PROJECTS: ROBERT WHITMAN, an exhibition of recent sculpture and related drawings, will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art from April 17 through May 23.

The four sculptures in the exhibition, never before shown, are constructed of upright wood planks or black cloth frames over which water flows continuously. A film image is projected on each of these wet "screens." By projecting the films in this manner, the artist enables the observer to perceive everyday images — here, two dancers, a horizontal man, and a burning match — in a way that is at once unexpected, mystifying, contradictory, and beautiful. Sounds are a part of each sculpture, both incidental noises of the running water and electric film projectors as well as tape recordings of a popular song.

Whitman is well known for the theater pieces and happenings he has been creating since 1960. His interest in time and performance is treated differently in the present sculptures which the spectator, as a non-participant, views as discrete objects with continuously visible images. The aesthetic functions in an infinite continuum articulated by the rhythms of the moving water and film. The realness of the projected objects is in tension with their film presence. In one sculpture there is the added contradiction of the large illusionistic image of a burning match imposed on a wet field. Our perceptions are challenged and directed as the artist creates a personal world with its own visual and intellectual realities.

Robert Whitman lives in New York, where he was born in 1935. He first began exhibiting in 1959 and has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions since then. He is best known for his happenings, films, and multi-media environments which employ complex technology.
PROJECTS: ROBERT WHITMAN continues the series of exhibitions designed to inform the public of recent researches and explorations in the visual arts.

The exhibition is directed by Cora Rosevear, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Painting and Sculpture, and presented with partial financial assistance from the Creative Artists Public Service Program.

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