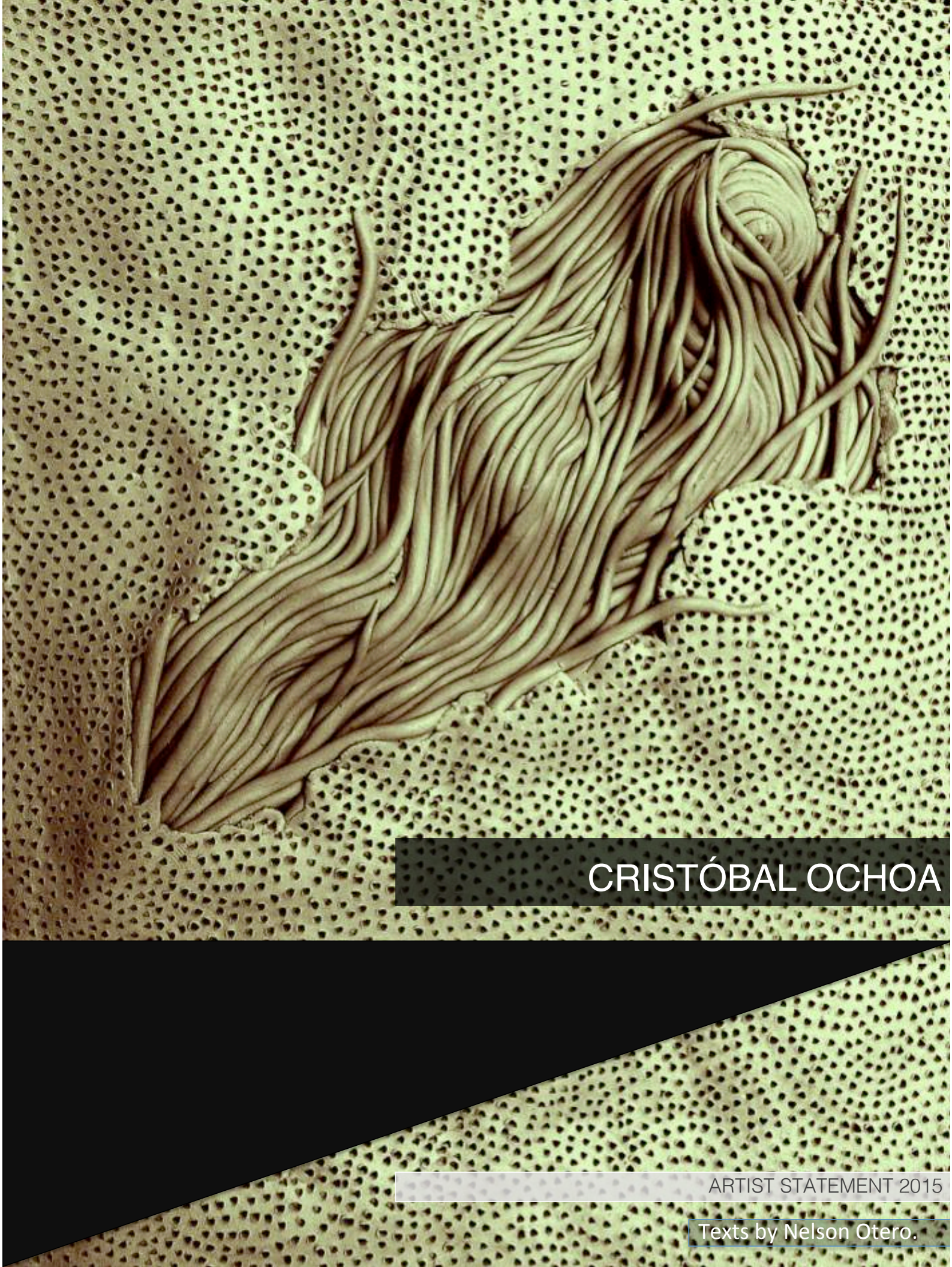


CRISTÓBAL OCHOA

ARTIST STATEMENT 2015

Texts by Nelson Otero.

SCULPTURAL WORK

Versatility and Contemporaneity

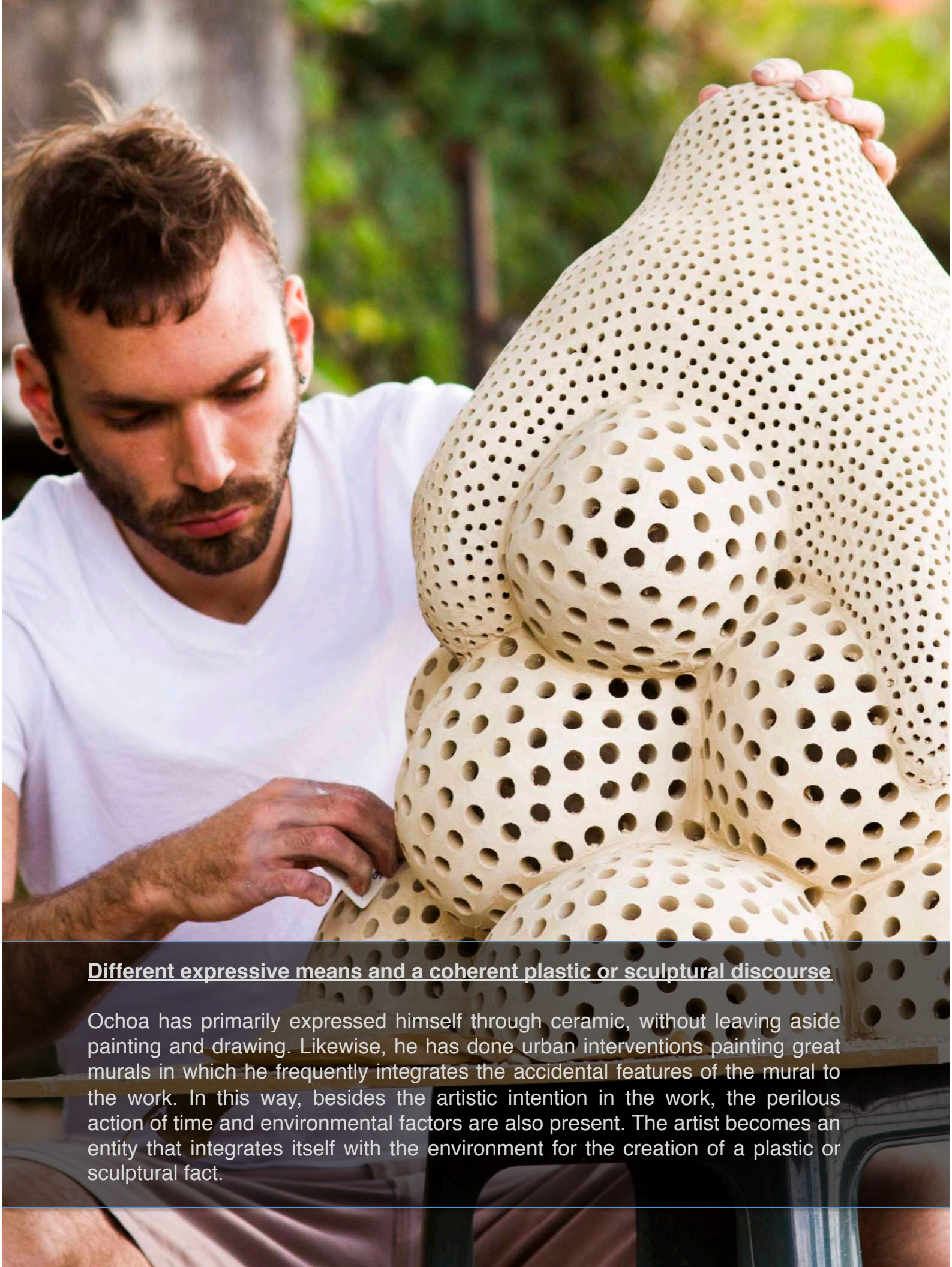
Cristóbal Ochoa (Caracas, 1986) is a versatile artist who expresses his creative vitality through means as different as: sculptural ceramic, painting, drawing, performance, and corporeal and urban interventions.

His creative work and being derives from the inevitable need to express his existential experiences; he assumes this inner revelation process with complete passion, honesty and dedication. Ochoa does not make concessions in his work.

The succinctness of his life experience in an aesthetic, ephemeral or lasting fact is the essential search that we perceive in his work. In this sense, the chosen means has a secondary significance. Nonetheless, with any of them he manages to reveal the different nuances of his creative inquiry and evidence the communicating vessels which give him coherence and permeability to his plastic or sculptural approach.

Cristóbal carries out his studies in Art in the Armando Reverón Institute of higher studies in Caracas, Venezuela (currently UNEARTE – the National Arts Experimental University, by its Spanish acronym) 2007-2011.

The photography piece was his first work in ceramic. This piece defined his course and his plastic or sculptural research.



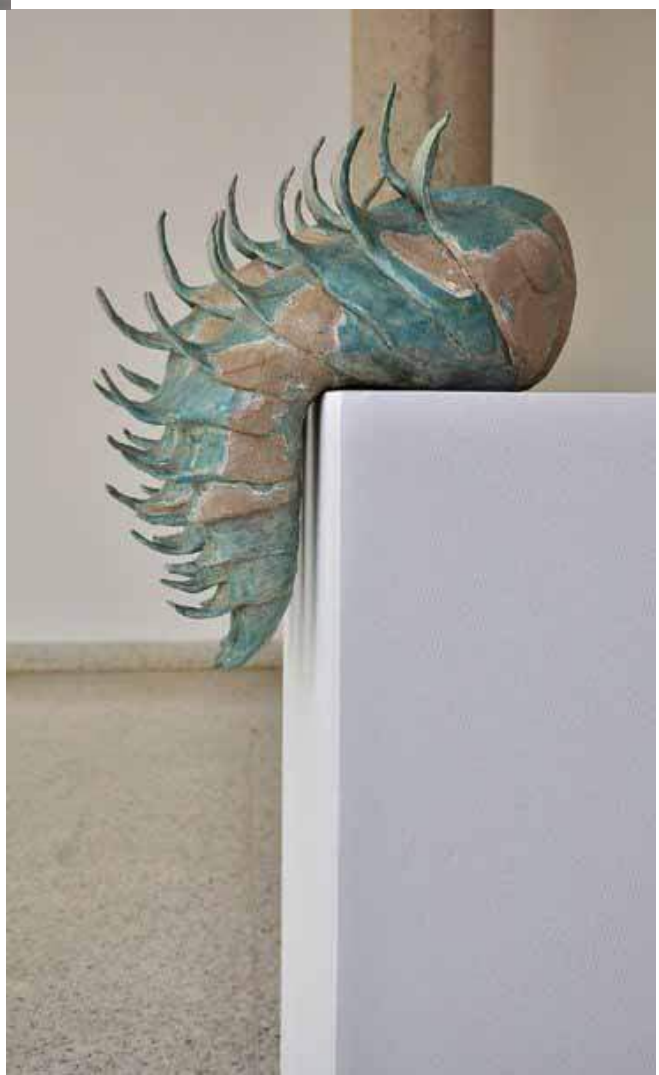
Different expressive means and a coherent plastic or sculptural discourse

Ochoa has primarily expressed himself through ceramic, without leaving aside painting and drawing. Likewise, he has done urban interventions painting great murals in which he frequently integrates the accidental features of the mural to the work. In this way, besides the artistic intention in the work, the perilous action of time and environmental factors are also present. The artist becomes an entity that integrates itself with the environment for the creation of a plastic or sculptural fact.

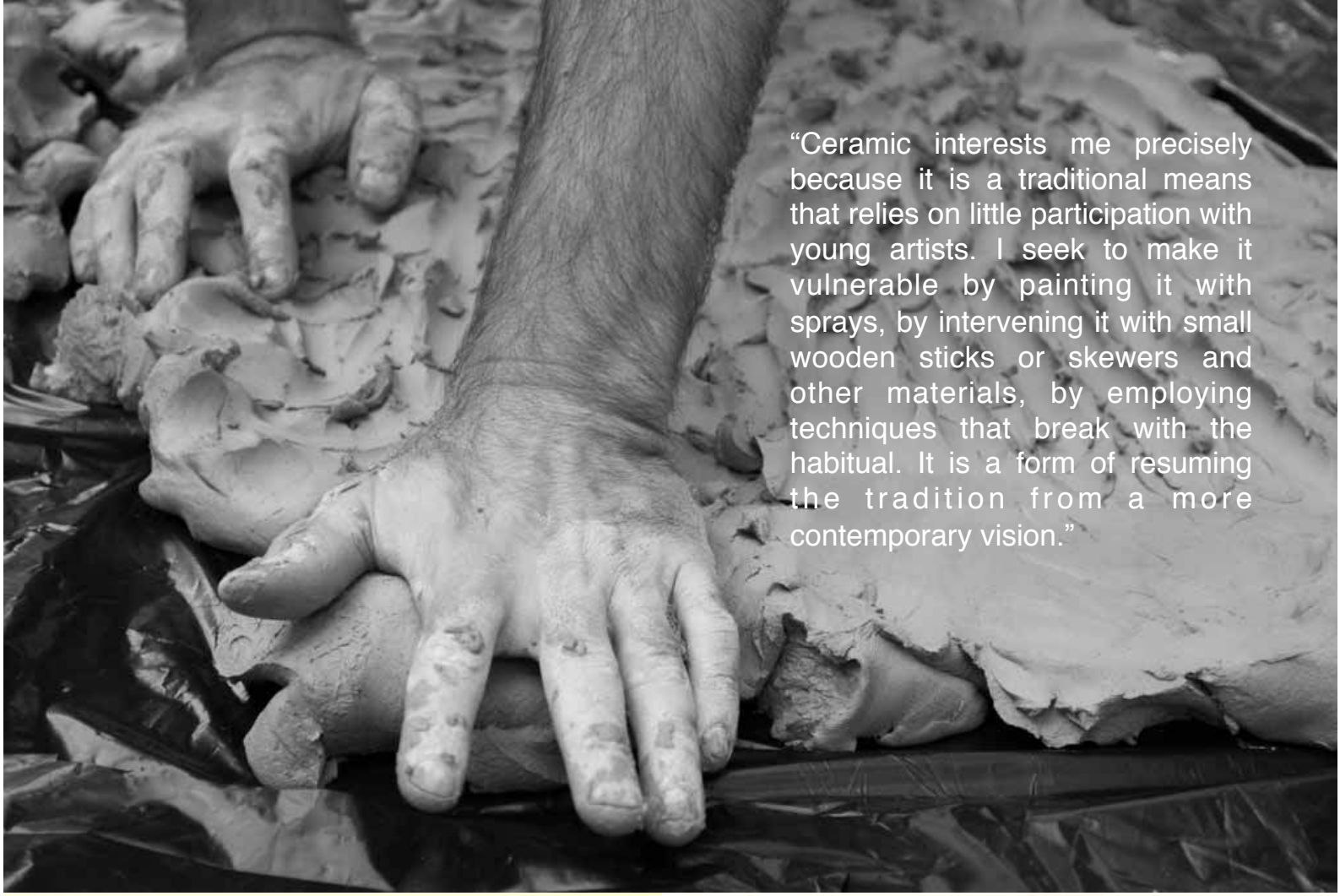
Cristóbal Ochoa was bestowed in 2009 the “Bolsa de Trabajo” Award, granted by the Ateneo de Valencia in the “36 Salón Nacional de las artes del fuego” *[36 National Hall of the arts of fire]* with his work “Ecdisis”.

In the “38 Salón de las artes del fuego” he receives the ACAF acknowledgement for his work “En la pobreza y en la riqueza” *[“In poorness and in wealth”].*

“A piece that rescues the constructive and expressive possibilities of traditional ceramic. It represents a fantastic form comprised of three protuberances covered by a series of petals or continuous layers and in decreasing size. It recalls an unidentifiable organic form whose three bodies fall heavily over the piece that supports it. The whole piece is covered by greenish-matte glaze which reveals patches of coloration of the material or applications of slip in another color. It is a piece that rescues and underlines the ceramic trade committed to the pure form, with the expressive liberty and in clear disengagement with the utilitarian sense of conventional ceramic.”
Gabino Matos.



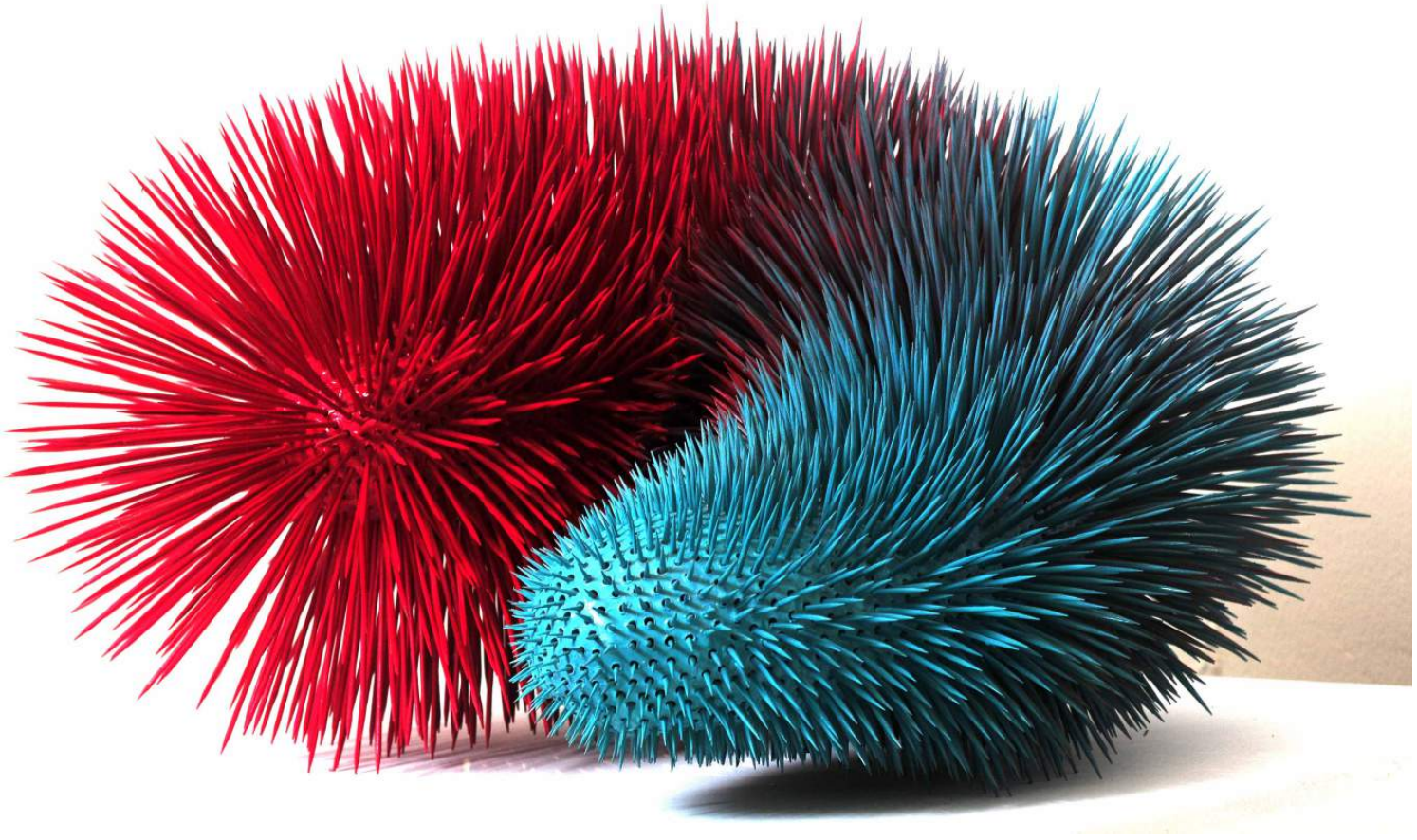
Cristóbal Ochoa
"Múdate" *["Move Out"]*
60x45x25cms
Ceramic
2010



“Ceramic interests me precisely because it is a traditional means that relies on little participation with young artists. I seek to make it vulnerable by painting it with sprays, by intervening it with small wooden sticks or skewers and other materials, by employing techniques that break with the habitual. It is a form of resuming the tradition from a more contemporary vision.”

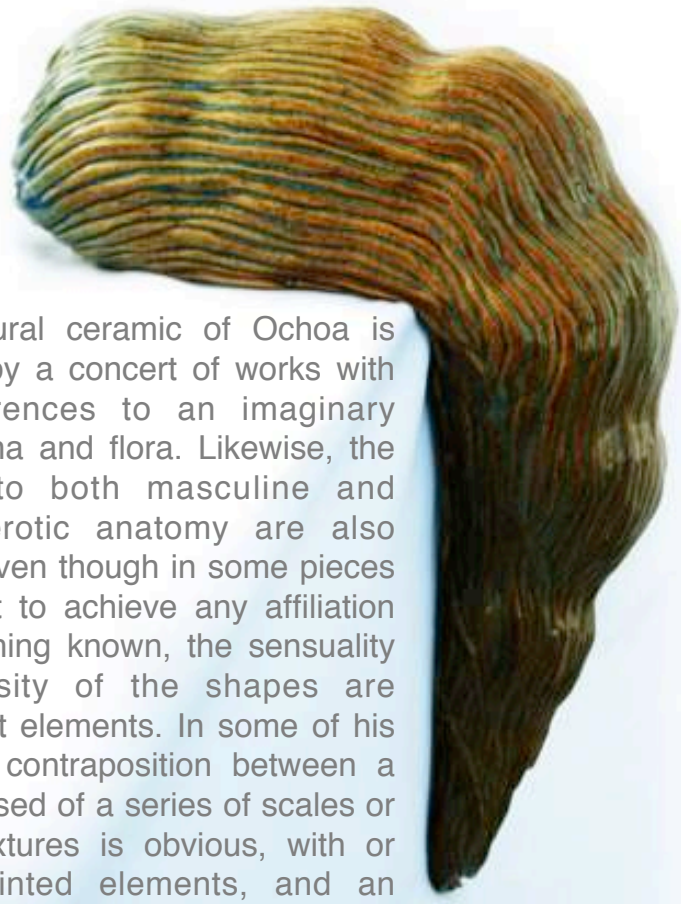
Cristóbal Ochoa
"Cachos" *["Horns"]*
Ceramic
55x35x26cms
2010

Of the series “insuflas”
Ceramic
2012

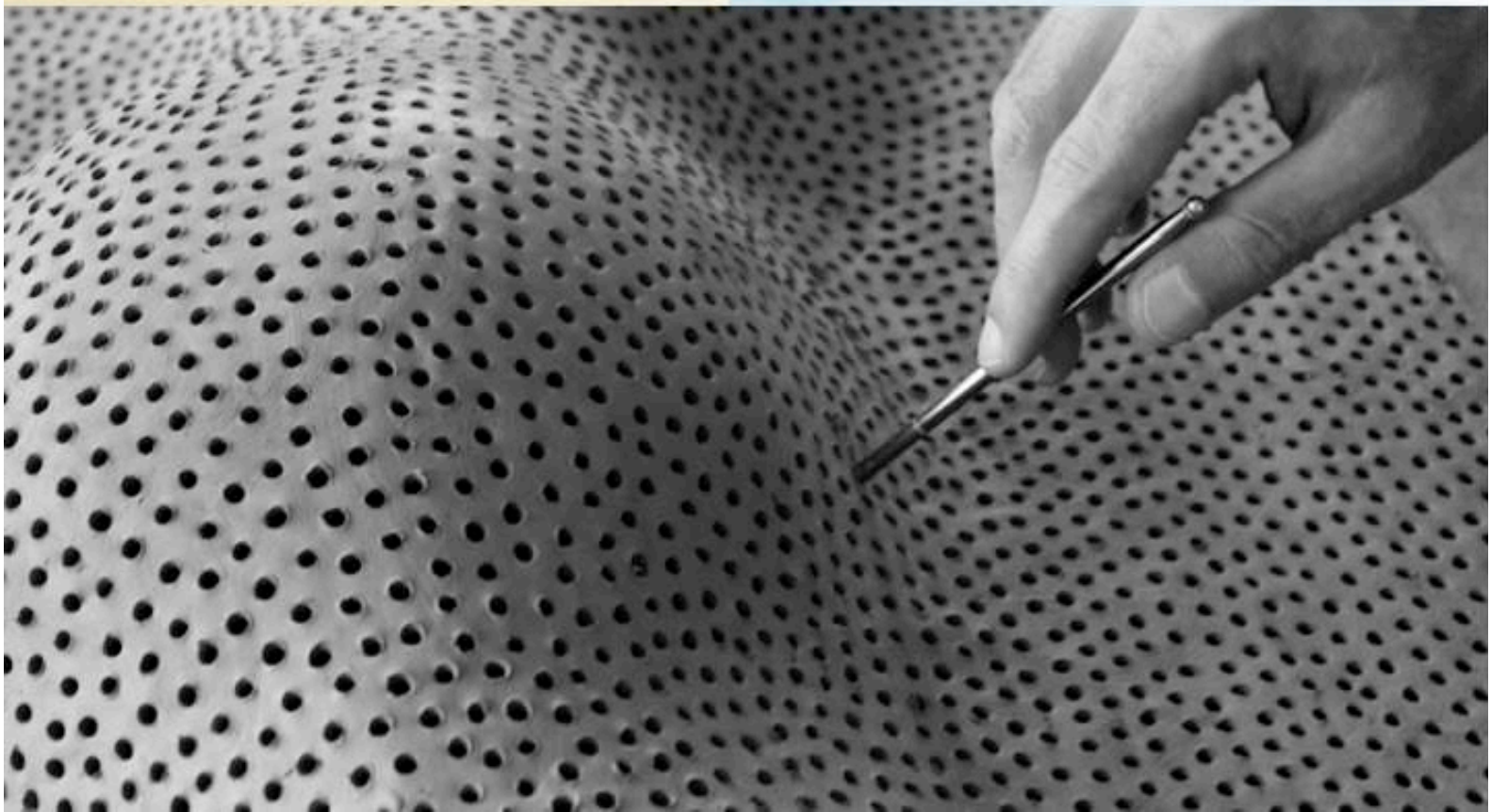


The Seduction – Rejection Duality

Ochoa is aware that the seduction-rejection duality is one of the underlying metaphors in his works. The spiny thorns inserted in the ceramic core, as well as other coarse textures that seem rough to the touch, are a clear illusion to the psychological defenses or armors that the contemporary man creates in order to conceal or to protect his inner self. His weaknesses and fears, and consequently to protect himself from the aggression resulting from an outer world that we do not control. In this same way, textures, colors and sinuosity of shapes, generally in the interior of the pieces, are used as elements of seduction that capture the observer in the eternal enchantment of the rejection-seduction duality.



The sculptural ceramic of Ochoa is populated by a concert of works with clear references to an imaginary marine fauna and flora. Likewise, the allusions to both masculine and feminine erotic anatomy are also common. Even though in some pieces it is difficult to achieve any affiliation with something known, the sensuality and sinuosity of the shapes are omnipresent elements. In some of his pieces the contraposition between a skin comprised of a series of scales or leathery textures is obvious, with or without pointed elements, and an interior that shows itself or it can be intuited as smooth and subtle, in its shape, color or texture.



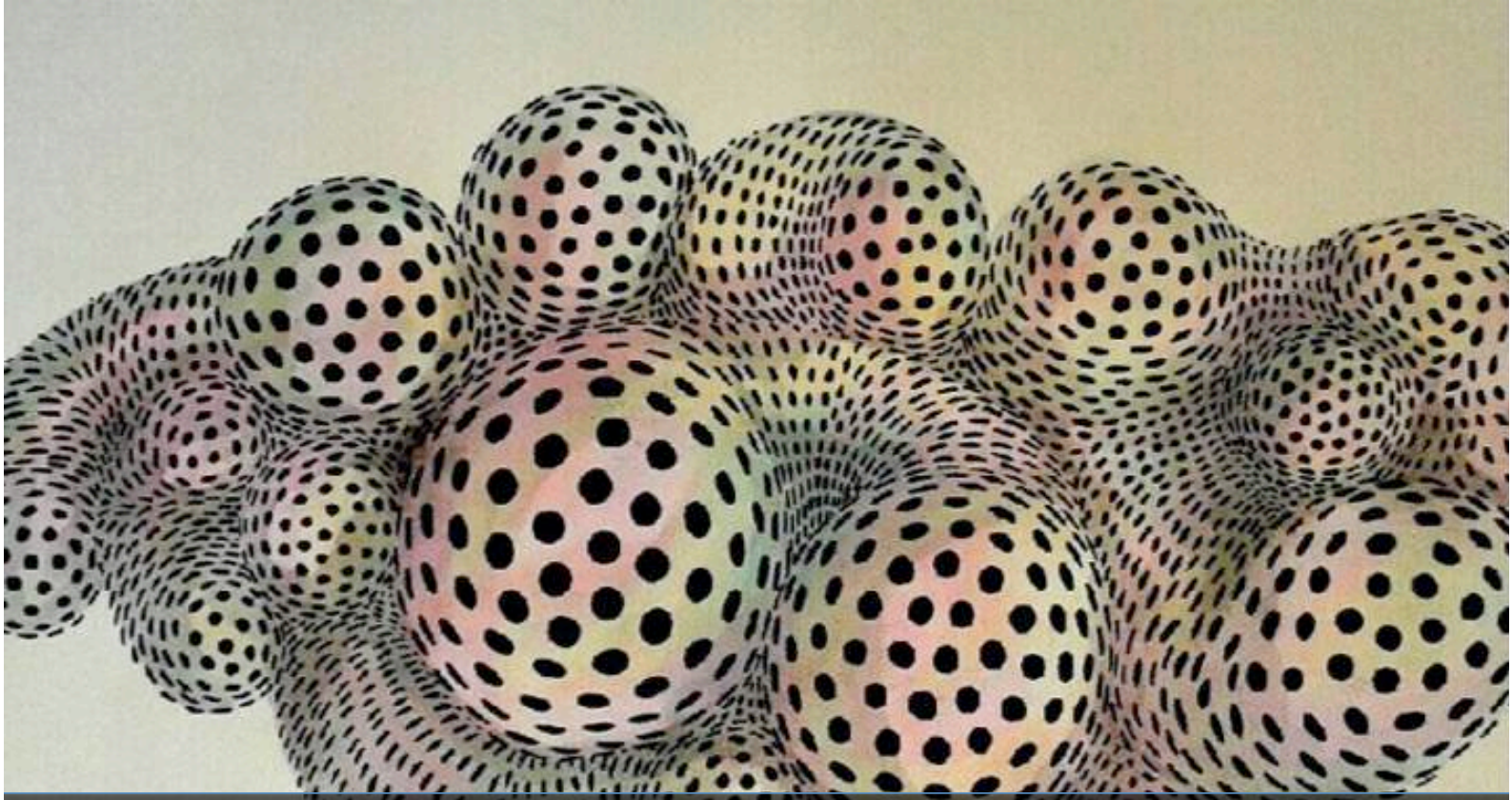
“The marine shapes have submerged themselves in his psyche, which is why he makes use of the earth and fire to talk to us about water, of the deep sea; of the element symbolizing emotions and death, danger and creativity.”
Erika Ordosgoitti.

Cristóbal Ochoa
Of the series “Simbiosis” *[“Symbiosis”]*
Ceramic, wood.
2013

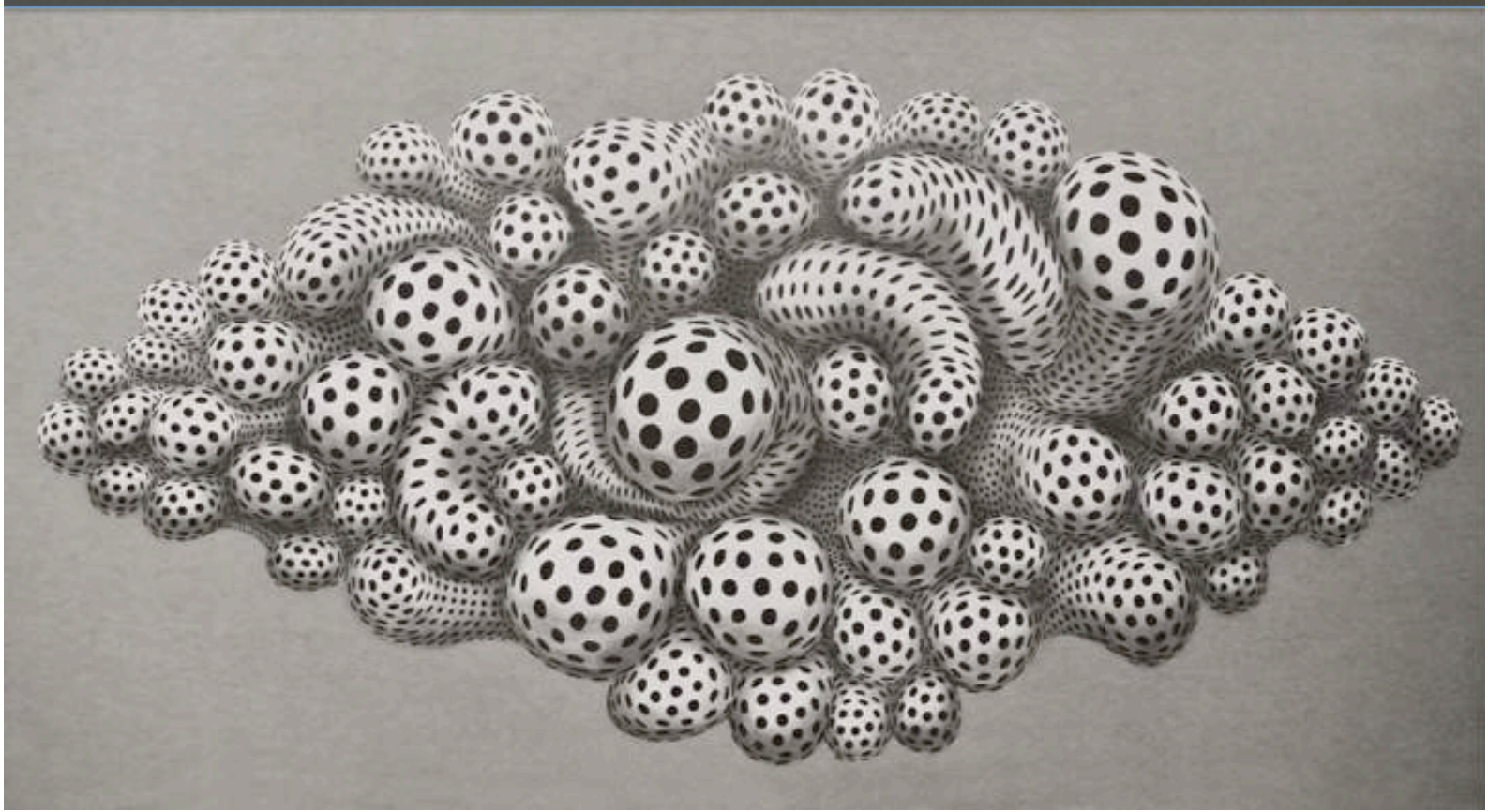
Deliberadamente el artista invita a la interacción o tacto directo del observador con la la obra, como ya lo señalamos las piezas seducen e intimidan al unísono. Como en todo conjunto hay singularidades, algunas más seductoras, otras más intimidantes. Sin embargo, todas se hacen sentir a su manera. Es prácticamente imposible permanecer indiferente ante cualquiera de las obras de Ochoa.

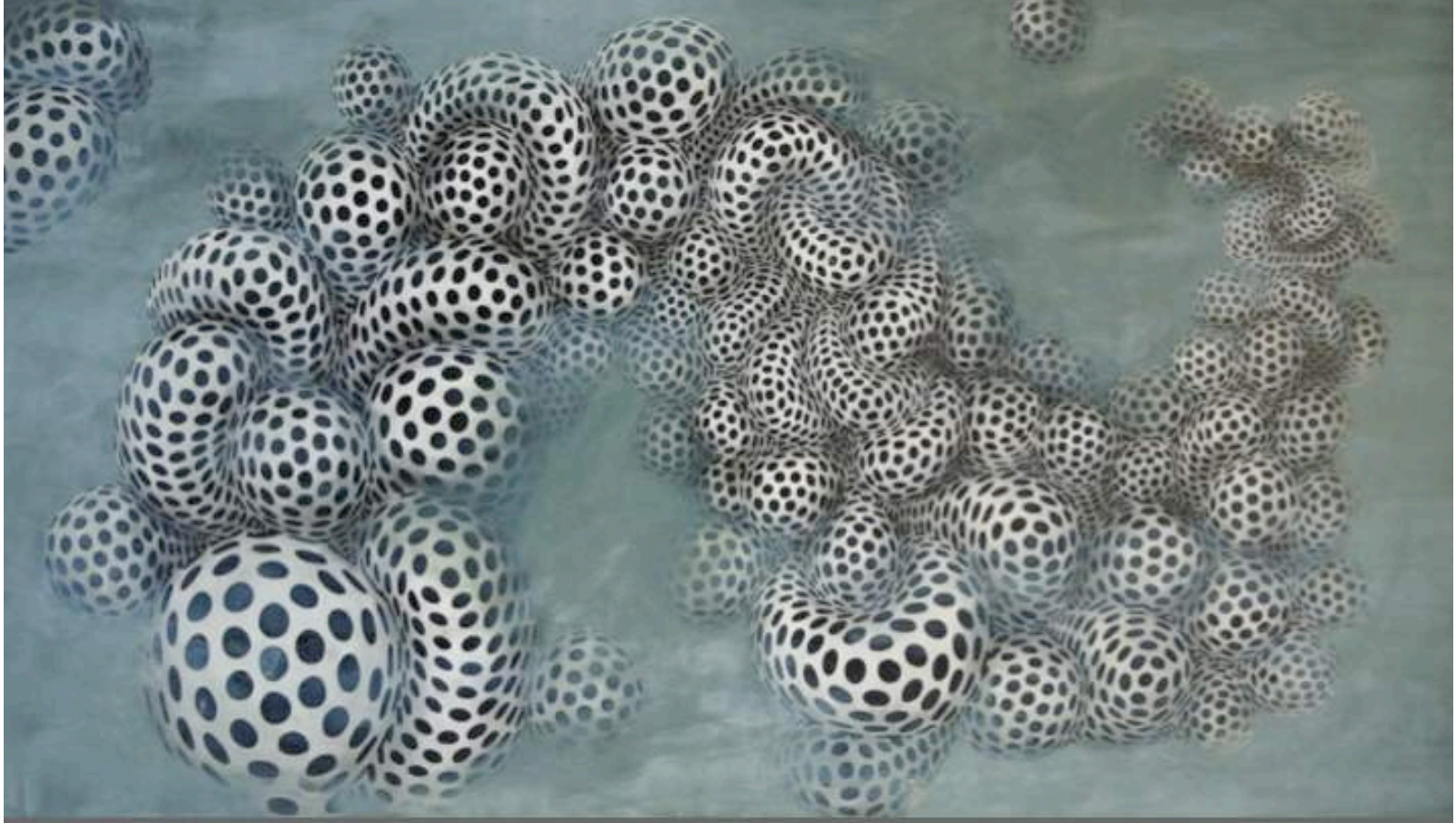
“I generally look to represent aggressiveness and defense in my sculptures through prominent and sharp textures. In some of those sculptures I have developed holes or perforations, attempting to achieve the opposite sensation: passivity and vulnerability of the bodies, unprotected, penetrable to their interior. I seek to stop people for one second, take them out of their visual routine, envelop them for an instant in my imagination.” C.O.

PICTORIAL WORK

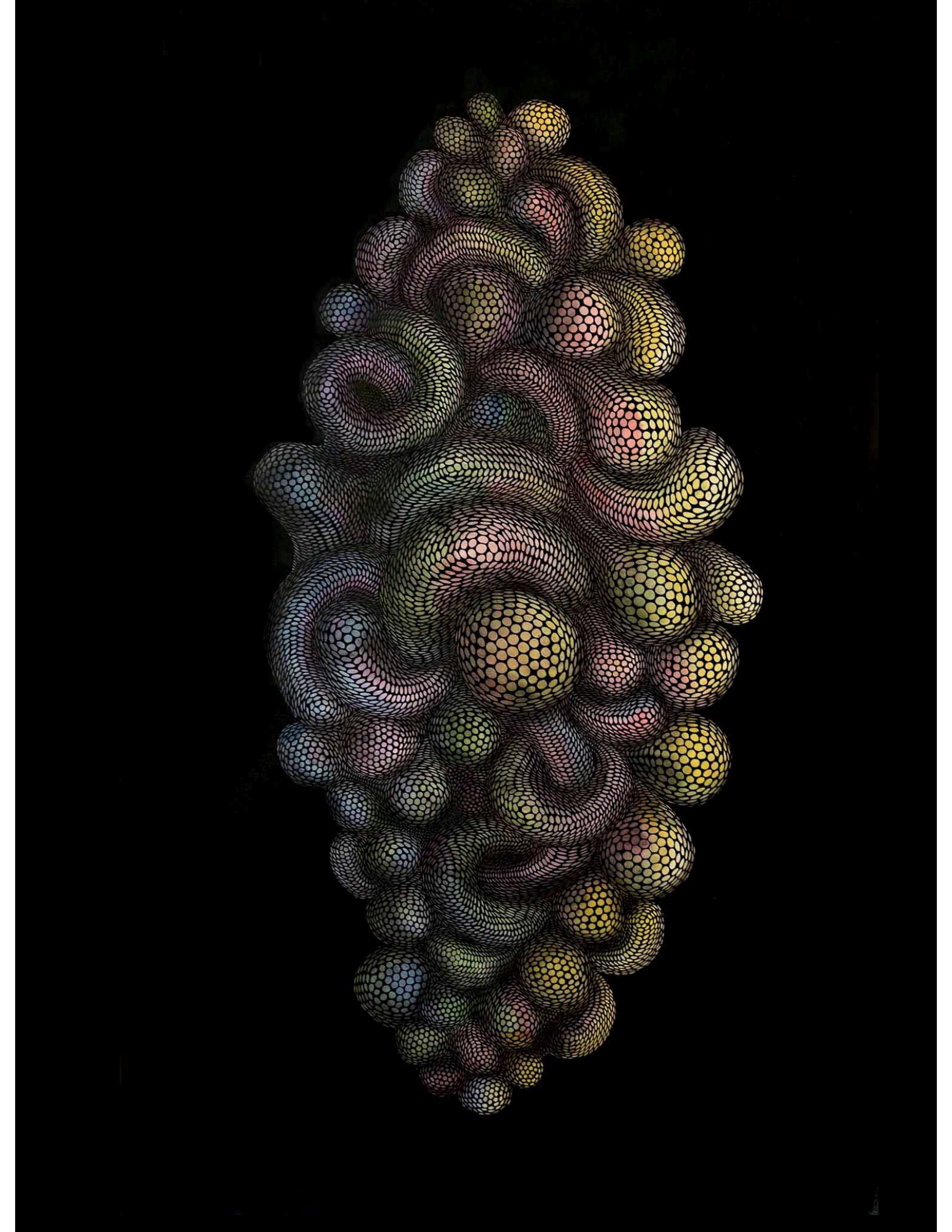


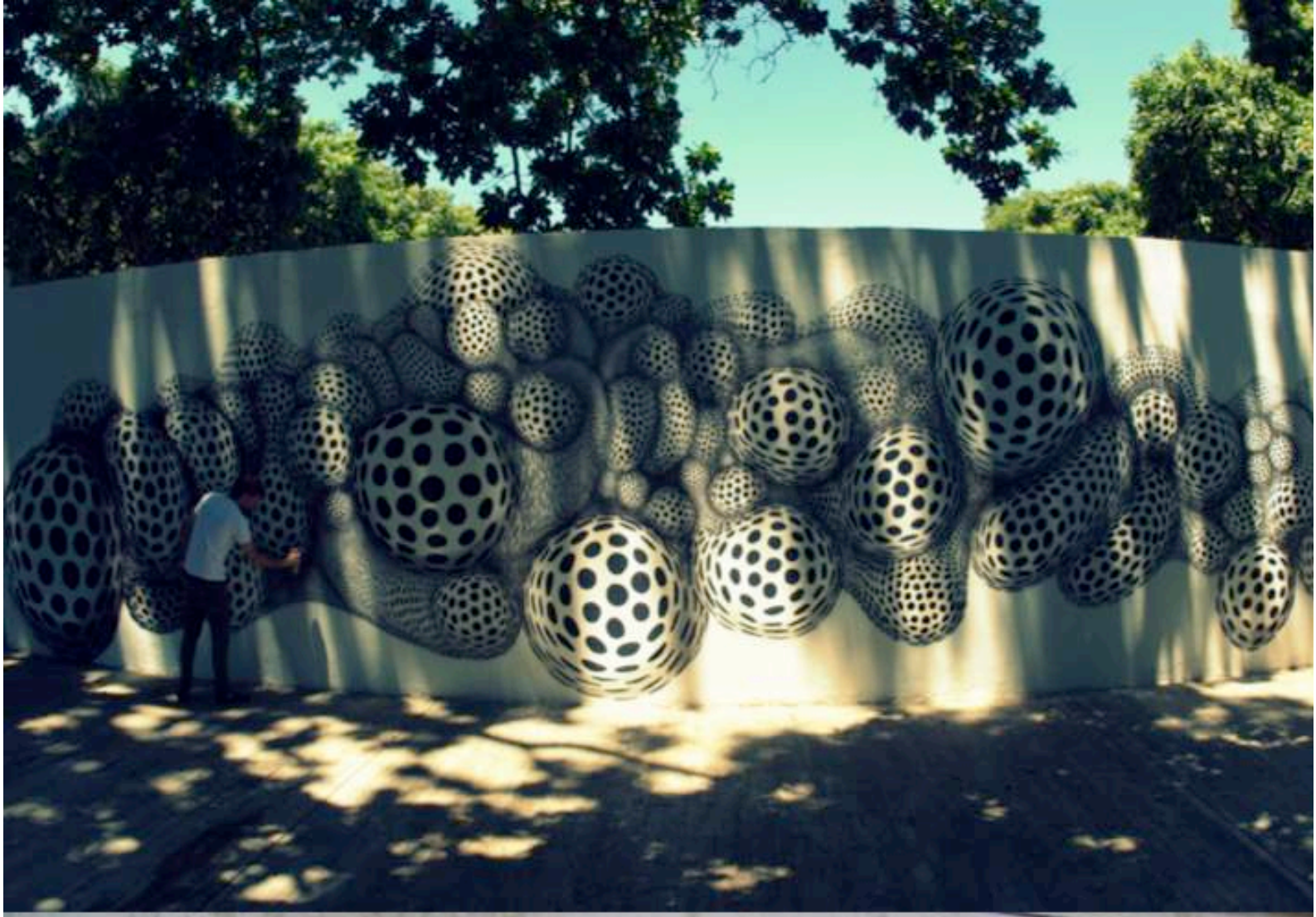
The gestation of organic volumes, whose paradoxical simplicity and complexity, send us back to primitive life forms, where the spherical and tubular have an emphatic predominance. Furthermore, Ochoa prints in these entities in apparent procreation, a movement of distressing tension of elements who struggle to split or superimpose themselves one over the other. In his paintings, the point element (holes) is presented as a metaphor to talk about the vulnerability of the body, unlike his pointed sculptures which seek the contrary. Changing, passive shapes, with a movement that seduces and hypnotizes us.





“It was a way to take my sculptures to a monumental scale. I didn’t want to achieve a painting but a reinterpretation of pieces that I make in ceramic in some dimensions that a kiln wouldn’t allow me. That is why I always look for three-dimensionality and volume.”





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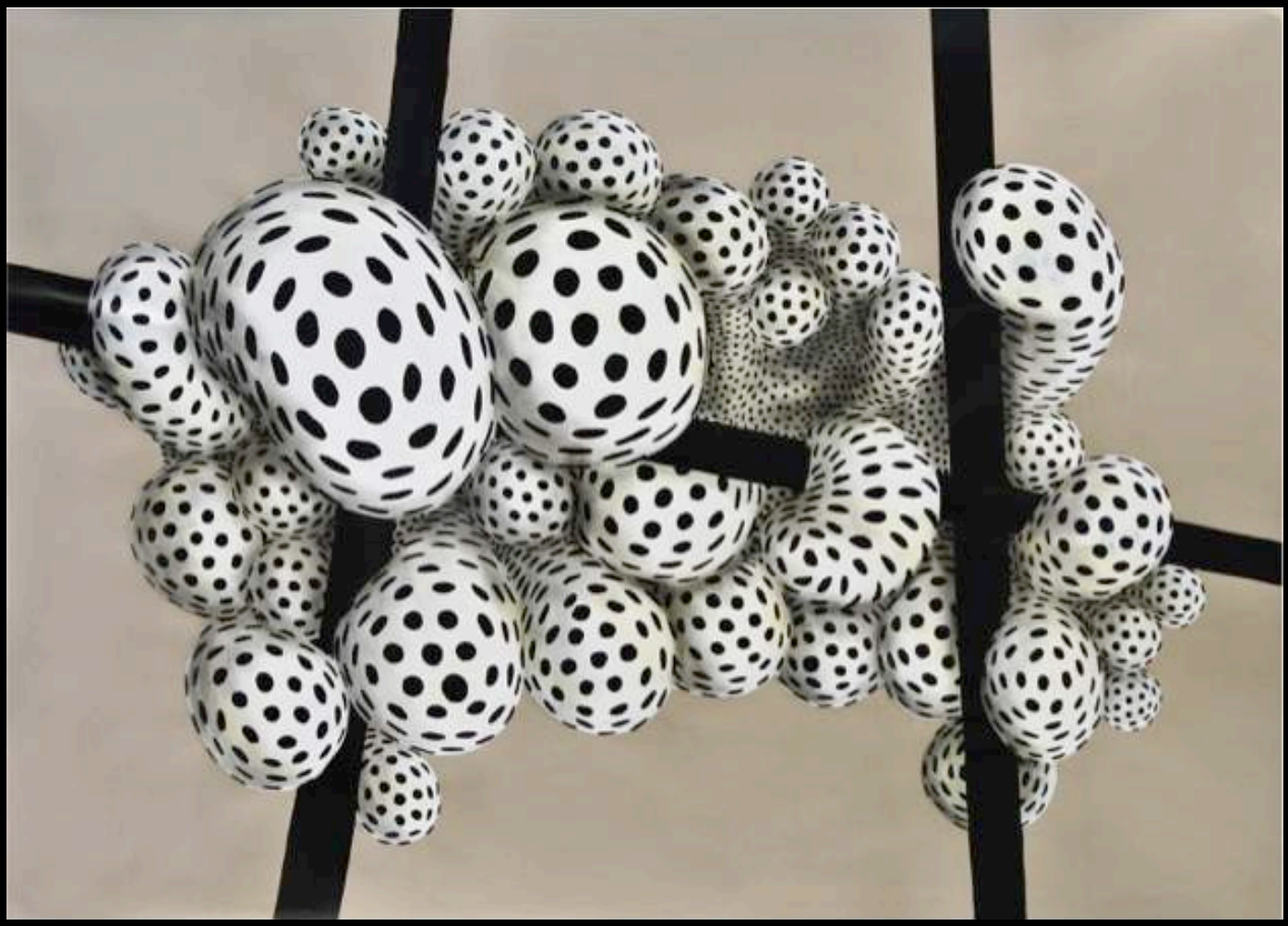
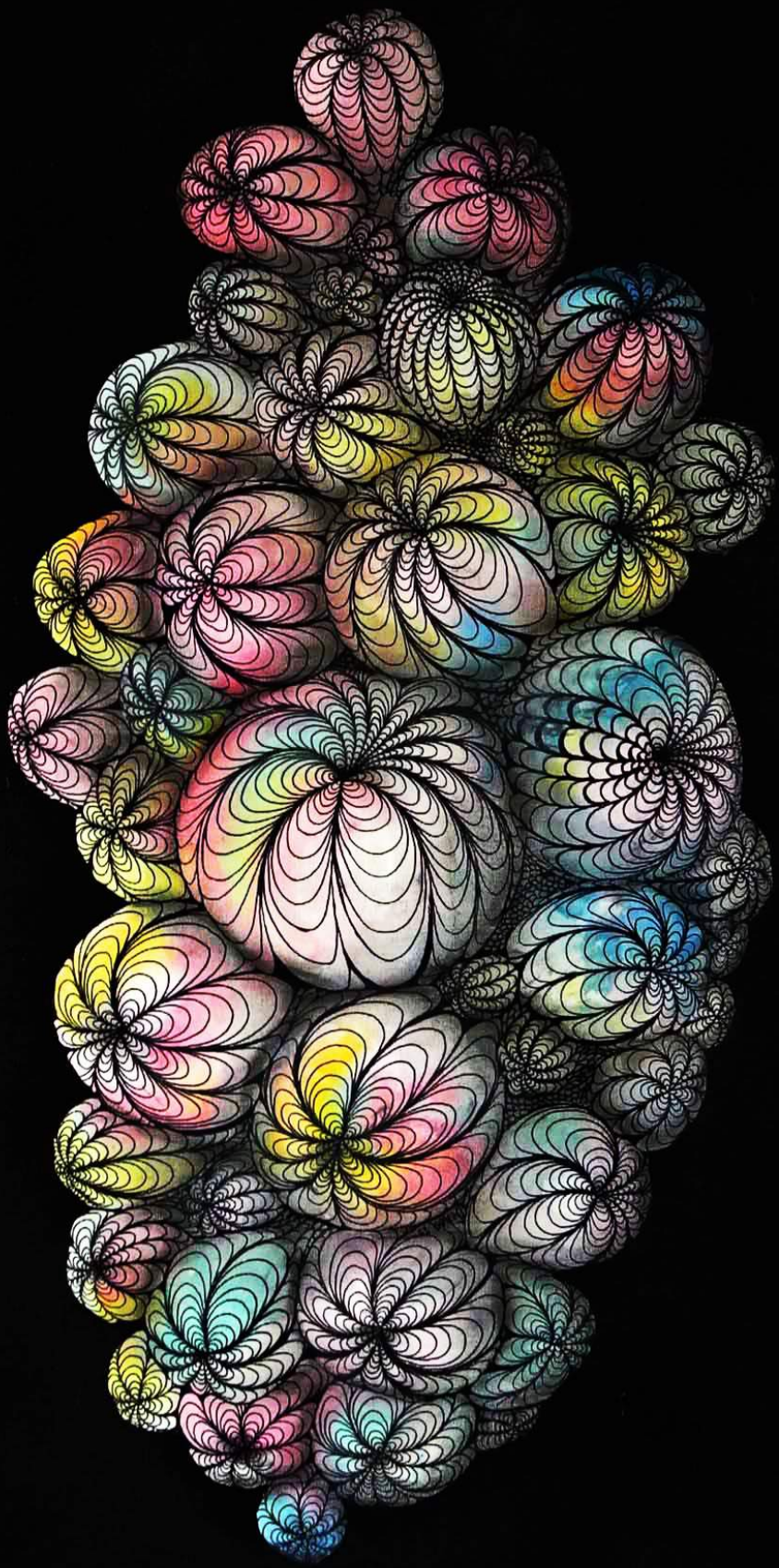
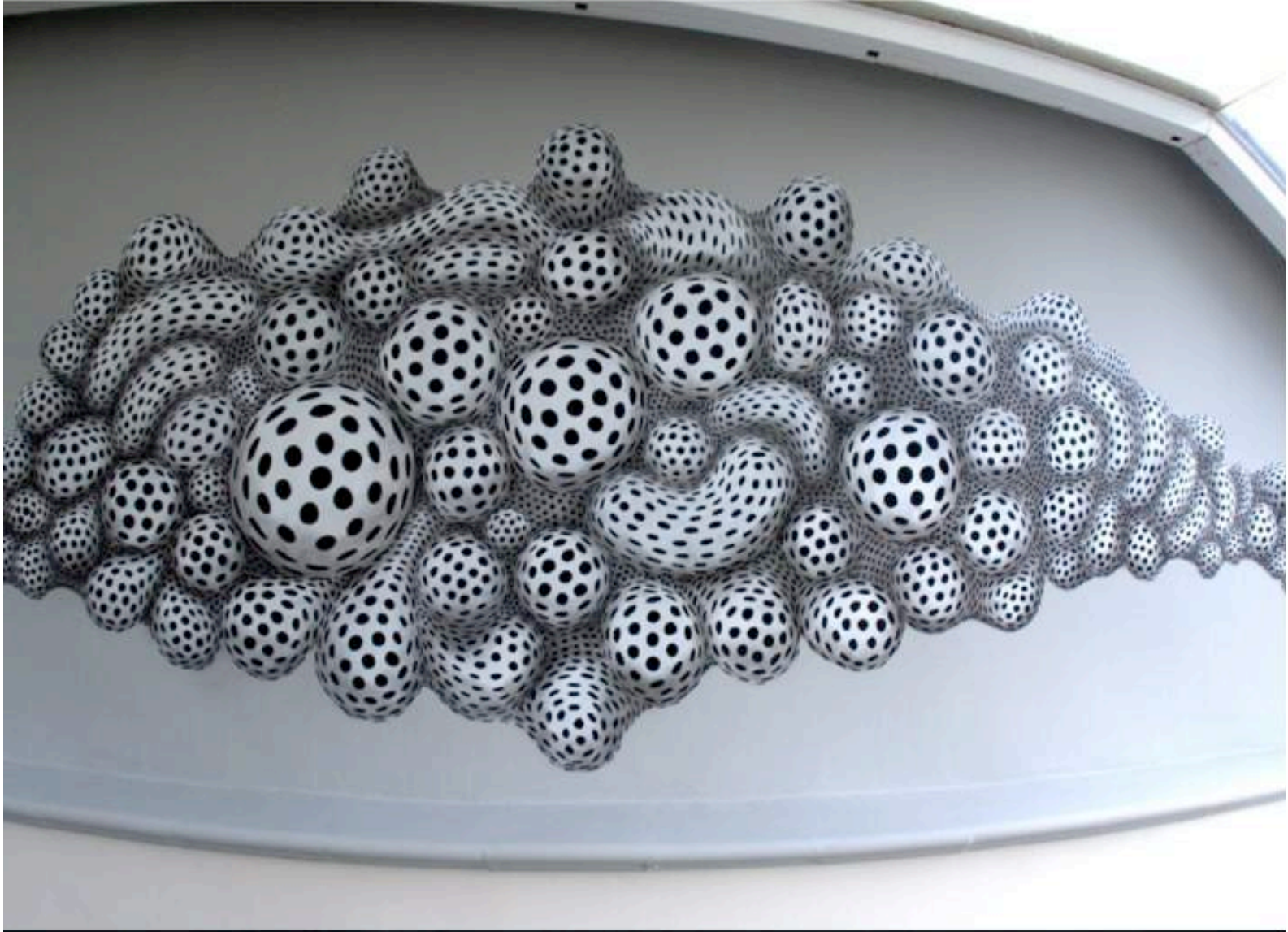
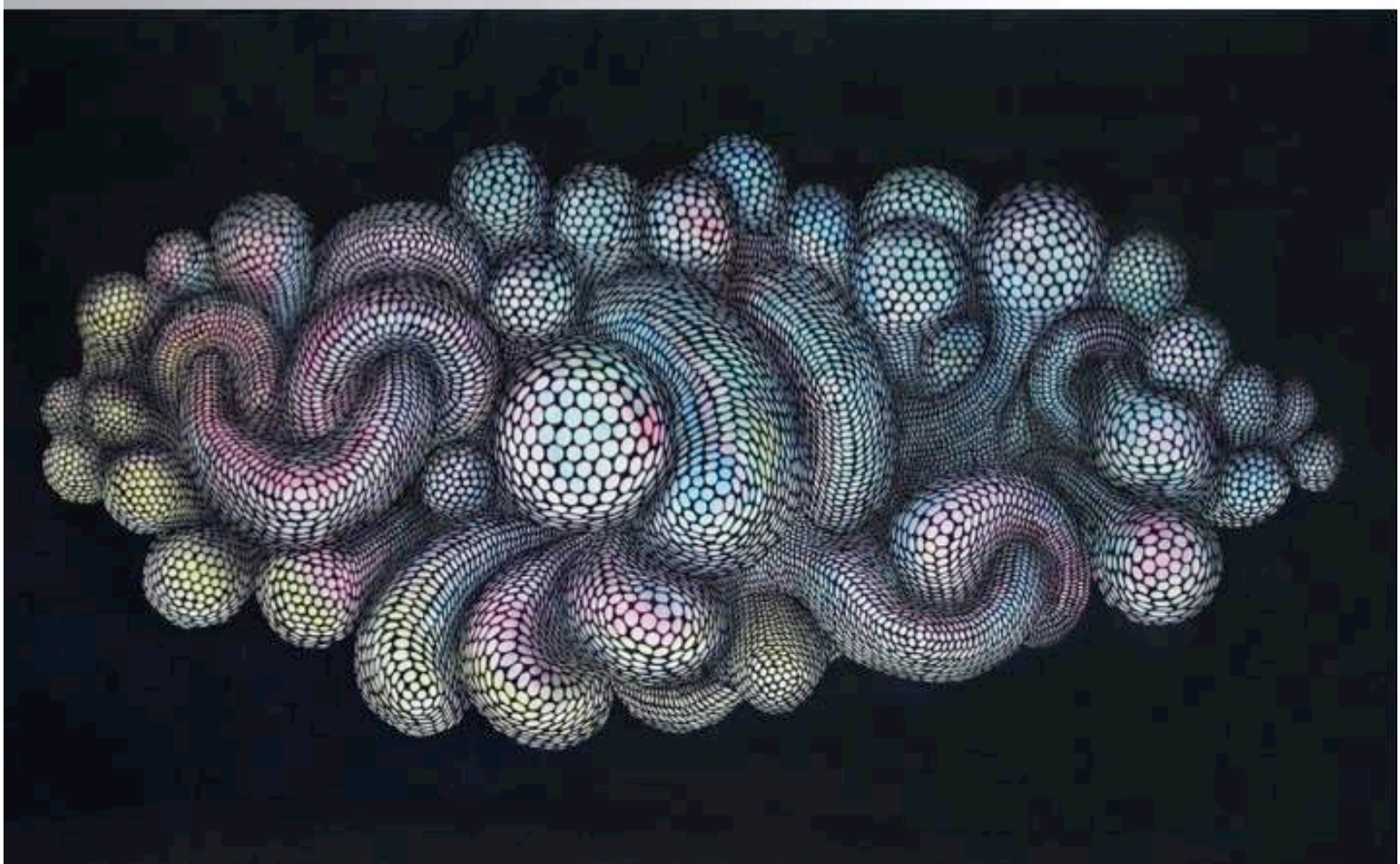




In 2014 is bestowed with the “Omar Carreño” award, young artist mention. This award is granted by the Architects Association, AVAP [Venezuelan Association of Visual Artists] and El Nacional [Venezuelan national newspaper]





PERFORMANCE WORK

“Los Conos de madre”

Venezuela-Colombia-France-England-China-South Korea

"This is a performance called "Los conos de madre" (no translation into other languages due to the fact that it is a swear word in Spanish, badly written, which means something different to the curse word itself, that phonetic and visual likeness with the swear word also means something else that reveals some features of the performance itself).

Paris, France
2013

Seoul, South Korea

The performance consists of interacting with the common pedestrian, taking them out of their daily visual routine. The reactions are diverse, some of them immediately, almost instantaneously take out their photographic device or something with which they are able to capture that strange moment and look to photograph themselves at all costs next to the suit. Others pass on by with an indifferent attitude, without taking their eyes off them. The most interesting part of the performance happens to the person who wears the suit, since they experiment the sensation of being the focus of attention without using their face, they see everything through a tiny hole, smiles, looks and sensations that they discover while their body moves in space." C.O.

Shanghai, China

“This performance is a continuation of my sculptures; I describe the performance as moving sculptures, thus giving another spatial dimension to the sculptures as well as my paintings. The theme of psychological defense mechanisms is something constant in my work, and in the performance it is made more evident, related to the physical defense mechanisms of animals with something metaphorical as how we constantly walk around defensive in the streets. “Los conos de madre” seek to form part of a street art movement, ephemeral, spontaneous, that intends to collect different reactions and faces in different cultures thanks to the photographic and video registry.” C.O.

Seoul, South Korea

Café

COMMER
JOG 430E

Cristóbal receives First Place in the regional art hall within the framework of the International Art Festival in Brighton, England, 2014 for his performance “Los conos de madre”.

Collective shows:
2009 Suiche Urbano [Urban Switch]. Universidad Monte Ávila. Caracas, Venezuela.
2009 "Los Conos de madre" in: "Por el Medio de la calle" [“In the middle of the street”]. Caracas, Venezuela.
2009 "El Sitio" [“The Place”]. Carora, Venezuela.
2009 36 Salón Artes del fuego. Braulio Salazar University Art Gallery. Valencia, Venezuela.
2010 I Bienal de Papel. Braulio Salazar University Art Gallery. Valencia. Venezuela.
2011 Uno, múltiple y variaciones [One, multiple and variations], Galería Múltiple Arte Contemporáneo [Contemporary Multiple Art Gallery]. Caracas.
2011 FIA [Ibero-American Art Festival]. Caracas, Venezuela.
2011 Festival de arte urbano [Urban Art Festival], El pedregal, Caracas, Venezuela.
2011 38 Salón Nacional de las artes del fuego.
2011 Por El Medio de la calle. With "Los conos de madre". Chacao, Caracas, Venezuela
2011 ACCIONES; REACCIONES Y VISIONES [Actions, Reactions and Visions]. Gallery 39. Caracas, Venezuela.
2011 Cerámica contemporánea [Contemporary Ceramic] in Gsiete Gallery, Los Galpones, Caracas, Venezuela.
2012 "Blanco y Negro" [Black and White]. Fernando Zubillaga Gallery. Los Galpones. Caracas, Venezuela.
2012 FIA. Feria Iberoamericana de arte [Ibero-American Art Festival]. Gsiete Gallery. Caracas, Venezuela.
2012 Viloria Blanco Gallery. Maracaibo., Venezuela.
2012 FIAAM [International Art And Antiques Fair of Maracaibo]. Viloria Blanco Gallery. Maracaibo, Venezuela.
2013 “Artistas venezolanos” [“Venezuelan Artists”]. Xein Jeno Gallery, Seoul, South Korea.
2013 “Zibo MACSABAL Symposium” Zibo- Jinan. China.
2014 “Encounters” Artistic Residence and Collective Exhibition in Brighton, England.
2014 “Translations” Regional Art Hall of Brighton, England.
2014 Performative Action in the Arts Festival of Brighton, England.

Solo Shows:
2011 "Enconos", La Guayaba Verde. Caracas Venezuela.
2011 "Introyección" Galería Múltiple Arte Contemporáneo [Contemporary Multiple Art Gallery]. Caracas Venezuela.
2012 "Proyecciones" [“Projections”] El Gato Gallery, Bogotá, Colombia.
2013 "Simbiosis" [“Symbiosis”] in Gsiete Gallery, Los Galpones. Caracas, Venezuela.

Awards and acknowledgements:
2009 Bolsa de Trabajo Award. 36 Salón Artes del fuego. Valencia. Venezuela.
2010 1st Place in drawing contest, sponsored by the Diesel trademark.
2011 ACAF acknowledgement in the 38 Salón Nacional de las artes del fuego.
2011 Acknowledgement "Ayer fui, hoy soy" [“Yesterday I was, today I am”]. Urban Culture Mention - Coca-Cola. Caracas.
2013 1st Place in Urban Art contest. City Hall of Chacao.
2014 1st Place in “Translations” Hall. Arts Festival in Brighton, England.
2014 “Omar Carreño” Award, Young Artist mention. Architects Association of Venezuela.