

## Body and machine

Man has always been obsessed with the search for everlasting knowledge, an archetypal idea already implicit in the myth of Prometheus. The wish to possess divine things, to play at being the creator and to manufacture a machine resembling oneself has been latent in the minds of engineers and artists of all ages. The first such devices, like the mechanical lion constructed by Leonardo da Vinci for King Louis XII of France or the wooden man made by Juanelo Turriano for Emperor Charles V of Spain, appeared in the 15th and 16th centuries under the inspiration of clockmaking. A definition of “android” appeared in the French encyclopaedia thanks to Jacques de Vaucanson, one of the most popular manufacturers of automata in France. Since their first appearance, the existence of automata has sparked metaphysical debates on respect for man’s own nature, and on whether we will be enabled by technology to dominate and subject our fellow beings. The subject was addressed by the Valencian ventriloquist Francisco Sanz in a documentary he made in 1918 with Maximiliano Thous, where he explained the mechanisms that set his simulacra of humans in motion. This urge to display their artifacts and reveal the secrets of their magic is the spirit suffusing the work of the artists gathered in the section Body and machine, which analyses the interdependence in contemporary societies of technology and corporality. These artists invite us to set up a dialogue with the machine-objects they have invented and built, confronting us with challenges and questions on ethical matters deriving from the relationship between humanity and nature.



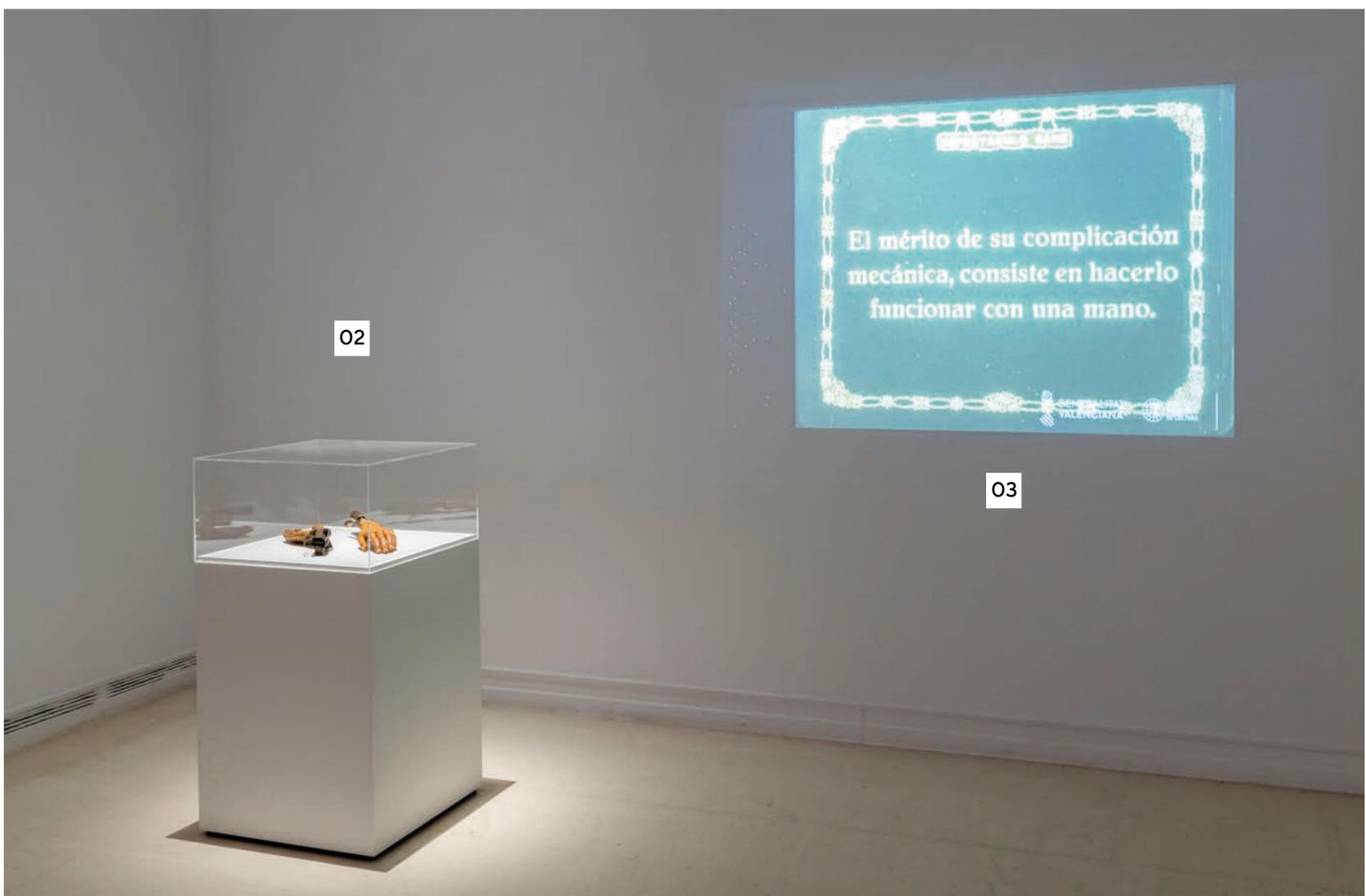
**01. Jana Sterbak**

*Remote Control II*, 1989

Aluminium structure on wheels, motor with remote control, cotton fabric and single-channel video, colour, no sound, continuous projection. Structure. 154.8 x 158.4 cm

Colección MACBA. Fundación MACBA

Photo: Tony Coll © Jana Sterbak



**02.** Design: Francisco Sanz

Execution: Francisco Boví and Lorenzo Mata

*Dos manos mecánicas de autómatas* (Two Mechanical Automaton's Hands), c. 1904

Wood, mechanical parts and oil paint. 46 x 10.5 x 6 cm

Herederos de Francisco Sanz.

Museu Internacional de Titelles d'Albaida

**03. Francisco Sanz and Maximiliano Thous.**

*Sanz y el secreto de su arte*

(Sanz and the Secret of his Art).

Barcelona: Hispano Films, 1918

Full-length video, 63' / Gauge: 35 mm /

Format: Silent; 1:1,33.

Extracts:

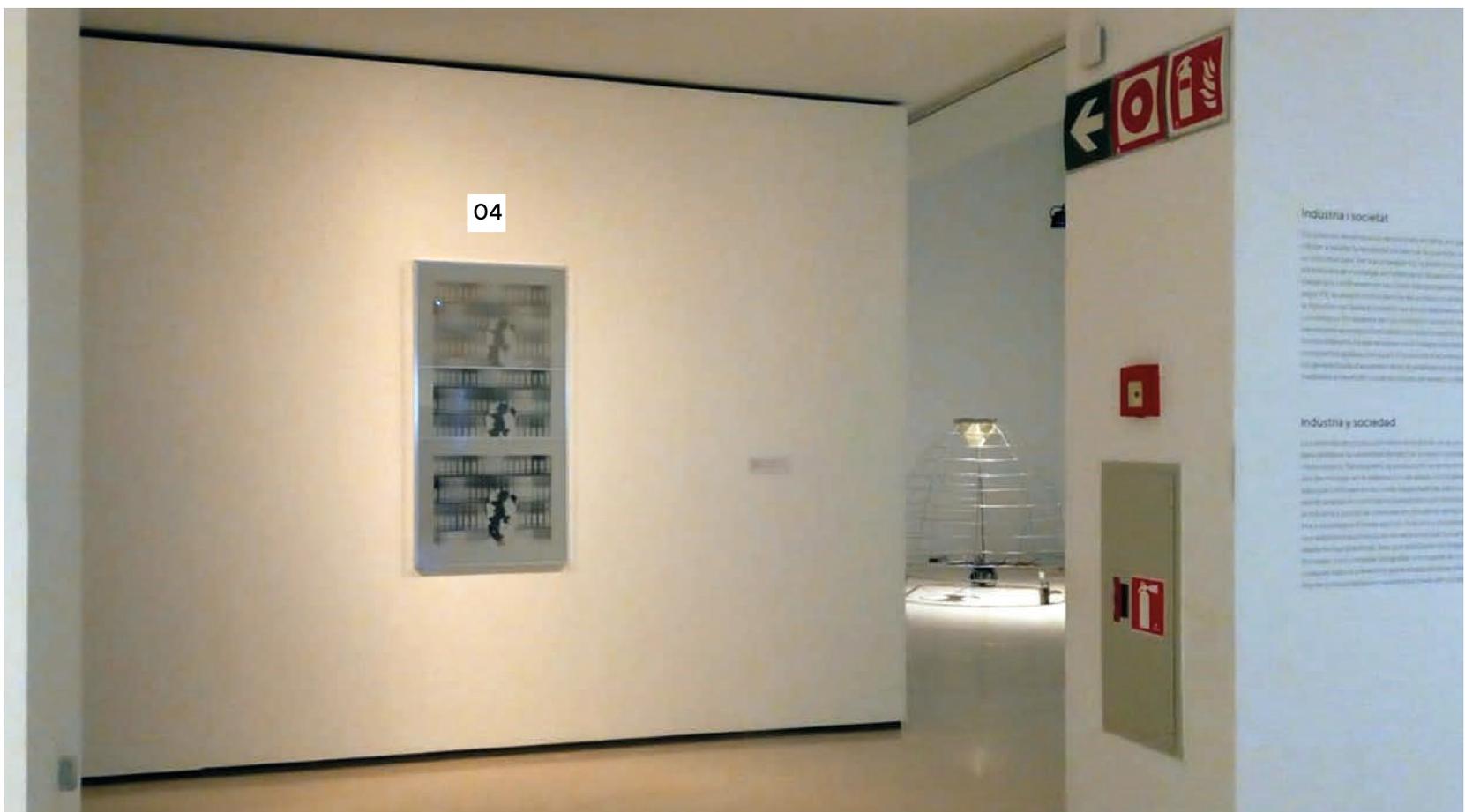
Don Venancio: 22'36" to 24'06"

Frey Volt: 29'10" to 31'16"

Juanito: 35'18" to 36'42"

Don Liborio: 44'17" to 46'26"

La Filmoteca - Institut Valencià de Cultura (IVC).

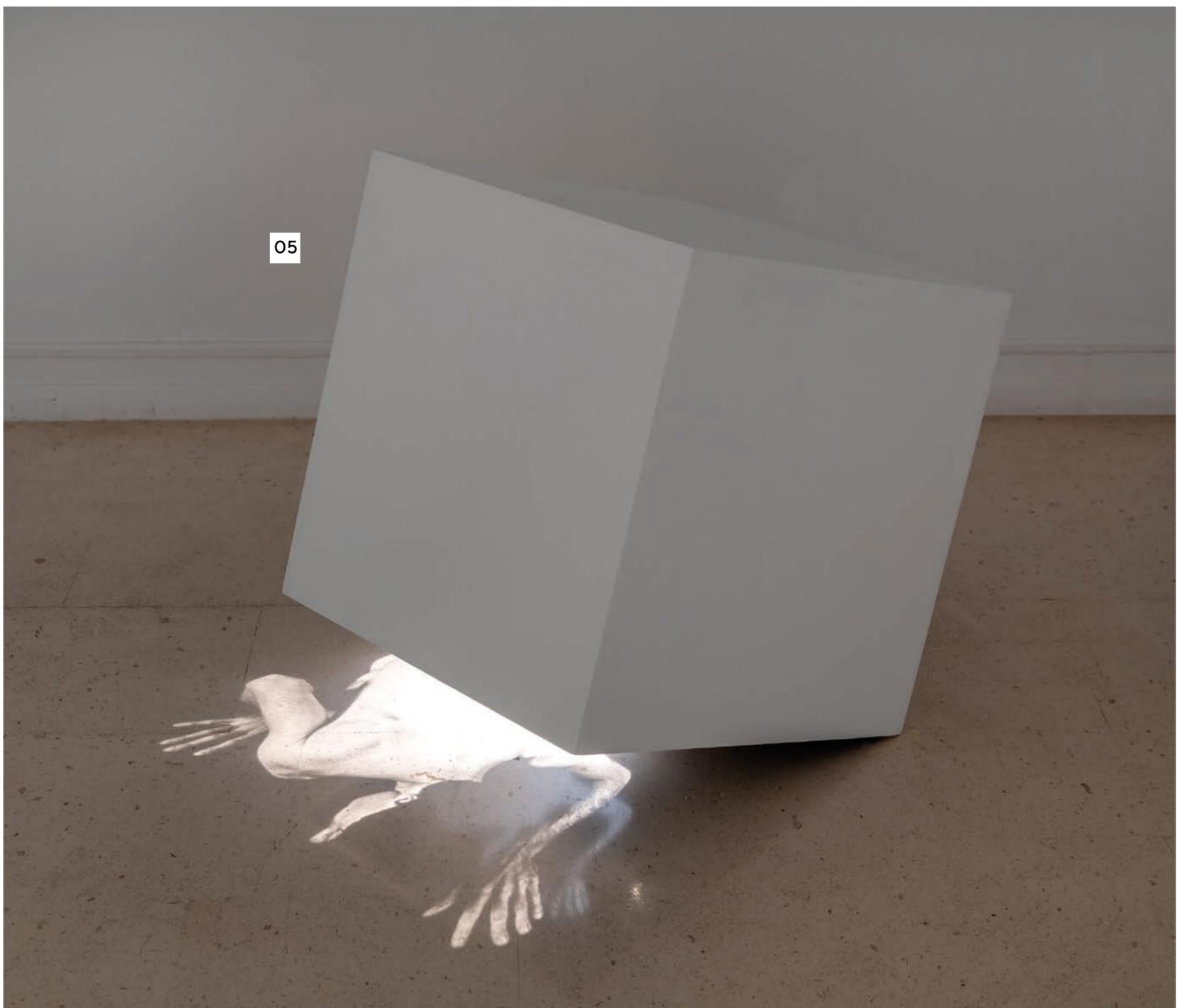


**04. ANZO**

*Isolation 7, (1967)*

Mixed technique (Aluminium photolith presensibilized and inked), 128.5 x 63 cm

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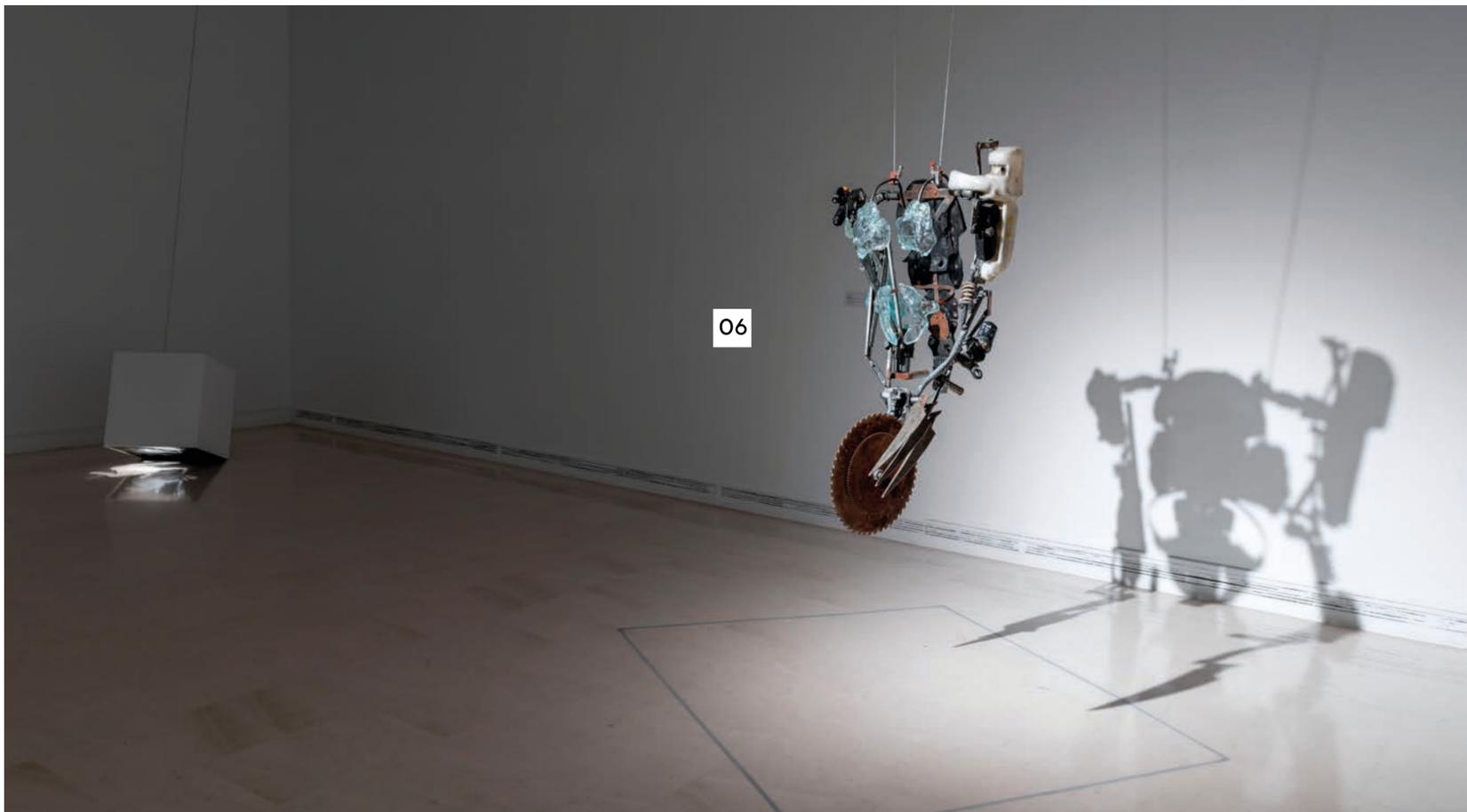


**05. Daniel Canogar**

*Contrabalanza (Counterbalance), 1999*

Wood, photolith, electric wire and halogen bulb.  
60 x 60 x 60 cm

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Depósito Cal Cego. Colección de Arte Contemporáneo



**06. Carlos Sáez**

*EXO-Corpse*, 2020

Automotion parts, iron, plastic and resin. 150 x 60 x 30 cm

Artist's collection



**07. Maribel Domenech**

*El cuerpo, la estancia oscura*

(The Body, the Dark Room), 1992

Aluminium, muraldón, methacrylate and other components: P.V.C., X-radiogram, fitted carpet, synthetic fabric and neon. 32.3 x 29.4 x 25.1 cm

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