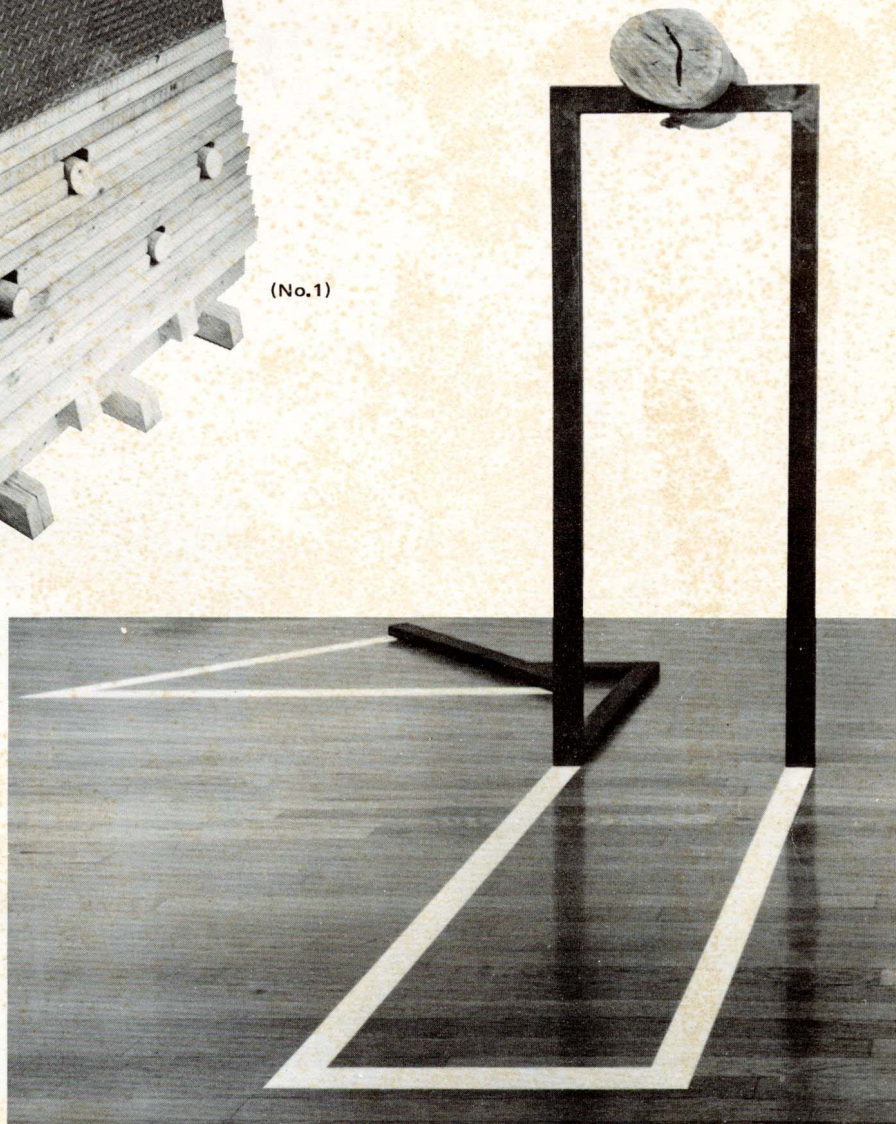


(No.1)



(No.2)

6 L.A. SCULPTORS

Michael Davis, Woods Davy, Guy Dill,
George Geyer, Michael Todd,
De Wain Valentine

Federal Reserve Board—Martin Building
Washington, D.C.
June through August 1980

6 L.A. SCULPTORS

An interview with Walter Hopps by
Mary Anne Goley on April 11, 1980

Woods Davy

Introduction

MARY ANNE GOLEY:

I want to welcome Walter Hopps to the Federal Reserve Board for the occasion of an exhibition, *Six L.A. Sculptors*, that will be on display during the time of the 11th Annual Sculpture Conference, which will be held in Washington in June of this year. You are uniquely qualified to give the employees of the Federal Reserve Board, our immediate audience, as well as the public, a look at Los Angeles art. I want to highlight your own experience in Los Angeles. I know that you were one of the collaborators behind the Ferus Gallery.

WALTER HOPPS:

I dreamed up, founded, and paid for five commercial galleries in California, but I didn't ever fancy myself as a dealer. Ed Kienholtz and I founded the Ferus Gallery together.

MAG: Also, you were at the Pasadena Art Museum from 1962 through 1967?

WH: Right, first as Curator and then as Director.

MAG: I think the major study of California art is the catalog, *California Painting and Sculpture: The Modern Era*, for the exhibition that was at the National Collection of Fine Arts and before that at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; you and Henry Hopkins collaborated on that in 1976, and that catalog probably remains the definitive overview on California art. Both Michael Todd and De Wain Valentine, who are in our exhibition, were in that one. You also did a catalog titled, *Sculpture, American Direction: 1945 to 1975*, and none of these sculptors were in that exhibition. If we talk about California and California sculpture, can we make some generalizations?

This interview has been edited for publication

WH: Getting to Woods Davy [*Kokomo (No. 2)*], there are certain things that he shares with Michael Davis. Three things are immediately perceivable: industrial materials, a piece of natural wood, and steel. They are combined much as Todd combines, in more classical ways, elements of geometry against informality, the industrial versus the natural, all put together without any structural relevance. They are just combined in an arbitrary sense of arrangement or composition. When one thinks of composition, it can also be in a perfectly straightforward, unsophisticated compositional way, which isn't very consciously pursued by Davy.

MAG: I find a similarity between the story of the art of Japanese flower arrangement in which a broken vase was rearranged with a flower in it and the hard-edged, industrial corners of Davy's piece, with the touch of irregularity from the log.

WH: Suddenly, you find this log. Davy's pieces invite touch and participation both perceptually and physically. Davy implies a lot of physical participation when he does long walkways and logs. One immediately thinks kinesthetically what it would be like to get up there and try to balance and walk along those walkways. Perceptual participation, the third element in a lot of his current work, involves a physical delineation on the floor but without real substance. He's marked an outline that would be a kind of isometric projection. If you fold it over, which one can't literally do, you begin to fold and transfer outlines of the steel form to the plane of the floor. Certain patterns emerge; it's very simply marked out.

MAG: The piece challenges you to visually unfold it.

WH: Right. The minute you look at the lines, you start trying to go through the geometry of making the projection that he's given us. It's an interesting, logical puzzle set against the completely illogical and humdrum log stuck on top of this careful piece of geometry. It has one thing in common with a kind of deadpan, dry wit that's part of some of the art in Southern California.

CONTENTS OF THE EXHIBITION

1. Michael Davis (b. 1948)
Double Break/Diamond Tread
 Two Sections: approx. 11' and 5'
 Douglas fir, diamond plate steel facing,
 twigs, pigment.
2. Woods Davy (b. 1949)
Kokomo, 1979
 Steel, wood, tape, 9' x 15' x 10'
3. Guy Dill (b. 1946)
Milwood #1, 1979
 Wood, steel, cable, granite, 6' x 10' x 14'
4. George Geyer (b. 1935)
Tidal Erosion Piece Simulation, 1978
 Glass, clay, water, rope, wood,
 approx. h. 10', w. 26'
5. Michael Todd (b. 1935)
Daimaru XII, 1980
 Lacquered steel, 12' x 11' x 4'

6. De Wain Valentine (b. 1936)
Triple Diamond Column, 1979
 Laminated glass and colorless glue
 116" x 120" x 24"

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The original tapes of the complete interview
 will be deposited with the Archives of
 American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

