

Alighiero Boetti

Agostino Bonalumi

Enrico Castellani

Dadamaino

Lucio Fontana

Paolo Scheggi

Andy Warhol

BASS!

HOW
LOW
CAN
YOU
GO?

Erica Baum

Raphael Danke

Rachel Lee Hovnanian

Sheree Hovsepian

Anthony Pearson

Gibb Sliffe

CURATED BY AMIR SHARIAT

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CURATED BY AMIR SHARIAT

May 8th - June 1st

TO MY FATHER

BASS! HOW LOW CAN YOU GO?

Through thick fog and rain and sunshine and thunder, I used to stroll down the famous *Flohmarkt* (flea market) of Vienna with my late father during the 1980s. Then at the tender age of 14 I bought my first artwork by the Austrian 19th century painter Ferdinand Georg Waldmueller, from the oldest auction house in the world, Dorotheum. It took me almost another 14 years before I dared buying another artwork, this time by the king of pop, Andy Warhol. By that time my taste buds had changed dramatically and it was clear that the influence of my environment had taken a toll on my penchant for 19th century landscape paintings. In those 14 years my taste for music had also taken a beating and it was no longer Strauss and Mozart that were running the roost but Public Enemy, Ice T and Eric B & Rakim.

The same way that rap embodies an entire generation and has indeed changed the world of music forever, today's young artists exercise the same influence on our visual experience. Contemporary art and hip hop go hand in hand. Rap is "poetry in motion" as Rakim rhymes without hesitation. Art has always been in motion ever since the first cave paintings graced Planet Earth. The creativity that underpins every single brushstroke is made up of a plethora of influences be they external or internal. In essence mankind has always sampled from the past.

The pairing of Italian postwar masters, Warhol and the young guns on either side of the Big Pond is no coincidence. Contemporary art's master kingpin is Andy Warhol but also to a large extent the Italian masters of the second half of the last century. Mankind has become furious in the fast lane and art allows us to dream but also to reassess the reality of the world we live in. The same way that we delve back into history to better understand the present and predict the future, artists find inspiration in the works of previous generations. It is with the tools of history and an innate sampling spirit that Erica Baum, Raphael Danke, Sheree Hovsepian, Rachel Hovnanian, Anthony Pearson and Gibb Slife's creativity comes to the fore. The origins of their sins can be traced back to Andy Warhol but also Alighiero Boetti, Agostino Bonalumi, Enrico Castellani, Dadamaino, Lucio Fontana and Paolo Scheggi. The Italians knew how to bend the fabric, slice the canvas and finally cut the Gordian Knot. Bonalumi, Castellani, Dadamaino and Scheggi represent the Italian post-war avant-garde itself deeply associated with the Argentina born Fontana. Whilst juxtaposing the young guns' works with their mentors' one delights in the fact that history does not repeat itself but is taken to the next level. Indeed the young generation knows perfectly how to deal with notions of space and motion.

Erica's works allude to the voyeurism of Warhol while revelling in the genius of Michelangelo Antonioni's masterpiece *Blow Up*. Our thirst for knowing the unknown and seeing the unseen



Amir Shariat, Courtesy of Emma Hardy

takes us back to the work of Dadamaino (born Eduardo Emilia Maino). The *Volumi* are monochromatic canvases (black or white) whose elliptical slices reveal an otherworldly dimension to the canvas that we have been used to for hundreds of years. Dadamaino's practice in turn was influenced by Fontana's *Buchi*.

Gibb can't stop our innate thirst for news and gossip. Warhol is a clear and welcome influence. His mirrored newspaper series are an homage to the king of pop but are they? The text is entirely made up. Fact is fiction and fiction is fact. Warhol is back with a vengeance. This is particularly evident in his works on canvas which depict everyday situations.

Sheree samples Fontana's slashes for only Man Ray rescues the paper from being sliced up. Her sculptures then take Rodin to the next level or should I say the Tower of Babel? Fontana's 1946 *White Manifesto* sums up Sheree's practice and moreover the exhibition: "Matter, colour and sound in motion are the phenomena whose simultaneous development makes up the new art".

Anthony, a seasoned record collector, meets Bonalumi head on, takes his hand and shows him the way to America. The surface of paintings remains surprisingly flat throughout history yet Anthony has reason to believe that our earth is not flat at all. Bonalumi's distortion of the evenness of the canvas had happened half a century ago. Bonalumi was an autodidact and founder of the legendary Azimuth journal and gallery in 1959 with fellow artists Castellani and Manzoni.

Rachel meets Enrico and Enrico meets Rachel: it's not the economy stupid, it's the fabric of society! Castellani was not only a co founder of Azimuth but also joined the ZERO movement with fellow founder Bonalumi in 1960. His minimal works are laced with nails on the back which raises the canvases ever so slightly and allows for a mesmerizing display and shadow and light. The space is finally conquered.

Raphael D rounds them all up and shouts "Danke" to Agostino, Alighiero, Andy, Dadamaino, Enrico, Lucio and Paolo. His brickwall patterns which remind us of Boetti whose *arazzi* (tapestries) are not mere numbers and letters but a coded text. Raphael's collages entitled *Disappearance* continue Boetti's labyrinthine task of deciphering text in the canvas. Another Fontana disciple comes to mind when digesting Raphael's works, Paolo Scheggi. The Italian worked the space by superimposing three canvases and thereby setting the stage for studies related to the real and virtual space. Raphael manages to flatten that space.

Rakim, whilst boasting about his rap genius, eloquently summarises creativity and our feelings when faced with a masterpiece. This is how I feel when faced with the artists in this exhibition.

Next episode'll be smooth as a Persian
Rhymes everlasting, there'll be no part two
Knowledge is infinite, once I start to
Draw a better picture for your third eye, if you're blind
You know with a mic, I'm a black Michaelangelo
I'm the brother who ideas are colorful
Giving 'em insight, but giving 'em trouble to

Amir Shariat

“Amir Shariat is not only among the most voracious contemporary art collectors on the planet, he is a force of nature that can out-pace anyone, anywhere in determining who, what, when and where to acquire art. He has had the good fortune to buy early and buy deep; and somehow, almost improbably, he continues to this day to rub my face in what I realize—days, weeks, even years later—I should have bought, which, alas, had I bought with half the temerity that he possesses I would possess a major collection. Artists such as Matthew Day Jackson, Sterling Ruby, Walead Beshty, Matthias Faldbakken, R.H. Quaytman hold court in his ever-expanding domain. Be warned: his aesthetic enthusiasms are highly infectious.”

- Steve Pulimood, art critic

ENRICO CASTELLANI

B. 1930; Castelmassa, Italy
Lives and works in Celano, Italy



Estroflessione, 1978
Acrylic on paper
19.5 x 27.3 in / 49.8 x 69.3 cm
Courtesy of Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York



Gates of Narcissus: Reflection XIII, 2013
Acrylic on linen, metal leaf, cast metal, leather in artist's frame
49 x 49 in / 124.5 x 124.5 cm



Gates of Narcissus: Mirror Motherboard VI, 2013
Steel, cast metal, leather in artist's frame
60 x 30 in / 152.4 x 76.2 cm

RACHEL LEE HOVNANIAN

B. Parkersburg, WV
Lives and works in New York, NY

AGOSTINO BONALUMI

B. 1935, Vimercate, Italy
Lives and works in Italy



Blu, 1971
Extroflexed canvas and vinyl
27.6 x 23.6 in / 70 x 60 cm



Grigio Verde, 1974
Extroflexed canvas and vinyl
57.1 x 44.9 in / 145 x 114 cm
Courtesy of Galerie Tornabuoni Art



Untitled (Plaster Positive), 2013
 Pigmented hydrocal in painted maple artist's frame
 60.9 x 40.8 in / 154.6 x 103.5 cm
 Courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York. © Anthony Pearson



Untitled (Plaster Positive), 2013
 Hydrocal in walnut artist's frame
 59.8 x 43.8 x 3.5 in / 151.8 x 111.1 x 8.9 cm
 Courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York. © Anthony Pearson

ANTHONY PEARSON

B. 1969; Los Angeles, CA
 Lives and works in Los Angeles, CA

PAOLO SCHEGGI

B. 1940; Florence, Italy
D. 1971; Rome, Italy



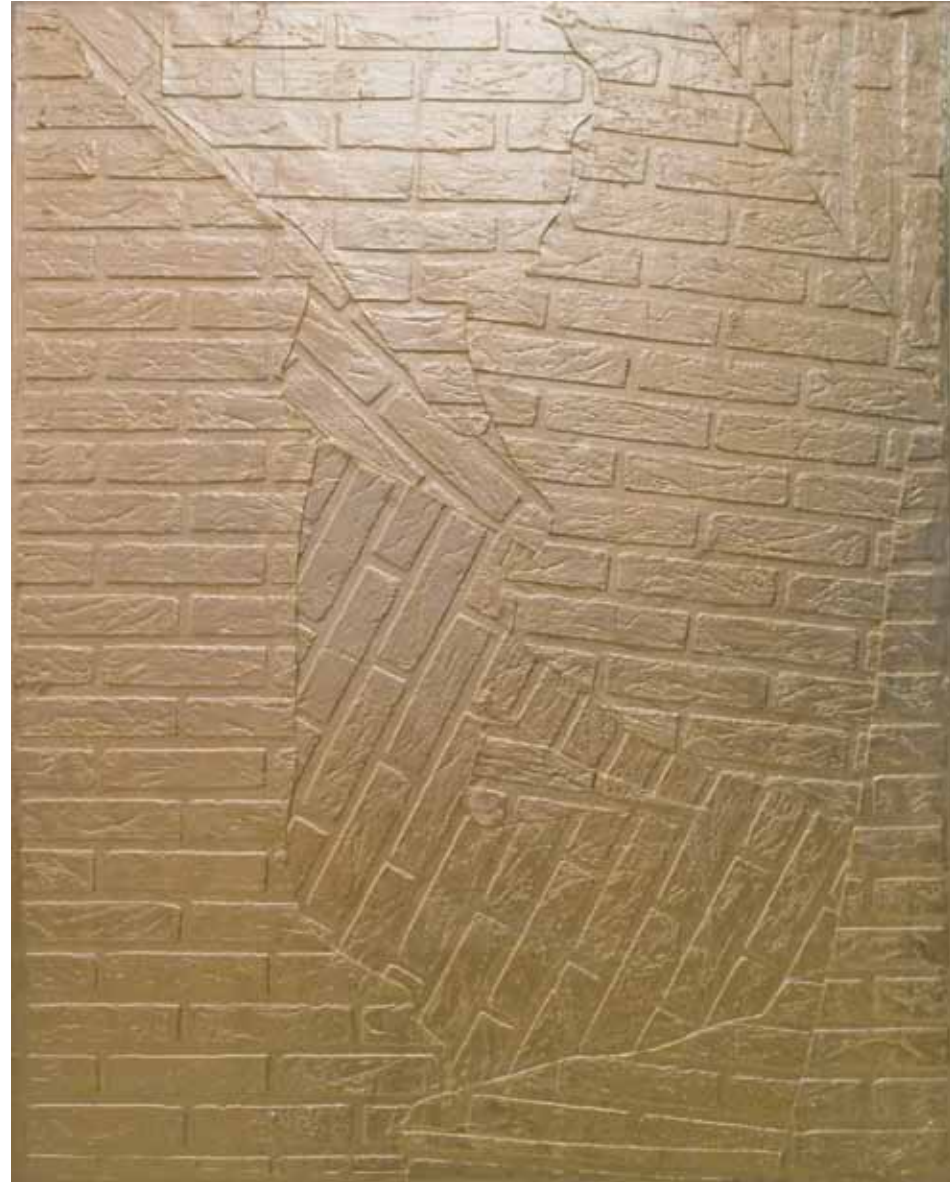
Volumi (blu), 1964
Acrylic on shaped canvas
15.7 x 19.7 in / 40 x 50 cm

ALIGHIERO BOETTI

B. 1940; Turin, Italy
D. 1994; Rome, Italy



Segno e Disegno, 1990
Embroidery
7.1 x 7.3 in / 18 x 18.5 cm



The Disappearance of a Girl Held By a Man, 2013
 Dutch metal and wallpaper on canvas
 49.2 x 39.4 in / 125 x 100 cm
 Courtesy of MOT International, London



The Disappearance of a Cigarette Held By a Girl, 2013
 Dutch metal and wallpaper on canvas
 49.2 x 39.4 in / 125 x 100 cm
 Courtesy of MOT International, London

RAPHAEL DANKE

B. 1972; Aachen, Germany
 Lives and works in Berlin, Germany

ANDY WARHOL

B. 1928; Pittsburgh, PA
D. 1987; New York, NY

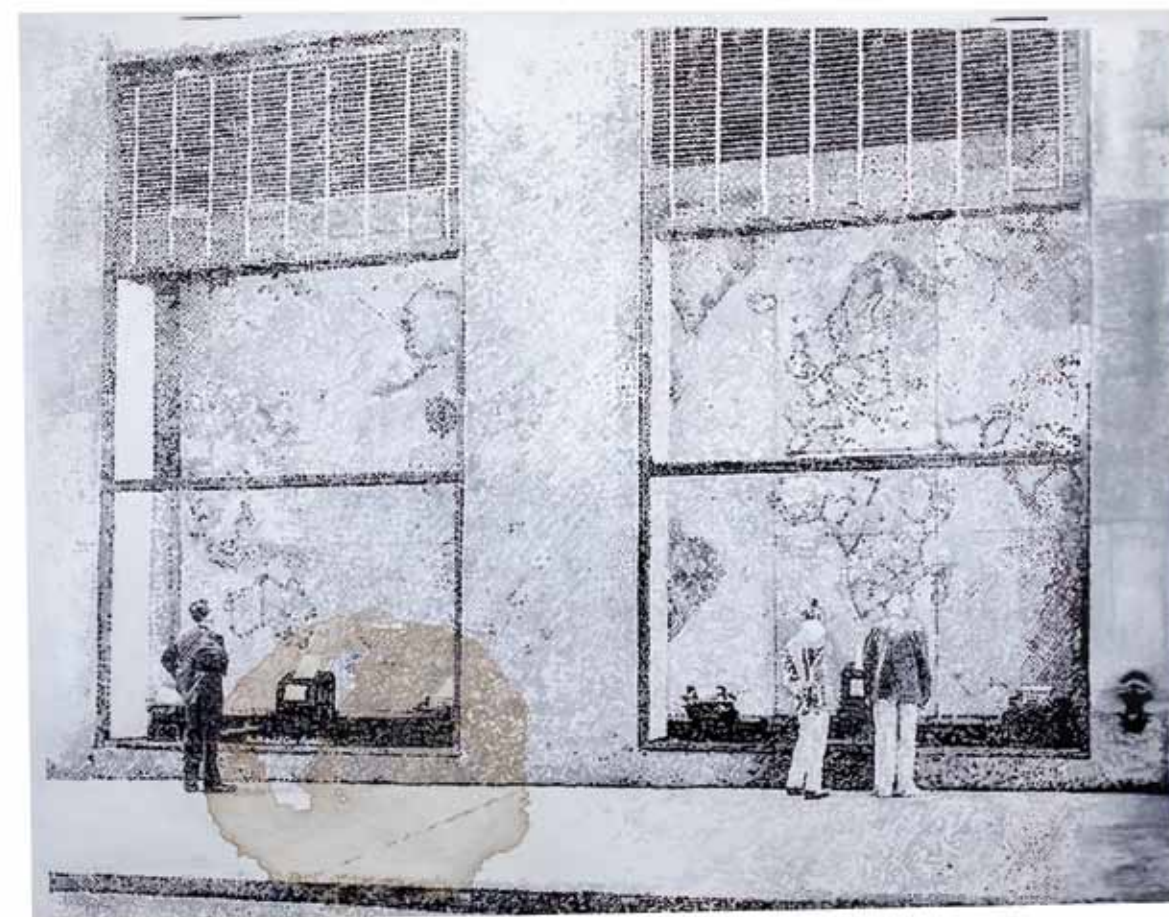
171 - *could top 200*, 1978
Silkscreen on paper
52 x 38 in / 132.1 x 96.5 cm



Untitled (The world #7), 2008
Serigraph on Plexiglas mirror
62 x 44.5 in / 157.5 x 113 cm
Courtesy of Fitzroy Gallery



Untitled (The world #9), 2011
Serigraph on Plexiglas mirror
62 x 44.5 in / 157.5 x 113 cm
Courtesy of Fitzroy Gallery



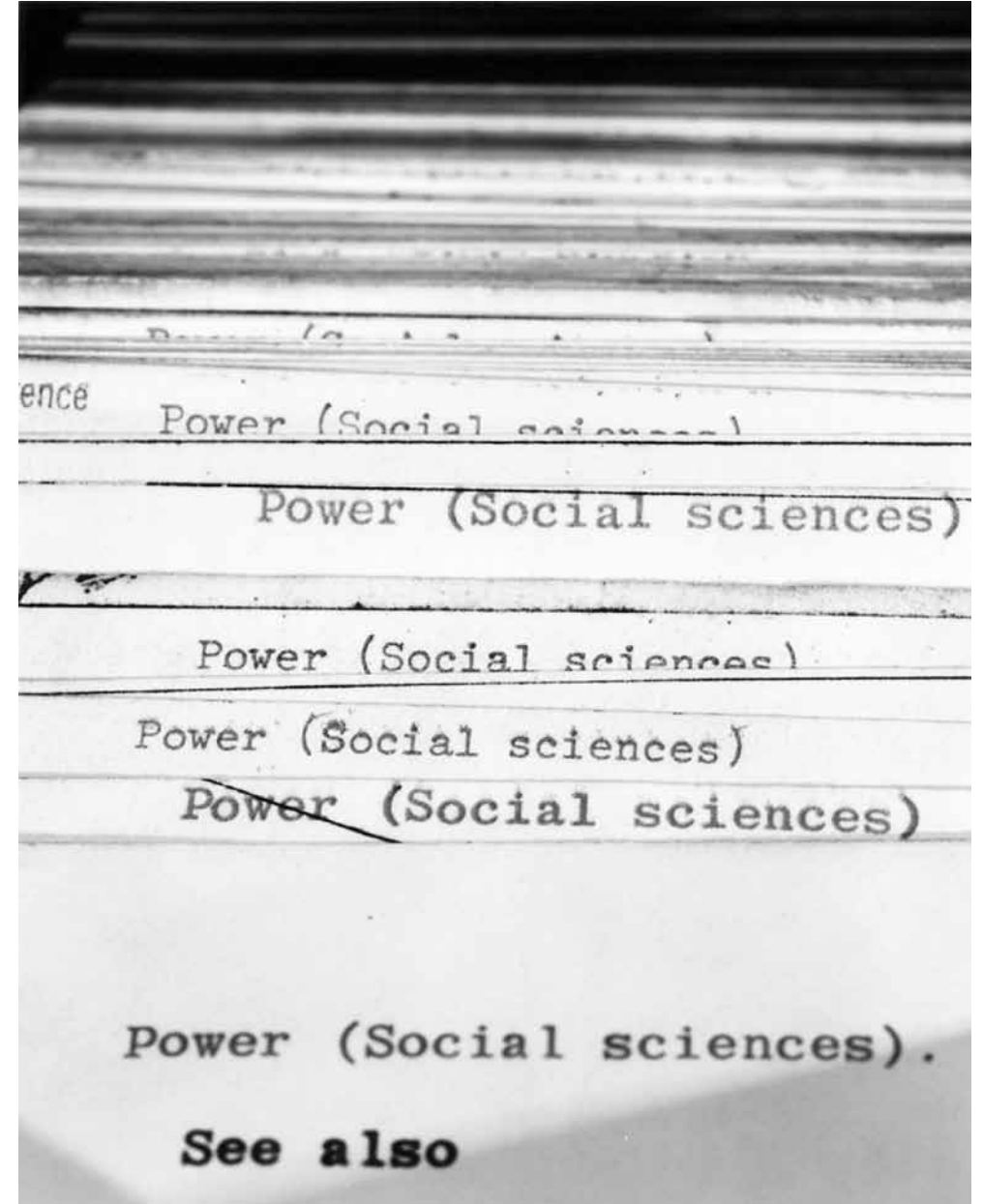
Untitled (Coffee), 2012
Oil on canvas
42 x 54 in / 106.7 x 137.2 cm
Courtesy of Amir Shariat and Fitzroy Gallery

GIBB SLIFE

B. 1975; Cleveland, OH
Lives and works in New York, NY



Untitled (Apparitions), 1997
(Card Catalogue)
 Gelatin silver print
 20 x 24 in / 50.8 x 61 cm
 Edition 1 of 6, 2 APs
 Courtesy of Bureau Inc.



Untitled (Power), 1996
(Card Catalogue)
 Gelatin silver print
 24 x 20 in / 61 x 50.8 cm
 Edition 2 of 6, 2 APs
 Courtesy of Bureau Inc.

ERICA BAUM

B. 1961; New York, NY
 Lives and works in New York, NY



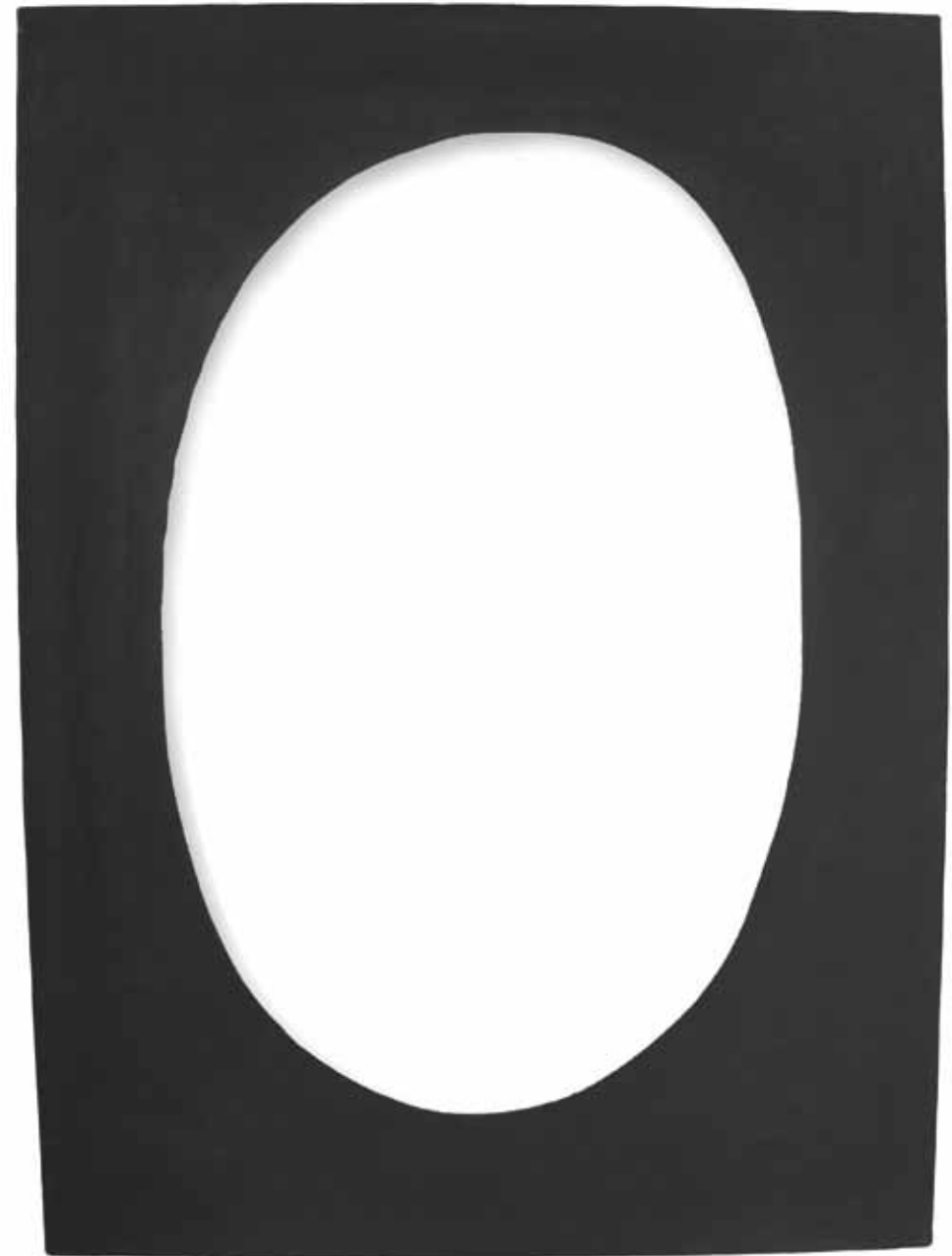
Matinee, 2012
 (Naked Eye Anthology)
 Archival pigment print
 18 x 9.6 in / 45.7 x 24.4 cm
 Edition 1 of 6, 2 APs
 Courtesy of Bureau Inc.



Art, 2008
 (Naked Eye Anthology)
 Archival pigment print
 18 x 15 in / 47 x 38.1 cm
 Edition 2 of 6, 2 APs
 Courtesy of Bureau Inc.

DADAMAINO

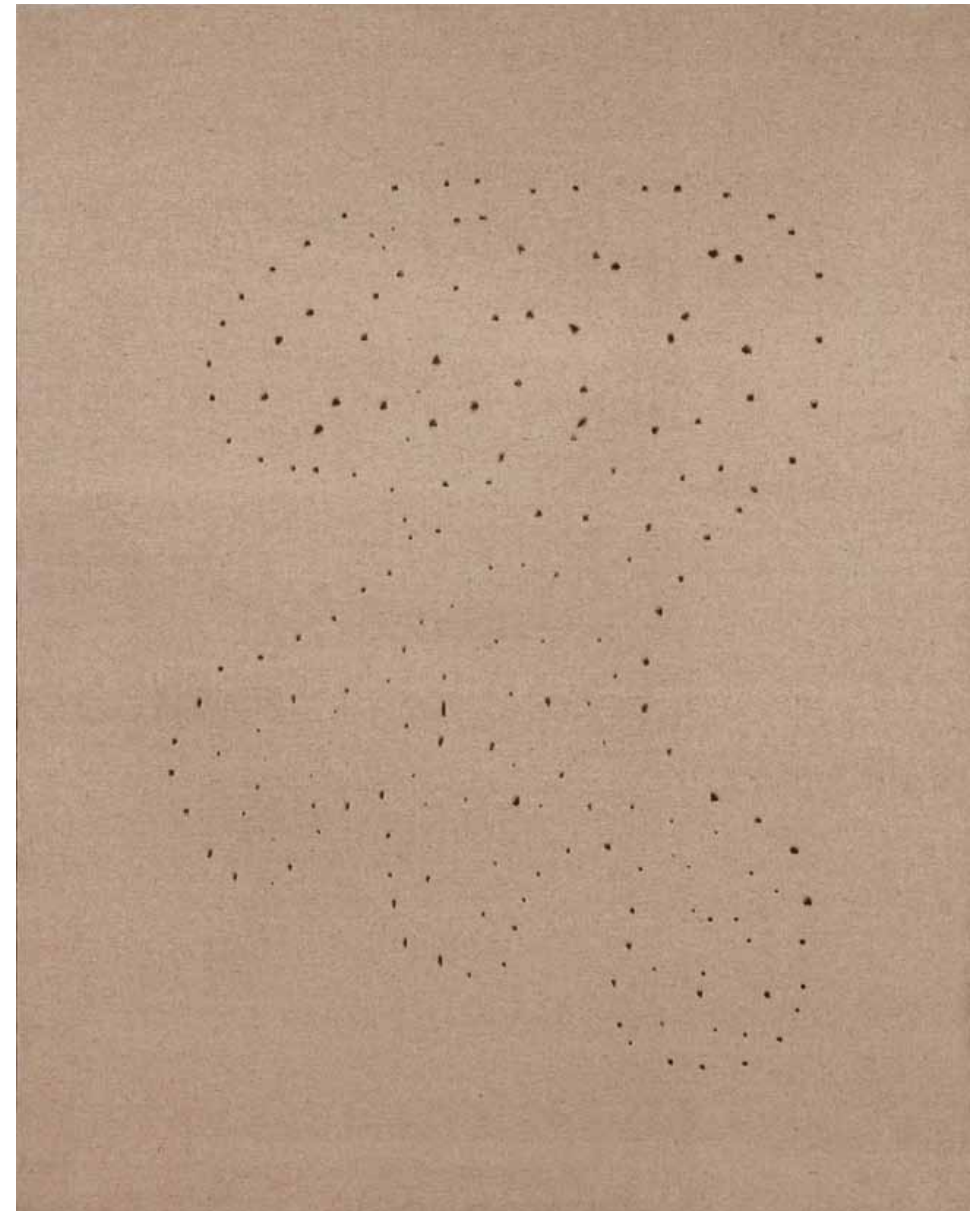
B. 1930; Milan, Italy
D. 2004; Milan, Italy



Volume, 1959
Water-based paint on cut-out canvas
31.5 x 22.4 in / 80 x 57 cm

LUCIO FONTANA

B. 1899; Rosario de Santa Fé, Argentina
D. 1968; Varese, Italy



18 Concetto Spaziale, 1960
Linen
36.4 x 28.8 in / 92.4 x 73 cm
Courtesy of Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York



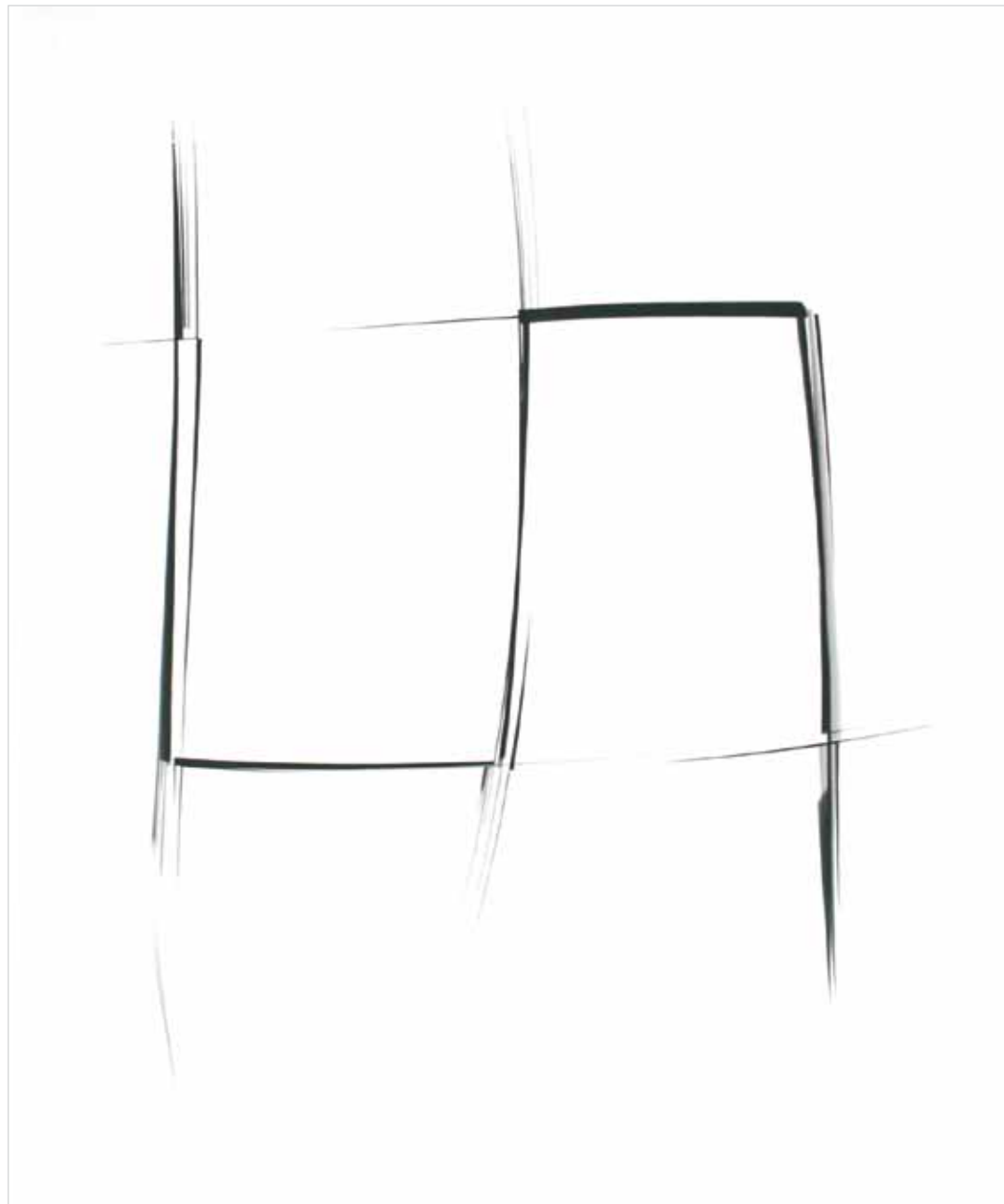
Column #6, 2013
Bronze, wood
Bottom of base to top of sculpture: 17 inches / 43.2 cm
Width of base: 7 inches / 17.8 cm



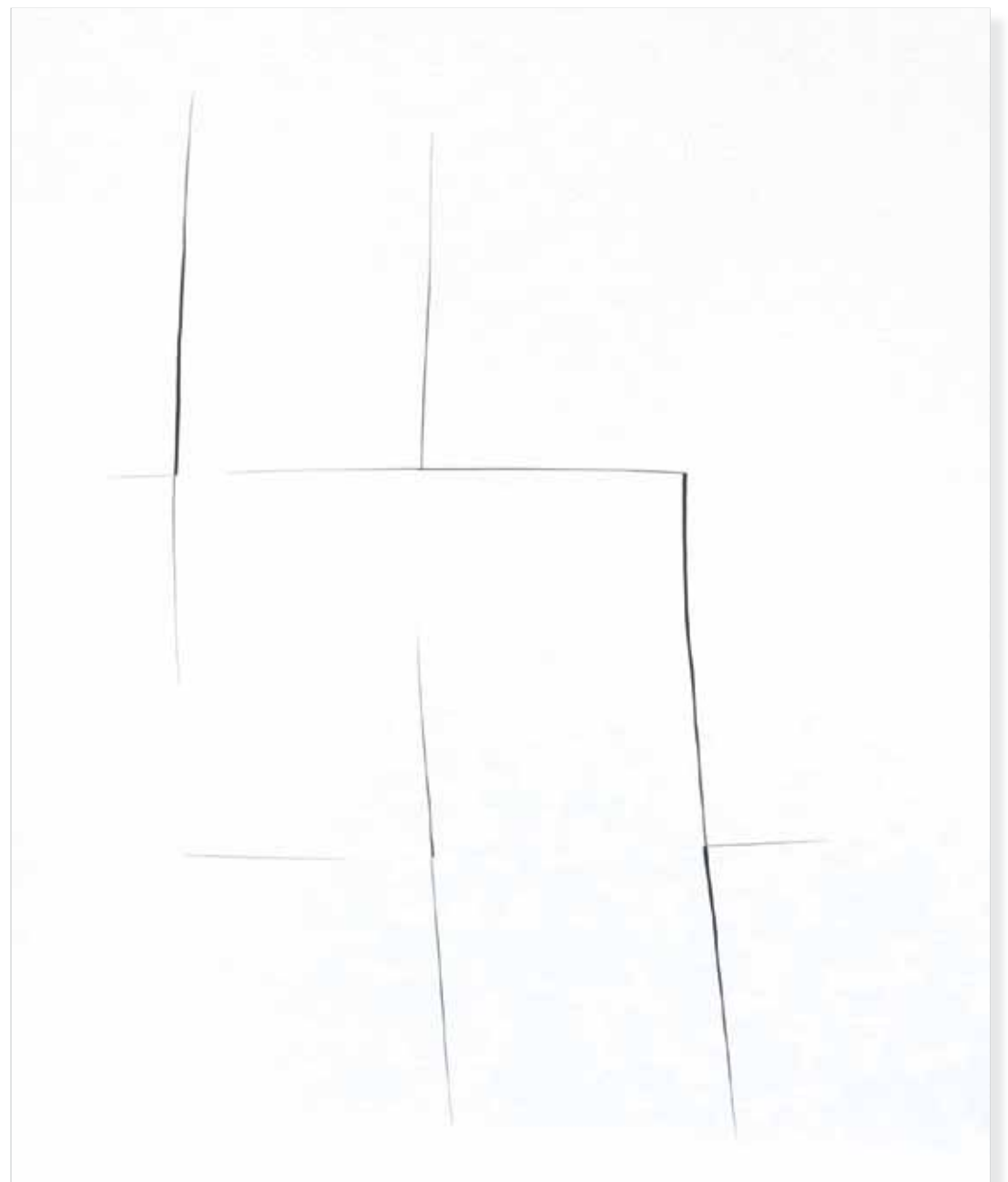
Column #7, 2013
Bronze, wood
Bottom of base to top of sculpture: 17.5 inches / 44.5 cm
Width of base: 7 in / 17.8 cm

SHEREE HOVSEPIAN

B. 1974; Isfahan, Iran
Lives and work in New York, NY



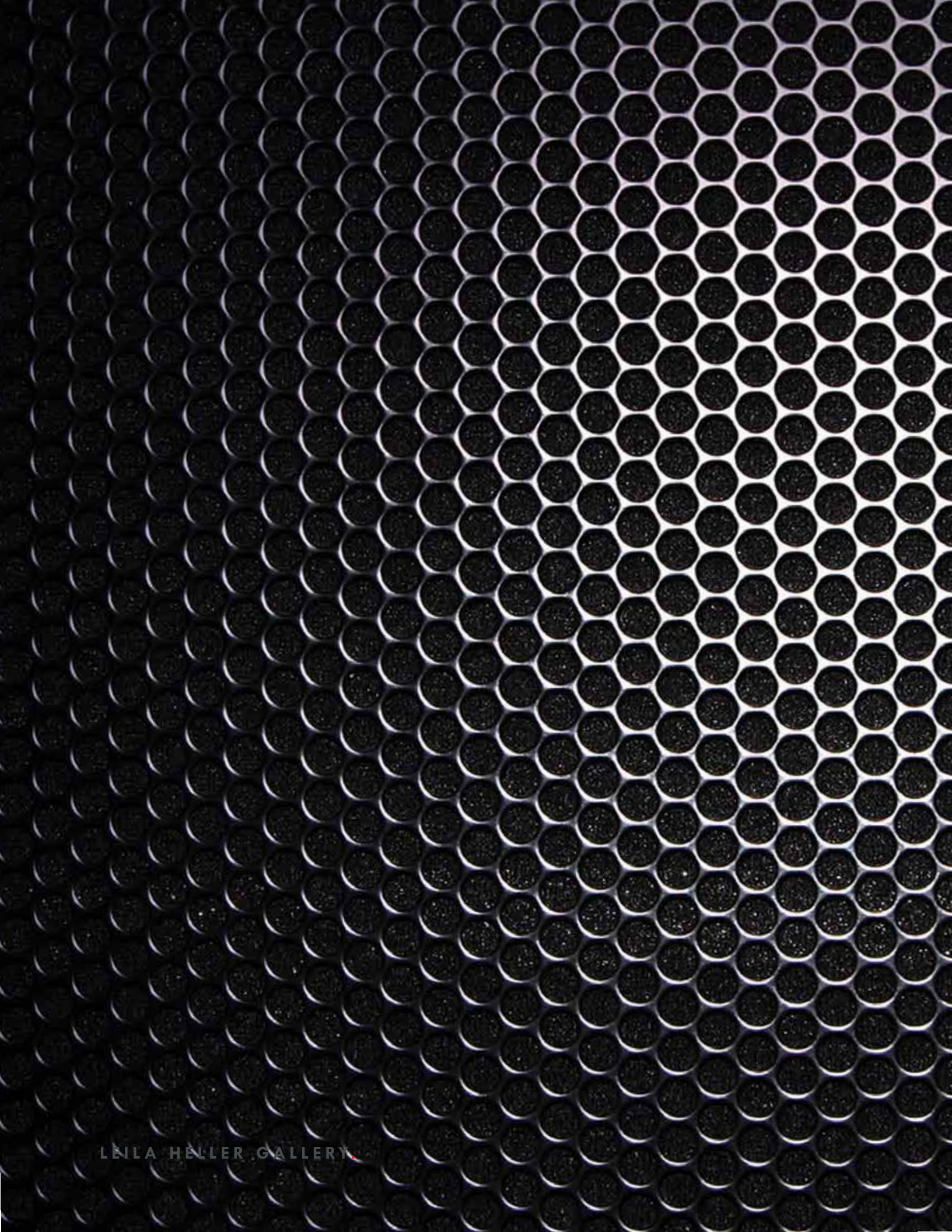
Untitled #86 (Haptic Wonders series), 2013
Photogram (unique gelatin silver print)
24 x 20 in / 61 x 50.8 cm



Untitled #87 (Haptic Wonders series), 2013
Photogram (unique gelatin silver print)
24 x 20 in / 61 x 50.8 cm

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