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International
designers
Network

VOL.  #5 :the geometrics issue
beyond shapes and patterns

10 GEO-HEROES

Basic form in the most exciting way.

10 geo heroes take you to a hyper-geometric world

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On the art and design of Metal Gear



On the DVD

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   94MIN.

International edition
€15 / £10 / C\$17 / US\$15

Volume 15 Number 5
2008, Five

The Geometric
Issue

www.idnworld.com



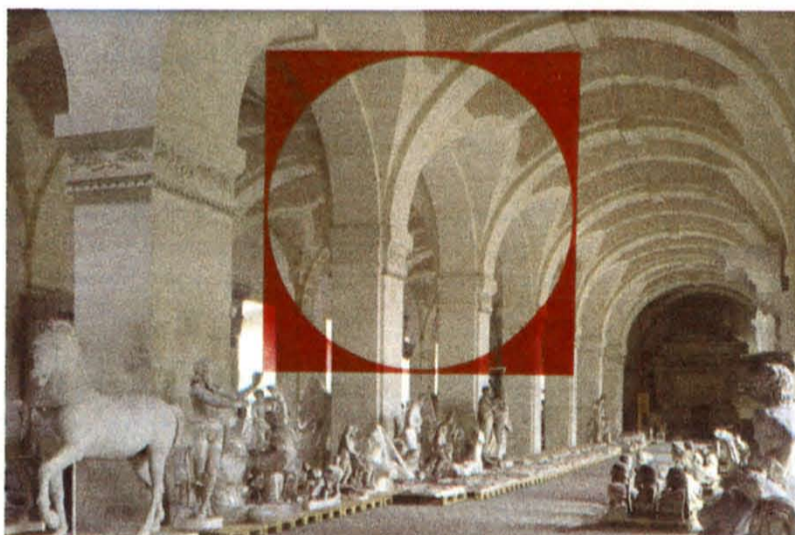
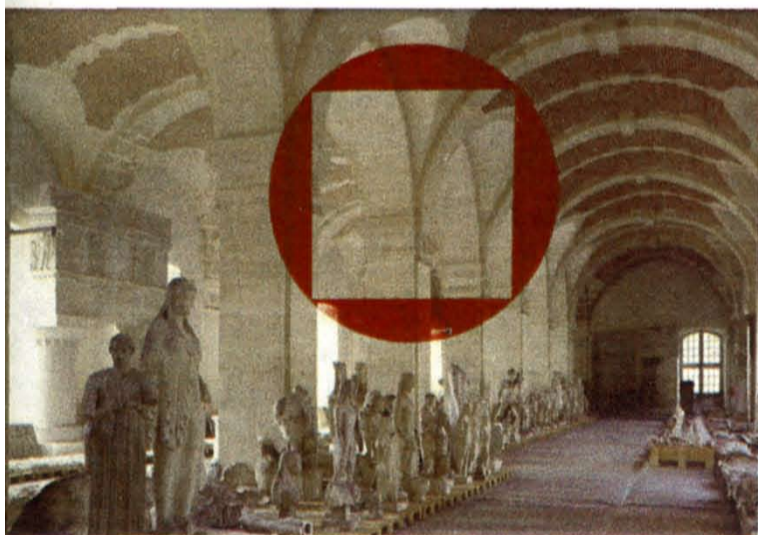
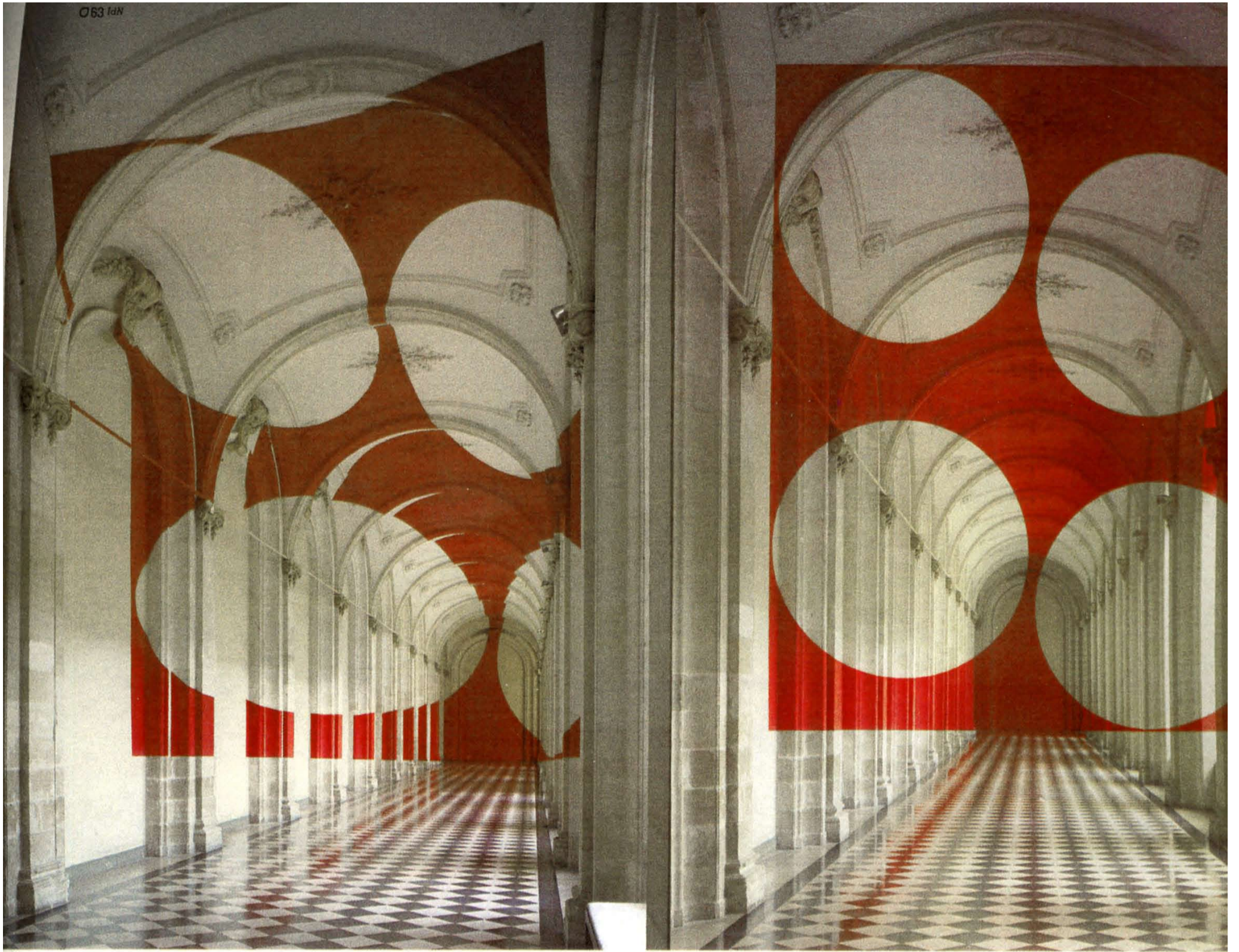
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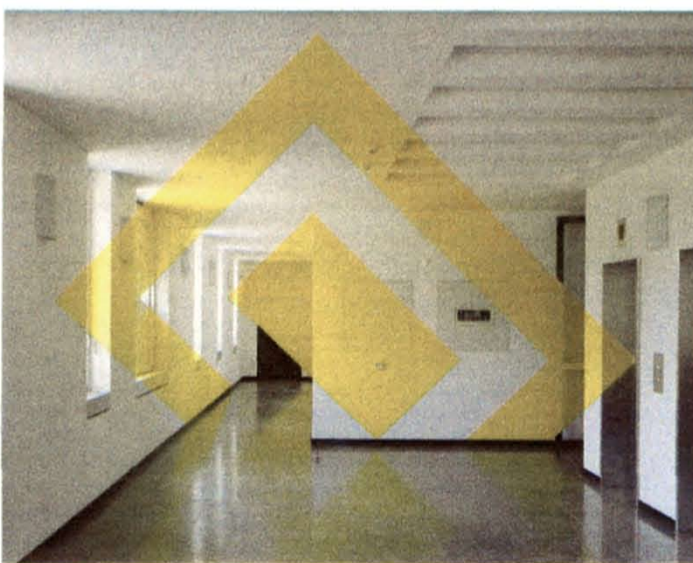
FELICE VARINI

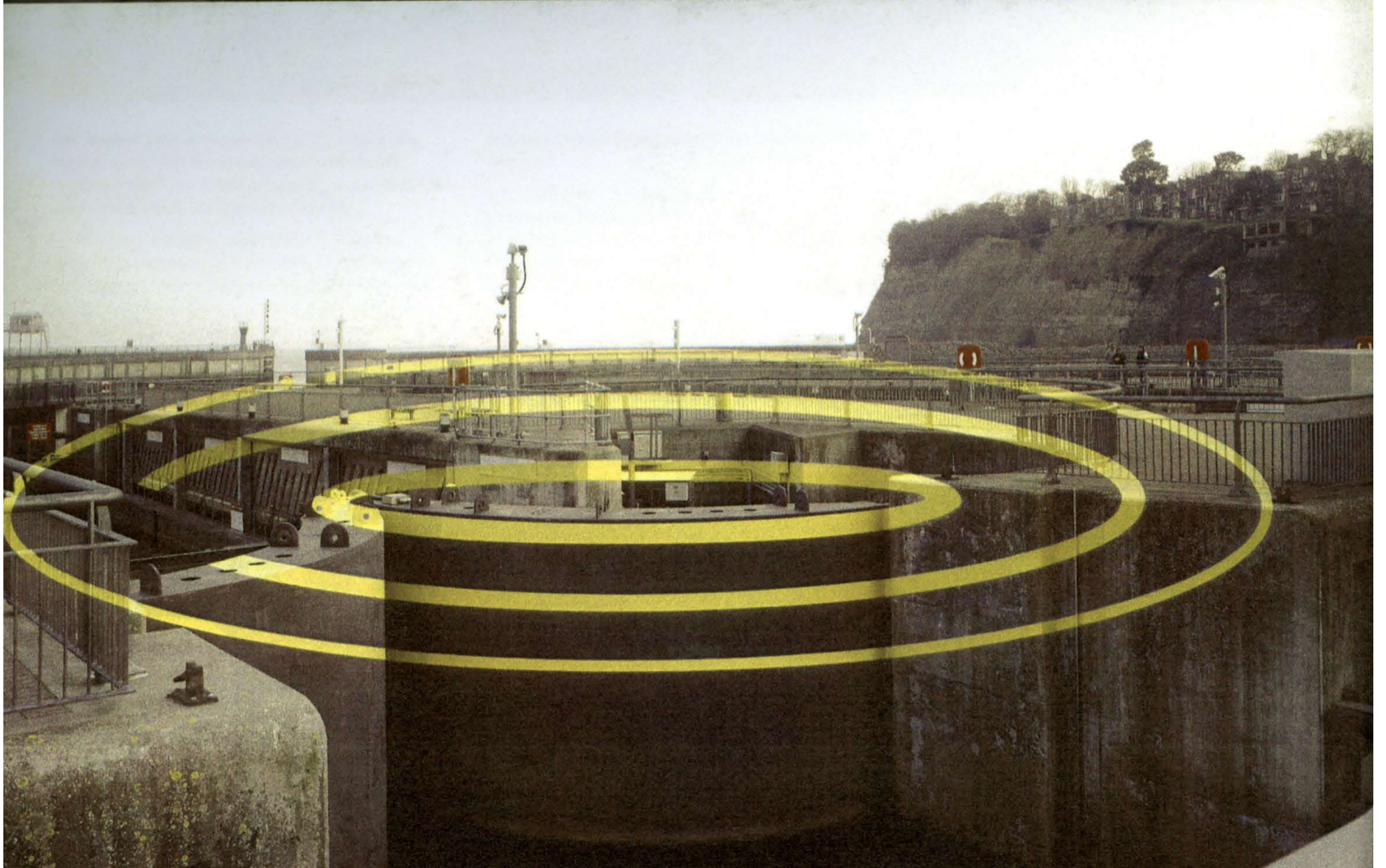
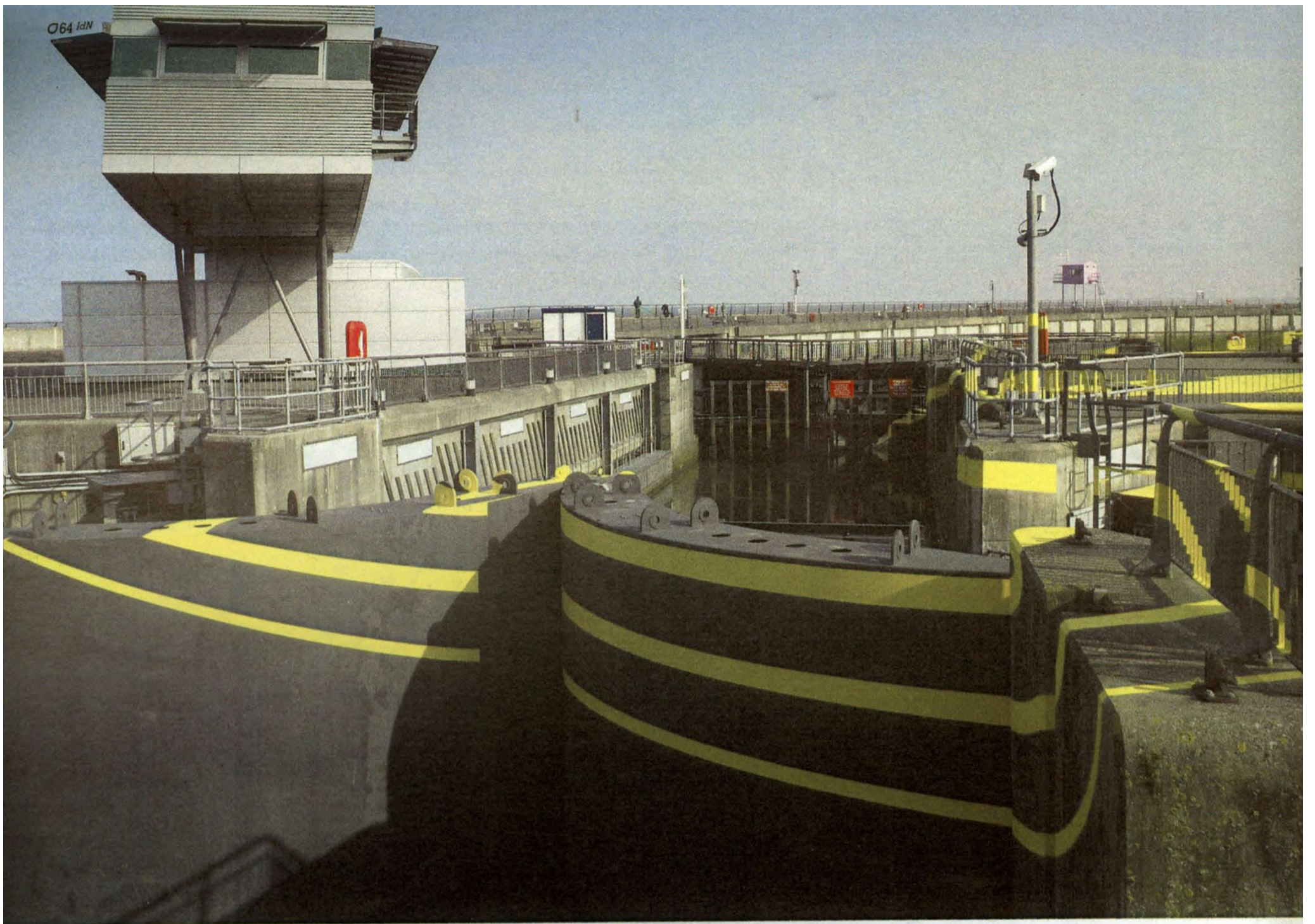
“I am not fascinated by geometry per se; it’s the simplicity of the forms – circles, triangles, squares, lines – that I retain as being the most efficient in the space. On-site, situations are more complicated. Working with simple geometry allows me to go more ‘inside’ the painting.”



This page (top to bottom, left to right): Quatre disques dans le rectangle (détail), Musée des Beaux-Arts, Arras exposition: "Une Saison Suisse" Arras 2007, Photo: André Morin | "Disque sans carré/Carré sans disque", expo: Versailles off La petite écurie, galerie des moulages, Versailles 2005, Photo: André Morin | "rettangoli gialli concentrici senza angoli al suolo", Lugano-Suglio, 1997 Collection UBS, Photo by André Morin

Opposite page: A travers l'ellipse, Sapporo Dome, Sapporo City 2000, Collection City of Sapporo, Photo by André Morin





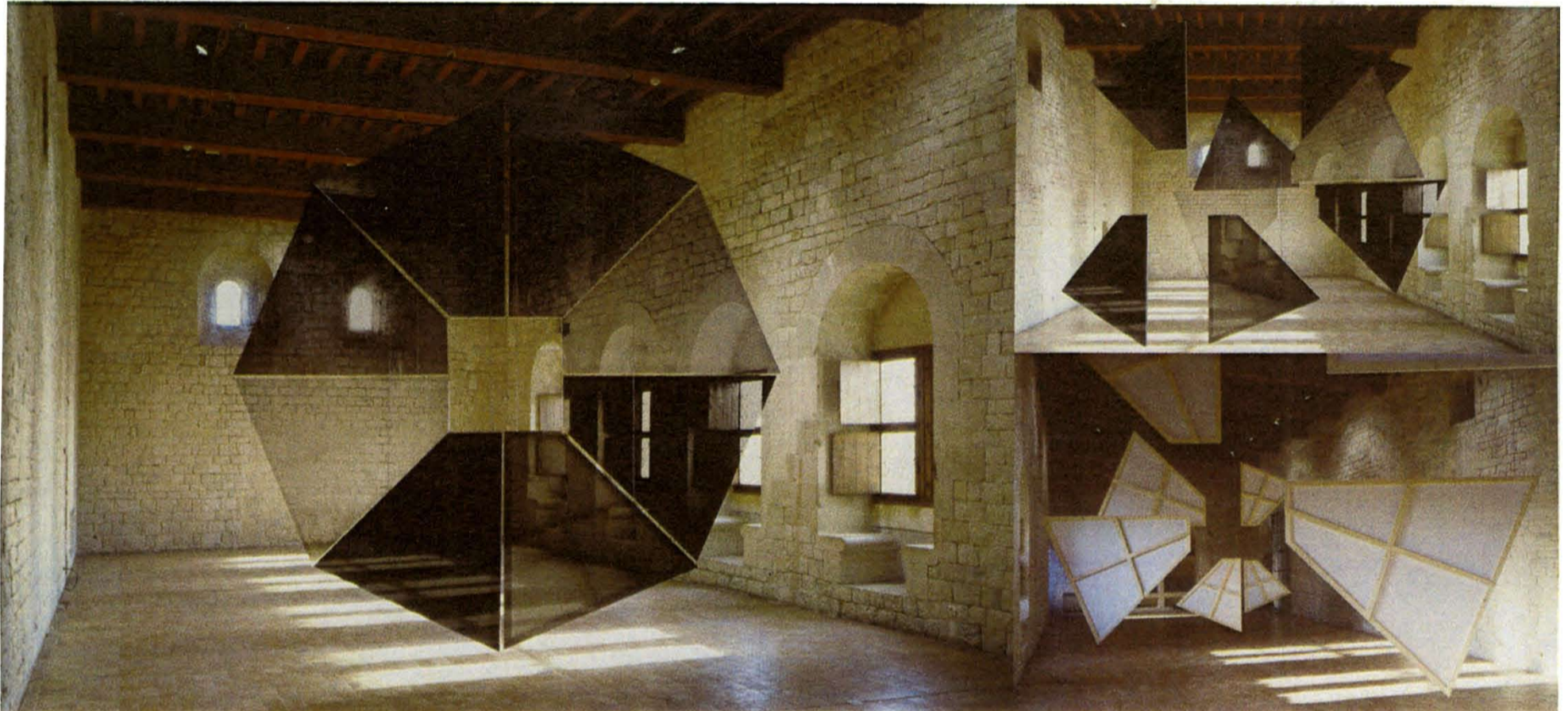


PROFILE: FELICE VARINI

If only one word was allowed to describe the work of Swiss artist Felice Varini, you would probably opt for 'perspective'. Varini works in very dynamic sizes – in an underground car park, the interior of a mall, the exterior of a building that covers several blocks, for instance. Since his final images are projected over different surfaces rather than one single plane, they are immediately segmented by the space's reality and appear fragmented when viewed from other angles. Thus, if a viewer is not looking at the work from Varini's specific vantage point when he created it, it can be difficult to discern the meaning behind it (which is part of the artist's objective), but if you look at it from his vantage point, a two-dimensional geometric figure will instantly appear.

This page: *Octogone au carré, Château des Adhémar, Montélimar, 2003, Photo: André Morin*

Opposite page: *three ellipses for three locks, Cardiff Bay Barrage, Cardiff 2007, commissioned by: CBAT The Arts & Regeneration Agency for Cardiff Harbour Authority, Acrylic based paint, Photo: André Morin*



IdN: Most of your works are on quite a large scale, indeed, some of them actually cross streets and buildings: when you start on them, do you already have a concept of the final images in your mind?

FV: In my way of working, when I begin to realise an artwork in the streets or on the buildings, I can imagine the final images, even if there are always surprises along the way, and obviously I have an idea of the final images. I always build the final image in relationship with the architectonic character of the place.

IdN: Some of your work is obviously dictated by the exterior/location of the building it is created on, so how do you stencil it out in such a unique medium? Could you describe the working process of one of the works you've sent us?

FV: In the working process, the first stage is the inscription design on the site. We use projections of the image onto the architecture. Then we have to do marking, and later we work with masking tape to protect the area that has to be painted. As soon as all surfaces are marked, we give them several coats of paint until we have obtained impeccably monochromatic surfaces. Then we take away the masking tape. So all the painted fragments appear in the whole space.

IdN: How does geometric design differ from other types of graphic design, and how does it influence the

way you approach projects and the way the solutions turn out?

FV: I don't work as a designer, graphic or otherwise. I do paint. My field of action is architectural space and everything that constitutes such space. These spaces are and remain the original media for my painting. I work 'on site' each time in a different space and my work develops itself in relation to the spaces I encounter.

IdN: Some people may group geometric design under ornamental design: how do you react to that, and how important a role do you think geometric design plays in design in general?

FV: Geometry is a tool that I use when I paint. It induces abstract situations out of a traditional frame. And takes the work beyond symbolic or literary evocation.

IdN: You have worked in a variety of different locations – which project has been your most memorable?

FV: In 2001, I realised a very large artwork on a medieval castle in Switzerland, in the city of Bellinzona. The painting was developed over a huge area. Also, last year, I was invited to Estuaire 2007, and I decided to work in Saint Nazaire harbour, in western France, in an industrial environment. Both situations were very different, one industrial and the other medieval, but for both, I had to deal with metro problems and huge volumes. Some 25 people

worked on the last project, including 10 climbers.

IdN: What medium do you think is best suited to geometric design?

FV: As I said earlier, I work with simple geometry in the allotted space. The reason is that when I paint these simple forms on the architecture, as soon as we leave the right vantage point, the abstract forms that appear become very complicated. That is my purpose: new forms appearing out of the point of view go beyond all known forms.

IdN: What are the key considerations when designing geometrically?

FV: I create a great relationship with the space that I have to work on. I consider its volume, the complexity of the architecture, artificial or natural light, moving lights. These are the elements that I ponder prior to commencing the project.

IdN: What are you working on right now and what are your plans for the future?

FV: Right now, I am preparing a new project for a public commission in the city of New Haven, in the US. In mid-August, I'll travel to Nagoya, Japan, where I'll realise an artwork at the university there. Then I'll participate at the Singapore Biennale, in September. Later, I'll have other projects in Europe (France and Switzerland).