



# Discourse

from the end of the line

August 2016

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A unique kite by Steve  
Brockett takes flight over  
the 2016 International Kite  
Festival in Cervia, Italy.  
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## FROM THE EDITORS

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(under Browse > Articles).

You never know when an inspirational moment will happen around kites. Attending the 32nd International Kitefliers Meeting in Fanoe, Denmark certainly provided such a moment when fliers paid tribute to German kitemaker Werner Ahlgrimm, who passed away earlier this year. On a beautiful Danish day, the sky was filled with Ahlgrimm Roloplan kites of various configurations. Over twenty graced the sky for most of the day.

In another, totally unexpected situation – an evening barbecue at a paragliding-friend-of-a-friend's house in Salt Lake City – another guest, a neighbor of the host's parents, was the surprise "inspirer." Lee Caporalli mentioned that he was from Brazil, and I asked if there were *pipas* – the distinctive Brazilian fighting kite – in all parts of Brazil or just in specific regions. Well, what happened next was an enthusiastic reminiscence of his childhood growing up with *pipas*. Lee explained how the cutting line was made, strategies for fighting, the skill of actually capturing a cut kite and retrieving it, all to the ready ears of myself, Blake Pelton, and Jose Sainz. Not satisfied with simply explaining how a kite was made by kids with no money, Lee dashed into the house and returned with a square piece of paper with which he made a *capocheta*, one of the most elegant and simple sled kites I've ever seen! After seeing kites from all over the world, the most beautiful are often the most humble. See how easy it is to make your own *capocheta* on the following page.

And now on to the issue. I hope you'll enjoy a short insight into father and son Richard and



Robert Loera. One of the great kite ambassadors of the 1980s and 1990s, Robert Loera came to his passion for kites naturally, as his father, Richard, ran Beauty in the Wind kite store in San Diego.

Photos by Jose Sainz tell much of the story of 2016's Cervia International Kite Festival. For over 30 years, this has been the festival that best showcases artists and their kites. And speaking of artists, see and read many of the ideas of Otto Piene, a pioneering sky artist of the 1960s. *More Sky*, an innocent paperback from 1970 presents wonderful ideas that kitemakers and fliers can still explore now, 45 years later.

Drachen Foundation board member Joe Hadzicki brings us another update on the state of wind energy generation. Google X has jumped into the fray with the leadership of Astro Teller and the research of Makani Power. Ali Fujino reports on Drachen's first kite exhibit in Tieton, Washington, where our collection has been stored for almost ten years. Paper-and-bamboo kite friends Jose Sainz and Greg Kono, and I present some of our newest creations to the Boxx Gallery and to *Discourse* readers. Finally, NGO Roshni Helpline inspires with their successful kite project to raise awareness about the cause of missing children in Karachi, Pakistan.

Best of winds,

Scott Skinner  
Board President  
Drachen Foundation



Scott Skinner

How to make a capocheta: Using a square piece of paper, position paper with the point up and crease vertically down the center. Open and lay flat and fold top three corners to the center, refold the top to rear and leave left and right sides creased. Fold left and right corners back for bridle reinforcements, and tie a bridle loop to each. Find the center of your bridle loop and add a flying line attachment, then add tails to match wind conditions and enjoy the flight!

## CORRESPONDENCE

What a lovely issue. Such a pleasure to read – especially the interview with Ben.

It was Ben who introduced me to the Foundation – over breakfast at the Thailand Kite Festival many, many years ago.

We talked for an hour or so and he said to me “Write to Ali, and say I asked you to” – and that was a beginning of a wonderful friendship.

AJAY PRAKASH  
INDIA

Thank you. Another great issue. Naturally forwarded it to my daughter, who is going to be an art teacher.

GARY HINZE  
USA

Thank you so much for publishing my article. It looks great and I am proud to see it among other excellent and interesting publications.

It is truly an honor for me to publish in *Discourse*. I’m up to something new and surprising for the next opportunity!

In Argentina, some difficult times, but we are enjoying our new life at the sea and nature. Luckily there is always a kite!

MARIA ELENA GARCÍA AUTINO  
ARGENTINA

## CONTRIBUTORS

ALI FUJINO  
*Seattle, Washington*

Fujino has worked at the Smithsonian and is currently Director of Advancement for the Alaska Wilderness League. She continues her 24 years with the Drachen Foundation by serving on Drachen's board of directors.



Erin Hatch

JOE HADZICKI  
*San Diego, California*

An engineer, inventor, and entrepreneur, Hadzicki is one of three brothers who started Revolution Enterprises, the first to make a completely controllable four-line kite. The Rev has been the standard for the kite industry for over 20 years.



Tyler Hadzicki

ROBERT AND RICHARD LOERA  
*Lahaina, Hawaii*

Undefeated fighter kite champion, sport kite champion, kite store owner, and American kite ambassador Robert Loera was exposed to kiting by his father, Richard, owner of San Diego's Beauty in the Wind kite store in the early 1980s.



Courtesy Robert Loera

AZMEENA RAHMATULLAH  
*Karachi, Pakistan*

Rahmatullah is a self-proclaimed workaholic at heart who loves treating herself to adventures. Currently Associate Creative Manager at Spectrum Y&R, she is passionate about interacting with people and getting to know their stories.



Courtesy Spectrum Y&R

JOSE SAINZ  
*San Diego, California*

Sainz is the Horatio Alger of American kitemaking. Renowned for his elaborate, beautiful kites with Aztec motifs, he has conducted kitemaking workshops around the country and is a board member of the Drachen Foundation.



Jose Sainz

# CONTRIBUTORS

SCOTT SKINNER  
*Monument, Colorado*

A former Air Force instructor pilot, Drachen's board president has flown and designed kites for three decades. Today, Skinner is known as a world class, visionary kite artist.



Scott Skinner

# THE SEARCH FOR USABLE ENERGY

Joe Hadzicki

In man's search for usable energy, the journey started with the first spark that led to harnessing fire, and continues toward the hope of nuclear fusion power in the future. Here I'd like to draw from that history and consider how kites may be on the verge of becoming a small part of that story.

First a little history. In the early 1940s Edward Teller was a key scientist on the Manhattan Project. The group's goal was to produce the first atomic bomb. His work on the Manhattan Project changed the landscape of energy production forever with the advent of nuclear power. Fast forward more than 70 years and his grandson, Astro Teller, is once again redefining the approach to energy production. Where his grandfather once found energy inside an atom, Astro is now looking to the air.

Astro is the director of Google X laboratories, overseeing such projects as Google Glass, the Google driverless car and Project Loon, so finding innovative ways to make futuristic technologies viable is right up his alley. He's been responsible for spearheading self-driving cars that have since traveled more than a million miles on their own. Now he is trying to bring that same magic to kites. The Makani Power airborne wind turbine power system was acquired by Google X in 2013 and has been on the cutting edge of kite energy ever since.

The idea of generating power using kites is by no means new, so what makes Astro's



approach any different from those who have had little success? In a TED Talk in February of 2016, Astro's challenge to every employee boiled down to this: If you can figure out how to kill this project, I'll buy you a beer. By constantly trying to find reasons to kill off projects, the hardest parts get handled first and create more momentum to propel the project forward.

Although the Drachen Foundation has done articles on this subject before, here are three points that show just how special this project is where so many others have failed:

1. The U.S. Department of Energy Office of Advanced Research Projects has backed this project.
2. Google X has invested more than \$15 million dollars over the past few years.
3. Google handed the project over to Astro (and he hasn't been able to break it yet).

What has been accomplished up to this point has been nothing short of impressive. It is a major win for kiting technology to have the likes of Google and the U.S. Department of Energy see potential in this approach. However, the question now is: will the Makani system prove superior to the current wind turbine system, or is it just a niche product for a limited market?

Okay, a little technical detail to help the pieces fit. The "kite" design looks like a small airplane tethered to the "truck-mounted" ground station. Attached to the wings of the kite are eight generators. As the wind drives the "kite" through the air in a circular path, the wind spins the generators which send electrical power down the tether to the ground station. When wind conditions are less than ideal, the kite is stored in a "cradle" on the "truck-mounted" ground station. What's interesting is that the

generators can be reversed and used as motors to fly the device out or retract it back aboard the truck when wind conditions are unacceptable.

The Makani system has its pros and cons. On the upside, it is less expensive to build than a typical wind generator. On the downside, with many more moving parts and complexity of the system, the maintenance costs could easily be much higher. Another advantage is the system can be "truck-mounted" which could allow for remote location access, but the space required to operate is significantly larger, which means multiple units would have to be spread over larger distances to generate the same power compared to standard wind generators.

To see the wind generator in action, watch the video at: [www.vimeo.com/32162584](http://www.vimeo.com/32162584)

The "buzz" is still in the air. Google X is still trying to break it, and the kiting community is behind it.

The verdict? Only time will tell. ♦

# MEMORIES FROM A SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA KITE FAMILY

Robert and Richard Loera



Courtesy Robert Loera

Robert Loera (left) and his father, Richard.

## INTRODUCTION BY SCOTT SKINNER

Few people had an impact on the American kiting scene in the 1980s and early 1990s like Robert Loera: undefeated fighter kite champion, sport kite champion and promoter, kite store owner, and American kite ambassador. Robert and his wife, Barbara, owned and operated kite stores in Oahu and Maui and promoted kiting in every way on the islands and elsewhere. Robert was exposed to kiting by his father, Richard, owner of San Diego's Beauty in the Wind kite store in the early 1980s. The following is just a small sample of the family stories and experiences that influenced their kite lives.

## MEMORIES BY ROBERT AND RICHARD LOERA

**RICHARD:** When I was three or four years old, my dad was a green card worker at a coastal ranch between Laguna Beach and Corona del Mar. Every May 5th, the Japanese ranchers would celebrate by flying kites, mainly, dragons and *yakko-dako*. Then in 1942, all the Japanese were taken away from the coastal ranches so quickly that they left many belongings behind. My dad became a citizen and leased a vacant ranch. On the property there was a two-room building that was padlocked. Being around nine or ten years old and very curious, I crawled under the building, unscrewed a heater vent, and found my way inside. There was a treasure trove of books, records, photos, and keepsakes. Among all these items was a book on Japanese kites. I

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Courtesy Robert Loera

TOP: Robert Loera flying a fighter at the 15th AKA Convention in Virginia. BOTTOM: Richard Loera in front of Beauty in the Wind kite shop, San Diego.





Courtesy Robert Loera

TOP: Robert Loera's Hawaiian fighter kite group. BOTTOM:  
Robert Loera (left) and fighter kite guru Vic Heredia.

spent many hours looking at the pictures and trying to understand how the bamboo was shaped to make the kites. About a year later, an Army truck came, cut the padlock on the fence, drove to the back of the building, broke in the door, and stole everything.

An interesting thing happened while we were vacationing in Copper Canyon, Mexico. I had packed a Flow Form kite and a graphite-framed Spinoff. Just below the town that we stayed in was a soccer field, so at least once a day I flew the Flow Form and villagers would come out to watch. One day I put the Spinoff together and launched it. Well, the wind was strong and the Spinoff really started roaring, and almost everybody in the village came out to watch. Naturally, I put on a show re-landing, re-launching, doing spins and spirals! Finally, the old mayor of the town came over (I thought to thank me) and said to me, "If you would put a tail on your kite..."

The main memory I have of Tyrus Wong, [Chinese-American artist and kitemaker who is still with us at age 106], is the year that I made a flying Japanese vase with flowers on it. It flew perfectly without tails, but Tyrus got first place with one of his beauties. The second time, I created a flying kitchen sink and I thought I had first place sewn up. Tyrus brought a beautiful string of flying seagulls that flew perfectly. I happily settled for second.

ROBERT: During the days of my father's Beauty in the Wind kite shop in San Diego (1979-1984), we would fly a 25-foot Tony Cyphert delta from the front of the store to attract customers. The kite weighed about 40 pounds, constructed of aircraft aluminum tubing about two inches thick.

One day we launched the kite up to about 750 feet and got the attention of the FAA. It

had been picked up on radar, and air traffic was stopped. The FAA sent the police out to have us lower the large kite. That same kite we later used to launch a larger two-sided advertising banner over the mall. It measured eight feet high and over 200 feet long. First day up, we made the newspaper.

While working for my dad, I would practice my fighter kite skills, flying daily just outside the door of the store. I would fly my kite out to greet people in the parking lot with the Vic's fighter equipped with a flowing 25-foot crepe paper tail. Almost everyone would ask, "Are you doing that on purpose?" I would then immediately offer to show them how. In between potential customers I would practice flying under tree limbs and out. When I needed to grab the phone, I would land the kite on a sign post and then just fly out when done. I named the move "free parking."

My father taught me how to engage non-kite-believers. Under the counter was a tray with his favorite smallest kites. In the top corners of the store he had a few of his favorites: the kitchen sink, vacuum cleaner, and flying shirt kites. ♦



## UNBOXXED AT THE NEW BOXX GALLERY

Ali Fujino

### ART AS KITES JUNE 4-25 BOXX GALLERY



A postcard promoting June's art kite show at  
Boxx Gallery in Tieton, Washington.

In the spirit of supporting a new art gallery venture in the town of Tieton, Washington, the Drachen Foundation became very excited about the idea of putting together the first contemporary art kite exhibit to raise funds for the Highland Food Bank.

Boxx Gallery is owned by Michele Wyland, a Yakima, Washington entrepreneur and philanthropist who has been instrumental in supporting the small community. The idea was simple. Take their small corner shop, renovate the inside to become a contemporary art gallery, and solicit artists to sell their works and donate 30% to the Highland Food Bank! A number of local artists have volunteered hundreds of hours to build the new place. The shows have featured local artists working in all types of media including photography, ceramics, prints, paintings, metal arts, and jewelry.

Karen Quint designed Boxx to be an empty but welcome space to be used by the community, and there are plenty of ideas on the table. "At the moment, there are proposals for a show of handmade boxes, poetry readings, an artist-made kite exhibit with children's activities, and the annual art exhibit of all the neighboring schools," she said.

The ultimate goal of Boxx Gallery is to bring attention to the needs of families in the Upper Valley. "There are hundreds of families that depend on the distribution of food made possible by Northwest Harvest and the

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Ali Fujino

Kites on display at Boxx Gallery. Having the kites on stands allowed visitors to walk around the art.

dedicated volunteers of the Highland Food Bank,” Quint said.

In all the years that Drachen has been a part of the Mighty Tieton community, we had not really had the opportunity to have a kite exhibit! Here was our opportunity, so we agreed to curate a show at the Boxx. I began to put the show into perspective, determining the theme to be paper and bamboo. This made my selection of artists extremely easy: Greg Kono of Seattle, Washington, Scott Skinner of Colorado Springs, Colorado, and Jose Sainz of San Diego, California. I asked each to make 8-12 medium size kites. All the artists, except for Greg, had worked in both ripstop (sewing) and paper/bamboo (cutting and pasting).

The results were stunning. Works were shipped in. Greg did the inventory of the items, and I continued to work out the installation details with manager Karen Quint. On June 3rd, Greg and I made the 2.5-hour drive from Seattle to install the works. Installation took only one day and was incredibly easy thanks to Greg who envisioned and built specially designed floor and table stands on which to place the kites, thus liberating them from being encased in frames. (The kites that were framed looked equally great!) Having the kites on stands made them appear to fly, allowing the visitor to walk around the art.

Since none of the artists could attend the opening the next day, I asked kite artist Kathy Goodwind to stand in for the group. There is no better kite ambassador to help answer questions and give insightful stories about the world of tethered flight. It was great to have the collaboration, which Drachen has always felt was important.

To our surprise and delight, after only three days of exhibiting (Saturdays only

11am-5pm), the show was almost sold out! Pricing was competitive and affordable, allowing local visitors to purchase original works of art. After the first Saturday showing, we were asked to bring more works into the gallery, and Greg rose to the occasion. The red dots continued to mark the labels of artworks, indicating “sale.”

But the art of kites is more than just sales. It is about the individuals who make the art.

Note the personal statements by each of the artists that follows. Their art is an expression of their experiences, growth, and development throughout their careers. The Scott, Jose, and Greg that we met in our early years and the kites that we fell in love with have evolved. They are the same people, but their art reflects decades of influence from interacting with the kiting community. In much of the work, I can see influence both in design and production from the likes of Nobuhiko Yoshizumi, Mikio Toki, Anna Rubin, Pierre Fabre and George Peters, just to name a few. And then there are the personal experiences that each individual has incorporated: Scott in his appreciation of American patchwork and fascination with printing on paper, Greg from his childhood and family farm, and Jose with his collaborations at Burning Man over the last ten years. This is what makes the art of an artist.

But let us have them say it in their own words.

#### SCOTT SKINNER ARTIST STATEMENT

As an artist, I have been a dedicated kitemaker, flier, collector, teacher, and philanthropist of the sport with the Drachen Foundation in Seattle for three decades, but in recent years I have concentrated on creating art kites – kites emphasizing beauty

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BUYER/FLYER  
MUST ADD 2. PT  
BRIDLE  
TRIM LINES IF  
DESIRED  
TAILS

6  
3. STICK  
BLUE BIRDS  
\$2.00 EA

Greg Kono

An original kite by Colorado artist Scott Skinner.

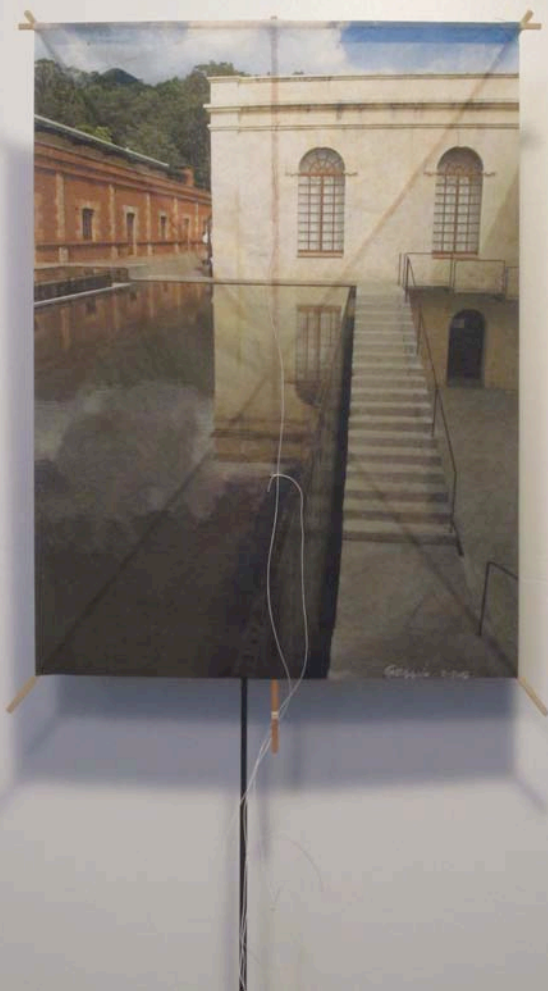




Jose Sainz

A butterfly kite by California artist Jose Sainz.





Greg Kono

"Casa" (left) and "Cut Fruit" kites by Seattle artist Greg Kono.

and originality.

Having studied kites, I knew what images were lasting: geometric ones. I became a student of traditional American patchwork quilts. My collection of books on the subject grew to a meter high. There was always a detail in a quilt that could be exploited for kitemaking; as an example, a wave detail. I was inspired to marry traditional American quilt designs with Japanese kite shapes and motifs using fine handmade papers and natural bamboo materials. – Scott Skinner

#### JOSE SAINZ ARTIST STATEMENT

I have been making and flying kites since 1989. My fascination with kites started when I was introduced to them by a friend at work. My friend would go out in the afternoon and fly his beautiful stunt kite in tune to the music. I went out with him several times and marveled at the way he could make his kite dance to the wind. Soon after I bought my own kite and got hooked.

Realizing I had to find my own motifs to make a mark, I continued to look to my heritage and decided to recreate the Aztec calendar for my 1992 AKA kite. Because the design was complex, I needed to make a large kite: “Azteca,” a ten-by-ten-foot hexagon with fifty-foot tail. The image came from a 26-ton stone monolith dug up in Mexico City in 1790 and now on exhibit at the anthropology museum there. The site of the find was the fifteenth-century Aztec capital, Tenochtitlan.

Over the years I have attended and displayed my kites at numerous national and international kite festivals around the world. I have been a member of the Kite Art Committee for the American Kitefliers Association and am a member of the board

of directors of the Drachen Foundation.

My greatest enjoyment in kiting is sharing the sky with all the wonderful friends I have met over the years. May we meet again under the sky some day! My works in this exhibit show how I approach the use of specialty papers and bamboo. I love to collaborate with other artists and working with henna artist Sandy Marie Brame from Belfair, Washington is illustrated in my shield kite. – Jose Sainz

#### GREG KONO ARTIST STATEMENT

I enjoy creating functional works. Nothing gives me more satisfaction than seeing something I built perform the way it was meant to. Kitemaking is an art form that I have been pursuing for over 15 years. Flying the kite is the final process to my art. I’ve heard that a kite does not have a soul until it has been flown at least once. As a Japanese-American I choose to explore the culture and materials used by my ancestors. Bamboo and washi (Japanese hand-made paper) are materials that I most often use, which are excellent for making kites and have been used for centuries in Japan due to their strength and light weight.

My approach to kitemaking is to unify all parts of the kite in harmony. I pay as much attention to the framework (bamboo) as I do the sail (washi) when building my kites. I strive to make the back of my kites just as aesthetically pleasing as the front. In flight, the sun backlights the kite, highlighting the framework through the sail. The challenge for me is to not overbuild the frame to the point where it will not perform, yet have enough substance to hold its shape in flight. For color I prefer to use fabric dyes, inks and watercolors to reinforce the transparent qualities that I seek. *Unryu*, Japanese for “dragon cloud paper,” is one of my favorite papers to use because of its unique

characteristic of having long strands of mulberry fibers running throughout the sheet.

Figures, past experiences, and elements from nature are reoccurring themes that I often use in creating my kites. Most of the images from my latest series of kites came from my trip to Oaxaca a few years ago. The images depict some of my closest friends, mentors, and experiences that still inspire and appeal to me. – Greg Kono

Many thanks to the Boxx Gallery and the dozen-plus volunteers who made this exhibit a success! ♦

Feature in *Yakima Magazine*:

[www.yakimamagazine.com/2016/05/27/art-food-community-the-boxx-gallery-in-tieton/](http://www.yakimamagazine.com/2016/05/27/art-food-community-the-boxx-gallery-in-tieton/)

# CERVIA KITE FESTIVAL 2016

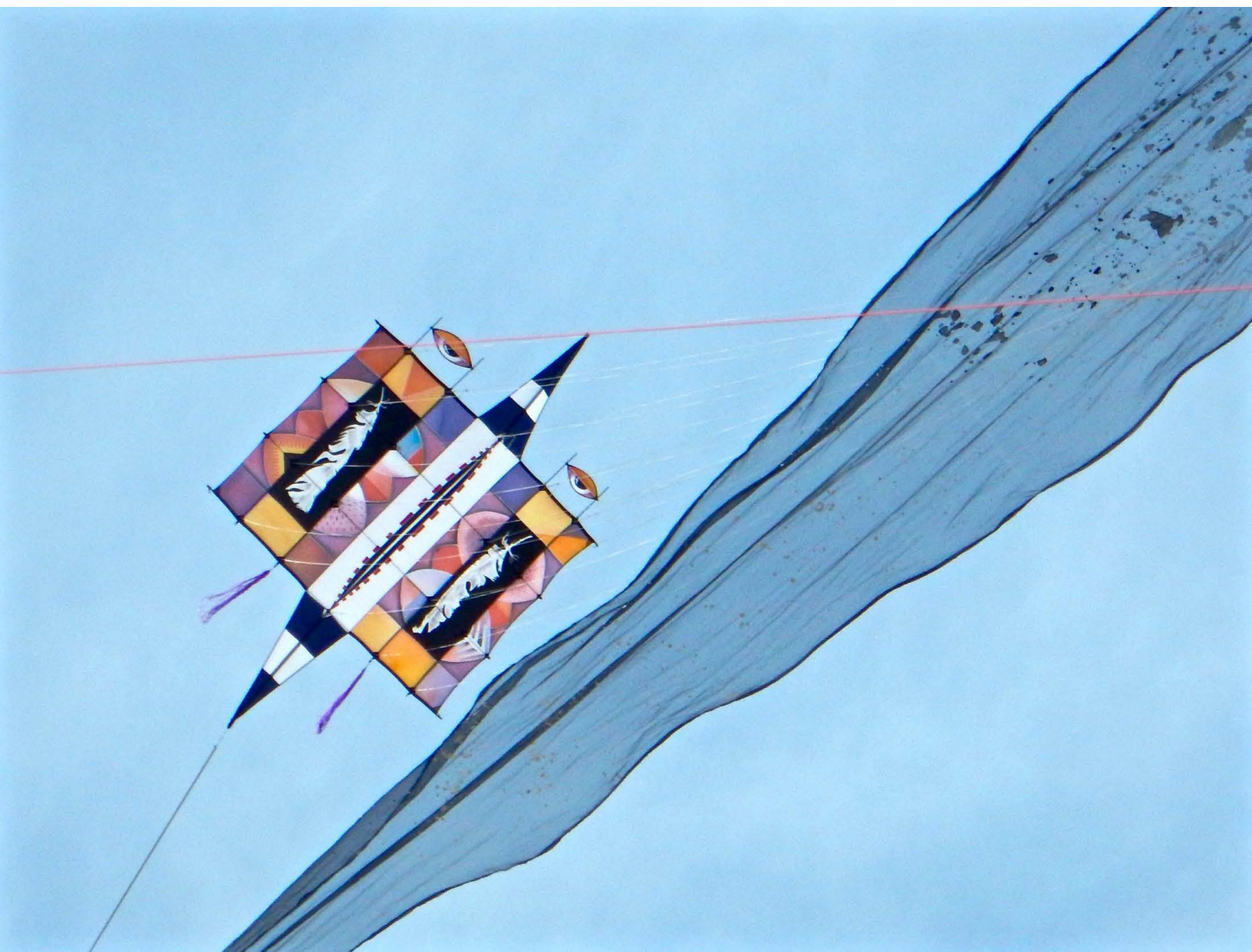
Photographs by Jose Sainz



Jose Sainz

Every spring since 1981, kite fliers from around the world have met in Cervia, Italy. 200 invited artists from 30 countries join thousand of participants for 10 days of kite flying on the beach. Here, Curtis Mitchel (U.S.) stands amid Pauline Taylor's (England) golden banner forest with a guiding hand.





Jose Sainz

"Cervia was so challenging and beautiful this year. The sky was as enchanting as the grounds and the crowds," writes photographer Jose Sainz. Pictured: a playful interaction of Steve Brockett's (Wales) hand-painted, rectangular kite with the transparent, flowing tail of Kisa Sauer's (Germany) kite.





Jose Sainz

Gorgeous wind installation by designer  
Frances Anderson (England).



Jose Sainz

LEFT: Detail of a kite from Steve Brockett's intriguing new series. RIGHT: Sharing the sky with George Peters' (U.S.) printed creation.





Jose Sainz

A series of life-size silhouette banners glancing to the sky  
by designer Jan van Leeuwen (the Netherlands).



Jose Sainz

"The wind and the weather were challenging all week this year. However, when the elements cooperated, the ground and sky displays became pure artistic magic," writes Jose. LEFT: Sunset image of Ramlal Tien's (France) creation. RIGHT: Fausto Marrocu's (Sardinia) "Medusas" dance in a turbulent sky.

# KITES OF HOPE: A SOARING TALE OF HOPE

Azmeena Rahmatullah

In Pakistan, the coming of spring is often marked by an army of kites that take over the clear blue skies. Traditionally referred to as Basant, this cultural festival is celebrated in the walled city of Lahore, where colorful kites take flight in the skies and kite flying gathers a frenzied momentum. Families, dressed in bright colors, gather on the rooftops to witness the kites dive and rise in a series of swoops and swirls.

Though traditionally associated with Lahore, Basant has caught the imagination of the entire country. The festive spirit during this time of the year is infectious as kite fliers partake in kite battles throughout the country. The hypnotic beat of the local *dhol*s (percussion instruments) are heard as gangs of little boys yell “*Bo-kata*” after cutting other people’s strings before chasing the fallen kites and claiming them as their reward.

We decided to use this popular kite flying activity to raise awareness about the cause of missing children by turning the kite, a cultural tool, into a social vehicle to reach people in the high impact areas of Karachi. With a population exceeding 22 million, Karachi is a densely populated metropolis of Pakistan. In a city that is home to different ethnicities, faiths, and social classes, around 3,000 children go missing each year. Many of these children are kidnapped for begging on the roads, forced into slave labor or prostitution, or are trafficked. However, others are simply lost and unable to find their way back home.

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Courtesy Spectrum Y&R

The "Kites of Hope" with photographs and details of missing children in Karachi, Pakistan.

Research indicates that the 24 hours after a child goes missing are most crucial. With each hour after that, the hope of finding a missing child diminishes. Unfortunately, at the moment the knowledge and information pertaining to missing children is restricted to the affected parties only. Given the alarming statistics, the need was to do something to raise urgency, spread awareness, and ultimately help reunite missing children with their parents.

Spectrum Y&R and Y&R Singapore collaborated with Roshni Helpline, an NGO working for the recovery of missing children in Karachi, to execute a kite flying initiative, “Kites of Hope,” on March 27, 2016. Kites with photographs and information of missing children, along with Roshni Helpline’s number, were designed by the Y&R office in Singapore and printed in Karachi. These unique kites became a coveted item, giving longevity to the information that needed to be spread as wide as possible.

A pre-event digital campaign was also conducted on social media to invite people to the kite flying event, while an announcement van, with “Kites of Hope” branding, informed people about the upcoming kite flying event. Spectrum Y&R also designed merchandise for the volunteers, and the team wore these t-shirts and caps while managing the ongoing event.

Certain areas in Karachi have emerged as the most vulnerable areas from where a high number of children go missing. These include Landhi, Korangi, Baldia Town, Orangi, Lyari and Gulshan-e-Iqbal, to name a few. Most of these areas are under-developed and poverty-stricken localities. “Kites of Hope” was organized in one such locality, Mehmoodabad, where a high number of children go missing.

Yusaf, age 5. Samia, age 7. Rafia, age only 3. These were among the children whose names and photos soared high on the “Kites of Hope” in an effort to reunite them with their families. Red, blue, and green kites bearing photos of missing children and the date of their disappearance were given out to both children and adults who had gathered at the park to celebrate the spring festival of Basant. The sky was filled with our message which was able to travel with the wind. As soon as one kite downed another and fell, crowds roared with delight and chased the fallen kite to claim it.

As an innovative way to locate missing children, the fallen kites helped disseminate information pertaining to missing children in a manner that reached the grassroots level and flowed freely. One after the other, the kites took flight at the event and each kite flier tried to take his kite higher than the others. People at the event were also given information on preventive steps and on urgent action that needs to be taken if a child goes missing.

The kite flying activity at the event not only proved to be engaging for the attendees but also helped in increasing awareness about the issue of missing children. Another equally important objective was to make people aware of Roshni Helpline’s number, so that if any child goes missing in the future, parents and relatives know that they should immediately contact the Helpline. A prompt notification helps the NGO track the missing child, and the likelihood of finding the child also increases.

“I believe such creative ideas will create awareness,” said Mohammad Ali, president of Roshni Helpline. He spoke about the apathetic attitude of local police who do not take swift action when a complaint of a child’s disappearance is brought to them.

*continued on page 33*





Courtesy Spectrum Y&R

Attendees at the "Kites of Hope" event.



Courtesy Spectrum Y&R

TOP: Parents holding posters of their missing children at the “Kites of Hope” event. BOTTOM: Press conferences to announce the recovery of a missing child.



However, since the “Kites of Hope” event, two police stations in the Mehmoodabad area have offered to help Roshni Helpline by inviting them to display posters of missing children inside the police stations.

“Kites of Hope” brought with it a ray of optimism for the families of missing children when a 12-year-old child, Shahmir, was found a week after the event. Relatives of the missing child were present at the event where they came to know about Roshni Helpline, after which they approached the NGO and provided details of their missing child. Roshni was then able to trace the child who was successfully recovered from an *edhi* home (a foster home), after he was reported missing from the central vegetable market in the Shah Faisal Colony vicinity on March 9, 2016.

The success of the “Kites of Hope” event paved the way for more recoveries when a second missing child, 5-year-old Muzammil, was traced and recovered by Roshni Helpline shortly after the first. Muzammil had been missing for 10 months and 13 days, after he was kidnapped from the Karachi Zoo on July 20, 2015. This recovery was made possible by the timely action of his parents who found out about and contacted Roshni Helpline. The NGO was then able to immediately activate their volunteer network and advise the parents to lodge a report at the Garden Police Station. The team’s tireless efforts paid off on June 1, 2016, when Roshni received an anonymous phone call informing them that the child was seen inside a house in Nazimabad No. 2. Upon confirmation, the police were informed, who raided the house and recovered Muzammil. Some people were also arrested in the process.

This string of successful recoveries was made possible by the awareness that the “Kites of Hope” event was able to spread.

These two successful recoveries were followed by yet another recovery of an 8-year-old child, Iftikhar, who went missing 10 months ago. He was traced at an *edhi* home and subsequently reunited with his family. Following each recovery, press conferences were also hosted by Spectrum Y&R at their Karachi office to increase awareness regarding the issue and recovery of missing children among the public.

This unique kite flying initiative not only helped build awareness by giving missing children’s faces and names greater reach through the sky, but the subsequent recovery of three of these missing children has alerted parents to be vigilant and ensure that urgent action is taken if a child goes missing. High participation from the general public and citywide awareness of Roshni Helpline has resulted in more reporting and inquiries of missing children.

Reuniting the families with their children was indeed the most worthwhile impact and outcome of this kite flying initiative. From electronic media including TV and radio channels, to print media and newspapers, the event was given extensive coverage. The innovative way in which this issue was addressed, the relevance of the initiative, and the urgency of the matter collectively gave way to a positive, long-term impact. The success of the “Kites of Hope” event also brings to light how a cultural icon of spring, the kite, succeeded in bringing people together to raise awareness about a social cause.

“Kites of Hope” is the first of many similar kite flying events that we will be organizing to reunite missing children with their families. You too can join us at [www.kitesofhope.org](http://www.kitesofhope.org) to help us reach out to as many people as we possibly can.

Together, let’s give wings to hope. ♦

## FROM THE FORGOTTEN BOOKSHELF: OTTO PIENE'S *MORE SKY*

Scott Skinner



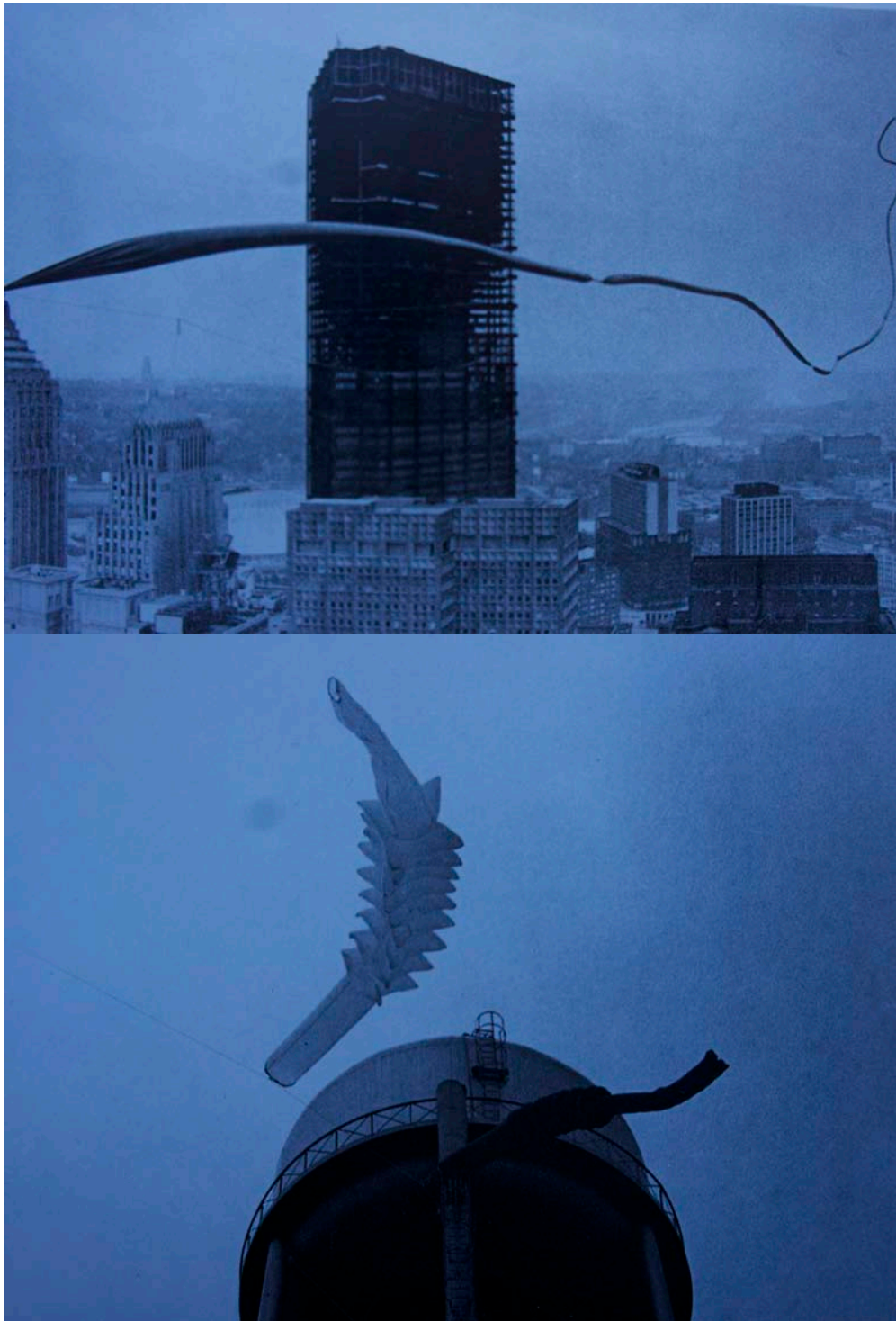
Otto Piene/MIT Press

I don't know how this understated paperback found its way to my bookshelf. I've walked into some great bookstores in every part of the country, including Powell's in Portland, Tattered Cover in Denver, and Ken Sanders Rare Books in Salt Lake City, to name a few. My memory is fuzzy, but *More Sky* might have been a Ken Sanders purchase, and I'm surprised and impressed every time I take it off the shelf and leaf through its pages.

Otto Piene was the first Fellow of the MIT Center for Advanced Visual Studies in 1968 and was a pioneering figure in multi-media and technology-based art. For readers of *Discourse*, you might have noticed his name in Clara Wainwright's wonderful recollection of the Great Boston Kite Festival of the late 1960s. In fact, Piene mentions the event in *More Sky*: "The Boston Kite Flying Festival in Franklin Park united thousands of people and, when I experienced it, produced much joy, few words, little theory, and no scholars, except as people."

In *More Sky*, as explained on its flyleaf, Piene "covers 'things to do' arranged alphabetically, A-M,... Like city planning, clothing, collaboration or electronic music, elements, engineering or government, graffiti, graphics, green toad jelly." In fact, this book covers only A through M and I'm unaware of another volume that tackles N through Z. In this case, "half a loaf" is more than enough to sustain those of us who attempt to use the sky as our canvas. Illustrated by whimsical drawings, the

*continued on page 37*



Otto Piene/MIT Press

Two large-scale inflatables by artist Otto Piene.



Otto Piene/MIT Press

"Dancers" drawing from Otto Piene's *More Sky* book.



book describes “some of the things that man the artist can do to purify the skies polluted by man the moneymaker and rendered fearsome by man the war-maker.”

Before speaking about some of Piene’s ideas – A-M rather than A-Z – let me borrow some of his words from the book’s preface. He makes the point that “the artist is still a person trained and willing to shape small or large objects, stretches of land, small or large portions of the environment, small or large portions of open minds. Aside from expressing spirit through matter and using the senses as doors to the mind, the artist has another subversive talent: the ability to express maximum ‘content’ by minimum means. He makes something out of nothing, or nearly nothing. The artist can be considered a brilliant economist.” He concludes, “I am happy to concede that... there may be a little room for ‘art’ and its habitual ways or the traditional hokus-pokus of an ‘art world.’ Ideally the art world will turn into a world of art where everything means something, in which there will be enlightenment of the artist, as well as of his audience, beyond becoming famous, beyond wielding power, beyond charming the mod masses.”

It’s unfair to pull selected “letters” out of Piene’s artistic alphabet, but I’d love to mention a few that might be of particular interest to kite artists and anyone using the sky as canvas.

C – Conventions. The outcry against conventions has become conventional.

D – Dance. I am now curious about how human dancers might interact with huge, artificial, inflated, mobile dancers.

E – Environment. How healthy it would be if we had Niagara Falls instead of Rockefeller Plaza. A most dramatic

environmental event: the 1965 New York blackout. Imagine if, when the light returned, it had been blue.

F – Flagpoles. Can hold flags, banners, ribbons, fish kites, wind-socks, wind puppets, and combinations thereof – wind sculptures for good weather and bad.

F – Flight. I do not think it is by accident that we are told repeatedly that soaring and parachuting come closest to art experiences.

G – Green Toad Jelly. The sense of poetry and the sense of the absurd that the artist has to maintain.

K – Kinetic Sculpture. Kinetic art is inherently a social art. It is mature enough to expand, to live without the babblers, and to address open minds everywhere. I find it significant that kinetic art has had a special appeal to children for a long time.

Can the same be said about kites?

Finally, I love what Piene says about kites:

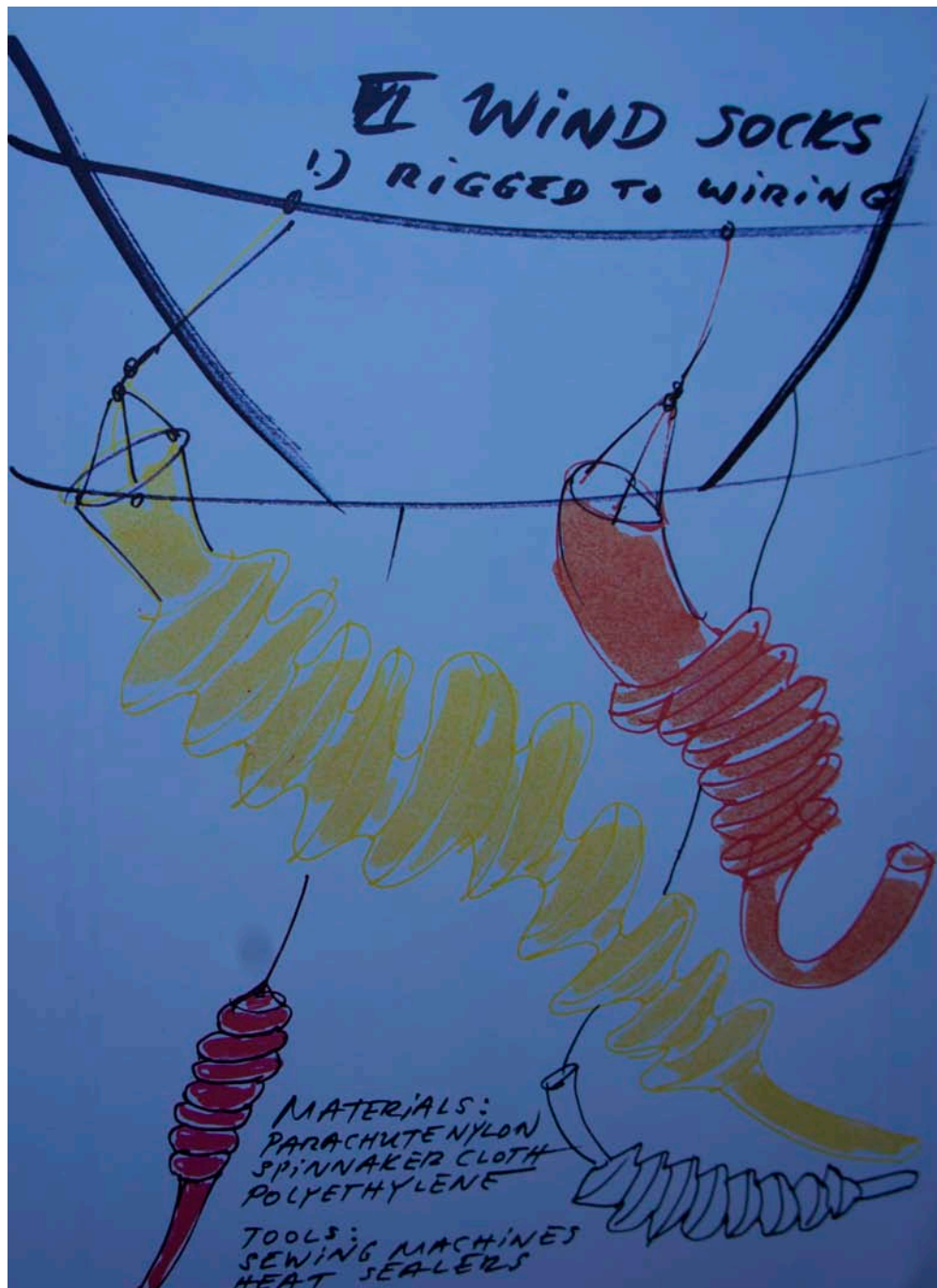
“The freedom of art and artists is still severely restricted by the artists’ common habit of regarding their own navels. Art in general has spent a lot of time and effort looking at its own navel. In order to reorient artists’ concern and to reestablish touch with and influence on life, we raise our eyes and look at the world beyond the limits on ‘art,’ and we study subject matter that is not in the files of art history.”

Read more about Otto Piene at [listart.mit.edu/node/693#.U2Jq1-A1fww](http://listart.mit.edu/node/693#.U2Jq1-A1fww). A simple search of “Otto Piene” will find several sites of wonderful images from Piene’s work. ♦



Otto Piene/MIT Press

"F – Flagpoles. Can hold flags, banners, ribbons, fish kites, wind-socks, wind puppets, and combinations thereof – wind sculptures for good weather and bad."



Otto Piene/MIT Press

"In order to reorient artists' concern and to reestablish touch with and influence on life, we raise our eyes and look at the world beyond the limits on 'art'..." - Otto Piene



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