



KATSUMI NAKAI

Dimensional Harmonies

Greg Bergner

# KATSUMI NAKAI

Katsumi Nakai (1927-2013) began his artistic journey in post-war Japan, where he studied at the Osaka Municipal Institute of Fine Art. His early career was marked by an interest in geometric abstraction, already showing signs of the dimensional explorations that would later define his practice. In the vibrant artistic climate of 1960s Japan, Nakai developed a distinctive approach to creating works that existed between painting and sculpture.

Upon moving to Milan in 1964, Nakai found himself at the center of one of Europe's most dynamic artistic scenes. He formed close relationships with leading figures of the Italian avant-garde, including Lucio Fontana, who shared his interest in transcending the traditional limitations of the canvas. Through his association with Galleria del Naviglio and Galleria L'Argentario, Nakai established himself as a unique voice in the European art world, bridging Eastern and Western artistic sensibilities.

Nakai's singular practice centered on the creation of three-dimensional wooden constructions that extend beyond the picture plane. These works feature hinged and moveable elements painted in subtle colors, creating dynamic compositions that shift and transform depending on the viewer's perspective. His art masterfully combines the precision of architectural forms with the meditative qualities of Japanese aesthetics, particularly in his attention to balance, negative space, and the inherent properties of his materials. This distinctive approach to dimensionality and space would remain central to his work throughout his career, reaching new heights of refinement in the 1990s.



KATSUMI NAKAI

*72-201, 1992-1999*

Acrylic/oil on plywood

161 x 62 cm

63 3/8 x 24 3/8 in





## VARIATIONS





KATSUMI NAKAI

*L'oggetto si sboccia, 73-123, 1991-1999*

acrylic/oil on plywood

161 x 62 cm

63 3/8 x 24 3/8 in

## VARIATIONS



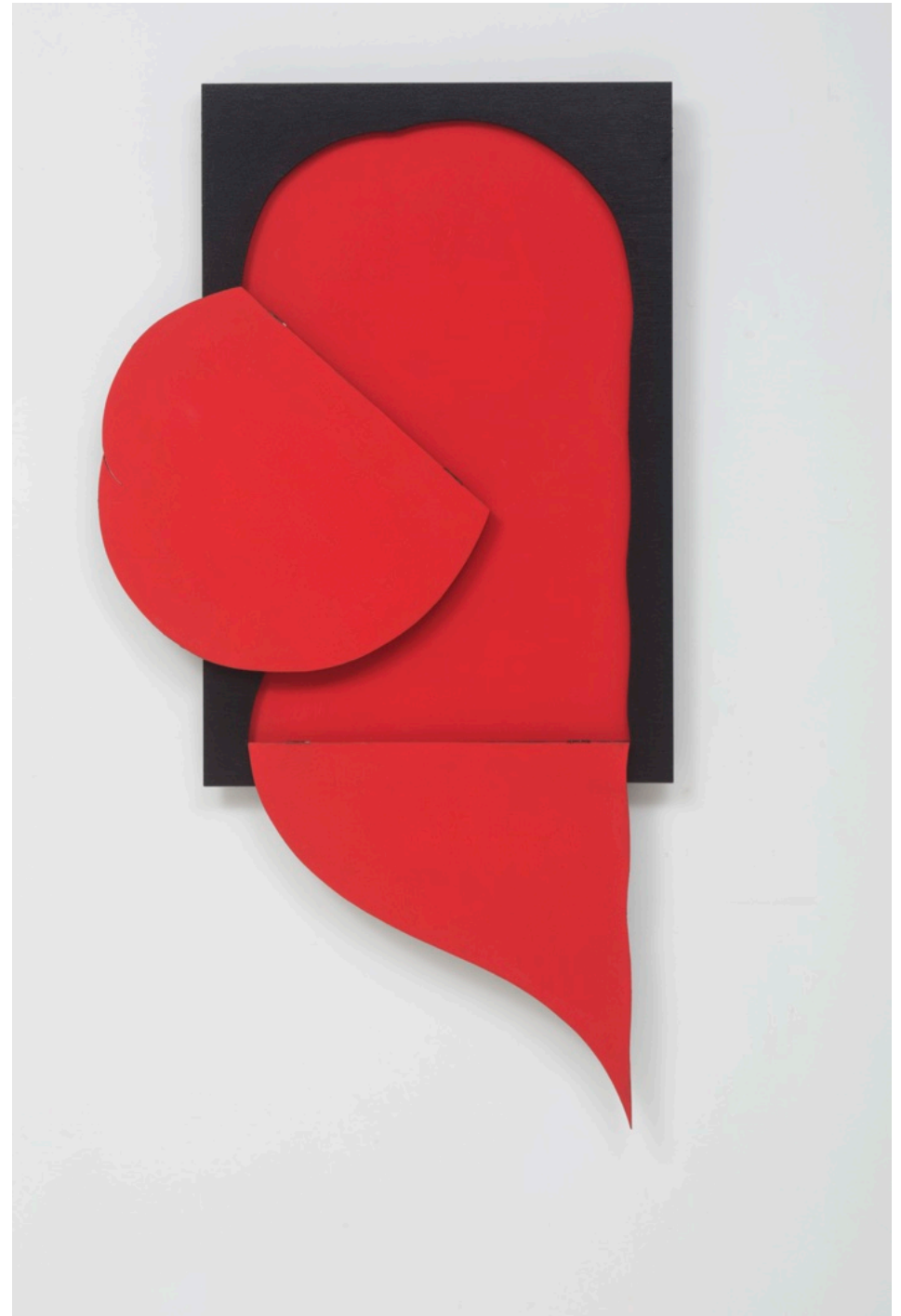
KATSUMI NAKAI

*L'oggetto si sboccia 71-102, 1998*

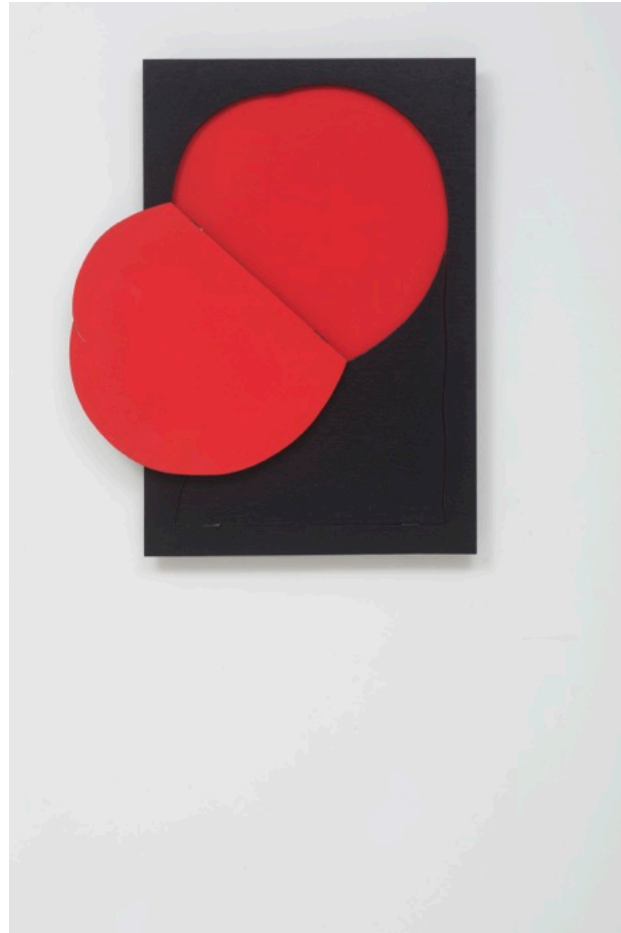
acrylic/oil on plywood

90 x 60 cm

35 3/8 x 23 5/8 in



## VARIATIONS







KATSUMI NAKAI

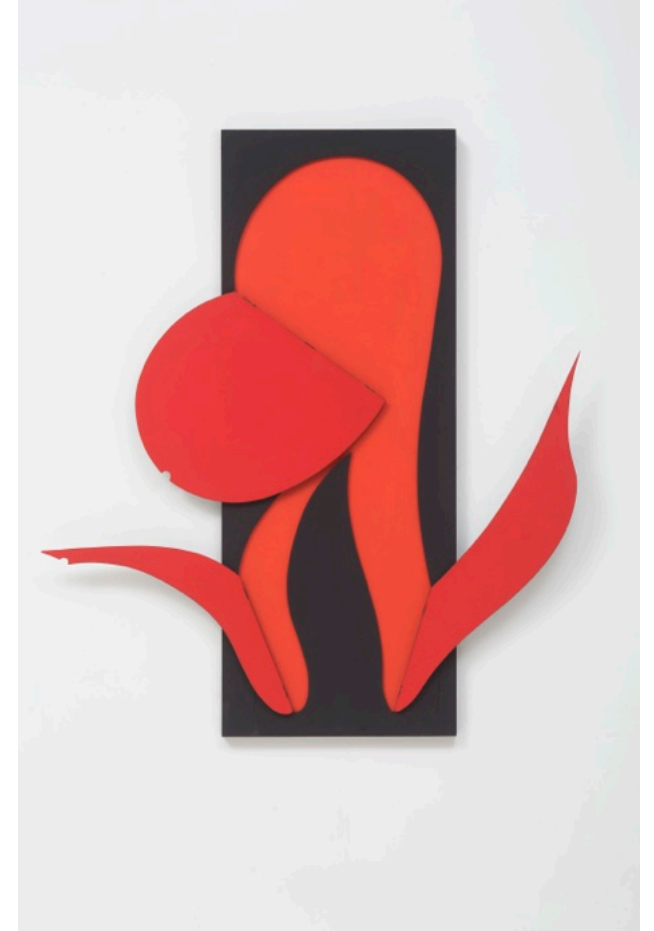
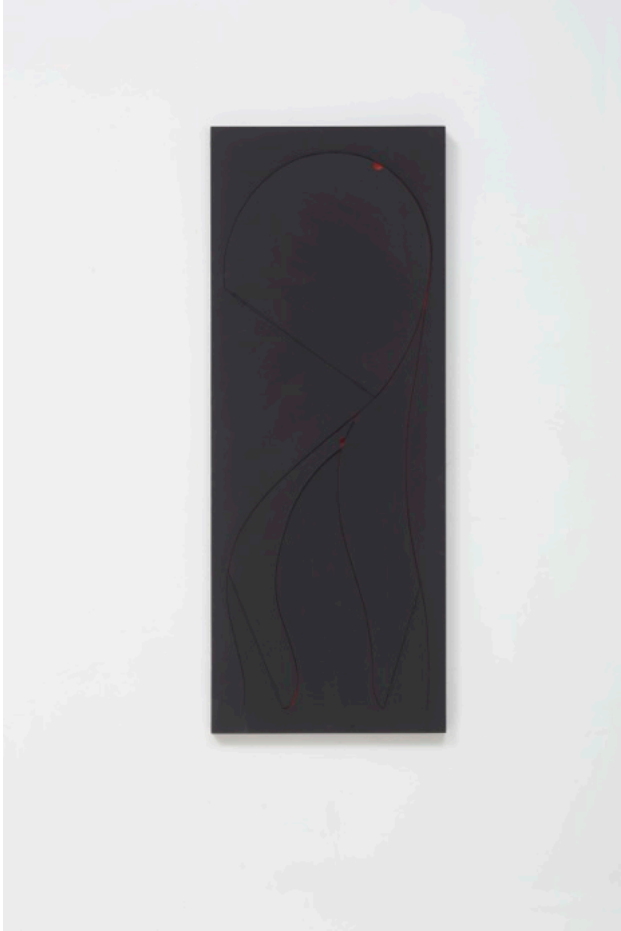
Untitled, 1998-1999

acrylic/oil on plywood

162 x 62 cm

63 3/4 x 24 3/8 in

## VARIATIONS





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