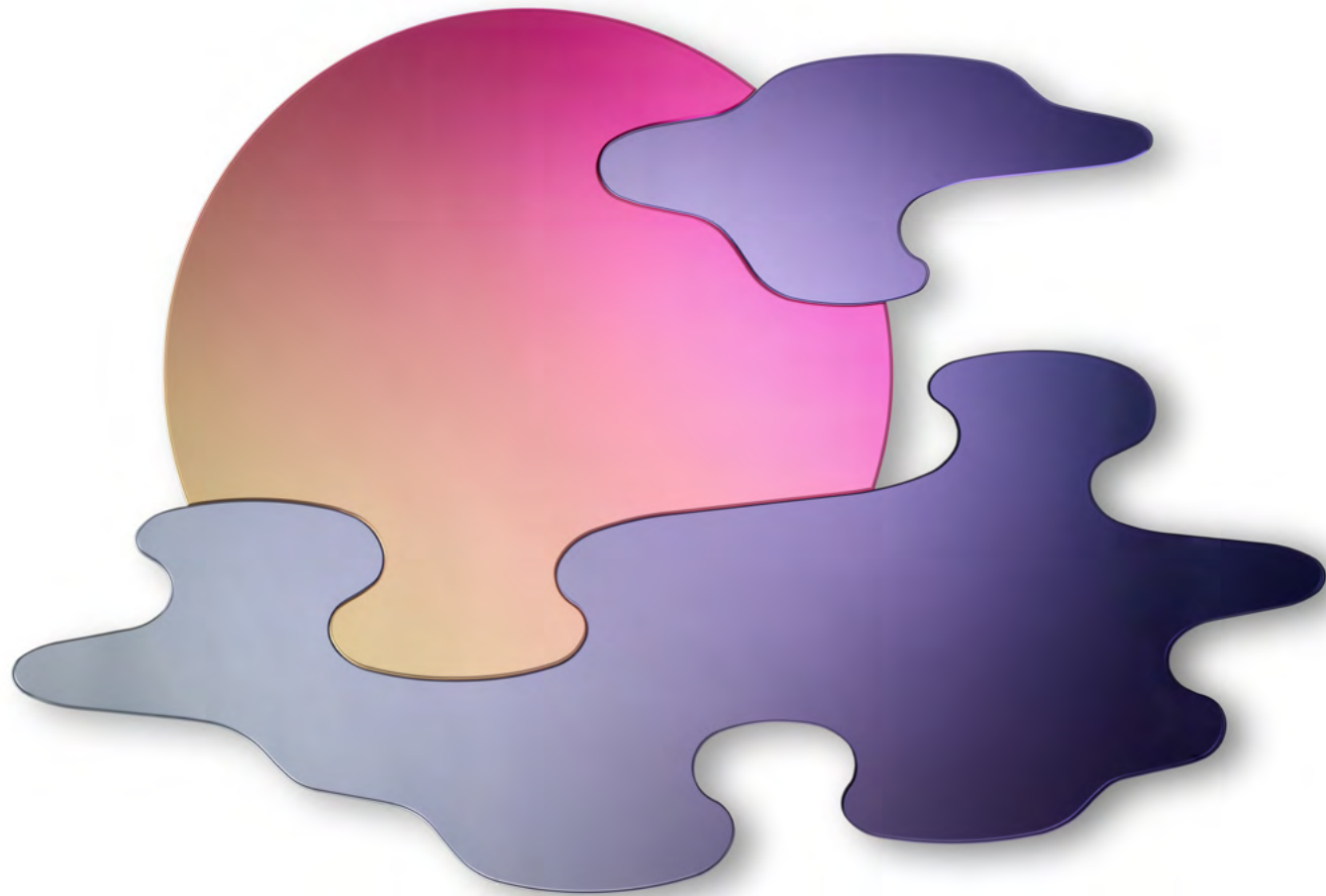


The background features a central purple field with organic, wavy borders. Above and below this field are large, rounded shapes in shades of orange and yellow. The top-left and bottom-left corners are white.

PHILIPPE CRAMER

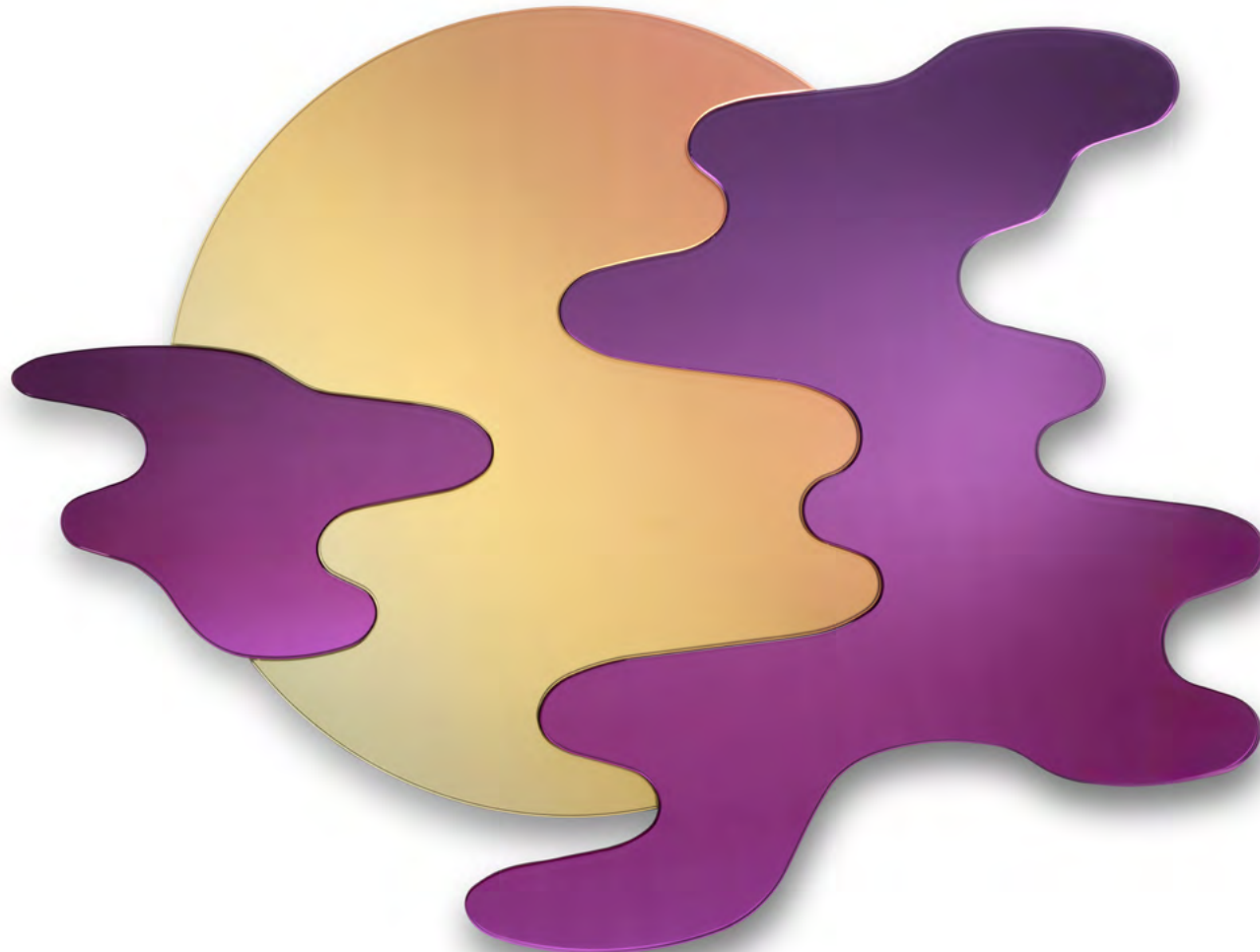
Onar



Philippe Cramer - *Onar 1* (2024)

Glass, mirror, acetate, wood panel | 150.5 x 100 x 3 cm | 59 1/4 x 39 3/8 x 1 1/8 in

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Philippe Cramer - *Onar 2* (2024)

Glass, mirror, acetate, wood panel | 140 x 105 x 3 cm | 55 1/8 x 41 3/8 x 1 1/8 in

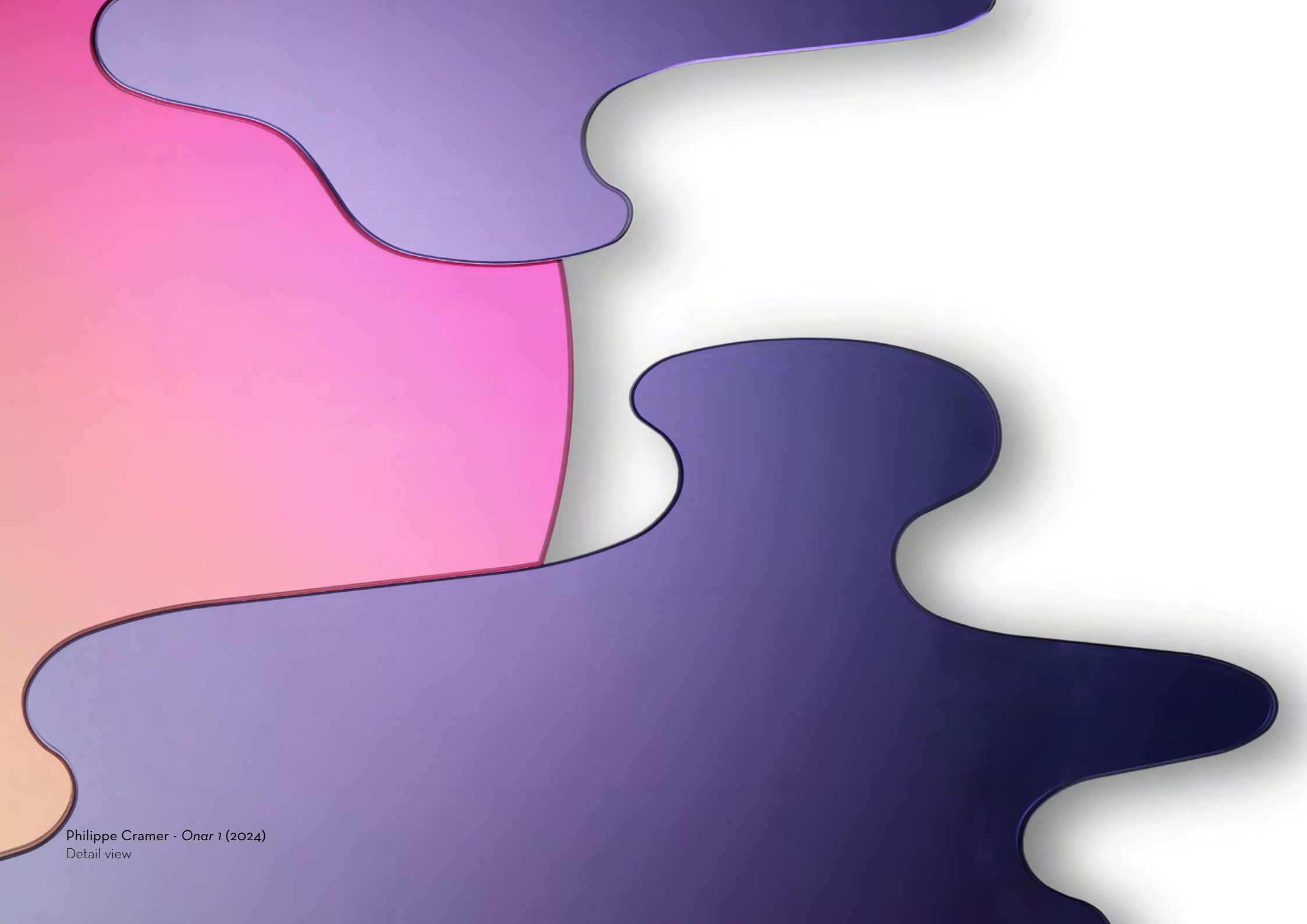
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Philippe Cramer - *Onar 3* (2024)

Glass, mirror, acetate, wood panel | 152 x 108 x 3 cm | 59 7/8 x 42 1/2 x 1 1/8 in

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Philippe Cramer - *Onar 1* (2024)
Detail view

Philippe Cramer – Onar

With the *Onar* series, Philippe Cramer explores one of the oldest questions in the history of art: the shifting boundary between reality and illusion. Neither painting, sculpture, nor mirror in the conventional sense, these works occupy an intermediate territory where perception becomes unstable and certainty gives way to wonder. They invite viewers to experience a space in which reality is doubled, transformed, and continually reinvented.

The title itself provides a first key to understanding the work. *Onar*, the Ancient Greek word for “dream,” immediately situates the series within a realm where appearances are constantly called into question. These works function less as images than as perceptual thresholds. They do not represent a world; they alter our way of seeing it. Reflection becomes mirage, vision becomes interpretation, and reality reveals itself to be far more complex than it first appears.

The origins of the project can be traced to a formative experience during a journey through the desert landscapes between Los Angeles and Las Vegas. Philippe Cramer became fascinated by mirages created by the reflection of sunlight on heat-soaked asphalt. These fleeting apparitions produced a doubling of the landscape, temporarily blurring the distinction between what was physically present and what was imagined. This experience of visual uncertainty became the conceptual foundation of *Onar*. More than a simple optical effect, the mirage reveals the fragility of our relationship to reality and reminds us that all perception is conditioned by physical, psychological, and cultural filters.

This reflection on perception belongs to a long historical lineage. For centuries, the mirror has occupied a singular position within the Western imagination. By turns a symbol of truth, self-knowledge, vanity, illusion, and transcendence, it has served as a privileged device through which artists interrogate the very nature of representation. From the convex mirror in Jan van Eyck’s *Arnolfini Portrait* to the complex reflections of Velázquez’s *Las Meninas*, mirrors have repeatedly challenged our relationship to image and reality.

Throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the mirror gradually became an autonomous artistic medium. Michelangelo Pistoletto transformed reflective surfaces into participatory spaces in which viewers become inseparable from the work itself. Anish Kapoor has used reflective forms to destabilize spatial perception and create experiences oscillating between materiality and immateriality. More recently, artists such as Olafur Eliasson and Jeppe Hein have explored the capacity of reflection to alter our relationship to movement, light, and environment.

Onar enters into dialogue with this lineage while occupying a distinctly personal position.

To create the series, Philippe Cramer appropriates a technology borrowed from the industrial production of laminated glass. Typically used for safety purposes, this process consists of inserting a transparent acetate membrane between multiple sheets of glass to prevent fragmentation in the event of breakage. The artist redirects this industrial technique toward a poetic objective. Before



Jeppe Hein - *Mobile Mobile* (2010)



Jeppe Hein - *Follow me* (2009)

assembly, he intervenes directly upon this translucent membrane, applying hand-painted chromatic gradients across its surface. Color does not simply cover the mirror; it inhabits its very structure.

The result is a hybrid object that escapes traditional categories. Neither painting, sculpture, nor mirror in the strict sense, *Onar* becomes a space in which image, color, light, transparency, and reflection coexist simultaneously. The mirror ceases to function as a neutral instrument of reproduction and becomes an active agent of transformation. The world it reflects remains recognizable, yet it appears filtered, tinted, and subtly displaced.

This notion of the filter is central to Philippe Cramer's practice. For many years, the artist has explored the mechanisms that shape and distort our perception of reality. The works in the *Onar* series do not seek to restore an objective image of the world; rather, they reveal that reality is always already mediated. Every gaze, every movement of the body, every variation of light generates a different experience of the work. Reflection becomes a metaphor for our relationship to the world itself: partial, subjective, and endlessly reinterpreted.

The organic silhouettes that characterize the series reinforce this sense of uncertainty. Resembling clouds, atmospheric halos, celestial bodies, or luminous apparitions, they remain deliberately ambiguous. Throughout history, clouds have occupied a privileged place within the human imagination. Leonardo da Vinci famously recommended observing cloud formations as a means of discovering hidden images capable of stimulating creativity. Later, Romantic artists would regard them as manifestations of the sublime.

In Philippe Cramer's work, these floating forms function less as representations than as spaces of mental projection. Suspended between appearance and disappearance, presence and absence, they open a field in which viewers are invited to construct their own narratives.

This dimension also recalls one of humanity's oldest symbolic systems: the sacralization of the sky.

Long before the emergence of organized religions, the sun, moon, and planets were understood as sacred forces governing earthly existence. Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Greek, and Mesoamerican cosmologies placed celestial bodies at the center of their understanding of the universe. The sun in particular embodied both a physical and spiritual force—a source of light, life, and cosmic order.

The luminous gradients that define *Onar* often evoke such celestial phenomena. Certain works resemble fragments of eclipses, solar disks, or atmospheric halos suspended in space. The reflected light refers not only to the mechanics of vision but also to the symbolic role light has played throughout human history as a metaphor for revelation, knowledge, and transcendence.

The Californian origins of the series also reveal themselves through its formal and chromatic vocabulary. The colors often appear borrowed from desert skies and the saturated light of the American West Coast. This lineage naturally situates *Onar* within the legacy of the Light and Space movement that emerged in Los Angeles during the 1960s around artists such as Larry Bell, Robert



Olafur Eliasson - *Mirror my calmness Buddha in me* (2021)

Irwin, Craig Kauffman, and James Turrell.

Like these artists, Philippe Cramer is interested less in the object itself than in the perceptual phenomena it generates. Yet whereas the historical figures of Light and Space often pursued a dematerialization of the artwork in favor of pure sensory experience, *Onar* retains a strong symbolic presence. The mirror remains an object charged with history, mythology, and cultural memory.

The viewer consequently occupies a central position within the work. Unlike a painting or sculpture that can be observed from a distance, *Onar* unfolds fully only through the presence of the person who encounters it. Every movement alters the reflection. Every shift in ambient light transforms the work. It remains in a state of perpetual reconfiguration, suspended between object and experience.

Yet Philippe Cramer seeks more than interaction alone. Above all, he invites a form of contemplation rooted in uncertainty. The viewer encounters not simply their own reflection but a transformed version of it. The work creates a space in which reality is neither affirmed nor denied, but suspended.

This suspension constitutes the true subject of the series.

The mirrors become contemporary instruments of reverie. They evoke ancient divination practices associated with reflective surfaces while remaining firmly grounded within the language of contemporary art. Throughout history, mirrors have frequently been associated with prophecy, magic, and access to invisible worlds. Philippe Cramer reactivates this symbolic heritage without ever resorting to mysticism. Instead, he explores the deeply human desire to glimpse what lies beyond the immediately visible.

At a time when our relationship to the world is increasingly mediated by screens, streams of images, and digital reflections of ourselves, *Onar* offers a singular alternative. These works do not produce information; they produce ambiguity. They do not clarify reality; they complicate it. They remind us that all perception is an act of interpretation and that wonder often begins where certainty ends.

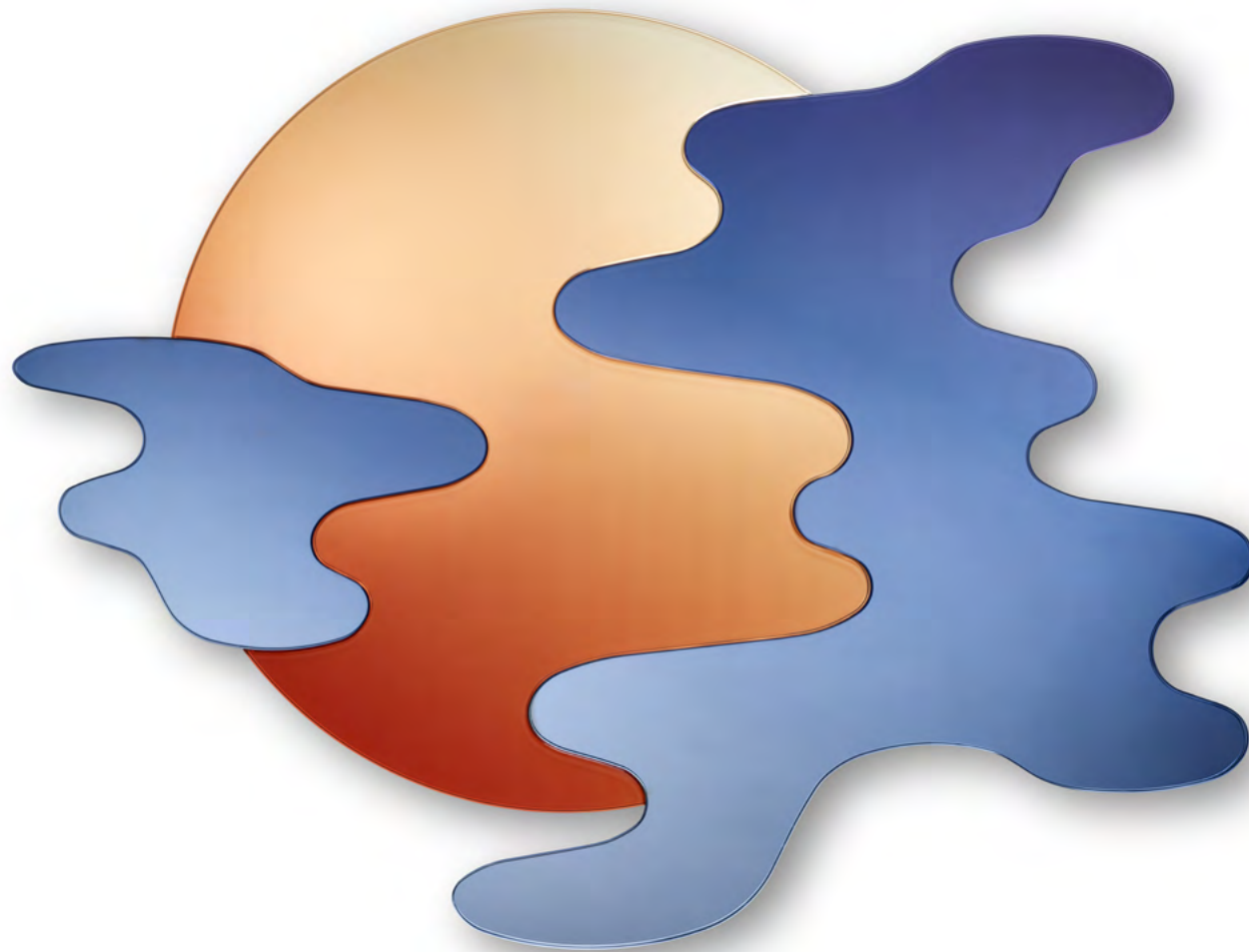
Through *Onar*, Philippe Cramer transforms the mirror from an instrument of recognition into a vehicle for imagination. Between dream and reality, reflection and apparition, technology and poetry, the series proposes a contemporary meditation on the very nature of perception and on the many filters through which we experience the world.



Michelangelo Pistoletto - *Judgement Time* exhibition view Galleria Continua (2023)



Philippe Cramer - *Onar 2* (2024)
Detail view



Philippe Cramer - *Onar 4* (2024)

Glass, mirror, acetate, wood panel | 140 x 105 x 3 cm | 55 1/8 x 41 3/8 x 1 1/8 in

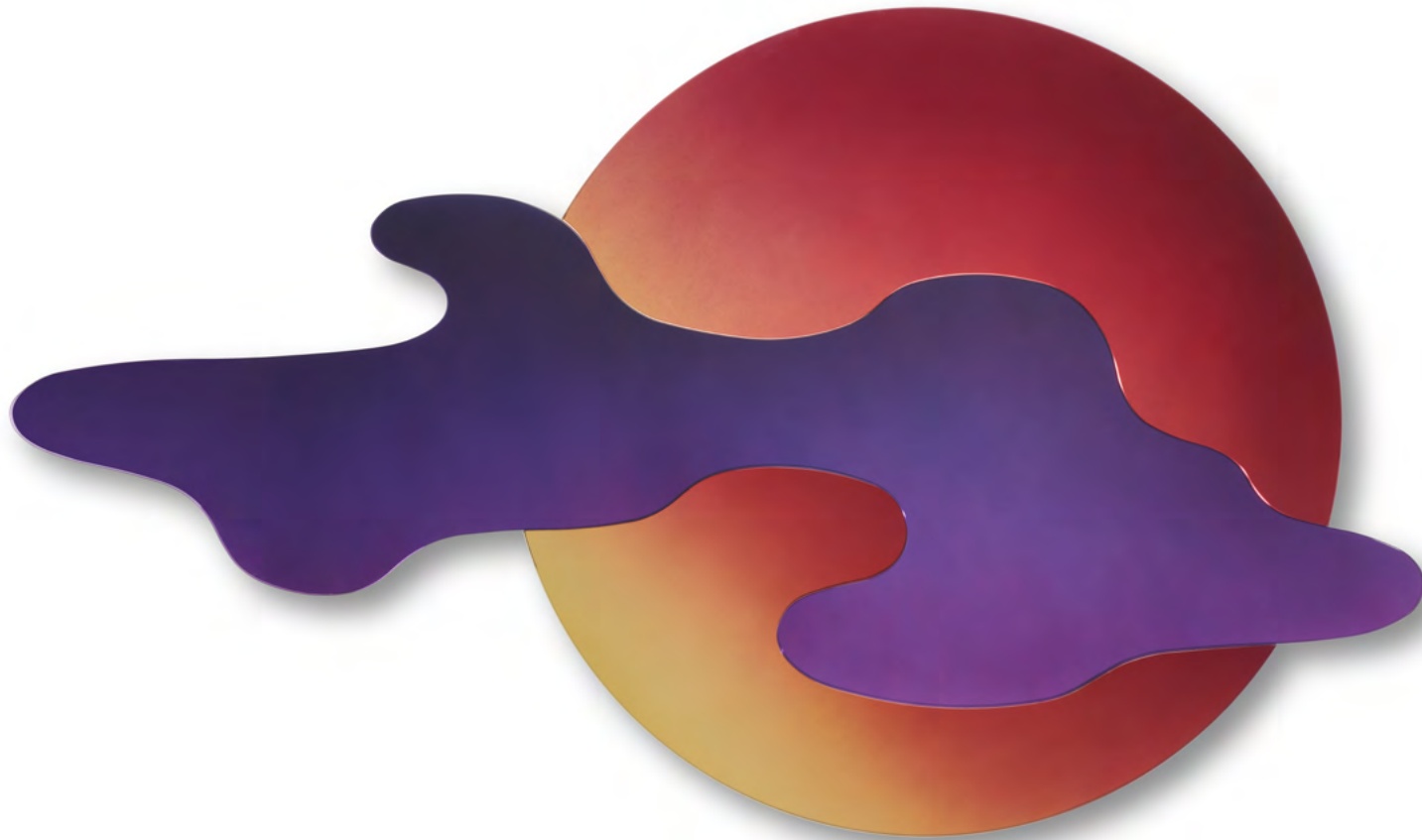
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Philippe Cramer - *Onar 5* (2024)

Glass, hand enameled mirror, acetate, wood | 140 x 105 x 3 cm | 55 1/8 x 41 3/8 x 1 1/8 in

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Philippe Cramer - *Onar 6* (2025)

Glass, hand enameled mirror, acetate, wood | 156 x 89 x 3 cm | 61 3/8 x 35 x 1 1/8 in

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Philippe Cramer

Onar 1

2024

Glass, mirror, acetate, wood panel

Edition of 3

150,5 x 100 x 3 cm | 59 1/4 x 39 3/8 x 1 1/8 in

Philippe Cramer

Onar 2

2024

Glass, mirror, acetate, wood panel

Edition of 3

140 x 105 x 3 cm | 55 1/8 x 41 3/8 x 1 1/8 in

Philippe Cramer

Onar 3

2024

Glass, mirror, acetate, wood panel

Edition of 3

152 x 108 x 3 cm | 59 7/8 x 42 1/2 x 1 1/8 in

Philippe Cramer

Onar 4

2024

Glass, mirror, acetate, wood panel

Edition of 2

140 x 105 x 3 cm | 55 1/8 x 41 3/8 x 1 1/8 in

Philippe Cramer

Onar 5

2024

Glass, hand enameled mirror, acetate, wood

Edition of 3

140 x 105 x 3 cm | 55 1/8 x 41 3/8 x 1 1/8 in

Philippe Cramer

Onar 6

2025

Glass, hand enameled mirror, acetate, wood

Edition of 3

156 x 89 x 3 cm | 61 3/8 x 35 x 1 1/8 in

Philippe Cramer - Onar 3 (2024)

Detail view



Philippe Cramer - *Onar 1, 2 & 3* (2024)
Here shown at ArtGenève 2024



Philippe Cramer - *Onar 5 & 6* (2024 - 2025)

Here shown at ArtGenève 2025, together with the *Stèle Stellaire* serie, *Aeternus Eternus Totemic I* and *Aeternus Eternus II*



Philippe Cramer - *Onar 6* (2026)

Here shown at Philippe Cramer *Selected Works*, Verbier, 2025



Philippe Cramer - *Onar 4* (2024)

Glass, mirror, acetate, wood panel | 140 x 105 x 3 cm | 55 1/8 x 41 3/8 x 1 1/8 in



Philippe Cramer - *Onar 5* (2024)

Here shown at ArtGenève 2026, together with the *Dual Inheritance* serie



Philippe Cramer - *Onar 6* (2025)

Glass, hand enameled mirror, acetate, wood | 156 x 89 x 3 cm | 61 3/8 x 35 x 1 1/8 in



Philippe Cramer - *Onar 1* (2024)

Glass, mirror, acetate, wood panel | 150.5 x 100 x 3 cm | 59 1/4 x 39 3/8 x 1 1/8 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.



Photo credit © Indexprz

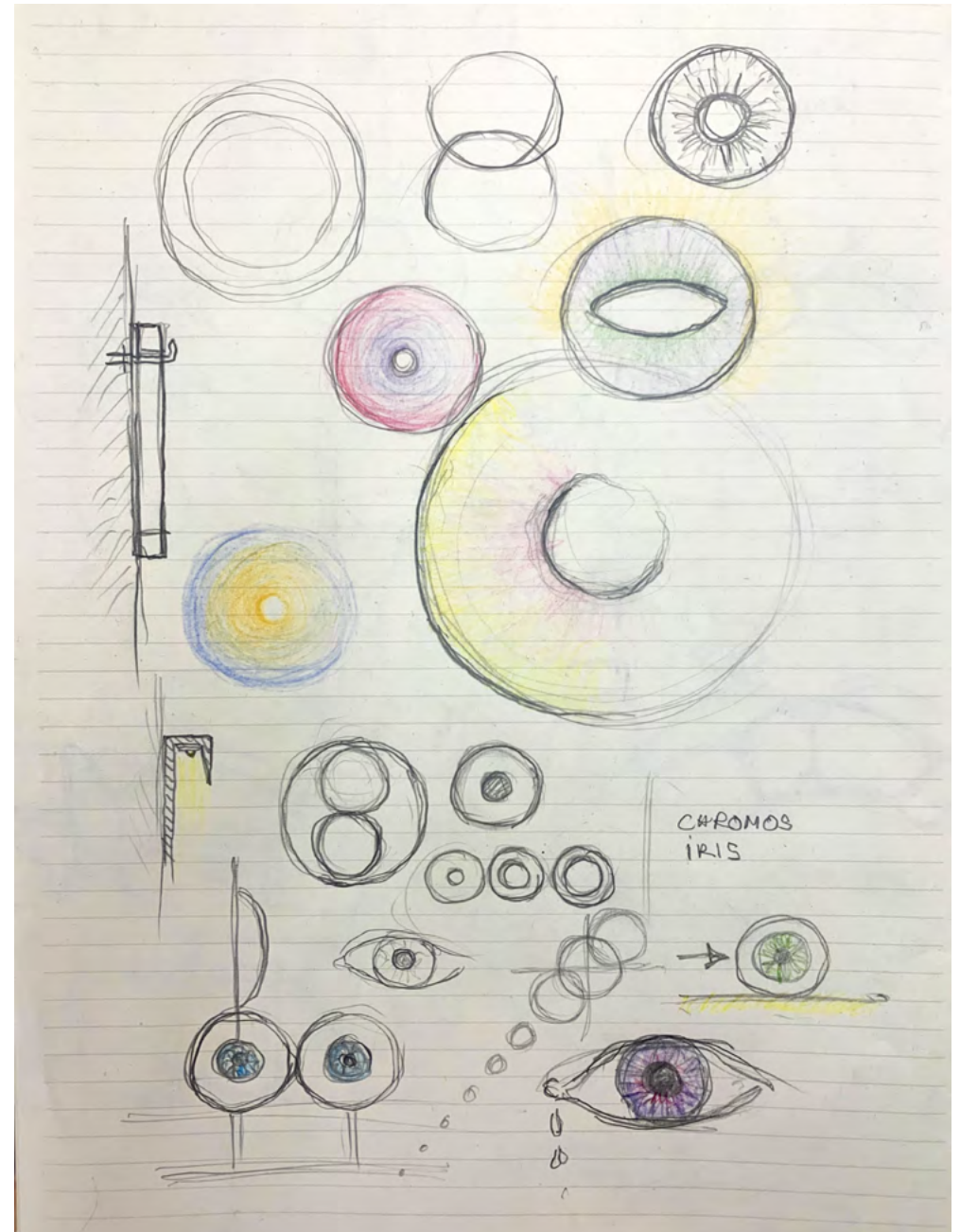
Artistic Practice

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.

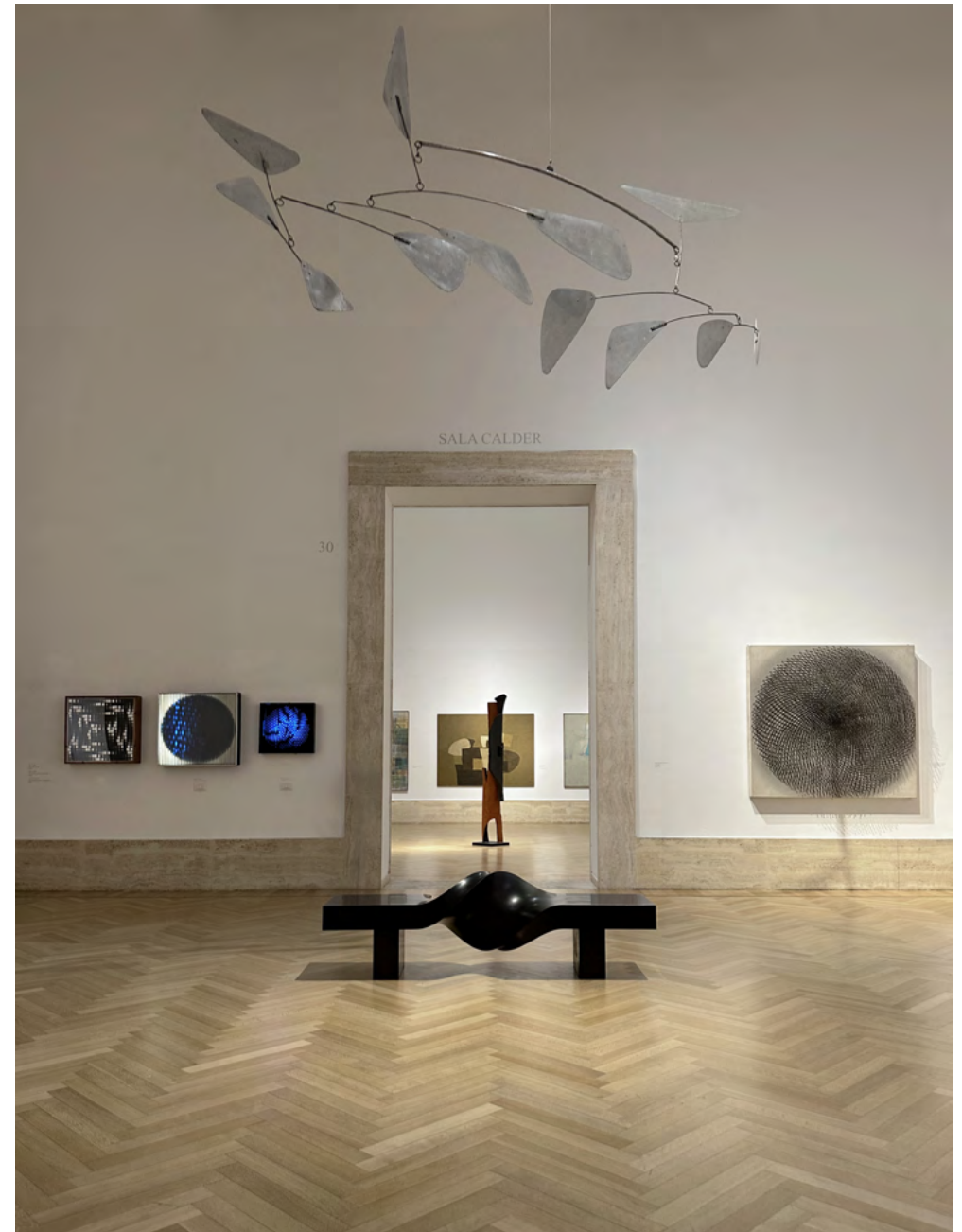
Believing in the importance of engagement with the public, Philippe Cramer keeps his studio open to visitors, inviting them to discover and appreciate his work up close. The studio is thus a space where he takes the time to discuss with visitors who stop by, inscribing his practice in a form of transmission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



Philippe Cramer - *Onar 6* (2026)

Here shown during Philippe Cramer's exhibition *Selected Works*, together with *Apokalupsis I*, Verbier, 2025

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

