

M0053935 NC

T2133 ✓

NC 0017941 8



Bound by
THE BINDING CENTRE
7 Upr. Camden St. Dublin 2.
Telf: (01) 4784726

National College of Art and Design

Faculty of Craft (Glass)

“Glass, A New Medium of Sculpture.”

By Deirdre Hipwell

**Submitted to the Faculty of History of Art and Design and
Complementary
Studies in Candidacy for the Degree of Bachelor of Design 1999.**

1870

1871

1872

1873

1874

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Nicola Gordon Bowe for all her help and encouragement and Bernard Dejonghe for his insightful comments.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Table Of Contents

List of Plates

Introduction

Pages 1 to 5

Chapter One

Pages 6 to 16

Chapter Two

Pages 17 to 26

Chapter Three

Pages 27 to 34

Chapter Four

Pages 35 to 41

Conclusion

Pages 42 to 44

Bibliography

Pages 45 to 48

GRACE BROWN

List of Plates

- Fig 1. Stanislav Libensky and Brychtova, Glass Pyramid,
- Fig 2. Vaclav Cigler Spatial Composition
- Fig 3. Bernard Dejonghe 49 Steles Bleues , 1985.
- Fig 4. Bernard Dejonghe Neuf Colonnes de Verre ,1988
- Fig 5. Bernard Dejonghe, Cercle 1996.
- Fig 6. Bernard Dejonghe, Colonne Triangulaire , 1995.
- Fig 7. Bernard Dejonghe , Ligne de Crete , 1995.
- Fig 8. Bernard Dejonghe, Maisons, 1996.
- Fig 9. Bernard Dejonghe, Antenne, 1995.
- Fig 10. Carl André, Log Piece , 1968.
- Fig 11. Walter De Maria, The Lightning Field, 1974-1977
- Fig 12. Steve Tobin, Doors , 1991.
- Fig 13. Steve Tobin, River , 1993.
- Fig 14. Steve Tobin, Teepee , 1992.
- Fig 15. Steve Tobin , Adobe , 1994.
- Fig 16. Mario Merz ,
At the Still Point of the Turning of the World , 1987.
- Fig 17. Chris Drury, Cuckoo Dome , 1992.
- Fig 18. Maya Lin, Wave Field , 1993.
- Fig 19. Maya Lin Groundswell, 1993-1994
- Fig 20. Maya Lin Rock Field , 1997.
- Fig 21. Maya Lin Avalanche , 1997.

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, in the center of the page.

Fig 22. Robert Smithson Non -Sites , 1971.

Fig 23. Kiki Smith Mothers 1992-1993

Fig 24. Marc Quinn Morphology, 1997.

SWIFT BANCORP

Introduction

“After twenty five centuries of utilitarian use, glass has become the amorphous substance from which function-less art is made. Suddenly glass has become a new medium of the fine arts, in which to conceive and create.”¹

This century glass has been liberated from its functional background. It has emerged from the factory to the ‘hotshop’ and now to the artist’s studio. There has been a revolution in the making and in the perception of the material, as it now is accepted as a new medium of sculpture. In this thesis I want to outline how the evolution has occurred and illustrate my point by examining the work of three artists, Bernard Dejonghe, Steve Tobin and Maya Lin, who work in the medium.

In my first chapter I want to illustrate how Czechoslovakia and America have contributed to the Studio Glass movement. The Czechoslovakian artistic education system and established glass industry are the two factors that have given the country a great advantage. The support of industry in both countries has been fundamental in bringing glass to the individual artist. In American the political

¹ Dan Klein, *‘The History of Glass’*, Slovakia, 1992, page 248.

WILLIAM BROWN

situation and pioneering spirit have acted as catalysts in establishing glass as new medium of sculpture.

The question of what is sculpture has been debated vigorously since 1945, when the boundaries of art began to blur. In the last two decades, Postmodernism has been established as the dominant cultural attitude. This inverts most of the modernist aesthetic value structures in art. Postmodernism is often 'double coded' and therefore has a deeper meaning than its decorative function. It is generally accepted that art works must embody these three limbs, "*incorporate elements of design, elements of cognition and the work also has to locate itself socially and with sufficient clarity so it cannot re-used by anyone.*"²

In an installation "*meaning is no longer given, residing in the object until discerned by the perceptive viewer, it is something that is made in the encounter.... It has allowed meaning the context of the work to seep out into its surroundings.*"³

The three artists that I am going to discuss, Dejonghe, Tobin and Lin engage cognitively and aesthetically with their work. I have chosen them as they

² Thomas Mc Evilly , Bringing Postmodernism Up to Date, Glass Art Conference, Washington, 1993, page 23.

are related not only by their choice of material, but by their common concern for the environment. The themes that they explore are also similar, transience, life, death, habitat and flux. Another factor that links them is that they often install their work in natural surroundings. They use this way of presenting their work, often outside the conventional gallery space, as experiencing it with the landscape enhances the didactic meaning of the artwork. Engaging their work with the natural environment makes obvious allusions to the Land Art movement, by which all three have been greatly influenced by. The Land Art movement came about due to the general revolt during the late Sixties, against traditional exhibition spaces. In 1966 Robert Morris proclaimed, *“Why not put the work outside and further change the terms? A real need exists to allow this next step practical... Ideally it is a space without architecture as background and reference, that would give different terms to work with..”*⁴

In my second chapter I will examine in detail Bernard Dejonghe’s career and main works, identifying the main themes running through his timeless installations. He lyrically plays with the fusion of time and memory in his dramatic glass pieces. His conceptual works force us to reconsider our place in the universe, whilst dazzling us with their technical excellence. I have chosen him as he captures the new wave of artists who create cognitive rather than decorative glass works.

³ Michael Archer, ‘Towards Installation’, *Installation Art*, London, 1994, page 13.

PROCESSED BY THE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In my third chapter I will evaluate Steve Tobin's work and main themes and his impact as a sculptor. Tobin like Marcel Duchamp, revels in the element of chance, his Water Glass series evoking a sense of flux and time. Tobin utilizes icons in his work for the purpose of social commentary. His Shelter series revels in the juxtaposition of meaning and verisimilitude. Tobin too installs his work in natural settings, mainly to reinforce his conservationist values. Tobin's grandeur, combined with a strong theoretical base and technical excellence, creates the perfect combination for the new classification of glass sculptors.

In my final chapter I want to evaluate one of the best architects come sculptors in America. Maya Lin uses simple forms to create seductive impressions of the underlying beauty of nature. What inspires Lin is the is the representations of time, life and flux. She highlights the awesome power of nature to show our relative insignificance, and thus the fact that we do not have the right to destroy it. Her references to Richard Long and Robert Smithson's work are apparent in her most recent exhibition, 'Typographies', 1997. Lin uses glass in an unconventional manner and creates her evocative installations to raise issues about the environment. Her work captures the novel way in which glass has become a new medium of sculpture.

⁴ Michael Archer, 'Towards Installation', Installation Art, London, 1994, page23.

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, in the center of the page.

Many aesthetic threads are woven into the notion of installation work. It is a hybrid of the second half of this century; similarly, art glass falls here into this category. That is to say that they are simply younger traditions, still expanding and pushing their own boundaries. Glass has become a new medium of sculpture and is beginning to be accepted in the fine arts. It has crossed from having purely decorative function to a cognitive one in a short period of time

Steve Tobin asks himself "*Is the object of sculptural glass interesting beyond the qualities of the medium, could it survive as sculpture?*"⁵ I hope to answer his question with a resounding yes. I want to outline how and why glass has become much more than its unusual properties and entered the field of sculpture.

⁵ Author not stated, 'Nature and Beyond', <http://www.stevetobin.com/termiteessay.html>

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, in the center of the page.

Chapter One

There has been a second Renaissance in our time, that is the rebirth of glass from its functional background into a new medium of expression. The radical changes that have taken place are mainly since 1945, though the foundations were being laid in the late 1800s. Although the Studio Glass Movement was established by a number of countries, I feel that Czechoslovakia and America were the forerunners in promoting the sculptural aspect of the medium.

In this chapter I want to outline the most important events that contributed to the emergence of glass as a new sculptural medium. "*Industry raised to the level of art*" was the phrase used by the critic Dan Klein to describe the pioneering spirit of the Czech glass industry at the 1960 Milan Triennale.¹ It was from this strong industrial base that Czechoslovakia emerged as one of the most innovative contemporary glass making nations.

There was always room for individualism and imagination within the highly organized glassworks dotted across Bohemia. They were in touch with the various art movements of the late 1800s, but it was Art Nouveau that they were most inspired by. The rich colours and delicate lines of the movement used by Galle and Tiffany greatly inspired Max Spaun the owner of the Loetz Glassworks in Southern Bohemia. In the late 1800s he mastered the technology of Galle and

¹ Dan Klein, The History of Glass, Slovakia, 1992, Page 257

2017-18

Tiffany and began to produce iridescent glass with great commercial success for which he won a gold medal at the World Exhibition in Paris in 1900.

The success of the Loetz company inspired others to adopt their own individualistic styles. Improvisation, imagination and abstract design became normal in this mass production industry. It is on the basis of individuality that Czech glass began to expand, explore and steadily produce its own national identity through glass in the early 1900s.

A number of historical factors must also be taken into account in the emergence of Czech glass's unique style. The impending break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire by the end of the century, put pressure on Prague to revive state sovereignty. The ideals of Czech culture as being unique, strong and intellectual were epitomized by its glass industry. Thus the government began to promote the glass industry and invest in its education system. New 'modern' concepts about the treatment of glass were beginning to emerge by 1906. Jan Kotera, a professor at The Academy of Applied Arts in Prague, was instrumental in pushing these new ideals. His far-sighted approach to glass, in highlighting its architectural and optical qualities, was to become the basis for the Bohemian Glass Movement in the 1950s.

A group of artists set up in response to Kotera's theories in 1908 called Artel. This group applied Kotera's ideals and adopted a cubist vocabulary in their glass making. This type of revolutionary break-away group has never been encountered before in the glass industry. Although their work only had a small

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, in the center of the page.

audience of art theorists in Prague, their impact was instrumental in advancing contemporary glass design.

In 1918 the state of Czechoslovakia was established due to the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire after World War One. Vienna was no longer the state capital, yet there was still a strong artistic influence emanating from it. In the 1920s the Viennese Secession had a great influence on Bohemian glass with their trade mark asymmetric geometry and contrasting colours. The Wiener Werkstatte had many of their glass panels manufactured at the Spaun glassworks in Klastersky Mlyn in Bohemia.

The young Czech nation was eager to promote its national assets and the government, along with the Union of Czechoslovakian Workers, wanted to reiterate the importance of education. The excellent glass education system is one of the most important factors along with its industrial base, that established Czechoslovakia as the leading nation for sculptural glass. Novy Bor and Kamanicky Senov were two specialized glass making schools who were in direct contact with the glass industry which they often used to realize their designs. A third school , Zelenzy Brod, was established in 1920, which was closely allied to The Prague Academy of Applied Arts.

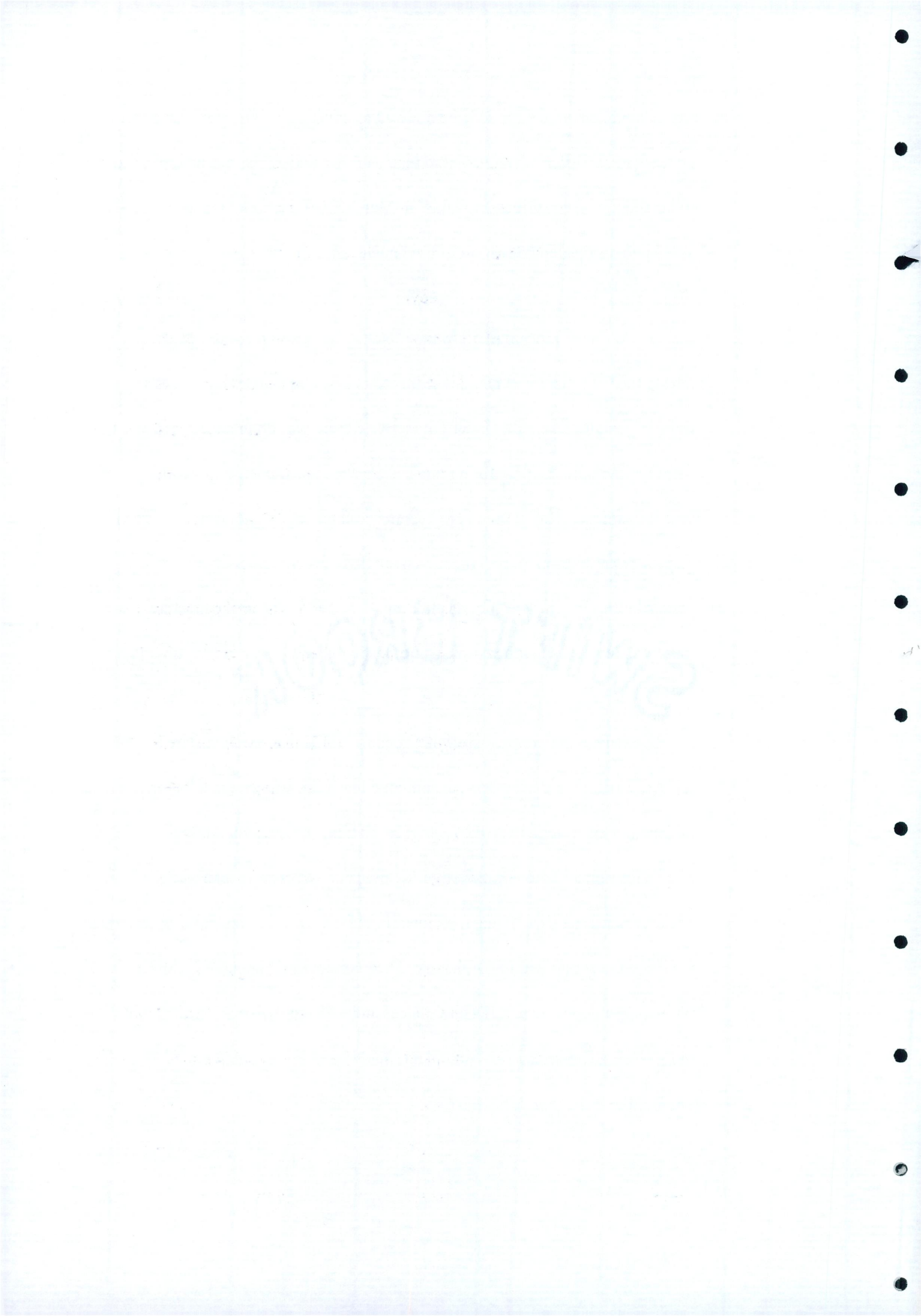
A major interruption stilted the blossoming period that the Czech glass industry saw between 1920 and 1938 : Hitler. He claimed that the three million Germans living in Sudetenland, in the North of Czechoslovakia were being badly

EMMET BROWN

treated and demanded that they be allowed to unite with Germany. In an act of appeasement, Hitler was allowed to take over the Sudetenland if he promised not to invade the rest of Czechoslovakia. In March 1939, he broke this promise and sent in his troops to conquer all of Czechoslovakia.

With the closure of all of the Czech borders and great world poverty during the war, there was no market for exporting glass, and thus the glass industry grinded to a halt. Under Hitler's rule there was no unsupervised artistic activity, the only fruition during this period were the architectural works of Joseph Kaplicky. Kaplicky was to become a major catalyst in bringing Czech glass forward to modernity. He utilized subtle tones and colours in his twelve panels in the church of Wenceslas in Prague, in 1935. The unique feature about these windows was that he used cast not leaded glass.

Due to the political shift of Czechoslovakia to a socialist state in 1945, the glass making industry was consolidated that year, which was to begin the most radical and exciting period in Czech glass history. This resulted in the mechanization and modernization of the industry. With these technological advancements the experimental element in the glass works was not lost, as artistic studios were set up within the factory. They collaborated with the factory in producing unique and architectural pieces and added a dynamic element to the glass works. The importance of this far-sighted move was fundamental in stimulating a new era.



The three specialized glass schools saw talented graduates of The Academy of Applied Arts in Prague pouring in with fresh ideals and concepts about the use of glass. Two of the most influential graduates of the time were Stanislav Libensky (who was employed at Novy Bor in 1945) and René Roubicek (who was employed at Zeleny Brod), both were students of Kaplicky. His theories on glass were extremely influential, as he wished to remove historical stereotypes and respect the character of the glass in a creative manner. The legacy of his ideas can be seen today in the work of many contemporary Czech artists such as Vaclav Cigler, Miluse Roubickova and Vladimir Kopecky.

The late 1950s were significant for Czech glass, as the new concept of non- utilitarian work was being explored by many of the artists collaborating with industry. This period of development and experimentation had fruitful results as the artists and industry began to exhibit domestically and internationally. Czech glass was well represented at all the major shows including The Triennales in Milan in 1957 and 1960, Expo in Brussels in 1958 and 'Glass 1957- A Special Exhibition of International Contemporary Glass' at Corning in New York.

What distinguished Czechoslovakia from the other participating countries was firstly its sculptural glass and secondly the size and technical excellence of the pieces. This showed the collaboration of excellently trained artists and their technically proficient industrial backing. René Roubicek won the Grand Prix at Expo '58 in Brussels for his 'Spatial Glass Collage' which paved the way for more large scale works. Also the sheer volume of specially trained artists working

SMITH BROTHERS

with glass couldn't be employed in the existing glassworks, therefore many had to become reliant on commission works.

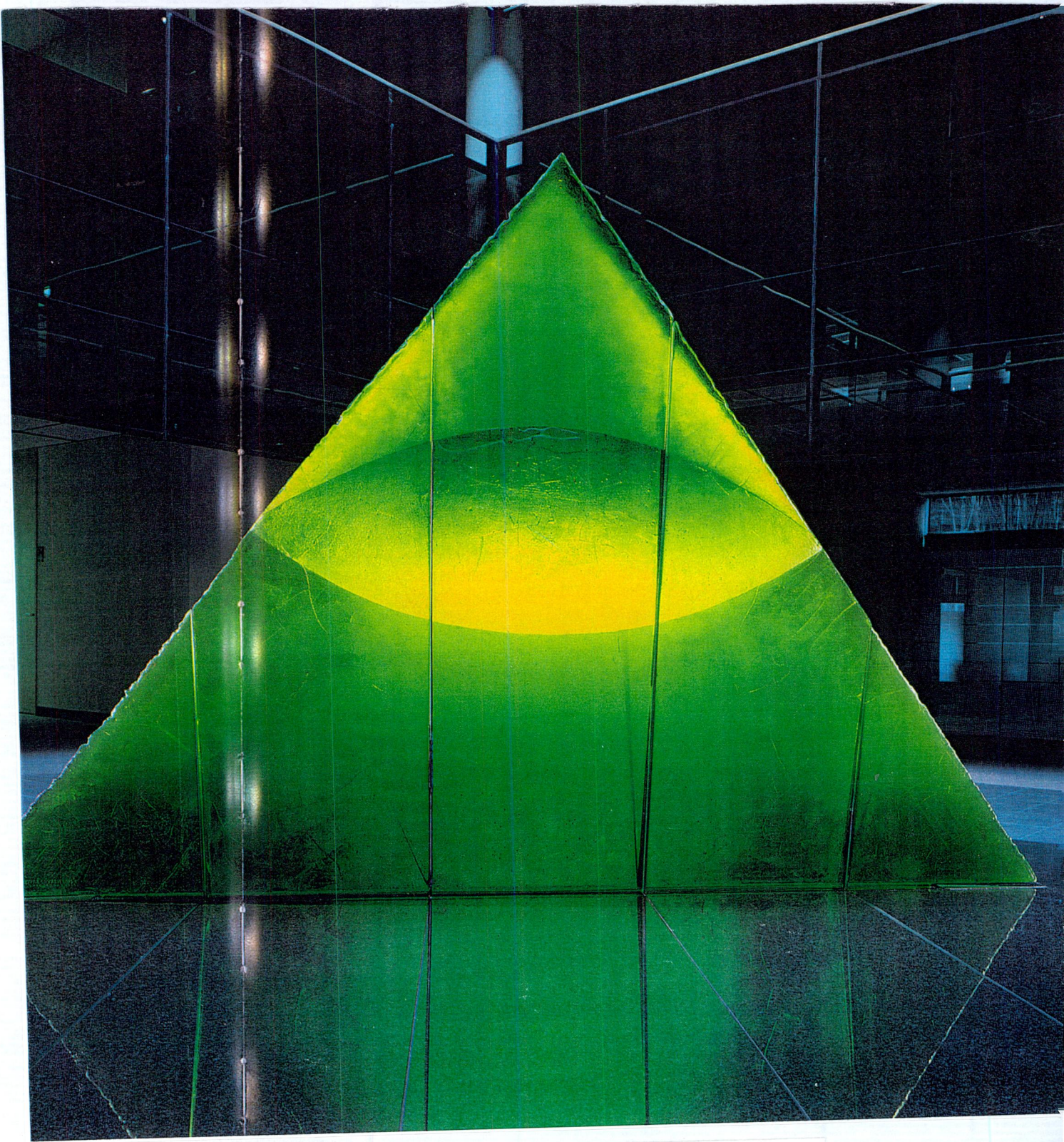
In the early Sixties the collaboration of a painter and a sculptor, Libensky and Brychtova, in my opinion produced some of the most revolutionary glass sculptures ever. Their approach was radical, not only due to its immense size but also of the pure abstraction of design. They wished to unlock the spiritual qualities of the material and its unique aesthetic with light. In the words of Libensky, "*My mental background is that of a painter,*" which describes his unorthodox exploration of the dramatic qualities of glass.² Their excellent collaboration created a four meter pyramid for Expo '67 in Montreal (Fig 1) and 'The River of Life' an allegorical sculpture for Expo '70 in Osaka.

Vaclav Cigler was the next truly radical artist who used glass. He utilized a conceptual instead of aesthetic base for his works. His 'Optical Games', a series which he began at the beginning of the Sixties, deal with the perception of reality (Fig 2). He created alternative worlds in his glass and analyzed the viewers reaction to them. He called his work as, "*objects that become instruments in which the viewer can create new realities.*"³ This is a significant shift from the earlier Czech glass sculptures as the content takes precedent over the beauty of the glass.

² Alena Adlerova, Czechoslovakian Glass 1350-1980, New York, 1981, page 47

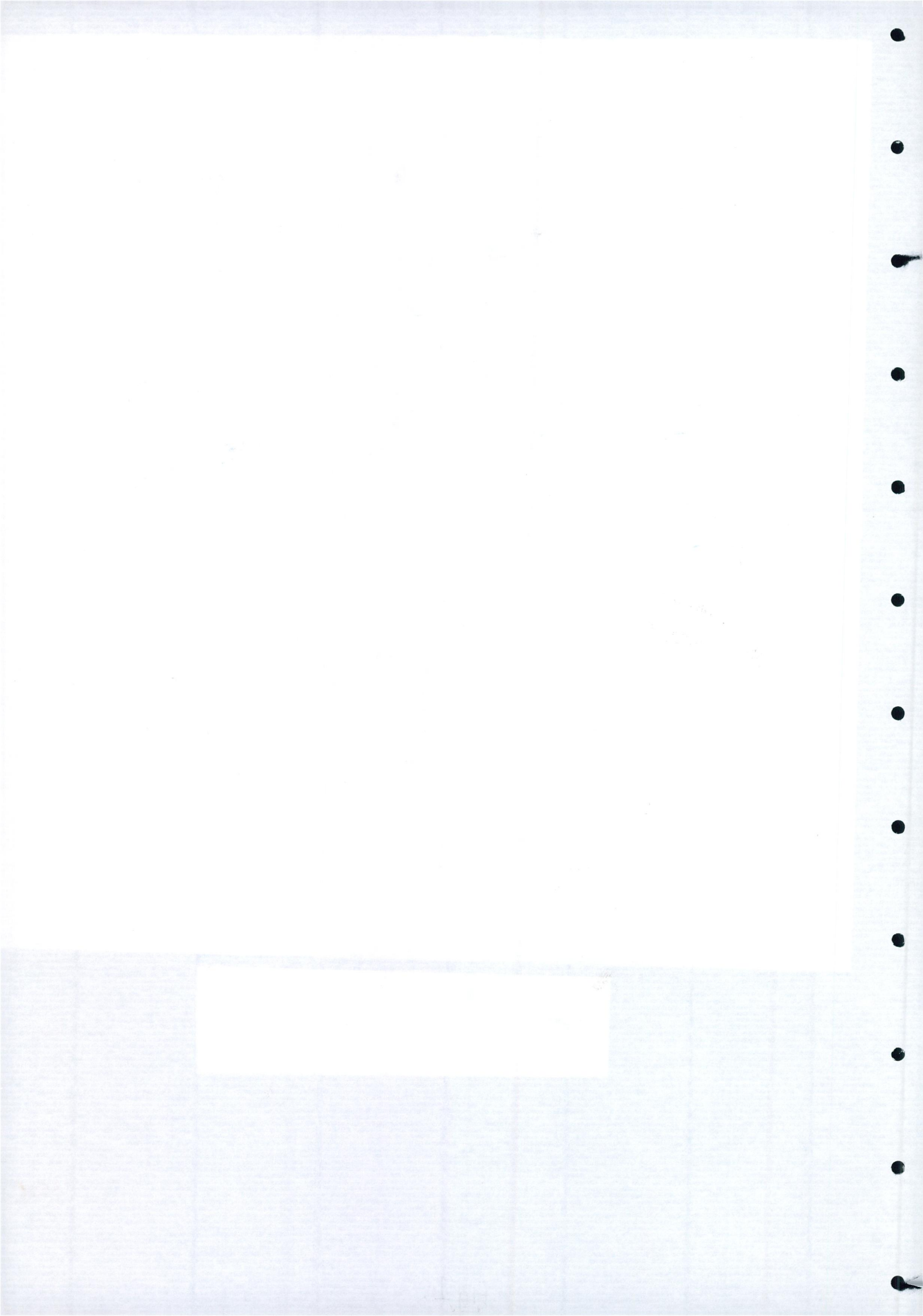
³ Alena Adlerova, Czechoslovakian Glass 1350 - 1980, New York, 1980, page 47

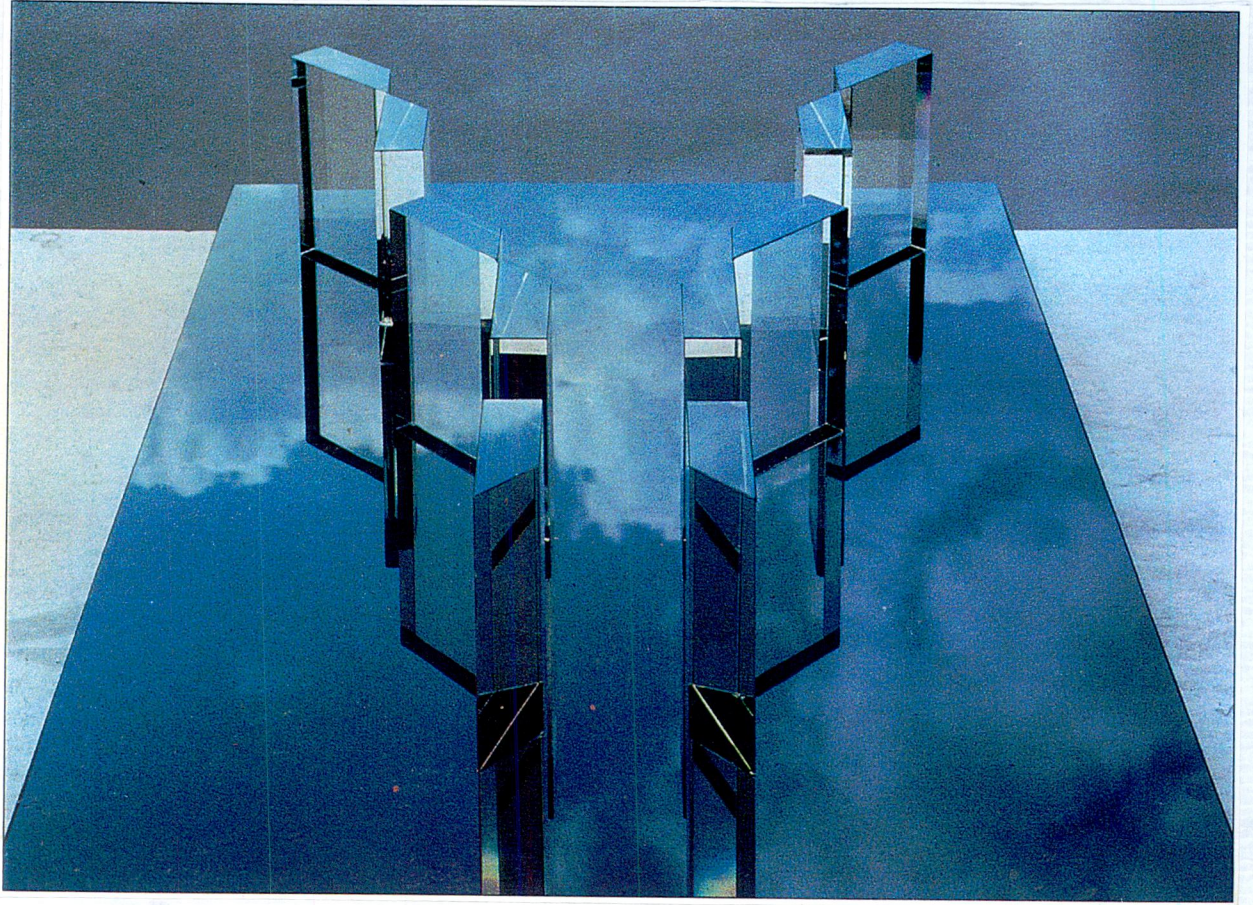
Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, in the center of the page.



Stanislav Libensky and Brychtova,
Glass Pyramid, 1967.

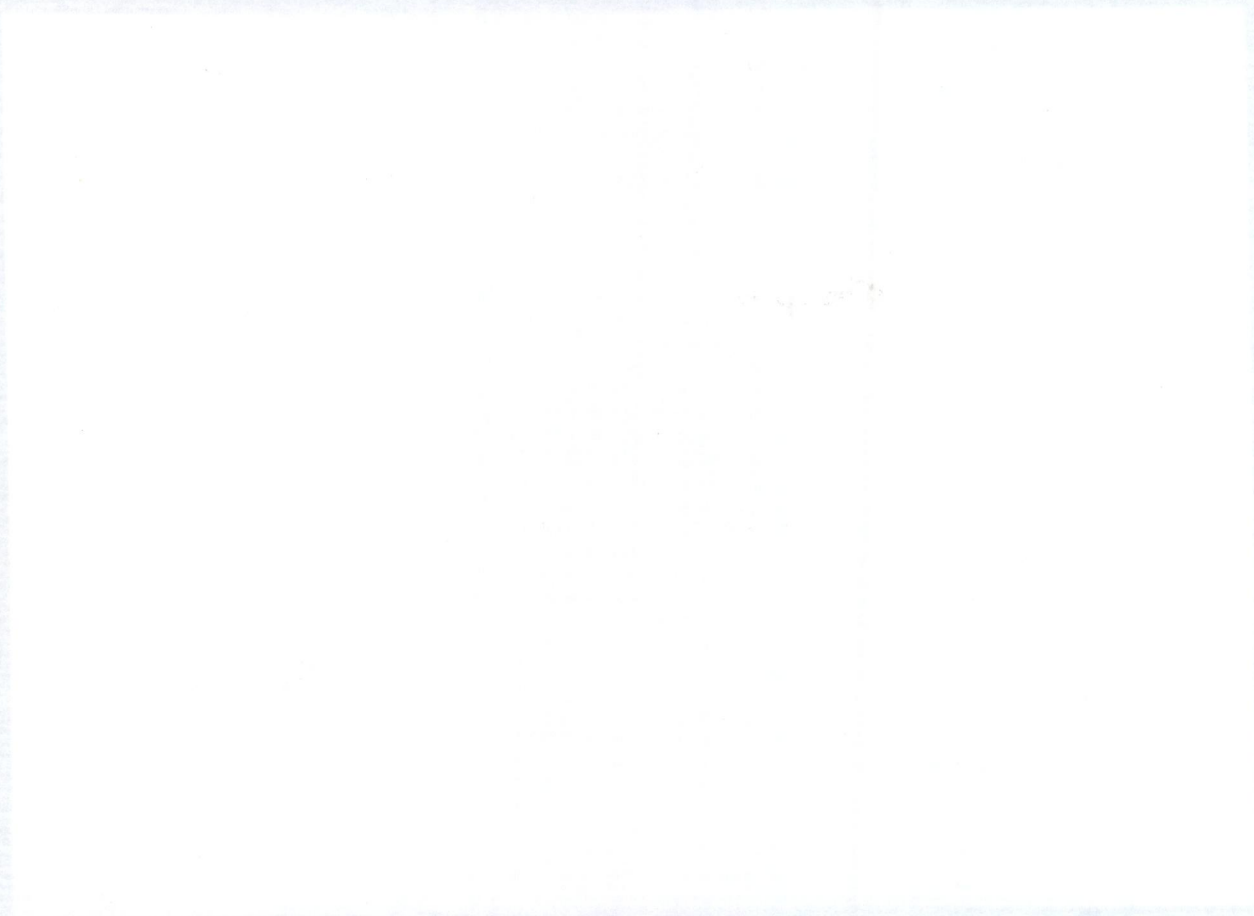
fig 1.





Vaclav Cigler,
Spatial Composition , 1965.

fig 2.



WORLD

*“The optical character of the glass plays the dominant role in Czech glass sculpture.”*⁴ Until the 1960s there was no optical cutting of glass, then, due to its popularity, it became overused and tired. Cigler was more interested in the Kinetic Art Movement than pretty optical trickery.

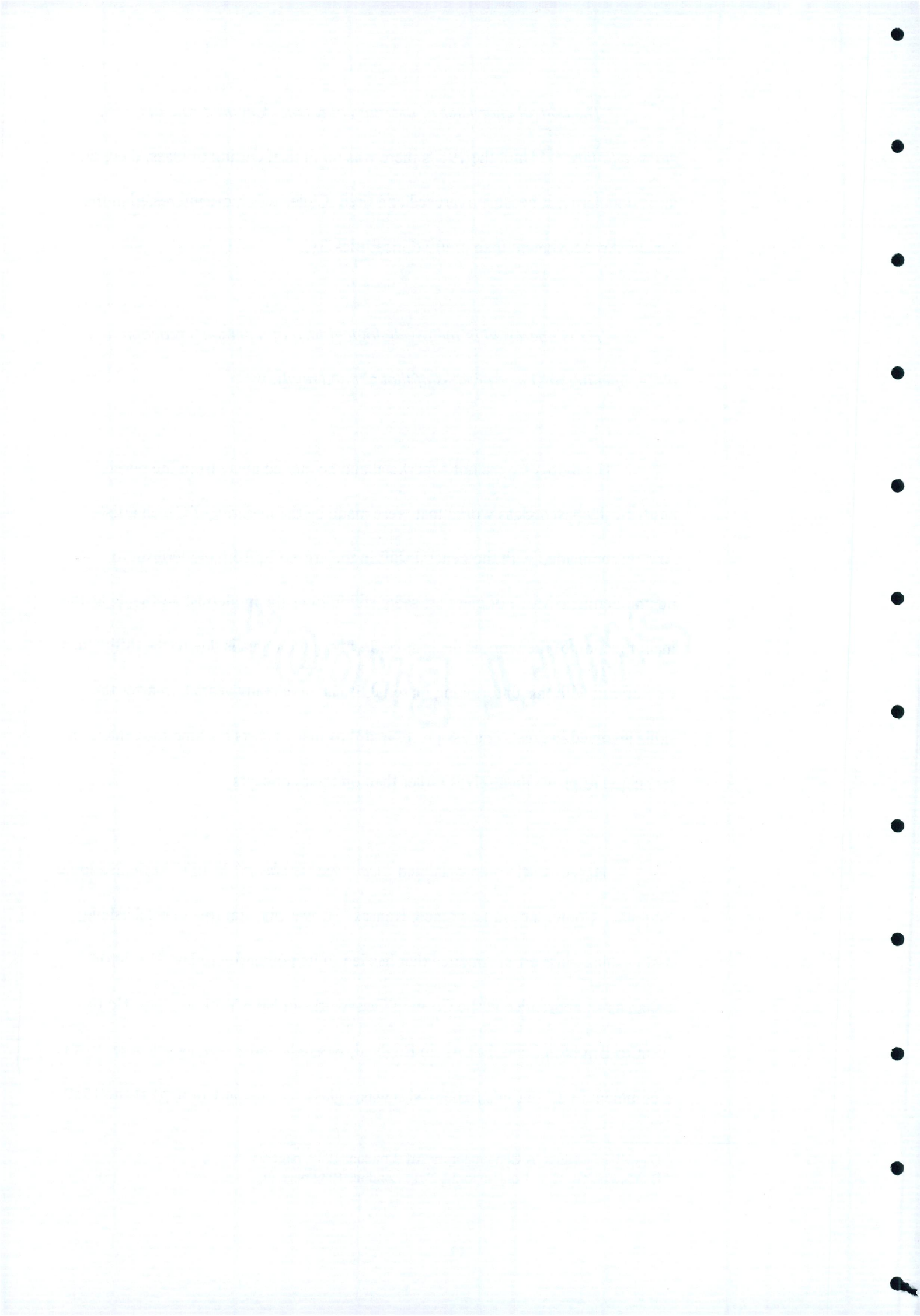
*“He is interested in the psychological idea of a person’s reaction to a piece, opening up a new process of thought and analysis.”*⁵

His motives were not superficial and he moved away from the purely aesthetically based glass works that were made by the majority of Czech artists. And this coincided with the general shift in the art world from modernism to postmodernism. Much of glass art sadly still follows the modernist aesthetic, as the main function of the work is decorative. In my opinion this is due to the difficulties of working with this unforgiving material. It can take many years to master the skills involved in creating glass pieces and thus many artists become too reliant on technique to prove themselves rather than on their concepts.

Harvey Littleton proclaimed *“technique is cheap”* in 1972 at the National Sculpture Conference in Lawrence, Kansas⁶. It was his vital role in establishing and pushing glass art in America that has led to its popularity today.⁷ Littleton began as an apprentice at the Corning Glassworks in New York in 1945. He then went to Brighton School of Art in England, where he did a ceramics degree. It was a comment by Littleton’s father (who was a glass scientist at Corning) at the 1959

⁴ Dan Klein, Glass, A Contemporary Art, London, 1989, page 98.

⁵ Dan Klein, Glass, A Contemporary Art, London, 1989, page 98.



a comment by Littleton's father (who was a glass scientist at Corning) at the 1959 conference of the American Crafts Council that sparked this exuberance for the material.

*"Glass should be a medium for the individual artist."*⁸

His persistence in pushing the material persuaded the Toledo Museum of Art to host two workshops on glass in 1962. Littleton and eight other ceramists convened in small converted garage in the museum's grounds. Initially, they were unable to overcome the technical difficulty of melting the glass. Dominic Labino, the vice-president of the Manville Fiber Glass Company, developed a new formula for melting glass at a low temperature. He also built a new small furnace to cut the cost of blowing glass. As with the evolution of Czech glass sculpture, they were assisted by industry.

The results of these humble beginnings were very fruitful, as Littleton proved that small scale artistic glass work was possible. He persuaded the authorities of the University of Wisconsin to establish America's first glass program. This in turn led to the setting up of a host of glass programs across the States, with the most famous being The Pilchuck School, established in 1971 near Seattle, Washington.

⁶ Martha Drexler, 'Masters of Contemporary Glass', Indianapolis, 1998, page 30.

⁷⁸ Dan Klein, The History of Glass, Slovakia, 1992, p262

WILLIAM J. BROWN

The late 1960s in America saw general public unrest and dissatisfaction with the governments position on the Vietnam War. There were mass protests about the severe loss of life that both sides were encountering and the general consensus that it was a war that no one was going to win. A peace movement began, promoting a return to nature, self sufficiency and a rejection of the idea of a dominant culture. The culmination of this anti-establishment movement occurred in the summer of 1967, aptly named the 'summer of love'. This rise of a sub-culture rejuvenated an interest in the crafts. The glass movement embodied spirit of the 'revolution': self expression , exploration and a rejection of traditional values. As a result, the social situation also perpetuated the expansion of glass courses throughout the States.

*"This protest movement is easy to understand in relation to the Civil Rights and anti-Vietnam War demonstrations in the USA."*⁹

The artists were merely beginning to explore the possibilities, as they had no preconceived notions of what the end result should be. This decade was crucial in establishing glass as a new medium of expression but was without any remarkable pieces of work. Artists were trying to come to grip with the technique and not the concept of their work. This type of exploration continued through the 1970s with mostly only technical advancement taking place, and artists becoming slaves to the medium.

⁹ Lesley Jackson, 'The Sixties, Decade of Design Revolution', Phaidon press, London, page 176.

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, located in the center of the page. The text is faint and appears to be written in a cursive or stylized script.

“When the success of a piece is reliant on the material alone, it will forever remain suspect on a conceptual level.”¹⁰

The real period of revolution in glass sculpture in my opinion was during the 1980s. Artists working in glass began to rebel against their predecessors' purely aesthetic motives. After the investigations of the medium's capabilities during the Sixties and Seventies, the artists began to use an intellectual basis for their work. This change reflected the great transition in the understanding of the function of art and the nature of the art object. During the modernist era the function of art was perceived as mainly aesthetic but by 1987 it was universally accepted that an art work should have elements of design, elements of cognition and locate itself socially.¹¹

Since 1945 dispute has been central to sculpture, in a discourse between matter and spirit, and fiction and reality. Thus two camps have evolved, the first who believe the relationship between the icon and reality is fundamental, and the second who are anti-iconic and have an essential and purist idea of the world. The first group would include such artists as Andy Warhol and Frances Bacon, who draw upon modern icons to create a social commentary. The second would include artists such as Piet Mondrian and Kazimir Malevich, also negate earthly images to create metaphysical images with the purity of the concept remaining.

¹⁰ Thomas Mc Evilly, 'Bringing Postmodernism Up To Date', Glass Art Conference 1993, page 24.

SMALL BOOK

As we are drawing closer to the end of the century it is becoming increasingly difficult to categorize all of the century's different art forms. There are so many hybrids of art that we can no longer pigeonhole and restrict them. This blurring of boundaries has in my opinion created the most exciting and innovative art since the Renaissance

*"Painting is becoming sculpture is becoming ceramic is becoming 3-D welding is becoming jewelry. Perhaps our own fin de siecle, sculpture is the mother of all arts as it was in pre-historic times."*¹²

The artists that I am going to discuss in the next three chapters fall into this 'blurred boundaries' category. They have diverse backgrounds, an architect -Maya Lin, a ceramists- Bernard Dejonghe and a mathematician Steve Tobin .Their work epitomizes the revolution that has occurred this century in the use of glass. That is the evolution from a functional material to a new force in the art-world. In their work it is obvious that the concept comes first and the technique second. It is this very approach that has been progressively establishing glass as a new medium of sculpture.

¹¹ Thomas Mc Evilly, 'Bringing Postmodernism Up to Date', Glass Art Conference, Washington, 1993, page 25.

¹² Christopher Frayling, 'A Message From The Medium', 2D /3D Art and Craft Made and Designed for the Twentieth Century, Sunderland ,1987, page20.

SMALL BOOK

Chapter Two

Introduction

“In general the craft is too traditional and that limits the possible working methods enormously. One has to cross these barriers and then the fun begins.”¹

Bernard Dejonghe certainly does cross the barriers of traditional craft, his approach to the medium is sculptural, conceptual and dramatic. His unconventional and experimental work encapsulates the leap that glass has made this century from its functional background. In this chapter I want to evaluate Dejonghe’s work in relation to my theory that glass has become a new medium of sculpture. I also want to illustrate his affinity to and the Land Art movement and their ethics about nature.

Dejonghe studied visual arts and ceramics at the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers in Paris. He graduated in 1966 and two years later he began working with Emile Decoeur in Fontenay-aux-Roses near Paris. He did numerous commissions and architectural projects, including a wall relief for the administrative center of Granvillier. In 1978 he built his own studio in Briançonnet in Southern France.

¹ Uta M. Koltz, ‘The Age of Silicon’, Neues Glass, No. 3 , 1994, page 24.

WALTER BRIDGES

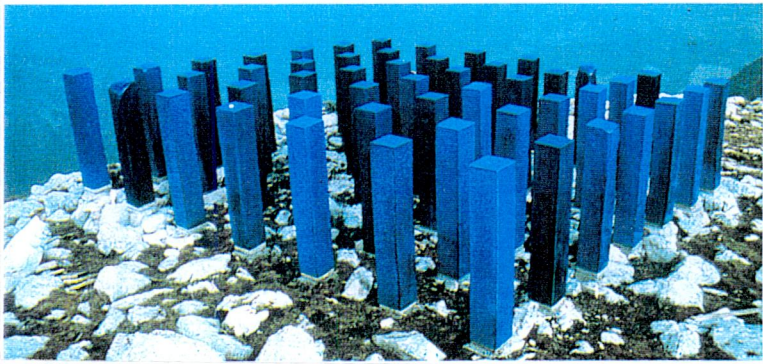
When Dejonghe moved into his studio he was concentrating on strong white, black and blue colour glazes. He spent “*five years on the same glaze, bringing it to its maximum intensity.*”² In 1985 he created ‘49 Steles Bleues’, which he installed on the slopes of the Alps in Provence (Fig 3). This work marked the end of era for Dejonghe, as he ends his exploration of colour and begins to address the themes that still inspire him.³

In 1986 he began to work in glass in the same monumental and geometric fashion. In ‘Neuf Colonnes de Verre’, (Fig 4) in 1988, which is similar to ‘49 Steles Bleues’ and was installed outdoors beside the A6 motorway at Rossignol in the South of France. As well as these site-specific works, Dejonghe has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions including: ‘Neolithiques et Quelques Blancs’ in 1992 at the Galerie Noella Gest in Provence, ‘Sculptures de Verre’ in 1994 at the Museum of Decorative Arts in Paris, ‘Venezia Aperto Vetro’ in 1996 at the Venezia Palazzo Ducale in Venice, ‘Fusions’ in 1997 in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Dunkerque and, most recently, ‘The Glass Skin’ in 1998 at the Corning Glass Museum.

² Françoise de l’Épine, ‘Bernard Dejonghe’, Ceramics: Art and Perception, no. 19 1995 page 23.

³ Françoise de l’Épine, ‘Bernard Dejonghe’, Ceramics: Art and Perception No.19 1995, page 21.

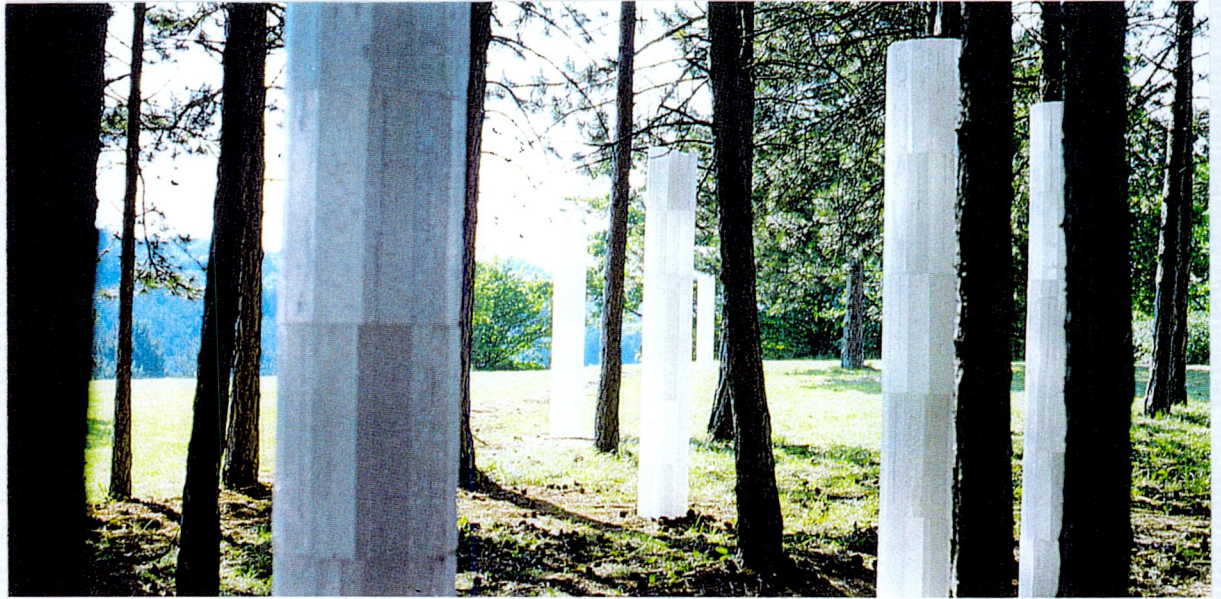
3/11/15
1/18/15



Bernard Dejonghe,
49 Steles Bleues , 1985.



10/12/2014



Bernard Dejonghe,
Neuf Colonnes de Verre, 1988.



Themes

“Multiple sites, a stratified terrain, postulations that undergoing continual displacement, a sort of strategic rhythm,” is Foucault’s definition of memory.⁴

One of the first things that I must establish about Dejonghe’s work is that of a metaphysical and spiritual nature. For him, nature symbolizes the divine. He utilizes undulating geometric forms which invariably invite an ethereal analysis of his work. The use of the transparent, which has connotations of transcendentalism , reinforces the spiritual nature of his work. He is essentially a purist, and doesn’t use what he would consider to be banal icons of everyday life. Instead, he uses intricate geometric patterns which evoke his philosophical views of the universe.

Memory is one of Dejonghe’s main concerns, which he believes belongs to the mineral world. In a sense, he evokes the idea that we were created within the world evolutionary pattern, which seems to have been forgotten. His belief that all things are connected from the micro to the macro, and that the human race plays only a small part, reflects Zen Buddhism.

⁴ William Olander, ‘Fragments’ in The Art of Memory, The Loss of History , New York, 1985 , page 12

SMITH BROS

“We have moved away from the fundamental values of nature, locking ourselves in an artificial and virtual modernity .We have lost the notion that life is equally physical, and that, in all domains, we create meaning with the material as much as the physical.”⁵

He revokes mainstream culture for its uncontrollable consumption and has strong feelings for a primitive mentality instead. His glass sculptures seem ancient and full of historical associations; they become symbols for the eternal. These simple forms resonate with an aura of timelessness and portray the relationships between people, culture, past and present.

His allusions to the archaic are evident through out his sculptures. In his series, ‘Meules Dormant’ from 1997, which translates as ‘Sleeping Mill’ stones, he conjures the image of the ancient practice of grinding corn by hand, which is still used today in poorer societies. He is promoting a simpler existence to gain spiritual harmony. This is also evident in ‘Cercle’ from 1996, which resembles a broken mill stone (Fig 5.)This series also works on another conceptual level, as the circle has had numerous associations with eternity and the circle of life, which can be found in many different cultures including our own Celtic history, where it symbolizes birth, life, death and rebirth.

In ‘Colonne Triangulaire’ of 1995, he makes references to ancient monoliths such as the Egyptian obelisk (Fig 6.). This work was installed in a flowing, constantly fluctuating stream, close to Dejonghe’s studio. This work

⁵ Alan Macaire, Bernard Dejonghe, Dialogues Ceramiques , Dunkerque, 1997, page 9.

STANLEY BRADLEY

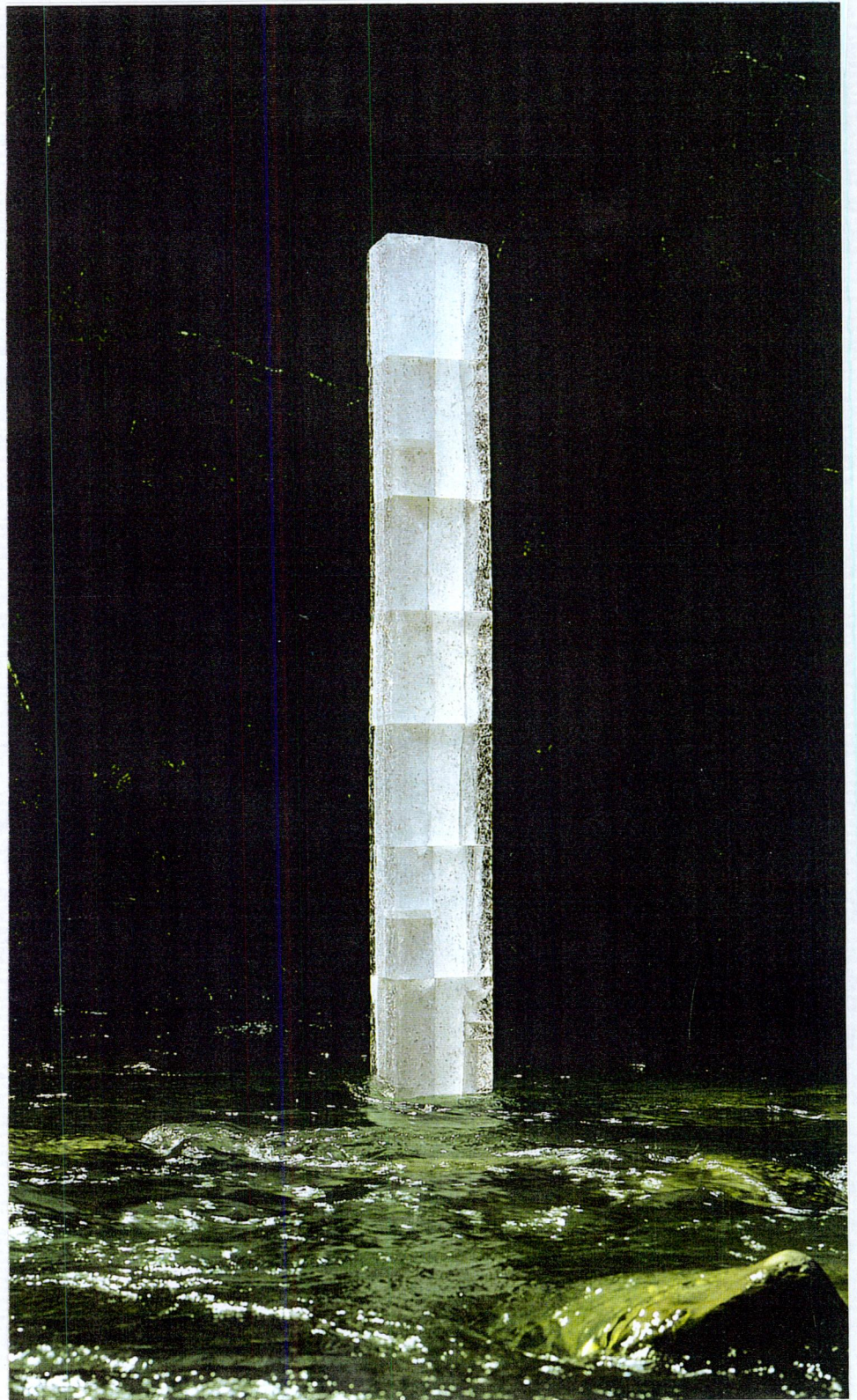


Bernard Dejonghe ,
Cercle , 1996.

fig 5.



13



Bernard Dejonghe,
Colonne Triangulaire , 1995.

fig 6



recalls his earlier personal installations '49 Steles Bleues' and 'Neuf Colones de Verre'. Dejonghe shows these landmarks as constants that have survived, to highlight the decay of the society that created them. Thus, he is paralleling the collapse of these once great cultures, with the inevitable fate that awaits our own civilization. The constant of nature is the only thing that survives time. He also implies that as we are the guardians of it, we must not destroy our own environment.

“There is a strong awareness of time due to rhythmic transformations of materials, gestures that become a reflection on time, on the length of timeall these easily take place in silence.”⁶

The second element that is fundamental to Dejonghe's sculptures is the physical and spiritual concept of fusion. The metamorphosis of fire and clay, and fire and glass creates new tangible forms. He uses fusion as a metaphor for the constant movement in the universe. This parallels the Buddhist concept of 'anicca' or impermanence, which implies that all things are in a constant state of flux:

“Fusion of minerals has become a constant in my work, placed before form, colour or installation on specific sites.”⁷

⁶ Alain Macaire, op. Cit. 1997, page 14.

⁷ Alain Macaire, op. Cit. 1997, Page 26.

WALTER BROWN

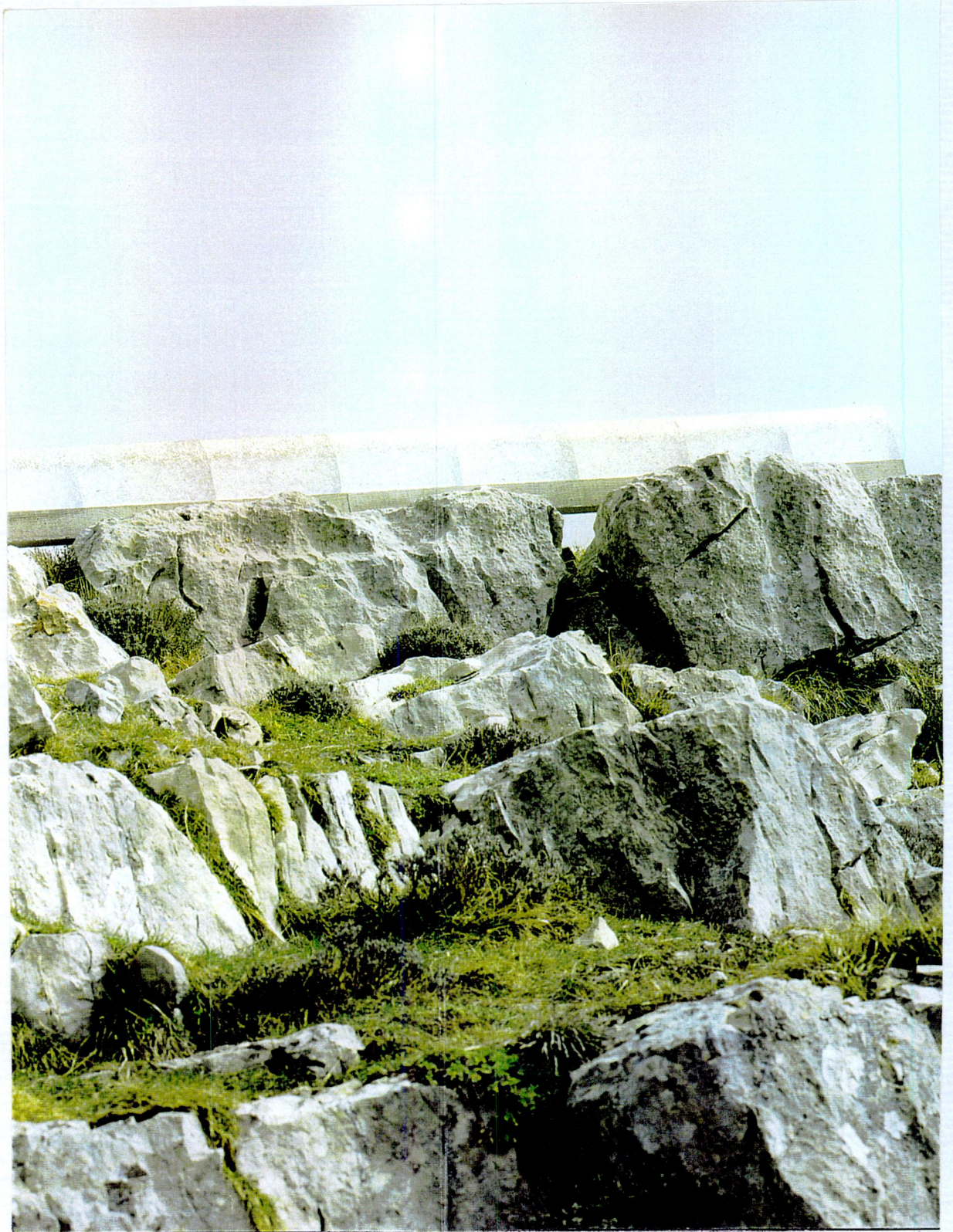
Fusion, metamorphosis and flux all symbolize, for Dejonghe life, time, and existence, the untangle elements that constantly effect us. He also uses antitheses in his work to represent this notion of the metaphysical. His glass is transparent and opaque, has volume but seems empty , looks flowing yet is solid. In 'Ligne de Crete', , the ideas of flux and contrast are central (Fig 7.). This work, consists six of separate blocks of glass, placed side by side. Dejonghe creates dramatic tension with a flowing white line of devitrified glass , that divides each transparent block. It creates a wave-like motion through the piece, which resembles the symbol of Yin and Yang, opposites fused together to create a perfect harmonious form.

Dejonghe uses this technique, of deliberate devitrification of glass, in 'Maison' , 1996 ,(Fig 8.) and 'Les Plissements du Verre' ,1996,. The motion is more exaggerated in these pieces, thus they seem to be in states of transition, still molten, and trying to find a final resting point. He implies that the metamorphosis is occurring before us, that the flux of the material is due to the fusion of heat and glass. Dejonghe wants us to think from the micro, this piece of glass, to the macro, our universe, which is in a constant state of change. Our environment is in the throes of entropy, with mans actions perpetuating the disintegration of our planet.

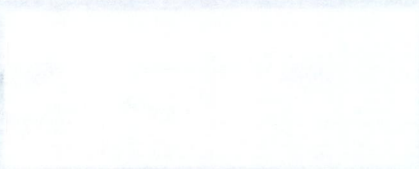
“The west has built it’s culture on the idea that man is placed in the center of the universe, controlling everything and explaining things he does not understand in whatever manner suits him”⁸

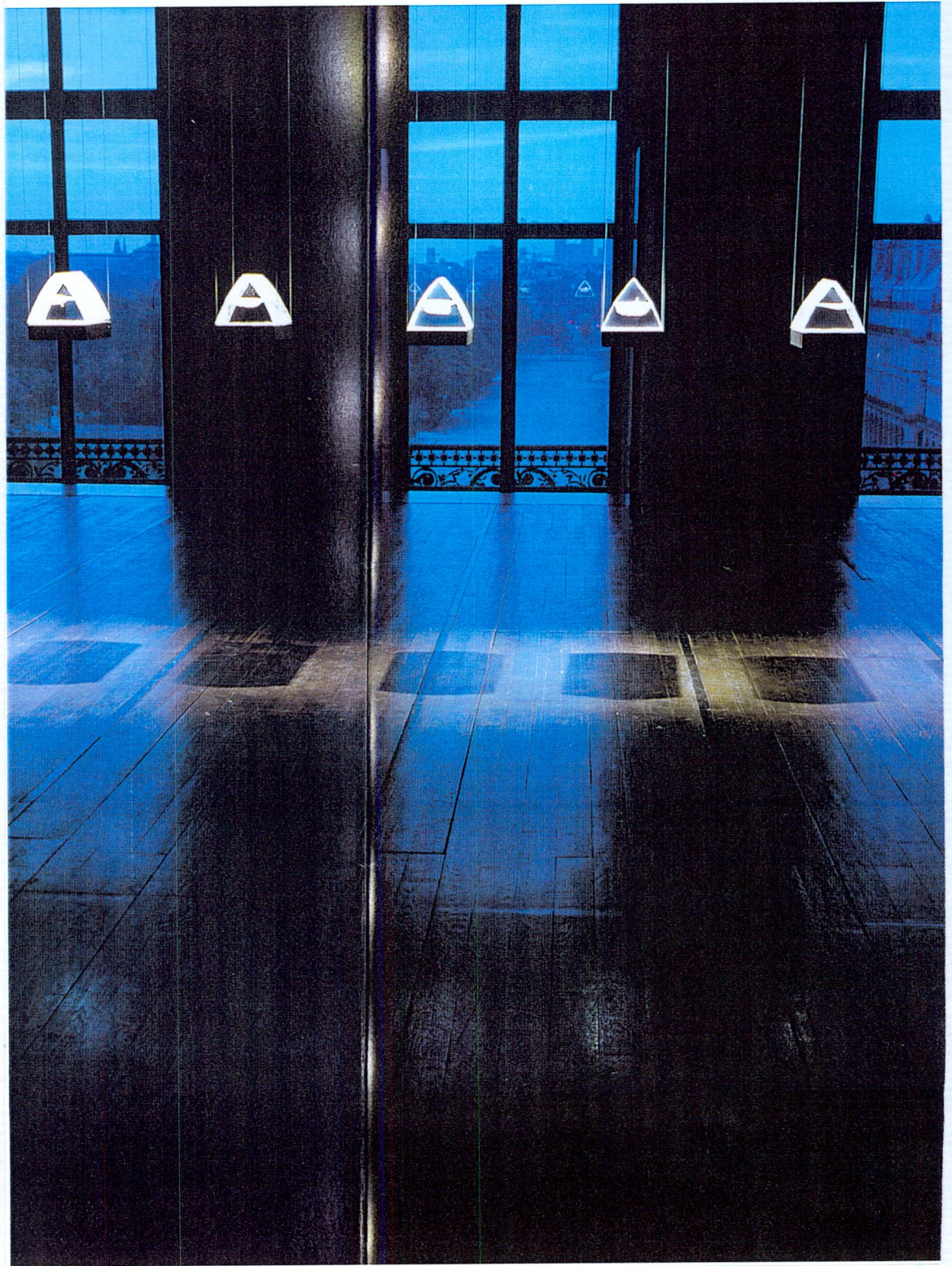
⁸ Macaire , op. Cit. 1997, At page 9.

EXHIBIT B



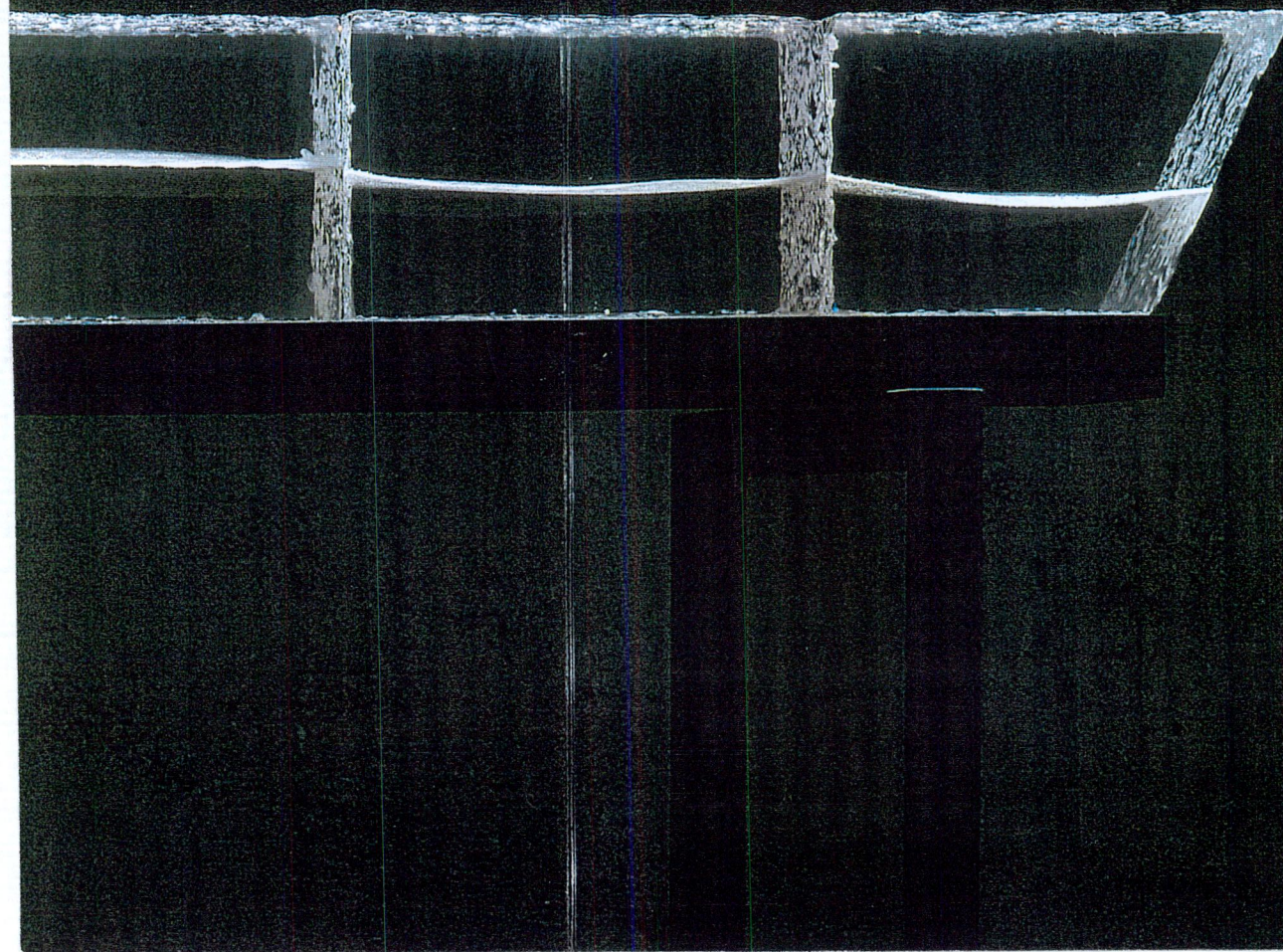
Bernard Dejonghe,
Antenne, 1995.





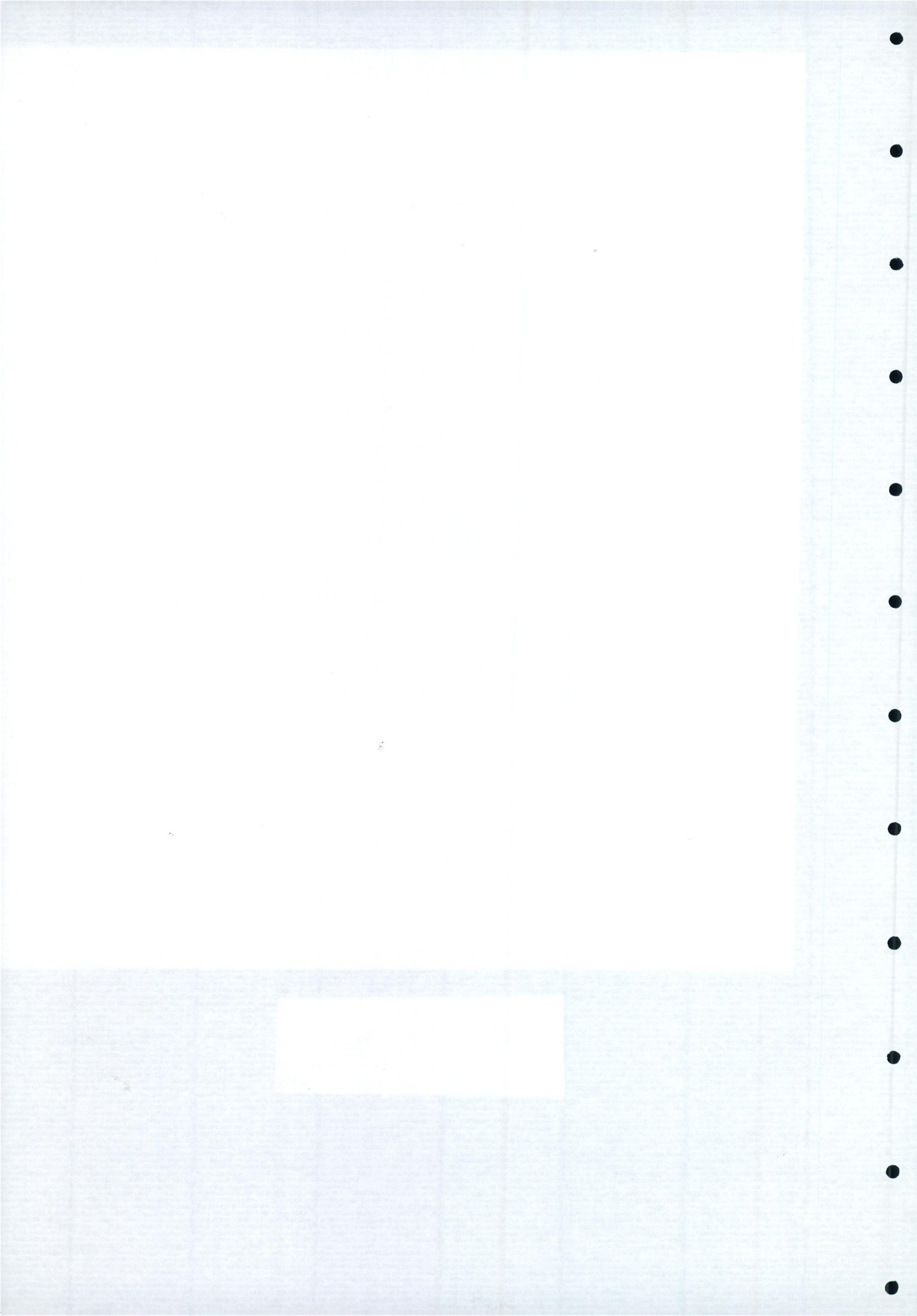
Bernard Dejonghe,
Maisons, 1996.





Bernard Dejonghe,
Ligne de Crete, 1995.

Fig 9.



Dejonghe attempts to reconcile man with nature throughout his work. His placement of his work in nature closely allies him to the Land Art movement, which in Clement Greenberg's words "*goes beyond its domain of competence.*"⁹ That is, it confronts its own limits, and becomes not only sculpture, but photography, architecture, cinema and experience-based art. Art in nature takes on a new meaning; there are no museums, and humanity seems to disappear. Thus it gives a greater resonance to the interpretation of the work, as the site was chosen by the artist and is specific to the content of the piece.

Dejonghe has similar concerns as many of the artists involved in the Land Art movement. Their fascination with evolution, organic decay, the metaphysical, and theories of infinity are central to their often impermanent works. Dejonghe addresses these themes throughout his work. His use of repetition of simple geometric form is thought by many civilizations to hold the key to the universe. In fact, Robert Morris has commented that "*the ideal of the infinite implied by the modular extension was most impressive in Brancusi's Endless Column.*"¹⁰

Dejonghe uses modular repetition in 'Antenne', from 1995, in which the textured block extends over the craggy alpine landscape (Fig 9.). His placement 'Antenne' in the photo documentary creates the illusion of blending the glass and the sky. He alludes to the metaphysical notion of infinity in the duplication of the simple form which is true of all living things as they can be broken down into

⁹ Gilles A Tiberghien, 'Minimalism and Beyond', Land Art, Paris, 1993, ,page 17.

¹⁰ Gilles A Tiberghien, 1993, op. Cit. page 34.

Example of a function

simple patterns of DNA. This work is reminiscent of Carl Andre's 'Log Piece' of 1968 (fig 10) and 'Secant' of 1977 (which means a straight line that cuts a curve).

This theory is reinforced by Christopher Hussey who, in giving the seven characteristics of the sublime, practically describes Dejonghe's work;

“obscure both physical and intellectual, power, privations, such as darkness, solitude and silence. Vastness either vertical or horizontal of both which diminish the relative scale of the human observer, infinity, which could either be literal or induced by the two final characteristics of the sublime, succession and uniformity, both of which suggest limitless progression.”¹¹

In '49 Steles Bleues', 'Neuf Colonnes de Verre' and 'Antenne' the characteristics of the sublime are apparent. Dejonghe uses two square numbers, forty nine and nine, which create harmonious patterns in these installations, and which he parallels to the inherent order in nature. The impact of these forms "*diminish the scale of the observer*", to illustrate their relative insignificance to the power of nature.¹²

¹¹ John Beardsly, 'Earthworks and Beyond', New York 1984, page 64.

¹² Beardsly, op. Cit. 1984, page 64.

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, is visible in the center of the page. The text is faint and appears to be written in blue ink.



Carl André,
Log Piece, 1968.

Fialo.

Case 11-11001
S. J. [unclear]



WOL

*“Silence in the form of a violence that occurs in the materials when they enter into fusion. Words are absent from nature’s phenomena. Could silence paradoxically express what is inhuman in man, who believes he is the reference for the living and for the incommunicable?”*¹³

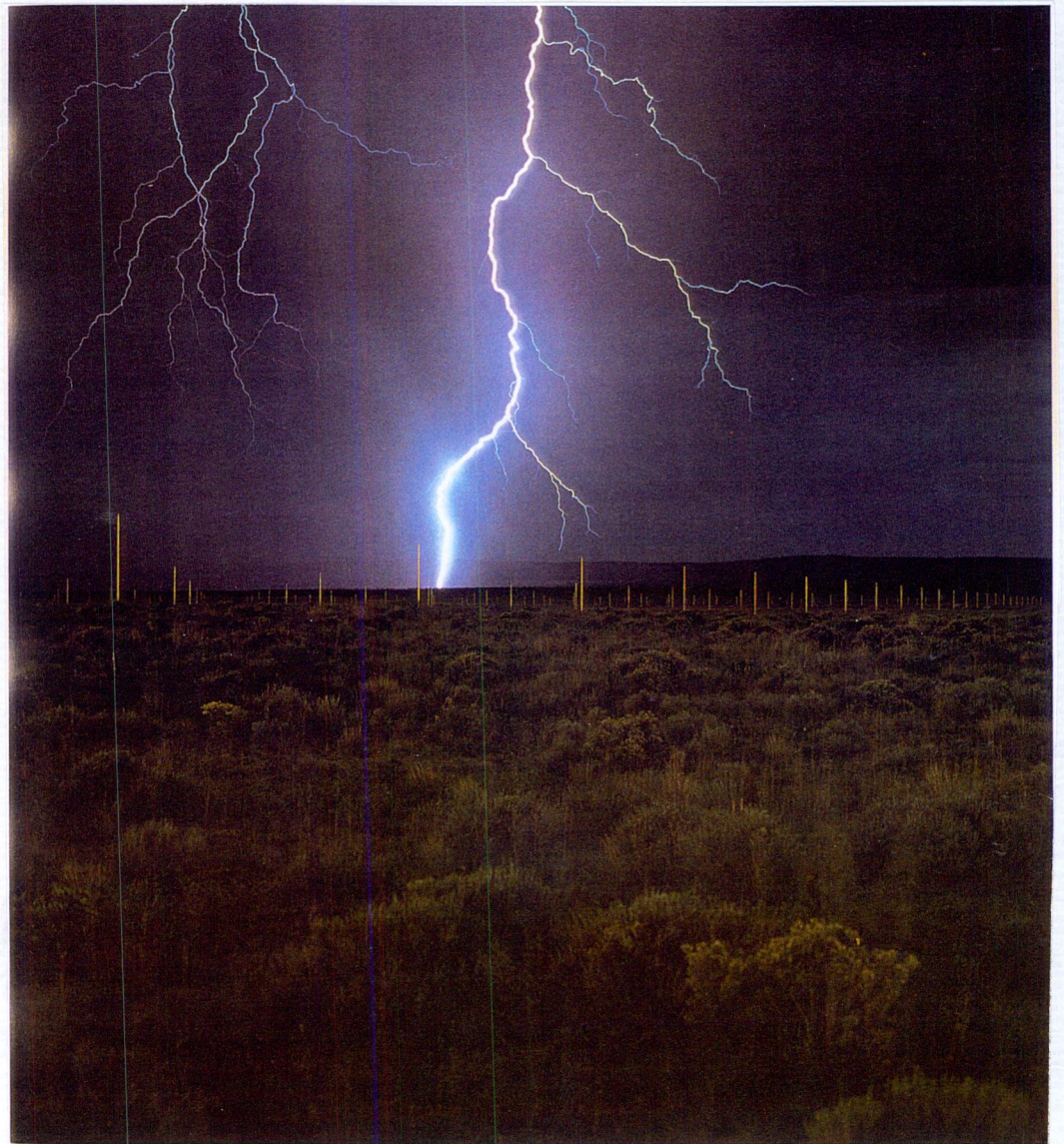
Dejonghe envisages silence with reverence, his work is extremely powerful and allows for quiet contemplation. We sense the spiritual and transcendental references. He evokes the complex simplicity of the cosmos with his subtle geometry, not only in the columns and blocks, but in the intricate internal pattern. Robert Morris noted that *“simpler forms create strong gestalt sensations”*, which is true of Dejonghe’s sculptures.¹⁴

The concepts of Dejonghe’s installations are reminiscent of Walter De Maria’s *‘The Lightning Field’*, 1974-77, near Quemado in New Mexico, one of the oldest and first artists to outline the principles of Land Art (Fig 11.). This piece consists of four hundred, twenty foot high stainless steel rods, placed an equal distance apart. They stretch for one mile square, in an area of New Mexico which has a high incidence of lightning. When a storm occurred, the viewer was reminded of the awesome power and breath taking beauty of nature. His work, like Dejonghe’s is about solitude and silence to allow meditation on existence. De Maria also implies the infinite through repetition and the vastness of this piece.

¹³ Macaire op. Cit.1997, page 13.

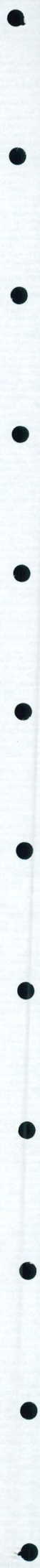
¹⁴ Michael Archer, *‘Towards Installation’*, *Installation Art*, London 1994, page 21.

Example 1: Brown



Walter De Maria,
The Lightning Field, 1974-1977.

fall.



Conclusion

The fusion of art and life has always been a concern of Dejonghe's. He wishes to push our perception of what art is, and its relationship to the world we live in. He exhibits beyond the private sphere of the gallery and thus gains more control over the meaning of his work. He has always had an affinity to the Land Art movement and its connection to nature, though he doesn't seek to shape nature, but draws from its eternal life-giving forces and forms, which he reinterprets in his sculpture.

The central themes in his work are memory of the mineral world or evolution, fusion of opposites and harmony of the cosmos. His forms are spare and reductive; their purity heightens the tension and energy that flows from their dramatic confrontation of opposites in his sculpture. For me Dejonghe embodies the new wave of artists working with glass, pushing the boundaries of its functional background. His deeply reflective work captures the technical excellence and conceptual drive that is essential in establishing glass as a new medium of sculpture.

Small Brown

Chapter Three

Introduction

“An idealist working through the material underbrush of contemporary culture in search of transcendental forms - Tobin does in fact seem close to metaphysics - as to the pursuit of the local and contingent truths that occupy most contemporary artists .”¹

Steve Tobin breaks away from the functional, vessel based history of glass and has taken it in an innovative direction. He is certainly not burdened by technique as he is proficient in all areas of glass making, casting, blowing and assembling. He has continually rejuvenate his visual vocabulary and skill, and his work constantly astounds. In this chapter I want to examine

Tobin’s sculptures and the role they have played in establishing glass as a new material of sculpture Tobin studied music, physic and mathematics at Tulane University in New Orleans. It was here that he was seduced by glass after watching a blowing class, part of the glass program which was initiated during the late Seventies. He instantly began casting and blowing as he sensed the creative possibilities of the medium. He spent two years exploring sculptural glass combined with metal.

BRADY

Upon graduation in 1979 with a BS in mathematics, he temporarily gave up sculptural work and established his first studio in North Carolina and began to blow functional pieces. In 1983 he received a fellowship from the Creative Glass Center of America at Wheaton in New Jersey. It was here that he resumed his sculptural work and began to branch into installation. His first pieces consisted of 15,000 fused commercial perfume bottles and were up to sixty feet long. Tobin described them as *“an architecture of glass, like the architecture of cells in the body, joined together to create an organic tissue.”*²

Tobin’s next definitive work was ‘River of Glass’ 1984, which brought in elements of chance and found objects, which he was to explore in greater depth in later years. While walking around the woods, Tobin discovered several tones of discarded glass threads, left over from the glass making industry that was once situated in the area. He manipulated the glass into a flowing pattern and then fused it with a blow torch and never returned to the site. He simply wanted to make something *“for people to discover and experience.”*³

Tobin left Wheaton to work at The Experimental Glass Workshop in 1985. He also taught at Segusto Vitri d’Art in Murano and at the Tokyo Glass School in Tokyo 1986. In 1987 He built one of Americas largest private studios, in Bucks County in Pennsylvania. It is here in a converted hay barn that Tobin resides and works to this date.

¹ Nancy Princenthal, ‘Steve Tobin :Taking Refuge’, Glass No.65, Winter 1996, page 17.

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, in the center of the page.

He has had over twenty international solo and group exhibitions including: 'Glass Doesn't Grow in the Forest' in St. Augustine Chapel, Belgium in 1989, 'Le Verre' in l'Espace Duchamp Villion, Rouen, France in 1989, 'Glass Installations' in The American Craft Museum, New York 1993, 'A Retrospective' at the Retretti Museum, Savonlinna, Finland 1993 and 'Waterworks' Palm Beach Community Museum, Florida, 1994.

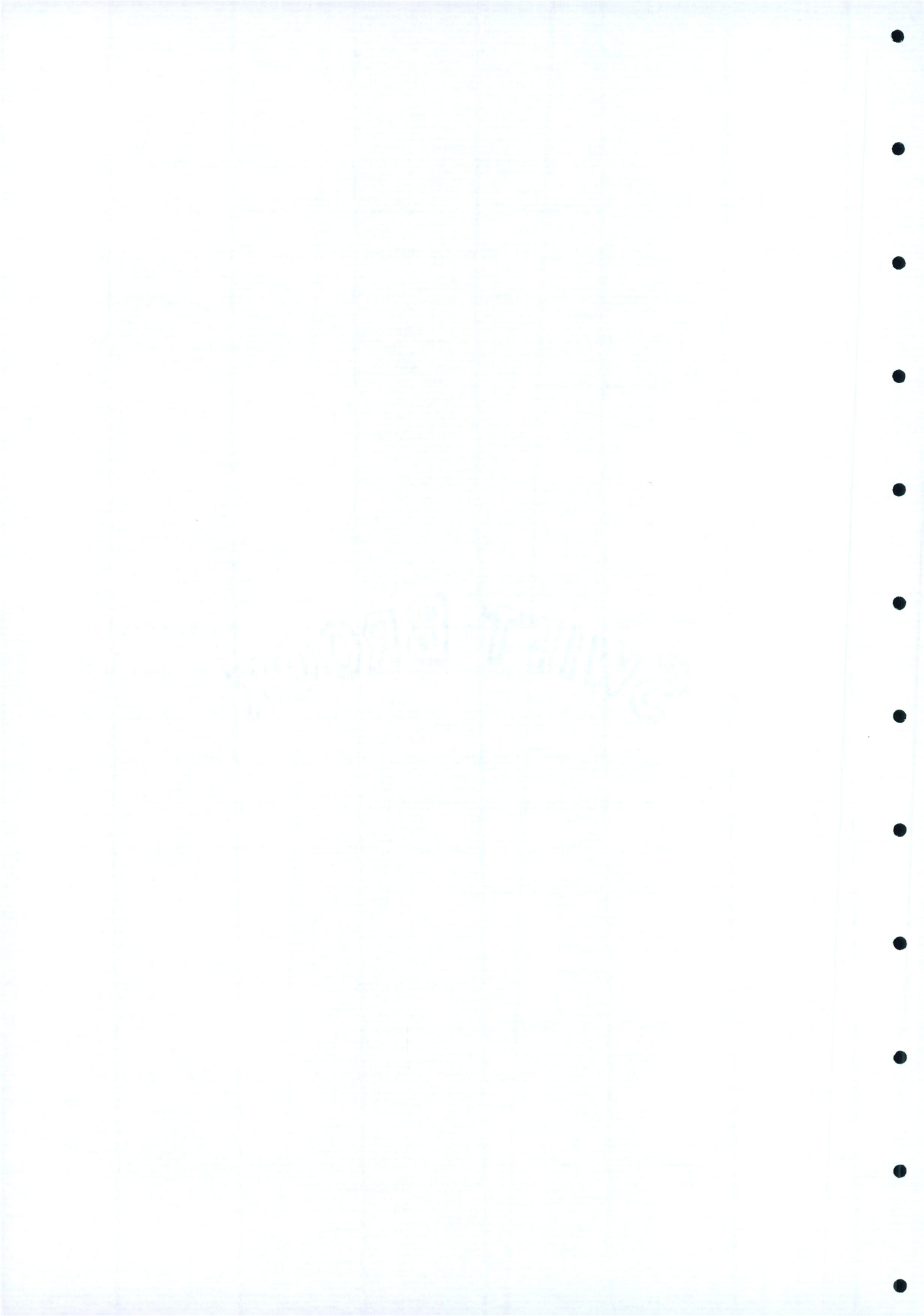
Themes

Before analyzing the major motifs and themes of Tobin's work, I must highlight his iconic method of creating art works. He, like many artists such as Claus Oldenburg and Andy Warhol, draws upon the relationship between an icon and reality. He uses found images as metaphors in his visual vocabulary, such as the cocoon or torso, and elevates them to the level of art. He takes this realistic position to allow the co-existence of art and life. Tobin's work can already be divided into a number of series or periods, which show the level of development he has already accomplished.

His first signature form was the Cocoons, which he began developing while at Wheaton. His casting period was also innovative, as he developed a new method of sand casting molten glass and bronze. This period saw the fruition of

² Maria F. Porges, 'Steve Tobin, Breaking the Rules of Glass', Art Today volume 2, 1990, page 34.

³ Maria F. Porges, 1990, op. Cit. page 35



doors, torsos and other archaic-looking souvenirs. Water Glass is ongoing and now shelter structures seem to be Tobin's main concern. The connection between these seemingly unrelated forms are the themes that motivate Tobin : nature and culture; death and metamorphosis; habitat and flux.

Cocoons borrowed from nature, encapsulate nearly all of these themes for Tobin. He spent many years perfecting and enlarging their form. He in fact purpose built his studio to accommodate the difficulty in creating their immense proportions. Tobin often photographed them in natural surroundings to emphasize the polemics between nature and culture, shelter and exposure.⁴ The culmination of this form, in my opinion, was at the group exhibition 'Glass Doesn't Grow in the Forest' in 1989 in St. Augustines Church in Belgium.

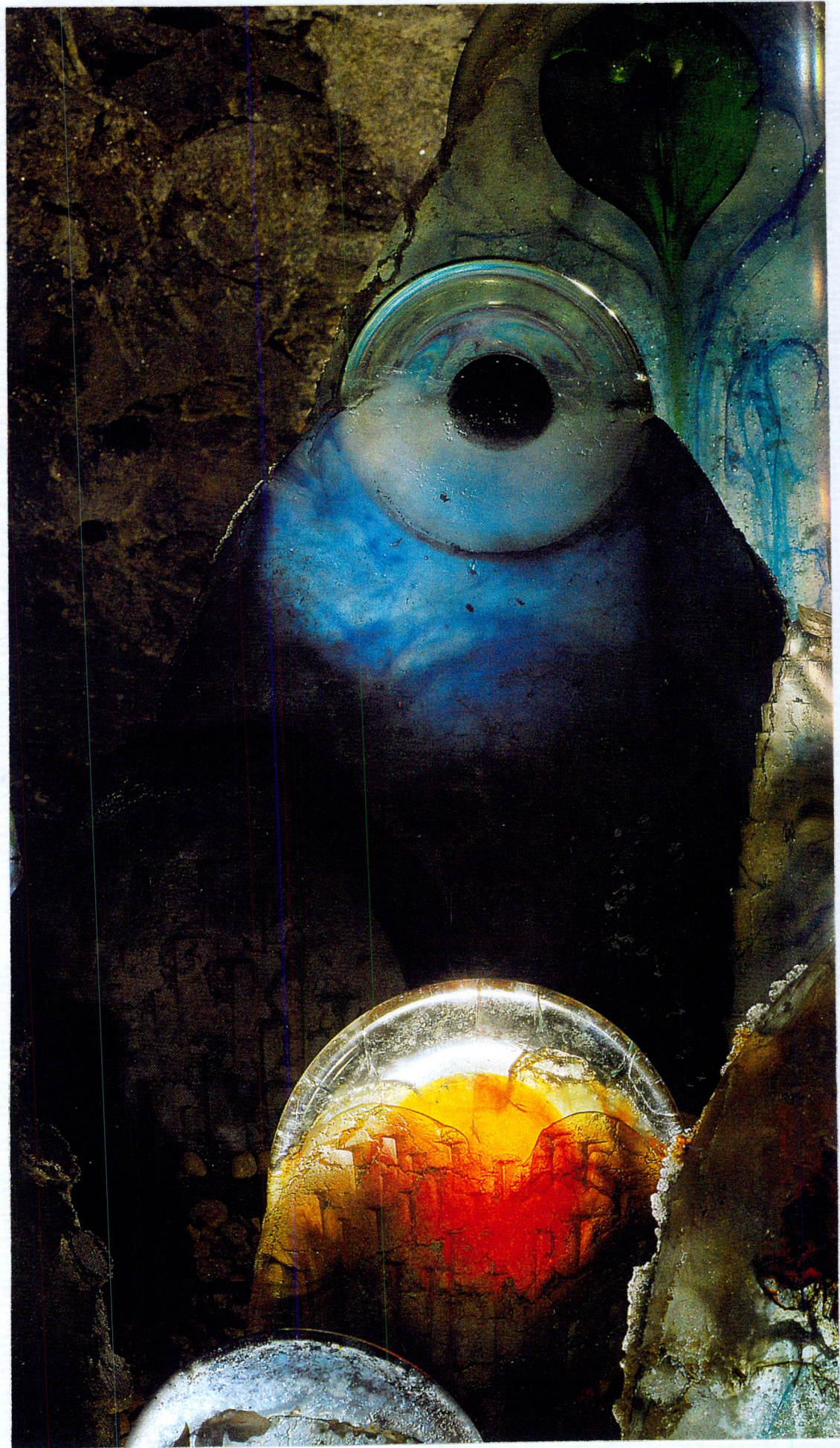
In 'Torsos', 1990, and 'Doors', 1991, Tobin alludes to the spiritual and symbolic, he envisages them as places of entry to the ethereal world (Fig 12.). He here uses an obvious symbol for flux, the door, which has been used for millennia. He associates it with the continual changes that occur, and that it is the change which equals life. He uses his torsos to highlight the decay of cultures as they resemble Ancient Greek marble carvings. Their timeless look only intensifies their poignancy.

*"Tobin's ambition is to make art which looks both old and new; found and fabricated; natural like a fossil or a shell, and cultural, a man-made thing."*⁵

⁴ Richard Torchia, 'Steve Tobin: Glass and Environment', Neues Glass vol. 2 1989 page 218.

⁵ Maria F. Porges op. Cit. 1990 page 35.

WORLD BROWN



Steve Tobin,
Doors, 1991.

fig 12.

Blank white rectangular area at the bottom center of the page.

I find some of Tobin's earlier motifs to be too simplistic and overdone. I think that his cocoons are elegant and interesting forms, but their conceptual content is a little dubious. In contrast to this, his series of 'Water Glass' always seems fresh and expresses his notions of flux, nature and metamorphosis. The sublime aura of these works also contributes to their success in conveying the content of their meaning.

'Waterfall' and 'River' (Fig 13.) at Retretti in 1993, 'Cascade de Verre' at Rouen in 1991 and 'New York Column' in the American Craft Museum in 1993, are just some of these water glass pieces that Tobin has installed during his career. These monumental works consist of thousands of discarded medical glass tubes. Tobin not only uses found material but a found form from nature. Tobin's interest in the cycle of life, death and spiritual rejuvenation is embodied by the flowing water. The constant flux of the water becomes a metaphor for life as he associates change as one of the fundamentals of existence.

*"The caves lend their power to my installations and these sculptures bring life to the caves. The rock and the glass come together at Retretti echoing the theme of the exhibition. All cultures are one, all time is now, everything is everything."*⁶

⁶ Naytlelyn Jarjestajat, Steve Tobin at Retretti, Retretti 1993, page 26.

GENERAL BROADWAY



Steve Tobin,
River, 1993.

Pinet 1913
As U.S.A.

Here the infinite is implied, as Tobin parallels the constant flux of the water with the self renewal of life. Tobin's use of a fragile form, but in a great volume that thus gives it strength, can also be seen as a metaphor for life. The concept of strength in numbers usually ensures the survival of species. He relates the water glass series to his shelters in 'Teepee' 1992, at his studio Pennsylvania, which creates an element of continuity in his work (Fig14.).

He surreally juxtaposes the meaning of shelter with the fragility of the glass. These shelters were systematically wiped out by the new settlers in America for their own gain. Tobin points out the fragility of cultures and how man destroys what he does not understand. This didactic piece indicates a maturing in Tobin as he begins to address social issues. This reference to tribal people illustrates the irony in our society as we freely use their imagery. We embrace the concept but not the people, and Tobin caustically implies this in 'Teepee'.

*"We have chosen to not really enter their culture. The modern world has digested them . There is no Indian in our new representation of their culture, That is why the 'Teepee' has no door. It exists only as an idea of itself. It works only as a symbol"*⁷

'Adobe', 1994, installed at the artist's studio in Pennsylvania, continues Tobin's shelter series (Fig 15.). He assembled it again with recycled materials, but they have a more menacing tone than the medical tubes he used before. This hive-

BRIDGE



Steve Tobin,
Teepee, 1992.

fig 14.



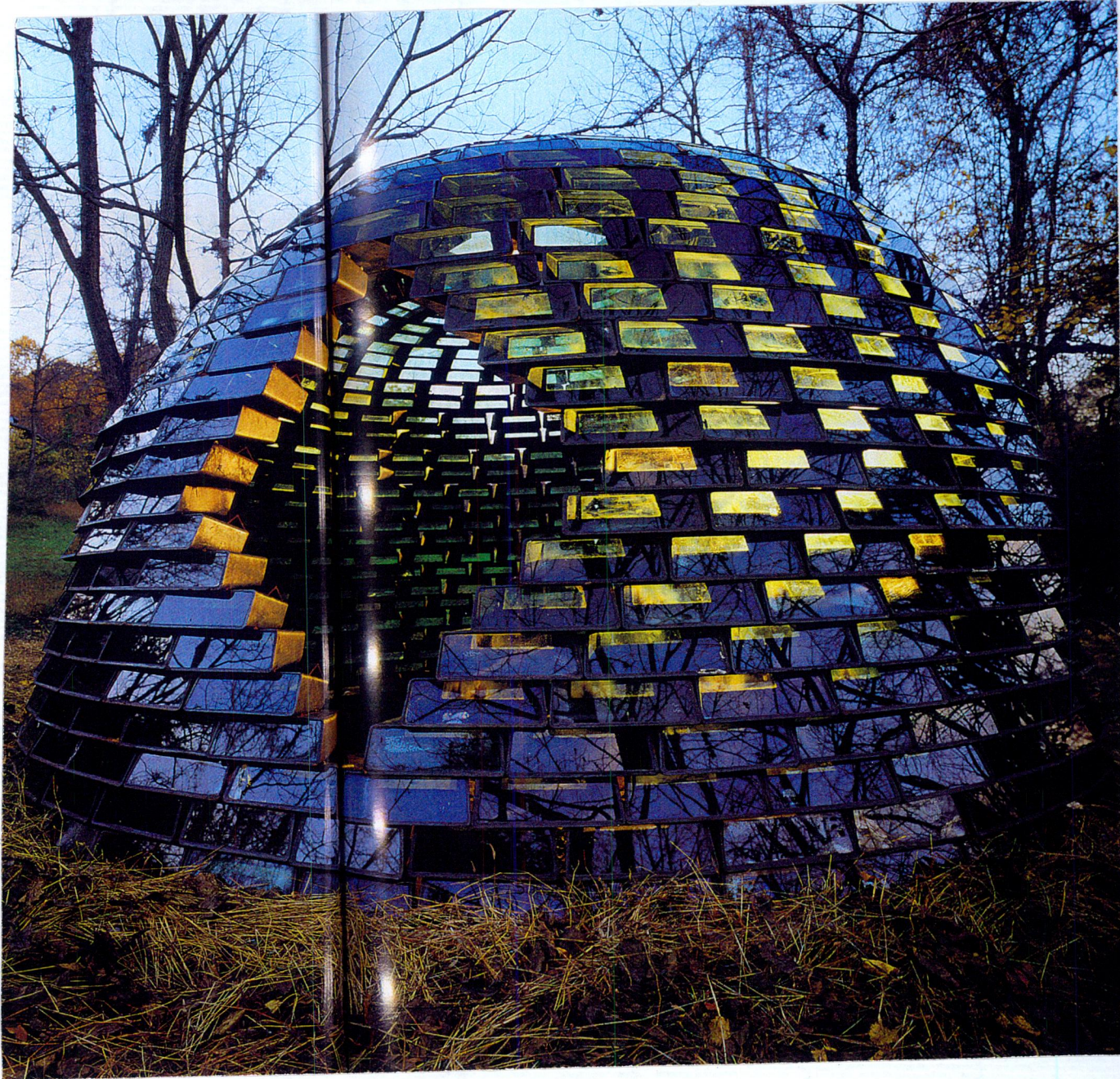
shaped glass shelter was created from a thousand unused M-60 tank windows, left over from the Korean War. The shelter is elemental enough to be associated with many cultures. Tobin parodies protection with destruction in this piece. He juxtaposes the meaning of adobe, an unfired sun dried brick, which is used to make primitive housing. They have been used for centuries and continue to be used in rural areas in parts of Africa. The clay is associated with decay and the tank associated with death. Tobin addresses the problem of unequal wealth in the world as America can build its weapons from sophisticated durable materials, some countries must rely on clay to built their permanent homes.

Tobin and his team fired armor piercing shells into some of the windows. They cracked in a crystalline manner but did not break. They stand testament to their original purpose, which was to arrest violence. Tobin doesn't let us overlook this fact. 'Adobe' is a morbid leftover of past experiences and past living. The oppositions it negotiates create it's poignant nature. Tobin for me establishes himself as a contemporary sculptor in this piece and leaves behind his somewhat naïve earlier works.

His use of this shelter form is reminiscent of Mario Merz's igloo-like structures in glass. His 'At the still point of the turning of the world' 1987, constructed from plate glass addresses similar themes of human debasing of the world (Fig 16.). Chris Dury also uses the borrowed shelter form in Cuckoo Dome, 1992, which he creates out of woven briars and branches (Fig.17). The

⁷ Author not stated , 'Nature and Beyond', <http://www.stevetobin.com/termiteessay.html>

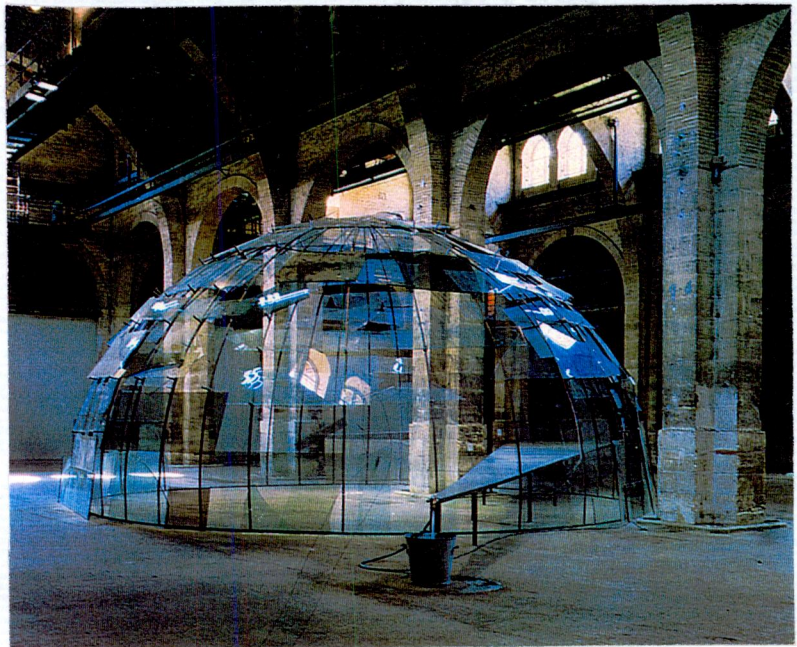
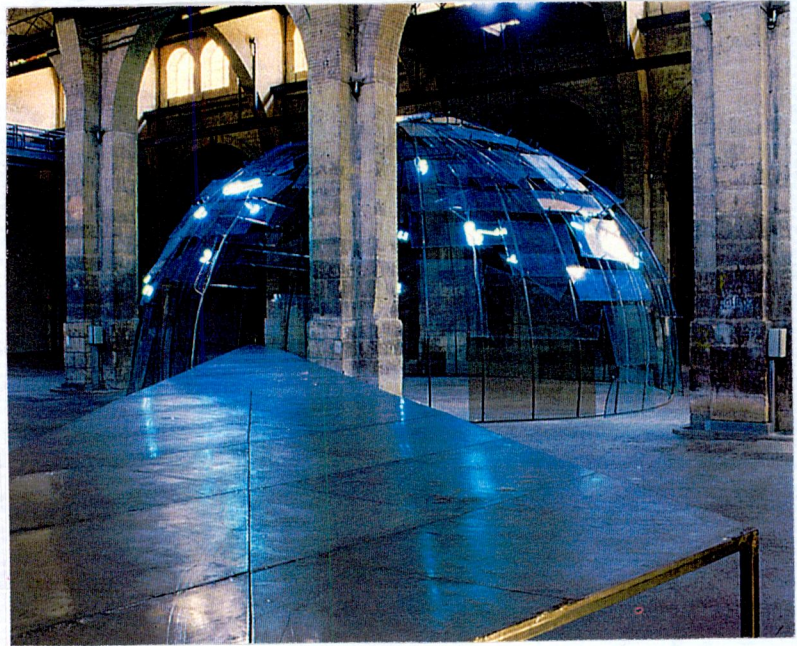
1950



Steve Tobin ,
Adobe , 1994.

Fig 15.





Mario Merz ,
At the Still Point of the Turning of the World , 1987.





Chris Drury,
Cuckoo Dome, 1992.

W. E. KOD Roman
Sussex 1992

concept of shelters has been explored by many contemporary artists and Tobin does so in an evocative manner.

Conclusion

Tobin's treatment of the material is often didactic and cognitive. His works, though excellently executed, are not technique based. Tobin approaches his work with a sculptural eye and with a stern social commentary. He crosses the boundaries of art and craft and creates new relationships between art and life in his installations. The work relates specifically to its site and he uses this to a dramatic effect. Tobin illustrates the sculptural way in which glass can be used with imagination and flair. He thus embodies the transition that glass has made in the last forty-five years and the manner of quality that can be achieved.

EMERGENCY

Chapter Four

Introduction

Voted by Time Magazine as one of the fifty leading thinkers for the next generation, Maya Lin, like Dejonghe and Tobin, has had an unconventional route to the use of glass. She began her career as an undergraduate of architecture at Yale and at twenty one, won a commission that changed her life. Her design for the Vietnam memorial in Washington was chosen from thousands for its poignant nature yet striking simplicity. The form followed function in this piece, as 57,000 names of the dead had to be placed on the memorial. *“I just did it spontaneously. It was obvious the names were the form.”¹*

She spent a brief period at Harvard in 1983, and then returned to Yale to her masters degree in Architecture. After graduation she set up her own studio in Manhattan, New York. In 1988 the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery decided to commission a memorial for those who lost their in the civil rights movement. Lin was chosen for her sensitive approach and the memorial was completed in 1989. Her final memorial was the ‘Women’s Table’, 1991 at Yale. In 1993 she embarked on a difficult project to design the interior of the Museum of African Art in New York.

In 1993 she embarked on a project that led to a great change in her work, ‘The Wave Field’ at the University of Michigan. It is a stunning environmental

Small Birds

sculpture that reflects Lin's affinity to nature. As the commission was for the front of an aeronautical building, Lin began investigating concepts of aerodynamics. This conventionalizing of nature has always been a strong theme in her work. In 'The Wave Field', she creates an undulating landscape which captures the underlying harmony of nature (Fig 18.).

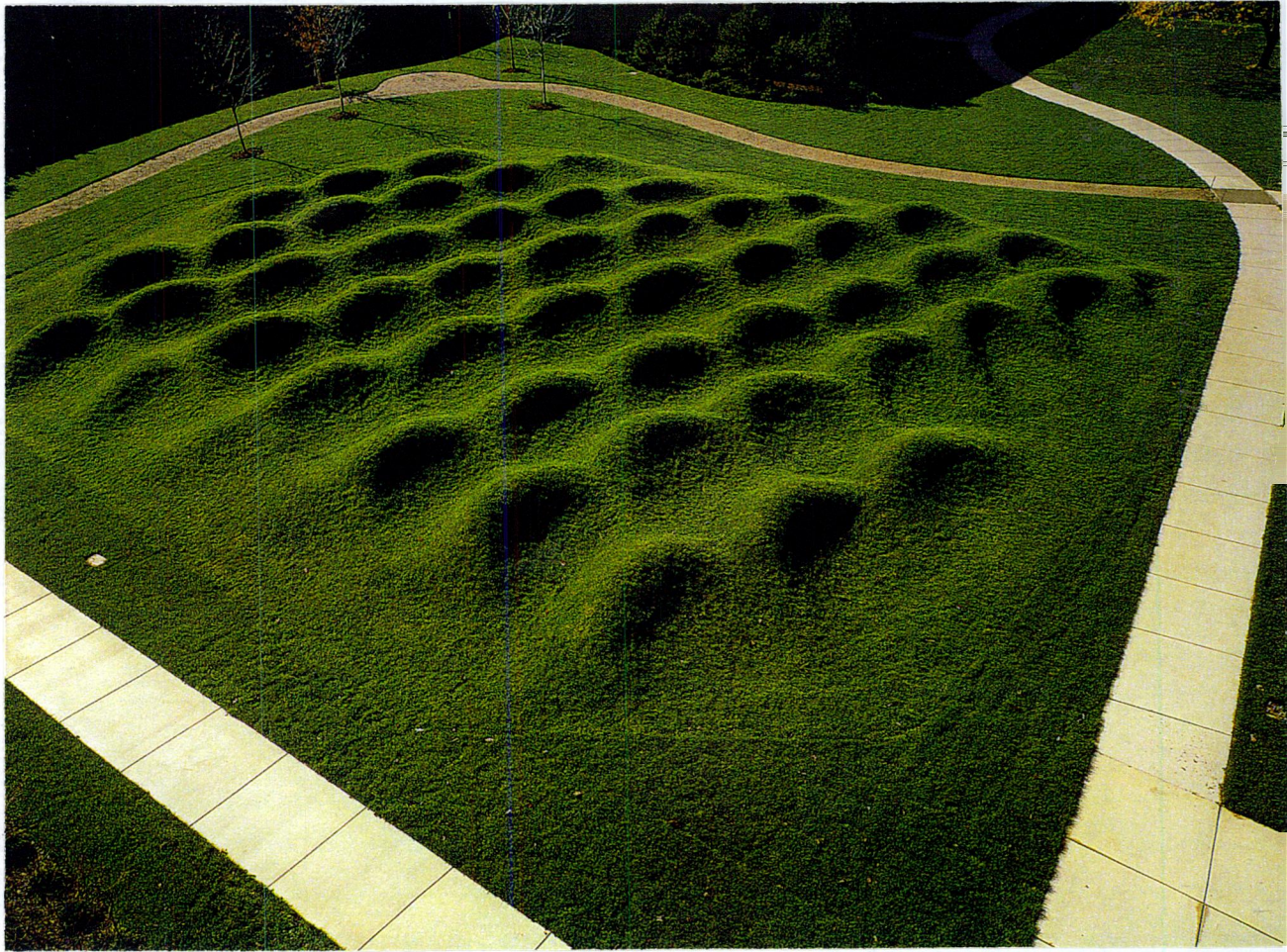
Lin was awarded a sculptor/architect residency in 1993 at the Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus, Ohio, where she created 'Groundswell', 1993-1994. Lin had her first non-site exhibition in 1997 at The Grey Gallery, New York, titled 'Typologies'. She has worked with the Presidio Advisory Council, as a consultant, for the conversion of a former military base in San Francisco to a public park. And has designed a recycling plant and paper mill in the South Bronx.

Her spontaneous and concise method of working have brought her fame. She is methodical without overworking and always remains true to an idea. Her work has always included architecture and sculpture and she feels no need to separate these two similar fields. She proclaims that , "*We live in an age of separation*" and avoids succumbing to this in her work.²

¹ Martin C. Padersen, 'One Driving Idea', Graphics, Issue 131, 1988, page 27.

² Ibid. at op. Page 28.

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, in the center of the page.



Maya Lin,
Wave Field, 1993.



Themes

Like Tobin and Dejonghe, Lin seems to be seeking the soul of nature. She studied under Frank Lloyd Wright who also simplified nature down to essential geometry. During her Artist-in-Residence at the Wexner Center of Arts It she created the magical 'Groundswell', 1993-1994, site-specific installations (Fig 19). She received 43 tons of glass from the Ford Motor Company in crushed form to create these three installations at the Wexner Center.

The Wexner Center was built in 1989 and designed by Peter Eisenman. It combines large areas of glass with a five-story gridded steel tubes. Another unusual feature of the building are the numerous platforms of grassy mounds which leave irregular gaps and lots of negative space. It was in the negative or residual spaces that 'Groundswell' was placed.

*"I wanted to create a glass landscape. Some of the areas look like a garden, while others are much more like ocean waves or pools of water."*³

'Groundswell' is similar to 'Wavefield' in its flowing rolling forms. When Lin was installing the glass by means of a large funnel moved by a crane, she hand-formed the mounds herself. The grand scale contours create the presence of a mystical landscape within a very ordered man-made landscape. Lin often works with polarities to emphasize the meaning of her work. In 'Groundswell',

³ Kate Hanslen, 'Maya Lin, Groundswell', Sculpture, January- February 1994, page 38.





Maya Lin,
Groundswell, 1993-1994.

ROOM

Lin highlights the fragility of nature. In using a material that can be waste disturbed, she parallels the care that we must take with our own environment. The malleable nature of this triptych sculpture also reflects the ever changing seasons of nature and how nature will debase man's activities. She exposes the duality of nature, its fragility and beauty.

*"She forces us to notice the earth, contemplate our existence and see k our origins."*⁴

The relationship between man and nature has always been a central theme in Lin's work. She formally addresses the social and political issues of our time. The environment is a global problem. Lin seeks to create fragile, beautiful and simple environments in her installations. The meaning of the work is held in the individual's response.

The gestalt nature of these works ties her to Dejonghe's and Tobin's use of multiple fragments. Lin uses crushed glass, taken from the ordinary and transcends it into art. This organized whole is perceived as more than the sum of its parts. Her use of multiple pieces again goes back to her tendency to break nature down into its simplest forms.

This method was used again in her first solo exhibition, her site specific works led to studio sculpture. This exhibition, held in The Grey Art Gallery in

⁴ Stephanie Howard, 'Lin Displays Glassy Art', *OG&B Electronic Edition*, http://www.ogb.wfu.edu/back_issues/199...ng/01-29-98/A_and_E/da.topologies..html

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

New York, 1997, was aptly named 'Topologies'. This exhibition contained many different methods of working in glass and wax. In 'Rock Field', 1997, she used 46 stone shaped glass bubbles which were crudely left without any polishing (Fig 20). In this sense, Lin tries to be true to the original form, once the creative process of blowing is finished. This work is reminiscent of Richard Long's placement of found stones in the Gallery space. Her affinity to the Land Art Movement is echoed in her reverence for nature.

Lin parodies the real nature of stone with the fragile, transparent ones in this piece. Again this contradiction is purposely highlighting the fragile nature of the environment. Her use of multiples is striking, as the stones are positioned on a purpose-built pine floor. As the spotlights of the gallery shine on them, they create a beautiful shimmering reflection. Another trademark theme Lin addresses is the passing of time. Lin sets out to emphasize this through changing light formations.

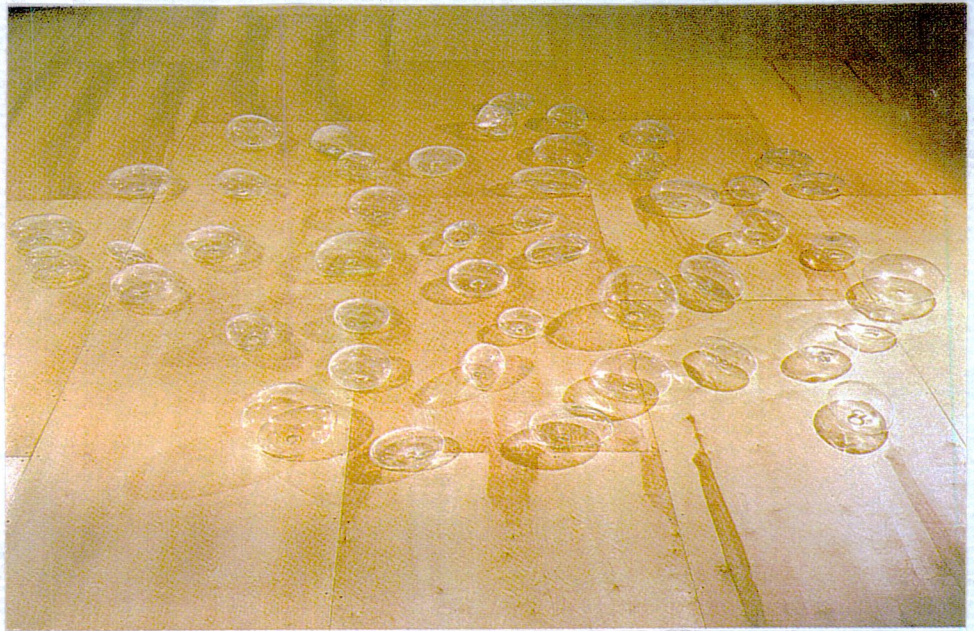
"I'm very interested in expressing the notion of time - I'm in love with marking time."⁵

'Avalanche', 1997, is very similar to 'Groundswell' as she again uses crushed glass with white and green shards (Fig 21). In this piece she pays homage to Robert Smithson's 'Non-Sites', 1971 (Fig 22). Smithson brought in pieces of rubble and clay and placed them on the gallery floor, with a mirror positioned at

⁵ 'Interview with Maya Lin', National Resources Defense Council, <http://www.mail.igc.apc.org/nrdc/nrdc/sittings/lookup/intlin.html>

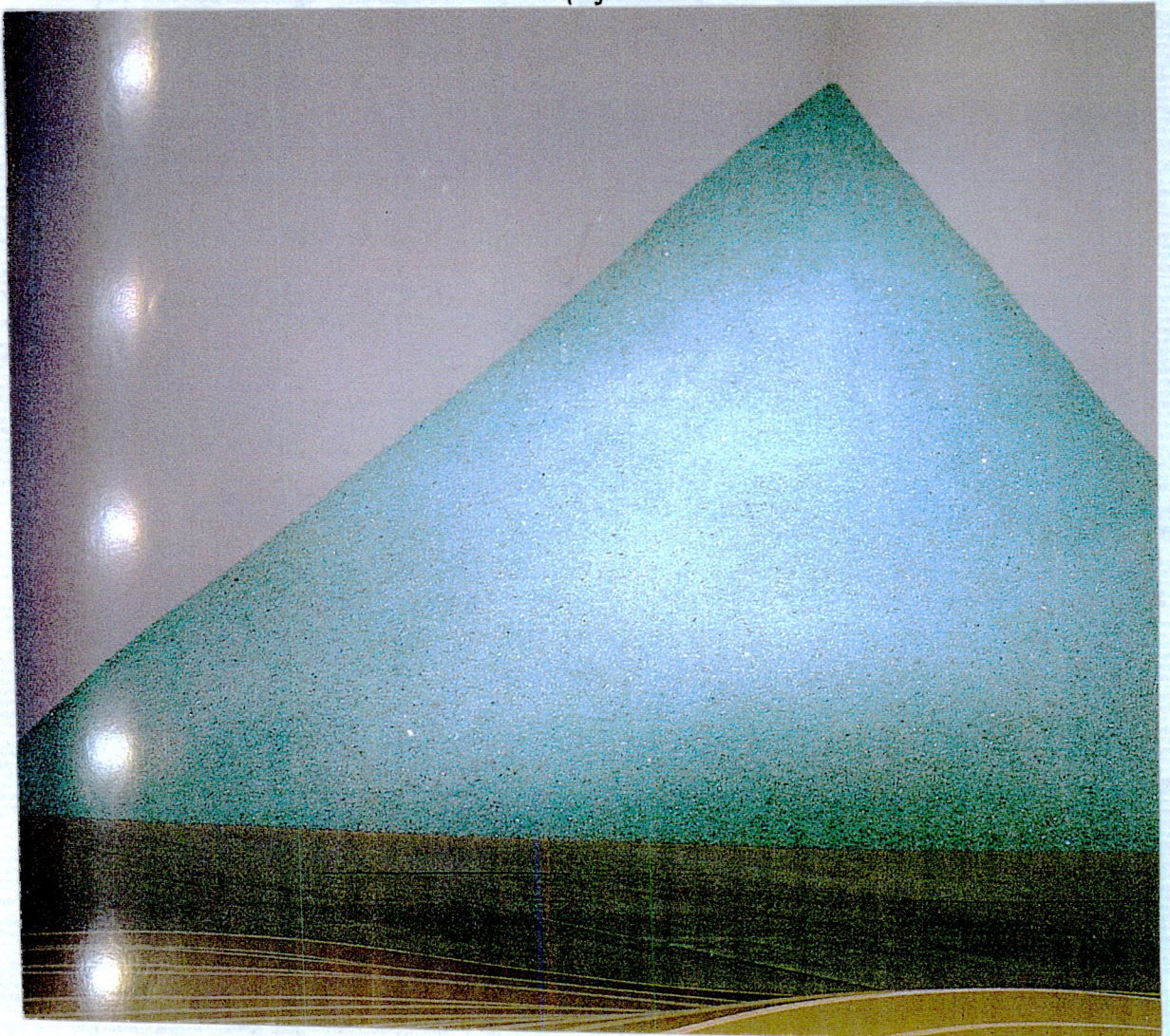
CHARTER BROADWAY

11



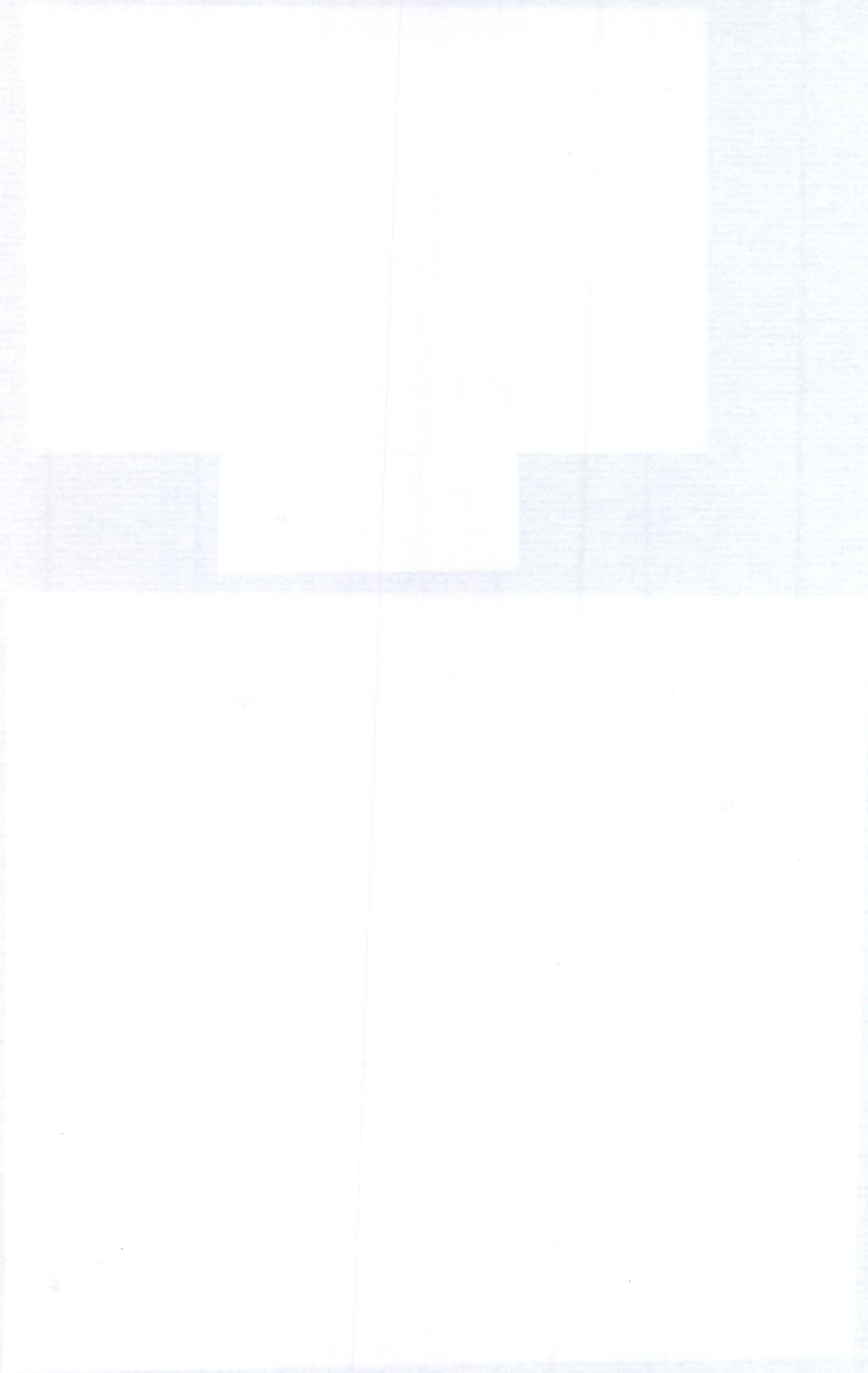
Maya Lin,
Rock Field, 1997.

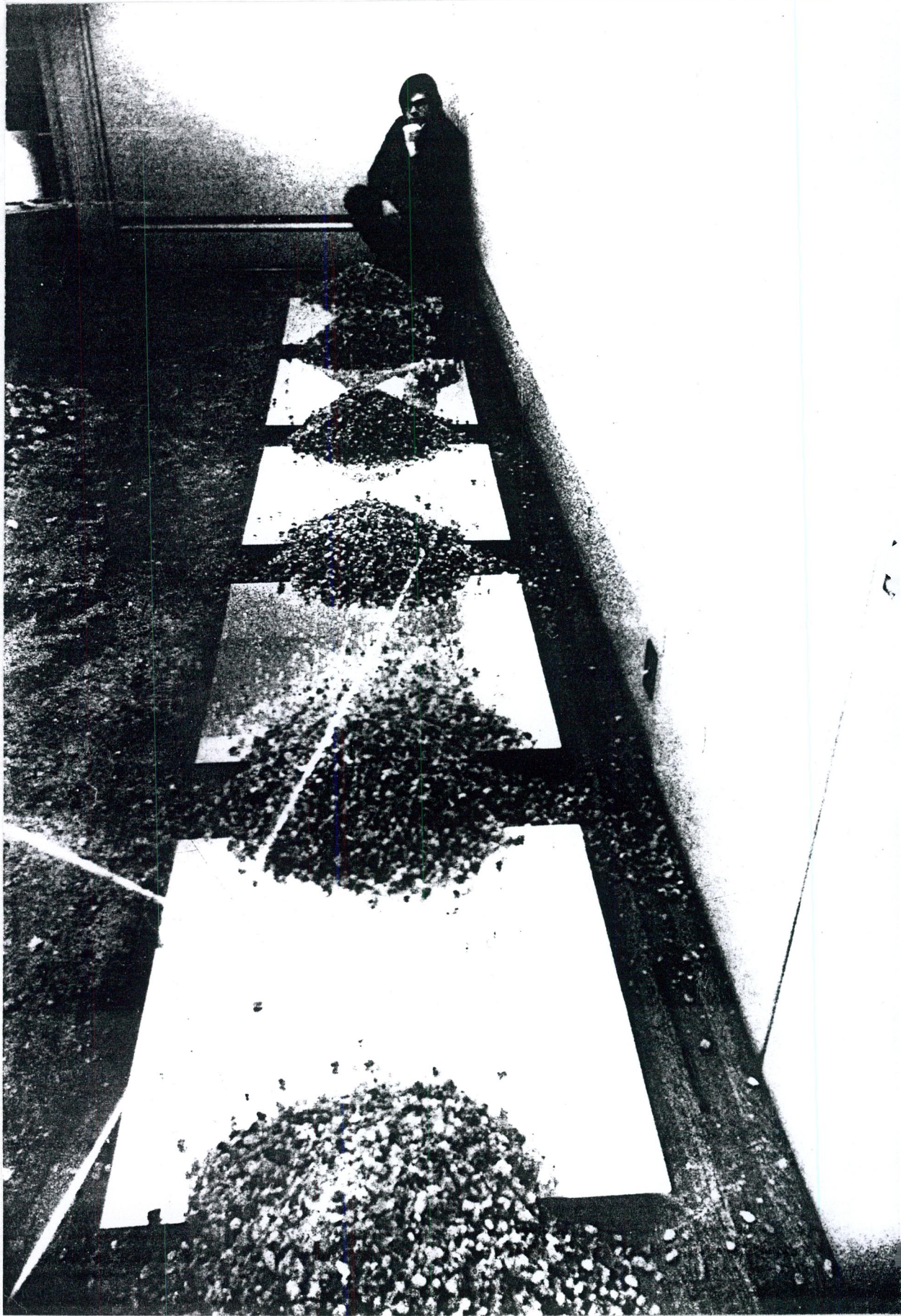
fig 20



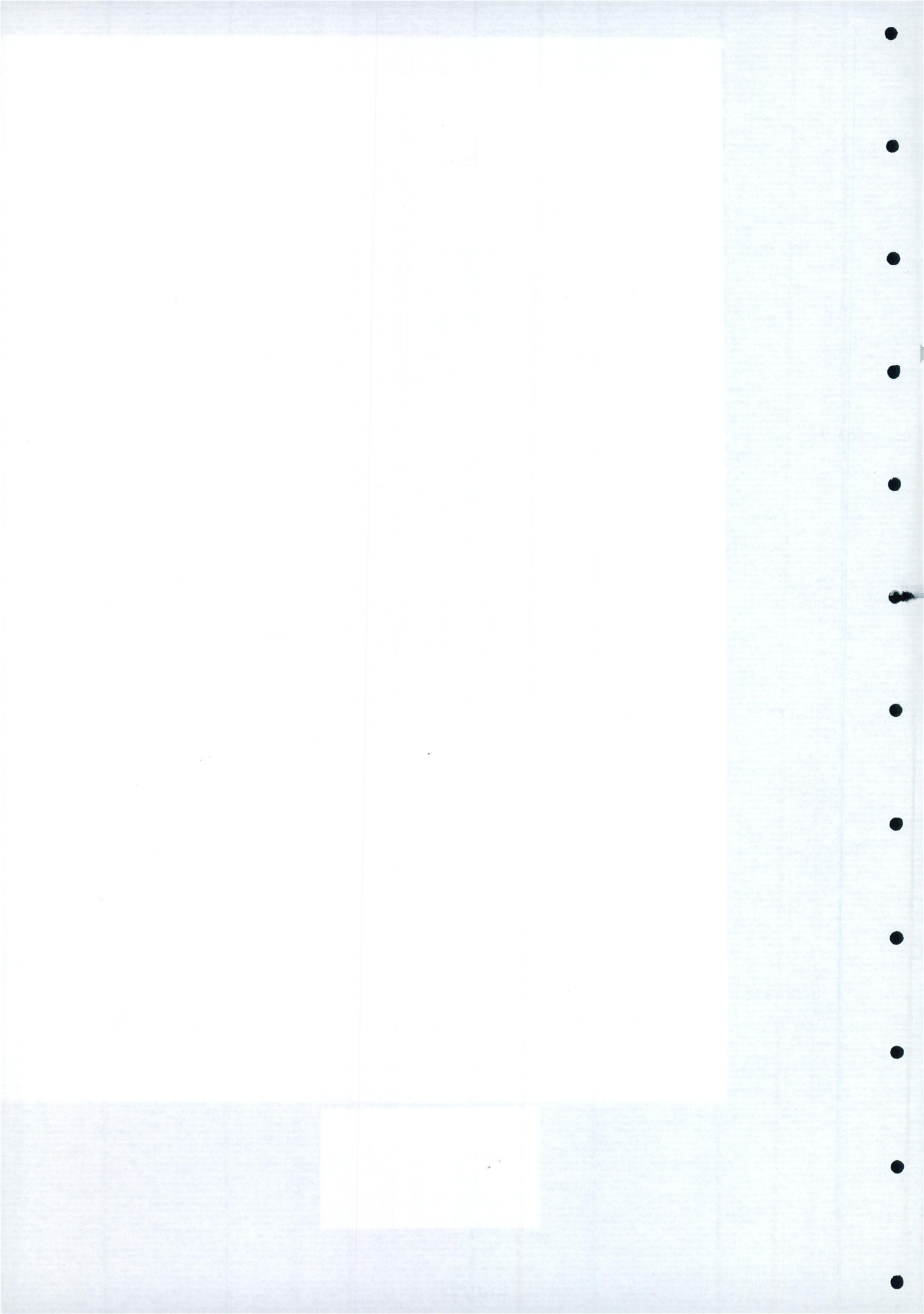
Maya Lin,
Avalanche, 1997.

fig 21





Robert Smithson,
Non -Sites , 1971.



the back. He was highlighting the devastation brought about by industry. The mirror was to firmly lay the blame on the viewer, as we are all responsible for the destruction of the landscape. In 'Avalanche' Lin is not as forceful with her opinion. Her piece is without human reference. It allows for a more self-reflective time, to realize without imposing conclusions on the viewer.

Conclusion.

May Lin has been described as having one driving idea. Her eloquent approach constantly draws on basic scientific forms and avoids the aesthetically obvious. Her "strong clear vision"⁶. Is to illustrate our destructive presence on this earth. Her dreamlike landscapes capture the changing typography of the earth in glass.

Her treatment of the material is quite different from that of most working with the medium. There is no preciousness in her use of glass, it is very matter-of-fact, as the meaning is more important than the method. Lin characterizes her work as "anti-monumental" and "intimate". She gives us a clear insight into her psyche. She intuitively molds and shapes her work with precise thought and planning.⁷

*"I'm concerned about the environment, I think I always have been ever since I was a little girl."*⁸

⁶ Todd Wolf, 'Catch A Strong Clear Vision', <http://www.publicnews.com>

⁷ Todd Wolf, 'Catch A Strong Clear Vision', <http://www.publicnews.com>

⁸ Chris Solomon, 'Despite Her Growing Notoriety, Maya Lin Would Prefer to Remain A Behind The Scenes Turtle', The Seattle Times, Tuesday April 15th 1997.

© 1997 by Pearson Education, Inc.

It was these concerns that led to her becoming involved in the Presidio Advisory Council in San Francisco. On commenting on her work there, converting a former army base into a National Park, she has said,

“Let’s think about the word ‘s defense , instead of defense in the sense of war, let’s talk about defense of the planet, protecting it and being a true steward.”⁹

This high moralistic tone is echoed throughout her work. Her beliefs tie her closely to Tobin’s and Dejonghe’s references to the environment. Her unique approach to the medium reflects the turning tide in the use of glass in sculpture. She engages her work with their surroundings, and creates a dramatic resonance of meaning. Her powerful work captures the novel way in which glass is being used in sculpture.

⁹ ‘Interview With Maya Lin’, National Resources Defense Council.

Conclusion

“By the retinal approach I mean that the aesthetic delectation depends almost exclusively upon the sensitivity of the retina without any auxiliary interpretation ...Like Alice in Wonderland [the young artist of tomorrow]will pass thorough the looking glass of the retina to reach deeper mines of expression.”¹ - Marcel Duchamp, 1961.

The shift in the manner of expression that Duchamp predicted, has definitely occurred. The subversion of the meaning of material or object is central to the postmodern era of art that we now occupy. Currently the genre of ‘Glass Art’ does not comply with these new sets of ideologies. It is awash with objects, some beautiful some ugly, without any meaning or content. The future of the Glass Art movement is with artists who base their work on concept rather than process.

During my research for this thesis, I tried to read around the topic, to grasp fully the place of glass within the contemporary art field. The catalyst for change in art during the Twentieth Century has mainly been due to fluctuating social and political conditions. Glass Art, in a sense, has remained in an idealistic bubble, ignoring the events both good and bad that have shaped the our present existence. The aura of the medium has seduced many, making them slaves to technique.

¹ Ron Glowen, ‘Looking for Meaning: Glass in Twentieth Century Art’, Glass:Material in the Meaning, Hong Kong, 1995, page11.

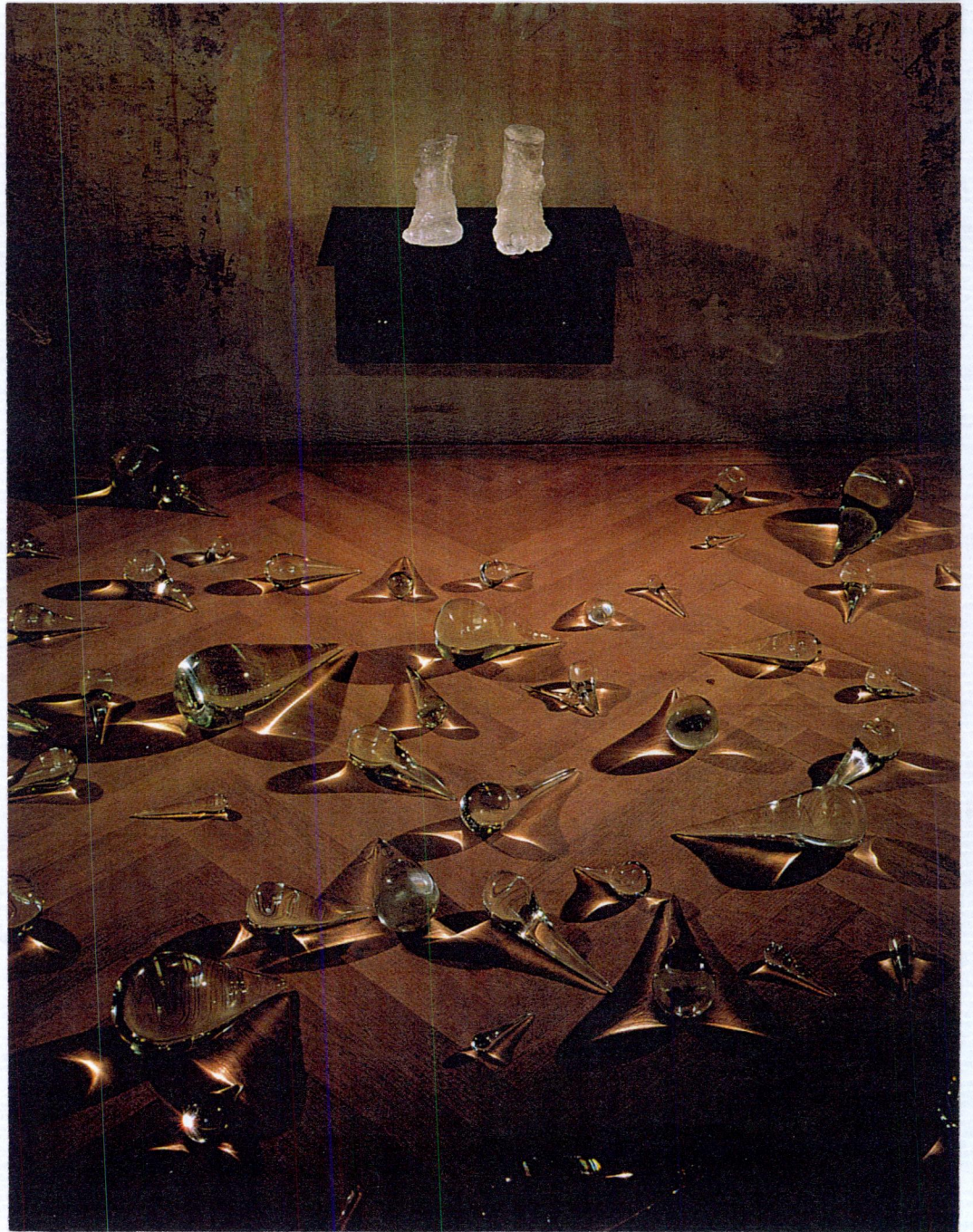
Example 5: BMD/OMG

Artists who work with glass as a means to an end, and not as material as content have been vital in establishing glass as an artistic medium. In 'Mother', 1993, Kiki Smith uses tear drop shaped glass to imply the constant worry of a mother (fig 23). Glass has become a signature material for Smith, she doesn't work exclusively with it, but utilizes it as a vehicle for her concepts. Maura Sheehan works with discarded windshields from wrecked cars to emphasize the throw-away attitude of our society. Mary Shaffer now creates sound and fiber optic installations combined with broken glass: in 'Ode to Fiddler', 1986, her use of the recorded sound of a crying woman points to the meaning of the work, which is to highlight the plight of abused women. Marc Quinn uses blown silvered glass in 'Morphology', 1997, to allude to the unnamable and indistinct feelings and moments in our lives that we don't recognize (Fig 24).

In questioning the validity of glass as a new medium of sculpture, we must evaluate where, how and by whom it is being exhibited. If glass is only being viewed by the craft audience, can it be considered a new medium of expression? The artists that I have examined exhibit within both areas of craft and the fine art spectrum. Dejonghe has recently had an exhibition at The Museum of Contemporary Art in Nice, Tobin has exhibited at The Retretti Art Center and Lin had her non-site specific installation at The Grey Art Gallery in New York.

The use of installation also reinforces their contemporary status. Early in the Twentieth Century sculpture began to command a new autonomy and authority, which undermined the dominance of painting. Robert Smithson

EXHIBIT B



Kiki Smith,
Mothers 1992-1993.

At home
Madison 10/17/92
10/17/92

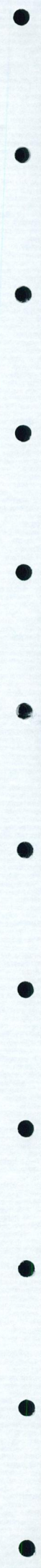


Marc Quinn,
Morphology, 1997.

fig 23



10.000



declared "*there is no way you can frame it you just have to experience it..*"² It is on this experiencing of art that installation is based. Generally in art there has been a shift from meaning residing in the object, to the actual experience of the work. The artists that I have chosen engage in this discourse, as do many others working with the material.

The final factor which has contributed to glass being accepted as a new medium of sculpture is the general blurring of boundaries in the art world. In my opinion ,the art of this century has reached its most innovative levels ever. Craft, art, technology, advertising, landscape and life in general have begun to mingle and mutate into exciting new genres. The anything-goes attitude of the art world at the moment surely is an invitation for glass artists to enter the contemporary main stream from the outskirts of craft.

² Andrew Causey, Sculpture Since 1945, Oxford, 1998, page 170.

SMITH & BROWN

Bibliography

Books

ADLERVA, Alena, Czechoslovakian Glass 1350- 1980 , New York, Corning Museum of Glass , 1996.

ARCHER, Michael, Installation Art , London, Thames and Hudson, 1994.

BEARDSLY, John, Earthworks and Beyond, New York, Abbeville Press, 1998.

CAUSEY, Andrew, Sculpture Since 1945, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998

DAVIES, Hugh M. , Blurring the Boundaries, Installation Art 1969- 1996, Hong Kong, Distributed Art Publishers, 1996.

JACKSON, Lesley, The Sixties Decade of Design Revolution, London, Phiadon Press, 1998.

KLEIN, Dan and LLOYD, Ward, The History of Glass, Slovakia, Black Cat Imprint, 1992.

KLEIN, Dan, Glass A Contemporary Art, London, Collins , 1989.

LAYTON, Peter, Glass Art, London, A&C Black, 1996.

TIBERGHEN, Gilles, Land Art, Paris, Carre Press, 1993.

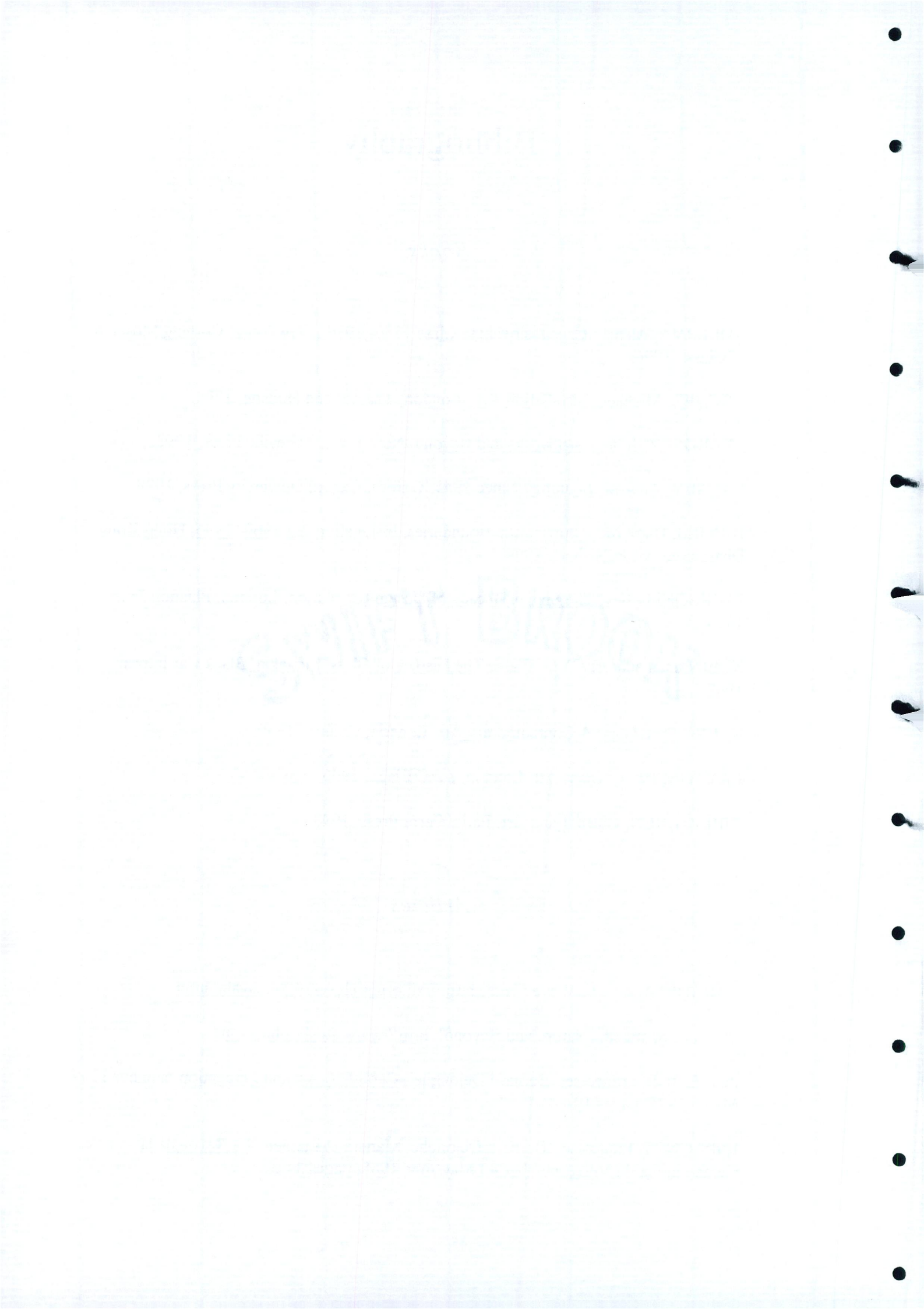
Articles

ARBOR, Ann, 'The Wave Field', <http://fxb.org/archive/1996/mayalin.html> .

Author not stated, 'Nature and Beyond', http://www.steve_tobin.com .

de L'EPINE, Françoise, 'Bernard Dejonghe', Ceramics: Art and Perception, number 19 March 1995, pages 19-24.

ESPAGNET, Françoise, 'Bernard Dejonghe, Matière et Lumière', La Revue de la Céramique et du Verre, number 40 May/June 1988, pages 34-37.



FRANTZ, Suzanne, 'Some of the Best in Recent Glass', Neues Glass, number 2 1998, pages 100-107.

HEARTNEY, Eleanor, 'Conventionalizing Nature', Art in America, number 9, September 1998, pages 87-90.

KLOTZ, Uta M., 'Nothing New under the Earth', Neues Glass, number 4 1993, pages 48-49.

KLOTZ, Uta M., 'The Age of Silicone: An Interview With Bernard Dejonghe', Neues Glass, number 3 1994, pages 22-29.

LOESCH, Richard K., 'Lin Displays the Glassy Art', http://www.ogb.wfu.edu/backissue/199...ng/01-29-98/A_abd_E/da.topologies.

Mc EVILLEY, Thomas, 'Bringing Postmodernism Up to Date', Glass Art Conference, 1993, pages 20-29.

MOUSTASHAR, Michael, 'Bernard Dejonghe', Ceramics Monthly, volume 36, number 4, march 1988, pages 36-38.

NATIONAL RESOURCE DEFENCE COUNCIL, 'Interview With Maya Lin', <http://mail.igc.apc.org/nrd/nrdc/sitings/lookup/intlin.html> .

NYBERG, Annika, 'Mathematician Turned Glass Artist', Form Function Finland, number 4 1992, pages 66-67.

PEDERSEN, Martin C., 'Maya Lin, One Driving Idea', Graphics, volume 313 1998, pages 87-90.

PORGES, Maria F., 'Breaking the Rules of Glass', Art Today, volume 2 1990, pages 32-37.

PORGES, Maria F., 'Glass Doesn't Grow in the Forest', American Craft, November 1990, pages 32-43.

RADOMSKY, Rosalie, R., 'Recycling Plant', <http://www.bronxpaper.org> .

SCHROEDER, Dr. Christine, 'Metaphors in Glass', Neues Glass, volumes 1 and 2 1996, pages 10-17.

SHEARING, Graham, 'Seeking Essences', <http://www.triblive.com> .

SCOTT, Whitney, 'When Nature Calls', <http://www.nypostonline.com> .

SHULGASSER, Barbara, 'A Strong Clear Look at Maya Lin', <http://www.sfgate.com> .

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, located in the center of the page.

SOLOMON, Chris, 'Despite Her Growing Notoriety, Maya Lin Would Prefer to Be A Behind-the-Scenes Turtle', <http://www.seattletimes.com> .

STIEN, Judith E., 'Space and Place', Art in America, December 1994 , pages 67-71.

TANGNY, Sarah , 'Steve Tobin', Sculpture, January 1996, pages 80-81.

THEOPHILUS, Jeremy, 'Glass Installations', Crafts, number 124, September/ October 1997, pages 48-49.

WOLF, TODD, 'Catch A Strong Clear Vision', <http://www.publicnews.com>

Catalogues

AMERICAN CRAFT MUSEUM, Glass Installations , New York, 1993.

DEXLER, Martha, Indianapolis Museum of Art , Masters of Contemporary glass, Indianapolis, 1998.

DUNKERQUE MUSEE D'ART CONTEMPORIAN , Bernard Dejonghe , Dialogues Ceramiques , Dunkerque, 1997.

FRAYLING, Christopher, Sunderland: Northern Center for Contemporary Art, 2D /3D Art and Craft Made and Designed For the Twentieth Century , Sunderland, 1987.

JARJESTAJAT, Neyttelyn, Retretti Art Center, Steve Tobin at Retretti , Retretti, 1993.

MUSEE des ARTS DECORATIFS, PARIS, Bernard Dejonghe Ceramique et Verre , Paris 1995.

MUSEE d'ART MODERNE et d'ART CONTEMPORAIN,NICE, Sculptures de Verre, Nice ,1994.

THE NEW MUSEUM of CONTEMPORARY ART, NEW YORK, The Art of Memory, The Loss of History , New York, 1985.

SPALLETTI, Ettore, Guggenheim Museum, Osmosis , New York, 1993.

TACOMA ART MUSEUM, Glass: Material in the Meaning , Hong Kong, 1995.

Small Brood

Other Sources

ANSSENES, Muriel, Musee d'Art Moderne et deArt Contemporian de Nice, Fusions Blanches, Bernard Dejonhe , Video, Nice 1994.

DEJONGHE, Bernard, Correspondence by post, 2nd of February 1999.

Small Business