



**JACOB HASHIMOTO**  
**THE ECLIPSE**

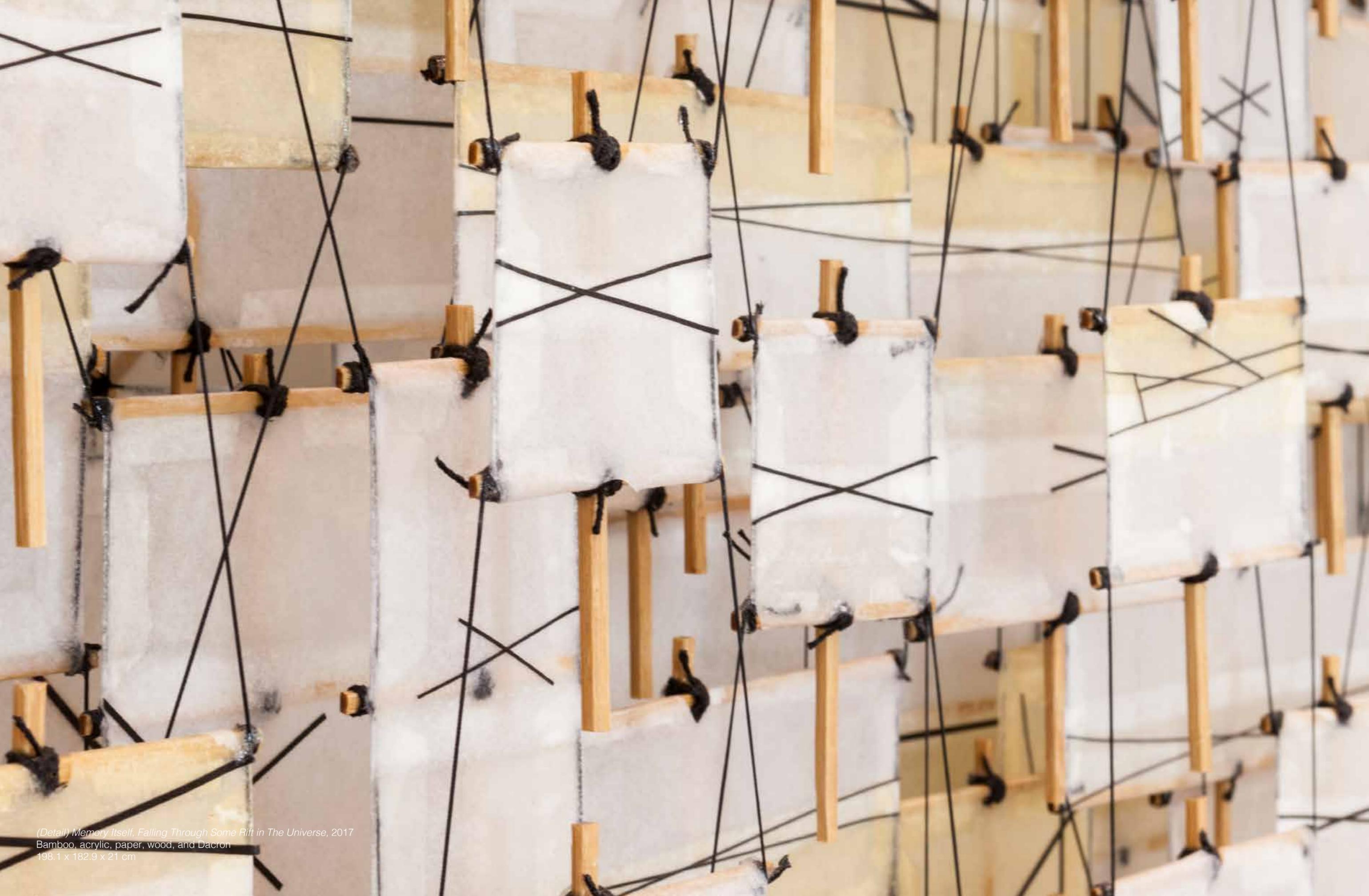


*(Detail) In The End, Darkness Isn't The Thing to Worry About, 2017*  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
81.3 x 68.6 x 19.1 cm

**JACOB HASHIMOTO**

THE ECLIPSE

Curated By Thomas Arnold



*(Detail) Memory Itself, Falling Through Some Rift in The Universe, 2017*  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
198.1 x 182.9 x 21 cm

FIELD WORK/CLOUD STUDY:  
THE ART OF JACOB HASHIMOTO

By Murtaza Vali



*The Eclipse*, 2017  
Cotton, paper, bamboo, silkscreen print  
Installation view - Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai

For two decades, Jacob Hashimoto has been constructing elaborate environmental and sculptural installations and complex wall reliefs composed of hundreds and thousands of small, light-weight kites, made from rice paper attached to bamboo frames. Hashimoto uses this trademark technique to create representations of landscape that straddle the threshold between the natural and the artificial, the real and the virtual, that evoke our physical surroundings but simultaneously foreground their own mode of construction. His labor-intensive process of building form, surface and space through the repetition and accumulation of smaller units produces a kind of perverse hand-crafted pixilation, approximating the low-res digital look of early video games through a method that acknowledges tradition and remains resolutely analog.

As Hashimoto has emphasized repeatedly in interviews, his generation experienced firsthand the shift from analog to digital media.<sup>1</sup> For this group, the dematerialization and digitization of all aspects of contemporary culture was not simply the status quo but a profound and lived transformation. Digital technologies have gradually eroded our conception of the natural landscape as fixed and continuous parceling it, instead, into bits, bytes and pixels. We increasingly encounter representations of landscape and space as fragmented, mutable and mutating. Through his diverse oeuvre, Hashimoto seeks to investigate how this technological and epistemological sea change has transformed how we perceive and picture the world around us, how we view, imagine and construct both space and landscape. Possibly indebted to an art school obsession with the work of Mark Rothko, Hashimoto also has an abiding interest in atmosphere or the atmospheric, or what Erik Morse has suggestively termed the “poetics of air.”<sup>2</sup> His approach to nature and landscape is not mimetic. In both his two- and three-dimensional works he attempts, instead, to capture and convey the phenomenological conditions of the natural world.

## SCREEN

Hashimoto trained as a painter and unsurprisingly his two-dimensional wall pieces uncannily synthesize various tropes of modernist painting, from Rothko’s moody fields of saturated color to the hard edges and strong colors of geometric abstraction, from the structural and chromatic austerity of monochromes to the unrelenting dynamism of all-over compositions. To create these works Hashimoto strings kites of different shapes and sizes together into columns stretched taut between wooden pegs. The kites function as brushstrokes, as premade if not entirely readymade marks, and their deployment disguises the artist’s hand by limiting gestural expressivity. Two parallel rows of equally spaced pegs provide each relief with an

<sup>1</sup> Luca Massimo Barbero, ““What makes nature feel like nature?”: Jacob Hashimoto’s Landscapes of Vision,” Jacob Hashimoto | V, Verona, Studio la Città, 2009, pp. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Erik Morse, “Jacob Hashimoto and the poetics of air,” Jacob Hashimoto 16.05.2015, Verona, Studio la Città, 2015, n.p.

underlying grid structure. However, Hashimoto’s individual units revolt against the tyrannical strictures of the system. Varying size, shape, color and pattern introduce irregularity at the level of the unit. Orthogonality becomes impossible when the individual elements have more than four sides. As corners smoothen into circles and ellipses, the rectilinear is rejected altogether.

These columns are stacked and layered on top of one another, extending out more than half a foot from the wall, creating a complex field of shifting planes and varying depths. The resulting overlaps and shadows produce a vibrancy that remains internal to the frame. The mode of construction literally introduces air and light around and in between the individual kites, and the works feel effervescent, especially when the individual units are circular. Pictorial elements—lines, shapes, forms, patterns—seem to bubble up to the surface. Air, light and shadow penetrate line, form and color producing subtle tonal variations, introducing a sort of dematerialized texture, a quality that is most noticeable in monochromatic compositions, where the field seems to breathe gently or buzz incessantly. In *Memory Itself, Falling Through some Rift in the Universe* (2017), Hashimoto skillfully and subtly varies not just the size and orientation of the square and rectangular kites, but modulates their tone by combining at least two slightly different values of neutral/white rice paper. A large disintegrating field composed of black quadrilaterals with delicate white borders, *Hugging a Black Hole, Hoping One Day to Forget* (2017) pulses and vibrates, the visual and formal fragmentation approximating the obliteration of not just body and self, but also memory and meaning, that proximity to a black hole might entail.

Hashimoto is continually negotiating a tricky balance between the part and the whole. Often branded with strongly graphic motifs, individual kites display a strong degree of visual autonomy. Yet, when repeated and concentrated they dissolve into fields of like (and unlike) color and pattern. Overwhelmed by complexity, the eye and mind tries desperately to settle on some sort of graphic and chromatic mean. Though hardly flat these works are essentially frontal. Extended across individual kites, linear and graphic motifs—like crisscrossing black lines in *This Lost Love, Wonderfully Unwound into a Spacious Dream of Freedom* (2017) or the irregular white cross with black outline at the center of *The Invisible, Immutable Geographies of Time* (2017) align themselves into a static image when one stands squarely in front of image. A couple of steps to either side and the motif begins to disintegrate into noise. Contingent on perspective and viewing position, composition is never fixed; it is always just a momentary alignment in a field of constant flux. Passages or whole compositions made up entirely of densely patterned and vividly colored kites introduce an additional degree of entropy. In *Fragments of the Sun Frozen in this Strangely Fretted Light* (2017), a riotous field of colorful plaids, checks and stripes, sheer ornamental and chromatic excess overwhelms all of the eye’s attempts to anchor itself, setting it adrift on a churning sea of color and pattern.

## SPACE

Emanating up and out like a tornado from the far corner of the cavernous main gallery Hashimoto's *The Eclipse* (2017) is made up of thousands of circular black and white kites carefully suspended from the ceiling. The nebulous form appears self-generative, as if growing organically through the gradual but endless replication of a single basic unit, a form that is always in a state of becoming. Unbound and immaterial, the cloud is a common representation of the natural sublime throughout art history. As Hubert Damisch has suggestively argued in *A Theory of /Cloud/: Towards a History of Painting*, the cloud profoundly troubles the rational, linear order of perspective, and as an index of the irrational and formless it enables the imagination and realization of new solutions for pictorial space.<sup>3</sup> Placing 'cloud' in between slashes, Damisch designates it as a semiological tool, a sign that can signify both iconographically and structurally, which seems quite relevant for understanding Hashimoto's practice.

Hashimoto has made sculptural installations of the firmament in the past. *Infinite Expanse of Sky* (1998), an early work begun when he was still in art school, consists of a gentle undulating canopy of rectangular kites each featuring cartoony white clouds floating in fields of deep blue sky. Rising gradually up from the ground to fill the ceiling overhead the installation evokes a cloudy summer day. However, its artifice remains clear, conveyed through the repeated pictorial element of floating clouds, which recall the iconic scrolling backdrop of the Super Mario Brothers video game. Structurally similar but composed entirely of white ellipses, *Superabundant Atmosphere* (2005), resembles a luminous cloudbank, dense but buoyant, monumental but ungrounded, the kind of pleasing soft cover that tempers but does not entirely obscure the light and warmth of the sun. In contrast, encountering *The Eclipse* is a truly sublime experience, evoking both a sense of beauty and dread. The floating overhang of rice paper kites simultaneously shelters but also towers over us like a cresting wave about to crash down. Occupying the center, the imposing black form eclipses the radiant white mass. Like a dark cloud looming on the horizon, it is a harbinger of impending and inevitable doom, a malignancy that evokes the growing specter of industrial pollution and the increasing severity of meteorological events as we tumble towards an environmental apocalypse.

If, as one critic has suggested, the loosely interwoven structure of Hashimoto's wall reliefs evoke the networked nature of the Internet,<sup>4</sup> then *The Eclipse* might picture the digital cloud, the invisible, and hence omnipresent, accumulation of data and information we increasingly contribute to and rely on. In some sense, *The Eclipse* is not, or not only, a digitized abstraction of a natural phenomenon,

<sup>3</sup> Hubert Damisch, *A Theory of /Cloud/: Toward a History of Painting*, Janet Lloyd (trans.), Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Wilson, "Jacob Hashimoto: Mary Boone Gallery | Uptown," Artforum.com, accessed December 10, 2017. <https://www.artforum.com/picks/id=23055>

it is a manifestation of our otherwise immaterial digital landscape itself. While technological advances continue to shrink the size of the interfaces through which we access this cloud, tricking us into feeling untethered and buoyant, the size and cost of the hidden infrastructure that enables it grows exponentially. The ominous black mass serves as a reminder of what the true cost of our digital freedom, of being able to access our lives anywhere and anytime, is.

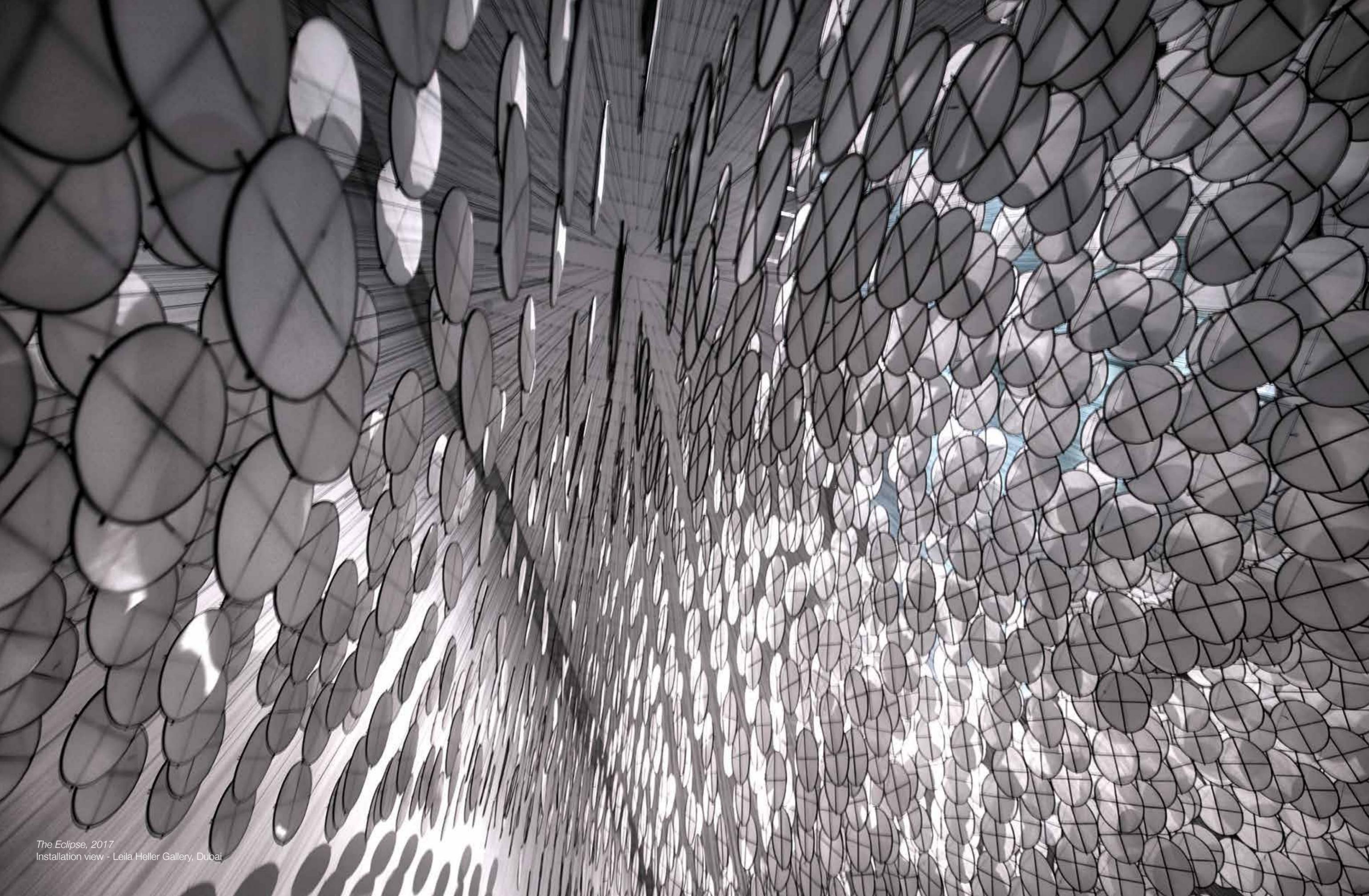
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What Hashimoto manages to picture in both his two and three-dimensional works is potential energy, a delicate vibrancy that can be felt but not seen, a type of dynamism that is non-transformative, that remains materially and formally contained. He is interested in vibrations not movements, in change of microscopic amplitudes. He materializes the calm before a storm, its particular charge. He mimics the rhythm of the breathing, beating body. Vibrancy of this sort animates those areas of the temporal and spatial scale that lie beyond human perception. It characterizes the subatomic and microscopic to the geological and cosmological. These are the phenomenological, perceptual and aesthetic limits of Hashimoto's singular practice.

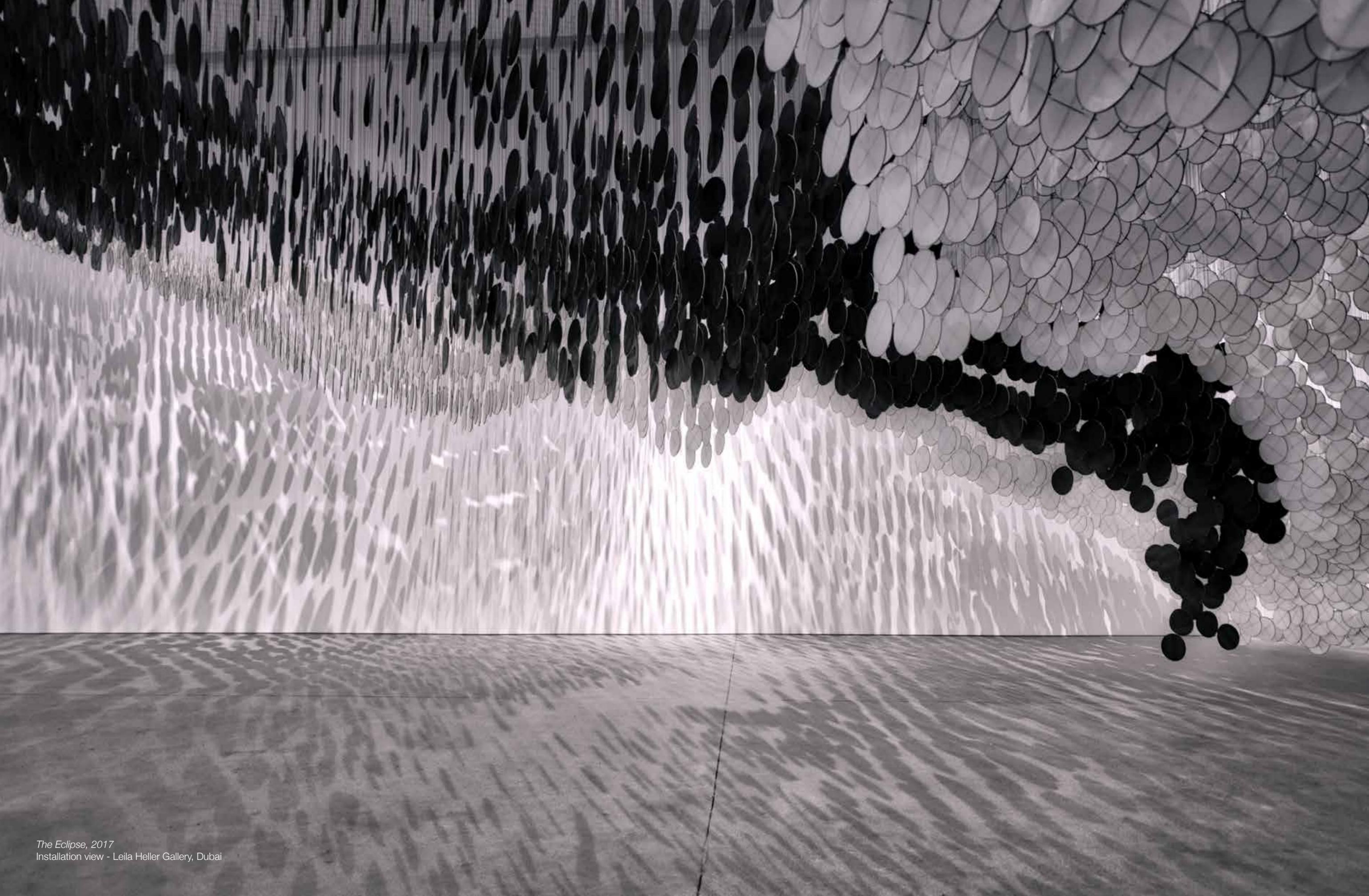




*The Eclipse, 2017*  
Installation view - Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai



*The Eclipse, 2017*  
Installation view - Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai



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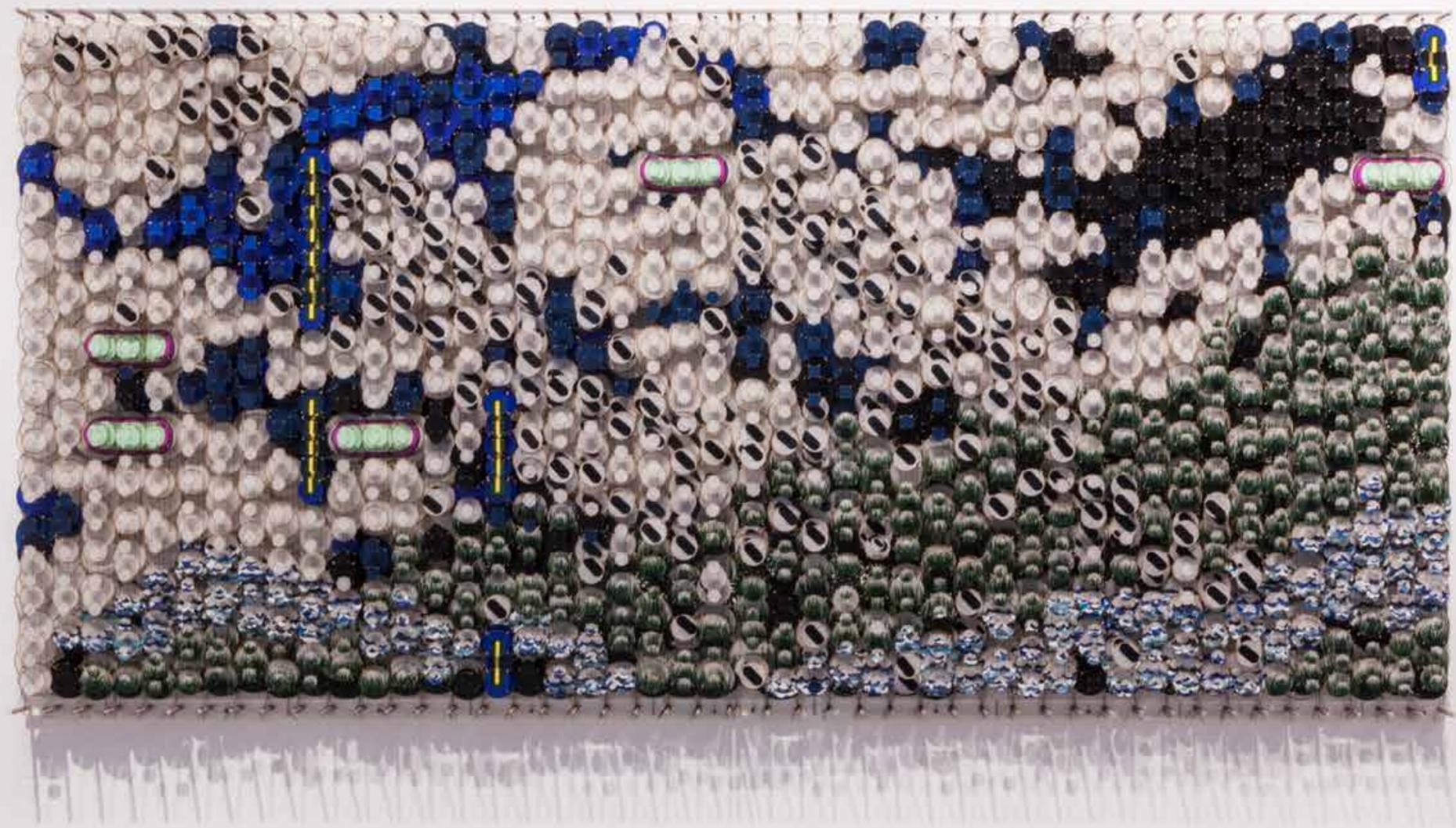
*(Detail) The Answer to all Questions Makes the World Vanish, 2017*

*The Answer to all Questions Makes the World Vanish, 2017*  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
213.4 x 426.7 x 21 cm

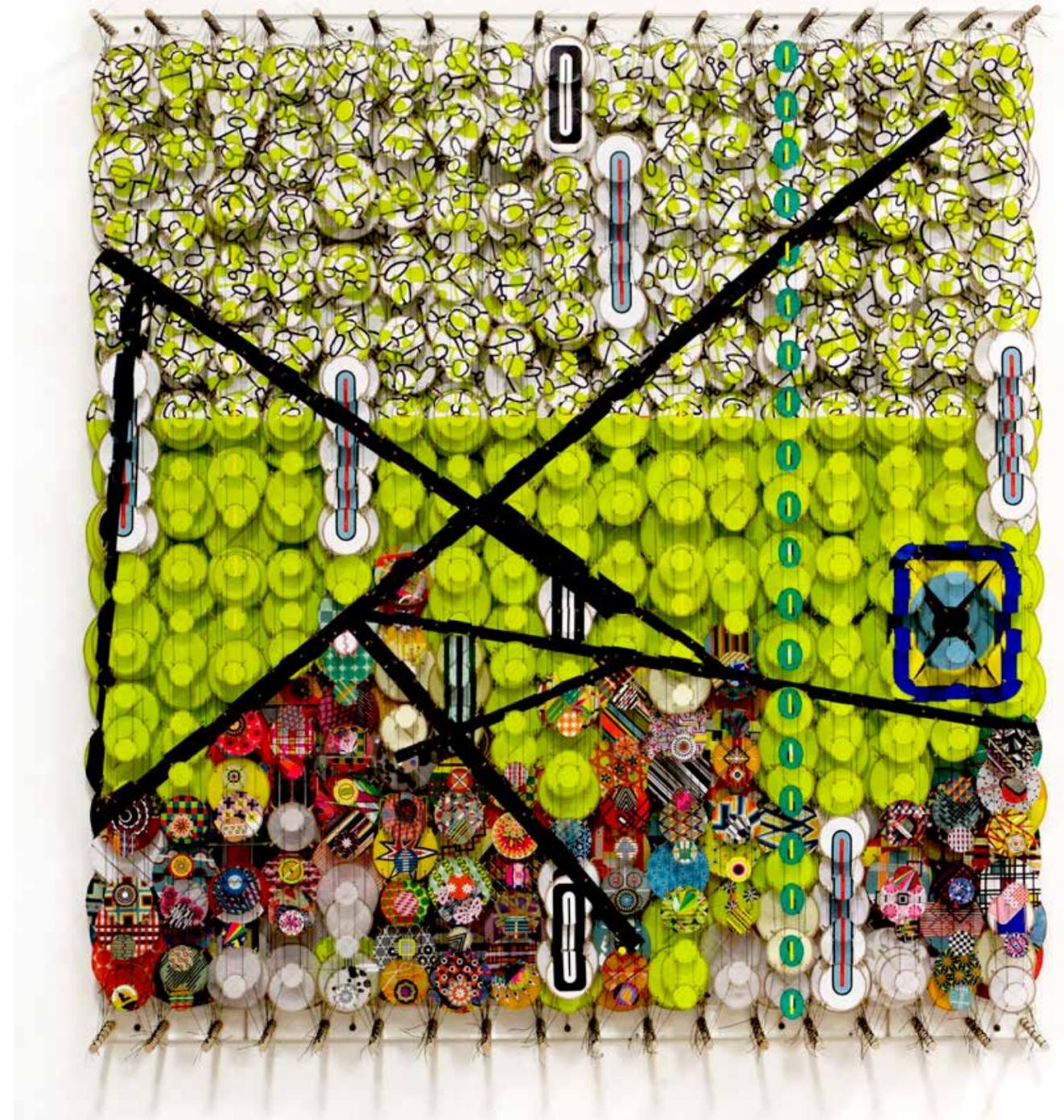




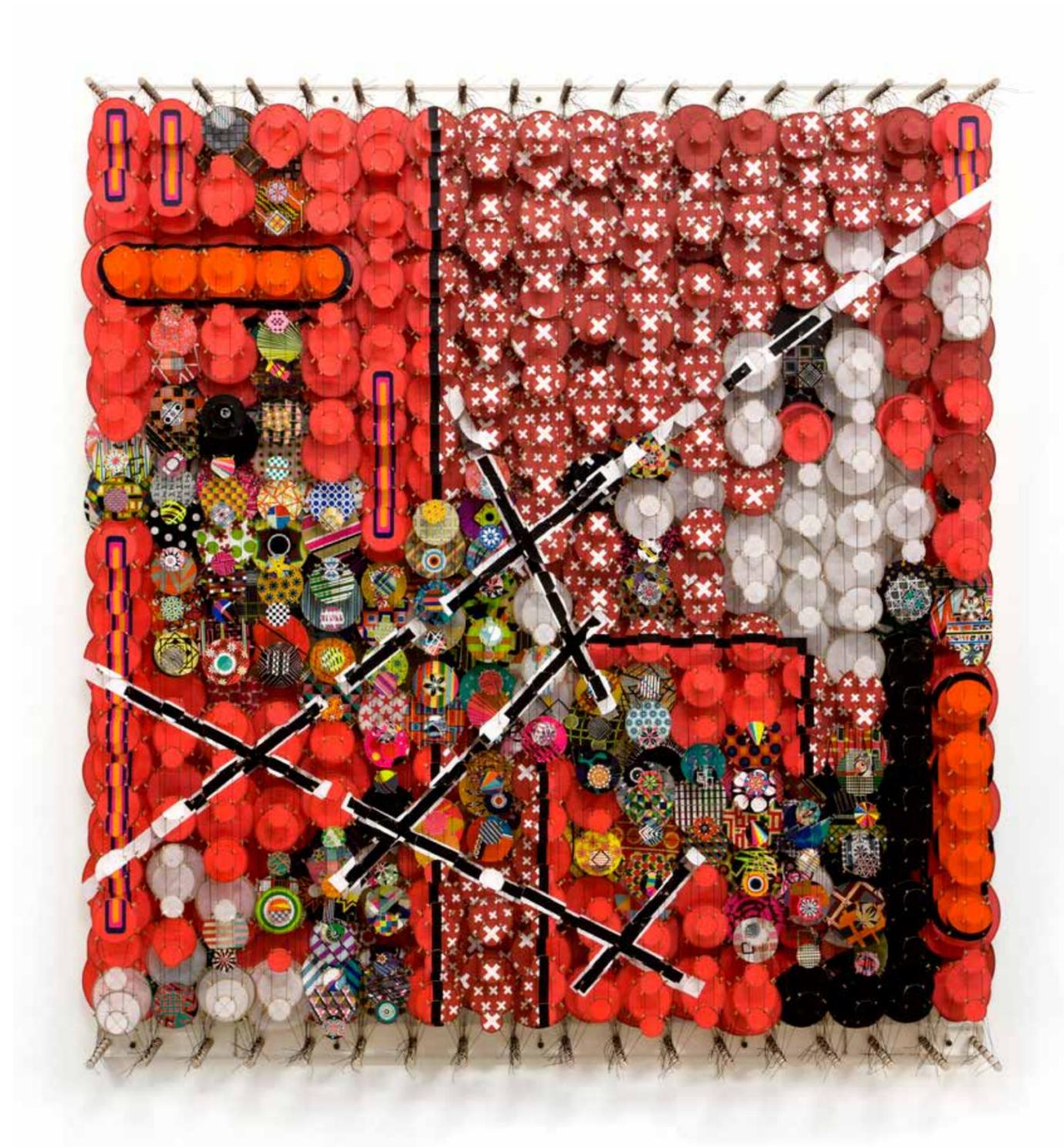
(Detail) *Slow Motion Sequences in Free Loop Space, Soaring Miles into the Sky*, 2017



*This Lost Love, Wonderfully Unwound Into a Spacious Dream of Freedom*, 2017  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
167.6 x 152.4 x 21 cm



*Slow Motion Sequences in Free Loop Space, Soaring Miles into the Sky*, 2017  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
167.6 x 152.4 x 21 cm



*The Invisible, Immutable Geographies of Time*, 2017  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
167.6 x 152.4 x 21 cm



*Hugging a Black Hole, Hoping One Day to Forget, 2017*  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
198.1 x 182.9 x 21 cm



*Memory Itself, Falling Through Some Rift in The Universe, 2017*  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
198.1 x 182.9 x 21 cm





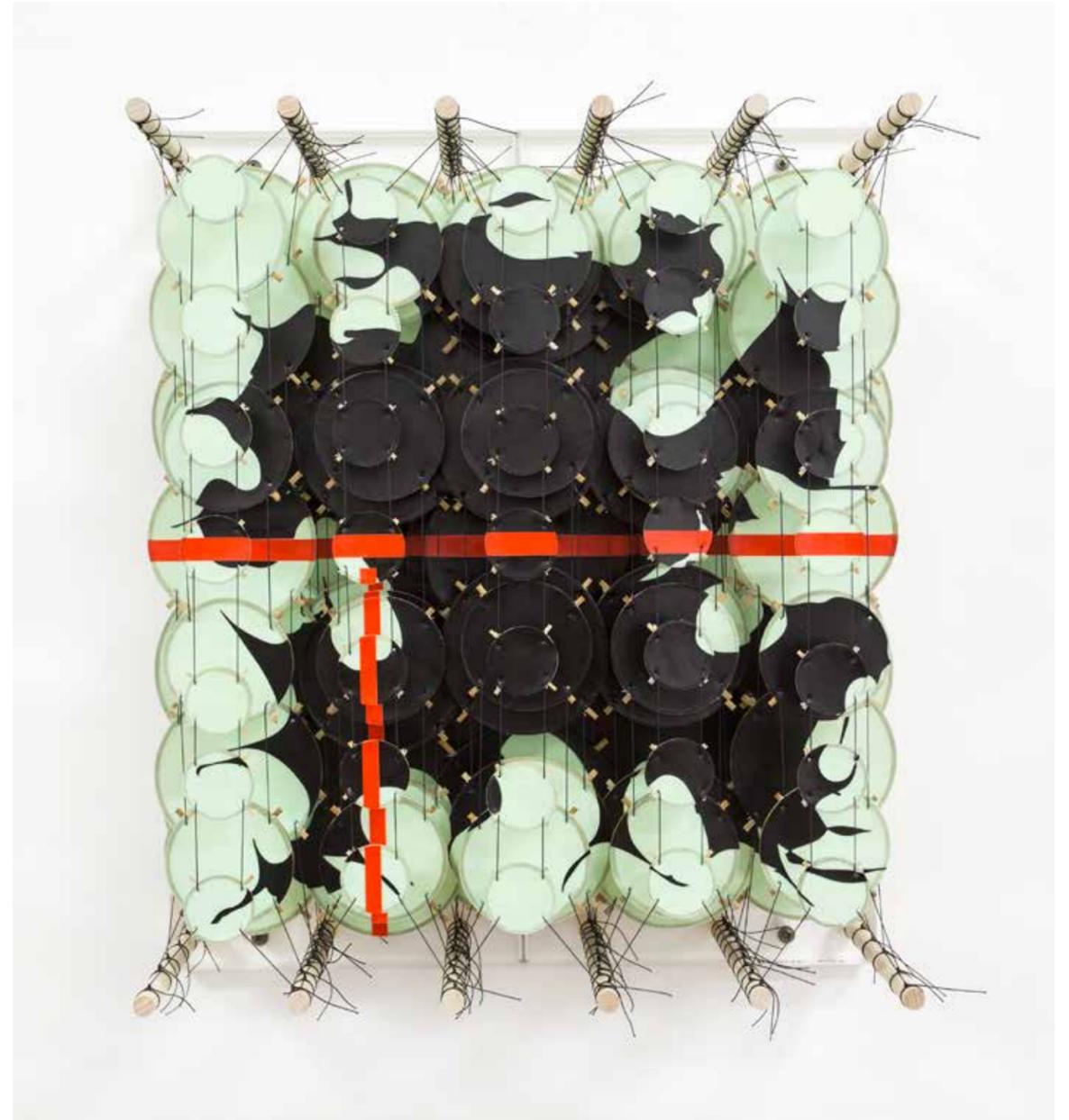
*This Tangled Skin of Memory and The Anchor of Time*, 2017  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
55.9 x 45.7 x 19 cm





*Fragments of The Sun Frozen in This Strangely Fretted Light*, 2017  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
81.3 x 68.6 x 19.1 cm

*Possibility's Red Boundary*, 2017  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
55.9 x 45.7 x 19.1 cm





*The Ever Receding Red Drift of Time*, 2017  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
81.3 x 68.6 x 19.1 cm

*The Eternal Echo*, 2017  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
81.3 x 68.6 x 19.1 cm





*In The End, Darkness Isn't The Thing to Worry About*, 2017  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
81.3 x 68.6 x 19.1 cm

*Space and Distance, Unseen Paths, 10,000 Miles per Hour, 2017*  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
81.3 x 68.6 x 19.1 cm





*Centuries of Space Shifting Slightly Beneath This Labyrinth*, 2017  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
81.28 x 68.6 x 19.1 cm

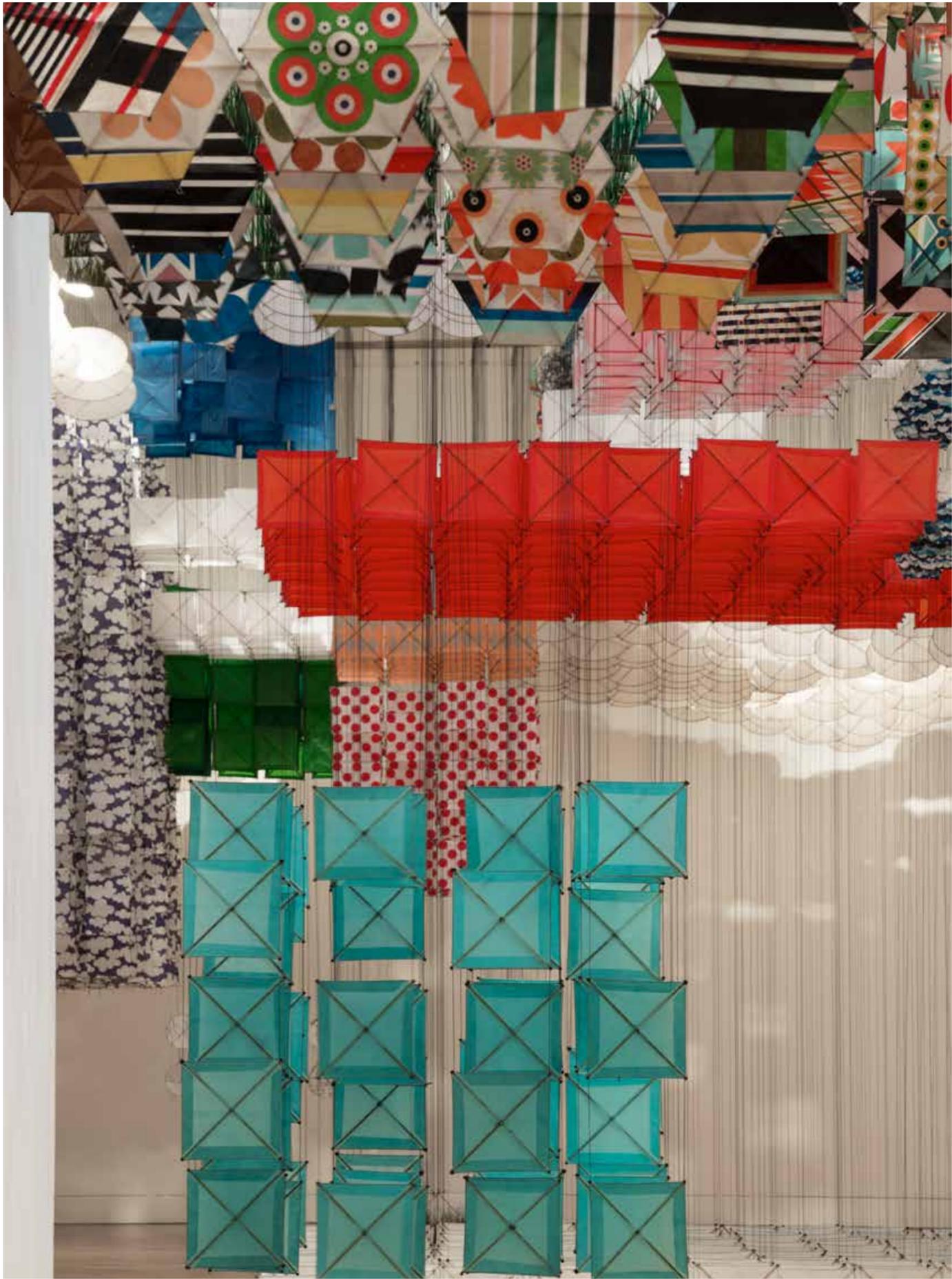
*Irresistible Attractions and True Awe, 2017*  
Bamboo, acrylic, paper, wood, and Dacron  
55.9 x 45.7 x 19.1 cm



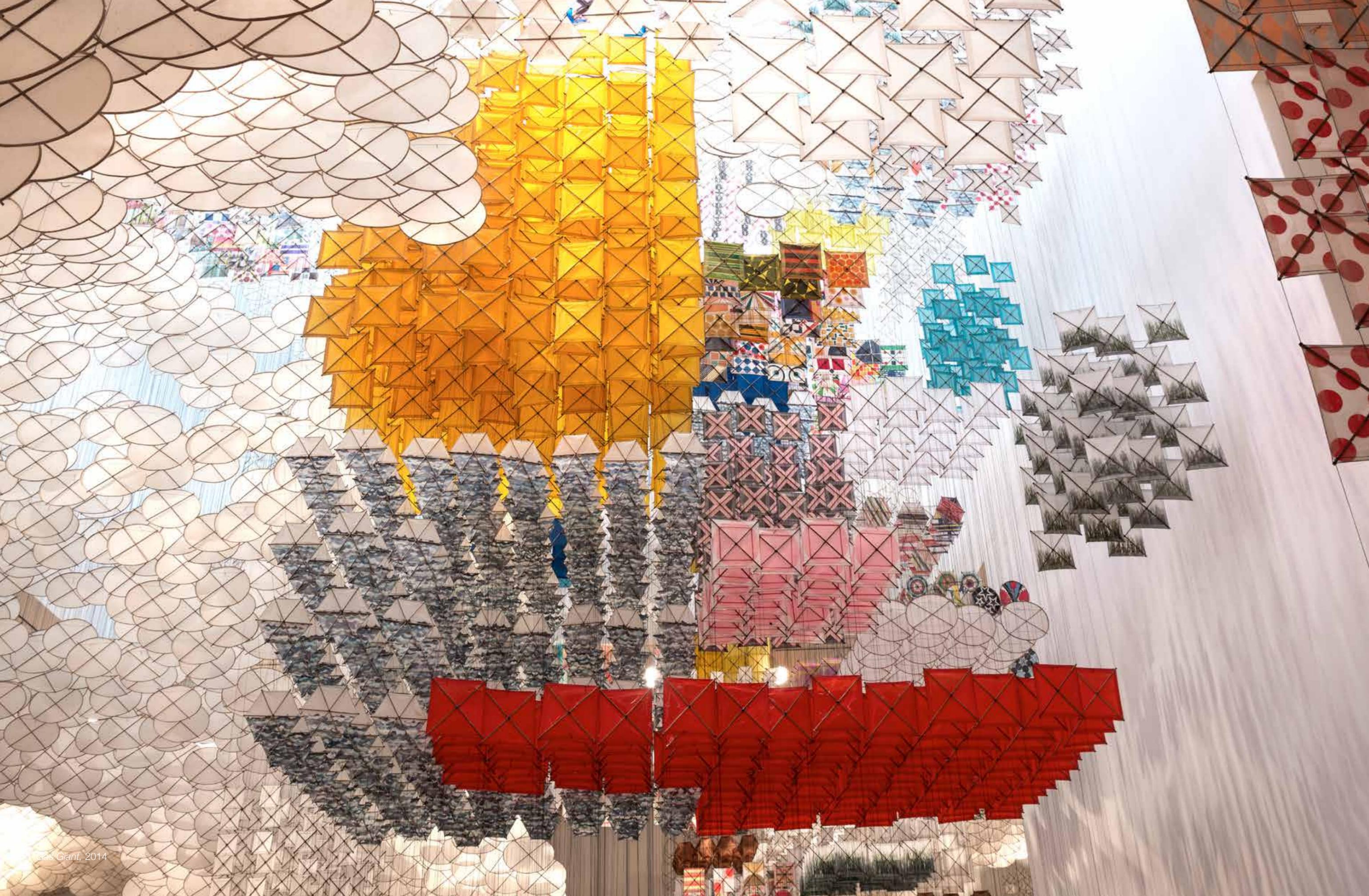




*Gas Giant*, 2014  
Installation View  
Paper, bamboo, Dacron



Gas Giant, 2014





*Gas Giant, 2014*



Gas Giant, 2014





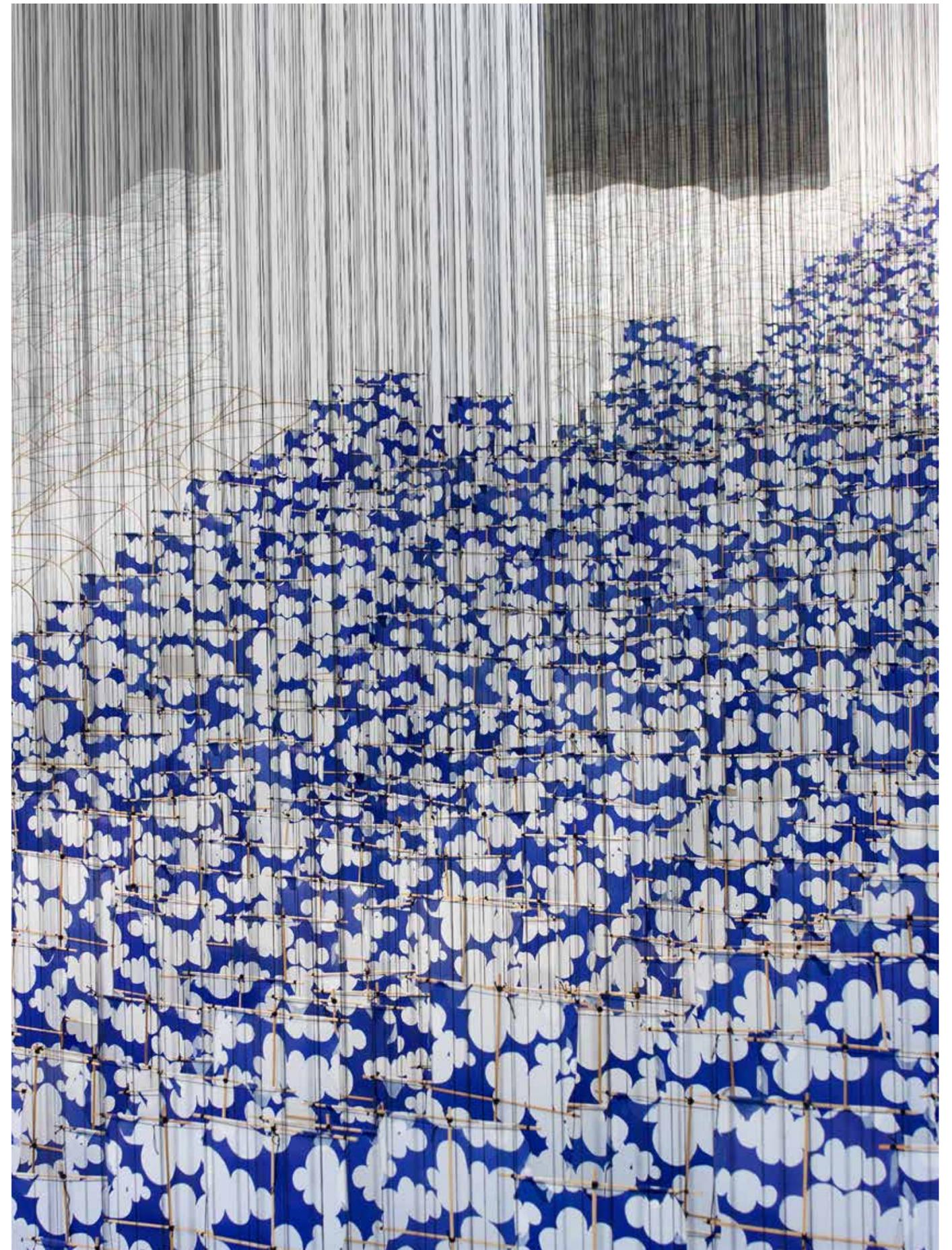
*Alma*, 2017  
Oil on canvas  
200 x 250 cm

*Infinite Expanse of Sky*, 2008  
Installation View  
Vellum, bamboo, Dacron





*Infinite Expanse of Sky, 2008*





*Superabundant Atmosphere*, 2013  
Installation View  
Silk, bamboo, Dacron



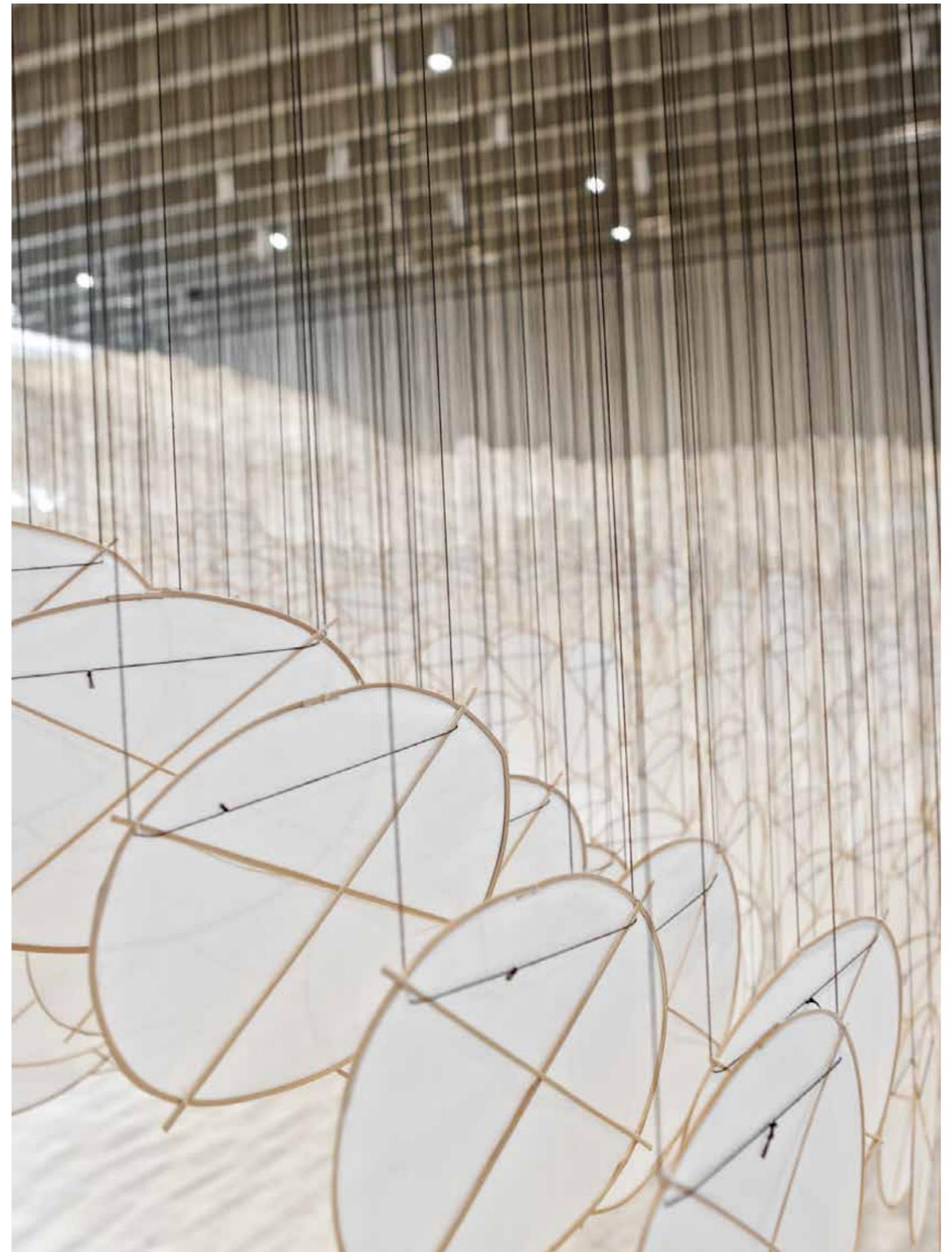
*Superabundant Atmosphere, 2013*



*Superabundant Atmosphere, 2013*



*Superabundant Atmosphere, 2013*





*Eclipse, 2017*  
Cotton, paper, bamboo, silkscreen print  
Installation view - Palazzo Flangini, Venice

*The Eclipse, 2017*  
Cotton, paper, bamboo, silkscreen print  
Installation view - Palazzo Flangini, Venice





*The Eclipse, 2017*  
Cotton, paper, bamboo, silkscreen print  
Installation view - Palazzo Flangini, Venice





*The Eclipse, 2017*  
Installation view - Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai



# JACOB HASHIMOTO

1973 Born Greeley, Colorado

## EDUCATION

1996 B.F.A, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago IL

1993 Carleton College, Northfield, MN

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2017 *The Eclipse*, Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai, UAE  
*Giants and Uncertain Atmospheres*, Wäinö Aaltonen Museum, Turku, FI  
*The End of Utopia*, Studio la Città – Palazzo Flangini, Venice, IT  
*My Own Lost Romance*, Anglim Gilbert Gallery, Minnesota Street Project, San Francisco, CA  
*Another Cautionary Tale Comes to Mind (but immediately vanishes)*, Mixografia, Los Angeles, CA
- 2016 *The First Known Map of the Moon*, Mary Boone Gallery, New York, NY  
*Gas Giant Fragments and Silence*, Sheehan Gallery, Whitman College, Walla Walla, WA  
*Never Comes Tomorrow*, Studio la Città, Milan, IT  
*Through the Lens of Gravity*, Galerie Forsblom, Helsinki, FI
- 2015 *In the Cosmic Fugue*, Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, IL  
*16.05.2015*, Studio La Città, Verona, IT
- 2014 *Skyfarm Fortress*, Mary Boone Gallery, New York, NY  
*Gas Giant, MoCA/PDC* – Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA, curated by Alma Ruiz  
*Gas Giant Studies*, Martha Otero Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2013 *Sky Columns*, Schauwerk Foundation, Sindelfingen, DE  
*Armada*, Galerie Forsblom, Helsinki, FI  
*Jacob Hashimoto: Foundational Work*, Studio la Città, Verona, IT  
*Gas Giant*, Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice, IT  
*Superabundant Atmosphere*, Bildmuseet-Umeå University, Umeå, SE
- 2012 *The Other Sun*, Ronchini Gallery, London, UK  
*Super-elastic collisions (origins, and distant derivations)*, Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, IL
- 2011 *Silence Still Governs Our Consciousness*, Galerie Forsblom, Helsinki, FI  
*Armada*, Studio La Città, Verona, IT  
*The End of Gravity*, Mary Boone Gallery, New York, NY
- 2010 *Silence Still Governs Our Consciousness*, MACRO – Museo d'Arte Contemporanea di Roma, Rome, IT  
*Here in Sleep, a World, Muted to a Whisper*, Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, NV
- 2009 *Forests Collapsed Upon Forests*, Martha Otero Gallery, Los Angeles, CA  
*Jacob Hashimoto*, Mary Boone Gallery, New York, NY
- 2008 *Jacob Hashimoto V*, Studio la Città Verona, IT
- 2007 *Plumes and The Landscape Omnibus*, Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, IL  
*Jacob Hashimoto*, Mary Boone Gallery, New York, NY
- 2006 *Jacob Hashimoto*, Studio la Città, Verona, Catalog with text by Luca Massimo Barbero
- 2005 *Skip Skitter Start Trip Vault Bounce – and Other Attempts at Flight*, Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, IL  
*Superabundant Atmosphere*, Rice Gallery, Rice University, Houston, TX
- 2004 *Bloom*, Main Lobby, San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, CA  
*Alta Dena*, Tacoma Art Museum, Tacoma, WA
- 2003 *The Nature of Objects*, Studio la Città, Verona, IT. Catalog with a conversation between the artist and Luca Massimo Barbero.
- 2002 *Jacob Hashimoto*, Studio la Città, Verona, IT. Catalog with text. Catalog with essays by Irvin Y Hashimoto and A. Vettese  
*Silent Rhythm*, Galleria Traghetto, Venice, IT  
*Jacob Hashimoto: New Work*, Finesilver Gallery, San Antonio, TX
- 2001 *Giant Yellow*, Patricia Faure Gallery, Santa Monica, CA  
*Big Mountain*, Patricia Faure Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
- 2000 *Project Room*, Patricia Faure Gallery, Santa Monica, CA

- Giant Yellow and Other Structures*, Galerie Lucien Durand – Le Gaillard, Paris FR
- 1999 *Armada*, Chicago Cultural Center, Chicago IL  
*Infinite Lightness*, with Thom Barth. Catalog with essays by M. Bertoni, Studio La Città, Verona, IT  
*Jacob Hashimoto*, Galleria La Nuova Pesa, Rome, IT
- 1998 *Infinite Expanse of Sky*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL  
*Jacob Hashimoto – sky fragment*, Patricia Faure Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
- 1997 *Perennial*, Boliou Carleton College Art Gallery, Northfield, MN Ann Nathan Gallery, Chicago, IL
- 1996 *Sky Canopy Installation*, Ann Nathan Gallery, Chicago, IL Group Exhibitions  
*The End of Utopia: Jacob Hashimoto and Emil Lukas*, Studio la Città, Venice IT  
*Inaugural Show*, Makasiini Contemporary, Turku, FI  
*A Story in Six Rooms*, Studio la Città, Verona, IT  
*Quiet Works*, Temple Contemporary, Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia, PA  
*NOW-ISM: Abstraction Today*, The Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, OH  
*HAVET: DET ANDET LANDSKAB (The Sea: The Other Landscape)*, Kunsthalle Brandts, Odense, DK  
*Ad Naturam*, Museo Civico di Storia Naturale, Verona, IT  
*De rerum Natura*, curated by Angela Madesani, in collaboration with Andrea Lerda, Studio la Città, Verona, IT  
*Black/White*, La Montagne Gallery, Boston, MA  
*Vitruvius*, Martha Otero Gallery, Los Angeles, CA  
*Rosa Piero, Rosa Tiepolo, Rosa Spalletti, Rosa....*, Studio la Città, Verona, IT  
*Off-Screen*, Studio La Città, Verona, IT
- 2011 *Toward the Third Dimension*, David Floria Gallery, Aspen, CO
- 2010 *Let There Be Geo*, A + D Gallery, Columbia College, Chicago, IL  
*Art on Paper*, The Weatherspoon Art Museum, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, NC
- 2009 *IN – FINITUM*, installation at Palazzo Fortuny, Venice, IT  
*Abstract America*, The Saatchi Gallery, London, UK  
*A Tribute to Ron Warren*, Mary Boone Gallery, New York, NY
- 2008 *Not Just A Pretty Face*, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, IL
- 2007 *...And he began by three*, Studio la Città, Verona, IT
- 2006 *Take Over*, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, IL
- 2005 *XIV Quadrennial in Rome*, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna di Roma, Rome, IT
- 2004 *White*, Patricia Faure Gallery, Santa Monica, CA  
*Artseasons*, Curated by Cas Pellers, ES Baluard Museum, Palma de Mallorca, ESP  
*Je ne regrette rien*, Studio Gallery 35th Anniversary of the City, Verona, IT
- 2003 *Structure*, Patricia Faure Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2002 *Officina America*, ReteEmiliaRomagna, edited and curated by R. Barili, Palazzo dell'Arengo, Rimini, IT  
*Intermezzo*, Studio La Città, Verona, IT
- 2000 *Carte Blanche*, à Hélène de Franchis, Galerie Lucien Durand - Le Gaillard, Paris, FR
- 1999 *Phoenix Triennial*, Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, AZ  
*Conceptual Color: In Albers' Afterimage*, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA
- 1997 *Headless, William Cordova and Jacob Hashimoto*, Lineage Gallery, Chicago, IL
- 1996 *Thesis Exhibition*, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL

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Behringer, David, “Thousands of Kites: The Art of Jacob Hashimoto”, Design-Milk.com, October 22, 2014.
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- 2012 Tylevich, Katya, “How to Fly Thousands of Kites, Simultaneously, Indoors: The Art of Jacob Hashimoto”, Elephant, Summer 2012.  
Apfelbaum, Sue, “A Wallpaper That’s Anything but Flat”, Surface, September/October 2012. 136-141. Sherwin, Skye, “Artist of the Week201: Jacob Hashimoto”, TheGuardian.com, August, 2, 2012.  
Fallai, P., “700 barche di Hashimoto si rilancia Bologna Arte Fiera”, Il Corriere della Sera, gennaio 2012.
- 2011 Sansom, Anna, “Panoramic Paper”, Frame Magazine, Mar-Apr 2011  
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“Studio la Città, suggestioni in mostra”, Il Corriere della Sera, October 2008.  
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“What do you see, is not what you think”, ASIANA Magazine, November 2008. Mojana, M., “Sol Levante per palati fini”, Il Sole 24 Ore, November 2008.
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### JACOB HASHIMOTO

#### *THE ECLIPSE*

September 21, 2017 - January 10, 2018

#### Image credits:

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Cesar Arredondo (Superabundant Atmosphere, 2013)

Michele Alberto Sereni (The Eclipse, 2017, Installation view - Palazzo Flangini, Venice)

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