

materials and process³

slash

paper under the knife



museum of arts and design
5 continents editions

to take over South's painted surfaces; the fine drawn lines and bold painted colors on the walls were transferred to the machines themselves, creating the effect of illusionistic shading that further defined her forms while making the surfaces appear like engraved images of machines. South has continued to respond to the industrial landscape she observes and analyzes: "her work speaks to the interconnected, sprawling nature of our modern environment."³⁸

Her landscapes of mysterious and sometimes threatening machinery are silent and abandoned. They confound rational understanding of their purpose while engaging us with their lacelike structures and often surprising colors, ranging from rusty browns and sooty grays and blacks to depressing dusty pinks and sallow greens that recall public schools and hospitals. By 2004, South's fully formed contraptions began to function as extrusions from and intrusions into architecture, as seen in her *Untitled (Double Cut Wall)* at Spencer Brownstone Gallery, New York. The work intersected the gallery wall to create a visual dialogue between structure and space. This concept has been fully realized in her current installation; an imposing wall of machines

appears to have entered the museum gallery by way of a vertical window slot, providing a barrier wall while also permitting fragmented views of the space through the gridwork of struts and structures the artist has created.

FORM AND SPACE: SLICING ARCHITECTURE

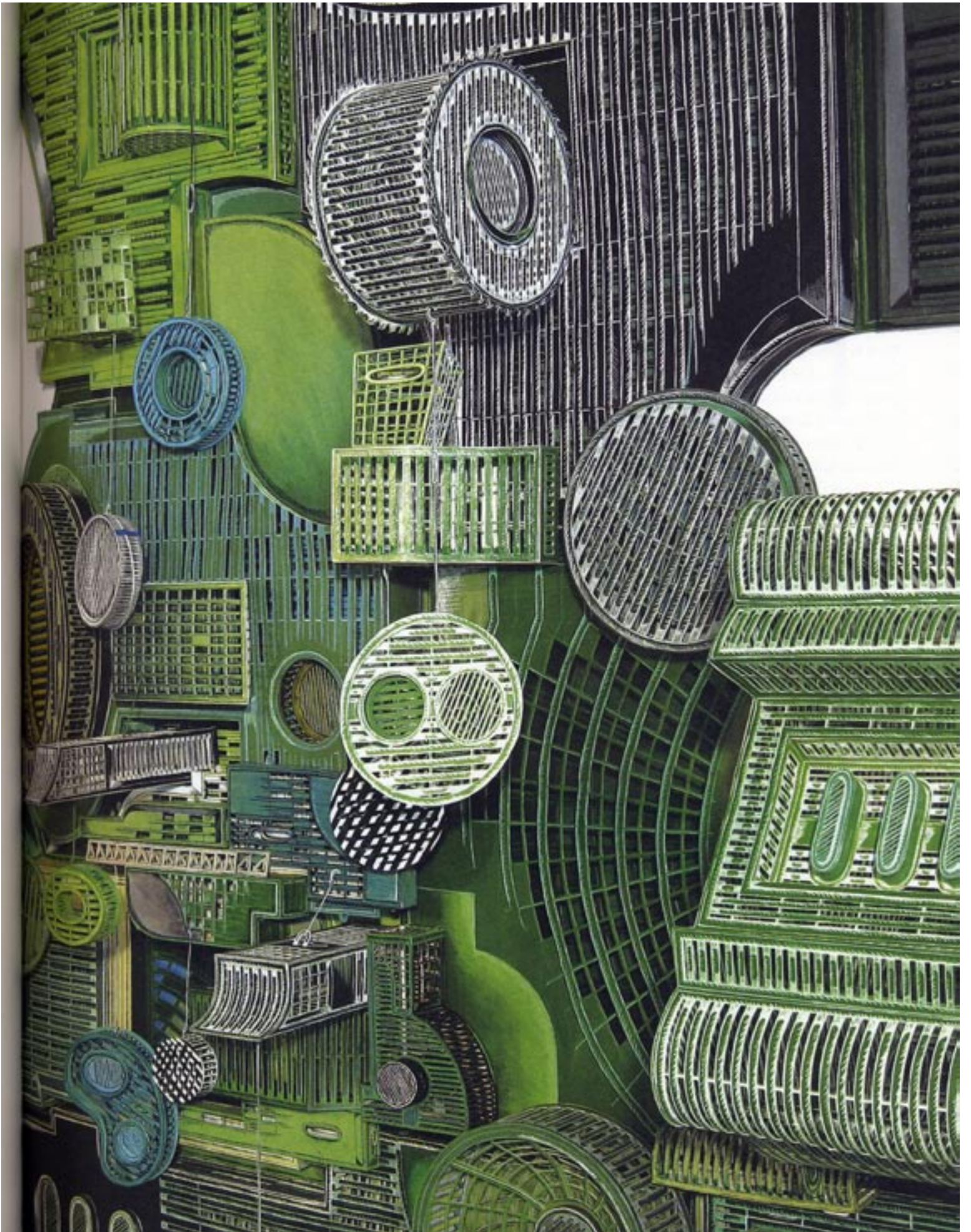
Architect Frank Gehry is quoted as saying, "Paper is structure. If I can make it out of paper I know I can build it."³⁷ Several of the artists in *Slash: Paper Under the Knife* establish a visual and intellectual dialogue with architecture—as form, as space, and as social and cultural environment.

Jane South's *Working Drawing* (2002), installed at MASS MoCA, North Adams, MA, comprised a 90-foot-wide wall composition painted a garish industrial orange. Schematic drawings of wheels, gears, grids, and push buttons emerged from the wall in three dimensions. These mutant mechanisms, paper simulacra of metal machines, began

far left:
Tomáš Gabzdil Libertiny,
Slovakia/The Netherlands
THE PAPER VASES, 2007
700 paper prints, ink, wood glue,
copper plate
Dimensions variable
Collection of the artist

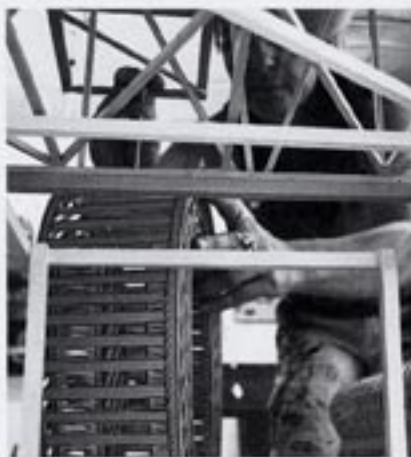
left:
Jane South, England/United States
*Untitled (Long Wheeled
Construction)*, 2006 (detail)
Hand-cut and folded paper, ink,
acrylic, balsa wood
Overall: 54 x 168 x 19 in.
(137.2 x 426.7 x 48.3 cm)
Courtesy of the artist and Spencer
Brownstone Gallery, New York





Jane South

British-born Jane South currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She studied at the Central School of Art (now Central/ St. Martins) in London, receiving a BA in theater set and costume design. Her MFA in painting and sculpture was earned at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. Since 1998, her work has been seen in numerous institutions including the Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria, New York; White Columns, New York; MASS MoCA, North Adams, Massachusetts; the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, Connecticut; and the Nassauischer Kunstverein, Wiesbaden, Germany. Among her fellowships, grants, and residencies are those from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center, the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, and the New York Foundation for the Arts. She has lectured, taught, and served as artist in residence in the United States, France, and Australia.



In Brooklyn, I live surrounded by the remnants of nineteenth-century industrial architecture, crumbling wharves, shipping cranes, and windowless warehouses, along with the burgeoning technological infrastructures of the twenty-first century, giant satellite dishes and fiber-optic cable terminals. My work references these structures and the ways I have seen my neighborhood evolve (for better and worse) over the years. New York City in particular is de- and re-constructed so much that it exists in a constant state of undress, exposing its history through dilapidated and/or shoddily/cheaply constructed layers—a reminder of the illusory and temporary nature of the urban landscape. Most of my work is made out of paper (the larger pieces also incorporating exposed wooden structures) which is hand-cut, folded, and constructed into three-dimensional elements. For me there is an honesty in the use of paper, a direct and fundamental art-making material that has a contrary relationship to the structures referenced. I would like these works to appear to waver between things: awkwardness/elegance, architecture/drawing, slight/monumental, direct/mysterious, ancient/futuristic. I would also like them to exist as states navigated in the mind—the way one mentally maps the landscape of a novel—but also to be present in real, external space.

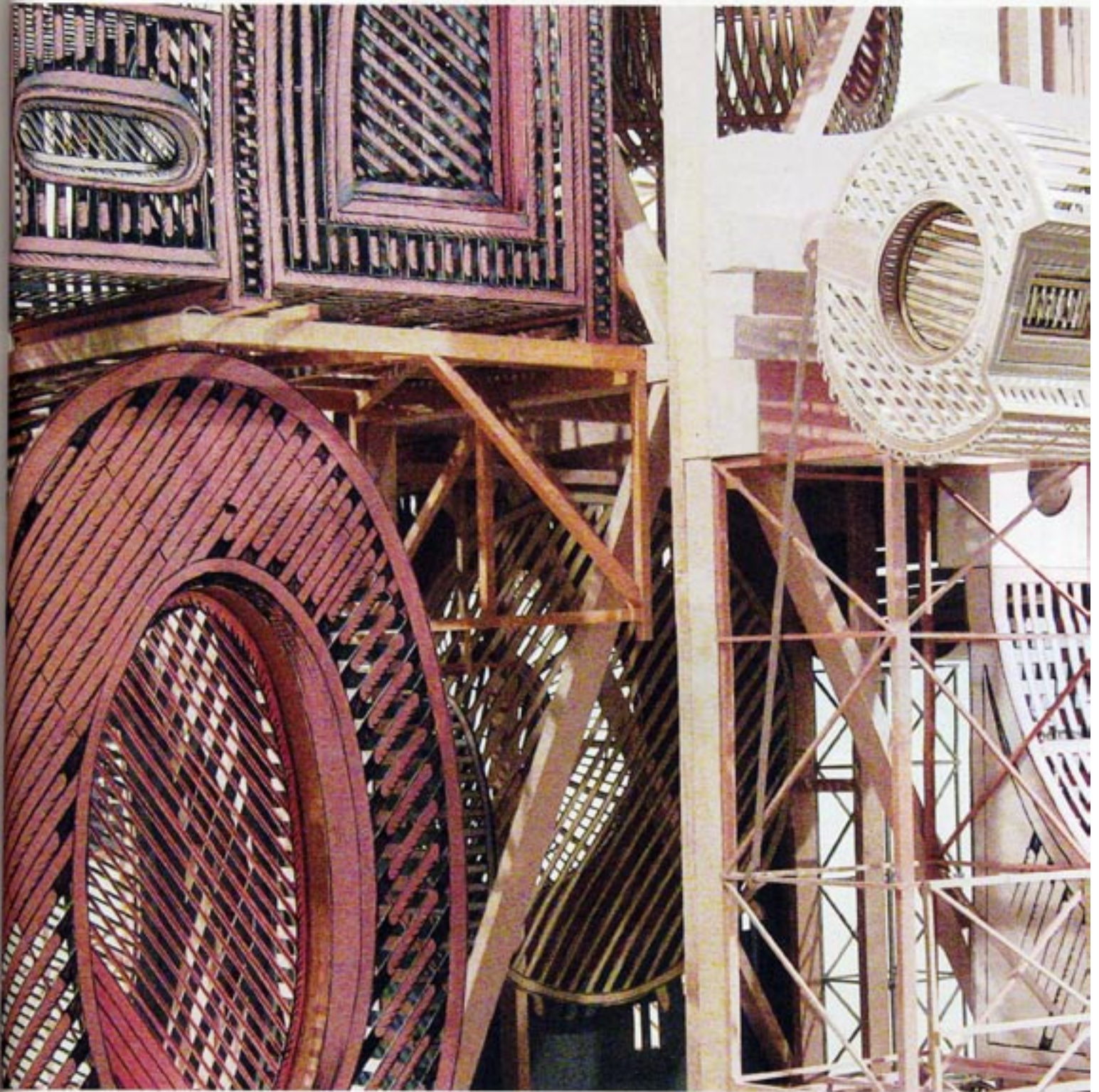
Untitled (Tower), 2009 (detail)

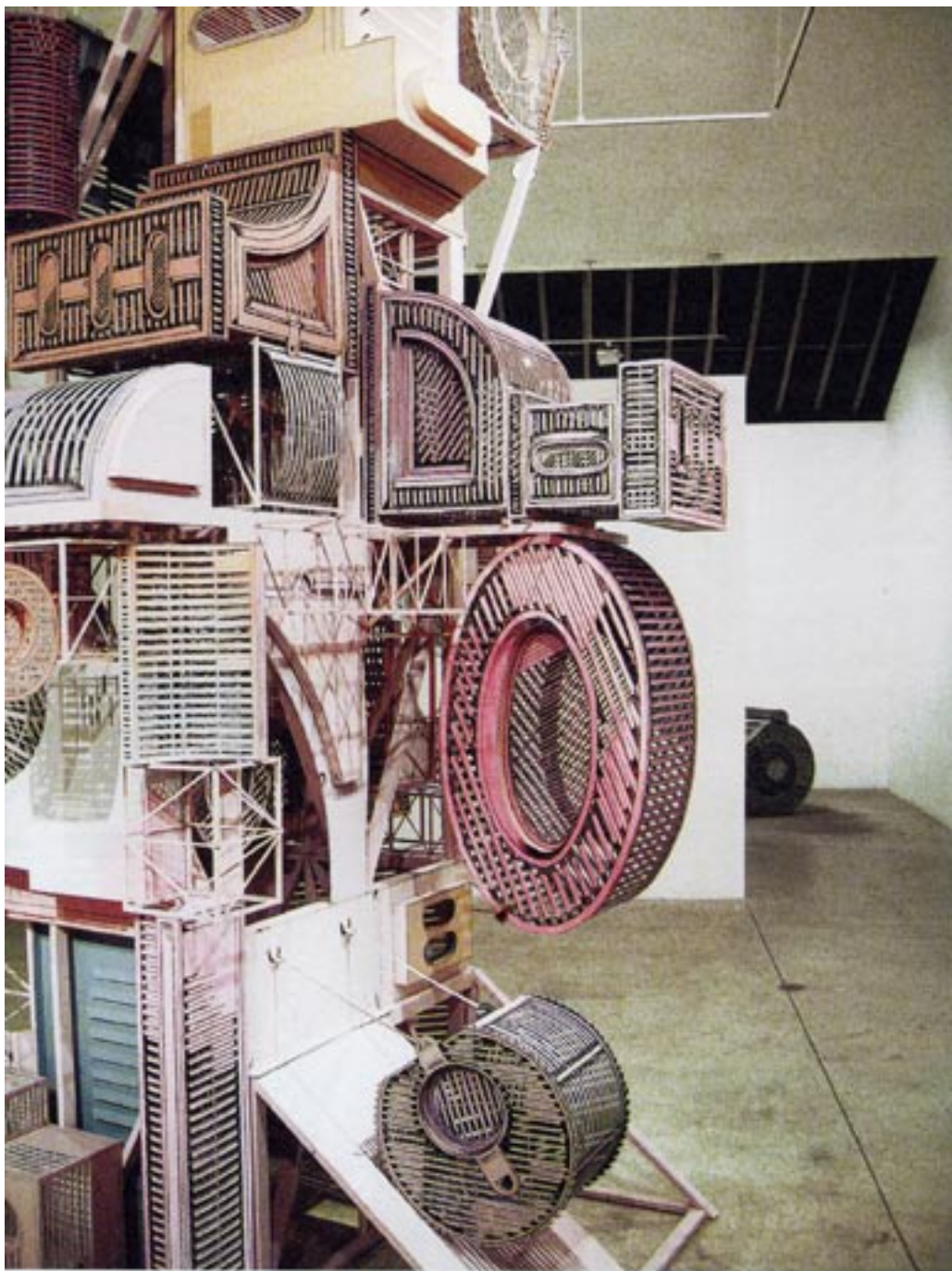
Hand-cut and folded paper, ink,
acrylic, wood

Overall: 15 x 6 x 5 ft.

(457.2 x 182.9 x 152.4 cm)

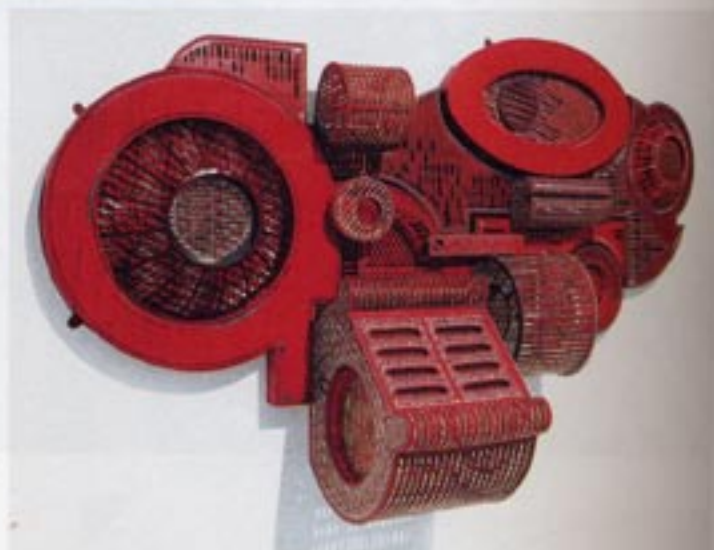
Courtesy of the artist and Spencer
Brownstone Gallery, New York



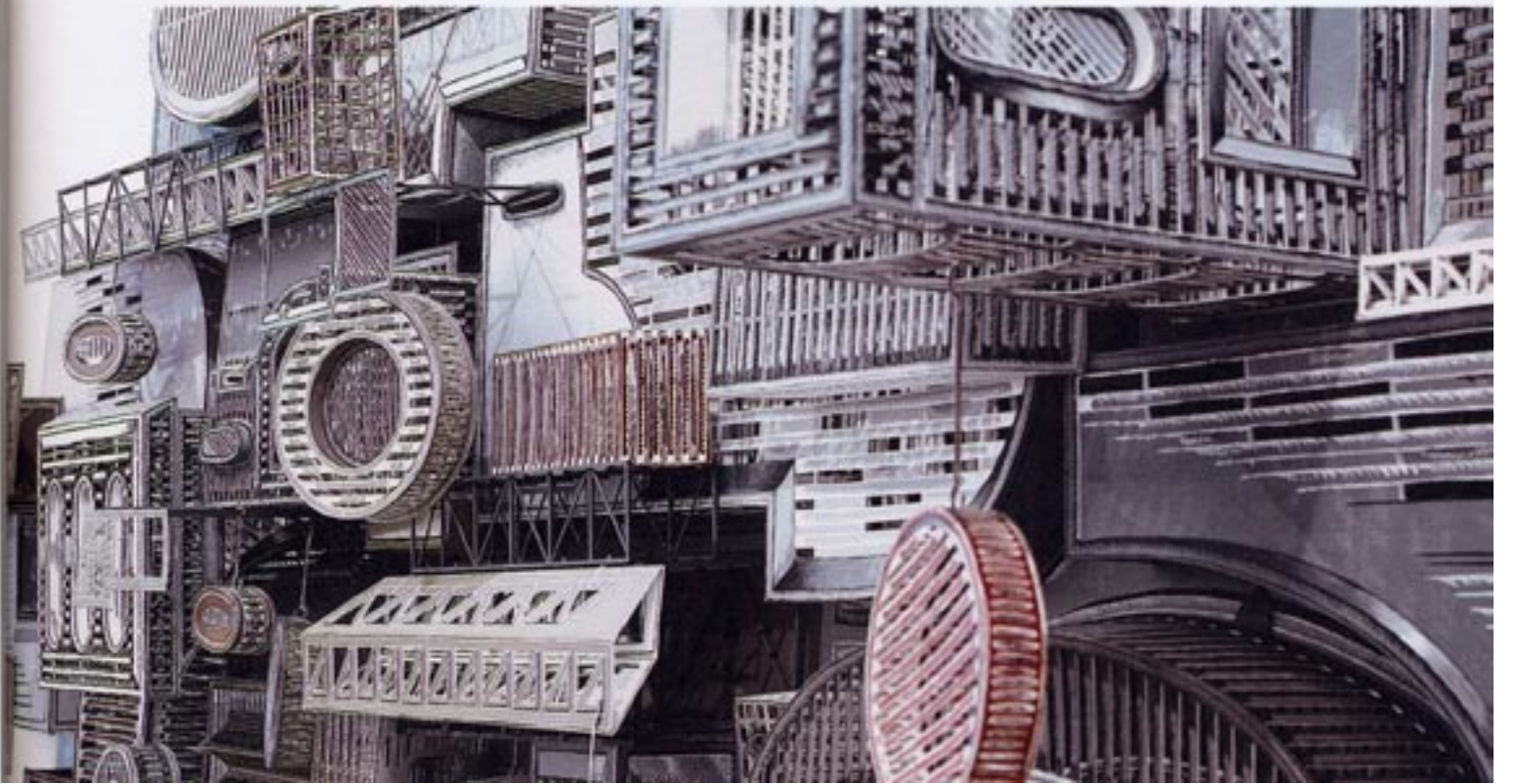
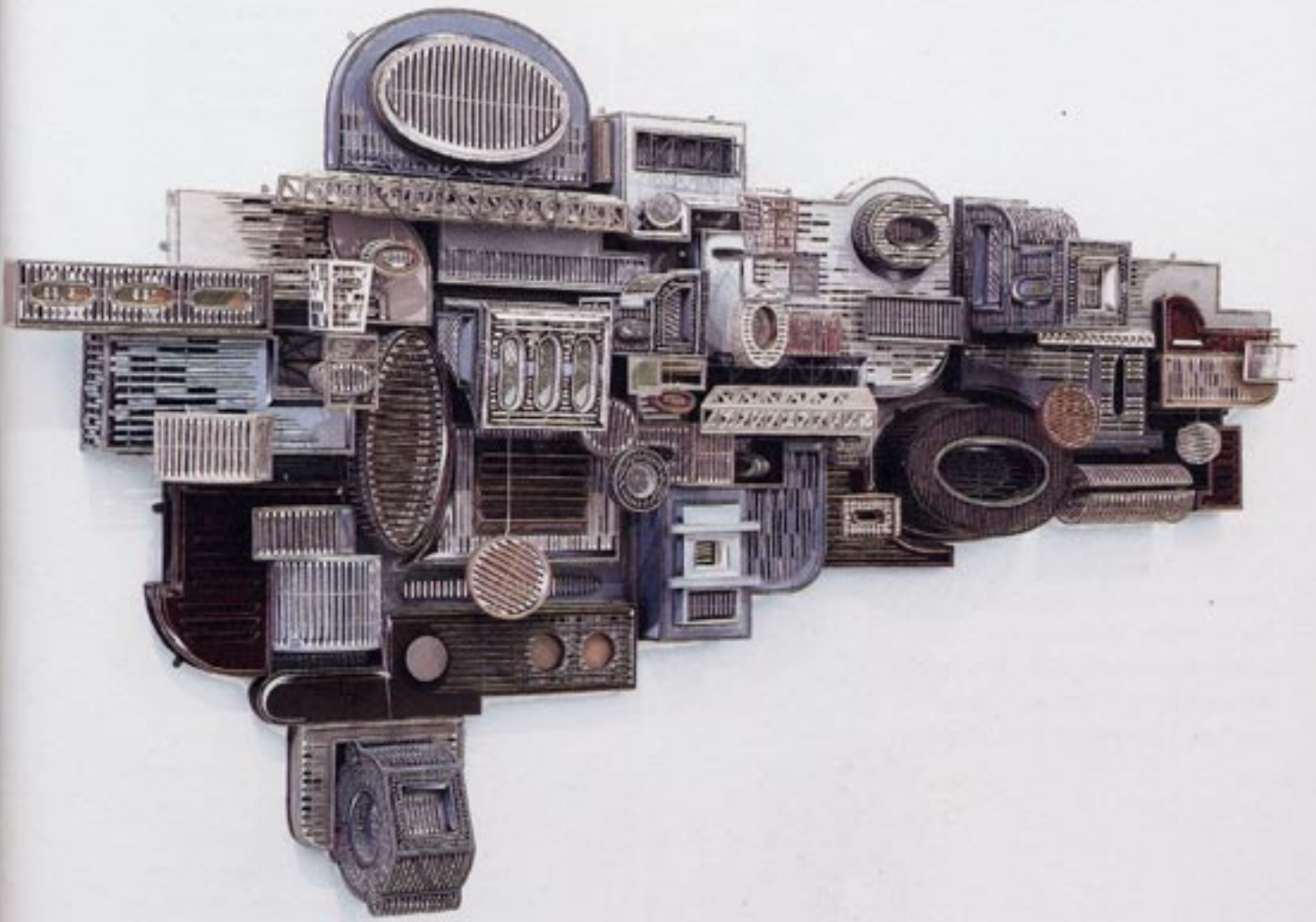


Untitled (Tower), 2009 (detail)

opposite; detail bottom:
Untitled (Long Gray Construction),
 2006
 Hand-cut and folded paper, ink,
 acrylic, balsa wood
 67 x 116 x 14 in.
 (170.2 x 294.6 x 35.6 cm)
 Collection of the Weatherspoon
 Art Museum, Greensboro, North
 Carolina



Untitled (Irregular Ellipse), 2008
 Hand-cut and folded paper, ink, acrylic
 9 x 3 x 1 ft. (274.3 x 91.4 x 30.5 cm)
 Courtesy of the artist and Spencer
 Brownstone Gallery, New York





Eclectic, eccentric, and tirelessly innovative, art crafted from cut paper has experienced an exciting renaissance in recent years. Published to accompany an exhibition organized by the Museum of Arts and Design in New York, *Slash: Paper Under the Knife* examines the resurgence of creative interest in one of the most ubiquitous materials through the lens of contemporary art and design. Highlighting the work of fifty-two

international artists, among them Olafur Eliasson, Tom Friedman, and Kara Walker, the book features cut, burned, torn, laser-cut, and shredded paper art. In addition, the book includes the work of cut-paper animators and photographers. Works range from small-scale intricate cuttings to large-scale architectural inventions and sculptures. With an essay by chief curator David Revere McFadden, this singular book reveals that, with ingenuity and craftsmanship, one of our most familiar materials can be transformed into unforgettable works of art.

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