

PHILIPPE CRAMER

Dual Inheritance Serie



Philippe Cramer - *Dual Inheritance N°2* (2025)
Lacquered maritime pine | 113 x 73.5 x 4 cm | 44.9 x 28.7 x 1.6 in



Photo credit © Indexprz

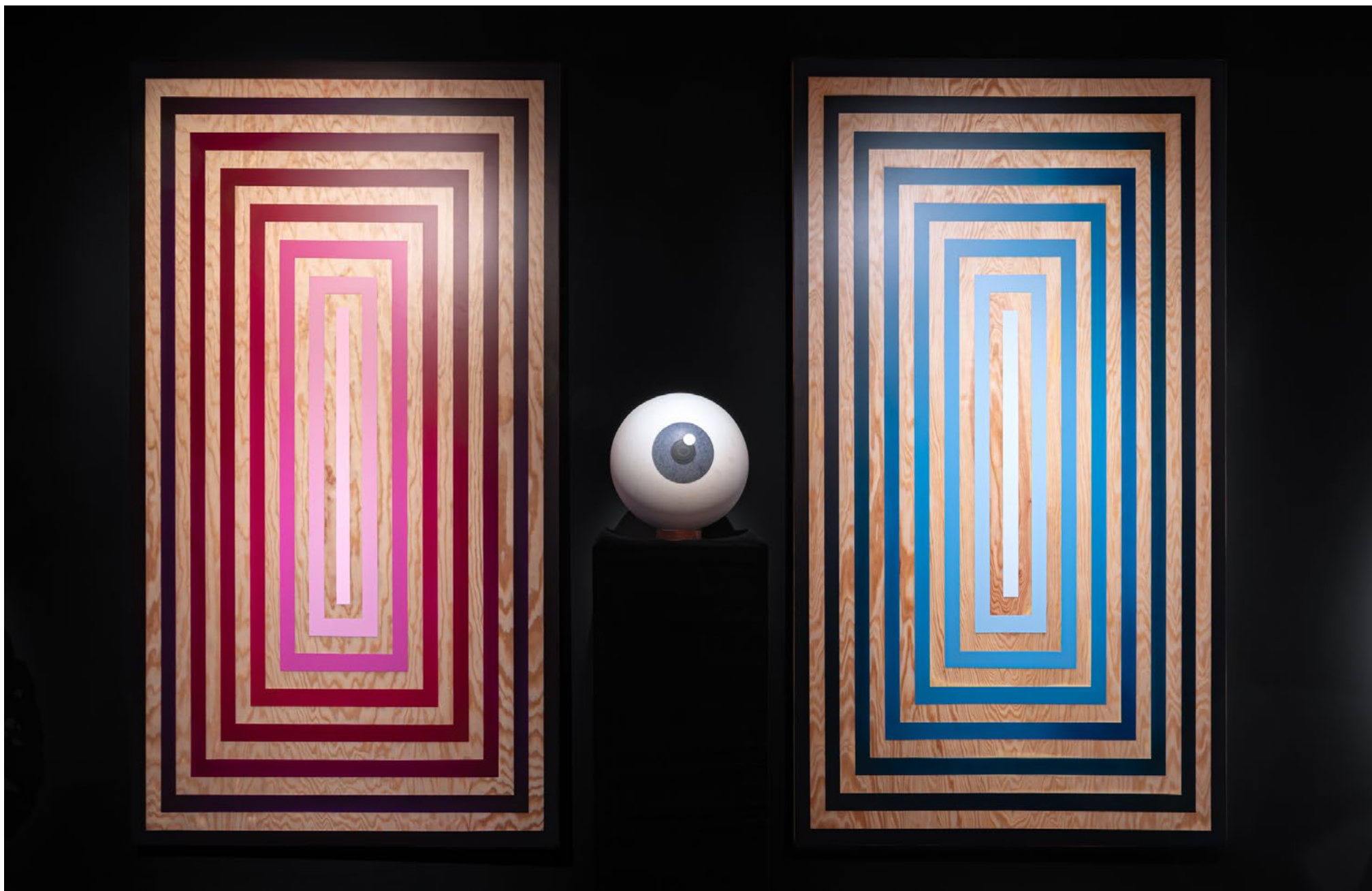
Philippe Cramer - *Dual Inheritance* serie (2026)

Here shown during ArtGenève 2026, together with *Whispering Stones* serie.



Philippe Cramer - *Dual Inheritance N°2* (2025)

Lacquered maritime pine | 113 x 73.5 x 4 cm | 44.9 x 28.7 x 1.6 in



Philippe Cramer - *Dual Inheritance N°4 & N°5* (2026)

Lacquered maritime pine | 110 x 200 x 4 cm | 43.3 x 78.7 x 1.6 in

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Philippe Cramer – Dual Inheritance Theory

With the Dual Inheritance Theory series, Philippe Cramer develops a sculptural and pictorial investigation into the coexistence – at times harmonious, at times conflicted – between structures generated by nature and those constructed by human culture. Crafted from lacquered maritime pine, these works bring together two opposing visual systems: on one side, the organic grain of the wood, unpredictable and alive; on the other, rigorous geometric compositions inspired by the visual language of Op Art and kinetic abstraction of the 1960s and 1970s.

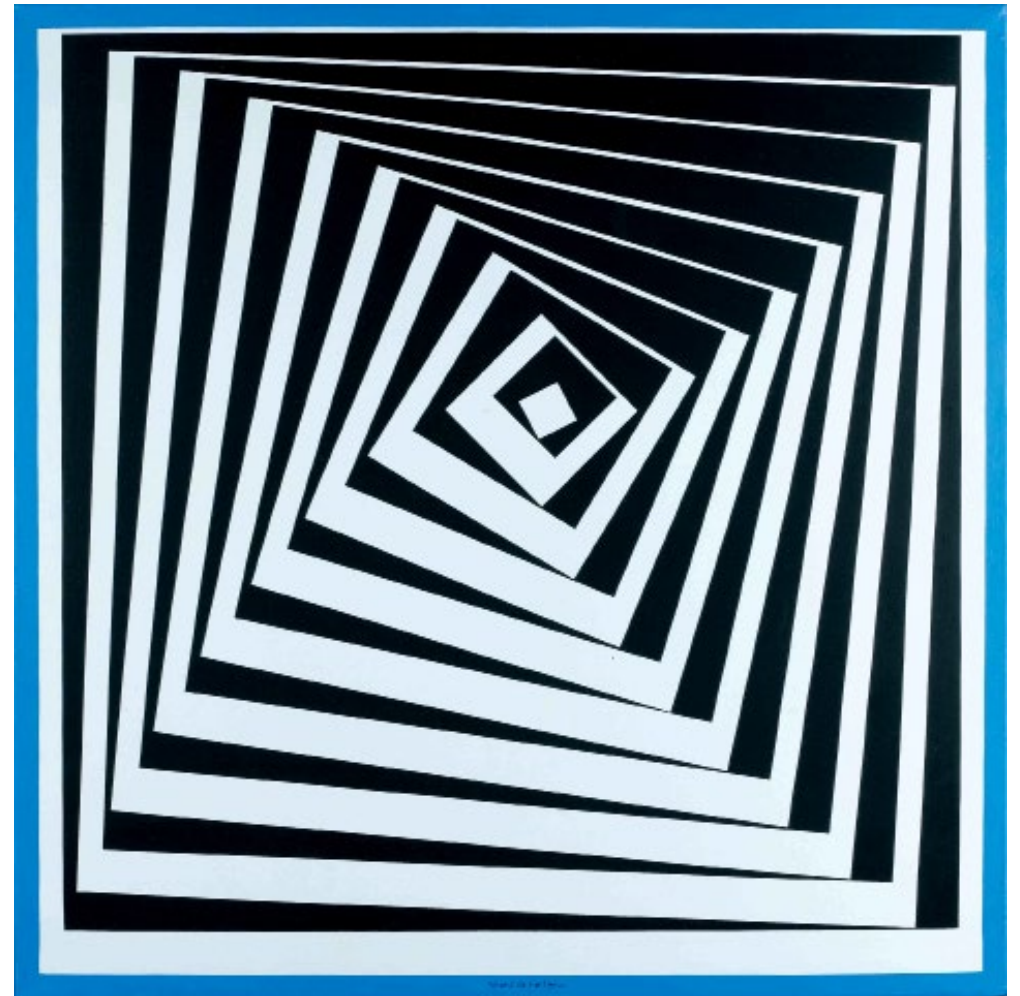
The title Dual Inheritance Theory borrows from an anthropological and evolutionary concept suggesting that human beings inherit simultaneously through biology and culture. In Philippe Cramer's work, this idea becomes both a visual and material principle. The works stage a tension between two fundamental inheritances: nature, embodied by the slow and irregular growth of wood, and human culture, expressed through geometric systems that seek order, control, and rational structure.

This duality runs throughout the history of modern art. From the early twentieth century onward, geometric abstraction emerged from a desire to create a universal visual language grounded in harmony, repetition, and mathematical clarity. Artists such as Piet Mondrian, Josef Albers, and the Constructivists sought to detach form from the contingencies of nature in pursuit of an idealized and intellectual order. Later, during the 1960s and 1970s, Op Art expanded this ambition into a perceptual and immersive experience.

The dialogue with Victor Vasarely is particularly significant here. Much like Vasarely's optical compositions, Philippe Cramer's geometric patterns generate visual tensions, vibrations, and shifting spatial perceptions that destabilize the viewer's gaze. Surfaces appear to expand, pulse, or recede through the repetition of lines and chromatic structures. Yet where historical Op Art often pursued perfectly controlled, almost industrial surfaces, Philippe Cramer introduces an element of resistance: the irreducible presence of the living material itself.

Beneath the lacquered geometry, the maritime pine always remains visible. Its veins, knots, irregularities, and organic accidents persist as an autonomous form of drawing that human intervention can never fully erase. The wood therefore becomes far more than a support; it operates as a living memory, a natural structure onto which human systems of order are projected.

This tension forms the conceptual core of the series. The geometric motifs attempt to impose logic, symmetry, and rational control, while the material quietly resists. The grain of the pine continuously reintroduces unpredictability, irregularity, temporality and a form of organic intelligence. The works become the site of a dialogue between two forms of drawing: that of nature and that of humankind.



Victor Vasarely - *Pavo II* (1979)

The first is slow and involuntary, shaped by climate, growth, and time. The second is constructed, calculated, cultural, and almost mathematical. Philippe Cramer does not seek to erase one in favor of the other; instead, he stages their coexistence.

This relationship between geometric structure and organic materiality also echoes broader tensions within the history of modernity itself. Twentieth-century abstraction often carried the ambition of establishing universal systems capable of transcending the chaos of the natural world. In Dual Inheritance Theory, this modernist aspiration encounters a distinctly contemporary awareness: the understanding that nature can no longer be considered a passive material entirely subject to human control.

The works may therefore be read as metaphors for our present relationship with the environment. Human systems – architectural, technological, political, or cultural – continuously attempt to organize the world according to rational models, while natural forces persist in following their own autonomous and often uncontrollable logic.

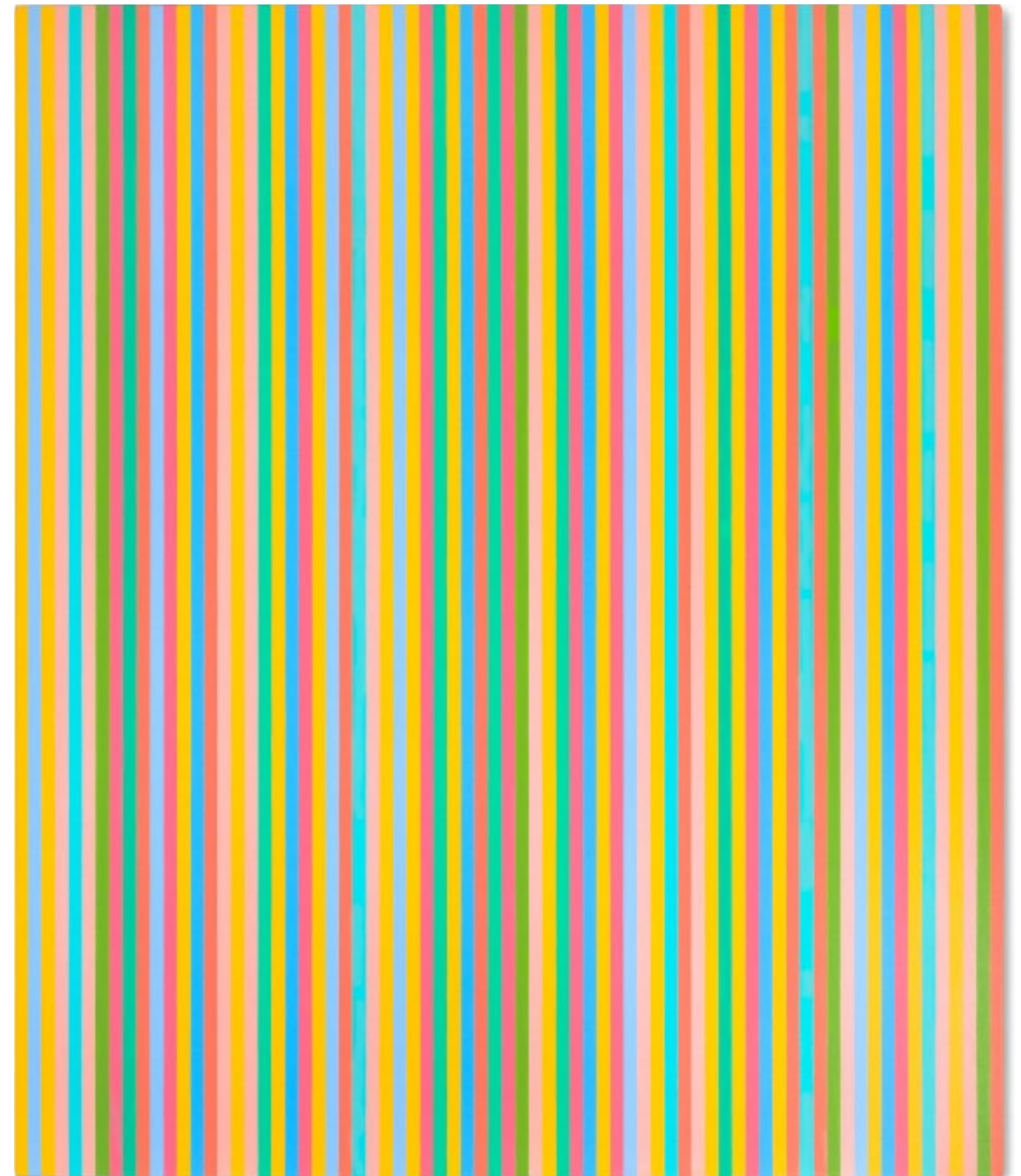
This gives the series a deeply contemporary resonance. Philippe Cramer reactivates the visual vocabulary of modernism and Op Art while redirecting it toward current questions surrounding ecology, materiality, coexistence between culture and nature, and the limits of human control.

The choice of maritime pine is especially significant in this context. Unlike the neutral industrial surfaces traditionally associated with geometric abstraction, this wood possesses a strong expressive presence. Its grain functions like a natural cartography or an internal topography. Certain organic lines appear to harmonize with the painted geometries, while others interrupt or contradict them.

This interaction generates a unique visual vibration. The eye constantly oscillates between two perceptual systems: geometric stability and organic movement. The viewer is never able to fully settle on either one. The surface becomes a field of perceptual negotiation where human order and natural growth coexist without ever completely merging.

This approach also connects Philippe Cramer to artists who explored the relationship between system and organicity. Bridget Riley's work resonates through the perceptual dynamism of the surfaces, while Giuseppe Penone and artists associated with Arte Povera similarly investigated the memory embedded within natural materials. More recently, many contemporary artists have reintroduced unstable or living materials into abstraction in order to question the legacies of modernism.

Yet Philippe Cramer's work maintains a distinct position. Rather than rejecting geometric modernism, Dual Inheritance Theory proposes a form of coexistence. The geometric structures do not erase the wood; they enter into dialogue with it. The works do not stage absolute domination, but rather an ongoing negotiation between control and surrender, culture and organic growth, calculation and chance.



Bridget Riley - *Myrrh* (1985)

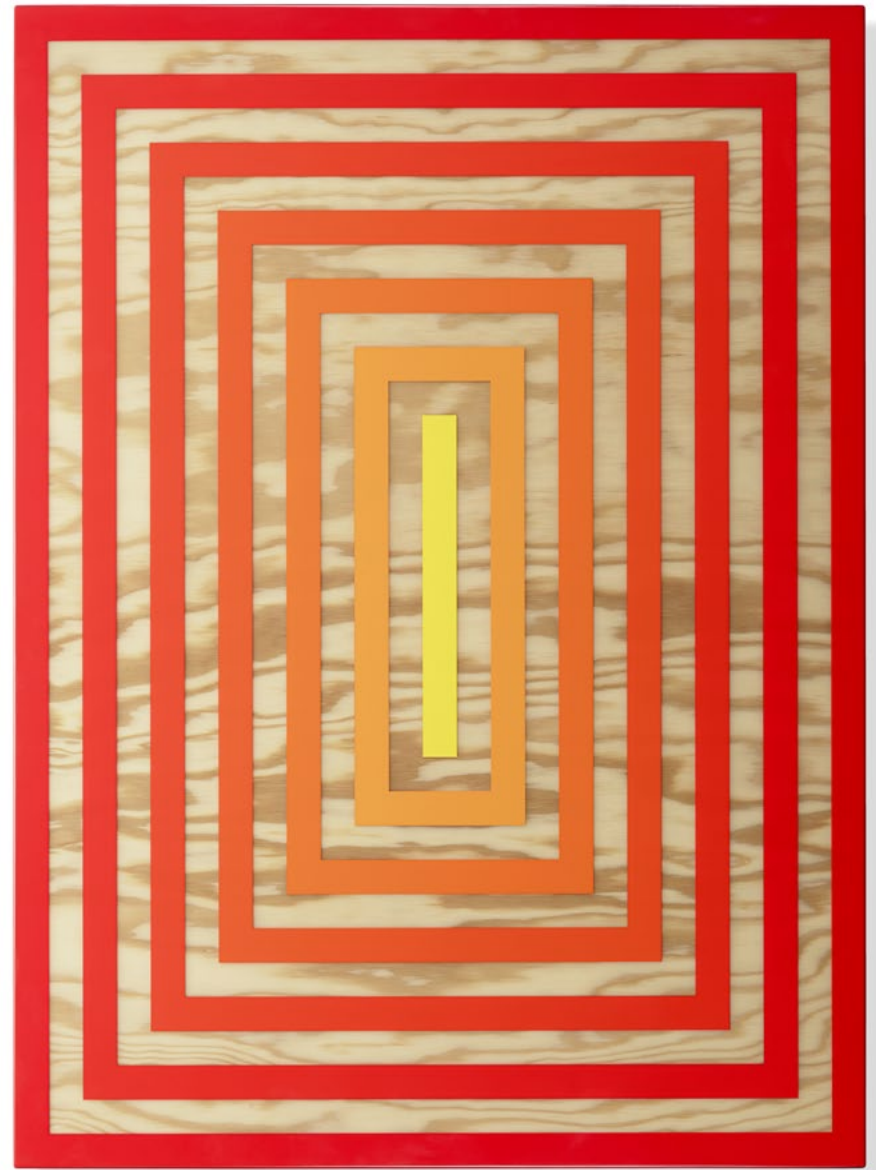
The lacquer itself plays a crucial role within this tension. Its smooth, refined and synthetic surface contrasts with the tactile depth and living texture of the wood beneath. This opposition between polished finish and organic material further intensifies the central duality of the series. Beneath the geometric order, the wood always retains something untamed.

In Dual Inheritance Theory, Philippe Cramer transforms the surface into a philosophical space. Each work becomes a meditation on the human impulse to project systems of thought onto the natural world while remaining confronted by an organic reality that can never be fully mastered.

The works ultimately emerge as hybrid objects – simultaneously modernist and organic, rational and instinctive, controlled and alive – surfaces where the history of geometric abstraction encounters the slow and silent memory of living matter.



Philippe Cramer - *Dual Inheritance N°1* (2025)
Detail



Philippe Cramer - *Dual Inheritance N°3* (2025)
Lacquered maritime pine | 85 x 62,5 x 4 cm | 33,5 x 24,4 x 1,6 in



Philippe Cramer - *Dual Inheritance* serie (2026)

Here shown during MAZE Art Gstaad 2026.



Philippe Cramer - *Dual Inheritance N°6* (2026)

Lacquered maritime pine | 150 x 100 x 4 cm | 59.1 x 39.4 x 1.6 in



Philippe Cramer - *Dual Inheritance N°7 & N°8* (2026)

Lacquered maritime pine | 120 x 80 x 4 cm | 47.2 x 31.5 x 1.6 in



Philippe Cramer - *Dual Inheritance N°7 & N°8* (2026)

Lacquered maritime pine | 120 x 80 x 4 cm | 47.2 x 31.5 x 1.6 in



Philippe Cramer - *Dual Inheritance N°1* (2025)

Lacquered maritime pine | 166 x 116 x 4 cm | 65.4 x 45.7 x 1.6 in



Philippe Cramer - *Dual Inheritance N°5 & N°4* (2026)

Lacquered maritime pine | 110 x 200 x 4 cm | 43.3 x 78.7 x 1.6 in

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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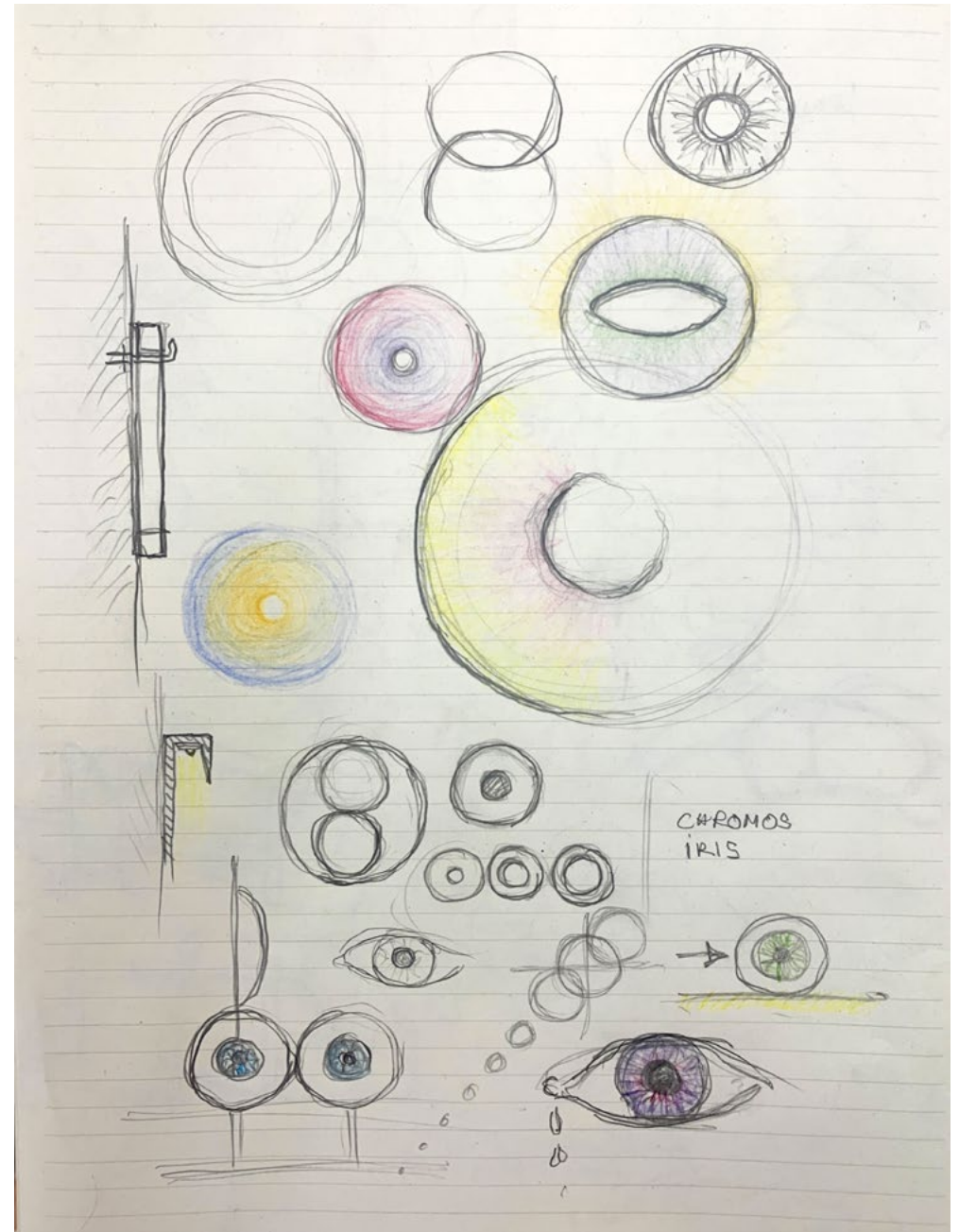
Artistic Practice

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 - *Dual Inheritance serie* (2025)

Here shown during MAZE Art Gstaad 2025 together with *Aeternus Eternus Totemic I* and *Aeternus Eternus II*.

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

