

TIMO NASSERI

TIMO NASSERI EPISTROPHY

Born in Berlin in 1972 to a German mother and an Iranian father, Timo Nasserì started out as a photographer. The series *Jet Skin* (2004), which portrays the encoded and undulating surface of powerful warplanes, was the pinnacle of the artist's photographic work and marked his transition to sculpture. Shortly afterwards, Nasserì's mural sculpture *Flag* played on the ambivalence between surface and volume, between a monochromatic black flag and a sculpture freezing the motion of fabric blowing in the wind. The minute attention the artist has devoted to fashioning the flag lends the piece a degree of perfection comparable to the machines of war or Islamic architecture that are the current focus of Timo Nasserì's work.

For his solo exhibition at the gallery, Timo Nasserì presents a series of works in different media, based on the *Muqarnas*, a type of corbel used as a decorative device in traditional Islamic and Persian architecture (from the 11th century onwards). *Muqarnas* encircle a space and shape its void. When contemplated from below they tend to create an abstract image of infinity. The original motif consists of a number of basic shapes that can be combined endlessly to create different patterns that never repeat themselves. Timo Nasserì seems to have found in the historical Islamic adornment the same pleasure in extricating a structured volume from a surface.

His latest sculpture, inspired by this architectural pattern and entitled *Epistrophy #1*, is deliberately severed from its past. It is embedded in the wall, leaving the sky accessible. Its polished stainless steel surface reflects the surrounding world rather than representing it, or rather represents it as totally fragmented and multiplied.

What is this infinity fashioned by the geometrical structures? Does it have a place in a society where everything comes down to self-image? The irreverence of this simple and beautiful gesture forms a question without providing any other answer than this sculpted void where self-image is dispersed in the infinite reflection of the world.

The exhibition also includes drawings based on the geometric calculations used to build *Muqarnas*.

The lines intertwine on the page, against a black background, presenting at once visual fascination and the formula behind it via the mathematical annotations that punctuate the drawing. The drawings, which lie somewhere between an architect's layout and a representation of heavenly beauty, are the by-product of a process leading towards an intuitive abstraction. Another version of the original shape appears on a display bearing objects that are similar to the *Muqarnas*' interlocking honeycomb structure. But in this case they are closed chambers, and filled, like so many confined small skies. In his new show, Timo Nasserì plays on oppositions such as empty/full, mirror/opacity, surface/image, like two worlds, which – despite stemming from each other – have developed their own autonomous chemistry.

The artist's handling of his dual nationality avoids the common pitfalls: he does not come down on one side or the other, nor does he attempt to represent a clash of cultures. Rather he broaches aporias and explores a richness that is often cultural and at times – as in the case of *Muqarnas* – historical. The sculptures *Apache* and *Comanche*, presented as part of his solo exhibition at the gallery in 2006, show a cultural paradox in which the artist's dual identity acts as a wake-up call.

The pieces are painstaking reproductions of the US army attack helicopters whose names, ironically, acclaim the camouflaging skills of the Native American tribes decimated decades earlier by that the very same army. The works, covered with bird feathers in a long and meticulous process reminiscent of a mortuary ritual, reveal a complex relationship with political conflicts. The slow-moving process, its disconcerting result and the zoomorphic nature of these machines raise the question of mourning. But who or what are we mourning here? Several forces are worn out: that of the machine against manual work, of Native American telluric knowledge, stripped of its connection with reality by machines, of war with its level of abstraction, and of beauty in the pathos of such a gesture.

Timo Nasser's works often examine the antagonism between multiple identities and points of view, in particular through the medium of language. His series of mural sculptures (2004-2008) based on Farsi script generate a dichotomy, dividing viewers into those who can decipher the characters and those who cannot. The calligraphy-based pieces *Fadjr* (Dawn), 2007, and *Simorgh* (Phoenix), 2008, stand out in relief from the wall. While purely abstract for some, for others they are a reference to Iranian armament (they spell out the names of missiles), an idyll or mythology.

Timo Nasser's work is currently exhibited at MART, Modern and Contemporary Art Museum of Trento and Rovereto (Italy) in Eurasia (curator: Achille Bonito Oliva, Christiane Rekade) and will be part of a group show at the Espace Paul Ricard in Paris (F), curated by Patrice Joly, in December.

EPISTROPHY #1, 2008
SCULPTURE EMBEDDED IN WALL
POLISHED STAINLESS STEEL, 150 x 150 x 100 cm
UNIQUE



EPISTROPHY #1, 2008
SCULPTURE EMBEDDED IN WALL
POLISHED STAINLESS STEEL, 150 x 150 x 100 cm
UNIQUE

Epistrophy #1 is the third sculpture of the mural work series inspired by the ornamental corbel elements in islamic architecture. These structures represented the celestial or even divine dimension through infinity suggested by repetition. Embedded in a wall and it's surface made with stainless steel, **Epistrophy #1** confronts this infinity with the fragmented and multiplied image of the world as well as the beholder's.

EPISTROPHY #1 (DETAILS), 2008
SCULPTURE EMBEDDED IN WALL
POLISHED STAINLESS STEEL, 150 x 150 x 100 cm
UNIQUE



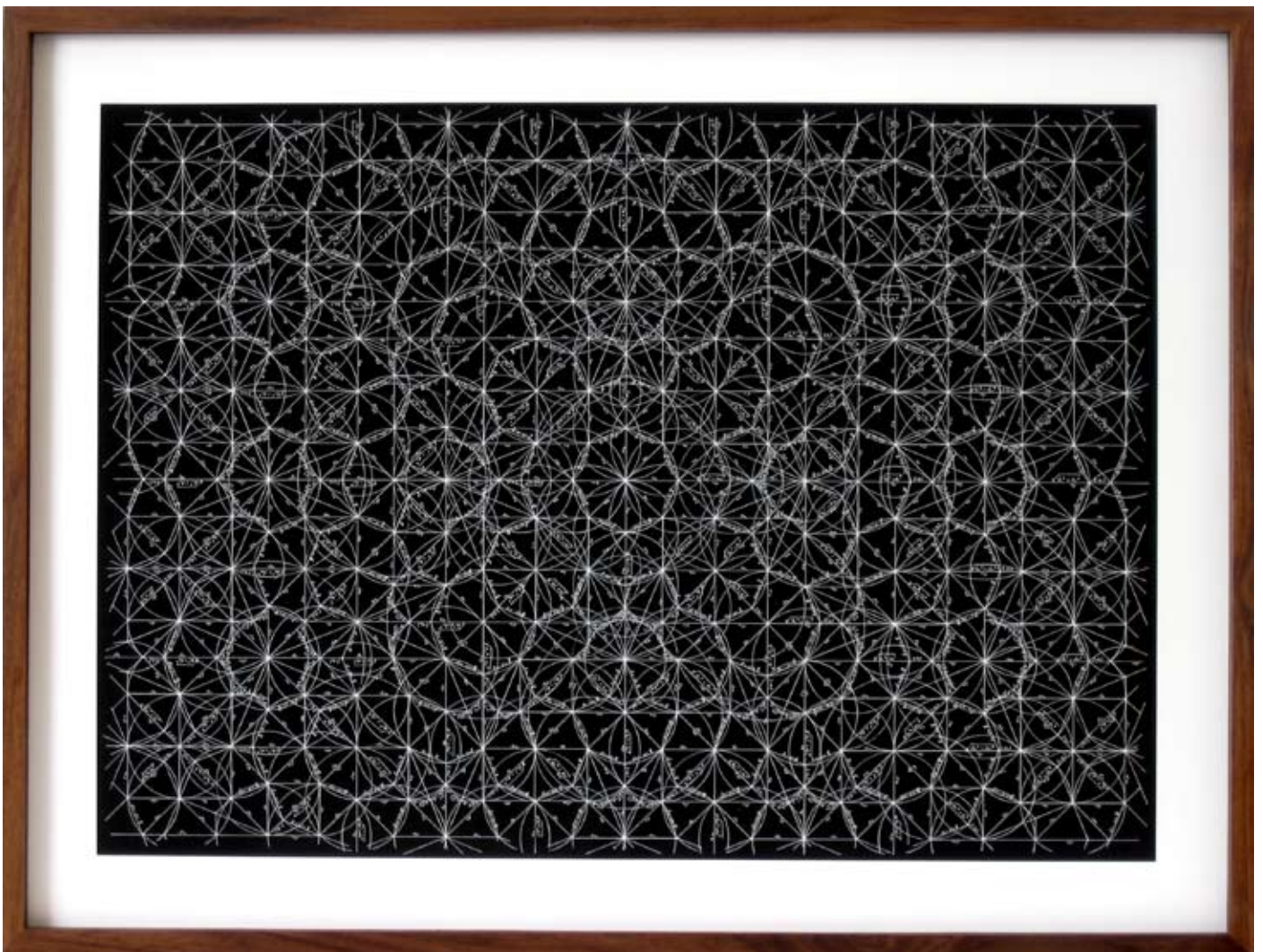
ONE AND ONE #1, 2008

DRAWING (INK ON PAPER), 63 x 83 cm

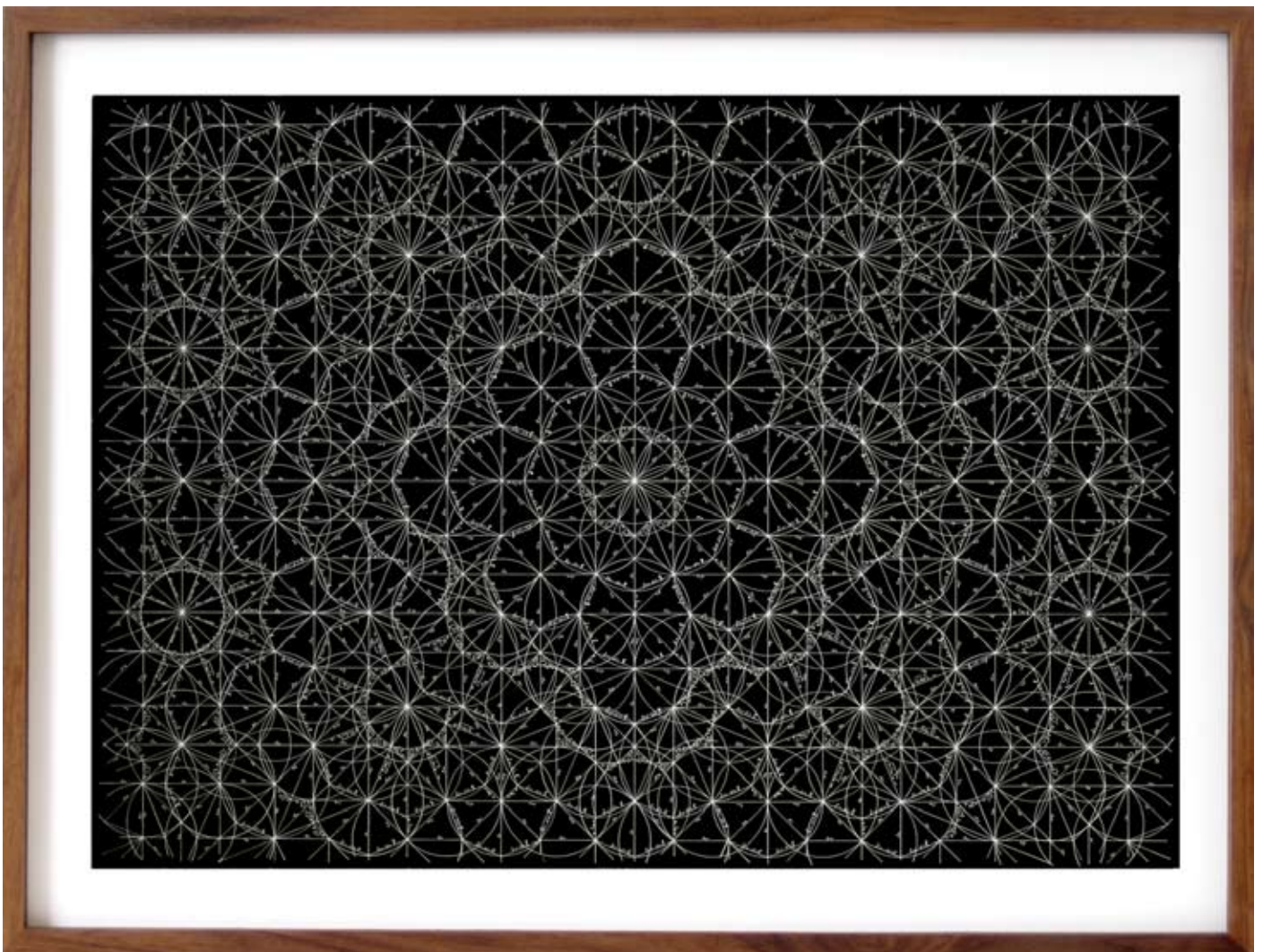
UNIQUE

The drawings of this series are painstakingly traced with white ink on a black sheet of paper. They repeat the structures represented, virtually to infinity, to build **Muqarnas I, II** and **Epistrophy I**. Its repetition of gesture and mathematic formulae intensifies the experience as it is the case for prayer. In the islamic culture, letters have correspondent numbers and significations, having thus a symbolic meaning beyond representation. It is this overcoming of the shape through the shape that the artists draws his inspiration from.

ONE AND ONE #1, 2008
DRAWING (INK ON PAPER), 63 x 83 cm
UNIQUE



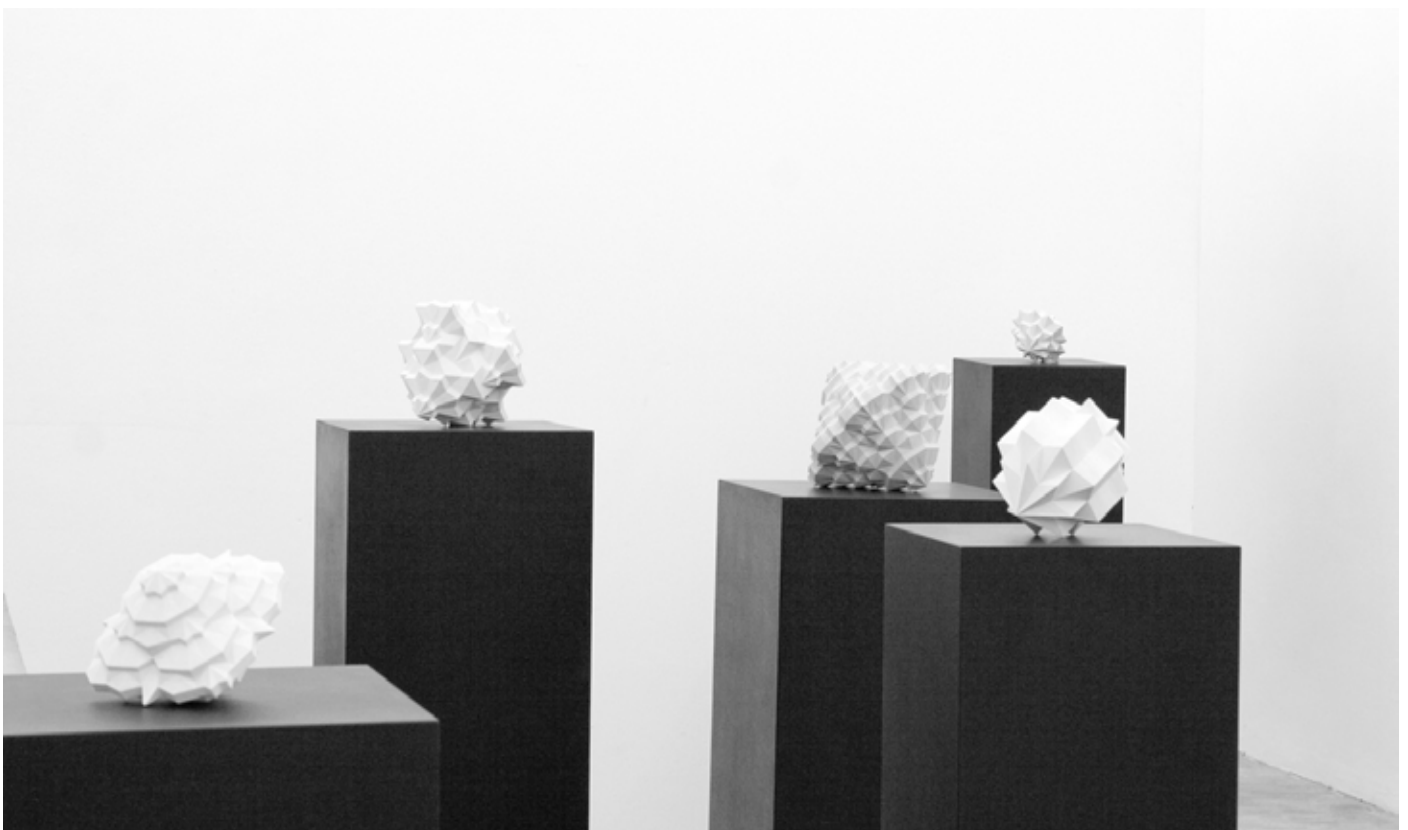
ONE AND ONE #2, 2008
DRAWING (INK ON PAPER), 63 x 83 cm
UNIQUE



SPHERES, 2008
PLASTER, WOODEN PLINTHS
EDITION OF 3 + 1 AP

In spite of their title, the seven sculptures of the series **Spheres** have complex shapes based on islamic ornamental elements. Rather than creating their sculpted void - as it is the case for **Muqarnas I, II** and **Epistrophy II** - they fill and form a closed chamber. Full rather than empty, in a reduced scale rather than monumental, **Spheres** integrate the plinth in the work in order to create a context of visibility, detachment and of mysterious existence.

SPHERES, 2008
PLASTER, WOODEN PLINTHS
EDITION OF 3 + 1 AP



SPHERES, 2008

VIEW OF THE EXHIBITION "EPISTROPHY" AT GALERIE SCHLEICHER+LANGE, PARIS

PLASTER, WOODEN PLINTHS

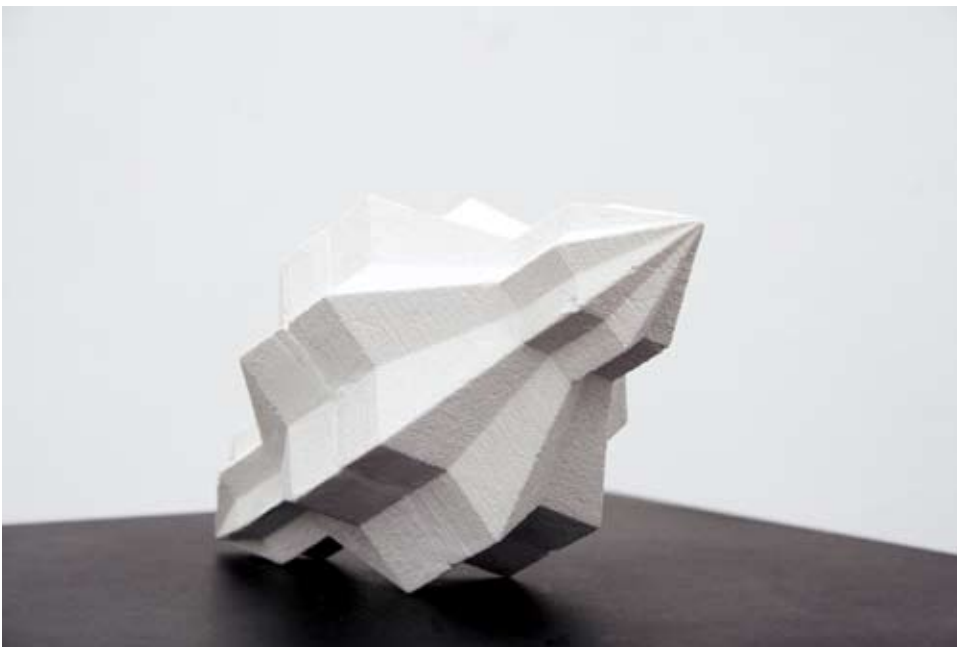
EDITION OF 3 + 1 AP



SPHERE I, 2008

PLASTER, WOODEN PLINTH, 13 x 9 x 7,5 cm

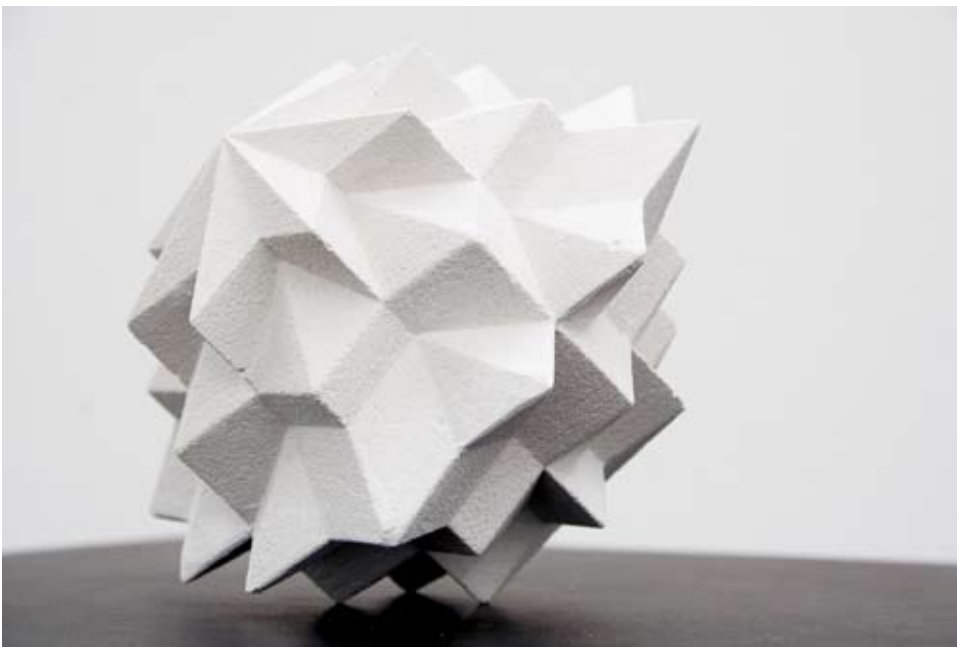
EDITION OF 3 + 1 AP



SPHERE II, 2008

PLASTER, WOODEN PLINTH, 10 x 9 x 8 cm

EDITION OF 3 + 1 AP



SPHERE III, 2008

PLASTER, WOODEN PLINTH, 15 x 3 x 9 cm

EDITION OF 3 + 1 AP



SPHERE IV, 2008

PLASTER, WOODEN PLINTH, 15 x 13 x 13 cm

EDITION OF 3 + 1 AP



SPHERE V, 2008

PLASTER, WOODEN PLINTH, 17 x 17 x 15 cm

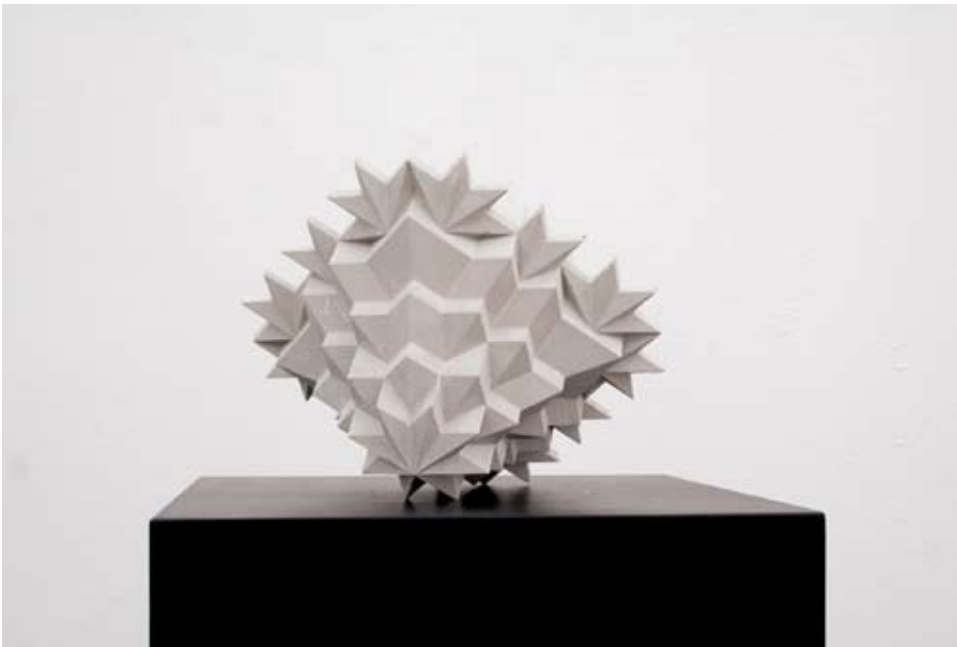
EDITION OF 3 + 1 AP



SPHERE VI, 2008

PLASTER, WOODEN PLINTH, 19 x 25 x 19 cm

EDITION OF 3 + 1 AP



SPHERE VII, 2008

PLASTER, WOODEN PLINTH, 24 x 18 x 15 cm

EDITION OF 3 + 1 AP



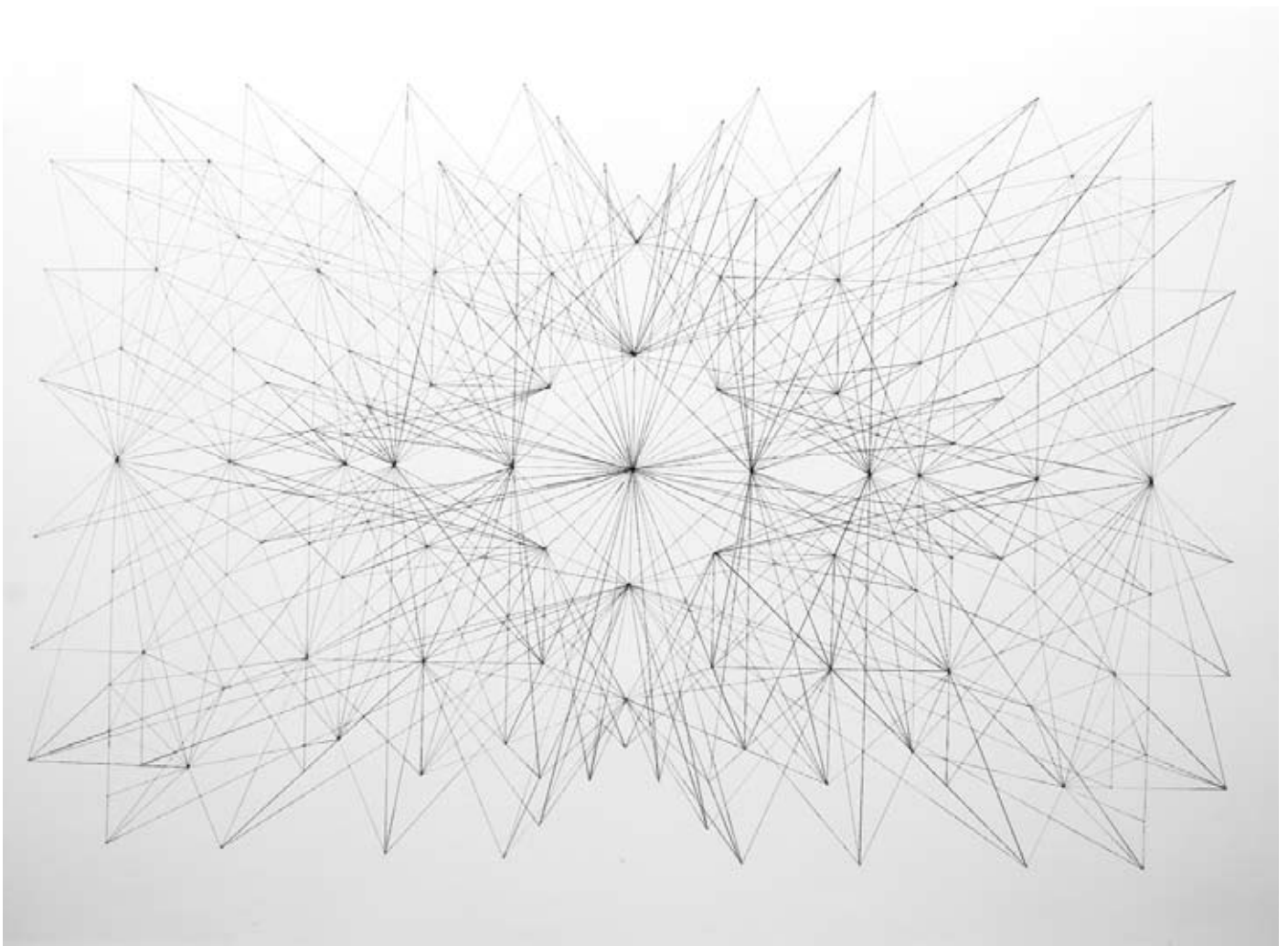
EVERYTHING IS EVERYTHING, 2008

WALL DRAWING, 200 x 300 cm

UNIQUE

The lines of this drawing represent an optically layered structure. On a same level, these lines form a visual game between form and formula. The drawing has another 'double', its negative, another mural drawing with white lines on a black rectangle on the wall. They cannot be in the same collection nor in the same exhibition space: their virtual superposition creates a black monochrome, obliterating both drawings.

EVERYTHING IS EVERYTHING, 2008
WALL DRAWING, 200 x 300 cm
UNIQUE



TIMO NASSERI

BIOGRAPHY

*1972 Berlin (D)

lives and works in Berlin (D) // vit et travaille à Berlin (D)

1994 – 1997 Lette-Verein, Berlin (D)

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2008

epistrophy, galerie schleicher+lange, Paris (F)

2006

falling stars, galerie schleicher+lange, Paris (F)

2005

Galerie Robert Morat, Hambourg (D)

jet skin, galerie schleicher+lange, Paris (F)

2004

Galerie ABEL Raum für Neue Kunst, Berlin (D)

2002

OP-Felder, Galerie ABEL Raum für Neue Kunst, Berlin (D)

Golab, Berlin (D)

2000

OP-Felder, Galerie derart, Bâle (CH)

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2008

Phoenix vs Babylone, Espace Paul Ricard, Paris (F)

Democracy In the Age of Branding, The Vera List Center for Art and Politics at The New School, New York (USA)

EURASIA, MART - Museo di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Trento (I)

The New World, Artnews projects, Berlin (D)

Die Wahren Orte, Alexander Ochs Galleries, Berlin (D)

Echo, Galerie Sfeir-Semler, Beirut (LB)

2007

Art-O-Rama, Marseille (F)

dark matter, artnews projects, Berlin (D)

Saar Ferngas Förderpreis Junge Kunst 2006, TUFA, Trier (D) 2007

2006

Saar Ferngas Förderpreis Junge Kunst 2006, Museum Pfalzgalerie, Kaiserslautern (D)

Saar Ferngas Förderpreis Junge Kunst 2006, Stadtgalerie Saarbrücken (D)

Else-Heiliger-Fond, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Berlin (D)

2005

7+, Tor 205, Berlin (D)

S-FOR, Galerie Lisi Hämmerle, Bregenz (A)

2004

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Else-Heiliger-Fond, Berlin (D)

„7“, Tor 205, Berlin (D)

2003

Der Rest der Welt, Palais Neuffer, Pirmasens (D) (cat.)

Prix Aenne Biermann, Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Gera (D) (cat.)

Synthetic Forces, Berlin (D), (cat.)

2002

Corporate Identity, Kunst Zürich 02 (CH)

Projectspace, Art Frankfurt 02 (D)

2001

INTER-TRANSFER, Galerie ABEL Raum für Neue Kunst, Berlin (D)

In God We Trust, Galerie ABEL Raum für Neue Kunst & Galerie Paula Böttcher, Berlin (D)

1999

Nachlese, Rotes Rathaus Berlin, (D)

1997

48, Galerie Böcker, Berlin (D)

AWARDS AND RESIDENCIES

2006 Prix **Saar Ferngas Förderpreis Junge Kunst 2006** (D)

2004 Bourse de la Fondation Konrad-Adenauer (D)

2003 Finaliste, Prix **Aenne Biermann** (D)

CONTACT

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