

SELECTIONS

From the Artists File



ARTISTS SPACE

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from the Artists File

September 21—October 19, 1985

Organized by Kay Larson

DOROTHY COCHRAN

NICHOLAS DeLUCIA

ROGER FREEMAN

ROBIN HILL

STEVEN KASHER

JULIAN LETHBRIDGE

THOR RINDEN

JACQUES ROCH

JESSICA STOCKHOLDER

PETER WHITE

TAD WILEY

PHILIP ZIMMERMAN



ARTISTS SPACE

223 West Broadway

New York

Acknowledgments

It is a pleasure to present our annual exhibition of **Selections from the Artists File**, now in its fifth year. Our satisfaction comes in part from the fact that the File clearly continues to prove over and over that it is a rich, growing and vital resource—so vital that it can allow for a new and very different exhibition each year. This season's **Selections** exhibition marks the first time we have worked with a curator who is not associated with the immediate Artists Space family. Kay Larson, Art Critic at **New York** magazine, graciously accepted our invitation to act as Guest Curator for this year's show. She tackled the task with enthusiasm and seriousness; we are extremely grateful to her both for the selection of the artists and their work, and for writing the catalogue essay. Her insights into the nature of the File itself, along with her perceptive analyses of the art help immeasurably in our understanding of both.

As she points out in her essay, a multitude of potential exhibitions exists in the File—just waiting for the right curator. Available free of charge to both user and artist, it continues to fulfill its original purpose of providing a viable outlet for the work of artists who are not involved in the established art community—whether by choice or due to the nature of the work. While there are many more commercial galleries today than there were in 1974 when the File was founded, there are also many more artists working in New York. And, it remains extremely difficult for artists without public recognition to find professional exhibition opportunities. The Artists File continues to provide active and valuable assistance to numerous artists whose work is not seen in galleries and museums.

Artists Space activities
are made possible by
the National Endowment
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EXXON,
R.H. Macy Company,
Mobil Foundation,
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Company,
Paine Webber,
and Philip Morris
as well as numerous
Friends.

But, to render coherent the immense number of slides and files and artists requires a degree of patience, imagination and knowledge of the New York artist community. Kay Larson has managed to do so with ease, and has been actively aided in her efforts by Kenji Fujita of the Artists Space staff. He has acted as the liaison for Kay Larson on all matters related to the show and catalogue, and has done an admirable job for which he deserves our heartfelt thanks.

I would also like to gratefully acknowledge the American Express Company which is generously sponsoring the exhibition and accompanying catalogue. This important support enables us to maintain the annual series at its highest level of quality, and will help to further encourage both artists and the public to make use of this valuable resource. We are deeply appreciative for their commitment to Artists Space and this exhibition.

And, finally, no exhibition is possible without the talents of the selected artists whose work, together, creates the experience of the exhibition. But their combined talents alone are not enough to complete the details of the preparation and organization of such a show: their cooperation and enthusiasm has contributed significantly to the success and pleasure of this show. To each of the participating artists, I extend our gratitude.

Susan Wyatt
Acting Executive Director

This exhibition has been made possible by the American Express Company on behalf of: American Express Travel Related Services Company, Shearson Lehman Brothers, IDS Financial Services Inc., Fireman's Fund Insurance Company, and American Express Bank Ltd.

Introduction by Kay Larson

The Artists File at Artists Space is a fascinating place. It contains the slides of roughly 2,000 New York State artists who are neither represented by commercial galleries nor familiar through solo exhibitions. In other words, it provides direct access to the thinking of artists who have not yet had their public say. To use the file, you inhabit the Artists Space basement for the two days necessary to project 4,000 slides (two per artist) in rapid sequence. Each pair of slides is keyed to a file folder. The carousel trays are not labeled, either by age, race, sex, personal history, or significant friendships; they are not even alphabetical. The process is as egalitarian as one can possibly imagine. The only conceivable hitch in its perfect equanimity comes from the artists whose work doesn't photograph well, or who are unable to muster the strength to supply the file with proper documentation.

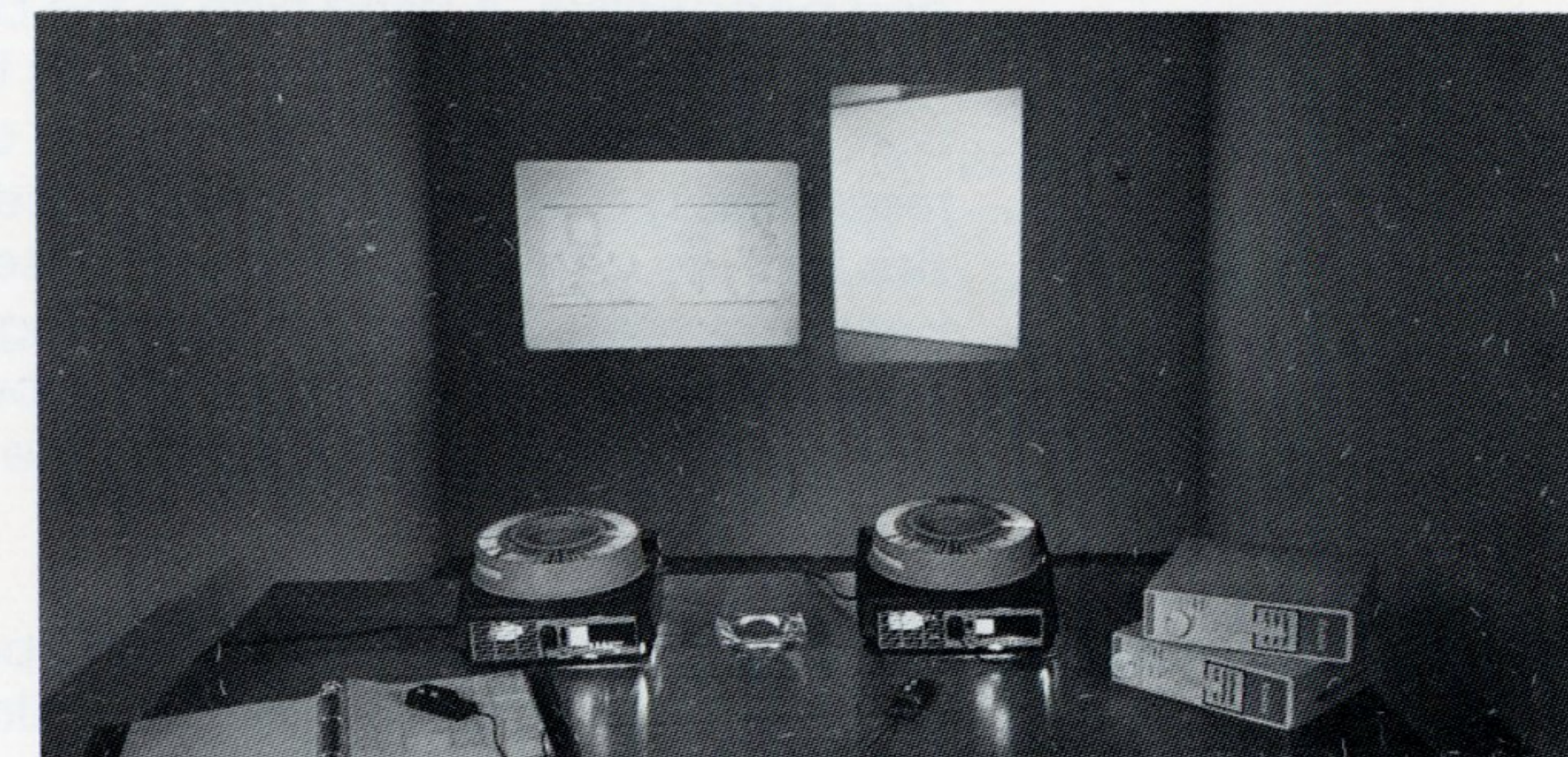
The Artists File is thus like a vast warehouse whose contents must be cross-indexed in the imagination of the user: a kind of art-library of workable notions, akin to one of the great libraries in a Borges story, encapsulating all ideas down to the most banal. Exposure to banality is merely part of the experience; any innovation repeated often enough is by definition a cliché. Artists in development are dismantling many years of received information on their way (one assumes) to insights of their own. The presence of clichés is not surprising, but the values of a cliché needs to be upheld: it offers proof of the power of certain ideas to reach all strata of the community of artists.

All artists (except those whose development has been arrested by success) are always thinking about and measuring themselves against their peers and predecessors. The cumulative weight of their allegiances can tell us which heroes survive in the climate of the moment, and which no longer have much to say. Observers of the latest trends in the galleries will be interested to learn that graffiti and the more garish variants of expressionism have not yet taken over the Artists File carousels. It would certainly be easy to put together a large "bad painting" show, full of flashy maneuvers and zapped up figures in free flight. But, it would be equally possible to find enough realists of different persuasions to satisfy the most eclectic disposition. Just as quickly, one could put together an information-deconstruction show, and apocalypse-science fiction show, or a rather good show of funky assemblage. Within the file is evidence of a shift from the private confessional modes of the 1970's to the outgoing expressive indicators of the 1980's. Minimalism is out like a light. Conceptualism is alive only as a poetic or analytic-poetic vehicle for piecing together words and images; it is no longer used to document semi-public actions.

Two sources of influence are nearly inescapable. Philip Guston's comic tragedies from the last ten years of his life have assumed an uncanny prescience, an ability to project the right escape route from formalism into figuration, and therefore have touched even artists who might not count them as direct inspira-

tion. Those whom Guston hasn't reached are likely to be indebted, at least partly, to Willem de Kooning and to gestural Abstract Expressionism, which seems to present the only other acceptable entry into a kind of naturalist abstraction (or abstracted naturalism) that could also count Arthur Dove and Charles Burchfield as prototypes. The successful rehabilitation of the early American modernists is reflected in the struggle of the slide file's artists to find a meaningful language for the once banned lyric beauty of nature.

In spite of the number of embryonic theme shows in the files, this exhibition is not meant to be thematic. An alert curator could perhaps have plucked out the next trend, but other shows can bear that responsibility. I preferred to look for the singular—for artists who knew what they wanted to do, even if what they wanted to do would not get them into the Whitney Biennial.



These nine artists and three photographers have a dozen different points of view. They are all strong individuals with an idiosyncratic connection to "movements" and an empathy for craft. Tad Wiley and Thor Rinden came of age during minimalism (Rinden was a student at Hunter College during the reign of Tony Smith) and have remained committed to its fundamentals while working out for themselves a personal relationship to their materials. Jacques Roch, age 50, was born and trained in France, and developed his cartoon-like line as a reaction against the dreamier aspects of French post-Surrealist abstraction. Jessica Stockholder constructs installations, but they are shaggy-dog-stories built out of industrial materials, aggressively non-organic and non-pictorial. Even Peter White, whose intensely-scaled paintings of forests could fit in any "new image" show of the last ten years, is English, with roots as much in Constable as in contemporary figuration.

The Artists Space slide file is known as an avenue to the larger world; the people who have completed the transition make an impressive list. The file is as egalitarian in terms of style as it is in terms of sex or race; anyone who sits through one of the marathon viewing sessions is prevented from too-rigid proscriptions about the nature of art in the 1980's. In that spirit of diversity, this exhibition has been put together.

Dorothy Cochran

In these large woodcuts, which Cochran prints from a huge flatbed press in her basement, elemental forces—storms, whirlwinds, deluges—compete with each other on a near-black surface whipped into movement by the paradoxically precise gouges of a burin. Cochran's exemplars include Blake, Dante, Durer, Ryder; landscape and cataclysm melt into one another in what for her are Biblical epics of creation. For an observer, however, they remain anchored on the page by the crisp, slightly grainy texture of the birch block; by a range of marks, from wispy to thunderous; and by intense, cottony blacks, which Cochran achieves by overprinting and slightly embossing each sheet. The gate to immateriality remains firmly materialized.

Nicholas DeLucia

These photographs at first seem to be creations of the darkrooms, they are composed entirely in the camera's eye, through the photographer's interest in extreme shifts of scale and perspective. A string high in the branches of a tree, catching the glow of a streetlight, appears to be a UFO streaking in from the stratosphere. Ice melting on a refrigerating coil resembles a giant pear strangely laced with wires. De Lucia insists that the camera's objectivity is itself an apparition, believable only as long as the photographer avoids showing us what the lens sees in *extremis*. In his best pictures the image stubbornly refuses to budge out of the inexplicable, even when its identity is known.

Roger Freeman

Freeman's currency is light. Glowing passages of white—a chef's toque, a set of gates and fences, a strip of beach seen through palms—irradiate the immediate surroundings and cast the rest into darkness. Since a photograph is a record of the passage of light, Freeman's pictures are objectifications of the temporality of his medium; they make light into a "thing" or an "object" intensified into surreality by simple enhancement of sunlight. In the series of gates and fences, and in another of billboards, light is squared off in the plane of the photograph. In the beach scenes, luminous swaths of sand hover indeterminately in a space of their own making. Their abstractness is eerily literal.

Robin Hill

With steel industrial strapping, or wax and cardboard, Hill "weaves" sculptures whose connecting parts depend for their strength on their ability to bind together. Citing Jackie Winsor as an important influence, Hill professes admiration for work whose shape and substance conform. The tall towers of near-black (or blackish-blue) strapping become a kind of woven three-dimensional drawing. The shorter pillars and tubes are made by stacking circles of cardboard as a core or spine for molten wax; when the wax cools, the materials undergo a phase change into a third, more stable and homogeneous state. The gentleness of this sculptural metaphor is enhanced by the wax's pitted, translucent sensuality, which lends these works their persona or sense of presence.

Steven Kasher

In the Biblical Book of Job, Kasher has found a story of suffering, renunciation and triumph that, he feels, has wide application even in an age that resists mysticism. His photographic book uses images to create a separate but interwoven narrative reflecting and commenting on the power of the text. Kasher likes the fact that a few of these pictures are widely known and therefore part of our common experience; others present strictly private associations. Some images are from his own photographs. Others have been borrowed from photographers whom Kasher admires: Richard Avedon, Harry Callahan and Robert Frank. The rest are picked from old books, postcards, or antique prints, such as the picture of the death masks of Delacroix and two other artists, an image which speaks to him of creativity and mortality.

Julian Lethbridge

The spontaneity of Lethbridge's nearly calligraphic black gestures is deceptive. He provides a foundation by first laying down a pattern or template and stenciling in a faint gray set of marks, a "frame" which may be repeated several times within a single picture. The regularity of his paintings and drawings is contradicted by the application of a second layer of pigment, this time pure black and brushed in by hand. One senses that Lethbridge likes the way spontaneous gestures of the hand in Japanese art seem to float on a more studied background.

Thor Rinden

By laying down a set of rules for the shape of his paintings (repeatable with slight variations) Rinden can concentrate on the fine gradations of texture, color, and handwork in the paint-surface. Each canvas is actually two: an outer "frame" about six or eight inches wide, and an inner square mounted with just a hairline crack between them. Since the crack can separate the two surfaces without immersing Rinden in the problems of painting a line, each part of the picture can become its own arena for pigment. The pigment itself is richly various: sanded, scuffed, layered, sometimes mixed with wax, sometimes buffed to a soft shine. One is reminded of Josef Alber's color-exercises, in which an economy of means does not produce minimal results.

Jacques Roch

Upset by what he considered the excessive softness and sentimentality of French painting in the 1950's, Roch retaliated by drawing cartoons, whose sharp black-and-white lines appealed to him for their emotional and formal precision. The legacy of that early interest can be seen in his recent paintings. In a red or blue (or, rarely, black) expanse of paint are suspended creatures drawn with a few simple lines. Roch thinks of them as male and female principles. They are transparent, like archtypal beings from myth or nightmare.

Jessica Stockholder

In the assemblage tradition, artists pick up junk and convert it into fine art; Stockholder insists that it retain its character as junk. She speaks of stripping art of the aura of preciousness it acquires in museums. Her installations, built up of industrial or cast-off materials (aluminum studs, wire lath, plaster, furniture, wood, sheetrock, and so on), are not elegant or easy. Her blue-collar constructivism is a "concrete poetry" of common things.

Peter White

Searching for a way to approach landscape from a contemporary viewpoint, White was struck by the complicated issues of space and light that exist within a grove of trees. His forests are almost violently lush. Their sense of the heroic is assisted by their scale: each canvas is the width and height of White's reach when his hand holds a paint stick. Each seems big enough, in other words, to be walked into, but for the apparent density of timber. White's new work includes the stark trunks of charred birches; burned forests present a different rhythmic pace.

Tad Wiley

From two-inch blocks of yellow pine, Wiley saws and glues angular forms and covers their front sides with a thick skin of marine enamel. They extensively refer to minimalism's well-fought-over skirmish line between painting and sculpture, but their increasing subtlety comes to their assistance. The pine itself is a substantial chunk of matter, too thick to be anything but grossly physical, and its angles are unusual enough to suggest some organic basis for its shape. These faintly humanoid references are insistently denied, however, by the glossy commercial sheen of a polyurethane-based paint.

Philip Zimmerman

These 30 drawings comprise a book of visionary characters based on Zimmerman's observations of the underworld of the mind—themes of obsession, love and death, and the "wedding" of good and evil, beauty and horror. He says that the project came into focus for him when, in a "caffeine den" in Portland, Oregon, he sat near a strangely dressed man who announced to his female companion, "Fear not, I am with thee." The Biblical promise of release is just a teaser, however. Zimmerman remains fascinated with Hell. In these felt pen drawings, the naif discovers a gift for nightmare.

The Revelation
1983
woodcut
40 x 30"



Dorothy Cochran

Born Teaneck, NJ, 1944

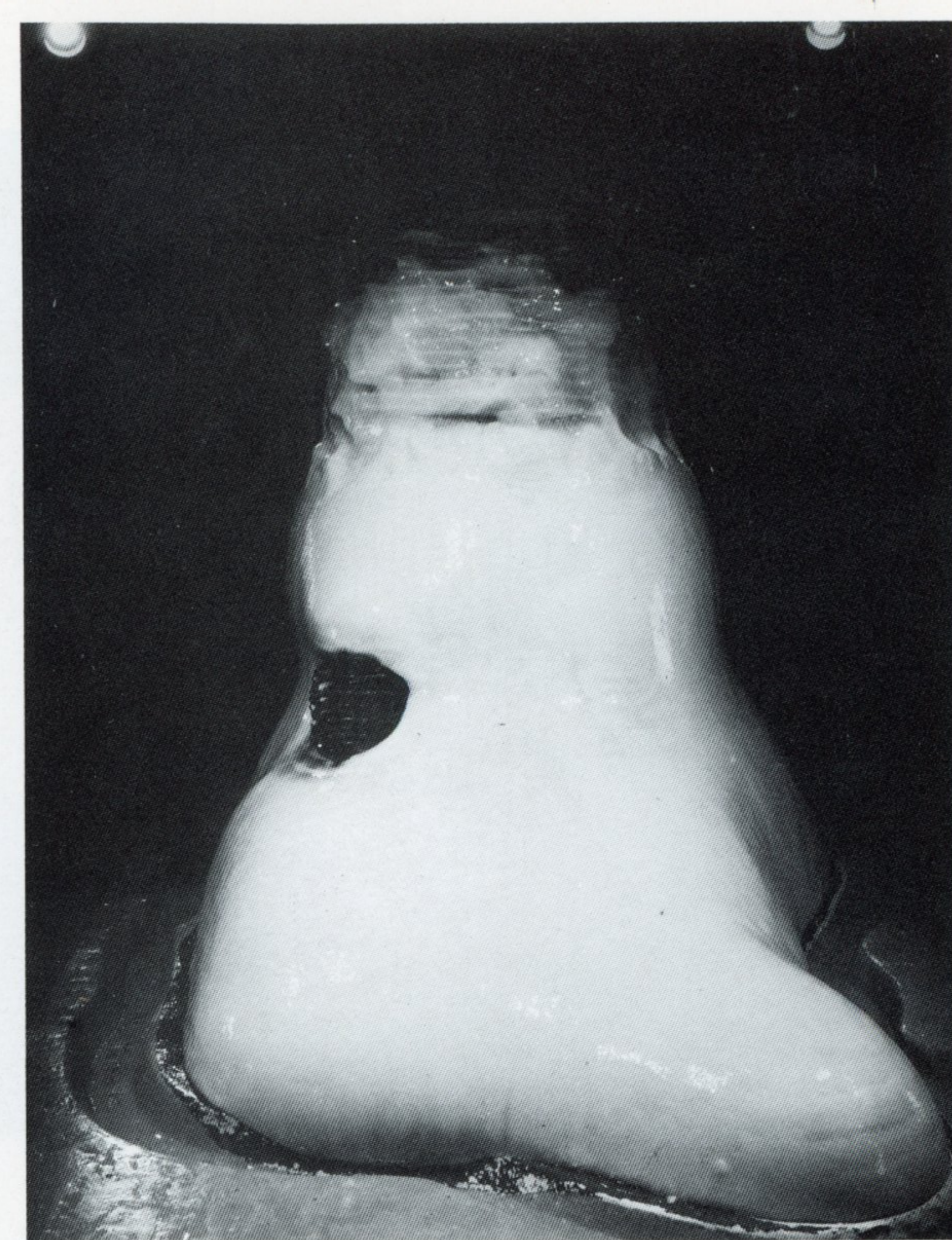
Education MFA, Columbia University, New York, NY, 1984
MA, Montclair State College, NJ, 1970
BA, Montclair State College, NJ, 1966

Selected Exhibitions

37th National Boston Printmakers, The Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, MA, 1985
New Artists-Mixed Media, Exhibition Space at 112 Greene Street, New York, 1984
Selected Works, Small Walls, New York, 1984
Hot-Town Summer in Art City, Art City, New York, 1984
Edward Williams College, Hackensack, NJ, 1981 (one person)
Five Women Artists, Douglas College, Douglas, NJ, 1980
Gallery of YM-YWHA, Clifton, NJ, 1979 (one person)

Untitled
1981
photograph
17 x 13"

"At the Miami Seaquarium of an exhibit designed to show the formation of an iceberg. Unfortunately, the refrigeration system wasn't functioning properly, and the iceberg was melting."



Nicholas DeLucia

Born Garfield, NJ, 1949

Education MFA, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY, 1978
BFA, School of Visual Arts, New York, NY, 1976

Selected Exhibitions

U.S. Federal Court Building, New York, 1981 (one person)
Floating Foundation of Photography, New York, 1980
Hansen Galleries, New York, 1979 (one person)



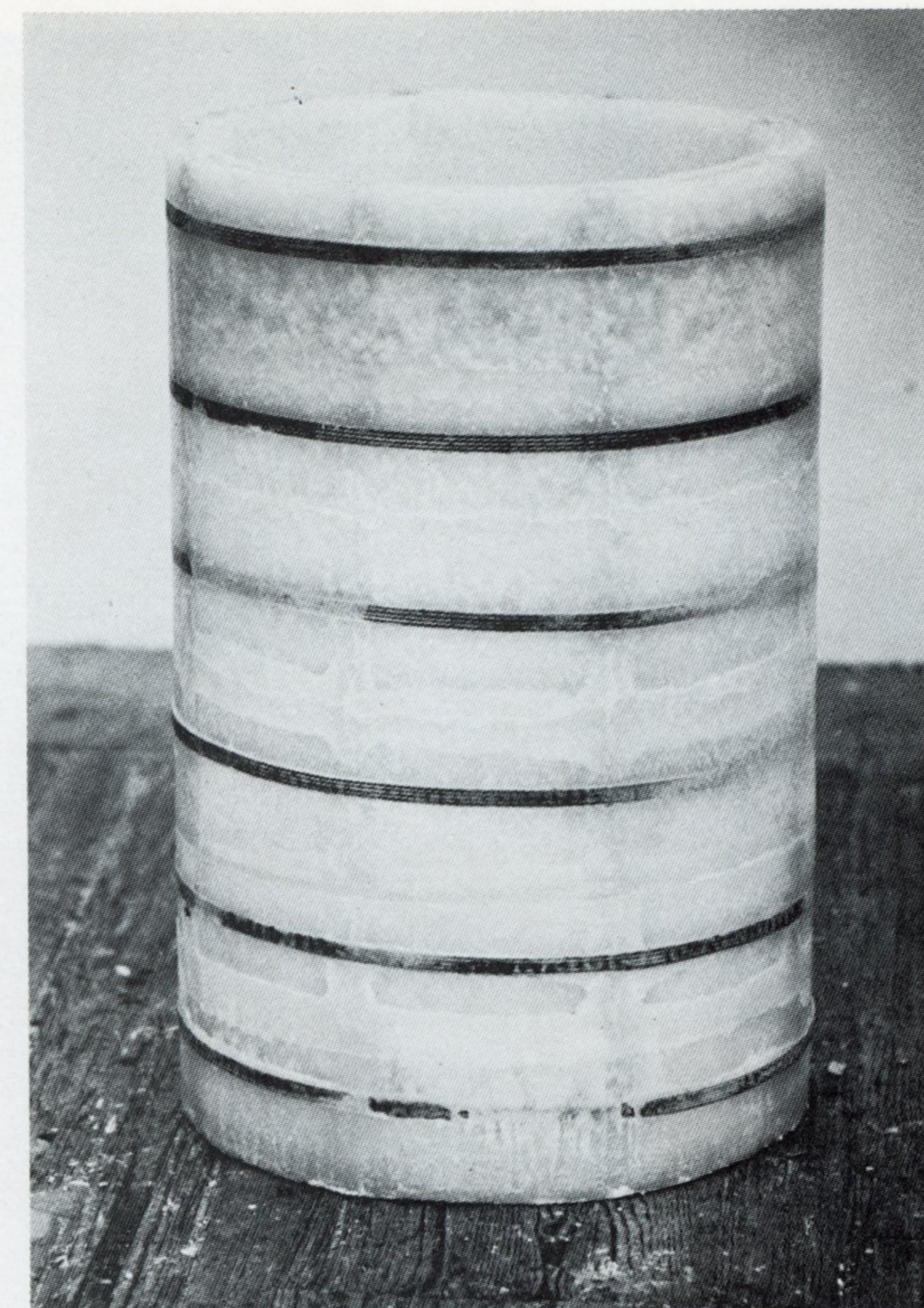
Atlantic City
1980
silver print
18 x 22"

Roger Freeman

Born Chicago, IL, 1945

Education MS Photography, Institute of Design, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, IL, 1976
Columbia College, Chicago, IL, 1972
University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, 1968
BA, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, 1967
University of Illinois, Urbana, IL, 1963-65

Selected Exhibitions Prairie State College, Chicago Heights, IL, 1984 (one person)
Second Sight, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, Traveling Exhibition, 1981
39th Western New York Exhibition, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY, 1981
Invisible Light, SUNY Albany Gallery, Albany, NY, Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition, 1980
Auto as Icon, George Eastman House, Rochester, NY, 1979
The Syracuse Show, Everson Museum, Syracuse, NY, 1978
N.A.M.E. Gallery, Chicago, IL, 1977



Untitled
1984
wax and plywood
36 x 18 x 18"

Robin Hill

Born Houston, TX, 1955

Education BFA, Kansas City Art Institute, MO, 1977

Selected Exhibitions **Small Works 1985**, 80 Washington Square East Galleries, New York, 1985
Trees and Trails, Arsenal Gallery, New York, 1984
Sculpture Survey, Virtual Garrison, New York, 1984
Small Walls, New York, 1984 (one person)
A Place Apart, Brooklyn, NY, 1983 (one person)
Winter Solstice Show, A Place Apart, Brooklyn, NY, 1982

I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVETH.

19:25



from Illustrations
to the Book of Job
1984-85
photograph
11 x 11"
from a set of 24 photographs

Steven Kasher

Born New York, NY, 1954

Education New York Studio School, NY, 1973-75
Columbia University, New York, NY, 1972-73
Academy of Fine Arts, University of Florence, Italy, 1971-72

Selected Exhibitions Four Walls Gallery, Hoboken, NJ, 1984
The Dead Blimpie Show, 105 Hudson Street, New York, 1984
The Ritz Show, Ritz Hotel, Washington, DC, 1983



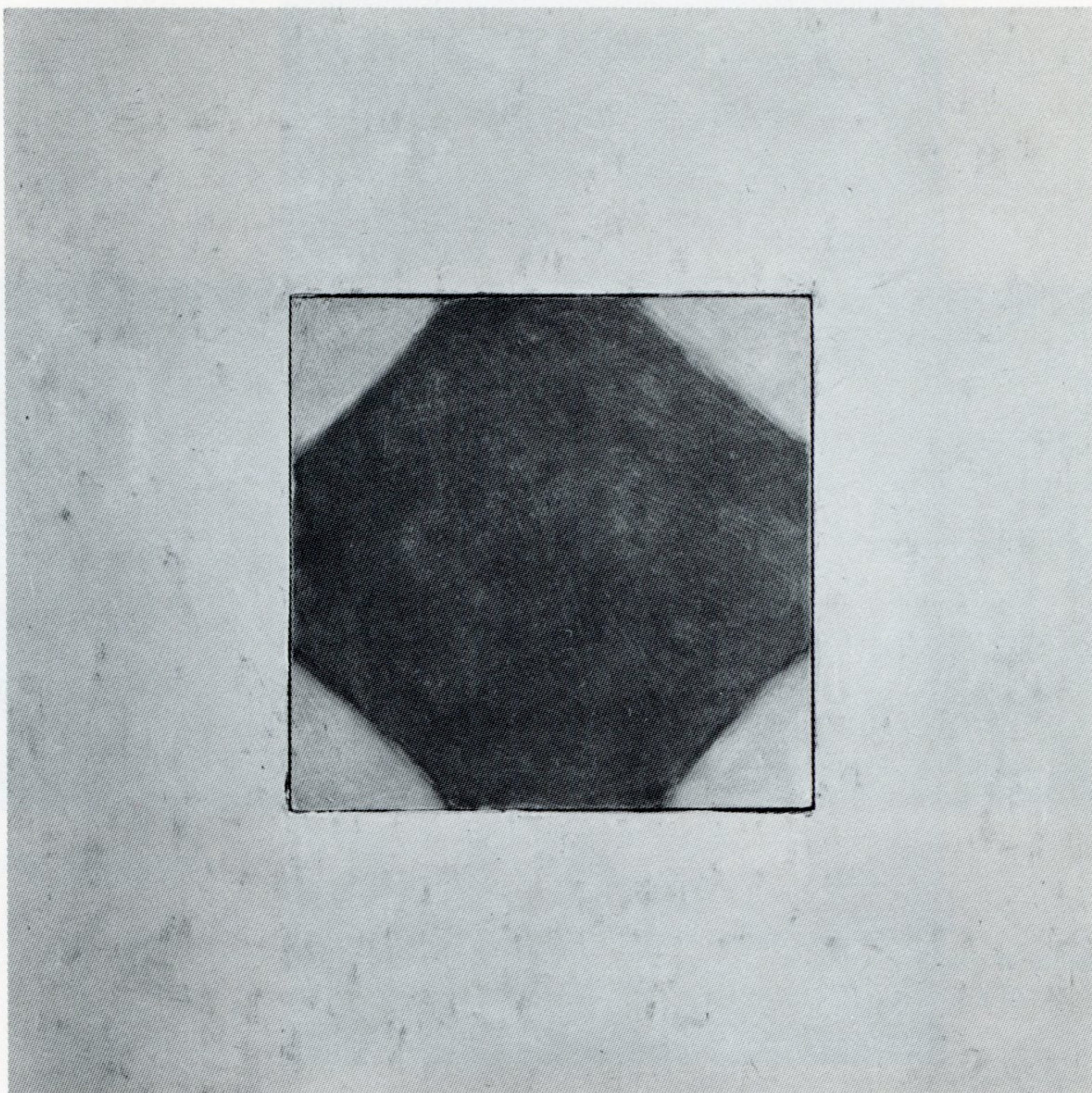
Jan
1981
gouache on paper
41 x 100"

Julian Lethbridge

Born Columbo, Sri Lanka, 1947

Education Cambridge University, England, 1967-69
Winchester College, England, 1961-66

Selected Exhibitions **Organic Abstractions**, H.F. Manes Gallery, New York, 1984
Drawings of a Different Nature, Portland Center for the Visual Arts, OR, 1980
Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts Exhibition, Leo Castelli Gallery, New York, 1980
Selections, The Drawing Center, New York, 1979



Loxed In
1985
24 x 24"

oil on joined canvas panels

Thor Rinden

Born Marshalltown, IA, 1937

Education MA, Hunter College, New York, NY, 1968
BS, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA, 1959

Selected Exhibitions **On, Of and About Paper**, The Rotunda Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, 1985
Hundreds of Drawings, Artists Space, New York, 1984
Repeating Images, The Rotunda Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, 1983
Cobble Hill Printmaking Workshop, The Brooklyn Museum, NY, 1980
Brooklyn '80, The Brooklyn Museum, NY, 1980
New Art Auction and Exhibition, Artists Space, New York, 1977



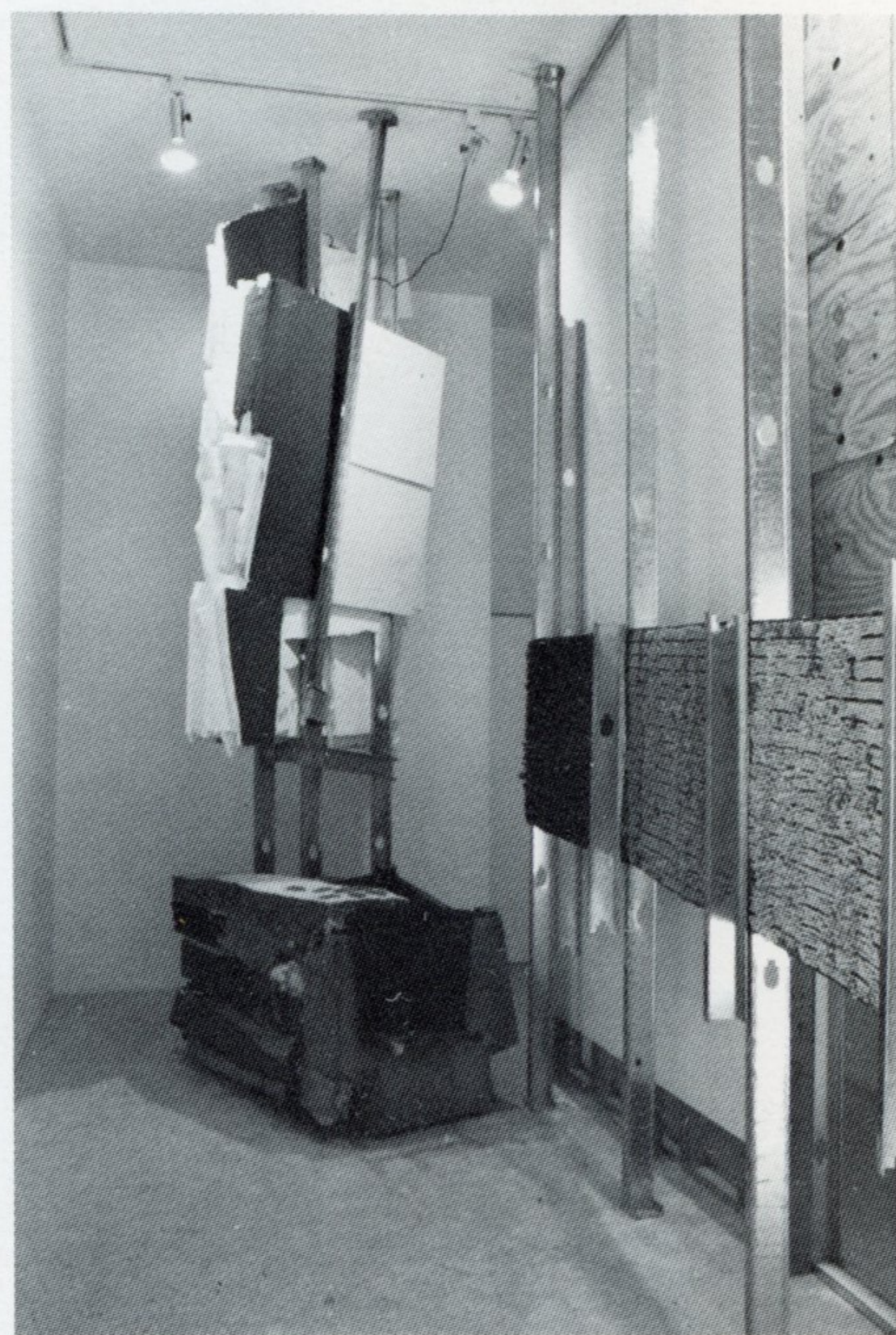
The Sound Comes Closer
1984
acrylic on canvas
96 x 64"

Jacques Roch

Born Lyons, France, 1934

Education Beaux Arts de Paris, France, 1956-59
Beaux Arts de Lyons, France, 1952-56

Selected Exhibitions **Five French Artists Living in New York**, French Embassy, New York, 1985
Facchetti-Burk Gallery, New York, 1984 (one person)
Five Artists, Galerie Paul Facchetti, Zurich, Switzerland, 1984
O/C, Proctor Art Center, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, 1984
East of East Village, Dramatis Personae Gallery, New York, 1984
Just Above Midtown/Downtown, New York, 1983
Drian Galleries, London, England, 1966 (one person)
Galerie Camille Renault, Paris, France, 1963 (one person)
Maison des Beaux Arts de Paris, France, 1959 (one person)
Biennale de Paris, France, 1957



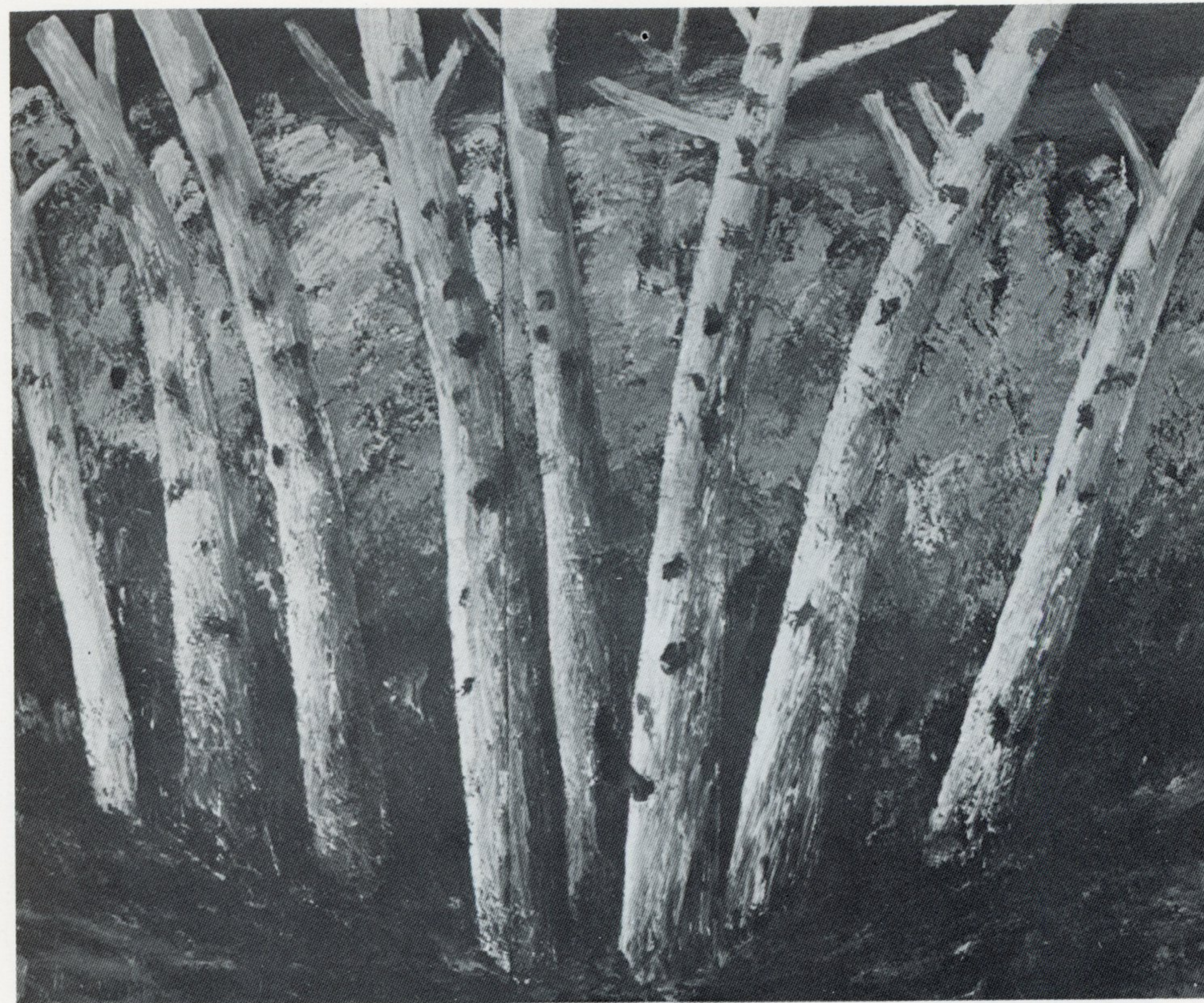
Untitled sculpture
1985
furniture, concrete, styrofoam,
wood, sheetrock, aluminum
studs, plaster and paint
156 x 216 x 72"

Jessica Stockholder

Born Seattle, WA, 1959

Education MFA, Yale University, New Haven, CT, 1985
BFA, University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, 1982

Selected Exhibitions Installation, Malinda Wyatt Gallery, New York, 1985
Artculture Resource Center, Toronto, Canada, 1984
Open Space Gallery, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, 1982



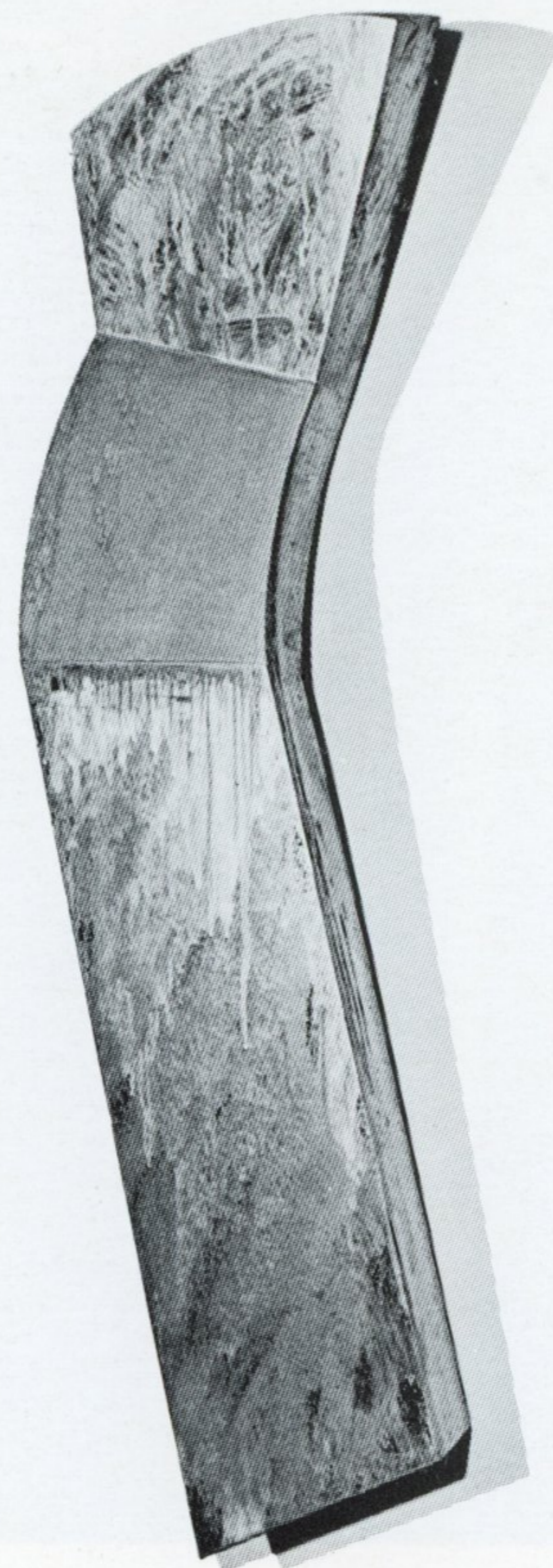
Untitled
1985
oil, wax and auto body filler
on wood
96 x 116"

Peter White

Born Sunderland, England, 1949

Education BA, Hornsey College of Art, London, England, 1973
Luton Art School, England, 1966-68

Selected Exhibitions **Nature Morte**, Edward Totah Gallery, London, 1985
Art Palace, New York, 1985
Spacex Gallery, Exeter, England, 1985 (one person)
New Art New York, Newcastle Polytechnic Gallery, England, 1983
New Talent, Marion Locks Gallery, Philadelphia, PA, 1983
New Talent, Hal Bromm Gallery, New York, 1983
Bath Festival Exhibition, Bath University, England, 1982 (one person)
Swindon Museum and Art Gallery, England, 1983 (one person)
New Works, Redfern Gallery, London, 1980
Open and Closed Book, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 1978
Young British Printmakers, ICA, London, 1978



The Silver King
1985
marine and aluminum enamel,
and epoxy putty on wood
50 x 17 x 5½"

Tad Wiley

Born Needham, MA, 1955

Education BFA, State University of New York, College at Purchase, NY, 1978
Saint Lawrence University, Canton, NY, 1974-76

Selected Exhibitions Craig Cornelius Gallery, New York, 1985
Leslie Cecil Gallery, New York, 1984 (one person)
New Spiritual Abstraction of the 1980's, Nohra Haime Gallery,
New York, 1984
Projects, Institute for Art and Urban Resources, P.S. 1, Long
Island City, NY, 1983 (one person)
Selections, The Drawing Center, New York, 1980



Cezar Boo 2 (first light)
1980-85
felt marker on paper
12¾ x 16¼"
from a book of 30 drawings

Philip Zimmerman

Born McMinnville, OR, 1956

Education BFA, Pacific Northwest College of Art, Portland, OR, 1979

Selected Exhibitions **Art for Public Consumption**, Ten on Eight, New York, 1985
Fashion Moda, Bronx, NY, 1984
Group Sculpture Show, Civilian Warfare, New York, 1984
Portland Center for the Visual Arts, OR, 1979



The Artists File at Artists Space is a file of New York State artists not represented by commercial or cooperative galleries. The Artists File is used for the selection of shows at Artists Space as well as by dealers, curators and collectors.

To be represented in the Artists File, bring or send in your slides and any other descriptive material along with a resume bearing your current New York State address and phone number.

The Artists File is set up to simultaneously project two slides of each artist's work; mark two slides for the projectors. The remaining slides will be in a viewing sheet in your file folder. Label each slide with your name, the work's title, date, medium and dimensions as well as an indication of top and front. It is a good idea to update the work in your file periodically.

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