



ATTACHMENTS
AND SEPARATION

BY UWE PFAFF

Being an In-Between Being

by Andrew Lamprecht

Of course I'll hurt you. Of course you'll hurt me. Of course we will hurt each other. But this is the very condition of existence.

To become spring, means accepting the risk of winter. To become presence, means accepting the risk of absence.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *Manon, Ballerina*

Uwe Pfaff has become well known for his sometimes irreverent, always materially engaging and usually very witty sculptures since the mid-1970s. German by birth, but an international citizen by inclination and a South African through long residence in this country, he has charted a course that takes highly stylised representations of the human form (as well as other subject matter) and layers a personal symbolic language over and into these forms to speak of a sense of dislocation as well as a place of being: a 'situatedness', one could say.

An endless experimenter and pusher of boundaries, over the years Pfaff has used wood, clay, and what he is now primarily known for, metal, amongst other materials and surfaces to construct a language that always has the human at its very heart. Even the limitations of three dimensions has not deterred him and at one memorable event an installation of his sculptures became the instruments upon which a group of local musicians and performers interacted, played upon and from which they created sonic soundscapes.

In this exhibition Uwe Pfaff has clearly placed himself – the artist – with his hopes and fears, dreams and imaginings, wakefulness and sweet slumbers, to the fore. In some ways death seems to be implied in many of the works: the chalk outline figure of a man that has fallen (or jumped or been pushed) from a tall building and trying to escape his marked line or a spirit leaving the body... but Pfaff is never morbid. It is as if he is talking of transitions between states or of a becoming as much as an unbecoming. His sculptures have a temporal implication as if we are seeing slices of time and space or frames in a celluloid movie strip. Furthermore I would offer that he is not didactic or telling us what is going to happen inasmuch as he is suggesting a possible route or path that may be taken but may also be avoided or deferred. As the artist himself puts it 'The truth is inbetween.'



This is indicated in a literal way in his work through the use of negative space. Several of the works on display – for example *Departing* and *Apple Bite* – are made from two pieces of metal that reside together on a plinth and resolve to indicate something that while it is not actually there exists and stands before us. It is as if he is saying we are temporarily here or partially here but can also in some way (or in some space) be elsewhere at the same time.

Sleep and sleeplessness is another theme that runs through *Attachments* and *Separation*. The witty portrayal of insomnia we see in the *I Can't Sleep* series – the figure seemingly contorting within and through space – or as in *It's Not Me It's You* as stiff as a board and standing on his head alludes to the fact that scientists are now researching and which we have all intuitively known for the longest time, namely that there is not a demarcatable boundary between one state and the other but rather shades and degrees between the two.

I think Uwe Pfaff is saying we are all potentially able to transcend our current existence and be mutable personas. We may literally be in two spaces (mental or spiritual) at once, just as some of his sculptures appear to be walking through walls in this exhibition. All this is presented with a sort of sly chuckle from the artist, as if he is sharing the joke with us and telling us to take things – serious things – just a bit less seriously, after all. He encourages us to touch his works – their tactility being a constant and engage with them, walk around them and commune with his characters and figures and symbols. We can let our imagination pass through his works, with their open spaces and open meanings and find a place, like he does in-between.

His work sometimes is shiny and polished and sometimes patinated with rust. After all we are all dying – decomposing – from the moment we emerge from the womb. Taken together the exhibition seems to be telling us a story about life, death and everything in-between and before and after. We may pause for a moment in front of one work or the other, or take them in through a grand sweep and thus see forms talking to each other. Even the spaces between the plinths have been thus activated with potential meaning and energy. Rarely does an artist give us so much space to play around in – space to live and be free and be ourselves or, if we wish, someone else entirely.

Andrew Lamprecht is an academic, curator and critic who is based in Cape Town, South Africa (but often travels physically or otherwise to other places too).

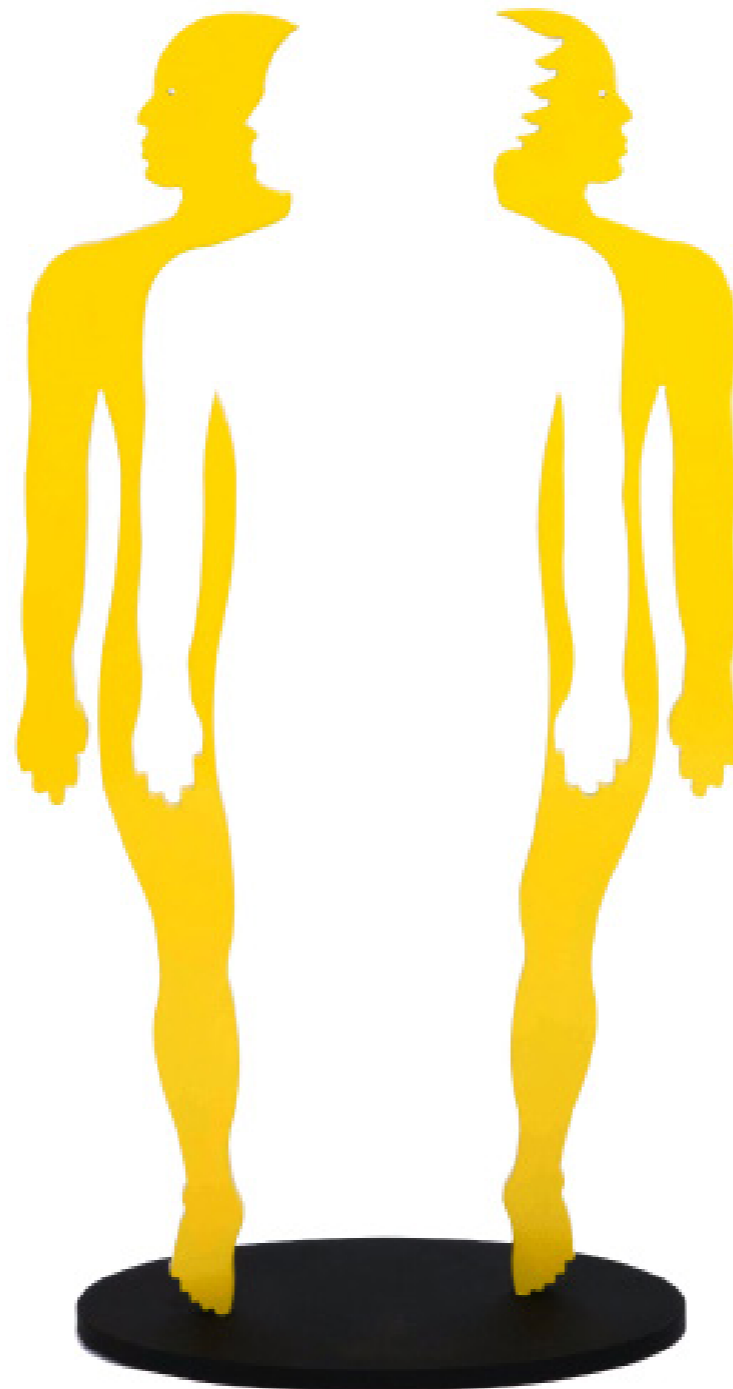
Three fish walkers
2016, Mixed medium
36 x 18 x 4.5 cm (x3), Edition 1 of 1

R 9 500.00



Apart
2016, Painted steel
106 x 59.5 x 25 cm, Edition 1 of 3

R 22 800.00



Apple bite
2016, Rusted steel
41.5 x 35.5 x 8 cm, Edition 1 of 3

R 6 100.00



Nile man
2016, Rusted steel
41 x 26.5 x 6.5 cm, Edition 2 of 5

R 5 400.00



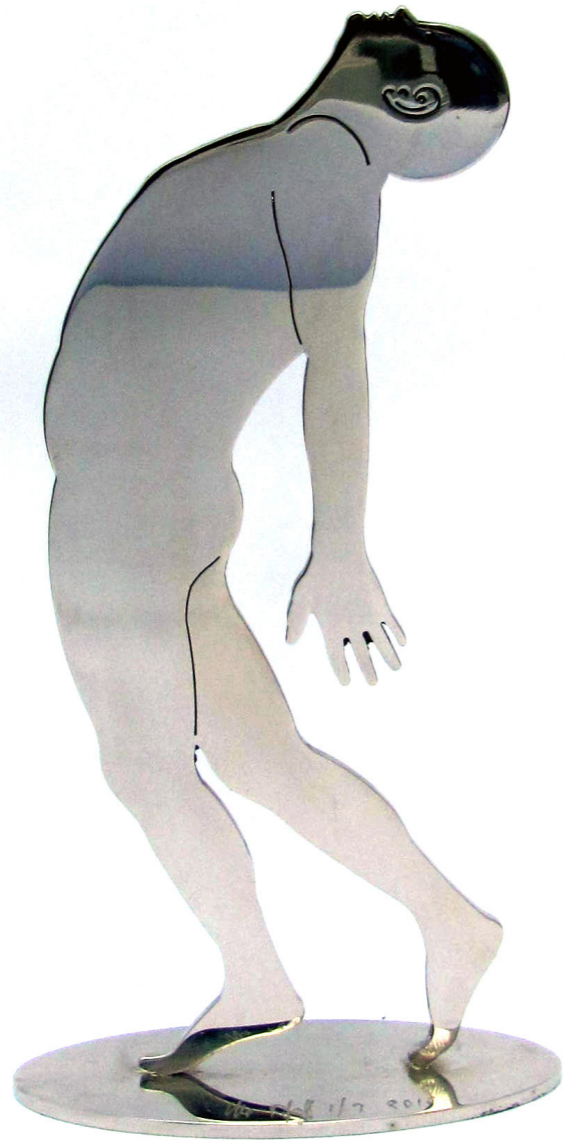
Eve baby small
2016, Plated steel
33 x 13 x 4 cm, Edition 1 of 3

R 3 050.00



Free at last
2016, Stainless steel
26.7 x 14 x 5 cm, Edition 1 of 7

R 3 050.00



Young girl
2016, Stainless steel
32.5 x 12 x 4.5 cm, Edition 1 of 12

R 3 050.00



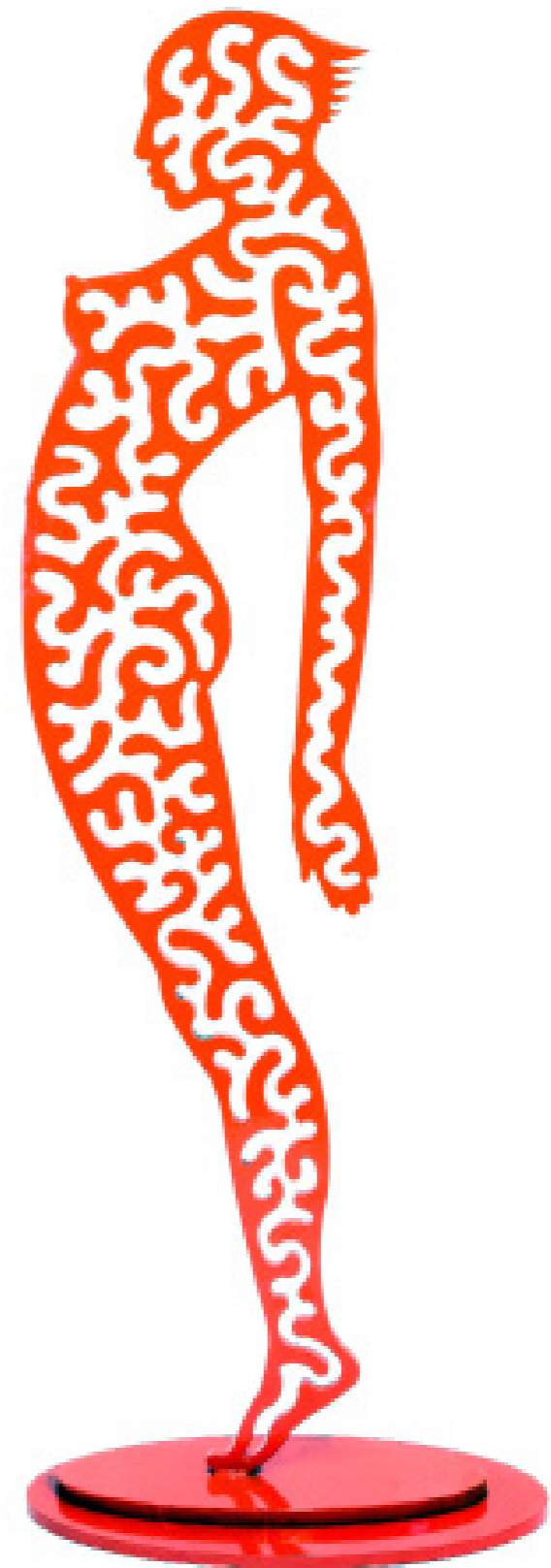
Separation / attachment
2016, Stainless steel and rusted steel
28.5 x 13 x 6.5 cm, Edition 1 of 1

R 5 800.00



Eve baby red
2016, Painted steel
168 x 60 x 31 cm, Edition 2 of 5

R 28 500.00



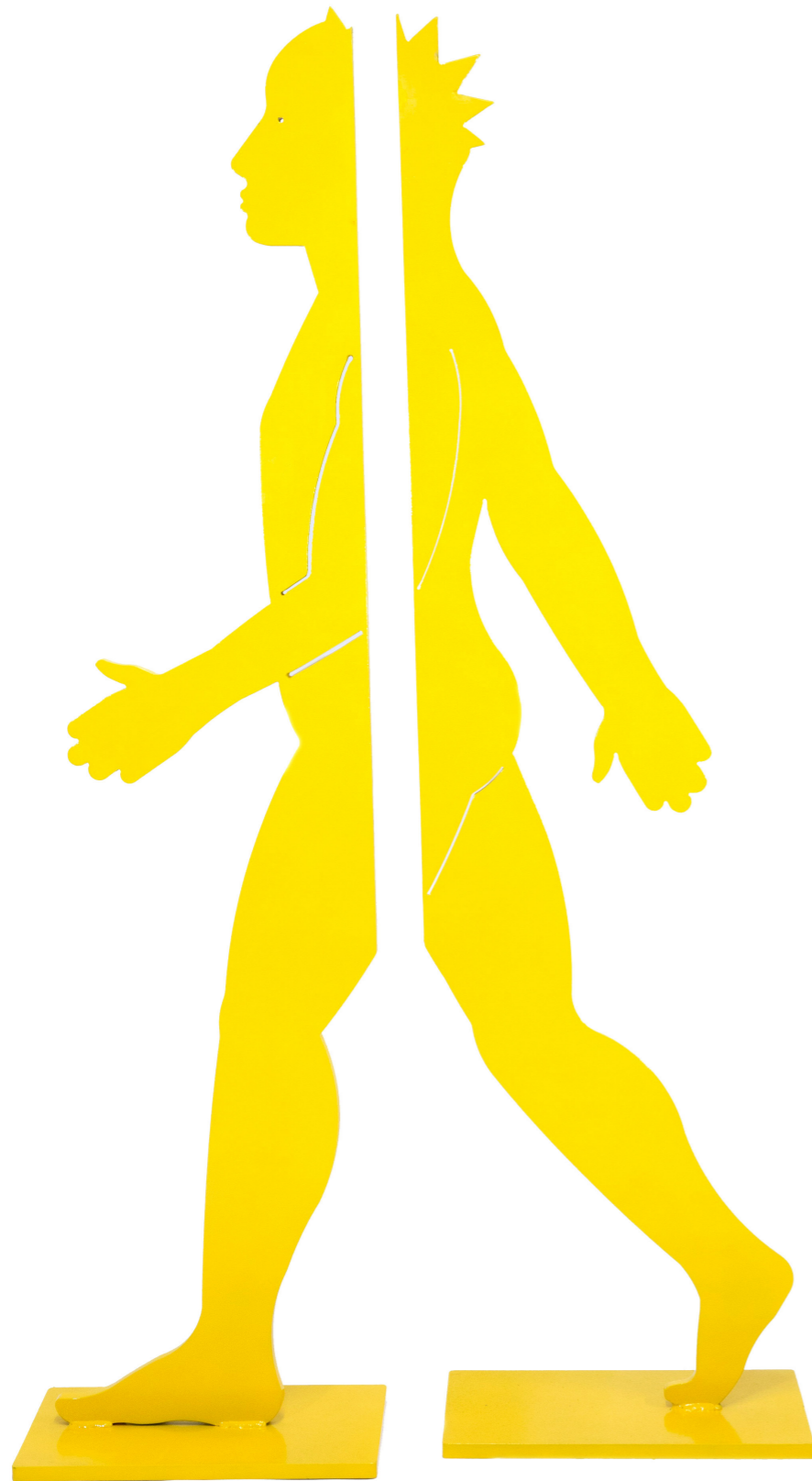
Falling back
2016, Rusted steel
180 x 100 x 25 cm, Edition 1 of 5

R 30 000.00



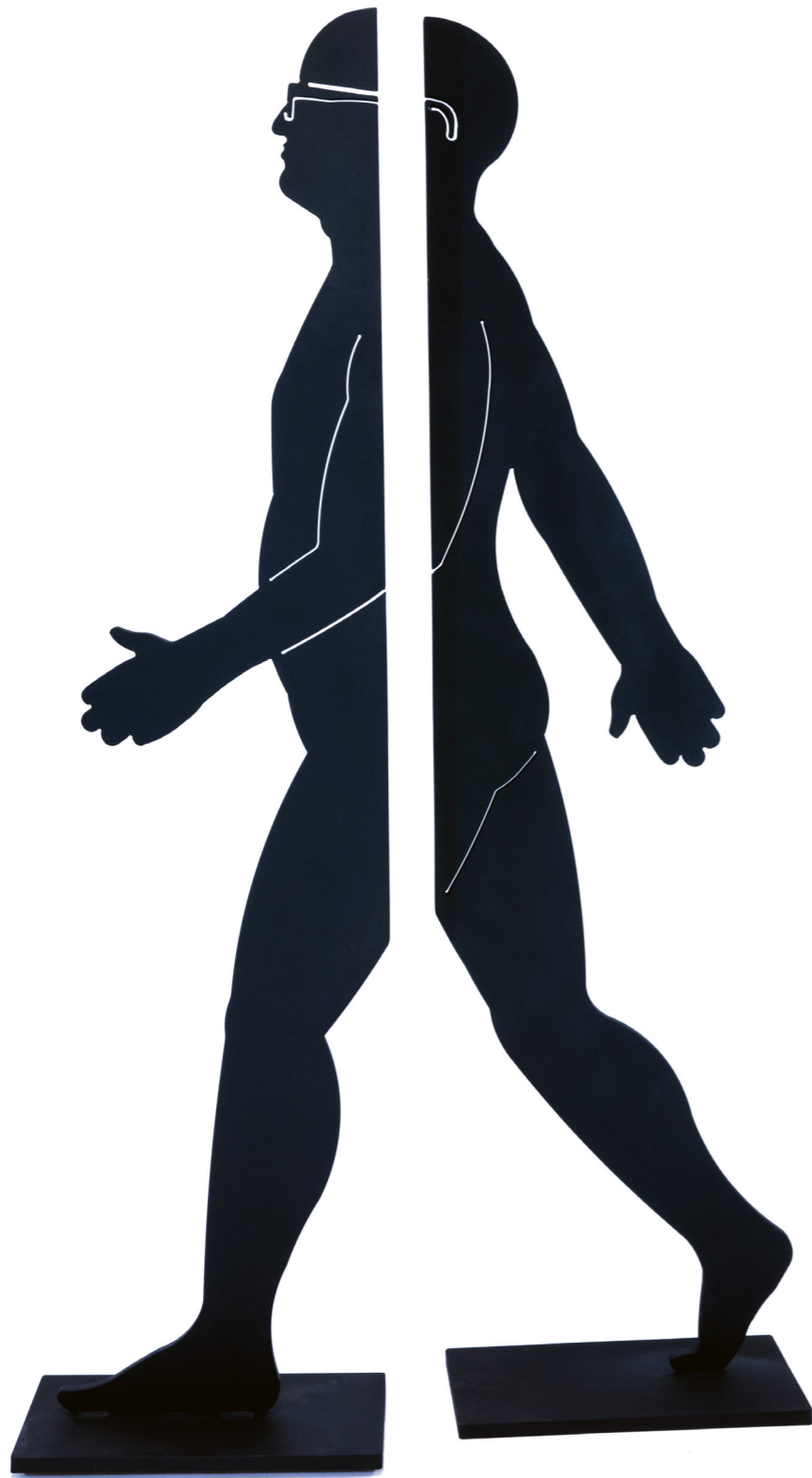
From one life to another
2016, Painted steel
182.5 x 46 x 25 cm, Edition 1 of 5

R 30 400.00



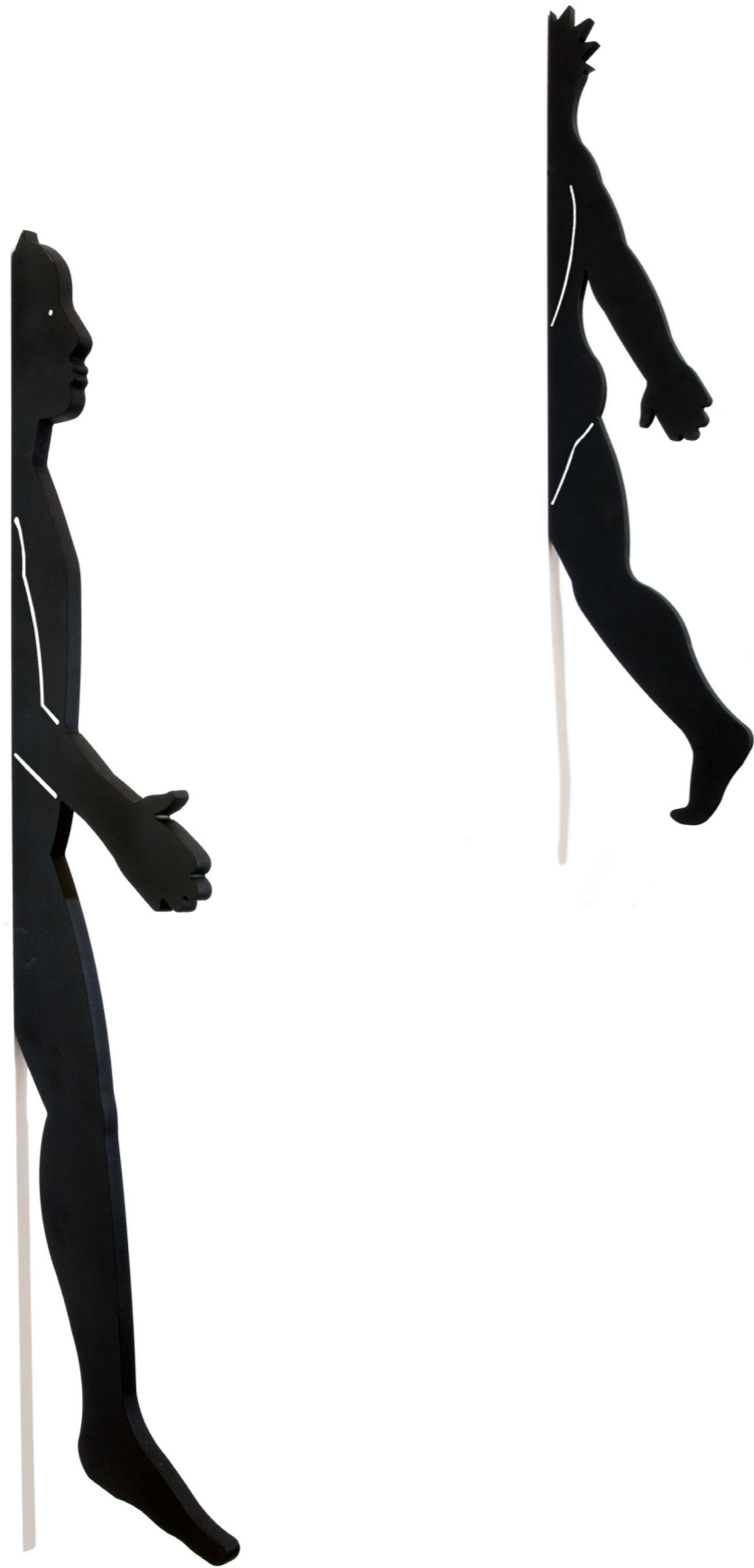
Sometimes I feel separated
2016, Painted steel
182 x 47.5 x 25 cm, Edition 1 of 5

R 30 400.00



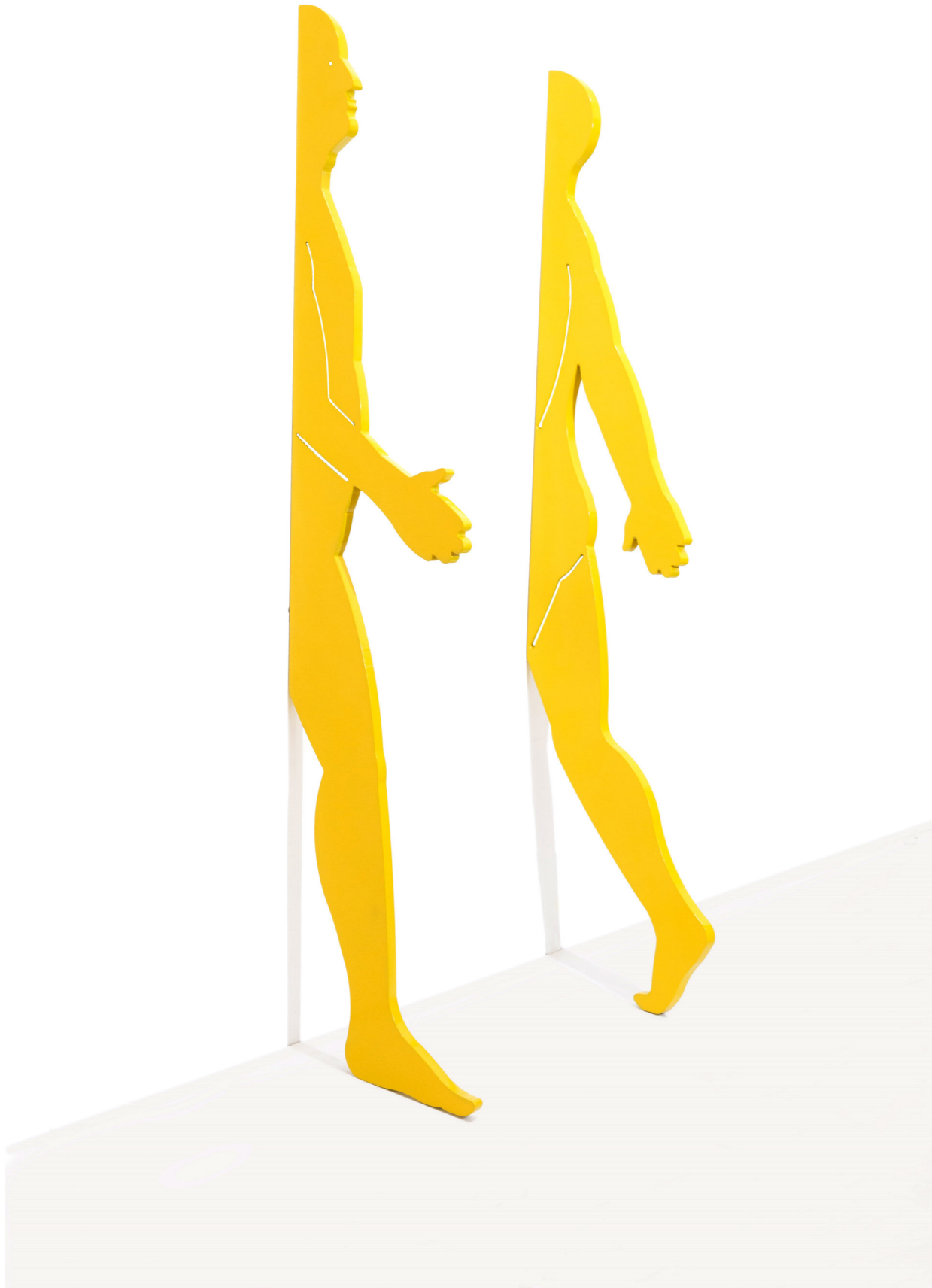
Half lifes black set
2016, Painted steel
120 x 31 x 1.5 cm, Edition 1 of 7

R 20 900.00



Half lifes yellow set
2016, Painted steel
120 x 31 x 1.5 cm, Edition 1 of 7

R 20 900.00



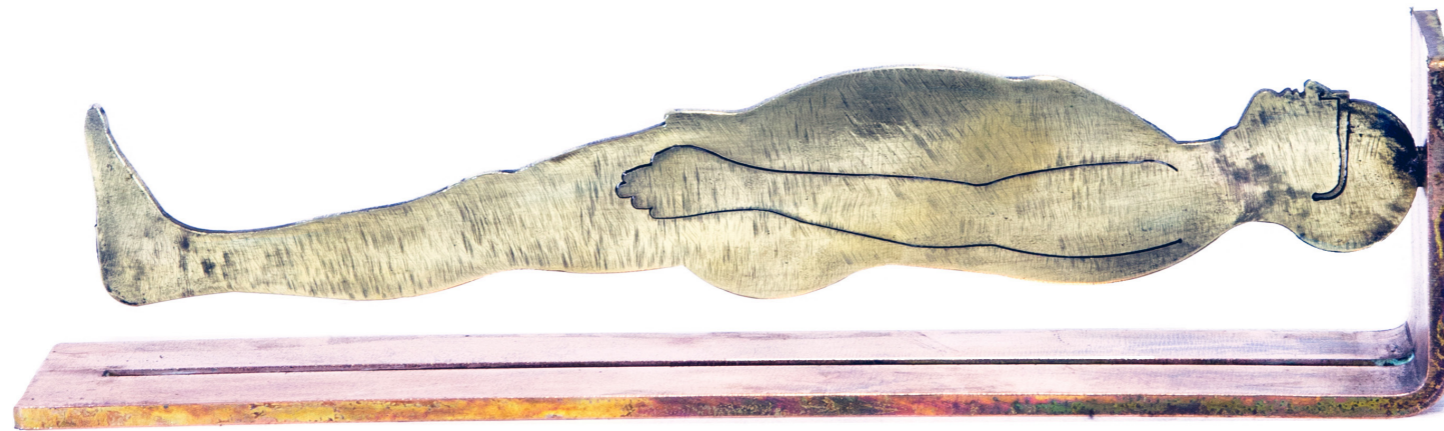
I am the light blue sea B
2016, Painted steel
181 x 42.5 x 28.5 cm, Edition 2 of 5

R 30 000.00



I can't sleep A
2016, Plated steel
7 x 27 x 4.3 cm, Edition 1 of 1

R 3 050.00



I can't sleep A
2016, Plated steel
7 x 27 x 4.3 cm, Edition 1 of 1

R 3 050.00

That's how the light gets in
2016, Painted steel
55.5 x 31 x 12 cm, Edition 1 of 1

R 7 980.00



Good moaning
2016, Plated steel
13.5 x 26.5 x 4.5 cm, Edition 1 of 1

R 3 050.00



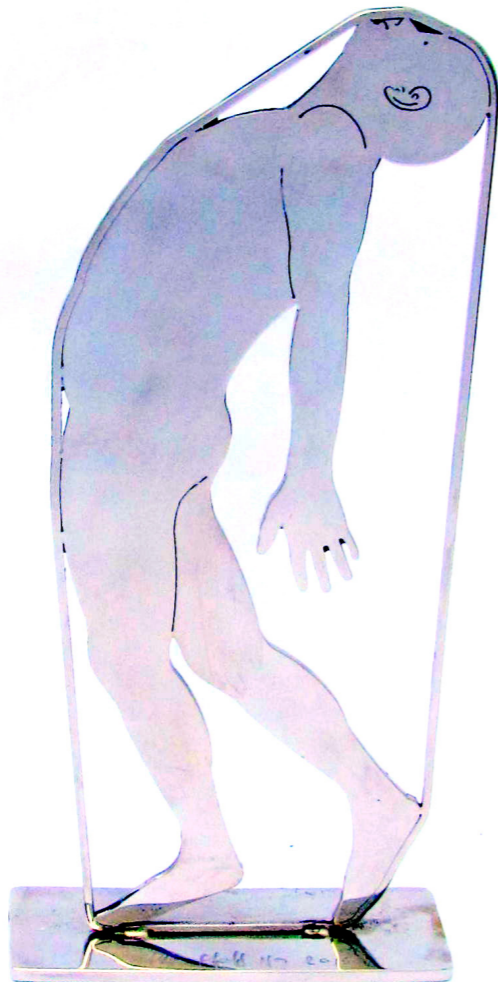
I am not ready yet
2016, Plated steel
57 x 31.5 x 7 cm, Edition 1 of 5

R 7 980.00



Can't sleep standing up
2016, Stainless steel
27 x 12.4 x 4.5 cm, Edition 1 of 5

R 3 050.00



I speak from my heart
2016, Plated steel
13 x 17.5 x 3.5 cm, Edition 1 of 1

R 4 950.00



It's not you it's me
2016, Painted steel
30 x 18 x 4.5 cm, Edition 3 of 7

R 4 950.00



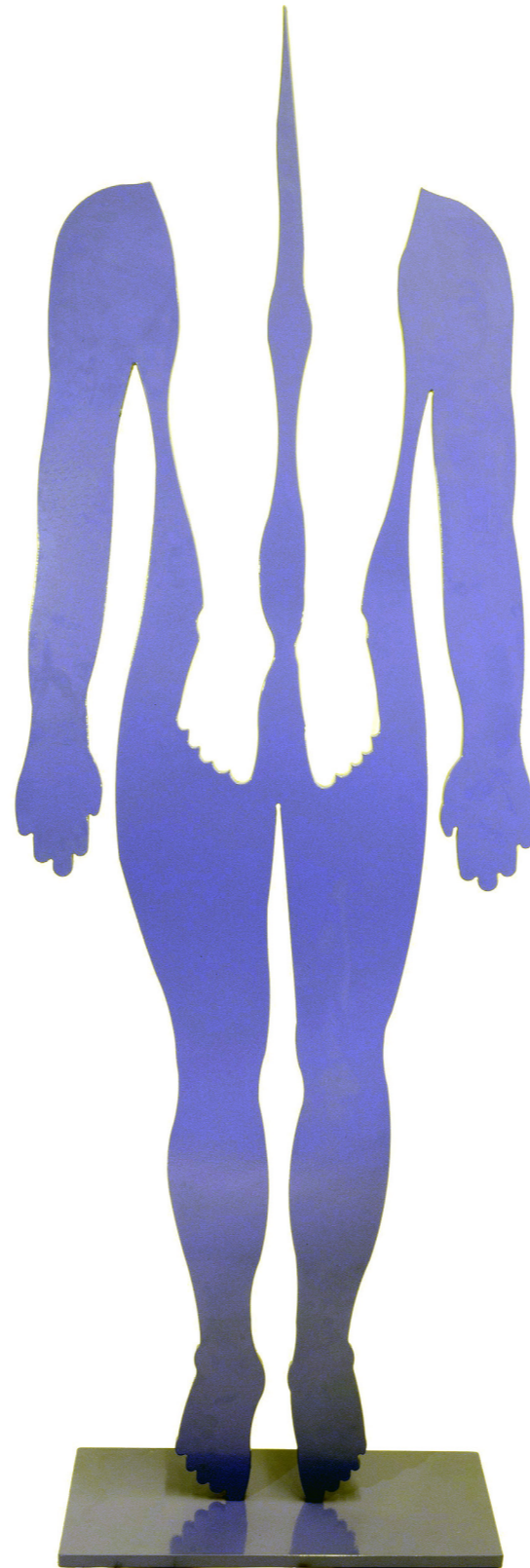
It's not me it's you
2016, Painted steel
30 x 18 x 4.5 cm, Edition 3 of 7

R 4 950.00



Later!
2016, Painted steel
178 x 61 x 39 cm, Edition 1 of 3

R 28 500.00



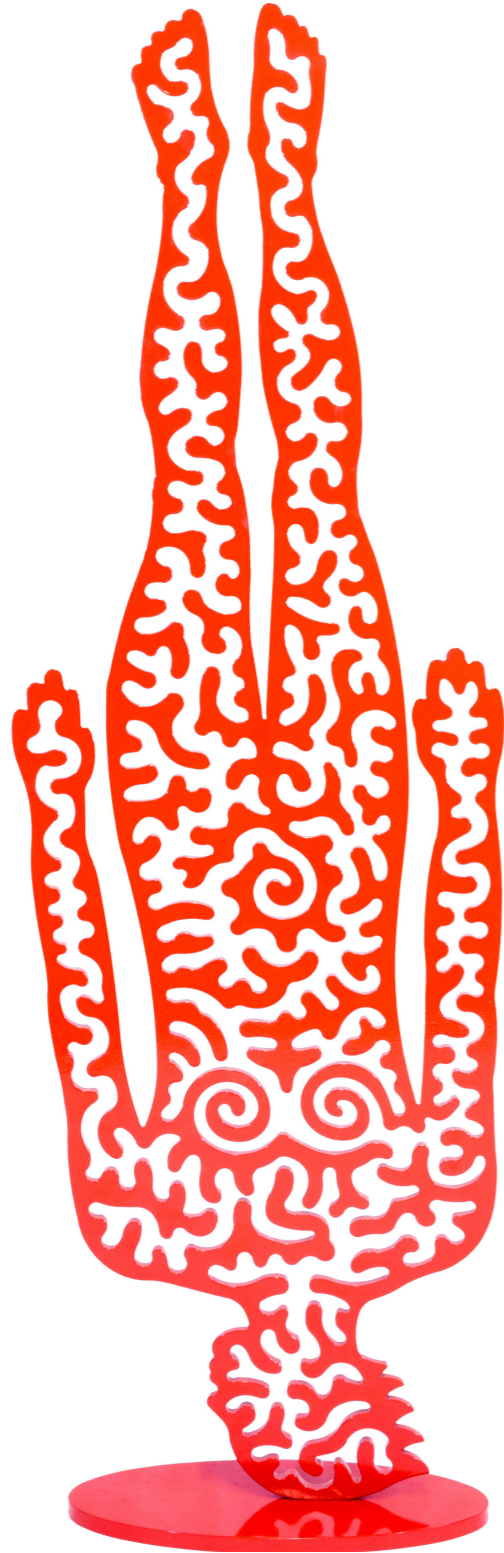
Three wise men group
2016, Rusted steel
180 x 72 x 25 cm (x3), Edition 1 of 1

R 95 000.00



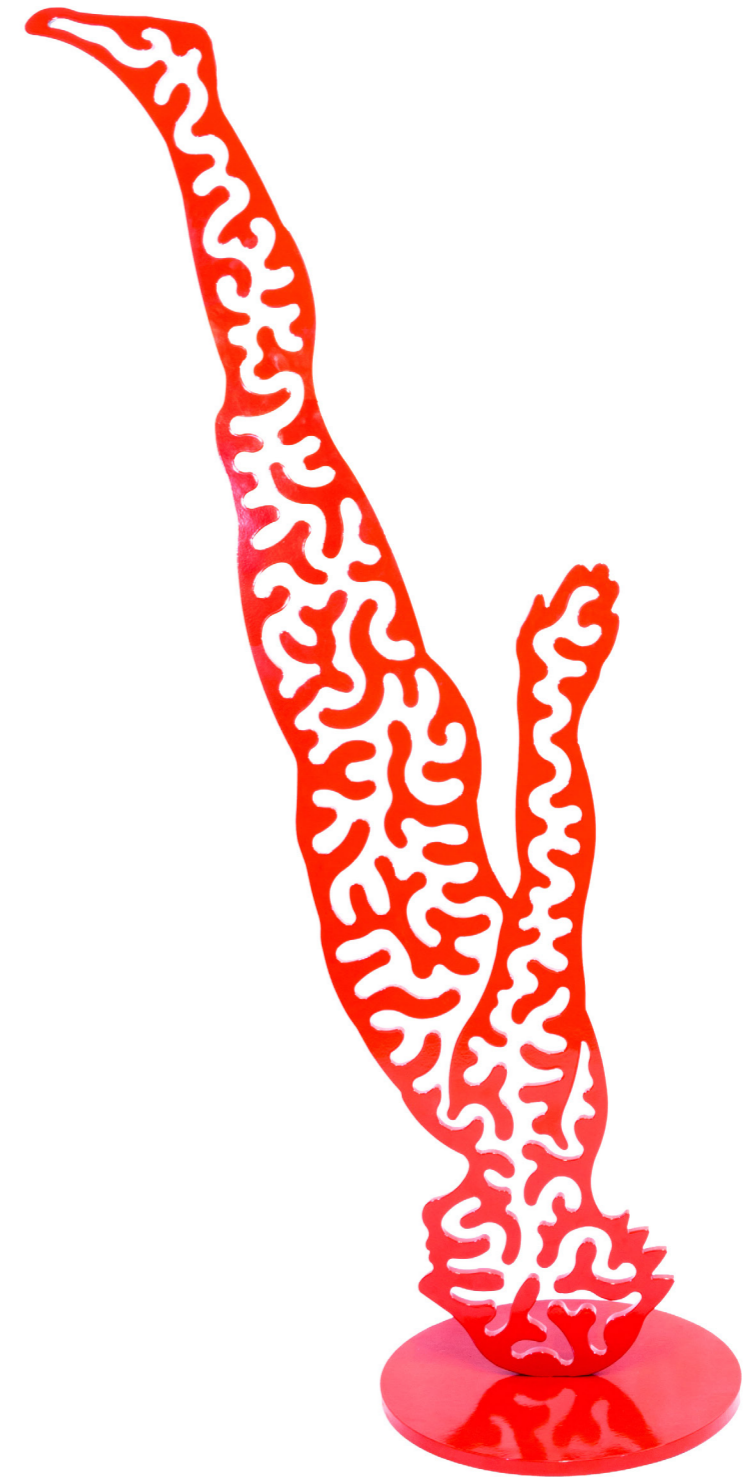
Return of the young women red
2016, Painted steel
171 x 55 x 20.5 cm, Edition 1 of 5

R 28 500.00



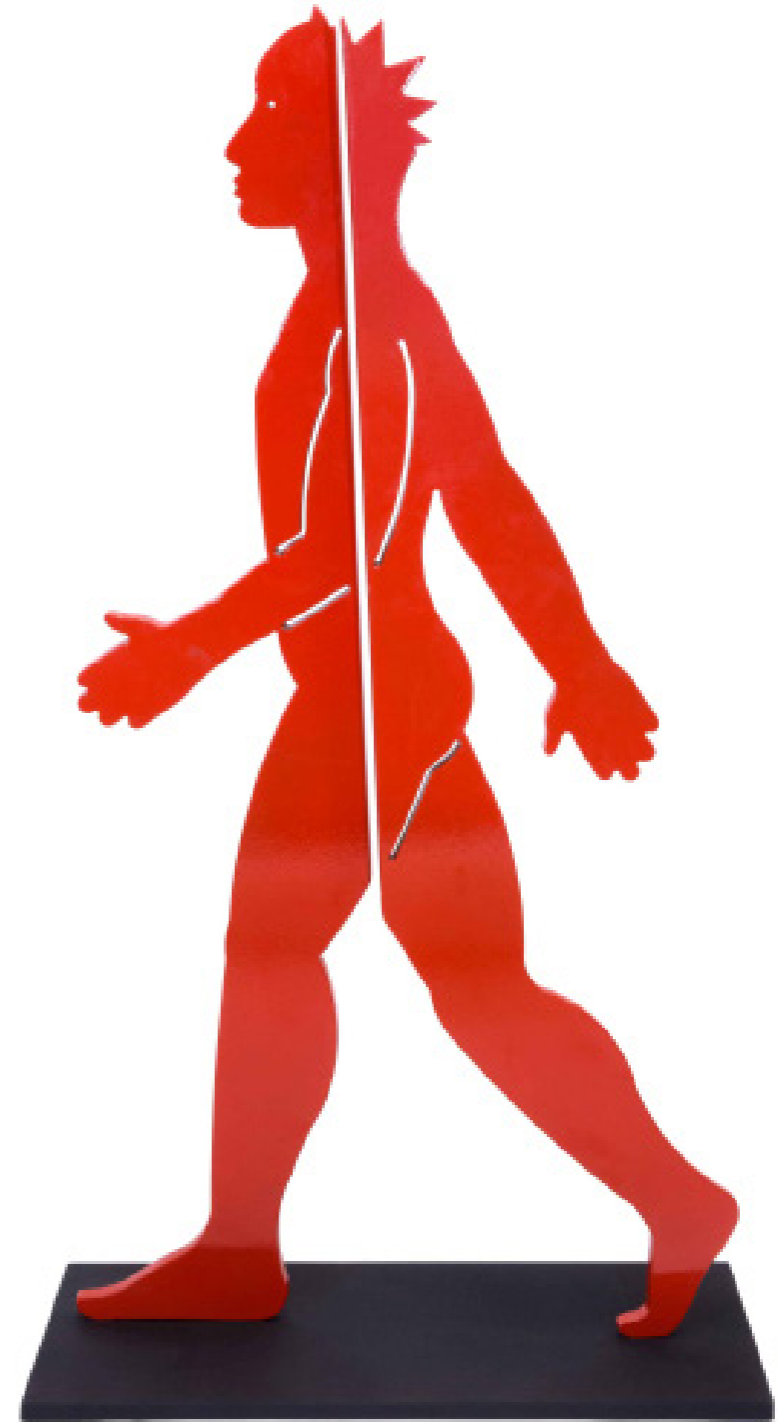
On target red
2016, Painted steel
182.5 x 77 x 46.5, Edition 1 of 3

R 30 000.00



Separated at birth red
2016, Painted steel
122.5 x 65.5 x 29 cm, Edition 1 of 3

R 21 800.00



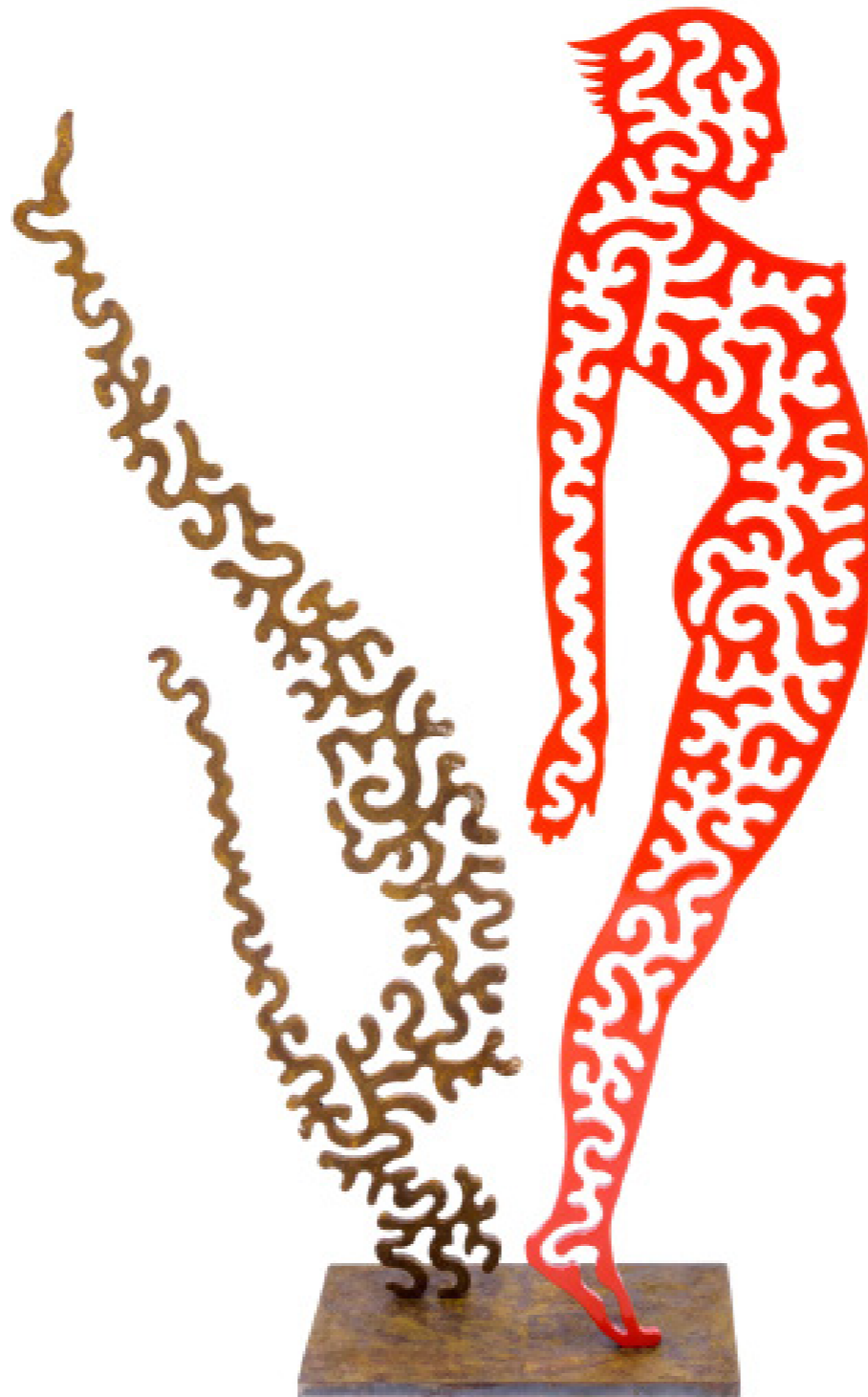
Separation blues
2016, Painted steel
165 x 46 x 25 cm (x2), Edition 1 of 5

R 28 500.00



Surprise development
2016, Mixed medium
122.5 x 71 x 25 cm, Edition 1 of 3

R 22 800.00



Soft landing
2016, Plated steel
36 x 7 x 5.5 cm, Edition 1 of 3

R 3 050.00



Falling behind
2016, Plated steel
33 x 17.5 x 5 cm, Edition 1 of 3

R 3 050.00



Phantom pain A
2016, Painted steel
19.5 x 16.5 x 4.5 cm, Edition 1 of 7

R 3 500.00



Phantom pain B
2016, Painted steel
19.5 x 23 x 4.5 cm, Edition 1 of 7

R 3 500.00



Young shadow
2016, Plated steel
36.5 x 9.5 x 4 cm, Edition 1 of 7

R 2 300.00



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