24
The Pluralistic Seventies

Presented with a world torn by mounting political and social conflict, the younger artists who emerged during the late sixties and early seventies found little to satisfy their expressive needs in the extreme purity and logic of Minimal art. In the seventies, the New York critic John Perreault voiced the growing dissatisfaction with the Minimalist aesthetic: "Presently we need more than silent cubes, blank canvases, and gleaming white walls. We are sick to death of cold plazas, and monotonous 'curtain wall' skyscrapers ... [as well as] interiors that are more like empty meat lockers than rooms to live in." With this, art entered what became known as its Post-Minimal phase—a time, like many others throughout history, when classical balance yielded to its expressive opposite. Minimalism's "classical" purity lay in its combination of the most literal, concrete kind of form with highly rarefied intellectual or even spiritual content; but it was the Minimalists' emphasis on the object, a commodity that could still be bought and sold, that caused certain artists to reject it. To avoid the stigma of commercialism and to recover something of the moral distance traditionally maintained by avant-garde art in its relations with society at large, some artists ceased to make objects altogether, except as containers of information, metaphors, symbols, and meaningful images. This ushered in Conceptualism, which considered a work finished as soon as the artist had conceived the idea for it and had expressed this, not in material, objective form, but rather in language, documentation, and proposals.

Along with Conceptualism came Process art, which undermined Minimalist forms by subjecting them to such eroding forces of nature as atmospheric conditions, as well as to the physical force of gravity. Related to Process art were "scatter works," consisting of raw materials dispersed over the gallery floor, a manifestation that opposed formalism with formlessness; and Earthworks, for which artists abandoned the studio and gallery world altogether and operated in open nature, to create art whose relationship to a particular site was an inseparable part of its existence. But, while some artists turned outward to nature, others turned inward, to their own bodies. On a more intimate scale, the human body served as the site for formal procedures comparable to those worked upon the environment. The artist in his or her own person became central to Performance art, which communicated ideas about the human situation, often in an ideological or political context, through theatrical works, consisting of paintings, songs, recitations, and dance, and often accompanied by instrumental or electronic music, light displays, and video. Performance art of this kind was usually more deliberately structured than the original Happenings of the sixties (see chapter 21) and involved the audience less directly. Simultaneously, as some artists abandoned studio and gallery, others revived easel painting in a mimetic style so sharply focused that it was dubbed Photorealism. This painstaking truth to appearances was not based on direct observation of the phenomenal world but rather on a purity of conception derived from an embrace of both the art of painting and photography. Integral to the Photorealists was the primary source of the photograph, the very kind of documentation most favored by the iconoclastic Conceptualists.

In the seventies it appeared as if someone had opened Pandora's box and released all the demons that modernism had exorcized. Illustration, pattern, decoration, expressionism, and even narrative were espoused by Postmodern artists seeking new avenues beyond the prescriptive route of modernism and its late, Minimalist phase. Without a dominant mode to follow, younger artists began to work in a more pluralistic way than that permitted by purist modernism. Rather than relying exclusively on the example provided by the plastic arts, artists during the seventies turned increasingly to linguistic and political theory as a means to develop their art. Particularly influential were theories of language and meaning, such as those of the analytic philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. During this period, the Marxist social and political critiques of such philosophers as Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and Walter Benjamin—the Frankfurt school—began to have increasing resonance with artists and critics. Their thinking could

be applied to the very system of commodification that the art market traditionally supported. So open, however, did this pluralistic era become that even the formalists had their place.

The pluralism of artistic forms and motivations during the seventies coincided with a growing revisionist trend in art history. This reflected a desire on the part of many scholars to devote attention to histories and arts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that had been marginalized or repressed in the accepted accounts of modern, Western art. The artistic achievements of other cultures and social groups outside the élite, male-dominated art-world of Europe and North America began to be championed by writers and taken forward by artists themselves.

Forms of Thought: Conceptual Art

The gradual and progressive "dematerialization of the art object," as the critic Lucy Lippard called the antiformalist movement, has its roots in the later sixties, but became increasingly dominant in the early seventies. In 1970 The Museum of Modern Art in New York mounted an exhibition called simply Information. As the title suggests, the show acknowledged that ideas had once again come to the fore in art and, for many younger as well as older artists, taken precedence over concrete form. Already in 1967, the Minimalist sculptor Sol LeWitt had defined his own grid and cube works (see fig. 22.52) as Conceptualist, while reinforcing his position with theoretical statements that had a vast influence on artists of kindred spirit. "In Conceptual Art," LeWitt wrote in 1967, "the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work ... all planning and decision[s] are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes the machine that makes the art." Where Minimalism had taken
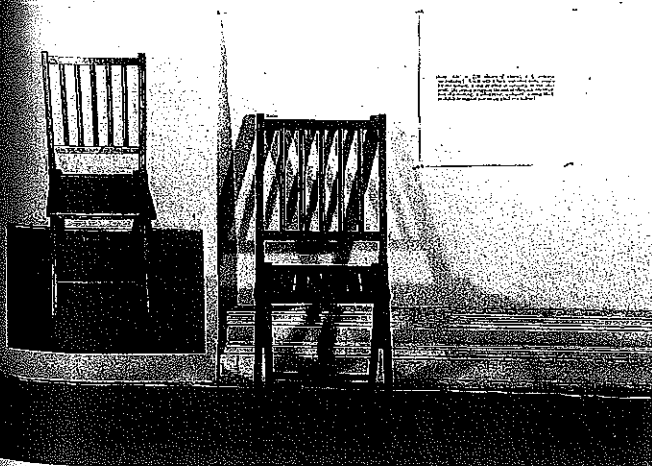
24.1 Joseph Kosuth, *One and Three Chairs*, 1965. Wooden folding chair, photographic copy of a chair, and photographic enlargement of a dictionary definition of a chair; chair, 32⅜ × 14⅞ × 20⅞" (82 × 37.8 × 53 cm); photo panel, 36 × 24⅛" (91.5 × 61.1 cm); text panel, 24⅛ × 24½" (61.3 × 62.2 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

pāint'ing, *n.* **1.** the act or occupation of covering surfaces with paint. **2.** the act, art, or occupation of picturing scenes, objects, persons, etc. in paint. **3.** a picture in paint, as an oil, water color, etc. **4.** colors laid on. [Obs.] **5.** delineation that raises a vivid image in the mind; as, word-*painting*. [Obs.]

24.2 Joseph Kosuth, *Art As Idea As Idea*, 1966. Mounted Photostat, 48 × 48" (121.9 × 121.9 cm). Collection Roy and Dorothy Lichtenstein.

a preconceived, intellectual approach, creating art from such "readymades" as mathematical systems, geometric form, raw industrial materials, and factory production, and pushed reductive formalism just short of total self-elimination, Conceptual artists proposed that the next logical move lay in taking art beyond the object into the realm of language, knowledge, science, and worldly data.

As if to offer a textbook demonstration of how this could be accomplished, the American artist Joseph Kosuth (b. 1945), a co-curator of the Information exhibition, made *One and Three Chairs* (fig. 24.1), which consists of a real chair accompanied by a full-scale photograph of it and a dictionary definition of "chair," together providing a progression from the real to the ideal and thereby encompassing all the essential properties of "chairness." The artist was concerned with exposing the mechanics of meaning, as regards objects, which involved linking a visual image with a mental concept. Here it is appropriate to mention the general language of semiotics, the science of signs, and say that the "signifier" (a specific representation of a concept or thing) and the "signified" (the actual object, chair) combine to produce the sign "chair." By exhibiting, along with the signifier (a common folding chair), a surrogate for the visual representation (the photograph) and a surrogate for the mental concept (the dictionary definition), Kosuth transformed his semiotic analysis into art and thus created a new sign, or "metasign", which in turn invites further analysis. He would soon omit the first two steps of his analytical process and go straight for the metasign, in a sequence of Photostat blowups of dictionary definitions of art-related words (fig. 24.2). Once mounted and exhibited, the blowups not only achieve the character of visual

art but also an objectlike aesthetic quality comparable to that of Minimalism's crisp, elegant beauty, as well as something of its serial repetitiveness.

The German-American artist **Hans Haacke** (b. 1936), during the sixties, literally undermined the integrity of Minimalist forms by subjecting them to the eroding forces of nature, among them atmospheric conditions exhibited in the condensation forming inside a clear acrylic plastic cube. His interest in the degradation of apparently closed systems extended beyond geometry to more extensive social arrangements and brought to conceptual art a moral conscience. On being invited to exhibit at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City, Haacke created *Shapolsky et al., Manhattan Real Estate Holdings,*


214 E 3 St.
Block 385 Lot 11
5 story walk-up old law tenement

Owned by Harpual Realty Inc., 608 E 11 St., NYC
Contracts signed by Harry J. Shapolsky, President('63)
Martin Shapolsky, President('64)
Principal Harry J. Shapolsky(according to Real Estate Directory of Manhattan)

Acquired 8-21-1963 from John the Baptist Foundation, c/o The Bank of New York, 48 Wall St., NYC, for $237 600.- (also 7 other bldgs.)

$150 000.- mortgage at 6% interest, 8-19-1963, due 8-19-1968, held by The Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board of the American Baptist Convention, 475 Riverside Drive, NYC (also on 7 other bldgs.)

Assessed land value $25 000.- , total $75 000.- (including 212 and 216 E 3 St.) (1971)

24.3 Hans Haacke, *Shapolsky et al., Manhattan Real Estate Holdings, a Real-Time Social System, as of May 1, 1971* (detail), 1971. 142 photographs, 2 maps, 6 charts. Edition of two. Collection the artist.

a *Real-Time Social System, as of May 1, 1971* (fig. 24.3). In this *Real Estate* series, the artist captioned photographs of tenements, among other kinds of buildings, with business information about ownership, acquisition, and property values. Presented with all the order and logic of a minimalist grid, *Shapolsky et al* described a system in which a small group of property owners were making money out of undermaintained buildings. Right away, the *Real Estate* pieces were seen as being so inflammatory that the Guggenheim canceled the show. While the cancellation may have preserved the political "neutrality" essential to a tax-free educational institution, it also guaranteed the very kind of public interest that could serve Haacke's overriding purpose—to jolt complacent viewers into helping to correct social injustice. What it could have achieved had it been viewed in the rotunda of the Guggenheim is, of course, impossible to know.

Revisiting the early-twentieth-century idea later articulated by Donald Judd ("if someone says it's art, it's art"), Conceptualism soon spawned a vast and unruly variety of Post-Minimal works ranging from Performance art to Process and Land art, all united, however, by a common and unprecedented emphasis upon ideas and their expression through some medium other than a unique object—a permanent, portable, and therefore marketable commodity. Illustrating the principle that the "ideal Conceptual work," as Mel Bochner characterized it, could be experienced in its description and be infinitely repeatable—and thus devoid of "aura" and uniqueness—the French artist **Daniel Buren** (b. 1938) reduced his painting to a uniform neutral and internal system of commercially printed vertical stripes, a formal practice that readily lent itself to infinite replication and exhibition in any environment (fig. 24.4). The initial concept would never have to change, and variety came not in the form itself but rather in the context: city streets, public squares, museums, and galleries are all
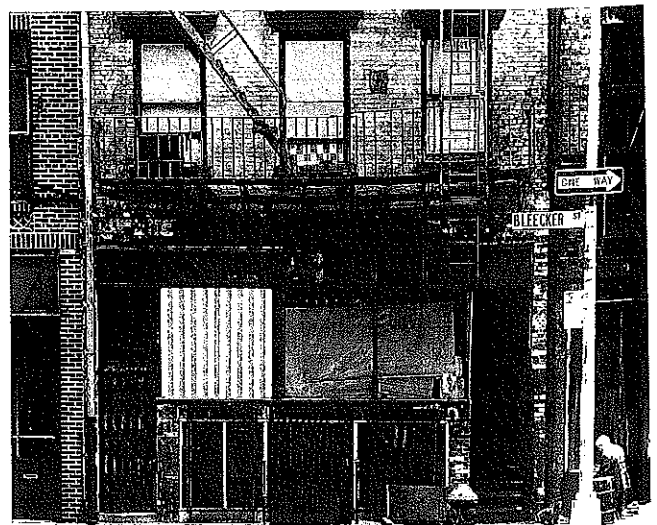
24.4 Daniel Buren, *Untitled*, 1973. Installation incorporating green and white stripes, Bleecker Street, NY (now destroyed).

highlighted by Buren's stripes, indicating that the circumstances surrounding the display of art are as important as the work itself.

Since its first articulation in LeWitt's statements, Conceptual art has been a form of critical investigation into the premises of art-making and exhibitions. Michael Asher (b. 1943) took the exposure of the museum and gallery to extremes by making his art out of the physical spaces of sale and display. Asher's 1974 *Situational Work* consisted of removing the wall that divided the exhibition and office space of a gallery. The work made the economic context of aesthetic experiences visible, thus undermining the purity of art praised by formalist critics. Moreover, there was no aesthetic or economic potential in the work itself. Photography and text served to preserve the idea and the event, but Asher's conceptual critique left nothing to buy or even observe.

Of the many forms of "documentation" that the Conceptualists found for their ideas, none served their purposes more perfectly than verbal language itself. "Without language, there is no art," declared Lawrence Weiner, who maintained that he cared little whether his "statements," a series of tersely phrased proposals, such as *A 36 x 36" Removal to the Lathing or Support of Plaster or Wallboard from a Wall*, were ever executed, by himself or anyone else. Fundamentally, he left the decision to implement the idea to the "receiver" of the work. "Once you know about a work of mine," he wrote, "you own it. There's no way I can climb into somebody's head and remove it." Meanwhile, Douglas Huebler made the Conceptualists' attitude toward form stunningly clear in a famous pronouncement published in 1968: "The world is full of objects, more or less interesting; I do not wish to add

any more. I prefer, simply, to state the existence of things in terms of time or of space." In *Location Piece #14* Huebler proposed that photographs be taken over a twenty-four-hour period at twenty-four locations on the 45° parallel north of the Equator. The piece would then be constituted of the photographs, a map of the world, and the artist's statement, which concluded: "The owner of the work will assume the responsibility for fulfilling every aspect of its physical execution." But even if the "owner" assumed that responsibility, the photographs would have been indistinguishable from one another, leaving the viewer to make sense of them and bringing to bear issues of individual identity and personal response. Yet more ephemeral, but touched with the charm of whimsy, were such proposals as the following by Robert Barry, offered as serious artistic commentary:

> *All the things I know*
> *But of which I am not*
> *At the moment thinking—*
> *1:36 PM, June 1969.*

While the Conceptualists may have denied the sensory delights offered by traditional painting and sculpture, they discovered new possibilities within the relatively restricted field of language and linguistically analogous systems. Books, newspapers, magazines, catalogs, advertising, postal and telegraphic messages, charts, and maps were all seized upon and exploited as resources for information and opinions about art and almost anything else of world interest in the early seventies. Also susceptible to Conceptualist exploitation was photography, inherent in any modern print medium, and now also readily available in the kinetic form of video, which became available to the public in the
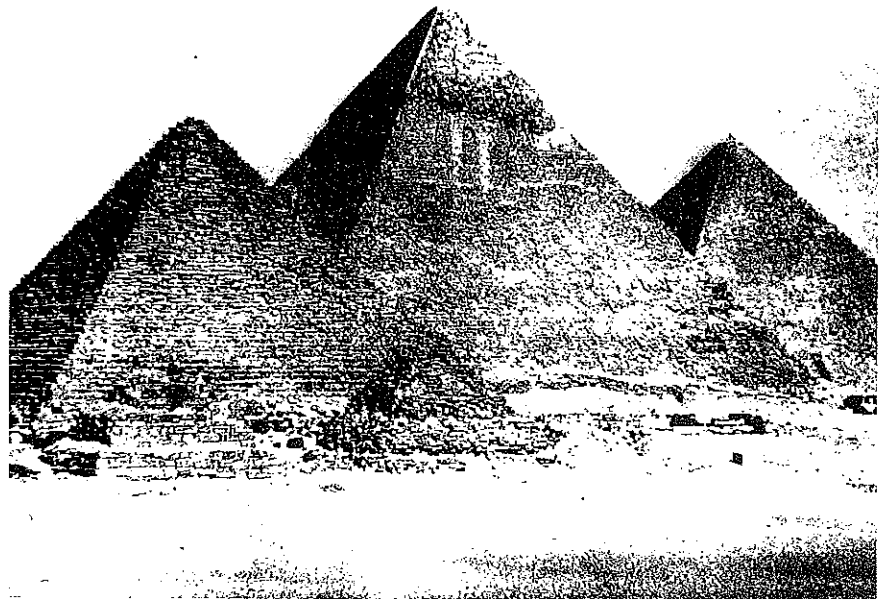
ART HISTORY

A young artist had just finished art school. He asked his instructor what he should do next. "Go to New York," the instructor replied, "and take slides of your work around to all the galleries and ask them if they will exhibit your work." Which the artist did.

He went to gallery after gallery with his slides. Each director picked up his slides one by one, held each up to the light the better to see it, and squinted his eyes as he looked. "You're too provincial an artist," they all said. "You are not in the mainstream." "We're looking for Art History."

He tried. He moved to New York. He painted tirelessly, seldom sleeping. He went to museum and gallery openings, studio parties, and artists' bars. He talked to every person having anything to do with art; travelled and thought and read constantly about art. He collapsed.

He took his slides around to galleries a second time. "Ah," the gallery directors said this time, "finally you are historical."

Moral: Historical mispronounced sounds like hysterical.

24.5 John Baldessari, "Art History" from the book *Ingres and Other Parables*, 1972. Photograph and typed text, 8½ × 10⅞" (21.6 × 27.6 cm).

mid-sixties. Non-unique visual images quickly became almost as ubiquitous in Conceptual art as words.

John Baldessari (b. 1931) composed brief but trenchant tales about art itself, usually accompanied by a reproduction of some key monument from the art-historical canon (fig. 24.5). In later works such as the photomontage *Heel* (fig. 24.6), however, the narrative element became extremely elliptical. The viewer may notice that almost all of the individuals shown in the side photographs have injured feet, suggesting that the title may perhaps refer to the idea of an Achilles' heel, the mythical Greek hero's one vulnerable point. And we may also note that the individuals on the periphery could easily gather in the crowd depicted in the central image. But in order to grasp the connection that the artist apparently had in mind, it helps to know that he had been reading Elias Canetti's book *Crowds and Power*, on the relationship between crowds and individuals. In superimposing a unifying red line on the people who are drifting away from the main group, Baldessari was identifying what might be seen as the mob's Achilles' heel: its vulnerable point is that its members may wander off, one by one, dissipating its power to act.

Books, like verbal communication, offer a sequential, cumulative experience, as opposed to the plastic art of traditional painting that, being static, has the potential for providing a total, all-at-once experience at the very instant of perception. Freed from the tedium of material restraints, the Conceptualists could now move even beyond the third dimension offered by sculpture to explore the fourth
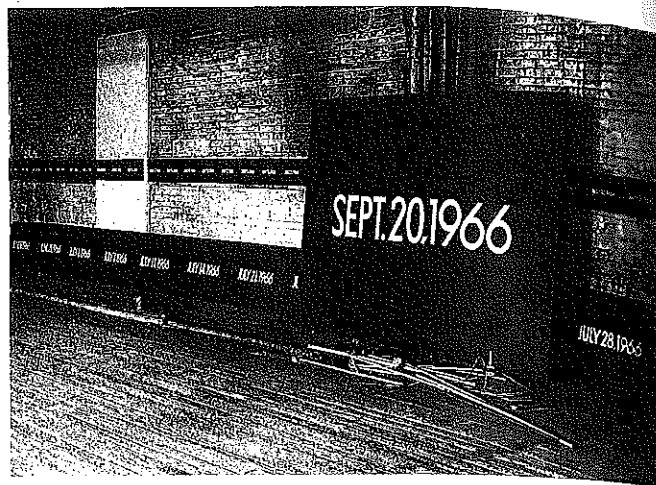
24.7 On Kawara, *The Today Series of Date Paintings*, 1966. Installation view.

dimension of time. **On Kawara** (b. 1933), a Japanese artist resident in New York, made the passage of time itself the all-important subject by each day starting a small black painting that simply set forth the current date in white block letters (fig. 24.7). With every panel an equal component in the series, the work can reveal its full meaning only as a total conception. The German artist Hanne Darboven recorded the passage of time and her experience of it by filling an enormous number of pages with a kind of abstract calligraphy and mysterious permutating numeration, derived in part from the days, weeks, and months of the calendar. As the artist's digits add up, multiply, and interweave, they eventually cover whole walls of gallery space, finally becoming a complete environment given over to a trancelike involvement with time's steady, inexorable advance.

Extended Arenas: Performance Art and Video

Some artists found the material limitations of the written word confining and preferred the temporality of Performance art. In the seventies so many artists embraced Performance that it has been called the art form most characteristic of the period. To a generation more eager than ever to disavow the past, Performance meant venturing into an arena, specifically theater, where artists, owing partly to their lack of experience in the field, felt encouraged to proceed as if unfettered by rules or traditions. Not only did Performance liberate artists from the art object, it also freed them to adopt whatever subject matter, medium, or material seemed promising for their purposes. Performance was not simply visual communication: it often incorporated words and called upon concepts of ritual and myth that had long been important to twentieth-century artists. Moreover, it enabled artists to offer their work at any time, for any duration, at any kind of site, and in direct contact with their audience. This gave artists instant access

24.6 John Baldessari, *Heel*, 1986. Black-and-white photographs with oil tint, oil stick, and acrylic, mounted on board, 8'10½" × 7'3" (2.7 × 2.2 m). Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

to the receivers of their work—without the intervention of critics, curators, and dealers—and thus permitted them a new level of control over its display and destination. For all these reasons, Performance appeared to offer the maximum possibility for converting art from an object of consumption to a vehicle for ideas and action, a new form of visual communication.
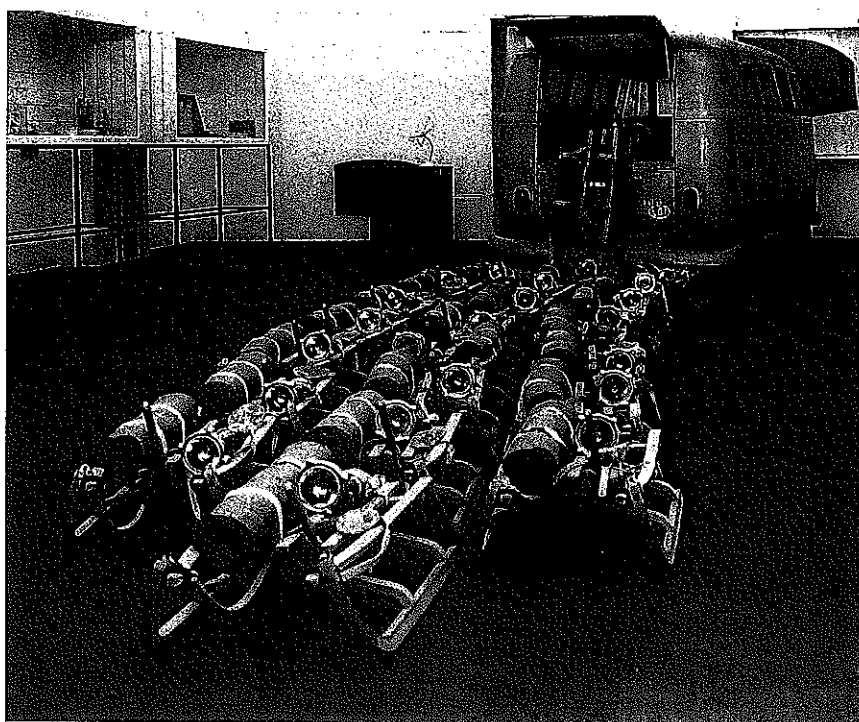
Beuys

No artist active in the seventies realized the heroic potential of Performance more movingly than the charismatic and controversial German artist **Joseph Beuys** (1921–86). Shot down from his plane during World War II and given up for dead in the blizzard-swept Crimea, Beuys returned to peacetime existence determined to rehumanize both art and life by drastically narrowing the gap between the two. To achieve this, he employed personally relevant methods or materials in order to render form an agent of meaning. He began by piling unsymmetrical clumps of animal grease in empty rooms and then wrapping himself in fat and felt, an act that ritualized the materials and techniques the nomadic Crimean Tatars had used to heal the young airman's injured body. Viewing his works "as stimulants for the transformation of the idea of sculpture or of art in general," Beuys intended them to provoke thoughts about what art can be and how the concept of art-making can be "extended to the invisible materials used by everyone." He wrote about "Thinking Forms," concerned with "how we mold our thoughts," about "Spoken Forms," addressed to the question of "how we shape our thoughts into words," and finally about "Social Sculpture," meaning "how we mold and shape the world in which we live: *Sculpture as an evolutionary process; everyone is an artist.*" He continued,

24.8 Joseph Beuys, *How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare,* 1965. Performance at the Galerie Schmela, Düsseldorf.

"That is why the nature of my sculpture is not fixed and finished. Processes continue in most of them: chemical reactions, fermentations, color changes, decay, drying up. Everything is in a *state of change.*"

In a Düsseldorf gallery in 1965 the artist created *How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare* (fig. 24.8), for which he sat in a bare room surrounded by his familiar media of felt, fat,

24.9 Joseph Beuys, *The Pack,* 1969. Installation with Volkswagen bus and 20 sledges, each carrying felt, fat, and a flashlight. Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Kassel, Neue Galerie, Germany.

wire, and wood, his face covered with gold leaf. A dead hare lay cradled in Beuys's arms, and he murmured urgently to it. To help explain this piece, Beuys said that in his work "the figures of the horse, the stag, the swan, and the hare constantly come and go: figures which pass freely from one level of existence to another, which represent the incarnation of the soul or the earthly form of spiritual beings with access to other regions." In this seemingly morbid performance, Beuys pointed up the complex and ambivalent feelings aroused in us by works of art that try to deal directly with such intractably unaesthetic subjects as death. The natural human reaction to the harmless creature held by the artist overturned any notion of "aesthetic distance." And the gold mask Beuys wore made him seem not like an artist but rather a shaman or healer who, through magical incantation, could achieve a certain oneness with the spirits of animals.

Sculptural works such as *The Pack* (fig. 24.9) drew on Beuys's experience in a different way, transforming inanimate objects by layering them with associations both positive and negative. The sleds in this work, for example, may be part of a rescue operation, like the one that saved the artist's life during World War II, since each one carries such emergency gear as a flashlight, in addition to the felt and the animal fat that Beuys specifically associated with his own rescue. But at the same time *The Pack* bears some resemblance to the equipment of a military assault force or commando unit and in this way might assume a decidedly more aggressive than pacifist character.

In 1962 Beuys joined Fluxus, which was a loosely knit, nonconformist international group noted for its Happenings, actions, publications, concerts, and mailing activities (see below). By the end of 1965, however, he had severed relations with Fluxus, not finding the work sufficiently effective: "They held a mirror up to people without indicating how to change anything."

Paik, Acconci, Nauman, and Burden

A different kind of Performance artist whose chosen media are defined by change is **Nam June Paik** (b. 1932), who switched from straight electronic music composition to the visual arts when he discovered the expressive possibilities of video. Paik proclaimed that "as collage technique replaced oil paint, the cathode ray tube will replace the canvas." Witty, charming, and therefore especially successful in collaboration, Paik achieved a certain notoriety for several of the pieces he created for the classical cellist Charlotte

24.10 Nam June Paik, *TV Bra for Living Sculpture* (worn by Charlotte Moorman), 1969. Television sets and cello.

24.11 Nam June Paik, *TV Garden*, 1974–78. Video monitors (number varies) and plants, dimensions variable. Installation view, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1982.
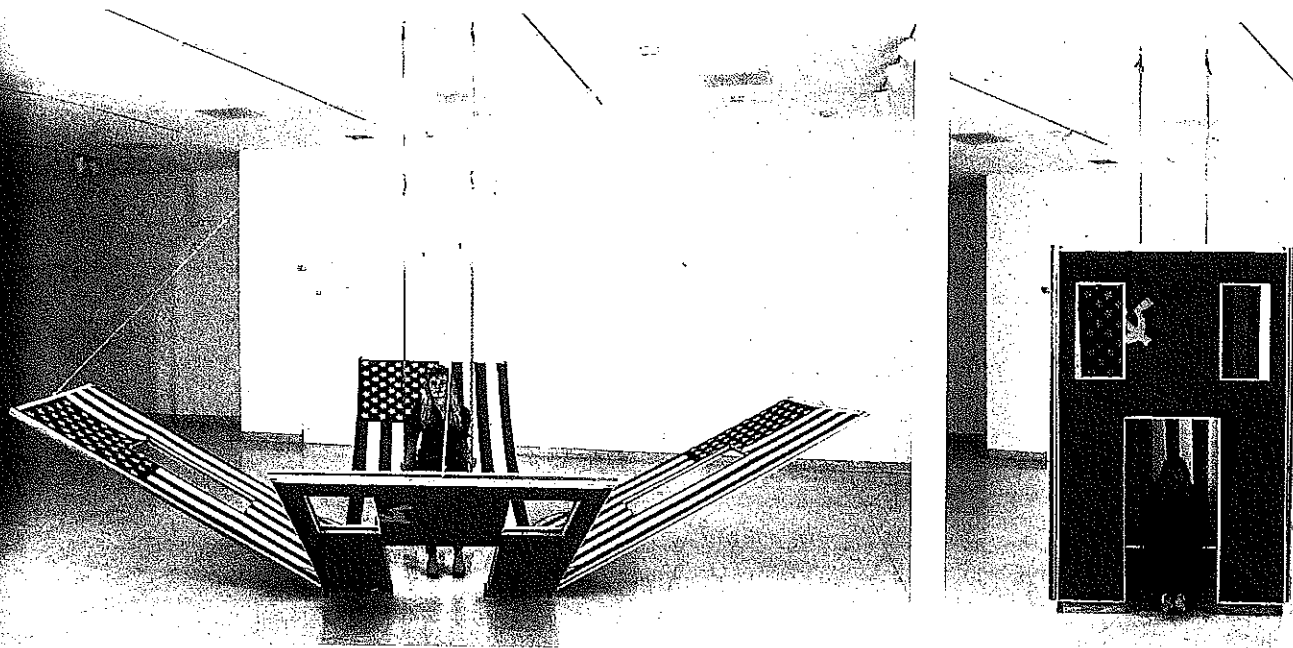
24.12a, 24.12b Vito Acconci, *Instant House*, 1980. Flags, wood, springs, ropes, and pulleys, open 8' × 21' × 21' (2.4 × 6.4 × 6.4 m), closed 8' × 5' × 5' (2.4 × 1.52 × 1.52 m). Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego.

Moorman. One of these had the instrumentalist play the cello while wearing a bra made of two miniature TV sets, which took on a humanity by their association with one of the most intimate of personal garments (fig. **24.10**). When Paik and Moorman performed *Opera Sextronique* in New York in 1967, the cellist removed all her clothing and was promptly arrested for, as the guilty verdict read, "an art which openly outrage[d] public decency." In contrast to his more provocative performance works, some of Paik's video installation pieces can be quite lyrical, even contemplative. In *TV Garden* (fig. **24.11**), the viewer is invited to stroll through a pastoral setting of potted plants, a garden decorated with television monitors. The glowing video images appear amid the foliage like blossoming flowers.

One form of performance, Body art, often induced a forced intimacy between the performer and the audience, with results that could be amusing, poetic, shocking, or discomfiting. In *Seedbed*, 1972, **Vito Acconci** (b. 1940) spent hours during each performance day masturbating beneath a gallerywide ramp, while visitors overhead heard via a loudspeaker the auditory results of his fantasizing. Here was the artist reintroducing into his work the element of personal risk that came from rendering himself vulnerable to the audience, as he engaged in an intensely personal activity and grappled with the potential audience alienation that such drastic strategies could produce.

Subsequently, Acconci made sculptural objects that can "perform" when activated by the viewer. The concerns reflected in these later works have become more political than psychological. His 1980 *Instant House* (fig. **24.12a and b**) lies flat on the floor in its collapsed position. When the viewer sits on its swing, however, pulleys raise the house's walls, making a toy building that looks like a child's

version of a military guardhouse. With the walls up, the viewer seated inside is surrounded by U.S. flags applied to the inner surfaces, while viewers outside see the red Soviet flag, with its hammer and sickle. In Acconci's ironic reduction of Cold War confrontation to the less intimidating proportions of a playground game, the underlying result was to point to the terrifyingly real implications of Cold War politics.

Bruce Nauman (b. 1941) wittily made himself into a living pun on Duchamp's *Fountain* (fig. **24.13**). Over the years, his production has been an astonishingly diverse
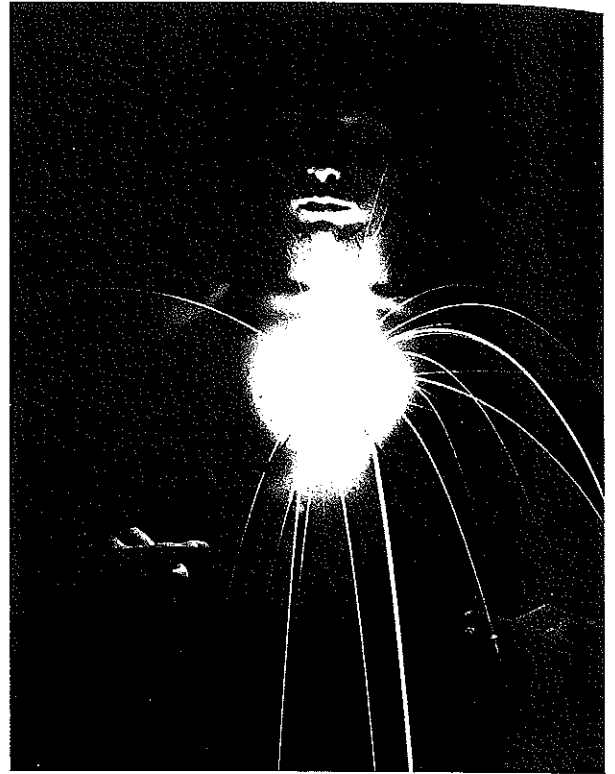

24.13 Bruce Nauman, *Self-Portrait as a Fountain*, 1966–70. Color photograph, 19¾ × 23¾" (50.2 × 60.3 cm). Edition of eight.
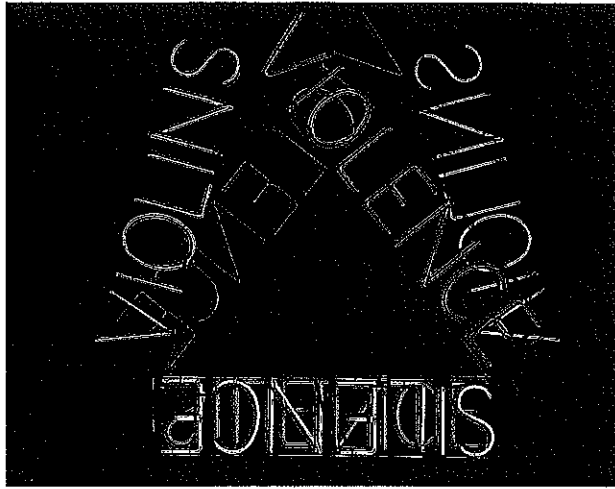
24.14 Bruce Nauman, *Violins Violence Silence*, 1981–82. Neon tubing with clear glass tubing suspension frame, 62⅜ × 65⅜ × 6" (158 × 166.1 × 15.2 cm). Oliver-Hoffman Family Collection, Chicago.

24.15 Chris Burden, *Doorway to Heaven*, November 15, 1973. "At 6 p.m. I stood in the doorway of my studio facing the Venice boardwalk. A few spectators watched as I pushed two live electric wires into my chest. The wires crossed and exploded, burning me, but saving me from electrocution."
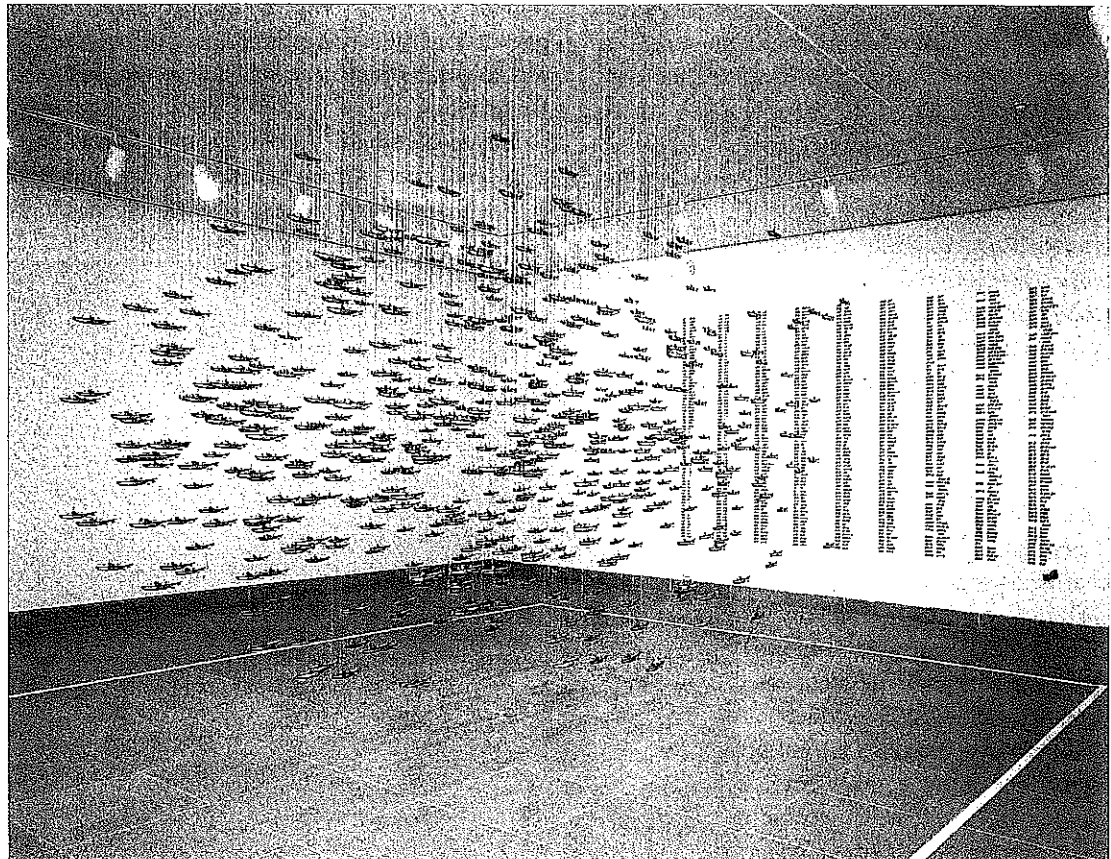
24.16 Chris Burden, *All the Submarines of the United States of America*, 1987. Installation with 625 miniature cardboard submarines, vinyl thread, typeface, 13'2" × 18' × 12' (4 × 5.5 × 3.7 m), length of each submarine 8" (20.3 cm). Dallas Museum of Art.

expression of his declaration: "I'm not interested in adding to the collection of things that are art, but [in] investigating the possibility of what art may be." Early in his career, Nauman created a number of films that made use of all that the young artist had available: himself and his empty studio. The results, including *Walking in Contrapposto*, *Pacing Upside Down*, and *Slow Angle Walk*, the latter two filmed with the camera tipped and turned over, succinctly combine humour and art history with the uncanny. His sculptural work also fluctuates uneasily between levity and seriousness. Nauman has made works in neon, some of which blink on and off with disturbing imagery, such as before-and-after images of a hanged man. Nothing could more pointedly contrast with the austere, Minimal fluorescent light-fixture works of Dan Flavin (see fig. 22.36). Other of Nauman's neon signs, such as *Violins Violence Silence* (fig. 24.14), depict only words and as such are related to Conceptual art. Asking the viewer to read the neon lettering from either side, these signs juxtapose different words and flip them around, backward and forward, until their usual meanings are rendered confused and problematic; the letters become unfamiliar and operate more like collections of abstract shapes and bright colors. Unexpected relationships emerge, such as the odd similarity between "violence" and "violins."

Some Body artists risked going beyond the by-now expected, and accepted, shock factor in contemporary art into the realm of violent exhibitionism. **Chris Burden** (b. 1946) achieved international fame in 1971 with a performance in Los Angeles that consisted of having a friend shoot him in the arm. As was crucial to much of Conceptual art, the ephemeral performance was rendered permanent in photographic documentation. The straightforward factuality of the photograph, capturing a critical moment in another of Burden's performances (fig. 24.15), makes the artist's ability to endure seem all the more harrowing.

Burden distanced himself, however, from any threat of actual danger in installations that, instead of enacting violence, sought to conceptualize it. He made *All the Submarines of the United States of America* (fig. 24.16) during the centennial of the 1887 launching of the U.S. Navy's first submersible, the *SS1*. The work is made up of some 625 miniature models, representing each of the actual submarines launched by the navy during the ensuing hundred years, including its nuclear-missile-carrying Polaris submarines. The armada of tiny cardboard boats floats harmlessly in the gallery space, like a school of fish, but at the same time it enables the viewer to grasp a formidable reality—a fleet of warships capable of mass destruction.

## Gilbert and George, Anderson, and Horn

In a lighthearted, though serious, response to the abstract and modernist tendencies of English sculpture of the sixties still influenced by Moore, Hepworth, and Caro, a pair of London-based artists known simply as **Gilbert** (b. 1943) and **George** (b. 1942) transformed themselves into "living sculpture" and brought to art and the world of the late sixties a much-needed grace note of stylish good humor. Indeed, they would probably have been quite successful performing in an old-fashioned English music hall, which, like all the rest of their material, Gilbert and George simultaneously parodied. For their performance *The Singing Sculpture* of 1971 (fig. 24.17), they covered their faces and hands with metallic paint, adopted the most outrageously proper English clothing and hairstyles, placed themselves on a tabletop, and proceeded to move and mouth as if they were wound-up marionettes rendering the recorded words and music of the prewar song that gave the piece its subtitle.

A Performance artist who actually does appear in music halls, as well as recording for major record labels, while successfully preserving her place in the world of contemporary art is the multitalented **Laurie Anderson** (b. 1947). As a second-generation Conceptualist and a child of the media age, Anderson can take for granted the intellectual rigor of her predecessors and, with greater command of far more spectacular means, transform the older artists' erudite,


24.17 Gilbert and George, *The Singing Sculpture* ("Underneath the Arches"), 1969. Performance at the Sonnabend Gallery, New York, 1971.
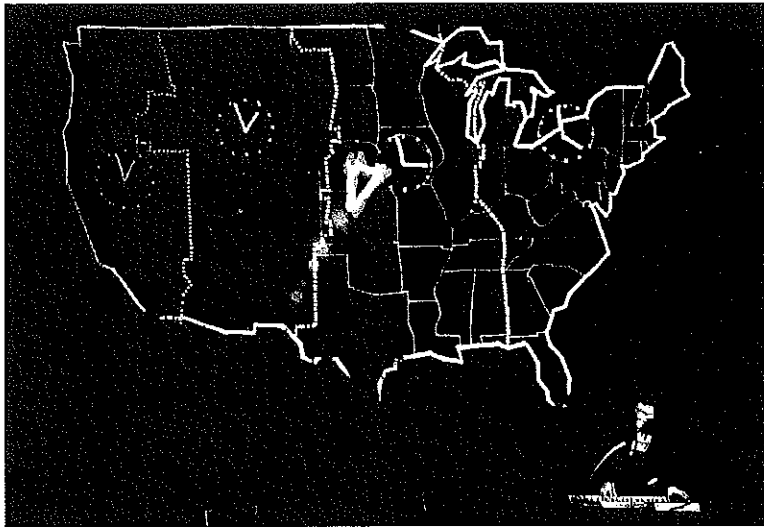
24.18 Laurie Anderson, *United States Part II.* Segment *"Let X = X,"* October 1980. Performance at the Orpheum Theater, New York, presented by the Kitchen.

but often rather amateurish, demonstrations into virtuoso performances. For *United States* (fig. **24.18**), a four-part epic composed and first presented over the years 1978–82, Anderson marshaled the full array of her accomplishments—drawing, sculpture, singing, composing, violin playing, electronic effects—to deal in half-hour segments with the themes of transportation, politics, sociopsychology, and money. Juxtaposing images and text, sound and technological inventions, she swept her audience through a series of ironical "talking songs." The journey turned into a joy ride with such original devices as custom-made instruments, a slide show that magically came and went with the
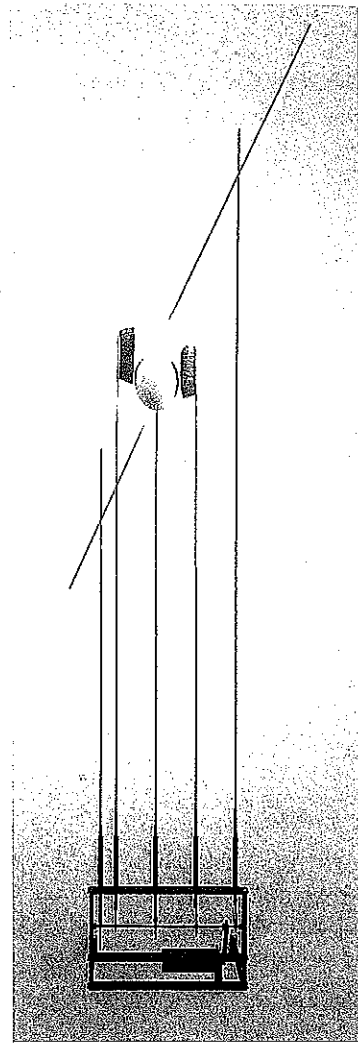
24.20 Rebecca Horn, *Ostrich Egg Which Has Been Struck by Lightening,* 1995. Two brushes, ostrich egg, electric motor, 102 × 27½ × 12" (260 × 70 × 30 cm). Kunstmuseum, Bonn, Germany.
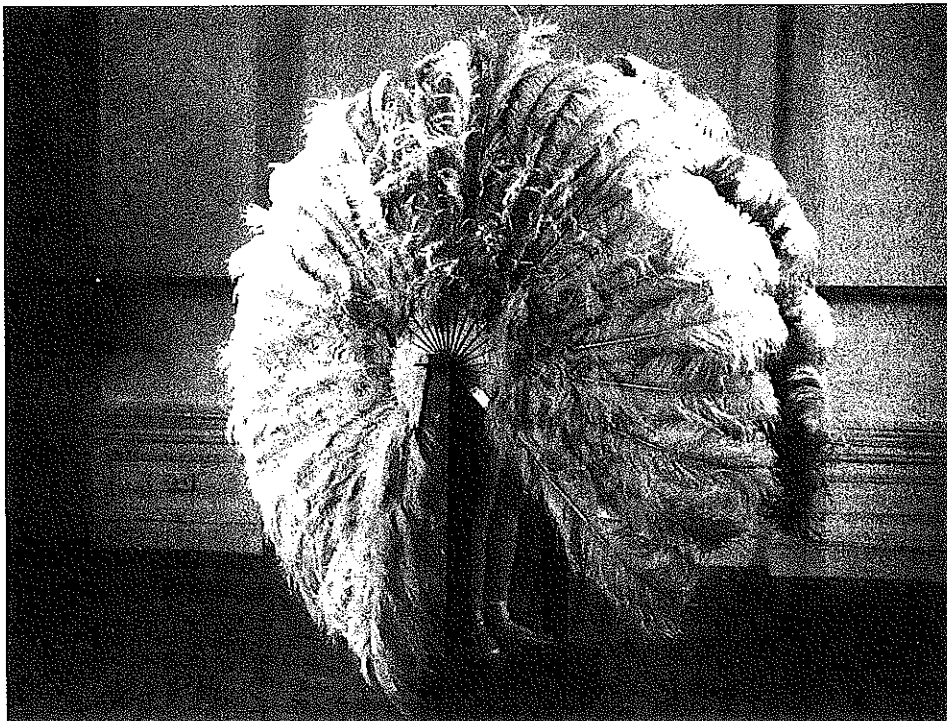
24.19 Rebecca Horn, *The Feathered Prison Fan,* as it appears in the film *Der Eintänzer,* 1978. White ostrich feathers, metal, motor, and wood, 39⅜ × 32⅝ × 12⅝" (100 × 82.9 × 32.1 cm). Private collection.

24.21 Peter Campus, *Three Transitions*, 1973. Two-inch videotape in color with sound, five minutes.

stroke of a neon violin bow, and red lips that suddenly floated in the dark. With humor, language, careful timing, style, and undeniable stage presence, Anderson has brought Conceptual art to a wide audience.

The German performance artist **Rebecca Horn** (b. 1944) has been active in creating sculpture, installations, and films. In much of her work, Horn explores the physical limits of the human body, which she often extends by using fantastic theatrical props, such as a mask of feathers, or gloves with yard-long fingers, or bizarre winglike devices operated by the performer. The most ambitious of these props are conceived as machines, such as the mechanical sculpture *The Feathered Prison Fan* (fig. **24.19**), which appeared in Horn's first feature-length film, *Der Eintänzer* ("The Gigolo," 1978).

The film is set in a ballet studio. In one scene, the fan's two huge, rotating sets of ostrich plumes, one on either side, envelop a ballerina. Yet when the legs of the standing figure are exposed, the framework of feathers looks like a set of wings mounted on her seemingly headless torso, perhaps recalling the renowned Hellenistic sculpture the *Nike* or *Winged Victory of Samothrace*, or suggesting the feathered wings attached by the mythological master inventor Daedalus to his son Icarus—that is to say, evoking figures capable of flight. And indeed elsewhere, as in *Ostrich Egg Which Has Been Struck by Lightning* (fig. **24.20**), the form of the egg calls to mind the most positive associations, symbolizing the artistic perfection sought by ballerinas as well as the formal absolutes of sculptors like Brancusi. The egg is placed between two soft brushes that move up and down but never come into contact with it; the spearlike forms threaten to pierce the egg and just barely miss. It is sensual and erotic and, at the same time, tantalizes viewers, whose expectations are titillated and then denied. Another influence is Max Ernst, whose Surrealist, masculinist fantasies are ironically evoked by Horn.

Campus's Video Art

During the seventies, Performance art extended itself into the new realm of video art, as video cameras and recorders became widely available and were used by artists such as Paik. **Peter Campus's** (b. 1937) early video work included closed-circuit installations. Viewers approaching them, not realizing that they were on camera, would unexpectedly encounter projections of their own image. Observers found themselves suddenly turned into performers. In such works, Campus explored how we come to see ourselves in unanticipated ways, not only physically but psychologically, and took as one of his main themes the ever-shifting nature of the self-image. In the early seventies he made a series of short videotapes, such as *Three Transitions* (fig. **24.21**), that pursue related ideas of transformation, usually focusing on himself as performer. Among other strange metamorphoses acted out on the tape, Campus applies makeup to his face, and the cosmetics appear to dissolve his features away. In another sequence he sets fire to a mirror reflecting his face; the mirror burns up, leaving only a dark background. In such vignettes, the human face, the basis of our sense of identity, becomes little more than a changing mask that we can never see behind.

Radical Alternatives: Feminist Art

Performance, like Conceptual art, challenged the existing means of evaluating quality that had guided the rise of modernism. Throughout the sixties, artistic and critical voices had been calling for new means of art-making to present contemporary content. First Minimalism, with its disavowal of any relationship to the context of traditional painting or sculpture, then other, less object-centered art forms gave artists the means to distinguish themselves from the oppressive nature of the canon. It was Performance art in the hands of feminist artists, however, that most clearly defined the political art of the seventies.
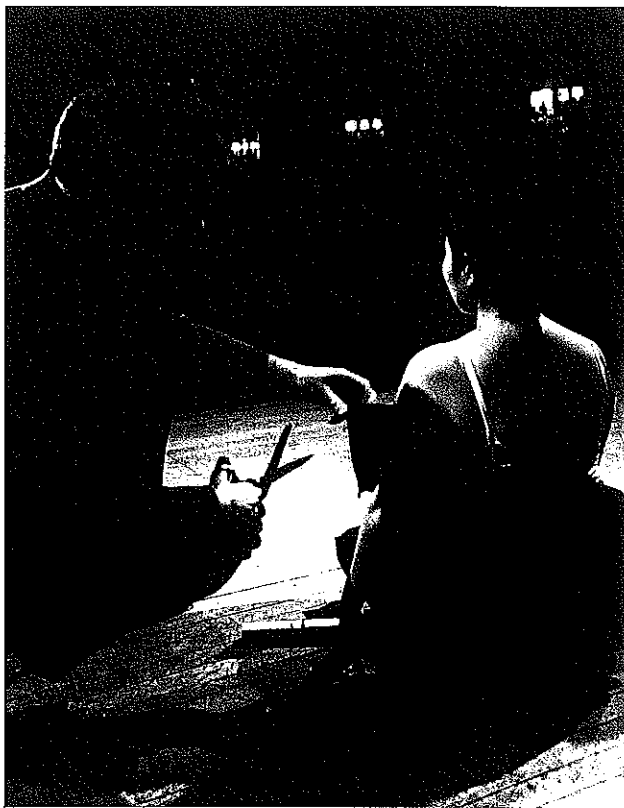
24.22 Yoko Ono performing *Cut Piece* at Carnegie Recital Hall, NYC, March 21, 1965.

Fluxus

The intuition that the personal was artistic, just a short step from declaring it political, was at the heart of the Fluxus group, an international collective of sculptors, painters, poets, and performance artists. In the words of the group's de facto leader, George Maciunus, Fluxus asked, "Why does everything I see that's beautiful like cups and kisses and sloshing feet have to be made into just a part of something fancier and bigger? Why can't I just use it for its own sake?" Fluxus resisted transformations of life into art, believing that the two were already inseparable. Japanese-born American member **Yoko Ono** (b. 1933) created performances *Breathe Piece* and *Laugh Piece* (both 1966) by giving one-word instructions to her audience. Her 1964 *Cut Piece* (fig. **24.22**), in which the artist sat on stage beside a large pair of scissors and wordlessly waited as the audience cut her clothes off, marks an unsettling and effective transition from the joyful whimsy of much Fluxus work to the politically astute presentations of everyday life created by feminists in the seventies.

The Feminist Arts Program

Feminist art of the seventies began at the Feminist Arts Program at the University of California, Valencia. Directed by **Miriam Schapiro** (b. 1923) and **Judy Chicago** (b. Judy Cohen, 1939), the program sought to address inequities in the arts from an institutional position.

Schapiro and Chicago's teaching redefined the creative process. Making art was not to be conceived as a private, introspective, mythic adventure. Instead, through public and private discourse, consciousness-raising sessions, personal confessions, and technical training, the program strove "to help women restructure their personalities to be more consistent with their desires to be artists and to help them build their artmaking out of their experiences as women." The major artistic statement of the program, *Womanhouse*, exposed the barriers to those desires. In describing their world, the artists of the Feminist Arts Program began restructuring the art historical landscape.

Womanhouse was one of the largest installations of the seventies. Guests were invited into the traditional spaces of domestic femininity to discover that political analysis had replaced homemaking. A bride descended a staircase, her train getting dirty as she moved straight to the kitchen, itself decorated with brightly colored breasts that slid down into the frying pan to form two fried eggs. A linen closet


24.23 Feminist Art Program, *Womanhouse* (detail of linen closet) by Sandra Org, 1971. Mixed media.

trapped another woman in a life defined, as one performance demonstrated, by an endless sheet endlessly ironed (fig. 24.23). Perhaps the most disturbing room to audiences was the Menstruation Bathroom. The bathroom exposed the aspect of women's lives that is probably the most effectively hidden. In a white bathroom immaculately cleaned, a wastebasket sat under the sink overflowing with all the evidence of an impossibly heavy period. The excess of that small sculpture served as a metaphor for the explosive nature of the house itself. Performances, classes, consciousness-raising sessions, talks, readings, plays, and a documentary film about the project presented the often psychologically crippling pressures of being a middle-class woman in America. In doing so, *Womanhouse* provided ample evidence of the artistic potential of populations and subjects that had scarcely featured in art history textbooks and museums.

Womanhouse encouraged a generation of women artists to explore content and media that had been marginalized in the artworld but that are central to many women's experiences. The most visible work to come out of this tradition was Judy Chicago's *Dinner Party*, 1979 (fig. 24.24). This elaborate celebration of women's history was executed, with intentional exaggeration, in such stereotypically feminine and decorative artistic mediums as needlework and china painting. The entire ensemble is organized as a triangle, a primordial symbol of womanhood as well as equality. Within its enclosed floor area are inscribed the names of 999 women in history and legend, from the ancient world up to such modern figures as Isadora Duncan, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Frida Kahlo. Each side of the triangular table has thirteen place settings; in part this makes a wry comment on the Last Supper—an exclusively male dinner party of thirteen—and in part it acknowledges the number of witches in a coven. The thirty-nine settings pay tribute to thirty-nine notable women, and each name is placed on a runner embroidered in a style appropriate to its figure's historical era. In *The Dinner Party*'s most provocative gesture, the plates on the table display painted and sculpted motifs based on female genitalia. The dynamic designs of the plates transform the vagina into an energetic counterpart to the ubiquitous phallic symbol. Such a reversal
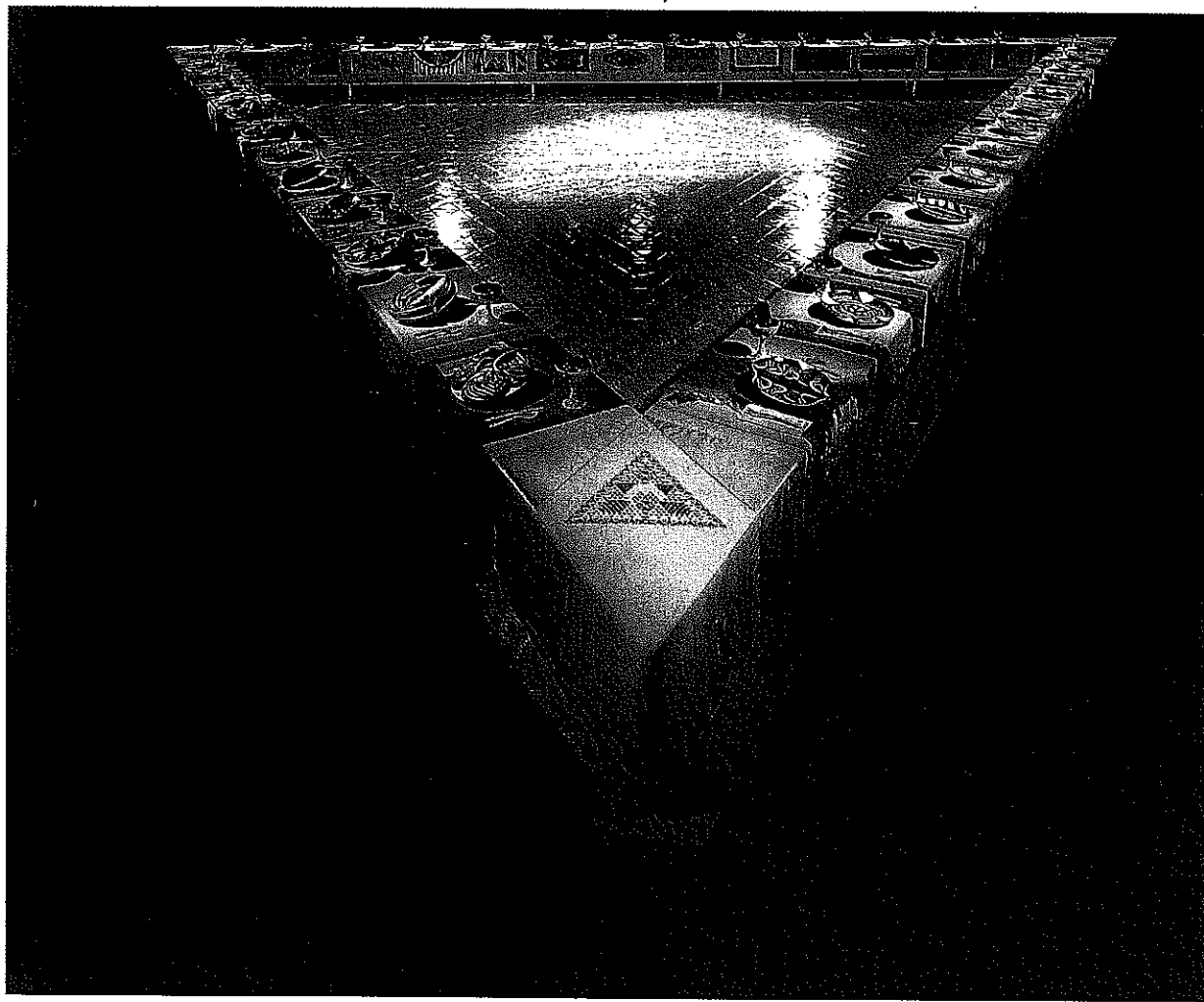
24.24 Judy Chicago, *The Dinner Party*, 1974–79. White tile floor inscribed in gold with 999 women's names; triangular table with painted porcelain, sculpted porcelain plates, and needlework, each side 48' (14.6 m).

attracted criticism, first for essentializing and defining each woman by her anatomy, and second for visualizing female power as phallic energy in drag. The essentializing and binary nature of the work has made it as controversial as its politics and craft have made it central to the history of gender and the arts.
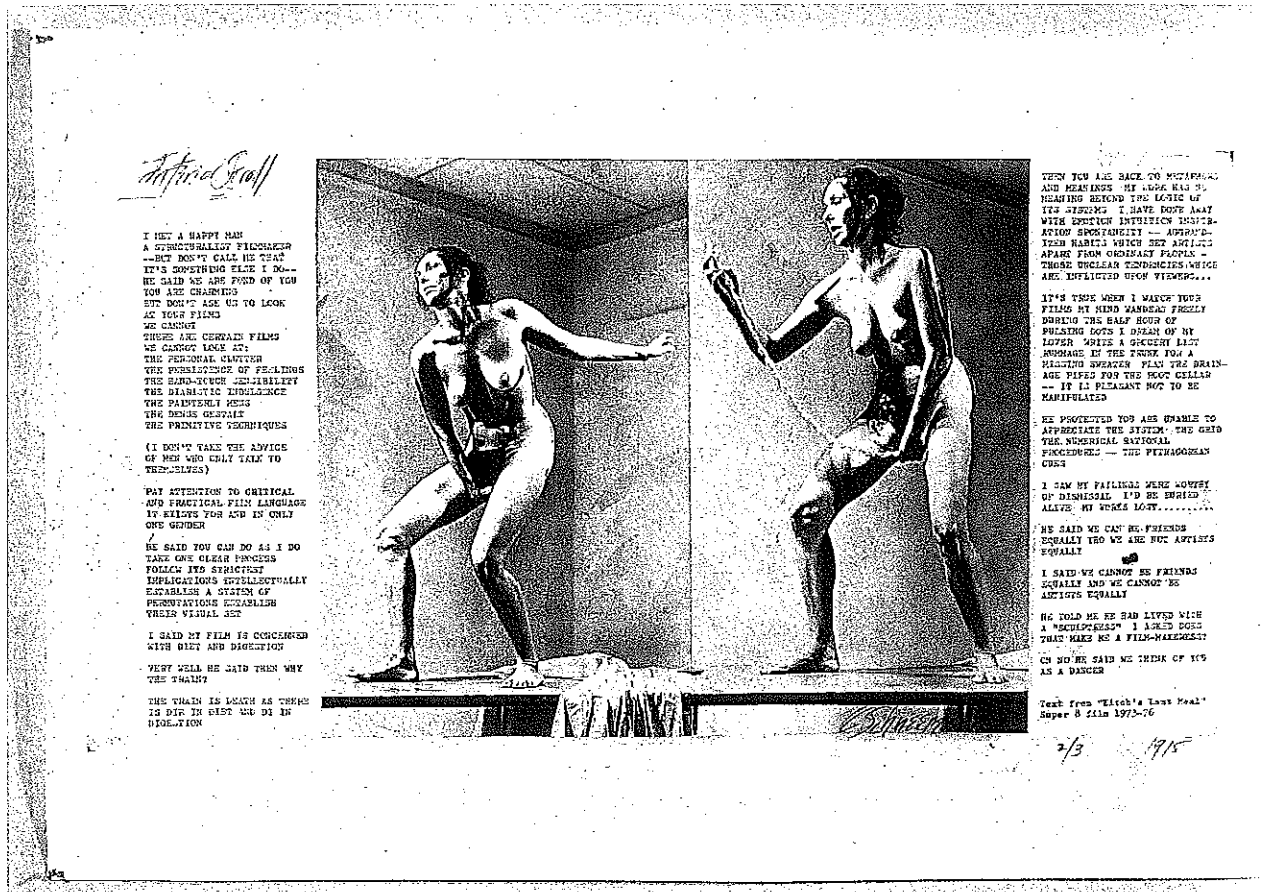
Performance Artists

As Judy Chicago was making work that took the female body as its source of aesthetic unity and political identity, artists such as **Carolee Schneemann** (b. 1939) and **Hannah Wilke** (1940–93) presented their bodies as their art. In the sixties, Schneemann's *Meat Joy*, a ritualistic, erotic romp between four men, four women, a serving maid, raw fish, chickens, paint, plastic, and sausages, drew on contemporary dance and Happenings to arise like the repressed unconscious of American Pop and European abstraction. First performed in Paris in 1964, Schneemann's narrative and physical clutter challenged the directorial control exerted by Yves Klein in his *Anthropometries* (see chapter 22) and the classicism of her American peers. *Meat Joy* was about liberation, sensuality, and spirit rather than aesthetics.

By the seventies, Schneemann's performances were focusing on the relationship between culture, meaning, and the female body. *Interior Scroll* (fig. **24.25**) is one of the most visceral performances of the decade. The performance included readings, the painting of a large figure and concluded with Schneemann slowly unrolling a scroll, the end of which she had been carrying in her vagina. As she removes the text she reads it and tells the audience about a confrontation with a male filmmaker. The man told her that good art must avoid the graphic and personally revealing subject matter that interested her: "You are unable to appreciate the system of the grid," he exclaims. It is this ability to confound the aesthetic rules that guide the reception of contemporary art that continues to make work such as Schneemann's so challenging. With a sensitivity that avoids the binary reversals that generated *Dinner Party*, Schneemann gave serious thought to finding meaning in the experience of being a woman that was independent from male symbols. She explained, "I thought of the vagina in many ways—physically, conceptually: as a sculptural form, an architectural referent, the source of sacred knowledge, ecstasy, birth passage, transformation." From within her body, Schneemann described her life and challenged the codes of the artworld.

Like Schneemann's, Hannah Wilke's performances reiterate her position as someone whose life is defined by playing the role of female artist. She takes the portrait as

24.25 Carolee Schneemann, *Interior Scroll*, 1975. Photographs of performance and scroll text, 48" × 72" (1.22 × 1.83m).

24.26 Hannah Wilke, *S.O.S. Starification Object Series*, 1974–82. Mixed media, 40.5" × 58" (1.03 × 1.47m) framed.

the central document of her work, staging events for the camera as well as the audience. As she has said, even asleep she is posing. Unlike Schneemann, Wilke works from within the expectations of society, casting herself as the beautiful woman posed to display her body and play the role of seductress. As she presents herself, she crafts the images so as to indicate the physical pleasure and the personal cost of such objectification. Concerned with "how to make yourself into a work of art instead of other people making you into something you might not approve of," Wilke encourages viewers to enjoy the sensuality of the body—hers and theirs—but also to recognize that desire is not without cost.

A 1977 work *Intercourse with ...* expresses the particular nature of Wilke's exposed body. The piece consisted of the artist striking poses as an answering machine played messages from her friends and family. The words shaped her body and defined her actions. She then undressed and covering her body were the names of the speakers. The names were slowly removed leaving her body without the protection of clothes or community. In *SOS Starification Object Series* (fig. 24.26) she marked her body with signs of distress rather than care. The work consisted of an

extended series of photographs that initially resemble fashion plates. Affixed to Wilke's body, however, were pieces of chewed gum folded to represent small vulvas. The gum sculptures disrupt the seductive quality of the pose and the photograph with external signs of what artists referred to as "internal wounds." She intended the gum to suggest society's chewing up and spitting out, not only of women but also of minority ethnic groups.

The work of the Cuban-born artist **Ana Mendieta** (1948–85) centered on the drama of the body, treating female physiology as an emblem of nature's cycle of birth, decay, and rebirth. Her sculptural *Process* pieces evoke the aura of ancient fertility rituals. These works were often developed from the direct imprint of the body, as when Mendieta outlined her own silhouette on the ground in gunpowder and then sparked it off, burning her form into the soil. The resulting image was a way, the artist said, of "joining myself with nature." That impulse is also evident in the pictograph-like figure outlines that Mendieta drew on amate (bark) paper, such as *The Vivification of the Flesh* (fig. 24.27). Here she inscribed a symbol of the body onto bark taken from a tree rooted in the earth. And in a

24.27 Ana Mendieta, *The Vivification of the Flesh* from series *Amategram*, 1981–82. Gouache and acrylic on amate (bark) paper, 24¾ × 17" (62.9 × 43.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

24.28 Ana Mendieta, *Untitled*, from series *Fetish*, 1977. Color photograph mounted on paperboard, 20 × 13¼" (50.8 × 33.7 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

work for the *Fetish* series (fig. **24.28**), Mendieta created a mummy-shaped mound of mud resembling a barely buried corpse and surrounded it with a shallow ditch, as if carrying out an archaic burial ceremony and returning the deceased to the earth. At the same time, the irrigation ditch and the small branches stuck into the figure's chest suggest that the body has been in a sense "planted" in the ground, to germinate and be resurrected in the spring.

Language and Identity

One of the lessons Miriam Schapiro took from her experience in the Feminist Arts Program was that, "Merely to speak out, to describe the daily ways of your life, turns out to be political." Life was a performance, and its presentation was art and politics. By the late seventies, feminists were shifting from descriptive projects to those examining how lifestyles are learned and knowledge is created. One of the most remarkable documents of the period is **Mary Kelly's** (b. 1941) *Post-Partum Document* (fig. **24.29**). American born but at that time based in London, Kelly charted the early childhood development of her son in comparison to the psychological changes of herself as a new mother. Basing her work on the linguistic interpretation of Freud by the French psychoanalyst and writer

Jacques Lacan, Kelly emphasized the role of language in identity formation, and the changes to the mother–child relationship as her son came to an understanding of his own selfhood and a command of language.

Post-Partum Document is a series of records: imprints of diaper stains, handprints, art work, lists, medical and educational records, diagrams, and confessional notes. Some of the most striking pages record the boy's writing and the mother's interpretation on slates recalling both a schoolhouse chalkboard and the ancient Egyptian Rosetta Stone, and notes about her highly ambivalent attempts to provide day care, all displayed. The pages poignantly detail the incomplete translation of the son's acquisition of language and education into a sensible event for the mother. This is a moment when the relationship between mother and child begins to change. Significance for the child starts to be located out in the world, to be translated by him through language rather than given to him by the mother. Likewise, the role of the child as the primary bearer of meaning for the mother begins to fade in a confusing, often distressing manner. Kelly's striking foray
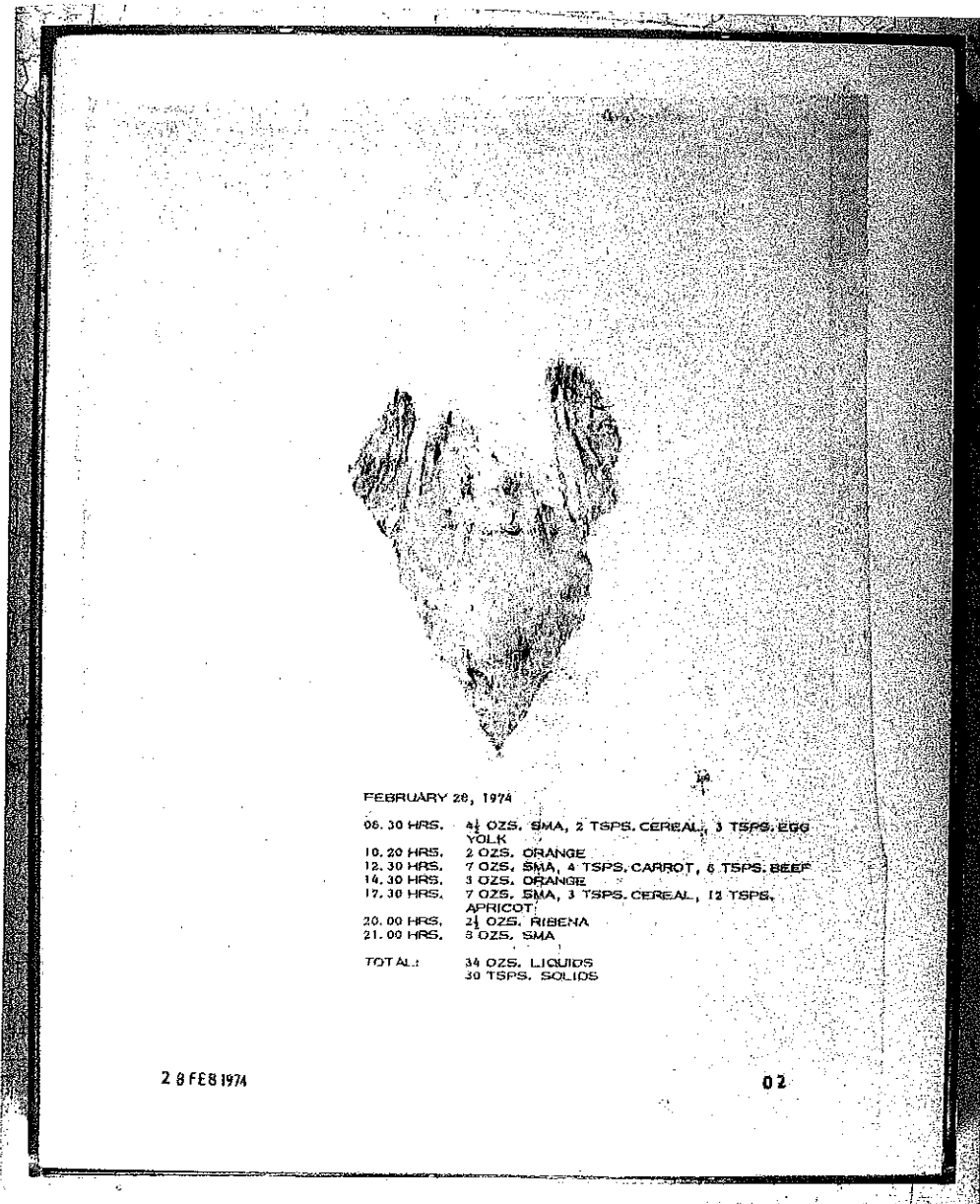
24.29 Mary Kelly, *Post-Partum Document: Documentation I Analysed fecal stains and feeding charts*, 1974. Perspex units, white card, diaper lining, plastic sheeting, paper, ink. Collection Art Gallery of Ontario.

into motherhood and psychology proposed content and form that combined Conceptual art, feminist politics, and psychoanalytic theory to examine aspects of female experience that were still taboo in the artworld of the seventies.

Metaphors for Life: Process Art

Like Performance, Process art countered the timelessness and structural stability of Minimal art with impermanence and variability. But while Performance artists operated in real time by making their bodies their material and personal action their means, artists interested in Process took entropy as an all-important criterion in their choice of materials and allowed the transformative effects of time to become their principal means. The Process artist's action concludes once he or she has selected the substance of the piece—ice, grass, soil, felt, snow, sawdust, even cornflakes—and has "sited" it, usually in a random way, by such means

as scattering, piling, draping, or smearing. The rest is left to natural forces—time in tandem with gravity, temperature, atmosphere, and so forth—which suggests that now, in an art where creation and placement are an integral part of the same process, means have, in the truest sense of the word, become ends. Thus, as literal as Process art may be, it also constitutes a powerful metaphor for the life process itself.
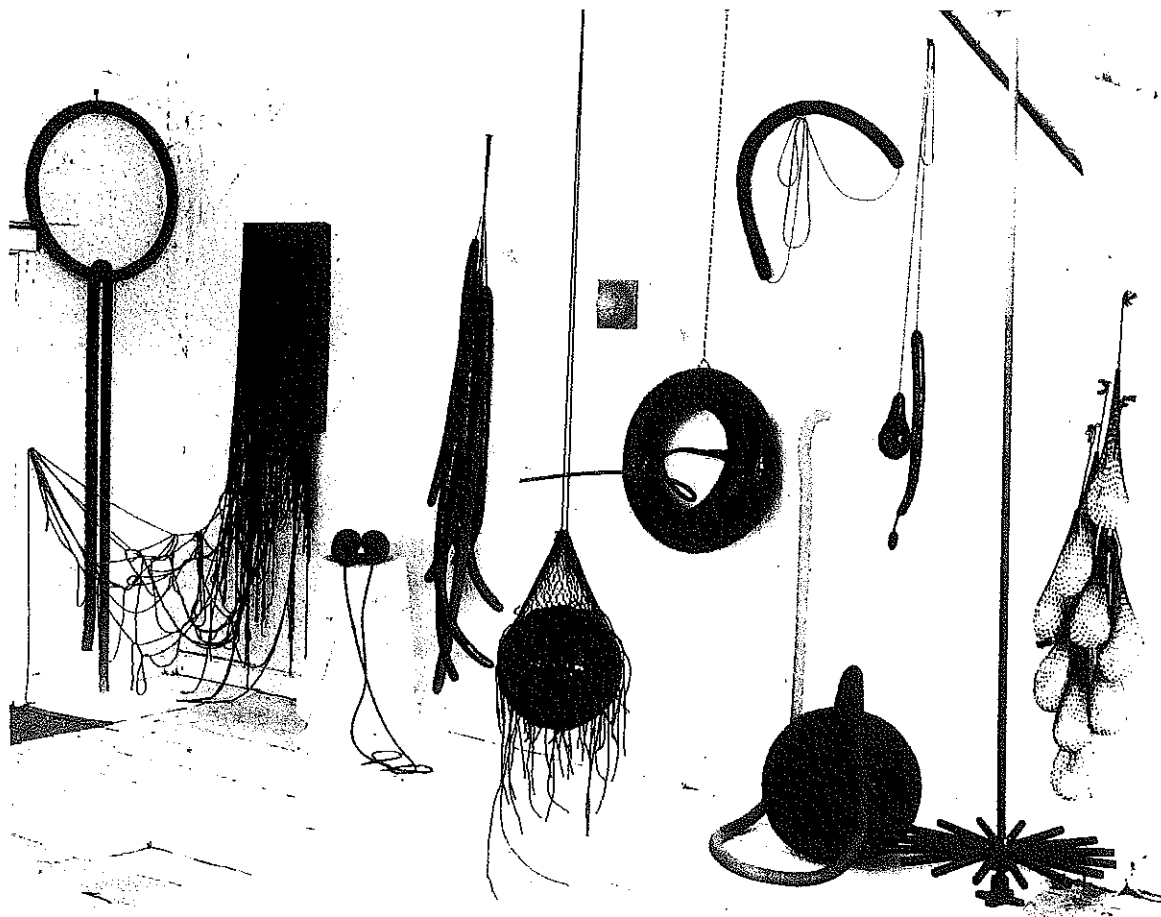
In addition to Joseph Beuys, another artist fascinated with felt was the prolific and protean **Robert Morris** (b. 1931), who in the late sixties subverted his own Minimalist sculptures (see fig. 22.51) by reinterpreting their Minimalist aesthetic in a heavy, charcoal-gray fabric that immediately collapses into shapelessness, however precisely or geometrically it may be cut (fig. **24.30**). Soon Morris would be working with such insubstantial and transient materials as steam. He also countered the absolute, concrete clarity and order of his Minimal works

with "scatter pieces," actually installations of what appear to be scraps left over from the industrial manufacture of metal as well as felt squares, cubes, cylinders, spheres, and grids. The order within this apparent disorder resulted from a "continuity of details," like that discernible in Pollock's allover gestural painting—an art unified by the generalized, holistic continuum of its endlessly repeated drips and dribbles.

German-born **Eva Hesse** (1936–70), who died at the young age of thirty-four, saw Process, especially as evidenced in such unconventional, malleable materials as latex, rubber tubing, and fiberglass, as a way of subjecting Minimalist codes—serial order, modular repetition, anonymity—to a broader, less exclusive range of human values than those inherent in cerebral, male-prescribed grandeur and monumentality. Taking memory, sexuality, self-awareness, intuition, and humor as her inspiration, she allowed forms to emerge from the interaction of the processes inherent in her materials and such natural forces as gravity (fig. **24.31**). Thus, her pieces stretch from ceiling to floor, are suspended from pole to pole, sag and nod toward the floor, or hang against the wall. The works seem like dream objects, materializations of things remembered from the remote past, some even evoking the cobwebs

24.30 Robert Morris, *Untitled*, 1967–68. Felt, size variable. Installation view, 1968, Leo Castelli Gallery, New York. Private collection, New York.

24.31 Photograph of Eva Hesse's Bowery studio in New York, 1966. Left to right: *Untitled*, 1965; *Ennead*, 1966; *Ingeminate*, 1965; *Several*, 1965; *Vertiginous Detour*, 1966; *Total Zero*, 1966; *Untitled*, 1966; *Long Life*, 1965; *Untitled*, 1966; *Untitled*, 1965; *Untitled or Not Yet*, 1966.
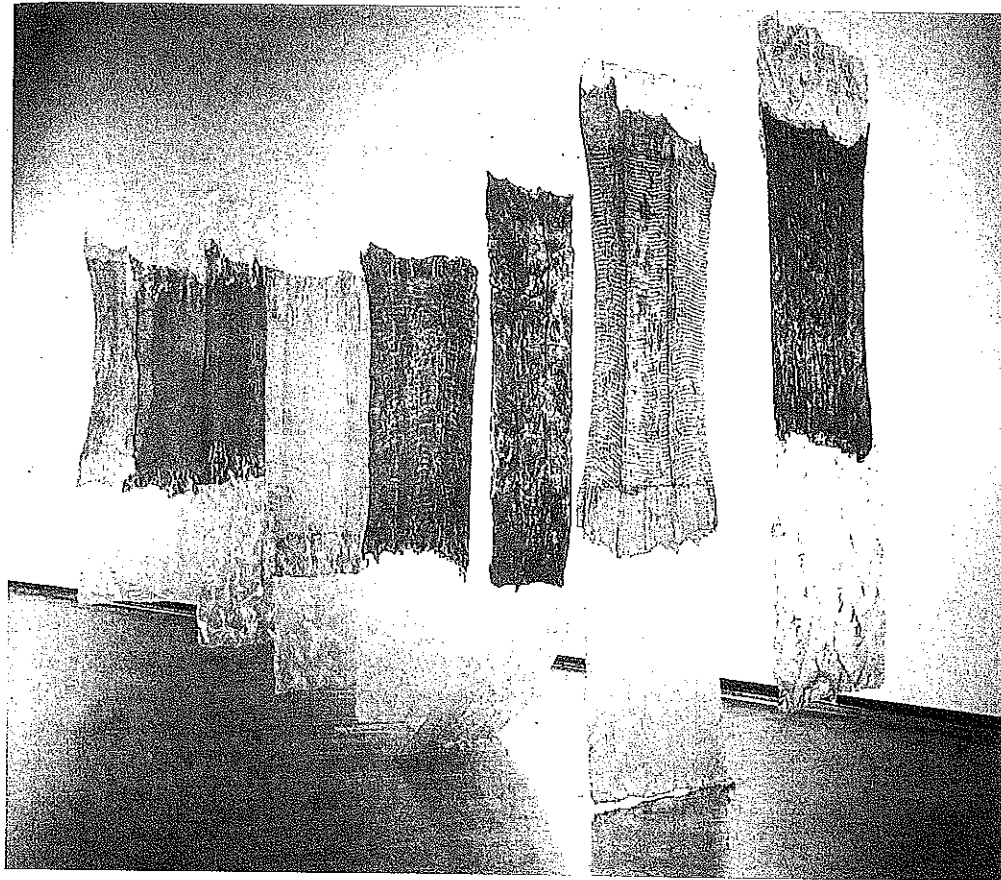
24.32 Eva Hesse, *Contingent*, 1969. Cheesecloth, latex, and fiberglass in eight panels. Installation, 12'7⅞" × 9'4⅜" × 3'2½" (3.7 × 2.9 × 0.98 m). National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.
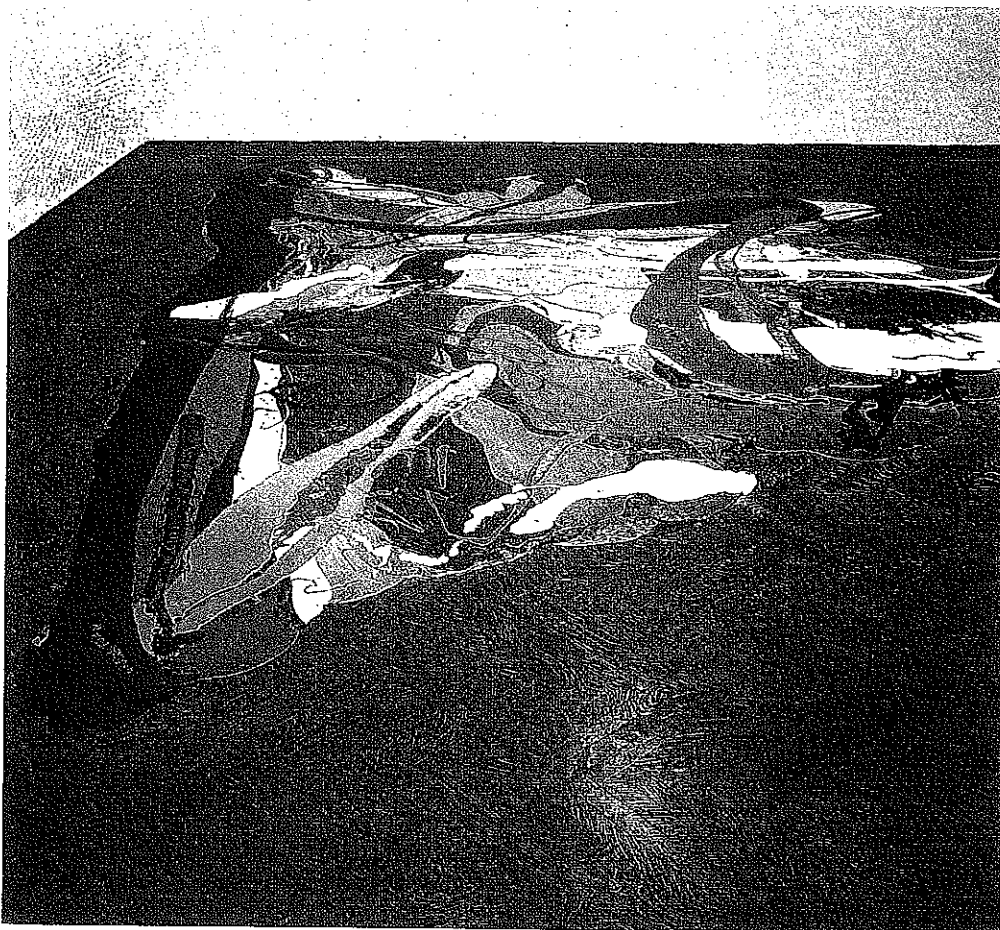
24.33 Lynda Benglis, *Bounce*, 1969. Poured colored latex, size variable. Private collection.

that cling to old possessions long shut away in attics and basements. The pendulous, organic shapes of her sculptures provoke associations with gestation, growth, and sexuality, the kind of emotionally loaded themes that orthodox Minimalists cast aside.

The late piece called *Contingent* (fig. **24.32**), consisting of eight free-floating sections of cheesecloth that have been covered with latex and fiberglass, takes the characteristic Minimalist concern with repeatable, serial objects and "humanizes" it. The luminous, translucent sheets function both as paintings and sculpture. Each of the hangings is allowed to become a distinct entity with its own texture and color, and each is suspended at a slightly different height; by these means, each one is given its own way of addressing the viewer who stands before it.

In the late sixties, **Lynda Benglis** (b. 1941) became fascinated by the interrelationships of painting and sculpture and used Process as a route not only to new form but also to new content. She began to explore these issues by pouring liquid substances onto the floor, just as a sculptor might pour molten bronze (fig. **24.33**). But instead of shaping it with a mold, she allowed the material to seek its own form. The artist simply mixed and puddled into the

flow a startling array of fluorescent oranges, chartreuses, Day-Glo pinks, greens, and blues.

A process of a different, more organic kind, gave rise to the relief *Excess* (fig. **24.34**). Here the use of beeswax suggests an association between the making of the work and bees' natural process of building up a honeycomb. The relief, too, was built up over time, growing bit by bit as the artist applied the pigmented wax medium. The resulting form also displays unmistakable links with organic life: its encrustations recall the furrowed underside of some immense caterpillar. In subsequent works, the artist has pursued pictorial effects in wall reliefs with strong plastic, sculptural qualities. Often they have fan or bow-knotted shapes and are finished with some sumptuously decorative materials, such as gold leaf or a patina of rich verdigris.

Although he came to prominence among ambitious Minimalist sculptors, many of whom have created powerful works in steel and stone, **Richard Tuttle** (b. 1941) dared to give viewers what Bruce Nauman, an admirer of his work, has called "a less important thing to look at." Working throughout his career with delicate and ephemeral materials, such as paper, string, and thin pieces of wire, Tuttle has been singled out for his work's unassertiveness,
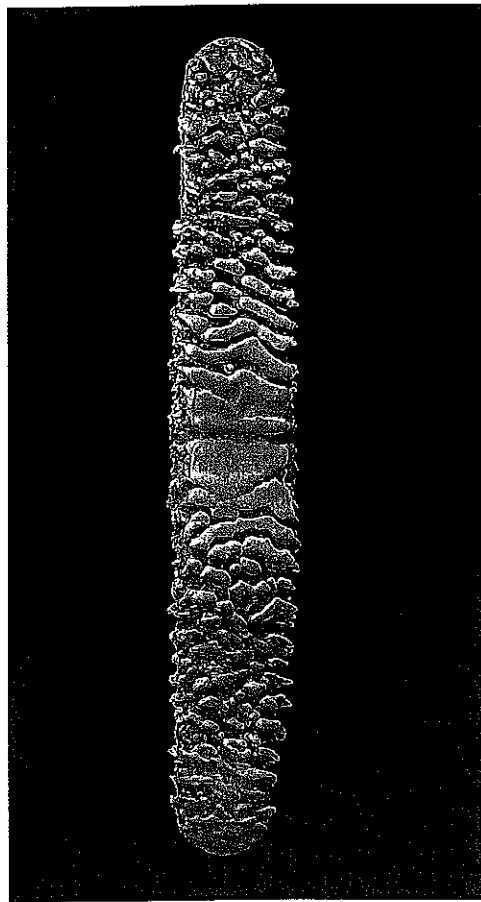
24.34 Lynda Benglis, *Excess*, 1971. Purified beeswax, dammar resin, pigments on Masonite and pinewood, 36 × 5 × 4" (91.4 × 12.7 × 10.2 cm). Walker Art Center, Minneapolis.
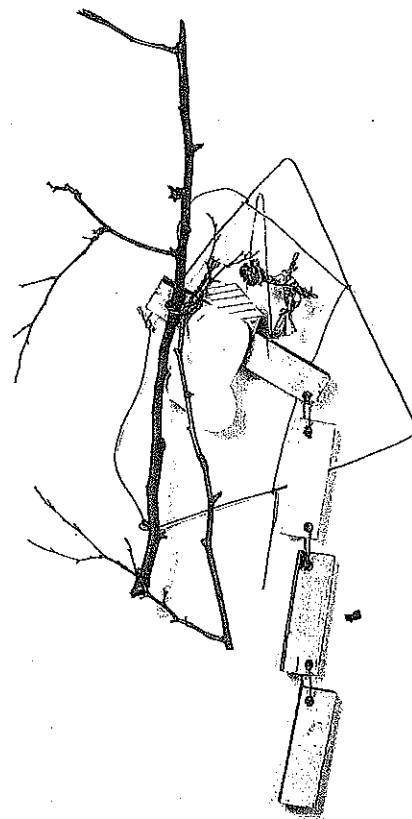
24.35 Richard Tuttle, *Monkey's Recovery for a Darkened Room (Bluebird)*, 1983. Wood, wire, acrylic, paint, mat board, string, and cloth, 36 × 22 × 6½" (91.4 × 55.9 × 16.5 cm). Private collection.
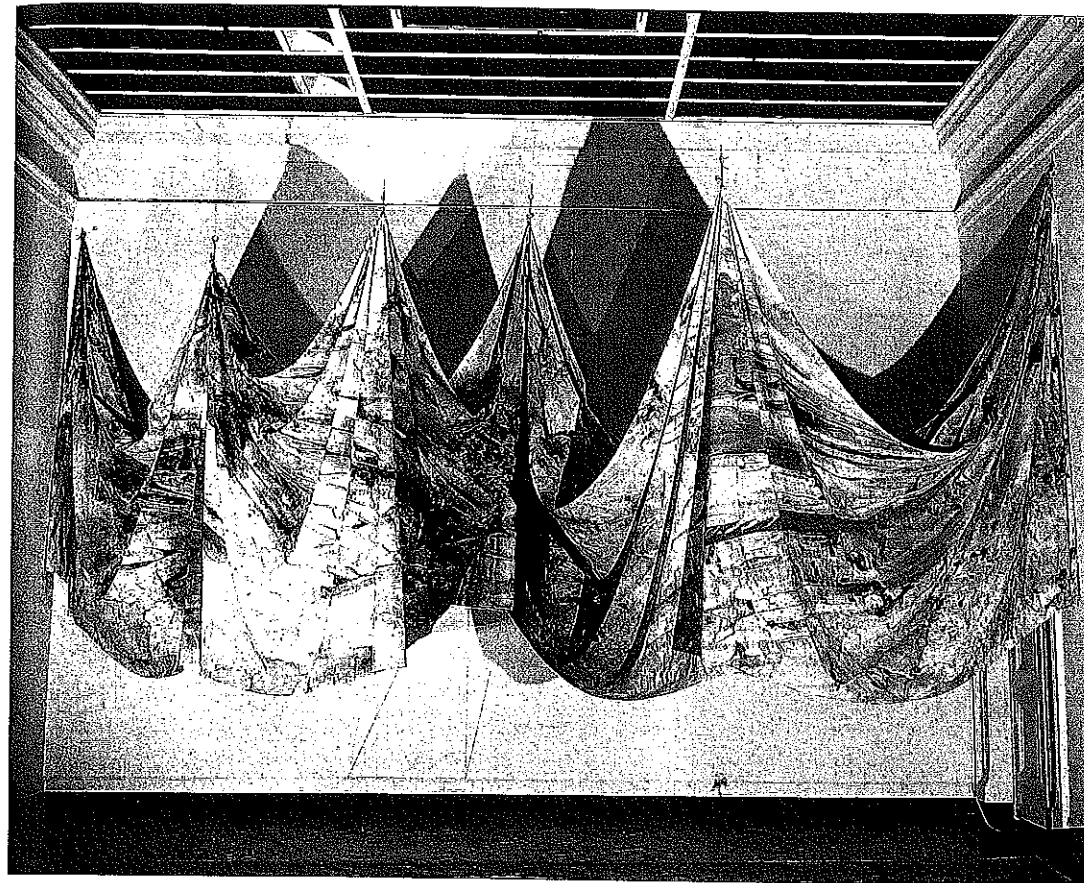
24.36 Sam Gilliam, *Carousel Form II*, 1969. Acrylic on canvas, 10' × 6'3" (3 × 1.9 m). Installation view, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Collection the Artist.

as when, for example, dyed pieces of cloth in geometric shapes are simply attached to the wall of a gallery.

When introduced into a specific venue, such works do not aggressively transform their surroundings, as do the more imposing sculptural works of some of Tuttle's peers. Instead, with their subtle nuances of texture and color, his modest constructions awaken a feeling for the sheer vulnerability of the domestic items around us, a sense of needing protection that can extend to ourselves as well. One critic has called Tuttle's work a "meditation on the extreme fragility of existence." Tuttle gains our sympathy for these frail, decorative pieces (fig. **24.35**) by endowing them with so much visual life: a finely gauged interplay of primary colors, the skillful intermixing of geometric with organic forms, and an elegantly balanced yet lively composition.

The Washington-based artist **Sam Gilliam** (b. 1933) fused painting and sculpture by flinging highly liquefied color onto stretched canvas, somewhat in the fashion of Jackson Pollock, though less in the spirit of controlled accident. He then suspended the support, minus its stretchers, from the ceiling (fig. **24.36**). Thus draped and swagged, the material ceased to do what would traditionally be expected of painted canvas and became a free-form, plastic evocation.

Associated for a time with the Fluxus group, German-born **Dieter Roth** (b. 1930) lived in Switzerland, Iceland, Spain, and England. Roth became known for using food

and other organic materials in unusual ways. In 1970 he had an exhibition of forty pieces of luggage, each filled with a different variety of cheese; during the show, the cheeses rotted and the suitcases leaked, attracting hordes of flies. As Roth has said of another work of his made with foodstuffs, "Sour milk is like landscape, ever changing. Works of art should be like that—they should change like man himself, grow old and die."

While living in London, Roth became a friend of the British Pop artist Richard Hamilton (see fig. 21.1). This association informs *Six Piccadillies* (figs. **24.37a and b**), a portfolio of six prints based on a postcard view of Piccadilly Circus. In this instance, Roth explored a different kind of process—the technical act of making a reproductive print, which involves separating the colors of the original image into the four basic colors used for commercial printing, creating plates to hold the inks, and reworking the image through a series of press proofs. By these means, Roth produced a series of variations on the postcard image, letting it "decompose" itself through the printed medium.

Following a long tradition in Western civilization that can be traced from Plato through Cézanne to the Minimalists, Canadian-born **Jackie Winsor** (b. 1941) visualizes perfection in what the sixties had learned to call Primary forms—simple squares, cubes, cylinders, spheres, and grids. Although her works do not, once finished, evince the process of their own making, that process is
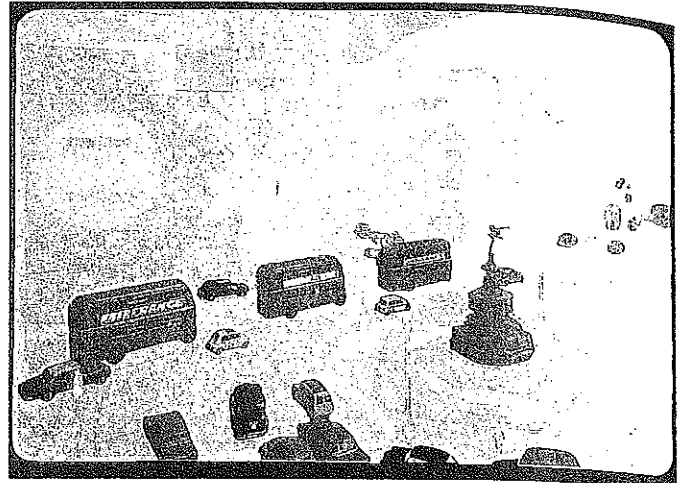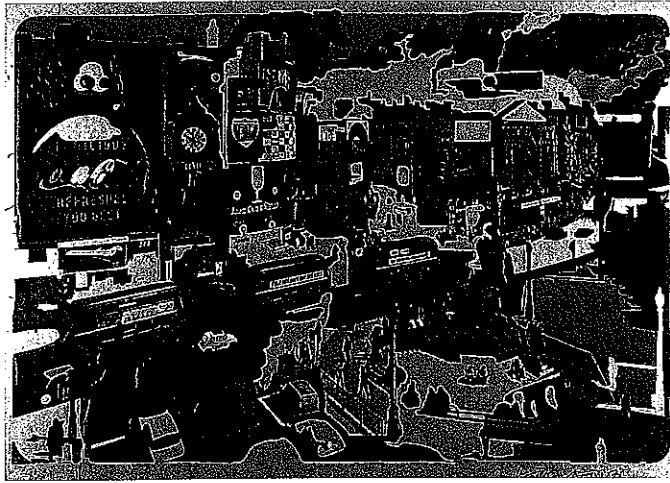
24.37a, 24.37b Dieter Roth, Two screen prints from *Six Piccadillies*, 1969–70. Portfolio of six screen prints on board, each 19¾ × 27½" (50.2 × 69.9 cm).

quite significant. It involves prolonged, ritualistically repetitive activity and materials chosen for their power to endow ideal geometry with a mysteriously contradictory sense of latent, primitive energy. In a 1971–72 work entitled *Bound Grid* (fig. **24.38**) that kind of energy was evident in the tension between a boldly simple grid form, made of crossed logs, and the slow, complex technique employed to lash the beams together. This entailed unraveling massive old ropes, returning them to their primary state as twine, and wrapping the crinkled, hairy strands round and round, for several days a week over months on end.

In 1980–82, Winsor set about activating energy in another, more startlingly dramatic manner. First she built a multilayered interior of plaster, gold leaf, and fluorescent pigment contained within a cube made of hand-buffed,

black concrete reinforced with welded steel. After bringing the piece to the requisite degree of perfection, Winsor added a further element—dynamite—and exploded it (fig. **24.39a**). Later she gathered up the fragments, reinforced the interior, and restructured the outer layer (fig. **24.39b**). In its final state, *Exploded Piece* seems quiescent and contained, even though it bears the scars of the various stages—both the carefully measured and the immeasurably volatile—through which it passed in the course of its creation, destruction, and reconstruction. What physically happened to the form and its material constitutes the content of *Exploded Piece*.

Associated with *Arte povera* in Italy—a group that attempted to illustrate the intersection of everyday life with the practice of art—the Italian sculptor and painter **Mario Merz** (b. 1925) has always been fascinated by the
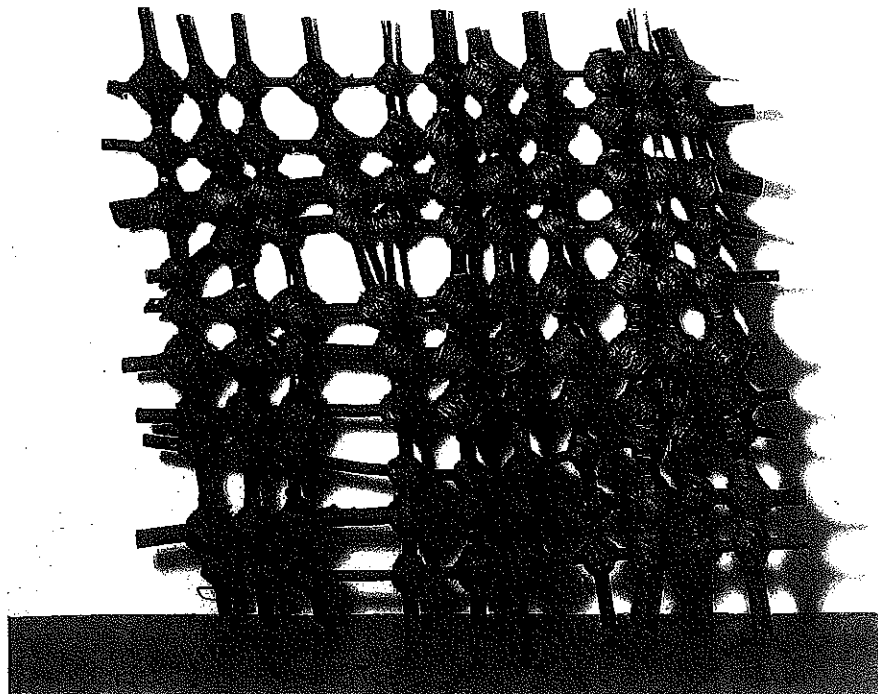
24.38 Jackie Winsor, *Bound Grid*, 1971–72. Wood and hemp, 7' × 7' × 8" (2.1 × 2.1 × 0.2 m). Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, Paris.

way that the world of nature and the world of modern civilization interact. Exploring this theme, he began making his "igloos" in 1968. Like much of his other work, the igloos fuse natural materials, such as mud and twigs, with industrial products, such as metal tubing and glass, to create rudimentary structures that look as if they were the shelters of some unknown nomadic people. The igloos' effect when shown in a museum is that their inhabitants have temporarily camped indoors. In the case of *Giap Igloo* (fig. **24.40**), Merz added modern neon signs to the outside, which spell out (in Italian) a saying by the North

24.40 Mario Merz, *Giap Igloo—If the Enemy Masses His Forces, He Loses Ground; If He Scatters, He Loses Strength*, 1968. Metal tubes, wire mesh, wax, plaster, and neon tubes, height 3'11¼" (1.2 m), diameter 6'6¾" (2 m). Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, Paris.
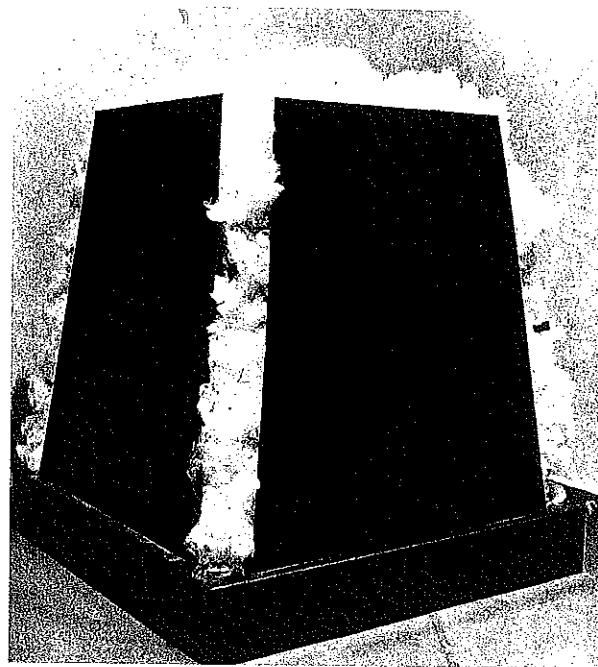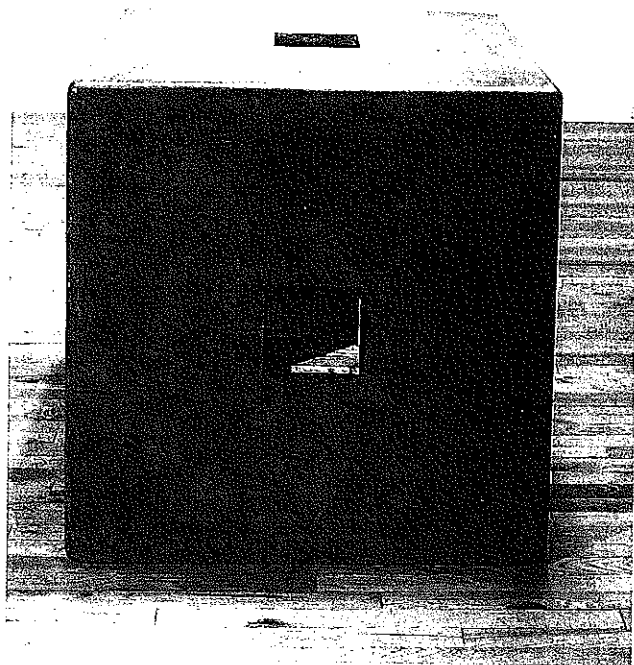

24.39a (above, top), 24.39b (above) Jackie Winsor, *Exploded Piece*, 1980–82. Wood, reinforced concrete, plaster, gold leaf, pigment, steel, and explosive residue, 34½ × 34½ × 34½" (87.6 × 87.6 × 87.6 cm). Private collection.

24.41 Jannis Kounellis, *Cotoniera*, 1967. Steel and cotton.

Vietnamese general named in the work's title: "If the enemy masses his forces, he loses ground; if he scatters, he loses strength." With its military proverb and conspicuous association with Vietnam, this particular igloo, made in 1968 at the height of the war, suggests an improvised guerrilla fortification of sandbags.

In one of his best-known works, **Jannis Kounellis** (b. 1936)—a Greek artist active in Italy and deeply influenced by the Process-related works of the Italians Alberto Burri and Lucio Fontana (see figs 20.38, 20.40)—stabled horses in a Roman art gallery as a way of dramatizing the contrast, and necessary relationship, between the organic world of nature and the human-created, artificial world of art. The same ideas inform *Cotoniera* (fig. 24.41), a piece in which the soft, white, perishable fluffiness of cotton was combined with the dark, indestructible rigidity of steel to create a dialectic of nature and industry. In a later, untitled work of 1986, the world of human creation is all that is made manifest, represented by no more than forty-two toy trains endlessly orbiting the pillars of a vacant building.

Big Outdoors: Earthworks and Land Art

At the same time that certain Process artists were integrating aspects of nature into their work, other Conceptualists acted on the idea of taking art out of both gallery and society and fixing it within far-off, uninhabited nature as huge, immobile, often permanent Land- or Earthworks. Insofar as pieces of this environmental character and scale were often not available to the general public, it was largely through documentation that they became known—which made such informational artifacts as photographs, maps, and drawings all the more important. Ironically, the documents often assumed a somewhat surprising fine-art pictorial quality, especially when presented in a conventional gallery setting. Then again, while Land artists may have escaped the ubiquitous marketing system of traditional art objects, they became heavily dependent on engineers, construction crews, earth-moving equipment, and even aerial-survey planes, the field equivalent of the factory-bound industrial procedures used by Minimalists, with all the high finance that that entailed.

The possibility of taking art into the wilderness nevertheless held great meaning at the time. Just as performance appeared to reintroduce an element of sacred ritual and mystery into a highly secularized modern society, Earth art seemed to formalize the revived interest in salvaging not only the environment but also what remained of such archaeological wonders as Stonehenge, Angkor Wat, and pre-Columbian burial mounds. The back-to-the-soil impulse may have first appeared in the post-studio works of Carl Andre, Robert Morris, and Richard Serra, who began to democratize sculpture by adopting the most commonplace materials—firebricks, logs, metal squares, styrofoam, rusted nails—and by merely scattering them over the floor
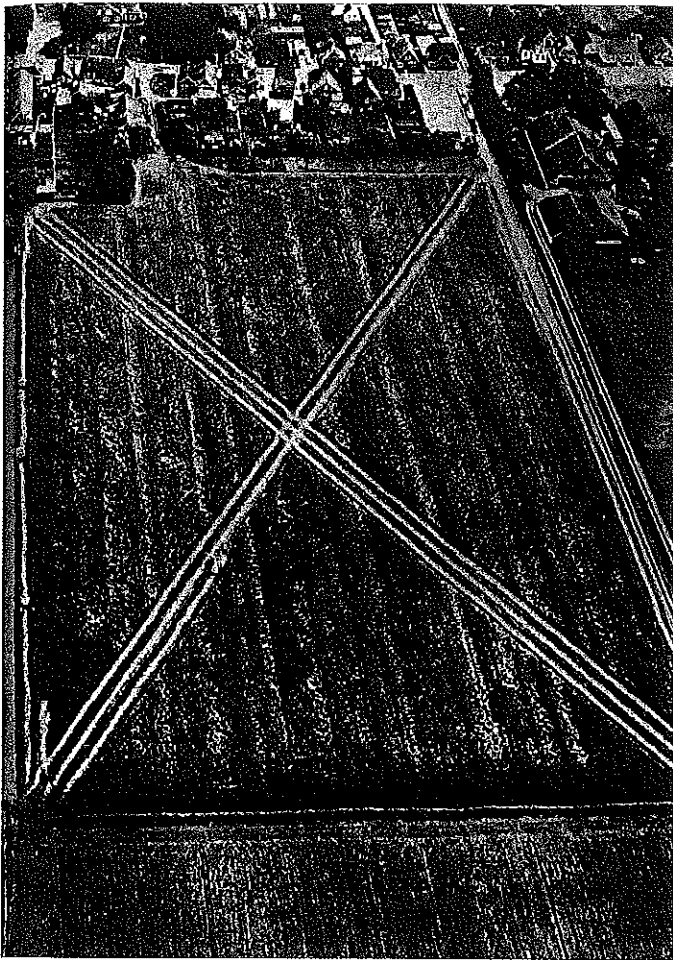
or assembling them on it. In Earth and Site works, the variables of selection and process inherent in the site took precedence over materials; they also shifted the perspective from that imposed by standing, vertical postures, with their anthropomorphic echoes of the human figure, to the bird's-eye overview allowed by arrangements that stayed flat to the ground. In its dialogue with natural forms and phenomena, Land art chimed with the burgeoning ecology movement of the late twentieth century, which called for more sustained and serious attention to be directed toward the dislocating effects of human intervention on the natural environment.

Monumental Works

One of the first to make the momentous move from gallery to wilderness was the California-born artist **Michael Heizer** (b. 1944), who, with the backing of art dealer Virginia Dwan and the aid of bulldozers, excavated a Nevada site to create the Earthwork *Double Negative* (fig. 24.42). Heizer is a Westerner and is sensitive to the immensity of the American landscape. In the Nevada desert he found what he called "that kind of unraped, peaceful religious space artists have always tried to put in their work." For *Double Negative*, Heizer and his construction team sliced into the surface of Mormon Mesa and made two cuts to a depth of fifty feet (15.25 m), the cuts facing one another

24.42 Michael Heizer, *Double Negative*, 1969–70. 240,000-ton displacement in rhyolite and sandstone, 1,500 × 50 × 30' (457.2 × 15.2 × 9.1 m). Mormon Mesa, Overton, Nevada. The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

24.43 Dennis Oppenheim, *Canceled Crop*, 1969. Grain field, 709 × 422' (216 × 129 m). Finsterwolde, the Netherlands.

(50 cubic meters) of rich, aromatic topsoil spread some two feet (0.6 m) deep throughout the gallery space. At the same time that this moist, brown-black rug kept patrons at a definite physical remove, it also provided a light–dark, textural contrast with the gleaming white walls of the gallery and filled the air with a fresh, country fragrance, both purely sensuous or aesthetic experiences. Eventually De Maria would expand the boundaries of his site to embrace vast tracts of fallow land and the entire sky above.

In *Lightning Field* (fig. **24.44**) De Maria combined the pictorialness and ephemeral character of European Land art with the sublimity of scale and conception typical of American Earthworks. Here the natural force incited by the work is lightning, drawn by four hundred stainless-steel rods standing over twenty feet (6 m) tall and arranged as a one-mile-by-one-kilometer grid set in a flat, New Mexican basin ringed by distant mountains. Chosen not only for its magnificent, almost limitless vistas and exceptionally sparse human population, but also for its frequent incidence of atmospheric electricity, the site offered the artist a prime opportunity to create a work that would involve both earth and sky, yet intrude upon neither, by articulating their trackless expanse with deliberately induced discharges of lightning. Few have ever been eyewitnesses to *Lightning Field* in full performance, but the photographic documentation leaves little doubt about the sublime, albeit unpredictable, unrepeatable, and fugitive effects that can be produced by a work designed to celebrate the power and visual splendor of an awesome natural phenomenon.

In 1968, the same year that De Maria created his *Munich Earth Room*, **Robert Smithson (1938–73)**

across a deep indentation to create a site fifteen hundred feet (457 m) long and about fifty feet (15.2 m) wide. But at the heart of this work resides a void, with the result that, while providing an experience of great vastness, *Double Negative* does not so much displace space as enclose it. Here the viewer is inside and surrounded by the work, instead of outside and in confrontation with it.

For *Canceled Crop* (fig. **24.43**), a work created in 1969 at Finsterwolde, the Netherlands, **Dennis Oppenheim** (b. 1938) plowed an "X" with 825-foot (251.5 m) arms into a 709 by 422-foot (216 x 129 m) wheat field. As if to comment on the binding artist-gallery-art cycle, Oppenheim said of his Dutch piece: "Planting and cultivating my own material is like mining one's own pigment. ... I can direct the later stages of development at will. In this case the material is planted and cultivated for the sole purpose of withholding it from a product-oriented system." In a work like this, Oppenheim emphasized the overridingly significant elements of time and experience in Conceptual art.

When the American artist **Walter de Maria** (b. 1935) initially felt the telluric pull, he responded by transporting earth directly into a Munich gallery. Once installed, *Munich Earth Room*, 1968, consisted of 1,766 cubic feet

24.44 Walter de Maria, *Lightning Field*, 1970–77. A permanent Earth sculpture: 400 stainless steel poles, with solid stainless-steel pointed tips, arranged in a rectangular grid array (16 poles wide by 25 poles long) spaced 220' (67.1 m) apart; pole tips form an even plane, average pole height 20'7" (6.3 m); work must be seen over a 24-hour period. Near Quemado, New Mexico.

relocated shards of sandstone from his native New Jersey to a New York City gallery and there piled them in a mirror-lined corner. In such gallery installations, including *Chalk-Mirror Displacement* of the following year, Smithson utilized strategically positioned mirrors to endow the amorphous mass of organic shards with a new form. Smithson's nonsite works (that is, works made in a formal, gallery setting rather than out in the landscape) were a synthesis of unformed organic material from the landscape and such rigid, manufactured forms as mirrors. The juxtaposition of these materials represented the dialectic between entropy and order. And just as the transferral from nature to gallery would seem to have arrested the natural process of continuous erosion and excerpted a tiny portion from an immense, universal whole, the mirrored gallery setting expanded the portion illusionistically, while also affirming its actual, and therefore infinite, potential for change in character and context. Fully aware of the multiple and contrary effects of his mirror pieces—of the dialectic it set up between site and nonsite—Smithson commented on these works' power as a metaphor for flux: "One's mind and the earth are in a constant state of erosion ... ideas decompose into stones of unknowing."

Smithson moved from gallery installations back to site works and discovered a major inspiration in Utah's Great Salt Lake, which the artist saw as "an impassive faint violet sheet held captive in a stony matrix, upon which the sun poured down its crushing light." As this lyric phrase would suggest, the artist was a gifted and even prolific writer, whose essays about his Great Salt Lake creation have made *Spiral Jetty* the most famous and romantic of all the Earthworks (fig. **24.45**). He deposited 6,000 tons (6,096 tonnes) of earth into the lake, forming an enormous raised spiral. With its graceful curl and extraordinary coloration—pink, blue, and brown-black—the piece rewards the viewer with endless aesthetic delight, but the form, for all its purity, arose from Smithson's deep pondering of the site, combined with his fascination with entropy—the gradual degradation of matter and energy in the universe—and the possibilities of reclamation.

At this particular point on the shore of the Great Salt Lake, Smithson found not only industrial ruin, in the form of wreckage left behind by oil prospectors, but also a landscape wasted and corroded by its own inner dynamism. As Smithson wrote, the gyre does not expand into a widening circle but winds inward; it is "matter collapsing into the lake mirrored in the shape of a spiral." Prophetic words, for in the ensuing years *Spiral Jetty* has disappeared—and reappeared—periodically amidst the changing water levels of the Great Salt Lake. The films and photographs that document the piece now provide the only reliable access to it. Tragically, Smithson died in a plane crash during an aerial inspection of a site in Texas.

On a less monumental scale than her husband Robert Smithson's late projects, **Nancy Holt's** (b. 1938) Land art involves site-specific architectural sculptures that are

24.45 Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty*, 1969–70. Black rock, salt crystal, and earth, diameter 160' (48.8 m), coil length 1,500' (457.2 m), width 15' (4.6 m). Great Salt Lake, Utah.
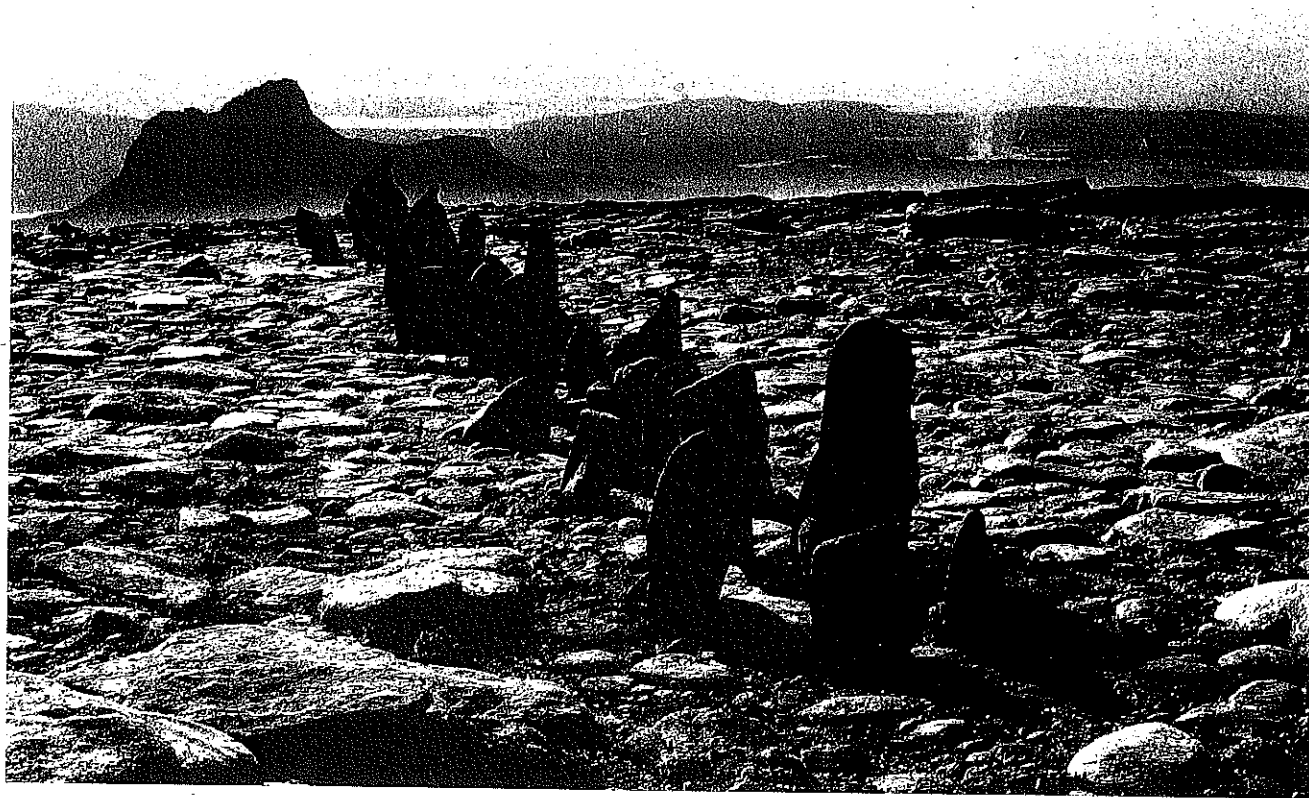
24.46 Nancy Holt, *Stone Enclosure: Rock Rings*, 1977–78. Brown Mountain stone, diameter of outer ring 40' (12.2 m), diameter of inner ring 20' (6.1 m), height of ring walls 10' (3 m). Western Washington University, Bellingham.

as a permanent outdoor installation on the campus of Western Washington University at Bellingham, Washington. It consists of two concentric rings formed of stone walls two feet (0.6 m) thick and ten feet (3 m) high. The inner wall defines a tubular space at the center and the outer one an annular space in the corridor running between the two rings; the smaller ring measures twenty feet (6 m) in diameter and the larger one forty feet (12 m). Piercing the walls are eight-foot (2.4 m) arches and twelve circular holes three feet, four inches (1 m) in diameter. Together these apertures give the spectator both physical and visual access into and even through a structure whose circular presence and carefully calculated perspectives evoke Stonehenge, the prehistoric monument in Wiltshire, England, apparently constructed, at least in part, as a device for marking the solar year.

Landscape as Experience

In England, with its long history of the interrelationship of art and the natural environment in painting, poetry, and landscape gardening, a number of artists contemporary with Heizer and Smithson also looked to landscape as a means of creating art outside the market system. But these artists were confronted with very different issues—limited funds and a more intimate landscape that was densely populated, heavily industrialized, rigorously organized, and carefully protected. In response to these challenges, they chose to treat nature with a featherlight touch and, in

absolutely integral with their surroundings. Holt's involvement with photography and camera optics led her to make monumental forms that are literally seeing devices, fixed points for tracking the positions of the earth, the sun, and the stars. One of her most important works is *Stone Enclosure: Rock Rings* (fig. **24.46**), designed for and built

24.47 Richard Long, *A Line in Scotland*, 1981. Framed work consisting of photography and text, 34½ × 49" (87.6 × 124.5 cm). Private collection, London.
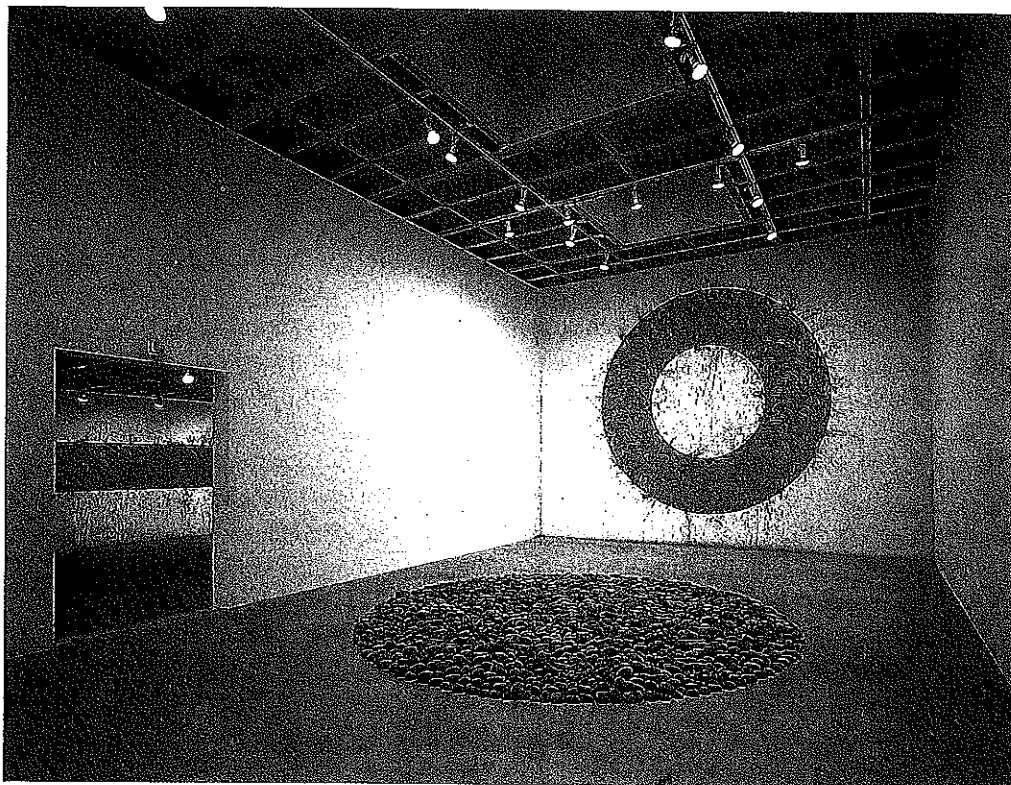
24.48 Richard Long, *Ocean Stone Circle*, 1990. Stones, diameter 13' (3.96 m).

contrast to the more interventionist Americans, to work on a decidedly antiheroic scale.

Richard Long (b. 1945) "intervenes" in the countryside mainly by walking through it, and indeed he has made walking his own highly economical means of transforming land into art. Along the way he expresses his ideas about time, movement, and place by making marks on the earth, by plucking blossoms from a field of daisies, or by rearranging stones, sticks, seaweed, or other natural phenomena (fig. **24.47**). With these he effects simple, basic shapes: straight lines, circles, spirals, zigzags, crosses, and squares that he documents with photographs. A token of human intelligence is thus left on the site—like the stone markers put in place by prehistoric peoples—and is then abandoned to the weather. "A walk is just one more layer," Long asserts, "a mark laid upon the thousands of other layers of human and geographic history on the surface of the land." Then, in a reversal of this practice, these landmarks can also be gathered up and displayed in a museum setting (fig. **24.48**), as were Smithson's gallery installations. When the stones are arranged indoors, a token of the natural world is introduced into the human-made environment of buildings and communities. The walk through nature, which Long has now extended to a global enterprise, is completed as the walker returns home from the gallery.

In contrast to Nancy Holt, who constructs permanent sites for viewing transient phenomena, **Mary Miss** (b. 1944) builds deliberately fragile architectural sculptures as a means of stressing the ephemerality of experience. Common to both artists, however, is a preoccupation with time as it affects the perception of space, as well as a deter-

mination to create a viable public art by making the viewer more than a neutral receptor. In the publicly funded *Field Rotation* (fig. **24.49**), sited at Governors State University in Park Forest South, Illinois, Miss took her primary inspiration from the terrain, an immense, flat field with a gently curved mound at the center. To explore this space and unleash its potential for yielding both a personal and shared expression of cultural experience, Miss used lines of posts to pattern the field as a kind of giant pinwheel. Its spokes or arms radiate outward from, while also converging toward, a "garden" sunk within the central hub or mound. In it, there is a pit shaped like a fortress and built up inside

24.49 Mary Miss, *Field Rotation*, 1981. Steel, wood, and gravel, central structure 56' square (17.1 m²), depth 7' (2.1 m), sited on 4½ acres (1.8 hectares). Governors State University, Park Forest South, Illinois.

as a reticulated, cross-timbered lookout rising above a "secret" well filled with water. At the same time that the posts and their fanlike movement articulate the vast openness of the American landscape, the sunken garden which these paths lead both toward and away from provides sanctuary and retreat from the surrounding barrenness.

Alice Aycock (b. 1946) too is less interested in building durable monuments than in siting and structuring her sculptures to induce us to move and thus intensify our experience of the environment, the work, and ourselves. But in a manner all her own, Aycock is concerned with the psychological implications of the architectural sites she creates for the sake of reembracing nature. On a site she chose in Far Hills, New Jersey, Aycock built *A Simple Network of Underground Wells and Tunnels* (fig. **24.50**), a structure, as the title would suggest, hardly visible at eye level, but filled with implications for the spectator courageous enough to enter it. To realize the work, Aycock began by marking off a twenty-eight-by-fifty-foot (8.5 x 15.2 m) site with straight rows of cement blocks. Within this precinct she then excavated a twenty-by-forty-foot (6.1 x 12.2 m) area and installed two sets of three seven-foot-deep (2.1 m) wells connected by tunnels. After capping three of the shafts, the artist lowered ladders into two of the uncapped ones, thereby inviting the observer to descend and explore an underground labyrinth of dark, dank passages. Aycock uses Minimalism's cool, structuralist vocabulary but in distinctively novel, even surreal ways, the better to evoke such structural precedents as caves, catacombs, dungeons,
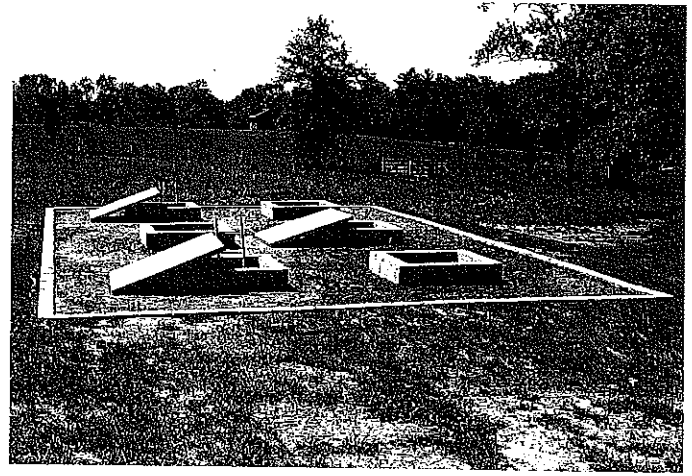
24.50 Alice Aycock, *A Simple Network of Underground Wells and Tunnels*, 1975. Concrete-block wells and tunnels underground, demarcated by a wall, 28 × 50' (8.5 × 15.2 m), area 20 × 40' (6.1 × 12.2 m). Morriewold West, Far Hills, New Jersey.

or beehive tombs and to make them the expressive agents of her own work.

In celebrating the natural environment, **Alan Sonfist** (b. 1946) has sought to recreate a sense of an earlier, unspoiled time. Sonfist was born in the South Bronx, in New York City, but happened to live near one of the area's few remaining wooded stretches. The compelling experience of seeing the vestiges of nature amid the gritty streets is reflected in his 1978 outdoor mural, *An American Forest*, at Tremont Avenue in the Bronx. The painting's
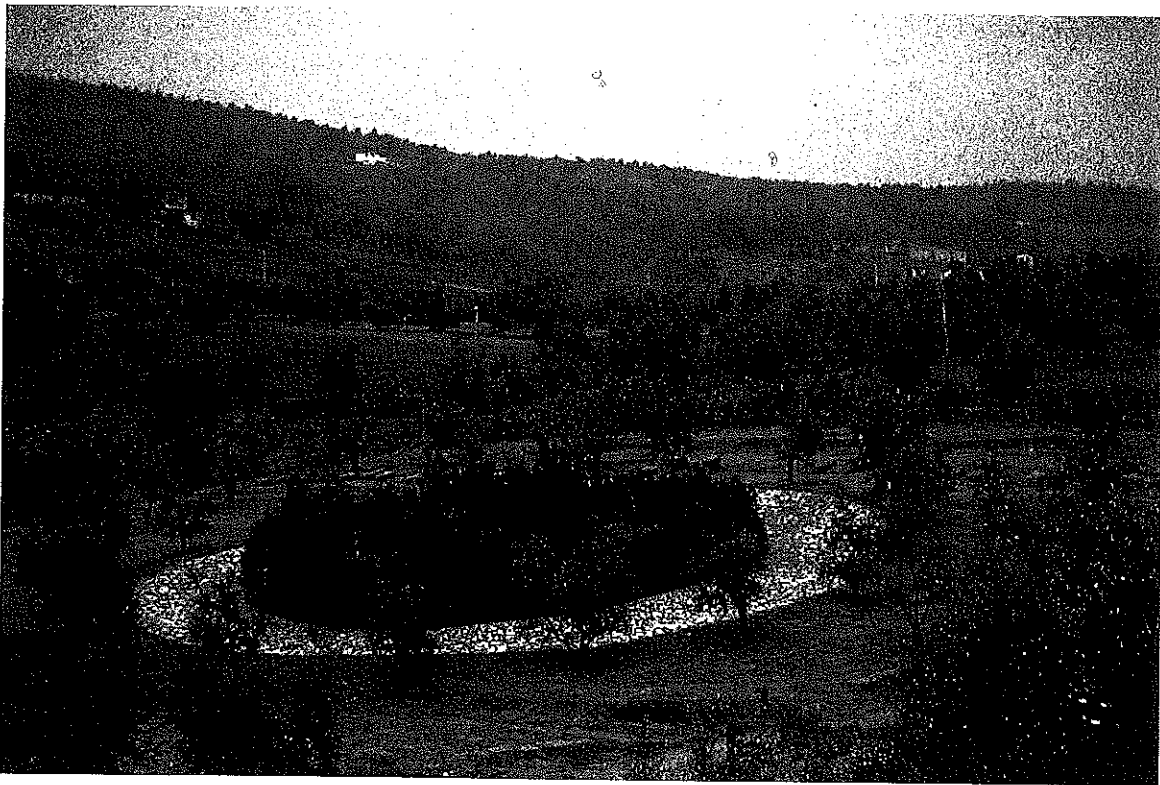
24.51 Alan Sonfist, *Circles of Time*, 1986–89. Bronze, rock, plants, and trees on three acres (1.2 hectares). Created in Florence, Italy.

marked contrast with the deteriorating buildings around it created a sharp sense of how different the American Eden had been before the land was settled and the cities built. In another, more Conceptual work, Sonfist put up memorial cardboard plaques at sites around the city where particular indigenous flora and fauna had long ago been displaced by sidewalks and office buildings. Some of his other work has a more international scope but still generally refers to an earlier, unspoiled state of nature. *Circles of Time* (fig. **24.51**), created for the city of Florence, is a circular garden that allows the viewer to trace what Sonfist calls "the history of vegetation," in that part of Italy. Like the rings of a tree trunk, each successive concentric circle of this work, from the center to the outer rim, represents a later era. In the center is the virgin forest, a time before human intervention. Farther out lies a band representing the herb gardens of the ancient Etruscans. Next are bronze casts of endangered or extinct trees, then a ring of laurels, referring to the influence of Greece on Italy. A band of stones then demonstrates a historical Tuscan style of street pavement, and the present-day agriculture of modern Tuscany is memorialized at the edges.

Like many sculptors during the early seventies, **Michael Singer** (b. 1945) first worked in natural environments

with the materials and shifting conditions they offered (fig. **24.52**). This took him from sites such as the beaver bogs near Marlboro, Vermont, to the saltwater marshes of Long Island, New York. Instead of imposing a preset idea on these sites in the manner of the Earth artists, however, he allowed nature and its laws to act on him and his work. In the mid-seventies, Singer returned to the studio and began making indoor pieces, confident that he could now maintain an aesthetic distance from such dominant trends as Minimalism and Conceptualism. By the eighties, the resulting art had grown in complexity and poetic content, yet it preserved the essential qualities that Singer achieved almost from the start. Formally, they contained rough stones and beams of diverse shapes assembled on the ground or on doors in self-contained, though visibly accessible, structures held in serene balance—a balance so delicate and precarious that it seems redolent of the mystery emanating from altars and ritual gates.

The photographer **John Pfahl** (b. 1939) has also been much involved with interventions at specific sites. Among his works along these lines is an extended series from 1974 to 1978 called *Altered Landscapes*. Pfahl photographed natural landscapes that had been subtly changed by the addition of foreign objects, such as pieces of string, foil, or blue


24.52 Michael Singer, *First Gate Ritual* series, 1979. Bamboo and phragmites. DeWeese Park, Dayton, Ohio.
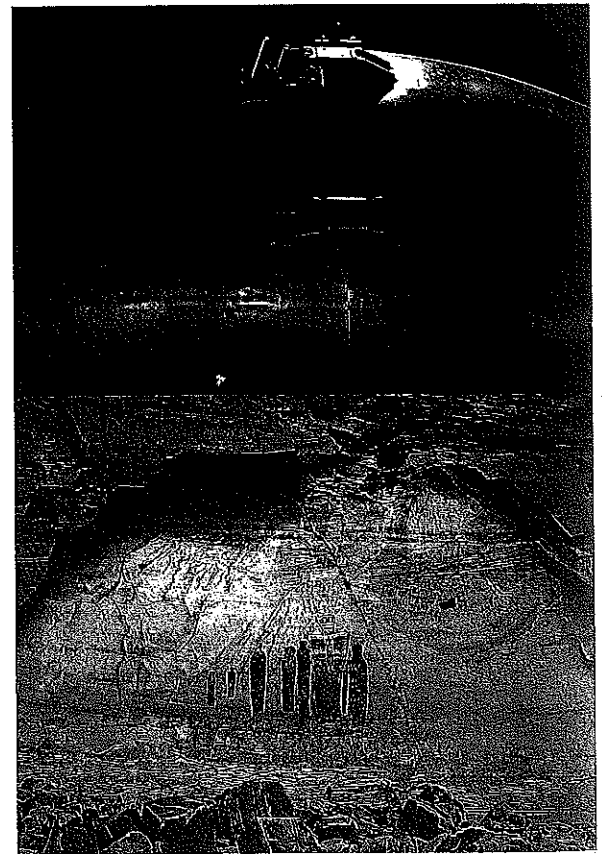
24.53 John Pfahl, *Fat Man Atomic Bomb/Great Gallery Pictographs* from series *Missile/Glyphs*, 1984–85. Two Cibachrome prints mounted on aluminum, 44 × 32" (111.8 × 81.3 cm).

tape. In adding such modest items, he took care to ensure that the scene was never physically compromised. Concern for the natural environment prompted him to call attention to the threats posed to the earth by human actions. In *Fat Man Atomic Bomb/Great Gallery Pictographs* (fig. 24.53) from the series *Missile/Glyphs*, Pfahl documented a marking of the land as harmless as his own—the petroglyphs, or pictorial inscriptions, carved or scored on rock by indigenous peoples. But he contrasts this with the horrific nuclear threat posed by modern missiles: a bulbous shape recalling "Fat Man," the military's familiar wartime name for the Nagasaki atomic bomb, has been added to the depiction of the site and looms ominously over a group of glyph figures. The small area of rock actually shown in the photograph seems to become a populated landscape, with a threatening mushroomlike form above. It is a restrained image that nonetheless carries tragic overtones.

James Turrell (b. 1943) was associated at the beginning of his career with the Californian Robert Irwin (see fig. 22.37), founder of what is usually called light and space art. But Turrell's installations, to a greater degree than Irwin's, explore the mysteries of how we actually perceive light, the basis of all visual experience. Specifically, Turrell manipulates our perception of light in order to reveal that
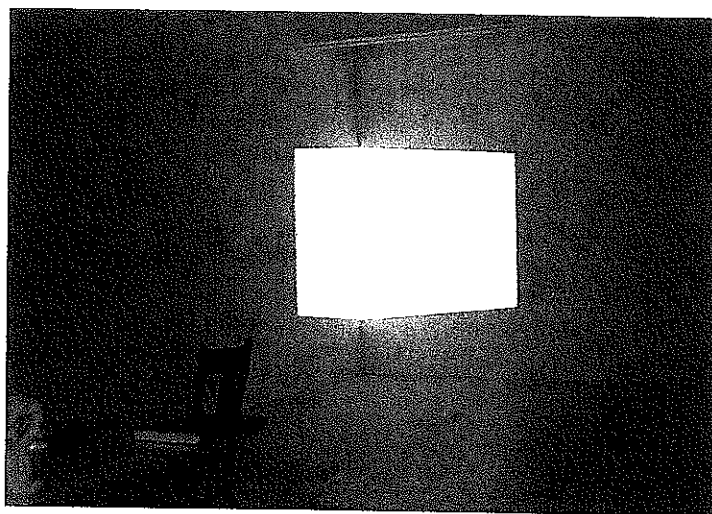
24.54 James Turrell, *Afrum-Proto*, 1967. Quartz-halogen projection.

our understanding of the space before us, and the way we see things within it, is fundamentally a kind of optical illusion. For example, in the early light sculpture *Afrum-Proto* (fig. 24.54), Turrell projected an intense beam of halogen light to form what appeared to be a three-dimensional,

24.55 James Turrell, Aerial view of *Roden Crater Project*, Sedona, Arizona, 1982. Cinder cone volcano, approx. height 540' (164.6 m), diameter 800' (243.8 m).