

STRONG/WEAK

FEW/MANY

ROUGH/SMOOTH

PRESENT/PAST

IKEBANA UP/DOWN

OPPOSITES FALL/RISE

ATTRACT NIGHT/DAY

SOUL/BODY

GROWTH/DECAY

CREATE/DESTROY

LIQUID/SOLID



INTEGRATE /
DISINTEGRATE

Tory J. Lowitz
USA

SOGETSU

INTRODUCTION

As a child we learn to describe ourselves and the differences in the world using opposites. Like the poles of a magnet, these antithetical concepts define each other and cannot exist without each other. Understanding contrasts, such as 'good and bad' or 'hot and cold', helps keeping us safe and allows us to develop important critical thinking skills. Later in life we often unconsciously look for someone who complements our own character. We strive for what we are not. Opposites attract.

In art history as well we see a continuous movement from one opposite to another: from impressionism to expressionism, from minimalism to maximalism, from realism to surrealism or even abstraction. And the other way around.

Our world is built upon the fusion of opposites going back and forth until they harmonise. Emotions can be compared with a pendulum swinging between extremes. Contrasts, opposites and differences keep life interesting – even though keeping a balance between two opposing forces, such as pleasure and pain, is often difficult, especially when we understand that one cannot be achieved without experiencing the other. During these pandemic years, we have all been confronted with the sometimes-painful balance between freedom and confinement, protecting and exposing, virtual and real.

Floral design, and Ikebana in particular, is often a balancing act in itself. Ikebana arrangements strive for harmony between straight and curved lines, a right balance between taking away and adding elements. These pieces try to find equilibrium between staying true to the shapes of nature and bending and trimming nature's materials to conform to a rule, and between sticking to the rules and breaking them. Opposites Attract uses the concept of opposites and contrasts as a starting point. Starting from a pair of antonyms over 150 Ikebana artists from all over the world made a twin design, two arrangements that perfectly complement each other. The multifaceted ways in which these contrasts were given shape, attest to the creativity and ingenuity of our artists and the sheer versatility of Ikebana.

We are very appreciative and would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all Ikebanists for their never-ending enthusiasm to participate in our books.



GROUP / INDIVIDUAL

Rica Arai
France

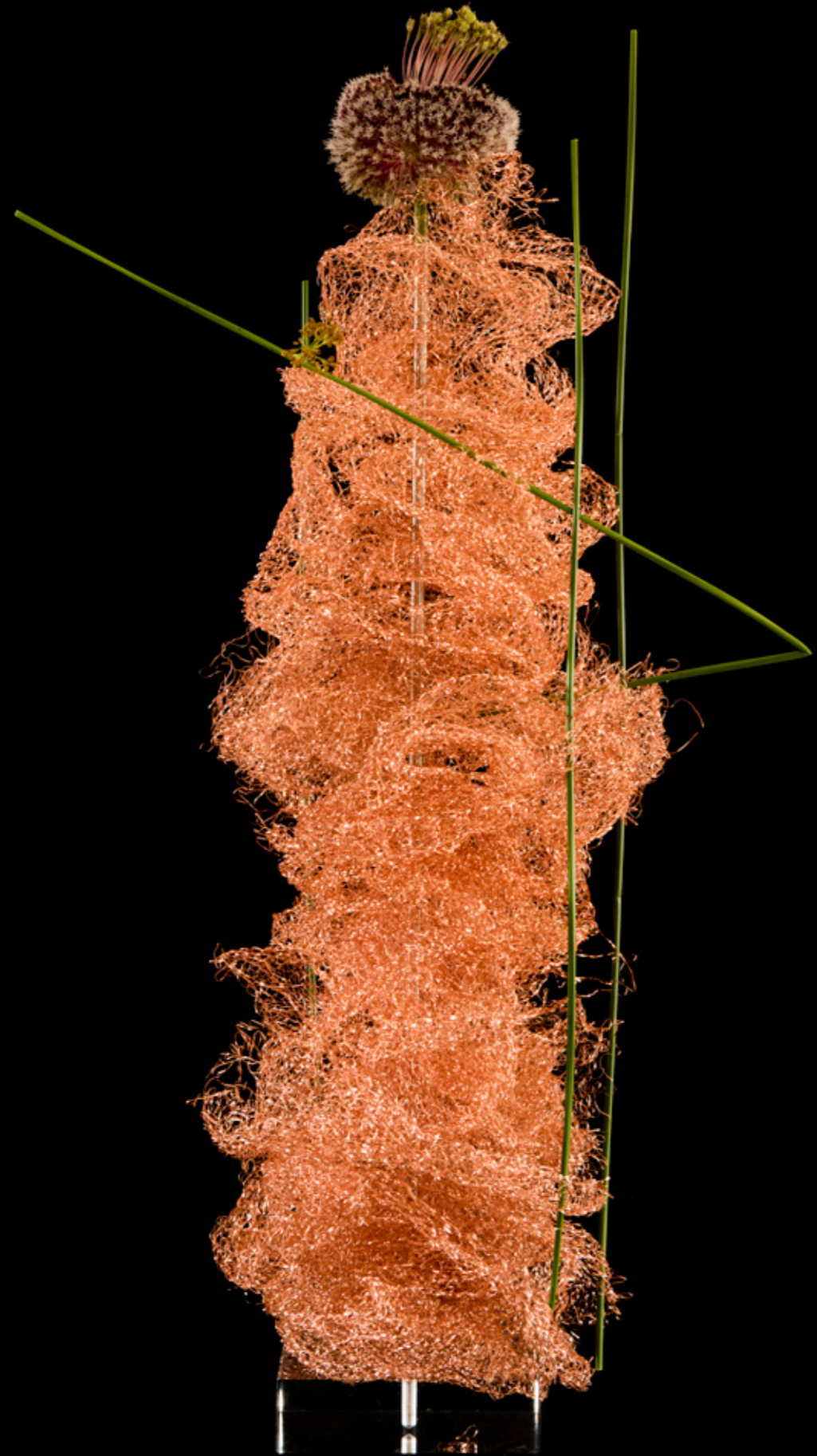
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HEAVY / LIGHT

Ilse Beunen
Belgium

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GEISHA / SAMOURAI

Mieke Bruynooghe - Van Elslande
Belgium

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ENERGETIC /
RELAXED

Chung-chi Yu
Taiwan

IKENOBO





CONNECT /
SEPARATE

Elin Dahlin
Sweden

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LIFE / DEATH

Claire Devleminckx
Belgium

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OPEN / CLOSED

Ayako Graefe
Germany

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POINTED / ROUND

Angelika Mühlbauer
Germany

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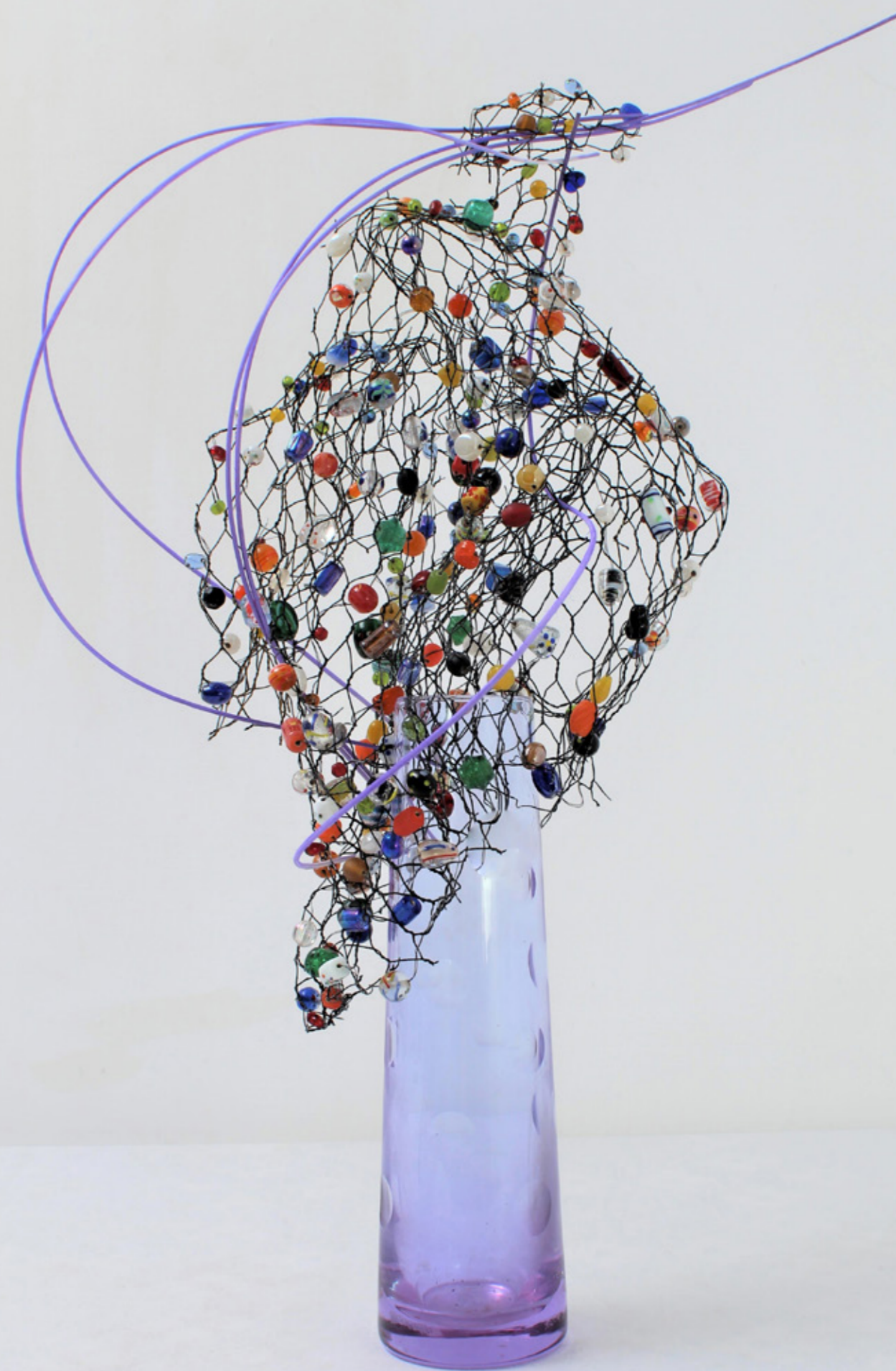
STORMY / CALM
Chinara Munduzbaeva
Russia
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ALL LEAVES / ALL FLOWERS

Margot C. Perez
Philippines

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HOT / COLD

Lucia Pierelli
Italy

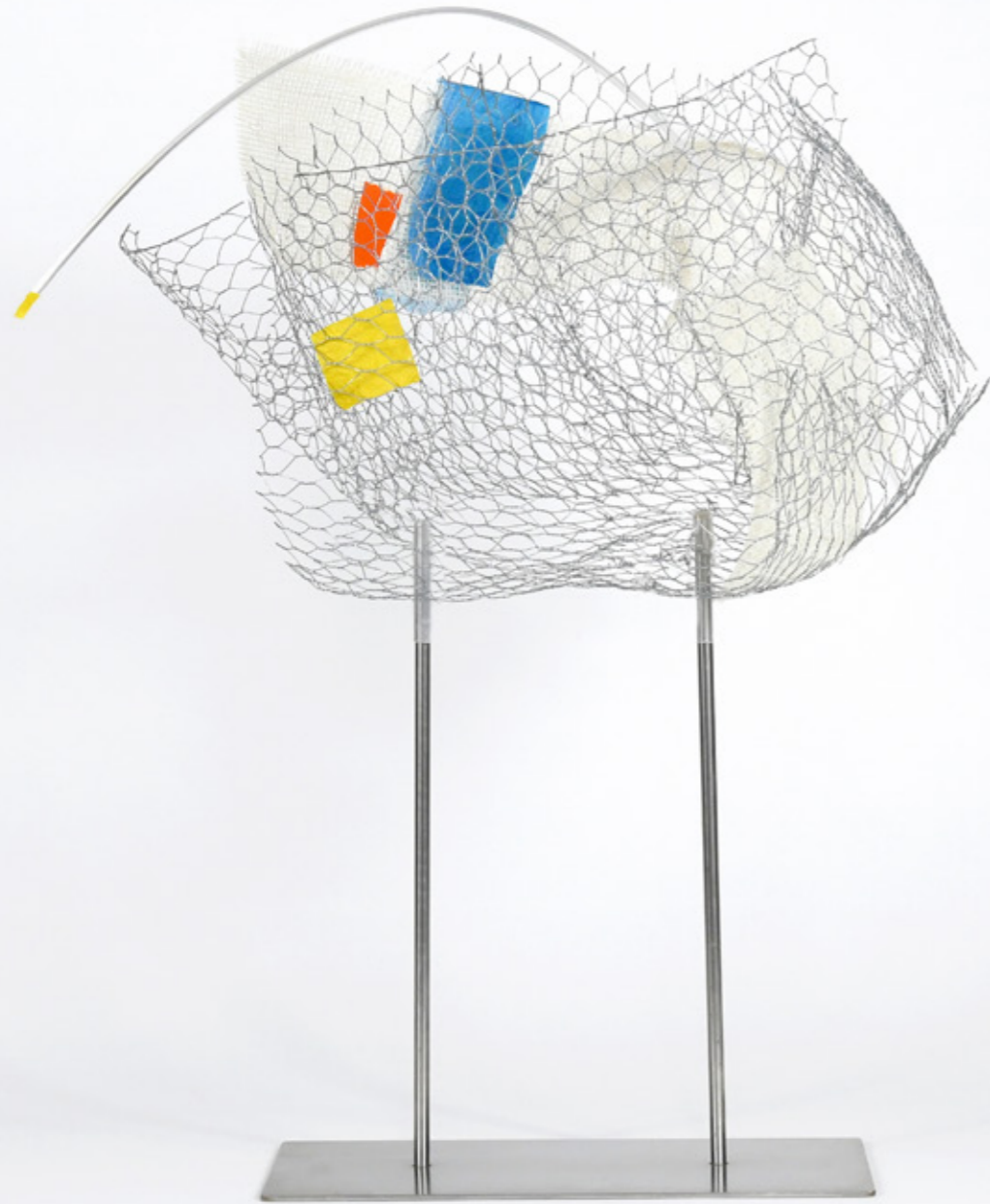
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FLUFFY / SPIKY

Larisa Sarycheva
Russia

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AIRY / MASSIVE

Anke Verhoeven
the Netherlands

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