

PHILIPPE CRAMER

**Celestial Bodies**





Philippe Cramer - *Celestial Bodies* (2025)

Here shown during Philippe Cramer's exhibition *Selected Works*, together with *Oculus Mirabilis II*, Verbier, 2025



Philippe Cramer - *Celestial Bodies* "16 Cygni Bb [38]" (2025)  
Poured bronze and raw oak | 89 x 29 x 189 cm | 35 x 11 3/8 x 74 3/8 in



Philippe Cramer - *Celestial Bodies* "OGLE-2005-BLG-390L b" (2025)  
Poured bronze and raw oak | 57 x 40 x 171 cm | 22 3/8 x 15 3/4 x 67 3/8 in



Philippe Cramer - *Celestial Bodies* (2025)

Here shown during MAZE Art Gstaad 2026, together with *Dual Inheritance* serie



Philippe Cramer - *Celestial Bodies* "Wolf 1069" (2025)

Poured bronze and raw oak | 57 x 24 x 172 cm | 22 3/8 x 9 1/2 x 67 3/4 in

## Philippe Cramer – Celestial Bodies

With the *Celestial Bodies*, Philippe Cramer extends a sculptural inquiry into presence, memory, and the sacred dimension of form. Made in poured bronze and raw oak, these works take the shape of vertical, totemic figures – silent, monumental presences situated at the intersection of archaic sculpture, modern abstraction, and ritual object.

*Celestial Bodies* situates itself within a long history of sculpture in which the object transcends its material condition to become symbolic presence. These works seem to belong to an indeterminate temporality – at once ancient and contemporary, primitive and futuristic, terrestrial and cosmic. Their stable, almost ceremonial verticality imbues them with an immediate meditative force.

The title itself – *Celestial Bodies* – opens a dual imaginary: that of astronomical entities, planetary trajectories, and cosmic systems, but also that of the sculptural body as an autonomous presence. Each piece appears as a gravitational form, dense and silent, structured around a central axis that recalls ancient stelae as much as votive artefacts or archaic anthropomorphic figures.

This relationship between abstraction and spirituality runs throughout the history of modern sculpture. The dialogue with Constantin Brancusi is significant here. As in *Endless Column*, *The Kiss*, or *Bird in Space*, form is reduced to its essence to approach a universal, almost metaphysical dimension. Brancusi sought not to represent the appearance of the world, but to reveal its inner energy. Philippe Cramer pursues a similar trajectory, developing condensed forms that escape visual narrative to attain a state of pure presence.

At the same time, the work engages with far more ancient traditions. The *Celestial Bodies* evoke Cycladic sculpture, primitive idols, megalithic standing stones, as well as ritual figures from African and Oceanic cultures that profoundly influenced the avant-gardes of the twentieth century. Like these sacred objects, Cramer's sculptures carry a symbolic charge that exceeds their aesthetic status. They function as presences – contemplative, almost tutelary forms.

This sacred dimension is reinforced through the choice of materials. Bronze, since Antiquity, has carried a powerful historical and symbolic weight. A material of permanence and monumentality, it traverses civilizations as a bearer of memory and authority. Raw oak, by contrast, introduces an organic, terrestrial, and almost archaic dimension. Its grain, irregularities, and living texture create a tension with the dense, mineral surface of the bronze.

The bronze disc appears to hover above its oak base like an apparition, or a condensation of matter. This duality recalls certain works by Isamu Noguchi, in which sculpture becomes a dialogue between nature, time, and human intervention.



Constantin Brancusi - *Endless Column III* (before 1928)

In Philippe Cramer's practice, bronze itself becomes a field of research. In contrast to industrial or standardized casting processes, each alloy is developed by hand within the studio. The bronze used in *Celestial Bodies* is entirely self-produced: Philippe Cramer and his collaborators create their own metallic compositions prior to casting.

This aspect is essential, as bronze does not exist in a natural state. It is a fully man-made material, an alloy born from the transformation of multiple metals – primarily copper, brass, and tin. By adjusting the proportions of each component, the material develops distinct tonalities: warmer and reddish when copper dominates, more golden when brass is present in greater quantities, and cooler, almost silvery when tin becomes more prominent.

Each sculpture thus possesses its own chromatic vibration and material identity. Subtle surface variations generate slightly different presences, as though each work contained its own internal temperature. This mastery of alloy aligns Cramer's practice with historical traditions of artistic foundry, when the sculptor maintained a direct, almost esoteric relationship with the transformation of matter.

This relationship to material resonates with a much older lineage – that of alchemy. For centuries, alchemists sought to understand the hidden forces within metals, their symbolic correspondences, and their transformative potential. Fire, fusion, and alloying were as much spiritual processes as material operations. In *Celestial Bodies*, Philippe Cramer discreetly reactivates this alchemical memory. The transformation of copper, brass, and tin into a unified substance evokes a form of transmutation in which distinct elements merge to give rise to a new presence.

This dimension lends the sculptures a magical quality. Each bronze disc appears as the result of a ritual governed by fire, time, and gravity. Variations in color become visible traces of this inner metamorphosis. Reddish, golden, or silvery surfaces echo ancient cosmologies in which metals were associated with planets, deities, and celestial forces. Copper, linked to Venus in hermetic traditions, tin associated with Jupiter, and the solar resonance of gold – subtly echoed in the reflective qualities of bronze – extend within these works an ancient imaginary in which matter, cosmos, and spirituality were deeply intertwined.

The title *Celestial Bodies* thus acquires an expanded resonance. The sculptures no longer refer solely to celestial objects as astral forms; they seem themselves to emerge from a cosmic process – like mineral fragments from a forgotten mythology, or relics of a civilization both archaic and yet to come.

As in the *Golden Landscapes*, Philippe Cramer places fundamental importance on artisanal gesture. Each work is entirely handcrafted in Switzerland in collaboration with highly skilled artisans mastering traditional techniques of bronze casting and woodworking. This collaborative dimension is essential, anchoring the sculptures within a historical continuity in which hand, time, and material remain central to the act of creation.



Unknown - *The Trundholm Chariot* (15th century B.C.)

In a contemporary context largely defined by dematerialization, digital technologies, and industrial production, this commitment to craftsmanship acquires particular resonance. Philippe Cramer asserts a slow, physical relationship to matter. The traces of metal pouring, the textures of wood, and the subtle irregularities of the surfaces become visible markers of time embedded within the object.

This valorization of process is not nostalgic. Rather, it participates in a distinctly contemporary reflection on materiality, presence, and the renewed need for forms capable of carrying symbolic density. In an era saturated with images and immaterial flows, *Celestial Bodies* reintroduce a physical and contemplative experience of sculpture.

Their silence is one of their most striking qualities. These works avoid spectacle and resist explicit narrative. They impose a slowed temporality. Their monumentality is never demonstrative; it resides in their stability, their equilibrium, and their ability to generate a field of contemplation around them.

This restraint aligns Philippe Cramer's work with modern sculptors such as Isamu Noguchi, Barbara Hepworth, or Eduardo Chillida, for whom sculpture was not merely form but a relationship between material, void, light, and space. In Cramer's work as well, the pieces seem to quietly organize the space around them. They possess an architectural quality, functioning as axes or points of anchorage within a given environment.

At the same time, the *Celestial Bodies* never seek emotional neutrality. Their abstraction remains inhabited. The forms retain an anthropomorphic resonance, oscillating between object, figure, and symbol.

This ambiguity constitutes one of the central strengths of the work. The sculptures seem to belong simultaneously to an archaic world, to modern sculptural language, and to a form of contemporary spirituality stripped of explicit religious iconography.

In *Celestial Bodies*, Philippe Cramer thus constructs a singular sculptural language in which bronze and wood become the vehicles for a meditation on time, memory, and permanence – essential forms that appear as relics of the future as much as vestiges of an immemorial past.



Barbara Hepworth - *Vertical Form* (1969)





Philippe Cramer - *Celestial Bodies* "HAT-P-1 b" (2026)

Poured bronze and raw oak | 59 x 22 x 173 cm | 23 1/4 x 8 5/8 x 68 1/8 in



Philippe Cramer - *Celestial Bodies* (2026)

Here shown during ArtGenève 2026, together with *Aeternus Eternus III*, the *Whispering Stone* serie, the *Dual Inheritance* serie, the *Nébuleuse Cinétique* serie and *The Guardian of Light* serie

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Philippe Cramer - *Celestial Bodies* "WASP-11 a/ HAT-P-10 A" (2026)

Poured bronze and raw oak | 56 x 25 x 158 cm | 22 x 9 7/8 x 62 1/4 in



Philippe Cramer - *Celestial Bodies* (2025)

Here shown during MAZE Art Gstaad 2026, together with the *Dual Inheritance* serie

## Philippe Cramer

Born in the United States and having grown up in Switzerland, Philippe Cramer owes his first name to his ancestor Philibert Cramer, an 18th century figure who was celebrated in the poems of Voltaire and the paintings of Jean-Étienne Liotard. The artistic heritage of his family is rich: his great uncle Gérard Cramer collaborated with renowned artists such as Joan Miró, Pablo Picasso, Marc Chagall and Henri Matisse to produce artist's books, while his grandmother Adrienne Cramer founded a gallery in Geneva in partnership with Alexander Iolas, and she maintained close ties with Jean Tinguely, Niki de Saint Phalle and Meret Oppenheim.

Drawing from this legacy, Philippe Cramer began his career as a designer of furniture and jewelry, creating pieces that were both dreamlike and functional. Rather than focusing uniquely on their practical dimensions, he became interested in the aesthetic qualities of the materials, as well as a large range of fabrication techniques, in order to apprehend the visual and tactile qualities of natural or synthetic materials, testing the limits and potential of each one. Gradually, he created the conditions for his own economic, symbolic and creative autonomy.

In 2001, Cramer made the decisive choice to focus on self-published editions and the production of limited series and unique pieces. In contradiction to an exponentially digitized industrial world, this positioning allows him to pursue his exploratory approach to creating. But above all, it reflects a deep and long-held conviction: in a world of accelerating dematerialization, handcrafted workmanship and the uniqueness of an object foster emotional attachment on the part of its user.

Today, Philippe Cramer focuses primarily on fine art, drawing on the knowledge of craftsmanship and contemporary production techniques he explored earlier in his career to bring his intuitions to life. His approach expresses itself as much through the care given to the formal aspects of his works, as in his philosophical vision of creating art - balancing tradition while pursuing new forms.

In 2010, the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire of Geneva offered Philippe Cramer a carte blanche for the exhibition "L'Ornement Jamais" (Ornament; Never). The works created for this occasion have since been added to the MAH's permanent collection and are now part of the cultural heritage of the State of Geneva. His works are also featured in the collections of the Maison Tavel, the Ariana Museum, MUDAC, the Pictet Group, GNAMC (Rome) and numerous private collections.

In 2021, Philippe Cramer was also honored for his contributions to the arts by the UBS Foundation for Culture.



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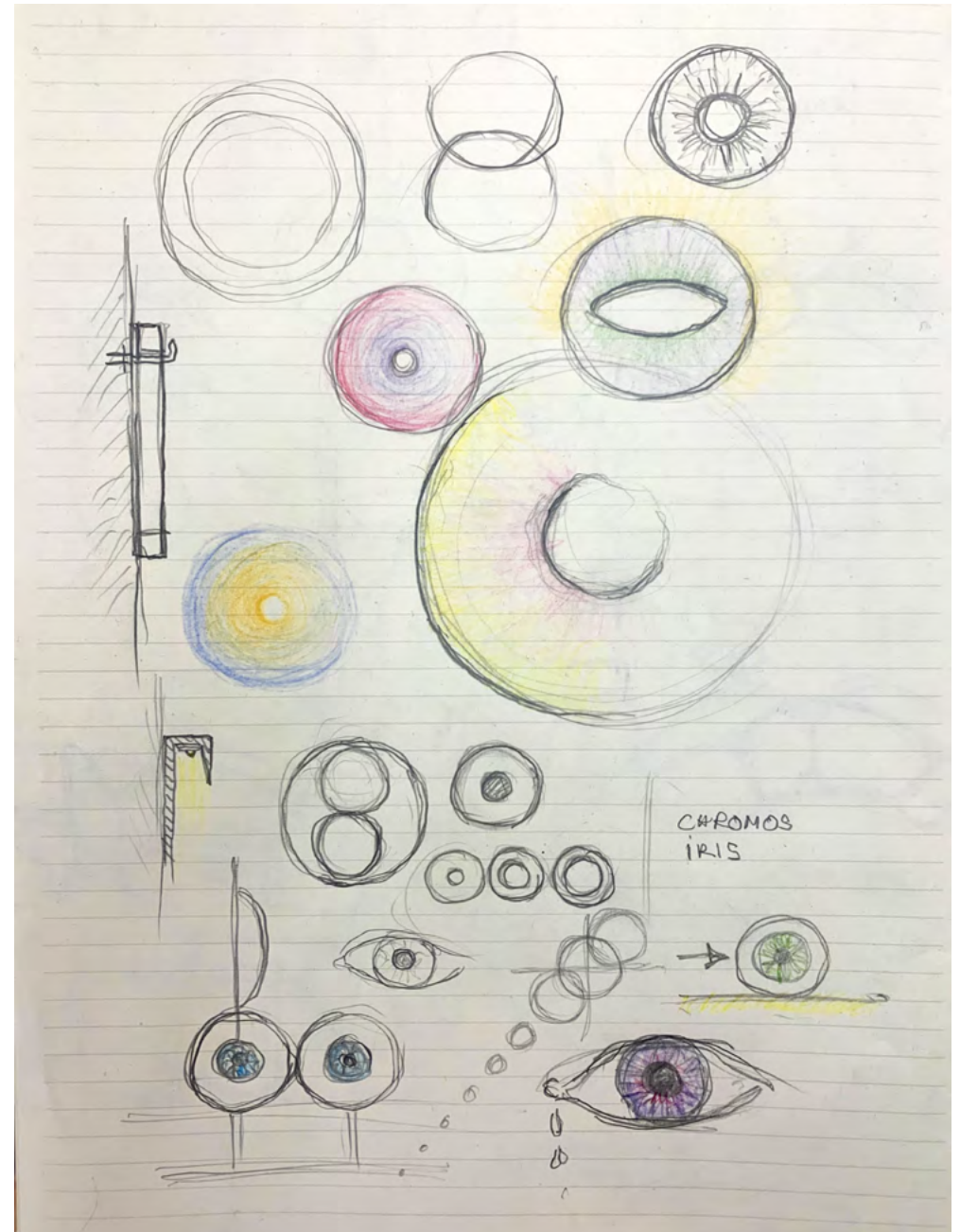
## Artistic Practice

Philippe Cramer imagines artworks that alloy soft organic lines with rigorous geometric forms, often referring to Antiquity, modern art, and the poetry of nature. His vision combines bold colors with the finest of materials. Solid oak, walnut, ash wood, marble, limestone, onyx, gold leaf: his love of wood and stone confers a warm and tactile dimension to his body of work. But he has also skillfully manipulated industrial techniques and materials to produce unique forms that are always expressive. More recently, in an experimental approach, he has integrated generative AI to his range of production techniques.

If his work bears the mark of his attachment to Switzerland, to its spectacular landscapes and to its artisanal traditions, it also possesses a strongly evocative power reminding us that from Tuscany to California, from Japan to the Greek islands, his many travels continue to inspire him. Between ancient archetypes and childhood memories, his works ultimately possess the magical power of time machines.

Through his vision, we can take stock of deep time that allows us to escape from the ultra-present and nourish our imaginations in new ways. To develop his work, Philippe Cramer draws in his own manner from a type of paganism: he is inspired by a strong connection to ancient myths and a fascination with the cosmos. These imaginary worlds are marked by a form of open spirituality that has always been present in his art. Far from unbridled rationalism, they also inscribe his practice where poetry and magic reign. The totemic objects he creates thus take on a life of their own.

Intuitive and deeply committed to the act of creation, nourished by artisanal expertise, Philippe Cramer crafts pieces that are designed to be shared and passed down, thus building bridges between individuals, ideas, and eras.



## The studio

Philippe Cramer established his studio in Geneva in 2001. Conceived as an artistic laboratory and an exhibition space for his work, the studio is a site for experimentation where he freely develops his creative ideas, linking traditional craft and the finest materials with innovative techniques.

He strives to offer ambitious works that are marked by the unique nuances that come with manual labor, producing one-of-a-kind pieces and limited editions that are meticulously crafted by artisans with whom he builds relationships of mutual trust.

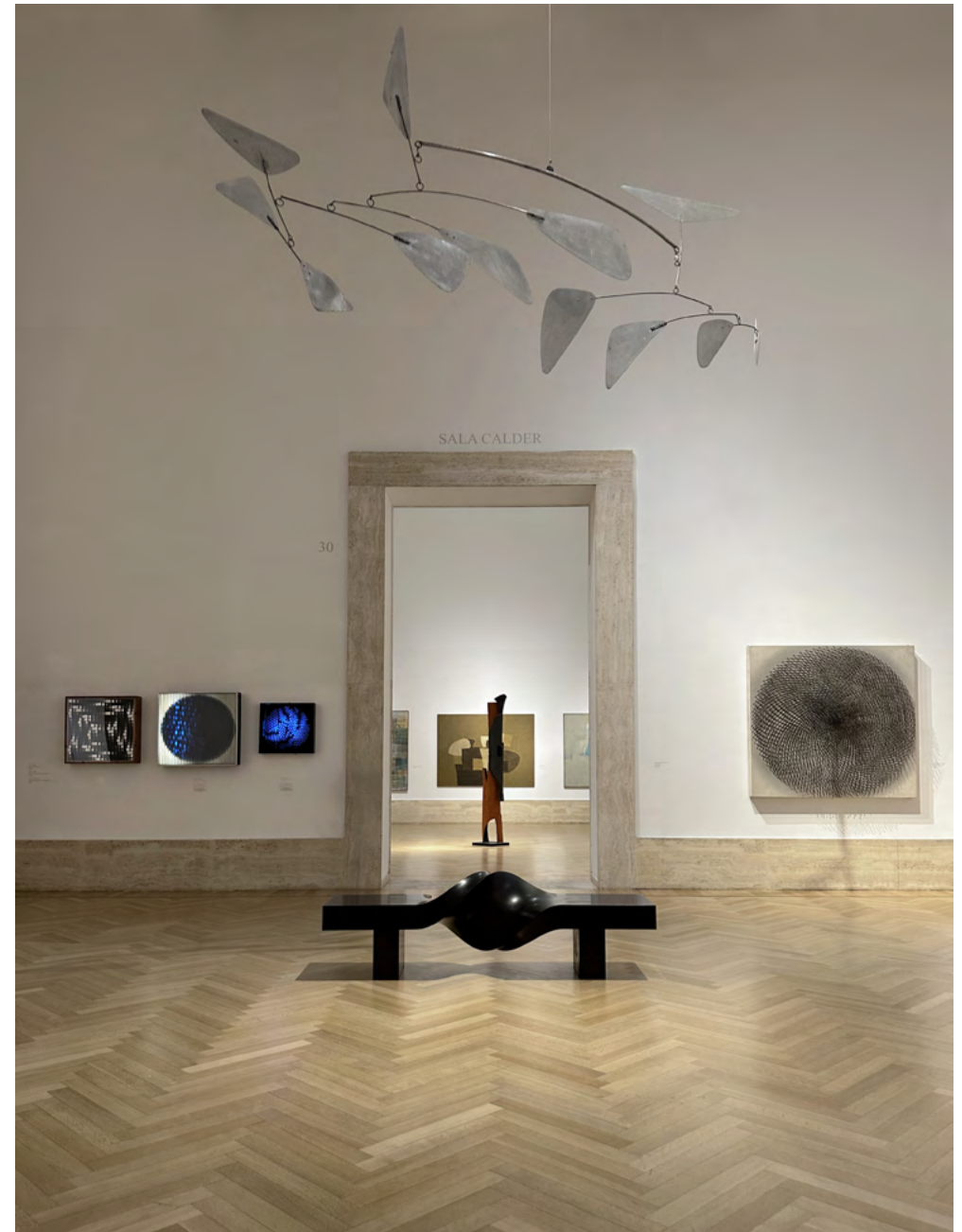
Believing in the importance of engagement with the public, Philippe Cramer keeps his studio open to visitors, inviting them to discover and appreciate his work up close. The studio is thus a space where he takes the time to discuss with visitors who stop by, inscribing his practice in a form of transmission of knowledge.

## Miscellaneous

Philippe Cramer has designed trophies for the United Nations Young Activists Summit and the Louis-Jeantet Foundation, as well as projects for the Swiss consulates and embassies in Geneva and Pretoria. He has also created works for the headquarters of Banque Pictet and Banque Piquet Galland. In 2021, Art Genève commissioned him to design the set for the pop-up art restaurant Night Fall.

Several institutions and galleries have exhibited his work, including Gallery S. Bensimon and Not a Gallery in Paris, the Swiss Cultural Center and the Michelangelo Foundation in Milan, the Audi Foundation in Beirut, Gallery Farb in Gstaad, Ormond Editions in Zurich, the Kisceffi Muzeum in Budapest, the Lapidarium of the National Museum of the Czech Republic in Prague, and the TEI Foundation in Tokyo.

Feature articles on his work have been published in numerous magazines and newspapers, including Wallpaper, Vogue, AD, L'Officiel, T, Metropolis, Le Monde, and the Chicago Tribune.



Philippe Cramer - *Aeternus Eternus II* (2025)

Here shown as part of the permanent collection of the GNAMC, Rome. Donation F.P.Journe, 2025



Photo credit © Antoni Aebly

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## Institutional collections

His artworks can be found in the following collections :

Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva  
Maison Tavel  
Musée Ariana  
MuDAC  
Groupe Pictet  
GNAMC

## Exhibitions

His work has been exhibited at :

Centre Culturel Suisse, Milan  
Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva  
MuDAC, Lausanne  
Musée du Lapidarium, Prague  
Fondation Audi, Beyrouth  
Musée Kicelli, Budapest  
Collectible, Bruxelles  
Doppia Firma, Milan  
Biennale de Crans-Montana  
Cimetière des Rois, Geneva

Edward Mitterrand, Geneva  
S. Bensimon, Paris  
ArtCurial, Paris  
Ormond Éditions, Zurich  
Galerie Farb, Gstaad  
Sabrier&Paunet, Paris  
Mint, London  
Speerstra, Bursins  
Fondation TEI, Tokyo  
Ambassade Suisse, Tokyo

## Publications

Numerous publications have covered his work :

NZZ	Vogue (DE, BR)
Bilanz	Elle Décoration (FR, IT, UK, DE)
Le Temps	AD (USA, FR, IT, DE)
La Tribune de Genève	L'Officiel
Espaces Contemporains	Metropolis
Annabelle	The Chicago Tribune
Tendances Deco	Le Monde
Wallpaper	New York Times

Many books reference him or illustrate his art:

*Pas Besoin d'un Dessin*, Jean-Hubert Martin, Un Musée, 2022  
*Geneva at the Heart of the World*, Assouline, 2021  
*Les Collections du Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de Genève*, Favre, 2019  
*Design Blok Book 2018*, Profil Media, 2019  
*The New Jewelers*, Olivier Dupon, Thames&Hudson, 2012  
*Wallpaper City Guide*, Wallpaper, 2012  
*Decors, Design et Industrie*, Alexandre Fiette, Somogy Editions d'Art, 2011  
*Design*, teNeues, 2002

