
SCULPTURE SINCE THE SIXTIES

from the Permanent Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art

The Whitney Museum of American Art at
Equitable Center is funded by The Equitable.

This exhibition was organized by Susan
Lubowsky, Branch Director, Whitney Museum
of American Art at Equitable Center.

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FOREWORD

The Whitney Museum of American Art at Equitable Center offers facilities for temporary exhibitions as well as complementary long-term installations of outstanding works from the Permanent Collection of the Whitney Museum. This is the only one of our four Branch Museums whose galleries are designed to establish this relationship between the Permanent Collection and temporary exhibitions.

Sculpture Since the Sixties is the third north gallery installation highlighting the Permanent Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art. While the first two—*Twentieth-Century American Art* and *American Mastery*—emphasized the range and depth of the Permanent Collection, the current exhibition focuses specifically on twenty artists whose achievements contributed to the development of contemporary American sculpture. Their works provide an overview of aesthetic issues in American sculpture during the last three decades.

Since opening in February 1986, the Whitney Museum of American Art at Equitable Center has also presented twelve changing exhibitions in the south gallery, as well as free performance series, lectures, symposia, and activities for school groups. Over 500,000 visitors have attended these exhibitions and participated in public programs.

The success of this branch museum is due largely to the generous support of The Equitable. We join The Equitable in hoping that you will enjoy this exhibition and associated activities and return often to the galleries.

TOM ARMSTRONG
Director

INTRODUCTION

Abstract Expressionism, the movement which propelled America to the forefront of the artistic avant-garde in the 1950s, was primarily concerned with painting. During the past thirty years, however, sculpture has evolved into a self-defining and wide-ranging mode of expression. The rise of sculpture as a vanguard art form in America began during the 1960s with Minimalism and Pop Art. Both of these aesthetics challenged the emotive, gestural nature of Abstract Expressionism and likewise the implicit preeminence it gave to painting. Pop Art and Minimalism were, in turn, reevaluated during the 1970s through a variety of styles grouped together under the rubric of Post-Minimalism. And as the eighties draw to a close, it is this spirit of pluralism that most aptly characterizes recent sculpture and accounts for its renewed vitality.

Pop Art and Minimalism, though their origins were in painting, helped to redefine the concept of sculpture as an autonomous object. The clear focus on cool objectness in Pop Art's appropriation of mundane cultural imagery such as commercial advertisements and Minimalism's emphasis on the artwork as a thing rooted in real time and space created a natural segue to sculpture. Technological advances provided new opportunities for larger scale works and encouraged artists to experiment with nontraditional media such as aluminum, plastics, and neon. Newly opened "art labs"—the Centre for Advanced Study of Science in Art, London, the Art and Technology Project for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.), New York—paired artists with scientists and engineers. By the beginning of the 1970s, monumental Pop icons, inert geometric configurations, and multimedia works were the common idiom of sculptural expression.

Much of this art seemed impersonal. In particular, Minimalism's insistence on the "objecthood" of sculpture eventually became a restrictive, hermetic system

for the next generation of sculptors. By the early seventies, artists wanted to close the rupture that Minimalism had caused between the handmade and the technological, between emotion and idea and, most critically, between abstraction and representation. Various sculpture forms developed, such as Conceptual, Process, Earth, and Body Art, all encompassed by the term Post-Minimalism. This term has recently come to include both utilitarian art and pieces created from cultural debris, as well as any work that does not fit into a defined style. The playful, naive quality that characterizes much of this hybrid work and its openly evocative nature signifies a departure from the hegemony of rigid, self-imposed ideology.

In the early 1980s, Neo-Expressionism, a European-based movement, began to change the direction of American art. Although its renewed emphasis on gesture and figuration helped broaden the scope of acceptable imagery, Neo-Expressionism was, like Abstract Expressionism in the 1950s, primarily concerned with painting. As a result, innovative, independent activity in sculpture was temporarily dissipated or ignored. By the mid-1980s the most visible new sculpture in New York was being created by Neo-Expressionist painters—the Italians Sandro Chia and Mimmo Paladino and the American Julian Schnabel. Only recently, with the waning of Neo-Expressionism, has sculpture recaptured the attention of the critical community. A plethora of images, styles, and media characterize the new work. Scale has decreased from the monumental, and surfaces often bear the mark of the artist's hand. But it is personal vision and referential subject matter that most distinguish the emerging aesthetic. For today's sculptors, individual instinct rather than cogent theory dictates the direction of their art.

SUSAN LUBOWSKY
Branch Director

Essays on the following artists have been excerpted from Patterson Sims, *Whitney Museum of American Art: Selected Works from the Permanent Collection* (1985): Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, Edward Kienholz, Lucas Samaras, George Segal, and H. C. Westermann. The remaining essays were written by Susan Lubowsky, Branch Director.

Three works in this exhibition will change due to other loan commitments. Asterisks appear alongside these titles.

DEBORAH BUTTERFIELD

b. 1949

Resting Horse, 1977

Steel armatures, chicken wire, twigs, and clay mixture (mud, paper pulp, dextrine, plaster, fiberglass shreds), 35 x 54 x 102 inches

Gift of Mrs. Frances Allen 78.63



Deborah Butterfield perceives her life-size horses as metaphors for herself. In the summer of 1972, she built her first large-scale animal pieces from welded steel, chicken wire, and plaster. *Resting Horse* was among the earliest in a series of mud and stick sculptures, begun in 1977, in which Butterfield attempted to capture the “aura” of the horses. “The pile of sticks were like my thoughts—they always end up in the shape of the horse.” Spiritual connections with nature motivated her to envision these pieces as “objects in

which the subject and the environment became fused together.” Having recently moved to Montana, she was struck by the beauty of its landscape. In spring, rivers flooded, and the tangled detritus of their banks reminded Butterfield of sleeping horses. By replicating the “chaotic surfaces” caused by natural phenomena, she imparted the feeling that these creatures were made by a freak accident of nature. Butterfield constructed *Resting Horse* from materials indigenous to her ranch, while her own horse observed the process.

CHRISTO

b. 1937

Package on Hand Truck, 1973

Metal, canvas, and rope, 52 x 30 x 31 inches

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Albrecht Saalfield 74.74



Like Lucas Samaras, Christo obsessively transforms mundane objects into elusive presences. For Christo, the metamorphosis is not accomplished by adornment, but rather by concealment. Since 1958, when he began his environmental work by wrapping randomly stacked bottles, cans, oil drums, and boxes in Paris, Christo has built an oeuvre of packages that range in scale from tin cans to buildings, bridges, and entire coastlines. Although numerous Pop artists of the 1960s have dealt with the theme of packaging, Christo's roots are in the Parisian Nouveau Réaliste movement,

with which he became allied after fleeing his birthplace in Bulgaria in 1956. Through this group, he was introduced to the concept of "freezing" time by encasing found objects in plastic, glue, or canvas. In *Package on Hand Truck*, and similarly conceived works of this period, Christo is at his most enigmatic, giving no clues as to the identity of the load being hauled. Whether on a hand truck, a luggage rack, or in a shopping cart, the contents of his shapeless bundles are withheld.

MARK DI SUVERO

b. 1933

Achilles' Heel, 1969

Welded steel and wire, 35 x 40¼ x 40¼ inches

Promised 50th Anniversary Gift of

Mrs. Robert M. Benjamin P.4.80



During the late 1950s, Mark di Suvero began producing sprawling, abstract wooden sculptures whose handworked surfaces and forceful, thrusting diagonals corresponded to the gestural brushstrokes in contemporaneous Abstract Expressionist painting. In his welded metal sculptures, begun in 1963, the rusted steel segments he used had the same rough-hewn quality of his earlier wood constructions. Di Suvero eventually turned to monumental outdoor works composed of massive steel I-beams, railroad ties, logs and tree trunks, with mobile parts. Their rough, expres-

sive quality belies the skilled engineering required for their fabrication. The composition of the modestly scaled *Achilles' Heel* is reminiscent of these gigantic pieces. The delicate balance of two metal frames (connected by a rusted "Achilles' heel") suspended over a figurelike axis connotes vulnerability. "Everybody has an Achilles' heel. The sculpture is very fragile looking and that's the way life is. Normally I try to stay away from myths, but Homer has a mythic resonance for all of us."

R. M. FISCHER

b. 1947

Max, 1983

Steel, limestone, brass and electric lights,

86 x 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ x 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ inches

Purchase, with funds from the Painting and
Sculpture Committee 84.7



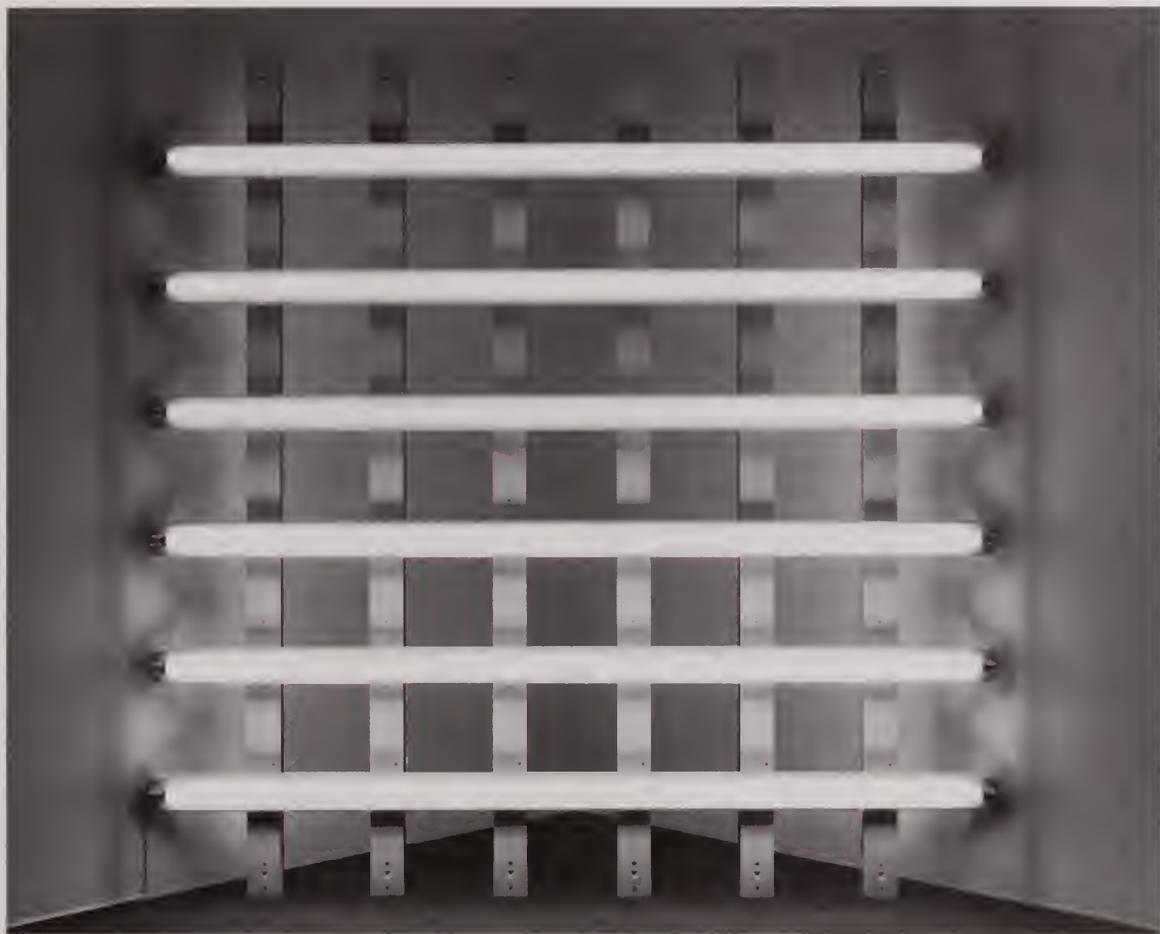
R. M. Fischer's lamps are aggregates of cultural debris, humorously fashioned into utilitarian objects. While Fischer is indebted to the traditions of Assemblage, Dada, and Pop, he creates art that is formal, usable, and often anthropomorphic. Fischer's first lamp sculpture, made in 1978, was used in conjunction with a black-and-white photographic collage of stills from Alfred Hitchcock's film *Rear Window*. He soon decided to abandon the photographs and the quasi-narrative themes that had previously dominated his work. During 1978–79, he fabricated a group of

lamps from found objects and household items. *Max*, made of similarly low-tech materials, resembles a space-age totem with a mixing-bowl head. But the limestone base, switch, and exposed electrical cord relate back to the lowly, functional nature of lamps. Fischer himself views his work as “antiques of the future”; they also can be viewed as epitomes of the world of objects in our contemporary life.

DAN FLAVIN

b. 1933

**Untitled (for Robert, with fond regards), 1977*
Pink, yellow, and red fluorescent light, 96 x 96 inches
Purchase, with funds from the Louis and Bessie Adler Foundation, Inc., Seymour M. Klein, President; the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc., by exchange; and gift of Peter M. Brant, by exchange 78.57



Despite the mechanical appearance of his art, Dan Flavin began his career as an expressionist painter and draftsman. In 1961, he appropriated the fluorescent light tube as his medium. The pieces function as both painting and sculpture, infusing surrounding space with glowing color. Flavin called his early light pieces “icons,” but also confessed that “they are dumb—anonymous and inglorious . . . as mute and indistinguished as the run of our architecture.” As early as 1963, Flavin’s works began to traverse corners, in a way that visually altered the proportions of

the room. *Untitled (for Robert, with fond regards)* is one of his more elaborate corner grid configurations, in which the almost palpable pools of light seem to make the room’s corner disappear. Flavin supplied his own description of the work, citing its “rich contrast, front over rear, and an optical interplay, pink on yellow backgrounded by the red, all modified by reflected color mixes and shadows of the grid structure itself.” As is Flavin’s practice, the work is dedicated to a friend, in this case, Robert Skolnick, a former longtime assistant.

BRYAN HUNT

b. 1947

**Double Cantata*, 1982

Lacquer on silk paper over wood, 7 x 62 x 7 inches

Promised gift of Mr. and Mrs. M. Anthony

Fisher P.1.83



Bryan Hunt began making sculpture in the early 1970s that challenged the rigid anonymity of Minimal Art. Although Minimalism's clean formalism appealed to him, he sought to elicit sensory and emotive responses as well. In the spirit of Post-Minimalism, Hunt's sculpture refers to the real world and contains implicit meanings beyond its identity as art object. *Double Cantata* continues a series of pieces based on airships and dirigibles, which Hunt began in 1974 with an 8-foot-tall scale model of the *Hindenburg*, moored to

the spire of the Empire State Building. Hunt's early interest in architecture and his background as a technical assistant at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral is reflected in this choice of subject matter. In succeeding pieces, he simplified and abstracted the projectile shape of the dirigible. Like model airplanes, Hunt's airships are constructed from silk paper stretched over balsa wood. Although anchored to the wall, they appear weightless, floating above the viewer.

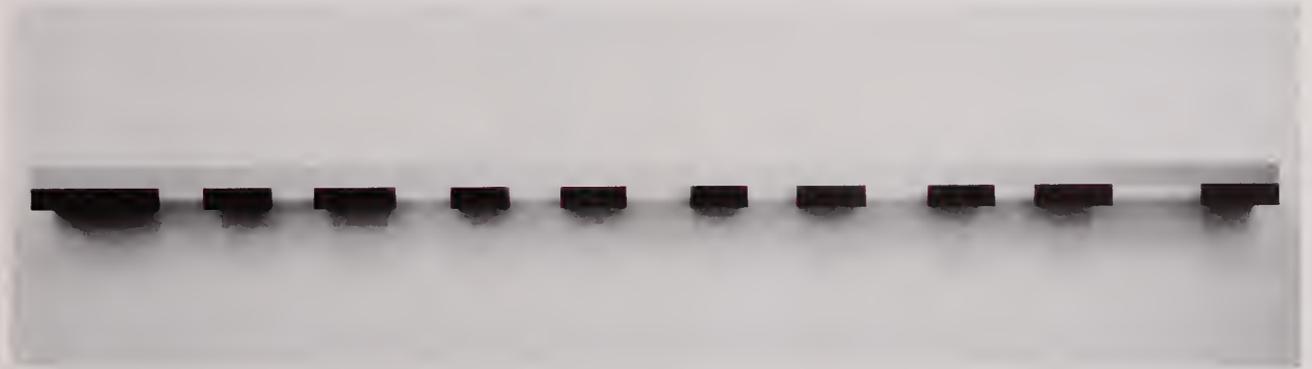
DONALD JUDD

b. 1928

Untitled, 1965

Aluminum, 8¼ x 253 x 8¼ inches

Purchase, with funds from the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc. 66.53



Machine-made, self-referential, and geometric, the sculpture of Donald Judd is emblematic of the formalism of the 1960s. In 1964, he made his first major lateral wall reliefs, a continuing series that includes the Whitney Museum's 1965 work. These sculptures, along with rectangular floor pieces and vertically stacked wall boxes, represent Judd's primary sculptural configurations. For *Untitled*, Judd paired an unpainted, matte-finished, hollow transversal beam with painted, encased, L-shaped brackets. He set the lengths

of the ten metal rectangles and their intervals with mathematical exactitude, each rectangle alternately augmented and diminished according to a predetermined system of proportions. Because the piece is lit from above, the shadows cast by the rectangles establish a second, even more complex, visual component. Judd's geometry stresses an act of seeing unencumbered by any representational or narrative connection. Color, interrelation, and precision command the viewer's attention.

EDWARD KIENHOLZ

b. 1927

The Wait, 1964–65
Tableau, 80 x 148 x 78 inches
Gift of the Howard and Jean Lipman
Foundation, Inc. 66.49



Social agitator and promoter of the banal, Edward Kienholz believes that the human condition and its cultural setting can only be comprehended through the commonplace, the discordant, and the discarded. Beginning in the late 1950s, his art took the form of repulsively attractive, found-object assemblages; in 1961 he made the first of his topical environmental assemblages. *The Wait* investigates the plight of the aged. Gruesome and stark, it is among Kienholz's best-known—and most morbid—pieces. A female figure, embalmed in plastic coating and constructed of

cow bones, lives in a cell of memory. Her youth is recalled in the bottled photograph of an innocent, late adolescent face that serves as her head. Her past is remembered in the containers adorning her neck. As Kienholz has described, they begin “with her childhood on a farm, and move on to girlhood, waiting for her man, marriage, bearing children, being loved, wars, family, death and then senility, where everything becomes a hodgepodge.” This vision of imminent death is trapped in her decay.

ROBERT MORRIS

b. 1931

Untitled, 1966

Reinforced fiberglass and polyester resin,
36 x 48 x 90 inches

Purchase, with funds from the Howard and Jean
Lipman Foundation, Inc. 66.54



Since the early 1960s, Robert Morris has worked in a broad range of vanguard aesthetic sensibilities—Process and Performance Art, Pop and Minimalism, as well as Conceptualism, Earthworks, and Neo-Expressionism. *Untitled* reveals Morris' spare, reductive Minimalist ideology as well as his stratagem to expand and confound perceptual boundaries. Two quadrilaterals assume the basic shape of a gold bar. A glowing band of light, emitted from the interior planes where the units meet, surrounds the piece. As in earlier works, Morris continues to investigate antithetical

relationships. A shape that is inherently dense, solid, and inactive is actually hollow and activated by light—a nontangible element that both unifies and separates each half. And by its very nature, light infuses the environment, eliminating the boundaries of a fixed sculptural unit.

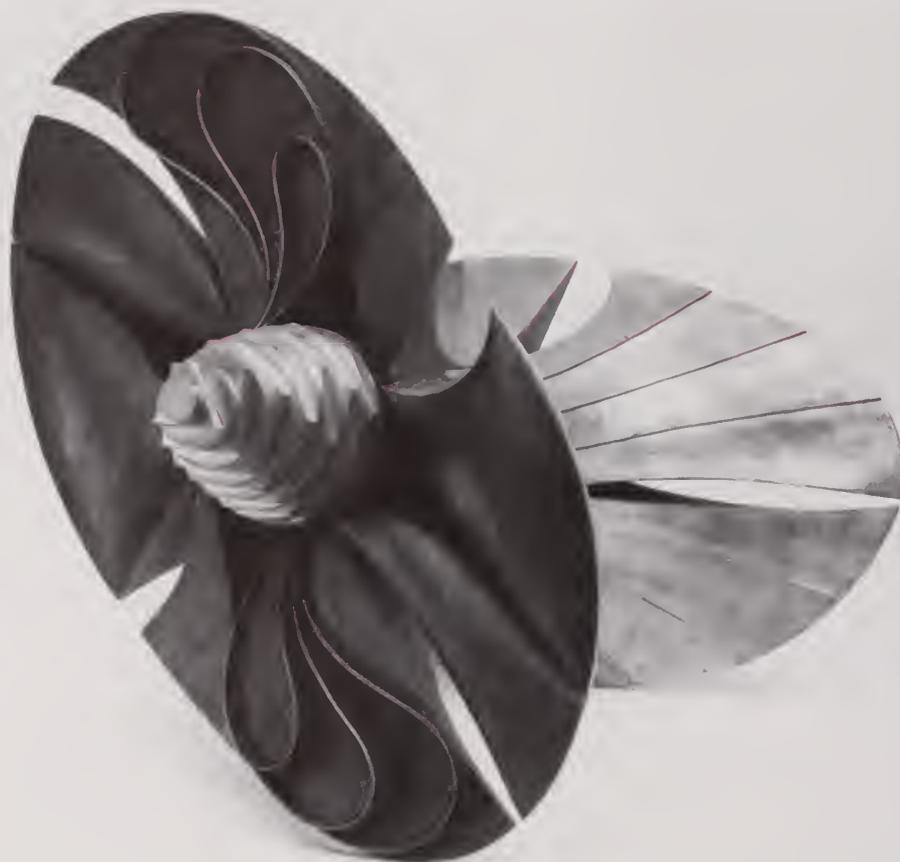
JOHN NEWMAN

b. 1952

Uprooted Symmetry (The Anchor), 1988

Aluminum with patina, 50 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 60 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 64 inches

Purchase, with funds from the Louis and Bessie Adler Foundation, Inc., Seymour M. Klein, President, and the Mrs. Percy Uris Purchase Fund 88.32



During the mid-1970s, John Newman created Minimalist, geometric wooden sculptures, but he has since turned to industrial materials such as aluminum and evolved a vocabulary of curved planes and organic forms. Emotional impact soon replaced the cool Minimalist sensibility, as he sought a more visceral approach to art. For Newman, such unlikely fields as science and mathematics—particularly those areas that deal with the deformation of surfaces—provided a wellspring of inspiration. “Under Minimalism’s tutelage, the right angle and the flat plane seemed to be emblematic of intellectual rigor and purity. I found that by doing something as simple as curving the

plane a wealth of references arose. . . . The sweep of the curve . . . brought to mind associations of the sexual, the biological, the technological, and the baroque.” The awkward stance of *Uprooted Symmetry (The Anchor)* recalls the arrested motion of a spinning object anchored suddenly by an inexplicable force. From its central core, two twisted forms zoom outward. But symmetry, as implied in the title, is illusory, since a close look reveals dramatic inconsistencies. In this and similarly conceived works, Newman explores the paradoxes and contradictions of the physical world.

CLAES OLDENBURG

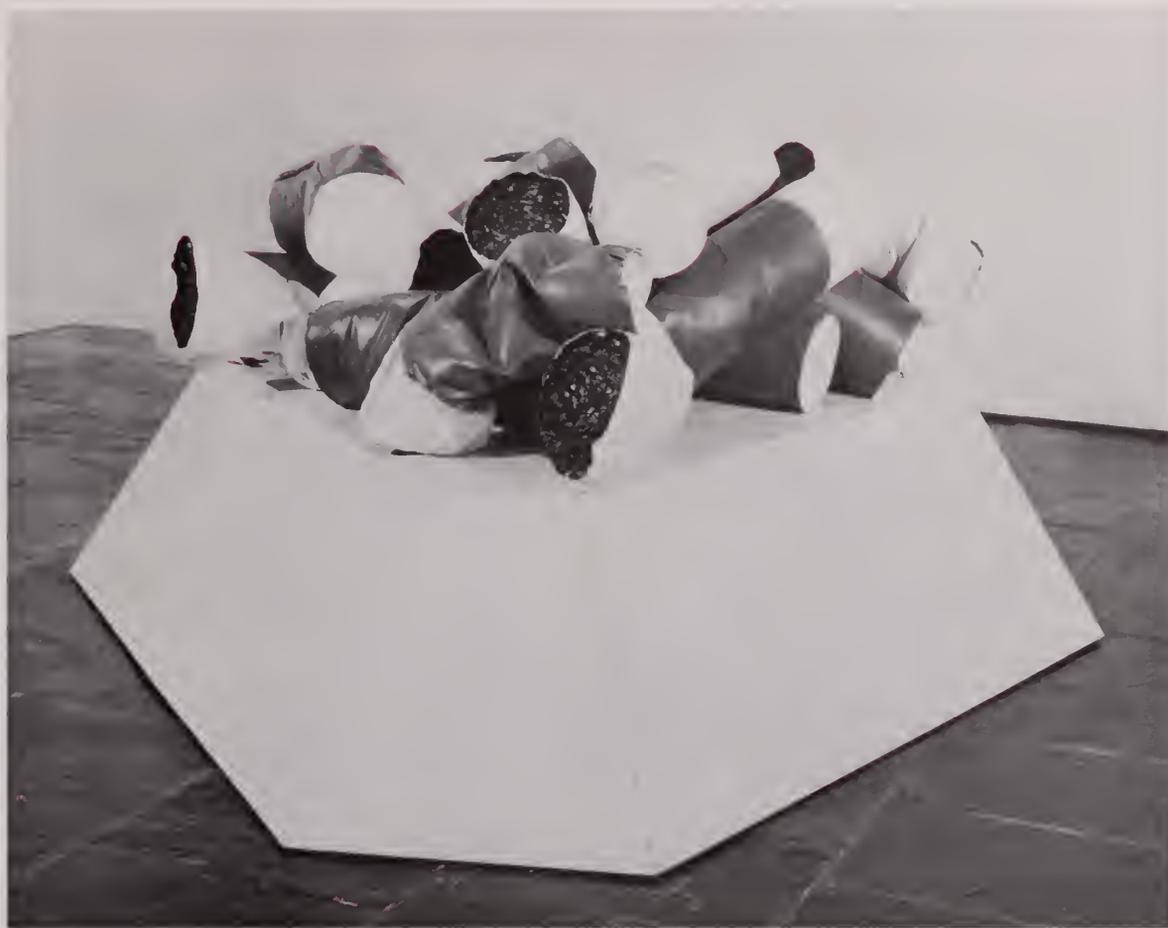
b. 1929

Giant Fagends, 1967

Canvas, urethane foam, and wood,

52 x 96 x 96 inches

Purchase, with funds from the Friends of the
Whitney Museum of American Art 70.44



In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Claes Oldenburg produced objects and environments crudely formed from the detritus of city life. By the mid-1960s, his art had taken on a more finished, almost elegant, expression as he began fabricating forms from vinyl, canvas, and industrial materials. He never ceased being fascinated with everyday objects, but these objects came to assume an overpowering stature. *Giant Fagends* is one of a series of “colossal monument proposals” begun at this time, which pay tongue-in-cheek homage to specific geographic locales, in this case, London. “A traditional notion of London is that it’s a male city, as opposed to Paris, which is a female

city. So in London you find an obsession with phallic forms—legs and cigarette butts and so on. . . . I made a collection of butts from ashtrays in various places visited and mounted them. These eventually led to the proposals for Hyde Park in the form of colossal fagends in various forms, various situations. I was inspired, in part, by an anti-smoking ad put out by the government of an ashtray full of butts arranged to frighten you off smoking, but in fact so beautiful, it had the opposite effect (on me).” The monument itself was never executed on site; the first realization of such a gargantuan project was the giant lipstick Oldenburg installed at Yale University two years later.

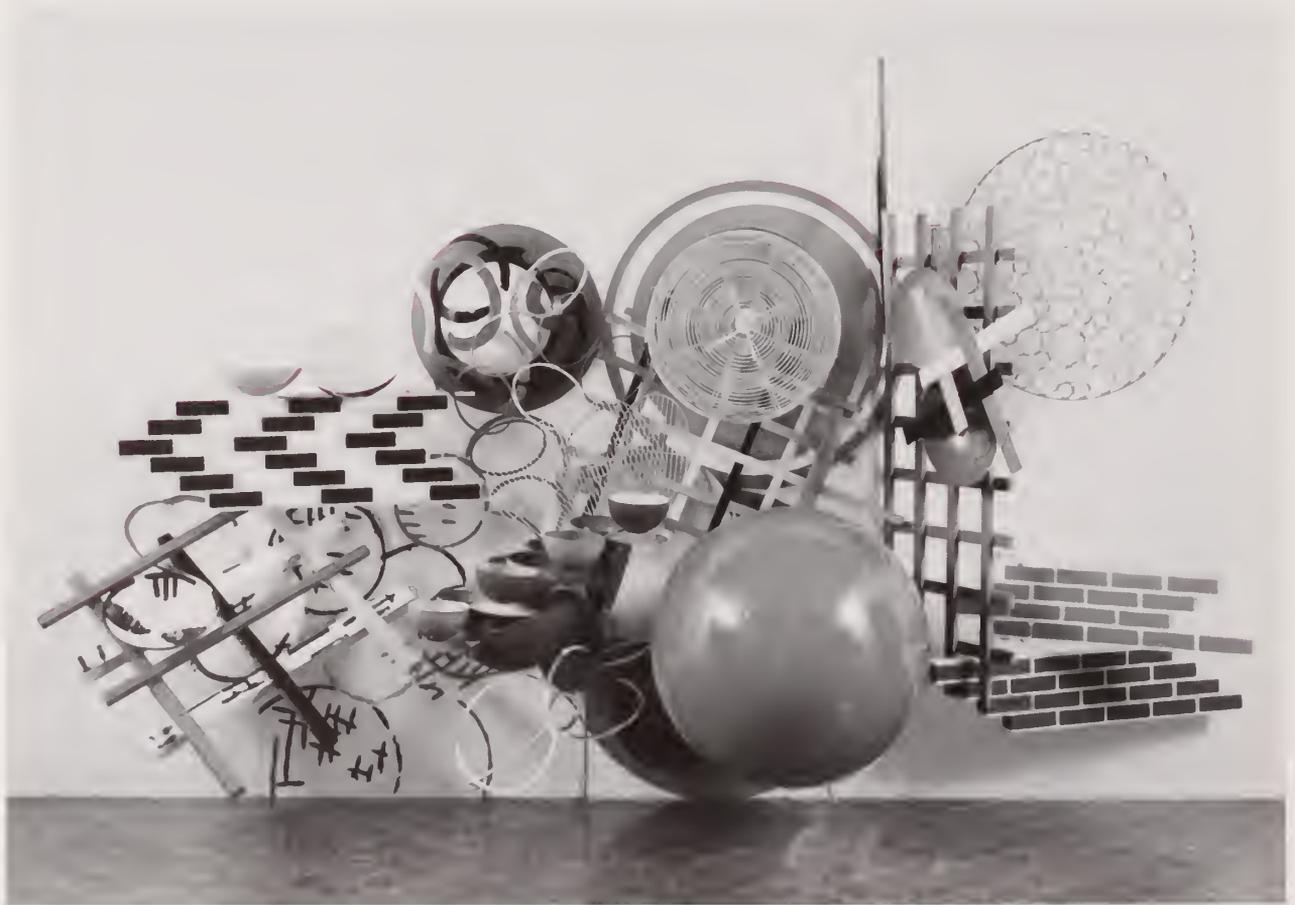
JUDY PFAFF

b. 1946

**Supermercado*, 1986

Painted wood and metal, 100½ x 163¾ x 50 inches overall

Purchase, with funds from the Louis and Bessie Adler Foundation, Inc., Seymour M. Klein, President, and The Sondra and Charles Gilman, Jr. Foundation, Inc. 86.34a-y



Judy Pfaff, like other artists of her generation, developed an aesthetic which rejected the strict boundaries imposed by Minimalist art. "I am interested in opening up the language of sculpture as far and as wide as I can in terms of materials, colors, and references, and in trying to include all things that are permissible in painting but absent in sculpture." The chaotic profusion of Pfaff's environmental pieces and more recent wall reliefs reflect an art that is inclusive rather than exclusive, incorporating other styles, periods, cultures,

and a multitude of personal references. *Supermercado* is a tumult of brightly painted bowls, grids, bricks, hoops, and a huge red ball, all cascading off the wall. But these familiar geometric shapes no longer represent Minimalist iconography as they had in the past. "Before, grids were pure, cool dividers of space. But this lattice is windows, it's upstate architecture, it's Japanese. It's not just a grid. Every time you see it, it has other connections."

LUCAS SAMARAS

b. 1936

Box #41, 1965

Wood, dimensions variable, $17\frac{1}{8} \times 38 \times 13\frac{3}{4}$ inches

Gift of Howard and Jean Lipman 77.81

NOT ILLUSTRATED

Box #42, 1965

Mixed media, $9\frac{3}{8} \times 14\frac{1}{8} \times 10\frac{1}{8}$ inches

Gift of Howard and Jean Lipman 74.97

Dinner #15, 1965

Mixed media, $8\frac{1}{2} \times 12$ inches diameter

Gift of Howard and Jean Lipman 74.98

NOT ILLUSTRATED



In the early 1960s, having been active in Happenings, Lucas Samaras began to make art objects keyed to theatrical, ritualistic presentations. Of all his thematic cycles, the over one hundred box constructions he has created since 1960 have most disturbingly displayed his perversity and omnivorous appropriation of materials. Between 1963 and 1966, he devoted his full energy to these reliquaries. As a group, the boxes marry contradictions: simple and adorned, container and contained, neutral and charged, shut and open. As

Samaras put it: “Box is a lovely principle that carries a lot of symbolic beans.” The box “suggesting architecture and all sorts of satiric psychological complications . . . provided me with a geometric structure that I could re-camouflage. . . .” His small, busy containers differ markedly from the large, pristine boxes then being produced by the Minimalists. Samaras’ boxes are private and autobiographical, unequivocally fashioned by the artist’s own hand and psyche. In them art and obsession converge.

GEORGE SEGAL

b. 1924

Walk, Don't Walk, 1976

Plaster, cement, metal, painted wood, and electric light, 104 x 72 x 72 inches

Purchase, with funds from the Louis and Bessie Adler Foundation, Inc., Seymour M. Klein, President; the Gilman Foundation, Inc.; the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc.; and the National Endowment for the Arts 79.4



Like many successful sculptors, George Segal began as a painter, and the rough-hewn surfaces of his sculptures recall the painterly brushstrokes of his early expressionistic canvases. In his sculpture, Segal never uses actual flesh tones, but paints his plaster figures white or, more recently, one of several non-naturalistic colors. Tapping the world of dreams and memories, Segal's pieces are apparitional, although he casts directly from models. His blend of the specific and the universal, the real and the dreamlike, is achieved through the inclusion of actual objects, such as the

streetlight and woman's purse. In *Walk, Don't Walk*, it was the functioning pedestrian streetlight that suggested this study of urban patience and regimentation. The light keeps flashing alternate commands, but Segal's crowd of three remains anchored and unmoving on the curbside. *Walk, Don't Walk* is the recording of telling and allusive incidents and gestures from ordinary life. A poet of the mundane, Segal isolates and confirms what can readily be seen, but is seldom observed.

JOEL SHAPIRO

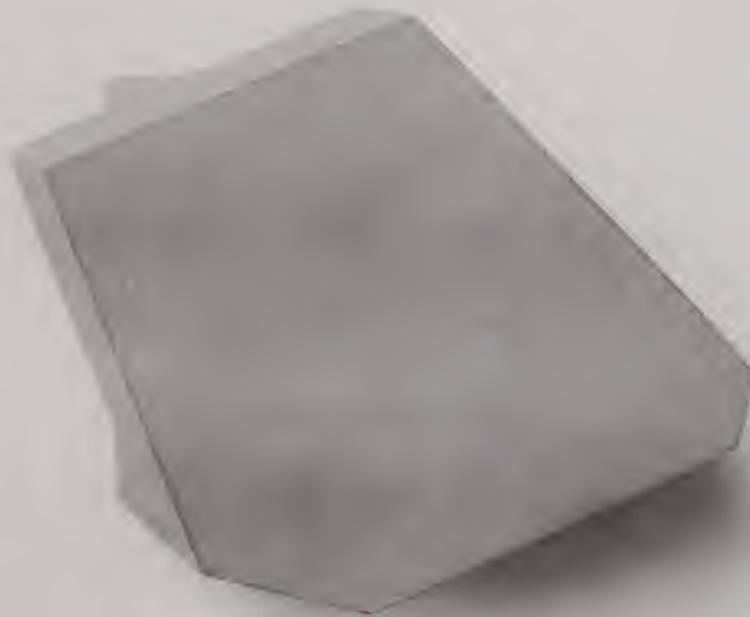
b. 1941

Untitled, 1978

Painted wood, 4½ x 6 x 3⅛ inches

Purchase, with funds from Peggy and Richard

Danziger 79.27



Joel Shapiro emerged as a major Post-Minimalist sculptor in 1971, when he began making simplified, miniature representations of bridges, chairs, horses, and, in his most extensive exploration of form, houses. In the late 1970s, he returned briefly to abstraction, which had engaged him during the early years of his career. This effort to reconsider the traditional division between abstraction and representation resulted in two series of wall reliefs constructed from basic geometrical components. The first are L-shaped and the second, which includes the Whitney Museum's

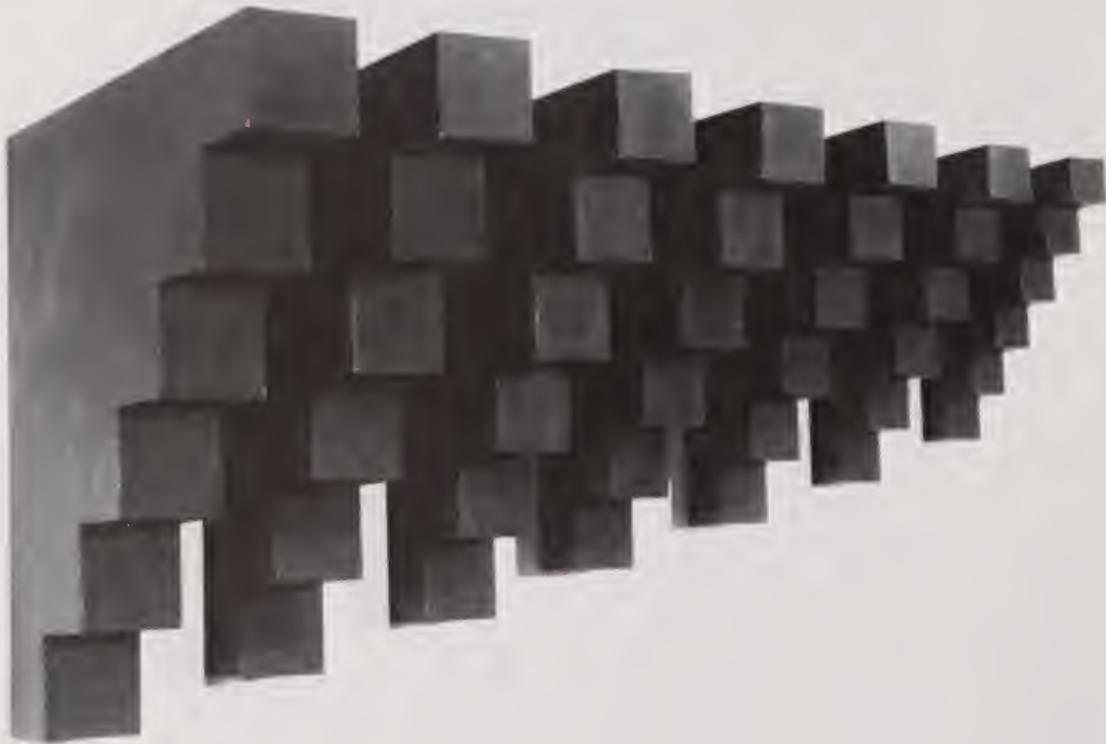
Untitled, is constructed from “two or three pieces of wood [joined] together in a complex configuration and [unified] . . . via color. I found that certain colors could dislocate the form, could intensify the form, or could alter your perception of the form. Cadmium red and black both add density. I like gouache and casein because they have a child-like quality that is chalky and iridescent.” Although *Untitled* is tiny, its color and shape command more space than its physical size. It is this combination of the conceptual and the naive that distinguishes Shapiro's work.

ROBERT SMITHSON

1938–1973

Alogon, 1966

Painted stainless steel, 35½ x 73½ x 35½ inches
Purchase, with funds from the Howard and Jean
Lipman Foundation, Inc. 67.8



Robert Smithson is best remembered for his Earthworks—on-site manipulations of the natural landscape. Works such as *Spiral Jetty of the Great Salt Lake, Utah* (1970) and *Broken Circle, Spiral Hill* (1971) illustrate his major concerns as an artist: the expansion of sculptural space, the affirmation of the contextual nature of art, and the predominance of concept over artifact. But from the beginning of his career as a sculptor in 1964, until 1968, when Earthworks became his focus, Smithson also created Minimalist pieces inspired by crystalline structures. Intrigued by the concept of inanimate objects that could

grow, he developed the *Alogon* series in 1966—three individual groups of stepped stainless steel units based loosely on mathematical systems. “The title *Alogon* . . . comes from the Greek word which refers to the unnameable and irrational number.” In the Whitney Museum’s *Alogon*, and in other related works, Smithson addressed this preoccupation with both the order and capriciousness of nature. In writing about *Spiral Jetty*, Smithson referred back to this concept: “Ambiguities are admitted rather than rejected, contradictions are increased rather than decreased—the alogos undermines the logos.”

KEITH SONNIER

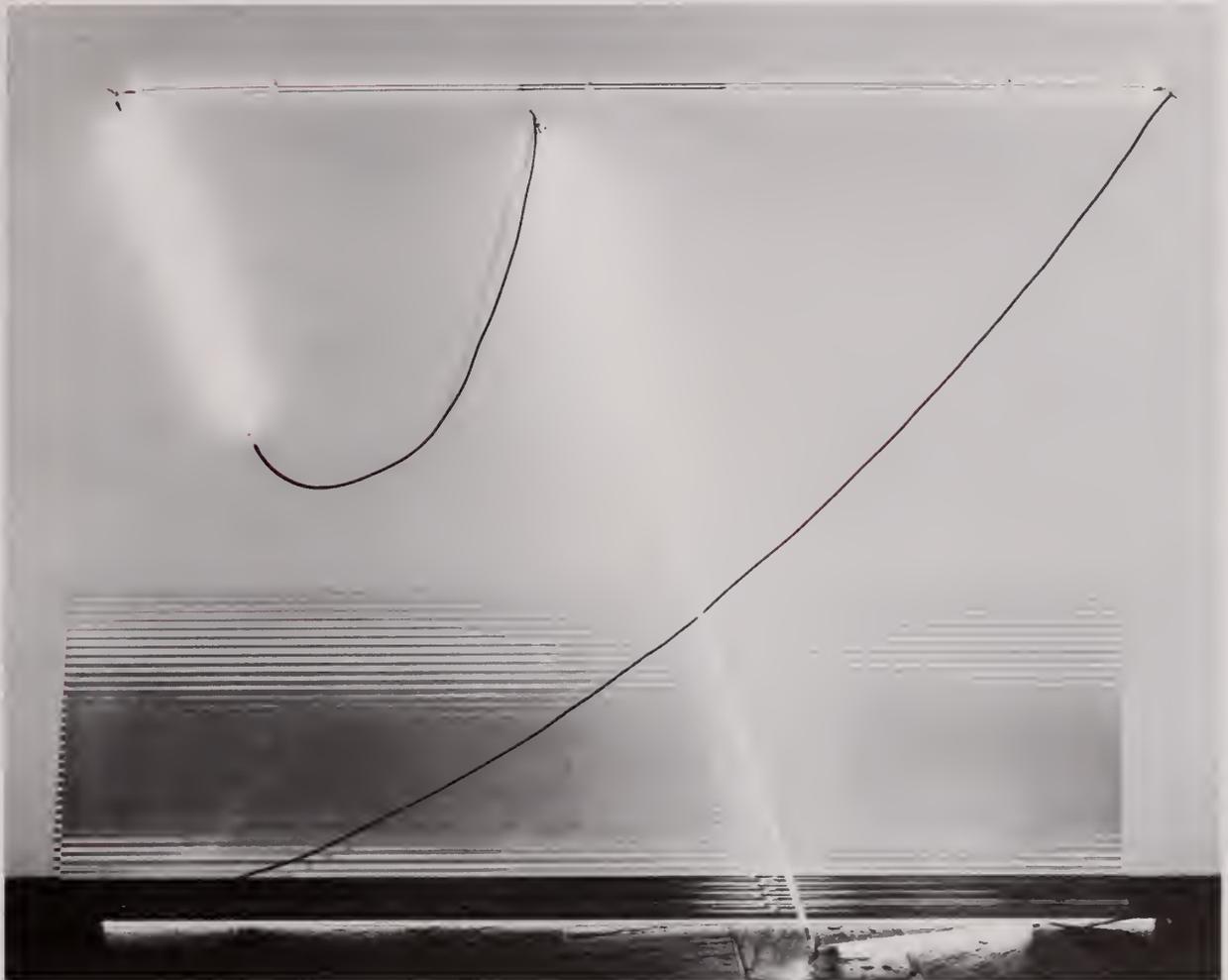
b. 1941

Ba-O-Ba, Number 3, 1969

Glass and neon with transistor,

91¼ x 122¾ x 24 inches

Purchase, with funds from the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc. 69.126



During the late 1960s, Keith Sonnier turned from painting to multimedia sculpture. Technology, in the form of film, video, light projections, and neon, figured strongly in his work, as did his Cajun origins and the visceral associations they recalled. Modern materials new to the sculptural milieu were used to express primal instincts and place them in context with what he called “the techno-moves the world was going through.” Begun in 1969, and continuing through 1974, the Ba-O-Ba series refers to the Haitian Creole word used to describe the effects of certain types of light on one’s skin. Neon, in this case, bathes

the viewer in boundless color, which Sonnier associates both with tropical fecundity and tinsel-town nightclubs. In describing the series he says: “These fluorescent light and glass pieces remind me a lot of driving in Louisiana, coming back late at night, and in the distance, seeing a club somewhere through the fog. About the most ‘religious’ experience I’ve had in Louisiana.”

H. C. WESTERMANN

1922–1981

Antimobile, 1966

Laminated plywood, 67¼ x 35½ x 27½ inches

Purchase, with funds from the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc. 69.4



Inventive, irreverent, and idiosyncratic, H. C. Westermann's art cannot be categorized with any of the succession of movements that span his tragically abbreviated career. Although some Westermann sculptures can be grouped thematically, he never worked in series. Each piece addresses very particular, if enigmatic, circumstances. Westermann sequestered himself in his well-equipped woodworking shop to tackle the subjects of war, mortality, sexuality, language, knowledge, and perception. *Antimobile* has been ex-

plained by Westermann's longtime ally and explicator Dennis Adrian as an antithetical response to the mobiles of Alexander Calder: it is solidly based and cumbrously three dimensional, not airily suspended and drawn in wire. With its misshapen and paralyzed steering wheel and such eccentric, flippant details as a diminutive, wing-bolt crown, *Antimobile* conjures up an impotent machine, one that inhibits function and idolizes craft.

CHRISTOPHER WILMARTH

1943–1987

Street Leaf #3, 1977

Bronze and glass, 48 x 72 x 9 inches

Purchase, with funds from Mrs. Oscar Kolin 78.4



© 1977 Christopher Wilmarth

Christopher Wilmarth juxtaposed sheets of etched glass over steel to create “physical poems” that reveal “the character of light and its evocations.” Glass first appeared in his work in 1967. By the early seventies, Wilmarth was etching its surface with hydrofluoric acid to bring out its inherent green color, and after a collaboration with Mark di Suvero in 1971 he began incorporating steel into the structures. The emotional tension created by these disparate materials is as important to the artist as their physical properties. As

the color of the glass is intensified by placing steel behind it, its fragility is heightened by contrast with the impenetrability of the steel. This dichotomy is the focus of the *Street Leaf* series, the most recent of which was completed in 1986, a year before the artist’s death. To describe the subject of this work, Wilmarth wrote: “*Street Leaf*, / a release from confines / that light can open / when the place / remains the same / just like minds / and new thoughts / mostly moments these / sidewalk epiphanies.”

JACKIE WINSOR

b. 1941

Cement Piece, 1976–77

Wire, cement, and wood, 36 x 36 x 36 inches

Purchase, with funds from the Louis and Bessie Adler Foundation, Inc., Seymour M. Klein, President; Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Meltzer; and Mrs. Nicholas Millhouse 80.7



Jackie Winsor's first mature works, made in 1969–70, were huge, freestanding coils of rope. Later pieces were produced by layering, and then nailing thin slats of wood together to form cubes and cylinders, or by binding sticks and logs with twine, or winding copper wire around wooden cores to form heavy, bulbous spheres. This use of unconventional materials and procedures, an explicit display of process, and an almost obsessive tendency to bind and define interior spaces, also characterizes the large, freestanding cubes that dominated Winsor's oeuvre during the 1970s. The result is the suggestion of energy under

restraint. In *Cement Piece*, Winsor negates the mass and solidity of a 3-foot concrete and wood-lathed cube by revealing the interior void through square holes at the center of each plane. Winsor's sculptural style is as much indebted to 1960s Minimalism as it is to Process Art, as evidenced by her attachment to primary geometric configurations, and her concern with symmetry and classical restraint. Yet the repeated manipulation of a single form, the anti-industrial, handmade quality, and an attention to small details situate her art squarely within the Post-Minimalist aesthetic of the 1970s.

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at Equitable Center

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