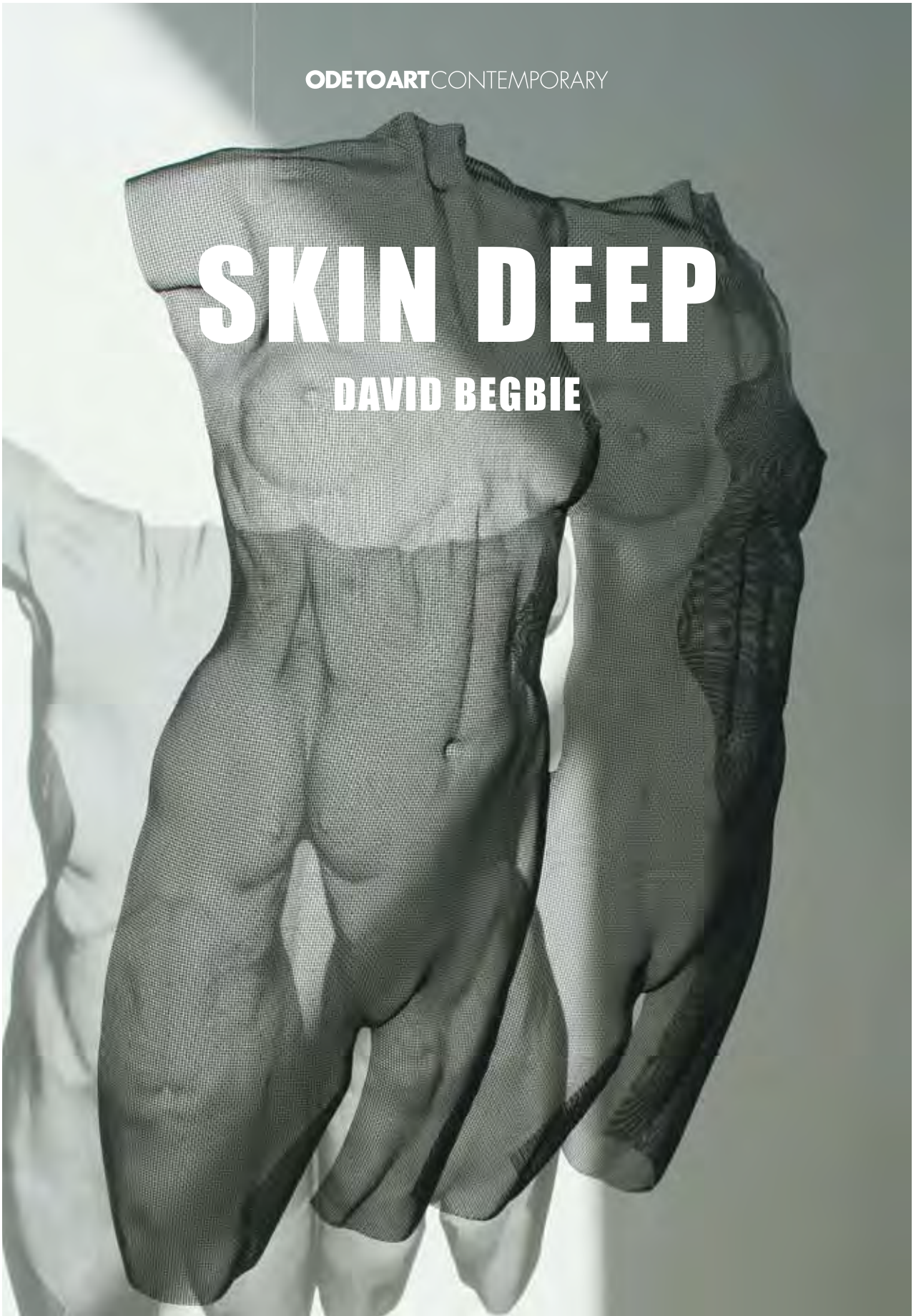


ODETOART CONTEMPORARY

SKIN DEEP

DAVID BEGBIE



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Biography —

Scottish born and London based sculptor David Begbie is world renowned for his innovative steelmesh sculpture which is exhibited, collected and imitated globally.

He discovered the properties of his medium as a student in 1977 and developed the idea as a post graduate at the Slade School of Sculpture, University College London. Begbie continues to be both inspired and challenged by the unlimited and inherent possibilities of his medium, and has literally invented and developed a unique art form and visual language. He sets up a paradox by creating from this cold industrial material, delicate, sensual and powerful work that is completely contemporary, but which ultimately is timeless

A global audience has sat up and taken notice of his work and they can be seen in museum collections and public art installations, including the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna of Rome in Italy, Museum Beelden aan Zee in Holland, National Gallery of Canada, National Gallery of Australia in Canberra, Southwark Bridge, London "Figure & Fountain"(1989), Ten Covent Garden, Connaught Rooms, London "Heavenlybodies" (2001), Hotel Linde, Mariaworth Austria "Nuda" (2004).

His sculptures are contemporary archetypal images using figurative physical forms made from steelmesh and stainless steel. Encapsulated within these forms are a series of relationships between male and female, masculinity and femininity, positive and negative, matter and antimatter, light and dark. Using strategic lighting to create supremely optical compositions of line and form, each transparent sculpture has a greater palpable presence than the space which it occupies. Begbie offers movement whenever there is any shift of light so much so that these pieces can sometimes have an interactive element.

The steelmesh material itself has a strong spiritual quality but is sensitive enough to convey characteristics of physical, emotional, sensual and sexual qualities, all of which can be found in the works which comprise the show."

He has now found a way to push this technique further. The mesh sculptures are made into flat transparent panels. When light is transmitted through these, the sculptures reconstitute themselves as shadows on the wall. The shadow-images seem so real and three-dimensional we get the impression that we can reach out and embrace them.

The sculptures are made by hand, they are not, as some people imagine, wrapped around a mould or model or treated with heat.

David Begbie takes a flat sheet of steelmesh, which, when it has no structure, is quite malleable. He cuts out the basic shape of his idea then he works the mesh with his hands, much as another sculptor would work with clay. The only technical intervention is when the sculpture has to be welded onto its base.

The shadows created by lighting the sculpture are an integral part of the whole and something which David is conscious of when working in his studio. He is aware at every stage of the multi-dimensional effect of each artistic decision he makes.

David has been working with steelmesh for over 25 years, and the clean simplicity of the lines belie the years of accumulated technical skill and respect for his medium which make the finished works so successful and beautiful.



Critiques —

The search for perfection represents the most evident link between the Scottish artist's works and the ancient sculptures.

Even if the technique is different, tension and creative drive are at the base of the processing and defining of the material in all its aspects; this situation is the same found in the great masters of the past.

The use of hand-worked steel mesh makes Begbie's sculptures unique and unmistakable: shapes of powerful men and women, almost endowed with carnality but at the same time ethereal and elusive. These bodies are sometimes headless. Anonymous busts, arms and legs devoid of identity remind the audience of the convulsive torsions of Michelangelo's Prigioni. Frozen bodies are longing for freedom, almost attempting to rescue their soul from the jail of a life, where what you look like is more important than what you are."

Lorella Pagnucco Salvemini

"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, teacher, writer, curator specialising in contemporary visual arts

"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

Writer, poet, art critic, curator, broadcaster and author

"In some of his recent work Begbie has been exploring this theatrical element a little further, bringing figures together in conflict or coition, setting faces in ambiguous relation to one another, taking on different constellations of meaning as you move in relation to them.

He could, one imagines, do a wonderful Gate of Hell for himself, but he would also be better equipped than Rodin to match an Inferno with a Paradise of ethereal light and grace. Certainly there seems to be no limits to his technique as long as there are no limits to his imagination. And of that there is no perceptible danger for a very long time to come. He is the master of his own floating world, where everything is as simple and as difficult, as once for all, as a classical Chinese brush drawing. Like all true art, it is half stage magic, the confidence trick the magician finally believes in, and half-real, inexplicable magic. Stage magic can make illusions seem actual for a moment, but only magic can ensure that they obstinately stay with us, capable of being explained, but never explained away."

John Russell Taylor

Art historian, teacher, writer, curator specialising in contemporary visual arts

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Art historian, teacher, writer, curator specialising in contemporary visual arts

“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 an 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 Gowling

Artist, writer, teacher and curator

“David Begbie is a sculptor, draughtsman and printmaker whose materials and media are unusual but whose preoccupation - the human figure, and indeed by implication, 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.

On one hand we have the monumental, the dignified, the awesome. We also see in his work the intimate, the affectionate. The use of shadowplay, the shadows cast by his figures, is an element that helps to convey liveliness, a sense of movement. There is also the nearly abstract, the refinement, especially in the works on paper, whether monoprints, Monoprints collages or drawings - into a paradigm of the figure, a pattern of outline shaded in with varying textures, and a rich sense of colour although all is black and white and the greys in between.

The artist captures too that sense of interest in the body that is characteristic of western culture. There is the awareness of health, of 'good' bodies; a feeling that we must rescue our bodies from the ill usage caused by the activities of the modern consumer world. People pay attention to their bodies, some even spend time and effort in building their bodies, a sport some claim as art.

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 in his art mediates it into a series of works, highly individual, that communicate a recognisable, emotionally authentic and affecting interpretation that is his own.”

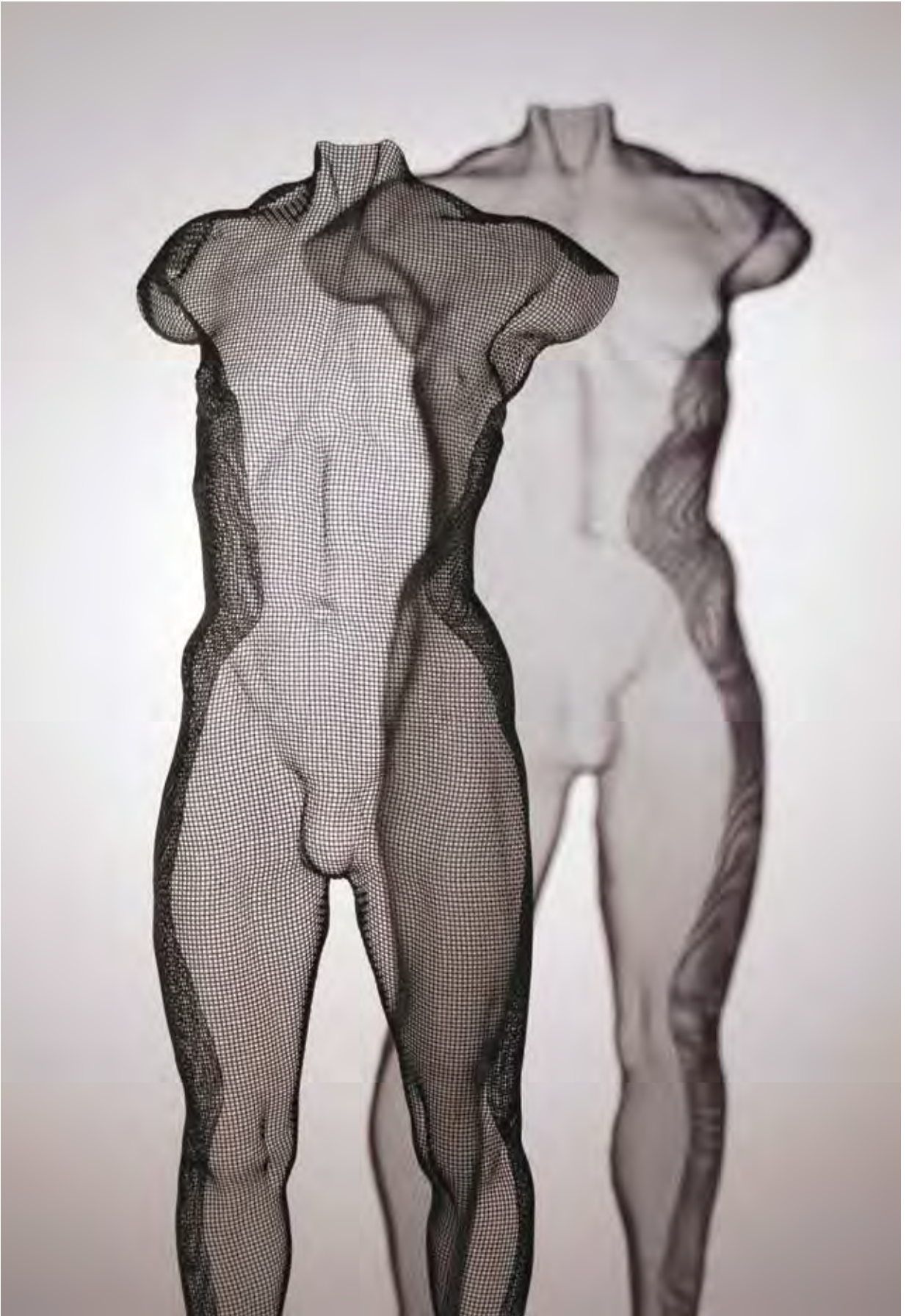
Marina Vaizey

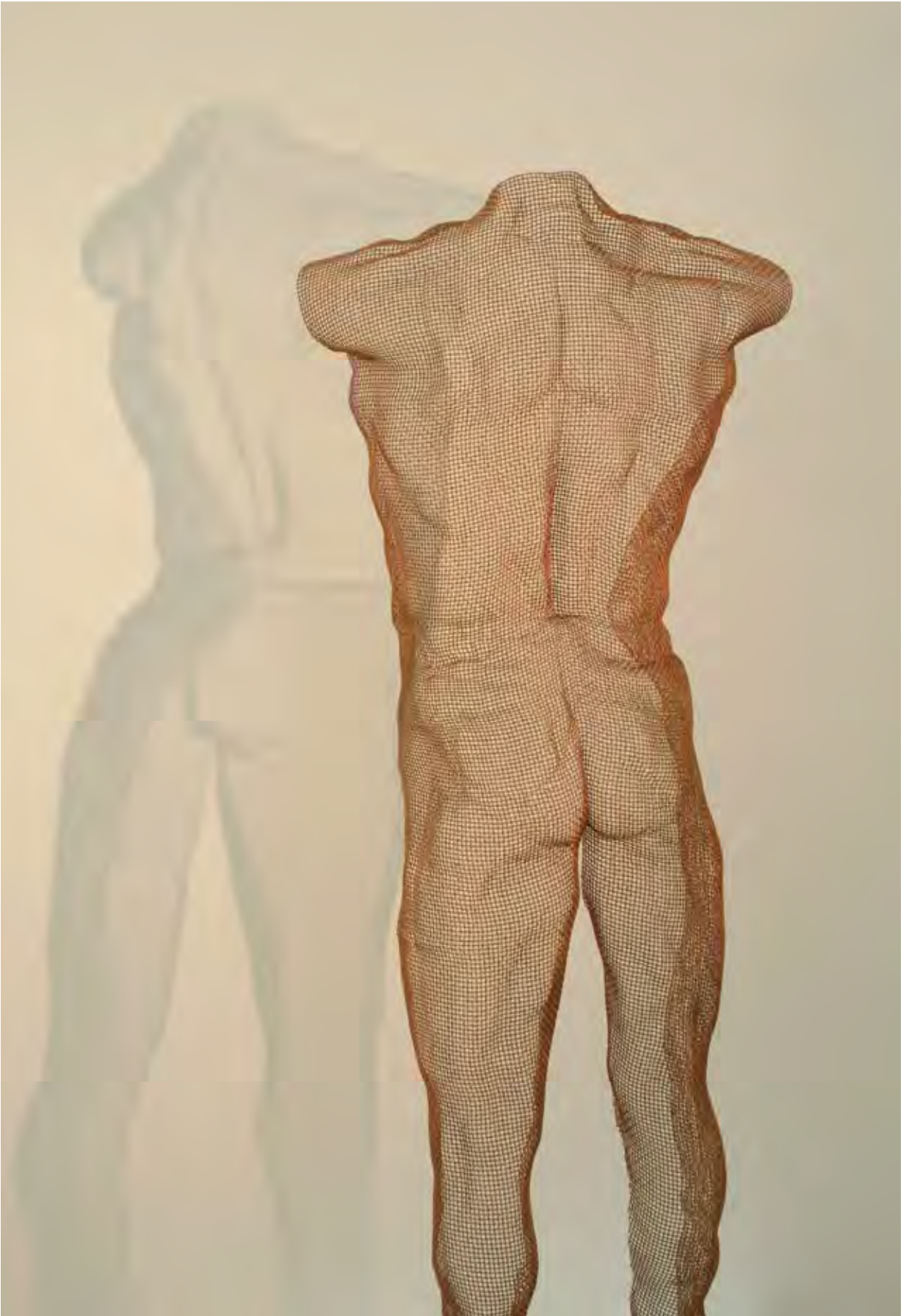
Art critic, journalist, curator and author

ORIGINALS



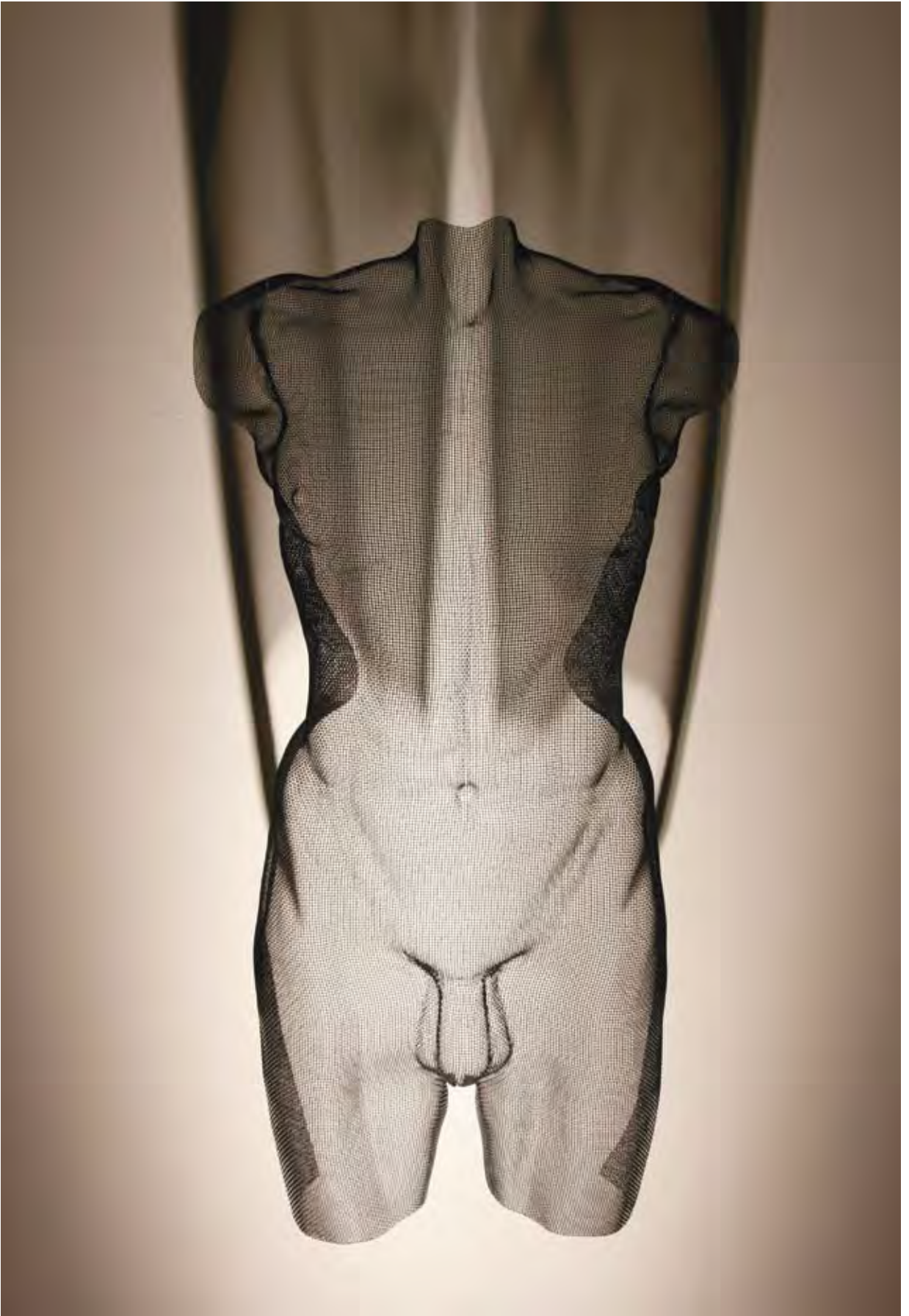
Hemo 2009
Steelmesh, 50.5 x 17 x 12.5 cm







Hevi 2009
Steelmesh, 49 x 18 x 12.5 cm



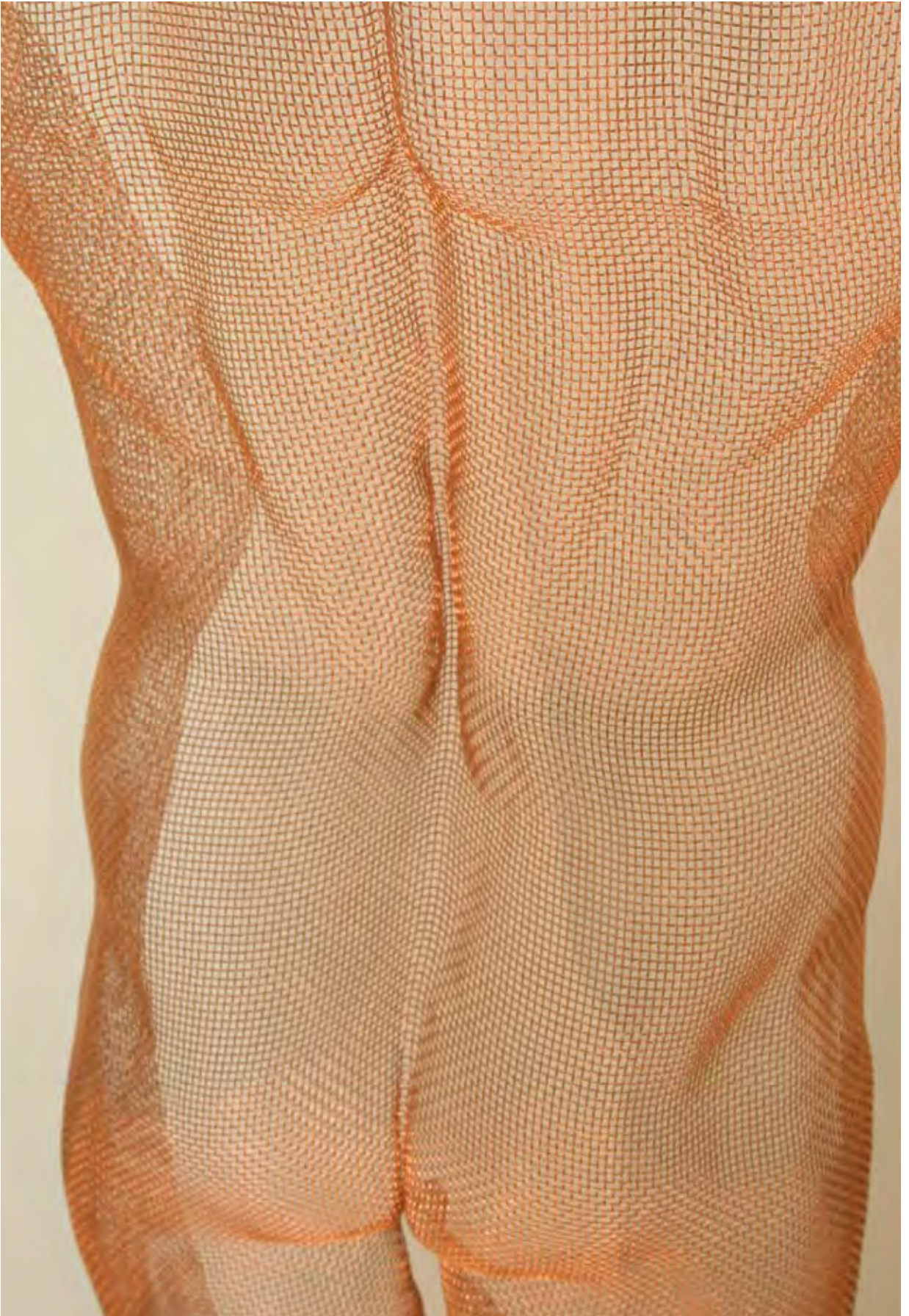


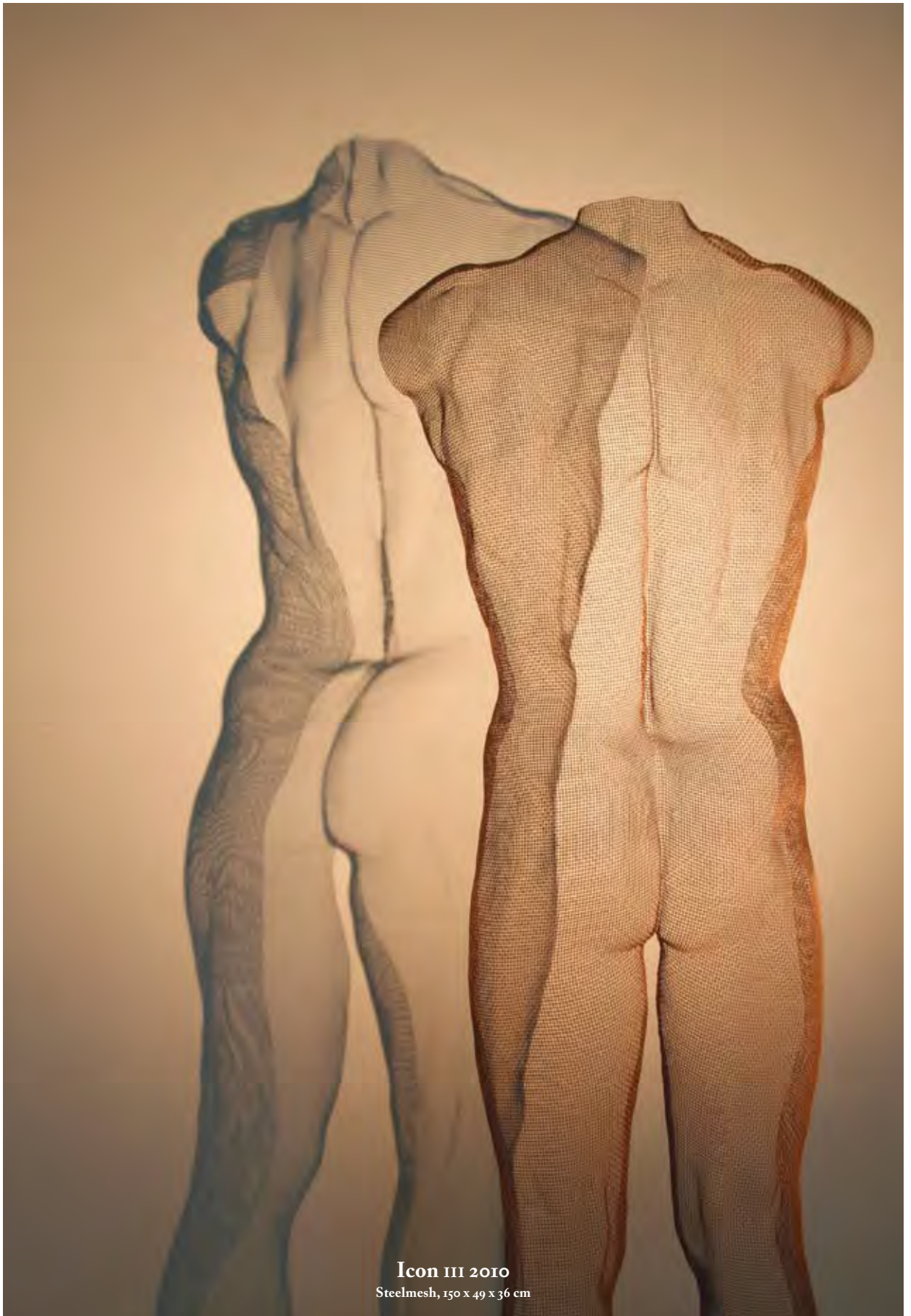
Homn 2008
Steelmesh, 74 x 37 x 14 cm



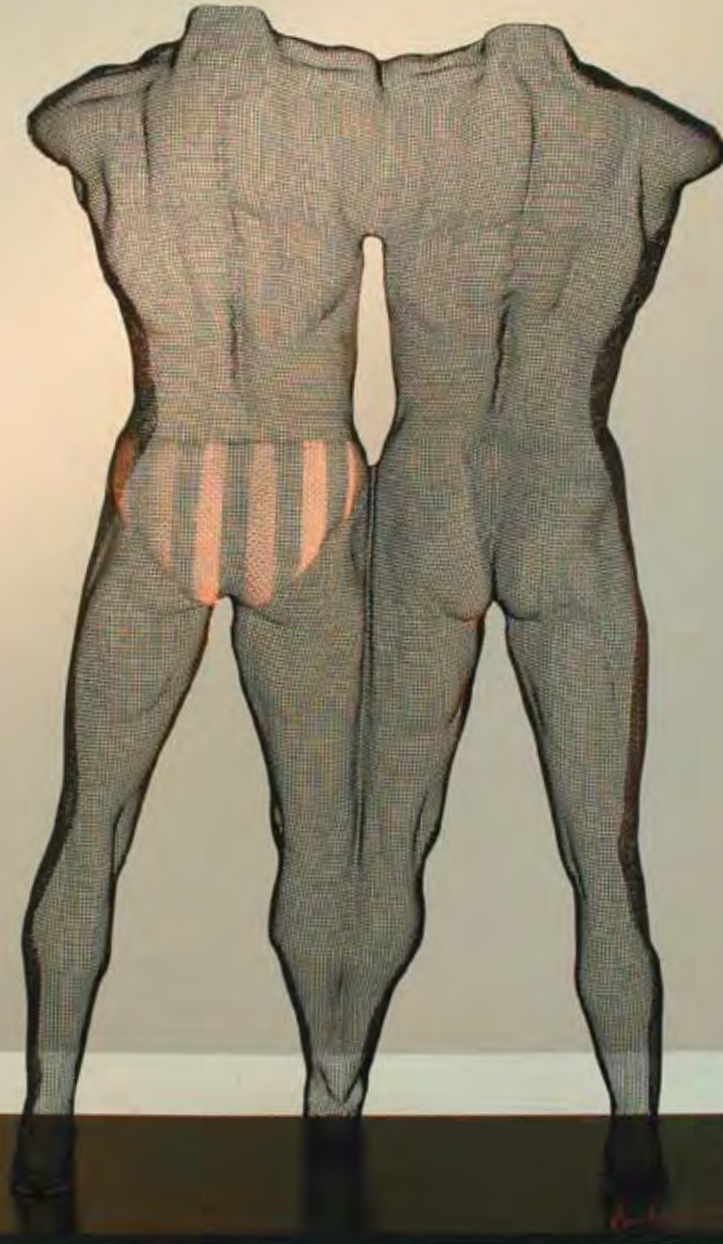


Icon 1 2008
Steelmesh, 51 x 15 x 12,5 cm





Icon III 2010
Steelmesh, 150 x 49 x 36 cm



Litu 2009
Steelmesh, 51 x 35,5 x 12,5 cm



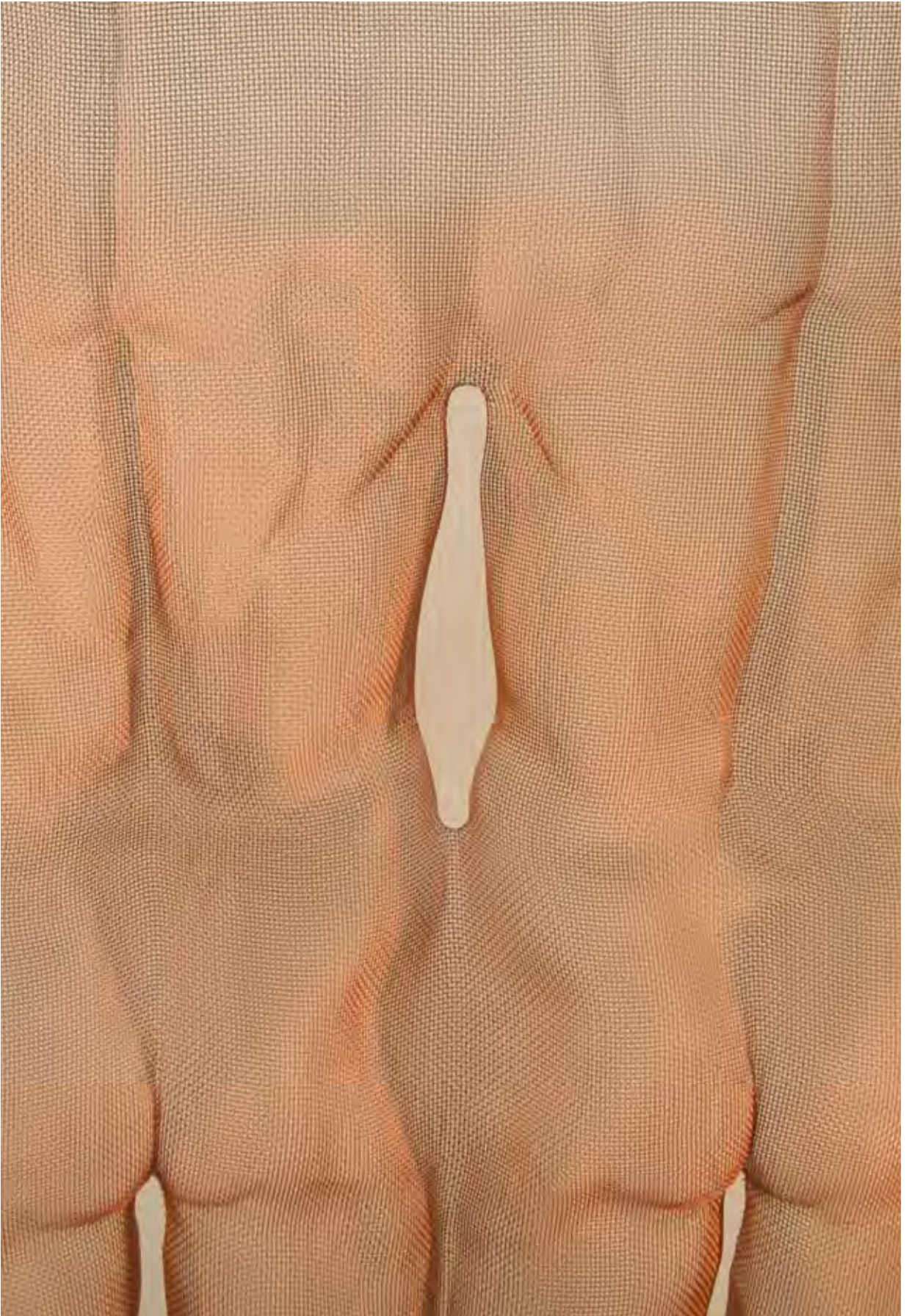


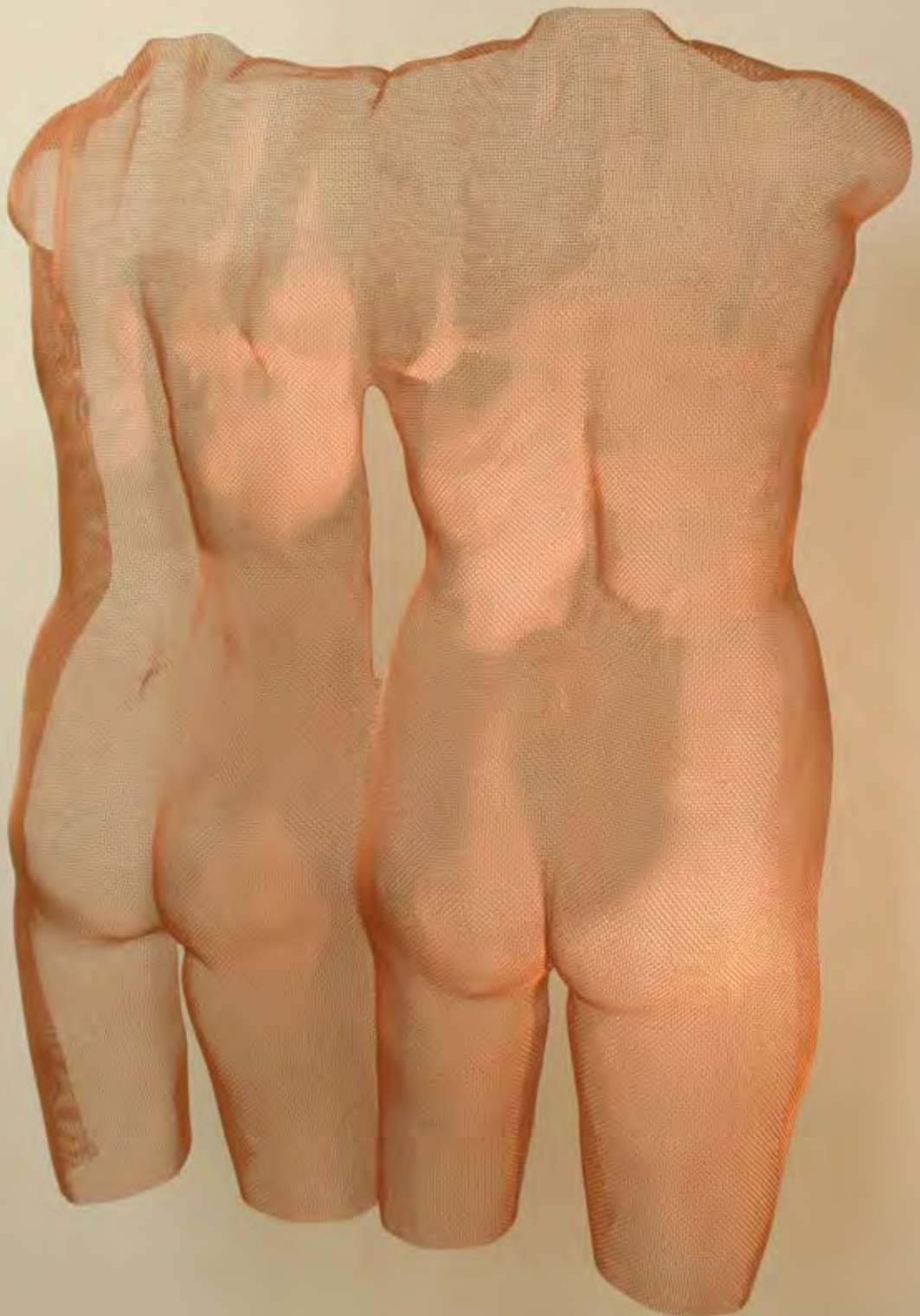
Mirrus 2006
Steelmesh, 74 x 46 x 15 cm





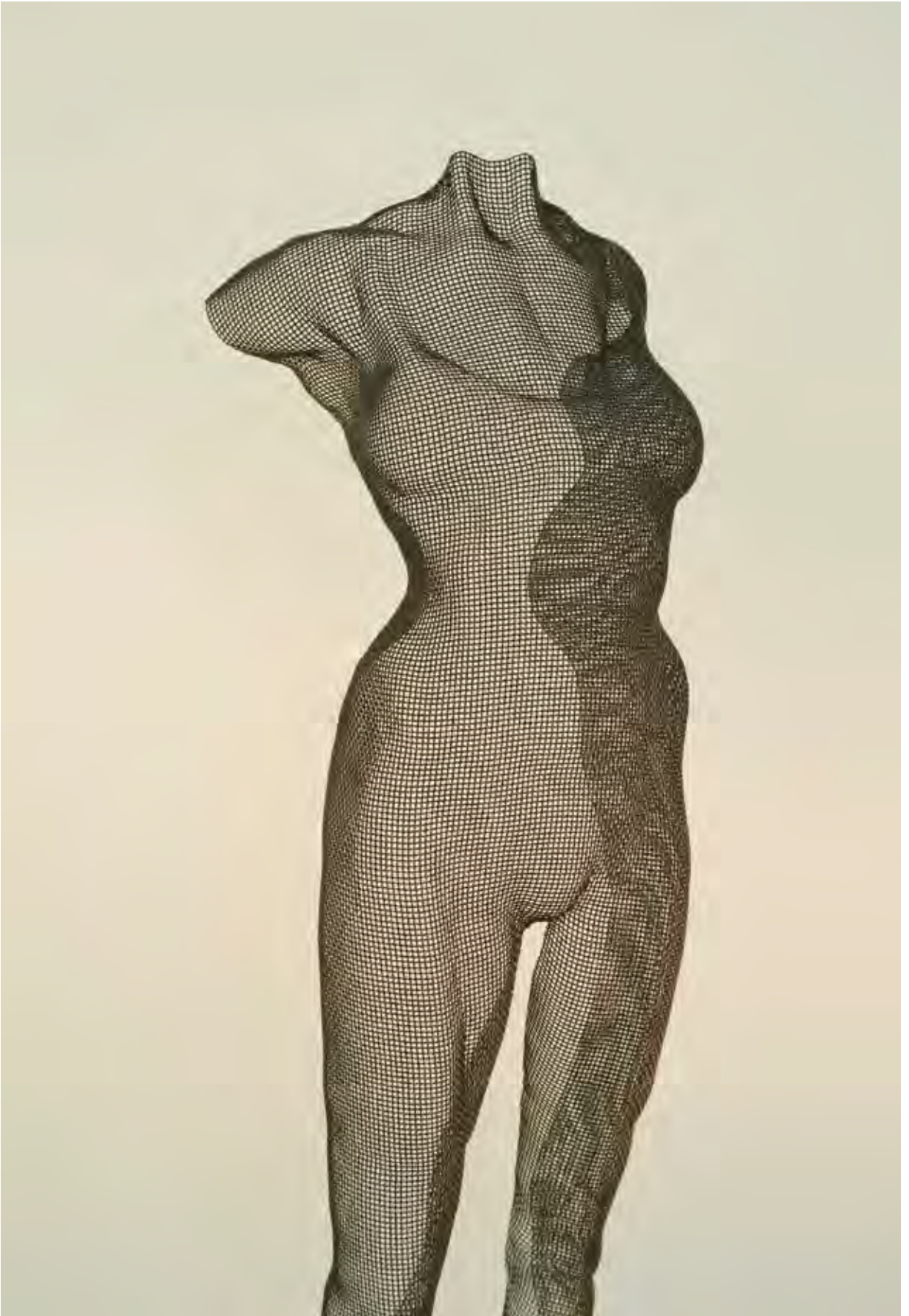
Mirrus I 2010
Steelmesh, 80 x 67 x 19 cm





Mirrus II 2010
Steelmesh, 80 x 66 x 17 cm







Nubi 2009

Steelmesh, 50.5 x 14.5 x 12.5 cm



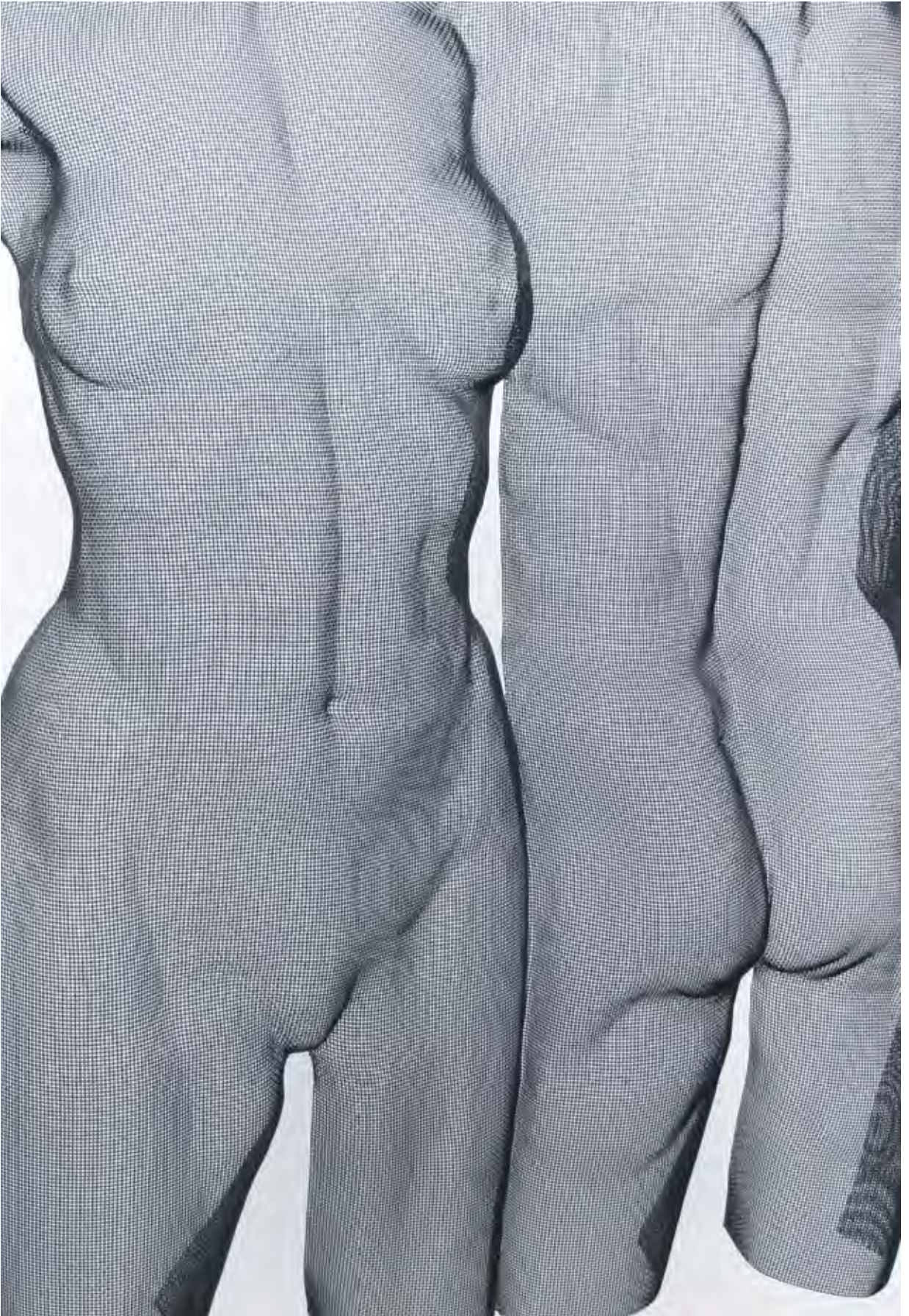
Nubii 2008
Steelmesh, 51 x 36 x 12.5 cm

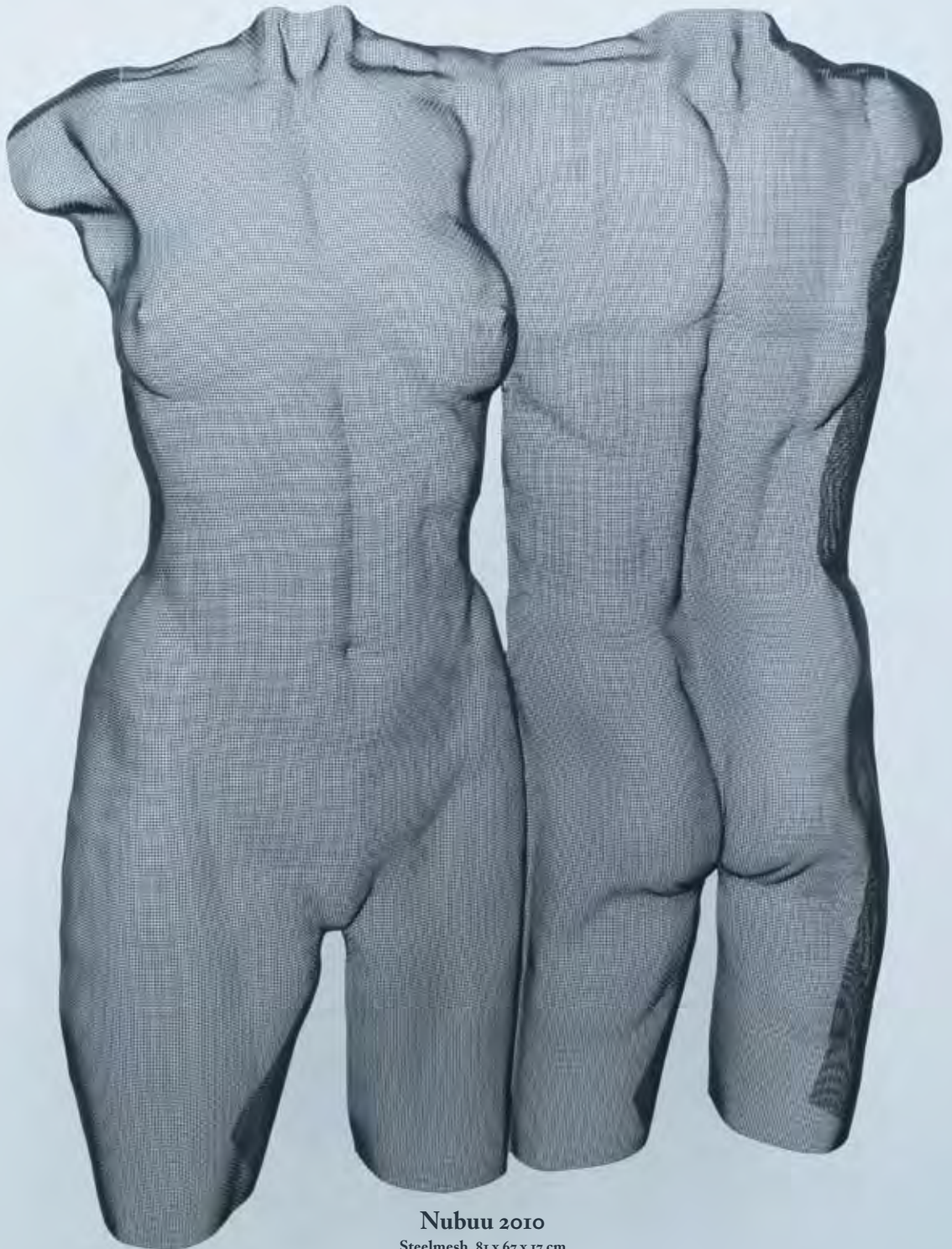




Nuboi 2010
Steelmesh, 50 x 18 x 12,5 cm





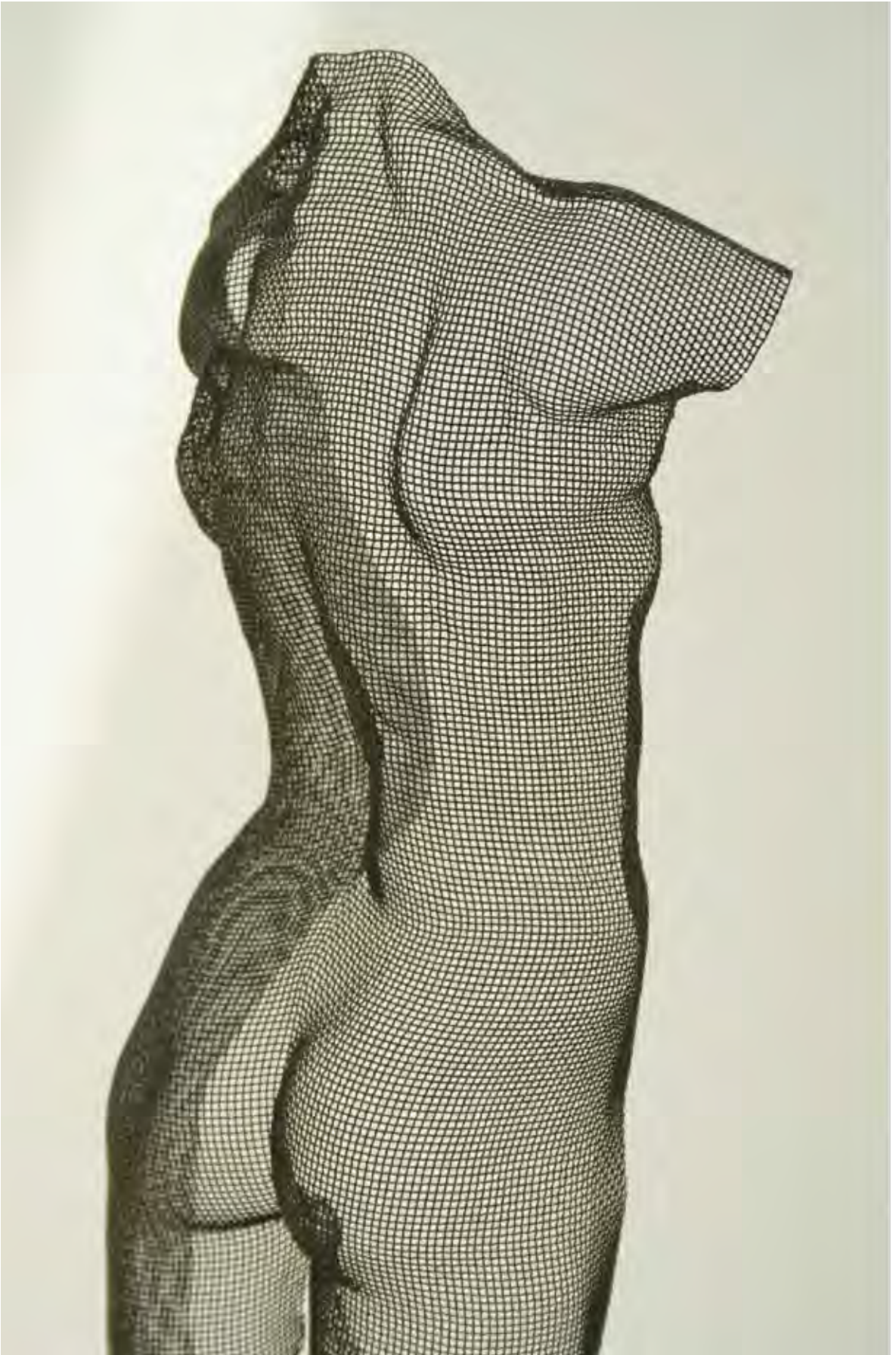


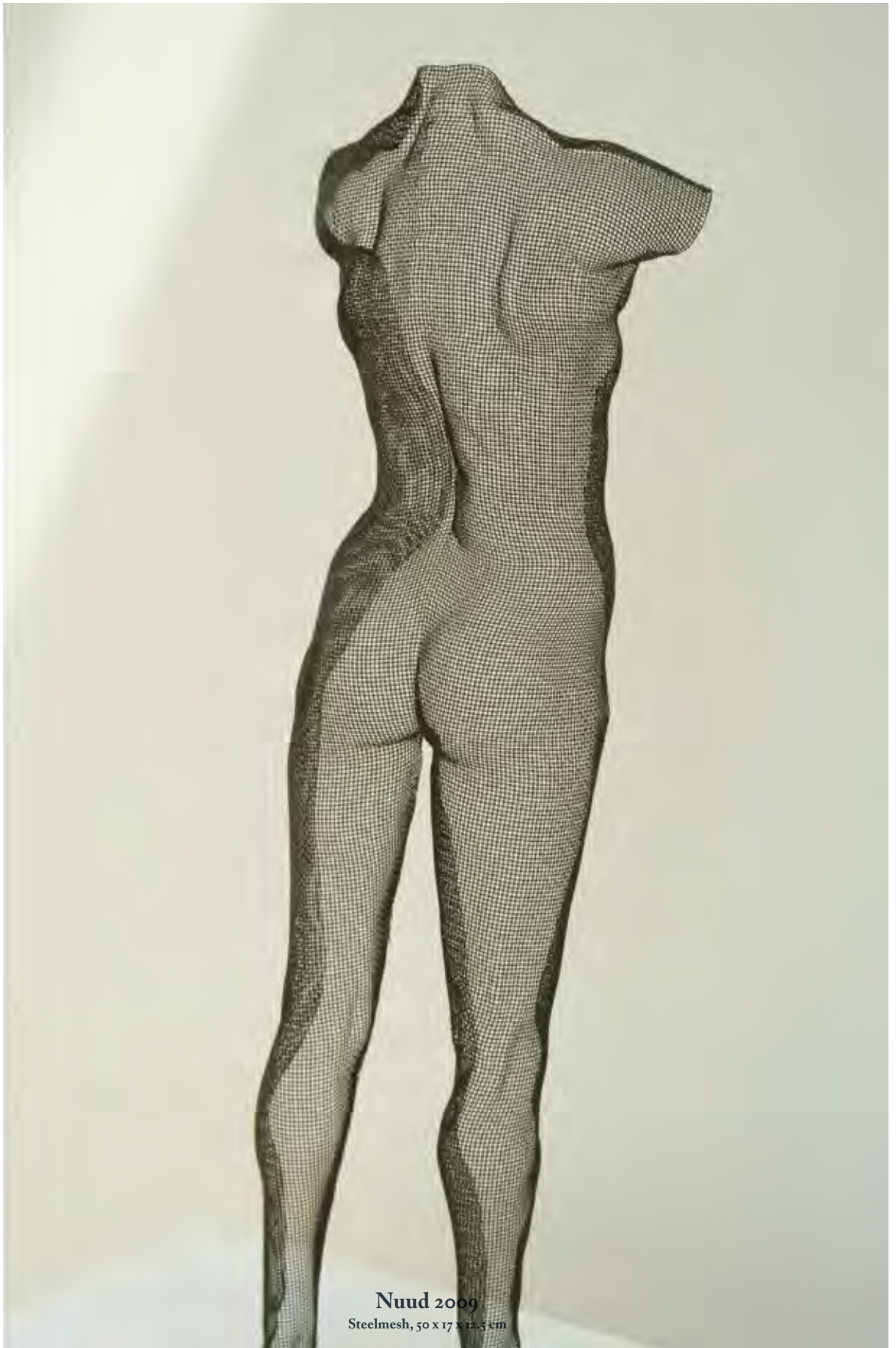
Nubuu 2010
Steelmesh, 81 x 67 x 17 cm





Nudai 2009
Steelmesh, 92 x 55 x 18 cm



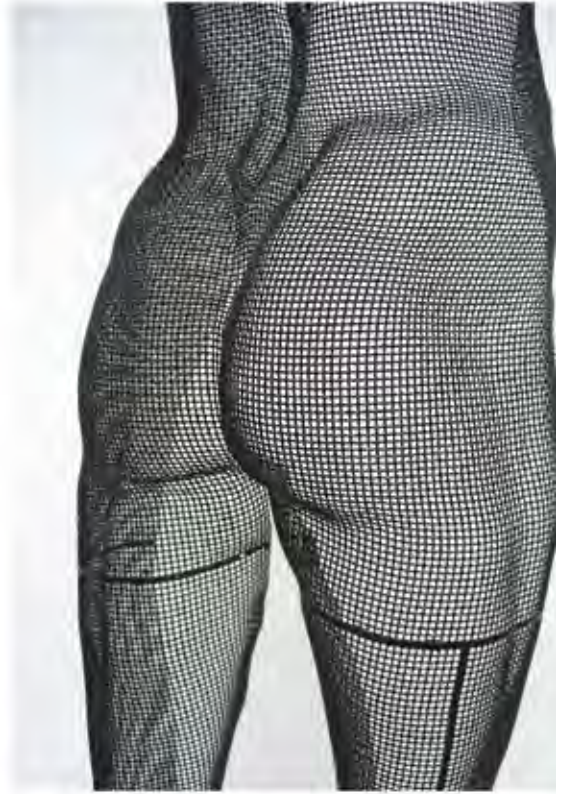


Nuud 2009
Steelemesh, 50 x 17 x 12,5 cm

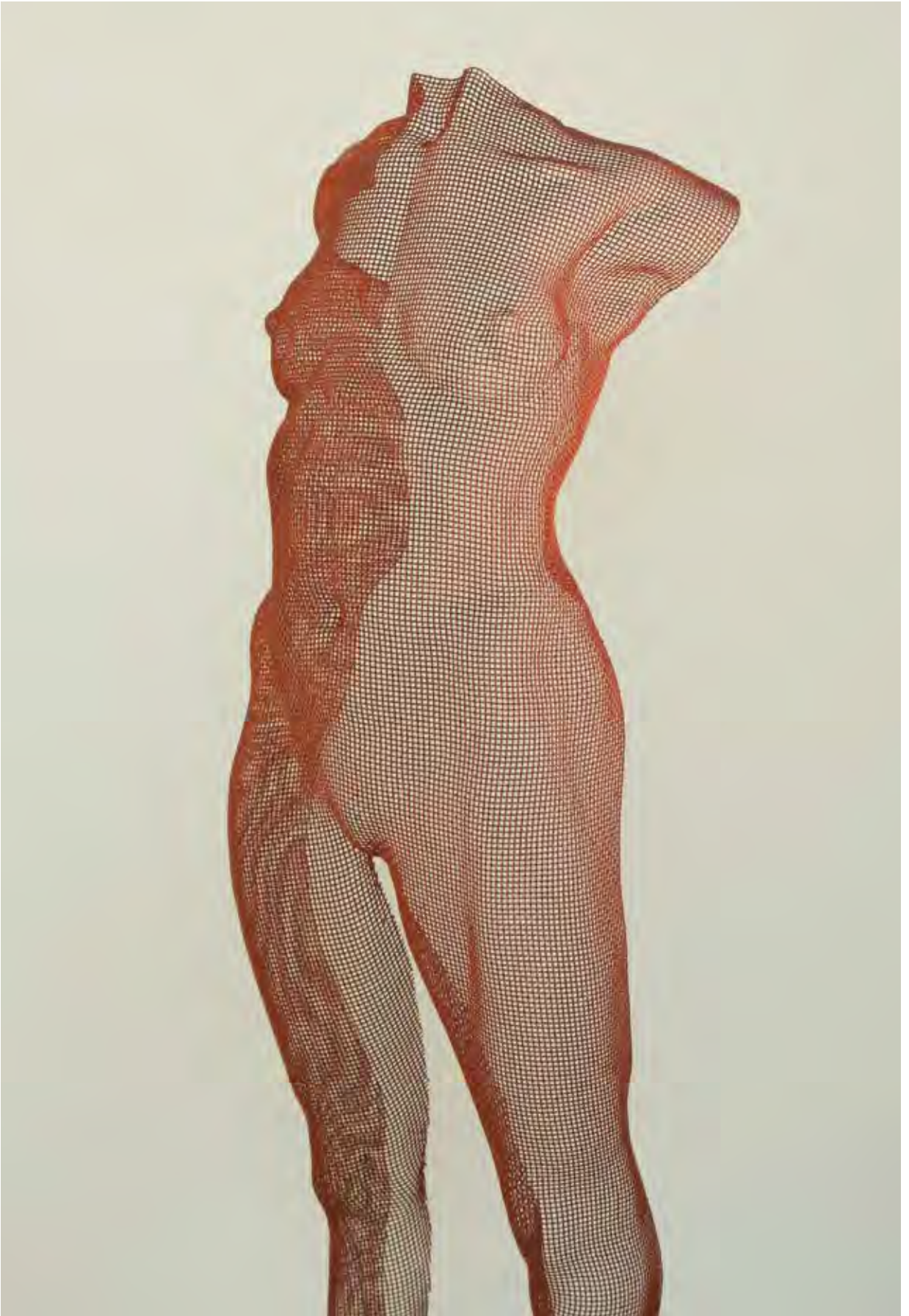


Nuudi 2010
Steelmesh
51 x 15.5 x 12.5 cm











Ruudi 2010
Steelemesh, 50 x 15 x 12.5 cm





Singed v 2003
Steelmesh, 30 x 36 x 7 cm





Solu 2009
Steelmesh, 74 x 36 x 19 cm



Stretch II 2009
Steelmesh, 48 x 31 x 11 cm



Stretch IV 2009
Steelmesh, 45 x 37 x 12 cm



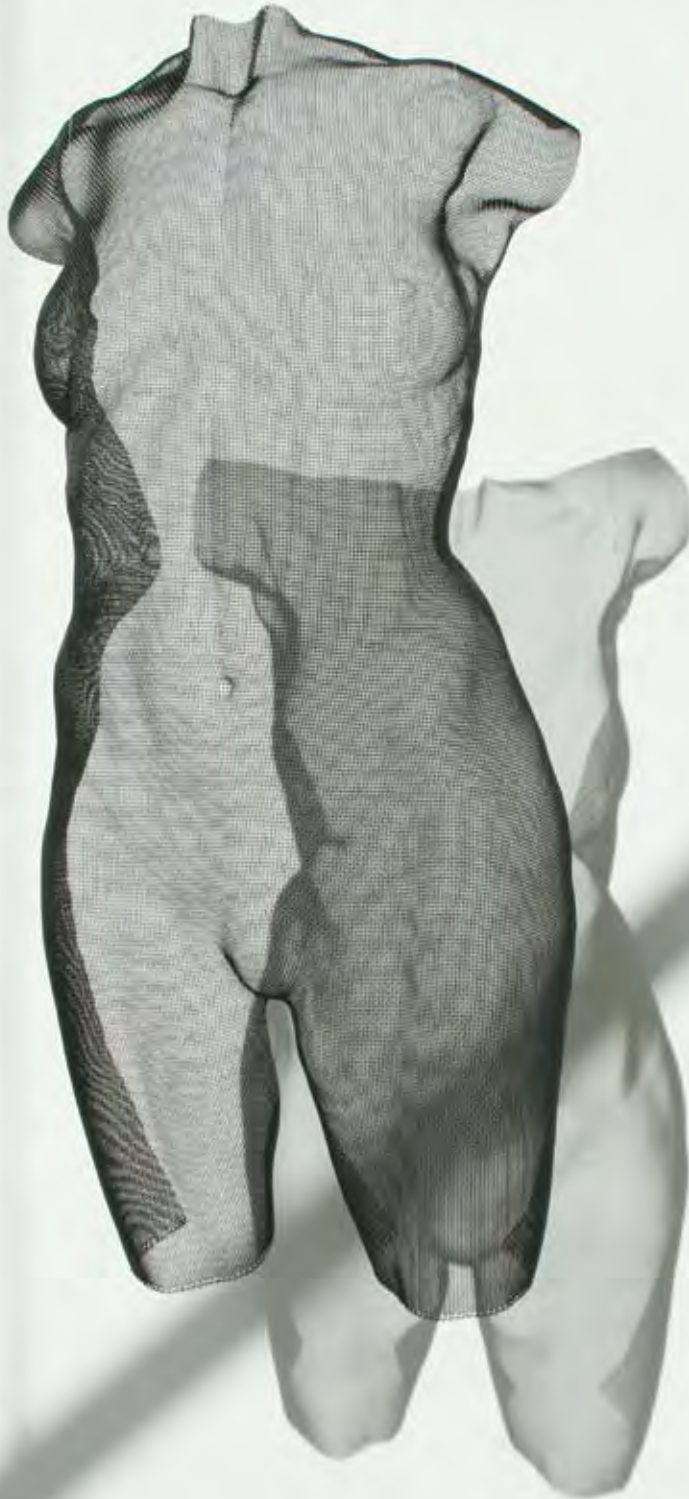
Stretch v 2009
Steelmesh, 45 x 35 x 9 cm



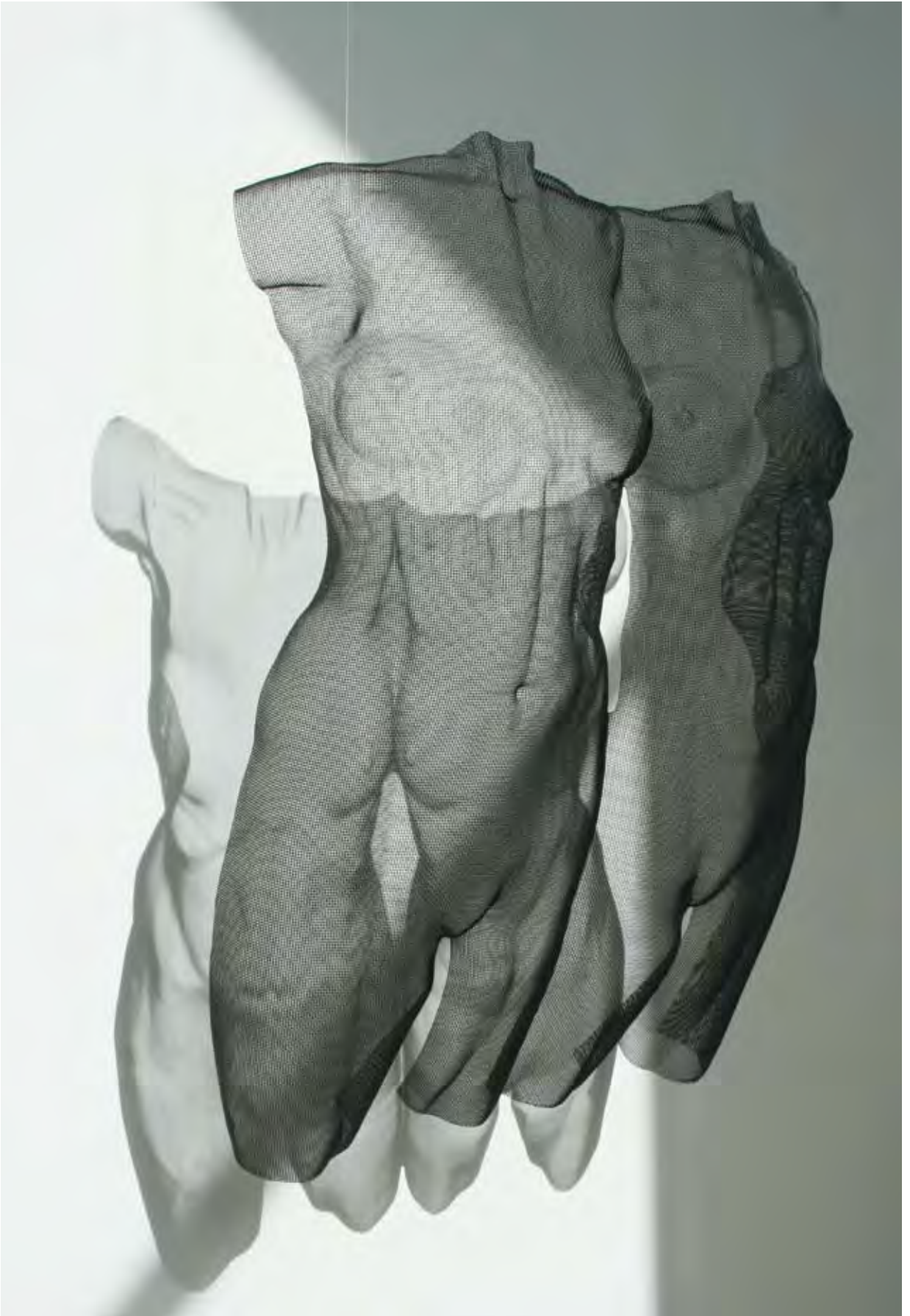


Torsas 2010
Steelmesh, 78 x 70 x 17 cm





Torsi 2010
Steelmesh, 79 x 38 x 15 cm





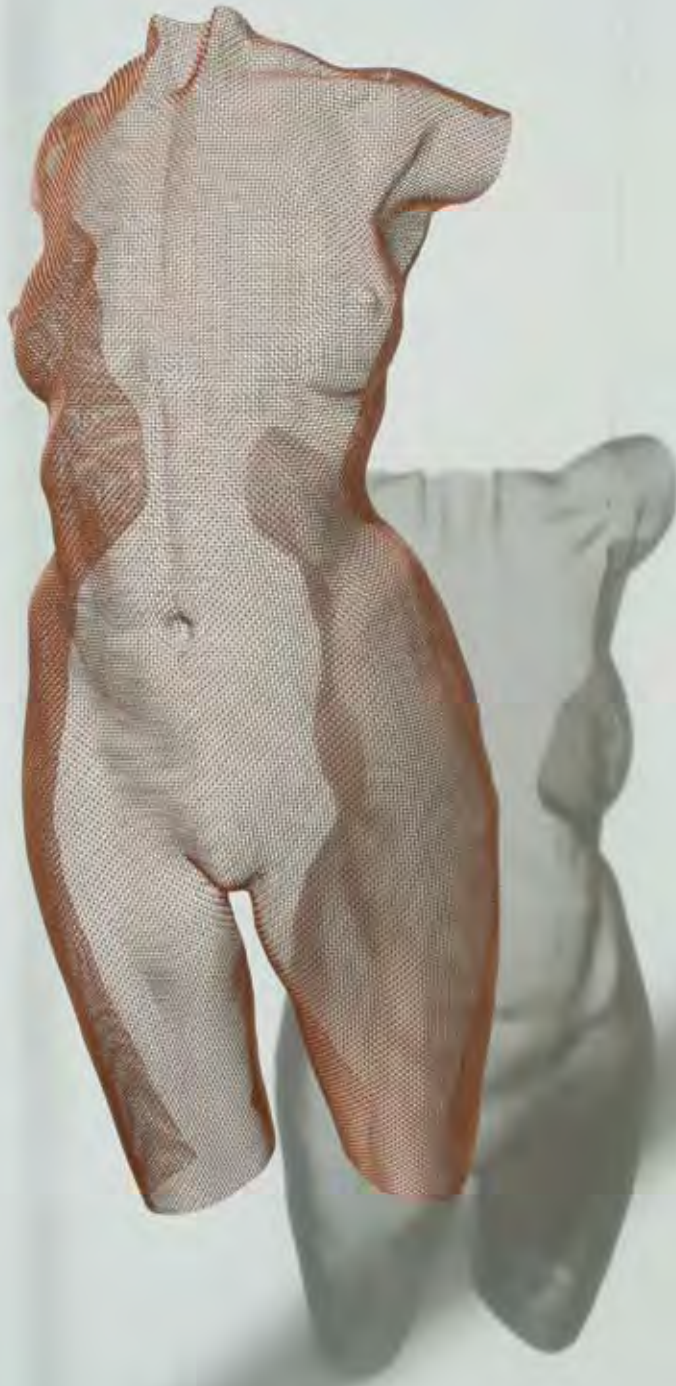
Torsu I 2010
Steelmesh, 63 x 24 x 17 cm



Torsus 2010
Steelmesh, 78 x 64 x 16 cm



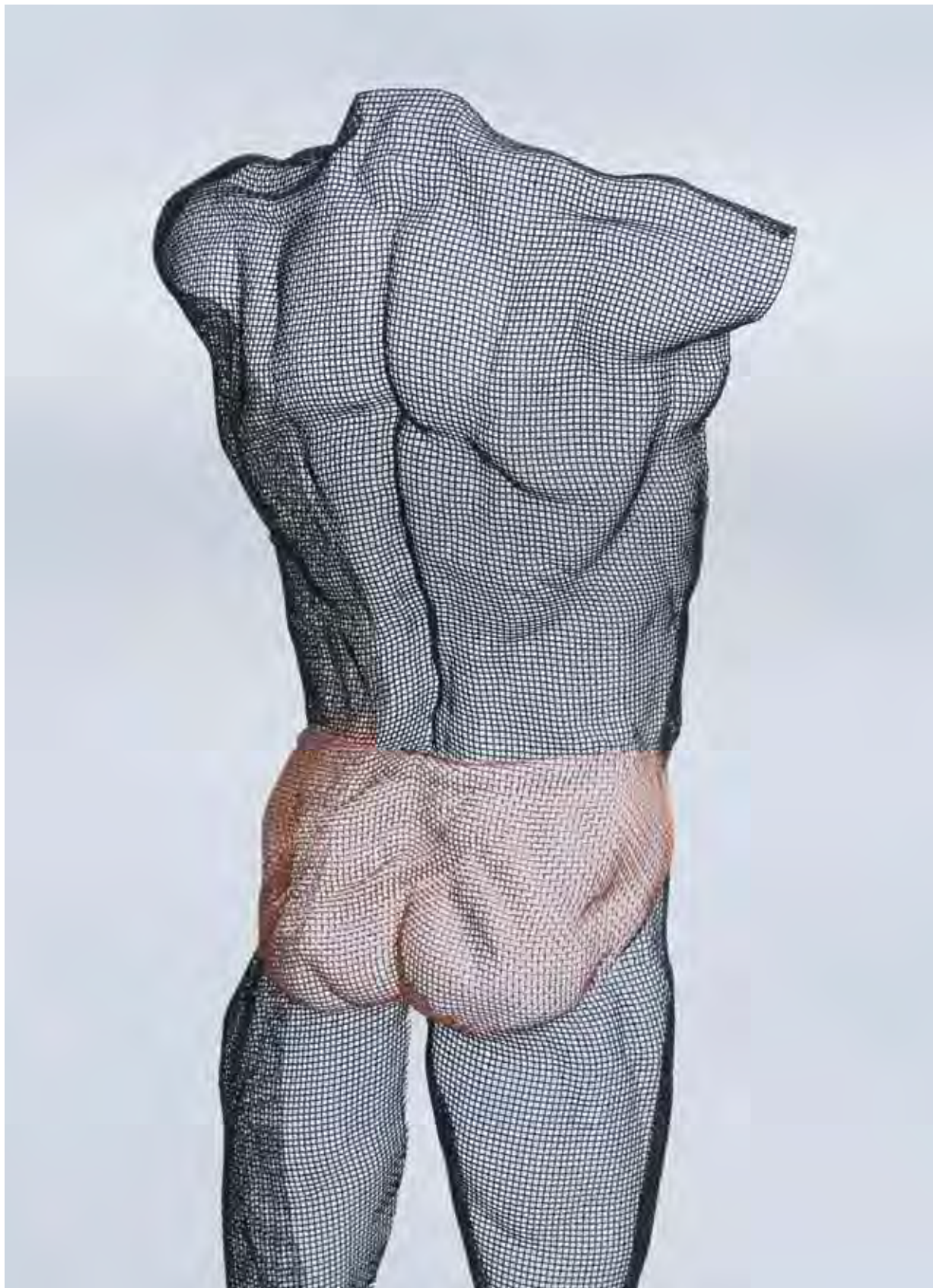
Torsu 1 2010
Steelmesh, 63 x 24 x 17 cm



Torsus 2010
Steelmesh, 78 x 64 x 16 cm



Trituu 2008
Steelmesh, 91 x 75 x 20 cm

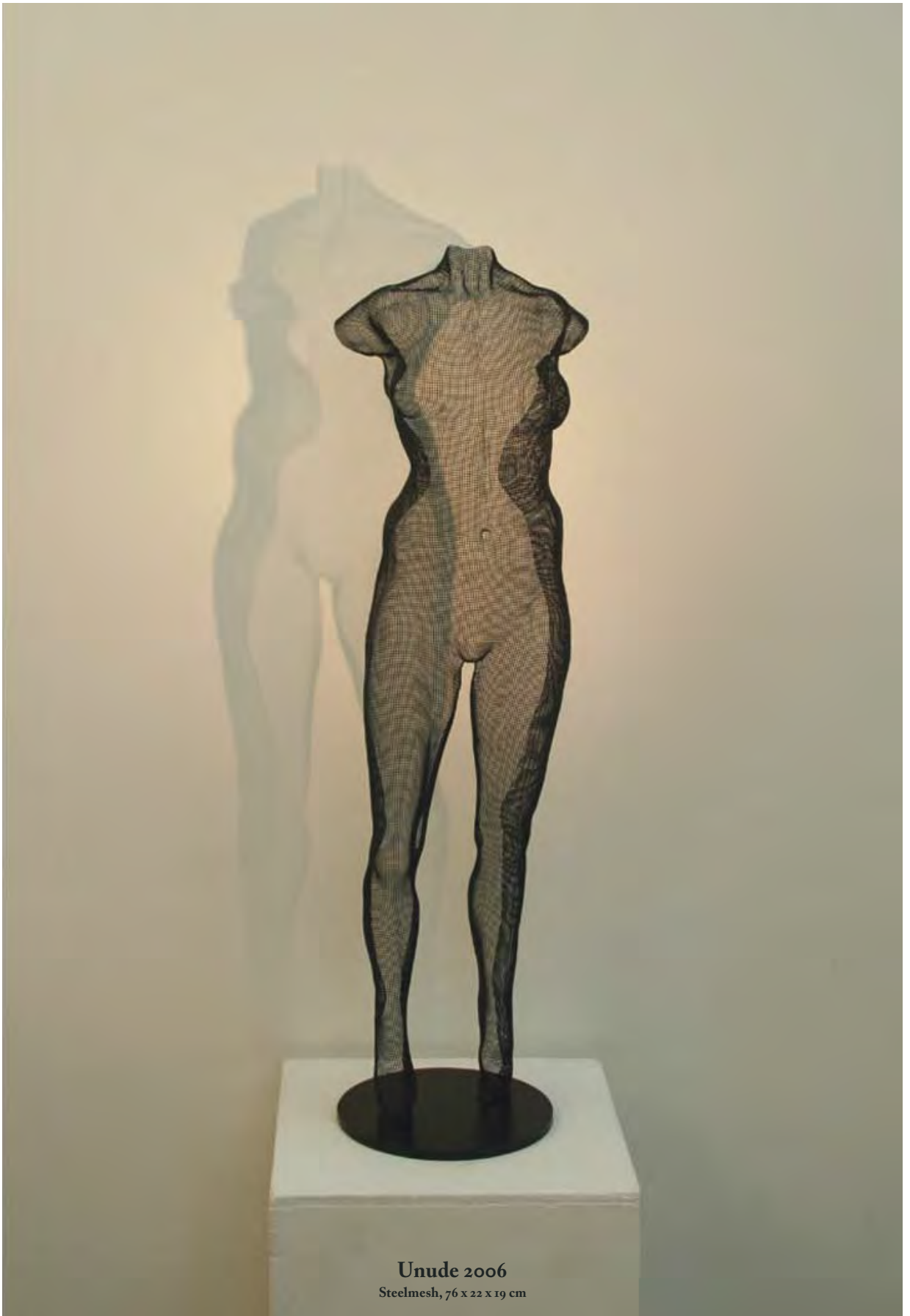


Unud IV 2009
Steelmesh, 50 x 18.5 x 12.5 cm



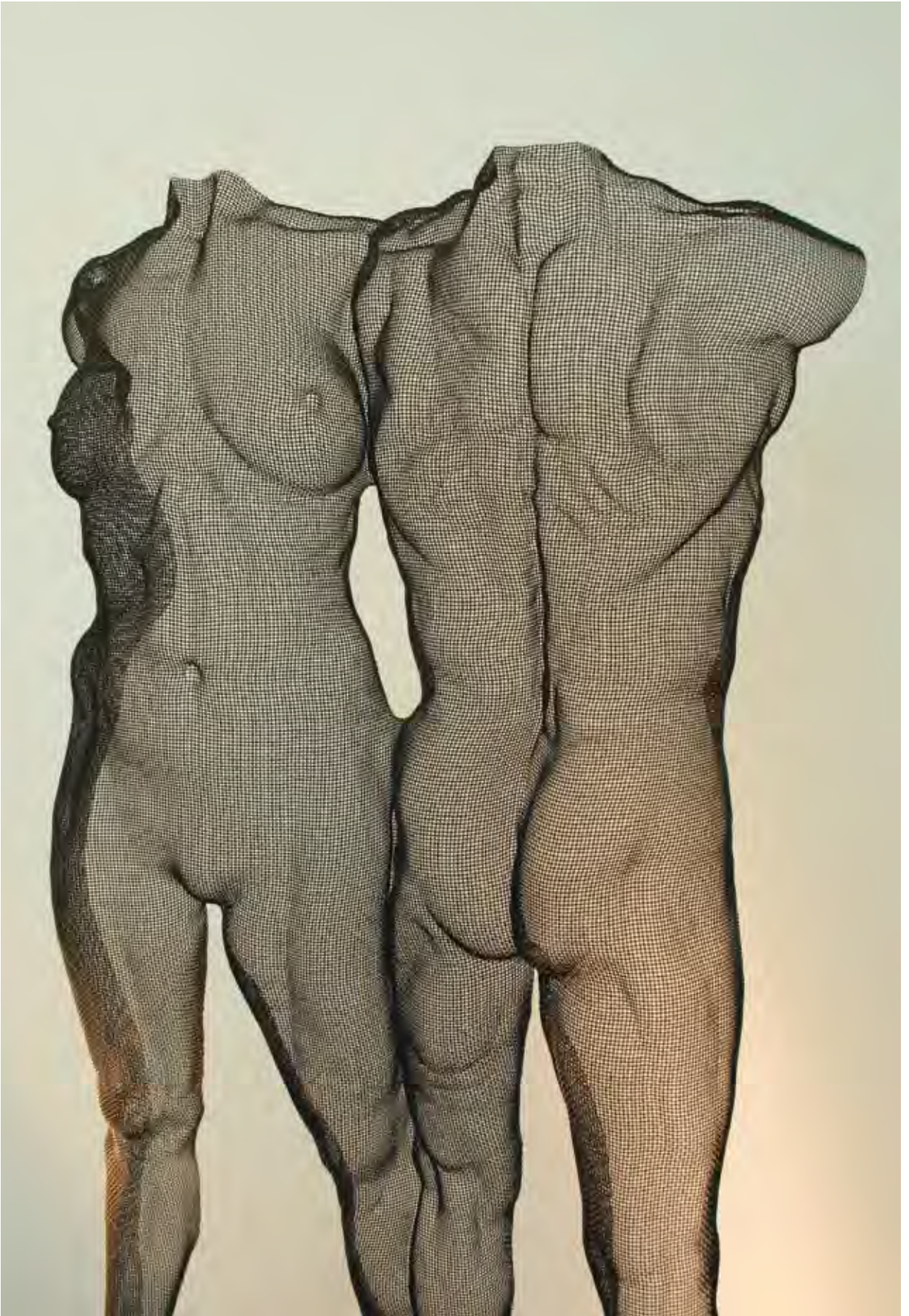


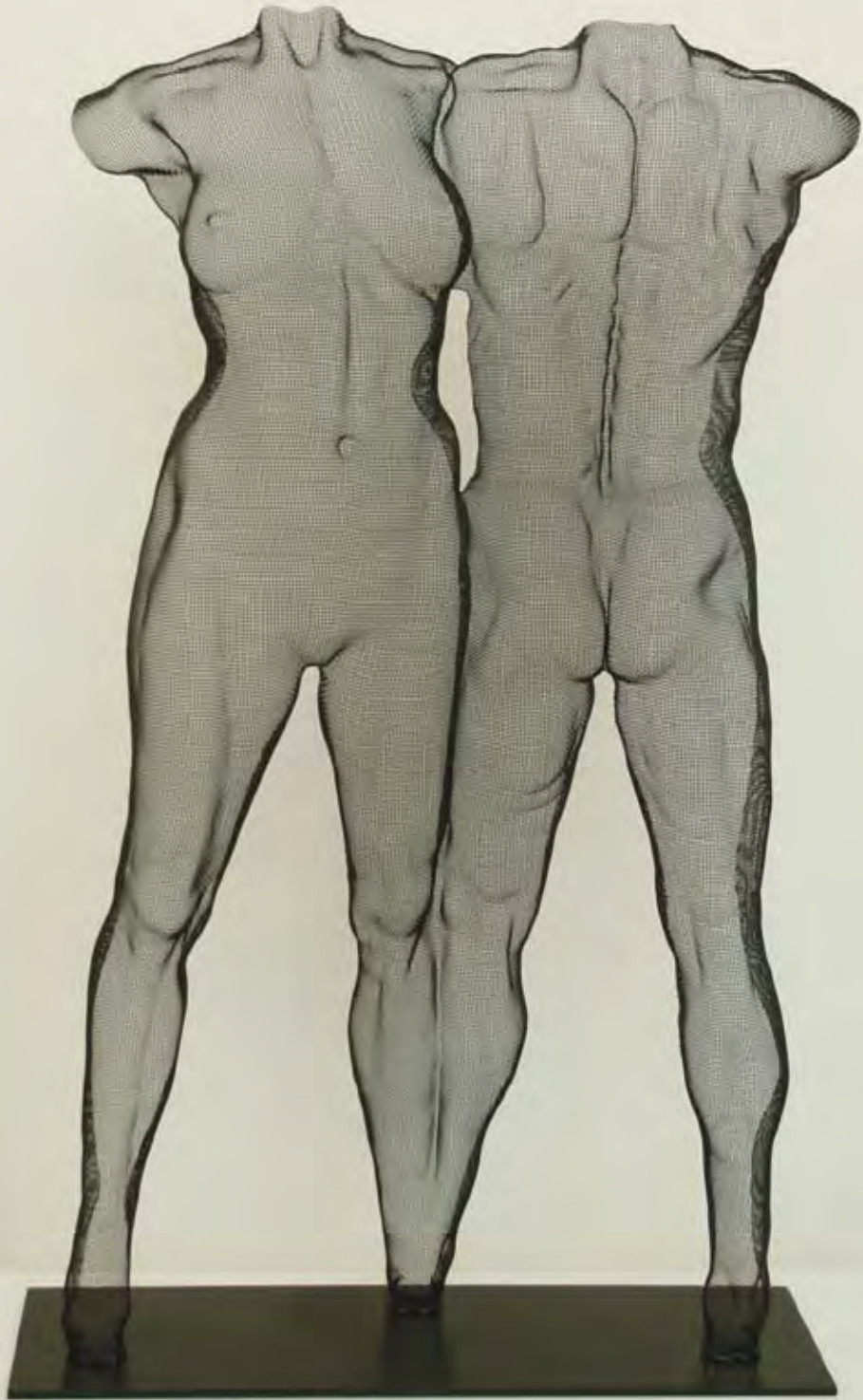
Unud VI 2008
Steelmesh, 49 x 15,5 x 12,5 cm



Unude 2006
Steelmesh, 76 x 22 x 19 cm







Utu 2008
Steelmesh, 91 x 55 x 18 cm





Uutu 2008
Steelmesh, 91 x 55 x 18 cm





Unud 2010
Steelmesh, 91 x 27 x 20 cm

EDITIONED





Eve 2008

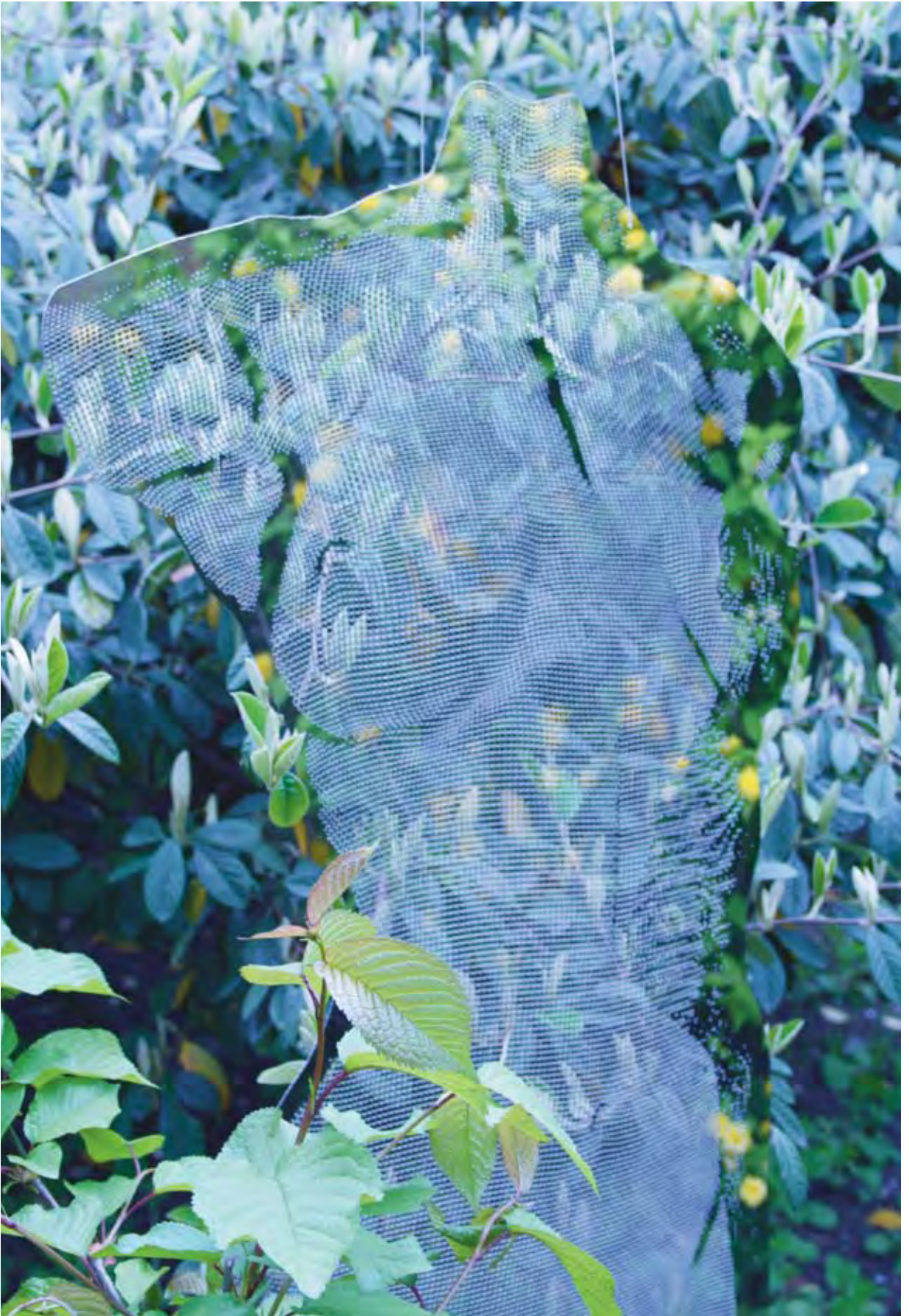
Steel Panel Edition of 9, 74.5 x 44.5 x 0.07 cm

Eve II 2008 (mirror)

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 74.5 x 44.5 x 0.07 cm

Eve III 2008 (red)

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 74.5 x 44.5 x 0.07 cm





Nuud 2005

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 74.5 x 44.5 x 0.07 cm

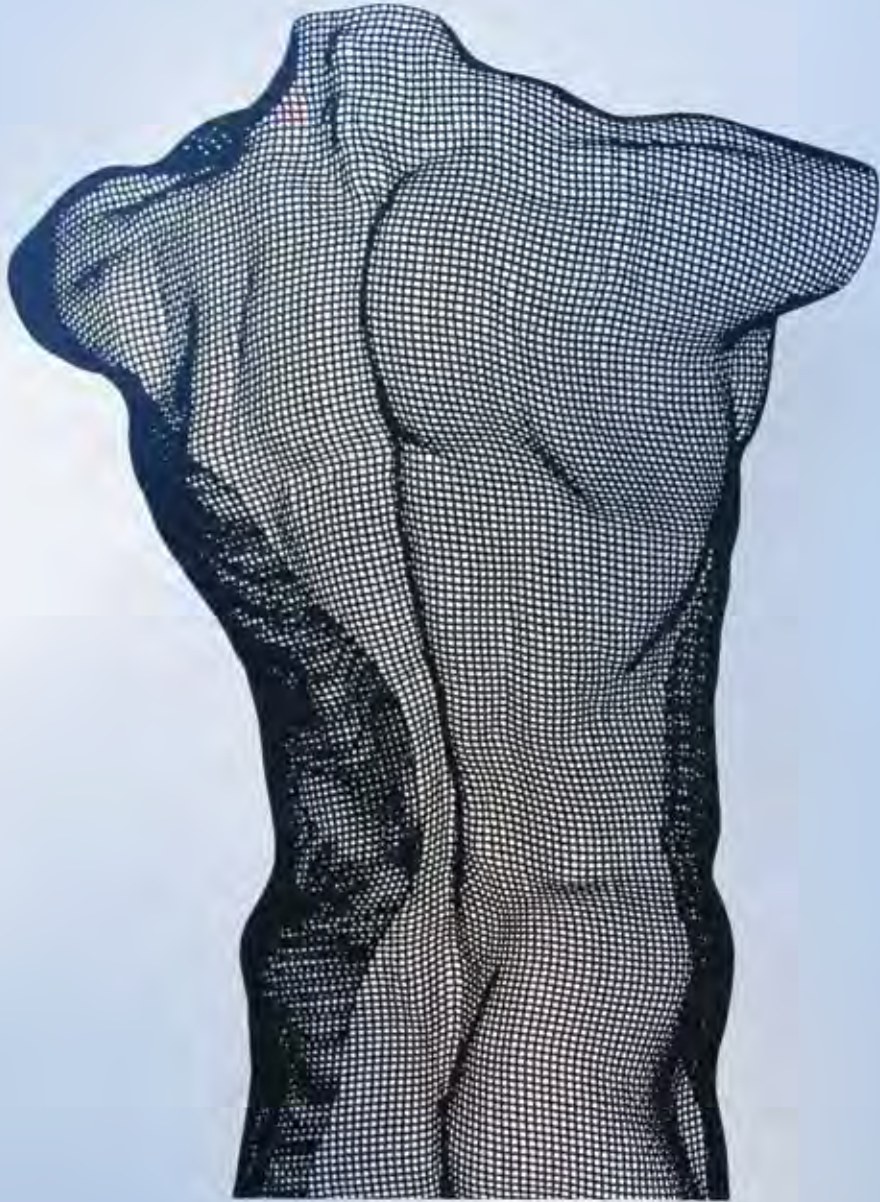
Nuud II 2005

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 74.5 x 44.5 x 0.07 cm



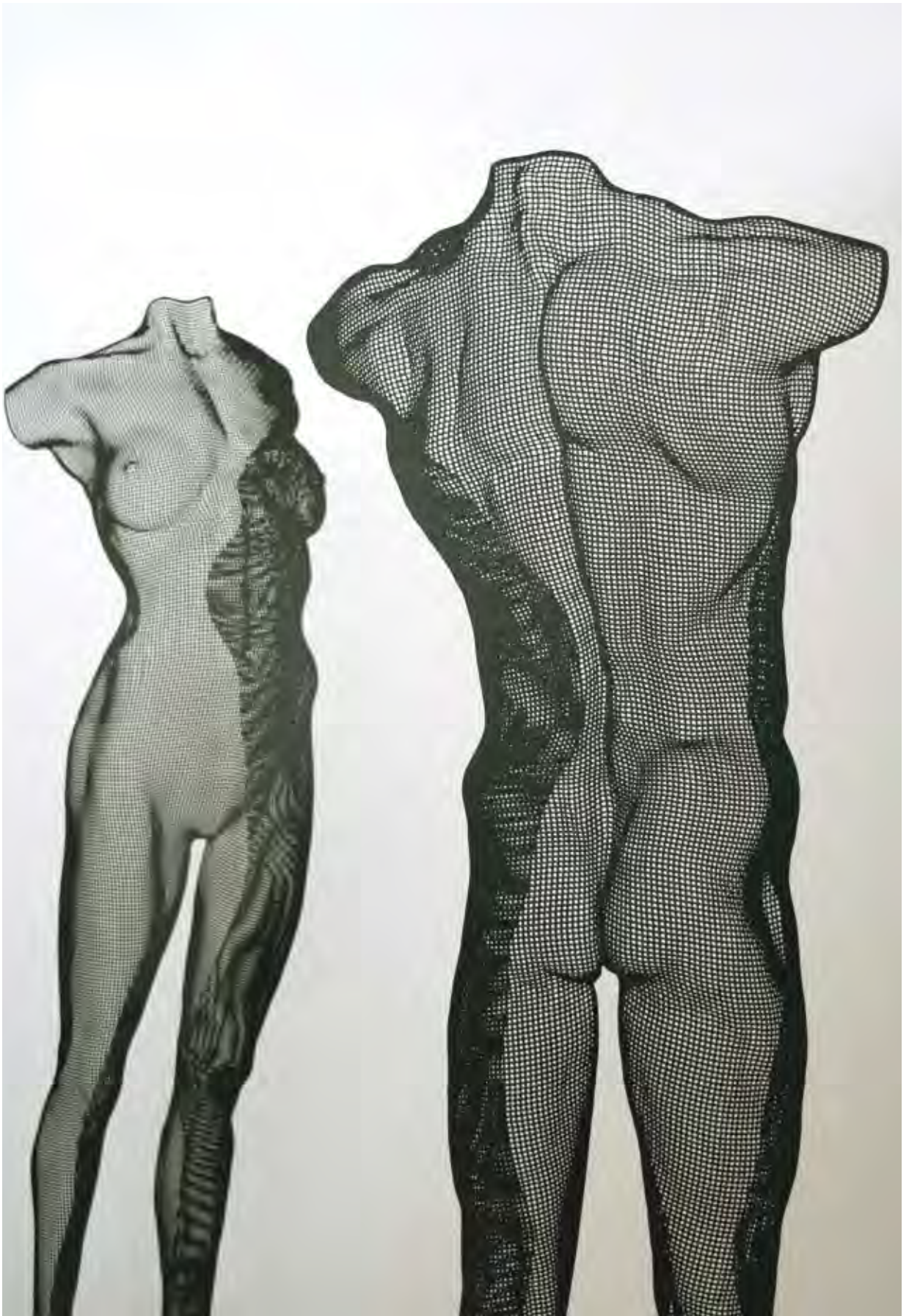
Nuwd 2006

Stainless Steel Panel Edition of 9, 74.5 x 44.5 x 0.07 cm



Nuwd II 2006

Stainless Steel Panel Edition of 9, 74.5 x 44.5 x 0.07 cm
(mirrored finish also available)





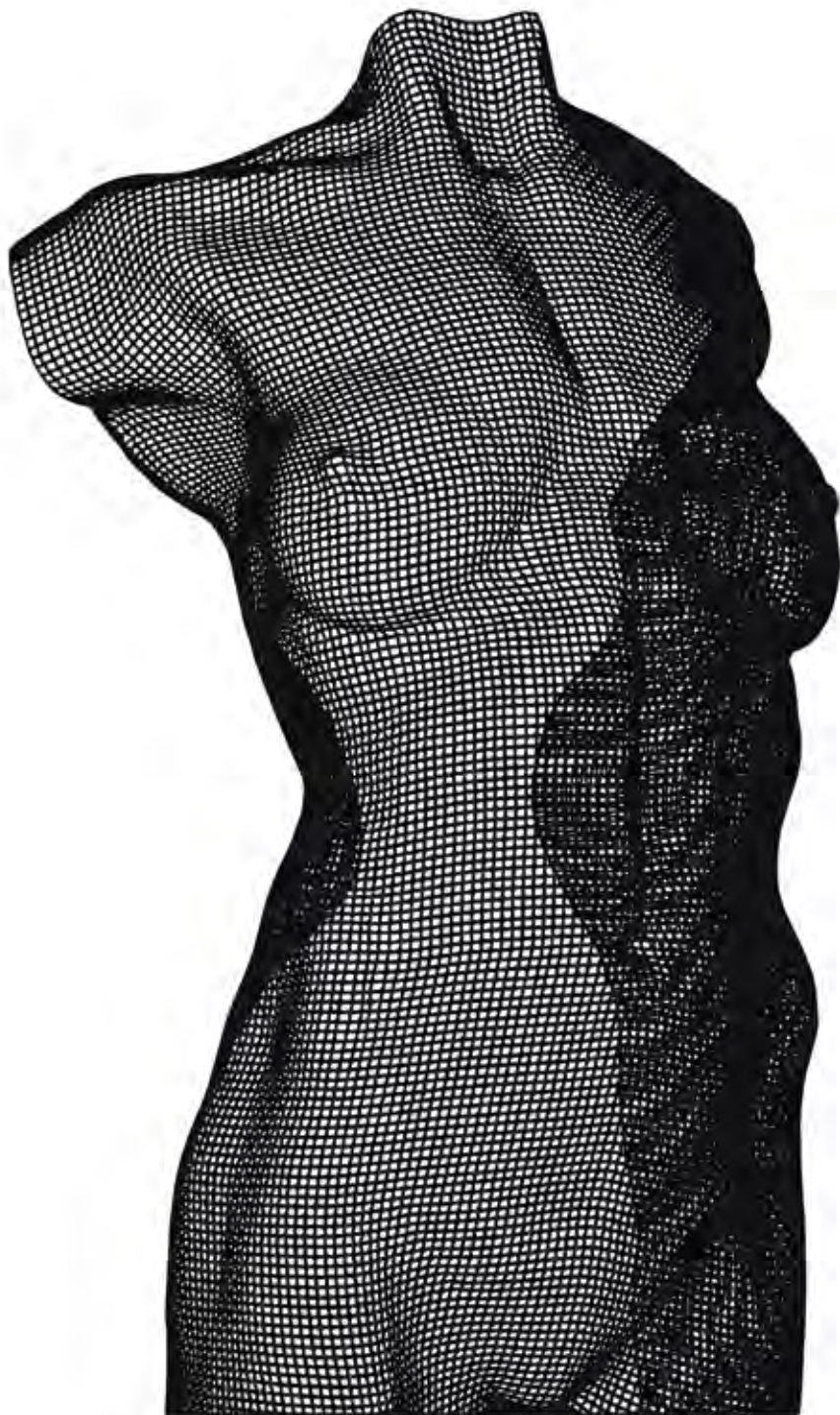
Nuwdstill 2008

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 150 x 43 x 0.15 cm



Stillnuwd 2008

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 150 x 36 x 0.15 cm



Nuwdu 2006

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 72.5 x 41 x 0.07 cm

Nuwdu II 2006

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 72.5 x 41 x 0.07 cm
(mirrored finish also available)





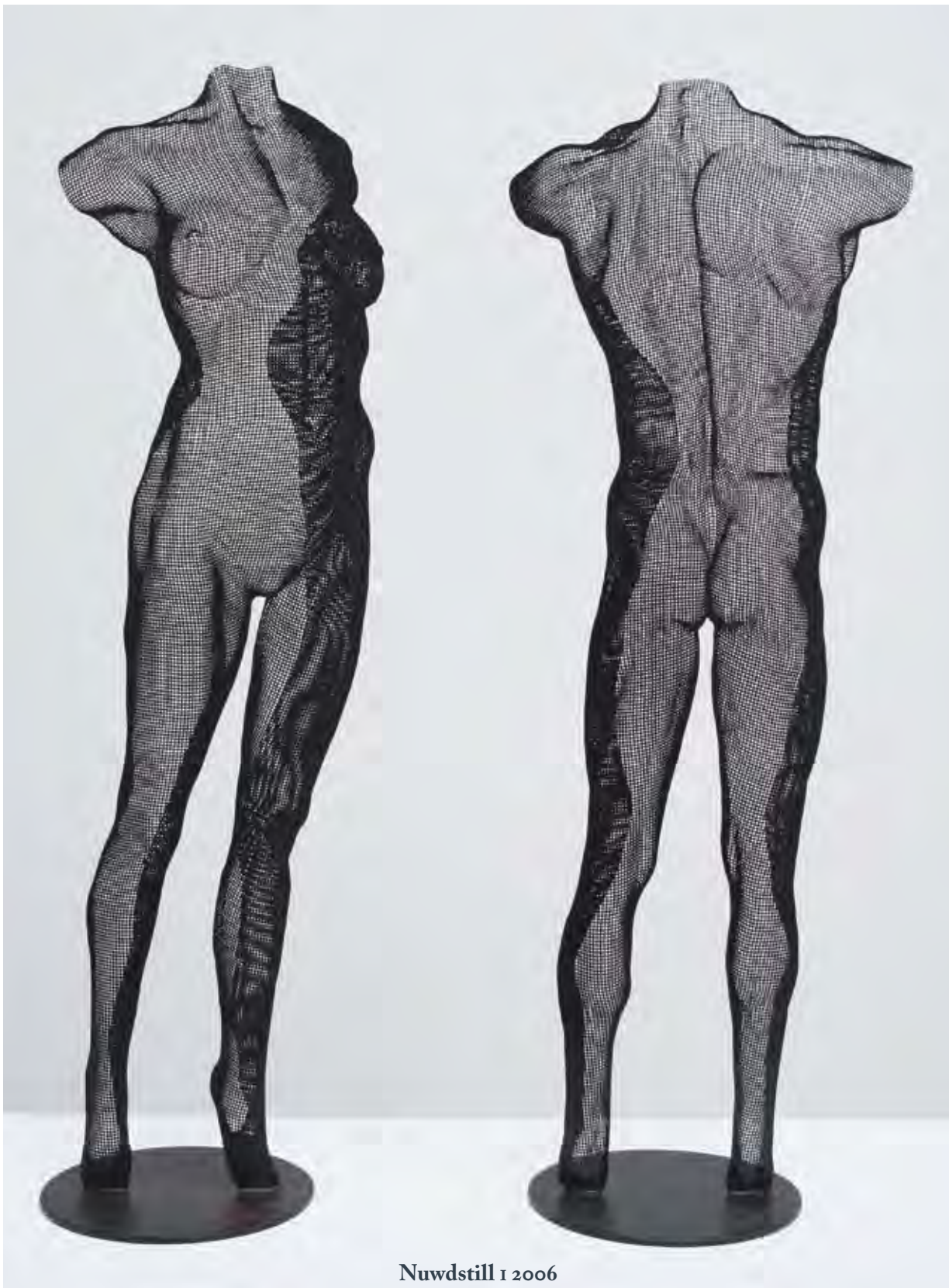
Self Portrait 2009

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 118 x 59 x 0.15 cm

Self Portrait II 2009

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 118 x 59 x 0.15 cm





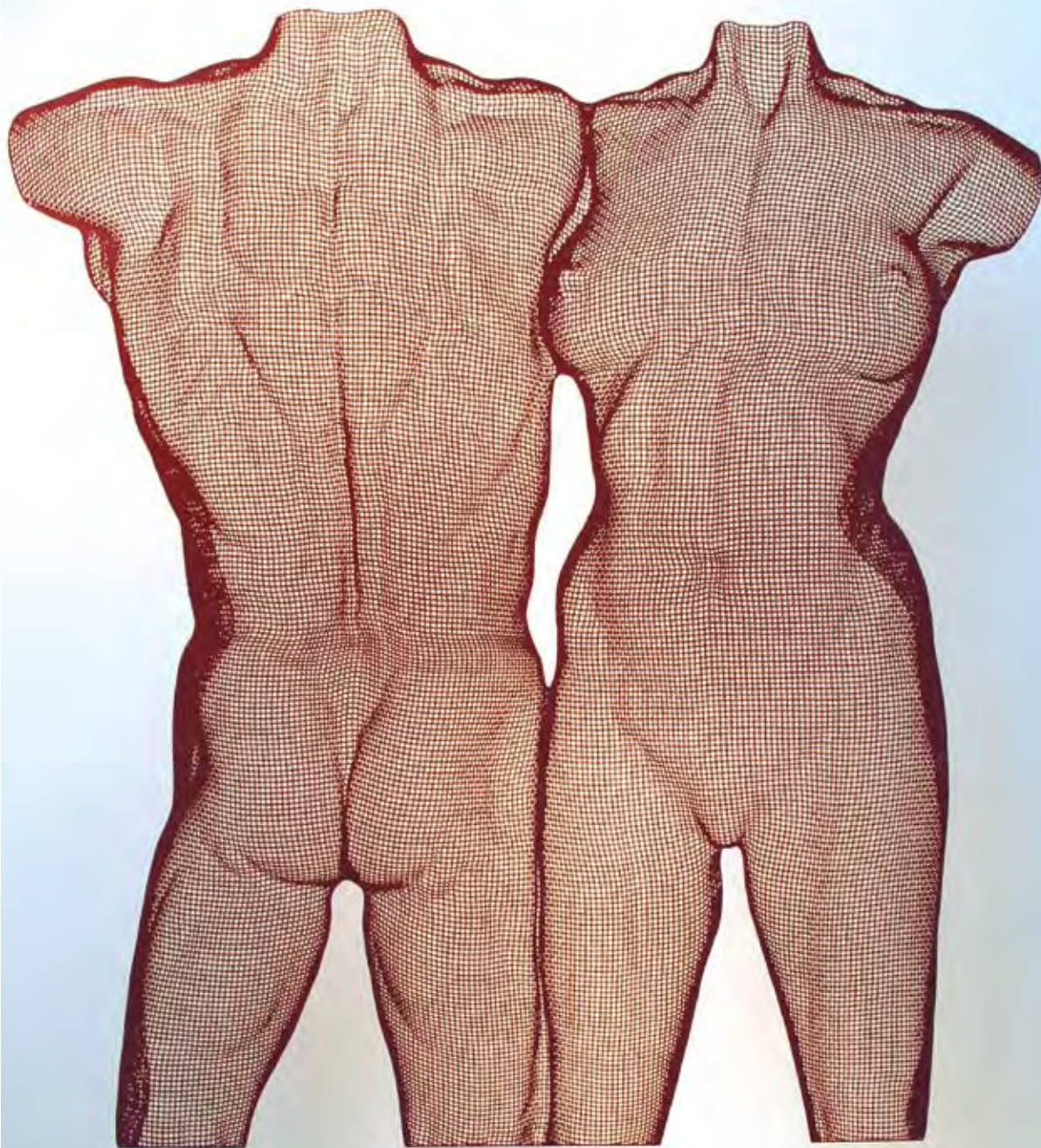
Nuwdstill I 2006

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 62.5 x 18 x 14.5 cm

Nuwdstill II 2006

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 63 x 22.5 x 14.5 cm





Venii III 2007 (red)

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 65 x 59.5 x 0.07 cm

Venii 2007 (black)

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 65 x 59.5 x 0.07 cm

Venii II 2007

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 65 x 59.5 x 0.07 cm

(mirrored finish also available)







Venii III 2007 (red)

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 65 x 46 x 0.07 cm

Venii 2007 (black)

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 65 x 46 x 0.07 cm

Venii II 2007

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 65 x 46 x 0.07 cm
(mirrored finish also available)



Venis III 2008

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 120 x 60 x 0.15 cm

Venus 2008

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 120 x 60 x 0.15 cm

Venus 2009

Phosphor Bronze Panel Edition of 9, 65 x 59.5 x 0.07 cm





Venus 2007 (black)

Steel Panel Edition of 9, 65 x 31 x 0.07 cm

Venus II 2008 (mirrored)

Stainless Steel Panel Edition of 9, 65 x 31 x 0.07 cm

Venus III 2007

Stainless Steel Panel Edition of 9, 65 x 31 x 0.07 cm

(red finish also available)



Solo Exhibitions

- 2010 "Skindeep" Ode to Art, Singapore; "Thin Air", Air Gallery, London; "Aria Sottile" Vecchiato Arte, Padua Italy; "Iconii" Canterbury Cathedral, Canterbury, UK; "Unud" AM Gallery, Almeria, Spain
- 2009 "Nudus" Number Nine the Gallery, Birmingham UK; Biennale, Galerie Van Loon en Simons, Vught, Holland; "Unud" Somerville Gallery, Plymouth, England; Gallery Different at Queens Elm Gallery, Chelsea, London
- 2008 "Genii". Albemarle Gallery, London; Wimbledon maquette exhibition.
- 2007 Gallerie Il Ponte Contemporanea, Rome; Galerie Van Loon en Simmons; Form 2007, Olympia London; "Antibodies, Buschlen Mowatt Galleries, Vancouver
- 2006 Number Nine the Gallery, Birmingham, UK
- 2005 The Catto Gallery, London; Etienne & Van Loon, Netherlands
- 2004 Hotel Linde, Mariaworth Austria; Herman Miller Event, International Art Consultants
- 2003 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 "Outline" Plus One Plus Two Galleries, London; Online - Platform for Art, Gloucester Road, London; Buschlen Mowatt Galleries, Vancouver, Canada; Galerie Bernd Duerr, Munich Germany
- 2001~10 Gallery Different, London
- 1992~2000 Gallery Differentiate, London
- 1999 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 The Festival of Erotica, Olympia
- 1996 Artopia, New York, USA; Hannah Peschar Gallery and Sculpture Garden, Surrey
- 1995 Magidson Fine Art, Aspen, Colorado, USA; Posner Fine Art, Santa Monica, California, USA
- 1994/5 Joel Kessler Gallery, Miami, Florida, USA
- 1994 Fire Station Gallery, Sydney, Australia (Opened by Terence Meecham - Director of the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney) 1
The Emporio Armani, Brompton Road, London. Special Collaboration, one man exhibition
- 1993 Catto Gallery, London
- 1990 Wates City Tower, London
- 1989~91 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
- 1984/5/6 Brompton Gallery, Knightsbridge, London

Group Shows

— 1984 ~ 2010 with

Ward Jackson Gallery London
 Guildford Art Gallery, England
 Brompton Gallery London
 MOMA Palma Mallorca
 Il Ponte Rome Italy
 Salama Caro Gallery, London
 Serpentine Gallery London
 Victoria and Albert Museum London
 Galleria 57 Madrid Spain
 Philip Samuels Fine Art, St Louis, USA
 Christies, London
 Arij Gasiunasen Fine Art, Florida, USA
 Charles Whitchurch Gallery, California USA
 Magidson Fine Art Aspen and New York USA
 Meridian Gallery, Melbourne Australia
 Gallerie Pierre Nouvion Monte Carlo
 Bruce Lewin Gallery, New York, USA
 Joel Kessler Fine Art, Miami
 National Gallery Ontario, Canada
 International Art Consultants, London
 Davies and Tooth, London
 Solmon and Solomon Fine Art, Chicago USA
 Catto Gallery, London
 Mall Galleries, London
 Marijke Raaijmakers Galerie, Netherlands
 Buschlen Mowatt Galleries, Vancouver, Canada
 Artparks International Guernsey, Channel Islands
 Hannah Peschar Sculpture Park, Surrey England
 Jack Gallery, Las Vegas, USA
 Galerie Bernd Duerr, Munich Germany
 Plus One Plus Two Gallery, London
 Etienne & Van Loon Contemporary Fine Art,
 Netherlands
 Wagner Art Gallery, Sydney
 Van Loon en Simons, Vught, Netherlands
 Rebecca Hossack Gallery, London
 Win Henstock Gallery, Toronto, Canada
 Woolff Gallery, London
 Albemarle Gallery, London
 Byard Fine Art Cambridge
 Vecchiato Arte, Padova Italy
 Ana Mercader Gallery, Almeria Spain
 Number Nine the Gallery Birmingham, England
 Somerville Gallery Plymouth, England
 Absolute Art Gallery, Bruges Belgium
 Galerie de Nice France
 Australian Galleries Sydney and Melbourne
 Ode To Art Contemporary, Singapore

Museum Collections & Permanent Public Installations

Galleria Nazionale 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 "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)
 Ladbroke 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, Chilbolton, Winchester "Cruciform"
 (1999)
 Fleet Place House, Holborn Viaduct "Fishnet" (2000)
 Bedes 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)
 The Shrine of Walsingham, Norfolk "Crucifix" (2005)
 The Jam House, Edinburgh "Aangel" (2005)
 San Domenico House Hotel "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)

SKIN DEEP DAVID BEGBIE

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Ode To Art Raffles City
252 North Bridge Road,
Raffles City Shopping Centre, #01-36E/F,
Singapore 179103
Tel: +65 6250 1901
Fax: +65 6250 5354

Ode To Art Marina Bay Sands
#01-19 The Shoppes at Marina Bay Sands
2 Bayfront Avenue, Singapore 018972
Tel +65 6688 7773

Ode To Art Kuala Lumpur
168 Jalan Bukit Bintang,
The Pavilion, #06-13/14,
Kuala Lumpur 55100, Malaysia
Tel: +603 2148 9816 / +6016 263 6937
Fax: +603 2142 6816

sales@odetoart.com

www.odetoart.com

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