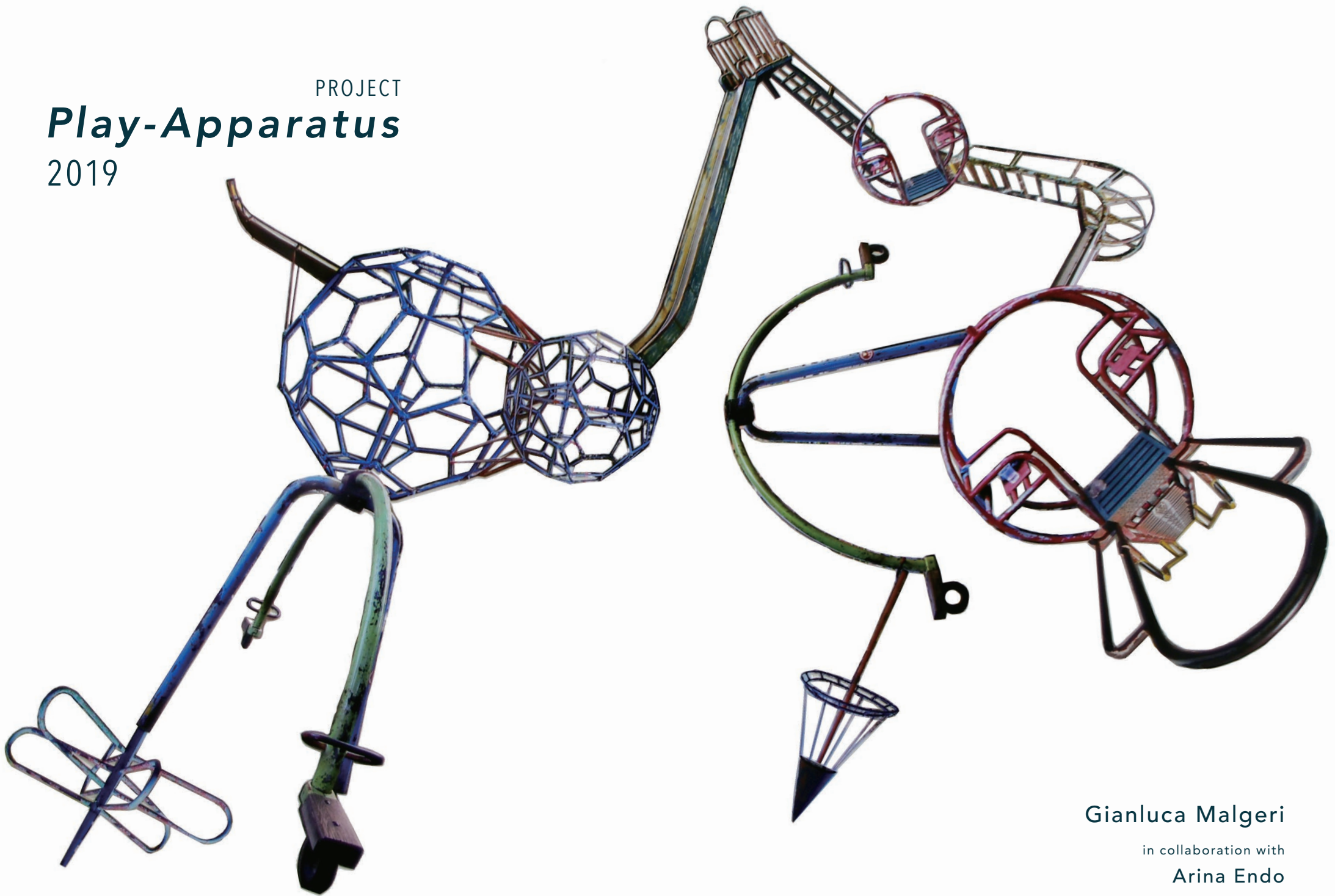


PROJECT
Play-Apparatus
2019



Gianluca Malgeri

in collaboration with
Arina Endo



Copenhagen, 2006



New Delhi, 2013



New Delhi, 2013



New Delhi, 2013



Tokyo, 2016



Tokyo, 2016



Tokyo, 2018



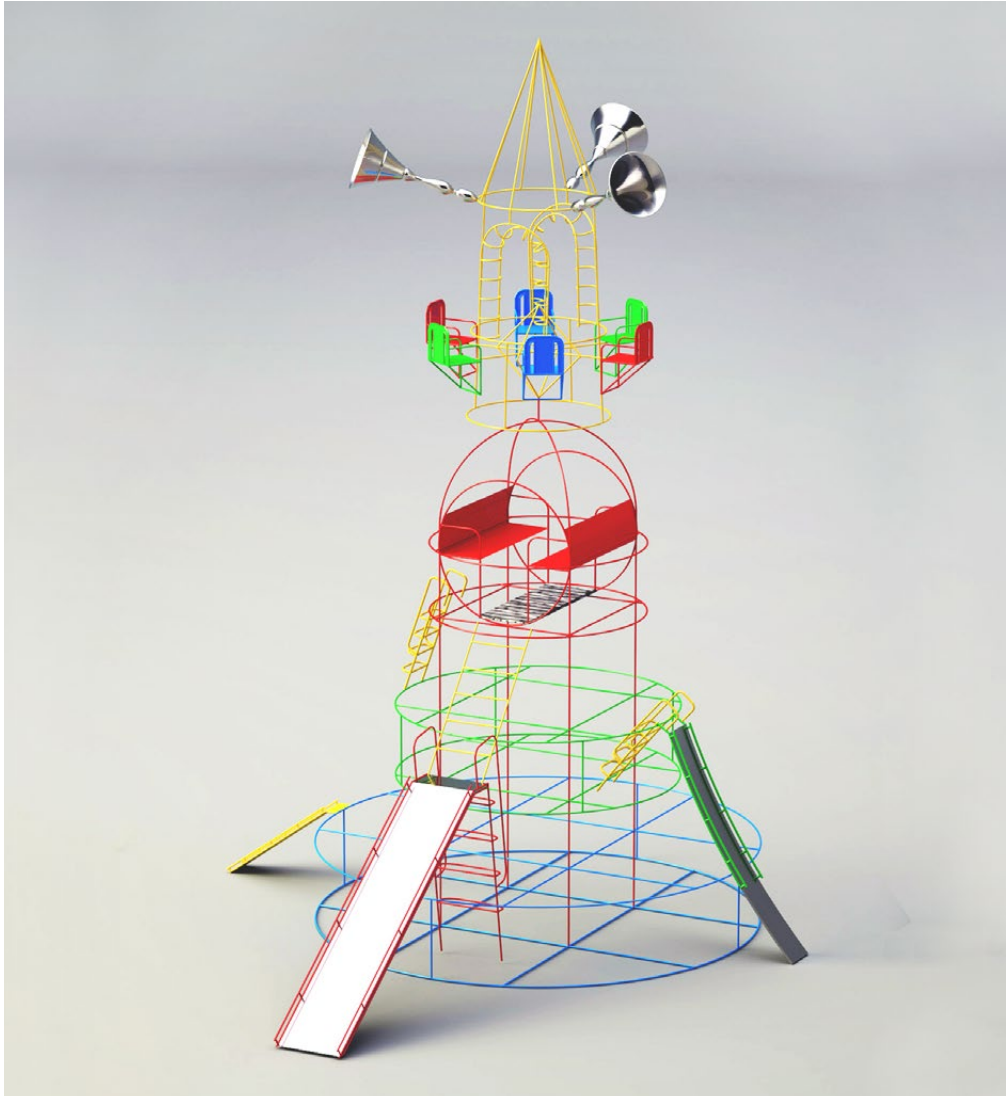
Untitled - India, 2013
photographic print
50 x 70 cm



Untitled - India, 2013
photographic print
50 x 70 cm



Untitled - India, 2013
photographic print
50 x 70 cm



- 3D Rendering
City composed of several elements of play-toy for children.



Paese dei balocchi No. 1, 2014
copper, soldering
20 x 32 x 45 cm



Paese dei balocchi No. 2, 2014
copper, soldering
33 x 28 x 52 cm



Paese dei balocchi No. 3, 2014
copper, soldering
38 x 38 x 58 cm

Edge of Chaos (Expelled from Paradise)

Curated by
Vita Zaman and Nicola Vassel

May 5 – June 29, 2015
Casa Donati, Venice

On the occasion of the 56th Biennale di Venezia, Vita Zaman and Nicola Vassel are pleased to present, *Edge of Chaos (Expelled from Paradise)*, an exhibition featuring works by LaToya Ruby Frazier, Gianluca Malgeri and Audra Vau.

“Edge of Chaos” explores these artists’ creative responses to global tumult using the framework of feminism and ecology. As chaos reigns from climate change to political and economic volatility, there is an increasing parallel between patriarchy, social injustice and the degradation of nature. Seeing all life as valuable, the three artists share an outlook that celebrates the earth as sacred and acknowledge our interdependence upon the natural world.

Ecofeminism and sustainability form the exhibition’s foundation. It links theory and activism, viewing the oppression of women and pillage of the earth as intrinsically related. Saluting women’s interconnectivity with the earth, ecofeminism challenges capitalistic domination of one subject over another as a means of optimizing wealth-based power and extracting finite resources without reciprocity (e.g. man over woman, culture over nature, racism that extends to specicism).

The cosmic thread for the exhibit is found in Edge of Chaos theory, which explores the dynamics of criticality. It locates the point between order and chaos that sits a fraction away

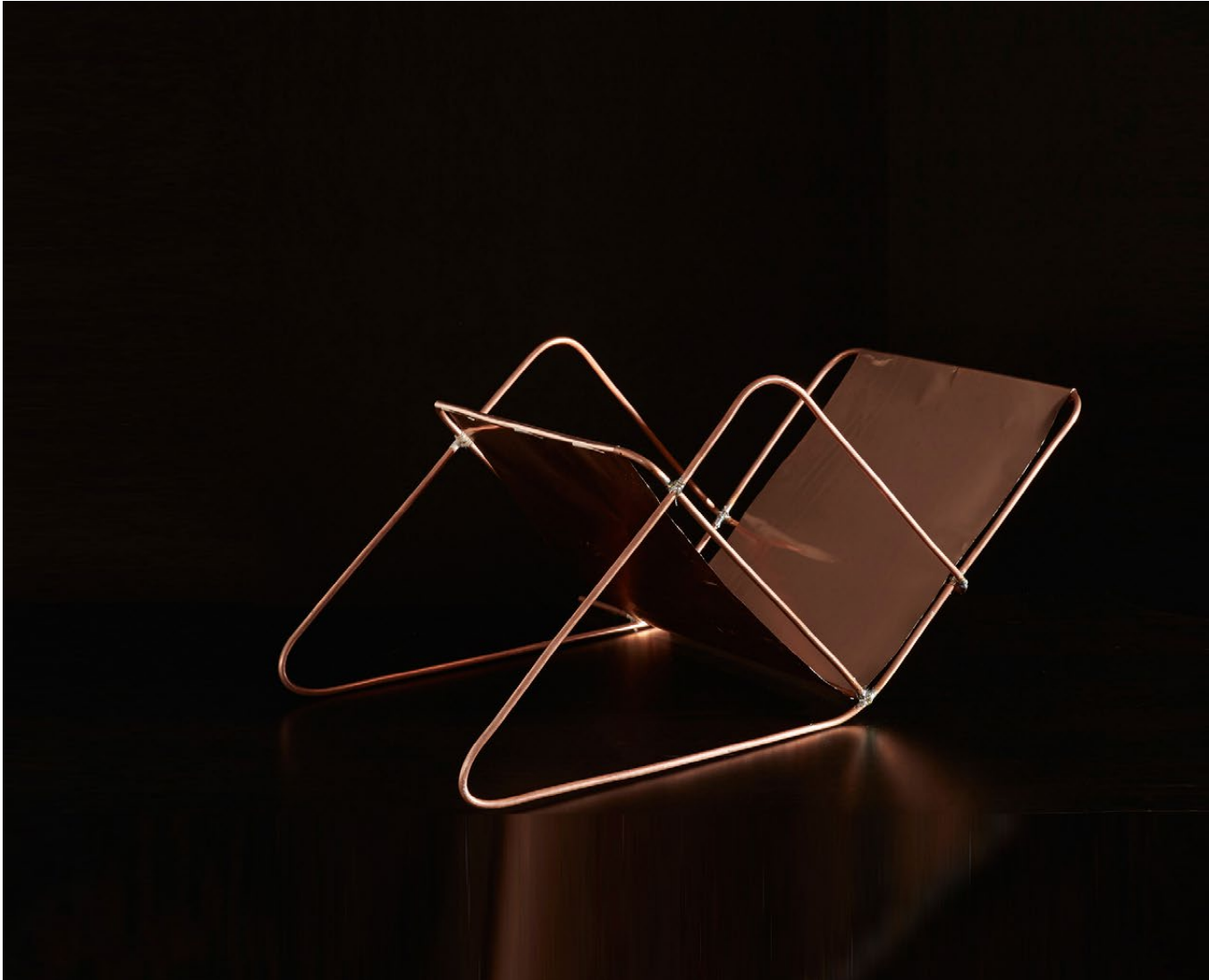
from bedlam but does not actually cross the annihilative threshold. When an ecosystem is poised at criticality, the trick is to harness the power of small agitations that occur immediately before ruin to alter the composition of the system without completely decimating it. In a sense, criticality could be a superlative evolutionary fix for dominions that need to balance resilience with adaptability.

Recognizing and repurposing the ripples of criticality, while utilizing traditionally female values like parity, nurturing and cooperation can bring new wisdom.

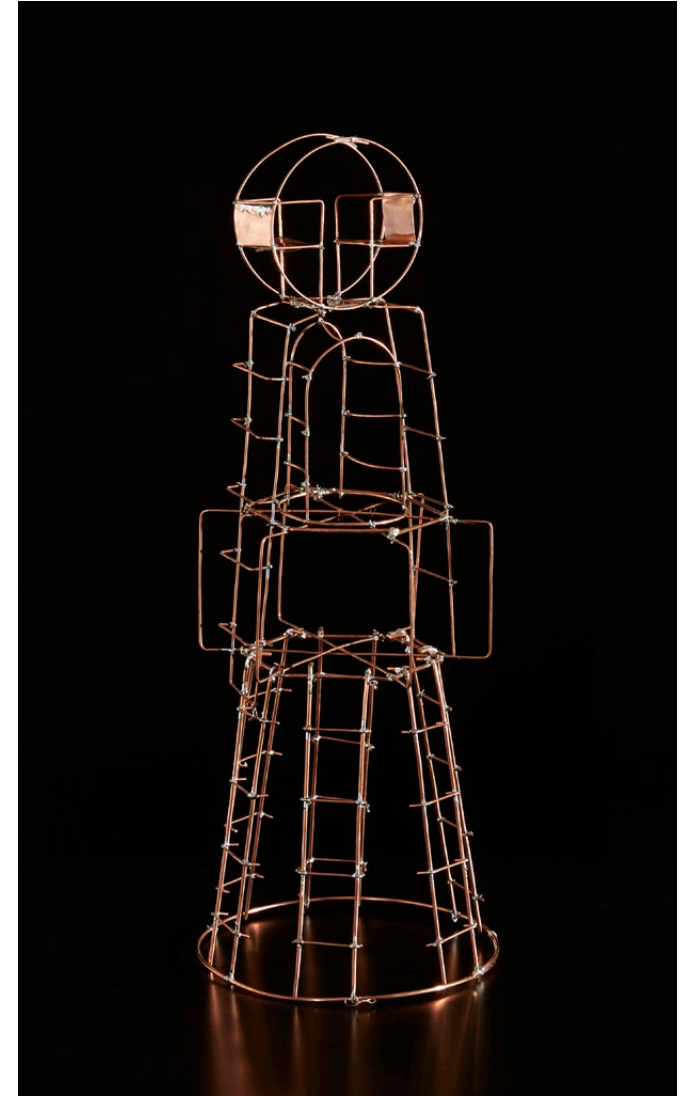
In the exhibition, LaToya Ruby Frazier presents an autobiographical and highly personal video, which documents illnesses that she and her mother suffer caused by the systematic industrial pollution of their Pennsylvania town. The sculpture of Gianluca Malgeri resembles utopian architectural models, and are based on his investigation of the Lithuanian symbolist painter/composer, Mykalojus Konstantinas Ciurlionis whose work bears the elegy of nature and principle of synesthesia. Audra Vau’s video and photographic series examine her intimate relationship with a local, post-agricultural Lithuanian landscape in which the strain between a community’s natural resources and its reliant inhabitants is palpable.



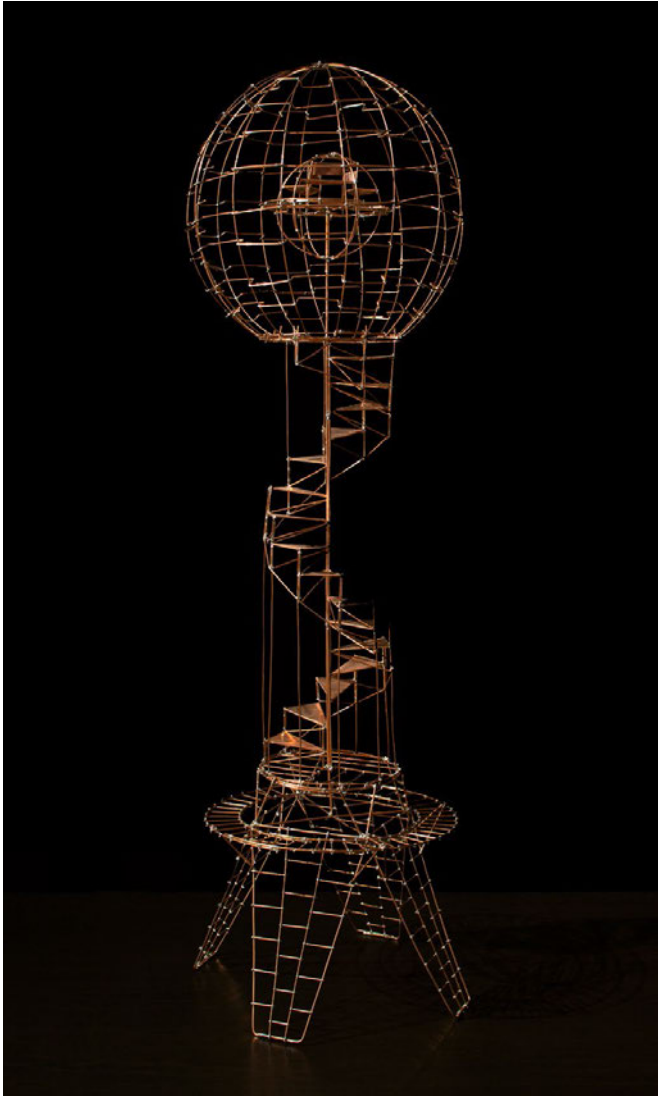
- Exhibition view



Ciurlionis, 2015
copper, soldering
125 x 80 x 80 cm



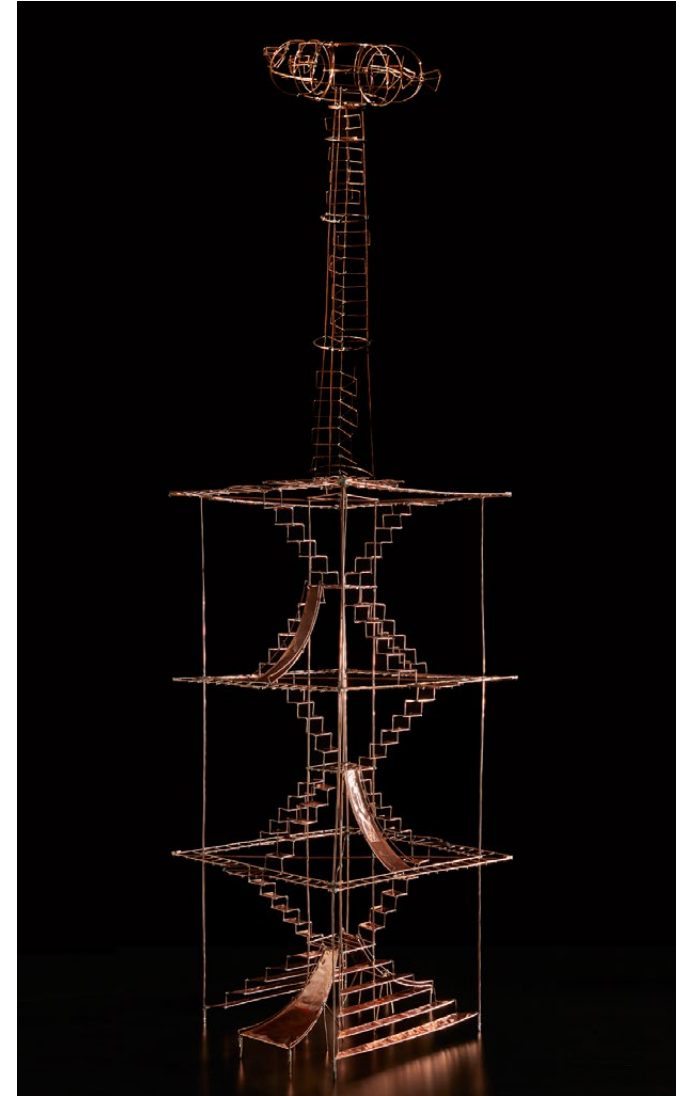
Expelled from Paradise #11, 2015
copper, soldering
70 x 20 x 20 cm



Expelled from Paradise #4, 2015
copper, soldering
122 x 32 x 32 cm



Expelled from Paradise #8, 2015
copper, soldering
258 x 70 x 70 cm



Expelled from Paradise #3, 2015
copper, soldering
230 x 60 x 60 cm



Expelled from Paradise #7, 2015

copper, soldering
150 x 74 x 74 cm



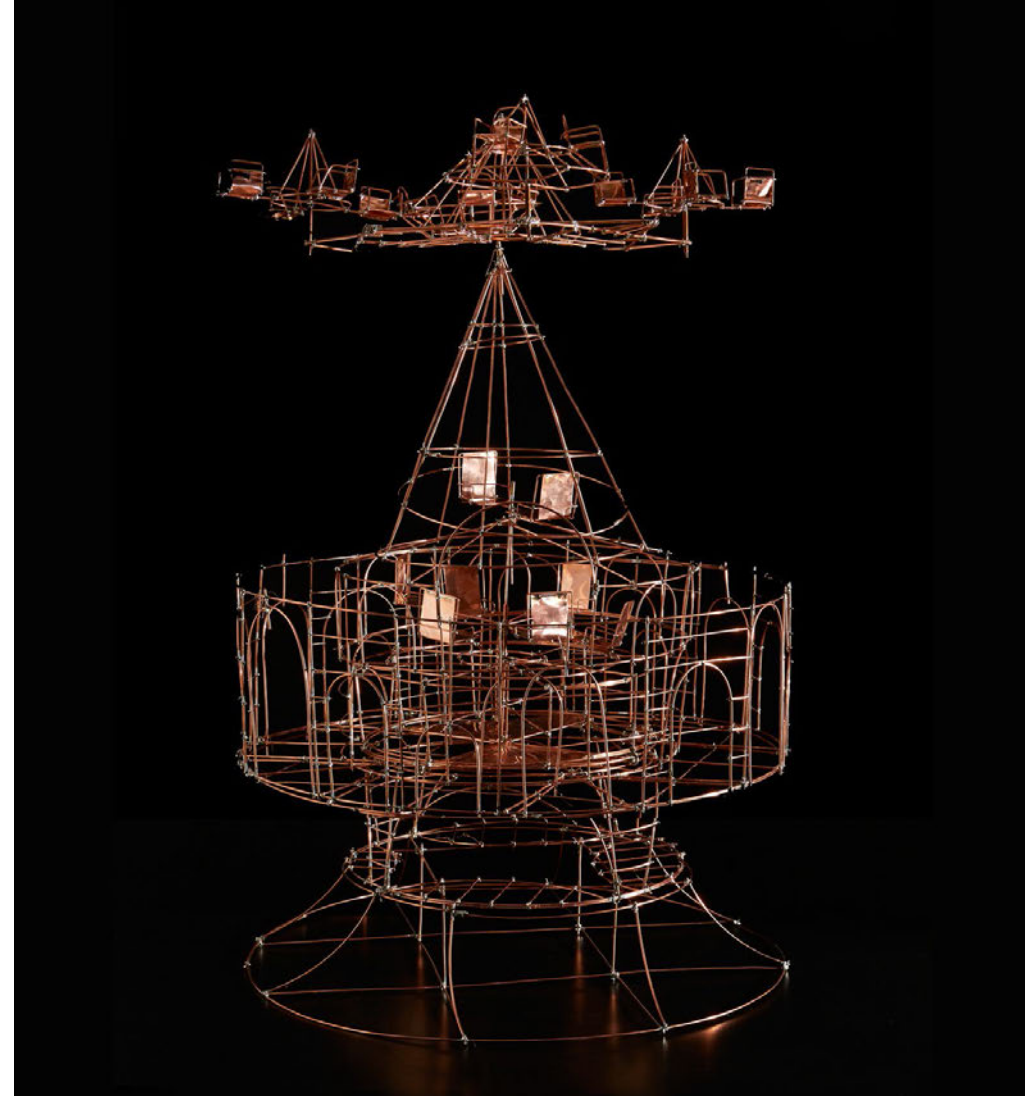
Expelled from Paradise #2, 2015

copper, soldering
150 x 74 x 74 cm



Expelled from Paradise #5, 2015

copper, soldering
160 x 25 x 100 cm



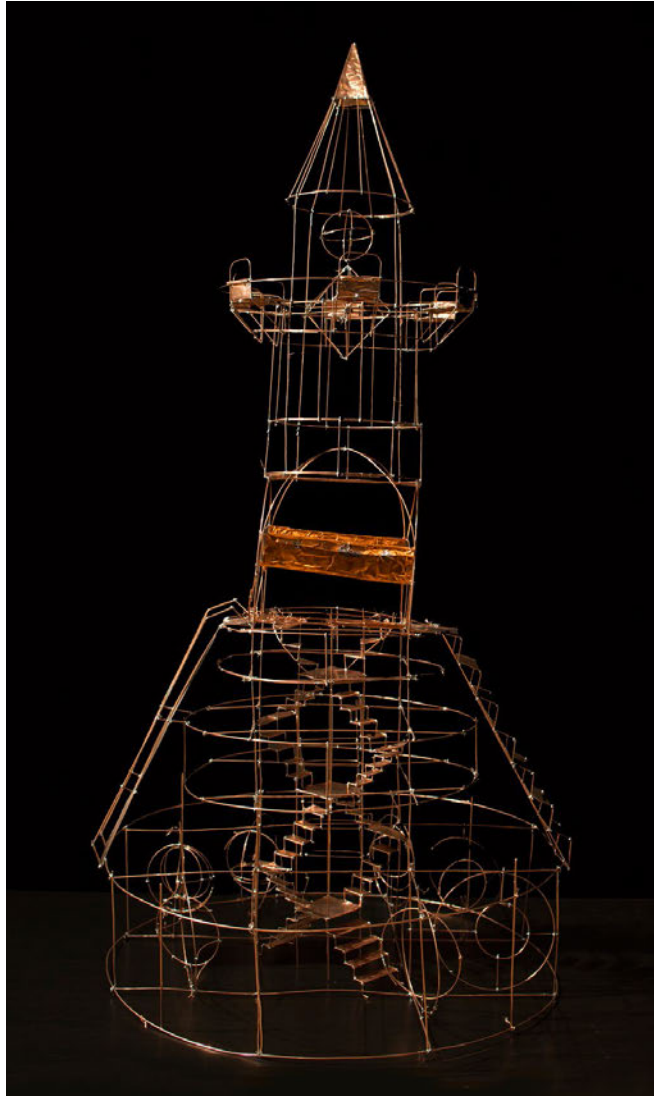
Expelled from Paradise #10, 2015

copper, soldering
125 x 80 x 80 cm



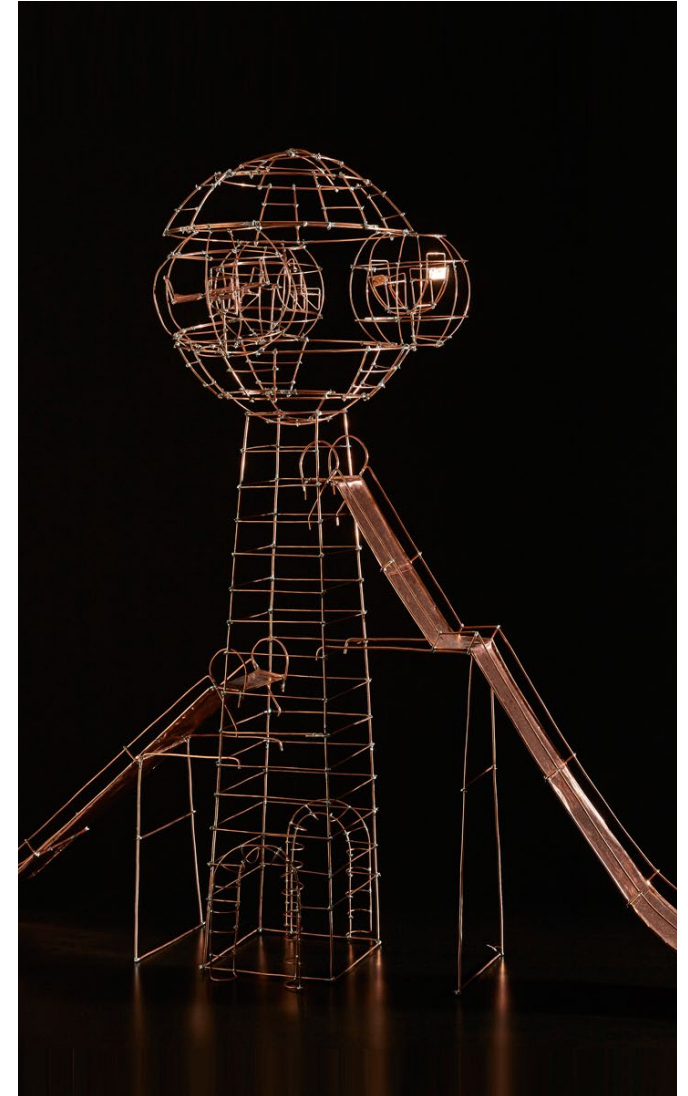
Expelled from Paradise #9, 2015

copper, soldering
230 x 50 x 50 cm



Expelled from Paradise #1, 2015

copper, soldering
160 x 74 x 74 cm

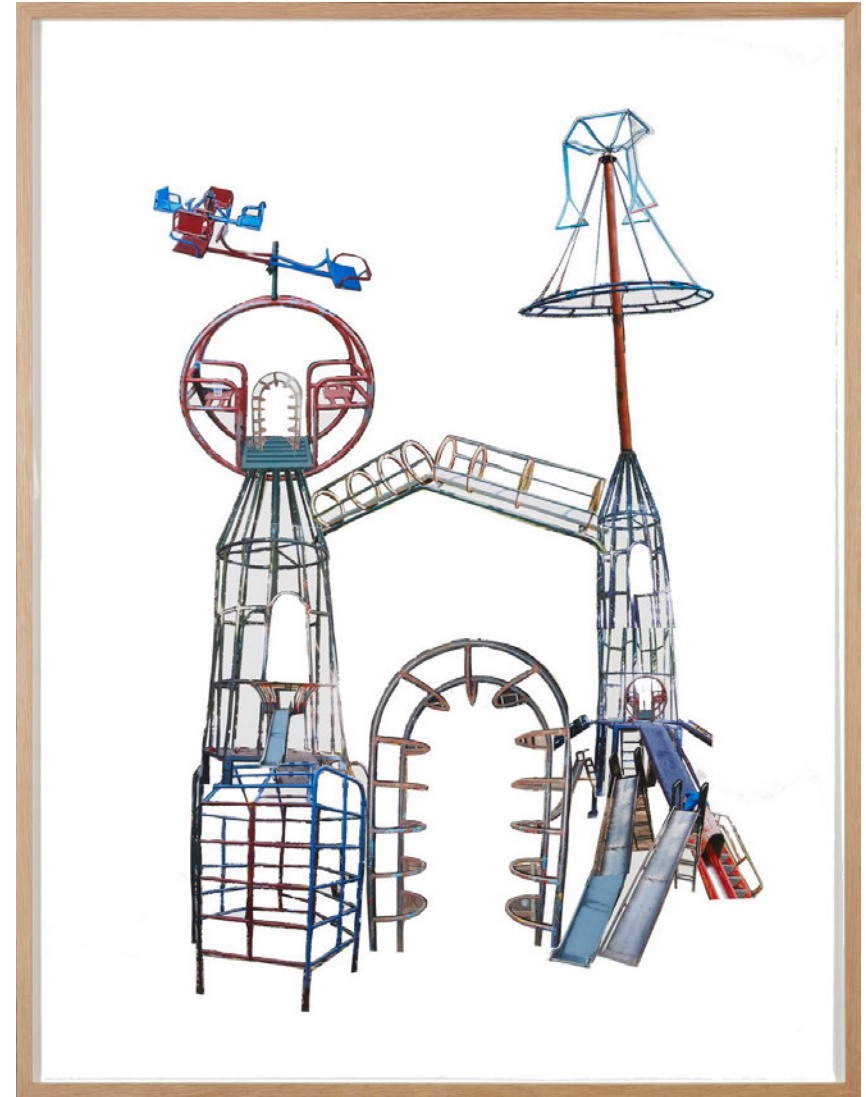


Expelled from Paradise #6, 2015

copper, soldering
115 x 130 x 30 cm



Dvynys, 2015
collage on paper
75 x 60 cm



Balansas, 2015
collage on paper
104 x 80 cm



Skorpionas, 2015
collage on paper
104 x 80 cm




Balansas 2015
collage on paper
104 x 80 cm

SONNABEND, 15. AUGUST 2015 | WWW.TAGESSPIEGEL.DE

DER TAGESSPIEGEL

MEHR BERLIN

VIER SEITEN KUNST, POLITIK UND STADTGEFÜHLE



Recht: Arina Endo

DIE KUNST

Im **Spiele-Land**. Vor zwei Jahren stieß Gianluca Malgeri bei einer Indienreise auf Spielplätze, deren Gerüste in Deutschland kein TÜV durchgehen lassen würde. Der Bildhauer war begeistert, fotografierte sie und nahm sie auf in sein künstlerisches Repertoire. Wieder in Berlin, wo er seit 2004 lebt, begann er die Klettergerüste, Rutschen und Schaukeln in miniature aus Kupfer nachzubauen und zu kombinieren – bis abenteuerliche Architekturen entstanden. Die Technik hat er im Atelier von Olafur Eliasson gelernt, für den er bis 2008 als Assistent tätig war.

der frei Otto Schüler und Architekt Einar Thorstein brachte sie ihm dort bei. Das Ergebnis ist eine Spielzeug-Stadt, eine Città dei Balocchi, wie sie in Carmelo Bene's Darstellung des „Pinocchio“ vorkommt. Für Malgeri hat Berlin den Charakter einer solchen Stadt der Trüme für Künstler – mit der Gefahr, nicht zu erwachen. Wir zeigen eine Collage der in Indien fotografierten Elemente.

DER KÜNSTLER

Gianluca Malgeri, 41, führte der Zufall nach Berlin, die Einladung zu einer Ausstellungs- teilnahme – und er blieb. Hier findet der aus Kalabrien stammende Bildhauer, der in Florenz und Venedig Kunst studiert hat, das Material für seine Installationen und Skulpturen. Für eine Ausstellung in der Italienischen Botschaft baute er aus Zweigen des Tiergartens Geweihe nach, die an Daphnes Verwundung aus Ovids „Metamorphosen“ erinnern sollten. Aus abgerissenen Kohlelefen konstruiert der Künstler zauberische, von innen leuchtende Skulpturen. Oder er setzt als fortlaufendes Projekt Glasurmrein in Einmachsalächer ein, die sich noch aus dem Zweiten Weltkrieg an Häuserfassaden befinden. Malgeri bezeichnet sich selbst scherzhaft als „Pseudo-Archäologe“, entsprechend gehört das Pergamonmu- seum zu seinen Lieblingsmuseen in der Stadt.

NK

Land of toys, 2015
– Cultural supplement
of the Der Tagesspiegel
(15 August 2015)

Homo Ludens

Text by
Christoph Sehl

November 20, 2015 – January 30, 2016
Magazzino, Rome

The most frustrating thing about the spectacle (in Guy Debord's sense of the term) is that it cannot be betrayed or deceived; the spectacle deceives and betrays us. A psychoanalyst once described the problem as an interactive ambivalence, in as much as we criticise power while forgetting our identity with it. In here lies the difficulty of handling the evaluation of several perspectives on a single object, or maybe the difficulty of coming to terms with paradoxes. At the end of 2015 a remarkable show was held at Galleria Magazzino in Rome, titled 'homo ludens'; an exhibition of artworks by Arina Endo and Gianluca Malgeri. They met in early 2015 and did a first exhibition, 'Edge of Chaos'. Their cooperation appears as a wonderful coincidence and their artworks are a correlation in the best sense. Consequently, they came up with the ideas of 'homo ludens' revolving around the figure of Pinocchio.

At first glance we might find in 'homo ludens' a common art exhibition in which the title presents a metaphor for the status of artists in a more or less wide context with the term 'homo ludens' referring to several cultural theories in which the position of art in society is well defined. And in some respects, such assumptions are not entirely wrong. Endo and Malgeri had engaged in a similar approach while doing artistic research on their surroundings, particularly their Berlin environment - to do whatever they wanted to do plus an additional insignificance, or in other words, agony. But 'homo ludens' went one step further through inverting the gaze...

The effect of changing the point of view is not only to obtain a different perspective on the same phenomenon, rather to receive a different thing. That is to say, it is not about technically changing one's location in space for adding certain quantitative, geometrical, measurable, aspects. In this sense, doing an installation which reflects on childhood would be tantamount to inventing childhood, i.e. the classical method of othering. As such, othering is a kind of projection far from what the thing itself is. However, seen differently changing the point of view can alter things in their quality.

Through stepping outside permanent self-referentiality, one can reinvent the ways of acting beyond convention, bias and prejudice.

Through his work 'homo ludens' Gianluca Malgeri shows us the possibility of a radical shifting between different standpoints as well as the possibility of a standpoint itself. The huge statue of Pinocchio is built with soldered copper. Like a see-through lattice work, we can see the backside of the figure and what lies behind it. Inside the body - inside the limbs, belly or the head - Malgeri has constructed a scattered world of stairs, carousels, spiral slides, jungle gyms and seesaws: the anatomy of Pinocchio is a playground, the 'land of toys' - a promised utopia of good but failed good deeds.

The most remarkable part of the sculpture is the nose, the famous nose of Pinocchio. In Carlo Collodi's novel, the wooden nose grows every time Pinocchio lies. '... the disappearance of the nose is the moment of his surrender to obedience', writes Carmelo Bene as quoted by Gianluca Malgeri. At one point in his discussion of Pinocchio, Bene chops the nose off. This was his special way of alluding to the social order. Malgeri now reverses this. He exaggerates the nose, builds an oversized version: it is as big as the whole body. Here, we go beyond obedience, and the social order is cancelled. We find Pinocchio on the other side of the border and see him as the 'heroic refusal of growing up' (Bene). He is not gentle or handsome; he is beyond the idea of naïveté and juvenility; he is not the object of education anymore; he is the evil child

whose possibility we always try to ignore. At least, this Pinocchio is a rebellion against the adult point of view, against social order, against power - maybe a way of going beyond the 'spectacle'.

Through opening up this playground Malgeri produces a wonderful metaphor for the very complicated way of thinking in other heads and for the evaluation of the simultaneity and contrariety of different perspectives. We can find ways for refusing to belong to a single idea and a single culture. We can combine two or more things not rationally connected in the logic of the social order. Hence, the switch is not only from one perspective to another; it is from one to many.

This, he works out in several sculptures in soldered copper and in prints that combine the motifs of playground in montaged images. The parts are not ordered logically, as rationality would have it. They are built one into the other; we are confronted with complex structures which cannot be assembled and made into a single totality.

'Homo ludens' means a kind of self-conception of a world where the construction of the gaze cannot escape self-evidence or the social order. However, it is not a direct disobedience either, it is the turning of the gaze within dispersion and in the aftermaths of plurality.

It would be too easy to suggest that this 'land of toys' is the end of history or one can find the ultimate goal in it. Malgeri and Endo are aware of this in as much as they know what agony means. This is because they come from the world of endless playing, the 'land of toys'; it is because they have done this paradoxical reflection on artist's life.

Endo constructs a small sculpture – City of Dice. It consists of a shelf attached to the wall and covered with a layer of sand. On the sand, she places a pile of handmade, rigged, loam-

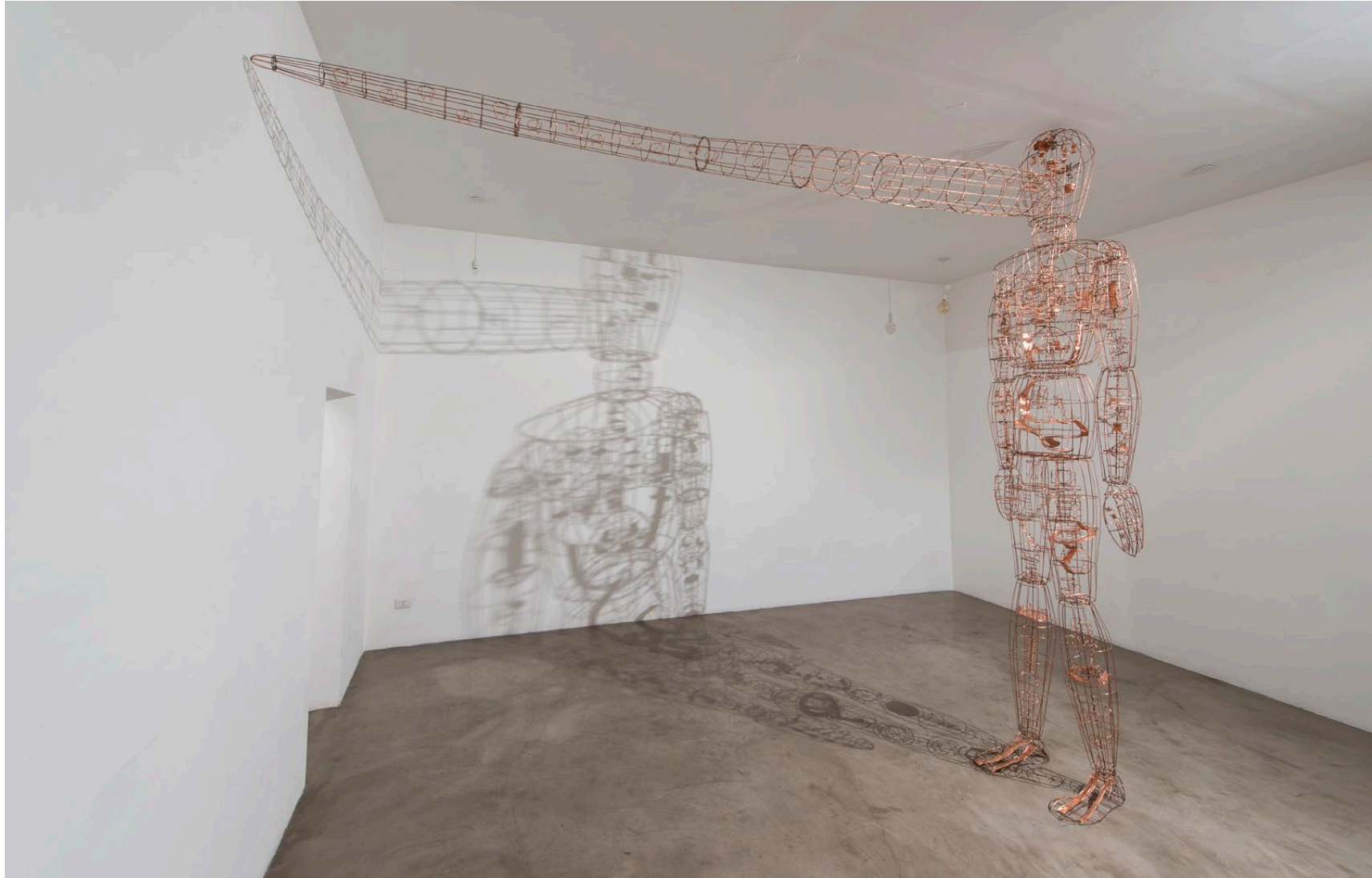
dices. The whole thing is very small. It is a projected image of a city, an oasis in the midst of desert, maybe a fata morgana, a mirage – beyond judging whether it is desirable or not, itself a deceit bringing together cause and effect. It is also the world of all random things heaped on us: tomorrow the throw of dice is different. It is an image of our sophisticated prison in which possibilities seem endless and limited at the same time.

In this sense, Malgeri's subject – Pinocchio – is the beginning of projecting the multitude of perspectives and the necessity of discussing their continuation. He builds up arguments, theses. His Pinocchio produces an endless number of them. We can never reproduce a view on this sculpture identical to our previous. The installed formal multiplicity aims at denying social, political and historical representation.

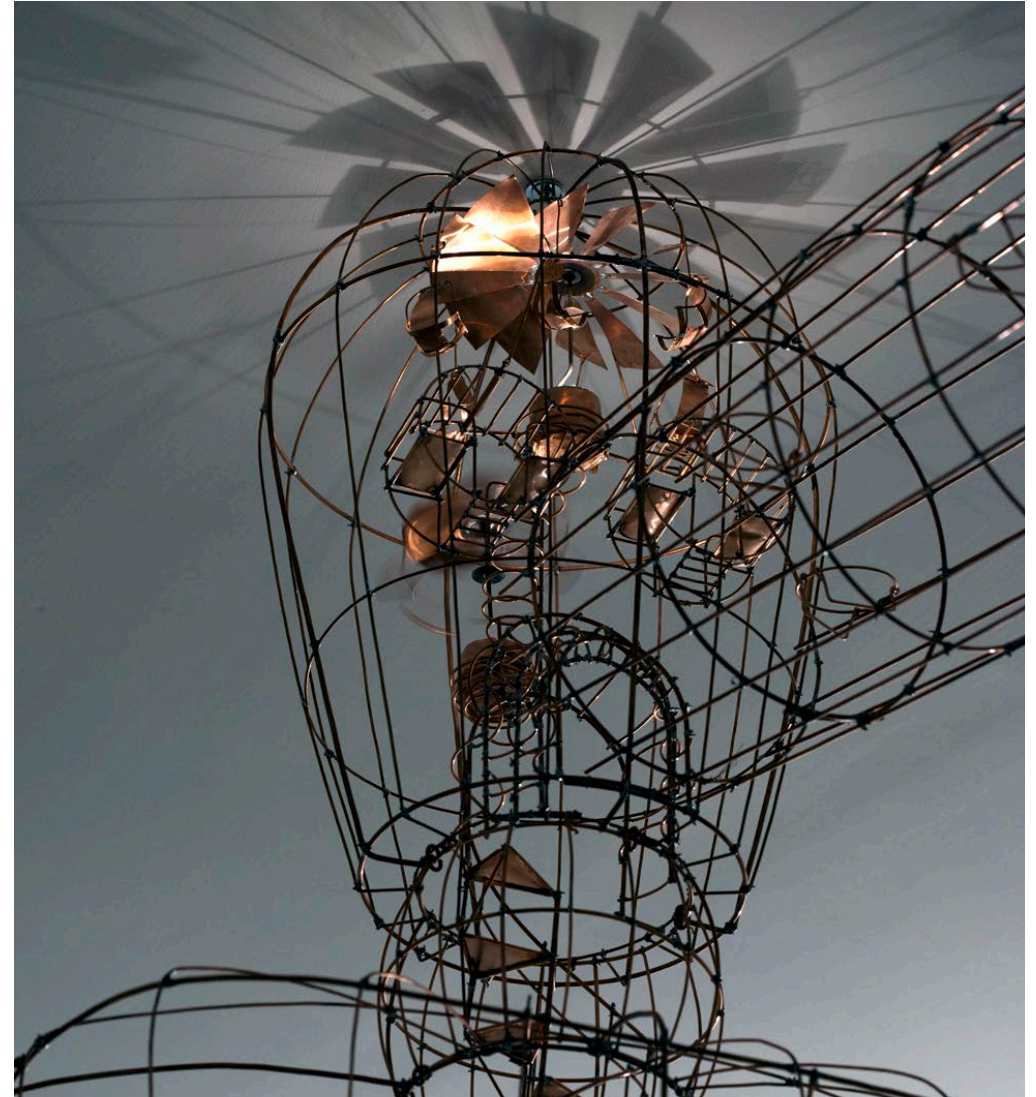
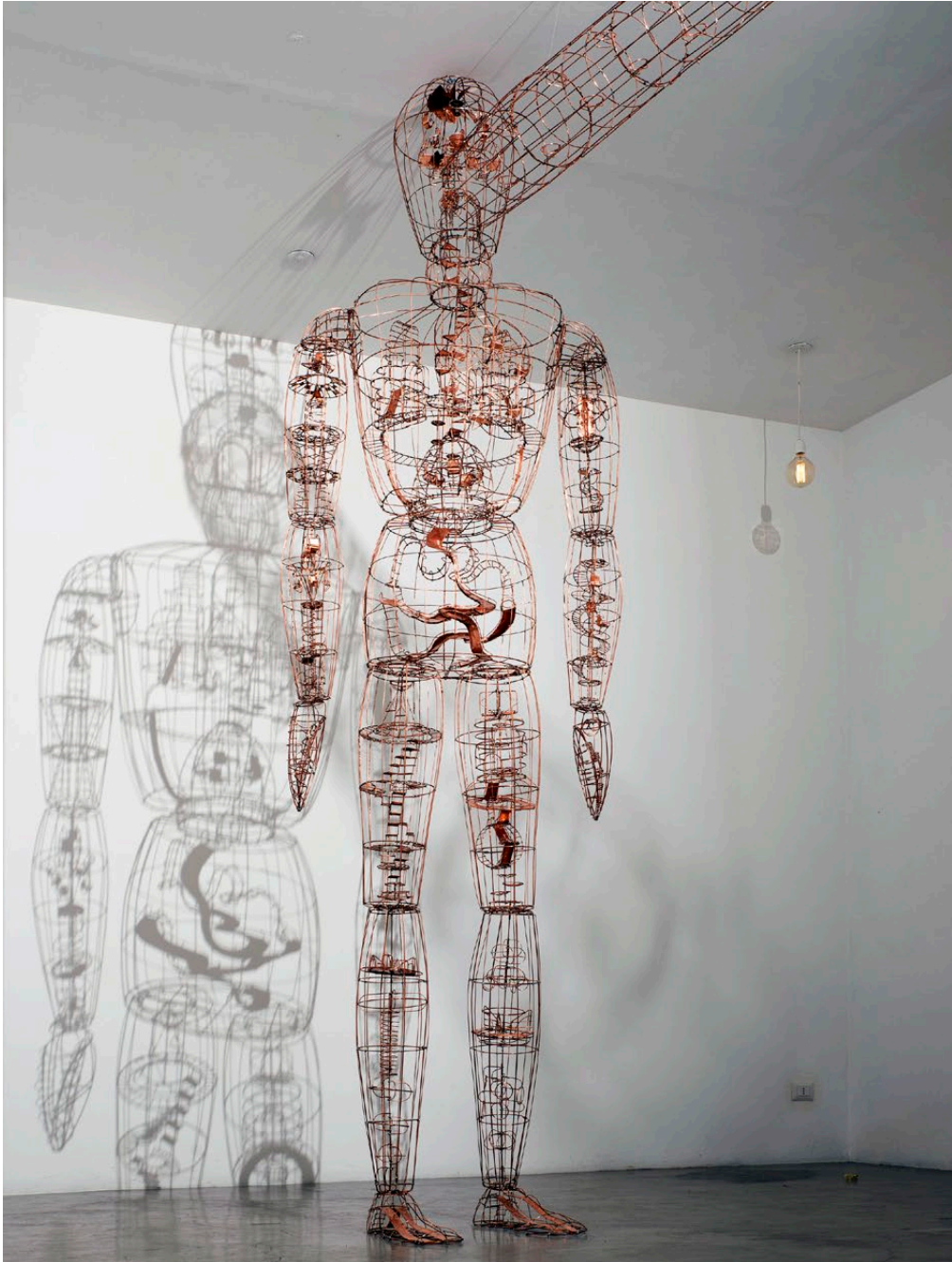
'Homo ludens' is bound to a double-minded structure. Inside, there is the definition of the body internalising the 'land of toys'; on the outside, a nose growing to an enormous size. Either way, the borderlines remain unclear. Although Pinocchio is lying, the 'land of toys' cannot be taken from him. An incomprehensible reality turns real.

If we now remove wishes and desires from Pinocchio's thinking in order to make him a normal human being with flesh and bone, the different perspectives would be flattened down. If we enter the spectacle through the backdoor we realise there is no way out and the status of this prison shifts from a matter of fact to a state of mind ('The City of Dice'). This means we can act directly with ideology – not only with the surfaces of power.

All in all one must not claim that the place of artist within society is that of person who affirms and lies at the same time. This would be too simplistic. Arina Endo's and Malgeri's concept of Pinocchio indicates this continual contradiction through creation of exquisite artworks.



- Exhibition view



Senza Nome, 2015
copper, soldering
347 x 100 x 300 cm



- Exhibition view



Arina Endo

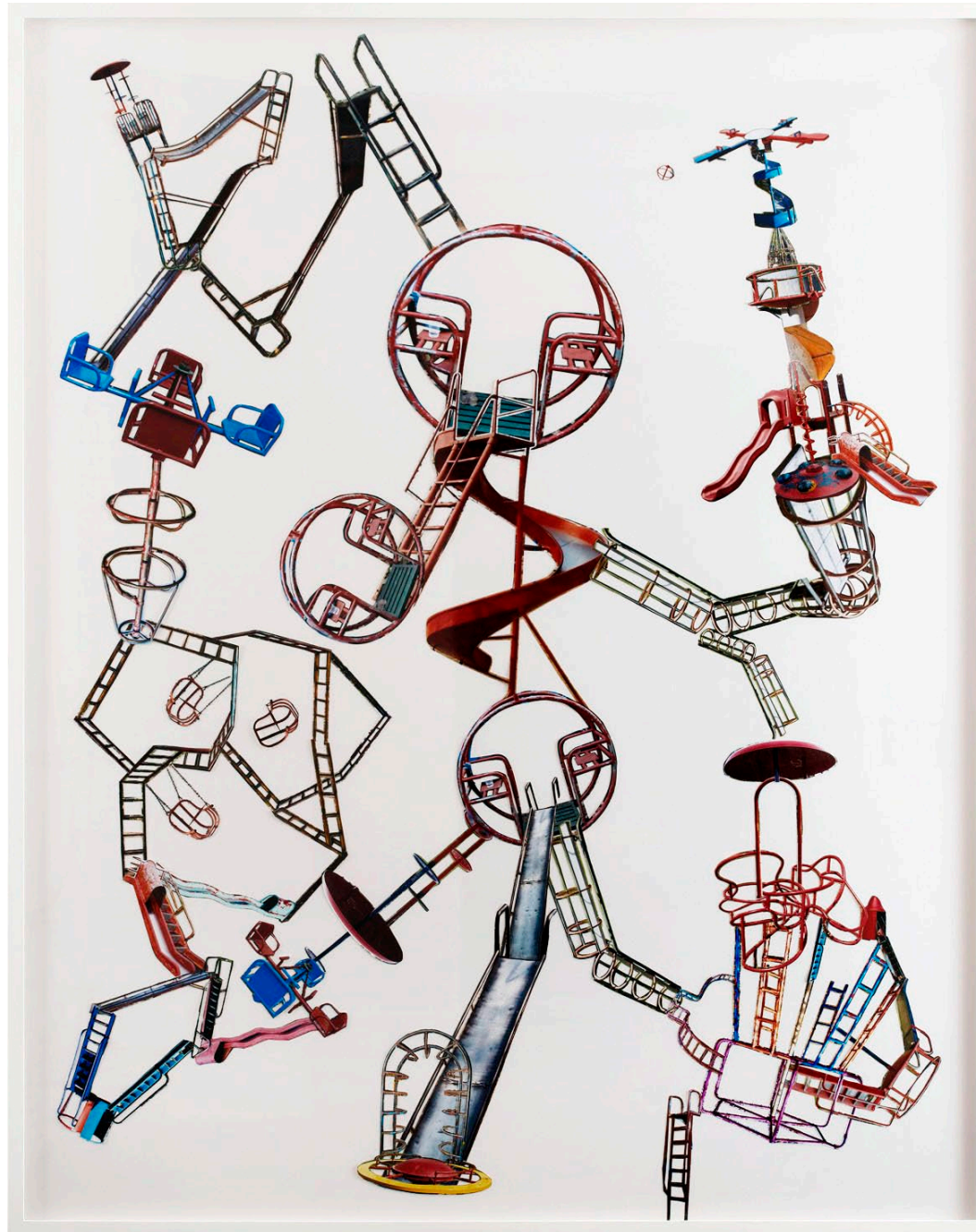
Pianta Psichica, 2015

dry leaves on paper

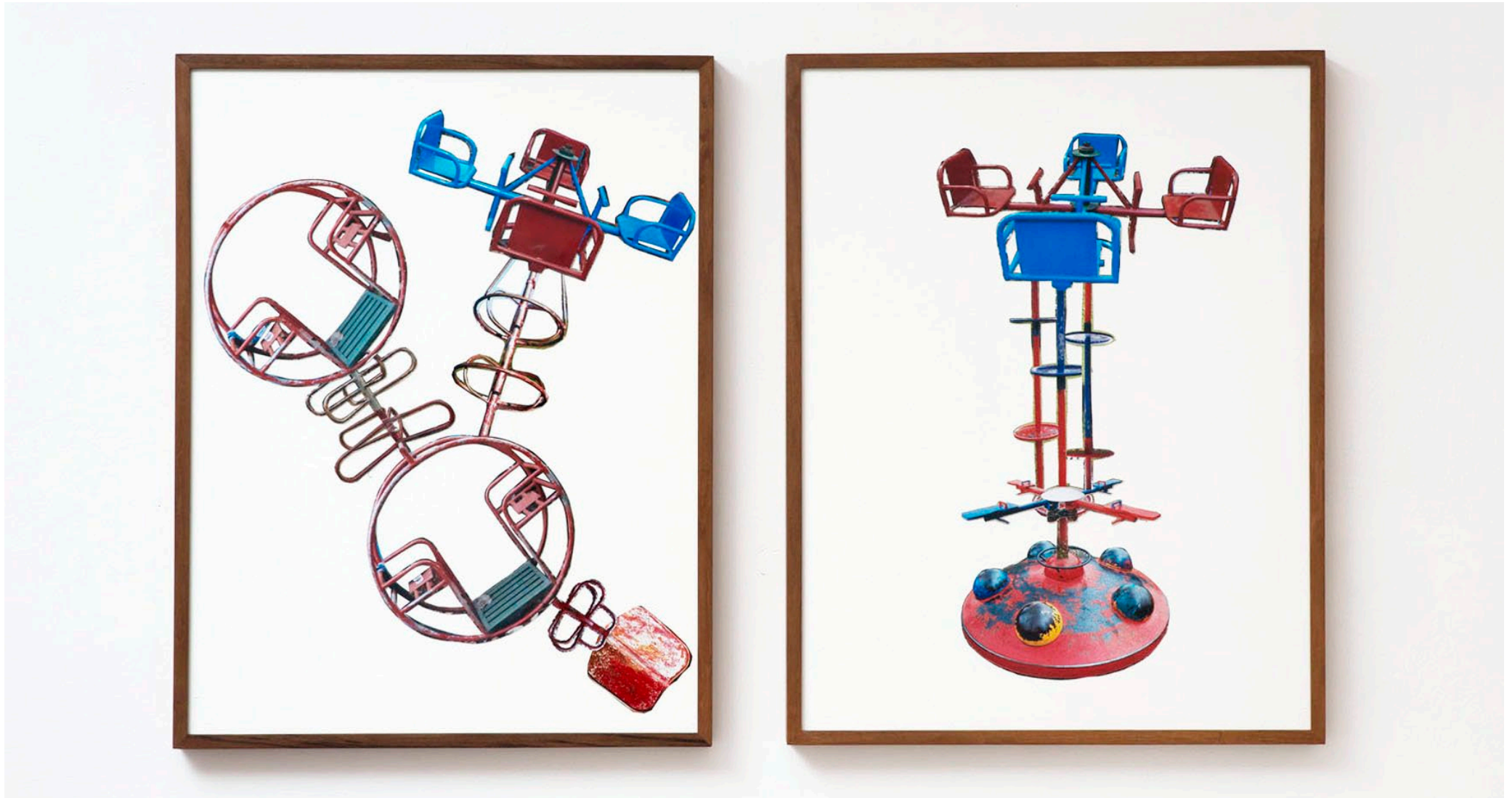
two elements, each 74 x 53,5 cm



Arina Endo
Municipio sul Miraggio, 2015
wood, sand, terracotta
28 x 28 x 10 cm



Sogno del Sonnambulo, 2015
collage on paper
158 x 128 cm



Città dei balocchi , 2015
collage on paper
two elements, each 54,4 x 42,5 cm

Mery-Go-Round

Text by
Lindsay Webb

March 23 – April 21, 2019
AYUMI GALLERY CAVE, Tokyo

Mery-Go-Round is a playful collection of collages and delicate copper sculptures by Gianluca Malgeri and Arina Endo. It imagines a multiplicative landscape of outmoded playground equipment, reconfigured into a series of prototypical, self-questioning artworks. The artists are Italian and Japanese respectively, and the approach they have chosen exposes both the ethical and idealistic dimensions of cross-cultural collaboration. That they converge on the subject of playgrounds offers the chance to overlay notions of social conditioning with those of a shared, non-cultural *a priori*.

The works on exhibition follow, quite directly, a line of enquiry from these artists' previous joint exhibition *Homo Ludens* (Rome, 2016), whose title explicitly conjured the primary thematic of humans as creatures of play. The well-regarded treatise of the same name by Dutch theorist Johan Huizinga, first published in 1944, explores the idea of play as a primordial condition, one that precedes culture. Huizinga claims that, because play occurs in the animal world too, it pre-exists our 'humanity', and, moreover, that "human civilisation has added no essential feature to the general idea of play". Being free, temporary but borderless, self-regulating, possessed of its own flexible interior logics, and without material interest or ultimate goals, Huizinga argues that play can provide insight into the great question of purpose that plagues the secular world.

Huizinga's ideas have inspired thinkers and strategists working in fields as disparate as pedagogy, corporate strategy, and computer game design, just as they have consistently captivated artists. Significantly for Mery-Go-Round, the situationist Constant Nieuwenhuys takes up the *Homo Ludens* thesis in his opus *New Babylon*, an encyclopaedic body of work spanning paintings, drawings and quasi-architectural models created between 1959 and 1974. *New Babylon* posits a utopian totalising urbanism (covering the whole Earth) that rejects capitalist oppression of the working classes and embraces play, adventure and mobility. This new metropolitan condition is largely characterised by reconfigurable, multi-density structures wherein post-evolutionary citizens can roam, free to curate their own artistic life whilst at the same time affecting and creating the environment they occupy. It can be conceived as a perpetual play space, and on examining the models and drawings, it is hard to imagine that playground designers of the 1960s and 1970s did not derive inspiration from them.

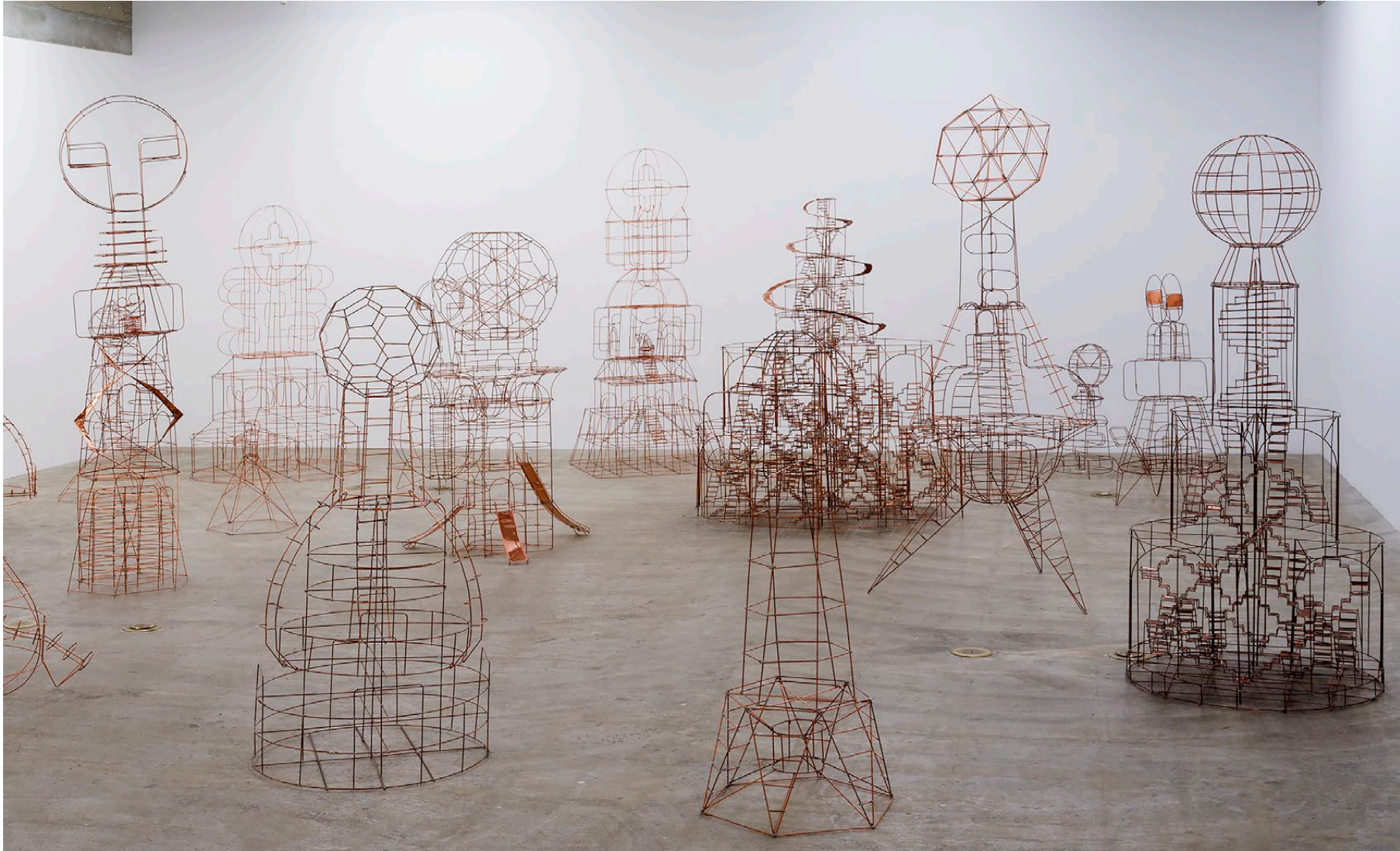
From today's perspective, *New Babylon* was remarkably prophetic. Its promise of a post-industrial, interconnected society has on many levels been enacted. Arguably now everyone is a creator, an influencer, an artist of the self. A life is curated, photographed, filtered, edited, and then re-represented in one's own gallery. Within industrialised nations, there emerges a philosophy that work, the 'old' kind, exists only to support rather than to fundamentally dignify a life. But reality is less egalitarian than Constant imagined – the citizenry of con-

temporary society lack other kinds of autonomy and agency that he portrayed as integral to the self-actualised life. Hyper-surveillance, increasing disparity in resources and wealth, diminishing global tolerance, and locales of permanent war thwart what might be our new Babylon: utopia has broken apart. Mery-Go-Round picks up the pieces, asking “what have we left in the playground – and what is there to salvage?”

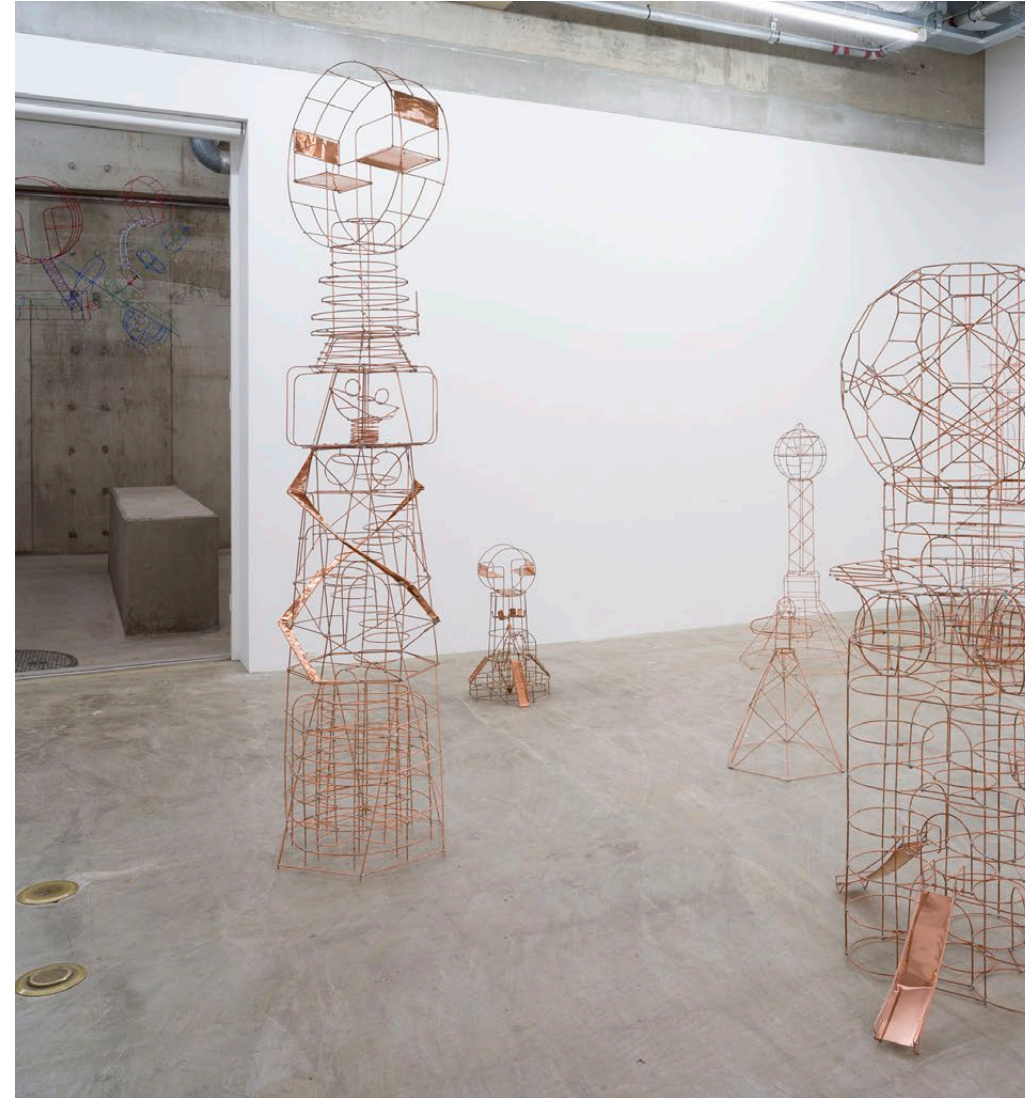
Salvage is a theme deliciously embraced in Mery-Go-Round. Drawings, collages, maquettes and sculptures unfold from the artists’ photo-documentation of playgrounds and playground equipment. Components from Japan, India and North America have been visually archived by the artists before being decommissioned at the rationalising hands of bureaucrats (who are perhaps the obstructive ‘grown-ups’ in Mery-Go-Round’s narrative). Then, plundering their own piecemeal resource, Malgeri and Endo combine the fragments in novel ways, reminding us that there are often more ways to construct one’s daily life than meet the eye, and that it is always possible to merge (pre)cultures, sparking new possibilities of relationship. Their synthesis of material play-structures brings us closer to an idea that we share a common root: in children from any culture, the mind is plastic and relatively unencumbered, existing in a fertile space of experimentation, vivid perception and candid interpretation. The collages in this exhibition, especially, express a childlike dynamism and instinctive action – perspectives warp, scales shift, and forms emerge then reform. This plasticity should be valued and maintained at all costs; petrification is enemy to be resisted, the enemy of play.

The objectives that Malgeri and Endo identified in *Homo Ludens*, they now extend in Mery-Go-Round, addressing anew the ambition of *New Babylon* but on a more discreet and modest scale. Unlike *New Babylon*, Mery-Go-Round dispenses with the grandiose and with the conceit that one idea can structure the world. These are not mega-structures presuming to cover the planet, they are rather anthropomorphic, human-scale, relational structures that themselves seek to dodge and play. They are not waiting for the collapse of capitalism

before getting on with the more important business of the playground. In this space, which is a mindset, we join with each other in schemes frivolous gravity; always a new scene is conceived, another figure is encountered, challenged, absorbed, discarded. Life is ‘just’ a game.



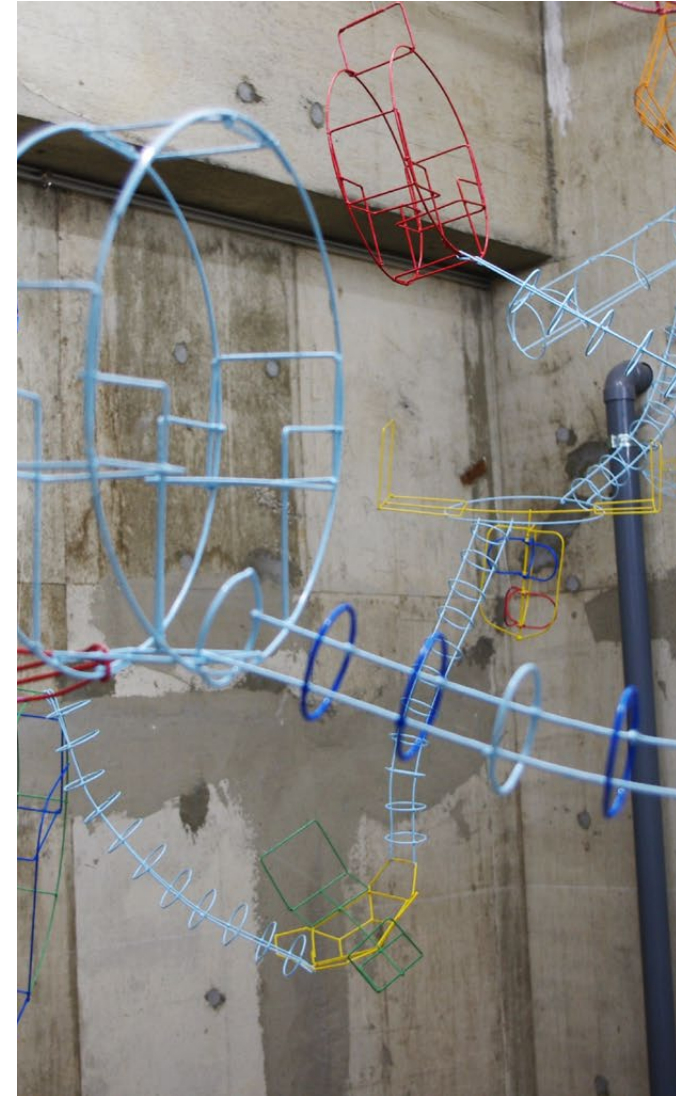
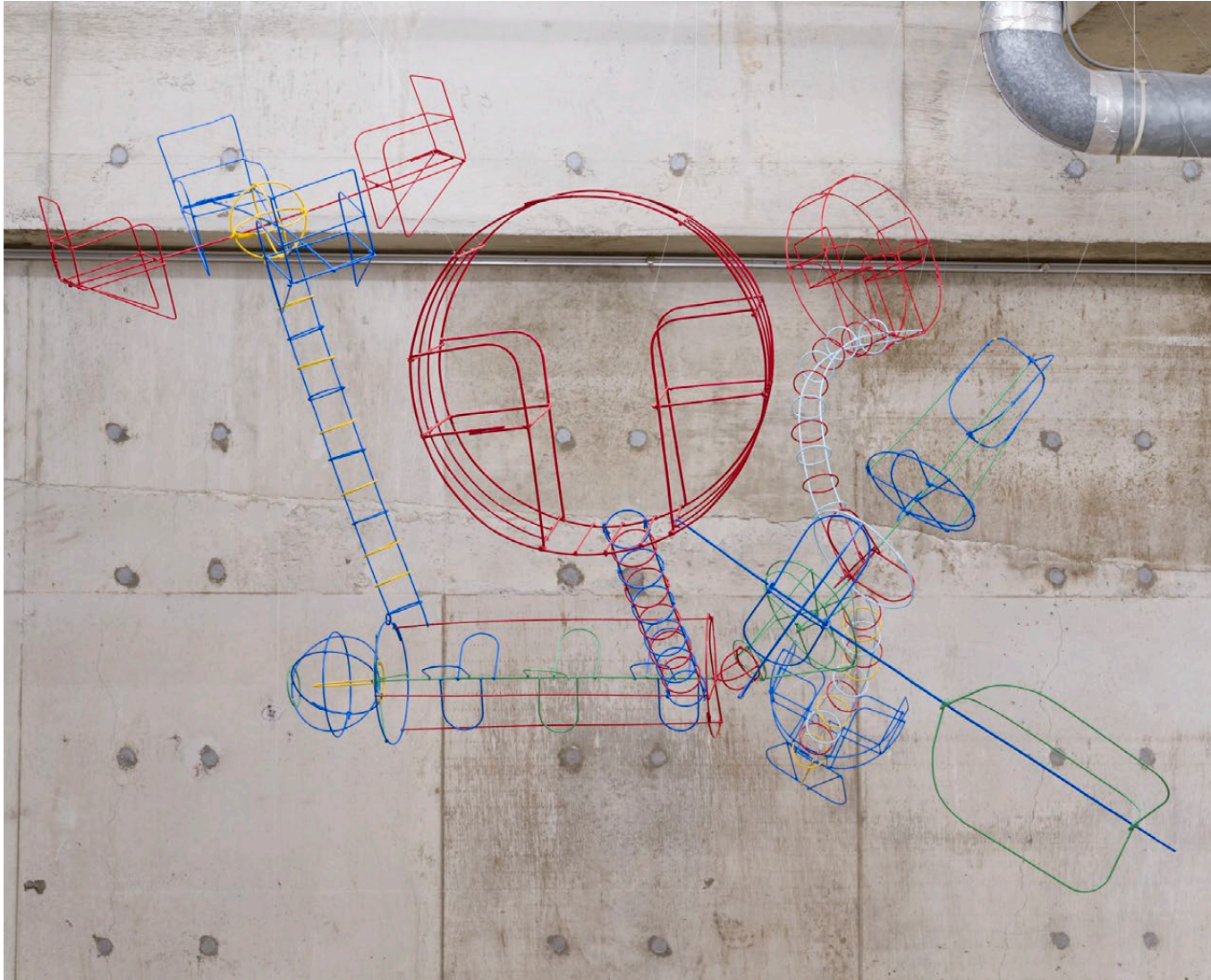
- Exhibition view



- Exhibition view



- Exhibition view



- Exhibition view



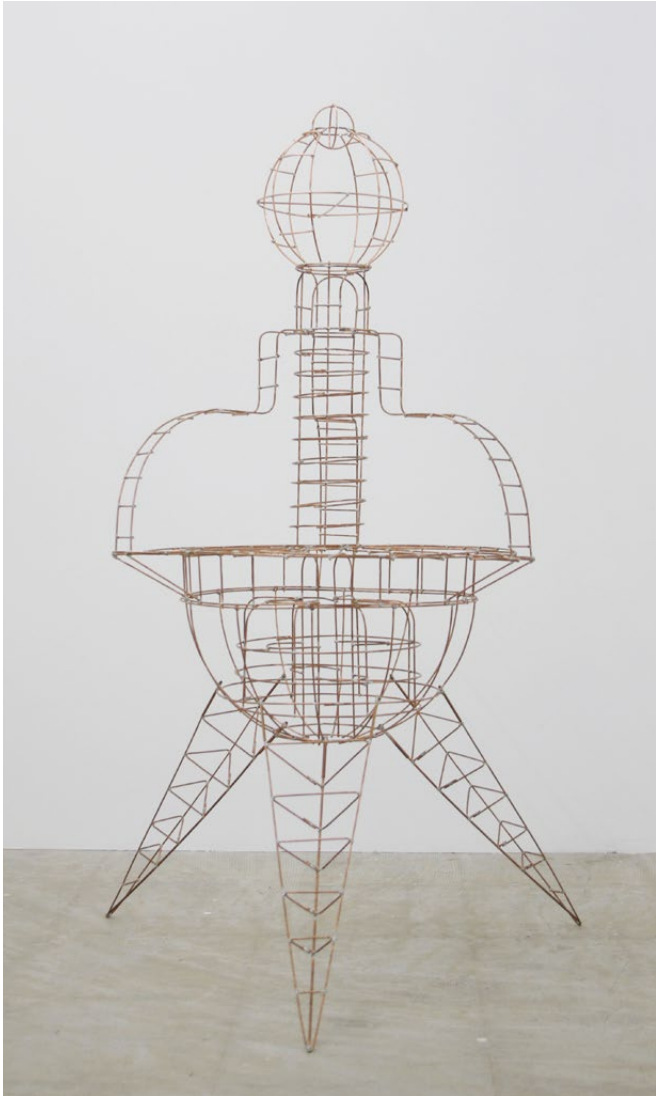
Mery-Go-Round #1, 2019

copper, soldering
102 x 102 x 135 cm



Mery-Go-Round #6, 2019

copper, soldering
80 x 80 x 140 cm



Mery-Go-Round #2, 2019
copper, soldering
65 x 65 x 119 cm



Mery-Go-Round #3, 2019
copper, soldering
61 x 61 x 146 cm



Mery-Go-Round #7, 2019
copper, soldering
60 x 60 x 122 cm



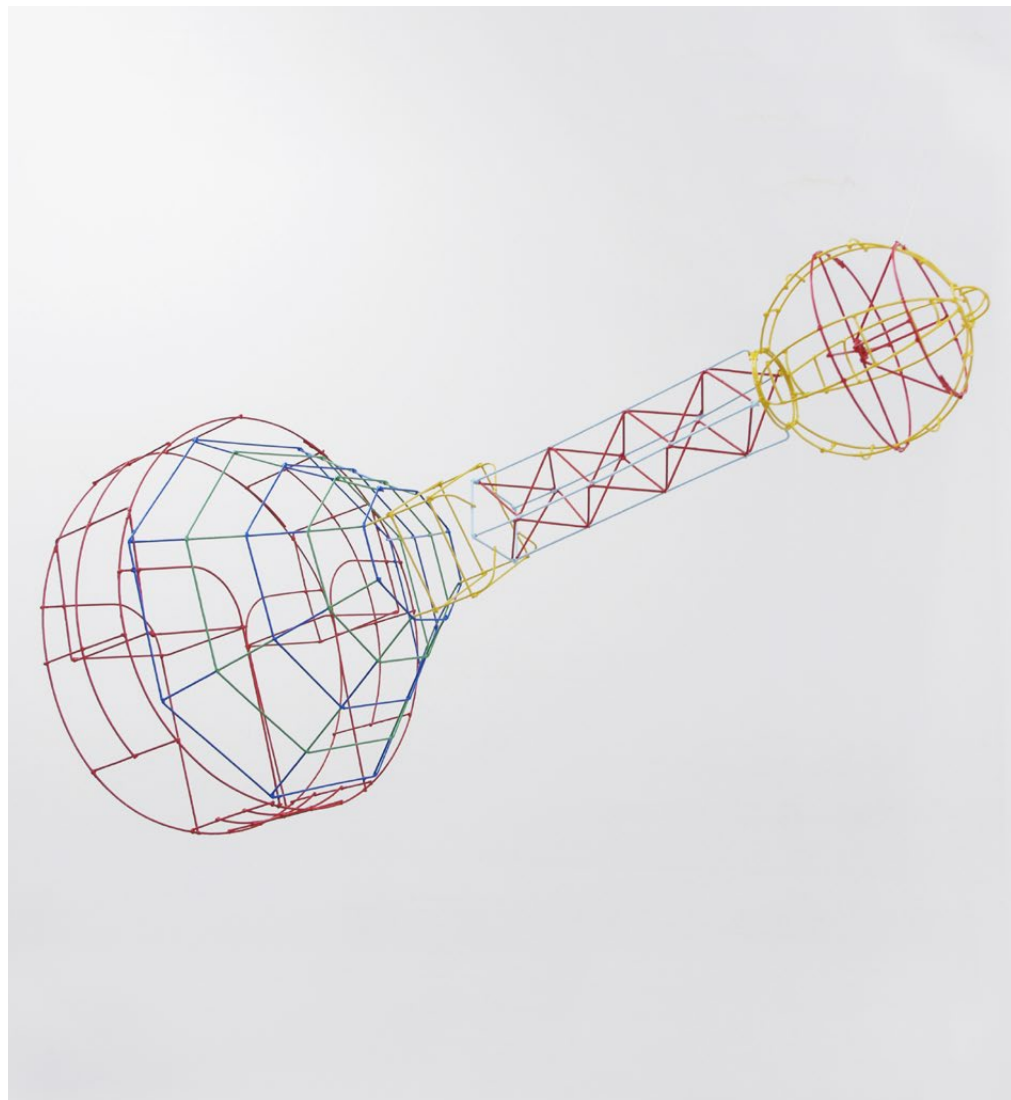
Mery-Go-Round #9, 2019
copper, soldering
41 x 41 x 98 cm



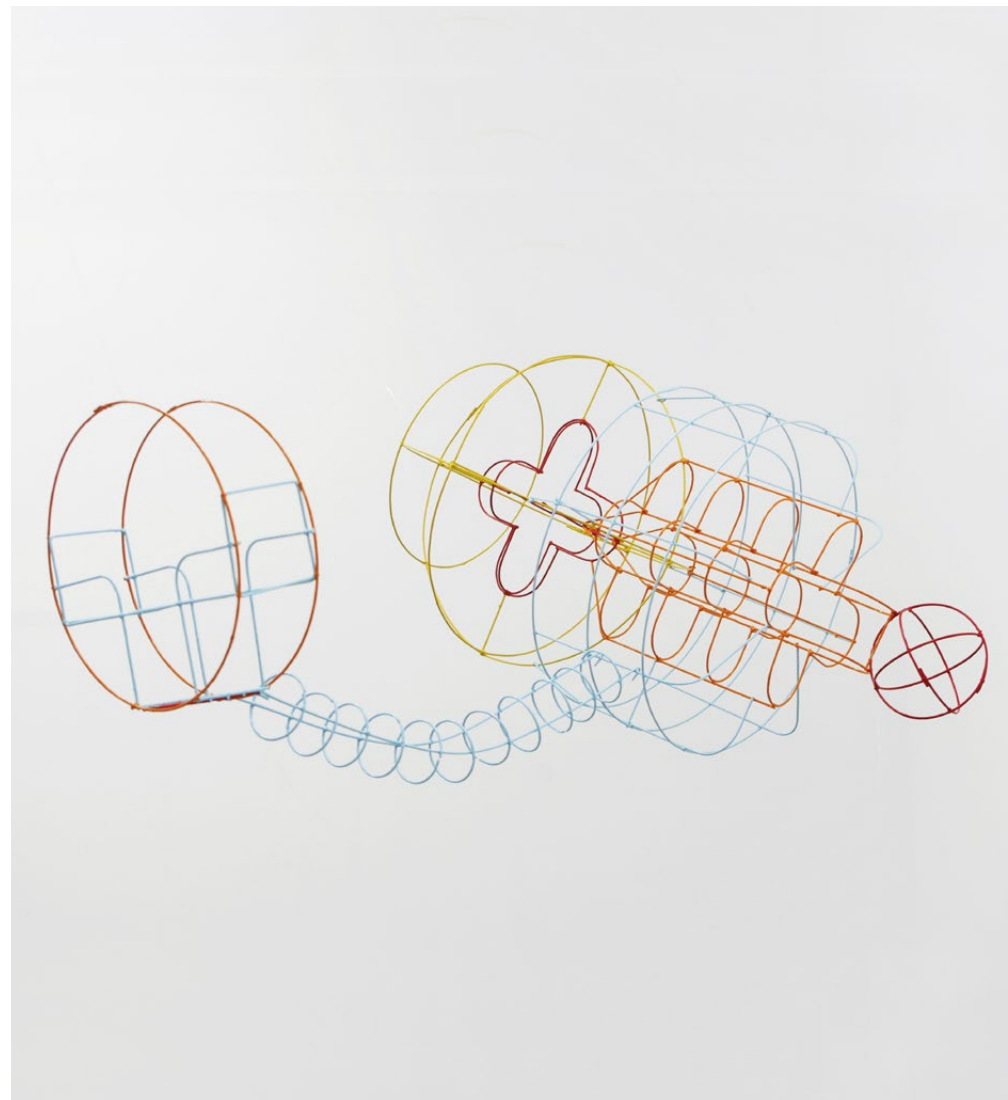
Mery-Go-Round #11, 2019
copper, soldering
40 x 40 x 98 cm



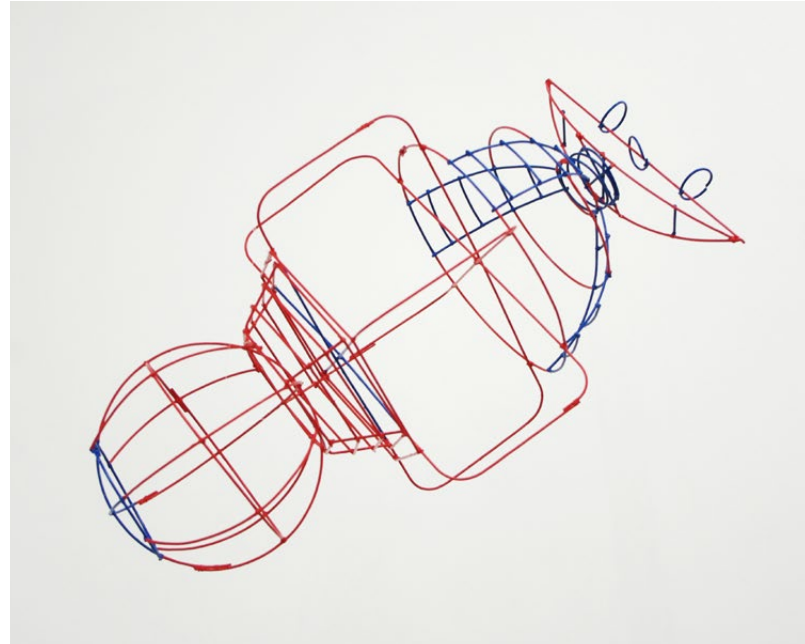
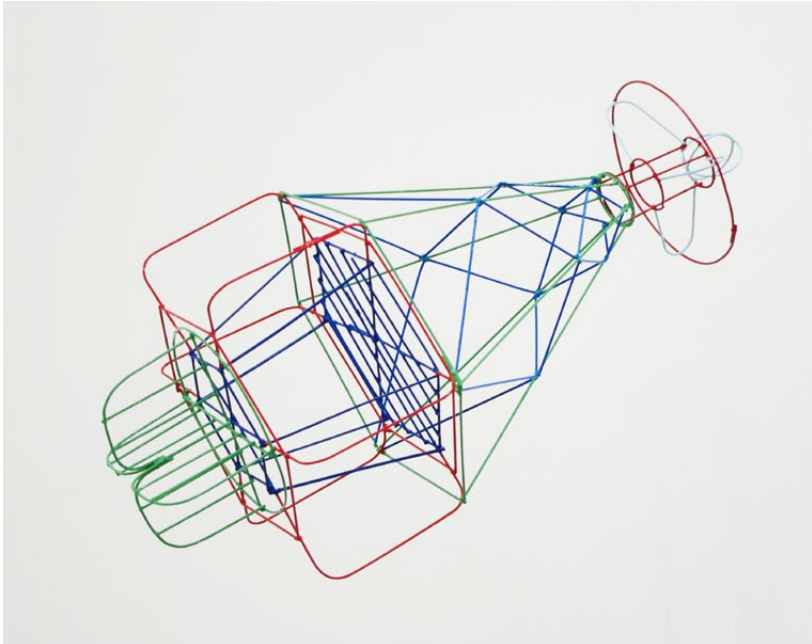
Jellyfish, 2019
copper, soldering
75 x 75 x 82 cm



Untitled, 2019
copper, soldering, paint
110 x 51 x 51 cm

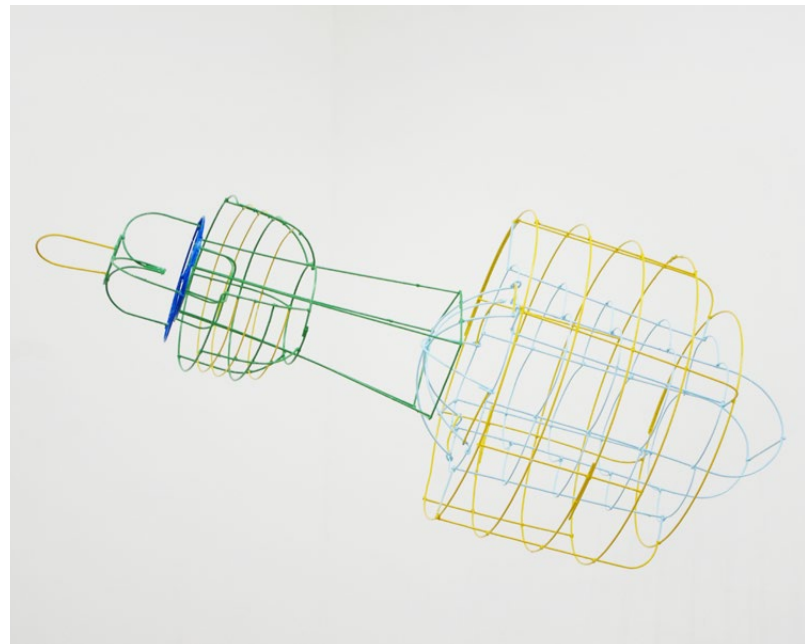
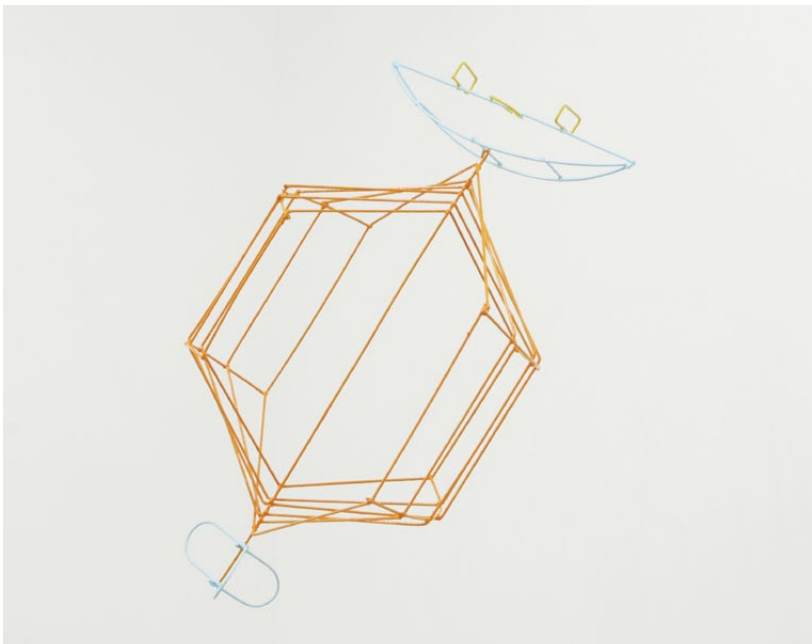


Untitled, 2019
copper, soldering, paint
102 x 80 x 40 cm



Untitled, 2019
copper, soldering, paint
110 x 51 x 51 cm

Untitled, 2019
copper, soldering, paint
65 x 36 x 32 cm



Untitled, 2019
copper, soldering, paint
55 x 33 x 26 cm

Untitled, 2019
copper, soldering, paint
92 x 40 x 40 cm



Mery-Go-Round, 2019
collage
112.3 x 76.5 cm



Untitled, 2019
collage
112.3 x 76.5 cm



Untitled, 2019
collage
112.3 x 76.5 cm



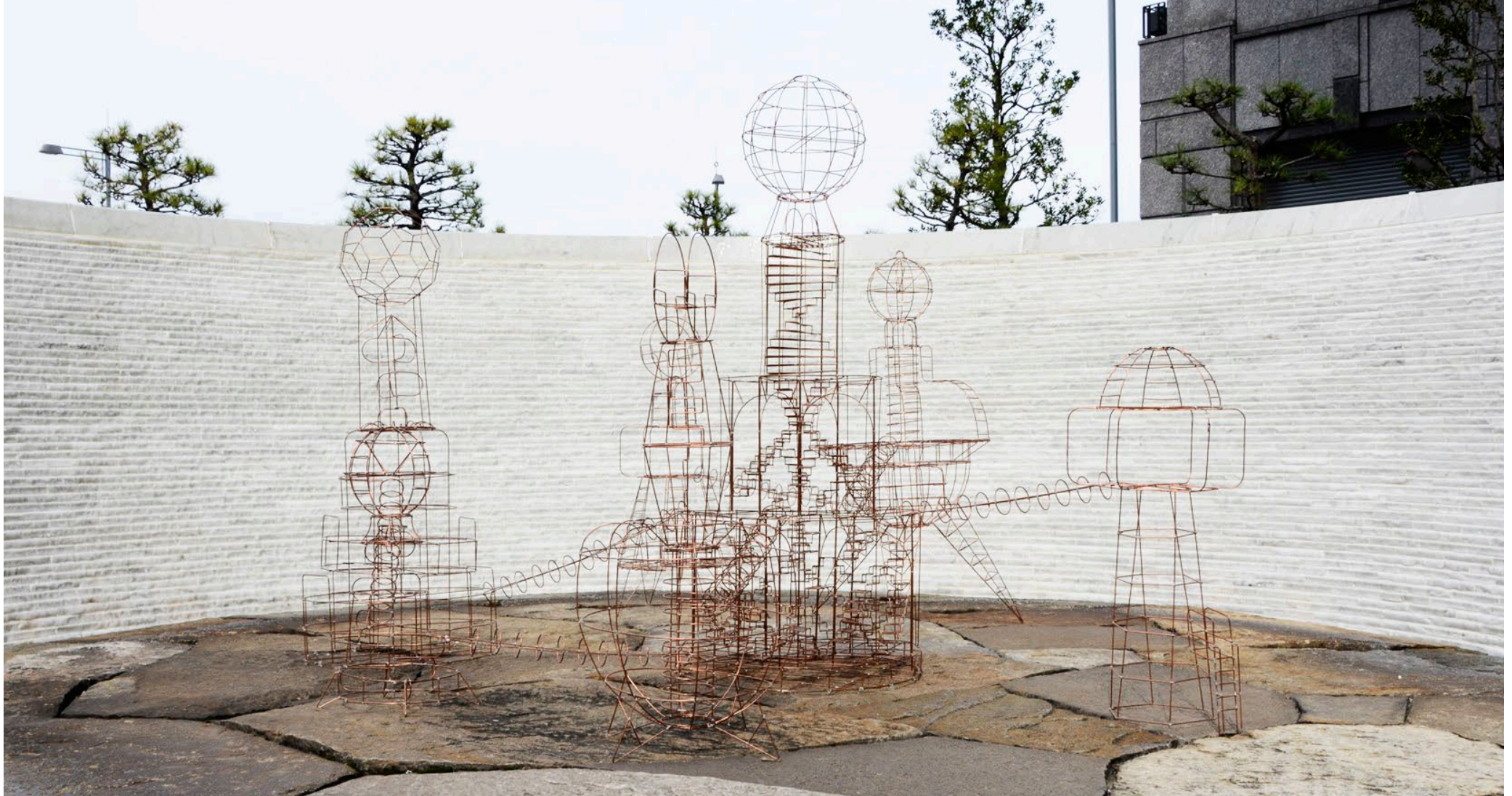
Untitled, 2019
collage
112.3 x 76.5 cm



Untitled, 2019
collage
112.3 x 76.5 cm



Untitled, 2019
collage
112.3 x 76.5 cm



- Art Fair Tokyo 2019 at The Peninsula, Tokyo



- Art Fair Tokyo 2019 at The Peninsula, Tokyo

Playground Project

Playground Project comprises of a collection of collages and a series of delicate copper sculptures developed by Gianluca Malgeri in collaboration with Arina Endo.

The official starting point of the ongoing research coincides with the exhibition *Edge of Chaos* (2015) in Venice, curated by Vita Zaman.

Nevertheless, the project evolved from an unexpected intuition revealed back in 2006, in Denmark, more specifically inside a playground in Copenhagen that immediately struck the Gianluca attention.

The idea has then frozen for some years only to resurface in 2013 when the two artists undertook a journey to India and got inspired by different playgrounds scattered throughout several gardens in New Delhi. They started to realize wide photographic documentation, which marks a very important part for the first series of collages, that anticipate the first maquettes and sculptures unfold from the artists' photo-documentation of playgrounds.

Berlin is where the project took shape out of a series of multi-layered observations of the city itself: Berlin is seen as a sort of "toy land" the tale of *Pinocchio*, which the artists repeatedly have tackled, precisely entails the awareness of being free from social enforced conventions.

Over the past three years, the research has moved to Japan, enriching the photographic archives of almost all of Tokyo's Gardens.



Gianluca Malgeri

Born in Reggio Calabria 1974, lives and works between Berlin and Tokyo. His work often re-writes certain fundamental images of our culture, reinserting them in a shifted context: the myth of Apollo and Daphne is transformed into a hall of hunting trophies; the supposed secret relation between Sultan Abdul Aziz and Eugenia di Montijo speculated in the Ottoman architecture; the relicts of stoves transformed into anphoras and oriental towers that seem to emerge from a strange past. Amongst his solo exhibitions: Magazzino, Rome (2007, 2011); GaleriArtist, Istanbul (2011, 2012); Apollo and Daphne, white rabbit, Berlin (2009). Amongst the group exhibitions: Edge of Chaos (2015, Casa Donati, Venice), ItAliens (2009, Italian Embassy in Germany), The Naturalists (2013, Castelluccio di Pienza, curated by Peter Benson Miller).



Arina Endo

Born in Hyogo, Japan 1983, lives and works in Tokyo. After university degree from the Department of Architecture and Design of Kyoto's Institute of Technology and Design, Arina Endo moves to Florence, where she specializes in graphic arts at the International School Il Bisonte and she attends the Academy of Fine Arts. Endo's production is characterized by meticulous attention to detail, and to the shapes, patterns and geometries of nature reproduced with meticulous technical diligence, and with sophisticated and sober elegance. Her work has been exhibited in Italy, India, Germany, Turkey, and Japan.