

NEW WORK / NEW YORK

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INTRODUCTION

This exhibition is the second of this name sponsored by The New Museum since its beginning in January, 1977. The first New Work/New York show was mounted in a borrowed space, The Gallery of July and August at Woodstock, N.Y., June 25–July 13, 1977, before we moved to our present location. It presented works of eight artists living in New York who had not shown extensively in the city and who, we believed, deserved wider public exposure. The present exhibition has been organized in the same spirit. None of the six artists have shown extensively; some are exhibiting their work in New York for the very first time. Since variety, not similarity, is the keynote of this exhibition, there is no unifying theme. In keeping with this, the curators have elected to discuss each artist's work in an individual essay. The artists' statements center, for the most part, around specific issues, predominantly having to do with changes in the work precipitated by living in New York; the effect, if any, of having chosen to exhibit or not exhibit work previously; and the relationship of each artist's work to that of his or her peers.

The artists were chosen by The New Museum's curatorial staff, Susan Logan and Allan Schwartzman, with my collaboration. The exhibition would not have been possible without the special assistance of two curatorial interns, Nicolie Roscoe Loustau and Kathleen Thomas, who provided invaluable help with the general organization of the exhibition and catalog, as well as with most aspects of

registration, shipping, insurance, installation, and publicity. Robert Price, who has recently joined our staff as preparator, has provided invaluable assistance with every aspect of mounting this as well as previous exhibitions; George Perez has also helped us with preparation and lighting; Tim Yohn once again provided extensive and careful editing and proof-reading of the manuscripts; the biographies were written by Nicolie Roscoe Loustau. We are grateful to Warren Silverman who provided the catalog photographs; to Pam Adler who furnished documentation of Steve Keister and his work; to Marcy Snapp who helped to type the manuscript and organized the details of the exhibition; and especially to our designer, Joan Greenfield, who once again designed and produced the catalog in record time.

Above all, we are grateful to the artists in the exhibition for their cooperation and support in every respect; without their good will, assistance and time, the exhibition would have been immeasurably more difficult.

We would like to once again extend our heartfelt thanks to the dozens of volunteers without whose time and effort The New Museum would not exist.

Marcia Tucker

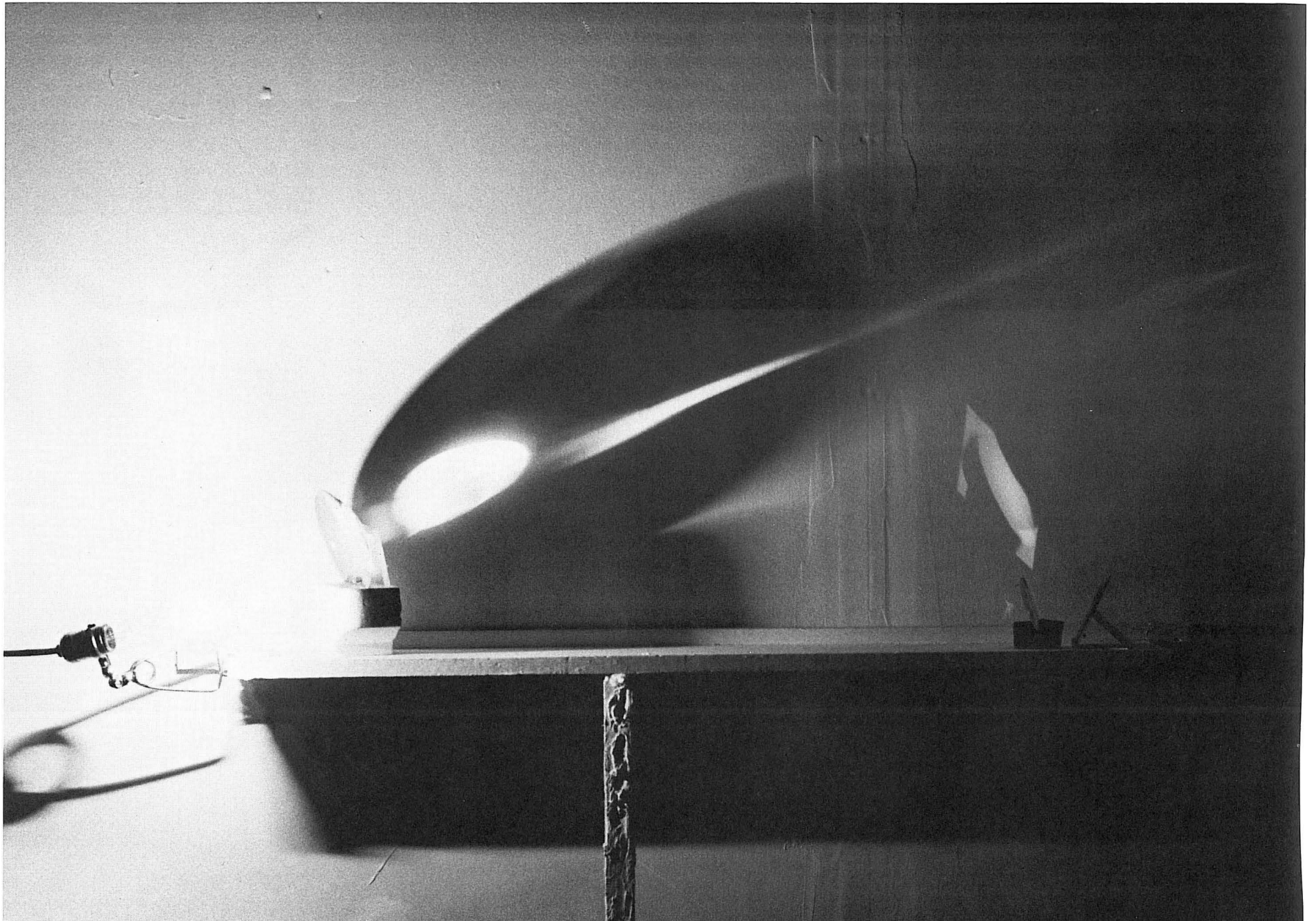
My efforts are directed toward understanding the analogies between these projects and other activities. Changes occur in relation to situations—much as light is transmitted in other ways after encountering various obstacles.

Susan Dallas



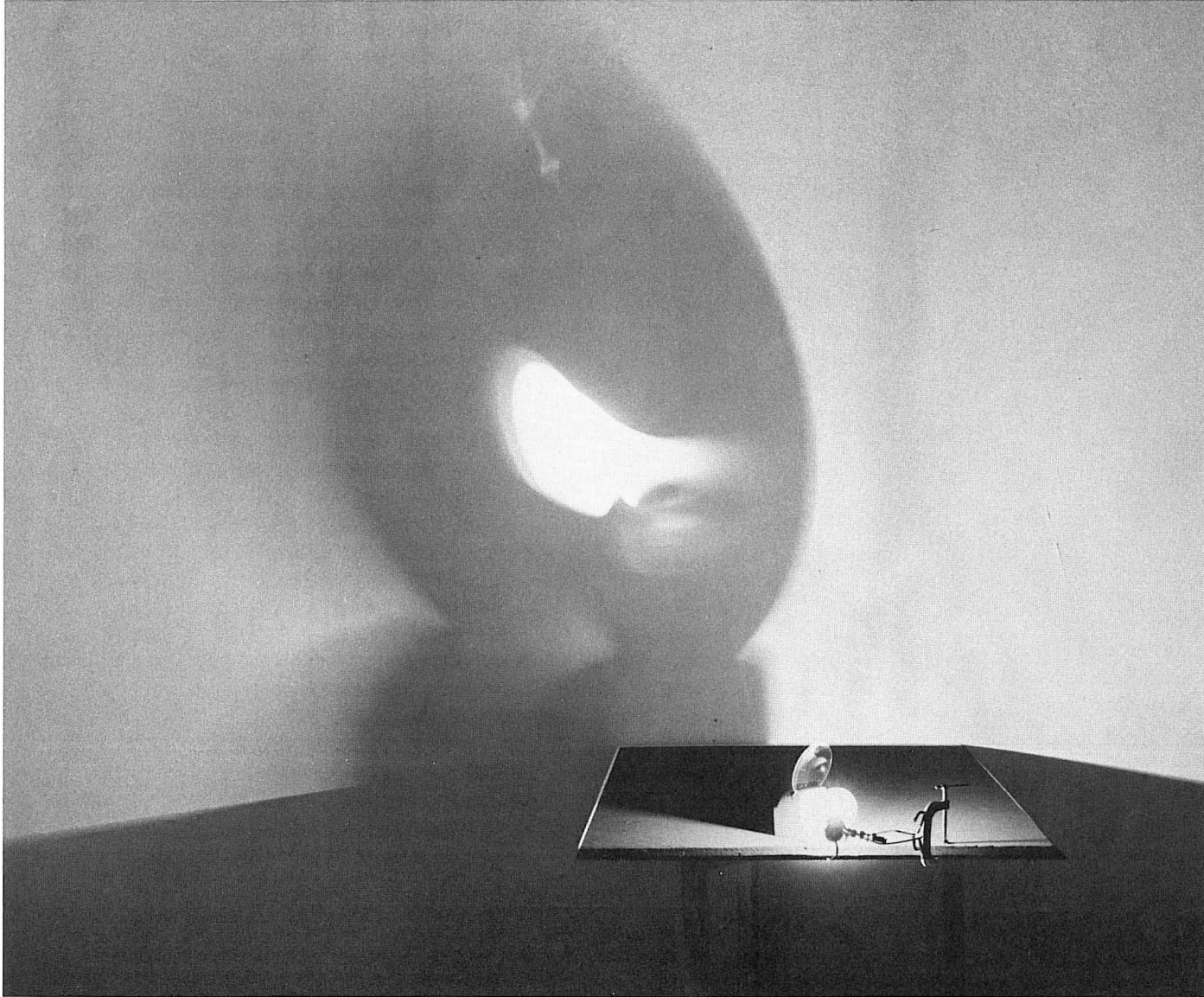
Susan Dallas, *Light Projection #3*, 1978, light apparatus and lenses, dimensions variable





Opposite:
Susan Dallas
Light Projection #4, 1978
light apparatus and lenses
dimensions variable

Below: Susan Dallas, *Light Projection #5*, 1978, light apparatus and lenses, dimensions variable



*Take away expectation and everything
comes out the same... chance makes
nothing in this world apart from making
us take note of it.*

—Paul Valéry

Susan Dallas' untitled constructions don't look like art. Although the viewer may be puzzled at first by the arbitrariness of the arrangement, one soon realizes that the concern here is the phenomenon of light and constituent color. Consisting of tables or shelves of wood, clip-on lights, lenses, and diffraction gratings*, mounted on plasticine or styrofoam bases, these assemblages are designed to generate specific patterns of light, color, and shadow on the wall. Examining these pieces closely, the viewer experiences the sense of pleasure that a child might have on successful completion of a science experiment. Their very simplicity becomes more intriguing as one considers the complexity of the optical experiment produced by them.

The pieces look, in fact, as though they were constructed within a few moments of their inception, as if Dallas couldn't wait to begin playing with light and lenses. In one piece, a low triangular white crate covered by formica serves as a base for a clip-on light which transmits odd jerky "U" shapes onto the wall through lenses situated at various distances from the light source. The passage of light through the lenses creates subtle warm and cool tones that change according to the position of the

*A diffraction grating is a plate of glass or polished metal into which fine parallel lines have been scored. It produces a spectrum as good as, or better than a prism.

lenses. Another light projection is constructed on a white shelf which runs along the wall a little below eye level. By means of a series of lenses and diffraction gratings, the light is transformed into a wedge of the spectrum which shoots across the wall. The resultant colors possess an extraordinary intensity that has no harshness or flatness.

Dallas even invites viewers to move parts of the pieces and experiment with the forms created by the light. Although Dallas carefully works out the desired effect of any particular piece and records it through drawings and photographs, she maintains no rigid expectation that the viewer will maintain the particular configuration she has devised. The flexibility of Dallas' approach seems to suit the nature of her medium, light—which is impossible to confine. Light is never obliterated by an opaque substance; it is simply converted into heat. It can be transformed easily, but cannot be destroyed.

Dallas approaches her work with the same openness she allows the viewer. Her success, she feels, depends on approaching the equipment with no predetermined outcome in mind. Play is important in her working method, since she realizes that any chance occurrence might alter and enrich her experiments. Although she reads scientific material pertaining to optics and related subjects, light is approached empirically, not theoretically. This open-endedness supplies her with the opportunity to surprise herself and offers a direct avenue to the means for uncovering information. The makeshift appearance of the work suggests its ability to adjust itself to im-

provided experiments, reminding the viewer that many discoveries have been made by scientists using rudimentary equipment.

Optical physics has long been a prime source for Susan Dallas' work. Previous to the present constructions, she built environments and wall pieces using light, film projection, panels, painted lines, and geometrical forms. Like her more recent pieces, they functioned as aesthetic interpretations of scientific analysis, but unlike them, they were characterized by clean lines, carefully balanced forms, and formal presentation. In 1977, for an exhibition at the Evanston Art Center, Illinois, entitled "Proposal for Lake Sculpture," Dallas submitted a design for solar energy collectors, an undertaking both aesthetic and functional. Yet, when I commented on the modest, unaesthetic appearance of her recent work, she was pleased, replying that although it was not her main intention, she was happy that her pieces do not look like products of the "Art Factory." The categorization of her work as art or science does not concern her; she is far more interested in her subject *per se*.

Dallas' exploration of color occurs at its source without the mediation of paint, paper, or other materials. Dallas restricts herself to the complex of color that comprises white light, which is her basic interest. Her colors are produced by either condensing light through lenses or dispersing it through diffraction gratings. Her work reveals the numerous possibilities contained within a limited scope. She gains control over the shape, color, and intensity of light by utilizing such available options as the particular type of

light, lens or grating.

Inasmuch as Dallas uses a minimum of means to reveal a phenomenon, her approach is similar to that of such environmental artists as Robert Irwin. However, the difference between them is vast; Dallas does not create environments, but examines a single fact of them. The interrelationship of color and light has long been a major concern for artists. Issues raised by the Impressionists have been scrutinized and elaborated on by many leading modern artists. Dallas' more analytic and reductive attitude distinguishes her from an additive approach of painters and artists who utilize colored lights.

Her work rests within contradictions: color and non-color, sophisticated and rudimentary, scientific and artistic, intangible and tangible. In all of the pieces, a precarious balance is maintained. They operate in three different spatial contexts. First, they occupy space in the room by jutting into the space of the room. Secondly, an interior space is established by the objects that project and manipulate light. In addition a two-dimensional space is occupied by the light projected. These pieces find a homeostasis within their three contexts. Even the contradiction between the disorderly constructions and harmonious forms of the projection is resolved. A visual balance is achieved in the same way a physicist might arrange it. Each component of the piece functions at an optimum, maximizing the energy of harmonious and disparate situations.

The directness of the work makes it all the more mysterious in certain respects. It demands immediate response

and a tolerance for confusion, but little acquaintance with science. Although knowledge of these disciplines may enhance our enjoyment of the work, it is not a necessary factor. Often, our sophistication hinders appreciation of basic elements around us. Dallas' pieces permit us to explore such a rudimentary phenomenon. She sparks our curiosity by venturing into the familiar to make discoveries.

Susan Logan

I moved from London to New York 18 months ago. This city has become crucial for me, both as an artistic center and as my adopted home.

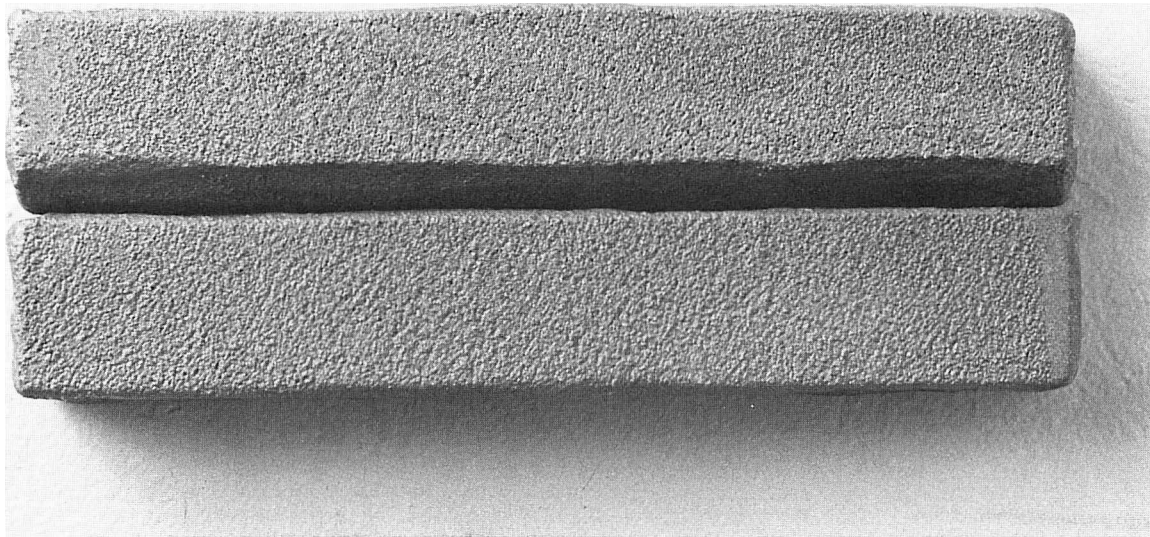
Although the stimulus of recent New York art has been important to me, ideas from other fields have also had a major impact. Underlying my work is an interest in natural forms, materials, and processes: the colors and textures of the earth and the layers of rock which make it up, the asymmetries of natural forms, and the tensions between the forces of order and disorder which are present in geological processes. My curiosity about nature has led me to the ideas of twentieth-century physics. One of its central concepts is that matter, when reduced to its elementary particles/waves, consists of chains of transformations which can only be perceived in terms of sets of relations. This has influenced the framework within which I approach my work.

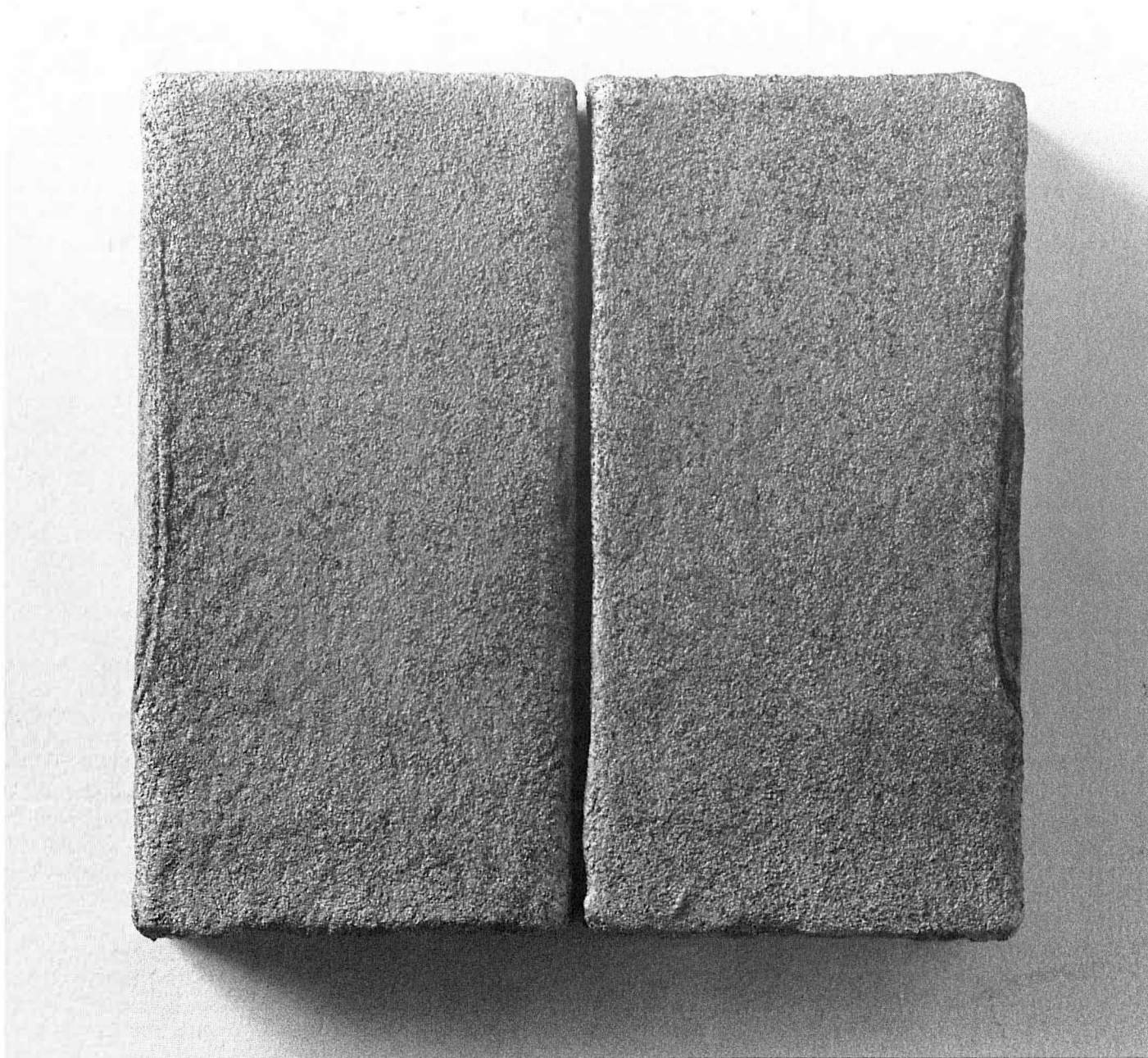
The interaction between the world of art and that of nature provides me with starting points from which to explore new territory.

Lynne Elton



Lynne Elton, *Untitled*, 1978, bronze compound and sand on wood, 2 x 6"





Seeing Lynne Elton's works for the first time is like encountering a familiar object on a beach or in the mountains. Like rocks or bark, one is inclined to take her pieces for granted, therefore close scrutiny is necessary to examine and appreciate them. Elton's penchant for geological forms and processes and her appreciation for the simple and the understated is expressed in her selection and use of materials—and reflects a poetic sensibility which links inside and outside as physical states and denies such traditional polar opposites as natural and artificial, urban and non-urban. Her works are small, concerned with the subtleties of surface, edge, texture, and color that can be achieved by minimal means. Even though this has little to do with demolishing the fine line between painting and sculpture in the manner of the minimal artists of the 1960s, her painted works resist classification.

Elton begins a work by selecting a piece of wood (either bought or found) for a structural support. She then builds up successive layers of bronze powders and compounds, aluminum compound, and acrylic mixed with sand, earth pigments, and mica in various combinations, often varying from layer to layer. This gradual additive process allows her materials to function in ways natural to themselves, yet willfully controlled by the artist and responsive to her touch. For example, a recent 8" x 1" x 3/4" piece appears to be muted bronze in color, but closer study

Lynne Elton
Untitled, 1978
bronze compound and sand on wood
7 x 7-1/4"

reveals subtle variations among bronze, copper, and aluminum, resulting partially from the artist's control of the materials and partially from the chance ways each layer dried. Likewise, this work's surface and texture are products of both the natural properties of the materials and of the artist's assertion.

Elton's works bear a strong resemblance to various kinds of unglazed and naturally glazed Chinese and Japanese ceramics (a subject of interest to the artist). The asymmetries of Japanese *raku* and of Tamba and Chinese Sung ceramics, their surfaces, textures, natural colorations, and subtlety of forms are quite similar to Elton's contemporary objects. Like these ceramicists, Elton achieves her textures and colors through the use of metal compounds and earth substances. For Elton, as for classical Oriental philosophers, there is a balance of polar opposites in nature; beauty is to be seen everywhere and anywhere by one with a sensitivity to and appreciation of

simplicity. Elton and Oriental potters share a respect for their materials, relying as much on the natural properties of materials as on aesthetic decision-making. Both can be said to share a similar understated sensibility.

Elton began making three-dimensional objects about two years ago in an attempt to "eliminate composition within a frame,"* by incorporating the frame into an overall composition whose subtly molded edges create shadows which become an integral part of the composition. Her shadows—the products of asymmetrical, irregularly shaped forms—suggest a continuation beyond the object's edge.

This point is most clearly illustrated in a group of Elton's works (1977) consisting of horizontal forms ranging in length from two and a half feet to eight feet. In height and depth these highly

*Unless otherwise noted, all statements made in conversation with the author in March, 1978.

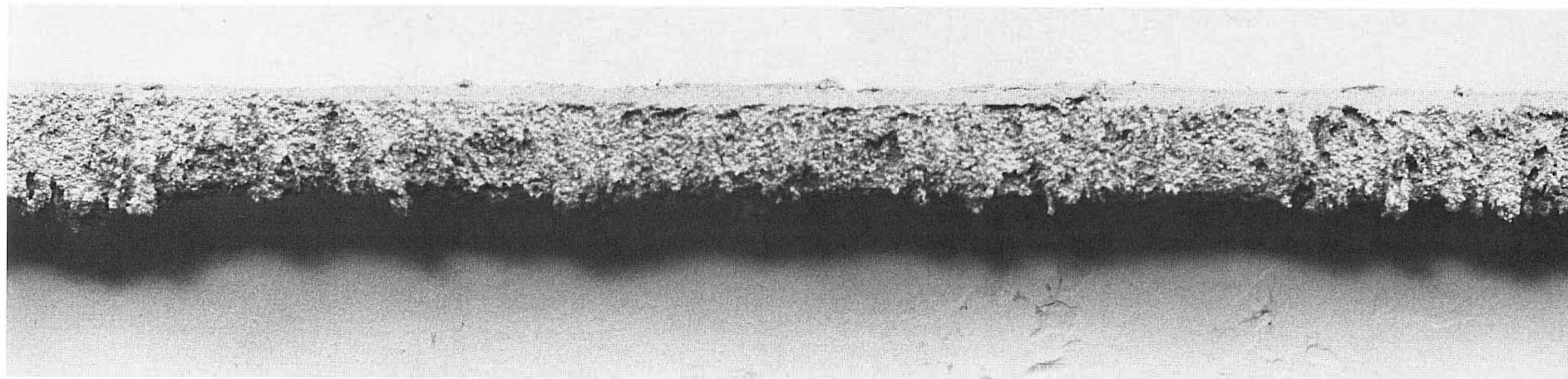
textured pieces do not exceed one inch. Given such proportions, the texture of the materials and the way in which they are molded *determine* the composition, thus the edge. The textured edges produce a shadow almost as large in area as the object itself. Elton's pieces integrate both elements (object and shadow) by contrasting their light coloration with the visually distinct shadows they cast. In their utilization of both positive and negative space these pieces not only suggest space beyond the object, but command the larger space on which they are situated. Thus the wall, like the shadow, becomes an integral part of the piece.

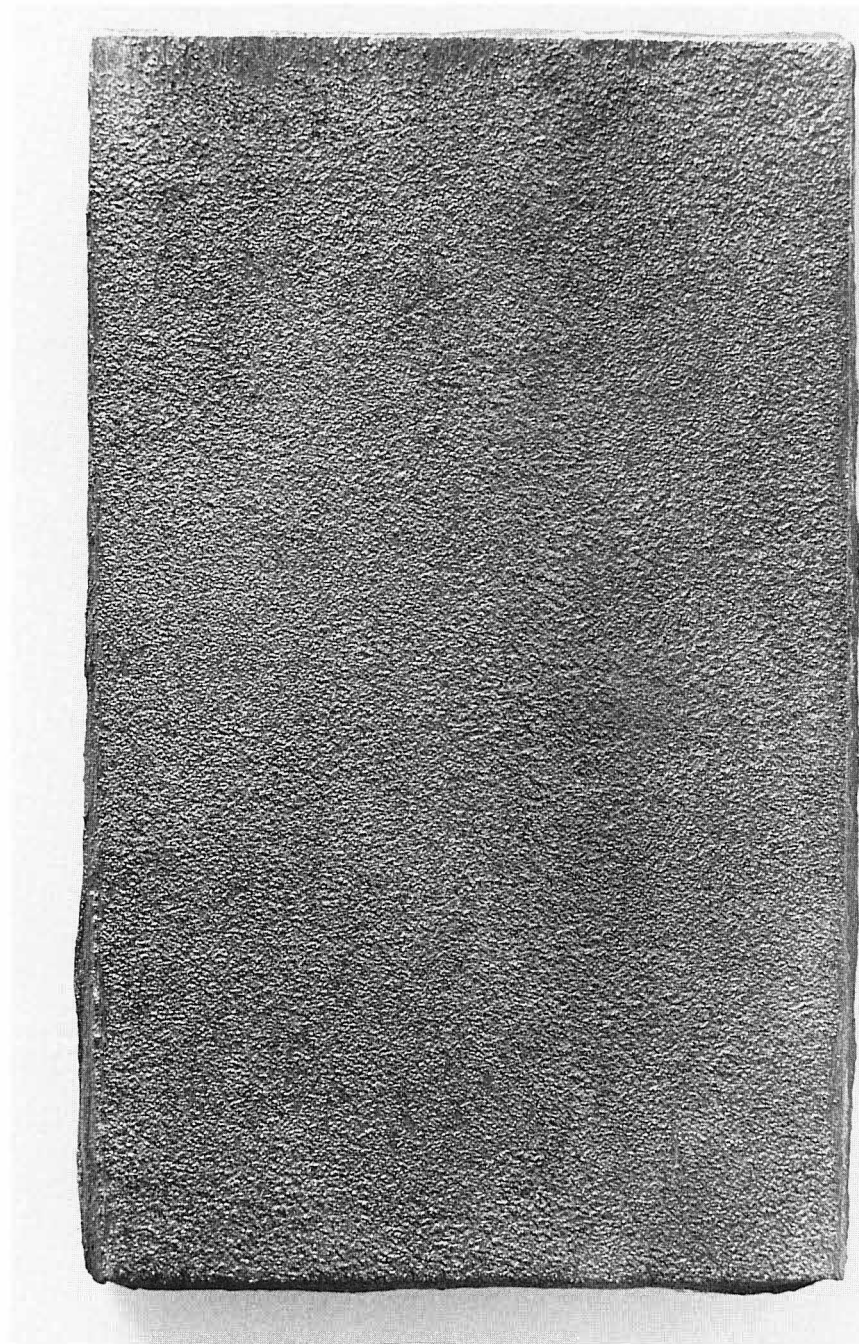
In their texture and form these horizontal pieces not only reveal the process by which they were made, but also refer to other processes their appearance calls to mind. Elton creates a situation which is not only open-ended spatially, but associatively as well. In texture, these horizontal pieces resemble drippings and thus acknowledge the force of

gravity. Although these pieces, like all of Elton's works, were executed on a table or on the floor, the downward movement of the artist's tools and hands translates on the wall as a function of gravity. Inasmuch as the artist deposits her materials layer upon layer, these works evoke such natural processes as water depositing sand on a beach. Her objects not only recall natural phenomena, but they visually resemble one another. The parallel here is that the process of artistic creation is analogous to geological occurrences. Just as geological phenomena are natural situations which change, adjust to, and adapt over time, art works are the transformation of materials from inert ingredients to their present state as art objects.

Her admiration of natural processes makes Elton sensitive to the fact that her materials have specific properties unique to themselves; she does not force the materials to function in ways that deny their individual properties. The develop-

Lynne Elton, *Untitled* (detail), 1977, acrylic and sand on wood, 3/4 x 96"





ment of Elton's work over the last four years has been a process of familiarizing herself with her materials, examining how they respond to one another, and extending her control over them. When she began modeling acrylic on wood, she realized that "if I loaded the acrylic with a lot of pigment, the acrylic started cracking." She soon became interested in the cracks and how they could be incorporated into a composition. Elton also discovered that the cracks in the acrylic "were at the exact same angles as cracks found in the earth when it is parched." This coexistence of geological and artistic processes, rather than one being a visual replication of the other, asserts the artist's interest in unifying polar contrasts.

By making works which parallel natural processes in appearance and in execution, we can think of Elton's works as landscapes. Like inhabited landscapes, her works are natural phenomena modified by human intervention. By bringing the landscape in, Elton resolves contrasts of interior and exterior as physical states in a manner which almost negates site-specific pursuits.

Elton unifies traditional contrasts of urban and non-urban through her use of color, which, like her textures, relies on subtlety for its appreciation, and is the result of a fusion between the natural properties of the materials and of the artist's control of them. Because she is so interested in color, Elton pushes it "toward the edge of non-color," by mixing her

pigments with gray. Her colors—muted brown grays, red grays, green grays—are common to both natural and urban environments. For example, *Untitled*, 1977 (included in the present exhibition) consists of two small brick-like forms with a shiny, aluminum coloration which recalls both natural and artificial substances (e.g., minerals and aluminum cans, rocks and metal pipes). By using generalized colors which refer to both realms, Elton points up similarities shared by all environments.

Elton's works express an appreciation for and sensitivity to the world around us. Her compositions are summarizing images which seem to encapsulate aesthetic and investigatory experiences the artist shares with us. By using basic forms, overall compositions, and generalized "non-colors," the poetry of Elton's works harmonizes traditional polar contrasts. Unifying traditionally disparate domains—urban and non-urban, interior and exterior, natural and artificial—Elton celebrates similarity over difference, congruity over discord.

Allan Schwartzman

Lynne Elton
Untitled, 1978
acrylic, sand, and bronze powder on wood
9-1/2" x 6"

My exposure to art here has given me focus and freedom.

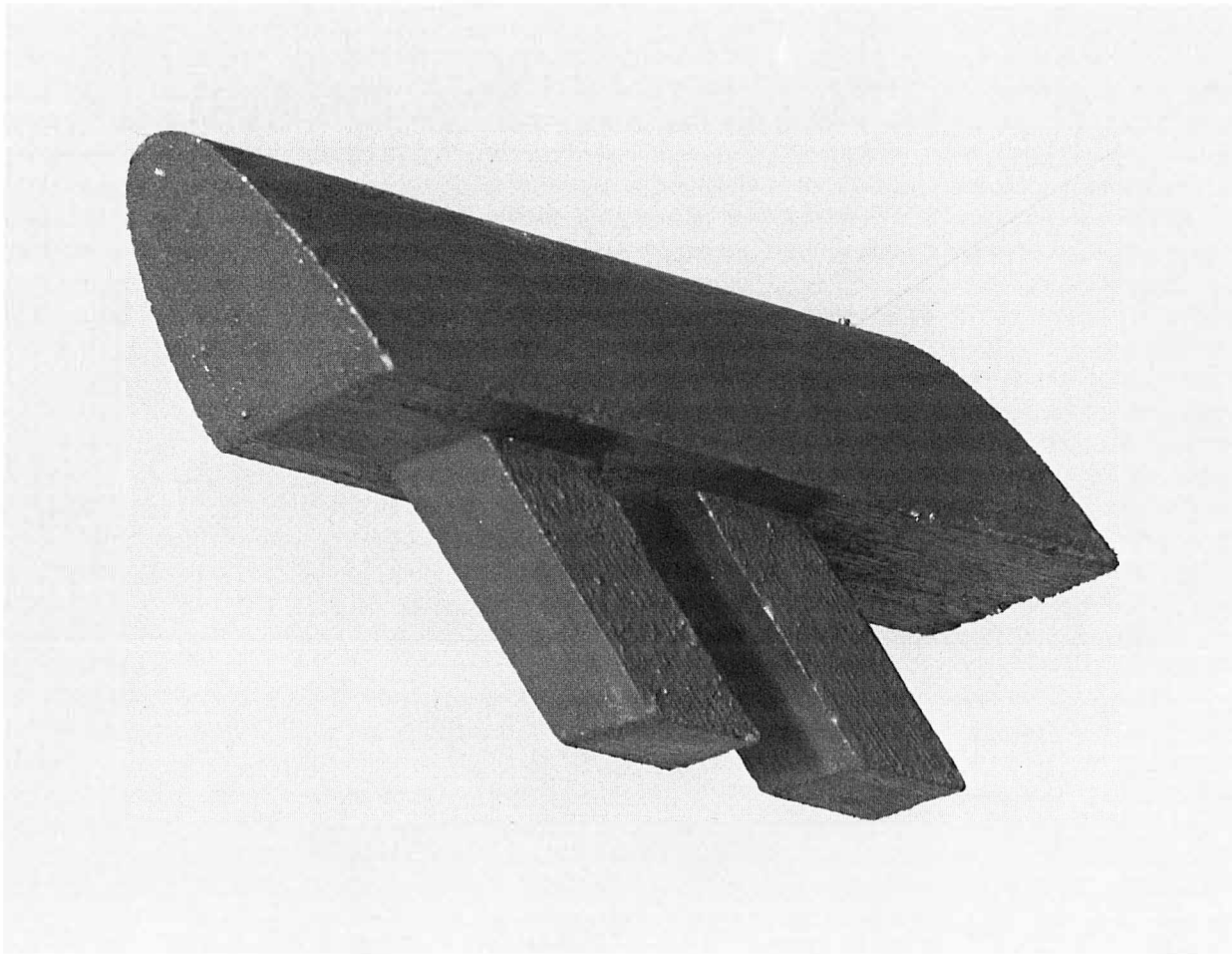
At first I wanted to show, but my work and ideas started to change, so I assumed the attitude that when the work was ready it would be seen.

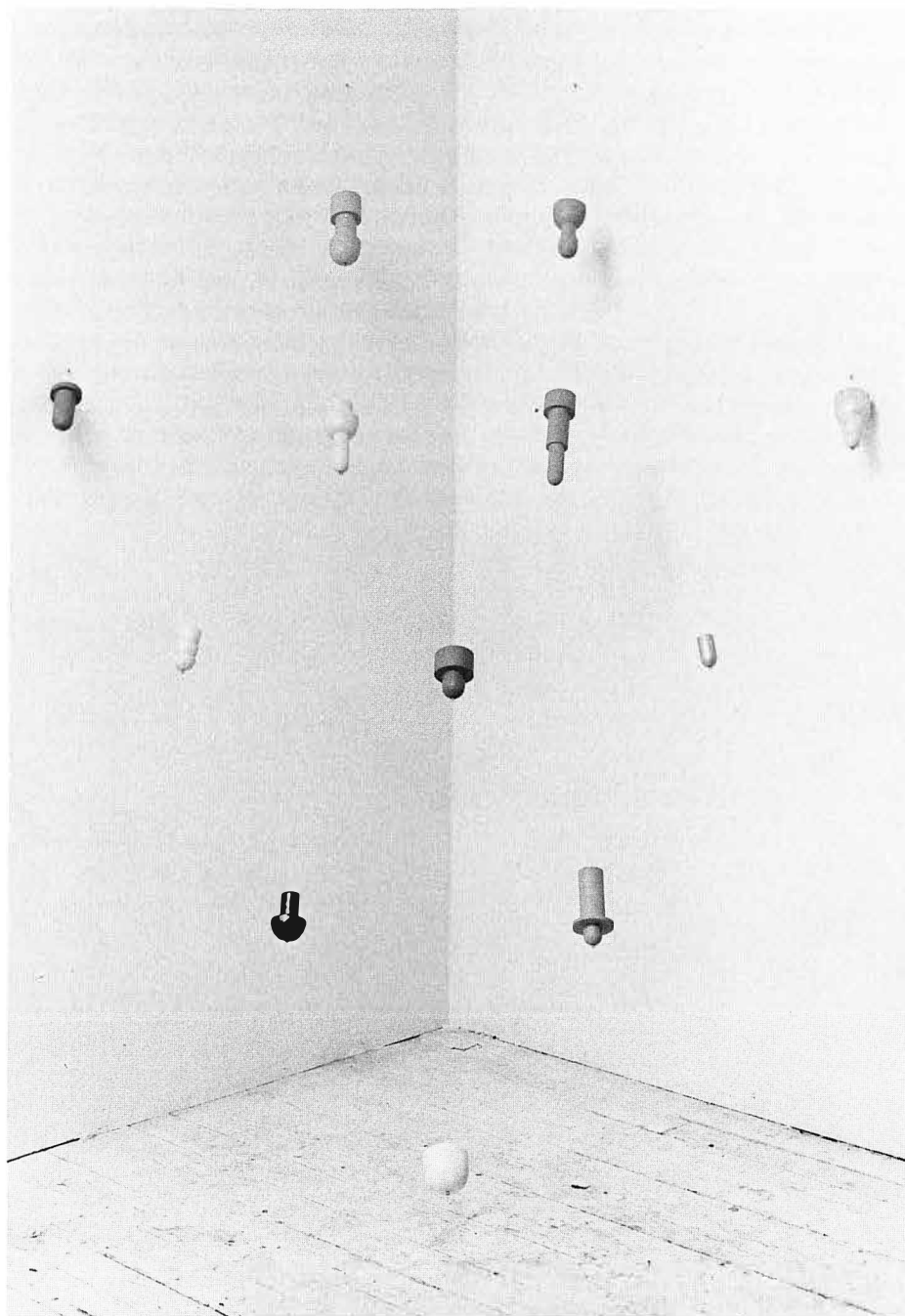
I am most interested in artists that are the most different from anybody else.

Steve Keister



Steve Keister, *5 Reds* (detail), 1978, acrylic on wood, dimensions variable





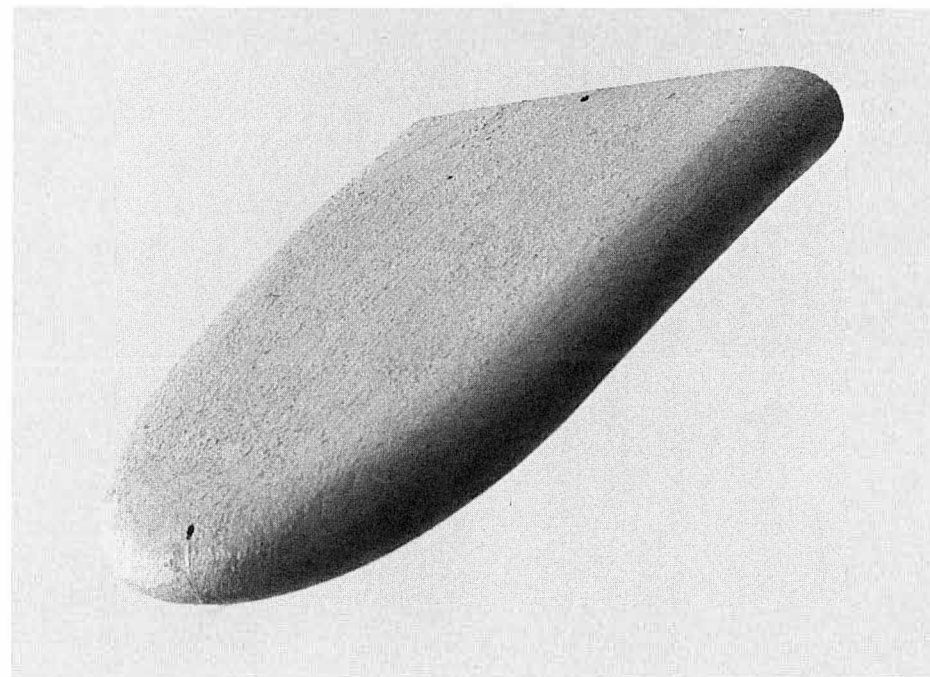
Being in a room filled with Steve Keister's sculptures evokes the feeling of suspended time and a resultant calm and dream-like mood, where time and movement are frozen at a specific moment. Although his sculptures do not physically move, as forms they suggest movement which is rendered passive through their physical suspension. While many of his pieces are analytic in nature, his work ultimately resists formal analysis because it addresses itself to undefinable states.

In the fall of 1976, Steve Keister began making small wooden objects suspended from ceilings and walls by fish line. At first, he carved organic forms in

wood. While he still does carve some pieces, his more recent concerns have focused on constructing geometrically derived shapes. Using wooden dowels, mouldings, slats, and boards of various sizes, he works with the geometry of preformed lumber and manipulates it by cutting, rounding off the edges, or adding it to other forms in the investigation of how a shape can be transformed. The variety of possibilities is vast, and while small in scale, recent works have varied in form from volumetric and cubic, to flat and curved, to rounded and linear, to circular and tubular. Specific size and color are equally as varied.

Left: Steve Keister, *V¹²*, 1977, acrylic on wood, dimensions variable

Below: Steve Keister, *Untitled*, 1977, acrylic on wood, 4 x 4-1/2 x 3"



Keister neither sands his sculpture nor attempts to finish off edges where different pieces of wood are joined, assuring that the process by which they are constructed is clearly evident. Even though they are painted, they retain the basic textural qualities of the original materials.

Keister often works in series which develop only after a number of pieces are executed. When he becomes aware of certain similarities between a few of his sculptures, he begins to develop these common elements. Likewise, pieces from one series or another can form the basis of new series when Keister freely acknowledges similarities between pieces previously unnoticed. Thus, the linear chronology of his work is irrelevant. Rather his development is an oscillation between ideas, ideas which frequently reside in the pieces themselves. The aim is a "controlled expansion,"* by which the artist widens his vocabulary of forms and "makes conceptual leaps," which ultimately result in an open-ended situation. For example, recent changes have included the assertion of pieces' three dimensionality from all angles of viewing, a strengthening of the emotive powers of suspension, and a more direct integration of works with specific architectural settings.

In his first series (1977) Keister explored ten different combinations of and possibilities for forms by restricting himself to the construction of geometric shapes formed by right angles and arcs from circles. The pieces are hung askew

*Unless otherwise noted, all statements made in conversation with the author in March, 1978.

to the geometry of a room, thus creating a tension between the pieces' movement (implied by placement) and the inertia of their suspension. Keister is not concerned with determining *the* finite number of possible combinations in a series, but in examining how pieces can share properties while retaining their own individuality.

Since his series are not systemic in a rigid sense, the artist's eccentricities and whims manifest themselves in the work in the variety of the individual pieces' sizes and colorations, and in the introduction of options not restricted by the series. For example, the *Numbers Series* consists of ten forms, each painted a different shade of gray, which derive from the numbers 0 through 9. In each one, reference to a number is visible only from one specific vantage point (which is different in each piece). *Number 9* is composed of a long, flat slat connected to an isosceles triangle and is painted a bluish gray. Because of the rigorous geometry of this piece we focus on the forms, how they are connected, and how they both assert and deny their three dimensionality in space (depending upon the angle we are viewing from). Ironically, the artist has given the viewer a familiar point of reference (by roughly basing the form on a specific representation), yet the number has been transformed into a juxtaposition of geometric shapes. This eccentric and unpredictable coupling adds a touch of whim and humor by Keister's inclusion of elements not determined by the series restrictions.

The V^{12} series reveals the highly analytic derivation of much of Keister's work. It consists of twelve pieces con-

structed from up to three different sizes of wooden doweling, each painted a different shade of yellow. The units are arranged in five horizontal rows in the following manner: the top row has two units, the next has four, the third has three, the fourth has two, and the bottom has one. The entire grouping is arranged symmetrically so that, with the exception of the top row, each piece is placed in the space between two pieces of the previous row, and the sides of the entire configuration taper down to form a "V" as the number of units in each row decreases. The top row is placed over and along the same axis as the center two units of the second row. The distance between units is eighteen inches both within a row, and between rows (in the latter case the eighteen inch distance is measured from the center of each piece and is plotted by an imaginary vertical line, not along the diagonal). The interior units are connected diagonally by fish line so that the first and second units of the second row are connected to the first unit of the third row (which is located eighteen inches below them in the space between them). Separate wires connect the two units of the top row and the one unit of the bottom row to the ceiling and floor respectively. The entire piece is suspended in a corner space, and all units are located on the same plane which thrusts through space on a diagonal so that the bottom unit is closest to the viewer. Wires running from the outer units to the wall insure that each unit is directionally pointed downward and at the same angle.

While V^{12} is clearly analytic in terms of its internal relationships, visual varie-

ty is offered by the individual components. Thus, not all twelve units incorporate all three sizes of doweling; the lengths of each unit vary from 2 inches to 8 inches. While the restriction to shades of yellow reinforces the work's unity, it helps us more clearly differentiate among the components' distinct structures.

Keister asserts that "although there may be more than one way to hang a piece, there are definitely wrong ways." In his works, balanced equilibrium is achieved when pieces are hung. Although some individual pieces may look awkward as forms, equilibrium results when they are suspended. Likewise, pieces which are parts of series are balanced in relation to the composition as a whole. The supporting-wires are integral to the composition. Although the construction and means of support of each piece are clearly visible, there is still a mysterious quality in these variously colored shapes floating above or near the viewer in a limbo of frozen time and movement. *Number 2* of the *Numbers Series* is a dark gray, linear "Z" shape. Through suspension the rapid movement of its lines is halted; the small geometric forms of *5 Reds* (included in the present exhibition) hover above the viewer like tiny spacecraft. Likewise, the dynamic austerity of V^{12} results from the thick cylindrical forms, symmetrically arranged, which thrust outward and downward, suspended in space and time.

An intriguing aspect of Keister's work is how his forms leave themselves open to association by the viewer. On first viewing a recent piece in the artist's studio I commented that its structure

reminded me of a toy I played with as a child. Keister replied: "I'm aware of their potential for association, but I want to leave that issue open for the viewer to determine." Nevertheless, Keister acknowledges this phenomenon in relation to himself. A recent green linear zig-zag piece is part of a series of works limited to the use of 45° and 90° angles. Some time after the piece was constructed, Keister was walking up the stairway at the Whitney Museum. "As I turned the corner," he recalled, "I felt the 45° angle and looked at the handrail and there was my sculpture."

The works' associative powers become more evident in *V¹²*, whose configuration has aptly been likened to militaristic maneuvers and phallic forms by viewers, either association equally appropriate. The *specific* visual associations *V¹²* conjures up are not important. What we have here is an extension of the open situation Keister spoke of earlier, of the controlled expansion which ultimately results in ordered freedom on the part of the artist. What at first seems stylistically to be a severely limited group of pieces is in fact a very open-ended situation in which certain formal aspects of

the piece are made constant in order to allow other less definable aspects to become more variable. In this series the artist has made three important steps: the spaces *between* adjacent units in *V¹²* play an active, primary role; the piece is more dependent on a specific (albeit ever-present) architectural setting; and the artist has furthered his ability to render objects motionless through suspension by constructing components that are clearly directional in themselves as well as in their planar arrangement, thus confronting the viewer in a stronger, more direct way.

Even though Keister's forms are quite simple, we must move entirely around a given sculpture in order to completely perceive its structure. Thus, while certain pieces are symmetrical, this can only be seen after viewing them from all sides. Even *V¹²*, which initially strikes us as being a frontal piece, has a different effect when viewed from its sides. This quality of a work of art revealing itself through the viewer's experience of it is, in our time, a traditional concern, one shared by such artists as Richard Tuttle.

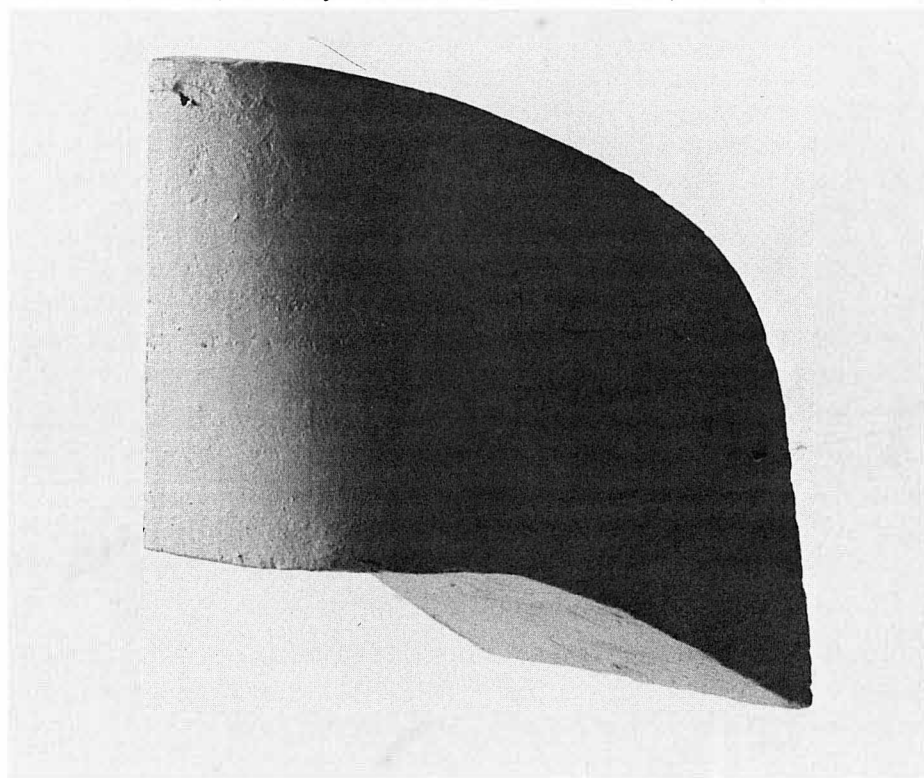
Keister's work, like Tuttle's, presents the viewer with more than a *visual* experience. Thus we use our bodies as well as our eyes to observe Keister's pieces from different vantage points and to gauge their scale in relation to ours, as we become sensitive to the space of which the works are a part. Likewise, the contemplative, ethereal mood induced in the viewer by the pieces' flotation is similar to the effect of Tuttle's work. But whereas Tuttle's perceptual concerns result from dematerialized, nonsubstantive (or non-volumetric) objects, which

refer to themselves and are not visual objects *per se*, Keister's works are sculptural in a more traditional sense. While Keister's works can be visually appreciated solely as aesthetic objects, the moods they evoke are not so much a response to the *specific* objects as a response to their interaction and to their structural dependence with the space they are a part of. It is as if we have come full circle: from de-materializing the art object in order to focus on perception as a major factor in art to a re-introduction of the object, which, in all its beauty, can function in both a visual and an experiential framework simultaneously.

The internal logic of Keister's series is only one primary aspect of them. As previously stated, Keister's series do not have the "inevitability" of purely systemic works: although many internal relationships are clearly evident, others, because of eccentricities not controlled by the series' restrictions, are more elusive. The individuality of each unit is assured by the artist's ability to treat the close relationship of the components without subordinating any. Initially connecting to our realm of experiences through their associational power, Keister's pieces next demand analysis for an understanding of their structures; finally they induce experiential states through their mysterious combinations of arrested movement, flotation, and architectural dependence. Thus their appeal to the mind is three-fold: through memory (association), through understanding (structural analysis), and through pure experience (the senses).

Allan Schwartzman

Steve Keister, *Untitled*, 1977, acrylic on wood, 6-1/2 x 1-1/2 x 1-1/2" (not included in exhibition)





Living in New York I feel has had a considerable effect upon my work. Although the change that has occurred within the present work had been anticipated prior to moving here, still I feel that the very flavor of life in New York has been conducive to promoting that change. How I've interacted with and related to people has always been very much affected by the environment at any given time, being subject to change in accordance with changes in space and the objects which composed that space, a process which had much influence on nearly all the work I did. As my consciousness of it grew, the work gradually began to talk about it—as a process, involving itself with mental and physical realities, the internal and external, taking as its form a series of transformations arranged in a strip similar in formation to the structure of a strip of film, allowing for the element of time to enter the work.

At first the work took on the form of a struggle between the mental and physical realities, then a kind of fusion occurred, and progressively as the work evolved and the portraiture element began to surface, more of a kind of conversation between the two realities began to take place. At that point a decision was made, in terms of the present work, to increase the levels of conversation by incorporating more than one character within the work, creating a series of confrontations in space between several people as opposed to just one person and an object. As a result what happened for me within the work was that the external reality of the physical shapes and objects in the work evolved into forms that serve as metaphors to describe the internal interactions of the characters involved. Basically then what has changed within the work is the sense of proportion between the internal and the external, involving itself more with the people element of the work and creating for itself its own environment that articulates in form the nature of the relationships. Which brings me to the effect that New York has had upon the work.

Life in New York has done much to promote the change that has occurred for me within the work in so much as I see New York as a city about people and confrontations between people, which I attribute to New York's largeness in population and its relationship to the compactness of its physical space. A strong metaphor for me is the interior space of New York subway cars in which the seats are arranged against the walls away from the release in space that a window offers and into the interior space of the car with its occupants creating as a result the optimum situation for confrontation. New York for me is also a city whose physical presence is as multifaceted as the expressions on the faces of its inhabitants. Thus I find New York to be an environment that corresponds with my work and which promotes for me my involvement with it.

As to how I see myself in relationship to other contemporary New York artists I should only like to say that I do not consider myself to be mainstream.

David Middaugh

*Kisses are,—
The only worth all granting.
It is to be learned—
This cleaving and this burning,
But only by the one
Who spends out himself again.*

—Hart Crane

For David Middaugh, metamorphosis is an unending process. Since 1975, he has concentrated exclusively on making colored pencil drawings in which recognizable images are progressively transformed. Throughout his piece, vivid colors are carefully juxtaposed, enlivening a winding movement of forms. His two major pieces, *Untitled*, 1975-1976 and *Fluff, Fly, and the Birdman*, 1977-1978 are series of drawings that form loose narratives concerning the artist's connection to family, lovers, friends and possessions. Middaugh constantly attempts to capture a broad and varied range of appearance and emotion. The progression from *Untitled* to *Fluff, Fly, and the Birdman*—from more literal images and rigid format to increasingly fantastic portraits and dynamic patterns—reflects an incessant exploration.

Distortion of recognizable images, reinterpretations of visual clichés, such as ads and cartoons and explicit sexuality are characteristics which Middaugh's work shares with "Chicago style" art. Since Middaugh studied art in Chicago between 1972 and 1977 he has had considerable exposure to various facets of this style. Some of his interests are similar to those of the "Hairy Who" artists. For instance, Middaugh, like Jim Nutt, has developed an idiosyncratic narrative structure and maximized the expressive

potential of form and color. In a manner similar to Barbara Rossi, Middaugh chooses to meticulously render his forms and group asymmetrical forms according to an underlying symmetry. Although influences are evident, Middaugh's amalgamation of the autobiographical, comic, mundane, and fantastic reflects a distinctly individual sensibility.

Untitled is a series of fifty-two drawings. Each drawing is a strip measuring 29" by 6" and is divided into seven portions; each of these portrays a stage of transformation. The metamorphosis of people, objects, and motifs occurs gradually in a progression running from the top to bottom of the strip. The ten drawings selected for the current exhibition are the beginning, middle, and end of the series. Two themes predominate: sexualization of non-sexual images and transformation of faces to reveal hidden expressions or latent qualities. Middaugh changes characters from children's books into aggressive seducers and helpless victims of sexual urges. A range of moods is depicted as a woman's placid face stretches into a series of different expressions as her features intertwine with the forms of a stuffed mouse. A man's glasses break into analytic forms that interact with the background objects in each frame. As the piece progresses, Middaugh becomes more concerned with activating the relationship between figure and ground and specifying the nature of the transformation to suit the particular nature of his subject.

In *Fluff, Fly, and the Birdman*, transformation becomes further integrated with the formal and narrative aspects of the work. Middaugh constructs



David Middaugh
Untitled, 1975-1976
colored pencil on paper
(Strips 51, 52)
each strip 29 x 6"

a peculiar world in constant flux—a world inhabited by a woman and two men, an animated camera, a skin diver, Birdman, and assorted shadows and objects. The narrative focuses on the center of this world shifting from the woman to a man. In Middaugh's interpretation of a triangular love affair, the change is gradual and establishes itself with erratic solidity.

The format for the seventeen drawing strips in this piece follows the triangular configuration by having eight strips devoted to the woman, eight strips to the man, and the ninth, the central strip depicting the point of transition. Unlike *Untitled*, the strips are not di-

vided into even segments, so images run vertically, horizontally, diagonally on the strips and even fly into the borders surrounding the strips. The negative space takes a distinctly active shape which widens to the right. It becomes the counterpart for the undulations of brightly colored images. The visual rhythm of the piece is integral to its overall cohesion. The portrayal of people in the process of transformation necessitates diverging from a static compositional format which depends on balance. Middaugh's piece relies more on the movement of forms through space rather than their orientation in various spatial planes. The schema is based on fours.

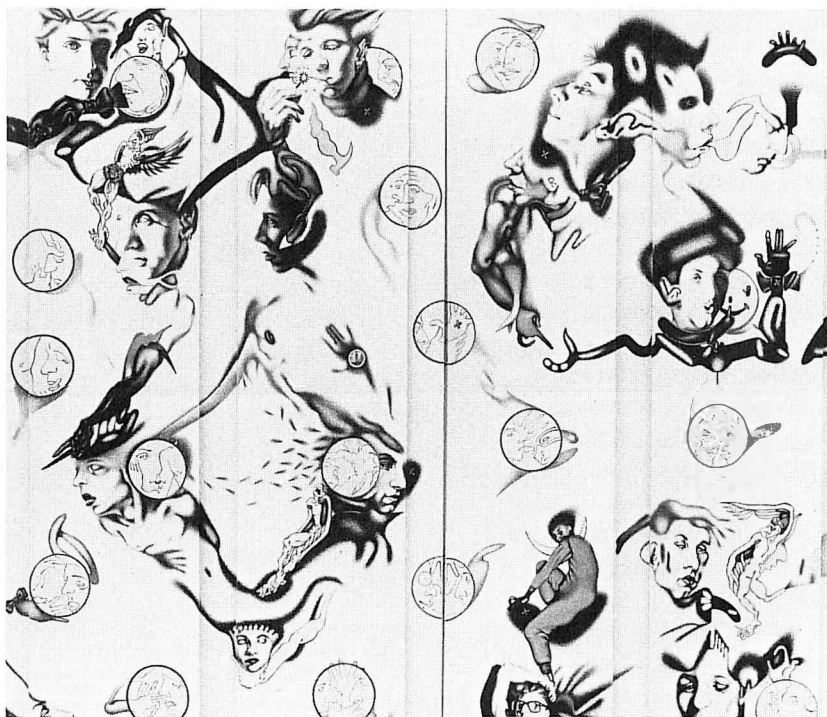
The strips are in two sections of eight plus one. The maximum number of basic images is eight, the minimum is four. It is as if a meter of four had been established and used as a substructure for variations. The distinct visual pulse and underlying symmetry organize the plethora of color and detail.

The color in *Fluff, Fly, and the Birdman* is even more extreme than in the earlier piece. Every possible color combination is worked into the piece. It is again balanced by juxtaposition, such as the frequent use of bluish black and green to offset the dazzling yellow circles or the application of bright red piping to a pair of intensely turquoise pajamas.

Middaugh also begins to modulate the intensity of the color, by leaving spaces white. Therefore, even an orange, green, and purple face can form without harshness. The manipulation of color and form in the three characters' faces are improvised and re-introduced the way a jazz musician uses a riff, changing key and rhythm of a single melodic line in order to draw out its subtleties. The choice of color for a figure is reminiscent of a film technique of tinting a sequence to indicate a certain mood.

The serial nature of the work structures the narrative. The impact is accumulative rather than instantaneous since it relies on increasing familiarity

David Middaugh, *Fluff, Fly, and the Birdman*, (details), 1977-1978, colored pencil on paper, 30 x 103" overall, each strip 29 x 5"



with the motifs and characters. The logic of the sequences creates a framework which allows Middaugh to disrupt rationality. *Fluff, Fly, and the Birdman* renders a sense of a world turned topsy-turvy, where cameras dance and faces turn green and purple. Although the sequential structure suggests the passage of time, the temporal element of the narrative does not divide itself into past, present, and future, but rather is centered on the actual, the potential, and their remnants—pinpointing personal attitudes and changes. The narrative is based on the formation, dissolution, and memory of a relationship. Meanings evolve from grouping visual elements rather than isolating them. Their spatial arrangement and repetition weight their significance. For example, the image of a tube in someone's mouth first appears in the second strip. This image occurs at least five more times in the piece. Each of these becomes indicative of certain feelings and situations when compared to similar images. Another motif is the transformation and transference of eyeglasses. For instance, in one frame the woman playfully sports the man's glasses, while in another frame this character's glasses become a heart as his head rests on the other man's. Content lies within pictorial associations and groupings.

The form that any character or object may take is unpredictable. Many expected constants are disregarded as the piece evolves. In the beginning, the cartoon-like camera plays a major role by revealing undercurrents of the drama, like a jester in a Shakespearean play. However, the camera is not a reliable

gauge since he turns into another character, the skin diver. While the camera seemed to encourage action, the skin diver is more inhibited and less emotive. Just as we become acquainted with him, he is transformed into Birdman who is affected more directly by the drama although he too is prone to independent antics. The main characters also undergo dramatic transformation, becoming clowns, mechanical people, statues, Draculas, and Franksteins, to name a few. Such distortions do more than dramatize since they are not merely guises but are condensed aspects of personalities surfacing.

In integrating the mundane with the fantastic, Middaugh's work shares certain affinities with Surrealism. As Magritte once noted, "The principal value of Surrealism seems to me to be that it has reintroduced the marvelous into everyday possibility."^{*} There is an element of play in *Fluff, Fly, and the Birdman*, as though the artist delighted in disrupting our expectations. Middaugh turns the ordinary into the extraordinary by making a huge green safety pin end in "R" and "X," or a match lighting a cigarette become a sparkler, or a shadow of a hand hold a light. Common objects acquire unique significance.

Middaugh has taken a visual cliché and uses it as an important and meaningful motif throughout the piece. The yellow circles are derived from those ubiquitous "Smile" buttons. The manner in which they punctuate and maintain visual rhythm recalls the use of the bouncing ball in sing-along cartoons.

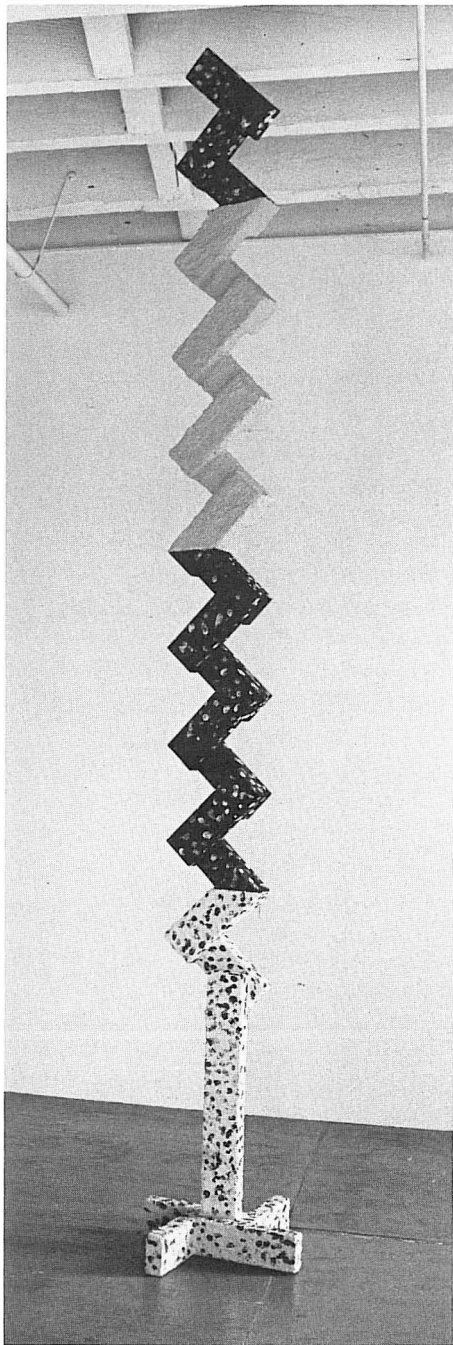
^{*}*Surrealism: Theater, Art, Ideas* Nahma Sandrow (New York: Harper & Row, 1962) p. 19.

Often the circles are humorous and whimsical. Sometimes, despite their primary colors, they depict tender scenes, contradicting usual associations provoked by these colors. The shadows as well as the circles project a quality of the extraordinary. They interact with the characters and function as wings, undefined objects, and other mysterious elements.

A world has been created by the faces, objects, and bodies sieved through the artist's perception. The crises, the periods of respite and joy only seem to continue in widening cycles. The sexual nature of the work does not segment the people or capsulize the relationships, but acts as an animating spirit for the transitions of emotions and occurrences. The sensuality and sexuality in this piece are other aspects of making the ordinary into the extraordinary. The sexual behavior here is diametrically opposed to the ordinariness of pornographic images. Eroticism becomes a metaphor for emotional interactions. Although the graphicness relates to a characteristic of Chicago Imagists, there is an absence of the brutality and violence often portrayed in their work. Even though explicitness is no longer taboo in art, there still remains some risk in portraying a more personal view of sexual interactions. Middaugh acknowledges the influences of Northwest Coast primitive art on his sense of design. Another element they share is the emphasis on the oral as a metaphor for transformation. In Northwest Coast art, the motif of one being swallowing another is widely used in totems, masks, and other objects employed in communal shamanistic rites.

The high point of this ritual is the reenactment for the initiate of being swallowed up by a monster god/goddess and reentering from the creature's mouth, Jonah-like, reborn and mature. The focus on the mouth in Middaugh's piece thus emphasizes the theme of change, but here—unlike the Northwest Coast ritual—no conclusion is reached, the process does not cease.

Susan Logan



"Shit!" 5:30 and I'm already awake.

I get up and walk to the bathroom to pee. In the kitchen I put some bread in the toaster and start to boil water for the coffee. While waiting: I reach for a filter, put it into the Melitta filter holder and fill it with the proper amount of coffee. The toast pops up and I butter it with the butter I bought from the Grand Union. By that time the water is ready and I pour it over the coffee lying in my Melitta filter. I chew buttered toast while I wait for the water to drip through the proper amount of coffee, the filter and the Melitta filter holder. Finally I can sit down with a cup of coffee and what is left of my buttered toast. I notice the paper from The New Museum that Susan gave me yesterday. It has three questions on it, which Susan wants answered in time to go into the catalog. I figure I might as well do it now since I'm up, have peed and am doing nothing but drinking coffee and eating the rest of the toast, which has on it butter, from the Grand Union.

First Question: How has your work been affected by being in New York? Answer: It has gotten larger and has become non-objective.

Second Question: Have you consciously chosen not to exhibit your work previously? If so, why? Answer: Yes and no. Up to five years ago I did not feel that I was ready to show, so I did not make my work available to anyone. Since then I've been taking my slides around once a year, only to find no one wants them anyhow.

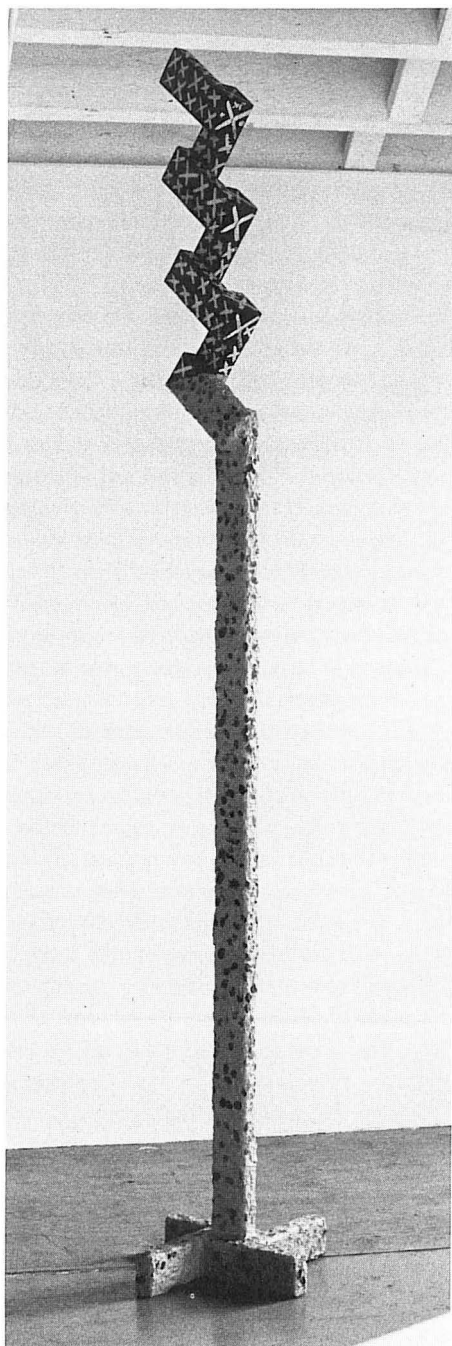
Third Question: How do you see your work in relation to other contemporary artists? Answer: I have always considered myself as working in the mainstream.

R-i-n-g. R-i-n-g. "The Phone." I put my pen down, wondering who could be calling so early.

Fred Smith

Fred Smith, *Untitled*, 1978, acrylic on wood, 114 x 18 x 18"





The complexity of our social structure and more varied interests allow us to see beauties that are closed to the senses of people living in narrower cultures. It is the quality of their experience... that determines the difference between modern and primitive art....

—Franz Boas

The simplicity of the forms in Fred Smith's sculpture, the directness of its texture and color, and its primitivistic quality result from the artist's struggle to pinpoint his work's elementary nature and lay bare its rudimentary character. Fred Smith acknowledges the strong influence of art from primitive cultures on his work. At the outset of his career, he considered primitive artists to be "heroes," and emulated their intensity and directness. The primitive reverence for the process of making objects is echoed in Smith's exuberance for the process of making art. Smith insists on imbuing all his sculptures with a strictly handmade quality. He avoids meticulous craftsmanship, welcoming accidents in construction and paint application. At the same time, he maintains very specific requirements for the final outcome of his particular artistic process.

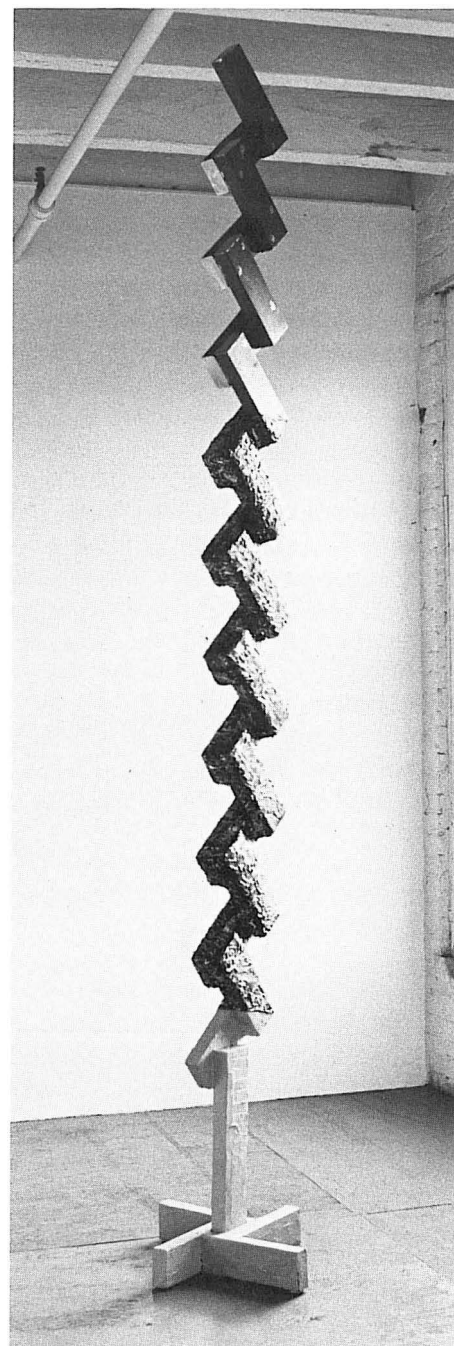
All of Smith's sculptures are wood structures painted and often textured with natural materials such as tar and hay. Since 1974, three separate series have been completed—a group of wall pieces and two groups of freestanding sculptures. Although he has been making

Fred Smith, *Untitled*, 1978
acrylic on wood, 114 x 18 x 18"

art for more than fifteen years, almost none of his work made prior to 1974 remains. Smith destroys any work which seems unsatisfactory to him. Thus by rather drastic means, Smith makes a selective history of his career. Related to this was the decision to change his name which was distinctly Italian, to the present one with all its implications of anonymity. This concern with making and erasing personal history is reflected in various aspects of Smith's sculpture.

In 1976, the artist began constructing freestanding sculptures from branches approximately eight feet long, at the center of which, where they were bunched together with tar, he set a photograph of a friend or family member. Each of these sculptures distinguishes itself by having a specific size, shape, color, and texture. The particular appearance of the work is connected with the photograph at its center. When the sculptures are viewed as a group, these distinctions are easily discernible. The pieces are thus evocations of the people portrayed in the photograph, people who have actively shaped the artist's past, although this specific history remains vague. The neutral shades in many of the pieces underscore that history's ambiguity. On one hand, the obsessive texturing of the branches and tar suggests that the images of these people have worked themselves into the artist's mind; on the other, the sculptures themselves are opportunities to treat human relationships as physical entities.

Fred Smith, *Untitled*, 1978
acrylic on wood, 114 x 18 x 18"



Spanning different periods of his life, these relationships have been condensed into a group of sculptures, representing a clan of the artist's own devising. In a certain way, these works function like totemic objects in primitive societies.

These objects, such as poles and masks, depict the totem—an animal or plant which identifies a particular clan. Although Smith's sculptures do not emblemize a shared feature of his clan, they do function totemically in that they identify the artist as a member of a particular group.

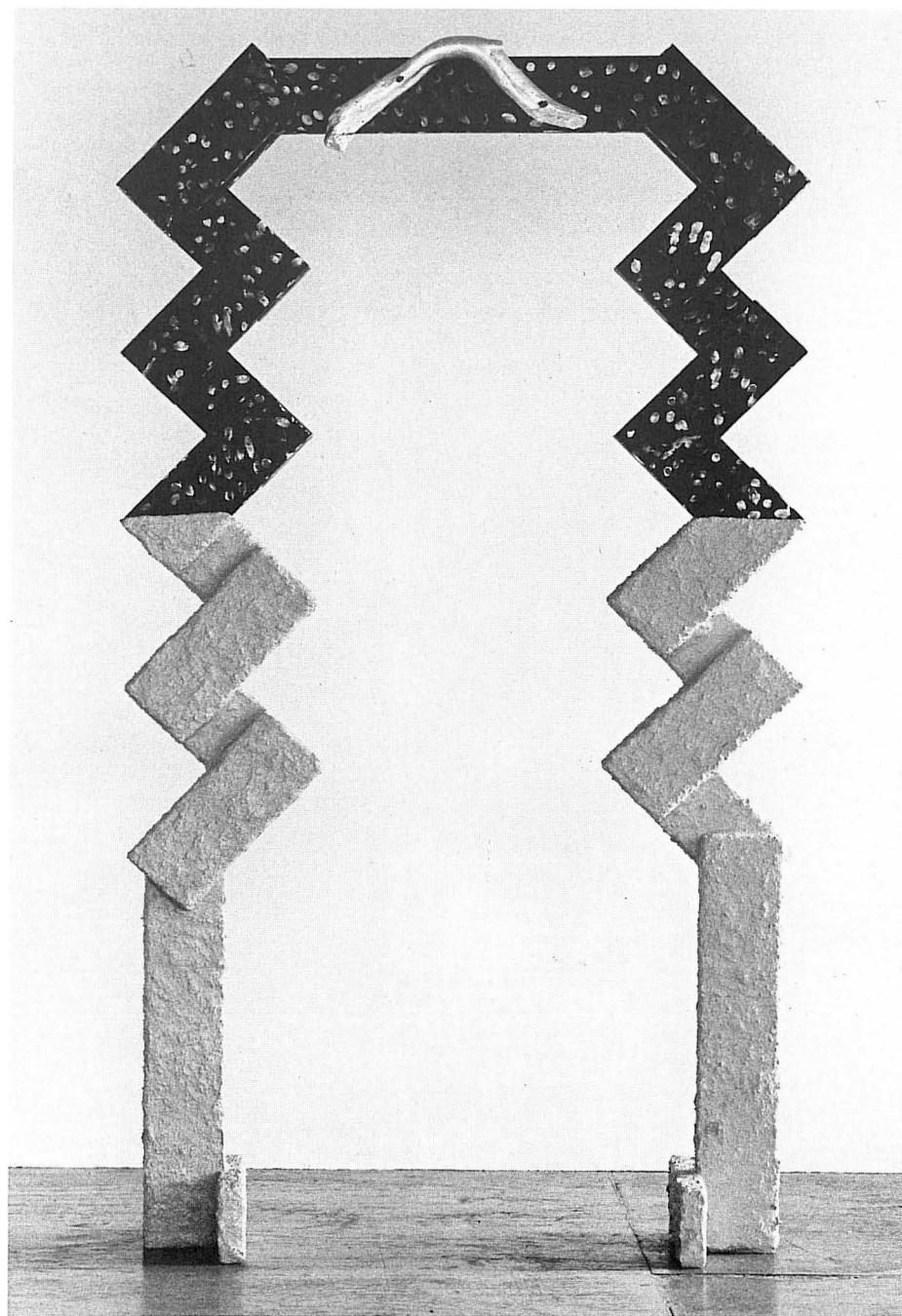
It is not so surprising then that Smith's most recent group of sculptures resemble totem poles in form as well as function. They are constructed from pieces of wood nailed together in diagonals which form zigzags. As they climb toward the ceiling, bright color breaks their tall, flat forms into zones. If the previous work linked Smith to a personal clan, these newer works connect him with other artists as if they too were a clan. He cites as the impetus for this series Brancusi's *Endless Column*. It is a tribute to and a dialogue with an art-historical personage. At the same time, Smith approached color in these pieces in the manner and spirit by which he imagined a primitive artist would select and apply paint—directly and unselfconsciously. He painted all the decoration of dots and "Xs" with his fingers in order to avoid preciousness. Sometimes the decoration is meant to reveal the construction of the piece. Blotches of red and silver paint are applied directly over the nails which join the pieces of wood. The edges of the wood are brightly colored to show the roughness of their cut.

This method calls to mind the primitive technique of "X-ray" painting by which the artist depicts the skeleton and internal organs of an animal, simultaneously rendering its external form. In addition, Smith never makes any attempt to disguise the process of making. Thus, paint is heavily impastoed, so that we see each stroke and get a strong impression of how the wet paint felt.

The emphasis on exposing the process of construction in these works broadens their meaning. Not only are the pieces made, they are about the process of making. They are referential and literal like totem poles, which for their maker, not only represent sacred beings but are sacred beings. In this context, the formal elements of the works take on unusual significance. Manipulation of color, shape, and decoration work to establish a piece's totemic identity. Upward and downward movement in this series is controlled by color. In one piece, black arrests the rising movement of light blue by sitting above it. The weight or dynamism of a color—not its harmony with other colors—is vital to the work's cohesion. Yet, the sections of color interact in a lively, occasionally garish way.

Each work suggests a particular quality of vertical movement which is animated by the color—one stretches straight up, one meanders toward the ceiling, another presses up against the weight of a black zone. The use of color in the decoration balances and unifies adjoining portions. It seems as though

Fred Smith, *Untitled*, 1978
acrylic on wood, 90 x 48 x 15"





Smith let the color become intoxicated with itself. Color likewise modifies the perceived scale of these sculptures. By breaking up the height of these sculptures, color helps bring them into human scale. The seven and a half foot tall archway invites and easily accommodates passage through it. The works never overwhelm the viewer.

Although Fred Smith admires artists of various primitive cultures, he does not imitate them. He seeks to incorporate their reverence and daring into his own approach. This process guides the maker toward placing his work within a tradition of direct and exuberant art.

Susan Logan

Fred Smith
Installation view, 1978
acrylic on wood

How has your work been affected by being in New York?

The great blues artist, Jimmy Reed, said in one of his songs, "I'm goin' to New York. I'm goin' to New York. I'm goin' if I have to walk." I began to paint after moving to New York. The city has been the chief source of my education and development as an artist. It provides a community of artists, a concentration of culture, and an unparalleled variety and intensity of experience. In short, everything good and bad. I try as much as possible to translate this into my work.

Have you consciously chosen not to exhibit your work previously? If so, why?

Yes, because I felt my work would not be adequately or appropriately represented.

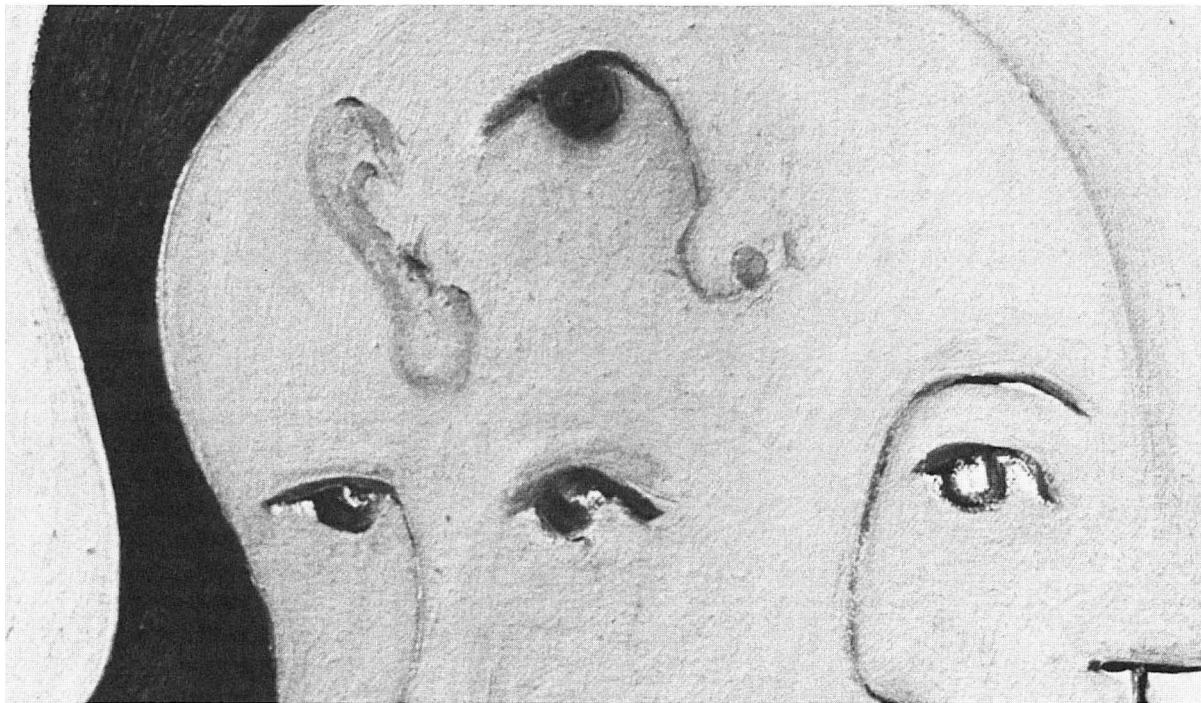
How do you see your work in relation to other contemporary artists?

In group exhibitions.

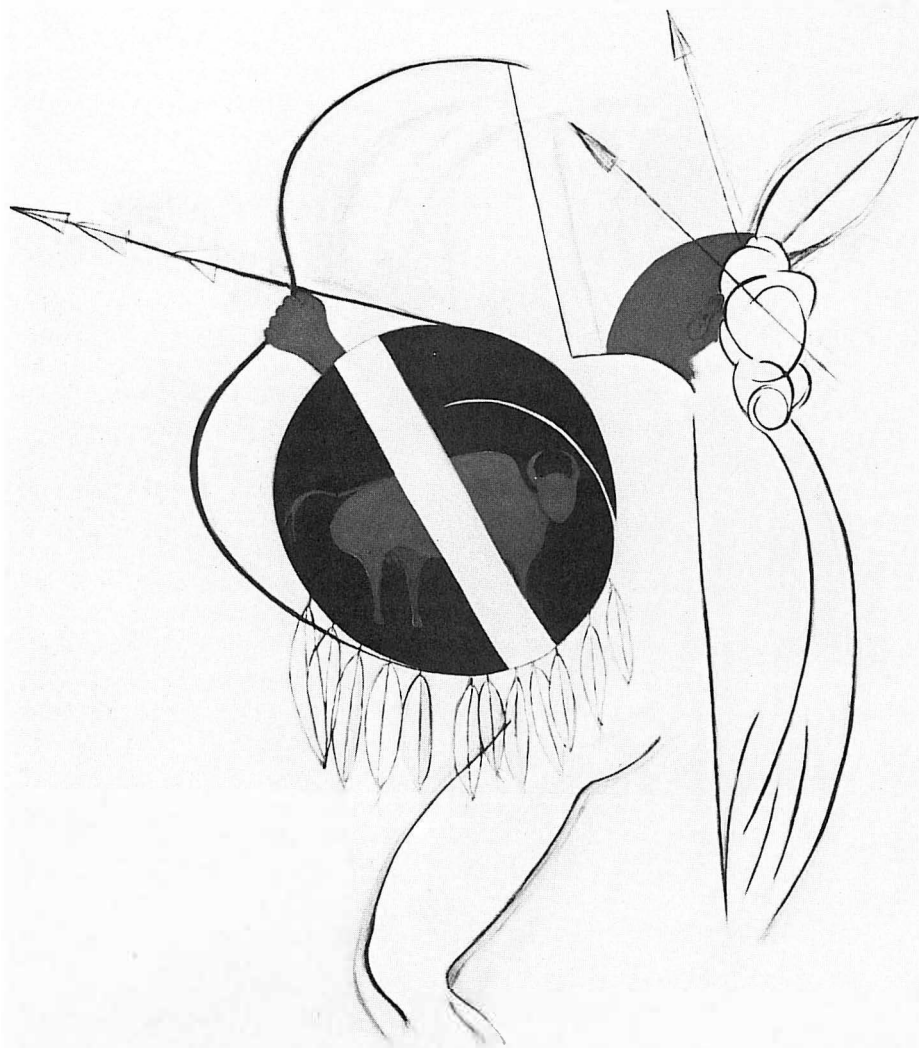
Jeff Way



Jeff Way, *Outerspace Person* (detail), 1978, oil on canvas, 14 x 10" (not included in exhibition)



Jeff Way
Mandan (For George Catlin), 1977
 oil on canvas
 120 x 90"



Art history texts tend to portray individual artists in terms of their "styles." Changes in style—or in attitude, emphasis, or direction—are not readily acknowledged if they run counter to the existing vocabulary designed to clarify art's issues. For conceptual clarity many artists' multiple pursuits have been generalized into one chapter heading.* While positive in intent, much art writing, instead of providing a framework for viewing art, has reversed direction and fought, rather than complemented, the art it has addressed. Jeff Way, who in graduate school turned from studying art history to making art, cannot be identified by a specific style or artistic pursuit since he incorporates so many different styles in his work. He does not impose limitations on his pursuits since, for him, art making and "exploration" are synonymous, both being open-ended. Way's work is a survey of art styles and pursuits.

The most striking feature of Way's work is the multiplicity of his approaches to art. For Way, art is an investigation of *whatever* interests him. To this end he paints, draws, makes masks and color Xerox images, keeps journals (both visual and written), and does performances. His production is vast. *Chief with Cherries*, a project which had its genesis in 1971 and is still being pursued, began with a

*Thus, James Abbott McNeill Whistler is not considered an artist who etched river views of London and Venice, who painted still life compositions employing people as plastic elements (arrangements), and who also painted atmospheric, expressionistic night scenes (symphonies); rather, Whistler was, according to art historical documents, a proponent of art for art's sake (*l'art pour l'art*).

photograph of White Bull (a Cheyenne medicine man) and the disjunctive collaging of photographs of cherries around the figure. The variety of techniques he (as well as other artists) has summoned for this project—art styles, parodies, and puns, to mention a few—are as varied as in all of Way's ventures.*

His images—usually representational—frequently serve as vehicles of obsession, as exemplified by *Chief with Cherries*. Likewise, Way's obsession with the image of a whale has undergone a series of transformations—visual, associational, and literal—over the last few years. Way's obsession is not in terms of behavior or of action, but rather in relation to an image, an image which is frequently the result, like the whales in the *Landscape* painting in the present exhibition, of a process similar to a stream of consciousness.

Way's artistic process, like stream of consciousness, is a direct expression of a chain of ideas which are rooted in memory (both personal and historical). His *Book of Snakes*† is a compilation of drawings, definitions, allegories, and personal experiences which revolve around the same visual image. On the basis of its content, one may be misled to read *Book of Snakes* as a diary. Yet, unlike a diary, which is a linear record or chronology of events, emotions, and impressions, this book does not address itself to the temporal dimension. Memory, which does not

**Chief with Cherries* reflects the democratic nature of Way's work. Many different people (some of whom are artists) have participated in this project.

†*Book of Snakes* was begun by Don Sunseri in 1973. As in *Chief with Cherries*, other artists have contributed stories and images.

function in a linear manner, is, in the artist's estimation, "larger than mind."*

For the most part, Way's images are literal. He enters taboo realms by depicting visually and psychologically charged images. Since his images—whales, har-

*Unless otherwise noted, all statements made in conversation with the author in March, 1978.

monicas, feet, for example—connote many associations for the viewer, they lend themselves to being interpreted as symbolizing something specific. Yet, unlike visual symbols, which are codified representations of objects, emotions, and states of being, Way's images are not metaphoric. For example, a 1975 drawing consists of a man and a woman

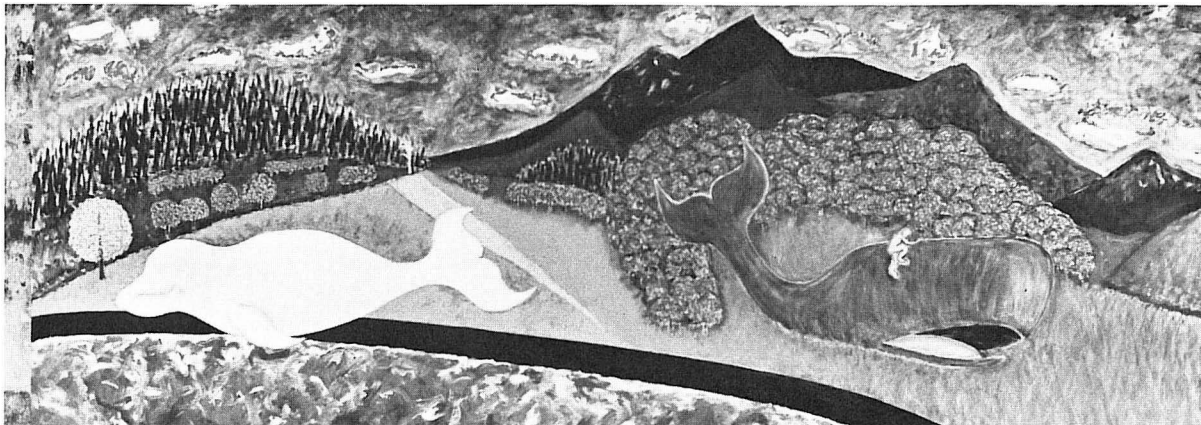
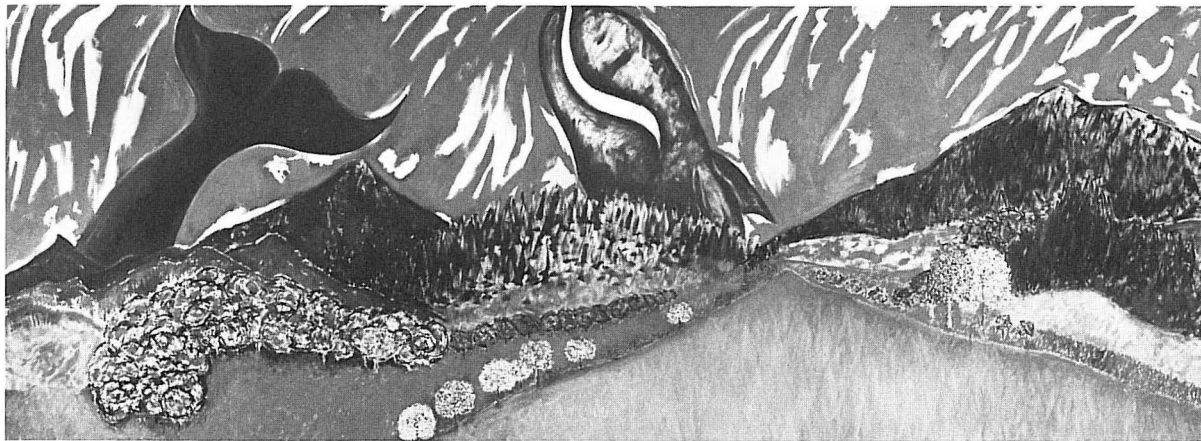
depicted from the waist down, both nude, with pairs of eyes located slightly above where their hip bones should be. This vivid image was inspired by a comment made by the instructor of a dance class the artist was participating in. "She said to move your body as if you had eyes over here (pointing to the aforementioned area)." Surrounding the figures in the

drawing are written the following thoughts prompted by the experience and its image:

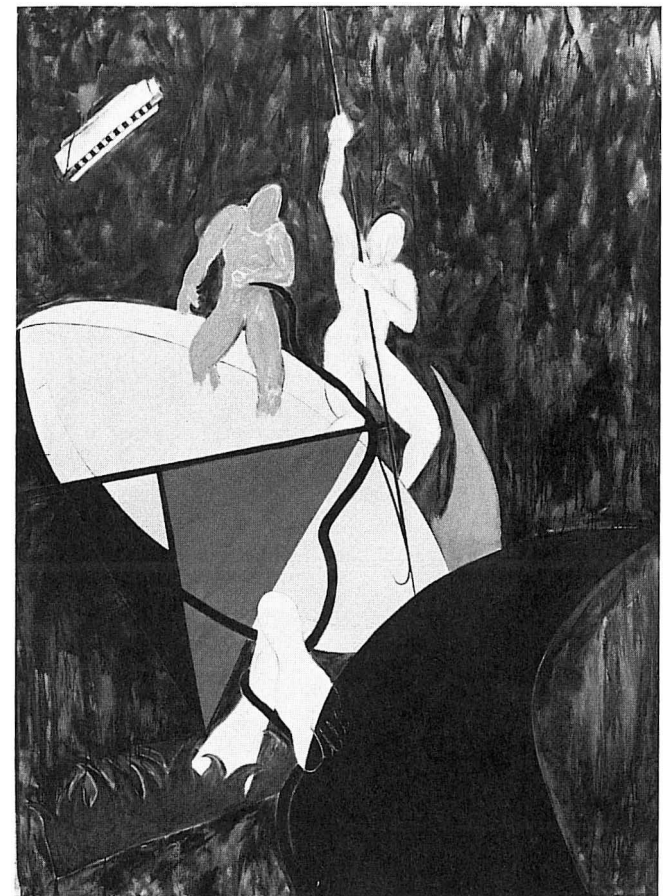
What year is it
What day is it
How when where did it begin
How when where did it end
Why did it happen
What do I mean

Top: Jeff Way, *Landscape*, 1977, oil on canvas, 72 x 192" (not included in exhibition)

Bottom: Jeff Way, *Landscape*, 1978, oil on canvas, 72 x 192"



Jeff Way, *Watson's Blues (For J. Singleton Copley)*, 1977
oil on canvas, 102 x 72"



Do you do it by yourself
 How do you do it by yourself
 How do you know where you are
 Are you an independent person
 Are you a dependent person
 What is your favorite fruit
 What is the secret of your success
 sexcess

These illustrate Way's chief aim in making art—self discovery. Questions of location (physical and temporal), circumstance, procedure, preference, and so on involve a process of examination which does not result in magical answers, but leads to further questioning. Answers do not interest Way, because they imply reaching a goal or an end, which, once achieved, demands reorientation or setting out on a new pursuit. But inquiries not directed toward an aim more specific than that of examination *per se* result in freedom to do, according to Way, “whatever I feel like doing, whether it leads to anything or not.”

For Way, attaining this freedom has meant the negation of notions of good taste. This occurred with a group of 1975 paintings, including *The Cosmic Echo* and *The Four Winds* (four panels), each consisting of silhouetted human buttocks and a group of concentric wavy circles emanating from the center of the image. Of these works Way recalls: “when I painted a fart I realized I could paint anything.” Through his pictorialization of the vulgar, tasteless, and taboo, Way denied subjective taste as a restriction by negating its existence. Since his “Fart Paintings,” which marked an abandonment of self-imposed limitation, Way has not so much depicted offensive images as he has unified disparate pictorial

elements in jarring juxtapositions, which employ aspects of humor, pun, and parody.

The proliferation of style encountered in Way's two *Landscape* paintings (one in the present exhibition) eclectically incorporates many painting techniques or styles developed during the Modernist period. In the red-skied *Landscape* Way uses an impressionist style for the grassy area on the right, an abstract expressionist style for the evergreen trees behind and to the left of the grass, a post-impressionist style (recalling Marsden Hartley's early landscapes of Maine) for the mountain on the right, to name a few. In his rendering of the sky he makes a parodic coupling of analytic cubism and a romanticist vision,* with the result that clouds in a sky appear visually as fire. Way's fiery zone, while appearing to recede beyond the foreground landscape, has been solidified so that fire, which usually reads as orange and yellow mixed together, has been analytically dissected, forcing the viewer to see the traditionally unmeasurable depths of fire as the product of orange and yellow whose strength derives not from a romantic interpretation of awesome nature, but from the energy of Way's paint application. Way's interest in a tension between paint technique, the literal space the paint occupies, and the illusionistic space the paint renders is most noticeable in his impressionistic grass and his abstract expressionistic

*For a further discussion of Romanticism see Robert Rosenblum's *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko*, (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1975.)

evergreens. The grassy area both reads as a sharp spatial recession drawing the viewer into the landscape and as a flat area echoing the mountains behind it. Evergreens are depicted here in a highly painterly style which undermines their traditional symbolism of stability.

Fantasy, a dominant element in all of Way's work, is manifest in these *Landscapes*. The bizarre juxtaposition of whales—rising from the unknown depths in one, bathing in the sun in the other—with a pastoral Vermont landscape bemuses the viewer. For Way, fantasy is a means of exploring and expressing himself, specifically, of revealing personal dreams, wishes, and experiences with the artist operating *incognito*. Thus we find Way wearing masks, or incorporating the image of his own face with that of Kurt Schwitters in such a manner that personality and identification are obliterated, leaving only a disengaged and reassembled group of facial parts. Likewise, the figure straddling the blue whale in the blue-skied *Landscape* is just a silhouette. By focusing on the self in disguise and by using art as a means for exploration, Way has created paintings which incorporate many different elements in a non-narrative structure emphasizing the relationship between forms as plastic elements, rather than as vehicles for a story.

Way commands the expressive powers of color by loading his palette with vibrant and highly charged hues. His paintings' vitality derives not only from the strength of his images, but also from the intensity of his colors.

Ultimately, Way's works question how style functions. Since he cannot be

identified by a specific painting technique and since he pursues a multiplicity of approaches, he undermines the traditional function of style (or sensibility) as a means of identification; he redefines it, for himself, in the form of eclecticism. Finding singular pursuits “too limiting,” Way is left free to pursue “whatever [he] feels like doing, whether it leads to anything or not.”

Allan Schwartzman

BIOGRAPHIES

SUSAN DALLAS

Born in Nashville, Tennessee, 1943. Educated at North Texas State University (BS 1968) and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois. Moved to New York City in 1976.

Selected Exhibitions

Solo Exhibitions

- 1978 "Light Projections," The Store, 3 Mercer Street, New York City
- 1976 "Susan Dallas, Installation," Evanston Art Center, Evanston, Illinois

Group Exhibitions

- 1977 "Proposals for Lake Sculptures," Weighardt Gallery, Evanston Art Center, Evanston, Illinois.
- 1976 "Installations," Joseloff Gallery, Hartford Art School, University of Hartford, Hartford, Connecticut
- "Critic's Choice," Gallery 1134,



Chicago, Illinois

"Modules, Shapes, and Grids," Northwestern University, School of Education, Evanston, Illinois

"Abstract Art in Chicago," Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Illinois

- 1975 "Illinois Artists '76, A Bicentennial Invitation," Illinois State University Center for the Visual Arts Gallery, Normal, Illinois (Traveled to Illinois State Museum, Springfield, Illinois, and Lakeview Center for Arts and Sciences, Peoria, Illinois)

"First Midwest Group Show," John Doyle Gallery, Chicago, Illinois

"Chicago Festival of the Arts," Chicago Civic Center, Chicago, Illinois

LYNNE ELTON

Born in London, England, 1948. Educated at University College, London University (1966-68), London Film School (Diploma 1970), and The Courtauld Institute of Art, London University (1972-73). Moved to New



York City in 1976.

Selected Exhibitions

Solo Exhibitions

- 1974 The Courtauld Institute of Art, London, England

Group Exhibitions

- 1976 "Summer Show 5," Serpentine Gallery, London, England

STEVE KEISTER

Born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1949. Educated at Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Rome, Italy (BFA 1970). Moved to New York City in 1973.

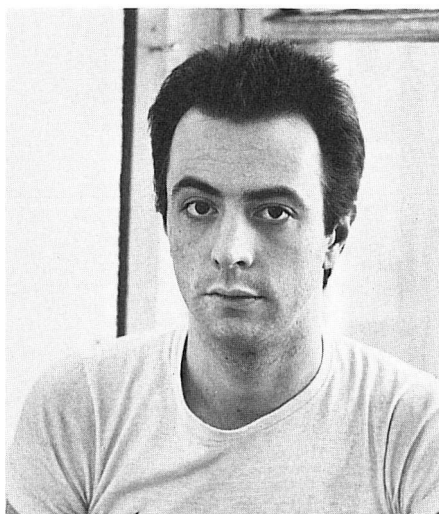
Selected Exhibitions

Solo Exhibitions

- 1977 Nancy Lurie Gallery, Chicago, Illinois

Group Exhibitions

- 1978 "Special Projects," P.S. 1, Queens,



New York City

"Third Group Show," \$100 Gallery, New York City

- 1977 "Review and Preview," Nancy Lurie Gallery, Chicago, Illinois

"New Abstract Objects," Hallwalls Gallery, Buffalo, New York

- 1972 MFA Exhibition, Tyler School of Art, Rome, Italy

DAVID MIDDAUGH

Born in Dickeyville, Wisconsin, 1954. Educated at The Art Institute of Chicago (BFA 1977). Moved to New York City in 1977.

Selected Exhibitions

Group Exhibitions

- 1977 "Fellowship Exhibition," The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois
- 1975 "Chicago and Vicinity," The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois



FRED SMITH

Born in Rochester, New York, 1937.
Educated at The Art Institute of Chicago
(BFA 1965) and San Francisco State College
(MA 1968). Moved to New York City in 1970.

Selected Exhibitions

Group Exhibitions

1978 "Private Myths," The Queens Museum,
Flushing, New York

JEFF WAY

Born in Waverly, Ohio, 1942. Educated at
Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio (BA 1964)
and New York University, New York City
(MA 1968). Moved to New York City in 1964.

Selected Exhibitions

Solo Exhibitions

1977 Franklin Furnace, New York City
The Artist's Studio, Walker Street,
New York City
1976 The Artist's Studio, Walker Street,

New York City

"Chief with Cherries," Ohio State
University, Columbus, Ohio

1975 "Chief with Cherries," Ohio Wesleyan
University, Delaware, Ohio

1974 "Chief with Cherries," Whitney
Museum of American Art,
New York City

The Artist's Studio, Leonard Street,
New York City

1973 Jacobs Ladder Gallery, Washington,
D.C.

1972 The Artist's Studio, Leonard Street,
New York City

1968 Contemporary Arts Gallery, Loeb
Student Center, New York University,
New York City

Group Exhibitions

1978 "Contemporary Masks," 55 Mercer
Street, New York City

"Artists Books," Traveling Exhibition,
Independent Curators, Inc., New York
and Washington, D.C.

1977 "New Works/New York," Traveling
Exhibition, North Dakota, Independent

Curators, Inc., New York and
Washington, D.C.

Marion Locks Gallery, Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania

Carl Solway Gallery, New York City

"Collection of Milton Brutton and
Helen Herrick," Moore College of Art,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Artists Space, New York City

1976 "24 x 24," Sarah Lawrence College,
Bronxville, New York

1975 "Collection of Milton Brutton and
Helen Herrick," The Clocktower, The
Institute for Art and Urban Resources,
New York City

1974 Willard Gallery, New York City

1973 Nancy Hoffman Gallery, New
York City

"Biennial of Contemporary American
Art," Whitney Museum of American
Art, New York City

Parker Street 470, Boston,
Massachusetts

1972 French and Company, New York City
"Paintings on Paper," The Aldrich
Museum of Contemporary Art,
Ridgefield, Connecticut

"Works on Paper," Bard College,
Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

Jacobs Ladder Gallery, New York City

1971 "Lyrical Abstraction," Whitney
Museum of American Art, New
York City

"Beaux Arts Exhibition," Columbus
Gallery of Fine Arts, Columbus, Ohio

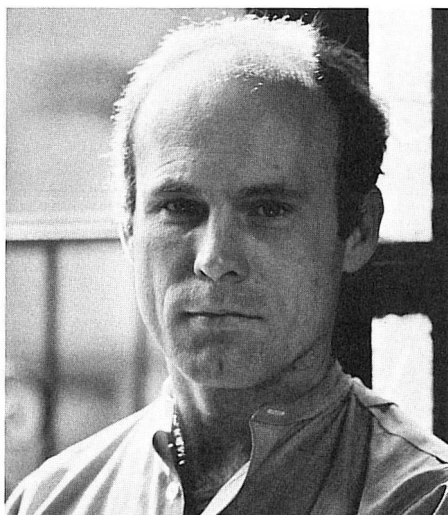
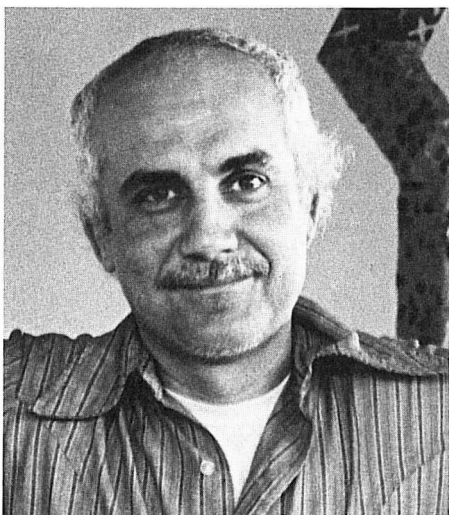
1970 American Federation of the Arts,
Traveling Exhibition

Kornblee Gallery, New York City

"Lyrical Abstraction," The Aldrich
Museum of Contemporary Art,
Ridgefield, Connecticut

1968 The Museum of Modern Art,
Penthouse, New York City

1967 Park Place Gallery, New York City



WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

All dimensions are in inches, height
preceeding width and depth.

SUSAN DALLAS

Light Projections, 1978
Light apparatus and lenses
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist

LYNNE ELTON

Untitled, 1977
Acrylic and sand on wood
3/4 x 96
Courtesy of the artist

Untitled, 1978
Bronze compound and sand on wood
2 x 6
Courtesy of the artist

Untitled, 1978
Acrylic, sand, and bronze powder on wood
9-1/2 x 6
Courtesy of the artist

Untitled, 1978
Bronze compound and sand on wood
7 x 7-1/4
Courtesy of the artist

STEVE KEISTER

Untitled, 1977
Acrylic on wood
5-1/2 x 4-1/2 x 3
Courtesy of the artist

Untitled, 1977
Acrylic on wood
6-1/2 x 1-1/2 x 1-1/2
Courtesy of the artist

Untitled, 1977
Acrylic on wood
3-1/2 x 3-1/2 x 1-1/4
Private collection, New York City

V', 1977
Acrylic on wood
Dimensions variable (approx. 96 x 120 x 102)
Courtesy of the artist

Cool Spectrum, 1978
Acrylic on wood
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist

5 Reds, 1978
Acrylic on wood
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist

DAVID MIDDAGH

Untitled, 1975-1976
Colored pencil on paper

Strips 1, 2, 3
Each 29 x 6
Courtesy of the artist

Strips 26, 29
Each 29 x 6
Private collection, New York City

Strips 31, 32
Each 29 x 6
Courtesy of the artist

Strip 50
29 x 6
Private collection, New York City

Strips 51, 52
Each 29 x 6
Courtesy of the artist

Fluff, Fly, and the Birdman, 1977-1978
Colored pencil on paper
Strips 1-17
30 x 103 overall, each strip 29 x 5
Courtesy of the artist

FRED SMITH

Untitled, 1978
Acrylic on wood
114 x 18 x 18
Courtesy of the artist

Untitled, 1978
Acrylic on wood
114 x 18 x 18
Courtesy of the artist

Untitled, 1978
Acrylic on wood
114 x 18 x 18
Courtesy of the artist

Untitled, 1978
Acrylic on wood
114 x 18 x 18
Courtesy of the artist

Untitled, 1978
Acrylic on wood
90 x 48 x 15
Courtesy of the artist

JEFF WAY

Mandan (For George Catlin), 1977
Oil on canvas
120 x 90
Courtesy of the artist

Watson's Blues (For J. Singleton Copley),
1977
Oil on canvas
102 x 72
Courtesy of the artist

Landscape, 1978
Oil on canvas
72 x 192
Courtesy of the artist

PERFORMANCES

SUSAN DALLAS

Light is a Burning of Some Substance
Performance of luminous movements
Length: approximately 30 minutes
Date and time to be announced

JEFF WAY

Yamayaway
Performance with masks, movement and
sound
Length: approximately 30 minutes
Date and time to be announced

THE NEW MUSEUM

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