 3–May 16
Standing Ground: Sculpture by American Women, The Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH
American Sculpture: Investigations, Davis/McClain Gallery, Houston, TX, April 30–June 20

Sculpture of the Eighties, Queens Museum of Art, Queens, NY
After Pollock: Three Decades of Diversity, Iannetti Lanzzone Gallery, San Francisco, CA
Contemporary American Collage 1960–85, Herter Art Gallery, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA
Art Against AIDS, Installation, Benefit Auction, organized by Livet Reichard, Sotheby's New York, NY, May–December
Faux Arts: Surface Illusions and Simulated Materials in Recent Art, La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla, CA
Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY
Sculptors on Paper: New Work, Madison Art Center, Madison, WI; Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, PA; Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, MI; Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, Lincoln, NE, December 5, 1987–January 23, 1988

1988

Indoor / Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition, El Bohio Community and Cultural Center, New York, NY
Aspects of Abstraction, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY
A Graphic Muse: Prints by Contemporary Women, Mt. Holyoke College Art Museum, South Hadley, MA; Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT; Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA; The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO
Summer Group Show, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY
Narrative Art, Mark Twain Gallery, St. Louis, MO
American Baroque, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY
Sculpture since the Sixties, Whitney Museum of American Art at Equitable Center, New York, NY

1989

20 Years: Max Protetch Gallery, Max Protetch Gallery, New York, NY
Art Forum 1989, Trenton State College Department of Art, Trenton, NJ
Delineations: Patrick Ireland, Judy Pfaff, Paul Di Marinis, Fuller Gross Gallery, San Francisco, CA, July 8–August 12
Lines in Space, Air Lines Exhibition, Hillwood Art Gallery, C. W. Post Campus, Long Island University, Brookville, NY; Blum Helman Warehouse, New York, NY
Making Their Mark, Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, OH; New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, LA; Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO; Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, PA
Contemporary Environments, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY
Golden Opportunity: Benefit Sale for the Resettlement of Salvadorian Refugees, Castelli Graphics, New York, NY

Abstraction in Question, John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, FL

Mike Kelly, Judy Pfaff, Keith Sonnier, Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, MI

International Sculpture Center Benefit Auction, Washington, DC

Contemporary Woodblock Prints, Jersey City Museum, Jersey City, NJ, December 6–March 3

Projects & Portfolios: The 25th National Print Exhibition, The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY

Immaterial Objects: Works from the Permanent Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, NC, October 14–December 31; Albany Museum of Art, Albany, GA, January 12–February 25, 1990; San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, CA, July 21–September 23, 1990

1990

Art on Paper, Weatherspoon Art Gallery, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, NC

1990 Seoul Art Festival—Contemporary Paintings on Hanji, organized by the Seoul Art Festival Executive Committee, Seoul, Korea

Mind & Matter: New American Abstraction, organized by the International Art Projects, Chosun Ilbo Gallery, Seoul, Korea; Dowse Art Museum, Wellington, (Lower Hutt) New Zealand; Bishop Sutter Gallery, Nelson, New Zealand; Metropolitan Museum of Art, Manila, Philippines; Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei, Taiwan; Hong Kong; National Museum, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; National Museum, Singapore, March 3–31

Scatter, Shea & Beker, New York, NY

Altered States, Crown Point Press, New York, NY, July 18–August 31

The Children's AIDS Project: A Benefit Exhibition in Memory of James 1984–1988, Daniel Weinberg Gallery, Santa Monica, CA, July 26–August 12

Diverse Representations, The Morris Museum, Morristown, NJ, September 18–November 18

A Decade of American Drawing, Daniel Weinberg Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

Sculptors on Paper, Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE

On the Move, The Museum of Modern Art Advisory Service, Pfizer Inc., New York, NY

Eva Hesse, Louise Lawler, Agnes Martin, Melissa Meyer, Judy Pfaff, Kiki Smith, Jackie Winsor, installation, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, NY, December 20, 1990–January 19, 1991

1991

Painted Forms: Recent Metal Sculpture, Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris, New York, NY

Presswork: The Art of Women Printmakers, The National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC (traveling exhibition from 1991 to 1993)

Physicality, Hunter College, City University of New York; University Art Gallery, State University of New York at Albany; List Art Center, Brown University; Plattsburgh Art Museum, State University College at Plattsburgh; Roland Gibson Gallery, State University at Potsdam; University Art Museum, State University at Binghamton (traveling exhibition from March 1991 to August 1992)

Drawing Conclusions, Molica Guidarte, New York, NY

25th Anniversary Exhibition, Gloria Luria Gallery, Bay Harbor Islands, FL

Contemporary Woodblock Prints (The Leif E. Johnson Memorial Exhibition), installation, Edison Community College, Fort Myers, FL

Interactions: Collaborations in the Visual and Performing Arts, Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

Discarded, The Emerson Gallery at Rockland Center for the Arts, West Nyack, NY, October 6–November 15

Glass in the Service of Meaning, Tacoma Art Museum, Tacoma, WA, November 2, 1991–January 27, 1992

From A–Z: Prints and Drawings from the Permanent Collection, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA, November 2–December 15

Stephen Davis / Gianfranco Langatta / Judy Pfaff, Pino Molica Gallery, New York, NY, November 1–December 31

Sculptors' Drawings, Bellas Artes, Santa Fe, NM, November 27, 1991–January 4, 1992

1992

44th Annual Academy–Institute Purchase Exhibition, American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, New York, NY

Art Against AIDS, "Together for the Cure" Benefit, AmFAR, New York, NY
BCCDHHHJKNPPRSSW, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University, New York, NY, September 15–October 31

Process to Presence: Issues in Sculpture 1960–1990, Locks Gallery, Philadelphia, PA

American Figuration from the Lilja Collection, Henie Onstad Art Center, Baerum, Norway

1993

Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts Benefit Exhibition, Leo Castelli Gallery, New York, NY

The Return of the Cadavre Exquis, The Drawing Center, New York, NY
Reflections on the Center: 25 Years, Cleveland Center for Contemporary Art, Cleveland, OH

Color Options: Josef Albers, Alexander Calder, Judy Pfaff, Janet Taylor, William T. Williams, The Fine Arts Gallery, Westchester Community College, Valhalla, NY

Spheres of Influence: Artists and Their Students in the Permanent Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art, Whitney Museum of American Art at Champion, Stamford, CT

Scratching the Surface: Between Paper and Printing, The Gallery of the Department of Art and Art History, Colgate University, New York, NY

Outdoor Sculpture: Displayed Indoors, Max Protetch, New York, NY, June 17–July

Table Sculpture, Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, NY

Artschwager, Egner, Farber, Goodwin, Gorchov, Jensen, Mitchnick, Morley, Pfaff, Phelan, Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, MI

Sculptors on Paper, Linda Farris Gallery, Seattle, WA

Lyric with an Edge, Victoria Munro Fine Arts, New York, NY

Works on Paper, Max Protetch Gallery, New York, NY

Help Build Iris House, Manhattan Borough President's Office, The Women & AIDS Working Group, New York, NY

1994

Inspired by Nature, Neuberger Museum of Art, SUNY, Purchase, NY

Art on Paper, Weatherspoon Art Gallery, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, NC

Three Degrees of Separation, Benefit Exhibition and Sale for Independent Curators, Sonnabend Gallery, New York, NY

Garden of Sculptural Delights, Exit Art, New York, NY, March 12–April 23

Rough Cuts: The Extended Artist's Notebook, Henry Street Settlement, Abrons Arts Center, New York, NY, March 18–April 30

American Academy Invitational Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture, American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, NY

The Matthew Marks Gallery, New York, NY

1995

Greene County Council for Arts, Catskill, NY

In Three Dimensions: Women Sculptors of the 90s, Snug Harbor Cultural Center, Staten Island, NY

1996

Indoor Group Show, Elena Zang Gallery, Shady (Woodstock), NY

New Art on Paper, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA, March 17–May 26

West Meets East, Numark Gallery, Washington, DC, March 21–May 11

Summer Group Exhibition, Thomas Babeor & Co., La Jolla, CA

Bard College Group Exhibition, Kanazaawa Ishikawa, Japan

New Visions: Al Held, Jules Olitski, Judy Pfaff, Andre Emmerich Gallery, New York, NY

1997

Drawn and Quartered, Karen McCready Gallery, New York, NY

Drawings ... An Annual Bi-coastal Invitational, Meyerson & Nowinski, Seattle, WA

Pieces Speak, Gallery 128, New York, NY

A Thought Intercepted, California Museum of Art, Luther Burbank Home and Gardens, Santa Rosa, CA

Before Construction Occurs, Sculptors' Drawings, School of Visual Arts, New York, NY

Flowers, Elena Zang Gallery, Shady (Woodstock), NY

Thirty-five Years at Crown Point Press: The Artists' Prints. Real(ist) Women II, Northwood University, West Palm Beach, CA

Annual Outdoor Sculpture Show, Elena Zang Gallery, Shady (Woodstock), NY

Indoor Group Show, Elena Zang Gallery, Shady (Woodstock), NY

1998

Pop Abstraction, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, PA, February 21–April 19

Portraits Speak: Chuck Close in Conversation with 27 of His Subjects, Dorfman Projects, New York, NY

Artists of the Hudson Valley, Kendall Art and Design, Hudson, NY

1999

Jane Hammond and Judy Pfaff, Byron Cohen Gallery, Kansas City, MO

Stella, Pfaff, Sugarman, Tatunz, New York, NY, February 2–March 20

Women in Print, Jim Kempner Fine Art, New York, NY, March 6–April 11

Where the Girls Are: Prints by Women from the DIA's Collection, The Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, MI, July 11–September 26

Sculptors and Their Environments, Rockland Center for the Arts, West Nyack, NY, October 17–December 10

Off the Wall, Ashville Art Museum, Ashville, NC

Indoor Group Show, Elena Zang Gallery, Shady (Woodstock), New York, NY

2000

Recent Prints, Robischon Gallery, Denver, CO, January 5–February 26

Works from the Studio, Elizabeth Leach Gallery, Portland, OR, January 6–February 12

The Likeness of Being, D. C. Moore Gallery, New York, NY January 12–February 5

Beyond the Press: Innovations in Print, Hand Workshop Art Center, Richmond, VA, January 21–March 12

Studio Arts Faculty Exhibition 2000, Fischer Studio Arts Building, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, February 2–23

Welded! Sculpture of the Twentieth Century, Neuberger Museum of Art, SUNY, Purchase, NY, April 30–August 27

Construction Site: Chamberlain, Pfaff, Stella, Ameringer, Howard Gallery, New York, NY, June 15–July 28

THE END: An Independent Vision of Contemporary Culture, 1982–2000, Exit Art, New York, NY

Can Chaos Have a Theory? [Robert Frank, Elizabeth Murray, Judy Pfaff, Keith Sonnier, Daniel Spoerri], The Rubelle & Norman Schafler Gallery, Pratt Manhattan Gallery, New York, NY venue given in photo labels

Pratt Institute Brooklyn and Pratt Manhattan Gallery, Part One, September 23–November 1; Part Two, November 17, 2000–January 6, 2001

Judy Pfaff, Mary Frank, John Synder, Elena Zang Gallery, Shady (Woodstock), NY

2001

Shadow Dancing, D'Amelio / Torres Gallery, New York, NY, January 6–February 10

Conversations from the Heart: Paintings, Sculpture, Drawings, The Educational Alliance Gallery, New York, NY, February 14–March 30

New Prints 2001, International Print Center New York (IPCNY), New York, NY, May 15–August 3

Beauty Without Regret, Bellas Artes, Santa Fe, NM, June 28–August 4

Art Transplant, British Artists in New York, British Consul-General's Residence, New York, NY, October 1–31

Yale Alumni, Yale, New Haven, CT, October 1–28

Mostly Black and White: Photography and Works on Paper, Elizabeth Leach Gallery, Portland, OR, October 4–27

Rapture and Revision: Collage in America, Pavel Zoubok, New York, NY, November 29–January 5, 2002

Art Is for the Spirit, Deutsches Bank, New York, NY, December 4, 2001–January 25, 2002

Group Show, Elena Zang Gallery, Shady (Woodstock), New York, NY

2002

Darkness and Brightness, Seas-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY, January 2–February 16

American Academy Invitational Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture, The American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, NY, March 4–April 7

Art in Context, Benefit Exhibition and Silent Auction, Schmidt Bingham Gallery, New York, NY, March 21–26

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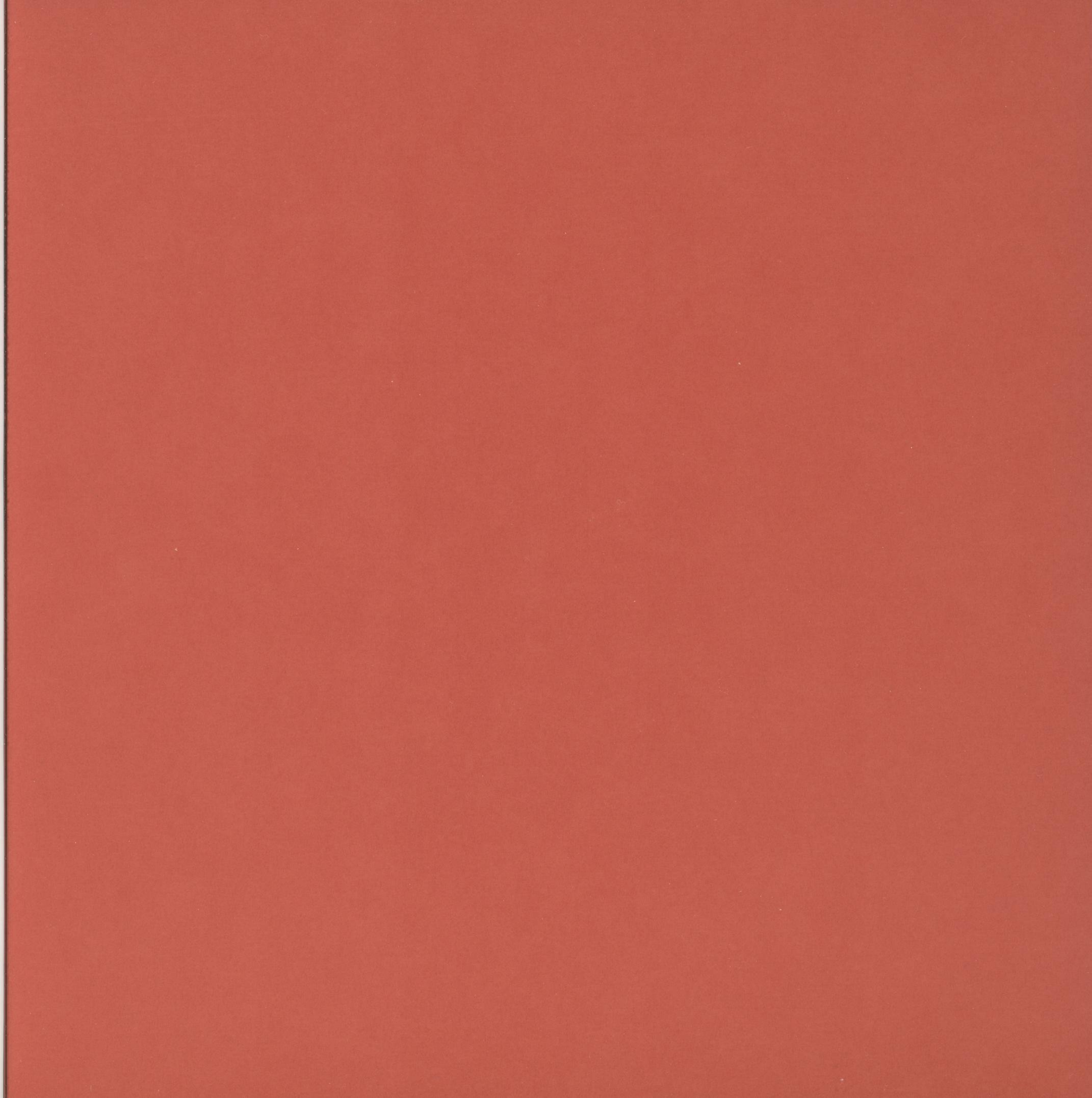
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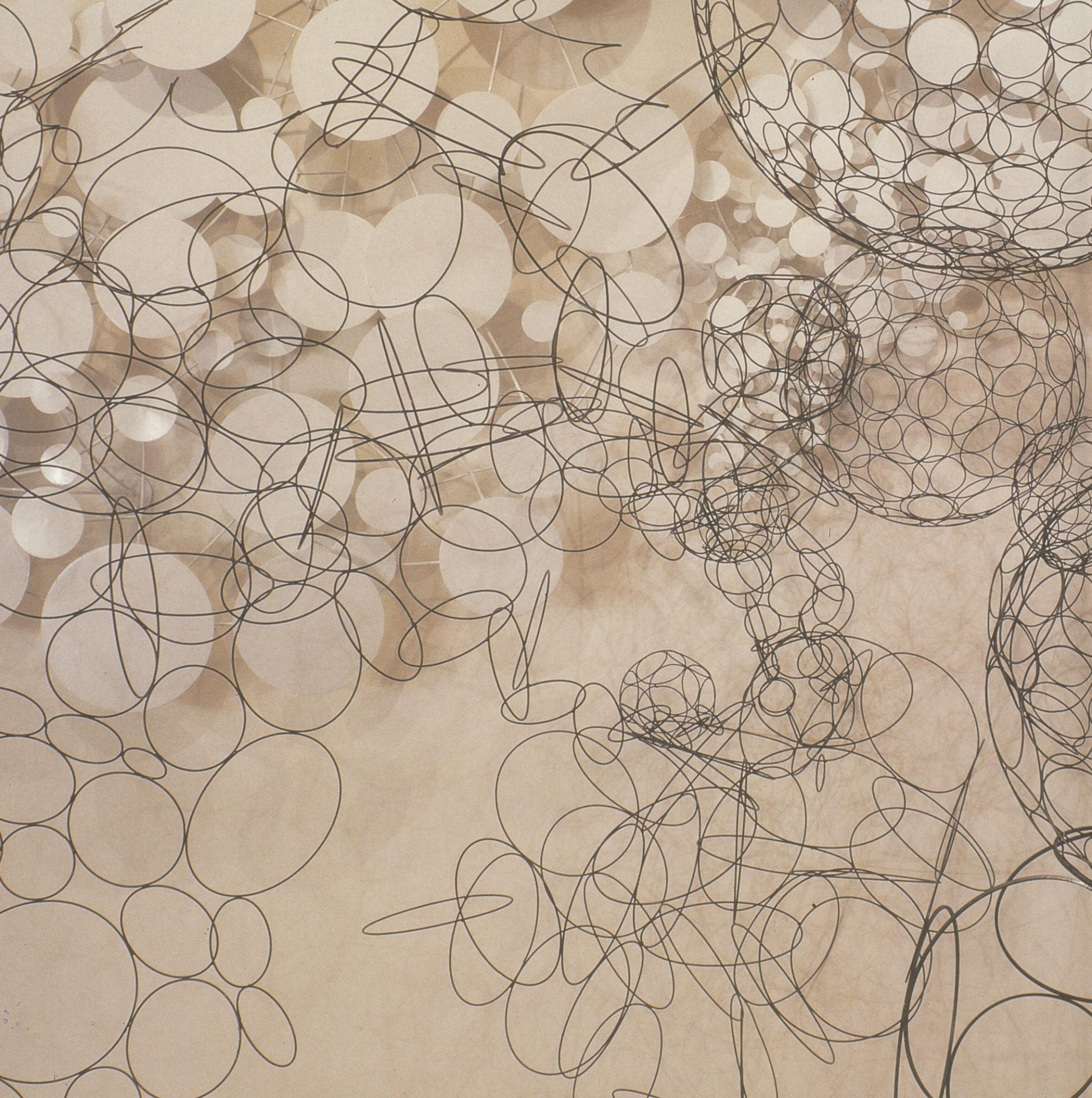
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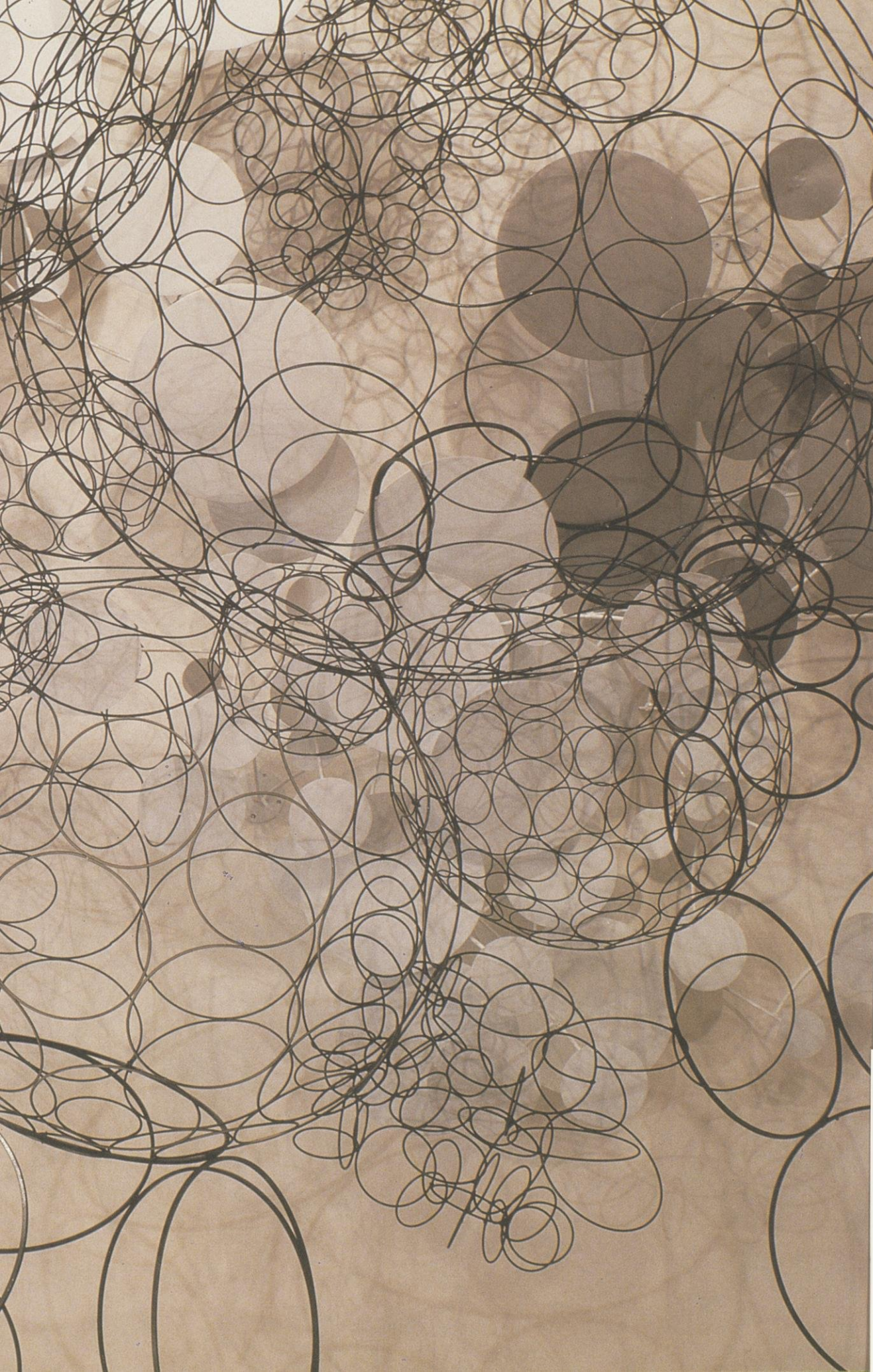
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