

**Contemporary Art
University of Texas at Dallas
Arts & Humanities
Fall 2021**

**AHST 3318-001
(87424)
Dr. Charissa N. Terranova
T-Th 11:30-12:45
JO 4.102**

**10/19/21
Minimalism**

Minimalism

Seriality

Industrial Materials

Anonymous Art

ABC Art

Literalism

Theatricality

Presence/Presentness

Minimalism – “Just one thing after another” (Donald Judd)

- Like in painting (the figure & ground), artists desired to dismantle illusionism in sculpture
- To resist the figurative and Surrealist qualities of 40s and 50s sculpture
- Inspired by previous styles and movements, including the Readymade and Russian Constructivism
- The Readymade (the florescent light tube) multiplied to create a “near-serial generation of structures”
- Flavin assembled these in a pyramidal structure to pay homage to Vladimir Tatlin & his *Monument for the Third International* (a Russian Constructivist monument to modernity and industry ca. 1920)
- Flavin’s Catholic background adds a spiritual component to his sculptures (as cathedrals bathed in light?)
- The material and the immaterial



Dan Flavin
*Monument for
V. Tatlin*, 1969



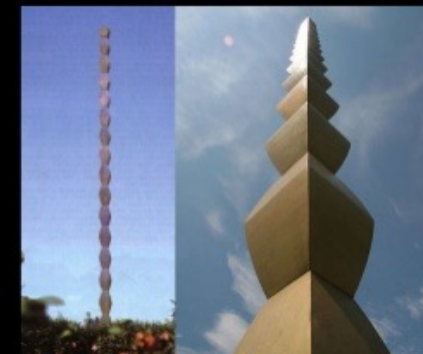
Chartres Cathedral
ca. 1200

Minimalism – “Just one thing after another” (Donald Judd)

- Sculptor Carl Andre also interested in Constructivist transparency of materials
- Sculpture as place
- To resist composition by arranging objects in a logical, orderly fashion as dictated by their inherent properties
- Flavin and Andre (also Judd, Morris & LeWitt) included in *Primary Structures*, an seminal Minimalist exhibition in 1966 at Jewish Museum in New York
- Reflected a continued movement away from illusionism, spiritual transcendence, and beauty in art
- A move away from “heroic scale, anguished decisions, historicizing narrative, valuable artifact” (Robert Morris), all pertinent to Abstract Expressionism



Carl Andre, *Equivalent VIII*, 1978



Brancusi, *Endless Column*, 1937-38

ART AND OBJECTHOOD

expression of a general and pervasive condition. Its seriousness is vouched for by the fact that it is in relation both to modernist painting and modernist sculpture that literalist art defines or locates the position it aspires to occupy. (This, I suggest, is what makes what it declares something that deserves to be called a *position*.) Specifically, literalist art conceives of itself as neither one nor the other; on the contrary, it is motivated by specific reservations, or worse, about both; and it aspires, perhaps not exactly, or not immediately, to displace them, but in any case to establish itself as an independent art on a footing with either.

The literalist case against painting rests mainly on two counts: the relational character of almost all painting; and the ubiquitousness, indeed the virtual inescapability, of pictorial illusion. In Donald Judd's view,

when you start relating parts, in the first place, you're assuming you have a vague whole — the rectangle of the canvas — and definite parts, which is all screwed up, because you should have a definite whole and maybe no parts, or very few.¹

The more the shape of the support is emphasized, as in recent modernist painting, the tighter the situation becomes:

The elements inside the rectangle are broad and simple and correspond closely to the rectangle. The shapes and surface are only those which can occur plausibly within and on a rectangular plane. The parts are few and so subordinate to unity as not to be parts in an ordinary sense. A painting is nearly an entity, one thing, and not the indefinable sum of a group of entities and references. The one thing overpowers the earlier painting. It also establishes the rectangle as a definite form; it is no longer a fairly neutral limit. A form can be used only in so many ways. The rectangular plane is given a life span. The simplicity required to emphasize the rectangle limits the arrangements possible within it.

Painting is here seen as an art on the verge of exhaustion, one in which the range of acceptable solutions to a basic problem — how to organize the surface of the picture — is severely restricted. The use of shaped rather than rectangular supports can, from the literalist point of view, merely prolong the agony. The obvious response is to give up working on a single plane in favor of three dimensions. That, moreover, automatically

gets rid of the problem of illusionism and of literal space, space in and around marks and colors — which is riddance of one of the salient and most objectionable relics of European art. The several limits of painting are no longer present. A work can be as powerful as it can be thought to be. Actual space is intrinsically more powerful and specific than paint on a flat surface.

The literalist attitude toward sculpture is more ambiguous. Judd, for example, seems to think of what he calls *Specific Objects* as something

other than sculpture, while Robert Morris conceives of his own unmistakably literalist work as resuming the lapsed tradition of Constructivist sculpture established by Tatlin, Rodchenko, Gabo, Pevsner and Vantongerloo. But this and other disagreements are less important than the views Judd and Morris hold in common. Above all they are opposed to sculpture which, like most painting, is "made part by part, by addition, composed" and in which "specific elements . . . separate from the whole, thus setting up relationships within the work."² (They would include the work of David Smith and Anthony Caro under this description.) It is worth remarking that the "part-by-part" and "relational" character of most sculpture is associated by Judd with what he calls *anthropomorphism*: "A beam thrusts; a piece of iron follows a gesture; together they form a naturalistic and anthropomorphic image. The space corresponds." Against such "multipart, inflected" sculpture Judd and Morris assert the values of wholeness, singleness and indivisibility — of a work's being, as nearly as possible, "one thing," a single "Specific Object." Morris devotes considerable attention to "the use of strong gestalt or of unitary-type forms to avoid divisiveness"; while Judd is chiefly interested in the kind of wholeness that can be achieved through the repetition of identical units. The order at work in his pieces, as he once remarked of that in Stella's stripe paintings, "is simply order, like that of continuity, one thing after another." For both Judd and Morris, however, the critical factor is shape. Morris's "unitary forms" are polyhedrons that resist being grasped other than as a single shape: the gestalt simply is the "constant, known shape." And shape itself is, in his system, "the most important sculptural value." Similarly, speaking of his own work, Judd has remarked that

the big problem is that anything that is not absolutely plain begins to have parts in some way. The thing is to be able to work and do different things and yet not break up the wholeness that a piece has. To me the piece with the brass and the five verticals is above all that shape.

The shape is the object: at any rate what secures the wholeness of the object is the singleness of the shape. It is, I believe, this emphasis on shape that accounts for the impression, which numerous critics have mentioned, that Judd's and Morris's pieces are *hollow*.

II

Shape has also been central to the most important painting of the past several years. In several recent essays³ I have tried to show how, in the work of Noland, Olitski and Stella, a conflict has gradually emerged between shape as a fundamental property of objects and shape as a medium of painting. Roughly, the success or failure of a given painting has come to depend on its ability to hold or stamp itself out or compel

Art and Objecthood



Robert Morris
Bodyspace motion things (1971)

"Art degenerates as it approaches the condition of theatre".

Michael Fried

Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood" (1967)

MICHAEL FRIED

Edwards' journals frequently explored and tested a meditation he seldom allowed to reach print; if all the world were annihilated, he wrote . . . and a new world were freshly created, though it were to exist in every particular in the same manner as this world, it would not be the same. Therefore, because there is continuity, which is time, "it is certain with me that the world exists anew every moment; that the existence of things every moment ceases and is every moment renewed."

The abiding assurance is that "we every moment see the same proof of a God as we should have seen if we had seen Him create the world at first."

— Perry Miller, Jonathan Edwards

The enterprise known variously as Minimal Art, ABC Art, Primary Structures and Specific Objects is largely ideological. It seeks to declare and occupy a position — one which can be formulated in words, and in fact has been formulated by some of its leading practitioners. If this distinguishes it from modernist painting and sculpture on the one hand, it also marks an important difference between Minimal Art — or, as I prefer to call it, *literalist art* — and Pop or Op Art on the other. From its inception, literalist art has amounted to something more than an episode in the history of taste. It belongs rather to the history — almost the *natural history* — of sensibility; and it is not an isolated episode but the

Michael Fried Art and Objecthood

- Literalist/minimalist art acknowledges the conditions of reception; it has the inauthenticity of theater/acting for an audience
- Associated with tactility and body/matter
TACTILE
- True art creates a timeless state – presentness
OPTICAL
 - Associated with opticality and spirit/intellect

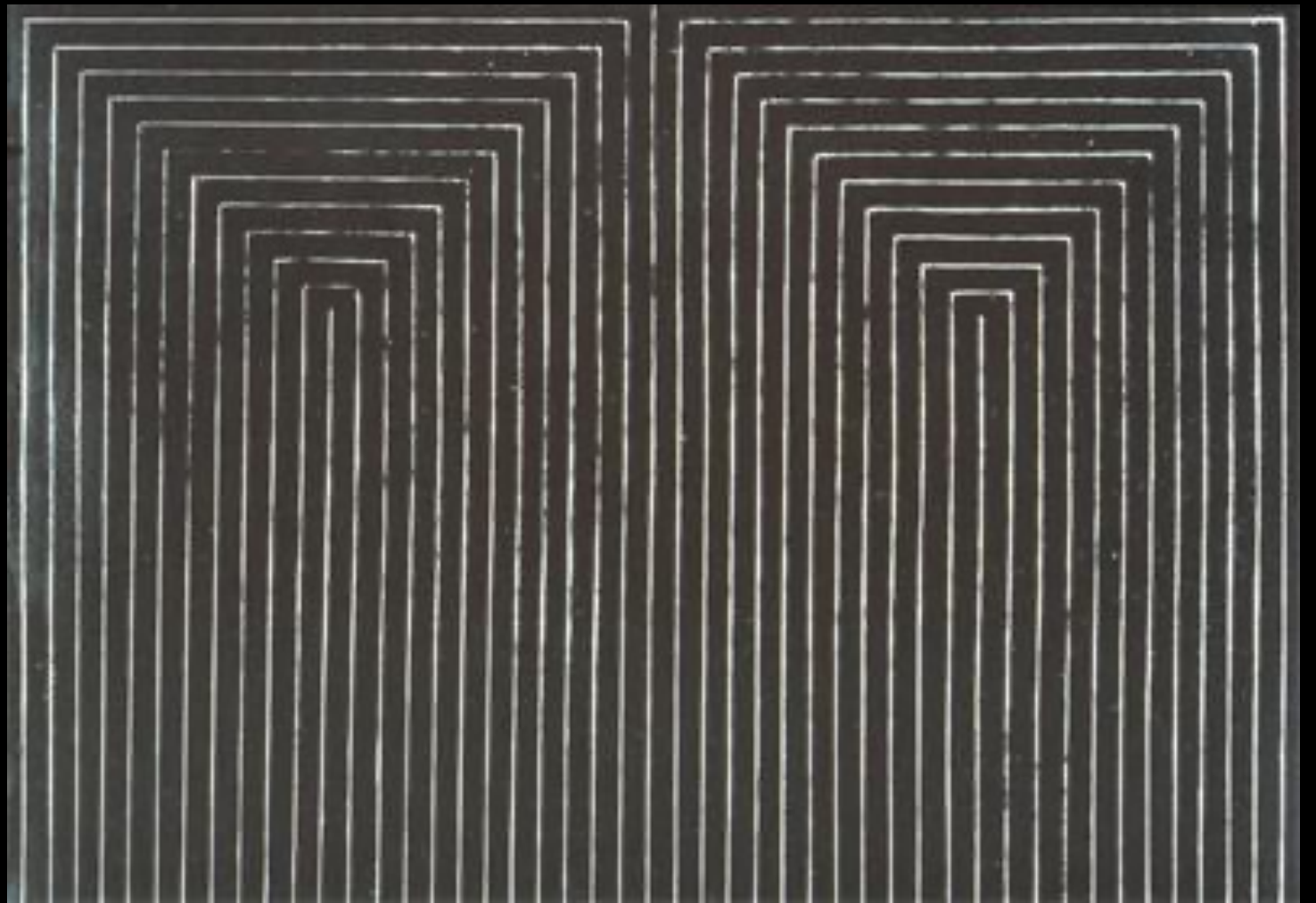


Painting between Surface and Object towards Minimalism

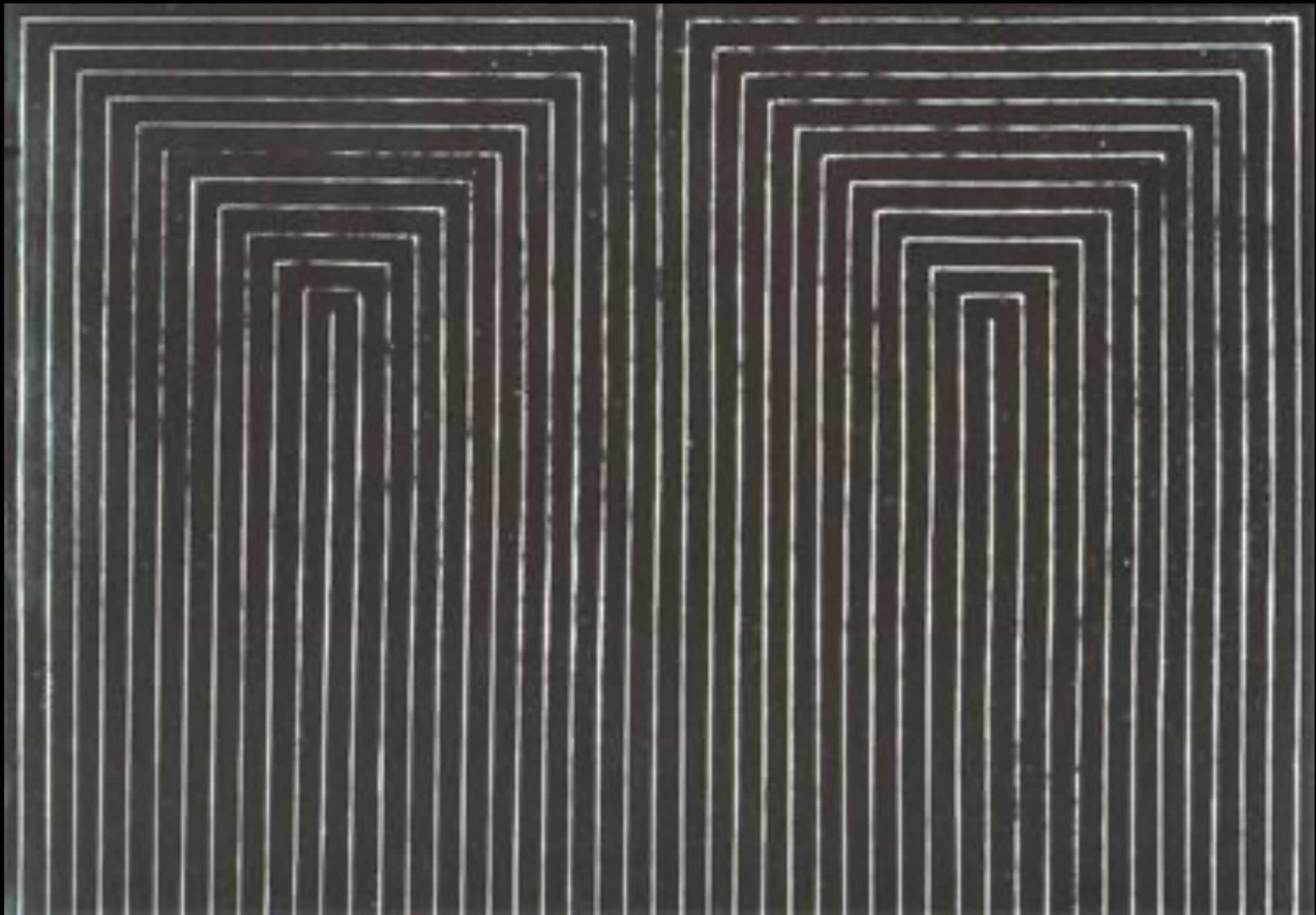
Frank Stella, Green Gate, 1958



Frank Stella, Marriage of Reason and Squalor, 1959



Frank Stella, Green Gate, 1958



Frank Stella, Marriage of Reason and Squalor, 1959

J. DE FEO	ROBERT MALLARY
WALLY HEDRICK	LOUISE NEVELSON
JAMES JARVAISE	ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG
JASPER JOHNS	JULIUS SCHMIDT
ELLSWORTH KELLY	RICHARD STANKIEWICZ
ALFRED LESLIE	FRANK STELLA
LANDÉS LEWITIN	ALBERT URBAN
RICHARD LYTLE	JACK YOUNGERMAN

SIXTEEN AMERICANS

edited by DOROTHY C. MILLER with statements by the artists and others

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK 1959



photograph Helio Fragon

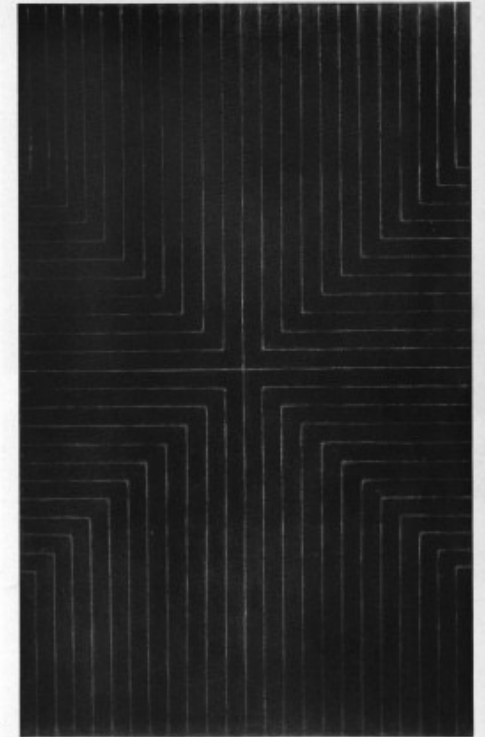
FRANK STELLA

Preface to Stripe Painting

Art excludes the unnecessary. Frank Stella has found it necessary to paint stripes. There is nothing else in his painting.

Frank Stella is not interested in expression or sensitivity. He is interested in the necessities of painting.

Symbols are counters passed among people. Frank Stella's painting is not symbolic. His stripes are the paths of brush on canvas. These paths lead only into painting. —CARL ANDRÉ



Frank Stella: *Die Falsche Hoch* 1959. Oil.
10' 11 1/2" x 8'. Leo Castelli Gallery

16 Americans

December 16, 1959–February 17, 1960

The Museum of Modern Art



16 Americans, 1959
Works by Ellsworth Kelly and Jasper Johns



Page spread from the *Sixteen Americans* catalogue, published by MoMA in 1959.



Jay DeFeo working on an early stage of *The Rose*, then titled *Deathrose*, 1960.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BURT GLINN/MAGNUM PHOTOS



Jay DeFeo (1929-1989) *Above The Rose* in DeFeo's studio. It is a monumental work created with so much oil paint that she called it "a marriage between painting and sculpture."



Jay DeFeo, Untitled (R. Mutt's cast, 1973)

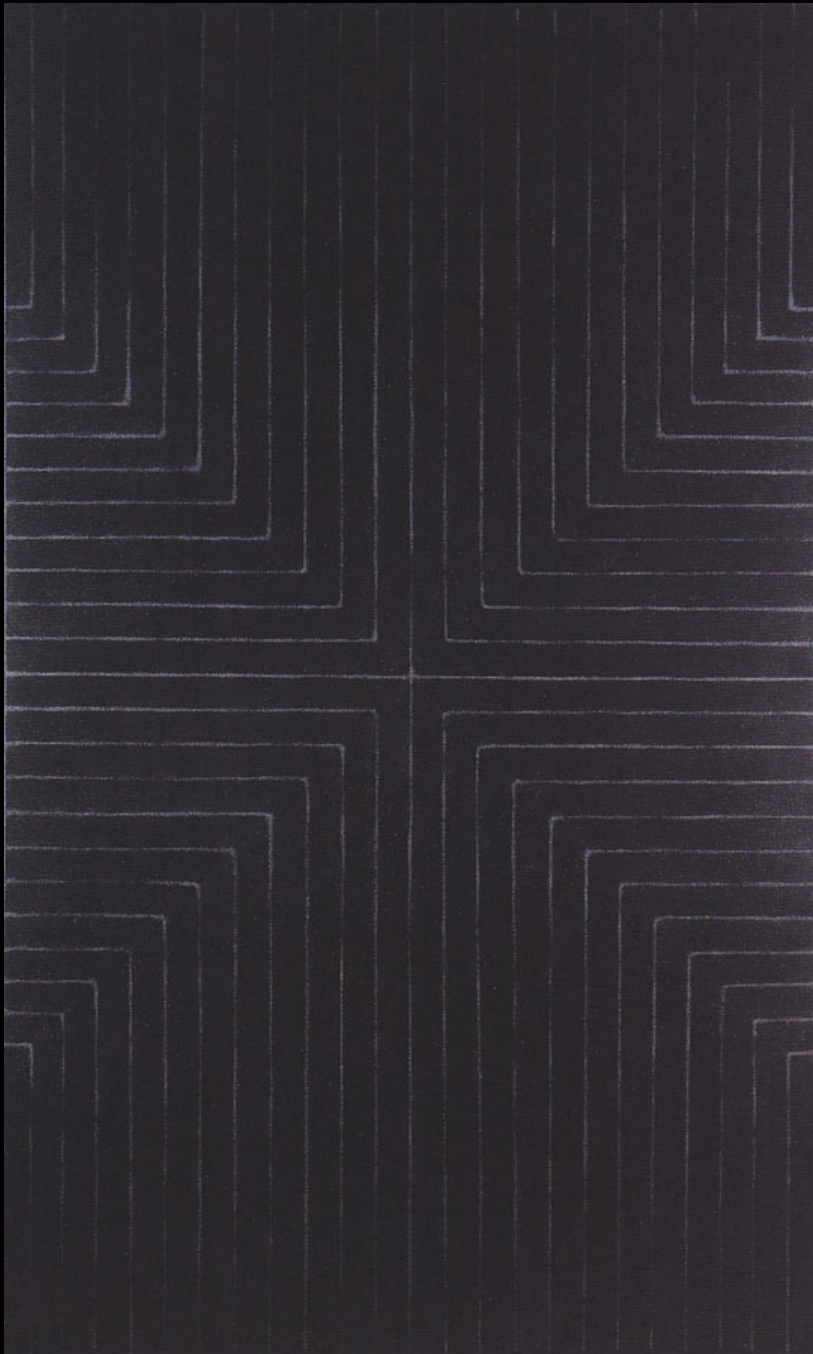




“All I want anyone to get out of my [works] and all I ever get out of them is the fact that you can see the whole idea without any confusion. What you see is what you see.”

--Frank Stella, 1964

Frank Stella at work on the Black Series



Frank Stella, Die Fahne
Hoch! [The Flag on High!]
1959

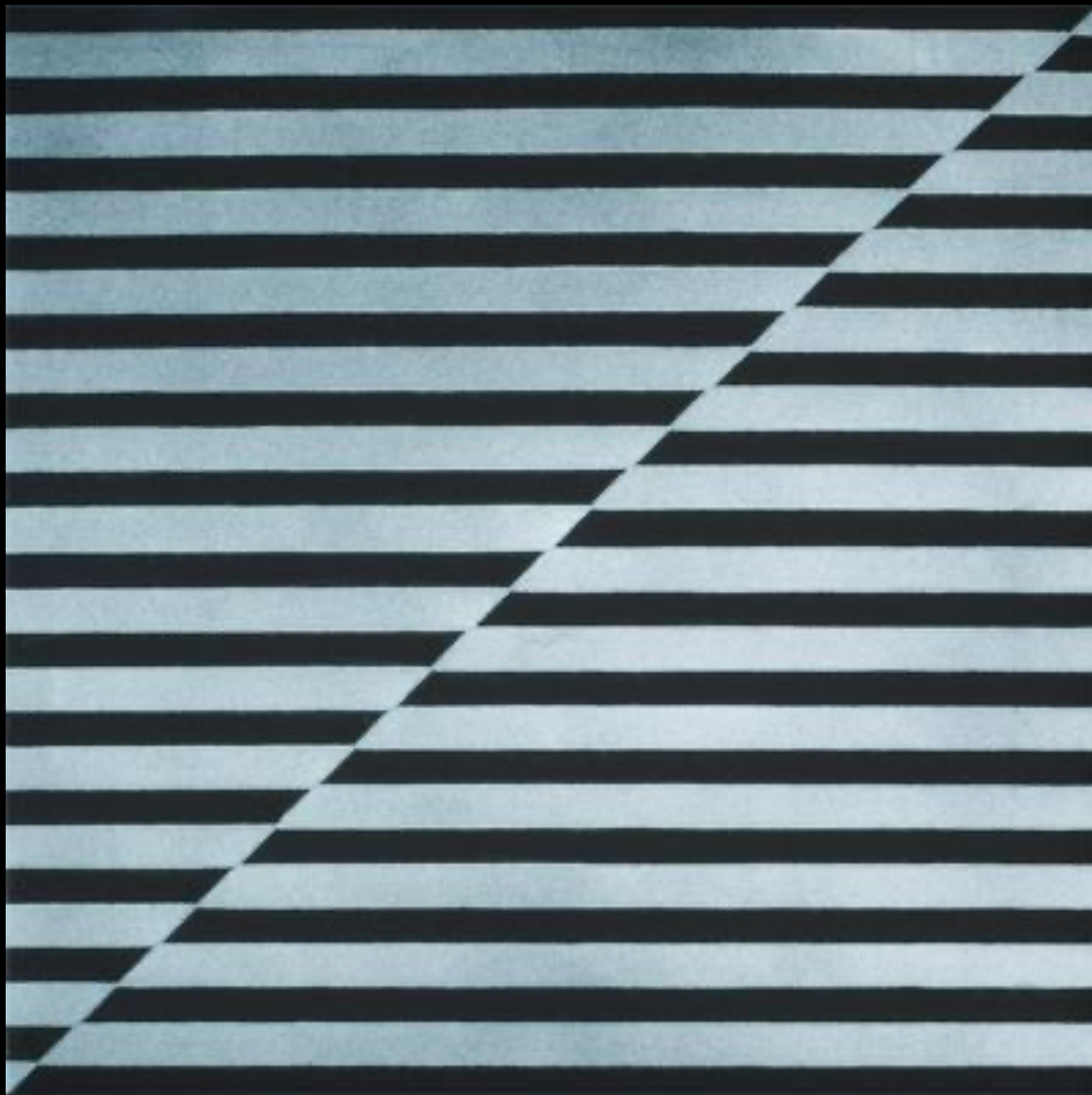
121.5 in × 73.0 in

"To many, Stella remains best known for his precocious appearance in 'Sixteen Americans' at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1959...Only twenty-three years old, he was represented there by four of his 'Black Paintings', a series that eventually comprised about two dozen large-scale canvases, each composed of concentric bands or stripes in black enamel house paint on raw canvas, at once stark, deadpan, rigorous, imposing, velvety – diagrammatic but also tactile...They are at the same time crucial exponents in the history of non-compositional abstraction, by which artists have sought to produce paintings absent of subjective decision-making. Instead, emphasis is placed on the painting itself, on its materials and terms, as well as, during the 1960s in particular, on the viewer: it feels impossible to write about Stella's early paintings without citing, for the umpteenth time, his own notorious line, 'What you see is what you see' – which either sets aside the difficulty of seeing them, or simply accepts the vagaries of seeing them. He offered this statement during a 1964 radio interview, and it has resounded like a Minimalist mantra ever since, treated as a kind of koan (a paradoxical anecdote or riddle without a solution) rather than as mere tautology."

-- Curator Kate Nesin



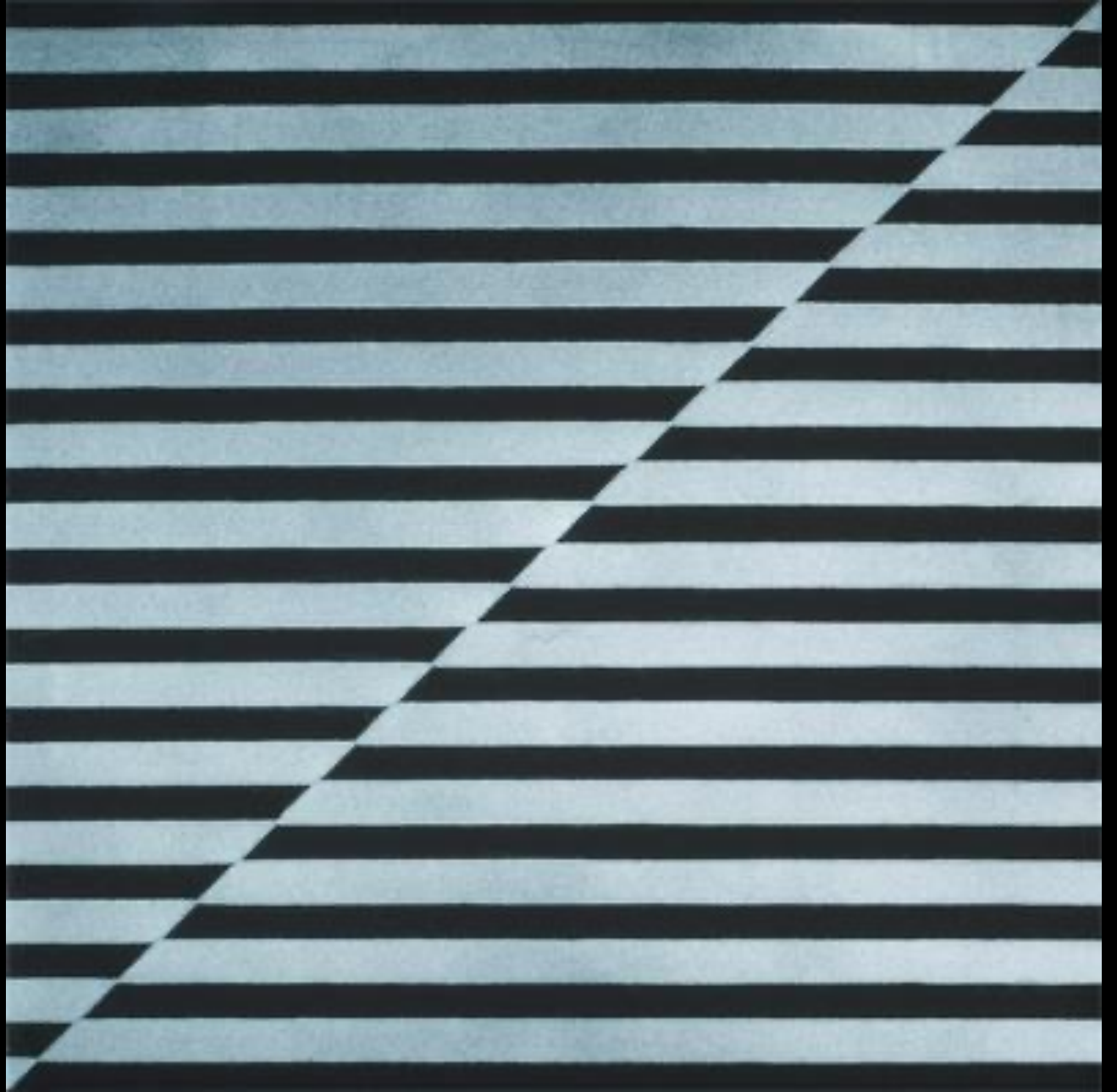
Frank Stella, Gezira (Black Series), 1960



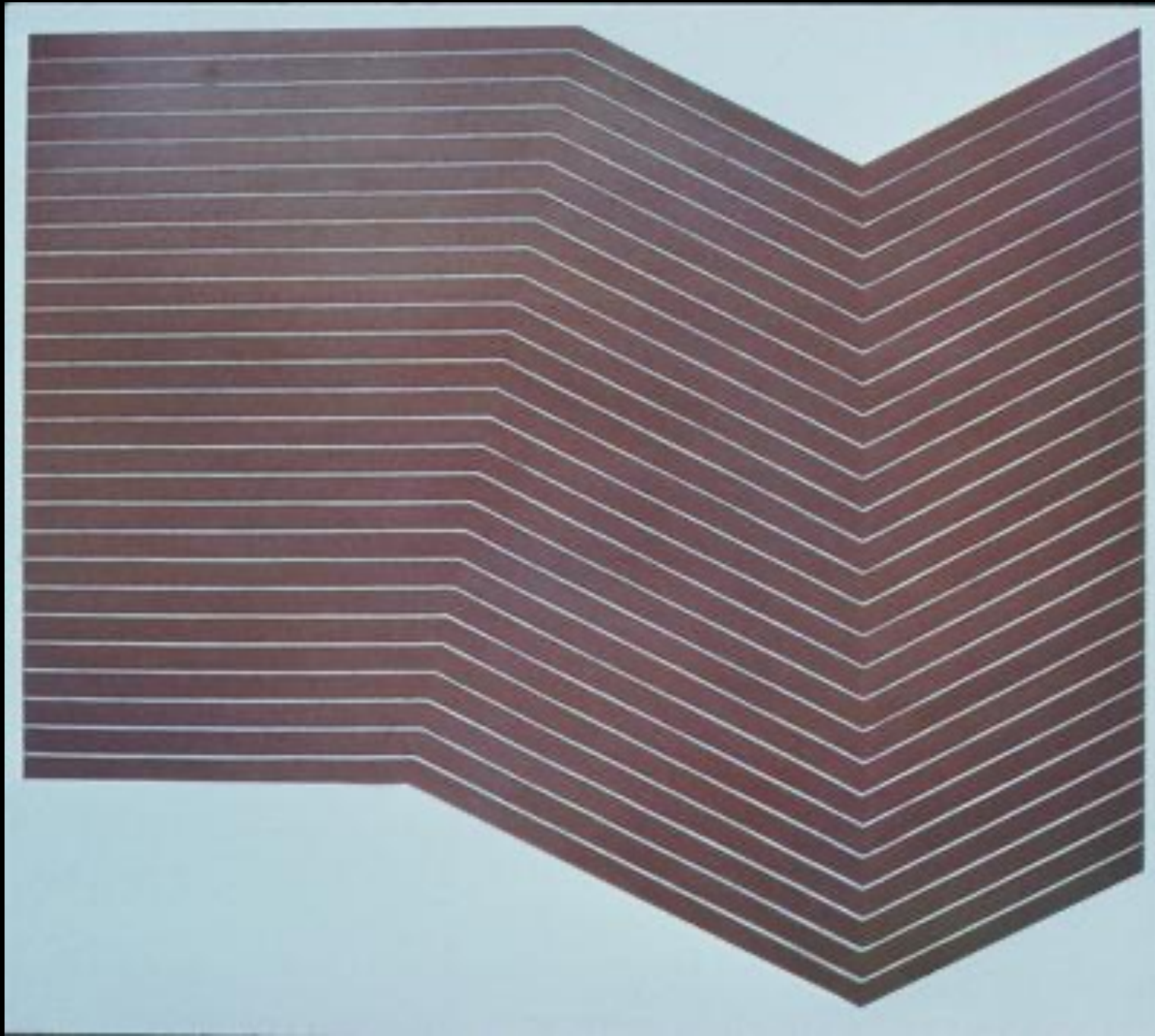
Frank Stella, Agadir II, 1964



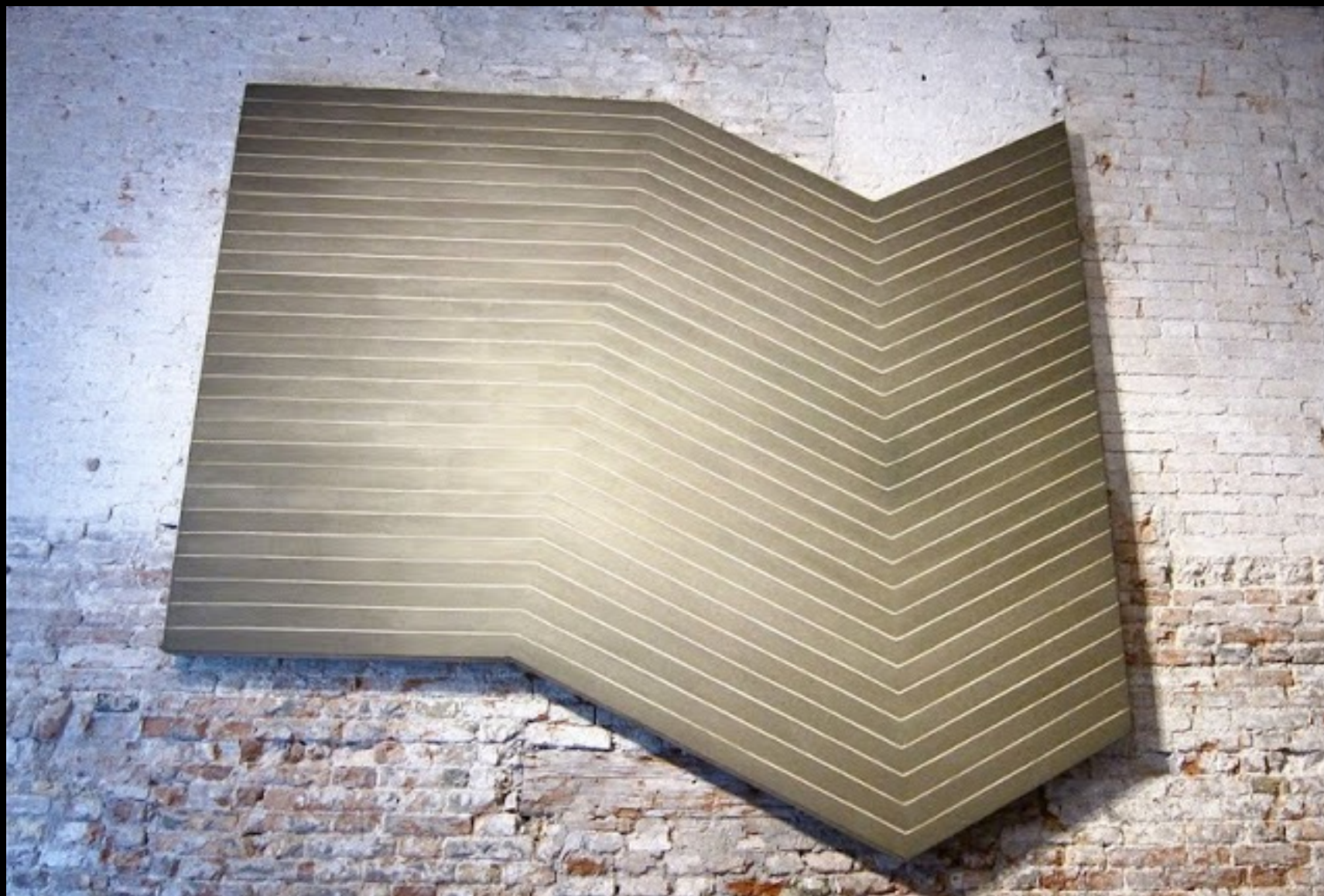
Frank Stella, Green Gate, 1958



Frank Stella, Agadir II, 1964



Frank Stella, Abajo (Flesh), 1964; powder & polymer emulsion on canvas 96 x 110in.



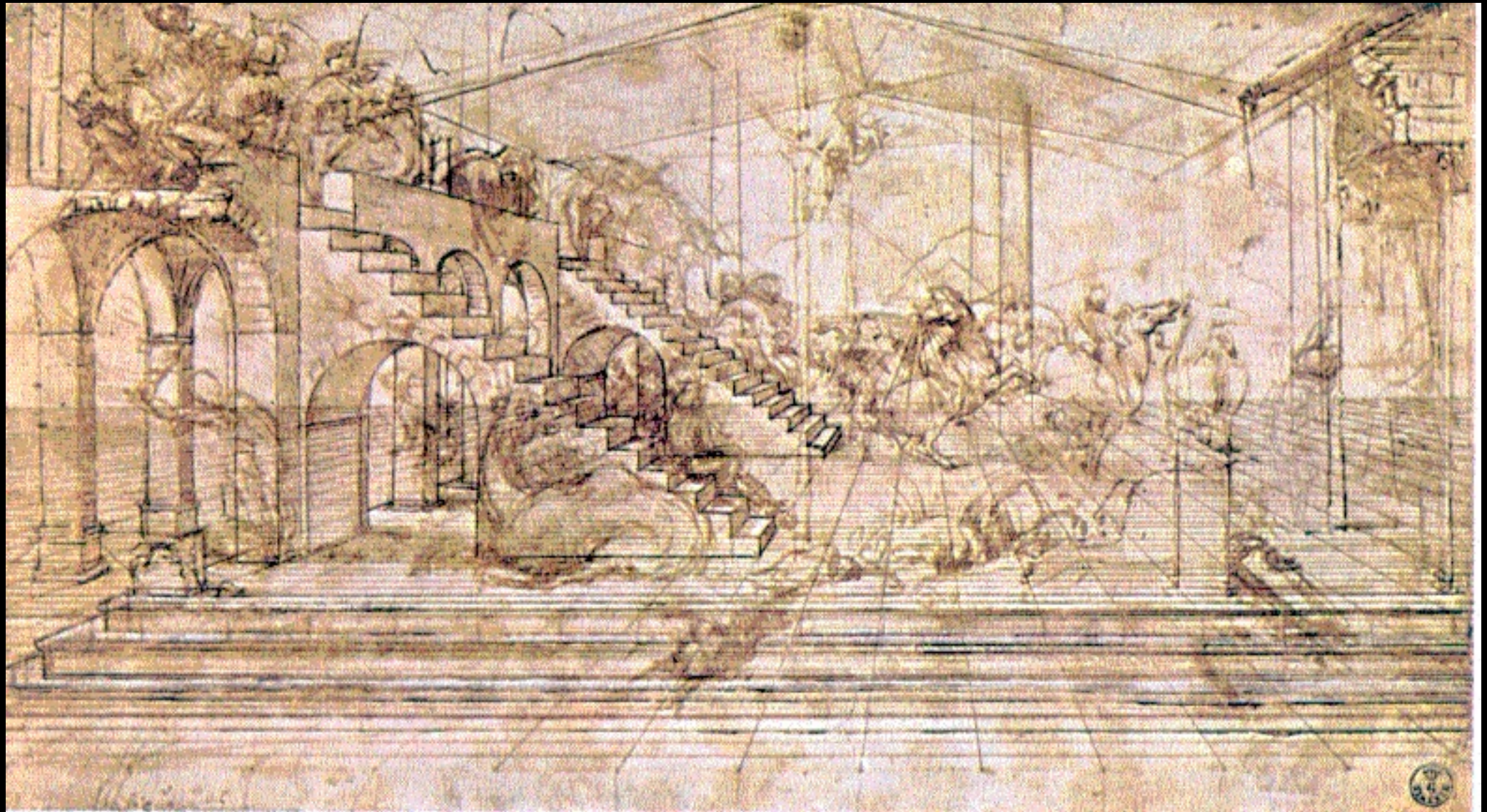


"The paintings I made before the Irregular Polygons were very symmetrical geometry. And these [Irregular Polygons] are a geometry which is no longer symmetrical, but they have to be the same thing that symmetrical paintings are: they have to have a sense of equilibrium. They can't fall over. There has to be a balance; they have to stand up. For the earth to keep spinning you have to maintain equilibrium. If the earth stops spinning it goes downhill and we're in trouble. Equilibrium is everything: it's true in painting as it is in everything else." -- Frank Stella

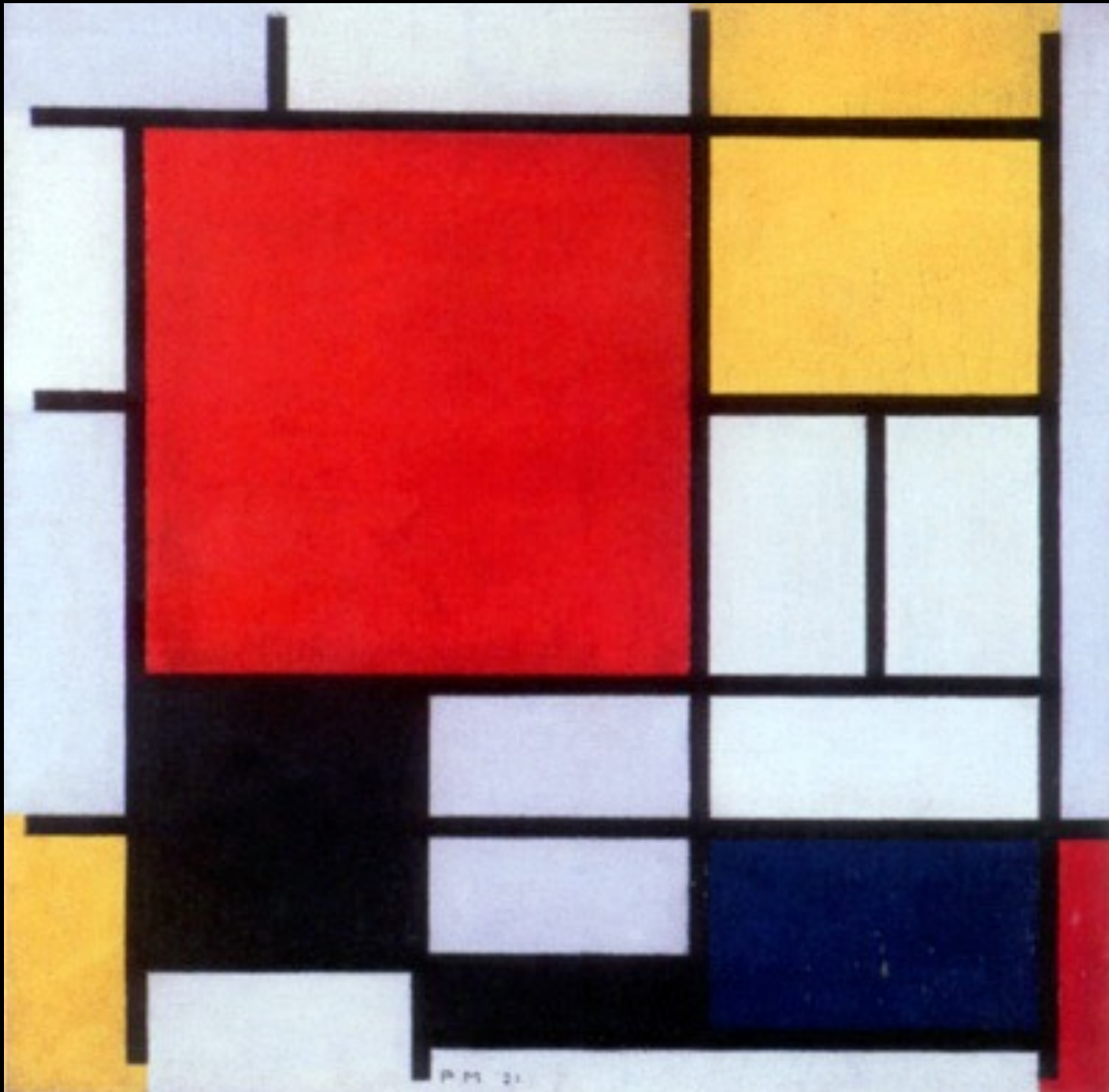
Frank Stella, Tuftonboro III,
1966; fluorescent alkyd and
epoxy paints; Irregular Polygons;
100 x 109in

ECCENTRIC POLYGONS





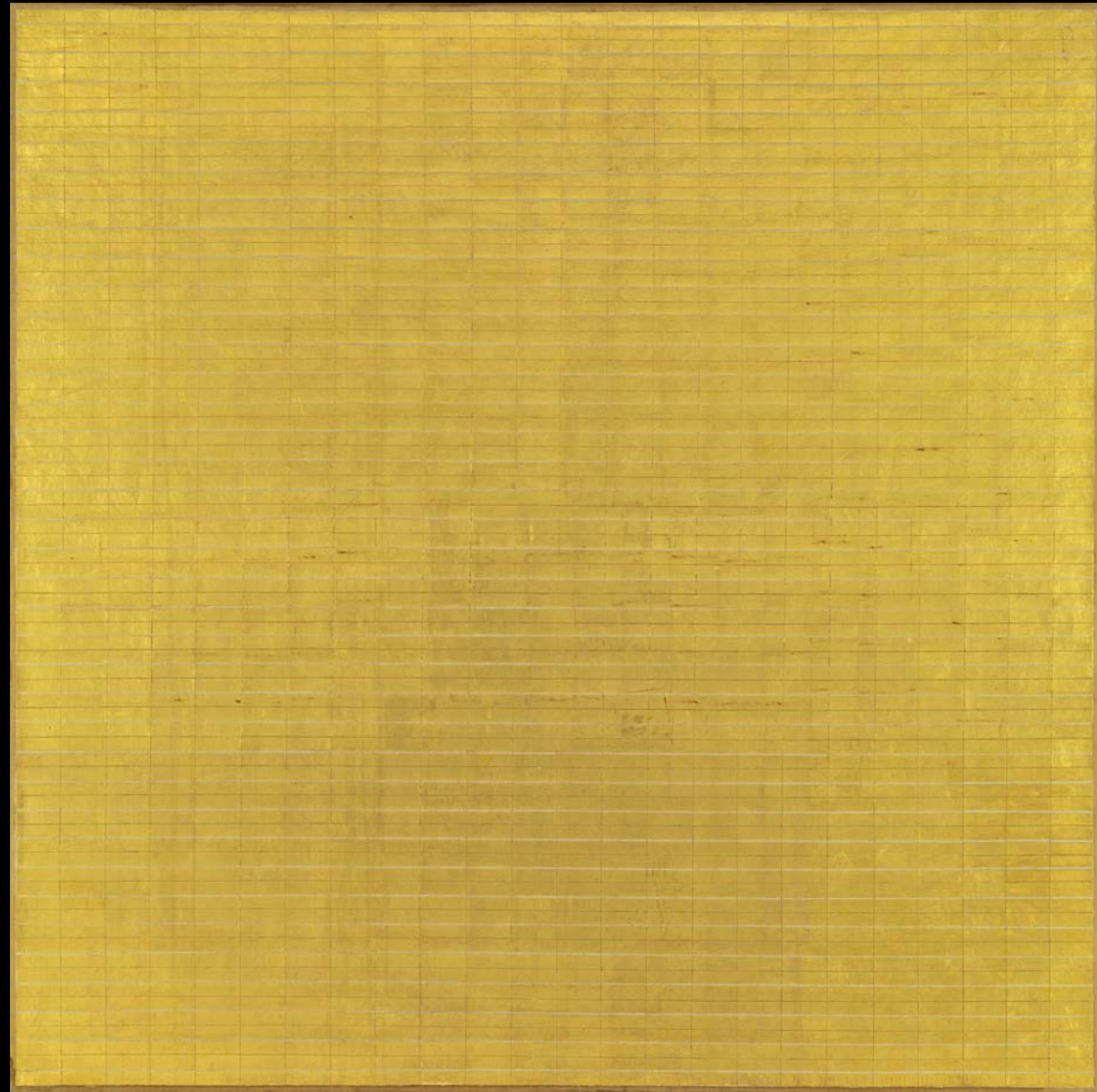
Leonardo da Vinci, Adoration of the Magi, 1481
Painting and the GRID



Piet Mondrian, Composition with Red, Yellow, Blue, and Black 1921
Painting and the GRID



Agnes Martin, Night Sea, 1963



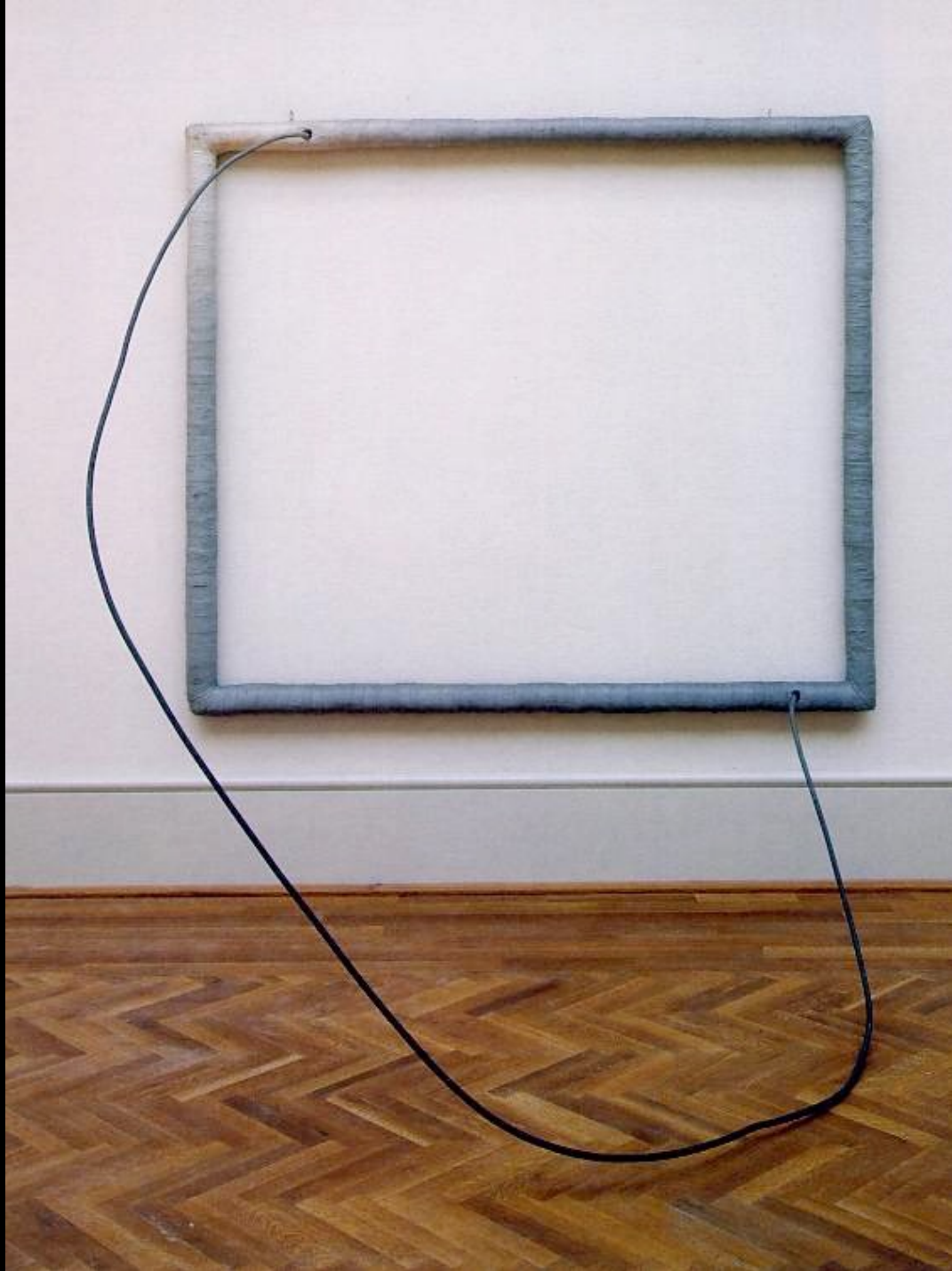
Agnes Martin, Friendship, 1963



Agnes Martin, Friendship, 1963
Gold leaf and oil on canvas
6' 3" x 6' 3"

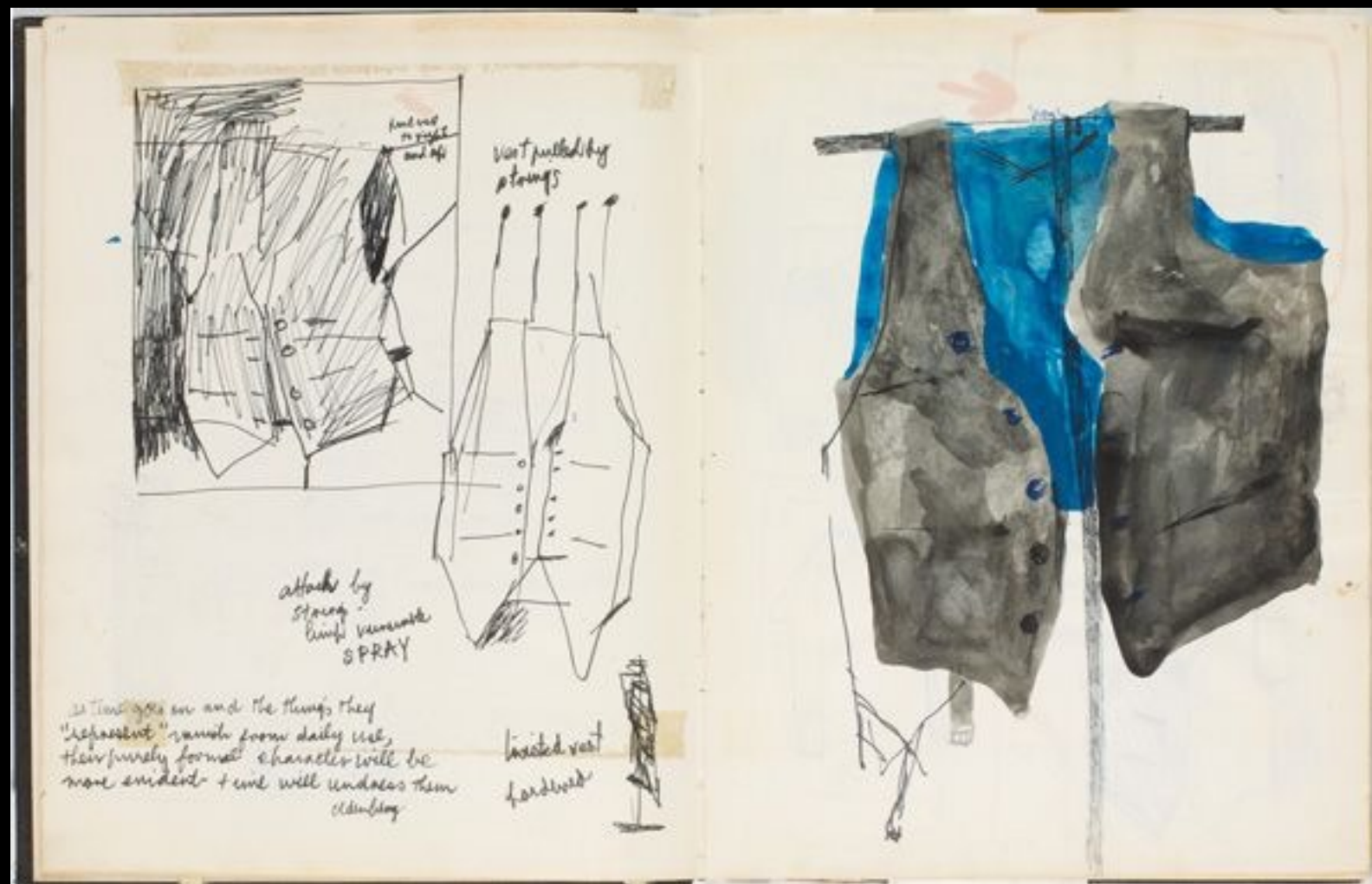
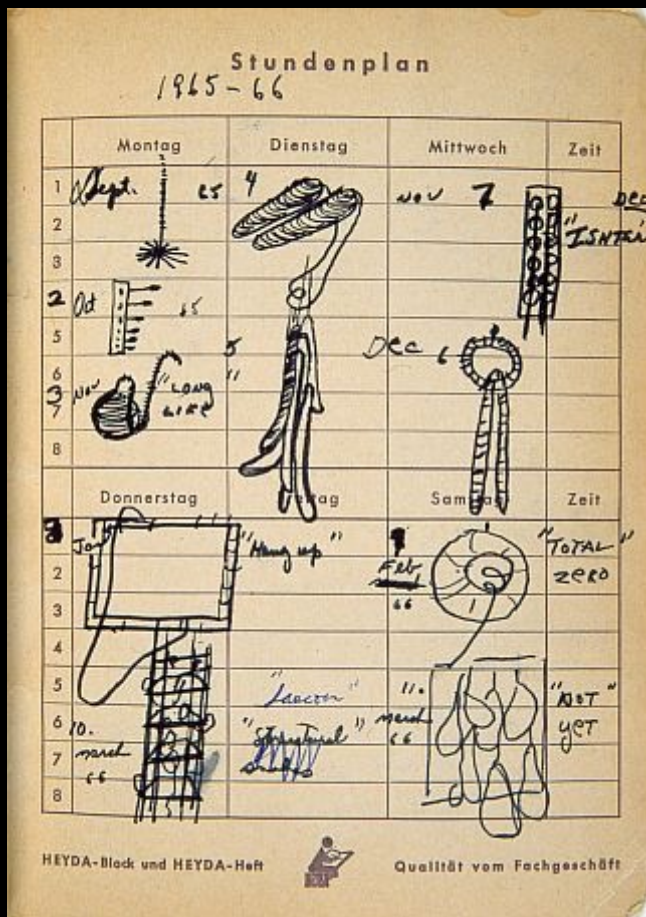


Agnes Martin,
Whispering, 1963

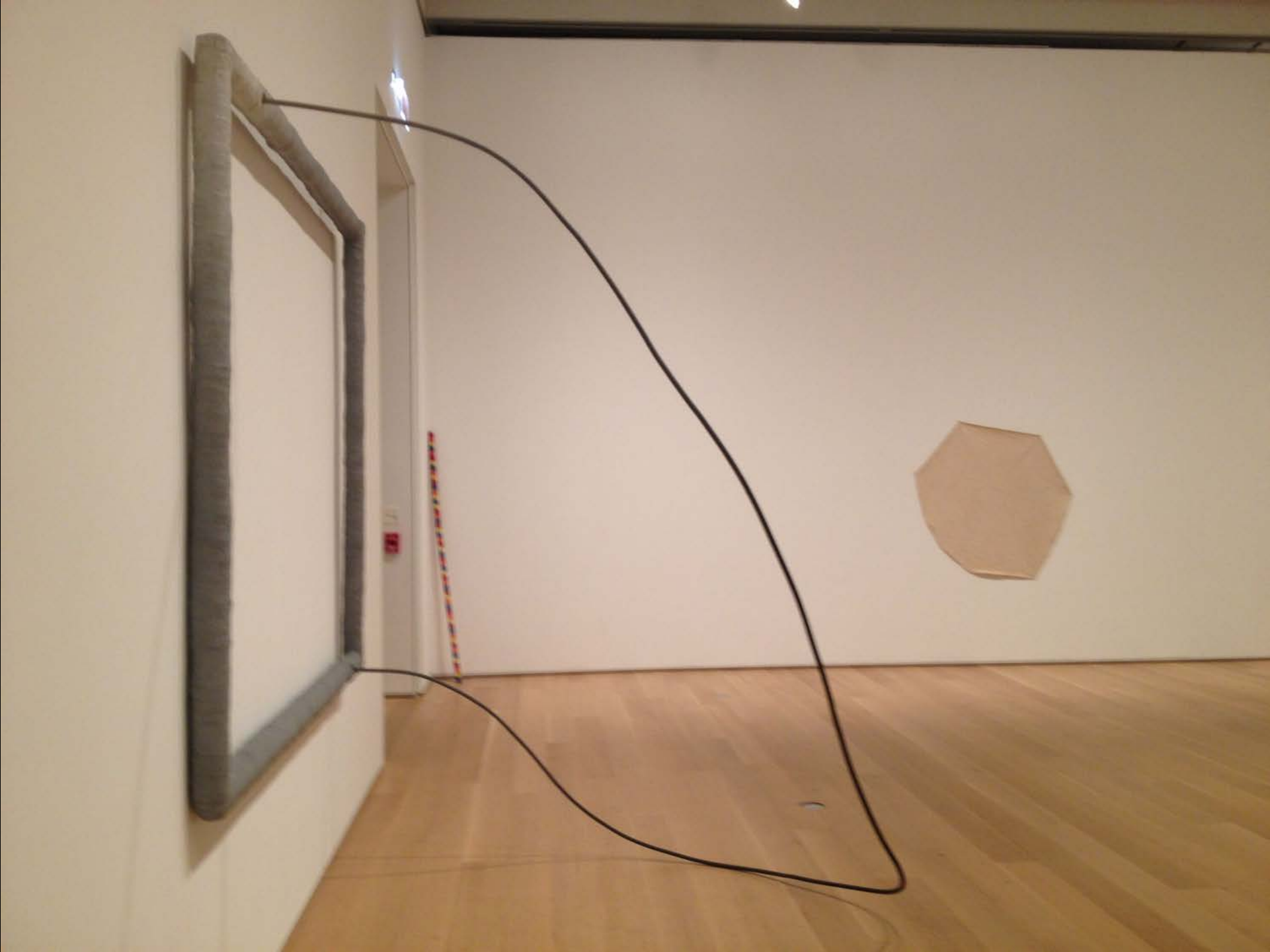


Eva Hesse, Hang Up, 1966

Acrylic on cloth over
wood; acrylic on cord
over steel tube

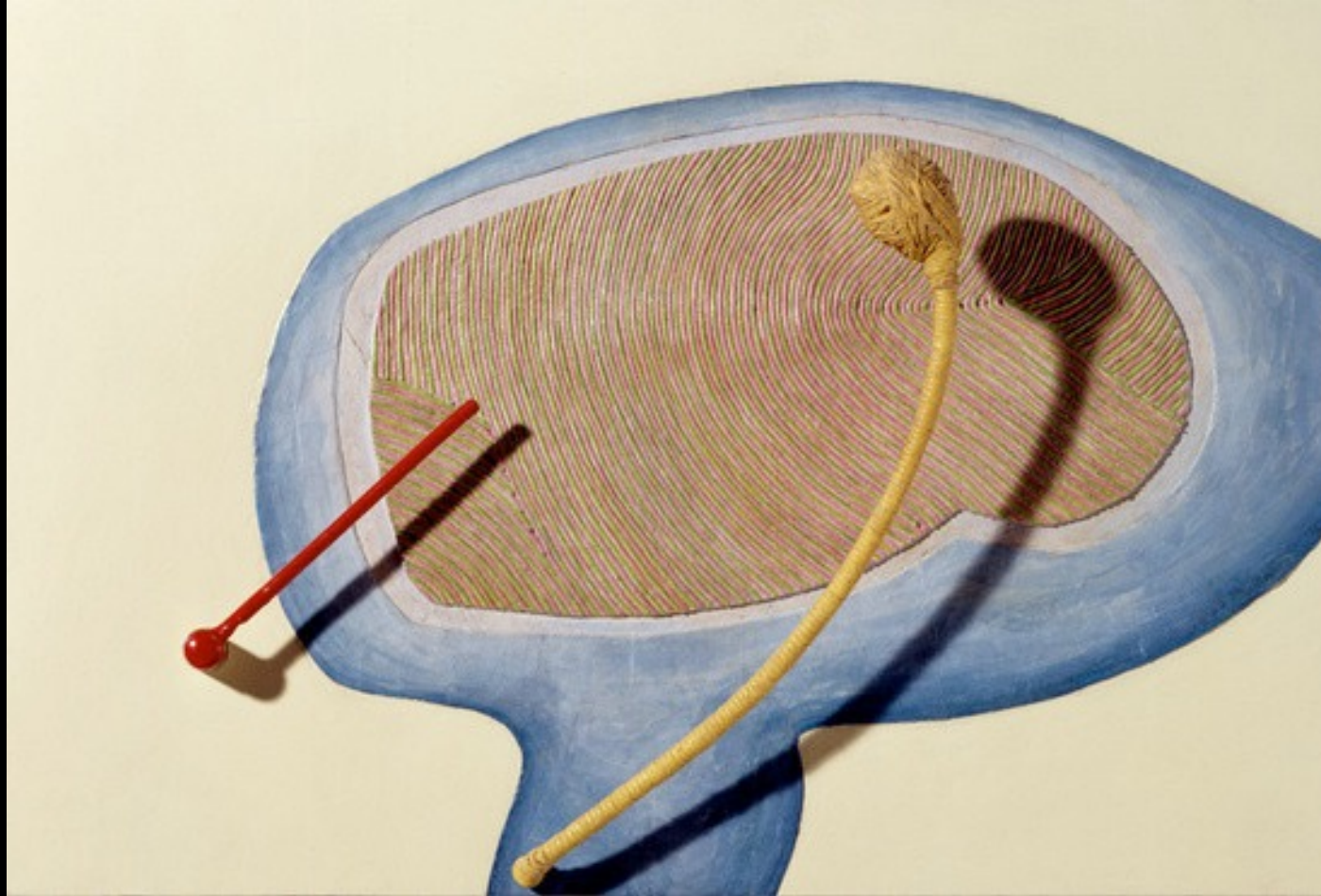


Eva Hesse, Notebook and Sketches, 1966





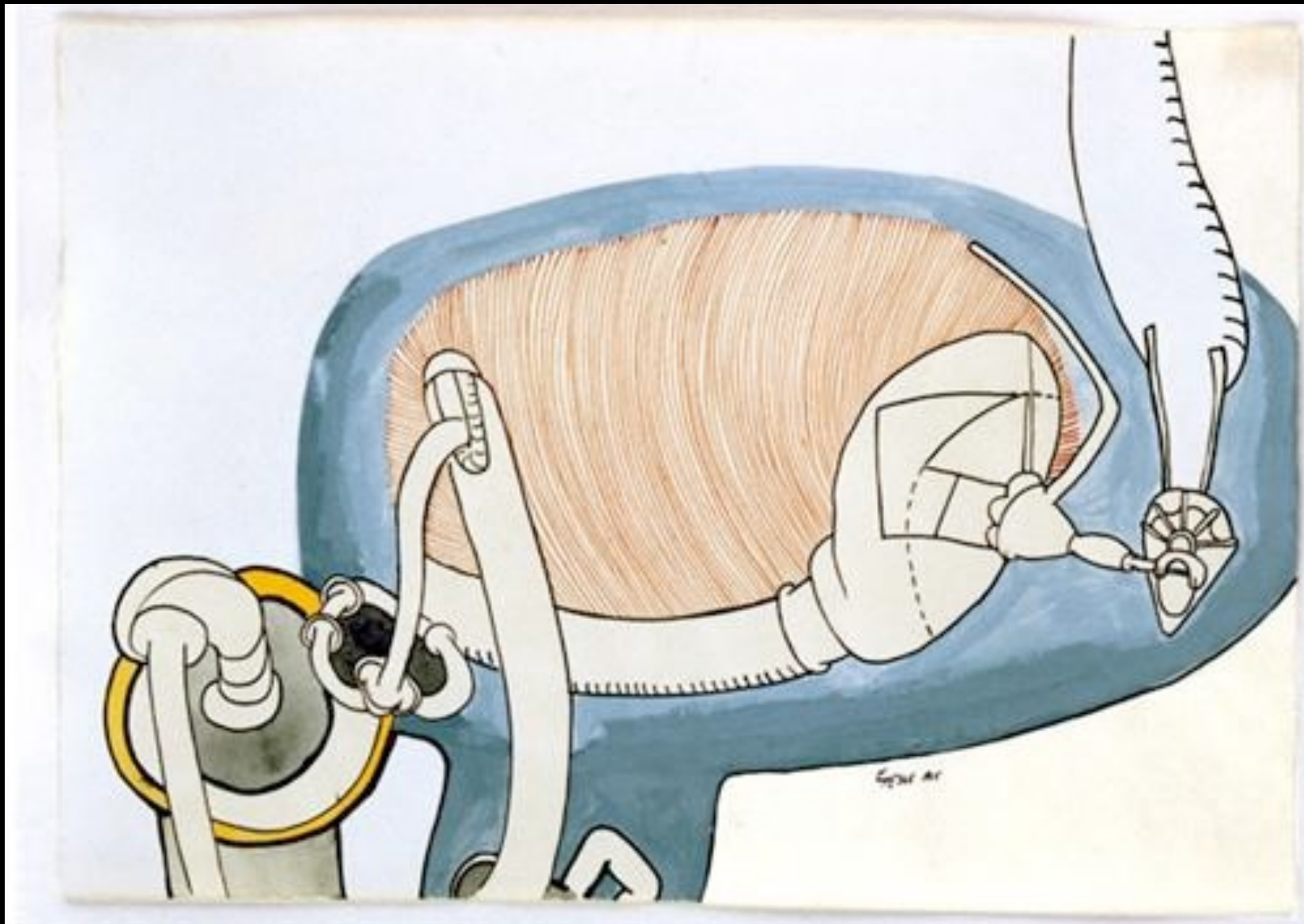
Eva Hesse, *Legs on a Walking Ball*, 1965, varnish, tempera, enamel, cord, metal, papier-caché, unknown modeling compound, particle board, wood



‘...clean and clear – but crazy like machines...’

Made in studio space located in an abandoned textile factory in Kettwig an der Ruhr, Germany. The old factory still contained machine parts, tools and materials from its previous use and the angular forms of these disused machines and tools served as inspiration for Hesse’s mechanical drawings and paintings.

<http://artnews.org/hauserwirthlondon/?exi=36604>



Eva Hesse, Study for or after Legs of a Walking Ball, 1965

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

in their games. Now even her drawings as well as her most recent sculpture are squares and rectangles, though their intricate veins are different each time.

Of course there is much more in her work than these few activities there, but what I have mentioned should be enough to illustrate the point that one of the reasons her countrymen are so successful is that her work utilizes her perceptions, but in a surprising and entirely unproductive way. The meaning of her last rule is one that we found in the other health traditions, but in its relation to her previous and subsequent work, and in its relation to the work of other systems. Because of the high degree of complexity in her work, the information obtained from one piece to another is generally less and the meaning less. That is, for some communicators with a high degree of reliability

Perhaps we should place this problem among the general problems of meaning. Possible? Has there ever been direct testimony to the visual arts, arranged from "higher" to "lower" (say, in a biological or sociological or geographical or other way, and pre-terminological distinction), often conducted with "lower"? Each of these three areas of interpretation has its corresponding degree of interpretation, requirement for interpretation, and successive principle of interpretation. The object of the sociological is "meaning, meaning in context, constituting the world of symbolical culture", the object of the literary, mythical or "symbolic" is "meaning, meaning in culture".

[illegible]

and events. The paratextual descriptions do not need a knowledge of the "history of poe" in which the objects and events of the preceding iconographical are expressed by lines.

One of the difficulties of adding in Phenology's new research is that it is based on a linear model of thought, in this case an hierarchical one. That which I wish to add here equally well on other work. What is needed is to bend the linear system into a circle and insert the additional idea of the biogrowth of cyberspace. It may seem foolish, which, with a few simple exceptions, has not been mainly grasped in the West except by artists.

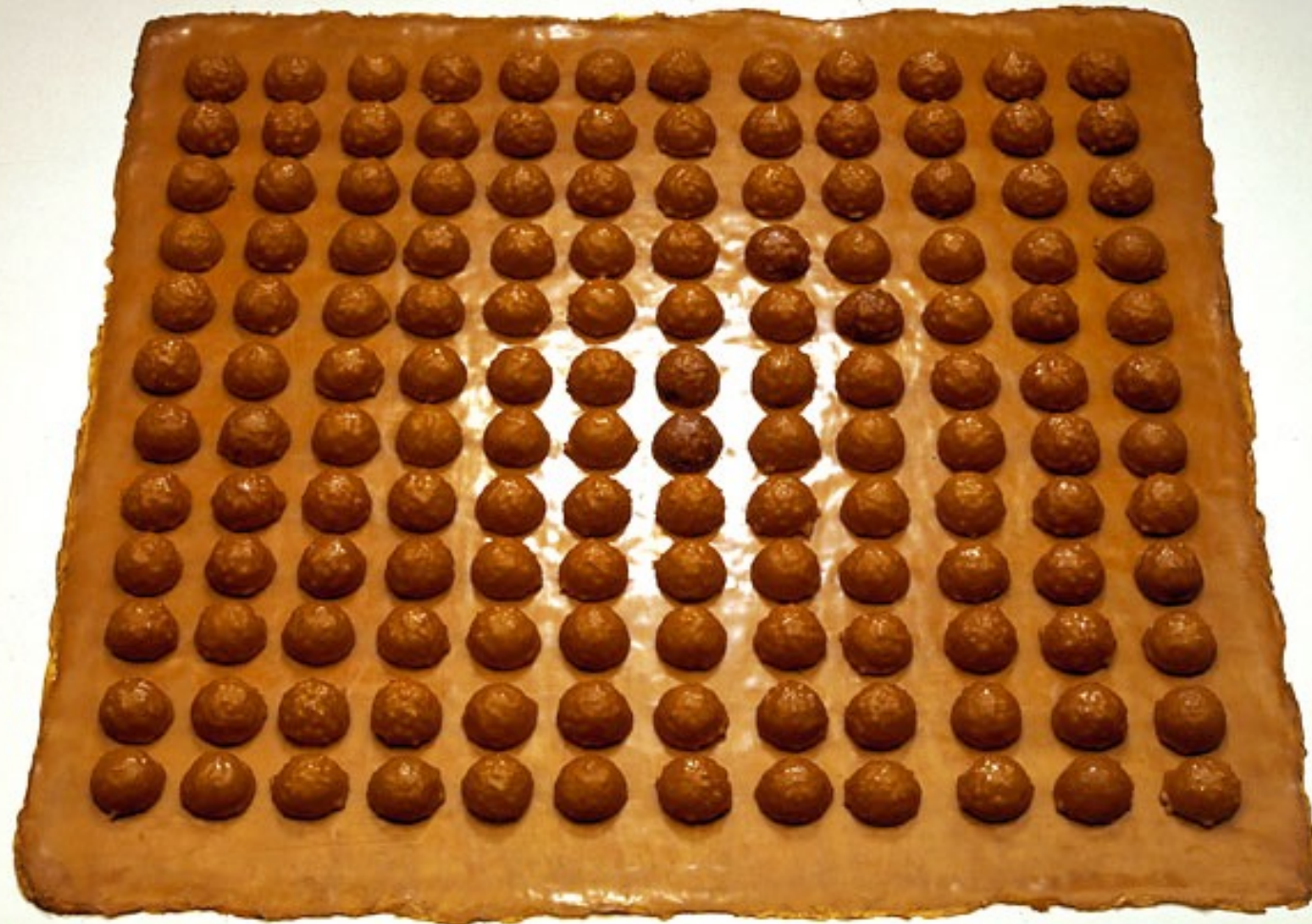
Possibly, despite its study of meaning by carefully representing meaning from texts, the kind of meaning I wish to add is concerned with how itself. Much contemporary art is without content or subject matter. To many this insufficiently means that it is also without meaning. Through some artists it is not without the possibility of ideological interpretation. By discussing meaning in terms I do not intend to require form and content. I wish to give no weight to either side of the form/content controversy. I simply wish to assert that content has no automatic or automatic.

To use Pausanias's already extant outline, I would call this additional act of interpretation the analysis and synthesis of message units of oral storytelling and reading. The corresponding stages of interpretation would be comprehensive final reading. The special equipment for this interpretation would be, therefore, fluency in systems and sub-systems of discourse.

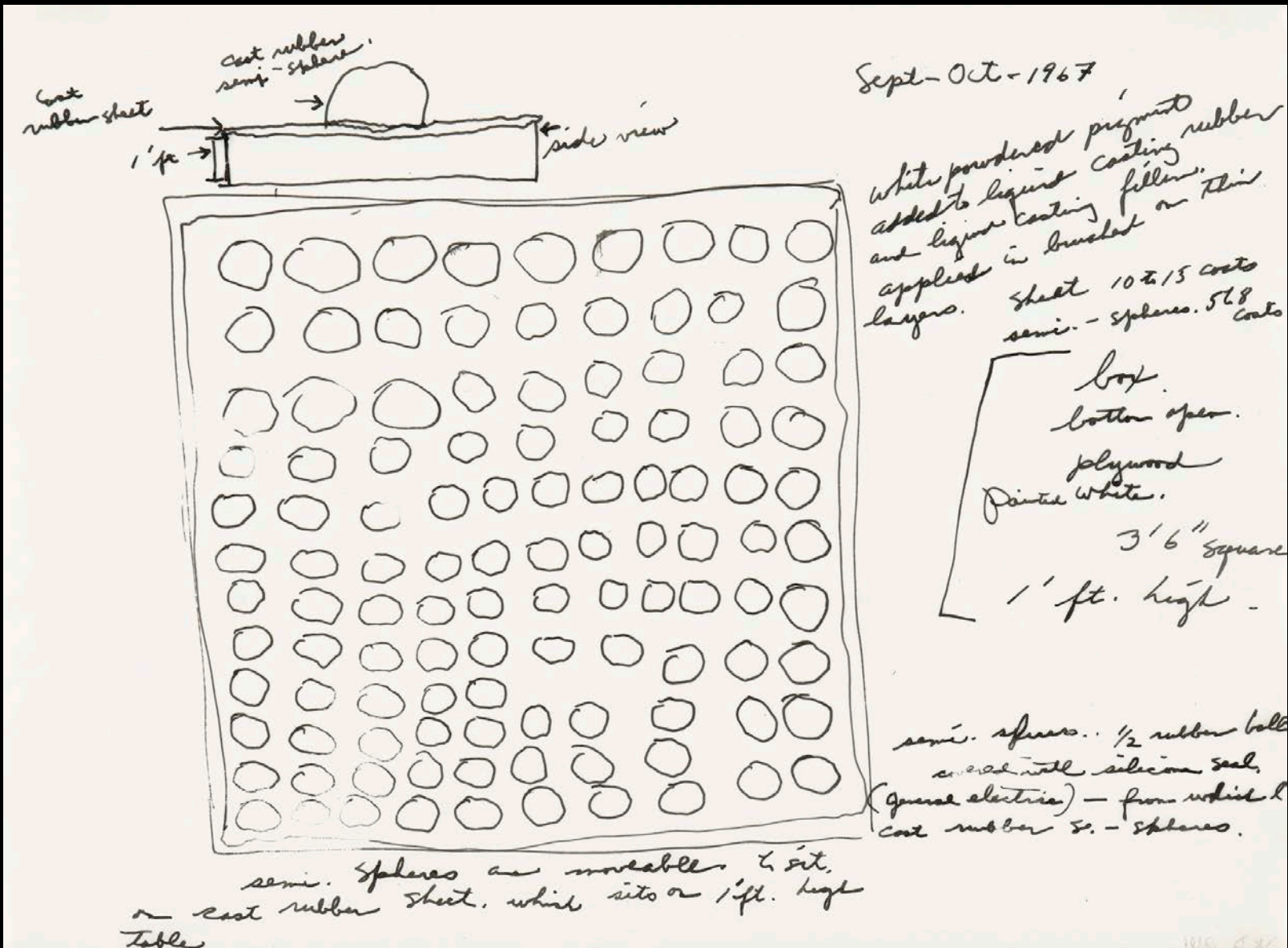
The corresponding corrective principle in this new case would be the *Misery of Language*. It might seem the measure in which, under existing historical conditions, Jews were oppressed by the mismanagement of Germany. It will be our task here I am suggesting to raise and discuss. It should be added that three forms of patterns are now thought of here as something to be made more or less according to time. In the future some such pattern could well be called *time-spirits*.⁷² The language is a clear-cut or continuous sequence of nonreducible events distributed in time – precisely what is called a time series by the mathematicians.⁷³

1. Norbert Wiener, *Cybernetics*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1948, p. 45.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
4. Norbert Wiener, *The Human Use of Human Robots*, Cybernetics and Society, 1948, p. 70.
5. J. J. Hayes, "Information, Machines, and Man," in *Philosophy and Cybernetics*, F. J. Givens and J. J. Hayes, eds., Norton and John, 1967, p. 55.
6. Ervin Panofsky, *Manning in the Field*, Am. Inst. Studies, Garden City, 1955, p. 30-32.
7. Norbert Wiener, *Cybernetics*, p. 8.

Box 999, Avenue 25, 1700 Grand



Eva Hesse, Schema, 1967-68 cast latex with
moveable elements



Hesse defined the word 'schema' as "synopsis, outline, diagram, general type, essential form, conception of what is common to all members of a class." While the evenly-spaced, balanced grid of her eponymous sculpture (fig.9) may be read in terms of Hesse's definition, her interest in 'diagram' and 'essential form' are also expressed in the meticulous planning and rigor with which she approached its design, including her choice of material.

-- Jeffrey Saletnik

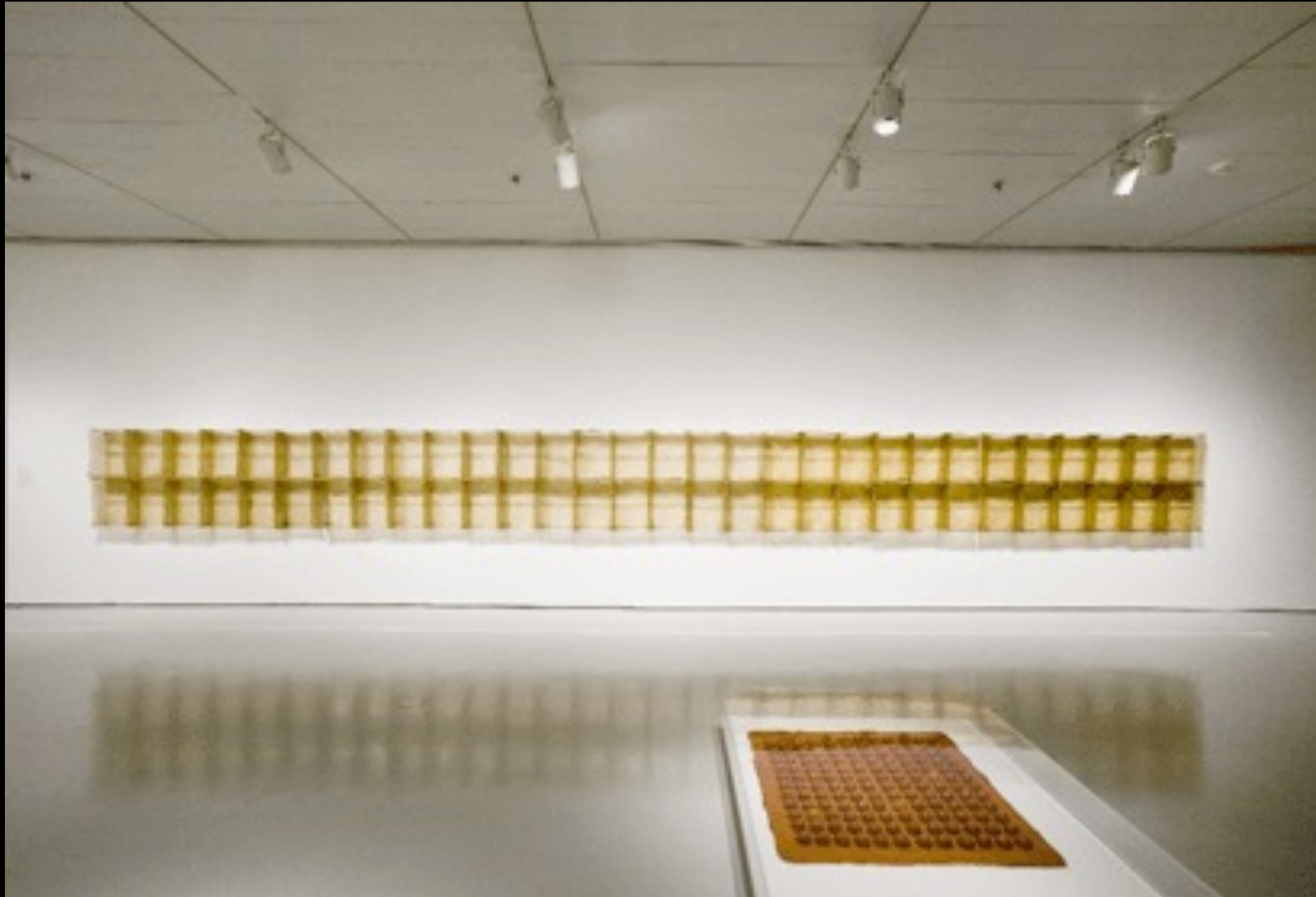
Eva Hesse, Study for Schema, 1967



“The materials I use are really casting materials, but I don’t want to use them as casting materials. I want to use them directly, eliminating making molds and casts ... I am interested in the process, a very direct kind of connection.”

-- Eva Hesse

Eva Hesse, Test Pieces, 1967



Eva Hesse sculpture exhibition gallery shot—foreground, “Schema,” 1967–68, latex, Philadelphia Museum of Art, and in the background “Sans II,” 1968, polyester resin and fiberglass



Eva Hesse, *Sequel*, 1967-68

Latex, pigment, and cheesecloth



By allowing the components of the sculpture to be arranged in various configurations, Hesse purposely left the precise allusions of these suggestive forms ambiguous, inviting our associations to guide our experience of the work and its meaning. The irregular surfaces of the elements are typical of “antiform” or “process” art.

<https://www.philamuseum.org/collections/permanent/85791.html>

Eva Hesse, Repetition Nineteen III, 1968

Fiberglass and polyester resin, nineteen units



Eva Hesse, Accession II, 1969



Annie Truitt, Summer Sentinel, 1963



David Smith, Zig VII, 1963



Dan Flavin, Alternating Pink and Yellow To Joseph Halmy, 1967-78

Dan Flavin, Icons, 1961-64

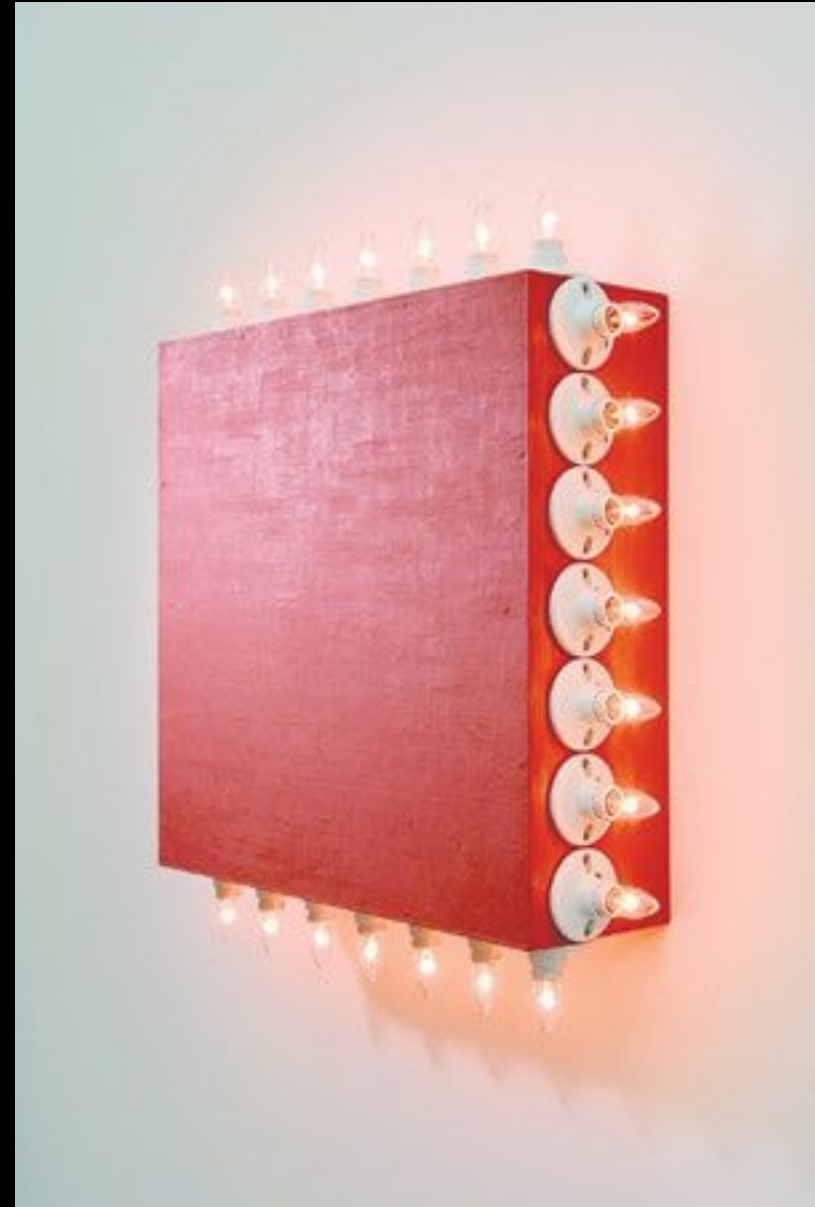
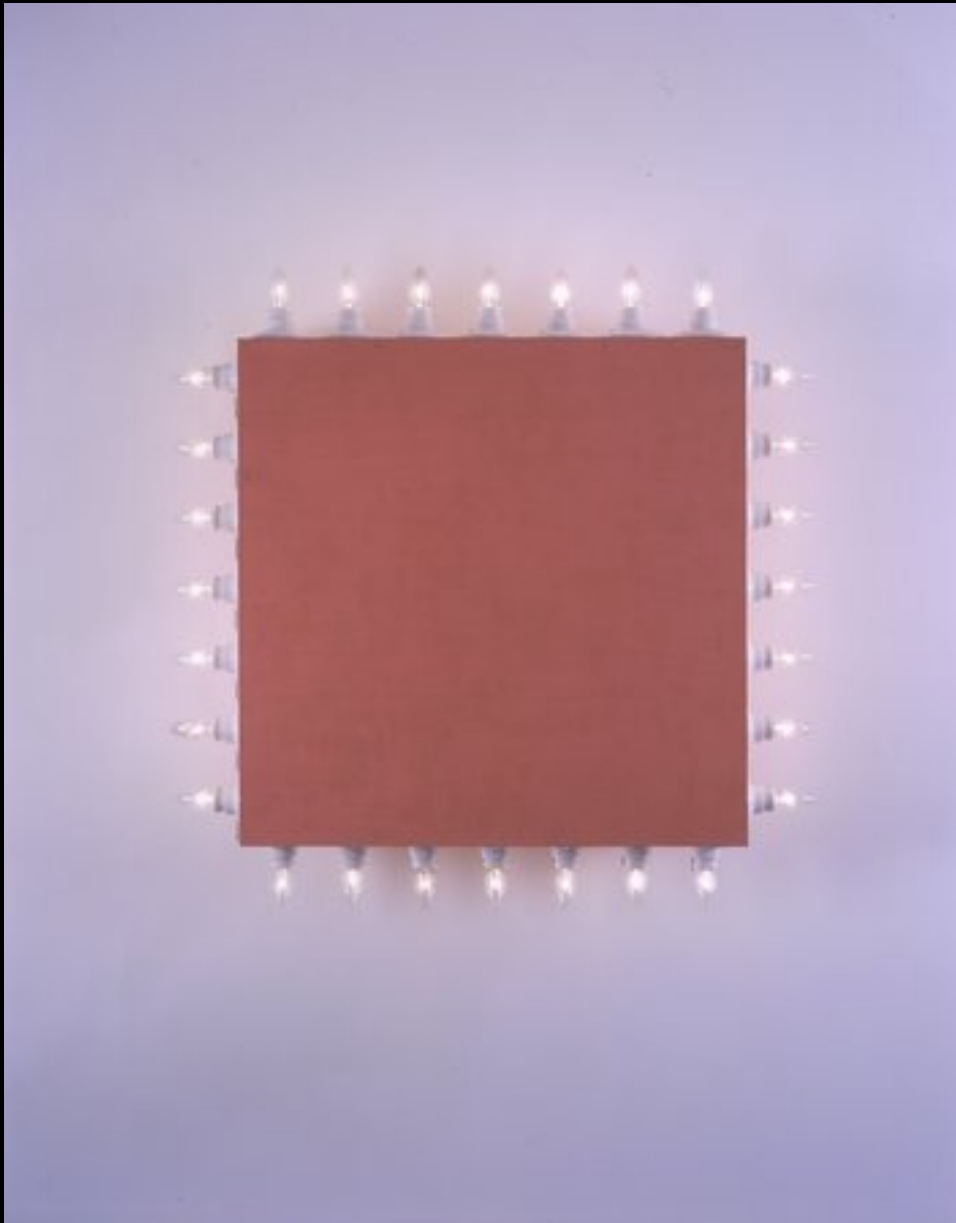




Dan Flavin, FLA_icon II (the mystery) (to John Reeves), 1961



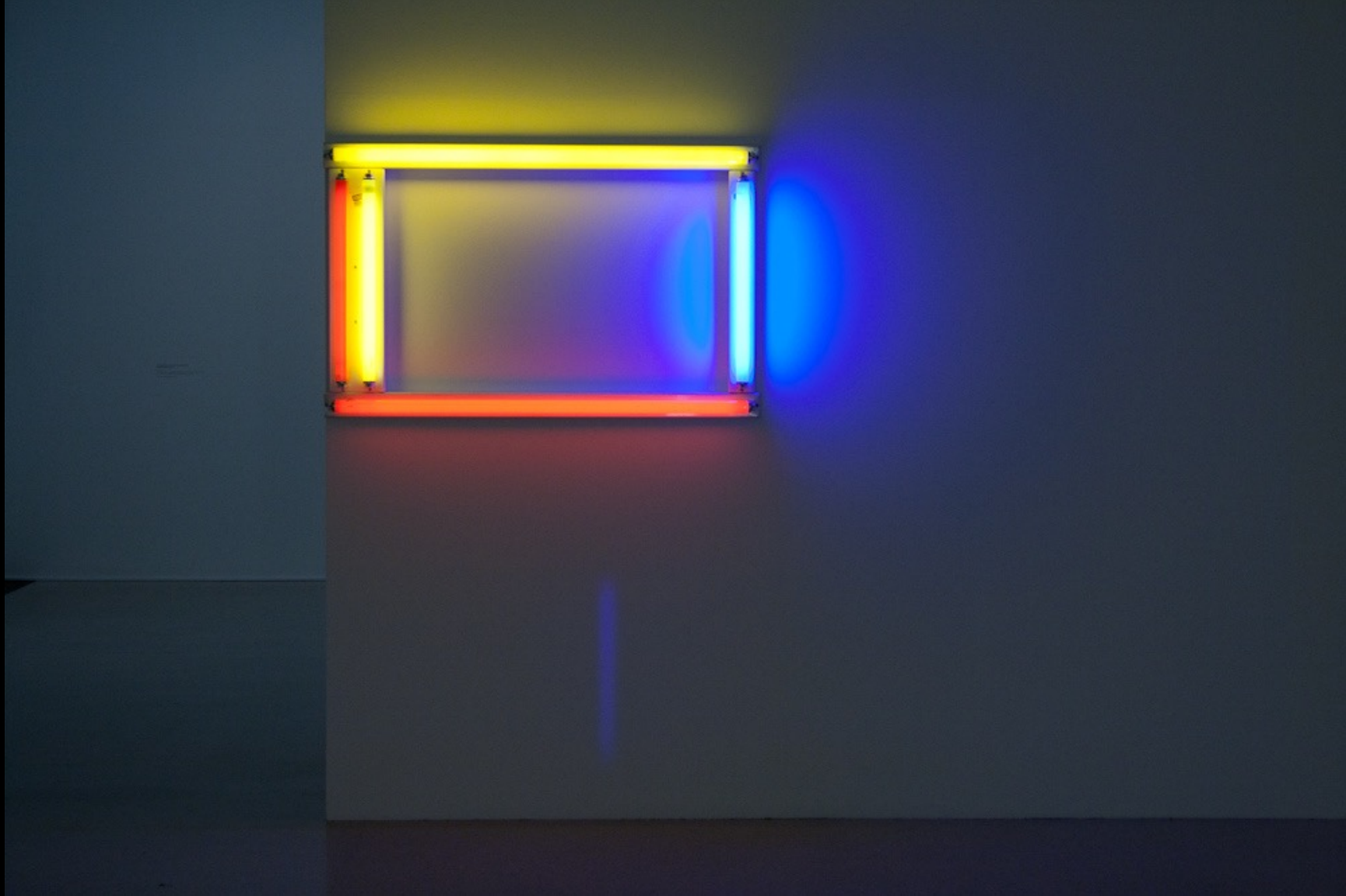
Dan Flavin, Icon VII (Via Crucis), 1962-64



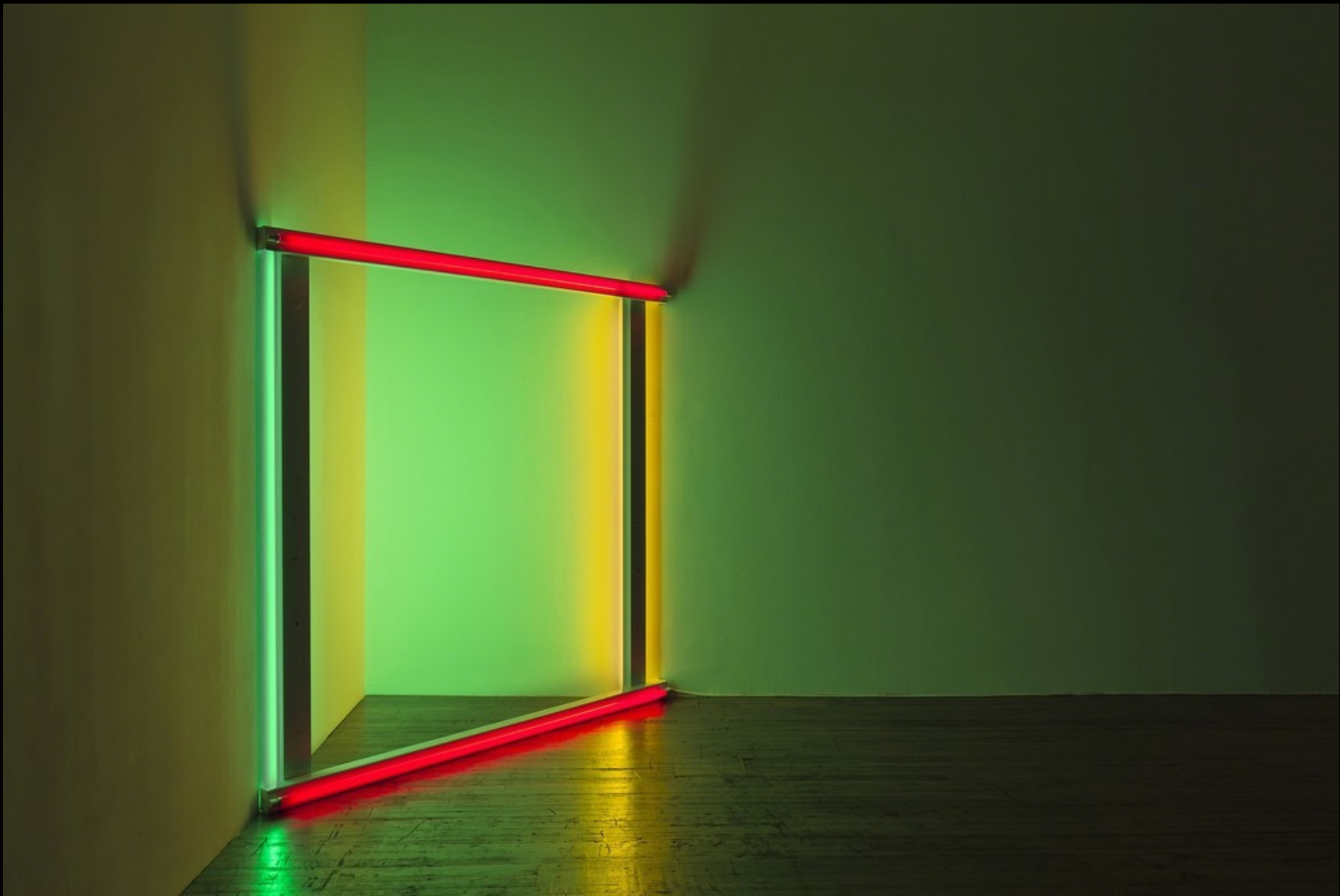
Dan Flavin, Icon V (Coran's Broadway Flesh), 1961-64



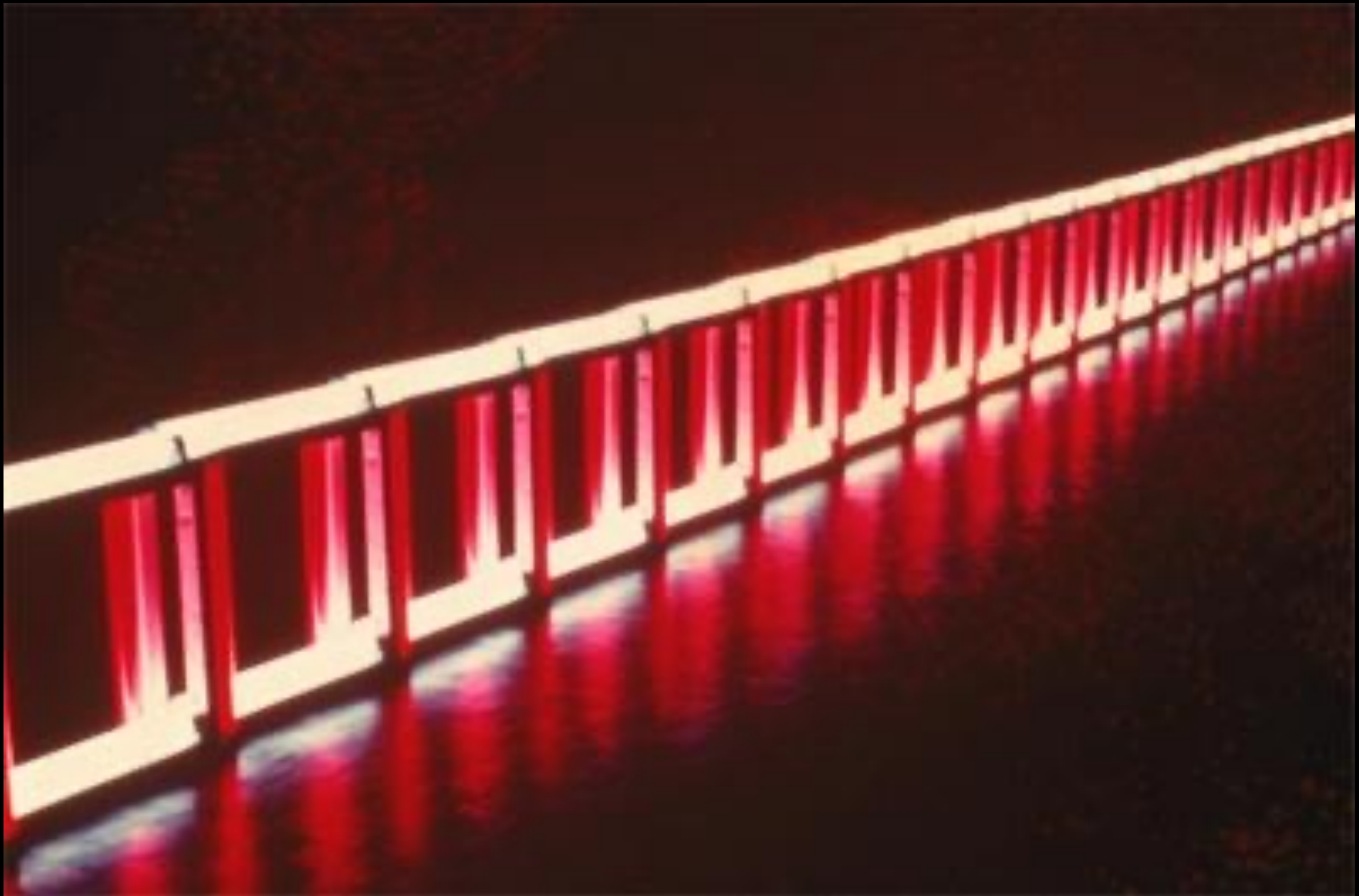
Dan Flavin, FLA_icon VIII (to Blind Lemon Jefferson), 1962



Dan Flavin a primary picture, 1964 Rote



Dan Flavin, Untitled (To Pat and Bob Rohm), 1969



Dan Flavin, *Artificial Barrier of Blue*, 1968

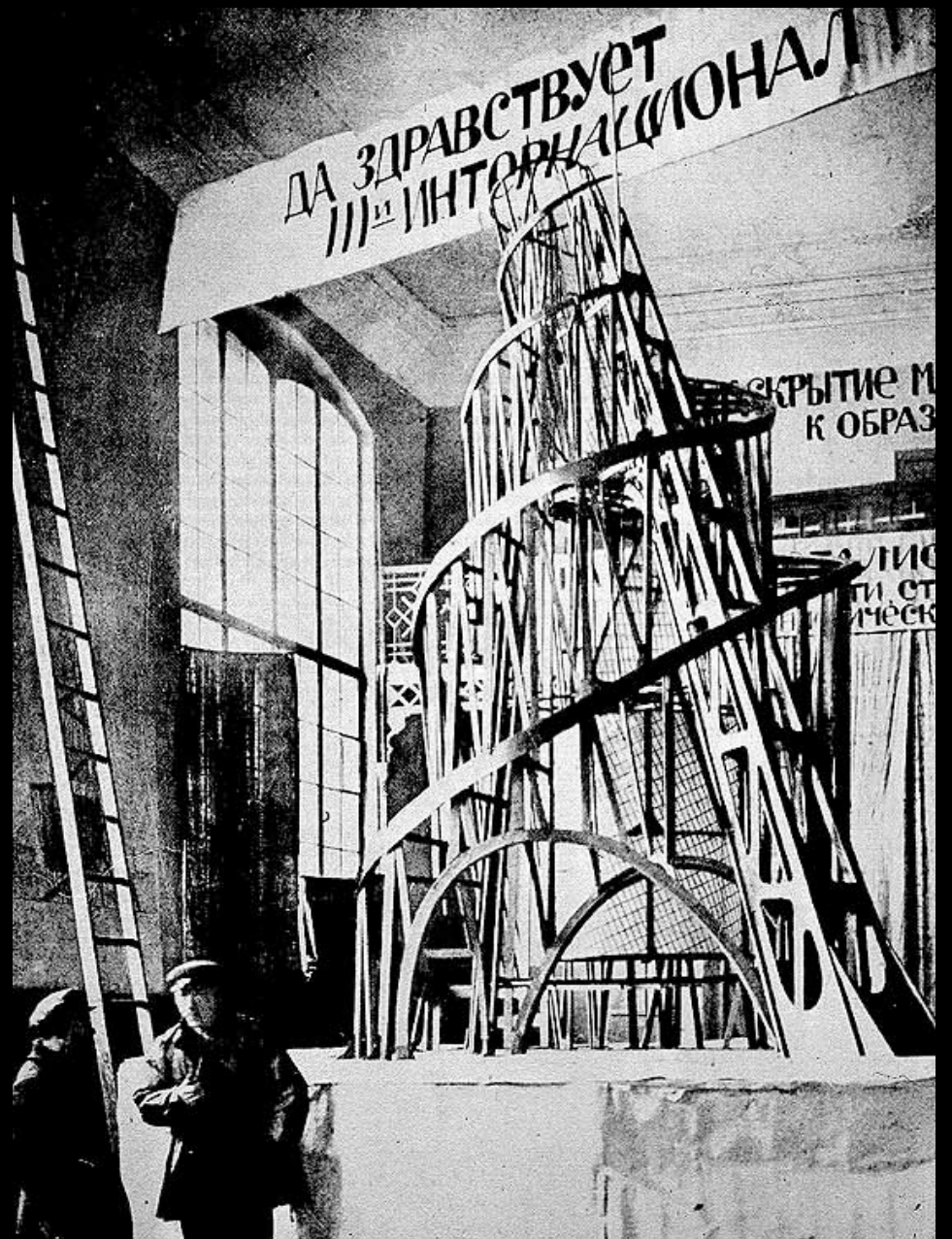


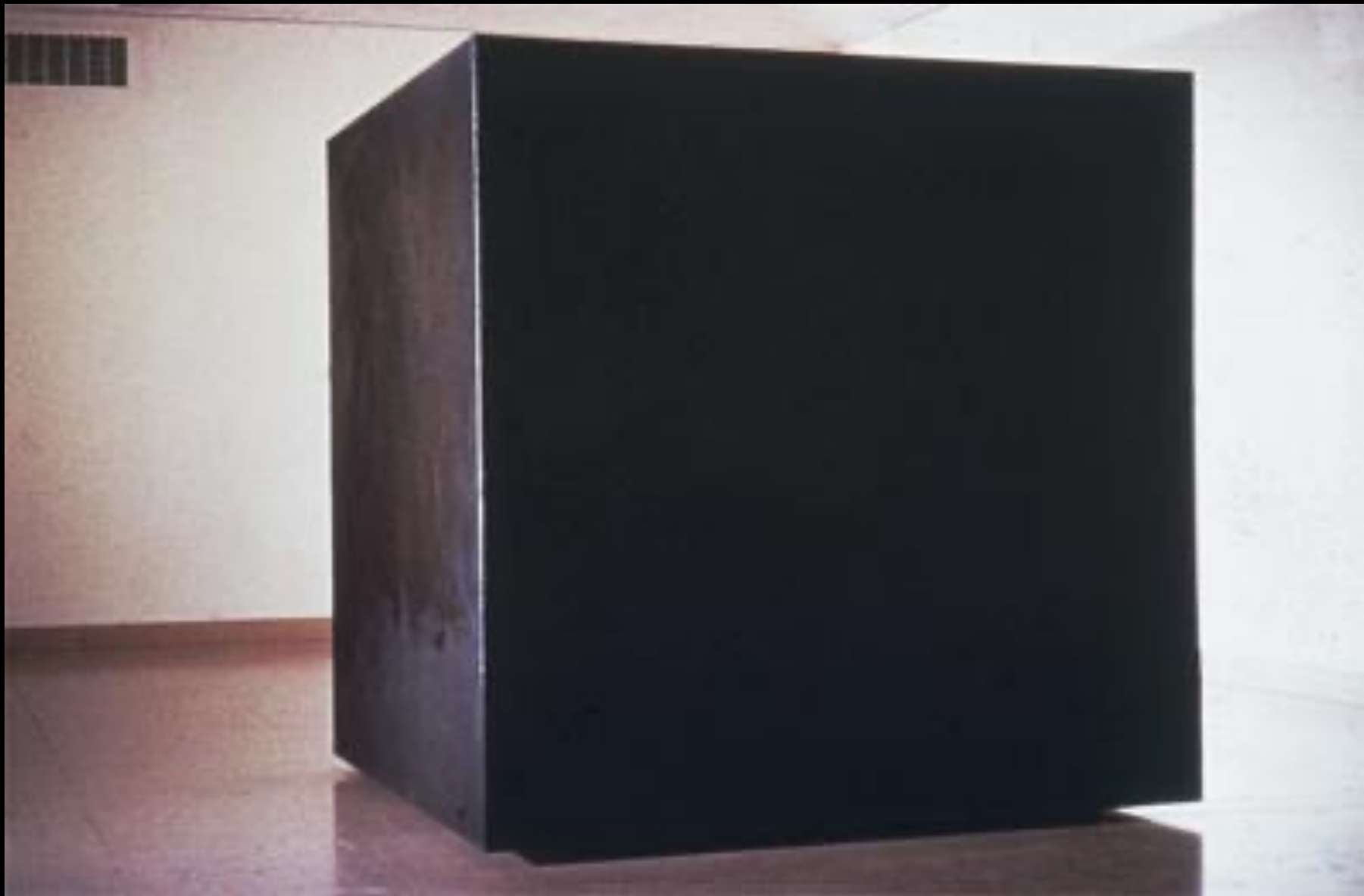
Dan Flavin, Monument to V. Tatlin, 1969



Dan Flavin, Monument to V. Tatlin, 1969

Tatlin, Model for the
Monument to the 3rd
International in wood
and wire displayed at
the VIIIth Congress of
the Soviets held in
December, 1920





Tony Smith, Die, 1962

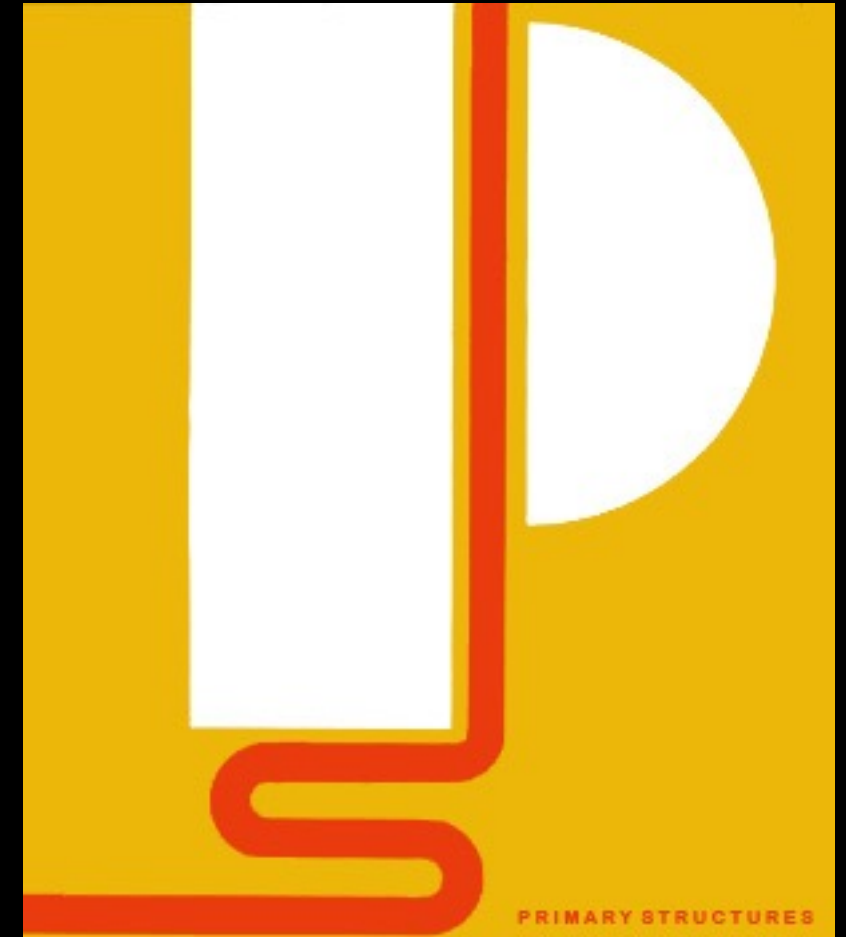


Exhibit Catalog Cover designed
by Elaine Lustig Cohen

Installation view of the exhibition "Primary Structures: Young American and British Sculptors" at the Jewish Museum in NYC, 1966 curated by Kynaston McShine



Kynaston McShine
(center) at the
opening of Primary
Structures: Younger
American and
British Sculptors,
April 27-June 12,
1966. The Jewish
Museum, NY.



ART AND OBJECTHOOD

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when you start relating parts, in the first place, you're assuming you have a vague whole — the rectangle of the canvas — and definite parts, which is all screwed up, because you should have a definite whole and maybe no parts, or very few.¹

The more the shape of the support is emphasized, as in recent modernist painting, the tighter the situation becomes:

The elements inside the rectangle are broad and simple and correspond closely to the rectangle. The shapes and surface are only those which can occur plausibly within and on a rectangular plane. The parts are few and so subordinate to unity as not to be parts in an ordinary sense. A painting is nearly an entity, one thing, and not the indefinable sum of a group of entities and references. The one thing overpowers the earlier painting. It also establishes the rectangle as a definite form; it is no longer a fairly neutral limit. A form can be used only in so many ways. The rectangular plane is given a life span. The simplicity required to emphasize the rectangle limits the arrangements possible within it.

Painting is here seen as an art on the verge of exhaustion, one in which the range of acceptable solutions to a basic problem — how to organize the surface of the picture — is severely restricted. The use of shaped rather than rectangular supports can, from the literalist point of view, merely prolong the agony. The obvious response is to give up working on a single plane in favor of three dimensions. That, moreover, automatically

gets rid of the problem of illusionism and of literal space, space in and around marks and colors — which is riddance of one of the salient and most objectionable relics of European art. The several limits of painting are no longer present. A work can be as powerful as it can be thought to be. Actual space is intrinsically more powerful and specific than paint on a flat surface.

The literalist attitude toward sculpture is more ambiguous. Judd, for example, seems to think of what he calls *Specific Objects* as something

other than sculpture, while Robert Morris conceives of his own unmistakably literalist work as resuming the lapsed tradition of Constructivist sculpture established by Tatlin, Rodchenko, Gabo, Pevsner and Vantongerloo. But this and other disagreements are less important than the views Judd and Morris hold in common. Above all they are opposed to sculpture which, like most painting, is "made part by part, by addition, composed" and in which "specific elements . . . separate from the whole, thus setting up relationships within the work."² (They would include the work of David Smith and Anthony Caro under this description.) It is worth remarking that the "part-by-part" and "relational" character of most sculpture is associated by Judd with what he calls *anthropomorphism*: "A beam thrusts; a piece of iron follows a gesture; together they form a naturalistic and anthropomorphic image. The space corresponds." Against such "multipart, inflected" sculpture Judd and Morris assert the values of wholeness, singleness and indivisibility — of a work's being, as nearly as possible, "one thing," a single "Specific Object." Morris devotes considerable attention to "the use of strong gestalt or of unitary-type forms to avoid divisiveness"; while Judd is chiefly interested in the kind of wholeness that can be achieved through the repetition of identical units. The order at work in his pieces, as he once remarked of that in Stella's stripe paintings, "is simply order, like that of continuity, one thing after another." For both Judd and Morris, however, the critical factor is shape. Morris's "unitary forms" are polyhedrons that resist being grasped other than as a single shape: the gestalt simply is the "constant, known shape." And shape itself is, in his system, "the most important sculptural value." Similarly, speaking of his own work, Judd has remarked that

the big problem is that anything that is not absolutely plain begins to have parts in some way. The thing is to be able to work and do different things and yet not break up the wholeness that a piece has. To me the piece with the brass and the five verticals is above all that shape.

The shape is the object: at any rate what secures the wholeness of the object is the singleness of the shape. It is, I believe, this emphasis on shape that accounts for the impression, which numerous critics have mentioned, that Judd's and Morris's pieces are *hollow*.

II

Shape has also been central to the most important painting of the past several years. In several recent essays³ I have tried to show how, in the work of Noland, Olitski and Stella, a conflict has gradually emerged between shape as a fundamental property of objects and shape as a medium of painting. Roughly, the success or failure of a given painting has come to depend on its ability to hold or stamp itself out or compel

Art and Objecthood



Robert Morris
Bodyspace (1971)

"Art degenerates as it approaches the condition of theatre".

Michael Fried

Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood" (1967)

MICHAEL FRIED

Edwards' journals frequently explored and tested a meditation he seldom allowed to reach print; if all the world were annihilated, he wrote . . . and a new world were freshly created, though it were to exist in every particular in the same manner as this world, it would not be the same. Therefore, because there is continuity, which is time, "it is certain with me that the world exists anew every moment; that the existence of things every moment ceases and is every moment renewed."

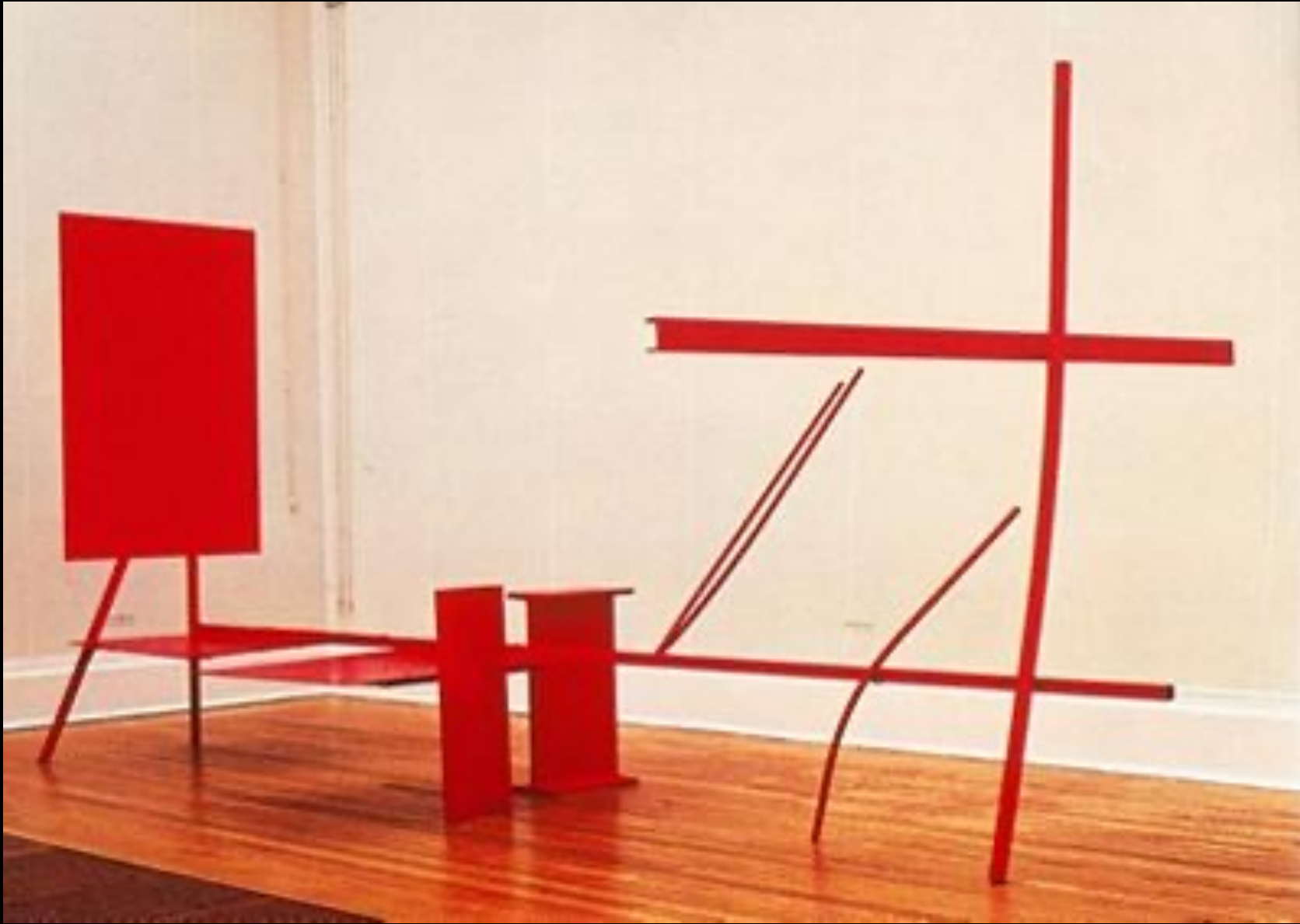
The abiding assurance is that "we every moment see the same proof of a God as we should have seen if we had seen Him create the world at first."

— Perry Miller, Jonathan Edwards

The enterprise known variously as Minimal Art, ABC Art, Primary Structures and Specific Objects is largely ideological. It seeks to declare and occupy a position — one which can be formulated in words, and in fact has been formulated by some of its leading practitioners. If this distinguishes it from modernist painting and sculpture on the one hand, it also marks an important difference between Minimal Art — or, as I prefer to call it, *literalist art* — and Pop or Op Art on the other. From its inception, literalist art has amounted to something more than an episode in the history of taste. It belongs rather to the history — almost the *natural history* — of sensibility; and it is not an isolated episode but the

Michael Fried Art and Objecthood

- Literalist/minimalist art acknowledges the conditions of reception; it has the inauthenticity of theater/acting for an audience
- Associated with tactility and body/matter
TACTILE
- True art creates a timeless state – presentness
OPTICAL
 - Associated with opticality and spirit/intellect



Anthony Caro, Early One Morning, 1962



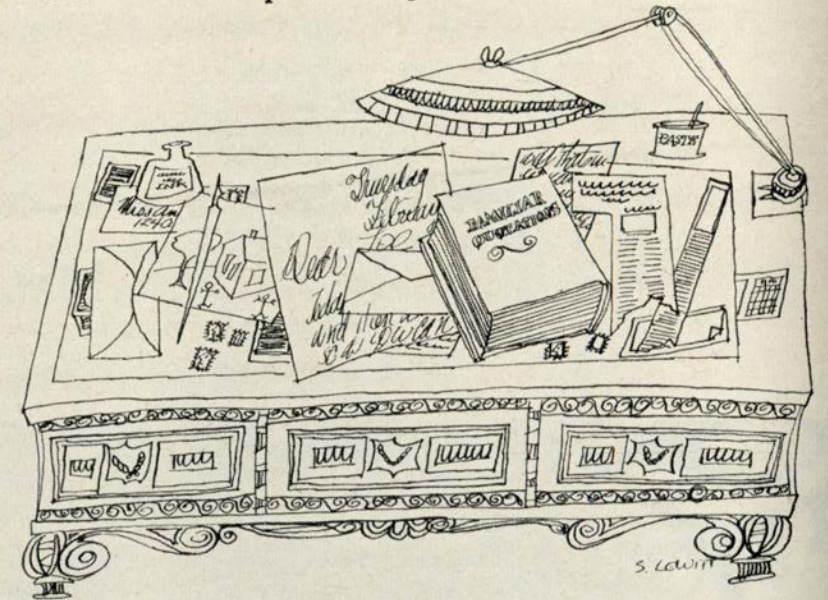
Sol LeWitt, Untitled, 1966



In 1953, Sol LeWitt (1928-2007) moved to New York City, where he studied at the Cartoonists and Illustrators School (now SVA/School of Visual Arts) and worked for Seventeen Magazine, making paste-ups, mechanicals and Photostats. He was then hired as a graphic designer in IM Pei's architecture firm.

Letter to a Boy

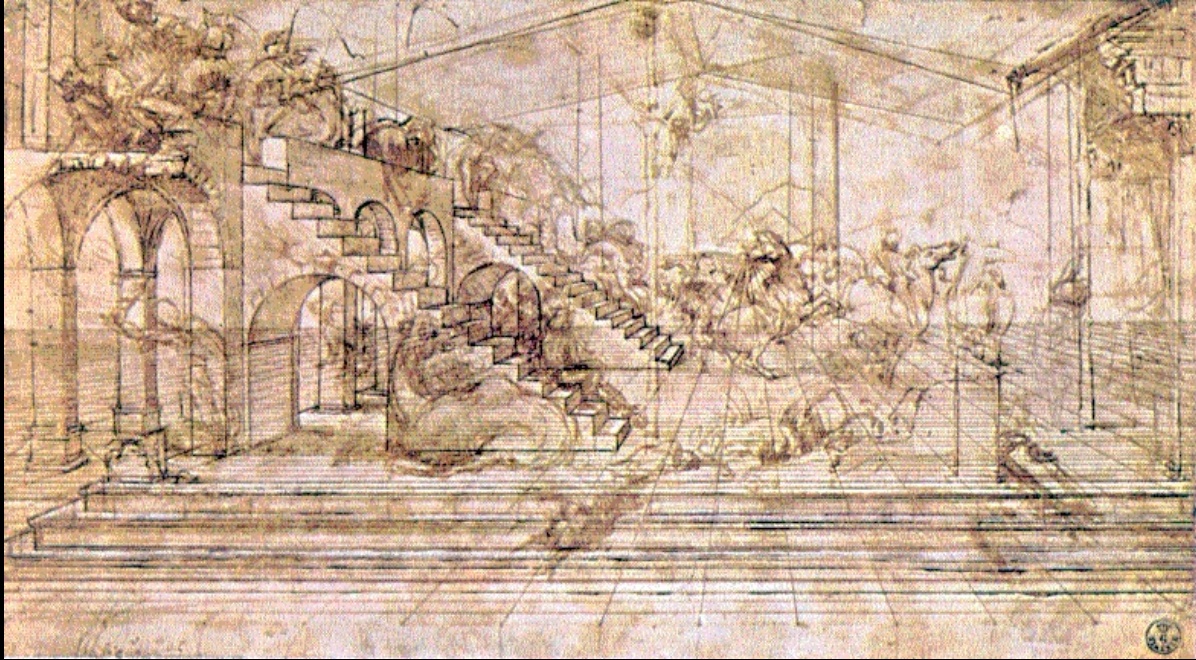
*If you find it difficult to write letters
that will keep the boys writing read on*



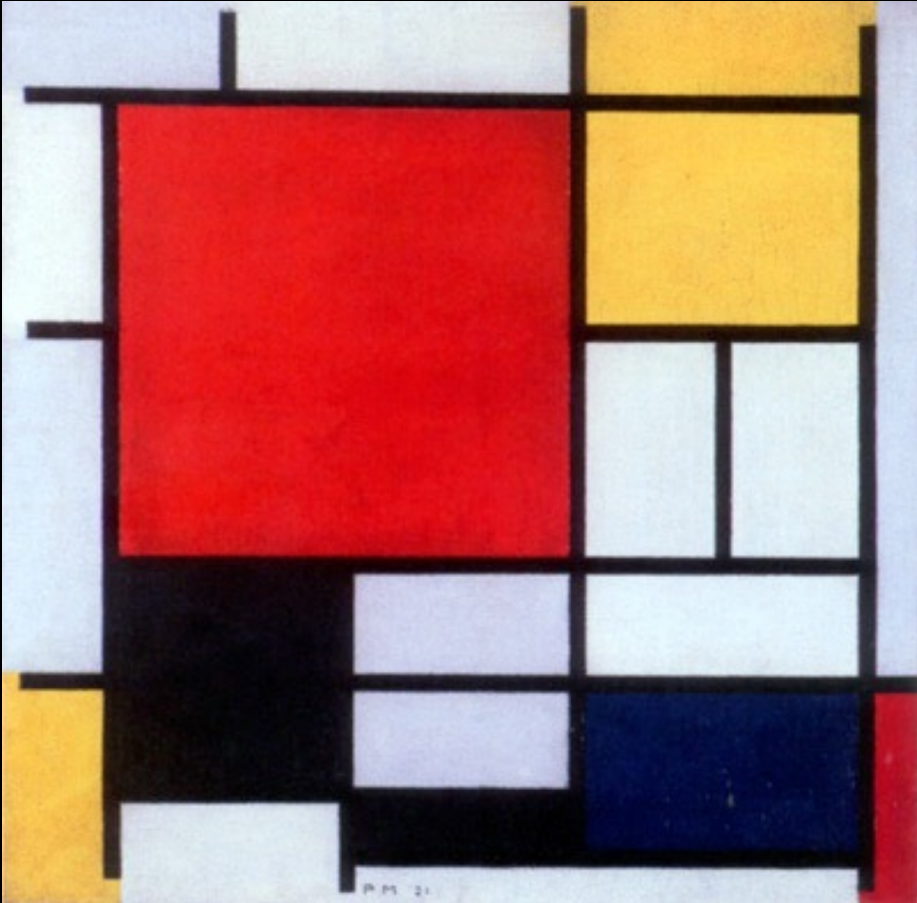
Sol LeWitt, Seventeen magazine illustration,
February 1955



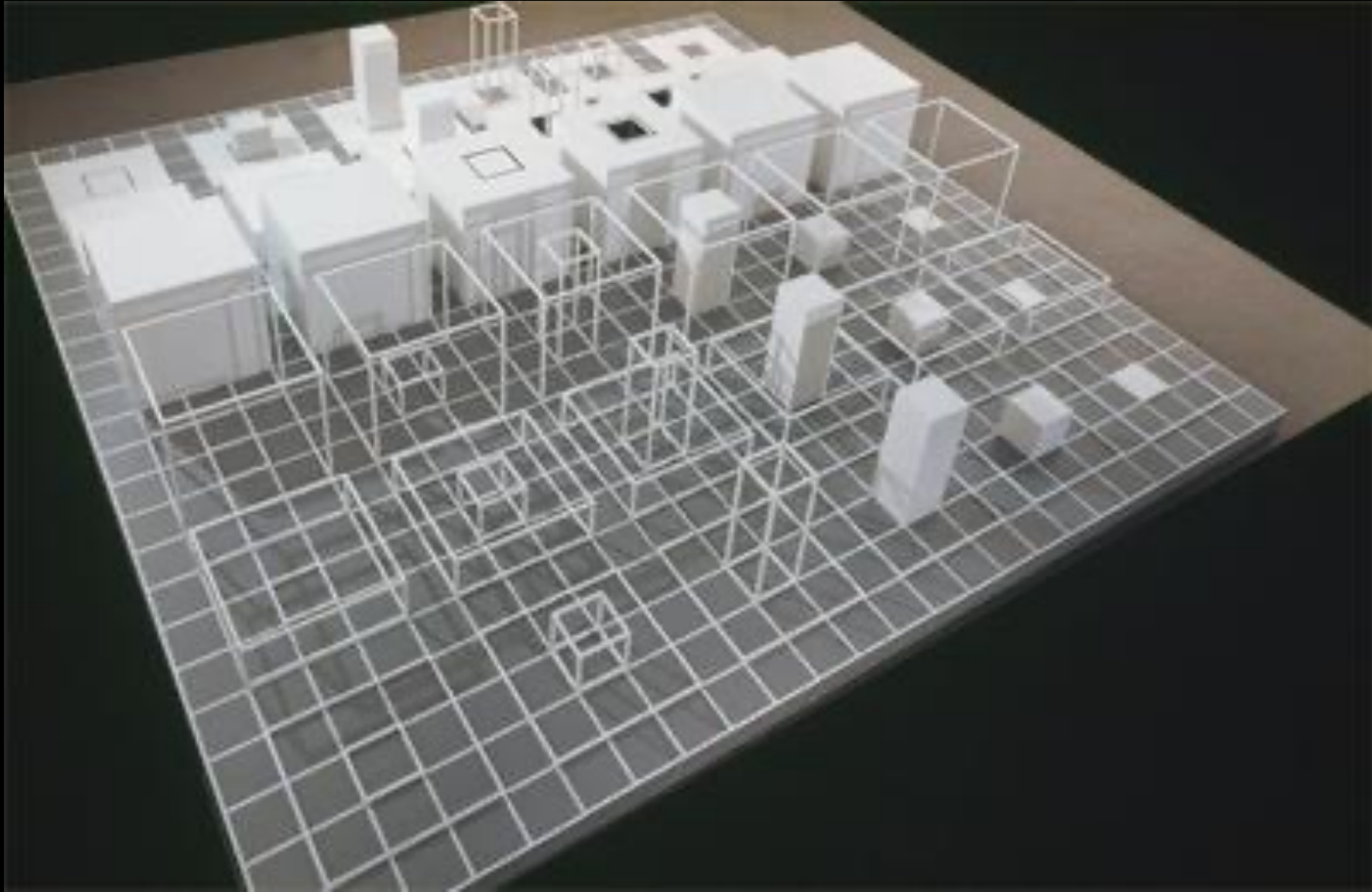
Sol LeWitt, Untitled, 1966



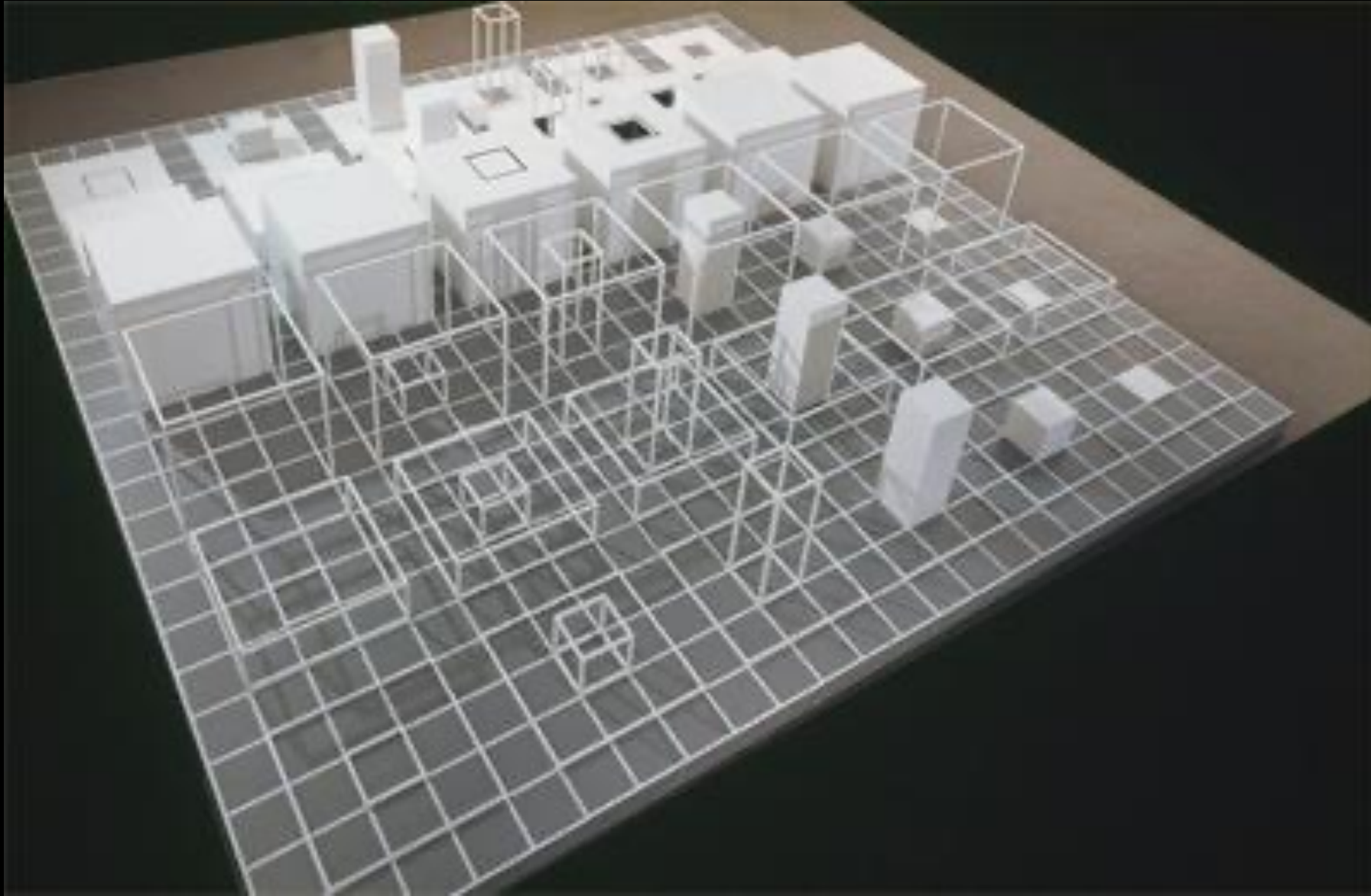
Leonardo da Vinci, Adoration of the Magi, 1481
Painting and the GRID



Piet Mondrian, Composition with Red, Yellow, Blue, and Black
1921
Painting and the GRID

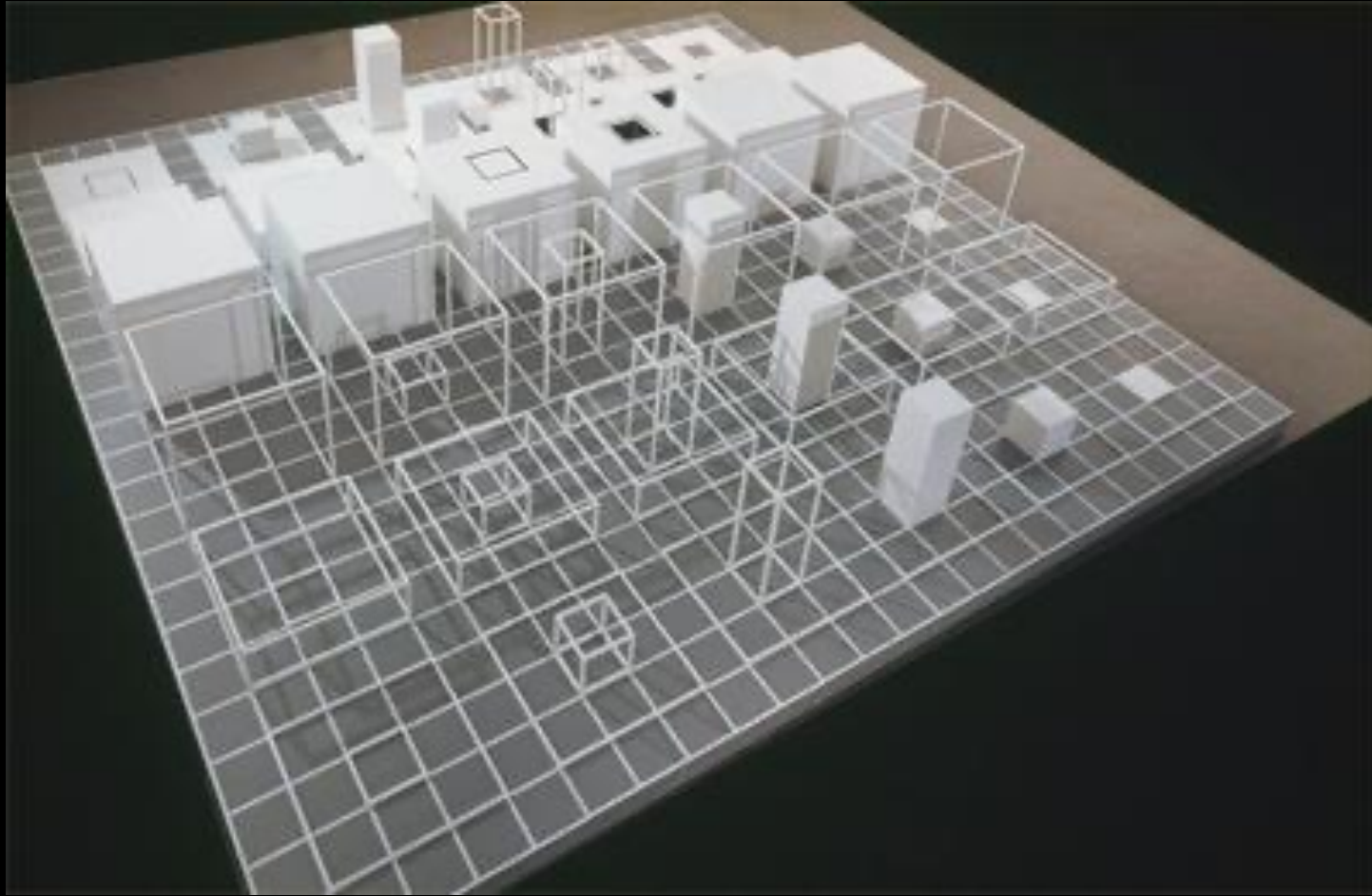


Sol LeWitt, Serial Project No. 1 ABCD, 1966



GRID
as
CONCEPTUAL
SYSTEM

Sol LeWitt, Serial Project No. 1 ABCD, 1966



Sol LeWitt, Serial Project No. 1 ABCD, 1966

In a text accompanying Serial Project, LeWitt wrote, "The aim of the artist would not be to instruct the viewer but to give him information. Whether the viewer understands this information is incidental to the artist; he cannot foresee the understanding of all his viewers. He would follow his predetermined premise to its conclusion avoiding subjectivity. Chance, taste, or unconsciously remembered forms would play no part in the outcome. The serial artist does not attempt to produce a beautiful or mysterious object but functions merely as a clerk cataloging the results of his premise."



Carl Andre, Equivalent, 1966



Carl Andre, Equivalent, 1966

"My idea of a piece of sculpture is a road. That is, a road doesn't reveal itself at any particular point or from any particular point."

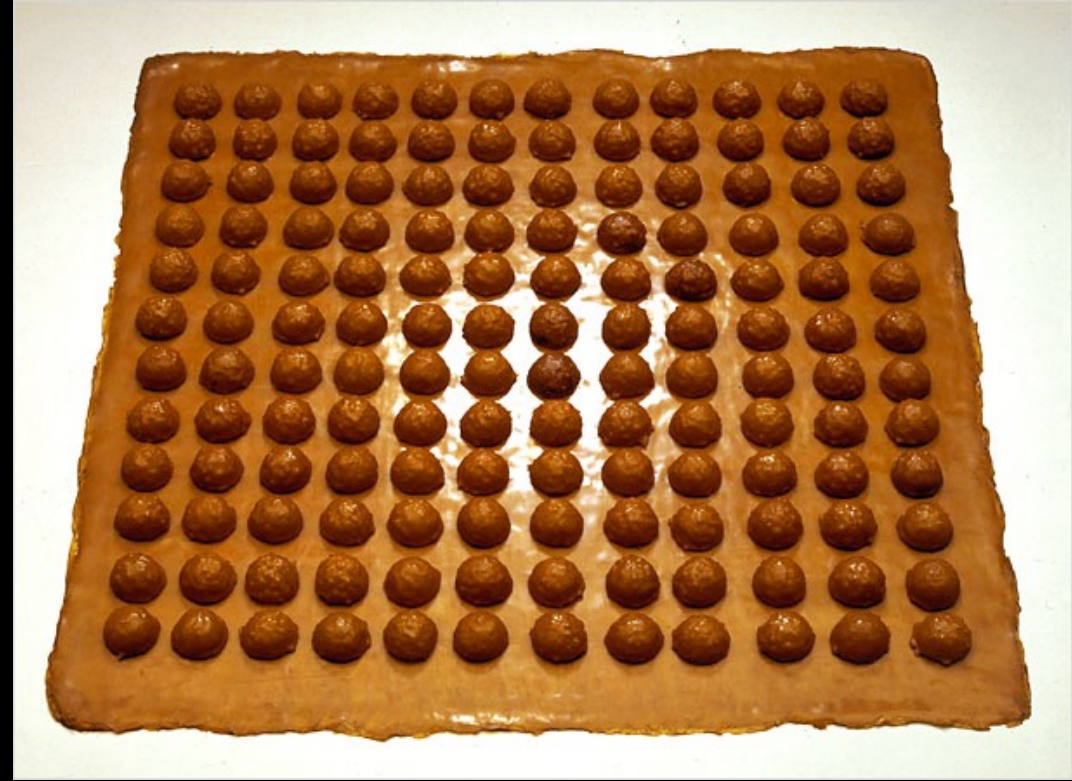
-- Carl André



Carl Andre, Aluminum and Magnesium, 1969



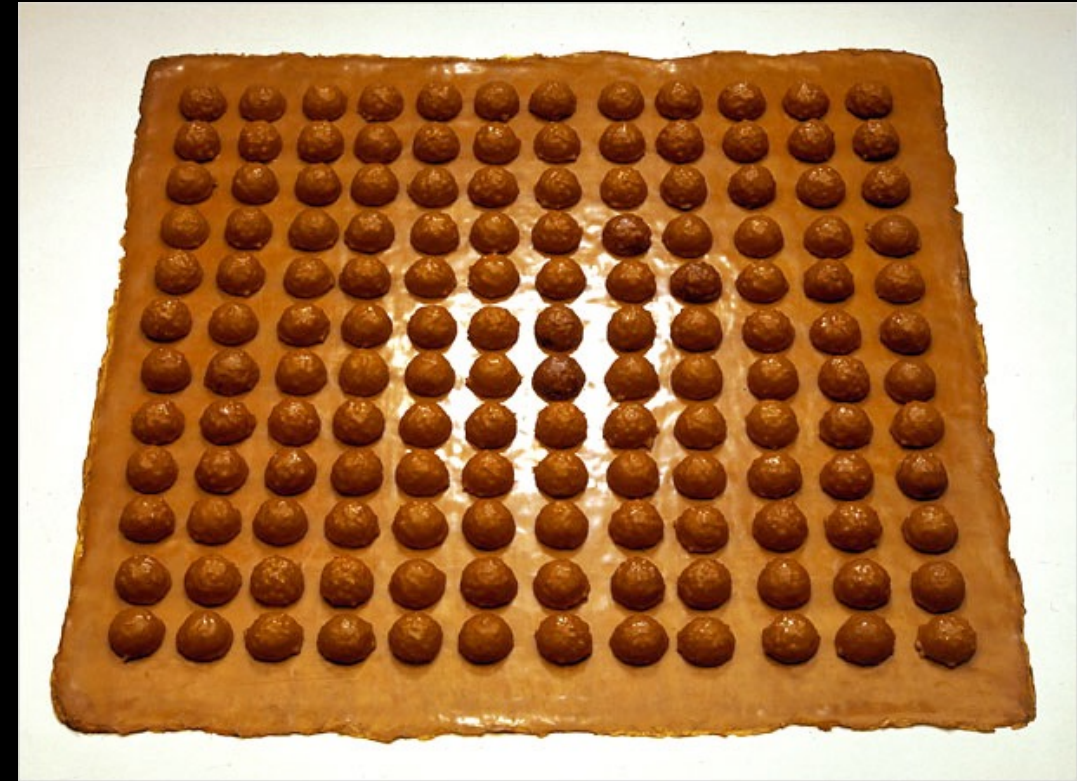
Carl Andre, Aluminum and Magnesium, 1969



Eva Hesse, Schema, 1967-68 Latex



Carl Andre, Aluminum and Magnesium, 1969



Eva Hesse, Schema, 1967-68 Latex

FLOORNESS



lying on Carl Andre's "144 Pieces of Zinc"
(1967)



Richard Serra, Serra Throwing Lead, 1969

to roll	to curve
to crease	to lift
to fold	to inlay
to store	to impress
to bend	to fire
to shorten	to flood
to twist	to smear
to dapple	to rotate
to crumple	to swirl
to shave	to support
to tear	to hook
to chip	to suspend
to split	to spread
to cut	to hang
to sever	to collect
to drop	of tension
to remove	off gravity
to simplify	of entropy
to differ	of nature
to disarrange	of grouping
to open	of layering
to mix	of felting
to splash	to grasp
to knot	to tighten
to spill	to bundle
to droop	to heap
to flow	to gather

to scatter	to modulate
to arrange	to distill
to repair	of waves
to discard	of electromagnetic
to pair	of inertia
to distribute	of ionization
to surfeit	of polarization
to complement	of refraction
to enclose	of simultaneity
to surround	of tides
to encircle	of reflection
to hide	of equilibrium
to cover	of symmetry
to wrap	of friction
to dig	to stretch
to tilt	to bounce
to bind	to erase
to weave	to spray
to join	to systematize
to match	to refer
to laminate	to force
to bond	of mapping
to hinge	of location
to mark	of context
to expand	of time
to dilute	of carbonization
to light	to continue

to roll
to crease
to fold
to store
to bend
to shorten
to twist
to dapple
to crumple
to shave
to tear
to chip
to split
to cut
to sever
to drop
to remove
to simplify
to differ
to disarrange
to open
to mix
to splash
to knot
to spill
to droop
to flow

to curve
to lift
to inlay
to impress
to pore
to flood
to smear
to rotate
to swirl
to support
to hook
to suspend
to spread
to hang
to collect
of tension
off gravity
of entropy
of nature
of grouping
of layering
of felting
to grasp
to lighten
to bundle
to heap
to gather

to scatter
to arrange
to repair
to discard
to pair
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to complement
to enclose
to surround
to encircle
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ART AS PROCESS

ART AS LANGUAGE

DELIQUESCENCE OF THE
ART OBJECT

Richard Serra, Verb List Compilation: Actions to Relate to Oneself, 1967-68



Richard Serra, Serra Throwing Lead, 1969

In an interview, Serra explained “When I first started, what was very, very important to me was dealing with the nature of process. So what I had done is I'd written a verb list: to roll, to fold, to cut, to dangle, to twist...and I really just worked out pieces in relation to the verb list physically in a space. Now, what happens when you do that is you don't become involved with the psychology of what you're making, nor do you become involved with the after image of what it's going to look like. So, basically it gives you a way of proceeding with material in relation to body movement, in relation to making, that divorces from any notion of metaphor, any notion of easy imagery.”



Richard Serra, Sign Board Prop, 1969



Richard Serra, Corner Prop, 1970



Richard Serra, Inverted House of Cards, 1969-70



Richard Serra, Tilted Arc, 1981



"The viewer becomes aware of himself and of his movement through the plaza. As he moves, the sculpture changes. Contraction and expansion of the sculpture result from the viewer's movement. Step by step the perception not only of the sculpture but of the entire environment changes."

-- Richard Serra



<https://vimeo.com/122126605>



People reacted viscerally to the piece, and one judge started a letter-writing campaign to have it removed. It cost 35,000.00 to have it dismantled and 50,000.00 to have it removed. On March 15, 1989, during the night, federal workers cut *Tilted Arc* into three pieces, remove it from Federal Plaza, and cart it off to a scrap-metal yard. Serra responded by saying "I don't think it is the function of art to be pleasing," he comments at the time. "Art is not democratic. It is not for the people."

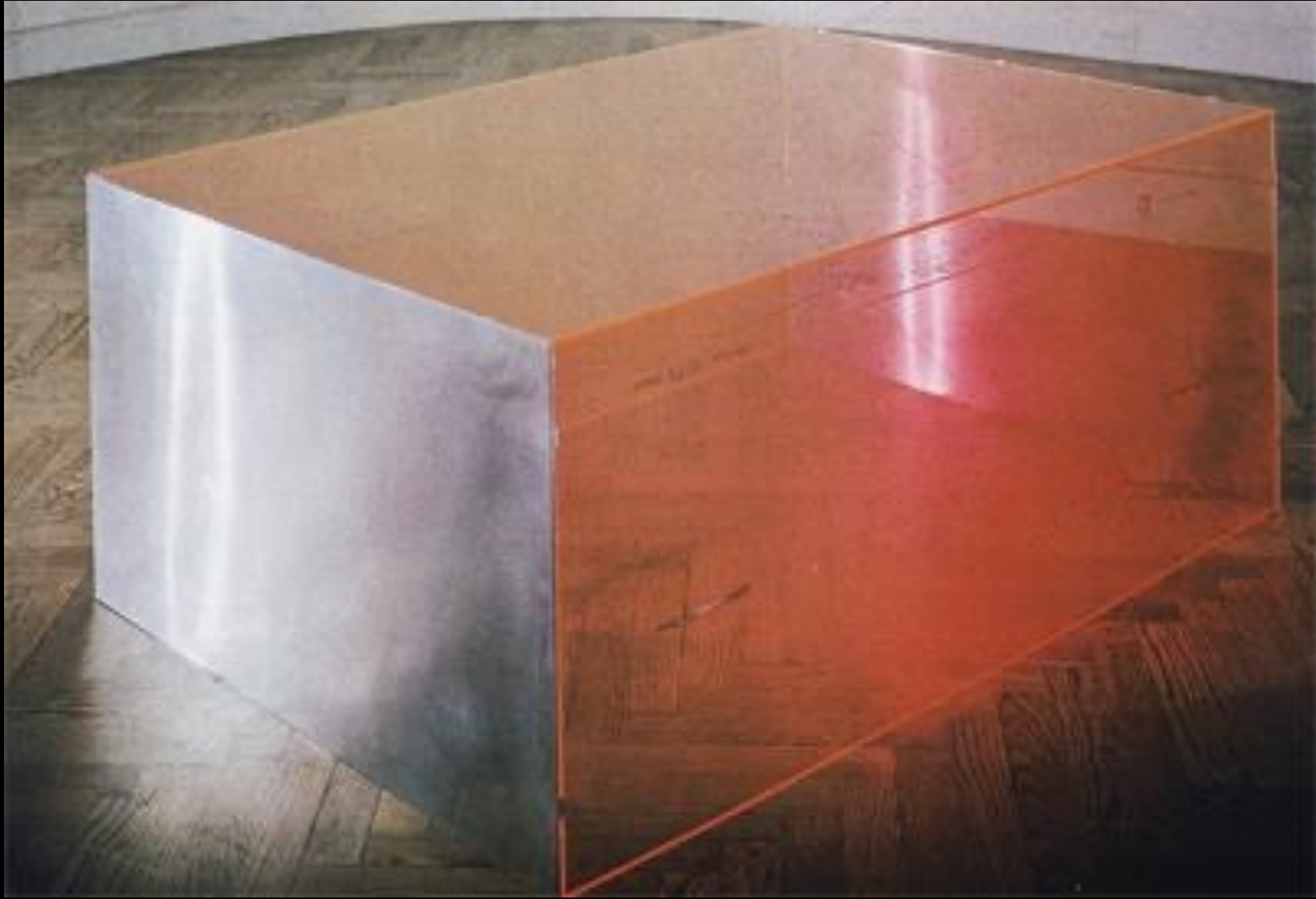


Richard Serra, Vortex, 2002

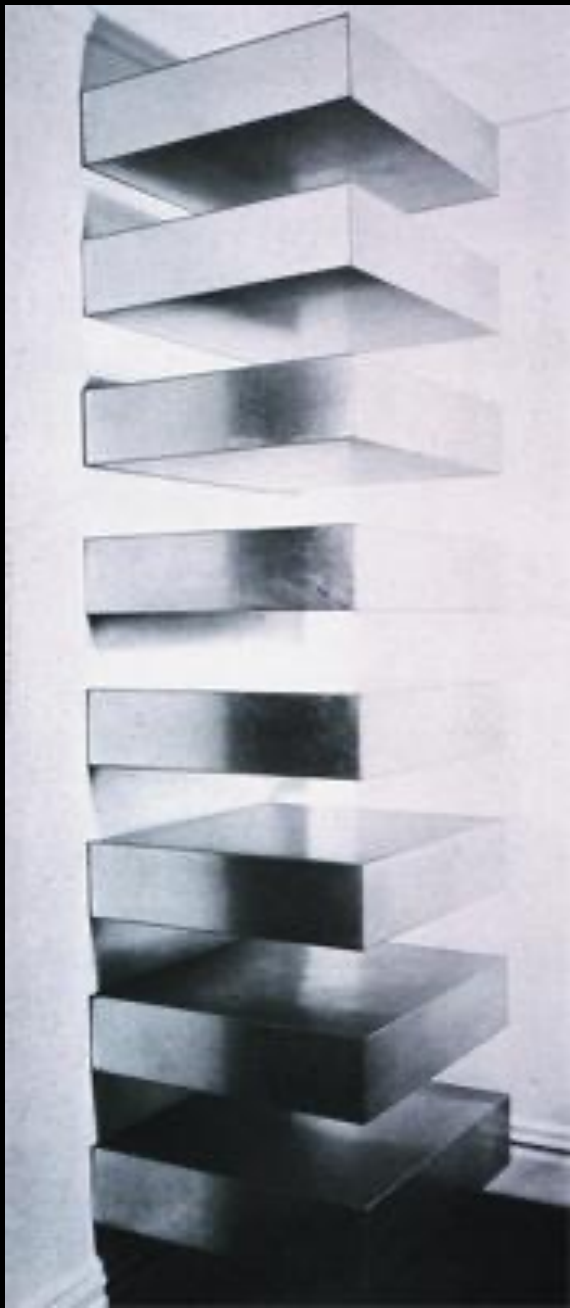


Donald Judd, Untitled, 1963
Donald Judd, Untitled, 1963





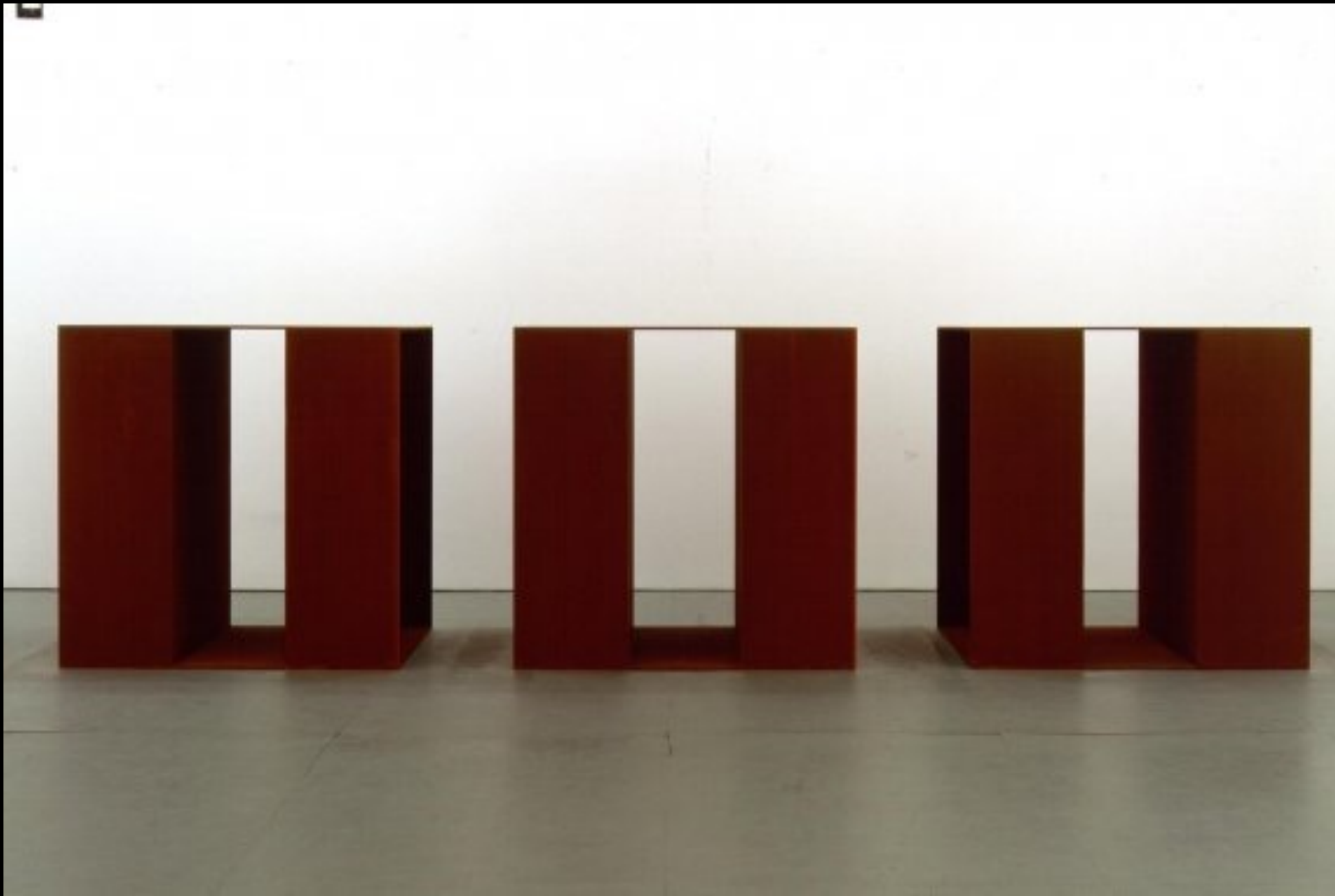
Donald Judd, Untitled, 1966



Donald Judd, Iron Stacks, 1965-8



Donald Judd, Untitled, 1966



Donald Judd, Untitled
Floor Sculpture Series,
1992

Corten Steel



“Just one thing after
another...” Donald Judd

Minimalism – “Just one thing after another” (Donald Judd)

- Like in painting (the figure & ground), artists desired to dismantle illusionism in sculpture
- To resist the figurative and Surrealist qualities of 40s and 50s sculpture
- Inspired by previous styles and movements, including the Readymade and Russian Constructivism
- The Readymade (the florescent light tube) multiplied to create a “near-serial generation of structures”
- Flavin assembled these in a pyramidal structure to pay homage to Vladimir Tatlin & his *Monument for the Third International* (a Russian Constructivist monument to modernity and industry ca. 1920)
- Flavin’s Catholic background adds a spiritual component to his sculptures (as cathedrals bathed in light?)
- The material and the immaterial



Dan Flavin
*Monument for
V. Tatlin*, 1969



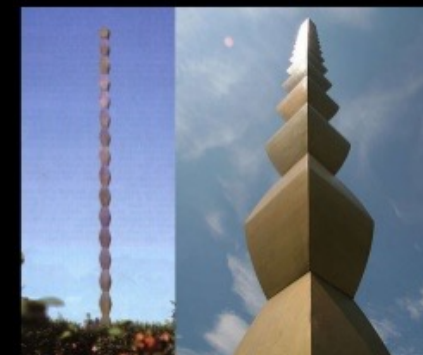
Chartres Cathedral
ca. 1200

Minimalism – “Just one thing after another” (Donald Judd)

- Sculptor Carl Andre also interested in Constructivist transparency of materials
- Sculpture as place
- To resist composition by arranging objects in a logical, orderly fashion as dictated by their inherent properties
- Flavin and Andre (also Judd, Morris & LeWitt) included in *Primary Structures*, an seminal Minimalist exhibition in 1966 at Jewish Museum in New York
- Reflected a continued movement away from illusionism, spiritual transcendence, and beauty in art
- A move away from “heroic scale, anguished decisions, historicizing narrative, valuable artifact” (Robert Morris), all pertinent to Abstract Expressionism

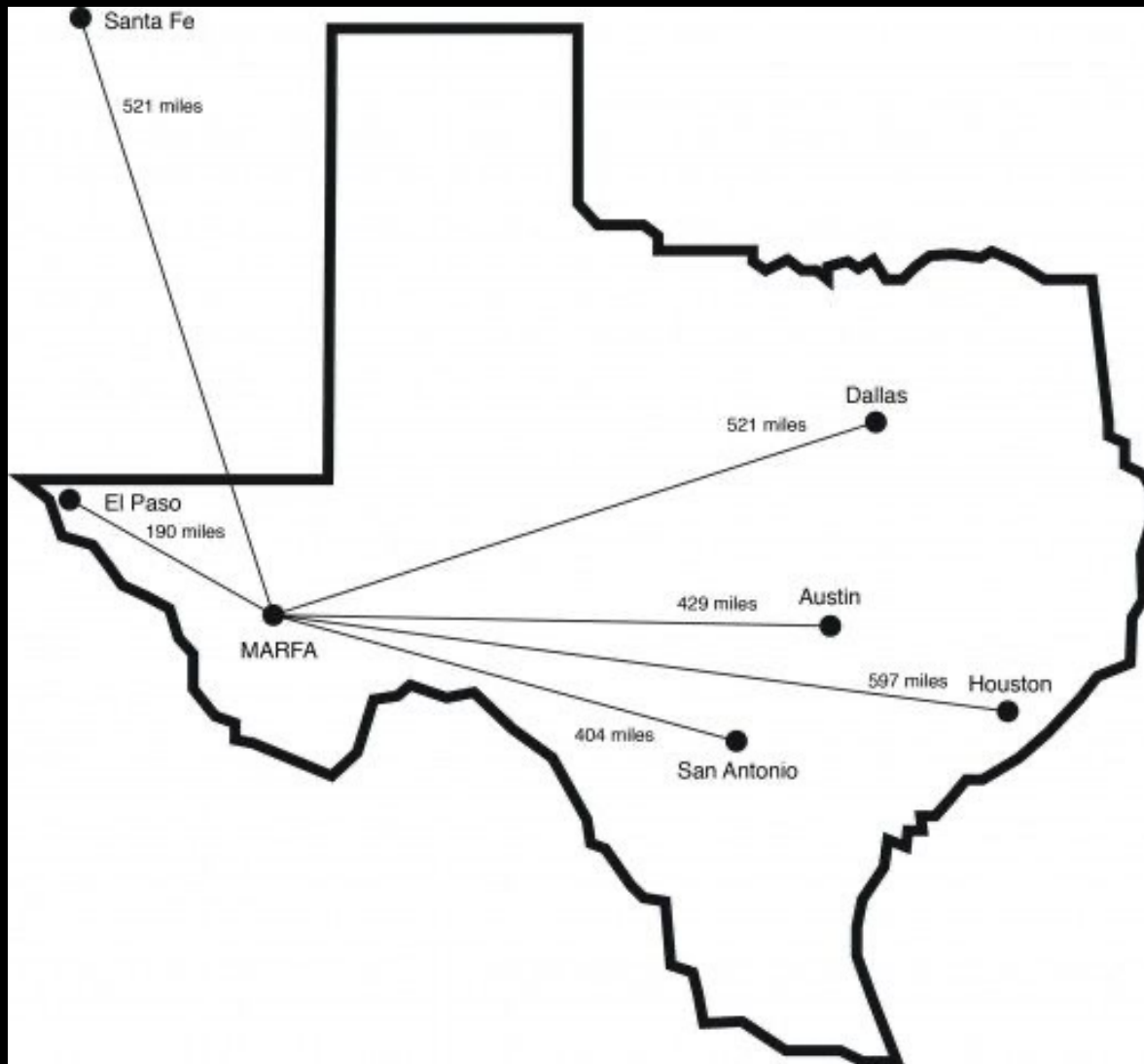


Carl Andre, *Equivalent VIII*, 1978



Brancusi, *Endless Column*, 1937-38

Marfa, Texas



<https://www.chinati.org/visit/forthistory.php>



Donald Judd, Permanent Installation, Chinati Foundation, Marfa, TX, c. 1979-1985







Elmgreen and Dragset, Prada Marfa, 2005
The artists called the work a "pop architectural land art project."micha