

ALAN SARET: MATTER INTO AETHER, NEWPORT HARBOR ART MUSEUM, NEWPORT BEACH, CALIFORNIA, 1982.

ALAN SARET, ENGINEER OF THE ETHEREAL

by Klaus Kertess

Technology and the clarity of mathematics, attuned to nature, laid claim to Alan Saret's vision at an early age. He grew up in sight of the George Washington Bridge, more impressed by the harmony of the bridge's glistening spans with the craggy shorelines than by the implacable and inorganic staccato of New York City, visible to the northwest. Saret's sculpture, drawings, and architectural projects draw strength from the forces of nature; his first exhibition, in 1968, was titled "Mountains of Chance, Documents of Ruralism." He draws organic images from industrial materials, molding and yielding to the structure of the material to "let matter present itself as spirit."* Saret's work resolves and dissolves itself in a finely calibrated balance of contradictions: volume drawn from line, mass becoming space, the order of number disordered (re-ordered) by the mutability of natural forces, clarity of process turning into vapors of illusion. All conspire to transform the material into the skeleton of the immaterial. Saret constructs bridges to the spiritual.

Now, when pop stardom has become both subject and object of much art, the word "spiritual" hangs precariously on the page. Since "sublime" was expelled from the art vocabulary in the mid-1950s, flatter words and deeds have been preferred; nonetheless, Saret insists on "spiritual" in word and deed – he is anxious to protect and propagate the revelatory nature of art. His intent does not preclude but includes a refined and conscious formal intelligence.

Saret studied architecture at Cornell but came to sculpture through painting. The divorce of sculpture and architecture that occurred concurrently with the rise of the bourgeoisie and modernism led to a symbiotic relationship between painting and sculpture. Sculpture's solidity and mass began to dissolve in sfumato and chiaroscuro in the hands of Medardo Rosso and Rodin, and then flattened into a planar play of space and transparency with the advent of Cubism — drawing upon his painterly innovation, Picasso set about redefining sculpture, as did the Constructivists in Russia. The dissolution of mass into transparent planes and space was to dominate much of the sculpture of succeeding generations. Even the retreat from the painterly and a return to a greater specificity of form and objectness by sculptors like Judd and Morris, in the sixties, still owed much to Constructivism and Cubism. In the late sixties, a remarkable generation of sculptors emerged and renewed the bond with painting; but now it was to be a (re)view of Pollock, not Picasso, that submerged sculpture in a solvent of painterliness - a generation that included Alan Saret, as well as Richard Serra, Keith Sonnier, Eva Hesse, Bruce Nauman, Barry Le Va, and Lynda Benglis. Robert Morris was to join them and become their self-proclaimed spokesman. Sculpture as object was submitted to a radical revision: gestalt gave way to process, form and mass melted into gesture and even transience.

The nature of an astonishing variety of materials was probed and propelled into an active play with the forces of gravity. Materials generally noteworthy for their liquidity and/or pliability – molten lead, mineral oil, latex, chicken wire, felt, glass, flour, cloth, and others - were torn, poured, folded, or molded in configurations that revealed and congealed the behavior of the material and the marks of the maker (marks of process, not of personal touch).

Pollock's conversion of painting from the confined movements of hand and wrist to broad sweeps of the arm leaving layers of linear drips in their wake internalized and objectified human scale and measure as actual visual components of the work. The procedural clarity and the obvious interaction of paint and gravity of Pollock's drip paintings from 1947-51 were seminal to many of the artists of the late sixties. Richard Serra's splashed lead pieces, Lynda Benglis' liquid latex released in multiple colors and poured from a pail directly onto the floor, and Saret's wire layers of linearity bowing and billowing with the memory of the movements of his body, all are clearly indebted to one aspect of Pollock.

Not surprisingly, the gusto that greeted this generation of artists blurred their individuality and encouraged a false homogeneity of intent. The critical emphasis on the phenomenological and the procedural was more germane to Morris and Serra than to Saret. In 1969, when Marcia Tucker and James Monte organized an exhibition at the Whitney Museum which included these sculptors, Saret withdrew upon learning its title was to be "Anti Illusion...." Then, as now, Saret insisted upon the freedom to investigate illusion as well as non-illusion. For Saret, the self-contained and the self-reflexive, so important to the modernism of the twentieth century, are not sufficient. His procedures are clear and transparent, but are further transformed and layered in meshes of metaphor and ambiguities of space and form that make vision a veil for the visionary.

Saret's early work set about subverting and converting the tenets of modernist painting. From the mid-fifties onwards, painting aspired to a more emphatic objectness (now approaching sculpture, rather than vice versa) — in the hands of such artists as Noland, Johns, and Stella, the physicality of the painting's support took on increasing importance. Saret gave the support greater dimension and volume, pushing it into sculpture while simultaneously retrieving painting's lost illusions. He opened up the weave of canvas and unfurled it into the room.

Having first done studies for a group of shaped canvas paintings in the form of an elongated arch, Saret then extended the implications of volume into the round by substituting the open mesh of chicken wire for the closed weave of canvas, drawing the play of actual space and volume into the work. Moving from the wall to the floor, the chicken wire took on increasing complexity of configuration. Hooke's Law, constructed in early 1968, consisted of a cylindrical tube made of eight or nine layers of two-inch mesh chicken wire laid horizontally or stood vertically on the floor. The implied volume of shaped canvas paintings now became a real volume — but a volume that dissolved into a mirage of itself. The multiple layering and openness of the wire mesh create an oscillating moire effect that blurs the edges and hinders the eye's retrieval of a specific form or shape. The clear linear configuration of the wire all but evaporates in transparency and vibrates with a painterly buzz; the viewer, literally and figuratively, sees through and beyond. Paradoxically, painting pushed into sculptural three dimensionality has propagated an immaterial that fosters illusion. While the cylindrical shape of Hooke's Law mimics the potential state of canvas

and chicken wire when still in a roll, other works increasingly encourage the wire to surrender to and retain the gestures of process. The mathematical precision of the industrially fabricated grid of the chicken wire is subjected to the natural rhythms of hands and body – the measure of gesture choreographs the measure of mathematics in a cascading counterpoint. Like partners in a dance, both systems of measure are clear and independently visible, while interdependent in their partnership to create new formations uniting suppleness of body and of wire.

Like fossils, Saret's sculpture exists somewhere between memory and non-existence. The wire's tensile strength and resilience holds the memory of the movements of the body — movements motivated by an urge to form – but a form in flux, no sooner composed than decomposed in its embrace of space. Seldom has sculpture achieved such an active exchange between space, form, and volume.

Saret seeks a sculpture that reflects and parallels the mutating forces of nature. The lightness and pliability of the wire subject it to constant change — there is no final and fixed configuration as there would be with a heavier, denser material or a congealing liquid. The sculpture is seldom as rigidly rooted as most of the work of Morris, Serra, and Andre; it maintains a more open dialogue with gravity. The work settles and adjusts to its support, be it wall or floor. Saret has often shifted a piece from the floor to the wall or ceiling permitting the configuration its own organic modification as it stretches or sinks into its new situation — like an air plant sprouting on top of a tree and drawing sustenance from rain and air.

The wire holds no false secrets; all is visible while all is variable. There is no confusion about the work being hollow or solid, no difficulty in seeing its density. The mathematical measure and transparency of the wire simultaneously blends formal clarity with an evanescent ambiguity. Order borders disorder.

By the spring of 1968, Saret's work attained its volition to volume: and by the time of his first solo exhibition in the fall of 1968, the sculpture took full and confident advantage of the wire's potential — the relative openness of the wire's weave, the weave's different shapes (hexagonal, rectangular, etcetera), the weave's thickness and surface (shiny, matte, rubber-coated, spray painted) are called into a panoply of varying density, mass, color, volume, and form.

The prevalent configuration of the works in the 1968 exhibition is mound-shaped and harks back to those early man-made shelters and sites that took their cues directly from nature — hand-hewn hills and megaliths that harmonize the artificial marks of the intellect with the organic forces of their surroundings — they can be open and airborne like a swelling, skeletal cloud, or approach the density of a pile of bristling antennae. One of the wall pieces was formed from a handmade mesh: *Into the Blue Field Galaxy* (1969) is made of several layers of wide open webs of blue, vinyl-coated electrical wire with a sinuous linearity like a transparent, modular Pollock. *Galaxy's* hand-measured weave foreshadows Saret's sculpture done after 1974.

While wire is dominant in Saret's work, it is not the exclusive medium. The lightness, linearity, and flexibility inherent in wire are natural to materials like rope, paper, polyethylene, cloth, and rubber - all have been called into service at one time or another. One floor piece in the 1968 show cloaked a bright blue, rubber-coated wire mound with the more liquid linearity of a web of thin, flat strands of brown rubber. In another work, a phantom mound accumulated out of folds and drapes

unrolls from a bolt of black rubber. In still another piece, situated in a wall recess, Saret draped orange rubber from a door handle and half submerged its ribboning cascade in the vibrant yellow of a pile of sulphur powder.

The dense look of the material and the activity of draping create the closest point of contact between Saret's sculpture and that of Robert Morris, with whom he had frequently exchanged studio visits and ideas with during the summer of 1968. While Saret's sculptures made from rubber have a less permeable presence than the wire pieces, they maintain a complexity of configuration and an ephemeral quality that hovers on the edge of slipping and sliding and melting away. The simplicity of procedure and almost smothering bluntness of Morris cut, hung, and draped gray felt pieces, shown in 1968, insist on a more self-contained formal physicality. Although related to Morris in process, Saret's work is much more intentionally open to allusion and illusion — the rolling rhythm of layers of curving gestures en courage references to organic phenomena such as clouds, vines, wind-blown hair, cotton balls, and veils of seaweed shed by the ebb of the ocean. However, the work remains abstract; the supple swirls of the configuration almost never close in a completed form, and the industrial materials hold in check and contradict the natural references they simultaneously create. The images constantly fall away into a disembodied baroque that reveals the material as a reflection of the immaterial.

Any doubt about Saret's desire to take off beyond formal procedures was dispelled by the drawings shown in one section of his second exhibition, in 1970 — drawings and gouaches of "imagined planets, landscapes, architecture and beings." Some forty works, modest in size and execution, directly depicting existence on the border of the realms of the physically and psychically observable (for example, a tight-rope walking goddess in radical perspective, android-like figures, daemons) — more remarkable for what they declared than what they did.

They declared an interest in mythology, astrology, and phantasy, and a desire to appropriate them as legitimate concerns for art. What the sculpture alludes to now becomes specific — the figures that move in a landscape of Saret sculpture become hill and dale and vine — now utopian, now cataclysmic. In 1970, this was a bold act by a man in the minority; it is only recently that the mythic and the phantasmagoric have been invited to rejoin the mainstream. While these works illustrate more than they evoke, they make clear Saret's need for the freedom to exercise any one of the many options that form in his mind.

The drawings done prior to the imagined planets and landscapes were initially also intended to be representational (depictions of the wire sculpture), but they evolved into (re)inventions of the medium of drawing and became totally free of representation. They are called "gang drawings" and were done with a fistful of pencils drawn across the page, creating an organic arrangement of parallel lines simultaneously regimented and gesturally improvised, much as the sculpture is — the movements of arm and body now restricted to the sweep of the hand within the borders of the paper support like a "neurological seismograph" recording the tremors of intent. The drawings have an effervescent delicacy and daring; changes in pressure, the number of pencils employed, choice and order of color and tone, and the type of gesture(s) permit a wide variety and complexity of formation in each drawing. Only a twist of grip is needed to distort the regular pulse of the parallels. Like the sculpture, the drawings approach an image but seldom close and complete it — the lines do not converge but are left open to air and allusion while retaining their real scale. Like

the sculpture, formal power and innovation are revealed in suppleness and finesse. Organic irregularity has been retrieved and returned to the medium of drawing and counter-balanced with an order that prevents the vagaries and eccentricities of personal touch.

Saret's first "gang drawings" were done in 1967, and he has continued making them to the present. Likewise, the figurative drawings, and more recently (1979-80), even large paintings on canvas. The latest figurative work, achieving a greater scale and hieratic simplicity, was partially inspired by a trip to Egypt in 1981.

The second section of Saret's 1970 exhibition consisted of sculpture, and extended and continued the concerns commenced in 1968. The sculpture became more expensive – now grace could approach grandeur. The mutability of structure was emphasized by subjecting a number of works to a variety of changes during the course of the exhibition. A very tight stainless steel mesh was first folded into a rayonnant bud-like cluster, capped with an open mesh, green vinyl-coated wire arch, then rearranged, without the arch, to pop up into a shape approaching the point of a mountain peak. Another work, *Let Granite's Ethers Rise*, 1969-70, made of a combination of rectangular and hexagonal wire meshes, achieved a buoyant volume as its forward lean accumulated more layers of undulating weaves of wire: its will to take wing needed to wait only a week to be achieved – it was hoisted and hung from the ceiling and permitted to spill a wispy trail of planes and process.

The 1970 exhibition's most imposing piece, perhaps because of its more implacably closed volumes, was *Triple Cornice with Windows*, 1969-70. Three classicizing rolled zinc fragments of the cornice of a cast-iron building, salvaged from demolition, were laid on their sides and propped up in a step formation, the topmost end of which was embraced by the austere transparency of a screen of newly constructed windows - bringing a new and unexpected clarity to ancient forms. The ascending and descending spiraling curves of the volutes, and their visible hollowness, are directly related to the other sculpture, but are more specifically mythic and monumental. Although totally composed of architectural elements, the structure achieves an abstract unity and reflects Saret's desire to reintegrate the forms and knowledge of past cultures — to make a new whole out of extant fragments. This piece pre-dates, by nearly a decade, related attempts by "post-modern" architects to incorporate styles of the past in their buildings — at tempts all too often motivated by a bankruptcy of invention unknown to Saret.

The watercolors in the 1970 exhibition were shown at the Bykert Gallery, the sculpture remained in Saret's studio, now renamed "Spring Palace " after its street location. Feeling a pall was cast by the commercialism of a gallery situation, he attempted to close the gap between the execution and the exhibition of art and turned his studio into an alternative space, both for himself and others. Saret's frustration with the homelessness of art and its frequent reduction to an object of commerce finally led him, in 1974, to start the Temple of Alael (an acronym of Alan Daniel Saret). As portentous as this sounds, the organization did not have elaborately codified liturgy or doctrine but quite simply proclaimed art as the religion and the artist as its revelator, leaving each person to be "his or her own experiments and espousing *self-realization through art." The foundation of Alael's tenets was laid in India.

What Theosophy and Madame Blavatsky were to Kandinsky, and Christian and Hebrew hagiology was to Newman, three years (1971-73) of travel and study in

India were to Saret. He undertook no specific program of study but set out in search of a deeper understanding of the sources of his art. Saret's interest in astrology and predisposition toward a spirituality tuned to nature made India a relevant site for his search. His work, both before and after his trip, bears parallels most specifically to the tenets of Jnana Yoga: the emphasis on self revelation, strength based on flexibility and endurance rather than developing musculature, discipline striving for a pacific bliss.

While in India and upon his return, Saret sought to reexamine and (re)ritualize elements of architecture. The India Ramp was built in 1971 for the Indian Triennale, New Delhi, and is quite simply a gently rising ramp to nowhere. A fifty-foot bamboo walkway is supported by a hardwood scaffolding, with the lateral branches carried by three quadripods on either side. These quadripods return to one of the most basic of wooden structures that could be the skeleton of a shelter such as a tepee, or the support for a caldron over a fire. More than a demonstration of basic building techniques with local materials, the ramp is literally and figuratively supported by the ascending diagonals of the skeletal scaffold—it seems afloat rather than anchored. The ramp becomes a bridge between the earthbound and the airborne; it is crucial to much of Saret's work. The India Ramp aspires to the ethereal. This aspiration is based on an understanding of the nature and structure of the material. The fragility of the linear components points to the immaterial, but is tied together in a web of superior structural strength—a strength that does not seek to overpower but to provide a space and place for self intimacy.

The India Ramp was Saret's passport into India; its precursor is the stark stairway of a more functional nature built in the "Spring Palace", in 1970. The ramp was the only actual work created by Saret while in India, except for designing and supervising the construction of the more conventional structure of a wood and stone ashram with a tile roof, built for two swamis he met in his travels.

It was upon his return to New York, late in 1973, that Saret founded Alael in a loft space on Leonard Street and focused his attention primarily on architectural projects. Alael was more celebratory than celibatory, setting out to restore a sense of wonder and delight to the habits of daily life. Nowhere is this clearer than in Bi-Column Temple and Water Arrangement (1974-77), set up at Leonard Street. Again the literal and figurative become one as a bathtub is elevated, and cleaning becomes ritual cleansing. The tub extends into the room, its back atop a metal platform housed in a pointed metal canopy, its front held up by a single aluminum cylinder and framed by two cast iron Corinthian columns anchored on a wooden beam. The ensemble becomes a counterpointing medley of straight and curved lines, volume and plane, container and contained, horizontal and vertical, smooth and rough, shiny and matte, that resolves itself in stark serenity. The gently bowed thrust of the form of the tub merits its elevated isolation and becomes a glyph for buoyancy-molded by and for the body. The bather cannot see the supporting cylinder when in the tub and so benefits from the illusion of being afloat while having his/her scale dignified by the elegant stretch of the guardian columns.

The symbolism of immersion in water, crucial to so many religions, is not lost on Saret; but now, ritual rebirth through immersion is self-administered. Like the cornices in Triple Cornice, the columns were taken from a local building being demolished, and represent a further attempt to integrate the spirituality of a past culture into the present. To build a temple, not a Tower of Babel. Saret is not a little proud

that the tub is of an ideal height to be used as a basin for washing clothes and household wares. He is happy to marry the functional to the spiritual.

The artist ritualizes vision. The viewer looks out with the possibility that he/she might see more clearly when looking in. A window passively provides a view, art makes possible a re-view - not a hole but a whole. A (w)hole was made by Saret at Leonard Street and four other locations. Literally a hole-in-the-wall: excavating through layers of brick and masonry, revealing the structure and finally breaking through to the outside, creating a miniature cave high up in the wall. The result is like breaking out of a shell, and seeing for the first time – but seeing as though through the wrong end of a telescope. Like Alice, the viewer shrinks in scale and is encouraged “to be small and fly out.” The hole provides another opportunity for re-discovery and a relief from the mundane regimentation of most domestic spaces. A house is a home is a temple.

An actual temple is what Saret undertook to build when invited to contribute to Art-park in Lewiston, New York, in the summer of 1975 — well, more like a tepee of the sublime. Working completely empirically with only a small model to start with and the aid of Anne Wehrer and a few volunteers, Saret created Ghosthouse, a modular, portable shelter of remarkable lightness and strength — the thickest element being the 1/8th-of-an inch diameter of 1272 gauge wire (only pneumatic structures are thinner). Saret worked as though making a sculpture, in collaboration with the tensile strength and flexibility of wire mesh, to create a habitable structure. Galvanized steel fencing was first folded, then pleated, to form a set of standard corrugated modules.

Thirteen units were employed to make the basic structure: nine standard ones twenty-four feet in height, three double ones sixteen feet in height, and one double unit twenty-four feet in height. Later, four sun and wind screens were added. The units were leaned together and tied with wire into a teepee-like structure, strong enough to be its own scaffolding and carry the weight of its builders, as well as resist a gale, and flexible enough to reveal both the acts of the constructing hands and the mutating forces of nature.

Ghosthouse it was called - more absent than present. As transparent as some insects' wings with their structure imprinted like circuitry, its rippling pointed configuration readily harmonized with the surrounding trees and granite outcroppings, as well as with the grand sweep of the spans of the Lewiston-Queenstown Bridge, visible to the south. Industrial materials constructed in an organic configuration so that “technology bows to the spirit of the natural world from which it derives its materials and inspiration.”

Ghosthouse is closely related to Saret's sculpture. The individual modules bear a strong resemblance to the units of a floor sculpture leaning into the wall (Four-Part Folding Glade, 1969-70), and the shelter's fluctuating volume harks back to one of the earliest wire pieces (Zinc Cloud 1967). As in the sculpture, the folding and layering of the wire creates a blurring of edges and shape that frustrates the resolution into a specific form. The configuration simultaneously reveals the nature of the material (linearity, tensility) and dissolves it in a corruscation of essence. From the inside, Ghosthouse became not only a shelter but an observatory. Its transparency revealed earth and sky, while transforming them and subjecting them to countless changes of order and scale in the kaleidoscopic shifts of its folded and

layered grids of some 180,000 rectangles.

Transparency turned to translucency when the onset of cold weather necessitated more protection. The Ghosthouse was covered with shingles made of layers of wire and reinforced polyethylene, taking on a more defined cone-like shape with a shiny crust on the outside and a diffused glow on the inside — a kind of radiant cocoon. In November, the Ghosthouse was dismantled and put in storage where it awaits the possibility of another manifestation.

The Ghosthouse's lace-like linearity and structure, dissolving in luminosity, relate it to the attenuated late Gothic of Ste. Chapelle, when the art of structure superseded Christianity's strictures. Both aspire to an aerated, abstract purity, but Saret's Gothic is more gazebo than church or cathedral — its human scale is geared to a more intimate self-illumination, a kind of peaceful pantheism. The ingenuity of the free-hand engineering and execution, and the sheer beauty and variety of its configuration, make Ghosthouse one of Saret's most impressive works.

As enterprising as Artpark has proved to be, it provides but temporary sites for the possibility of potent public art. The distance between art and the world at large too often dictates a public art molded from the merely mundane. Like Richard Serra, Saret has made several attempts to bridge the gap between art and a larger public. A model for a public park project competition in Yonkers, later joined to the working model for Ghosthouse, recombines and summarizes Saret's architectural concerns. The Three Archetypes: Curved Truss Platform Stair, Bi-Column Temple and Water Arrangement, and Meshwork Canopy is the architectural resolution of the quest begun in India. The India Ramp now has a specific goal—a stairway similar to the ramp rises to the platform with an elevated tub emerging from and structure are now all determined at will. Saret has become his own manufacturer.

The hand-made meshes gain new freedom for the forces of formation, permitting geometry's harmonic function a new set of options. The measure itself has now become more sculptural by taking on the third dimension. Volume is approached more organically. The single wire construction permits more flexible manipulation. Wires of different color and thickness, and/or different systems of measure, can now more readily be woven into a whole, more varied in complexity of configuration, density, and scale. Simultaneously, volume and form more readily approach an agitated ambiguity. The almost infinite multiplicity of lines radiate out from the structural core into febrile single lines vibrating on the verge of evaporation. The slinky fineness of the wire and the single-strand multiplicity relate these works to the "gang drawings," now weaving their hand measure into volume — volume that envelopes not only the clarity of number, but the mystery of number. Saret's configurations frequently conform to the occult combinations of numerology, adding yet another layer of possibility to their meaning.

If Saret's shelter was named Ghosthouse, his exhibition in New York, in 1980, could appropriately have been named "Ghost Garden." A startling variety of color and configuration consumed the space and exhaled a soft fragrance of exotic reverie. If the metals were not precious, they looked it — the glow of copper, the lacquered lustre of space-age coated wire, the sleek gleam of nickel - all coiled and woven in swelling whorls of light and doing the utmost to justify titles like Reflected Aether. The wires employed ranged from merely thin to hair-like filaments, and gave the pieces an almost immaterial delicacy and bristling intimacy of scale. The config-

urations ranged from the simple, relatively contained and dense mound of An-namalaxxy (1980), to the open stretch of Copper Connection (1979-80), with its two copper mesh tendrils pulled from the ceiling to form an irregular triangle ending in a blossoming clump of geometry, to the endlessly looping and rolling lines that all but erase themselves in the multiplicity of the bow-tie shapes of one or another cone-line “Infinity Clusters.”

No sooner done than changed. Having all but transformed metal into light and air, Saret turned to heavier wire and relinquished the preciousness of its more jeweled surfaces to achieve greater scale and structural clarity. Ascending Number Spirit Fountain (1981) has a configuration much the same as Copper Connection, but its thicker wire surrenders more to the eye and the force of gravity. The tetrahedral geometry that forms the mesh of the two supporting arms is more clearly visible as is the cubic geometry of the mesh of the bottom cluster. The piece is denser but hardly static – it is indeed like a fountain with its jets obeying the forces of its structure, yet constantly shifting and dispersing.

The most recent pieces extend the potential of single lines drawn into space — the lines move more slowly and deliberately as they become heavier and stiffer. In Open Center Rising (1982), stiff, straightened copper wire yields a large cube made up of cubic mesh on the floor, with a smaller companion cube, (de)formed by gravity, suspended from the ceiling by four tendrils of tetrahedral mesh.

Weight and density play a more visible role — the lava-like liquidity of lead sinks down into more languid loops in an “Infinity Cluster,” than does nickel or steel. Different weights and thicknesses impose different size and scale – a lead “Infinity Cluster,” made up of wire with a diameter of a quarter of an inch, looks titanic next to the identical structure formed of nickel wire with a diameter of .0063 of an inch. However, even the weight of the lead piece slides into illusion. The lead’s weight and malleability require larger loops, making the formation more open to space, while shifting its matter into liquid shadow. The increase in the weight of the material is welded to an increase in the weight of the will.

The greater variety of measures and scale is fully exploited in Had Heaven (1982), with its congregation of seventeen different configurations including a dense clump of cubic measure, the wide open, freely formed stainless steel mesh of a spheroid, and a variety of “Infinity Clusters.” In Icos Launching (1982), a single icosahedral (twenty-sided) unit perches atop an “Infinity Cluster” like a cosmic insect about to take flight.

The new work brings yet another manifestation of the variety which culminates in the unity of Alan Saret’s vision. A vision that folds the dictates of the material into the immaterial. The sonorous rhythms of the organic and the metaphorical roll through the regularity of number to make the visionary visible. The intent remains the same, as in the beginning, but the vocabulary has grown to form a new language more capable of exploiting the conjunction of chaos and clarity.