

# **Christo wraps the museum : scale models, photomontages, and drawings for a non-event, June 5-25, 1968, the Museum of Modern Art, New York**

Author

Christo, 1935-

Date

1968

Publisher

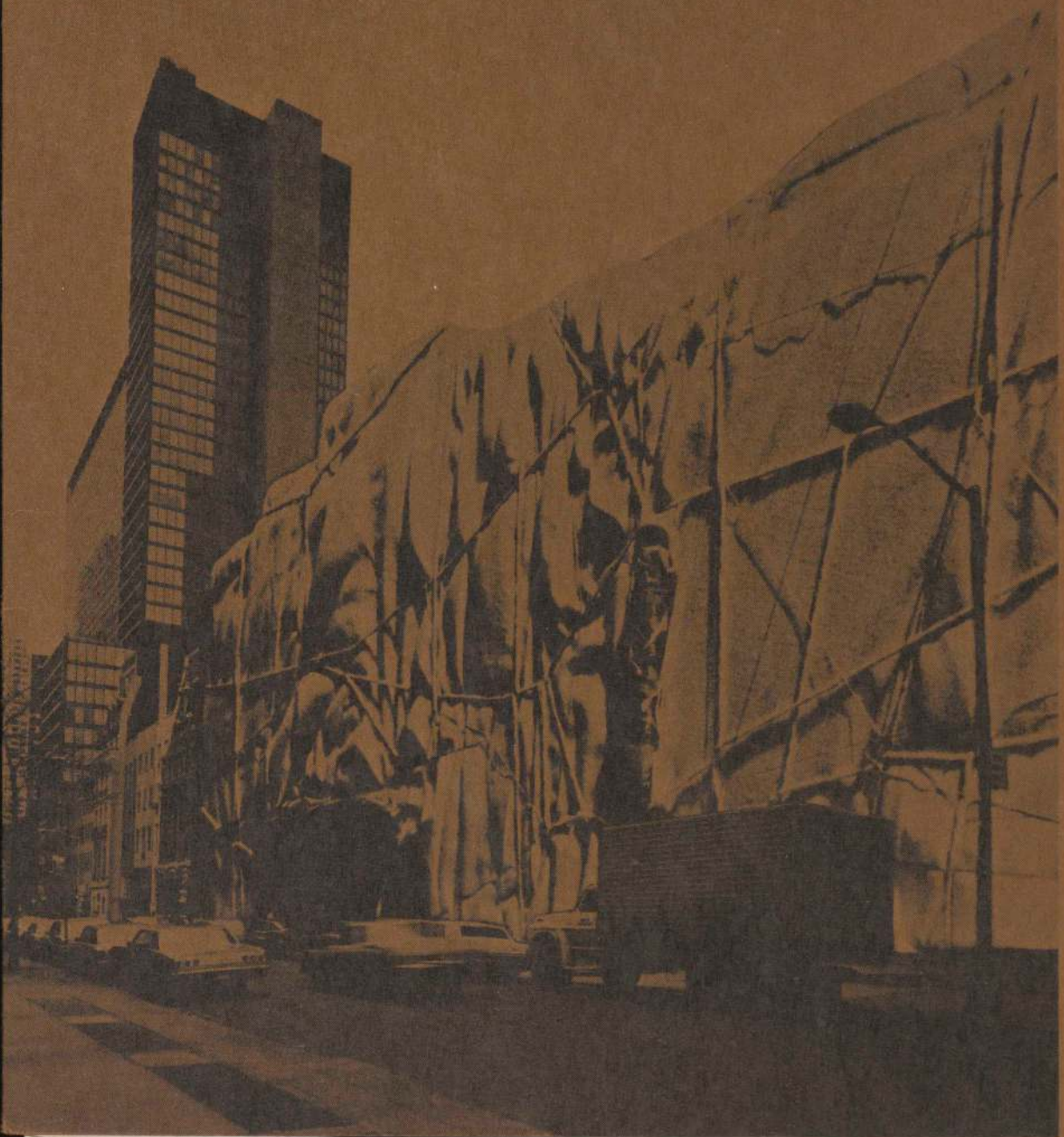
The Museum of Modern Art

Exhibition URL

[www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/3499](http://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/3499)

The Museum of Modern Art's exhibition history—from our founding in 1929 to the present—is available online. It includes exhibition catalogues, primary documents, installation views, and an index of participating artists.

# CHRISTO wraps the museum





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# CHRISTO

## wraps the museum

**scale models, photomontages, and drawings for a non-event  
june 5-25, 1968, the museum of modern art, new york**

With the advent of Dada, artists began to employ objects in order to challenge the conventions of sculpture. Man Ray, a pioneer Dada artist, was the first to wrap an object. But his gesture remained unique in the history of Dada. Neither he nor the other artists of the movement seemed to realize the possibilities inherent in the enigma of "packaging," although, in retrospect, it seems a logical concomitant of the emergence of the object. Since then, packaging has itself become a crucial—and potentially insidious—aspect of the way in which the world is presented to us.

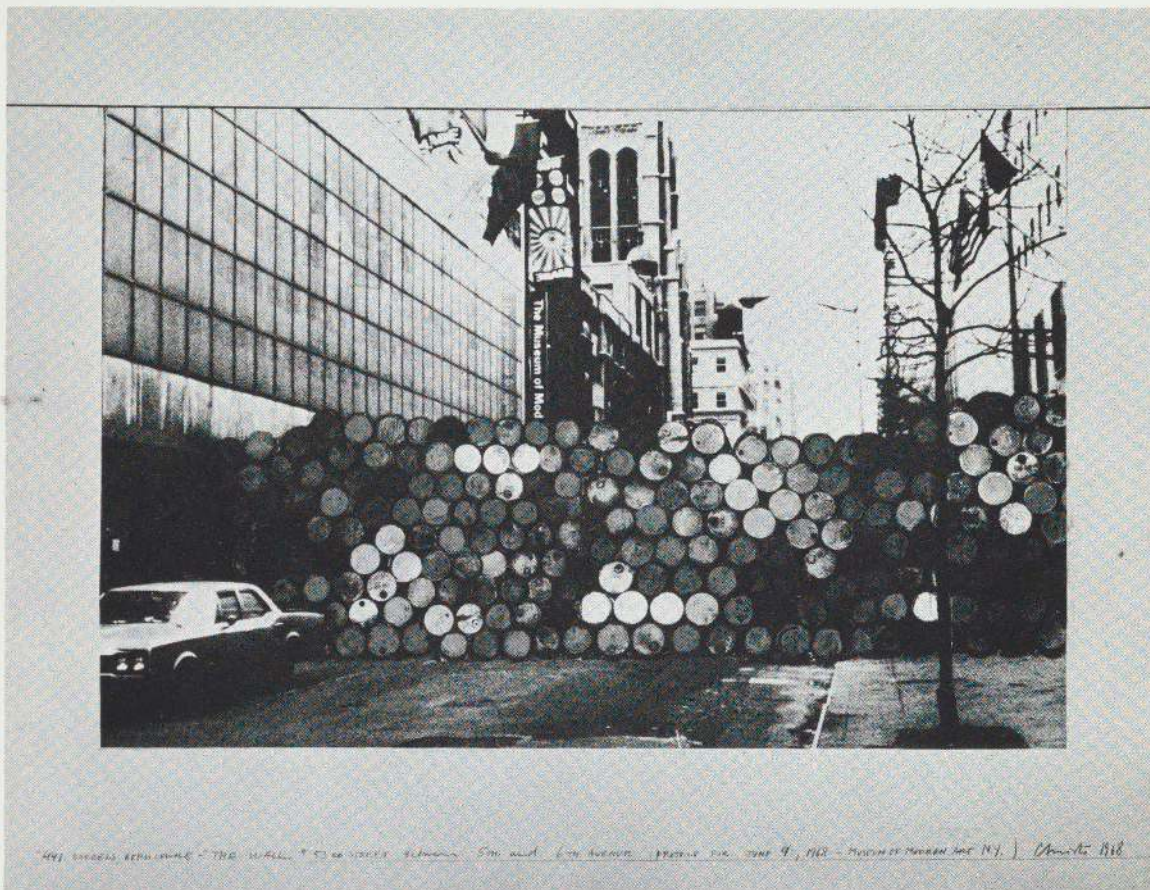
The exploration of its implications has been taken in hand by Christo (Javacheff). By the range and scale of what he wraps (girls, buildings—nothing is beyond his reach), Christo draws attention to various ironies that exist in the relationship between the packager, the package, and the thing packaged. As an artist functioning more in the realm of "events" than in that of painting and sculpture, it is not surprising that he should have dreamed that it was time to wrap up the Museum—and for that matter the trees, the sculptures, and even some of the spectators in its garden. The Museum staff found this a potentially lively and poetically strange project. But the more practical heads of the fire department, police department, and insurance agencies prevailed. Nevertheless, we felt that our public would enjoy seeing the models, photomontages, and drawings that Christo had prepared as sketches for this event, an event that was to have signaled the closing of the exhibition *Dada, Surrealism, and Their Heritage*.

William S. Rubin





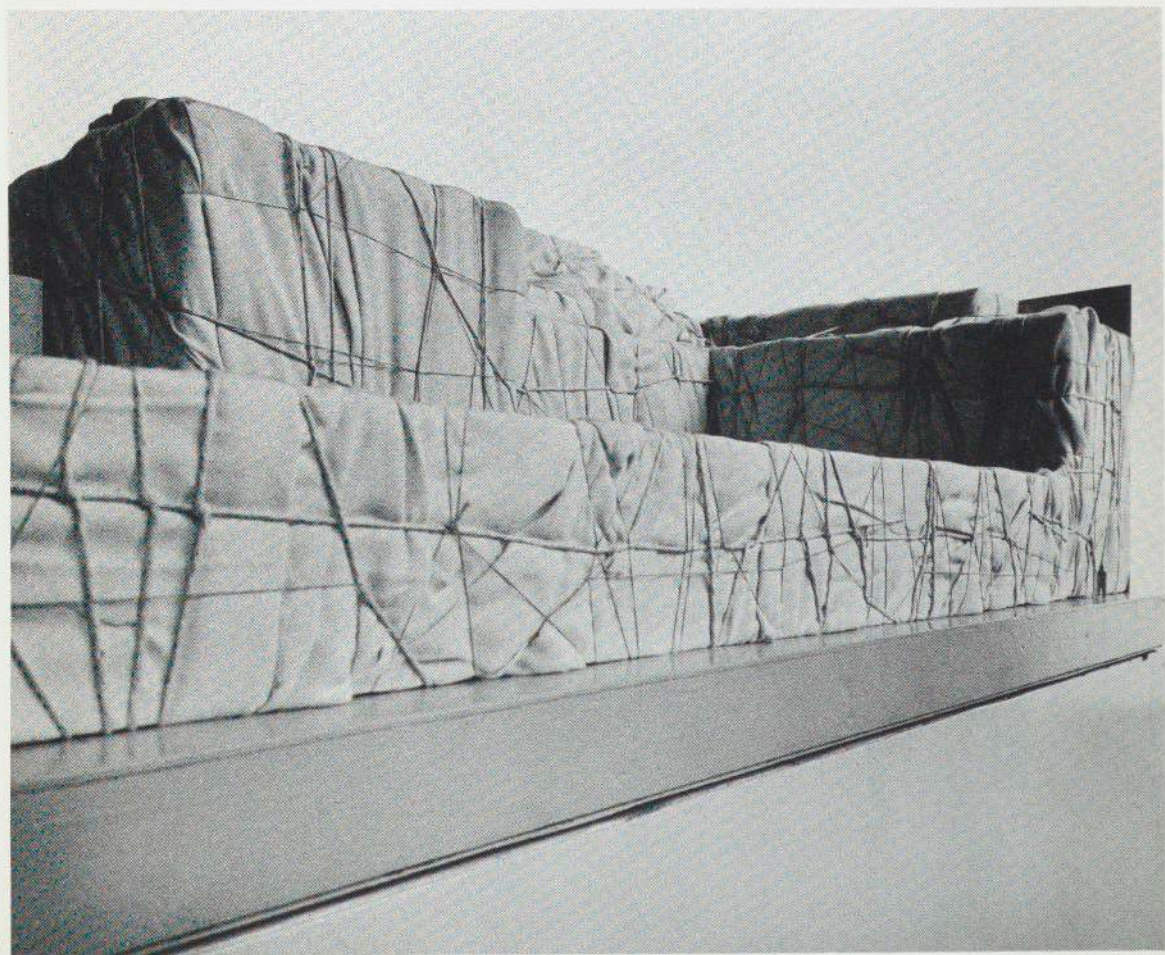




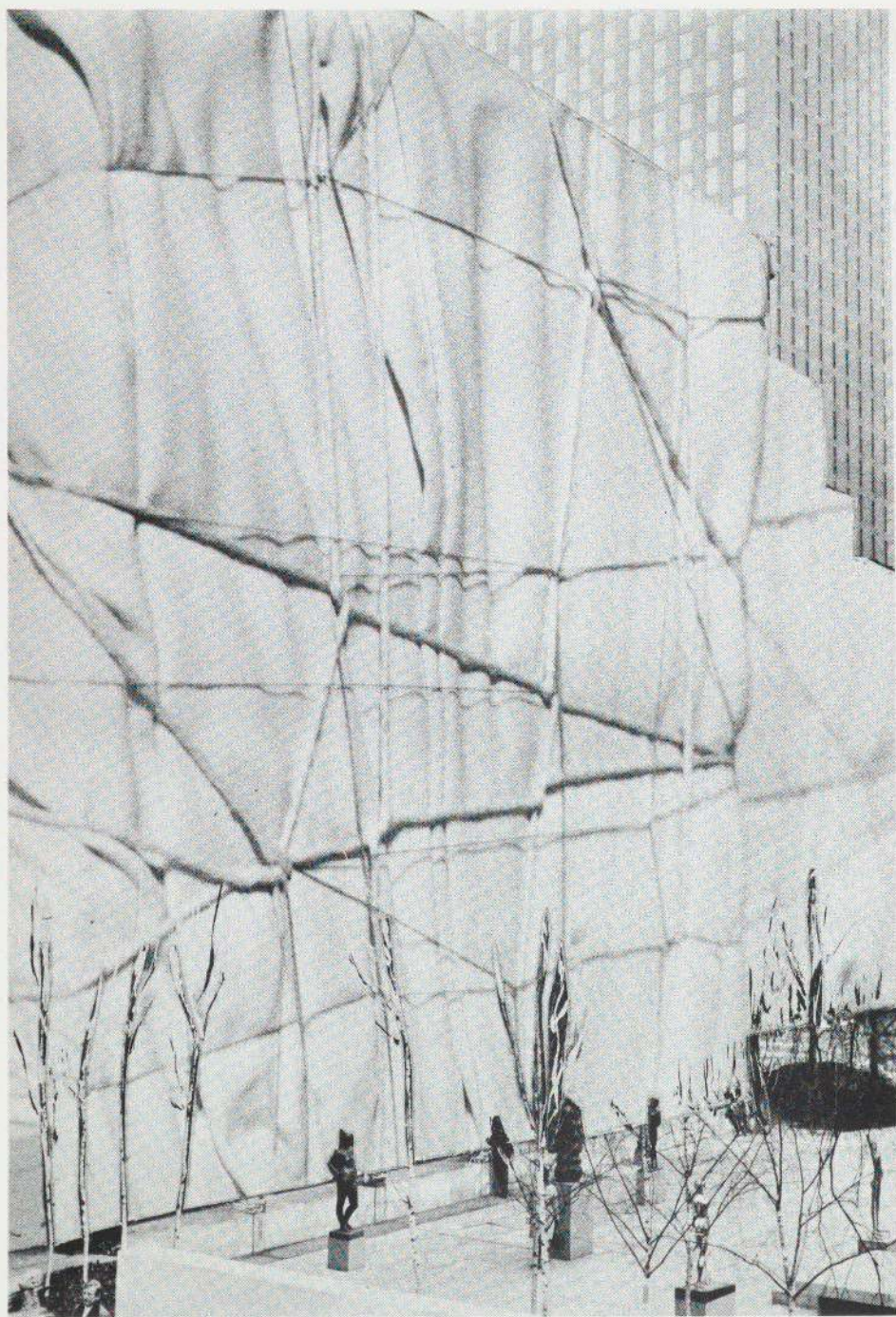
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1. *The Museum of Modern Art Packed (View from 53rd Street)*. Photomontage, 1967.
2. *441-Barrel Structure—the Wall (53rd Street between 5th and 6th Avenues)*. Project: drawing and photomontage, 1968.
3. *The Museum of Modern Art Packed (View from 54th Street)*. Scale model, 1968.



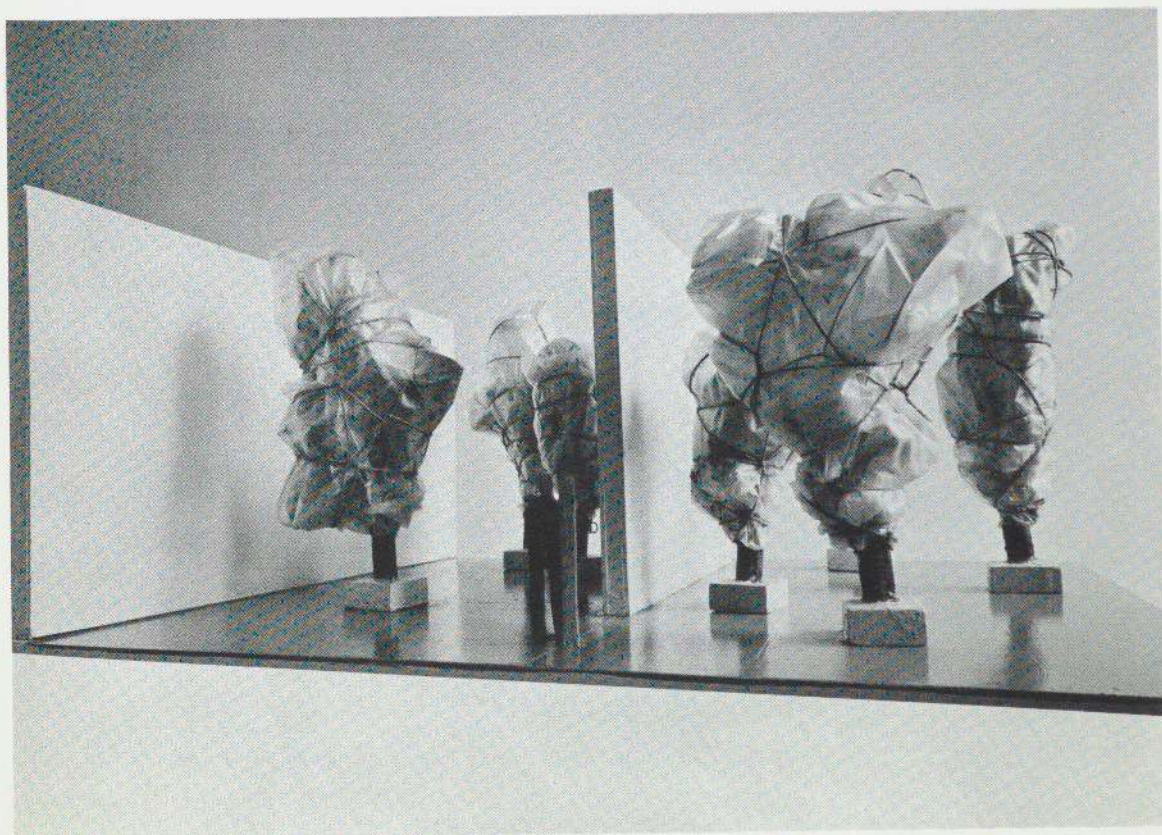








4. *The Museum of Modern Art Packed (View from the Garden)*. Photomontage, 1968.
5. *Packed Trees for the Main Hall of The Museum of Modern Art*. Scale model, 1968.
6. *The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden of The Museum of Modern Art Packed*. Project: drawing, 1968.





THE ARDY JACOBSON KIMBLEBERG SCULPTURE GARDEN OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART N.Y. PACKED - (PROBABLY) / CHURCH / 1968





Lying on the floor like errant cargo, Christo's packages suggest that things really aren't where they're at. Rather than represent an object on canvas, Christo simply wraps the object in canvas and makes a direct presentation....Like a couturier, Christo drapes the shroud directly upon the model, fashioning baroque swags and bulges, before snaring the object in twine, obsessively knotted....The matrix of cloth or filmy plastic effects morphological changes in the object, emphasizing exterior form. But the material reality of the contained object makes its presence felt from within, the indwelling form activating the constricting surface....Christo brings time to a momentary and suspenseful standstill, for his packaged objects do not preclude a future existence. The object, enclosed and quiescent, still resists its assimilation as art.

David Bourdon in *Christo*. Milano: Edizioni Apollinaire, 1966.

Christo is preoccupied with the mystery of same-size. That is to say, he has packed objects...without changing the scale of life. The literal core of his work is essential to a kind of detachment that characterizes him; he proposes both objectivity and its denial....he is concerned with human scale but not with human use.

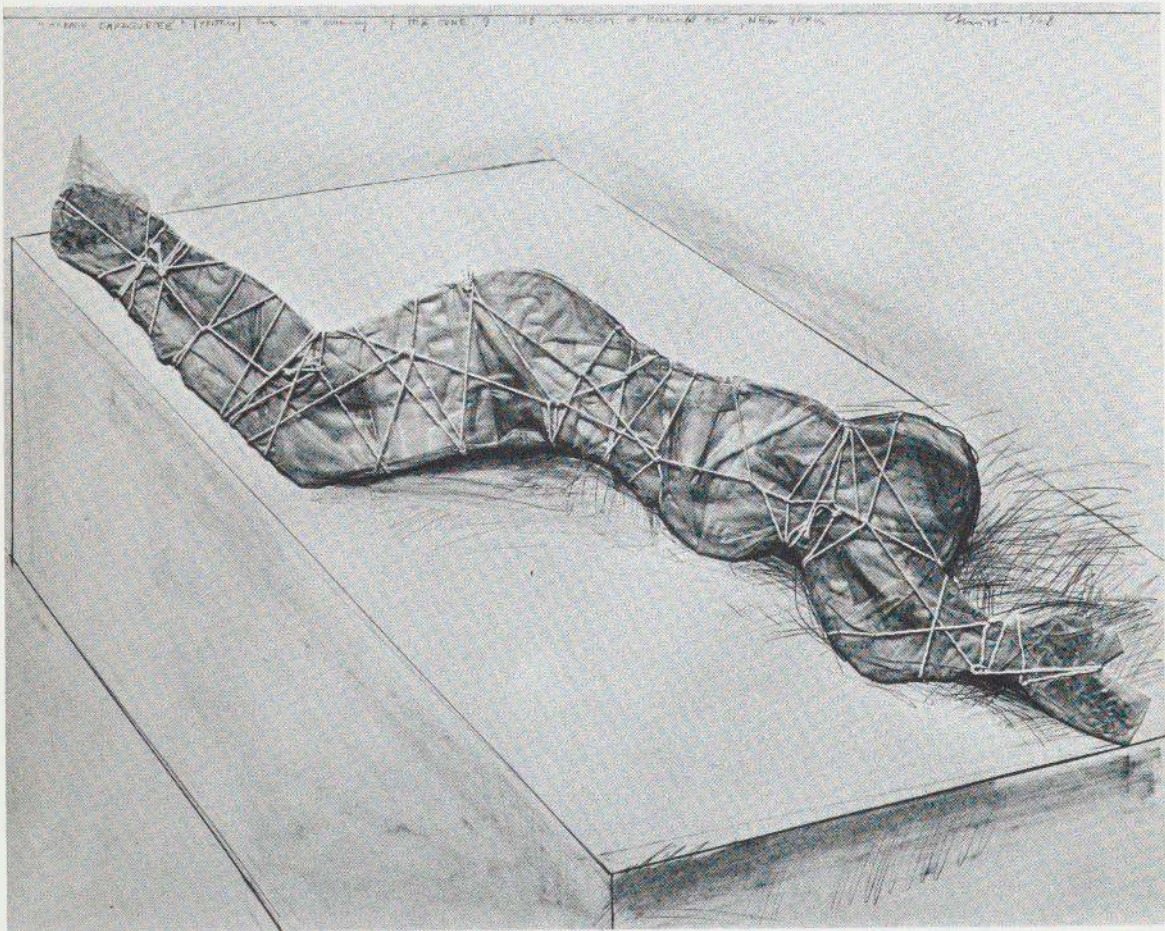
Lawrence Alloway in *Christo*. Eindhoven: Stedelijk van Abbemuseum, 1966.

All photographs are by Ferdinand Boesch, with the exception of number 10, by G. Hartwell.

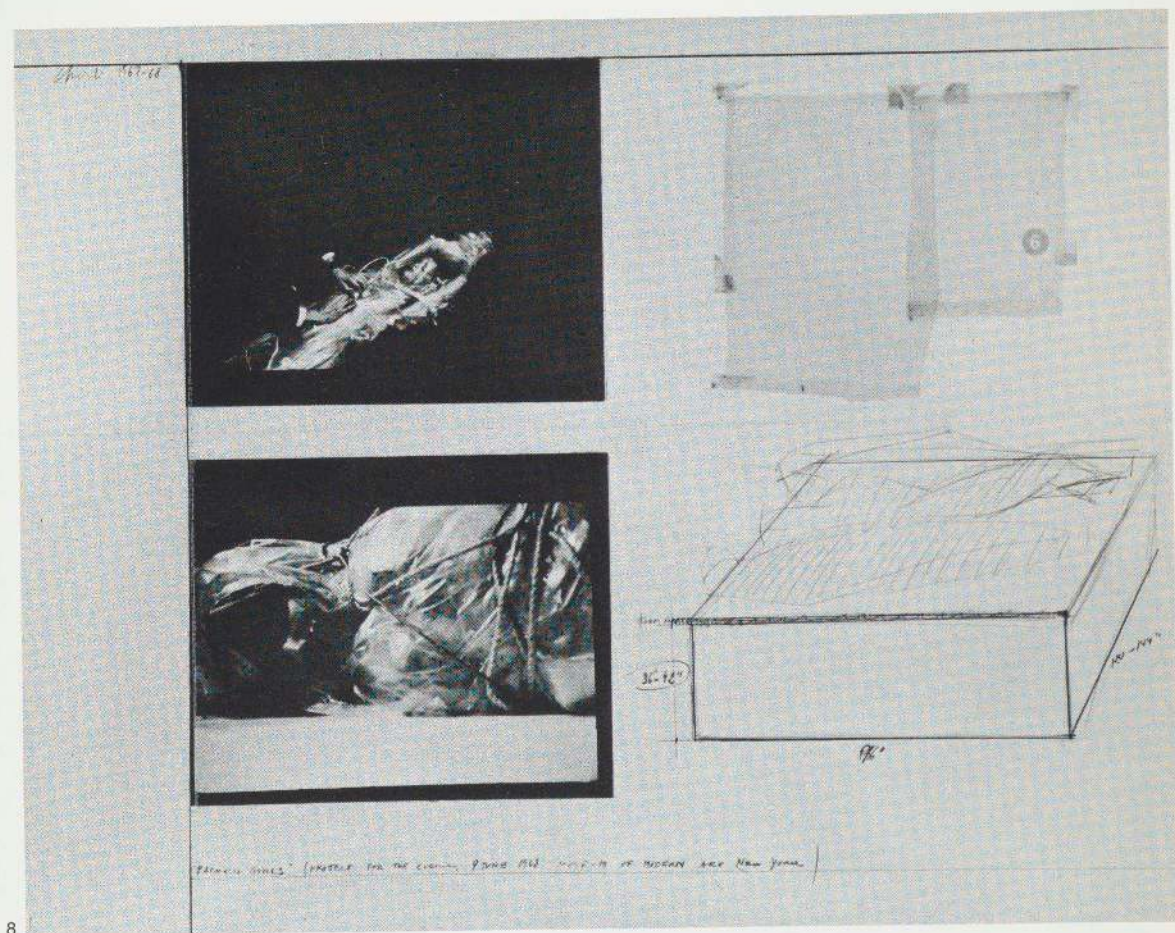


NAME	DATE	TIME	LOCATION	TYPE	REMARKS
JOHN J. CAPORALE	10/10/68	10:00	1000	1000	1000

March 13/68







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7. *Packed Girl*. Project: drawing and collage, 1968.

8. *Packed Girls*. Project: drawing and collage, 1967-1968. Collection G. Locksley, Minneapolis.



9. *Three Packed Trees*. Scale model, 1968.
10. *42,390 Cubic-foot Package*. Polyethylene, rope, and 2,804 balloons — airlifted by helicopter October 29, 1966. The Walker Art Center and Minneapolis School of Art, Minneapolis.









