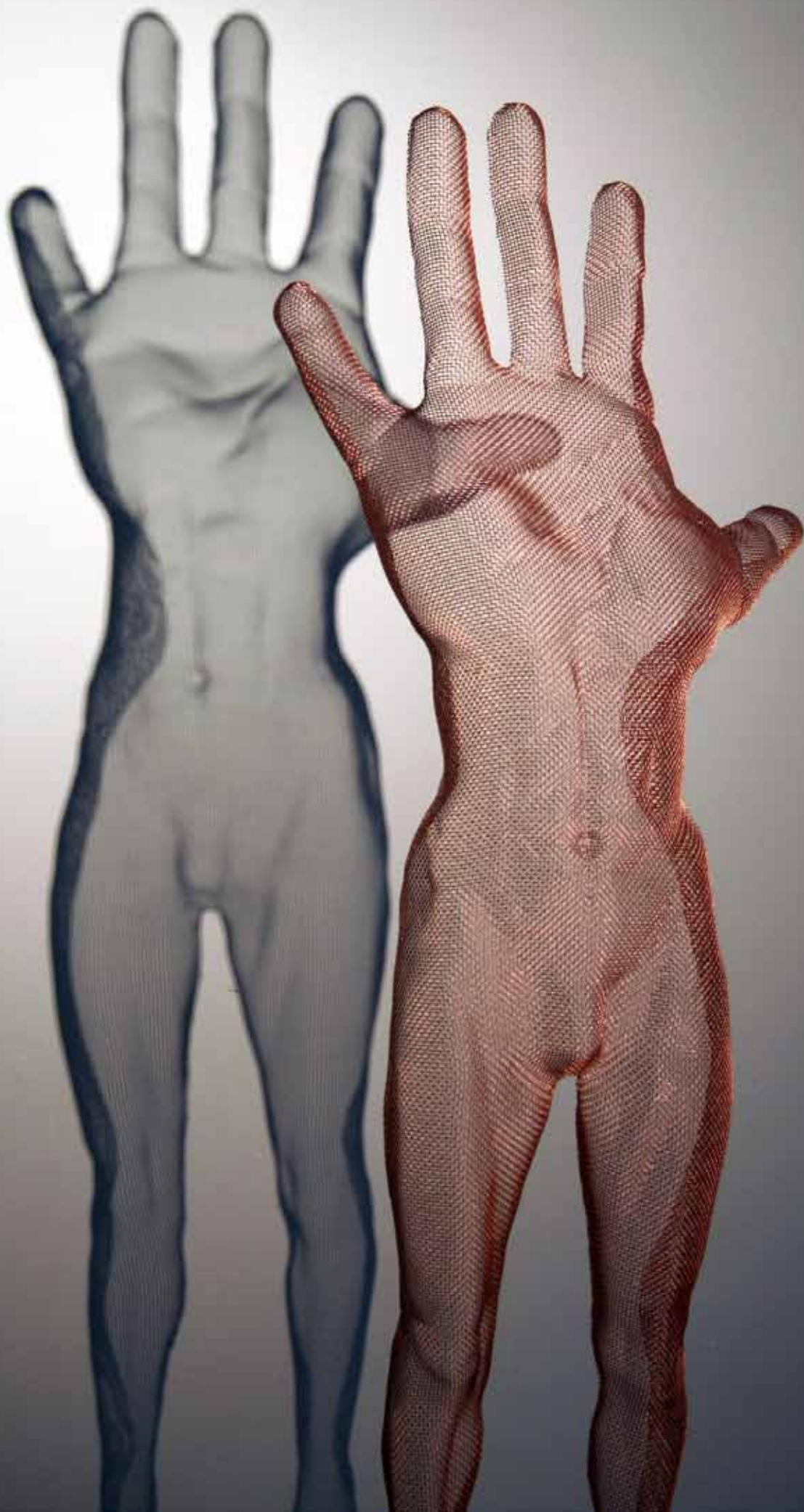


DAVID
BEGBIE



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G A L L E R Y

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“Sculpture, we usually say without examining our proposition too closely, is of course a tactile art. We are most likely regretting the present-day hands-off policy of the great public art collections, however responsible in terms of conversation it may be, because after all you can obtain a much more intimate knowledge of a sculptor’s intentions, interests and achievements if you can actually run your hand over that curve and into the declivity, savour through your sense of touch the texture of stone or wood or metal. Which is true as far as it goes. But with David Begbie it does not go very far.

There is no doubt that Begbie is a sculptor. What else can you call someone who produces three-dimensional work in a material as palpable as fine steel mesh? And for that matter the comparisons that spring to mind are always with other sculptors. He may make us think of Medardo Rosso, who sought to capture similarly evanescent effects of fluidity and movement in the similarly evanescent medium of wax - though Begbie’s works, for all their apparent insubstantiality, are in fact amazingly sturdy. Or of Rodin for his passionate interest in the musculature of the human body, his fascination with the way the light falls on and moulds the shapes of human flesh.

And yet Begbie’s work must be the least tactile of all sculpture. If you touch a Begbie, what do you find out? Simply, that it is made of wire mesh. More complicatedly, that most of its visual effect is illusion. He is indeed, like Rodin, fascinated by the way that light falls on the human body, but he never reproduces the effect; he re-creates it in a highly illusionistic way. He is always playing with the intricate relationship between the eye and the mind, which enables us, forces us even, to see things which are not there, to place things in an imaginary space which corresponds to the real space before our eyes very little, if at all. Because of the very delicate and subtle fashion in which the mesh is moulded (mostly with his bare, strong fingers), extraordinary illusions are created, for as we look at the sculpture from different angles, the mesh takes on different visual densities, depending on the angle at which we see it, or whether we see it, as we do in some of the fully three-dimensional figures, in one thickness or two or three.”

John Russell Taylor, Critic and Author

“As he is a splendid sculptural draughtsman, the shape is exquisitely outlined. It has the rightness and the adjustment to observation, which in their absence we always miss in visual art. The steel mesh that makes these bodies also constitutes their imaginative clothing. It creates and iridescent fabric, with a fluttering sheen that is wantonly voluptuous, harsh yet silky, both at once. David Begbie weaves for imperial nakedness an optical garment, which is more illusory and stylish than ever.”

Sir Lawrence Gowing, Artist and Writer

“If one envisages the human form in sculpture one perhaps first thinks of it being carved in marble, since we all still wear what Henry Moore once referred to as ‘Greek spectacles’. Alternatively one might reflect on Donatello’s DAVID, which is arguably the most beautiful sculpture ever made. Or, perhaps nearer to our own time one thinks of Rodin’s powerfully modelled figures - and here we are getting closer to what David Begbie is seeking to create: an incomplete portion of the human body, a part which speaks eloquently for the whole. The foregoing examples are of the human body carved or modelled, solid either absorbing or reflecting light. Begbie has explored a further range of possibilities - his figures are transparent, made of wire mesh, modelled painted and galvanised: the light both ripples on the surface and passes right through them. The effect is of a presence that is not quite of this world. It is real, but also surreal.”

Mary Rose Beaumont, Art Historian and Critic

“His work is quite unlike anything else being done at the present moment. His figures and figure-fragments are moulded from fine wire mesh. These materials turn out to be extraordinarily sensitive: Begbie is able to shape it with his hands to produce the illusion of rippling musculature. He makes it seem as sensitive and pliable as wax. But the mesh provides a whole range of other effects as well - the sculptures become translucent - they are simultaneously there and not there. In this new series of works, Begbie has become much bolder - the figures are deliberately fragmented, metal armatures are used to ‘draw’ with, so that the spatial interaction becomes more complex. Every time the viewer shifts position, a new set of relationships appear. The fascinating thing is that these relationships remain coherent.”

Edward Lucie-Smith, Art Historian, Critic and Author

“David Begbie is a sculptor, draughtsman and printmaker whose materials and media are unusual but whose preoccupation – the human condition – is ancient. The first known paintings, the cave paintings of southern France, are of living creatures, animals in the main; even older however, are the first known sculptures: a very plump female in limestone, and a man in ivory both from Central Europe. The survivors - (and characteristically sculpture has a potential for survival denied to painting) – are associated with the art of the hunters, rather than with the more settled art of the farmers appearing substantially later. The famous dictum of Pope’s turns out to have been shared throughout the millennia, even if man and woman were dressed up or rather down, in the sense of being naked and observed – as a deity.

In the face of all creeds and isms, the most persistent motif – man is the measure of all things – characterises the formulation of imagery for all of human history. (Abstraction is bold, because it emphasises human absence the more powerfully in some instances to recall the human presence.) Therefore, in one sense, what is there still to say or show?

David Begbie’s human and humane art does demonstrate in contemporary terms and the human figure is inexhaustible as an inspiration in itself, and as itself, and as a way of saying all kinds of things about art – and life – now. First of all there is the refinement of the material. In the case of the three-dimensional figures, Begbie confounds sculptural preconceptions – particularly when related to figurative work. We are accustomed to seeing the figure carved in stone or cast in bronze, however we are also used to an enormous variety of material in the revolutionary formulations for sculpture so characteristic of this century. In a curious way, the figure itself is the last bastion. David Begbie does not, it seems to me, use the novelty of steel mesh and now copper, simply for its own sake. Rather, it is an extension and amplification of an earlier avant-garde – Julio Gonzalez, say, and his drawing in space with his welded metal sculpture. Their technical insights and expansions of possibilities were and are quarried by artists who have tended to abandon overt representation for a more oblique view of the world around us, relying more on an inner vision, a sense of constructing from within.

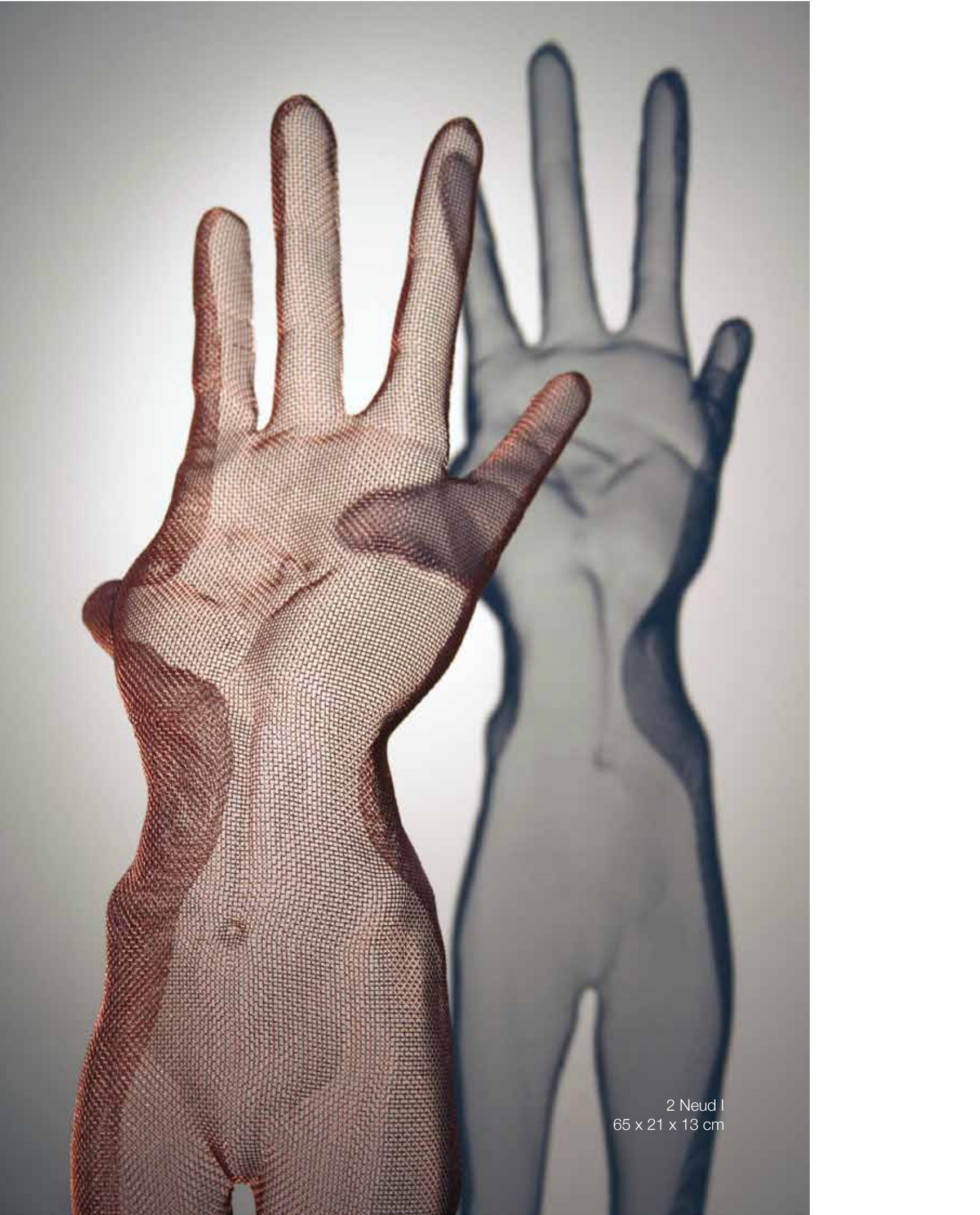
I do not believe that David Begbie’s seemingly accurate (although they are not; artistic licence is subtly, imaginatively and interestingly at work) visual mediations on the human figure and face could in fact have been created without the liberty afforded to artists by photography and its apparent faithfulness to the observed world (although we know that fidelity to be false as well). Nor could the evolution and development of his highly individual idiom have taken place without the freedom afforded figuration by abstraction.

Effective art must be of its time, as well as containing within it some understanding of tradition and the past. David Begbie’s art is exhilarating and fascinating precisely because he deals directly with a subject that could not be more ancient and traditional, but does so in ways that are only possible now. He uses traditional and invented techniques. He uses the human form, but his art mediates it into a series of works, highly individual, that communicate a recognisable, emotionally authentic and affecting interpretation that is his own.”

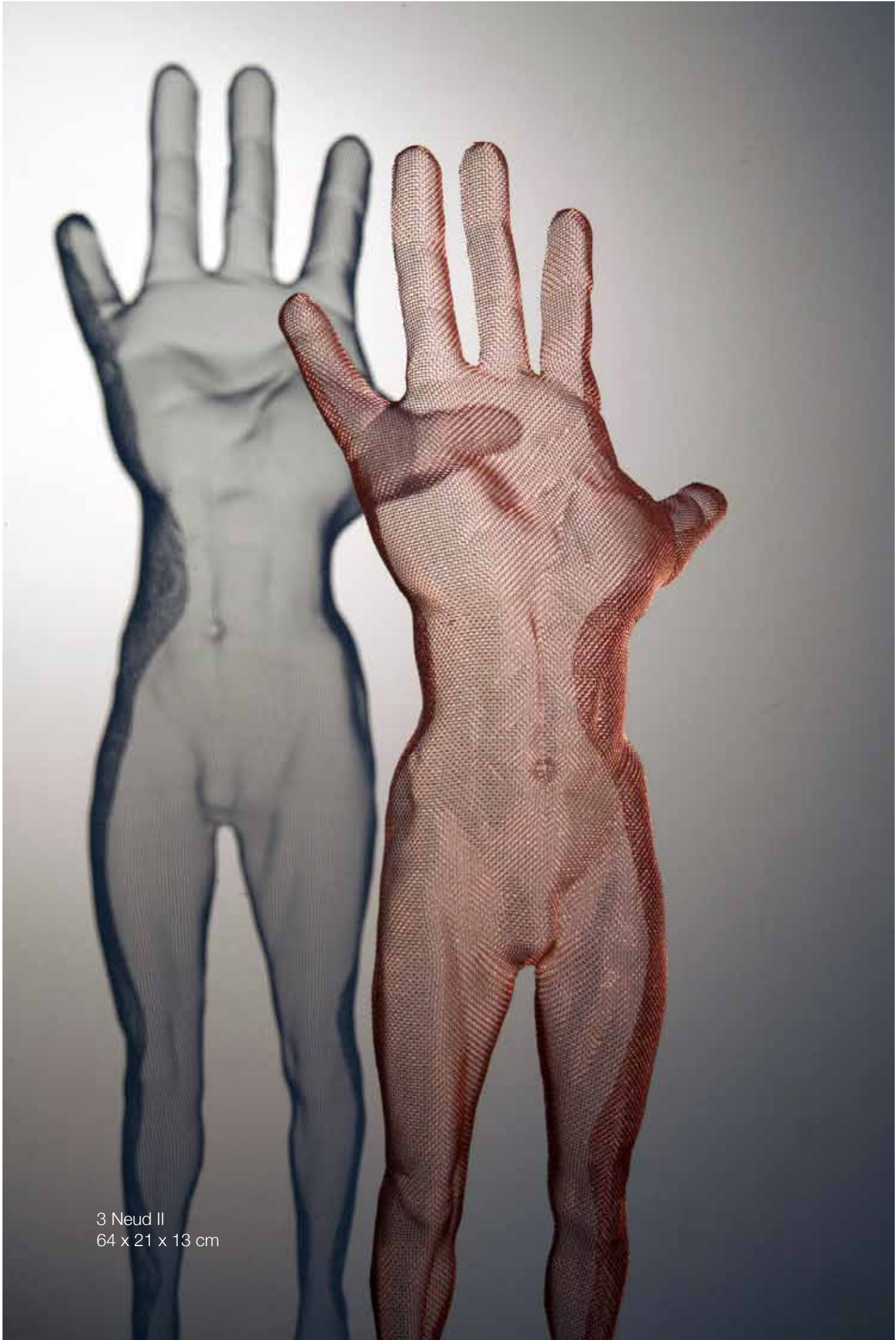
Marina Vaizey, Art Critic



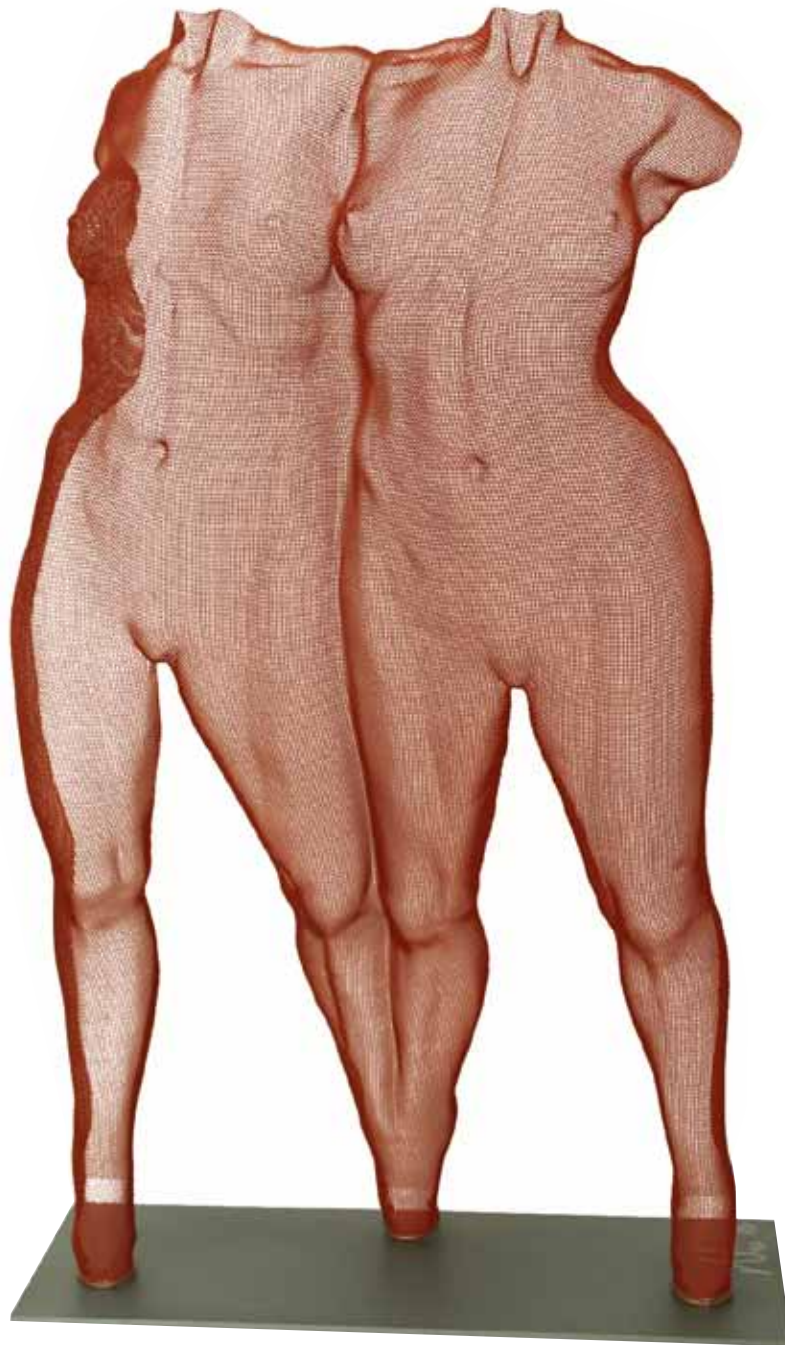
1 Icon I
156 x 44 x 36 cm



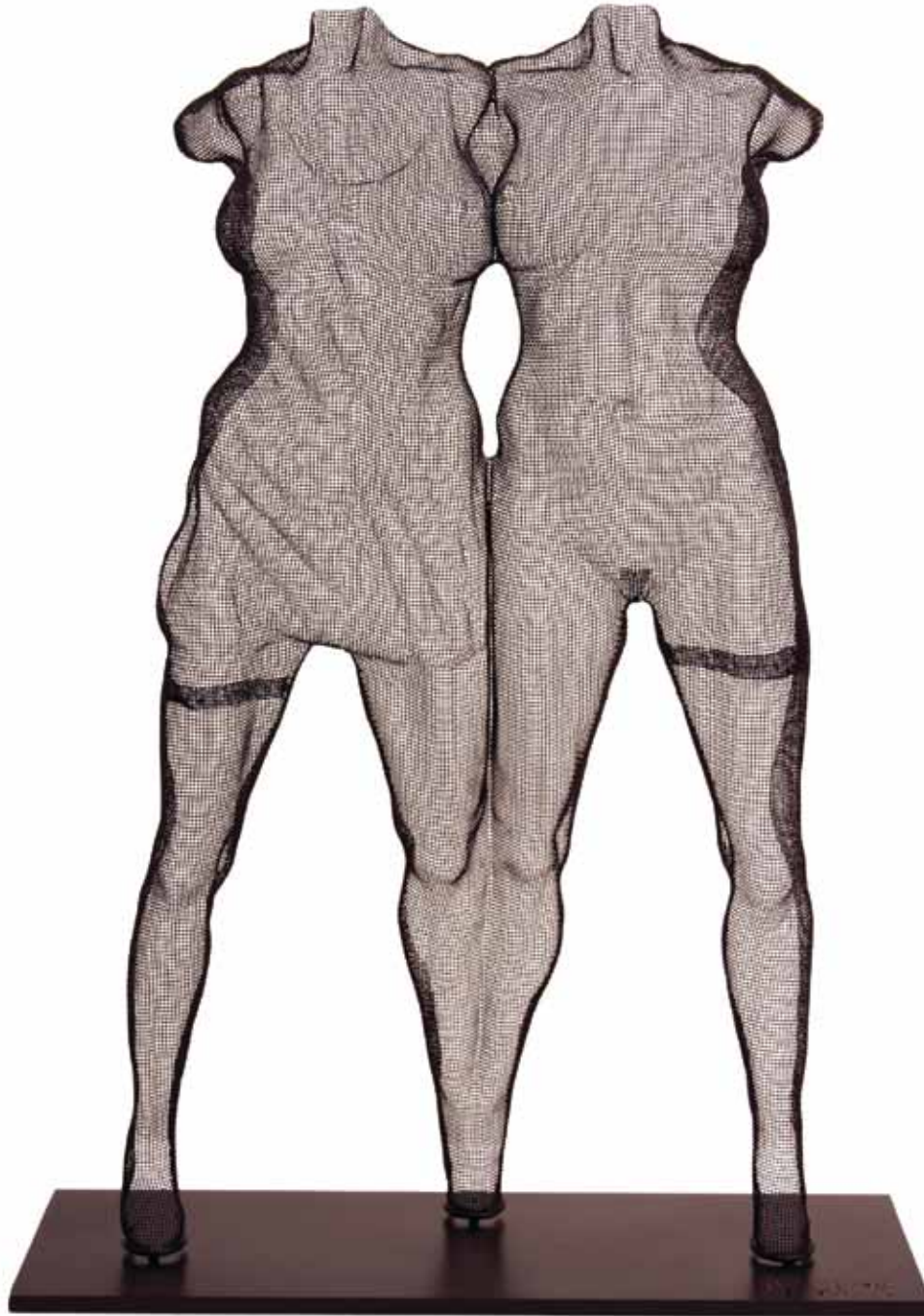
2 Neud I
65 x 21 x 13 cm



3 Neud II
64 x 21 x 13 cm



4 Iconis
93 x 55 x 18 cm



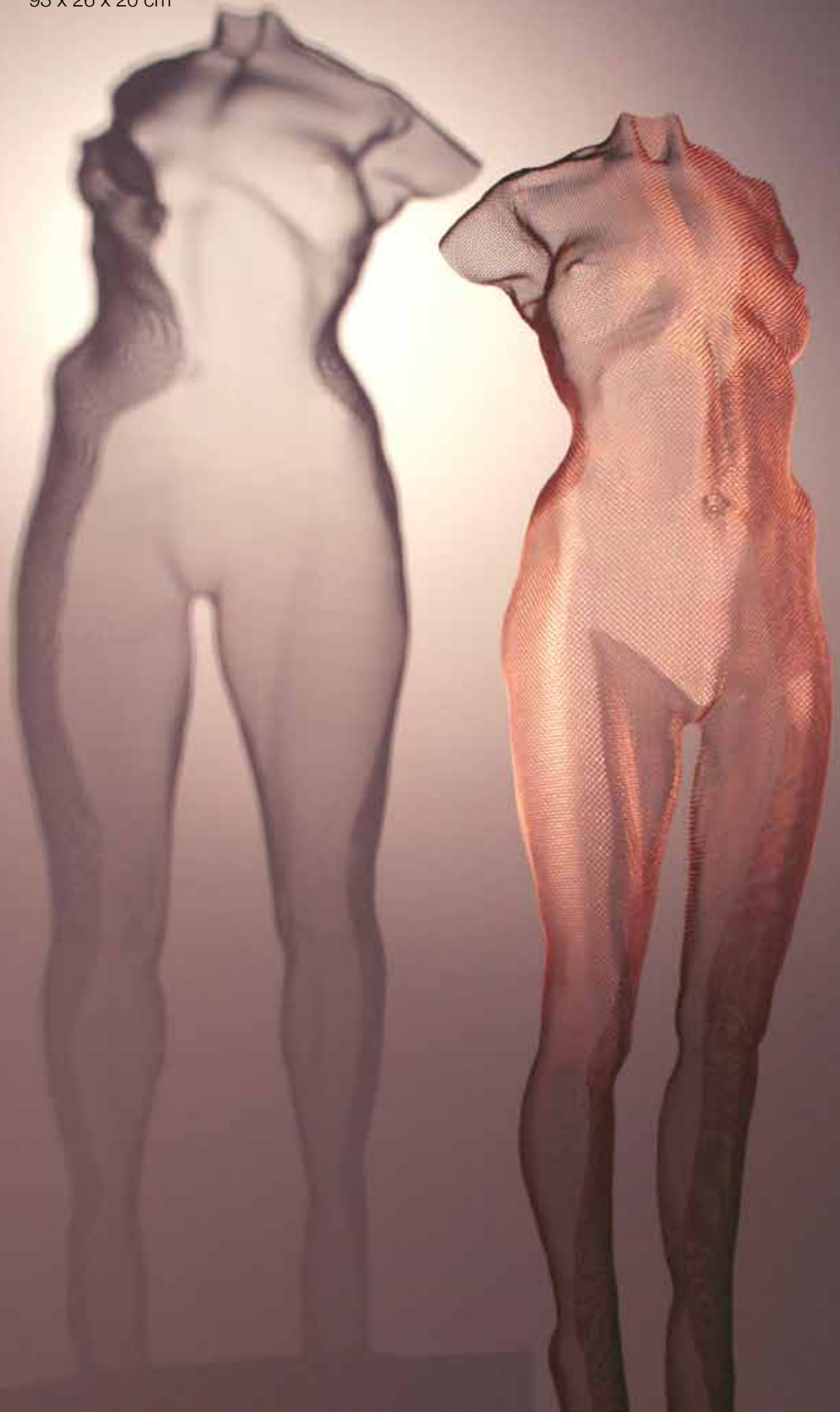
5 Luuda
51 x 36 x 13 cm

6 Prima
50 x 17 x 13 cm

7 Prima
51 x 17 x 13 cm



8 Icon
93 x 26 x 20 cm

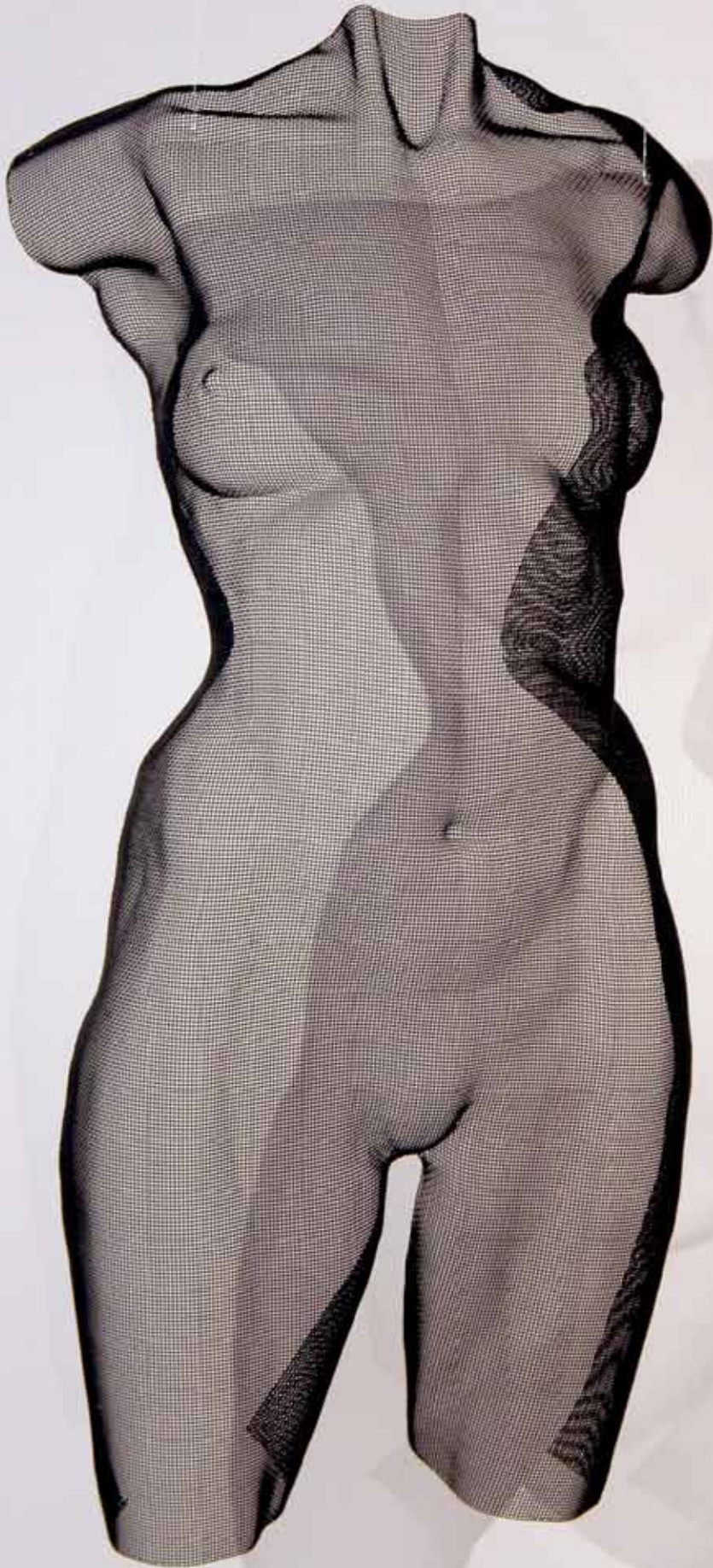




9 Iconic
94 x 42 x 20 cm



10 Iconi
95 x 55 x 20 cm



11 Nudis
76 x 37 x 18 cm
(Suspended)



12 Palm
122 x 122 x 20 cm
(Suspended)



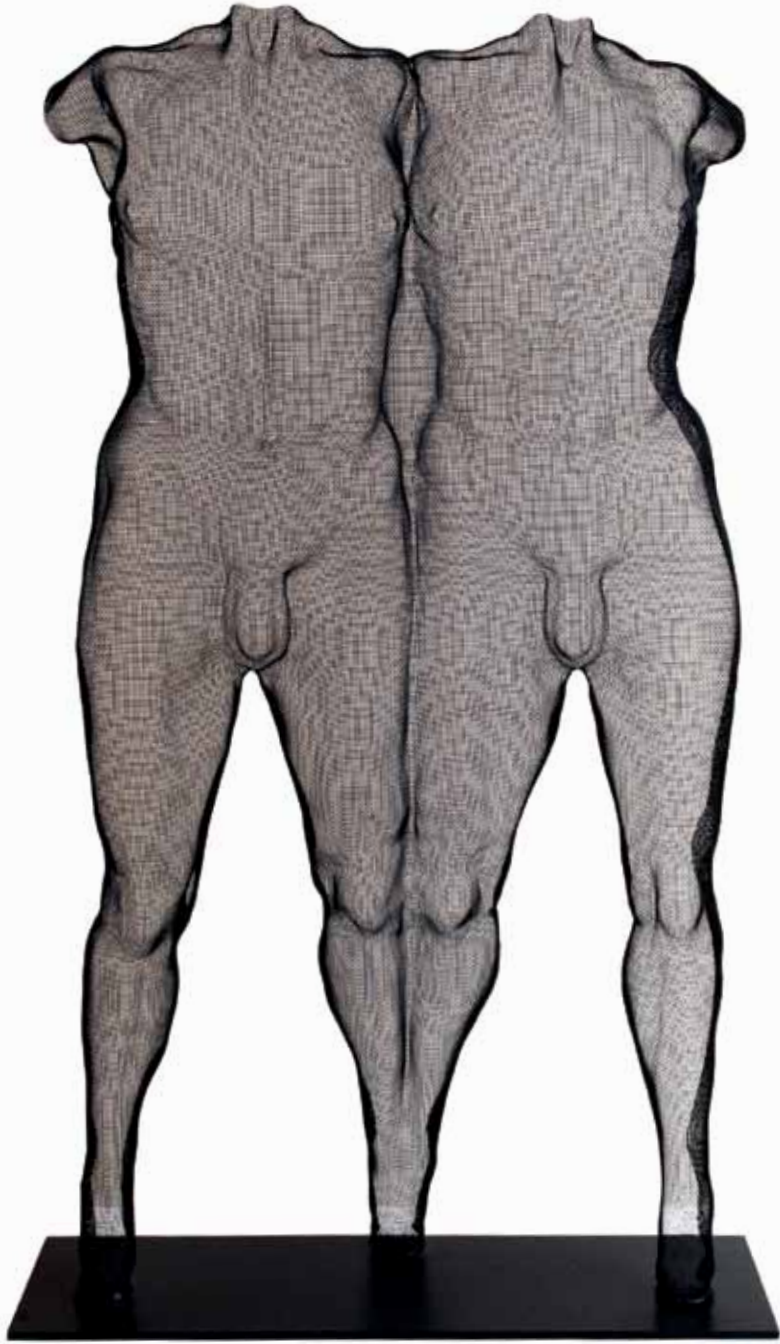
13 Fnud
51 x 16 x 13 cm



14 Nubis
51 x 16 x 13 cm



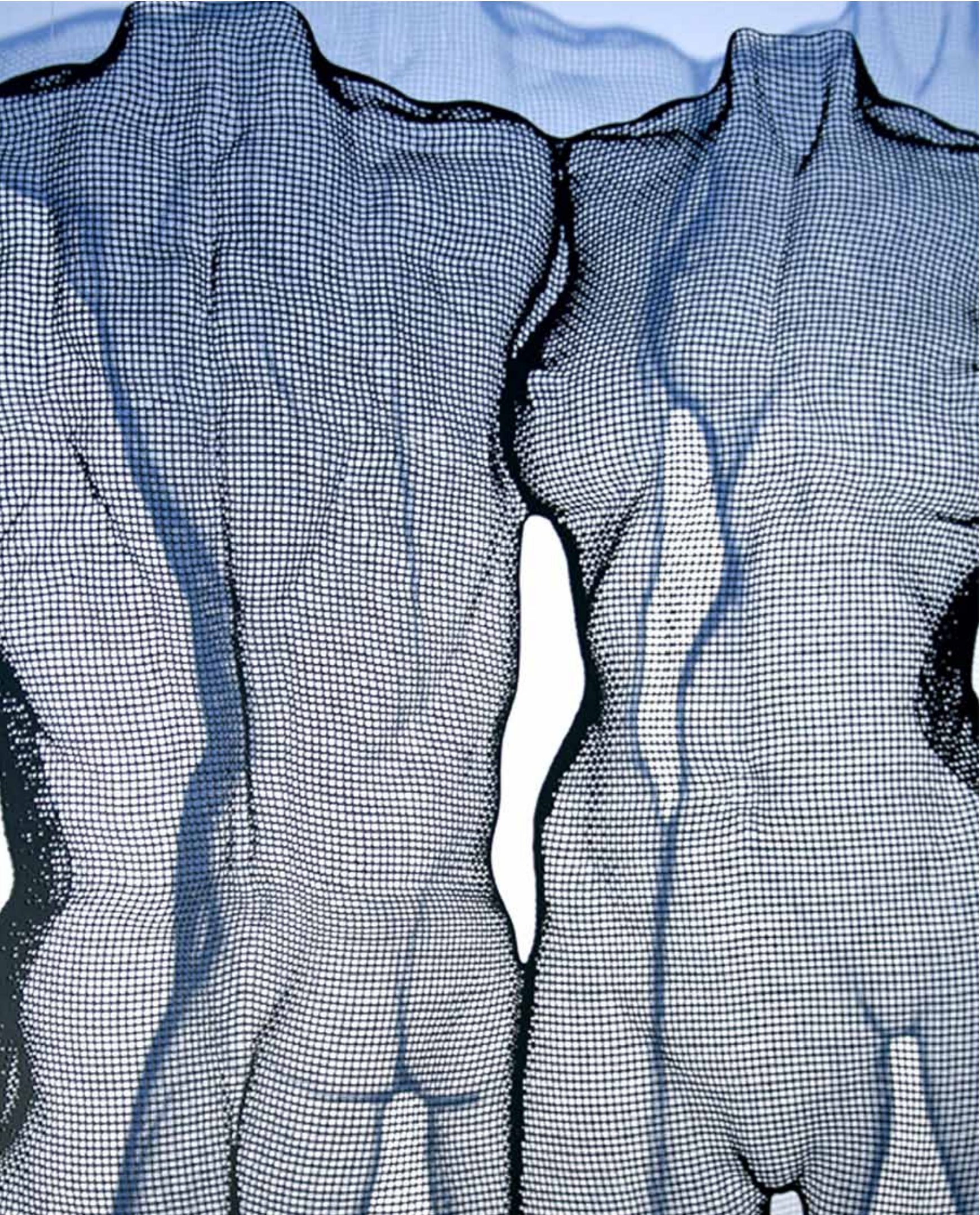
15 Bnud
51 x 16 x 13 cm

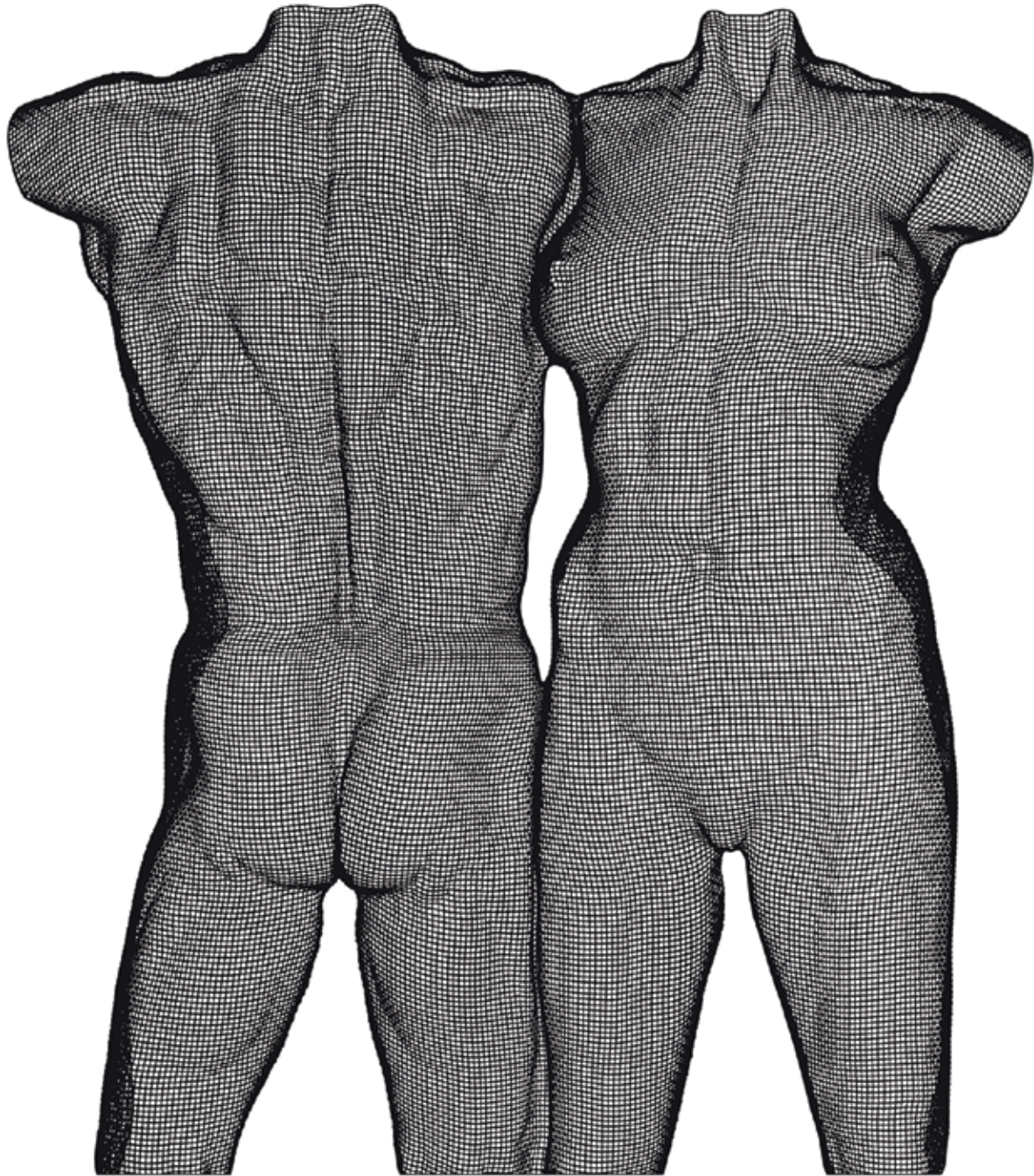


16 Omo
92 x 55 x 18 cm

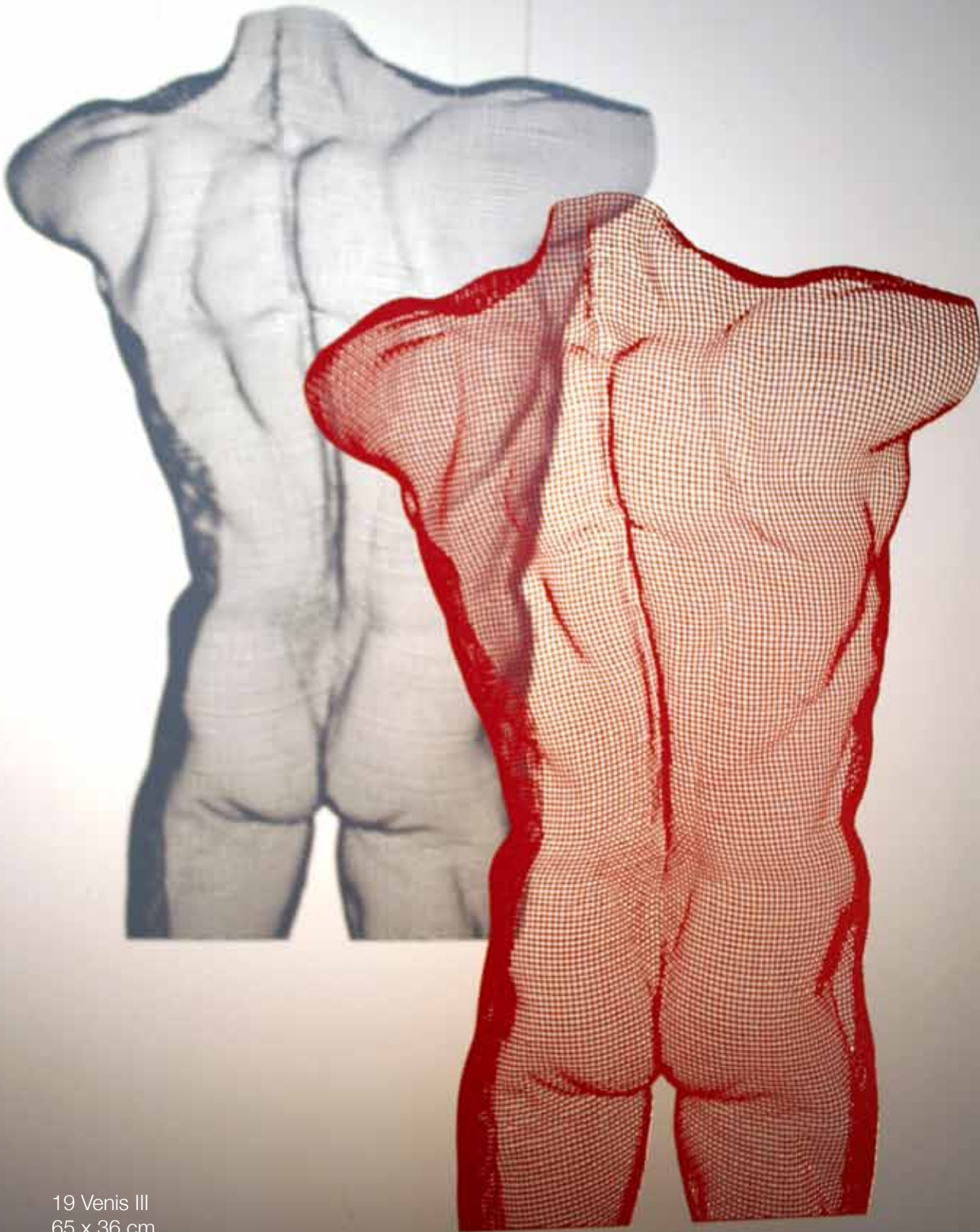


17 Unuud
93 x 107 x 20 cm

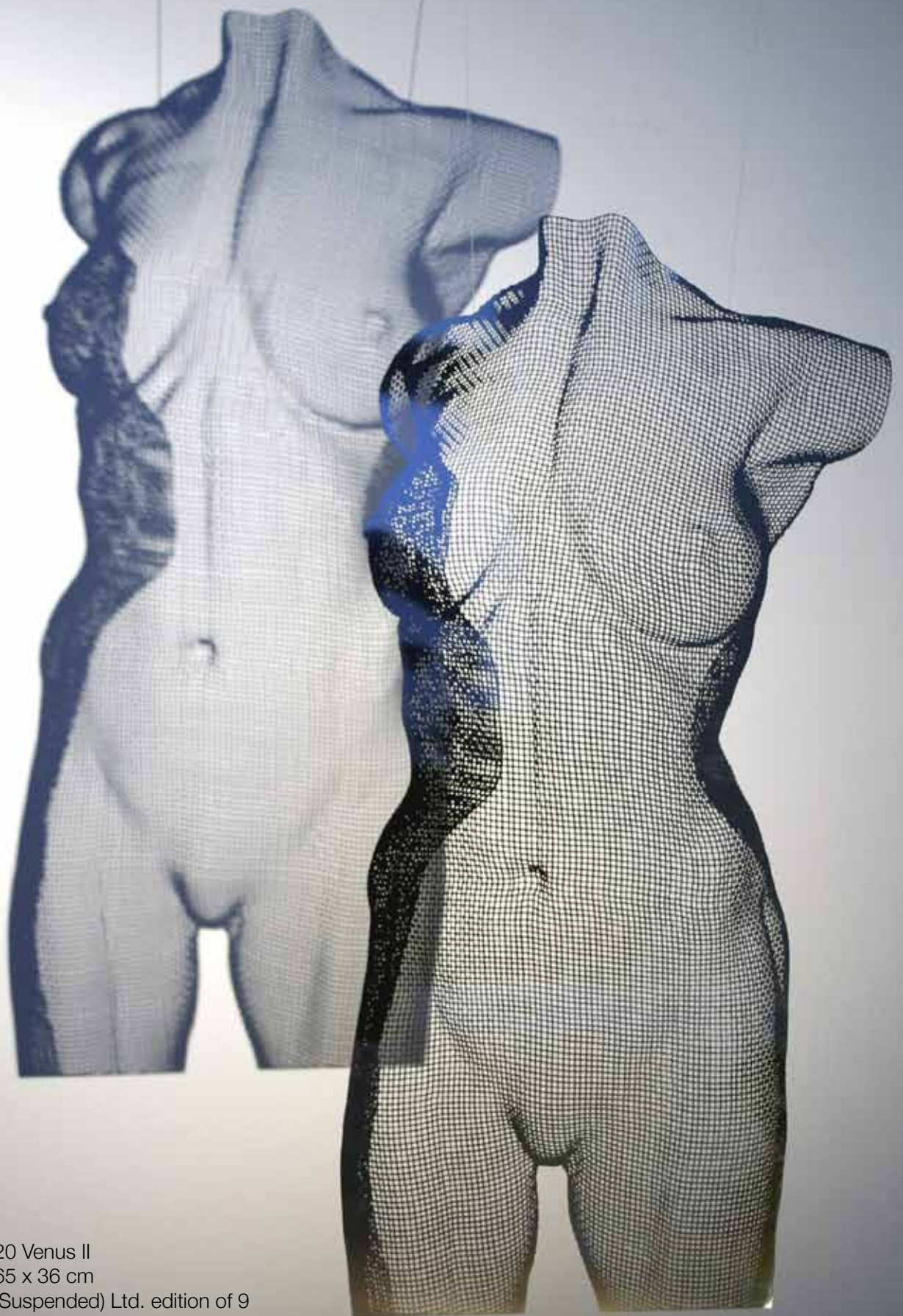




18 Venii I
65 x 46 cm
(Suspended) Ltd. edition of 9



19 Venis III
65 x 36 cm
(Suspended) Ltd. edition of 9



20 Venus II
65 x 36 cm
(Suspended) Ltd. edition of 9



21 Luna
97 x 106 x 20 cm
(Suspended)

DAVID BEGBIE

- 1955 Born Edinburgh, Scotland | 1975 Winchester School of Art, England
1977 – 80 Gloucestershire College of Art and Design (BA Hons), Cheltenham, England
1980 – 82 The Slade School of Sculpture. Post Graduate (H.D.F.A.), University College London
1993 Associate of the Royal Society of British Sculptors (A.R.B.S.)

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2011 "Archetypes", Moorhouse, London | "Skindeep", Ode to Art, Singapore | Van Loon en Simons, Vught Netherlands | Australian Galleries, Sydney | Different, London
- 2010 Gallery Different, London | "Thin Air" Air Gallery, London | "Aria Sottile" Vecchiato Arte, Padua | "Unud", AM Gallery, Roquetas Del Mar, Almeria, Spain | "Iconii" Chapter House, Canterbury Cathedral | "Archetypes", Moorhouse, London | "Skindeep", Ode to Art, Singapore
- 2009 Gallery Different London | "Nudus" Number Nine the Gallery, Birmingham UK | Biennale, Galerie Van Loon en Simons, Vught, Holland
including Rhythmic Ties Concert | "Unud" Somerville Gallery, Plymouth, England | Gallery Different at Queens Elm Gallery, Chelsea, London including Rhythmic Ties Concert
- 2008 "Genii" Albemarle Gallery, London | Gallery Different, London | Wimbledon maquette exhibition.
- 2007 Galerie Il Ponte Contemporanea, Rome | Gallery Different, London | Galerie Van Loon en Simmons | Form 2007 Olympia; London | "Antebodies" Buschlen Mowatt Galleries, Vancouver
- 2006 Gallery Different London | Number Nine the Gallery
- 2005 "Nuduu" Gallery Different | The Catto Gallery, London | Etienne & Van Loon, Netherlands
- 2004 Gallery Different, London | Hotel Linde, Mariaworth Austria | Herman Miller Event, International Art Consultants
- 2003 Gallery Different, London | Camino Real Gallery, Boca Raton, Florida | Magidson Fine Art, Aspen, Colorado | International Art Consultants, Spectrum, London | Plus One Plus Two Galleries, London | Number Nine the Gallery, Birmingham, England | Spectrum, International Art Consultants London | Festival Gallery, Henley Festival, England
- 2002 Gallery Different, London | Plus One Plus Two Galleries, London | Online - Platform for Art, Gloucester Road, London | Buschlen Mowatt Galleries, Vancouver, Canada | Galerie Bernd Duerr, Munich Germany
- 2001 Gallery Different, London
- 2000 Gallery Differentiate, London
- 1999 Gallery Differentiate, London | Inauguration of Stirling Square, St James' London Sir James Stirling's final building
- 1998 Begbie Selected Retrospective, Early Work 1983-1991 and Recent Work 1998, Gallery Differentiate, London
- 1997 Gallery Differentiate, London | The Festival of Erotica, Olympia
- 1996 Gallery Differentiate, London | Artopia, New York, USA | Hannah Peschar Gallery and Sculpture Garden, Surrey
- 1995 Gallery Differentiate, London | Magidson Fine Art, Aspen, Colorado, USA | Posner Fine Art, Santa Monica, California, USA
- 1994 Gallery Differentiate, London | Fire Station Gallery, Sydney, Australia (Opened by Terence Meecham - Director of the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney) | The Emporio Armani, Brompton Road, London. Special Collaboration, solo exhibition | Joel Kessler Gallery, Miami, Florida, USA
- 1993 Gallery Different | Catto Gallery, London
- 1992 Gallery Different
- 1991 Salama-Caro Gallery, Cork Street, London
- 1990 Wates City Tower, London | Salama-Caro Gallery, Cork Street, London
- 1989 Salama-Caro Gallery, Cork Street, London
- 1988 "Crucifix", Installation at Winchester Cathedral, England | Henley '88 Festival, Henley On Thames, England (OMS)
- 1987 Salama-Caro Gallery, Cork Street, London | I.C.A.F, Olympia, London (OMS)
- 1986 Forum, Zurich, Switzerland, (OMS) | Navy Pier, Chicago, USA | Savacou Fine Art, Toronto, Canada | Simpsons of Piccadilly of London - Special Collaborative One Man Exhibition

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2011 The London Art Fair, London (Byard Art) | Kunst Salon Eindhoven Netherlands (Van Loon en Simons) | Number Nine the Gallery, Birmingham, England | Somerville Gallery, Plymouth, England | Van Loon & Simmons Contemporary Fine Art, Vught, Netherlands | Woolff Gallery, London | AFO, Docklands, London | Australian Galleries, Sydney and Melbourne, Australia | Gallery Vecchiato, Padova and Milan Italy | Ana Mercader Gallery, Almeria | Galerie Mada Primavesi, Madrid, Spain | Ode to Art, Singapore | The Hooke Sculpture Gallery, Sag Harbor, New York, USA | The Jamie Gourlay Gallery, Eton, Berkshire | Number Nine the Gallery, Birmingham | Hannah Peschar Gallery & Sculpture Garden Surrey, England | “Kunstsalon” Art Fair Eindhoven, Van Loon en Simons
- 2010 The London Art Fair, London (Byard Art) | Number Nine the Gallery, Birmingham, England | Buschlen Mowatt Galleries, Vancouver | The Hooke Sculpture Gallery, Sag Harbor, New York, USA | Somerville Gallery, Plymouth, England | Van Loon & Simmons Contemporary Fine Art, Vught, Netherlands | Win Henstock Gallery Toronto | Woolff Gallery, London | AFO, Docklands, London | Byard Fine Art, Cambridge | Australian Galleries, Sydney and Melbourne, Australia | Gallery Vecchiato, Padova and Milan Italy | View Two Gallery, Liverpool UK | Ana Mercader Gallery, Almeria Spain | “Exhibitionism” East Wing Nine Courthauld Insitute, London | Liliane Parade, Netherlands (Van Loon en Simons) | Espacio Atlantico’s Art fair Vigo (AM Gallery | Ode to Art, Singapore | Hertogenbosch Fair (Van Loon en Simons) | ARCO Madrid Spain (AM Gallery) | The Cambridge Art Fair, UK (Number Nine the Gallery) | The Hooke Sculpture Gallery, Sag Harbor, New York, USA | The Jamie Gourlay Gallery, Eton, Berkshire | Art Verona (Vecchiato Art Galleries) | Artparks International, Sausmarez Manor Heritage Trust Sculpture Trail, Guernsey | Hannah Peschar Gallery & Sculpture Garden Surrey, England | The Hamptons Art Fair, New York (Woolff Gallery) | Devon Art Fair (Number Nine the Gallery) | Art Fair Toronto, Canada (Woolff Gallery) | Edinburgh Art Fair (Number Nine the Gallery) | “Christmas Cracker”, Byard Art, Cambridge | Galerie Mada Primavesi, Madrid, Spain
- 2009 Number Nine the Gallery, Birmingham, England | Buschlen Mowatt Galleries, Vancouver, Canada | London Art Fair 2009 , Albemarle Gallery, London | Somerville Gallery, Plymouth, England | Van Loon & Simmons Contemporary Fine Art, Vught, Netherlands | Win Henstock Gallery Toronto | Woolff Gallery, London | AFO, Docklands, London | Absolute Art Gallery, Bruges, Belgium | Galerie de Nice, Nice, France | Byard Fine Art, Cambridge | “Inspired” at the Mitchell Library, Glasgow UK | Art and Antiques Fair, Rotterdam Van Loon en Simons | Sculpture Promenade, Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge (RBS) | Celebration of Sculpture Leicester University | Australian Galleries, Sydney | Gallery Vecchiato, Padova Italy | View Two Gallery, Liverpool UK | Ana Mercader Gallery, Almeria Spain | Artparks International, Sausmarez Manor Heritage Trust Sculpture Trail, Guernsey | Hannah Peschar Gallery & Sculpture Garden Surrey, England | Open Art Fair, Utrecht, Galerie Van Loon en Simons | Toronto International Art Fair, Woolff Gallery

Selected Museum Collections and Permanent Public Installations

Galleria Natzionali de Arte Moderna, Rome, Italy | National Gallery Canberra, Australia | Museum Beelden aan Zee, Holland | National Gallery of Canada | Citibank, London | Southwark Bridge, London “Figure & Fountain” (1989) | City Place House, London “Back to Front” Diptych & “Venus” (1991) | The Hyatt Carlton, London, ‘The Peak Health Series’ (1993) | Natural History Museum, Primates Gallery, permanent site for “Origins” Triptych Sculpture (1993) | Cannons City Gym, London “Archetypes” (1994) | Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines (1996) | The Hyatt Carlton, London, ‘Swimmingtrunks’ (1997) | The Hyatt, Hamburg, ‘Composure’ (1998) | Ladbrooke Sporting Casino, London, ‘Chance’ (1999) | The Jam House, Birmingham, ‘Anangel’ & ‘Manangel’ (1999) | 60 Queen Victoria Street, “Humantouch” (1999) Dyptich | Faith Zone, Millennium Dome, Greenwich, London, “Faith” 1999 Millennium Sculpture | St Mary the Less, Chillingham, Winchester “Cruciform” 1999 | Fleet Place House, Holborn Viaduct “Fishnet” 2000 | Bede’s World Museum, Jarrow, Tyne & Wear “Worldsapart” 2000 | Ten Covent Garden, Connaught Rooms, London “Heavenlybodies” 2001 | The Lowry Hotel, Manchester, England “Suspense” 2001 | The Milan Bar, Grants of Croydon, London “Anangel” 2002 | Hotel Linde, Mariaworth Austria “Nuda” 2004 | Radisson SAS Hotel, Stansted England “Standover” 2004 | Shrine of Walsingham, Norfolk 2005 “Crucifix” | The Jam House, Edinburgh “Aangel” 2005 | San Domenico House “Nuuda” “Nuudu” “Tunuud” 2006 | Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Providence Wharf, Genus Series “Venus” and “Veni” 2007 | 62 Threadneedle Street –“Totu” 2006 | Way of Therapy, London “Otuu” 2007 | The All England Lawn Tennis And Croquet Club, Centre Court Wimbledon “Grandslam” 2008 | Coloplast Limited, Peterborough, England “Olo” 2008 | Hanover Grange, Montego Bay, Jamaica “Statu I and Statu II” 2010 and “Nuwdstill” 2008



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