

a basic contradiction between the work of Robert Morris and George Trakas, on one hand, and Richard Serra and David Rabinowitch, on the other, and therefore a more basic contradiction in the direction of recent sculpture than realized. The new spatial art of a subjective, romantic and baroque sensibility, as promoted by Morris and including Trakas, is contradicted by Serra's work (which does indeed share certain tendencies with this spatial art) and Rabinowitch's sculpture. The two latter seem more concerned with understanding judgements in perception by showing that knowledge is not given directly in experience and that the constructed sculpture and world exist, nonetheless, external to our perceptions. Morris' and Trakas' spatial art at no time allow these types of judgements to be made. This question will be dealt with more thoroughly in the analysis of the exhibition in the forthcoming Fall issue of Parachute. The exhibition, no matter what contradictions are revealed, is important and of as high a quality as we are likely to see in Toronto. The Art Gallery of Ontario, and especially Roald Nasgaard, who conceived and organized the show, are to be commended for their courage in creating this exhibition in Toronto.

Other sculpture shows in Toronto deserving attention included the Ontario College of Art's "Aspects of Sculpture". Much of this work has been seen before, many of the better pieces at the Carmen Lamanna Gallery. David Rabinowitch, Royden Rabinowitch, Robin Collyer, Ed Zelenak have good work on display and there is a remarkable early Snow (as there is at the Isaacs Gallery along with a 1970 piece). John Massey's work deserves attention also (as did his "The 2 Rooms" exhibition).

Good quality work of international standards exists in Toronto, but it is submerged under the self-glorifying hype of the second-rate.

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NOTES ON RICHARD SERRA'S 3 = elevations,  
IN THE ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO'S "STRUCTURES FOR  
BEHAVIOUR"

1. Each piece of steel is a discrete mass (with definite length, breadth and depth) oriented to each other and in a space.
2. Each mass is a different height but all horizontal planes (top and bottom) are equal in elevation due to their topographic setting.
3. The three masses roughly triangulate an area.
4. There is a judged centre point of the directional lines of the three masses.
5. The a priori conception of triangulation is abandoned through the observations that arise in situating oneself in the approximate centre. The outcome of physical movement and visual and concomitant spatial adaption obviates the original conception.
6. Each mass is in its own right a separate mass and part of a space of three masses.
7. Relations can exist between two of the three masses at a time.
8. The terrain causes the spectator to vary an ideated and expected geometrically projected path.
9. The constituent elements of the masses are constructions in relation to one's movement and perception.
10. Moving directionally from one mass perpendicular to its face, one intersects the face of another mass.
11. Each face presents a construction.

12. A meaning is made obvious at that point through comparison with the other masses.

13. One's line of vision aligns or coincides with the longitudinal line projected from the mass under observation.

14. But a line from the third mass does not coincide with the other two linear projections.

15. The tension between the actual line and the expected line separates the actual line from a triangular pattern.

16. The lines exist as separate entities, as separate lines, as constituent elements of each mass.

17. The lines begin to separate as distinct orientations.

18. The directional line from the original mass under observation that is aligned with the spectator's line of vision is separate from that line of vision. It exists in its own right.

19. The two lines (line of vision and projected line) are not the same.

20. The directional line exists apart from the spectator's vision. It asserts that something exists EXTERNAL to one's vision. It confirms the externality of the world. (Carl Andre: "The sense of one's being in the world confirmed by the existence of things and others in the world.")

21. Other seeming constructions (see note 4) show that knowledge is not given directly in perception (see note 5).

22. Serra: "What I am interested in is revealing the structure and content and character of a space and a place by defining a physical structure through the elements that I use."

23. Only through the space of the site is the site known.

24. The sculpture does not abandon the possibility of an abstract sculpture whose meaning is posited in the medium itself and its constituent elements in conjunction with the perception of the whole and its parts through observation in spatial duration.

25. Fulfills Robert Smithson's criterion: "Art's development should be dialectical and not metaphysical," in opposition to a suspect metaphysical art of a subjective, romantic and baroque sensibility.

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A SUNNY AFTERNOON IN CHINATOWN

It was a sunny afternoon in Chinatown when I went looking for Serra's piece. Chickens clacked furiously from the back of a truck. Small activities went on: cleaning up yards, skipping, buying and selling. Each one driven by a particular purpose. At Huron and Phoebe is a vacant lot, a path cuts more-or-less diagonally across it, through the grass and trash. Three steel "bricks" sat quietly and anonymously in the grass, ignored by children. The sun shone down on all, regardless of sex or race, animal or mineral.

You might not know it was art. The rusting steel is no more important than the empty milk carton. Unless you had the importance already in mind, were bringing it with you before you got there. No sign adds importance to the steel, no placard announces art. Kids cut through art. Home from school or the park. They see steel, junk that is rusting.

I see art sometimes, sometimes steel. Because I brought the idea of art with me, it's not clear at times what I am seeing.

I think I am seeing a gesture someone made so small that no one would dispute it.