

FRED EERDEKENS



OPERA GALLERY

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09 – 30 October 2026

GENEVA

OPERA GALLERY

Foreword

Nothing in Fred Eerdekens' work is quite as it first appears. His sculptures occupy a singular territory between the physical and the immaterial, between what is seen and what is read. At first glance, they often seem abstract: lines of metal, folded forms, constructions whose logic is not immediately apparent. Yet within them lies something else, waiting to be discovered.

This fascination with hidden meaning began in 1987, when the shadow cast by a fragment of twisted metal unexpectedly formed a letter. That moment became the starting point for a practice in which material, perception and language became inseparably connected. Rather than representing words directly, Eerdekens creates forms from which they can emerge.

His practice unfolds through two principal approaches. Wall-mounted and suspended sculptures rely on projected shadow, while freestanding works reveal themselves through perspective. In the first group, illumination transforms an apparently abstract structure into a recognisable image. The projected shadow is not secondary to the sculpture, but part of its very existence: one element is tangible, the other fleeting.

The apparent simplicity of this transformation conceals extraordinary precision. Every curve, interval and angle must be carefully resolved so that a form with no obvious resemblance to lettering can generate something perfectly legible.

His freestanding sculptures operate differently. From most angles, they remain sculptural constructions in space. From one precise point, their separate elements suddenly align and reveal their meaning. Move away, and that clarity disappears.

These different approaches share the same essential tension. Meaning is never simply given. It depends on how, and from where, the work is encountered.

This passage from looking to recognition lies at the heart of Eerdekens' practice. Once an image or phrase has been perceived, the sculpture itself changes in the mind of the observer. What seemed abstract becomes charged with association, and recognition opens the way to interpretation.

The words and phrases Eerdekens chooses, extend this ambiguity further. Often concise, poetic or suggestive, they resist fixed interpretation. They function less as statements than as points of departure, allowing the work to continue beyond its physical presence and into the imagination.

This second solo exhibition of Fred Eerdekens at Opera Gallery Geneva, following his first presentation with us in 2018, brings together approximately twenty works spanning different periods of his practice. Together, they reveal the remarkable coherence of an investigation that Eerdekens has pursued and refined over decades. Across different materials and methods, his work continually challenges the apparent certainty of what lies before us.

The sculpture is never entirely self-contained. It exists in relation to its surroundings, to illumination, to space, and to the person standing before it. A shadow may vanish as the light shifts; an image may disappear with a single step.

Eerdekens' work reminds us that seeing and understanding are not the same thing. What appears clear can remain unresolved.

The work begins with an object. What follows depends on how we look.

Jordan Lahmi

Director
Opera Gallery Geneva

Gilles Dyan

Founder and Chairman
Opera Gallery Group



WORDS



Cloud (big)

2024

Corten steel

Unique piece

248 x 800 x 592 cm | 97.6 x 315 x 233.1 in



Cloud (big), side view



Cloud (small)

2022

Corten steel

Unique piece

78 x 255 x 190 cm | 30.7 x 100.4 x 74.8 in



Reveal

2026

Copper, light source

Unique piece

25 x 80 x 30 cm | 9.8 x 31.5 x 11.8 in



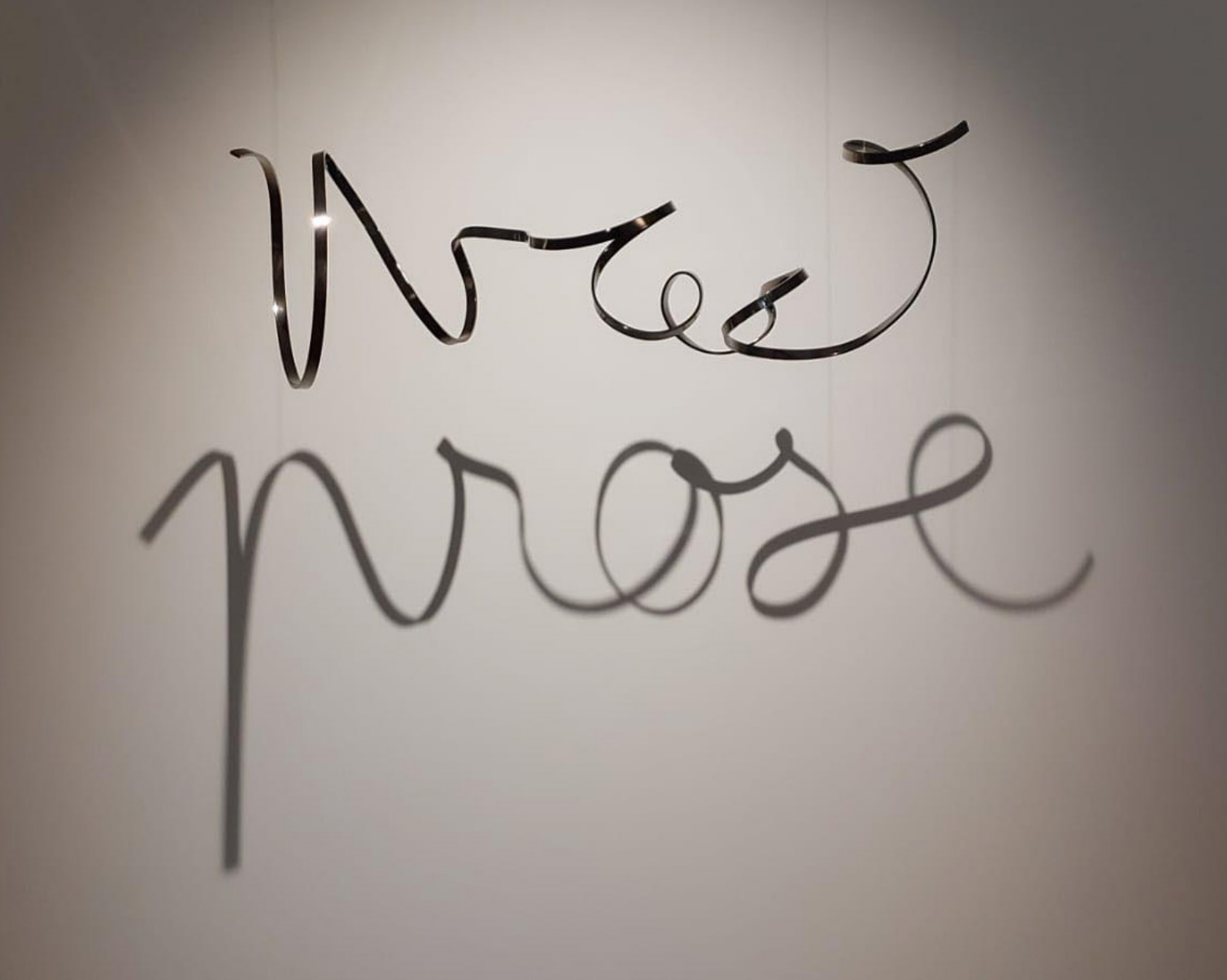
Because

2023

Treated copper

Unique piece

12 x 48 x 15 cm | 4.7 x 18.9 x 5.9 in



Prose

2021

Black nickel, light source

Unique piece

25 x 60 x 30 cm | 9.8 x 23.6 x 11.8 in



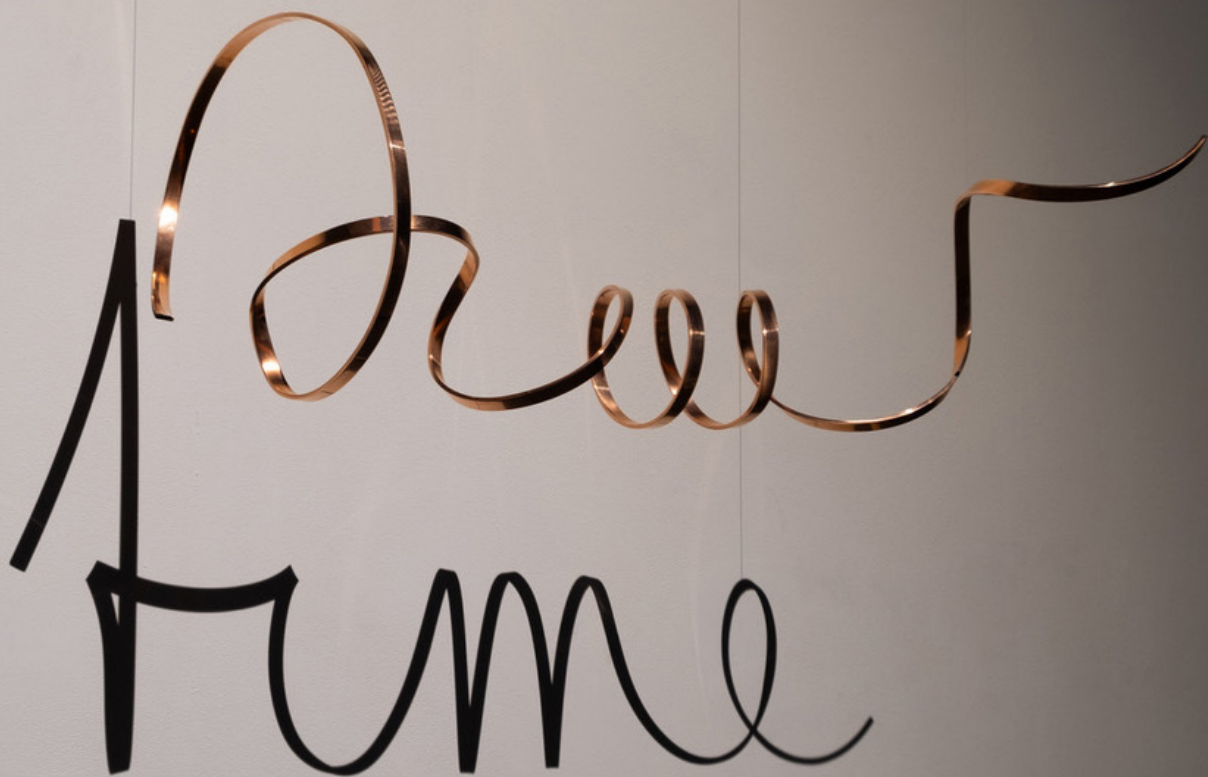
Quiet

2022

Copper, light source

Unique piece

30 x 40 x 50 cm | 11.8 x 15.7 x 19.7 in



Time

2024

Copper, light source

Unique piece

25 x 70 x 30 cm | 9.8 x 27.6 x 11.8 in





Air

2022

Copper, light source

Unique piece

15 x 36 x 25 cm | 5.9 x 14.2 x 9.8 in



Open

2026

Copper

Unique piece

25 x 50 x 25 cm | 9.8 x 19.7 x 9.8 in



Open, side view



Chant

2023

Treated copper

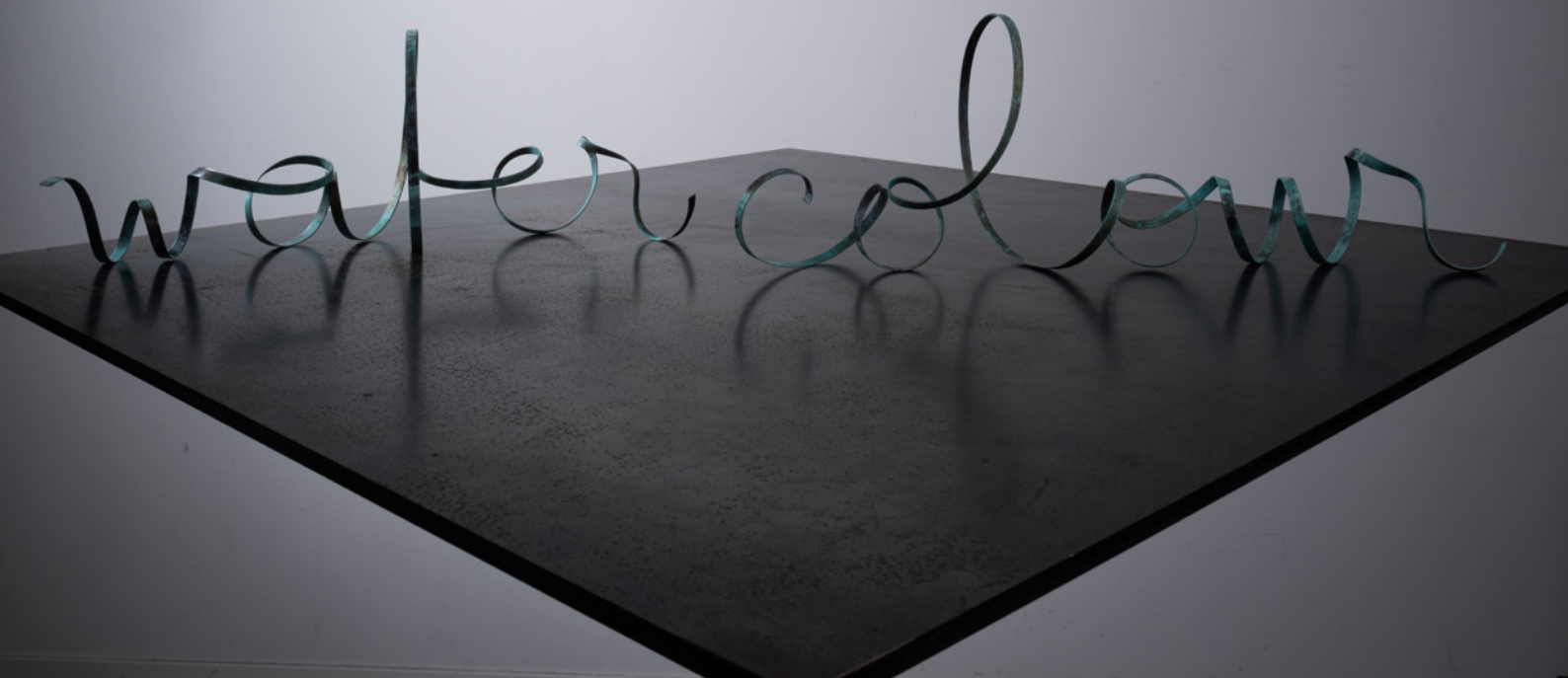
Unique piece

18 x 37 x 15 cm | 7.1 x 14.6 x 5.9 in

This sculpture can also be made on a monumental scale.



Chant, side view



Water colour

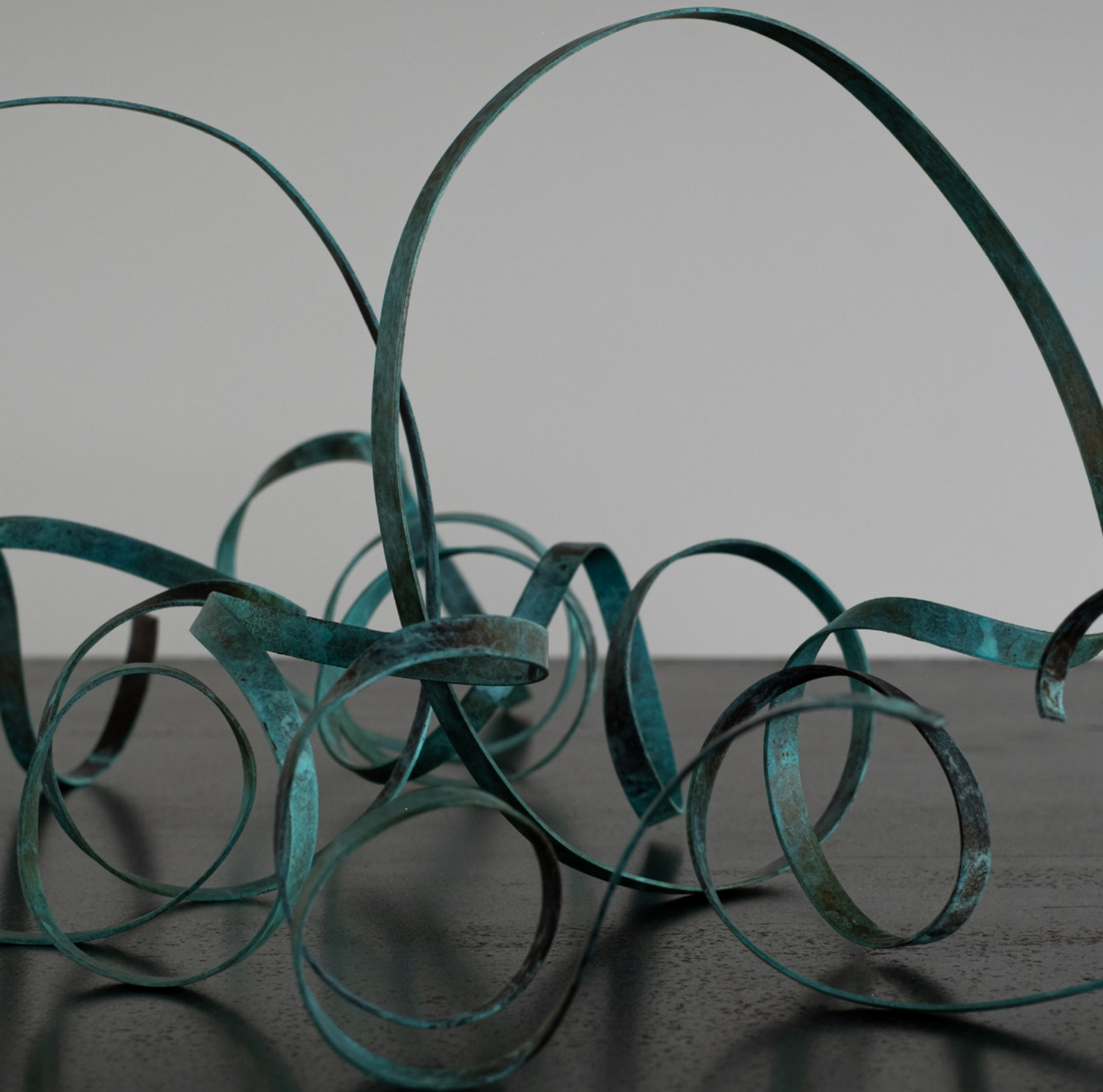
2023

Treated copper

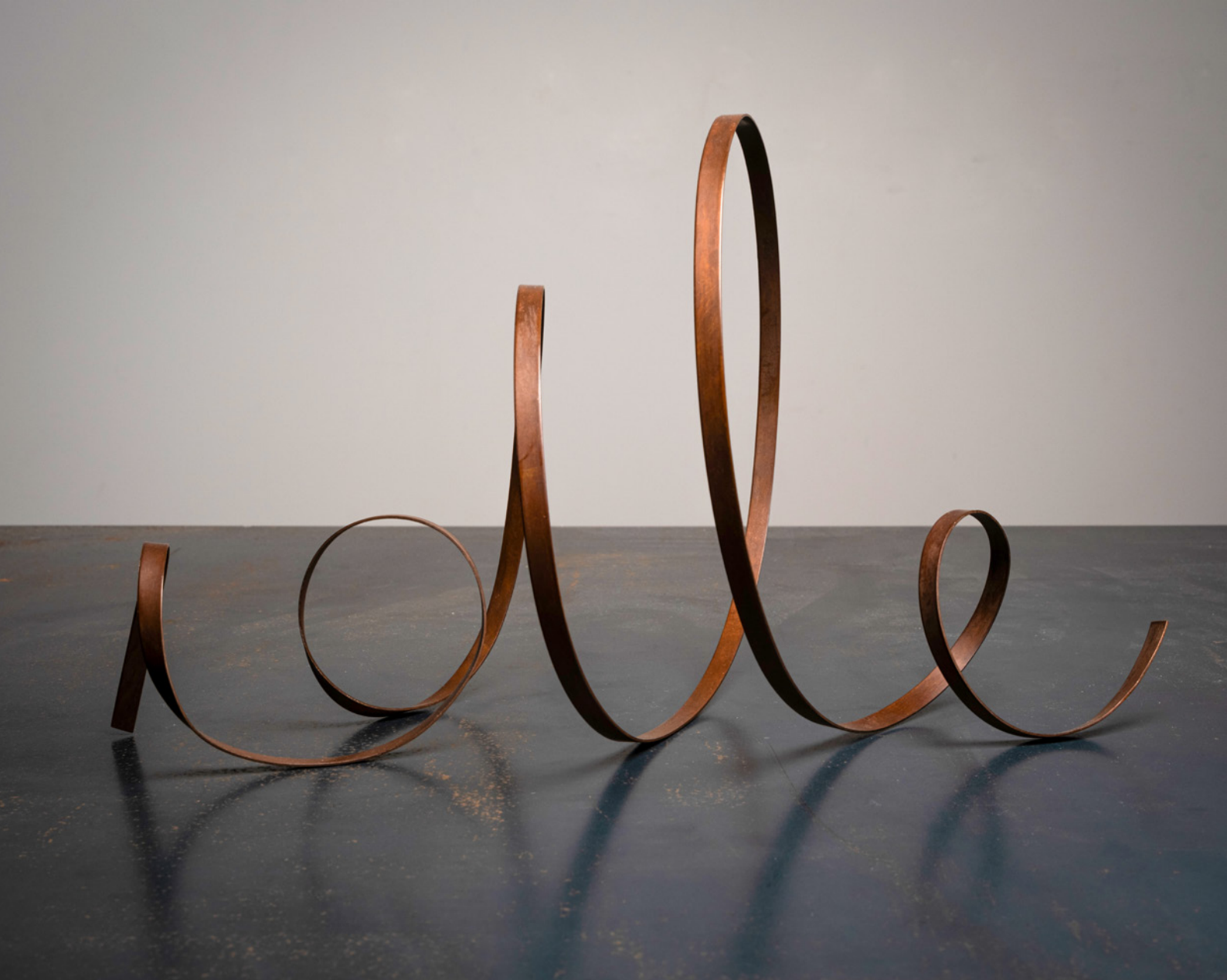
Unique piece

Two parts: 14 x 40 x 14 cm - 16 x 43 x 16 cm | 5.5 x 14.7 x 5.5 - 6.3 x 16.9 x 6.3 in

This sculpture can also be made on a monumental scale.



Water colour, side view



Idle

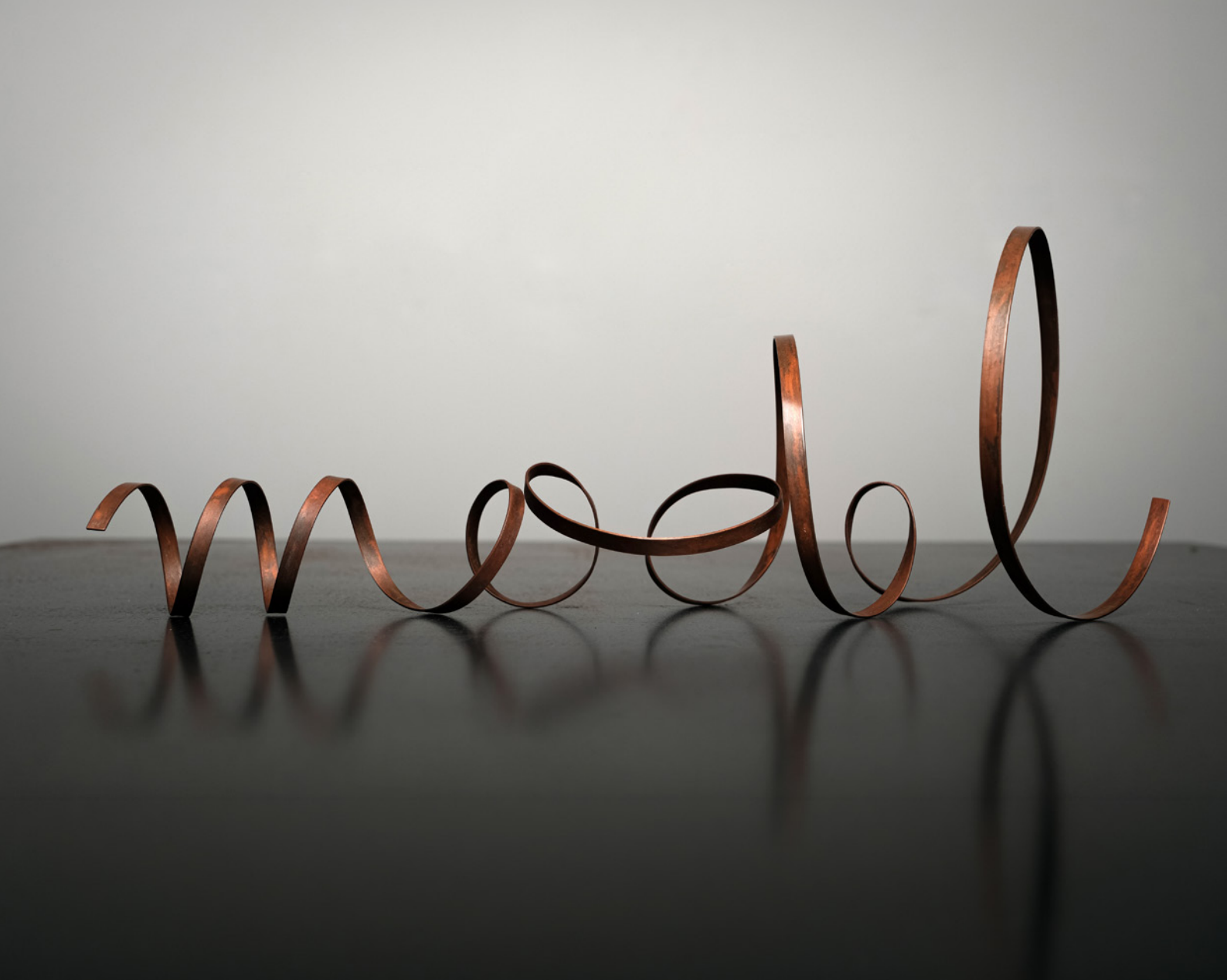
2023

Treated copper

Unique piece

20 x 32 x 20 cm | 7.9 x 12.6 x 7.9 in

This sculpture can also be made on a monumental scale.



Model

2023

Treated copper

Unique piece

14 x 40 x 12 cm | 5.5 x 15.7 x 4.7 in

This sculpture can also be made on a monumental scale.



Shore

2023

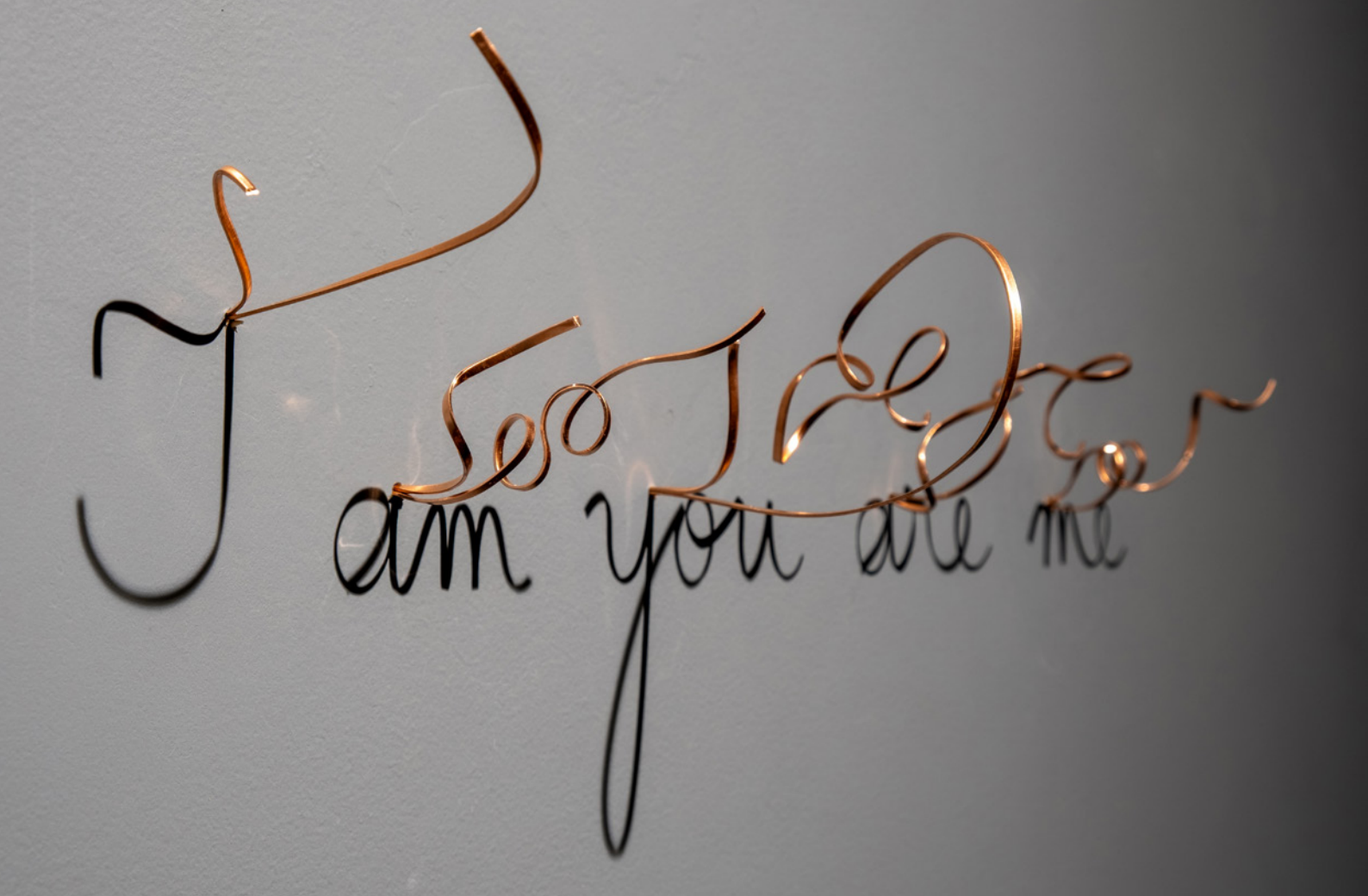
Treated copper

Unique piece

18 x 45 x 18 cm | 7.1 x 17.7 x 7.1 in

This sculpture can also be made on a monumental scale.

SENTENCES



I am you are me

2026

Copper, light source

Unique piece

15 x 50 x 15 cm | 5.9 x 19.7 x 5.9 in



I am you are me, side view

A sculpture of the sentence "I am simply sense as far as the eye can see" in cursive script, made of copper wire and mounted on a dark grey wall. The sculpture is a single horizontal line of text, with each letter and word formed by thin copper wire. The wire is twisted and looped to create the cursive style. The sculpture is mounted on a dark grey wall, and the lighting is soft, highlighting the metallic texture of the copper.

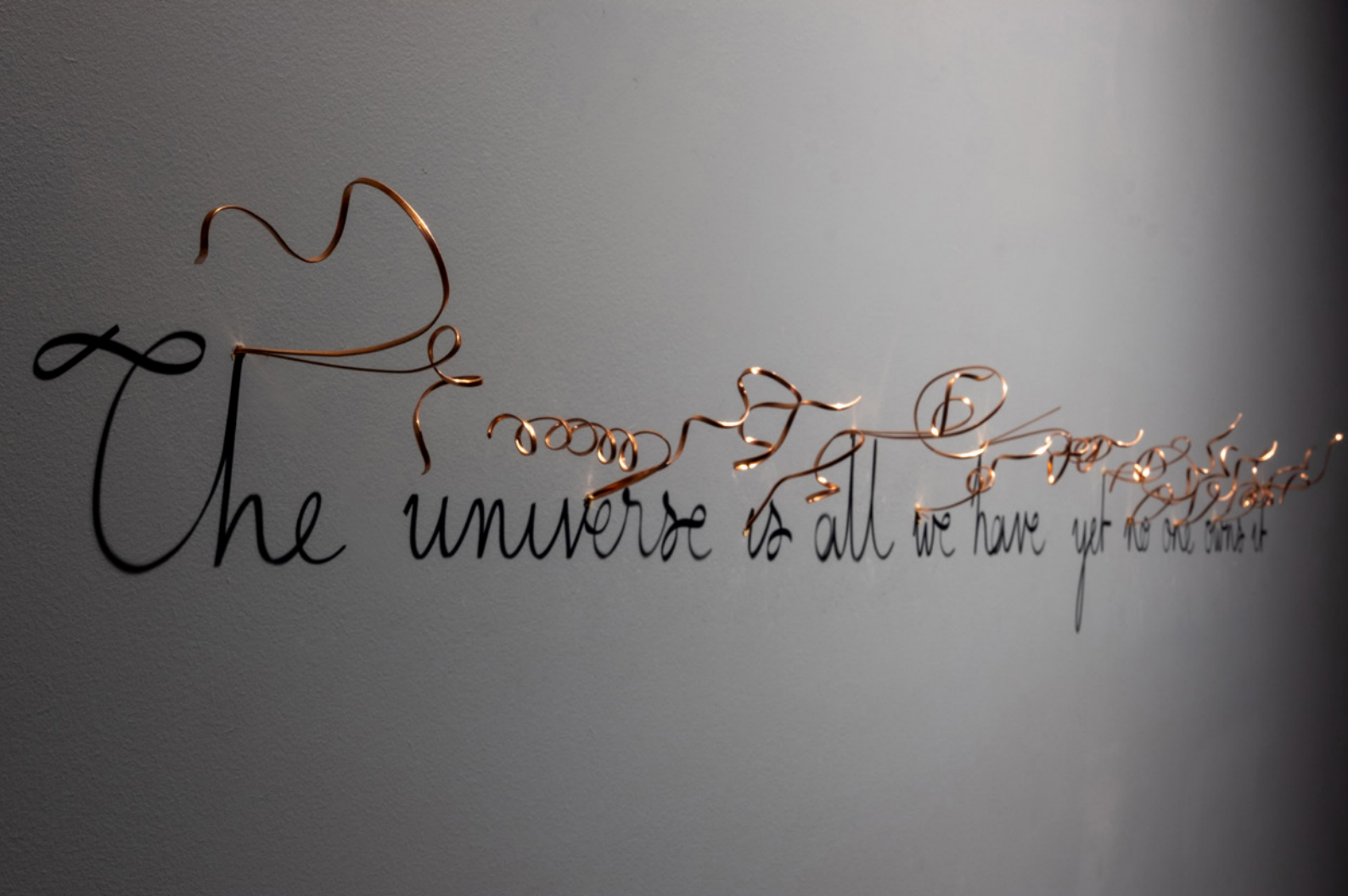
I am simply sense as far as the eye can see

2024

Copper, light source

Unique piece

15 x 129 x 15 cm | 5.9 x 50.8 x 5.9 in



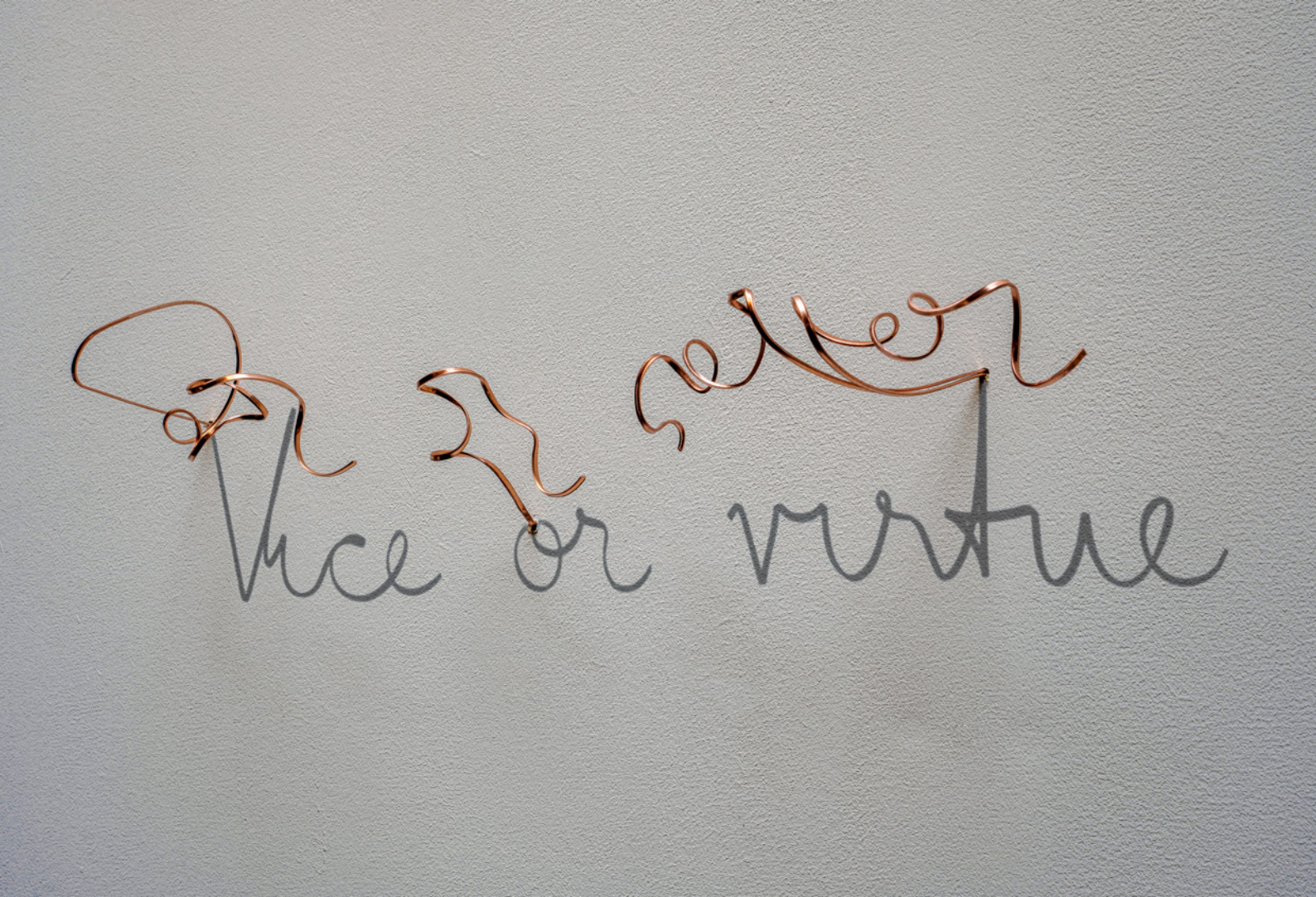
The universe is all we have yet no one owns it

2024

Copper, light source

Unique piece

15 x 147 x 15 cm | 5.9 x 57.9 x 5.9 in



Vice or virtue

2024

Copper, light source

Unique piece

15 x 38 x 15 cm | 5.9 x 15 x 5.9 in



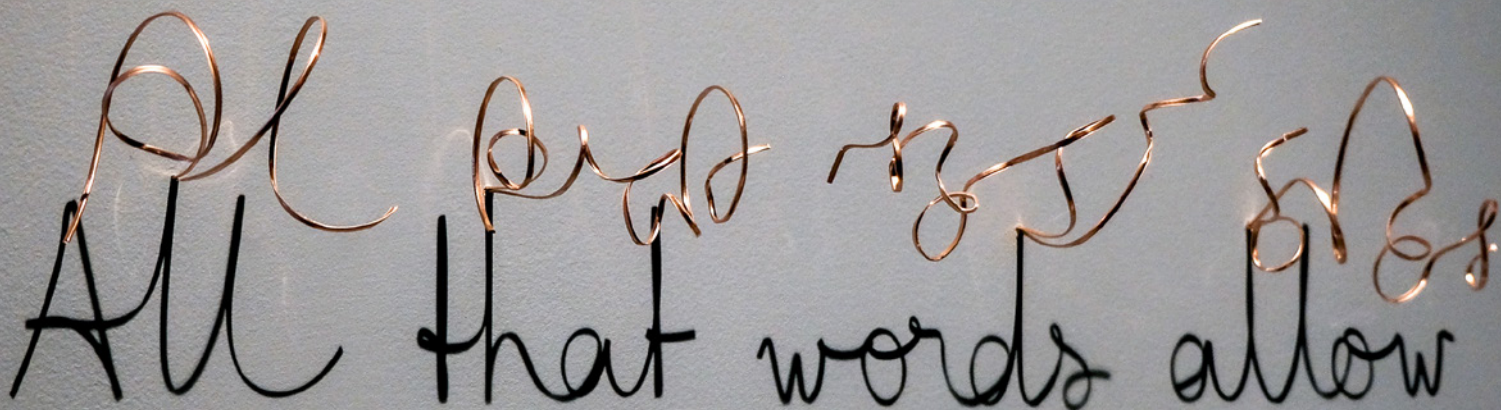
Write a book

2025

Bronze, light source

Unique piece

31 x 30 x 45 cm | 12.2 x 11.8 x 17.7 in



All that words allow

2026

Copper, light source

Unique piece

15 x 58 x 15 cm | 5.9 x 22.8 x 5.9 in



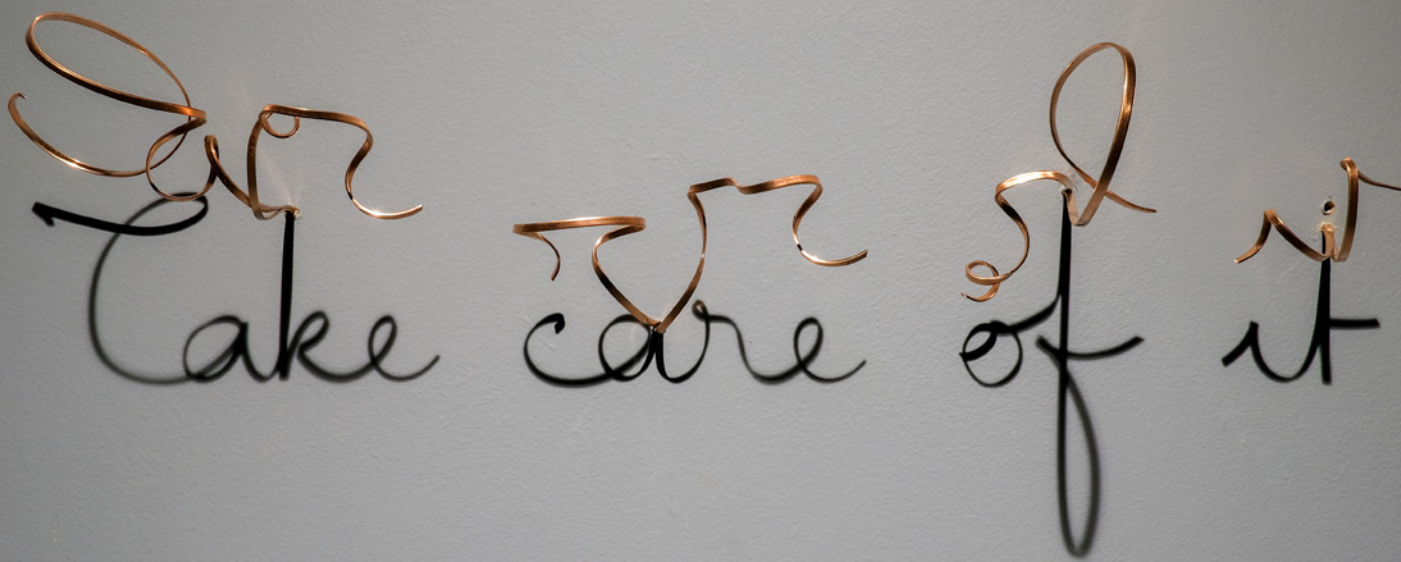
Pli selon pli

2026

Copper, light source

Unique piece

15 x 40 x 15 cm | 5.9 x 15.7 x 5.9 in



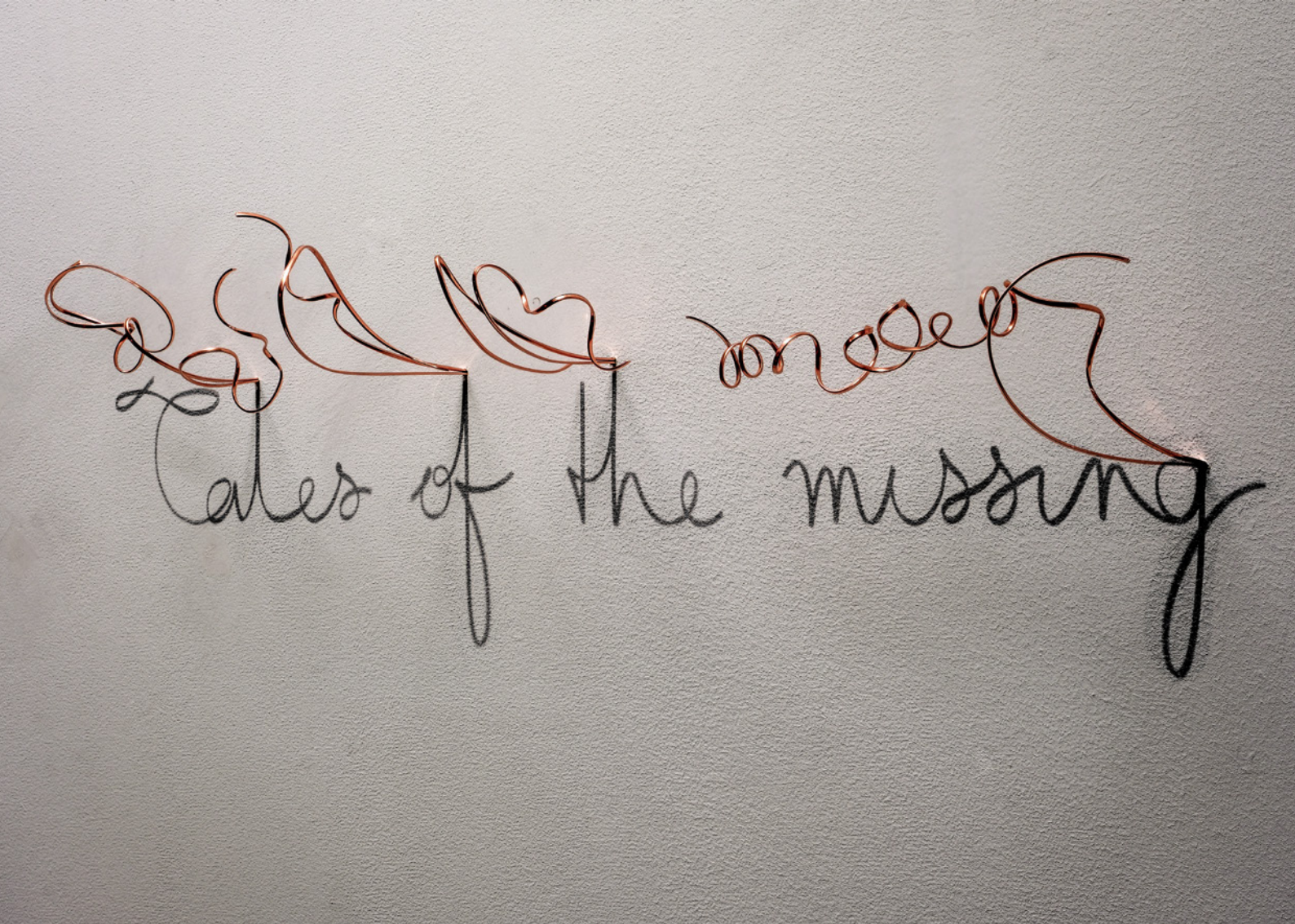
Take care of it

2026

Copper, light source

Unique piece

15 x 48 x 15 cm | 5.9 x 18.9 x 5.9 in



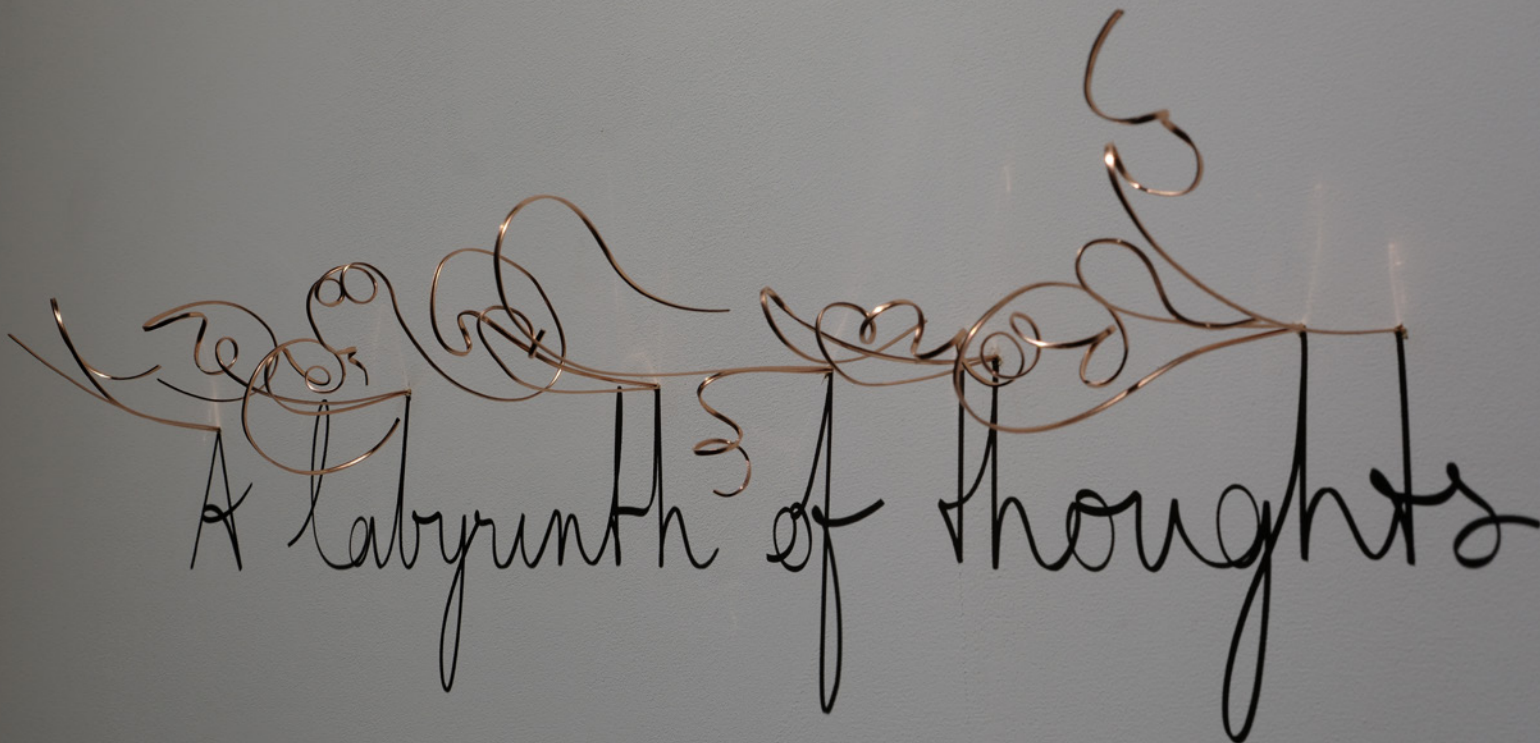
Tales of the missing

2024

Copper, light source

Unique piece

15 x 60 x 15 cm | 5.9 x 23.6 x 5.9 in



A labyrinth of thoughts

2024

Copper, light source

Unique piece

15 x 70 x 15 cm | 5.9 x 27.6 x 5.9 in



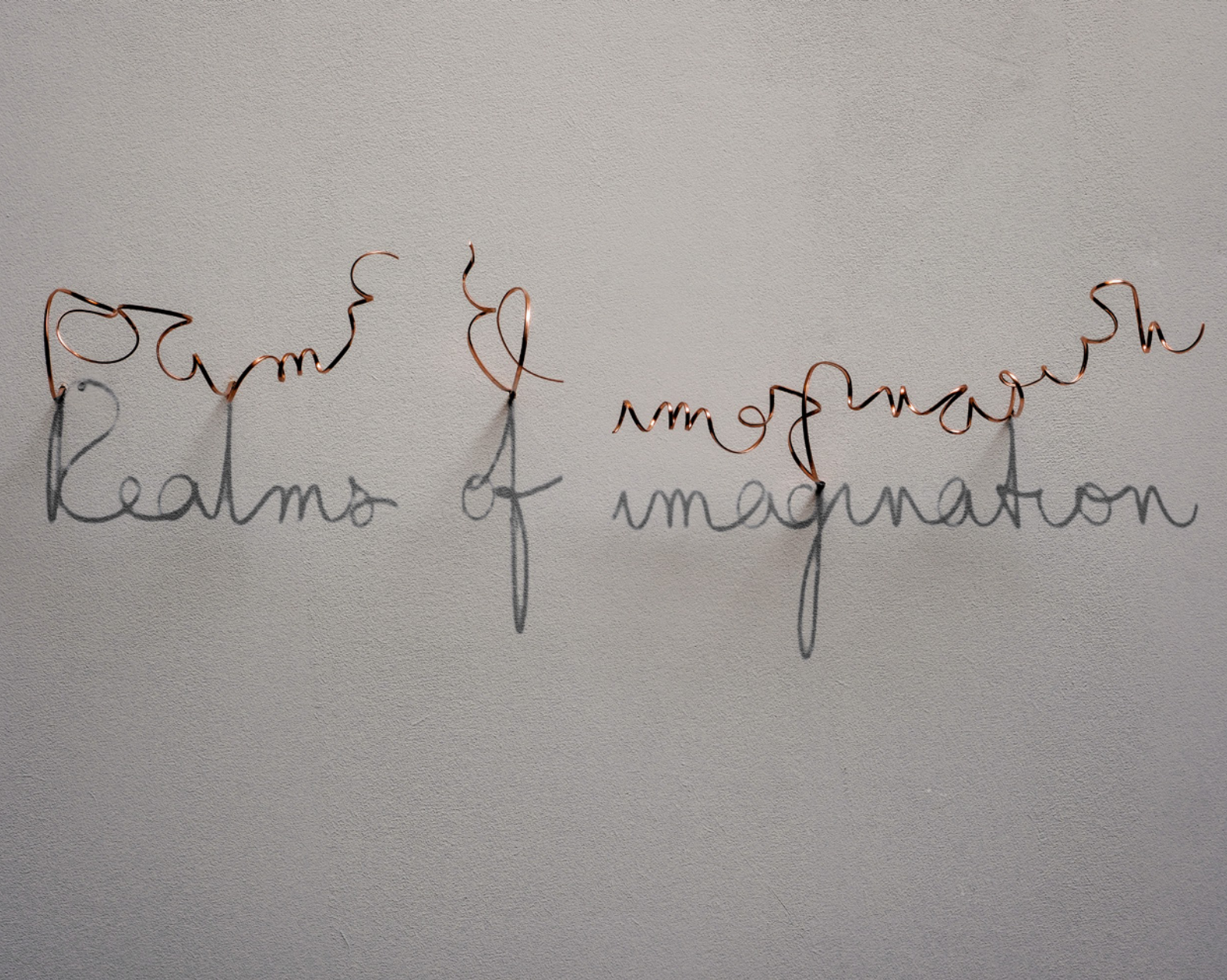
It won't get lost

2026

Glass

Unique piece

ø: 21 cm | 8.3 in



Realms of imagination

2024

Copper, light source

Unique piece

15 x 60 x 15 cm | 5.9 x 23.6 x 5.9 in



One spark in a mist of words

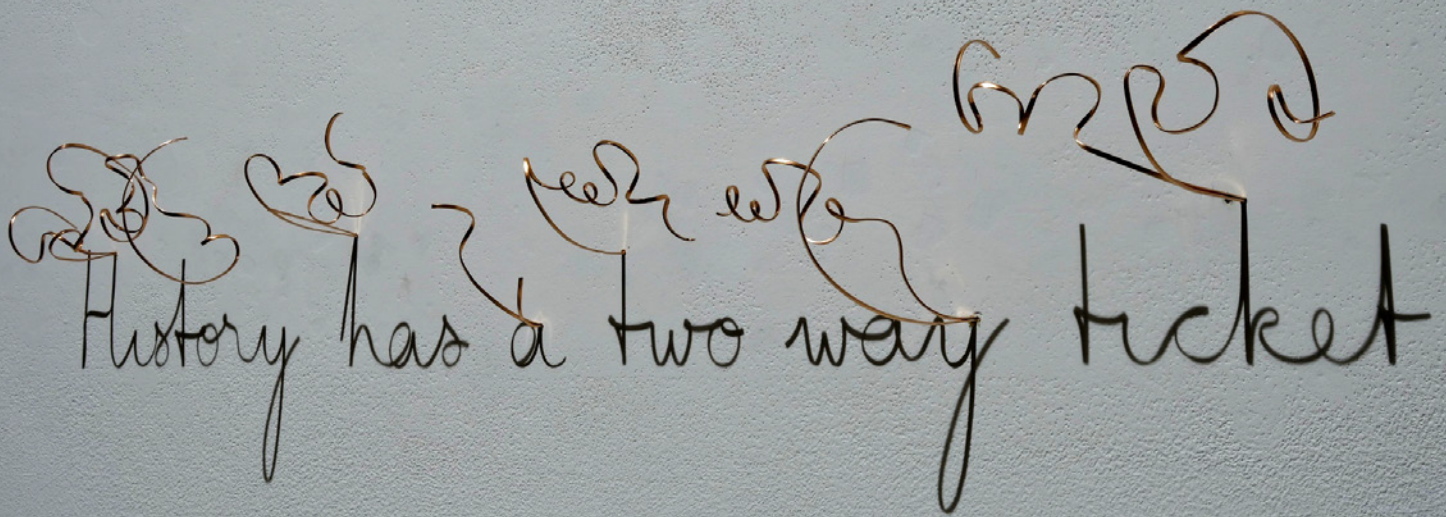
One spark in a mist of words

2024

Copper, light source

Unique piece

15 x 84 x 15 cm | 5.9 x 33.1 x 5.9 in



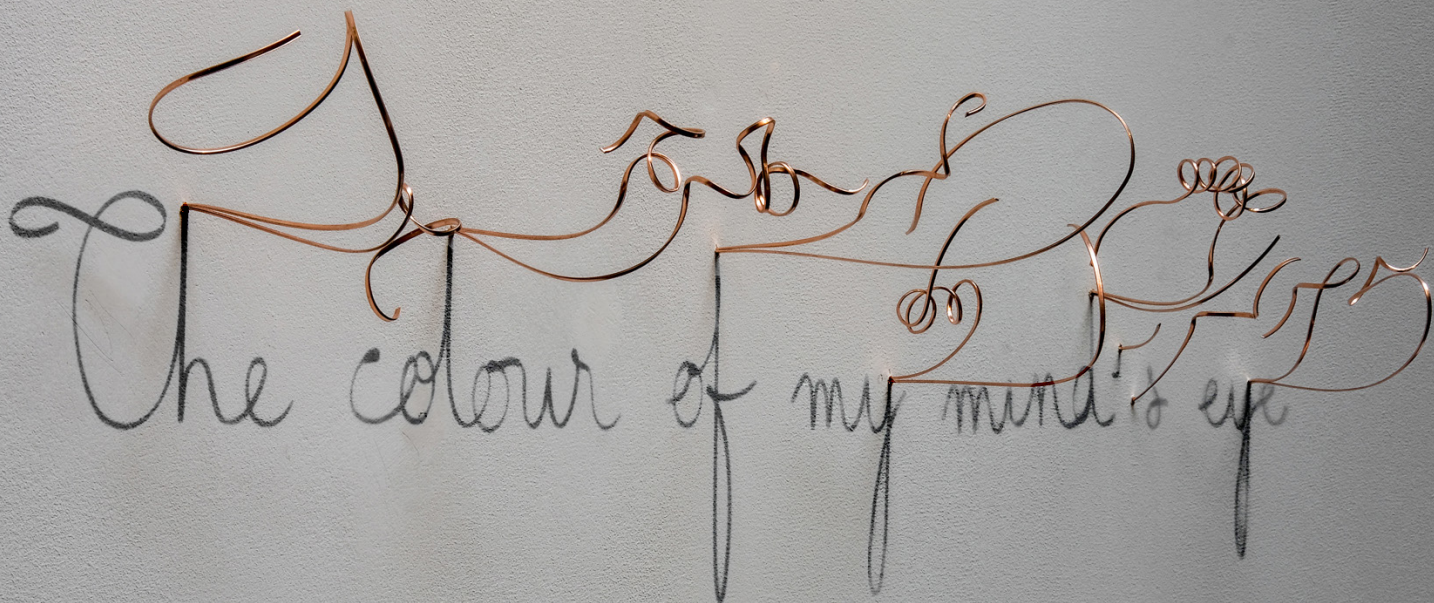
History has a two way ticket

2019

Copper, light source

Unique piece

15 x 82 x 15 cm | 5.9 x 32.3 x 5.9 in



The colour of my mind's eye

2024

Copper, light source

Unique piece

15 x 82 x 15 cm | 5.9 x 32.3 x 5.9 in



Biography

Fred Eerdekens (b. 1951, Heusden-Zolder, Belgium) studied Sculpture and Graphic Art at the Provincial Higher Institute of Art and Architecture in Hasselt, where he continues to live and work. Since the late 1980s, he has developed a singular sculptural language in which words and phrases emerge from carefully constructed forms, most often through projected shadow or from a precise point of view.

Eerdekens transforms language into a visual and spatial experience, allowing words to emerge from abstract forms with subtlety, wit and poetic ambiguity. His works invite viewers to move between abstraction and legibility, questioning the relationship between what is seen, what is read and what is understood.

His work has been presented in numerous solo and group exhibitions throughout Europe, the United States and Asia, including at the Musée d'Art Moderne in Brussels, the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, The Courtauld Institute of Art in London, the Musée d'Art moderne et contemporain in Strasbourg, the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium in Brussels and the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes in Havana.

Eerdekens' work is also represented in numerous prominent public, corporate and private collections internationally.

Selected solo exhibitions

- | | | | |
|------|---|------|--|
| 2026 | 'Present, Then Silent', CC Maasmechelen, Belgium | 1992 | 'Hi Outsider', KC II Ventuno, Hasselt, Belgium |
| 2024 | 'Cartier Exhibition', Opera Gallery, Paris, France | | Lokaal 01, Breda, The Netherlands |
| 2023 | 'See or Seem', Samuel Vanhoegaerden Gallery, Belgium | | Von der Milwe Gallery, Aachen, Germany |
| 2022 | 'Real Time', Michael Fuchs Gallery, Berlin, Germany | | James Van Damme Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium |
| 2018 | 'Allusions', Opera Gallery, Geneva, Switzerland | 1991 | Museum of Installation, London, United Kingdom |
| 2017 | Installations, Samuel Vanhoegaerden Gallery, Knokke, Belgium | | Museum Gallery, Bolzano, Italy |
| 2016 | 'Figures of Speech', Mario Mauroner Contemporary Art, Vienna, Austria | 1990 | Stux Gallery, New York, USA |
| 2015 | Solo Booth, Art Brussels 2015, Samuel Vanhoegaerden Gallery, Belgium | | Dorothy Goldeen Gallery, Santa Monica, USA |
| | 'One Looking at It, One Looking Through', Spencer Brownstone Gallery, New York, USA | | Bébert Gallery, Rotterdam, The Netherlands |
| 2014 | 'Mirages', Fred Eerdekens, Pascal Lansberg Gallery, Paris, France | 1989 | Von der Milwe Gallery, Aachen, Germany |
| | 'Sliding from One State into Another', Art Museum, Sharjah, UAE | | Gallery 175, Brussels, Belgium |
| | 'Mind Beats', Samuel Vanhoegaerden Gallery, Knokke, Belgium | 1988 | Museum of Modern Art, Brussels, Belgium |
| 2013 | 'Remanences', Fred Eerdekens at Magda Danysz Gallery, Paris, France | 1987 | Polynero Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium |
| | 'Poetic Meanings', Gallery Isabelle Van Den Eynde, Dubai, UAE | 1986 | New Math Gallery, New York, USA |
| 2012 | 'In Search for Symbols', Samuel Vanhoegaerden Gallery, Knokke, Belgium | 1985 | ICC, Antwerp, Belgium |
| | 'Seen Not Seen', Magda Danysz Gallery, Shanghai, China | 1984 | 9915 Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium |
| 2010 | 'I Am', Twig Gallery, Brussels, Belgium | | |
| | 'Close Your Eyes...', Samuel Vanhoegaerden Gallery, Knokke, Belgium | | |
| 2005 | 'I Hate Words', Taché-Lévy Gallery, Brussels, Belgium | | |
| | 'Forever', Spencer Brownstone Gallery, New York, USA | | |
| 2004 | Grita Insam Gallery, Vienna, Austria | | |
| 2003 | 'Folds', CC De Bogaard, St-Truiden, Belgium | | |
| | Spencer Brownstone Gallery, New York, USA | | |
| 2002 | 'The Retina Diamond', MuHKA Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp, Belgium | | |
| | St. James Chaplaincy, Gordes, France | | |
| 2001 | James Van Damme Gallery, Brussels, Belgium | | |
| 2000 | 'Golden Delicious', Jadoul Fruit Storage, Gingelom, Belgium | | |
| 1999 | James Van Damme Gallery, Brussels, Belgium | | |
| 1998 | 'Holy Spirit / Come Home', James Van Damme Gallery, Brussels, Belgium | | |
| 1997 | 'Too Much Inner Voice and Real Images', Z33, Hasselt, Belgium | | |
| 1996 | 'At Last Something Real', Provinciaal Museum Z33, Hasselt, Belgium | | |
| 1995 | James Van Damme Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium | | |
| 1994 | 'Utopia of a Private Language', Provinciaal Museum Z33, Hasselt, Belgium | | |
| 1993 | Vlaams CC De Brakke Grond, Amsterdam, The Netherlands | | |

Selected group exhibitions

- 2026 'Dream Up,' Opera Gallery, Geneva, Switzerland
- 2025 'The Sublime Nature of Being,' ICD Brookfields, Dubai, UAE
- 2024 'J'Adore Dior,' Guardian Art Centre, Beijing, China
'30 Years – 30 Artists,' Opera Gallery, Geneva, Switzerland
- 2023 PAD Paris, Jardin des Tuileries, Paris, France
Art Paris, Grand Palais, Paris, France
Private Views, La Boverie, Liège, Belgium
Dior J'Adore, School of Fine Arts, Paris, France
PAD London, Berkeley Square, London, United Kingdom
- 2022 'The Sublime Nature of Being,' ICD Brookfields, Dubai, UAE
'Dotremontage,' BRAFA Art Fair, Brussels, Belgium
- 2021 Art Paris, Paris, France
FIAC Paris, Paris, France
- 2020 BRAFA Art Fair 2020, Brussels, Belgium
Materia, Bermel von Luxburg Gallery, Berlin, Germany
- 2019 'Abstract Writing,' Bermel von Luxburg Gallery, Berlin, Germany
PAD Paris, Tuileries, Paris, France
Art Paris, Grand Palais, Paris, France
Shadows, Italian Gallery, Paris, France
Blue, Mario Mauroner Gallery, Vienna, Austria
'The Monaco Masters Show,' Opera Gallery, Monaco
'Beyond the Shadows,' Chimei Museum, Tainan, Taiwan
'More Than Words,' Opera Gallery, Dubai, UAE
'Ekphrasis,' Villa Empain, Brussels, Belgium
ART021, Shanghai, China
- 2018 BRAFA Art Fair, Brussels, Belgium
Masterpiece London Art Fair, London, United Kingdom
'Abstracting the Real,' Opera Gallery, Geneva, Switzerland
Luxembourg Art Week, Halle Victor Hugo, Luxembourg
- 2017 Kunstenfestival Watou, Watou, Belgium
Single Divas, Hasselt, Belgium
BRAFA Art Fair, Brussels, Belgium
Masterpiece London Art Fair, London, United Kingdom
'Flashblack, Black to the Future,' C-Mine Genk, Belgium
- 2016 'For an Image, Faster Than Light,' Yinchuan Biennale, Yinchuan, China
'Arts and Metals, Jehay Castle,' Jehay, Belgium
Art Brussels, Tour & Taxis, Brussels, Belgium
Kunstenfestival Watou, Watou, Belgium
'Words and Images,' Ronny Van De Velde Gallery, Knokke, Belgium
- 2015 'Attention! Attention!,' De Warande, Turnhout, Belgium
'Formidable,' Beelden aan Zee, The Hague, The Netherlands
'Andante Giocoso,' Mario Mauroner Gallery, Vienna, Austria
Walk the Line: New Paths of Drawing
'The Importance of Being,' Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba
- 2014 'Health, Something of Value,' National Bank of Belgium, Brussels, Belgium
- 2013 'Poetics and Meanings,' Mohammed Kazem and Fred Eerdeken's, Gallery Isabelle Van Den Eynde, Dubai, UAE
'Museum to Scale 1/7,' Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels, Belgium
- 2012 'Words and Dreams,' Magda Danysz Gallery, Paris, France
Tesi Samanunga, parallel event Manifesta 9, Bilzen, Belgium
Manifest Presence, parallel event Manifesta 9, Kasteel Oud-Rekem, Belgium
- 2011 'Grandville – Another World – Another Time,' Museum of Time, Besançon, France
'Grandville – Another World – Another Time,' Félicien Rops Museum, Namur, Belgium
'In and Outside Writing,' De Voorkamer, Lier, Belgium
Twijfelgrens Haspengouw-Borgloon, Z-OUT, Z33 Limburg, Belgium
- 2010 'Exhibitionism, The East Wing Collection IX,' Courtauld Institute, London, United Kingdom
'Photography Is Not Art,' The Perlstein Collection, Museum Elsene, Brussels, Belgium
'Photography Is Not Art,' The Perlstein Collection, Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art of Strasbourg, France
'Coup de Ville,' St-Niklaas, Belgium
- 2009 'This Is Our Earth 1+2,' Thurn & Taxis, Brussels, Belgium
- 2008 'Septiformis,' St. Gudula Cathedral, Brussels, Belgium
'Shadows & Lights,' Nyon Castle, Nyon, Switzerland
- 2006 'Light Play,' Z33, Hasselt, Belgium
- 2005 'Drawings / Works on Paper,' Spencer Brownstone Gallery, New York, USA
'Hot Re-Strike,' De Warande, Turnhout, Belgium
'Shadowplay – Light and Shadow in Contemporary Art,' Kunsthallen Brandts Klædefabrik, Odense, Denmark; Kunsthalle Kiel, Germany; Landesmuseum Linz, Austria
'VOLTAshow 01,' Voltahalle, Basel, Switzerland,
'Light Art from Artificial Light,' Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie, Karlsruhe, Germany
'Pain,' Museum Dr. Guislain, Ghent, Belgium
- 2004 Armory Show, New York, USA
ABC2004 – Antwerp Book Capital, work in collaboration with Tom Lanoye, public spaces, Antwerp, Belgium
- 2003 'Five,' Kusseneers Gallery, Lier, Belgium
'The Ambiguity of the Image: Belgian Art Now,' Art Athina, Athens, Greece
'Between Heaven and Earth,' Schildehof, De Pont, Schilde, Belgium
- 2002 'Mobile Phonics,' Z33, Hasselt, Belgium
- 2000 Speelhoven, Domein Speelhoven, Aarschot, Belgium
- 1999 Museum Under Water, Provinciaal Museum, Hasselt, Belgium
- 1998 'Strong Be the Language of Words – @rt Words–@rt Works,' Bruges, Belgium
'@rt Words–@rt Works,' De Lege Ruimte Gallery, Ghent, Belgium
- 1998 'Through the Pipeline,' R. Brey, J. Carlier, W. Daems, M. Pawlowski, E. Vanden Meersch, J. Volders, NICC, Antwerp, Belgium
- 1997 'Something Happens..,' Various Locations, Lier, Belgium
Expoarte, Guadalajara, Mexico
- 1997 'Too Much Inner Voice and Real Images,' artworks, texts and lyrics by Fred Eerdeken's, Mauro Pawlowski and Peter Verhelst, PCBK, Hasselt, Belgium

Works in public and corporate collections

- 1996 'Light and Movement', KMSK-ICC, Antwerp, Belgium
 'Meir – Axis for Art', KMSK-ICC, Antwerp, Belgium
- 1995 'The Collection', MUHKA, Antwerp, Belgium
- 1994 'Translucent Writings', Neuberger Museum, Purchase, New York, USA
 Artworks Acquired by the Flemish Community, MUHKA, Antwerp, Belgium
 'Memoria e Desejo', Palacio Nacional de Sintra, Sintra, Portugal
 'Translucent Writings', USF Contemporary Art Museum, Tampa, USA
- 1993 'Confrontations', Elzenveld, Antwerp, Belgium; Municipal Museum of Ixelles, Brussels, Belgium
- 1992 'Chance as Principle', Wilhelm-Hack-Museum, Ludwigshafen/Rhine, Germany
 'Art in Flanders, Now', Bergkerk, Deventer, The Netherlands
 'Word and Image in Belgian Art from A to Z', MUHKA, Antwerp, Belgium
 A Collection – Silent Moments', Caldic Collection, Rotterdam, The Netherlands
 'The Object of Debate', Espace 251 Nord, Liège, Belgium
- 1991 'The Marvelous and the Periphery', Liège, Belgium
 'Art in Flanders, Now', MUHKA, Antwerp, Belgium
- 1990 'Neighboring Noise, Belgian Artists', Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
 Zoersel 1990, Zoersel, Belgium
 'Belgicism Illuminated', Nouvelles Images Gallery, The Hague, The Netherlands
 'Summer of 90', Stux Gallery, New York, USA
- 1989 'Collection of the Professor of Gymnastics', Ateliers 340, Brussels, Belgium
 'Windows in View', Liège, Belgium
 Group Show, Galerij Transit, Leuven, Belgium
- 1988 'Belgicism / Objet Dard', Casa Frollo, Venice, Italy
 'Extreme States – Archives of Passions', Espace 251 Nord, Liège, Belgium
 'On Writing', Centre of Contemporary Art, Arlon, Belgium
- 1987 'Confrontation', Ateliers Ste-Anne, Brussels, Belgium
 De Kruijff Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium
 'In Confidence – In Trust', Middelburg, The Netherlands
- 1986 Galerie 86, Hessenhuis, Antwerp, Belgium
 'On Good Ground', Provincial Museum, Hasselt, Belgium
- 1985 'Art 80', Provincial Museum, Hasselt, Belgium
 Sculpture Triennial, St-Niklaas, Belgium
 'Sculptures', 9915 Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium
 'A.P.E.', Gele Zaal, Ghent, Belgium
- 1984 'The First Chauvinist', Montevideo, Antwerp, Belgium
 Critics' Biennial, ICC, Antwerp, Belgium
- 1983 8–83, Provincial Museum, Hasselt, Belgium; ICC, Antwerp, Belgium
 'Young Belgian Painting', Pv.S.K., Brussels, Belgium
- National Bank of Belgium, Brussels, Belgium
 MUHKA – Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp, Belgium
 Flemish Community, Brussels, Belgium
 SMAK – City Museum for Contemporary Art, Ghent, Belgium
 Court Building, Hasselt, Belgium
 FRAC Languedoc-Roussillon, France
 Municipal Museum of Ixelles – City Museum Elsene, Brussels, Belgium
 Fashion Museum, Hasselt, Belgium
 Parliament of the Flemish Community, Brussels, Belgium
 Education Department, Conscience Boulevard, Brussels, Belgium
 House of the Province of Limburg, Hasselt, Belgium
 Public City Library, Kontich, Belgium
 CC De Adelberg – Culture Centre, Lommel, Belgium
 City Museum, Helmond, The Netherlands
 Museum of Modern Art, Bolzano, Italy
 Wilhelm-Hack-Museum, Ludwigshafen, Germany
 LRM, Hasselt, Belgium
 Perlstein Collection, Paris, France
 Siemens Belgium, Huizingen-Brussels, Belgium
 Caldic Collection, Rotterdam, The Netherlands
 University of Antwerp, Wilrijk/Antwerp, Belgium
 University of Maastricht, The Netherlands
 The Eye Hospital, Rotterdam, The Netherlands
 The Norton Collection, USA
 Palace of Justice, Brussels, Belgium
 Courthouse, Hasselt, Belgium
 European Embassy, Brussels, Belgium

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COVER

Cloud (small)

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