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Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972
(Lucy Lippard, Praeger, 1973)

"One of the important things about the new dematerialized art is that it provides a way of getting the power structure out of New York and spread it around to wherever an artist feels like being at the time. Much art now is transported by the artist, or in the artist himself, rather than by watered-down, belated circulating exhibitions or by existing information networks such as mail, books, telex, video, radio, etc. " (p.8)

Early works by Yoko Ono (Fluxus): "Listen to the sound of the earth turning" (spring 1963); "Use your blood to paint. Keep painting until you faint (a). Keep painting until you die (b)" (spring 1960).

Aug 1966 - London. John Latham and sculptor Barry Flanagan invited other artists in to tear out and chew pages from Clem Greenberg's "Art and Culture." About a third of the book was so chewed. The chewed pages were later immersed in 30% sulphuric acid solution until the solution was converted to a form of sugar, and this was then neutralized by addition to sodium bicarbonate. Yeast was added (an alien culture), and the mixture bubbled gently for several months. Nearly a year after the chewing, Latham received a card from the library asking for the book's urgent return. He returned the solution in a glass container, distilled, with a label describing the process. Next day a letter from St. Martins School of Art was delivered to Latham informing him that he would not be invited to do any more teaching there.

Joseph Kosuth, Feb 1967: "All I make are models. The actual works of art are ideas...It does not matter who actually makes the model, nor where the model ends up..."

April-May 1967: Robert Ryman's first one-man show, at Bianchini Gallery, NY. Thirteen all-white brushstrokes on steel sheets hung flat against the wall plane, denying object-quality to concentrate on surface, paint, and process. This later became a trend called "antiform," later "anti-illusionism."

June, 1967 - Artforum piece on influential works by Robert Morris in 1963, including "Statement of Esthetic Withdrawal" in which he withdrew from his construction Litanies "all esthetic quality and content" and declared that "from the date hereof said construction has no such quality and content." (Note also RR's "This is a portrait of Iris Clert if I say it is.")

Summer 1967, Sol LeWitt "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art" (Artforum, summer 1967): "In conceptual art the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work...When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair... Conceptual art is not necessarily logical...The ideas need not be complex...Ideas are discovered by intuition...Conceptual art is only good when the idea is good."

Fall, 1967 - Claes Oldenburg, asked to participate in a city outdoor sculpture show, (1) suggests calling Manhattan a work of art; (2) proposes a scream monument wherein a piercing scream is broadcast thru the streets at 2 a.m.; and (3) finally has a 6' x 6' x 3' trench dug behind the Metropolitan Museum by union gravediggers, under his supervision, and then filled up again.

Oct, 1968 - Sol LeWitt does first serial drawing in pencil directly on the wall (temporarily) at Paula Cooper Gallery for Art for Peace exhibition.

1969 - Lawrence Weiner's Terminal Boundaries, 42 pieces such as: "An intrusion into an eastward flowing stream/ An intrusion into a westward flowing stream/ On or near the Continental Divide USA... An object tossed from one country to another... An rubber ball thrown at the sea/A rubber ball thrown on the sea."

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Six Years (cont)

1969 - Douglas Huebler, statement in catalogue: "The world is full of objects, more or less interesting; I do not wish to add any more. I prefer, simply, to state the existence of things in terms of time and/or place..."

Jan 1969 - Gilbert and George perform first version of their "singing sculpture," St Martin's School, London.

June 1969 - Richard Serra and Philip Glass: Long Beach Island, Word Location. In a 30-acre area of marshland and coastline 32 polyplanar speakers were placed in chosen locations to cover the site. The word is was recorded on a 15-minute tape loop and became the sound source for the speakers. The volume was controlled so that the speakers did not interrelate, but could only be heard within their proximity... Each sound dissolved in a given space.

1969 - Vito Acconci, Following Piece. Choosing a person at random, in the street, any location, each day. Following him wherever he goes, however long or far he travels. (The activity ends when he enters a private place -- his home, office, etc.)

1970 - Art News article by Ursula Meyer on conversation with Joesph Beuys. "In How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare," Beuys covered his head with honey and gold-leaf, transforming himself into a sculpture. He cradled the dead hare in his arms and took it "to the pictures and I explained to him everything that was to be seen. I let him touch the pictures with his paws and meanwhile talked to him about them..."

March 10, 1970 - Don Celender, from Preliminary Statements. St. Paul, Minn.: "Realizing that art, as it is experienced currently, reaches only a small portion of the public, my conceptual movements were initiated to explore the realm of the impossible in order to stimulate innovative and creative approaches to bringing art to the masses... About twenty-five chief executive officers of major organizations were contacted in each of the four movements...

Feb 9 1971 - Eleanor Antin sends out the first postcard of a photographic mailing piece, 100 Boots Facing the Sea; the continuing "Boots" series to be published in Art In America.

(Note: In 1960, Yves Klein "signed the world").

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"Information" - Summer 1970 at MOMA

From Kynaston L. McShine essay: "An artist certainly cannot compete with a man on the moon in the living room. This has therefore created an ambiguous and ironic position for the artist, a dilemma as to what he can do with contemporary media that reach many more people than the art gallery."

"It is no longer imperative for the artist to be in Paris or New York. Those far from the 'art centers' contribute more easily, often without the often artificial protocol that at one time seemed essential for recognition."

Joseph Kosuth: "At its most strict and radical extreme the art that I call conceptual is such because it is based on an inquiry into the nature of art... Fundamental to this idea of art is the understanding of the linguistic nature of all art propositions, be they past or present, and regardless of the elements used in their construction."

Sol Le Witt: Proposal for Wall Drawing, Information Show: Within four adjacent squares, each 4' by 4', four draftsmen will be employed at $4.00/hour for four hours a day and for four days to draw straight lines four inches long, using four different colored pencils; 9H black, red, yellow, and blue. Each draftsman will use the same color throughout the four-day period, working on a different square each day."

Robert Morris, A METHOD FOR SORTING COWS: (Elaborate description of complicated procedure involving two men, a corridor with gate, a pen etc, and an unspecified number of cows. When the last cow has trotted down the corridor, "The head man must then turn to his gate man and say, 'That's the one we're looking for.'"

Edward Ruscha - lists various pieces done, such as Twenty-six gasoline stations, various small fires, every building on Sunset Strip, thirty-four parking lots, crackers, stains, real estate opportunities.

Lawrence Weiner: "1. The artist may construct the piece. 2. The piece may be fabricated. 3. The piece need not be built. Each being equal and consistent with the intent of the artist the decision as to condition rests with the receiver upon occasion of receivership."

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(Photo: Gretchen Lambert, 1964.)

DAN FLAVIN

(to Frank Lloyd Wright who advised Boston's "city fathers" to have a dozen good funerals as urban renewal)

". . . we might, if, like the things outside us we let the great storm over-ride us, grow spacious and anonymous."

—Maria Rainer Rilke

"It looks like painting is finished."

—Don Judd

"Dan Flavin has destroyed electric lights for me. I'm going back to candles."

—Tom Doyle

My name is Dan Flavin. I am thirty-two years old, overweight and underprivileged, a Caucasian in a Negro year.

I was born (screaming) a fraternal twin twenty-four minutes before my brother, David, in Mary Immaculate Hospital, Jamaica, New York, at about seven in the morning on a wet Saturday, April Fool's Day, 1933, of an ascetic, remotely male, Irish Catholic truant officer whose junior I am, and a stupid, fleshly tyrant of a woman who had descended from Bavarian royalty without a trace of nobility.

Early, I was the victim of a substitute mother, an English "nanny," fraught with punctilious schedules, who tried to toilet-train me at two weeks of age. When she failed or I failed, she slapped me.

Before I was seven, I attempted to run away from home but was apprehended by a fear of the unknown just two blocks from our house.

I started drawing by myself as a small boy. (My mother told me that I had made a vivid, if naive, record of hurricane damage on Long Island in 1938.)

"Uncle Artie" Schnabel, the vice-president of my father's East River boat club, became my first instructor in art. He was a portly, ebullient, red-faced old World War veteran, whose battered left leg bore a brace and pained him gravely when it was about to rain. Also, he had been gassed. I saw his Purple Heart.

On a certain sunny Sunday afternoon, dockside on the river, he set aside a stein of beer, adjusted his glasses, and showed me how to put down pencil water around a ship by lightly dappling just some of the surrounding space with the tiniest half moons. His cosmic touch on space is in my drawings even now.

Soon religion was pressed upon me to nullify whatever childish optimism I may have had left. Rank suppression at seven in the name of God the Father or any other of the heavenly host did not deter me from devising fantasies in secret. I heard the altar boys' whispered responses in strange Latin as the beautiful soprano of angels concealed behind the high altar

In time, I grew curiously fond of the solemn high funeral mass which was so consummately rich in incense, music, chant, vestments, processionals and candlelight. Besides that, I got fifteen cents a corpse serving as an acolyte.

I also dwelled in serious fantasies of war—digging in with lead soldiers under the Japanese yews in my father's rock garden, and changing pencil sketches of World War devastation as it progressed, these depictions mutually drawn with an older friend, who, as an aerial gunner, was killed over Guam in the next real war.

Before I was ten, I had filled a corrugated paper carton with hundreds of pencil and pen-and-ink drawings after the "Horrors of War" picture cards of Gum, Incorporated, and sundry other war time illustrations.

In parochial school, I was compelled to become a good student, a model child. The sisters diverted me from some of my war-torn tendencies and trained my hand in the peaceful uses of watercolor, but they did not permit much freedom for thought about what was to be drawn and washed.

My class work—dutifully done drawings and watercolors on prescribed themes — was preserved in folders by the nuns as good example for the students of following years until, when in 8A, I defied one of the good sisters by putting two handles on a vase of flowers instead of one as she demanded. I remember that that black lady called me a heretic or at least a sinner, but one look at my plump innocence checked her incipient anger and restored her to modest nunliness.

At fourteen, my father committed my brother and me to a junior seminary in Brooklyn so that we might doubly fulfill his own lost vocation. No one had asked me if I wanted to go there, but that hardly mattered, since I had not been permitted to contemplate much else since birth.

I continued drawing privately in class, in the margins of my textbooks. Now there were battered profiles of boxers with broken noses and Dido's pyre on a wall in Carthage, its passionate smoke

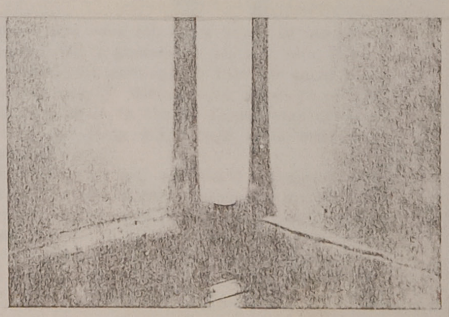
(left) "the diagonal of May 25, 1963" gold fluorescent light, 8' h., 3¼" w.

his pipe and, for a while, distractedly puffed smoke through his wiry black mustache. When he finally spoke, he hesitantly suggested that I might better become a scholar—a religious art historian at that.

I was secretly shocked and grieved by Albert's lack of recognition. In the months that followed, I fervently poured out more hundreds of bad drawings and a few horrid aspirations in oil on canvas paper and canvas board which I supposed must be what paintings were like. Albert, with immense tolerance, kept looking and talking but he could not be encouraging.

On a sudden, dear Albert suffered a heart attack and died on his living room floor. I was entirely on my own again. This was 1958.

During this time, I took survey courses in art



"pink out of a corner," fluorescent light, 8' high, 3¼" [illegible] as installed in the Green Gallery, New York November [illegible]. (Collection Philip Johnson.)



white," cool white [illegible] at the Institute of [illegible]

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piercing "pious" Aeneas' faithless heart outbound in the harbor below.

Young Father Fogarty, my Second Year Latin professor, was unimpressed with my talent, especially as it continually evolved in his class against his daily lesson plan. He often censured, even ridiculed, me. I acquired a certain personal power with him though. When he chastened me, he blushed redder than I did.

My grades worsened so badly by my senior year that I had to flee the seminary for the terrible profanity of life outside its Gothic walls which, in large measure, I had never experienced. At eighteen, I turned toward art.

I read art, looked for it, and listened about it. In an anti-aircraft battalion library hut in Osan-ni, Korea, I found only Jacques Maritain's "Art and Poetry." It was rough going. After buying a pair of Georges Rouault's prints from his "Miserere et Guerre," I wrote an American fan letter to the aging master. He answered touchingly with a poem. On a Saturday afternoon in the office at the Hansa Gallery, where a generation of new New York art was being born, Dick Bellamy, Ivan Karp, George Segal and Allan Kaprow carried on a "bull session" before me.

Since leaving high school, I had done little drawing and no painting until, in 1955, while loitering in Korea with an army of occupation, I became so restless in mind that I sought out another reluctant soldier, an Army private from Special Services, who had studied painting in Oberlin College and would not bathe for four days in a row as some sort of more personal esthetic assertion. I assisted him in setting up a regular class session in figure drawing. Within a few weeks, our program was suspended by an Army major whose obscene eyes saw the probability of a possibility of an unmanly, immoral disclosure in the posing of fellow G.I.'s stripped to the waist while leaning on brooms.

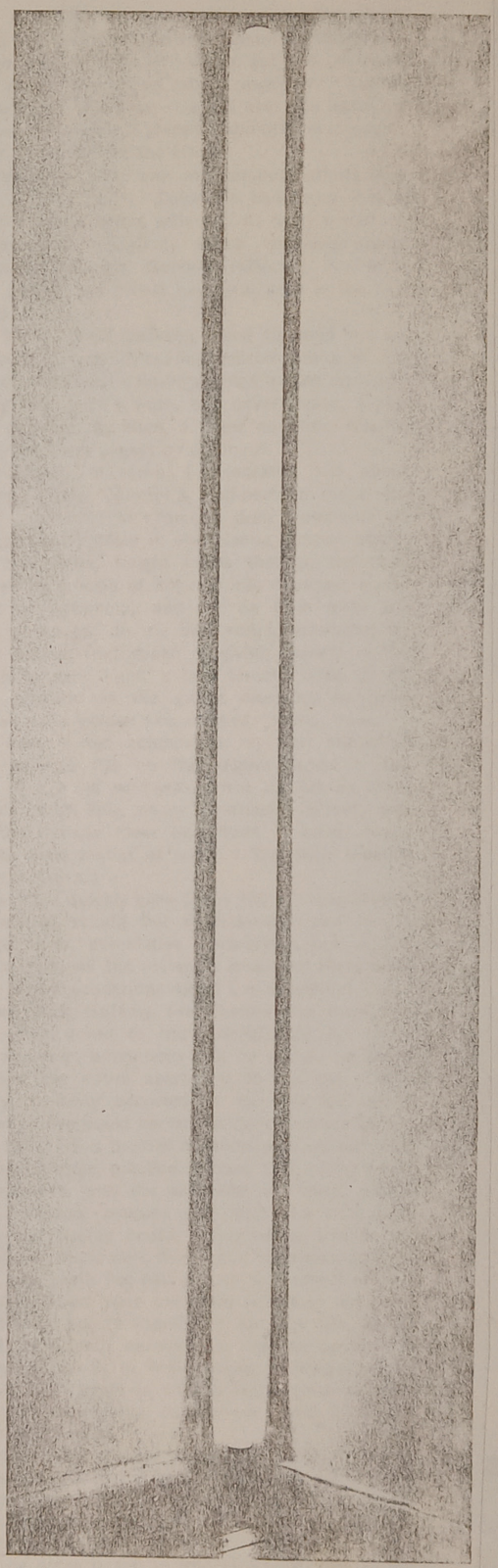
Fortunately, I stopped formal instruction in art after four inconclusive sessions at the Hans Hofmann School in 1956. Following that discouraging experience, my drawing had the considered criticism of a new "American" painter, Albert Urban, a gentle unreconstructed pariah, who, as a young man, had had his work acclaimed in Hitler's museum for "degenerate" art. I never worked in his studio, which he kept as his barred sanctuary daily from nine to five, but, on several evenings, weeks apart, we sat for hours with his wife, Reva, in their spacious West Tenth Street apartment, pouring over my misdirected papers.

After scanning my first batch of divers expression, Albert sighed, settled back in his easy chair, lighted his pipe and, for a while, distractedly puffed smoke through his wiry black mustache. When he finally spoke, he hesitantly suggested that I might better become a scholar—a religious art historian at that.

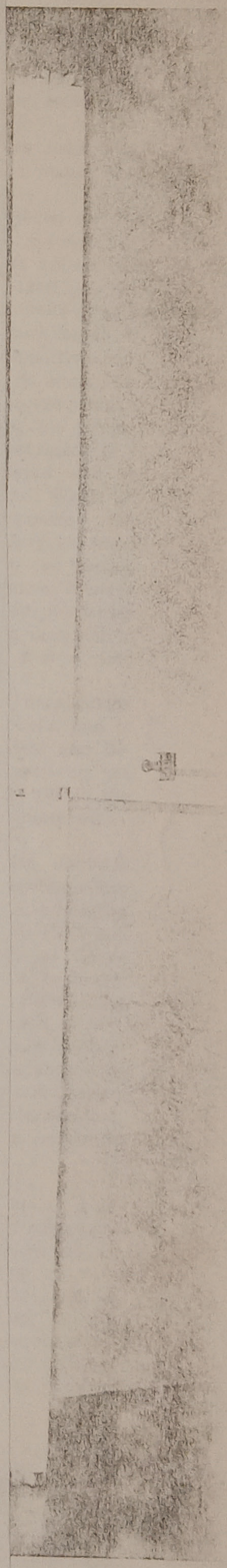
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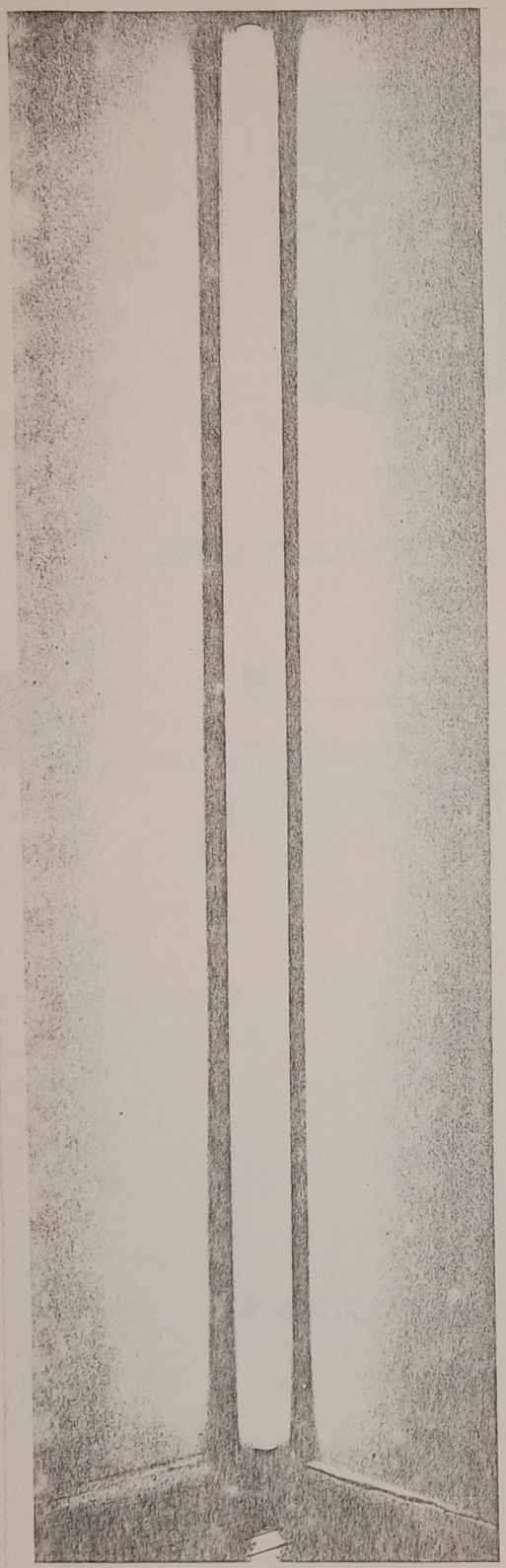
"pink out of a corner," fluorescent light, 8' high, 3¾" ... as installed in the Green Gallery, New York November, ... (Collection Philip Johnson.)



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"pink out of a corner," fluorescent light, 8' high, 3¼" wide, as installed in the Green Gallery, New York, November, 1964. (Collection Philip Johnson.)

history and Ralph Mayer's "Tools and Materials" program for two semesters at Columbia University.

These classes with Mr. Mayer put me in touch with a variety of antique artistic modes of "permanent painting" which no one will ever use again. In the second semester, I glazed a still-life too intensely and got a thin "B" for the effort.

In February 1959, with my personal affairs in a tangle, I burst out of Columbia University into a belated full-time affair with art. At first, I was on my own with everybody else's work—Guston's, Motherwell's, Kline's, Gorky's, Pollock's, Rothko's, Jasper Johns' and "What have you seen in the new Art News?"

My friend, Ward Jackson, used to send me inspirational postcards bearing reproductions of ten year old Motherwell paintings which looked strikingly like my last week's work, but nevertheless, I persisted because, by then, I knew no other way to live. My work was always on my mind.

For a year or more, I celebrated just about anything: crude Cézanne's self-portrait mask ennobled in a whirl of charcoal; drab tenements on the waterfront profiled in oil—sienna, umber, ochre, black and white; freight trains through the rain, rendered by smears of fingered ink; misspent ejaculations of watercolor and ink on their own; the "Song of Songs" in my own script, embraced by tender washes that spoke of giving breasts in the field in morning light; a Luis Lozano Olive Oil tin found flattened in the gutter disclosed as itself fastened to a golden box marked, "mira, mira."

By now, I had established my first studio, a sunny railroad flat on Washington Street in the midst of the old wholesale meat market on Manhattan's West Side below Fourteenth Street, and near the Hudson River waterfront. (I have always lived by large bodies of water. I love their breadth in constant flux.)

This place quickly grew chock full of curiosities—a dance of strung out objects—arranged like a strange, dirty, cumulative composition but with a random look. All the materials displayed there were found in my wanderings along the waterfront.

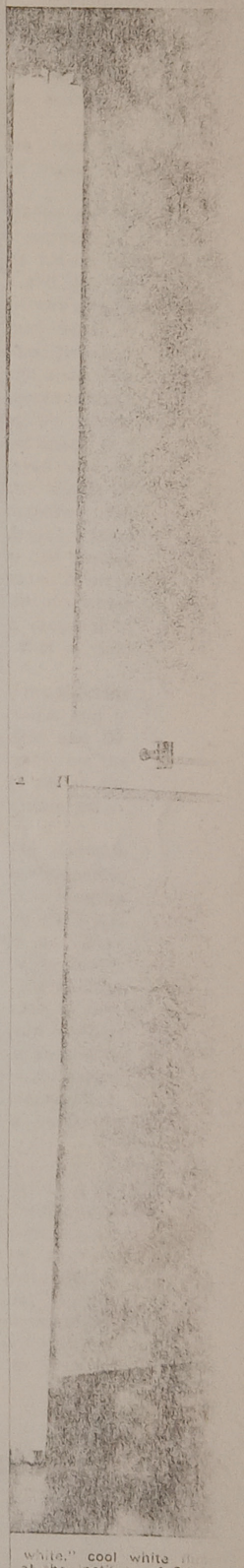
When Dick Bellamy first visited me there, he paced from room to room delightedly for some time, and then announced that he wished he could transport the entire apartment to his new Green Gallery. It never occurred to me that the way I wanted to live could become a saleable work of art.

By 1961, I was tired of my three year old romance with art as tragic practice. I found that all my small constructions, with the exception of "mira, mira," were memorial plaques and that the numerous pages and folding books of watercolor and poetry which I had made were drowned in funereal black ink.

My four room flat had shrunk to a closet around my mind. There were too many things of old emotion there. I had to abandon it. My new wife, Sonja, and I pooled our earnings so that we could rent a large loft away in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, where I could start again to change those small celebrations into something grander—a more intelligent and personal work.

While walking the floor as a guard in the American Museum of Natural History, I crammed my uniform pockets with notes for an electric light art. "Flavin, we don't pay you to be an artist," warned the custodian in charge. I agreed, and quit him.

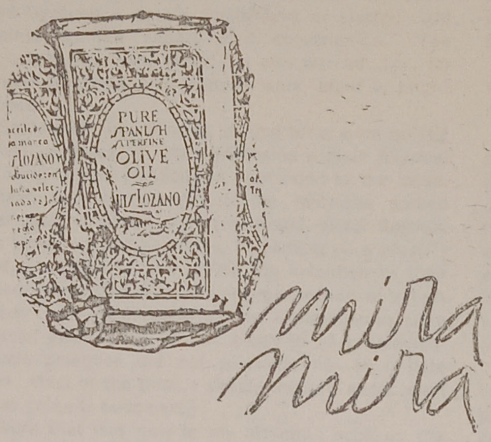
These notes began to find structural form in the fall. My wife and I were elated at seeing light and



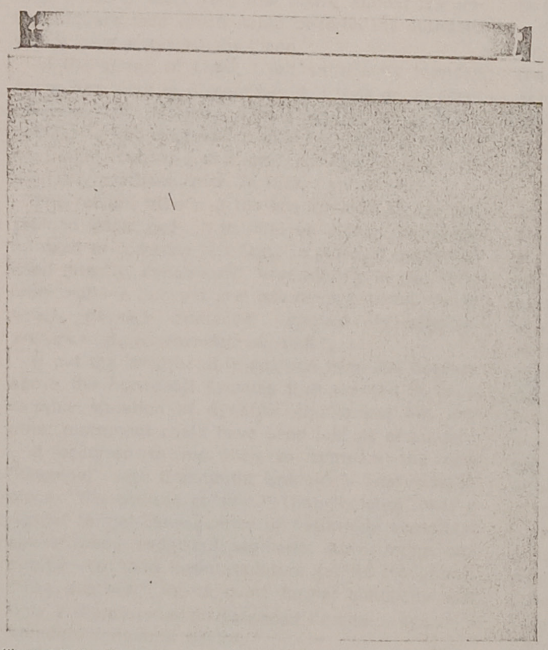
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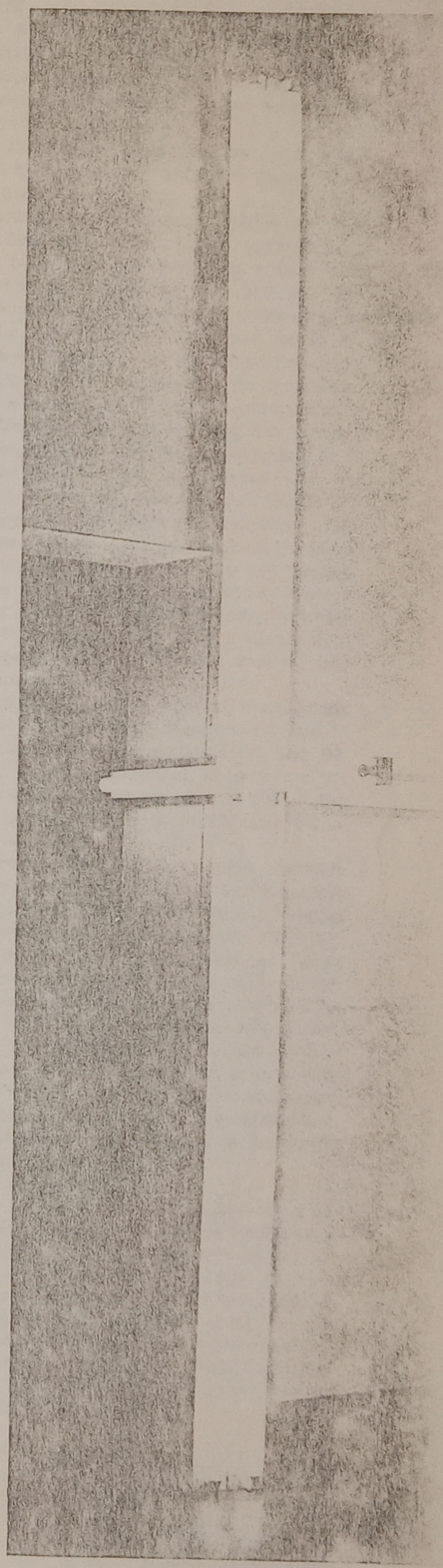
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"mira mira," tin can and oil on masonite and balsa, 19x22x1⅞", 1960. (Collection Mr. and Mrs. J. Bowyer Bell, Jr.)



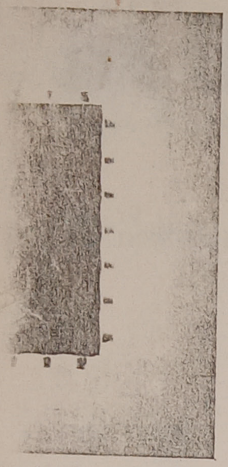
"icon I," (to Sean McGovern), 25⅛" (exclusive of light), red fluorescent light and cadmium red oil on canvas.



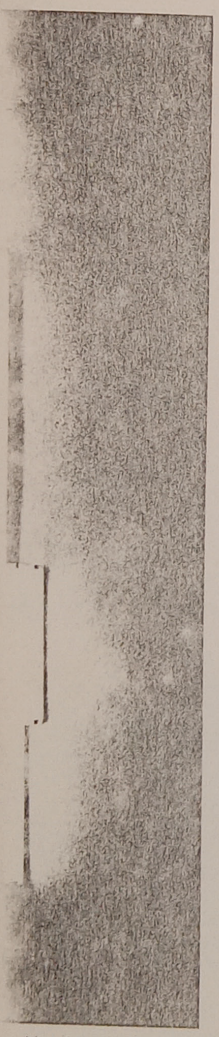
"vertical and horizontal cool white," cool white fluorescent light, 144x60½", 1965, as installed at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, Pa., April 1965.

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clear incandescent light
the bulb tips), 9⅞" d.



white fluorescent light,
nstitute of Contemporary

paint together on the wall before us. Then, for the next three years, I was off at work on a series of electric light "icons."[1]

Some previously sympathetic friends were alienated by such a simple deployment of electric light against painted square-faced construction. "You have lost your little magic," I was warned. Yes, for something grander—a difficult work, blunt in bright repose.

Somewhere in my mind, at this time, were quietly rebellious thoughts about proposing a plain physical painting of firm plasticity in opposition to the loose, vacant and overwrought tactile fantasies spread over yards of cotton duck (my friend, Victor Caglioti, has labelled these paintings, "dreaming on a brush") that overwhelmed and stifled the invention of their practitioner-victim—a declining generation of artists whom I saw out there before me in prosperous commercial galleries. (I do not mean to be misleading. Plastic polemics did not persuade me to initiate work. Most of the time, I simply thought about what I was going to build next.)

Work that was new to my attention such as the homely objective paint play about objects of Jasper Johns, the easy separative brushed on vertical bar play in grand scale by Barnett Newman or the dry multi-striped consecutive bare primed canvas-pencil-paint frontal expanse play from Frank Stella did not hold an appropriate clue for me about this beginning. I had to start from that blank, almost featureless, square face which could become my standard yet variable emblem—the "icon."

In the spring of 1963, I felt sufficiently founded in my new work to discontinue it. I took up a recent diagram and declared "the diagonal of personal ecstasy" ("the diagonal of May 25, 1963"), a common eight foot strip of fluorescent light in any commercially available color. At first, I chose gold.

The radiant tube and the shadow cast by its pan seemed ironic enough to hold on alone. There was no need to compose this lamp in place; it implanted itself directly, dynamically, dramatically in my workroom wall—a buoyant and relentless gaseous image which, through brilliance, betrayed its physical presence into approximate invisibility.

(I put the lamp band in position forty-five degrees above the horizontal because that seemed to be a suitable situation of dynamic equilibrium but any other placement could have been just as engaging.)

It occurred to me then to compare the new "diagonal" with Constantin Brancusi's past masterpiece, "the endless column." That "column" was a regular formal consequence of seemingly numerous similar wood wedge-cut segments surmounting one another—a hand hewn sculpture (at its inception). "The diagonal" in its overt formal simplicity was only a dimensional or distended luminous line in a standard industrial device.

Both structures had a uniform elementary visual nature. But they were intended to excel their obvious visible limitations of length and their apparent lack of expressiveness—visually—spiritually. "The endless column" had evident overtones returning to distant symbols. It was like some archaic mythologic totem which had continued to grow, surging skyward. "The diagonal," on the other hand, in the possible extent of its dissemination as a common strip of light or a shimmering slice across anybody's wall, had the potential for becoming a modern technological fetish; but, who could be sure how it would be understood?

Immanuel Kant explained in his "Critique of Judgment" that ". . . the Sublime is to be found in a formless object, so far as in it, or by occasion of it, boundlessness is represented." He seemed to speak to both these structures.[2]

In time, I came to these conclusions about what I had found in fluorescent light, and about what might be done with it plastically:

Now the entire interior spatial container and its parts—wall, floor and ceiling, could support this strip of light but would not restrict its act of light except to enfold it. Regard the light and you are fascinated—inhibited from grasping its limits at each end. While the tube itself has an actual length of eight feet, its shadow, cast by the supporting pan, has none but an illusion dissolving at its ends. This waning shadow cannot really be measured without resisting its visual effect and breaking the poetry.

Realizing this, I knew that the actual space of a room could be broken down and played with by planting illusions of real light (electric light) at crucial junctures in the room's composition. For example, if you press an eight foot fluorescent lamp into the vertical climb of a corner, you can destroy that corner by glare and doubled shadow. A piece of wall can be visually disintegrated from the whole into a separate triangle by plunging a diagonal of light from edge to edge on the wall; that is, side to floor, for instance.

These conclusions from completed propositions (in the Kaymar Gallery during March 1964 and in the Green Gallery during November 1964 and December 1964) left me grounded at play on the structure that bounded a room but not yet in the volume of air space which is so much more extensive than the room's box.

Since December 1964, I have made tentative attempts at this (in the Institute of Contemporary Art from March 1965 through May 1965, and again at The Ohio State University during April 1965 and May 1965) through bringing the lamp as image back into balance with the other side of its duality as object by dropping it diagonally from the wall out onto the floor in Philadelphia; by extending it horizontally out of an entry arch into the room in Philadelphia and, in Columbus, by placing a pattern of lamps as a complement to the ascent and descent of a flight of stairs and then letting a sole, two-foot, cool, white fluorescent strip act as a horizontal visual bar across the staircase.

What has art been for me?

In the past, I have known it (basically) as a sequence of implicit decisions to combine traditions of painting and sculpture in architecture with acts of electric light defining space and, recently, as more progressive structural proposals about these vibrant instruments which have severalized past recognitions and swelled them effluently into almost effortless yet insistent mental patterns which I may not neglect. I want to reckon with more lamps on occasion—at least for the time being. ■

1. I used the word "icon" as descriptive, not of a strictly religious object, but of one that is based on a hierarchical relationship of electric light over, under, against and with a square-faced structure full of paint light.
2. In November 1964, the Green Gallery, held by strategic lines of light, became a quiet cavern of muted glow.

This text is the first half of a lecture presented at the Brooklyn Museum Art School on December 18, 1964, and again, in revised form, in the Ohio State University Law School Auditorium on April 26, 1965. It was augmented for publication during the last week of August, 1965 and the first weeks of September, 1965.

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SOL LEWITT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

February 3 to April 4, 1978

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019, Cable: Modernart

NO. 90
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:
Linda Gordon (212) 956-2648
Bruce Wolmer (212) 956-7295

ADVANCE FACT SHEET

EXHIBITION: SOL LeWITT

ITINERARY: The Museum of Modern Art, New York
February 3 - April 4, 1978
Press Preview: February 1, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Musee d'Art Contemporain
Montreal, Canada
September 5 - October 24, 1978

Krannert Art Museum
University of Illinois, Champaign, Illinois
March 4 - April 8, 1979

La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art
La Jolla, California
May 11 - June 24, 1979

DIRECTOR: Alicia Legg, Associate Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, The Museum of Modern Art

CONTENTS: This retrospective is devoted to one of the major artists of the last decade, a pioneer figure in the Minimalist movement of the 1960s, whose work has had a profound influence on the current generation of Conceptual and post-Conceptual artists.

Sol LeWitt has established an international reputation and has been the subject of numerous one-man gallery shows and museum exhibitions in both this country and Europe. However, this exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art is the first comprehensive retrospective view of LeWitt's work to be presented by an American museum.

Although the term Minimal art can imply a limited physical manipulation of material by the artist, and LeWitt's structures and wall drawings are usually executed under his direction by assistants, the word "minimal" is used in relation to LeWitt's work in the sense that his shapes derive from the simplest geometric form -- the cube -- leading to infinite possibilities for variations in both two- and three-dimensional works. Referring to the Conceptual aspect of his work, LeWitt has said, "The concept and the idea are different. The former implies a general direction while the latter is the component. Ideas implement the concept." For LeWitt, if the thinking is done in advance, the problems are solved and the execution is secondary.

(more)

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Included will be the artist's modular and serial structures, framed drawings, wall drawings, and "bookworks":

Structures

Approximately 24 structures ranging from his reliefs of the early 1960s to the more recent serial works that demonstrate the clarity of logical progression. Among these are his first serial piece, "Serial Project #1 (ABCD)" of 1966, in which he has arranged open and closed modular units on a four-part grid base to present every possible variation or permutation; and "Incomplete Open Cubes" of 1974, in which the linear elements of a cube are explored in 122 eight-inch pieces, beginning with the basic three bars and concluding with 11 bars (12 being needed to complete the cube).

Drawings

LeWitt's first important drawings like the structures were also derived from the grid. They date from 1968 when LeWitt seriously began his serial drawing using the four basic kinds of straight lines (horizontal, vertical, and both diagonals), from which he has gone on to develop the various combinations and permutations. Among the approximate 100 framed drawings in the exhibition is "All Three-Part Variations on Three Different Kinds of Cubes," presenting 71 variations of three stacked cubes in open and/or closed forms.

Wall Drawings

LeWitt's wall drawings evolved in 1968 and embody such concerns as chance and impermanence. They assume their forms according to the space they occupy, following the architectural limitations of a given wall, and incorporating the various elements of that wall. Believing that it is the "idea" that counts, LeWitt puts his instructions in writing for others to follow; hence, there are subtle variations in each execution. There will be approximately 20 wall drawings on view.

Books

Book design is one of LeWitt's greatest interests today. His "bookworks " incorporate all his ideas on form and seriality with the various progressions illustrated in line drawings in black and white as well as in color. Succinct captions serve as the text. They correspond chronologically with his structures and drawings and date from 1966 when his first publications devoted to his serial projects were issued. Approximately 20 books are included in this retrospective.

PUBLICATIONS:

Sol LeWitt. Designed by the artist, edited by Alicia Legg; with essays by Lucy Lippard, Bernice Rose, and Robert Rosenblum. Clothbound $22.50; paperbound $12.50. Published by The Museum of Modern Art.

In addition, approximately 15 of LeWitt's "bookworks" will be available for sale in the Museum Bookstores.

(more)

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LECTURES:

Sol LeWitt will lecture and discuss his work in a program especially for students and teachers in conjunction with his current exhibition on Saturday, February 11 at 10:00 a.m. Tickets are free and can be obtained at the Lobby Information Desk. Ticket-holders will be invited to view the exhibition after the program.

Two additional lectures presented in conjunction with the SOL LeWITT exhibition will be held Tuesday evenings at 8:30. Tickets at $4, members $3, students $2, available at the Lobby Information Desk.

Mar 14: "Sol LeWitt: An Introduction" -- Robert Rosenblum, Professor of Fine Arts, New York University
Mar 21: "Sol LeWitt: What's In a Name" -- Donald Kuspit, Professor of Art History, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Gallery talks will be given by graduate students on various aspects of the SOL LeWITT exhibition at 1:00 p.m. everyday except Wednesday.

RELATED EXHIBITION:

Because so much exhibition space has been given to wall drawings--more will be shown in this exhibition than have ever before been assembled in one place--The Museum of Modern Art is not able to include LeWitt's prints. Fortunately, the Brooklyn Museum concurrently is presenting SOL LeWITT GRAPHICS from February 4 through March 4, providing the opportunity of seeing LeWitt's complete oeuvre in New York.

SOL LeWITT is made possible in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. The Museum of Modern Art's exhibition program is made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency whose funds are recommended by the Governor and appropriated by the State Legislature.

December, 1977

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Sol LeWitt's 'Jungle Gym for the Mind'

NYT - 1/29/78

By GRACE GLUECK

"Euclid alone has looked on Beauty bare," wrote the poet Edna St. Vincent Millay musing about the great Greek geometer more than half-a-century ago.

Substitute the name of Sol LeWitt, the high priest of Conceptual art, for Euclid, and you will please his followers mightily. They tend to hail his pallid, austere geometric structures and drawings, often outweighed by the lengthy, pseudo-mathematical descriptions that accompany them, in, well, something like Millay-an terms. To wit (no pun intended):

"They have the look of thought," writes Donald Kuspit, professor of art history at the University of North Carolina. "They seem to transcend the compulsion to create objects . . . one spots their convergence toward an ideal meaning and one contemplates that." Robert Rosenblum, professor of fine arts at New York University, finds them "stunningly beautiful. . . with a logical rigor that implies the tonic, intellectual clarity of a Euclidean theorem," while the art writer and critic Lucy Lippard says of LeWitt's work, "I can find no more learned term than beauty."

Some critics, to be sure, are rather more lukewarm about the work, calling it "cold," "awkward," "not fun to look at," "astringent, to say the most." Still, Mr. LeWitt, now 49, is accounted one of the major figures in the art of the last decade (a heavy influence on the current generation of Conceptual and post-Conceptual artists, his work appeared last year alone in nine one-man and 26 group shows, from Tel Aviv to Grand Forks, S. D.) Yet he is only now having his first museum retrospective in the United States, opening Friday at the Museum of Modern Art.

The show will expose the full range of the LeWitt oeuvre, whose basic ingredients are the cube, the square and the line: his structures, drawings, giant wall drawings and "bookworks"—small books that blueprint his ideas on form and seriality—will appear at the Modern, while a concurrent show of LeWitt graphics will open Saturday at the Brooklyn Museum.

•

The artist, a low-key, unassuming man who is known for his help, financial and otherwise, to needy artists and friends, has lived since 1960 in the same seedy but cozy loft on Hester Street ("I have a dread of moving"). In his early days in New York, to keep body and soul together, he actually worked at the Modern as a might receptionist, for $40 a week. "But at the time, when I desperately needed a job, they were the only people who'd hire me." He takes his triumphal return lightly; "I know the building's innards and a lot of people there, and it makes things much easier."

Despite Mr. LeWitt's Conceptual claim that his art is more important in the idea than in the embodiment, the show, curated by Alicia Legg, must be seen to be appreciated. And there's a lot to look at: Among the works on view are early wooden structures of 1962-64, among the first in the idiom later to be known as Minimal; famous cube structures such as "Serial Project 1 (ABCD)," of 1966, in which open and closed modular units are arranged on a four-part grid in every possible variation; drawings that parlay the four basic parallel lines (horizontals, verticals, right diagonals and left diagonals) into dense tapestries of color; gossamer pencillings that cover entire walls and bear such descriptive titles as "10,000 Straight Lines 10 Inches Long."

The very appearance of it all is intellectually strenuous; it suggests, as one viewer put it while gazing at the skeletal framework of a cube, "a jungle gym for the mind." But for all its "mathematical," geometry-demonstration look, his art, LeWitt asserts, is "intuitive." "Conceptual artists are mystics rather than rationalists," he has written. "They leap to conclusions that logic cannot reach."

Nor is he particularly concerned with the visibility of his art—it must be "mentally interesting." "Ideas can be works of art," he has also written. "They are in a chain of development that may eventually find some form. All ideas need not be made physical." And he elaborates: "In conceptual art the idea of concept is the most important aspect of the work. When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes a machine that makes the art."

What fascinates Mr. LeWitt is the idea of "system"—the assemblage of elements so as to form a complex or unitary whole. His art lies in exploring all the possible combinations and permutations of a given set of elements, and he moves with equal ease in both the second and third dimensions. One of his best-known serial pieces, "Incomplete Open Cubes," of 1974, for example, rings no less than 122 changes on the linear structure of a cube. Starting out from a fundamental three-bar form, it progresses to the penultimate one of 11 bars, stopping just short of the whole cube.

•

"The idea was to see how many ways a cube can be constructed without actually finishing it and without repeating any of the forms by turning them sideways, each form being unique," he explains. No mathematician, he started the work "empirically," building the cubes, then finding (through a friend, the sculptor Ruth Vollmer) a mathematician/physicist who "worked out a formula and verified it."

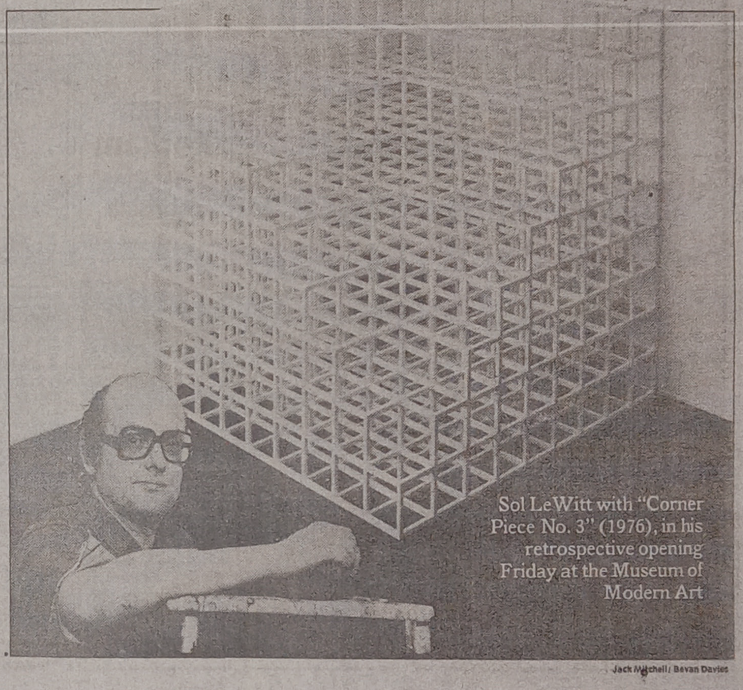
And the idea behind it? "It was done as an exercise in the creation of a system," says Mr. LeWitt, mildly. "No one can say that art—at least modern Western art— is done for a purpose." And he goes on: "A lot of the things I do are trying to make order out of chaos. But my ideas are not about anything but themselves. I'm not attempting a world view. I start with an idea and work it out. The viewer sees it from the outside and works it in. I like reading detective stories—they're all about getting to the crux of things, starting from the outside and getting to the inside. I give the viewer all the clues and he arrives at the idea."

Like most artists, Mr. LeWitt came to his present work by a complex and circuitous route, involving architecture, graphics, the photographs of Eadweard Muybridge, the paintings of Jasper Johns and the militant art-world polemics of the 1960's, which took issue with the idea of art as a luxurious object. Born in Hartford to a middle-class family, he says his first impulse to be an artist was "a rejection of bourgeois values in my whole upbringing and society. I felt it necessary to establish myself as an individual."

After graduation from Syracuse University with a degree in fine arts, Mr. LeWitt came to New York and found work as a graphics designer, where he got hooked on typography. He traces back to these days his interest in doing his "bookworks"—those inexpensive editions that he hopes "communicate" his works and ideas to a (theoretically) larger-than-art-world audience. So far, he has done more than 30 of them.

Later, work in the graphics division of the architectural firm headed by I.M. Pei stimulated his interest in architecture—"Just thinking about it and look-

Continued on Page 28



Sol LeWitt with "Corner Piece No. 3" (1976), in his retrospective opening Friday at the Museum of Modern Art

Jack Mitchell / Bevan Davies

April 1976

Jeffrey Deitch
Editor

Published by
The John Weber Gallery
420 West Broadway
New York, N.Y. U.S.A. 10012
Telephone number: (212) 966-6115

Opposite page: A page from one of Carl Andre's 1960 sketchbooks showing plans for the Element Series.

that the gallery had been wasting taxpayers' money by buying an Andre which consisted of nothing more than a rectangular arrangement of 120 firebricks, and collecting other controversial contemporary work.

Andre's piece, which he made in 1965, was purchased by the Tate Gallery four years ago and has been exhibited a number of times without any unusual reactions. The present controversy was occasioned by the Tate's issuance of a 275 page catalogue that presented all of their recent acquisitions. In light of the current British budget crisis, the *Times* quick herringbone pattern to show that he could put together bricks just as well as Andre.

The immediate outcome of all this publicity was that hundreds of visitors a day began to file through the Tate's gallery 19 where the Andre was on display. The piece continued to draw crowds for the next two weeks until a young man vandalized the work by throwing blue vegetable dye onto the bricks. The piece was immediately withdrawn from exhibition in order to be cleaned, and as of this writing, it still has not been returned to public view.

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Continued from Page 25

LeWitt's Jungle Gym

ing at it." Meanwhile, he painted, more or less conventionally, according to those who knew him at the time, and spent hours talking politics and exploring such questions as the social/esthetic validity of art with his friends, Miss Lippard, the painter Robert Ryman, the art writer Michael Kirby, the sculptors Dan Flavin, Tom Doyle and the late Eva Hesse.

"We were especially thinking about non-esthetic ways of making art. I thought it was at a standstill—we were in the last mushy stages of Abstract Expressionism and needed a more rigorous approach. Abstract Expressionism was predicated on the taste and sensitivity of the artist. We wanted to make art that was more scientific, more rational. The keys and clues should be included so that the work could be understood, so the process could be understood."

Stalled among "a lot of deadends," Mr. LeWitt came across the work of Muybridge, the English photographer (1830-1904) whose sequential, stop-action recording of figures and animals led to the development of the motion picture. "Muybridge used a serial system. His use of signs as language, as syntax, as narrative, was a starting point for my concern with finite systems over the last 10 years."

•

The idea of using a system was "most important," Mr. LeWitt explains, "because (a) it provides objectivity; and (b) you have the non-esthetic quality of not relying on taste." He saw "hints of system" around him in the work of Donald Judd, Flavin and Robert Morris—"but the real liberating force for me was Jasper Johns. I rejected the kind of Duchampian/Dada thing that Pop art took off on, but the thing in Johns that appealed was his use of alphabets and numbers as systems."

Johns also recognized, Mr. LeWitt points out, "that flat was flat and things 3-D were 3-D. Once that got into my head it was very important. In my case, it ended up in my drawing directly on the wall."

The idea of flatness was crucial, Mr. LeWitt points out, "because if you do drawings directly on the wall you don't need to build a stretcher, or support, for a canvas, whose surface you then paint and say this is the real thing, the rest of the support doesn't matter. Most important is the reality of a thing, doing something *real*, without illusionism."

Mr. LeWitt's wall drawings—done by assistants, as is all of his work—make use of parallel lines, cross-hatching, arcs and circles, most often in black and white but sometimes in the "basic" color of yellow, black, red and blue. They are eminently destroyable, though as "works" they can be owned and perpetuated by written descriptions. (The Tate Gallery in London, for example, owns "Horizontal Color Composite," a three-wall composition that was redrawn by the LeWitt team for the Modern show; a stunning "permanent" installation, done in 1974, covers eight interior walls of a building owned by the collector Giuseppe Panza di Buomo in Varese, Italy.)

The ephemeral nature of his wall works does not bother LeWitt the immaterialist, far from it. "A wall has a presence for me, a flatness, as it did for Giotto," he explains. "It takes over, it maintains its architectural quality, its wallness. Everything is finite and ephemeral, after all. It's better to have done a work that lasts for three or even only for a day than not to have done anything."

Back home on Hester Street, Mr. LeWitt lives what many would consider a Spartan life, often getting up at 5 A.M. to do his work, uninterrupted by street noises or the telephone. A prime supporter of young artists and their work, he amassed through purchases a huge collection—some 800 items—of current art, which he gave last year to the Wadsworth Atheneum in his native Hartford.

"They engulfed me," he says. "I didn't feel comfortable, being the custodian of such valuable things." ■

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Spring-Summer Schedule

Robert Mangold	Through April 21
Robert Smithson	April 24-May 19
Ian Wilson	Exact dates to be announced
Fred Sandback	May 22-June 16
Dale Henry	May 26-June 16
Group Exhibition	June 19-July 14

Gallery Artists

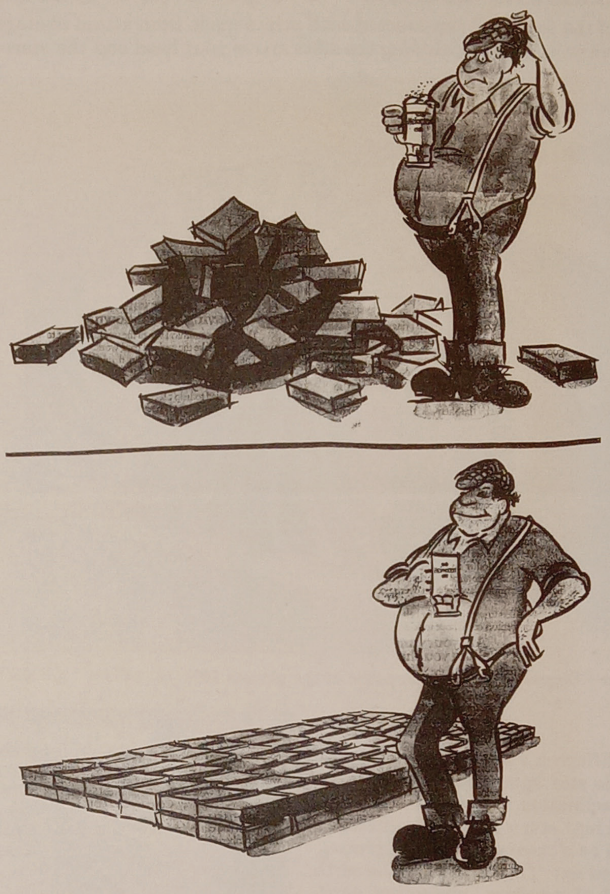
Roberta Allen
Carl Andre
Giovanni Anselmo
Stephen Antonakos
Art & Language
Alighiero E Boetti
Daniel Buren
Dan Flavin
Hans Haacke
Dale Henry
Ralph Humphrey
Sol LeWitt
Richard Long
Robert Mangold
Mario Merz
Roman Opalka
Lucio Pozzi
Dorothea Rockburne
Stephen Rosenthal
Charles Ross
Robert Ryman
Salvo
Fred Sandback
Estate of Robert Smithson
Ian Wilson
Gilberto Zorio

Newsletter
of the
John Weber Gallery
April 1976

Jeffrey Deitch
Editor

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Opposite page: A page from one of Carl Andre's 1960 sketchbooks showing plans for the Element Series.



Part of a beer advertisement that appeared in the London *Times* during the controversy over Andre's sculpture.

ANDRE SCULPTURE CAUSES CONTROVERSY IN LONDON

A sculpture by Carl Andre caused a furor in the London press last month and made the Tate Gallery a center of controversy. The imbroglio started with an article in the February 15th London Sunday *Times* headlined "The Tate Drops A Costly Brick." The writer complained that the gallery had been wasting taxpayers' money by buying an Andre which consisted of nothing more than a rectangular arrangement of 120 firebricks, and collecting other controversial contemporary work.

Andre's piece, which he made in 1965, was purchased by the Tate Gallery four years ago and has been exhibited a number of times without any unusual reactions. The present controversy was occasioned by the Tate's issuance of a 275 page catalogue that presented all of their recent acquisitions. In light of the current British budget crisis, the *Times* thought that it would be an opportune time to sift through the Tate catalogue for examples of dubious expenditures.

The other London newspapers lost no time jumping into the fray. The *Evening Standard* called Andre's sculpture "a pile of bricks," and asked "Do we need toys like this at the Tate?" The *Daily Mirror* sent around a roving reporter to sample public reaction, printing the more humorous comments, and featuring an interview with a bricklayer, ironically named Tony Smith, who laid a quick herringbone pattern to show that he could put together bricks just as well as Andre.

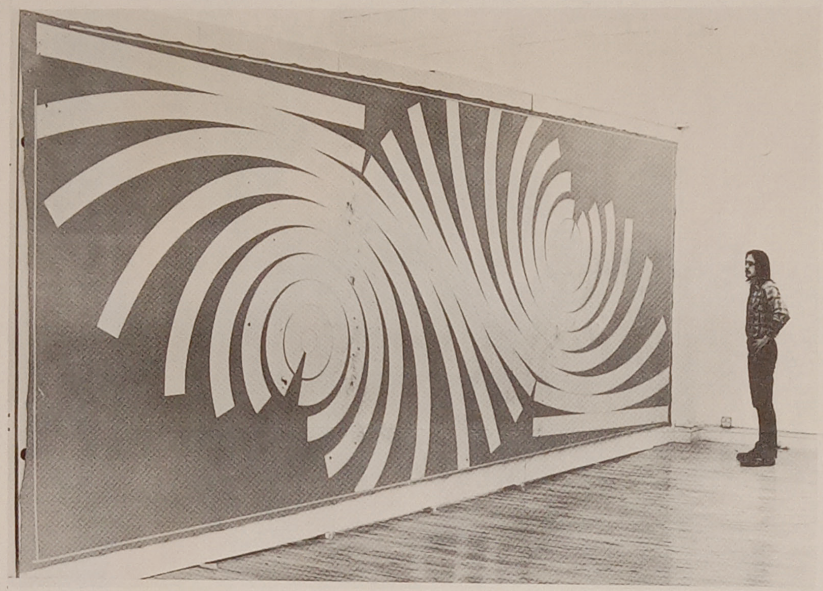
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CHARLES ROSS: POINT SOURCE/STAR SPACE

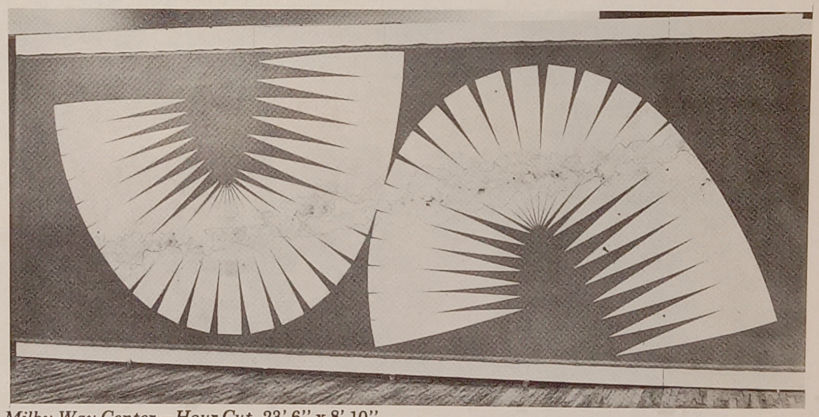
" 'Maps of the universe' constructed with prints made from actual photographs of the stars. Each map covers the entire celestial sphere from pole to pole, including the stars above your head and the stars below your feet no matter what your position on earth."



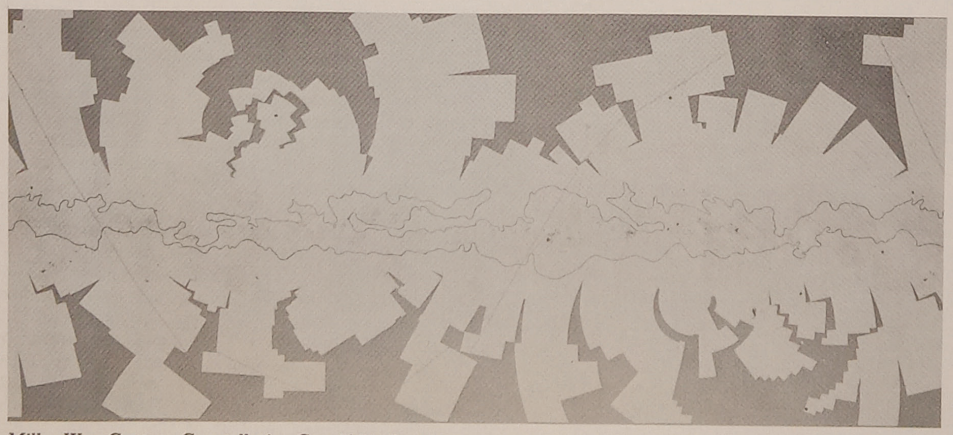
"The central core of each map is one of the two great 'landmark' pathways through the stars: the Milky Way, the galaxy that contains us, or the annual path of the sun, along which lie the constellations of the Zodiac. Those pathways are constructed running straight, exactly as they would appear in space if viewed from the center of a transparent earth."

Sun Center—Degree Cut, with the paths of the planets 1975-76, 24' 9½" x 8' 10"

"Three different systems were used to flatten the star sphere onto the canvas:
—The declination cut: Earth latitude extended into star space. The surface of the earth as a measure of the universe.
—The hour cut: The rotation of the earth as a tool of measure, projecting earth time onto star space; merging space and time into a single unit.
—The constellation cut: Maintaining the boundaries of each constellation. Mind space projected into star space, a conceptual system bridging the ages of history."



Milky Way Center—Hour Cut, 23' 6" x 8' 10"



"From the two structural decisions of spherical cut and central core, the shape of each map formed itself."

"The maps exist at the interface of two and three dimensions. They lie at the boundary of flatness and roundness, the dual realms of visual space, linking what is above with what is below."

Milky Way Center—Constellation Cut, 8' 3½" x 18' ?"

Opposite page: Detail from a star map showing the constellation Orion.

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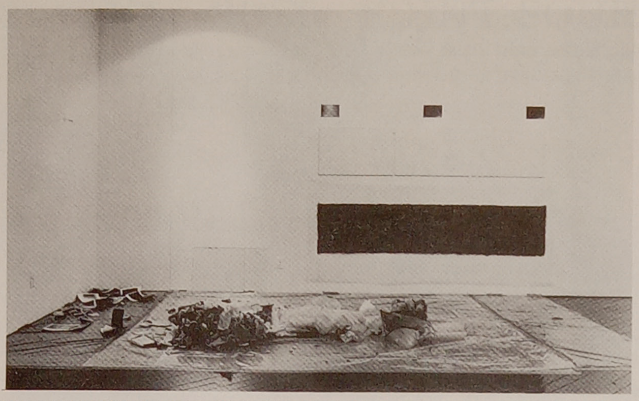
"Countless black dots scattered on a paper surface: shadows of immense and virtually unknown worlds that continually bombard our existence with particles of light."

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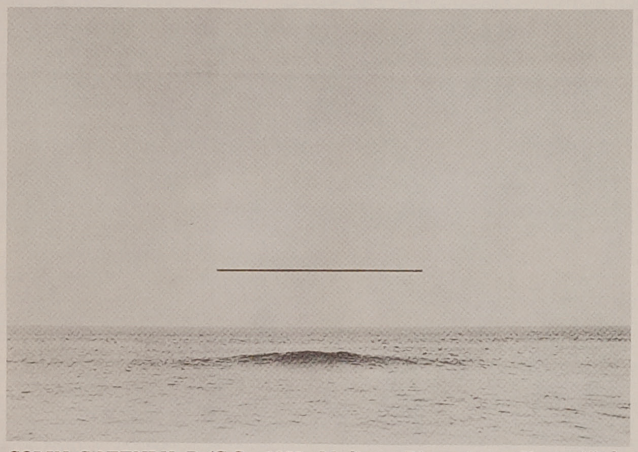
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JOHN WEBER GALLERY INVITA

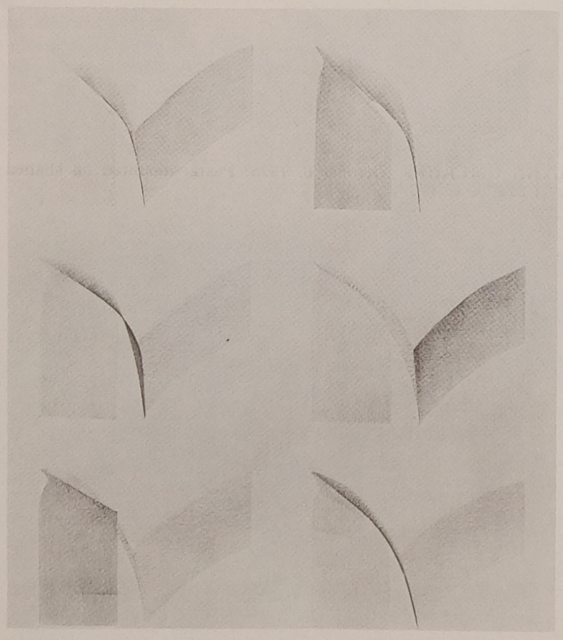
The intention of this exhibition, which will be an annual even
felt had achieved a personal and unique image in their work.
for the most part, exhibited extensively in New York, and v



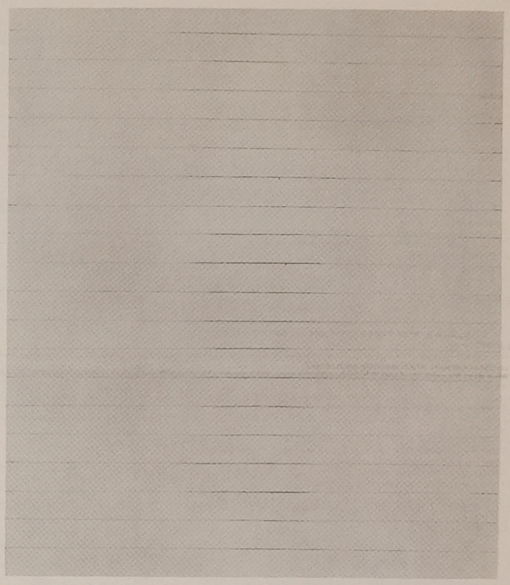
RUTH HARDINGER *A Weber Wall—A Piece In Five Parts,* 1975. 114" x 186" Overall.



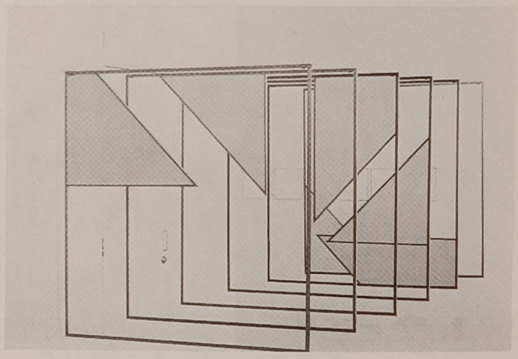
COLIN GREENLY *P./C.S.,* 1975. Medium, Dimensions—Unspecified. Presentation: Photoemulsion Mounted, 40" x 60". One Panel of Three.



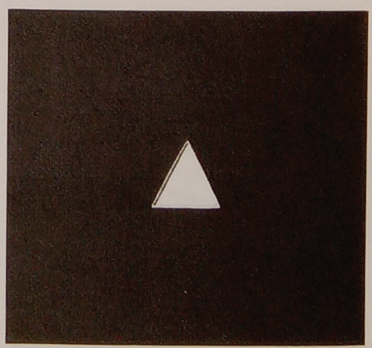
BLYTHE BOHNEN *Motion Touching Four Points With Graphite Stick Separating The Points With Dark and Light,* 1975. Graphite on paper, 46 3/4" x 36" fr.



HELEN SOREFF *Untitled,* 1975. Acrylic on canvas, 61" x 51".



SIBYL WEIL *Spiral,* 1975. Wood and vellum, 6 panels, each 36 1/2" x 36 1/2".



SUSANNA TANGER *Painting,* 1975. Acrylic on canvas, 24" x 24".

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RY INVITATIONAL EXHIBITION

h will be an annual event, is to exhibit artists whom the gallery
ue image in their work. The artists in this exhibition had not,
ely in New York, and were not affiliated with other galleries.

LONDON ALL OTHER PLACES

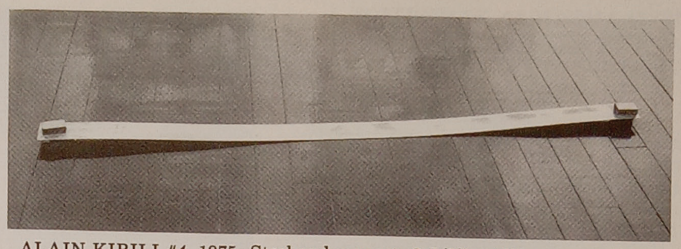
WHAT THE WORK CONSISTS IN
1 The work consists in 2 slots from a mail box, the language which appears above the adjacent slots, mutually exclusive claims as to what the work signifies mutually exclusive claims as to the consequence of the work and a set of questions.
2 The work consists in 2 slots from a mail box and the language which appears above the adjacent slots.
3 The work consists in sets of mutually exclusive claims and a set of questions.
4 The work consists in its own cause: an act of choice– the primal gesture of isolating, accepting and cognitizing a particular sensory stimulus. But that the work consists in the cognitive consequence i.e. the chosen of an act of choice precludes that the work consists in its own cause for if the cause is the work the work can not consist in that which has been caused. The cause ceases to be the cause of anything but the work while the work consists in nothing but the cause so that if the cause and work are equivalent nothing in a sense has been caused i.e. the work consumes the causeness of the cause neccessary in order that the cause be replaced by the work. The caused vanishes: the work is only and exactly the cause.
5 The work consists in a volitional therapy– a means of recuperating one's volition.
6 The work consists in one subordinate element– mail slots, one essential element– language above mail slots and one metaphysical element– arrows pointing at the language.
7 The work consists in 3 languages: one self serving and abased, one queer and chosen and one– the language of the arrows– sacrifical and incantatory
8 The work consists in a state of affairs which engenders a means of synthesizing metaphysical arrows.
9 The work consists in a moot proliferation of useless casuistry.

WHAT THE WORK SIGNIFIES
1 An example of what the work signifies might be, "an example of what the work signifies might be."
2 The work signifies what it consists in given that it would not consist in what it does without, 'the work signifies what it consists in'.
3 The work signifies– in the language of the arrows– fantastic messages hidden in the relative syntax of a mundane directive.

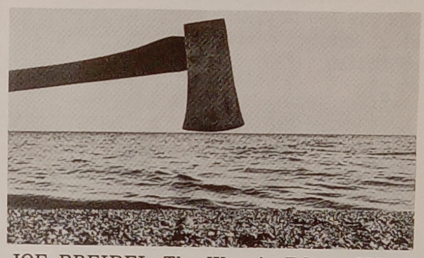
THE CONSEQUENCE OF THE WORK
1 The consequence of the work consists in not a particular but a general refutation of mimesis.
2 The consequence of the work is not a general but a particular annihilation of an ostensive causalty.
3 The consequence is, 'what might a consequence consist in here?'

QUESTIONS
1 How can the work contend that its claims are mutually exclusive? Is the work false? If not, what might it mean for a work to consist in elements which preclude each other?
2 What does the work 'deal with'? but what does it mean for a work to 'deal with'? or mightn't a dissolution of the question be the case here?
3 Might the work either lack criteria for determining what it consists in or consist in that which lacks the possibility of introducing 'criteria'? does this preclude anything? but why isn't it clear when one would want to use 'criteria'?
4 Are there criteria for being certain about what 'shoe' signifies? criteria for 'v'? for 'w'? but why isn't it clear when one would want to use 'signification'?
5 Is it clear that the work can have no truth value? no conclusions? say nothing?
6 Mightn't one interpret the work in the same way that one interprets the nature of ones god? ones shoe?
7 Is there any more intelligible proposition than to affirm that ones hunger mightn't be the consequence of ones having not– perhaps for several days– eaten?
8 Why is it not possible to pose more questions?

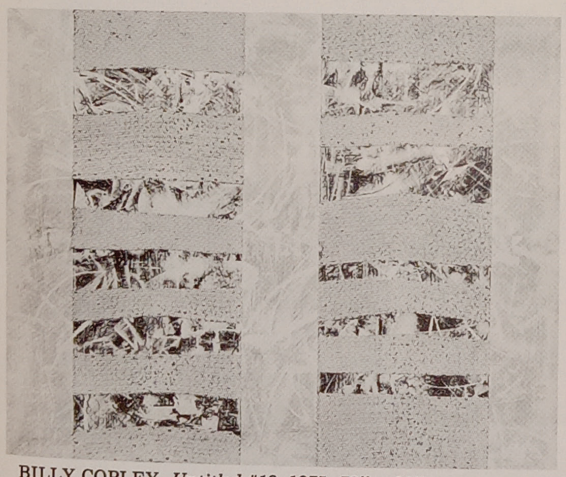
JEFFREY LOHN *Untitled,* 1975. Cardboard letters mounted on the wall, 66" x 76".



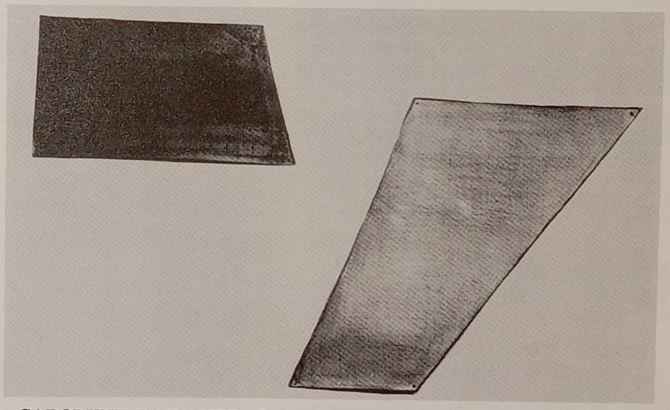
ALAIN KIRILI *#4,* 1975. Steel and magnet, 2 7/8" x 16".



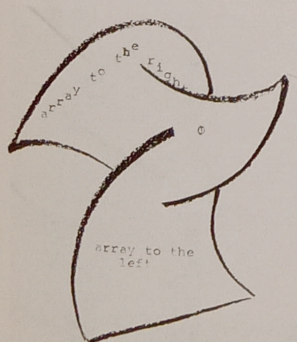
JOE BREIDEL *The Water's Edge*, 1975. Photograph, 16 1/4" x 20 1/4".



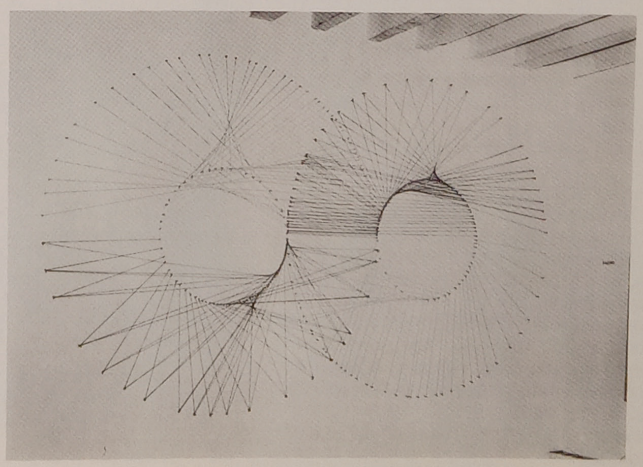
BILLY COPLEY *Untitled #13,* 1975. 72" x 90".



CAROLYNN UMLAUFF *October 6, 1975.* Pastel mounted on shaped canvas, 21 3/4" x 40 1/2", 36" x 56 1/4".



JUDY RIFKA *Untitled*, 1975. Photograph, 20" x 16".



KAZUKO *String Construction Ring*, 1975. String, nails, pencil on wall, 80" x 132" approx.

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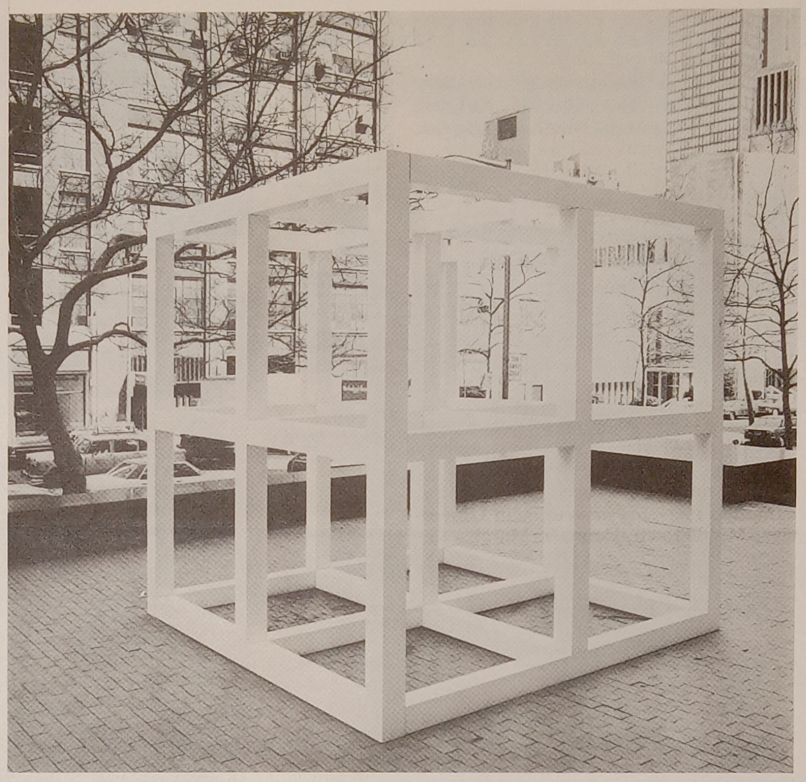
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72ND AMERICAN EXHIBITION AT THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

A sizeable contingent from New York attended the opening of the 72nd American Exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago last month. It is the oldest continuous exhibition of American art. Sol LeWitt's contribution to the show is a series of twelve large wall drawings on colored panels that also serve as the dividers between exhibition areas. Dorothea Rockburne is represented by a new painting, Robert Ryman by two paintings, and Carl Andre by *144 Tin Square,* a new work that was exhibited at the gallery in January. Dan Flavin contributed a multicolored fluorescent light installation.



A. James Speyer, left, Director of the Art Institute of Chicago, with John Weber at the opening of the 72nd American Exhibition.



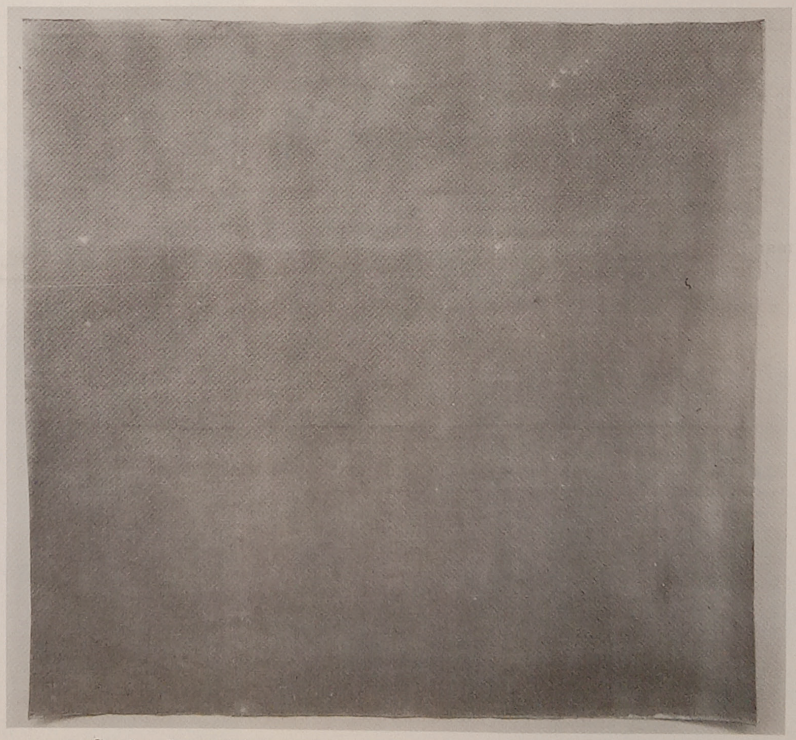
Sol LeWitt *8 Unit Cube,* 1976, Baked white enamel on aluminum, 10' 6" x 10' 6" x 10' 6". One of five LeWitt structures on view through May at Dag Hammerskjold Plaza, 2nd Ave. at 47th St., New York Citv.

STEPHEN ROSENTHAL'S NEW PAINTINGS

Stephen Rosenthal exhibited six new paintings in his February 28-March 24 show at the gallery. He prepared the following notes about his new work:

The sizing is removed, scratched off along each strand of the weave, an almost invisible process, later defined by films of ink wash, and the traces of this process, the incomplete removal of the sizing base, remain as visible traces in a painting context.

Lines, as extensions of all points of a line, which generate a plane, have less bearing than one might think. As infinite repetitions of one gesture, directed movements, they fill a surface as they obliterate themselves. The materiality of the canvas is defined by gesture which itself is absorbed as vowels and consonants make up the larger sound of the word. The lines do not articulate, subdivide and make coherent a surface; so densely packed they are imperceptible except as total gesture, they cluster leaving only the residue of their direction.



Stephen Rosenthal *Ayrb,* 1975, India ink on scored canvas, 75¼" x 81"

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NOTES

The exhibition of Robert Smithson's drawings that originated at the New York Cultural Center in 1974, and has been traveling around North America for the past two years will be traveling to Europe next fall. The Kroller-Muller Museum in Otterlo, Holland, and the State Museum at Moenchengladbach are two of the institutions that will be hosting the show.

The Future of the Present is the title of an exhibition currently being shown at the Lowe Museum of Art at the University of Miami, Florida. The exhibition includes 30 artists, among them Roman Opalka, Robert Mangold, Robert Ryman, and Sol LeWitt. LeWitt's wall drawing was executed by people from the university community.

Carl Andre gave a poetry reading and exhibited *Passport* at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn. in March.

An October-June exhibition at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, Georgia entitled *The New Image* includes work by Robert Smithson, Carl Andre, Hans Haacke, and Dorothea Rockburne.

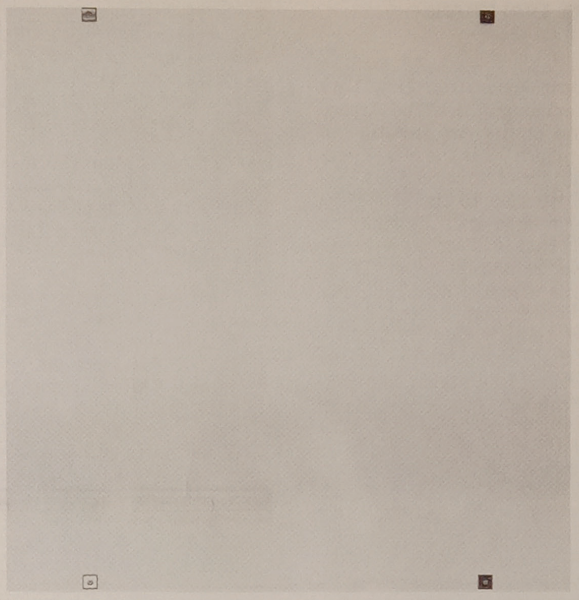
The National Collection of Fine Arts Bicentennial Sculpture exhibition opened earlier this year in Washington, traveled to Dallas, and is now in New Orleans. It includes work by Smithson and Andre.

An exhibition at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio featured a number of gallery artists including Andre, Haacke, Robert Mangold, Lucio Pozzi, and Stephen Rosenthal.

Webster College in St. Louis put on an exhibition this spring entitled *The Mind's Eye* that features the work of gallery artists. Carl Andre, Roberta Allen, Stephen Antonakos, Art & Language, Alighiero Boetti, Dale Henry, Sol LeWitt, Robert Mangold, Lucio Pozzi, Stephen Rosenthal, Charles Ross, Roman Opalka, and Salvo are included.

Line, an exhibition organized by Janet Kardon, opened at the Visual Arts Museum, New York, in January and traveled to the Philadelphia College of Art. It includes works by Andre, Antonakos, Flavin, LeWitt, Mangold, Pozzi, Rockburne, Rosenthal, and Sandback.

Critical Perspectives in American Art, organized by Sam Hunter, Rosalind Krauss, and Marcia Tucker, will be the American inclusion in the Venice Biennale, which will open on June 13th. The *Critical Perspectives* exhibition will first open at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. Robert Ryman will participate in this exhibition and has been commissioned to execute a large work for the American pavilion in Venice. In addition to the national pavilions, there will be several special exhibitions. Germano Celant is organizing an exhibition of interior environments and has invited several gallery artists to participate.



Robert Ryman *Untitled*, 1976, Pastel and pencil on plexiglass with steel plates and bolts, 49 5/8" x 49 5/8". Exhibited in The Museum of Modern Art's "Drawing Now" show.

Daniel Buren, who just had two exhibitions in California, will be having three simultaneous exhibitions in Holland this spring. Each of the shows will be referential to each other, in that pieces from each museum will be continued in the other locations. The show at the Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven opens on April 31st, the show at the Kroller-Muller in Otterlo opens May 1st, and the show at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, opens on May 2nd. This will allow people to attend all three openings in one weekend.

Instead of the standard art fair presentation, The John Weber Gallery will be mounting a group exhibition of important contemporary American drawings at the Bologna Art Fair in May. The show will include the work of artists who are not represented by the gallery as well as pieces by gallery artists.

The Museum of Modern Art's *Drawing Now* exhibition will be traveling to Europe. Edinburgh, Scotland is the first stop on the tour.



Lucio Pozzi *Shootout No. 5*, December 12, 1975, Art Agency Ltd., Tokyo, Japan. This season, he also had exhibitions and performances at Galerie Art in Progress, Munich; Galerie December, Munster; Galleria Peccolo, Livorno; Galerie Rencontres and Yvon Lambert, Paris; and the University of Rochester. Later this spring he will be having exhibitions at Galerie Aronowitsch, Stockholm, Galerie Baronian, and Galerie Charles Kriwin, Brussels, and Francoise Lambert, Milan. He exhibited at John Weber in October.

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SOL LEWITT: TEN YEARS OF ARTIST'S BOOKS

In addition to his sculpture and drawing, Sol LeWitt has been producing books for the past ten years. The books serve an important documentary function in that his wall drawings often must be painted over and his serial pieces dispersed after an exhibition. But beyond their documentary role, the books exist essentially as artworks. The medium is especially suited to LeWitt's work in that much of it deals with the problems of permutation and serial order, which lend themselves to exposition in a set of consecutive pages. Books are inexpensive to obtain, and can be made easily accessible, making LeWitt's ideas available to a wider audience. LeWitt is part of a group of artists and critics who have joined together this year to form Printed Matters, a company that will publish and distribute artists' books. The following is a list of all LeWitt's books and other publications since 1966. Catalogues that are not actual book works are not included.

BOOKS

B1 *Serial Project No. 1*
20 x 20 cm, 16 pages
Aspen Magazine, Section 17, No. 5-6
New York, 1966

B2 *Set II, 1-24*
25 x 25 cm, 28 pages, edition of 300
Ace Gallery, Los Angeles, 1968

B3 *49 Three-Part Variations using Three different kinds of Cubes, 1967-68*
17 x 35.5 cm, 28 pages, edition of 1000
Bruno Bischofberger, Zurich, 1969

B4 *Four Basic kinds of Straight Lines and their Combinations*
20 x 20 cm, 32 pages, edition of 500
Studio International, London, 1969

B5 *Four Basic Colours and their Combinations*
20 x 20 cm, 32 pages, edition of 500
Lisson Publications, London, 1971

B6 *Arcs, Circles &Grids*
20.5 x 20.5 cm, 208 pages, edition of 1000
Kunsthalle Bern/Paul Bianchini, Paris, 1972

B7 *Cercles & Lignes/Circles & Lines*
10.5 x 10.5 cm, 8 pages, edition of 1000
Galerie Yvon Lambert, Paris, 1973

B8 *Seventeen Squares with Sixteen Lines and one Arc (project for wall drawings)*
22 x 14 cm, 18 pages
Portland Center for the Visual Arts, Portland, Oregon, 1973

B8a (Itaian edition) *Diaciassette Quadrati con sedici linee ed un arco*
13 x 19 cm, 39 pages
Universita di Bari e Galleria Toselli, Mailand, 1974

B9 *Arcs with Straight Lines, Not-Straight & Broken Lines (project for wall drawings)*
22 x 14 cm, 14 pages
Cusack Gallery, Houston, Texas, 1973

B10 *Grids, using Straight, Not-Straight & Broken Lines in all Vertical & Horizontal Combinations, 2 etchings (E6)*
27 x 27 cm, 60 pages, editions of 25
Parasol Press, New York, 1973

B11 *The Location of Eight Points (project for wall drawings)*
14 x 14 cm, 24 pages
Max Protetch Gallery, Washington, 1974

B12 *Squares with Sides and Corners Torn Off*
14.5 x 14.5 cm, 32 pages
MTL, Brussels

B13 *La posizione di tre figure geometriche/The Location of Three Geometric Figures*
13 x 19 cm, 16 pages
Galleria Sperone, Turin, 1974

B14 *Incomplete Open Cubes*
20.5 x 20.5 cm, 264 pages, edition of 2000
John Weber Gallery, New York, 1974

B15 *Drawing Series I, II, III, IIIIa & b (1970)*
23.5 x 23.5 cm, 224 pages
Galleria Sperone, Turin, and Konrad Fischer, Dusseldorf, 1974

B16 *The Location of Lines*
20 x 20 cm, 48 pages
Lisson Publications, London, 1974

B17 *Arcs and Lines*
20.5 x 20.5 cm, 56 pages
Editions des Massons, Lausanne, and Galerie Yvon Lambert, Paris, 1974

B18 *Color Grids*
20.5 x 20.5 cm, 48 pages
MTL, Brussels, 1975

B19 *Lines and Color*
20.5 x 20.5 cm, 72 pages, edition of 1000
Annemarie Verna, Zurich, Rolf Preisig, Basel, Marilena Bonomo, Bari, 1975

B20 *Grids in Color. 45 Radii (E11)*
27 x 27 cm, edition of 25
Parasol Press, New York, 1975

B21 *Grids*
30.5 x 30.5 cm, 8 pages
Pour, Brussels, 1975

B22 *Red, Blue & Yellow Lines, from Sides, Corners & the Center of the Page to Points on a Grid 18 x 18 cm, 16 pages*
Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 1975

B23 *Stone walls*
14 photo etchings
Crown Point Press, Oakland, California, 1975

B24 *The Location of Straight, Not-Straight & Broken Lines and All Their Combinations*
8" x 8", 16 pages
John Weber Gallery, 1976

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

P1 *Lines and Combinations of Lines—1969*
29.7 x 21.4 cm, 4 pages, edition of 800
Art & Project, Amsterdam (Bulletin 18, 2/$/1970)

P2 *Ten Thousand Lines/Six Thousand Two Hundred and Fifty-Five Lines—1970*
29.7 x 21 cm, 4 pages, edition of 800
Art & Project, Amsterdam (Bulletin 32, 4/1/1971)

P3 *Folded Bulletin—1971*
29.7 x 21.4 cm, 4 pages, edition of 800
Art & Project, Amsterdam (Bulletin 43, 1/9/1971)

P4 *Lines & Lines, Arcs & Arcs & Lines & Arcs—1972*
29.7 x 21 cm, 4 pages, edition of 800
Art & Project, Amsterdam (Bulletin 60, 25/9/1972)

P5 *Vier Muurtekeningen/Quatre Dessins Muraux—1973*
29.7 x 21.4 cm, 4 pages, edition of 800
MTL, Brussels and Art & Project, Amsterdam

P6 *Wall Drawings & Structures: The Location of Six Geometric Figures/Variations of Incomplete Open Cubes—1974*
38 x 38 cm, 4 pages
John Weber Gallery, New York

P7 *Incomplete Open Cubes—1975*
29.7 x 21.4 cm, 4 pages, edition of 800
Art & Project, Amsterdam (Bulletin 88, 4/3/1975)

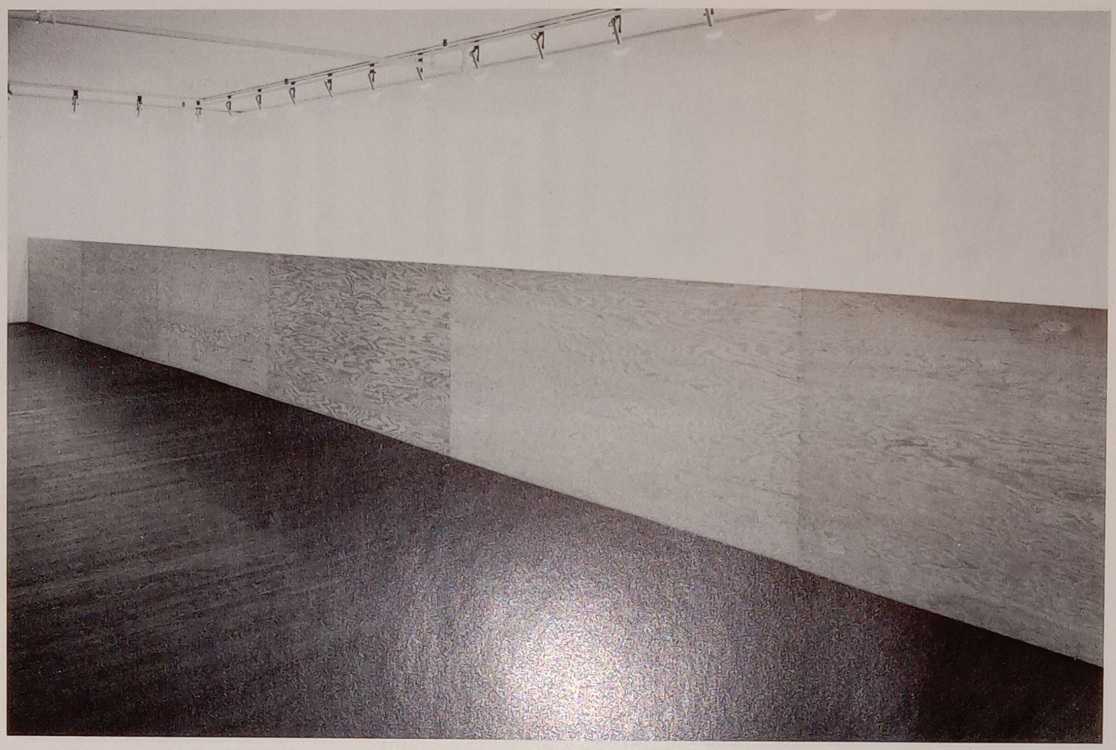
P8 *Five Structures*
5 ½" x 5 ½", 8 pages
John Weber Gallery, New York, 1976

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Donald Judd, untitled, 1976, plywood, 4′ × 48′ × 10′9″.

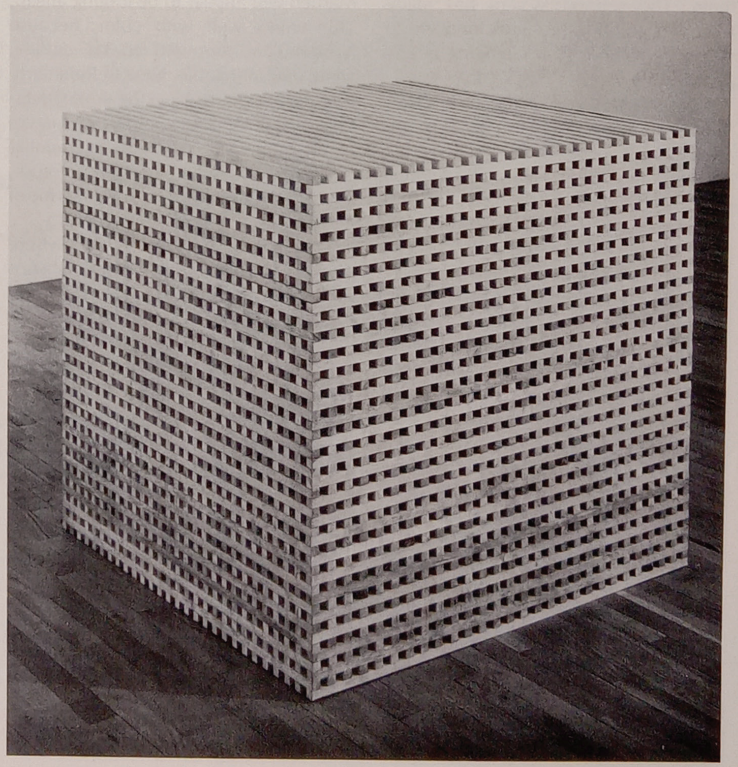
no structural function, affirming Winsor's obsession with laborious, even gratuitous processes.

In method these new works are quite close to Jackie Ferrara's plywood zigguratlike constructions. Both artists stack and build, and both open their forms enough to emphasize the relationship between inside and outside. But whereas Ferrara heightens the architecture and archeology associations by drawing detailed plans and quoting from the forms of ancient buildings, Winsor expunges all such references. Her simple shapes declare themselves unequivocally. It is evident that the art of Winsor's work is in its making.

—NANCY FOOTE

BRICE MARDEN, Sperone Westwater Fischer; WILLIAM T. WILEY, Museum of Modern Art:

BRICE MARDEN was discovered just when many were saying that painting seemed to be on its last leg. A certain rescue strategy was initiated that magnetized his work, attracting every possible influence and predecessor of the last 400 years. This made Marden seem to be the apotheosis of it all, the crowning glory, the last gasp, not just of the endangered species—painting—but



Jackie Winsor, *Fifty-Fifty*, 1975, wood and nails, 40 × 40 × 40″.

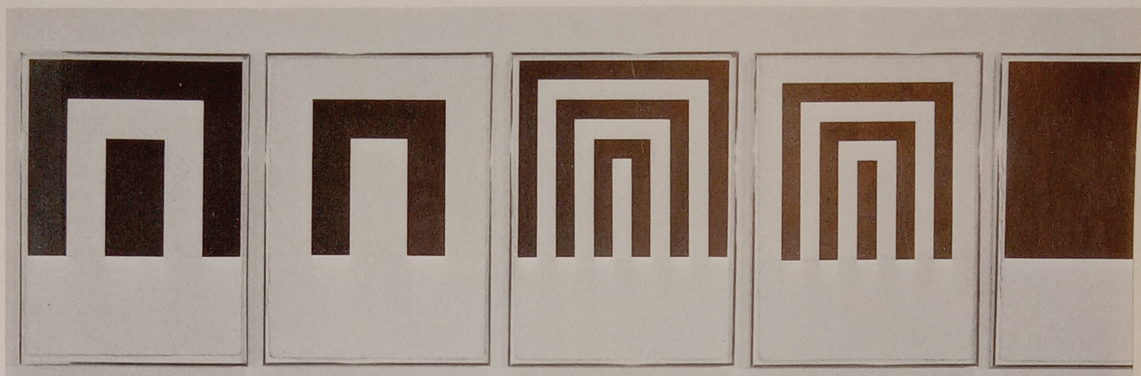
Artforum Summer '76

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Brice Marden, *Thira Series*, 19

Western Art and Culture itself. To me, this is undoubtedly the worst thing short of utter neglect that can happen to a painter and his art. These canvases exist solely as vehicles for critics to exercise their ability to explain them—not in the interest of the work itself, but in order to create an instant, synthetic history. The problem with approaching Marden's new work is that we can't really see it. The extraneous critical/historical support sprouts up like weeds, obscuring the objects and estranging our experience of them. The support system has made Marden's paintings go from innocent to decadent without their changing in any appreciable way.

Marden's work is always described as "physical," and "physicality" is repeated as a pious term underscoring Marden's interest in "sensual" handling of paint that has, in turn, led him to a certain ambiguous tonal quality of color. This brings out his "romantic" aspect. Obviously, his paintings are physical, but really no more so than a Johns, or for that matter, a Boucher. Marden is said to use one-color canvases to insist on physicality, and by color, primarily, he achieves his ends. O.K., but oddly enough, admirers can't get past vague kinds of color descriptions (color being too subtle for words) and so they backslide into comparisons with other painters. (This is much like the formalists trying to explain Noland: they had no equipment with which to deal with color intelligibly, so they spoke only of structure. With Marden the structure is obvious, and not only derivative, but identical with other painters.)

Marden's name is then associated with Cézanne, Newman and Johns (hardly a romantic trio!), but it is obvious to the viewer that Marden's color is nothing like those three and a lot like late Rothko and Reinhardt. The reason these two are not invoked is obvious: in comparison with Rothko, Marden shows an incredibly weak color sensibility, and has nowhere near the range that Rothko could get even in the late, all-black work. As for Reinhardt, the comparison is enlightening because it shows how limited both painters are with color. Physically, Marden's paintings are really close to Reinhardt's. The critical strategy here: choose artists whose paintings don't look too much like Marden's so that Marden will appear to be forging ahead. This works well with color, because Marden's is supposed to be unique, great, and inimitable. Next to Reinhardt, Marden appears to have the same limitations, share the same palette, and is uncomfortable with anything but minute differences in dark colors. (The morose, dark and moody color also reminds me of Nevelson's contrived atmospheres.)

I remember an interview where Marden speaks of the red in Matisse's *Red Studio* as not being too dark or too gray but "too dead." This is, I think, a vaguely disguised self-analysis rather than a critique of Matisse, who certainly knew more about red than Marden appears to. (Along the same lines, Marden accuses Matisse and Picasso, in collaboration with Alfred Barr, of creating a "50-year stranglehold on art." In much the same spirit, if you will, Marden's supporters have created a stranglehold of Marden-type painting across the country, e.g. the dreadful one-color, one-panel San Francisco entries at last year's Whitney Annual. In this regard, Marcia Tucker told me that Marden is not a "New York artist" but just "a great painter.")

The latest work is the most reduced yet. The last vestige of painterly touch—really a painterly scrape—is a slight thin line around the edges, leaving some bare canvas and exposing the inner structure of the stretchers. This is refinement to the point of preciousness. The red/green painting is discordant, unsubtle, and looks suspiciously like bad Op art in its flickering complementaries. An all-gray painting (entitled, God help me, *Tonto*) looked like Marden working toward white and Ryman.

Perhaps to his favor, Marden included some drawings which were unlike anything else of his—although suspiciously like Stella's (some are blown-up details of the black paintings). They're also like Kelly's (the comparison holds up better when Marden works in black and white than when he works in color). One cannot assume that these drawings are leading anywhere, or that they might become interesting paintings. Lizzie Borden once wrote, apropos Marden, that "uniformity can suggest a strong commitment to a set of ideas, although it can also indicate an inability to develop permutations from known solutions." She placed Marden in the first category of convincing rediscovery rather than systematic repetition. Three years later, it is difficult to see Marden as Borden did. We can only guess what the critical line has done to Marden; but visually, the paintings strongly suggest that he is simply repeating his own decade-old conventions.

It's no wonder that WILLIAM T. WILEY strikes fear in the hearts of veteran New York art pundits. I doubt if I've ever seen a more perverse display of self-consciously bad-art-for-bad-art's-sake than Wiley's "Projects" show at the Modern. Oh, how they try and understand him! "Dude Ranch Dada" and deliberate put-on of New York art, meant to 1) categorize him with familiar

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DAN FLAVIN

1933 Born in New York City

1947 Graduated from Saints Joachim and Anne Parochial School, New York City

1952 Graduated from the High School Department of the Cathedral College of the Immaculate Conception Preparatory Seminary of Brooklyn, New York City

1953 Graduated from the United States Air Force Meteorological Technical Training Program, Chanute Air Force Base, Rantoul, Illinois

1954 Studied in the adult education program at the University of Maryland, Osan-ni, Republic of Korea

1956 Studied at the New School for Social Research, New York City

1957-1959 Studied in the General Studies Program of Columbia University, New York City (All of the artist's university studies were toward a degree or degrees in art history. He is self-educated as an artist.)

1961 Married Sonja Severdija in New York City

1964 Stephen Conor, his son, born in New York City

1964 Received "An Award in Art for 1964" from the William and Noma Copley Foundation of Chicago (through the personal recommendation of Marcel Duchamp)

1966 Received an award "in recognition and encouragement of (his) work" from the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities, Washington, D.C., (from the first such awards)

1967 Became a "Guest Lecturer" in Design for one semester at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro

1972 Organized an exposition of modern watercolors and drawings from the de Menil and Menil Foundation Collections for the Institute for the Arts of Rice University, Houston, Texas

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DAN FLAVIN (continued)

1973 Was Albert Dorne visiting professor at University of Bridgeport, Bridgeport, Connecticut

1975 Organized the exposition of Urs Graf from the permanent collection of the Kunstmuseum Basel, Basel, Switzerland

1975 Organized the exposition "light on the American scene 1875-1941" from the permanent collections of the Fort Worth Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

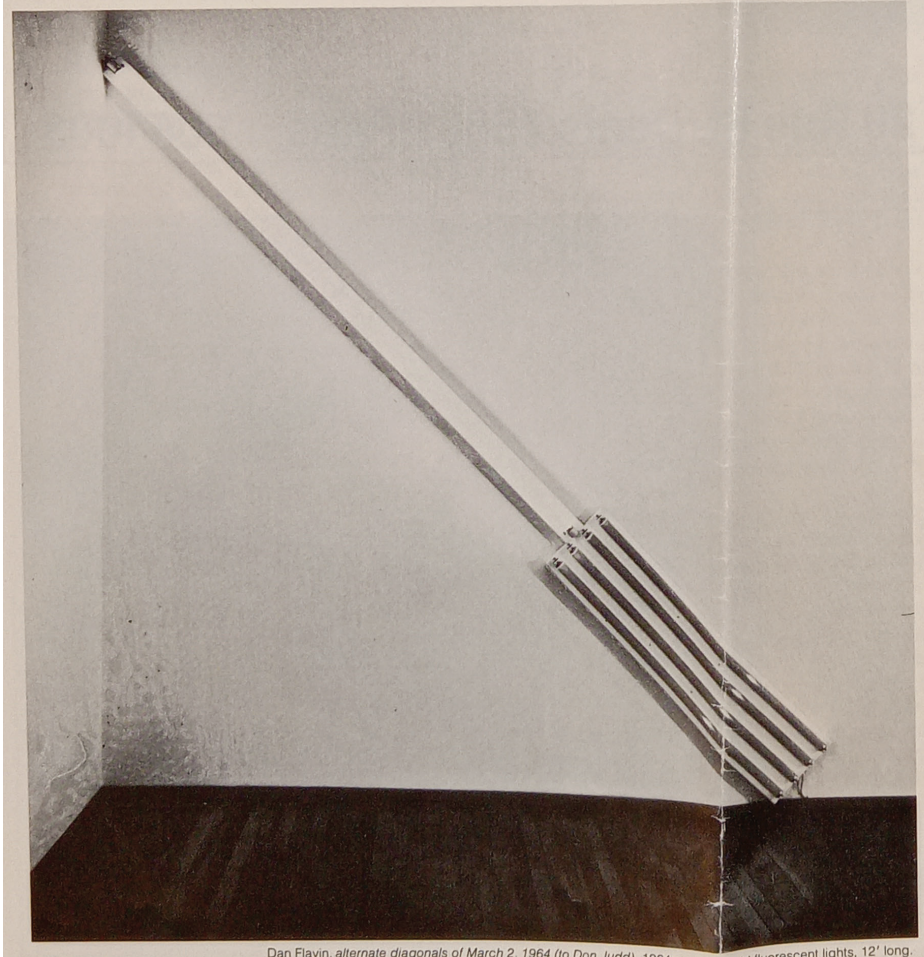
1976 Was awarded the Skowhegan Medal for Sculpture in New York City

Lives in Garrison-on-Hudson, New York and Bridgehampton, Long Island, New York

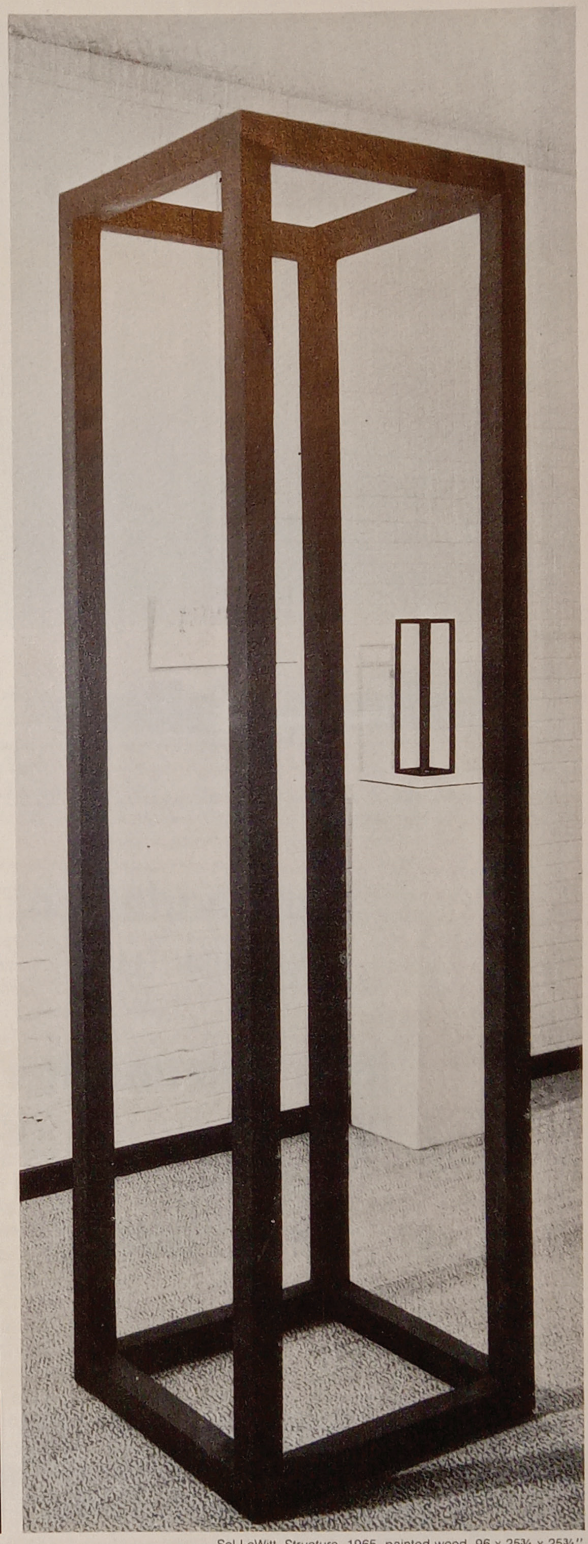
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MINIMALISM AND CRITICAL RESPONSE



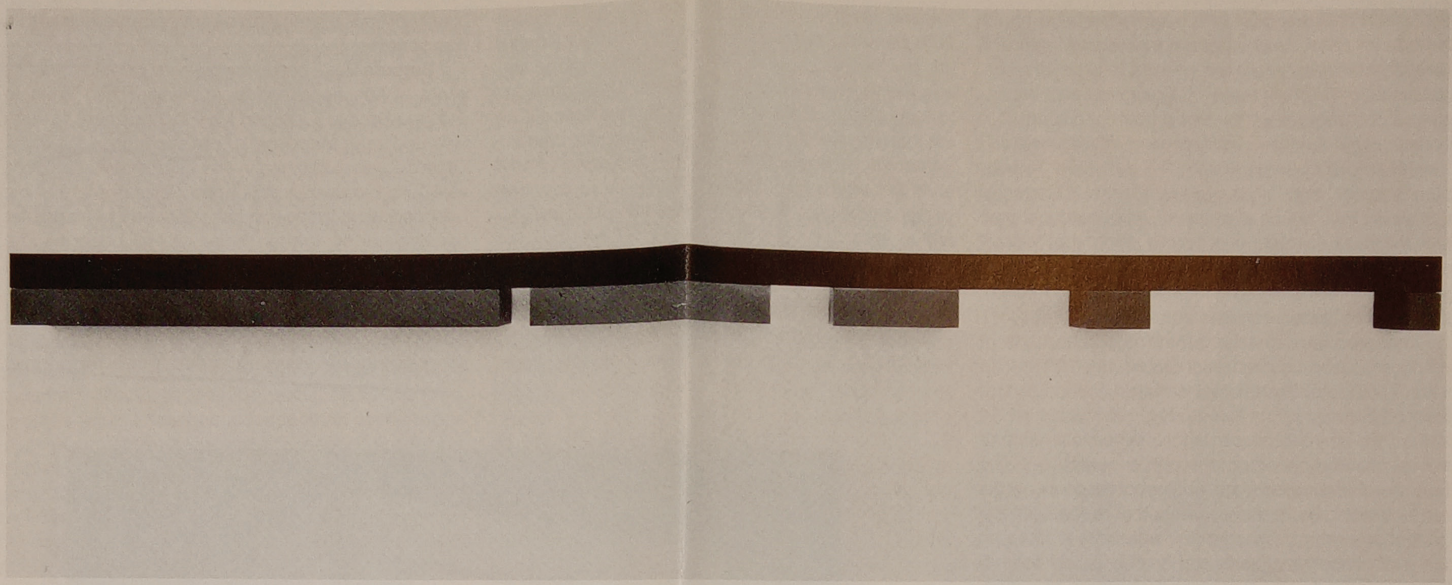
Dan Flavin, *alternate diagonals of March 2, 1964 (to Don Judd)*, 1964, red and gold fluorescent lights, 12′ long.



Sol LeWitt, *Structure*, 1965, painted wood, 96 x 25¾ x 25¾″.

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Donald Judd, Untitled, (progression with tube), 1965, lacquer and enamel on aluminum, 8¼ x 161 x 8¼"

Phyllis Tuchman

Since rather early on, Carl Andre, Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, Sol LeWitt and others—together with Robert Morris—were singled out by critics and curators as the chief practitioners of a new mode of three-dimensional art. But as Robert Rosenblum pointed out in *Partisan Review* last winter, "Time creates sanctity and gravity. . . . Already, many sixties artists have taken on, for me, this classical stature—Dan Flavin, Carl Andre, Don Judd, Robert Morris, Kenneth Noland, among others—which feels more like past than present . . ." Nevertheless, many of the assumptions which were first propounded about the style—or what was commonly claimed, the non-style—of Minimalism (née Cool Art, The Third Stream, Post Geometric Structures, ABC Art, Object Sculpture, Specific Objects, Primary Structures, or Art of the Real) have remained unchallenged for over a decade. The April 1966 opening of the Jewish Museum's landmark exhibition of 42 "Younger American and British Sculptors" put Minimalism on the map, but recent viewings of works from that time and even earlier have provided a welcome opportunity to review some of the initial premises which were propagated and which seem still to hold countenance.

Most new art movements are either greeted by partisans who are often championing their friends or else are attacked by hostile reviewers who feel the status quo is being threatened by upstarts. Minimalism was no exception. There were both advocates and detractors. However, the tone of published criticism—whether paean or diatribe—was more matter-of-fact than might be expected, along the lines of "Something new is being shown and I would like to explain it to you because the history of the avant-garde suggests that whether we like it or not, it is here to stay." However, something even more startling was occurring. For long expository articles appeared quickly in well-circulated art journals (*Art in America, Arts, Artforum, Art Voices,* and *Arts Yearbook*) throughout 1965, even though no major exhibition had yet been held. Only a few group shows in New York art galleries and one, or at the most two, one-person installations per artist had actually taken place, so lengthy discourse really preceded prolonged observation.

Was the art audience told what to think (it was never asked to "feel") even before it was given the opportunity to experience the new work first-hand? Were the attributes of painting mistakenly applied to the meaning and methods of sculpture? Was the work interpreted or were artists' intentions recited? Was biography overlooked when it would have informed? Were relevant cultural phenomena ignored? How do the sculptures relate to what was discussed in these early articles?

In the opening paragraph of "The New Cool Art" by Irving Sandler in the January 1965 *Art in America,* the then-art critic of the New York *Post* observed, "During the last five or six years, a growing number of young artists have rejected the premises of Abstract Expressionism." "The most extreme," he noted, "are Frank Stella, Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Larry Poons, and Don Judd. Because the group they are a part of is the most vociferous and perhaps the most populous in the New York art world today, I have come to believe that its point of view may turn out to mark the 1960s as Abstract Expressionism did the 1940s and 1950s," he correctly surmised 12 years ago, although now it seems that he might have included the '70s in his prediction as well. While listing Judd in his initial comments, and illustrating one of his 1963 painted wood objects, Sandler did not mention him again. He focused instead on the new painting, with its deadpan lack of emotion and its reversal of the "anxious 'I don't know' of the action painters to a calculated 'I know.' " "Many," he wrote, "have embraced a different method—the execution of simple, pre-determined ideas—and other values—calculation, impersonality, impassiveness and boredom."

Max Kozloff, in "The Further Adventures of American Sculpture," published in *Arts* one month later, mentioned over 55 sculptors' names. The Whitney Museum's 1964 Sculpture Annual was currently on view. The harshest critic at that time, he set up a category "Aesthetics of Sterility," singling out "a perceptibly tightening group of sculptors in New York [which] consists of Donald Judd, Robert Morris and Dan Flavin. . . ." Illustrating work by each of these three artists, Kozloff pointed out that it was "inert, concrete, extremely large-scaled (if lightweight), monochromed, geometrically based construction." "If painters such as Frank Stella or Kenneth Noland had not existed," *The Nation*'s then current curt reviewer exclaimed, "one could perhaps look upon the present works more sympathetically; but without these painters, the sculptors very likely could not have conceived of their work at all."

The Whitney Sculpture Annual was also treated in February 1965 for *Artforum* by Barbara Rose. After describing the work of some 46 artists, she concluded: "Though the Whitney show was representative of most of what is being done today, one important kind of sculpture was hardly represented . . . that is 'object' sculpture, three-dimensional forms that are such simple uninflected volumes or structures that they appear to be functionless objects rather than sculpture as we know it. . . . This work may be our most radical sculpture, though not, perhaps, our fullest." Again, "Two of the best artists making object-sculpture," the young writer suggested, "are Donald Judd and Robert Morris," also mentioning Carl Andre. Rose pointed to certain characteristics evidenced by their work which still seem fundamental. One was that

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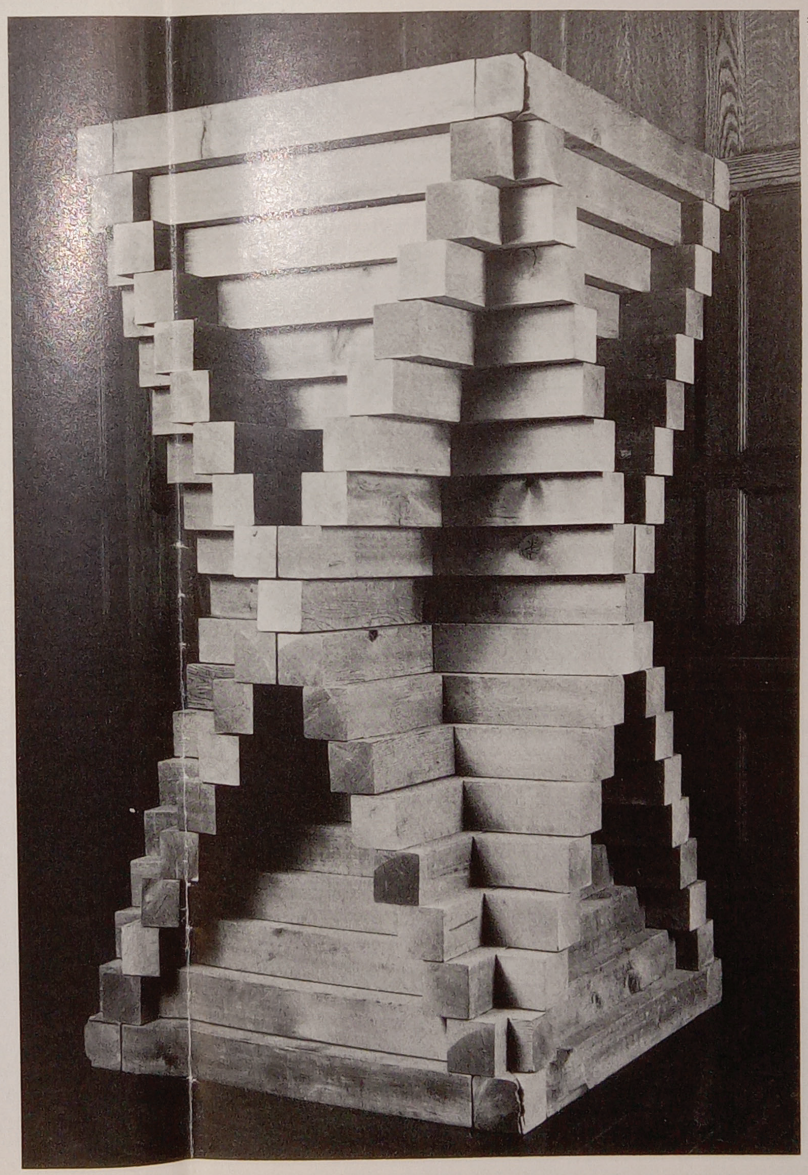
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they could make a plan which someone else could execute for them: "All evidence of personal facture is carefully eliminated as is any reference to psychological states or forms in nature." Color was also important, while "geometry provides a point of departure." If their work seemed "distant and noncommittal," "unyielding and unmodifiable," it did have "a still-born lyricism" and "it was big and bright." Correctly assessing that "much effort went just into rejecting all but the very barest, irreducible minimum," Rose added that Clement Greenberg had, after all, already predicated that "one of the main directions in modern sculpture . . . has been towards reduction."

Relying on the old adage that there is strength in numbers, Lucy Lippard associated over 55 artists with "The Third Stream: Constructed Paintings and Painted Structures" in the Spring 1965 issue of *Art Voices*. Polemically, she began—"When is a painting not a painting, a sculpture not a sculpture? The boundaries between traditionally understood media are becoming increasingly difficult to define with the advent of a group of young non-objective artists who are strongly denying the existence of any such boundaries." Lippard was intent on establishing the invincibility of this new group. Value judgments were not to be made; individual works were not to be analyzed. Instead, it appeared to be more propitious to define the topographies shared by these men and women: "A single or reduced image (or no image at all), a limited or monochrome palette—often in brillant hues, . . . a paint quality that foregoes gesture, stroke and impasto, and a strong emphasis on structural rather than pictorial qualities." Since "they"—the artists themselves—"still do not consider their work as sculpture," Lippard agreed with them, interjecting—"It is, in fact, anti-sculptural and I think that the term 'post geometric structure,' or simply 'structure,' is most accurate for the work of Robert Morris, Don Judd, Sol LeWitt, *et al.* . . ." Certainly Judd, Morris and LeWitt were "opposing the predominantly open sculptural tradition of the last two decades in favor of radical self-containment." Nevertheless, in attributing newness to the decisions they were making—such as "eschewing the play of part against part and aiming at a new spatial complexity activated by the single form—the space around, above, below or within that form," or placing "the spectator in one pre-ordained location" or "taking up more solid space"—Lippard short-changed their ambitions by ignoring the history of sculpture since antiquity. Sure, these artists were structuring their works differently from those of the preceding generation; but hadn't what was being claimed they were doing also been addressed by Rodin, Bernini, Michelangelo, Donatello, or even the legendary Greeks? Ironically, by concluding that "there is less room for *misinterpretation*," Lippard also closed the door on "interpretation."

A few months later, in the October-November 1965 *Art in America,* "ABC Art" appeared, by Barbara Rose—at that time Frank Stella's wife and for several years a friend of both Carl Andre (whom she met the day he arrived in New York in 1957) and Donald Judd (a Columbia classmate during the late '50s). In her lengthy exegesis, Rose talked about new painting, new sculpture, new music, new dance, and new film, relating them to one another as well as to earlier 20th-century innovations. Robert Morris, Donald Judd, Carl Andre, and Dan Flavin, she noted, "occupy to my eye some kind of intermediate position" among all the artists she was then considering. She felt that they were "more related in terms of a common sensibility than in terms of a common style." And if style became the dreaded enemy, the artists' own explanations became the wherewithal. Besides liberally quoting artists in her text, 11 illustrations were accompanied by lengthy declarations of intent. Years before "What you see is what you get" became a national slogan, these men were expounding the same principle. While this article concluded that this was "an art not so simple as it looks," interpretation could not transpire so long as acceptance was all that was sought.

If Barbara Rose and Lucy Lippard were to the early years of Minimalism what Apollinaire had been to Cubism, Donald Judd and Mel Bochner were its Juan Gris and Jean Metzinger. Judd's infamous "Specific Objects" was published in *Arts Yearbook 8* in 1965 as well. Like Lippard, Judd began, "Half or more of the best new work in the last few years has been neither painting nor sculpture. Usually it has been related, closely or distantly, to one or the other." "The new three-dimensional work," he stated in a tone which initially cloaked its argumentative character, "doesn't constitute a movement, school or style." "The main thing wrong with painting is that it is a rectangular



Carl Andre, *Cedar Piece*, 1960–64, 72 x 36¼ x 36¼".

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plane placed flat against the wall," he stated, simply wiping out much of the history of pictures. By focusing on sculptures having been "made part by part, by addition, composed," he also wrote off the tradition of three-dimensional imagery. Judd suggested how art could be less generalized. "In the new work," he pointed out, "the shape, image, color and surface are single and not partial and scattered." "The use of three dimensions," he added, "makes it possible to use all sorts of material and colors." The virtues he praised—read "shape, unit, projection, order, and color"—would communicate by being "specific, aggressive and powerful."

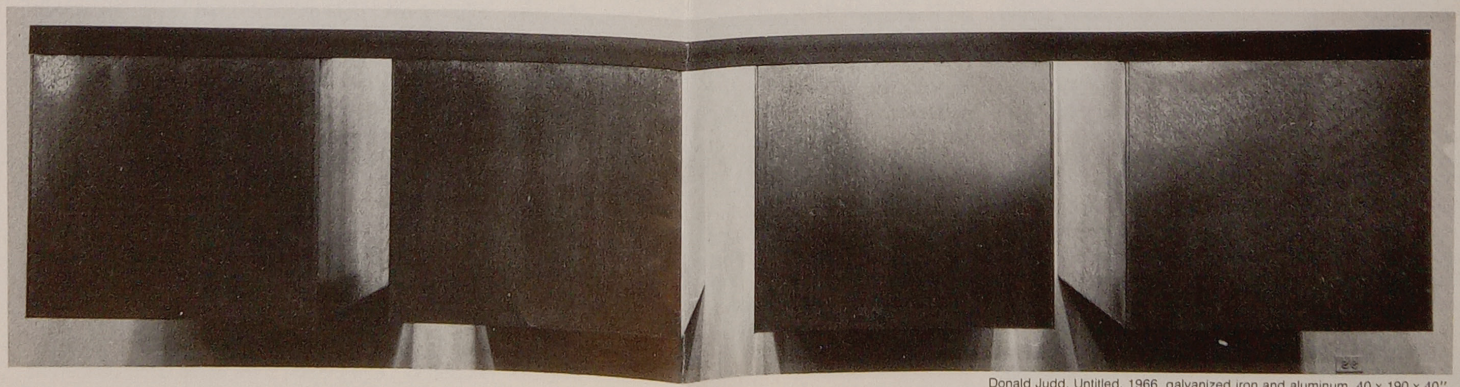
In the 12 years since *Specific Objects* initially appeared, it has aged into as historic a document as something like Alberti's 1430s treatise *De Statua* (that perhaps equally youthful consideration of the properties of sculpture). How and why new art should be made seems communicated by both. Judd's call-to-arms actually echoed similar sentiments expressed by Ibram Lassaw 27 years earlier when he too maintained (in the American Abstract Artists' Yearbook) that "the crystallized concepts of the terms 'sculpture' and 'painting' are dissolving." And like Judd, the then 25-year-old Lassaw found "colors and forms alone have a greater power to move man emotionally and psychologically." He knew "certain artists" who, as early as 1938, had already "abandoned traditional pigment painting and solid, static sculpture." "The new attitude that is being formed as a result of these searches is concerned with the invention of objects. . . . The artist no longer feels that he is 'representing reality,' he is actually making reality." Well, the more things change, the more they remain the same, for Lassaw also maintained, "We must make originals." "A work of art must work," he concluded.

Lassaw was 52 years old when "Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculptors" was on view. He, his immediate predecessors, and his contemporaries had just represented "Etats-Unis: Sculptures du XXe Siècle" at the Musée Rodin in Paris during 1965. Artists like Ferber, Flannagan, Hague, Lachaise, Lipton, Nadelman, Nakian, Rickey, de Rivera, Zogbaum and others, however, were elder statesmen without a home base. The art world, mirroring the world in general, was communing exclusively with its junior generation. The Beatles, *Hair,* Carnaby Street, Twiggy, *Easy Rider, Wild in the Streets,* college smoke-ins, college teach-ins; demonstrations against R.O.T.C., Dow Chemical, white oppressors, slumlords, and the Vietnam war: the middle and the late '60s were filled with elation and rage. Change was sought and celebrated. But Minimalism—not Pop art—could effect the most significant turnover in the art world since Abstract Expressionism because it had more than a "look:" it had a "style," one which had been festering for quite some time and which, when finally displayed full force, was peaking. Perhaps the most significant word in the title of the Jewish Museum exhibition has been heretofore overlooked: "Younger." In April of 1966 Judd and LeWitt were both 38; Flavin was 33; Andre, 30.

It has become standard practice for museums to print significant dates in artists' lives in exhibition catalogues. The Judd entry in Kynaston McShine's souvenir book noted that the sculptor was born in Excelsior Springs, Missouri in 1928; served in the United States Army in Korea, 1945-47; attended the College of William and Mary, 1948-49, Columbia University, 1949-53 (B.S. in Philosophy) and 1958-60 ("fine arts," now art history) and the Art Students League, 1947-53. It was also mentioned that he had been writing reviews and articles for art publications since 1959. Robert Morris' paragraph in the same publication included—"Born in Kansas City, Missouri, 1931. Attended University of Kansas City; Kansas City Art Institute; California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco; Reed College, Portland, Oregon. Graduate work at Hunter College, New York City. Has participated in several dance events here and in Europe. Has also created several dance pieces and written on the dance." This undigested material at least informed interested parties that both artists grew up in the same area of the country at roughly the same time; both studied at universities and at art schools, pursued graduate education, and published professional criticism. Still, what relevance does this have to their art? Actually, details from their biographies that are now publicly accessible suggest that it is more important than might be suspected.

Although Judd's family moved several times during his youth—to Omaha, Kansas City, and Des Moines—he spent the greater part of his childhood, as Morris did, in the hotbed of Regional Art during its heyday. If both Judd and Morris were later to rebel against Abstract Expressionism, their first schoolroom instructors were versed in the art of Curry, Benton, and Wood. In 1938 Judd took his first private art lessons in Omaha; that same year, Morris attended sessions at the Nelson Art Gallery. Judd remembers designing a war bonds poster as a class assignment in 1939, when Morris was painting a school mural. In the early '40s, the Judd family moved East; during the mid-'40s. Morris briefly travelled West (he did not stay, but he would when he was older). In 1946, Judd was stationed in Korea in an engineers unit just before the outbreak of the next war. Morris also served time in Korea in an engineers unit, toward the end of that war. Both, in other words, were exposed first-hand to Oriental culture. Judd's paintings had simple forms and few colors; Morris' did, too. Judd, after studying philosophy, attended graduate classes in art history at Columbia University; Morris, after studying philosophy, moved to New York and studied for his master's degree at Hunter College. Both men married dancers. Each held his first one-person show during 1957 and exhibited for the first time at the Green Gallery in 1963. They both soon became critics who were widely read. When told last summer how closely certain episodes in his life paralleled Morris', Judd was surprised; he had not known any of this. Still, their parallel experiences during the 1930s, '40s, '50s, and early '60s probably were as significant for 20th-century art as the actual exchanges of Picasso and Braque or Morris Louis and Kenneth Noland. Without knowing one another, they could simultaneously arrive at strikingly similar stances, perhaps because they had so much in common.

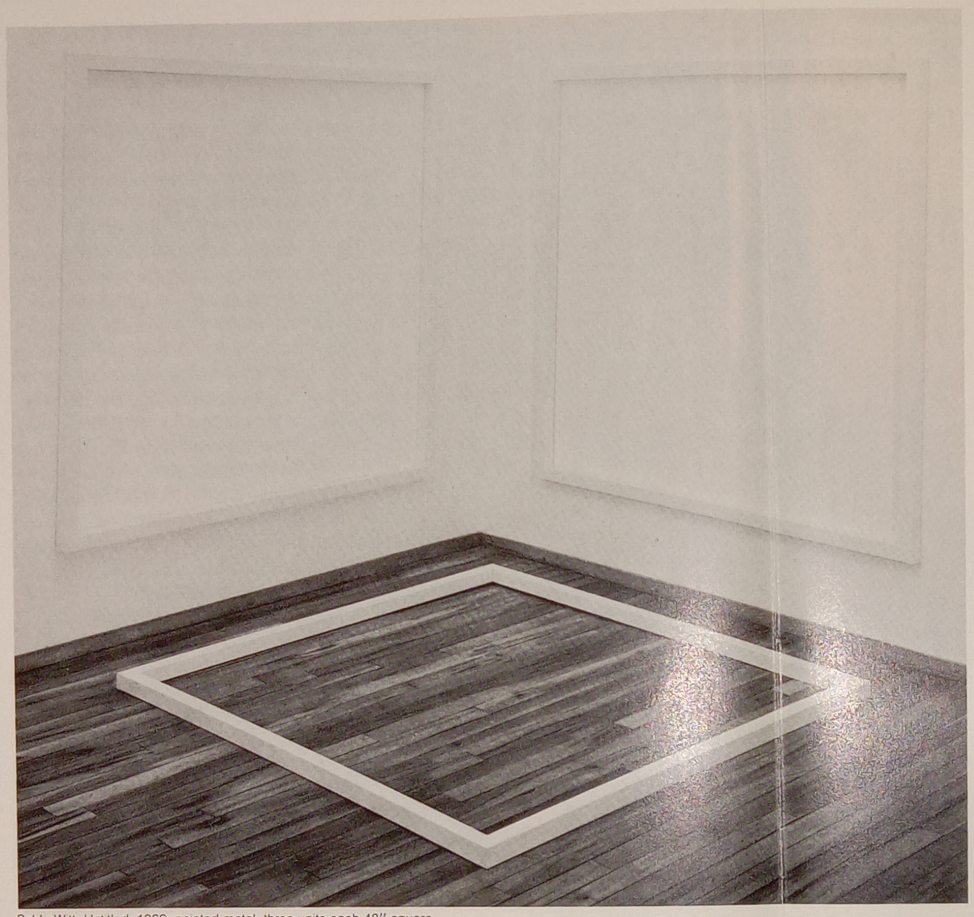
At the beginning of the '60s Andre, Flavin, Judd, and LeWitt were a few years away from realizing their signature styles. And while they were floundering, they earned their livings outside their studios. Judd



Donald Judd, Untitled, 1966, galvanized iron and aluminum, 40 x 190 x 40".

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Sol LeWitt, Untitled, 1966, painted metal, three units each 48" square.

was reviewing art and also teaching school part-time; LeWitt worked at the Museum of Modern Art; Flavin was a museum guard; Andre labored in New Jersey railroad yards. While the artists were engaged in these jobs, the great "Art of Assemblage" exhibition directed by the late William Seitz opened at MOMA in October 1961. Seitz, who has just recently been lauded at a symposium by his former Princeton University student Frank Stella, characterized the kind of artworks in the show: "1. They are predominantly *assembled* rather than painted, drawn, modelled, or carved. 2. Entirely or in part, their constituent elements are preformed natural or manufactured materials, objects, or fragments not intended as art materials."

Although Andre, Flavin, and Judd were obviously not included in this show, their own work, following on it, would never look the same again. For a time they saw what they could do with street debris. Eventually they used manufactured materials "not intended as art materials." The directions they were exploring were reinforced or restructured by Seitz's show. Hence the art they made before that exhibition is significantly different from what was made subsequent to it. And, by the time of their "own" "Primary Structures" show they had all mastered their own art.

Take a look at the Jewish Museum's catalogue. The work exhibited there by Andre, Flavin, Judd, LeWitt, and Morris *is* different from the other sculptures on view. Compact units, uninterrupted profiles, no fanciful forms, an awareness of the materials from which they were composed, and their responsiveness to human size: all this sets them apart. The path to the realization of these works was not logical or immediate.

Andre, for example, developed some remarkably precocious Minimal structures during the winter of 1960. The surfaces of wood beams were to be left uncarved and unpainted, and the pieces were to rest on or beside one another, unattached and directly on the floor. Unfortunately, the artist could not afford the heavy, 70- to 120-pound timbers he needed, and art dealers who were shown a notebook filled with diagrams for the "Element" series were unwilling to sponsor him. So he went to work instead for four years, as a freight brakeman and conductor on the Pennsylvania Railroad. He would occasionally find small particles, recalled his Andover roommate Hollis Frampton in a 1969 Hague Gemeentemuseum Andre catalogue, and he would bring home these "fabricated scrap bits picked up along the tracks: a hook, a spring, ball bearings. These were assembled loosely, held only by gravity or their own structural limits." The artist was no longer actively looking at art and had little free time to make his own. When he did, however, he momentarily veered away from using regularized, geometric units. Frampton mentioned seeing "collage 'paintings' incorporating whole physical objects (gloves, umbrellas, lettuce), covered entirely in glossy enamel paint in primary colors, poured on, so that viscosity and surface tension were exploited rather than hue or texture." It was in a work entitled *November 1961* that Andre joined together an umbrella, cigarette butts, and enamel; in the following month he stacked some oddly ended and flaked scrap wood bits. During the next few years there were other departures from the style he had initially realized in 1959–60.

Eugene Goossen asked the artist in 1964 to refabricate one of the earlier pyramids for a group exhibition. Then, in January of 1965, he finally got the chance to use some wood beams in the "Shape and Structure" show at Tibor de Nagy's. These turned out to be too heavy to be supported by the townhouse's weak floors, so in his first one-person presentation that April three sculptures were executed from styrofoam planks. For his second show, the following spring, and for his contribution to the *Primary Structures* exhibition, he used bricks to form works. He had hit his stride.

Flavin had already made several small paintings before the MOMA show by attaching crushed cans that he had found on the street to wood supports (*Apollinaire Wounded,* March 1960; *mira mira,* 1960; *Vincent at Auvers,* July-August 1960; and *Africa,* 1960). Subsequent to the exhibition, Flavin worked on eight "Icons" during the next two years. These were paintings whose perimeters were bounded by electric light bulbs and tubes. During May 1963, he attached his first solitary cool white fluorescent tube diagonally against a wall. Others followed and were exhibited at the Kaymer, Green and John Daniels galleries. The piece he sent to the Jewish Museum in 1966 was the first installation in which he spanned lights across a corner.

Don Judd was painting pictures before October 1961; that year, he made several using sand, and, in one instance, wax. During 1962 he began to incorporate pipes he had picked up off the street in various wall reliefs and in two free-standing structures. Other three-dimensional "objects" followed and were included in a one-person show at the Green Gallery in

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December 1963–January 1964. These rapidly led him to the kind of works he exhibited in April 1966.

Now some new questions must be posed. The progenitors of Minimalism favored clean lines; plain surfaces, either painted monochromatically or left bare to utilize the inherent properties of the chosen materials expressively; simple, often compact forms; and human-size proportions. But what does this really reveal about their accomplishments or contribute to an understanding of their various oeuvres.?

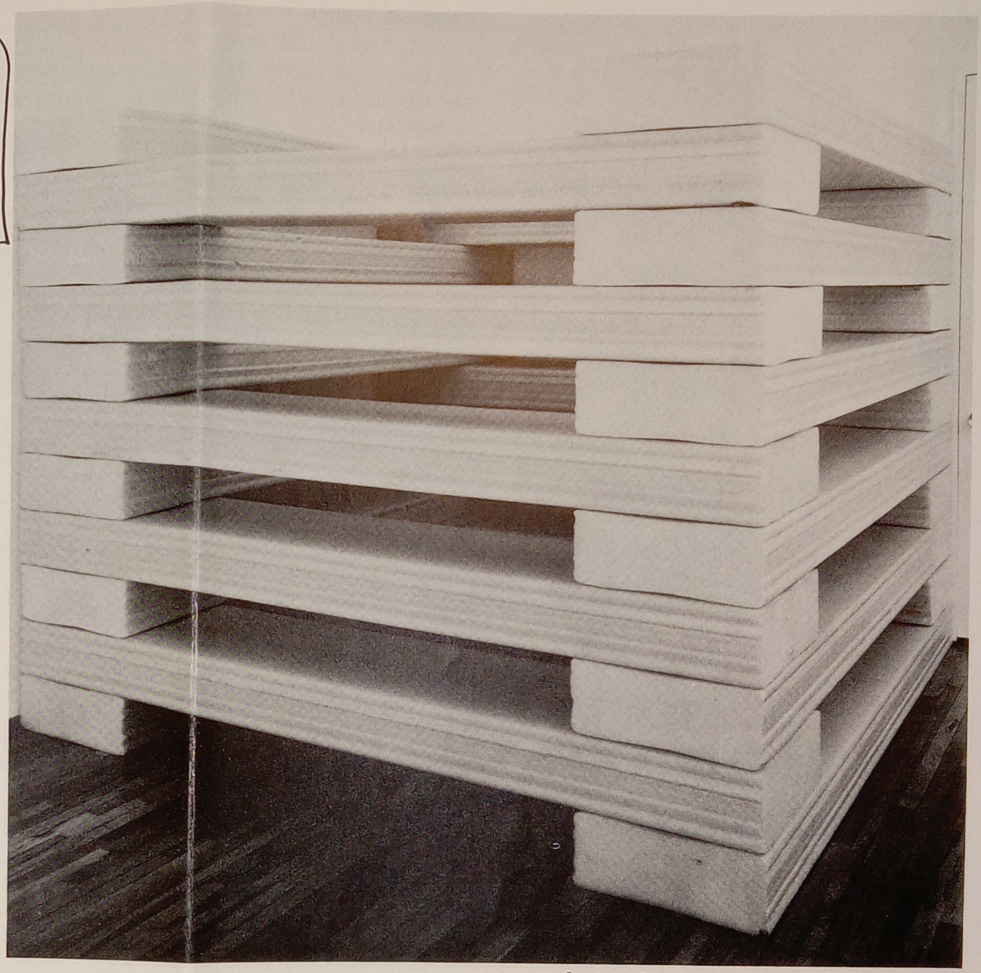
Is it sheer coincidence that Sol LeWitt's 1966 *Modular Open Cubes* measures a bodily graspable 6 by 6 by 6 feet? Its bottom horizontal layer is knee-level; its middle section, elbow level; and its upper portion, head level. Standing and facing its central column, one can stretch one's arms outward and encompass the scope of the structure in its entirety. LeWitt's 1966 *Untitled* corner piece raises other issues. It is composed of two open square frames of painted white wood fixed to corner walls, and a third resting on the floor. If joined, they would form the base and two sides of a square. These elements look placid, serene, and restful. Yet, the space between them appears charged magnetically; no acetylene torch is needed for the eye to weld them together (or leave them separated).

How do Flavin's tubes function coloristically? Why does green peek out of a room installation where red, gold, pink, and daylight white hues are emitted? When the space is actually entered, why is the same green then washed out by the gold and pink of the 1964 *Untitled (to Mr. and Mrs. Giuseppe Agrati)*? Furthermore, it has been taken for granted for too long that Flavin's electrical components are frequently *the same size.* In past art, an expanse of yellow could be equalized by a dab of red. Flavin has managed to balance an 8-foot sliver of gold light with an 8-foot sliver of red light.

Judd, too, is a prestidigitator in his own way. The sides of his 1965 *Untitled (Progression)* suggest that a red square has had its upper, wall-hugging corner hollowed out; on the front face, however, it looks as if a Harley-Davidson Hi-Fi purple-lacquered rectangular strip supports five red cadmium enameled boxes diminishing in size. What are we to believe? Judd has insisted in the past—just as he reaffirmed to an interviewer last summer—that he does not make sculpture. How should this claim be taken into account? Moreover, Judd has made much of his use of various mathematical systems (Fibonacci's, for example) to show that he is really not "composing." In the 1965 *Untitled (Progression),* for instance, the measurements of left-to-right planes are balanced by the identical dimensions of open spaces moving from right to left. If that feels like classical balance, Judd is simply relying on numerical incidents the way traditional sculptors had the givens of proportional head, body, arms, and legs to proceed from. Moreover, aren't the five components of metal and space locked together as securely as the five fingers of a right hand are when grasped in those of the left?

Andre embraces spectators' awareness of their own bodies in figurative terms, too. He uses particles which are easily assembled by one person; factory crews, elaborate hauling and lifting devices, and intricate tools are dispensed with. Such works are easily installed, but also wonderfully graspable when experienced in person. In his 1965/1977 *Crib* (originally executed from white styrofoam planks which are no longer available: it is now colored a pale, sherbet orange), only one's eyes can enter the interior space. It was only a matter of time before Andre would realize that he could compress his materials flush with the floor (in a 1970 *Artforum* interview, Andre mentioned that he felt the metal plate pieces included the column of air above them which reached upward to the ceiling as limit) and that people could indeed enter the space of his work and walk upon his sculptures.

The recent showing of early Minimalist works at Sperone Westwater Fischer made it evident that the time is ripe for another full-scale exhibition of Minimalism. Value judgments can now be made. What has already been seen sporadically has revealed that many of the works have aged well. (Their weathering is another problem: those using easily replaceable, machine units have to be reordered for reconstitution; others with delicate surfaces have been badly scratched; some wood works have been realized in more permanent metals. In other words, the originals no longer exist.) Still, just as various earlier contributions to the art of the 20th century have deserved to be reviewed, re-evaluated, and come to terms with, we should have the chance to see in the most comprehensive way just what the Minimalists wrought. ■



Carl Andre, *Crib*, 1965/1977, styrofoam beams, 77 x 108 x 108"

Phyllis Tuchman is writing her Ph.D dissertation at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, on *Minimalism: Andre-Flavin-Judd-LeWitt-Morris.*

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

55 MERCER 55 Mercer Street New York, N.Y. 10013

November 27 - December 15, 1976: Caspar Henselmann will show a single new work in wood, consisting of an arched horizontal "span" six feet wide by 33 feet long, made out of 8x8 and other assorted beams, extending on the floor to the wall of the gallery. Three feet in front of the wall the span continues at a right angle nine feet vertically. The beams are fitted together according to the milled length.

The span is painted yellow to denote a condition of alert and danger, as well as to minimize any possible reference to texture and design.

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THE SOHO WEEKLY NEWS

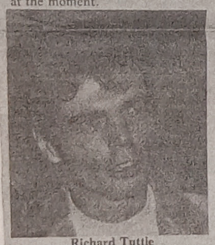
Creating the Eternal Moment

MOIRA HODGSON

Richard Tuttle, the afternoon after his show opened, was drinking coffee in the front room of Art Weave, a store specializing in rare Asian rugs and wall hangings, across the street from the Whitney Museum. Himself a collector, he was trying to decide on an exquisite early 19th century peasant Turkish piece which was spread on the floor next to us. Before long the conversation turned to the artist's dilemma today, and Tuttle's controversial exhibition at the Whitney.

Richard Tuttle: Most people would think that I did a show like this for my career. The fact is that I did it for my work, that is all.

The art is a compensation for the terrible thing it is to be an artist today in America. No one understands what you are. One of the main problems of American society, which is very adolescent compared with Japanese, French or Italian cultures, is the lack of recognition of the artist as artist. The society sees the artist either as someone who lives in the gutters of wild bohemia or as a movie star. As in everything else in America, economics plays a major part. If a person is rich, then he has status. An artist who doesn't sell his work has the status of a bum on the Bowery. Ironically, because of this state of things, American art is stronger than any other in the world at the moment.



Richard Tuttle

Moira Hodgson: In what way do you feel this works?

RT: The more you are told you can't be the way you are, the harder you fight. The more you develop your ability to think, to dream and to invent.

Knowing what art is is something one is born with. It doesn't follow any predictable lines. One tends to find this out early in life. In this society to find that out is rather a desperate thing. The artist has the ability to show other members of the society what art is. If I want to know whether a painting I see in a museum is any good or not, I'll go to another artist.

But other people don't understand what you are saying. It's like being a crazy man. No one will listen. People who are put away in insane asylums often have a lot to say. But who cares? That's how artists are treated in America.

MH: Do you think Europeans treat their artists any better?

RT: Because their cultures are so much older, there are people in Europe and Japan who can recognize the artist for what he is. That's why so many American artists travel there. Not for their careers, but for their work. I was stunned, when I went to Japan, by the way people simply recognized me as an artist by seeing it in the shape of my hands, or the way my eyes look.

MH: You are planning to change your show twice during the time it is on display at the Whitney. Can you explain how you will be doing this.

RT: What the show will be in the next two phases has more to do with the on-going dialogue I have established with the curator, Marcia Tucker, than any projection of a theory. She is evolving an essay on the work and this will give her direct experience. By our changing works within groups or series she'll then be able to have contact over a two or three week period with different works.

Most museum shows tend to be cut and dried. The chance to be creative in this situation is very rare. But Marcia and I are children of the sixties. With the seventies turning out to be a period of mellowing, conservatism gaining strength, and life generally getting duller, more than every one should have the courage to put one's beliefs on the table. Art offers security for some people, adventure for others.

MH: Perhaps people are looking for permanence in the arts because the rest of their lives changes so frequently.

RT: Life is life and art is art. They are not the same. Once I had an exhibition in Dallas and at the opening a member of the local press made quite a scene and tried to present me as some strange buffoon from New York City. She went around introducing me to people saying: "Oh, this is Richard Tuttle, he believes in impermance in the arts." She made the mistake of doing it to Betty Parsons who snapped back, "What's more permanent than the invisible?"

In art the creative moment is of such immeasurable quality and quantity that the moment is a virtual symbol for eternity. I don't know whether I'm crazy or right or what but in artistic terms I feel that my work, if it lasts for one second or all eternity, it's all the same to me. In terms of *art*. Of course, in terms of life it would be nice if they stayed three weeks instead of two and a half or whatever.

MH: Was there a point in your life where your work underwent a major change?

RT: If there was a change at all in my work, it was in coming to the city. I needed to seek out artists who would help me to be myself. When I first came I told an artist whose work I admire that I felt there was something wrong with every artist's work. There was no such thing as totally perfect art. His response was, "Oh, we're going to have to be careful of you!"

MH: You arrived at a time when there was enormous opportunity for young artists.

RT: In the sixties the climate was extremely conducive to the kind of energy young people naturally have. Youth was a natural source of energy. Young people showed promise. The older people had perhaps made more substantial contributions, but they didn't have that quality of promise. In the same way a few years ago women were discovered to be a source of energy. And recently many of the most vital works have been done by women. So whatever the contribution an individual can make is dominated by the climate of the times. Some people might refute this and call it fashion. But they are not sensitive to the vital climate of life. They are dying inside.

Con't. on 24

CREATING

Con't. from 22

Forms of contemporary art are like forms of nature. If there's a strong wind the grass will bend right down. If there's a lighter wind it will stand up more. A danger is for artists to think they are outside of this give and take. To make a contribution we hook up to a train, travel on that train up to a certain point, then it's time to get off and somebody else picks it up. The train is what is important.

MH: You point out how different the climate of the sixties is from the seventies. How do you feel your present show differs from your first one at Parsons?

RT: I hope this show reveals something about the moment. I'm a little surprised. To me the show looks as though it sprang full-blown from the head of Zeus! There doesn't seem to be any significant difference between the old work and the new. Yet it's been a very hard road to travel—ten years. It might

Con't. on 28

CREATING

Cont'd. from 24

be because those steps have to do with life, and art is art. I look at life all the time and I find it almost like a jail. Art is freedom. So I surely don't expect to see life when I look at a work of art.

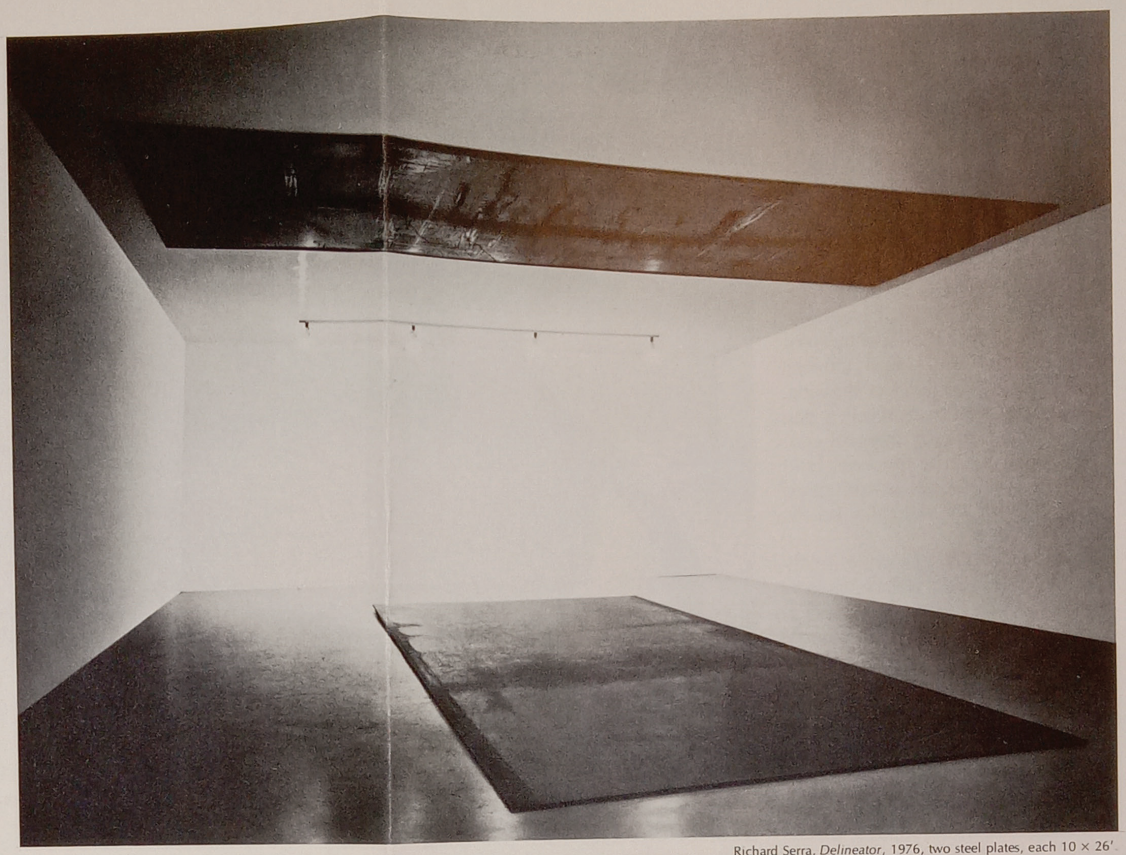
Frost wrote a poem that I like very much in which he likens human beings to a child who's riding a great big horse. We know that the child can't possibly control the horse. At the end of the poem he says, "But we will always have a better idea." Much of the search an artist is involved in is in the search for a better idea. Nothing could please me more than in a show like my current one for a younger artist to see beyond what I've done, and beyond what I've been able to see.

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taneously, they give the appearance of a slow-motion film of flipping pages and immobile, constructivist glass sculpture such as Sylvia Stone's. These broad, planar "motions" are juxtaposed with another series of drawings of a line/arc between two or more points. In a parody of stereotyped sex differences, these are softer and more fluid, and the gestures or motions seem smaller, like those made with the wrist rather than the whole arm. Their contours vary from drooping, folded O'Keeffian shapes to the illusion of taut, three-dimensional stretched cloth shapes.

—ANN-SARGENT WOOSTER



Richard Serra, *Delineator*, 1976, two steel plates, each 10 × 26'

Los Angeles

RICHARD SERRA, Ace Gallery, Venice; KAREN CARSON, Cirrus Gallery; ANN McCOY, Margo Leavin Gallery:

RICHARD SERRA, who once was credited with having gotten Andre "up off the floor," may now be decorated for hoisting him as high as the ceiling. In an important new installation entitled *Delineator*, Serra invigorates the slightly tired issues of ground sculpture by adding to them the fillip of ceiling esthetics. Coincidentally, he takes '70s sculpture one more step along the usurper's path, encroaching still another inch on what Focillon called the "fundamental privilege" of architecture—its prerogative, that is, to dominate a real space "not only as a mass, but as a mold." Furthermore, *Delineator* is a work of abrupt drama and unusual power, even if these virtues require some behind-the-scenes trickery.

Consisting of an authoritative five tons of rusty, hot-rolled steel in the form of two rectilinear plates (each 10 feet wide, 26 feet long, and 9/10 inch thick), *Delineator* is reductive in its simplicity and iconic in its figuration. One plate sits on the floor, mantling the ground and, in effect, setting the stage. The second, more unusually, clings to the ceiling 13½ feet up, fastened crosswise in relation to the lower form. The ceiling plate flouts contemporary anti-illusionist doctrine by seeming to require no supporting structure. (In fact, Serra's installation—a quixotic endeavor in the light of the temporary nature of the exhibition—necessitated extensive prior alterations in the gallery building, and the plate itself is bolted topside to a complicated system of I-beam supports.) Thus installed, Serra's steel occupies the "framing edge" of an otherwise uncabined portion of real space, while the space so defined is itself annexed as docile matter for the sculptor's will. Serra's use of the ceiling-plane as a second, and not an inverted, base line is innovative. In contrast to ceiling-hung work by Calder, Grosvenor, Ginnever, Lippold et al., his piece suggests a different range of sculptural possibilities for ordering space, works in which ceiling-attached forms may complement rather than supplant those on the ground, and in which the ceiling functions as a plane instead of a launching pad.

If Serra's ostensible interest is the linear demarcation of a space, his formalist stance in no way interferes with his urge to theatricality; he makes no effort to temper the dramatic contrast between his looming, rusty-dark, industry-contaminated steel forms and the perfect austerity of their white-walled gallery setting. Though nominally the two plates form only a partial frame, the top and bottom of a space, they function more dictatorially than the neutral work "delineation" might suggest. The upper plate presses darkly, heavily, on the air below, mute reminder of the iron fist of gravity; the bottom form, in turn, expands horizontally, laying imperial claim to the strip of floor beneath and to the space above. Together the plates mount a massive assault on the cubic content of the room—an aggressive act of domination over light and air in a space which, ironically, as Bob Irwin's former studio, was a monument to these high intangibles.

Serra stresses the distinction between "inside" and "outside" in this work, although the exact perimeters of the space over which the plates exercise hegemony (I read it as octagonal) are subject to some individual variations in perception. Viewed from outside, *Delineator's* heavy top would seem to promise a range of claustrophiliac delights, perhaps even one of those "enclosed spaces for the self" described recently by Robert Morris. Inside, however, it is the agoraphobe who must beware, and it may be the lack of solid vertical boundaries, the very openness of the piece, which is its most unsettling characteristic. Serra counts the viewer as the vertical element of his construct, a necessary formal link between top and bottom. And when one has stepped onto the steel stage and taken up a position under the aphotic metal plate, one does indeed feel absorbed into the drama of the piece, a participant in the structure, willingly or not. What a viewer also experiences is an atavistic awareness of the fragile nature of that thankful form, the human vertical.

It has already been observed that while traditional object sculpture mimics human perpendicularity, ground sculpture, like a miniature horizon, emphasizes the viewer's sense of the tension between his upright posture and the flatness of the earth. Serra goes further. By adding his weighty ceiling "rug," he forces perception of the extent to which gravity favors the groveller. But *Delineator* also italicizes, thereby, the difficult dignity of the upright form. As 19th-century critics of large public sculpture were wont to say, it is a "fortifying spectacle."

All jostle and rip, KAREN CARSON's

Artforum, Summer '76

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Carl Andre

Carl Andre is a sculptor of place. To a given location he brings selected materials which are arranged in a form that identifies that place with sculptural activity. The materials are commonly available, squares of metals and their alloys, blocks of timber, bricks and stones. The forms are geometric with lines and square or rectangular grids predominating.

Andre's art has an economy born of a personal philosophy that abhors waste and a sensibility that recognizes the value of what an industrial society heedlessly discards. His sculptures imply a cultural statement refined by the 20th century yet, have a profound relationship to the art of the past. Sculpture as an art form originates from the human desire to mark a location, to signify its importance. Discovering this desire within himself, Andre has come to prefer that his work follow the horizontal plane of the floor or the terrain that is offered. From this perspective his works define latitude and longitude while insinuating a volume of space above them.

A reading of his biography might suggest that Andre is self-taught but such a judgement would ignore crucial experience with major figures in the development of modern and contemporary art. He was born in Quincy, Massachusetts in 1935. At Phillips Academy in Andover from 1951 to 1953 he studied art with the painter Patrick Morgan. Hollis Frampton, now a filmmaker and critic was his friend at school and the two shared interests in poetry and art. Andre has published his poetry and his love of words, his fascination with their placement on a page is metaphorically linked with the placement of units in his serially constructed sculptures. It was Frampton who showed Andre photographs of sculptures by Constantin Brancusi and the images retained ultimately provided a starting point for Andre's three dimensional works.

Andre enrolled at Kenyon College in Ohio, but was expelled and went to work at the Boston Gear Works. He left to travel to England and France where Stonehenge, Parliament, the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre made lasting impressions. There followed a two year Army hitch from 1955-56 as an intelligence analyst in North Carolina.

In 1957 Andre arrived in New York where he worked as an editorial assistant to a publisher of textbooks, wrote poetry and drew. He met Frank Stella who had been at Phillips Academy, although they had not known each other then, and Stella invited Andre to share his studio. Andre has referred to Stella as his teacher at this time, honoring the hours of conversation, criticism and artistic experimentation that had passed between them. Stella was making his black paintings, the works that won him immediate acclaim when they were first shown at the Museum of Modern Art in 1959. Andre was investigating both painting and sculpture. During this period he rediscovered Brancusi and early works reflected the influence of the Roumanian's insistence upon the importance of direct cutting of a block as opposed to the modeled, additive build-up of form. Brancusi's *Endless Column,* with its implications of interminable verticality out of the ground and into the air was the impetus for Andre's early work in wood. *Pyramid* first made in 1959, but destroyed and now remade, is a reflection of Andre's reverence for Brancusi. However, Andre's achievement in this stacked pine piece cannot be understood without taking into account an earlier work, now lost, which was a carved vertical timber. This piece, entitled *Ladder #2,* with its pattern of concave indentation enabled Andre to go beyond Brancusi's influence. "I realized the wood was better before I cut it than after. I did not improve it in any way." And he also said, "Up to a certain time I was cutting into things. Then I realized that the thing I was cutting was the cut. Rather than cut into the material, I now use the material as the cut in space."

By 1960 Andre was on the verge of attaining a personal style when circumstances forced him to go to work to support himself. He chose the Pennsylvania Railroad where he worked for four years as a freight brakeman and conductor. His artistic production dwindled but the experience was not without benefit, a period of delay during which his dissatisfaction with middle class values intensified and his awareness of spatial vistas increased. Essentially an urbanite, he discovered the plains of New Jersey where the railroad yards lay and he imagined the vast networks of trackage that linked the coasts. Horizontality and the image of a roadway began to have a cerebral effect that was furthered by an experience on a lake in New Hampshire in 1965. Regarding the level plane of the surface of the water, he determined to make his art achieve a similar serenity. Choosing the horizontal orientation for his sculpture, Andre rejected the venerated vertical, the almightly upright, the human-scaled relativity which, it had been thought, was the only way for sculpture to go. The break with Brancusi was complete.

The first exhibition of Andre's work occurred in 1964, in a group show organized by Eugene Goosens for the Hudson River Museum, at Yonkers. Entitled "Eight Young Artists", it featured those who would soon be associated with the developing style called Minimalism. A stacked *Cedar Piece* was Andre's contribution. Again the following year, but now in New York City, Andre showed at the Tibor de Nagy Gallery, in the company of Donald Judd, Robert Morris, Larry Bell and Walter Darby Bannard, in an exhibition called "Shape and Structure." A few months later Tibor de Nagy gave Andre his first one-man show for which Andre used Styrofoam slabs, an unusual material, but perfectly suited to his purpose, which was still at that time to make large architectonic structures. Lightweight, portable, easy to assemble, although somewhat antitactile, Andre's Styrofoam sculptures were an ingenious solution for a gallery whose floor had almost given way under his previous exhibition.

Andre first showed his floor bound sculptures in 1966 at the Jewish Museum exhibition "Primary Structures." This exhibition firmly established Minimal art as the art of the later 60's. Andre's piece *Lever* is recreated for our exhibition. Consisting of 137 firebricks laid in a row, *Lever* embodies all the characteristics of Andre's mature style: it is horizontal, it is modular and the units themselves are clastic, which means unmalleable fragments of particles. Unlike materials which can be plastically manipulated, these inflexible units can only be arranged. The number of bricks, 137, was chosen since it is a prime number, having no factor other than itself and one. The title *Lever* refers to a rigid bar and to the French verb "to raise" implying the potential cut through vertical spaces above which must be mentally achieved by the viewer.

The works selected to complete this retrospective exhibition are a significant representation of Andre's vast production of sculptures in metal, brick and wood. Among them are four of the *Plains,* which each comprise 36 squares of contrasting metals and were originally assembled within *37 Pieces of Work* for his Guggenheim Museum show in 1970. Pieces in red cedar from the *Element Series* are shown as well as *Equivalent VII,* one of the series in firebrick that forms a rectangular solid. The purchase of *Equivalent VIII* by the Tate Museum in 1976, created a popular controversy in London, which has only now been equalled by the furor over Andre's *Stone Field Sculpture* completed last fall in Hartford, Connecticut as his first public commission.

Such controversies can be better understood from an informed perspective if we accept the visually challenging nature of Andre's accomplishment. An exhibition such as this enables us to evaluate fully the evolution of Andre's sculpture. We are grateful to the Laguna Gloria Art Museum, Austin, Texas, and to its Director Laurence Miller, for inviting us to participate in this outstanding exhibition. Our thanks are also extended to the artist Carl Andre for his unstinting cooperation and to the lenders of the exhibition.

This exhibition has been made possible by the Marion Becker Memorial Fund and with the continuing support of the Ohio Arts Council.

Ruth K. Meyer
Curator

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A Letter from the Director

In my first writing to you, I would like to thank the many of you who have extended warm greetings to me in my first few days and weeks in Cincinnati. I am excited by the sense I feel that we are embarking on the next stage of development of an institution of which all of you should be proud. I would like to thank each of the members of the Board of Trustees for giving me the opportunity to participate in the continuing growth and progress of one of this country's finest contemporary arts institutions. I owe a sincere debt of gratitude to Ruth K. Meyer who, as Interim Director while maintaining her curatorial duties, has guided The Center through the arduous, almost year long period during which over seventy candidates were considered. I am very pleased to join the many people who, for over nearly forty years, have dedicated their talents and vision to an organization whose chosen goal is, and always will be, very difficult: selecting and bringing exposure to the most significant and often controversial developments in the contemporary arts. In addition I want to thank Jack Boulton, a friend of nearly eight years, whose courage in this task created for The Center a reputation of international scope for its visionary and adventurous exhibitions.

At this beginning, I will make a few personal observations about the visual arts today. If one can dare make any generalizations about "New Art" in these last years of the 1970's, perhaps one might be that there is less emphasis now on any one leading school of thought: less emphasis on the importance of changes of style and direction: less journalistic emphasis on defining the "mainstream." Rather, we are in a period of watching and observing the development and evolution of the advancements made during the hyperactive, sometimes mercurial era of the 1960's. That was quite a decade. Every year saw new artists discovered, only to be discarded by the art world the next year. Annual exhibitions of work by that season's "important" young artists were eagerly awaited, and their newest works were rapidly observed, criticized, analyzed and collected, only to be eclipsed by the artists' further discoveries the next year.

One characteristic of the most advanced art of the 1960's and 70's is the process of applying systematic rationale to visual and spatial relationships: systems of numbers, colors, sizes, weights materials, etc. These systems have their roots in mathematics, philosophy, and in social, political and art histories. Initially antagonistic to the emotionalism of Abstract Expressionist painting and sculpture, artists of the past fifteen years have sought to identify, understand and explore the very basic qualities which art possesses as objects, spaces, even activities. To avoid confusing their search, the simplest forms were better than complicated ones; better than ornate ones; better than ones which also attempted to carry a message. Removing emotionalism led to a back-to-basics, 99 and 44/100 percent pure objectivity which attempted to maximize the presence of the object, or the system, or environment which was being presented. This capitalized on the qualities and beauties of materials (steel, wood, plastic, paper, fabric), size (big, small, high, low, short, long) and structure (bolted, stacked, leaned, tied, random, ordered).

Many of the artists who began their mature work in the 1960's — among them Frank Stella, Kenneth Noland, Agnes Martin, Roy Lichtenstein as painters and Robert Morris, Donald Judd, Dan Flavin, Claes Oldenburg as sculptors — continue to refine and define their ideas through new works with a continuity which is consistent with their rational, rather than emotional precepts.

As these artists' works have matured and the 1970's have progressed, however, many other artists have worked and exhibited in museums and galleries around the world. A homogenous or defineable "movement" has not arisen to eclipse Minimal Art the way, for example, Frank Stella's cooly rational black stripe paintings (first shown in 1959) clearly marked, even then, the passing of the supremacy of Abstract Expressionism.

The 1970's instead have witnessed the development of stylistic independence on the part of the artists, with no one group or "school" assuming leadership or supremacy. The development of high quality regional centers (including institutions like The Contemporary Arts Center, but also younger organizations referred to as "alternative spaces" and the many cooperative galleries) have brought exposure outside New York City for artists of a multitude of styles: Photorealism, California Funk, The Chicago "Hairy Who", new styles of landscapes, environmental or site sculpture, video art, autobiographical work and other forms of highly eccentric, personal vision in painting, sculpture and performance.

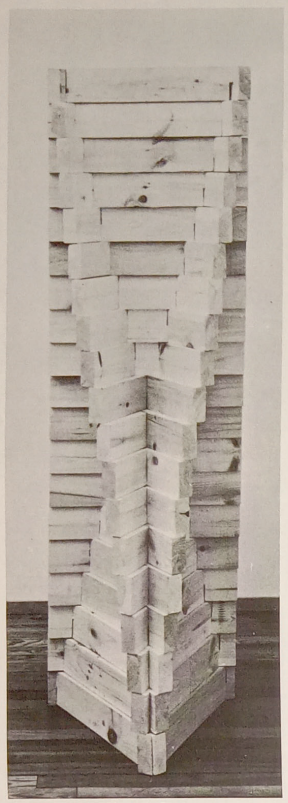
Unless we wish only to review the artists of the 1960's and their immediate descendents, we should strike out often into some uncharted, risky territory where little, if any, critical analysis has yet reached. In doing this, The Center should also extend its limited resources to reaching, educating, even *entertaining* its membership and the broader community with a program of exhibitions that are challenging, exciting, *and* enjoyable.

We will be devising, over the next several months, plans for an ongoing program designed to afford anyone who has the time and the desire a rich survey of the trends of Modern and Contemporary art. We wish to offer direct experiences of its current activities and directions through exhibitions, catalogs, lectures and seminars, field trips, films videotapes and performance works. As a member, you will be kept informed of these programs and events. We hope you will visit often, bring your friends and think of the CAC as an exciting learning center.

Robert Stearns
Director

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Carl Andre, *Pyramid* (Triangular Base), 1959 begun/1977 remade, pine, G. H. Andre, Orleans, Massachusetts.

Projects Gallery: Charles Curro

We are pleased to announce the re-instatement of the Projects Gallery program of frequent exhibitions for area artists. During March and April, Charles Curro will exhibit recent drawings. Curro is a Cincinnatian who studied at the Art Academy and the University. He has been working in various areas of arts administration in Kentucky and Ohio, and is presently a consultant for the Ohio Foundation on the Arts. Curro's portrait drawings of other Cincinnati artists are featured in this exhibition.

May-June Exhibitions

Patrick Ireland's Rope Drawings

Using painted ropes, Ireland will construct three dimensional art works in the Johnston and Rosenthal Galleries.

Performance: The Photography of Sandy Underwood

Cincinnati's favorite photographer of the performing arts will present an exhibition of memorable moments at the Playhouse in the Park, the Summer Opera, and the Ballet. She will also exhibit prints that reveal her personal creativity in the darkroom. This exhibition has been selected for travel by the Ohio Foundation on the Arts.

A Chorus Line

Just a reminder for those who wish to attend "A Chorus Line" during its short run in Cincinnati. The Center, in coöperation with the American Council on the Arts has procured a large block of prime tickets for the performance on Wednesday, March 22. You should have received information about these tickets and the planned benefit event. If you have not purchased your tickets and wish to, we urge you to contact us right away.

Education Program Events

Volunteer Training Session
Saturday, March 4, 10:30 am

All members interested in volunteer activities at The Center are encouraged to attend a lecture discussion on the Andre exhibition Saturday morning, March 4 at 10:30 am. Robert Stearns will welcome participants and outline future plans for the Education Program. Ruth Meyer will present a review of Andre's career and escort a tour through the exhibition.

A Lecture on the Art of Carl Andre
Sunday, April 2, 2 pm

David Bourdon, formerly an editor of *Life* and *Smithsonian* magazines, and frequently a contributor to major art periodicals, will speak on Carl Andre's sculpture and its relationship to artistic developments of the 60's and 70's. Bourdon has authored the essay for the catalogue of this exhibition which is being jointly published by Laguna Gloria Art Museum and Trinity University Press, San Antonio.

A Saturday Event for Children
Saturday, April 8, 2 pm

Children from five to ten are invited to participate in a visual and sensory-oriented experience to the Andre exhibition. Carolyn Brown, Education Assistant, will offer a guided tour geared for children and a follow-up session where participants can react to the exhibition by creating their own sculpture.

Special Programs

Sunday, March 5, 3 pm: The Contemporary Music Ensemble of the College-Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati, will appear in concert at The Center. Gerhard Samuel is Director of this group, which will be conducted in this performance by Teri Murai.

Friday, March 31, 8 pm: *Selected Videotapes*. A special evening of video presenting a selection of the best works from the past four years. Two viewing stations will exhibit works by Peter Campus, Richard Serra, John Sanborn and Kit Fitzgerald, Nam June Paik, William Wegman and "Artists Propaganda II," produced by Jean Dupuy.

Entrance: $2.00 non-members, $1.00 members.

Saturday, April 22, 8 pm: The Fibre dance company of Kent, Ohio, will perform *Hey Stein* and other short works in repertory. *Hey Stein* employs a tape collage and incorporates a film by Lainard Bush. Connie May, Director of the company will dance this work, which she conceived and directed. Fibre previously appeared in Cincinnati in 1976 as part of the Metro-Cincinnati Bicentennial celebration.

Video and Film

The Contemporary Arts Center will continue its program in video by offering monthly open screenings to which all practicing artists in the field and the public are invited to attend. In addition, special programs of selected works of film and video will be initiated.

Open screenings: Tuesday, Feb. 14, 1978
Tuesday, Mar. 14, 1978
Tuesday, April 11, 1978

We encourage anyone who has work to share to bring it to open screenings. These may be finished works, works in progress, student or professional, documentary or artistic in nature. Works will be shown on a first come, first shown basis, up to a total of two hours each evening. Robert Stearns will host these evenings.

Members Bookshelf

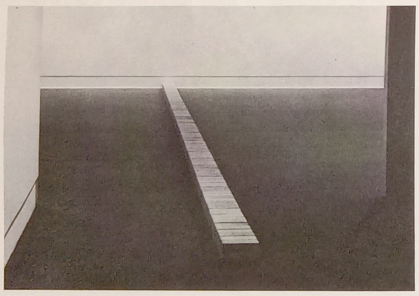
Triceracopter. The catalogue of the exhibition of Patricia A. Renick's *Triceracopter,* designed by Keith Kleespies and including a recording of Paul Palombo's "Music for Triceracopter" is now available. $4.70 members; $6.50 non-members.

We also have *Triceracopter* postcards for 25 cents.

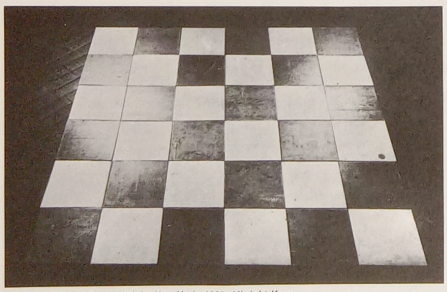
Carl Andre Sculpture Experiences for Children. The Education staff of Laguna Gloria Art Museum has published a wonderful introduction to the art of Carl Andre. Copies of this booklet will be available during the exhibition. $1.60 members; $2.00 non-members.

Membership Renewal

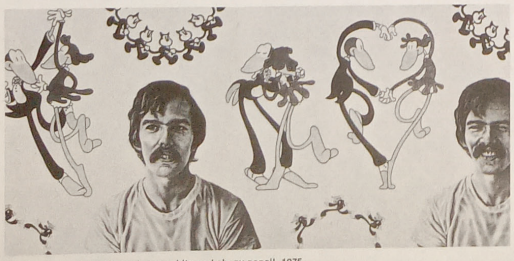
If your annual membership expires this month we would like to remind you of the importance of members' support. Your membership entitles you to free admission, a 20% discount on publications, announcements of special events and the knowledge that you are a member of one of this country's most exciting and innovative arts institutions. Memberships account for 15% of our annual budget and are a strong reflection of our base of support. The support you provide is of significant value in our successes in soliciting funds from the Ohio Arts Council, The National Endowment for the Arts, and private foundations.



Carl Andre, *Lever*, 1966, firebrick, The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

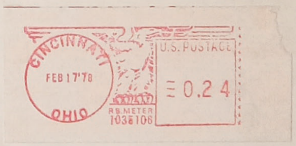


Carl Andre, *Lead-Copper Plain*, New York, 1969, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, Charles Clifton Fund.



Charles Curro, *Keith Kleespies*, graphite and ebony pencil, 1975.

The Contemporary Arts Center
115 East Fifth Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202



Calvin Tomkins
147 East 82nd Street
New York, New York
10028

Members Preview
Thursday, March 2, 1978
6-9 pm

Carl Andre

will attend

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Carl Andre

Sculpture 1959/1977

Organized by the
Laguna Gloria Art Museum,
Austin, Texas



3 Copper Row, 1976, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Gordon, Cincinnati.

Photograph: Ron Forth

March 3, 1978/April 16, 1978

The Contemporary Arts Center
115 East Fifth Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

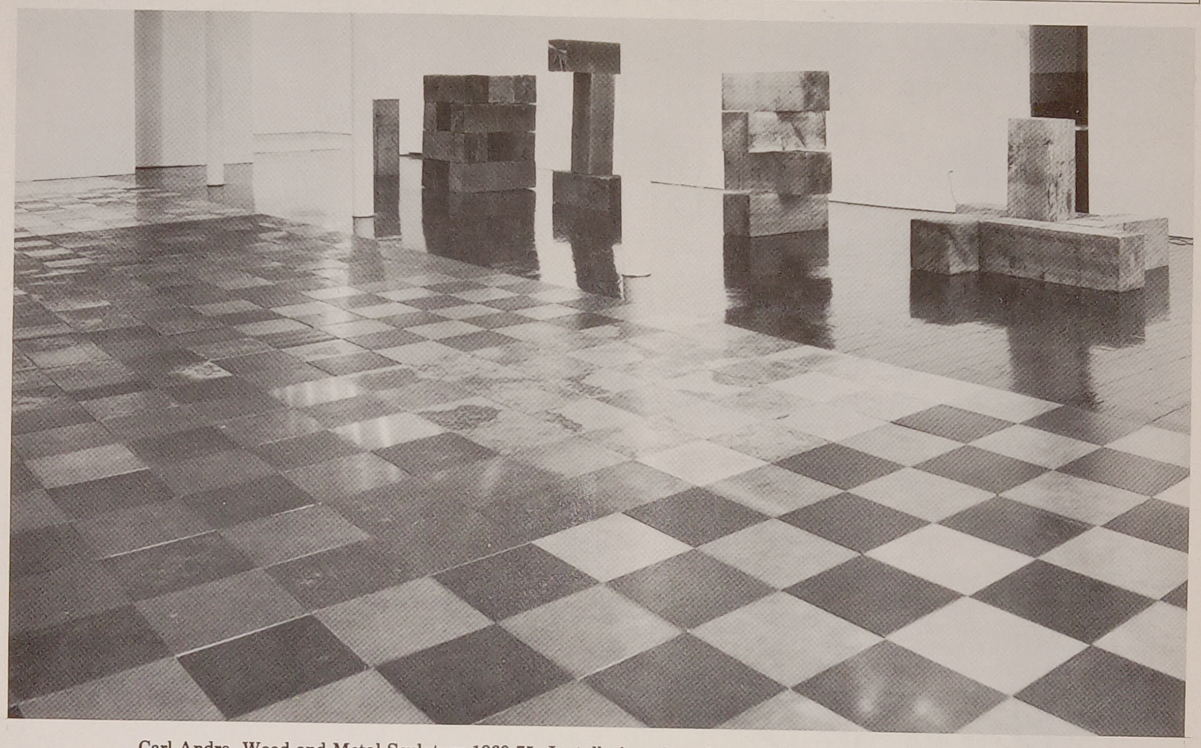
Gallery Hours
10-5 Tuesdays through Saturdays
12-5 Sundays
Closed Mondays

This exhibition is made possible by the Marion Becker Memorial Fund and with the continuing support of the Ohio Arts Council.

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Newsletter of the John Weber Gallery



Carl Andre, Wood and Metal Sculpture 1960-75, Installation view, January 1976. Foreground: *17 Pieces of Work,* Background: five wooden timber sculptures, Back room: *144 Tin Square.*

CARL ANDRE: WOOD AND METAL SCULPTURE 1960-75

Carl Andre exhibited selections of wood and metal sculpture dating from 1960-75 in his January show at the gallery. The largest piece was a metal floor sculpture called *17 Pieces of Work*, the title deriving from the way in which sixteen *Plain* pieces, each made up of thirty-six 1 foot square plates are combined to form one large work. The sixteen *Plains* were joined in series to form a rectangle measuring 48 x 12 feet. Six different metals are used in the *Plains*: aluminum, copper, steel, magnesium, lead, and zinc.

Andre is interested in the way a work changes over time and becomes a physical and visual record of the various conditions that it is subject to. All of the *Plains* in *17 Pieces of Work* were originally made for Andre's monumental *37 Pieces of Work,* which was installed on the main floor of the Guggenheim Museum for his show there in 1970. Since then, the various *Plains* have been traveling around the world for exhibitions and have experienced a wide variety of climatic and environmental conditions. Each of the *Plains* has aged differently, and these variations were evident in the installation of *17 Pieces of Work*.

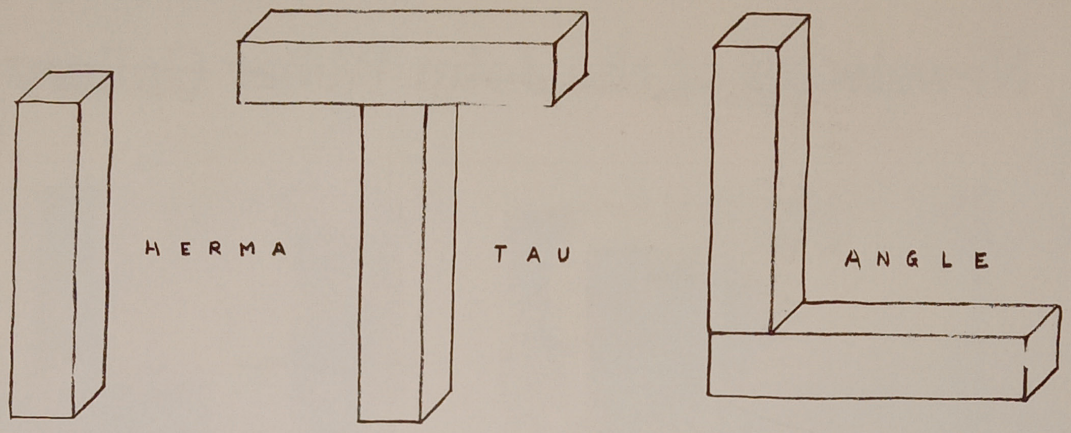
The other metal piece in the January show was entitled *144 Tin Square*. Dated 1975, it is the seventh in Andre's series of 144 metal square sculptures. Squares of aluminum, copper, steel, magnesium, lead, and zinc were constructed between the years 1967-69. The newly cut tin is bright and shiny, and John Russell, writing in the New York Times on January 18th, likened the experience of this work to "walking on a great sea of light."

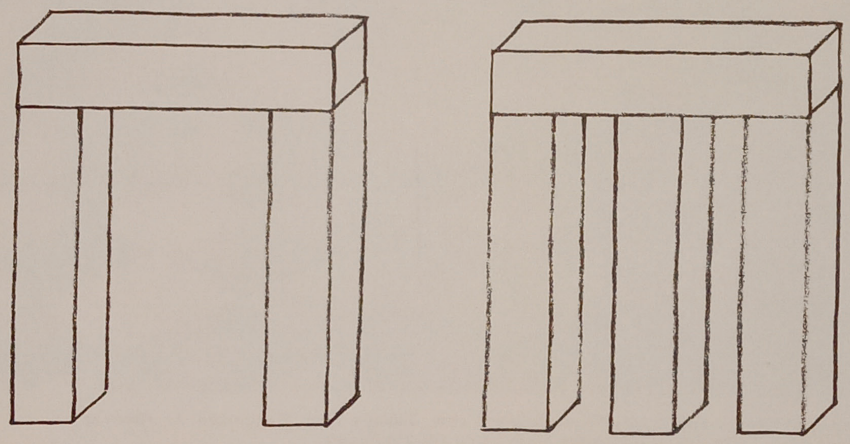
The refreshing cedar scent that filled the gallery came from the five wooden timber pieces that were exhibited in a row beside *17 Pieces of Work*. Four of them are part of the Element series that Andre proposed in 1960, but was unable to execute until 1971.

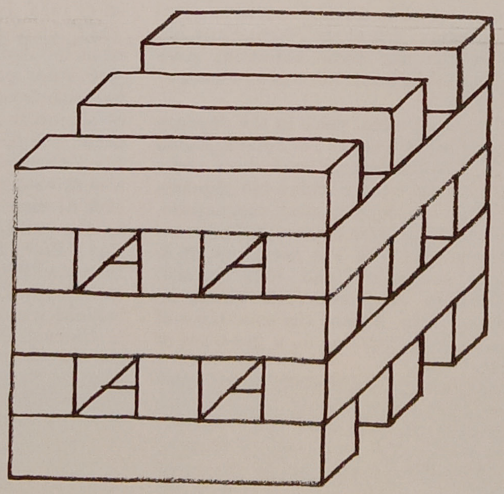
The first sculpture in the row is entitled *The Way North, East, South, and West*, and was planned and executed in 1975. It is part of a series called *The Uncarved Block* that Andre exhibited at the Ace Gallery in Vancouver last year. Appropriately, the wood is western red cedar from British Columbia. Like all of the other wooden sculptures in the show, this piece was constructed of 1' x 1' x 3' timbers. *Stile*, the second piece, is also of western red cedar. It is from the 1960 Element series, but it was executed for the first time for the January show. *Tau & Right Threshold* and *Pyre* are also from the Element series. They were both executed in Douglas Fir in 1971 for an exhibition at the Locksley-Shea Gallery in Minneapolis. *Herma*, the last piece in the row, is of western red cedar. It was inspired by the classical Greek road markers that were stone pillars, topped with the head of Hermes and adorned with male genitalia. Like *Stile*, it is part of the 1960 Element series, but was executed this January for the first time.

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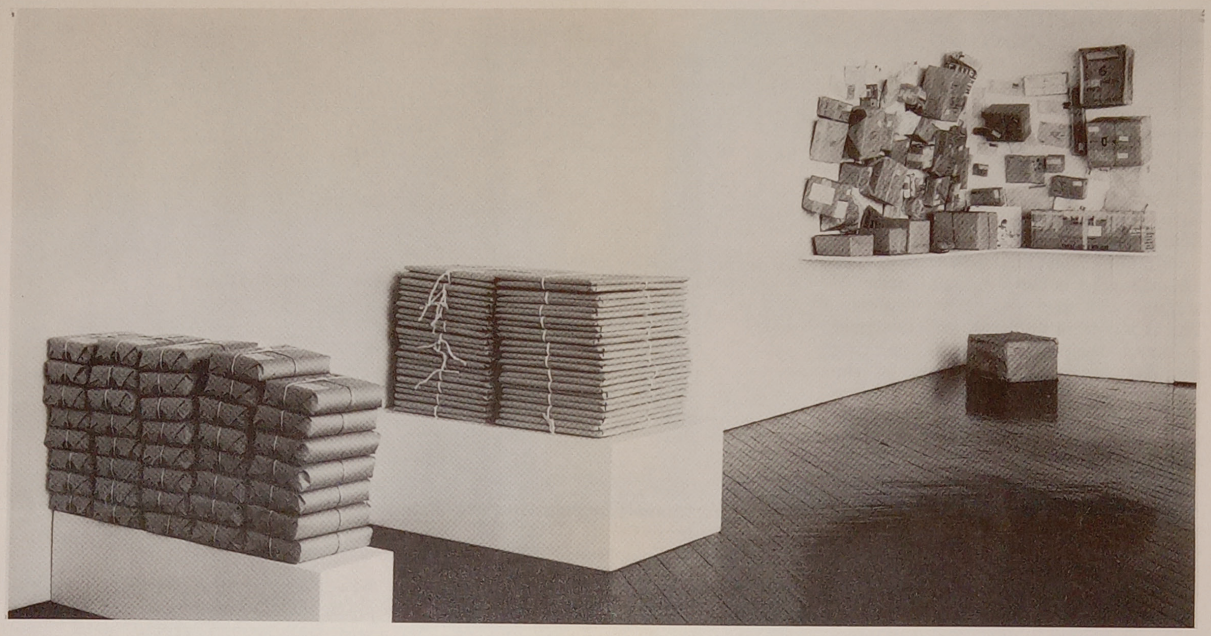






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Stephen Antonakos *Packages Meant To Be Opened/Packages Meant Never To Be Opened,* Installation view, March 1976.

STEPHEN ANTONAKOS PACKAGES MEANT TO BE OPENED/PACKAGES MEANT NEVER TO BE OPENED

Stephen Antonakos' March exhibition at the John Weber Gallery, *Packages Meant To Be Opened/Packages Meant Never To Be Opened*, is composed of several varied projects involving packages made between 1971 and the present.

Every single package is unique, and the contents as well as the wrappings are of great importance to the artist—whether the particular package be one which is intended to be opened at some distant time or never to be opened.

Packages are of course rather attractive, sympathetic things visually as well as emotionally, so seeing an extensive accumulation of them has an immediate appeal. But some of the invisible aspects of certain projects are somewhat obscured by their presentation with the others *en masse*. In the Fresno Project for instance, people who mailed packages to Antonakos mostly thought it was the contents he wanted for his project (chronologically the first). But unexpectedly it was rather the packages themselves that he was interested in. His declaration that he would never open them, that he and we were not intended to know or see what they contained, and that they were to be hung on the wall in the Fresno exhibition "as is" was a gesture of some surprise and impact.

Subsequently Antonakos began putting together packages marked "Never To Be Opened" and mailing them to artists and friends here and abroad. He chose the contents and treated the surfaces differently for each recipient. In addition to different papers, kinds of lettering, series of stamps, etc., each had a label glued onto it bearing a dedication to the addressee.

In the last few years, Antonakos has sequestered away many things in packages and it is a good question whether it is in those items or in the packages which enclose them that the identities of the works reside. In the case of packages meant to be opened twenty or twenty-five years from now, we shall know more. But even here, neither the package nor the objects within will ever be purely just one or the other: each will always partake of the other.

The proportions and general appearance of the packages do not range very far from the standard, but there is quite a variety of coverings: beautiful blue or orange papers, fabric which has been sewn up and glued, wrapped lead sheeting, electro-plated bronze and silver, nailed wood, tacked homosote, and ordinary brown paper sealed with brown paper tape. Some packages are made of two or three units tied up together and there is one which resembles a cubic wooden crate. Made of plywood with brass corner fittings, this package is called "Xerox Project".

Another distinct project is made up of four sheet metal boxes painted white. At Antonakos' request four artists (Richard Artschwager, Daniel Buren, Sol LeWitt, and Robert Ryman) were each given one of the boxes to put something into or to do something to. Together they form a work which is to be opened in the year 2000. Antonakos himself does not know what is inside.

Among the ideas involved in these works is whether or not the viewer, the recipient, the artist knows what the packages contain—how one knows, how much one knows, whether or not one will know more at some future moment. The grasp they have on the viewer's imagination has to do with knowing what the object inside may have been before it was transformed by packaging, how it is known as a package, and speculatively what it may be when it is opened—if it is to be opened. Both the packages meant to be opened and those meant never to be opened involve time in a direct way. More than is usually the case, these works may mean quite different things to different people, at different times. Some people may see packages meant to be opened only as packages; whereas others may see them only after they have been opened. The imaginative, perhaps emotional experience possible in viewing the packages contains echoes of their hidden past and future. Like beautiful recordings on the shelf, unopened telegrams slipped under doors when there's nobody home, they are full of silent urgency, waiting. —*N.S.*

This month Antonakos is also exhibiting blue and red "Incomplete Neon Circles" at Galerie December in Dusseldorf, a series of 46 drawings and several green "Incomplete Circle Neons" at Art & Project in Amsterdam, and a group of related blue and red neons and nineteen drawings at Galerie Bonnier in Geneva.

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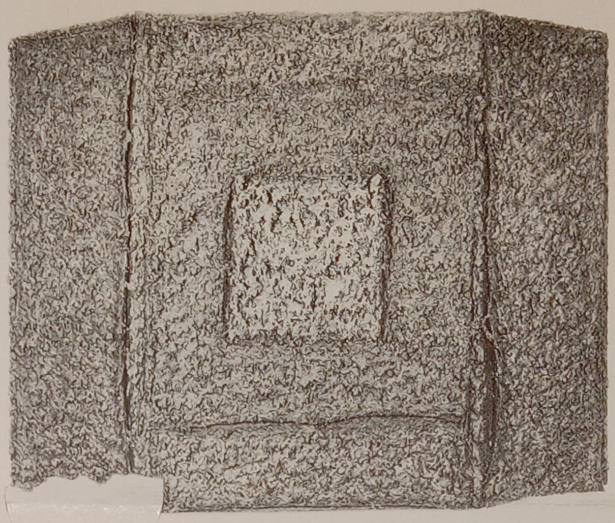
RALPH HUMPHREY'S FEBRUARY EXHIBITION

Ralph Humphrey's new works reverse painting's traditional spatial stance. Rather than providing the illusion of space behind the painted surface that the eye can penetrate, they are like walled-up windows, to use William Wilson's term, projecting outward and entering into the space occupied by the viewer.

Humphrey accomplishes this spatial dialogue with a careful combination of architectural and painterly elements. The stretcher is painstakingly designed to direct the energy of the painting outward, entering the interior of the room. Each painting has a human-like presence. The surfaces seem scarred with experience, having absorbed the emotional strain that the artist poured into them during his months of intense work. It is as if a psychological transference has taken place between the artist and the painting. An entire year of Humphrey's life has been deposited into the five works in his February exhibition at the gallery.

The paintings have a jarring appearance with their mottled "skin" and ghoulish colors. Flat blues and murky purples are sometimes flecked with shocking specks of orange and silver that rest uneasily on the otherwise dense and somber surface. They do not hang elegantly on the gallery wall waiting to be admired. Instead, the viewer is aggressively confronted with their penetrating spatial presence and their psychological intensity.

The works are certainly very sculptural, but they are fundamentally paintings, since their references are primarily to the institution of painting. What Humphrey has done is to present the painting as an object, rather than as a pane of illusion. The painting-object



Ralp[illegible] *Untitled #2,* 1975, Acrylic on canvas, 36" x 47½" x 6¼"

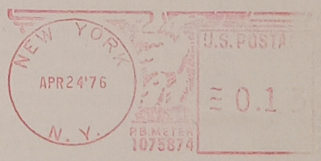
claims a spatial territory that a flat painting does not have the power to attain.

The paintings seem to be built around a central area. In one case, this center is like a big square button. In other paintings, this center gives the appearance of a bricked-in window surrounded by frames, a reference to the traditional status of the easel painting as a portable window. "Plates" of near-rectangular canvas sections are attached to the surface like armadillo armor. These semi-correct rectangular and trapezoidal forms are fit snugly together into a whole that has a solid, geometric appearance, but actually contains no straight lines and no real right angles.

Often, the "skin" curls up at the edges, creating interesting shadows on the surface. Shadow plays an important role in the surface appearance since the thick build-up of acrylic paint over marble dust creates a pockmarked effect, with hundreds of tiny crevices that appear dark and shadowed when viewed from a distance, but reveal the colors of the undercoats when viewed closely. For this reason, the color of the paintings is never constant. It changes according to the location of the viewer and the set-up of the lighting.

These new works demonstrate Humphrey's fusion of abstract expressionism with contemporary sensibility. The recent work combines a theoretical analysis of the position of painting, a direct personal expressionism, and the insertion of a shadowy persona into the work that is similar to the direction of contemporary performance pieces.

John Weber Gallery
420 West Broadway
New York, N.Y. U.S.A. 10012



THIRD CLASS MAIL

Mr. Calvin Thompkins ✓
New Yorker Magazine
25 W. 43 St.
New York, N.Y. 10036

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Exhibition Walter De Maria

Biennale di Venezia

June 28 - October 15, 1978

C o n f i r m a t i o n

I, the undersigned wish to visit the gallery in which De Maria's sculpture "Bed of Spikes" is exhibited, and confirm herewith,

that I have taken note of the information sheet;

that I am aware that the spikes are extremely sharp and can cause serious injuries;

that I will refrain from any action which might be dangerous to myself ot to other persons.

Name (Signature).....

Address.....

Venice, the.....

Please sign and complete with your address.