



ALBERT YONATHAN SETYAWAN

HYPNAGOGIA

TRACING TIME

23.05 – 27.06

2026

ara  
contemporary

## *Held in Space, Passing in Time*

Albert has maintained the same precision and ethical consistency in his practice since I first met him, all the way back in 2009. A meditative quality permeates his oeuvre, evident not only in its physical output but also in the processes of making. My initial understanding of this sensibility emerged through observing his method alone: the iterative multiplication of ceramic pieces through slip-casting until they reach a certain quantity, in the ceramic studio located adjacent to the printmaking studio at the Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB), where I was studying. Coming from a printmaking background, it was easy for me to relate to the essence of repetition, which, in his work, lies in repeating actions over and over until they eventually transcend their original intent. Over years of conversation and continued acquaintance following our time in Bandung, it has become increasingly apparent that this meditative quality cannot be attributed to repetition alone. The meditative quality present in his work serves as a reflection of the underlying elements that give form to Albert's practice.

*In a set of repeated actions, each of the actions is in itself unique in that very present moment that action is being done. Repetition changes nothing in the object repeated, but it does change something in the mind which contemplates it.*

- Albert Yonathan Setyawan

Clay has long been associated with the creation of human existence. We often encounter the notion that humans were first shaped from the earth and, in time, return to it. Through clay, or baked clay in this case, he has produced works in ceramic and terracotta; however, since 2018, his practice has focused exclusively on terracotta, which he regards as the closest thing that could be representative of his own cultural and geographical roots. Terracotta retains a strong bodily resonance, echoing the materiality of the human form. Albert noted that throughout Indonesia's long pottery history, terracotta has primarily been used by indigenous potters nationwide to produce domestic objects. Within this framework, he employs clay as a means to reflect on philosophical questions of time, being, and existence. Its plasticity lends itself to processes of replication and repetition, which he activates through the technique of slip-casting. Given its efficiency, slip-casting has been widely adopted within industrial modes of production, especially in the manufacture of tableware. Transposed into an artistic context, however, the method unsettles notions of authenticity, foregrounding the tension between repetition and the trace, or perhaps erasure, of the artist's hand.

The contradictory nature of accuracy in replication and traces, in relation to slip-casting, is explored in works such as *Annica*. The first work in this series, *Annica: Sticks and Stones* (2024), was presented in the Indian Ocean Craft Triennale (IOTA24), at John Curtin Gallery, WA, Australia. The body of work consists of over 1000 terracotta pieces replicated through slip-casting using a single mould. Each piece follows the mould until it gradually loses detail and form through a painstaking process of repeated casting, challenging the technique's premise of exact reproduction. Initially, I understood this process as a continuous reduction of form toward nothingness; however, Albert maintains that there is no such thing as nothing—there is always form. His process embodies how time transforms form, tracing time through physical action and material presence. *Annica*, stemming from a foundational Buddhist concept, becomes a realistic observation that all things are always changing.

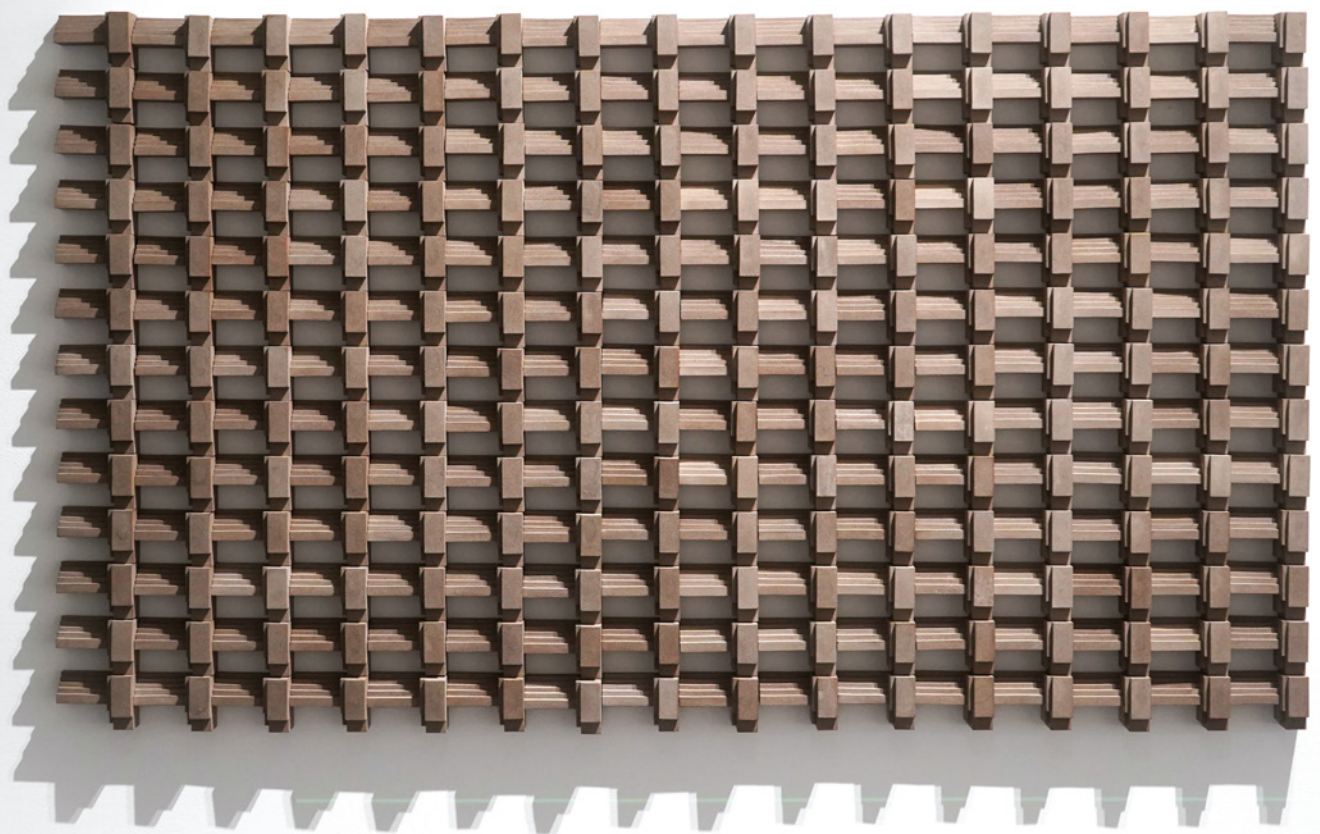
*Hypnagogia* further explores the theme of change. The works draw from familiar elements of interior and exterior architectural spaces, treated as modules that are repeated to construct vertical and horizontal planes, suggesting larger built forms. Each module is a self-contained image rendered in single-point perspective, where forms recede toward a vanishing point. When assembled in their entirety, much like mosaic tiles, they are geometrically arranged into planes that hold multiple

perspectives at once, suggesting spatial impossibilities or 'illogical' spaces. We often perceive space as a fixed container; yet our surroundings in urban cityscapes, as static as they may seem, are in constant flux, shaped over overlapping periods of time and human intervention until they begin to lose coherence. This is evident in the works, which appear orderly in their individual parts but reveal increasing spatial illogic when expanded into a larger whole. *Hypnagogia* also extends Albert's contemplation on existence, positioning space as an extension of bodily presence in the world. The mind constructs divisions between inside and outside, self and world. This perhaps underlies the long tradition of architectural metaphors used to describe the mind, such as 'a window into the mind', 'corridors of memory', and other spatial analogies.

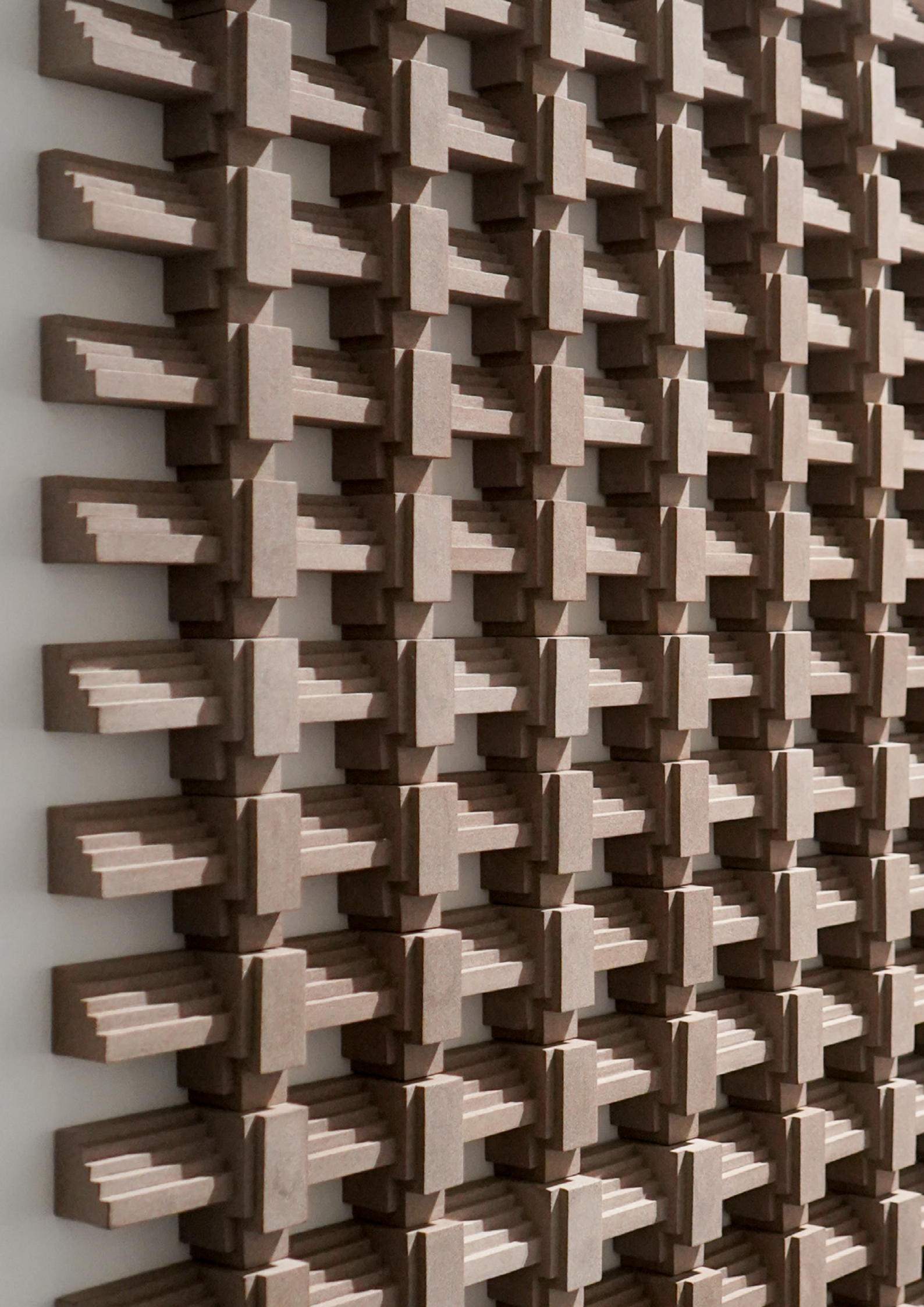
*Squaring the Circle - Circling the Square* captures the desire to control what resists control through form. The three-channel video documents Albert's attempts to transform a cube into a sphere and vice versa. However, neither form resolves into perfection: the sphere is never fully spherical, nor the cube fully cubic, as he humorously remarks that even the world itself is not a perfect sphere. The repeated failure highlights the collapse of ideal systems when subjected to repetition, expansion, and time. Through these reflections, Albert's solo exhibition *Hypnagogia | Tracing Time* ultimately questions our existence within time and space, and the impossibility of overcoming them. As quiet as the works may feel, within them lies a record of time and transformations. In this sense, even stillness carries a contradiction within itself: nothing, no matter how static it appears, can ever truly remain the same.

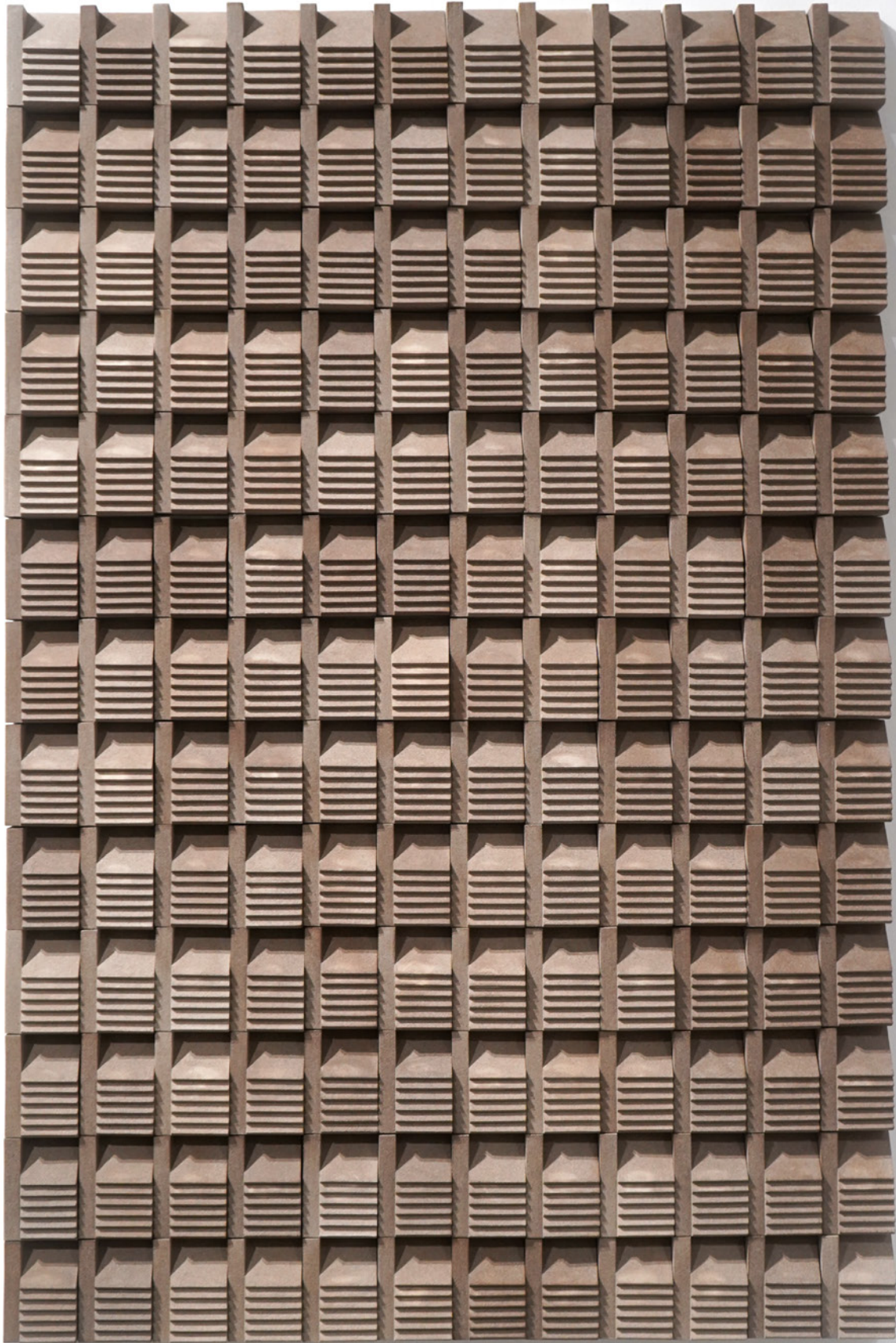
Megan Arlin  
May 2026



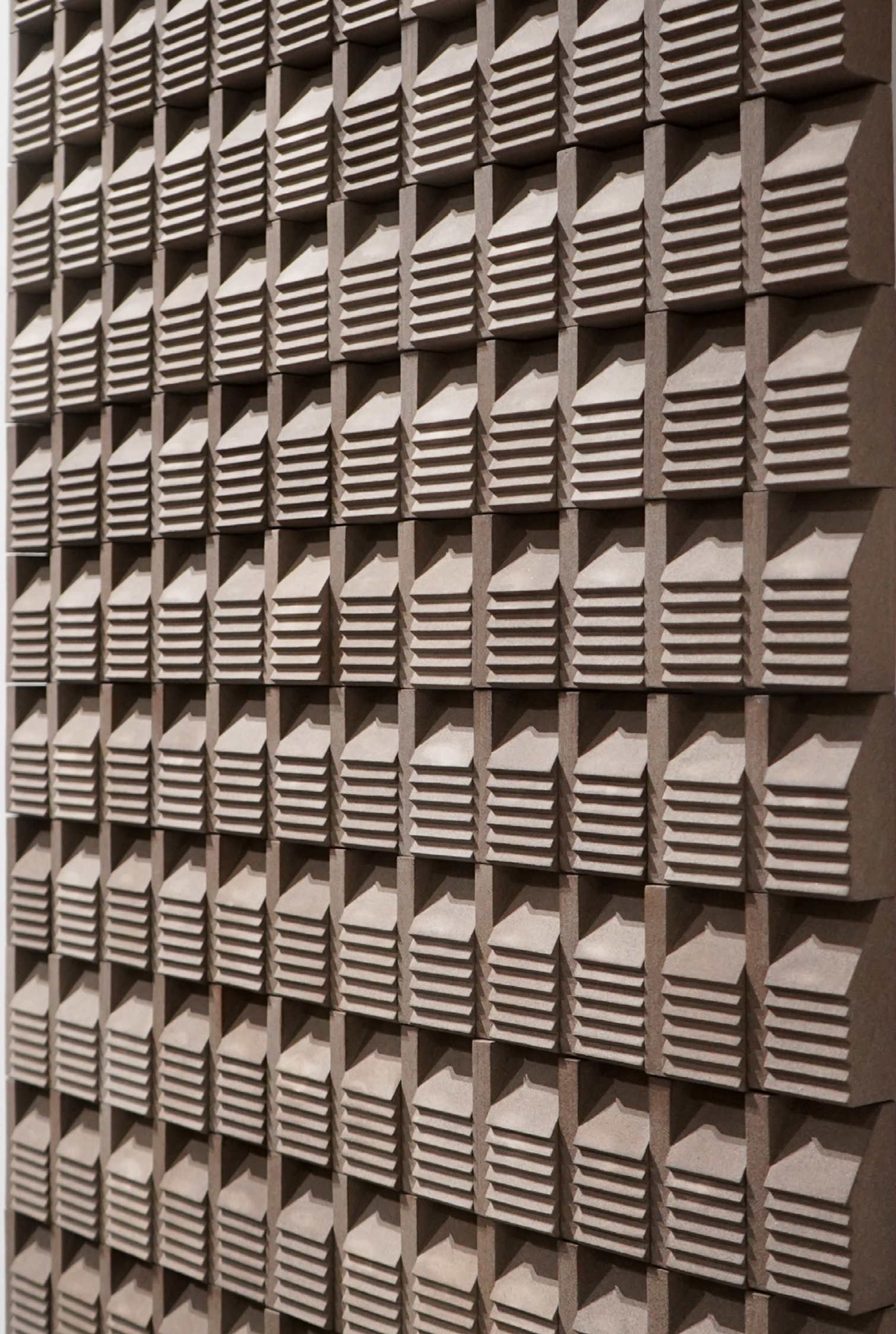


*Form Constants - Spatial Tessellation #12 (Beams & Columns)*, 2026  
terracotta  
89.5 x 156 x 5 cm (208 pcs)

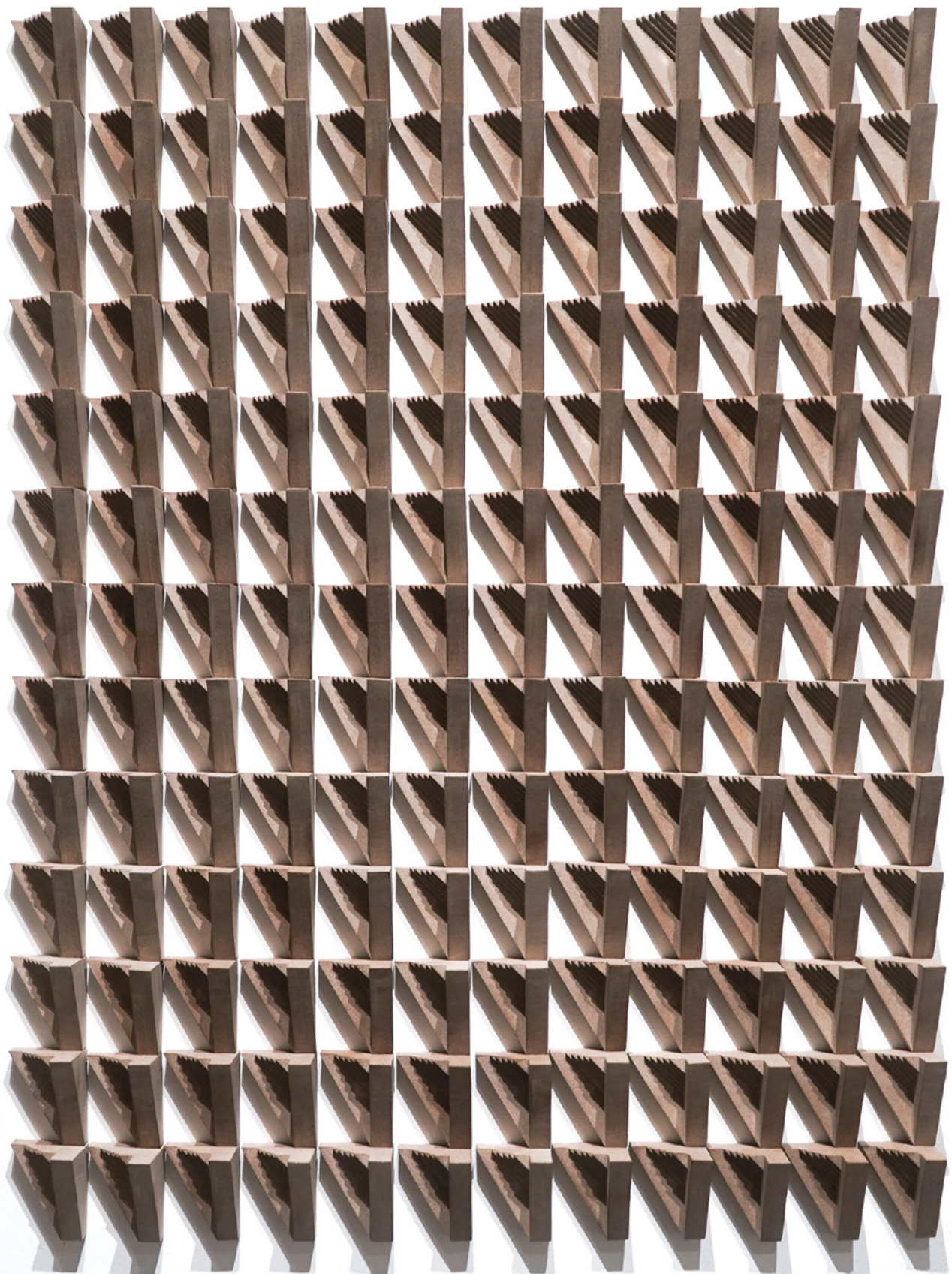




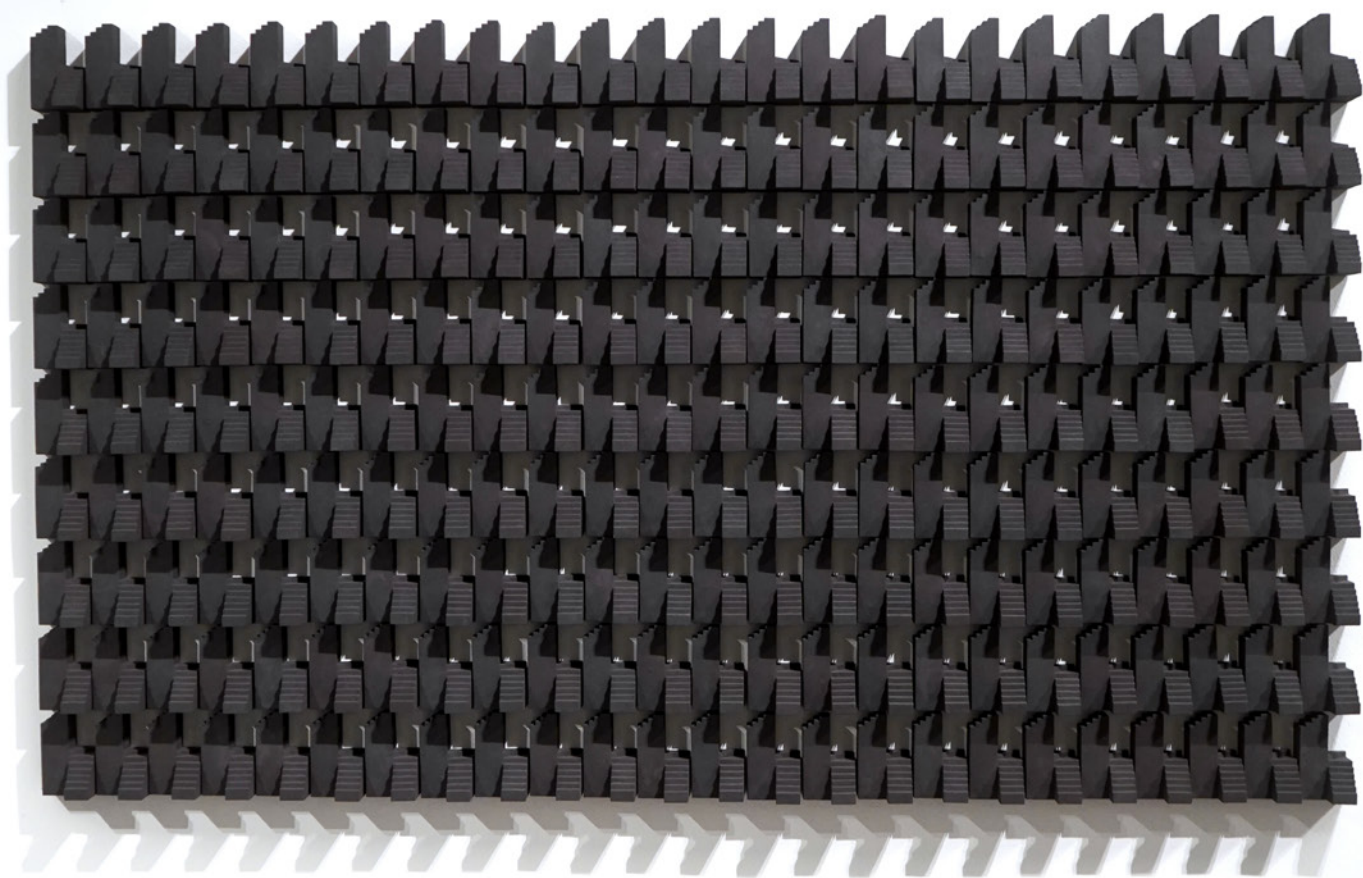
*Form Constants - Spatial Tessellation #6 (Roofs)*, 2026  
terracotta  
101 x 67 x 3 cm (156 pieces)



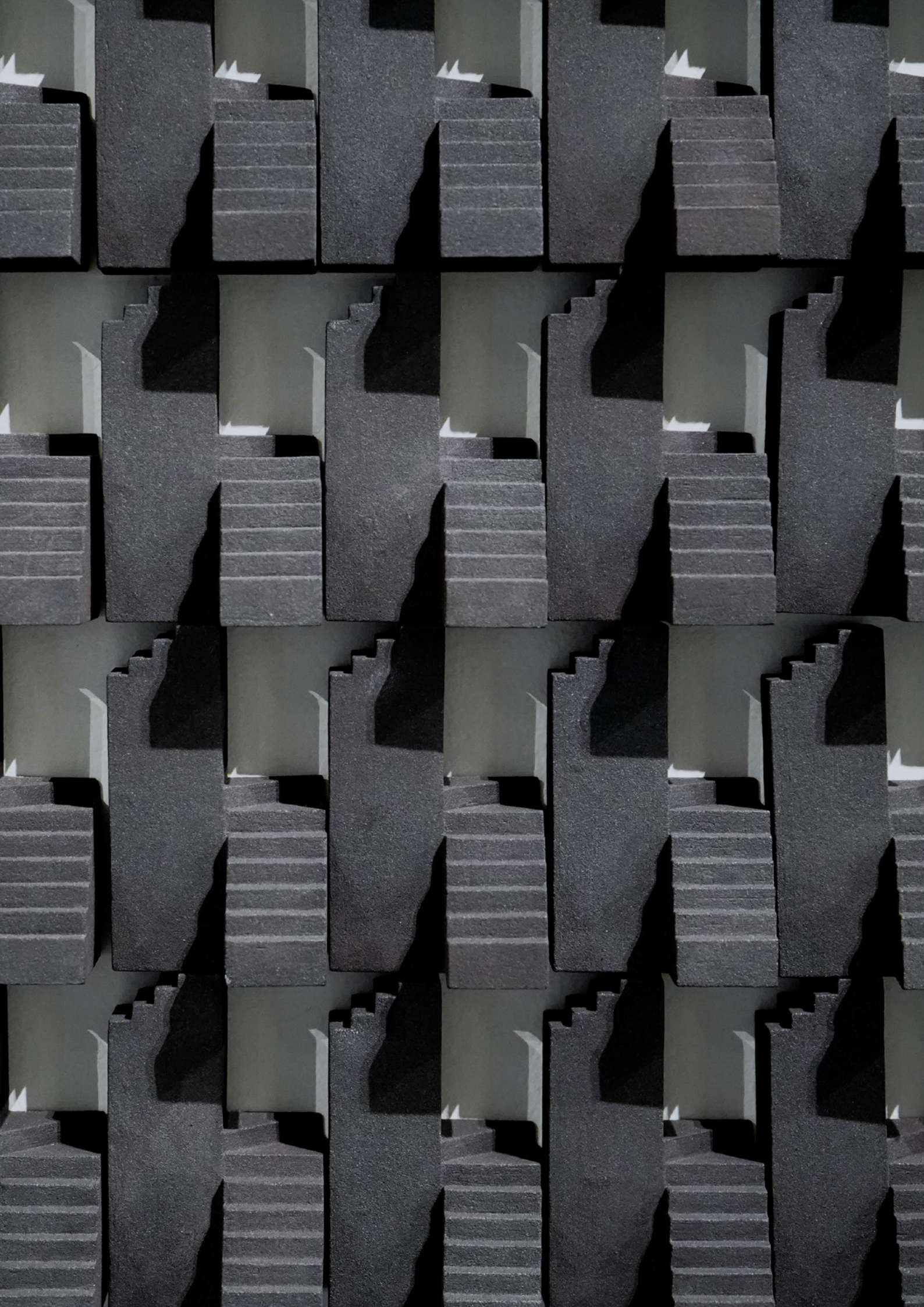
*Form Constants - Spatial Tessellation #11 (Piers)*, 2026  
terracotta  
94 x 72.5 x 6 cm (156 pcs)







*Form Constants - Spatial Tessellation #9 (Pillars & Stairs)* , 2026  
terracotta  
80.5 x 103.6 x 4.5 cm (216 pcs)



*Form Constants - Spatial Tessellation #8 (Walls & Stairs) , 2026*

terracotta

140.5 x 86 x 6 cm (204 pcs)

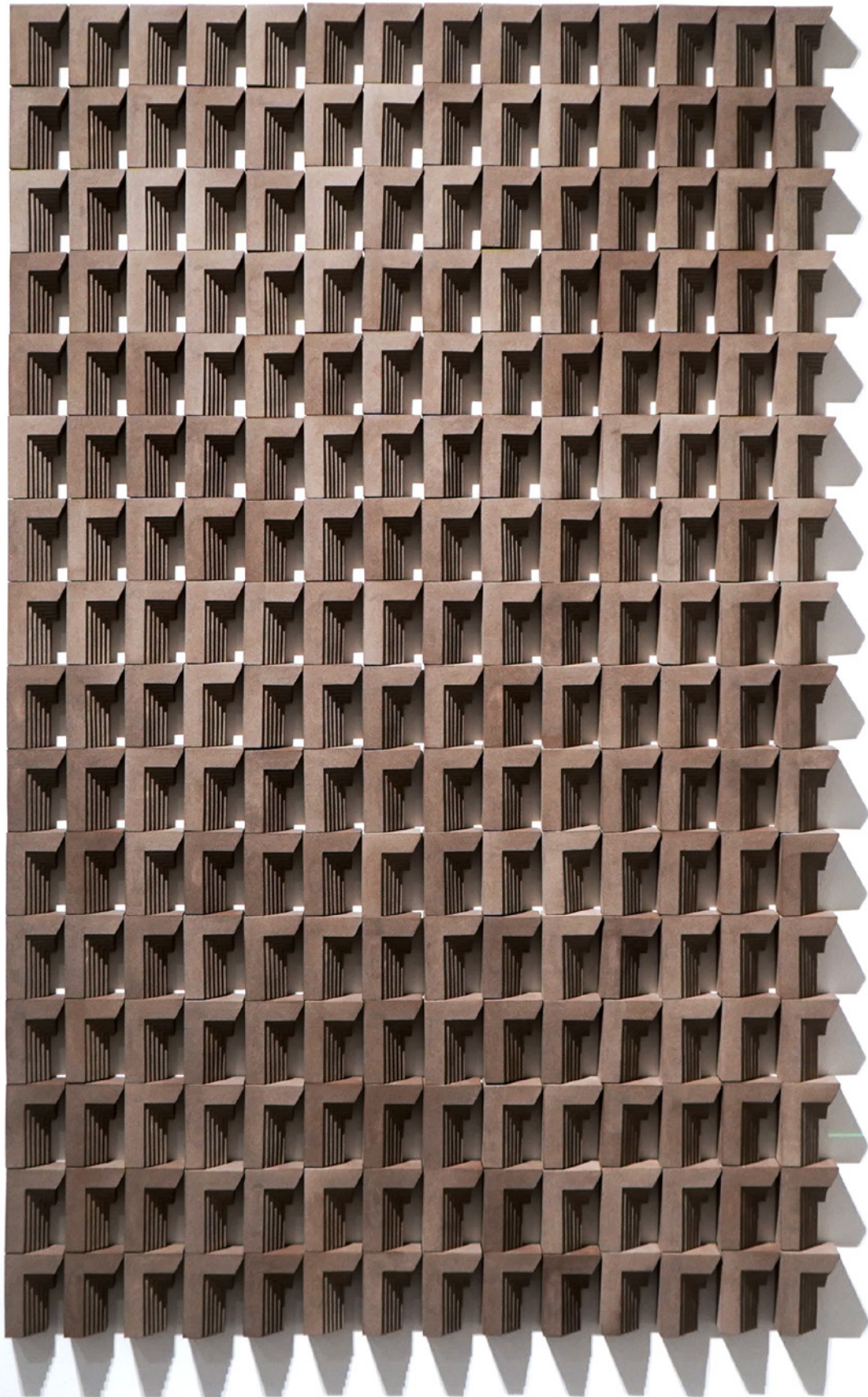


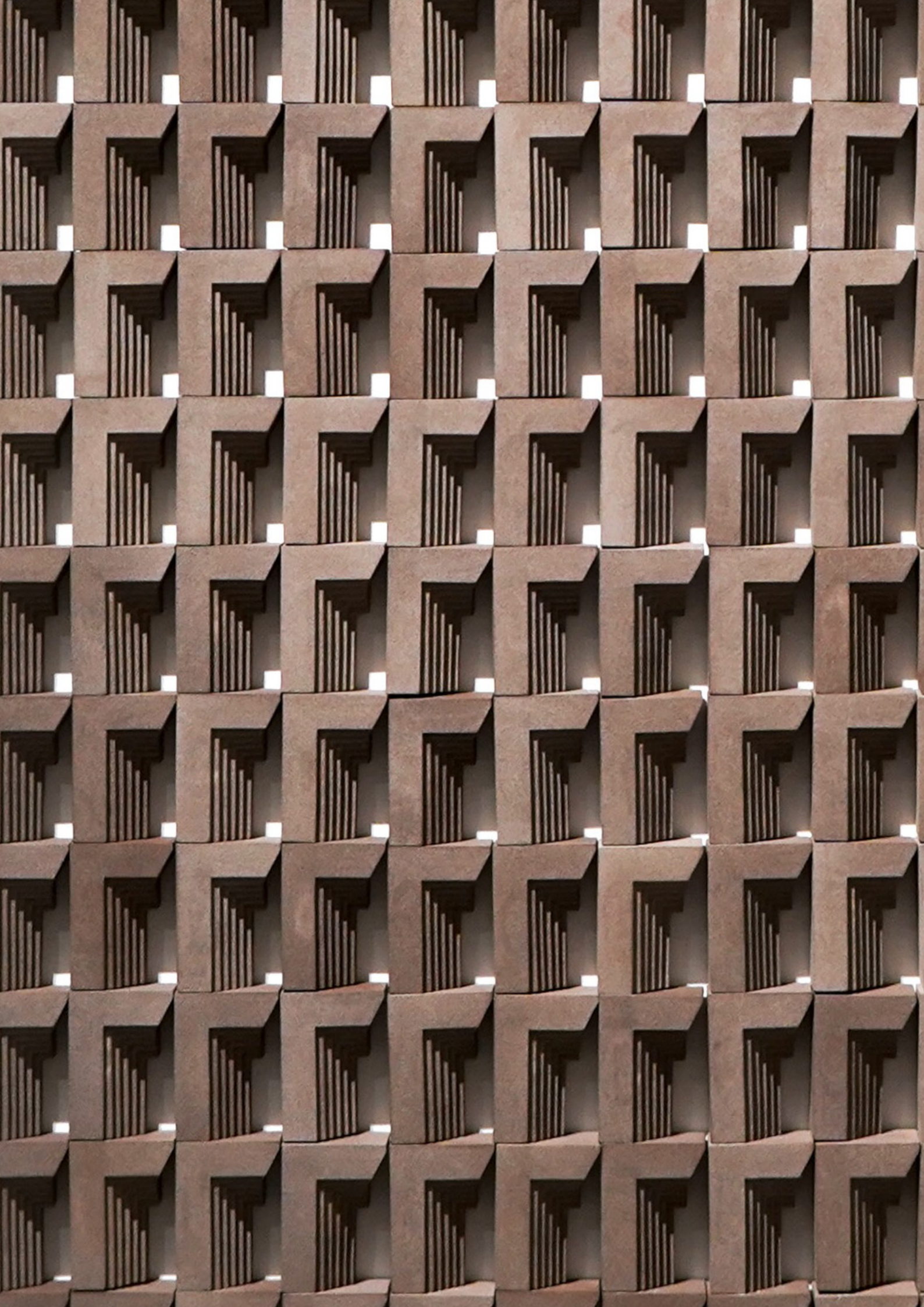


*Form Constants - Spatial Tessellation #14 (Window Frames), 2026*

terracotta

144 x 90 x 4 cm (224 cm)



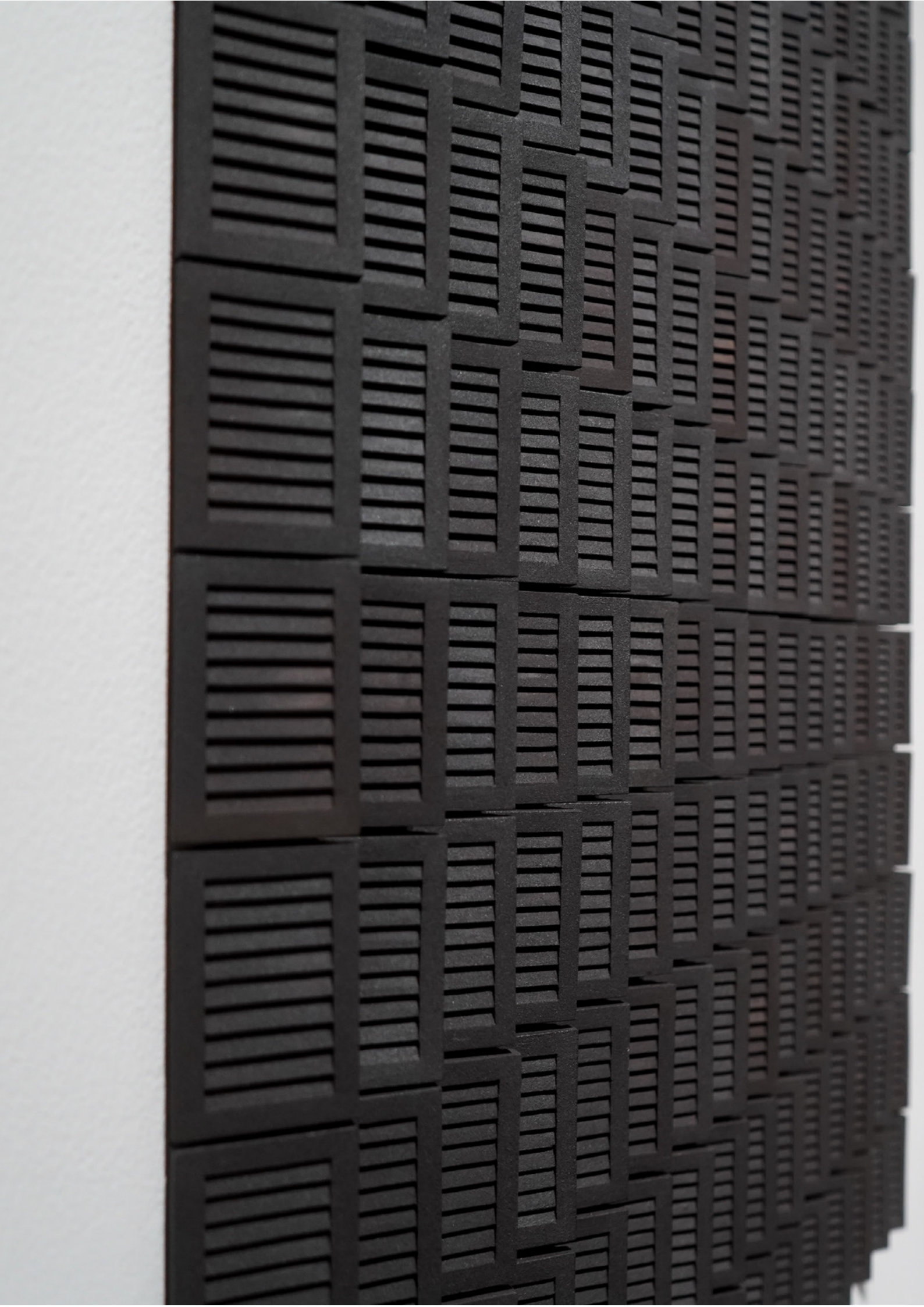


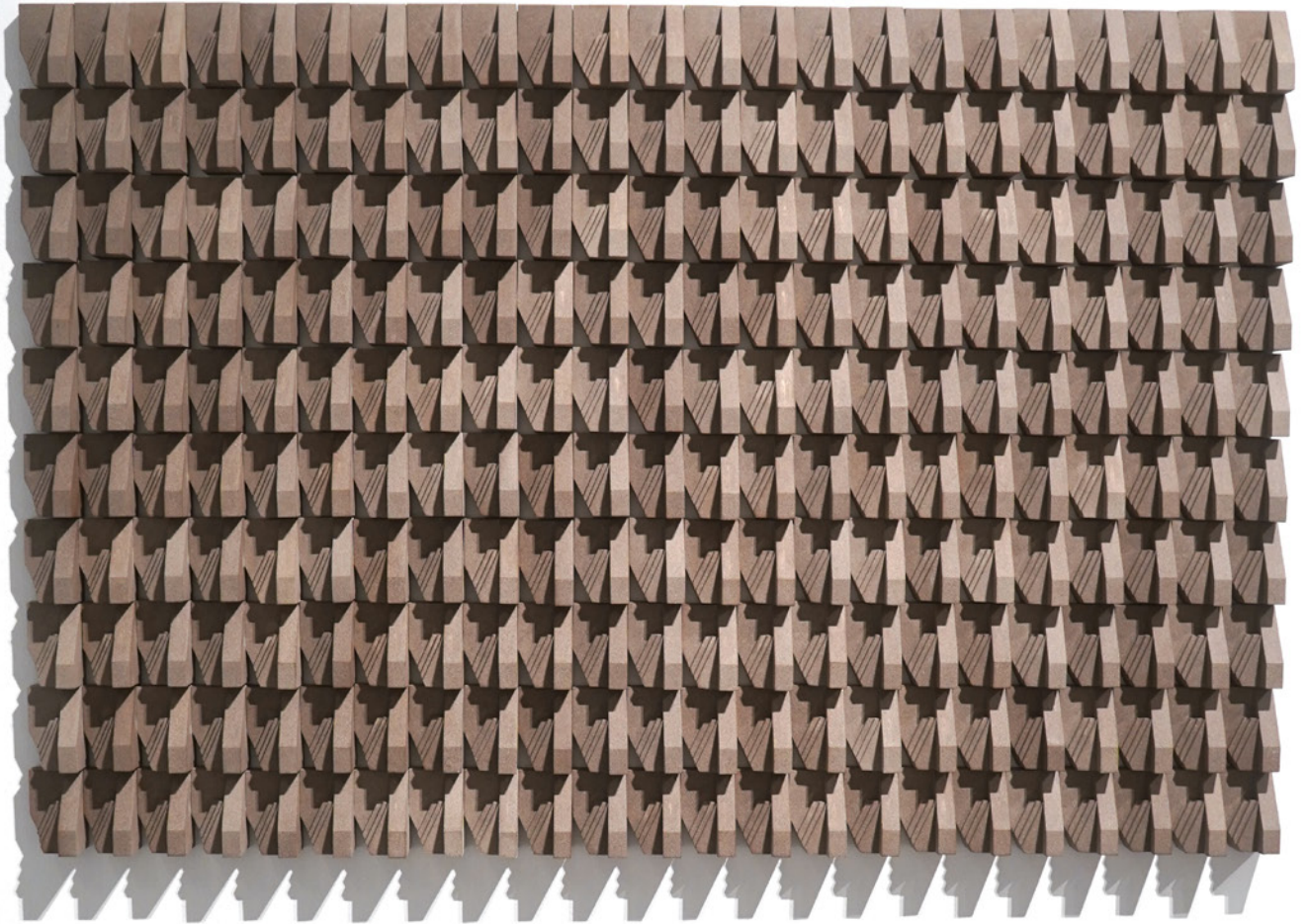
*Form Constants - Spatial Tessellation #7 (Windows), 2026*

terracotta

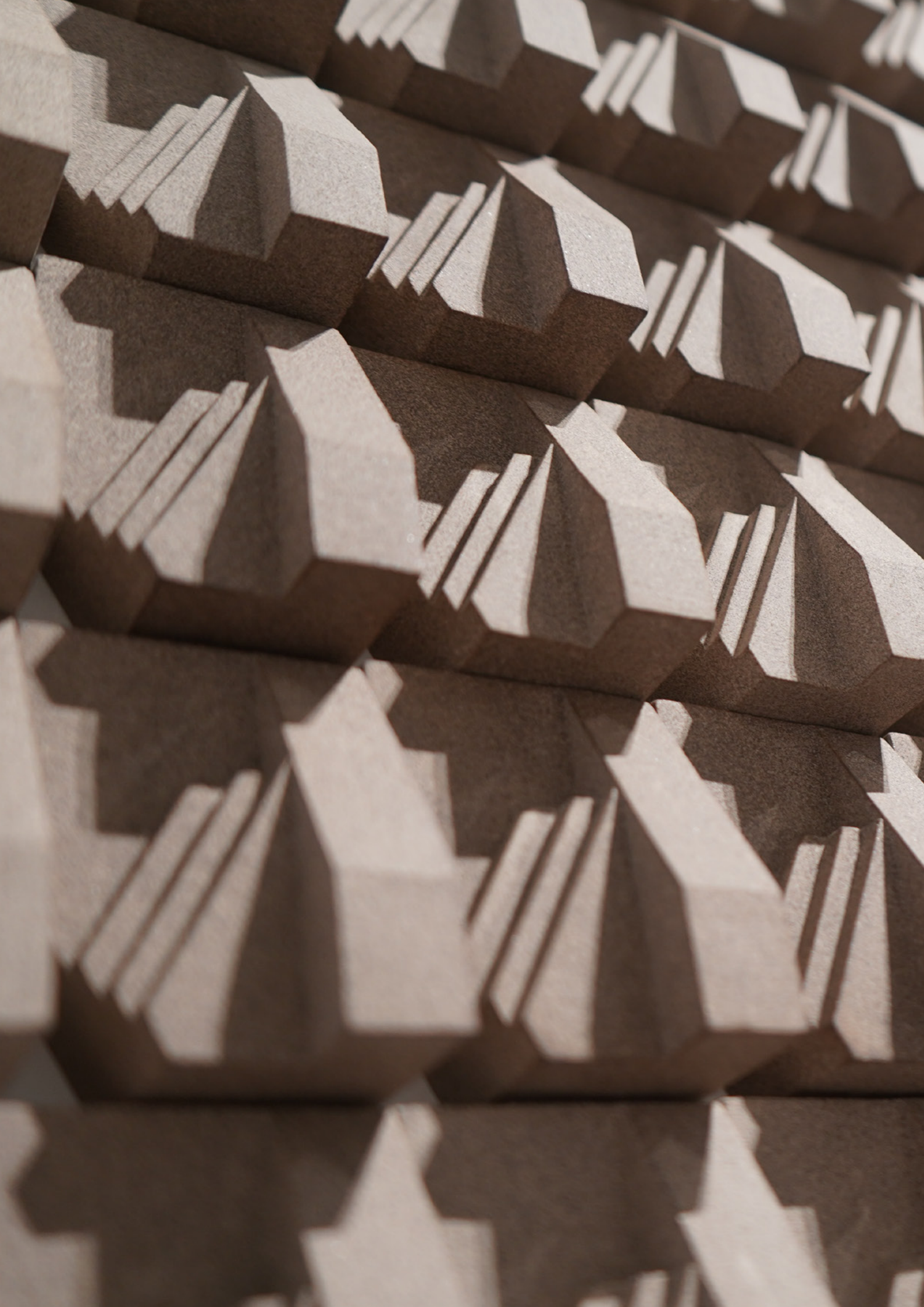
119 x 68 x 4 cm (165 pcs)







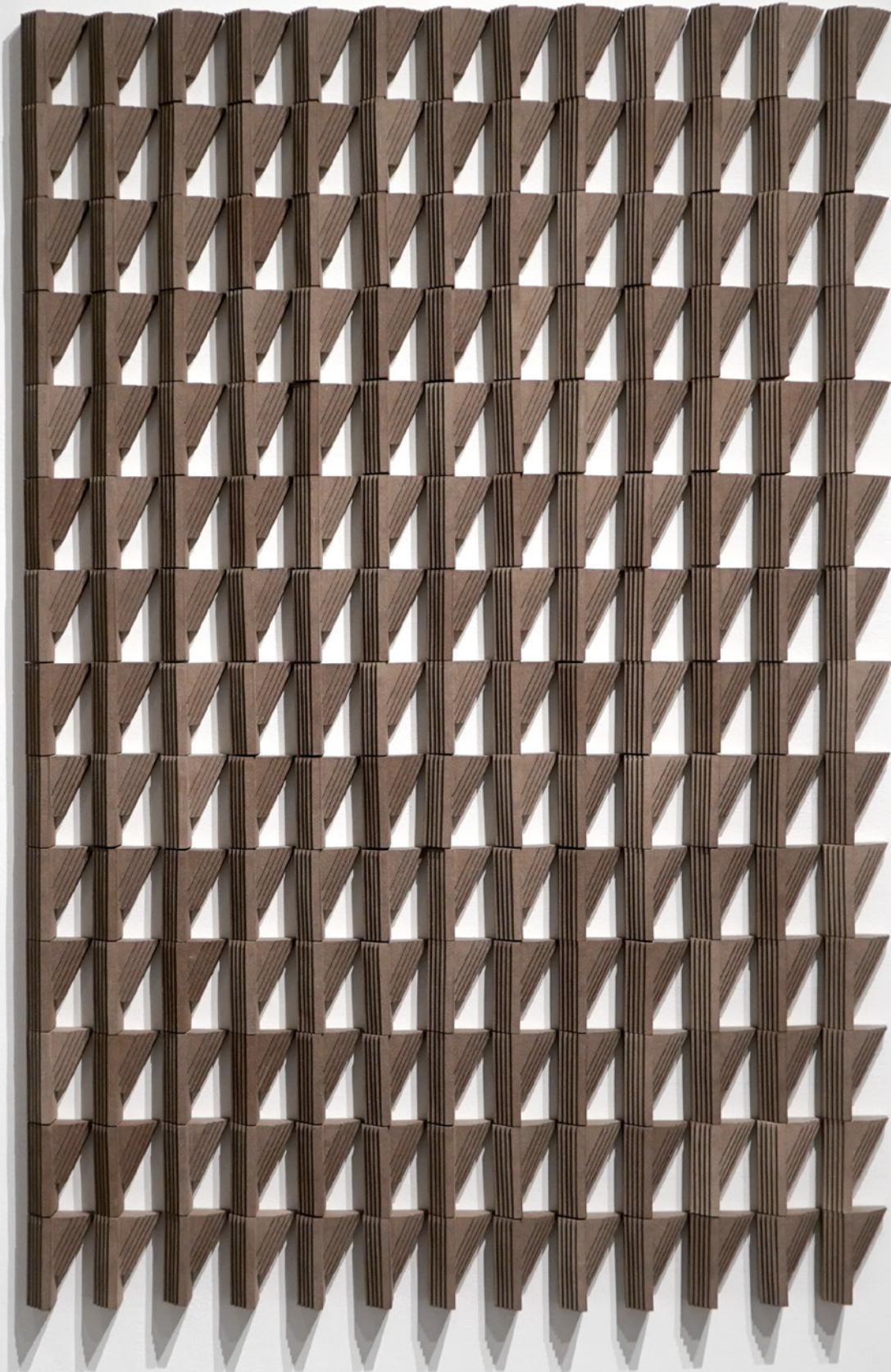
*Form Constants - Spatial Tessellation #10 (Beams), 2026*  
terracotta  
70 x 118 x 4.2 cm (230 pcs)



*Form Constants - Spatial Tessellation #13 (Pillars & Piers), 2026*

terracotta

121 x 81 x 4 cm (182 pcs)



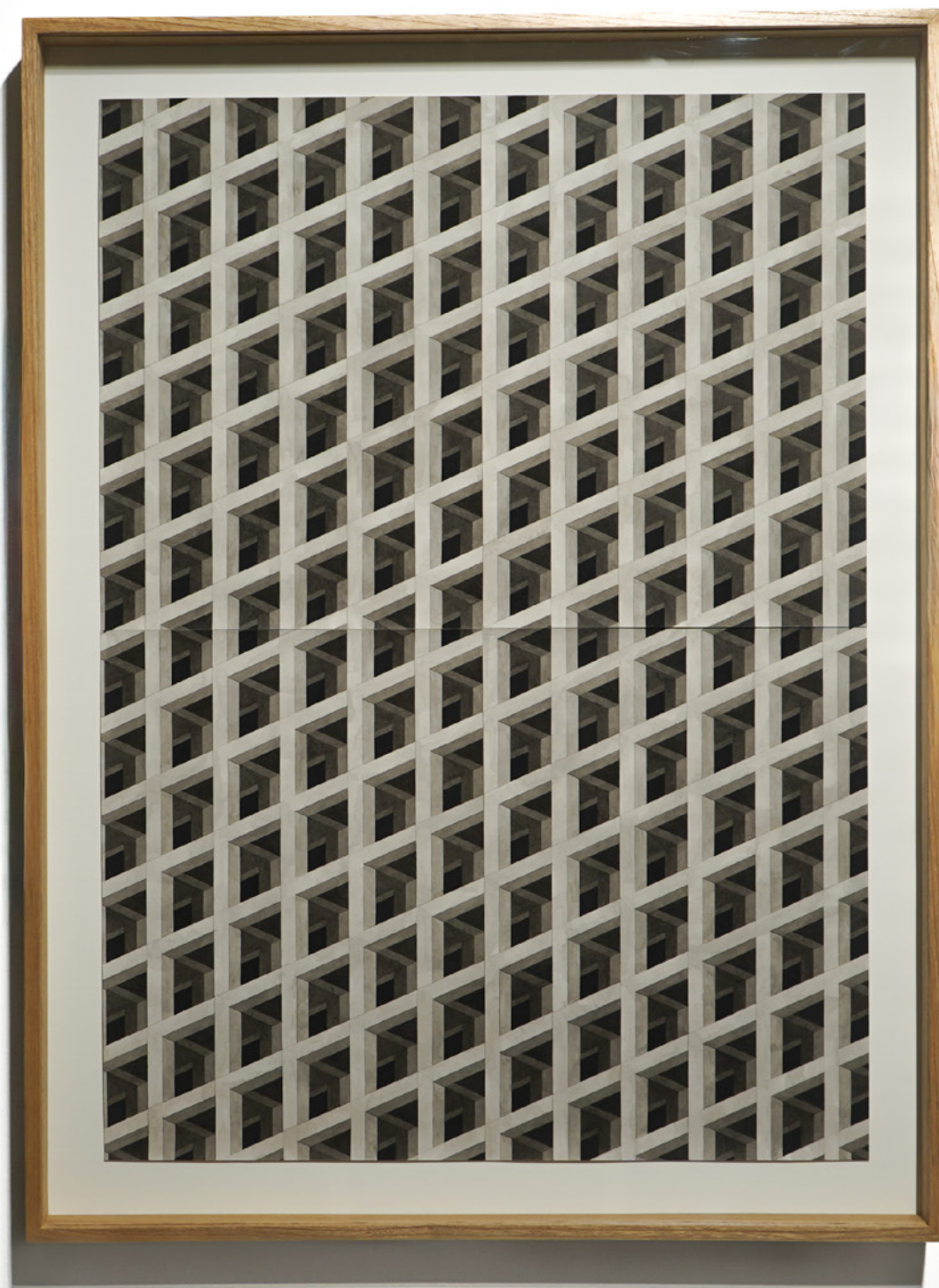


*Anicca: Altars & Stones, 2026*  
terracotta  
approx. 500 pcs, each 7 x 8 x 8 cm

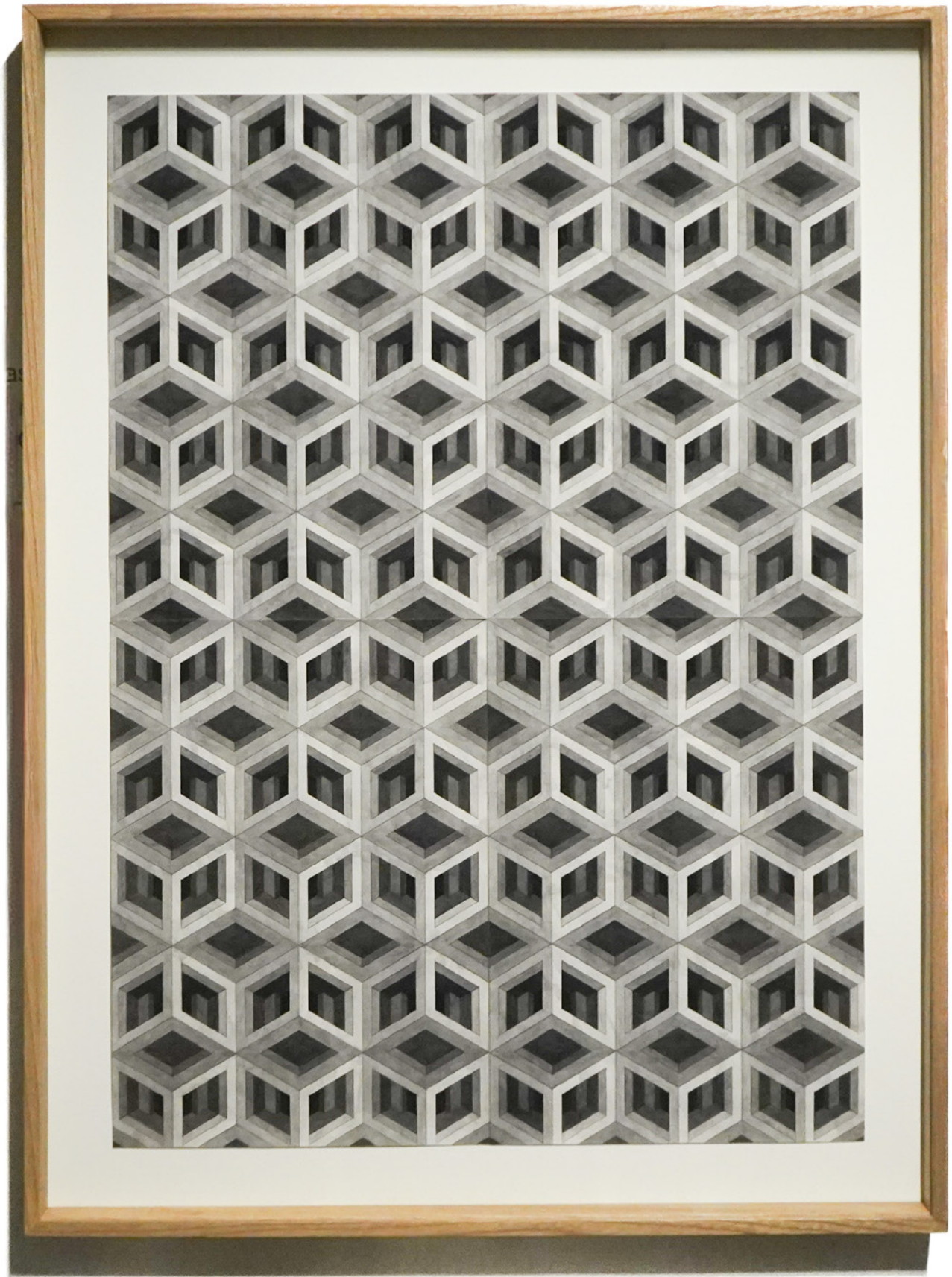




*Hypnagogia - Inside Looking in (Windows & Ceilings #1)*, 2026  
gouache on paper  
70.5 x 51 cm (unframed), 80 x 60 x 4.5 cm (framed)



*Hypnagogia - Inside Looking in (Chambers #1)*, 2026  
gouache on paper  
70 x 50 cm (unframed), 80 x 60 x 4.5 cm (framed)

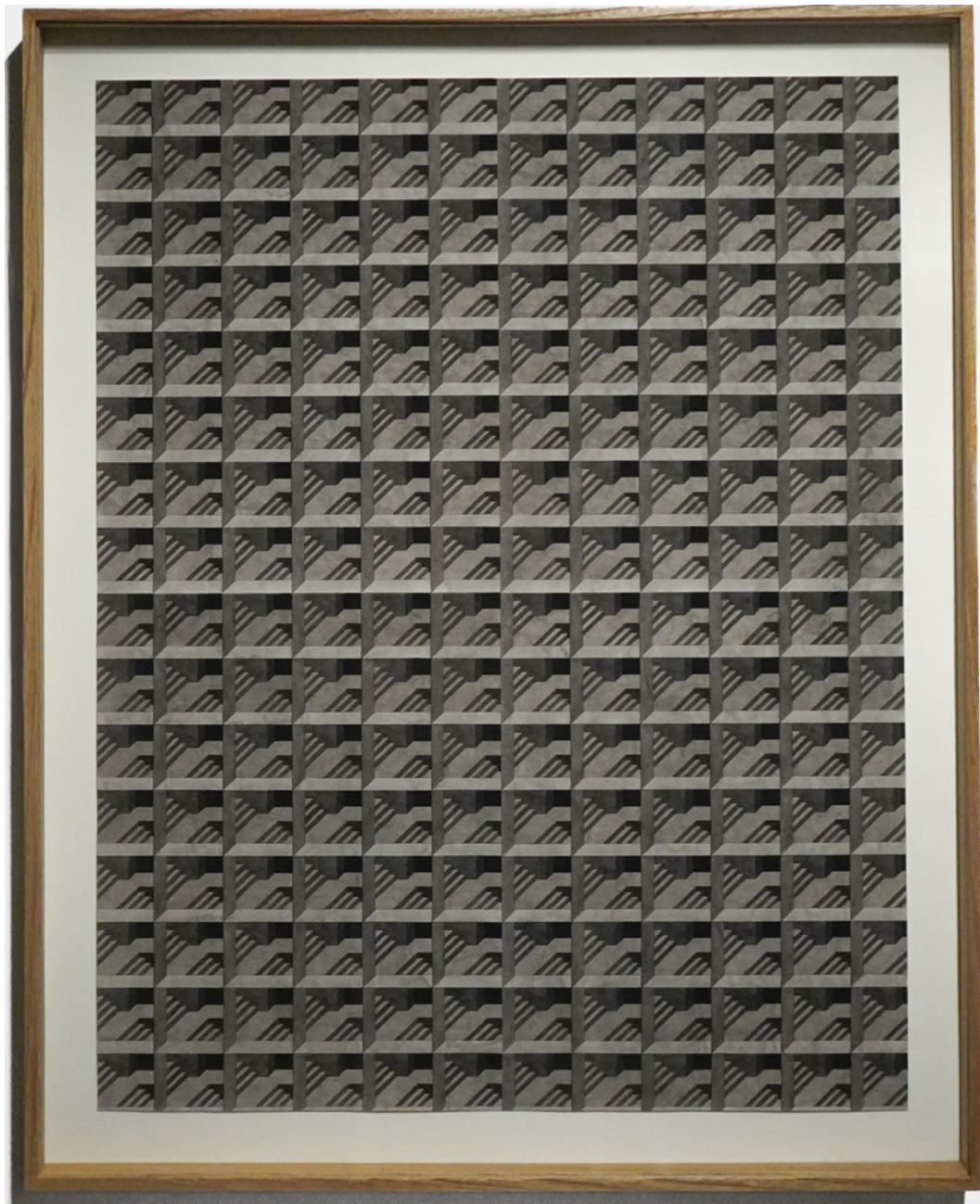


*Hypnagogia - Inside Looking in (Chambers #2), 2026*

gouache on paper

81 x 63.5 (unframed)

92 x 74 x 4.5 cm (framed)

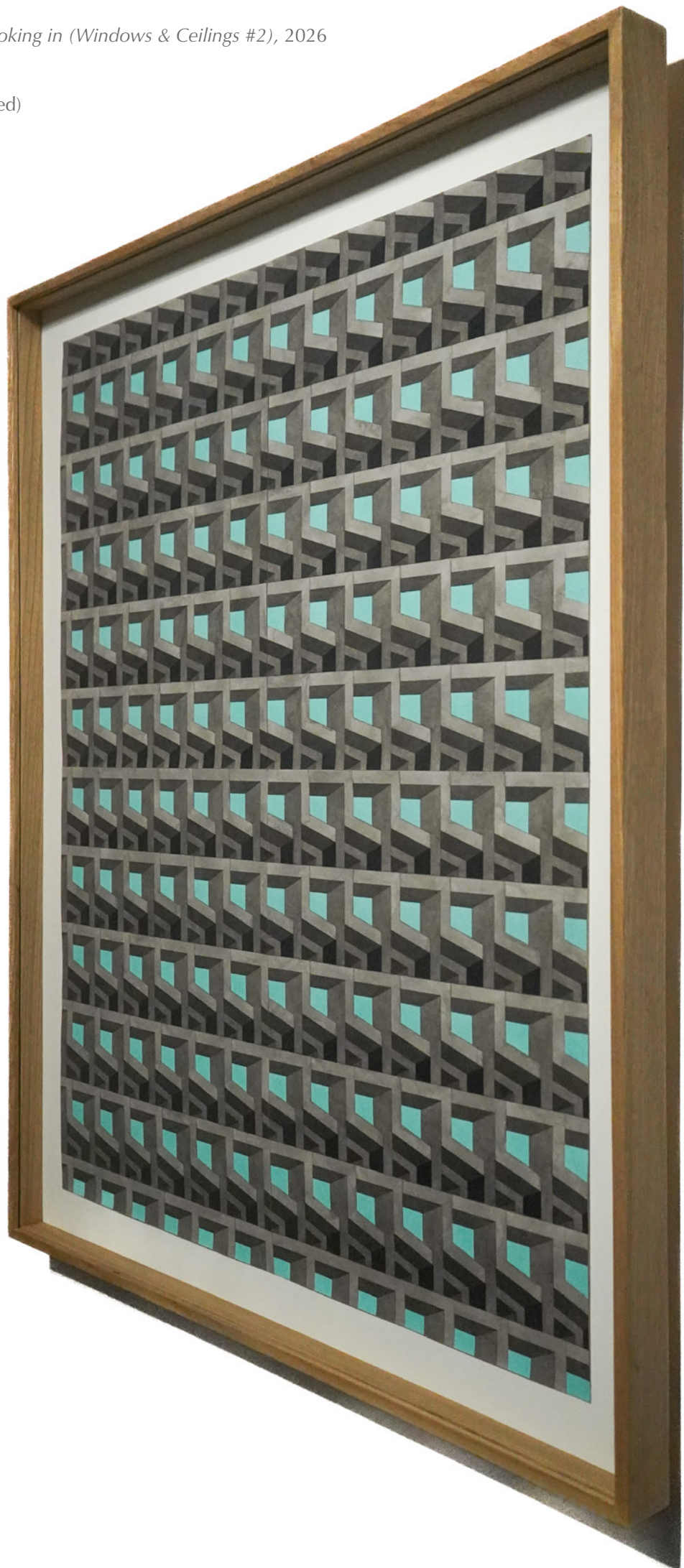


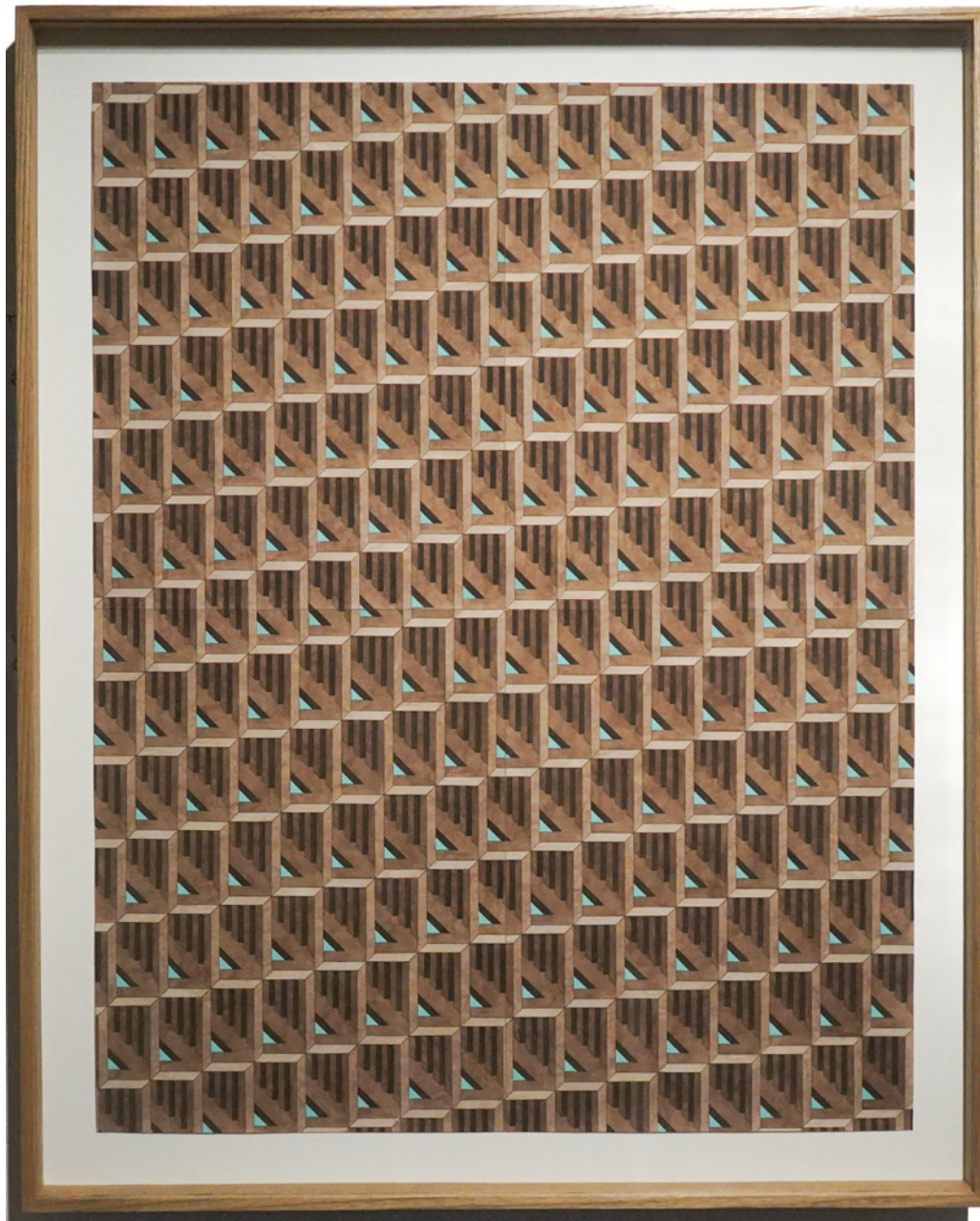
*Hypnagogia - Inside Looking in (Windows & Ceilings #2)*, 2026

gouache on paper

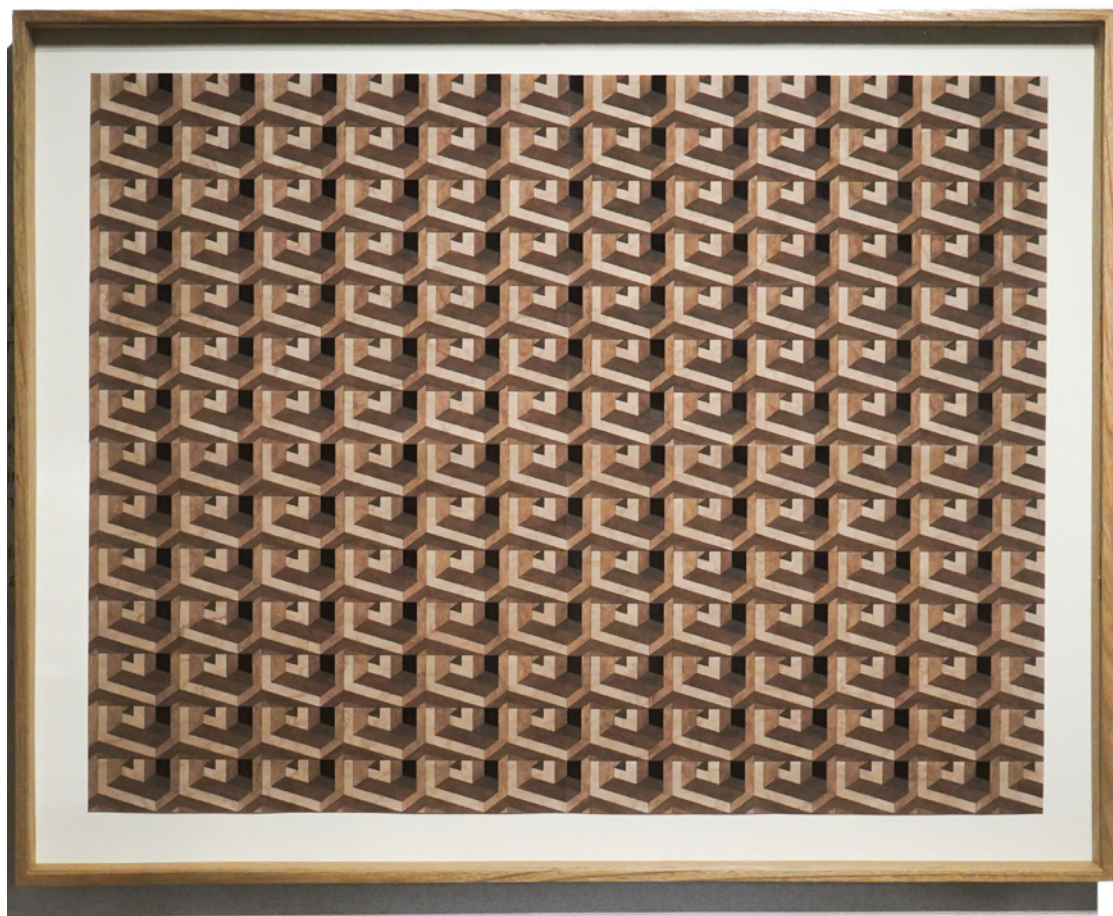
81 x 63.5 (unframed)

92 x 74 x 4.5 cm (framed)





*Hypnagogia - Inside Looking in (Windows & Pillars)*, 2026  
gouache on paper  
81 x 63.5 (framed)  
92 x 74 x 4.5 cm (unframed)



*Hypnagogia - Inside Looking in (Entryways)*, 2026  
gouache on paper  
62.5 x 80 cm (unframed)  
74 x 92 x 4.5 cm (framed)

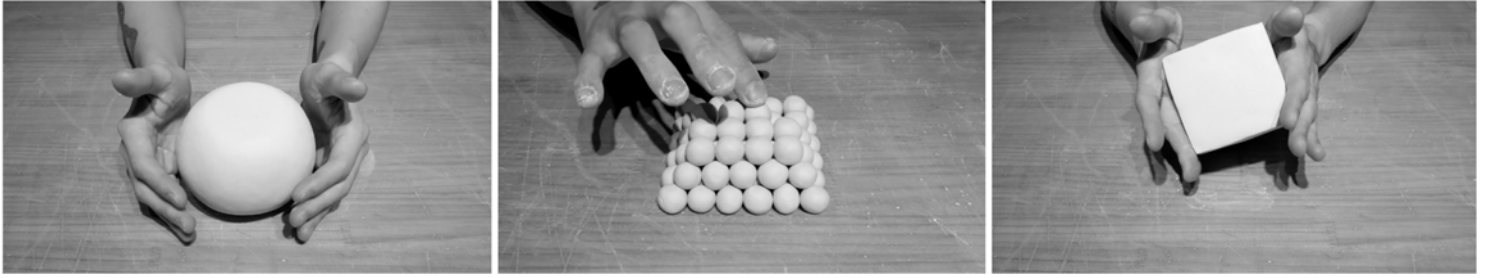




*Tracing Time* 14.04.2026, 2026  
ink on paper, dried flower  
40 x 64 cm (unframed)  
52 x 76 x 4.5 cm (framed)



*Tracing Time 17.04.2026, 2026*  
ink on paper, dried leaf and flower  
40 x 64 cm (unframed)  
52 x 76 x 4.5 cm (framed)



*Squaring the Circle, Circling the Square, 2025*  
three channel video  
14 mins 17 Sec - 23 Mins 40 Sec - 14 Mins 17 Sec  
Edition of 2 plus 1 artist's proof



## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Concerned with repetitions—how we form patterns in daily life—and the materiality and genealogy of clay in a cultural context, Setyawan has built an artistic practice in contemporary ceramic art while also translating his conceptual ideas into various mediums such as drawing, multi-media installation, performance, and video documentation. In his ceramic works, the objects that are used to form one specific pattern may look similar and identical to one another. However, on closer inspection, some slight variations and differences can be seen in each one as a result of cleaning and carving each of the individual objects by hand after casting. Yonathan looks into the ‘meditative’ quality that can be achieved through the repetition of form or action.

Setyawan represented Indonesia at the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013. He has also participated in major group exhibitions such as *SUNSHOWER: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now* at Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan (2017); and *Contemporary Worlds: Indonesia* at the National Gallery of Australia, ACT Canberra, Australia (2019). Recent solo exhibitions include *CONSONANCE*, Imura Art Gallery, Kyoto, Japan (2025), *Sugar Poetry*, ZENBI (Kagizen Art Museum), Kyoto, Japan, (2025), *Anicca: Sticks & Stones*, Mizuma Art Gallery, Tokyo, Japan (2025); *Transitory Nature of Earthly Joy*, Tumurun Museum, Solo, Indonesia (2024); *Capturing Silence*, Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2023); and *Speaking in Tongues*, Mind Set Art Center, Taipei, Taiwan (2022). His works are in the collection of Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK; National Gallery of Australia; Mori Art Museum, Japan; Museum of Modern Ceramic Art, Japan; OHD Museum, Indonesia; Singapore Art Museum, Singapore; Tumurun Museum, Indonesia, amongst other notable institutions.

## CV

Albert Yonathan Setyawan

Born 1983 | Lives and works in Tokyo, Japan

### EDUCATIONS

- 2016 - 2020      PhD./Doctorate Program, Kyoto Seika University, Kyoto, Japan  
2014 - 2016      MFA, Kyoto Seika University, Kyoto, Japan  
2012 - 2014      Research Student in Ceramic Art Department, Kyoto Seika  
University, Kyoto, Japan  
2010 - 2012      MFA, Bandung Institute of Technology, Bandung, Indonesia  
2002 - 2007      BFA, Bandung Institute of Technology, Bandung, Indonesia

### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 *CONSONANCE*, Imura Art Gallery, Kyoto, Japan  
*Sugar Poetry*, ZENBI (Kagizen Art Museum), Kyoto, Japan  
*Anicca: Sticks & Stones*, Mizuma Art Gallery, Tokyo, Japan  
2024 *Transitory Nature of Earthly Joy*, Tumurun Museum, Solo, Indonesia  
2023 *Capturing Silence*, Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia  
2022 *Speaking in Tongues*, Mind Set Art Center, Taipei, Taiwan  
2020 *Mirror Image*, Mizuma Art Gallery, Tokyo, Japan  
2019 *Variations on Symmetry*, Mizuma Gallery, Singapore  
2017 *Terrene*, POLA Museum Annex, Tokyo, Japan  
2016 *Terrene*, Strathnairn Arts Association, Canberra, Australia  
2015 *Apotheose*, Mizuma Gallery, Singapore  
2012 *Sacred Veranda*, Galeri Soemardja, Bandung, Indonesia  
*Grammar of Meditation*, Galeri Canna, Jakarta, Indonesia  
*Cosmic Totems*, WTF Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand  
2011 *Temple of Threshold*, Valentine Willie Fine Art, Singapore  
2010 *Cosmic Mantra*, SIGlarts Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia  
*Liminal Being*, The Japan Foundation, Jakarta, Indonesia  
2009 *i am a bird now, am i?*, Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park, Shiga, Japan

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2026 *Art in Resonance*, The Peninsula, Hong Kong  
2025 *The Tree of Life : MSAC 15th Anniversary Special Exhibition*, Mind Set Art  
Center, Taipei, Taiwan  
*We Begin with Everything*, ara contemporary, Jakarta, Indonesia

- 2024 The 11th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), Brisbane, Queensland, Australia  
*Lost & Found: Embodied Archive*, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore  
*ATW FOCUS: Earth, Wind, and Fire: Visions of the Future from Asia*, Okura Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan  
*Gyeonggi Ceramics Biennale 2024: TOGETHER\_Montaigne's Cat*, Gyeonggi Museum of Contemporary Ceramic Art, Icheon, South Korea  
*Indian Ocean Craft Triennial 2024*, John Curtin Gallery, Bentley, Western Australia, Australia
- 2023 *The Order of Things*, Appetite, Singapore  
*Figurative Abstraction*, Mind Set Art Center, Taipei, Taiwan
- 2022 *Romantic Progress*, Museum of Modern Ceramic Art, Gifu, Japan  
 AGAS Group Show 2022: A World At Every Turn, Gillman Barracks, Singapore
- 2021 *Invisible cities*, Albert Yonathan Setyawan & Louise Rouse, Hagiso, Tokyo, Japan
- 2020 *It's done*, Mizuma Gallery, Singapore
- 2019 *TROPOSPHERE: Materials to open up a new world*, Kyocera Museum, Kyoto, Japan  
*Contemporary Worlds: Indonesia*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia  
*Future Past: tradition and transgression in contemporary art from Asia*, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, Australia  
*ASEAN Crafts: Place, Scent and Atmosphere*, Cheongju Craft Biennale, ASEAN Pavillion, Cheongju, South Korea  
*SUNSHOWER: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now*, Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts, Kaohsiung, Taiwan
- 2018 *Radiance*, Albert Yonathan Setyawan & Miyanaga Aiko, Mizuma Gallery, Singapore  
*Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale 2018*, Tokamachi, Niigata, Japan  
*DISINI Festival 2018*, Gillman Barracks, Singapore  
*Folkloristics*, Mizuma Gallery, Singapore
- 2017 *SUNSHOWER: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now*, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan  
*Y : Collect 2.0*, Ruci Art Space, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2016 *Tom Tandio - The Man Who Fell into Art: Collecting as a Form of Personal Narrative*, SongEun ArtSpace, Seoul, Korea
- 2015 *Contemporary Asian Ceramics*, China Academy of Art, Hangzhou, China  
*Rev/Action: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia*, Sundaram Tagore Galleries, New York, USA  
*Unveiling Fundamentals in Contemporary Art Through Asia*, OHD Museum, Magelang, Indonesia

- 2014 *Transmission*, Jim Thompson Art Center, Bangkok, Thailand  
*Contemporary Ceramic Art in Asia 2014*, Clayarch Gimhae Museum, Gimhae, South Korea  
*Real way to connect with the world - ceramic art to look, see, and feel*, Museum of Modern Ceramic Art, Gifu, Japan  
*Today and Tomorrow, Indonesian Contemporary Art*, Yallay Gallery , Wong Chuk Hang, Hong Kong
- 2013 'Sakti' The Indonesian Pavilion, 55th Venice Biennale, Arsenale di Venezia, Venice, Italy  
 L'oriente Dell'Occidente, Palazzo Medici Riccardi — Sale Fabiane, Florence, Italy  
*Kuota #4 Kepingan*, Langgeng Gallery , Magelang, Indonesia
- 2012 *Panorama: Recent Art from Contemporary Asia*, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore  
*Jakarta Contemporary Ceramic Biennale #2*, Museum of Fine Arts & Ceramics, Jakarta, Indonesia  
*Parallab*, Artsphere Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia  
*Trick or Truth*, Fang Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia

## COLLECTIONS

Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK  
 Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), Brisbane, Queensland, Australia  
 Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan  
 Museum Azman, Shah Alam, Malaysia  
 Museum of Modern Ceramic Art, Gifu, Japan  
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia  
 OHD Museum, Magelang, Indonesia  
 POLA Museum Annex, Tokyo, Japan  
 Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park, Shiga, Japan  
 Singapore Art Museum, Singapore  
 Tumurun Private Museum, Solo, Indonesia  
 The Farrer Park Art Collection, Singapore

## RESIDENCIES

- 2016 Strathnairn Arts Association, Canberra, Australia  
 2009 JENESYS Programme - The Japan Foundation, Shigaraki Ceramics Cultural Park, Shiga, Japan



Jalan Tulodong Bawah I no 16,  
Senayan, Jakarta Selatan  
Indonesia 12190

[www.aracontemporary.id](http://www.aracontemporary.id)  
[info@aracontemporary.id](mailto:info@aracontemporary.id)  
[@aracontemporary](#)