

Tate Modern

Between Object and Architecture

Blavatnik Building (South) Level 2

11:30-12:00

Laurence Shafe

Between Object and Architecture (Blavatnik Building, Level 2)

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- This is based on the new hang in Blavatnik Building Level 2. Works marked with '*' are key works not to be missed and the others are optional. The talk is 30 minutes and each work takes about typically 3 to 5 minutes so 6 to 10 works can be covered. The 'Background Notes' are designed to answer any questions and the section 'Visual Aids' at the end contains additional images that may be used to illustrate related works or ideas. Optional sections are shown in square brackets. All quotations are in bold and names are underlined.
- In general, start with the title and the artist followed by a description of the work and end with a link to either the theme or the next work. Avoid dates, movements and 'isms' unless directly relevant. Only refer to other works or historic events if they help explain the work being presented.

Introduction

1. Welcome to Tate Modern. My name is Laurence and I am your guide for the next thirty minutes.
2. I have a hearing loop for anyone that requires it and if you need a seat there are folding stools available.
3. We are in the new Blavatnik Building extension of Tate Modern that was opened in June 2016. The Tate was named after Henry Tate, the founder of the sugar company Tate & Lyle. He was a wealthy nineteenth-century entrepreneur who made his fortune selling sugar cubes. In later life, he gave a lot to charity including a donation of £80,000 to create what became Tate Britain and, about 100 years later, this building was opened to hold the ever-expanding collection. This building is a converted power station, called Bankside, that was built in the 1950s and was due for demolition until it was converted by the Tate and opened in 2000.
4. Tate Modern is one of the top international art galleries in the world and we have managed to keep our permanent collection free by charging for temporary exhibitions, and some Government funding. Please help us remain free by having lunch here, buying a book or giving a small donation.
5. There are about eight free art tours every day, seven days a week, given by volunteers like me. The next tour on this side of the building is the next floor up in an hour. It is a 30-minute tour of the Performer and Participant gallery on Level 3 at 12:30.
6. This tour is called 'Between Object and Architecture' which refers to the way sculpture in the 1960s came down from its pedestal onto the floor or walls of galleries and artists started to regard them as independent objects not as attempts to imitate nature. The gallery we will be visiting is one room and we will be looking at about seven works. At the end of the tour, I will leave you to continue looking round the gallery. I am happy to take questions as we go around so let's get started in the first room. Please follow me.

Notes

- **The Founder.** Henry Tate (1819-1899) was the son of a clergyman and set up his own grocery shop when he was 20. He expanded this to a chain of six shops which he sold and became the owner of a sugar refinery in 1859. This was 26 years after slavery had been abolished in the British Empire (1833) and 52 years after Britain had abolished the slave trade (1807). In 1872, Tate bought a German patent for making sugar cubes from Eugen Langen and it was this that made his fortune. The same year he opened a refinery in Liverpool. Towards the end of his life he gave money to many colleges, hospitals and founded Streatham, Balham, South Lambeth and Brixton libraries. In 1897, he spent £150,000 (some say £80,000) on building the National Gallery of British Art ('Tate Gallery' in 1932), endowed it with his personal art collection of 65 contemporary paintings and gave it all to the nation. The famous portico was designed by the architect Sidney Smith. It was separated from the National Gallery in 1954. Tate Britain was extended twice by Joseph Duveen, an art dealer who also paid for an extension at the British Museum, and in 1987 Charles Clore funded the Turner wing.
- **Bankside power station** was designed by Giles Gilbert Scott (1880-1960) who designed Liverpool Cathedral and many of the red telephone boxes. He was the grandson of the prolific Victorian architect George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878) who designed the Midland Hotel at St. Pancras and the Albert Memorial. The façade of the building is made from 4.2 million bricks. The chimney is 325 feet (99m) and was designed to be lower than St. Paul's Cathedral opposite (365 feet, 111m). At its peak, the power station generated 300 megawatts but it became uneconomic and too polluting and was closed in 1981. The turbine hall is 509 feet (155 m) long, 115 feet (35 m) wide and 85 feet (26 m) high. The conversion was carried out by Herzog & de Meuron at a cost of £134 million of which £50 million was from the Millennium Commission. Tate Modern opened in 2000 and had become one of the most visited museums of modern and contemporary art in the world.
- **Attendance.** According to Wikipedia and the Tate Annual Report 2014-15 the four Tate galleries received 7.9 million visitors and Tate Modern 5.7 million. The Louvre was number one with 9.7 million, number two was the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art with 6.1 million, the British Museum was number three with 5.6 million and Tate Modern was number four.
- **Extension.** Within four years of opening our success meant we started planning to expand the gallery. This new extension, again designed by Herzog & de Meuron, cost £260 million and opened on 17 June 2016. This ten-storey extension, now called the Blavatnik Building, increases the display space by 60%. Len Blavatnik is the UK's richest person and has been a UK citizen since 2010.
- **Gender balance.** Nearly 40% (38%) of the artists on display at Tate Modern are women and 50% of the monographic rooms are by women.
- **Management.** The Director of the Tate is Maria Balshaw who was previously Director of the Whitworth (University of Manchester) and Manchester City Galleries, and Director of Culture for Manchester City Council. The previous Director, since 1988, was Sir Nicholas Serota (b. 1946). The Director of Tate Modern is Frances Morris and of Tate Britain Alex Farquharson.

Route

- 11:30 Meeting Point at L2 Blavatnik Building, discuss the Tate and then go through the door and turn left to
- Yayoi Kusama and her mirrored cube, then to the right to
- Carl Andre and his bricks, then walk to the centre to
- Tony Cragg's large cube, then the corner of the room to see
- Saloua Choucair and her concrete blocks, and then along the wall to
- André Cadere whose stick is leaning against the wall, then continue to
- Eva Hesse and her ropes down the wall and then towards the centre to
- Christina Iglesias and her black suspended trellis, then on to the far corner and
- Donald Judd and his stack on the wall, and turn back towards centre to
- Rachel Whiteread's resin blocks to finish.

*Yayoi Kusama (b. 1929), *The Passing Winter*, 2005 (T12821)



[Yayoi Kusama \(b. 1929\), *The Passing Winter*, 2005](#)

- This is a cube of mirrors resting on two thick slabs of glass forming a pedestal. There are three holes cut into each side and if we look in we can see reflections to infinity. It is called *The Passing Winter* and is by the Japanese artist [Yayoi Kusama](#) (pronounced 'ya-yoy-ee kusama').
- The reflected images of the circular windows remind us of polka dots which are the signature symbol of Kusama's work [see Visual Aids]. She has given many reasons for her repeated use of the polka dot, but her most frequent explanation is that the dots have a kind of cosmological significance. She wrote, "**Our Earth is only one polka dot among a million stars in the cosmos. Polka dots are a way to infinity.**"
- In this work, the polka dots take on a particular form suggested by the title. *The Passing Winter*, invokes two trains of thought relating to passing time and hard, cold winter days combined with the fragility of falling snow. The sculpture is very fragile as the cube just rests on the plinth and it must be regularly polished to maintain the highly reflective surface. The image inside suggests passing time as it continually changes as we move, as other people pass the other windows and the light changes. The pattern of the dots, their brightness and their colour changes every time we look inside. The dots themselves remind us of falling snowflakes in winter and the mirrored surface of ice and cold, hard winter days.
- Kusama is a Japanese artist who moved to New York when she was 28 [in 1957] and who exhibited alongside artists such as [Andy Warhol](#). She became well-known in the New York avant-garde art scene during the 1960s and she organized a series of happenings in which naked participants were painted with brightly coloured polka dots. She left New York in the early 1970s and was largely forgotten but she has made a comeback and is now regarded as one of the most important living Japanese artists.
- From a young age Kusama has suffered from a psychological condition in which she says she feels as if she is dissolving into infinity and eternal time and space. She has produced many works that involve reflections to infinity which she has described as a form of therapy and which invite the viewer to share in her mental state. Another interpretation of the title is that it refers to a period of depression or anxiety, which can be symbolized as winter, that is now passing.
- Her work is an example of Minimalism but she invokes deep emotions and so is not typical of the early Minimalists. Let us look at an example of pure Minimalism and an artist who rejected the expression of emotion in art.

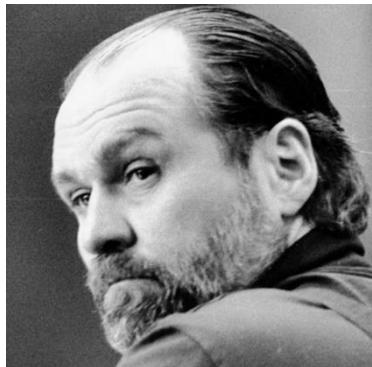
Yayoi Kusama, The Passing Winter, 2005

- Yayoi Kusama (pronounced ‘ya-yoy-ee kusama’, b. 1929) is a Japanese artist and writer. Throughout her career, she has worked in a wide variety of media, including painting, collage, soft sculpture, performance art, and environmental installations, most of which exhibit her thematic interest in psychedelic colours, repetition, and pattern. A precursor of the pop art, minimalist and feminist art movements, Kusama influenced her contemporaries such as Andy Warhol, Claes Oldenburg, and George Segal and exhibited works alongside the likes of them. In 1957 she moved to the United States, settling down in New York City where she produced a series of paintings influenced by the abstract expressionist movement. Switching to sculpture and installation as her primary media, Kusama became a fixture of the New York avant-garde during the early 1960s where she became associated with the pop art movement. Embracing the rise of the hippie counterculture of the late 1960s, Kusama came to public attention when she organized a series of happenings in which naked participants were painted with brightly coloured polka dots. Although largely forgotten after departing the New York art scene in the early 1970s, Kusama is now acknowledged as one of the most important living artists to come out of Japan, and an important voice of the avant-garde.
- She has worked in many media from painting to performance art and environmental installations. Her work is usually based on psychedelic colours, repetition to infinity and pattern.
- There is another version of this work in the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis.
- Kusama is aware of her condition and checked herself into a psychiatric hospital in Tokyo in 1977. In her statements and interviews over the last forty years, she has ascribed the origin of the repetitive vision so basic to her imagery to certain hallucinations she experienced as a child, and intermittently ever since. She has frequently spoken of her art making as both the symptom of and cure for her “obsession” and more recently recalls her work “psychosomatic art.” Kusama has stated that she suffers from Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and 75% of such patients suffer from depression. It is not clear that Kusama has suffered in this way but it is clear she has suffered from anxiety.

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*Carl Andre (b. 1935), *Equivalent VIII*, 1966 (T01534)



Carl Andre (b. 1935), *Equivalent VIII*, 1966

- This is *Equivalent VIII* by Carl Andre commonly known as “the pile of bricks” and it caused a major controversy about forty years ago. It consists of 120 sand-lime fire bricks arranged in two six by ten layers. The idea came to him when he was sitting in a canoe on a still lake in New Hampshire, he was inspired by the flatness of the water and he used bricks to simulate it. It was originally part of eight different configurations of 120 bricks (see Visual Aids) arranged on the floor of a single gallery space. This means the interaction between the configurations and the resulting complexity and resonance between them has been lost. We are left with a work that draws attention to itself through its simplicity. Andre could find no buyers for the original work made using bluish-white bricks and returned all but 200 bricks. Later, in 1969, the brickworks had closed so he recreated the work using these sand-coloured bricks.
- It was purchased by the Tate [in 1972] for £2,297 and *Equivalent V* was bought by the Museum of Modern Art in New York. When first put on display it provoked no criticism. Then, suddenly and unexpectedly three and a half years later a critical article in the *Sunday Times* [February 15th 1976] led to widespread criticism in the press. The most famous was the front page of the *Daily Mirror* which said, ‘**what a load of rubbish**’ (see Visual Aids). It so incensed the public that someone was moved to throw a pot of paint over it.
- The work was criticized for three main reasons. First, there was the familiar criticism, “**Anyone could do it**”. Raising the question of whether skill is a necessary part of producing art. Well, many people do get pleasure from the demonstration of artistic skill but surely that cannot be the only attribute of art? Second, the Tate was told by the press that it had been conned and the *Burlington Magazine* described it as “**showy work which may well be regarded in a few decades as trash**”. Well, forty years have passed and it is still on display and it is now regarded by most respected art authorities as one of the key works of the period and as an important example of Minimalism. Finally, the Tate was accused of wasting public money, well, the Tate paid £2,297 and a similar work by Andre recently sold for \$1 million so it appears like a wise purchase financially. Of course, practically the Tate does not sell its art [known as deaccessioning, unless it is a duplicate or the work is irretrievably damaged].
- So why did Andre assemble this work? The work is extremely simple in form and it draws attention to its simplicity yet it was one of eight variations. Andre takes us back to basics and to make the point more strongly he has used raw industrial materials, bricks, with their commonplace, unromantic associations. He was challenging and undermining the art market and the enormous financial value of most well-known works of art. He was also attacking what he regarded as the false emotion and pride of many other artists [particularly the Abstract Expressionists].
- Let us next look at another collection of commonplace materials but from an artist with a very different motivation for producing the work.

Background Notes on Carl Andre *Equivalent VIII*, 1966

- The most famous work is Carl Andre's Equivalent VIII 1966, known as 'the pile of bricks', because of the controversy it caused when it was purchased by the Tate in 1972. They rejected what they saw as academic fine art distinctions between sculpture and painting and the formalist dogma of art critics. The leaders of the movement were Sol LeWitt, Donald Judd and Robert Morris.
- This was the last of his series of 120 firebricks which were arranged differently but were all 'equivalent'. The Tate purchased the sculpture in 1972 for £2,297 and exhibited it without controversy but in 1976 it suddenly provoked a national debate (see Visual Aids). Many believed the Tate had been 'conned' and verbal abuse and a flood of letters followed. The most serious criticism came from the editor of the Burlington magazine who accused the Tate of purchasing a "**showy work which may well be regarded in a few decades as trash.**" Following strong pressure from the Tate's director the Burlington magazine published an article from Tate's curator which claimed "the Andre will, in time, be generally accepted as among the most important art of its period" and the Tate is still of that view. The piece is now one of the best-known pieces of modern art in our collection and a similar work by Andre has sold for more than \$1m.
- Andre is critical of his own abilities and admits that he cannot paint or draw. He says, "**I can't draw treacle out of a barrel**".
- Sand lime bricks are fire resistant and very accurate and uniform although they are easily chipped. They can be made in a variety of colours. The bricks are made from sand (silica) embedded in cured lime rather than clay. The number 120 was chosen as it has many factors and so many arrangements are possible. All the arrangements have the same volume which is why it is called 'Equivalent'. None of the works was sold from the original March 1966 Tibor de Nagy Gallery exhibition so he returned all but 200 bricks. In 1969, he decided to recreate the work but the original brickyard had closed so he bought yellowy-brown bricks rather than bluish-white. It was important they were light in colour, and solid without holes.
- In 1956 Andre was introduced to Constantin Brâncuși through whom he became re-acquainted with his former classmate, the artist Frank Stella. In 1960 he worked for four years as a railway brakeman and he often wore blue overalls and a blur shirt after that, even to formal events.
- In 1988, Andre was tried and acquitted of the murder of his wife Ana Mendieta, a Cuban American performance artist and sculptor who produced over 200 works of art using earth. Mendieta fell to her death from Andre's 34th story apartment window in 1985 after an argument with Andre. There were no eyewitnesses. A doorman in the street below had heard a woman screaming "No, no, no, no," before Mendieta's body landed on the roof of a building below. Andre had what appeared to be fresh scratches on his nose and forearm, and his story to the police differed from his recorded statements to the 911 operator an hour or so earlier. The police arrested him. Andre was charged with second degree murder. He elected to be tried before a judge with no jury and in 1988 Andre was acquitted of all charges related to Mendieta's death. Andre still lives in the same flat.

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*Tony Cragg (b. 1949), *Stack*, 1975 (T07428)



Tony Cragg (b. 1949), *Stack*, 1975

- This is *Stack* by Tony Cragg. It consists of a multitude of miscellaneous objects and materials packed tightly together to form a solid two-metre cube.
- Cragg is fascinated by materials and objects which relate to his passionate interest in science and natural history. Unlike Carl Andre who selected bricks because of their lack of associations, Cragg sees all manmade objects as “**fossilized keys to a past time**” and he sees “**a material or an object as having a balloon of information around it**”. He believes we can understand our consumer society by examining what we discard. Here garbage has been carefully assembled into a solid cube. Many materials have been included, wood, concrete, plastic and cloth, and the result unifies these different materials into a single unit.
- The idea of stratification has always been important to him. Many of his works show layers of form and in this case the colour and clear layers suggest strata under the earth. The detritus of lost time. He believes that “**Sculpture is the only activity that lies outside the use of materials in a functional world. Everything else is repetitive and boring**”. Cragg believes that it is sculpture that gives forms and materials value rather than just a function in society and that is why it is an important activity.
- His work explores the internal dynamic and energy in the materials and he is looking for deeper emotional experience. “**I try to use the surface to indicate what is underneath the surface.**” And “**I build it up until it has an emotional quality.**” It is this emotional quality that distinguishes his work from that of Carl Andre. Andre’s work is Minimalist and Cragg’s work is Post-Minimalist [a term coined by the art historian and critic Robert Pincus-Witten].
- Tony Cragg’s early work involved making installations using objects he found and discarded materials. From the mid-1970s through to the early 1980s he assembled various structures using these materials and this is his first mature piece based on that approach. He made five pieces like this between 1975 and 1985.
- He attended the Royal College of Art from 1973 to 1977 while he was working on this piece. He developed a passion for materials and found that for him it was an emotional experience to make things and move things around. For him, sculpture has become a study of the physical world of materials and forms combined with the intense emotional experience they provide. He has exhibited around the world, won numerous prizes including the Turner Prize and is now a Royal Academician. He was knighted in 2016.

Background Notes on Tony Cragg, *Stack*, 1975

- Sir Tony Cragg was born in Liverpool in 1949 by travelled extensively around the country as his father worked in the military as an engineer. He worked as a young man as a lab technician at the National Rubber Producers Research Association (1966–68) and then went to Gloucestershire College of Art (1969-70), Wimbledon School of Art (1970-73) and then the Royal College of Art (1973-77). He moved to Wuppertal in Germany, his wife's home town and taught at the Kunstakademie, Düsseldorf. His first solo exhibition was in 1979 and his international reputation spread quickly. He has lived in Wuppertal for the last thirty years. He was made a Royal Academician in 1994, represented Britain at the 43rd Venice Biennale in 1988, and won the Turner Prize in the same year.
- He has said, “**I see a material or an object as having a balloon of information around it**” (1992). For him form and meaning are interdependent, any change in form changes the “**balloon of information**” and vice versa, so that any change in materials also changes meaning and significance. Cragg understands sculpture as a study of how material and material forms affect and form our ideas and emotions.
- Post-Minimalist is a blanket term that has been used to describe the wide body of work that developed from the end of the 1960s. It sometimes refers to Performance Art, Body Art or Conceptual Art but more narrowly it refers to Minimalist art that has an emotional, sensual or expressive quality.

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*Saloua Raouda Choucair (1916-2017), *Infinite Structure*, 1963-5
(T13262)



Saloua Raouda Choucair (1916-2017), *Infinite Structure*, 1963-5

- *Infinite Structure* is by Saloua Raouda Choucair and consists of twelve rectangular tufa stone blocks. It was designed as a single column over two metres high but the blocks have eroded and Tate staff considered it too dangerous to pile all twelve one of top of each other. So, with the agreement of Choucair's daughter [Hala Choucair] the blocks have been arranged in two columns of different heights. The title, *Infinite Structure*, is in recognition of a work by one of the most influential sculptors of the twentieth century, the Romanian/French sculptor Constantin Brancusi's (1876–1957). His work was called *Endless Column* (1938) and it consists of smooth tapered blocks that suggest an endless repetition upwards (see Visual Aids). Choucair has carved each block so that it is unique and so her column extends upwards indefinitely but as a potentially infinitely varying series. The idea of using basic components and then creating a sequence is a fundamental aspect of Minimalism.
- Choucair was born in Beirut and was influenced by Egyptian art before she went to Paris to study as an art student [working in the studio of the artist Fernand Léger]. When the Lebanese ambassador to France saw her work he said, "Your work is curious, Miss Raouda. Have you not got any Lebanese paintings for us?" He expected a Lebanese artist to paint in the conventional European style. Her work is influenced by the West, for example, she was also influenced by the modular architecture of Le Corbusier [in Marseille] but she said, "**All the rules that I apply are derived from the Islamic tradition and from Islamic geometric design.**" Choucair's work has been considered as one of the best examples of the spirit of abstraction characteristic of Arabic visual art, completely disconnected from the observation of nature and inspired by Arabic geometric art. She has been a pioneer of abstraction in the Middle East.
- Her early work was figurative but between the 1950s and 70s she experimented with abstract forms that reflected her passion for science, mathematics and cosmology. She spent the rest of her career combining Western abstraction with the traditions of Islamic design.
- The Lebanese Civil War started in 1975 and she continued working through the war. Until recently she remained largely unknown outside of the Lebanon and then, at the age of 97, she was recognised with her first major museum show. She lived to 100 and was never nostalgic but continued to be engaged with scientific and technical developments in the modern world. She was a very rational artist and never brought in political, such as the Civil War, or personal events, such as being a mother.
- The next artist is one who, in this room, comes closest to painting.

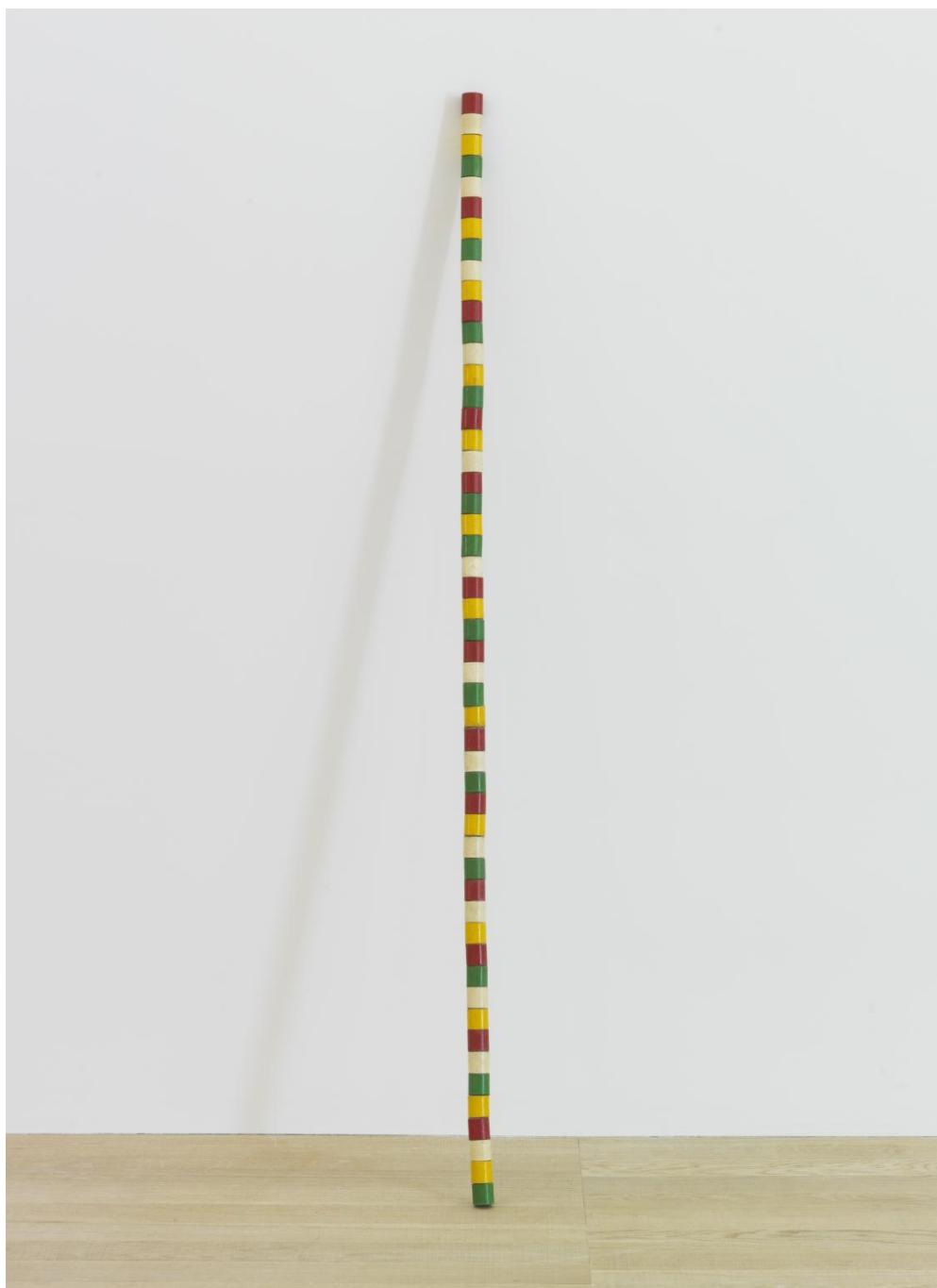
Background Notes on Saloua Raouda Choucair *Infinite Structure* 1963-5

- Saloua Raouda Choucair (pronounced ‘saloo-a rawda shu-care’, 1916-January 26 2017, aged 100) is a Lebanese painter and sculptor said to have been the first abstract artist in Lebanon. She was born in Beirut and her father died shortly after she was born. Her mother paid for her education including working with two of Lebanon’s most distinguished artists. She studied natural sciences and philosophy in Beirut and in 1948 went to the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris. The following year she worked in the studio of Fernand Léger. In 1943 she first became aware of Arabic art in Cairo and she set out to rethink Western art from an oriental point of view. With her science training, she was interested in science, mathematics and cosmology and the way they informed abstract forms and symmetry. Tate held a major retrospective in 2013. One canvas in the Tate’s show, a modular painting from the 40s, was embedded with glass shards blown into it by a car bomb exploding outside. Only in her 90s, and suffering from Alzheimer’s disease, did Choucair finally stop making art. In the early 50s, she married Yusif Choucair, a journalist; in 1957, the couple had a daughter, Hala, herself now an artist. It was she who cared for her mother in her last years, and who survives her.
- Tufa is a variety of limestone that is soft and precipitates from mineral waters.

References

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*André Cadere (1934-78), *Round Bar of Wood*, 1973 (T12180)



André Cadere (1934-78), *Round Bar of Wood*, 1973

- This is *Round Bar of Wood* by André Cadere. It is a wooden baton with 52 segments painted using the four colours red, white, yellow and green. There are 13 sequences of these colours that I have marked up on a photograph of the work to try to show what is going on (Visual Aids). As you can see it is quite involved. There are four colours whose relative position changes, one at a time. In each sequence of four one colour moves down through the other colours. However, in the fifth sequence the order of the last two colours is reversed, an intentional mistake by the artist.
- Cadere was known as the stick man as he carried batons like this around with him wherever he went. He had large and small batons, this one is medium-size and they were always painted in bright colours. He would go into art galleries uninvited and lean them against the wall to create spontaneous works of art. He would also announce art happenings in public locations, such as railway stations and restaurants where he would display these batons and discuss them with passers-by.
- He started by explaining that the visual world around us consists of coloured patches from which we mentally assemble shapes and forms. He applied mathematical rules to the sequence of these coloured patches and then displayed them as a sequence of coloured cylinders along a baton, and he called them paintings. He used a mathematical permutation to determine the sequence and actively interrupted this with an error. The error is vital as it mirrors his desire to challenge the art world which he believed mirrored wider social systems. Every baton has a certificate dated when it was first circulated and a code describing the mathematical sequence. However, the code is a mystery and has never been explained, which is part of his subversive game playing. Cadere claimed absolute independence from all cultural institutions.
- **“A bar of round wood is immutable, each piece being different from each other, the whole work being a constellation, this constellation being strictly limited. No future, no future. There is no evolution, a round wood bar is.”** (Letter to Yvon Lambert, May 24, 1978).
- Cadere’s art combines Performance art and Minimalism and sadly, like the next artist, he died young [only 44]. The next artist introduces a human dimension through the artist’s intervention and elements that do not conform to mathematical rules.

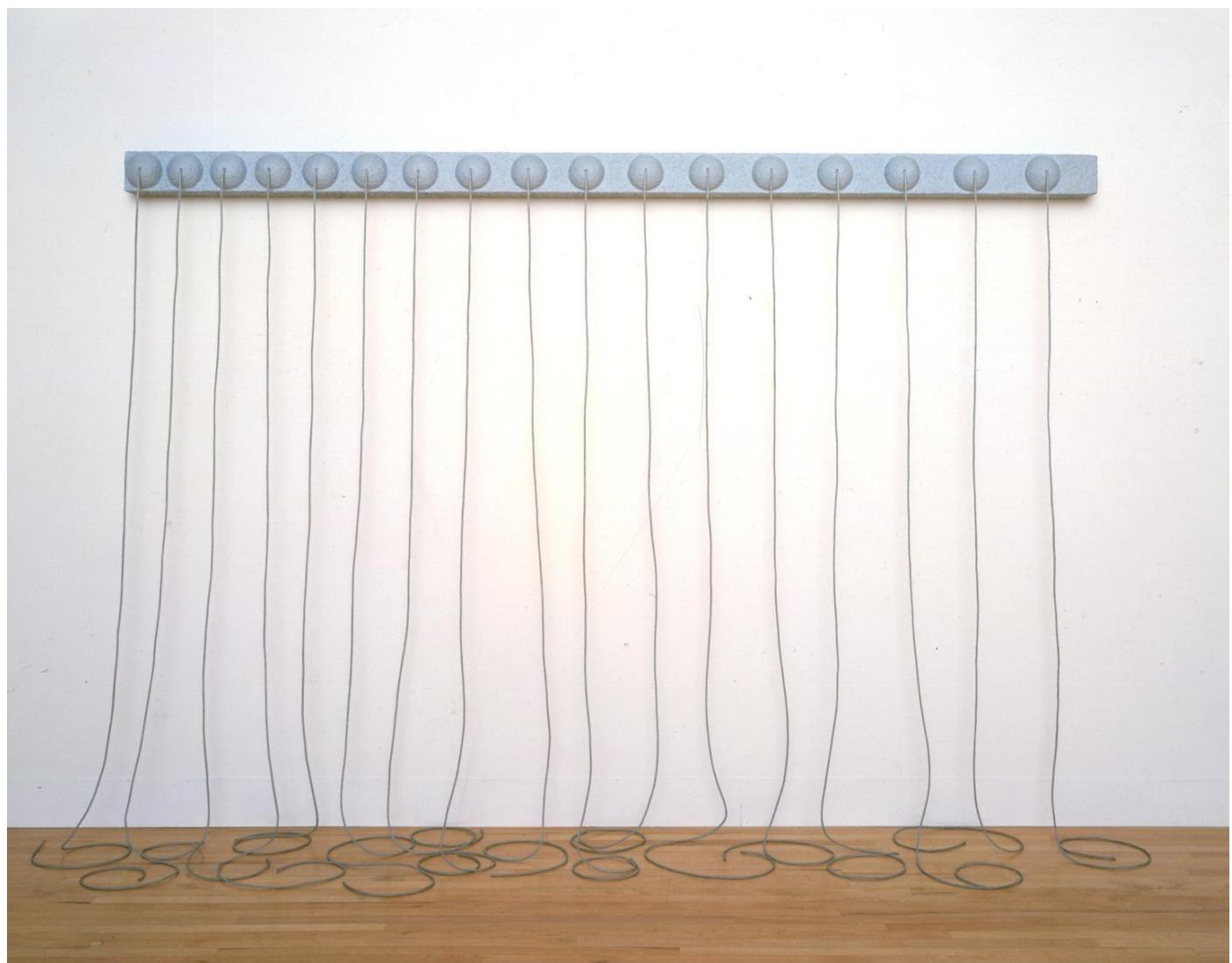
Background Notes on André Cadere, *Round Bar of Wood*, 1973

- André Cadere (pronounced ‘cada-ray’, 1934-1978) was born in Warsaw in 1934, of Romanian and French descent. Having spent some years in Portugal, his family returned to Romania after the Second World War and there he attended the Academy of Bucharest. In 1967 Cadere moved to Paris where he pursued a career as an artist, developing an individual conceptual practice which focused on *barres de bois rond* (round bars of wood). Informed by op art and growing trends in minimalism and conceptual art, Cadere developed his first *barre de bois* in 1970. He would leave batons in art galleries to which he had not been invited and in public spaces such as restaurants and underground stations. He would announce exhibitions’ on specific dates and times and engage passers-by in discussions about his batons.
- Cadere saw his batons as paintings. He argued as we only see differently coloured surfaces around us the application of colour to a surface is an essential aspect of artistic practice as it is this that gives a work its appearance and therefore its privileged position as an artwork. This applies to painting on a flat surface, or onto a baton or to creating a sculpture. By 1972 he was creating batons composed of wooden cylinders glued to wooden dowelling. The batons vary in length and diameter but the individual cylinder’s length is always equal to its diameter.
- He only ever used three to seven colours (black, white, orange, red, purple, blue and green). He made almost two hundred batons and although they are reminiscent of a child’s toy he was very serious about his work. He used one of two permutations and always went through a sequence that returned to the original pattern. All of his batons contained an error resulting from switching two cylinders but he never introduced an error that would result in the same two colours being adjacent and this would have been too obvious an error. Sadly, he died aged 44 from cancer.

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*Eva Hesse (1936-70), *Addendum* 1967 (T02394)



Eva Hesse (1936-70), *Addendum*, 1967

- This is *Addendum* by Eva Hesse. It is a sculptural wall installation consisting of seventeen light grey papier mâché hemispheres arranged at increasing intervals on a wooden bar that is seven-foot high. The papier mâché around the bar and the hemispheres are hand moulded. Although Hesse used her hands to construct the work there is still a mathematical sequence. The interval between the hemispheres starts a 1/8th inch and increases by a ¼ inch for each gap.
- There is also what could almost be seen as an organic element. Coming out of each hemisphere there are ten-foot long pieces of painted rope that fall to the ground, coiling in unpredictable loops. This is an example of Post-Minimalism. It was a reaction against the cold, hard, formal approach of the Minimalists such as Carl Andre and his bricks. The Post-Minimalists remained interested in abstraction but introduced more expressive and emotional qualities, often evoking the body and the sensual. They often rejected industrial materials such as bricks and used softer more expressive materials such as the paper mâché and rope used here. This introduces an element of the un-composed as elements droop and sag and they often retain the mark of the artist.
- Eva Hesse was a German-Jewish artist who had a difficult life. She and her family fled Nazi Germany when World War II started and she went to New York when she was three. Her parents separated five years later and her mother committed suicide the following year. Eva's own marriage only lasted five years and her father died the year she was divorced. She died of a brain tumour when she was only 34 and although her working life was only ten years she is now regarded as one of the leading artists in New York at the time.
- I have been calling her 'hess', the way she pronounced it but many art historians pronounce it 'Hess-a', to link her work to her German-Jewish background. Her work is also seen as some of the earliest feminist art and the hemispheres have been described as female breasts that are too perfect, perhaps a result of silicone implants. However, it is too simplistic to link the components to parts of the body. Her work is a combination of opposites such as organic/inorganic, hard/soft, and order/chaos assembled with a humour that sometimes borders on the absurd. She said, "**I think art is a total thing. A total person giving a contribution. It is an essence, a soul ... In my inner soul art and life are inseparable.**"
- She said she was influenced by Andy Warhol and the looping cables remind me of his *Lavender Disaster* (1963, see Visual Aids) a set of screen prints of the electric chair used to execute Julius and Ethel Rosenberg in 1953. They were a Jewish-American couple accused of spying for the Soviet Union. In this case, the hemispheres take on an electrical function and there is a suggestion of violence and death and a possible link to the Holocaust. This interpretation suggests the way that charismatic leaders can use national identity, nationalism and immigration to lead the public down a path that leads ultimately to state authorised torture and death.
- The next artist provides us with an architectural space we can enter.

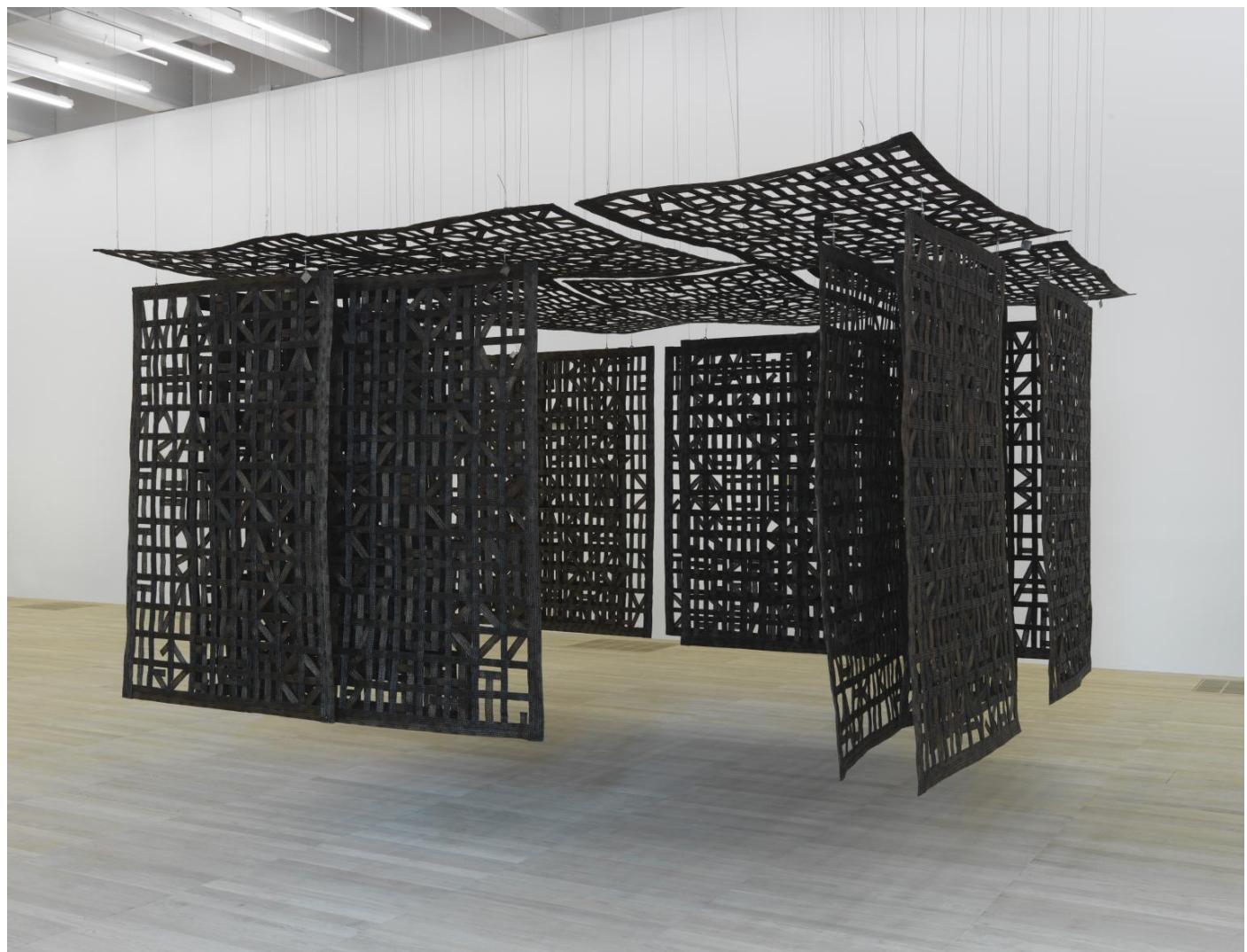
Background Notes on Eva Hesse, *Addendum*, 1967

- Eva Hesse (1936-1970, she pronounced it ‘hess’ but many art historians pronounce it the German way as ‘hessa’) was a German Jewish artist who fled Nazi Germany and came to New York in 1939. Her parents separated when she was 8 and her mother committed suicide when she was ten. She obtained a degree from Yale and was influenced by the Abstract Expressionists. She married in 1962 and they went to Germany to work but Hesse was not happy and she returned to New York in 1965 and they divorced the following year. Her father died the same year. She taught at the School of Visual Arts, New York, until her death from a brain tumour in 1970. In Germany, she had started to work with industrial and ‘found’ materials and on her return to New York continued to work with latex, fibreglass and plastics. She was motivated by the ideas of Minimalism and was one of the first artists to move to Postminimalism which is known for its jokiness, exploration of psychological moods and sexual innuendo in a whimsical fashion. She developed the form of abstract sculpture shown here to express her ideas. Hesse’s life was plagued by family illness and depression and she finally died of a brain tumour aged only 34. She was one of the first artists of the 1960s to work with the fluid contours of the organic world combined with simple artistic gestures. She was fascinated by the absurd and her work is often self-contradictory and the possible meaning of her work is shrouded in mystery. She is regarded as a precursor to the feminist art movement although her work is never obviously political. She found it difficult to find an authentic artistic identity but when she moved from painting to working with her hands with plaster and string that she found what she wanted to say.
- Hesse wrote, “**It is my main concern to go beyond what I know and what I can know.**” She is an artist who is often described as a Post-Minimalist because of her works hand-made and sensual qualities.
- Addendum is seventeen, five-inch diameter hemispheres spaced 1/8, 3/8, 5/8, 7/8, 9/8, 11/8, 13/8 and 15/8 apart. The monochrome colour is a light neutral grey. The large size, small hemispheres and the thin rope as different from each other as possible. The bar is seven-foot-high and the ropes are ten-foot long. She wrote that art through its significant form enables an observer to experience an aesthetic emotion rather than a ‘meaning’. Her work is an open diary on her ‘soul’, her inner self and feelings.

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*Cristina Iglesias (b. 1956), *Pavilion Suspended in a Room 1*, 2005
(T12135)



Cristina Iglesias (b. 1956), *Pavilion Suspended in a Room 1*, 2005

- This work clearly invokes the theme of this gallery ‘Between Object and Architecture’. It is a suspended room consisting of steel lattice panels suspended from the ceiling. The panels neither completely enclose like a wall nor provide an open view like a window. They therefore mediate between the public and the private and between the exterior and interior space. The work is called *Pavilion Suspended in a Room 1* by Cristina Iglesias. She is a Spanish artist who first studied Chemical Sciences before moving to London to study at the Chelsea College of Art.
- You can enter the enclosure at two points and the screens two openings provide access through which the viewer can enter. The title suggests a large building but the lattice walls fail to provide the shelter implied by the name. The structure is heavy steel but appears weightless and fragile and the decorative patterns suggest the Moorish architecture of Spain. Iglesias began a series of works like this in the 1990s and she called them *Celosía* (pronounced se-low-see-a) which means both latticework and jealousy. We can imagine the jealous lover peeking through the screen or perhaps the screen refers to the way that jealousy blinds us by keeping us trapped inside an irrational state.
- At first glance the screens appear plain but if you look closely you can see embedded words. They are taken from Arthur C. Clarke's Rendezvous with Rama (1973). A science fiction novel concerning an alien spaceship fifty four kilometres long that enters the solar system in the 2130s. It is intercepted by humans who find no aliens and try to make sense of it, as we are doing here with this work.

Background Notes on Cristina Iglesias, *Pavilion Suspended in a Room 1*, 2005

- Cristina Iglesias (b. 1956) challenges the vocabulary of Minimalist sculpture through immersive architectural installations using facades, screens, cast walls, and constructions meant to act as "skin". Her installations transform galleries into immense labyrinths of dream, fiction, literary allusion, and chiaroscuro, enigmatic and yet highly evocative of the tradition of Islamic architecture in Spain. Iglesias makes her screens from weaved metals, resin, bronze, and other traditional sculptural materials, yet she usually hangs them from the ceiling and walls, giving them an improbable lightness.
- She began exhibiting in the 1980s and has participated in over 60 solo and group exhibitions in Europe, North America and Japan. She now lives and works in Torrelodones, 30km northwest of Madrid.
- Iglesias describes her work as "**pieces that are like thought, places from which one sees, spaces that fall between reality and image, between presence and representation, spaces that speak of other spaces.**"
- The Guggenheim contains Iglesias's *Untitled (Jealousy II)*, a lattice room that stands on the floor and is made from bronze-coloured wood.

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*Donald Judd (1928-1994), *Untitled*, 1980 (T03087)



Donald Judd (1928-1994), *Untitled*, 1980

- This is *Untitled* by Donald Judd who was one of the leading Minimalist artists. It was constructed in 1980 and consists of ten 'shelves' fixed to the wall and equally spaced from each other. It is made of galvanised steel [with aluminium reinforcements] with inset blue Perspex panels. Judd ignores traditional craft skills in favour of presenting an idea and this work was made [by Bernstein Brothers] in a factory in New York to obtain a perfect industrial finish. He started making similar rectilinear metal units in 1965. They are all cantilevered off the wall at regular intervals and are often referred to as 'stacks'. He makes these stacks in two sizes and this is an example of the larger size and each stack is made of at least ten boxes, as here. The space between each unit and between the bottom unit and the floor is equal to the height of a unit, nine inches.
- The box was one of Judd's favourite forms, because he felt it was neutral and had no symbolic meaning and to prevent us from assigning a meaning he calls it *Untitled*. He described the benefit of sculpture over painting as removing the problem of illusionism, the attempt by painters to create the illusion of three-dimensional space. He insisted his work was sequential, '**one thing after another**', rather than one thing in relation to others. The precision of the work suggests an industrial production line and he has all his works manufactured by professional, industrial production companies. This is pure Minimalism, like the Carl Andre work, everything is clear and obvious and associated with industrial processes that remove the hand of the artist.
- Minimalists reject the idea that art should imitate something else or even reflect an emotion. Minimalism is therefore an extreme form of abstract art which was developed in America in the 1960s and Minimalist works typically consist of simple geometric shapes based on the square and the rectangle.
- Judd was an American artist who is known as a leading Minimalist but who shunned the word. He could be better described as a literalist. Nicolas Serota described him as the three-dimensional equivalent of Piet Mondrian. Judd does not set out to teach us anything but to present a work that allows us to explore. He described his work as '**the simple expression of complex thought**'. Unlike Mondrian he never sets out to explore the spiritual or the metaphysical. The object and its position, form, colour and its relationship to the environment is all that he intends.

Background Notes on Donald Judd, *Untitled*, 1980

- Donald Judd (1928-1994) was an American artist born in Missouri and who serviced in the Army from 1946 to 1947. He grew up on a farm and was a product of the Mid-West. On leaving the Army he was undecided whether he should become an artist or an architect and he also had an interest in philosophy. He obtained a degree in philosophy and a masters in art history and supported himself by writing art criticism. He bought a large run-down building in New York which became his home and his studio and he continued to renovate it over the next 25 years. His first solo exhibition in 1957 was of his abstract impressionist paintings. And he also explored woodcut. He increasingly became more abstract and he moved from carving organic shapes to straight lines and angles. By 1963, he had established his signature style of 'stacks', 'boxes' and 'progressions' which occupied him for the rest of his life. Humble materials such as metals, industrial plywood, concrete and colour-impregnated Plexiglas became his main materials. He wrote his manifesto 'Specific Objects' in 1964 and abandoned painting for sculpture although he refused to call the sculptures as he did not sculpt them but had them manufactured. In 1973 he moved to Marfa, Texas and bought a 60,000 acre farm and opened an art foundation. He also designed furniture which he kept distinct from his art as furniture is functional and 'A work of art exists as itself'.
- In 1965, Judd began to make vertical pieces – the so-called 'stacks' – consisting of a number (usually 10, but variable according to the height of the room) of identical, projecting units hung one above the other on the wall. The intervening spaces have the same dimensions as the units, as does the space between the floor and the first unit, so that the boxes link the floor to the ceiling. These pieces are the first indication of his interest in integrating art with the architecture of the room. He shunned the work Minimalist and his work could be more accurately described as literalist as it does not allude to anything beyond its own physical presence.
- The stacks are all ordered according to strict principles: the gap between each unit, and between the first unit and the floor, should be equal to the height of a single unit. Since the units are all identical, their significance derives from this pre-determined geometric order rather than from any individual features. However, Judd's attention to the sensuous qualities of his materials prevents *Untitled* from being cold or clinical.
- Many of his works are manufactured by Bernstein Brothers of New York based on his drawings.
- From the 1960s Judd removed all direct references to the human body. However, there is still the important relationship between ourselves, our bodies and the work. In this work, we are conscious of the height and the angle of each box in the stack with respect to our eyeline. Above and below our eyeline the boxes increasingly angle up or down. We go from seeing the base down to seeing the top.
- Ad Reinhardt, had this to say about the value of a reductive approach to art: "*The more stuff in it, the busier the work of art, the worse it is. More is less. Less is more. The eye is a menace to clear sight. The laying bare of oneself is obscene. Art begins with the getting rid of nature*".

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*Rachel Whiteread (b. 1963), *Untitled (Floor)*, 1994-5 (T07129)



Rachel Whiteread (b. 1963), *Untitled (Floor)*, 1994-5

- This is *Untitled (Floor)* by Rachel Whiteread and it is a resin cast of the area below the floorboards of a house. It consists of fourteen rectangular blocks, which are all made from polyester resin and arranged flat on the floor in two even columns of seven. The work was made by taking a cast of a wooden floor, so that the surface of each slab features a wood-grain pattern, and the sections are installed to loosely replicate the layout of the cast floor. In a way she had to cheat to make the cast. She created a fictional floor in her studio and made a plaster cast of the interior between the joists. She then made moulds from the casts and slowly filled them with resin. Very slowly, she found she could not add more than 1 mm of resin a day without losing the translucency. The resin is very dark green but in sunlight it turns into a copper and gold colour. It looks hard and unforgiving but also gives the illusion of movement and water.
- The core of Whiteread's work is the transformation of people's emotional and social investment in their houses and furniture into sculptural forms. However, rather than show people she shows the absence of people, the structures that embed the repeated actions of people. She echoes some of the concerns of Minimalism. *Untitled (Floor)* for example, reminds us of Carl Andre's *Equivalent VIII*. However, Andre works with industrial objects while Whiteread records the marks left by people, like fingerprints of their use of the object or surface. This abstract series of blocks records on its surface the everyday wear and tear of an ordinary room with its three-piece suite and television set and the footfall of people living their lives. She makes the absent present.
- Whiteread was the first woman to win the Turner Prize in November 1993 for *House* (destroyed 1994, see Visual Aids) a life-sized replica of the interior of a condemned terraced house in Bow in London's East End. This work was made when Whiteread was living in London and she had to invent the casting process which involved slowly pouring an inch of resin into a mould every twenty-four hours. The resin was pigmented using coloured dye and each block has a number drilled in the side which is not visible when they are assembled for display.
- This is the first work that Whiteread used resin and it opens up the interior space of her sculpture and enables it to interact with light. Although dark, brooding and secretive it is transformed into emerald with flashes of gold when the sunlight hits it. The work is Post-Minimalist as it is hand-made, like that of Eva Hesse, and refers outside itself to other people and their lives.

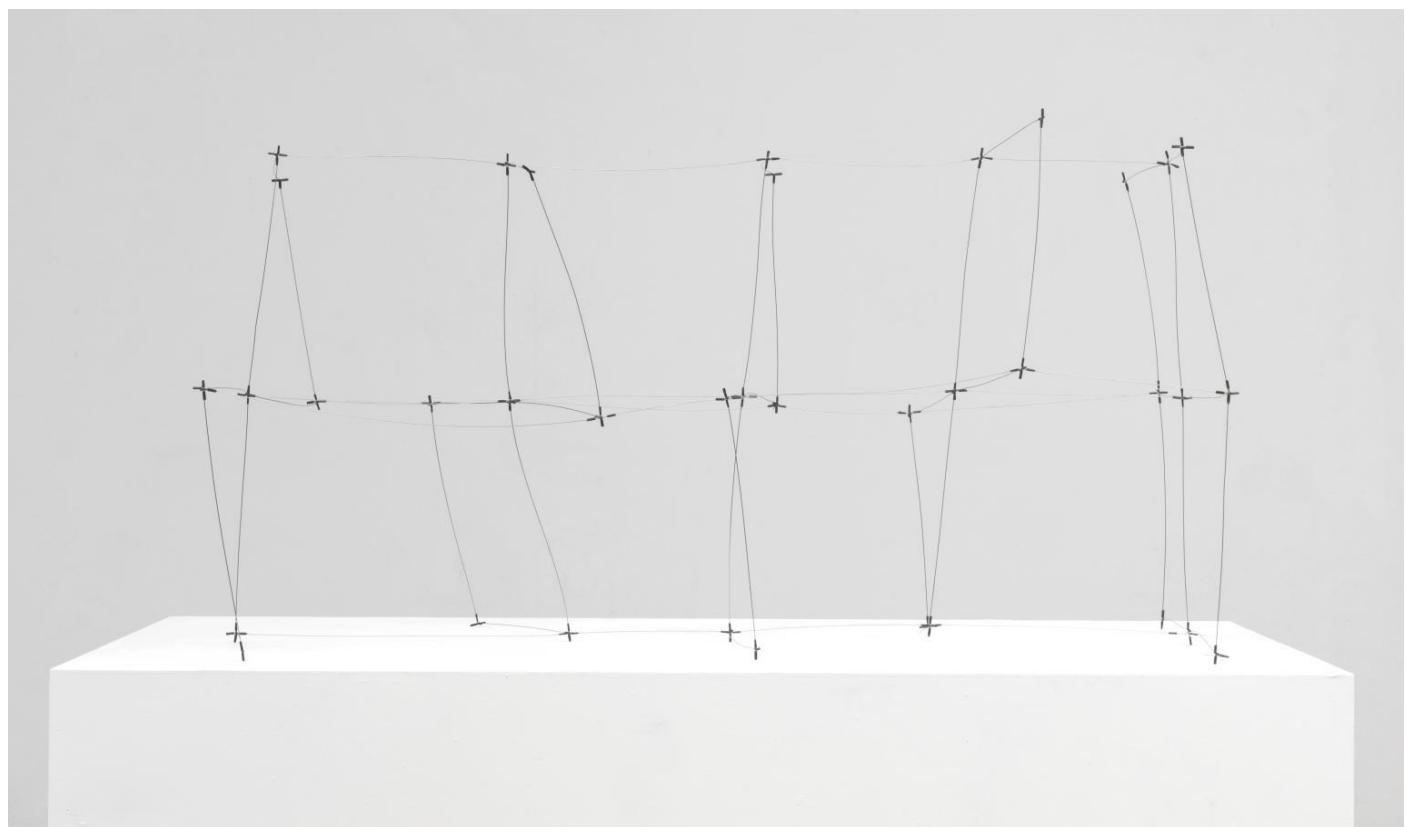
Background Notes on Rachel Whiteread, *Untitled (Floor)*, 1994-5

- Rachel Whiteread (b. 1963) was born in Ilford, Essex and studied at Brighton Polytechnic and the Slade. She is lives with the sculptor Marcus Taylor and they have two sons.
- Whiteread employs casting methods using plaster, rubber and resin which are typically used as part of the process of making sculptures rather than in the finished work. She makes sculptures of the spaces within, around and under everyday objects from baths and sinks to houses, so called 'negative spaces'. This draws our attention to the forgotten spaces around and within our everyday world and fixes them in time as public monuments. The spaces around objects are normally occupied by human beings and so the solidified spaces become symbols for our human presence while refusing us entry. By removing the object and refusing its function the shapes express absence and loss. Her early work was personal and biographical but her later works have become universal and their titles have become straightforward, down-to-earth and descriptive. For Whiteread her sculptures are metaphors for neglect of people and their environment in Thatcher's Britain (Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister, 1979-90, John Major was Prime Minister from 1990 to 1997, followed by Tony Blair from 1997 to 2007).
- Whiteread's *House* took two years to plan and was made by spraying liquid concrete into the building's empty shell before its external walls were removed. *House* was completed on 25 October 1993 and demolished eleven weeks later on 11 January 1994. *House* won the Turner Prize in 1994 and also the K Foundation award of £40,000 for the worst work of art of the year. K Foundation threatened to burn the money unless it was accepted so she gave some of the money to Shelter and the rest was allocated to young artists based on a competitive submission. K Foundation burned £1 million the following year.
- The cast presents the reverse of the original object, a floor. We are conscious of the loss of what is normally a stable object on which we depend but rarely think about, the floor. You have to engage in a process of imaginary recreation which brings the original object to life.
- Each of the 14 slabs weighs 200 kg so the work weighs 2.8 tonnes.

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Gego (Gertrud Goldschmidt, 1912-1994) *Horizontal Square Reticularia*
71/10, 1971 (T14115)



Gego (Gertrud Goldschmidt, 1912-1994), *Horizontal Square Reticularia 71/10*, 1971

- *Horizontal Square Reticularia 71/10* is a floor-based work consisting of thin steel rods and metal joints. They form a series of rough cubes or partial-cubes as some have their sides missing. The missing edges and the thinness of the rods result in the work bending under its own weight. The selection of materials and the irregular construction gives rise to a kinetic element and an organic feel. It is one of a series of *Square Reticularias* dating from the early 1970s that explore the topology of destabilized partial cubes. Some of her work is room-size installation where the visitor can walk through the work (see Visual Aids).
- The artist is known as Gego [pronounced ‘gay-go’] and her real name was Gertrud Goldschmidt. She was a Venezuelan artist who was born in Hamburg, the daughter of a Jewish banker who had to flee Germany at the outbreak of World War II. She was an engineering graduate who migrated to Caracas, Venezuela and she began her artistic career in the 1950s.
- Her work is characterized by delicate, three-dimensional lines often made of steel reflecting her engineering training. Her early works explore the viewers sense of motion created by parallax as the viewer moves around the object. In 1969 she created the first of her *Reticularia*, all fragile wire grids that expand across the gallery space creating an organic and ethereal space of precarious cubic spaces. She called her fragile, wire structures, ‘drawings without paper’, refusing to call them sculptures. She described her work as ‘**Line as object to play with**’.

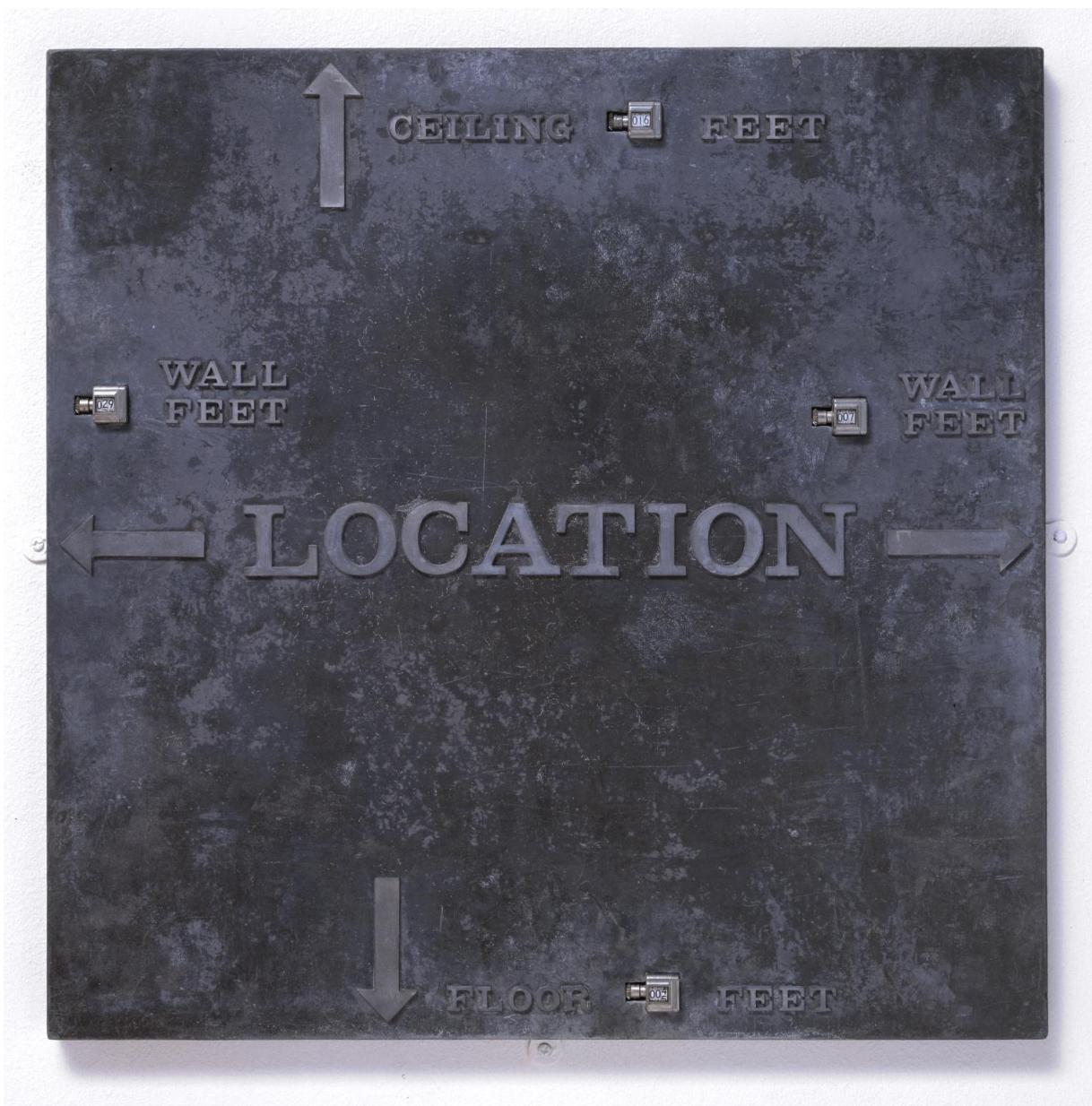
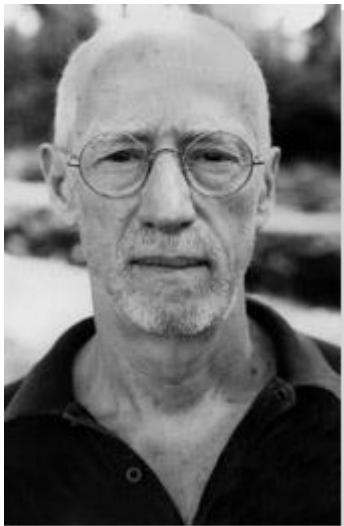
Background Notes on Gego (Gertrud Goldschmidt) *Horizontal Square Reticularia* 71/10, 1971

- Gertrud 'Gego' Louise Goldschmidt (1912-1994, pronounced 'gay-go') was a Venezuelan artist whose best-known work was produced during the 1960s and 70s. She was born in Hamburg, the daughter of a Jewish banker, and graduated in engineering from the University of Stuttgart in 1938. She migrated to Caracas at the outbreak of World War II and began her artistic career in the 1950s. Her work is characterized by delicate, three-dimensional lines often made of steel reflecting her engineering training. Her early works explore the viewers sense of motion created by parallax as the viewer moves around the object. In 1969 she created the first of her *Reticulárea*, fragile wire grids that expand across the gallery space creating an organic and ethereal space of precarious cubic spaces.
- Critics have debated whether Gego, along with Hélio Oiticica and Lygia Clark are 'resolutely rebelling against the rationality of modernism', specifically as representing the ordered geometry of European modernism or whether they can be best described as 'simple distortions of the grid akin to basic exercises in topology'.
- Many of Gego's works are large installations that can be entered and have been compared to woven baskets and fishing nets.

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Robert Morris (b. 1931), *Location Piece*, 1973 (P07235)



Robert Morris (b. 1931), *Location Piece*, 1973

- *Location Piece* is a square grey relief sculpture by Robert Morris. It is shown mounted on the wall at eye level. A dull lead sheet covers a base made of composite board, and metallic elements are fixed to the surface. Small meters with adjustable numeric values have been attached near all four edges. The numbers on the meters correspond to the distance in feet from the work to the nearest walls, ceiling and floor, as described by the aluminium text and arrows that accompany them. The prominent inscription in the centre of the panel, reading 'LOCATION', is also made of aluminium relief in a generic, capitalised serif font.
- Morris had abandoned painting in the late 1950s, and made his first sculptures after moving to New York City in 1961. Location was among a substantial group of small, monochrome works made between 1961 and 1965 that reflected a strong interest in the art of Marcel Duchamp. Morris favoured industrial materials such as lead or wood, and often incorporated banal, functional objects that he found in hardware stores.

Background Notes on Robert Morris, *Location Piece*, 1973

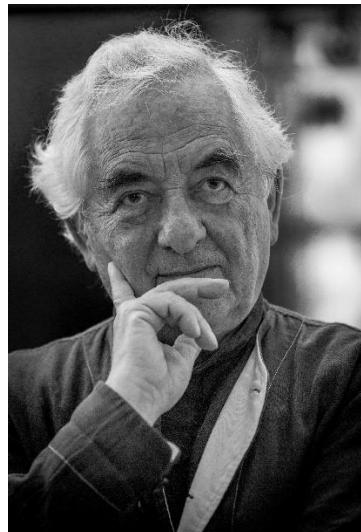
- Robert Morris (b. 1931 in Kansas City, Missouri) is an American sculptor, conceptual artist and writer. He is regarded as one of the most prominent theorists of Minimalism along with Donald Judd but he has also made important contributions to the development of performance art, minimalism, land art, the Process Art movement and installation art. Morris currently lives and works in New York.
- In the early 1970s Morris started to remake some of his earlier sculptures as multiples and Tate's version of *Location Piece* is the third in an edition of seventeen fabricated by Morris's assistant George Finsrud in 1973.
- In 1971 Morris designed an exhibition for the Tate that took up the whole central sculpture gallery with ramps and cubes.

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Daniel Buren (b. 1938), *One of the Possibilities*, 1973 (T12316)

16m blue and white striped cloth.



Daniel Buren (b. 1938), *One of the Possibilities*, 1973

- This is *One of the Possibilities* by the French conceptual artist Daniel Buren. It is a sixteen-metre-long piece of blue and white striped cloth, sewn together from sixteen individual panels, with the outermost stripes of each section painted white. The seams and the painted stripes alternate, such that there is no 'front' or 'back' of the work. The top and bottom edges are cut unevenly, as is characteristic of Buren's earlier works. The piece can be shown in a variety of different ways, and can change depending on the size, features or contents of the room, thereby creating a dialogue between the work and its surroundings. The different permutations are detailed in the certificate and drawings the artist produced when the work was sold in 1983 and which still accompany it. This work can be hung flush with the ceiling or floor or at the centre of the wall. It can be fully unrolled around one or two rooms or partly unrolled in which case it goes from left to right. This means that each time it is hung a new work is created.
- Buren was born in the suburbs of Paris in 1938. He developed his iconic signature of vertical stripes after he discovered a piece of commonplace striped awning canvas in a Parisian market in 1965. The alternating white and coloured stripes, each a standard 87 mm thickness, has been the basis for all his subsequent work. Buren's use of this material, which is never marked and is only altered in length and width, evacuated any trace of the hand of the artist, questioning what might be considered art and the parameters of the art object.

Background Notes on Daniel Buren, *One of the Possibilities*, 1973

- Daniel Buren was born in Boulogne-Billancourt in 1938. He developed his iconic signature of vertical stripes after he discovered a piece of commonplace striped awning canvas in a Parisian market in 1965. The alternating white and coloured stripes, each a standard 87 mm thickness, has been the basis for all his subsequent work. Buren's use of this material, which is never marked and is only altered in length and width, evacuated any trace of the hand of the artist, questioning what might be considered art and the parameters of the art object.

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*Roni Horn (b. 1955), *Pink Tons*, 2008 (T14525)



Roni Horn (b. 1955), *Pink Tons*, 2008

- *Pink Tons* is a solid cube-shaped sculpture made of cast glass by the female artist Roni Horn. The base and four sides of the cube are composed of frosted pink glass and maintain scratches and irregularities generated by the casting mould, while the glass at the top of the sculpture is clear. It weighs a massive four and a half tons. The base and four sides of the cube are composed of frosted pink glass and maintain scratches and irregularities generated by the casting mould, while the glass at the top of the sculpture is clear. Glass is deceptive as its clarity belies its weight. This cube weighs four and a half tons, the weight of an Asian elephant. It is so heavy the Tate could not place it in the centre of the room but Horn wanted it to be at least one and a half metres from the wall so visitors could walk around.
- Horn is an American artist and writer whose work spans almost four decades, encompasses sculpture, drawing, photography, language, and site-specific installation. She is the granddaughter of Eastern European Jewish immigrants and was born in New York where she lives and works. Since discovering Iceland as a young student the country has become her muse and inspiration and she frequently visits.
- Regarding the glass, Horn says, “**There is an almost unbearable precision in the effect of the light on the smooth surface of glass or an accidental but infinitesimal flaw in the surface that creates an effect of massive turbulence in certain lights and absolutely none in others. Depending on the angle of view, glass has a surface of either razor sharpness or infinite depth.**”

Background Notes on Roni Horn, *Pink Tons*, 2008

- Roni Horn (b. 1955) is an American visual artist and writer. Horn quit high school a year early at 16 and enrolled in the Rhode Island School of Design. She received an MFA in sculpture from Yale University. Since 1975 Horn has travelled often to Iceland, whose landscape and isolation have strongly influenced her practice. Horn's oeuvre, which spans almost four decades, encompasses sculpture, drawing, photography, language, and site-specific installation. The granddaughter of Eastern European Jewish immigrants, she was born in New York where she lives and works.

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Liu Jianhua (b. 1962), *Blank Paper*, 2009 (T14360, T14361, T14362)



Liu Jianhua (b. 1962), *Blank Paper*, 2009

- This next work is one visitors often walk by as it doesn't register. It is a set called *Blank Paper*, and the artist, Liu Jianhua, made 16 more sets like this. It looks like paper but you could not write on it as it is porcelain made to look like paper. He is a Chinese artist and his uncle had a porcelain factory. When he was growing up he learnt to make many different objects from porcelain.
- *Blank Paper* is one of a number of similar monochrome white porcelain objects, all with the same title, that are rectangular and flat in shape and presented on the wall in the manner of paintings. Their corners are slightly lifted adding an impression of lightness and flexibility like paper. The work is not intended to mimic paper but to declare their status as works of porcelain. There are sixteen larger works than these and twelve smaller versions. They were produced as singular objects but are often shown together to emphasize their subtle differences.
- It is an object for contemplation. Stand in front of it and meditate on existence and non-existence. You cannot write on the porcelain so you can say what you want. It will not be recorded.
- Liu Jianhua is one of China's best known sculptural and installation artists. He graduated in Fine Arts in 1989. His previous focus was on the social issues in China as the result of globalization, since 2008, he explored new grounds with works like Untitled. His "no meaning, no content" approach signals a new direction of contemporary art creation.

Liu Jianhua, *Blank Paper*, 2009

- Liu Jianhua (b.1962, Ji'an, China) began his career in 1977 by working in a porcelain sculpture studio. In 1985, he was admitted to the Fine Arts Department of the Jingdezhen Pottery & Porcelain College, majoring in Sculpture. Liu graduated in 1989 and went on to teach at the College of Fine Arts at the Yunnan Institute of the Arts. Since 2004, Liu has been a professor in the Sculpture Department of the Fine Arts School of Shanghai University. The artist currently lives and works in Shanghai, China. The artist's work is included in the permanent collections of institutions including The Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Asian Art Museum, San Francisco; Kawara Museum; Shenzhen Art Museum; Guangdong Museum of Art; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Today Art Museum, Beijing; USC Pacific Asia Museum, Pasadena and the Yuz Museum, Shanghai.

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Jac Leirner (b. 1961), *8 Levels*, 2012 (T14208)



Jac Leirner (b. 1961), *8 Levels*, 2012

- This is *8 Levels* by Jacqueline Leirner, a Brazilian artist. It is a wall-based sculptural work consisting of eight differently coloured spirit levels lined up end to end. It is hung high on the wall and its bright colours and industrial appearance remind us of Donald Judd. Leirner made the decision to find objects by shopping, an all-American activity. She took care shopping to find spirit-levels whose colours reflected the work of different artists, such as Joseph Albers and Paul Klee.
- Leirner was born in São Paulo in 1961, where she lives and works. Leirner's work references the history of Brazilian Constructivism and the legacy of Arte Povera and Minimalism. Leirner is best known for the sculptures and installations she creates from mundane objects and ephemera, including devalued bank notes, used envelopes, promotional tickets, empty cigarette packets and plastic shopping bags. Leirner organises and presents her material in unusually complex ways, highlighting the banality of each object, enabling a refocus of its form, colour and beauty.
- Leirner said, “**I never tire of repeating the same gesture, like the repetition of a mantra. I know the result of this repetition will be beautiful ... They carry with them the genius of the inventors, engineers, designers, the perfection of the industrial finish. They're generally beautiful and most often strange.**”

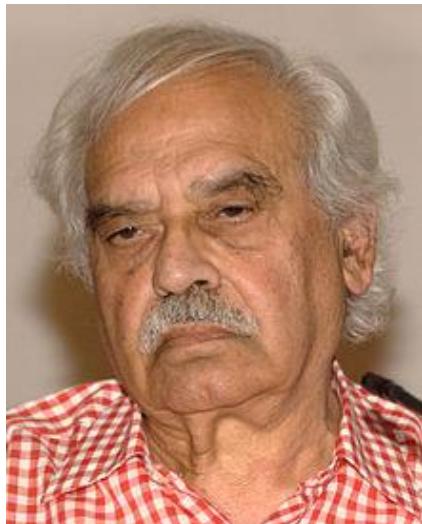
Background Notes on Jac Leirner, *8 Levels*, 2012

- Jacqueline (Jac) Leirner was born in São Paulo in 1961, where she currently lives and works. One of Brazil's most internationally renowned contemporary artists, Jac Leirner is best known for the sculptures and installations she creates from mundane objects and ephemera, including devalued bank notes, airline tickets, cigarette packets, and shopping bags. Leirner collects and categorizes objects and cultural detritus—including ephemera relating to the machinery of the art world and objects that bear a personal relationship to the artist—before reconfiguring them into meticulously constructed works that both draw attention to and negate their function. Leirner references Brazilian Constructivism, Arte Povera, and Minimalism. She counts the artists Eve Hesse and Cildo Meireles as major influences on her work.

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Rasheed Araeen (b. 1935), *Lovers*, 1968 (T13389)



Rasheed Araeen (b. 1935), *Lovers*, 1968

- *Lovers* 1968 is a two-part movable sculpture made of painted wood by Rasheed Araeen. Each part is an open prism constructed out of a series of triangles, rotated and orientated in different ways. The work can be shown in two different configurations, either with the two parts next to each other, or on top of each other.
- Araeen is an important figure in the British black art movement as a publisher, writer and artist.

Background Notes on Rasheed Araeen, *Lovers*, 1968

- Rasheed Araeen (b. 1935) is a London-based conceptual artist, sculptor, painter, writer, and curator. He graduated in civil engineering from the NED University of Engineering and Technology in 1962. Araeen was pursuing a career as an engineer in Karachi when he was first exposed to avant-garde art. This arrived through two channels: imported Western books and magazines and contact with Pakistani contemporary artists. Consequently, he decided to pursue art-making and embarked on a second career. He began working as an artist when he arrived in London in 1964 without any formal training, producing sculptures influenced by Minimalism and by his engineering experience. In 1972 he joined the Black Panther Movement. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover called the party "the greatest threat to the internal security of the country" and support declined when it became associated with drug dealing and extortion. In 1978 Araeen founded and began editing the journal *Black Phoenix*, which in 1989, was transformed into *Third Text*, one of the most important journals dealing with art, the Third World, Postcolonialism, and ethnicity. He is one of the pivotal figures in establishing a black voice in the British arts through his activities as a publisher, writer, and artist. His work demonstrates a concern with the problems of establishing an identity for the third-world artists.

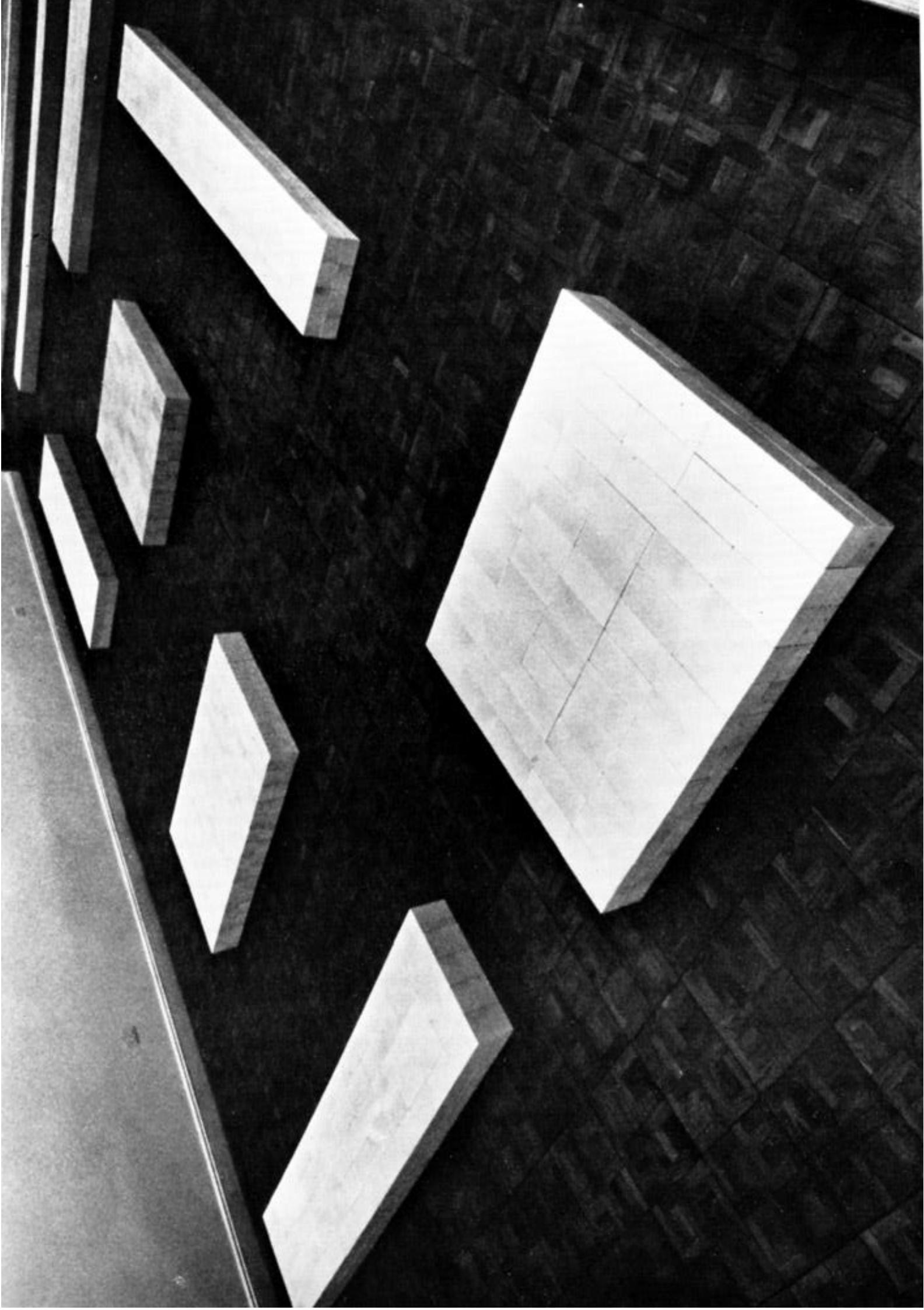
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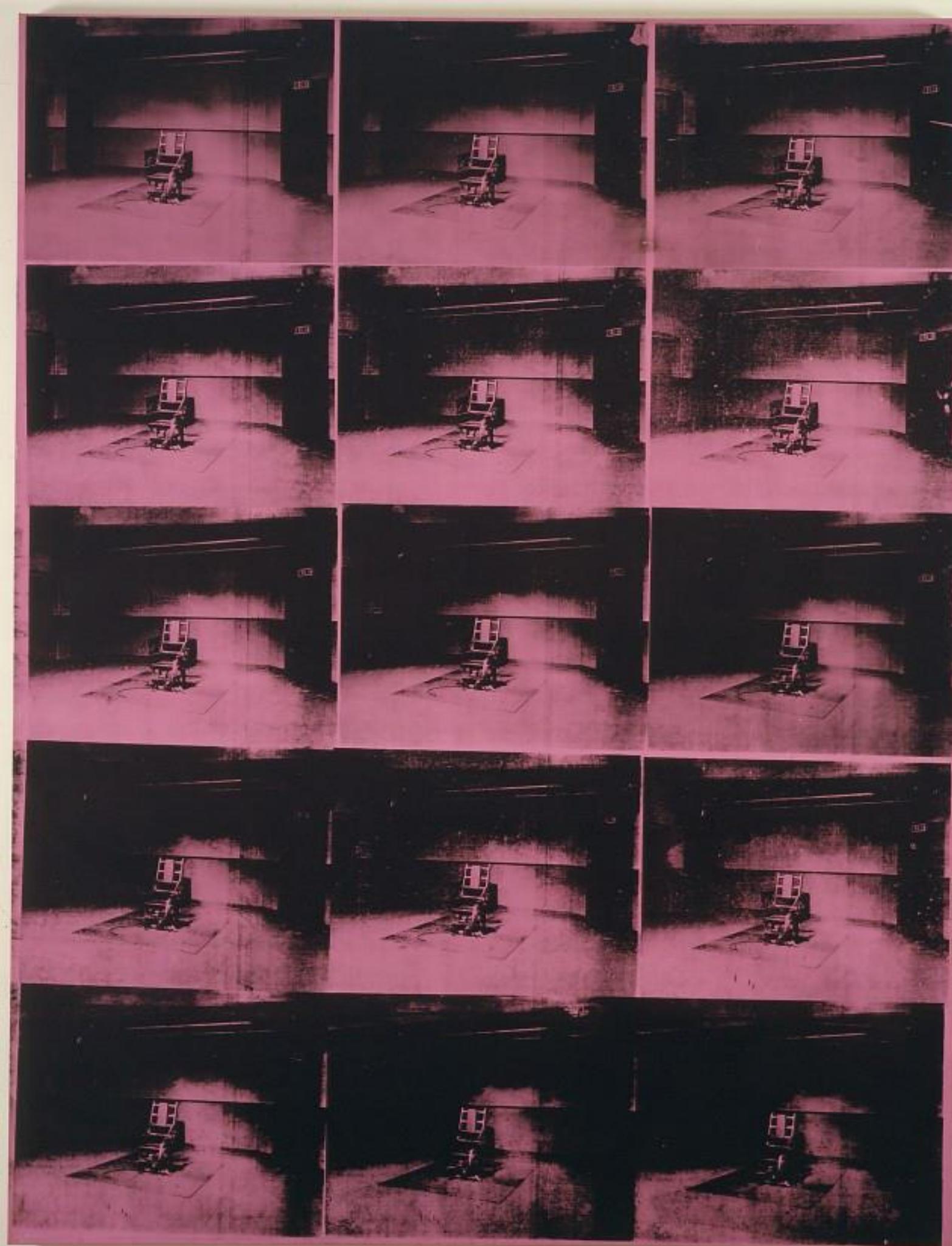
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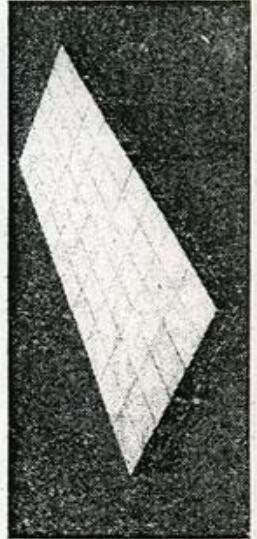
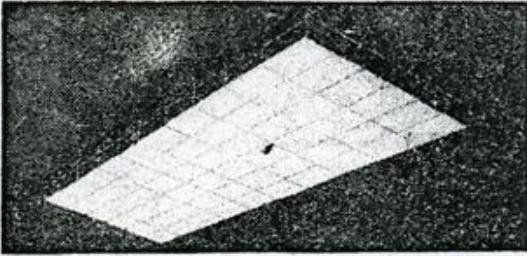
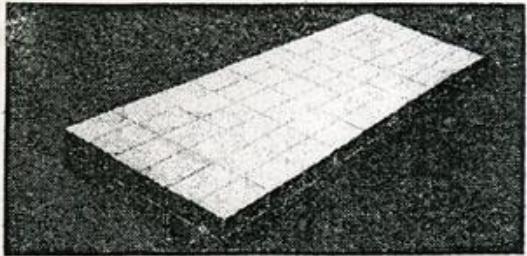
- Yayoi Kusama, 2012
- Carl Andre, Equivalent I-VIII
- Constantin Brancusi (1876–1957), *Endless Column*, 1938, see [Brancusi Endless Column](#)
- Andy Warhol, *Lavender Disaster*, 1963
- "What a load of rubbish", front page of *Daily Mirror*, 16 February 1976.
- Gego (Gertrude Goldschmidt), Reticulárea (ambientación), 1969, Royal Academy
- André Cadere, *Round Bar of Wood*, marked up
- Rachel Whiteread, *House*











Whichever way you look at Britain's latest work of art...

By PHILIP MELLOR

A TOP art gallery was under fire last night for spending taxpayers' cash on . . . a pile of bricks. It was all done in the name of art, because the 120 loose firebricks go under the heading of "low sculpture."

They are now under lock and key at London's Tate Gallery, which gets a £500,000 Government handout every year.

Gallery officials refused to say how much their unique acquisition from American sculptor Carl Andre had cost.

But Arts Minister Hugh Jenkins yesterday promised an investigation into the deal.

Bizarre

He said: "The Tate have their own trustees, and they are their own masters.

"I do not know if they have made a mistake over this particular purchase, but I shall certainly look into the matter."

American galleries and art buyers have shown no interest in the bricks, which have a bizarre history.

It began in 1965, when ex-railwayman Carl Andre decided to launch his own brand of down-to-earth sculpture.

He bought the bricks and arranged them in a low pile on the floor of his studio.

Price

Then he slapped a £4,000 price tag on them. But there were no takers.

The way-out sculptor was determined not to be out of pocket, so he took his creation back to the brickyard . . . and got his money back.

Then, in 1972, Tate officials saw a photograph of the brick pile. They promptly offered to buy it for Britain.

By then the brickyard had closed down. But, un-

WHAT A LOAD OF RUBBISH

How the Tate dropped 120 bricks

daunted Carl found 120 more to the grateful Tate.

He crated them up as they were, drew up assembly instructions, and shipped the lot to the grateful Tate.

So the gallery didn't even get the original pile of bricks.

The "sculpture" went on exhibition a couple of times, then it was locked away in a storeroom—the world's most

expensive and closely-guarded bricks.

But the deal was defended yesterday by Tate director Sir William Reid. He said at his home in Kent:

• The piece was not bought in isolation. We purchase pieces from artists who we consider to be of serious intent. This is our business. But the prices we pay are a secret.

It must be remembered that for at least a hundred years every new form of art has been ridiculed and labelled a folly.

The Andre piece is part of a recognised movement in the art field.

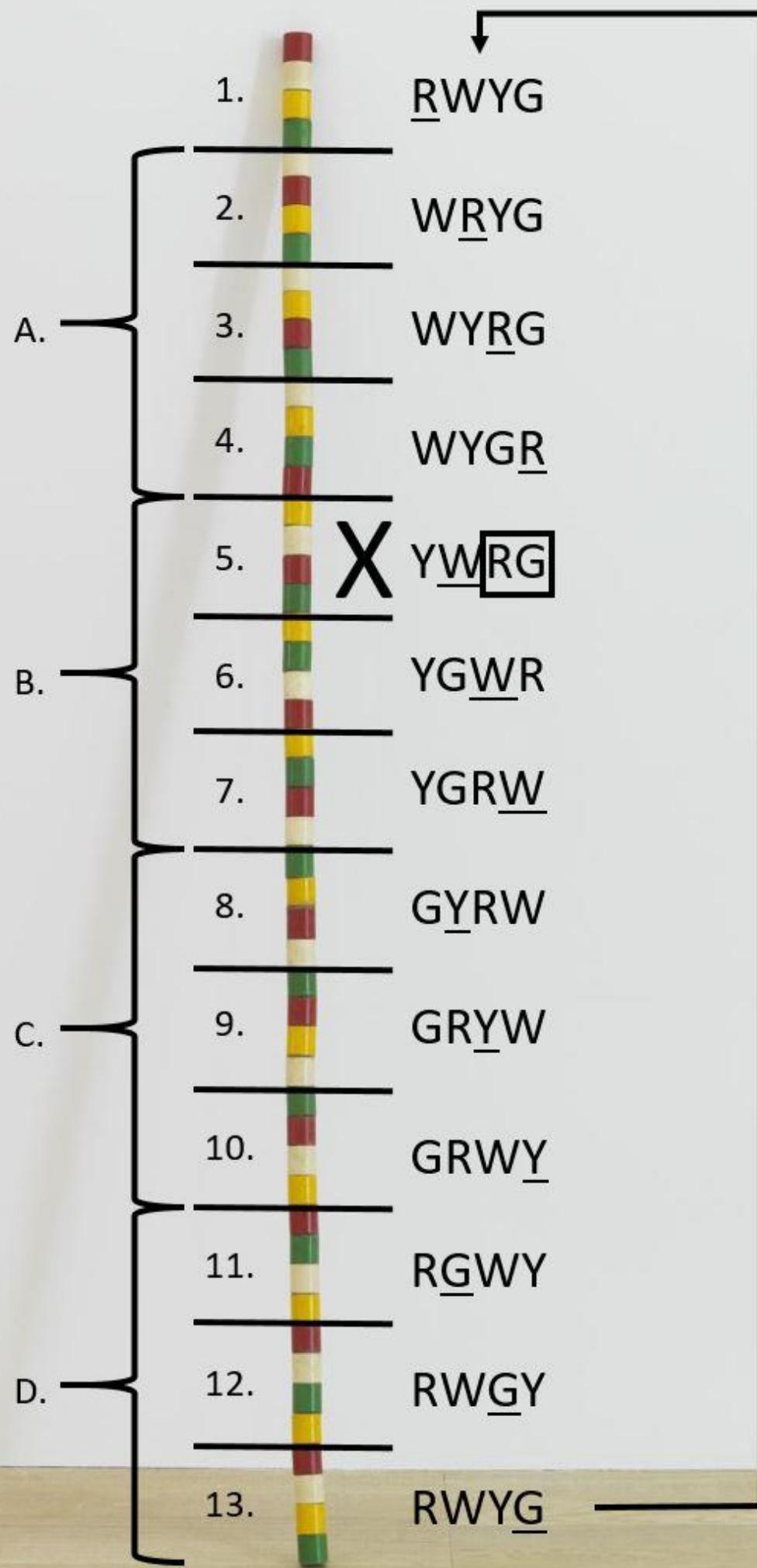
The Tate is Britain's leading gallery for modern art, and in the past it has bought some works at below market rates.

In 1972, when the gallery decided to buy Carl Andre's bricks, the sculptor exhibited his latest inspiration—made up of bent rods and scrap metal. Critics described it as "delicate."

BRICKNOTE: You can buy ordinary household bricks for between £40 and £60 a thousand. The 120 bricks the Tate bought would be enough to build a large fireproof moneybox.

OFFICIAL No.







Summary of Between Object and Architecture (11:30-12:00)

Introduction Giles Gilbert Scott designed Bankside. Maria Balshaw (ex. Manchester) new Director Tate. Frances Morris, Director Tate Modern. Len Blavatnik patron of new extension.

Yayoi Kusama (b. 1929, pronounced 'yar-yo-e kusama'), *The Passing Winter*, 2005. She is a Japanese artist who moved to New York in 1968 and exhibited with Andy Warhol. She used polka dots even then. She faded from view in the 1970s but has become internationally famous recently. She said "Our Earth is only one polka dot among a million stars in the cosmos. Polka dots are a way to infinity." The title might refer to a 'winter' of depression that is now passing. She said producing her work was therapeutic. She has been in a psychiatric hospital since 1977.

Carl Andre (b. 1935), Equivalent VIII, 1966. *Burlington Magazine*, wrote that it was a "showy work which may well be regarded in a few decades as trash." Tate paid £2,297 in 1972. Another work recently sold for over \$1m. The controversy started with a *Sunday Times* article in 1976 which was followed by a *Daily Mirror* headline – 'What a load of rubbish'. 120 bricks were chosen as the number has so many factors. Andre was attacking the art market, the excessive financial value placed on art works and the false pride of many artists. His wife Ana Mendieta fell from their 34th story apartment and was heard screaming. He had scratches on his face and was arrested for murder but found not guilty.

Tony Cragg (b. 1949), Stack, 1975 (when he was still at the Royal College of Art). Cragg sees all manmade objects as "fossilized keys to a past time" and he believes we can understand our consumer society by examining what we discard. He believes that "Sculpture is the only activity that lies outside the use of materials in a functional world. Everything else is repetitive and boring". "I try to use the surface to indicate what is underneath the surface" and "I build it up until it has an emotional quality." He has said, "I see a material or an object as having a balloon of information around it." His work is Post-Minimalist (a term coined by Robert Pincus-Witten) as it expresses emotion.

Saloua Raouda Choucair ('saloo-a rawda shu-care', 1916-2017), *Infinite Structure*, 1963-65. She studied in Beirut and Paris and her early work was figurative and influenced by the West but Choucair said later, "All the rules that I apply are derived from the Islamic tradition and from Islamic geometric design." Influenced by the Romanian/French sculptor Constantin Brancusi's (1876–1957) *Endless Column* (1938). Worked through the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990). Lived to 100, passion for science, mathematics and cosmology. The original single column was considered too dangerous and this two-column display was agreed between the Tate curator and her daughter Hala.

André Cadere (1934-78), Round Bar of Wood, 1973. 52 segments, 13 sequences, mistake in #5. "A bar of round wood is immutable, each piece being different from each other, the whole work being a constellation, this constellation being strictly limited. No future, no future. There is no evolution, a round wood bar is." He used to display batons in cafes, railway stations and galleries uninvited. Died aged 44 from cancer.

Eva Hesse (1936-70), Addendum, 1967. German/Jewish artist whose parents fled Germany. Went to New York aged 3, parents separated 5 years later, mother committed suicide. Her own marriage lasted only 5 years and her father died the year she divorced. Her name is pronounced 'hess' or hess-a' depending on whether Jewish origins are emphasized. 17 light-grey papier mâché hemispheres 1/8th" apart increasing by ¼ inch for each one. Influenced by Andy Warhol, see looping cable in *Lavender Disaster* (1963, relates to Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, 1953). She is known for her jokiness, whimsical sexual innuendo, absurdity and self-contradiction. Possible meanings are shrouded in mystery. Perhaps this work is a reference to how charismatic leaders can use nationalism and immigration to lead the public to state authorised torture and death. She said, "I think art is a total thing. A total person giving a contribution. It is an essence, a soul ... In my inner soul art and life are inseparable." She said, "It is my main concern to go beyond what I know and what I can know." She died of a brain tumour when she was 34.

Cristina Iglesias (b. 1956), Pavilion Suspended in a Room 1, 2005. Spanish artist who studied at Chelsea College of Art. Steel lattice panels look delicate but are strong. Suggest Moorish architecture of Spain. Part of a 1990s series called *Celosía* (pronounced se-low-see-a) which means both latticework and jealousy. Inside is text from Arthur C. Clarke's *Rendezvous with Rama* (1973). Iglesias describes her work as "**pieces that are like thought, places from which one sees, spaces that fall between reality and image, between presence and representation, spaces that speak of other spaces.**" Her work transforms galleries into labyrinths of dream, fiction and fantasy.

Donald Judd (1928-1994), Untitled, 1980. One of the leading Minimalist artists but he rejected the term Minimalism. He described his work as '**the simple expression of complex thought**'. He separated himself from the works construction and used a factory (Bernstein Brothers) in New York. Ten equally spaced shelves of galvanised steel with blue Perspex insets. Referred to as 'stacks'. Like Carl Andre there is no symbolic meaning intended. He is the 3D equivalent of Piet Mondrian although Mondrian saw his work as expressing an underlying spiritual order. Ad Reinhardt, the New York Abstract Expressionist, famous for his black paintings, said, "**the busier the work of art, the worse it is. More is less. Less is more. The eye is a menace to clear sight. The laying bare of oneself is obscene. Art begins with the getting rid of nature.**"

Rachel Whiteread (b. 1963), Untitled (Floor), 1994-5. Born in Ilford, studied at Brighton Polytechnic and the Slade. Fourteen rectangular blocks weighing 200kg each (2.8 tons). Whiteread is interested in negative spaces. She is most famous for *House* which won the Turner Prize in 1994. Dark green but copper and gold in sunlight. Resin was poured at 1mm a day. The work draws our attention to the spaces we fill and the interaction between our bodies and the spaces they occupy.

Roni Horn (b. 1955), Pink Tons, 2008 consists of a solid cube of cast glass weighing 4.5 tons with frosted pink glass sides and a clear top. Horn is an American female artist with an MFA from Yale University. A lot of her work has been influenced by the landscape and isolation of Iceland. The work could not be placed in the centre of the room because of its weight and it must be at least 1.5 metres from the wall so people can walk round. Horn says, "**There is an almost unbearable precision in the effect of the light on the smooth surface of glass or an accidental but infinitesimal flaw in the surface that creates an effect of massive turbulence in certain lights and absolutely none in others. Depending on the angle of view, glass has a surface of either razor sharpness or infinite depth.**"