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PROJECTS: ALICE AYCOCK

"So this was to be the story of the Middle Ages and possibly World War I and you ask me how I got around to Egypt and the desert and I have to tell you I simply don't know...."

Alice Aycock's most recent work will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art from December 19 through February 5, 1978. A large-scale wooden structure called Project Entitled "Studies for a Town," it was conceived especially for the Museum's first-floor "Projects" galleries. Numerous related drawings for unexecuted projects and photographs documenting structures built during the past several years will also be shown.

Project Entitled "Studies for a Town" is an elliptical wooden structure cut on a skew to provide a bird's-eye view of the whole and to reveal its interior components: steps, walls, doorways, windows, ladders, roofs, shafts, and alleys, some of which may be reached by the spectator, others, only seen, remain inaccessible. The piece ranges from 3 feet to 10 feet high and its diameter varies from 11 feet to 12 1/2 feet.

Aycock's work suggests many levels of associations, involving personal experiences and references to past and present architectural structures of all types. Among the allusions which the Museum project incorporates are Medieval walled towns, military bunkers, Egyptian shanty towns and desert citadels, and an 18th century Indian observatory. Aycock's art is also deeply involved with her own autobiographical memories, feelings, and reflections. For example, the underground tunnels and vaults that have figured in so many of her works recall not only catacombs, bunkers, and Pueblo kivas, but also family burial plots and her own dreams (or nightmares) of

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entombment. By extension the viewer/participant experiences the artist's spaces as "psychophysical spaces." These associations have been articulated in her writings, published in various sources, including the book Individuals: Post-Movement Art in America edited by Alan Sondheim, the periodical Tracks, and a book of photographs and texts by the artist, to be published later in December by Lapp Princess Press.

Also to be shown at the Museum are drawings for Project Entitled "The Beginnings of a Complex...." That project consists of five heterogeneous structures connected by underground passageways and is an expression of various ideas, among them Bachelard's notion of the cellar and attic as place and metaphor. Other works related to the city/town fantasy have been constructed in various locations here and abroad during the last five years. Included in the exhibition are photographs and drawings of her pieces at Documenta in Kassel, Germany, and Artpark in upstate New York, among others, and drawings for as-yet-unrealized structures.

Alice Aycock was born in 1946 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and has lived in New York since 1968.

The exhibition, the latest in the Museum's continuing series exploring recent developments in contemporary art, has been directed by Cora Rosevear, Assistant Curator of Painting and Sculpture.

The Museum of Modern Art's exhibition program is made possible in part 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.