

HAUS WITTGENSTEIN

/

ERGİN ÇAVUŞOĞLU

The View from Above



"Golden is a surface colour."
Remarks on Colour (1950), Wittgenstein

Haus Wittgenstein

The starting point is Haus Wittgenstein, the Viennese townhouse designed by the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein for his sister, Margarethe Stonborough-Wittgenstein, between 1926-29. Margarethe originally commissioned the architect Paul Engleman, a pupil of Adolf Loos, but Wittgenstein gradually appropriated the project whilst retaining Engleman's overall structural framework. It was the interior layout, dimensions and fittings – windows, doors, door handles, radiators – that became his focus for a rigorously planned and executed set of internal spaces that dispensed with all unnecessary and decorative elements. The building was completed ten years after Wittgenstein had apparently abandoned philosophy believing that his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* had resolved the logical structure of language, of what could and could not be said. However, he had already begun to make notes towards what would become his major rethink of linguistic philosophy, the posthumously published *Philosophical Investigations* (1953).

The Stonborough-Wittgenstein House thus occupies a transitional and pivotal role in his thinking, a period that initiated the shift from a theory of language as representing the world through the lens of logic (the 'picture theory of

meaning') to language as constructing a world of everyday practice ('language games'). Architecture, as a problem-solving material practice of space, place and subject, can be seen as analogous to the reframing of subjectivity through language segueing from an external or meta-critical position to one framed from within. Wittgenstein made frequent reference to visual and spatial metaphors in his writings: boundaries, limits, inside/outside, public/private, hidden/manifest and these constructs are operative in the viewpoints and sightlines of the interior spaces of Haus Wittgenstein. The exterior assemblage of white cubes interrupted by regularly positioned, vertical windows is contrasted by an interior that emphasises edges, planes, surfaces, inside and outside, division and repetition, transparency and opacity. The central hall, which allows access to the ground floor rooms, is illuminated by light passing through and reflected off, eight paired translucent glass and steel doors. This space of movement from exterior to interior is characterised by images of reflection and refraction, of looking through and looking into, shifting viewpoints that refer directly to Wittgenstein's reassessment of language in the *Philosophical Investigations* as 'a labyrinth of paths'. Ergin Çavuşoğlu responded to the internal dynamics of Haus Wittgenstein and the philosopher's notions

of boundary, viewpoint, framing and other spatial epistemologies and the site of encounter with the work of art. The exhibition stages interdisciplinary installations, video, images and sculptures exploring the relationships between subjects, objects and space and examining how meanings are produced in context.

Ergin Çavuşoğlu's investigations in informal architecture and sculpture manifested in his large-scale anamorphic drawings constitute ongoing research that conveys the construct and the critique of ideas on spatial art practices and act as visual explorations of the 'unsayable' that haunts the *Tractatus*.

Simon Harvey
departures, homecomings

Let's start at the beginning. Walk through the small glass and steel-framed chamber that is the entrance to Haus Wittgenstein, up the grand-ish but minimal stairs, pause, noting the prominent, transparent elevator-shaft ahead, turn, glance back at the door, look left, look right, and then decompress from the busy city into a clean, silent Viennese modernism. This is perhaps how Ludwig Wittgenstein intended us to experience the house: quietly. It is known as Haus Wittgenstein both because it was intended for his sister Margarethe and because it was Ludwig's design (at least the interior) and, some say, a reflection of his philosophy.

Enter another room here at Danielle Arnaud and one sees further strange, apparent defiance of Wittgenstein's grounded, although singular, architectural modernism. These are, among other works by Ergin Çavușoğlu, flying (at least suspended) sculptures, one of them a kite that alludes to the philosopher's brief aeronautical engineering career, prior to his academic work. There are twisted and morphed 'propositions' resembling propellers lying lightly on a bed frame that is not even there (it is a projected, anamorphic drawing). Where Wittgenstein privileged emptiness, this room is explored for its kinesthetic potential, levity and occupation of the whole space, right up to the ceiling, like a prou installation, a Kafkan metamorphosis of space. Some of these profess to be sculptures of Wittgenstein's precisely laid-out propositions, but they actually invoke entanglement in them, exhibiting

curvatures that contradict his architectural logic and aesthetic of straight lines and edges. Upstairs, in the fireplace, there is a 3D animation video work showing a curious Neolithic shrine situated in a cave whose roof is perforated with two apertures through which one sees a racing day-and-night sky. It all seems mystical, illogical.

Surely this is messing with Wittgenstein's neat architectural idea and close attention to detail? It seems that the only works faithful to his design are the exact copies of his extraordinary door-handles that are installed on the doors here, that we can touch, allowing us to directly grasp the precision that he always strived for.

At first sight, the interior of the house in Vienna is a gesamtkunstwerk, albeit a minimal and minimalist one (Wittgenstein was an acquaintance and, initially, admirer, of early modernist architect Adolf Loos; indeed, his collaborator on the house, Paul Engelmann, who designed the exterior, was a student of Loos). Rudolf Carnap, one of the Vienna Circle of philosophers inspired by Wittgenstein's work was similarly struck by his artistic sensibilities: 'His point of view and his attitude toward people and problems, even theoretical problems, were much more similar to those of a creative artist than a scientist ...'

Nevertheless, to engage with the house inevitably involves some addressal of Wittgenstein's philosophy, beginning with the Tractatus (published in 1921, in English in '22), continuing with his emergent

philosophical preoccupations as he built the house between 1926-29, thinking that led to the Philosophical Investigations (published posthumously in 1953). And to engage with the philosopher is also to encounter the man: to pursue the architect, the musician, the (almost) artist, the aeronautical engineer and the mystic that made Wittgenstein more than a philosopher and so fascinating to us.

The philosophical viewpoint of the Tractatus can also be thought of as a 'view from above' (in one sense, a work of logic that is limited, freed from a metaphysical past, viewable in its entirety as if from above) and Çavușoğlu both draws on this for his title and plays with the idea for several of his artworks that refer to flight or aerial reconnaissance – kites, propellor sculptures, the artwork entitled Dust Breeding* and the video work Aloft.

Biographical aspects of Wittgenstein and his family's life (the anamorphic piano drawing refers to his brother Paul, a concert pianist) that inform several more of Çavușoğlu's works are much more about context and immersion in a culture of creativity that the philosopher develops in the Investigations..

Production of meaning, for the later Wittgenstein, had to be produced in context and is termed 'aspect seeing'. Accordingly, Çavușoğlu's work gives us this fuller picture with multiple viewpoints. The component parts of his installation might be considered to have 'family resemblances' and 'internal relations'

Simon Harvey
departures, homecomings

(which are a development from the fixed perspectives of Wittgenstein's famous picture constructions of the earlier work). The 'expressive playing' of pianists can only be felt if one has been immersed in a culture of music, as Wittgenstein was from birth. The artworks here, precise and light touch, seeped in the culture of Wittgenstein, are analogous to this culture of expressive performance.

Philosophy more generally helps us here. There is a way of looking at Wittgenstein's work, including his house, not as all about precision and detail (although that too), certainly not about perfection, but as to do with a point of departure. Giorgio Agamben, referring to Wittgenstein's work, but also to linguistics in general, sees it as such: it '... gives itself the most minimal object conceivable ... it is from a still more minimal place, namely from the pure existence of language, that philosophy must depart'.

The partially empty space of Haus Wittgenstein, so wonderfully captured again and, variably, again by Bird is also inviting for artistic commotion and inhabitation, and Çavuşoğlu steps in here. Not quite a white cube (as also the gallery in London is not), it is nevertheless, in some ways, sufficiently minimal to accommodate a referential and reverential, and also poetical take on Wittgenstein's only artistic (if one excludes the Tractatus) work.

* Çavuşoğlu's Dust Breeding is inspired by Man Ray's photograph (of the same title), which is a view from above of a very dusty Large Glass (Duchamp) which was imagined at the time to have the appearance of a view over a reconnoitred earth, from an aeroplane.

About

Ergin Çavuşoğlu (Bulgaria) studied at the National School of Fine Arts, Sofia, Marmara University (BA) Istanbul, Goldsmiths College (MA) London, and the University of Portsmouth (Ph.D). Çavuşoğlu co-represented Turkey at the 50th Venice Biennale in 2003. He was shortlisted for the Beck's Futures Prize in 2004 and for Artes Mundi 4 in 2010.

Solo exhibitions include: Haus Wittgenstein: The View from Above, Danielle Arnaud Gallery, London (2024); Ergin Çavuşoğlu / Palma Giovane, Hatton Gallery, Newcastle (2024); The journey down the current of all those who were adrift, Ci Contemporary Istanbul (2022); Desire Lines /Tarot & Chess/, Whitechapel Gallery, London, Istanbul Modern Museum and Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires (2020); Which Sun Gazed Down on Your Last Dream?, Rampa, Istanbul (2016); Cinefication (Tarot and Chess), Extra City Kunsthall, Antwerp (2016); Liquid Breeding, YARAT Contemporary Art Space, Baku (2015); Dust Breeding, The Pavilion, Dubai (2011); Alterity, Rampa, Istanbul (2011); Ergin Cavusoglu, Zilkha Auditorium, Whitechapel Gallery, London (2011); Crystal & Flame, PEER, London (2010); Ergin Çavuşoğlu, Ludwig Forum für Internationale Kunst, Aachen (2009); Place after Place, Kunstverein Freiburg (2008), Point of Departure, John

Hansard Gallery, Southampton (2006); Entanglement, Dundee Contemporary Arts (DCA), Dundee, 2004.

Group exhibitions include: Seeing Is Believing: the art and influence of Gérôme, MATHAF, Doha (2024); The Image Generator, Kunsthall Extra City, Antwerp (2023); Love Songs: Photography and Intimacy, ICP International Center of Photography, New York (2023); The Sun Rises in the West and Sets in the East, TUAG, Boston (2022); The Futureless Memory, Kunsthau Hamburg (2020); But a Storm Is Blowing from Paradise, GAM (2018); On Anam? Where are we going?, Es Baluard Museu d'Art Modern i Contemporani de Palma, Majorca (2018); Your Story! Geschichten von Flucht und Migration, Kunsthalle Emden (2017); But a Storm Is Blowing from Paradise, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2016); Artists in Their Time, Istanbul Modern (2015); First Kiev International Biennale of Contemporary Art (2012); Paradise Lost, Istanbul Modern Art Museum (2011); Manifesta 8, Murcia (2010); fast forward, ZKM, Karlsruhe (2010); All Inclusive – A Tourist World, Schirn Kunsthalle (2008), Frankfurt; the British Art Show 6 (2005); the 8th Istanbul Biennial (2003); the 3rd Berlin Biennial (2003).

Central to Çavuşoğlu's artworks are concepts that frequently explore ideas of place, space, liminality, mobility and the conditions of cultural production, which he has been examining in classical, modern and contemporary guises through video and sound installations, anamorphic drawings and sculptures. The contextual framework of his practice in its broader capacity examines socio-cultural terrains and human geographies. Çavuşoğlu's works frequently engage with the in-between spaces of urban environments: airports, waterways, marketplaces, historical sites and national borders. These are also mobile spaces, where ships, currencies, people, and time pass in disengagement with their geographical coordinates. The concepts of time and liminality are central to his practice on a multitude of levels. Çavuşoğlu alludes to these themes in a reflective way positioning them within geo-political, philosophical, historical and literary contexts. The spatiality and the immersive qualities of his installations further contribute to the manifestation of these concepts in the ways they are experienced by the viewer. Furthermore, the pattern of literary references

in his narrative film and video works unfold a series of moral parables that have a notional relevance to contemporary art and the production of culture. Çavuşoğlu frequently works with fiction and non-fiction texts in the development of my projects in various forms and contexts. Sometimes he produces cinematographic and theatrical adaptations from these writings, and often texts institute concepts and act as forms of conceptual clarifications. Moreover, the acknowledgement of art in his broader practice as a scholarly activity, often presents a multi-layered experience of its systems today and their appreciation, or critique.

Ergin Çavuşoğlu lives and works in London, UK. He is a Professor of Contemporary Art at Middlesex University, London.

Selected Public Collections

Solomon R. Guggenheim Collection, New York
Arts Council England Collection
La collection du Frac Alsace (FRAC Alsace Collection)
Pinakothek der Moderne, München, Haus der Kunst, München, and Neues Museum, Nürnberg Collection
Sammlung Goetz, Munich
The Ludwig Collection
DD Collection (Dimitris Daskalopoulos)
Leeds City Art Gallery Collection
Vehbi Koç Foundation Collection
Istanbul Modern Museum
Borusan Contemporary Collection
MTEL, Sofia
The Pinault Collection
Soho House Collection
The Elgiz Museum Collection



Haus Wittgenstein - Bulgarisches Kulturinstitut, Vienna
Parkgasse 18, 1030 Wien, Austria



Bronze bust by Wittgenstein (1926/28)

'I also have, in my artistic activities,
only good manners.'
L. J. J. Wittgenstein (1934)

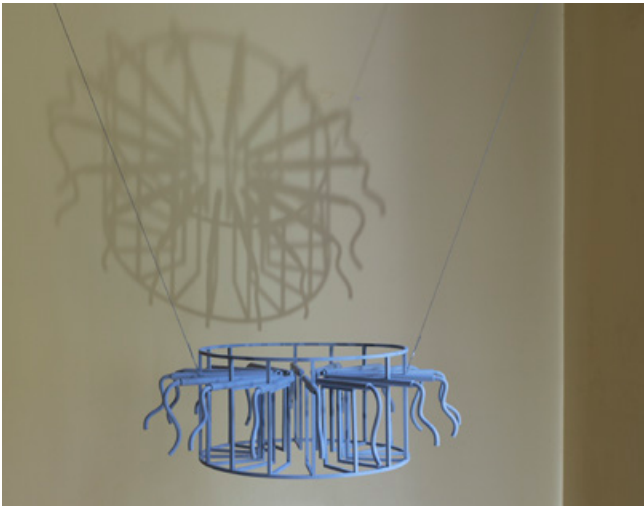


ERGİN ÇAVUŞOĞLU

The View from Above

Danielle Arnaud Gallery London

5 October - 9 November 2024



Systems (2020)

Alumide / PA-AF (Aluminum Filled)
D500.00 x W500.00 x H183.60 mm

Employing the principles of informal architecture and minimalist sculpture, Systems (2020) was developed originally as a contemplative act and an attempt to deconstruct the ideas of classicism ingrained in the architectural edifice of the McCaig's Tower in Oban, Scotland. Also known as McCaig's Folly (based on the Colosseum in Rome), the unfinished structure was used as the stage for Çavuşoğlu's epic video installation entitled Voyage of no Return (2009). Systems was produced initially as a large floor-based anamorphic drawing for his solo exhibition at Ludwig Forum Aachen in 2009.



Silent Systems (2020)

Alumide / PA-AF (Aluminum Filled), D328.51 x W500.00 x H374.12 mm

Silent Systems acts as a representation of the Noah's Ark - one of the first migratory vessels. Silent Systems was produced initially as an anamorphic drawing in response to a site used during the filming of "Silent Glide (2008-09), a three-channel video installation, which tells the story of a young academic who found himself anchored in Hereke, a city in Turkey once known for their beautiful silks and now home to Noah, a huge cement production facility." Which sun gazed down on your last dream? Exhibition brochure text by Nicole Dee O'Rourke (2016)

"I was put into a boat (I do not remember when) and pushed off from an unknown shore, shown the direction of the opposite shore, had oars put into my unpractised hands, and was left alone. I forgot the direction given me... I saw before me nothing but destruction, towards which I was rushing, and which I feared. I saw no safety anywhere, and did not know what to do... but... I remembered about the shore, the oars, and the direction, and began to pull back upwards against the stream and towards the shore."

Leo Tolstoy, A Confession (1882)

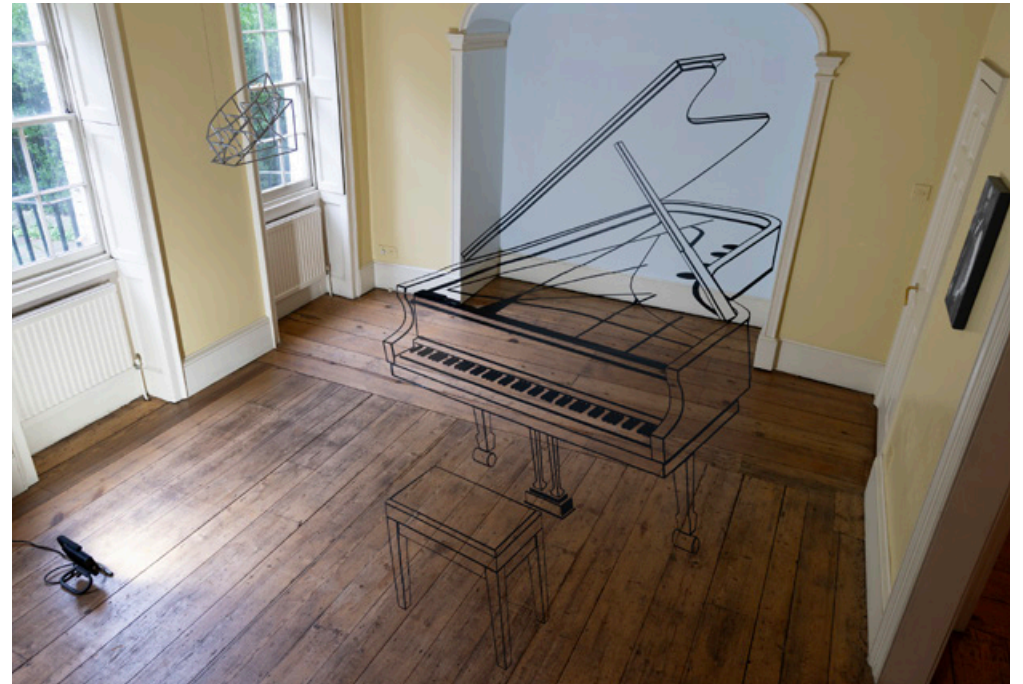
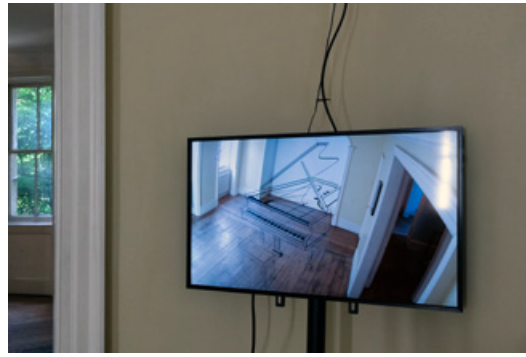
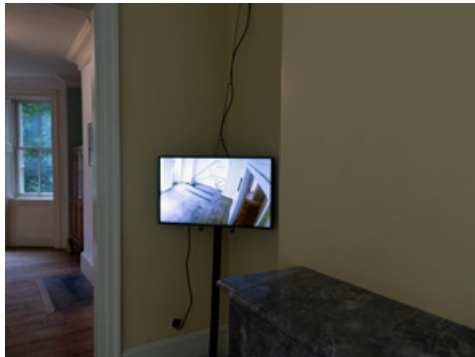




Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in C-Sharp Major (2024)

Site-specific anamorphic drawing: Vinyl, HD camera, Wall bracket,
32" HD monitor

Floor section: H 375 x W 293 cm, wall section: H197 x W284 cm



Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in C-Sharp Major (2024)

Site-specific anamorphic drawing: Vinyl, HD camera, Wall bracket, 32" HD monitor

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Tranquility #2000 /Lightness IX/ (2023)

Acrylic and UV print on canvas, 61.3 x 31.4 cm





Propellers and Propositions (2024)

Site-specific anamorphic drawing:

Vinyl, HD camera, wall bracket, 32" HD monitor

Floor section: H 330 x 183 cm, wall section: H 15 x 32 cm



Propellers and Propositions (2024)

Site-specific anamorphic drawing:

Vinyl, HD camera, wall bracket, 32" HD monitor

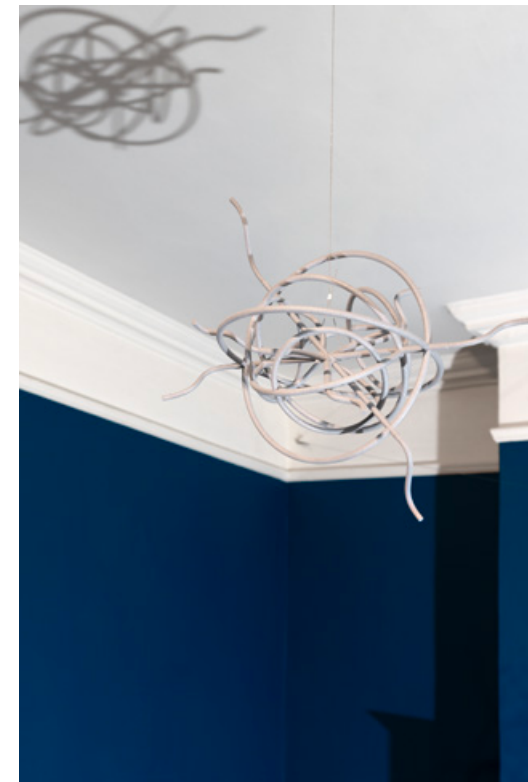
Floor section: H 330 x 183 cm, wall section: H 15 x 32 cm





Bell - Flying Lesson /Lightness I/ (2018)

Acrylic and UV print on canvas, 101 x 76 cm



Dust Breeding (2020)

Alumide / PA-AF (Aluminum Filled), D300.04 x W445.83 x H500.00 mm

Dust Breeding alludes to architectural and mechanical spherical structures, such as the Horace Horton's Spheres for storing oil. Dust Breeding is an ongoing project that represents the construct and critique of ideas on spatial art practices. The work is situated in the threshold between visibility, informal architecture and three-dimensional artwork. Conceptually the work is on the continuity of the anamorphic drawing Dust Breeding (2011-2018), which borrows the title of Man Ray's famous 1920 photograph. The image depicts an aerial view of Duchamp's iconic *The Large Glass* (1915-1923) having accumulated a thick layer of dust. Duchamp dedicated much time on articulating the relationship of form to 'space-time continuum' and issues around the 'rehabilitation of perspective' as exemplified in several of his works and most notably in *The Large Glass* (1915-1923).



NW What do you think the film itself is: a kind of storytelling or a kind of observing?

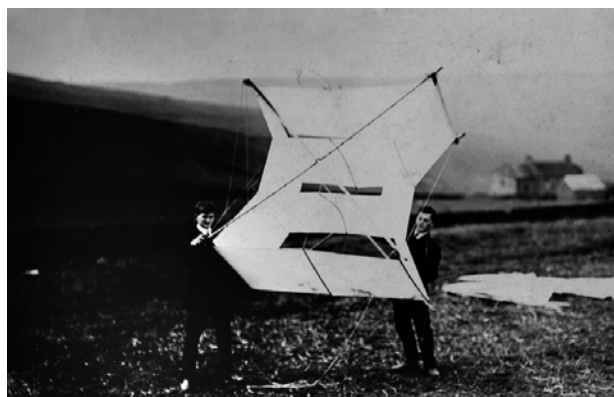
EÇ The film derives from an archaeological finding. The temple has eight holes on top, equally positioned from the centre to the sides. According to the archaeologists, this temple was built like so, and there was once a goddess placed in the middle of the temple. It was suggested that while the sun travels around, it will light the statue equally throughout the day in a circular pattern, like clockwork. During the production research, I found images of a cave called Prohodna, which has two holes on top, known as the Eyes of God. The movement in the animation is the light going through a cycle of day and night so that both the temple and the interior of the cave are lit by sunlight and moonlight.

NW So the film is having the audience watch something which is itself watching.

The Dwelling - Place of Light (2022)

Single-channel (2920x1644) 3D animation
2'24" continuous loop

EÇ Exactly. I use the "eyes" on top of this cave very much like an aperture, to focus the light on certain elements in the setting.
Nell Whittaker, TANK Magazine, March 2022



William Eccles and Wittgenstein on the moors
above Glossop in the summer of 1908

Flying Lesson - Wittgenstein Studies I (2024)

Alumide / PA-AF (Aluminum Filled), D500 x W445 x H169 mm

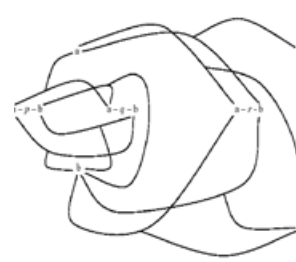


Figure 2: Diagram of the proposition 'p. q) ⊃ r'

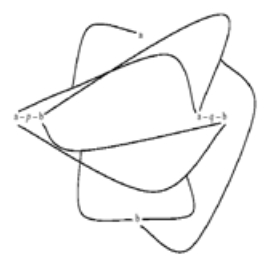
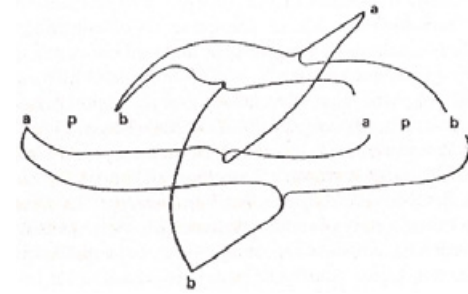
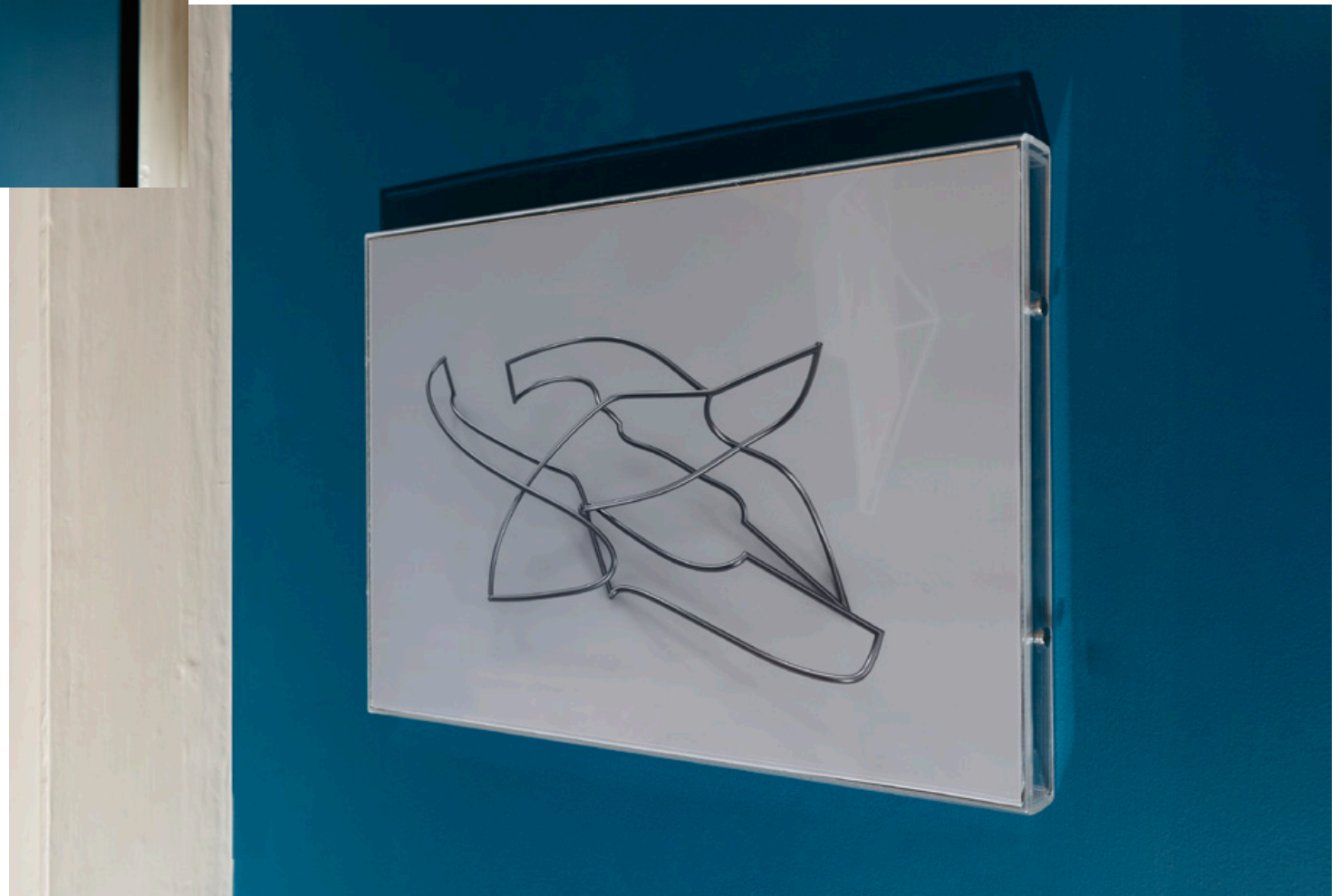


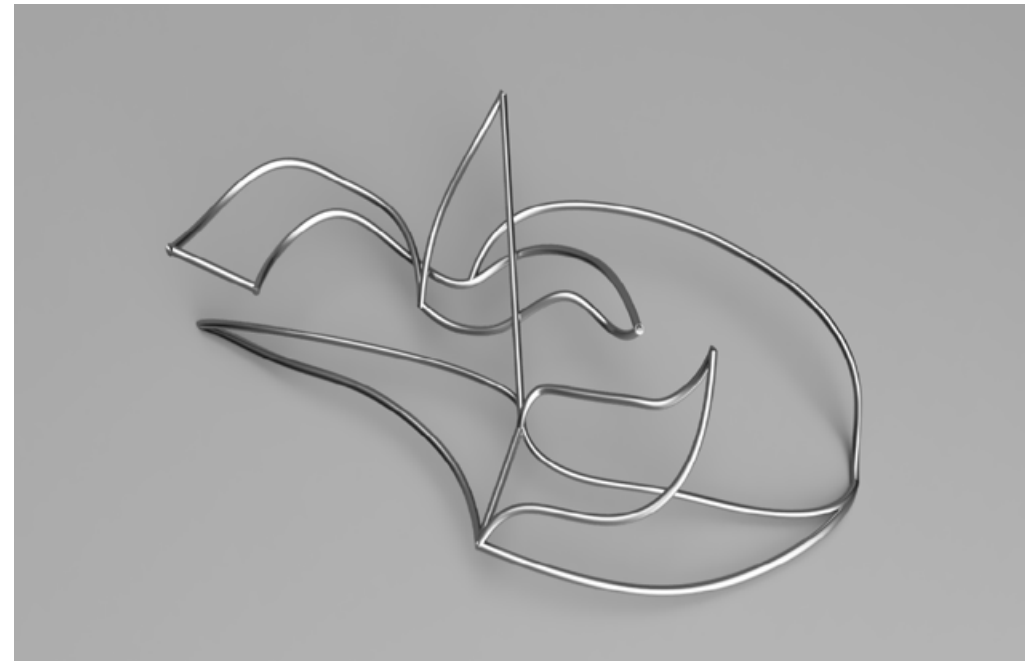
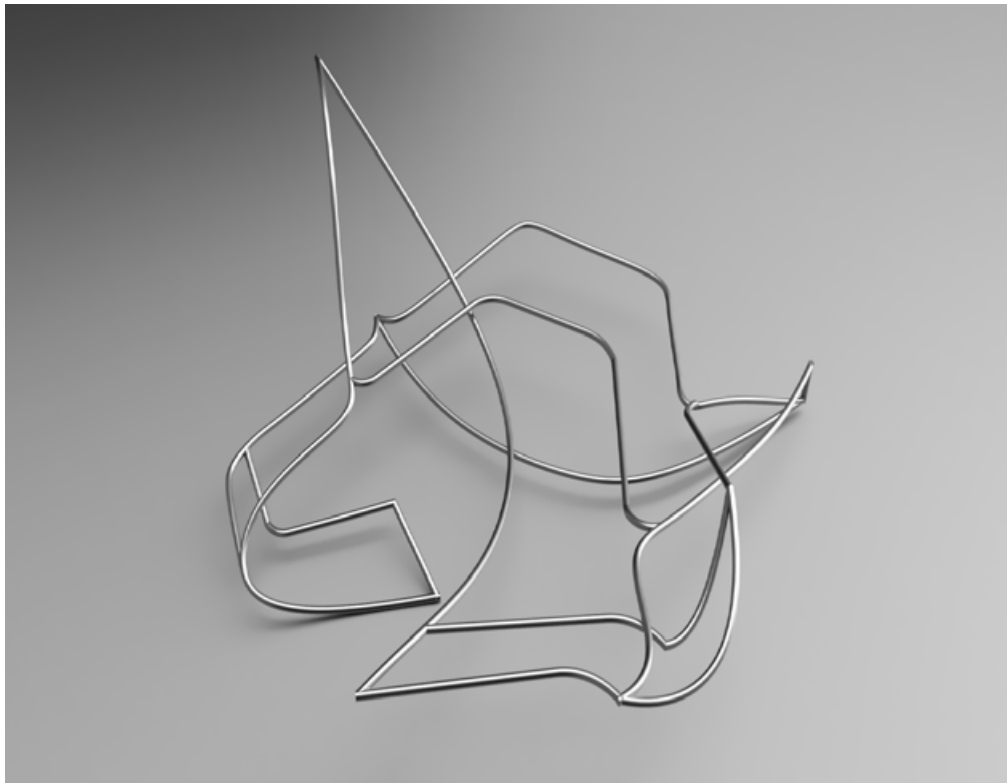
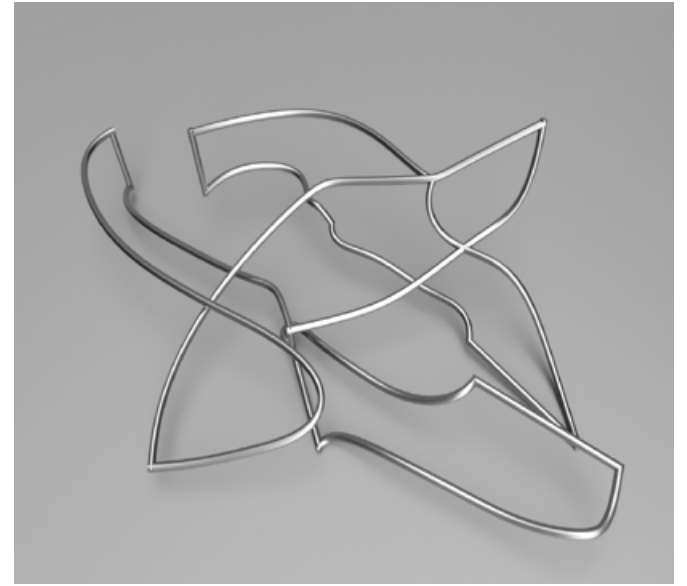
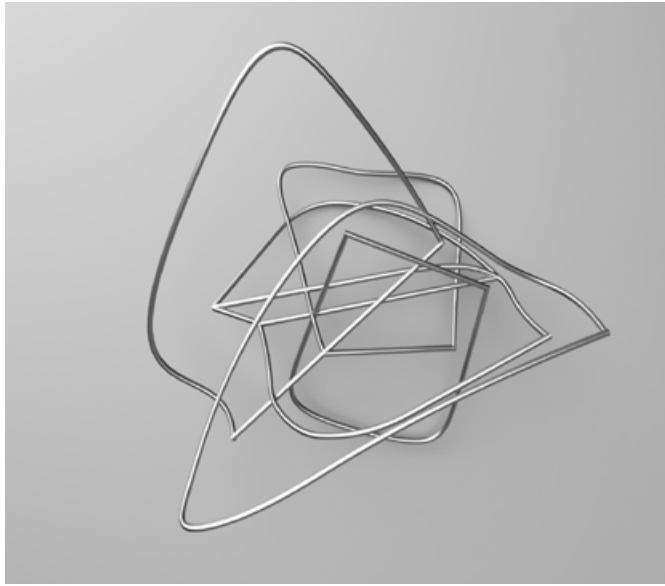
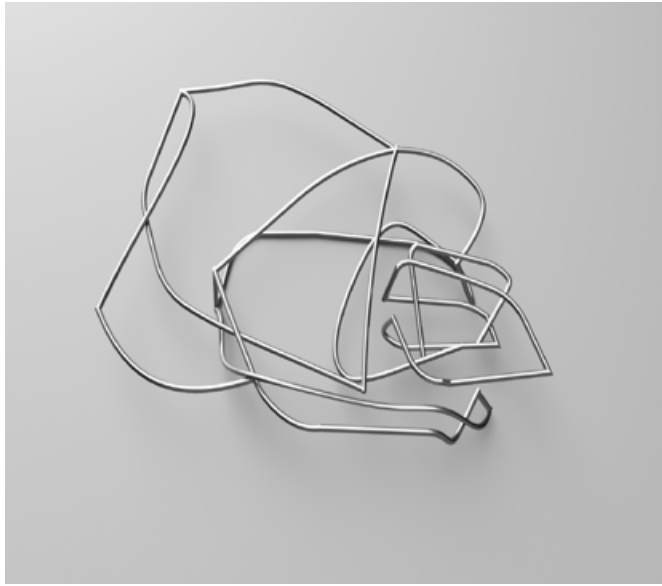
Figure 1: Diagram of the proposition 'p. q'

Diagrams of propositions
by Ludwig Wittgenstein



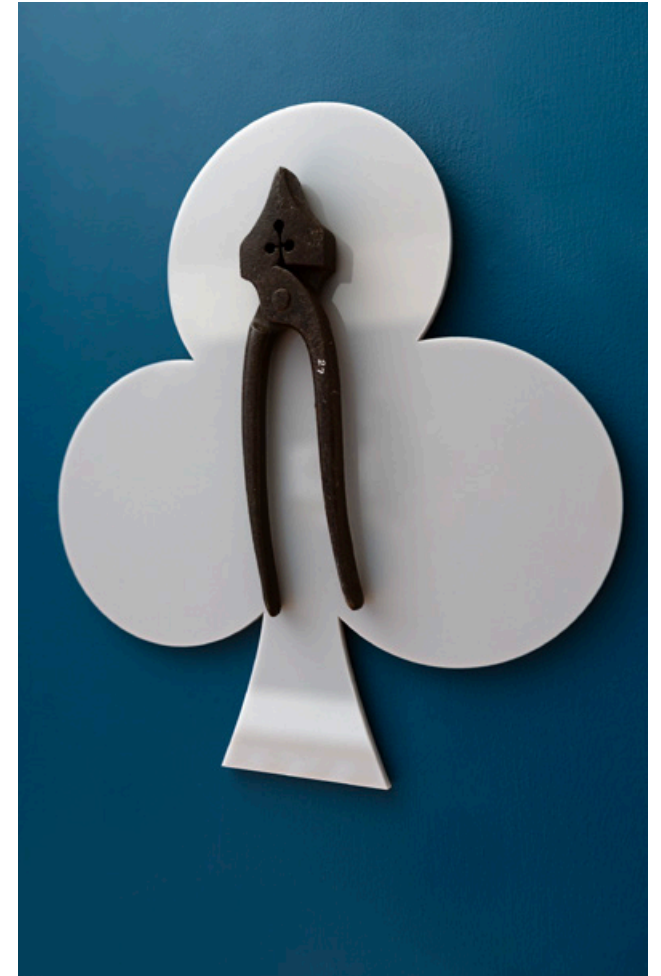
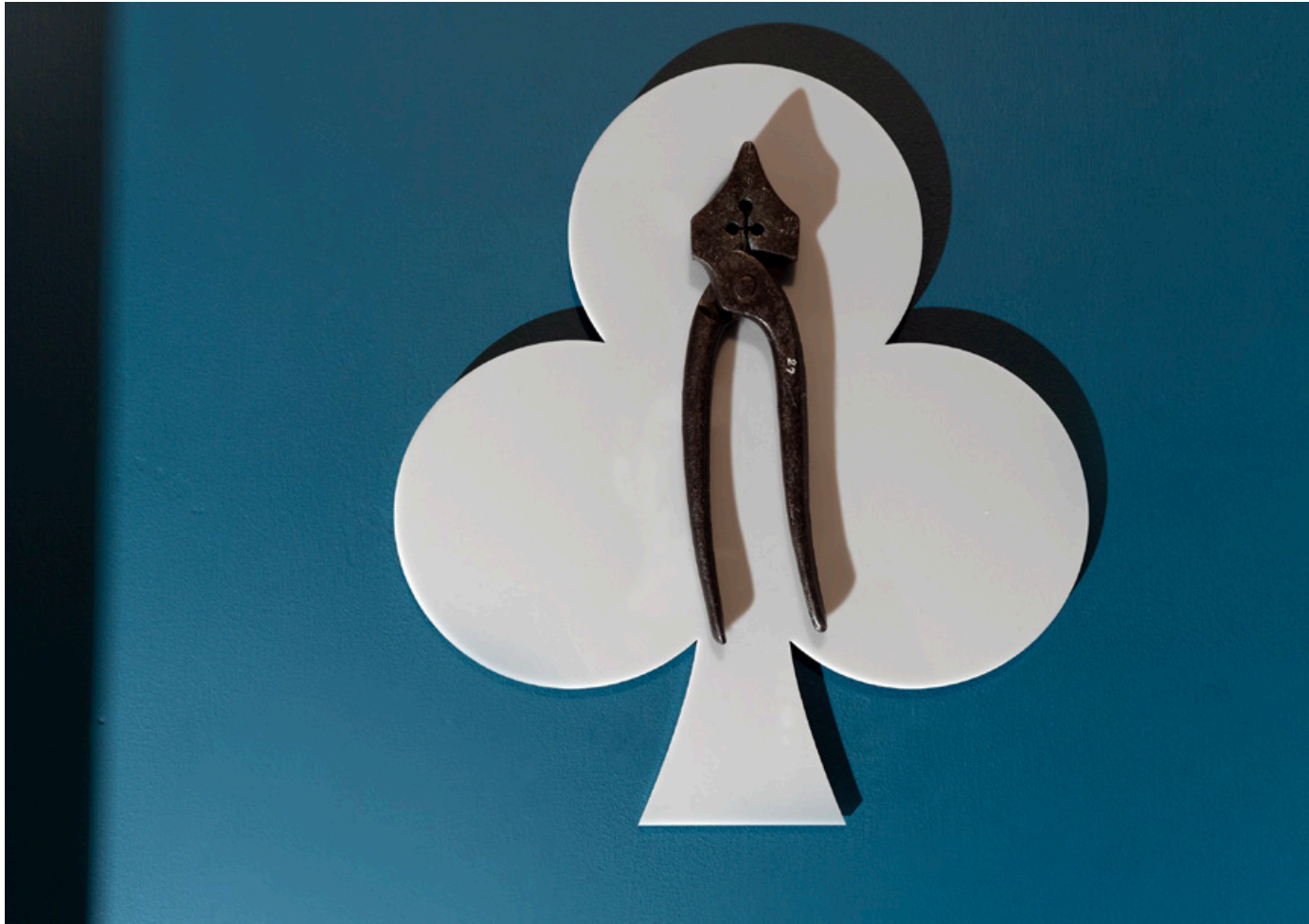
Proposition III 'ab-diagram of $p \equiv p$ ' (2024)

Digital print in double tray acrylic box frame
29.7 x 42.0 cm



Propositions I - V (2024)

Alumide / PA-AF (Aluminum Filled), approx D530 x W500 x H200 mm each



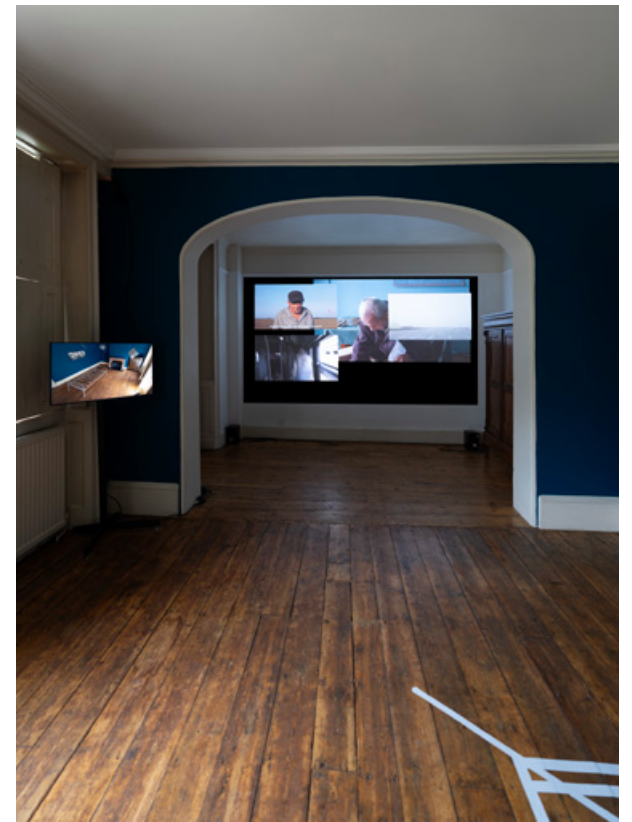
Proposition VI - Clubs 27, 2024

Found object mounted on Perspex
29 x 32 x 1.7 cm



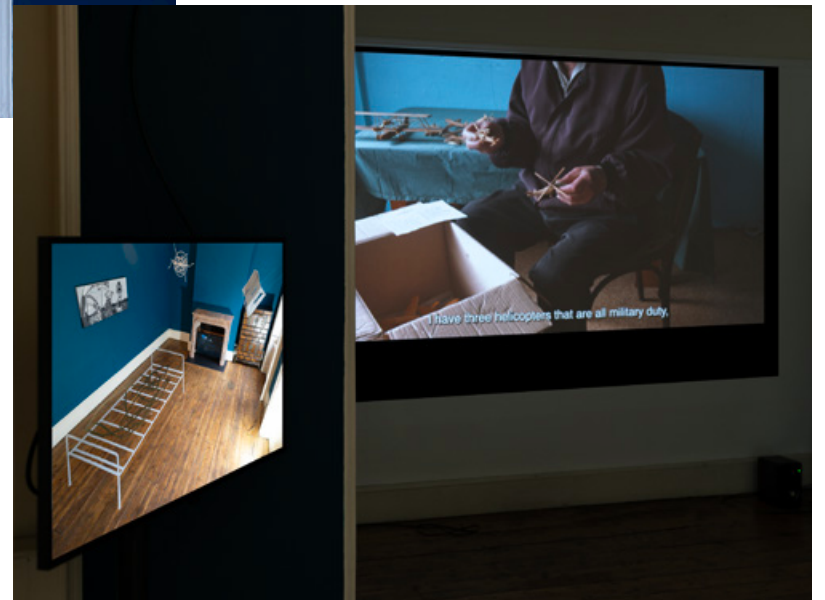
Lever Handle Wittgenstein (2024)

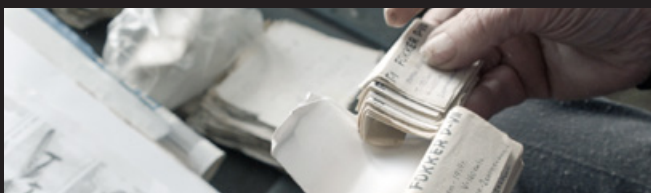
Ergin Çavuşoğlu and Jon Bird in collaboration with izé
Rose Gold Bronze, Length 135 mm, Projection 66mm, Rose diameter 50 mm



Aloft (2014 - 2024)

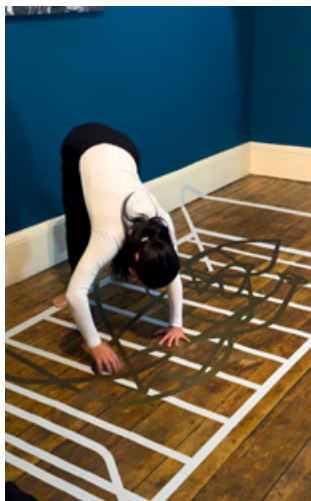
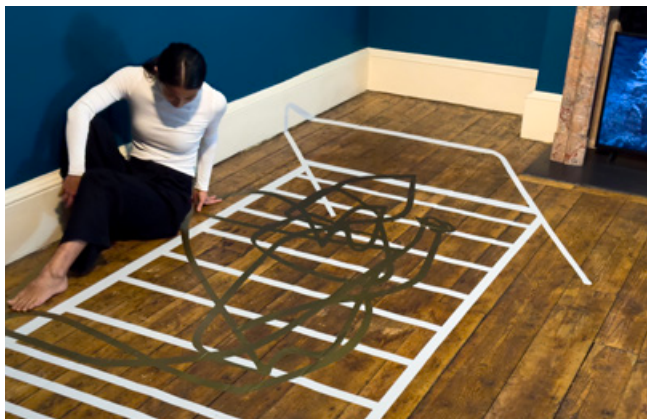
Four-channel split-screen
(1080x1920) HD video,
sound, 203' 39"





Aloft (2014 - 2024)

Four-channel split-screen
(1080x1920) HD video,
sound, 203' 39"



Andrea Madore performing in:
Haus Wittgenstein: The View from Above

Propellers and Propositions (2024)

Site-specific anamorphic drawing:
Vinyl, HD camera, wall bracket, 32" HD monitor
Floor section: H 330 x 183 cm, wall section: H 15 x 32 cm

Haus Wittgenstein: The View from Above
Closing Event 9 November 2024



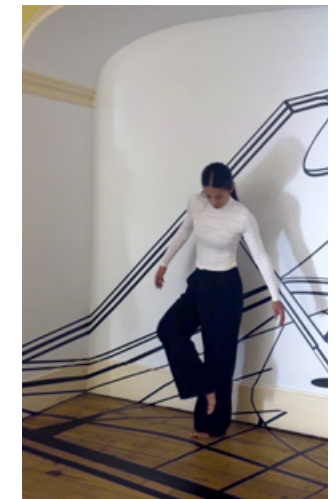
Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in C-Sharp Major (2024)

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Olga Ksendovska performing Erich Wolfgang
Korngold's Piano Concerto for the Left Hand
in C-sharp major, Op. 17

Performers Andrea Madore and Tansy Spinks

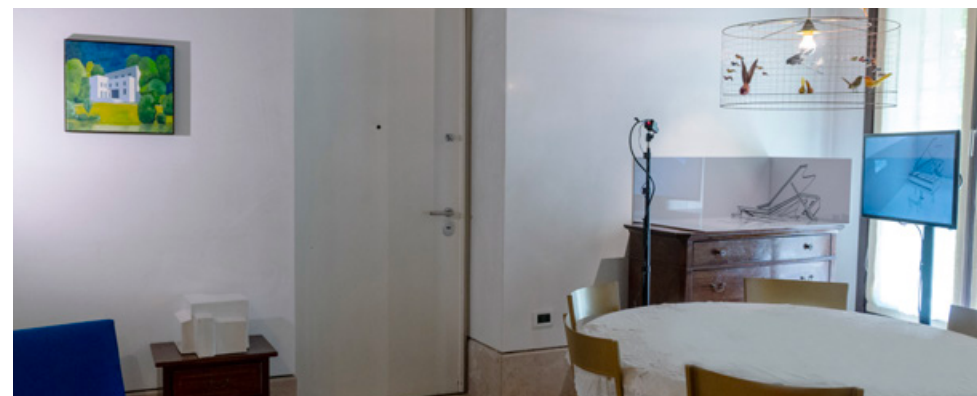


ERGİN ÇAVUŞOĞLU

The View from Above

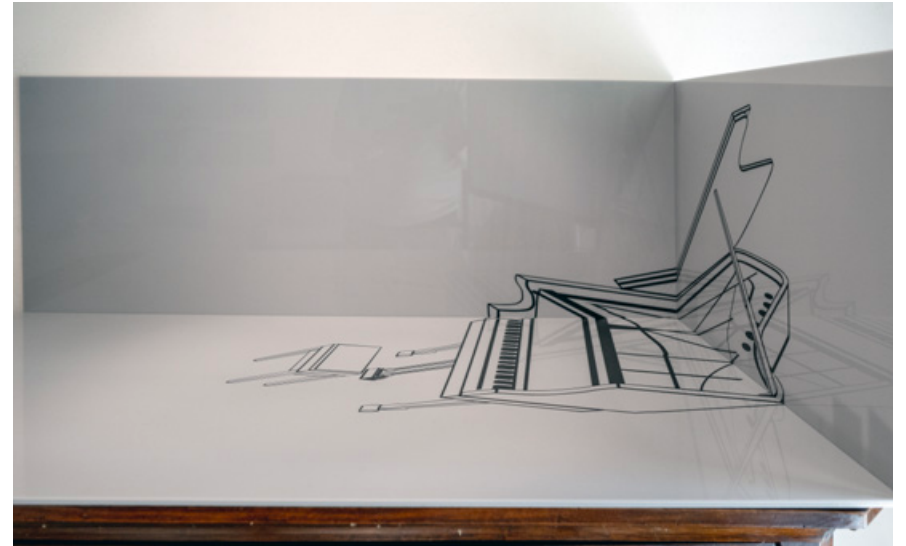
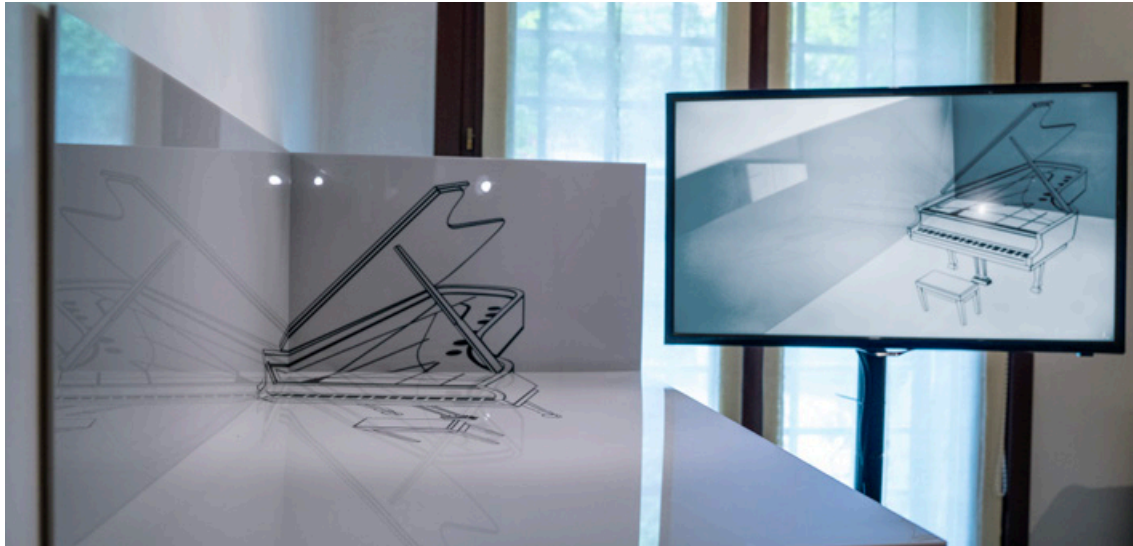
Danielle Arnaud Venice

6 May - 23 November 2025



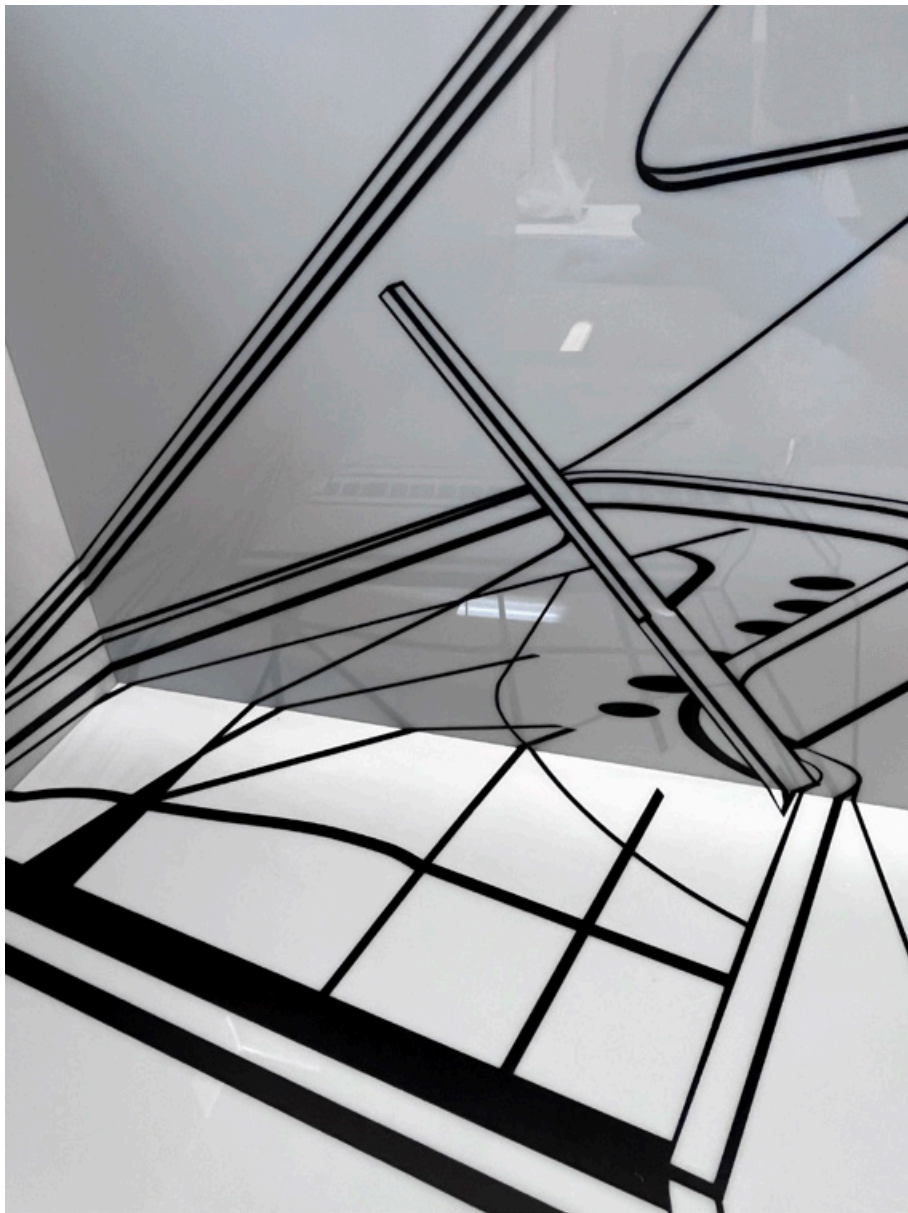
DANIELLE ARNAUD VENICE

Haus Wittgenstein
Ergin Çavuşoğlu: The View from Above
Jon Bird: Wittgenstein's Ladder
Installation Views
6 May - 25 November 2025



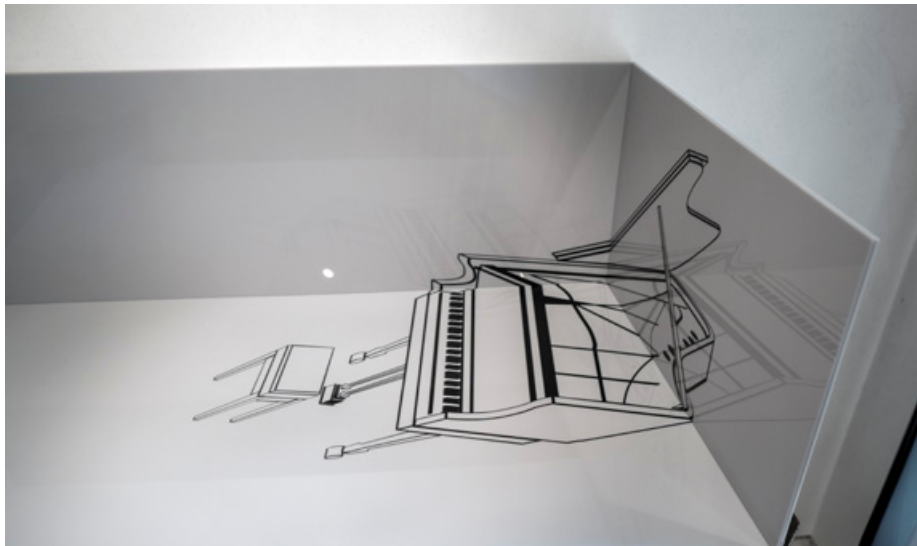
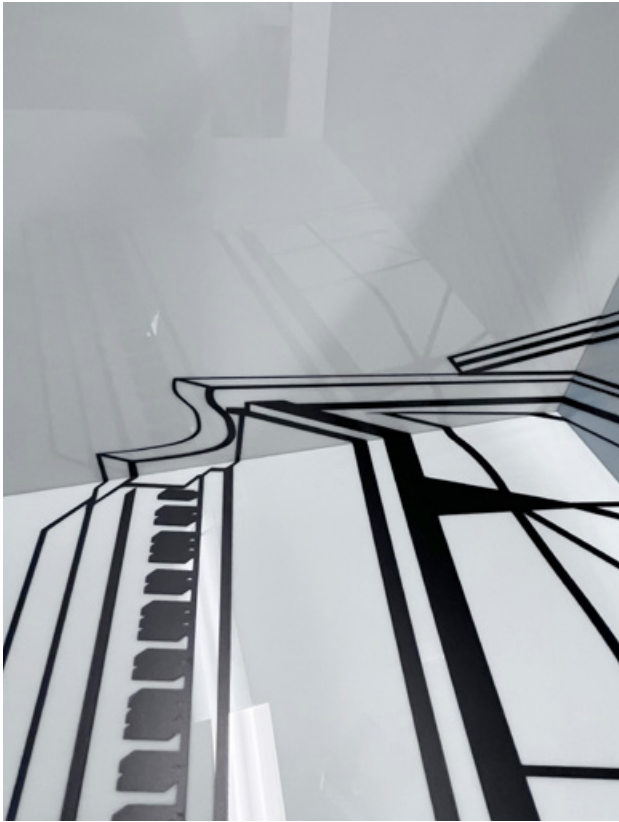
Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in C-Sharp Major (2025)

Site-specific anamorphic drawing: Perspex, Vynil, HD camera, Camera stand, bracket, 32" HD monitor, Monitor stand
 Floor section: H 57 x W 97 cm, wall section: H32 x W97 cm



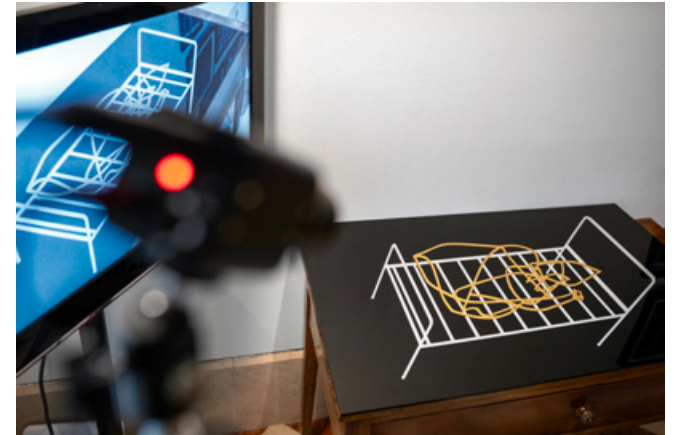
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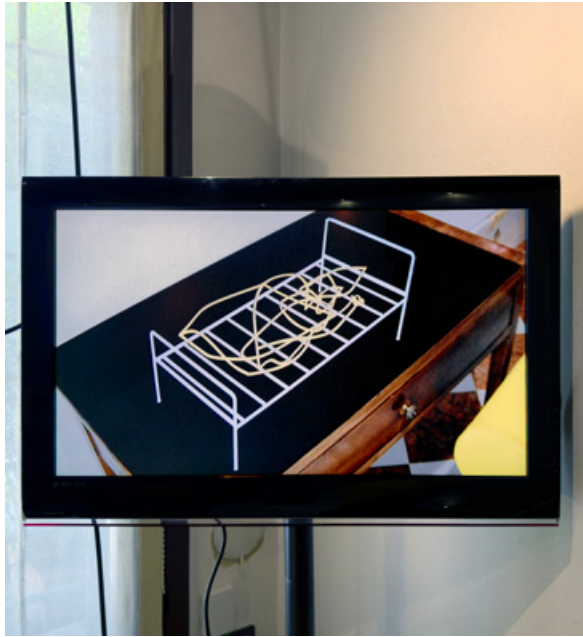
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Site-specific anamorphic drawing: Perspex, Vynil, HD camera, Camera stand, bracket, 32" HD monitor, Monitor stand
 Floor section: H 57 x W 97 cm, wall section: H32 x W97 cm



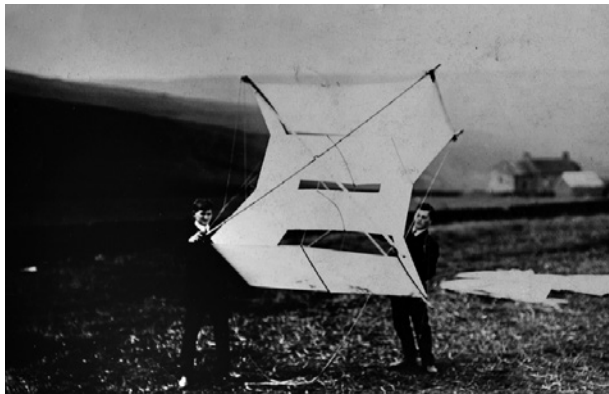
Propellers and Propositions (2025)

Site-specific anamorphic drawing: Perspex inlay, HD camera,
Camera stand, bracket, 32" HD monitor, Monitor stand
Floor section: H 97 x W 57 cm

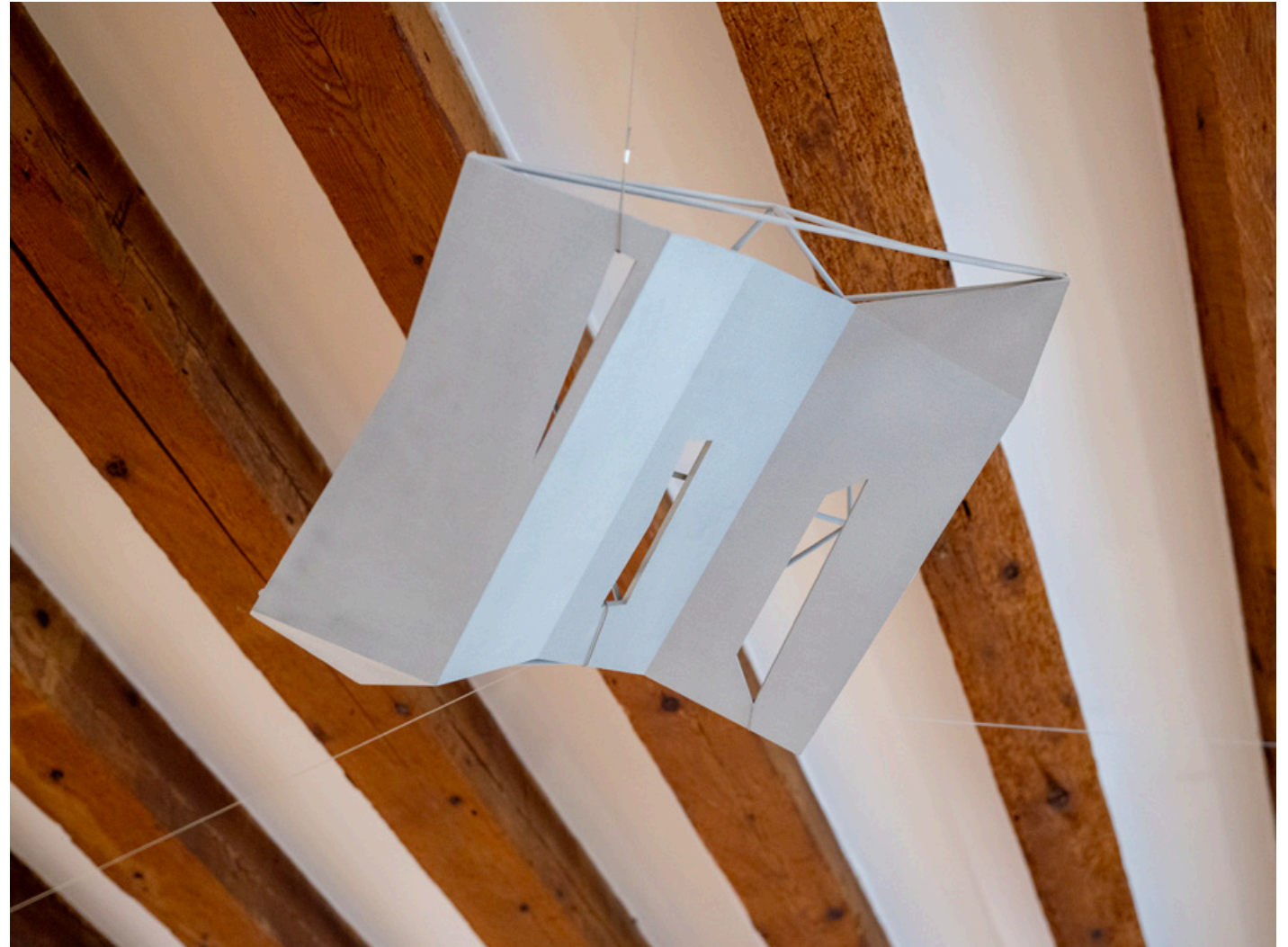


Propellers and Propositions (2025)

Site-specific anamorphic drawing: Perspex inlay, HD camera,
Camera stand, bracket, 32" HD monitor, Monitor stand
Floor section: H 97 x W 57 cm

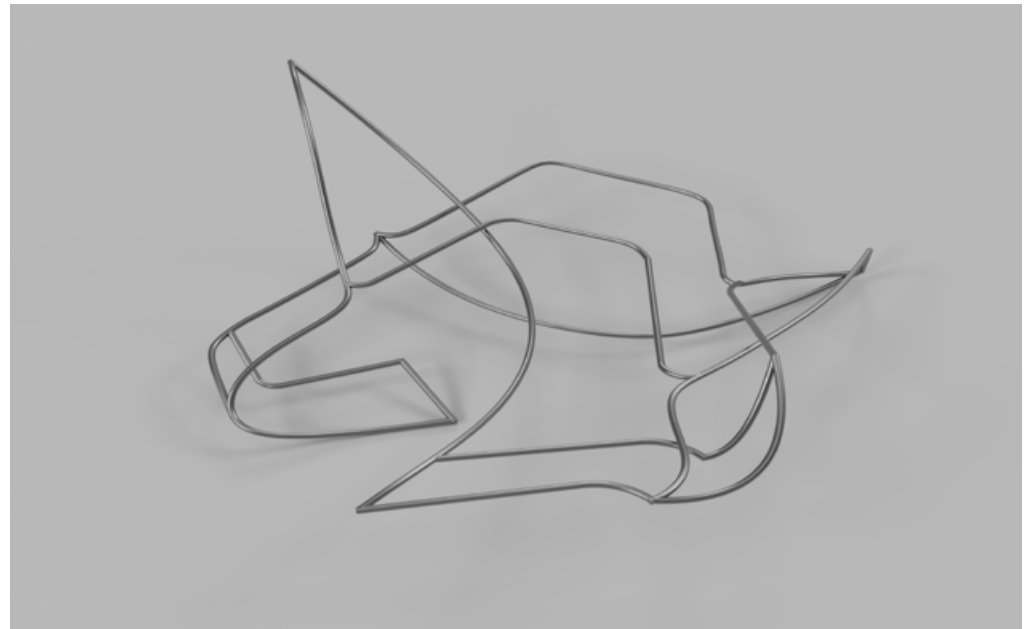
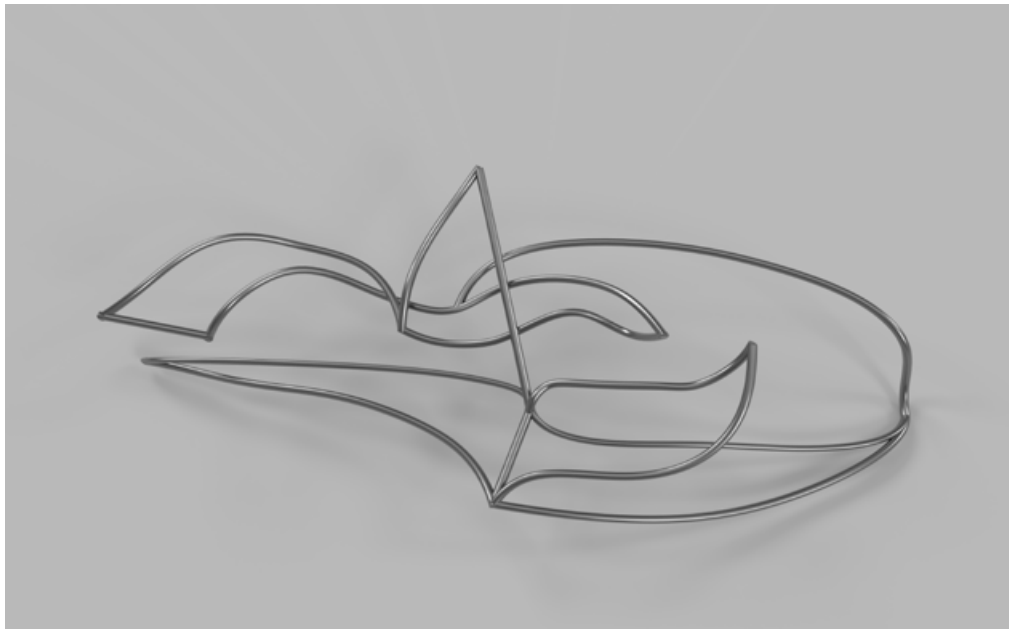
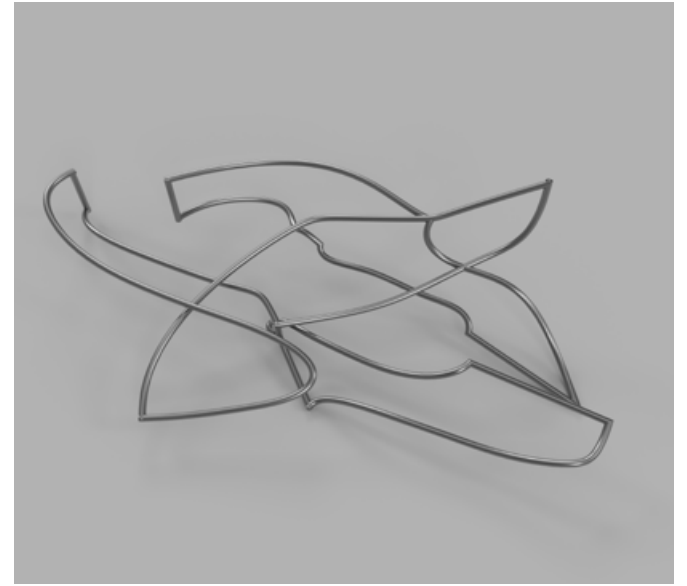
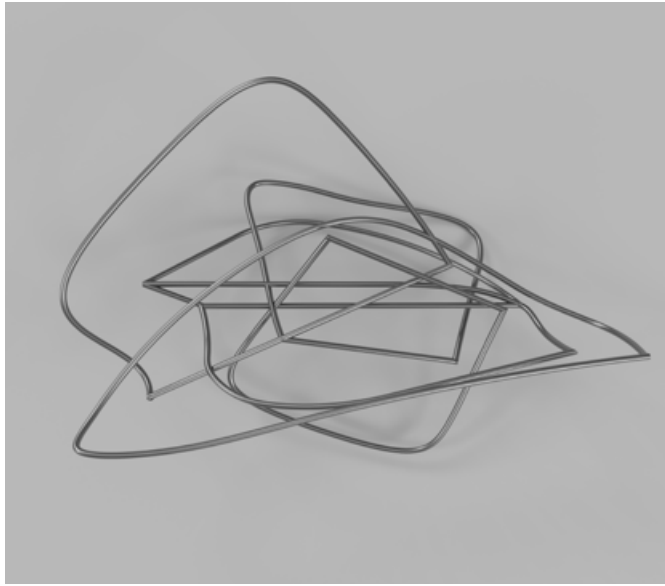
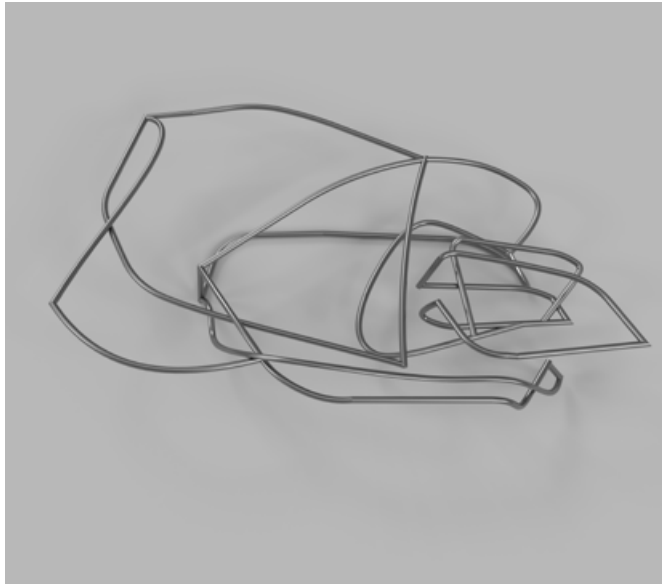


William Eccles and Wittgenstein on the moors
above Glossop in the summer of 1908



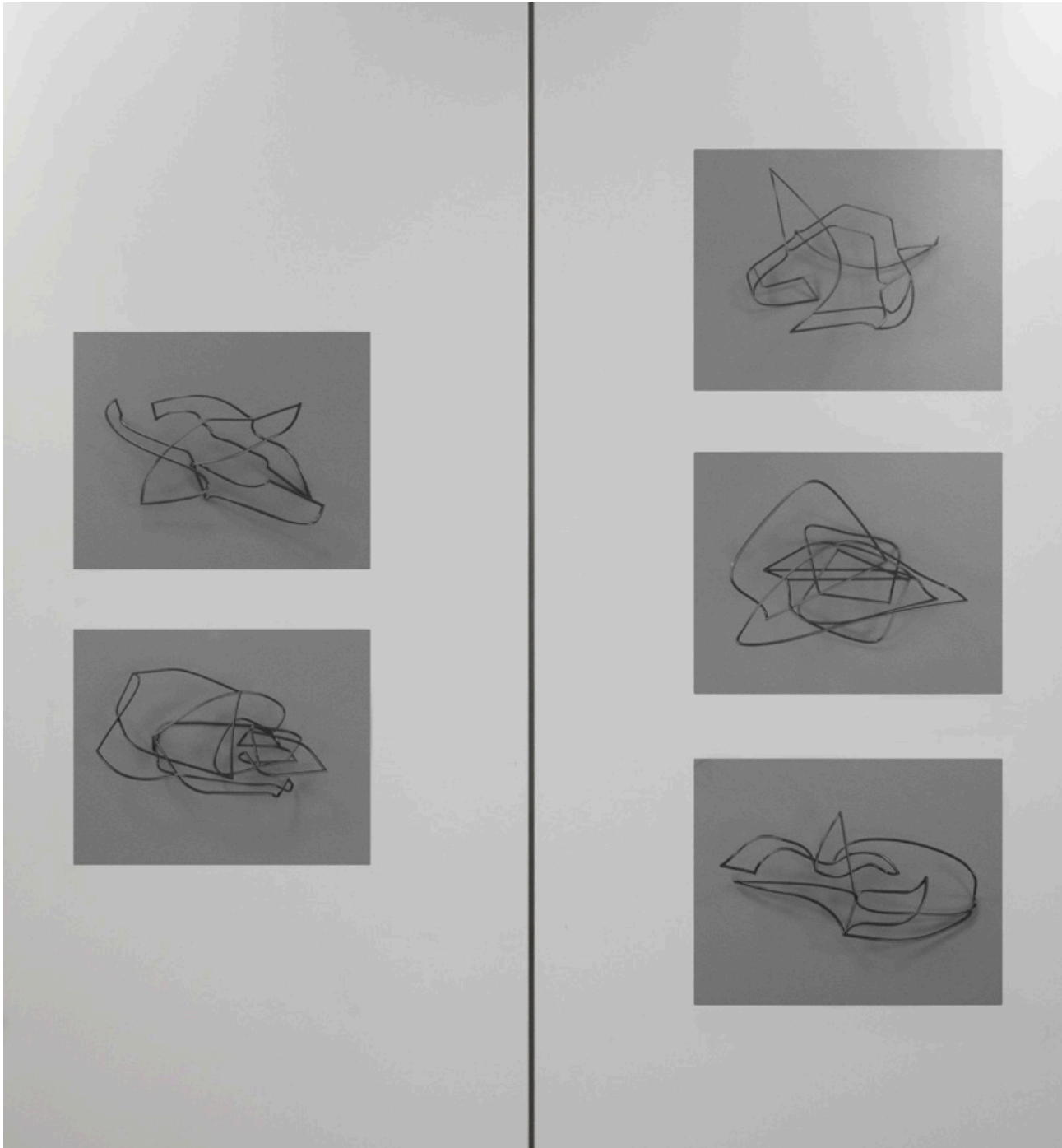
Flying Lesson - Wittgenstein Studies I (2024)

Alumide / PA-AF (Aluminum Filled), D500 x W445 x H169 mm



Propositions I - V (2025)

Digital print, 30 x 24 cm each



Propositions I - V (2025)

Digital print, 30 x 24 cm each

X La Roue de Fortune /The Wheel of Fortune/ (2013)

Perspex, 57 x 35 x 0.5 cm

USE KEYBOARD ARROW KEYS FOR NAVIGATION ← →



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