

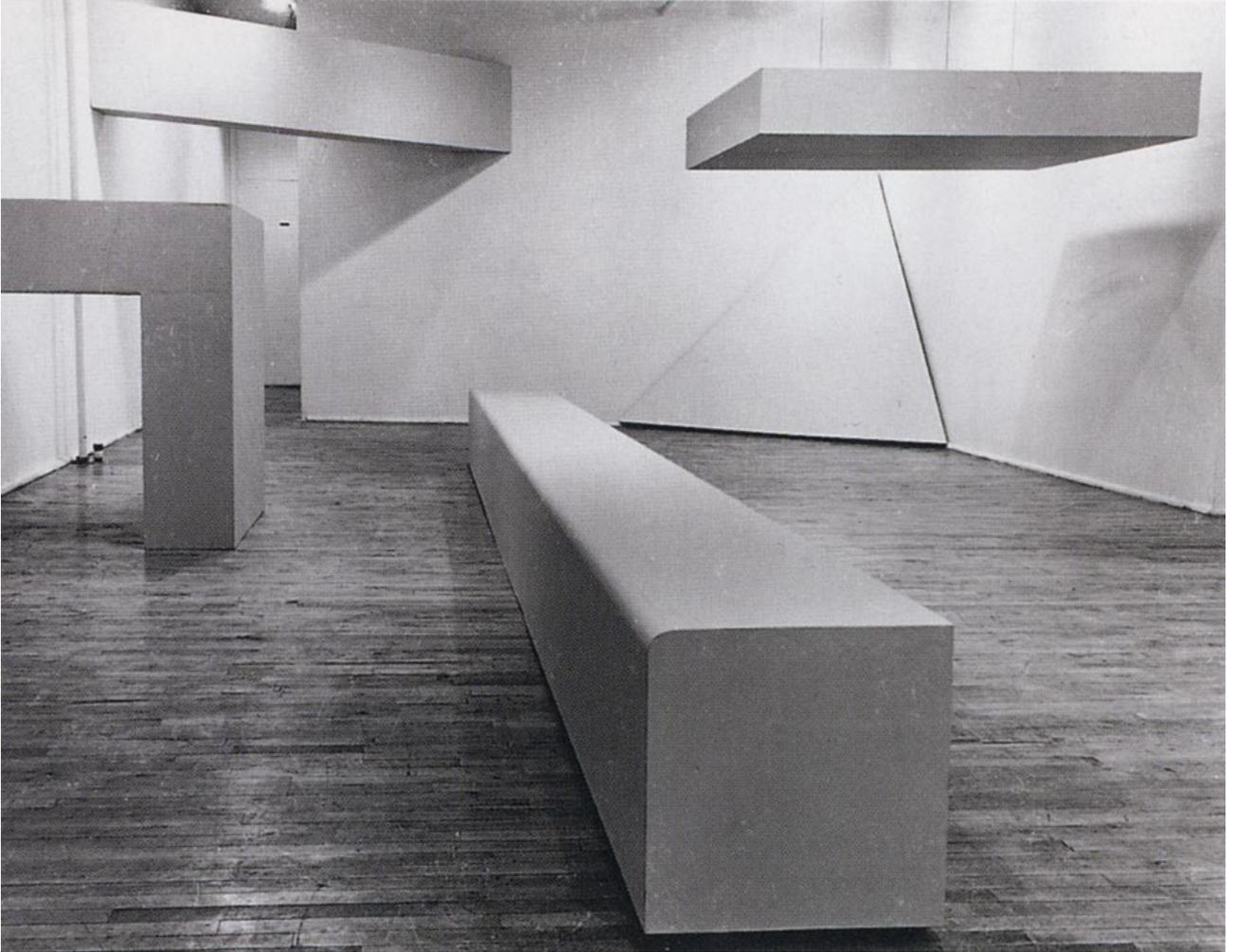
SCOTT BROWN

3255862

GAIL KENNING

GROUP B – 'INTERACTION AESTHETICS'

SAHT3613 – DIGITAL THEORY AND AESTHETICS



Plywood Show (1964) by Robert Morris. Green Gallery, New York.

Robert Morris' *Plywood Show* (1964) was made up of several large-scale plywood structures. Shown in the Green Gallery, New York, this solo exhibition brought together individual works from his *Untitled* series to create a space that required the viewer to physically explore the works, experiencing the entire exhibition from many perspectives. Whilst these pieces may not be thought of as being interactive today, they present an interesting juxtaposition to what is now considered interactive art.

There is no doubt Morris' experience as an avant-garde dancer influenced the way he approached his minimalist works. Using "body perspective" as a starting point¹, Morris asks the viewer to interact with not only the works, or the space, but with the body itself. It is the instigation of this awareness that makes Morris' *Untitled* works interactive. Unlike Erkki Huhtamo's strict definition, that interactive art requires an interface "where the encounter between the work and the user took place"², a more appropriate definition is put forward by Lev Manovich, who refers to interactive art as being a place of theatre, where "the interaction is treated as an event".³

In fact, Huhtamo goes on to say that interaction "can be used to alienate and control users"⁴, which is in effect exactly what Morris' work achieves. *Plywood Show* is a place of dance, theatre or event, where the viewers and objects are performers alike. *Ars Electronica* has also "expanded [it's] definition of interactivity"⁵, and appears content with an audience "experiencing a piece vicariously"⁶. Golan Levin too, believes it is the human mind which actually places a work into the category of 'interactive'.⁷

Therefore, this work requires no additional change to become interactive. As the title of one piece, *Untitled (Cloud)*, might suggest, it is in fact the human brain that completes the sense of interaction. Like a cloud in the sky, the viewer can believe it is whatever they choose.

1 Marzona, D (2006), 'Minimal Art', U Grosenick ed, Taschen, Köln

2 Huhtamo, E (2005), 'Trouble at the Interface: Identity Crisis in Interactive Media Art', <http://www.mediaarthistory.org/Programmatic%20key%20texts/pdfs/Huhtamo.pdf> (accessed 20/03/10)

3 Manovich, L (2007), 'Information as an Aesthetic Event' <http://www.manovich.net/> (accessed 20/03/10)

4 Huhtamo, E (2005)

5 Huhtamo, E (2005)

6 Noble, J (2010), 'Golan Levin Interview', <http://vagueterrain.net/journal16/golan-levin/01> (accessed 12/04/10)

7 Noble, J (2010)