



MATTEO BERRA
P o r t f o l i o



FOLD is finally finished and it's Milan's tallest sculpture.

So far it is the largest and most ambitious sculpture I've developed and completed. I've been working on this project for three years. It all started with the concept in March 2016, the concept development, the engineering, the production and logistic organization in 2017 and the final production in 2018. We assembled the sculpture in place in December 2018 and it was presented to the public in April 2019.

FOLD is 23.5 meters tall, built completely in stainless steel and leans out from a building's corner in the north side of town, not far from the city center and right on the track of the railway leading to the nearby Central Station. This location makes of the sculpture a strong landmark, welcoming all the passengers commuting to Milan by train from the city's main airport, Malpensa, which means 3 million people a year. I'm particularly happy this work was meant to be public, as I dream a city where private interventions like this transform the streets into open air art museums.

I wanted FOLD to be the place where architecture reveals its ancient wild nature. On the elbow of the building, the rational cold lines of minimalism lose their skin, to unveil their organic and human origin. I wanted FOLD to include the whole building, they need to be read together, the contrast triggers the concept. FOLD should be an alien presence, a slice of natural landscape in the cityscape, an ocean wave, a weathered spur of rock, a sequoia trunk.

FOLD is made unique not only by its size, but also by the technique employed to produce it. I have obtained its shape by patiently layering, more than 4000 times, 24 kilometers of steel rods, 6mm in diameter, then welded by hand. The result is a mix of human handcraft, natural phenomenon and a somehow uncanny wild presence, inexplicably grown in the middle of the city.

But getting closer FOLD offers us other expressive elements. From nearby we get lost in the patient layering of rods. They are a record of the time and work of a human being. They become a tangible example, a trace of our daily lives, that often pass by without us noticing. FOLD gives a substance to our activity, reminds us that every moment matters and leaves a trace, moments build up in time, until we look back to finally face how much we have done.

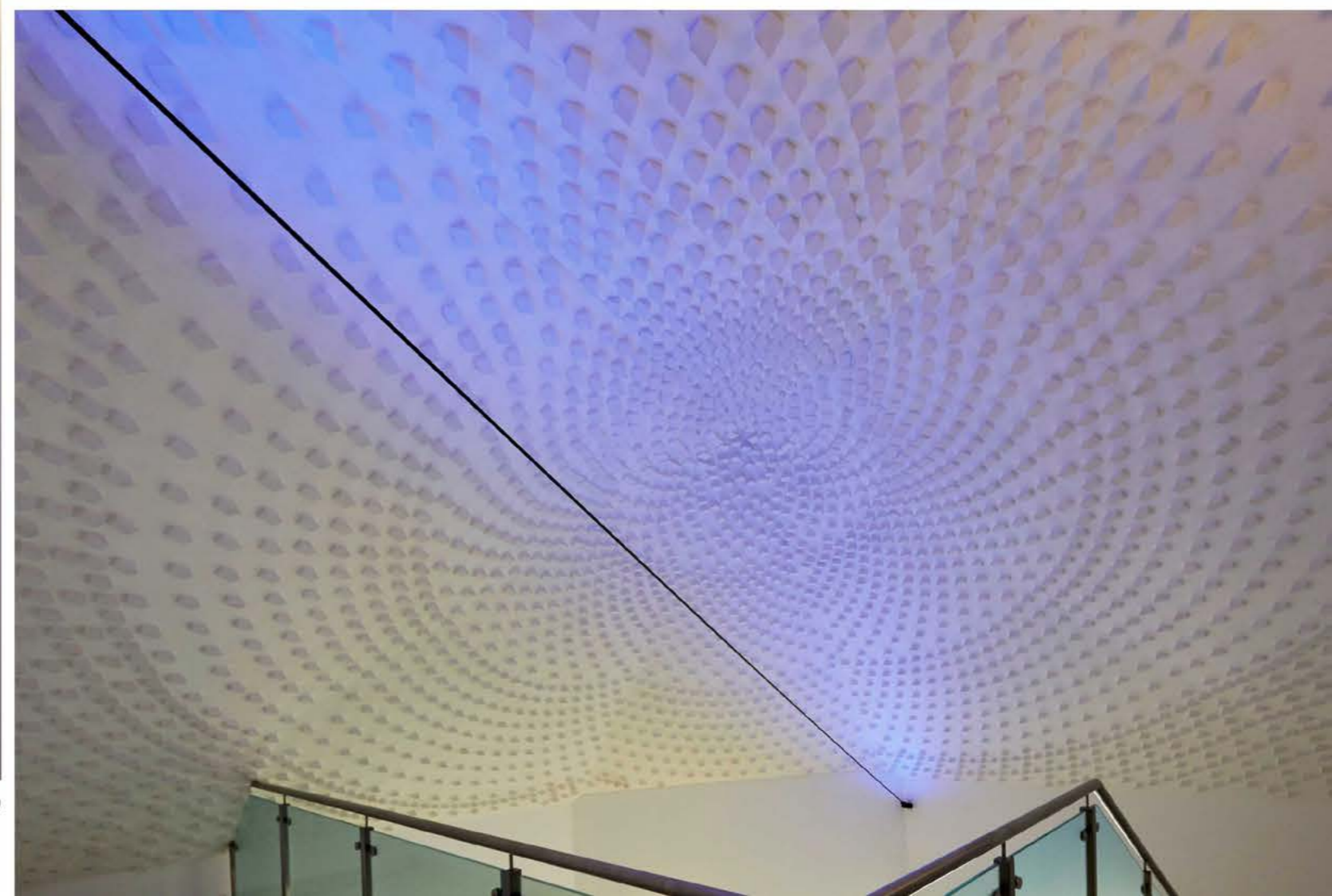
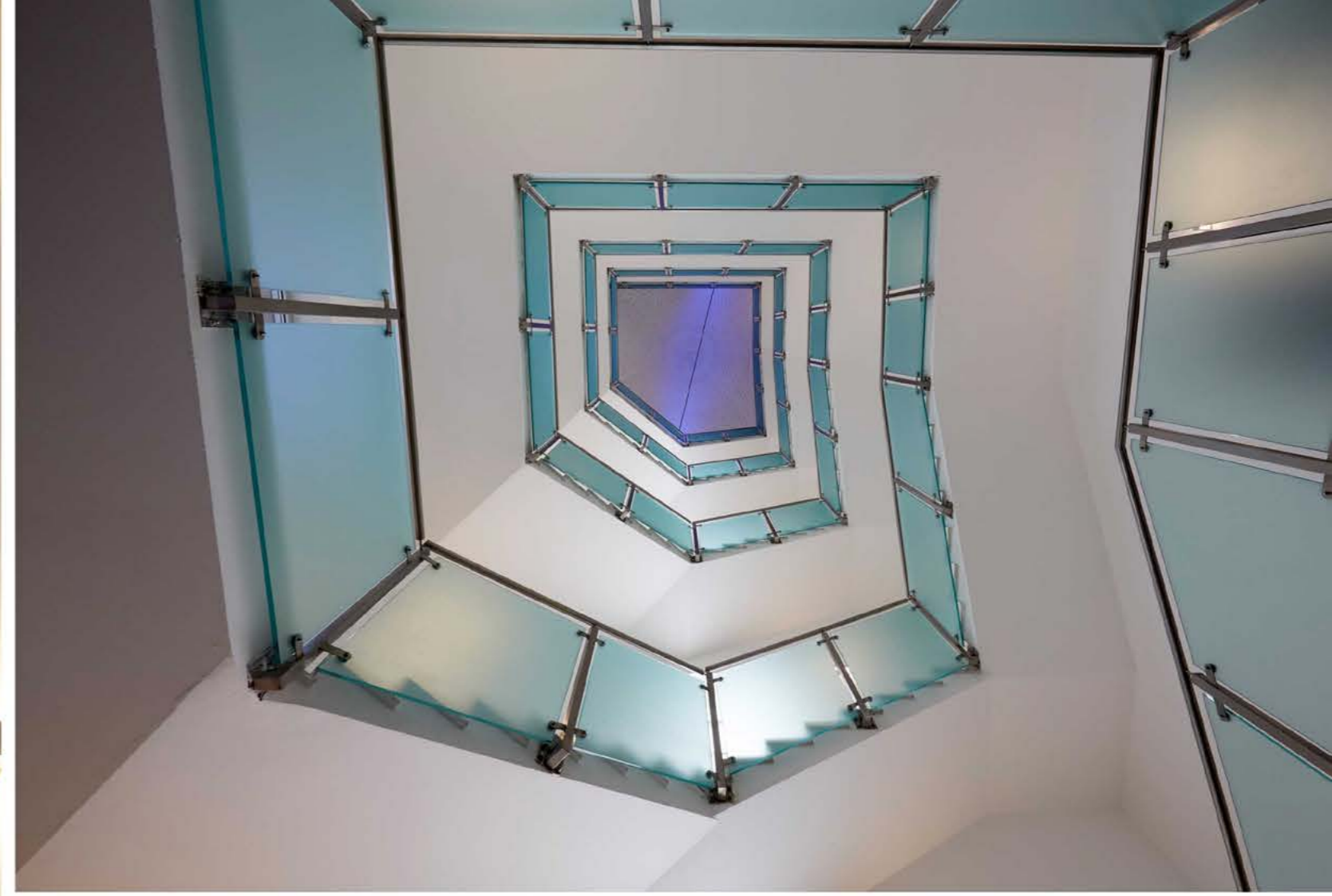
FOLD grows on an architecture, its concept is complete only if the building is read as part of the sculpture. This is a fundamental value of my point of view in sculpture. It is not the first time that my work work is crossed by architecture, I often cooperate with architects. In this same building, the ceiling of the staircase hosts another installation. It is a relief of about 60 square meters called "**Blue Sky Deep**" that mesmerizes the viewer with more than 3000 elements composed in a concentric pattern. More than depicting the universe, it means to convey the human feeling in front of it. We feel it is uncontainable but we still try to find a general design in it. But at the same time this installation crowns the staircase, projecting it toward a poetic elsewhere.

My work often means to investigate the apparently irreconcilable gap between nature, human and analytical thought, and synthesize this conflict in a single physical manifestation. That's why the conflicting presence of sculpture and architecture somehow finds a solution in my work.

FOLD is a public sculpture, visible from the street in Via Lucini 19. So if you plan a visit to Milan, don't forget to include FOLD in your city tour.







BLUE SKY DEEP

MALDOROR

is a serie of medium sized sculptures I started in 2016 as part of my constant research of the contemporary possibilities of the language of sculpture.

The shape is "grown", layering steel rods, one over another, subtly changing the curves, one layer after the other. Therefor the shape grows slowly, unplanned, organically.

This approach forces me in a set of mind of constant analysis. The shape has to be imagined and checked long before it is visible. There is no step backward and the imagined progression can change until the very last moment.

I see in this process a possible existential metaphore. I usually start with a very simple line, that then starts to get more complex and articulated. My working time accumulates, becomes tangible in the layered rods. You can read the shape as the phisical transcription of a phenomenon that has a transformation during time, so it could be a person's life, a relationship, an opinion on a subject matter.

I want my sculptures to be visual references, clues to be used to surf through thoughts, more than to specifically refer to a concept or to a set of judgements and conclusions. I want them to be used, misunderstood, discovered everytime in a different way, seen under a different light. I want the relationship with my sculptures to be a work in progress, rather than a short line to be spoken word for word. A relationship that evolves, as the shape of my sculpture does: slowly, unexpected and organically.

This serie is painted with color changing pigments. Depending on the angle of the incident light, the color changes. Therefor also walking around the sculptures, you will see the color change, on every curve of the surface. For me this is the only possible color choice, for a serie of sculptures that speaks of changes and variations.

MALDOROR

Painted Steel
50x40x90 cm
2016

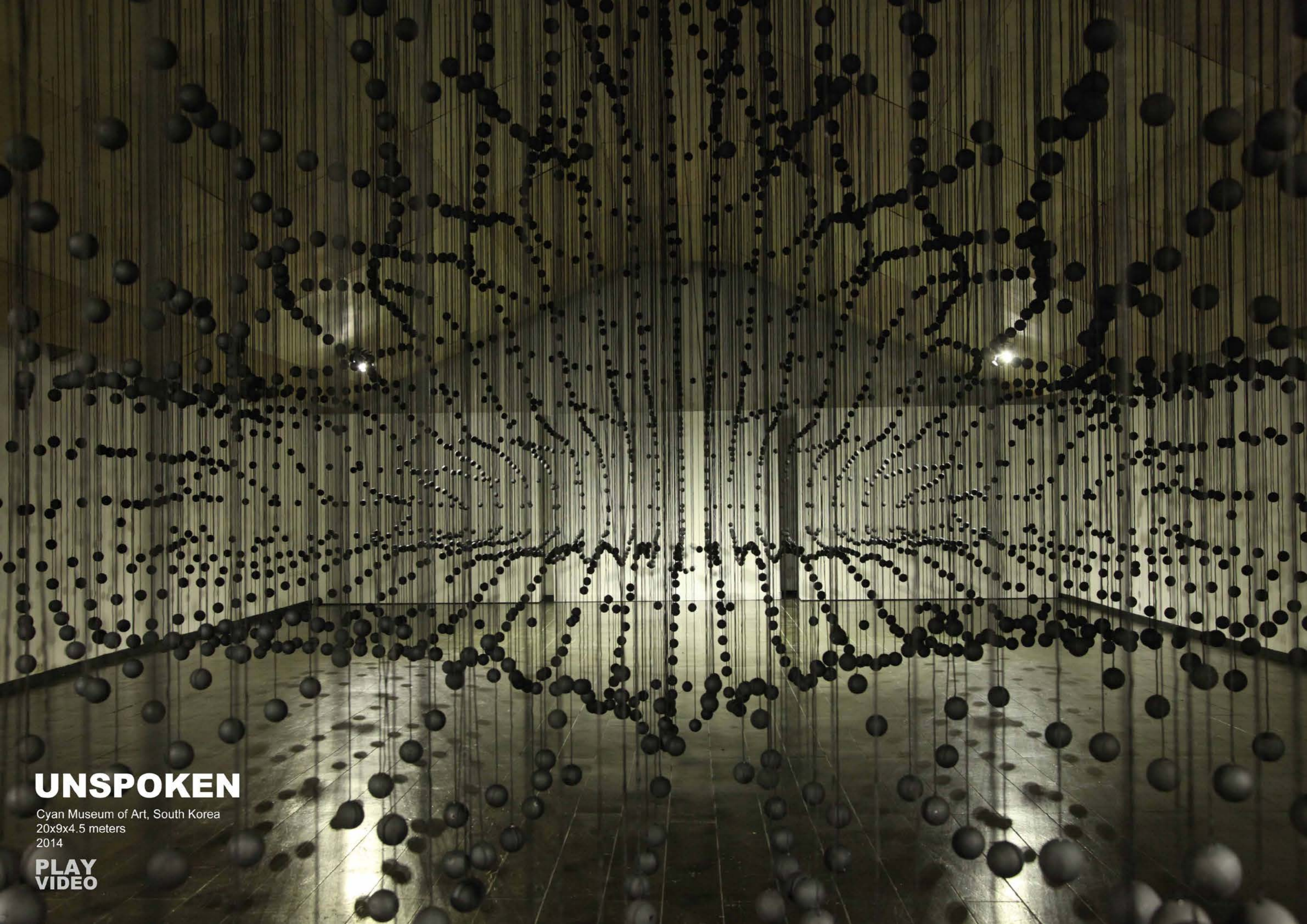




STAIRS

Stainless Steel, 270x240x40 cm 2018

I love my works to grow over architecture.
I love them to be like parasites, mushrooms, viruses, corals,
roots, dripstones, stalagmites and stalactites.
I love them when they contrast with the untouched rational beauty
of the straight line, when they break in the house as the wild wind of nature.
I love when they take over interstitial spaces, making a breach, sprouting a space.



UNspoken

Cyan Museum of Art, South Korea
20x9x4.5 meters
2014

**PLAY
VIDEO**

UNSPOKEN is sculpture.
More than 8.000 points, identified in space with mathematical precision.
A sphere for each point, assembled by hand on strings.
The shape is shapen, blindly. Points are assembled on strings,
but only at the end the shape will be visible,
thanks to gravity and proximity.
Eventually a mistake, a misplacement will show up, too late.
A mountain is dreamt to fly, a whale made of air,
a cloud in a room.
Simmetry is the only reference
to a biological origin,
the rest lies,
UNSPOKEN,
elephant
in the room.



NEW STAR, NEW BIRTH

First Prize Busan Biennale Sea Art Festival 2011

40 meters diameter, Songdo Beach, Busan, South Korea 2011

NEW STAR, NEW BIRTH is a drawing on the sea. Its pattern is a synthesis. I wanted to reference something primal. I considered biological evolution and focused on the first organization life chose after the amorphous era of amoebas.

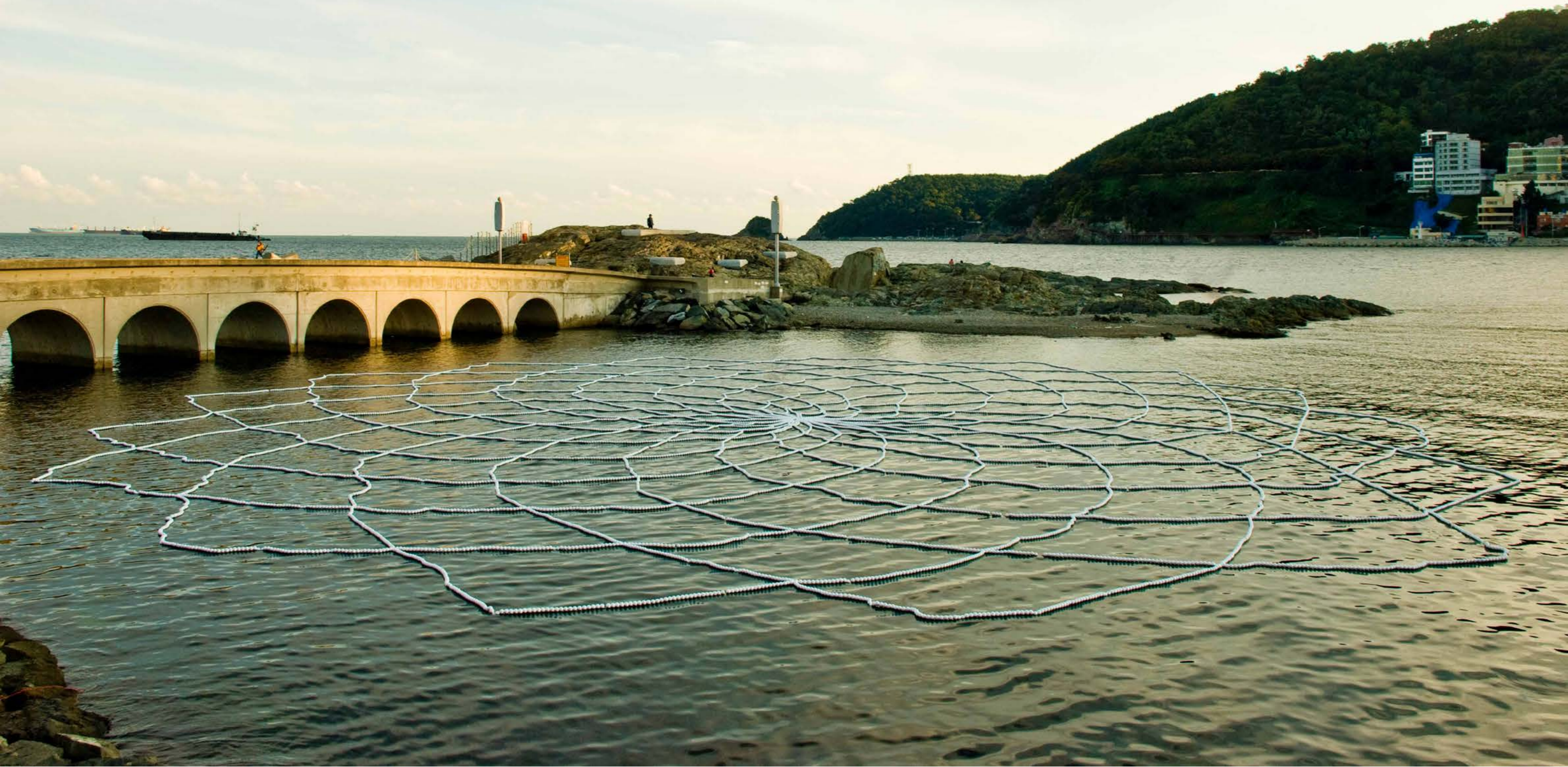
Symmetry around a central point, as in the starfish, became a first pattern.

It got adopted also by primitive artists in cave art representations of godlike concepts such as the sun.

I think that there is an actual relationship between biology and languages in general, or in this case visual languages. Signs ordered in a concentric pattern, line flowing inward and outward are an attempt to organize space management.

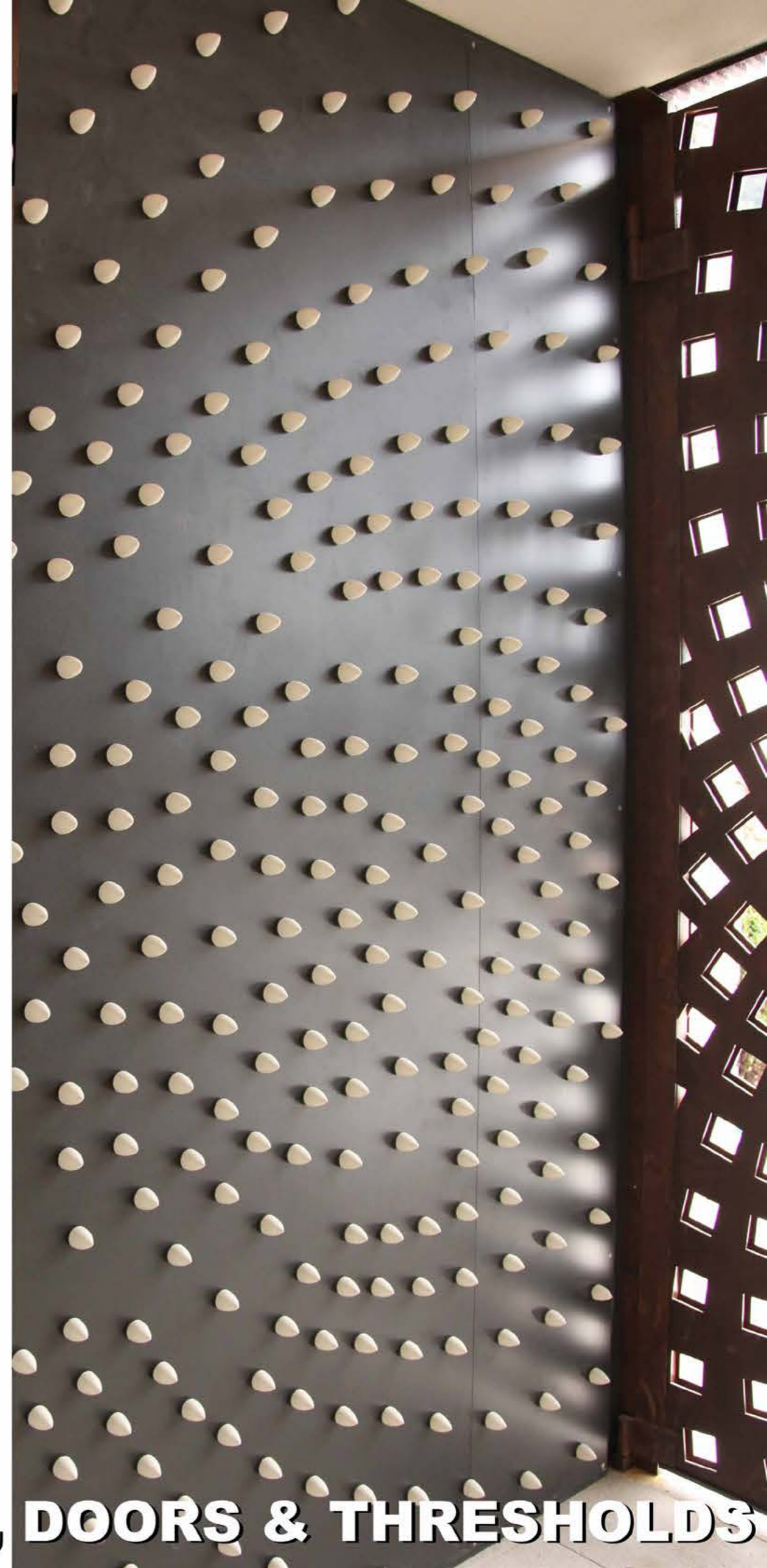
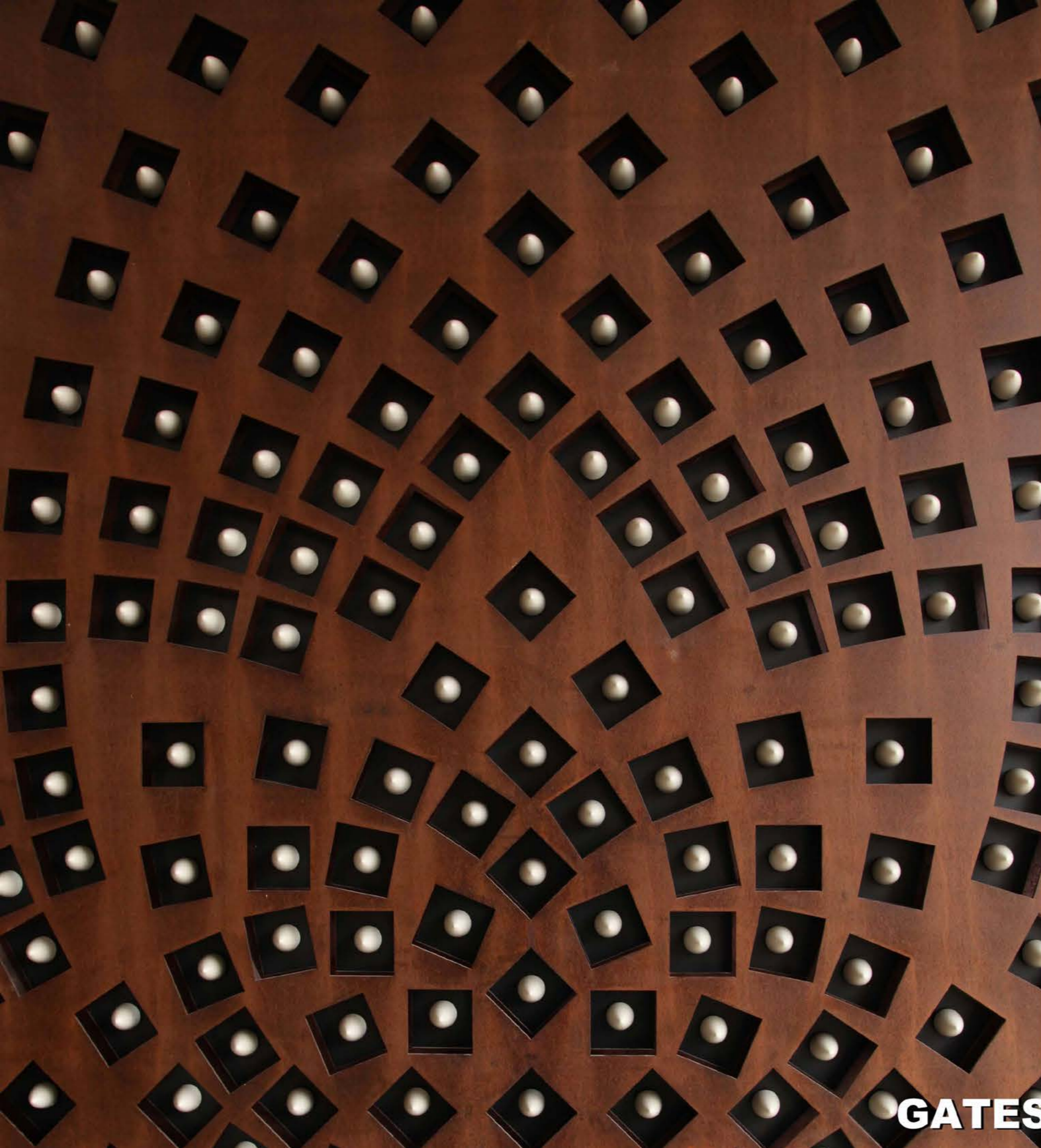
For organisms it was a way to try to have an advantage in survival.

In drawing it is a way to organize space in order to convey a certain idea of the world.



GATES, DOORS & THRESHOLDS





GATES, DOORS & THRESHOLDS



CALENDAR

More than 40 meters of diameter, completely in Bamboo, Songdo Beach, Busan, South Korea, 2013

As the name suggests, CALENDAR is a machine to keep track of time. The sculpture opens and closes respectively with the low tide and the high tide, giving a visible reference the influence of the moon on the tides cycle. As a sundial marks the solar time CALENDAR explicits the moon movements and gives us the consciousness of its position around the earth, so that we can set a calendar on that cycle. And then create a chronology, a reference for history and memory.



NEBULA

About 15x9x5 meters
Polystyrene, Silk and Flash Light
Yeongcheon Art Studio, Yeongcheon, South Korea
2013

PLAY
VIDEO

OMBRA

50x38x58 cm
Stainless Steel
2016





SECTION OF THE SPACE CONTINUITY

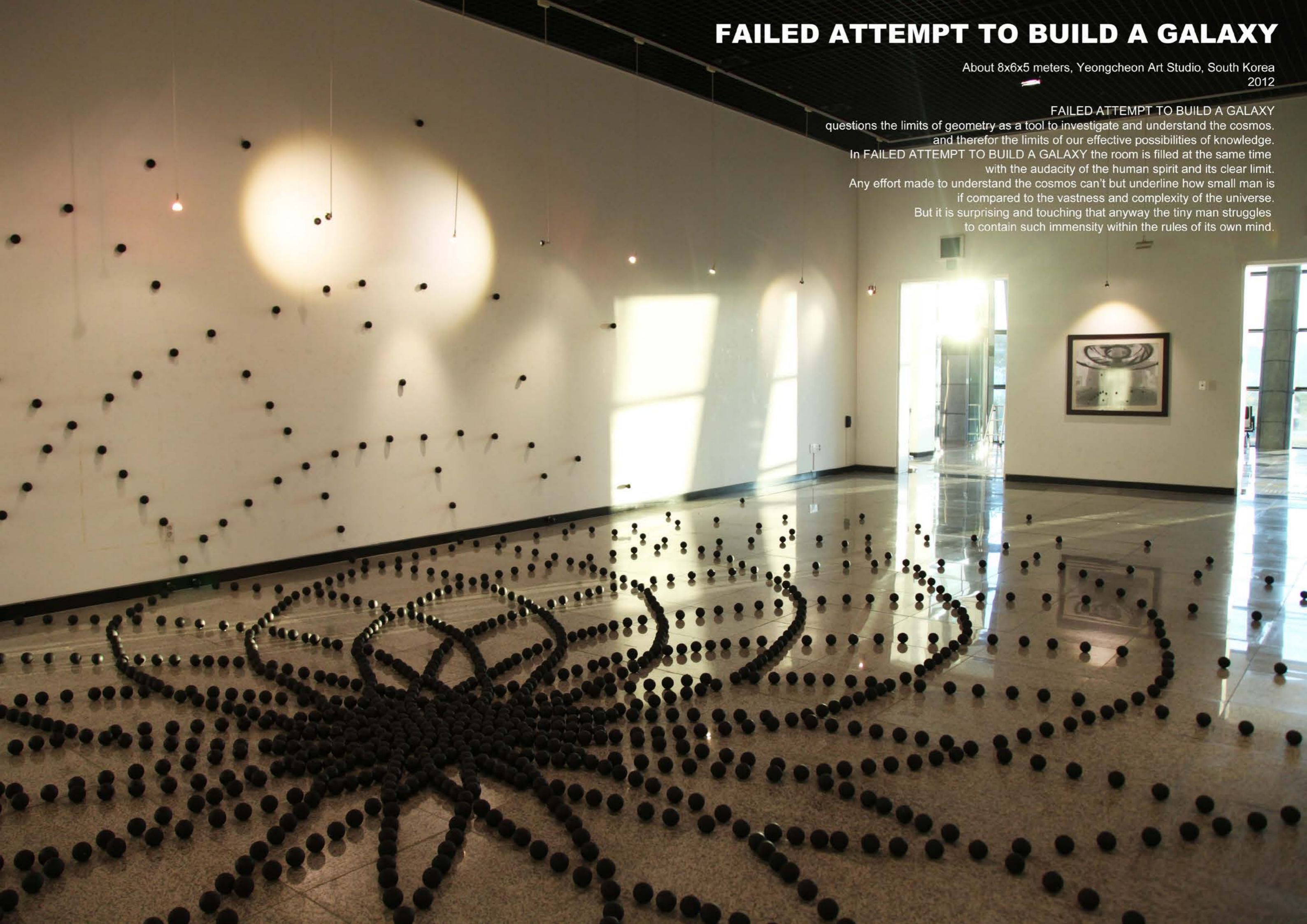
300x170x170 cm, Plywood and pine wood, 2014

**PLAY
VIDEO**

FAILED ATTEMPT TO BUILD A GALAXY

About 8x6x5 meters, Yeongcheon Art Studio, South Korea
2012

FAILED ATTEMPT TO BUILD A GALAXY questions the limits of geometry as a tool to investigate and understand the cosmos, and therefor the limits of our effective possibilities of knowledge. In FAILED ATTEMPT TO BUILD A GALAXY the room is filled at the same time with the audacity of the human spirit and its clear limit. Any effort made to understand the cosmos can't but underline how small man is if compared to the vastness and complexity of the universe. But it is surprising and touching that anyway the tiny man struggles to contain such immensity within the rules of its own mind.



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Born in Milan in 1977, holds an MFA from the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera of Milan. During his education, has been an exchange student at Athen's National Academy, in Greece and at UCLA in Los Angeles. Has been Tutor in the sculpture course in Brera, while alongside his artistic career, he was consultant for various artists and studio assistant for Giancarlo Marchese. From 2011 until 2015 has been Assitant Professor at the Catholic University of Daegu, in South Korea. Back in Italy, has started a profitable collaboration with architects on projects that are thought so that sculpture is integrated and alive in the architecture. Has also started a collaboration with Officina della Scala, a high end interior design studio, for the production of Meteorite, a table which is a sculpture. During his artistic career he has worked with galleries in Milan, New York and Seoul, showing in galleries and museums in Europe, Asia and the United States. In 2001 he won the first prize at the Angelo Tenchio Prize in Como and in 2011 the first prize at the Busan Sea Art Festival, in South Korea.

