

Dan Graham. Draft of *Schema*
(March 1966), ca. 1967. Verso.
Courtesy Dan Graham.
Digital image courtesy the
LeWitt Collection.

JOHN DANIELS GALLERY

John Daniels
17 EAST 64th STREET NEW YORK, N. Y. 10021 TN 1-6360

Dan Mumler

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Dan Mumler

Desktop Arenas: Magazine Pieces and the Professions of the Neo-Avant-Garde

COLBY CHAMBERLAIN

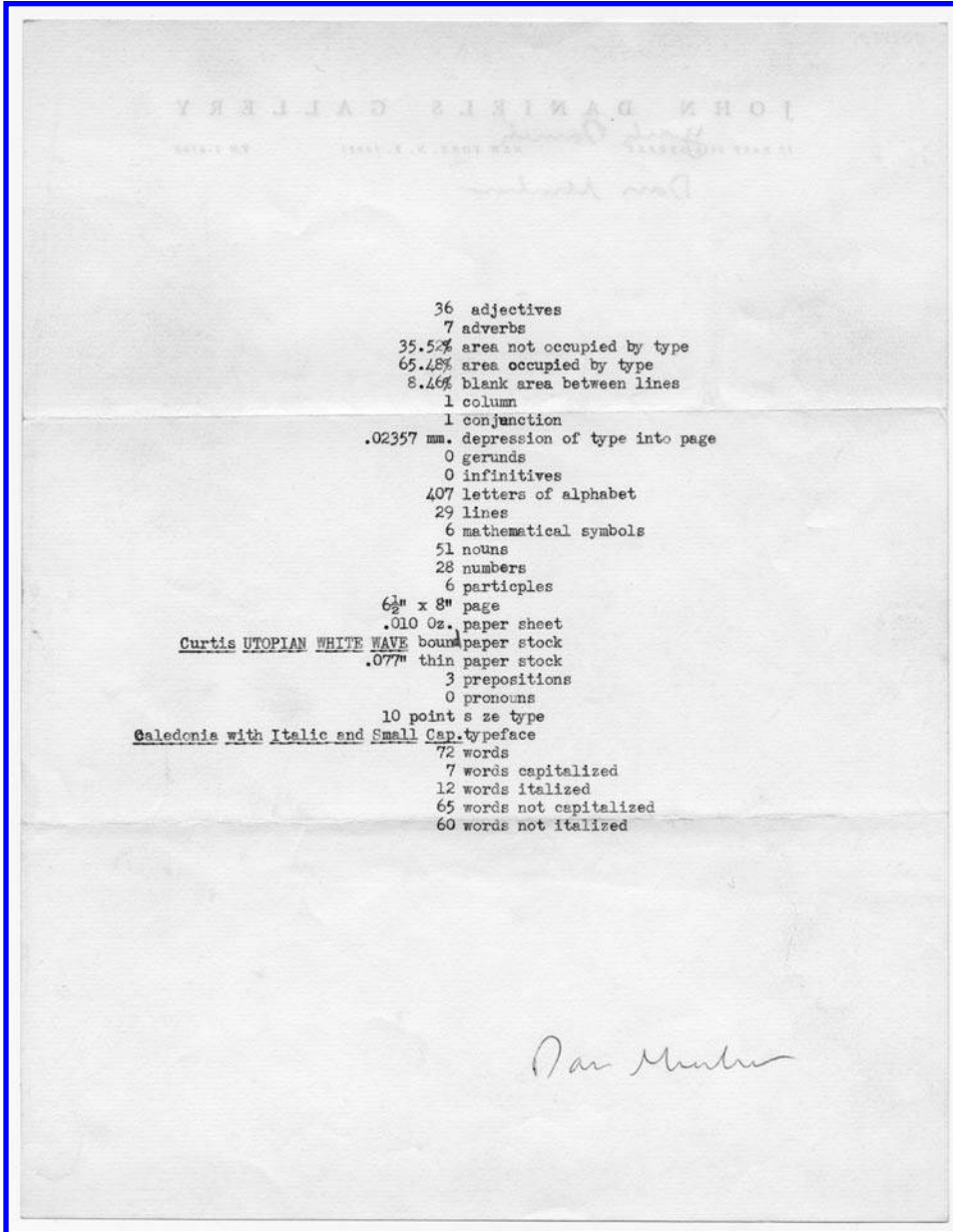
Schemas and Domains

Simply defined, a magazine piece is an artwork conceived for and sited within a periodical. Not surprisingly, the artists credited with inventing the format have also disseminated accounts of its origin.¹ Dan Graham laid out the rationale for his magazine pieces of the mid-1960s in an essay first published in 1985: “Through the actual experience of running a gallery, I learned that if a work of art wasn’t written about and reproduced in a magazine it would have difficulty attaining the status of ‘art.’”² As director of the short-lived John Daniels Gallery, Graham had encountered firsthand the cycle of mutual dependence that sustained the New York art world. Galleries relied on magazines to review their exhibitions; in turn, magazines relied on galleries to purchase advertisements for the exhibitions they reviewed. Graham sought to destabilize this arrangement by devising artworks that existed solely as print reproductions. “Putting it [the artwork] in magazine pages meant that it also could be ‘read’ in juxtaposition to the usual reproduction art, art criticism, reviews, reproductions in the rest of the magazine and form a critique of the magazine (in relation to the gallery structure).”³ In 2006, Mel Bochner attributed a similar logic to *The Domain of the Great Bear*, a magazine piece that he and Robert Smithson published in the fall 1966 issue of *Art Voices*. According to Bochner, the inspiration for *Domain* came from a shared frustration with dealers who requested slides in lieu of studio visits. “We started speculating that if slides were all anyone wanted to see, and if they were already a form of reproduction, was there any need to make actual works?”⁴ Together, Bochner and Smithson conspired to “camouflage” an artwork as an article on the planetarium at the American Museum of Natural History. By slipping it past the unsuspecting editor of *Art Voices*, they would “plant an intellectual time bomb inside the art system’s machinery.”⁵

Graham’s and Bochner’s narratives have become integral to histories of conceptual art’s entry into language, institutional critique’s inter-

rogation of exhibition conventions, and, more recently, post-Internet art's preoccupation with networks of circulation.⁶ But do these tales of sly subversion accurately characterize what early magazine pieces actually accomplished? Consider Graham's *Schema* (March 1966) (1966), described by Graham himself as "the most 'absolute' of these [magazine] works."⁷ A permutable poem, *Schema* consists of twenty-eight lines that each index an aspect of its surrounding context, such as page dimensions or typeface. I recently came across a version of *Schema* intended for *Arts Magazine* in the archives of the Sol LeWitt Collection.⁸ The draft had been adjusted to track the particulars of *Arts*—0.077-inch-thick paper stock, ten-point type—yet, remarkably, the text itself was inscribed on the backside of a different, equally distinct support: the letterhead of John Daniels Gallery, which had

Dan Graham. Draft of *Schema* (March 1966), ca. 1967. Recto. Courtesy Dan Graham. Digital image courtesy the LeWitt Collection.



closed in 1965.⁹ Evidently Graham had held onto its leftover stationery. In his 1985 essay, Graham argues that magazine pieces flagged the financial connection between magazines and galleries. The drafting of *Schema* on John Daniels letterhead concretizes the more direct conduit: Graham's own transition from dealer to artist.

In 1964, Arthur Danto published an article in the *Journal of Philosophy* that posits the existence of an "artworld" to explain how wooden boxes painted to resemble cardboard Brillo Pad cartons could come to be legitimated as works of art.¹⁰ That same year, in the *American Journal of Sociology*, Harold Wilensky published "The Professionalization of Everyone?" a study of how numerous occupations, ranging from realtor to bellboy, were increasingly modeling themselves as professions.¹¹ Wilensky's sociology furnishes the materialist underpinnings to Danto's philosophy: the coalescence of an art world was a process of professionalization.¹² That is, postwar American art was undergoing a continuous, if continuously incomplete, codification of specialized roles, technical knowledges, and ethical norms that were espoused and enforced by an interconnected set of institutions, among them universities, museums, galleries, and, of course, magazines.

Again, Graham: "All art magazines cater to people who professionally or institutionally are involved in the art world—either as artists, dealers, collectors, connoisseurs, writers, they all have a professional interest."¹³ Art magazines circulated the concepts, news, and information that converted a public of readers into a field of colleagues. Yet even as these publications contributed to the formation of distinct professions, they also provided a unique platform for blurring the boundaries among them. The magazine pieces of the 1960s almost invariably involve some superimposition of professional roles. As the letterhead iteration of *Schema* attests, Graham's works for magazines are grounded in his "actual experience of running a gallery." Bochner and Smithson could not have succeeded in "camouflaging" *Domain of the Great Bear* had they not already earned their stripes as credentialed art critics. These superimpositions led to the unpredictable overlaps of genres, jargons, protocols, and presumed addressees that lent early magazine pieces their cryptic, occasionally baffling aspect. By purchasing ads in *Artforum* or the *Village Voice*, Stephen Kaltenbach and Adrian Piper assumed the role of advertisers without proffering any product, thus confounding any casual browser who paused to determine what their pieces were actually selling.

To pursue this proposition further, I discuss in this article three magazine pieces that have received less critical attention than *Schema* or *Domain*: George Maciunas's *Grand Frauds of Architecture*, first published in *Fluxus 1* (1964); LeWitt's *Ziggurats*, from the November

1966 issue of *Arts Magazine*; and *The Maze*, Tony Smith's contribution to the 1967 double issue of *Aspen* edited by Brian O'Doherty. Admittedly, canonical histories of North American art offer little self-evident rationale for grouping these figures together. The name Maciunas is synonymous with Fluxus, which until very recently appeared in most histories as an indiscriminate blur of intermedia experimentation. LeWitt has featured prominently, but always partially, in the histories of both minimalism and conceptual art. Smith hailed from the generation of abstract expressionist painters yet was drafted as the spokesman for a younger brood of sculptors in minimalism's single most consequential critical appraisal.¹⁴ What aligns Maciunas, LeWitt, and Smith is their professional experience outside the art world, in the field of architecture. In the mid-1950s, LeWitt (1928–2007) and Maciunas (1931–1978) both worked for large architectural firms; Smith (1912–1980) taught and practiced architecture for two decades. All three gained recognition as “artists” only in the early 1960s—not by exchanging one profession for another but, as their magazine pieces attest, by forging links between the two.

My approach here is informed by the work of historian of science Peter Galison, who imported the term *trading zone* from anthropology to identify spaces where the three subcultures of physics—theoreticians, experimenters, and instrumentalists—breached the autonomy of their respective professions by improvising methods that facilitated coordination among them.¹⁵ Like pidgins or creoles, these “contact languages” are localized and limited but nevertheless productive. Following Galison, my methodological conceit is to frame magazine pieces as trading zones, sites where the techniques and norms of artistic practice are brought into coordination with those of other professions. However, Galison's concept does require some adjustment, as his localized sites are physical laboratories. (In this sense, a more direct art-historical analogy might be the collaborations between artists and engineers facilitated by Experiments in Art and Technology in New York or the Artist Placement Group in London.) When applying the trading-zone concept to *The Whole Earth Catalog*, historian Fred Turner rearticulates Galison's “trading zone” as a “network forum” to emphasize how the publication disseminated ideas among a motley readership of counterculture communalists, research-and-development engineers, and university academics.¹⁶ Since my concern here is with how individual artists treated magazine pieces as platforms for coordinating their own varied professional experiences, I adopt an alternate term: *desktop arenas*.

I borrow *arena* from Harold Rosenberg's “The American Action Painters,” the 1952 essay that hails the artist's canvas as “an arena in which to act.”¹⁷ In swaggering, wildly chauvinist prose, Rosenberg

casts painting as a spontaneous, pseudo-existentialist encounter between an artist and “his” materials. The traditional criteria for aesthetic evaluation, Rosenberg declares, had been liquidated.¹⁸ The measure of an action painter’s work would be the agony of its execution and the authenticity of its expression. The brash confidence that buoys these assertions was short-lived. By 1956, Rosenberg seems to have recognized that action painting’s romanticizing hero worship was out of step with the art world’s push toward professionalization. In “Everyman a Professional,” Rosenberg observes anecdotally the same tendency that Wilensky would verify sociologically eight years later:

The professional mass keeps expanding and as it expands it divides. Old professions break up and each fragment becomes the center of a new constellation—it is not only that all doctors have become specialists but that the practice of medicine, like warfare, involves scores of other professions. At the same time the trades keep propelling themselves upwards into professions; as the dentist not so long ago suppressed his past as a barber and assumed the rank of surgeon, so the kitchen manager becomes a dietician and stockbreeders and policemen set up academic qualifications and conduct “prestige” campaigns to convince society of the learned nature of their pursuits.¹⁹

At times, Rosenberg’s commentary reads as thinly veiled grumbling against the medium-specific formalism advocated by his chief rival, Clement Greenberg. “Pure art, physics, politics, is nothing else than art, physics, politics, that develops its procedures in terms of its own possibilities without reference to the needs of any other profession or of society as a whole,” Rosenberg writes. “It is pushing these possibilities to their logical extreme, rather than the penetration of new areas of experience or understanding, that results in the recognition of the work as ‘vanguard.’”²⁰ Though the essay never states it outright, the insight to be extrapolated from “Everyman a Professional” is that Greenberg’s vision of modernism as the autonomous pursuit of technical refinements appealed to the priorities of a professionalizing art world.²¹ The action painter’s arena of self-realization was ceding ground to the modernist painter’s area of competence.²²

If the canvas arena is a metaphysical bullring for confronting one’s own inner turmoil, then a desktop arena is a work surface for reconciling one’s multiple professional identifications.²³ In desktop arenas, the studio overlaps with the office, the atelier, the laboratory, the classroom, imbricating artistic conventions with paperwork techniques of drafting, copying, calculating, indexing, et cetera that materially structure so much so-called immaterial labor. A common-

Frauds remained one of the holdovers from the original table of contents. Thus, though Maciunas wrote and composed several essays and scores in the interim between 1962 and 1964, *Grand Frauds* is the first piece he conceived specifically for a Fluxus periodical.²⁸

As such, *Grand Frauds* serves as a record of Maciunas's astonishingly rapid transition from his career in architecture in the 1950s to his position as Fluxus's founder and "chairman" in the 1960s. A Lithuanian emigre, Maciunas studied architecture as an undergraduate at the Cooper Union and earned his bachelor of architecture degree from the Carnegie Institute of Technology in 1954. He then worked as a designer for Anthony J. DePace AIA (a firm specializing in commissions for the Roman Catholic Church); Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill (SOM); the aluminum products division of the Olin Mathieson Chemical Corporation (OMCC); and Knoll Associates. In parallel, he enrolled as a part-time graduate student in art history at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts (IFA), where he studied with Alfred Salmony, a specialist in Asian art. At AG Gallery, Maciunas initially concentrated on organizing concerts of Renaissance and baroque music played on replica antique instruments. Only after he met La Monte Young in spring 1961 did Maciunas come into contact with the artists and composers whom he would subsequently bring together under the banner of Fluxus.

The so-called grand frauds cited in the piece's title are all listed as entries in a four-column chart covering the entirety of its back page. The leftmost column pairs each name with a signature building: Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Lake Shore Drive Apartments; Eero Saarinen, MIT Auditorium; Gordon Bunshaft, Lever House; Frank Lloyd Wright, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. The chart analyzes each commission as a three-part swindle. The entry for Mies exemplifies the pattern:

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, 845–80 Lake Shore Drive Apartments, 1949–51, Chicago Ill.

Pre-formed Result: employ "efficient" looking exposed steel columns.

Solution required by client: employ fireproof concrete—covered columns efficiently and beautifully (can not use exposed steel columns)

Resultant fraud & swindle: apply "efficient" looking exposed nonfunctioning columns over functioning, efficient concealed columns. [C]lient pays for 2 columns, gets one. [L]ess value for more money.

Swindles occur when architects disregard a commission's actual requirements in favor of a "pre-formed result." The evidence of Mies's fraudulence is the apartments' superfluous overlay of exposed steel.

Opposite:
George Maciunas. "The Grand Frauds of Architecture: Mies van der Rohe, Saarinen, Bunshaft, Frank Lloyd Wright," from *Fluxus* 7, 1964. Digital image © The Museum of Modern Art, licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, NY. Courtesy Billie Maciunas.

The construction disingenuously proffers elegance as efficiency and foists onto the client an unnecessary expense.

Grand Frauds is printed on both sides of a single sheet, book-ended by semitransparent overlays. The front bears a photograph of Mies culled from a 1958 feature in *Life* magazine. The back overlay reproduces the design schematics of Mies's Lake Shore Drive columns alongside a quotation from the same article: "In our work,' he [Mies] says, 'we don't have a grand idea, a dream, and then try to glue it together. . . . We just solve problems.'"²⁹

For Maciunas, "problem solving" was the central tenet of architectural practice. The curriculum at Carnegie had followed a functionalist approach that trained students to take a commission's requirements and translate them into a fixed spatial logic, without regard for, or reference to, historical styles or received convention.³⁰ Each semester's design course assigned an increasingly complex "problem," beginning with a "House" and ending with a "Town Plan."³¹ By juxtaposing *Grand Frauds* with this quotation from *Life*, Maciunas uses Mies's own words to underscore his betrayal of functionalist principles. The very construction of Maciunas's chart further advances his case. The sequence of "pre-formed result," "solution required by client," and "resultant fraud & swindle" is a perversion of the three-part problem-analysis-solution procedure that Maciunas had learned at Carnegie.³² Mies, Saarinen, Bunshaft, and Wright are all "frauds" because they had decided on a "pre-formed result" prior to undertaking an analysis of their clients' actual needs.

The text of *Grand Frauds* is set in the same IBM Selectric typeface as other essays in *Fluxus 1*, and the chart's spatialization of its argument hardly appears out of place beside the issue's numerous graphic scores. Still, the presence of a diatribe against the false functionalism of high-profile architectural commissions is undeniably incongruous in a volume otherwise dedicated to music, poetry, dance, and art. In an apparent attempt to integrate *Grand Frauds* into its surrounds, Maciunas devoted the piece's first page to an "Introduction" that articulates the relation between "Art" and "Architecture" through two side-by-side columns of stilted parallelisms:

ART

cost of material is less than of artist's attainment cost
cost of material seldomly exceeds 10% of total cost
more efficient use of materials will hardly economize
more efficient use of artist's time will economize much
therefore efficient performance of creator is desirable

efficient performance of creator requires

IMPULSIVE DEXTERITY
DEXTEROUS IMPLEMENTATION

artist must be efficient doer

value derived from efficient occurrences is organic

ART—
OCCURRING ORGANISM
forms experience

ARCHITECTURE

cost of artist's attainment is less than of material cost
cost of material structure is usually 90% of total cost
more efficient use of materials will economize much
more efficient use of artist's time will economize little
therefore efficient performance of created is desirable

efficient performance of created requires

DELIBERATE LOGIC
LOGICAL DELIBERATION

artist must be efficient thinker

value derived from efficient components is mechanic

ARCHITECTURE—
FUNCTIONING MECHANISM
performs for experience

The gist of these juxtapositions is clear enough: efficiency in art is achieved through manual virtuosity, whereas efficiency in architecture derives from meticulous planning. More opaque are the precise definitions for their peculiar terminology and the underlying rationale for their claims. *Grand Frauds* is composed in the contact language of a desktop arena, a jerry-rigged merger of disparate concepts.

The principal operation at play here is Maciunas's conversion of architecture's professional standards into analogical equivalents for art. In a set of statements positioned directly above the two columns, Maciunas writes, "[A]rt is a value attained by artists & sold to clients." The assertion preemptively dismisses any notion that artists pursue their work first and foremost for their own gratification and instead situates their practice within a structure of market relations. However, Maciunas switches out the typical designation for a patron within the art world—namely, the "collector" who purchases a finished work—for the one most common in architecture: the "client" who assigns a commission. This subtle recasting of roles sets up Maciunas's evaluation of artistic practice according to the service model of architecture. As a correlate to an architect's ethical obligation to economize on materials, Maciunas reasons that artists must be efficient with their time. The romance of the studio is replaced

with the diligence of an office that bills clients by the hour.

From the first stanza of statements to the next, the terminology becomes markedly more rooted in Maciunas's own experiences during the 1950s. For instance, in the ARCHITECTURE column, Maciunas shifts from emphasizing the "efficient use of materials" to "efficient components." Whereas *materials* might apply to virtually any building type, *components* belongs to the language of modular systems. At SOM, Maciunas was responsible for the preliminary design of prefabricated curtain walls; he moved further into this specialization by taking a job as a product developer in the aluminum division of OMCC, where he researched and prepared plans for prefab panel walls, solar grills, and office partitions. These products consisted of interchangeable modular units, each calibrated to minimize cost and maximize flexibility. Maciunas's description of architecture as a "functioning mechanism" should not be understood as a broad appeal to modernity—as in Le Corbusier's metaphorical "machine for living"—but as a narrowly functionalist reference to structures assembled from prefabricated parts.

Maciunas's attempt to formulate an equivalent to "functioning mechanism" results in perhaps the single most enigmatic assertion in *Grand Frauds*: "ART-OCCURRING ORGANISM." Prior to 1961, Maciunas possessed little knowledge of experimental composition, but he had acquired a familiarity with the critical reception of post-war painting through the IFA. For a seminar with Robert Goldwater, Maciunas submitted a term paper, titled "Development of Western Abstract Chirography as a Product of Far Eastern Mentality," that treats abstract expressionism's gestural calligraphy as symptomatic of a civilizational tilt toward Eastern cultural traditions.³³ As is the case with all his extant graduate papers, Maciunas supplements a relatively brief main text with an elaborate bibliography, subdivided into topics ranging from Chinese aesthetics to the psychology of handwriting. His section on abstraction cites both classic overviews of twentieth-century modernism, such as Meyer Schapiro's "The Nature of Abstract Art," and recent articles on abstract expressionism by Rosenberg, Thomas Hess, and William Seitz. Significantly, his bibliography makes no reference to Greenberg, suggesting that Maciunas's understanding of abstract expressionism was rooted primarily in Rosenberg's concept of action painting. The effect of the *Grand Frauds* chart is to recode abstract expressionism as a professional activity, but in a manner wholly distinct from Greenbergian formalism. The action painter's anguished virtuosity turns into "dexterous implementation," the existentialist act into "efficient occurrences." In the juxtaposition of "functioning mechanism" to "occurring organism," the architect's skill in designing flexible modular units serves as the equivalent to an artist's proficiency in

rapidly achieving a unified composition.

Maciunas put his interpretation of abstract expressionism into practice in May 1961 when he filled a gap in AG Gallery's calendar by announcing an exhibition of his own work. The filmmaker Jonas Mekas witnessed Maciunas's rapid preparations, later recalling,

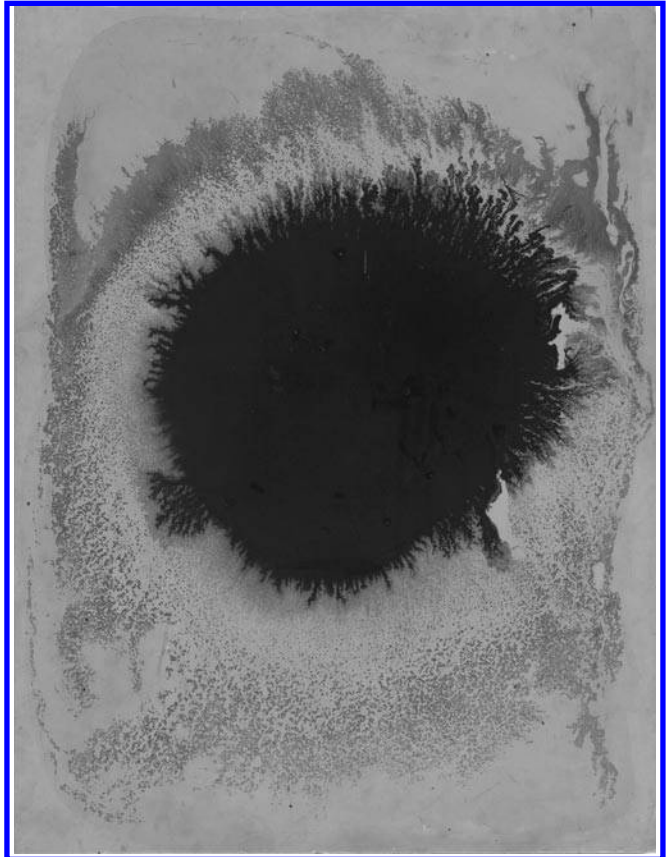
One day I walked into the gallery and I found George on the floor, stretching canvasses, and he engaged me in helping him. We prepared some 20 canvasses—if my memory is correct—of exactly the same sizes, c. 24 x 30 [inches]. Next, George brought a bucket of water and poured it over the canvasses. He then picked up a can of black ink and began dripping it on the canvasses. In fifteen minutes or so he had 20 brand new “abstract” paintings ready for a show. He said, he had completely forgotten that he had a show announced and there were some critics coming the next day to see the show. So he said, he decided to produce an instant show. He thought it was a very good joke.³⁴

Mekas's recollection of the ink works as slapdash jokes is seemingly at odds with the seriousness of the exhibition's invitation card, which describes the “hydrokinetic paintings” as materialized extensions of Maciunas's subjectivity. “Being non illusional but realistic, my graphic expression or form becomes one and [the] same as my state of consciousness and intuitive perception or awareness of the microcosmos and its process of becoming.”³⁵ Yet speed and self-presence are precisely the combination an artist requires to achieve successive “efficient occurrences.”

The rapid-fire technique that Mekas considered a prank is actually a rigorous application of the principles Maciunas articulates in *Grand Frauds*.

Maciunas was hardly the only figure associated with Fluxus to have trained for a profession outside the fields of music or art. George Brecht was employed as a chemist by Pfizer, Mobil Oil, Bayer, and Johnson & Johnson; Robert Watts served as an engineering officer in the U.S. Navy; Robert Filliou earned a master's degree in economics; Henry Flynt studied mathematics at Harvard.³⁶ To varying degrees, the concepts and techniques they acquired from these professions became integral parts of Fluxus's aesthetic project.³⁷ (As a

George Maciunas. *Hydrokinetic-Osmotic Painting*, 1961. Digital image © The Museum of Modern Art, licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, NY. Courtesy Billie Maciunas.



counterpoint, consider the rigorous division between commercial work and studio practice upheld by James Harvey, the abstract expressionist painter who designed the Brillo box illustration that Andy Warhol subsequently appropriated.)³⁸ As Maciunas became further engaged with charting the practices and precedents of the neo-avant-garde, he ceased treating abstract expressionism as his primary point of reference for postwar art. The experiment with hydrokinetic painting was never to be repeated. Maciunas never, however, lost contact with architecture. Despite authoring numerous scores, films, and multiples, he continued to identify as an architect until his death in 1978. “[T]he reason I am so concerned with [functionalism] is that’s an architect’s training,” he stated in an interview that year. “I mean, that’s the way [an] architect thinks—he thinks in functionalism—otherwise he’s not an architect, he’s a sculptor or stage designer.”³⁹ The publication of *Grand Frauds* was an initial step in an ongoing project of integrating the legacies of Duchamp, Pollock, and Cage with the expertise of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill.

Below: Sol LeWitt. Model for parking signage at Roosevelt Field, ca. 1956. © 2019 The LeWitt Estate/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Opposite, top: Sol LeWitt. Model for parking signage at Roosevelt Field, ca. 1956. © 2019 The LeWitt Estate/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Opposite, bottom: Sol LeWitt. Brochure for Roosevelt Field, ca. 1956. © 2019 The LeWitt Estate/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Codes and Concepts

In 1956, one of Maciunas’s assignments at SOM was to supervise the production of aluminum accents for a terminal at Idlewild Airport (now John F. Kennedy International). That same year, LeWitt contributed design elements to a similarly extensive development

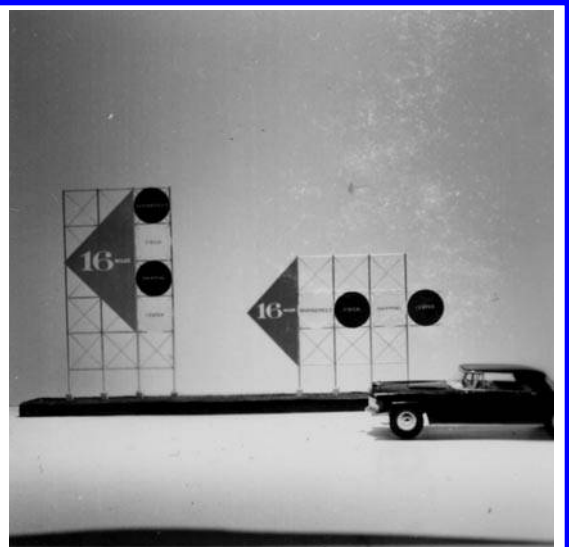
located only a few miles farther east on Long Island, the Roosevelt Field shopping mall. Photographs on file in LeWitt’s archives show his prototypes for the facility’s roadside signage. In one, a rectangular scaffold of crisscrossing metal bars holds aloft color-coded panels that designate parking-lot quadrants; in another, a toy car passes by a pair of placards attached to gridded armatures. Considered in isolation, these models suggest several aspects of LeWitt’s subsequent sculptural practice: modular units, variable scale, and a division in labor between a design’s conception and realization. A more consequential correspondence emerges from the models’ surrounding circumstances. Another item that LeWitt designed for Roosevelt Field was a brochure intended to attract businesses to the mall’s adjoining industrial park.



The document highlights the site's confirmed tenants—including United Parcel Service and Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company—and lists the advantages to building there, such as highway access, service utilities, provisions for expansion, and protective zoning. What the brochure shows is how LeWitt's models were conceived within an architectural program determined by a complex set of logistical needs, financial incentives, and legal regulations.

Roosevelt Field was overseen by I.M. Pei & Associates (later known as I.M. Pei & Partners). Though now best known for iconic commissions, among them the East Building of the National Gallery and the glass-pyramid entrance to the Louvre, Pei's firm began as the architecture division for the real-estate company Webb & Knapp. Its chairman, William Zeckendorf, was the first developer to fully grasp the potential of the Title I provision in the Housing Act of 1949, which granted city governments the authority to condemn whole neighborhoods as slums and sell the properties to private enterprise for renewal. Pei's job at Webb & Knapp was to bring a modernist touch to massive building projects while also minimizing construction costs and negotiating the bureaucratic requirements that Title I agreements inevitably entailed.⁴⁰ For instance, the planning for Zeckendorf's L'Enfant Plaza complex in Washington, DC, involved coordinating with no fewer than twenty-seven federal agencies.

LeWitt joined I.M. Pei & Associates in 1955 as a designer of printed materials and three-dimensional models. Earlier he had held positions as a magazine paste-up artist for *Seventeen* and *Fashion & Travel*. LeWitt left Pei's firm after a year, then briefly took a job at an advertising company before quitting the commercial arts entirely to focus on his studio practice. In a 1974 interview, LeWitt recalled his work for Pei as mostly tedious, yet the experience appears to have stayed with him.⁴¹ His first-ever contribution to an arts periodical, published a full ten years after his employment at the firm, addresses an issue that had been absolutely central to all of Pei's commissions for Webb & Knapp: the impact of financial calculation and government regulation on architectural form.



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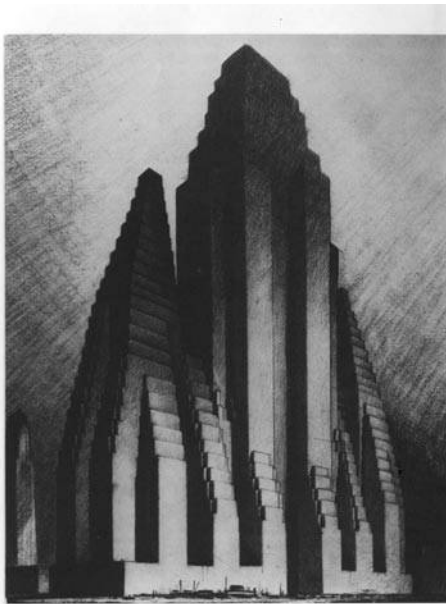
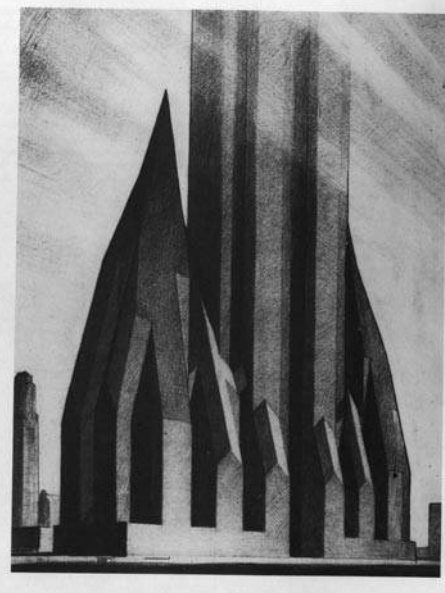
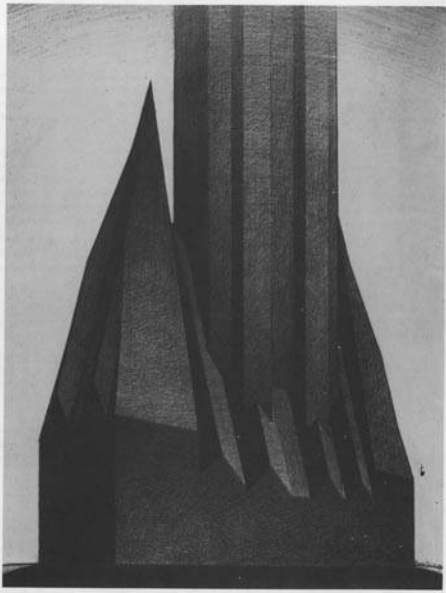
ties, so architects designed buildings with staggered stories that hewed closely to the envelope generated by the resolution's calculations. Almost inadvertently, this process resulted in skyscrapers of a wholly original character. In 1926, the architect Ely Jacques Kahn declared in the *New York Times* that the zoning resolution had shaken American architecture free from its indebtedness to Europe. "We have been accustomed to buildings modeled after the traditional Gothic, French, or Roman," Kahn writes. "While this new style is born of humbler parents, of legal and economic circumstances, it has yet become the soul and spirit of some of the most notable buildings of today."⁴³

Perhaps the most acute aesthetic response to the zoning resolution came from Hugh Ferriss, New York's preeminent architectural illustrator of the 1920s (and a key protagonist in Rem Koolhaas's *Delirious New York*).⁴⁴ Distasteful of surface ornament and historicist quotation, Ferriss drew in a sfumato charcoal that obscures detail and emphasizes the blunt outlines of a building's unadorned form. In a series of four drawings in his 1929 book *Metropolis of Tomorrow*, Ferriss demonstrates how the zoning resolution dictates a skyscraper's volume. The first image shows the bulky mass theoretically permitted by the resolution's calculations on a standard city block: a dark polyhedron with steeply sloping sides. At the block's center, the unregulated quarter of the building's footprint thrusts upward and out of the frame. Ferriss details in the three succeeding pictures the financial and engineering considerations that deductively lead the architect to arrive at the ziggurat form. Writes Ferriss, "He [*sic*, the architect] is accepting, simply, a mass which has been put into his hands; he proposes to modify it step by step, taking these steps in logical order; he is prepared to view the progress impartially and to abide by whatever result is finally reached."⁴⁵

I point to Ferriss as a particularly vivid example of a broader tendency within architectural practice to embrace legal regulation and other externalities as creative restraints. For Pei, the capacity to balance formal concerns with bureaucratic requirements was both a source of pride and the basis for his early reputation.⁴⁶ Published more than thirty years after *Metropolis of Tomorrow*, LeWitt's appreciation of ziggurats echoes Ferriss's in many respects. Like Ferriss, LeWitt attributes the ziggurats' success to the zoning resolution's "liberating rather than confining" restrictions, and he compares them favorably to buildings designed by a more erratic and indulgent method. For opprobrium, LeWitt singles out the "slab type" style of skyscraper popularized by Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building. Glass curtain walls would seem a far cry from historicist ornaments, but LeWitt and Ferriss saw in them the same transgression—excessive attention to surface detail. LeWitt writes, "By having

to conform to this rather rigid code, aestheticism was avoided, but the code was flexible enough to allow great originality of design. New materials were not necessary. . . . The slab type buildings, on the other hand, established by rules of taste and aestheticism, require new materials for variety." To LeWitt, the best ziggurats were the homeliest, made from brick, in contrast to the slab-type skyscrapers, which depended on novel cladding materials to distinguish themselves. By ascribing these failings to "taste" and "aestheticism," LeWitt amplifies a second resonance with Ferriss. Both men favored a creative process that minimized the exercise of subjective taste. "The zoning code pre-conceived the design of the ziggurats," LeWitt writes, "just as an idea might give any work of art its outer boundaries and remove arbitrary and capricious decisions."

Hugh Ferriss. Zoning resolution drawings from *The Metropolis of Tomorrow*, 1929.



What *Arts Magazine*'s readers would have gleaned from *Ziggurats* in November 1966 is difficult to reconstruct, in part because the work's condition of legibility has been so impacted by the publication of two subsequent pieces. The first is Graham's *Homes for America*, which appeared in the next issue of *Arts*. (The photographs accompanying *Ziggurats* attributed to "Gretchen Lambert" were, in fact, taken by Graham.)⁴⁷ Benjamin Buchloh was first to observe that Graham's analysis of mass-produced housing doubled as a commentary on minimalist sculpture. This interpretation applies to *Ziggurats* as well. LeWitt's complaint that slab-type skyscrapers relied too heavily on flashy surfaces to differentiate their uniform rectangular shape was a veiled attack on Donald Judd. "Materials vary greatly and are simply materials—formica, aluminum, cold-rolled steel, plexiglas, red and common brass, and so forth," Judd writes in his essay "Specific Objects."⁴⁸ Judd's polished stacks were the sculptural equivalent to Park Avenue glass towers. LeWitt, by contrast, favored aluminum or wood painted white, akin to the ziggurats' matter-of-fact brick.

The second piece that now inflects any reading of *Ziggurats* is LeWitt's own "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," published in the June 1967 issue of *Artforum*.⁴⁹ To a remarkable degree, the arguments of LeWitt's quasi-manifesto were first advanced in *Ziggurats*. Even word choices are similar. "If the artist wishes to explore his idea thoroughly," LeWitt wrote in 1967, "then arbitrary or chance decisions would be kept to a minimum, while caprice, taste and other whimsies would be eliminated from the making of the art."⁵⁰ The passage clearly echoes the description in *Ziggurats* of the zoning resolution's code as "an *idea* [that] might give any work of art its outer boundaries and remove *arbitrary* and *capricious* decisions."⁵¹ LeWitt arrived at his particular notion of conceptual art by thinking through the legal and economic contingencies of midcentury architectural design.

The connection between *Ziggurats* and "Paragraphs" has been previously recognized by Alexander Alberro and Kirsten Swenson, both of whom struggle to account for the pieces' sequence of publication. For Alberro, *Ziggurats* "prefigures" "Paragraphs"; for Swenson, it "demonstrates parallels with LeWitt's own emerging conceptual practice."⁵² A more chronologically consistent explanation is that *Ziggurats* is a desktop arena, a site where the disciplines of art and architecture are brought into contact with each other. LeWitt first articulated the tenets of conceptual art through an improvised language that drew from his experiences in the office of an architectural firm. Before the November 1966 publication of *Ziggurats*, LeWitt exhibited white, open-cube structures that shared the literalist aesthetic of Robert Morris's plywood blank forms.⁵³

After *Ziggurats*, in April 1967 at Dwan Gallery, Los Angeles, LeWitt debuted *Serial Project #1*, the first of his sculptures executed according to the permutations of a preconceived “idea.”⁵⁴ By the time “Paragraphs” was published that June, LeWitt had sufficiently refined his definition of conceptual art such that he could dispense with his earlier intermediary references to ziggurats and zoning. The set of techniques that LeWitt would employ for the rest of his career had been codified.

To posit that LeWitt first articulated the tenets of conceptual art in the provisional language of a desktop arena in no way discounts or discredits the narratives of LeWitt’s maturation routed through his reception of various patrilineal influences.⁵⁵ LeWitt’s engagement with the work of Cage, Jasper Johns, and Eadweard Muybridge is self-evident, particularly so in his paintings and sculptures from the first half of the 1960s. What *Ziggurats* marks is how LeWitt’s assimilation of earlier avant-garde approaches to antisubjective composition coincided with the adoption of a professional protocol derived from architecture. The commercial architect’s adherence to legal code became a model for the serial artist’s fidelity to a premeditated idea.

A possible foil to my line of argument is that in “Paragraphs” LeWitt explicitly rejects the merger of sculpture and architecture. “Architecture and three-dimensional art are of completely different natures,” he writes, adding, “When three-dimensional art starts to take on some of the characteristics of architecture such as forming utilitarian areas it weakens its function as art.”⁵⁶ A handwritten draft of “Paragraphs” gives a second example of sculpture that incorporates architectural characteristics: “passageways at or of a large scale which diminish the viewer proportionally.”⁵⁷ This fragment clarifies that LeWitt’s criticism was directed against Morris, whose sculptures emphasize the viewing subject’s phenomenological encounter with a constructed situation, as in Morris’s *Passageway* (1961).⁵⁸ In the next section of the published text, LeWitt repeats the objection to novel materials that he first raised in *Ziggurats* (this time without reference to Midtown skyscrapers). Thus, LeWitt introduces into “Paragraphs” veiled repudiations of both Morris and Judd, arguably the two most consequential figures in the discourse on minimalism. He circumvented them both by passing through a desktop arena.

Mazes and Maquettes

LeWitt’s *Serial Project I* and Graham’s *Schema* were both first published in *Aspen* no. 5+6, the 1967 double issue guest-edited by Brian O’Doherty. The contents of the magazine’s white box showcase a constellation of literary inspirations and avant-garde precedents for the antisubjective attitude that supplanted the emotive tenor of abstract expressionism: Duchamp’s “The Creative Act” (1957); Alain

Robbe-Grillet's *Jealousy* (1957); Cage's *Fontana Mix* (1958); Samuel Beckett's *Text for Nothing #8* (1958); William Burroughs's *Nova Express* (1964); Susan Sontag's "The Aesthetics of Silence"; and, perhaps most notable, the original publication of Roland Barthes's "The Death of the Author," translated into English by Stephen Howard. Barthes's essay diagnoses and prescribes the emergence of a kind of writing that fastidiously effaces all traces of its author's personality and bequeaths the production of meaning to its reader. In the course of constructing a genealogy for this blank-slate authorship, Barthes cites Stephane Mallarmé as "the first to see and to foresee in its full extent the necessity to substitute language itself for the person who until then had been supposed to be its owner."⁵⁹ On this count, Barthes's argument coincides perfectly with O'Doherty's editorial vision: the issue as a whole is dedicated to Mallarmé.

Nevertheless, to assume Barthes's and O'Doherty's positions are entirely aligned would be a mistake. As Molly Nesbit observes, Barthes restricts his references to novelists and poets. His argument encompasses only an authorless *literature*, whereas the contents in *Aspen* are enmeshed in media. For instance, the texts by Duchamp, Burroughs, Beckett, and Robbe-Grillet are "published" as audio recordings stored on flexi disc, a low-quality commercial format. *Aspen*, Nesbit argues, "asserts its own position as a cultural product tentatively engaged with a larger, uncultured but technologically sophisticated world. . . . Barthes, for his part, was out of step."⁶⁰ This tentative engagement plays out over the issue's table of contents, where O'Doherty identifies some of the contributions as belonging to recognizable genres, such as "poetry," "music," or "film," and others to the more ambiguous categories of "data" and "documents." The latter terms belong to the improvised lexicon of a desktop arena, a pair of catchalls for a wide range of artistic, scientific, and administrative modes of organizing information. One piece positioned on either side of this divide, appearing in the table of contents both as "data" and as the issue's sole "sculpture," is Smith's *The Maze*.

Best known for large-scale metal sculptures like *Smoke* (1967), Smith did not exhibit as a sculptor until 1964, at the age of fifty-one. He studied painting under George Grosz and Vaclav Vytlacil at the Art Students League in the mid-1930s, then moved to Chicago to train in architecture at the New Bauhaus. A visit to Wright's Ben Rebhuhn House in Great Neck, New York, inspired him to work as a carpenter's assistant on another Wright project, which led in turn to jobs with Wright as a clerk and then as a draftsman. In the 1940s, Smith took on private commissions for a clientele drawn from his social circle in the New York art world, designing homes and studios that reflected his interest in both Wright and the International Style of Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe.⁶¹ In parallel, Smith continued

to paint, but never received the level of recognition afforded to his friends, among them Pollock, Barnett Newman, and Clyfford Still.

Smith's breakthrough into sculpture came about through a pedagogical exercise. In 1956, he constructed a small maquette to demonstrate a complicated tetrahedral joint for an architecture seminar. Compelled by its form, Smith reconstructed the model at greater scale with acoustical tiles and then again in wood. A steel version, titled *The Throne*, was fabricated in 1963. Smith more or less followed this same procedure for the rest of his career. He designed his sculptures as maquettes that he then brought to a foundry for full-scale fabrication. Constructions in steel or aluminum were first assembled with cardboard cut from milk cartons and cigarette packs. Smith also drew his designs—often in the isometric perspective typical of architectural draftsmanship—but insisted on the centrality of his handmade paper assemblies. "I have to work from three-dimensional maquettes rather than from sketches," he told Lucy Lippard in a 1971 interview, "because drawings can't give me the particular quality that I want."⁶² Regardless of their gargantuan dimensions, his sculptures remained ideationally tethered to the classroom.

Smith and O'Doherty first met in early 1967 as artists participating in *Schemata 7* at Finch College, an exhibition of what its curator, Elayne Varian, described as "walk-in sculpture."⁶³ Smith originally designed *The Maze* specifically for the exhibition. Four painted plywood monoliths, each nearly seven feet tall, dominated the center of a darkened room, creating a square interior that visitors could choose to circle around or enter.⁶⁴ For *Aspen*, Smith effectively reverse engineered his usual working process by scaling *The Maze* back down into a maquette. The sculpture is published as eight boards of cardstock, each printed black on one side and, on the other, white with written instructions for how to fold, cut, and glue the pieces into four rectangular blocks. An accompanying pamphlet of "data" includes a short statement by Smith, a photograph of the completed maquette, and three diagrams of *The Maze's* floorplan.

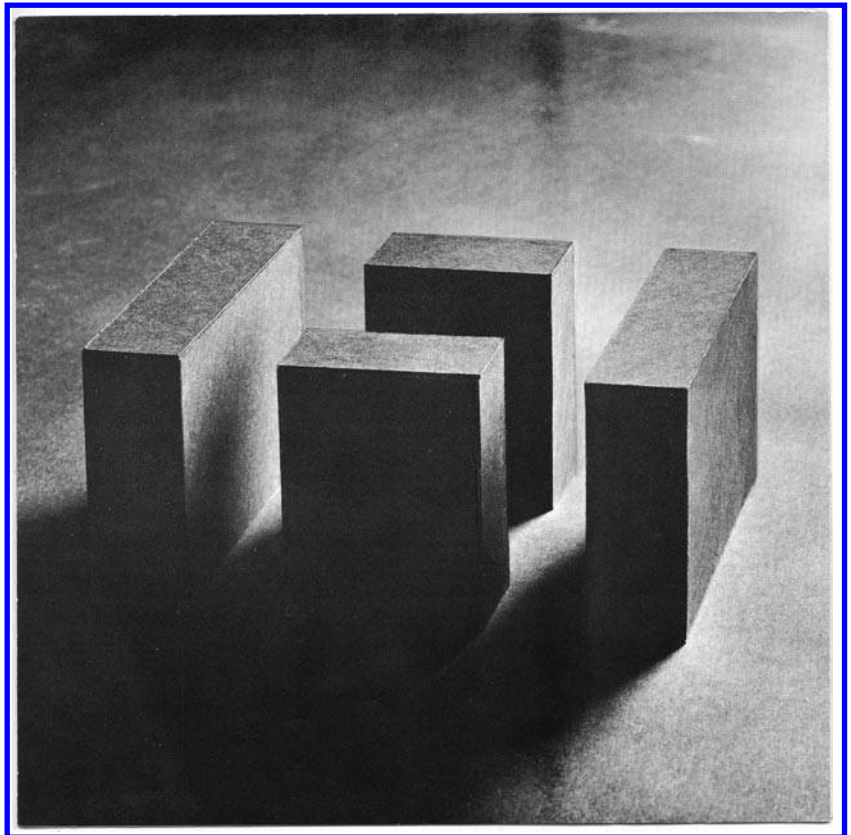
As *Aspen's* readers hand-assembled *The Maze*, they engaged in a kind of reconstruction that progressively revealed the architectural techniques responsible for Smith's imposing forms. The instructions printed on the cardstock boards identify *The Maze's* four monoliths as "modules," explicitly connecting the work's rectilinear units to the modular systems that Smith had become interested in through Wright.⁶⁵ Anyone consulting the floorplan diagrams in the pamphlet portion of *The Maze* can see how Smith determined the modules' spatial coordinates by superimposing two grid systems rotated by forty-five degrees. "The two sets of grids interpenetrate one another," Smith states in the *Aspen* pamphlet. "In a certain sense it is a labyrinth of the mind." Smith's notion that a viewer should register

The Maze's position within a complex lattice of gridded space is markedly at odds with the phenomenological models of sculptural experience advanced in Morris's "Notes on Sculpture, Part 2" or Michael Fried's "Art and Objecthood," two essays that nevertheless prominently cite Smith in the course of their argument.⁶⁶

Smith's statements in *Aspen* were adapted from an interview with Varian, one of a series she conducted for the *Schemata 7* catalogue. To each contributor, Varian posed questions regarding their education. "It interests me to find that two thirds of the artists in this exhibition majored in other fields before turning to art as their primary interest in life," she observes.⁶⁷ Both Smith and Will Insley had studied architecture; Charles Ross majored in mathematics; Michael Kirby held an MFA in theater; and O'Doherty's résumé beggared belief. He had practiced medicine in Dublin for three years; studied experimental psychology and visual perception in Cambridge, England; obtained a master's degree in hygiene at Harvard; hosted a television series on art and culture for WGBH; and wrote criticism for the *New York Times*. It was O'Doherty who offered Varian a viable explanation for the varied backgrounds of *Schemata 7's* artists.

One of the things that strikes me about the whole development of non-romantic art here [in the United States], is that it is so late. It happened in literature long ago. . . . I think the reason for that was abstract expressionism with its apotheosis of the individual; it is really a frontier climax of romanticism, Delacroix on the frontier. As such, it has a sort of attraction in

Tony Smith. "Drawings for the Maze," *Aspen* no. 5+6 (Fall 1967). © 2019 Estate of Tony Smith/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.



a mythical fashion, just as Marshall Dillon [of *Gunsmoke*] does. . . . I like also the fact that once you remove the romantic narcissism of expressionist abstraction, the artist is allowed to be what he [*sic*] wishes to be; to be a scholar, to be a philosopher, to be a connoisseur, to be a thinker, to be like a lawyer or a shop-keeper without any moral depreciation.⁶⁸

O'Doherty argues that romanticism's faith in the unmediated plenitude of authorial expression first came under assault through literature, when Mallarmé severed the metaphorical connection between written verse and the poet's voice by exploiting printed language's material characteristics. Nevertheless, the romantic conception of authorship persisted into the twentieth century by latching onto modernism. In the United States, it regained vigor by tapping into the American ethos of pioneer individualism and recoding the painterly gesture as an act of unfettered freedom. Then, when the influence of abstract expressionism finally waned, a new kind of freedom emerged. Artists no longer needed to adopt the masculinist postures of Tenth Street painters. Instead they could assume the attributes of shopkeepers (e.g., Claes Oldenburg, *The Store*, 1961), lawyers (Morris, *Document*, 1963), philosophers (Joseph Kosuth, *One and Three Chairs*, 1965), physicians (O'Doherty, *Portrait of Marcel Duchamp: Mounted Cardiogram*, 1966), or, of course, architects.

O'Doherty's contention that abstract expressionism artificially prolonged romanticism's viability is of particular relevance to *The Maze*. The key conundrum of Smith's career is how, as Lippard states, "a respected friend and colleague of Newman, Rothko, Pollock and others" could become "tenuously and progenitorally associated with the Primary Structure tendency."⁶⁹ Smith employed the industrial materials and production methods of minimalism without ever assuming the Barthesian "prerequisite impersonality" of Judd or Dan Flavin.⁷⁰ Critics considered his modular constructions to be, in their own manner, as gestural as action painting, and Smith gave his work dramatic titles with spiritual or literary overtones, such as *The Wandering Rocks* (1967; an allusion to the Odyssey by way of James Joyce's *Ulysses*).⁷¹ By his own admission, Smith had never satisfactorily channeled his voice through painting. "I was unlike Pollock," he told Irving Sandler in 1958. "I always worked in someone else's style."⁷² To devise a style of his own, Smith needed to exercise the new freedoms of "non-romantic art" and draw from the techniques of his professional training. The instructions for *The Maze* direct *Aspen's* readers to procure the tools and materials that had facilitated Smith's own authorial expression: not a palette knife and oil paint, but an X-Acto knife and Elmer's glue.

Desktops and Turnpikes

As the dominance of abstract expressionism subsided, the neo-avant-garde devised alternatives to the painterly gesture by recovering the tactics of the historic avant-garde and by incorporating attributes of other professions. Some figures leveraged careers already situated within the art world, like dealer (Graham) or critic (Bochner), while others, such as Maciunas, LeWitt, and Smith, drew from their employment outside it. For these artists, magazine pieces served as desktop arenas for brokering mergers between their multiple professional identifications. The role that magazines played in the art world's professionalization had made publication a privileged site for breaching its autonomy. To be clear, this line of argument makes no blanket claim for the radicality or complicity of such practices. The integration of techniques derived from multiple professional fields is neither the class-conscious rhetorical framing of artistic labor that Julia Bryan-Wilson examines in her study of the Art Workers' Coalition, nor is it the withdrawal of manual skill that Buchloh characterizes as conceptual art's renunciation of modernism's utopian dimension.⁷³ The long-term outcome of a desktop arena is contingent and variable. In LeWitt's case, the impact of architectural techniques was gradually effaced as his practice pivoted from fabricated cube structures to instruction-based wall drawings. By contrast, Maciunas's outlook on the division between fine and applied arts became increasingly politicized. His research into the Soviet avant-garde led him to conceive of Fluxus as a transitional project that would push artists toward "useful" professions that could contribute to the realization of a revolutionary society.⁷⁴

Furthermore, this argument applies to a relatively narrow, if highly influential, set of mostly male artists for whom professional identities offered an antidote to the prescribed masculinity of abstract expressionism.⁷⁵ (*Aspen* 5+6 included only one woman, Sontag, and no persons of color.) In the 1970s, some of these same artists sought out nonromantic strategies for mobilizing other dimensions of their subjective formation. Following the Bloody Sunday killings in Derry, O'Doherty marked himself as the subject of English colonial violence by assuming the pseudonym "Patrick Ireland"; Maciunas introduced a formerly private practice of cross-dressing into his public performances.⁷⁶ At the same time, the authority of professionalism would—like the autonomy of the museum—come under increased scrutiny. In sociology, the publication of Magali Sarfatti Larson's *The Rise of Professionalism* marked a turn away from the project of defining professionalism's attributes (in the manner of Wilensky or, before him, Talcott Parsons) to one of revealing its underlying market rationale. "Professionalization is thus an attempt to translate one order of scarce resources—special knowledge

and skills—into another—social and economic rewards,” Larson writes. “To maintain scarcity implies a tendency to monopoly: monopoly of expertise in the market, monopoly of status in a system of stratification.”⁷⁷ Though her book purports to trace the development of professionalism from the nineteenth century onward, Larson’s emphasis on scarcity now reads as particularly attuned to the socio-economic circumstances of the 1970s. To endure under neoliberalism, a field’s rate of professionalization needed to continually outrun its risk of precaritization. This strained calculus applied broadly, from medicine and the law to academia and the art world.

Today, whenever the topic of art’s professionalization is raised, it is almost inevitably as a lament—against degree programs, accreditation, careerism, networking.⁷⁸ Among artists, critics, curators, art historians, even dealers, there is no shortage of ambivalence toward the professional protocols they observe.⁷⁹ This collective discomfort has forestalled a serious consideration of professionalization’s impact on artistic practice, beginning with the rapid expansion of neo-avant-garde strategies in the 1960s. The implicit professionalism of Greenberg’s modernism culminated in a remarkable inversion, where the narrowing of art’s areas of competence opened onto the integration of techniques and concepts imported from other professions. These mergers occurred in localized zones that encouraged, or required, contact languages and improvisation. Recall Smith’s anecdote of driving on a half-built highway: “When I was teaching at Cooper Union in the first year or two of the ’50s, someone told me how I could get on to the unfinished New Jersey Turnpike.”⁸⁰ For all the times Smith’s statement has been quoted, it is never remarked that his driving companions were *architecture* students, not art studio. As he drove along the blank surfaces of the unfinished highway and contemplated the “end of art,” Smith was acting in his capacity as a professor of architecture. “This drive was a revealing experience. . . . Its effect was to liberate me from many of the views I had had about art.”⁸¹ Now completed, the New Jersey Turnpike seldom liberates anyone from anything, but for a time it opened onto the new possibilities of the neo-avant-garde. The same goes for the pages of magazines.

Notes

This text was first delivered as a lecture at the James Gallery of the Center for Humanities at the City University of New York on the occasion of the exhibition *The House of Dust* by Alison Knowles, curated by Katherine Carl, Maud Jacquin, and Sébastien Pluot. I am grateful to Rachel Valinsky for the invitation. For crucial advice on expanding the piece for publication, I thank Gemma Sharpe. I thank Sarah Auld of the Tony Smith Estate and Janet Passehl of the Sol LeWitt Collection for their generosity and expertise, and Carol LeWitt and Sofia LeWitt for their extraordinary hospitality.

1. For discussions of the distinction between “medium” and “format,” see David Joselit, “What to Do with Pictures,” *October* 138 (Fall 2011): 81–82; and Jonathan Sterne, *MP3: The Meaning of a Format* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 7–17.

2. Dan Graham, “My Works for Magazine Pages: ‘A History of Conceptual Art,’” in *Dan Graham*, ed. Gary Dufour (Perth: Art Gallery of Western Australia, 1985), 10.

3. Graham, “My Works for Magazine Pages,” 12.

4. Mel Bochner, “Secrets of the Domes,” in *Solar System and Rest Rooms* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008), 199; originally published in *Artforum* 45, no. 1 (September 2006): 340–45.

5. Bochner, “Secrets of the Domes” (2008), 200.

6. For instances of Graham’s and Bochner’s accounts being cited, see Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, “Conceptual Art 1962–1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions,” *October* 55 (Winter 1990): 122–24; Anne Rorimer, “Siting the Page: Exhibition Works in Publications—Some Examples of Conceptual Art in the USA,” in *Rewriting Conceptual Art*, ed. Michael Newman and Jon Bird (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), 15–17; Gwen Allen, *Artists’ Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011), 29–34; and Seth Price, “Dispersion” (2008), in *Mass Effect: Art and the Internet in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Ed Halter and Lauren Cornell (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2015), 52, 65.

7. Graham, “My Works for Magazine Pages,” 12. For an extended discussion of *Schema*, see Alexander Alberro, “Reductivism in Reverse” (1994), in *Dan Graham*, ed. Alex Kitnick (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011), 21–40.

8. The *Arts* iteration of *Schema* was prepared but never published. For a reproduction of the intended layout, see Bennett Simpson and Chrissie Iles, eds., *Dan Graham: Beyond* (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2009), 212.

9. Dan Graham, draft of *Schema* (*March 1966*), ca. 1967, in folder 002453, Sol LeWitt Collection, Chester, CT.

10. Arthur Danto, “The Artworld,” *Journal of Philosophy* 61, no. 19 (1964): 571–84.

11. Harold L. Wilensky, “The Professionalization of Everyone?” *American Journal of Sociology* 70, no. 2 (1964): 137–58.

12. Danto, “The Artworld,” 580.

13. Graham, “My Works for Magazine Pages,” 10.

14. Michael Fried, “Art and Objecthood” (1967), in *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 148–72.

15. Peter Galison, *Image and Logic: A Material Culture of Microphysics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 46–54, 803–38.

16. Fred Turner, *From Counterculture to Cyberculture: Stewart Brand, the Whole Earth Network, and the Rise of Digital Utopianism* (Chicago: University of Chicago

Press, 2006), 19, 71–73.

17. Harold Rosenberg, “The American Action Painters” (1952), in *The Tradition of the New* (New York: Horizon Press, 1959), 25.

18. Rosenberg, “The American Action Painters,” 28.

19. Harold Rosenberg, “Everyman a Professional” (1956), in *The Tradition of the New*, 63.

20. Rosenberg, “Everyman a Professional,” 69.

21. Mary Leclère argues that Rosenberg’s essay anticipates the post-Greenberg formalist criticism associated with Michael Fried and others of his generation. Whereas Greenberg and Rosenberg made their names writing for general-interest publications (e.g., *The Nation*) or little magazines (*Partisan Review*) as “cultural critics,” this next generation of critics was the first to write primarily for art magazines, most prominently *Artforum*. Mary Leclère, “A Funny Thing Happened,” *Art Journal* 72, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 103.

22. Greenberg’s very use of the term *area of competence* in reference to medium specificity is itself a sign of formalism’s affinity with professionalization. Clement Greenberg, “Modernist Painting” (1960), in *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism*, vol. 4, *Modernism with a Vengeance, 1957–1969*, ed. John O’Brian (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 86.

23. In addition to revisiting Rosenberg’s legacy, these opposing terms invite a dialogue with Leo Steinberg’s distinction between the upright and flatbed picture planes. Steinberg was also among the first to recognize the professionalizing thrust of Greenberg’s formalism. Leo Steinberg, “Reflections on the State of Criticism” (1972), in *Robert Rauschenberg*, ed. Branden W. Joseph (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002), 21.

24. For an instance of this language being applied to pop and minimalism in a widely distributed textbook, see Erika Doss, *Twentieth-Century American Art* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2002), 163–68.

25. George Maciunas, “Musica Antiqua et Nova,” 1961, in I.31.48, Jean Brown Papers, Getty Research Institute (JBP).

26. See also Colby Chamberlain, “International Indeterminacy: George Maciunas and the Mail,” *ARTMargins* 7, no. 3 (October 2018): 57–85.

27. George Maciunas, “Brochure Prospectus for Fluxus Yearboxes, Second Version,” 1962, in V.F.8, Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Archives, Museum of Modern Art (GLS).

28. That Maciunas’s magazine piece precedes those of Graham, Bchner, and others by several years will not surprise readers familiar with Fluxus scholarship, which has repeatedly demonstrated that many of the innovations attributed to conceptual art bear a close resemblance to aesthetic strategies devised several years earlier by artists associated with Fluxus. For instance, the chronology of conceptual art that Lucy Lippard assembled for her anthology *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* begins not in 1966 but with three event scores composed by George Brecht in 1961. The art historians Julia Robinson and Liz Kotz have considerably enhanced Fluxus’s legibility by analyzing the movement’s formal operations in relation to the extant discourse on conceptual art, an approach Kotz describes as “reading Brecht through [Lawrence] Weiner.” Here I take the inverse approach—reading conceptual art through Fluxus—in order to suggest that the elision of professional roles evident in Fluxus is in fact a constitutive feature of the entire neo-avant-garde. See Lucy R. Lippard, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California

Press, 1997), 11; Liz Kotz, "Post-Cagean Aesthetics and the 'Event' Score," *October* 95 (Winter 2001): 88; and Julia Robinson, "From Abstraction to Model: George Brecht's Events and the Conceptual Turn in Art of the 1960s," *October* 127 (Winter 2009): 77–108.

29. Originally quoted in "Emergence of a Master Architect," *Life*, 18 March 1957, 60–68. See also Cuauhtémoc Medina, "Architecture and Efficiency: George Maciunas and the Economy of Art," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 45 (Spring 2004): 273–84.

30. Howard Saalman, "Architectural Education at Carnegie Tech: 1905–1990," 1990, in Carnegie Mellon University Architecture Archives. See also Hyungmin Pai, *The Portfolio and the Diagram: Architecture, Discourse, and Modernity in America* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002).

31. Carnegie Institute of Technology, "Course Bulletin," 1951, in Carnegie Mellon University Archives.

32. George Maciunas, "Meat Soup Factory," n.d. (ca. 1954), in V.D.57, GLS.

33. George Maciunas, "Development of Western Abstract Chirography as a Product of Far Eastern Mentality" (Institute of Fine Arts), 1959, in V.D.3.34, GLS.

34. Jonas Mekas, addendum to George Maciunas, "This Is George Maciunas Speaking [and] Talking about Fluxus History," 20 April 1978, in I.855, GLS.

35. George Maciunas, "Works of G. Maciunas," 1961, in I.31.48, JBP.

36. Like Maciunas, Brecht also staged an early engagement with abstract expressionism informed by his professional training. See George Brecht, *Chance-Imagery* (New York: Something Else Press, 1966); and Julia E. Robinson, *From Abstraction to Model: In the Event of George Brecht and the Conceptual Turn in the Art of the 1960s* (Princeton: Princeton University, 2008), 63–74.

37. See Branden W. Joseph, "Concept Art," in *Beyond the Dream Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the Arts after Cage (A Minor History)* (New York: Zone Books, 2008), 153–212; Mari Dumett, *Corporate Imaginations: Fluxus Strategies for Living* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2017), 126–217; and Laurel Jean Fredrickson, "Life as Art, or Art as Life: Robert Filliou and the Eternal Network," *Theory, Culture and Society*, September 2018, 1–29.

38. Michael J. Golec, *The Brillo Box Archive: Aesthetics, Design, and Art* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Press, 2008), 5–9.

39. Larry Miller, "Transcript of the Videotaped Interview with George Maciunas, 24 March 1978," in *The Fluxus Reader*, ed. Ken Friedman (Chichester, UK: Academy Editions, 1998), 194.

40. For more on Pei's career with Zeckendorf, see Carter Wiseman, *I.M. Pei: A Profile in American Architecture* (New York: H.N. Abrams, 1990), 47–71; Michael Cannell, *I.M. Pei: Mandarin of Modernism* (New York: Random House, 1995), 89–161; Gero von Boehm, *Conversations with I.M. Pei: Light Is the Key* (New York: Prestel, 2000), 49–75; and Sara Stevens, *Developing Expertise: Architecture and Real Estate in Metropolitan America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 187–234.

41. Sol LeWitt, interview with Paul Cummings, July 1974, in Archives of American Art Oral History Project. <https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history-interview-sol-lewitt-12701>.

42. Robert Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and Thomas Mellins, *New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism between the Two Wars* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), 31–37.

43. Ely Jacques Kahn, "Our Skyscrapers Take Simple Forms," *New York Times Magazine*, 2 May 1926, 11. See also Carol Willis, "Zoning and 'Zeitgeist': The

- Skyscraper City in the 1920s," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 45, no. 1 (1986): 47–59.
44. Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1994), 110–30.
 45. Hugh Ferriss, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow* (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1986), 74.
 46. Von Boehm, 51.
 47. Alberro, "Reductivism in Reverse," 34.
 48. Donald Judd, "Specific Objects" (1965), in *Complete Writings 1959–1975: Gallery Reviews, Book Reviews, Articles, Letters to the Editor, Reports, Statements, Complaints* (Halifax: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design; New York: New York University Press, 1975), 187.
 49. Sol LeWitt, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," *Artforum* 5, no. 10 (June 1967): 79–83.
 50. LeWitt, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," 80.
 51. Emphasis added.
 52. Alberro, "Reductivism in Reverse," 35; and Kirsten Swenson, *Irrational Judgments: Eva Hesse, Sol LeWitt, and 1960s New York* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 90.
 53. James Meyer, *Minimalism: Art and Polemics in the Sixties* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 200–2.
 54. Meyer, 202–4.
 55. Buchloh, 111–15.
 56. LeWitt, "Paragraphs," 82.
 57. The final draft published in *Artforum* reads, "When three-dimensional art starts to take on some of the characteristics of architecture such as forming utilitarian areas it weakens its function as art. When the viewer is dwarfed by the large size of a piece this domination emphasizes the physical and emotive power of the form at the expense of losing the idea of the piece." The handwritten draft reads, "When three-dimensional art starts to take on some of the characteristics of architecture such as forming utilitarian areas, even passageways at or of a large scale which diminish the viewer proportionally, it weakens the function of art as art." Sol LeWitt, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," ca. 1967, in folder 001476, Sol LeWitt Collection, Chester, CT.
 58. Maurice Berger, *Labyrinths: Robert Morris, Minimalism, and the 1960s* (New York: Harper and Row, 1989), 129–30.
 59. Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 143.
 60. Molly Nesbit, "What Was an Author?" *Yale French Studies* 73 (1987): 243.
 61. See Craig Buckley, "'A Definite and Persistent Monster': Tony Smith's Urban Vision," *Perspecta* 44 (2011): 70–199.
 62. Lucy R. Lippard, "The New Work: More Points on the Lattice: An Interview with Tony Smith," in *Tony Smith: Recent Sculpture*, exh. cat. (New York: M. Knoedler, 1971), 19.
 63. Elayne H. Varian, *Schemata 7*, exh. cat. (New York: Finch College Museum of Art, 1967).
 64. For a firsthand description of the installation, see John Perreault, "New Concepts," *The Village Voice*, 25 May 1967.
 65. Samuel Wagstaff, Jr., "Talking with Tony Smith" (1966), in *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Gregory Battcock (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of

California Press, 1995), 381.

66. Robert Morris, “Notes on Sculpture, Part 2” (1966), in *Continuous Project Altered Daily: The Writings of Robert Morris* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), 11–21; and Fried, “Art and Objecthood.”

67. Elayne H. Varian, “Michael Kirby,” in *Schemata 7*, n.p. Battcock included the catalogue’s interviews in his *Minimal Art* anthology but with abridgements that eliminate all of Varian’s questions regarding the artists’ training. See Elayne H. Varian, “Schemata 7” (1967), in *Minimal Art*, 359–380.

68. Elayne H. Varian, “Brian O’Doherty,” in *Schemata 7*, n.p.

69. Lucy R. Lippard, “Tony Smith: The Ineluctable Modality of the Visible,” *Art International* 11, no. 6 (Summer 1967): 24.

70. Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” 143.

71. Martin Friedman, “Foreword,” in *Tony Smith*, 5.

72. Quoted in Robert Storr, “A Man of Parts,” in *Tony Smith: Architect, Painter, Sculptor*, exh. cat., ed. Robert Storr (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1998), 18.

73. Julia Bryan-Wilson, *Art Workers: Radical Practice in the Vietnam War Era* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009); and Buchloh, “Conceptual Art 1962–1969.”

74. I explicate Maciunas’s vision for Fluxus at greater length in my dissertation, “George Maciunas and the Art of Paperwork” (Columbia University, 2016).

75. See also Caroline A. Jones, *Machine in the Studio: Constructing the Postwar American Artist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

76. See Barbara Dawson, “The Fiction of Identity,” in *Beyond the White Cube: A Retrospective of Brian O’Doherty/Patrick Ireland*, ed. Christina Kennedy and Georgina Jackson (Dublin: Dublin City Gallery, 2006); and Billie Maciunas, *The Eve of Fluxus* (New York: Arbiter, 2010).

77. Magali Sarfatti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977), xvii.

78. For recent examples, see curator Daniel Palmer’s complaint against the “hyper-professionalization” of artistic practice and a response by critic Andrew Berardini: Daniel S. Palmer, “Go Pro: The Hyper-professionalization of the Emerging Artist,” *ARTnews* (blog), 9 March 2016, <http://www.artnews.com/2016/03/09/go-pro-the-hyper-professionalization-of-the-emerging-artist/>; and Andrew Berardini, “How to Be an Unprofessional Artist,” *Momus*, 24 March 2016, <http://momus.ca/how-to-be-an-unprofessional-artist/>.

79. The question that haunts Howard Singerman’s history of arts education in the United States is whether an MFA degree makes an artist a professional. In *October*, the collective Our Literal Speed declares, “Everyone feels the grip of ‘professionalization,’ yet they generally have no way of imagining alternative distributions of interest and conviction.” Howard Singerman, *Art Subjects: Making Artists in the American University* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999); and Our Literal Speed, “Our Literal Speed,” *October* 129 (Summer 2009): 145.

80. Wagstaff, Jr., “Talking with Tony Smith,” 386.

81. Wagstaff, Jr., “Talking with Tony Smith,” 386.