



light

SAMUEL
VANHOEGAERDEN
GALLERY

FRED EERDEKENS

Light, 2014
Aluminium
33 x 66 x 31,5 cm
Private collection, Waterloo, Belgium

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FRED EERDEKENS

COPPER WORKS
ALUMINIUM WORKS
SHADOW PAINTINGS
DRAWINGS
INSTALLATIONS

SAMUEL
VANHOEGAERDEN
GALLERY

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כל העולם הזה
Nothing has changed

Nothing has changed but everything is different, 2014
Copper wire
18 x 140 x 14 cm

but everything is different



What was your reason for creating works of art in copper?

'I studied sculpting and ceramics. I also studied graphics at the same time and particularly enjoyed drawing at the academy. I tried to combine those graphic and sculptural dimensions from the end of the nineteen eighties. I used to paint copper plates, for example, which you would normally use to create engravings or etchings. You're also working with reversal, mirroring, positive and negative in that printing process: the common thread in the works I created at a later stage.'

But the effective sculptures with copper letters were created purely by chance.

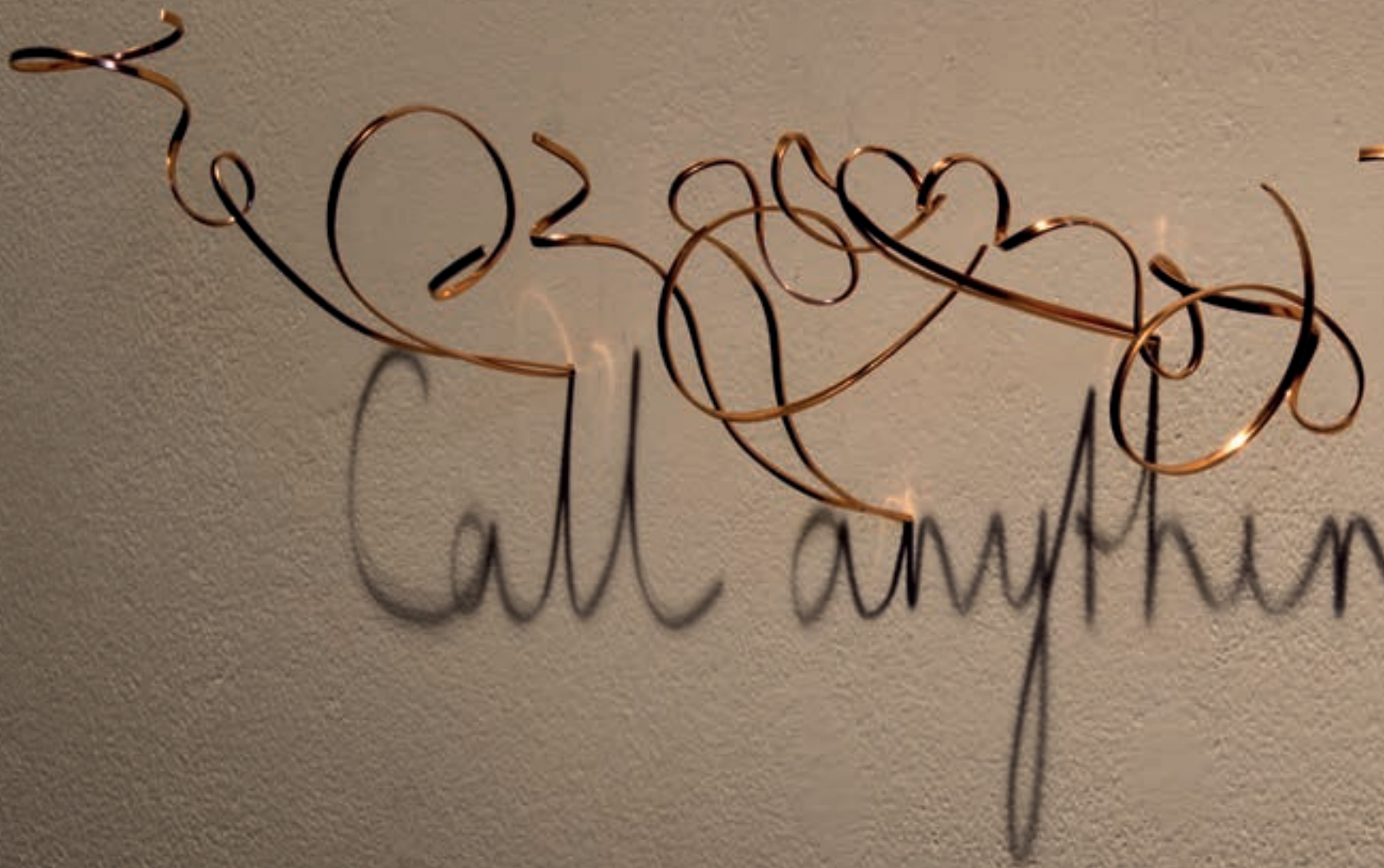
'Yes, indeed. A beam of sunlight shone onto a slither of copper when I was trimming a copper plate in my studio. I suddenly recognised my handwriting in the shadow. A pure coincidence, of course, but something you need to have an eye for. From that moment on I started manipulating copper into shadow letters.'

COPPER WORKS

You exhibited these copper letters in a gallery for the first time in 1987. Were you aware at the time that this would be the new turn in your work?

'No, not at all. I barely had the courage to show off those first copper letters when my gallerist saw them in my studio. He was instantly incredibly enthusiastic. I used

those initial copper works to fold my own quotes and even ones by art historian Ernst Gombrich: 'When we know what to expect, we don't have to look anymore.' Very apt, as my work is all about looking, reading and allowing the unexpected. I also processed words in figurative copper sculptures at a later stage: I used strips of copper to create the outline of a vase, a referral to the brain like a 'vase of memories'. These memories can also serve as a type of imprint of reality. And this imprint is subsequently linked to copper as a material.'



Call anything a target, 2014
Copper wire
18 x 65 x 14 cm



g a target

The unimaginable is unlimited

The unimaginable is unlimited, 2014
Copper wire
18 x 99 x 14 cm
Private collection, Biarritz, France

power of human
able to unlimited

Sliding from one state into another

Sliding from one state into another, 2013
Copper wire
18 x 125 x 14 cm

state into another



bad bad bad, 2015
Aluminium wire
95 x 95 x 30 cm

You started off with creating your shadow sculptures in copper, then subsequently started using aluminium. Why the change?

‘That really wasn’t a conscious choice, it was as if the material offered itself to me. When I discovered that the word ‘minimum’ almost exclusively consisted of spirals, I went looking for a material which would allow me to easily fold this like shadow letters. I came across aluminium: an extremely flexible and light material, plus one which is available in various different levels of thickness.’

In the end, words are still only illusions, even in those aluminium works.

‘In my work I always opt for the detour of the shadow, the suggestion or the illusion. The work only exists by the grace of its shadow. Lights and shadow cancel each other out. Yet both elements are required in my work. Literature science professor Geert Lernout wrote in his work “The Book” that ‘speaking is so easy for people, as it gives them the opportunity to lie’. I’m not saying my work is deceitful, but I do present people with an illusion: I put them on the wrong track. A body of work which is about reality will undoubtedly also sail across the vast land of lies.’

ALUMINIUM WORKS

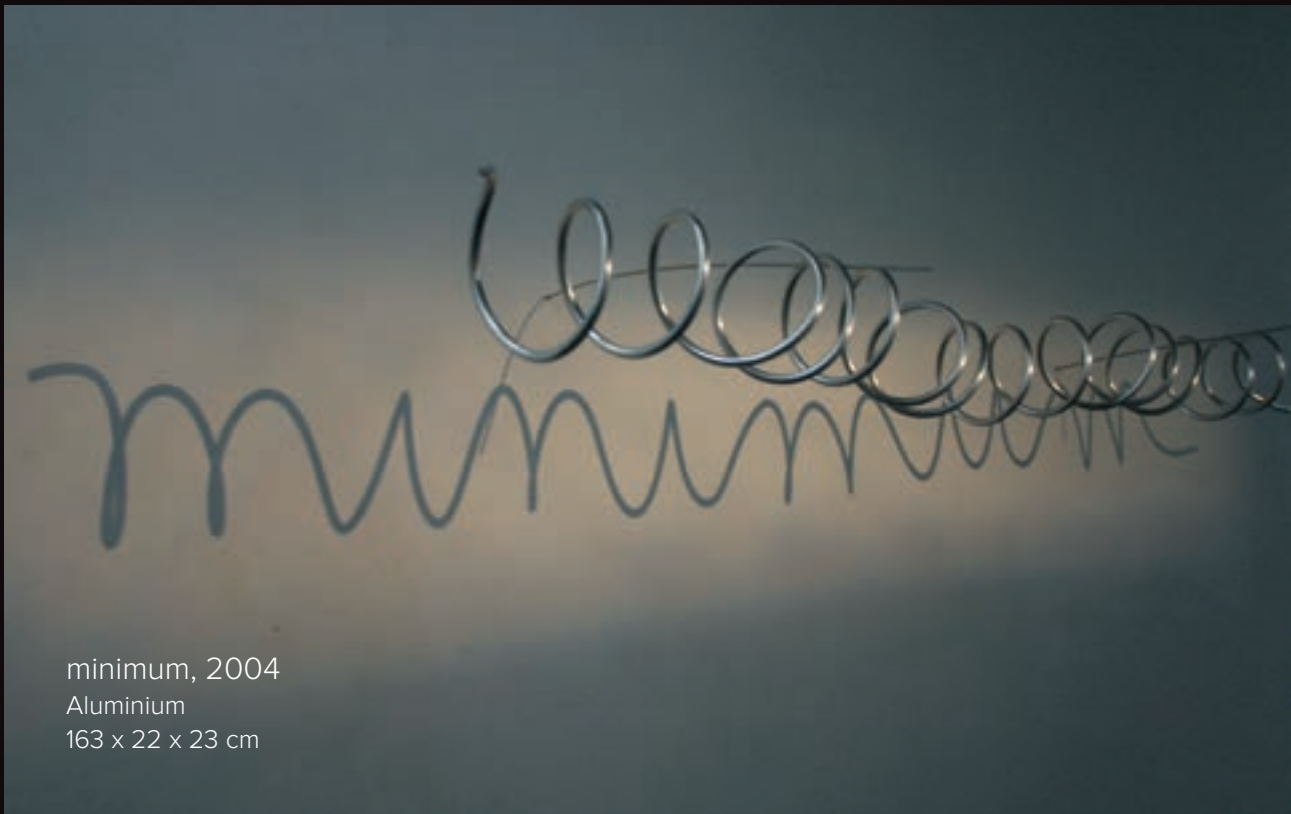
How do you allow chaos or the nonsensical to enter your creations?

‘My sculptures are nonsensical without light. Light is absent in the shade, just like meaning is absent from the aluminium curlicues. One of

my favourite creations is still on display in my studio: it’s a series of aluminium shadow letters, which together form the sentence ‘One looking at it, one looking through’. I purposely jumbled up all the letters, so the separate words are no longer recognisable. The work literally depicts nothing. The language has become chaos.’



memoire, 2012
Aluminium
33 x 66 x 31,5 cm



minimum, 2004
Aluminium
163 x 22 x 23 cm

tourbillon

tourbillon

tourbillon, 2012
Aluminium
102 x 35 x 22cm



Shadow Painting #2, 2014
Steel, lacquer, lightsource
75 x 50 x 48,5 cm

You included art-historical references to Lucio Fontana in your recent series of 'Shadow Paintings'. How do you translate his work sculpturally?

'I feel incredibly inspired by Fontana's sculptural gesture, the splitting of the canvas. It's a radical act to cut through a suggestion of depth in a two-dimensional plane. My 'Shadow Paintings' actually work the other way around. Fontana takes something away by cutting a slit into it, I depart from a three-dimensional iron bar, which I add a twist to. The light source makes the two-dimensional shadow of the bar on the wall look incredibly like Fontana's 'Concetto Spaziale'.

You no longer literally refer to language or words in these Shadow Paintings. How do these creations still fit in with your body of works?

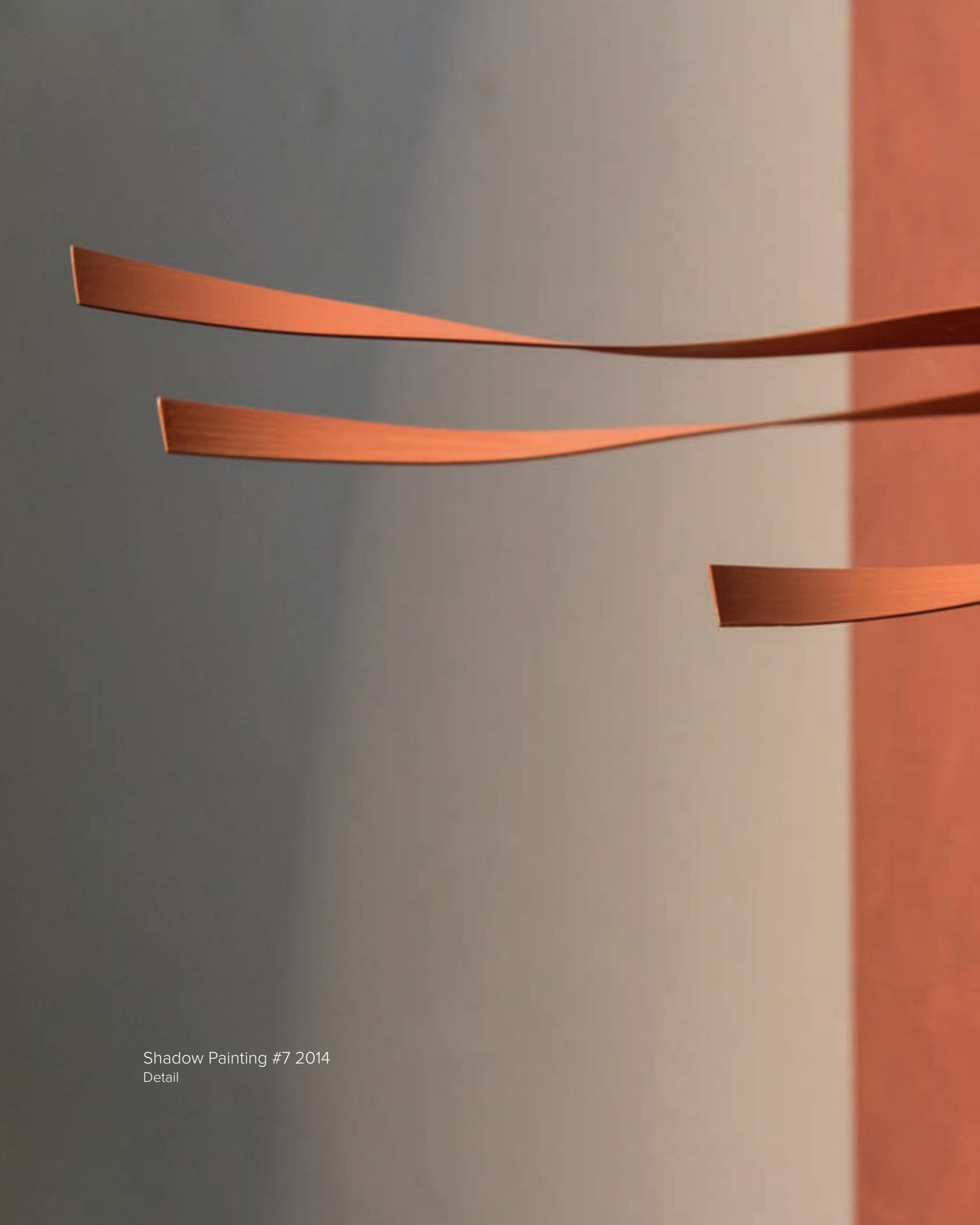
'I indirectly refer to Lucio Fontana in these 'Shadow Paintings'. Or to a formal sculpture within which people 'recognise' Fontana. The artist developed his own iconic language of sculptures, which people can decipher as 'a Fontana'. Just like people can still 'recognise' letters, words, sentences or a language in an amalgam of curlicues. If we see letters in something, suddenly it takes on meaning.'

You do use language in another series of 'Shadow Paintings': these shadow sculptures refer to titles of iconic works of art.

SHADOW PAINTINGS

'Abstraktes Bild' by Gerhard Richter is a good example. I have turned the title of this iconic work of art into shadow letters. The letters refer

to a piece of work you can't see, but which you can evoke mentally. My folded aluminium letters are actually abstract themselves with 'Abstraktes Bild', but the shadow on the wall is figurative. Whilst Richters' work itself naturally remains abstract. You will once again find that reversal and feint effect lurking in here, which you will actually find in all of my work. I like to move around that intersection between reading, looking and sculpting.'

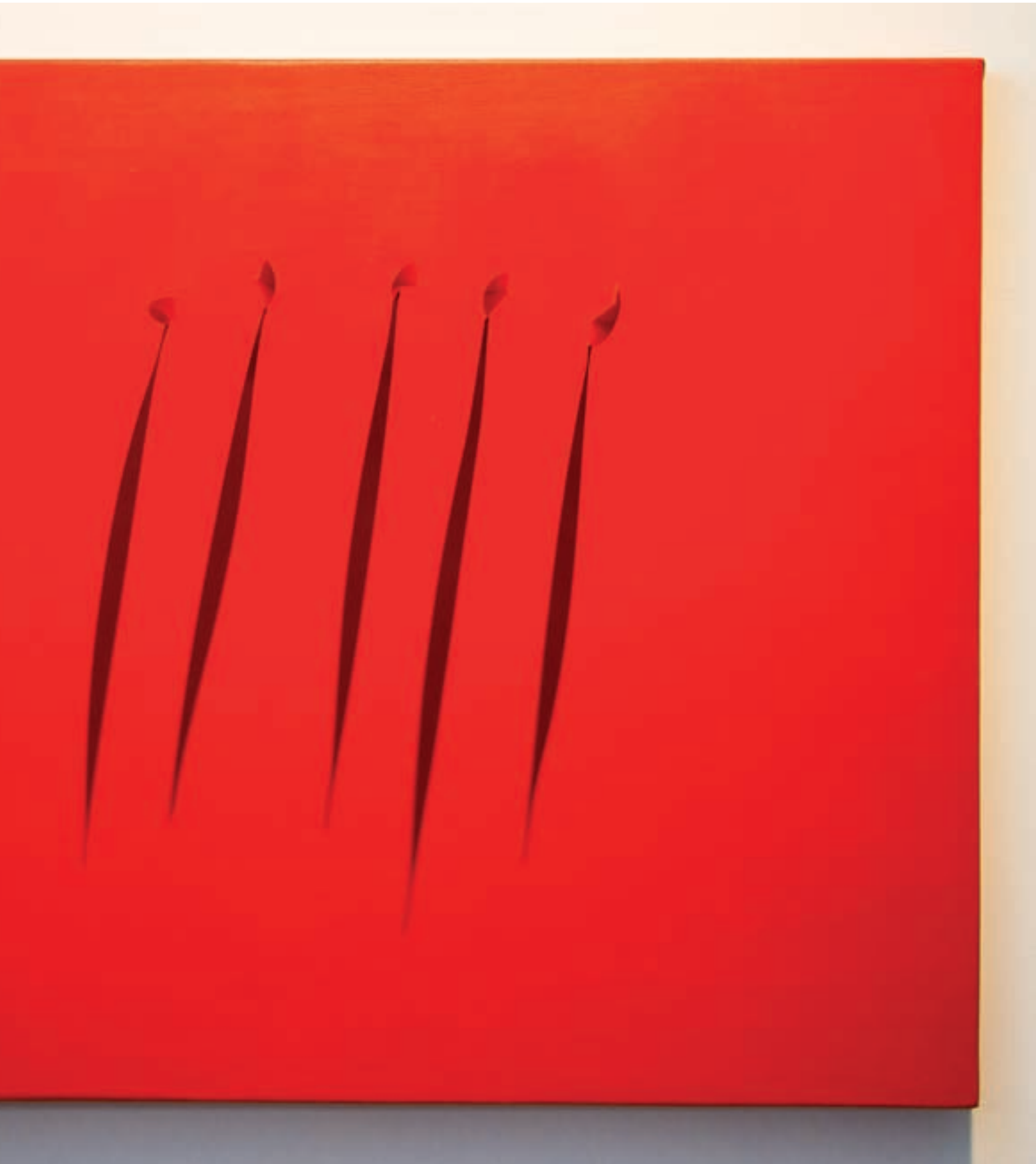


Shadow Painting #7 2014
Detail



Shadow Painting #4, 2014
Wood, canvas, steel,
Acrylic paint, light source
80 x 95 x 37 cm





Shadow Painting #20, 2015
Wood, canvas, steel, acrylic paste, acrylic paint, light source
84 x 65 x 38 cm



The image features a vibrant red background heavily textured with white splatters and streaks, resembling paint or ink. Several thin, wavy black lines are scattered across the surface, some following the direction of the white streaks. The overall effect is one of dynamic, abstract movement.

IN MY HEAD

I NEVER SAID IT WOULD WORK

Just like an author, your preparatory work mainly consists of writing and deleting.

‘And that exclusively happens in my notebooks. This is a continuous process of writing down all of my thoughts. I combine this with sculptural ideas in my notebooks. By no means all of these drawings are suitable for publication. I get completely stuck with most of them. I consider most of them to be incomplete experiments with language and shapes. I sometimes use a particular one, because I consider it to be very special. This will subsequently be given the status of being an independent, completed work of art.’

You have stated the American action painter Jackson Pollock is one of your major influences. So can we consider your work as ‘action writing’?

‘Pollock was my hero during my time at the art academy. When I attentively watched a documentary about Pollock, I noticed he actually writes, rather than paints, with paint. He doesn’t use a brush, but a stick with dripping paint. His movements too are not like other painters, but more like those of a writer. His canvas isn’t even positioned vertically, but horizontally like a piece of paper lying down. I see an abstract way of writing in his work. Just like me.’

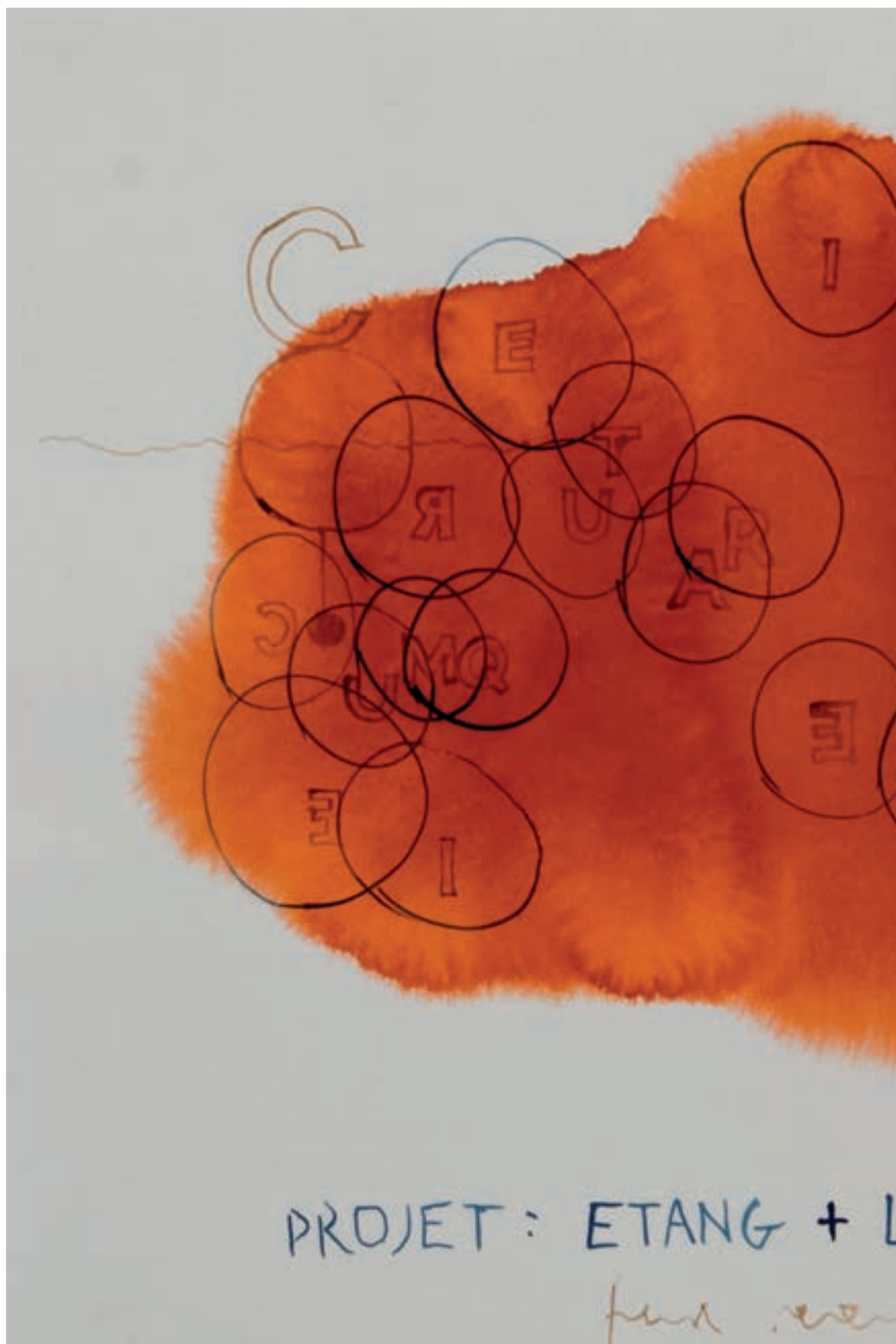
DRAWINGS

You sometimes compare your own sculptures and drawings with ‘potential literature’.

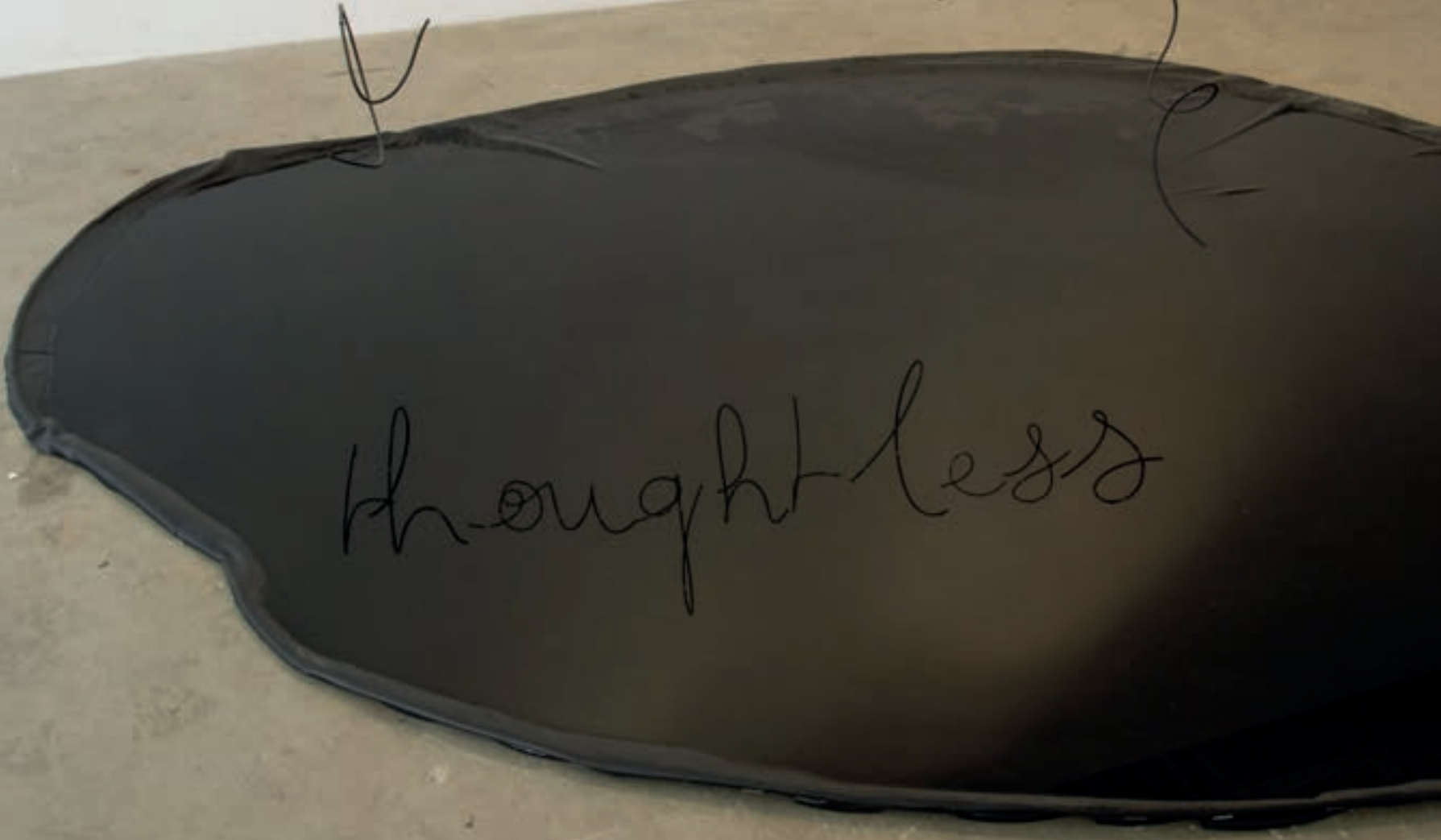
‘Oulipo is an abbreviation of ‘Ouvroir de Littérature Potentielle’. This was a French movement around the writer George Perec, who used an experimental, associative writing technique. I do similar language experiments in my notebooks. My work is formally about language. I don’t rely on what people feel when they look at my work, but instead on what they think. Language is an instrument for expressing feelings. But you definitely need your wits about you when you work on decoding the characters. My art is therefore mainly decoded using ratio.

In My Head, 2013
Watercolour on paper
64,5 x 93,7 cm

Projet Etang, 2013
Watercolour on paper
46,5 x 30 cm



Handwritten scribbles and symbols on a white wall, including a large 'a', a 'y', and various abstract lines and curves.



Thoughtless

Thoughtless 2015
Aluminium, water, rubber
300 x 400 x 200 cm

You use language in a sculptural way in your work. How did language sneak into your creations?

'I had a teacher who used to play home-made 'spoken word' recordings during the model drawing lessons during my time at the Higher School of Art in Hasselt. I didn't enjoy the traditional method of drawing, but subconsciously I started writing words and letters on my sketches. This fascination with words always remained. The whimsical shadow calligraphy which I have been folding out of aluminium or copper since the end of the nineteen eighties always makes me think of how words would come out of a larynx. This is roughly what the physical word vibrations look like in my imagination. Those vibrations are abstract, just like my curlicues are illegible too. They literally mean nothing if you can't read.

Without a source of light or shadow, they can only refer to themselves, like any abstract piece of work. And not to anything else, outside of the work.'

You also experimented with language in sculptures made with textile, wood, glass and even food.

'I created some three dimensional installations with double shadows at the end of the nineteen eighties. The words 'God' or 'Ego', 'Icon' or 'Idea' would appear as the lighting changed. I also experimented with coloured glass, which I painted with hydrogen fluoride. This made certain zones within the glass take on a matt appearance. The words I painted would only become visible once a light was shone on them.'

INSTALLATIONS

Do you feel like a writer or a sculptor?

'Language is the main constant element in my work. I also continuously write in notebooks or sketchbooks, which I always give an 'arty' name. I sometimes write down random thoughts, sometimes poetry and sometimes word games. I occasionally use some of these language experiments in a sculpture or installation at a later stage. Others just remain random thoughts which I don't do anything else with. Other pages may become fully fledged drawings, whereby I combine language and images. Writing words down makes them tangible. Just like the shadows make my works of art legible.'



Rechtlijnig, 2012
Aluminium, polyester, goldleaf
200 x 1600 x 150 cm
Gerechtsgebouw Hasselt, Belgium





Big Bang 2013
Glass
Ø 30 cm

Selected Individual Exhibitions

- 1984 9915 Gallery, Antwerp (B)
1985 ICC, Antwerp (B)
1986 New Math Gallery, New York, NY (USA)
1987 Polynero Gallery, Antwerp (B)
1988 Museum of Modern Art, Brussels (B)
1989 Galerie Von der Milwe, Aachen (D)
Galerie 175, Brussels (B)
1990 Stux Gallery, New York, NY (USA)
Dorothy Goldeen Gallery, Santa Monica, Ca (USA)
Galerie Bébert, Rotterdam (NL)
1991 Museum of Installation, London (GB)
Galeria Museo/Museum Galerie, Bolzano (It)
1992 Hi Outsider, KC Il Ventuno, Hasselt (B)
Lokaal 01, Breda (NL)
Galerie Von der Milwe, Aachen (D)
James Van Damme Gallery, Antwerp (B)
1993 Vlaams CC De Brakke Grond, Amsterdam (NL)
1994 Utopia of a private language Provinciaal Museum Z33 Hasselt (B)
1995 James Van Damme Gallery, Antwerp (B)
1996 At last something real, Provinciaal Museum Z33, Hasselt (B)
1997 Teveel innerlijke stem en echte beelden, Z33, Hasselt (B)
1998 Holy Spirit/Come Home, James Van Damme Gallery, Brussels (B)
1999 James Van Damme Gallery, Brussels (B)
2000 Golden Delicious, Jadoul Fruit Storage, Gingelom (B)
2001 James Van Damme Gallery, Brussels (B)
2002 The Retina Diamond, MuHKA Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp (B)
Aumônerie St-Jacques, Gordes (F)
2003 Vouwen, CC De Bogaard, St-Truiden (B)
Spencer Brownstone Gallery, New York, NY (USA)
2004 Galerie Grita Insam, Vienna (A)
2005 I hate words, Taché-Lévy Gallery, Brussels (B)
2005 Forever, Spencer Brownstone Gallery, New York, NY (USA)
2006 -----

2010 I am, Twig Gallery, Brussels (B)
2010 Close your eyes... Samuel Vanhoegaerden Gallery Knokke (B),
11/12-16/01/11
2012 In search for symbols, Samuel Vanhoegaerden Gallery, Knokke (B),
31/03-13/05/12
Seen not seen, Magda Danysz Gallery, Shanghai (Ch), 8/12-26/01/13

2013 Rémanences, Fred Eerdeken at Magda Danysz Gallery , Paris (F) 20/4-8/6
Poetic meanings, Gallery Isabelle Van Den Eynde, Dubai (UAE)
2014 Mirages, Fred Eerdeken, Galerie Pascal Lansberg, Paris (F), 06/03-18/04
Sliding from one state into another, Art Museum, Sharjah (UAE)
Mind Beats, Samuel Vanhoegaerden Gallery, Knokke (BE)
2015 Solo booth Art Brussels 2015, Samuel Vanhoegaerden Gallery (BE)
One looking at it One looking through, Spencer Brownstone Gallery,
New York, NY, 29/4-12/6

Selected group Exhibitions

- 1983 8-83, Prov. Museum, Hasselt (B); ICC, Antwerp (B)
"eune Peinture Belge", P.v.S.K., Brussels (B)
- 1984 De Eerste Chauvinistische, Montevideo, Antwerp (B)
Biënnale van de Kritiek, ICC, Antwerp (B)
- 1985 Kunst 80, Prov. Museum, Hasselt (B)
Sculpture Triënnale, St-Niklaas (B)
Sculptures, Galerie 9915, Antwerp (B)
A.P.E., Gele Zaal, Gent (B)
- 1986 Galerie 86, Hessenhuis, Antwerp (B)
Op Goede Grond, Prov. Museum, Hasselt (B)
- 1987 Confrontation, Ateliers Ste-Anne, Brussels (B)
Galerie De Kruijff, Antwerp (B)
In Vertrouwen - In Trust, Middelburg (NL)
- 1988 Belgicisme/Objet Dard, Casa Frollo, Venice (It)
Etats Limites - Archives des Passions, Espace 251 Nord, Liège (B)
A propos d' écriture, Centre d'Art Contemporain, Arlon (B)
- 1989 Kolekcja Profesora Gimnastyki, Ateliers 340, Brussels (B)
Fenêtres en Vue , Liège (B)
Group show, Galerij Transit, Leuven (B)
- 1990 Burengerucht, Belgian Artists, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (NI)
Zoersel 1990, Zoersel (B)
Belgicisme Belicht, Galerie Nouvelles Images, Den Haag (NI)
Summer of 90, Stux Gallery, New York, NY (USA)
- 1991 Le Merveilleux et la Périphérie, Liège (B)
Kunst in Vlaanderen, nu - Art in Flanders, now, MUHKA, Antwerp (B)
- 1992 Zufall als Prinzip, Wilhelm-Hack-Museum, Ludwigshafen/Rh. (D)
Kunst in Vlaanderen - Art in Flanders, Bergkerk, Deventer (NI)
Woord en Beeld in de Belgische Kunst van A tot Z - Word and Image in Belgian Art from A to Z, MUHKA, Antwerp (B)
Een Verzameling-Verstilde Momenten, Caldic Collectie, Rotterdam (NI)
L'Objet du Débat, Espace 251 Nord, Liège (B)
- 1993 Confrontaties/Confrontations, Elzenveld, Antwerpen (B); Musée Communal d'Ixelles, Brussels (B)
- 1994 Translucent Writings, Neuberger Museum Purchase, NY, NY, (USA)
Kunstwerken verworven door de Vlaamse Gemeenschap - Artworks for the Flemish Community, MUHKA, Antwerp (B)
Memoria e Desejo, Palacio Nacional de Sintra, Sintra (P)
Translucent Writings, USF Contemporary Art Museum, Tampa, Fl., (USA)
- 1995 De Kollektie - The Collection, MUHKA, Antwerp (B)
- 1996 Licht en Beweging - Light and Movement, K.M.S.K.-ICC, Antwerp (B)
Meir, As voor kunst, KMSK - ICC, Antwerp (B)
- 1997 Er gebeurt iets...- Something happens..., Various Locations, Lier (B)
Expoarte, Guadalajara, (Mexico)
- 1998 Sterk zij de tale der woorden - @rt words-@rt works, Brugge (B)
@rt words-@rt works, Galerie De Lege Ruimte, Gent (B)
- 1999 Museum onder water, Provinciaal Museum, Hasselt (B)

2000 Speelhoven, Domein Speelhoven, Aarschot (B), 9/9 - 8/10
 2002 Mobile Phonics, Z33, Hasselt (B), 10/11/2002 - 05/01/2003
 2003 Five, Galerie Kusseneers, Lier (B), 08/02 - 09/03
 The Ambiguity of the Image. Belgian art now, Art Athina, Athens (GR), 27/03 - 31/03
 Tussen hemel en aarde, Schildehof, De Pont, Schilde (B), 12/04 - 02/11
 2004 Armory Show, New York, NY, 11/03
 ABC2004 – Antwerp Book Capital, work i.c.w. Tom Lanoye, in public spaces,
 Antwerp (B), 07/05 - 31/12
 2005 Drawings/Works on paper, Spencer Brownstone Gallery, New York (US),
 13/01 - 26/02
 Hot Re-Strike, De Warande, Turnhout (B), 03/02 - 30/04
 Shadowplay – Light and shadow in contemporary art, Kunsthallen
 Brandts Klaedefabrik Odense (DK), 28/05 - 28/08; Kunsthalle Kiel (D), 18/09 - 27/11;
 Landesmuseum Linz (A), 26/01/2006 - 01/05/2006
 VOLTAshow 01, Voltahalle, Basel (CH), 14/06 - 19/06
 Lichtkunst aus Kunstlicht, Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie,
 Karlsruhe (D), 19/11/2005–23/04/2006
 Pijn (Pain), Museum Dr Guislain, Gent (B), 08/10/2005–30/04
 2008 Septiformis, St-Gudula Cathedral Brussels(B), 4/10–24/11
 Ombres & Lumières, Château de Nyon, Nyon(CH), 30/10–29/03/2009
 2009 This is our Earth 1+2, Thurn&Taxis, Brussel (10/09-24/04/2010
 La photographie n'est pas de l'art; The Perlstein Collection, Museum Elsene
 Brussels 29/10-10/01/2010
 2010 Exhibitionism, The East Wing Collection IX, Courtauld Institute London (UK),
 23/01/2010-14/07/2011
 La photographie n'est pas de l'art; la collection Perlstein,
 Musée d'art moderne et contemporain de Strasbourg (F) (05/02-25/04
 Coup de Ville, St-Niklaas (B), 11-09/10-30/10
 2011 Grandville - un autre monde - un autre temps Musée Félicien Rops,
 Namur (B), 25/6-11/09
 Grandville - un autre monde - un autre temps, Le Musée du Temps
 Besançon (Fr) 25/11/2011 -04/03/2012
 In - and outside - writing De Voorkamer Lier (B) 21/05-02/07
 Twijfelgrens Haspengouw-Borgloon, Z-OUT, Z-33 Limburg (B)
 2012 Words and dreams, Galerie Magda Danysz, Paris (F), 17/03-21/04/12
 Tesi Samanunga, paralelevent Manifesta 9, Bilzen, (B) 02/06-16/09
 ManifestAanwezig, paralelevent Manifesta 9, Kasteel Oud-Rekem (B),
 02/06-30/09
 2013 Poetics and meanings, Mohammed Kazem and Fred Eerdeken, Gallery
 Isabelle Van Den Eynde, Dubai, 07/05-08/06
 Museum to Scale 1/7, Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels (B),
 12/10-02/02/14
 2014 Health, Something of value, National Bank of Belgium, Brussels, (B),
 21/01-15/03
 2015 Aandacht! Aandacht!, De Warande, Turnhout, (B)
 Vormidable, Beelden aan Zee, The Hague, (NL)

Works in Public and Corporate Collections

Nationale Bank van België- National Bank of Belgium, Brussels (B)
MUHKA - Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp (B)
Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap - Flemish Community, Brussels (B)
SMAK - City Museum for Contemporary Art, Ghent (B)
Court Building, Hasselt (B)
Frac Languedoc Roussillon, (F)
Musée Communal d'Ixelles - City Museum Elsene, Brussels (B)
Modemuseum - Fashion Museum, Hasselt (B)
Vlaams Parlement - Parliament of the Flemish Community, Brussels (B)
Ministerie voor Onderwijs - Education Department, Conscience-bdg, Brussels (B)
Provinciehuis Limburg - House of the Province of Limburg, Hasselt (B)
Gemeentelijke Openbare Bibliotheek - Public City Library, Kontich (B)
CC De Adelberg - Culture Centre, Lommel (B)
Gemeentemuseum - City Museum, Helmond (NL)
Museo d'Arte Moderna - Museum of Modern Art, Bolzano (It)
Wilhelm-Hack-Museum, Ludwigshafen (D)
LRM, Hasselt (B)
Perlstein Collection, Paris (F)
Siemens Belgium, Huizingen-Brussels (B)
Caldic Collection, Rotterdam (NL)
UA-University Antwerp, Wilrijk Antwerp (B)
University Maastricht (NL)
Het Oogziekenhuis, Rotterdam (NL)
The Norton Collection, USA
Justitiepaleis, Brussel (B)
Courthouse, Hasselt (B)
Europe Embassy, Brussels (B)

BIO

Fred Eerdekens (*1951) is a visual artist, living and working in Hasselt, Belgium.

He studied Sculpture and Graphic Art at 'Provincial Higher Institute of Art and Architecture in Hasselt, and was professor at PHL (now: MAD Faculty) in Hasselt and HISK in Antwerp. Eerdekens mainly works in three dimensions in a wide variety of materials with the components light and language.

The basis for his works are the texts he writes himself. He playfully generates opposite notions in which words contradict each other and meanings are shifted. His very sculptural body of work provides the impetus for a world which can only be imagined through words. In the shadows, where the light fails, a story of things lacking is often told, sometimes short, sometimes lyrical or longing. Besides these sculptural works, Eerdekens draws in a variety of techniques and materials, but most often in watercolour.

Fred Eerdekens is represented by galleries in Knokke, Paris, New York and Dubai.

More information can be found on www.fred-eerdekens.be

Plus que parfait, 2014

Copper wire

55 x 18 x 14 cm

Private collection, Brussels, Belgium

plus que parfait