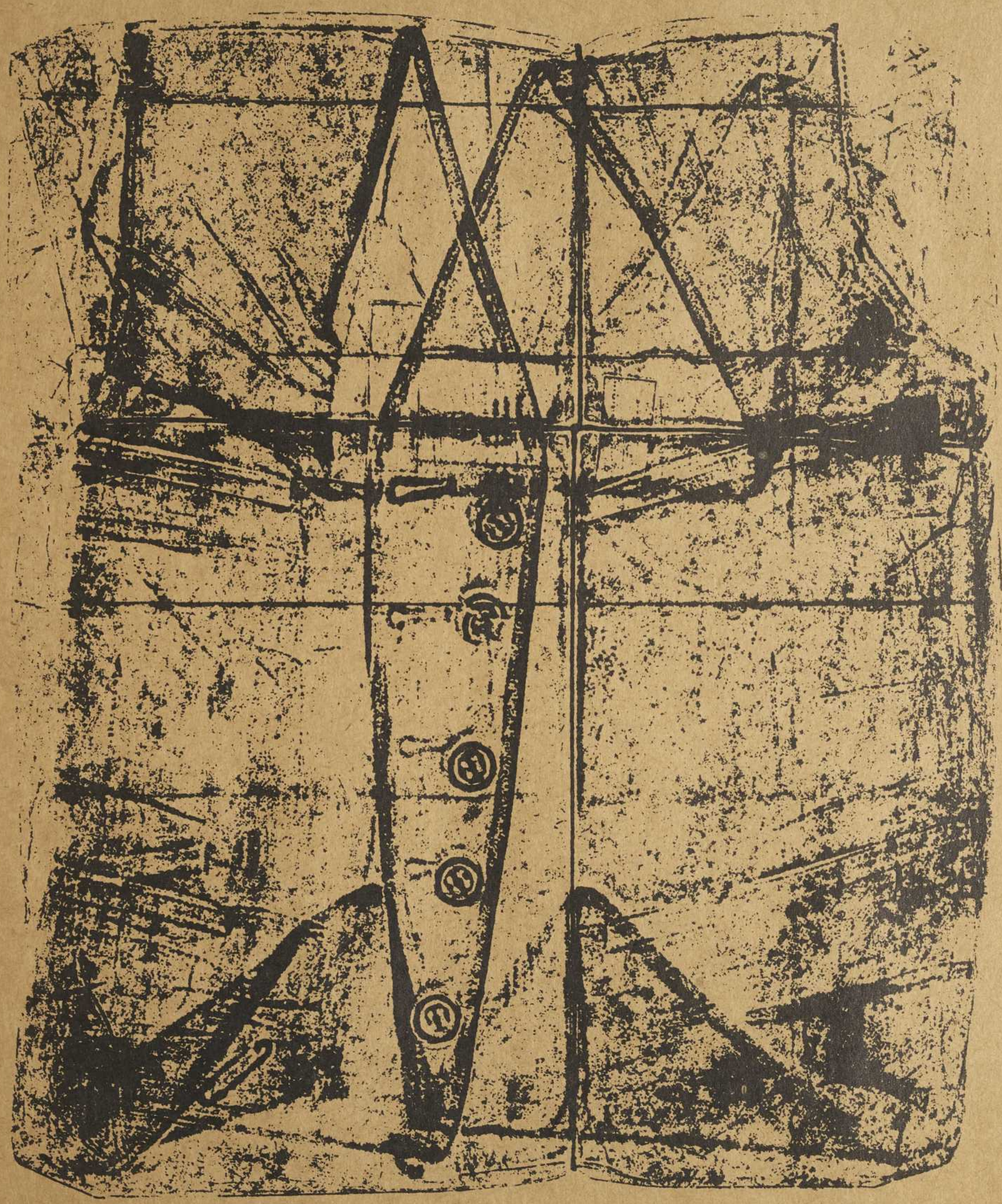


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couverture

BETTY GOODWIN

Parcelled vest # 2, etching/gravure,
21" x 27", 1972.

janvier, février, mars 1976

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L'existence de PARACHUTE ne tient qu'à un fil. Financièrement, la revue ne bénéficie à l'heure actuelle d'aucune subvention gouvernementale. Elle dépend uniquement d'une bourse personnelle d'un de ses membres, de la publicité et du support financier de ses abonnés. Il faut signaler d'autre part que toute l'équipe et ses collaborateurs travaillent bénévolement.

Devant l'absence d'une revue consacrée uniquement à l'art contemporain québécois et canadien, devant l'indifférence et l'isolement général dans lequel se trouvent les créateurs ici, il nous apparaît vital d'assurer la pérennité de cette revue.

Nous croyons que pour arriver à briser cet isolement et cette indifférence, il faut, comme nous le mentionnions déjà dans l'éditorial du premier numéro: "... permettre aux artistes, aux critiques, aux administrateurs d'art d'intervenir directement dans nos pages en leur accordant entière liberté afin de permettre à ces collaborateurs de faire le point sur les problèmes pertinents à l'art d'aujourd'hui...". Cet outil maintenant existe. Cependant, l'équipe de PARACHUTE constate avec étonnement que jusqu'ici seul le milieu anglophone a collaboré spontanément à la revue. Même si notre situation financière nous le permettait, traduire les textes de ces collaborateurs ne remplacerait pas une collaboration québécoise francophone indispensable.

PARACHUTE se heurte-t-elle aussi aux craintes et aux angoisses décelées pendant les débats de l'exposition *Québec '75*? Craintes de perdre les biens culturels déjà acquis! Craintes de subir de fortes influences étrangères!

Certains éléments conservateurs de notre milieu ont orienté faussement les débats durant cette exposition, par le biais de conférences, de critiques, en ramenant tout à l'historicité, essayant à tout pris de justifier les démarches des artistes francophones par des références aux pôles marquants de notre histoire de l'art (Borduas, Molinari).

Par contre, pour d'autres éléments de notre milieu, les oeuvres devenaient signifiantes uniquement lorsqu'elles véhiculaient un contenu politique; se référant constamment aux écrits de Borduas, ne revendiquant aucun artiste, présent ou absent de cette exposition, refusant aux oeuvres le métalangage nécessaire à leur compréhension, ils la déclarèrent *vide*.

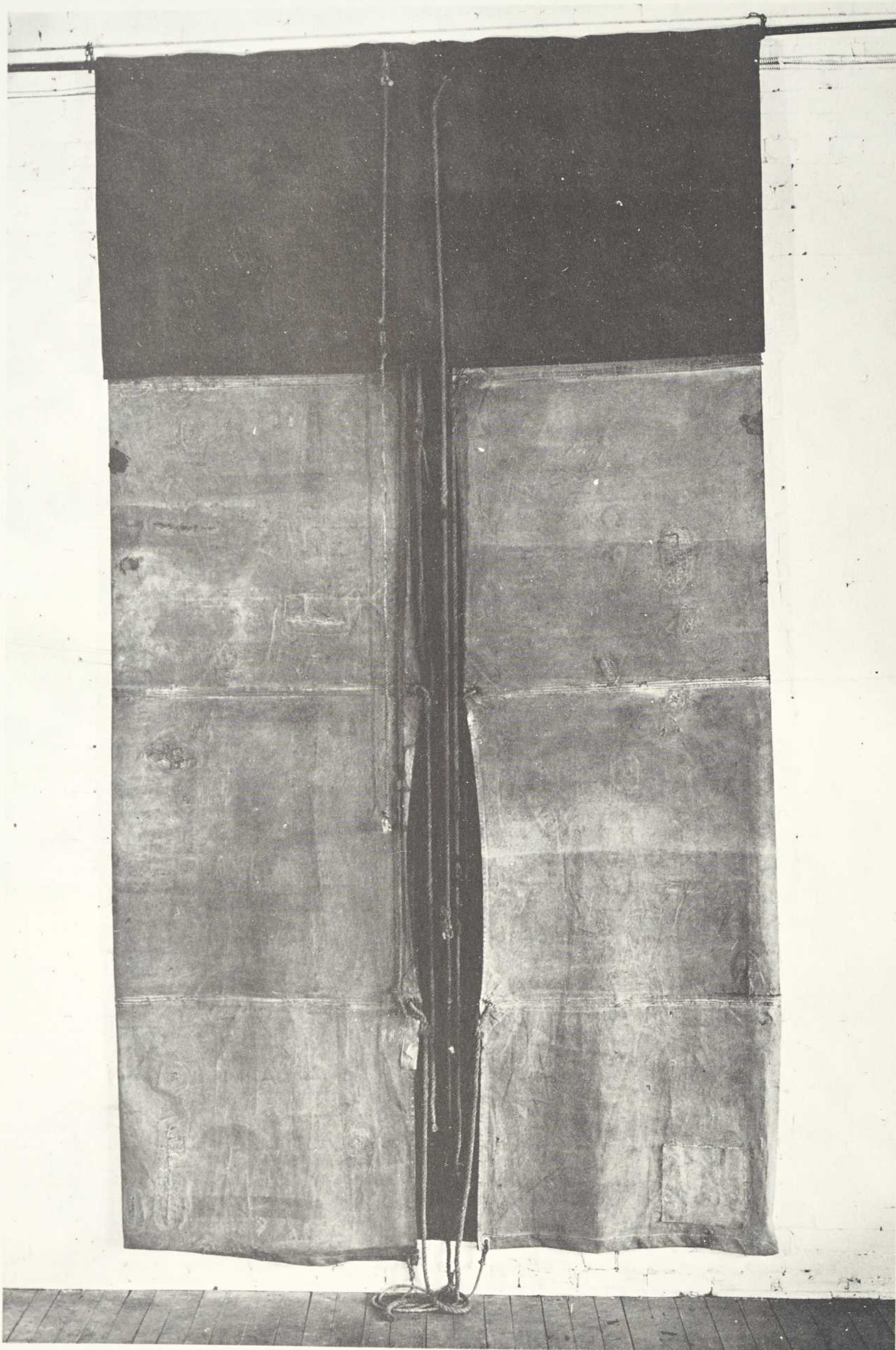
Tout centre d'art dynamique se doit de revendiquer ses ruptures, ses changements. Comme l'affirmait le rapport du Tribunal de la Culture tenu en 1975, pour rassurer ceux qui croient qu'il n'existe plus de culture québécoise, les structures mentales et affectives d'un peuple créent d'autres valeurs et d'autres conduites dont l'ensemble reste différencié.

Pour sa part, l'organisateur de *Québec '75*, Normand Thériault, déclarait dans le catalogue de l'exposition que: "l'art ne se donne soudainement plus comme rôle de témoigner d'une identité culturelle mais plutôt d'affirmer sa propre existence. Montréal cesse alors d'être une capitale provinciale pour devenir une métropole comme les autres." Mais à en juger par la question qui revenait continuellement *Qu'est-ce que l'art québécois?*, Montréal serait une métropole encore aux prises avec un problème régionaliste. Le malaise et la déception ressentis par les artistes sont engendrés par un milieu trop étroit, trop souvent chauvin, peu diversifié, limité économiquement. Mais ils sont aussi engendrés par la complète indifférence dans laquelle leurs oeuvres se retrouvent, par leur incapacité de pouvoir influencer le cours de l'histoire de l'art (problème régionaliste).

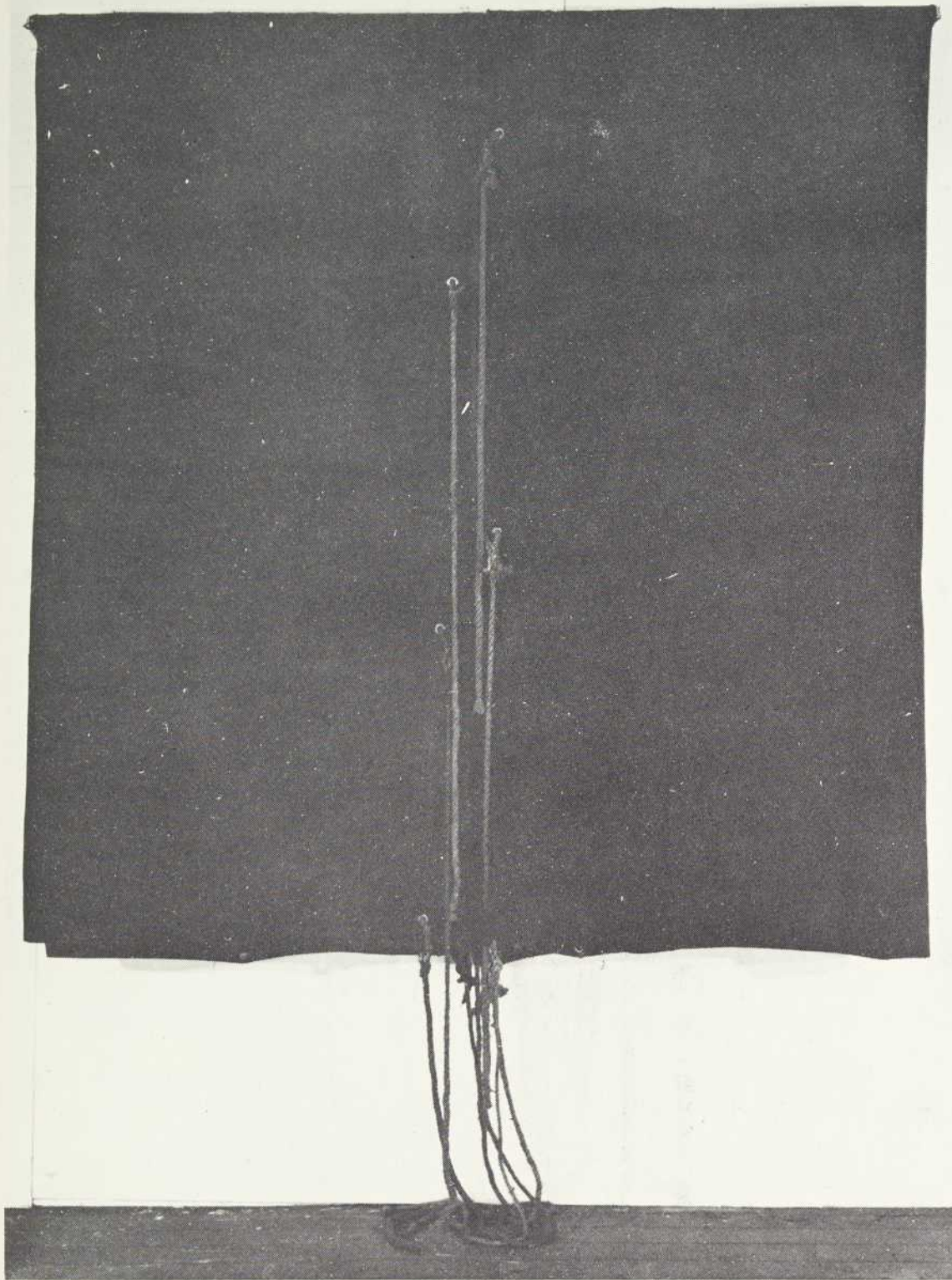
L'art québécois, dans ses instances dynamiques, sera toujours appelé à valoriser ce qui dans le moment présent est le plus révélateur de sa quête créatrice.

Fini l'assassinat massif du présent et du futur à coups redoublés du passé. (Borduas)

BETTY GOODWIN



Tarpaulin 4, 1975, 13' x 7', gesso, oil, rope and wire.



Tarpaulin 5, 1975, oil and rope, 10' x 8'.



Tarpaulin 2, 1974-75, 7' 1" x 8' 2", gesso, pencil and rope.

One of the most stubbornly upheld shibboleths in esthetics is the existence of two fundamentally different arts. Kant described the duality between the external senses which would be particularly receptive to spatial experience (the "fine" arts) and the internal sense that responds to a linear, rhythmic flow of stimulus, to the sense of time that is the primary structure of literature, music and film.

Neat as it is, the duality is too confining an approach to a large sector of contemporary painting, to those works where the artist's presence in the form of gesture or process is an organic part of the work's content.

In the case of Betty Goodwin's art, the duality is even less relevant than usual. Not only is Goodwin's fundamental theme time - time's passage as perceived by its effect on material and memory, on physical and psychic tissue - her objects constitute mnemonic narratives whose content is almost wholly free of spatial considerations, except for the inevitable pre-

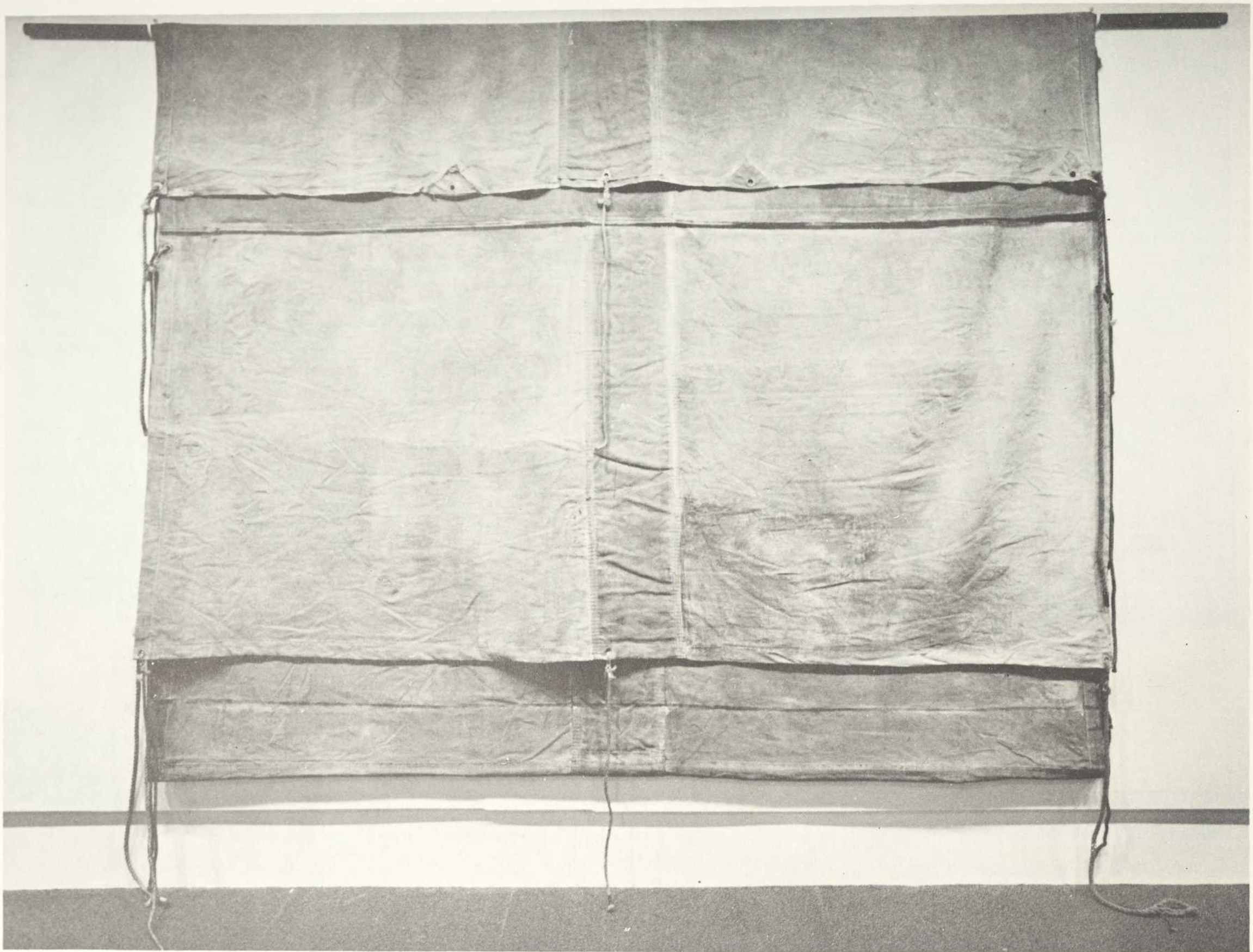
sence of the support which is, in any case, subverted by the art process.

"We exist only by what we possess; we possess only what is really at hand and so many of our memories, and moods, and ideas go away far from us where we lose sight of them. Consequently we cannot add them into the total that is our personality. But they can return to us by secret paths". -Proust

Between 1969 and 1974, the first truly mature phase in her production, Goodwin worked on the Vests series, prints that were made directly from pieces of clothing. This approach to printmaking concentrates on the primacy of the original act and precludes the production of an edition, a useless exercise for this artist for whom the repetition of the essential adventure would only mock the original triumph of wresting a usable, meaningful image from the inert and unliving object. A second or third identical copy would be, at best, a stagy retelling of the drama: reheated emotion.

For Goodwin, the vests "are covering, skin enclosure". They are moulds and casts at the same time, fragments that bear within them their wearer's presence. From them the artist extracts through a process of sculptural and graphic manipulation, as much of these presences as the objects are willing to yield, which is by no means all. Memory is, after all, a mere fabrication of the mind, the "clearest" memory being the one that is the most esthetically plausible within the frame of the present. But there is always enough in each print to furnish the imagination with a sufficient number of clues to a common past, enough to kindle both desire and regret: the two requisite components of the Romantic experience.

"Not only do we fail to grasp at once really rare works of art, but even within each of those works we first notice the least valuable parts. Unlike life, those great masterpieces do not disappoint us by giving us their best first". -Proust



Tarpaulin 3, 1975, 9' 9" x 7' 8", gesso, crayon and rope.

With the recent Tarpaulin pieces - there are seven to date - the scale expands and so does the reading time both in historical and psychological terms. Historically, the least time-consuming part is the detour we must make around the immediate association these loose-hanging objects evoke with the painting-objects of the Support/Surface movement. Goodwin's historical ancestors are elsewhere, not in readily identifiable individuals, but in a Symbolist hybrid of Proust and Cornell, Wallace Stevens and Mallarmé.

These works begin with old tarpaulins which already contain a number of narratives of their past: seams, wrinkles, blots, discolorations, grommets, hand-sewn repair tears. "They retain their own history", says the artist, "to which I add my own history". The additive process includes the folding and refolding of the material, a gestural activity that can take weeks or months to complete and whose signs remain visible. There are slight structural alterations as well, seams tightened to alter curves, bits of rope added; the creative process by which the mind fabricates memories tailor-made to fit the needs of the present is reproduced and objectified.

The material is then impregnated with thin washes of gesso, an embalming process which preserves and highlights the visual anecdotes already in the canvas - no other incident is added. The results are keepsakes, effigies of time lived, compelling narratives that in successive readings recount the most meaningful adventure artist and spectator can embark on: the preservation of time, the search for that tiny part of the past that can be retained. ■

Georges Bogardi

Joan's Apple Turnover, first exhibited at the Carmen Lamanna Gallery in 1970, is in many ways Royden Rabinowitch's earliest major effort as a serious and mature sculptor. It represents the first time that the artist had successfully integrated an original conic permutation with a wholly satisfying and self-contained sculptural form. To fully experience this work in time is to bear witness to the gradual unfolding of a powerful and inseparable conjunction between a geometric concept with its physical manifestation in formed steel. While our initial impression of the brightly enameled *Turnover* is that of a wholly compact material object with a distinct gestalt all its own, we soon become aware of the smooth and inevitable transition from one clearly defined section to another. However, it is not long before we begin to suspect that its contours which expand and contract and expand again in an inspired sweeping horizontal arc inches above the floor are not there merely to elicit a pleasing visual sensation from the viewer but are there primarily to display the various discrete instances of a single ideal geometric concept of some sort. It is at this juncture in our viewing of the work that we see its crisply articulated and dynamic rhythms in terms of just such a principle: a point at the apex of a supine half cone expands to the full diameter of the cone's base and then diminishes to a single point again at the apex of a second, conjoined, half cone. It is now apparent that the success of *Joan's Apple Turnover* rests in its fusion of the mental with the essentially physical - that is to say, an abstract idea, in this case, that of the trajectory described by a point as it is rotated in space, is brought into contact with the imperatives and special exigencies inherent in transforming a

pure idea into a concrete material thing. Rabinowitch achieves this fusion by *completing* this operation of extending a point in space and also simultaneously *closing* the partial volume of the two attached half cones in one and the same act. He rotates the point a full 180° around to the opposite end of the sculpture thereby forming in the process a "fast" semi-circular blade-like edge and an elegantly sloped flying wedge. Thus, what could have been a mere exercise in elementary Euclidean geometry is made into a distinctive, if somewhat ominous, *sculptural* form, one that is emphatically felt by the viewer to be sculpture and not a mathematical model.

The grease cones (1971) are Royden Rabinowitch's last and most complete statement of the conic volume to date. Though a singularly brilliant and audacious invention in itself the grease cone is, in effect, a kind of cul-de-sac, an impasse which necessitates a significant change in the direction of Rabinowitch's art. As Rabinowitch himself has pointed out, while the grease cone seems to provide an especially effective means of presenting an unmodified full conic in an arresting and indeed, a compelling manner, it leaves the issue of volume itself problematic and unresolved. The layers of thick, opaque industrial grease arrest our perception of the interior volume of the grease cone at the level of its outer skin. We simply cannot penetrate beyond it.

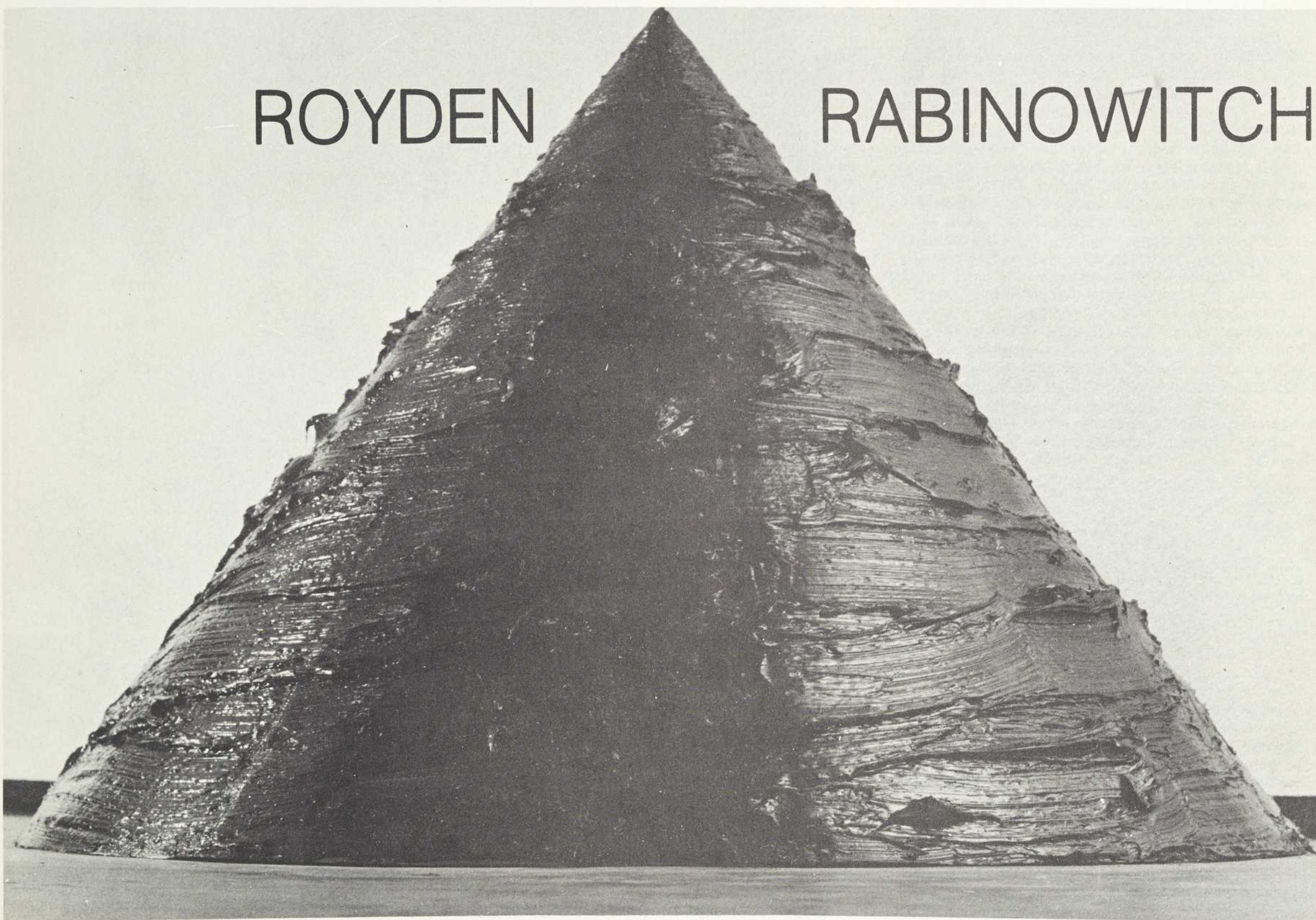
Could it be that, for Rabinowitch, the internal physical areas bounded by the walls of an object had become, in some primitive, deeply felt way, as real for him as an actual physical property of things as

the shell that contained and gave them form and as real as the external surface which rendered them both tactile and visible.

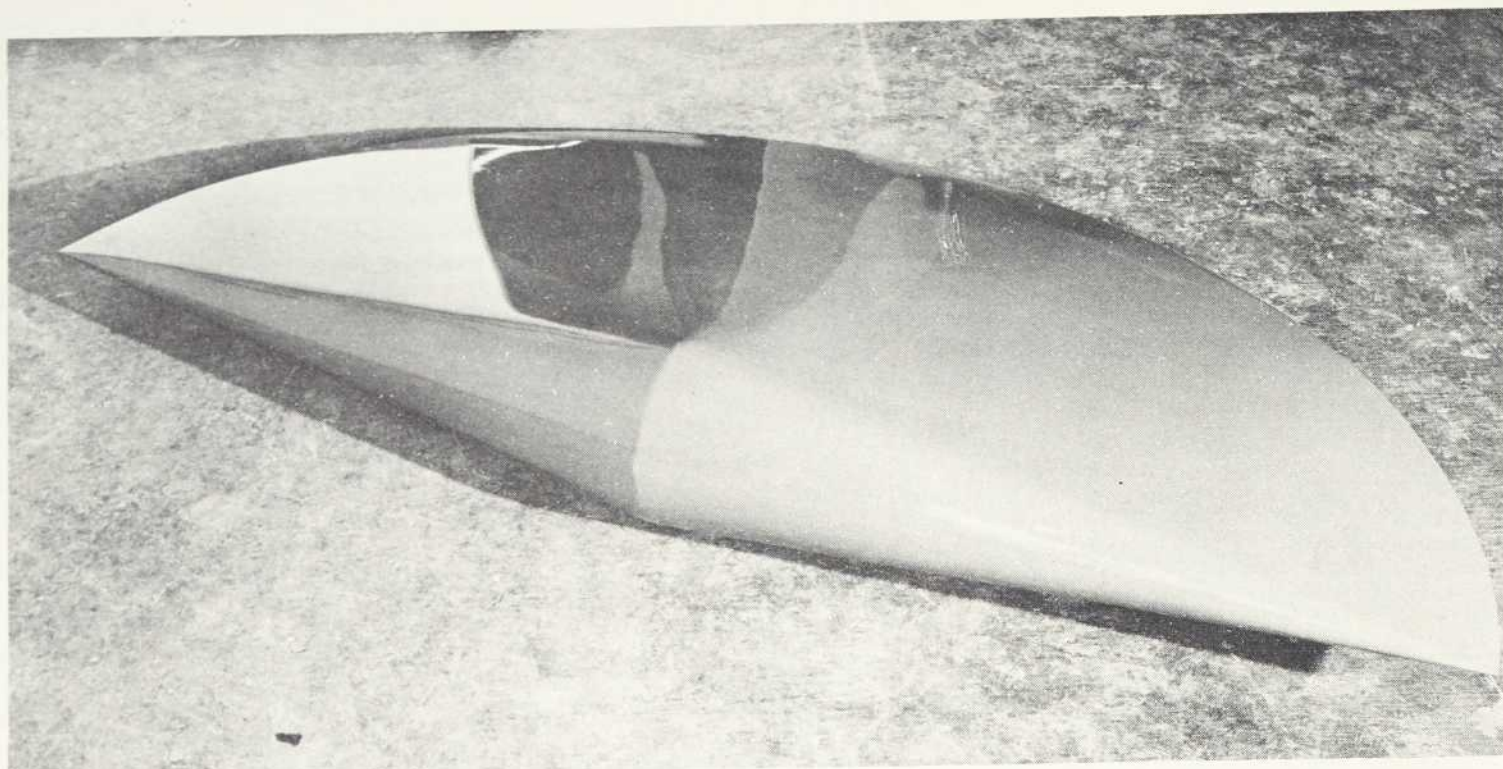
Indeed, it should be pointed out that grease cones as well as the *Turnover* and its predecessors, *Conic Topography* (1968) and *Red Conic* (1969), articulate a conception of volume which is fundamentally classic in character. For all these works are, in their very different ways, attempts to give form and substance to Rabinowitch's intense and private intuition of bound volume in general. That is, in them, especially the *Turnover* and the grease cones, volume seems to be regarded as that aspect of any work of sculpture which gives dimension and body to its shape and surface and hence gives to that sculpture as a whole its full presence in the world. In the *Turnover* volume (i.e., the interior space of an ideal conic form) seems to have been pulled out and extended laterally creating in the process an altogether original form that keeps its essential identity as a conic and at the same time makes possible an entirely new and authentic vision of the conic interior. The grease cones, on the other hand, clearly and dramatically project a deeply profound awareness of the extreme modulation of interior space inherent in the basic conic form. The rapid and inevitable diminution of this internal area from the cone's broad circular base to its tip is controlled by the degree of slope of its sides. The unmistakable sense of "speed" of this closing in of space in any given grease cone seems to have a kind of tactile analogue in the slick, "quick" quality of the grease itself.

ROYDEN

RABINOWITCH



GREASE CONE #1 1970, steel and grease, 65" x 50"



JOAN'S APPLE TURNOVER, 1969, painted steel, 12" x 96" x 54".

This rather perverse negative physical property known as volume and the desire on Rabinowitch's part to invent objects which clearly indicate its parameters and various conditions soon seem to gain an urgency for the artist which very quickly exhausts the possibilities of the conic itself as a suitable container. In fact, in the works that the grease cones for the next three years the cone is abandoned by Rabinowitch in a concerted effort to make a totally unambiguous representation of volume. Rabinowitch takes up a method of construction in these pieces, i.e., tack welding thin plates of cold rolled steel together, which effectively indicates on the surface of the metal the actual condition of the sculpture's interior, namely that it is hollow. No doubt he chose the rectangular box for the standard shape in these works because it is as basic a form as there is and because it is ideal for those works containing several units, such as the hollow/solids (1973) and the volumetric sculptures (1974). As a modular unit the conic would have been altogether too unwieldy - it would have presented Rabinowitch with enormously involved technical problems and at the same time would have resulted in an inordinantly complex structure only diverted attention away from the main issues at hand. While the tack welded boxes may in the end be a bit all too pat and standardized a solution it does allow the sculptor to invent new and, I think, definitive models for situations involving any hollow object and to make concrete and tangible aspects of volume as a real physical condition in a precise and almost literal manner.

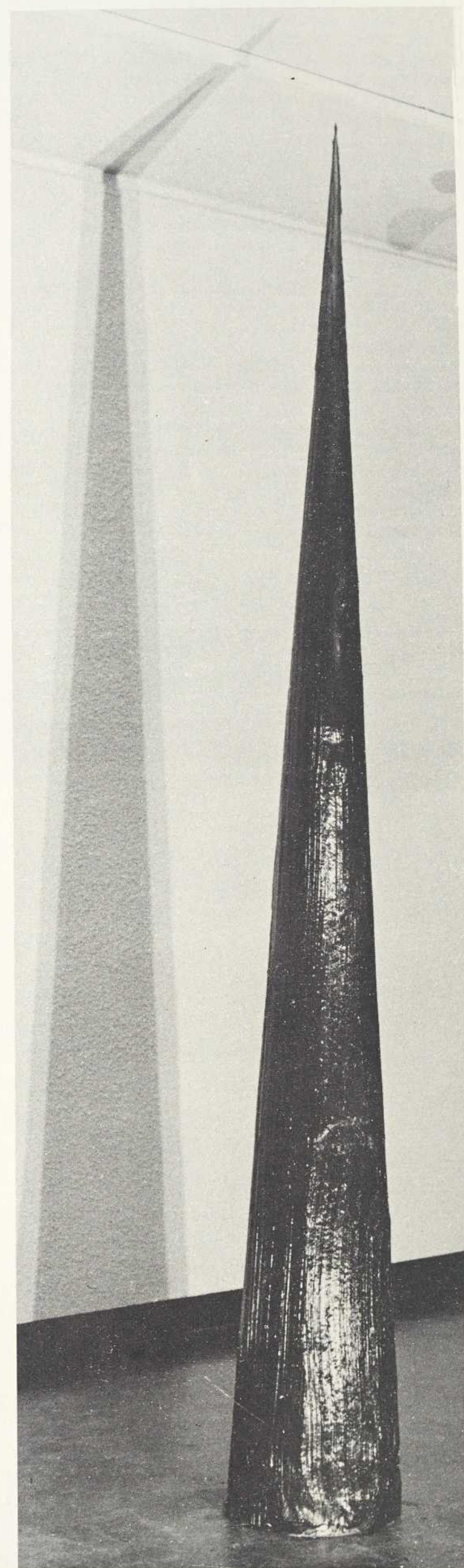
Royden Rabinowitch's "volume pictures", shown the year after the grease cones, may collectively represent one of the most original and successful attempts to make a completely independent and logically inevitable wall sculpture in contemporary art history. What makes them even more important as wall sculptures than say Donald Judd's innovative cantilevered progressions of the mid-1960s is that the Rabinowitch pieces take full ironic advantage of the traditional convention that what normally goes on walls are pictures, which by custom are flat surfaces, hung flush against the wall, and whose framing edge has, in the course of twentieth century art, attained an increasingly crucial significance to the work as a whole. Between two small steel plates Rabinowitch has inserted short segments of metal along the edges and then sealed the plates together by means of a rope weld. The ostensibly blank surface of the top most plate, the "picture" as it were, has been discoloured by the heat of the welding process thereby calling attention to the real character of its construction. The indentations along the border edge of the plate subtly and unobtrusively indicate that there is a back, a front and sides to what

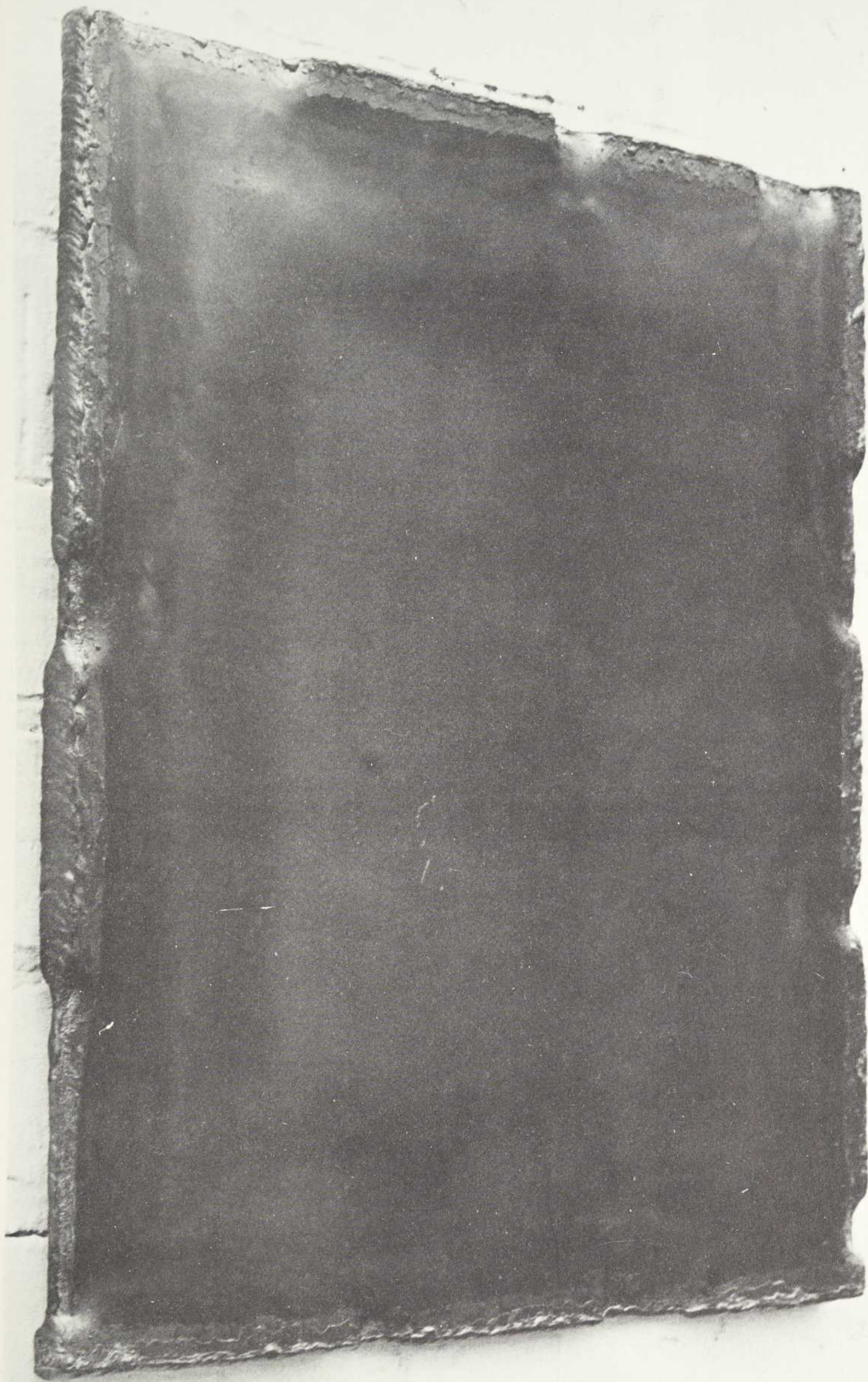
at first appeared to be a simple flat image. But one has to finally move to one side and check the actual thickness of the edges in order to verify one's impression that the erstwhile "picture" contains a shallow volume. By this simple but necessary physical act on the viewer's part one tacitly acknowledges the work's three-dimensionality, i.e., its salient sculptural quality. Despite their modest proportions and unassuming presence, the volume pictures' thorough inversion of the conventional distinctions between sculptural and pictorial art exhibits an exclusively contemporary attitude toward what are the legitimate possibilities of "meaning" available to artists working today. If traditional sculpture treated volume more or less figuratively since the Renaissance, i.e., in the sense of roundedness and full proportions of the sculpted form, then Rabinowitch's presentation of it is, in contrast, relentlessly literal and direct. The gap between the artist's notion of volume and that of the scientist and the engineer has now after several centuries been closed by contemporary sculpture. It seems to me reasonable to say that something like Rabinowitch's wall plaque invention was virtually impossible before at least the 1960s.

The hollow/solid sculptures (1973) may perhaps appear to take this kind of post-minimal fundamentalism a bit too far - their demonstration of certain basic conditions which occur to contained volumes seem at first to be all too clear focus. They seem to be devoid of the larger emotional resonance, the latent complexity and the sheer imaginative power of Rabinowitch's other work. Nevertheless, the hollow/solids do enlarge the scope of the sculptor's investigation of representing volume in significant ways. By placing the aluminum block on top of a welded steel box of equal size (all these sculptures are 12" square and are from a total 1-1/2" to 8" in height) Rabinowitch presents the viewer with an absolutely unequivocal and lucid distinction between mass and volume. It's almost as if Rabinowitch had wanted to put an end once and for all to the inevitable and nagging question of whether a thing was really hollow or dense by showing the viewer both conditions in their purest states together in one and the same instant. One doesn't have to go up to the piece and tap the aluminum block or kick the tack-welded steel box to know the answer; one can tell simply by looking at their outer surfaces.

If this primitive concatenation seems almost too obvious as an idea to carry much conviction, one has only to encounter the sculptures themselves to experience the intense and unique compression each of them projects. Indeed, curious and quite intriguing complications set in when we see a group of

JOAN'S GREASE CONE, 1970, steel and grease 96" x 12".





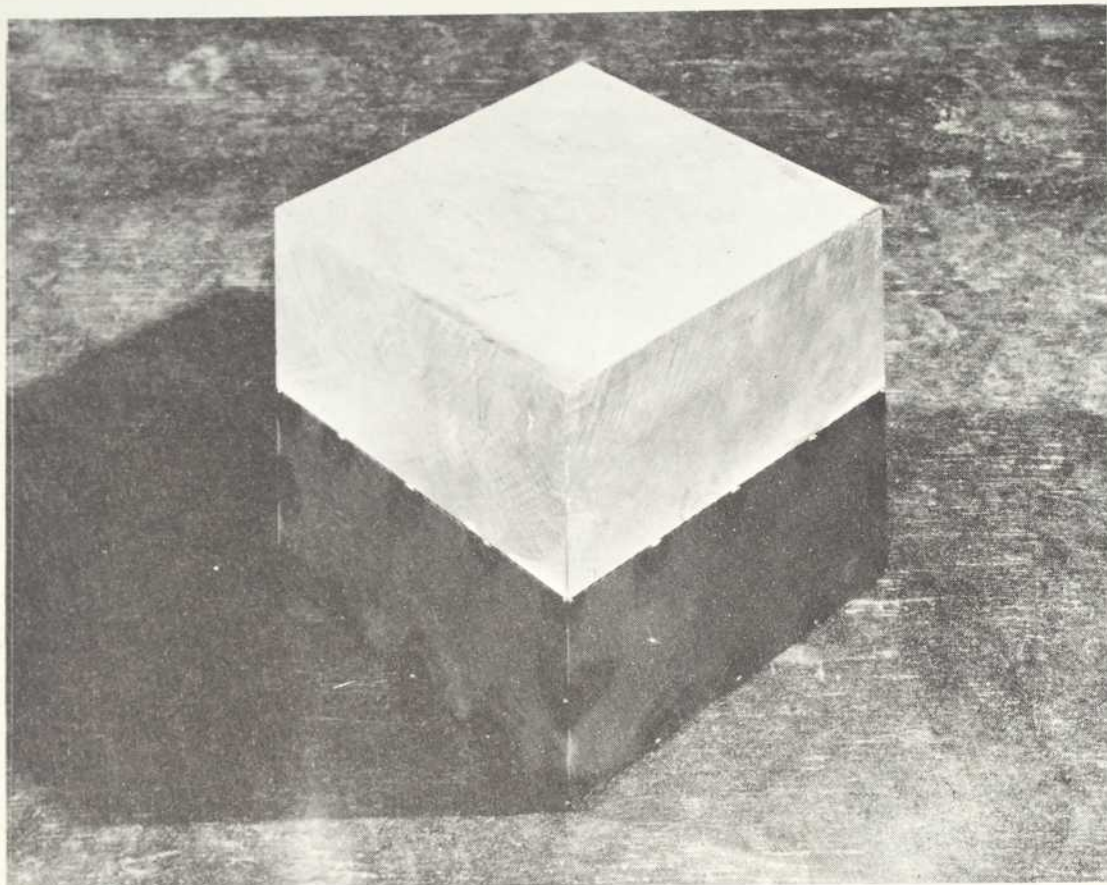
UNTITLED #8, 1972, welded hot rolled steel. 16" x 14" x 1/2".

these pieces together: it seems that merely by varying the height of each Rabinowitch can create a distinct presence and a specific "meaning" in each individual piece. However, it is only in the middle-size sculptures that Rabinowitch achieves an equilibrium between the mass above and the volume below, for in these particular pieces not only is the tack weld construction clearly visible but its implied volume (hollowness) is *felt* to be a palpable and separate entity in itself so that it seems to counterbalance and not merely suspend the aluminum mass above it. These are the only variations of the hollow/solids which totally succeed in projecting a stark dramatic contrast between the two extreme pure states of material being - both in the different ways each state presents itself visually to the viewer and in our fully intuited sense of their difference.

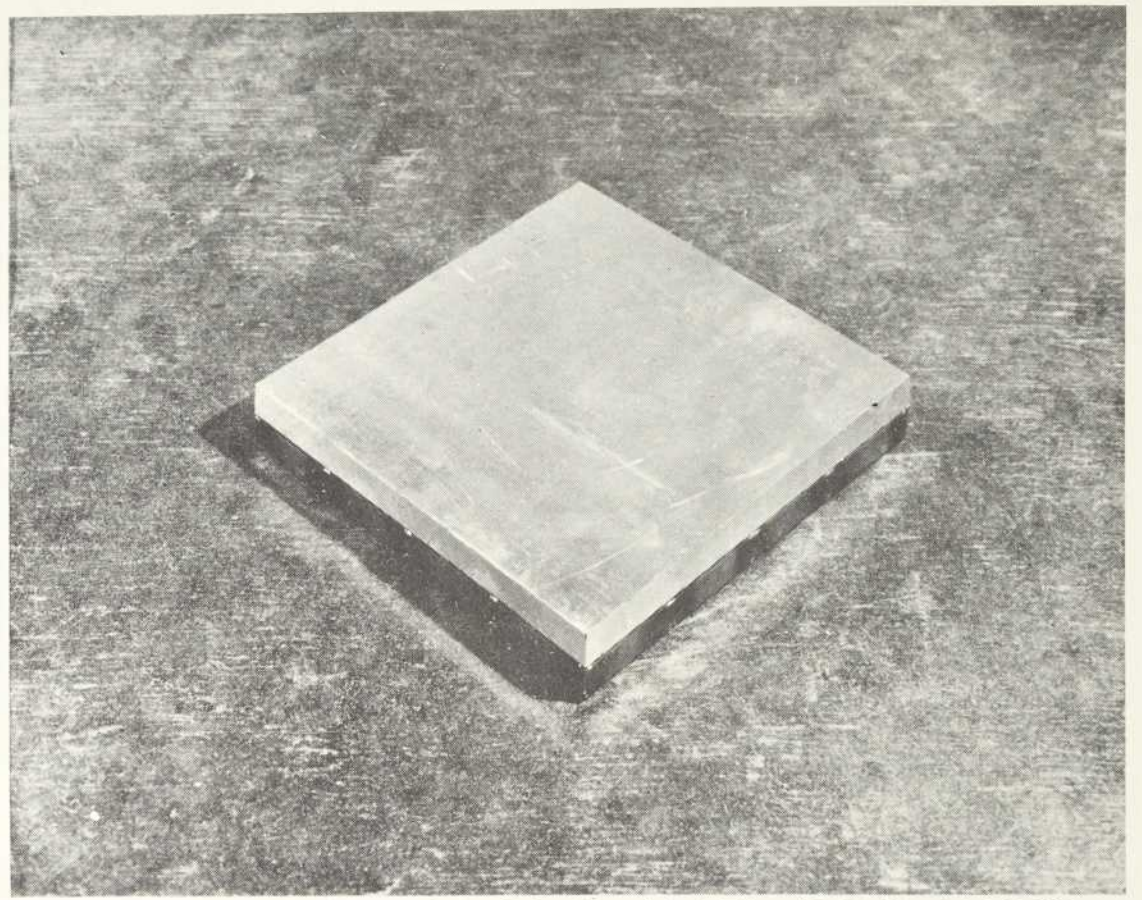
The smaller versions, on the other hand, are virtually negligible in regard to this demonstrational aspect of the hollow/solid sculptures. They seem dominated by the clean, hard surfaces of their aluminum top sides. Their primary visual impact is that of a surface plane which is emphatically grounded to the floor. There is a wonderfully subtle tension created by the sculpture's overall impression of holding the tendency of its surface to hover or float above the floor, securely in permanent check. The aluminum section is just thick enough to exert the necessary downward pull. Because the weld marks on the steel box are difficult to distinguish from a distance we do not visually tend to regard it as a separate kind of entity from the aluminum. It simply creates enough of an apparent gap between the thin aluminum block and the floor for us to "feel" the mass of the block. The smaller hollow/solids are interesting in their own right because they are able to project a distinct if somewhat eerie presence despite its extremely modest scale.

In the larger pieces we are made acutely aware of the oppressive mass of the aluminum block in spite of the fact that both the block and the box beneath it are of equal dimensions. This concentration of matter in the block seems so dense that we are forcefully reminded of the intense pull which gravity must have on it: it *belongs* directly and squarely on the floor. The placing of a hollow steel shell between it and the floor effectively intensifies our impression of the steel box's resistance to the full force of the block as well as emphasizes the real tensile strength of the steel construction itself. Because of this the larger hollow/solids call attention to the actual physical properties of what in the other versions of this sculpture we automatically read as an ostensibly hollow container. Generally speaking, the larger hollow/solids are extremely instructive insofar as they successfully counteract the tendency inherent in Rabinowitch's use of the tack weld markings (in order to indicate a hollow interior) throughout the works of this period, i.e., the volume pictures and the volumetrics as well as the other hollow/solids, to become an altogether too external and too facile convention - to the extent that, after a while, one tends to lose sight of the physical side of what are after all steel objects. In other words, we learn to recognize the outward sign and ignore the material thing it really is.

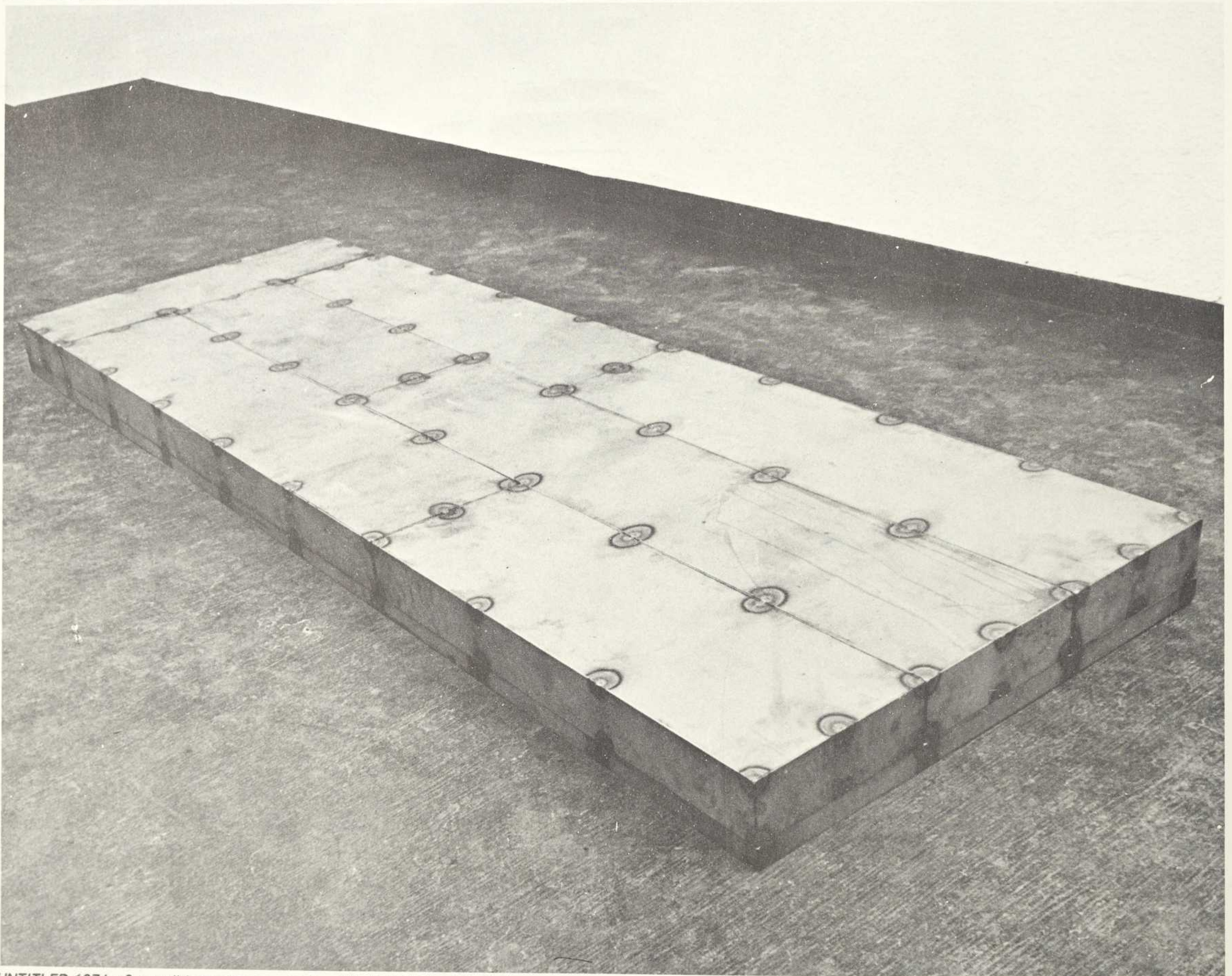
Finally our understanding of the significant differences between the various hollow/solids also helps us to appreciate Rabinowitch's keen and highly selective sense of experimentation. All he has done is alter one variable (the height) within an entire series of sculptures to produce distinct individual works that can stand on their own. His evident need to see what the variations on a given format would look like calls to mind the single question which seems central to all of his work so far, that is, the question of what would happen to an idea, clear and complete in and of itself, when it was made into



UNTITLED #10, 1973, welded cold rolled steel and aluminum, 12" x 12" x 10".



UNTITLED 1974 #1, sandblasted steel -tack welded. 7" x 48 3/4" x 132 3/4".



UNTITLED 1974 #2, sandblasted steel - tack welded, 5 3/4" x 36 3/4" x 108 3/4".

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Photos Courtesy Carmen Lamasana

a concrete material object and was forced to occupy a real rather than an exclusively mental space.

Thus, in the end, it is the viewer's perception and felt experience of a particular sculpture rather than his mere cognition of the idea behind it that is of primary concern to the artist. This aspect of the hollow/solids will be stressed even more in the succeeding works. As for the hollow/solids themselves, in respect to the issue of perception, they are so low keyed and unobtrusive that they not only test our normally lazy habits of seeing but tax them.

The volumetric sculptures (1974) further extend Rabinowitch's depiction of volume beyond his two previous works in that these pieces do more than indicate the hollowness of an object by its external appearance; they provide a model of the fact that volume is also a specific well-defined area - an interior space which is something in itself quite apart from the walls of its container. What this amounts to of course is being able to make an essentially invisible property visible and Rabinowitch's solution in the volumetrics is one of striking clarity and simplicity. His method of structuring the long tact welded steel boxes in a rough approximation of a rectangular shape is the key to understanding the work as a whole, in fact, to making any sense of the work at all. Imagine, for example, that you have two narrow rows of empty rectangular boxes and that the sum of the internal areas of all the boxes in both rows are exactly the same. (N.B.: the internal area is determined by measuring the area of a box from its inside walls.) If one row contained more boxes than the other row it would be slightly longer than the latter and the difference between the lengths of the two rows would be equal to the thicknesses of the walls of the additional box (or boxes). Because of this principle you can account for the indentations that occur along the outer edge of the volumetric sculptures simply by comparing the number of boxes in the adjoining rows. In this way we are made aware by means of drawing inferences from the ex-

ternally visible signs that volume is the space contained and not the container. The volumetrics also are the very first time that Rabinowitch has worked from the inside of a sculpture to the outside, for it is the interior dimensions of this piece which determine its exterior dimensions as well as its final form (shape). In this light then, the base-frame of these sculptures has to be regarded not as a kind of mold into which the various box elements have been fitted but simply as a means of fixing and securing as it were, finalizing, what is in effect the direct consequence of sculptures straight-forward additive procedure.

But it is finally one's own experience in actually walking around these pieces that allows one to understand that the volumetrics have a significance apart from their being astonishingly lucid demonstrations about the nature of volume; for it is only in this manner that we can truly appreciate their very special and important treatment of the perception of complex configurations. In *Untitled #1*, the larger of the two sculptures shown at Carmen Lamanna in 1974, both the long expanse of more or less uniform grey close to the ground and the numerous individual units cause one to lose one's bearing in the work. And because Rabinowitch has also arranged several units across the rows as well as length-wise in this piece one is forced to refer constantly to the edges rather than the top in order to understand the piece. Because of the greater complexity of the large volumetric's appearance we also find ourselves (again aided by the clues provided by the edges) having to assume that there is some standard unit of measurement used throughout the piece (as it happens the boxes vary by increments of one foot but of course there is no telling this by the eye alone). We also have to assume that the ultimate arrangement of the boxes is based on some undecipherable scheme of proportions. The large volumetric makes a significant statement because it sets up a distinction between a knowable kind of order, as defined by the parameters of the piece, and a perceptually unknowable order, that of the in-

terrelationship between the individual box elements viewed from above. This reminds one somewhat of certain early works by Judd, Smithson and others in which a specific system such as an exotic mathematical series like the Fibonacci numbers were used to determine the arrangement of the individual parts of the work. These internal orders resulted in such a high degree of visual complexity that the viewer in most cases had to be *told* of their presence in the work in order to know it. Rabinowitch's large volumetric, on the other hand, supplies all the needed information about its internal structure within the work itself. More importantly, it informs us about the limits of one type of perception (direct vision) by making us use another type of perception (seeing by means of rational inference).

In order to account for the extreme departure *Kharakorum* represents from the works which immediately preceded it, one can only speculate that the artist had begun to feel that all his attempts to contain and locate volume - even when they succeeded - had the effect of bringing into the world yet another non-*internally necessary* object. Perhaps Rabinowitch had begun to suspect that the authority and conviction which his simple rectangular box and conic solutions once carried was due more to psychological considerations than to purely material ones: the reason for their validity and powerful generality might be that most viewers, including the artist himself, subconsciously always accept such forms as ultimate archetypal gestalts and feel comfortable with the belief that no physical form could be more absolute and necessary than these. One can see operating in *Kharakorum*, I think, the new and far more extreme assumption that really significant sculpture at this point in history has got to concern itself with the basic physical forces and conditions which effect the existence of *all* three dimensional things: the way, for example, gravity does. This assumption, once accepted, places a premium on justifying all instances of *verticality* in a sculptural work and severely under-

KHARAKORUM, 1975, 1/4" hot rolled steel - blued and oiled, 3 1/2" x 66" x 102".



mines one's belief in the primacy of certain elementary configurations such as the cone or the cube. (Furthermore, the shift to an emphasis on gravity and its imperatives effectively renders Rabinowitch's long-standing preoccupation with volume in general, largely superfluous.)

Under such premises a sculpture must justify within its own self-defined terms the building up of vertical dimensions above its horizontal plane, the horizontal distribution of the work's mass being the one thing granted as the inevitable starting point for the work. In *Kharakorum* Rabinowitch has decided to combine the physical necessity of the flat sheet of hot-rolled steel with the *logical necessity* implicit in a geometric abstraction, in this case, the development of a plane in space. In other works, Rabinowitch, in effect, imposes upon the prone, solid steel plane a conceptually elegant superstructure based on what is essentially a (kind of) Euclidean abstract concept. (Never before has Rabinowitch so emphatically and so clearly separated the physical imperatives in a work from its essentially mental aspects. This isolation of the two, as we shall soon see, is absolutely crucial to his underlying intentions in this piece.) Again, the conceptual origin of each and every elevation in *Kharakorum* has to do with illustrating, "demonstrating", the various possible ways a plane can be vertically extended in space and still retain its essential character as a flat plane. It is important that none of these elevations suggest volume. We can see by inspecting the sculpture from various points of view that all inflections and vertical developments in it rise up above the floor but do not enclose space to any appreciable degree.

By restricting himself to these premises (contexts) Rabinowitch has become engaged in an impressive feat of imaginative compression in which a single idea (the flat extended plane) and the concentration of its possibilities (the various individual developments) are fused together in the same self-contained unit. Largely because of this compression, the new work requires, as none of Rabinowitch's previous works have, a radical reorientation on the part of the viewer in the way he *perceives* and in the quite special way he comes to finally *understand* it. Indeed, the nature of perception and how one is sometimes forced to look beyond immediate appearances of things is an issue which the artist treats with great originality in *Kharakorum*.

Rabinowitch's sculptures of the previous three years accustomed the viewer to expect that the artist's intentions in a work (and hence the "meaning" of that work) would be revealed in the visible marks (such as the tact welds) of its actual process of construction. In *Kharakorum*, however, while we can clearly see how the piece was put together that information in itself does not tell much about what it is. The source of this sculpture's difficulty and complexity is that one's full experience of it is effectively distanced and stretched over a long period of time so that one must work one's way gradually into it from the outside, inwards, as it were. That is to say, a separation has been induced by the artist between what one initially sees and the idea (rational) behind the work as a whole: the two are no longer one and the same thing. The fact of the matter is that our immediate involvement in the work is basically perceptual and hence primarily with the stunning compositional effects it possesses.

In contrast to the continuous flow of *Joan's Apple Turnover*, *Kharakorum* confronts the viewer with an ever changing series of altogether discrete views as he moves around the work. Its "visual center of gravity" shifts significantly which each change in position and, while some are more interesting than others no one view seems to have priority over the others, i.e., there is no starting point visually in the piece. It is something of a paradox that this frag-

mentation and essential discontinuity of the spectator's experience is brought about by a work that is so physically compact and whose internal structure has been so superbly and tightly organized. Rabinowitch has shrewdly selected and located all of the individual elements in *Kharakorum*. The large and imposing elliptical shape is in itself an inspired stroke of imagination. At the most acutely angled corner of the sculpture (see photograph) the tip of this illeipsis, ever so slightly yet emphatically askew, lies in dramatically close proximity to the converging outer edges of the major plane. Here, compressed into a single epiphanic instant of total lucidity, the powerful dynamics and complex internal tensions within the work unfold before us and offer us a prime example of the exquisitely constructed views in *Kharakorum*.

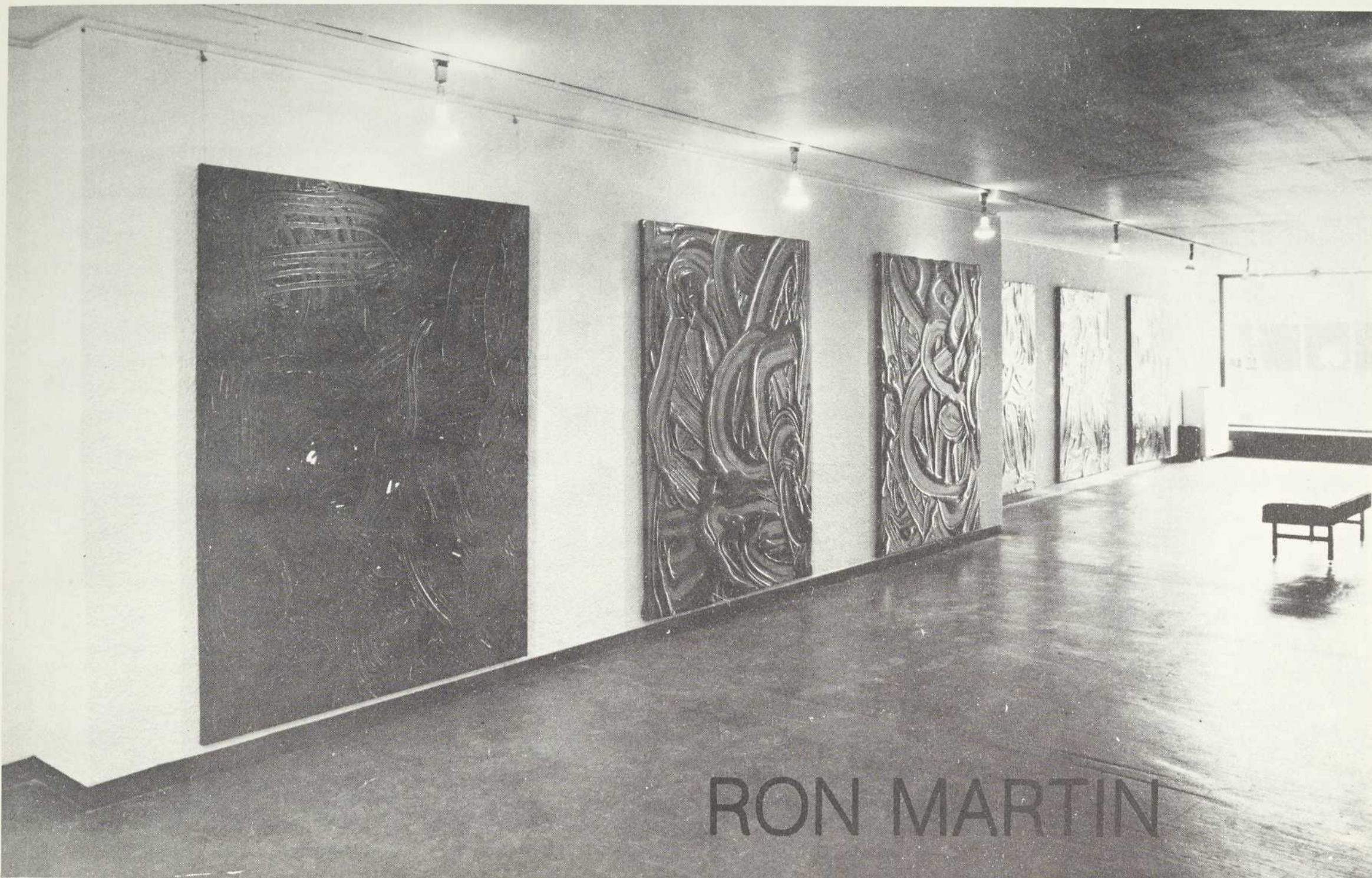
After a while one begins to look beyond the purely compositional function of such elements as the accreted planes, i.e., the large illeipsis and the open center parallelogram, and starts to see them as the totally autonomous and utterly mysterious shapes they are in themselves. Each seems to have a compelling and ultimately inexplicable existence of its own. It Rabinowitch has concentrated the exciting visual stimulus, which initially captures our attention, in the constructed views, he has more or less isolated what most disturbs and moves us in this sculpture within the curiously fascinating shapes of these two planes. They strike us as emotional or psychic absolutes rather than as purely geometric paradigms. As in the case of the conic overtones inherent in *Kharakorum*, as mentioned earlier, the pungent memorable, shapes of the accreted planes are proof that Rabinowitch has in effect, followed certain elementary geometric configurations beyond their existence as pure intellectual entities which seem to possess a seemingly independent life of their own to the place where they live deep within the imagination of us all.

In the end, one must come to the conclusion that the composition, that is, the setting up of distinct views, and shapes of the accreted planes are, for all their calculated effectiveness and subliminal power, the results of essentially *arbitrary* choices. They are not in themselves, despite their obviously deliberate appearance, the final justification (reason) for why the sculpture has been constructed the way it has. For example, the structured views seem to be permeated by an underlying cohesion and the tough integrity of a central core of identity which suggests to the viewer that are they not there primarily for the striking visual effects they present, as they certainly would be in a formalist sculpture say by Caro or Murray. One is in effect *expected* to seriously ask himself why things are the way they are. This question calls attention to all the individual elements in *Kharakorum*, the flatness of the major plane and its inflection, all the planer developments, as well as the shapes of the accreted planes, and hence to *their* justification: the idea of the development of a uniform plane in space and the unavoidable restraint on all material things by gravity. In this respect, one realizes upon reflection that the shapes of the accreted planes are not ends in themselves for all their salient presence - and that they could have theoretically been exchanged for other shapes and really any *number* of other shapes - for the only absolute requirement made upon the accreted planes *per se* is that they be flat and parallel to the major plane. Seen in this light, *Kharakorum* becomes a brilliant model for aesthetic decision-making in general: it analyzes the distinct phases (areas) and parameters of this process and puts them all together in a single work. The viewer's experience of the work is such that he is lead step by step to each separate and clearly defined level of this process - not as it relates only to this piece itself but as occurs in any work of art.

Looking back over Rabinowitch's total output during

the past decade one can detect an almost inevitable succession of deeply interrelated shifts in the artist's basic concerns as a serious sculptor which lead from one work to that which follows it. From a restless and intense preoccupation with trying to create a definitive and emotionally compelling model of bound volume, which was to culminate in *Joan's Apple Turnover* and the grease cones, Rabinowitch goes on to isolate and give concrete form to the highly illusive and intangible characteristics of volume itself. In attempting to clarify and extend our understanding of volume Rabinowitch discovers for himself an important distinction between an object as it exists in the world and the viewer's perception of it. The assumption inherent in the early work from the *Turnover* up to the hollow/solids that the two were, for his purposes at hand, virtually equivalent are increasingly challenged in his later work. Rabinowitch's growing critical awareness of the vagaries of human perception and his understanding of how that awareness can be put to use in the making of new sculptures really begin in a general way with the larger volumetric and are focused and deepened in *Kharakorum*. The simple, discrete gestalts of all his previous works give way to visually more complex and essentially non-iconic character of the two recent pieces. This awareness, however, is not treated as an end in itself but becomes a means whereby Rabinowitch can extend his work as a whole in an entirely new direction. He is now free to enter into a concentrated investigation of the nature of art objects in general - not in terms of their essential physical properties as before but as the cumulative product of a series of conscious aesthetic decisions on the part of their maker. Confronting a work such as *Kharakorum*, the viewer is forced to draw upon the resources of his own imagination and perception in order to discover and re-enact the mental acts which have made the sculpture the way it is.

With the grease cones, the volume pictures, and, to a lesser extent, the larger volumetric, Royden Rabinowitch has unquestionably produced sculptures fully capable of taking their place in contemporary art by virtue of their own achievement. *Kharakorum*, on the other hand, decisively marks the start of a profound new phase whose implications and real significance will only be made truly clear by the work Rabinowitch himself will do in the next few years. ■



INSTALLATION SHOT One Man Exhibition at the Carmen Lamanna Gallery - June 7-26, 1975.

In regard to the Black Paintings (Pretext and text) by Philip Fry

Beginning June 7, 1975, Ron Martin had a one-man exhibition at the Carmen Lamanna Gallery. The works shown had a great deal to do with a literal use of paint as substance.

The main body of the following text - printed here in regular type - was written in late June and early July, 1975.

While I was doing the background work, I wrote Ron Martin asking for clarification of certain points that I then felt had some relevance as facts. Martin replied, refusing to supply answers and raising serious doubts about my approach to his work. Taken aback by this response, I abandoned the project for a while, attempting to reassess my purposes and attitudes. I finally decided to finish the article, but with some misgivings. There was, after all, something quite right in what Martin had to say.

About a month later, mentioning my uneasiness, I asked Charles Gagnon to read the text. We had already talked about Martin's work. He pointed out what he felt to be a wide gap between what I had written on Martin's paintings and the kind of questions I

raised about them in the secure context of friendly conversation. In fact, rather than raising questions, the original text side-stepped the central issues by adopting a relatively impersonal, formal approach. But it seemed that the text nevertheless had some validity as a symptom of my difficulties in coming to terms with writing about work that is couched in an essentially subjective reality. The facts - whatever facts may be - also remain.

The upshot of all this was my decision that, if it were to be published, the text would have to stand as written. Some kind of commentary would be added as a corrective device. These additions have been printed in italics.

LOOKING

There were twelve paintings in the show; all of them were executed with black acrylic paint on canvas and all measured 84" by 66" (1). The paintings did not however, seem to constitute one, unified series. The earliest work in the show, dated July 3, 1973 and entitled *The Last Painting*, stood more or less

alone. Four other paintings, dated from November 1973 to January 1974, resembled each other with that kind of likeness that helps identify members or a family in a crowd; through forming a homogeneous group, each was nevertheless easily distinguished from the others, mainly by the arrangement of surface patterns. The remaining seven paintings, begun in November 1974, would seem to constitute a series that perhaps has not yet been completed.

One of the reasons I became involved in this descriptive exercise was that I felt a definite need to sort out my first impressions of the Black Paintings.

My questions arose from a visit I made to Martin's studio about two months before the show. The main issue concerned the focus of Martin's work: Are the paintings "finished" works that stand on their own in virtue of their material and formal qualities, or are they better understood as some kind of document that refers to the artist's subjective experience? If, as suggested by the context and the artist's own statements, the latter should be the case, what does the idea "painting-as-record" imply? Martin might, for exam-



THE LAST PAINTING, 1973, black acrylic (aquatec) on canvas, 84" x 66".



IRON OXIDE - MARS BLACK #1, 1973, black acrylic (aquatec) on canvas, 84" x 66".

ple, feel that the activities of working with a definite quantity of black paint at such and such a time and place is essentially a growth process, aimed at augmenting and/or perfecting his own experience. Should this be the case, the resultant paintings are little more than by-products, the left-overs of an activity that originated and terminated within the same subject. In that event, the difficult thing to understand would be why Martin would want to show his left-overs to the public.

The other possibility is that Martin takes steps to organize the process so that it terminates with an end product. It seems to me that part of this is done when he postulates the conditions that govern a given set of paintings. In some previous works, the artist's actions as he applied paint can be traced to some degree, and to that extent the idea of calling the painting a "record" of the process seems appropriate. But it seems to me that the quantity of paint used in the new work calls for a revision of this idea., what, in fact, is a record that erases itself, or document that obliterates its own content?

I should also add that when I was in the studio, I saw some drawings pinned on the wall. They were of human figures - heads I think - swallowing themselves. That is very much what I felt was happening in the paintings - the paint was swallowing itself. Why would Martin - or any artist for that matter - bother to make a painting that "swallows" itself if he cares about it as a "product" of his efforts?

The most readily apparent, objective difference between the earliest and the latest of the works in the show is the quantity of paint used in their production. In this regard, *The Last Painting* appears to be related to Martin's *One Colour Paintings* in which approximately one gallon of paint mixed with gel and acrylic medium were used. There is a distinct in-

crease in the amount of paint used in the group of four paintings, but even this is considerably less than the quantity employed for the most recent works. For each of these, up to seven gallons of paint taken directly from the container were used.

To avoid further confusion, I should perhaps mention that the purpose of this text is not to inform the reader about the appearance of Martin's paintings, as if words could be a substitute for actually seeing the works. The questions I had in mind were concerned with how to pin down the various differences between the paintings while trying to come to some conclusions about whether the way these paintings look really matters at all. If the appearances are deemed important, then the problem would seem to consist in discovering which differences really do make a difference when trying to understand the works.

In *The Last Painting*, long, sinuous strokes tend to group in a dominantly vertical arrangement, frequently crossing each other and creating localized incidents either of overlapping or of partial erasure. Although also subject to partial obliteration by subsequent strokes, contact points where the brush first encountered the canvas and termination marks where the brush lifted from it, punctuate the image with a slight excess of paint and muddled areas resulting from an arrested thrust of the brush. Slightly above the middle, there is a dense group of what appear to be finger or knuckle mark spreading across the canvas, establishing a strong horizontal axis. These relatively small-scale squiggles have obliterated some of the larger strokes; conversely, there are clear passages in which the hand or arm-scaled activity has wiped out the finger marks. Both kinds of mark have been applied with a degree of force, leaving streaks of relatively thin paint; these streaks are perceived as having a lighter value than the paint itself.

Several small portions of bare primed canvas, while setting up visual opposition between covered and non-covered areas, accentuate the over-all articulation of the image.

If *The Last Painting* is seen as a loosely-woven network of streaks and marks, the organization of the image suggests that it is a record of the sequence of the artist's activity as he applied paint to the canvas. The closely related notions of applying, spreading out and covering would seem to dominate this work even if the more detailed small-scale marks indicate some concern about the appearance of the final image.

With the four paintings dating from November 1973 to January 1974, there seems to have been a shift in emphasis from applying paint to the surface of the canvas to the process of working with paint on the canvas. There are, as might be expected, some similarities with the older piece that go beyond the questions of colour and format. The artist has continued to leave a few small uncovered areas and there are some finger grooves that force their way through the paint almost to the surface of the canvas. But there the similarities end.

In all the paintings of this group, finger marks are predominant, usually in the form of parallel furrows that appear in sets of four, five or even more. These sets are grouped and tend to break up the image into fairly distinct areas of activity knit together by overlapping marks at their loosely defined edges. They nevertheless appear as focal points of the artist's work with the paint. Smooth, hand-width strokes do appear in *Conceal Honestly*, but they end up as finger marks or are partially obliterated. *A-Face-Facing-A-Face #5* and *Iron Oxide - Mars Black #1*, incorporating a number of loose, sometimes



DIONYSOS TORN LIMB FROM LIMB, #16, 1075 black acrylic (aquatec) on canvas, 84" x 66".

scratchy marks, are relatively busy paintings when compared to *Use*, a more tranquil work in which a fair amount of paint has been allowed to accumulate along the contours of several sweeping strokes as well as at attack and termination points.

To a great extent the sheer quantity of paint used to produce the seven more recent works determines their visual impact and suggests the qualities of massiveness, abundance and serene opulence that are their most striking characteristics.

The finger marks that were so evident in the previous group now appear as partially absorbed traces: their definition is much less clear, their edges rounder, as though the substance of the paint refused to stay put while the artist was working. Arcs and troughs somewhat wider than a hand's length, repeatedly plowing through the paint and massing it in some areas, have been used to arrange the main elements of the image. In *Dionysos Torn Limb from Limb*, for example, an arc curves away from the center of the painting in contrast to the more angular furrows found in the same area of the work. Along the edges of the main troughs and at their intersections, there is a considerable build-up of paint that seems to be on the point of sliding back into the hollows. The accumulation of paint continues over and wraps around the edges of the canvas. Towards the top and bottom left corners, pools of paint have seeped over the furrows; elsewhere ridges of paint have been partially reclaimed by the paint body.

I think that it would be excessive to suggest that Martin has allowed the paint to actually "take over" the painting, but he seems to have arranged a state of affairs that "captures" a moment in which the paint as a quasi-subject is on the point of taking over, begin-

ning to assume its rights and threatening to advance into the territory marked out by the artist. All of this seems to suggest a relationship between the artist and his work that cannot be reduced to a new version of Abstract Expressionism.

There does not seem to be any common measure between personal experience as grasped within the confines of a subject having the experience and the actions by which or in which this experience is geared to external realities. If the notions of "recording" or "documenting" the actual sequence of the artist's activity break down because the paint itself is allowed to cast doubts on the permanence of the external activity-marks, could this not be so in order to permit the paintings to stand as sheer evidence of the fact that other, purely subjective, events have taken place?

Tempting as it may be to use works such as "bending" and "folding" to describe certain things that happen in these paintings, they suggest attributes that are too brittle and dry to convey the feeling of an advancing, oozing edge that separates areas retaining the imprint of the artist's activity from the masses of paint attempting to establish their own equilibrium. These works are embodiments of the artist's experience working with a given quantity of paint. It is not at all irrelevant that the works used to describe subjective feelings about this group of paintings spontaneously tend to be strongly affective, sensual and based on a metaphor of the body.

CONNECTING

When coming to grips with an artist's new work, one of the things that can happen is the discovery of connections with the artist's previous work (2). At first these links might be vague and tenuous, perhaps no more than a hunch about format or a

suspicion about the way paint is used, but if they are pursued they contribute something to an understanding of the work. Tracking down relationships of this sort is not so much a question of trying to discover the artist's personal motives as it is an attempt to determine what concerns are manifested in the whole body of work attributed to the artist (3).

Whether Ron Martin's Black Paintings mark the end of a work sequence that included, among others, the *One Colour Paintings* and the *Bright Red Paintings*, or whether they are the beginning of a new sequence does not seem as important right now as the fact that they do seem to have a lot to do with our way of understanding his past work. Martin tends to formulate his ideas in binary terms that bear some seed of contradiction; his work would seem to consist in resolving these contradictions, not on a theoretical plane, but through the process of enacting a bond between these terms in a group or series of paintings. The main sets of terms that he has talked about are reality / appearance, original / copy, subject / object, body / mind, evidence / truth and self / other (4). Several of these sets function within any given series of work and the importance attributed to any one of them depends to a great extent on the viewer.

When writing the original text, I tended to avoid questions about the self/other relationship. It made me wonder about Martin's motives and I felt that that was none of my business. But the inescapable fact bound up with the impact of the recent works is that there seems to be something gratuitous about his approach. Even if it is not a put-on-an idea that comes from the fact that the work is entirely postulated, I think - and if it is centered on serious self-exploration, what earthly good can the results of such activity be to someone else? The situation created is unusual. For one of these paintings to be of some importance to me, they must be the occasion of something happening to me that I value. Now, if they are no more than sheer evidence that something subjective has happened to Martin, then, to appreciate the work, I must already be concerned about Martin in more than a remote way. I can respond to "something" happening to one of my friends or a culture hero, but not to an anonymous subjectivity. In such a context, the question: Who is the artist? is linked very closely to the other: What is art?

Another possible approach could be that Martin, while working, creates a kind of theatre set which, after serving to modify and explicate his experience, remains after the fact as a prop for the viewer's exploration of his own feelings and attitudes. Beyond the strong sense of presence created by these works, there does not seem to be any attempt at "communication". What they seem to do is throw the viewer back on his own personal resources in order to "deal with" the presence. Not such a tough thing with these paintings because of their open sensuality.

Before he began working on the *Conclusion* and *Transfer* series, Martin painted landscapes and domestic interiors on plywood with enamel (5). But, as he has pointed out, even if he liked the colours just as they were shown on the Cilux paint chart and the flat, hardedged forms he was using, he felt that these paintings were only one way of getting at more important matters having to do with feelings and attitudes. He found something particularly bothersome about the fact that the landscape paintings only dealt with the appearances of things, leaving aside essential questions concerning the reality of the artist's work as an expressive process. The first set of contractions, reality/appearance, was tackled in the form of the opposition between original work and its copy in the *Conclusion* and *Transfer* series.

Around 1967, Martin began to make abstract collages which he called *Conclusions*, apparently to indicate that they were the end product of a process initiated within his own person and therefore truly original in the sense of being at the source of the beginning. Each of these *Conclusions* also bore a name printed with a rubber stamp - *Matisse*, *Brodzky*,

Rans - that, with obvious exceptions, denoted people in the artist's immediate locality. To make a *Transfer*, the artist copied the original collage with enamel on a piece of plywood considerably larger than the collage. The differences between the *Conclusion* and its *Transfer* were immediately evident, permitting the viewer to identify and then distinguish the original from the copy.

In another group of paintings dealing with the same problem, the *Conclusions* were hard-edged, geometric works executed on shaped canvas; they stood in much the same relationship to the artist as the earlier *Conclusions* except for the exclusion of the rubber-stamped names that served to anchor the artist's subjective activity in a definite context (6). But in this new group of works, the same paint, the same visual elements and canvas of the same shape and dimensions as used for the *Conclusions* were likewise used to make the *Transfers*. Exact as they were, these *Transfers* were nevertheless copies: the main difference had to do, not with the elements given to perception after the fact of production, but with the way *judgements* could be made about them. The significant differences concerned the *Conclusion's* immediate and prior bond with the originating activity of the artist as opposed to the *Transfer's* secondary, mediated position in regard to the artist's work schedule (7). Once produced, each painting's material or substantial singularity was expressed by little more than its temporal and spatial coordinates.

Around 1969 Martin noticed that the appearance of a group of intersecting lines changes according to the position or view-point of the viewer. At that time, he was working on water colours, using a number of parallel, distinct brush strokes about one inch long within a grid system. He subsequently modified this approach, using two sets of brush strokes, one com-

posed of two vertical strokes almost joined by an oblique to form a tight N configuration, the other of two horizontal and an oblique, forming a flat Z configuration. The strokes in each set were of one, two or three colours and were laid out on the grid by alternating the vertical and horizontal sets in some of these works, penciled numbers appear behind the strokes, indicating the placement of colours according to a code relative to each piece. When viewing these works from quite near, the underlying order and the individual brush stroke elements are very clear. In a sense, that is their reality. From further away, however, they are perceived as something else, that is more or less intricate patterns of colour (8).

Martin's *World Paintings* work with the same principles on a larger scale; the question of reality and appearance constantly recurs but the artist's concern with the respective roles of mind and body also comes to the forefront (9). Two works from 1969 and 1970, *Close-foot* and *Foot-close*, use the same elements as the water colours, alternating one-colour stroke sets in a grid of two-inch squares. Although loose, the patterning effect is clear. No colour code numbers are apparent. The size of the grid was reduced to one-inch squares for the *World Paintings*, tightening the patterning effect of the image.

Martin varied his approach to the colour code to be used in each painting to some degree. In some cases, the numbers represent individual colours; in these instances, when a stroke set used only one colour, only one number appears in each square. If the sets admit of two or three colours, the appropriate numbers appear together in the square, apparently with no concern for their order. In other cases, one number represents a complete set of strokes no matter how many colours it contains. For

example, in *World #37*, the following code was used for both the vertical (left to right) and the horizontal (top to bottom) strokes:

1. Violet, blue, blue
2. Blue, green, green
3. Green, brown, brown
4. Brown, rose, rose
5. Rose, red, red
6. Red, orange, orange
7. Orange, yellow, yellow
8. Yellow, violet, violet

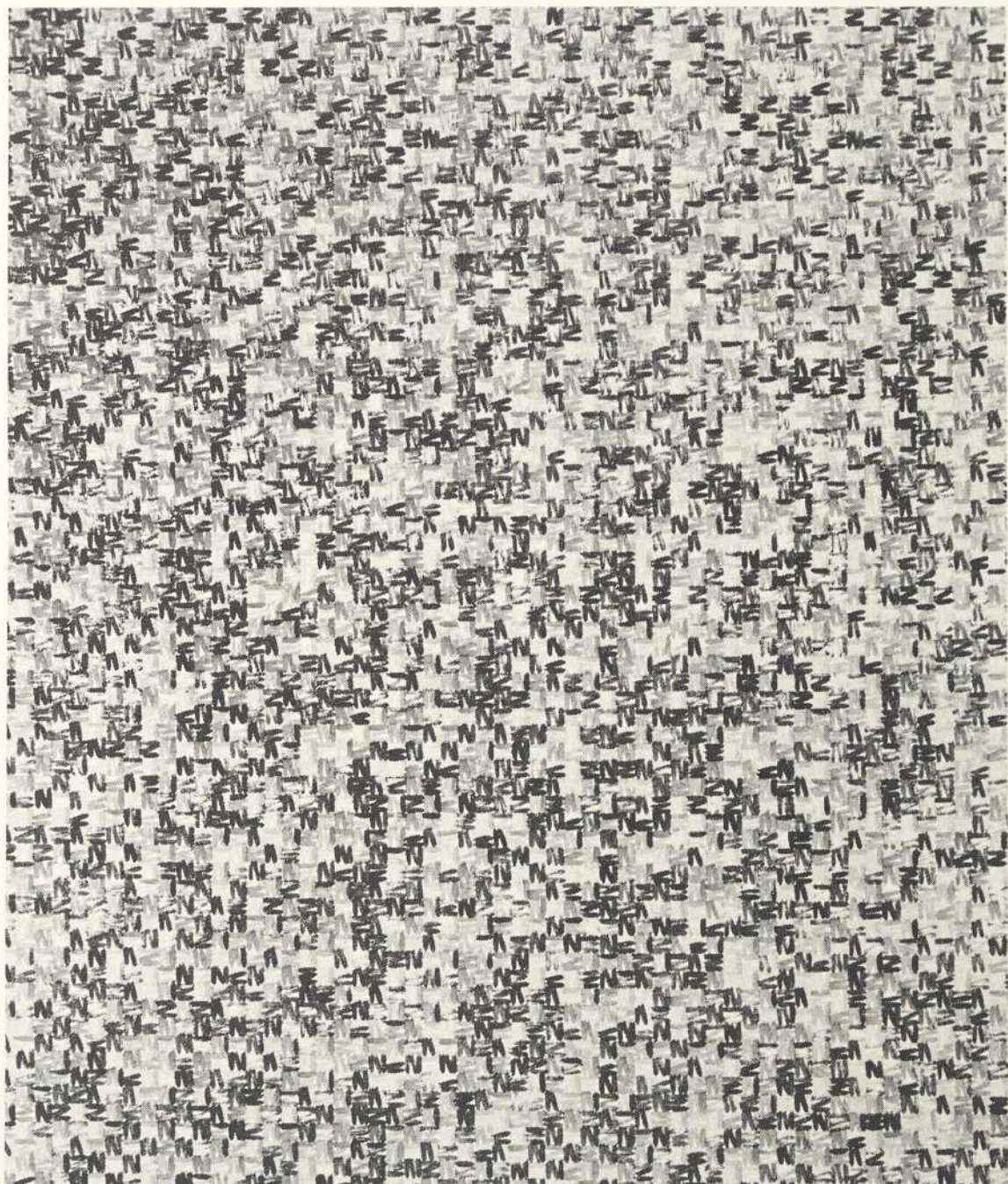
The importance of the order used in this system is underscored by an apparent exception in *World #35*: if the numbers and order used for the vertical sets are taken as a base, then, in regard to certain numbers, there are variants in the horizontal sets for oblique stroke only. For example, No. 2 is brown, *black*, blue on the vertical, but becomes brown, *red*, blue on the horizontal. The most obvious principle behind the code development would seem to be the identification of the last colour stroke in each number with the first stroke in the subsequent number and finally the last stroke of the series with the first

The actual use of the code by applying numbers to the grid is a subject of debate. According to some affirmations, it would seem that the actual placement was guided more by the artist's intuition than by an idea of what the resultant pattern would actually look like. The results obtained in *World #18*, a smaller work than those usually associated with the series, suggest that on the contrary, considerable care was taken in view of the final image. The colour code, for example, is worked out so that relative values can be attributed to the different sets:

DETAIL DRAWING, 1970.



WORLD #37, 1970. acrylic on canvas, 60" x 84".



1. Red, brown, black - dark value
2. Black, blue, brown - dark value
3. Brown, orange, blue - lighter value
4. Blue, grey, orange - light value
5. Orange, violet, grey - light value
6. Grey, green, violet - darker value
7. Violet, red green - darker value
8. Green, black, red - dark value

This wouldn't indicate much about the process of organizing the painting if the relative values were not used in some particular manner, but they were.

The grid used in this painting counts 48 squares in the horizontal rows and 72 in the vertical. On the horizontal, the code is applied in a sequence of 16 numbers which are repeated three times to complete the line. Line A, beginning with a vertical set, establishes a pattern that is modified in Line B by inverting pairs of stroke sets beginning with a horizontal:

Line A : 1 ∞ 2 ∼ 3 ∅ 4 ∪ 5 ∴ 6 ∞ 7 ∼ 8 ∴
- repeat two times

Line B : ∞ 1 ∼ 2 ∅ 3 ∪ 4 ∴ 5 ∞ 6 ∼ 7 ∴ 8
- repeat two times

Lines A and B, repeated in alternation thirty-six times, compose the complete image. The final appearance of *World #18* is largely due to the transition from one value to another that results from the application of the colour code in this manner.

If mind had the upper hand in the organization of *World #18*, the body also had a role to play, a role clearer in this work perhaps than in some of the other *World Paintings*. With the use of a grid, a code

and a strategy, there would seem to be little left for the artist's body to do but carry on according to instructions, fastidiously placing the one-inch strokes in their appointed positions. But even within these constraints, the body has marked its presence by varying the stroke, making it full and rich, sparse or dry, accentuating the attack or passing lightly over an area. In *World #18*, the strokes at the top are firm and solid but they become increasingly faint towards the bottom as if the artist loaded the brush with paint and, working downwards, allowed the paint to run out. Used in this manner, the paint becomes a measure of the artist's gestures while contributing to the appearance of slightly convex, cone-shaped volumes, in situated the very shallow pictorial space bound up with the surface of the canvas itself.

The importance of paint as a substance is further illustrated by two paintings executed in March, 1971. In these works, the colour code and number order are arranged so that one-colour stroke sets are apparent and grouped closely together in areas counting up to ten or more squares. During their execution, the brush was heavily overloaded; the paint has run to the point of joining up with strokes in different squares. As the dribbles run both vertically and horizontally, it seems that the artist turned the painting on their sides in order to exploit the quality of the paint body as much as possible. The difference between this situation and that of *World #18* serves to emphasize the importance given to the activity of using paint.

The following month, using a relatively large brush and strokes vaguely reminiscent of the N and Z configurations in the *World Paintings*, Martin painted two works, *Proxine Purple* and *Bocour Green*, expanding the one colour areas of the paintings mentioned above to the scale of an 84" by 72" canvas. In the

series of one colour paintings that followed, the strokes working up the image from the attack points became sinuous, tangled trails. Each work dealt with a pre-established quantity of a given colour of paint over 42 square feet of canvas (10).

It would seem that Martin did not find the distinction between paint as a substance and paint as colour pertinent at this point in his work. When writing of it, he presents colour as a place, a locality to be explored by the body, a substance that can be used to enact feelings not only about a specific hue but also with it.

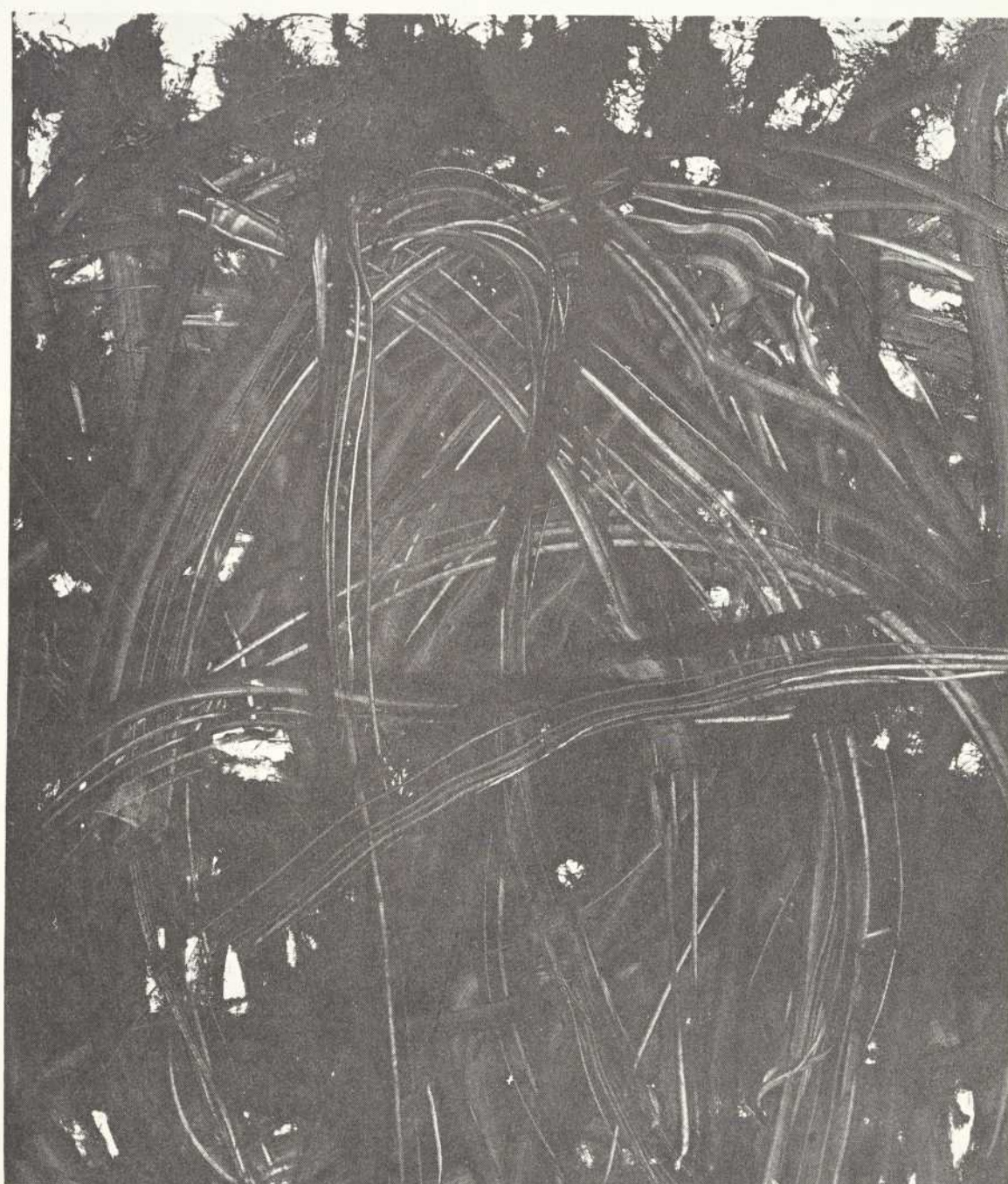
At this point I should have added that I'm not sure of the distinction mentioned has ever been important for Martin - even now - to the degree that it is a purely logical distinction. The main point is that a kind of bifurcation seems to have taken place within Martin's work, whether he has rationalized it as "substance" or not. All this has to do with the rather complicated questions raised by the "water colours without colour" mentioned a bit further on.

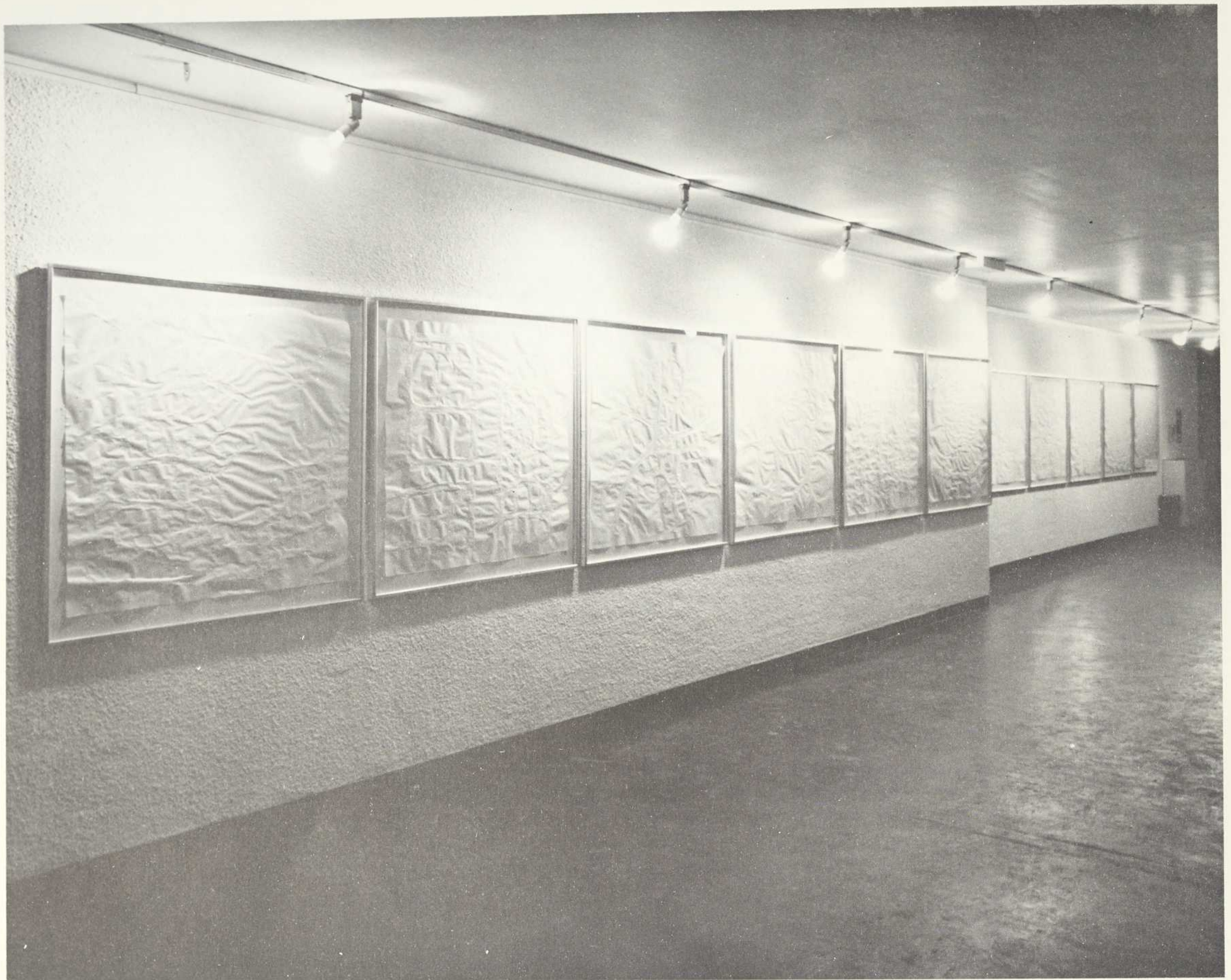
From the *One Colour Paintings* in that they constitute several distinct enactments with the same colours, each enactment having the radical value of being done at a certain time, at a certain place and under certain conditions (11). They proceed primarily from the body and its abilities to feel and do and are the product of a process by which painting as work has been derationalized, the intellectual framework of format and quantitative measure notwithstanding. This decrease in the organizational role of mind seems to have two important consequences. As the painting process claims and affirms the presence and rights of the body, the products tend to assume the role of *objects* in the root sense of that word things thrown in one's way. Corresponding to the weakening of the painting's bond with mind,

BOCOUR GREEN, 1971, acrylic on canvas, 72" x 84".



BRIGHT RED #8, 1972, acrylic on canvas, 84" x 72".





INSTALLATION SHOT

there is an increase in doubt about its purpose which generates a situation of extreme ambiguity.

A distinction between substance and colour seems to be implied by a series of water colours without colour that Martin painted in the summer of 1973. These works involve no pigment whatsoever; water was simply brushed onto the paper and the resultant wrinkles formed the image (12). Even if the "substance" of this paint evaporated once it was used, it still was the major element in the painting process. A similar distinction would seem to be reflected in one of the *Black Paintings* in the recent exhibition: *Iron Oxide - Mars Black 1*. In this title, "iron oxide" designates a component of the paint substance and seems to indicate the paint's reality as a thing in itself; "mars black" refers to the perception of the paint as colour, recalling the problem of appearance and the paint's existence as a thing for vision.

Only recently it has occurred to me that a number of notions I thought I understood are really very fuzzy and need a great deal more exploration. "Documenting", "recording", "enacting", "performing" and "embodying" have to do with "evidence" and "process" as ex-

ternally perceptible functions of current "reality". They nevertheless have something to do (by way of reference?) with "experience" which, because it is a dimension to subjective existence, always escapes exteriority in some way. If the bond between exterior and interior reality has to do with our sense of presence in the world, then Martin's work would seem to have a lot to do with the manner in which this sense is triggered.

FEELING

Considered within a context that also contains works with the limpid, rational clarity of the *World Paintings*, the *Black Paintings* appear all the more opaque to the spirit, holding reason at bay. They are massive, imposing physical presences, goading, urging and recalling a mind only too prone to dispel a sense of place by naming names: sweep, furrow, trough and overflow. These works are for the eyes that are of the body but mainly for being here, being here that is this way and no other. As if Rilke's ascending angels had come down to earth.

notes

1. The show also contained an object entitled *Dedicated to Jackson Pollock* that contained a tube of Aquatec Mars Black paint immersed in water contained by a glass jar and presented on an ornate, antique-gold wall bracket. The work suggests relationships that haven't been developed here, notably Pollock's and Martin's common tendency to seek in-put from written sources.
2. Connections with other people's work also appear and raise legitimate questions. My feeling is that these questions are rarely well answered unless the artist's work is grasped in the first place as a set of internal relationships that can be used subsequently for comparative purposes.
3. When they can be ascertained from credible sources, an artist's intentions can serve to orient this kind of investigation to the degree that they are effectively manifested in the work. In this sense one could speak of the "objective intentionality" of a body of work - if it didn't sound so self-contradictory. Three texts of Martin's have been used here: "For Pierre" in the



GUELPH TRIP - ONE & TWO #17, 1975, black acrylic (aquatec) on canvas, 84" x 66".

catalogue *Boucherville Montreal Toronto London*. The national Gallery of Canada, 1973; "Conversation, October 12, 1973, Between Ron Martin and Anne Garwood" in the catalogue *Ron Martin*, London Public Library and Art Museum, 1974; and "Joan Murray interviews Ron Martin" *Canadian Forum*, L111 (Feb. 1974).

4. There is another set of terms that has to do with the relationship between the texts Martin has written or dictated about his work and the work itself. Potential contradictions appear mainly in those parts of the texts that deal with the viewer's approach to the work. While claiming to address the works to the viewer's sense of liberty, he is curiously directive about how they should be seen and what values they represent.
5. See Anne Brodzky's review of this work in *Artscanada*, No. 108 (May 1967), p. 5.
6. David Rabinowitch reviewed this work in *Artscanada*, No. 134/135 (Aug. 1969) p. 36.
7. One of the interesting things about these works is that if they are considered on a different level as a *pair*, the *Transfer* has a kind of originality that reflects back on the *Conclusion* as one of its conditions.
8. The water colours were reviewed by Ross Woodman in *Artscanada*, No. 148/149 (Oct.-Nov. 1970), p. 81.
9. The *World Paintings* were reviewed by Gary Michael Dault in *Artscanada*, No. 154/155 (April-May 1971), pp. 66-68.
10. Martin discusses these paintings with Gary Michael Dault in "*Talking with Ron Martin*", *Artscanada*, No. 166/67/68 (Spring 1972), pp. 90-91.
11. One aspect of these works that is of considerable interest concerns the socialization of the viewer's experience of colour. If red has a fairly good chance of triggering notions of fire, heat, blood danger and revolt, white, at least since Melville and Joyce, is particularly ambiguous.
12. This use of substance also brings the ideas of

evidence and truth into play. The gesture by which the water is brushed onto the paper is the immediate, "true", sign of the artist's personal, expressive activity; the wrinkles left on the paper, while being conditioned by the water, are only the evidence of what once happened there in a substantial manner. Because they stand as it were between the viewer and the artist's non-mediated act, the wrinkles conceal the truth of the original act at least partially. In the *Black Paintings*, the same relationship remains a central problem, but it is approached somewhat differently because the substance does not disappear. The artist's gestures while painting (truth - personal expression) are embodied in the shifting and moving about of the paint; the record of this activity (evidence - the form given to the paint while painting) is however only partial because the paint, in flowing back upon the forms, tends to conceal the truth. On the question of truth and evidence, see the brief text: "Ron Martin - October 3, 1973" in *Six London Artists #2*, Catalogue, The London Public Library and Art Museum. ■

CLAUDE MONGRAIN

entretien avec France Morin

NOTES

Bien qu'elles découlent de la perception que j'ai de la réalité, mes sculptures ne visent pas à projeter une image de cette réalité. Le sens d'une sculpture sera la résultante de l'organisation matérielle de ses composantes.

Chacune est perceptible pour ce qu'elle est et compréhensible sans références extérieures. L'énergie en présence s'exprime réellement et aucune illusion ne contribue à créer une image métaphorique.

Toute sculpture qui affirme la primauté du sens sur la forme est nécessairement idéaliste, animiste et anthropomorphique.

Toutes les relations (des parties entre elles et

de chaque partie au tout) sont nécessaires à la configuration de l'ensemble.

Le réel en sculpture, c'est la matière.

Dans la mesure où la sculpture est liée à l'utilisation de la matière, le sculpteur ne peut échapper aux caractéristiques fondamentales qui la déterminent: la forme, l'ordre et la position.

Assumer la "matérialité" de l'oeuvre, c'est s'inscrire dans une problématique où le sens se définit à partir de l'information véhiculée par la sculpture même et non pas par référence immédiate à une réalité qui lui est extérieure et qu'on pourrait lui associer de fa-

çon métaphorique ou symbolique.

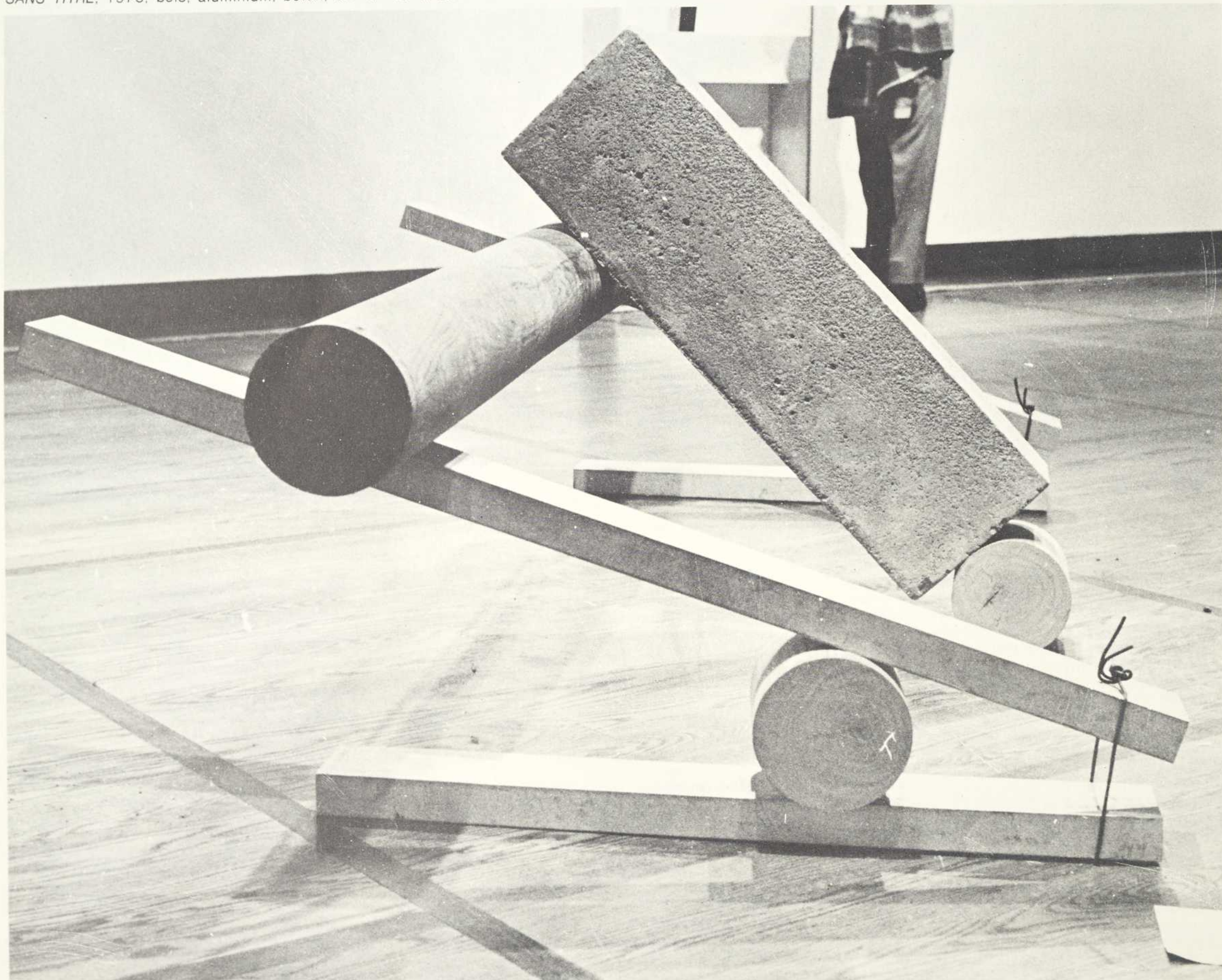
Un système est un assemblage plus ou moins complexe d'éléments en interaction.

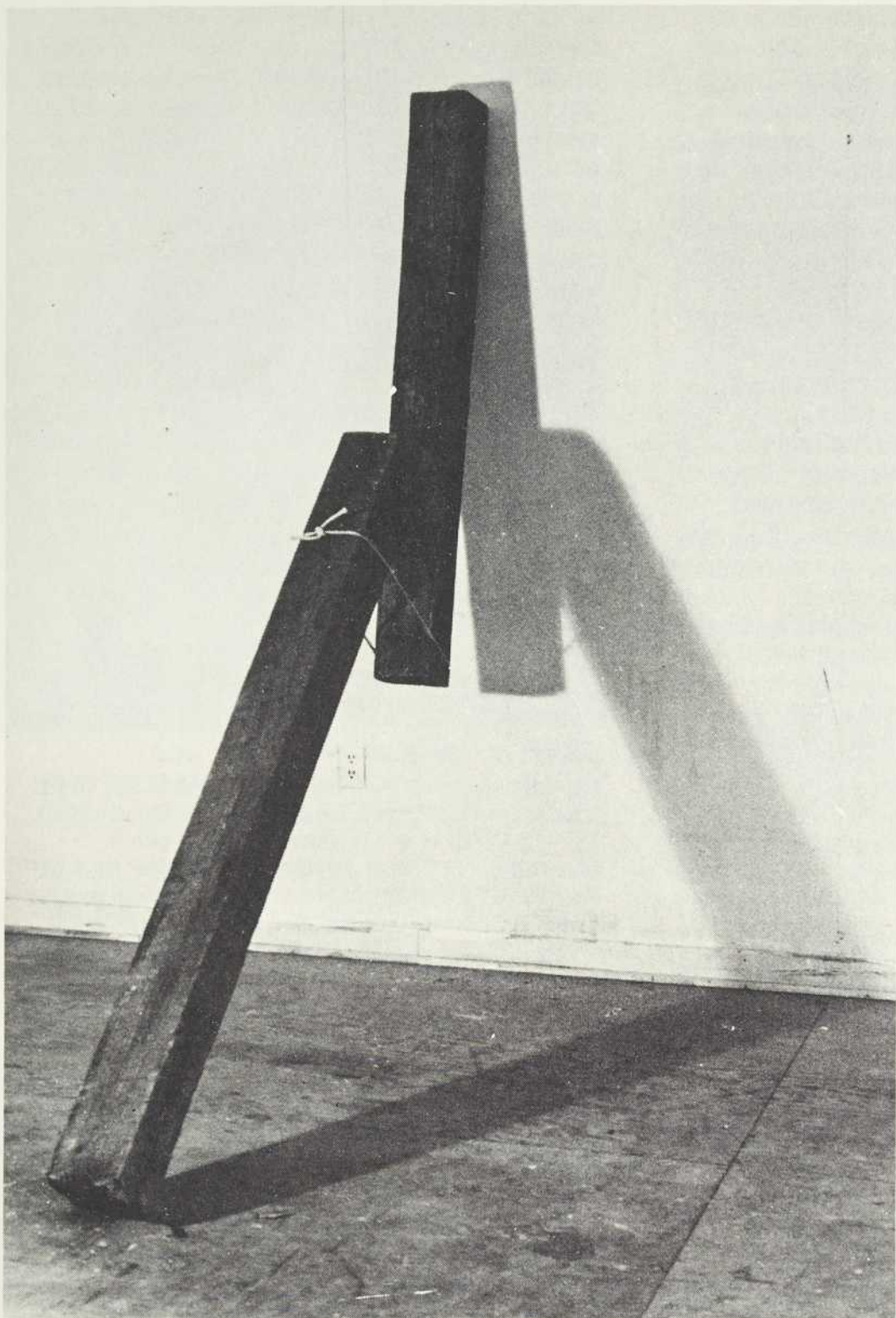
Tous les systèmes ont une tendance inhérente au changement. L'état statique serait la phase ultime de ce processus, l'expression d'un niveau d'ordre supérieur résultant de l'équilibre de l'énergie à l'intérieur d'un système.

La création artistique, prise comme l'expression d'une liberté individuelle et la résultante d'un travail auto-déterminé dirigé vers la connaissance ne saurait être confondue avec les modes de production capitalistes et les valeurs bourgeoises qui le sous-tendent, non plus qu'assigné à une fonction utilitaire à l'intérieur d'un système socialiste.

L'art, dans la mesure où il a pour objet le développement de la pensée, devient incompatible avec tout système qui ne

SANS TITRE, 1975, bois, aluminium, béton, 92" x 48" x 30".





SANS TITRE, 1974, bois corde, roche, 6' x 7' x 8'.

propose pas une définition nouvelle de l'activité humaine.

Car ce qui est en cause dans la question de l'insertion de l'art dans la société, c'est la définition même du travail. Toute idéologie qui vise à perpétuer la notion de travail (l'homme au service de la machine pour la production de biens consommables) comme activité essentielle, entrera inévitablement en conflit avec la pensée artistique. La seule possibilité de réconciliation réside dans le développement de la machine qui, en assurant la production, permettra à tout homme d'exercer librement l'usage de sa pensée et de déterminer librement les moyens qu'il entend prendre pour développer cette connaissance de l'univers vers laquelle doit tendre toute activité humaine.

Claude Mongrain, septembre 1975

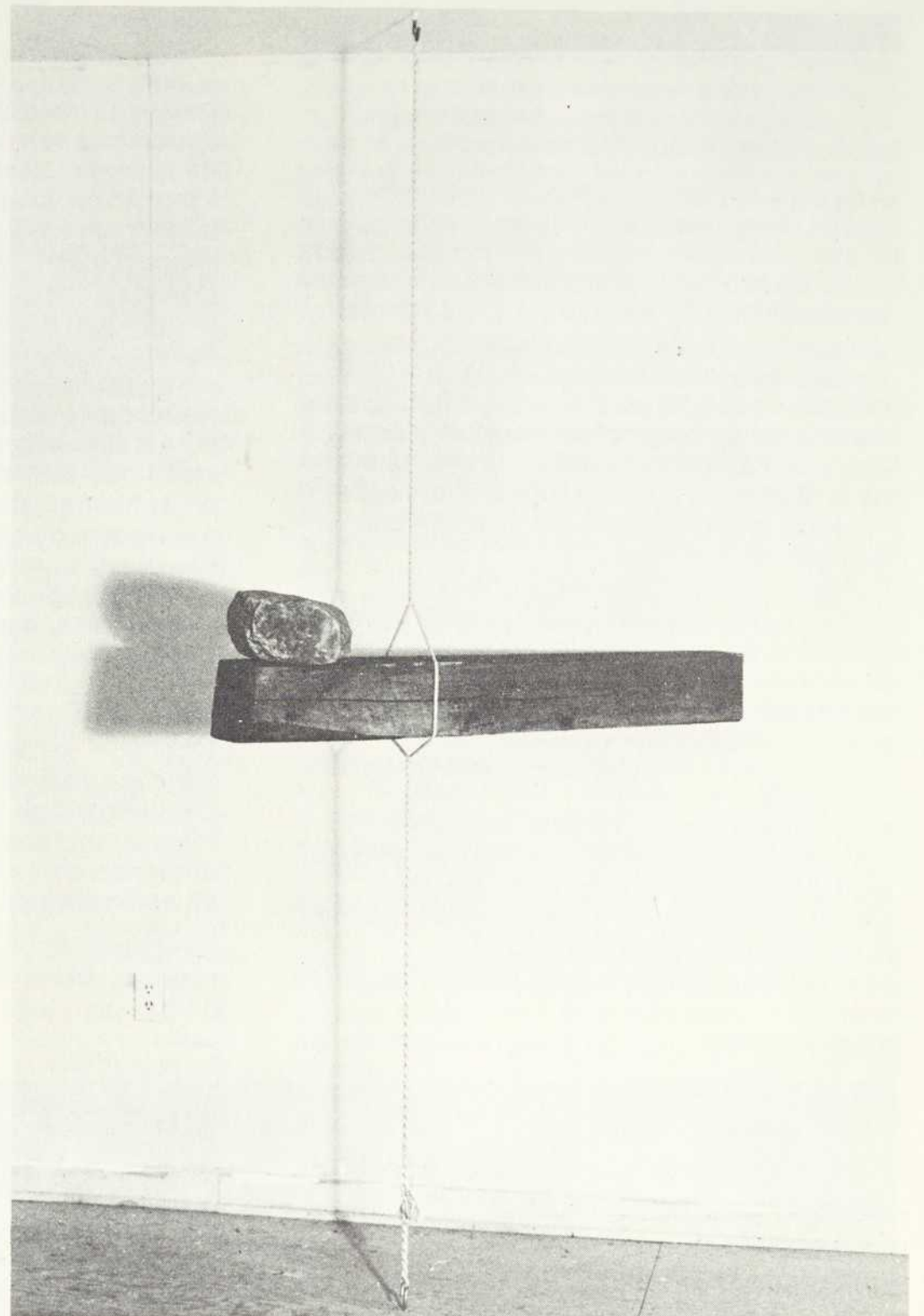
Extrait d'un entretien entre Claude Mongrain et France Morin réalisé les 9 et 11 décembre 1975. Les questions posées ont été supprimées car elles n'avaient pour but que de permettre à l'artiste de parler de son travail.

Dans mon travail, il y a un lien inséparable entre la structure et la forme, la structure prise comme l'ensemble des relations entre les éléments. De l'utilisation des éléments premiers, à partir de leur forme, leur contour,

leur volume, leur densité et de leur combinaison, découle une image; mais à ces éléments, aucune image n'est rattachée à priori, aucune référence extérieure. Une image globale se crée, qui découle de la structure même de l'objet, qui est conséquente à son organisation et qui peut sembler en contradiction apparente avec la structure de l'objet.

Pour revenir à la subjectivité dans mon travail, dans le choix des matériaux, il y a sûrement une part subjective; au début je travaillais avec des objets trouvés mais il s'est posé un problème de transposition: ces objets trouvés imposaient une limite de format, (une brique par exemple) et aussi le fait que je ne veux pas au départ, comme je le disais tantôt, qu'il y ait de référence extérieure de rattacher aux composantes de la sculpture. Mais le choix des matériaux, leur coloration, c'est finalement secondaire. Ce qui est subjectif, c'est le choix de l'image globale qui résulte de la manipulation et de l'organisation des éléments premiers.

Que la sculpture fonctionne n'est qu'une condition première et l'assemblage ne vise pas à démontrer de façon quantifiable que ça marche vraiment, l'assemblage ne vise pas à une simple démonstration. A partir des mêmes éléments, il pourrait y avoir différentes organisations possibles, et



SANS TITRE, 1974, bois, corde, roche, 4' x 40" x 8'6".

sûrement que certaines pourraient être plus descriptives que d'autres. Je pars de certains éléments et je les combine en laissant suffisamment de place au hasard pour que puisse apparaître une configuration inattendue.

A la limite, pour que ce soit strictement objectif, on pourrait incorporer à la sculpture des instruments de mesure, indiquer des déplacements possibles ou faire une série de constructions qui soient des variantes possibles d'une organisation donnée et où la série véhiculerait des informations sur le fonctionnement de la sculpture. Mais je ne travaille pas dans cet esprit-là, je ne le fais pas dans le sens strictement didactique d'une démonstration qui viserait à mesurer ce qui se passe, c'est intéressant dans la mesure où le fonctionnement peut générer une organisation qui soit imprévisible et ambiguë.

Pour revenir à l'élément hasard, il occupe une place importante dans mon travail. C'est à dire que mon approche doit laisser place à des développements plus ou moins prévisibles mais que je peux intégrer après coup dans la mesure où ils sont conformes aux règles que j'ai déterminées, bien qu'ils ne peuvent être déduits à partir de ces mêmes lois. Je choisis des éléments que je manipule de façon systématique et auxquels je confère une fonction propre. Cette manipulation, qui

est ma façon d'aborder les éléments, laisse suffisamment de place au hasard pour que surgissent des événements inattendus, comme l'idée de précarité peut découler d'une structure que l'on sait stable.

A propos des minimalistes, l'intérêt de leur travail réside dans leur affirmation de la matérialité de l'objet. Par contre, chez un type comme Judd, cette démarche l'a amené à une réduction de plus en plus grande de l'objet, dans le but d'éviter toute allusion à des réalités extérieures à celui-ci. Je vois cela comme un point zéro. Pour moi, affirmer la matérialité de l'objet c'est une position qui doit aller dans le sens de la complexité et non de la réduction. L'information véhiculée par l'objet et la place laissée au hasard étant fonction de la complexité.

Dans ce sens, il m'apparaît curieux que Marcel Saint-Pierre (1) rejette en art une approche qui passe par la matérialité, où le sens se définit par la matérialité de l'oeuvre. Ce faisant, il adopte automatiquement une position idéaliste qui est incompatible avec le marxisme, à moins que son marxisme ne soit idéaliste?

Pour ce qui est de la dimension de mes sculptures, je considère que les perceptions sont différentes selon qu'elles sont très petites ou très grosses, mais personnellement je ne veux pas accentuer la charge psychologique comme c'est le cas chez Serra

par exemple. Ce n'est pas un aspect que je tiens à accentuer. Je veux que cela soit suffisamment gros pour que la pièce ait une présence mais je ne tiens pas à terroriser le spectateur parce que ce serait de le mettre dans un état de non réceptivité au niveau de l'analyse de la sculpture. Parce que en ce qui concerne mon travail, il n'y a pas seulement l'impact global, il y a aussi le démarche que je fais, je pense que la perception de mes choses doit jouer sur une espèce de dualité entre ce que tu sais de la pièce et ce que tu perçois de cette dernière, voir dans quelle mesure ces deux perceptions sont contradictoires, alors que si je les faisais monumentales et terrorisantes, on n'aurait probablement pas envie de décortiquer le processus, de comprendre cette dualité entre une chose que l'on sait tenir et une chose qui a l'air de ne pas vouloir tenir.

Je considère personnellement que c'est un faux problème de faire une séparation radicale entre internationalisme et nationalisme. On ne peut évidemment pas nier qu'on est sensible aux informations qui viennent de partout, on ne peut faire l'autruche et se mettre la tête dans le sable. Mais je considère que mes influences décisives sont locales (Comtois, Saxe) et non ce qu'on appelle "internationalistes".

Par contre, là où l'on pourrait définir le régionalisme, c'est dans les mécanismes qui

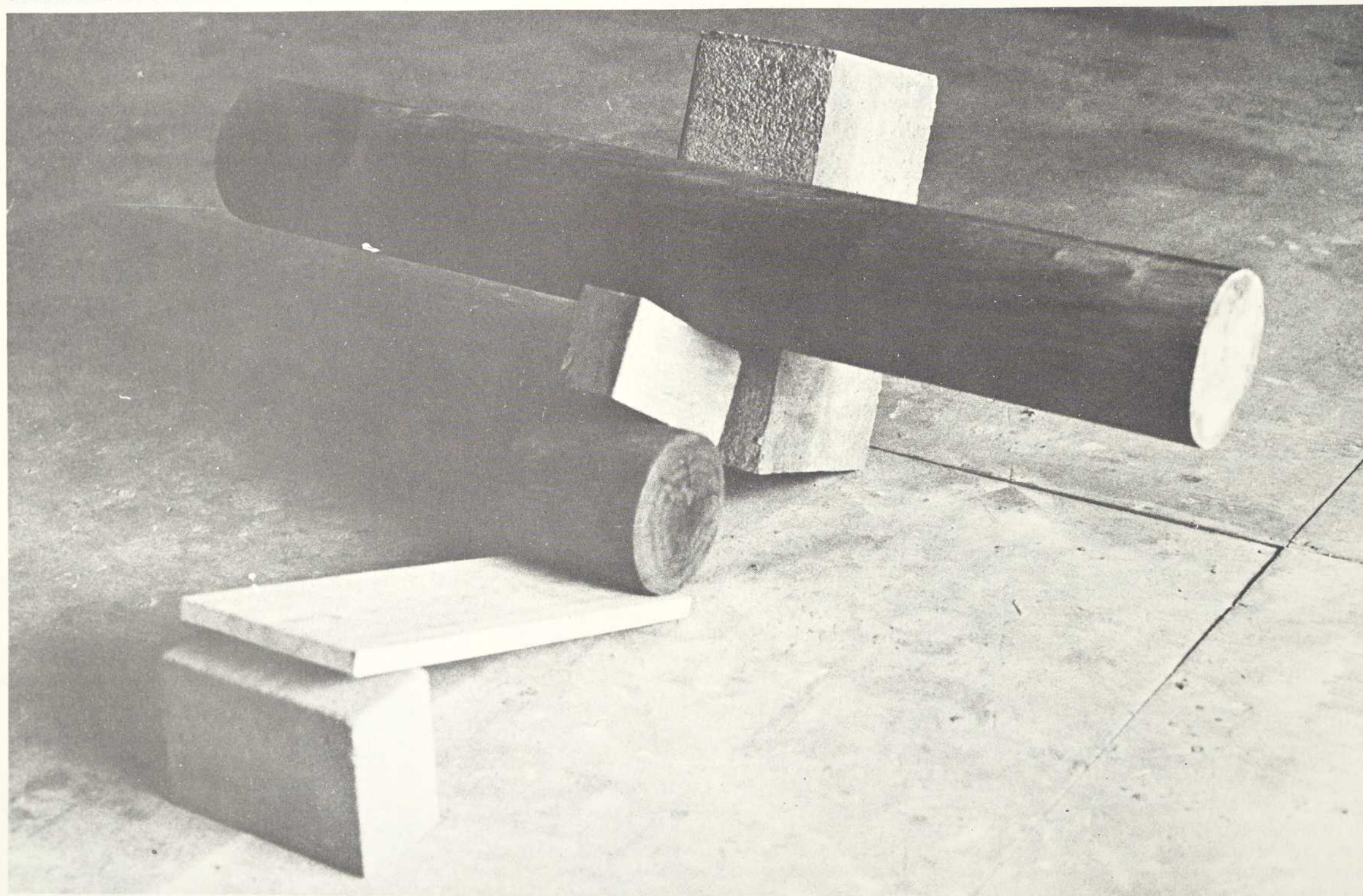
sont critiques de l'information qui nous parvient. Ce qui définit une réaction propre à un milieu ce sont les mécanismes critiques qui sont propres à ce milieu et c'est dans ce sens que je peux dire que Comtois et Saxe sont des influences parce que ce sont eux qui ont servi de modèle et de filtre à un moment donné. Mais encore là, la question reste posée: En quoi, Comtois, Molinari, Saxe, etc, sont-ils proprement québécois? Je crois qu'au Québec on traverse une crise d'identification et on semble vouloir se rallier à des valeurs plus folkloriques qui semble-t-il nous correspondent plus? Qu'est-ce qui est authentiquement québécois par rapport à ce qui vient de l'extérieur? Je pense que ce sont les *mécanismes critiques québécois* (oeuvres et transmission verbale) qui le définissent et que de toute façon ce n'est pas une notion statique et immuable.

1. Marcel Saint-Pierre est peintre et directeur du département d'histoire de l'art, à l'Université du Québec à Montréal.

note biographique

CLAUDE MONGRAIN est né au Québec en 1948. Il étudie à l'École des Beaux-Arts de Montréal de 1966 à 1969 et à l'Université du Québec à Montréal en 1969 et 1970. Il séjourne en Europe en 1970. Vit à Montréal et enseigne à l'Université Laval à Québec. Il participe au mois d'octobre 1975 à l'exposition Québec '75 au Musée d'art contemporain.

SANS TITRE, 1975, bois et béton, 48" x 33" x 16".





Les Levine in Cape Dorset, 1974.

WE ARE STILL ALIVE

by Les Levine

I had the impression before I came that Cape Dorset was more problematical weatherwise. I thought it would be a bit more arctic, more snow and stuff like that. I didn't realize that it would be all gravel and dry. I thought it would be more mucky, like a movie I had seen of the Klondike. And I had the vision that maybe the Eskimos would be living in rustic type houses. I didn't realize that no trees grow here at all. Because when I'd seen that movie, there were things like log cabin restaurants. There was the assay office which was made out of log cabin and had a swinging door, and so that was the image one had. And then the Eskimos were all living in sort of huts that were semi-igloo shaped. That was the kind of vision I had and also the notion that the Eskimos had very strange customs.

But they look pretty much the way I thought they would look, the women do anyway, with the things they're carrying on their backs. I've seen many Eskimo carvings. And that image is depicted all the time so that image was in my mind. The men seem to be very much into a kind of clothing you'd see at gas stations or in a lot of North American cities. It either goes between ex-army surplus or high-styled Hudson Bay hunting outfitters' equipment. They either have these parkas that are in extreme bright colors, as though they were made for a Sears catalog, or else they have the look of all American teenagers which is denim clothing or ex-marine jackets, but there's nothing in between. It's hard to believe that it's handcraft in anyway because it all looks the same. It looks as though it's mass-produced item that they buy somewhere. Then I had the impression that one might be in a situation where you might be asked to do something that you would not be able to cope with yourself as a concept, and that would freak them out. Like you might be asked to sit down to a meal in which it was raw whale that was being offered, and it would freak you out to eat raw whale, and it would freak them out if you didn't. I thought that situation might come up, but it didn't.

There were a couple of other impressions that one got from talking to White people. And one was that the Eskimo did not like to be called an "Eskimo". That that was offensive. I think it was put to me in one case that calling an Eskimo an "Eskimo" was the same thing as calling a Black man a "nigger". And that they looked at it that way. That they preferred to be called Inuits. So I was getting myself all ready with that word. It was like I didn't want to make the mistake of calling anybody an Eskimo. And I was told that they're very drunk all the time. And that they only work when they want to eat. The impression I was given was that they make enough carvings to get a skidoo, and then when they've got the skidoo, they don't have the money to run it because the way their reasoning runs is, you make carvings to get money and when you've got what you want you stop making carvings. So they wouldn't take into consideration the cost of running something. This is an impression that I got from talking to White people in the South. They gave me the impression the Eskimos just do it purely to get money and that if they want a hi-fi set then they make a carving, and as soon as they've got the hi-fi set, if you say to them, "Can you make another carving?" they'd say, "Why? I have the hi-fi set". You see that was the impression I had. I realize it's not a right impression now.

I also had the impression that when things break the Eskimos throw them out. Which is something that I never expected to see, realized in the form that I saw it. You walk around Cape Dorset and you see parts of skidoos all over the place. Broken skidoos, whole ones that just don't work, are abandoned all over the place. It was hard for me to visualize when somebody told me when I was in the South, "That when a hi-fi set breaks, they just throw it out and get a new one when they can". They have no concept to repair anything I was told in the South, and I didn't realize

that it was true. I couldn't put that together in my head. And when I came here it certainly appeared to be true, but not for the reason I was told. I was told that they do it because they have no concept of saving things or repairing things. But it seems very obvious to me that in most cases it's impossible to get anything repaired here. So what else can you do. But you wouldn't know if you were in the South the difficulties of getting a hi-fi set repaired in Cape Dorset. And how in fact, given the transportation problem, the weight problem, it might be cheaper to throw it out and get a new one than get it repaired.

Another impression I had was that they were extremely primitive people. And that they were hunting and fishing all the time. And that they were very shy people. If I was told that they were shy once, I must have been told it a million times, that they're shy. And that they don't understand the White man's way of looking at things. I was told that a few hundred times. And I didn't find most of them to be shy. I find their sensibility is different than our's, but it's not really a shyness. They like other people, they really like to see other faces come to Cape Dorset. The idea that a lot of people have, that you would be an intruder, is totally ridiculous because a lot of the younger people have heard phonograph records and they're into so-called North American teenage culture on some level. That's the biggest shock of all, to find that there's a teenage culture here which is almost identical to all of North American teenage cultures. They wear all the same clothes, they have decaloes that all the kids are wearing, they're listening to the exact same records that all the kids are listening to. That amazes one because that is not an image of an Eskimo that you could have in your mind if you live in the South. I don't know where you would get that image from. I think the people in the arctic are fascinated by anything that comes in from the outside. When I asked Mary Kudjuakju, the old woman sculptor-carved, what she would like to see happen in her life at this point, her answer was very simple and direct, "Anything new always amazes me", which I thought was a very sophisticated answer. And so when people say to you when you come into this situation that you are an outsider and you're a White man in this situation. But they're fascinated by you. You bring in information to them. When a plane comes in to Cape Dorset a whole gang of people go out to meet it. A whole gang of people who have no possible reason to go out and meet it. Why? It's very simple. Because they're cut off. They have no television. They have no radio, they have no newspapers. Your face is the news for the day when you get here, your face. That new face walking around town is the link with the outside world, that's the national news of the day in Cape Dorset.

When we got to Frobisher Bay and we were talking to the man there who was the ticket agent for this charter flight which we came in on, he told us that Cape Dorset was an extremely troubled community. That there was a lot of serious drinking going on here -- out of control drinking -- a lot of out of control gambling -- a lot of out of control promiscuity. A lot of general social mix ups. And he said that it was an extremely artistic community. That because it was an extremely artistic community, one would expect to find those kinds of things there. So the apprehension was there, before one even got here, you know, and when one got to Cape Dorset, one was immediately bombarded by a number of white people telling you, be careful with the Eskimos, don't approach them. Don't get involved with them too quickly. Be cautious. You could make the wrong move. You could freak them at all. I found that my impression of what was going on was that the white man who had been here wanted you to leave here with some impression that they had developed rather than your own impression. They wanted to keep a very status quo situation here vis-à-vis the white man's relationship to the Eskimo. I couldn't understand why they wanted that, except that at some point they were all semi-officials in some form, and I assumed that that was the Canadian Govern-

LES LEVINE

We are still alive

Introduction

You have made something new that is different from anything seen before anywhere, and which will never, once it is gone, be seen again. Because you have done this and still do, you can be called an "artist".

Canadian Dept. of Indian and Northern Affairs
Publication no. QS-3018-000-HE-A-1

Have you ever wondered what the world would be like if it were run by artists, if our entire economy were based on art? In other words, if the only job around were the production of art, what would our society be like? For the Eskimo artists living in the Northwest Territories in Canada, these questions have already been answered.

Cape Dorset is a settlement of approximately 700 Eskimos. For most of the inhabitants of the settlement, the production of arts or crafts is the only possible means of employment, and over the past 15 years Cape Dorset has surfaced as one of the most important art producing settlements in the arctic. Amongst themselves the Cape Dorset Eskimos have formed a cooperative called the West Baffin Island Cooperative Ltd. The Co-op approach was introduced by the Canadian government to give the Eskimos a marketing vehicle for their carvings and prints. Before the cooperative existed they would sell their carvings to the Hudson's Bay Co., but when the co-op started they began to buy all the work.

In the summer of 1974, I went with my wife Catherine to Cape Dorset to work on the project entitled "We Are Still Alive," which will be shown at the Galerie Gilles Gheerbrant in Montreal from January 6 to 31, 1975. What follows here are my impressions of that experience along with those of Mary Hunt, a 30-year old Eskimo woman, who was born and raised in Cape Dorset.

ment's attitude in the situation. Simply don't mess around with that thing. Keep it the way it is because we're not ready to deal with any serious changes there yet.

There seems to be an extraordinary uptightness about people coming in here. The place looks in actual fact like one of the worst slums you've ever seen. It's a total welfare, wrecked, depressing environment from the point of view of the housing and the way it's been handled. Plywood structures with the paint peeling off them. Ten people fitted into a home, if you can call it a home, a clapboard house that would only fit one comfortably, maybe two at the most. And I know what the uptightness is about. It's like everybody here is guilty about something and you don't know why they feel that way. Part of it is they think they are intruding on the Eskimo, and the other part of it is that they think the Eskimo is stupid and can't do it for himself and needs their help, and that they're going to make sure he gets it on some level and try and keep other people from interfering with them. That may not be true -- it's an impression I got. The Eskimos are varied from that in my opinion. Some of them, the older ones maybe, genuinely are amused by you, but they wouldn't care to get too involved with you. The middle-aged group would like to not have much to do with you at all. The younger group want to get as involved with you as possible. Because you represent what they want to be, in some kind of way. But that whole idea that people keep on saying to you, be careful what you do, and so on and so forth, is ridiculous. Because it doesn't really matter. The people accept you on whatever level you present yourself. Some people don't but other people do. And that would be the same wherever you were.

If more white artists would come in here, of course they would change it radically. In the various talks that I've had with Kumakuluk, he has been relating to me ideas of art that most of the other artists in town would not consider. Well, it only takes a few more artists to come up and have some form of communication with people at Kumakuluk's age level to change the so-called art scene. It wouldn't happen in a second, it wouldn't happen in a week. But if there were a constant flow of artists coming up here it would certainly happen. If artists were to come here, it would obviously create problems as much as it would loosen problems. In the long run it would be a very good thing. In the short run it would have a complicated effect that's hard to consider in most other situations other than this one. Most of the art that is produced in this community is based by its nature on the producer of it not understanding what he's doing. And on the other hand, the seller of it involving it on some level of Canadiana or of craft or something like that. If other artists were to come up here they would obviously change the view of some of the artists here over a certain period of time, and those artists would start to think more seriously about what they were doing. They would probably start to take the same approach that some of the Southern artists do. And they would become less Eskimo in terms of Eskimo art, and more just pure artists. One of the things that is bound to happen is that in ten years an Eskimo artist will be an abstract painter. It's bound to happen. Because most of the young kids have none of the culture to relate to that we see in Eskimo art right now. The young kids only see that culture, those legends in the Eskimo prints the same way that we do. They see it for the first time when they see an Eskimo print. They've never witnessed it themselves and they never will because all of those things are dying out. And what the young kids are seeing today on some level exactly what every other young kid is seeing. It's a more impoverished situation here, but nevertheless they're seeing it. So they're more likely to make art at some point from now based on that experience. People might be afraid because they might think that it would damage the Eskimo art market. That it would damage the structure of the way Eskimo art is made. Eskimos make art not because they want to make art, but because they don't have any other

means of living. One has heard fifty times if you've heard it once that the reason most of the carvers do the work is because they have no job. Most carvers would say to you, "If I had a job I wouldn't do this". They don't really like doing it. It's very hard work and it's physical, manual labor that's hard on the body.

The one who comes in with the knowledge here is going to be the Southern artist, because the Southern artist has seen Eskimo art all over the south, whereas the Northern artist, the Eskimo, has never seen Southern art. The Eskimo is an extremely versatile workman. Generally one can see that a good carver is also a good carpenter or a good plumber or what have you. So that most of the ideas that the Southern artist can bring in could be adapted in many, many ways because Eskimos are very adaptable. They just make this one thing because people have told them to make it. You know, people have said, "You make this." or give them some idea of what should be made. And they have seen that when somebody makes this they get paid. And that when it's highly polished they get paid a little more. And when it's nicely shaped they get paid a bit more. And people like polar bears more than they do birds. They've done it on that basis. They've had no access to other art information. White people have been very definite about keeping that information away from them. So that their view of what is good is based on what brings the most money. In other words, the carver in town who is making the most money and buying the most skidoos and whatever, would be the one they would likely want to emulate. They have no critical view of anything beyond that.

There's one important consideration to make in the arctic. Art is not a luxury which people have in their homes the way it's considered in the South. Here art is the main industry. Art here is the coal mines in Birmingham. So you can't expect it to be viewed in quite the same way as in the South. Art is the main industry in this area. Art is where most people are employed and it's a totally different scene. The notion that you have when you see an Eskimo sculpture in Toronto, New York or in any major city in the world, is not something that is related to anything you see when you get here. I've been totally misled, it's not anything like I've seen before. But to add to that, the social problems involved in an art community, and the structure of the way the art is made, how it is merchandised, how it is criticized. The motivations involved in making it, the social structure surrounding how it's made, are very much a part of what I see as an artist in any situation, be it a painting in a New York gallery, be it a Henry Moore sculpture in Toronto, be it an Eskimo sculpture. I find that all the appendages to the making of art are very much a part of the art. And if the social structure is bad, and the reasons that the art is being made are bad, and I'm not saying that it is bad in this case, but if they are bad, then the bad reasons become a part of the art. And in time they devalue the art as an honest experience.

It is my position as an artist to use media to effect changes in language. Be they perceptive language, oral language, visual language or any other kind of language. So one would hope to be able to make a document that would clearly give the Eskimos a look at themselves that they have not had before. And also to show the Southerner some reality of the art experience that he thinks he may be having when he views Eskimo art. He should understand how the art is made. He should understand all the problems and all the reasons if it is going to have any real meaning to him.

There is an aspect of journalism in my work. There has been for quite some time. I feel that the artist should not get himself involved in something which he does not feel deeply concerned about. Therefore, I would say that an artist should not sign petitions, although I have signed a number of them in my life. But the realization came to me a few years ago, that signing petitions was too easy. That the artist had a



Recently finished prints are hung on the wall in the block printing workshop in Cape Dorset.



Finished carvings wait to be shipped out of the storage room of the West Baffin Island Eskimo Co-op in Cape Dorset.



Les Levine and Eskimo artist Kumakuluk stop for a smoke in the lithography workshop in Cape Dorset.



Catherine Levine behind the camera during the production of the video tape *We Are Still Alive* in Cape Dorset.



West Baffin Island Eskimo Co-op, Cape Dorset, Northwest Territories, Canada.

The Eskimo artist Kananyinak working on a carving outside his home in Cape Dorset



role and that the artist should attempt to fulfill that role. Instead of signing petitions he should get behind concerns he feels strongly about and he should attempt to use his art to effect those concerns. Now initially one was cautious about it because one felt that art and politics don't mix. I mean one had heard that till it came out of your ears. Art and social ideas don't mix, art and behaviourism don't mix. Any number of things like that. But at a certain point it became clear to me that art was going to have to deal with these things if art was going to survive, for me anyway. Then it became even more clear to me that it wouldn't be enough for the artist to be simply acting as a mirror which is a popular cliché about the artist being the mirror of society, but that it would be necessary for the artist to be pragmatic about something if he felt strongly enough. Not only say that this is happening. But to put together something that would express his own particular anxiety in it happening. And assuming that he's a reasonably well-tuned artist, it wouldn't merely be his anxiety, it would be a societal anxiety that he had read clearly enough to make it his own anxiety. So that put more simply, what the artist would be doing would be simply acting out for society an anxiety that they had at the moment. And to do that I felt he would have to take a more pragmatic position. So it wouldn't be a question of saying, here are the Eskimos, this is what look like, or here is Northern Ireland or whatever, but this is what I think about what I see in this situation. I have always felt that the artist's role was a very defined role in society. That his part in society was to be perceptive about what was happening in society. To some way ferret out the points in society that might be aching at that moment or might be causing underlying neuroses or anxieties and get them out.

The idea of preserving this situation in the arctic is not only ridiculous, it's ludicrous. If you're talking about preserving the situation the way it is, first of all, you've got to consider that you have an impossibility on your hands. Because this situation is changing rapidly just by natural causes. People have seen the white man's way of life, they like it and they want it. Particularly the younger ones. So you're not going to preserve that unless you do something which is totally reconstituted and synthetic, in order to preserve a society which is dying of its own natural causes. So the only alternative, when you can't preserve a situation like this is to start making sense of it. Is to start making it work for the people who are here.

The people here live an extremely hard life. They've been given a new way of life which at this point in time they can't afford. They don't have the means to support that way of life. They don't have the means to work, the means to produce what is necessary to get the goods that they now want because they've seen them. It's a question of taking a look at this structure and saying what can you do to make it more economically viable.

The old way of life here is dying a natural death. There's a lot to be said for letting change develop on its own here. But most of the government people who are up here are doing quite a good deal to prevent the change from happening here too quickly. If it's a question of allowing the Eskimos to go ahead and make their own choice, the choice would be very simple. They will say, "We want the white man's way of life. We know it's better than ours. We know we're not cold in the winter. We know we can have motors for our boats. We know we can have guns to shoot the seal we want to shoot." So it's very obvious what choice they'll make. They already have made it. They would make it on an even grander scale if the white man was to get out of their way. But the white man suspects that they're not ready for the total change yet. He'd better slow them down a bit.

When I came here first I really wanted the opportunity to work with some Eskimo artists and exchange ideas. Possibly even produce a work with an Eskimo artist if that were possible. But I was confronted with such an uptight situation that even to approach that became almost impossible. Then there was the language barrier which was considerable finding that most of the carvers and drawers here are older people who cannot speak English. I found that so many of them had been given this kind of welfare mentality, told they should not communicate except if they get something out of it.

You can't just work with an Eskimo artist who has always been told that as soon as you lift up a tool you are going to be paid. The Eskimos don't make art for the sake of making art like a Southern artist. A Southern artist might make a work of art with another artist as a way of creating a dialogue with the other artist. No intention to sell it maybe, but as a way of creating dialogue. But these people are not interested in talking about art, they don't have art in their homes, they don't have their carvings in their homes. They're not interested in that level of involvement. They get paid for working, and they see it that way. So they see your involvement in wanting to exchange artistic ideas with them as some form of work. That's an impossible barrier to break down.

The Eskimo Co-op is a good idea. If the Co-op were not here it would be possible for white people to come in here and buy the Eskimos' sculptures from them at very low prices. The Co-op helps to pull all of it together and make it an industry. So that aspect of it is very positive. And the fact that all the members of the community who produce art are Co-op members and stand to benefit from any profits that the Co-op might accrue, is an excellent idea. Whether it's a dollar or a thousand dollars, everything the Eskimos produce they get paid for. That does not happen to any white artist. He may produce a lot that he doesn't get paid for, and so that whole concept of buying everything that the carvers do continues the industry and helps pull it together. In some sense, one might say that the Co-op has been a bit naive because lot of things that have been bought in the arctic have been sold in the South for a lot more money. So that the dealers in the South make most of the money.

The Co-op is also expanding into oil, expanding into retail stores into weather station contracts, various things like that. So that the Co-op, whether it would admit it or not, sees itself as eventually becoming the large conglomerate in this area and controlling all the funds that are coming in, controlling all the profits. I feel that without the Co-op that this place would have little hope. I see the Co-op as a positive force for the people here. Even if the Co-op only provided a ready-made market, that would pull the community together to some degree. But it does a lot more than that. It merchandises the material, it helps control it to some degree, it helps it appreciate, it helps keep up interest in what the people are doing so there will be a continuing market for what they do, and provides them with ready cash when they need it, if they're willing to make the product that the Co-op wants, Eskimo art!

The people generally don't seem to like making carvings. As an individual who is an artist, one cannot help but be a little outraged at the idea that most of the people who are producing art in this community don't like doing it. They merely do it because it's the only means of survival that they have. And that if they got up the opportunity to have another means of survival they would stop carving very quickly. An artist down South might say, "I don't like making art." There is always the opportunity that he might do something else, there are industries around, there are offices to work in, there are other

places to do things. But here in Cape Dorset, there is no possibility to do anything, there isn't one industry here. You couldn't even repair a pair of shoes here. There isn't even a restaurant here where you could get a job as a dishwasher. There's nothing. So there's no way to support yourself unless you make art. And if you don't like making art there's no alternative, you just go on welfare. They have no alternative. If they decided tomorrow that I'm not getting enough satisfaction out of making this art, there's nothing else they can do.

WE ARE STILL ALIVE

Part 2

"Mary Hunt"
in conversation with Les Levine

I used to enjoy going to school here. Both of my brothers and I. And after school we used to go out a lot on our own. We had lots of freedom. We didn't go to stores and buy things like my kids do now. Now my kids goes out to buy few things like pops and chips. We would play out doors. I would play with my girl friends. Play in the tent, like play hunting, you know. Nowadays the kids play cowboys like in the movies. That has changed. We played dolls and dollies.

We lived in a government house and in the summertime we used to move into a tent. My parents used to like that, I guess they were used to that. They used to live in the hut or in the igloo all winter long and when the summer came, they used to move into the tent, and they still used to do that after we moved into the town here. We used to live in the tent in the summertime even if we had a proper house. They don't do that anymore. We used to go camping early in the spring and live in an igloo for a while. Then move into the tent from the hut. My father used to make a house out of old crates and then put some moss on it between two tents, it used to be pretty warm. I don't really recall what it was like to live in the igloo. It's cold, I find it really cold when I went out with my friends. I don't know how my folks used to live in them all the time in the olden days. I used to live out in the camp, too. But those days I can hardly remember. My parents moved here. My father helped with power plant operating here. The guy who used to be the Northern Officer, he asked my father to come in and he was helping out with power plant. He used to make money pretty good then go out hunting again. I think they'd rather live here right in town now, but yet they seem to like living outside in the camp.

I don't think they'll ever go back to the camp now and live in the old way of life 'cause they know that they can enjoy themselves, you know, like with the skidoos and dog team? The dog team is much slower, but safer though; if you break down in the skidoo, you lost. It really takes a long time to try to go back to your place if you break down with a skidoo. But they seem to like the skidoo better because it goes faster. They used to go out hunting for weeks, now they only take a few days to go out hunting if they are going out caribou hunting or seal hunting. But there is more lack of food now like the country food. I don't think the skidoo has really improved the people. They get sick easier now than before. Maybe because they are in the public places all the time or lack of meat. Maybe that's why, no proper foods. Now they have to have money to buy some food from the store. Some of them don't really bother with proper things to buy like with proteins in it. I care about protein a lot myself. They used to hunt the seal and the caribou which are full of protein. Now they don't do that so much. Only when they feel like it they go out hunting and get some as a recreation more than anything.

There never used to be any card games, that changed the life around here a lot. And gambling with money. I guess it's their sickness now. I don't like it myself. I



Eskimo boy holds microphone while he picks up the sounds on the headset of the chipping his mother makes during recording session with Les Levine.

guess they just can't help it anymore. They would say they don't want to do it, but once they see other people play they join them if they have some money with them. They play with the money, all they got and forget about their little ones. I don't like that at all. So the little ones are undernourished. They get tired while the mother and father are playing cards. They get dirty and hungry. Maybe that's why the housing is really poor here, too, because they hardly stay home. They go to somebody else's house to play cards. They'd like money like everybody else and yet they lose money all the time when they play cards. I don't know what they want. They'd like to live better, but they don't try. They can't help it I guess. You know with gambling and drinking. A lot of them would like to live out in the camp again like olden days. They will say it's much better, but yet they rather not live out there all the time now. They get better and more food and they don't think about money or playing cards, movies, stores. But still they come back and go back to same old thing.

But there isn't much hope. I mean, a person who lives here knows that. What can he work at? He can maybe make something for the Co-op. Maybe work for the power station, it only employs a couple of people, and then what else can he do? Nothing else to do. No, they are not educated. There's nothing they can do unless they do something for the white man. A lot of them are usually employed helping out the kadloona wives or doing some labor work that would last a week or month. I don't think they have any courage to start something going on themselves. No, they don't have any organization to think with. They're too weak to start something themselves. I'm sure they could do it if they tried.

I don't see any hope at all here. I wish there was something they could do, but like what? There's nothing to do here. I don't know what the television thing is going to do around here. That's something new for them, too. Maybe the kids will stay home more if they have television sets in their homes rather than running around. The Eskimo never drank before the white man came in. That's why they don't know how to take it. Downing it all at once. It makes you drunk. I guess they don't realize what is the law. To me I wouldn't want to have a name in the RCMP. After drinking too much they put you in the jail and put you in the records and everything. I don't like that for myself. I think a lot of them don't understand that. When somebody walks around drunk, RCMP picks them up and puts him in the jail. I guess in a way it's the best for them to pick the drunken people before they get into trouble like in hurting other people's feelings and hurting them physically. It hurts my feelings when I see them like that. I never used to see them before like that. I wish they had taken this booze thing more slowly. Maybe they think it's a modern way of life. You know, like a hippy, like nothing to do, freedom. ■



STEVE REICH

Steve Reich est aujourd'hui l'un des musiciens les mieux connus de la nouvelle musique américaine. Sa présence à Montréal en janvier 76 pour deux concerts (programme inclus) constitue l'événement musical le plus substantiel de l'année.

L'accessibilité (par le disque/en direct) aux musiques du monde entier est un phénomène relativement récent. Tout musicien sensible et intelligent ne peut en faire abstraction. Il lui faut cependant assimiler ces influences et s'inventer une musique à soi (pour tous), ouverte mais identifiée, habitée, incarnée: processus d'ethnisation.

"Plus l'homme s'éloigne de ses origines, plus sa mentalité se développe et plus aussi ses besoins augmentent." Alexandra David-Neel, *En Chine/Pour la Vie*.

"The mixing of races and the mixing of cultures creates the greatest of all things. This is my theory. This is what I really believe in. Not only in the 20th century our period. Just check out the countries from which

the greatest intellectual and artistic giants came. They have always been from countries where a great amount of mixing was going on. (...) So the further the races go apart, the greater the freshness of the blood." Joe Zawinul, *Down Beat*, janvier 75.

Durant les années 70, en réaction contre les musiques commerciales dégénérées, la musique contemporaine hyperspécialisée (trop souvent une négation du corps biologique, une division du corps et de l'esprit suivant le principe: diviser pour mieux régner) et par saturation des formes éculées d'une musique occidentale surdiffusée, les groupes d'improvisation se multiplient partout à travers le monde. Hors institutions et pour la plupart non subventionnés, ils assurent eux-mêmes la viabilité de leur entreprise, la visibilité de leur musique: regroupement en coopérative ou autre forme d'association, festivals auto-gérés, production indépendante d'enregistrements, animation etc... C'est une reprise en main manifeste de la musique afin de réinscrire toute pratique dans la vie quotidienne, son contexte

socioculturel/historique, et compte tenu de l'origine de toute musique, son rôle agissant dans une société saine, informée, re-liée.

Les musiques ethniques traditionnelles, enracinées, sont dès lors revendiquées par la plupart des musiciens d'expérimentation, par un public d'auditeurs croissant. On en redécouvre l'actualité. La musique de Steve Reich, bien que *non improvisée*, est le résultat, la manifestation avouée de cette ouverture de l'esprit aux musiques ethniques (plus spécifiquement d'Asie du Sud-est et d'Afrique et sans pour autant renoncer à renier la tradition occidentale).

"I'm very conscious now of returning to the western classical music tradition as a source of new ideas, and I'm moving back to a western ensemble which includes all parts of the orchestra.(...) I want to create a new orchestra which includes the voice to play the new chamber music that I feel I am and always have been composing." Steve Reich (1).

Raymond Gervais

"I left New York in 1961 because I wanted to get out of a production line syndrome: you go to Julliard you get your M.A. you get a fellowship from the Ford Foundation teaching music in the high schools, you get your Fulbright, you study with Nadia Boulanger, you come back to get your gig at a university and that's that. I did take my master's degree at Mills thinking that if all else failed, I could go back and get a job teaching, but that wasn't the reason I became a composer. I became a composer because I love music and wanted to compose it. I didn't want to get caught up in the machinations of the musical world and toe the line. The idea of teaching three days a week and still having plenty of time for musical composition is fallacious. I've taught at community schools in San Francisco at the New School and at the School for Visual Arts in New York, but I've always found teaching to be a burden. So when I got out of Mills with my M.A. I drove a cab because it left my mind freer for work than having to put out the energy necessary if one wants to be a good teacher. (...) I believe that I teach by "doing". I believe that it's more honorable to take your chances out in the world than to sit in a university and give classes and have a little built-in audience, have your work performed by the university orchestra and have other university composers perform you. The historical proof of the pudding is that very little significant music has come out of the university. Charles Ives didn't teach; neither did Ruggles. Aaron Copland hardly taught at all. The best music grown on our home soil has not come out of institutions. The same holds true for Europe. Bach was a practical musician. Bartok was a pianist and ethnomusicologist who didn't believe in teaching composition. Igor Stravinsky didn't teach. Webern was principally a conductor. Only Schoenberg taught." Steve Reich (1)

"In the summer of 1968, I began thinking about what I had done musically, primarily about the phase pieces. I began to see them as "processes", as opposed to compositions. I saw that my methods did not involve moving from one note to the next, in terms of each note in a piece representing the composer's taste working itself out bit by bit. My music was more of an impersonal process. John Cage discovered that he could take his intentions out of a piece of music and open up a field for many interesting things to happen, and in that sense I agree with him. But where he was willing to keep his musical sensibility out of his own music, I was not. What I wanted to do was to come up with a piece of music that I loved intensely, that was completely personal, exactly what I wanted in every detail, but that was arrived at by an impersonal means. I compose the material, decide the process it's going to be run through, but once these initial choices have been made, it runs by itself.(...) And that's what makes the piece interesting; there's more in it than I put in. That's the joy of working with processes. If you follow your personal taste, you get your taste back. But if you follow a musical process you get your taste, plus a few surprises that may educate you to make some other music." Steve Reich (2)

Music as Gradual process-1968

"I do not mean the process of composition, but rather pieces of music that are, literally, processes.(...)

I am interested in perceptible processes. I want to be able to hear the process happening throughout the sounding music.

To facilitate closely detailed listening a musical process should happen extremely gradually.(...)

John Cage has used processes and has certainly accepted their results but the processes he used were compositional ones that could not be heard when the piece was performed. The process of using the I Ching or imperfections in a sheet of paper to determine musical parameters can't be heard when listening to music composed that way. The compositional processes and the sounding music have no audible connection. Similarly in serial music, the series itself is seldom audible.(...)

What I'm interested in is a compositional process and a sounding music that are one and the same thing.(...)

The use of hidden structural devices never appealed to me.(...)

The distinctive thing about musical processes is that they determine all the note-to-note details and the over all form simultaneously. One can't improvise in a musical process - the concepts are mutually exclusive.

While performing and listening to gradual musical processes one can participate in a particular liberating and impersonal kind of ritual. Focusing in on the musical process makes possible that shift of attention away from he and she and you and me outwards towards it." Steve Reich (3)

"There's a certain idea that's been in the air, particularly since the 1960's, and its been used by choreographers as well as composers and I think it is an extremely misleading idea. It is that the only pleasure a performer (be it musician or dancer) could get

was to improvise, or in some way be free to express his or her momentary state of mind. If anybody gave them a fixed musical score or specific instructions to work with this was equated with political control and it meant the performer was going to be unhappy about it. John Cage has said that a composer is somebody who tells other people what to do, and that it is not a good social situation to do that. But if you know and work with musicians you will see that what gives them joy is playing music they love, or at least find musically interesting, and whether that music is improvised or completely worked out is really not the main issue." Steve Reich (3)

"(...) we're serving the music. I believe performers are happiest playing music they love whether they are improvising or reading. As far as audience participation is concerned, there are, for example, groups that pass out whistles or other instruments to the audience who can join in when they feel like it. I think this is degrading, certainly to the music and to the audience as well." Steve Reich (1)

"The pleasure I get from playing is not the pleasure of expressing myself, but of subjugating myself to the music and experiencing theecstasy that comes from being a part of it." Steve Reich (3)

"(...) there are different kinds of control. I'm not that good an improviser and I never was, so that's undoubtedly part of it. Consequently, I'm also not interested in solo music, because I'm not a virtuoso type of performer. I'm interested in the virtuosity being the arrangement of people within an ensemble where the parts are all exactly equal and extremely simple. But by their arrangement, what is produced is something really phenomenal. The virtuosity is in their ensemble relationship to each other. This is something I feel very committed to both on physical and mental grounds. In some program notes recently I wrote this, so let me repeat some of it to you now:

A performance for us is a situation where all the musicians, including myself, try to set aside our individual thoughts and feelings of the moment, and try to focus our minds and bodies clearly on the realization of one continuous musical process. Focusing in on the musical process makes possible that shift of attention away from he and she and you and me outwards towards it. By voluntarily giving up the freedom to do whatever momentarily comes to mind, we are, as a result, free of all that momentarily comes to mind. The extreme limit used here then have nothing to do with totalitarian political controls imposed from without, but are closely related to yogic controls of the breath and the mind." Steve Reich (2)

"I feel it is very important that my music come out of my body as well as my mind and ear, so I limit what I write to what I can play. The music cannot be played by non-professionals, however. The difficulties are not in being able to play notes all over the keyboard very fast. The difficulties are being able to play a limited number of tones in a complicated rhythmic context precisely right, because the slightest error is immediately noticeable. Steve Reich" (1).

"The avant garde dance of the 1960's

focused on non-dance movements to be performed in concert situations. Walking, running, working with objects, and performing specific tasks were among the genuinely new alternatives to the modern dance of expressive movements of an earlier generation. The basic idea (...) could be summed up as any movement is dance. This is the precise equivalent to the basic idea of the composer John Cage: any sound is music. (3)

(...) that's what I mean by all music is ethnic music; it grows out of where you live. Therefore, for people to do electronic music, particularly in the '60's when the novelty and delight in electronic toys was at its peak, was a natural expression of Western humanity, as natural as organic foods. It just happened to be electronics which were giving people that excitement. When people say that ethnic music has to do with drums, they're simply looking at another culture from a distance. And someone who looks at this culture from a distance would see that electronics are peculiar to this way of life which manifests itself in its music. And now, as our culture is shifting away from electronics, towards concerns about keeping the world unpolluted, perhaps it is stepping back from technology and that's also reflected in the music; it's apparent in *Drumming*. I wasn't thinking about those things as causology, but I was aware of it because I am alive now, and of course my mind and body will mirror these things." Steve Reich (2)

"Any music student or composer owes himself an awareness of other musics, and I still hope that all music schools will one day offer courses at least in Indonesian, African and Indian music. If you studied only American and European history in school today, you would be considered racist and stupid. However, I think that studying non-Western music presents a real danger, a kind of tightrope you have to walk. On the one hand, anyone who doesn't listen to non-Western music isn't putting his feet into the water. On the other hand, he may find out, as I did when I was in Africa, that this is really big music, that it's thousands of years old. It's a whole continent's worth of music, and I'm just one puny little individual representing an individualistic culture." Steve Reich (1)

"I believe that non-Western music is presently the single most important source of new ideas for Western composers and musicians.

Although earlier generations of Western musicians listened to many non-Western musics, live or on recording, it is now becoming increasingly possible to actually learn how to play African, Balinese, Javanese, Indian, Korean and Japanese music, among others, directly from first-rate African, Balinese, Javanese, Indian, Korean or Japanese musicians right here in this country or abroad. A Western musician thus begin to approach non-Western music as he would his own; he learns how to play it through study with a qualified teacher and in that process can also analyze the music he is playing in detail to understand how it is put together. During the process of performance and analysis he will find basically different systems of rhythmic structure, scale construction, instrumental technique and tuning. Knowledge of these different systems also

Music for Mallet Instruments, Voices and Organ (1973); bars 1 and 2

sheds light on our own Western system, showing it to be one way among many. (...)

A very real interest in non-Western music can be seen now in many young composers, some young performers, and a few universities, where the interest in electronic music, so marked in the sixties, is gradually giving way to an interest in world music. Along with the obvious benefits of this interest, which include a strong belief in live performance, and the aural or rote teaching of music instead of the exclusive use of scores, there are also some problems. The most difficult of these is the problem of Western composers, like myself, absorbing non-Western music. What can a composer do with this knowledge? (...)

The least interesting form of influence, to my mind, is that of imitating the sound of some non-Western music. (...)

Imitating the sound of non-Western music leads to "exotic music"; what used to be called "Chinoiserie". (...)

Alternately, one can create a music with one's own sound that is constructed in the light of one's knowledge of non-Western structures. This is similar, in fact, to learning Western musical structures. (...)

This brings about the interesting situation of the non-Western influence being there in the thinking, but not in the sound. This is a more genuine and interesting form of influence because while listening one is not necessarily aware of some non-Western music being imitated. Instead of imitation, the influence of non-Western musical structures on the thinking of a Western composer is likely to produce something genuinely new." Steve Reich (4)

(1) Entrevue réalisée par Stuart Liebman, The

Boston Phoenix, 29 avril 1975

(2) Entrevue réalisée par Emily Wasserman, Art Forum, Mai 1972

(3) Writings about music, Steve Reich, 1974

(4) Steve Reich, New York Times, 2 septembre 1973

note biographique

STEVE REICH est né en 1936 à New York et a vécu en Californie et à New York.

Il termina des études de philosophie à l'Université Cornell en 1957, étudia la composition à la Julliard School of Music de 1958 à 1961 et reçu en 1963 une maîtrise en musique du Mills College en Californie, où enseignaient Darius Milhaud et Luciano Berio.

En 1966, il forme un ensemble de trois musiciens. Depuis lors, il travaille avec cet ensemble, Steve Reich and Musicians, qui comprend actuellement douze musiciens, aux Etats-Unis comme en Europe. En 1971, les premières de Drumming composition d'une heure et demie, eurent lieu au Museum of Modern Art, à New York, à la Brooklyn Academy of Music et à Town Hall. Il collabore avec Laura Dean, présentant des concerts de musique et de danse à Berlin, Bremen, Pampelune, Rome et New York en 1972. Pendant l'été 1970, il étudia la percussion africaine (drumming) avec un maître de la tribu Ewe à l'Institut d'Etudes africaines au Ghana. En 1973, il étudia le Gamelan Semar Pegulingan balinaise avec un professeur balinaise à la American Society for Eastern Arts Summer Program à l'Université de Washington. En 1974, il fut invité par le D.A.A.D. à être artiste en résidence à Berlin.

discographie

It's Gonna Rain (1965), Columbia MS-7265

Come Out (1966), Odessey 32-16-0160

Violin Phase (1967), Columbia MS-7265

Phase Patterns (1970), Shandar 10005

Four Organs (1970), Shandar 10005, Angel S-36059

Drumming (1971), Deutsche Grammophon 2740-106

Six Pianos (1973), Deutsche Grammophon 2740-106

Music for Mallet Instruments, Voices and Organ (1973), Deutsche Grammophon 2740-106

Piano Phase (1967), RCA Victor japonais

Drumming (1971), Live performance/Town Hall/John Gibson and Multiples inc., New York 1972, une édition signée et numérotée à 500 exemplaires, incluant la partition complète de l'oeuvre.

références discographiques

Pour *Drumming* et *Works in Progress*, Steve Reich fait référence respectivement à la musique de la tribu Ewe du Ghana de même qu'à Pérotin. Pour qui s'intéresse à vérifier ces parallèles, deux enregistrements existent sur le marché:

Ewe music of Ghana (Folkways, Asch Mankind series, AHM-4222)

Pérotin: Sacred Music (Vanguard HN-1SD)

bibliographie

Writings about music, the Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, New York University Press, New York 1974. Disponible au Canada de: L'Alternatif 1587 St-Denis, Montréal, ou Art Métropole, 241 Yonge Street, Toronto.

Writings about music regroupe pour l'essentiel, la plupart des textes, entrevues, partitions déjà publiés par/sur Steve Reich dans VH-101 no. 4, Soundings, Synthesis, Source, New York Times, Ballet Review, Musical Times, Art Forum, parfois modifié ou complété d'inédits. Steve Reich a aussi publié dans:

John Cage: Notations, the Anti-illusion Catalog, Aspen magazine, Interfunktionen et Artitudes. ■

LISA STEELE

Looking very closely by Peggy Gale

cutting free of the past ... cauterising wounds ... preparing oneself for the trials to come.

Lisa Steele's new work suggests a background of all these factors, and yet continues to respond to potent elements of life as it flows and continues ... the recurring cycles of nature itself, the great unknowns of femaleness, sexuality, the rituals of season and activity.

"I have looked so carefully ..."

Lisa Steele has been working with video since 1972, and with photography and personal imagery for longer. She has not always seen her work as 'art', but it has always been an interior and mythic exploration.

Hers is a female sensibility, one fascinated by growth and natural processes, by identity and self-knowledge. Her photographs also reflect these preoccupations; a 38-photo sequence of 1973 entitled *Divination By Dream* positions fruits and plants, seeds, stones and people from her life in highly-charged "natural" juxtaposition. The inanimate becomes meaningful, suggestive, explanatory in its muteness.

Her early works on tape investigate the boundaries of the medium, the nature of our perception through the video eye, the range of subjects worthwhile for study. The titles give summary indication of the contents - *Juggling*, *Turtletape*, *Know Your Turtle*, *Earthworms*, *Foodcraft* - and images of a daily environment are a backdrop for technical experiments, provide a home setting for scientific interests. Other works, *The Ross Street Tapes*, *Lisa With The Egg*, manipulate ordinary actions through the unconscious, work juxtapositions of image and sound towards a highly charged unity.

The last of these early works, undertaken before a break of over a year in her creative use of the medium, was the prophetic *Sleep/Dream Vigil*. For the first time Steele's interest in non-conscious decisions, activities, perceptions, is joined explicitly with her desire for specific coherent information within a framework of scientific verification. It demonstrates that simple, fundamental human activities, so common as to be beyond interest, could in fact contain important information about motivation, personality, the more complex issues of life.

Sleep/Dream Vigil (1973) is a 30-minute two-channel piece, in which one camera closely studies a sleeping figure while Lisa Steele, in an adjoining room, is seen and heard on the second monitor reading from various texts on the nature of sleep, the content and context of dreaming, the physical and subconscious activities involved. By isolating a process as simple and enigmatic as sleep, she was to discover how rich such a close study could be. Complementaries and contrasts of interior/exterior thought and activity, known/unknown, seen/unseen are all brought into play. The visuals at this point are still smoothly-flowing "real time", without editing, but now the subject documented has also become focussed, single-minded; everything seems very clear and simple.

In September 1974 came her next finished tape, *Birthday Suit - Scars and Defects*, and the plans for three more pieces. *A Very Personal Story*, *Outlaws*, and the three-channel *Internal Pornography*, all completed in early 1975. It was a difficult time, with many personal relationships to be clarified. Old ties, long assumed to have dissolved, reappeared and clamored for attention; all four tapes were a response to this need to specify her identity and establish her territory, reassert her uniqueness and explore her isolation.

Birthday Suit is straightforward. "September 22, 1947 to September 22, 1974. In honour of my birthday I am going to show you my birthday suit, with scars and defects". But it is a remarkable document; in the twelve-minute piece we are shown each mark in its chronological turn, from surgery at birth through scars from barbed wire (falling off a horse), stitches for cut tendons (broken milk bottles in the school cafeteria), breast surgery (benign tumour). Through this precise information, we feel that we are able to intuit a great deal about this person, and about her acceptance of and interest in commonplace but revealing detail.

Similar structure, *A Very Personal Story* has a more compelling effect. In it the artist reveals, as simply and unemotionally as possible, the story of the day in 1963 she found her mother dead at home. Throughout the telling of the tale her fingers twist nervously, shielding her eyes from our scrutiny, until finally, the story over, she drops her hands to face us directly. She notes that it's not a story we really want to hear. Yet we accept its importance for understanding what kind of a person *she* is and, more broadly, for divining and defining knowledge of self and others.

Outlaws is more opaque. The 20-minute piece comprises five segments, each one a lingering view of a person in some non-context, with a voice-over reading of a text composed by the artist:

He was an outlaw. The loneliness of bathing alone in the ice-cold Guadalupe River did not bother him, but he did not do it often.

Once in San Antonio he picked out the prettiest woman in the place, and shot the light off her cigarette at fifty yards. She was favorably impressed, and the rest of the night was pure pleasure.

His eyes were the colour of the Rio Grande at Matamoros where it began to flow into the Gulf a hundred years ago. There is no evidence of this, except for a few old magazine clippings kept by friends.

His vision was so acute that he could spot an armadillo on the horizon, ride to within twenty feet of the horny creature, and drop it with a blinding wad of spit between the ears.

It was known that at irregularly-spaced intervals, a spotlessly clear starlit night would occasion a spontaneous flow of tears from his river-blue eyes. Once, a graceful pair of mating gila monsters was caught in this outpouring. He forever after laughingly referred to his lizard tears as being a bath for fertile friends.

The voice-over commentary is repeated for each person in turn, with only the pronouns changed. Cash wears cowboy boots, looks us over coolly as he smokes a cigarette. Judy does not look up at all, but is intent on whittling at a piece of wood. Tom's hand fiddles with radio dials, adjusting his sound system, and only at the end does the camera move slowly to his face with its quizzical stare and bushy beard. Colin stirs a cup of coffee, his eyes large and incredibly alone. All are examined slowly, curiously, but what is finally revealed?

The tape ends with Lisa gazing levelly out at us, reporting that these are all real people, those are their real names, and that if you see her, Lisa, on the street you will know her, you can recognize her by her face.

These are portraits of people important to Lisa Steele, but we outsiders are left to piece together the fragments of information on our own. We wonder at the connection between these five, on how many

levels are they outlaws, and the same? And does the information reflect on us? All the external details given cannot supply the answers, and reflecting back on our sense of intuition fulfilled by *Birthday Suit*, we begin to wonder whether in fact external details can ever reveal those things that are most meaningful. The case is not so simple after all.

Then comes *Internal Pornography* (three channels, simultaneous running time 30 minutes), a complex and important piece both explicit and veiled in its message. The whole is introduced by a separate segment on the central monitor, Lisa Steele gazing off-camera and baldly stating certain of her opinions on sexuality, her fantasies and practices. Its content is deliberately shocking, forcing the viewer to weigh what she is saying, placing the information in context with the face we see speaking and with the rest of the piece. For the body of the work, each of the three monitors presents a discrete image and a milder overt message. On the far right we see the artist's nude torso and hear her reading descriptive and explanatory extracts from sexual handbooks and medical journals. In the centre we look closely at various plants; disembodied hands help us to see the most interesting pieces of foliage, the hairs and tendrils and flowers. The far left screen shows us a low-angle view of the artist's face as she lies in a tumbled bed; she musingly tells us bits of her dreams.

This complex of images offers several openings for interpretation. The separation of elements permits us to concentrate upon each aspect in turn, while also suggesting that each strand interact with and comment upon the others. The whole is a comprehensive exploration of the membrane between conscious and unconscious, the details of content almost submerged by the fascination of the process-of-learning we experience. And yet we know we must reckon with the content. Perhaps human sexuality can best be explored by intimation and metaphor, objectifying and expanding the intimate information.

Facing South, Lisa Steele's most recent tape, continues this investigation of female activity and response.

Facing South begins with a close-up view, a visual and verbal urging to "look closer", and the artist's musing note that she at times looked too closely, saw things in too much detail. And yet we are urged to focus on fine details, see everything as clearly as possible.

The tape progresses; we see under magnification flowers, petals, leaves. We chart growth day by day of the angelwing begonia, nasturtiums, all the while aware of the progress of seeds, germination, nurturing into maturity. When the next close-up, a little blurry, focusses onto a long slit, surrounding hairs, and the comment about how difficult it is to see well here, it does not seem unusual or surprising to be examining a clitoris and vagina. The connecting links had already been established, with women as part of a natural system, fruitful beds of daily functions and desires. The planting of seeds in fertile ground, the eventual germination and flowering to become food for humans and other animals. Flowers after all are more than merely visual pleasure. They are an important part of attraction for reproductive purposes, they are receptive, inviting, and are to be sniffed, fondled, admired. They are food.

The camera backs off, takes a long view of rooftop gardens, shadows moving imperceptibly from left to right. We watch. The tape ends as "at noon, rising, locate the distance to view..."

In the three years documented in these videotapes,

Lisa Steele has travelled a long way.

She began with an amused and personalised comment on the art world, in line with then-current interests and approaches as seen from an outside viewpoint.

The next series of works shows her looking more closely into meanings - finding out what real and significant information about the world could be found in searching through scientific data, the external natural world. If bits of nature are examined in laboratory terms, what can we discover of substance?

The answers seemed to be limited. Lisa Steele then turned the same scrutiny and analytic technique upon her own experience and personal history, but *Birthday Suit*, *Outlaws*, and *A Very Personal Story* only appeared to give us answers. Somehow clues to deeper realities remained hidden by civilised surfaces of what was common to all of us, what was acknowledged by all to be suitable for public discussion.

More fundamental truths were closed off.

Internal Pornography begins to break through that barrier of acceptability. She searches deeper, looks for information that is more raw, closer to source. And *Facing South*, while returning to the external world (begonia blooms, germinating nasturtium seeds), continues deeper into an unconscious world of desperate needs. We see her eating the nasturtium leaves, barely fourteen days old, craving their freshly green vegetable taste with whole-grain bread and butter. With the evident care and knowledge she had lavished on the young seedlings, this jolts on us as a cannibal act, a greedy devouring of newly-born innocents, a primeval demand deeper than knowledge, somehow both a shameful urge and an atonement. A sacrifice. And in the end, after much looking, much waiting, she has at last acquired through inestimable, unspoken pain, a distance to view. Only a distance to view.

I feel it takes courage to embark on such a search, courage to seek an unknown truth and face whatever answers may come forth. Courage to see oneself clearly, and to begin to deal with that self in open and understanding terms.

Lisa Steele has found something, still not quite defined. But our reaction to her discovery is visceral and moving. We also want to make those discoveries.

A ritual may be a private thing, but offered publicly its patterns offer clues to hidden realities.

Daily, monthly, seasonal cycles - the lives of plants and animals seem potentially within understanding, knowable, enclosed as they are within the longer and more complex human span. If we return again and again to the same spot, the same activity, will we see more with each experience? Experience more with each viewing?

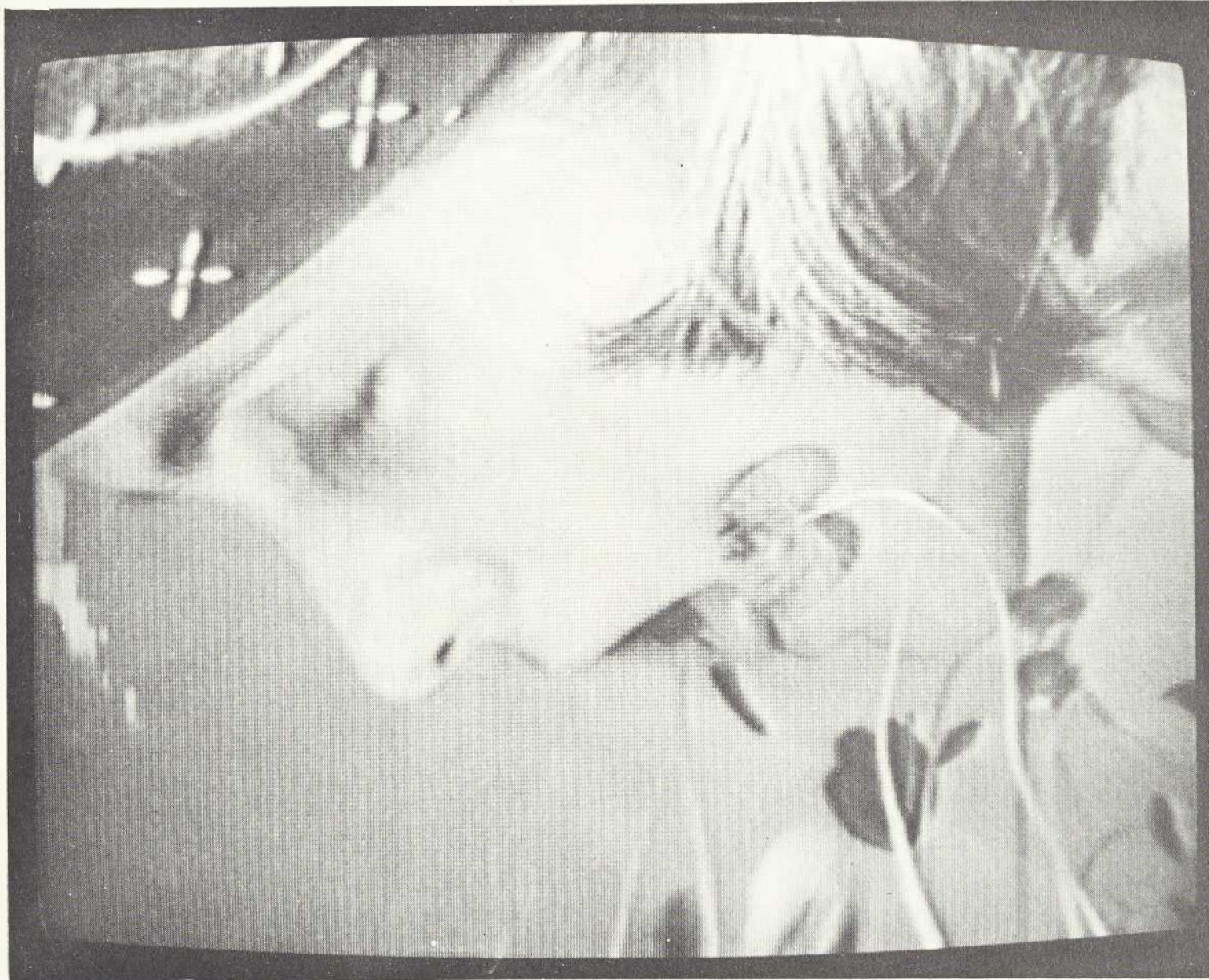
The final decision is not made, the summary not yet possible, but each of Lisa Steele's works is an interim report. ■

Videotapes by Lisa Steele

- 1972 Juggling b/w, sound, 6 minutes
- Ross Street Tapes b/w, sound, 15 minutes
- Lisa With The Egg b/w, sound, 10 minutes
- Turtletape b/w, sound, 15 minutes
- Three Women b/w, sound 20 minutes
- Know Your Turtle b/w, sound, 20 minutes
- 1973 Earthworms b/w, sound, 20 minutes
- Foodcraft b/w, 8 minutes
- Sleep/Dream Vigil, 2 channels, b/w, sound, 30 minutes
- 1974 Birthday Suit - Scars and Defects b/w, sound, 12 minutes
- A Very Personal Story b/w, sound 17 minutes
- Outlaws b/w, sound, 20 minutes
- 1975 Internal Pornography, 3 channels, b/w, sound, 30 minutes
- Facing South b/w, sound, 22 minutes



FACING SOUTH, 1975, b/w, sound, 22 minutes.



A VERY PERSONAL STORY, 1974, b/w, sound, 17 minutes.

note biographique

LISA STEELE est née, à Kansas City, au Missouri, en 1947. Elle vit présentement à Toronto où elle travaille la photographie et le vidéo. Elle exposa ses travaux à la galerie A Space de Toronto en 1973 et en 1974 et a participé à de nombreuses expositions

de groupe dont "Canada" Trajectoires '73", à Paris, "Women and Film Festival", Toronto, 1973, "Toronto Video", Syracuse, N.Y., 1974, "Videoscape", Toronto, 1975, et "Video Art", exposition itinérante aux États-Unis, 1975.

Québec 75

postface de Chantal Pontbriand

Dans son premier numéro, Parachute publiait une interview de Normand Thériault au sujet de l'exposition qu'il organisait depuis près d'un an: Québec 75. Cette interview était intitulée: Québec 75, une stratégie. Pour citer l'organisateur de l'exposition, dans son introduction au catalogue (1), Québec 75 se voulait une stratégie appliquée au "milieu" montréalais de l'art, une intervention dans le champs de la pratique artistique, une exposition, et plus qu'une exposition, un concept global... "Nous croyons que l'art québécois a besoin présentement de confrontations sérieuses, d'événements nombreux de façon à forcer chacun à préciser son rôle et sa place dans le secteur culturel. "Ce qui, sans doute, incita dès le départ les organisateurs à mettre sur pied parallèlement à l'exposition une série de débats" pour que le spectateur comprenne que la problématique de l'art n'est pas faite que d'objets", lesquels débats devaient toucher des thèmes tels que la notion d'artiste, les groupes, les galeries, les musées, la critique d'art, l'objet d'art. Susciter des débats, des polémiques, Québec 75 ne manqua pas de le faire. Pendant une semaine, l'atmosphère du Musée d'art contemporain fut à la frénésie collective. Dans d'autres salles que celle des débats, languissaient, portant en quelque sorte le deuil, les objets d'une exposition qui, elle aussi, aurait pu être.

"La problématique de l'art n'est pas faite que d'objets"... en effet, ceux-ci deviennent peut-être trop vite le prétexte à une mise à nue d'un milieu inarticulé, peu défini, ayant des relations historiques avec des mouvements qui, selon certains, pourrait donner une continuité à l'art québécois, victime d'interrelations avec l'art "international", un milieu limité aussi du point de vue nombre et services (critique, galeries, musées, etc.), et pauvre idéologiquement (sans penseurs d'envergure). Bref, une situation ambiguë, laquelle devait inévitablement mener à l'énorme confusion que fut Québec 75. Que dire de cette tour de Babel, où tour-à-tour, on applaudissait sans discrimination, celui qui osait parler le plus fort, d'une façon plus articulée qu'un autre, sans se soucier s'il fut conséquent avec lui-même, cohérent, pertinent, informé. Outre une telle confusion dans les esprits des "spectateurs" de Québec 75, ne faut-il pas mentionner avant tout celle de certains panélistes et celle de la critique, qui dans les quotidiens montréalais se laissa aller à maintes spéculations sur l'art "québécois", remettant en question, sans scrupules, l'art qu'elle prétendait défendre (?) auparavant.

"A major illusion of the art system is that art resides in specific objects. Such artifacts are the material basis for the concept of "the work of art". But in essence, all institutions which process art data, thus making information, are components of the work of art. Without the support system, the object ceases to have definition; but without the object, the support system can still sustain the notion of art." - Jack Burnham (2).

Il me semble que ce court texte de Burnham décrive assez bien la véritable problématique autour de Québec 75. Québec 75 est un serpent qui se mord la queue.

Les idées maîtresses apparues tant au cours des débats que dans les journaux, se développaient par rapport aux axes suivants: nationalisme/internationalisme, historicité/production actuelle, intervention/panorama, artiste/société. Ce sont en fait, et depuis toujours, les axes de pensée à la base du "système" qui prévaut ici au Québec, dans le domaine des arts, (il s'agit de contextes similaires dans l'ensemble du Canada, ou dans tout autre endroit où il n'y a qu'une faible concentration de l'activité artistique: la Californie, Chicago, la Belgique, l'Espagne, les pays d'Europe de l'Est). Occasionnellement, dans un semblant de désert, on assiste à un soulèvement, une explosion d'énergie, un regain d'intérêt, toujours cependant, l'histoire le dit, grâce à quelqu'un (Borduas, ici?)... ou quelques-uns, peu importe.

Ainsi, le Mouvement Dada est originaire de Suisse, mais combien de suisses compte-on parmi les dadaïstes? Ce que l'on retient de tout mouvement, ce n'est pas la biographie de ses auteurs, comme leur créativité, leur inscription personnelle et individuelle dans l'histoire des idées. L'art a une fonction sociale qui est loin d'être évidente et unidimensionnelle, mais qui existe et agit très certainement. Il n'est pas nécessaire pour cela de continuellement se demander: "Is Politics Art?" (3) ou inversement. Cela ne correspond à rien.

Le milieu ambiant, érigé par Burnham en système, supporte l'art et définit l'objet. Que signifie cette affirmation dans le contexte actuel? Le milieu... on pourrait le qualifier de réduit sans tromper personne: quelques galeries, un petit musée, quelques centaines d'intéressés et encore, des collectionneurs, non. De quelle relation sociale les artistes ici vivent-ils? Aucune... ou presque. Ils exposent en l'espace de cinq ans partout où cela est possible, y compris le Musée d'art contemporain, la Galerie nationale souvent, les galeries subventionnées, les galeries commerciales... et puis rien. Il ne se présente aucun défi (challenge) autre que ceux mentionnés, ni aucun feedback de la part d'une critique informée et qualifiée idéologiquement. Il y a cependant un très fort système de bourse qui entretient l'espoir. Ce qui mène très vite à conclure que le "système artistique" est une immense illusion entretenue par les politiques fédérales et provinciales. Triste et inévitable conclusion.

Quelques bourses et un salaire de professeur, voilà ce qui semble définir, socio-économiquement, l'artiste au Québec, et pose la question: être artiste, un luxe ou une discipline? Le professorat est un pis-aller, à interrompre s'il-le-faut, pour une année sabbatique, où, si possible, on bénéficie d'une bourse. C'est ce que le Québec offre actuellement de mieux aux artistes. Et on (universitaires, critiques) se demande ce que l'artiste québécois a à offrir de mieux à la société dans laquelle il vit (question fondamentale des débats, ne l'oublions pas...).

Affirmer la nationalité québécoise, exiger des oeuvres un contenu politique, de quel droit

peut-on l'imposer aux artistes. Traiter l'art qui se fait ici maintenant d'art dégénéré (ce ne sont pas les termes employés, mais c'est bien ce que l'on sous-entend) est une aberration, et peut bien être qualifié de nazisme. Le premier "mouvement" à naître au Québec revendiquait justement l'ouverture d'esprit, la liberté, la libération de l'énergie créatrice, le refus global de toute imposition idéologique, venant de toute part (gouvernements, académies, universités, institutions).

Aujourd'hui, quelques décades plus tard, on voudrait à nouveau instaurer le despotisme idéologique sur la production idéologique. Spontanément, on se méfie. Spontanément, on réagit.

Quelques artistes se retirent des débats de Québec 75 (Champagne, Mihalcean, Mongrain, Poulin). Leur manifeste (?) est court, peu explicatif, maladroit. Mais le geste y est. Faut-il se surprendre de l'absence des artistes quand le discours de l'oeuvre elle-même ne tient aucune place, quand une chapelle veut faire du musée le lieu de discussions politiques, alors qu'elle est incapable d'agir politiquement là où il le faut, i.e. en dehors du musée. Va-t-on comprendre que la force de l'art au Québec doit venir des artistes eux-mêmes, de leur énergie rassemblée? La seule chance de survie ne serait-elle pas dans l'auto-organisation?

N'est-il pas clair que ce qui a véritablement marqué l'art au Québec de 1970 à 1975, ce sont les galeries Media et Véhicule, à leurs débuts? Ces deux galeries furent mises sur pied par des artistes. L'une exposa les tendances ludiques, pop et folfloristes de l'art québécois, l'autre des tendances conceptuelles et néo-formalistes. Media eut toujours la volonté de s'inscrire très fortement dans le milieu québécois et fit de nombreux efforts pour y démocratiser l'art, offrant au public des gravures et des multiples, des termes d'achat avantageux, des expositions où dominaient l'humour, la gaité, la couleur... Véhicule est né d'un besoin de communication entre un certain nombre d'artistes qui se trouvaient isolés dans le système qui prévalait alors, où des oeuvres se rattachent plutôt à des mouvements d'art pauvre, d'art minimal et d'art conceptuel, n'avaient pas leur place. Il n'est donc pas étonnant que Véhicule ait cherché à se rapprocher d'un réseau d'information international, où son travail trouvait plus de répercussion et d'affinités que dans la communauté immédiate, qui offrait peu de sympathisants. Sentant à prime abord le laboratoire, Véhicule devint une chasse-gardée. Dès que les artistes qui avaient donné l'impulsion du départ se furent retirés, ces deux coopératives perdirent leur intérêt. Pourtant, fortes de leur subventions annuelles, elles continuèrent à exister tant bien que mal et existent encore, malgré une orientation de plus en plus difficile à définir. Aucune de ces galeries n'a su appuyer à long terme un groupe d'artistes qui lui soit propre. Aucune continuité n'est apparue dans les efforts déployés par l'une ou l'autre. Une mentalité qui voulait donner la chance à chacun, a prouvé son ineptie.

C'est pourtant à Media et Véhicule que l'on a vu les premières expositions de la plupart des artistes inclus dans Québec 75, sans parler des exclus... C'est à Véhicule qu'on a vu les seules expositions nous venant d'Europe ou

des États-Unis pendant un certain temps, offrant ainsi à l'artiste québécois quelques possibilités de se situer par rapport à d'autres recherches que les siennes dans le domaine de l'art actuel. Ce sont Media et Véhicule qui ont préparé le terrain pour les quelques autres galeries contemporaines à Montréal. Comment négliger ou rejeter facilement ces facteurs dans l'histoire des cinq dernières années? Est-ce que les forces "dynamiques" du milieu, que l'on réclame de part et d'autre, n'étaient justement pas là. Cette intervention que l'on cherchait tant à susciter avec Québec 75, n'avait-elle pas déjà été pratiquée par les artistes eux-mêmes quand ils organisèrent Media et Véhicule?

Québec 75, une intervention? Plutôt une officialisation du déjà vécu. Un enterrement, du point de vue de la pratique artistique. Les objets de l'exposition semblent muets... bien sûr, ils n'étaient que le prétexte. Des oeuvres commandées pour servir un objectif du domaine de l'administration de l'art. Rien de plus. Un à un, la plupart de ces objets deviennent oeuvres et se justifient. Ensemble, c'est le cirque, le bazar, l'absurdité. Leur rassemblement est inutile parce que vide de sens, sans idéologie cohésive. Le lien entre les pièces ne se fait pas. Faut-il citer Documenta pour reprendre un exemple d'exposition cohérente, imaginative, originale, offrant des concepts inusités, pour prouvé qu'une exposition de groupe peut offrir autre chose qu'un morne étalage d'objets? On a voulu implanter une stratégie, provoquer et ce qu'on nous propose ressemble à un panorama incomplet. Que serait-il arrivé si Thériault y avait mis du sien? N'est-il pas temps de réclamer de ceux qui s'occupent d'art ici (critiques, administrateurs de galeries, musées) un engagement, surtout de l'imagination et de la créativité? Ce rôle leur est imputable autant qu'aux artistes.

"Throughout history fairly constant pressure has been applied to the artist, restricting his output to some set of "higher" (read "socially useful") truths. In this respect the nineteenth century concept of "art for art's sake" is relatively unique, since even at the beginning of the the present century it was mainly considered irresponsible and frivolous. So one can begin to understand why there is so much disdain directed towards contemporary artists who are not primarily concerned with object-making. Yet it is precisely those artists involved in the most naked projections of their personalities who will contribute the most to society's comprehension of its self." -Jack Burnham (4). Tout artiste honnête qui travaille au Québec y est forcément engagé et y trouve ses racines; il se rattache automatiquement à des mécanismes critiques et historiques locaux. Ses problématiques sont aujourd'hui autres que celles de ses prédécesseurs. Le changement est une vérité inscrite dans le temps. Le renouvellement est inévitable et désirable.

On associe beaucoup d'oeuvres exposées dans Québec 75 à des mouvements venant de l'étranger, n'ayant pas d'appartenance au Québec, ou de signification. Support-Surface en France. Le Minimalisme et le Conceptualisme américains. La ressemblance est indéniable. Faut-il pour autant taxer ces oeuvres d'internationalistes et n'accorder

aucune crédibilité à leurs auteurs? L'internationalisme est une grosse machine entretenue par le système capitaliste américain, on le sait. Les artistes voyagent (?), les foires annuelles sont d'énormes conventions, les biennales, des instruments de prestige. La communication et l'information à une échelle internationale est pourtant une réalité, et l'internationalisation est un phénomène et un paradoxe, dont l'artiste québécois, à moins qu'il ne soit stupide et naïf (certains semblent y croire), se méfiera. Que l'on songe au paradoxe de la survie matérielle pour l'artiste, et l'on comprendra mieux les contingences qui soustendent ce phénomène dans le contexte local au cours des dernières années.

Sollers disait à propos de Joyce récemment: "Joyce, lui, trace les limites de toute langue nationale, maternelle. Qu'est-ce qu'un sens en langue de mère-patrie? La propriété privée de la parole infantine, ce qui fait des groupes d'adultes, des enfants en sursis. Mais aussi: un fonctionnement référentiel du sujet vers sa matrice corporelle et un barrage vers l'inconscient élevé par le pré-conscient. Joyce dit: *Finnegans Wake*, c'est le langage et l'écriture de la nuit, en rêve. La langue nationale, maternelle ne se rêve pas, elle fait rêver un sujet dans son rêve. Mais le rêve d'une langue peut être la veille d'une autre, et quant il fait nuit sous une latitude, il peut faire jour sous une autre. Joyce rêve donc d'un livre qui serait indistinctement rêve et interprétation, passage sans fin des frontières. Or, c'est là, précisément, le *réveil*."

On croit naïvement que Joyce n'a pas eu de préoccupation politique, parce qu'il n'a rien dit ou écrit à ce sujet *en langue morte*. Nous en sommes encore là, l'art d'un côté, la politique de l'autre. Comme s'il y avait une *place* pour la politique, et d'ailleurs pour quoi que ce soit. Mais le refus de Joyce de se livrer au moindre énoncé mort est justement l'acte politique *même*. Cet acte explose au coeur de la *polis* rhétorique. Au coeur de la reconnaissance narcissique du groupe humain: fin des nationalismes décidée par Joyce au moment où les crises nationalistes sont les plus virulentes (le fascisme en Europe). Le nationalisme peut être caractérisé comme une double obstruction vers l'inconscient et le champ international: c'est pourquoi (même paré d'une bannière "marxiste") il est toujours fondamentalement régressif, et ouvre sur toutes les exclusions racistes.

Joyce veut détruire le nationalisme, mais il va plus loin que l'internationalisme abstrait, "oecuménique" (qui ne peut se supporter que d'une langue morte: latin pour l'église, stéréotype "marxiste-léniniste", délire fasciste). Ce qu'il est en train de construire avec *Finnegans Wake*, de 1921 à 1939, c'est un transnationalisme actif. Il désarticule, réarticule, et en même temps annule le maximum de traces linguistiques, historiques, mythologiques, religieuses. Dans ce qu'il écrit, il y a *plus que des différences*: il met donc en question toute communauté (on appelle ça son "illisibilité")." (5)

Que l'on songe aussi à la survie spirituelle, et l'on comprendra que la connaissance ne saurait s'accomoder de frontières. Ici, les artistes apprennent par expérience indirecte la plupart du temps. Ils ont accès à l'art par voie

de catalogues ou de revues. Leur expérience n'est pas concrète. Les Automatistes et les Plasticiens sont des mouvements historiques, classés, qui sont très loin de la dynamique actuelle. Ils prouvent heureusement la viabilité de mouvements artistiques ici. Mais n'est-il pas temps pour l'artiste québécois d'aujourd'hui de regarder *en avant* plutôt qu'en arrière, comme le réclame tant les critiques. C'est le propre de tout artiste partout dans le monde de produire en fonction de ce que la société dans laquelle il vit est en train de devenir et non l'inverse. Et si cela veut dire ici, sauvegarder une culture qui nous est inhérente et qui est menacée, cela aussi est une tâche à remplir en fonction de l'avenir. Autant que possible, c'est du présent que l'artiste tirera de l'énergie créatrice, par une extrême conscience du présent. Cette conscience s'étend de nos jours à tout l'occident par la force des choses; l'occident ne forme-t-il pas une unique civilisation? Comment ne pas voir alors les ressemblances inévitables entre ce que produisent les artistes d'ici et d'ailleurs? De là à croire que l'artiste québécois est récupéré et avalé par le système impérialiste américain...

A toutes ces questions, Québec 75 n'a rien changé. Une fois de plus, le milieu artistique n'a fait que se regarder le nombril.

"Identifier le milieu..."

"montrer les facettes dynamiques"

"forcer l'artiste à préciser son cheminement et être le premier juge de son art"...(catalogue Arts, Québec 75)

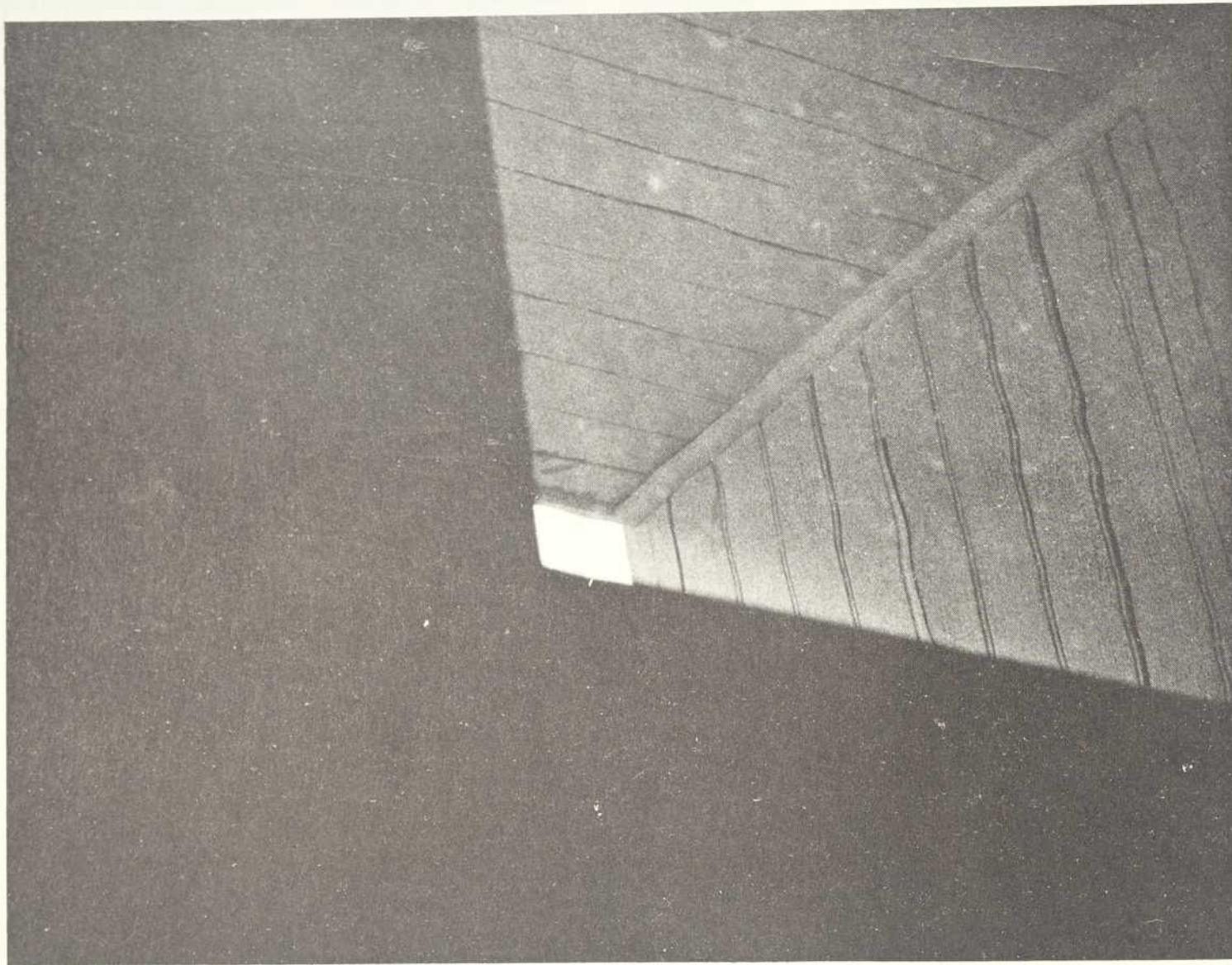
Identifier le milieu, est-ce qu'un véritable panorama n'aurait pas réussi davantage? Montrer les facettes dynamiques, quant à être subjectif, pourquoi ne pas y aller de front? Forcer l'artiste, à préciser son cheminement et être premier juge de son art, n'est-ce pas justement inhérent à tout artiste?

Québec 75 a voulu forcer l'art *québécois* à se définir. Il est vain de chercher une définition de cet art à même tous les textes que cette exposition a provoqués, il est vain aussi de la chercher à même les oeuvres. Car, ensemble, elles ne révèlent rien. Chacune parle individuellement, si on ose regarder. Mais personne, à commencer par les promoteurs/organisateur, n'a osé regarder, gênés par un langage plutôt silencieux (spécialisé, exigeant, discipliné) et, en soi, peu polémiste. Bonne ou mauvaise, chacune des oeuvres est une révélation, et un mystère. ■

notes

1. Québec 75/Arts, "Manifeste pour une exposition", introduction de Normand Thériault, Institut d'art contemporain, 1975.
2. Burnham, Jack, *Great Western Salt Works, "Real Time Systems"*, George Braziller, New York, 1974, p.27
3. Titre de l'oeuvre de Robert Walker.
4. Burnham, Jack, *Great Western Salt Works, "The Artist as Shaman"*, George Braziller, New York, 1974, p.140.
5. Sollers, Philippe, *Joyce et Cie*, Art Press 20, septembre-octobre 1975.

cinéma



LE PUIT DE LUMIÈRE, film de Vincent Grenier

Le cinéma hérite de l'inévitable besoin de représentation que notre civilisation avait auparavant demandé à la peinture puis à la photographie, il hérite aussi, surtout après l'arrivée du son, de l'infirmité occasionnée par la transposition des moeurs et des oeuvres tirées du théâtre et de la littérature. Evidemment, le théâtre et la littérature, même transposés sur film, restent une forme d'expression. Mis à part les quelques rares sursauts d'emploi duement cinématographique qui ces modes d'expressions aient bien voulu endurer du cinéma, il faut bien se rendre compte de la fausseté et de l'irréalité impliquées dans ce qu'est devenu la notion de cinéma, en s'appliquant pratiquement uniquement à ces genres. (C'est à cette unique notion que de nombreuses histoires et anthologies du cinéma, entre autres, veulent bien nous faire croire.)

Il faut ajouter à cela que, puisque le cinéma est présentement l'un des moyens de reproduction de la réalité (!?) les plus efficaces, il est assujéti aux définitions et aux pressions d'une industrie de corporation florissante; c'est à dire que la plupart des énergies dirigées dans le *Motion Picture* le sont au profit de produits et des formules faciles à vendre, de l'impersonnalité et de la médiocrité. Le cinéma peut exister sans tous

ces prétextes et distorsions qui amoindrisent des potentiels beaucoup plus réels, plus puissants et plus personnels. Tout comme la peinture, le cinéma a une identité propre que le cinéaste se doit de comprendre et de respecter, tout en avançant son propre geste et ses propres émotions. Il existe une facture cinématographique, à travers laquelle l'artiste/cinéaste peut s'exprimer: à partir du moment où il manifeste le désir de rendre disponible un acte de voir et possiblement un acte d'entendre, jusqu'au moment de la projection du rectangle de lumière et, facultativement du son amplifié.

Dans *La toile*, *Le puit de lumière* et *catch*, j'ai essayé de rechercher et de lier, d'une part, les qualités et les possibilités des contrôles de la caméra et, d'autre part, de l'objet filmé, avec mon propre mouvement. Je me suis intéressé au maniement des contrôles de la caméra et de la lentille, i.e. diaphragme, focus, angles de vision, vitesses de tournage, cadrage, sortes de trépieds, etc., comme s'ils étaient des extensions physiques de mes mains. Dans *La toile*, la toile poussée par le vent devient un diaphragme qui bouge en confrontation avec le diaphragme de la lentille que je contrôle. La même chose se passe avec le focus. Dans *Le puit de lumière*, en plaçant adéquatement le trépied, une pièce de ciel changera de forme

lorsque je tournerai la caméra dans une autre direction. Dans *Catch*, un trépied à "tête sèche" permet de brusques panoramiques, juxtaposés avec des prises de vue rapides de d'autres sortes de mouvements.

Je me suis intéressé à la découverte, l'illusion, les sources et les directions des mouvements, et aux tensions.

Je me suis intéressé à l'organicité que j'aime à contempler, à découvrir ou à continuer. J'apprécie cette organicité spécialement si elle occupe un espace qui est capable de la contenir, mais on lui a rarement donné ce privilège.

L'Art est peut-être une façon d'écouter les choses et/ou les gens en vue de fabriquer une réponse qui consisterait à mettre en évidence ce que l'on voit comme important dans les réalités perçues par chacun, de façon à extrapoler mes propres conclusions constructives. Plus celui qui écoute colle à sa propre réalité dans sa réponse et plus cette dernière est juste, la quantité d'énergie engagée se révélera d'autant plus grande, plus saisissante et plus vitale.

Vincent Grenier, New York
novembre et décembre 1975.

Vincent Grenier projetera ses films à la Galerie Véhicule Art (Montréal) Inc. au mois d'avril 1975.

HOLLANDE

Johan van der Keuken, cinéaste hollandais de passage à Montréal l'année dernière, vient de compléter un nouveau film, produit par le Comité hollandais pour la Palestine. Le film avait été tourné au Liban juste avant son séjour à Montréal. Depuis la fin du tournage, *Les Palestiniens* a été présenté aux festivals de Lyon et de Leipzig.

"The film *The Palestinians* opens with a statement about the Jews in nineteenth century Europe. They lived in isolated communities, virtually deprived of rights. Under the pressure of the programs against the gettos in eastern Europe the idea of a return to the Promised Land acquired a political shape. But the Promised Land was already the home of a people: the Palestinians.

Then the camera moves to South Lebanon, to the border area where the peasant population is being shelled every night by Israeli artillery. Their government doesn't protect them, the interests of the Lebanese ruling classes lie elsewhere.

A parallel is drawn between the poor Lebanese peasants - who are being oppressed by the local feudal rulers with their bands of armed hirelings and menaced in their existence by the Israeli pressure - and the Palestinian refugees. For the Palestinians are also essentially an agrarian people with a traditional lifestyle, but there's one great difference: they have no land. Poor and faceless they live in their camps, many of them lost in the large urban centers.



Through the explanation of the social contradictions in Europe and the contemporary Arab world the film tries to give an identity to the Palestinians: for a Western audience the dispossessed who act as a fuse that can set off an explosion between the haves and the have-nots, in the Arab world and in Israel. The Palestinian struggle, aimed at a return to their homeland and the foundation of a democratic Palestine in which Jews and Arabs can live and work together, must be seen in the perspective of a social revolution." **Johan Van der Keuken**

camera: Johan van der Keuken
 son: Chris Brouwer
 musique: Willem Breuker
 montage: Fred van Dijk, Johan van der Keuken
 production: Chris Brouwer
 texte: Johan van der Keuken
 (45 minutes, couleur.) ■

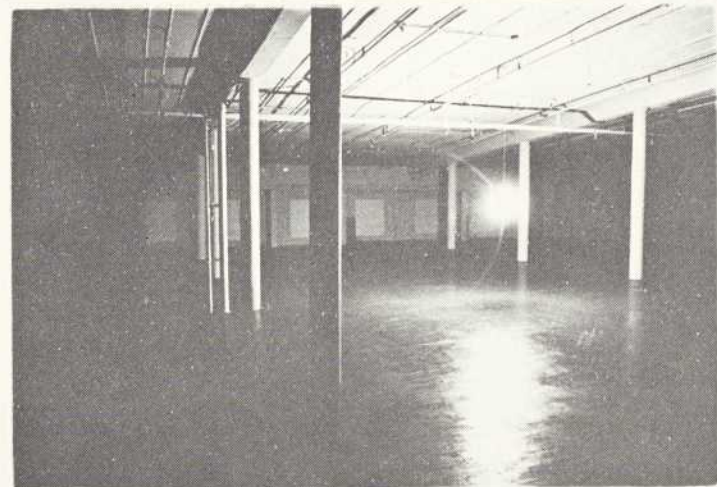
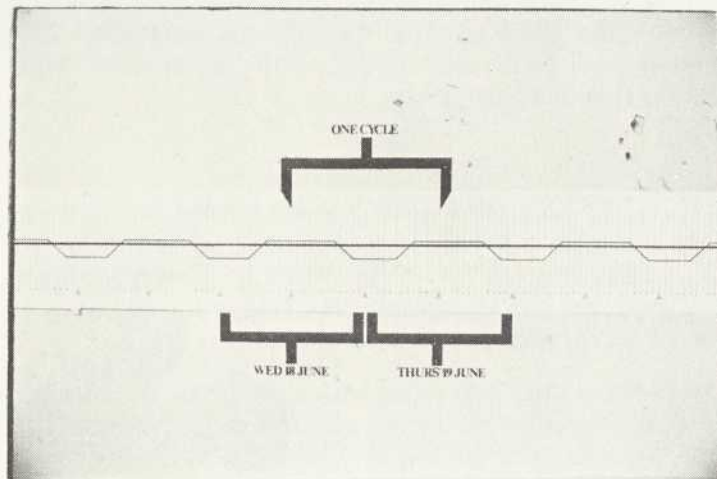
Anthony McCall

LONG FILM FOR AMBIENT LIGHT

Performed at The Idea Warehouse, Reade Street, New York City, from 12 noon, June 18th, through 12 noon, June 19th, 1975. This work used no actual film or film-projector. Three distinct elements combined to form the 'film' and not one of these is regarded as being prior to the other two:

1. A time-schema, on the wall, covering fifty days (photo no.1). At the centre, the actual time-period of the presentation is indicated.
2. An altered space. A single electric light

hangs in the centre of the room, at eye level. The windows were covered with white paper, limiting them to being light sources during the day and reflective surfaces(screen) during the night (photos 2 and 3).



1. LONG FILM FOR AMBIENT LIGHT: Time-schema (detail).
2. LONG FILM FOR AMBIENT LIGHT: Installation, 3 pm, June 18.
3. LONG FILM FOR AMBIENT LIGHT: Installation, 3 am, June 19.

3. The following statement, on the wall:

LONG FILM FOR AMBIENT LIGHT

NOTES IN DURATION

This film sits deliberately on a threshold, between being considered a work of movement and being considered a static condition.

Formalist art criticism has continued to maintain a stern, emphatic distinction between these two states, a division that I consider absurd. Everything that occurs, including the (electro-chemical) process of thinking, occurs in time. It is cultural habit that persuades us otherwise-perhaps a function of intelligence, that breaks up perception of continuous time into "moments" in order to analyse them. Our insistence upon static, absolute lumps of experience, as opposed to continuous, overlapping, multiple durations, shows a warped epistemology, albeit a convenient one.

Art that does not show change within our time-span of attending to it we tend to regard as "object". Art that does show change within our time-span of attending to it we tend to regard as "event". Art that outlives us we tend to regard as "eternal". What is at issue is that we ourselves are the division that cuts across what is essentially a sliding scale of time-bases. A piece of paper on the wall is as much a duration as the projection of a film. Its only difference is in its immediate relationship to our perceptions.

A static thing, in terms of impulses to the brain is a repetitive event. Whether the locus for consideration is "static" or "moving", we deal with time-spans of attention, the engagement of cognition and memory within the context of art behaviour. Neither objects nor events are for the most part, accessible. They are rarely "on show". Since they are intentional, meaningful signs, this is of no consequence: once an idea is established "in mind", it has entered the circuit of (art) ideas, and it won't go away, except through debate within the circuit. The apprehension of any artwork, static or moving, is a fleeting moment, as are all experiences. It is their mental residue that is important.

One of the norms of film presentation has been "limited, group access". It has been necessary to assemble at a particular time to see the work, thus forming the social group, "audience". This group has specific behavioural characteristics.

With "Fire Cycle" (MOMA, Oxford, June 9, 1974, duration: 13 hours) and "Long Film for Four Projectors" (completed November 1974, N.Y.C.), I established to my satisfaction that extending the duration could significantly alter the kind of concentration possible on the part of the spectator. Because the time-span of attention was not prescribed, the works being advertised as merely "open" between certain hours, people came and went in their own time. The structure of each of them, though continually shifting, had a systematic evenness. No special viewing positions were dictated, and in each case the entire space was utilised such that there was no particular

axis of attention (unlike earlier films like 'Line describing a Cone' where, though there was an infinite set of possible viewing positions, there was nevertheless, a one-line axis running through space, which in terms of eye direction, always ended at one point, the lens of the projector). When there were several people present at one moment, the scale was sufficient to provide spatial separation. These formal characteristics made possible a one-to-one relationship between spectator and work.

I am now interested in reducing the 'performance' aspect, in order to examine certain other fundamentals, viz temporality, light. I am presently assuming that it is possible to do this without using the customary photochemical and electro-mechanical processes (which have the disadvantage of being expensive, ie slow). I am aware of the dangers of back-tracking, that behind every 'first principle' lurks another, and I do not rule out the possibility of continuing to make 'films'. However, for the time being I intend to concentrate less on the physical process of production and more on the presuppositions behind film as an art activity.

Anthony McCall, New York, June 1975.

infos

CINÉMA PARALLÈLE

La Coopérative des Cinéastes Indépendants (Montréal) annonce la reprise des activités du "Cinéma Parallèle" dès janvier prochain. Lieu de projection encore à déterminer. Ouvrir l'oeil! ■

DORE NEKES ET WERNER NEKEI

Les 4 et 5 décembre dernier à l'Institut Goethe (Place Bonaventure, Montréal), Dore O. Nekes et Werner Nekes, cinéastes "underground" allemands, présentaient leur travail respectif à l'aide de quelques films; elle: ALASKA (1968), BLONDE BARBAREI (1972) et KASKARA (1974, film en compétition au festival international de Knokke-le-Zoute en 1974); lui: DIWAN (1973, qui regroupe une série de courts-métrages); JUM-JUM (1966): en collaboration.

L'Institut prépare pour l'automne prochain une série régulière de projections de films allemands expérimentaux. ■

FESTIVAL DU FILM ETUDIANT CANADIEN

Lors du Septième Festival du Film Etudiant Canadien organisé par le Conservatoire d'Art Cinématographique de l'Université Concordia du 24 au 28 septembre dernier, dix films ont été sélectionnés dans la catégorie "expérimentale". C'est Lorne Marin, auteur de RHAPSODY ON A THEME FROM A HOUSE MOVIE (7 minutes, n/b, sonore, 1972), qui s'est mérité le second prix (\$300) pour son film SECOND IMPRESSIONS (9 minutes, couleur, 1974). Aucun premier prix n'a été décerné dans cette catégorie. ■

AU WHITNEY MUSEUM

A New York, le Whitney Museum of American Art présente chaque semaine des films indépendants dans le cadre d'une série intitulée "Les Nouveaux Cinéastes Américains" (*The New American Film-makers*). D'autres salles offrent de façon permanente des programmes de cinéma parallèle: The Anthology Film Archives, The Millenium Film Workshop et Film Forum.

THE VERY EYE OF LIGHT, tel est le titre du "festival" du film que vient d'organiser pour la seconde année consécutive * la Pacific Cinémathèque (Vancouver) à la Vancouver Art Gallery. L'exposition a eu lieu du 6 octobre au 6 novembre 1975.

Un programme imposant qui cherchait à retracer grosso modo l'histoire du cinéma expérimental: Le film absolu (*the absolute film*): dadaïsme et surréalisme; expressionnisme; impressionnisme et néo-dadaïsme; Cocteau/Vigo; animation représentation et abstraction; le film comme danse; *the graphic/kinetic interface* (Len Lye, Maya Deren, Alexandre Hammid, Shirley Clarke, Stan Vanderbeek, Ed Emshwiller); Kenneth Anger I et II; abstraction du graphisme à la lumière pure (Hy Hirsch, Jim Davis); événement spécial: Ondine en personne présente Warhol; du psychodrame au film personnel (Christopher MacLaine, Stan Brakhage); Harry Smith, Stan Brakhage I et II; événement spécial: Morgan Fisher présente une sélection de ses films; artistes-cinéastes I (Michael Snow, Robert Smithson); cinéastes de la Côte Ouest (Bruce Conner, Robert Nelson, Bruce Baillie, Scott Bartlett); *the underground: improvs and expanded realities* (Ken Jacobs, Bob Fleischner, Jack Smith, David Bienstock); autobiographie sexuelle (Frans Zwartjes, Steve Dwoskin); Stan Brakhage II; jeunes cinéastes canadiens (Raphael Bendahan, Lorne Marin, Keith Lock); cinéastes de Vancouver (David Rimmer, Keith Rodan, Rudy Wrench, Kalle Lasn, Jim Johnson, Al Razutis, Tom Braidwood, Rick Parron); artistes-cinéastes II (Bruce Nauman, Frank Owen, Ed Rucha); le film en tant que film (Barry Gerson, David Hykes, Colen Fitzgibbon, George Landow, Antony McCall); le film en tant que journal (*diary*)/ le film en tant que lumière (Kames Herbert, Andrew Noren).

* PERSONAL FILM CONTENT & CONTEXT avait déjà obtenu un immense succès en 1974. Cf: catalogue de l'exposition: *Personal Content & Context*. (A Vancouver Art Gallery Exhibition organized by Pacific Cinematheque), November 4-11, 1974. Illustré, avec des interviews ou propositions des cinéastes participants. ■

A PARIS

Le premier Centre Vidéo, fondé par des membres du Vidéostone (Canada), vient d'ouvrir ses portes à Paris. Il s'agit du Vidéographe, 17, rue des Grands-Augustins, Paris, 75006. ■

QUÉBEC 75 VIDÉO

Vient de paraître dans la série des catalogues publiés par l'Institut d'art contemporain pour l'exposition Québec '75: *Québec '75 Vidéo*, qui n'a rien d'un catalogue habituel.

Réalisé par Yves Chaput, Gérard Henry et Michel Van de Walle, il constitue l'une des meilleurs sources de renseignements sur la pratique du vidéo au Québec dont nous disposons jusqu'ici, et un instrument indispensable pour quiconque s'intéresse aux possibilités du vidéo.

L'importance de ce document réside également dans le fait que ses auteurs, demeurants sans cesse très critiques par rapport aux conditions de la pratique du vidéo, ont échappé (enfin!) au regard neutre et/ou esthétisant du critique/historien d'art ou de cinéma.

"Le tout débute par une histoire: celle de la magnétoscopie demi-pouce. Une histoire souvent mouvementée qui nous est partiellement racontée par ceux qui l'ont vécue de l'intérieur. Mais cette histoire ne se développe pas en dehors de l'infrastructure qui l'a déterminée: l'économie. Ni, non plus en dehors d'enjeux politiques, de pouvoir, d'enjeux idéologiques. L'histoire n'est pas neutre."

Mais cette histoire a aussi des assises concrètes que sont les centres de production, les lieux où se réalisent concrètement les vidéogrammes. C'est l'inventaire, plus "exploratoire" qu'autre chose, que nous avons pu rassembler avec quelques données de base pour quelques-uns des centres.

Cette histoire s'est développée aussi dans des pratiques: des pratiques d'intervention où nous avons rassemblés quelques textes produits par les groupes vidéo et les télévisions communautaires, textes qui rendent compte de leurs activités d'organisation et d'utilisation du médium.

Enfin, nous nous sommes brièvement attardés à scruter quelques aspects du développement de l'utilisation du médium tant chez les groupes, les organismes gouvernementaux que chez les câblodistributeurs.

En somme, la pertinence de ce livre réside peut-être en ce qu'il permet de voir historiquement comment s'est développé le médium, comment on l'utilise et, en dernier lieu, provoquer peut-être un débat autour de l'élaboration éventuelle d'un réseau populaire de communication...

Yves Chaput, Gérard Henry, Michel Van de Walle (extrait de "présentation de l'objet" page 5).

Ce catalogue peut-être obtenu à l'Institut d'art contemporain, 1025 est, de la rue Marie-Anne, à Montréal, Québec. ■

BIBLIOGRAPHIE

Voici une liste à peu près complète des livres qui traitent du cinéma expérimental, la plupart disponibles à la Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec, département de cinématographie, 360, rue McGill.

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- COLLECTIF. *Atti del seminario internazionale di studio sul cinema underground*, Palazzo del Cinema-Lido, 19-23 Maggio 1970.

A cela, il faut ajouter quelques périodiques tels que *Film Culture* (New York), *Filmmakers' NewsLetters* (New York), *The Village Voice* (New York, interrompu en 1975), *Canyon Cinema News* (Berkeley), *Cantrill Filmnotes* (Melbourne, Australie; cinéma expérimental et vidéo), ainsi que *Cinim* et *Cinemantics* (Londres, tous deux interrompus depuis quelques années mais qui demeurent valables parce qu'ils couvrent les développements du cinéma "underground" en Europe (Allemagne, Angleterre, Australie plus particulièrement, 1970-71).

Sans oublier: les catalogues de festivals ou d'expositions comme celui du festival international de Knokke-le-Zoute (Belgique) qui se tient tous les sept ans ou celui de l'exposition organisée par Annette Michelson à Montreux, du 3 au 24 août 1974, *New Forms in Films*, pour ne mentionner que ces deux exemples. Sans oublier non plus les catalogues des différentes coopératives qu'on peut se procurer en écrivant directement aux adresses suivantes:

Coopérative des Cinéastes Indépendants, 2026 est, Ontario, Montréal (tél: 523-2816); Toronto Filmmakers' Cooperative, 341, Bloor Street West, Toronto;
New York Filmmakers' Cooperative, 175 Lixington Avenue, New York, NY 10016;

Canyon Cinema Cooperative, c/o Industrial Center Building, Room 200, Sausalito, California 94965;
Paris Films Coop, 19, rue Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Paris, 75001-
Hamburger Film Coop, Rosenstrasse 18, 2 Hamburg 1, Deutschland;
The Other Cinema, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London, WC2 H 7JJ. ■

Suzanne Danis-Hébert

BANQUE D'ART

Le numéro d'automne d'ArtsCanada porte sur la Banque d'art, important programme d'acquisition d'oeuvres d'art du Conseil des Arts du Canada, auquel on a jusqu'à date consacré cinq millions de dollars. Au terme de ce projet de cinq ans, ArtsCanada a confié la tâche de faire le bilan de cette expérience particulière du gouvernement fédéral à l'écrivain américain Dale McConathy. Celui-ci, dans un volumineux compte-rendu du programme, a constitué en dossier qui couvre plusieurs aspects de la Banque d'art, son histoire, sa collection, sa valeur, ses répercussions. Ce numéro est intitulé: *The Canadian cultural revolution, an appraisal of the politics & economics of art.* ■

GUIDO MOLINARI

Une rétrospective de l'oeuvre de Guido Molinari aura lieu en juillet à la Galerie nationale du Canada à Ottawa. La Galerie nationale publiera un catalogue de l'exposition, dans lequel on pourra lire des textes de Molinari, un des chefs-de-file du mouvement des Plasticiens dans les années cinquante à Montréal. ■

BIENNALE DE VENISE

Greg Curnoe représentera le Canada lors de la prochaine Biennale de Venise, en juin 1976.

GOODWIN, RAINER' BEUYS

La galerie B présentera en mars sept nouveaux dessins de Betty Goodwin, alors que l'exposition du mois de février regroupera plusieurs travaux de Joseph Beuys et de Arnulf Rainer. ■

CHARLES GAGNON

En janvier Yajima expose les photographies de Charles Gagnon, peintre et photographe. ■

RENÉ BERGER, LUCY LIPPARD, RAOUL JEAN MOULIN

Vers la fin juin 1976 aura lieu, à Montréal, au Musée d'art contemporain, le Congrès national de l'Association internationale de la critique d'art. Participeront à ce congrès: René Berger, Lucy Lippard et Raoul Jean Moulin, à titre d'invités. Le thème de ce congrès portera sur la critique d'art: pour qui? pour quoi? comment?. Sous-thèmes: la critique d'art et les mass-media, la critique d'art et le féminisme. ■

BARRY LE VA

En décembre dernier, Barry Le Va occupa le studio du Musée d'art contemporain avec une installation intitulée:

ORGANISATION SPATIALE

Nous reproduisons ici un texte de Barry Le Va paru dans le catalogue de l'exposition (traduction de Alain Parent). Barry Le Va est né à Long Beach, Californie, en 1941 et vit à New-York présentement. Cette première exposition au Canada avait lieu parallèlement à une exposition de dessins à Espace 5. Barry Le Va

La surface du sol est divisée en deux ou trois espaces d'organisations diversifiées, par des petits morceaux de bois rectangulaire ou des baguettes (points centraux et longueurs par points de tangence). À première vue, les espaces isolés semblent être deux ou trois oeuvres séparées, mais en fait il s'agit là d'une seule oeuvre intégrée par un plan sous-jacent de surfaces circulaires localisées, qui recouvrent toute la surface du plancher, et dont les positions dépendent des limites de cet espace, sur lesquelles elles sont fondées.

Que les surfaces localisées soient le produit d'un réseau d'organisation sous-jacent, qui peut se définir très généralement comme "système", ne signifie pas nécessairement que l'oeuvre soit à propos de ce système, ni d'aucun autre système impliquant fabrication ou construction, qui offrirait toute son information "historique", qui la rendrait disponible immédiatement.

L'oeuvre est une construction perceptuelle spécifique, à l'intérieur, et à propos, d'un espace qui se subdivise, créant des aires spatiales séparées, non définies de manière visible, et qui deviennent apparentes que lorsqu'elles sont découvertes par l'expérience. Bien que l'oeuvre soit "présente" visuellement, et qu'elle occupe un espace physique, elle doit être approfondie mentalement. D'une information visuelle et physique (points centraux et baguettes), qui sont seulement des indices, l'espace et l'oeuvre s'activent par la perception du spectateur, qui circule physiquement autour, dans l'espace, recevant ou rassemblant les données, ajoutant mentalement les données absentes.

On sait que chaque "point central" localise une aire circulaire spécifique sur le sol, mais ce que l'on ne sait pas, c'est:

- 1) la localisation en relation avec d'autres aires circulaires localisées.
- 2) la surface que cette aire circulaire circonscrit.
- 3) si cette aire dépend de, ou est indépendante, d'autres aires circulaires.

Les aires circulaires peuvent seulement être localisées et définies plus précisément en séparant chaque point central d'autres points centraux, et en essayant de lier chacun avec sa longueur correspondante sur le sol.

En marchant autour de l'oeuvre, dans l'oeuvre, on essaie de reconstruire les surfaces sur des suppositions vagues, fondées sur les données perçues, selon la position du spectateur. En effet, l'oeuvre occupe une grande surface du plancher, et on peut seulement la percevoir par sections, en séparant l'oeuvre en surfaces ou en aires visuelles. Celles-ci sont davantage fragmentées, seulement du fait

qu'elles occupent des situations très proches les unes des autres.

On essaie le processus de reconstruction, en décryptant l'information reçue des positions des éléments sur le plancher. Ce procédé suppose que l'on dégage points centraux et longueurs, individuellement ou par groupes, les groupant ensemble en diverses combinaisons, essayant de reconstruire et de faire des liens rationnels entre les éléments et le plan sous-jacent.

Les liens se divisent, les aires visuelles que l'on n'a pu voir que partiellement fluctuent, créant d'autres aires circulaires, causant un sentiment d'incertitude dans les suppositions précédentes. Une fois qu'une aire spatiale est localisée, sa position spécifique, en relation avec d'autres surfaces, ne peut pas être retenue en mémoire pour un temps déterminé. L'observateur intuitionne constamment des structures pour la compréhension de l'oeuvre, les confirmant, ou les abandonnant, dans le processus d'une visualisation continue. Les éléments visuels cèdent la place à l'intuition d'aires localisées. La surface du sol devient un grand champ d'aires circulaires auto-déterminées, chacune séparée mais en relation avec les autres, organisées logiquement dans cet espace spécifique sur lequel elles se fondent. ■

MICHAEL SNOW

Michael Snow vient de publier un livre intitulé *Cover to Cover*, aux presses de la Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Le Musée d'art moderne de New York exposera dans sa série "Projects", du 19 février au 25 avril, dix travaux photographiques de Snow et présentera une rétrospective de ses films. ■

CHICAGO

Running Dog Press and Michael Crane (Chicago, U.S.A.) are publishing an international anthology of works titled, *Running Dog One and Done*, to be released in February, 1976. The book will include conceptual pieces, dada, poems, writings, photos, etc. some of the contributors to the publication include; Alan Bealy (Canada), Klaus Groh (W. Germany), Michele Perfetti (Italy), Phil Hitchcock (U.S.A.) A.G. Devdas (India), Suzy Lake (Canada), Jacques Lennep (Belgium), Western Dakota Junk Co. (U.S.A.). The book will be available from Editions Vehicule in Montreal soon. ■

VISION

VISION est une magnifique revue qui vient de paraître à San Francisco et dont les exemplaires sont numérotés (\$10.00 chaque numéro, \$25.00 pour une souscription annuelle). La revue paraîtra trois fois l'an et sera consacrée chaque fois à différents lieux d'activités artistiques. Le numéro deux portera sur les pays d'Europe de l'Est. Chaque numéro est constitué de quelques textes ou interviews et de participations personnelles d'artistes. Ce premier numéro sur la Californie offre une interview avec Oldenburg "About California", un texte de Tom Marioni sur la Californie et l'art "hors métropole"..., un compte-rendu de Vito Acconci sur une série d'expositions qu'il a montées en Californie récemment, et une vingtaine de participations d'artistes californiens. Cette revue est éditée par

Tom Marioni et publiée par le Crown Point Press. Tom Marioni dirige le Museum of Conceptual Art à San Francisco depuis plusieurs années. Vision est disponible de Crown Point Press, 1555 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland, California 94612, U.S.A. ■

TORONTO



GENERAL IDEA

CAPTION

SCENE 1 (see above)

LOCATION: Sculpture court at the Art Gallery of Ontario.

TIME: The evening of October 18, 1975. General Idea is holding "Going Through The Motions", a rehearsal of the audience for the opening ceremony of the 1984 Miss General Idea Pavillon. That ceremony is, of course, the '84 pageant.

ACTION: Six massing studios for the pavillon are sliding down the center ramp to the throws of "Style". Original music by Toronto's "Rough Trade". Six hundred extras are playing the part of the ecstatic '84 audience.

Granada Gazelle's voice over: "...Made out of miles of the finest aluminum slats, these urban armours of the future keep us barricaded behind the sight lines without losing our point of view. Cultural formats containing our meat natural impulses. High facade, low profile. Ideas with legs-we call them at the pavillon..."

CUT.

SCENE 2.

LOCATION: A comfortable flat in Manhattan's West

Seventies occupied by General Idea as their winter HQ. The place has just been visited by robbers. File layout sheets and video gear strewn all over the floor.

TIME: A week before X'mas '75.

ACTION:

Surrounded by AA Bronson, Felicks Partz and Jorge Zontal a weary New York cop-played by John Coplans-is making an inventory of missing effects.

FELICKS: (Groan). "The character generator on loan from Syracuse U."

AA: "Van Sehly's 56" Screen colour monitor". (Mean)

JORGE: "That rare special effects box from Rain-dance".

FELICES: (Sigh of relief) "They never touched the eight hours of color tape from "Going through the Motions"..."

FADE OUT. ■

General Idea

LANGUAGE & STRUCTURE IN NORTH AMERICA

Cette exposition, présentée au mois de novembre à Toronto par le Kensington Arts Association, regroupait des oeuvres d'au delà de cent cinquante artistes canadiens et américains. Richard Kostelanetz signe l'introduction du catalogue, "Writing Degree Zero", de même qu'il assume la responsabilité du contenu de l'exposition. De plus, on peut lire un article intitulé "Language Art", dont l'auteur est Beth Learn, organisatrice de Language & Structure, dans Queen Street Magazine, Volume 3, No. 7, 8, 9. Cette revue participait à l'exposition par la présentation de conférences d'Acconci, Yvonne Rainer, Agnes Denes et de Beth Learn (sur Yeats/Smithson). ■

CARMEN LAMANNA

À Toronto, Carmen Lamanna expose en janvier Ian Carr Harris, en février Murray Favro, et en mars, Royden Rabinowitch. ■

FRINGE RESEARCH AT A SPACE

This certainly had to be one of the best-attended and most fun-filled openings in recent years. Several hundred people jammed A Space for an evening of hologram, slide shows, and musical performances sponsored by Fringe Research. People in white lab coats scurrying about with clipboards and slide rules added a slight science fair flavor to the evening. Rick Simon's demonstration of obsolete electrical apparatus called "The Violet Ray Machine" seemed like a traveling medicine man's performance as a curious crowd gazed in awe. Ooohs and Aaahs were frequently heard as he demonstrated the wonders of electricity. A 3-D slide show which required polaroid viewing glasses was well received and the evening came to a close with a performance by Toronto's art-style vocal group the Hamel Sisters, who seemed strangely out of place.

Dorothy Cameron became the first art collector in Canada to purchase an artist's hologram, a small plate "still life" composition which included an egg cup.

Several real scientists were present in the crowd and were seen enjoying the festivities.

A laser was on display in a specially-darkened chamber along with a number of larger, more sophisticated holograms. Drawings and explanatory graphics were hung on the walls along with a number of "white light" holograms, which, although not as sharp as those which require laser light only for viewing, are visible in ordinary room light.

The lighthearted atmosphere of the evening was a refreshing change from most art events which involve prominent technological hardware freaks stealing the spotlight, the evening's humor provided a focus on the *meaning* of the activity rather than merely the *means*.

The exhibition was held in Montreal's Vehicule Art gallery in December. ■

COLOR XEROX

Several Toronto artists have recently begun to explore the properties of Xerox Corporation's remarkable new color copier. Michael Bidner of London, Ontario's Canyon Productions, Flavio Belli, and Michael Hayden are among those who have already done extensive work with the new process, which provides color copies nearly instantly.

The machine is not yet readily accessible, with only a few locations in Toronto and none elsewhere in Ontario. Bidner and Hayden have managed to rent one for installation in Hayden's Shuter Street art complex.

A number of commercial reproduction houses in Toronto have the machine, but so far have not been able to make it even pay for itself. One problem is the relatively high cost of the copies, some places as high as \$2.50 each.

Despite the machine's lack of commercial success in such locations, artists have seized upon it with enthusiasm. Flavio Belli has already received two commissions for works using the machine. One, an outdoor mural in Montreal, was done several months ago. The other, a corner mural for Toronto's Ritz Cafe, was conceived, completed, and installed in the same day. The piece is quite unusual as it replicates the old floral wallpaper which had previously occupied the corner in which it was installed.

Bidner seems to have done a great volume of work with the machine, and has worked extensively from photographs. For Hayden, the machine is a potential production aid in the creation of his sculpture, electronic works, architectural applications, and numerous other projects. Joe Bodolai has begun to use the machine in the creation and simulation of commercial graphics and printed information such as magazine ads, imaginary covers, etc., including one for a "magazine" entitled "Popular Aesthetics". ■

ART GALLERY HAPPY HOUR

Try this on your next visit to the Art Gallery of Ontario: At five o'clock on weekdays, when the gallery

closes, the member's lounge charges half price on all drinks until six (or maybe even later). The catch is that somebody has to be a staff member of the AGO. Meet a tour guide and go for a drink. You'll actually hear curators talking about important things. Besides, the view of the sculpture court is breathtaking, especially for a buck a drink. ■

TORONTO ART SCENE ON TV

Many people involved in Toronto's art community have been seen recently on Rainer Schwarz's late-night video atrocity, *Nightmusic*. For anyone who was in a coma during the late Sixties and missed psychedelia, all the worst aspects of this glorious period survive nightly on this curious Educational TV program. The show generally features flashbacks to the early days of Video Art (anybody remember "feedback"?) rambling mindless ravings and funny faces by the show's host, and lots of contemporary acid rock.

For some reason, lately a lot of artists have shown up on this show, presumably seeking publicity. Marien Lewis discussed Video with the show's alternate host, clown Rosie Sunrise. (that sounds better than it is, by the way). General Idea talked about whatever one talks about on that show, and the Hummer Sisters appeared with Rick Simon and Fringe Research on an exceptionally-hilarious episode that left everyone looking pretty silly. Now the amazing thing is that all these guests know full well how terrible the program is and they think they can all survive it. So far, the show has a perfect record - it has claimed all its victims. But it's always fun the next day around A Space when everyone decides to talk about the program. (REAL television is so much more exciting than art video, isn't it.)

The producers of the program, in their constant search for Redeeming Social Merit (after all, they have to justify why it's on an "educational" station) will probably continue to exploit local artists and genuinely creative people as long they are willing to put themselves up to it.

The one good thing about all this is that nobody with any sense can take the program for more than ten seconds anyway. So the only people watching it all (other than friends) don't realize they're watching television anyway. (Wanna smoke a joint?) ■

RADIO'S THE THING

Radio plays have become a popular art form here lately. Well, not real broadcast radio, but tape recordings of live performances that the promoters call radio plays. Vic D'Or and Hank Bull have figured prominently in several of these events, one of which was held in conjunction with a poetry festival at Hart House which also included William Burroughs. I'm told some of these are quite fun, and more are certainly underway, including one using 3-D slides tentatively titled "The Red Menace". ■

ANDY WARHOL ON HIS WAY

Word is that author Andy Warhol will make a personal appearance at the Art Gallery of Ontario bookshop to sign things on November 28 and 29. He supposedly will sign not only copies of his new book but also anything else people want him to sign. A number of artists are presently furiously completely

drawings in his style for him to autograph and it looks like there may, be a few more silly moments in store at the Art Gallery of Ontario this month. ■

GENERAL IDEA STAG NIGHT

An all-night honest-to-goodness stag party, complete with cigars and sex films, was held at General Idea's Toronto headquarters, above a Yonge Street body rub parlor. Smoking, a poker game, dancing, drinking, and much masculine camaraderie carried on through the night. Amazingly enough, there were no females present (as far as anyone knew) except for a television appearance by Linda Lovelace in her role as an anatomical genius in *Deep Throat*. (This is bad journalism, by the way. I wasn't there.) ■

Joe Bodolai

ITALIE

MAGMA

Magma is the name of a group show organized by Romana Loda (Director of the gallery Multimedia in Erbusco near Brescia), and sponsored by the municipality of Iseo. This comprehensive exhibition opened on November 29 in the Castello Oldofredi in Iseo and is a review dedicated to art trends of the past ten years with 33 women participating. A small catalogue has been prepared for the occasion with an introduction by Romana Loda, and with biographical profiles on each artist. The show's dual themes are "Art:Latest Trends" and "The Woman:Condition/Protest". Of the 33 artists, 12 are Italian, while the others represent North and South America, East and West Europe. Magma included works by Marina Abramovic, Anna Candiant, Carla Ceratt, Lygia Clark, Betty Danon, Hanne Darboven, Iole de Freitas, Valie Export, Nicole Gravier, Rebecca Horn, Suzy Lake, Ketty La Rocca, Paola Mattioli, Marisa Merz, Annette Messenger, Verita Monselles, Natalia LL, Giovanna Nuvoletti, Stephanie Oursler, Gina Pane, Lucia Pescador, Marianne Pitzen, Diana Rabito, Edda Renouf, Andreina Robotti, Dorothea Rockburne, Ulrike Rosebach, Franca Sacchi, Suzanne Santoro, Katharina Sieverding, Berty Skuber, Nando Vigo and Dorothee Von Windheim.

DEL MILIONE

In October, Galleria del Milione in Milan inaugurated an exhibition of works by the Canadian artist Otto Rogers. In November, the gallery presented recent paintings by another Canadian artist David Sorensen. Sorensen exhibited only a few small-sized canvases of the well-know "bars" series, however, the major part of the show consisted of large-sized paintings whose extremely pure surfaces are interrupted where strips have been cut out of the canvas, and then restructured by applying a strata of canvas behind the cut out and replaced elements.

Also at the same gallery, in a show running to mid-December, Claudio Olivieri presented 18 canvases many of them more than 1 meter X 2 meters in dimension. These works have vertical application of very deep tones of blues, greens and reds. Approximately 12 of these recent works will be exhibited in February 1976 at the Galerie Espace 5 in Montreal.

AZIMUTH

Studio Luca Palazzoli in Milan opened with an important documentation show called "Azimuth" (October 30-December 6). Co-ordinated by the critic Lea Vergine, this show was also presented in Rome at the Primo Piano. Along with works by Enrico Castellani, Heinz Mack and Piero Manzoni, there was also documentation on display with excerpts taken from the magazine Azimuth published with texts in four languages and edited by Castellani and Manzoni, of which only two issues came out in 1959 and 1960. though actually of very short duration, the Castellani-Manzoni team worked as one of the most important catalyzers of a conception of making art from which there was no turning back. In their magazine Azimuth and in the gallery of the same name which they opened shortly after publishing the first issue of the magazine, they gave space to those who, conscious of a language crisis, felt the need to "venture beyond". As well as those of Castellani and Manzoni, there were contributions and participation by Klein, Boriani, Mavignier, Dorflès and many others.

This show with its well documented catalogue gives us the opportunity to understand something of that brief story which engraved a date on the visual culture of the '50s, and which became so clearly marked during the '60s.

PHOTOGRAPHE PAINTERS

Piero Cavellini, Director of the gallery Nuovi Strumenti in Brescia, inaugurated his season on November 6 with a group show called "Photographers-painters", taken as an attempt to analyze, and a moment on which to reflect regarding those artists who use photographic means in their work. Eighteen artists representing America and Europe were exhibited in three groupings as follows: Haka, Lachowicz, Natalia LL, L. Sosnowski (Poland); Agnetti, Altamira, Carpi, Cavellini, La Rocca, Guerzoni, Parmiggiani, Vaccari (Italy); Baldessari, Beckley, B. & H. Becher, Collins, Graham, Gravier, Goldstein, Hutchinson, Le Gac, Oppenheim (other).

CLAUDIO COSTA

At the gallery Massimo Valsecchi in Milan, Claudio Costa exhibited recent works titled "For an Inventory of Cultures". These were a series of dark-stained, wood and glass, shelved, 6-foot high and narrow cabinets similar to museum display cases containing many utensils and small objects faithfully remade by the artist, out of clay or plaster for the most part. The effect is appealing, mysterious and evocative, in that they recall characteristic moments, gestures, habits of a remote cultures, which phenomenon develop between two poles: the object and the spectator. So that the gesture, the behavior, the symbol, acting on the viewer allows him to relive that phenomenology characterized by them, and through the pure forms, the undefinable may be defined.

ENGLISH ART TODAY

From February 18 to May 16, the exhibition "English Art Today (1960-1976)" will be held in the Palazzo Reale in Milan. This elaborate show has been organized through the collaboration of the British Council Institute and the City of Milan. Works by more than 50 artists, each represented by a certain number of selected pieces spanning a 15 year

period, will offer a wide panorama. Complementary events are programmed to run simultaneously. There will be film projections showing eighteen artists work. And in the octagonal center of Milan's downtown Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II there will be performance events by Stuart Brisley, Coum, Roland Miller and Shirley Cameron. Furthermore, artists Paul Huxley, Kenneth Martin, Tom Phillips, Richard Smith, Joe Tilson and William Turnbull have been commissioned to create flags and banners which will be hung in Milan's central Piazza del Duomo. Some of the many artists participating are: Keith Arnatt, Art & Language, Victor Burgin, Alan Charlton, Robyn Denny, David Dye, Gilbert & George, Richard Hamilton, John Hilliard, John Stezaker, William Tucker, etc.

ANNETTE MESSENGER

"Collectionneuse, Artiste, Truqueuse, Femme Pratique", is the name of Annette Messenger's show held from November 18 to December 6 at the Galleria Diagramma in Milan. It is a complex diary created to reconstitute poetry to every day occurrences, by an artist among the most significant working in this field of research. Seven works, each composed of numerous elements, fill the walls, often with a tapestry-like effect. Works on display: "Ma vie pratique" par Annette Messenger femme pratique (47 written and drawn works in black and white and in color); "Ma collection de proverbes" par Annette Messenger collectionneuse (91 small pieces of white cotton with proverbs embroidered using colored thread); "Mon mariage" par Annette Messenger artiste (5 color photos); "Motifs gais" par Annette Messenger artiste (18 color photos with the original drawings on the reverse); "Le bonheur" par Annette Messenger artiste (66 pastel drawings); "Les effroyables aventures de Annette truqueuse" (96 photos plus the original drawings); "Annette Messenger truqueuse" (21 little booklets with original drawings on the covers, with two to four black and white photos inside).

Annette Messenger collectionneuse, Annette Messenger femme pratique, Annette Messenger truqueuse sont trois de mes appellations qui correspondent à mes trois activités actuelles.

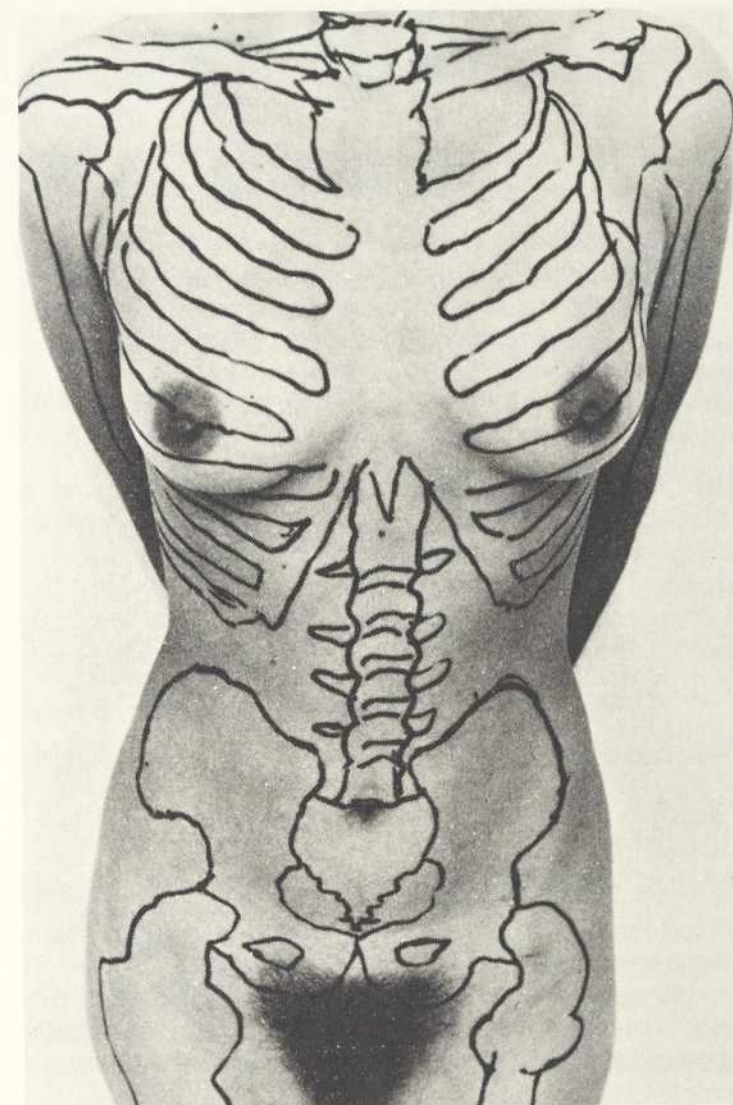
J'aimerais à mesure que les années passent me constituer une collection d'appellations qui représenteraient la marque de toutes mes activités passées; je veux tenter un peu dérisoirement de compenser la diminution du temps de ma vie par l'augmentation de mes appellations.

La collectionneuse qui veut aussi faire penser à une femme dont la vie serait assez douteuse et peu sérieuse, cherche à posséder la vie et les événements qui arrivent jusqu'à elle.

Comme toute collection qui est l'appropriation pour soi-même du monde extérieur, celles-ci s'enrichissent continuellement et se dépassent elles-mêmes toujours avec le temps.

Ni achevés, ni définitifs, les albums-collections qui partent presque tous du collectif sont pour Annette Messenger collectionneuse la meilleure préservation possible et semblent alors se prendre pour sa propre vie illustrée.

Annette Messenger femme pratique, elle, voudrait avoir le sens des réalités - elle ne cesse de consigner par écrit toutes les affaires de la maison et de la vie



Annette Messenger truqueuse, LA FEMME ET LA MORT, Galleria Diagramma, novembre 1975.

courante qui devraient servir en cas de nécessité, mais ces notes seront-elles jamais utilisées?

Annette Messenger truqueuse est pleine d'adresse - petites tricheries sur sa vie, sur ses sentiments, sur son travail, divers tours de main lui permettent de se distraire toute seule - rien ne doit se perdre - un cheveu tombé par terre servira à dessiner un éléphant - une tache d'encre sur la peau deviendra un Monsieur très sérieux etc...

Ainsi la truqueuse (mais les artistes ne sont-ils pas tous des truqueurs?) n'est jamais désœuvrée et ne manque jamais de matériel puisqu'elle joue avec elle-même et sur elle-même.

Annette Messenger — October 1974

STEPHANIE OURSLER

The American artist Stephanie Oursler who is currently living in Rome, had a one-man show of 1974-75 works at the gallery Multimedia in Erbusco (Brescia) which opened on November 22. A second exhibition called "5 Cuts" was held in November-December at the Studio Barozzi in Milan. A recent book published titled "5 Cuts" is an almost actual-size facsimile of the five sequence pieces (the first piece is made up of 13 elements, the other four, of 6 elements each).

AMELIA ETLINGER

The gallery Mercato del Sale in Milan continuing its activity of exhibiting what might be loosely grouped as Visual Poetry works, has organized a show called

"Something is happening" with works by the American artist Amelia Etlinger at the University of Pavia beginning October 17. (A similar exhibition was held at the Mercato del Sale in early 1975 and in October of the same year in Genoa at the Art's Transformation Gallery). Included in the show are tapestry poems, box poems, letter poems, packet poems and threads poems. A 16 page booklet has been put out for the occasion containing a series of written works by the artist.

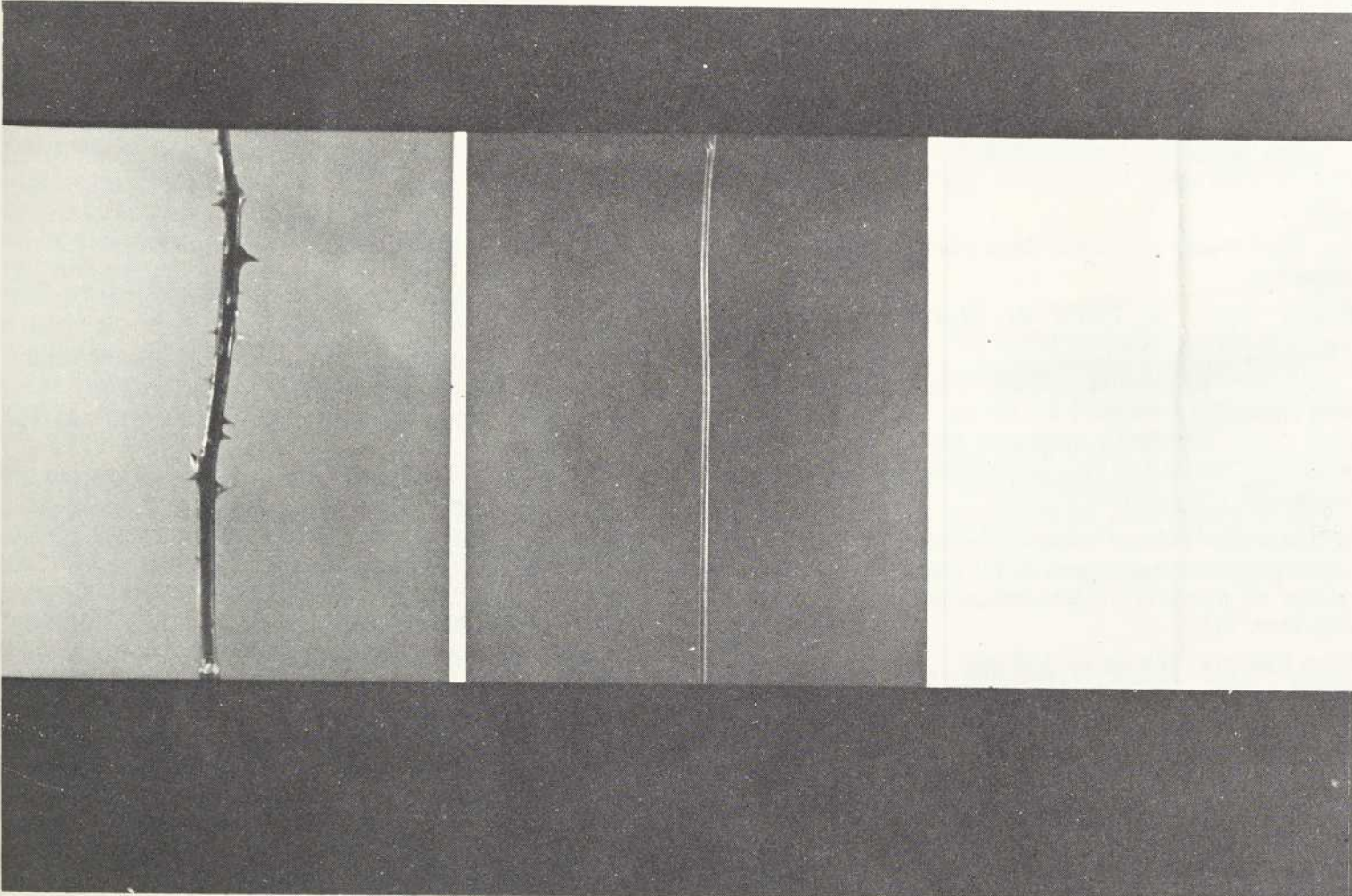
ANTONIO PARADISO

Beginning October 21 for a two-week period, Antonio Paradiso had continuous projections of his recent films along with a videocassette piece by Sandra Sandri called "Hypnosis" (video, b&w, sound, 60 min.). Paradiso's ground-floor, large studio space lended itself well to such screenings and was just one of the many recent instances of available alternative space currently being utilized in various Italian cities to present artists' work. Paradiso's "Filmed Sculptures" recently incorporated to form 1 50 minute film series (16 mm., color, sound) included "Terrestrial Navigation of Doves", "Portrait of the Sahara", "Tarantati" and "Sleepwalkers" (By Paradiso and Sandri).

FRANCOISE LAMBERT

Françoise Lambert in Milan opened her season in October with a Katharina Sieverding show of spectacular and large-scale photographic wallmurals in color. Following this, the gallery showed recent works by Bill Beckley consisting of color photos and texts. (Previously, at the Milan Lambert gallery Beckley had a one-man show in 1973 and a performance piece in 1974). On December 1, James Collins presented a series of recent photo works.

Bill Beckley, *Roses are red, Violets are blue, Sugar is sweet*. 1974, 3 pannelli 40 x 60" cad.



NARRATIVE ART 2

Studio Cannaviello in Rome opened the season in October with a group show called Narrative Art 2. The same exhibition travelled to the city of Caserta (near Naples) and is scheduled to be shown at the Galleria Diagramma in Milan beginning mid-January. Artists included in this show are David Askevold, Didier Bay, Bill Beckley, Christian Boltanski, Cioni Carpi, Robert Cumming, John C. Fernie, Roger Cutforth, Jochen Gerz, Peter Hutchinson, Jean Le Gac, Franco Vaccari and Roger Welch. Enzo Cannaviello has selected excellent examples of works by these artists. A catalogue edited by Achille Bonito Oliva and Filiberto Menna has been printed, and contains reproductions of the works presented in this show, together with an anthology of critical texts on Narrative Art which have appeared over the past few years in international publications.

VICTOR BURGIN

This seven part piece "Hussonet" by Victor Burgin executed during the summer of 1975 while the artist was teaching at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, was exhibited in October at the gallery Daniel Templon in Milan. Future Burgin shows include one at the I.C.A in London in January 1976 and an important group show called "English Art Today (1960-1976)" scheduled to open on February 18, 1976 at Milan's Palazzo Reale.

Eve Carpi

musiques au présent

EN DIRECT

Don Druick/Greg Simpson (flûte-percussion, piano, ruban magnétique) à Véhicule Art Inc. Samedi 11 octobre 21h.: **Musique par coeur.**

"Toru Takemitsu dit que pour lui toute musique doit devenir prière. Personnellement je crois que cette idée indique la direction essentielle pour que la musique puisse survivre... des rythmes qui ne sont ni métriques, ni pulsés; des mélodies qui ne cherchent nullement à séduire ou à dominer; des modes de communications auto-révélateurs, des formats de développement de textures." -Don Druick

Trio: Yves Bouliane (contrebasse), Robert LeRiche (clarinette basse, saxophone soprano), Patrice Beckerich (percussion), à la Galerie **Média:** 970 Rachel est, 20h., entrée libre. De l'improvisation comme méthode d'investigation à la fois scientifique et intuitive. Un premier album de ce trio devrait paraître début 76.

Birmanie: Danseurs et musiciens du théâtre national dans le cadre de la Semaine mondiale de la musique, salle Claude-Champagne, vendredi 3 octobre 1975. Première visite nord américaine d'une troupe de Birmanie.

"La troupe est composée de quinze musiciens et danseurs. Les instruments utilisés comprennent notamment le pat-waing (cercle de tambours), le chi-waing (cercle de gongs), le maun-zaing (gong), divers types de tambours, de cymbales et de claquoirs, ainsi qu'un instrument à vent." Notes du programme.

Les exercices solos du début: technique de la danse birmane, mouvements féminins (3), mouvements masculins (4) furent particulièrement captivants.

Tibet: L'ensemble folklorique du Tibet, théâtre Maisonneuve, du 1er au 4 octobre 1975.

"Le Dalai Lama quitta le Tibet (envahi par la Chine) avec des dizaines de milliers de Tibétains pour se réfugier aux Indes où ils fondèrent la Société Tibétaine de Musique, Danse et Théâtre en un ultime effort pour préserver le mysticisme de leur culture. Aujourd'hui les membres de cette société sont les uniques représentants de l'héritage artistique et culturel du Tibet. Ce sont les seuls professionnels qui interprètent les danses folkloriques tibétaines et le "Lhamo", l'opéra traditionnel qui date de plus de 500 ans." - Notes du programme.

Discographie/référence: Tibet

Songs and music of Tibet, (Folkways 4486). Tibetan folk and minstrel music, (Lyricord 7196). Tibetan ritual music, (Lyricord 7181). Tibetan Buddhist Rites from Bhutan: Rituals of the Drupka order, (Lyricord 7255). 2- Sacred dances of Nyingmapa, (Lyricord 7256). 3- Temples and public ceremonies, (Lyricord 7257). 4- Tibetan instrumental & Folk music, (Lyricord 7258).

The music of Tibet-Tantric ritual, (Unesco 4005). The music of Tibet vol. 1-2-3, (Unesco 2009-10-11).

Le Tibet, rituel bouddhique, (CBS 65174). Ceremonial, ritual and magic music: Tibet, (Phillips-Unesco 6586007).

Tibetan Buddhism, (Nonesuch 72005).

Musique tibétaine du Sikkim, (Vogue, musée de l'homme LULX 187).
Musique rituelle tibétaine, (Ocora no. 49).
Musique et théâtre populaire tibétaines, (Ocora 62).
Musique sacrée tibétaine, (Ocora 71).



Troisième festival de musique traditionnelle, à la salle du Plateau, 17 au 21 novembre. La tradition au présent. Cinq veillées/rencontres: Québec & Acadie/Bretagne/Louisiane/Irlande présenté par le Service d'animation socio-culturelle. U.Q.U.A.M.

Projet Musique prévu pour Québec 75, subvention refusée par le Conseil des Arts du Canada. Budget suggéré: \$3,600.
Contenu: un catalogue d'information sur les musiques nouvelles locales/internationales, 2 journées d'auditions commentées, 5 concerts non lucratifs avec Dionne/Brégent, le Komuso, Yves Bouliane/Robert LeRiche, Bernard Gagnon/M.P. Chabot, Brian Highbloom et Raymond Torchinsky, (musiciens de recherche, composition/improvisation.)

Le Sonographe: Nous parlerons plus en détail dans notre prochain numéro des 9 nouvelles productions québécoises sur cassettes produites et distribuées par le Sonographe, 1604 St-Denis, Montréal.

TORONTO

Le 15 novembre 1975, un groupe de peintres/graveurs/photographes... de Toronto donnent un concert à Montréal. Ils enregistrent un album double: **The Artist's Jazz Band**, gallery éditions (disponible de Coda publications, P.O. Box 87, Station J, Toronto, Ontario). Michael Snow appartient à ce groupe. Il espère d'ici peu ouvrir une galerie à orientation spécifiquement musicale. Son premier disque doit paraître ces jours-ci sur Chatham Square, la firme phonographique de Philip Glass.

Michael Snow: **Musics for whistling, piano, microphone and tape recorder** (Chatham Square).

Toronto: le **C.C.M.C.**, Canadian Creative Music Collective (Casey Sokol-piano, Ai Mattes-guitare basse, Larry Dubin-batterie, Bill Smith-saxophones/flûte, Nobuo Kobota-saxophone, Greg Gallagher-saxophone, Peter Anson-guitare) nous annonce la parution prochaine d'un premier album de leur musique. Ils seraient directement impliqués dans ce projet de Michael Snow: **Music Gallery** (fabrication d'instruments, ateliers, concerts, participation de non-musiciens etc...).

Toronto: Onari Productions en collaboration avec la galerie **A Space** (85 St-Nicholas Street) organise une série de concerts de musique nouvelle avec musiciens canadiens/américains. Au programme de janvier à mai: The Artist's Jazz Band, Sonny Greenwich, Oliver Lake, Joseph Bowie, Dollar Brand, Richard Teitelbaum, Joseph Jarman, Karl Berger, Barbara Ackerman Ensemble...

Renseignements: **A Space** ou Jazz and Blues record center, 893 Yonge Street, Toronto (929-5065).

DISQUES D'ARTISTES

Il serait éventuellement intéressant de discuter toutes ces productions enregistrées, ces musiques réalisées/interprétées par des peintres, sculpteurs, photographes ou tout autre artiste dont le travail relève avant tout et plus spécifiquement des arts visuels. (Par exemple Jean Dubuffet: **Musical experiences**, Finnadar SR-9002, du JCOA). La revue **Musics** (no.3) nous parle de trois d'entre eux.

Alan Davie: Music Workshop (disponible de Gimpel Films Gallery, 30 Davies Street, London W-1). **Suite for prepared piano and mini-drums**, avec Frank Perry (percussion), 1971, ADMW002.

"Sounds quite like the Cage on sonatas and interludes but free-er."(1)

Phantom in the Room, piano-clarinette avec Daniel Humair (drums), 1971, ADMW 004.

ADMW 005 avec Tony Oxley (percussion), en préparation.

Sur Alan Davie lire aussi: Jazz Magazine août 1975, page 10.

Dieter Rot (& Ruhn et Wiener): November Symphonie (double, 1973)

"It's a kind of spastic musical orgy carefully stuffed into classical symphony structure. (...) Their inability to play music produces moments which somehow approaches the kind of instrumental exploration that real musicians are doing now."(1)

Berliner Dichterworkshop, 1973

"A time passing indulgence (...) sounds mostly like a group of drunken tone-deaf Germans vocalizing together."(1)

Tom Phillips: Words and Music

"Side two is just Phillips voice reading pages from **A Humument** (...).

Side one has four items of music. (...) Nothings, in-elegant, irrevelant, nothings..."(1)

(1) les notes sont de Peter Riley (Musics)

Les albums de D. Roth et T. Phillips son distribués par Compendium Books, 281 Camdem High Street, London NW1.

LIVRES

Pierre Boulez, par Vérité et par Hasard, entretiens avec Célestin Deliège, Tel Quel, édition du Seuil, 1975.

Merce Cunningham, Clarke Irwin & co. ltd, Toronto et Vancouver, 1975, \$11.95 (incluant textes d'Yvonne Rainer, John Cage, Earle Brown, Gordon Mumma, Christian Wolf, R. Rauschenberg etc...).

Leo Smith: Notes-(8 pieces), P.O. Box 102, New Haven, Connecticut 06510, \$3.25 U.S. ou Coda Toronto.

Libérer la musique: de Jean-Claude Lartigot et Eric Sprogis, collection Citoyens, éditions universitaires, Paris (Musique et politique/vie quotidienne).

Free Jazz: Ekkerhard Jost, edition Universal, Vertriebsges, MBH, A-1015, Vienne, Autriche, Postfach 130, 214 pages. Collection "Series in Jazz research" (analyses strictes du matériau musical, techniques etc... Trane, Ayler, A.A.C.M...).

Coltrane: C.O. Simpkins, Herndon House publishers, \$8.95.

Music Outside: Ian Carr, Latimer 1973, \$10.00 (Contemporary Jazz in Britain)..

Billie's Blues: John Chilton, biographie de Billie Holiday, England, 1975.

Modern Jazz: M. Harrison, A. Morgan, R. Atkins, M. James et J. Cook. Aquarium Books, Londres. Distribué par Argus Books, Station Road, Kings Langley, Hertfordshire, Angleterre (1945-70, les disques essentiels).

Pieces: An Anthology de Michael Byron, 142 pages. Partitions et articles de Peter Garland, Victoria Brown, Tom Nixon, M. Byron, Marion Brown Harold Budd, Frederic Rzewski, Richard Teitelbaum, David Rosenboom, John Grayson et James Tenny. \$4.50 de: York University, departement of music, 4700 Keele St., Downsview, Ontario.

Immeasurable Equation: a book of space Wisdom, de Sun Ra, El Saturn Research P.O. Box 7124-Chicago, Illinois 60607 - U.S.A.

MAGAZINES:

Radio Free Jazz, 3212 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E. Washington D.C. 20020, U.S.A.

Bells: Henry Kuntz Jr., 1921 Walnut no.1, Berkeley, California, 94704, U.S.A. \$2.00 (U.S.) pour six numéros, un numéro par six semaines.

L'Indépendant du Jazz: 86 rue du Faubourg St-Denis, Paris 10e, France.

Cadence, the American review of Music, P.O. Box 5, Oxbow, N.Y. 13671 (\$7.00/an).

FILMS

Jean Carignan violonneux, de Bernard Gosselin, 1975, O.N.P., 94 minutes, avec Ti-Jean Carignan, Paul Gosselin, Léo Plamondon, Arcade Gosselin et sa famille. Une présentation de la Cinémathèque québécoise, 15 octobre 1975. Un document essentiel sur notre musique traditionnelle et l'un de ses maîtres incontestés.

The Rise and Fall of Charlie Parker (produit par Ray Lofaro et Stewart Levine-en préparation).

CRAMPS RECORDS

Cramps Records: Série Nova Musicha, Milan, Six albums parus, notes en italien seulement. Distribution au Canada: P.J. Imports 1635 Sismet Road, Unit 30, Mississauga, Ontario. A Montréal, à l'Alternatif, 1587 Saint-Denis.

John Cage: Music for Marcel Duchamp (1947), **Music for Amplified Toy Pianos** (1960), **Radio Music** (1956), **4'33"**, en trois parties (30", 2'23", 1'40") (1952), **62 Mesostics Re Merce Cunningham** (fragment) (1972). CRSLP 6101.



Juan Hidalgo: Tamarin (1974), Gocce di sperme per dodici pianoforti. "Tamarin è un opera di 40 minuti di durata (più le risonanze finali) per solo suoni armonici prodotti da 12 pianoforti a coda. In questa esecuzione le dodici parti sono state registrate separamente e poi "mixate". "Juan Hidalgo, extrait des notes de l'album. Interprète: Juan Hidalgo, claviers J. Hidalgo forme avec Walter Marchetti à Madrid en 1964 le groupe Zaj, affilié à Fluxus. Hidalgo travaille aussi avec Cage. Deux livres publiés: *Viage Argel* (1967) et *Juan Hidalgo de Juan Hidalgo* (1971). CRSLP 6102.

Robert Ashley: In Sara, Mencken, Christ and Beethoven there were Men and Women (1972), d'après un texte de John Barton Wolgamot (1944) avec la participation du Center for Contemporary Music (C.C.M.), Mills College, Oakland, Californie, et Paul de Marinis, Moog synthetiser (1973). Le texte est restructuré, permuté, récité sur deux faces consécutives: "In its very truly great manners of Leudwig Van Beethoven very heroically the very cruelly ancestral death of Sara Powell Hardt had very ironically come amongst his really grand men and women to Rafael Sabatini, George Ade, Margaret Storm Jameson, Ford Madox Huefer, Jean-Jacques Bernard, Louis Bromfield, Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche and Helen Brown Norden very titanically." CRSLP 6103.

Robert Ashley: directeur du C.C.M., un des organisateurs du Once Festival, 1961-1968, directeur du Once Group Theater Ensemble, membre du Sonic Arts Union. Compositions: "She was a Visitor," Odessey 32160156, "Untitled Mixes", ESP 1099, "The Wolfman", Source, In Memoriam Crazy Horse", (Advance 5), avec le Sonic Arts Union (Mainstream 510)

Walter Marchetti: La Caccia (da "apocrate seduto sul loto" 1965). Musique qui ressemble aux bruits inarticulés d'un environnement rural, aux chants d'oiseaux minimalistes, sans développement narratif. Quelques mots tirés ici et là du texte explicatif de Marchetti. "Reminiscenza/Imaginaría/Memoria/Rimemorazione/Apparenza/Metamorfosi/Simulazione/Furtive." CRSLP 6104. Walter Marchetti: né en 1931, autodidacte, exerce plusieurs emplois, forme en 1964 avec Hidalgo le groupe Zaj, un livre "Apocrate seduto sul loto".

Paolo Castaldi: Finale (1961-73) pour piano, CRSLP 6105. Interprète: Giancarlo Cardini. Néo-classicisme sans intérêt. Nova Musicha?

Cornelius Cardew: Four Principles on Ireland and other Pieces (1974), piano solo. CRSLP 6106. Interprète Cornelius Cardew. Les titres ne laissent aucune équivoque quant aux motivations et position idéologique de Cardew: Four principles on Ireland. Bring the land a new life. The east is read. Soon (there will be a high tide of revolution in our country), Long live chairman Mao/Revolution is the main trend in the world today... Musique populaire traditionnelle, tonale, folklorique, chants révolutionnaires communistes, chinois. Sans ces références explicites, il ne resterait guère plus qu'un recueil de mélodies simples, accessibles.

Cornelius Cardew: membre du A.M.M. et du Scratch Orchestra, "The Great Learning" (DGG 2561107), avec A.M.M., "Improvisations" (Mainstream 5002).

Livres: "Treatise Handbook", ed. Peters, Londres 1971;

"Scratch Music", (MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1972, 1974;

"Stockhausen sert l'impérialisme", Londres, 1974.

NOUVEAUTÉS DISCOGRAPHIQUES MUSIQUE NOUVELLE COMPOSÉE/IMPROVISÉE

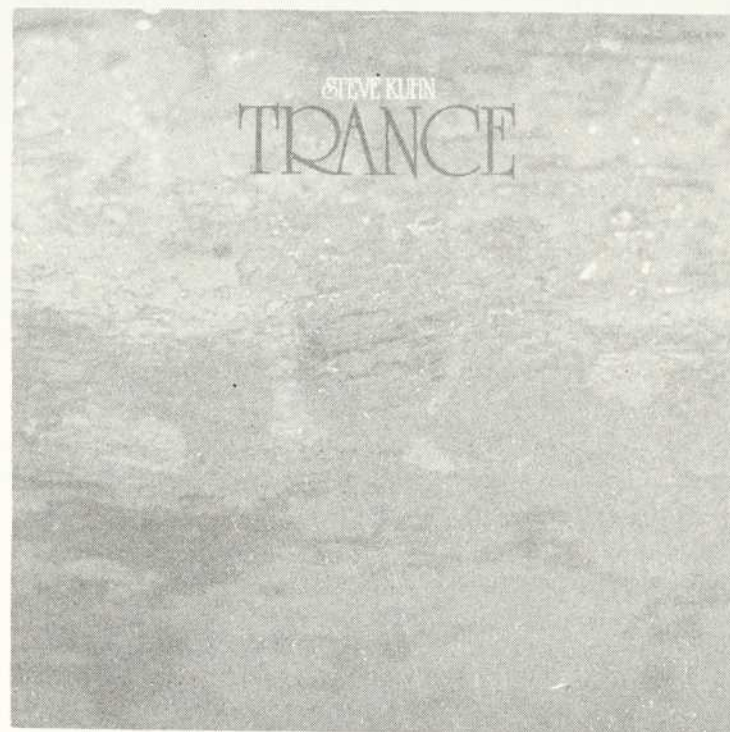
Richard Beirach: Eon, ECM 1054. Richard Beirach, piano, Frank Tusa, contrebasse, Jeff Williams, batterie. Dans l'esprit de Paul Bley, S. Khun ou le Chick Corea des débuts, un premier album très réussi. Mélodies angulaires / impressionisme / swing / décontraction / rigueur: du temps qui passe.

Lee Konitz (saxophones): **Lone Lee**, solo, Steeplechase 1035.

Jackie McLean: Antiquity, duo saxophone, percussions, Steeplechase 1028.

Duke Jordan: Two Loves, Steeplechase 1024.

Steve Kuhn (piano): Ecstasy, solo, ECM 1058. **Trance**, ECM 1052. Les deux albums les plus "achevés" de Steve Kuhn.



Michael Naura: Vanessa, ECM 1053. Mièvrerie et stéréotype.

Gary Burton, Steve Swallow, Ralph Towner, album double. ECM 1055-56

Gary Burton: Ring, d'un musicien parfois inégal, ici fort bien entouré, une musique polie, raffinée, sans excès, ECM 1051.

Steve Lacy: Saxophone Special avec Evan Parker, S. Pots, T. Watts, D. Bailey, et M. Waisvisz, Emanem 3315.

Steve Lacy: School Days, New York 1963; avec Roswell Rudd, Henry Grimes, Dennis Charles, sept compositions de Thelonius Monk, Emanem 3316. Emanem Records, nouvelle adresse: P.O. Box 46, Shandy, N.Y. 12479, U.S.A.

Randy Weston: Blues to Africa, piano solo, 14 août 1974, Zurich. L'Afrique revendiquée, universalité du blues, intégrité. Arista AL 1014.

Mal Waldron: Blues for Lady Day, piano solo, 5 février 1972, Hollande. Un bel hommage à Billie Holiday par son pianiste des dernières années (1957-59). Arista AL 1013.

Julius Hemphill: Coon Bid Ness, saxophoniste alto membre du Black Artists Group de Saint-Louis, enregistré aussi pour Dogon du JCOA. Arista AL 1012.

Archie Shepp: There's a trumpet in my soul, 12 avril 1975 avec Dave Burrell, Charles Majid Greenlee, Ray Draper, Jimmy Garrison, Beaver Harris, Bill Wood... une rentrée remarquable d'Archie Shepp avec sensiblement les mêmes musiciens que lors de son récent passage à Montréal. Référence:

Tiers-Monde, Brésil, tradition afro-américaine, Arista AL 1016.

Charles Tolliver: Ringer, avec Stanley Cowell, du hard bop à son meilleur, Arista AL 1017.

Albert Ayler: Witches and Devils, 24 février 1964, New York avec Sunny Murray, Norman Howard (trompette), Henry Grimes et Earle Henderson (basses), Albert Ayler ou l'urgence renouvelée. Ce dernier aurait, en 1963, enregistré avec Cecil Taylor, Sunny Murray et Henry Grimes une bande restée à ce jour inédite. Arista AL 1018.

Art Ensemble of Chicago: Paris Session, Paris, 26 juin 1969, L. Bowie, R. Mitchell, J. Jarman, Malachi Favors, l'humour et le risque, la tradition, le jeu libre, le cri, l'improvisation: nécessités. Gravé un mois après leur départ de Chicago pour l'Europe, ces enregistrements comptent parmi les documents/repères les plus indispensables d'une orientation nouvelle de la musique Afro-américaine post Coltrane, Ayler: éclatement, pluralisme, collectivisme. Arista AL-9103, album double.

Anthony Braxton: Five Pieces 1975, Arista AI 4064.

Luis Bacalov: Desbandes, saxophone ténor, voix, groupe instrumental, cordes et bandes magnétiques, soliste: Gato Barbieri. Vista 8 TPL 1 1149.

Horo, Série Jazz a confronto, une trentaine d'albums parus. D distribué par Hi-Fi Center, Via Cavalotti 8-20/22, Milan, Italie. Don Pullen, Mario Sciano, George Adams, etc...

Harry Miller: Children at play, solo contrebasse, flûte, percussion, Ogun 200.

Dollar Brand: Ode to Duke Ellington, Phillips japonais RJ 5139.

Charles Moffet: Family Jazz Ensemble, premier album, disponible de Donna Roselius, 212 Bishop Pt., Richmond, California 94801.

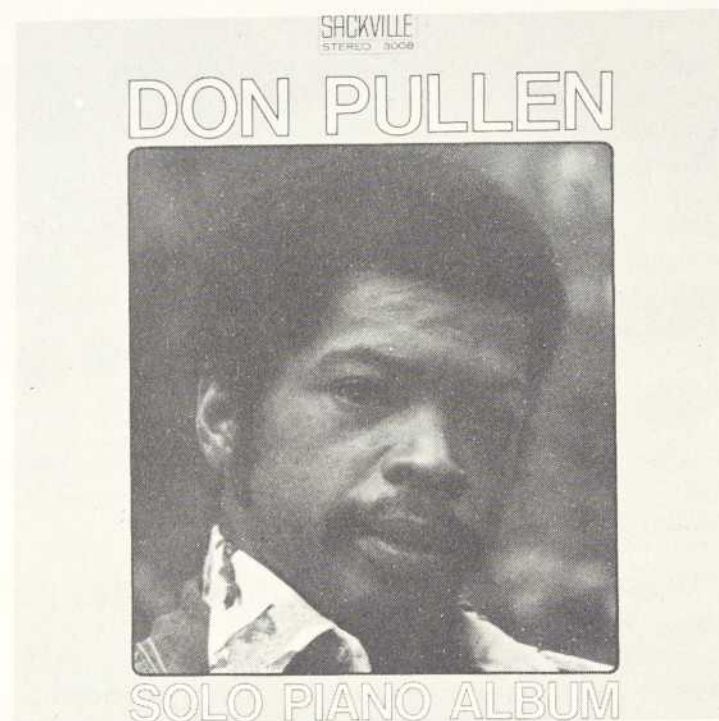
Creative Construction Company, Muse 5071 (avec Braxton-Abrams, L. Smith, R. Davis...).

Trois duos piano contrebasse:

Walter Norris/George Mraz: Drifting, Enja 2044;
Bill Evans/Eddie Gomez: Intuition, Fantasy 9475;
Dollar Brand/Johnny Dyani: Good News from Africa, Enja 2048.

Live Records Production, 42 rue Marge, 75005 Paris: nouvelle firme phonographique spécialisée dans la production de sessions "live". Premier LP prévu: **Oliver Lake Quartet**, distribue aussi: la production du collectif "Le temps des cerises" (François Tusques TDCI 5), de même que les étiquettes ADMI, AKNI, Marge D1,02.

Don Pullen: Solo Piano Album, co-produit par Bill Smith et John Norris, Toronto 24 février 1975, quatre magnifiques compositions/improvisations: Richard's Tune (pour Richard Abrams), Suite (Sweet) Malcolm (part 1, memories and gunshots), Big Alice, Song played backwards), Sackville 3008.



Willem Breuker: Baal/Brecht/Breuker, Bvhaast 003 1973; **De Nejuwe Ijstijd**, Bvhaast 002 1974, 45 tours; **Orkest De Volharding**, 45 tours édité par le comité Nederland-Vietnam, Postgira 1090400, orchestre de rue, militant pour soutenir les luttes sociales par sa présence sur les lieux de manifestations. Nouveaux enregistrements Bvhaast: **Willem Breuker** en duo avec le pianiste Leo Cuypers, **Willem Breuker Big Band**. Willem Breuker a quitté la coopérative hollandaise I.C.P. (Instant Composer's Pool) pour former le W.B. Kollektief, Bvhaast, 2e Oosterparkstraat 243, Amsterdam 3246920, Hollande.

A.M.M. (Lou Gare/Eddie Prévost): To hear and back again, batterie et saxophone, Emanem, A.M.M. fut formé en 1965 avec à l'origine Lawrence Sheaff, Keith Rowe, Cornelius Cardew, Christopher Hobbs et Christian Wolf. Duo depuis 1972: animation, concerts, ateliers. Musique totalement improvisée. Renseignements: Music Now, 26 Avondale Park Gardens, London W 114 PR, Great Britain. Lire: *The view from the hear*, E. Prévost, Musics No. 2, p. 10-14.

Nondo Recording: -9 the Hawthorns, Wood Bridge Road, Birmingham B 13 9 DY, England. Album disponible entre autres: Derek Bailey, en préparation, 1973 & One Music Ensemble, 1974, DPepo/02.

Deux albums non-distribués commercialement, une adresse: **LaMonte Young / Marian Zazeela** (voices and sinewave): 31 juillet 1969, 10h.26-10:49, 23 août 1964, 2h.50. **Meredith Monk: Key**, Increase Records, disponibles de Jaap Rietman, 157 Spring Street, West Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10002,U.S.A.

NEW MUSIC DISTRIBUTION CENTER

De la nouvelle liste du New Music distribution center, 6 West 95th Street, New York, N.Y. 10025, nous avons retenus quelques titres susceptibles de présenter un intérêt particulier.

Bertram Turetzky: New Music for Bass, Advance Fgr 4.

Phillip Rehfeldt: New Solo Clarinet Music, Advance Fgr 4.

Music from the Once Festival: Advance Fgr 5.

Entourage Music and Theatre Ensemble, Folkways 33866.

The Blackearth Percussion Group (Opus One no. 22)

Barry Green: New Music for Double Bass, Piper R 103.

Gunter Hampel: Celebrations, Birth 021/22, Roumi, Birth 023.

Clifford Thornton: The Gardens of Harlem, JCOA 1010.

Leo Smith: Reflectivity, Kabell 2.

Grachan Moncur: Echoes of Prayers, JCOA 1009

Leroy Jenkins: For Prayers Only, JCOA 1010

Leo Smith: Reflectivity, Kabell 2

Bob Moses (& Jeanne Lee): Bittersuite in the Ozone, Mozown 1001.

Roscoe Mitchell: Old Quartet, Nessa 5. R.M. est maintenant directeur du C.A.C. (Creative Arts Collective), association semblable à l'A.A.C.M. de Chicago.

Hannibal Aka Marvin Peterson: Children of the Fire, Sunrise 1944

East New York Ensemble of Music: At the Helm, Folkways FTS 33867

Beaver Harris: From Rag Time to No Time, 360 Company.

AU JAPON

Beaucoup de musiciens américains enregistrent au Japon. On y réédite aussi plusieurs albums disparus du marché américain et jamais réédités depuis (les Verve, par exemple). Pour en obtenir la liste, écrire à:

Dan Serro, 165 William Street, N.Y., NY. 10038, U.S.A.

Sélection:
Sonny Rollins: Gift to Africa (Byg YX-9009-10/double)

Don Cherry: Blue Lake (1971) (Byg YX 4022-23/double)

Max Roach/Clifford Jordan/Abbey Lincoln (Byg YX 4018-19/double)

John Coltrane: Cosmatology (1961-62 avec E. Dolphy) (Byg YX 8006-07/double)

John Coltrane In Paris (1965) (Byg YX 4001-02/double)

Cecil Taylor: Live in Tokyo (PA 7088)

Dave Burrell/S. Cowell: Questions-Answers (PA 7089)

Gil Evans & Kiruchi (FX 8525) etc...

Nombreux inédits de Lee Konitz, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Jack DeJohnette, Cecil Taylor, Earl Hines, Ray Brown, Mal Waldron, Abbey Lincoln, Anthony Braxton, Charlie Mariano, Jaki Byard, Joe Henderson, Circle T. Monk, M. Davis, musiciens d'improvisation japonais.

RÉÉDITIONS

Blue Note, rééditions, Sept albums double bien documentés.

Paul Chambers/John Coltrane: High Steps, (BN-LA 451-H2).

Sam Rivers: Involution, (BN-LA 453-H2).

Deux sessions: S.R. Sextet (17 mars 1967) et Andrew Hill Quartet (7 mars 1966 avec S.R. au saxo ténor). Musique de l'intransigeance. Aucun compromis. Avec "Afflatus" (trio), "Involution", "Effusive Melange", les productions les plus récentes de S. Rivers compositeur/orchestratour/soliste parmi les plus originaux s'y retrouvent déjà, telles quelles amorcées/identifiées/énoncées avec une cohésion remarquable.

Lester Young: The Aladin Sessions, (BN-LA 456-H2).

Six sessions datant respectivement de 1945-46-47-48. L. Young y improvise quelques solos des plus bouleversants. Une réédition longtemps attendue. Indispensable. Lester leaps in/Again/Forever. Deux plages manquent cependant à cette réédition: One o'clock Jump et Tea for two.)

Jackie McLean: Jackknife, (BN-LA 458-H2).

Cecil Taylor: In transition, (BN-LA 458-H2).

Deux sessions: 14 septembre 1956 et 15 avril 1959 incluant le premier album enregistré par ce pianiste pour Transition et depuis longtemps introuvable. Deux documents fascinants pour en retracer l'évolution et le réinscrire dans sa véritable perspective: du pareil au même, avant/pendant/après/à suivre.

Andrew Hill: One for one, (BN-LA 459-H2).

Trois sessions, 10 février 1965, 1er août 1969 et 16 et 23 janvier 1970, 11 compositions de ce pianiste au jeu dénotant, au toucher (sound) très personnel. Ses solos sont une dé/re-structuration de l'espace/temps rythmique (brisée/altérée) rarement prévisible d'où parfois l'impression momentanée de malaise, discontinuité.

Gil Evans: Pacific Standard Time, (BN-LA 461-H2).

Réédition des albums "New Bottle Old Wine" (1959) et "Great Jazz Standards", 1958 (avec Cannonball Adderley soliste, au meilleur de sa forme).

Herbie Nichols: Trio, (Blue Note simple BLP 1519).

Pianiste bop, un novateur, un grand méconnu. Sur H.N. lire: A.B. Spellman, "Four lives in the be-bop business", en attendant la réédition des faces Blue Note en trio avec Art Blakey.

Sonny Clark: Trio, (Blue Note simple BST 81579).

On aimerait de ce pianiste hard bop voir réédité la très belle session gravée pour Time (2101) en trio avec George Duvivier et Max Roach.

PABLO: the Tatum Group Masterpieces, sept albums.

Art Tatum: avec Lionel Hampton, Harry Edison, Buddy Rich, Red Callender, Barney Kessel. Pablo 2310 731

Art Tatum: avec Benny Carter et Louis Bellson. Vol. 1. 2310 732; Vol 2. 2310 733.

Art Tatum: avec Roy Elridge, John Simmons, Alvin Stoller. 2310 734.

Art Tatum: avec Red Callender et Jo Jones. 2310 735.

Art Tatum: avec Ben Webster, Red Callender, Bill Douglas. 2310 736.



Dès les premiers instants d'une écoute même distraite, l'effarante virtuosité d'Art s'impose d'emblée, elle nous saute aux oreilles, elle nous agresse gentiment: montée/descente vertigineuse du clavier cascade de notes propulsées de tout côté, emportement soudain, bousculade du tempo, accélération/ralentissement brusque, inattendu, démantèlement de la structure harmonique de standards d'apparence inoffensifs (joliesse des mélodies) et dont Tatum entreprend la relecture d'une manière non équivoque. Qu'on ne s'y trompe pas, l'excès chez Tatum (le baroque de son jeu-tordre le cou au piano) n'est pas qu'une figure de style mais dissimule bien une violence sous-jacente et correspond de fait à ce qui dans la tradition orale des Afro-américains constitue de façon continue l'une des caractéristiques fondamentales: le cri. Un besoin vital de jouer, une conviction, le blues, un témoignage/dévoiler, déracinement/affirmation. Dans ces disques, tous les musiciens jouent remarquablement bien. Tatum y est partout magistral, omniprésent.

ATLANTIC

Jelly Roll Morton: **New Orleans Memories and Last Band Dates** (SD 2-308-0698/double).

Les derniers enregistrements de J.R. Morton. Les faces I et II (1939/N.O. Memories) furent éditées autrefois sur Commodore et demeurèrent longtemps introuvables. J.R.M. y joue seul au piano

et chante avec beaucoup d'émotion/vérité cinq blues du début du siècle. L'autre album (1940) réunit entre autres Henry Red Allen, Albert Nicholas, Zutty Singleton et Welman Braud. J.R.M. quittait ce monde le 10 juillet 1941. Pour se souvenir: **Mister Jelly Roll**, d'Alan Lomax, Flammarion 1964 ou paperback anglais \$3.45 (de Coda, Toronto).

MUSIQUES ETHNIQUES:

Nouvelle collection CBS, sept titres parus:

Bali: **Musique sacrée**, (CBS 65173).

Tibet: **Rituel bouddhique**, (CBS 65174).

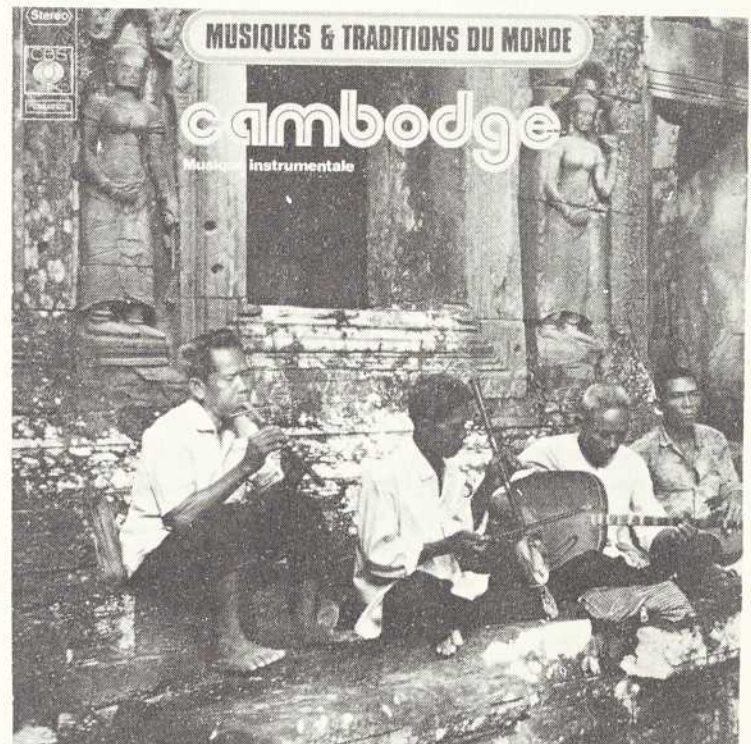
Inde: **Musique religieuse/Bhakti yoga**, (CBS 65175).

Iran: **Le Ney**, (CBS 65414).

Java: **Une nuit de Wayang Kulit**, (CBS 65440).

Gongs: **Asie du Sud-Est**, (CBS 65964).

Cambodge: **Musique instrumentale**, (CBS 65522).



"Le Bhajan est un chant de dévotion et d'amour qui joue un grand rôle dans la vie religieuse et musicale de l'Inde. Il participe du Bhakti, mouvement mystique né, semble-t-il au 15e siècle à la suite de l'invasion des mongols musulmans en Inde(...)

Ces chants nécessitent un grand contrôle de soi et plus particulièrement de la respiration et c'est pourquoi ils sont considérés comme des exercices de Hatha-yoga. Les Bhajans présentés sur ce disque ont été enregistrés à Rishikesh, lieu de pèlerinage au bord du Gange, aux contreforts de l'Himalaya. Le Guru (maître spirituel) et ses quelques élèves se retrouvent tous les matins avant le lever du soleil pour cette méditation musicale qui dure environ deux heures. Ces chants se poursuivent d'une façon ininterrompue en évoluant continuellement avec de perpétuelles modulations jusqu'à se fondre dans le silence, entrecoupé du chant des corbeaux. -Hubert de Fraysseix, extrait du texte de pochette L'Inde: musique religieuse.

Il est difficile, dans l'état actuel des recherches archéologiques, de déterminer l'origine des gongs en Asie et on en reste encore aux hypothèses(...) Les gongs sont toujours fabriqués par des spécialistes-

des forgerons-qui conservent secret leurs alliages ainsi que les formules magiques récitées au cours de la fonte. Généralement les gongs sont en bronze, ou en alliage où le bronze est quantité dominante.(...)

L'Asie du Sud-Est est la seule région au monde où les gongs ont été groupés pour former des instruments mélodiques d'une telle complexité; il en est ainsi au Laos, Cambodge, Birmanie, Thaïlande, Malaisie, Sunda, Java, Bali, l'archipel indonésien et les Philippines. -Jacques Brunet, extrait du texte de pochette; Gongs: Asie du Sud-Est.

Mais dans toute l'Indochine hindouisée c'est le Cambodge qui a conservé, par sa personnalité culturelle puissante, un art dont la tradition remonte loin dans le passé. En effet, ce qui reste le plus remarquable dans la musique cambodgienne, c'est son esprit, sa conception qui est toujours restée originale; malgré les contacts avec les cultures voisines et les nombreux apports de l'extérieur, la musique khmère n'est en rien hybride; l'apport de la culture indienne n'a point fait de la musique cambodgienne une musique modale; de même les contacts avec les cultures chinoises ou vietnamiennes n'ont point sinisé l'art khmer. Si le style évolue, par contre les principes et critères esthétiques n'ont pas changé et s'inscrivent toujours dans une certaine continuité spirituelle garante de l'authenticité de la tradition et véritable moteur de l'art traditionnel.(...)

Mais actuellement, face au génocide systématique que connaît depuis plusieurs années les pays de l'Indochine, devant l'incapacité coupable d'un gouvernement impuissant à établir une politique de sauvegarde d'un patrimoine culturel national évanescant et favorisant même une sorte d'auto-destruction culturelle de la population khmère et des minorités, privé aussi d'une certaine sollicitude royale qui avait permis de maintenir au moins certains aspects de l'art musical (celui concernant la danse classique surtout). La musique khmère est dans une voie de désagrégation irréparable et de disparition dramatique. -Jacques Brunet, extrait du texte de pochette "Cambodge: musique instrumentale".

Raymond Gervais

Nous remercions Jean Papineau pour l'information qu'il nous a communiquée dans cette chronique.

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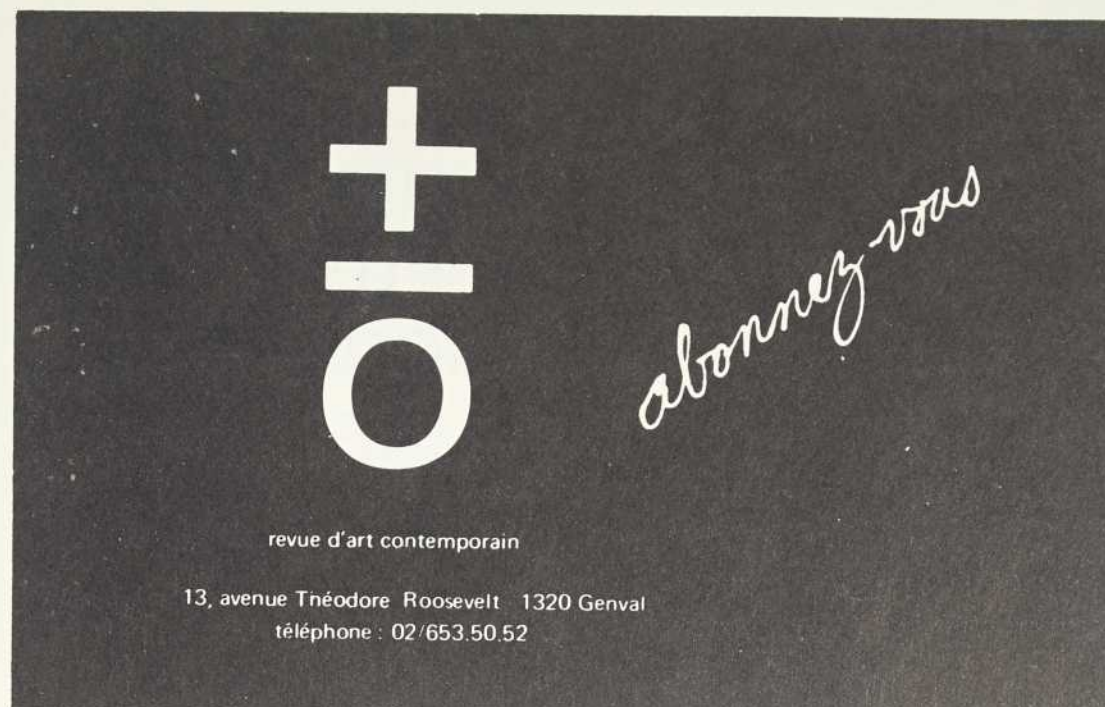
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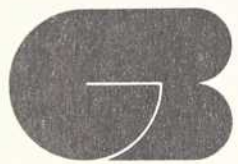
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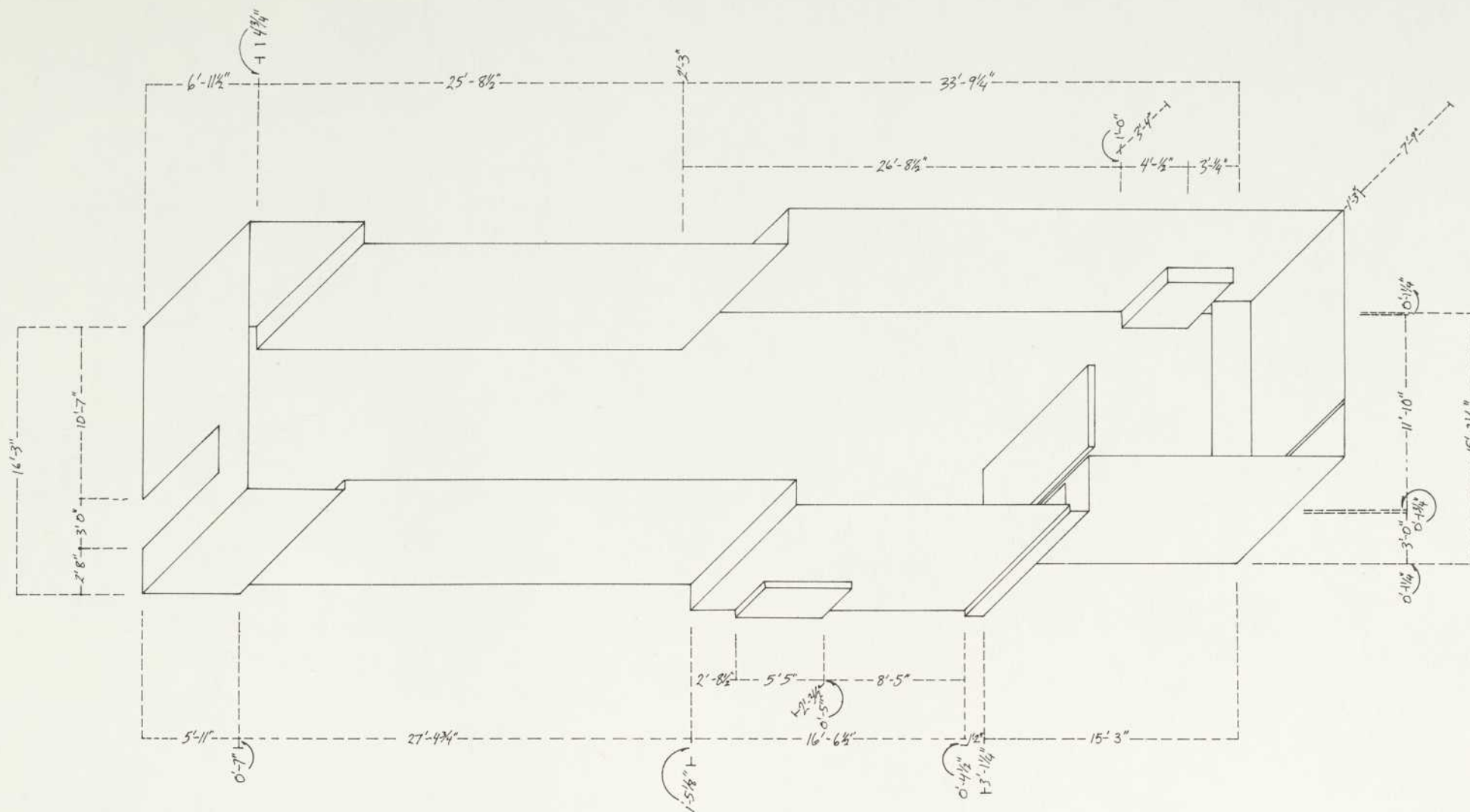
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du 18 au	DAVID MOORE - INSTALLATION &		hiver" - chorégraphies pour danseur, diapositives
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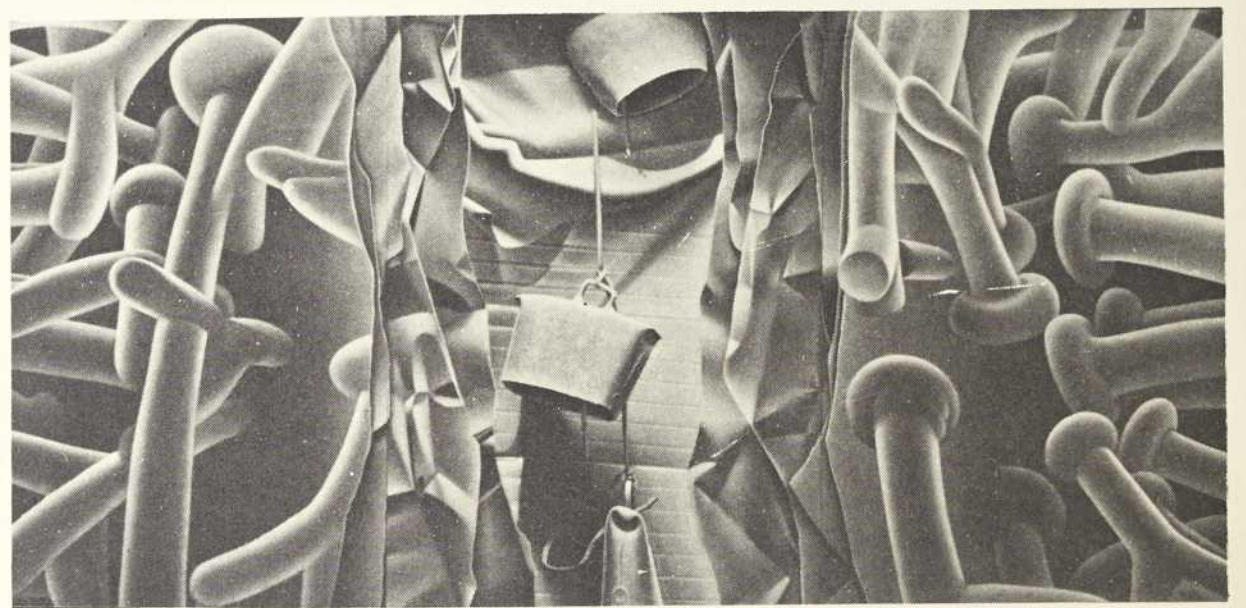
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