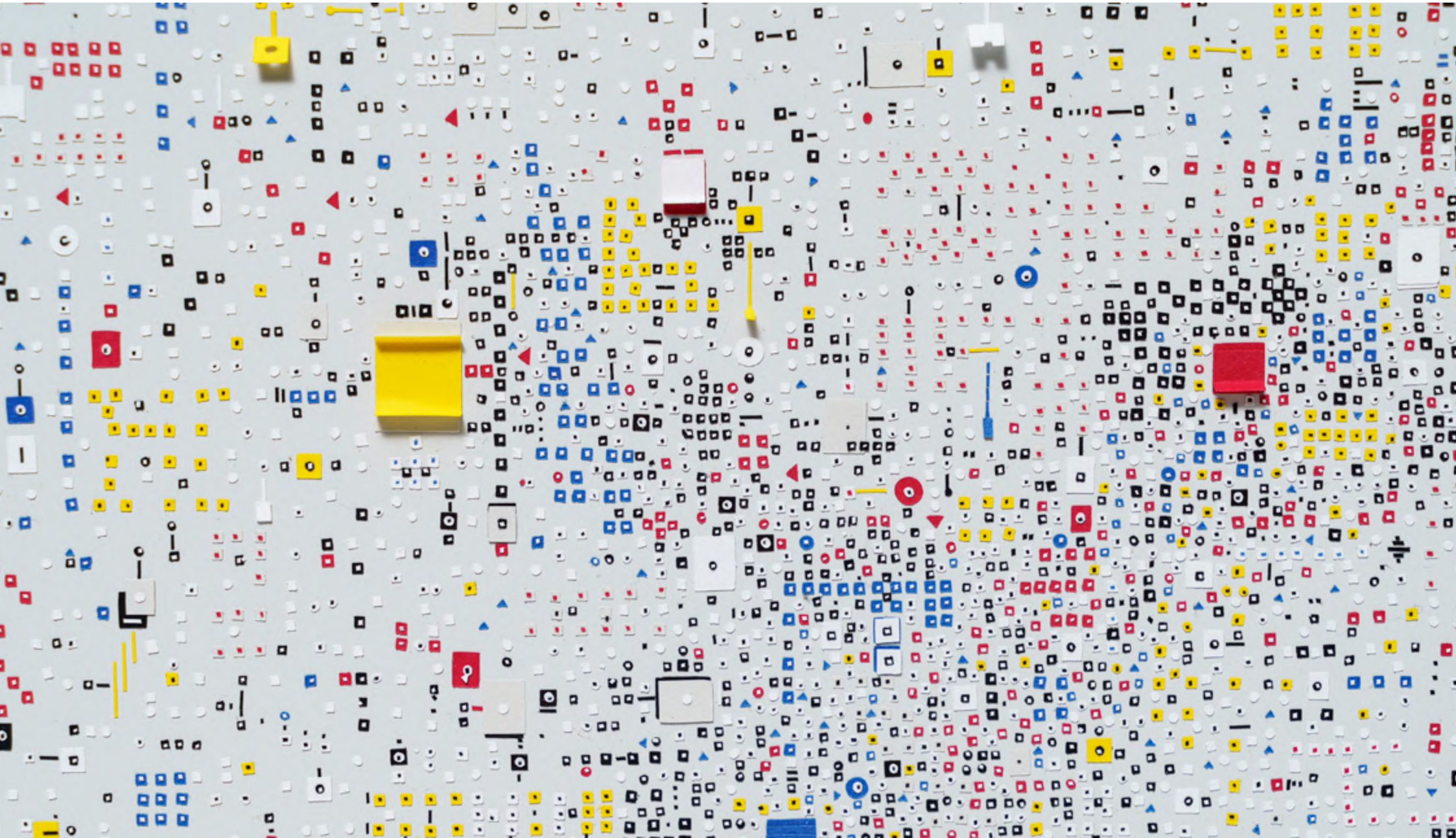
nara roesler

marco maggi



marco maggi

b. 1957, Montevideo, Uruguay
lives and works in New York, USA

The presence of paper and an intimate character are two constants in the work of Marco Maggi, even in his large installations. Ever since he established his career, in the 1990s, Maggi has wittily and delicately encouraged his audience to slow down their pace, and watch, pay attention, and delve deeper into his works, the life that surrounds them, and the society in which they live.

In a series entitled *The Ted Turner Collection—from CNN to the DNA*, Maggi shows his acute critical sense by using reproductions of pieces by artists like Gerhard Richter, Andy Warhol, and Hélio Oiticica to comment on the mediatized condition of contemporary life. Heaps of white paper cover reproductions, slashed with precision to create reliefs and gaps that reveal traces of tones from the reproductions hidden underneath, forming a big white landscape spiked with small slits of color. The installations maintain the use of paper, but from a distance, the numerous heaps do not show their nature; one must come closer, become somewhat acquainted with the works and dedicate some time to find out what they reveal.

click to see full cv

capa *White square* (detalhe), 2024

selected solo exhibitions

- *La Economía de la Atención,* Fundação Iberê Camargo, Porto Alegre, Brazil (2025)
- *A Sociedade Subatômica,* Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil (2025)
- *O papel é inocente*, Museu Brasileiro de Escultura e Ecologia (MuBE), São Paulo, Brazil (2018)
- *Putin's Pencils*, Sicardi Gallery, Houston, USA (2017)
- *Lentissimo*, Vassar College, New York, USA (2014)
- *Piano Piano*, Espacio Monitor, Caracas, Venezuela (2016)
- *Functional Desinformation: Drawings in Portuguese*, Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, Brazil (2012)
- *Optimismo Radical*, NC Arte, Bogotá, Colombia (2012)

selected group exhibitions

- *Movement: The Legacy of Kineticism,* Dallas Museum of Art (DMA), Dallas, USA (2022)
- *Reflections on Time and Space,* Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil (2019)
- *Art_Latin_America: Against the Survey*, Davis Museum at Wellesley College, Wellesley, USA (2019)
- *Latinoamérica: volver al futuro*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Buenos Aires (MACBA), Buenos Aires, Argentina (2018)
- *Tension and Dynamism*, Atchugarry Art Center, Miami, USA (2018)
- 56ª Bienal de Veneza, Italy (2015)
- 8th La Habana Biennial, Cuba (2003)
- 25th São Paulo Biennial, Brazil (2002)

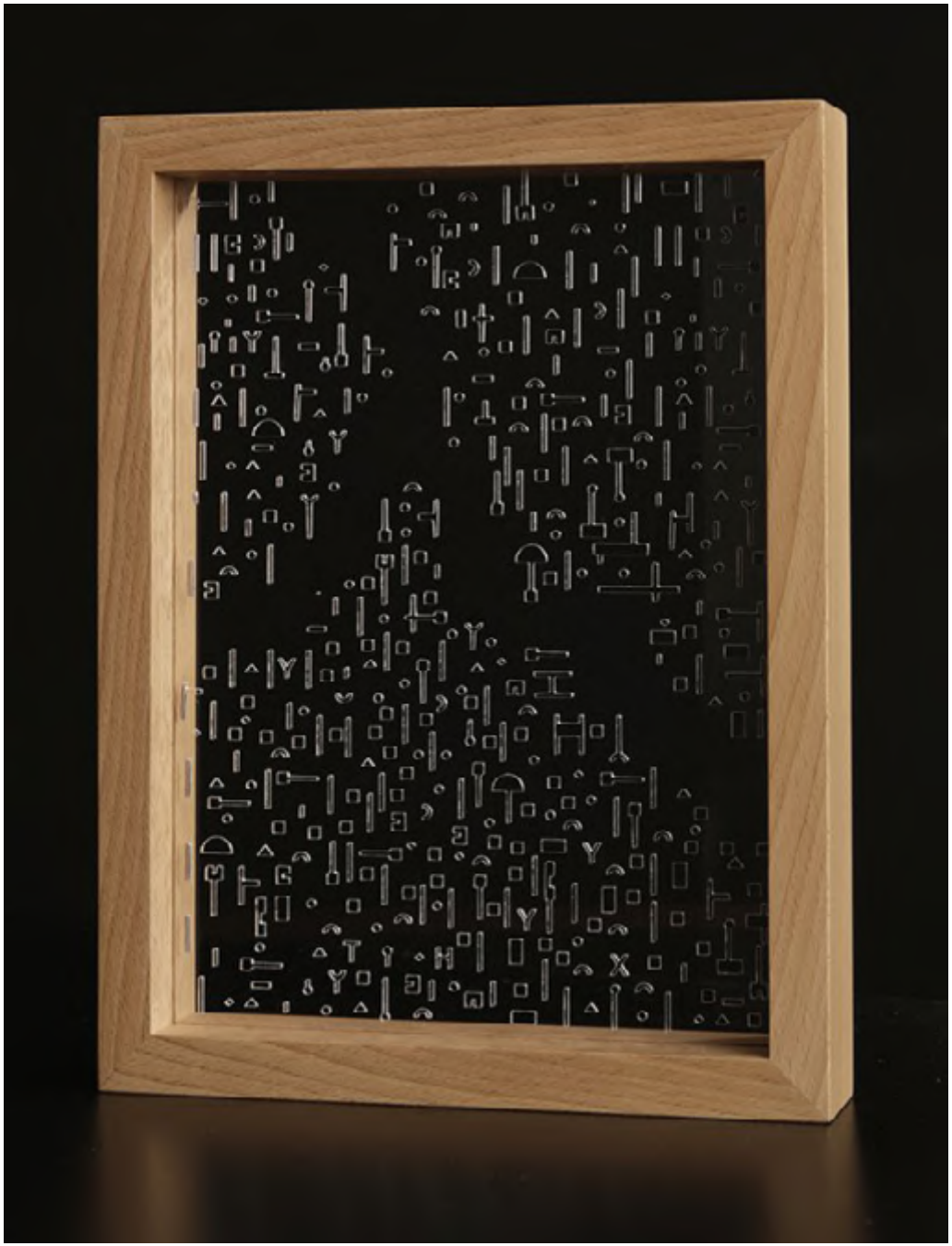
selected collections

- Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, USA
- Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, USA
- Daros Foundation, Zurique, Switzerland
- San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMoMA), San Francisco, USA
- Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA
- Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA
- Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, USA
- Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, USA

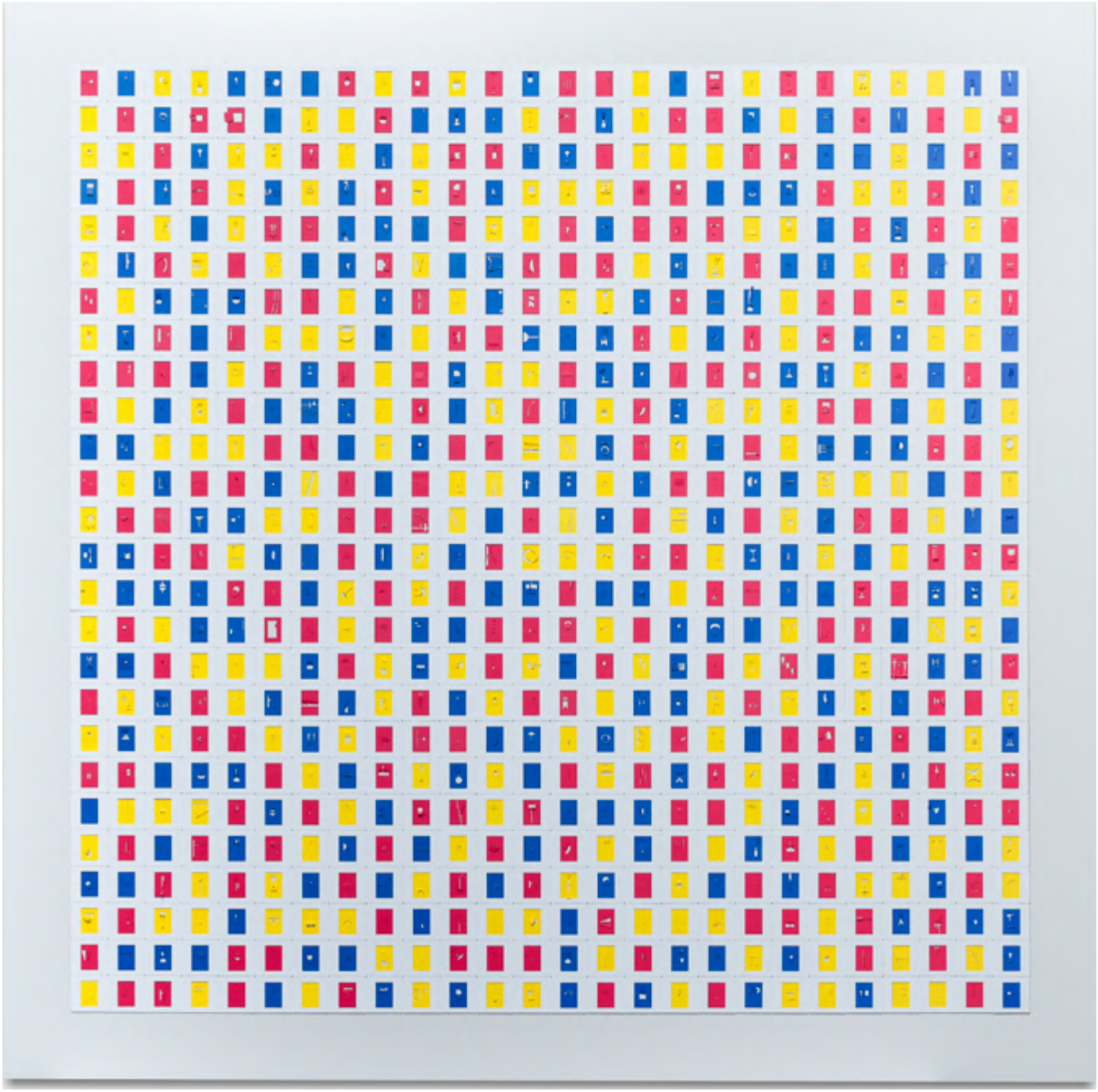
4 an advocate of pauses
27 site-specific
52 turner boxes

an advocate of pauses

“I am an advocate of pauses. My pencil drawings are tectonic and can be mistaken for a blank surface. Upon closer inspection, one discovers moving plates or out-of-focus planes,” explains Marco Maggi in a conversation with Colombian artist Guillermo Ovalle, describing what he seeks to achieve through his poetics.



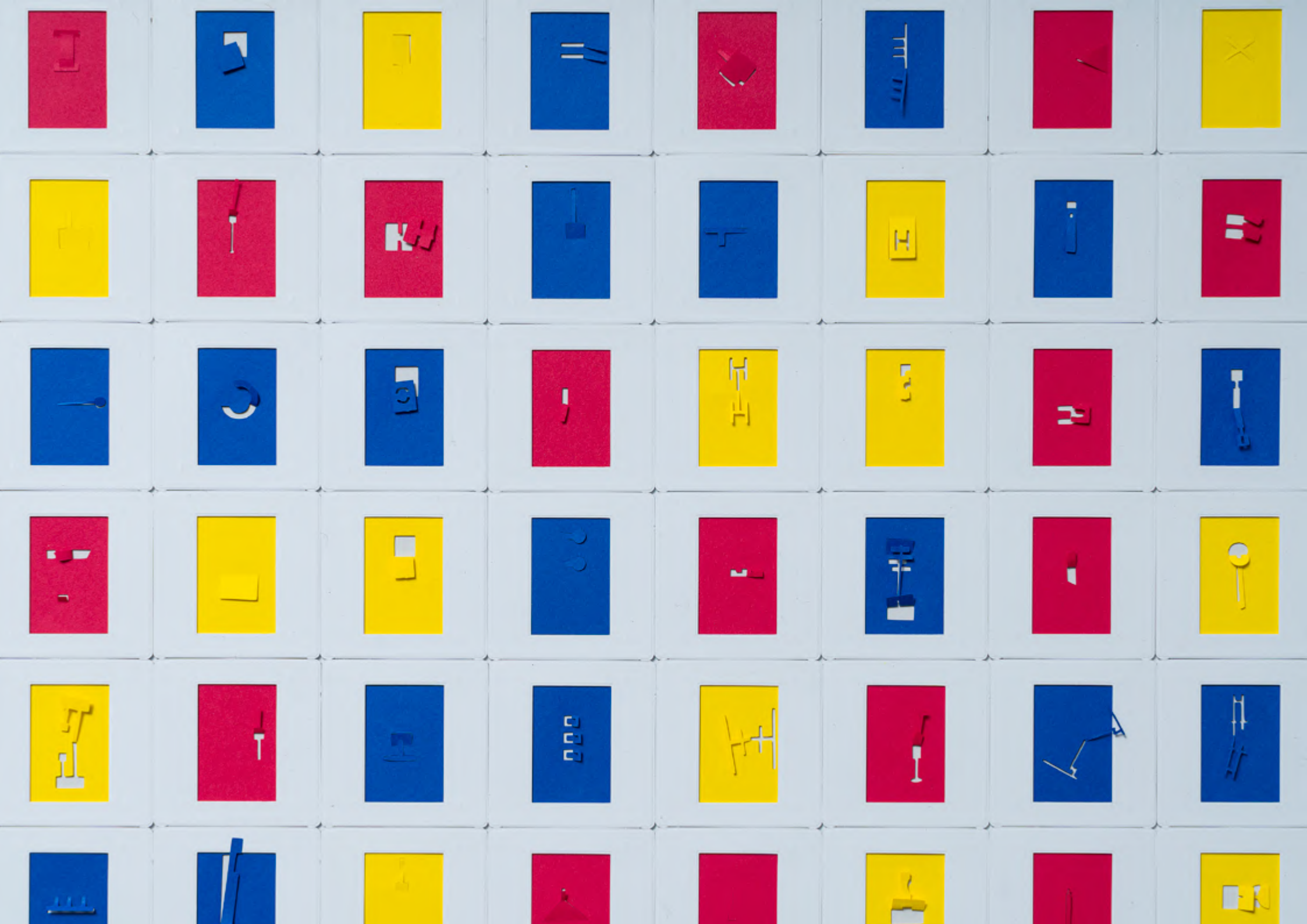
Drawing Machine II , 2016
wood and acrylic glass
33 x 25 x 5 cm
13 x 9.8 x 2 in



Maggi perceives the contemporary world as an environment in which the capacity for sensory perception as a whole, particularly visual perception, has been severely impaired. “Censorship in the twentieth century acted like a pair of scissors, cutting out the news. Today, censorship operates like a flood. We are victims of semiotic indigestion caused by such an overwhelming overdose of stimuli that it prevents any reaction. The influx of information moves at such an overwhelming pace that nothing receives the attention it deserves. Today, paying attention can be considered a subversive activity,” the artist states.

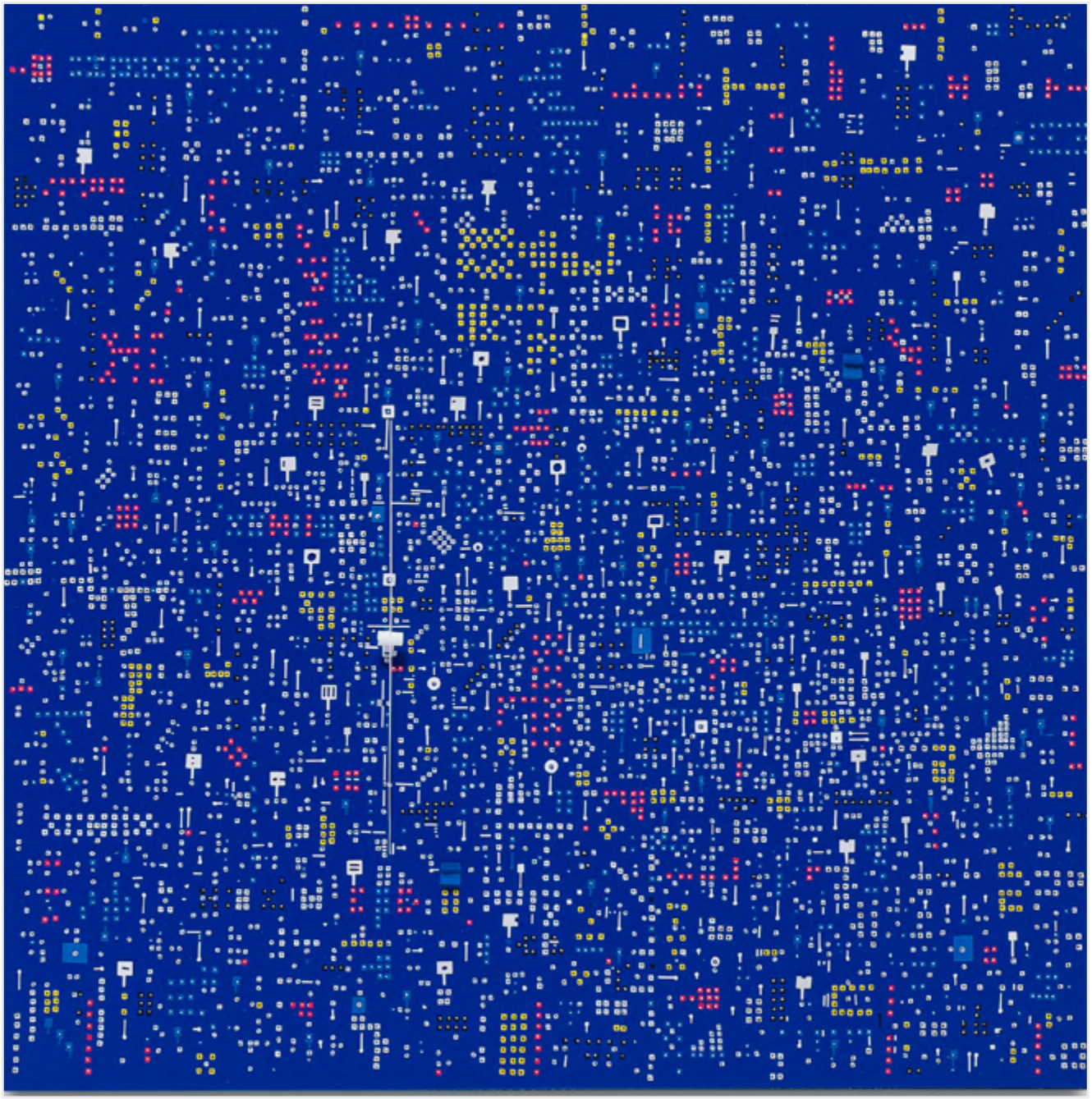
In his view, part of this problem is accompanied by an issue of “scale.” The construction of contemporary civilization, along with its progress and advances, has been based on a conception that places human beings as the primary unit of measurement, disregarding both the macro scale—the greater forces of nature and the cosmos—and the micro scale. The result is a blurred, imprecise way of seeing that calls for attentive observation, something difficult to achieve in an age when time moves at an extremely fast pace. Starting from this diagnosis, Maggi proposes a reverse approach.

Yellow, blue, red (silent movie), 2024
35mm film (cut and folded) and slide frame on paper over white Dibond
152,4 x 152,4 cm
60 x 60 in





Language in Residence, 2016
yellow stickers on Ping Pong
ball at IBM Selectric crown
on playwood base
Ø 4 cm
Ø 1.6 in



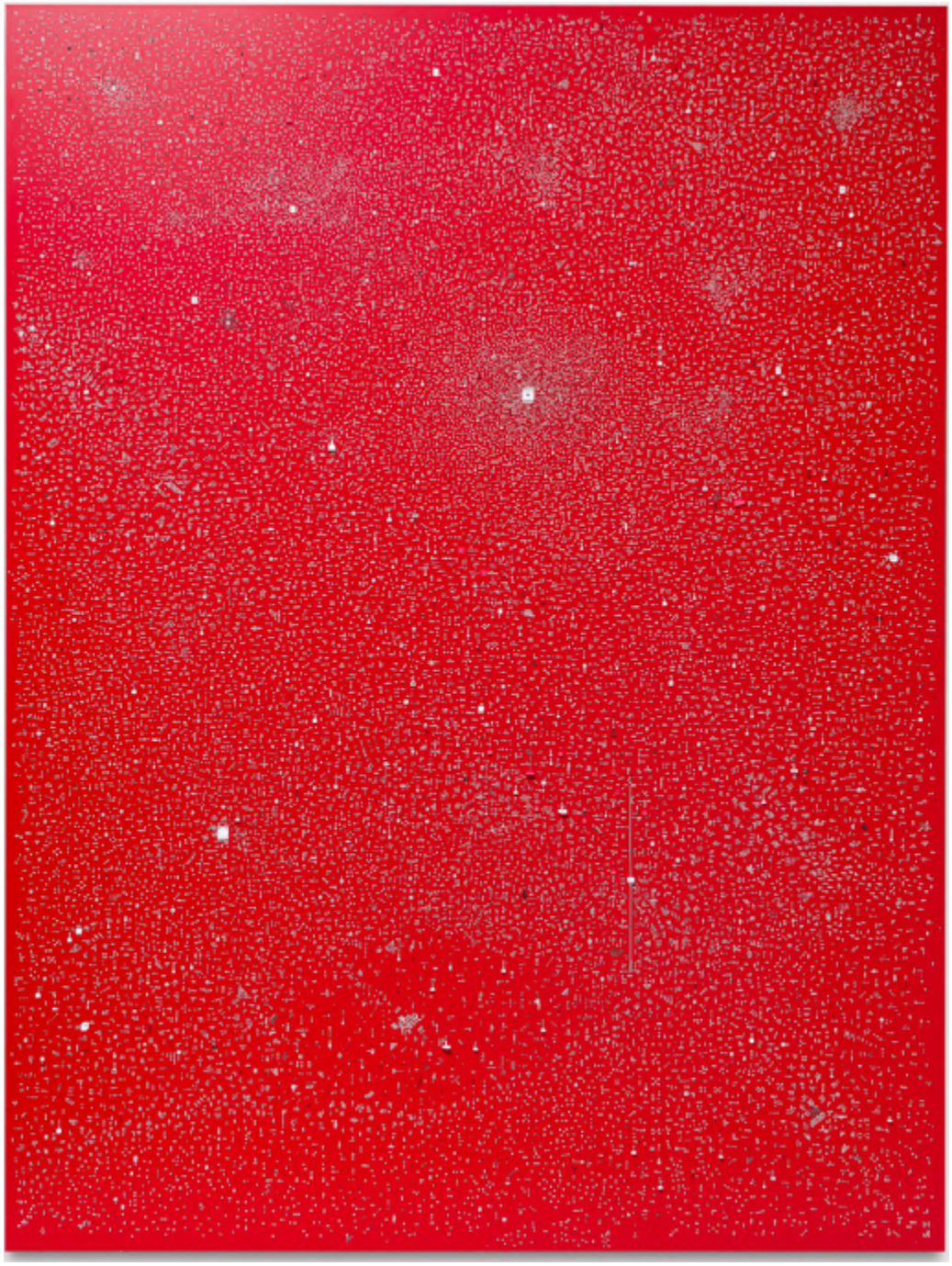
Independent red, 2025
paper on paper on blue Dibond
30,5 x 30,5 cm
12 x 12 in



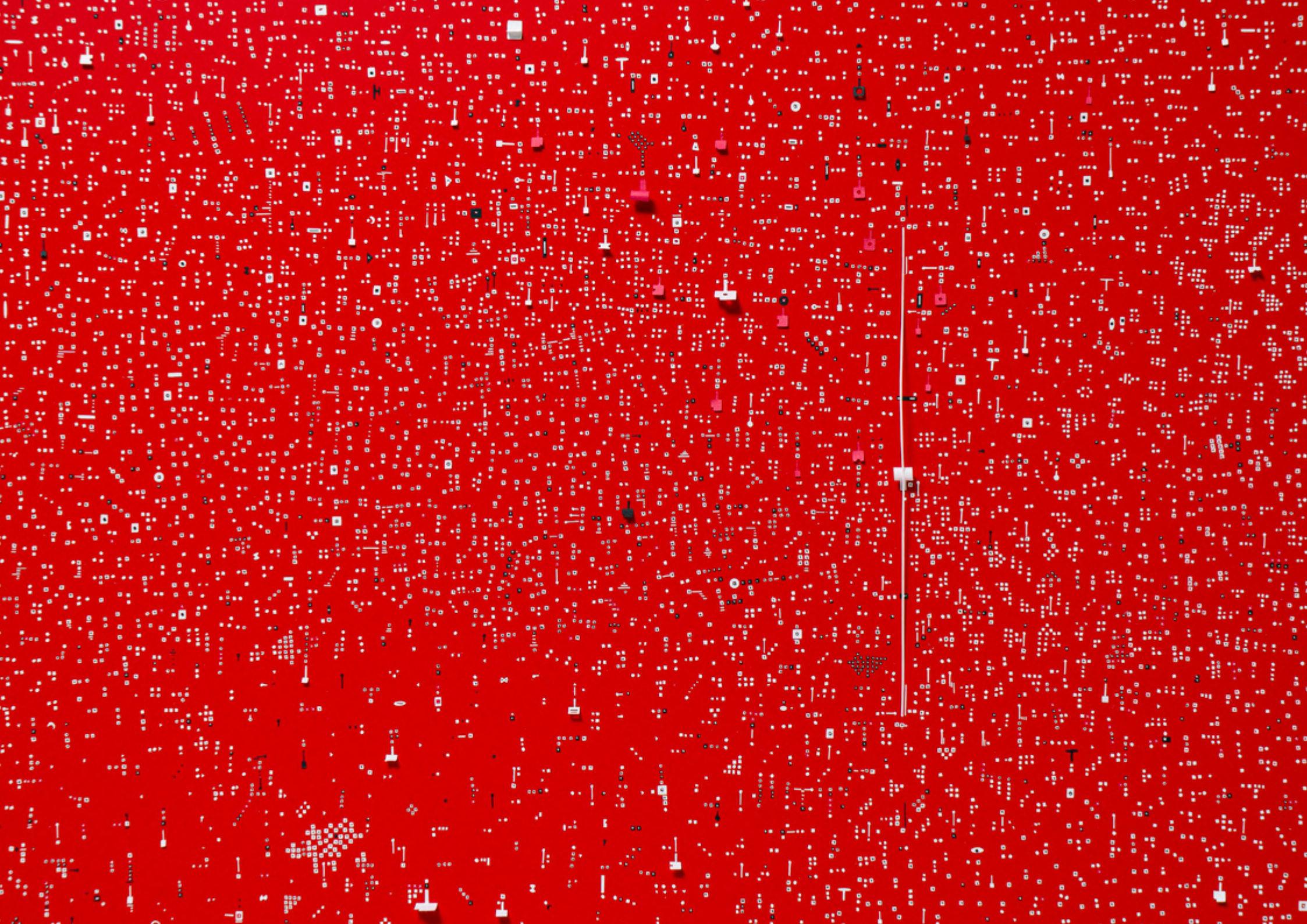
His starting points are the surfaces of everyday objects: sheets of paper, acrylic and Plexiglas panels, strings, billiard balls, and even apple peels. Beneath them, Maggi draws complex patterns, grids, pathways, and lines. Everything operates on an extraordinarily small scale, impossible to perceive from a distance. Even so, these intricate labyrinths and microstructures are constructed through meticulous, almost architectural linearity.



Lentisimo, 2011 – 2013
12 engraved optic lenses
ø 5 cm each



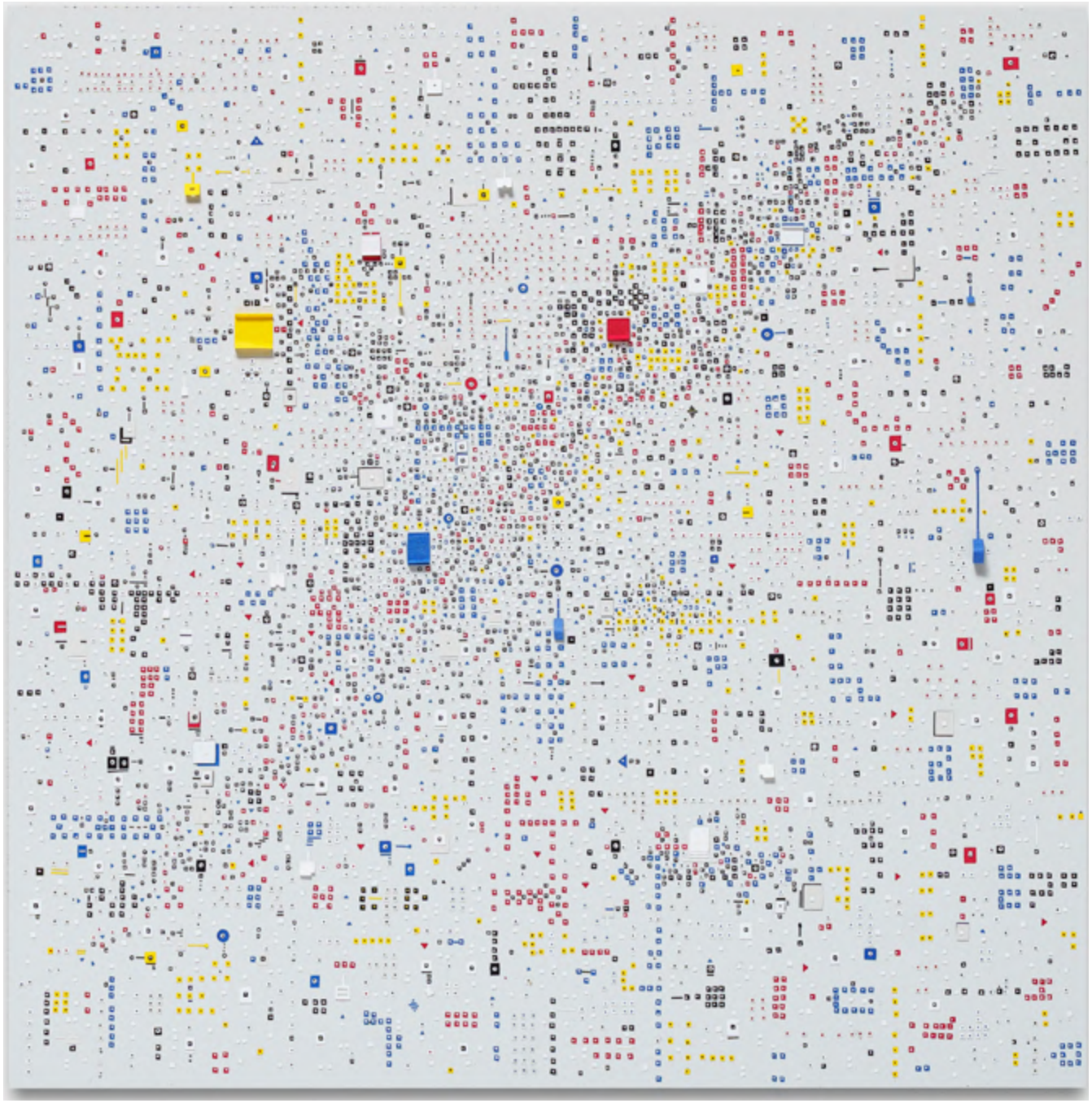
“Red” means “Net” in Spanish, 2024
paper on paper
on red Dibond
121,9 x 91,4 cm
48 x 36 in



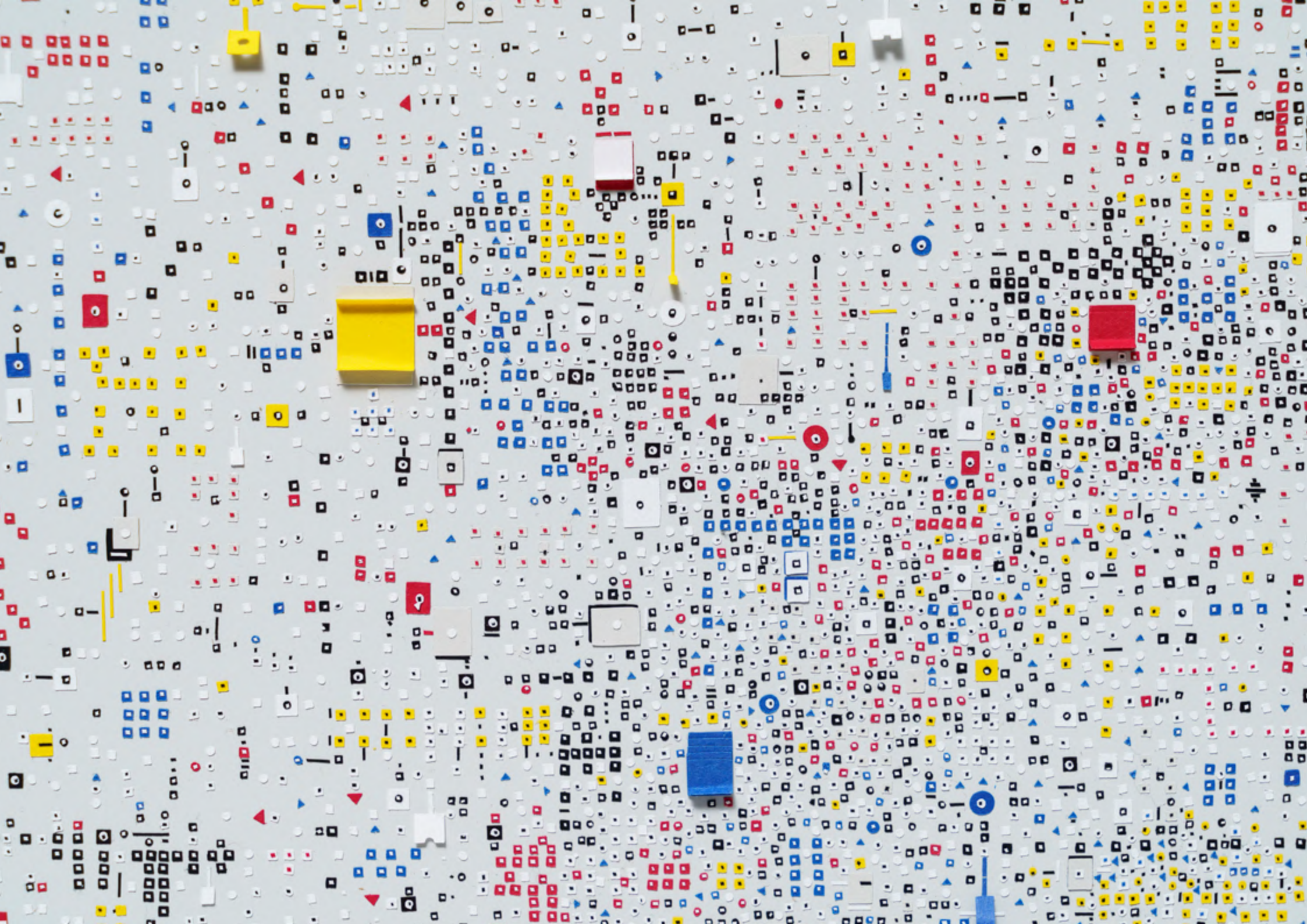
A draftsman above all, the artist expands the very concept of drawing as he works across a wide range of surfaces. On certain sheets of paper, he makes incisions, and the resulting fragments project outward from the support, creating small structures that cast shadows. Tiny pieces of paper are also glued onto Dibond panels, producing three-dimensional forms and ultimately lending volume to these linear entanglements.



exhibition view
O papel é inocente, 2018
MuBE, São Paulo, Brazil



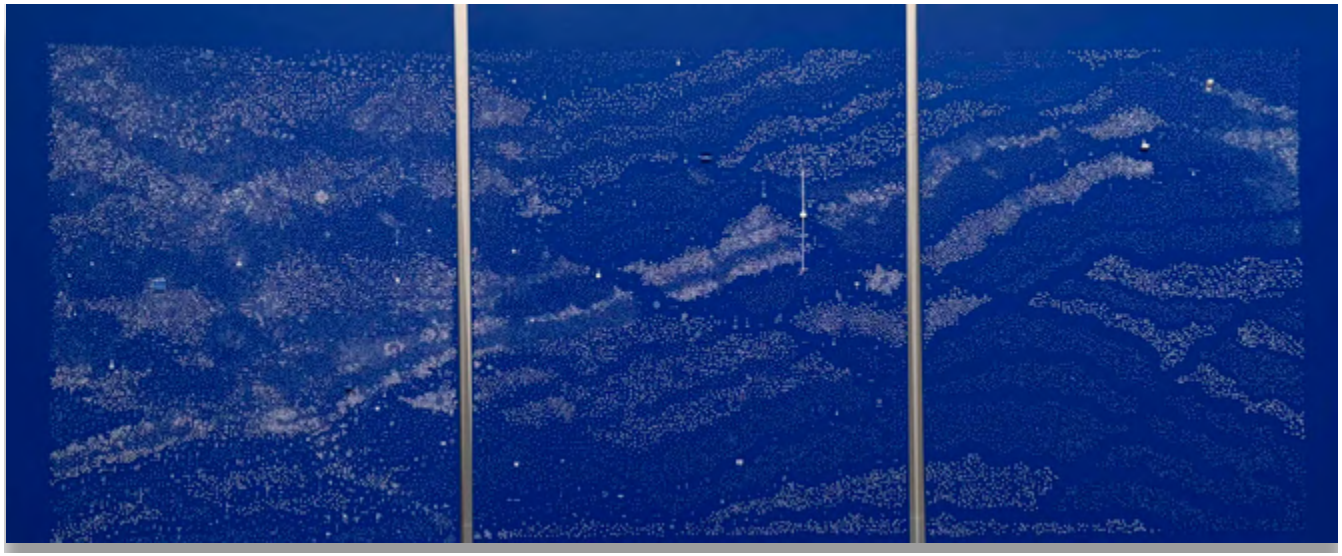
White Square, 2024
paper on paper
on white Dibond
30,5 x 30,5 cm
12 x 12 in



To perceive these compositions, however, viewers must engage in deeply attentive and sustained observation, approaching the work and progressively “reading” its surface. These works transport the public to another scale, demanding time and attention.

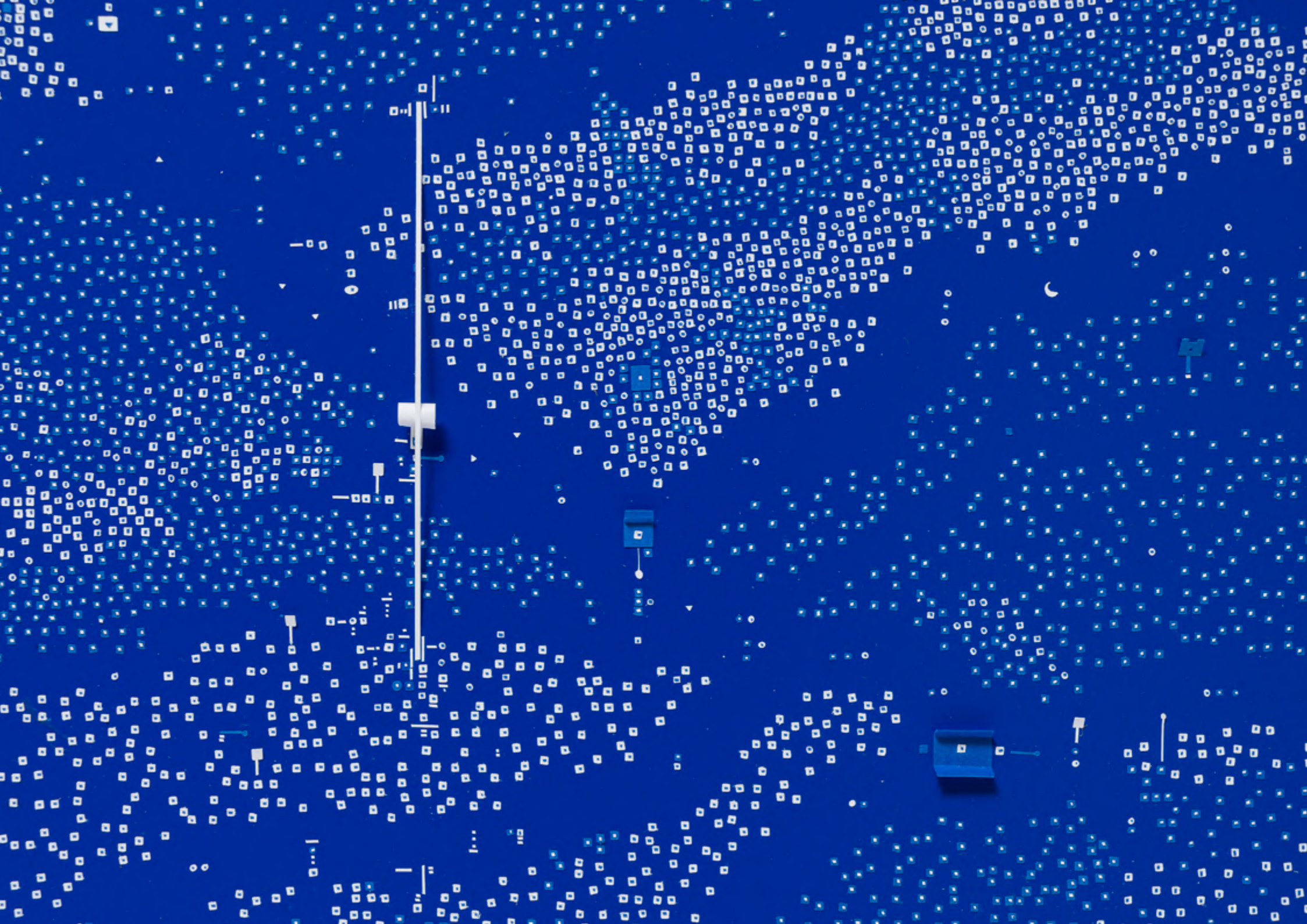


Walling, 2018
envelopes of different sizes

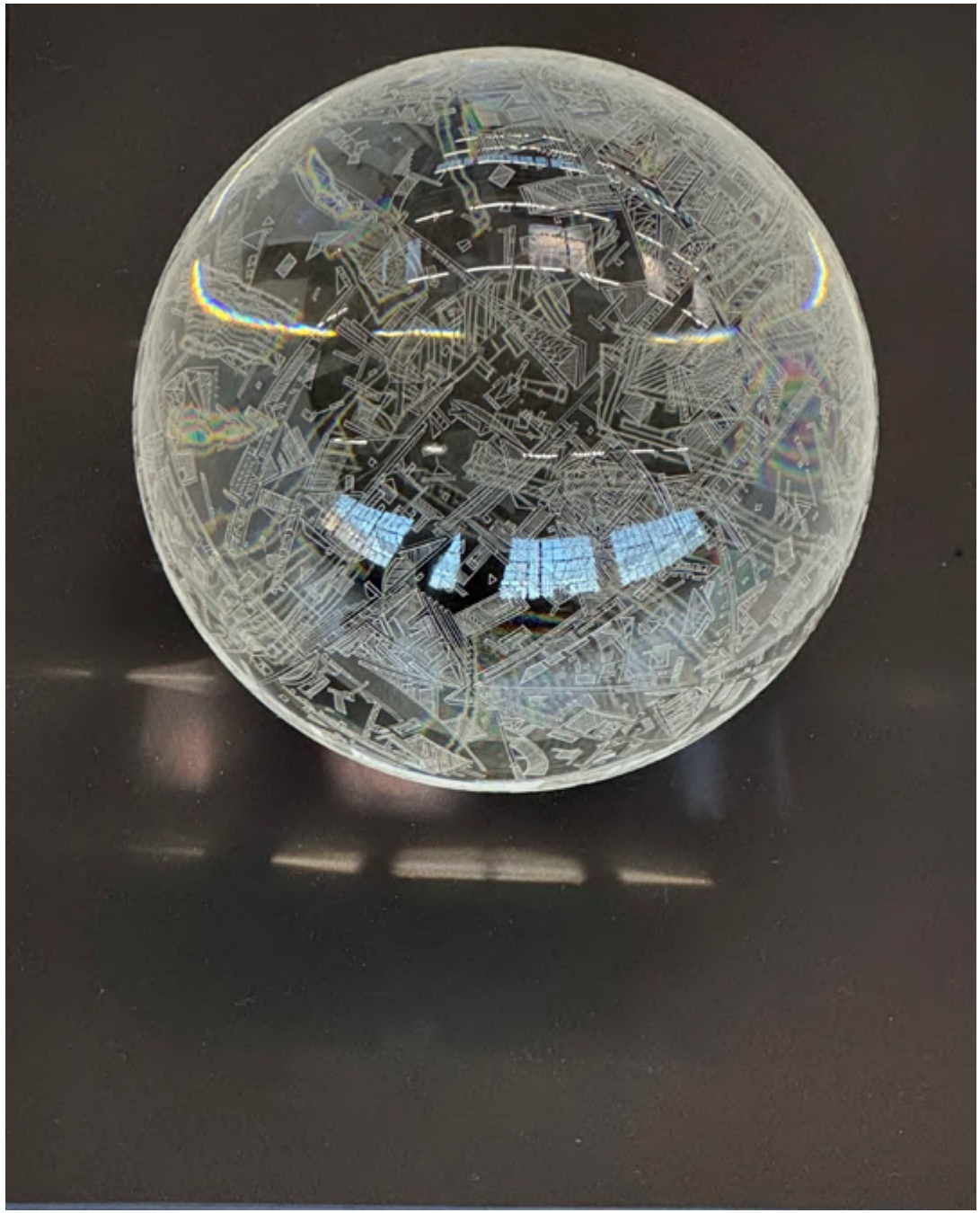


Even the photographic documentation of this type of production cannot be accomplished through a single, all-encompassing image. Maggi's poetics moves in the opposite direction from synthesis. In works such as Blue Paragraph, an overall view reveals an imprecise, ethereal, out-of-focus composition, resembling a cloud. A closer look, however, makes the work's entire "atomistic" structure visible.

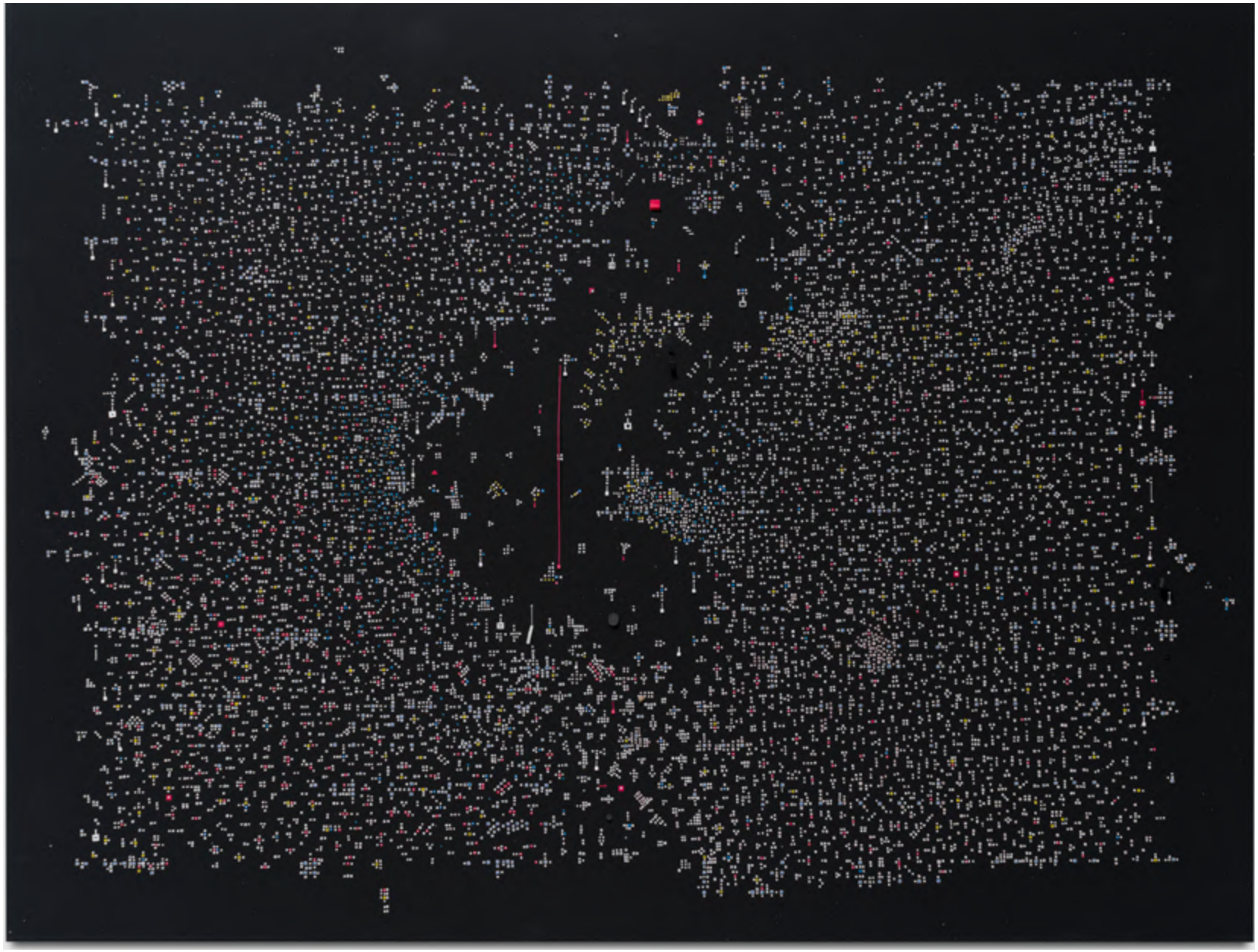
Blue paragraph, 2024
paper on paper on blue Dibond
3 parts of 61 x 137,2 cm
3 parts of 24 x 18 in



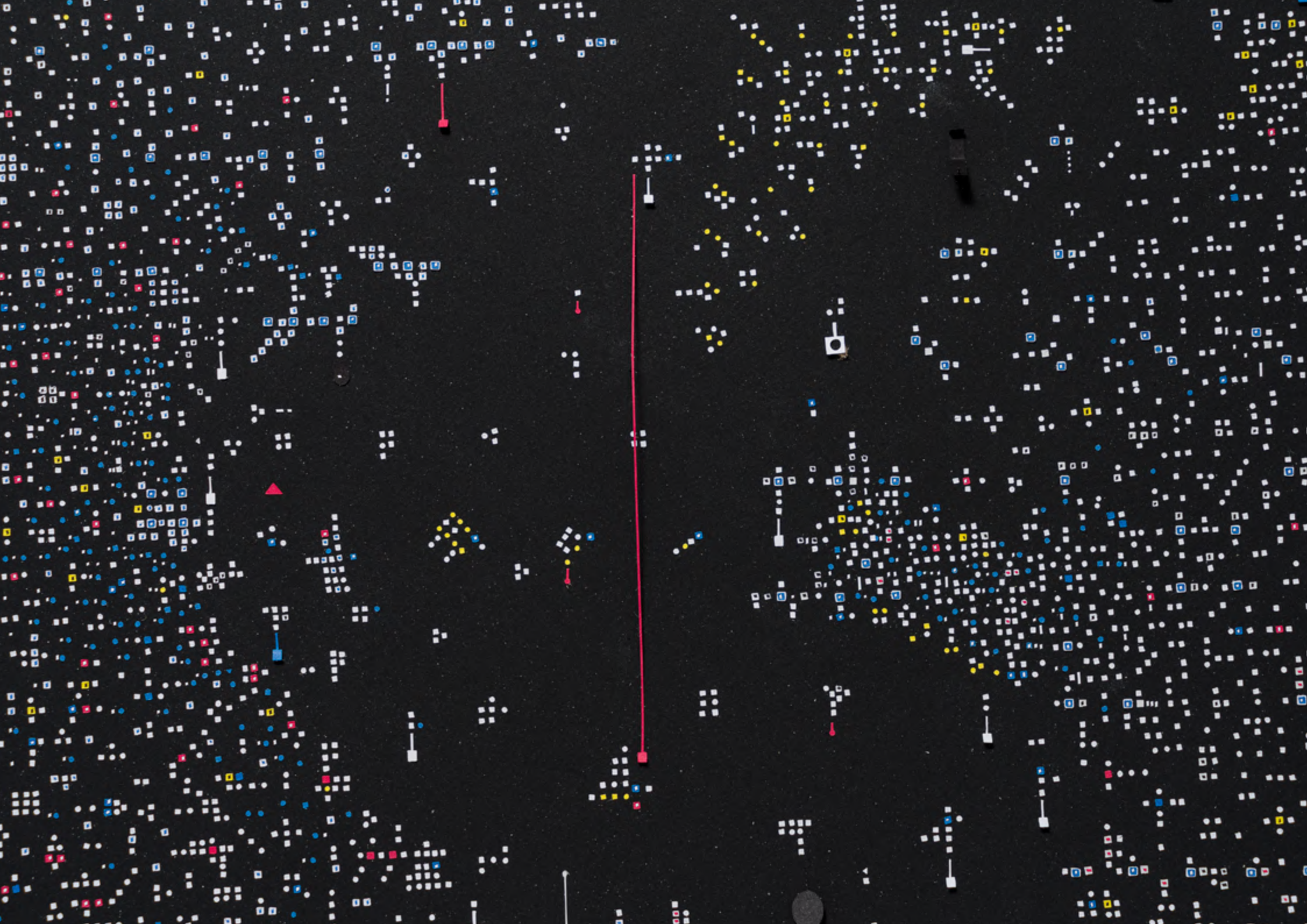
In this way, the artist invites us to perceive the structures of things on another scale, one that remains largely invisible in everyday life and requires “pauses” to be apprehended.



Gol (série Paper weight), 2024
acrylic sphere engraving
on a ream of black paper
Ø 22 cm (sphere)
Ø 8.66 in (sphere)



The economy of attention, 2024
paper on paper
on black Dibond
61 x 81,3 cm
24 x 32 in





BIG DATA (West), 2016
self adhesive alphabet on
black museum board
150 x 100 cm
59.1 x 39.4 in

Beyond paper, the artist also works with other everyday materials. In the Reynolds series, drawing takes place on sheets of aluminum foil produced by the eponymous brand. In the video Micro & Soft, made in collaboration with artist Ken Solomon, Maggi draws beneath the skin of an apple. The video presents the fruit's dehydration cycle in reverse. When completely dried, its geometric incisions are deep, whereas when the apple is ripe, the cuts are shallower, almost entirely confined to the peel.

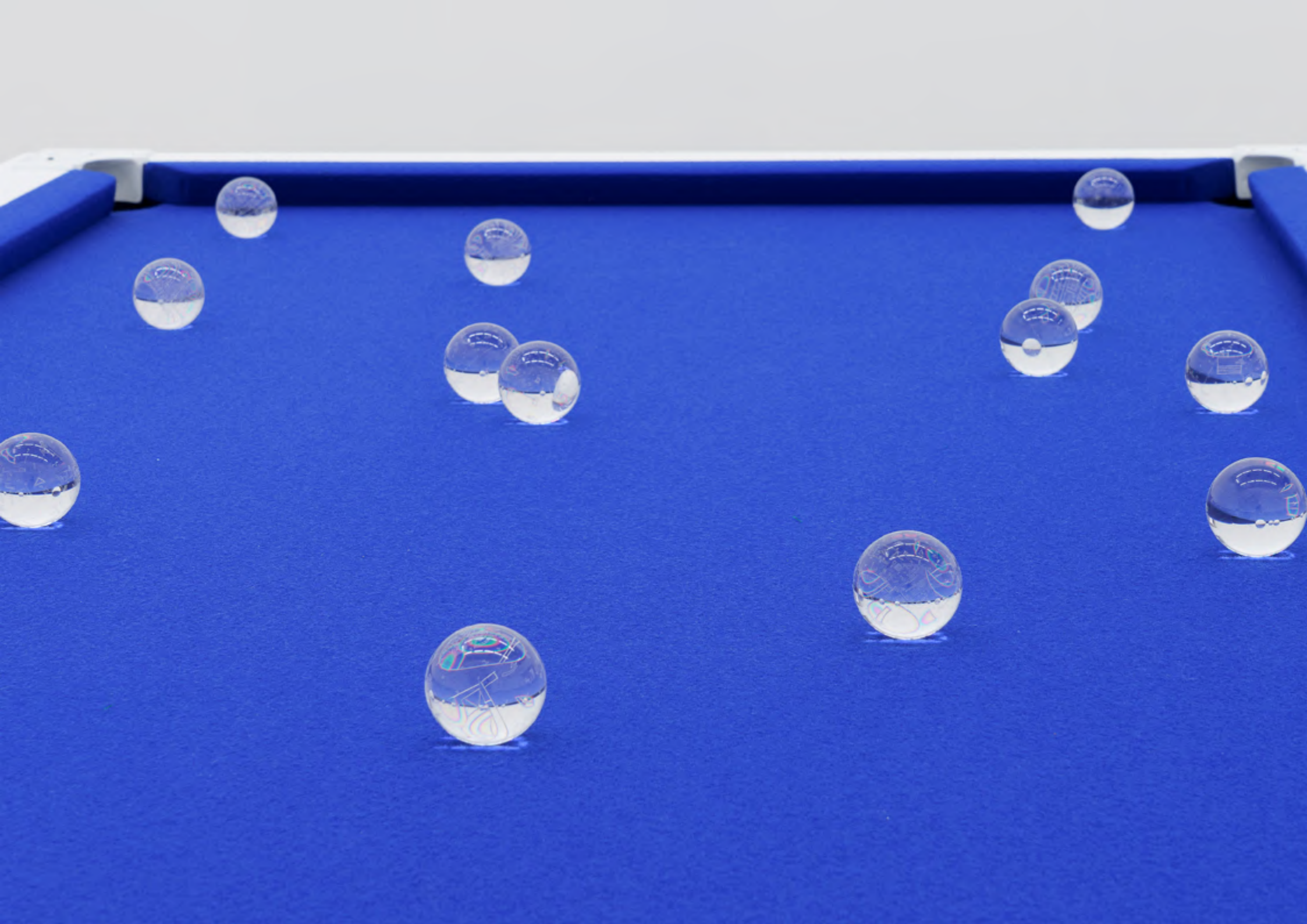


Reynolds wrap (SP), 2008
etching needle, aluminium paper
10 x 32 x 5,5 cm
3.9 x 12.6 x 2.2 in
click here to watch the video

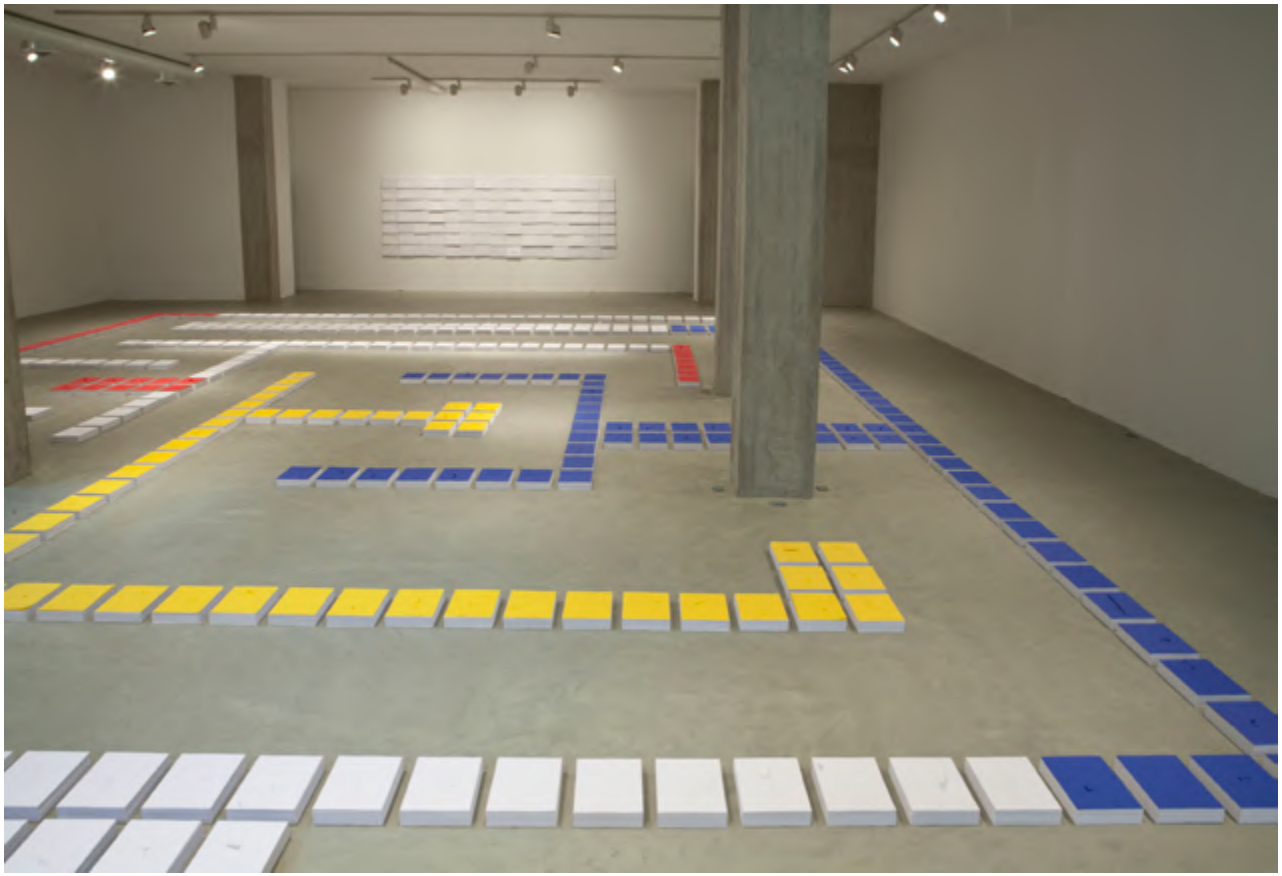


In The *Subatomic Society*, Maggi fills a billiard table with several acrylic spheres engraved with his signs. For the artist, billiards, like drawing, requires great precision, heightened attention to detail, and a certain degree of calculation. Its final outcome, however, contains an element of imprecision and unpredictability, just as in the act of drawing and in the functioning of the elements that make up the world.

The subatomic society, 2025
white pool table with blue cloth
and 16 engraved acrylic spheres
variable dimensions







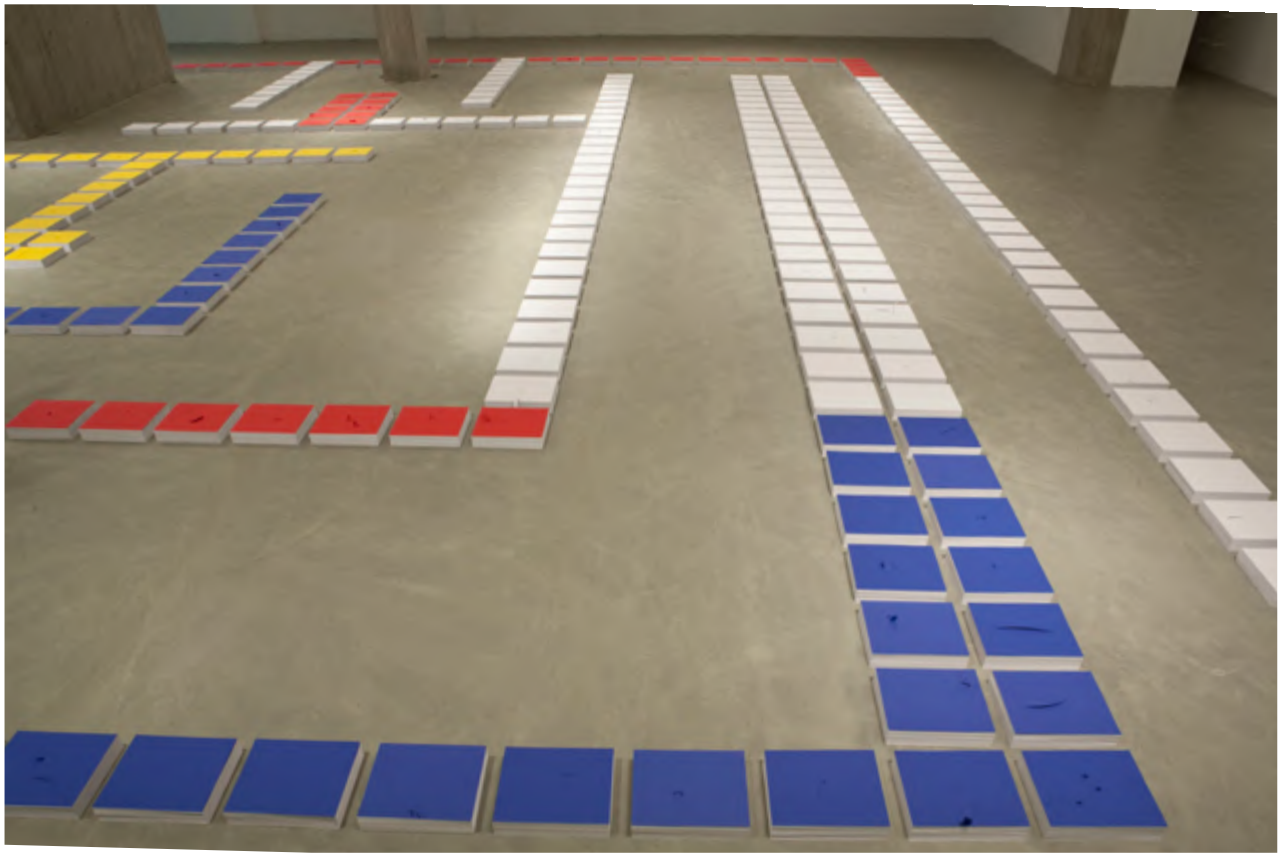
exhibition view
otimismo radical, 2011
nc-arte, Bogotá, Colômbia

site-specific

Although Maggi works with objects and materials on an extremely small scale, an important aspect of his poetics lies in relating this kind of work to the architectural scale.

One of his most significant projects in this regard is *Optimismo Radical* [Radical Optimism], first presented at Josée Bienvenu Gallery in 2010 and subsequently developed into a solo exhibition in 2011 at NC-Arte, in Bogotá, Colombia. For this site-specific installation, Maggi constructed a series of pedestals distributed throughout the exhibition space. Arranged at regular intervals, they create sequences of alternating colors. This arrangement establishes a kind of pathway through the space, suggesting possible routes for viewers to follow.

Alongside this relationship with the architectural macro scale, there is also the micro element, which is fundamental to Maggi's poetics. The pedestals are actually constructed from stacked sheets of paper. Beneath their tops, he makes incisions and drawings with a craft knife, creating graphic patterns and small structures that can only be perceived up close. Another intervention carried out by Maggi involved covering one of the space's columns with 12,000 yellow Post-it notes.



exhibition view
otimismo radical, 2011
nc-arte, Bogotá, Colômbia

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exhibition view
otimismo radical, 2011
nc-arte, Bogotá, Colômbia



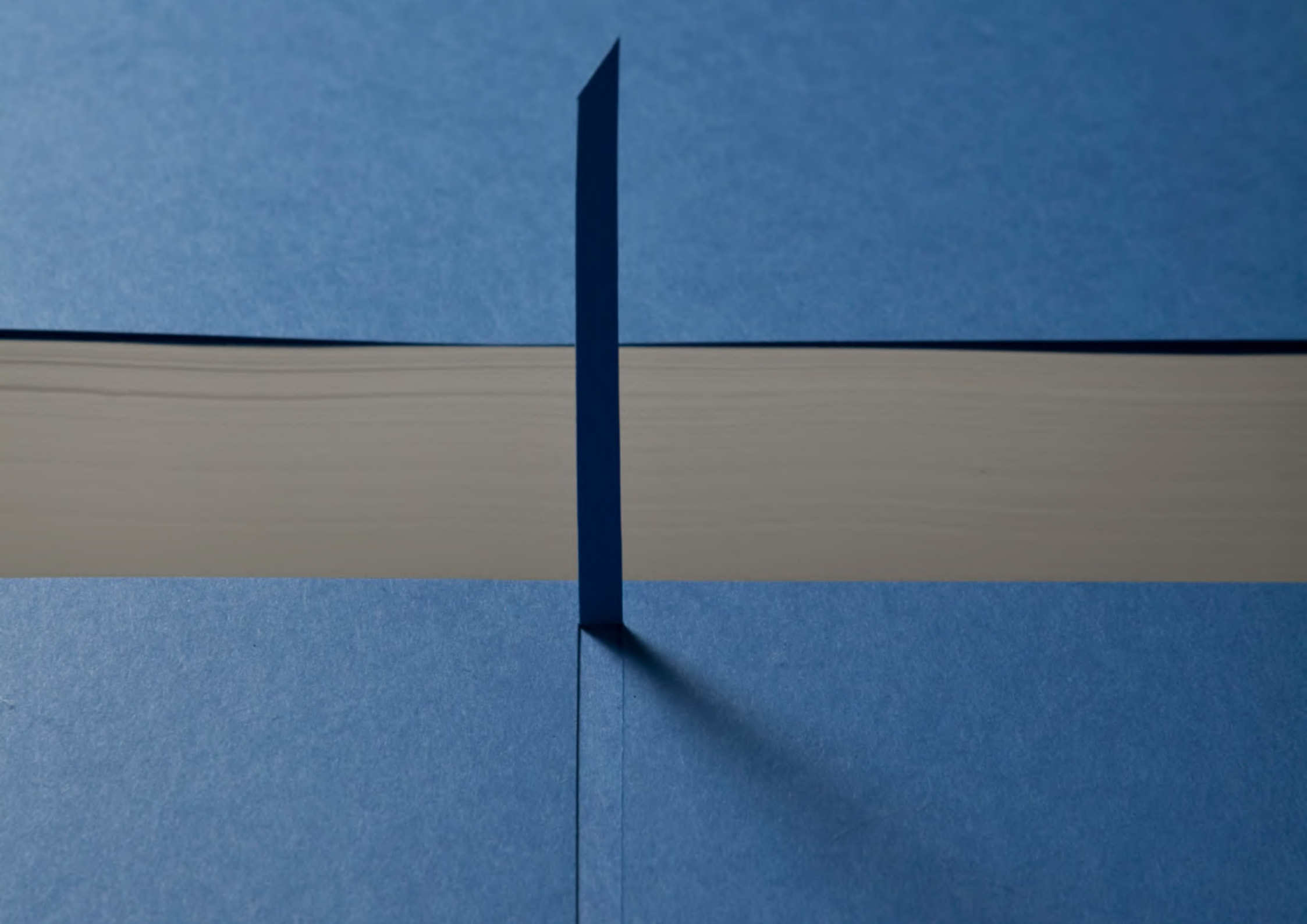
Regarding the architectural elements already present in the space, the artist states: “I preferred that they (the elements) function as punctuation marks in a text. From the outset, my intention was for the supposed interventions to help multiply the intermittent effect of the lines formed by the paper blocks. The vertical elements of the building would fragment the perspective of the space, creating chapters, as though they were switching the structure of colored paper on and off.”

exhibition view
otimismo radical, 2011
nc-arte, Bogotá, Colômbia

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exhibition view
otimismo radical, 2011
nc-arte, Bogotá, Colômbia

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exhibition view
otimismo radical, 2011
nc-arte, Bogotá, Colômbia



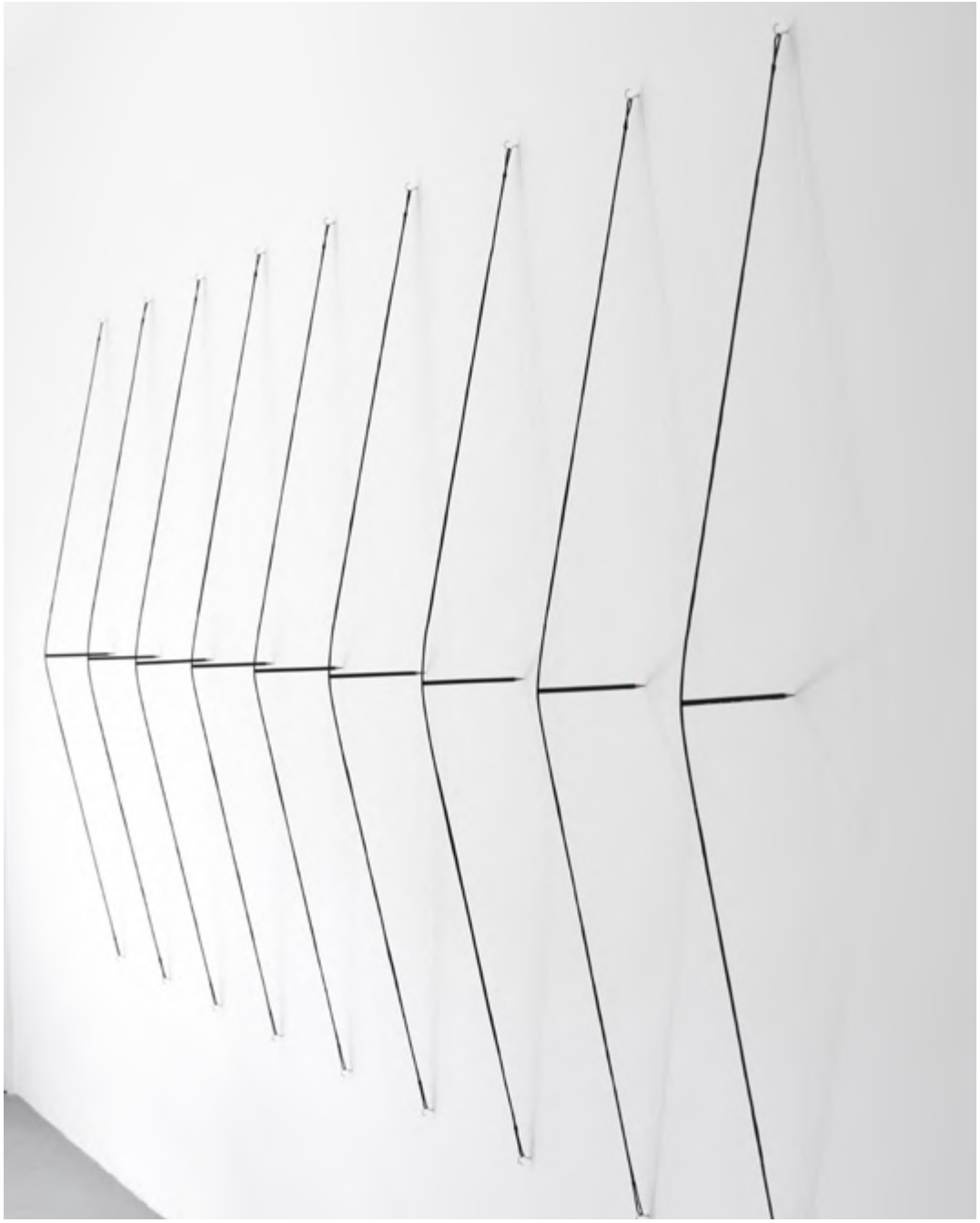






At the 56th Venice Biennale, in 2015, Marco Maggi represented Uruguay in the country's pavilion. To occupy the space, the artist conceived the project Global Myopia, an extension of his existing poetics, now directed toward the architectural scale of the entire pavilion.

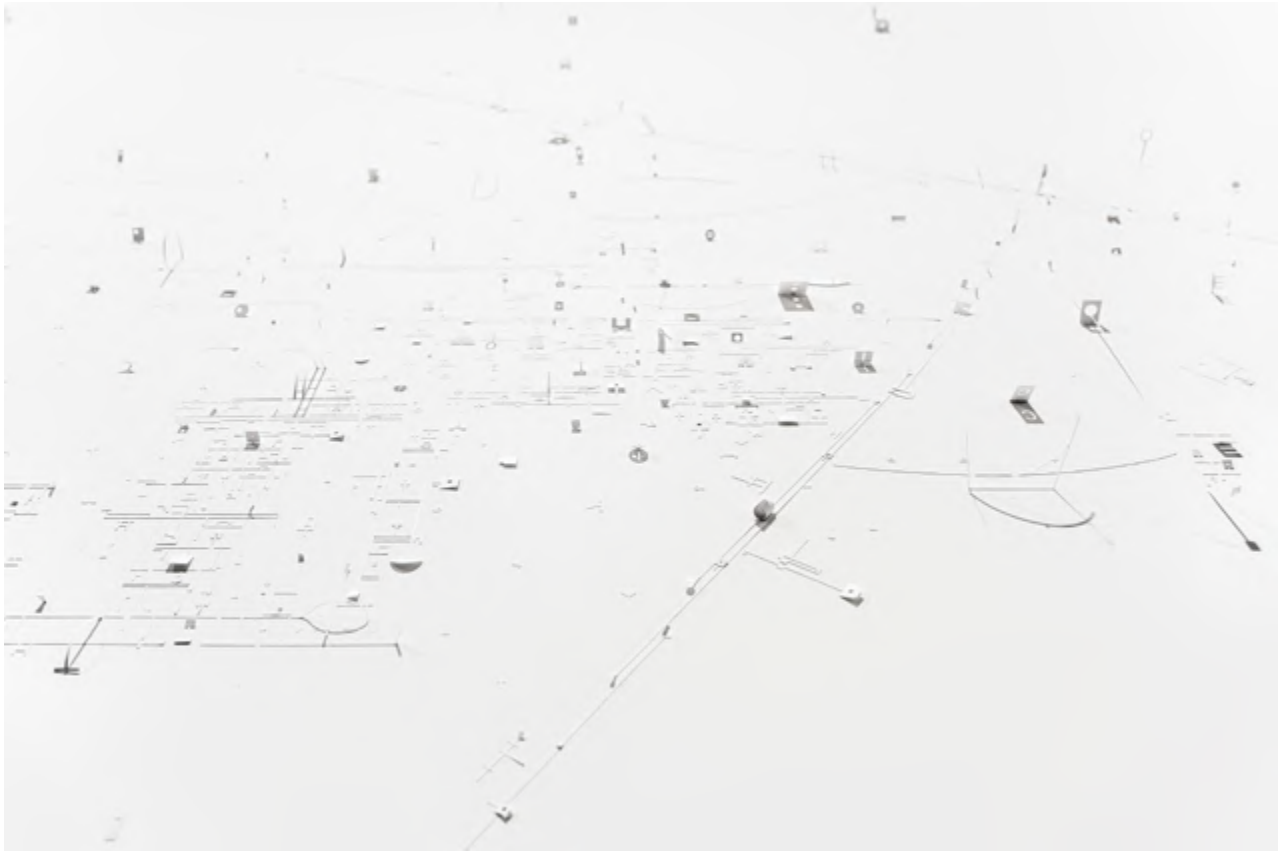
exhibition view
56th Venice Bienalli, 2015
Venice, Italy



The idea was to conceive a project that could travel in a carry-on suitcase and unfold across the walls like a .zip file: an infinite, portable structure capable of slowly expanding throughout the months leading up to the opening.

exhibition view
56th Venice Bienalli, 2015
Venice, Italy

Whereas color had played a prominent role in previous site-specific installations, Maggi made use of the pavilion's white walls here. He applied small paper structures resulting from the incisions he makes into the material. This is a work that cannot be seen from a distance or in haste: without approaching it, visitors are left with the impression of an entirely white, empty room. A more attentive gaze gradually reveals complex, three-dimensional patterns and graphic symbols, the result of the artist's drawings, which here become perceptible through a monochromatic white palette.



exhibition view
56th Venice Bienalli, 2015
Venice, Italy



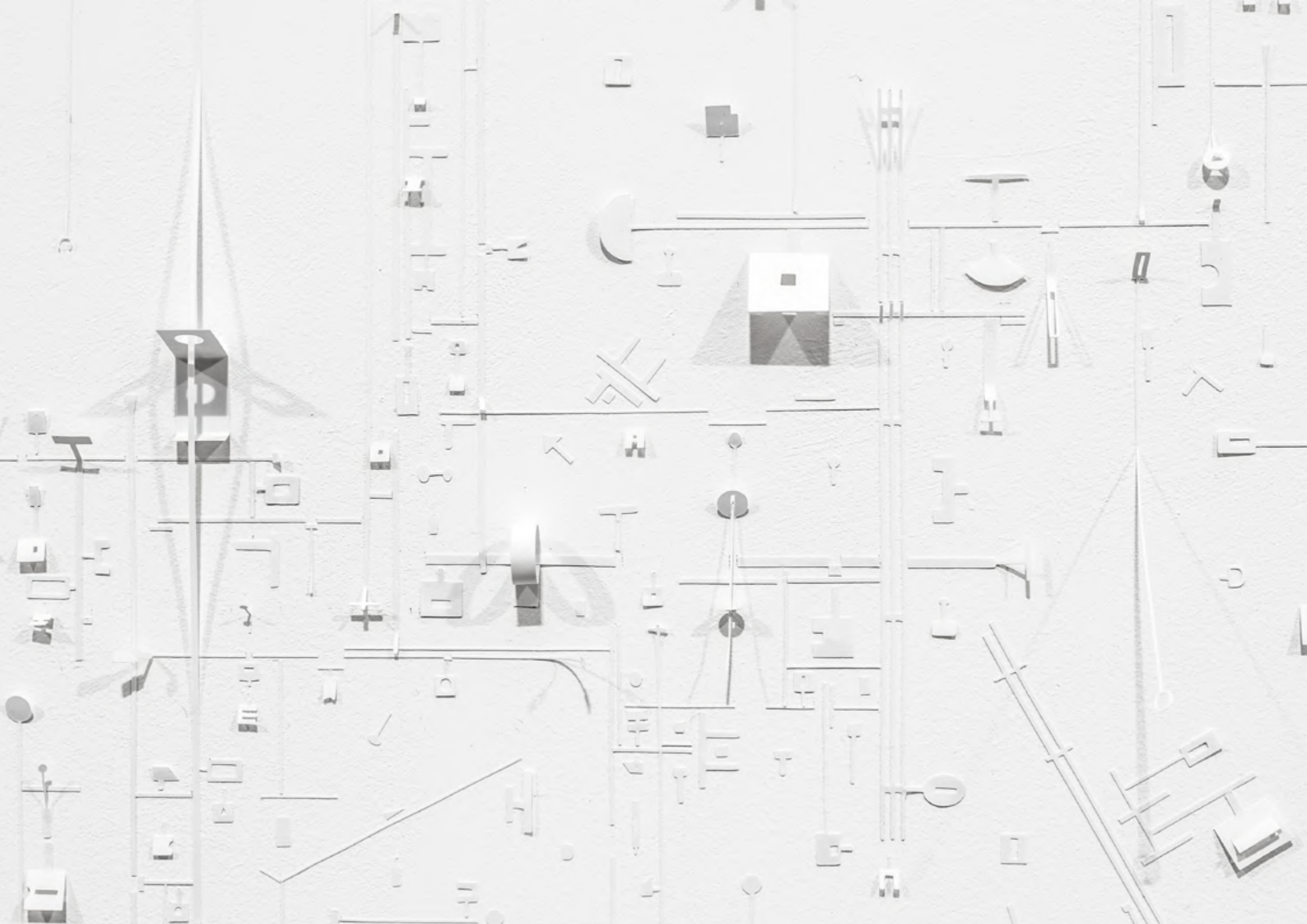
The pavilion also featured the installation *Drawing Machine*, composed of nine parallel black pencils. Pointed toward the wall, the pencils were pressed against it by means of a taut rope, creating a bow-and-arrow shape. However, the pencil tips pointed toward the wall, directing the force of the “bow and arrow” structure inward. The pencil is precisely the starting point of any drawing, which also makes Global Myopia a reflection on the language of drawing itself.

exhibition view
56th Venice Bienalli, 2015
Venice, Italy

→
exhibition view
56th Venice Bienalli, 2015
Venice, Italy

→→
exhibition view
56th Venice Bienalli, 2015
Venice, Italy





As an extension of the work presented at the Venice Biennale, Marco Maggi presented the solo exhibition *Uma Frase com Três Cantos* [A Sentence with Three Corners] at Nara Roesler, in São Paulo. The exhibition's title plays on the double meaning of the Portuguese word canto, which can mean both "corner" and "song," and refers to the large installation of stickers that the artist conceived for the gallery space, which he describes as "a very long sentence with three corners." The installation incorporates characteristic elements of his research, such as small paper cutouts that capture the viewer's attention through their apparent familiarity. Despite this, the tiny, meticulously cut geometric structures do not signify anything; they are simply forms that require the attentive gaze to be seen in their entirety.



exhibition view
Uma Frase com Três Cantos, 2015
Nara Roesler São Paulo, Brazil



The conceptualism of the representation presented in Venice, entirely in black and white, gained the addition of primary colors here, another characteristic of his production. The exhibition consisted of several black and white panels in varying dimensions, onto which cutout structures in the primary colors—blue, red, and yellow, which, together with black and white, form the most basic color palette from which all other colors can be obtained—were applied. The shapes appeared in black and white as well, sometimes contrasting with the background and sometimes in monochromatic arrangements. The result is a series of volumes and forms resembling maps of imaginary cities or a code of signs that always remains beyond comprehension, while simultaneously drawing viewers into the act of deciphering them.

exhibition view
Uma Frase com Três Cantos, 2015
Nara Roesler São Paulo, Brazil

In addition to the panels, Maggi conceived an installation featuring these small markers and signs, in white and primary colors, applied directly to the wall.

Suspended from the ceiling in the middle of the exhibition space, the artist created a five-meter-high ladder made of white Fanfold paper, modeled after a rope ladder. The exception was a few “rungs” in black and primary colors. The intention was for the ladder’s larger structure to disappear into the distance, leaving only the colored rungs visible, as though they were floating. Once again, this sense of estrangement invites viewers to approach the work and gain a better understanding of what they are seeing.



exhibition view
Uma Frase com Três Cantos, 2015
Nara Roesler São Paulo, Brazil



In the words of curator Adriano Pedrosa, writing in 2009: “The game Maggi proposes to us is full of great concealments and strategic revelations. One must take time to look. (...) It is a silent, delicate, slow game. In this sense, we find a subtle political dimension here, even if disguised by the beauty and wonder of the works. Slowing down is anti-modern, anti-progressive, anti-capitalist, anti-urban, and anti-globalization. (...) It is precisely through this quality of resistance that art becomes so essential to our everyday lives.”

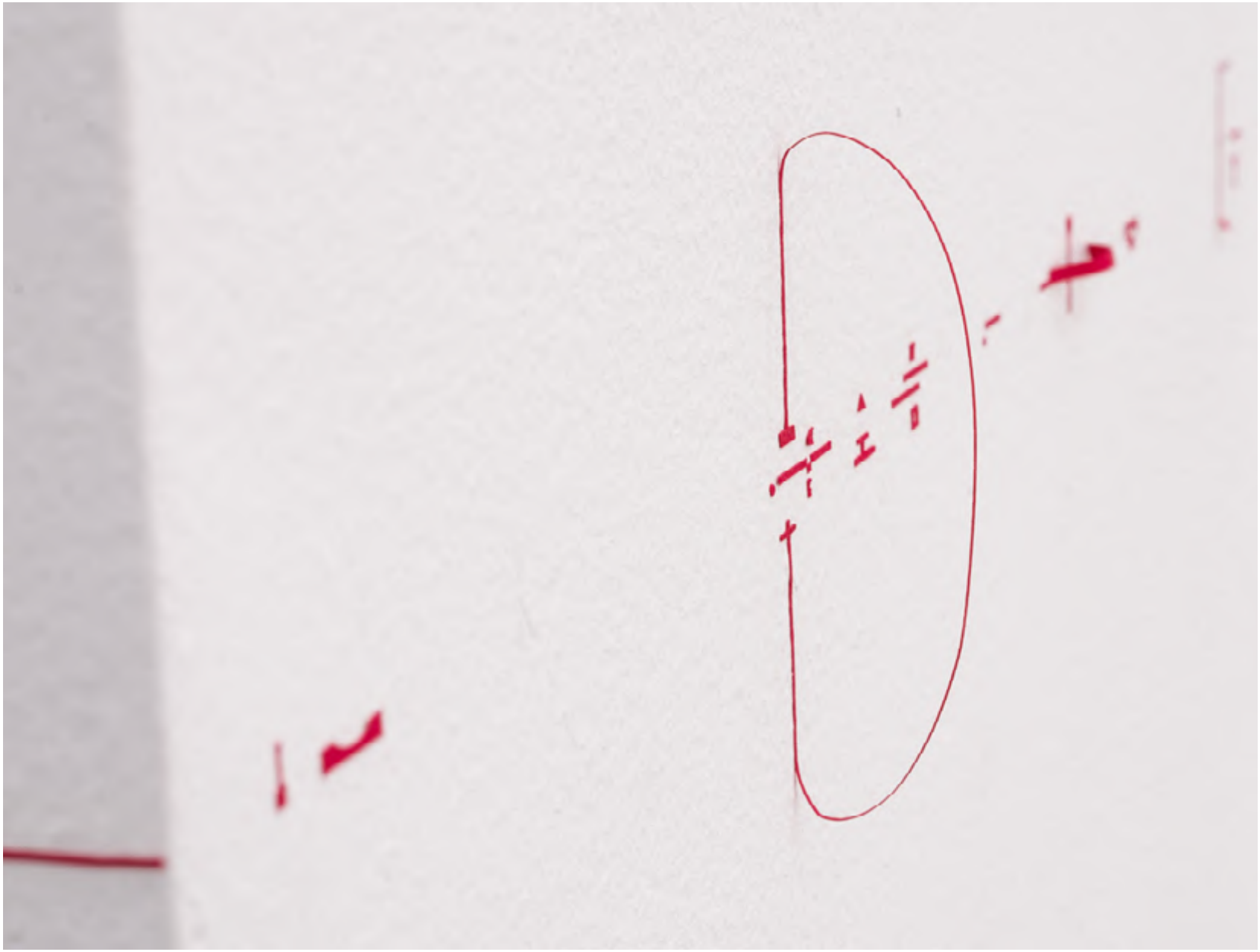
exhibition view
Uma Frase com Três Cantos, 2015
Nara Roesler São Paulo, Brazil

exhibition view
Uma Frase com Três Cantos, 2015
Nara Roesler São Paulo, Brazil

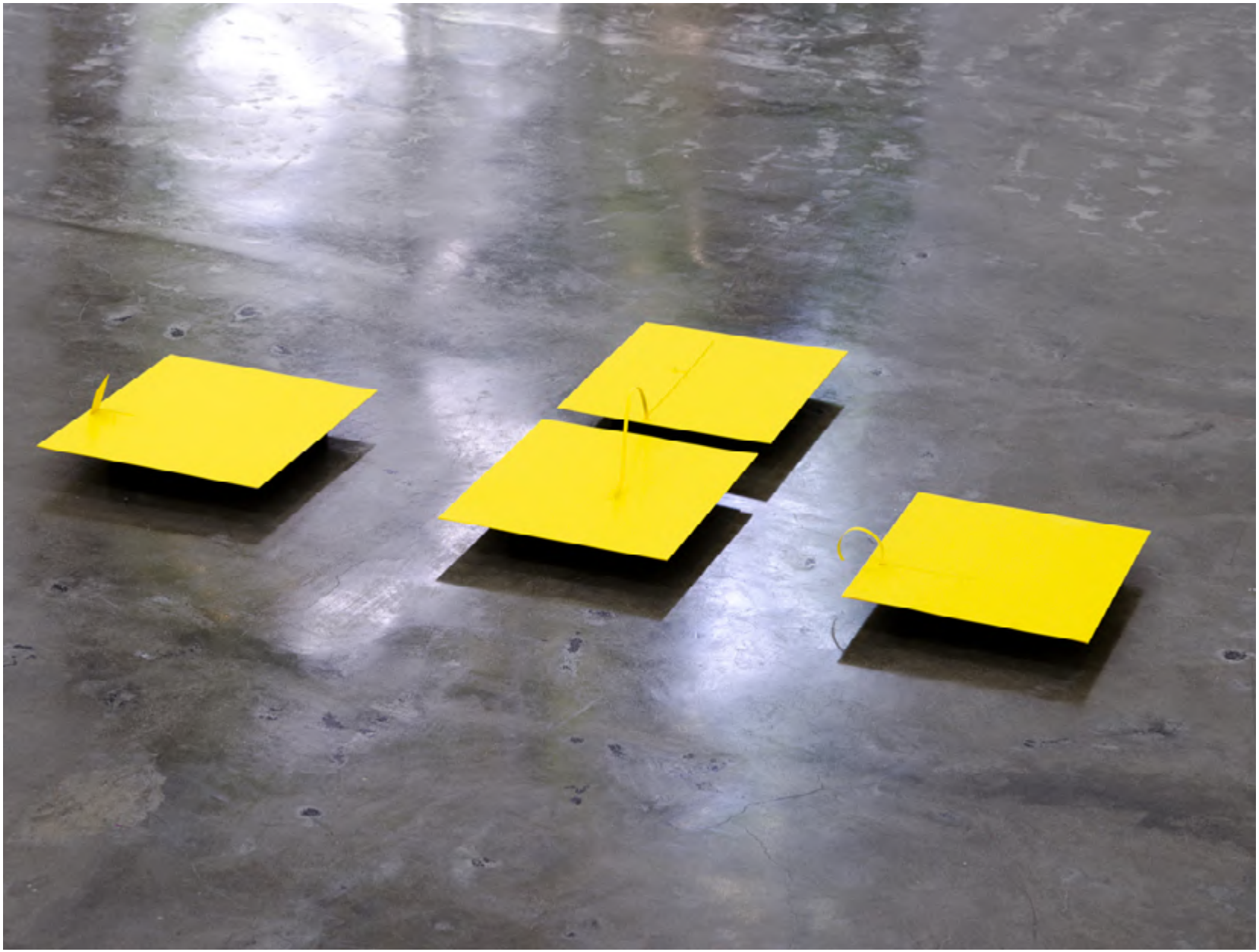




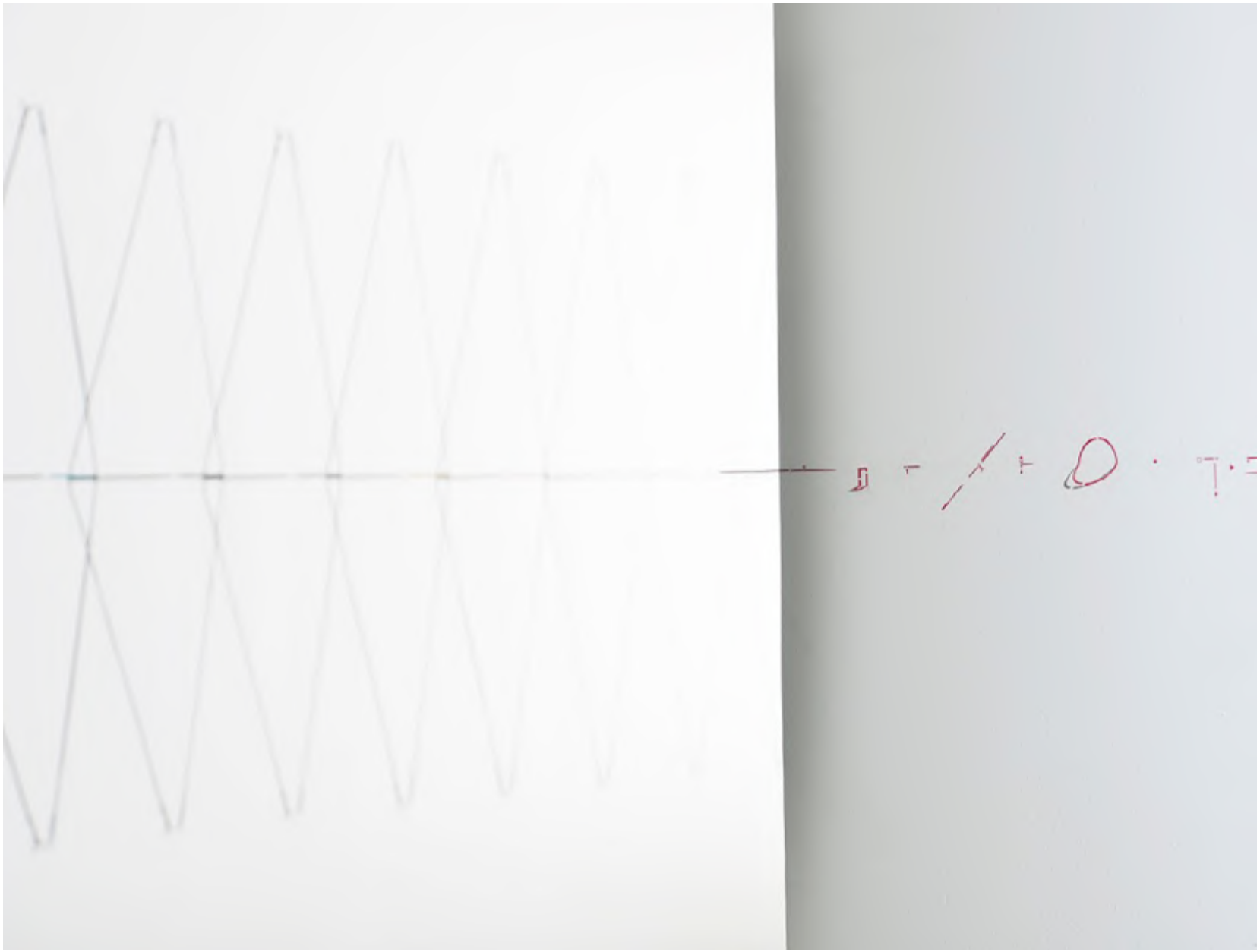
exhibition view
Piano Piano, 2016
Espacio Monitor,
Caracas, Venezuela



exhibition view
Piano Piano, 2016
Espacio Monitor,
Caracas, Venezuela

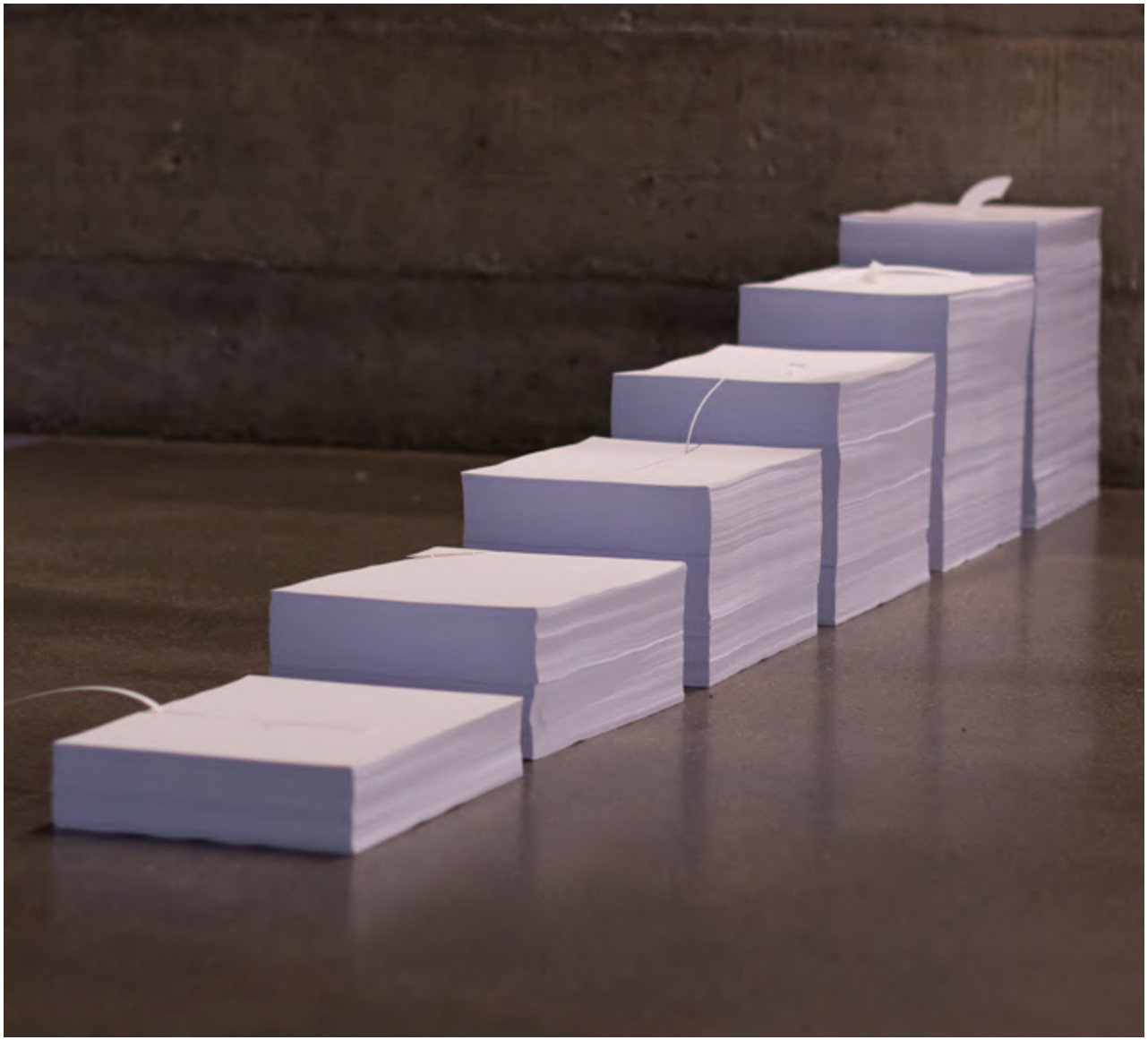


exhibition view
Piano Piano, 2016
Espacio Monitor,
Caracas, Venezuela



exhibition view
Piano Piano, 2016
Espacio Monitor,
Caracas, Venezuela

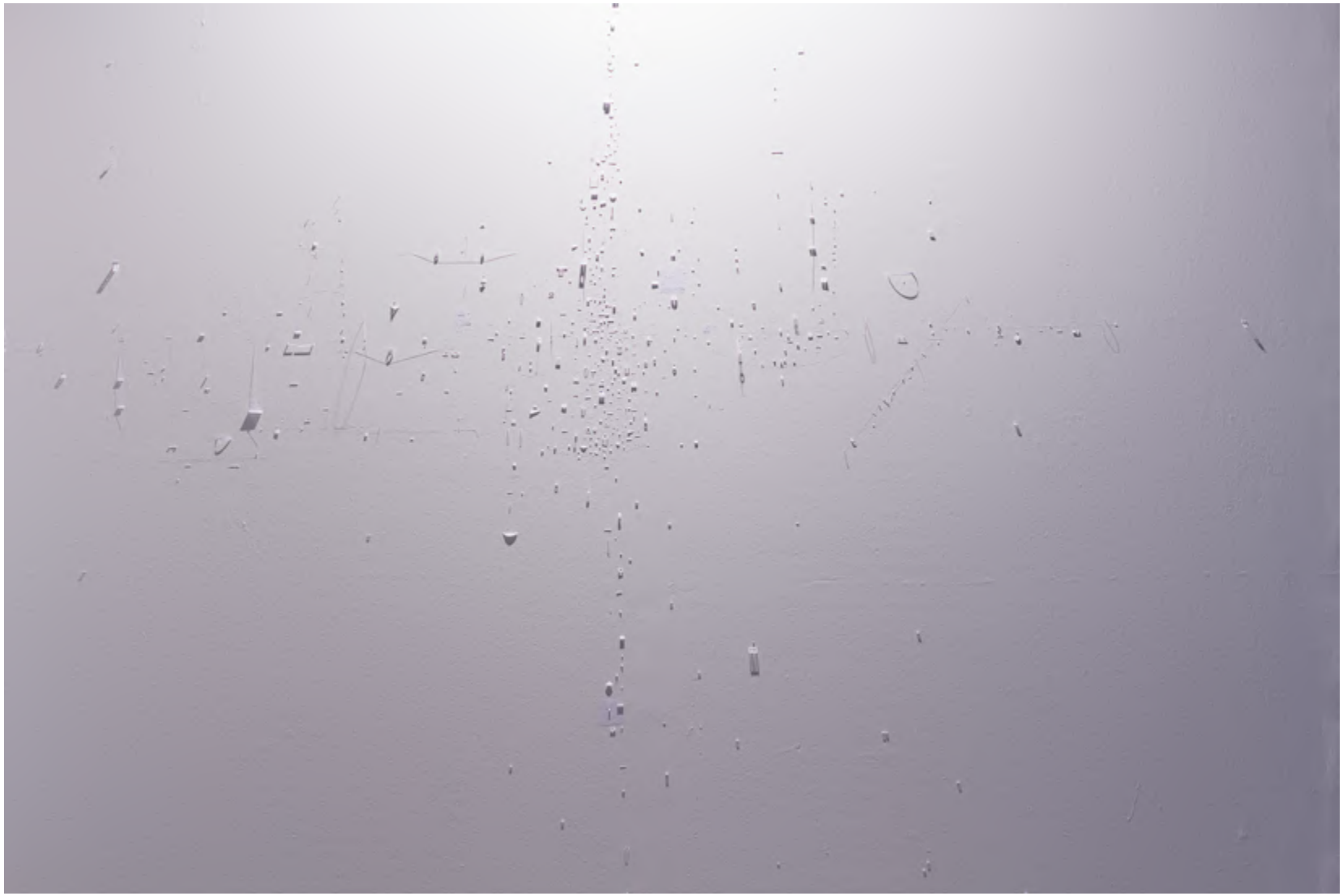
In 2018, Maggi presented the solo exhibition *O Papel é Inocente* [Paper Is Innocent] at the Brazilian Museum of Sculpture and Ecology (MuBE). For this exhibition, the artist presented works that established a relationship with the architecture of the building, designed by architect Paulo Mendes da Rocha (1928–2021).



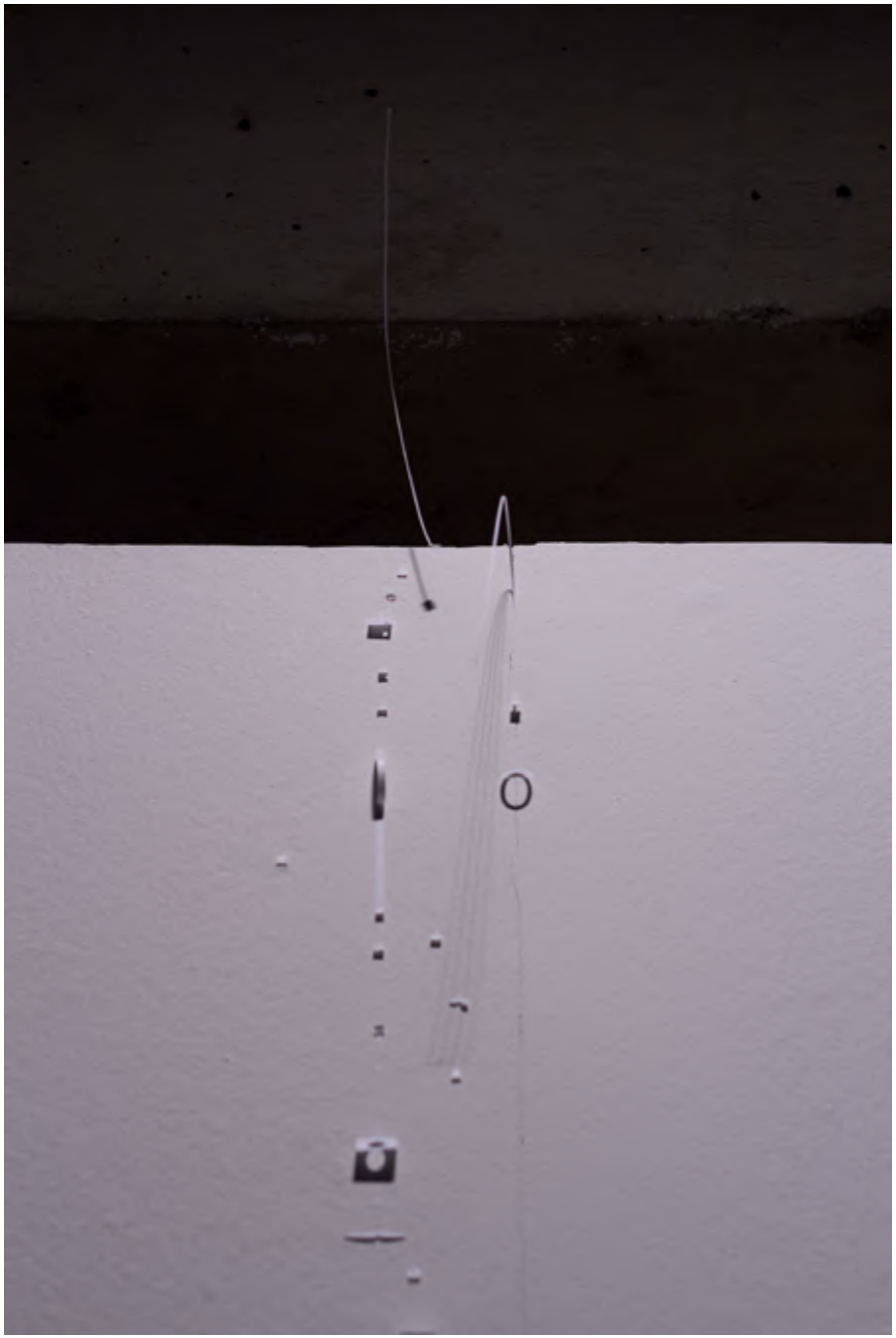
exhibition view
O papel é inocente, 2018
MuBE, São Paulo, Brazil



exhibition view
O papel é inocente, 2018
MuBE, São Paulo, Brazil



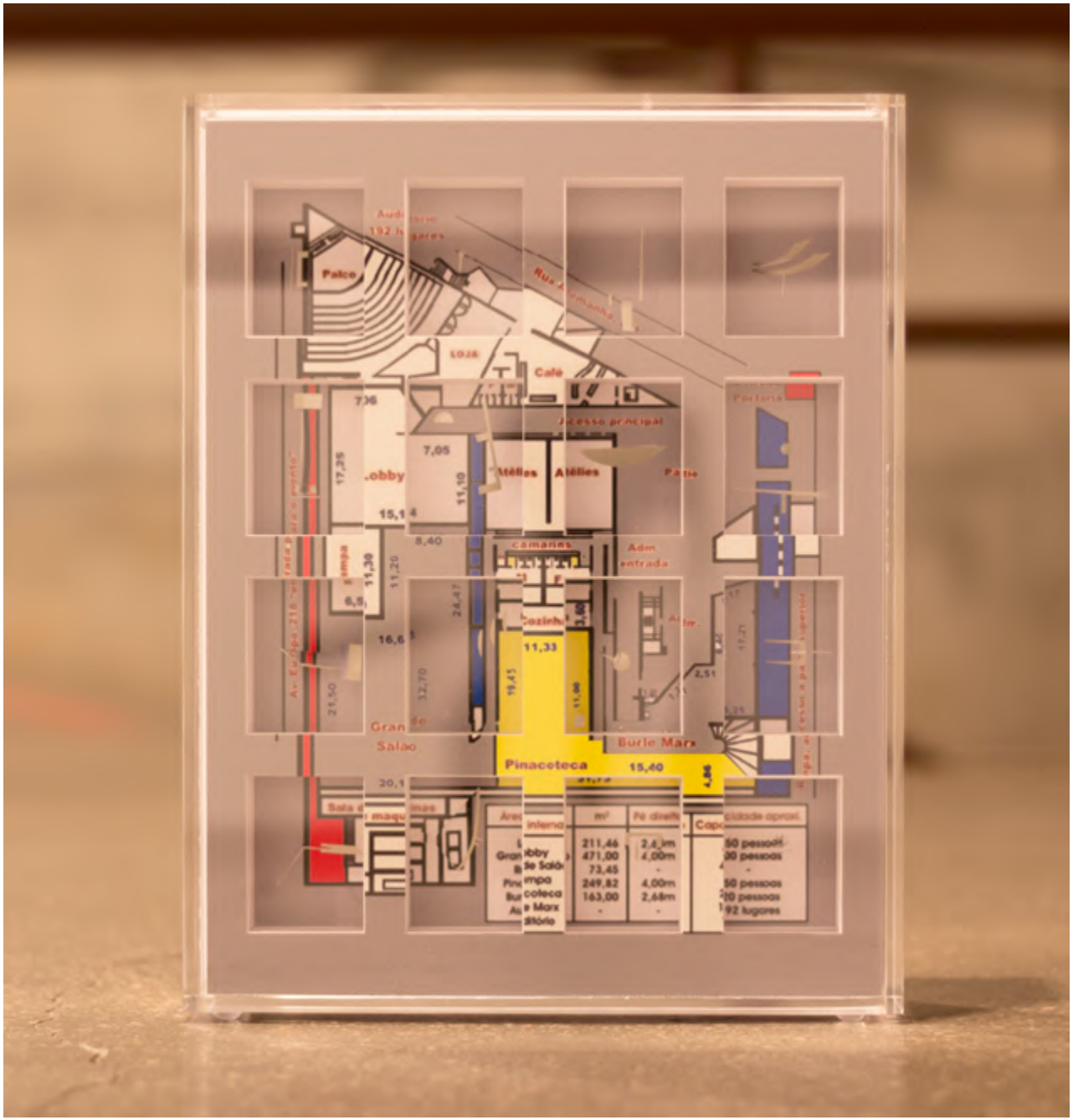
exhibition view
O papel é inocente, 2018
MuBE, São Paulo, Brazil



exhibition view
O papel é inocente, 2018
MuBE, São Paulo, Brazil

turner boxes

Beginning in 2005, Maggi developed the series *The Ted Turner Collection – From CNN to the DNA*. Comprising acrylic structures resembling boxes (hence also known as Turner Boxes), the series takes its title from media mogul Ted Turner, founder of the CNN news network, which completely transformed the news industry.



Turner Box: Complete Coverage on Mendes da Rocha, sem data
cuts and fold on paper ream
27,9 x 21,6 x 5,1 cm
11 x 8.5 x 2 in



In these works, Maggi uses reproductions of pieces by major modern and contemporary artists, such as Mondrian, Duchamp, Andy Warhol, and Mira Schendel. He places the artworks facing away from the viewer, adds stacks of paper, and cuts slits into the surface. In this way, he creates small paper reliefs while revealing only occasional fragments of the concealed artworks.

The final result is an almost entirely white geometric grid, punctuated by small fragments of the reproductions. In the artist's words: "From CNN to DNA, I direct my attention toward reading surfaces without the slightest hope of being informed. Every day, we are condemned to know more and understand less."

Infinity, intimity, 1990
inscription on acrylic sheet
34 x 33 cm
13.4 x 13 in



Turner box (Complete coverage on Warhol), 2008
cuts on paper and plexiglas
29,2 x 22,8 x 6,3 cm
11.5 x 9 x 2.5 in



Turner box (Complete coverage on Lichtenstein), 2008
recortes em papel e plexiglas
29,2 x 22,8 x 6,3 cm
11.5 x 9 x 2.5 in





Turner box (Complete coverage on Fontana), 2008
cuts on paper and plexiglas
29,2 x 22,8 x 6,3 cm
11.5 x 9 x 2.5 in



Turner box (Complete coverage on Soto), 2008
recortes em papel e plexiglas
29,2 x 22,8 x 6,3 cm
11.5 x 9 x 2.5 in



Turner box (Complete
coverage on Schendel), 2008
cuts on paper and plexiglas
33 x 24,1 x 8,9 cm
11.5 x 9 x 2.5 in

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