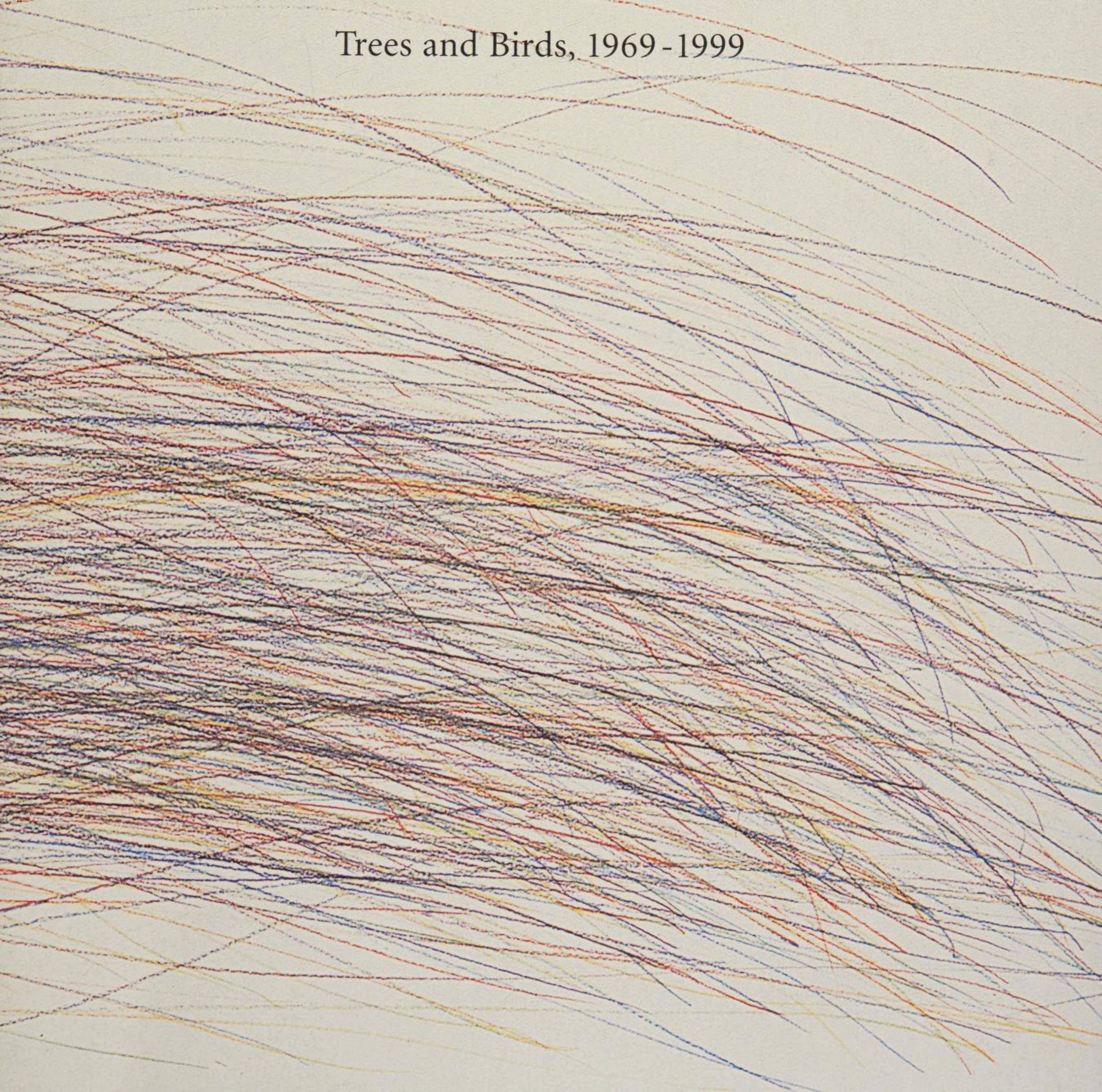


T O M M A R I O N I

Trees and Birds, 1969-1999



TOM MARIONI

Trees and Birds, 1969-1999

Marcia Tanner, Guest Curator

Mills College Art Museum
Oakland, California

November 10 – December 23, 1999

Mills College Art Museum
5000 MacArthur Boulevard
Oakland, California 94613

Tom Marioni
Trees and Birds, Drawings 1969–1999

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Guest Curator Marcia Tanner

Text: Marcia Tanner, copyright 1999
ISBN 0-9638030-4-2

Design: Betsy Joyce with Tom Marioni
Printing: Richmond Blueprint and Litho Company, Richmond, California

Cover:
Flying with Friends, 1999
All Color Photos: Phil Cohen

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to Katherine Crum for making this show happen, and to Valerie Wade for having the idea in the first place; to Keith Lachowicz for his administration and for putting up the show; to Sasha Baguskas for technical assistance on the catalog; to Betsy Joyce for designing the catalog with me; to Kathan Brown for emotional support; to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Oakland Museum, the Berkeley Museum, and Crown Point Press for loaning work.

And special thanks for Marcia Tanner for all her work in organizing and installing the show and for writing the catalog essay.

— TM

FORWARD

Charlotte Beck retells an old Zen story in her book *Nothing Special*:

A student said to Master Iehu, "Please write for me something of great wisdom." Master Iehu picked up his brush and wrote one word: "Attention." The student said, "Is that all?" The master wrote "Attention. Attention."

For more than thirty years Tom Marioni has found inventive ways to have us pay attention. First, there's attention to whatever is going on. Pointless activity. Then human beings create significance. In Marioni's work we can literally watch the creation of meaning. The repetition or continuation of activity in time seems to transmute it, generating meaning. These actions also remind us that all activities create traces—ideas or objects. And all objects and ideas are the result of activity. Further, activity, as Marioni often shows, has to happen somewhere—in a "context," in a place, in a time, in a culture, in a body. All kinds of philosophical questions arise, but they are embedded in ordinary life activities. The extraordinary thing about Marioni's art is that it does not translate philosophical ideas. Its context is a different kind of practice. The work is not about attending to time, meaning and the nature of experience. Instead, the work creates a space for us to experience these phenomena, and enjoy them, sometimes laugh at them. So we're not doing philosophy. We're simply paying attention.

It is a great privilege to have the present exhibition of Tom Marioni's drawings here at Mills. I am grateful for the care and attention he has given both to this project and to our students and faculty.

Katherine B. Crum, Ph.D.
Director, Mills College Art Museum

RECORDS OF FLIGHT:
THE PROCESS DRAWINGS OF
TOM MARIONI

Whatever is here, it is material for my art.

— Thom Gunn, “Confessions of the Life Artist”¹

*What I’m trying to do is make art that’s as close
to real life as I can without its being real life.*

— Tom Marioni²

INTRODUCTION

Drawings have been a central, compelling preoccupation throughout Tom Marioni’s thirty-year career as a conceptual artist. His unconventional methods of mark-making arise most often from his sculptural activities, which embrace performance, installation, and “social sculpture” as well as three-dimensional objects.

Trees and Birds, 1969-1999 presents a subset of drawings made by Marioni over the past three decades. The drawings in this retrospective survey — works on paper, silk and linen, some of them incorporated into sculptural installations and tableaux — were not created as independent pieces. Nor are they studies or sketches for works to be realized in another medium. While beautiful and formally elegant in themselves, his drawings are rendered even more poetic when recognized as residues or artifacts of process, historic markers of the artist’s sculptural actions: visual records of his gestures, the rhythmic movements of his body, his manipulation of



[FIG. 1] *One Second Sculpture*, 1969. Action

materials in a particular place over a particular time span. Although non-narrative and usually abstract, they are graphic evidence of actual events.

Marioni has described his art actions as “sculpture evolved into the fourth dimension”: explorations of “the relationships of forms in space and in time.”³ He approaches performance art as sculptural actions in which he explores ideas by engaging physically and with focused concentration on materials. Almost anything may become material for his sculpture: sound, light, shadow, air, social situations, natural phenomena, his weekly beer-and-conversation salons, even having a museum buy him a car with his exhibition budget. For him, the artist’s role requires creative interaction with the ephemeral, often intangible stuff of life.

Apart from the period between 1969 and 1972, when he engaged only in art actions, Marioni has always made objects. For him as for other conceptual artists globally during those years, the move away from object-making was a protest against materialism and the commodification of the art object. When he returned to the object, Marioni was careful to clarify his intentions:

*Ten years ago it was important to make a statement against materialism by making actions instead of objects. Now with some artists of my generation there’s a return to the object, not as an end in itself, but as material to explain a function, like before the Renaissance where the object was used in a social, architectural or religious way.*⁴

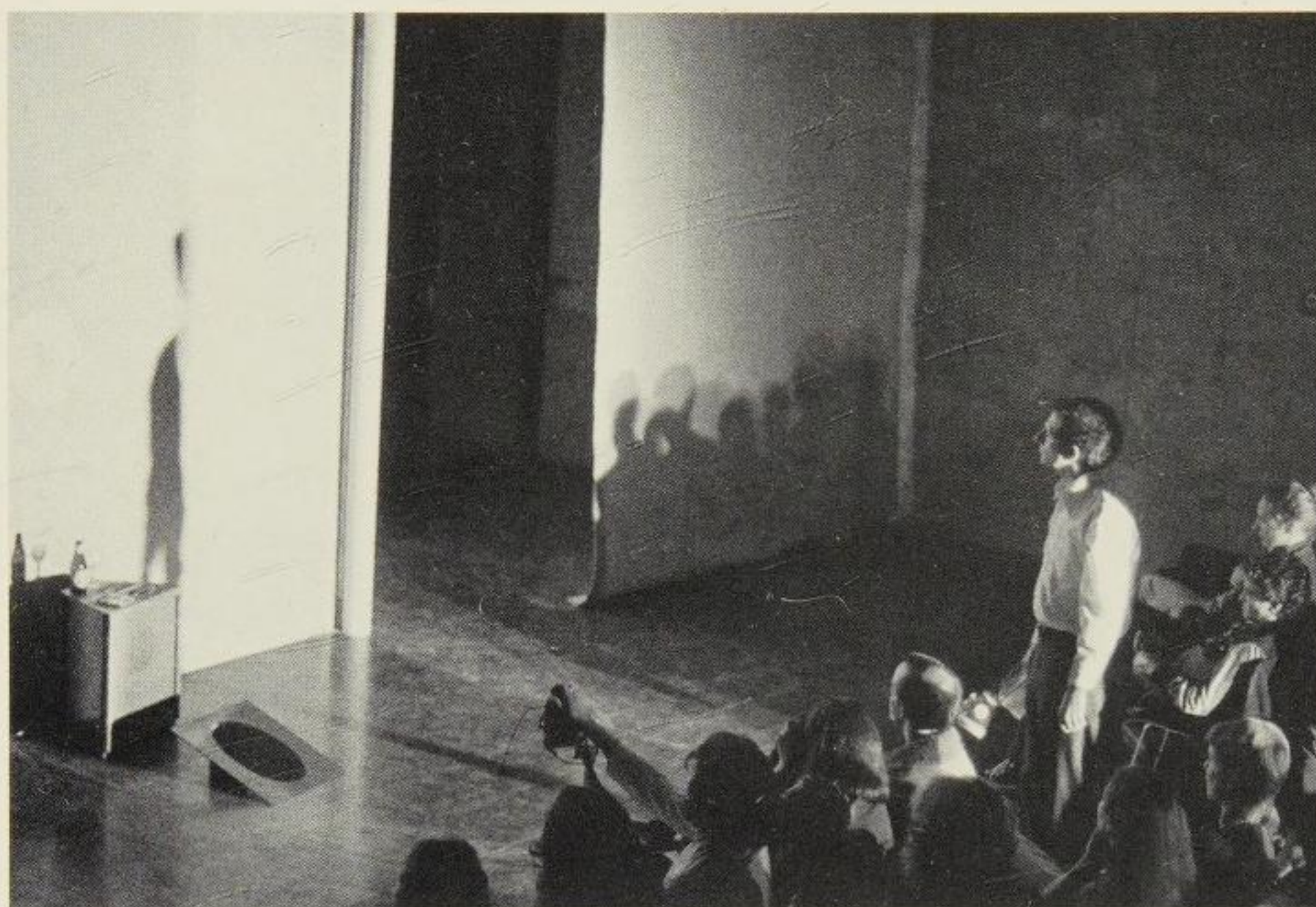
These objects, in other words, had to have a history of use or serve as a reliquary for specific memories and materials associated with some art action. Marioni refers to these as “objects of power,” like the symbolic objects handled by the Catholic priests in the rituals he absorbed as an altar-boy.⁵

The coiled tape-measure in a shadow box commemorating his 1969 art action *One Second Sculpture* [Fig.1] is an example. For the original performance, Marioni flung into the air an “instrument

made from a metal tape measure that flies open like a spring in one second, making a loud sound. The object leaves his hand as a circle, makes a drawing in space, and falls to the ground as a straight line.”⁶ He had made an intangible, ephemeral drawing, the result of a linear gesture in space, whose brief existence could only be documented indirectly via photography. A crucial piece for Marioni, it was one of his earliest experiments in conceptual art and the beginning of his “personal work” (his “public work” involved social actions). Combining gesture, sound, an instrument for making a drawing, “male” (linear) and “female” (curved) elements, and the image of flight, *One Second Sculpture* encapsulated and anticipated ideas that have engrossed him ever since.

Repetition of simple actions and ideas is a hallmark of Marioni’s process. He engages in these ritualistic actions — many of which result in drawings — as a spiritual exercise, a means to connect himself and others with altered states of consciousness. Both demonstrations and celebrations of the act of art, they enable spectators to witness the transformation — not of wine into blood, as in the Catholic sacrament — but of one material changing into another. When he draws his own shadow in a public performance, for instance, its outline traced on the paper remains when he backs away from the light, and his shadow gradually disappears [Fig. 2].

Implicit in Marioni’s practice is the notion that the artist serves a priestly function. Marioni is more catalyst than priest, however. As in Zen Buddhist ceremonies and the sensuous, theatrical rituals of the Catholic Church, he creates conditions that can activate changes in perception: intellectual, spiritual, emotional. By providing the communion of beer and conversation every Wednesday, or engaging with absorbed attentiveness in the art actions he performs, or demonstrating processes of transformation in his transactions with materials, he sets things in motion that may (or may not) trigger the observer’s imagination. But he has a light touch. His



[FIG. 2] *Studio*, 1980. Performance

social art is never doctrinaire or solemn. On the contrary, it is vividly experiential, often mesmerizing, unintimidating, and usually fun.

This exhibition's title, *Trees and Birds*, refers primarily to two series of gestural process drawings, products of sculptural actions which Marioni originated in 1972. They are "drawing a line as far as I can reach" (trees), and drum brush drawings (birds). He has continued to make them as his ideas evolve and their contexts change. All the other pieces here refer to trees and birds as well.

The works in this exhibition document every stage of Marioni's development over the past three decades. A microcosm of his entire *oeuvre*, they embody and reflect his continual elaboration and refinement of the ideas, images, materials, and processes which have preoccupied him throughout his practice. They thus open out into an exploration of his artistic evolution, and his pivotal, pervasive influence — as impresario, leader and role model — on defining the

character of conceptual art-making in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond.⁷ They reveal Marioni's work as an evolving composition: an ongoing series of complex variations on themes that have absorbed his imagination from the beginning of his artistic career.

TREES

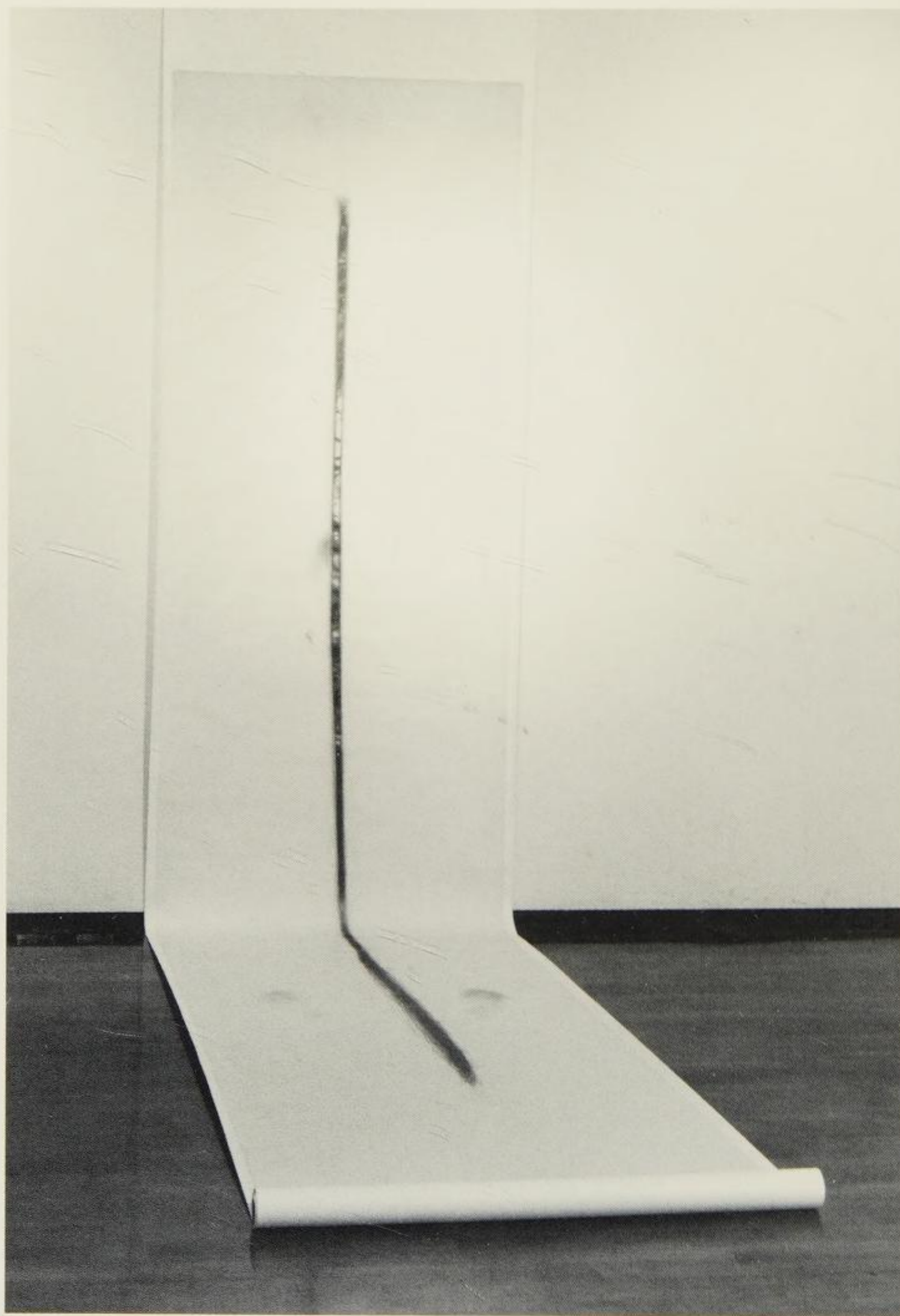
"Trees" are the treelike forms evoked by "drawing a line as far as I can reach". Each tree is the sum of the marks left by repeated, rhythmic vertical pencil strokes, like Chinese calligraphy, made from a specific length along the artist's hand or arm, and continued as a meditative act until the pencil is used up. "It is like doing yoga and holding a pencil while you are doing it," he says.⁸ While these delicate, flame-like nerve bundles of upright linear marks do resemble trees — branchless tree trunks, or Italian cypresses — they represent neither actual trees nor anything physical except the process of their making, a process engendered by the measurements and natural rhythms of the artist's body.

Yet metaphorically, if not pictorially, these drawings *are* of trees. "I was trying to make a tree in the way a tree grows," Marioni has said: an approach that John Cage has called "imitating nature in her manner of operation." Besides, each pencil is a former tree, transubstantiated by the artist's actions into an abstract image on paper of a tree's life force. They are trees if one imagines that the energy which fuels the natural motion of the artist's mark-making arm or finger is akin to the energy driving a tree's growth, and that both obey the innate instinct of an earth-rooted organism to orient itself upward, toward the light. They are trees because they were created with a treelike impulse.

Marioni's first *Drawing a Line As Far As I Can Reach*, 1972 [Fig. 3] was made during his live-in exhibition *The Creation: A Seven*



[FIG. 3] *Drawing a Line as Far as I Can Reach*, 1972. Action



[FIG. 4] *Drawing a Line as Far as I Can Reach (Edinburgh Drawing)*,
1972. Pencil on paper

Day Performance at the Reese Palley Gallery in San Francisco. Basing his program on the Creation story in Genesis, Marioni devoted each day to symbolically re-enacting God's actions in the Biblical account. On the third day — when “the earth brought forth grass, and herb . . . and the tree yielding fruit” — Marioni hung a sheet of brown wrapping paper low on a wall, seated himself in the lotus position on the floor in front of it, and drew vertical pencil lines as far up as he could reach — over a thousand of them — until the pencil was consumed. “I was mimicking Nature in trying to make a tree,” Marioni says. “Only God makes nature and only people make art. My intent was the action, but the result was an image that resembled a tree.” His action was a form of meditation. It also dramatized the tedious, painstaking, labor-intensive, sometimes apparently pointless process of creating *anything*.

Marioni's tallest tree was made later in 1972, during his five-day performance/exhibition at the Richard Demarco Gallery in Edinburgh, Scotland [Fig. 4]. For this effort, Marioni used a piece of paper that began on the floor and continued up the wall. Standing upright and straddling the sheet, he made pencil strokes that swept from the bottom of the paper behind him, between his legs, forward and upward toward the top of the sheet in front of him, using the full length of his body to produce the marks. This piece had a sound component as well. A microphone concealed at the baseboard, where the paper curved at the juncture of floor and wall, amplified the sounds of his pencil strokes as they approached and receded. “The effect was like the seashore, the ocean coming in, and the waves going out,” Marioni recalls.

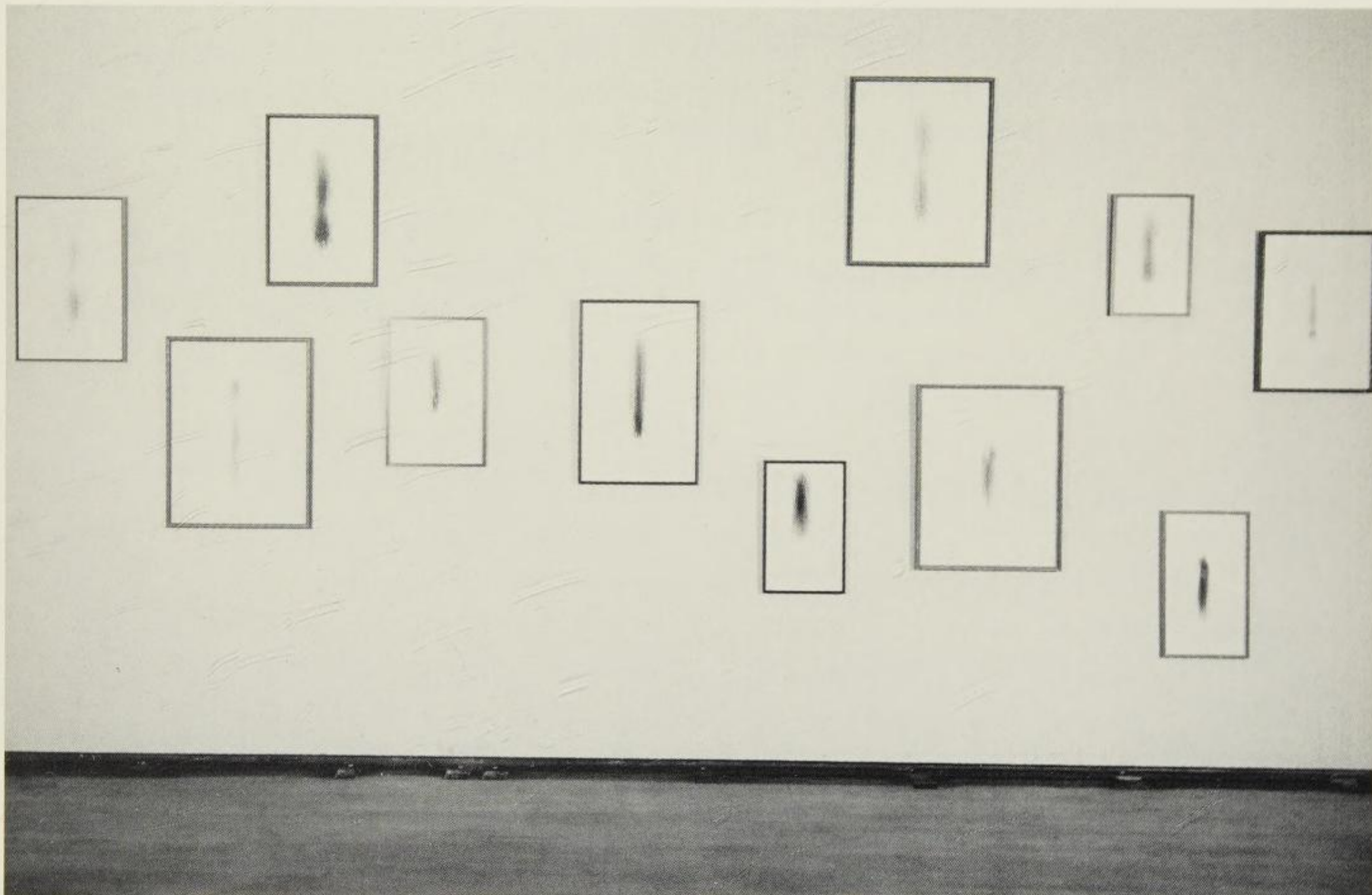
His shortest tree, the 1986 *Finger Line*, is also included in this exhibition, as is his 1997 group of *11 Line Drawings*, each created at the height at which they are hung [Fig. 6]. For this elaborate conceptual exercise, which took over three months to complete, Marioni made the first drawing on the wall, then hung another sheet of paper



Finger Line, 1998. Etching

whose size, qualities and placement were determined in relation to the previous one to make the next drawing, and so on. The sheets of paper were blank except for a pale border of aquatint as a tonal framing device. For each drawing, Marioni used a multicolored pencil attached to a length of bamboo. They are thus records of extended reach.

In some cases Marioni had to jump to make the drawings; in others he had to push the stick down; in others he held the stick straight out and vibrated it vertically. The resulting drawings take their forms from the angles of the pencil strokes. Some are short and stubby, some long and tapered, some flaring and torchlike, some thick and trunklike. Each is the unique trace of the process of its making. The salon-style installation is intended to create rhythm as it moves across the wall. But it is also suggestive of a landscape,



[FIG. 6] *11 Line Drawings*, 1997. Pencil on paper

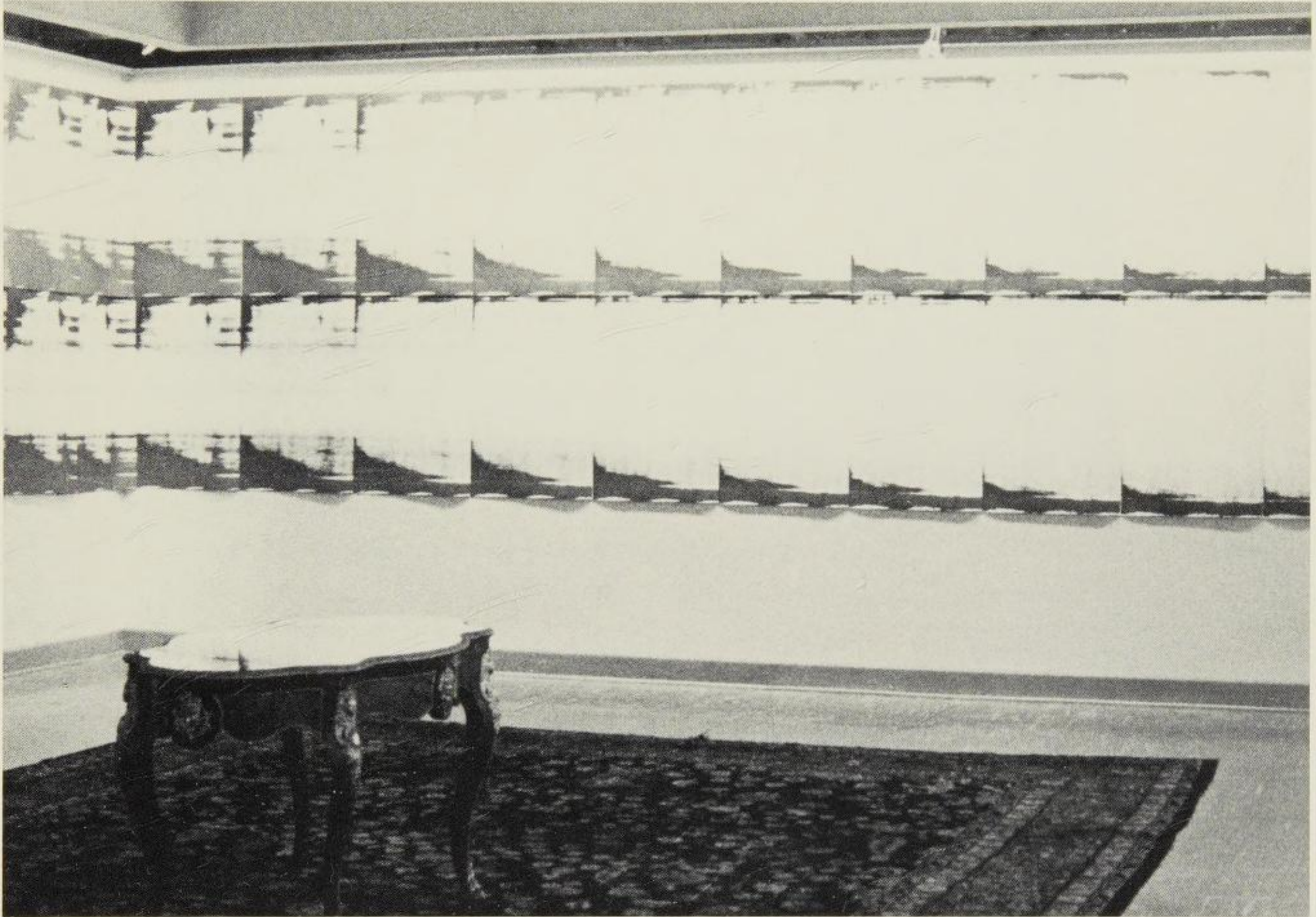
where the trees and vegetation have a different character depending on the height at which they grow.

In Marioni's "landscape" prints and drawings, the trees aren't always visible to the naked eye. These works are landscape-like in the same sense that his "trees" are tree-like. That is, their resemblance to landscape is an artifact of the processes of their manufacture, in which horizontal layers of pigment trigger viewers' recognition of "landscape".

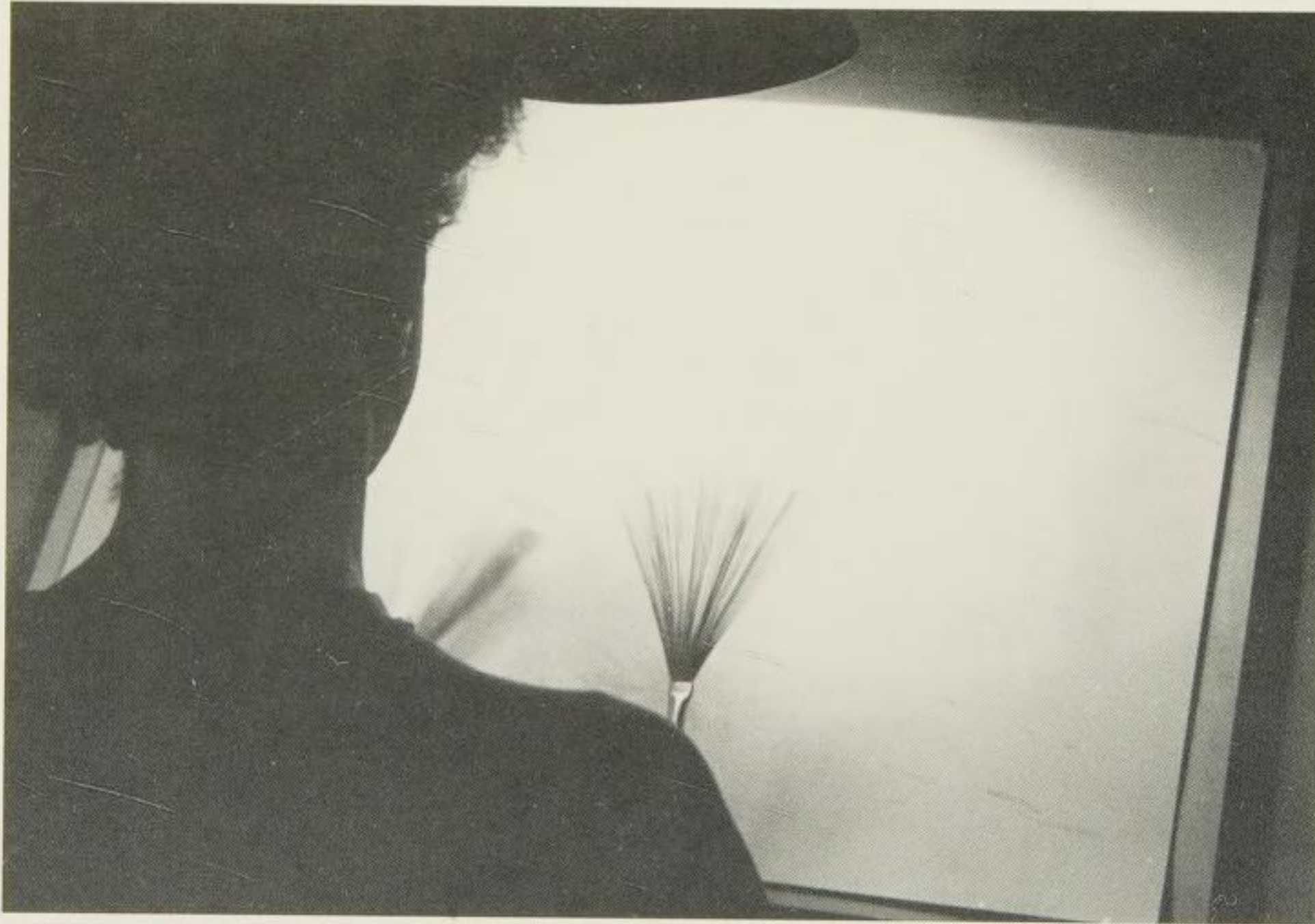
The 1970 *Process Print* installation, for instance — a series of 225 sheets of heavy commercial paper run through an offset lithograph press with no image on the plate — displays a sequence ranging from completely blank to solid brown, a result of the dry plate gradually picking up ink. [Fig. 7] The sheets, edited to fit the space they occupy, are hung in order from white to dark around the walls. According to the artist, "it looks like a film strip of a landscape." Similarly, his "bottled landscapes" are the chance results of successive washes of diluted ink poured into a bottle lined with paper and rotated. If these landscapes are projections of our own perceptual processes, Marioni suggests — slightly tongue-in-cheek — that implicit trees are growing there. To paraphrase the poet Marianne Moore, they are virtual landscapes with imaginary trees in them.

BIRDS

Birds and flight are recurrent Marioni themes. Inspired by the automatic writing of the Surrealist movement, and by his desire to marry visual art with music and "male" with "female" elements in his work, Marioni's drum brush drawings do not literally represent birds any more than his "drawing a line as far as I can reach" series literally represents trees. But they are chief among the "birds" referred to in the exhibition's title. Resembling ghostly birds in flight, they are the



[FIG. 7] *Process Print*, 1970. Offset lithographs, installation



[FIG. 8] *Drum Brush Drawing*, 1972. Action

shadowy traces left on large sheets of sandpaper by the artist's prolonged, hypnotic drumming sessions with jazz drummers' brushes made of steel wire. Their shapes emerge, as if conjured, out of the repeated patterns of brush strokes made by the natural movements of his arms. [Fig. 8]

I really became aware how much they looked like birds, flying to the left. This was an exercise . . . like trance drumming . . . similar to the automatic writing that the surrealists did. I wasn't consciously trying to make a picture or an image. The pictorial result was just what happened after two hours of drumming with what was a natural rhythmic movement for me. The left hand went up and down and made what looks like the head of the bird and the right hand made a kind of rounded form which became like the wings of the bird. It was a way to make a drawing with the left and right hand at the same time. Because

of the hypnotic nature not only of the sound, but also the reflections and shadows as well, the rhythmic sound put me in a kind of trance.”¹¹

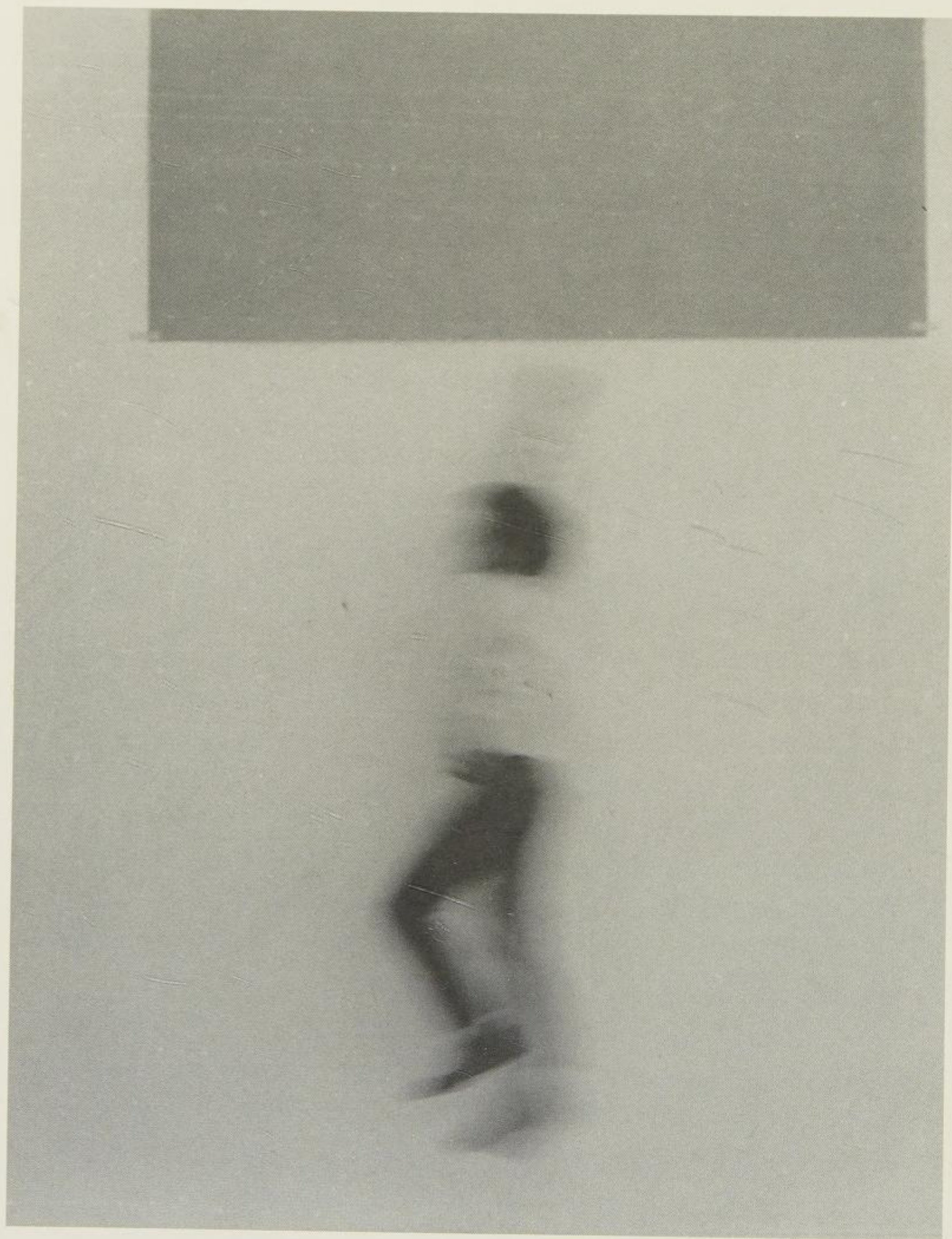
Marioni visualized the rounded shape his right hand made as female, while the left hand made an upright “male” arc. “I superimposed these . . . male and female elements — on top of each other.” He also saw this work as a musical instrument. It was amplified with microphones, and by using an echo effect he could play a duet with himself. “The paper became a pictorial record of the music activity.”¹²

Marioni discovered recently that the regular rhythmic swish of his drum brushes uncannily mimics the sound of the fetal heartbeat in the womb. This primordial rhythm may partially account for the trance-like state he induces in himself, and in his audience, when making these drawings. Inadvertently, Marioni developed a process of producing images of flight that metaphorically makes people high. In some of his early performances, Marioni tried to transmit telepathically to the audience the visual image that appeared to him on the paper while drumming. In the case of one spectator, at least, he apparently succeeded.¹³

Another variety of “bird” is “a record of flight” created by the artist either individually or collaboratively. The first of these, *Bird, Running and Jumping With a Pencil, Marking the Paper While Trying to Fly* was made in 1972, on the fifth day of Marioni’s performance / exhibition *The Creation* at the Reese Palley Gallery. [Fig.9]

I hung paper high on the wall, out of reach. I had to jump to get to it. I would circle the gallery and then run parallel to the wall, and while I was in flight, like a hurdle jumper with a pencil, I’d make that mark. I kept doing that all day long. I was a lot younger then. The marks were a record of my attempted flight, and the end result looks like a wing, this arced bunch of lines.¹⁴

The process of making these long, irregular lines that often continue onto the walls has been described by critic David Bonetti



[FIG. 9] *Bird, Running and Jumping With a Pencil,
Marking the Paper While Trying To Fly, 1972. Action*



[FIG. 10] *Flying With Friends*, 1999. Action

as “almost a parody of action painting.” “It is a literal record of what the body can achieve under delimited circumstances,” he continues, “but it also gives the artist, at least, the feeling of flight and the idea of the bird.”¹⁵

In 1990, after his studio was lost in the 1989 earthquake, Marioni recreated several works from twenty years earlier for his residency at San Francisco’s Capp Street Project. Called *Starting Over: The Artist’s Studio*, this project included a new version of *Running and Jumping . . .* “In that case, I had people help me with it, and I called it *Flying With Friends*.” The most recent version of this process piece was made with students at Marioni’s *alma mater*, the Art Academy in Cincinnati, Ohio, in September, 1999, and is included in this exhibition [Fig. 10].



[FIG. 11] *Art*, 1989. Ink on paper

“Feather Writing,” a series of calligraphic drawings and prints made with an ink-dipped seagull feather, also invokes the themes of bird and flight. During several trips Marioni made to China and Japan in the 1980s he became intrigued by the beauty of the Chinese written language, by its origins as picture writing which evolved over centuries into abstract yet still potent symbols, and by the way the characters define the meanings of the words. The written Chinese word for “art,” for instance, pairs the graceful, feminine character for “beauty” with the more rigid masculine character for “skill”. Marioni interprets this as “art being a man and a woman dancing together.” [Fig. 11] “For me, it’s male and female, which I’m



[FIG. 12] *Flying Yen*, 1990. Woodblock print on silk

into in a lot of my work,” he says. “When I saw the Chinese word for art I wanted to make it, wanted to do it.”

Marioni learned enough Chinese calligraphy to write words that interested him: “art,” “music,” “heart”, “bird, “to fly” — words whose symbols formally resemble what they mean and serve as visual metaphors for the concepts they embody. Using a feather as his implement, the traditional quill pen inverted, he produced drawings of these characters with strokes that imitate the look of feathers, thanks to the ink-absorbing properties of the paper. Some symbols, like the proto-Pop woodblock prints *Flying Yen*, 1990 [Fig. 12] and *Pi*, 1988 [Fig. 13] — which Marioni calls “a kind of mathematical equivalent of God” — are drawn as though in flight.

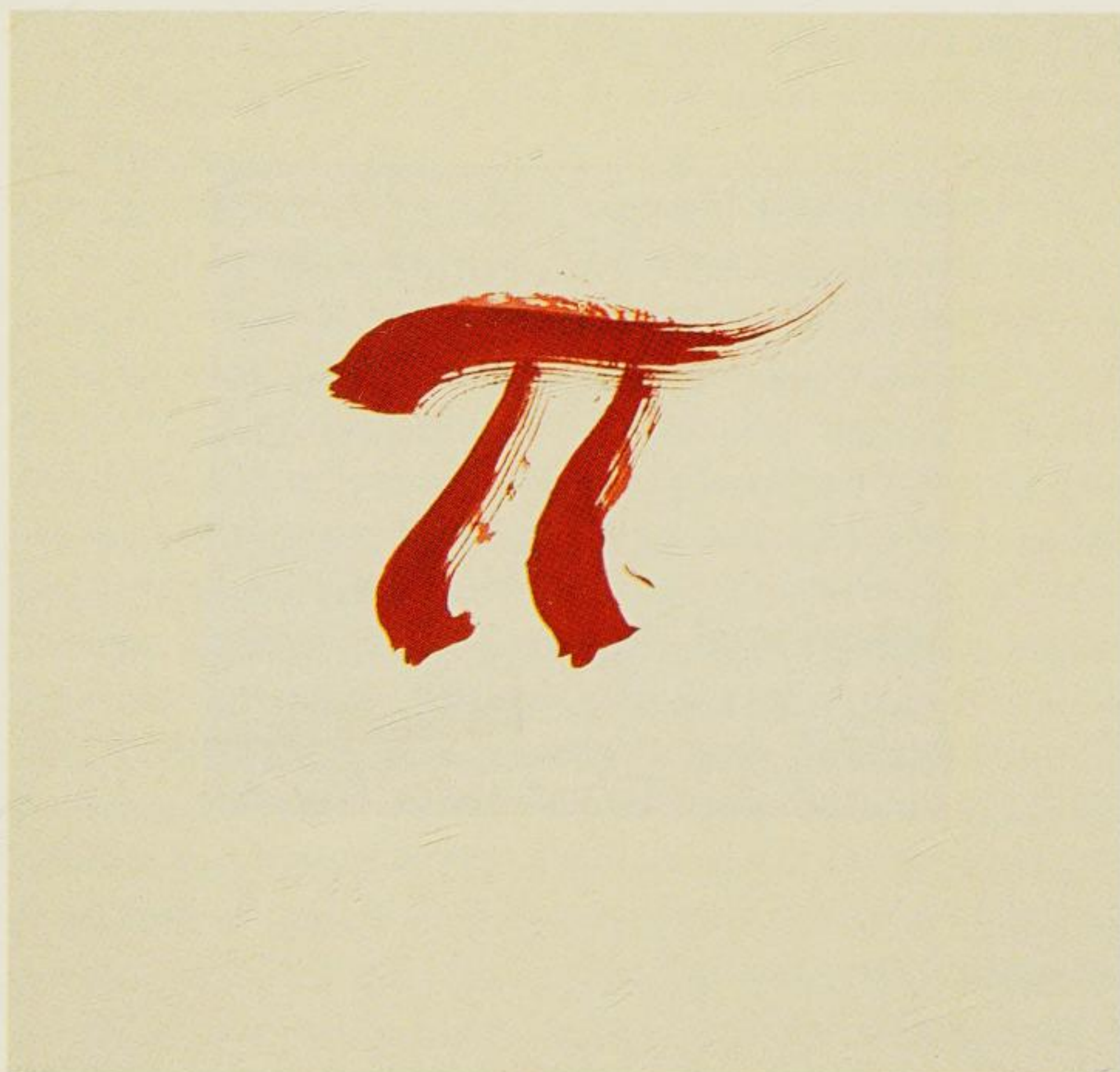
A RECORD OF FLIGHT

Tom Marioni was born in 1937 to Italian-American parents in Cincinnati, Ohio. The second of four sons, he grew up in a household steeped in European culture.¹⁶ His father, a medical doctor born and educated in Northern Italy, was an avid reader, a writer, and an amateur painter who admired Leonardo da Vinci. His mother was a musician and singer.

Marioni studied violin as a child and later switched to drums when he discovered jazz. Music was and is important in his life and work. He credits jazz and the Catholic Church as the two main influences on his career as a performance artist and sculptor. The priestly rituals he observed as an altar boy, and, later on, watching jazz trumpeter Miles Davis play with his back to the audience, made him “think about performance art as some kind of ritual that the audience is witness to. But you’re not playing to the audience, you’re playing to the material that you’re working with or manipulating . . . performing a kind of miracle.”¹⁷

His years in the Church also formed Marioni’s ideas about sculpture. “I use symbolic objects to create new associations,” he says. “The objects are metaphors for something else. The object is not only *not* an end in itself. In my case it has a use and a history and is symbolic of something.”

At the Cincinnati Art Academy, Marioni received a traditional art school education in drawing, sculpture, and design. He headed straight for San Francisco after graduating in 1959, attracted by the city’s jazz scene, Beat culture, and its promise of an open society offering freedom to experiment and reinvent oneself. In his first year on the West Coast, he made abstract formal sculpture while supporting himself as a commercial designer of wallpaper and rugs. After a stint in the army in Ulm, Germany, where he was battalion artist in charge of “beautifying” his base and traveled widely, he



[FIG. 13] *Pi*, 1988. Woodblock print on silk

returned to San Francisco in 1963. With a new family to support, he worked as a finisher of plaster reproduction art works, a graphic designer, and a designer of architectural elements.

Marioni was still making minimal, slickly painted wood sculpture inspired by the work of Larry Bell and John McCracken when he began reading about Yves Klein, the French artist who did elegant painting performances and died, tragically, in 1962 at the age of thirty-four. "I made this connection with the ritual and the priest, and the idea of making art," Marioni says. "Instead of celebrating the Last Supper, in [Klein's] case it was celebrating the act of painting."

Marioni was also impressed by the intensely physical process involved in Jackson Pollock's action paintings, as well as by the meditative gestural practice of Zen Buddhist brush painting. He studied the works of Marcel Duchamp, revisited the scientific writings and drawings of Leonardo da Vinci, and discovered Joseph Beuys. Beuys' use of "curious materials" encouraged Marioni to experiment with sculptures made of sound, taste, and other unorthodox media. His germinal exhibition at the Oakland Museum in 1970, the literally titled *The Act of Drinking Beer With Friends Is the Highest Form of Art*, was Marioni's highly individual take on Beuys' notion of "social sculpture". John Cage's creative use of chance operations became an important influence as well.

DRAWING IN SPACE

Having characterized social activities as an art form, Marioni formed his own artistic community in 1973, when he inaugurated a regular Wednesday afternoon open house for beer-drinking, video-watching and conversation as a work of conceptual art. This evolving group of artists and others still meets weekly at Marioni's studio to imbibe, show and tell, and keep a lively dialogue going.

From 1968 to 1971, Marioni was curator of art at the Richmond Art Center, across the Bay from San Francisco, where he organized a number of ground-breaking conceptual art exhibitions. In 1970 he founded MOCA, the Museum of Conceptual Art, at 75 Third Street in San Francisco, above Breen's Bar and Restaurant (MOCA's weekly meeting place from 1976-79).

Marioni's intention was to "create a scene," and he succeeded. MOCA became a cultural center for the first generation of Bay Area conceptual artists and a magnet for European and other conceptual artists who were passing through. The Museum itself was "almost like a repertory company where the same players are in different shows." Marioni took curating very seriously, organizing theme shows intended to be educational. He developed a reputation for presenting exhibitions only when he "came across work that he felt imperative to exhibit."¹⁸

As MOCA's chief curator and proprietor, Marioni helped delineate the qualities that would distinguish Bay Area conceptual art from its counterparts elsewhere. "When I started MOCA as a specialized sculpture action museum, I made my own rules and defined conceptual art as idea-oriented situations not directed at the production of static objects," he wrote.¹⁹ Marioni's activities as curator, host, artist and museum director became a vital force in nurturing conceptual art in the region. "The art that happened at MOCA was not my art," he says, "but the idea of this museum was."

Conceptual artmaking emerged as a worldwide underground phenomenon in the mid-1960s, flourished through the 1970s, and continues in varied incarnations into the present. It arose independently and almost simultaneously around the globe in a time of social protest, when the old world order was apparently capsizing everywhere. It was the era of the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, the Women's Liberation Movement, the counter-culture. Old rules and hierarchies felt — to the young especially — worn out,

useless, irrelevant, and stifling. Society seemed ripe for radical transformation. So did art.

“In general, the whole conceptual art movement was a moral and political movement,” Marioni says. Conceptual artists critically engaged the question of how art produces meaning. Challenging the notion that the value and aesthetic qualities of a work of art are embedded in the material object or the medium used to create it, they explored new forms of artistic practice. The common denominator was what Lucy Lippard — the movement’s early chronicler — called the “dematerialization of the art object”.²⁰ Artists in different parts of the world adopted it for different purposes. Some were making statements about ecology, or capitalism, or materialism, or to protest the war in Vietnam.

Unlike the conceptual art developing in New York, which was primarily based on linguistic philosophy and systems, or the light-and-space installations emanating from Los Angeles, Bay Area conceptual practice was centered on the body, on actions performed as art. Although rooted in European existentialist philosophy it was just as strongly influenced by Asian thought, mysticism and artistic practice. Wry deadpan humor, often gently satirical, was a characteristic. So was a vein of surrealism. Combining a benign climate with the legacy of minimalism and a tradition of maverick mad-inventor artmaking that crossed over genres, experimented with new technologies, and deliberately turned its back on the East Coast, the Bay Area was free to forge its own distinctive idiom from very rich ore.

What Marioni and his colleagues were after was a fundamental shift in consciousness, a profoundly renovated way of experiencing and interacting with the world. Such ideas were in tune with the “human potential movement” of the 70s, when West Coast people, at least, believed the individual had the freedom and responsibility to construct him/her self, that life wasn’t over until it was over. Those values are beginning to look even more relevant now.

**BIRDS AND TREES IN FLIGHT:
PERCEPTION AS PROCESS**

Despite its apparent variety and complexity, all of Marioni's work is characterized by his use of simple yet metaphorically eloquent materials, his economy of means, his absorbed, meticulous execution and his stringent attention to visual beauty and elegance of form. Marioni lists seven words that have served as his guiding concepts. They are:

Sound (sculpture)
(Free) **Beer**
Drum (brushing)
(MOCA) **Wednesday**
Yellow (light)
(Shadow) **Drawing**
Feather (writing)

Collectively, the "trees and birds" in this exhibition embody or allude to all seven of Marioni's canonical terms. They also tread the borders between multiple paradoxes. Marioni has presided in his work over many mystic marriages between supposed opposites: visual art and sound, abstraction and representation, male and female, process and object, light and shadow, matter and spirit, body and mind, East and West, seriousness and humor, formal composition and chance, and (by no means exhausting this litany), the dubious Duchampian distinction between cerebral and retinal art. The work assembled here demonstrates that these terms are not mutually exclusive, either physically or conceptually, if one's imagination is limbered up and paying attention.

Birds in Flight, 1969 [Fig. 15], for instance, was originally made for *The Return of Abstract Expressionism*, an exhibition Marioni organized while curator of the Richmond Art Center. Participating



[FIG. 15] *Birds in Flight*, 1969. Paper, installation

artists in this show of expressionistic, “anti-form” process sculpture included Dennis Oppenheim, Iain Baxter, Terry Fox, Mel Henderson and John Woodall.²¹ “I didn’t have enough floor pieces for the show,” Marioni recalls, “so I made this piece.”

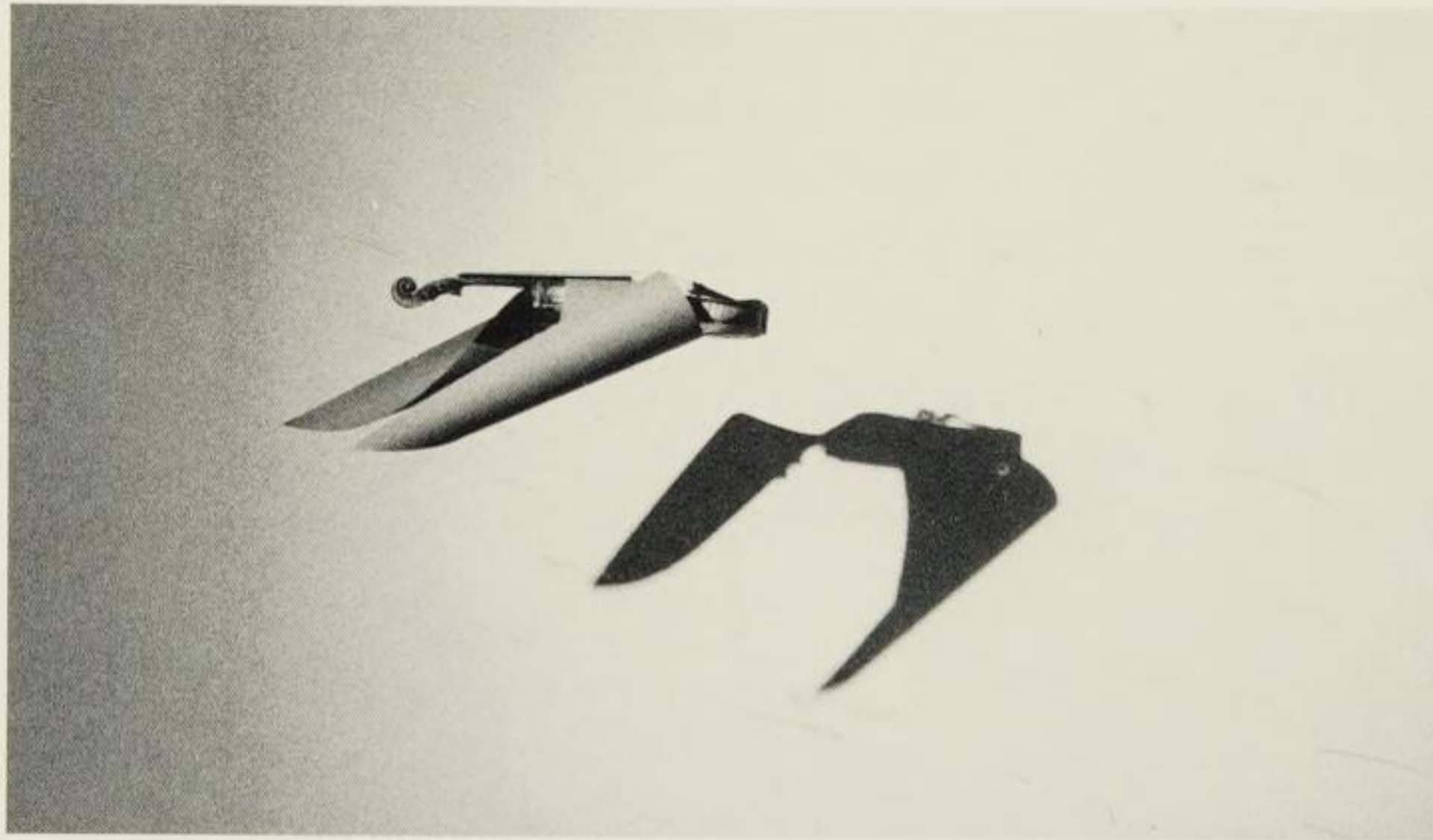
Actually, he submitted instructions and materials for making the piece to the curator (himself) under the pseudonym of Allan Fish, who became his artistic alter ego — complete with Groucho Marx disguise — for as long as Marioni was employed at the gallery. The instructions read:

Enclosed is a packet of multi-colored construction paper. To install sculpture, sit in a chair about ten feet from a wall. Take one sheet at a time and crumple each one, as if you were in a hurry and throwing it into a wastepaper basket. Throw each piece at the wall, trying to keep them generally in a confined area. The result should be multi-colored birds at the moment of flight after being frightened by the stamping of feet.²²

The resulting scatter piece is simultaneously a process sculpture and a collection of drawings, whose “lines” are the wrinkles in the paper. If not an image of flight, it represents an anticipation of flight, the liminal moment between panic and takeoff.

Violin Bird, 1972, is technically a drawing in a sculpture [Fig. 16]. The piece consists of a violin with a sheet of paper inserted between the strings and the body, protruding on either side in such a way that it resembles the instrument’s wings. The “drawing” is a white spot of powder deposited on the paper by a bow that had been thickly coated with rosin. The piece is suspended from the ceiling by a wire, like a mobile. When lit with the prescribed yellow spotlight (yellow light is Marioni’s emblem of spiritual enlightenment, intellectual illumination, vision), it casts a crisp yet eerie shadow on the wall resembling a bird in flight.

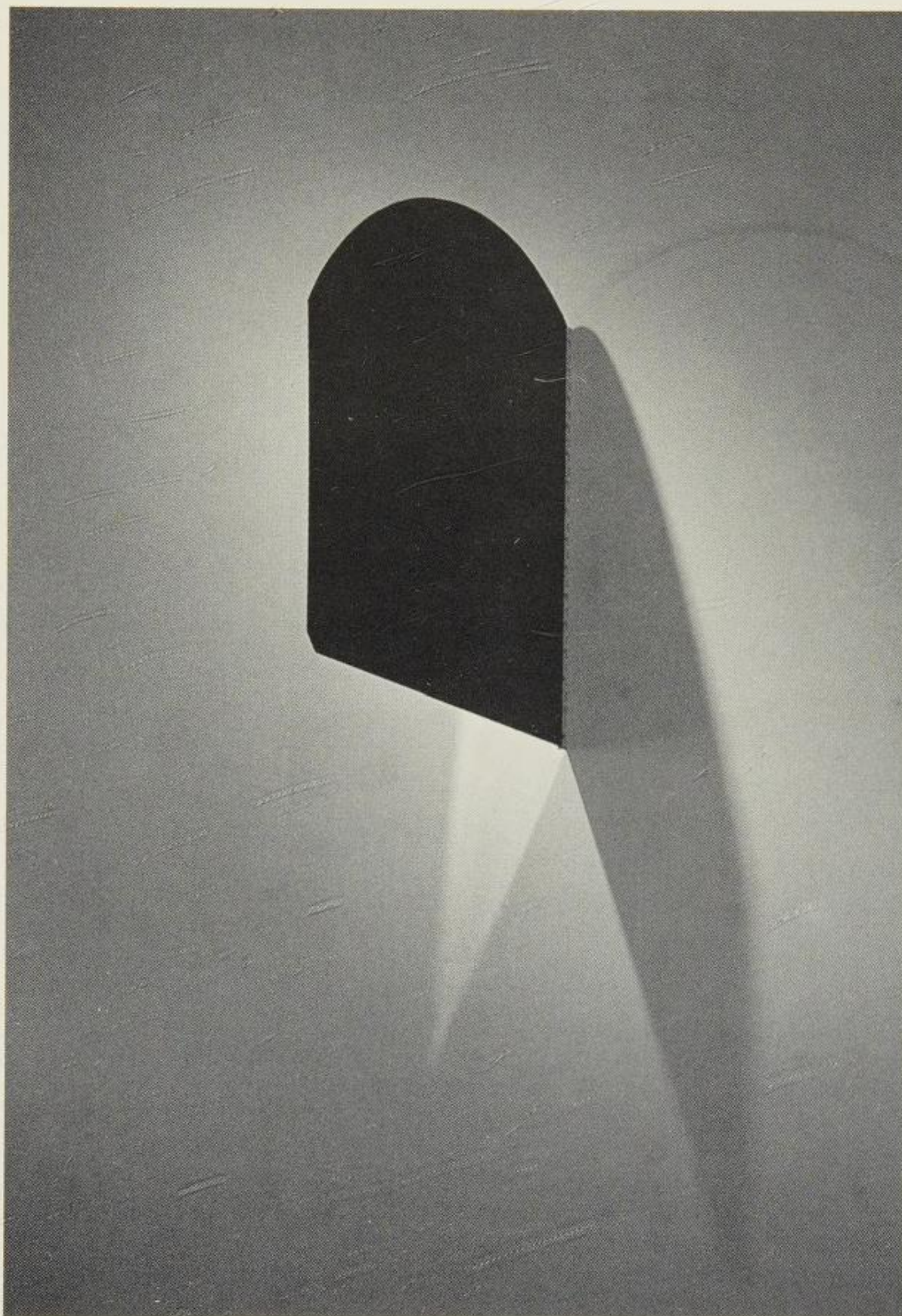
Violin Bird became an object only after it had been used in a performance/action called *Sunday Scottish Landscape*, the first piece



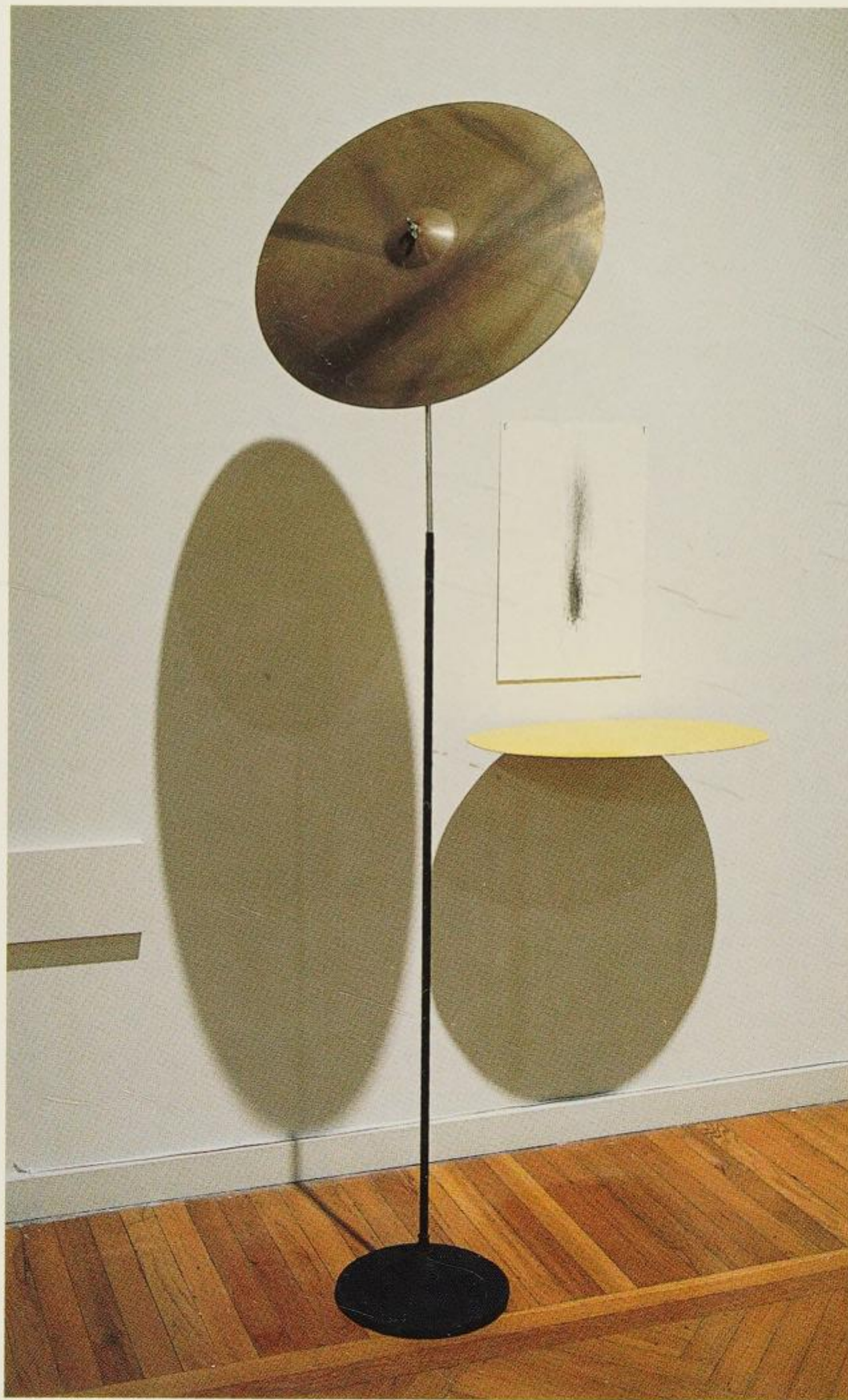
[FIG. 16] *Violin Bird*, 1972. Sculpture with drawing

in Marioni's five-day performance/exhibition at the Richard Demarco Gallery in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1972. For that event, Marioni bowed the same harmonic note on the violin for half an hour, producing a distant, clear, otherworldly sound. The resulting "drawing" made by the bow and the rosin was, he thought, like "a miniature landscape" with "the strings as the telephone wire, and the bridge of the violin . . . like a real bridge". "It was another fantasy space, or a meditation idea, like the drum brushing," he says. "There's a poetic relationship between the object and its shadow".

Like the tape measure of *One Second Sculpture*, Marioni's *Circle, Triangle, Square*, 1996 [Fig. 17] is an instrument for making a drawing. This wall sculpture is based on a Zen brush drawing of the same title by the Japanese artist Sengai (1750-1838). It is a single sheet of copper, hinged to the wall, whose shape includes within it a circle, triangle and square: a shape Marioni arrived at through experimenting with the ideal Renaissance proportions of the Golden Section, and the Golden Rectangle. One side of the copper is



[FIG. 17] *Circle, Triangle, Square*, 1995. Wall sculpture,
painted copper



[FIG. 18] *Illuminated Drawing*, 1996. Pencil on painted copper, sculpture

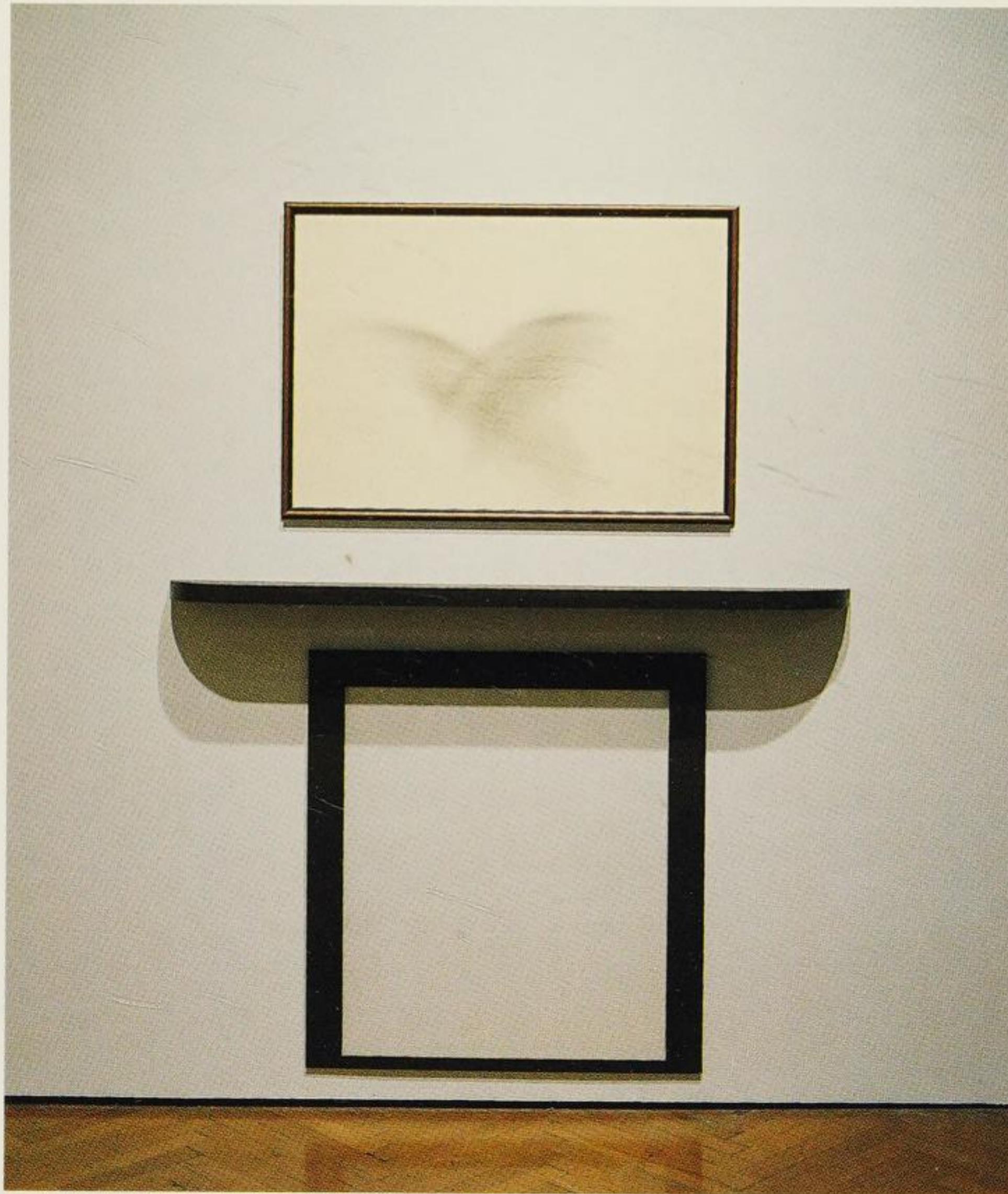
painted black while the other is highly polished and reflective. A spotlight illuminates the panel (swung just to the left of 90 degrees), creating winglike shapes on the wall: one of reflected light (on the copper side) and the other a shadow. The entire piece becomes a sort of bird in flight, with an added interactive element. To polish the unpainted copper, the panel must be pushed against the wall. The metal polish leaves a stain around the panel's edges as an evolving action drawing, a collaboration between the piece's owner and the artist.

Illuminated Drawing, 1996 [Fig. 18] is almost an encyclopedia of Marioni motifs. Like *By the Fire*, 1994 [Fig. 19] it is a tableau sculpture that provides an altar-like context for a drawing. And like *Circle, Triangle, Square* it's a perceptual game that plays with illusion and transformation. It also resembles the setting for a performance in which the viewer is invited to participate imaginatively.

Formally it suggests a set of drums. An oval copper shelf, enameled yellow on top, hangs on the wall below a "tree" drawing. To the left on the floor, facing the wall like a presiding entity, stands a brass cymbal on a tall pole. The cymbal is placed to appear elliptical when viewed head on. A spotlight illuminates the piece, casting a perfectly circular shadow on the wall beneath the oval shelf. The circle thus describes an ellipse, the ellipse a circle.

The illuminated drawing itself, a "record of extended reach," was made with a pencil on a stick, on a sheet of copper painted white. Where the stick attacked the surface it removed bits of paint, revealing flecks of burnished copper that glow under the light like hot coals. The lines above them suggest smoke. This tree has become a burning bush, or rather, an eternal flame.

Marcia Tanner
Berkeley, California
October 1999



[FIG. 19] *By the Fire*, 1994. Sculpture with drawing

NOTES

1. Thom Gunn, *Collected Poems* (New York, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1994), p. 159.
2. Robin White, Interview with Tom Marioni, *View*, Vol, I, No. 5, October 1978 (Oakland, CA, Point Publications, Crown Point Press. Reprinted and updated January 1981), p. 3.
3. Robin White, op. cit., p. 14. "I always strictly stuck to the principles of sculpture, that is, the relationships of forms in space and in time."
4. Tom Marioni, 1979, color video with voice-over narrative. The text appeared in Suzanne Foley, *Space Time Sound: Conceptual Art in the San Francisco Bay Area: The 1970s* (Seattle and London, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, distributed by the University of Washington Press, 1981), p. 50. It was reprinted as *1979 Manifesto* in *Tom Marioni: Sculpture and Installations 1969-1997* (San Francisco, published privately, n.d.), p. 13.
5. Unless otherwise noted, all the artist's direct quotes are taken from two interviews with the author: in Berkeley on June 22, 1999, and in the artist's studio in San Francisco on July 9, 1999.
6. Kathan Brown, "Demonstration," *Why Draw a Landscape?* (San Francisco, Crown Point Press, 1999), p. 49.
7. "Marioni's work and its influence are the key to the development of a San Francisco Bay Area style of conceptual art expression." Foley, op. cit., p. 57.
8. Tom Marioni, unpublished slide lecture notes, number 1, n.d. According to Marioni, each drawing repetitively spells the Chinese character for "stick".
9. Tom Marioni, *ibid.*, number 1. "I wasn't trying to make a picture of a tree, but I was trying to make a tree in the way a tree grows."
10. Tom Marioni, *ibid.*, number 17. "This is a process print from 1970. I ran 225? sheets of paper through an offset printing press; there was no image on the plate. In offset printing, the plate is on a curved drum so the drum goes around and the papers are run through the automatic printing press. The principle in lithography is that oil and water don't mix. There is a roller that has water on it that keeps the plate wet, and wherever the image is, the ink sticks. That is what separates the image from the places where there are no images. What I did is run the pieces of paper through the press

[without water] so that, gradually, the dry plate picked up ink. It took a long time for the plate to be completely inked. The first piece of paper that went through the press came out blank with nothing on it. Then gradually the plate started to build up ink in a regular way so by the time the 100 pieces of paper had gone by, the paper was printing solid brown. The whole edition was exhibited in the gallery [De Saisset Art Museum, University of Santa Clara, Santa Clara, California]. It runs from white to brown and it looks like a film strip of a landscape. It's a print that becomes an installation. It is called Process Print because it demonstrates the process of its making."

11. Marioni, op. cit., number 19.
12. Tom Marioni, "The Sound of Tooting My Own Horn," *The Journal/Southern California Arts Magazine*, 22 (March 1979), p. 64. Quoted in Suzanne Foley, *Space Time Sound: Conceptual Art In The San Francisco Bay Area: The 1970s* (Seattle and London: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1981), p. 56.
13. "When I first started doing the drum brush drawings in the 70s there was still a residue from the hippie days. I sort of believed that maybe I could be involved in some kind of telepathic activity. At the Psychic Research Center at Stanford they found that people could create telepathic situations by listening to white noise, this kind of shooosh. That somehow cleared the brain and made it more open to receiving or sending telepathic images. I was creating this white noise with the drum brushing, because it makes a repeated, raspy sound that puts you into kind of a hypnotic state. And it could put the audience into a hypnotic or semi-hypnotic state. The whole combination of the lighting, and the shadows created by the brushes, and the rubbing on the paper, the rhythmic monotone sound, create the right conditions for communicating telepathically. I got this idea that maybe I could create a telepathic situation. As I drum, slowly the marks start to show. It takes a while. Nothing is there for the first fifteen or twenty minutes. Then I'd see things in it. The image that appeared to me — sometimes it looked like the surface of the moon from above or a landscape from an airplane looking down. I'd see a tree, I'd see a bird, I'd see a landscape, I'd see a train, I'd see a house in a landscape. Each time I would do it in a public situation, I'd see something different in the mark. It was kind of like seeing an image in the clouds. That would be the thing I would really concentrate on. I would be totally focused on the image. As I kept drumming, the [image] would get stronger and stronger because the paper got a

little bit darker and darker. It was actually something to do with the construction of the paper. So that would be the image that I would try to send, telepathically, to the audience. One time, afterward, somebody came and said, 'You know what I was thinking about while you were doing that? And it was exactly what I was thinking about. So I thought, 'Gee, well, maybe there's something to this.'"

14. "This was part of a show called *The Creation: A Seven Day Performance*, where I lived in the gallery for a week and made works according to how the Bible described the Creation. On each day I made a drawing or things that related to [the text], like birds and trees and fishes and water and the universe and the moon. The day there were birds would have been the fifth day. [For] *Running and Jumping With a Pencil* . . . I hung paper high on the wall, out of reach. I had to jump to get to it. I would circle the gallery and then run parallel to the wall, and while I was in flight, like a hurdle jumper with a pencil, I'd make that mark. I kept doing that all day long. I was a lot younger then. The marks were a record of my attempted flight, and the end result looks like a wing, this arced bunch of lines."
15. David Bonetti, "Art through the eye of a beer glass," *San Francisco Examiner*, June 8, 1990.
16. Marioni was the first in his family to attend art school. His two younger brothers followed in his footsteps. Both are artists: the painter Joseph Marioni and the glass sculptor Paul Marioni.
17. "I was an altar boy. That and jazz were the two biggest influences on my work. In the Church, the objects the priests use became objects that had some kind of power to them. That influenced me to be a sculptor, because I wanted to make objects that had this kind of power. The saints' relics, the chalices, the bread and the host and the wine, the candles, the things that you get your throat blessed with, the ashes on Ash Wednesday, all those things in the Church are materials to me. I see them that way now. I went through First Communion and Confirmation and being an altar boy, ringing the bells on the altar. Being impressionable as a kid, that influenced me a lot. The priest who performs the ritual with the bread and wine and mostly turns his back on the parishioners, that influenced me. It's the bread and the wine and the host that he's going through; he's performing a kind of miracle, changing the bread and the wine to the body and blood of Christ. And later, seeing Miles Davis play music that way [with his back to the audience], it's 'I'm not a performer, I'm a musician. You came here to hear my music, not to see me perform.' That combination really made me

think about performance art as some kind of ritual that the audience is witness to. But you're not playing to the audience, you're playing to the material that you're working with or manipulating. So putting those things together, jazz and the Catholic Church, those two main things influenced me as a performance artist, and also as a sculptor."

18. Thomas Albright, "An Artist's Right to Remain Silent," *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 29, 1977.
19. See Note 4.
20. Lucy R. Lippard, *Six Years: The dematerialization of the art object from 1966 to 1972 . . .* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London; University of California Press, c. 1973; first California paperback printing 1997), p. vii.
21. The title is a sly reference to Constantin Brancusi's series of elegant abstract metal sculptures, collectively titled *Bird in Space* (1924-30), inspired by the sleek design of an airplane propellor. "This piece would have been too messy for Brancusi," Marioni remarks.
22. Tom Marioni, *Tom Marioni: Sculpture and Installations 1969-1997*, San Francisco, n.d., p.5



LEFT: *Drawing a Line as Far as I Can Reach*, 1972. Pencil on brown paper

RIGHT: *Violin Bird*, 1972. Violin with drawing, light and shadows

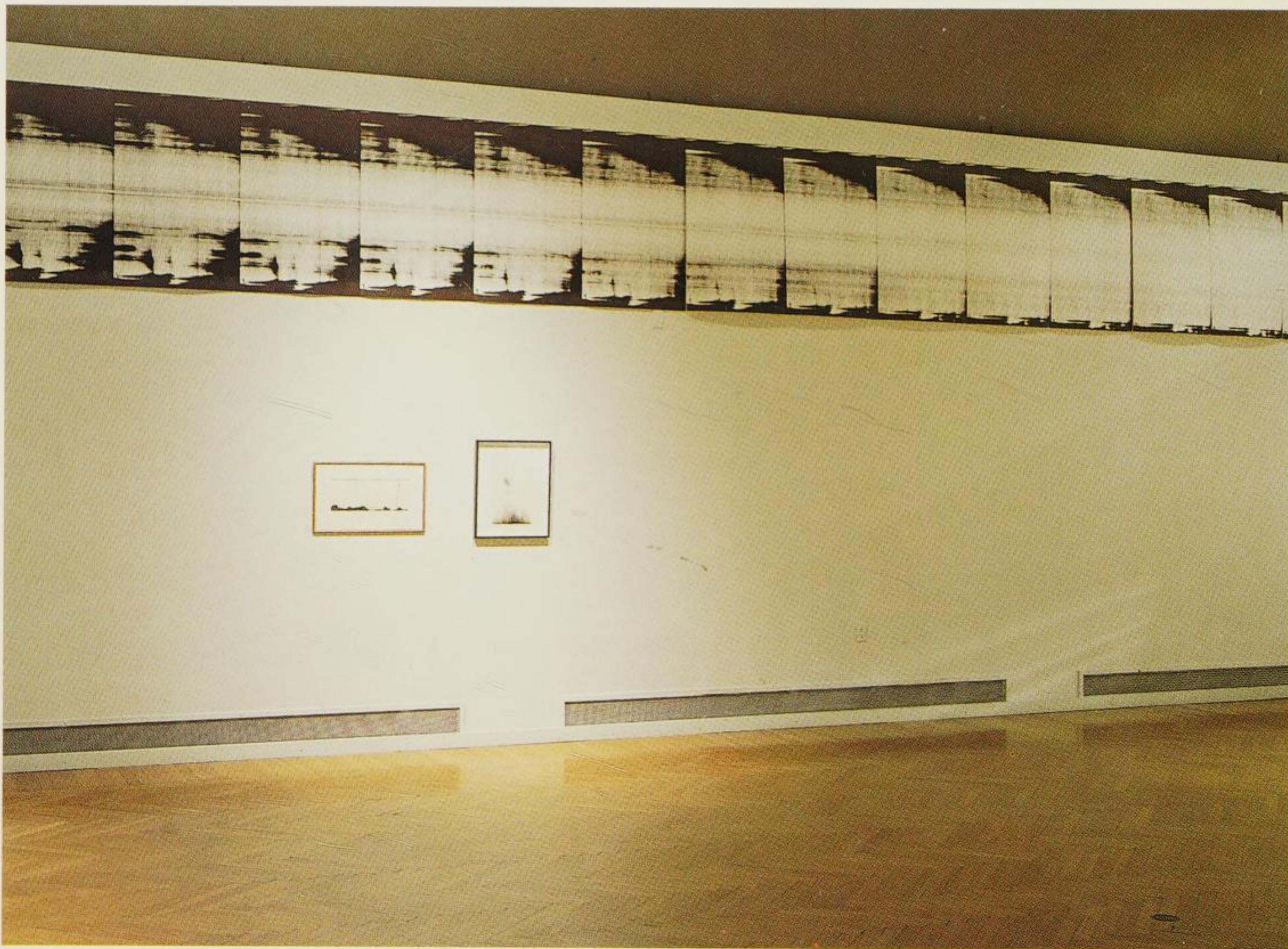


LEFT: *Drawing a Line as Far as I Can Reach*, 1997. Etching
Finger Lines, 1998. Four etchings

RIGHT: *11 Line Drawings*, 1997. Colored pencil on paper



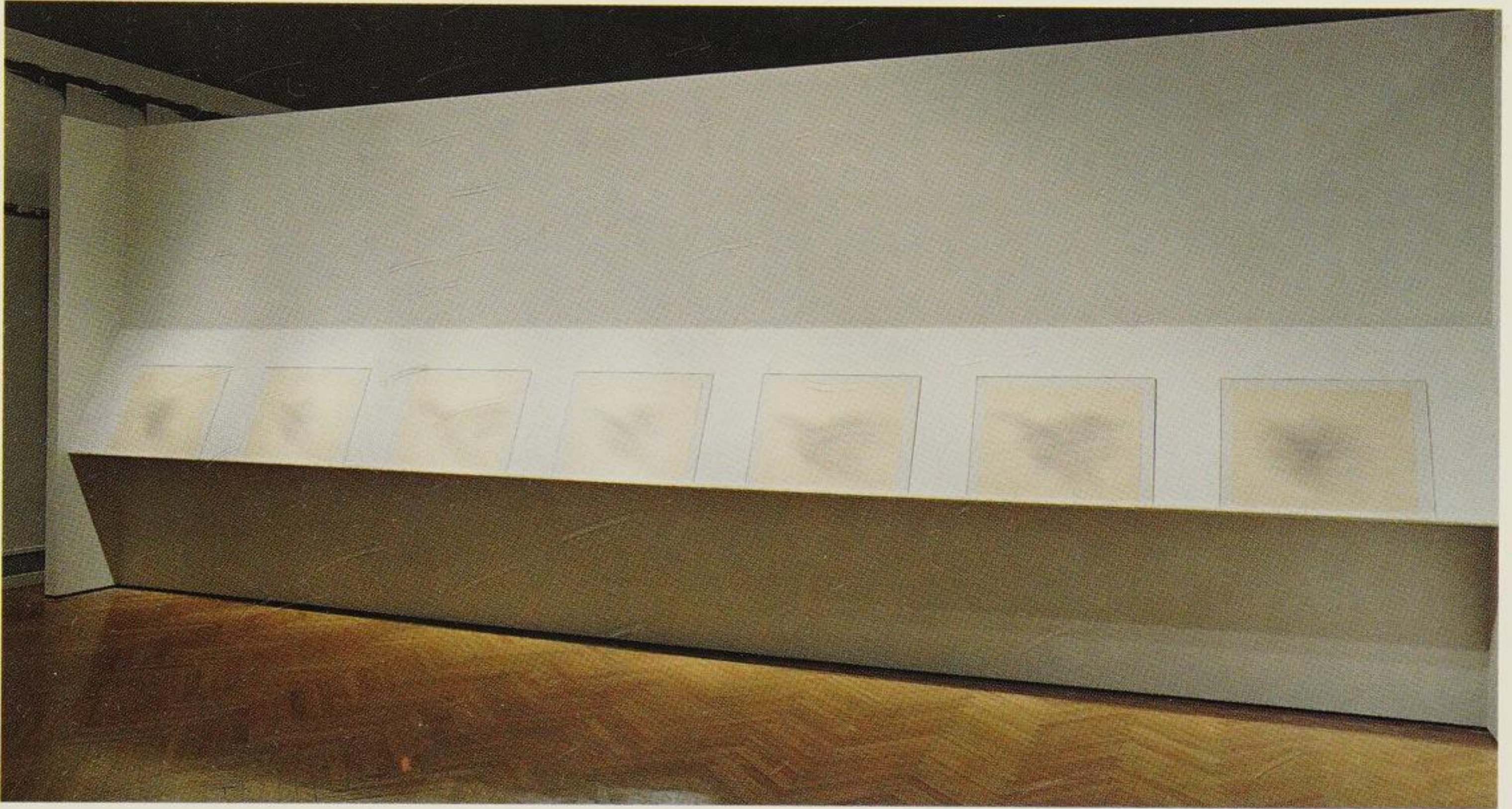
LEFT: *Drawing a Line as Far as I Can Reach*, 1999. Colored pencil on paper
RIGHT: *Drawing a Line as Far as I Can Reach (Edinburgh Drawing)*, 1972. Pencil on paper



TOP: *Process Print*, 1970. Offset Lithograph on paper, installation

BOTTOM LEFT: *Landscape Made in a Bottle*, 1992. Ink on paper

RIGHT: *Process Landscape*, 1992. Etching



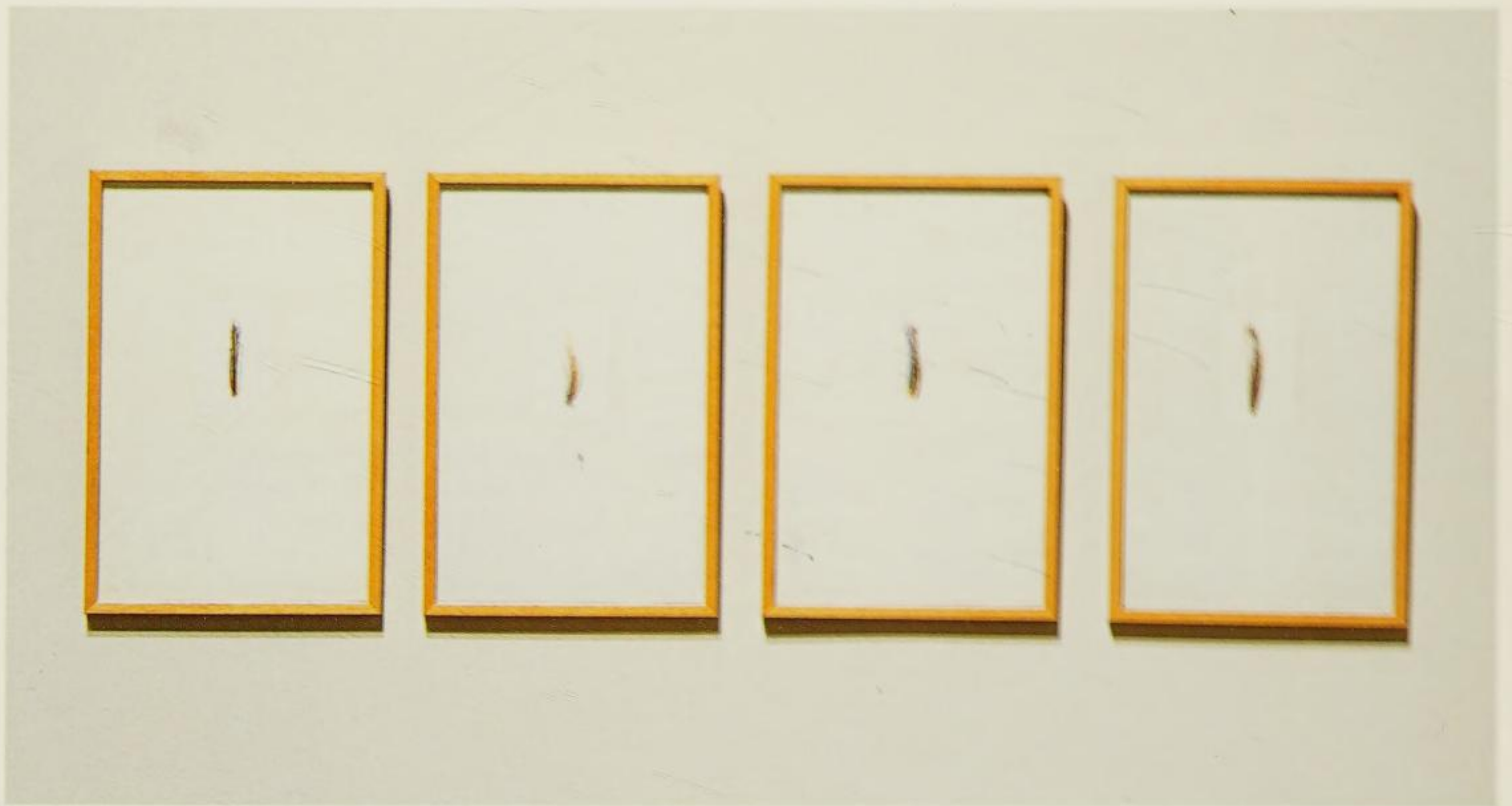
7 Drum Brush Drawings (The Sound of Flight), 1977. Steel on sandpaper, installation



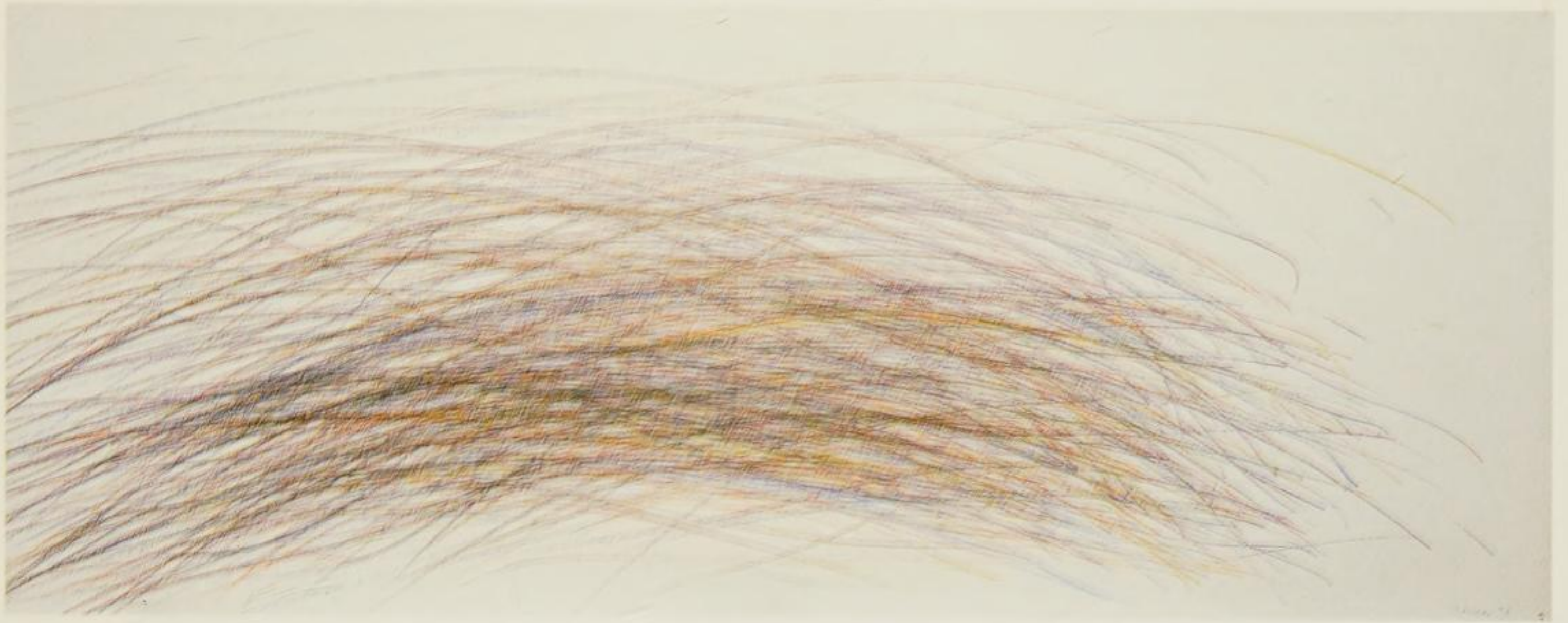
Line Drawing in a Shadow Box, 1999. Colored pencil on paper



11 Line Drawings, 1997. Colored pencil on paper



Finger Lines, 1998. Four etchings



Flying with Friends, 1999. Colored pencil on paper

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

Single drawings

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>1. <i>Drawing a Line As Far As I Can Reach</i>, 1972
Pencil on brown paper
75³/₈ x 48³/₄ inches
Collection of the Oakland Museum of California, gift of the Donors Acquisition Fund</p> | <p>6. <i>Drum Brush Drawing</i>, 1973
Steel on white paper
22¹/₂ x 28¹/₂ inches</p> | <p>14. <i>Finger Line</i>, 1986
Pencil on paper,
16 x 11 inches</p> |
| <p>2. <i>Bird, Running and Jumping With a Pencil, Marking the Paper While Trying to Fly</i>, 1972*
Pencil on brown paper
48 x 90 inches</p> | <p>7. <i>Drum Brush Drawing</i>, 1973
Steel on sandpaper
22 x 28 inches</p> | <p>15. <i>Drawing a Line As Far As I Can Reach</i>, 1999
Colored pencil on paper
92 x 42 x 4 inches</p> |
| <p>3. <i>Flying With Friends</i>, 1999
Colored pencil on paper
36¹/₄ x 89 inches</p> | <p>8. <i>Art</i>, 1989
Ink on paper
27 x 30 inches</p> | <p>16. <i>50" From the Floor</i>, 1997
Colored pencil on paper
37 x 29 inches</p> |
| <p>4. <i>Studio Berkeley</i>, 1998
Colored pencil on paper
48 x 82 inches
Collection of the University of California, Berkeley Art Museum</p> | <p>9. <i>To Fly</i>, 1988
Ink on paper
30 x 24 inches</p> | <p>Drawings in groups or in tableau sculptures</p> |
| <p>5. <i>Drawing a Line As Far As I Can Reach</i> (Edinburgh Drawing), 1972
Pencil on paper
111 x 42 x 92 inches
Collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Ruth Nash Fund Purchase</p> | <p>10. <i>Bird</i>, 1988
Ink on linen
31 x 23 inches</p> | <p>17. <i>One Second Sculpture</i>, 1969
Photograph
11 x 14 inches
Instrument in shadow box, mixed media
17 x 17 x 5 inches</p> |
| | <p>11. <i>Drawing a Line As Far As I Can Reach</i>, 1985
Pencil on linen
29 x 15 inches</p> | <p>18. <i>Birds In Flight</i>, 1969
Construction paper
Dimensions variable</p> |
| | <p>12. <i>Landscape Made In a Bottle</i>, 1992
Ink on paper
15 x 25 inches</p> | <p>19. <i>Process Print</i>, 1970
Offset lithographs on paper
36 x 24 inches each; overall dimensions variable</p> |
| | <p>13. <i>Line Drawing in a Shadow Box</i>, 1999
Colored pencil on paper
52 x 32 x 4¹/₂ inches</p> | |

20. *Violin Bird*, 1972
Mixed media sculpture:
violin with drawing
(rosin on brown
paper), light and
shadow
72 x 36 x 36 inches

21. *7 Drum Brush Drawings*
(*The Sound of Flight*), 1977
Steel on paper
28 x 32 inches each
Installation dimensions
variable

22. *By the Fire*, 1995
Mixed media tableau
sculpture with drum
brush drawing
Wood, steel on sandpaper
Drawing: 35 x 24 inches
75 x 56 inches overall

23. *Circle, Triangle, Square*
1995
Wall sculpture: copper,
paint, metal polish
34 x 31 x 13 inches

24. *11 Line Drawings*, 1997
Colored pencil and
aquatint on paper
Installation 108 x 240
inches overall

25. *Illuminated Drawing*
1996
Mixed media tableau
sculpture (copper, brass,
light and shadow)
with drawing (pencil on
painted copper)
84 x 48 x 18 inches

Etchings

26. *Religious Picture*, 1977
Soft ground etching
on paper
22 x 35 inches

27. *Tree*, 1991
Hard ground etching
on paper
with wood veneer
22¼ x 14¼ inches

28. *Drawing a Line As Far As*
I Can Reach, Second
Version, 1997
Hard ground etching
on paper
77 x 19 inches

29. *Process Landscape*, 1998
Aquatint on paper
20 x 16 inches

30. *Feather Line*, 1987
Aquatint on paper
44 x 30 inches

31. *Finger Lines*, 1998
Four soft ground etchings
with aquatint on paper
12¾ x 8¼ each

Woodblock prints mounted on paper

32. *Pi*, 1988
Woodblock print on silk
mounted on paper
22½ x 34½ inches

33. *Flying Yen*, 1990
Woodblock print on silk
mounted on paper
22½ x 21¼ inches

34. *Peking*, 1987
Woodblock print on silk
27¼ x 20½ inches

* *Note: Unless otherwise indicated, all works are in the collection of the artist and should be credited as follows: Courtesy of the artist, Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco and Margarete Roeder Gallery, New York. The prints are courtesy of Crown Point Press, San Francisco*

External dimensions of all drawings are as framed unless specified as unframed.

TOM MARIONI

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INDIVIDUAL EXHIBITIONS

- 1963 Bradley Memorial Museum of Art, Columbus, GA [Sculpture]
- 1968 Richmond Art Center, Richmond, CA [Sculpture]
- 1970 The Oakland Museum, Oakland, CA
"The Act of Drinking Beer with Friends is the Highest Form of Art" [Installation]
- 1972 Richard Demarco Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland [Drawings, Sculpture]
DeSaisset Museum, University of Santa Clara, Santa Clara, CA, "My First Car" [Installation]
Reese Palley Gallery, San Francisco, CA, "A Seven Day Performance." [Installation]
- 1975 Galeria Foksal, Warsaw, Poland, "Thinking Out Loud." [Installation]
- 1977 M.H. De Young Museum of Art, San Francisco, CA, "The Sound of Flight" [Installation]
Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA [Drawings]
- 1978 Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA [Drawings]
- 1979 "The Museum of Conceptual Art at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art," San Francisco, CA
[Installation with Free Beer]
Grita Insam Gallery, Vienna, Austria, "The Power of Suggestion" [Installation]
Cochise Fine Arts Center, Bisbee, AZ, "A Penny from Heaven" [Installation]
- 1980 Felix Handschin Gallery, Basel, Switzerland [Drawings]
Matrix, University of California, Berkeley Art Museum [Drawings]
- 1981 Site, Inc., San Francisco, CA, "Paris, San Francisco, Kyoto [Installation]
- 1984 Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA [Drawings]
Le Consortium, Dijon, France, "Cutting the Mustard" [Installation]
- 1985 Eaton/Shoen Gallery, San Francisco, CA [Sculpture]
- 1986 New Langton Arts, San Francisco, CA, "The Back Wall of MOCA" [Installation]
Kuhlenschmidt/Simon, Los Angeles, CA [Sculpture]
- 1987 Museo ItaloAmericano, San Francisco, CA "The Germans, The Italians, The Japanese." [Sculpture]
Margarete Roeder Gallery, New York, NY [Sculpture]
Yoh Art Gallery, Osaka, Japan [Drawings]
- 1988 Margarete Roeder Gallery, New York, NY, "Astronomy Piece" [Installation]
- 1989 Fuller Gross, San Francisco, CA, "Golden Rectangles" [wall sculptures]
- 1990 Fuller Gross, San Francisco, CA [Sculpture]
Capp Street Project A.V.T., artist-in-residence, San Francisco, CA
"The Artist Studio (Starting Over)" [Installation]
- 1993 Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA, "Seascapes" [Sculpture, Drawings]
Crown Point Press, San Francisco, CA, "Landscapes" [Prints] and "By the Sea" [Installation]
Robert Koch Gallery, San Francisco, CA [Color Photograms]
University of Nevada, Reno, NV, "Around the World" [Installation]

- 1994 Margarete Roeder Gallery, New York, NY, "Shadowgrams" [Photograms with their objects]
 1995 Refusalon, San Francisco, CA [Conceptual Works 1969-73]
 1996 Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA, "Elegant Solutions" [Sculpture]
 1998 Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA [Sculpture, Drawings]
 Margarete Roeder Gallery, New York, NY [Drawings]
 1999 Y-1 Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden [Installation]
 Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, CA, "Trees and Birds" 1969-1999 [Drawings, Prints]
 Cincinnati Art Academy, Cincinnati, OH [Drawings, Sculpture and Performance]

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 1970 Museum of Conceptual Art (MOCA), San Francisco, CA*, "Sound Sculpture As"
 1971 DeSaisset Museum, University of Santa Clara, Santa Clara, CA, "Fish, Fox, Kos"
 1972 Mills College Art Gallery, Oakland, CA*, "Notes and Scores for Sounds."
 Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, CA.*, "The San Francisco Performance"
 1973 Museum of Conceptual Art, San Francisco, CA*, "All Night Sculptures"
 1975 Biuro Wystaw Artystycznych, Poland, "Kontra punkt"
 1979 Salzburger Kunstverein, Austria, "Art as Photography"
 San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA, "Space/Time/Sound"
 1980 Akademie der Kunst, Berlin, Germany, "For Eyes and Ears"
 ACR Museum of Modern Art, Paris, France, "For Eyes and Ears"
 Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands, "Music/Sound/Language/Theater"
 1982 Biennial II, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA, "Twenty Americans"
 The Oakland Museum, Oakland, CA, "100 Years of California Sculpture"
 Sound Art, Rimini, Italy, "Sonorita Prospettiche"
 Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA, "Sound"
 Belca House, Kyoto, Japan*, "Elegant Miniatures from San Francisco"
 [Also at San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA]
 1983 San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA*, "Art Against War"
 Franklin Furnace, New York, NY, "In Other Words"
 1984 The Sculpture Center, New York, NY, "The Sound Art Show."
 San Antonio Museum of Art, San Antonio, TX; Lock Haven Art Center, Orlando, FL
 Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, MI, "Awards in Visual Arts"
 1985 Kunsthalle, Bern, Switzerland, "Alles und Noch Viel Mehr"
 Stuttgart Staatsgalerie, West Germany, "From Sound to Image"
 The Oakland Museum, Oakland, CA, "Art in the San Francisco Bay Area: 1945-1980"
 Otis Art Institute of the Parsons School of Design, Los Angeles, CA
 "The Marriage of Art and Music for L.A." [Installation for "New Music America Festival"]
 1986 San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA*, "Inspired by Leonardo"
 Gallery Route One, Pt. Reyes Station, CA, "Under One Roof"
 1987 Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff Center, Alberta, Canada, "Object Lesson"

- 1988 Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA, "Solid Concept" *
- 1989 UCLA, San Jose, CA, Fresno, CA, Omaha, NB museums, "Forty Years of California Assemblage"
Hallwalls, Buffalo, NY, "Bay Area Conceptualism: 2 Generations"
- 1990 University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA, "In Site"
Sandra Gering Gallery, New York, NY. Organized by John Cage
- 1993 Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA, Guggenheim Soho NY, Houston,
Philadelphia, and Tokyo museums, "Rolywholyover A Circus." [Traveling show organized
by John Cage.]
- 1994 Artists Space, New York, NY, "Conceptual Art from the Bay Area"
[Tom Marioni and David Ireland installations]
Crown Point Press, San Francisco, CA [New Photogravures]
- 1995 Index Gallery, Osaka Japan. Benefit for the Kobe earthquake victims.
Exit Art/The First World, New York, NY, "Endurance."
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles CA, "1965-1975 Reconsidering the Object of Art"
- 1996 Musees de Marseilles, France, "The Art Embodied"
- 1997 Track 16 Gallery, Santa Monica, CA, "Chain Reaction"
- 1998 Museum of Contemporary Art at The Geffen Contemporary, Los Angeles, CA
"Out of Actions: Between Performance and the Object 1949-1979"; traveling to: Austrian
Museum of Applied Arts, Vienna; Museu d'art Contemporani, Barcelona, Spain; Museum of
Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan; Centre George Pompidou, Paris; Dijon/Consortium,
Dijon, France
- 1999 Refusalon, San Francisco, CA, "SOUND"
M.H. De Young Museum, San Francisco, CA, "Museum Pieces"
Landesmuseum, Linz, Austria, "Die Kunst der Linie"

*Organized and participated in.

PERFORMANCE / ACTIONS

- 1966 Worked in night club, sketching nude model, San Francisco, CA
- 1969 "One Second Sculpture," San Francisco, CA
"Abstract Expressionistic Performance Sculpture," San Francisco, CA
- 1970 "Sound Sculpture As," Museum of Conceptual Art (MOCA), San Francisco, CA
- 1971 "Chain Reaction," DeSaisset Museum, University of Santa Clara, Santa Clara, CA
"Identity Transfer," Berkeley Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 1972 "Sunday Scottish Landscape," Richard Demarco Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland
"Sound Actions," Whitechapel Gallery, London, England
"The Creation: A Seven Day Performance," Reese Palley Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 1973 "A Talk," Project, Inc., Boston, MA
Concert, MOCA Ensemble, St. Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh Festival, Scotland
Concert, Institute of Contemporary Art, London, England
Concert, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA
Demonstration, University of California, Berkeley Art Museum
Radio performance, KPFA, Berkeley, CA

- 1974 "The Sun's Reception," Residence of David and Mary Robinson, Sausalito, CA
 "A Sculpture in 2/3 Time," Student Cultural Center, Belgrade, Yugoslavia
 "One Minute Demonstration," Gallery of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, Yugoslavia
- 1975 "Duologue (with Terry Fox)" CARP, Los Angeles, CA
 "Morning Action," Salon of the Museum of Modern Art, Belgrade, Yugoslavia
 "East/West," (with Petr Stembera), Prague, Czechoslovakia
 "Thinking Out Loud," Galeria Foksal, Warsaw, Poland
 "Lecture/Reception/Action", Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN
- 1976 "Bird in Space: A Psychic Sculpture," and/or Gallery, Seattle, WA
- 1977 "Yellow is the Color of the Intellect," Portland Center for the Visual Arts, Portland, OR
 "The Sound of Flight," M.H. De Young Museum of Art, San Francisco, CA
- 1978 "Now We'll Have a Party," International Performance Festival. Vienna, Austria
 "Predictions," Alternative Art Space Conference, Los Angeles, CA
- 1979 "Freibier (free beer), Vienna Performance Biennial, Vienna, Austria
 "A Social Action," Dany Keller Galerie, Munich, Germany
 "Action," Krinzinger Gallery, Innsbruck, Austria
 "Liberating Light and Sound," Pellegrino Gallery, Bologna, Italy
 "Talking Drumming," LACE, Los Angeles, CA
 "A Theatrical Action to Define Non-theatrical Principles," Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA
- 1980 "Studio Bern," Kunst Museum, Bern, Switzerland
 "Studio Basel," Kunsthalle, Basel, Switzerland
 "Bending Light," Berner Gallery, Bern, Switzerland
 "Atelier," Centre George Pompidou, Paris, France
 "Studio Berkeley," University of California, Berkeley Art Museum
 "Spirit in the Dark," Crown Point Press, Oakland, CA
 "Studio Berlin," Akademie der Kunst, Berlin, West Germany
 "Word of Mouth," conference, Crown Point Press, Ponape Island, Pacific Ocean
- 1981 "Studio", Tea house of the Saito Family, Kamakura, Japan
 "Studio Chicago," Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL
 International Performance Festival, ELAC Lyon, France
 Performance Festival, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany
- 1982 University of California, San Diego, CA
 Folkwang Museum, Essen, Germany
 Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne, Germany
 University of Wisconsin, Green Bay, WI
 "Social Action," Intersection Theater, Performance Festival, San Francisco, CA
 "Studio Kyoto," Ohara Shrine, Kyoto, Japan (sponsored by Belca House)
- 1985 Commencement speaker, Cincinnati Art Academy, Cincinnati, OH
- 1986 "Double Portrait" (with Shoichi Ida), The American Center, Kyoto, Japan
- 1996 WDR Radio, Cologne, Germany. Acoustic Festival. "Studio"
- 1997 The Art Orchestra, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco, CA
 Tom Marioni in conversation with Arthur Danto, University of California, Berkeley Art Museum

- 1998 "Studio Berkeley 1980", University of California, Berkeley Art Museum
Austrian Museum of Applied Arts, "A Social Action, 1978", Vienna, Austria

RELATED PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 1968-1971 Curator of Art, Richmond Art Center, Richmond, CA
1970-1984 Founding Director, Museum of Conceptual Art (MOCA), San Francisco, CA
1975-1982 Editor/Designer, *Vision*, art journal published by Crown Point Press, Oakland, CA
1981 Artist-in-Residence, Djerassi Foundation, Woodside, CA
1990 Artist-in-Residence, Pilchuck Glass School, Stanwood, WA
Artist-in-Residence, The Fabric Workshop, Philadelphia, PA
1992 Consultant for public art, Central Embarcadero project, City of San Francisco, CA
Founded The Art Orchestra, San Francisco, CA

AWARDS, GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 1976 National Endowment for the Arts: Sculpture
1980 National Endowment for the Arts: Sculpture
1981 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial: Conceptual Art
1984 National Endowment for the Arts: Sculpture
Awards in the Visual Arts: Sculpture
1986 Asian Cultural Council: Travel Grant/Japan
1998 Flintridge Foundation, Sculpture


COMMISSIONS

- 1988 "Observatory Bird" Public sculpture, Marin County Civic Center, San Rafael, CA
1990 "The Yellow Sound for Kandinsky," West Deutscher Rundfunk (radio), Cologne, Germany
Two page project, *Contemporanea* Magazine, January 1991, New York, NY

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

The Oakland Museum, Oakland, CA
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA
Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, CA
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA
Dijon/Consortium, Dijon, France
Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY
Stadtische Kunsthalle, Mannheim Germany
Museo ItaloAmericano, San Francisco, CA
Chase Manhattan Bank, New York, NY
Bank of America, San Francisco, CA
Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum, Duisburg, Germany
Kunsthau, "The Museum of Drawers", Kunsthau Zurich, Switzerland
M.H. De Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, CA
Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, CA



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