

OFF BY AN INCH

BETIL DAZDELEN

MAY 10 - AUGUST 23, 2024

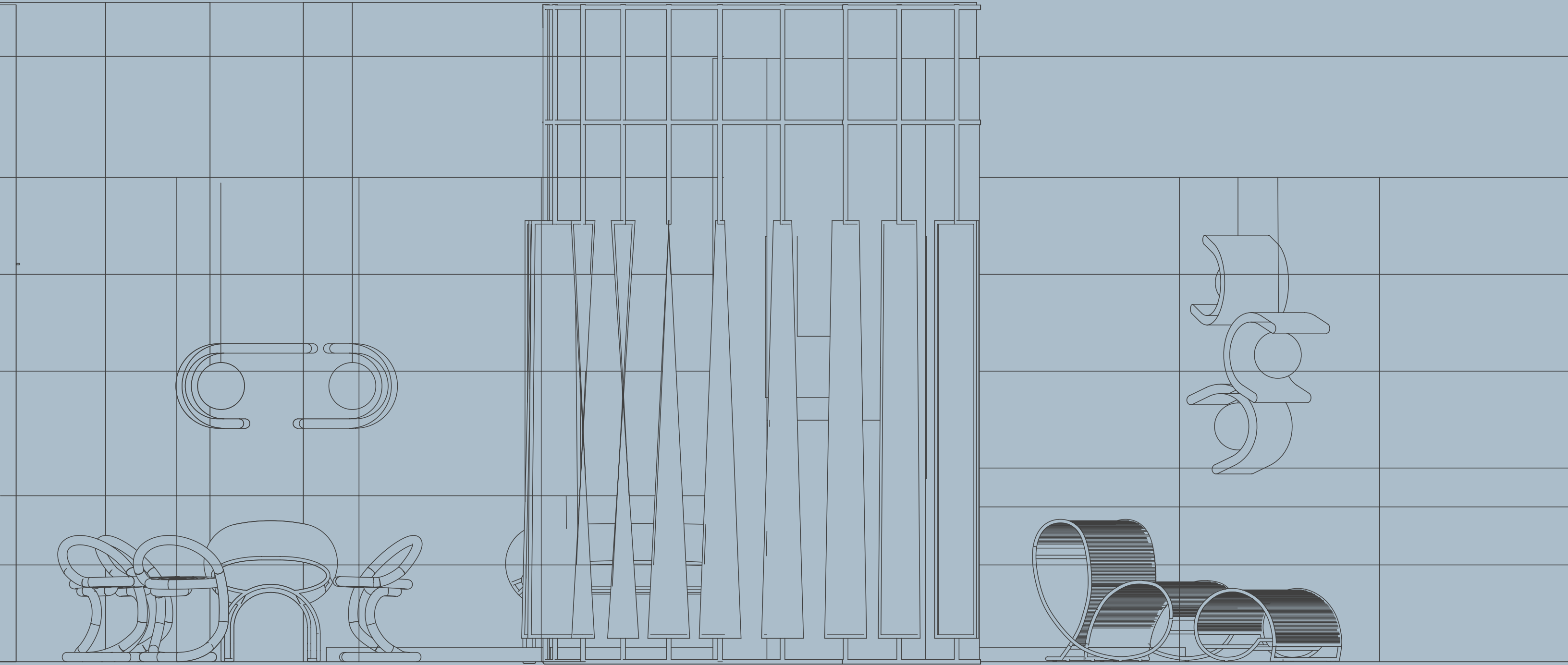
CRISTINA GRAJALES | 50 VESTRY STREET, NEW YORK



BETIL DAGDELEN (B.1978) grew up on the Aegean Sea in the vibrant coastal metropolis of Izmir, Türkiye, and now lives and works amid the majestic canyons and mountains of Abiquiú, New Mexico. In between, she's built worlds as a set designer out of her Williamsburg studio, lived in a shipping container home in Socrates Sculpture Park, attuned herself to the cadence of desert living in Joshua Tree National Park, criss-crossed the country in a teardrop trailer, studied weaving in Taos with Navajo women, learned backstrap-loom weaving in the Peruvian Andes, and lapped up the writings of Bauhaus artist and weaver Anni Albers while gazing upon the ocean horizon in Malibu.



NATURE USES THE LONGEST THREADS TO WEAVE HER PATTERNS INTO THE FINEST PIECE OF TAPESTRY I'VE EVER SEEN.



A distinctive, often unruly thread runs through Dagdelen's perambulations in both her life and her art, one that the artist has physically referenced in the form of a recurring light blue line connecting the various works she made for *Off By An Inch*, her first solo exhibition at Cristina Grajales Gallery. As Dagdelen herself stresses, "I cannot weave a straight line." Indeed, this aesthetic journey is based on mindful deviations from rules that Dagdelen has often devised and imposed on herself. When the time is right to break the rules, a new path emerges.

"THERE IS NO PERFECTION IN LIFE, AND WE SHOULD VALUE THAT.
BREAK THE PATTERN. MOVE AN INCH."

By giving her current opus the title of *Off By An Inch*, Dagdelen invites us to find comfort in living according to the generative rhythm she has set in motion in her life and work: find and recognize the pattern and then break it by, say, moving an inch and opening yourself to the places where discrepancies take you. Deviation in this light is a conscious choice, a form of problem solving, another way. As we consider the works featured in *Off By An Inch*, note the ways that subtle movements, twists, and manipulations of scale, shape, and texture converge to provide moments of comfort, balance, and refuge amid the frenzy of life today.

Dagdelen achieves the shifts and movements characteristic of her work by emphasizing the intimacy and immediacy of hand work—the trial and error of manual metal fabrication, churro wool yarn weaving, rammed earth adobe construction, and even pecking the keys of a vintage typewriter. In this way, she creates inventive forms that retain a profound tactile engagement and support the unfolding of not only our bodies but also our minds. Thanks to her years working as a set designer, Dagdelen has developed a facility for working within a prescribed structure to open up, innovate, and change the way we see, feel, and experience a space.





GALLERY EXHIBITION SPACE: (LEFT TO RIGHT) Elz Section F #10 and Section D #7, Peacock Series Dining Chair Set, Rammed Earth Side Table, Be Set (Chair and Ottoman), Louvers Partition, Elz Section G #8 and Section H #11



LOOMINAIRE SERIES, LAMP A (x3), Steel Frame, Satin Cording, Frosted Acrylic Shade, Porcelain Bulbs, 16" x 16" x 15"

Entering the gallery, we immediately encounter Dagdelen's ongoing explorations of ways to marry radical simplicity, pure geometry, and formal precision to create furnishings that are functional while expressive of a contemplative approach to making, designing, and inventing. Merging techniques of architecture, line drawing, and weaving, miniature models of table sets are presented as sculptural studies of the show's title, with each corner designed literally to be OFF BY AN INCH.

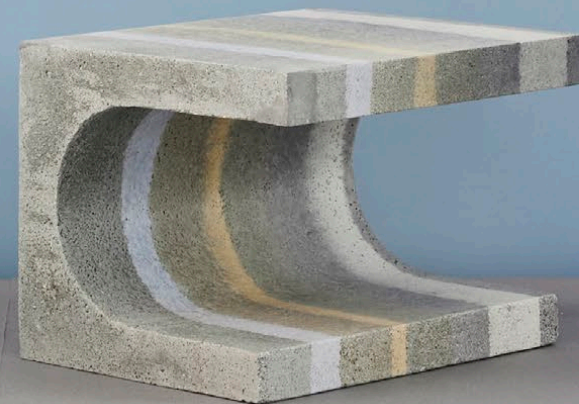
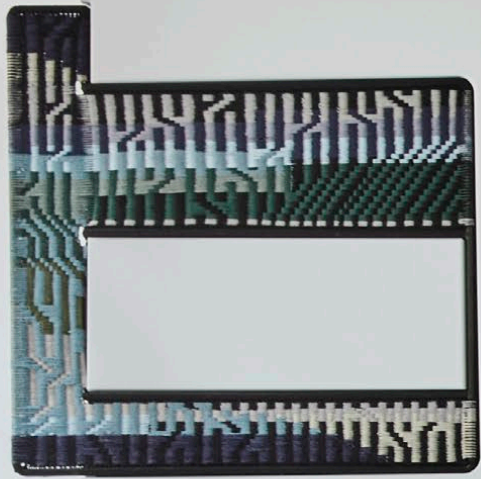
A set of armchairs, early examples of Dagdelen's experiments with warping yarn on fixed frames of different shapes, introduces the simultaneity of process/form, shape/surface, and material/structure that Dagdelen sets as her primary challenge in this new body of work. Lines of yarn overlapping and intersecting in a straight grid of varying textures and stark colors contradict and counterbalance the circular form in which they are laid.

BETIL DAĞDELEN OFF BY AN INCH



**WEAVING AS BOTH VERB AND NOUN CANNOT
BE SEPARATED FROM THE ACTION OF HANDS
HANDLING THE THREADS OFF THE LOOM.**







PEACOCK SERIES, SINGLE SEATER, Steel Frame, Tubular Foam, Rayon Cording, Cotton Cording, Dedar Fabric, 32" x 33" x 33"

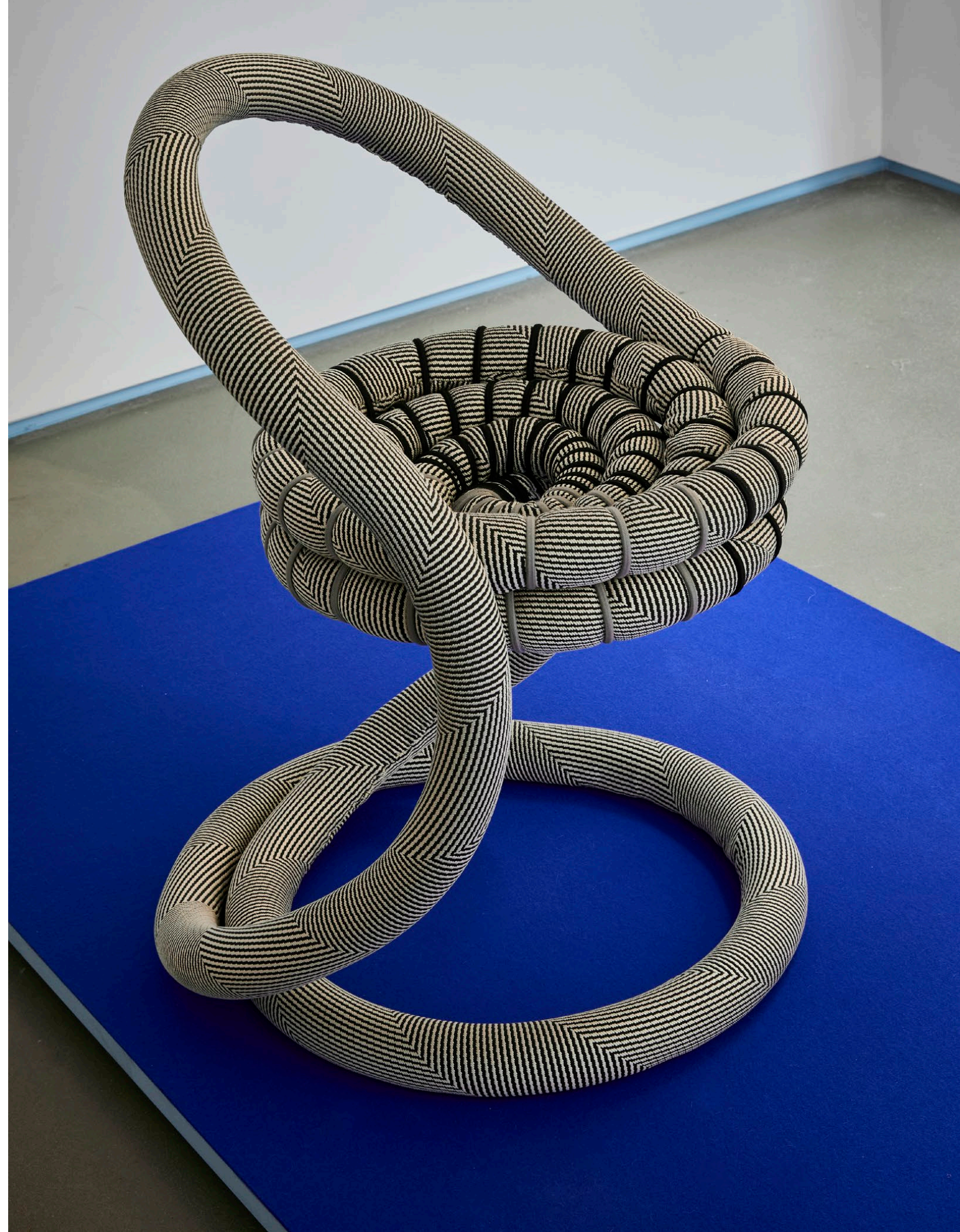
The sinuous handmade fabric-covered “ropes” used in the PEACOCK SEATING series defy gravity and morph into their own armature through Dagdelen’s mathematical calculations and muscular material manipulations. Nestled and held taut within a cross-woven framework, the snaking tubular ropes create a structure that supports the body on its own and, in Dagdelen’s words, “shows that weaving can do it all”; it is a technique, as well as a method and sensibility.

CRISTINA GRAJALES





CHAIR PHOTOGRAPH (01 and 02), PEACOCK SERIES Digital C-print, mounted on beveled dibond. Photography by Robin Broadbent, 36" x 41"



PEACOCK SERIES,
DINING CHAIR SET
Steel Frame, Tubular Foam,
Rayon Cording, Cotton Cording,
Dedar Fabric, Metaphores Fabric
29" x 22" x 21"

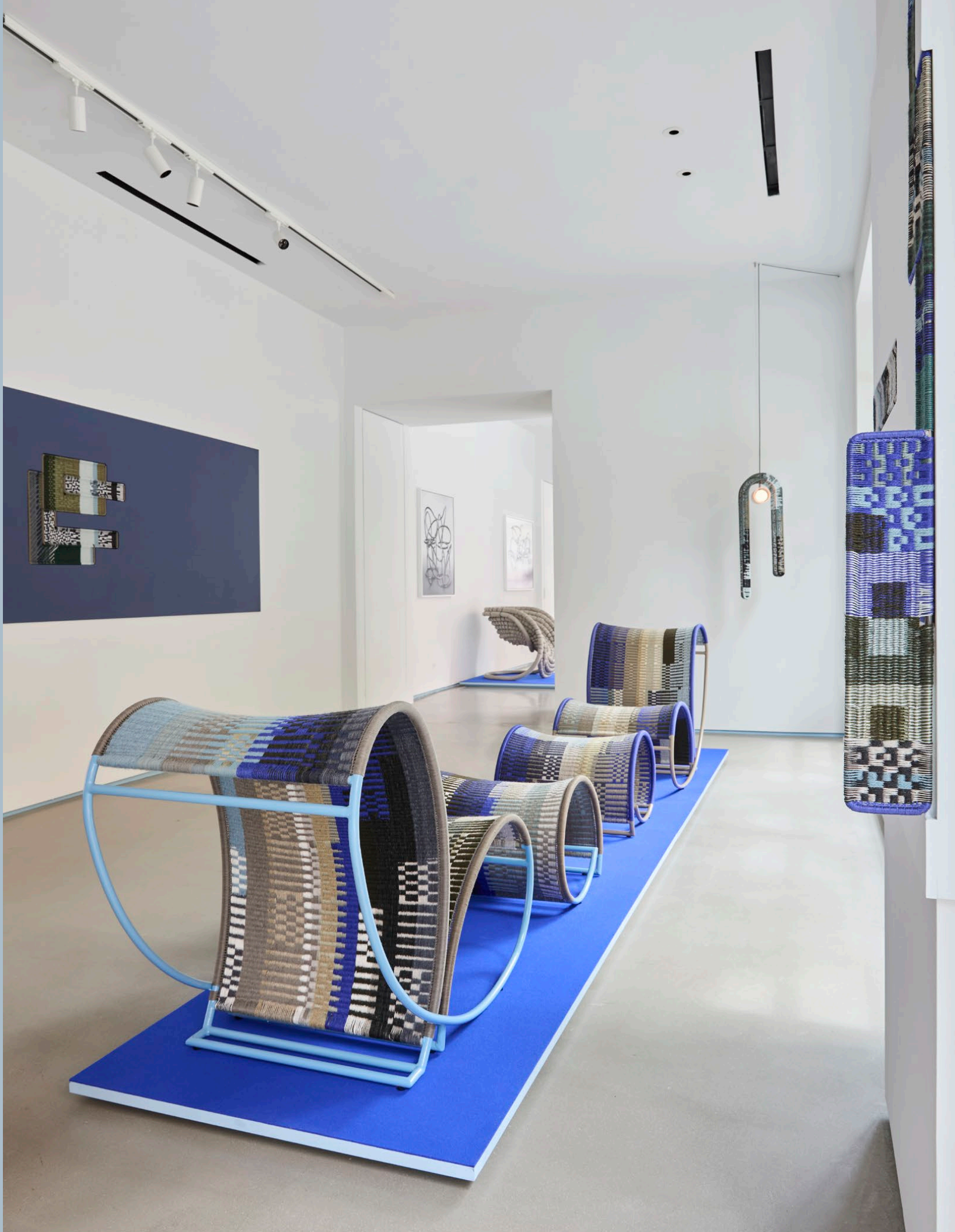
CRISTINA GRAJALES

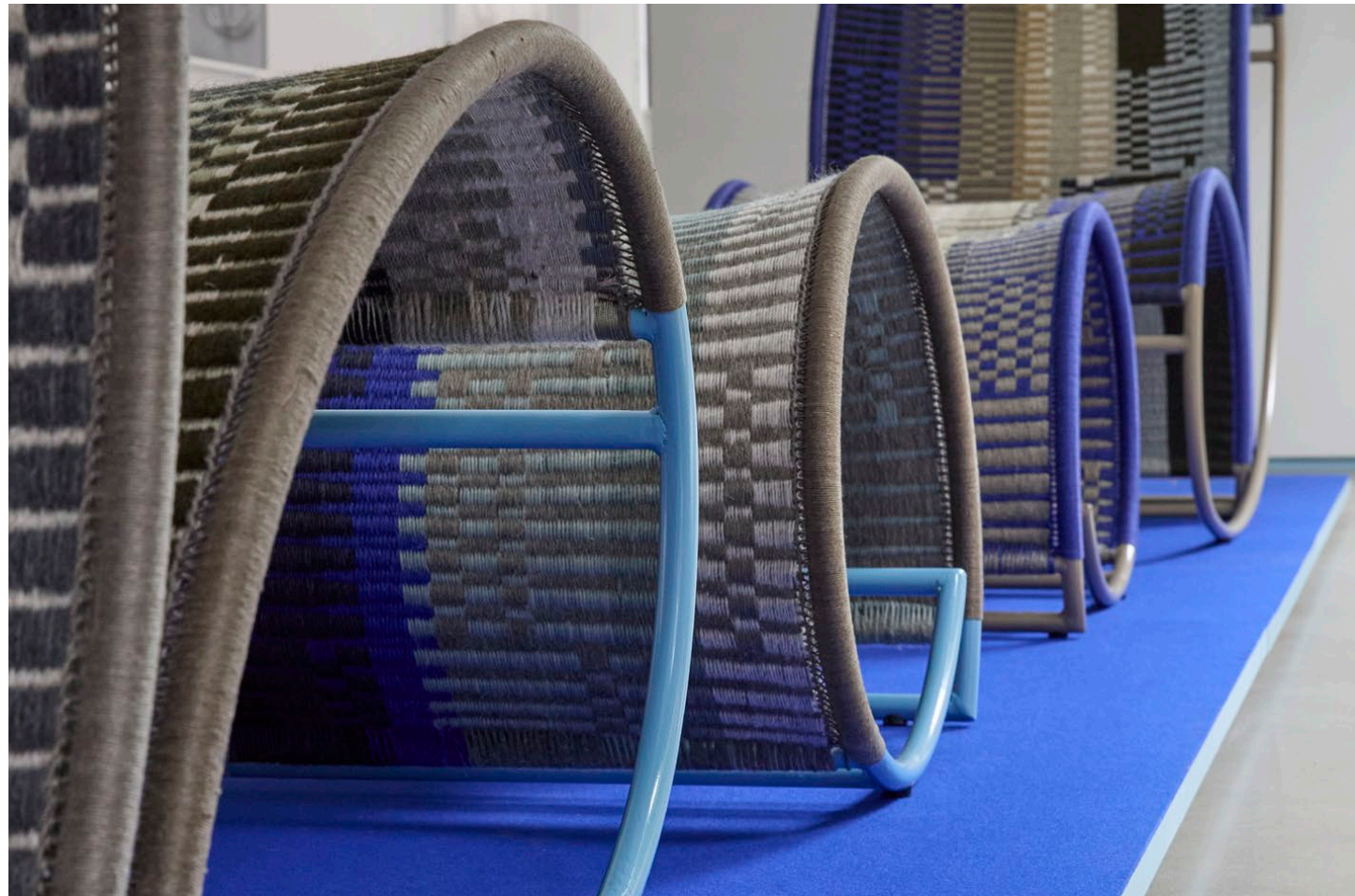


PEACOCK SERIES, LOVE SEAT Steel Frame, Tubular Foam, Rayon Cording, Cotton Cording, Pierre Frey Fabric, 32" x 60" x 30"



FOR EVERY PATTERN TO FORM, THERE MUST BE A SET OF RULES. I'VE REALIZED THAT TO BREAK A PATTERN, YOU MUST REALLY UNDERSTAND IT.



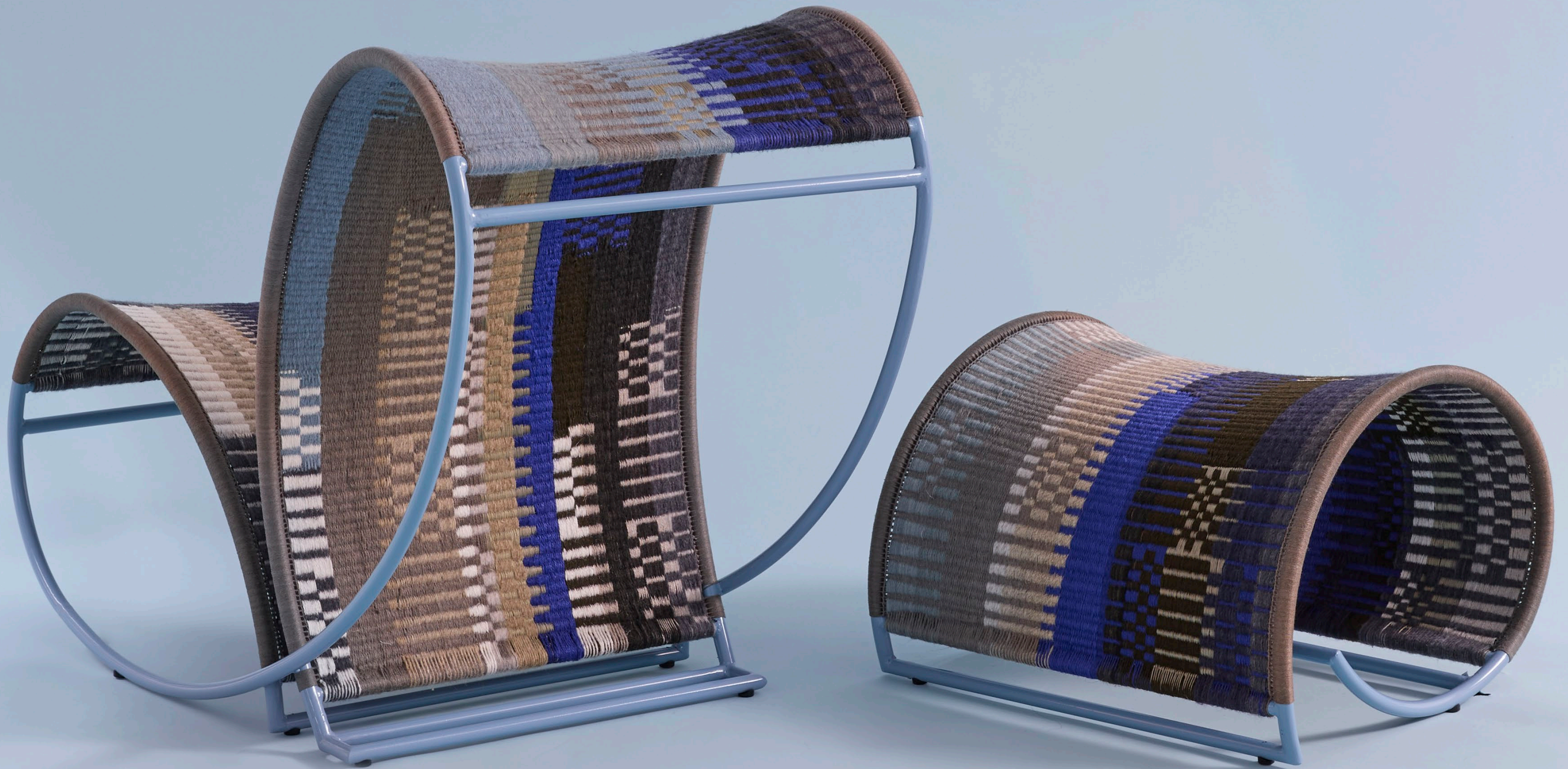


BE SET, CHAIR & OTTOMAN, Churro Yarn, Bonded Nylon Cording, Linen Warp, Linen Cording, Powder Coated Steel Frame, 32" x 24" x 42" (Chair), 16" x 24" x 42" (Ottoman)

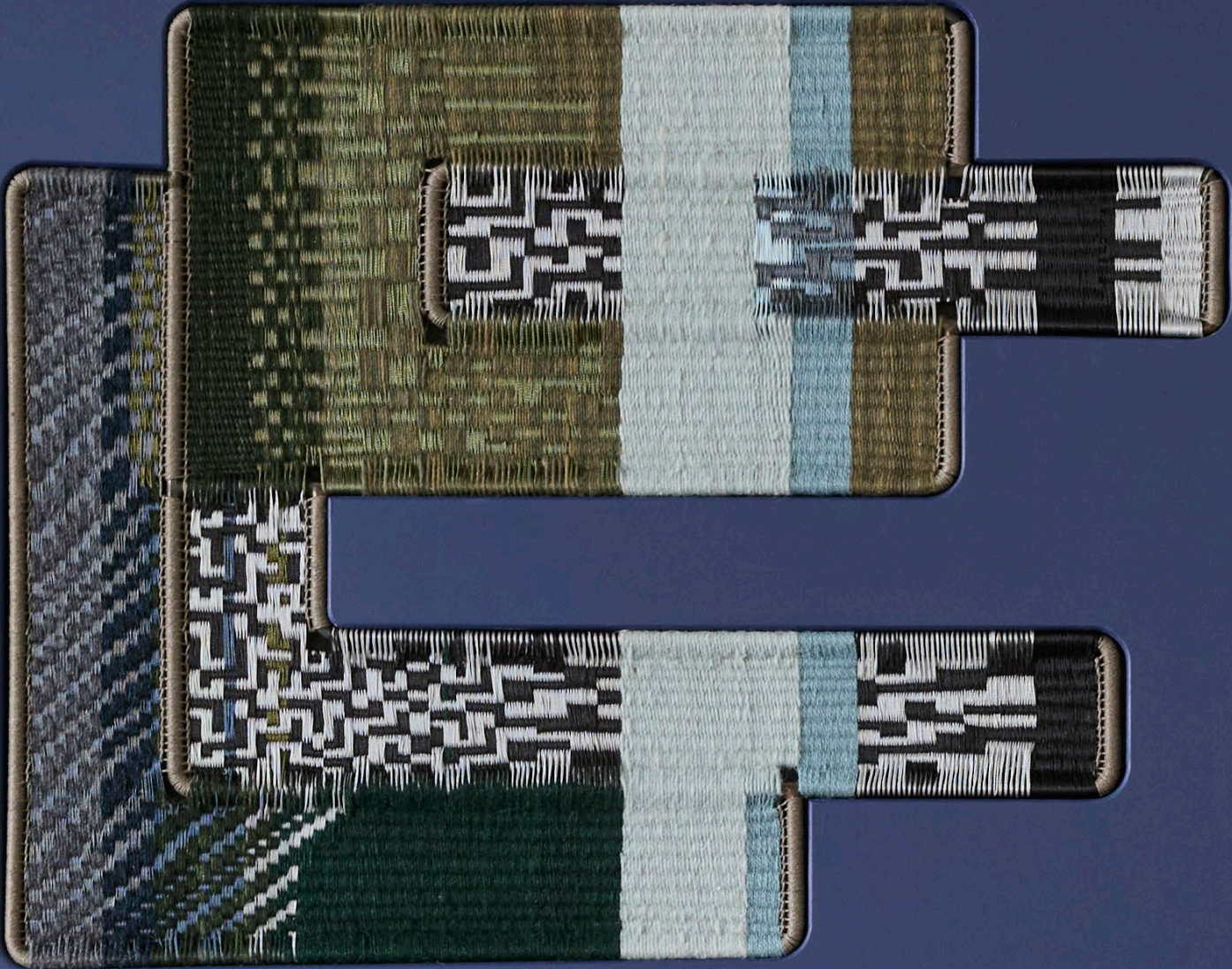
In the BE SET OF CHAIRS AND OTTOMANS, Dagdelen's largest weaving in terms of their span, she trains the yarn to flow around bent metal tubes in a variation of a checkerboard pattern that comes alive in gentle waves as it crests and dips into the crevices created by the gracefully curving frame. The carefully chosen hues of blues and sandy earth tones are integral to the language of the series, tying the pattern together and conveying the length along the form as it rises and falls.

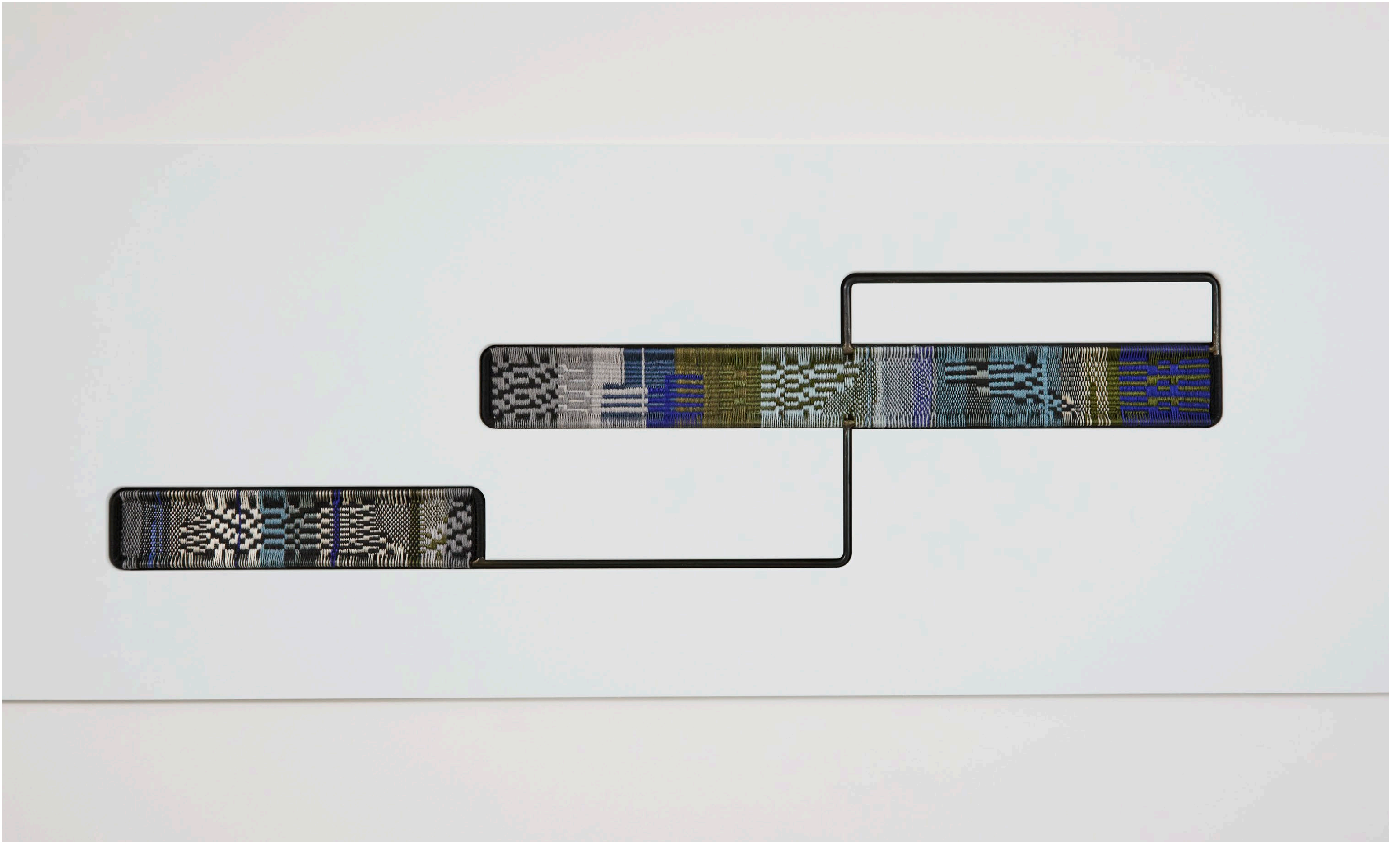
CRISTINA GRAJALES





**A PATTERN IS NOT AN ANSWER. IT'S A WAY.
HOW MUCH YOU FOLLOW IT DEFINES WHO YOU ARE.**



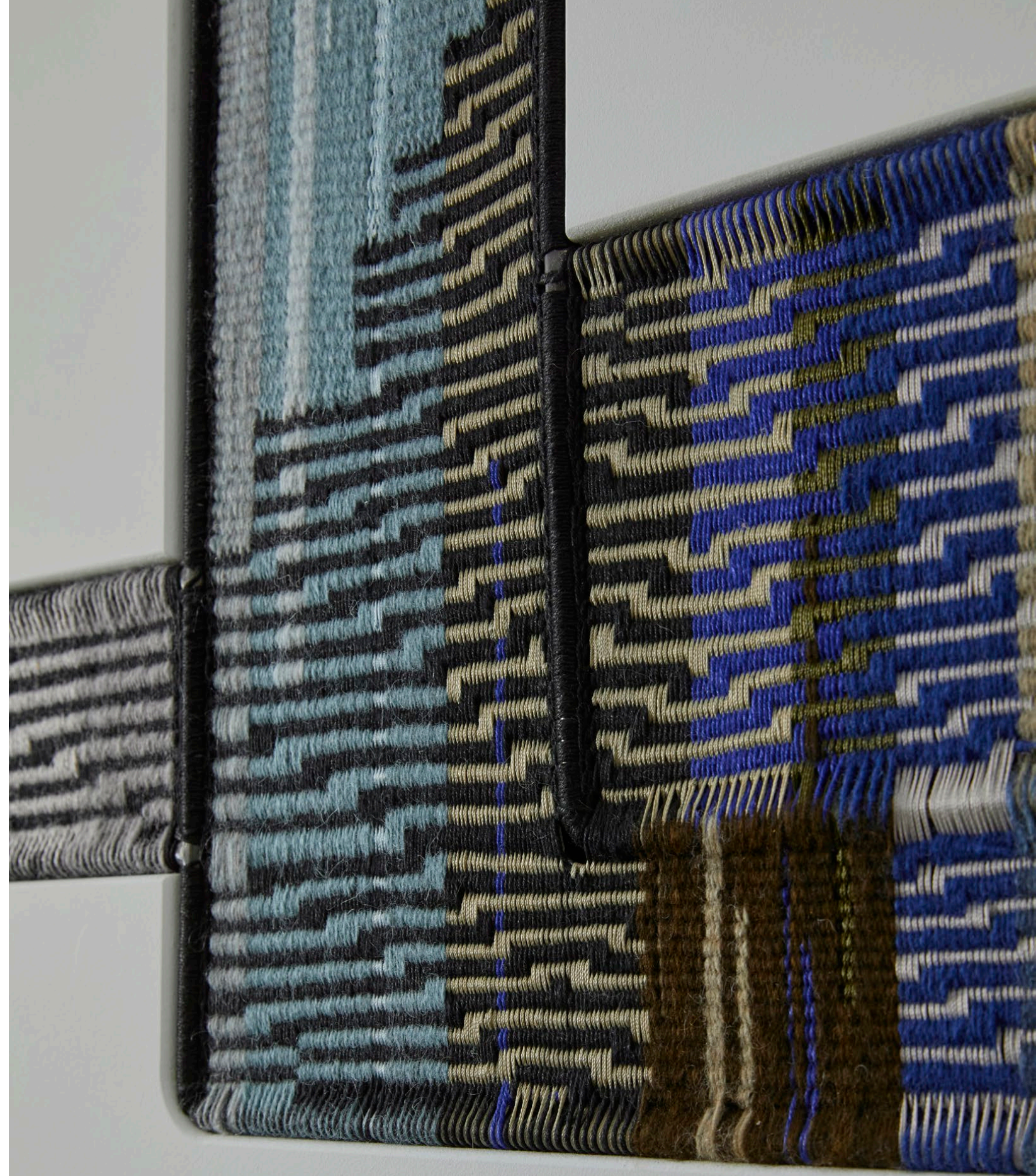


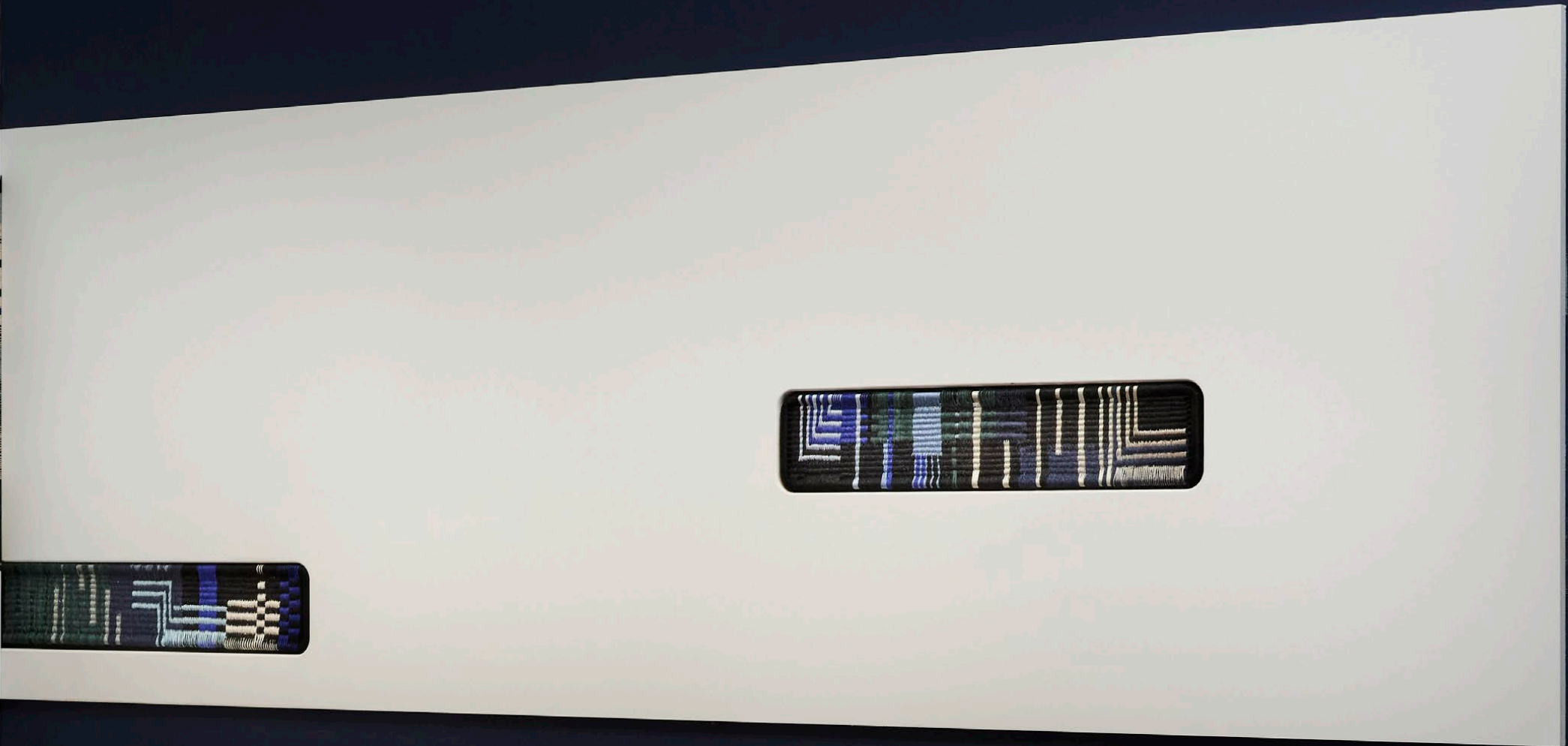
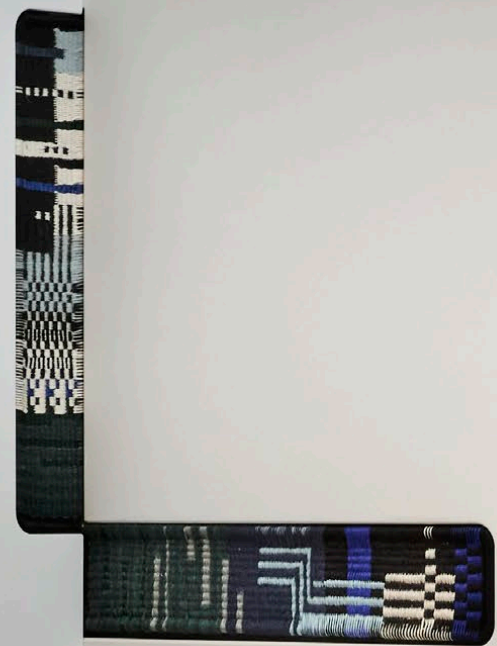
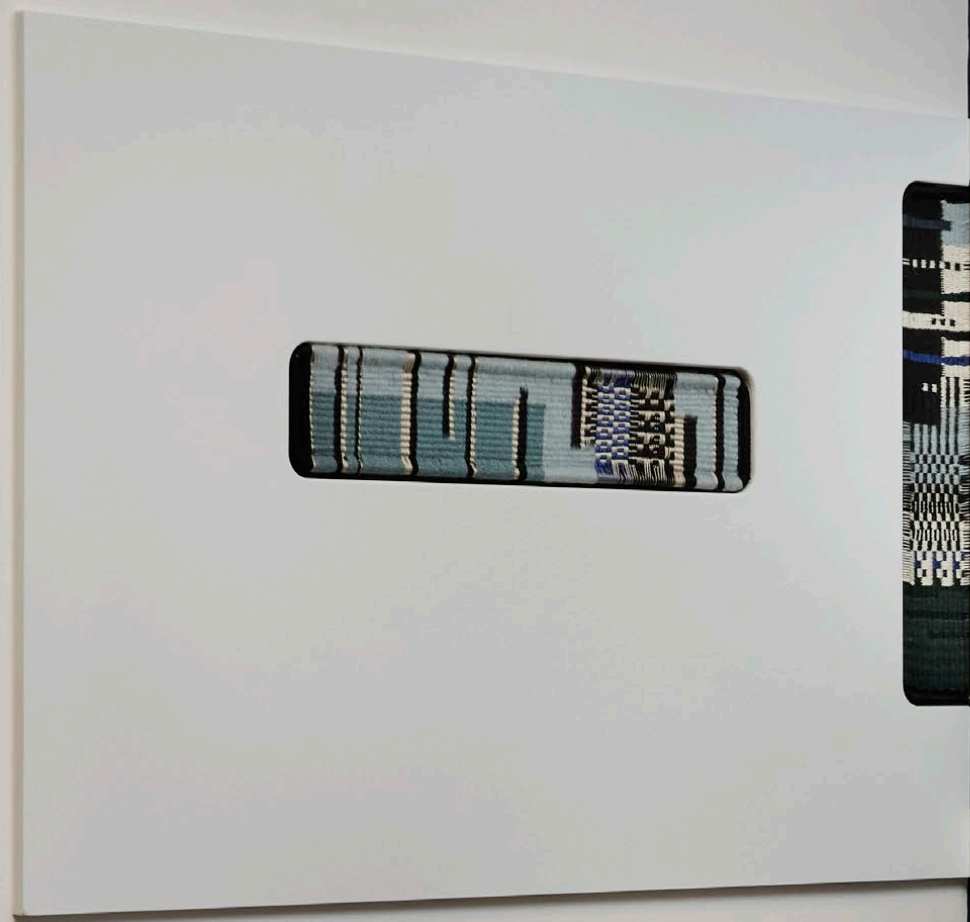
ELZ (Section C #6) Churro Yarn, Bonded Nylon Cording, Linen Warp, Linen Cording, Steel Frame

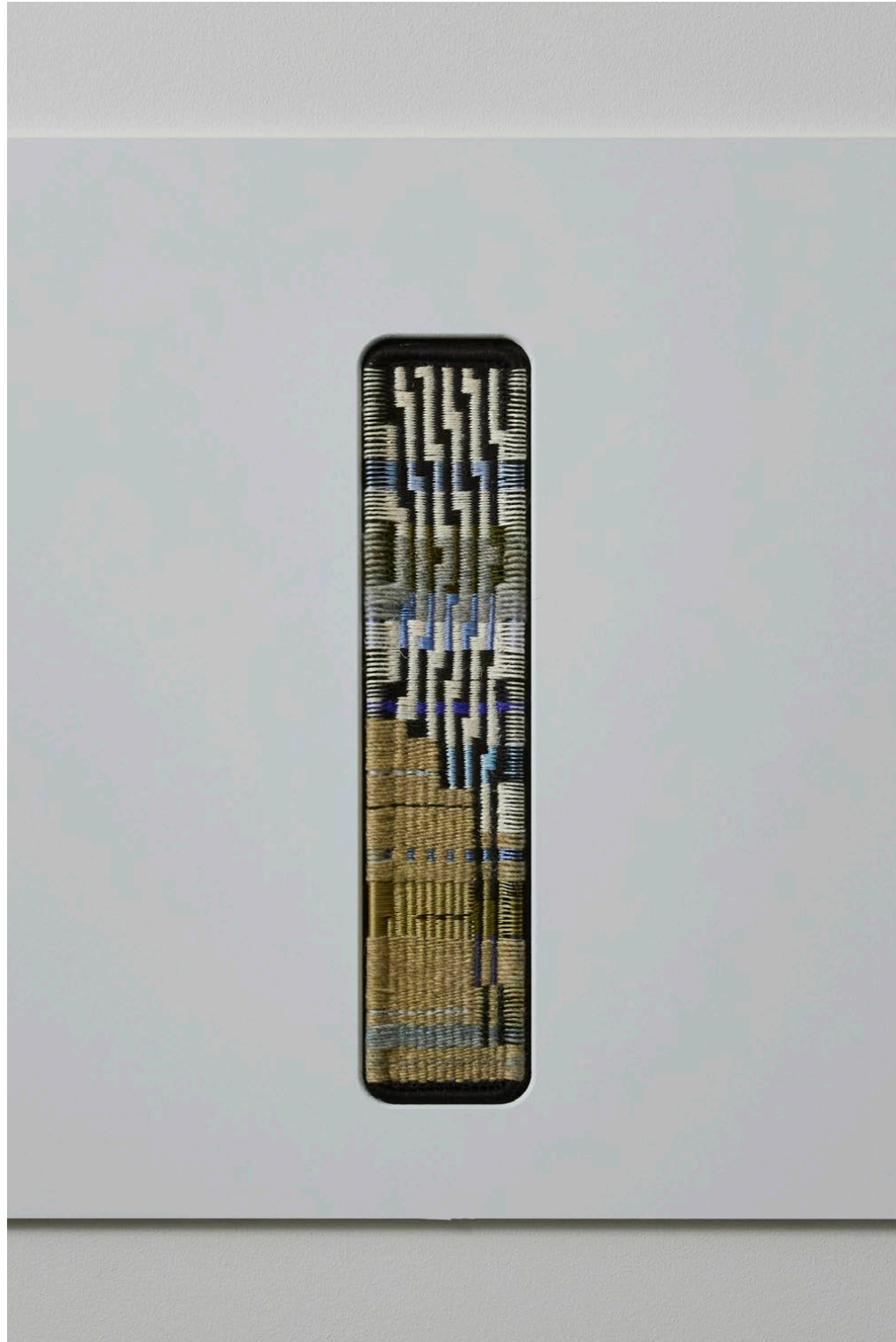


ELZ (Section B #4 and #5) Churro Yarn, Bonded Nylon Cording, Linen Warp, Linen Cording, Steel Frame

Embedded in the walls, turning corners, and boldly jutting out into the room, the ELZ WOVEN PANELS are playful, mesmerizing, experimental, and, as such, they are the beating heart of Dagdelen's creative process. They romp about the space, sporting patterns within patterns (sometimes patterns eating patterns) that are contained within hand-welded frames derived from a standard L-shape formed into different configurations according to rules set down by Dagdelen. The woven patterns themselves are resurrected from older ones developed by the artist and re-introduced here so that she can spontaneously toy with them, making the units bigger or smaller, rotating them, or cutting them in half—all to the end of introducing so many deviations throughout that we ultimately find ourselves calm as we delve into the charm of idiosyncratic detail.







ELZ (ABOVE: Section B #5, OPPOSITE: Section E #9 and Section F #10)
Churro Yarn, Bonded Nylon Cording, Linen Warp, Linen Cording, Steel Frame







ELZ (Section D #7) Churro Yarn, Bonded Nylon Cording, Linen Warp, Linen Cording, Steel Frame

**WEAVERS DON'T NEED WATCHES;
THEY NEED CALENDARS.**





LOUVERS PARTITION Churro Yarn, Bonded Nylon Cording, Linen Warp, Linen Cording, Powder Coated Steel Frame, 90" x 155½" x 11½"

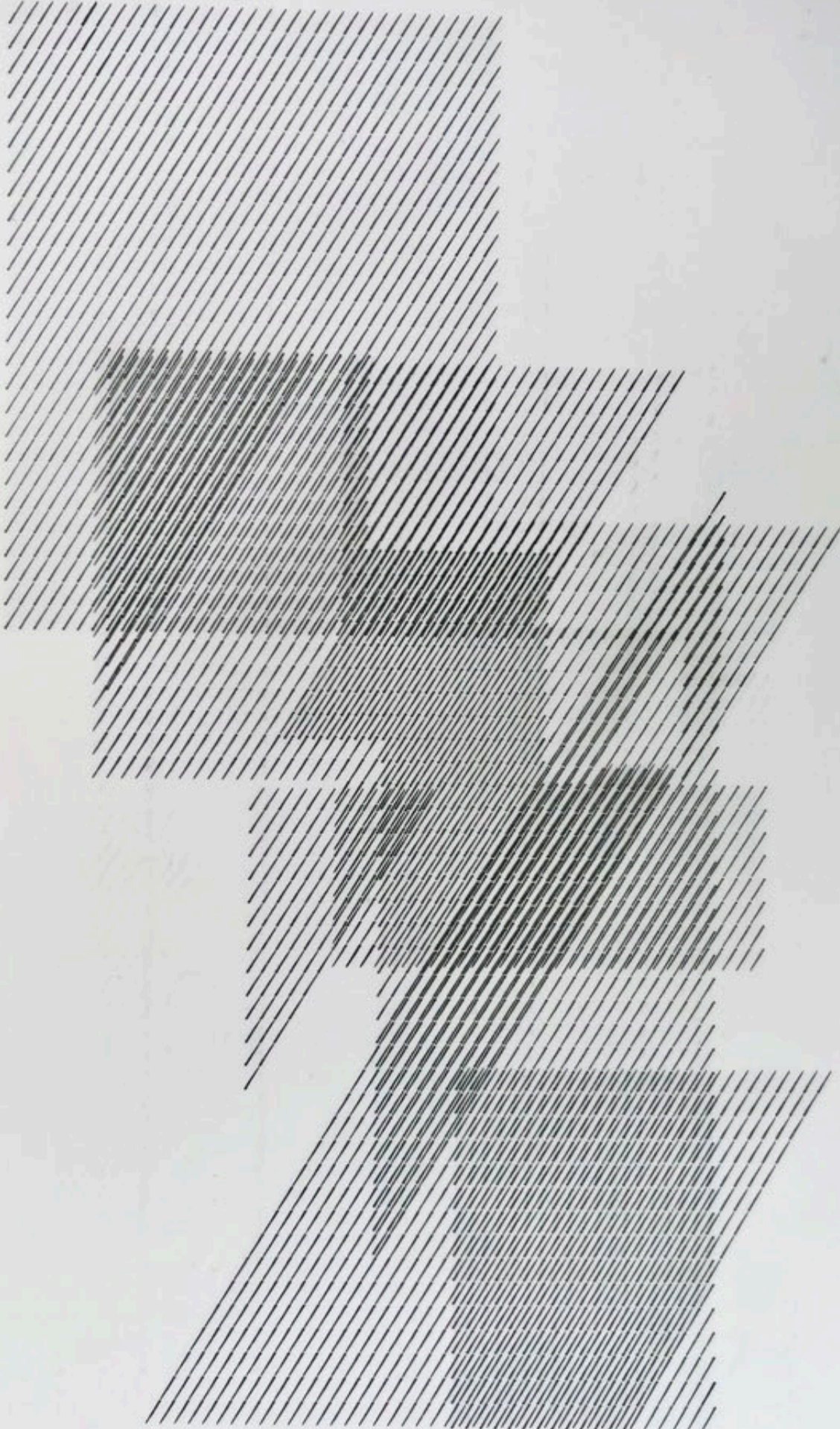


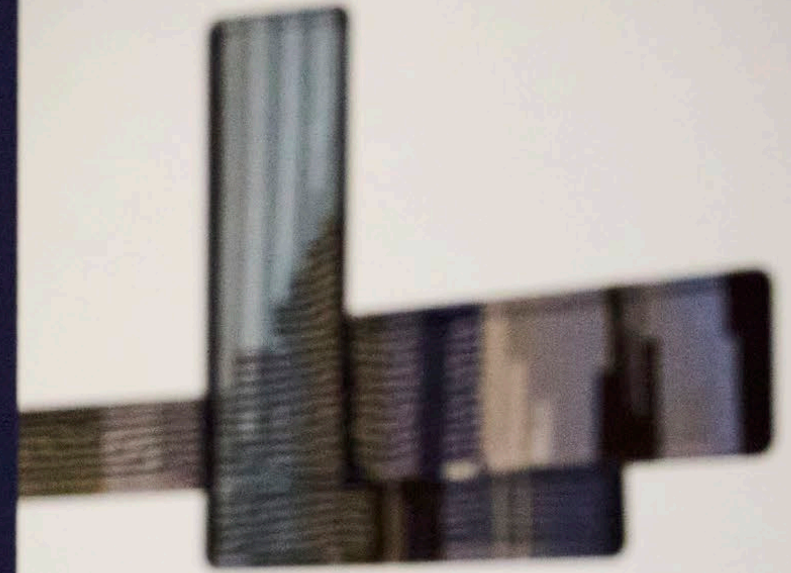
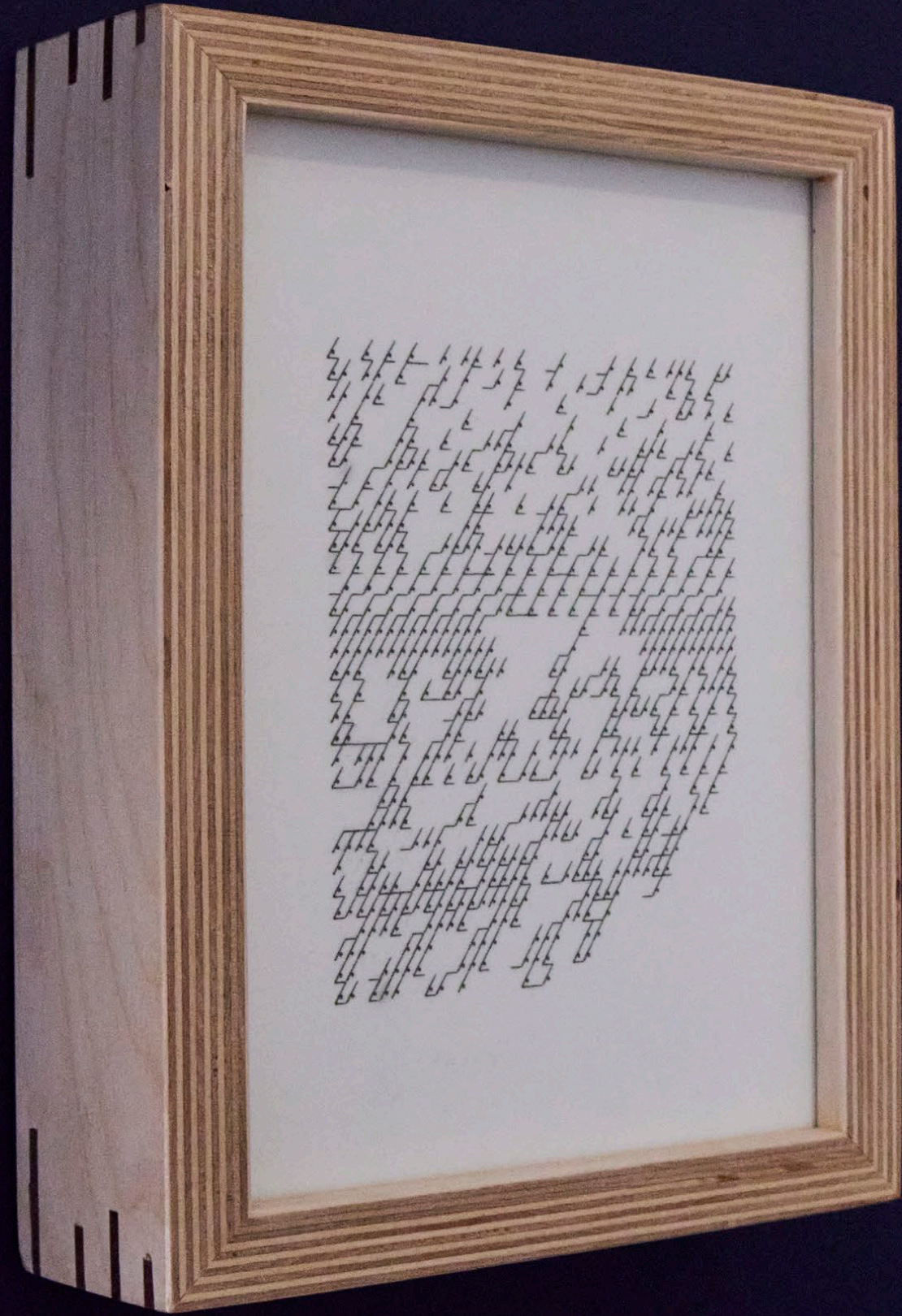
LOUVERS PARTITION Churro Yarn, Bonded Nylon Cording, Linen Warp, Linen Cording, Powder Coated Steel Frame, 90" x 155½" x 11½"

A muralistic composition of dynamic skies and jagged mountains, the LOUVERS PARTITION stands tall in the center of the main gallery wall, playing with the eye as it shimmers with dazzling patterns and literally twists and changes planes as part of its construction. In keeping with the show's theme, Dagdelen designed each of the thirteen panels to pivot an inch (or ten degrees), with the center panel the most torqued, to create a screen that will not truly close. Per the artist, "It is a partition that will never fully partition." Scanning the surface gives the impression of light, shadow, days, and time itself moving fast-motion across a landscape. In reality, the making of this piece was anything but speedy. Dagdelen has described it as being akin to a diary, as she wrote the patterns in sections over the course of five years, approaching it as a different person each time she came to it.



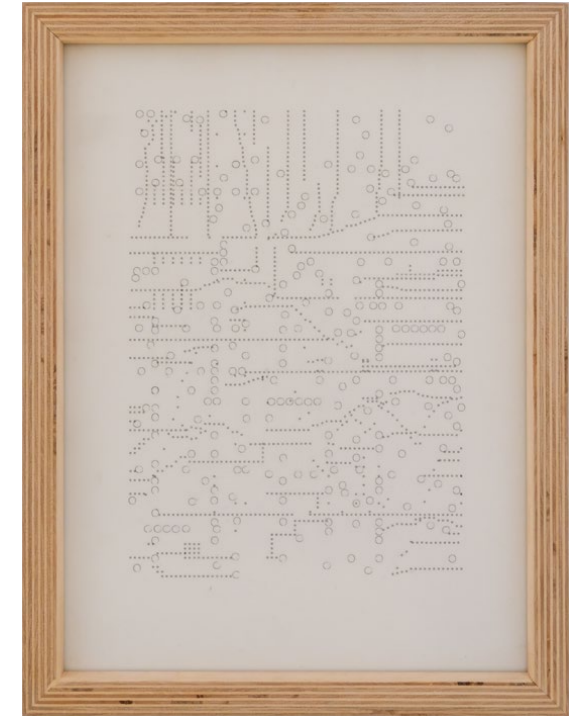
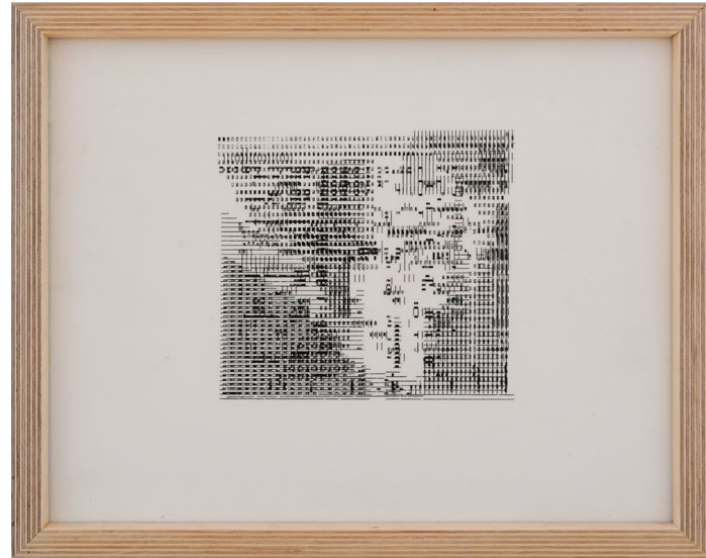
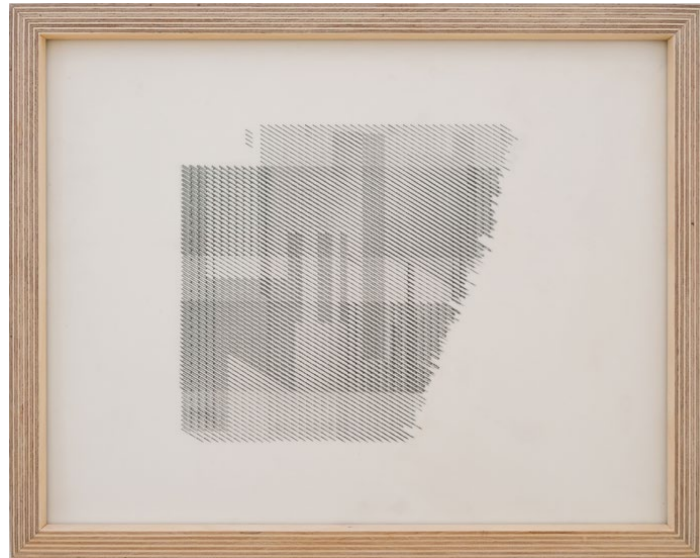
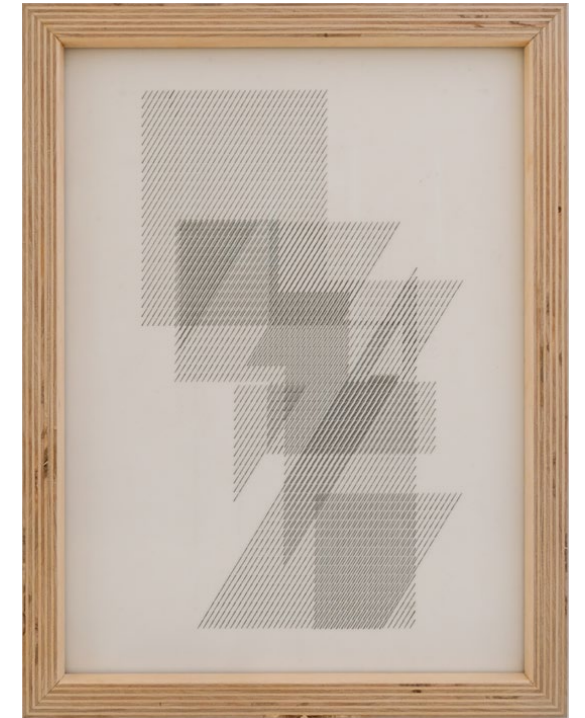
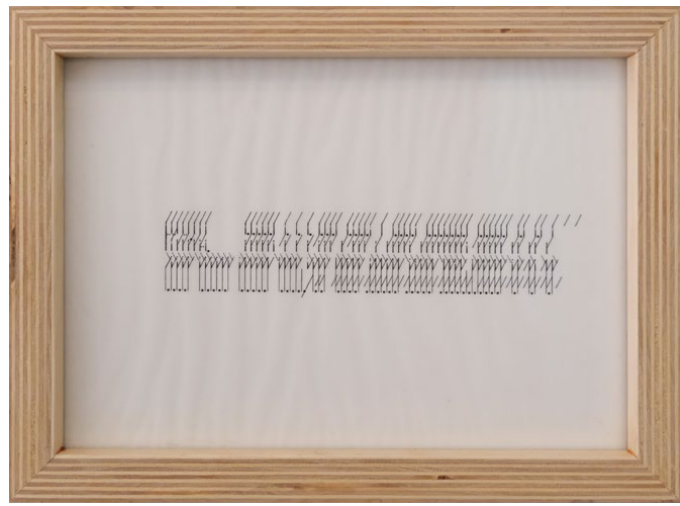
IF THERE'S PEACE WITHIN THIS CHAOTIC SITUATION OF PATTERNING, THAT'S WHEN I'M REALLY HAPPY.







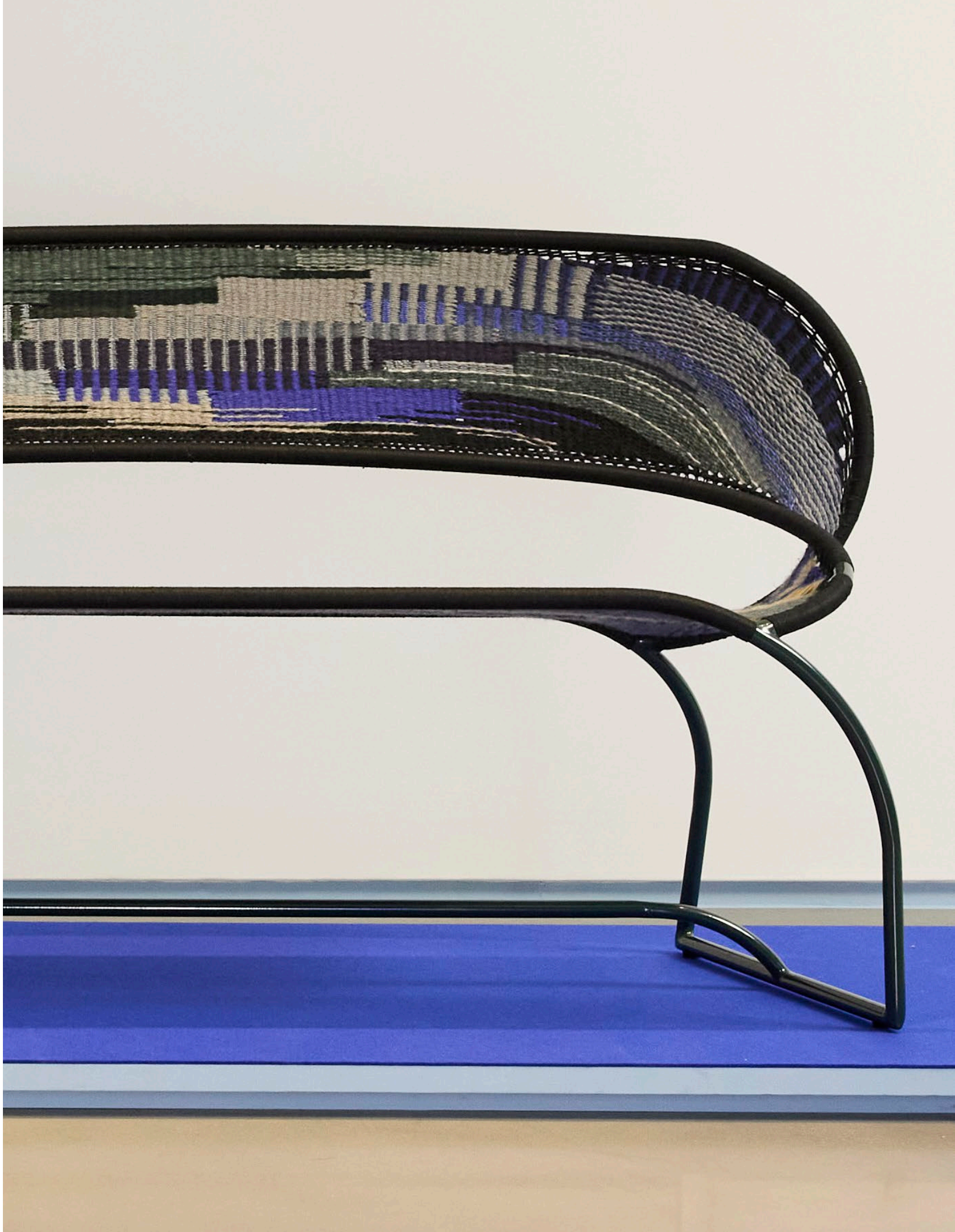
The delicate TYPEWRITER STUDIES mounted in handmade frames on the gallery walls engage with pattern and tempo in another medium. Always using vintage IBM Selectric machines with different fonts and characters, Dagdelen lays down a foundational “beat” onto a vellum sheet while listening to classical music. She then determines the rules for the ensuing pattern; if, for example, she starts with circles, she might play the game of hitting each one with a slash until she can’t, and a new pathway emerges. Manipulating, rotating, subtracting, and extracting come next as Dagdelen organizes the marks marching across the page into a cohesive movement.

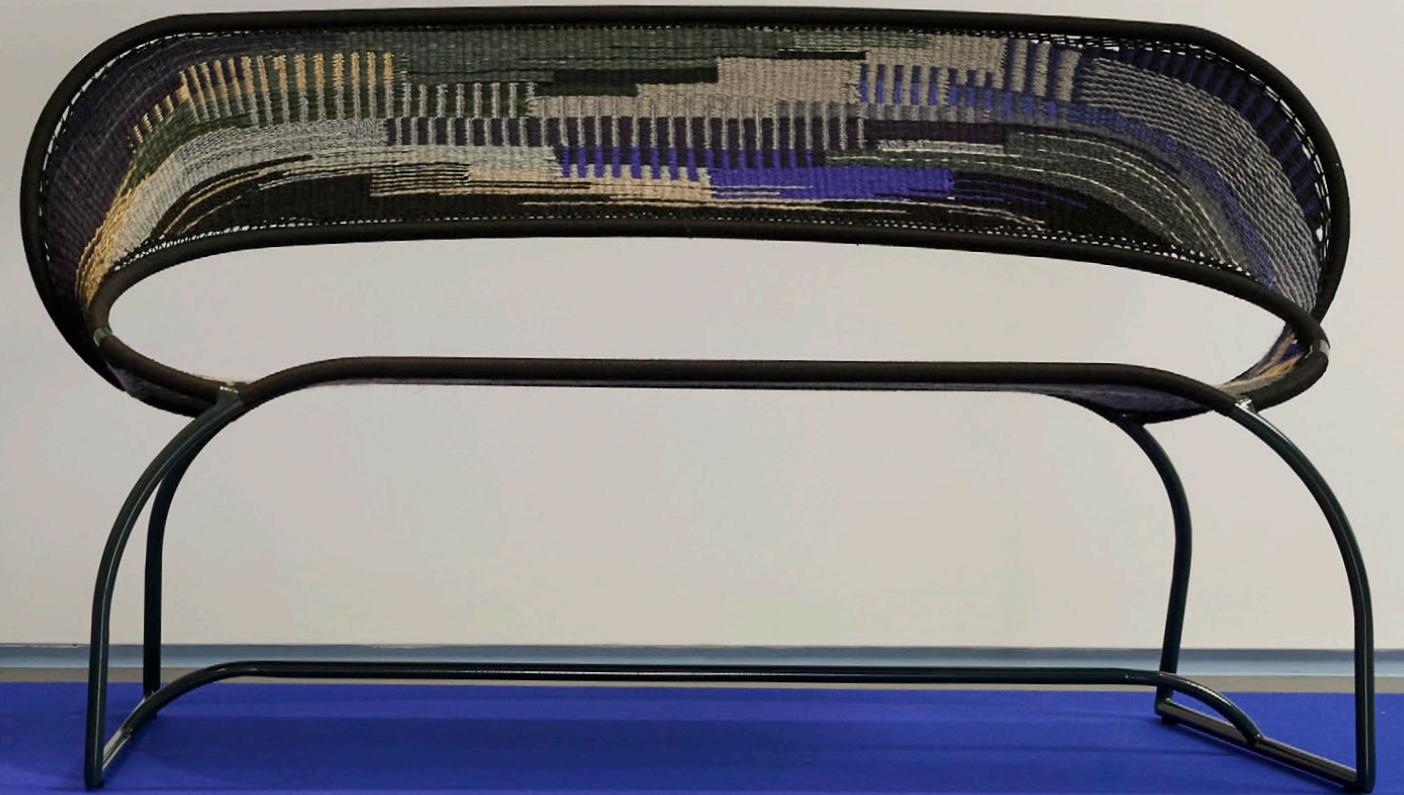


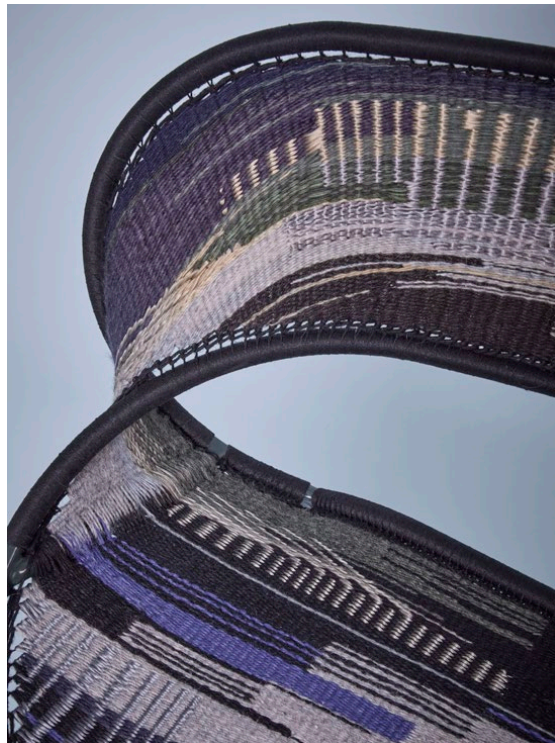
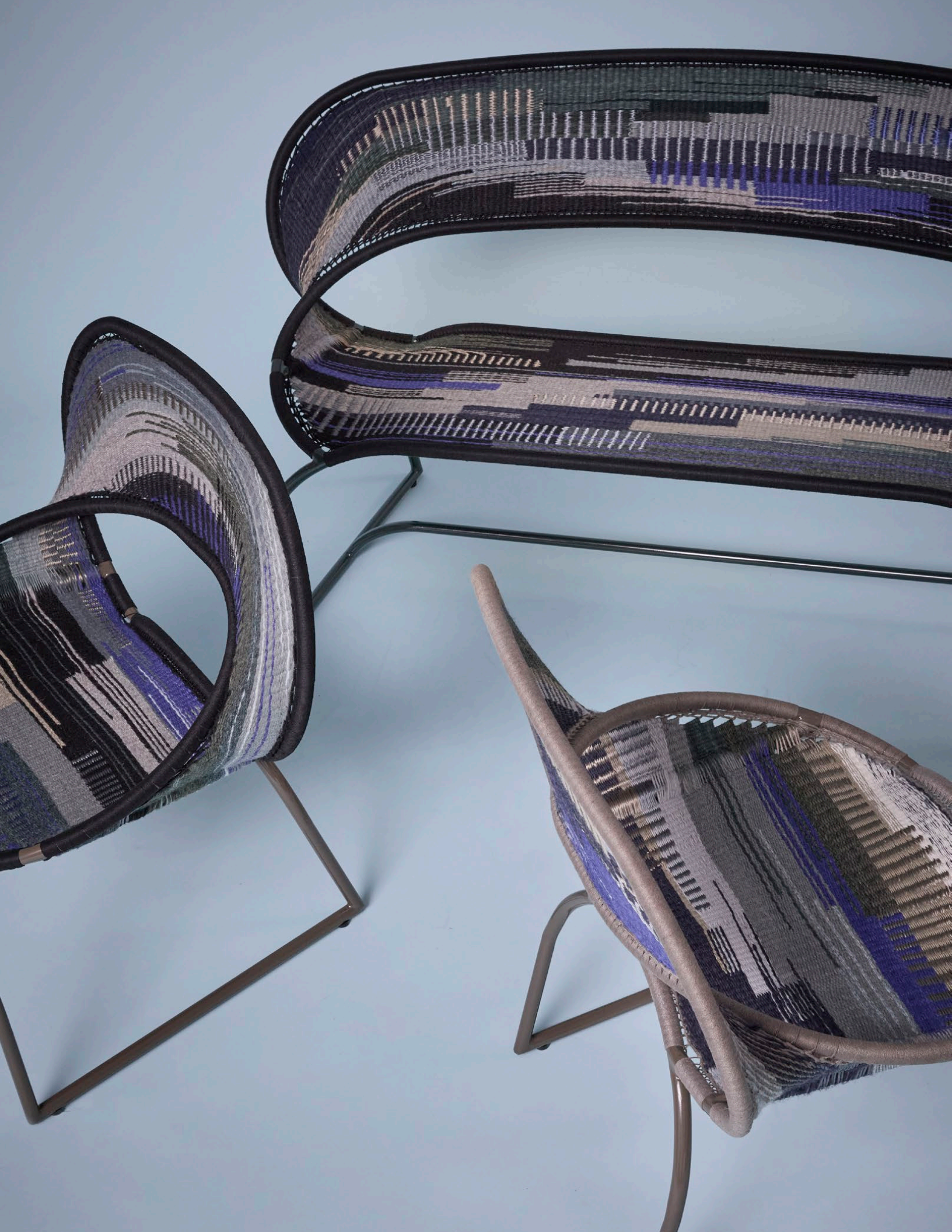
TYPEWRITER STUDIES, (#1 - #4) Vellum paper sheet, ink, handmade wooden frame, (#1) 7" x 9½" x 2½", (#2-4) 12" x 15" x 2"

TYPEWRITER STUDIES, (#5 - #8) Vellum paper sheet, ink, handmade wooden frame, 12¾" x 9¾" x 1¾"

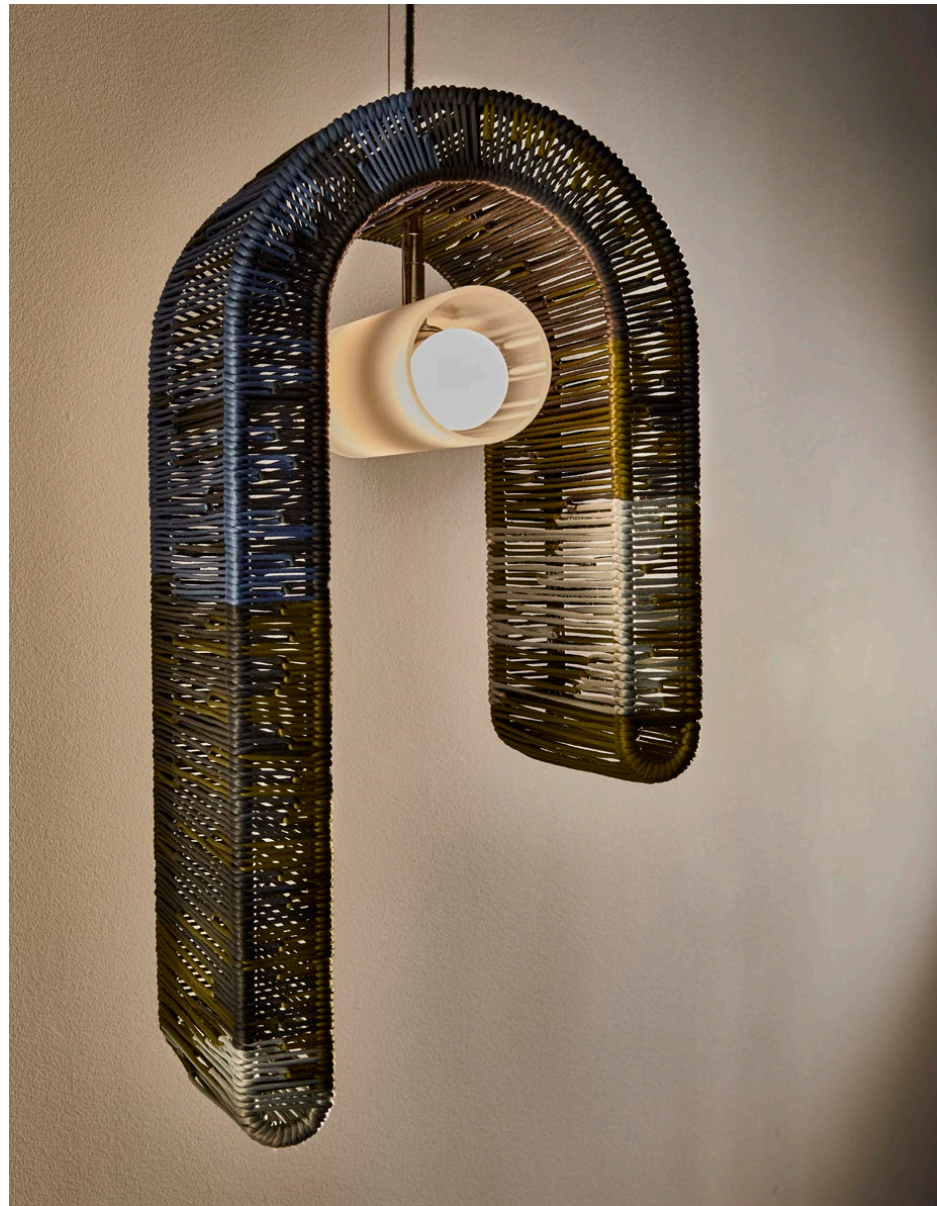
**NONE OF MY SHAPES ARE EXACTLY THE SAME.
THEY ARE INDIVIDUALS.**







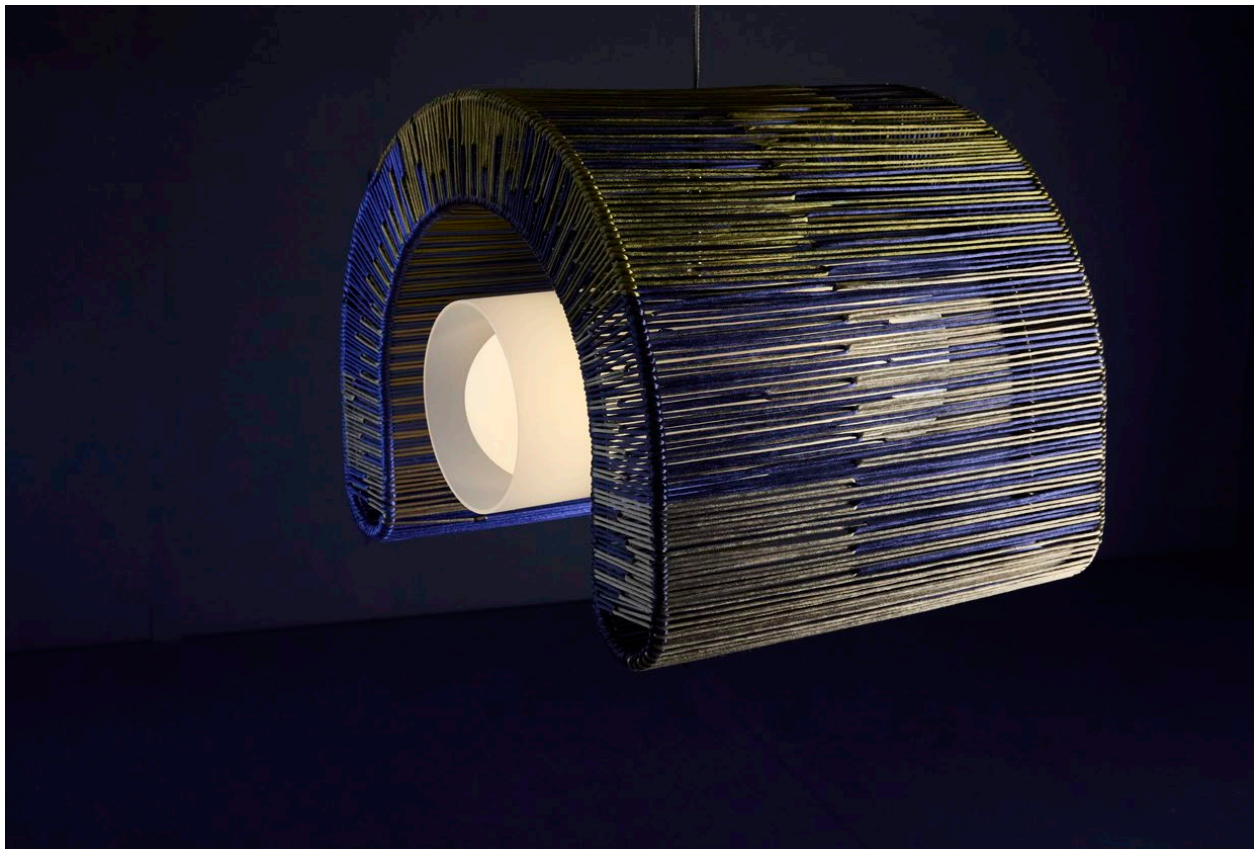
YU SET, BENCH & CHAIRS Churro Yarn, Bonded Nylon Cording, Linen Warp, Linen Cording, Powder Coated Steel Frame, 31" x 28" x 22" (Chair), 32" x 50" x 20" (Bench)



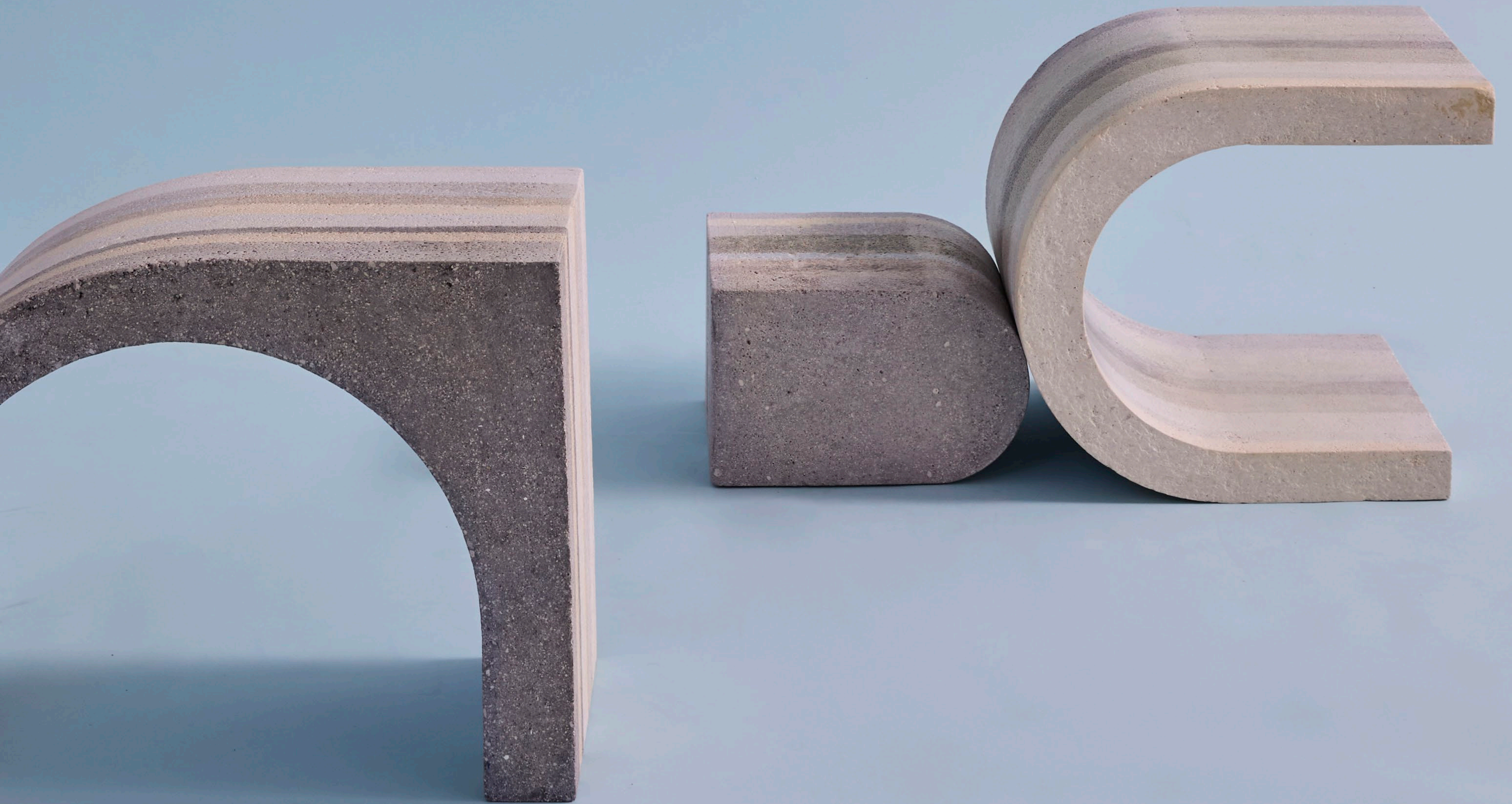
LOOMINAIRE SERIES, LAMP E, Steel Frame, Satin Cording, Frosted Acrylic Shade, Porcelain Bulbs, 20" x 9½" x 10"

Dagdelen has declared that “weaving is just one part of what I do,” adding that fabrication, material, and, in particular, shape present productive challenges that she readily embraces. In the YU SERIES of RAMMED EARTH SIDE TABLES, LAMPS, and WOVEN FURNITURE, experimental iterations of one shape reflect a critical rule that Dagdelen always abides: “Let the material do its thing; don’t force it to be something else.” Rigorously adhering to this directive, she guides different materials to naturally fill the YU framework, whether as pigmented adobe layers, parallel cords stretched taut, or Churro wool wefts fluidly navigating the straight lines of Swedish linen warps configured by Dagdelen to form a curving hyperbolic shape.





LOOMINAIRE SERIES, LAMPS A, B, and C, Steel Frame, Satin Cording, Frosted Acrylic Shade, Porcelain Bulbs
TOP IMAGE: (C) 18" x 30" x 15", (B) 18" x 21" x 15" BOTTOM IMAGE: (A) 16" x 16" x 15" OPPOSITE PAGE: (C) 16 1/4" x 28" x 15"





RAMMED EARTH SIDE TABLES Pumice-crete, Portland Cement, Natural Dyes, Lime, 17½" x 24" x 13", 16" x 29" x 15", and 13" x 18" x 15"





LOOMINAIRE SERIES, LAMP D, Steel Frame, Satin Cording, Frosted Acrylic Shade, Porcelain Bulbs, 33" x 10½" x 10"

Writing in 1965, the Bauhaus weaver ANNI ALBERS, a seminal figure in Dagdelen's pantheon of influences, traced the human capacity for forming "ever-extending relationships" to what she called "the event of a thread," a nod to the multifaceted, often nonlinear, connections the medium affords us. Much to Albers's point, Dagdelen recognizes that repetitive patterns entice and entrance and sometimes get us stuck; in response, she pushes for the potential of purposeful glitches to open up ever more nuanced relationships to each other and our worlds. Always an emotional journey, this approach to making and designing feeds the soul, calms the mind, and provides re-energizing moments of rest and repose.



WORDS by KATE IRVIN | DESIGN by AVA CRUZ
PHOTOGRAPHY by JASON MUHLBERGER | PORTRAIT by LINDA BEECROFT

OFF BY AN INCH

BETILDAZDELEN

CRISTINA GRAJALES

50 VESTRY STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10013