

Family – Nathan

2023
painted stainless steel
310 x 280 x 292 cm

The sculpture was inspired by an old Native American adage, which says: “Love the Earth. For we do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.” Man belongs to the earth, but not conversely. The piece enacts a dialogue between the surrounding nature and its own artificial color scheme, but equally concord between organic and geometric abstract forms. Orange and azure, rounded (female) and sharp (male) forms do not meet in conflict but instead protect what is most valuable – life.

Exhibited in spring of 2023 at Sculpture by the Sea in Perth, Australia.

Bronislava Kuzica Rokytová
art historian, theoretist and exhibition curator

Music by Mark Underwood from the Perth Symphony Orchestra

Family – Nathan

What is the story of my sculptural family?

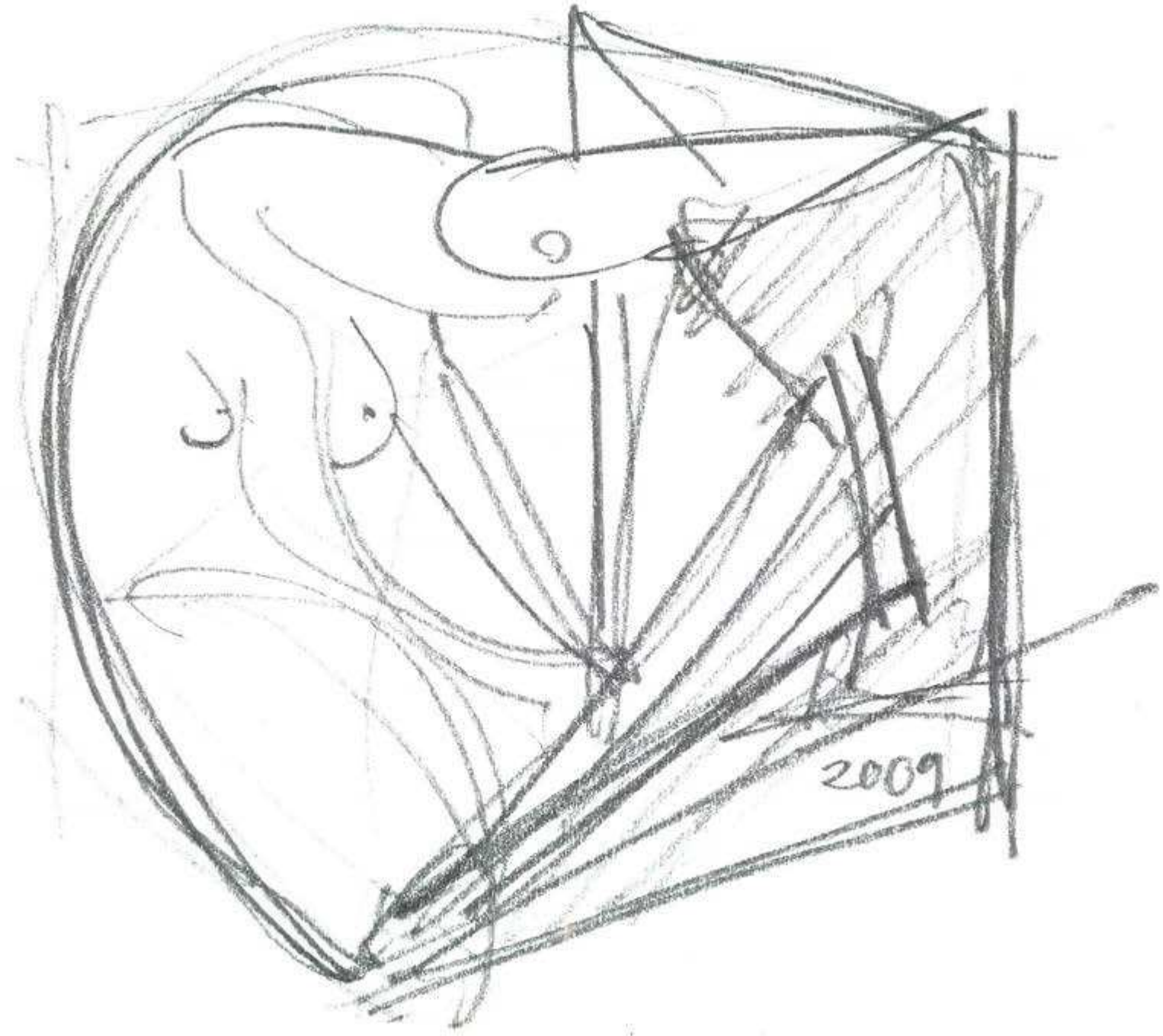
Ideas do not come to me unless they come from my life, and this was very much the case with *Family – Nathan*. Its roots can be traced back to a time 20 years ago when my first family fell apart. Now, in hindsight, I am discovering that moments of partner misunderstandings and conflict were already present in my piece *Domina*, and that the wound of my gradual plunge into solitude found expression in a sculpture series titled *Single(s)*. With this work, I realized that my problem was not exceptional, and that a growing portion of society was facing the consequences of life in an incomplete family. During the last half-century, perhaps for fear of personal failure, the common mode of human life has transformed fundamentally into a life alone. Sociologists have dubbed this phenomenon ‘voluntary singlehood’. This led me to create the earliest sculptures in complementary colours, singles of two opposing principles, which express mutual, not-entirely-idyllic interpersonal relationships between man and woman. Taken together, their symbiotic forms stand in antagonistic contrast. The work warns of the upshots brought by societal change that, though rife with apparent personal benefits, may have fatal consequences for humanity on the whole. As for myself – I have already ordered my personal priorities.

The counterpart to the *Single(s)* series can be found in my piece *Family – Nathan*. It came into being in stages and arose from perhaps surprising inspirations that I found exploring the origins of indigenous cultures. The first version of this piece, made of snow and titled *Safe Place for our Children*, was created in 2010 in Colorado’s Rocky Mountains. It was inspired by an old Native American adage, which says: “Love the Earth. For we do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.” It reminds us that humans belong to the Earth and not the other way around.

When I arrived from the USA, I met my second wife; later we had our son Jonatan (Jonathan, Nathan in the sense of ‘God-given’) and this rediscovered family life crystallized my earlier sculpture’s meaning and form. I developed the motif in a new piece done in an original technique I call ‘inorganicbio’. Humanity was thrown into a world-wide battle with COVID19, and I became aware that we must, first and foremost, protect our children and the Earth even before we begin grappling with our problems – that we must avoid them in the first place – and so my sculpture features a woman and man not protecting their child but instead tending to it before it is born, caring for its future, the world in which it is yet to arrive. The following spring, Pope Francis declared 2021 the ‘Year of the Family’, and to commemorate this, we installed a model of my sculpture in a castle park near Prague (the capital of the Czech Republic). Yet society-wide crisis has found no relief, Ukraine was invaded by totalitarian Russia, and we Czechoslovaks have recalled an earlier Soviet ‘liberation’ from 1968 and re-experienced how important it is to protect peace, the freedom of every individual and the sovereignty of every nation and state. I understood that I need to tell of all this, to as many people as possible, through my sculpture *Family*, because it embodies a stand against violent, selfish and opportunistic egoism. We see this now in the bringing together of Ukrainian families and the entire Ukrainian nation, courageously defying a fanatic evil. This is why I created the final version of the sculpture group done, from the human point of view, in a ‘permanent’, time-stable medium: stainless steel. The figures’ dialogue is underlined by an artificial colour scheme and contrasting organic and geometric abstract forms. Orange and azure are opposing colours on the colour spectrum, they are inverse and so do not stand in conflict but are mutually interchangeable.

It is clear that differences may function together if we share a common goal, just like the rounded and sharp forms in my sculpture protect what is most valuable – pure life.

Milan Kuzica
Bronislava Kuzica Rokytová
art historian, theoretist and exhibition curator



Prague, Czech Republic 2009





Breckenridge Rocky Mountains, Colorado, USA, 2010

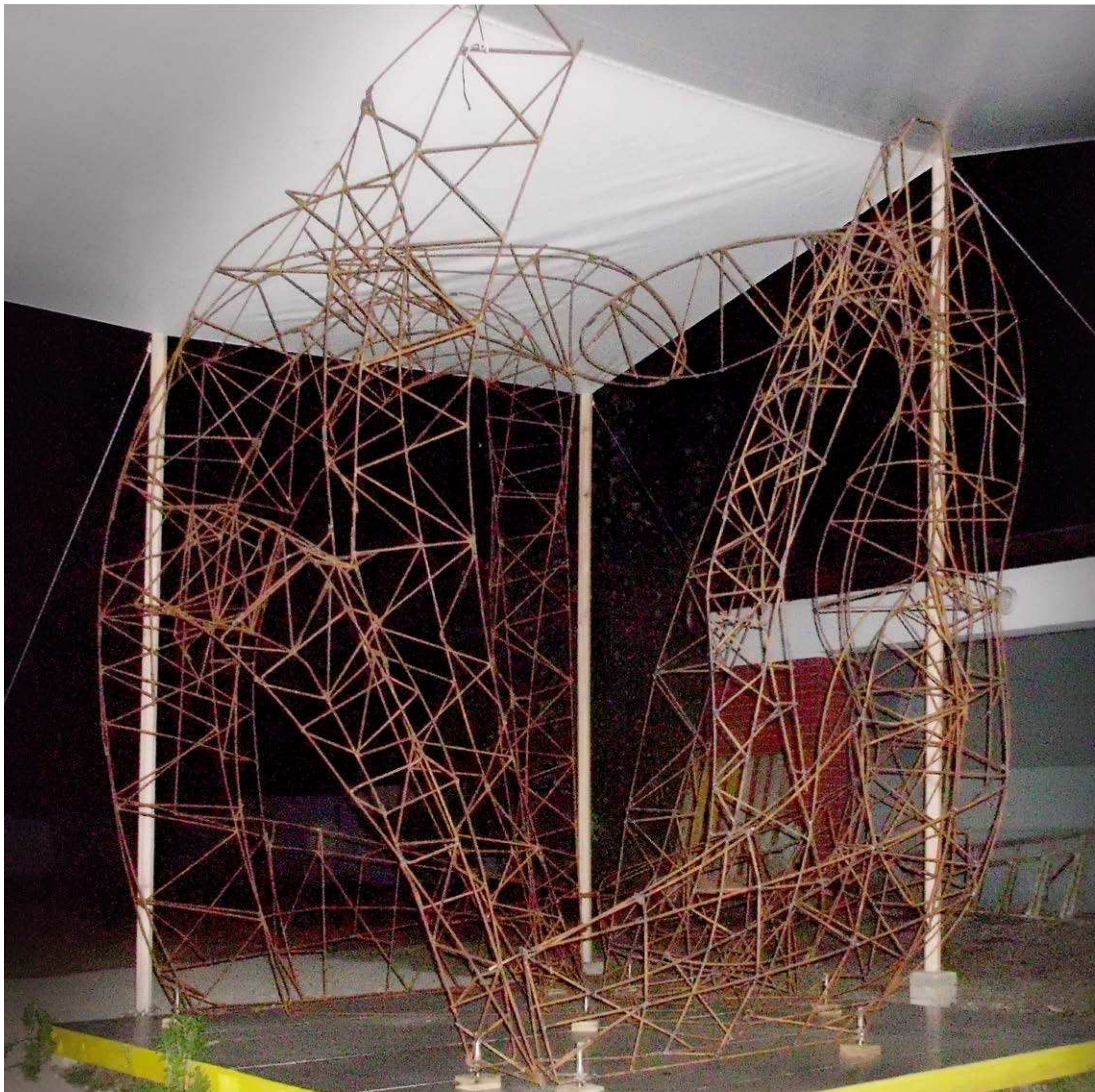






Prague, Czech Republic 2010

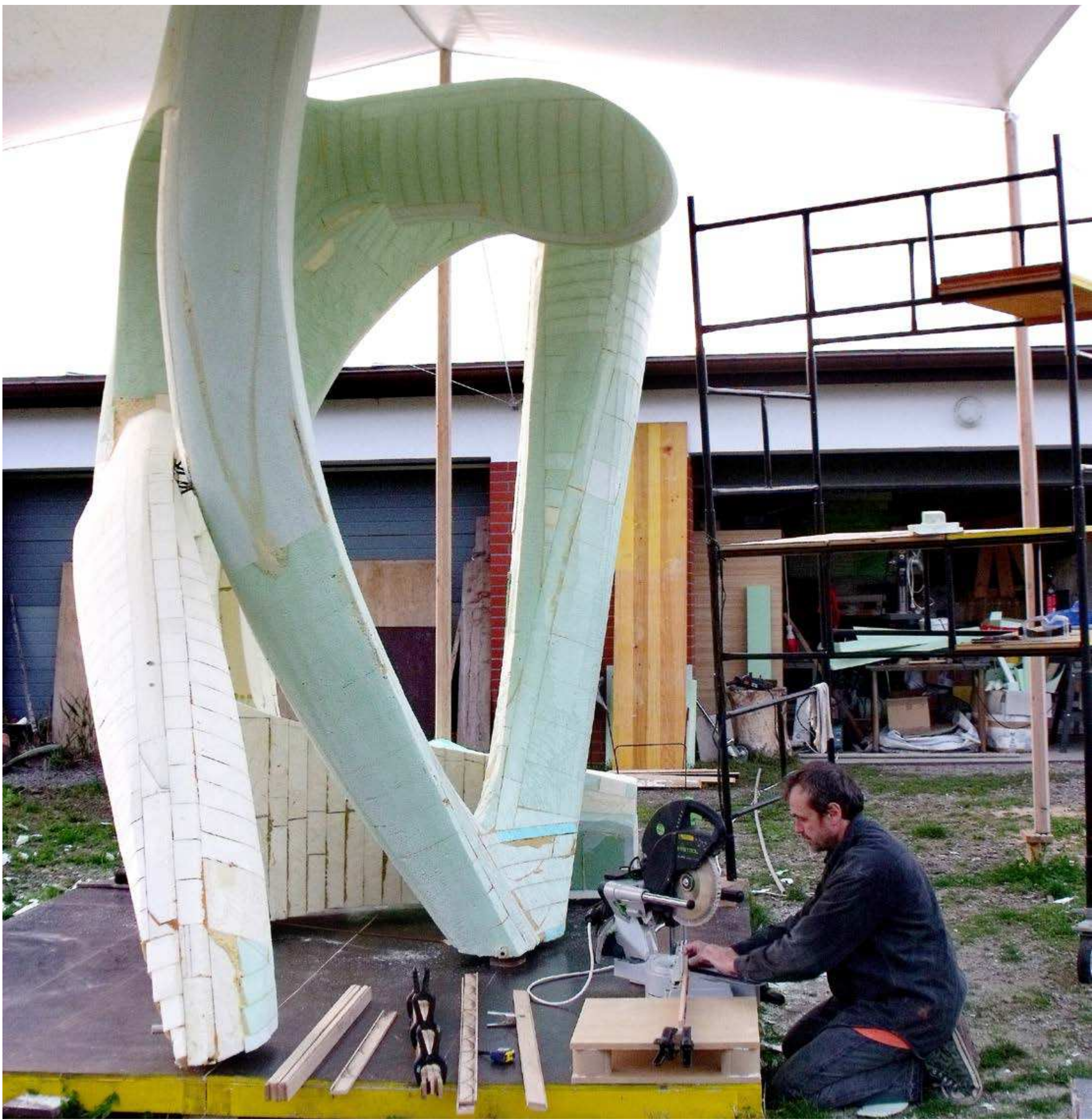




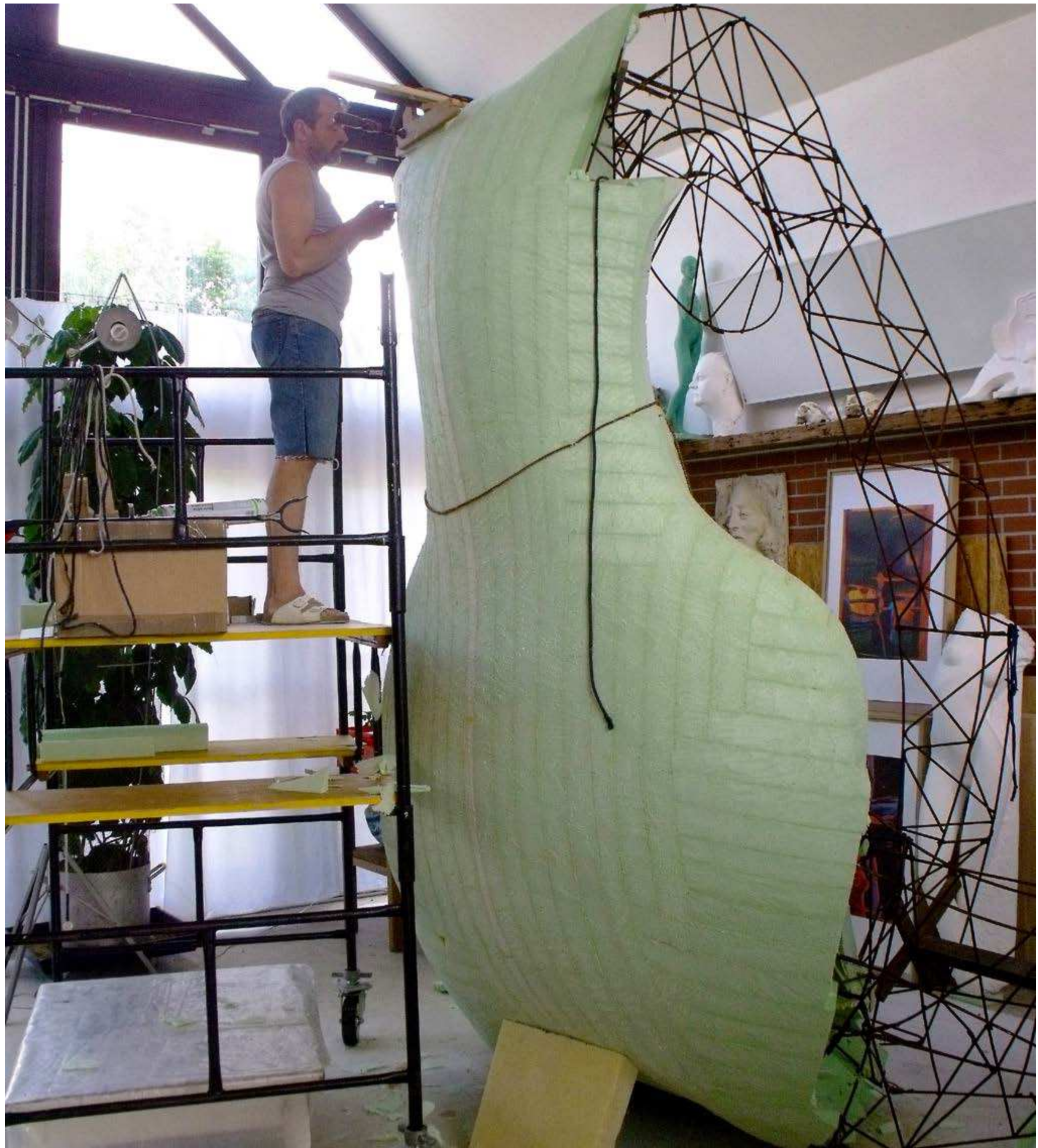






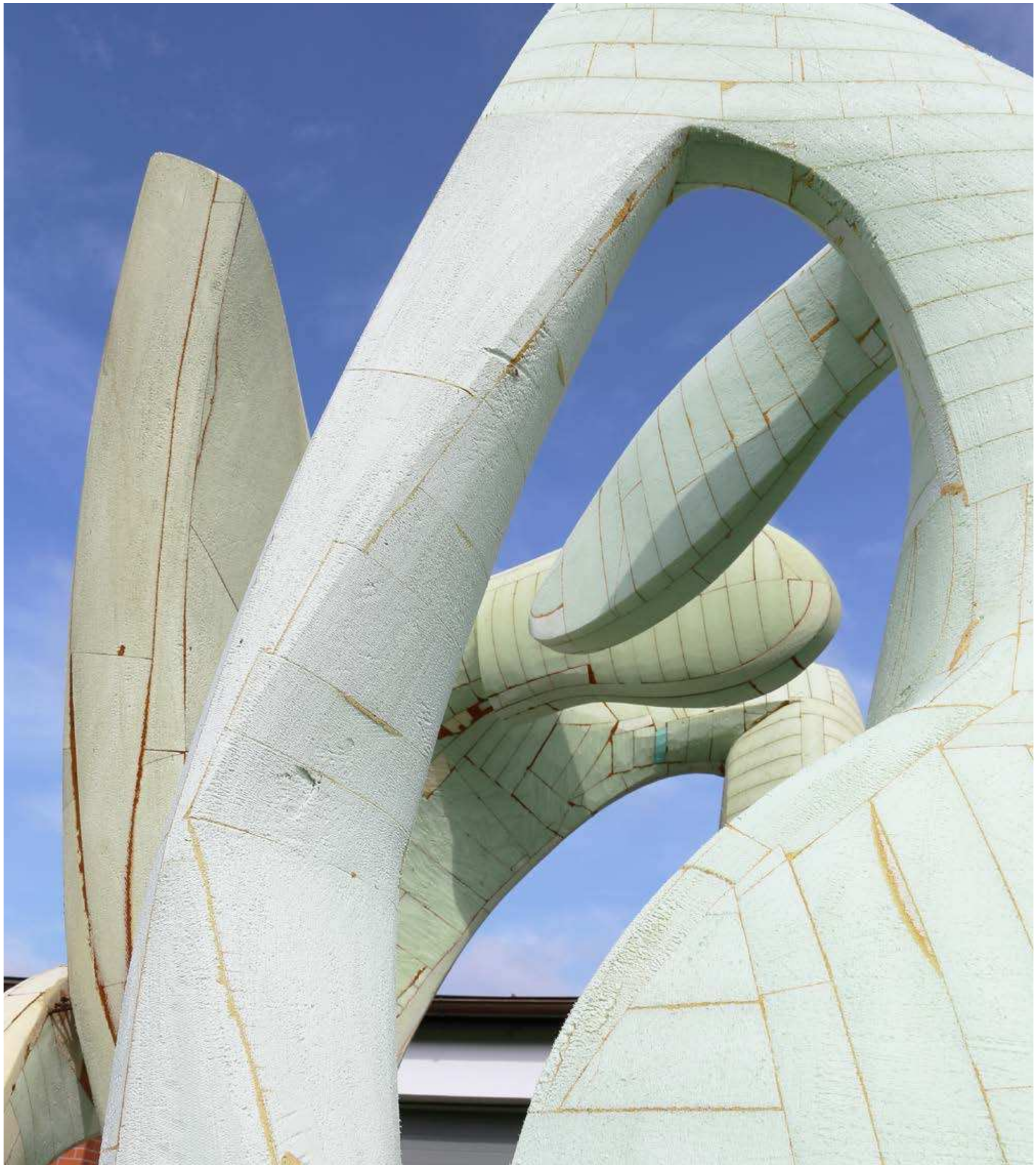


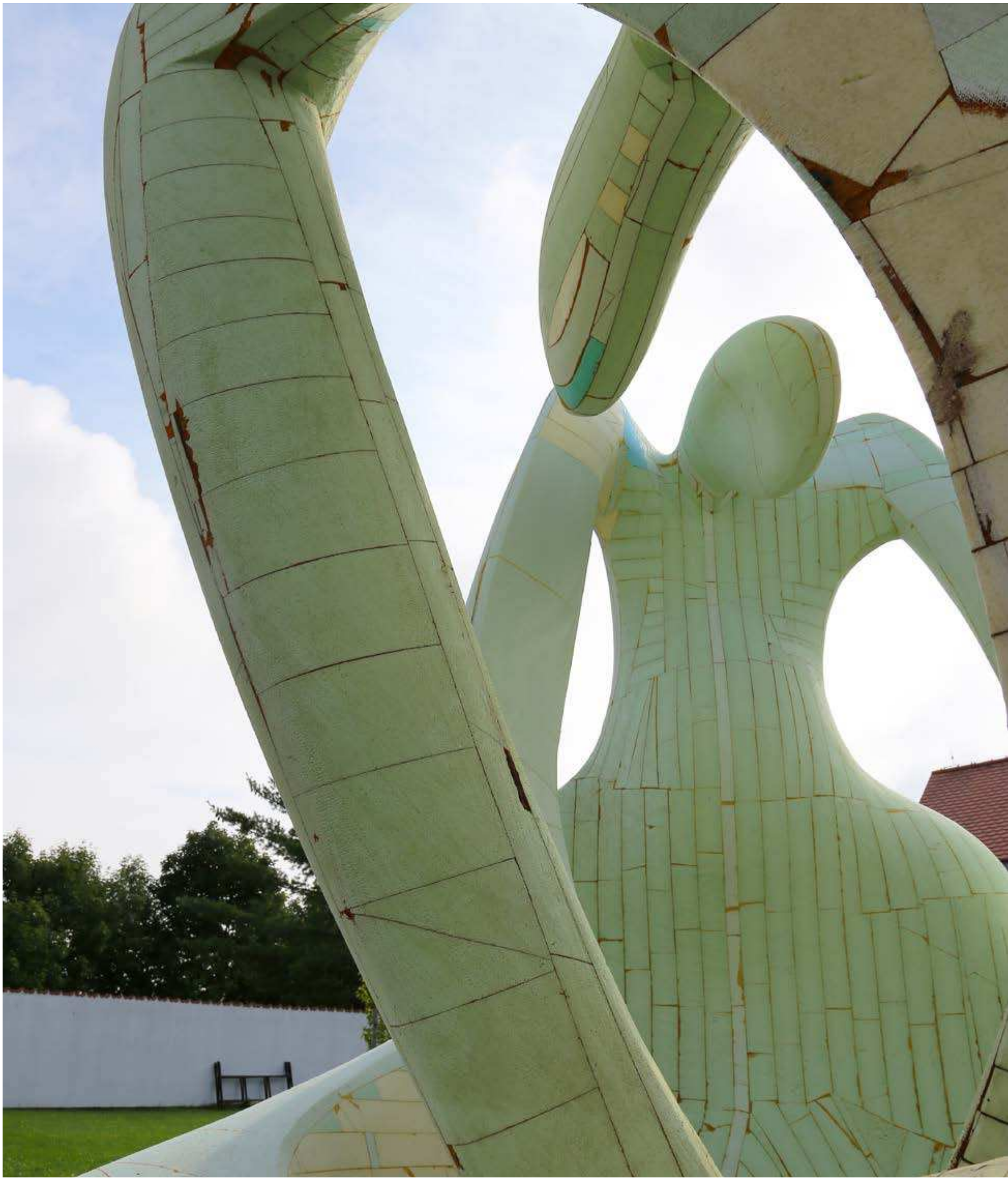


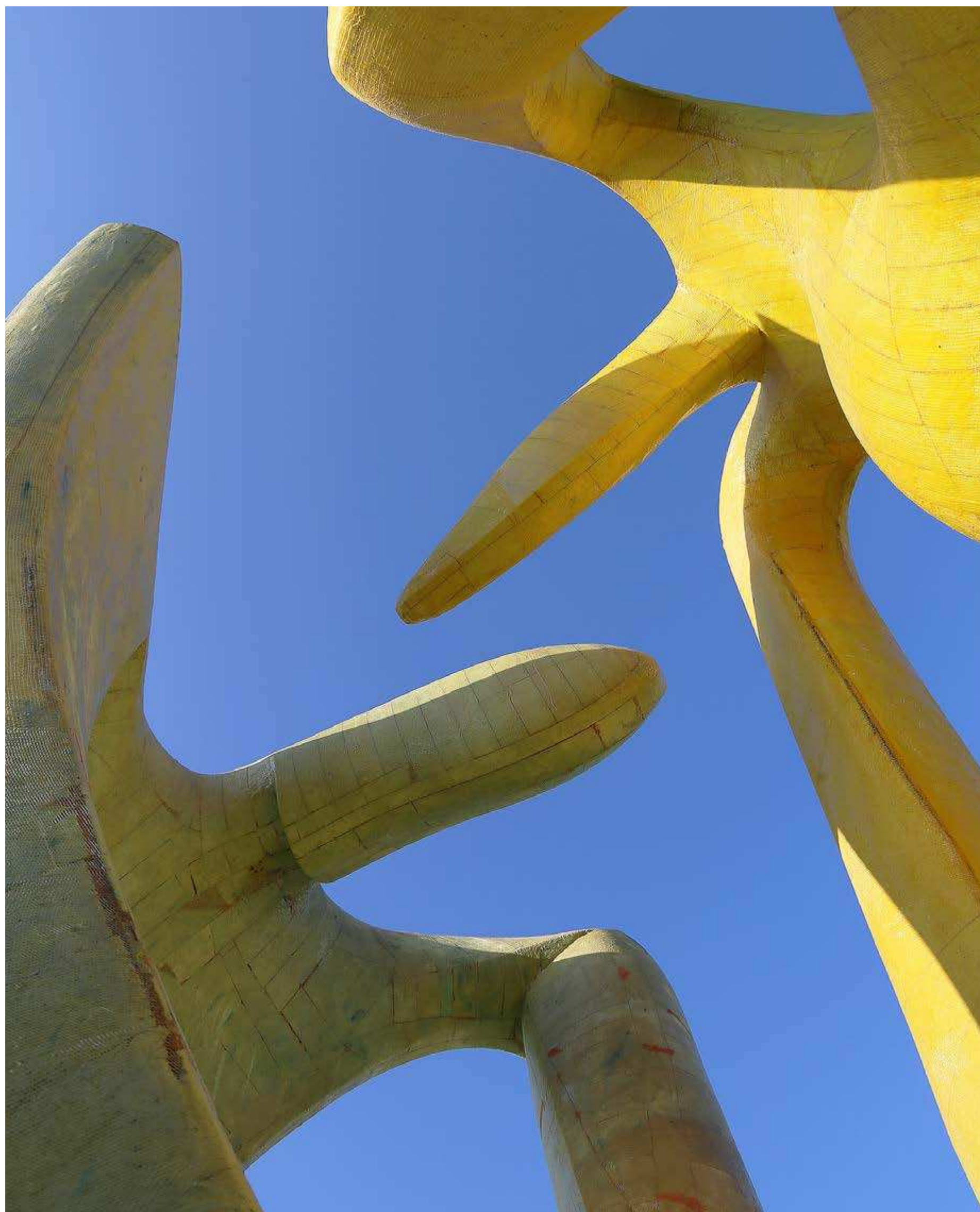




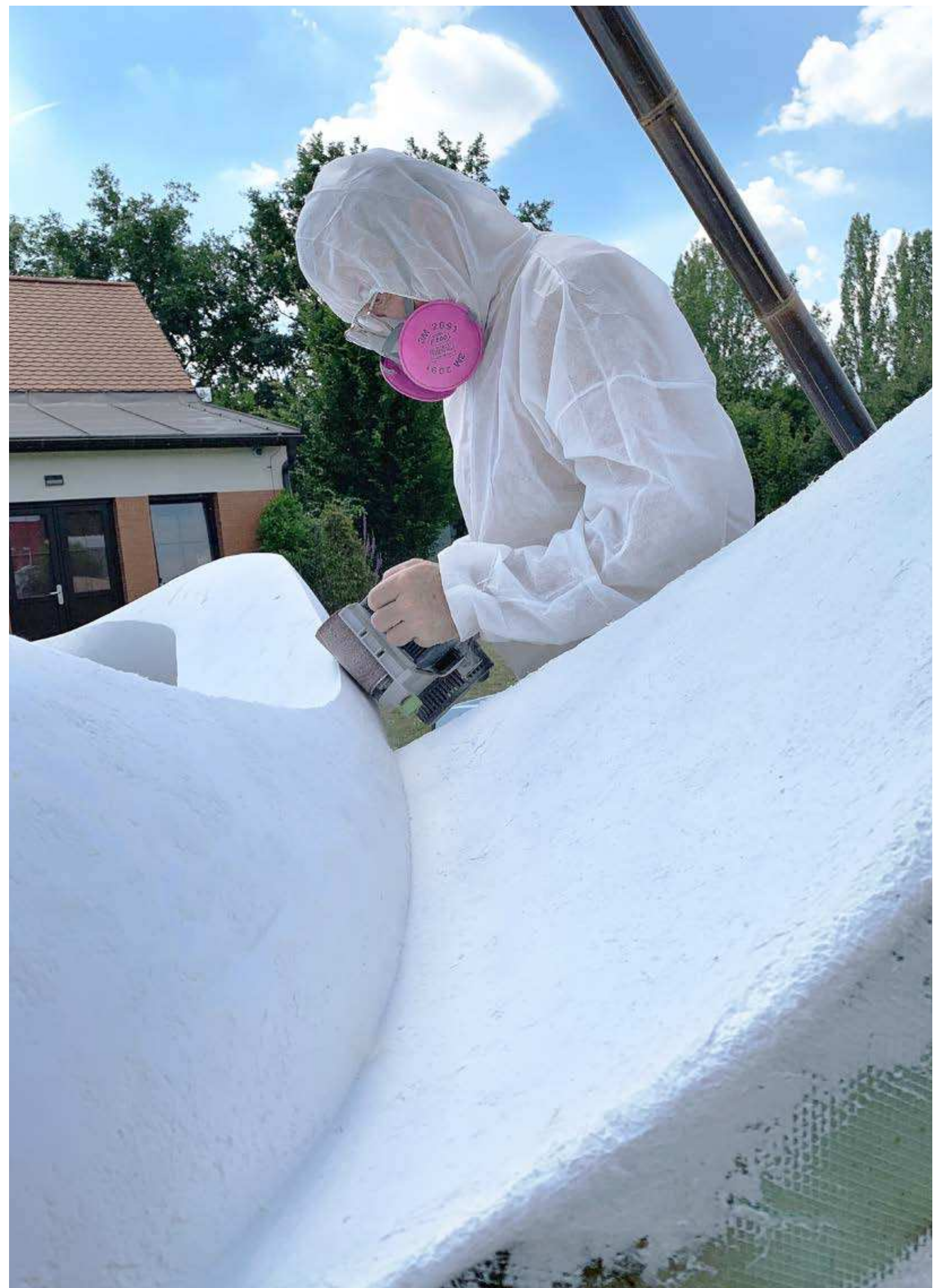












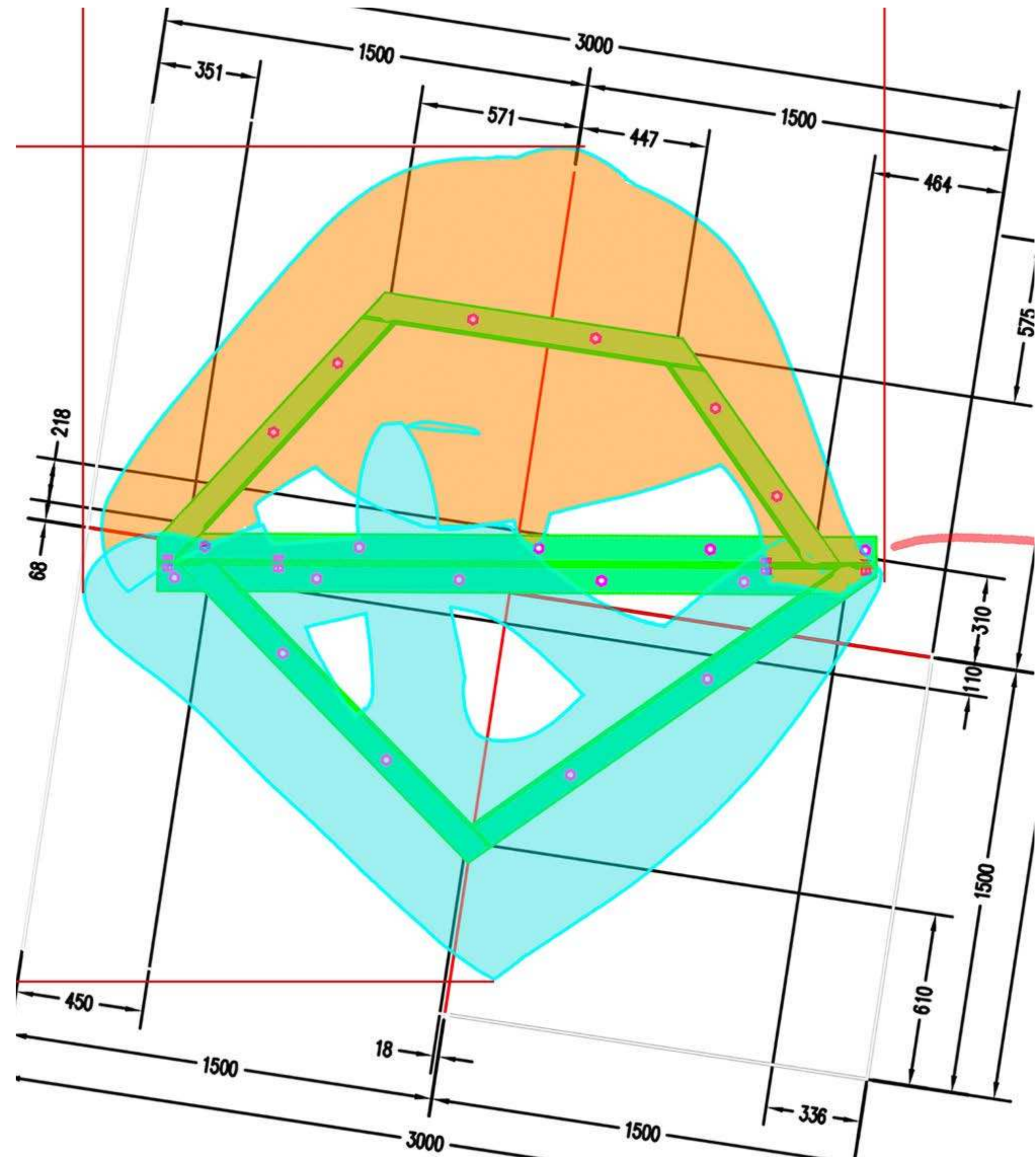
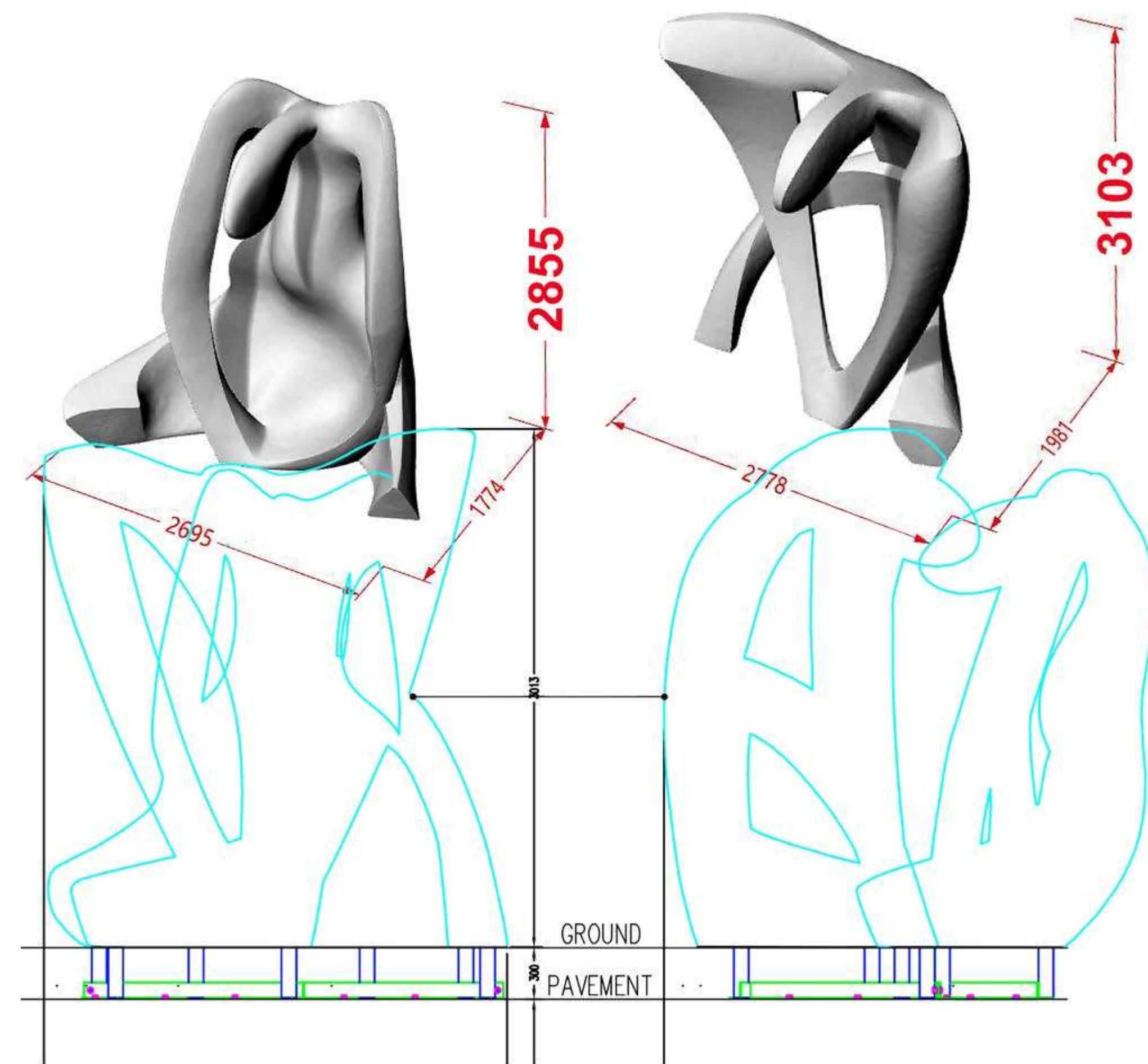




Prague, Czech Republic 2023







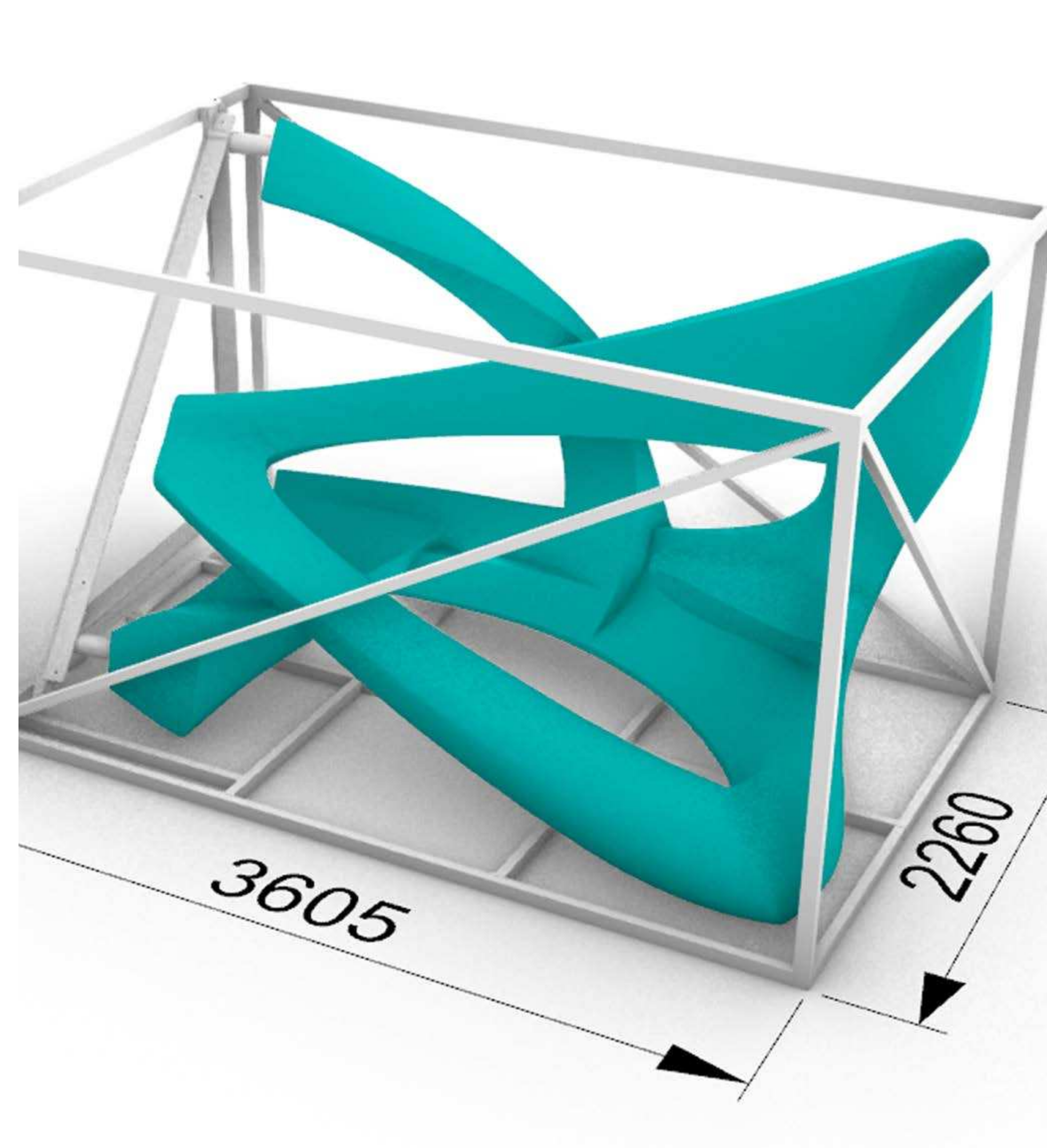


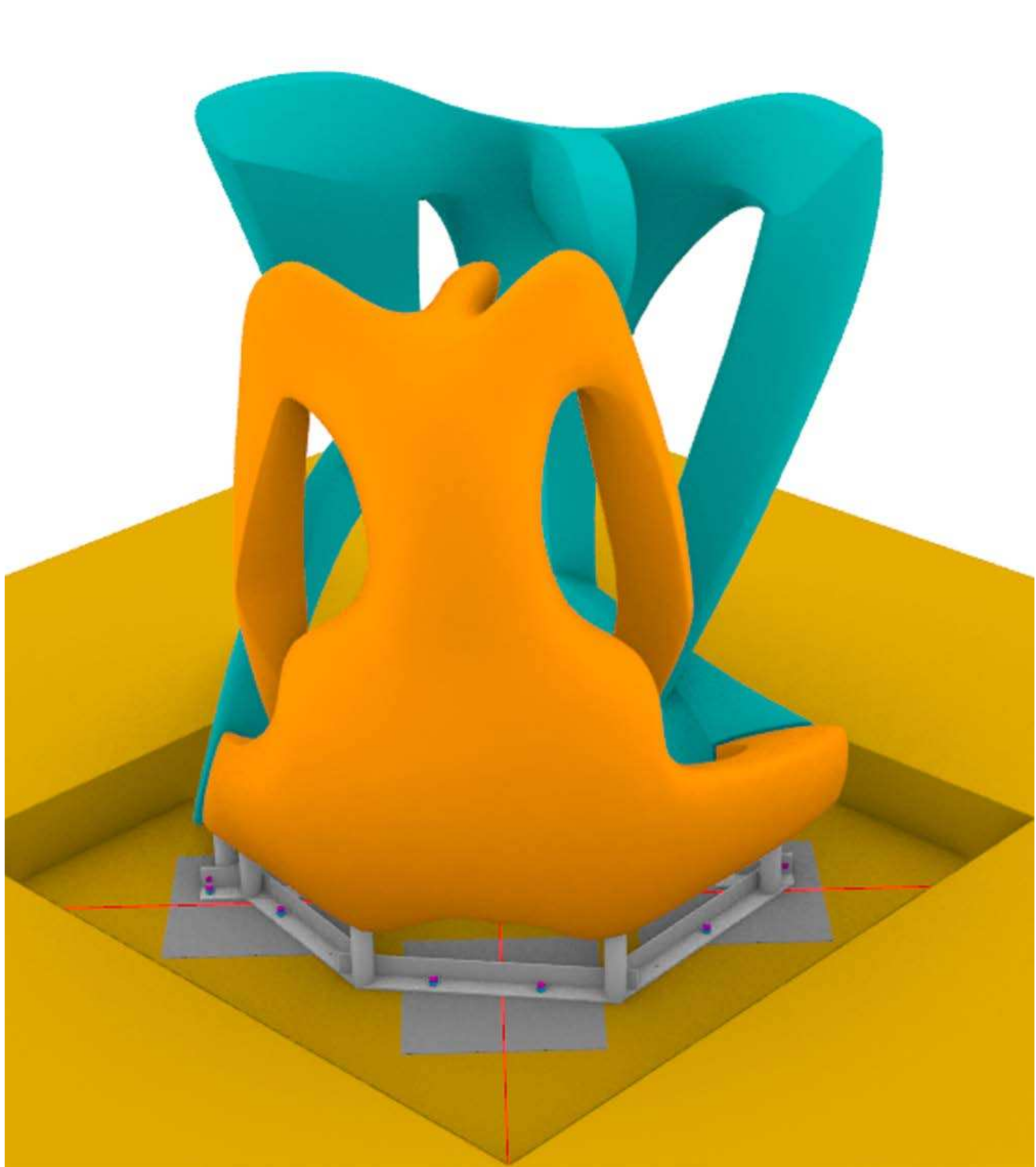


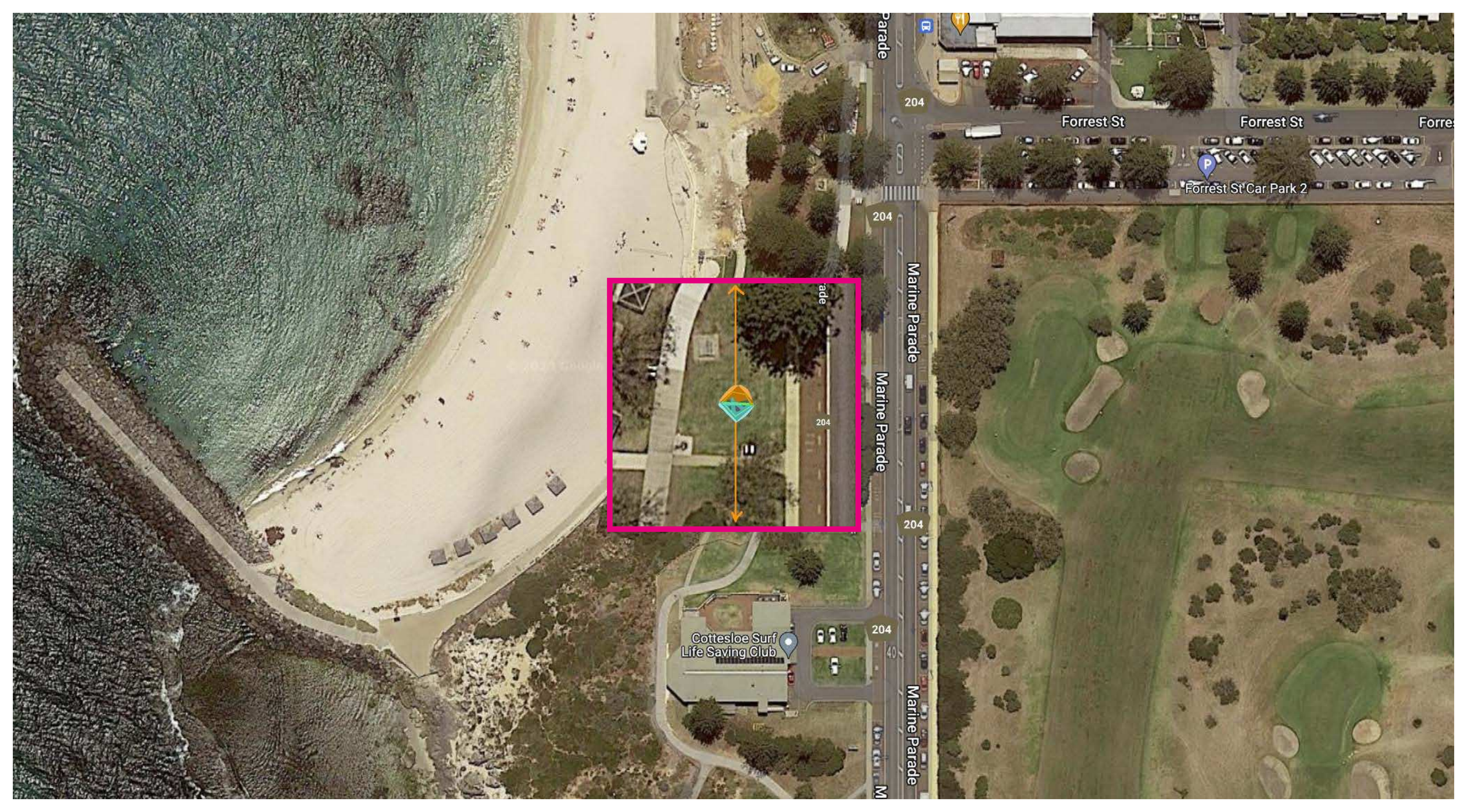














Perth, Australia, Sculpture by the Sea, 2023







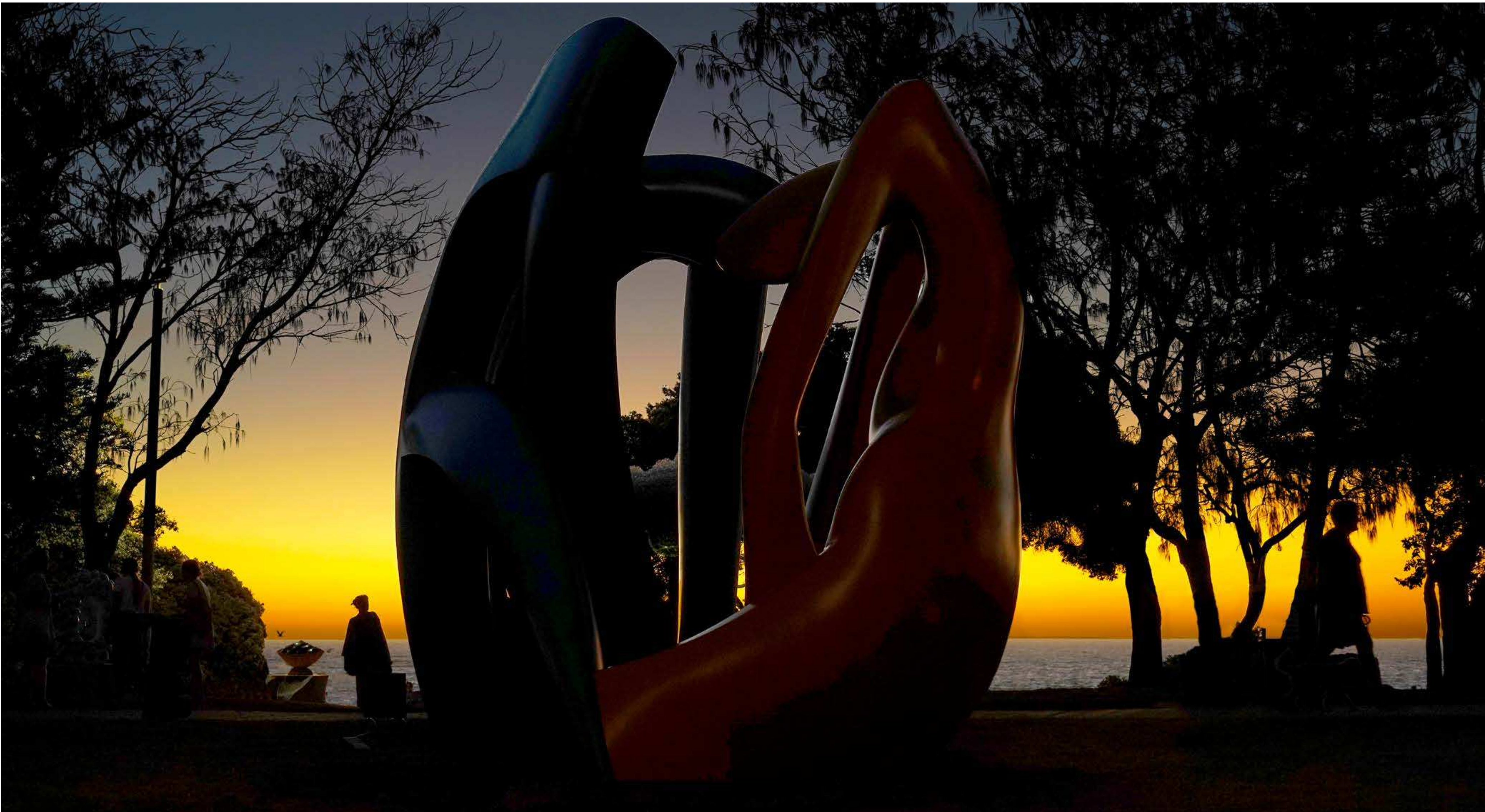
Music by Mark Underwood from the Perth Symphony Orchestra











Kuzica's dialogue of organic abstraction with the organism of living nature

Organic abstraction in modern concepts became the opponency of sophisticated geometric abstraction based on exact principles. There is a controversy of seemingly accidental nature processes with what was specified in Otto's encyclopaedia – with its specific literary charm induced by the origins of this encyclopedia dating back more than a century – as geometry: “Geometry, mensuration, is the science of quantities and structures of space. The concepts of these structures are arrived at by means of abstraction from material objects.” This controversy has remained relevant in the art of post-modernism as well as in the present time. Only it is getting new shapes, and new immediacy of confrontation with reality, i.e. with the principles it has been derived from. In our contemporary world, where the nature-friendly attitude is revealing connections and regularities of the symbiotic relationship between man and nature, and contributing to the more and more demanding protection of this relationship against the devastating side-effect of civilization, the organic abstraction is obtaining new functions. One of the courageous – and entering direct dialogue with nature really needs courage – is Milan Kuzica. Compared to similar artistic intentions, Kuzica's confrontation with nature is extraordinary. He does not adapt to nature, does not imitate its processes or functional shapes or materials that present our primary means of perceiving nature, often with undisguised admiration. He does not adopt submissive position, as is common in this kind of art. On the contrary, he remains its partner firmly based in the nowadays world. Even if he works with wood, the fundamentally natural material, he uses luminous chemically based colours for polychromy on his statues or their parts. He experiments also with synthetic materials and does not hesitate to make their artificiality equal with natural phenomena. He makes them equal means of communication, as an artist with his individual distinctive imagination inspired with unconscious and dreams.

Hana Rousová
art historian, theoretist and exhibition curator