

ZEINAB ALHASHEMI





Leila Heller Gallery
Alserkal Avenue
Al Quoz 1, Dubai, UAE
www.leilahellergallery.com

Zeinab AlHashemi

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

Nature's Designs

Our life is an apprenticeship to the truth that around every circle another can be drawn; that there is no end in nature, but every end is a beginning and under every deep a lower deep opens - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Constructivism: We See Things as We Are presents two movements in time simultaneously. The first implicates an artist looking back at the origins of her practice and the second is a forward motion, pushing beyond familiar parameters and into the abstractions of color, structure and space. This solo exhibition by Zeinab Alhashemi at Leila Heller Gallery is multi-layered. Her concerns unravel from the gridded structures of the city and the patterns of the natural environment to a deep understanding of the body, prosthetics and hybridity.

Alongside welded metal mesh, scaffolding, camel leather and neon tubes, the oversized, ubiquitous concrete block is one of the materials Alhashemi used early in her practice. She was drawn to its rawness and the idea of being in process or incomplete, as part of urban development that could not be grasped by the human.

In contrast, the metal and wood sculptures in this exhibition serve as a sculptural blueprint, in CMYK code - structures for an injured body. They are less about becoming and more about providing a supportive backbone. With her work, Alhashemi recalls a car accident in which her own body had to be held and screwed into place by metal. She constructs her sculptural grids using nuts and bolts in the same manner as orthopedic surgery. Her relationship to materials in fact, has become inextricable to her relationship with her body.

Alhashemi plays with color and repetition to evoke a symmetry, alluding to the ways in which the brain is designed to subconsciously see geometry as perfection. The eye captures what it cannot measure. Yet her subtle deviations from repetitive angles don't affect the overall harmony of her pieces which achieve an equilibrium through perpendicular lines. As Wassily Kandinsky put it, "Form often is most expressive when least coherent. It is often most expressive when outwardly most imperfect, perhaps only a stroke, a mere hint of outer meaning." Inspired by the Bauhaus movement, color and geometry become compositional elements in her work, with a Piet Mondrian sensibility.

Alhashemi has always been interested in complex, intersecting systems, science and art. She has recently conducted research on the geometries of outer space and the applications of vesica piscis - the converging of two disks with the same radius - considered one of the first steps in constructing an equilateral triangle, elements of which can be found when stars collide or a new star is born.

Interested in the algorithms and patterns that exist in nature and in the universe, the scale of Alhashemi's art translates from the micro-level to the macrocosmic. The architectural sense of interconnectivity in her work expresses a keen eye for measurements and proportions such as with the golden ratio and the Fibonacci sequence, in which a combination of numbers and forms is linked to longevity. The grid, a spatial exercise in which she can exert both control and deviance, is a feature she always returns to. With both freestanding forms (at different scales) and wall hangings, her latest sculptures embody movement and texture through the use of degradations of color - the wood grain is layered with paint at various levels of saturation and the color changes from one facet to the other.

Despite the rigor and discipline of the lines in her work, Alhashemi experiments with the porosity of boundaries. An inspirational image is the skeleton of an unfinished building she documents over time. It stands outside her window from when a canal was constructed. Like an exposed form in the city, in the middle of a manmade environment, violent urban intervention gives rise to her visual language, a language of solid frames on which to build upon. Alhashemi is fascinated by the duality between nature and industry, a vision though often projected by the external environment, is linked to an understanding of internal dynamics. For her, the natural and the artificial occupy the same space.

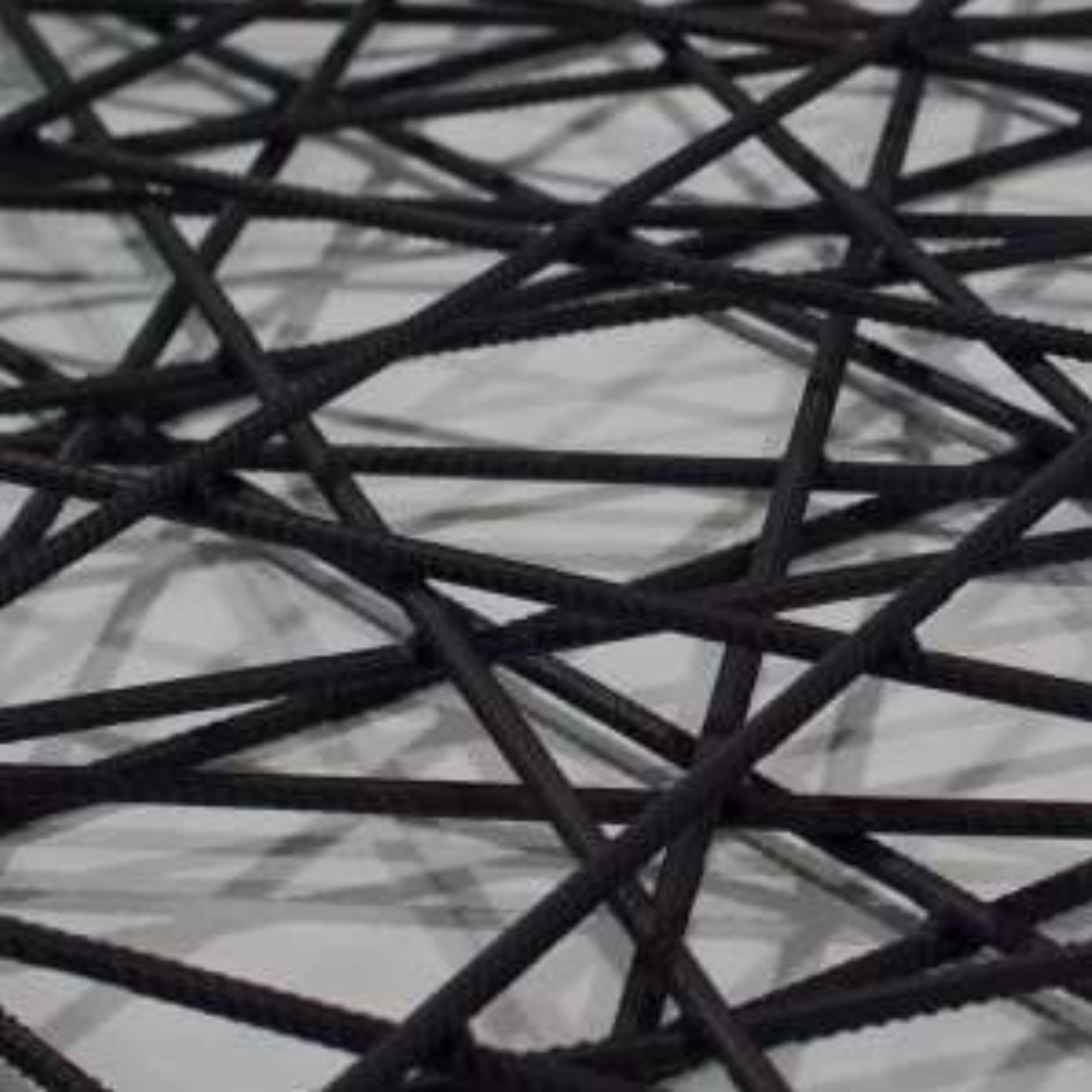
This is a series of work that maps a body's response to rapidly morphing environment and the impact of that environment on the body. It is about hybrid states of being in which the natural elements can no longer be distinguished from synthetic forms. In Alhashemi's structuring of time, change and adaptation, she also bears witness to a certain immobility or fixity, a duality, the unity in multiplicity, and the nature of coexistence between the body and the machine.

Words by Nadine Khalil

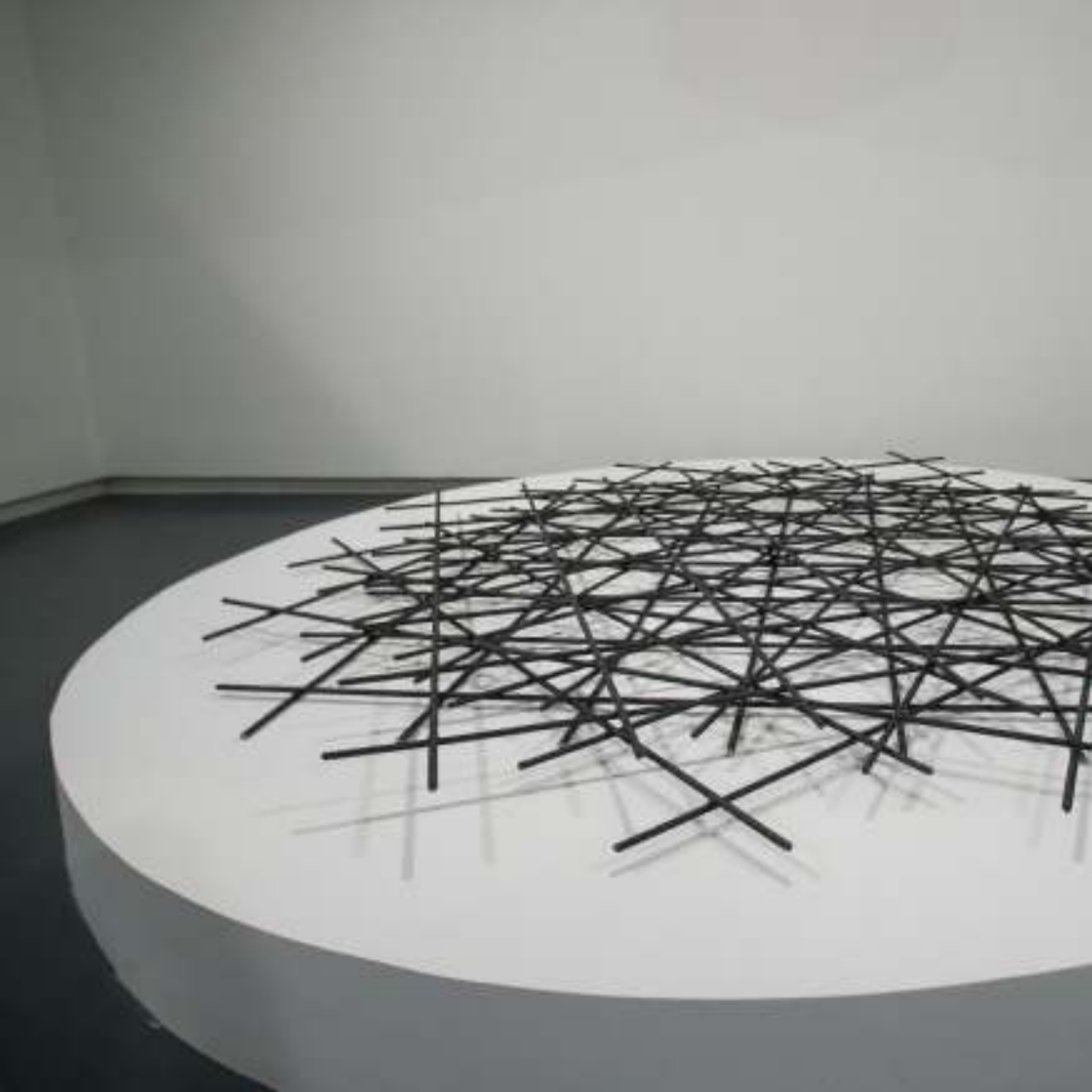
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Zeinab is aware that objects can be used repetitively to separate us and define our differences, whilst also being the talismans that remind us of our ultimate unity in being. Zeinab recognises how sometimes her ideas stem from childhood, yet reverberate lessons which she is continually learning throughout her adult life, revealing how art can act as an anchor for our subconscious minds to remedy our present with our past.









Metalmorphosis

Sharjah Islamic Festival 2018
Reinforced Metal rods, Mirror
200 x 200 cm

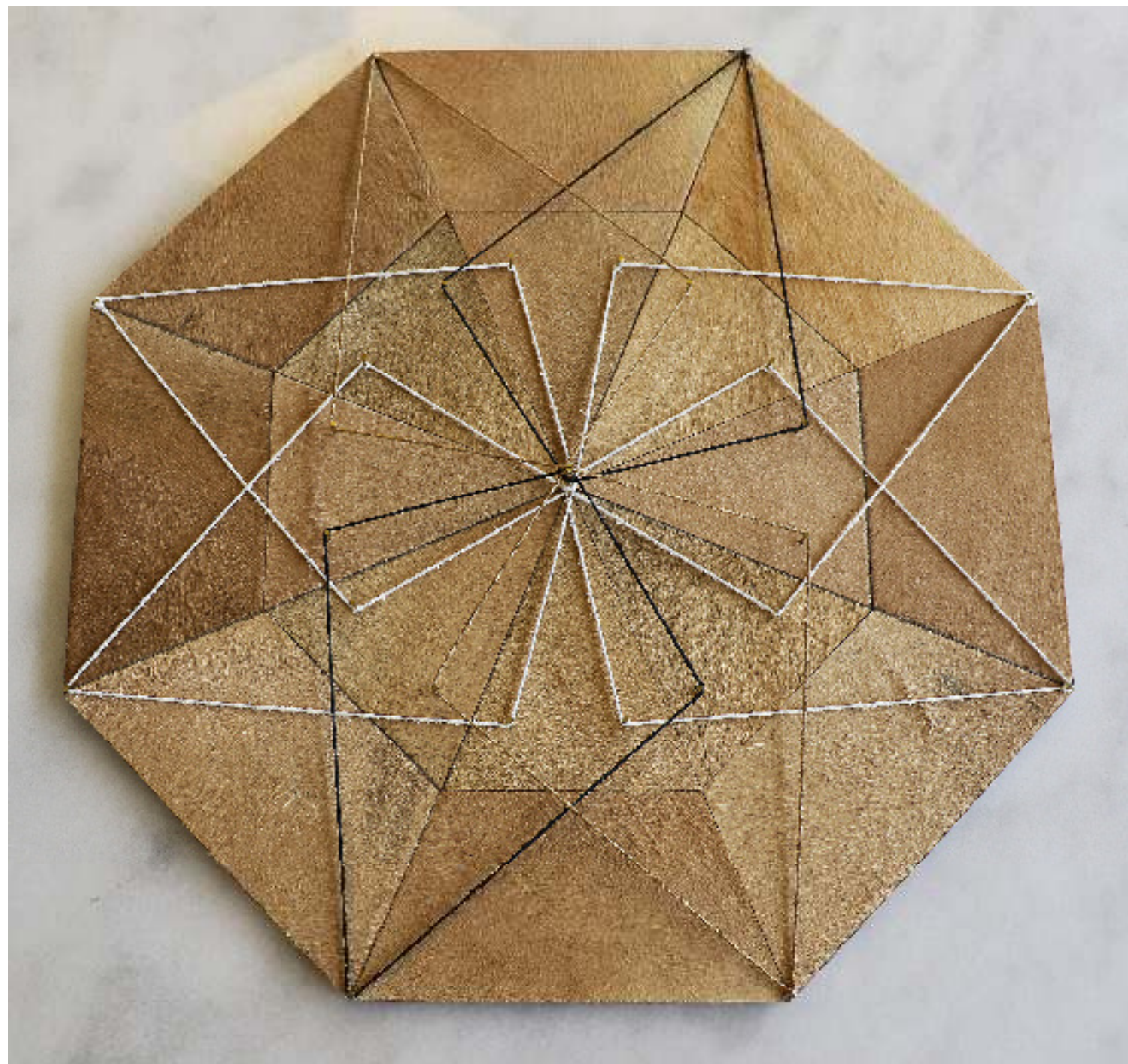
Camouflage
Emirati Expression 2015
Camel hides, Wood
420 x 280 x 120 cm











Anachronism

2017

Camel hides, Wood, Rope

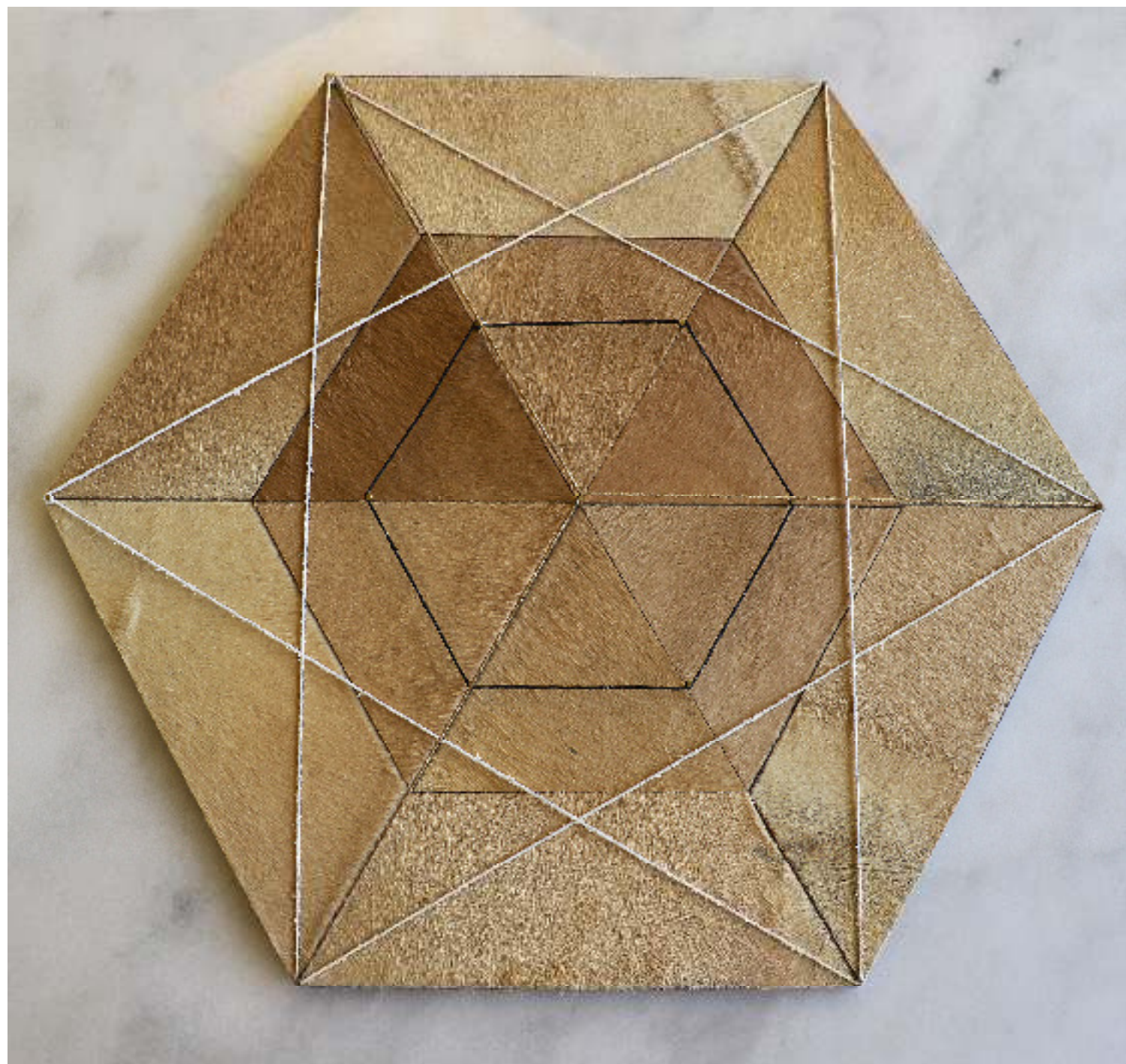
60 x 60 cm

Anachronism

2017

Camel hides, Wood, Rope

60 x 60 cm





Anachronism

2017

Camel hides, Wood, Rope

60 x 60 cm









Metamorphic
Colab - Louvre Abu Dhabi 2018
Reinforced Metal Rods, Stained Glass (Saint-Gobain)
200 x 200 x 200 cm











Within The Grid

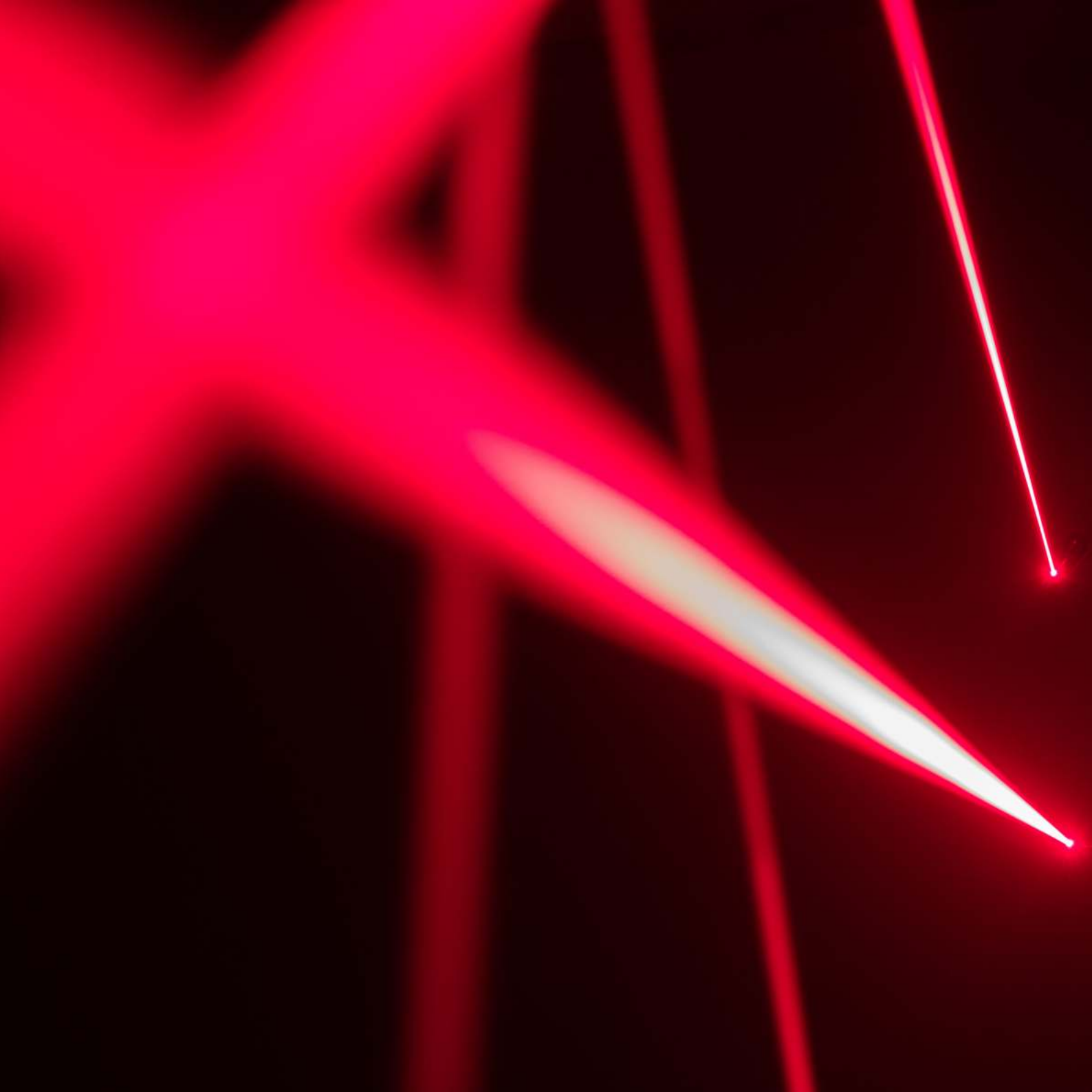
UAE Unlimited 2016

Reinforced Metal Rods, Neon Tube Lights,
Wood

400 x 200 x 10 cm







Hypersensitivity

Sharjah Islamic Art Festival 2021

Laser Security System, Plinth, Dark Room

600 x 400 x 300 cm





Takween
Expo2020 Sustainability Pavillion 2021
Stainless Steel, Corten Metal, Concrete
400 x 200 cm







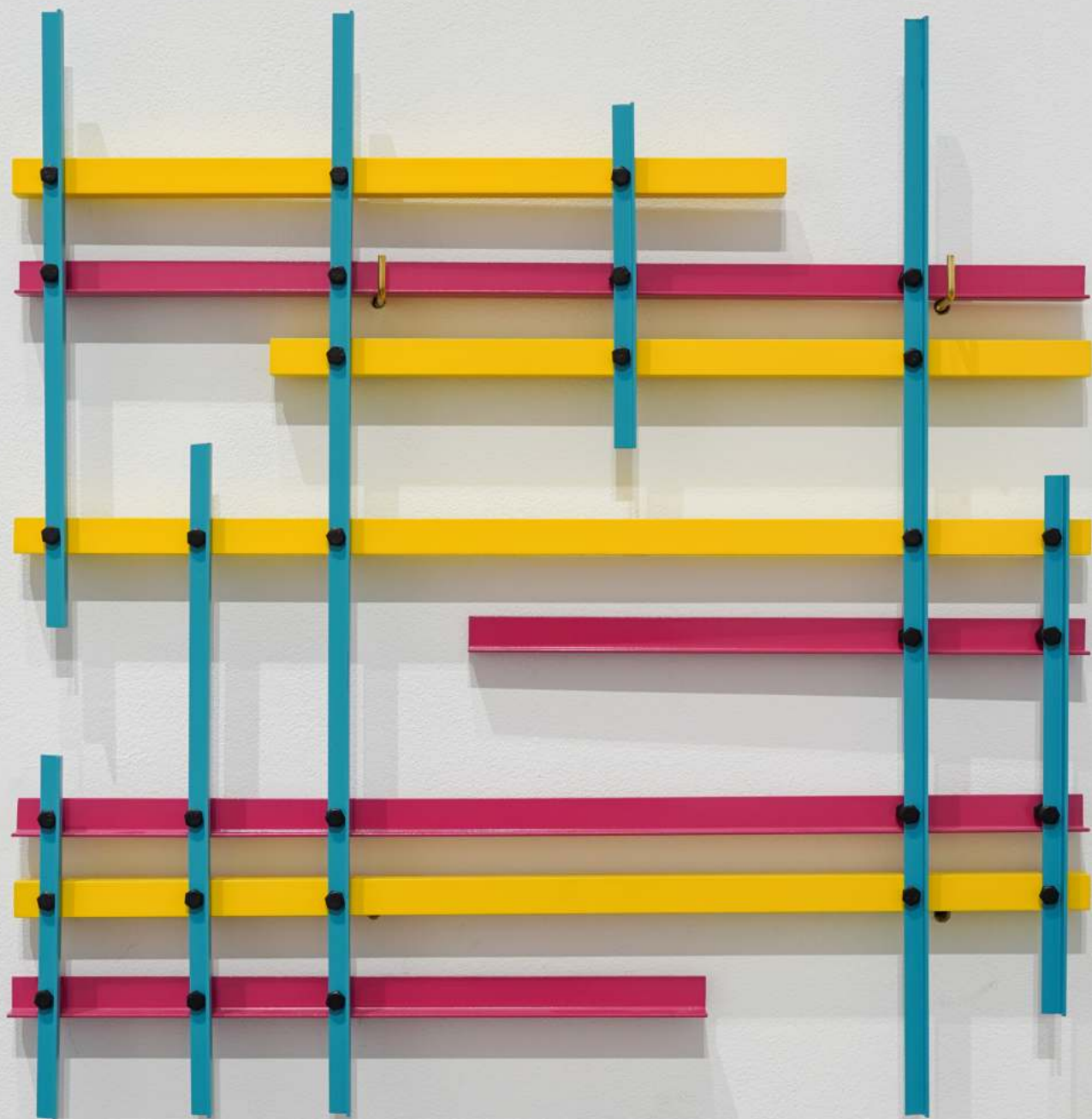


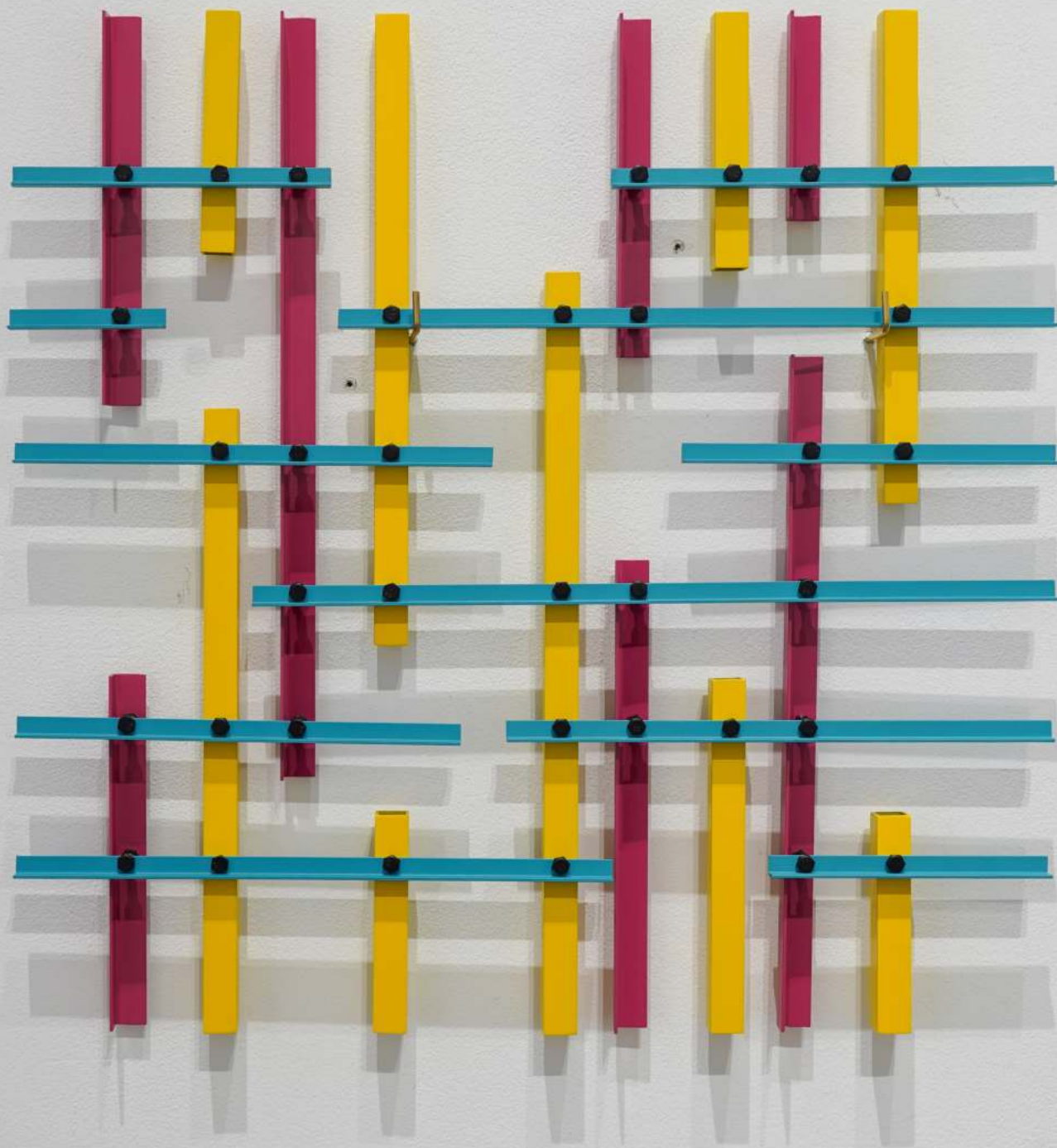
Day 1

2022

Angle Bar, Aluminium Tube, Screws

60 x 60 cm





Day 2

2022

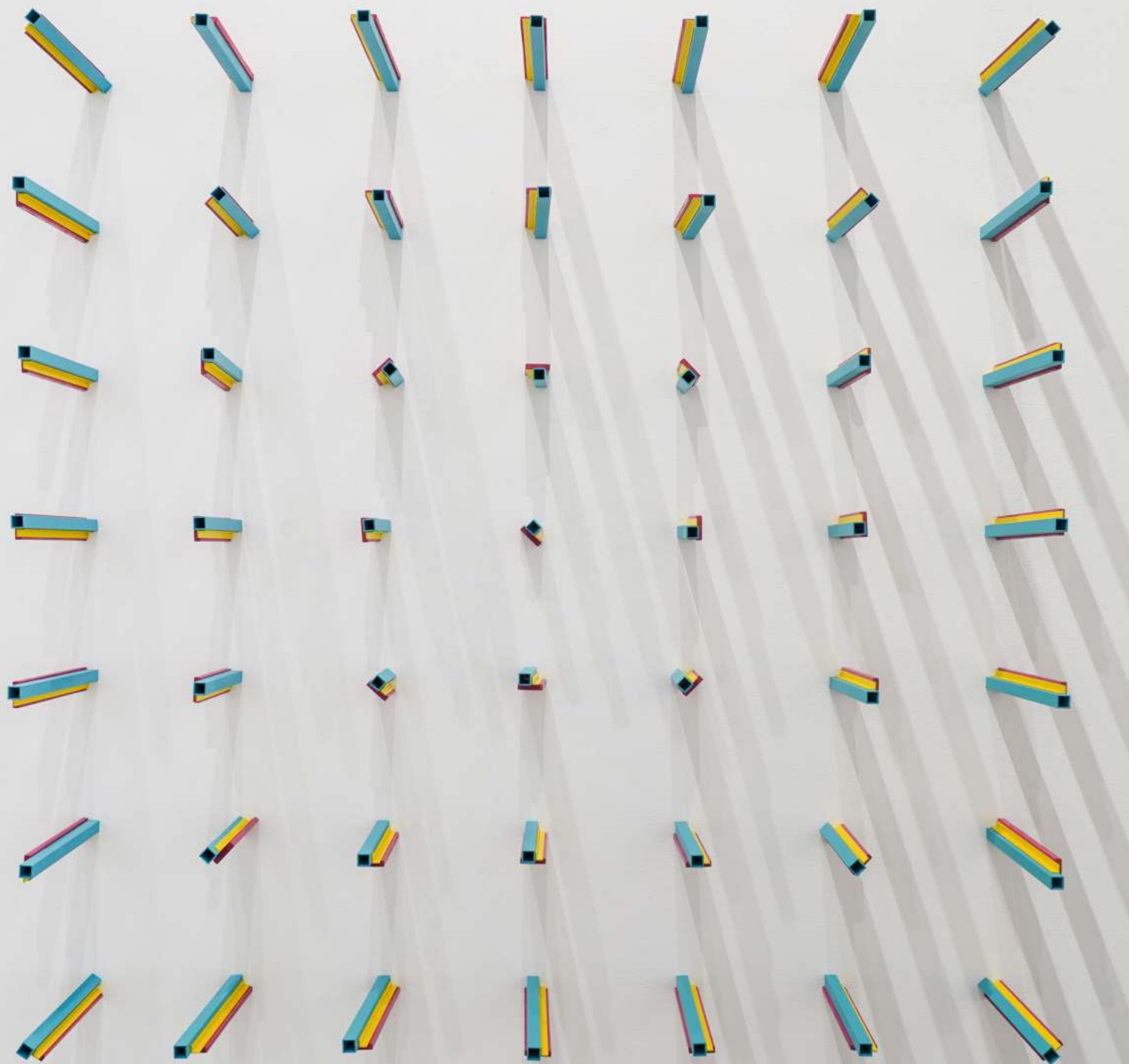
Angle Bar, Aluminium Tube, Screws

60 x 60 cm

Day 7

2022

Wood, Angle Bar, Aluminium Tube, Screws
160 x 160 cm





Day 7

2022

Wood, Angle Bar, Aluminium Tube, Screws

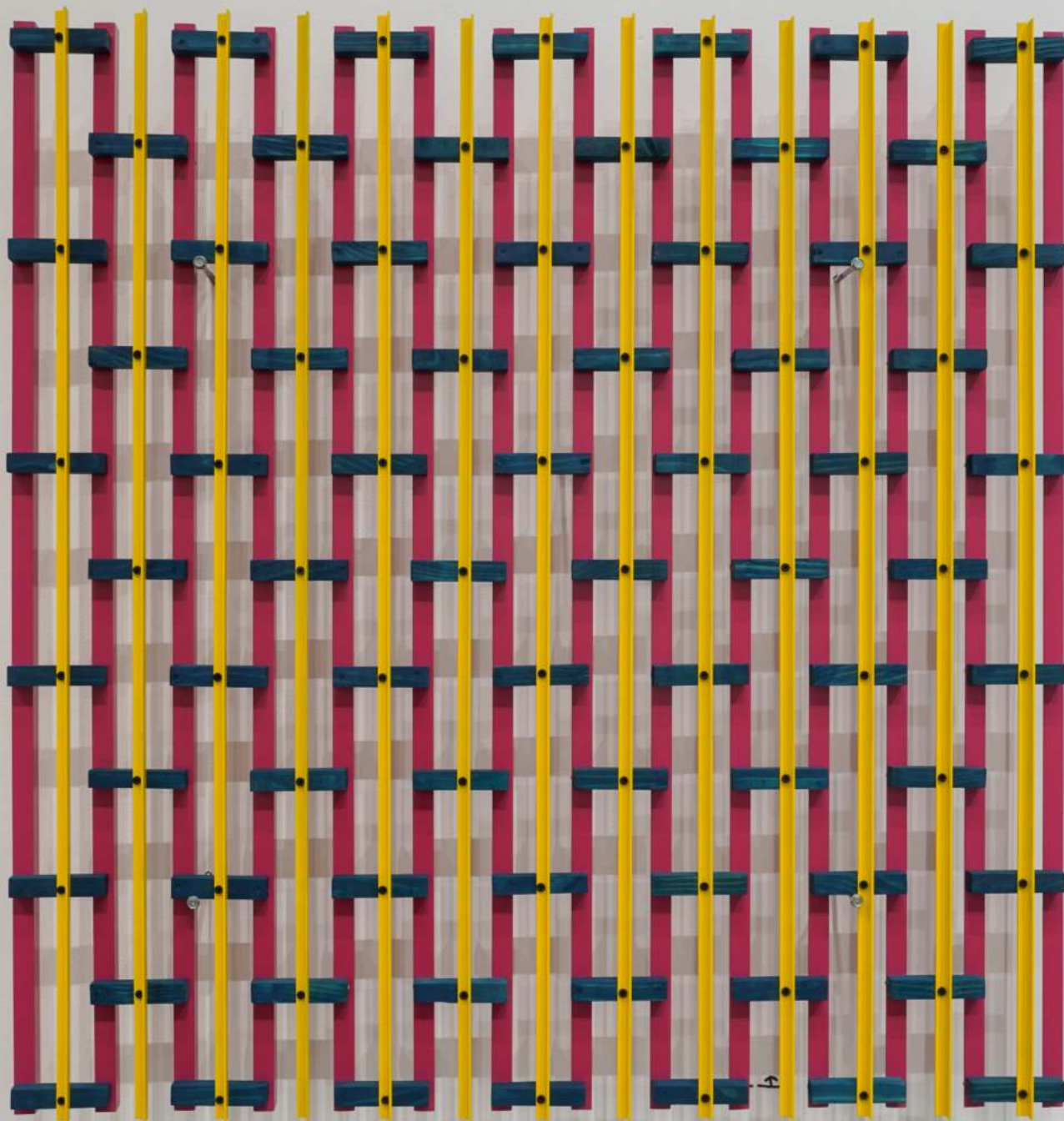
160 x 160 cm

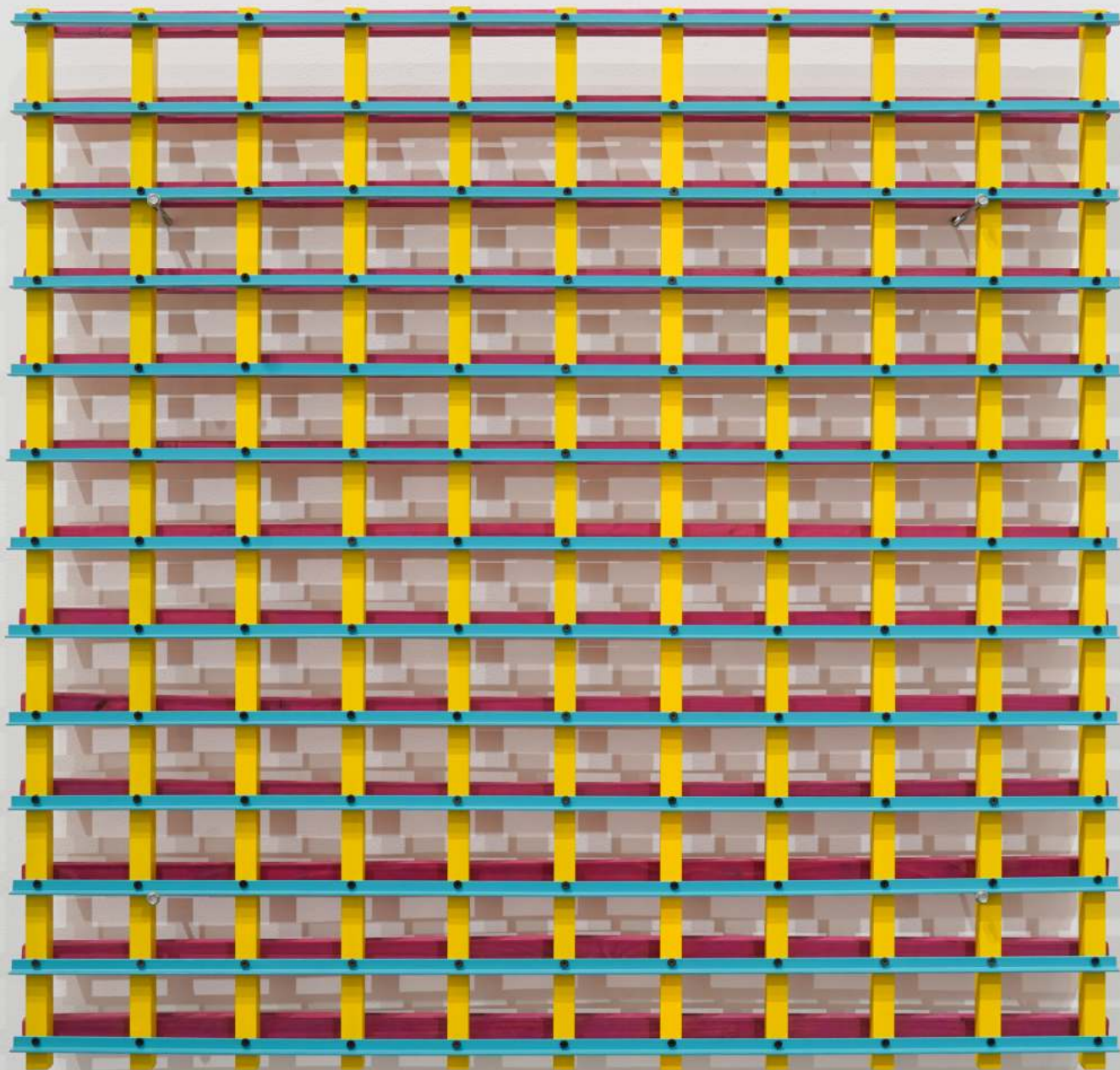
Day 3

2022

Wood, Angle Bar, Aluminium Tube, Screws

100 x 100 cm



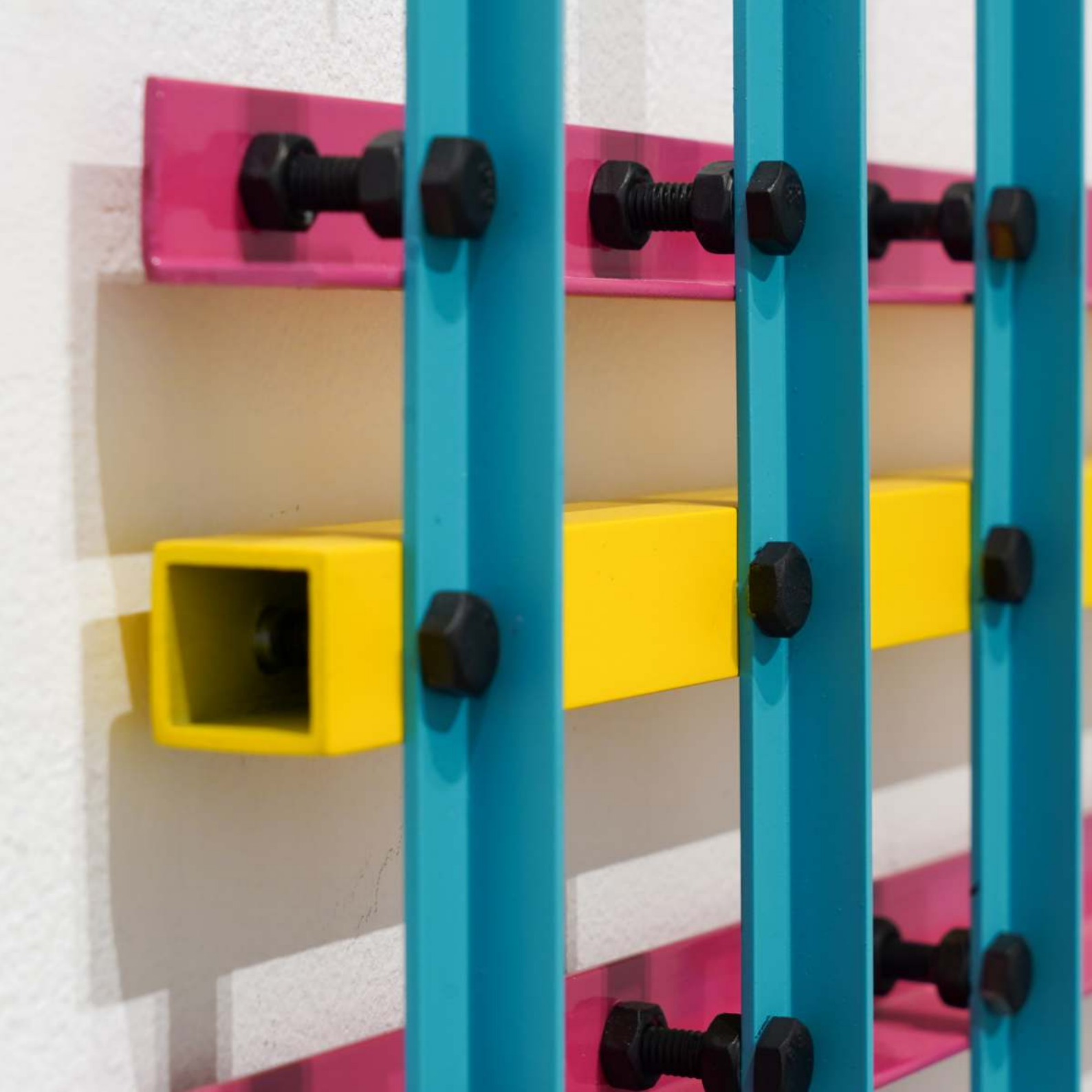


Day 4

2022

Wood, Angle Bar, Aluminium Tube, Screws

100 x 100 cm



SHOWS & EXHIBITIONS

- Sharjah Islamic Art Festival 2021 "Hypersensitivity" – Sharjah Art Museum
- EXPO2020 commission at the Sustainability pavilion "Terra" for Kinetic Art Sculpture "Takween"
- SETI-Institute Artist in Residence -2018Current - San Francisco / Montalvo Arts Center
- Sharjah Islamic Art Festival 2018 "Metalmorphosis" – Sharjah Art Museum
- Co-Lab: Contemporary Art & Savoir-faire is part of the Emirati- French Cultural Program (EFCP) commissioned by the Department of Culture and Tourism, Abu Dhabi 2018
- hexalite"x Swarovski -Dubai Design Week 2016
- Alharaka Baraka" Unlimited Arab Explorations-(Maraya Art Center) 2016
- WASL" - (Dubai Design Days)2016
- The time is out of joint" - SAF 2015
- Emirati Expression" - ADART 2015
- Past Forward" – Washington DC 2014
- Phantasmagoria" Cuadro Gallery DIFC-Urban 2014
- Tanween Design Program - Tashkeel - Design Days Dubai 2014
- Circumvolution State of Mind" Sharjah Biennial 2013 -11
- Time & Space Matters" Capital D Studio Show 2013
- Design Road Pro" Arts & Culture x DDD 2013
- Prayer On a Wheel" Art in Residence (Air) 2012
- Abayah - Ara Gallery 2012
- Christies Auction for Noor Dubai 2012
- 40 Poems From the Desert at The Ara Gallery 2011
- UAE A Work of Art at The Ara Gallery 2011
- Sikka Art Fair - 2011-2012 ,2010
- (MinD) Made in Dubai - DUCTAC 2011
- Abu Dhabi Airport Center Project for F2011 1.
- Art Connection – Alfahidi Street - 2009



Monolith Pilar

2013

Styrofoam, Concrete

350 x 150 cm

Zeinab Alhashemi is an Emirati conceptual artist based in Dubai. Having graduated from Zayed University with a BA in Arts and Science, the artist specialized in Multimedia Design, and has since become known for her large scale contemporary sight-specific installations.

Alhashemi is fascinated with capturing the transformation of the UAE following the country's construction and industrial booms from her own perspective. She examines the contrast as well as interdependence that came to exist between the abstract, geometric shapes of urbanism and the organic form associated with her country's natural landscape. Since Alhashemi's childhood, the familiarity of traditional scenery and nature was largely disturbed to facilitate the rise of the man-made. In her experimental installations, in search of a new identity appropriate to the modern condition, the artist deconstructs the viewer's understanding of their surroundings and introduces an alternative point of view, creating a new perception of the reality.

Drawing inspiration from the natural topography of the UAE, Alhashemi experiments with a variety of materials to position the viewer over the intangible boundary between the natural and artificial. While her work is reminiscent of the traditional landscape due to color and textures, such familiarity is quickly disturbed by the striking contrast arising from the use of industrial materials such as mesh metal - suddenly reminding of human interference. Alhashemi's work in itself, is a true representation of her homeland today which strikes a delicate balance between modernism and tradition in an unexpectedly harmonious coexistence.

In her short career, the young artist has participated in numerous art fairs and festivals such as Sikka Art Fair and Dubai Design Week. Alhashemi's work was featured in exhibitions at prominent galleries around the world as well as Sharjah Biennial 11. Her recent project Alhashemi was commissioned by the Institute de France and DCT Department of Culture and Tourism Abu Dhabi to showcase at the inauguration of the Louvre Abu Dhabi and was part of the Co-Lab Show in 2018. Currently the artist is one of the Artists in Residence for SETI-Institute in San Francisco, an Art and Science residency that encourages an engagement and research between artists and scientists. Her recent commissions "Takween" is currently showing at EXPO2020 Dubai at the Sustainability pavilion "Terra".

Published on the occasion of the exhibition Constructivism: We See Things
As We Are
By Zeinab AlHashemi
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