

The Museum of Modern Art

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JACKIE WINSOR

An important exhibition of 24 works by Jackie Winsor, one of today's most accomplished younger sculptors, will be on view in the first-floor galleries of The Museum of Modern Art from January 12 through March 6, 1979. Directed by Kynaston McShine, Curator of Painting and Sculpture, JACKIE WINSOR surveys the ten-year development of this artist who has, in Mr. McShine's words, extended "both traditional and innovative sculptural ideas in a very natural and inevitable direction."

On the occasion of the exhibition, the Museum is publishing a monograph on Jackie Winsor's work* with an introduction by the distinguished art historian Ellen H. Johnson of Oberlin College. The exhibition, which has been made possible by a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, will later travel to The Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto and the Forth Worth Art Museum, Texas.

Using simple forms--cubes, spheres, circles, and squares--and such equally simple materials as plywood, pine, rope, brick, twine, nails, lathing and even trees, Jackie Winsor makes compact, self-sufficient objects notable for their qualities of presence and integrity, their materiality and clarity. Asserting the role of artist as object-maker, Winsor fuses contemporary attitudes and approaches with a traditional stance toward the viability of sculpture: its object-ness or, as Ellen Johnson, quoting Rilke, puts it, its "'stubborn existence.'" Winsor's art evidences aspects of the Minimalism of the 1960s--an emphasis on geometric forms, symmetry, and classical restraint--

and such more recent concerns as interests in process and personal expressiveness. With its tensile strength and raw vitality, Jackie Winsor's sculpture often seems evocative of the energies of nature.

Winsor's works result from a slow, even obsessive process of building or nailing or attaching piece upon piece. Repetition--nail pounding, winding string, chipping and gouging plywood--becomes the central element in the process of construction. The works seem to absorb and then express the amount of time and energy given to their physical execution. "I can fiddle around for days over a sixteenth of an inch," Winsor has remarked. Similarly, the practice of building density and strength from the usually minor, insignificant materials she uses is a constant of Winsor's art. In Bound Square of 1972, for example, hemp twine was used to bind four heavy logs in a square. The hemp was wound and wound around the joints of the square until great swathes of string hold the stout logs in place. The hemp twine has, in effect, become an architectural joining. Strength is realized through plenitude.

Among the 24 works on view in this exhibition will be such significant pieces as Double Circle (1970-71), Bound Square (1972), Laminated Plywood (1973), Fifty-Fifty (1975), #2 Copper (1976), and Cement Piece (1976-77). Also on view will be three works not previously exhibited: Burnt Piece (1978-79), Wire Piece (1978), and Drilled Piece (1978).

Writing in her catalog essay Ellen Johnson notes: "Winsor's sculpture obstinately proclaims mass, weight, and density, properties which she combines with space in such a way that mass and air tend to become one solid substance. Winsor's sculpture is as stable and as silent as the pyramids; yet it conveys not the awesome silence of death, but rather a living quietude in which

multiple opposing forces are held in equilibrium. Jackie Winsor marshals her strands of rope and metal, her 1 x 1 inch sticks and layers of laths and pounds of nails as laboriously as Cezanne organized his countless petites sensations, but she does it like a Yankee pioneer."

Jackie Winsor was born in Newfoundland, Canada in 1941. Educated at the Massachusetts College of Art, Yale Summer School of Art and Music, and Rutgers University (M.F.A., 1967), she has lived in New York City since the late 1960s. She has had one-woman exhibitions at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, the Portland Center for Visual Arts, the Museum of Modern Art of San Francisco, the Contemporary Art Center of Cincinnati, and the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, among other museums and galleries. In addition her work has been in major group exhibitions both in the United States and abroad including showings at the Paris Biennial, the Hayward Gallery of London, and the Stedelijk Museum of Amsterdam, among others.

*Jackie Winsor, introduction by Ellen H. Johnson, foreword by Kynaston McShine. 32 pp., 31 illustrations (plus 10 reference illustrations).

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