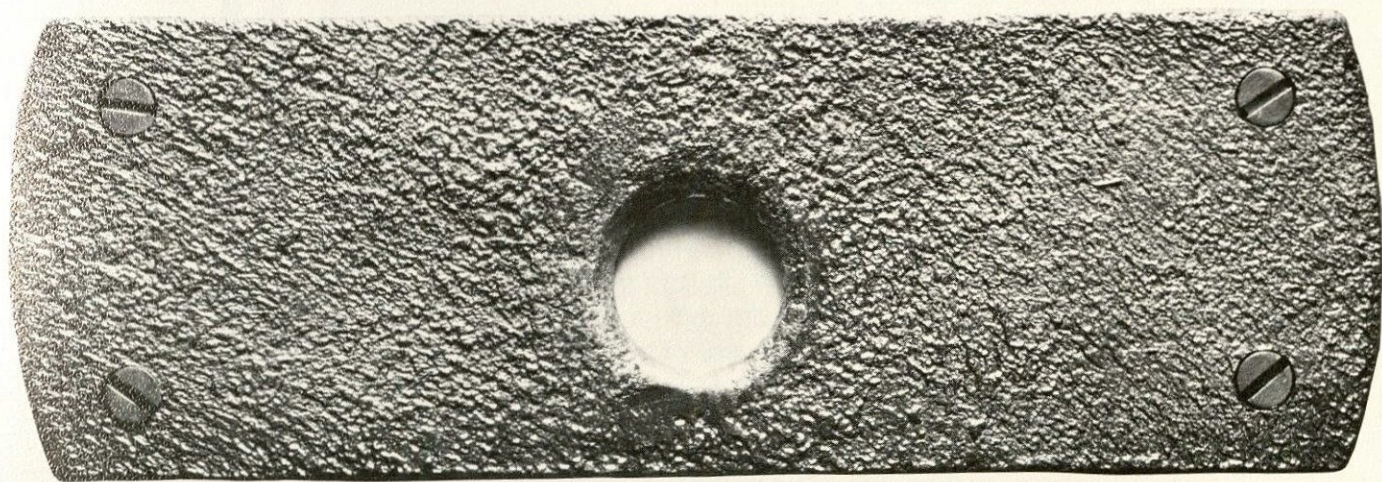




Jim Stark

Jim Stark

WALL PIECES AND WINDOWS



January 20 – February 15
1984

Cover and Title Piece:
Wall Piece with Hole

2-13/16 x 8-9/16; Bronze with nickel plate.

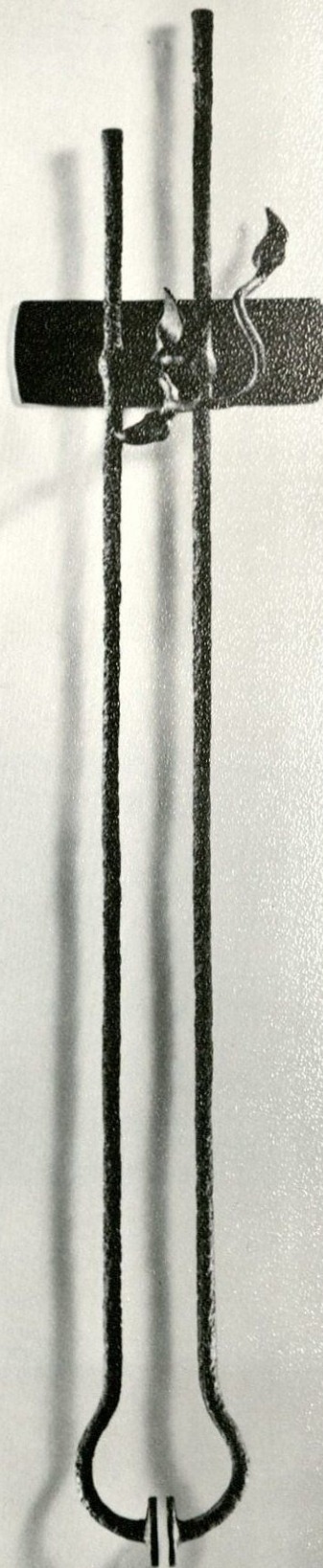
Unless otherwise indicated, all of the pieces illustrated are of D.Z.R. bronze.

Dimensions in inches, height precedes width.

Catalog Design: Don Bell, Jim Stark

Photography: Chris Focht

Wall Commutator
45 x 10



The pleasure in an answer depends upon the quality of the question posed; a solution is only as good as the puzzle it resolves. So we aren't much interested any longer in what has become abstractly obvious nor, far on the other hand, in arcane minimalist conclusions. Or put another way: we want our aesthetic experiences to take us where we can't get to alone, and we want our art to say *look at this* in ways that had not occurred to us. And we want the *this* to be more than some dalliance with a theoretical concept. In a word, we want art to *count* for something, to serve something larger than its own solipsistic necessities. And this is why Jim Stark's work is exciting.

The work presented in this show has been developed over the past three or four years. The progression has been from the Commutator series to the Wall [Commutator] pieces to the Windows. Together, what is represented here is the exploration of physical, psychological, and spiritual energy. Energy.

Commutator: a device for gathering and then changing or extending the direction of an electrical current.

Pulsing through the sinuous turns or straight runs of the ligaments of these pieces, the organic energy of flower or leaf or root or form itself gathers into the capacitor until it can be held no longer and must leap the gap and become a circuit. Without a circuit, there is no energy. Without the movement of electrons, there is no energy. It is in the space between, where nothing *seems to be*, that the prime focus of the piece paradoxically falls, the hottest place, the point of greatest intensity. How delightful! To follow the "circuitry" of a piece until it throws the switch in us and we are caught up in the perpetual movement of energy exchanging itself: the universe at work.

But our discoveries here are fairly conscious. In the more enigmatic wall pieces, we are pushed into the subconscious, into the magnetic field of personal energy that art releases in us, that "place" in us where our personal iconography begins to take over, but not as a separating force, rather as a binding one, a curve of binding energy. The "strong force" that

clenches the atoms of imagination. And the commutator principle is still at work here. But instead of a spasm between actual physical points, now the exchange, the energized leap, occurs between the obvious and the implicit, between the simplicity of the surfaces, the textures, the shapes and their immediate denotations, and the connotative, seamless subconscious. It is the tension that characterizes all the best aesthetic experiences: the pull of forces that tug us to the edges of our lives held in equilibrium by the object. In experiencing these pieces, we experience the energy of imagination itself, and in that way encounter our most human attribute, for it is humankind alone, we remember, that can "to airy nothing" give "a local habitation and a name." But not the artist alone, I stress, rather each of us. The artist only takes us to where we can best begin.

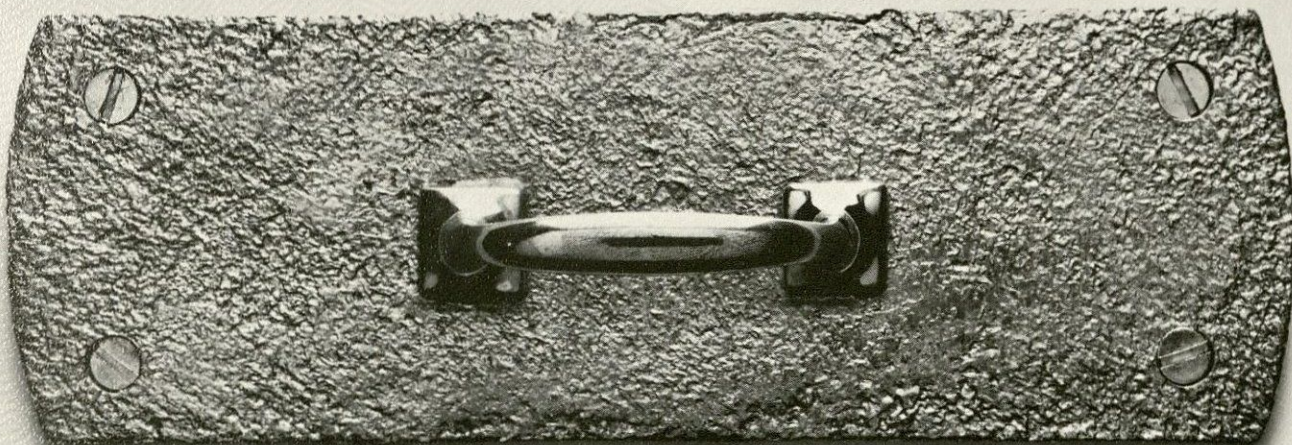
The window pieces take us further yet, but beyond either the energy in a specific piece or that of our imagination. The energy here is more mythic, archetypal. The imagery here is more subsumptive; it holds, that is, values that are not particular to an individual or a time or a place. The overview, perspective, the micro-macro tension is now the subject. What is implied here is a vantage greater than that of the artist's. Instead of the object itself, the artist's realm, now we are in a larger region, some "place" from which what the artist does is observed.

I remember a painting in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts of a hawk soaring above a countryside. The view is from above the hawk. At first, you think conventionally that this is a bird's-eye view of terrain. And then with great force you understand that this is not the hawk's view; it is a view, or a vision, that includes the hawk within it.

It is something like this recognition that describes my experience of the window pieces: a sense of existence larger than either what we can see literally or even capture imaginatively, a spirituality as simple as the air we breathe, as pervasive as the various lights by which we see.

Barry Targan

November 1983



Wall Piece with Handle
2-13/16 x 8-9/16; Bronze with brass plate



Wall Piece with Drain
2-13/16 x 8-9/16



Wall Piece with Cord

5½ x 8-9/16; Wood, steel, and cord

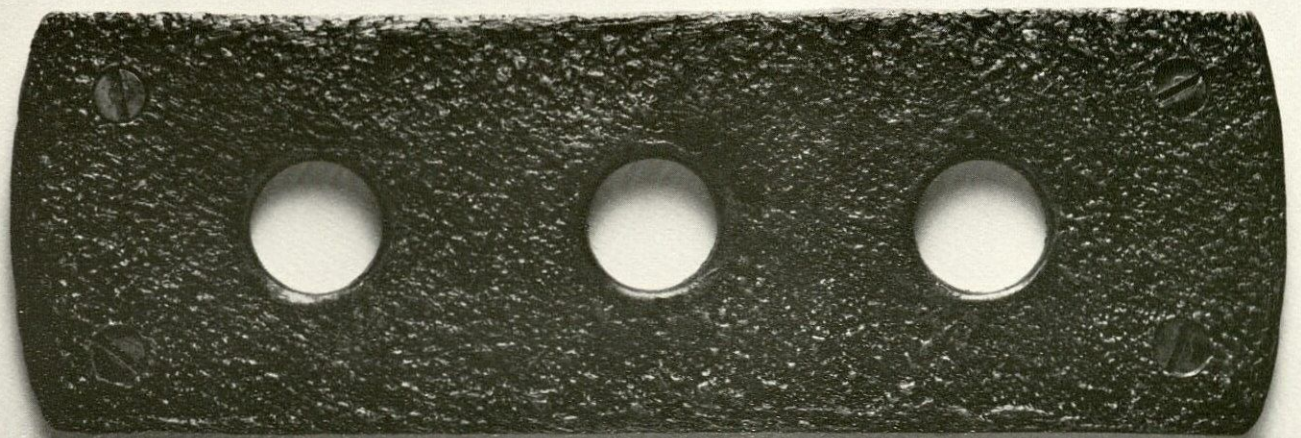


Wall Piece with List

7-1/8 x 8-9/16, Bronze and steel with nickel plate, and paper



Altered Wall Piece
2-13/16 x 8-9/16; Bronze with nickel plate

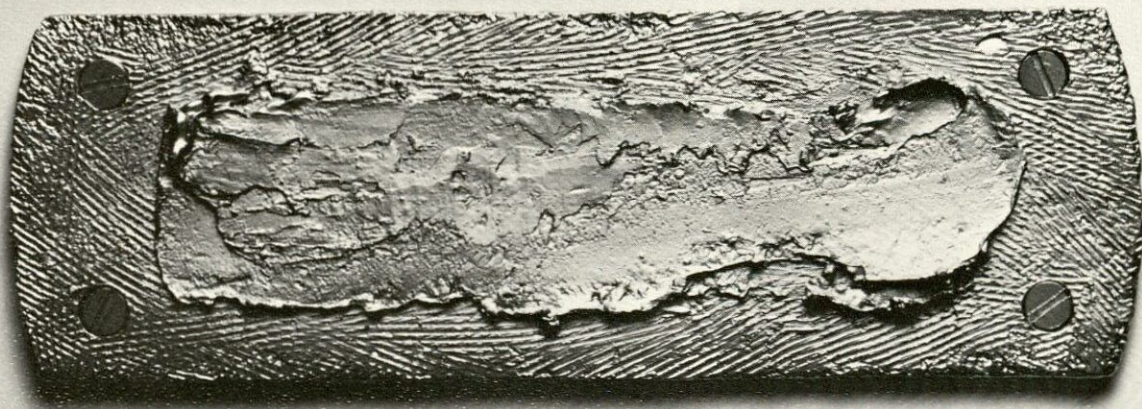


Piece for Wall
2-13/16 x 8-9/16



Wall Piece with Weight

10-1/8 x 8-9/16; Bronze with brass plate, brass, and lead

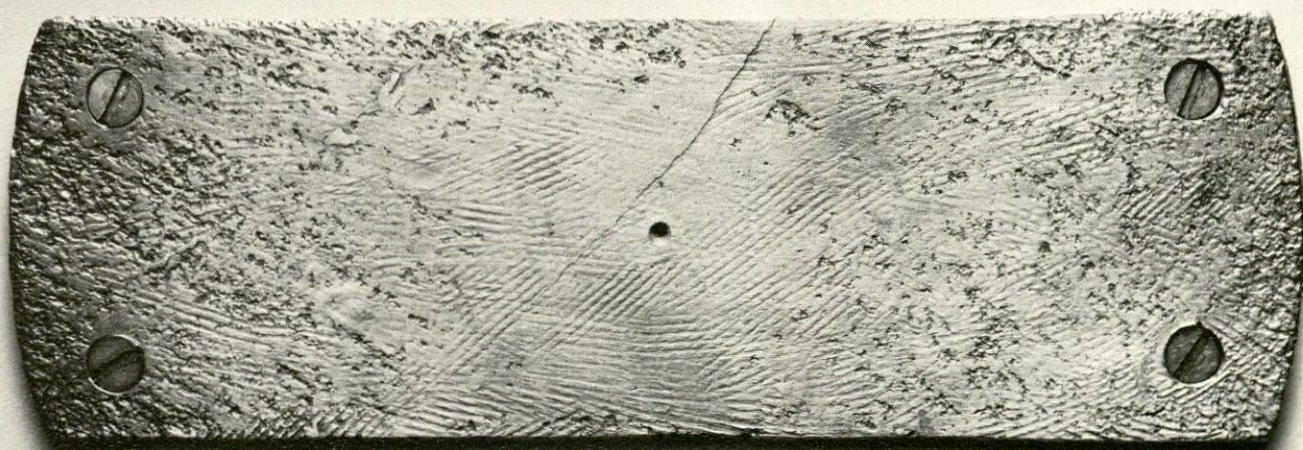


Wall Piece with Mark

2-13/16 x 8-9/16; Bronze with nickel plate

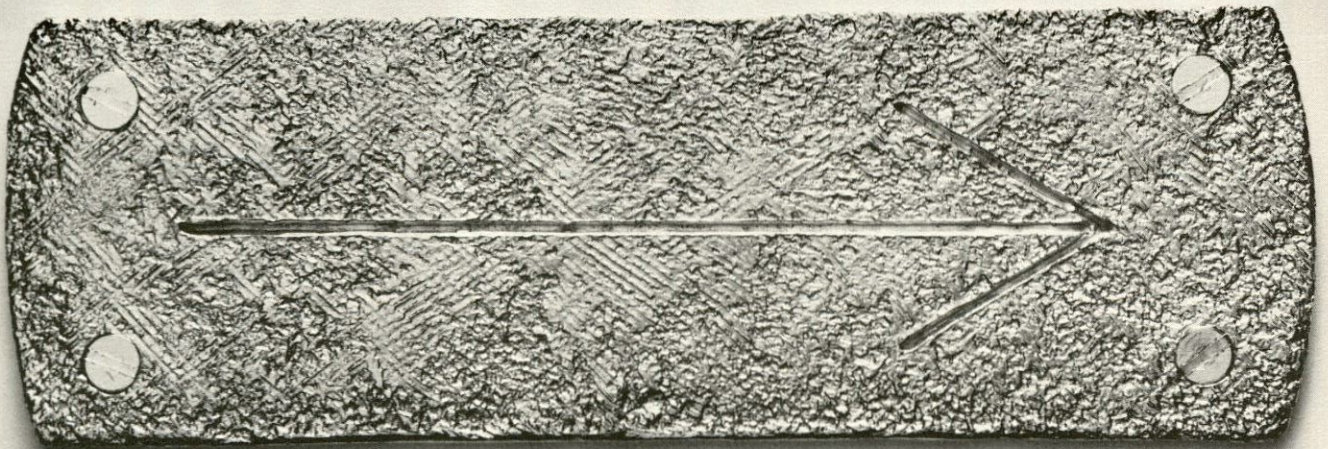


Wall Piece with Rope's End
20 x 8-9/16; Bronze and rope

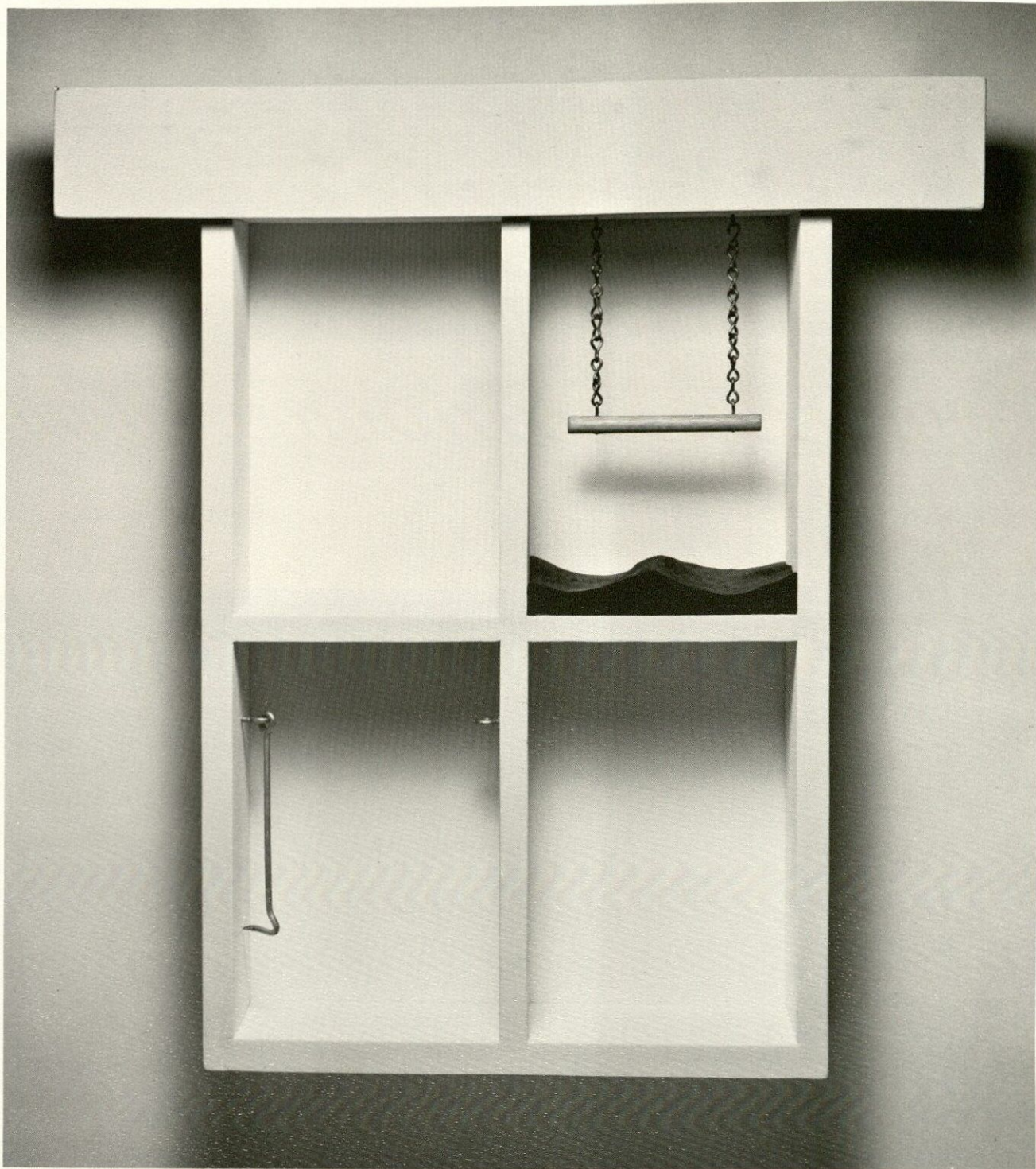


Wall Piece with Dot

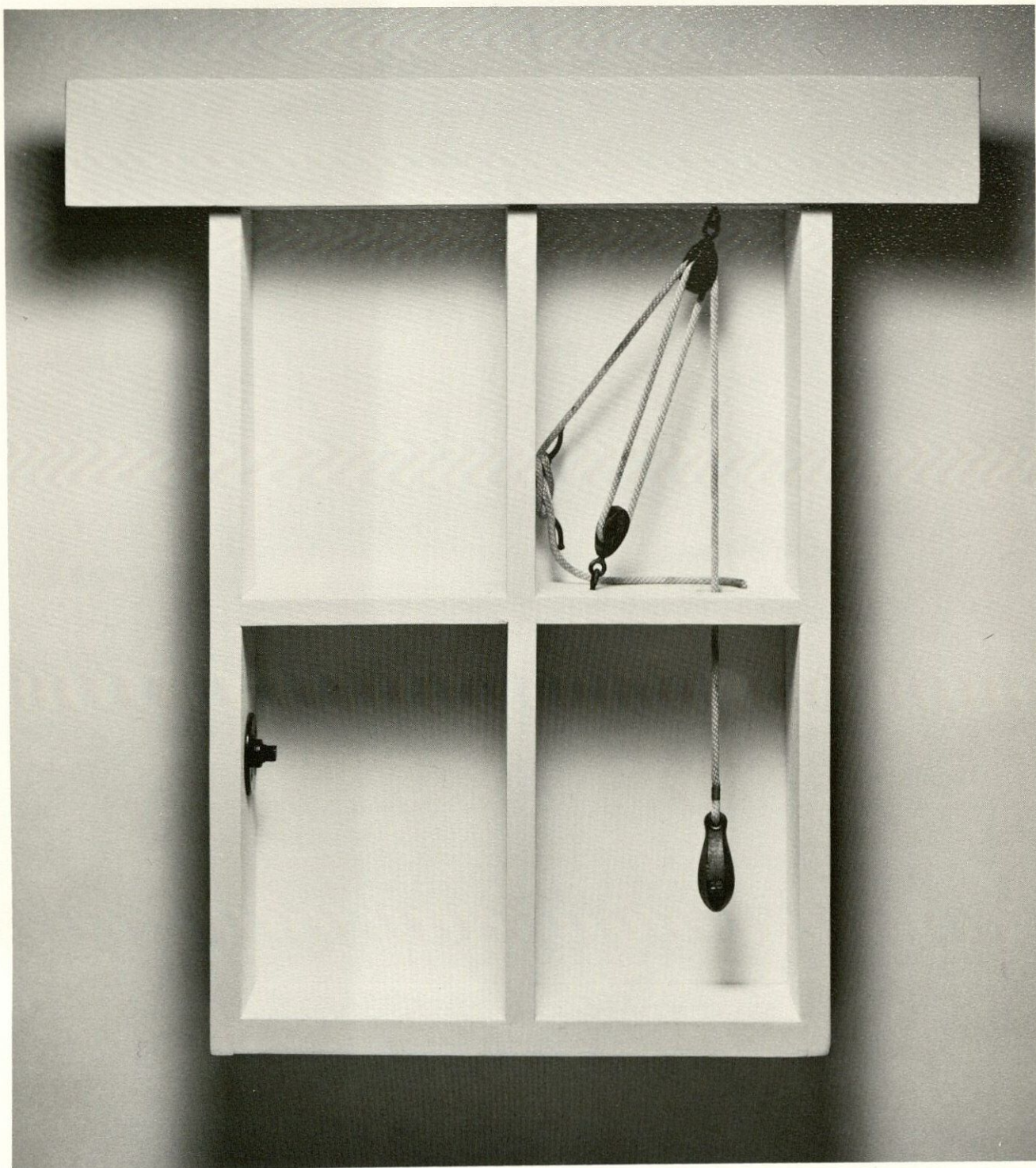
2-13/16 x 8-9/16; Bronze with tin-lead plate



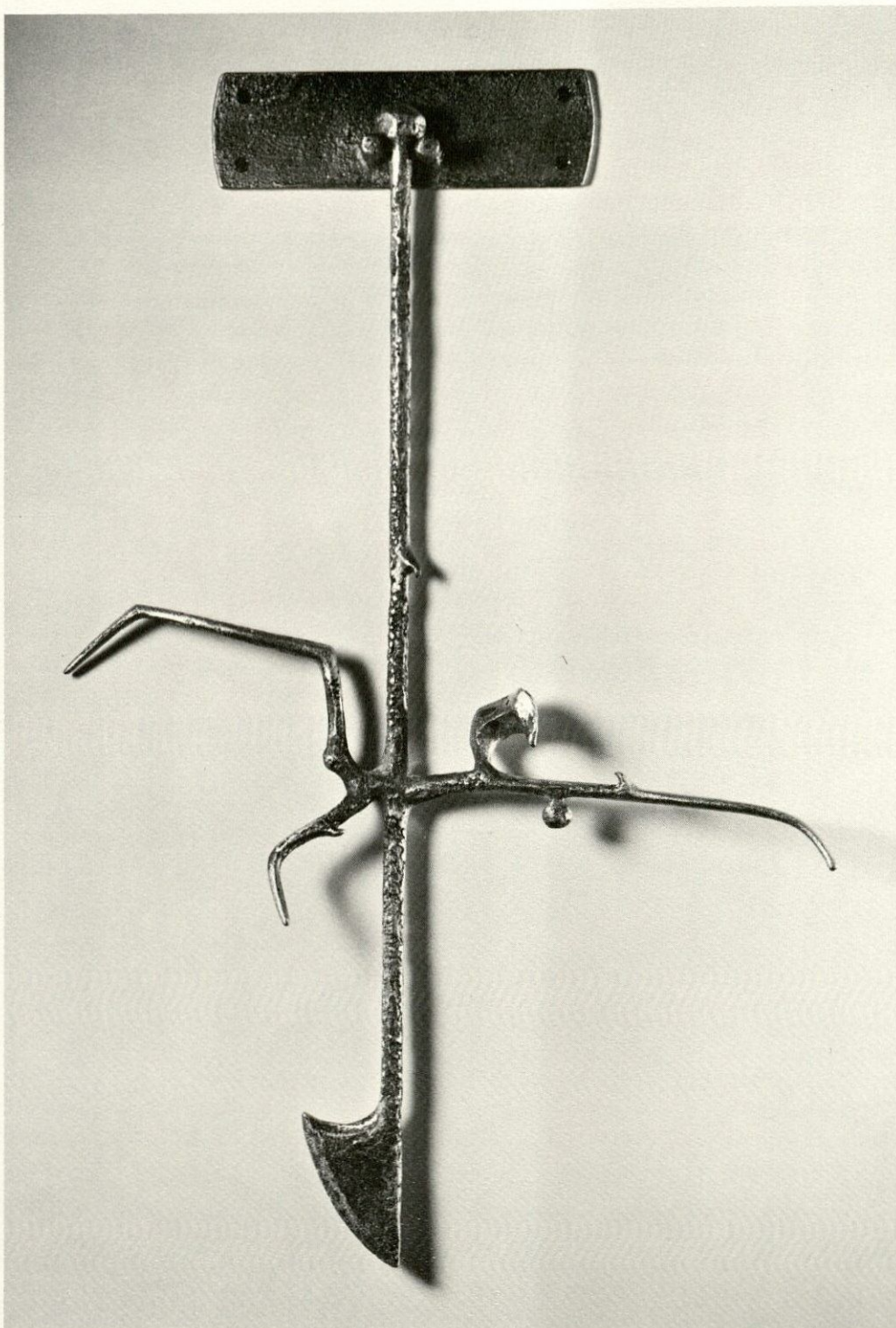
Wall Piece with Direction
2-13/16 x 8-9/16; Bronze with nickel plate



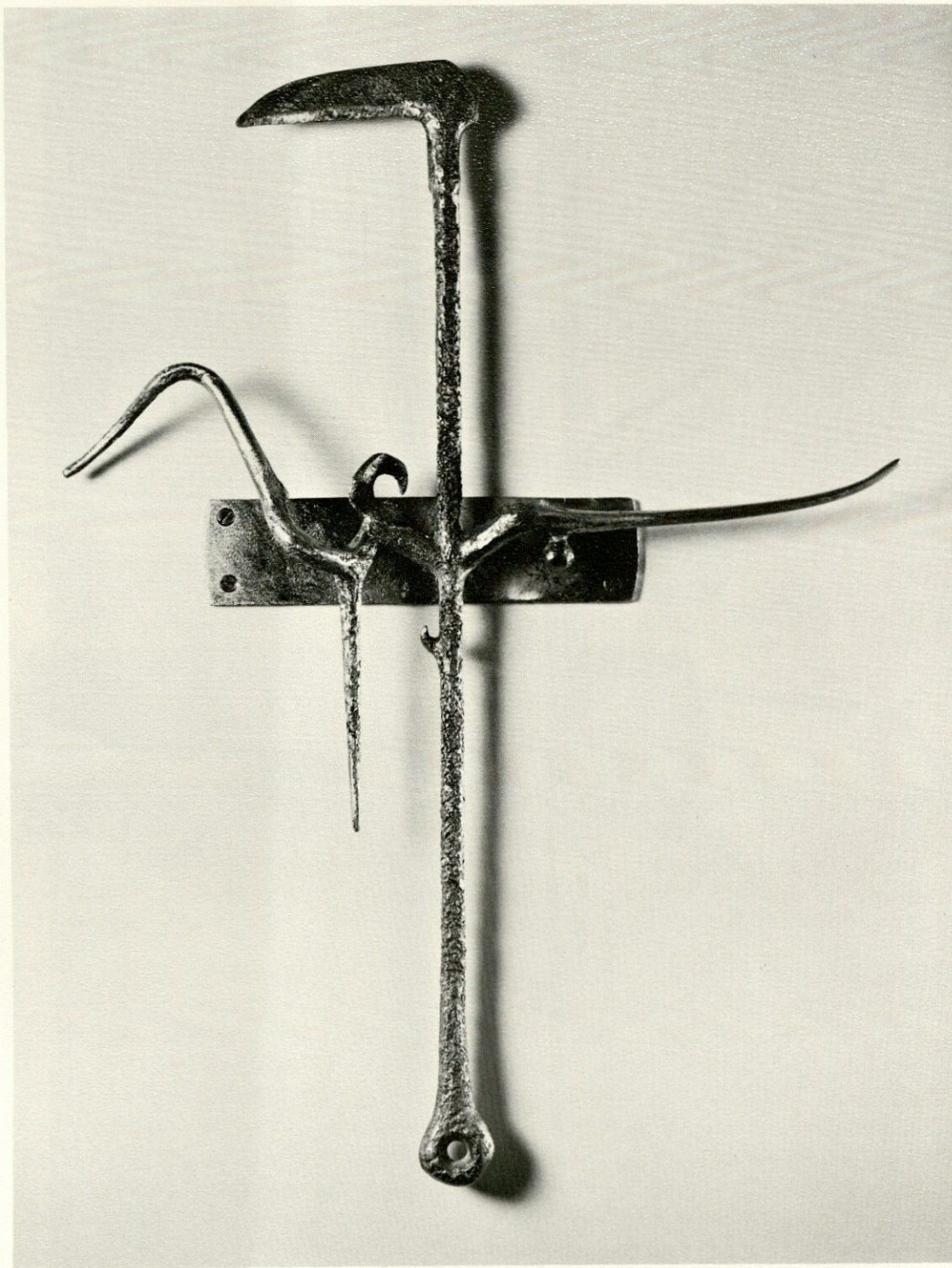
Window with Perch and Hook
34½ x 31¼; Wood, bronze, brass, and steel



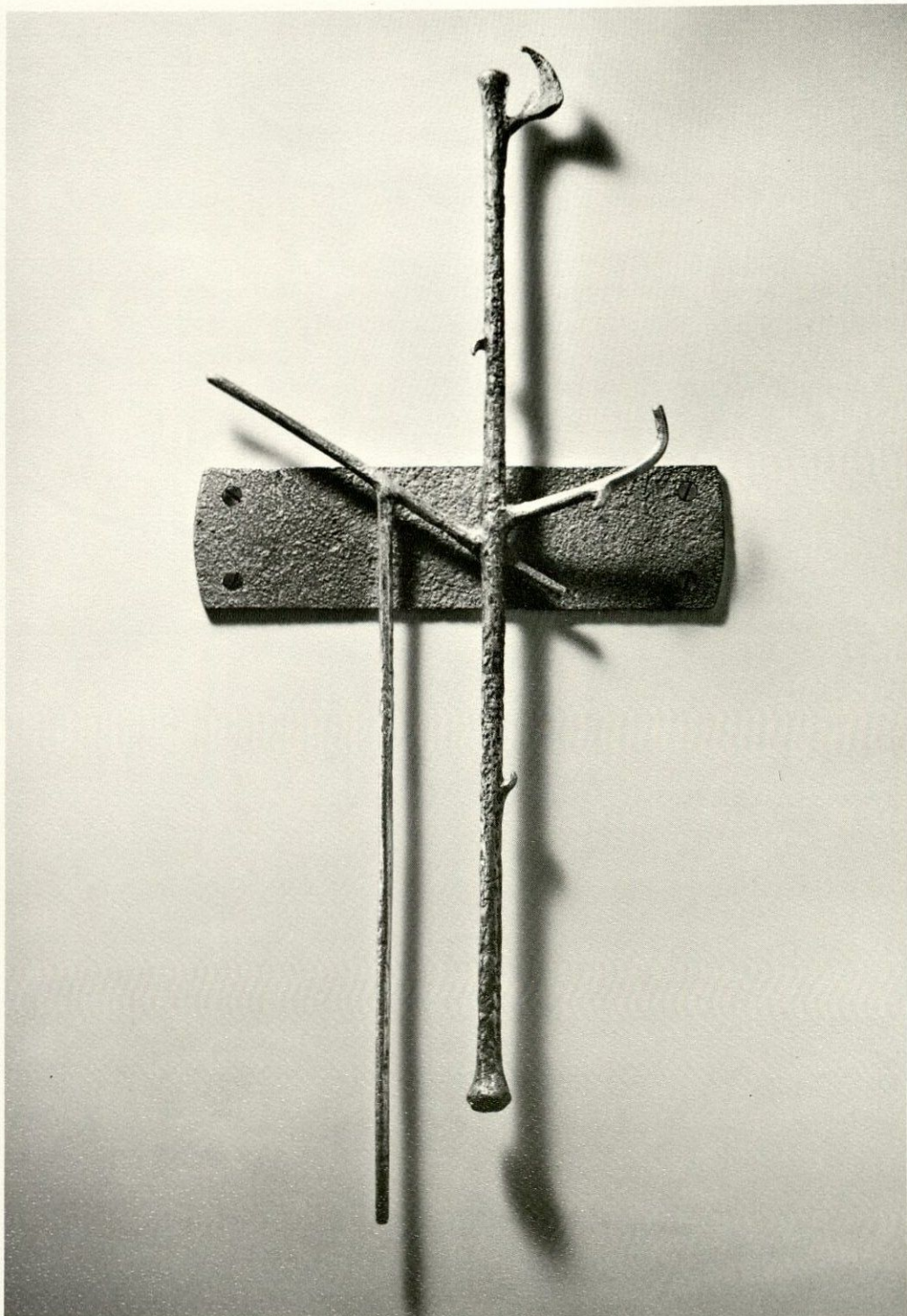
Window with Plug and Weight
34½ x 31¼; Wood, rope, steel, and lead



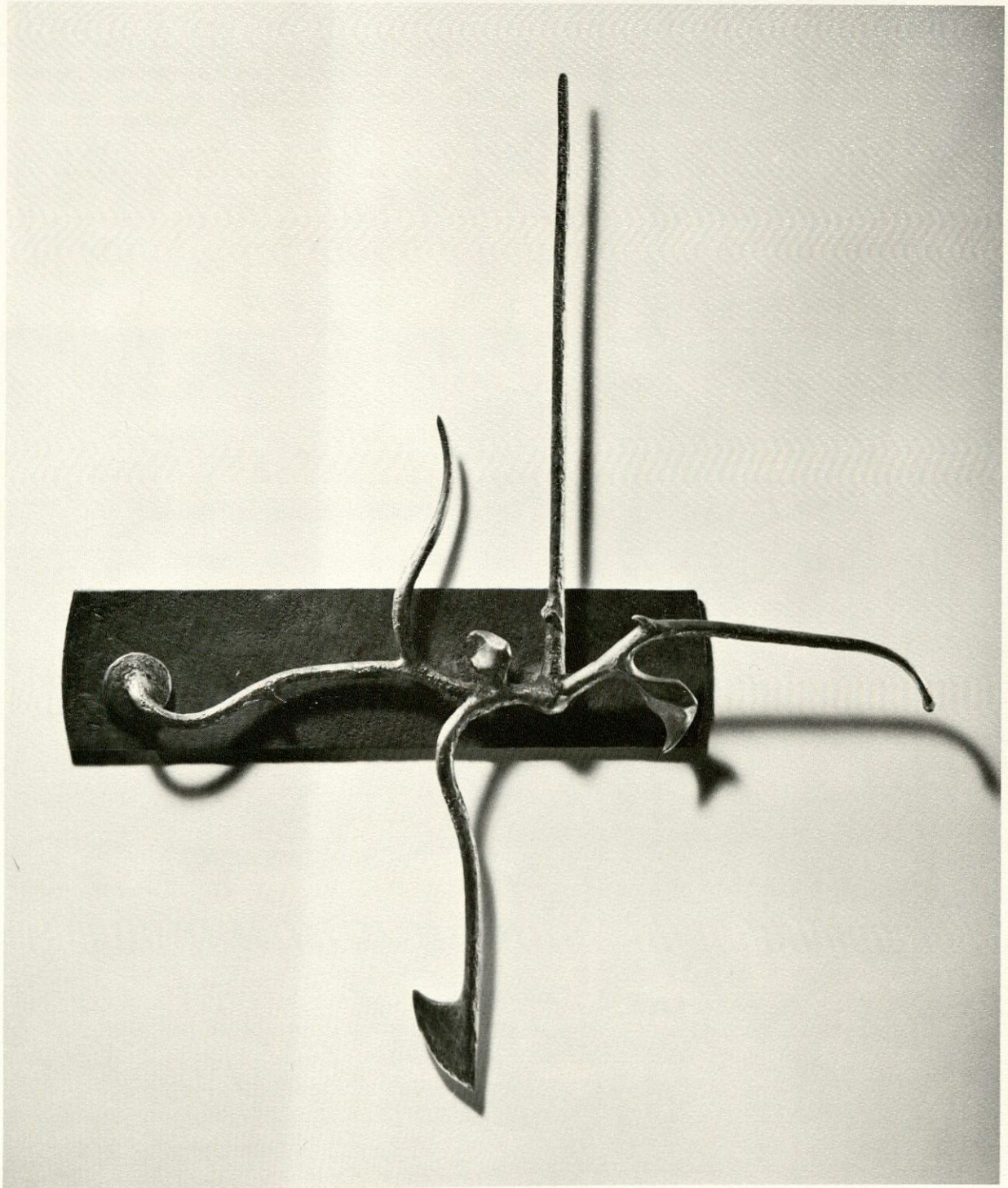
Wall Commutator Available
30½ x 19



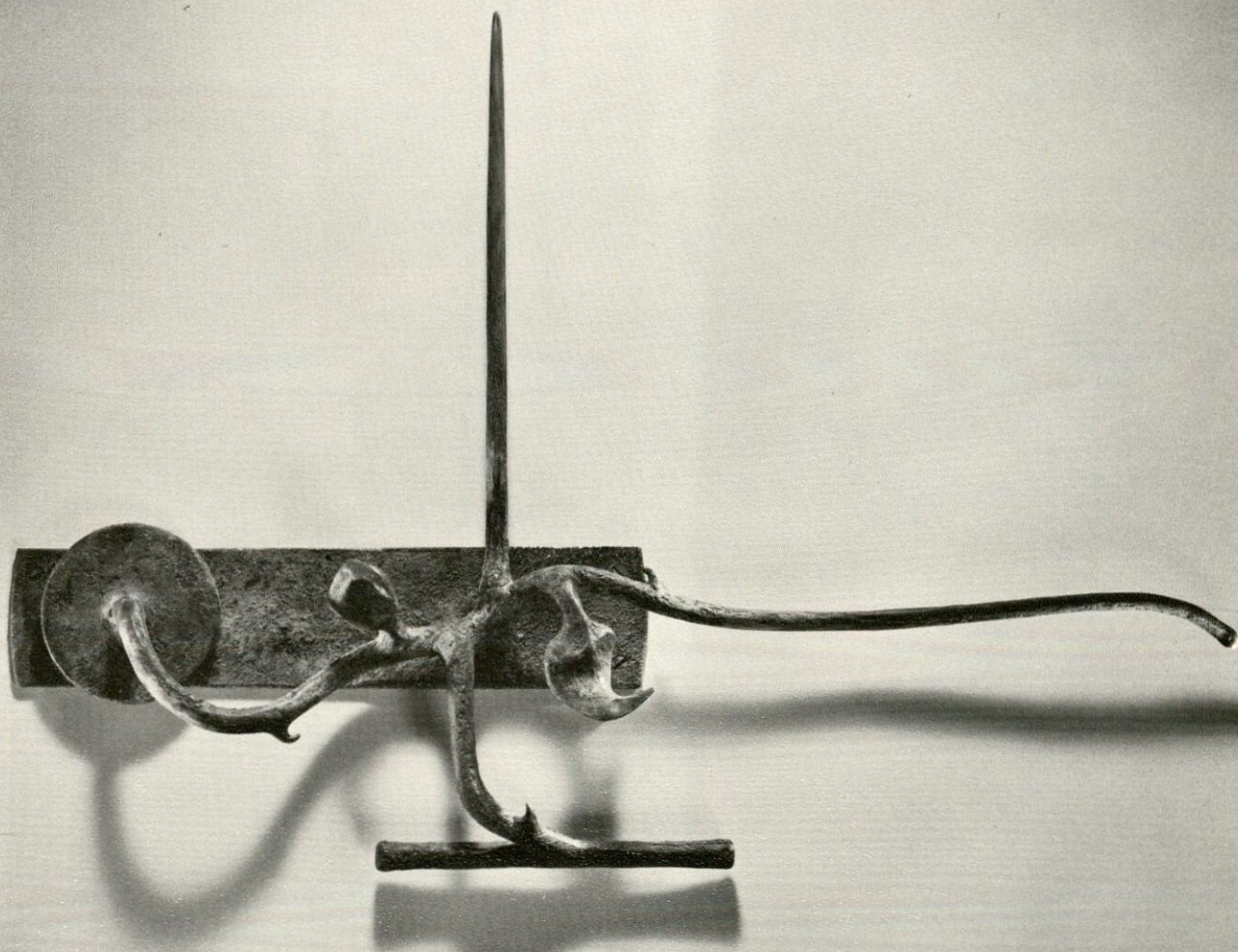
Wall Commutator with Blade
24 1/4 x 17 1/2; Bronze with tin-lead plate



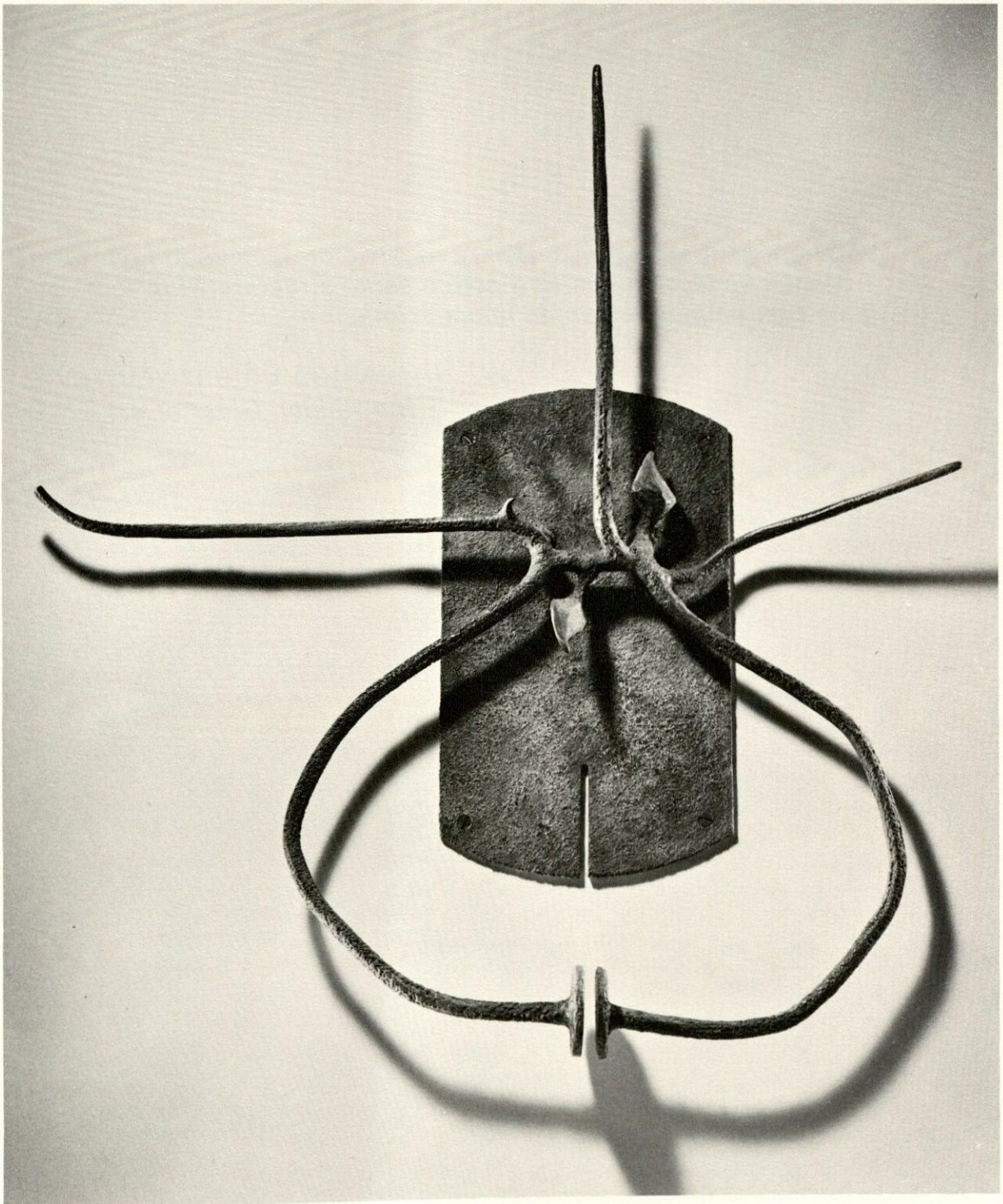
Wall Commutator with Mechanism
22³/₄ x 10; Bronze with nickel plate



Wall Commutator with Implement and Small Disk
28½ x 24



Wall Commutator with Bar and Disk
19¼ x 28



Wall Commutator with Slot
28 x 25½

What appears ambiguous, multi-evocative or open-ended on a conscious level becomes a single serial structure with quite firm boundaries on an unconscious level.

Anton Ehrenzweig
The Hidden Order of Art

