





To ensnare. To take in. To beguile. To elude. To while away. To cheat. To fail to fulfill. Or otherwise, to deceive. From its Latin roots, through the centuries, in its obsolete, archaic, or contemporary form, 'deception' as a word defies definition and is open to interpretation. It is, in fact, inherently elusive: difficult to pin down, changing with the passing time, laden with meaning and yet ever so playful, specific and vague at the same time.

Avramidou's recent body of work is the three-dimensional equivalent of this elusiveness. Presented in a variety of media the artist's near-obsession with the art of deception keeps the viewer occupied and uneasy, in mind, body and soul. Just as the pieces evolve and transmute over time, so does the viewer's reaction to them. The visceral and the cerebral go hand in hand in this gradual, tentative, sometimes locomotive discovery of a world that is both strictly and subtly personal and esoteric, and fiercely and boldly public and proclaimed.

The artist is preoccupied with the seen and the unseen, the obvious and the hidden, what is above and what lies beneath the surface. More than a mere visual play, this constant tension between the two polarities - or sides of the same coin, reveals a pattern that is, to a certain degree, a common social experience. Avramidou quite consciously points out our imagined or lived safe places that in her work may become abstracted as the 'hidden': a cavern, the seabed, the floor of a rainforest. Her own subconscious and personal experiences come to enhance this imagery, which now necessarily oscillates between the individual and the collective, emulating life and perhaps recalling our primeval origins.

The evolution of the artist's work from her earlier canvases to today's sculptural pieces almost depicts the process of going from darkness to light, from obscured to revealed 'truths', from uncertainty to certainty, from vagueness to clarity. In Gateway to Light (2019), Avramidou cuts through pitch-black thickness with vertical openings, which simultaneously evoke rays of light, fogginess, dampness and cascading water. The blurriness indicates the start of a process, a state between sleep and awakening, a rupture of the visual.

The introduction of red colour in its blood-like tone in Perspectives (2020) indicates life and points to this all-important element in the art historical hidden/seen duality, the curtain. The allusion to the theatrical space invests the scene with greater ambiguity, as it is unknown on which side lies the real life and on which lies fiction. In Untitled 50 (2021) the boldness of the slits now gives way to restlessness, visually translated to an escape towards the three-dimensional space.

Avramidou's recent works, then, forming the Deception series come out of this early struggle to pull the curtain apart and reveal, or courageously dive in, what lies behind it. While the colour disappears and the process is seemingly reprised from the initial fogginess, a decisive turn has been realised. The artist is no longer hostage to the material, but instead works with it. The vertical movement is now expressed not just with light and the occasional vibrant colour opening, as in Deception 7 (2021), but also with traces of human participation. Hands have deliberately, at times tantalisingly shaped the work into a game of light with shadow, of colour with greyness and of folds with smoothness. Seen from a distance, the works are even reminiscent of the silk taffeta gowns of the baroque and rococo iconography, in all their theatricality and luxury.

The works doubtless invite the viewer to intervene. Natural curiosity, or a willingness to flatten and tidy the unevenly ruched 'fabric', as if that of life, prompts the senses to respond. The impulse is strong but, alas, deception has been realized. The material is not mouldable by hand only, and the paint is acrylic, shiny, industrial. Hence, what appeared from a distance to be an inviting, abstracted, changeable, smoothing-worthy piece of cloth is a hard, unchangeable structure that, moreover, hides the secrets behind its folds surprisingly well. This is now a case of powerlessness, and the tentative exploration of the world now turns into an admission of manipulation. While experimentation may be said to be found at the core of this move, subtle nuances of a slowly self-establishing power of the artist are starting to emerge.

Deception, however, does not stop there: it goes a step further in the Bubblegum (2021) works. Boldly using a monochromatic palette now, the artist launches herself into an exploration of fleshiness-meets-industry, where body parts combine an implied softness with power. Then, moving from her sexually suggestive pink to an iridescent blue in her Chameleon (2021) works, Avramidou crushes the female-shaped, delicate nature. Here, the harshness of the industrial material and colour, characteristic of the supercar, with its power and raciness, is decidedly male, dominates the work and the contained female presence.

Although firmly positioned in César's legacy of redundant car compressions as a comment on throwaway society, the effect is here, however, decidedly different: the artist is secure in the knowledge that she is dealing with an organic element, which symbolically has the power to unfold, change its colour like a chameleon, regenerate and re-emerge. This process is expressed by the artist's latest Fluo Capsule works, a three-dimensional evolution of her earlier slit canvasses. The dynamic, trademark colours of luxury car brands emerge as rays, or wings of hope from black masses that are ready reveal their insides and bloom, such as in Fluo Capsule- Lava Orange (2021).

Beguiled, then, the artist, the viewer, and by consequence society at large are, in a seemingly never-ending circle of push and pull, shadow and light, introversion and exposure, compression and expansion. However, transmutation lies at the heart of this process. Standing at a crucial crossroads, Avramidou's works, then, which do not seem to be touched by a fear of change, have reached a level of maturity just before they re-emerge in a new form, steely and dynamic but nevertheless magnetic, to ensnare us once again.

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Art Historian-Curator*

Fluo Capsule  
Lava orange

95x75cm  
Acrylic paint  
on hand sculpted plastic board  
2021





Fluo Capsule  
Yellow

110x75cm  
Acrylic paint  
on hand sculpted plastic board  
2021



# Space Addiction

190x90cm

Acrylic paint

on hand sculpted plastic board

2021





# Silk

125x100cm

Acrylic paint

on hand sculpted plastic board,  
2021



# Bubblegum

80x55cm

Acrylic paint

on hand sculpted plastic board

2021



# Chameleon 4

95x75 cm

Acrylic paint

on hand sculpted plastic board

2021



## Bubblegum 2

80x75cm

Acrylic paint

on hand sculpted plastic board

2021t



# Bubblegum 3

160x80cm

Acrylic paint

on hand sculpted plastic board

2021





## Chameleon 2

95x75cm

Acrylic paint

on hand sculpted plastic board

2021



# Chameleon 3

95x75cm

Acrylic paint

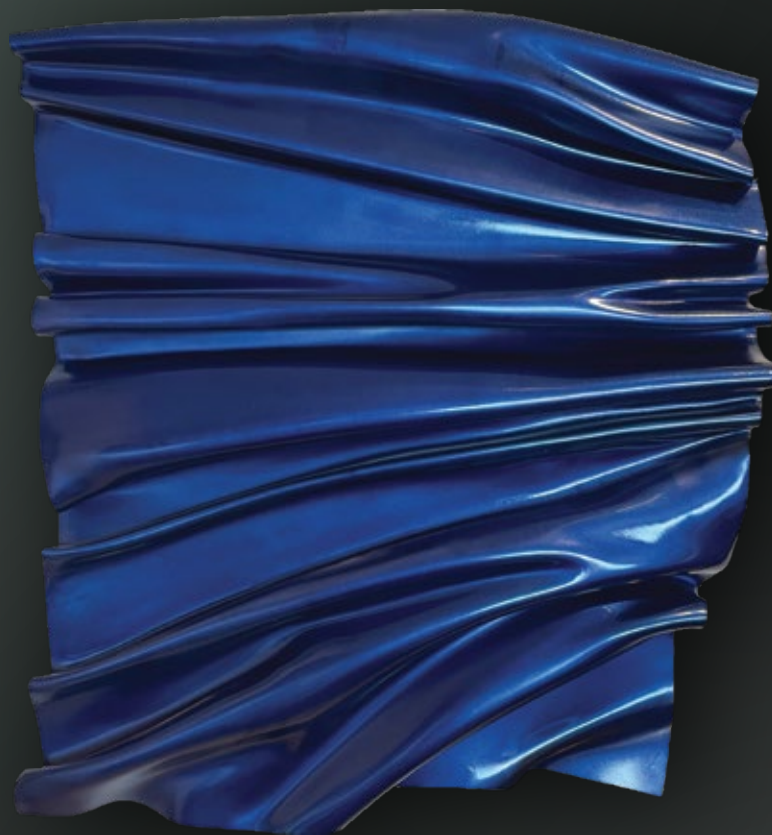
on hand sculpted plastic board

2021



# Deception 10

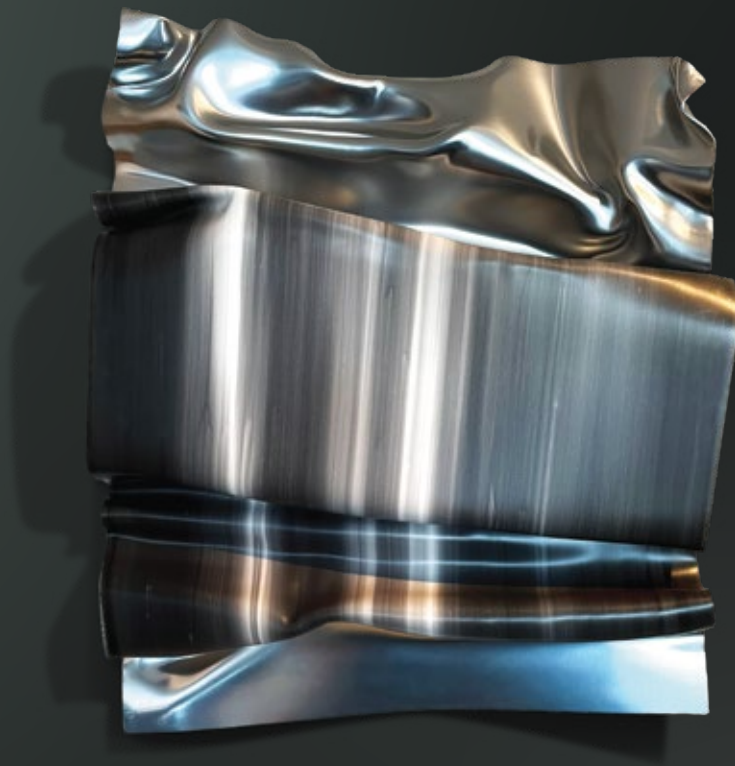
105x90cm  
Spray paint  
on hand sculpted plastic board  
2021



## Deception 9

100x80cm

Acrylic ink, spray paint  
on hand sculpted plastic board  
2021



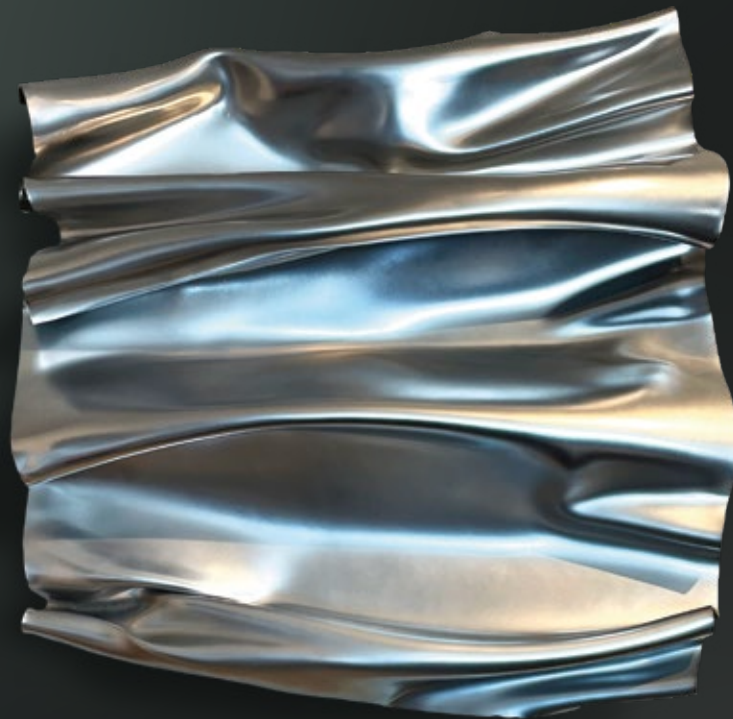
# Silver

80x80cm

Spray paint

on hand sculpted plastic board

2021





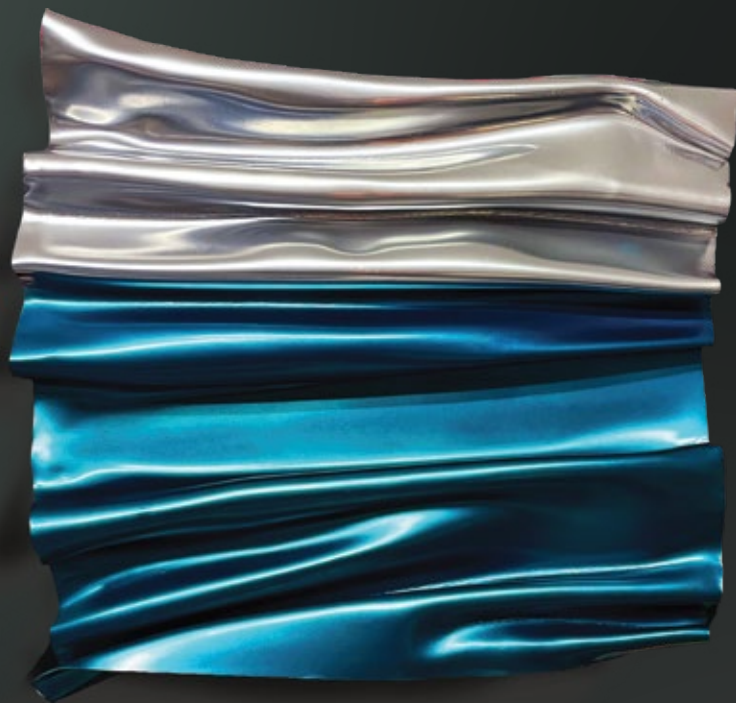
# Silver and Blue

80x80cm

Spray paint

on hand sculpted plastic board

2021



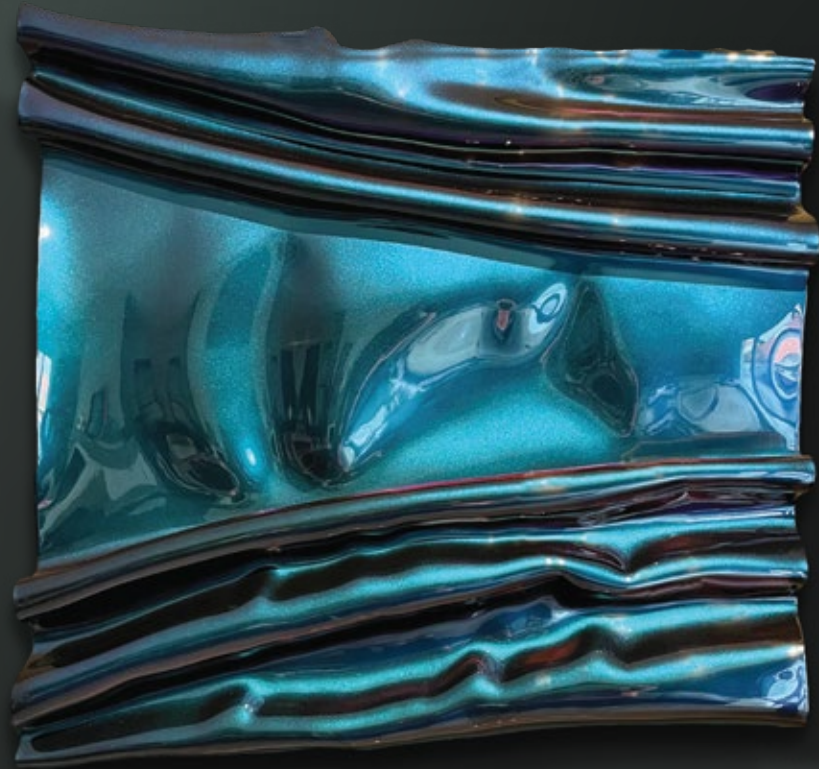
# Chameleon 5

75x80cm

Acrylic paint

on hand sculpted plastic board

2021



# Chameleon 6

75x80cm

Acrylic paint

on hand sculpted plastic board

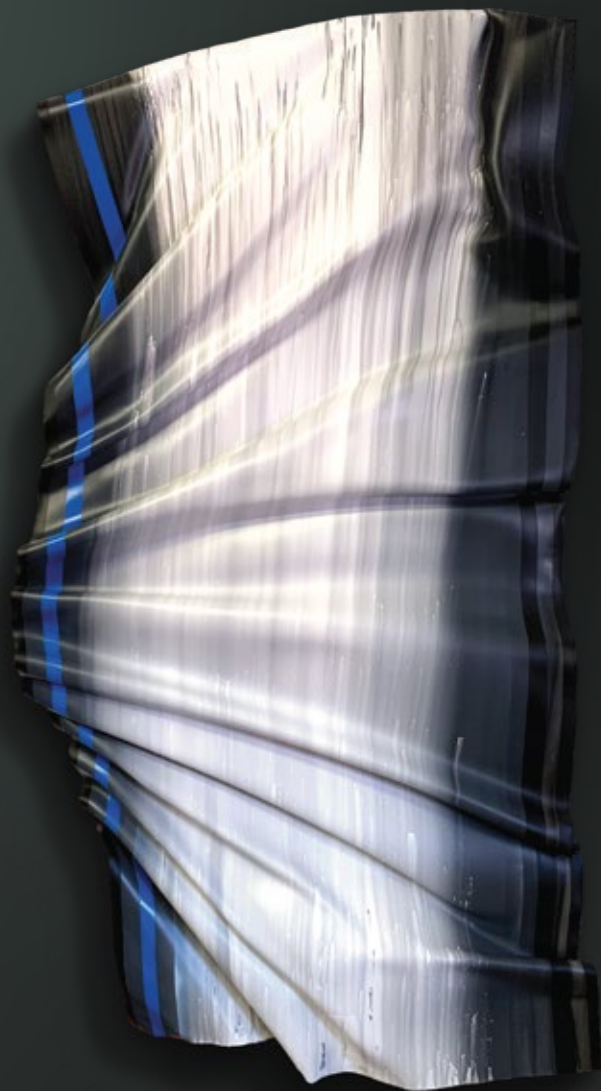
2021



## Deception 8

175x90cm

Acrylic ink, spray paint  
on hand sculpted plastic board  
2021



# Deception 7

130x90cm

Acrylic ink, spray paint  
on hand sculpted plastic board  
2021





# Deception 6

90x90cm

Acrylic ink, spray paint  
on hand sculpted plastic board  
2021



# Deception 5

90x85cm

Acrylic ink, spray paint  
on hand sculpted plastic board  
2021



# Gateway to light

150x150cm

Acrylic ink and Spray paint  
on canvas, 2019



# The Way Out

140x110cm

Acrylic ink and spray paint  
on canvas, 2020



Untitled 50

104x84cm  
Acrylic ink, spray paint  
on canvas, 2021





# Perspectives

150x150cm

Acrylic ink and spray paint  
on canvas, 2020







Ermina Avramidou