



MARIAWETTERGREN  
GALERIE



SANCTUM  
Gjertrud Haas



SANCTUM  
Gjertrud Hals

**7 February - 30 September, 2020**

From February 7 to July 25, 2020, Galerie Maria Wettergren presents the solo exhibition Sanctum by the pioneering textile artist, Gjertrud Hals (b. 1948, Norway). Over the past twenty years, Hals has visited and collected inspiration from “*places marked by rites, myths or by significant events*”, such as Varanasi, Mount Sinai, Kyoto, or the Forbidden City.

The souls of these places (*anima locus*) form the core of this exhibition, in which Hals shows her most recent works, made from various types of metal and fibers. Chosen for their intrinsic beauty, Hals composes with materials from recycling sites or objects found on the beach or on the roadside, such as the reddish copper wire of electrical cables, the ring-pulls of beer cans, a fragment from a clock, or a piece of plastic jewelry...The artist weaves, knits and hammers these so-called poor materials delicately like a goldsmith, transforming them into refined grids, vibrating sculptures, poetic dream-catchers. Through her delicate yet powerful works, this ‘artist-chemist’ shares with us her personal wonder at metamorphosis, whether it is a material that she transfigures from waste into art, or a culture she elevates from low into high, all the while maintaining a trace of its original state.

Gjertrud Hals is considered as an important pioneer in the field of Scandinavian textile art. She has been one of the redefining figures by liberating textile art from the loom and displaying it in space as three-dimensional sculpture. Born in 1948 on the island of Finnøya, her upbringing on this little island is profoundly anchored in her art, and her relationship to the region’s nature and culture is deep and complex. The Nordic mythology is a great source of inspiration to the artist, but it was her interest in feminism and women’s culture that drew her, in the 1980s, towards the new wave of women artists exploring the sculptural potential of “fiber art”, such as Sheila Hicks, Claire Zesler et Magdalena Abakanowicz.

Hals’ works have been acquired by private and public collections, such as Mobilier National / Les Gobelins, France; National Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo; American Craft Museum, New York; The Museum of Decorative Arts, Lausanne; and The Bellerive Museum, Zürich.

**Gjertrud Hals - SANCTUM**

Preview :  
Thursday 6 Feb, 6-9 PM

Exhibition :  
**7 February - 30 September 2020**  
Tuesday - Saturday, 11am - 7pm

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Exhibition view :  
*Sanctum*, Galerie Maria Wettergren, 2020

*Eir*, 2019  
Copper wire  
Various dimensions  
Unique pieces





*"Eir, the Norwegian word for copper rust, is pointing to one of the characteristics of copper. The dark, burnt wire from dynamos and motors is used together with the shiny, unburnt wire from electric cables. Eir also has a link to Norse Mythology, as it is the name of one of the goddesses. At the same time, their shape reminds of the lanterns in a Buddhist Temple, as well as the pendant lights in a Christian Church." G.H*



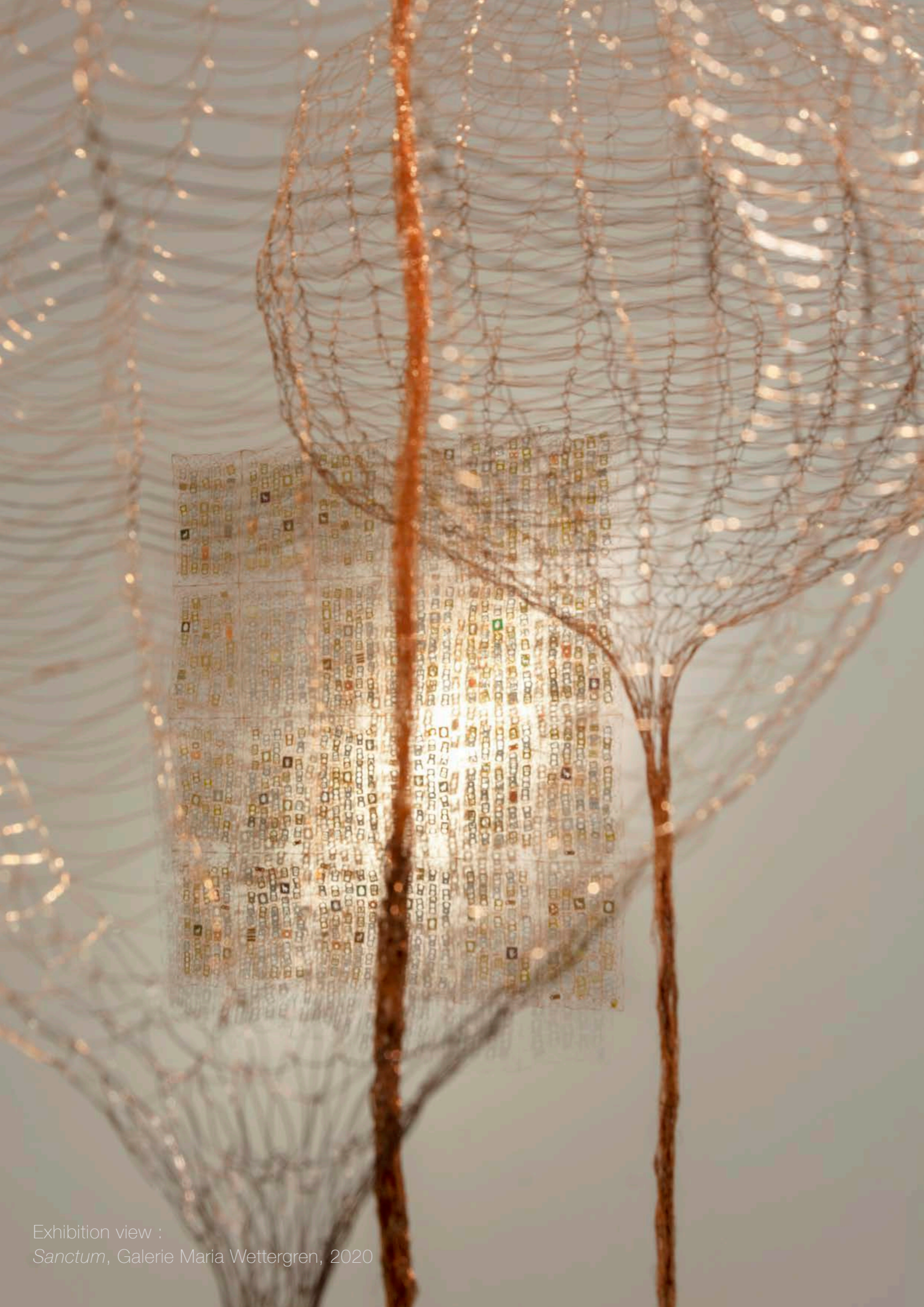
*Eir, 2019*  
Copper wire  
Various dimensions  
Unique pieces



Exhibition view :  
*Sanctum*, Galerie Maria Wettergren, 2020



*Eir*, 2019



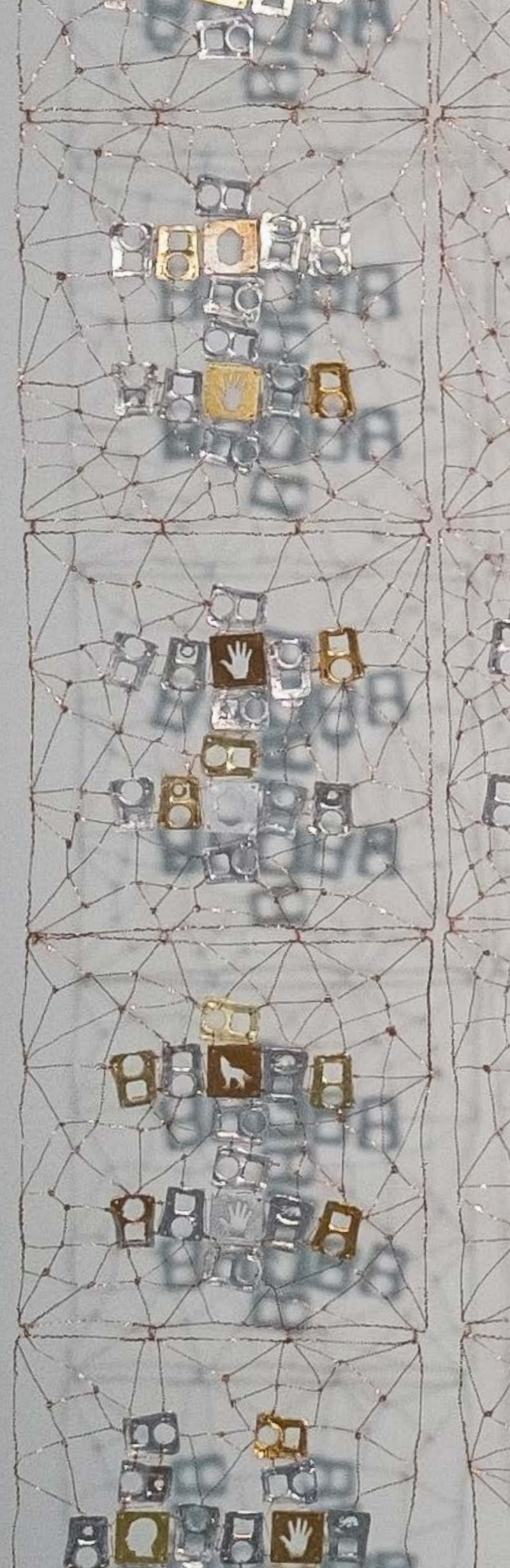
Exhibition view :  
*Sanctum*, Galerie Maria Wettergren, 2020



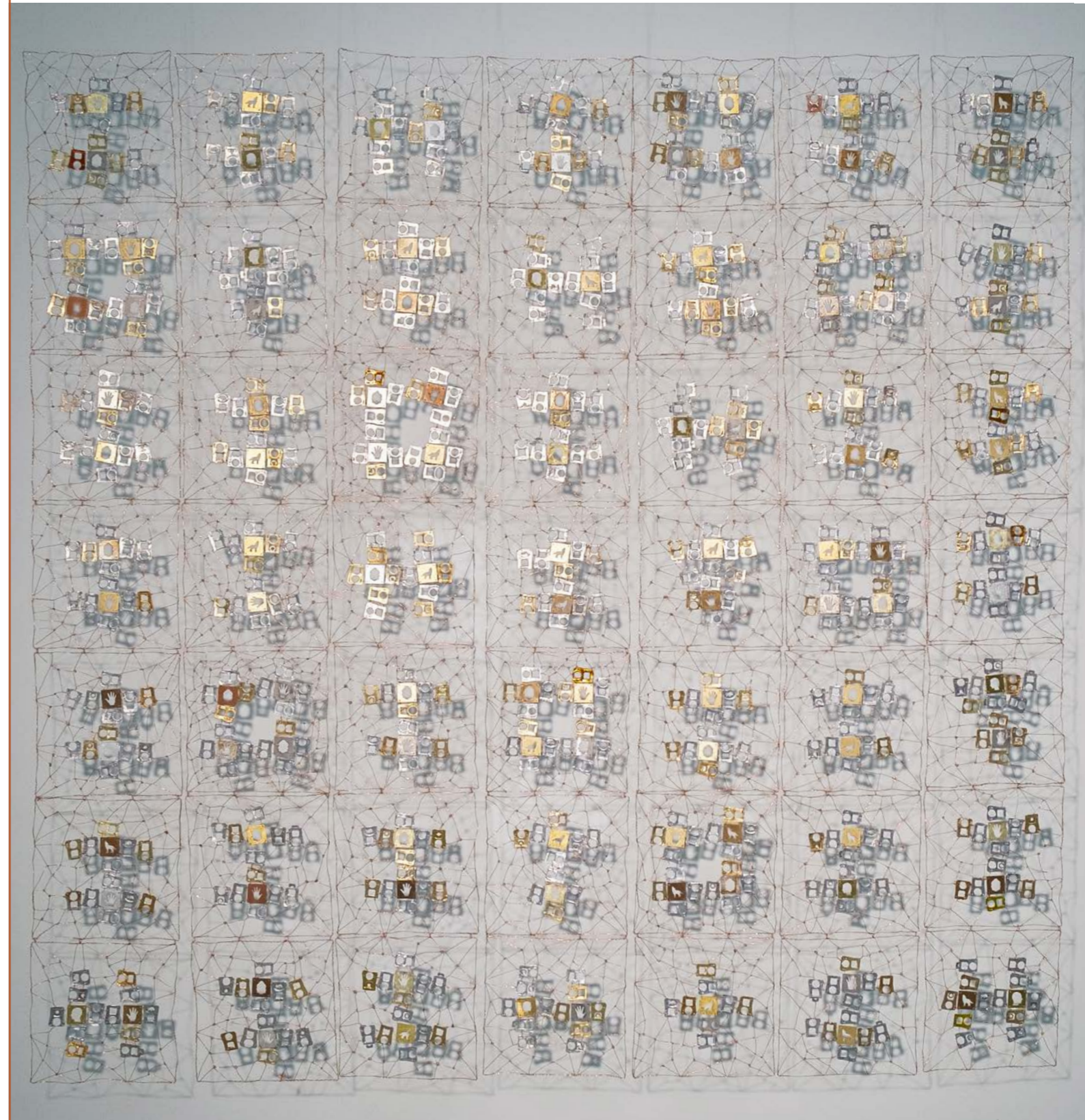


*Eir*, 2019 (detail)



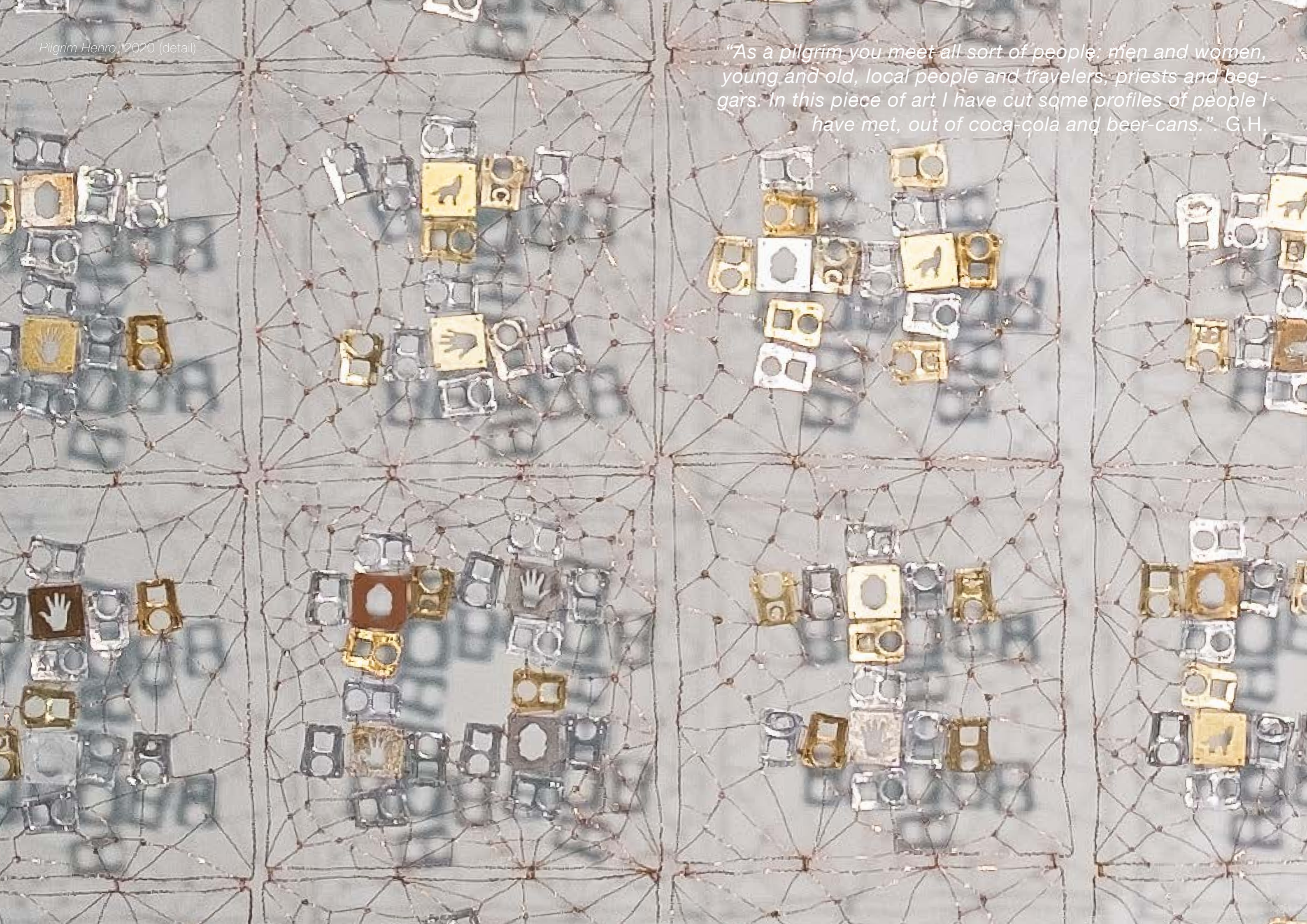


Connecting and binding together characterise Gjertrud Hals' art, both literally and symbolically. Many of her works are grid structures made of fibres or metal thread. Often little objects, *objets trouvés*, are added alongside with plastic capsules or embroideries from India or made by her grandmother. They look a bit like the kind of "treasures" children find. Like a spider's web, these weavings seem to capture the traces of life as time goes by. Like small micro-cosmoses, inspired by mythological story-telling and children's worlds, Gjertrud Hals' works seem to possess their own laws and logics, moving somewhere between delicate neatness and unrestrained inspiration. In the words of the artist, they propose a reflection "... on the relationship between nature and culture, in which the lives of modern humans are moving between chaos and order. Forces of nature and war create chaos, after which a new order is elaborated, always both the same and a little bit different than the previous.



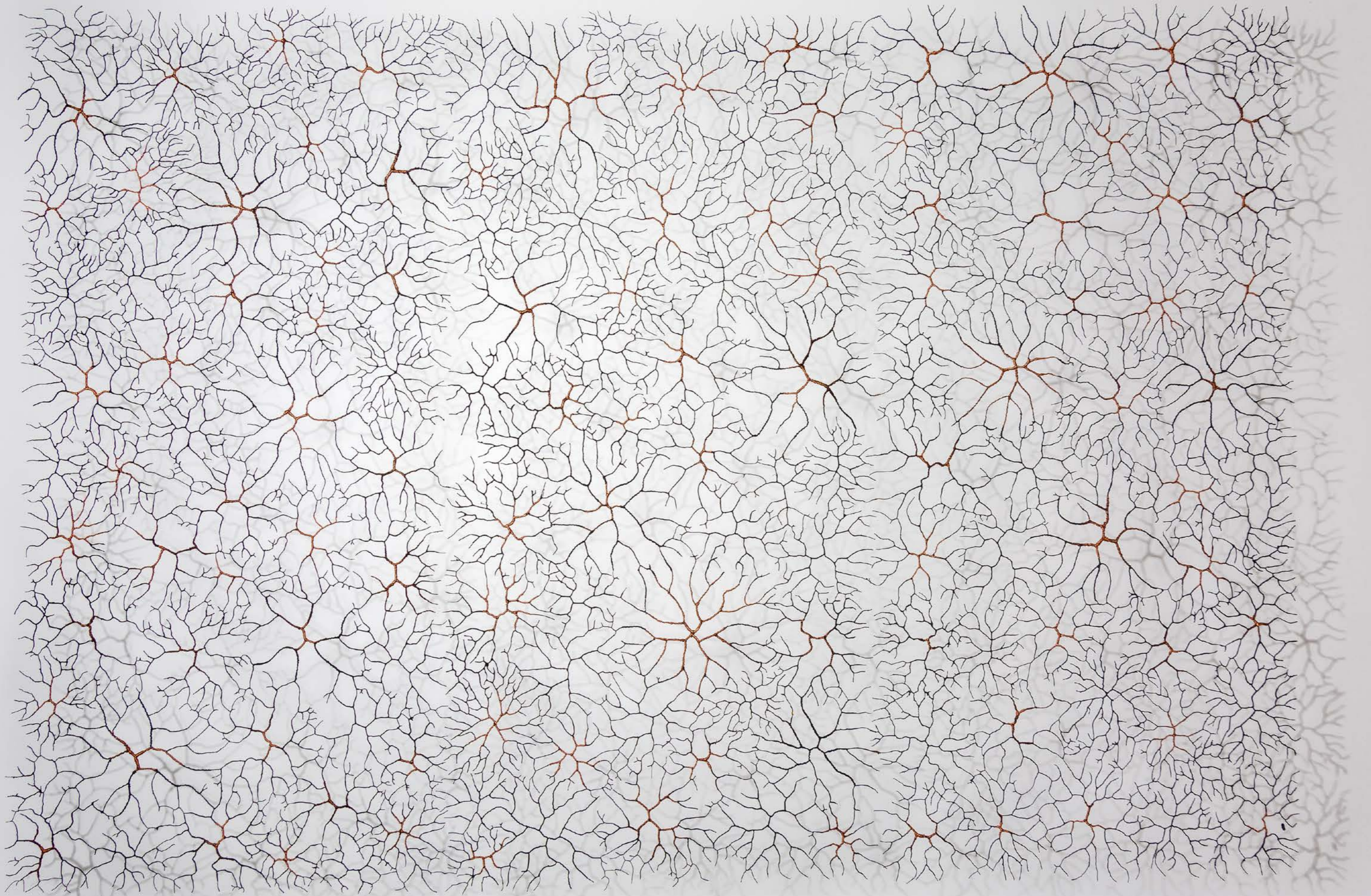
*Pilgrim Henro*, 2020  
90 x 100 cm  
Copper wire, aluminium objects  
Unique piece

*“As a pilgrim you meet all sort of people: men and women, young and old, local people and travelers; priests and beggars. In this piece of art I have cut some profiles of people I have met, out of coca-cola and beer-cans.” G.H.*





Exhibition view :  
Romsdal Museum, 2018



*Vena Cuprum*, 2018  
200 X 300 cm  
Copper wire, metal objects  
Unique piece



*Vena Cuprum*, 2018 (detail)



Exhibition view :  
*Sanctum*, Galerie Maria Wettergren, 2020



*URD*, 2008  
120 x 30 cm  
Twigs, thread, paper pulp  
Unique piece



*URD*, 2008  
120 x 30 cm  
Twigs, thread, paper pulp  
Unique pieces





*ERO, Black, 2019*  
20 x 38 cm  
Carbon fibres, resin  
Unique piece

*ERO, Red*, 2019  
20 x 38 cm  
Carbon fibres, resin  
Unique piece





*“Libra consists of everyday material like buttons and ring-pull tabs from beverage cans, together with watches and jewelry items. They are all integrated into copper wire nets. Elevating the status of these man-made objects from worthless to worthwhile gives me comfort and joy!”. G.H.*

*Libra II, 2018  
125 x 125 cm  
Metal wires, pieces of metal  
Unique piece*

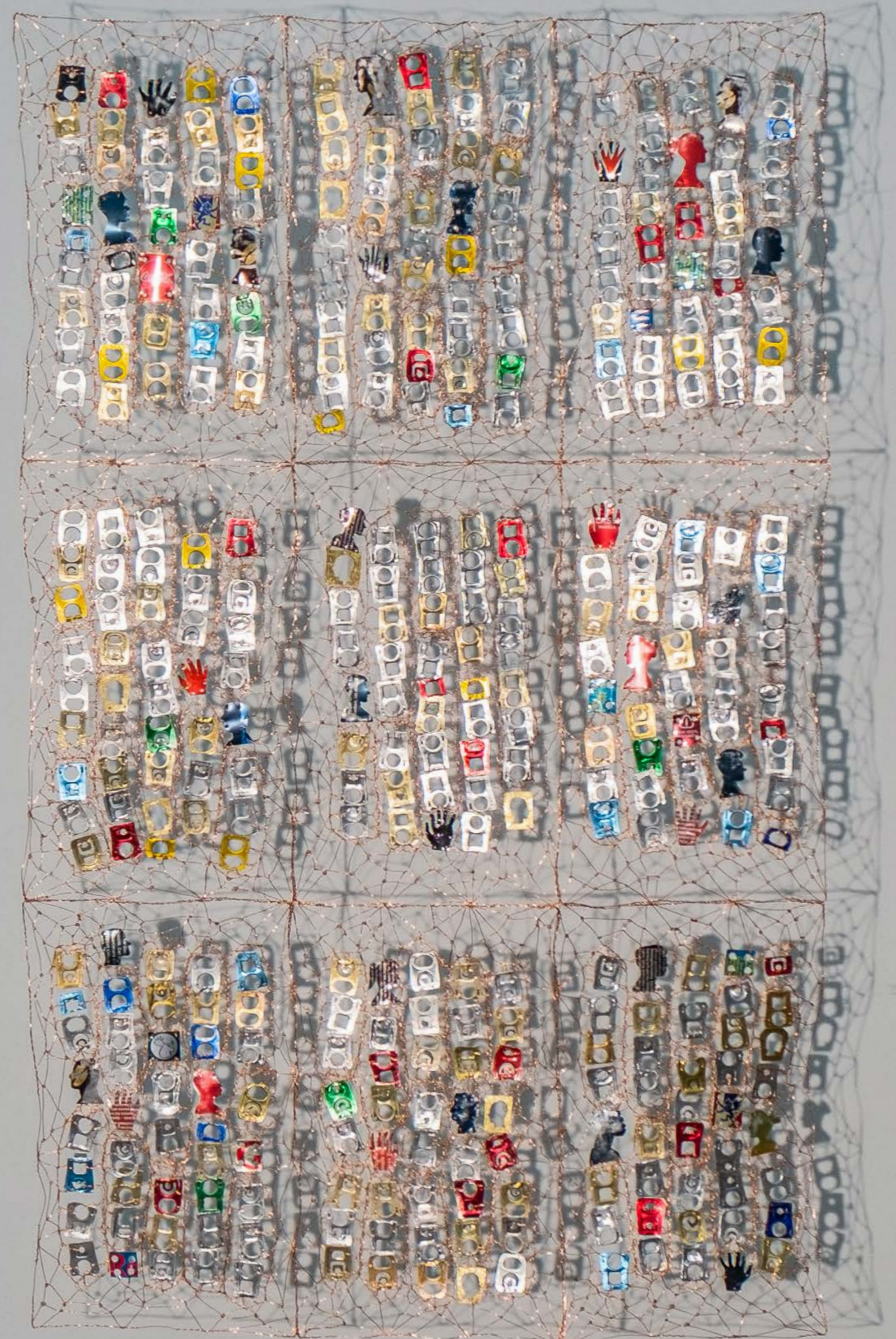


Libra II, 2018 (detail)

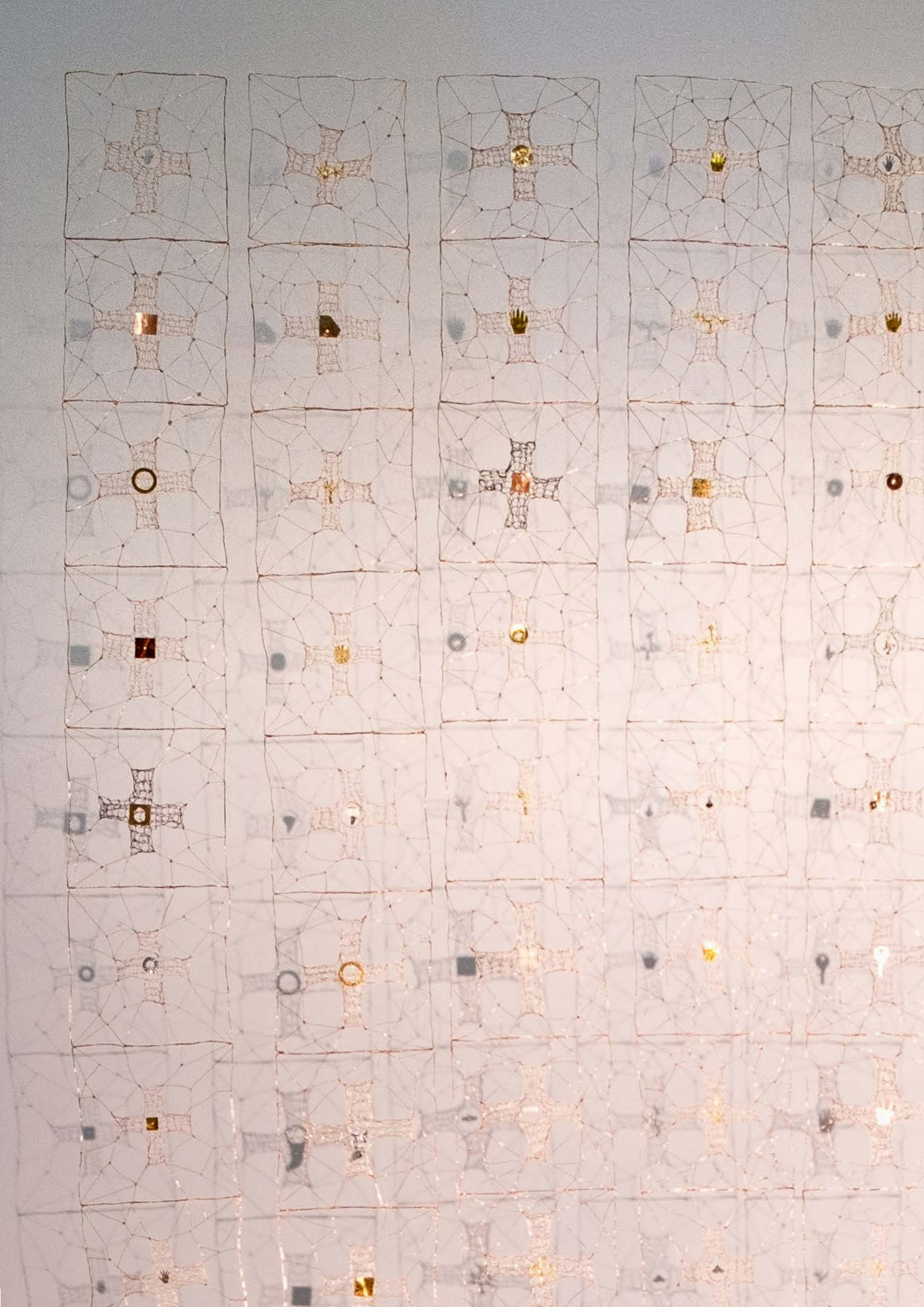


Gjertrud Hals works tirelessly, always seeking out new experiences. She has constantly explored new techniques, as she weaves, knits, casts, sprays and cuts her way through various materials, mostly natural fibres or metal threads, that she elaborates during physical and time-consuming sessions. Her inspiration comes from her frequent travels to Japan, where she admires the ancient Shinto temples and learns to make paper. The Japanese word kami actually means both paper and for God, and it is the discovery of Japan's old nature-worshipping religion, Shintoism, that puts nature at the heart of Gjertrud Hals' work. For her, nature is not just an inspiration, but small pieces of natural life that she often draws into her works in a direct manner. "With all that is happening in the world today, it feels right to focus on a small segment by conserving a small part of it. It reminds me of my collections of shells and insects from my childhood. It has always given me great pleasure to create order out of chaos."

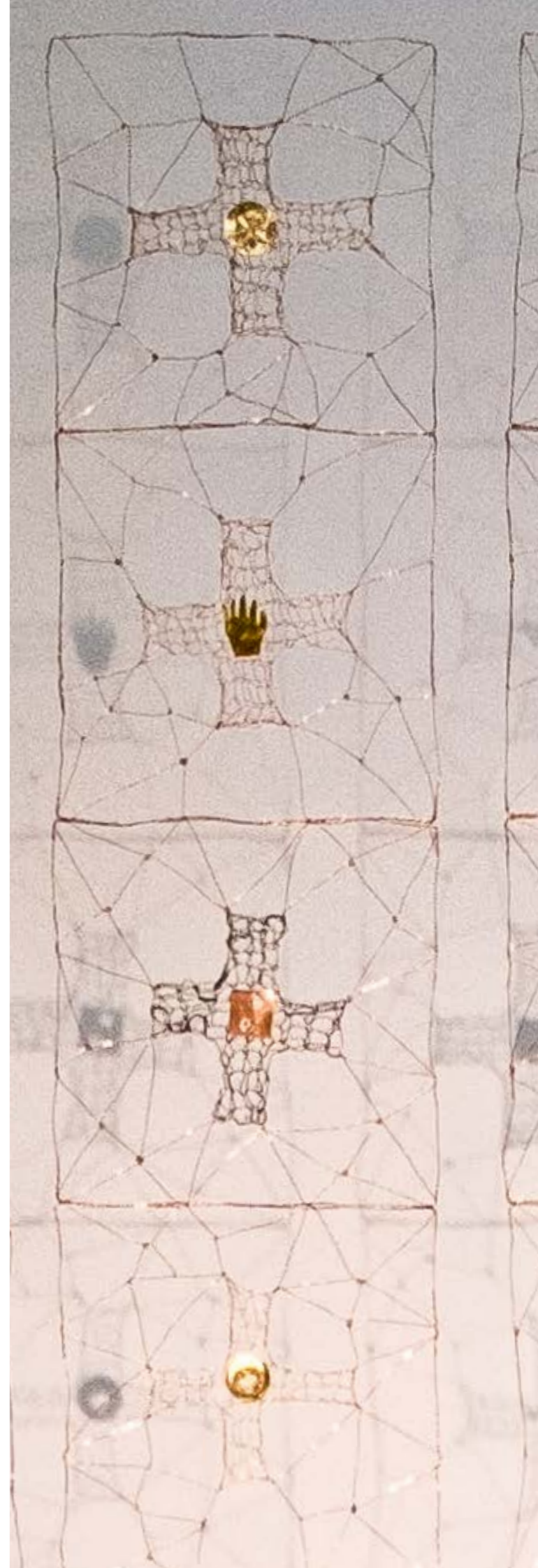
*Pilgrim Folk*, 2020  
45 x 75 cm  
Copper wire, aluminium objects  
Unique piece





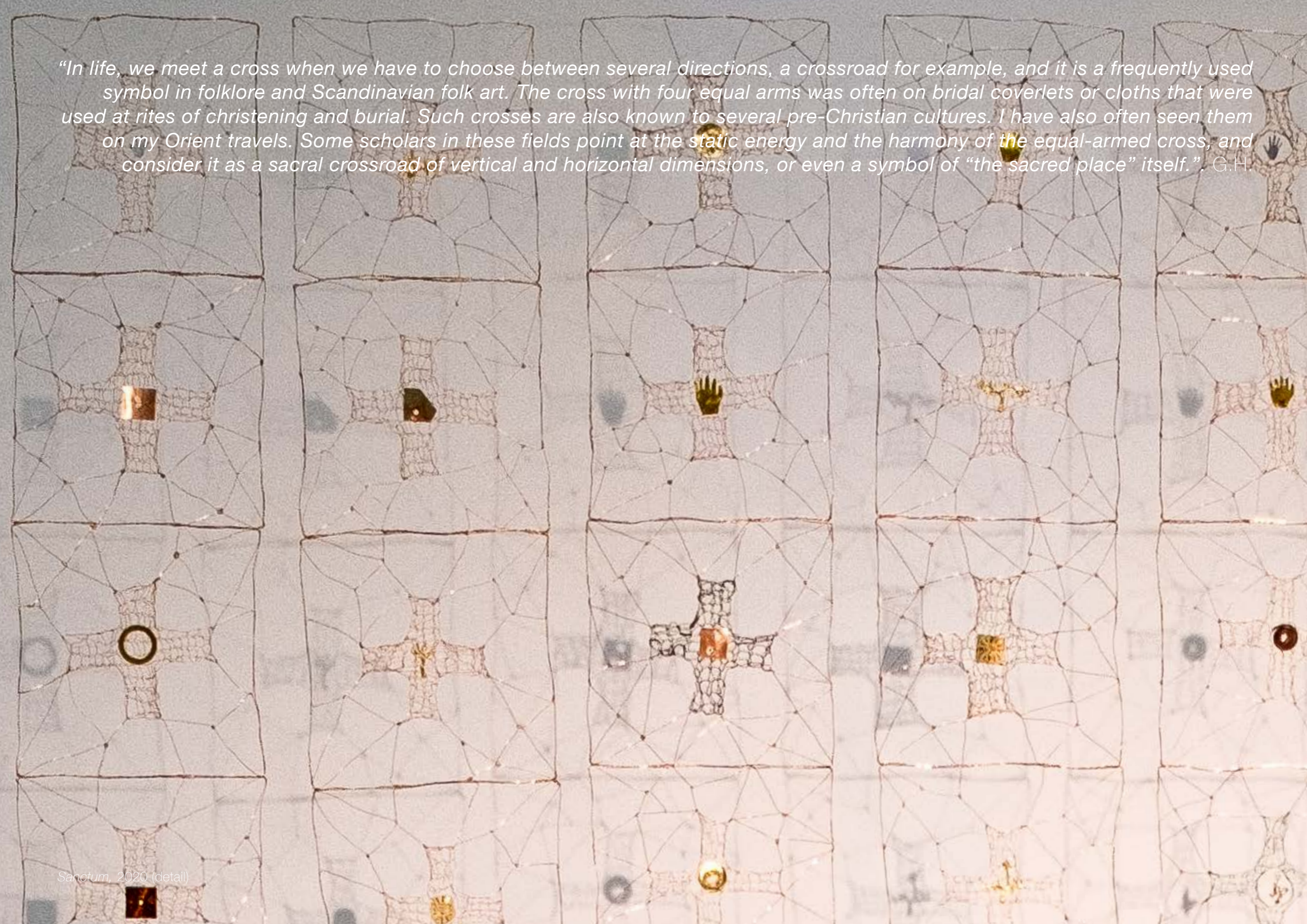


It is also Shintoism that has opened her eyes for Norse mythology. She is struck by the feeling that so many things in today's culture are rooted in these stories. In the documentary *Black Sun*, the artist explains her spiritual approach to art and techniques, "Over the past 25 years, I've had a fling with Zen Buddhism. It focuses on technique but not for show. It's a continued technical exercise. You should exercise so much that you forget the technique. And, in the end, yourself ... Zen Buddhism is very down to earth. It's about getting in touch with your inner child, and that reminds me of things I know from way back in my culture ... my background ... Christianity ... and the essence of the New Testament. Several times, in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, Jesus says that if you don't become a child again, you're not allowed into the kingdom of heaven. In that way, there is something in common ... this simple down-to-earth mysticism. You can't get there by keeping a safe distance. You must get into it, take part in it." (*Black Sun*, movie).

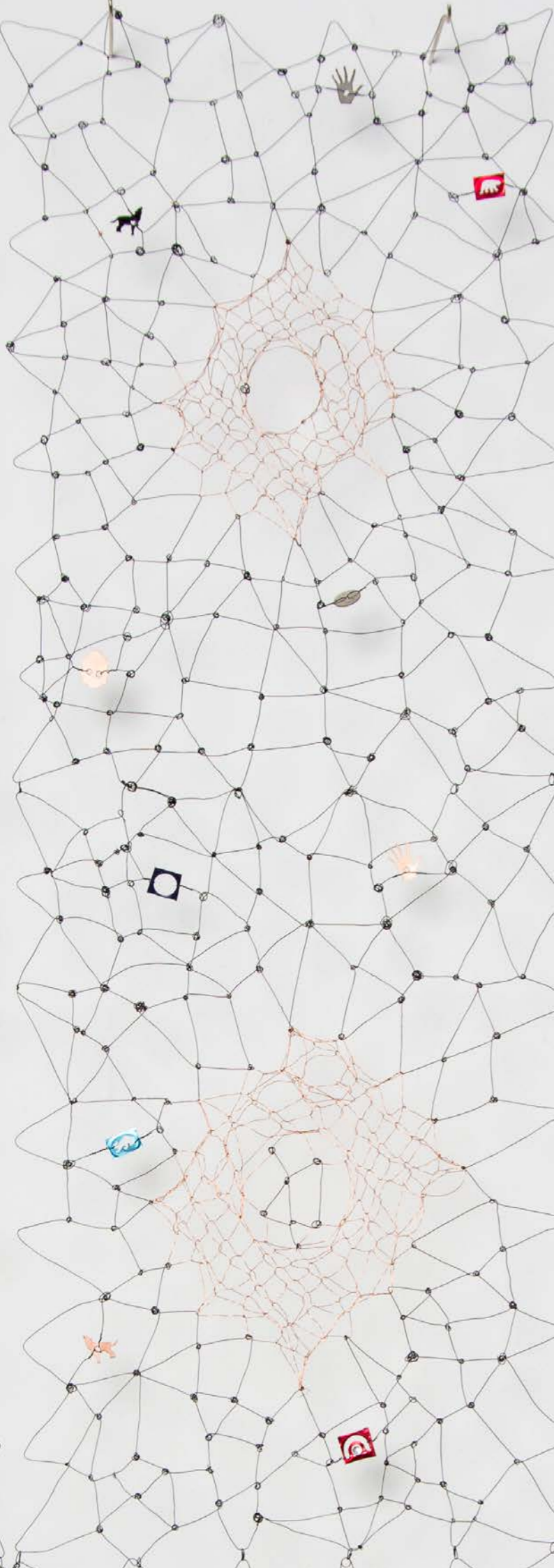


*Sanctum*, 2020 (detail)  
245 x 92 cm  
Copper wire, pieces of metal  
Unique piece

*"In life, we meet a cross when we have to choose between several directions, a crossroad for example, and it is a frequently used symbol in folklore and Scandinavian folk art. The cross with four equal arms was often on bridal coverlets or cloths that were used at rites of christening and burial. Such crosses are also known to several pre-Christian cultures. I have also often seen them on my Orient travels. Some scholars in these fields point at the static energy and the harmony of the equal-armed cross, and consider it as a sacral crossroad of vertical and horizontal dimensions, or even a symbol of "the sacred place" itself." G.H.*

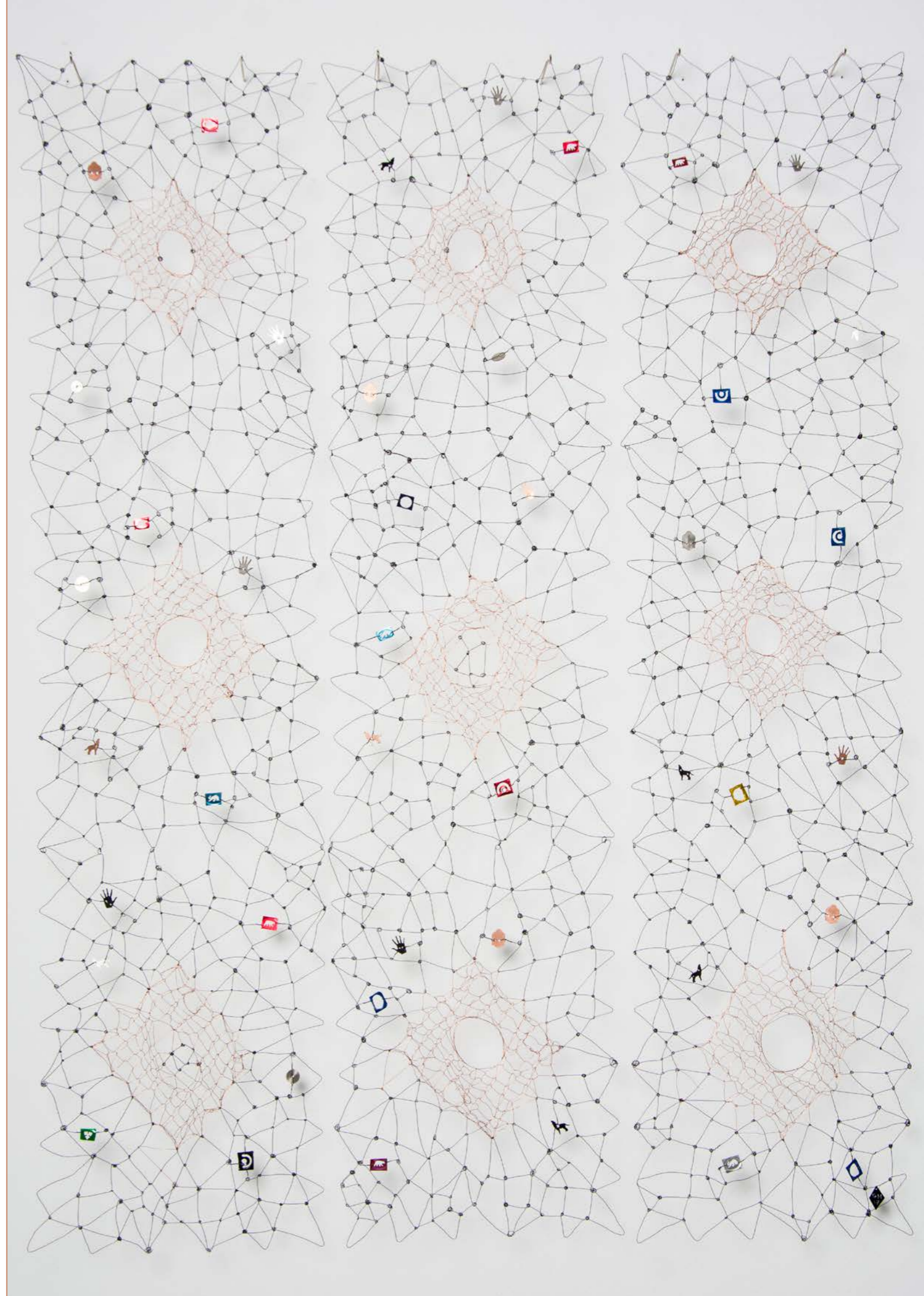




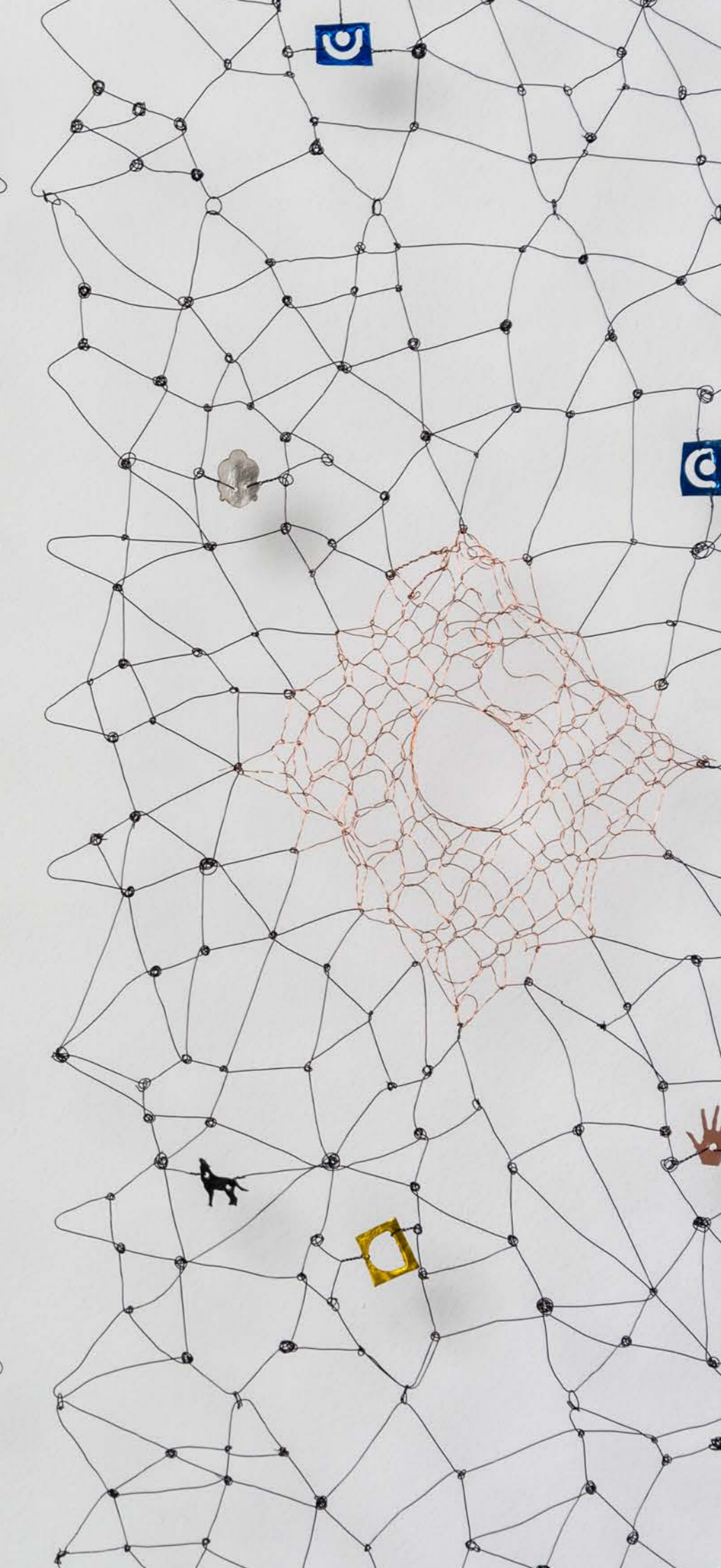
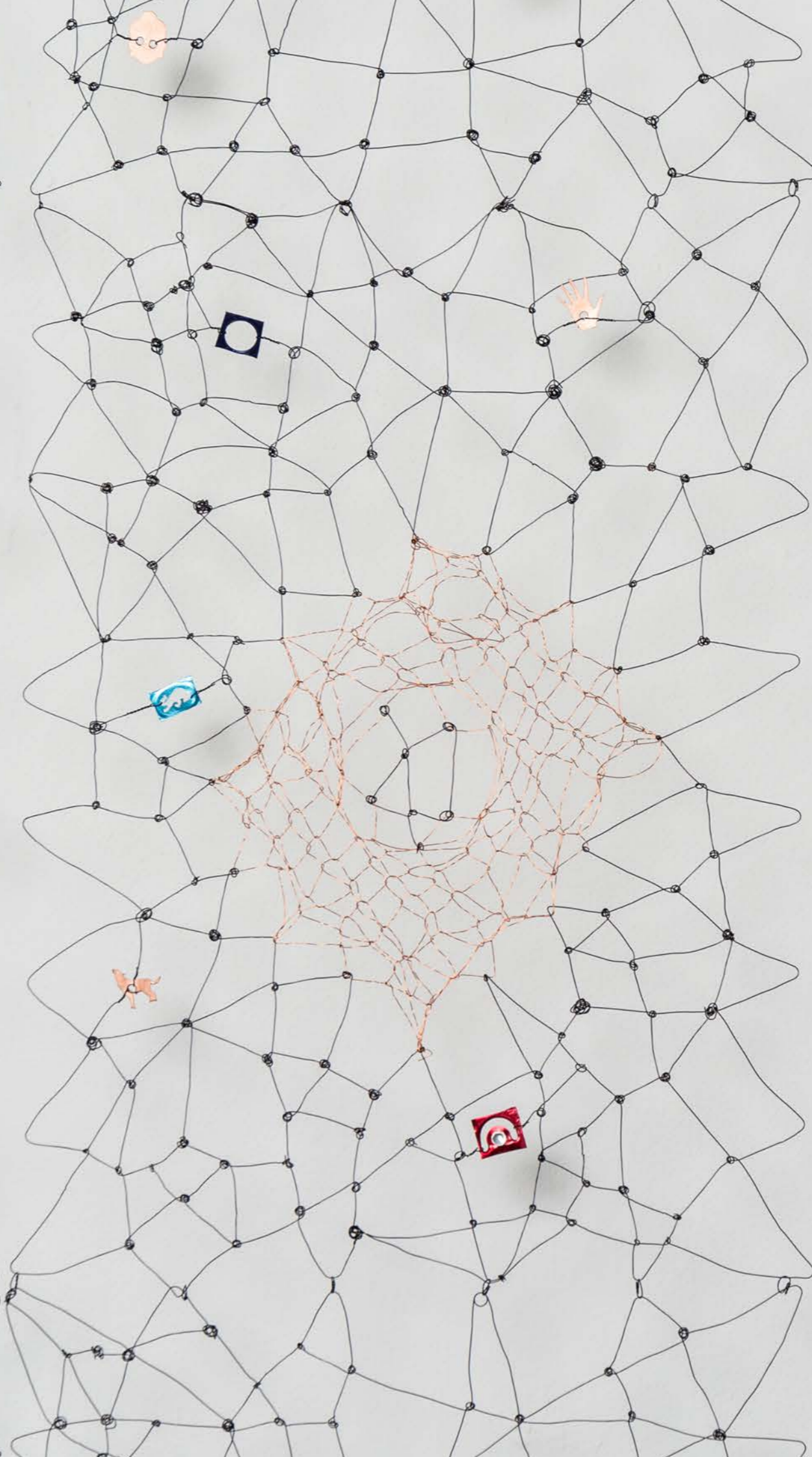
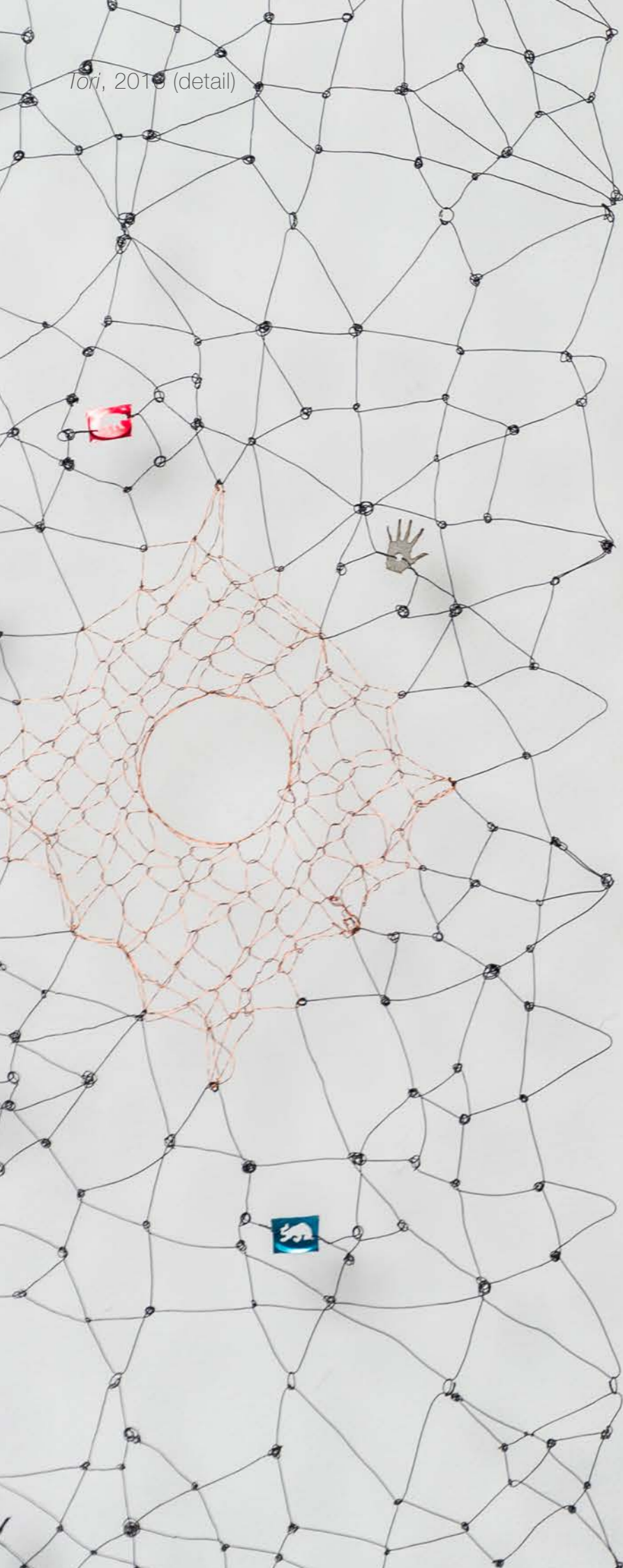


It is all about finding your inner child ... getting into it, forgetting to keep a safe distance, being ALL IN, like a child - shipwrecks, spiders' webs, snakes, animal skeletons and all. Chaos and order. Joy mixed with terror. Combining big and small, high and low, Gjertrud Hals mixes auto-biographical and feminist themes with legendary story-telling, folk art and fine art, profane and sacred ... a simple down-to-earth mysticism, as she calls it, that beckons the child in us all.

*Tori*, 2017  
62 x 84 cm.  
Copper wire, pieces of metal.  
Unique piece



Torj, 2019 (detail)





Trained in the art of tapestry-weaving in the 1970's, Gjertrud Hals' interest in feminism and women's culture associates her with the new Polish wave of women artists exploring the sculptural potential of textile. The word fiber art appeared in the United States in the 1960's, and the first fiber art exhibition ("Woven Forms") took place in 1963 in New York at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts. Previously, this style had been referred to as "off-loom", and it is the process of binding elements together which comes from weaving that is the common denominator of fiber art.

*Gemini*, 2017  
120 x 100 cm  
Crochet with metal threads (copper, iron, brass), found objects.  
Unique Piece

"In 2007, I went on a pilgrimage in Japan with two colleges. We planned to walk on foot to the 88 Zen-Buddhist temples on Shikoku. However, after 24 temples, I strained my leg, and I had to continue on my own by bus, train and careful walking. I got plenty of time to look around and pick up interesting items, like tabs from beverage cans. The Coca-Cola and Kirin vending-machines were everywhere, also in the temples. In retrospect, they stand before me as inseparable parts of the sacred temples!" G.H.

*Pilgrim Kirin*, 2020  
110 X 110 cm  
Copper wire, metal objects  
Unique piece





Photo Credits :  
Sjur Fedje  
Omar Sejnæs



## **Gjertrud Hals**

Born 1948, Finnøy, Norway

### **Education:**

1971-72 SLFN, degree in Art Education  
1975-77 SLFO, degree in Art Education  
1986-87 Art Academy, Trondheim

### **Collections selected**

Mobilier National/ Les Gobelins, Paris  
Kube Art Museum, Ålesund  
Museum Bellerive, Zurich  
Museum of Decorative Art, Lausanne  
American Craft Museum, New York  
Erie Art Museum, Pennsylvania  
Leopold-Hoesch Museum, Düren  
The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo  
The National Museum of Decorative Arts, Trondheim  
Arts Council Norway

### **Awards:**

2002 Bærum Municipal Art Prize  
1989 Grand Prix, International Textile Competition`89, Kyoto  
1987 1.Prize, Metro Arts Intern. Art Competition, New York

### **Grants:**

2020, 1998, 88 Ingrid Linbæk Langaard Foundation  
2018, 14, 11 BKH Exhibition Grant  
2010, 07, 04, 00 Arts Councils Exhibition Grant  
1998 The Inadomi Foundation  
1997 The National Guarantee Income for Artists  
1992 The National Work Grant for Artists (3 years)  
1991 Rune Brynstad Memorial Legacy  
1990, 89 Vederlagsfondet Grant  
1989 Sasakawa Foundation

### **Solo Exhibition selected**

2020 Sanctum, Galerie Maria Wettergren, Paris  
2018 Gjennom Maskene, Krona, Romsdalsmuseet  
2017 Det gule huset, Asker  
2015 ULTIMA, Galerie Maria Wettergren, Paris  
2015 Bærum Kunsthall, Fornebu  
2014 Himmerland Art Museum, DK  
2014 Kube Art Museum, Ålesund  
2012 Gallery RAM, Oslo  
2011 Molde International Jazz Festival, Festival Artist  
2008 Norwegian Forest Museum, Elverum  
2006 Gallery Heer, Oslo  
2005 Gallery Svalbard, Longyearbyen  
2003 Gallery Ill, Oslo  
2002 Trondheim Art Museum, Trondheim  
2000 Nils Aas Art Studio, Inderøy  
1999 The Bjørnson Festival, Festival of International Literature, Molde  
1990 North Norwegian Art Center, Svolvær  
1989 Gallery Wang, Oslo  
1988 Shæffergården, Copenhagen  
1988 Gallery F15, Moss  
1985 Møre og Romsdal Art Center, Molde

### **Group Exhibitions, selected**

2020 TEFAF Maastricht  
2017 Fiberfeber. Museum of Decorative Art, Trondheim  
2019, 18, 17, 16, 15 PAD Paris, Galerie Maria Wettergren  
2019, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14 PAD London Art+Design, Galerie Maria Wettergren  
2019, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14 Design Miami/Basel, Galerie Maria Wettergren  
2018 70 - 100, Bærum Art Hall  
2018, 17, 16, 15, 14 The Salon: Art+Design NY, Galerie Maria Wettergren  
2018 Threads & Fibers, Contemporary Scandinavian Design, Galerie Maria Wettergren  
2017 Fiberfeber, Museum of Decorative Art, Trondheim  
2016 Apent Rom, Nils Aas Art Studio, Straumen  
2016, 15 Art Genève, Galerie Maria Wettergren  
2015 Päivitetty pitsi(modern lace art).Hankasalmi, Finland  
2015 Herfra. Kube Art Museum, Ålesund

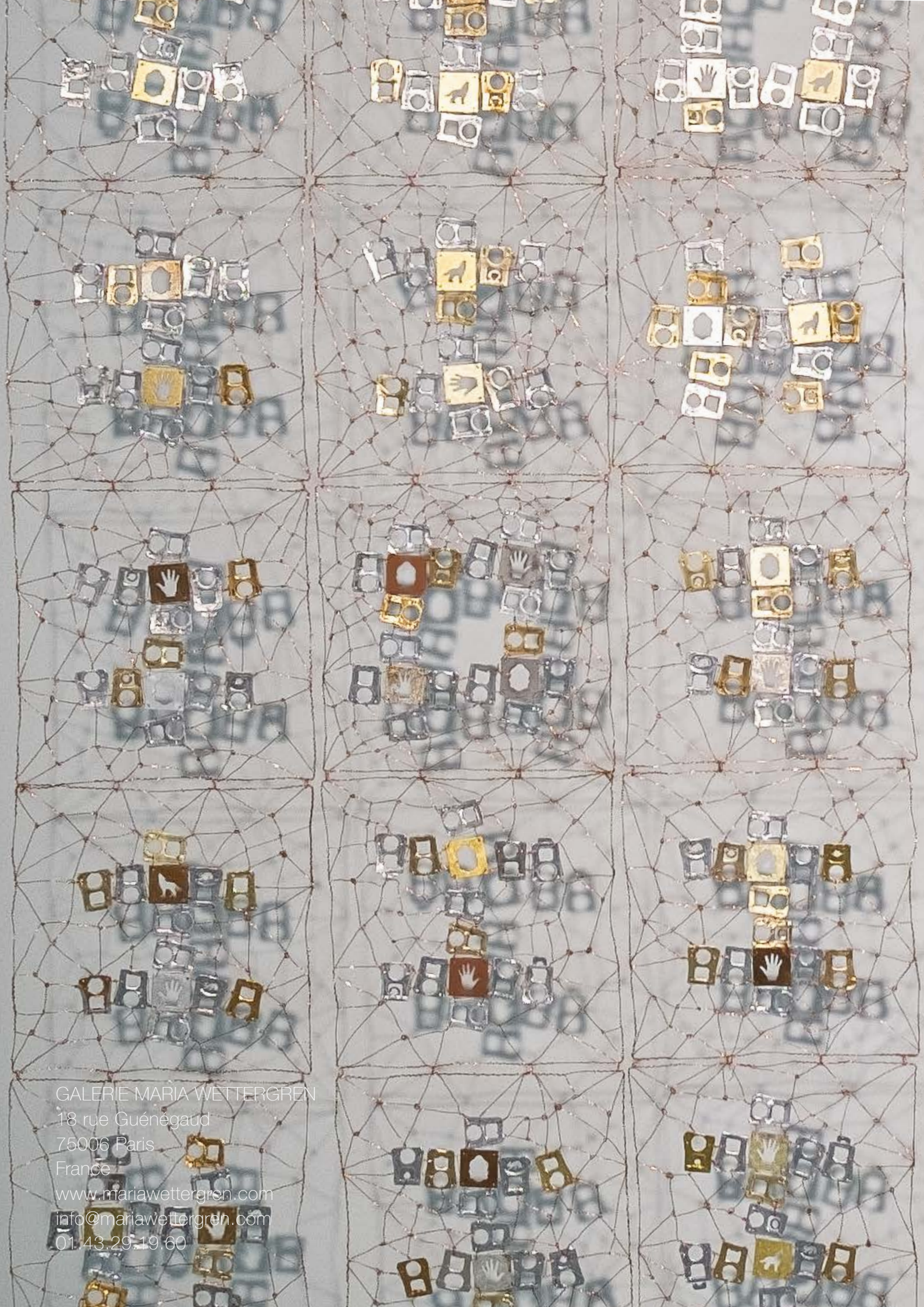
2015 Interwoven. Merzbau Gallery, Miami  
 2015, 11, 09, 07 Art in Nature. Landart in Vengedalen, Romsdal  
 2015 Fattig kunst-rik arv. National Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo  
 2014 The Vevring Exhibition, Vevring  
 2012 Lost Garden, Høvikodden  
 2012 Moving, Ålesund  
 2011 Paper Art Exhibition, Seitenstetten, Austria  
 2010 Goddesses II, the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo  
 2010 The Holland Paper Art Biennial 2010, Apeldoorn and Rijswijk  
 2005 Identity, Kube Art Museum, Ålesund  
 2003 Modern Masters, Munich  
 2002 Masterpieces –Capolavori, Turin  
 2002 Norwegian Textile Artists 25 years, Notodden  
 2001 SOFA-Sculpture Object and Functional Art, New York  
 2000 International Art Festival – Art 21, Palm Spring  
 1998 Cellulose, International Touring Exhibition in The Nordic Countries  
 1998 9th Triennial of Tapestry, Łódź  
 1997 Shelter, International Art Exhibition, Trondheim  
 1997 International Triennial of Tapestry and Textile Art, Tournai  
 1997 Norwegian Textile Artists 20 years, Oslo  
 1997 Blue, Haugar Art Museum, Tønsberg  
 1996 Flax and Linnen Biennial, Rouen and Paris  
 1995 Art -Material, Brandts Klædefabrik, Odense  
 1995 International Touring Exhibition in Scandinavia and Spain  
 1994 Paper Art, Gemeente Amstelveen Museum, Amsterdam  
 1992 Gallery "Kunst und Handwerk", Munich  
 1992 Ode de la coupe, Museum of Decorative Art, Lausanne  
 1992 3. Basketry Invitational, Michigan  
 1992 Kryss-Crossing Borders, Regional Art Center, Hordaland  
 1991 European Craft, Stuttgart  
 1991 Crossing Borders, Gallery F15, Moss  
 1991 Configura, Art in Europe, Erfurt  
 1990 Nordform, art , craft, design and architecture, Malmö  
 1990 Gallery Ram, Oslo  
 1990 International Biennial of Paper Art, Düren  
 1989 Splendid Forms, Bellas Artes Gallery, Santa Fe and New York  
 1989 Nordic Textile Triennial  
 1989 New Norwegian Textile Art, Museum of Decorative Art, Trondheim  
 1989 ITF International Textile Competition`89, Kyoto  
 1989 Perspective on Paper, Maihaugen, Lillehammer  
 1988 Neo Tradition, Museum of Decorative Art, Trondheim  
 1988 The Tactile Vessel, Touring Exhibition in USA  
 1988 Textile Art 88, Maihaugen, Lillehammer  
 1988 The National Annual Exhibition (Høstutstillingen)  
 1988 Metro Art's International Art Competition, New York  
 1987, 84, 83, 82, 80 The National Annual Exhibition  
 1986, 84, 83, 81, 80, 79 The Annual Exhibition for Western Norway (Vestlandsutstillingen)  
 1984 The 3.Michoacan Int. Exhibition of Miniature Textiles, Mexico  
 1984 5th Int. Biennial of Miniature Textiles, Ungarn  
 1984 The Annual Exhibition for Trøndelag  
 1982 Nordic Textile Triennial  
 1980 Art and Church, Trondheim  
 1975 Norwegian Contemporary Textile, Oslo Art Association, Oslo

### Selected Commissions

2014 Kristiansund College  
 2013 NGLMS, Otta  
 2012 Teatret Vårt, Møre og Romsdal  
 2006 Shell Administration Building, Aukra  
 2002 Rica Seilet Hotel, Molde  
 1997 Statoil Administration Building, Tjeldbergodden  
 1994 Molde University College, Molde  
 1993 Brage Oil Platform  
 1992 Draugen Oil Platfo



Exhibition view :  
 Romsdal Museum, 2018



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