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**Mapping Poetry onto the Visual Arts:**

**Carl Andre's *Words***

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**Mapping Poetry onto the Visual Arts:**

**Carl Andre's *Words***

**by**

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## Dedication

To E.S.M., S.C.M., T.J., J.A.W., R.C., J.D., N.I., I.H.F., S.H., H.dP., J.T., G.O., A.F.J.  
and to all the *heroes* I have encountered, all those who came before and who have yet to  
arrive, for *all that industrious wisdom lives in the way the mountains and the desert are  
waiting for the heroes...*

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## **Abstract**

### **Mapping Poetry onto the Visual Arts: Carl Andre's *Words***

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As innovative as his sculpture, Andre's visually oriented poetry, however, has yet to receive the same rigor of attention as his sculpture. His inventive use of poetic and visual form, which he described as poetry mapped onto the visual arts, provides a compelling example of the interrelationship of word and image, a practice, although often overlooked, that suffuses twentieth-century visual art and poetry.

Whereas Andre produced approximately 1,500 poems over many decades, this project focuses on his *Words* installation, the largest permanently installed collection of Andre's poems in the world. In 1995, Andre gifted 465 pages of poetry to the Chinati Foundation in Marfa, Texas. Andre's experiments with genre, including lyrics, autobiographies, novels, odes, and operas, push literary convention to the edge of irreconcilability. Despite the array of genres, I argue that all of the disparate kinds of writing found in *Words* demonstrate Andre's poetic sensibility.

Until recently the critical discussion of Andre's poems proceeded as a one-sided discourse, which advanced the notion that this large body of work was best suited to enhancing the understanding of Andre's sculptural practice. To redress the one-sidedness of the discourse requires approaching Andre not only as a sculptor who made poems, but also as a poet deeply engaged in the visual qualities of his poetics.

Engaging the spirit of the "make it new" sensibility of modernist poetics, Andre developed his own practice by "mapping language on the conventions and usages of 20<sup>th</sup>-century abstract art."<sup>1</sup> Andre's poetry operates in the space between art and language. In this space we find Andre's engagement with poetic history, particularly the innovations of Ezra Pound, his relationship to important poetic developments such as fragmentation and quotation, and his experimentation with poetry as a visual medium. An examination of Andre's poetic oeuvre, the publication and exhibition history of his poems, and the manner of critical attention given to the poems from the 1960s onward contextualizes Andre's practice of mapping poetry onto the visual arts, while also bridging the gap in discourse between the fields of art and poetry.

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<sup>1</sup> Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 215.

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## Introduction

“How detestable art is as a category,” Carl Andre (1935-) declared in 1962, “For painting I will have about me my Japanese spring toy which pumps out targets of infinite...variety; for sculpture I will have three one-inch bright steel ball bearings; for my novel I will take the New York Telephone Directory.”<sup>2</sup> In this admonishment, Andre calls for an open situation for the arts; one not confined by traditional materials or genre distinctions. To this end, in his own practice, Andre challenged artistic convention by creating sculptures from unmodified industrial materials such as metal plates, timber blocks, and bricks. In one of his best-known works, *Equivalent VIII* (1966), Andre formed a 6 x 10 rectangular sculpture out of two layers of 60 firebricks (fig. 1). Allowing materials to determine the form of the sculpture, Andre left the firebricks intact to retain in the work, “the experience of materials that have largely disappeared from the world.”<sup>3</sup> Whereas some critics at the time derided Andre’s work as “rubbish,” others such as art historian, Kurt von Meier, recognized the historical significance of Andre’s sculpture arguing that it “exploded out of a narrow world of bronze and marble to include a richer demesne.”<sup>4</sup> As innovative as his sculpture, Andre’s visually oriented poetry, however, has yet to receive the same rigor of attention as his sculpture. His inventive use of poetic and visual form, which he described as poetry mapped onto the visual arts, provides a

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2 Carl Andre and Hollis Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, ed. B.H.D. Buchloh (Halifax: Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1981), 237.

3 Carl Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, ed. James Meyer (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 146.

4 Philip Mellor, "What a Load of Rubbish: How the Tate Dropped 120 Bricks," 1976, in *About Carl Andre: Critical Texts since 1965*, ed. Paula Feldman, Alistair Rider, and Karsten Schubert (London: Riding House, 2006), 138-9; Kurt von Meier, "Los Angeles," 1967, in *About Carl Andre: Critical Texts since 1965*, ed. Paula Feldman, Alistair Rider, and Karsten Schubert (London: Riding House, 2006), 33.

compelling example of the interrelationship of word and image, a practice, although often overlooked, that suffuses twentieth-century visual art and poetry. Whereas Andre produced approximately 1,500 poems over many decades, I will focus on his *Words* installation, the largest permanently installed collection of his poems in the world.

In 1995, Andre gifted 465 pages of poetry to the Chinati Foundation in Marfa, Texas. The Foundation provided Andre with a building dedicated entirely to the installation of his poems. Installing 270 pages in cases he designed for the space, Andre gave the Foundation permission to periodically rotate selections of the poems. To this point, the Foundation has maintained Andre's original installation from 1995 (fig. 2). Not the first instantiation of many of these works, Chinati's collection is one of only a few signed Xerox copies derived from Andre's original typed, or in a few instances handwritten poems. Reproduced on 8.5 x 11 sheets of white paper consistent with the originals, this body of work challenges the convention of the auratic original. Walking around the two long rows of cases, situated back to back, the reader encounters an astounding diversity of types of works. The viewer strides alongside sonnets, lyrics, autobiographies, novels, odes, and operas—a panoply of genres. Andre's experiments with genre push literary convention to the edge of irreconcilability. Despite the array of genres, I argue that all of the disparate kinds of writing found in *Words* demonstrate Andre's poetic sensibility. I will therefore discuss these works, whether “sonnets” or “novels,” within the context of this sensibility, which I will characterize as one that can

“make it new” and simultaneously recover poetic qualities from lost traditions.<sup>5</sup> He described the most salient features of his poetics as: right naming; Constructivism; and the plastic possibilities of language. The persistence of these features across genre unifies the otherwise disparate works. In this sense, we may consider all of the works in *Words* as “poems.” Rephrased, I argue that Andre experimented with literary genres in an expressly poetic manner. His poems do not consist of verse, rhythm, and meter as historically defined. Instead of developing the traditional formal features of poetry, Andre wanted his poems to retain “the qualities of both poetry and painting,” which he believed to be the foundation for “a kind of plastic poetry.”<sup>6</sup>

To maintain the position that visual images cannot be completely reduced to language, art historians occasionally encourage the reducibility of language to the visual. The art historian decides between policing and negotiating, constructing an open or a closed situation for discourse. As in any contestation, peaceful resolution materializes through the investigation of both sides of the position. Until recently the critical discussion of Andre’s poems proceeded as a one-sided discourse, one that advanced the notion that this large body of work was best suited to enhancing the understanding of Andre’s sculptural practice. Historically, many critics either forced the poems into the service of the sculpture or actively ignored their existence. To redress the one-sidedness of the discourse requires approaching Andre not only as a sculptor who made poems, but also as a poet deeply engaged in the visual qualities of his poetics. As Andre often

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<sup>5</sup> In 1934 Ezra Pound published a selection of essays entitled *Make it New*. Now considered one of the grand slogans of literary modernism, the “Make it New” sentiment has as much to do with contemporary modernist literature as it does with the writers Pound perceived as his forbears, such as the Greeks and the troubadours. See Ezra Pound, *Make It New* (London: Faber and Faber, 1934).

<sup>6</sup> Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 34, 37.

recounts, “To talk about the link between my sculpture and my poetry: all I can say is that the same person does both.”<sup>7</sup> For Andre, temperament more than formal similarities connects his poetry to his sculpture. This does not refute, however, the visual quality of the works, which one can set alongside or parallel to his sculptural practice without diminishing either.

In 1935, the year of Andre’s birth, the Pennsylvania Station opened to the public. Twenty-five years later Andre worked as a brakeman on the Pennsylvania Railroad line, a job that both Andre and his critics regard as an experience crucial the development of his modular style. Nevertheless, Barbara Rose rightly noted that, “it was before his tenure on the railroad that Andre first became involved with the fundamental, irreducible definitions of making and constructing.”<sup>8</sup> Between 1958 and 1959, well before his first public exhibition, organized by E.C. Goossen at the Hudson River Museum in 1964, Andre produced dozens of small sculptures in wood and Plexiglas. His initial choice to cut into the material, rather than use modeling techniques, derived from his interest in Constantin Brancusi (1876-1957). Learning of Brancusi’s work around the mid-1950s through reproductions and Ezra Pound’s writings on the subject, Andre praised the ability of Brancusi’s sculpture to surpass the boundedness of verticality, which before had been terminal, feet at one end, head at the other. In addition, Andre saw in Brancusi’s work a structural combination of materials in a manner that was new, yet also conversant with Neolithic era works such as Stonehenge. Some of Andre’s most important early works in

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7 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 214.

8 Barbara Rose, "A Retrospective Note," foreword to *Carl Andre: Sculpture 1959-1977*, by David Bourdon, Carl Andre, and Laguna Gloria Art Museum (New York: Jaap Rietman, 1978), 10.

wood such as his *Last Ladder* (1959) reflect his indebtedness to Brancusi's *Endless Column* (1918) (fig. 3, 4). Instead of duplicating the concave form of *Endless Column*, Andre instead cut into the block of wood, allowing the sculpture to rest on the floor without the support of a pedestal. Describing this as his "response to Brancusi," Andre referred to these early cut objects as "negative sculptures."<sup>9</sup> In the later part of 1959 Andre further advanced his experiments in sculpture by trading the hammer and chisel for a machine-powered saw.

The versatility of the radial arm saw allowed Andre to produce his "Quincy Exercises," a series of small sculptures made in the summer of 1959 in his hometown of Quincy, Massachusetts. In these works, Andre furthered his experiments with negative sculptures, but now with the precision of a machine tool. Soon after, Andre moved away from using the saw to create geometric forms, focusing on techniques of joinery aided by the saw's ability to create incised joints. This innovation gave way to Andre's "Pyramid" sculptures, constructed out of pre-cut timbers, which Andre joined to construct outwardly or inwardly tapering lattices of beams. Again, each experiment presented Andre with another departure and by the end of 1959 Andre began a new body of work that he referred to as his "Element Series." Dropping joinery from his techniques of arrangement altogether, Andre configured units of material by "propping, bearing and loading" units of discrete materials.<sup>10</sup> In works such as *Posts on a Threshold* (1960) and *Stile* (1960), both part of the "Element Series," we find Andre stacking and piling timbers of identical dimension (12" x 12" x 36") (fig. 5, 6). Andre named his process of

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<sup>9</sup> Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 104.

<sup>10</sup> Carl Andre et al., *Carl Andre, Sculptor 1996: Krefeld at Home, Wolfsburg at Large* (Stuttgart: Oktagon, 1996), 76-77.

aggregating similar or identical units of materials, “clastic,” a term borrowed from geology. Describing the term in an interview with Phyllis Tuchman in 1970, Andre explained: “My particles are sorts of cuts across the mass spectrum in what I call a ‘clastic’ way (‘plastic’ is flowing of form and ‘clastic’ means broken or preexisting parts which can be put together or taken apart without joining or cementing)....”<sup>11</sup> Although these works pre-date Andre’s first show at the Hudson River Museum, Alistair Rider states, these “early years were formative, and it was during this period that Andre would generate a direction for his work that he has continued to pursue to the present.”<sup>12</sup>

“I wrote lots of Haiku’s” Andre said in a recent interview in his 34<sup>th</sup> floor apartment at 300 Mercer, “Would you like to hear one?”<sup>13</sup>

Birds in the city  
Snowfall on the ocean floor

Although not a traditional haiku, a stanza or stanzas consisting of three lines of five, seven, and five syllables each, Andre’s short poem uncovers a path into his long relationship with poetry. His juxtaposition of the birds with the snowfall generates a paratactic cut in the image, with the birds above and the snow below. An important term in Andre scholarship, the “cut” provides a compelling example of the imbalance in critical attention given to Andre’s sculptures. The first published use of the word “cut” occurred in David Bourdon’s influential 1966 essay, “The Razed Sites of Carl Andre.” In this essay, Bourdon quotes what is now one of Andre’s most famous statements on his work: “Up to a certain time I was cutting into things. Then I realized that the thing I was

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11 Andre et al., *Carl Andre, Sculptor 1996*, 47.

12 Carl Andre and Alistair Rider, *Carl Andre: Things in Their Elements* (London: Phaidon Press, 2011), 47.

13 Carl Andre, interview by the author, Carl Andre’s apartment in New York City, September 14, 2013.

cutting into was the cut. Rather than cut into the material, I now use the material as a cut in space.”<sup>14</sup>

In 1967, the Dwan Gallery in Los Angeles hosted a show of Andre’s titled *Cuts*, which consisted of 1,472 identical, rectangular concrete blocks. Andre arranged the blocks to create eight voids or cuts. Through this large-scale work, Andre produced a situation in which space and matter shared equal importance (fig. 7). Although explicitly referencing his sculpture, James Meyer uses the “cut” as a way into Andre’s epigrammatic style of writing, stating, “Just as his sculpture consists of “cuts” of elemental materials, his texts are condensed expressions, containing few asides, parenthetical remarks, and dependent clauses.”<sup>15</sup> Although apt, these comparisons often reduce the poems to derivations of the sculpture. Direct attention to the poems uncovers an experimental practice that collapses distinctions between form and content and word and image.

Inherently visual, the line break between the image of the birds and the image of snowfall in Andre’s simple haiku enables the paratactic sense of juxtaposition. Andre relates the images, but does not conjoin them. The birds and the snowfall remain singular, but also part of a whole. In William Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline*, Shakespeare creates a similar cut between the lines that is concurrently literal, metaphorical, and visual:

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14 David Bourdon, "The Razed Sites of Carl Andre," 1966, in *About Carl Andre: Critical Texts since 1965*, ed. Paula Feldman, Alistair Rider, and Karsten Schubert (London: Riding House, 2006), 25.

15 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 7.

With his own sword,  
Which he did wave against my throat, I have ta'en  
His head from him.<sup>16</sup>

When explored within a poetic context, Andre's "cuts" reflect his use of formal poetic and visual strategies more incisively than the application of sculptural concepts to the page. For Andre, the best poetry resists paraphrase. His interest in the specificity of diction derives from his love for his inestimable poetic forbears such as Keats (1795-1821), Pope (1688-1744), and Byron (1788-1824). Engaging the spirit of the "make it new" sensibility of modernist poetics, Andre developed his own practice by "mapping language on the conventions and usages of 20<sup>th</sup>-century abstract art."<sup>17</sup> To make his most important poetic cut, Andre created a cut in space between art and language, the cut itself materializing the space where the two coexist. In this space we find Andre's deep engagement with poetic history, particularly the innovations of Ezra Pound, his relationship to important poetic developments such as fragmentation and quotation, and his experimentation with poetry as a visual medium.

In a panel discussion hosted by Lucy Lippard in 1969, Andre described his process as the creation of a set of particles, "which the rules for joining the particles together is the characteristic of the single particle."<sup>18</sup> Finding this idea exemplified in Andre's poetry, Alistair Rider reprinted Andre's *preface to my work itself* (fig. 8):

preface to my work itself  
  
in, is, my, of, art, the, into,

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16 William Shakespeare, *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, ed. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, second ed. (Oxford: Oxford University, 2005), 1207.

17 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 215.

18 Carl Andre, in "Time: A Panel Discussion," *Art International*, vol. 13, no. 9 (November 1969): 23.

made, same, this, work, parts,  
piled, piles, broken, pieces,  
stacked, clastic, stacked,  
identical, interchangeable

“I have attempted to write poetry in which the sentence is not the dominant form,” explained Andre in a 1975 interview, “but the word is the dominant form.”<sup>19</sup> In *preface to my work itself*, Andre dismisses linear syntactical structures that rely on conventional subject and predicate relationships. Instead, he created a non-hierarchical syntagmatic structure that emphasizes the equivalence of units of language.<sup>20</sup> In many of his poems, Andre experimented with conventional techniques of joining words together. As he argued, a sentence like “I am a red pansy” relies on an “overriding super-referent.”<sup>21</sup> His non-syntactical construction of poems such as *preface to my work itself*, on the other hand, accentuates the specificity of its particular referents. Instead of writing, “My work is made of identical stacked pieces,” Andre asserts the individuality of each word, even subordinate articles and prepositions such as “the” and “of.”

Although lacking syntax, *preface to my work itself* provides a structure of a different order. As Andre wrote in 1964, “I am trying to demonstrate qualities of specific cuts of language by means other than grammar, logic, and association.”<sup>22</sup> Andre’s joining of various parts of speech calls attention to surprising relationships between words, contesting systematic approaches to language categorization. To generate *preface to my work itself* Andre employed a simple numerical strategy, which acknowledges that

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19 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 214.

20 A syntagm is a construction of words joined together to express a larger message.

21 Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 75.

22 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 209.

English speakers compose words by conjoining single letters of the alphabet. This numerical process generates a visual structure whereby the words become successively longer, a system that would be difficult to duplicate in a grammatically correct sentence. In addition to employing a numerical strategy to visual effect, a strategy that Andre used in many of his poems, he simultaneously attended to meaning by joining words that are grammatically non-sensical, but nevertheless evoke manifold meanings. Andre selected a body of words that the English speaker could easily reorganize to generate whole sentences, such as “My work is made of identical stacked pieces” or “This clastic art is made of broken piled pieces.” Missing altogether in this poem is the first-person singular subject pronoun “I.” Andre’s reliance on the word “my” renders any sentence formed from combinations of these words passive. Although Andre believed that subjectivity was an essential component of art production, his decision to leave out the personal pronoun “I” is indicative of his desire to let his materials speak for themselves.

In his notes on the properties of words from 1964, Andre questioned, “How shall we determine the metaphorical overtone of neighboring words? (The Chinese Written Character as Medium of Poetry – Fenellosa/Pound).”<sup>23</sup> In addition to proximity, Andre proposed that the complexity of the relationship between words extends beyond grammatical regularity, noting that words may be related based on spelling, sound, form, meaning, function, and identity. In his poetry, Andre explores “the metaphorical overtone of neighboring words” through attention to both what he describes as “intervals of words” as seen in the relations of spelling, sound, form, meaning, function, and identity

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<sup>23</sup> Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 210.

and the visual qualities inherent to language. As a poet, Andre accentuated metaphor through his acknowledgement of “a space gap or distance between objects, states, qualities, etc.” Yet, Andre’s use of metaphor relies more on association than resemblance. His expansion of the term metaphor is akin to Pound’s behavior as a translator. Considering translation a model for the poetic act, Pound believed that “the purpose of poetical translation is the poetry, not the verbal definitions in dictionaries.”<sup>24</sup> For Pound, it was a way of bringing blood back to ghosts.<sup>25</sup> Although not a translator, Andre’s interest in metaphorical overtones was an assertion of his belief in the multiplicity and instability of language. As Pound acknowledged in the *ABC of Reading*, “There is no end to the number of qualities which some people associate with a given work or kind of word, and most of these vary with the individual.”<sup>26</sup> Releasing words from their submissive position within dominant syntactic structures allows multiple complex associations to exist concurrently. Whereas Pound brought blood back to ghosts, Andre brought blood back to language, despite Robert Smithson’s claim that each of Andre’s poems “is a ‘grave,’ so to speak, for his metaphors. Semantics are driven out of his language to avoid meaning.”<sup>27</sup> Yet, unlike a traditional metaphor that relies on points of comparison between two related things to create an alternative definition, Andre’s metaphor insists that each word on its own can invoke its own series of relationships.

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24 Ernest Fenollosa, *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry*, ed. Ezra Pound (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1968), 6.

25 See Kenner’s chapter “Knot and Vortex” in *The Pound Era* for more on Pound’s relationship to translation. Kenner compares Pound’s act of translation to visible patterns such as those found in knots. On Pound’s translation of Andreas Divus’s *Odyssey* in Pounds Canto I, Kenner writes: “With these words we are suddenly watching rope flow through the knot, particulars rushing through the ‘radiant node or cluster’; and the Canto is no longer a specimen ‘version of Homer’ but an exhibition of ‘Homer’ as a persistent pattern, ‘from which, and through which, and into which’ flow imaginations, cultures, and languages.”

26 Ezra Pound, *ABC of Reading* (New York: New Directions, 2010), 37.

27 Robert Smithson, “A Museum of Language in the Vicinity of Art,” 1968, in *The Writings of Robert Smithson: Essays with Illustrations*, ed. Nancy Holt (New York: New York University, 1979), 67-8.

Extracting language from syntactical structures allowed Andre to dissolve the meaning, but not the tenor of language.

Arguing that, “the nature of the work creates the category of description,” Andre asserted that his poetry is a “separate and discrete field” from his sculpture.<sup>28</sup> The link between the two, Andre claims, is that “they’re related by the same temperament.”<sup>29</sup> Andre believed that one distinction between the plastic arts and poetry is that painting and sculpture deal with aspects of the human sensibility that cannot be addressed by language. In his sculpture, Andre accentuated the materiality of the sculpture itself, be it timbers or hot-rolled steel, viewing these materials as a residue of experience. Andre’s interest in poetry emerges from a similar longing for a primal relationship to the materiality of language. Like Samuel Beckett, who declared that, “More and more my own language appears to me like a veil that must be torn apart in order to get at the things (or Nothingness) behind it,” Andre strove to emphasize the primal thingness of language, not as a mode of communication, but as a demonstration of human inclination.<sup>30</sup>

One of the primary questions recommended by *preface for my work itself* is how Andre defines the word “work.” Does “work” refer to his poetry or his sculpture, or perhaps instead to the temperament that links the two? This line of questioning informs the entirety of this project, yet this inquiry does not focus on the similarities and differences between Andre’s poetry and sculpture, but instead investigates Andre’s poetry as a distinct practice. To this end, I will first explore Andre’s relationship to the

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28 Andre, in "Time: A Panel Discussion," 22.

29 Andre, in "Time: A Panel Discussion," 22.

30 Anthony Cronin, *Samuel Beckett: The Last Modernist* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997), 361.

poetry of Ezra Pound, before providing a close reading of a selection from Andre's poetic oeuvre. Lastly, I will reflect upon the publication and exhibition history of his poems and the manner of critical attention given to the poems from the 1960s onward. Although still a brief account of Andre's poetic practice, this inquiry contextualizes and explores Andre's practice of mapping poetry onto the visual arts, while also bridging the gap in discourse between the fields of art and poetry.

## On Poetry and Consecutive Matters

Coming from a family engaged by poetry, Andre's interest in poetic form and the visual and aural properties of language developed at a young age.<sup>31</sup> By age 23, Andre had created some of the first poems in the *Words* installation at the Chinati Foundation. The relationship between poetry and the visual arts at the time Andre created these early poems may best be characterized by two opposing dominant positions: one, the collaborative milieu established by the Tibor de Nagy circle of painters and poets; and two, the critical position established by Clement Greenberg which promoted a strict boundary between art forms, particularly between the literary and the visual. Nevertheless, numerous artists created a diverse array of works that do not reflect these two positions. Although the works of these artists share few formal qualities, they established an alternative treatment of language in the visual arts, distinct from the composed canvases and artist's books by the painters and poets of the 1950s. Disregarding categorizations of art that treated the integration of visual art and language as impure, artists such as Marcel Duchamp, Cy Twombly and Stuart Davis created integrated works that employed language to visual effect. Andre's poems, although regularly considered within the context of minimalism and conceptualism, converse with a much larger cadre of artists. Perhaps a strange selection of artists, rarely discussed within the same context, Duchamp, Twombly, and Davis's affinity for visual explorations

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<sup>31</sup> As a secretary for women's clubs, Andre's mother often wrote her reports in verse. See *Cuts*, 77-81.

of language place them within a discourse that crosses boundaries of medium, time, and movement. Explored in this context, Andre's poems converse with a large variety of visual artists, and also poets, historical and contemporary, that embrace the visual potentials of language through writing.

In his 2011 exhibition review of the sixtieth anniversary "Tibor de Nagy Gallery Painters and Poets," show, Holland Cotter lauded the collaboration between poets and visual artists as codified by the Tibor de Nagy gallery in the 1950s and 1960s. This era of creative collusion between poets and painters set the standard for one type of relationship between poetry and the visual arts during Andre's early period of poetic production. Exhibiting the work of Larry Rivers, Alfred Leslie, and Helen Frankenthaler while also publishing John Ashbery's first collection of poems, Tibor de Nagy was a significant site for both artists and poets. As Cotter reminisced, the owners "seemed as interested in new poetry as they were in art, and were producing a line of books combining the two."<sup>32</sup> Fomented by the connection of friends of friends, Tibor de Nagy hosted young poets such as Frank O'Hara who drew poets such as Ashbery and Kenneth Koch to the gallery.

Moving to New York in the early 1950s, O'Hara took a service job at the Museum of Modern Art, working his way up to Assistant Curator of Painting and Sculpture in 1960 while frequently reviewing shows for *ARTnews*. After meeting the painter Larry Rivers at a cocktail party at John Ashbery's apartment in New York, O'Hara and Rivers embarked on a number of collaborations including their 1952 satire of creativity entitled "How to Proceed in the Arts." In two of the dozens of

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<sup>32</sup> Holland Cotter, "When Art Dallied with Poetry on 53rd Street," *The New York Times*, January 20, 2011, sec. C, 27.

recommendations in “How to Proceed in the Arts,” Rivers and O’Hara exclaimed, “If you’re the type of person who thinks in words—paint!” and “Do you hear them say painting is action? We say painting is the appraisal of yourself by lions.”<sup>33</sup> Juxtaposing what he recalled as two distinct artistic behaviors in the 1950s, Cotter describes, “This was the high moment of Abstract Expressionism with its image of the heroic artist battling his way alone toward some existential sublime. Set this image against another: O’Hara and Rivers, lovers at the time, sitting knee to knee as they worked on a series of jointly made lithographs.”<sup>34</sup> Privileging the mythological personas of the Abstract Expressionists, Cotter’s review, penned in 2011, performs the polemic of 1950s era art world machismo.

In 1957, O’Hara and Rivers embarked on a lithograph series entitled *Stones*. This was the first project of Tatyana Grosman’s Universal Limited Art Editions (ULEA). Through ULEA, Grosman later produced editions with Jasper Johns, Lee Bontecou, Helen Frankenthaler, and Barnett Newman, among many others. For the *Stones* project, Grosman wanted to publish a book by Rivers and O’Hara that would, “be a real fusion of poetry and art, a real collaboration, not just drawings to illustrate poems.”<sup>35</sup> Although not a literal visual interpretation of O’Hara’s poems, *Stones*, like Rivers and O’Hara’s other joint projects, falls short of this unification.

In the spirit of collaboration, artists and poets in the Tibor de Nagy cadre published books of poetry with hand-painted covers by their artist friends, and poets

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33 Frank O’Hara and Larry Rivers, “How to Proceed in the Arts,” 1952, in *Evergreen Review Reader, 1957-1966*, ed. Dick Seaver, Fred Jordan, and Donald Allen (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2011).

34 Cotter, “When Art Dallied with,” sec. C, 27.

35 Russel Ferguson, *In Memory of My Feelings: Frank O’Hara and American Art* (Berkeley: University of California, 1999), 50.

reviewed their shows in the major art publications of the era. Not a blend of the two mediums into a single conversation as much as two adjoining conversations occurring simultaneously, the work of the painters and poets lacked the integration of image and text as reflected in the work of earlier artists such as Marcel Duchamp. For example, Rivers and O'Hara's 1961 *Portrait and Poem Painting* demonstrates more of an estrangement between text and image than a unification (fig. 9). The canvas appears bifurcated with O'Hara's text occupying the left side of the canvas and Rivers's figure occupying the right. Compared with Cy Twombly's *Poems to the Sea* (1959), which integrates both text, although illegible, and image to a unified effect, *Portrait and Poem Painting*, although on a single canvas maintains the recto and verso quality of a book of poetry accompanied by an image. Whereas Twombly engages the textual components of his work as a poet, informed by the contexts and techniques of poetry, the work of Tibor de Nagy group remained a composite conjoining of poetry and painting.

In contrast to the painters and poet's scene, artists such as Marcel Duchamp, Cy Twombly, and Stuart Davis provide alternative examples of the integration of image and text in the early to mid-twentieth century. Behaving both as writers and visual artists, all three incorporated image and text into aspects of their visual practice. For example, the punning titles of many of Duchamp's readymades function as a crucial part of the readymade itself. One of his best-known readymades, *Fresh Widow* (1920) enacts a readily discernible pun through a simple phonemic alteration, the deletion of "n" from "French" and "Window" (fig. 10). Constructed by a carpenter in New York City, *Fresh Widow* functions as a model of a French window by representation alone. Its form is

similar to a French window, with double casement windows closing against each other without a frame in between them. Yet, *Fresh Widow* is not typical of the class of “French windows.” Freestanding at roughly two-feet tall, with black leather covering the glass panes, *Fresh Widow* does not serve a utilitarian purpose. Whereas traditional styles of painting aspired to represent objects in the real world, *Fresh Widow* is an object in the real world. Inscribed with its title, it demonstrates the non-articulable space between both an object and its representation and an object and its name. The readymade becomes a realization of the pun; the language of the pun gains plastic significance. Duchamp’s punning titles support interpretative variability, as also demonstrated by his other readymades, such as *Apolinère Enameled* (1916) and *L.H.O.O.Q* (1919). Is “Fresh Widow” a reference to World War I widows or to Duchamp’s physical displacement from France, or something else entirely? By engaging multiple senses and forms of reading, Duchamp rejected fixed meanings. As he noted in his 1946 interview with James Johnson Sweeney, “For me the title was very important.”<sup>36</sup>

In Nicholas Cullinan’s 2008 chronology of Cy Twombly’s life and work, he writes that in the summer of 1959, Twombly “draws the series *Poems to the Sea*” (fig. 11).<sup>37</sup> Certainly, for brevity, the verb “to draw” suffices. Yet, we could also describe *Poems to the Sea* as a complex of actions, including painting, writing, composing, scribbling, or as David Sylvester adds, “living, looking, making.”<sup>38</sup> Twombly purportedly *drew, composed, and made Poems to the Sea* in just one day, while living in Sperlonga,

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36 Marcel Duchamp, *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp*, ed. Michel Sanouillet and Elmer Peterson (New York: De Capo, 1989), 125.

37 Nicholas Cullinan, “Chronology,” in *Cy Twombly: Cycles and Seasons*, ed. Nicholas Serota (New York: D.A.P., 2008), 238.

38 Richard Schiff, “Charm,” in *Cy Twombly: Cycles and Seasons*, ed. Nicholas Serota (New York: D.A.P., 2008), 19.

Italy, a small town located between Naples and Rome. Twombly invested the surface of *Poems to the Sea's* twenty-four serial pages with marks, smudges, lines, numbers, and question marks. He marked each page by hand in crayon, pencil, wax crayon and house paint.

Attending Black Mountain College in the 1950s, Twombly learned from a number of the most formidable figures of Abstract Expressionism including Franz Kline and Robert Motherwell. Indeed, "Motherwell's elegant calligraphy and his interest in the automatic handwriting of surrealist artists, as well as his thorough appreciation of symbolist poetry, cannot be discounted as early influences on Twombly's attitudes about art," argued Suzanne Delehanty.<sup>39</sup> Both Motherwell and Charles Olson, poet, professor and dean at Black Mountain from 1951 to 1956, wrote statements on Twombly's early work. In 1950, the year before Twombly started at Black Mountain, Olson published "Projective Verse," one of the most significant essays on poetry of the mid-century. In projective or open verse, breath not conventions such as traditional meter form poetic lines. Although Clement Greenberg conscribed the metaphor of breath to the application of paint on a surface, I suggest that breath in Twombly's *Poems to the Sea* reflects poetic movement through space. On the one hand, the serial nature of *Poems* demonstrates a regularity of breath as one moves from page to page. Contrastingly, each page has its own rhythm, its own visual pattern of breathing. The formal manifestations of breath in Twombly's work correspond to Olson's notion that poetic breath creates unique structures independent of received forms. From illegible gestures of language, to letters,

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<sup>39</sup> Suzanne Delehanty, "The Alchemy of Mind and Hand," 1975, in *Writings on Cy Twombly*, ed. Nicola Del Roscio (Munich: Schirmer/Mosel, 2002), 61.

whole words and fragments of poems extracted from Rilke or Baudelaire, language suffuses many of Twombly's paintings and drawings. Described by one of his teachers as a "poet in paint," Twombly's ". . . borrowings, quotations, allusions or appropriations, all owe something to a poetic tradition to which Olson, with his 'collagist approach to culture,' was already heir," argued Twombly scholar Richard Leeman.<sup>40</sup> This poetic tradition includes some of the same poets that most engaged Andre, including modernist poets T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound.

"As in Apollinaire [sic] poetry encroaches on painting, so let painting encroach on poetry," noted Stuart Davis in an unpublished piece of writing dated March 12, 1921. Introducing words into his Tobacco paintings of that same year, Davis's combination of language and painting ran contrary to the formalist line drawn by Greenberg in his essays such as "After Abstract Expressionism." "Not surprisingly as the hegemony of formalist criticism consolidated, Davis's reputation waned, and his ambition to combine language and image in art has remained largely unrecognized," argued Lewis Kachur in his essay "Stuart Davis's Word-Pictures."<sup>41</sup> In his later works from 1949 onward, Davis increasingly incorporated language into his works, such as *Visa* (1951) and *Rapt at Rappaport's* (1952) (fig. 12, 13). Davis inscribed the brightly colored picture plane of *Visa* with the boldly lettered words "Champion" and "Else" and the phrase "The Amazing Continuity," in his characteristic, playful cursive. Drawing from commercial

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40 Richard Leeman, *Cy Twombly: A Monograph* (Paris: Flammarion, 2005), 97.

41 Lewis Kachur, "Stuart Davis's Word-Pictures," in *Stuart Davis: American Painter*, by Lowery Stokes Sims (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991), 97.

product and sign design to generate the shape of the letters, Davis worked and re-worked the vibrant colors of his words and shapes in numerous studies and paintings.

A central component of Davis's play with words most certainly was his interest in the shapes of the letters and his engagement with the physicality of language towards the creation of form. As E.C. Goossen contended in his pioneering work on Stuart Davis in 1959, "If you are stopped by your inability to transcend connotations, then you will never be able to know or appreciate words as a visual artists does, as *things* rather than as signs for abstract ideas."<sup>42</sup> Goossen's formalist argument, though consistent with the predominant critical position on language and art at the time, rejected the centrality of language to Davis's rigorous approach to painting. As Kachur asserted, "The artist staked his late career on continuing the *peinture-poésie* tradition, which placed him in opposition to Abstract Expressionist action painting. Indeed, by the fall of 1954, Davis would define art as, 'The Shape of Language.'"<sup>43</sup> For Davis, words were equivalent to the drawing of shapes, yet these shapes were not randomly chosen, but selected based on Davis's relationship to the typography of commercial advertising. By employing the word "Champion" in *Visa*, Davis championed the nameless commercial designers of the first half of the twentieth century, for example, the designers of the matchbook cover advertisement for Champion spark plugs that *Visa* references. In favoring the quotidian American advertisement, Davis presented an alternative to the hero-worship of the big name Abstract Expressionists whose work was synonymous with American high-brow culture. Davis believed that titles enriched the quality of a visual image, characterizing

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42 E.C. Goossen, *Stuart Davis* (New York: George Braziller, 1959), 25.

43 Kachur, "Stuart Davis's Word-Pictures," in *Stuart Davis: American Painter*, 107.

the titles of his works as integral to the works themselves. Often selecting his titles from the ubiquitous language of contemporary life, such as *Ready to Wear* (1955), Davis, like Duchamp, also employed puns in his work. Although Goossen typified Davis's use of language as purely pictorial, not intellectual, Davis insisted that the meaning of language was as important as the form of the words themselves: "words & phrases, and their Meaning, are part of the Form-Shape of Drawing even if they appear only in the title. They are integral with the unanalyzed Given Any content."<sup>44</sup>

Greenberg's influential paradigm of dominant and subservient art forms, as established in "Towards a Newer Laocoon" (1940), staked a critical claim, which deemed the word and image practices of artists like Duchamp, Twombly, Davis, and Howe as impure. To "gain power over one's material," Greenberg argued, the artist must annihilate the encroachment of the other arts into their media. Failure to do so results in a "confusion of the arts." Later in "American-Type Painting" (1955), Greenberg asserted that the "law of modernism" decrees, "that the conventions not essential to the viability of a medium be discarded as soon as they are recognized."<sup>45</sup> The plastic arts must be freed from the dominant influence of language and subject matter. In his essay, "Collage," for example, Greenberg addresses George Braque's use of letters and numerals in paintings, such as *The Portuguese* (1911), but describes these features as tools for the advertisement of the support: "instead of being used to push an illusioned middleground farther away from an illusioned foreground, the imitation printing spells

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44 Kachur, "Stuart Davis's Word-Pictures," in *Stuart Davis: American Painter*, 107.

45 Clement Greenberg, "American-Type Painting," 1955, in *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), 208.

out the real paint surface and thereby pries it away from the illusion of depth” (fig. 14)<sup>46</sup> Braque described the introduction of lettering into his paintings as an attempt to get closer to reality. Whereas some critics have asserted that Braque’s use of language does not provide a context for his paintings, the text in both the title and in the painting in *Homage to J.S. Bach* (1911), as one example, suggests that Braque was certainly using text to contextualize his painting. In *Homage to J.S. Bach*, Braque applied the upper-case stenciled letters BACH and J S to the lower left corner of the painting (fig. 15). Far from a random selection of letters used solely to call attention to the actual picture surface, Braque’s Bach stencil provides multiple degrees of reference to his life and work, such as his training as a housepainter and classical musician and his admiration for Bach.<sup>47</sup> Additionally, through phonemic similarity, Braque enacts a play on words between their rhyming family names, Braque and Bach. More than just one critic’s admonishment of the blending of art forms, Greenberg’s critical stance on word and image, “. . . set down the main lines of a theory and history of culture since 1850,” as T.J. Clark has asserted. Although not always overt, the impact of Greenbergian thought is one factor contributing to the meager attention directed to Andre’s poems.

Much of what is known about Andre’s relationship to poetry in the late 1950s and early 1960s derives from a series of written dialogues between Andre and his close friend Hollis Frampton (fig. 16, 17). Attending Philips Academy Andover together as teenagers, the two bonded over a shared interest in science and art. Graduating in 1953, Andre spent

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46 Clement Greenberg, "Collage," 1959, in *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), 73.

47 See also Braque’s *Guitar and Glass (Guitaire et verre): Socrate* (1921) in which Braque partially spells out “Socrate,” the title of the symphony by Braque’s close friend, the composer Erik Satie. In addition to making this explicit textual reference to Satie’s work, Braque also collaborated with Satie on an illustrated version of Satie’s play *Le piège de Méduse* (1913).

the next three years serving in the U.S. Army in South Carolina, working and traveling before moving to New York in 1956. In spring 1958, Frampton moved to New York and lived briefly with Andre in a small hotel room near Columbia University. At this time Andre wrote, painted and developed a sculptural practice, which Frampton described as Andre “systematically mutilating (I can use no other word) bits of wood in a variety of ways, none of which were traditionally sculptural, for example charring, wire-brushing and so forth.”<sup>48</sup> Andre discarded much of his work from this period out of necessity. Regularly moving in and out of small studios and apartments was cumbersome and as Frampton recollected, “When he moved, the work was left behind. If it became too copious, he discarded it. Since he has moved often, and produced much, a great deal is gone.”<sup>49</sup> The situational ephemerality of Andre’s production led Frampton, a developing avant-garde photographer, to begin documenting Andre’s work in 1958. Frampton’s photographs, published in Andre and Frampton’s essential text *12 Dialogues* in 1981, remain some of the only records of Andre’s early sculptures. Andre and Frampton generated the dialogues over the course of a year, from October 14, 1962 to September 22, 1963 mostly on evenings and weekends in Andre’s one-room apartment in Brooklyn. A number of the dialogues begin with a discussion of recently shared art encounters. For example Frampton and Andre’s trip to the Philadelphia Museum of Art precipitated the third dialogue, “On a Journey to Philadelphia and Consecutive Matters,” in which they considered Marcel Duchamp’s *Large Glass* (1915-1923) and Auguste Rodin’s *The Gates*

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48 Hollis Frampton, "Letter to Enno Develing," 1969, in *About Carl Andre: Critical Texts since 1965*, ed. Paula Feldman, Alistair Rider, and Karsten Schubert (London: Riding House, 2006), 77.

49 Frampton, "Letter to Enno Develing," in *About Carl Andre: Critical*, 78.

*of Hell* (1880-circa 1890). As a starting point for the fourth dialogue, “On Painting and Consecutive Matters,” Andre proposed a discussion of the then current Barnett Newman/Willem de Kooning show at Allan Stone, which had opened a few weeks prior to the dialogue. Andre began the dialogue by recalling a comment made by Frank Stella the night before concerning the Newman/DeKooning exhibition. As recounted by Andre, Stella commented that the show, “demonstrated the inherent deficiencies of the Expressionist Style.”<sup>50</sup> Although closer to Frampton at the time, Stella also attended Philips with Andre and later, between 1958 and 1960, the Stella and Andre shared a studio space in New York. Andre’s intimate engagement with Stella’s work oriented Andre’s understanding of contemporary painting. Beginning with Frampton and Andre’s initial comments on the distinctions between the work of Stella, Newman, and de Kooning, the dialogue widens to include some of Andre’s most compelling early comments on the importance of experimentation, Constructivism, the relationship of painting and music to poetry, and Andre’s desire to create a plastic poetry. These ideas, cursorily and colloquially discussed by Andre and Frampton in their dialogue on painting, provide an entry point into the central terms and ideas of Andre’s poetic practice.

Although initially focused on distinctions between Newman and Stella’s paintings, Andre and Frampton shifted their attention to a question of process: Does the artist start with a fully formed idea of what a work should look like or does the artist generate a work through experimentation? Agreeing with Frampton that experimentation

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<sup>50</sup> Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 33.

is central to art, Andre asserted that contemporary artists and critics do not understand and instead often misinterpret the experiments of previous generations:

The idea of experimentation in art is very much derided today. I think experimentation in art is exactly the testing of aesthetic rules and taste in general. The results of the Dada experiments have not been fully evaluated to date.<sup>51</sup>

Andre identified his relationship to experimentation as a process of combining materials to achieve an unknown result, akin to a child discovering the creative power of chemistry. Describing this process as both scientific and creative, Andre's experiments with language proceed from a similar desire to combine text and image to produce new, unknown results. Continuing the dialogue on experimentation in painting, Andre asserts his interest in a "Constructivist aesthetic." The Constructivist aesthetic is not genre specific, nor a reference to Constructivism. Andre used Frank Stella's paintings as an example of the Constructivist aesthetic, arguing:

Frank Stella is a constructivist. He makes paintings by combining identical, discrete units. Those units are not stripes, but brush strokes. We have watched Frank Stella paint a picture. He fills in a pattern with uniform elements. His strip designs are the result of the shape and limitation of his primary unit. A brick wall is a Constructivist execution.<sup>52</sup>

For Andre, Newman's paintings could not be considered Constructivist in that Newman did not use identical, discrete units to achieve an overall effect. Whereas Constructivism begins with the notion of combining units, *clastic*, a term Andre adopted from the Greek, describes the act of breaking or the quality of being broken. Nevertheless, both methods result in arrangements of materials derived from primary units be it brush strokes, timbers, or words.

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51 Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 24.

52 Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 37.

Returning to painting, Andre argues that, “The innovation in twentieth century painting, Constructivism, provides the suggestion of an aesthetic which could be the basis for a kind of plastic poetry which retained the qualities of both poetry and painting. I am experimenting toward that end, anyway.”<sup>53</sup> Instead of fusing poetry and music, a combination which has existed as long as the history of poetry, Andre wanted to explore the graphic possibilities of painting and poetry. Noting a handful of examples, such as Apollinaire’s *Calligrammes* and Mallarme’s *Un Coup de Dés Jamais N’Abolira le Hasard (A Throw of the Dice will Never Abolish Chance)*, Frampton asserted that Andre is far from the first artist to explore this possibility (fig. 18, 19). Nevertheless, Andre argued that his poetry owes less or perhaps nothing at all to Concrete Poetry or the French experimental poetic tradition. Instead, he cites the value of his parents reading poetry to him as a child:

My father used to read poetry; he was very fond of poetry. He used to read poetry aloud to me as a small child... I remember him reading to me John Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" as a quite small child. I said, “That's fine, but what does it mean?” And he said something to the effect that “You'll know what it means when you don't have to ask that question.” It wasn't up to him to explain it to me, but it was up to me to find out eventually.<sup>54</sup>

Andre’s early questioning of the relevance of meaning in poetry is as important to his formal innovations as a poet, as his later interests in the Chinese written character, or ideogram, and the poetic innovations in Ezra Pound’s *Cantos*.

Andre’s attraction to the ideogram cannot be separated from his interest in Pound’s *Cantos*, for Pound was as T.S. Eliot stated in 1928, “the inventor of Chinese

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<sup>53</sup> Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 37.

<sup>54</sup> Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 79.

poetry for our time.”<sup>55</sup> By “our time,” Eliot meant the modernist era in literature, which Pound scholar Hugh Kenner named, “The Pound Era” in his eponymous book on the period.<sup>56</sup> Pound served as a touchstone for Andre for a number of reasons, one being that Frampton was, as Andre described him, “a devout Poundian.”<sup>57</sup> In the late 1950s, when Frampton was in his early twenties and Pound was in his early seventies, Frampton visited Pound in St. Elizabeth’s hospital, Washington, D.C., one of the largest psychiatric hospitals in the country at the time. “There was an incessant stream of visitors,” Frampton recounted in a 1978 interview. “Pound undertook to read aloud and to footnote live or to make oral scholia on the entirety of *The Cantos*—the whole shooting match. And it was mostly through that that I sat, and it was indeed an extraordinary experience.”<sup>58</sup> Frampton introduced Andre to Pound’s *Cantos* and his writings on the sculptures of Henri Gaudier-Brzeska and Constantin Brancusi. Returning again to Andre and Frampton’s 1962 dialogue, we find Andre championing Pound as a Constructivist, stating:

My Constructivism is the generation of overall designs by the multiplication of the qualities of the individual constituent elements. May I suggest, furthermore, that Ezra Pound in the *Cantos* exploits the plastic and Constructivist quality of words, symbols and phrases. Cummings would seem an obvious example, but I would insist that his divisions and eccentricities are more an attempt to reintroduce musical values in poetry rather than an exploitation of plastic possibilities.<sup>59</sup>

In addition to his use of the Chinese ideogram, what other attributes of Pound’s *Cantos*

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55 T.S. Eliot, introduction to *Selected Poems, by Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Gwyer, 1928), xvi.

56 Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era* (Berkeley: University of California, 1971).

57 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 102.

58 Hollis Frampton, *On the Camera Arts and Consecutive Matters*, ed. Bruce Jenkins (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009), 183.

59 Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 37.

attest to the plastic and Constructivist qualities of his poetry? And, to what end do these qualities appear in Andre's visual poems? Looking first at the ideogram, I argue that Andre adapted many features of Pound's poems within a spirit of "make it new" modernism. This is not to say that Andre adopted Poundian modernism, but instead I suggest that many of Andre's experiments with the visual and the poetic explore pre-existing terrains, rather than unknown territories. Andre and Pound's shared interest in the Chinese ideogram serves as evidence for Pound's claim that, "we [poets] have spent our strength in trying to pave the way for a new sort of poetic art--it is not a new sort but an old sort."<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Alec Marsh, *Ezra Pound* (London: Reaktion, 2011), 47.

## Ezra Pound's "Make it New" Modernism

Born in 1885, Ezra Pound lived in Hailey, Idaho territory, for the first year and a half of his life before moving to New York City. While attending the University of Pennsylvania at the age of 15, Pound first met his life-long friends, the poets Hilda Doolittle (H.D.) and William Carlos Williams. Eventually transferring to a smaller college in New York, Pound studied what we would now call comparative literature, with a focus on Dante. After a brief academic career, Pound travelled to Europe where he lived from 1911 to 1939 without a single return visit to the United States. During these years Pound published frequently, penning a number of articles in important small magazines of the era, such as *The New Age* and *The Egoist*. Through his involvement with small magazines, Pound promoted and published the most important figures of British modernism, including James Joyce, T.S. Eliot, and Wyndham Lewis. British modernism flourished in a time marked by the discovery of significant Greek, Egyptian, and Minoan archeological finds. In addition, the collapse of the Qing Empire in 1900 allowed for an influx of Chinese art and artifacts to surface in the British Museum. In 1909, Pound befriended the curator of Chinese acquisitions at the British Museum, Laurence Binyon. Binyon introduced Pound to the writings of American professor Ernest Fenollosa, author of the two-volume, *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*.

In 1913, Mary Fenollosa entrusted Pound with the literary remains of her late husband. This included approximately sixteen notebooks of Fenollosa's work on Far

Eastern literature and drafts of translations of Japanese dramas and Chinese poetry, including Fenollosa's essay "The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry." Of the "Chinese Written Character," Pound acclaimed: "what we have here is not a bare philological discussion, but a study of the fundamentals of all aesthetics."<sup>61</sup> Over the next years, Pound edited and published material from Fenollosa's notebooks and in 1915 he published *Cathay*, a collection of his own free-translations from Fenollosa's notes of Japanese translations of Chinese poems. "*Cathay* encouraged subsequent translators of Chinese to abandon rhyme and fixed stress counts," wrote Hugh Kenner, "It also inaugurated the long tradition of Pound the inspired but unreliable translator."<sup>62</sup> Indeed, neither Pound nor Fenollosa knew Chinese, yet translation was and remained for Pound fundamental to his conception of reading and writing poetry.

In 1920, after many failed attempts, Pound published "The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry" in *Instigations*, a collection of his own writings on French Poetry and Greek translations, as well as reviews of Eliot, Joyce, and Lewis. Fenollosa's understanding of the ideogram was of such importance to Pound that he opened the initial chapter of his 1934 textbook, *The ABC of Reading*, with an exposition on the key points of "The Chinese Written Character." By definition, an ideogram is "a character in an alphabet which functions as an image for that to which it refers."<sup>63</sup> Pound's understanding of the ideogram through Fenollosa became so fundamental to contemporary understandings of the ideogram that the citation for the ideogram in *The*

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61 Marsh, *Ezra Pound*, 68.

62 Kenner, *The Pound Era*, 199.

63 "Ideogram." *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*. Ed. Alex Preminger, et al. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993. 555-556. Gale Virtual Reference Library. Web. 7 July 2013.

*New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* focuses largely on Pound's development of the "ideogrammatic method." As Pound describes in *The ABC of Reading*:

...the Chinese still use abbreviated pictures AS pictures, that is to say, Chinese ideogram does not try to be the picture of a sound, or to be a written sign recalling a sound, but it is still the picture of a thing; of a thing in a given position or relation, or of a combination of things. It *means* the thing or the action or the situation, or quality germane to several things that it pictures.<sup>64</sup>

Instead of corresponding directly to things, Fenollosa argued that the Chinese ideogram, far more than an arbitrary symbol, depicts actions and relationships. "It is not so well known, perhaps," writes Fenollosa, "that the great number of the ideographic roots carry in them a verbal idea of action...a large number of the primitive Chinese characters, even the so-called radicals, are shorthand pictures of actions or processes."<sup>65</sup>

Fenollosa and Pound believed that the Chinese ideogram registered a method of cogitation, distinct from European thinking. Pound contrasted the European's reliance on increasingly abstract processes of definition with the Chinese ideograph, arguing that:

In Europe, if you ask a man to define anything, his definition always moves away from the simple things that he knows perfectly well, it recedes into an unknown region, that is a region of remoter and progressively remoter abstraction.

Thus if you ask him what red is, he says it is a "colour."

If you ask him what a colour is, he tells you it is a vibration or a refraction of light, or a division of the spectrum.

And if you ask him what vibration is, he tells you it is a mode of energy, or something of that sort, until you arrive at a modality of being, or non-being, or at any rate you get in beyond your depth and his depth...

By contrast to the method of abstraction, or defining things in more and still more general terms, Fenollosa emphasizes the method of science, "which is

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<sup>64</sup> Pound, *ABC of Reading*, 21.

<sup>65</sup> Fenollosa, *The Chinese Written Character*, 9.

the method of poetry,” as distinct from that of ”philosophic discussion,” and is the way the Chinese go about it in their ideograph or abbreviated picture writing.<sup>66</sup>

Pound believed that the process of definition necessitated a poetic methodology. The writer reflects the poetic method not through abstraction, but by composing a constellation of words or images. For further explication, Pound asked how an ideogram could depict a more complicated idea, such as the color red, without using red paint? To do so one would constellate “the abbreviated pictures of”:

<b>ROSE</b>	<b>CHERRY</b>
<b>IRON RUST</b>	<b>FLAMINGO</b>

57

Pound’s *Cantos*, his most important poetic work, blends his knowledge of the ideogram with his concurrently developing notions of Imagism and Vorticism. While many passages from *The Cantos* reflect these ideas, I have chosen a few that strongly resonate with Andre’s poems.

Let us begin with this short passage from Pound’s *Pisan Cantos*, composed during Pound’s detention for treason at the American Disciplinary Training Center north of Pisa, Italy.<sup>68</sup>

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66 Pound, *ABC of Reading*, 19-20.

67 Pound, *ABC of Reading*, 22.

68 While living in fascist Italy during World War II, Pound broadcasted a series of radio commentaries that attacked the President of United States, Roosevelt, and promoted anti-Semitic sentiments. Judging the broadcasts as treasonous, the U.S. government imprisoned Pound in a small wire cage at the American Disciplinary Training Center near Pisa. When back on U.S. soil, Pound was deemed mentally incompetent to stand trial and was incarcerated in St. Elizabeth’s Hospital in Washington D.C. until 1958.

Here are lynxes                      Here are lynxes,  
 Is there a sound in the forest  
    of pard or of bassarid  
 or crotale                      or of leaves moving?  
  
    Cythera, here are lynxes  
 Will the scrub-oak burst into flower?  
    There is a rose vine in this underbrush  
 Red? white? No, but a colour between them  
    When the pomegranate is open and the light falls  
 half thru it

69

In this section, Pound calls out to the Lynx for protection. “O Lynx keep watch on my fire,” he writes, and, “Lynx, keep watch on this orchard.” But, perhaps more importantly, as Hugh Kenner makes clear, “the spatial disposition of every word is functional,” adding: “In such a passage (more representative than it seems) the rhetoric of the indentations, in enacting the tension between ecstatic arrest and rhythmic chant, should escape no one.”<sup>70</sup>

Certainly Pound was not the first to acknowledge the page as a plane, nor the inherent visuality of the written word. For example, Mallarmé states in his 1897 preface to his most famous work, *Un Coup de Dés*, that the basic unit of a poem is the page and not the “Verse or the perfect line.”<sup>71</sup> Pound’s *Cantos* are perhaps not as visually daring as Mallarmé’s *Un Coup de Dés*, nor do they exemplify the “richness of structure” over “the richness of language” as some concrete poems of the 1950s demonstrate.<sup>72</sup> One could argue in *The Cantos* Pound engages less with distinctions between the page and words, or words and images and more with the ideogram as a foundational poetic principle.

69 Ezra Pound, *The Cantos of Ezra Pound* (New York: New Directions, 1970), 490.

70 Hugh Kenner, *The Poetry of Ezra Pound* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1985), 186-7.

71 Stéphane Mallarmé, *Collected Poems*, trans. Henry Weinfield (Berkeley: University of California, 2011), 121-2.

72 Marjorie Perloff, “Refiguring the Poundian Ideogram: from Blanco/Branco to Galáxias,” accessed September 22, 2013, <http://marjorieperloff.com/articles/refiguring-pound/>.

One finds many examples of Pound's "rhetoric of the indentations," as described by Kenner, as Pound's "interruption of lyric passages by the symbols of commerce found on every typewriter keyboard: a subtle and ironic instrument of tension."<sup>73</sup> As an example of one such interruption, Kenner provides the following passage from the opening canto of the *Pisan Cantos*:

. . . sinceritas  
from the death cells in sight of Mt Taishan @ Pisa  
as Fujiyama at Gardone  
when the cat walked the top bar of the railing  
and the water was still on the West side . . .

74

Demonstrated by Pound's use of the @ symbol in the above example, this passage exemplifies the potential for poetic meaning in traditional and non-traditional linguistic characters. In contradistinction to the clearly delineated form of traditional verse, such as the sonnet, which typically contains fourteen unbroken lines, Pound's *Cantos* appear structure-less or lacking in conventional formal rigor. Perhaps even more shocking for the reader of poetry in the first half of the twentieth-century than the abandonment of conventional form was, despite Mallarmé's radical output, Pound's use of Chinese ideograms.

Pound's deployment of the *Ching Ming* ideogram throughout Cantos LII to LXXI bridges the distinction between words and images (fig. 20). For Pound, the *Ching Ming* ideogram represented, "a kind of generic ideogram of Adamic language. For the non-

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73 Kenner, *The Poetry of Ezra*, 186.

74 Pound, *The Cantos of Ezra*, 427.

Chinese reader, however, it is a purely visual language.”<sup>75</sup> Notwithstanding this assertion, the non-Chinese reader comprehends the notion that, despite its immediate untranslatability, the ideogram reflects visual content while simultaneously signifying linguistic content. To this point, Marjorie Perloff suggests in “Refiguring the Poundian Ideogram” that, “The goal is not to have ideogram X translated but to allow that ideogram to function in its relationships to neighboring words—and to its own English equivalent.”<sup>76</sup> The ideogram’s ability to simultaneously demonstrate visual and linguistic content serves as a cornerstone of Pound’s relationship to poetic meaning making.

Both Pound and Andre associated the ideogram with the idea or act of right naming. As Andre wrote to Frampton, “the great natural poem about anything is its name.”<sup>77</sup> As Pound noted, “a hawk is a hawk.”<sup>78</sup> Or as Stein described, “a rose is a rose is a rose.”<sup>79</sup> Andre attributed his nominalist understanding to Confucius, stating, “As Confucius said, when he was asked what he would do if he were made the prime minister of the duchy where he lived, ‘The first thing I would do is call things by their right names.’”<sup>80</sup> Confucius, through Fenollosa, served as a key figure for Pound. In Canto XIII, devoted to Confucian teachings, Pound describes an interaction between Confucius and his disciples in which Confucius asks the disciples to discuss how they would like to spend their time, to which each provides a different response. To this, as Pound recounts in the canto:

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75 Mutlu Konuk Blasing, *Lyric poetry: The Pain and the Pleasure of Words* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 169.

76 Perloff, “Refiguring the Poundian Ideogram.”

77 Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 51.

78 Marjorie Perloff, “The Search for ‘Prime Words’: Pound, Duchamp and the Nominalist Ethos,” *Paideuma* 32 (2003), 206.

79 Gertrude Stein, *Geography and Plays* (New York: Something Else Press, 1968), 187.

80 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 85.

Kung smiled upon all of them equally.  
And Thseng-sie desired to know:  
‘Which had answered correctly?’  
And Kung said, ‘They have all answered correctly,  
‘That is to say, each in his nature.’<sup>81</sup>

Only with difficulty can we reflect on Pound’s beliefs concerning human nature. We should not separate his support of Mussolini during WWII, as well as his insidious anti-Semitism, from his interest in pure language and clear terminology, concepts initially derived from his understanding of Confucius. In his chapter on the *Ching Ming* ideogram, Kenner writes, “The whole key to Pound, the basis of his *Cantos*, his music, his economics, and everything else, is the concern for exact definition.”<sup>82</sup> Andre also endeavored to be a namer, not a rhymer. “Good poetry is calling things by their right names plus an indication of the benefits of doing so,” Andre asserted, “The rest is morphine where penicillin is required.”<sup>83</sup>

“An American mind, brought to ideographs by an art historian of Spanish descent who had been exposed to Transcendentalism,” writes Kenner, “derived Vorticism, the *Cantos*, and an ‘ideogrammatic method’ that modifies our sense of what Chinese can be.”<sup>84</sup> From 1912 to 1915 Pound engaged a number of paratactic strategies, of which the ideogrammatic method was only one. These strategies set the foundation for his stylistic developments in *The Cantos*. Through Imagism, the short-lived poetic movement developed by H.D. and Pound, Pound moved towards the pictorial. By 1914 he transformed his conception of the image into the patterned energies of the Vortex.

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81 Pound, *The Cantos of Ezra*, 58.

82 Kenner, *The Poetry of Ezra*, 37.

83 Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 52.

84 Kenner, *The Pound Era*, 162.

Published in 1913, Pound's "In a Station of the Metro" is his most famous Imagist poem. Terse at only twenty words including the title, the poem reads:

IN A STATION OF THE METRO  
The apparition of these faces in the crowd;  
Petals on a wet, black bough.

Pound's paratactic strategy defies straightforward equivalence and the poem resists the determined relationships proscribed by figures of speech. "Pound called it an equation," writes Kenner, "meaning not a redundancy,  $a$  equals  $a$ , but a generalization of unexpected exactness."<sup>85</sup> Indeed, his deployment of the ideogram or juxtaposed fragments of language repels simple deduction. The poem reflects arrangement and coordination, not syntactical subjugation. The paratactic revels in placing the dissimilar side by side. Thinking back to Andre's haiku, the poems are not about what Andre or Pound saw, but situates what they saw into a relational context. Furthermore, to witness the complexity of "In a Station at the Metro," one must look to its original publication in *Poetry* magazine in 1913. As Bartholomew Brinkman argued, the poem, as published in *Poetry*, should be treated as an art object.

In October 1912, Harriet Monroe published the first issue of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*. Through *Poetry*, Monroe endeavored to redefine the scope of poem by questioning entrenched theories of style, form, and genre:

*Poetry* has frankly tried to widen the poet's range, to question conventional barriers, whether technical or spiritual, inherited from the past, and help to bring the modern poet face to face with the modern world. We have printed not only odes and sonnets, but imagistic songs, futuristic fugues, fantasies in *vers libre*,

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85 Kenner, *The Pound Era*, 185.

rhapsodies in polyphonic prose—any dash for freedom which seemed to have life and hope in it...<sup>86</sup>

In keeping with this spirit, *Poetry* was the first to publish the poems of the Imagists, including Pound, H.D., and Richard Aldington. Yet, it was not just that *Poetry* published the poems of burgeoning modernist poets, but *how* they were published. Indeed, my transcription, as well as most subsequent reproductions of “In a Station of the Metro,” poorly demonstrates a key feature of the poem—its intentional visual quality (fig. 21). In her “Review of *Des Imagistes: An Anthology*” published in *Poetry* 1916, poet Alice Corbin Henderson described Imagist poems as “essentially a graphic art, and, like the finest etching, print, or wood-cut, depends upon a highly cultivated state of the observer.”<sup>87</sup>

In the original publication of “In a Station of the Metro,” Pound transcribes the words and phrases as visual fragments, combined into a necessary whole. He provided them space to exist on their own terms, both textual and visual. The poem requires an expressly visual attention. “The reader becomes a connoisseur,” suggests Brinkman, “admiring the poem not so much for its content as for its image...”<sup>88</sup> Yet, can we separate the content from the image? “In a Station of the Metro” announces that content and form are not separate or even intertwined, but one and the same. As Pound requested, Monroe set the poem “in the center of whatever white space” there was on the page.<sup>89</sup> Pound interpreted the page plane as a “white space” that could be manipulated and made useful

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86 Bartholomew Brinkman, "Poetry: Format, Genre and the Invention of Imagism(e)," *Journal of Modern Literature* 32, no. 2 (Winter 2009): 31.

87 Brinkman, "Poetry: Format, Genre and the Invention," 33.

88 Brinkman, "Poetry: Format, Genre and the Invention," 33.

89 Brinkman, "Poetry: Format, Genre and the Invention," 34.

and resonant, not merely a tool for communication and commerce. Reflecting on the poem in 1916, Pound wrote:

my experience in Paris should have gone into paint. If instead of colour I had perceived sound or planes in relation, I should have expressed it in music or in sculpture. Colour was, in that instance, the 'primary pigment'; I mean that it was the first adequate equation that came into consciousness.<sup>90</sup>

Through Vorticism, Pound realized in poetry his vision for planes in relation. Instead of the single image, "which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time," Pound developed the notion of the image as a "radiant node or cluster," a "VORTEX."<sup>91</sup>

By 1914, Pound had grafted Imagisme onto the Vorticist movement, an alliance of artists whose key organizer was Wyndam Lewis. Lewis, a British painter and author, articulated the ideas of Vorticism in *Blast*, a small, London-based literary publication. Through Vorticism, Pound added movement, dynamism, and intensity to his notion of the paratactic image. Whereas Imagism "regarded" and "treated" an idea, Vorticism allowed ideas to "blast," "rush" and "transform." Pound desired to destroy conventional notions of the image as a mimetic tool or decorative embellishment of poetry. He attacked conventional narrative in which poets fashioned images as narrative supports. As a confluence of energies, the Vortex became the perfect emblem for a modern inventive energy, a cluster of ideas that rush together to yield a definite shape. In this way, argued

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90 Brinkman, "Poetry: Format, Genre and the Invention," 36.

91 Kenner, *The Pound Era*, 185.

Herbert N. Schneidau, “The Vorticist Image, then, is really a dynamic whirling ideogram.”<sup>92</sup>

Pound’s Vorticism shared many concerns with the Chinese ideogram, including “the dominance of the verb and its power to obliterate all other parts of speech.”<sup>93</sup> The ideogram, which as Fenollosa described combines “several pictorial elements into a single character,” is not unlike Pound’s notion of the Vortex in which multiple ideas circulate and transform. “A true noun as an isolated thing does not exist in nature,” wrote Fenollosa, “Things are only the terminal points, or rather the meeting points of actions, cross-sections cut through actions, snapshots. Neither can a pure verb, an abstract motion, be possible in nature. The eye sees noun and verb as one, things in motion, motion in things...”<sup>94</sup> Whereas Vorticism also shared with Italian Futurism an insistence on motion and dynamism, Pound and Lewis rejected Futurism’s nihilistic disregard for the past. “The vorticist has not this curious tic for destroying past glories,” wrote Pound.<sup>95</sup> Instead, Pound strove to make the past usable—to make the dead live. Through the combination of Imagism, Vorticism, and the ideogram, Pound blended the achievements of ages past with his own formal innovations, articulated by Kenner as the creation of “patterned energies.”<sup>96</sup> As Kenner describes, Pound’s Canto I adopts a Homeric narrative, but “the Canto is no longer a specimen ‘version of Homer’ but an exhibition of ‘Homer’ as a persistent pattern, ‘from which, and through which, and into which’ flow

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92 Henry Schneidau, "Vorticism and the Career of Ezra Pound," *Modern Philology* 65, no. 3 (February 1968): 222.

93 Fenollosa, *The Chinese Written Character*, 29.

94 Kenner, *The Pound Era*, 157.

95 Ezra Pound, *Gaudier-Brzeska* (New York: John Lane, 1916), 104.

96 Kenner, *The Pound Era*, 151.

imaginations, cultures, and languages.”<sup>97</sup> Pound created new patterns for the conservation of creative energies from millennia past.

Pound’s famous slogan, “Make it new” announces a key contradiction in modernist poetry. Excerpted from the phrase, “Make it new day by day make it new,” written on the bathtub of a sixth-century Chinese Emperor, the modernist motto is simultaneously forward and backward looking, like the Roman God Janus, the god of gates, doors, passages, war and peace. Ancient scraps of papyrus found their way into fragments of modernist poetry. Not the syntax of the ancients, but words and phrases re-entered into the poetic present. Poorly described as “influence,” Kenner instead likened the practice to homeomorphism, a scientific term for continuous transformation. The *Odyssey* transforms into *Hamlet*, *The Divine Comedy* transforms into *The Cantos*. This dynamism of transformation, translation, and quotation marks the works of Eliot, Joyce, and Pound. In *The Cantos*, Pound placed the Chinese *hsien* ideogram alongside a description of an Italian folk custom (fig. 22). Not just a paratactic strategy in service of the single image, Pound’s arrangements transcended distinctions between time, language, and culture, generating complex clusters of images. Pound reclaimed, translated, and transformed the fragments of the past, generating what Kenner describes as “quotation newly energized, as a cyclotron augments the energies of common particles circulating.”<sup>98</sup> Constructed out of particles and discrete elements of language, Pound also recognized that the space around these particles of language on a page demanded rigorous attention.

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97 Kenner, *The Pound Era*, 149.

98 Kenner, *The Pound Era*, 126.

Flipping through the pages of *The Cantos* one recognizes the wild, seemingly erratic structure of each page, an antipode of Dante's orderly *terza rima* stanzas (fig. 23). Far from non-sensical, Pound's *Cantos* provide a structure of a different order. Instead of stanza-level, fixed units, Pound's order materializes at the level of the word. With modernism, "Newton's universe—a mental, not a physical entity—was gone," argued Kenner, "gone too the objects strewn through it in a state of 'rest,' awaiting the impingement of causality: the metals waiting to be oxidized, the water to be pumped, the poets to be 'influenced.'"<sup>99</sup> Pick any page of *The Cantos*—perhaps the fifth page of Canto IX (fig. 24).<sup>100</sup> The reader finds herself immersed in a colloquial letter sent from the faithful Lunarda de Palla dated 20 Dec. 1454. De Palla worked as the tutor of Sallustio, murdered sixteen years later by his half-brother Roberto. Just one of a series of epistolary passages, the letter expresses an emphatic form with the inclusion of open quotation marks at the beginning of each sentence. Pound insists on the quotational characteristic of these passages through assertive typographic intervention. In Pound, Andre saw the ability to combine words as discrete units to visual effect. First purchasing a typewriter in 1913, Pound, as Kenner describes, reproduced "on the machine a gesture his hand always performed when it held a pen and marked with wide spaces the initial stroke of the new world."<sup>101</sup> The typewriter's grid allowed Pound to design the letters and words on a page so as to emphasize the inherent visual quality of language.<sup>102</sup> In his

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99 Kenner, *The Pound Era*, 155.

100 Pound, *The Cantos of Ezra*, 38.

101 Kenner, *The Pound Era*, 90.

102 Although Pound would likely not have used this term, his poems reflect a plastic understanding of language. As Frampton defined in his conversation with Andre titled, "On Plasticity and Consecutive Matters": "While it's still soft you can push it around. When it gets hard, it pushes you around. Miss Miriam Webster says it means pliable, impressionable, capable of being molded or modeled. In

poems, Andre utilized similar tools and techniques to create structured shapes of language.

“Making it new” from Pound, Andre advanced his own structure related to the ideogrammatic and fragmentary. Wanting to “map poetry onto the visual arts,” Andre combined Poundian innovation with his understanding of the “plastic and Constructivist quality of words, symbols and phrases.”<sup>103</sup> Like Pound, he did not follow the path of Apollinaire and his calligrams, in which the poet arranges the text into a representational pattern, but instead Andre generated his own adaptation of patterned energies for his expressly plastic poetry. Returning again to Frampton and Andre’s dialogue “On Painting and Consecutive Matters,” Andre closed the discussion with the following example:

My plastic poem about the rose will not be printed in a blooming, petalled pattern:

roseroseroserose  
roseroseroserose  
roseroseroserose  
roseroseroserose  
roseroseroserose  
roseroseroserose  
roseroseroserose  
roseroseroserose  
roseroseroserose

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Far more so than Pound, Andre’s concerns are both painterly and poetic. He focuses his attention both on the contrasting values of his “rose” poem and recognizes that the word

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art, characterized by being modeled hence, sculptural in form or effect” (Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 41). It bears noting that Andre had deep regard for Pound’s sculptural criticism, namely his writings on Constantin Brancusi. Of Pound’s criticism, Andre recounted: “He wrote at least one pamphlet on the works of Brancusi and Brancusi did a portrait of Pound, which Pound still possessed. It just seemed that Pound had an eye for sculpture. I think he is the premier critic of sculpture in the 20th century. He had this natural inclination towards sculpture the way I do. He is a critic who can appreciate it” (Kenner, *The Pound Era*, 216).

103 Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 37.

104 Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 38.

“violet” maintains a different plastic appearance from the word “rose.” The poem plays upon and questions Stein’s “rose is a rose is a rose is a rose.”<sup>105</sup>

In a later dialogue between Frampton and Andre titled, “On Poetry and Consecutive Matters,” Frampton challenges the necessity of Andre’s word choice in his work *First Five Poems*. “Blue/six/hair/ear/light?,” writes Frampton, “why your own five words (green, five, horn, eye, sound), instead of the first five I just typed?” Andre’s response: “These poems begin in the qualities of word. Whole poems are made out of the many single poems we call words.”<sup>106</sup> Like *preface to my work itself, First Five Poems* does not contain the traditional formal elements of a poem: rhyme, rhythm, or meter. Every word constitutes a poem. The poem’s concision prompts close attention to the words themselves. What are the qualities of these words? How are their qualities altered by Andre’s particular arrangement? Is there a richness in paucity of his poems? As Frampton writes, “You would grind off the pearly layers to find the grit. From my didactic stance I see these five poems as the nursery school of a new curriculum.”<sup>107</sup> Whereas the old curriculum taught that a poem must contain a specific, hidden meaning using symbolic language for the reader to decipher, Andre’s new curriculum rejects mystery, while maintaining complexity in a formally simplified structure. “In one sense I am trying to make it new,” Andre responded, “But even more, I am trying to recover a

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105 Of Stein Andre wrote, “Gertrude Stein in her obfuscation did touch on the human need to return literature to a size compatible to the capacity of the human mouth. Her monosyllables and indicative sentences are impressive, at least one at a time. And surely the great natural poem about anything is its name.” See Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 38. In addition, an unpublished poem of Andre’s further attests to his regard for Stein’s work: “TIME WILL BE KIND / TO GERTRUDE STEIN. SHE WILL NOT SEEM / TO RISE. THE DUST / AROUND WILL BLOW AWAY. / HER STONE WILL STAY.” In this short poem, Andre makes use of Stein’s diction in *Tender Buttons*. The word “kind” is particularly resonant and features prominently in *Tender Buttons*, in lines such as, “A kind in glass and a cousin, a spectacle and nothing strange a single hurt color and an arrangement in a system to pointing.”

106 Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 75.

107 Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 76.

part of the poet's work which has been lost. Our first poets were the namers, not the rhymers. Our first poets were the men who first associated the sounds they could make in their throats with the things around them."<sup>108</sup> Like Pound, Andre desired to simultaneously make it new and "recapture the ecstatic clarity of those first associations."<sup>109</sup>

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108 Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 76.

109 Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 76.

## *Words*

“For more than thirty years I have tried to create English poetry by mapping language on the conventions and usages of 20<sup>th</sup>-century abstract art,” Andre recalled in 1992, “The success or failure of these attempts will be judged not by their novelty but by their usefulness as poetry.”<sup>110</sup> Building upon the poetic innovations of the modernists, Andre formed his own relationship to the materiality of language, fragmentation, composition, history, and genre through an expressly abstract visual-poetic practice. Because of the large scale of the *Words* project at The Chinati Foundation, I have selected five sections of poems for consideration, four installed (*One Hundred Sonnets*, *Shape and Structure*, *Stillanovel*, *A Long History of King Philip’s War*) and one uninstalled (*OVER 2*).

Each work in the installation belongs to one of twelve categories, such as “Historical References” or “Lyrics.” Andre occasionally gave titles to specific works within these categories, such as *Pope Byron Andre* located in the “Autobiographical References” section. In some instances, many pages of poems in a given category form a unit, as in the case of Andre’s *One Hundred Sonnets*. Alternately, Andre placed many discrete works within a single category. For example, the section “Odes” contains the poem *144 Times (Lament for the Children)* and *De Kooning.Gorky.Pollack*. Andre’s categories are often unconventional, such as the section “Oversized,” which does not

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<sup>110</sup> Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 215.

include a single work larger than his standard 8.5 x 11 sized pages. As Andre says, “We get trapped in our categories...I wrote sonnets that weren’t sonnets and novels that weren’t novels.”<sup>111</sup> A close look at a few of Andre’s poems aids in clarifying some of the most salient features of his poetry, such as his conception of right naming, Constructivism, and the plastic possibilities of language.

### **ONE HUNDRED SONNETS, 1963**

Andre’s first poem upon entry into the *Words* installation, *One Hundred Sonnets* (1963), consists of 99 pages on to which he typed the same noun repeatedly to fill a rectangular plane, one plane per page, one noun or pronoun per plane (fig. 25). The gridded-square structure of the sonnet is the key visual component of the work, a feature made possible through the use of the fixed-width character setting of the typewriter. Each character occupies approximately the same amount of space, and each sonnet includes a set number of these units, either 392 or 400, depending on the number of letters in each word. Andre set the approximate visual rule for the characters and word units, generating lines of either twenty-eight or thirty characters, also depending on the number of letters in each word. Andre begins *One Hundred Sonnets* by repeating the self-referential pronoun “I” thirty times across the first page. A few sonnets later he repeats the four-letter word “head” seven times to produce a line that is twenty-eight characters long, and so on. Andre arranged each sonnet into six sections unified by kind. He begins with the pronouns, I, you, he, she, it, and moves successively to body part, fluids, numbers,

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<sup>111</sup> Andre, interview.

minerals, colors, and terrestrial and planetary phenomena and subjects. The arrangement in the cases creates surprising juxtapositions between these various categories. For example, due to the placement, two rows of ten sonnets in each case, we have combinations such as the following:

sunsunsunsunsunsunsunsunsunsunsunsun  
sunsunsunsunsunsunsunsunsunsunsunsun

tidetidetidetidetidetidetide  
tidetidetidetidetidetidetide

There are numerous possible readings in this simple combination. There is the initial shock of reading tides aligned with the sun, rather than the moon, in a combination where the word sun defines a particular subcategory of tide. Or, we can think of the two

words as equivalent, “sun tide.” Incomprehensible at first, we may also remember the wave-particle duality of light in which case we imagine the sun issuing, metaphorically, a constant tide of light. Or, perhaps we simply think, nominally, of sun light illuminating the tide. Or, we can think of the word tide in its rise and fall, the sun’s tide, as a synonym for the sun’s diurnal activity. But, there is still the pressing question of genre and form. How can we read either of these as a sonnet? Andre’s poem is far from Shakespeare’s “Sonnet 138”:

When my love swears that she is made of truth,  
I do believe her, though I know she lies,  
That she might think me some untutor’d youth,  
Unlearned in the world’s false subtleties.<sup>112</sup>

*One Hundred Sonnets* lacks most of the formal characteristics of a sonnet: iambic pentameter, a volta, or rigorous attention to syllabic substitution. The standard structure of a Shakespearean sonnet allows for easy navigability. The repetitive force of Andre’s sonnets, in contrast, disorients the reader. Words hide within strings of words. The word “bowel,” for example, appears within “elbowelbowelbow” (fig. 26). Andre generates meaning by forming relationships of words as singular units on a page, in contrast to utilizing habitual syntactic relationships between subjects, verbs, and predicates.

The poem’s orientation of words in space demonstrates the centrality of the visual for reading and meaning-making. The repetition of form suggests an equivalency amongst different words. The grid structure equalizes the word units, generating a non-syntactical equivalence between each word. Andre gestures paratactically toward

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<sup>112</sup> William Shakespeare, *The Poems and Sonnets of William Shakespeare* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1994), 71.

numerous comparisons without the “like” or “as” construction of the simile. He reserves the connective action for the reader/viewer. Although engaging a paratactic strategy, Andre expands Pound’s technique of juxtaposing dissimilar images in the poem “In a Station of the Metro.” Each repeated word in Andre’s sonnets exists within a paratactic structure with every other word. Moreover, each sonnet relates to every other sonnet paratactically. Describing the sonnets to Frampton, Andre wrote:

In *Five Poems*, I accomplished a kind of dissociation, an isolation of single words from all the others. In the *Sonnets* I attempted to generate a form by the repetition of the dissociated elements... You tend to take curves in order to discover values. I take values to obtain curves. Each sonnet of the *Sonnets* is the curve obtained by the repetition of an element. I was trying to map a poetry on a plastic, rather than a musical system.<sup>113</sup>

Andre’s repetitive structure does not evacuate meaning, but instead allows for a reevaluation of meaning. Every word has its own value. As Andre generates visual, not syntactic relationships between words, these values shift. If mapped, these shifts create shape, a plastic not a musical quality. *One Hundred Sonnets* denies the reader the ability to identify meaning or easily paraphrase the content of a poem. Still maintaining a rigorous and highly organized structure, Andre generated new rules for the sonnet while exploring the Constructivist qualities of language in which individual constituent elements, in this case letters and words, combine to form an all-over design.

### **SHAPE AND STRUCTURE, 1963**

Of all of the works in the *Words* installation, *Shape and Structure* least resembles poetry. None of the ten works in the series contain a single alphabetic character. Instead,

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<sup>113</sup> Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 76.

Andre reduced the linguistic content of these poems to periods, commas, consecutive dashes, backslashes, and asterisks. Although non-alphabetic, these common characters serve necessary functions in most texts. While periods and commas perform grammatical functions, the asterisk can be used to distinguish the omission of words or characters, among many other conjectural functions. Among other shapes, Andre formed grids, triangles, and line-based cruciform constructions reminiscent of Kasimir Malevich's Suprematist compositions. As in almost all of the works in *Words*, the diversity of the keys on Andre's typewriter determined his linguistic and visual palette.

Though the works in *Shape and Structure* fit within the definition of a calligram, in which the poet arranges the typeface or handwritten characters to form a visual image, Andre's poems do not generate figurative representations, such as Apollinaire's Eiffel Tower. Instead, Andre produced abstract shapes and structures employing the Constructivist method of combining discrete units to generate a design. Returning again to Andre's first encounters of poetry as a small child, Andre stated:

The books that interested me were the books of poetry, not because I would read them, but because the shape of the poems on the page was much more interesting than the shape of the dull gray prose in solid blocks. I used to love to look at the poems of Whitman, because one could see the reoccurrence of form without being able to read" (fig. 27).<sup>114</sup>

The young Andre acknowledged that poetry allowed for a variety of visual forms, some of which reoccurred depending on the poetic genre. With Whitman more than Apollinaire in mind, Andre cultivated his notion of the plastic possibilities of language, while concurrently pushing the boundaries of language.

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<sup>114</sup> Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 212.

To compose the first, and perhaps simplest work in the *Shape and Structure* series, Andre created five horizontal lines crossed vertically by four lines to generate a grid (fig. 28). The work resembles a large tic-tac-toe board in which the winner would need to fill in six boxes of successive x's or o's to win the board. "My obsession with grids," as Andre says, "came because my father was a designer of plumbing for ships. His drafts were on graph paper so that sketches could be made quickly."<sup>115</sup> Instead of making sketches on graph paper by hand, as his father had done, Andre produced an enlarged and exaggerated grid by a mechanical method. "The grid system for the poems comes from the fact that I was using a mechanical typewriter to write the poems, and as you know a mechanical typewriter has even letter spacing, as opposed to print which has justified lines with unequal letter spacing," stated Andre in a 1973 interview. "A mechanical typewriter is essentially a grid and you cannot evade that. And so it really came from the typewriter that I used the grid rather than from the grid to the typewriter."<sup>116</sup> A primary compositional method of many of Andre's sculptures, the grid also provides the structure for all of Andre's poems. Moreover, Andre uses the word "grid" itself in a number of his poems, including, *Essay on Sculpture for E C Goossen 1964* (1964), *Essay on Photography for Hollis Frampton* (1963-4), and *Leverwords* (1966).

Opening her discussion of "Modernist Myths" with a chapter on the grid, Rosalind Krauss writes: "Yet it is safe to say that no form within the whole of modern aesthetic production has sustained itself so relentlessly while at the same time being so

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115 Andre, interview.

116 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 212.

impervious to change.”<sup>117</sup> For Krauss, the spatial and temporal qualities made manifest by the grid declared “the modernity of modern art.”<sup>118</sup> Krauss argued that the flatness, anti-naturalistic, geometricized order of the grid, as well as its ubiquity in twentieth-century art, made it particularly “modern.” Moreover, Krauss described the grid as a tool that helped to wall “the visual arts into a realm of exclusive visuality” as a defense “against the intrusion of speech.”<sup>119</sup> Andre’s grid demonstrates a counter aim to the notion that the grid is a tool for the exclusion of literature from the plastic arts. His use of a typographic character to draw the lines of his grid demonstrates a blending of text and image that resists the Greenbergian binary of dominance and subservience. The work remains abstract although utilizing the tools of language.<sup>120</sup>

Although approximate in size and form, the three triangular works in this section all maintain distinct internal constructions due to the diversity of keyboard characters used to produce them. In the installed portion of *Shape and Structure*, consisting of ten pages, Andre created three discrete triangles, two of periods and one of backslashes (fig. 29, 30, 31). The backslash triangle is equilateral, with thirty-three backslashes on all sides. To build this triangle, as well as the triangles composed of periods, Andre centered the first character at the top-middle of the page and then added one character per line downward and outward from this central position. Andre often used this additive

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117 Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986), 9.

118 Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde*, 9.

119 Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde*, 9.

120 W.J.T. Mitchell states that, “The true face of the ‘will to silence in abstract art is not the ‘grid’ of its compositional forms, but the imposition of a social mandate: you are not qualified to speak about this painting, keep your mouths shut.” Mitchell argues that the modern movement signaled a shift from *Ut pictura poesis* (the collaboration between art and language) to *ut pictura theoria* (the relationship between art and criticism). Mitchell questions the success of critical narratives that “represented abstract art as a repression of literature, verbal discourse, or language itself in favor of ‘pure’ visuality or painterly form.” See W.J.T. Mitchell, “*Ut Pictura Theoria: Abstract Painting and the Repression of Language*,” *Critical Inquiry* 15 (Winter 1989).

technique in his works with both letters and whole words. For example, in *144 Times (Lament for the Children)*, also part of the Chinati Foundation's installed collection, Andre began each stanza with one four letter word and then added an additional word per line for six lines, generating isosceles triangle-shaped stanzas (fig. 32). Rather than using letters in *Shape and Structure*, Andre used non-linguistic characters such as dashes or periods, and the non-visible space, tab, and return keys. To create the equilateral form, Andre controlled the amount of "blank" spaces added after each character thereby elevating the non-meaning bearing "blank" spaces to the level of the meaning bearing characters and rendering the distinction between meaning and non-meaning bearing characters null.

In the penultimate work in this series, Andre generated a square using lines of periods. Whereas the lines of periods that bound the square form ninety-degree angles, Andre then angularly skewed the successive lines of closely-spaced period marks within the square causing the period marks to overlap (fig. 33). The unregulated proximity of the various lines generates a pulsating, optically charged square of marks within the center of the larger square. The sum of the period marks, their relation and interaction, causes an erratic sensation of multi-directional, undulating movement. Although painted by hand and on a much larger scale, Bridget Riley's works from the mid-1960s, such as *Pause* (1964) and *Untitled [La Lune en Rodage – Carolo Belloli]* (1965), resemble Andre's undulating square in that they make use of single marks, multiplied to optical effect (fig. 34, 35). For Andre, the typewriter allowed him to move away from the speed of handwriting while maintaining material tangibility: "I could write much faster than I

could type...I don't know how to type. I felt like a blacksmith with an anvil, 'boom' 'boom,' one letter at a time."<sup>121</sup> The mechanical uniformity of Andre's typed poems contrasts greatly with Twombly's notable auratic scrawl, which critics have associated with automatic writing, calligraphy, and cryptology, while suggesting that his unique handwriting is "... a carrier of sign and system, autobiography and landscape, bearer of eros and logos."<sup>122</sup> (fig. 36). In contrast to Twombly, Riley, in the 1960s, moved away from the gestural encounter, employing studio assistants to paint her work:

As making moved further and further away from trying to master external reality, it seemed to me an inevitable step to lay my hands aside and ask someone else to paint the work out. It didn't need to be one particular person, it could be anybody, anybody whom I trained to apply the paint without emphasis and with no trace of handling.<sup>123</sup>

Engaged by the idea of primary experience, both Riley and Andre developed work that was immediately perceptible and did not require the armature of meaning. "There's a story by Vuillard," explained Riley in a 2005 interview with Lynne Cooke, "He said that when you go into a room and see, perhaps, a big dark shape, and a strong bright thing, and something sparkly, then that's what you should paint."<sup>124</sup> Enthralled by the freedom of the pre-literate mind, Andre created works, such as his *Shape and Structure* series, that disregard questions of meaning and instead, as with Riley, originate with shape: "It meant something to me that poetry could look like something when you weren't close to read it."<sup>125</sup>

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121 Andre, interview.

122 Delehanty, "The Alchemy of Mind," in *Writings on Cy Twombly*, 82.

123 Bridget Riley, *Bridget Riley: Retrospective* (London: Ridinghouse, 2008), 140.

124 Riley, *Bridget Riley: Retrospective*, 158.

125 Andre, interview.

## STILLANOVEL, 1972

“Genre definition may be a futile pursuit,” wrote poet and critic David Antin, “because culturally well-established genres with a long history like poetry, as Aristotle’s famous essay seems to demonstrate, may be embarrassingly difficult, or even impossible to define in a compact and nontrivial way.”<sup>126</sup> As with his sonnets, Andre’s poem *Stillanovel* (1972) disrupts and critiques the stylistic criteria associated with the novel. In a genre that includes works as diverse as James Joyce’s *Ulysses* and J.K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series, the reader still encounters anchors in the work that weights the text to its genre: lengthy prose and fictional characters and events. But, as Antin notes, “new works are continually being proposed for inclusion in established genres and judgments are constantly being made about the suitability of their candidacy.”<sup>127</sup> Deriving from the word “new,” a/the “novel” encourages the original and unfamiliar, despite the bemoaning nature of entrenched critical gatekeepers.

Andre’s novel lacks lengthy prose or fictional characters or events. Visually the work appears as akin to a novel as a bush to a tree. Yet, like a traditional novel, Andre composed the work by arranging sequences of letters to fill a page. Also like a traditional novel, he arranged the letters to generate rectangular blocks of lines of text. But no viewer could visually mistake Andre’s *Stillanovel* for a work by Jane Austen or Mark Twain. Nevertheless, Andre declares that these seventeen 8 ½ x 11 pages are, in fact, *still*

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126 David Antin, "Stranger at the Door," in *Radical Coherency: Selected Essays on Art and Literature, 1966 to 2005* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2011), 245.

127 Antin, "Stranger at the Door," in *Radical Coherency: Selected Essays*, 245.

a novel. However, while the work is titled *Stillanovel* in the index to the poems as well as on the title cards that await visitors to the installation, the surface of the works sometimes list the title as *Stillthenovel*, producing new trouble for categorization. We cannot know with certainty whether the individual pages constitute single novels, parts of a single novel whose unity comprises all the typed pages, or whether they pertain to an ideal category of “the novel” without beginning or end, first or last pages. This leaves us, therefore, with an especially unstable category. Through what stylistic innovations does Andre alter, question, condemn, or praise the novel as a genre? The play and difficulty of these questions resonates strongly in the poem’s formal characteristics.

*Stillanovel*’s diverse visual orientations cause similar trouble. Each of the poems consists of at least one rectangle of text (fig. 37). However, the relationships among the letters of each word in the series can differ greatly from one page to the next. In several instances, the letters appear tightly packed, without spaces to distinguish words. However, the dimensions of the rectangles and their quantity per page vary within this type. In one, twenty-four lines high by twenty-two characters wide, the external form includes several internal, triangular sections, distinguished from each other by an alternation between upper and lower case letters, where each of these internal sections constitute a single phrase (fig. 38). A more common rectangle of this type is seven lines high by nine characters wide. On one page, a single rectangle of this type appears in the upper left hand, abutting the margin (fig. 39). The letters of the rectangle constitute a single phrase. On another page, forty-nine such rectangles appear in a large grid, with blank space surrounding each. In other rectangles, Andre types a regular quantity of

blank spaces between individual, uppercase letters, thereby permeating the dominant form with plenary space. This same type can seem to consist of single letterform rectangles when we realize the edges of each typewritten letter define the perimeter of a fixed width and fixed height rectangular unit. Variations abound; rectangles shift from vertical orientation to horizontal orientation. On some pages Andre repeats the individual letters of each word or repeats sentences to an exaggerated effect, forcing the reader to follow the letters with their finger so as to not get lost. In all but one instance, mentioned above, Andre placed only one rectangle on the page and in all but one instance Andre centered the rectangles of text on the top third of the page. The grid demonstrates its variability and visual, rather than syntactic, comparisons remain one of the significant features of this work.

Typing a sentence or phrase into a particularly sized rectangle requires pre-meditation. Andre must, a priori, manipulate the text to fit a visual form. In most instances Andre successfully generated his rectangular structures while maintaining the integrity of the phrase, yet upon closer inspection, mistakes become visible. Page sixteen of the series, for example, contains multiple errors, which are inconsistent with the structure of the text. In a few places one finds that Andre duplicated a character, substituted an incorrect character or accidentally forgot a necessary character for the legibility of a sentence. For example, in two instances Andre mistakenly added a character at the end of a line, thus breaking the rigidity of the 7 x 9 grid structure, as seen on page sixteen (fig. 40). Yet, as it was Andre who generated the rule, it was also his rule to break.

Andre's invention of constraints, procedures, and language games resemble the process of the Oulipo (*L'Ouvoir de littérature potentielle*) writers. Largely working in French in the 1960s, the Oulipoian's worked within the field of what they called "potential literature." Using procedures as methods of composition, writers such as Raymond Queneau and Georges Perec, produced new structures and patterns for writing that expanded conventional genres. For instance, in *Exercices de style* (1947, first published in English in 1958), Queneau created 99 renditions of the same story, using a different style for each re-telling. In her essay on Oulipo, contemporary experimental poet Harryette Mullen writes:

I think of poetry as the ultimate rule-governed writing because a poem is subject to all the rules of grammar, spelling, punctuation, rhetoric, and so forth that govern any text; on top of that the poem is also subject to additional rules specific to literature and poetry. And what makes poetry even more complex is that the poet can choose to break any of those rules in the act of creating the poem.<sup>128</sup>

Andre's rule-breaking was perhaps unintentional and simply the result of error. Nevertheless, Andre did not discard the work; the grid, or the ideal of perfection, does not prevail. Instead, the additional characters and substitutions reflect the flexibility of both Andre's process and the completed work. That Andre broke his own formal rules and procedures, only further resonates upon reading *Stillanovel*. Curiously, the act of reading, delayed by one's evaluation of forms and notation of errors, comes late in the experience of this work. Additionally, the unconventional design substantially increases the difficulty of following the text. But, the reader who perseveres discovers a story more shocking than an inventory of typographic substitutions.

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128 Harryette Mullen, *The Cracks Between What We Are and What We Are Supposed to Be: Essays and Interviews* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama, 2012), 44-45.

The first page of the installed portion of the *Stillanovel* series begins with the following dedication: STILL THE NOVEL FOR HOLLIS FRAMPTON AND SOL LEWITT NYC 1972 CARL ANDRE. Andre and Sol Lewitt both included work in the seminal “Primary Structures” exhibition at the Jewish Museum in New York City in 1966. Additionally, both artists participated in numerous shows in the 1960s at the Dwan Gallery. In 1969, LeWitt published his famous “Sentences on Conceptual Art” in the January 1969 issue of *O to 9*. In his “Sentences,” LeWitt, like Andre, critiqued the closed-situation created by genre definition in the visual arts, stating: “When words such as painting and sculpture are used, they connote a whole tradition and imply a consequent acceptance of this tradition, thus placing limitation on the artist who would be reluctant to make art that goes beyond limitations.”<sup>129</sup> While we have already explored Andre’s close friendship with Frampton and particularly the seriousness of their conversations and numerous shared affinities, *Stillanovel* prompts further investigation into their common interests.

A year after Andre dedicated *Stillanovel* to Frampton and LeWitt, Frampton published an article in the March 1973 edition of *Artforum* on Muybridge titled, “Eadweard Muybridge: Fragments of a Tesseract.” Frampton opened the article with the following statement:

Here is an irksome paradox of public consciousness: to be accorded the status of a legend is to be whittled down to a microscopic point, a nonentity at the intersection of a random handful of idiosyncrasies, tidbits of gossip, shreds of advertising copy.<sup>130</sup>

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129 Sol LeWitt, “Sentences on Conceptual Art,” in *O to 9*, ed. Vito Acconci and Bernadette Mayer (Brooklyn, NY: Ugly Duckling Presse, 2006).

130 Hollis Frampton, *On the Camera Arts and Consecutive Matters*, ed. Bruce Jenkins (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009), 22.

Frampton's reflections on the life and work of Muybridge form a generous portrait of the inventor of photographic cinema. Quoting Paul Valery, Frampton writes: "Muybridge's photographs...showed how inventive the eye is, or rather how much the sight elaborates on the data it gives us."<sup>131</sup> In prose, Frampton hoped to elaborate on the material remnants, facts and myths of Muybridge's life and work to explore "the genesis of his [Muybridge's] sensibility." Andre's *Stillanovel* endeavors towards a similar goal, but while he also explores the life and work of Muybridge, he additionally considers the genre of the novel, the craft of storytelling, and the veracity of facts.

In *Stillanovel*, Andre describes the events leading up to and following Muybridge's murder trial. Starting in the year 1868, Andre's narrative of the life of Eadweard Muybridge begins with the following reminiscence: "North Point dock about 1868 Eadweard Muybridge himself sitting on the dock." This is a few years before two major turning points in Muybridge's life, his marriage to Flora Shallcross Stone in 1870 or 1871 and his most well-known achievement, the first successful use of a high-speed shutter to capture an instantaneous photograph of a horse in full-stride. Andre focuses little attention on this accomplishment and instead recounts the details of Muybridge's murderous attack on his wife's lover, Major Larkyns, in 1874. Just as the classification of Andre's visual/textual output as poems requires an expansion of the defining features of poetry, *Stillanovel* necessitates a similar amplification of the novel. Although history corroborates Andre's narrative of Muybridge's revenge, the information from which

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<sup>131</sup> Frampton, *On the Camera Arts*, 30.

Andre drew his historical re-telling most certainly comes from eye-witness accounts and hearsay. This form of telling, though taken to be non-fiction, must always contain elements of the imagination. Returning to Valery's discussion of Muybridge, do not all the senses elaborate on the data they give us? By designating his series as a novel, Andre encourages the reader to investigate historical fact with the understanding that people crave novelty.

Andre constructed almost the entire narrative of *Stillanovel* in the present participle. Instead of writing that Muybridge departed by steamer for Panama, Andre types: "Muybridge upon his acquittal departing by steamer for Panama in March 1875." Andre activates each sentence with a sense of the continuous present, in a manner that resembles the prose of a photographic caption. His prose reads as a compilation of captions for which photos are non-existent, for example: "Muybridge replying at once good evening Major Larkyns my name is Muybridge." Indeed, based on the qualities of Andre's prose, a more suitable title for the work could be, *Stillacaption*. As captions without photographs, Andre provides the reader with a sense of temporality through his insistent use of the present participle. Andre's sentence construction demonstrates for the reader something perhaps more valuable than a re-counting of the events in this well-known life. Through his use of the present participle, Andre shares with the reader his sense of Muybridge's relationship to temporality. As Frampton wrote, "But what interests me most, in all this work of Muybridge's first career, is...Muybridge's apparent

absorption in problems that have to do with what we call time.”<sup>132</sup> After every event, it is possible for the event to eternally live on in a novel, in a re-telling, or in the case of *Stillanovel*, many simultaneous re-tellings. Again, as Frampton notes, “T.S. Eliot’s crucial insight, that the temporal system of a tradition permits, and even requires, movement of energy in all directions, could not have taken place within the metaphoric continuum of ‘classical’ temporality.”<sup>133</sup> Ezra Pound and Wyndham Lewis made the vortex the temporal system of modernity, Muybridge transformed filmic substance into a temporal system, and Andre collapsed distinct moments in time into a simultaneous present with *Stillanovel*.

### **A LONG HISTORY OF KING PHILIP’S WAR, 1963**

From the end of 1938 through the beginning of 1939, Ezra Pound composed the ten cantos that scholars now refer to as the John Adams Cantos (62-71). In a letter to his publisher in 1939, Pound wrote, “you are getting [sic] something NEW in the Cantos; not merely more of the same. Trust at least two advances in mode...”<sup>134</sup> As David Ten Eyck notes in his publication, *Ezra Pound’s Adams Cantos*, “The primary advance of which Pound spoke was the method of extended citation of material from a single source, which is used as the source for a whole block of cantos: Joseph de Mailla’s eleven-volume *Histoire Générale de la Chine* for the Chinese History Cantos and the ten-volume *Life*

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132 Frampton, *On the Camera Arts*, 26.

133 Frampton, *On the Camera Arts*, 26.

134 David Ten Eyck, *Ezra Pound’s Adams Cantos* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013).

and *Works of John Adams* for the Adams Cantos.”<sup>135</sup> Situating Adams as the *THUMON*, from the Greek, meaning “that which animates,” Pound presents Adams as the most compelling figure in America’s struggle for liberty from England. To construct his ten cantos, Pound culled from the *Works*, selecting phrases, fragments and whole lines for inclusion in *The Cantos*. In a 1968 interview with Italian filmmaker and poet, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Pound noted that the Adams Cantos behave like music such that, “themes find each other out.”<sup>136</sup> W.B. Yeats described the Adams Cantos as, “impressions that are in part visual, in part metrical.”<sup>137</sup> See for example the following section from Canto LXV:

Lights in the garden and an Inscription

GOD SAVE LIBERTY THE CONGRESS AND ADAMS

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Pound, as Kenner described, had a “readiness to lift single words out of history.”<sup>138</sup> T.S. Eliot viewed this ability as one of the defining features of the creative eye, “an eye which can see the past in its place with its definite differences from the present, and yet so lively that it shall be as present to us as present.”<sup>139</sup> In “Notes Towards a Definition of Culture” Eliot wrote:

...the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature

135 Ten Eyck, *Ezra Pound's Adams Cantos*.

136 Demetres P. Tryphonopoulos and Stephen Adams, *The Ezra Pound Encyclopedia* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 39.

137 Tryphonopoulos and Adams, *The Ezra Pound Encyclopedia*, 39.

138 Kenner, *The Poetry of Ezra*, 143

139 T.S. Eliot, "Euripides and Professor Murray," 1920, in *Selected Essays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1950), 50.

of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order.<sup>140</sup>

The creative eye afforded the poet the ability to translate distinct temporalities, histories, and languages into a “simultaneous order.” In the Adams’s Cantos, Pound transforms and translates the *Works* of Adams, though not from one language to another, but instead makes it new through selection and perception.

Though approaching history from radically different political positions, Andre also made the appropriation of history a central component of his poetic practice. For Andre, the failure to account for history spoke to Utopian bourgeoisie capitalism. Speaking to this belief, Andre wrote: “In the comedy of the denial of history, the failed American artist sitting alone in her studio surrounded by the unsold, unbought weapons of her vision is subjectively and objectively the inheritor of Utopian capitalism... Without a sense of history, we cannot begin to imagine who we are.”<sup>141</sup> In his *Three-Vector Model* from 1970, Andre visually demonstrated the importance of the “subjective characteristics of the artworker,” to art production (fig. 41). Andre described this subjective vector as a representation of “one’s personal history, one’s talents, one’s skills, the accidents of one’s life—genetic and environmental influences—the whole thing that composes the individual human being.”<sup>142</sup> Andre’s hometown of Quincy, Massachusetts, is a primary source of the subjective characteristics of his work. Nicknamed the “City of Presidents,” Quincy is the birthplace of John Adams, a fact that Andre mentions in a 1972 interview at

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140 T.S. Eliot, "Tradition and Individual Talent," 1920, in *Selected Essays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1950), 4.

141 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 42.

142 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 60.

his studio in Westbeth.<sup>143</sup> As Rider points out in his introduction to *About Carl Andre: Critical Texts since 1965*, Andre increasingly references Quincy from the late 1960s onward. In an interview from 1970, Andre drew a direct correlation between growing up in an industrial city and his own use of industrial materials stating:

It was and still is a center of shipbuilding in America, and there's a shipyard on a small back river where I saw, as a young boy, great plates of steel laid out in acres under the rain and the sun—rusting acres of steel plates. Also the town of Quincy was historically a stone quarrying region...So that as a very young child my first recollections are of materials which I use today: steel plates and, on occasion, stone. Those recollections did have a great deal of influence on my own style.<sup>144</sup>

In 1973, in conjunction with his exhibition at the Addison Gallery of American Art, Andre produced *The Quincy Book*. Consisting of twelve pages of forty-eight black and white photographs taken in Quincy, the book contains, as Rider described, “views of spaces on its [Quincy’s] periphery — the park, the cemetery and the beach — interspersed with depictions of sites that have been inexorably altered by industrial activity.”<sup>145</sup> Exhibited with Andre’s sculpture, these photographs fostered the connection between Andre’s sculptural practice and the Quincy narrative.

Andre’s interest in Quincy is larger than his own private history, however. The long history of the region permeates his work. Not merely local history, Andre’s poems such as *King Philip’s War* address difficult questions, which touch upon larger concerns in North American history. An armed conflict between English colonists and Native American inhabitants of New England, King Philip’s War (1675-6) also known as the First Indian War, resulted in enormous casualties, as well as tremendous property losses

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<sup>143</sup> Paul Cummings, *Artists in Their Own Words: Interviews by Paul Cummings* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), 33.

<sup>144</sup> Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 217.

<sup>145</sup> Andre and Rider, *Carl Andre: Things in Their*, 215.

and economic instability. Writing to his friend Reno Odlin in March 1963, Andre argued for a recursive view of history: “King Philip’s War was fought many times before King Philip’s War was fought and has been fought many times since and is being fought now; then the Indian names disappeared, but now the names of all mankind.”<sup>146</sup>

In his dialogue with Frampton, “On Certain Poems and Consecutive Matters,” Andre describes the genesis of his poems related to King Philip’s War (1675-76), stating, “The belligerents in King Philip’s War were fighting for their lives and for the lands which my people came to live upon...History has given me a subject, history has not given me a method.”<sup>147</sup> Using E.W. Peirce’s *Indian History and Genealogy* as his primary text, Andre generated a number of poems which explored King Philip’s War through the language of Peirce’s *History*, including, *A Long History of King Philip’s War*, *The Short History of King Philip’s War*, and *King Philip’s War Primer*. Rider’s chapter, “Drills” in his *Things and Their Elements* provides an excellent account of the various permutations of the *King Philip’s War* texts between 1959 and 1963. Initially winnowing Peirce’s text to several pages of what he called “direct testimony,” Andre initially based his extracts on the lyrical quality of language. Andre then winnowed further to produce, *A Long History of King Philip’s War*, recounting to Odlin that he “did not want song anymore.” To this end, as Andre described, “I did this with file cards and produced the alphabetized *Long History of King Philip’s War*.”<sup>148</sup>

Andre used his alphabetization of Peirce’s *Indian History and Genealogy* to

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146 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 202.

147 Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 77.

148 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 201.

produce the nineteen pages of *The Long History*, which appears at first to be an index missing its correlating referent (fig. 42). Andre explained to Frampton, “What I wanted was the isolation of the terms of King Philip’s War and then a suitable operation for recombining the terms in such a way as to produce a poem.”<sup>149</sup> Andre compared his poetic isolation of each word to his experience as a freight train brakeman, “taking identical units, or close to identical units, and shifting them around.”<sup>150</sup> Instead of units of freight, Andre reduced Peirce’s text to the word, a practice that was not uncommon in modernist poetics. Yet, as Rider notes, unlike Stein or William Carlos Williams, Andre “chose very deliberately to confine himself exclusively to the prosaic.”<sup>151</sup> Not adopting prose in the literal sense, Andre challenged genre distinctions by creating poems using the *diction* of prose.

Andre included almost all parts of speech in his isolation of over 1,000 distinct words for *A Long History of King Philip’s War*. The proper nouns, such as Marshfield and Massasoit on page eleven, situate the reader within the particular historical context of King Philip’s War. Marshfield, for example, was an early Pilgrim town, established in 1620, but home to Native Americans for thousands of years prior. Massasoit, was Chief of the Wampanoag tribe of the Algonquin nation. The nouns and adjectives on any given page, such as “melancholy,” “mire,” “misery,” and “missing,” on page eleven set the tone of the historical conflict (fig. 43). As in *Stillanovel*, Andre generates a non-linear temporal structure in which time does not function on a continuum but surfaces in

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149 Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 77.

150 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 222.

151 Andre and Rider, *Carl Andre: Things in Their*, 161.

concurrent layers. For example, on page two we read the following verbs, one after the other: arm, armed, arms. The tense of each of the verbs suggest a manifold relationship to time. In this way, the units of language reflect Andre's belief that, "King Philip's War was fought many times before King Philip's War was fought and has been fought many times since and is being fought now."<sup>152</sup> In this sense, the poem demonstrates that the act of right naming, when contending with historical events, might demand a constellation of terms.

Historical writing represents a large part of Andre's work, as evidenced by several other works in the *Words* installation, including, "Historical References." The Indian Wars again surface in this series of poems, as well as the names of several significant figures of American history, including Ralph Waldo Emerson, John Brown, and Irish nationalist and poet, Roger Casement. Treason, nationality, race, and questions of property rights suffuse Andre's history poems. As contemporary poet Susan Howe, an admirer of Andre, suggests, "If history is a record of survivors, Poetry shelters other voices."<sup>153</sup> And accordingly, in his "poems including history," Andre created non-hierarchical relationships of language, which allow the past to enter into the present.<sup>154</sup>

## **OVER 2, 1960**

Less rigorous in formal structure than his sonnets, Andre's uninstalled poem, *OVER 2*, appears considerably more gestural, while still working within the limitations of

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<sup>152</sup> Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 202.

<sup>153</sup> Susan Howe, *The Birth-Mark: Unsettling the Wilderness in American Literary History* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University, 1993), 47.

<sup>154</sup> In his *ABC of Reading*, Pound described an epic poem as a "poem including history." See Pound, *ABC of Reading*, 21.

the typewriter's grid. Although I have generated the poem's "title" from the "Carl Andre Poetry Index" at the Chinati Foundation, which lists this poem under the category "Over 2, 152-185 (1960)," the poem in discussion has no explicit title. Despite the category name, none of the works in this series are "oversized." *OVER 2* consists of 34 unbound, single sheets of standard, white, 8.5 by 11 sheets of paper, all vertically oriented. Similarly to the bulk of Andre's other works in *Words*, each page contains typewritten characters in black ink. A registrar has added a cataloging number to the bottom-left side of the verso of each sheet. On the bottom-left of the verso, Andre placed a copyright symbol; the copyright date, 1960; an "@" symbol; and an "x" mark. Indeed the @ symbol resembles a large "C" with an "A" inside (fig. 44). Andre used the @ symbol as his signature, transforming the typographic symbol into an ideogram and a self-portrait.

As distinct from many of the works in *Words*, *OVER 2* contains content on both the recto and verso of the 34 single sheets, making it difficult to install the work. The cases Andre designed allow for only one side of a page to be viewed at any time. The work therefore demands a unique format for presentation. Moreover, Andre left many of the recto pages blank, creating the following combinations: text on recto, text on verso; blank recto, blank verso, text on recto, blank verso; blank recto, text on verso. The flux between the presence and absence of text confuses the reading process, but also forces the reader to closely examine the poem. The viewer wonders, why are there so many blank pages? One assumes that if a page is blank, there is no content. Yet, we should not consider Andre's blank pages "content-less." His subtractive gesture calls the viewer's

attention to the blank page as a material surface, a surface that can be activated and deactivated through the additive and subtractive functions of, in this case, typed text.

On the non-blank pages Andre typed a series of nouns that either designate a specific color or a degree of a color: black, red, blackness, golden, silver, crimson, green, coral red, white, purple, orange, blue. Yet, what I have described as nouns, could as easily be read as adjectives. All the words are lowercase, with the exception of the first letter of the word, “Black” on the recto of page one and the first letter of the word “Purple” on the verso of page thirty-three (fig. 45). Andre occasionally typed one word singly on the page. In other instances he arranged the words in a non-strophic, seemingly non-structured relationship (fig. 46). Andre spaced some words more closely together such as “crimson” and “black” on the recto of page thirty (fig. 47). He organized other words with more space in between them, such as “white” and “white” on page thirty-two (fig. 48). Whereas in other poems, such as *One Hundred Sonnets*, Andre calls attention to the fixed-width character setting of the typewriter, his visual arrangements in *OVER 2* do not call great attention to this limitation. In all instances, he placed the words either near the center or in the top half of the page. If we consider this work to have 34 pages, with 68 surfaces, then over half the surfaces remain blank, devoid of typed text.

Returning again to Pound, Kenner writes:

Looking about the world, we know *things*. On a page of poetry there are set in motion the intelligible species of *things*. Words are solid, they are not ghosts or pointers. The poet connects, arranges, defines, *things*: pearls and eyes; garlic, sapphires.<sup>155</sup>

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155 Kenner, *The Poetry of Ezra Pound*, 77.

By using the word as the dominant formal unit, Andre enacted a Poundian nominalism akin to Kenner's understanding that, "Words are solid, they are not ghosts or pointers." Andre suggested a movement from abstraction to the concrete through his reduction of form to single word units and his placement of these units in relationship on a visual plane. The reader knows that "black" is "black" because it is not white, purple, orange or red, yet through the seriality of pages, Andre augments and undercuts nominalism by repeating words ("red red") and adding terms such as "blackness" and "golden" as well as numerous blank pages. The word "red" becomes as abstract as the blank pages and also as open to interpretation. The blank page, simultaneously suggests no meaning and all possible meanings. Contiguously, the term "blackness" unsettles our understanding of the word "black." We must remember that only in the instance of the word "black," does the form match the content in that the color of the typewriter ink is black. By this I mean that when we read the word "red" there is a cognitive disconnect. It is both red and not red at the same time. Perhaps it is the simplicity of this work that allows for the recognition of such compelling contrasts, for a "multiplicity of meanings," for indeterminacy and undecidability. As T.S. Eliot describes in "Reflections on *Vers Libre*," "...the most interesting verse which has yet to be written in our language has been done either by taking a very simple form... and constantly withdrawing from it, or taking no form at all, and constantly approximating a very simple one."<sup>156</sup>

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156 T.S. Eliot, "Reflections on *Vers Libre*," in *To Criticize the Critic and Other Writings* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1992), 185.

## Language as Place

Different frames of reading and distribution allowed and still allow for a critical discussion of Andre's poems that focus on the classification of his poems within the history of artists' books, visual art, or as surrogates for Andre's sculpture. At the same time, the historical positioning of Andre's poems within museum and gallery contexts has diminished the critical recognition of this body of work within the history of visually engaged poetry. In the following chapter I will review the history of distribution and exhibition of Andre's poems, in order to clarify the contexts within which critics have placed this body of work. The critical positioning of Andre's poems within the history of conceptual art and also artists books creates a lacunae that reinforces stagnant genre distinctions between poetry and the visual arts. As Gavin Delahunty, the organizer of the recently announced *Carl Andre: The Complete Poems* catalog, has noted, the continued critical reliance on the juxtaposition between Andre's poems and sculpture, "has forestalled discussion or analysis of the poems beyond a visual arts context, effectively silencing their poetic voice."<sup>157</sup> Proceeding chronologically, I will begin with a discussion of the poems' short-lived distribution in literary contexts, before addressing the larger issue of their display in museums and galleries.

Around 1963 Andre began a correspondence with writer Reno Odlin. A devout Poundian like Frampton, Odlin established a small mimeographed literary newsletter, *All*

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<sup>157</sup> Gavin Delahunty, "Carl Andre: Poems," *Artforum*, Summer 2013, 293.

*Points Bulletin* that regularly published the works of other Pound enthusiasts, including Frampton and eventually Andre. Although Odlin wanted to publish early dialogues between Frampton and Andre, not yet the *12 Dialogues*, lack of resources prevented him from succeeding. Instead, around 1959 Odlin reached out to Pound scholar Hugh Kenner to find a suitable publisher. Lauding the unpublished dialogues from 1959 as “magnificent,” Kenner shopped around various works of Andre’s and Frampton’s to no avail. In one of his failed attempts, Kenner sent Andre’s manuscript of a short novel, *Billy Builder, or The Painful Machine* to Grove Press, who rejected the manuscript on the grounds that at 52 pages it was too long. At that time, Grove published many of the most important writers of the literary avant-garde, including Samuel Beckett and Bertolt Brecht. Grove Press’s rejection of *Billy Builder* perhaps further fermented Andre’s dislike for the publishing world. “A year or so I ago I gave up a poem to a competition sponsored by the American poetry society,” Andre wrote in a 1962 dialogue with Frampton, “I never heard reply or acknowledgment from them. Only now do I realize that sending poetry to a poetry society is like sending garbage to the garbage disposal.”<sup>158</sup> Not surprisingly, Andre’s first successful publication of a large collection of his poems occurred not within the literary world, but through the Dwan Gallery. Opening her first gallery in Los Angeles in 1959, Virginia Dwan moved the gallery to New York in 1965. Andre joined Dwan Gallery in 1967, showing *Word Tube* (1967) in Dwan’s exhibition,

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<sup>158</sup> Andre and Frampton, *12 Dialogues: 1962-1963*, 18.

“Language to be Looked at and/or Things to be Read.”<sup>159</sup> Dwan hosted numerous solo shows of Andre’s work between 1967 and the close of the gallery in 1971.

Before exhibiting his poems at Dwan, Andre publically demonstrated his engagement with poetry by including a poem of four stanzas in the exhibition catalog for the 1966 “Primary Structures” exhibition at the Jewish Museum, where he presented *Lever* (1966) (fig. 49, 50).<sup>160</sup> To generate the shape of his poem, Andre began with one four-letter word in the first line of each stanza, adding an additional four-letter word to each line until the sixth and final line included six four-letter words. Andre’s poetic submission to the “Primary Structures” catalog resembles his poem *144 Times (Lament for the Children)*, dated 1962-1965, for which he created 24 stanzas totaling 144 words using the same additive method. Although *144 Times* is much longer, the poems include a shared vocabulary. “Edge,” “beam,” “wall,” “hill,” “rock,” “path,” “clay,” “root,” “heel,” and “line” appear in both. The poems share a similar additive technique employed earlier by Gertrude Stein in her poem “Sacred Emily.” In “Sacred Emily,” Stein added one additional word per line multiple times before disrupting her established pattern:

Next to barber.  
Next to barber bury.  
Next to barber bury china.  
Next to barber bury china glass.  
Next to barber and china.  
Next to barber and hurry.<sup>161</sup>

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159 Andre composed *Word Tube* by wrapping paper on a roughly 50 cm long tube. For the installation at Dwan, Andre placed the tube through a floor-to-ceiling pole. The Art Institute of Chicago lists a similar work entitled *Word Poem* of the same year as part of their collection.

160 Andre and Rider, *Carl Andre: Things in Their*, 134.

161 Stein, *Geography and Plays*, 181.

In contrast to Andre, the other artists in “Primary Structures” composed short statements in prose that described specific qualities of their work, such as Robert Grosvenor’s brief explanation: “I don’t want my work to be thought of as ‘large sculpture,’ they are ideas which operate in the space between floor and ceiling. They bridge a gap.”<sup>162</sup> As Rider addresses, Andre’s notebooks indicate that he initially contemplated providing an artist’s statement in prose, testing out statements such as, “this lever is built by combining a number of identical and interchangeable parts.”<sup>163</sup> Whereas Rider describes Andre’s poem as the, “clearest means to introduce viewers to his sculptural art,” we should also recognize this inclusion as a means to introduce viewers to his visuo-poetic work.<sup>164</sup>

In 1969, Andre published *Seven Books of Poetry*, a collaborative effort with the Dwan Gallery and Seth Siegelau. *Seven Books* includes many works that Andre would exhibit at Paula Cooper in the 1980s and 1990s and later gift to the Chinati Foundation, such as “Three Operas,” “One Hundred Sonnets,” “Lyrics and Odes,” and “Shape and Structure.” Totalling 524 pages of black and white photocopies presented in seven individual vinyl ring binders, *Seven Books* lacks the aura of the rare or unique object. Additionally, as a signed and numbered edition of 36 sets, *Seven Books* does not condescend to the democratic, unnumbered, unlimited quality of the contemporaneously produced artists books by Ed Ruscha and Dieter Roth. The classification of *Seven Books* as an illustrated book by large collecting institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art, New York and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston or as an artist’s book likely emerges

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<sup>162</sup> Jewish Museum, *Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculptors*. (New York: Jewish Museum, 1966).

<sup>163</sup> Andre and Rider, *Carl Andre: Things in Their*, 134.

<sup>164</sup> Andre and Rider, *Carl Andre: Things in Their*, 134.

from the work's association with *The Xerox Book*, a publication also organized by Seth Siegelaub in which Andre's work appears.

Published in 1968, a year before *Seven Books*, *The Xerox Book* contains work by Andre, as well as Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth, Sol LeWitt, Robert Morris, and Lawrence Weiner. The *Xerox Book* presents twenty-five pages per artist in which the pages of the book are the artwork, not the reproduction of the artwork. Although offset print and not Xeroxed due to cost, the first edition consisted of 1,000 copies that could be distributed inexpensively. In his essay for *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, Ian Burn describes Siegelaub as a "shrewed promoter" of conceptual artists such as Barry, Weiner, Huebler, and Kosuth.<sup>165</sup> Nevertheless, many artists now canonized as conceptual artists found the classification cumbersome, if not arbitrary.<sup>166</sup> As early as 1970, Andre stated:

I am certainly no kind of Conceptual artist because the physical existence of my work cannot be separated from the idea of it... As Confucius said, when he was asked what he would do if he were made the prime minister of the duchy where he lived, "The first thing I would do is call things by their right names." This is why I wish to separate myself entirely from any Conceptual art or even with idea in my art.<sup>167</sup>

Indeed, in a 1970 review of Andre's show at the Guggenheim, which included a number of his poems, Grégoire Müller described the horizontality, use of form, and concern for place in his work as the "'conceptual' background" of Andre's work.<sup>168</sup> Eight years later,

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<sup>165</sup> Ian Burns, "The 'Sixties: Crisis and Aftermath (or the Memoirs of an Ex-Conceptual Artist)," in *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson (Cambridge: MIT, 1999), 408, n. 16.

<sup>166</sup> Joseph Kosuth, "Art after Philosophy," in *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson (Cambridge: MIT, 1999), 172.

<sup>167</sup> Andre et al., *Carl Andre, Sculptor 1996*, 48-49.

<sup>168</sup> Grégoire Müller, "Carl Andre at the Guggenheim," 1970, in *About Carl Andre: Critical Texts since 1965*, ed. Paula Feldman, Alistair Rider, and Karsten Schubert (London: Riding House, 2006), 91.

David Bourdon described Andre's work as "an important source for the Conceptual movement."<sup>169</sup> In addition, Lucy Lippard included both *The Xerox Book* and Andre's *Seven Books* in her landmark work, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object*. Yet, the shared formal characteristics of *Seven Books* and *The Xerox Book*, as well as Siegelau's participation in both, veils very real differences between the two projects. Whereas *The Xerox Book* functions as an exhibition outside of the gallery, Andre's *Seven Books* functions as a publication of visual poems within a gallery context. To refer to Andre's *Seven Books* as dematerialized, conceptually oriented or as an example of an illustrated book demonstrates a misunderstanding of the work. Categorization of the work suffers from superficial similarities it shares with other works, based on distribution methods and Andre's personal associations. This critical misunderstanding only deepens as Andre exhibits his poems in conjunction with his sculptural work starting in 1970 at the Guggenheim.

"As visitors to the Guggenheim in the early autumn of 1970 sauntered along the wide, gently curving ramp that spirals around the central atrium, they would have encountered at regular intervals works made from steel, aluminum, zinc, lead, magnesium and copper," recounts Rider in his description of Andre's 1970 retrospective, "When they looked over the ramp and down into the wide circular space below, they would have seen even more of these metals, arranged across the floor and forming a

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169 David Bourdon, "A Redefinition of Sculpture," 1978, in *About Carl Andre: Critical Texts since 1965*, ed. Paula Feldman, Alistair Rider, and Karsten Schubert (London: Riding House, 2006), 170. Bourdon also notes that Andre was "first and foremost, consciously extending the traditions of modernist sculpture."

fractured, shimmering sea of silvers and greys.”<sup>170</sup> Although missing from this dream-like reimagining of the exhibition, the visitor to the Guggenheim also encountered twelve poems by Andre. Nevertheless, the omission of the poems from Rider’s description is not surprising, for they are also absent from curator Diane Waldman’s accompanying exhibition essay. Although reproduced at the end of the exhibition catalog, Waldman makes not a single mention of the poems in her eighteen-page essay. Significant enough for inclusion in the retrospective, Andre’s poems also figured prominently in exhibition programming. In lieu of a private exhibition opening, which Andre found politically objectionable, Andre instead gave a public reading of his poetry (fig. 51). Further ignored in the prominent reviews of the retrospective, including Enno Develing’s long-form review “Sculpture as Place” in *Art & Artists*, the poems’ presence in the exhibition received brief mention in Hans Strelow’s review for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in which Strelow argued that:

He also sees himself as a poet, and the exhibition in the Guggenheim Museum, with an accompanying catalogue monograph by Diane Waldman, he juxtaposes the sculptures with the “word poems,” which can be grasped both by reading and by being looked at, which seem more felt than thought, and which thus, despite their outward similarities, have little in common with concrete poetry. They are more like word-sculptures, and they have accompanied the artist’s sculptural work through all its phases from the outset--not as commentaries, but as parallel creations.<sup>171</sup>

More generous than most, Strelow’s unwillingness to place Andre’s work within a poetic context and his insistence that the poems serve as accompaniment to the sculptures

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<sup>170</sup> Andre and Rider, *Carl Andre: Things in Their*, 80.

<sup>171</sup> Hans Strelow, "From Sculpture to Floor-Piece: Carl Andre's Sculptures in New York's Guggenheim Museum," 1970, in *About Carl Andre: Critical Texts since 1965*, ed. Paula Feldman, Alistair Rider, and Karsten Schubert (London: Riding House, 2006), 94.

reflects the ideas and attitudes of much of the critical commentary on Andre's poems from 1970 to the present.

In the summer of 1971, Dwan Gallery closed, prompting John Weber, then director of the Dwan Gallery, New York, to open his own space in SoHo.<sup>172</sup> Between 1972 and 1976, Andre had four solo shows at John Weber Gallery. Roberta Smith's review of Andre's 1975 show at Weber, "Carl Andre: Words in the form of poems," demonstrates the critical reluctance to discuss Andre's poems outside of the context of his sculpture. In the first sentence of Smith's review, she describes her preference, "Carl Andre's poetry is more engrossing than it first appears, but it can't finally compete with his sculpture. My prejudice is general, however I simply like the sculpture better than the poetry." Smith's review vacillates between acute points that clarify the work for the reader, such as her discussion of *Stillanovel*, in which she addresses the temporal and rhythmic qualities of the work. Yet, just as her "prejudice is general," many of her statements on Andre's poems lack specificity, demonstrating her unwillingness to engage the poems from a poetic perspective. For example, Smith writes, "Andre's poetry is not concrete in the term's literary sense. That is to say, its visual appearance, while important, does not reinforce linguistic meaning." While she accurately notes that Andre was not part of the concrete poetry movement, she misreads the relationship between the visual and textual in Andre's work. His poems' visual qualities cannot nor should not be separated from the so-called "linguistic meaning." Defining the connection between the

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172 Jayna M. Hanson, "A Finding Aid to the Dwan Gallery Records, 1959 - Circa 1982," in *Smithsonian Archives of American Art*. See also Roberta Smith, "John Weber, 75, Contemporary-Art Dealer, Is Dead," *The New York Times*, June 1, 2008.

look of the page and the content of the text as *paratext*, literary critic Gérard Genette argues that:

No reader can be completely indifferent to a poem's arrangement on the page...Likewise, no reader should be indifferent to the appropriateness of particular typographical choices, even if modern publishing tends to neutralize these choices by a perhaps irreversible tendency towards standardization...These considerations may seem trivial or marginal, but there are cases in which the graphic realization is inseparable from the literary intention...<sup>173</sup>

Far from a detached decision to assign a visual quality to his poems, Andre's choice to "map poetry onto the visual arts," suggests that, as with cartography, his compositions required a systematic, detailed practice of engaging both the textual and the visual. Not yet to the end of the first paragraph of her review, Smith writes, "His approach to the letters, words, and images of his writing is similar to his choice and arrangement of material in his sculpture." Again, this understanding of Andre's poems reverberates in many successive discussions from the seventies onward, leaving little reflection on the poems themselves.

In his review of Andre's first solo show of his sculpture at Tibor de Nagy in 1965, David Bourdon closed the review with the following statement: "Work of such minimal intent and technique may not sound exciting but it is."<sup>174</sup> Continuing to write on Andre over the next decade, Bourdon became one of the more important critics of Andre's work. Although the poems figure little into his influential essay "A Redefinition of Sculpture," Bourdon notes that Andre's "substantial body" of poetry could, "easily be the

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<sup>173</sup> Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Threshold of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1997), 34.

<sup>174</sup> Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 19.

subject of an entire essay.”<sup>175</sup> Nevertheless we again find a reliance on the poems’ formal relationship to the sculpture (“The regularly notched gestalt of the poem obviously alluded to his carved beams”), and again, the brief discussion of the poems betrays a misunderstanding of the unity between the visual and textual in Andre’s work. While Bourdon correctly notes that, “The spatial intervals are as important as the words in Andre’s poetry,” he closes “A Redefinition of Sculpture,” by stating that, “the overall shape or gestalt of the poem encourages us to look at it as a design rather than read it for sense.”<sup>176</sup> The notion that a poem can either be looked at or read, but not the two concurrently is a fallacy. Whereas the Dwan Gallery exhibition presented “Language to be looked at and / or things to be read,” in Andre’s poems there is no “or”; the looking and reading occur simultaneously.

Despite the publication of *12 Dialogues* in 1981, in which Andre and Frampton frequently discuss Andre’s poetic practices, his poems received little attention in the 1980s. In 1993, almost thirty years after he first exhibited poems at Dwan, Paula Cooper Gallery hosted the most significant exhibition of Andre’s poems to date. Titled, “Words: 1960-1980,” the show subsequently travelled to the Kölnischer Kunstverein as *Words: 1958-1972* and to the Stedelijk Museum in 1994 as *Words – The Complete Poems*. Whereas previously Andre hung his poems in frames on the wall or distributed them in codex-like editions, for the Paula Cooper installation, Andre created a series of floor cases in which he placed the works (fig. 52). Roberta Smith’s short review of the show at Paula Cooper reflects a development in her appreciation of the works. “Inevitably, and

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175 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 178.

176 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 178.

with a kind of fascinating discipline,” Smith wrote, “equal weight is given to sense and appearance, to meaning and visual composition.”<sup>177</sup> The development of her ideas concerning the form and content of Andre’s poems is evident when one recalls that in her 1975 review, she wrote, “visual appearance [of Andre’s poems], while important, does not reinforce linguistic meaning.”

The mode of display as well as the scale of Paula Cooper’s *Words* installation marked a radical shift in how the public encountered Andre’s poetry. On the suggestion of Donald Judd, who had seen the show at Paula Cooper, Marianne Stockebrand, then the director of the Kölnischer Kunstverein, brought the show to Cologne where it was again installed in the same type of wall cases as at Paula Cooper. The show then travelled to the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam where it was acquired a year later. After Donald Judd’s death in 1994, Andre gifted a selection of 465 copies of his poems to the Chinati Foundation, which subsequently became part of the Foundation’s permanently installed collection. The Kölnischer Kunstverein, Stedelijk Museum, the Chinati Foundation, and the Paula Cooper installation all made use of the same case design. “The design of the vitrines presents the poems at a podium-angle,” wrote Associate Director of the Chinati Foundation, Rob Weiner, “compelling the reader to silently mouth the words, or quietly read them aloud.”<sup>178</sup> Andre’s preference for installing his poems in floor cases reflects his personal relationship to reading/viewing and his desire to keep the viewing experience of his poems distinct from his sculpture. “If there is one thing I have learned, if there is

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177 Roberta Smith, “Carl Andre’s ‘Words, 1960-1980’: Paula Cooper Gallery,” *New York Times*, October 8, 1993.

178 Marianne Stockebrand, ed., *Chinati: The Vision of Donald Judd* (New Haven: Yale University, 2010), 221.

anything on the wall then no one sees anything on the floor,” argued Andre.<sup>179</sup> Also, comfort played a large role in Andre’s installation decision. Stating that it’s less tiring for him to look down than to look up, Andre chose the design of a floor case that more closely resembles the experience of holding the poem in one’s hands.

Installed in simple fiberboard cases, Andre’s *Words* installation at the Chinati Foundation fills almost the entirety of an old concrete barrack building on the grounds of former Fort D.A. Russell, the decommissioned military base that became the Chinati Foundation in 1986. The organization of the cases closely resembles, but does not duplicate Andre’s installation, *Words 1960-1980*, at Paula Cooper (Fig. 53, 54). The method of installation of Andre’s poems also approximates Barnett Newman’s exhibition *18 Cantos* at the Nicolas Wilder Gallery in Los Angeles in 1965. Rather than framing them, Newman installed his series of eighteen color lithographs in back to back slanted floor cases, similar to the podium-angle fiberboard cases used for the various iterations of Andre’s *Words* (fig. 55).

Andre’s *Words* installation co-exists on the grounds of the Chinati Foundation with a number of large-scale, permanently installed projects, such as Donald Judd’s *Untitled, 100 works in mill-aluminum* (1982-1986), Dan Flavin’s *Untitled (Marfa project)* (1996), and John Chamberlain’s installation of twenty-two sculptures in the former Marfa Wool and Mohair building (1972-1983). As Donald Judd wrote in 1987 in his founding address for the Chinati Foundation, “The art was meant to be, and now will

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<sup>179</sup> Andre, interview.

be, permanently installed and maintained in a space suitable to it.”<sup>180</sup> For Judd, the Chinati Foundation served as an example of, as he wrote, “what the art and its context were meant to be.”<sup>181</sup> Rejecting the desire to create “another museum anthology,” Judd’s initial vision included only the permanent installation of his work and the work of Flavin and Chamberlain, although he later strove to include works by a handful of other artists, such as Carl Andre. Although each installation at the Chinati Foundation exists discretely, the addition of a new project alters and invigorates the relationships between works. With the exception of Ilya Kabakov’s *School no.6* (1993), Andre’s installation is the only permanently installed work at Chinati that prominently engages text and image. Many of the artists in the Chinati Foundation’s collection avoided linguistic description, focusing instead on direct perception. The inclusion of Andre’s poems in the Chinati collection reflects a field of difference, recognizing as Judd did in the late 1960s that the field of contemporary art should exist as an “open situation,” not to be resolved by thoughtless devotion to styles, movements, or “seniority, juniority, money and galleries, sociology, politics, nationalism.”<sup>182</sup>

With the exception of the Guggenheim in 1970, the Kölnischer Kunstverein (1993) and the Stedelijk Museum (1994), viewers infrequently encountered Andre’s poems outside of gallery settings. The inclusion of his poems in Chinati’s permanent collection therefore signaled the importance of this body of work to the understanding of Andre’s oeuvre. *Words* remains today the only permanent installation of Andre’s poetry.

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180 The Chinati Foundation, *The Chinati Foundation/La Fundación Chinati* (Marfa, TX: Chinati Foundation, 1987).

181 The Chinati Foundation, *The Chinati Foundation/La Fundación*.

182 Donald Judd, “Complaints: Part 1,” in *Donald Judd: The Complete Writings 1959-1975* (Halifax: Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 2005), 197.

In *Words to Be Looked At*, Liz Kotz explores the changing context of language in the visual arts noting that in the 1960s, artists not only conceive of language as a material, but also as a “site”:

The page is a visual, physical container—an 8 ½ by 11 inch white rectangle analogous to the white cube of the gallery—and also a place for action and a publication context. This site is implicitly relational and dynamic: words on a page operate in relation to other texts and statements, since language is a system perpetually in circulation.<sup>183</sup>

In his sculptural practice, Andre endeavored to activate whatever site he placed his work. Like Donald Judd who believed that, “Space is made by an artist or architect; it is not found and packaged,”<sup>184</sup> Andre believed that the history of modern sculpture developed from “sculpture as form,” to “sculpture as structure,” to “sculpture as place.”<sup>185</sup> Describing one of his works in Styrofoam, Andre stated, “I had destructuralized my work and I wanted to use the Styrofoam in way that would be placemaking...”<sup>186</sup> Using the Statue of Liberty as the metaphor for the shift from form to structure to place, in 1970 Andre said:

In the days of form people were interested in the Statue of Liberty because of the modeling of Bartholdi and the modeling of the copper sheet that was the form of the Statue of Liberty. Then people came to be interested in structure and they were not interested in Bartholdi’s form any more. They became interested in Bartholdi’s cast iron interior structure... Now sculptors aren’t even interested in Eiffel’s structure any more. They’re interested in Bedloe’s Island and what to do with that. So I think of Bedloe’s Island as a place.<sup>187</sup>

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183 Liz Kotz, *Words to Be Looked At: Language in 1960s Art* (Cambridge: MIT, 2007), 138.

184 Donald Judd, *Some Aspects of Color in General and Red and Black in Particular* (Sassenheim, NL: Sikkens Foundation, 1993), 6.

185 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 24.

186 Kotz, *Words to Be Looked At*, 149.

187 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 197.

Adapting Andre's statement on form, structure and place, Kotz asks, "What might a parallel series of shifts in language look like, from 'language as shape,' to 'language as structure,' to 'language of place'?"<sup>188</sup>

In his famous essay on the state of contemporary art in the mid-1960s, "Specific Objects," Judd wrote in favor of three-dimensional objects that are not quite painting or sculpture, arguing that, "Actual space is intrinsically more powerful and specific than paint on a flat surface."<sup>189</sup> Like the relationship of a painting to a three-dimensional object, the framed poem hanging on the wall lacks the temporal tension of a bound codex in which the viewer can shift back and forth between pages with ease and purpose. Comparable in kind to a framed work on paper, the framed, wall-hung poem loses the literary context often associated with a codex. The codex on the other hand, provides a definite and particular site, available for one person to experience at a time. Though the pages of *Seven Books* may be easily removed from their vinyl ring binders, the viewer understands the work as a whole through the unifying nature of the non-traditional codex. Whereas the cast iron interior structure of the Eiffel tower relies upon a series of interconnected parts, girders, cantilevers, and supports, the structure of the book also necessitates many discrete parts to form the whole, including the cover, binding, and pages. Nevertheless, the place of the book is both localized within the hands of the reader and non-specific in that it is easily transportable. The mobility of the book allows for manifold sites in which the reader can choose to encounter it. This multiplicity alters the

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<sup>188</sup> Kotz, *Words to Be Looked*, 149.

<sup>189</sup> Donald Judd, "Specific Objects," 1965, in *Donald Judd: The Complete Writings 1959-1975* (Halifax: Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 2005), 184.

manner in which readers contextualize the book. In contrast, the installation of Andre's poems generates a distinct relationship to the place of language unlike the framed poem and the codex.

Kotz identifies "Andre's attention to sculpture as an object that fills and overcrowds the space of the gallery" with Andre's "earlier poems that cover the space of the page, simultaneously filling and obliterating it."<sup>190</sup> Yet, what if Andre's sculptures as well as his poems, create space instead of "filling or obliterating space"? For the 1965 "Shape and Structure" show at Tibor de Nagy, Andre wrote that he wanted "to seize and hold the space of the gallery—not simply fill it."<sup>191</sup> Andre's use of the page plane was not an obliteration of the blank space of the page, but an activation and recuperation of space. Analogously, Andre's placement of sculpture directly on the floor allowed him to "seize and hold" not only the floor, but also the space around the work. For example, Andre described the characteristics of place achieved by his metal-plate floor pieces, stating, "I don't think of them as being flat at all. I think in a sense, that each piece supports a column of air that extends to the top of the atmosphere. They're zones."<sup>192</sup> Similarly, the placement of Andre's poems into three-dimensional cases at the Chinati Foundation generates many small zones of interest that form a unified whole. This whole extends throughout the space to include the building itself. The viewers' experience of Andre's poems at the Chinati Foundation begins upon entrance. The installation engenders multiple experiences of duration. One reads the poems, one also moves around the

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190 Kotz, *Words to Be Looked*, 150.

191 Kotz, *Words to Be Looked*, 149.

192 Andre et al., *Carl Andre, Sculptor 1996*, 49.

poems. Part of a unified whole, the viewer encounters additional layers of composition that extend beyond the singular page and case by case design to the overall design of the installation. We may therefore think of Andre's installation at Chinati as the most complete articulation of his poems as "language as place."

As one work in a collection of permanent installations, *Words* necessarily converses with the other permanently installed works on the grounds of the Chinati Foundation, including one of the most recent additions, Andre's *Chinati Thirteener* (2010). Consisting of thirteen rows of individual plates of hot-rolled steel with regular intervals between each row, *Chinati Thirteener*, exemplifies many of the formal qualities of Andre's sculpture, namely his combination of standardized units of materials composed without conjoining the plates (fig. 56). Each of the thirteen rows runs the width of a courtyard enclosed on three sides. Although located on the same property, the *Words* building and *Chinati Thirteener* are not contiguous. The placement of the two installations fulfills Andre's requirement concerning the spatial relationship of his poems to his sculpture. Although encountered separately, the installations remain conversant. More importantly, this arrangement lessens the urge to fuse the poetry and sculpture into a unified practice, and instead allows for a singular appreciation of the poems outside of the rhetoric of dominance and submission.

Exhibited in larger quantities in only a handful of exhibitions between 1995 and the present, Andre's poems have received more attention in scholarly publications than in

galleries or museums.<sup>193</sup> Of these publications, James Meyer's *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004* (2005), Liz Kotz's *Words to Be Looked At: Language in 1960s Art* (2007), and Alistair Rider's *Carl Andre: Things in Their Elements* (2011) provide the most engaged writing on Andre's poetic practice. Whereas Meyer's *Cuts* surveys Andre's extensive body of writing, including statements, dialogues, epistles, epigrams, maxims, and poems, Rider's *Things in their Elements* addresses the entirety of Andre's artistic production, focusing two substantial chapters on Andre's poetry. Kotz, on the other hand, in her survey of language in the 1960s considers Andre's poems within the context of minimal and post-minimal visual art. This significant increase in attention to Andre's poems, previously recognized only in brief passages of reviews or catalog essays, has greatly added to the knowledge of this infrequently exhibited body of work. Each publication makes claims concerning the relationship of Andre's poems to his sculpture and to the significant movements of the era in which they were produced, i.e. minimalism, post-minimalism, and conceptualism. This desire for a fit within existing discourses both accentuates important features of Andre's work, while diminishing others. Exploring this critical positioning presents an opportunity to assess what work on Andre's poems has already been accomplished and what is still left to be done.

Placing Andre within the context of the emerging artist-writer, Meyer argues in *Cuts* that the 1960s and 1970s served as a watershed moment for artists developing a significant relationship to writing within their artistic practice. Whereas the Abstract Expressionists considered writing an "ancillary activity, or even a liability," the artists-

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<sup>193</sup> Notable exceptions include Paula Cooper's 2001 show "Carl Andre: Poems" and Konrad Fisher Galerie's "Carl Andre: Passport and Poetry" in 2006.

writers of this new generation collapsed Greenbergian distinctions between art and language.<sup>194</sup> In an effort to take control of the critical discourse on their work as well as attract attention, the artist-writers developed their own critical conversations using emerging art publications such as *Artforum* and *Art International* to host their ideas. Conferring the title of artist-writer largely on artists associated with minimalism or post-minimalism such as Donald Judd, Robert Morris, Robert Smithson, Mel Bochner and Dan Graham, Meyer acknowledges that, “the number of significant artist-writers was relatively small.”<sup>195</sup> Whereas many of these writers worked in prose, penning reviews and essays, Andre, in a 1974 letter to Reno Odlin asserted, “My own mind moves by no means of prose.”<sup>196</sup> Even though Meyer grants that Andre’s use of such a variety of non-prosaic formats made him distinct from the other artist-writers, he nevertheless chose to locate Andre’s practice as a writer within this discourse. His desire to place Andre within the dominant discourse of minimalism and post-minimalism prevents Meyer from locating Andre’s work alongside the work of other artists outside of these critically codified movements. Whereas Andre’s writings in *Cuts* provides insight into Andre’s thoughts on poetry and interest in Ezra Pound and Gertrude Stein, Meyer does little to contextualize Andre’s engagement with modern poetry, focusing instead on his relationship to poetry in grade school. Like Andre’s sculptures, *Cuts* aligns important examples of Andre’s poems and writings on poetry, but does not join them together.

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194 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 1.

195 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 3.

196 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 125.

Fixing Andre to the “artist-writers” of the 1960s prevents a clear discussion of what makes Andre’s poems distinct and what makes Andre distinct as a poet.

In *Words to be Looked At*, Kotz develops a trajectory for the proliferation of language in art since the 1960s beginning with John Cage’s *4’33”* and closing with Andy Warhol’s *a: a novel*. Moving from music, to poetry, to visual art, Kotz suggests that Andre’s sustained engagement with language was formative for his sculptural practice. Titling her chapter on Andre, “Poetry from Object to Action,” Kotz pairs Andre’s poetry with a discussion of Vito Acconci’s poems and their influence on his work in performance and video. “My goal here is not just to use visual art to understand poetry,” writes Kotz:

but also to use the work with language to understand sculptural practice, and, in Acconci’s work, the turn to performance—and in doing so, to reexamine the terms of this “shift,” from minimal to postminimal art, by looking at it through linguistic production.<sup>197</sup>

Kotz provides a close formal reading of a handful of Andre’s poems, drawing attention to their visual and linguistic qualities such as repetition, scattering, and gridding. Focusing on the similarity between Andre’s sculpture and his treatment of language as a material for generating form through identical units, Kotz convincingly argues for an interrelationship between the two practices. Yet, her desire to firmly link Andre’s poems and sculpture results in a chicken or egg conundrum. Whereas Kotz claims that, “Andre’s early 1960s’ work with language emerged closely from his work with objects and materials,” she later suggests that, “Andre’s use in sculpture of what he terms ‘clastic

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<sup>197</sup> Kotz, *Words to Be Looked*, 140.

structures'...could be seen to derive in part from his work with language."<sup>198</sup> At what point are the poems the progenitor of the sculpture and vice versa? Kotz is most successful when she describes the formal qualities by which Andre mapped poetry onto the visual arts. Even Kotz acknowledges that the similarities between Andre's poems and sculptures are best demonstrated by his more conventional work.

"My interest in elements or particles in sculpture is paralleled by my interest in words as particles of language," stated Andre in 1975.<sup>199</sup> Using this statement as the epigram to his chapter on Andre's poems, Rider orients his discussion within the paradigm of parallelism. Yet, whereas Rider makes significant claims concerning the interrelationship between Andre's sculpture and poetry, he understands that distance is integral to parallelism. Rider provides a considered narrative account of Andre's development as a poet, acknowledging the importance of Pound and Fenollosa to Andre's advancements. Right-naming, the materiality of language, and the ideogrammatic figure prominently into his analysis. In his lengthy study of Andre's 1963 poem "America Drill," Rider addresses key components of Andre's practice, such as his attention to diction, use of quotation and fragmentation, and his resistance to lyrical composition. Perhaps most importantly, Rider exposes the centrality of historical reference to Andre's poetic behavior. Of "America Drill" Rider argues that:

there is no other work by the artist that so comprehensively incorporates what we might call Andre's constellation of historical references: the themes and topics raised here help cast a distinct light on his later productions, which, to date, have

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198 Kotz, *Words to Be Looked*, 147.

199 Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 214.

been largely greeted by critical commentators largely with blankness and consternation.<sup>200</sup>

More complex than simplistic formal comparisons between the shapes of Andre's poems and sculptures, this approach emphasizes the distinction between parallelism and similitude. Implicit in this distinction is the recognition that although both practices reflect Andre's reinvention of modernism, they do not overlap.

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<sup>200</sup> Andre and Rider, *Carl Andre: Things in Their*, 170.

## Conclusion

In *Pope Byron Andre*, the final poem in the *Words* installation at the Chinati Foundation, Andre situates himself in a lineage with the English poets Alexander Pope (1688-1744) and George Gordon Lord Byron (1788-1824) (fig. 57). Pope, known for his satirical verse and command of the heroic couplet, and Byron, recognized as one of the central figures of the Romantic movement, seemingly have little in common with Andre, whose poems feature few of the formal strategies that made Pope and Byron renowned. Referencing Hollis Frampton's library, Andre recalled, "Hollis had a library of Pound's works and related works, and living with him was Pound and Wyndham Lewis and C.H. Douglas and Alexander Pope."<sup>201</sup> As Pound and Frampton established their own living history of writers, Andre too lived with the works of other poets and made them live again by incorporating their diction into his poetic output. In *Pope Byron Andre*, the route to Pope's diction is circuitous. Andre generates his sparse homage through a process of winnowing. Not a paraphrase, Andre's poem maintains the diction and tenor of Pope's original poem as extracted from a later re-inscription by Byron.

Pope's "Epistles to Several Persons: Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot" (1735), a 419 line poem, addresses the demands of being a famous poet, one of them being regular participation in acrimonious literary feuds.<sup>202</sup> For example, in part six of the epistle, Pope pens a rancor-filled portrait of Lord Hervey, a powerful politician who wrote of Pope that

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<sup>201</sup> Cummings, *Artists in Their Own Words*, 180.

<sup>202</sup> Alexander Pope, *The Poems of Alexander Pope*, ed. John Butt (New Haven: Yale University, 1966).

his, “‘wretched little carcass’ remained ‘unkick’d’ and ‘unslain’ only because people took pity on Pope’s ugly body.”<sup>203</sup> Referring to Lord Hervey as “Sporus,” a male concubine belonging to Emperor Nero, Pope lambasts Hervey as a social climbing dilettante, interested only in his own glamorous self-presentation:

Satire or sense, alas! can Sporus feel?  
Who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel?  
Yet let me flap [swat] this Bug with gilded wings,  
This painted Child of Dirt that stinks and stings;  
Whose Buzz the Witty and the Fair annoys,  
Yet Wit ne’er tastes, and Beauty ne’er enjoys,  
So well-bred Spaniels civilly delight  
In mumbling of the Game they dare not bite. (lines 307–314)

In contrast to Lord Hervey, Pope writes of his own indebtedness to Truth, providing his own eulogy:

That Flatt’ry, even to Kings, he held a shame,  
And thought a Lye in Verse or Prose the same:  
That not in Fancy’s Maze he wander’d long;  
But stoop’d to Truth, and moraliz’d his song. (lines 338–341)

Exactly 100 years Pope’s junior, Lord Byron took from the “Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot” formal lessons related, not to revenge satire, but to Pope’s use of imagery and piercing diction.

Writing to one of his publishers, Mr. Murray, Byron extolled the virtues of Pope’s poetry, asserting that he will show Mr. Murray, “more *imagery* in twenty lines of Pope than in any equal length of quotation in English poesy, and that in places where they least expect it.”<sup>204</sup> In particular, Byron encouraged Murray to read the “Sporus” section of the

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203 Stephen Burt, “Alexander Pope: “Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot”,” *Poetry Foundation*, accessed November 3, 2013, <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/learning/guide/179880>.

204 George Gordon Byron, *Life, Letters, and Journals of Lord Byron* (London: John Murray, 1839), 500.

“Epistle to Dr. Aburthnot” which he excerpted and included in his letter to Murray. Yet, Byron did not excerpt whole lines from Pope, but instead extracted key sequences of words from each of the lines, submitting these selections to Murray as a list, not as stanzas:

1. The thing of *silk*.
2. *Curd of ass's milk*.
3. The *butterfly*.
4. The *wheel*.
5. Bug with gilded wings.
6. *Painted child of dirt*.
7. Whose *buzz*.
8. Well-bred *spaniels*.
9. *Shallow streams run dimpling*.
10. Florid impotence.
11. *Prompter. Puppet squeaks*.
12. *The ear of Eve*.
13. *Familiar toad*.
14. *Half froth, half venom, splits himself abroad*.
15. *Fop at the toilet*.
16. *Flatterer at the board*.
17. *Amphibious thing*.
18. Now *trips a lady*.
19. Now *struts a lord*.
20. A *cherub's face*.
21. A *reptile* all the rest.
22. The *Rabbins*.
23. Pride that *licks the dust*.<sup>205</sup>

From Pope’s “Wit that can creep, and pride that licks the dust,” Byron emphasized “pride that licks the dust.” “Look at the *variety*—at the *poetry* of the passage—at the *imagination*,” wrote Byron to Murray, “there is hardly a line from which a painting might not be made, and *is*.”<sup>206</sup> Less interested in the meaning, context, or form of the poem,

Byron lists abbreviated selections from “Epistle to Dr. Aburthnot” so as to emphasize

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<sup>205</sup> Byron, *Life, Letters, and Journals*, 500.

<sup>206</sup> Byron, *Life, Letters, and Journals*, 500.

Pope's diction. In *Pope Byron Andre*, Andre further accentuates Pope's diction through a further winnowing of Byron's already truncated list. To generate his own, Andre alphabetized all the words in Byron's abbreviation of Pope's poem. Including the articles "a" and "the," Andre includes every word, often maintaining the capitalization of Byron's original. Here we have another example of Andre's selection of diction as a cut in language.<sup>207</sup>

I have focused on the importance of modernist poetic innovation to Andre's visual-poetic practice, yet, as *Pope Byron Andre* reflects, Andre's poetic interests traverse historical movements. As Andre asserted, the category of art becomes detestable when impoverished by miserly restrictions. To prevent a similar impoverishment of Andre's poems, we must avoid over-simplistic classification. Too often critics have chosen a path for navigating through Andre's poetry that necessitates a set route from his sculptures to poems or his poems to his sculptures, or worse yet, positions his poems within the context of the dominant movements of the era without regard for the poems themselves or the context of their creation. This method of investigation, akin to René Descartes' description of how to proceed if lost in a forest, advises that one:

should not wander this way and that, or what is worse, remain in one place, but should always walk as straight a line as one can in one direction and not change course for feeble reasons. For by this means, if they are not going where they wish, they will finally arrive at least somewhere, where they will probably be better off than in the middle of the forest.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> Andre, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 208.

<sup>208</sup> René Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, trans. Donald A. Cress, 3rd ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998), 13.

Yet, this desire for a straight line of inquiry leaves the reader/viewer capable of movement in only one direction. Unhindered by historical and critical proscriptions, Andre adopted an expansive approach to word and image, a behavior that poet George Oppen, another acolyte of Pound, characterized in his inestimable poem, “Of Being Numerous”: There are things/We live among ‘and to see them/Is to know ourselves’ . . . . We have chosen the meaning/Of being numerous.<sup>209</sup> As Oppen’s poem suggests, the quality of being numerous necessitates openness and inclusivity. In contrast, a reliance on a well-trodden path narrows not only what we know about Andre’s work, but also what we can learn about a number of other artists whose work oversteps the boundary between word and image. Andre’s poetic practice rejects the model of dominance and subservience as established by Clement Greenberg’s sweeping indictment of literature’s perceived encroachment on the visual arts. Instead, Andre, as well as many artists before and after him, chose to investigate language in their visual practices. More than just the work of a minimalist, Andre’s poems propose a kinship with artists whose work falls outside of movements. For example, Andre’s poetics has as little in common with the Conceptual movement of the later half of the 1960s as it does with the collaborative paintings and publications of Tibor de Nagy’s painters and poets group of the 1950s. As I have suggested, instead of Andre, Judd, and Flavin, an alternative cohort might be Andre, Duchamp, Twombly, and Davis. Expanding the cohort to include poetry, we might also add Pope, Byron, Pound, Stein, Olson, and Susan Howe. As Andre “mapped poetry onto

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<sup>209</sup> George Oppen, *George Oppen: Selected Poems*, ed. Robert Creeley (New York: New Directions, 2003), 83.

the visual arts” so must we expand the discourse to include those poets or visual artists who also make fluid these often isolated fields.

I have defined Andre’s word and image works as “poems,” for a number of reasons: to establish their poetic precedence, the context in which they were created, their formal poetic qualities and also to redress claims on this body of work that reduce Andre’s investment in language to the service of his sculpture. Nevertheless, I have also categorized these works as poems for lack of an adequate term. Equally visual, these works engage abstraction, geometry, materiality, space and time. Relegating them solely as works of language diminishes these essential qualities. This predicament of terminology also affects poets whose works equally engage the visual and the verbal. The works of contemporary poet Susan Howe, for example, cannot be sufficiently addressed or even understood without investigating the visual strategies of her poetics. Of Howe’s body of work, Robert Snowden, curator of Howe’s first solo show in a contemporary art context, writes:

This is not a moment for making analogies—Howe’s poems are like drawings are like notations are like collages. No. They are poems. But if you write poems that are structured the way a piece of glass is when dropped from a great height, you probably mean something different by the word “poem” from what most people mean. Whatever poetry may prove to be, Howe’s is a material construction.<sup>210</sup>

An admirer of Emily Dickinson, John Cage, and Carl Andre, Howe disrupts the boundary between poetry and art, proving any attempt at conclusive categorization futile.

Born approximately ten miles from Andre’s hometown, in Boston, MA, Susan Howe, two years Andre’s junior, makes poetry that, like Andre’s, consistently negotiates

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210 Robert Snowden, "Susan Howe: Tom Tit Tot," *Yale Union (YU)*, accessed November 3, 2013, <http://yaleunion.org/susan-howe/>.

language and the space of the page. Howe graduated with a degree in painting in 1961 from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston. Moving to New York in 1964, her first works were wall illustrations, combining photographs, found text, verse, and lists. “I used quotation in my painting in the same way that I use quotation in my writing, in that I always seemed to use collage,” described Howe.<sup>211</sup> At the suggestion of her friend, poet Ted Greenwald, Howe shifted from arranging words on walls to creating books of poems. When asked if she stopped behaving as a visual artist, Howe answered, “No. I’m still doing it, but I’m doing it on pages with words.”<sup>212</sup>

In her book, *Singularities*, Howe employed visual strategies such as the irregular shaping of text and textual collage techniques in her investigation of the Indian Wars, a series of historical events also explored by Andre in his *King Philip’s War* series.<sup>213</sup> Whereas some sections of *Singularities* follow traditional linear reading arrangements, other pages weave quotation and primary documents into a layered collage of text. The title of the second section of *Singularities*, “Thorow,” refers to both Henry David Thoreau and the words “through” or “thoroughfare.” Howe’s arrangements force the eye to wander, looking for a direct route to follow, but is frustrated by this desire. Her lines offer no single proscribed direction, but many possible ways of navigating the page. To maneuver through these layers of words and phrases one must always have the book in motion, rotating and flipping and rotating and flipping again. In one page spread of the “Thorow” section, the text on both the left and right hand pages at first appear to be

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211 Christopher J. MacGowan, *Twentieth-Century American Poetry* (Maldon, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 158.

212 Lynne Keller, "An Interview with Susan Howe," *Contemporary Literature* 36, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 8.

213 Susan Howe, *Singularities* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University, 1990).

mirrored collages of text, but with a closer look one finds they are not exact mirror images (fig. 58). As Howe has stated, her use of mirrored text as a compositional strategy developed from an interest in the work of Marcel Duchamp:

The mirroring impulse in my work goes way back...I was very interested in Duchamp's *Large Glass* and the book that went with it, *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even*. Duchamp was an inspiration to me when I was beginning to shift from painting to writing. At first when I used mirroring in my writing I was very sedate about it, and it involved repetition in a more structured way. But with "Thorow" I had done one scattered page and made a xerox copy and suddenly there were two lying on my desk beside each other, and it seemed to me the scattering effect was stronger if I repeated them so the image would travel across facing pages. The facing pages reflected and strengthened each other.<sup>214</sup>

Like Andre, Howe's work is marked by qualities of both poetry and visual art. Further, she draws from a number of historic, artistic, and poetic sources to generate her poems. The situation or categorization of these works is equally poetic and artistic; they evidence qualities of both activities: the materiality of their production and the manner by which we see or read them owes much to the visual arts; their diction and acoustical aspects owes much to poetry. Accurate investigation demands a fluency in both fields and a refusal to oversimplify their qualities for the sake of reinstating the narratives of dominance and subservience.

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<sup>214</sup> Keller, "An Interview with Susan," 9.

## Figures



**Figure 1** Carl Andre, *Equivalents VIII*, 1966. Firebricks, 5 x 27 x 90 1/8 in. (12.7 x 68.58 x 229 cm). Tate.



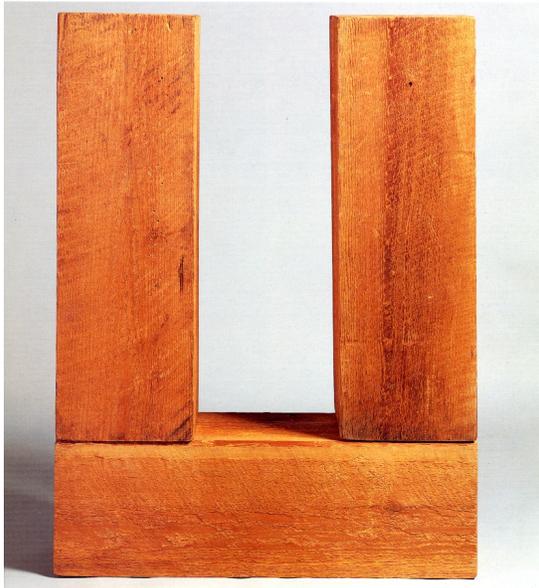
**Figure 2** View of Andre's, *Words 1958-1972*. Chinati Foundation, Marfa, Texas, 2013.



**Figure 3** Carl Andre, *Last Ladder*, 1959. Wood, 84 ½ x 6 1/8 x 6 1/8 in. (214 x 15.56 x 15.56 cm).



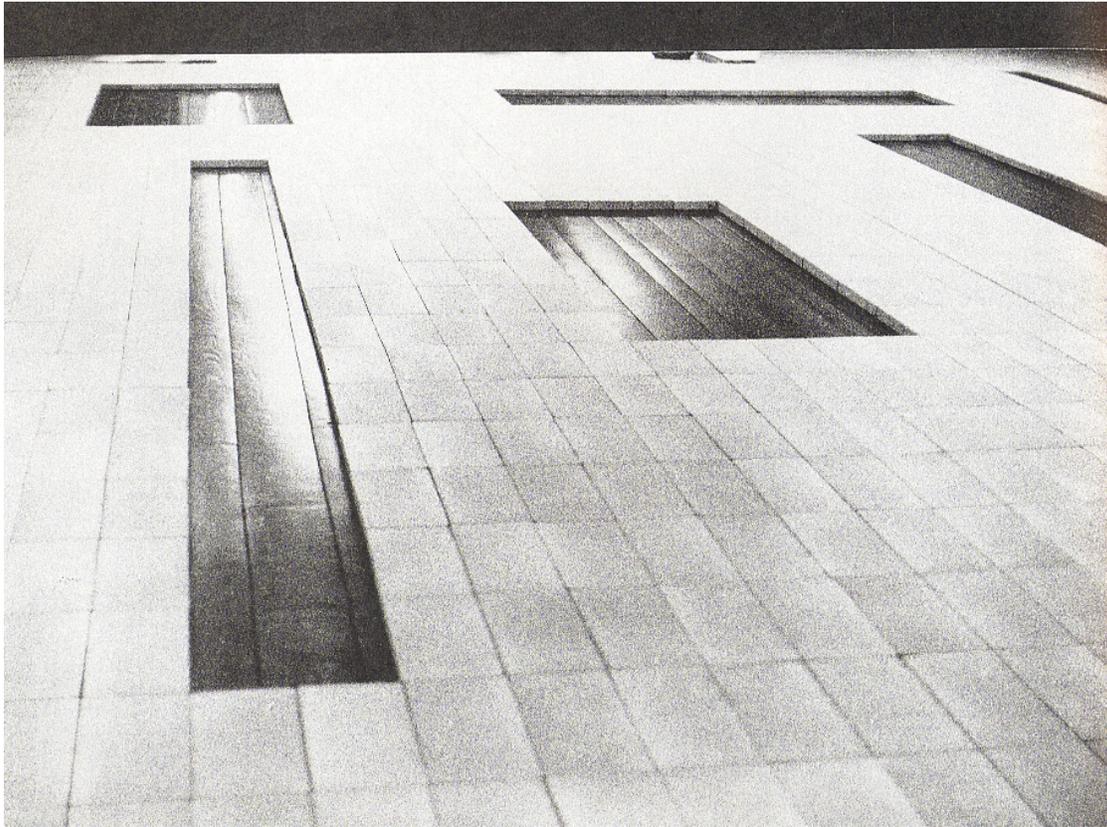
**Figure 4** Constantin Brancusi, *Endless Column*, version I, 1918. Oak, 80 x 9 7/8 x 9 5/8 in. (203.2 x 25.1 x 24.5 cm). The Museum of Modern Art.



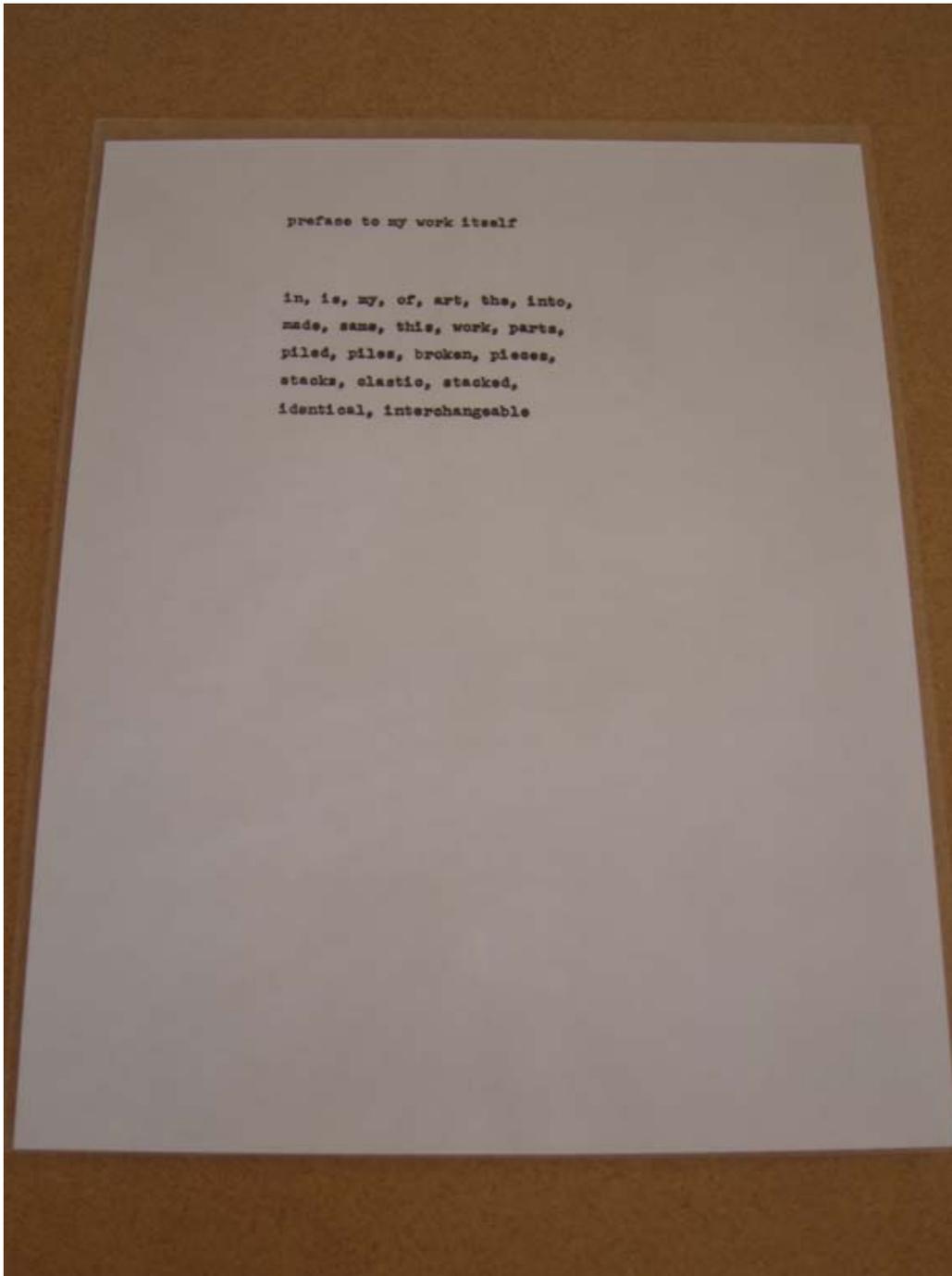
**Figure 5** Carl Andre, *Posts on a Threshold* (Element Series), 1960. Western red cedar, 48 x 36 x 12 in.



**Figure 6** Carl Andre, *Stile* (Element Series), 1960. Western red cedar, 48 x 36 x 12 in.



**Figure 7** Carl Andre, *Cuts*, 1967. Concrete capstones, 4 in. x 368 in. x 4 ½ ft. (10 cm x 934.72 cm x 13 m). Installation shot, Dwan Gallery, Los Angeles, 1967.



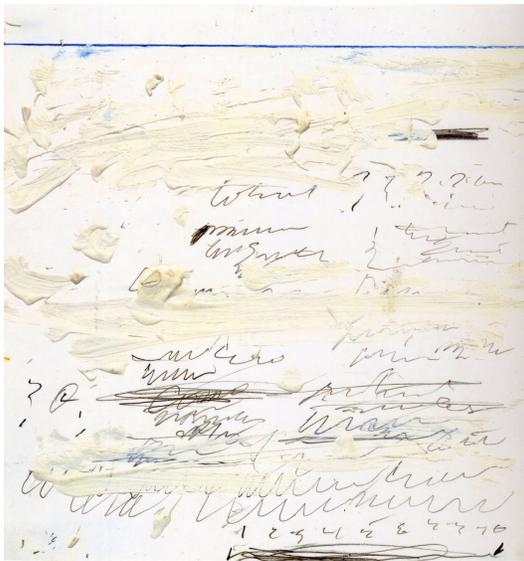
**Figure 8** Carl Andre, *preface to my work itself*, page 1 of 1, 1963. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.



**Figure 9** Larry Rivers and Frank O'Hara, *Portrait and Poem Painting*, 1961. Oil on canvas, 36 x 36 in, Private collection.



**Figure 10** Marcel Duchamp, *Fresh Widow*, 1920. Miniature French window, painted wood frame, and panes of glass covered with black leather, 30 ½ x 17 5/8 in. on wood sill ¾ x 21 x 4 in, The Museum of Modern Art.



**Figure 11** Cy Twombly, *Poems to the Sea XIX*, 1959. House paint, wax crayon, crayon and pencil, 30.5 x 30.1 in.



**Figure 12** Stuart Davis, *Visa*, 1951. Oil on canvas, 40 x 52 in. The Museum of Modern Art.



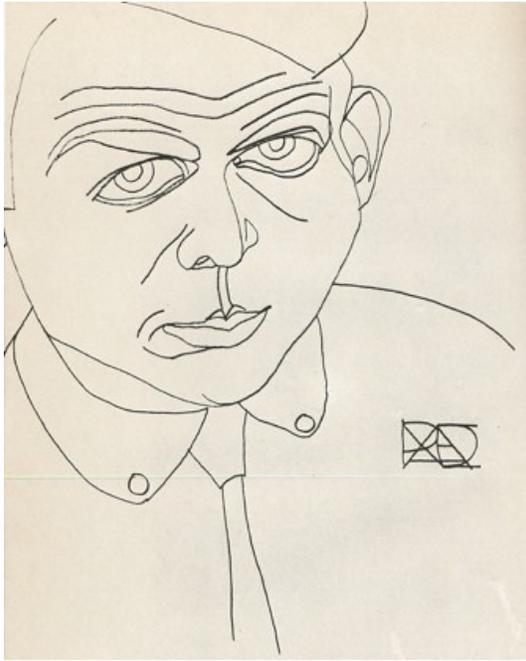
**Figure 13** Stuart Davis, *Rapt at Rappaport's*, 1952. Oil on canvas, Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, D.C.



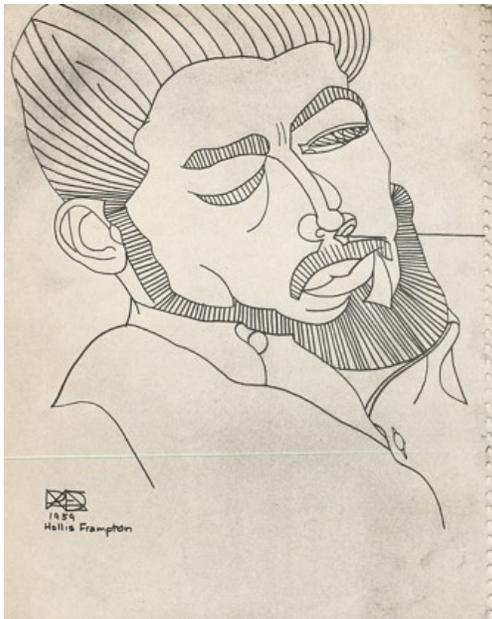
**Figure 14** George Braque, *The Portuguese*, 1911. Oil on canvas, 3' 10 1/8 in. x 2'8".  
Kunstmuseum Basel.



**Figure 15** George Braque, *Homage to J.S. Bach*, 1911. Oil on canvas, 21 1/4 x 28 3/4" (54 x 73 cm). The Museum of Modern Art.



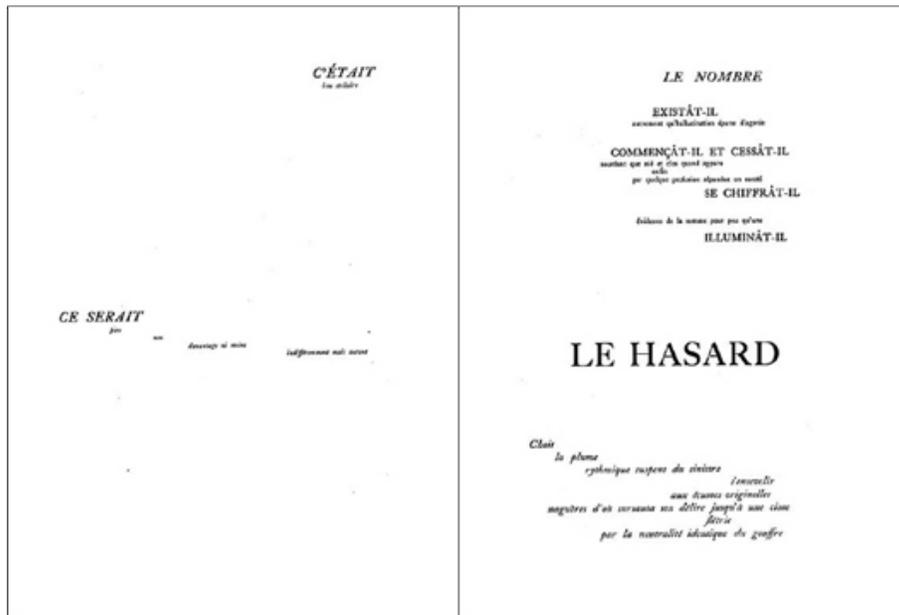
**Figure 16** Carl Andre, *Self-portrait*, 1959. Drawing on paper.



**Figure 17** Carl Andre, *Portrait of Hollis Frampton*, 1959. Drawing on paper.

S  
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 JE SUIS  
 LA LAN  
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 BOUCHE  
 O PARIS  
 TIRE ET TIRERA  
 T O U        JOURS  
 AUX        A L  
 LEM        ANDS

**Figure 18** Guillaume Apollinaire, “2<sup>e</sup> Cannonier Conducteur,” *Calligrammes: Poems of War and Peace 1913-1916*. Berkeley: University of California, 1980. (First edition 1918).



**Figure 19** Stéphane Mallarmé, *Un Coup de Dés Jamais N'Abolira Le Hasard*, 1914.

正名

Figure 20 Ching Ming ideogram.

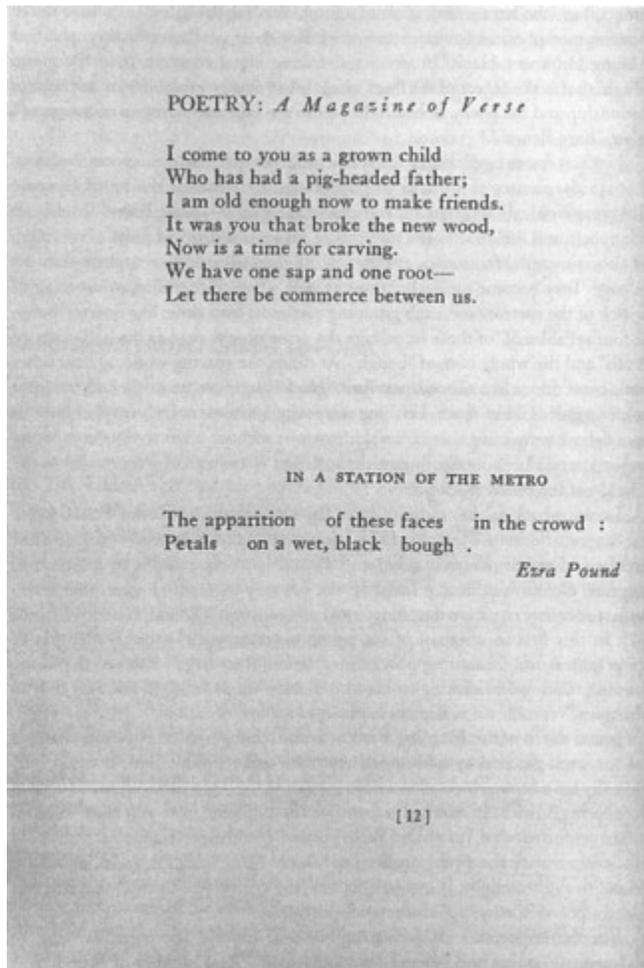


Figure 21 Ezra Pound, "In a Station of the Metro," *Poetry*, April 1913.



## CANTO VIII

Io dico, seguitando, ch'assai prima  
che noi fossimo al piè de l'alta torre,  
li occhi nostri n'andar suso a la cima 3

per due fiammette che i vedemmo porre,  
e un'altra da lungi render cenno,  
tanto ch'a pena il potea l'occhio tòrre. 6

E io mi volsi al mar di tutto 'l senno;  
dissi: "Questo che dice? e che risponde  
quell' altro foco? e chi son quei che 'l fenno?" 9

Ed elli a me: "Su per le sucide onde  
già scorgere puoi quello che s'aspetta,  
se 'l fummo del pantan nol ti nasconde." 12

Corda non pinse mai da sé saetta  
che sì corresse via per l'aere snella,  
com' io vidi una nave piccioletta 15

venir per l'acqua verso noi in quella,  
sotto 'l governo d'un sol galeoto,  
che gridava: "Or se' giunta, anima fella!" 18

"Flegiàs, Flegiàs, tu gridi a vòto,"  
disse lo mio signore, "a questa volta:  
più non ci avrai che sol passando il loto." 21

Qual è colui che grande inganno ascolta  
che li sia fatto, e poi se ne rammarca,  
fecesi Flegiàs ne l'ira accolta. 24

Lo duca mio discese ne la barca,  
e poi mi fece intrare appresso lui;  
e sol quand' io fui dentro parve carca. 27

Figure 23 Dante Alighieri, Canto VIII, *The Divine Comedy*. London: Penguin, 2003.

" father's opinion that he has shode to Mr. Genare about the  
" valts of the cherch... etc ...

" Giovane of Master alwise P. S. I think it advisabl that  
" I shud go to rome to talk to mister Albert so as I can no  
" what he thinks about it rite.

" Sagramoro..."

" *Illustre signor mio, Messire Battista...*"

" First: Ten slabs best red, seven by 15, by one third,

" Eight ditto, good red, 15 by three by one,

" Six of same, 15 by one by one.

" Eight columns 15 by three and one third  
etc... with carriage, danars 151

" MONSEIGNEUR:

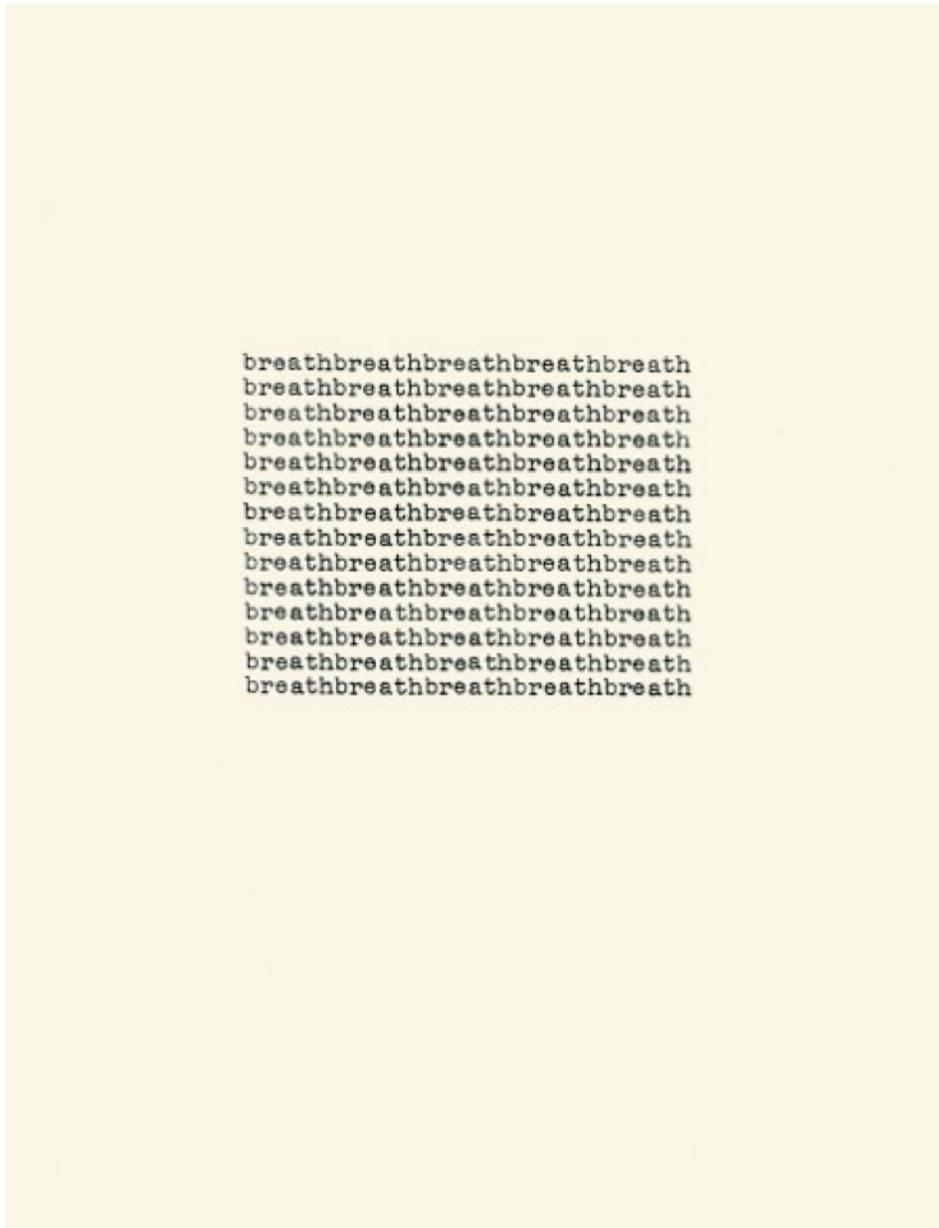
" Madame Isotta has had me write today about Sr. Galeazzo's  
" daughter. The man who said young pullets make thin  
" soup, knew what he was talking about. We went to see the  
" girl the other day, for all the good that did, and she denied  
" the whole matter and kept her end up without losing her  
" temper. I think Madame Ixotta very nearly exhausted the  
" matter. *Mi pare che avea decto bogni chossia.* All the  
" children are well. Where you are everyone is pleased and  
" happy because of your taking the chateau here we are the  
" reverse as you might say drifting without a rudder. Madame  
" Lucrezia has probably, or should have, written to you, I  
" suppose you have the letter by now. Everyone wants to be  
" remembered to you. 21 Dec. D. de M."

" ... *sagramoro* to put up the derricks. There is a supply of  
" beams at..."

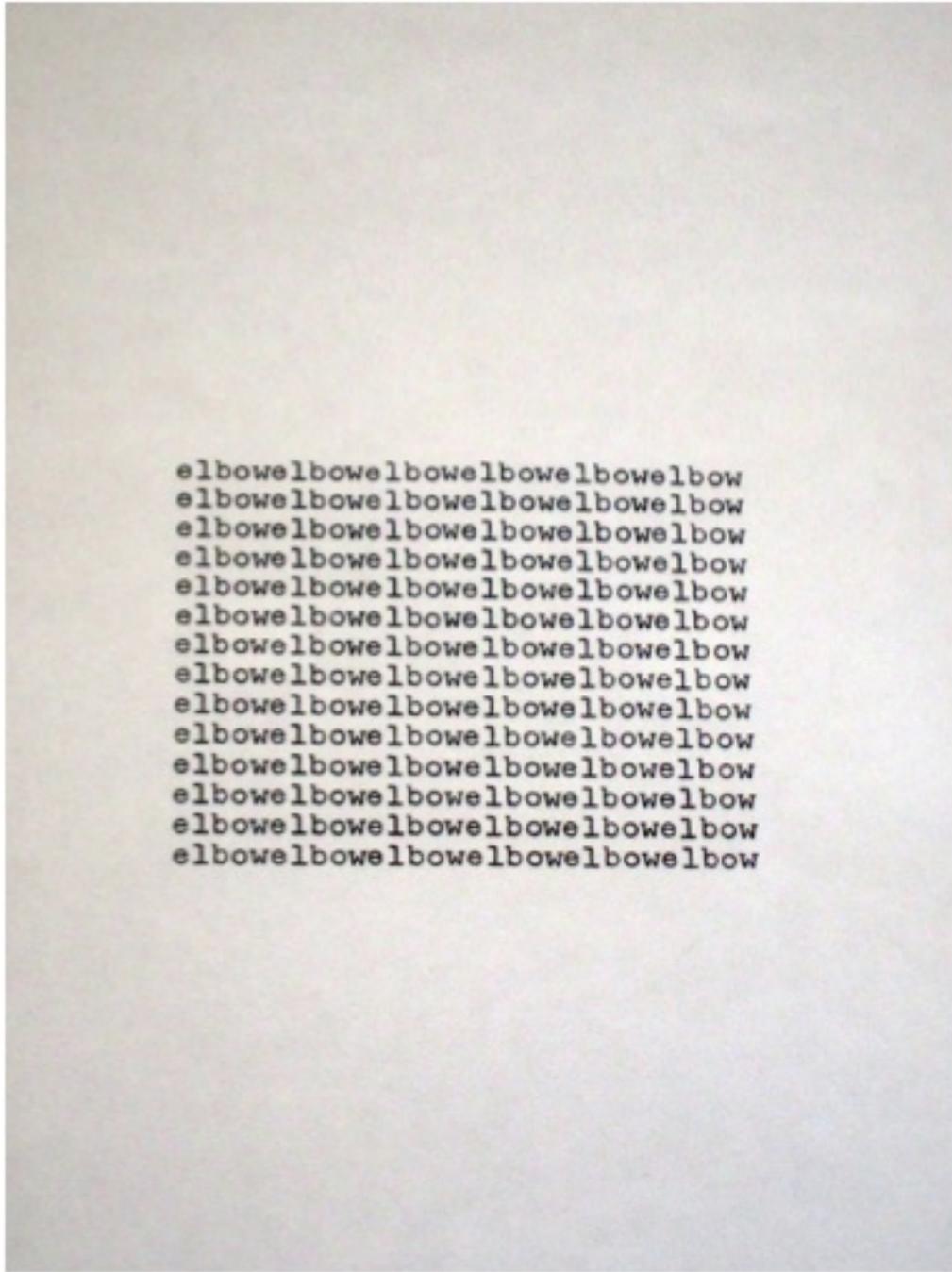
" MAGNIFICENT LORD WITH DUE REVERENCE:

" Messire Malatesta is well and asks for you every day. He  
" is so much pleased with his pony, It wd. take me a month  
" to write you all the fun he gets out of that pony. I want to  
" again remind you to write to Georgio Rambottom or to his

Figure 24 Ezra Pound, Canto IX, *The Cantos*. New York: New Directions, 1970.



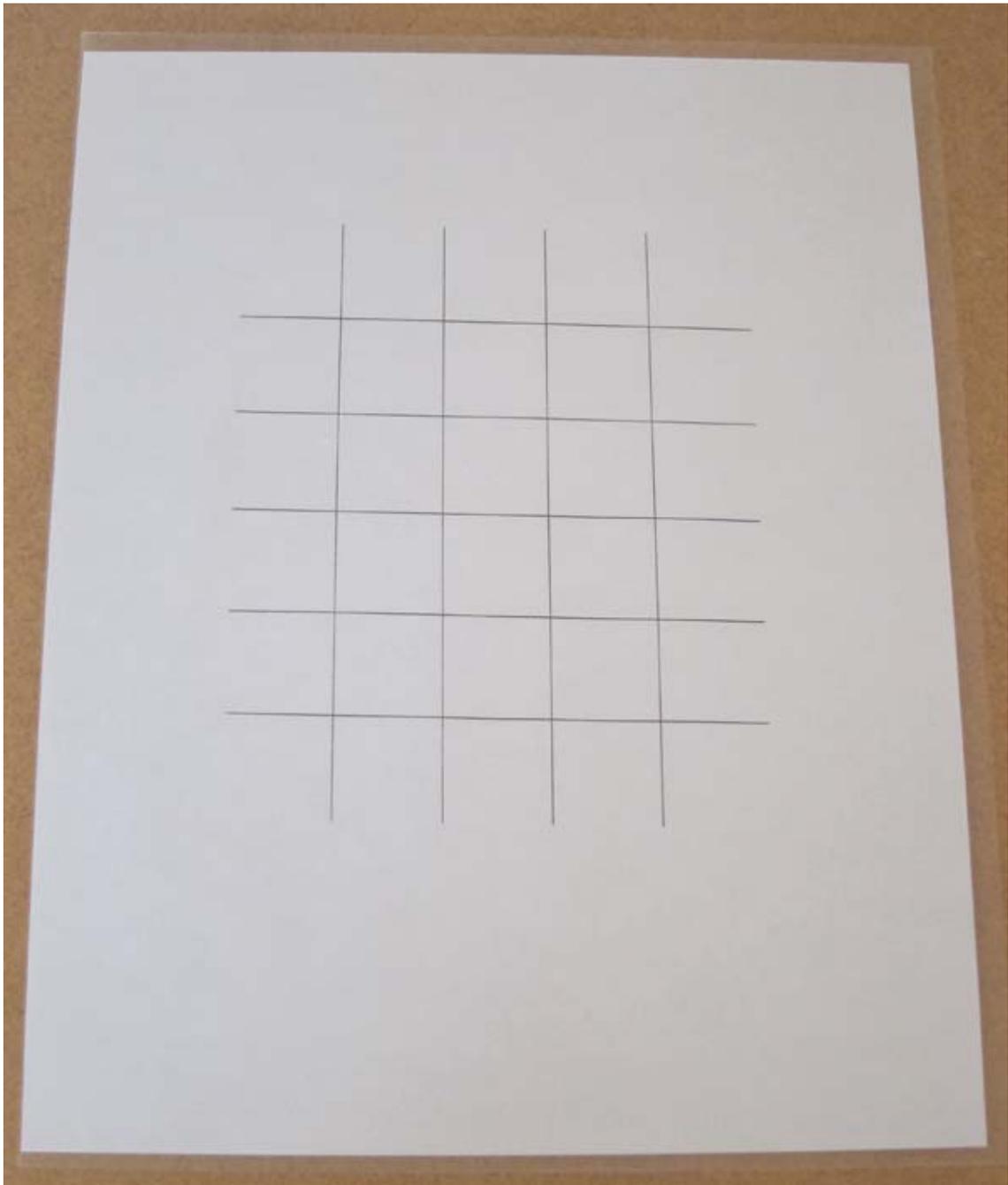
**Figure 25** Carl Andre, *One Hundred Sonnets*, 1963. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.



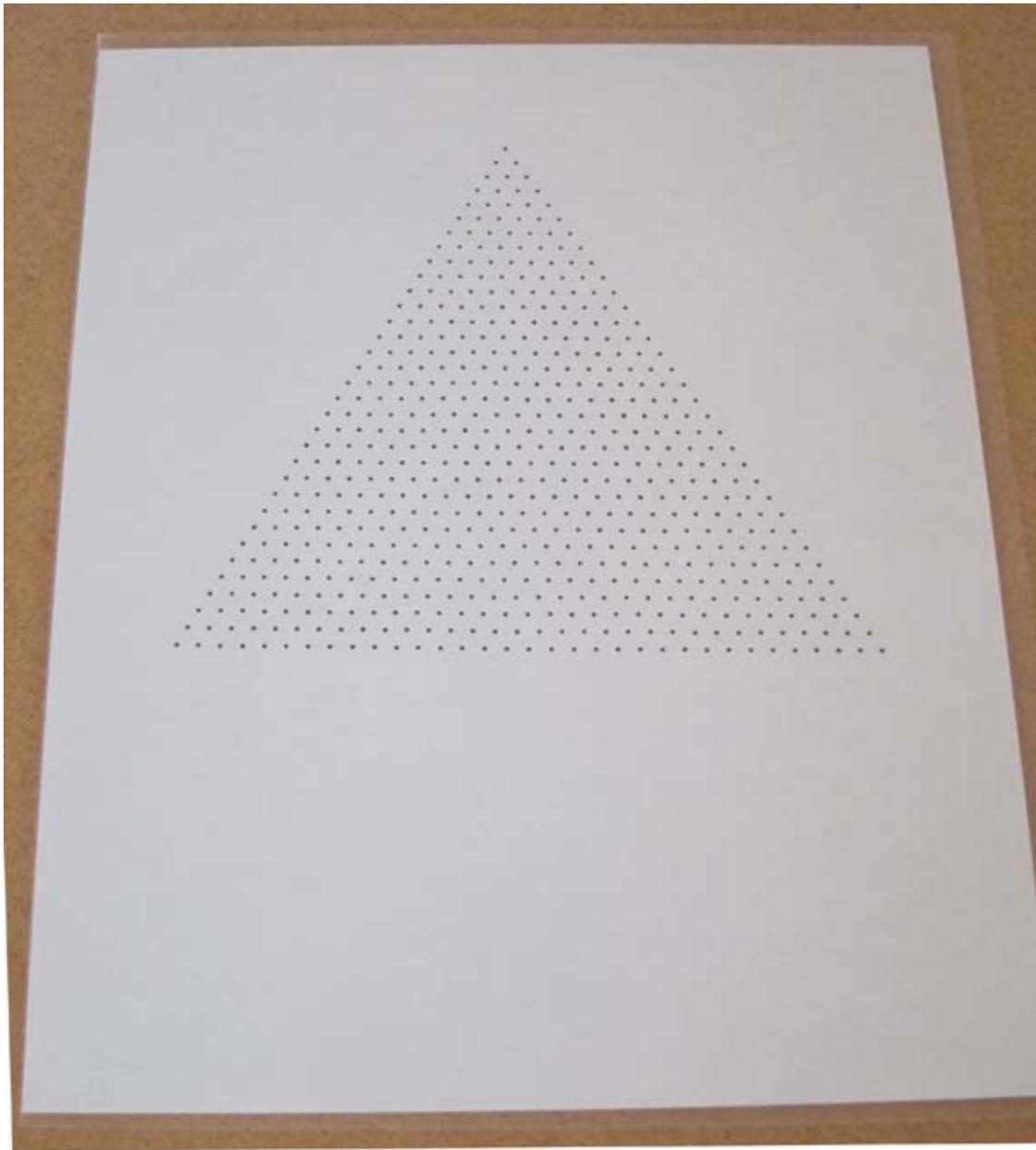
**Figure 26** Carl Andre, *One Hundred Sonnets*, 1963. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.

The hairy wild-bee that murmurs and hankers up and  
 down— that gripes the full-grown lady-flower, curves  
 upon her with amorous firm legs, takes his will of  
 her, and holds himself tremulous and tight upon her  
 till he is satisfied,  
 The wet of woods through the early hours,  
 Two sleepers at night lying close together as they sleep,  
 one with an arm slanting down across and below the  
 waist of the other,  
 The smell of apples, aromas from crushed sage-plant,  
 mint, birch-bark,  
 The boy's longings, the glow and pressure as he confides  
 to me what he was dreaming, 20  
 The dead leaf whirling its spiral whirl, and falling still  
 and content to the ground,  
 The no-formed stings that sights, people, objects, sting  
 me with,  
 The hubbed sting of myself, stinging me as much as it  
 ever can any one,  
 The sensitive, orbic, underlapped brothers, that only  
 privileged feelers may be intimate where they are,  
 The curious roamer, the hand, roaming all over the body  
 — the bashful withdrawing of flesh where the fingers  
 soothingly pause and edge themselves,  
 The limpid liquid within the young man,  
 The vexed corrosion, so pensive and so painful,  
 The torment—the irritable tide that will not be at rest,  
 The like of the same I feel—the like of the same in  
 others,  
 The young woman that flushes and flushes, and the 20  
 young man that flushes and flushes,  
 The young man that wakes, deep at night, the hot hand  
 seeking to repress what would master him—the  
 strange half-welcome pangs, visions, sweats—the  
 pulse pounding through palms and trembling  
 encircling fingers—the young man all colored, red,  
 ashamed, angry;  
 The souse upon me of my lover the sea, as I lie willing

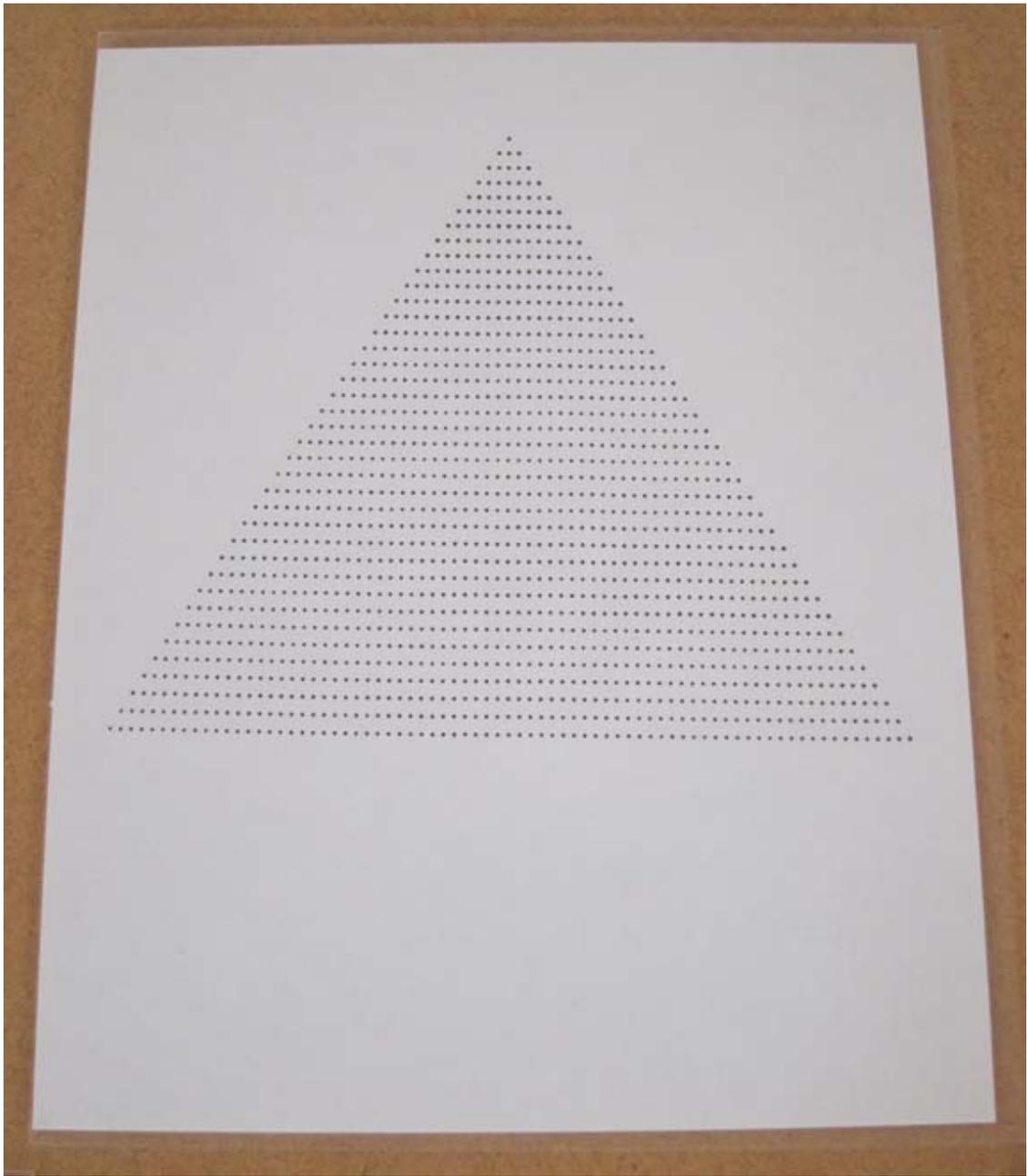
**Figure 27** Walt Whitman, *Walt Whitman: Selected Poems 1855-1892*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999.



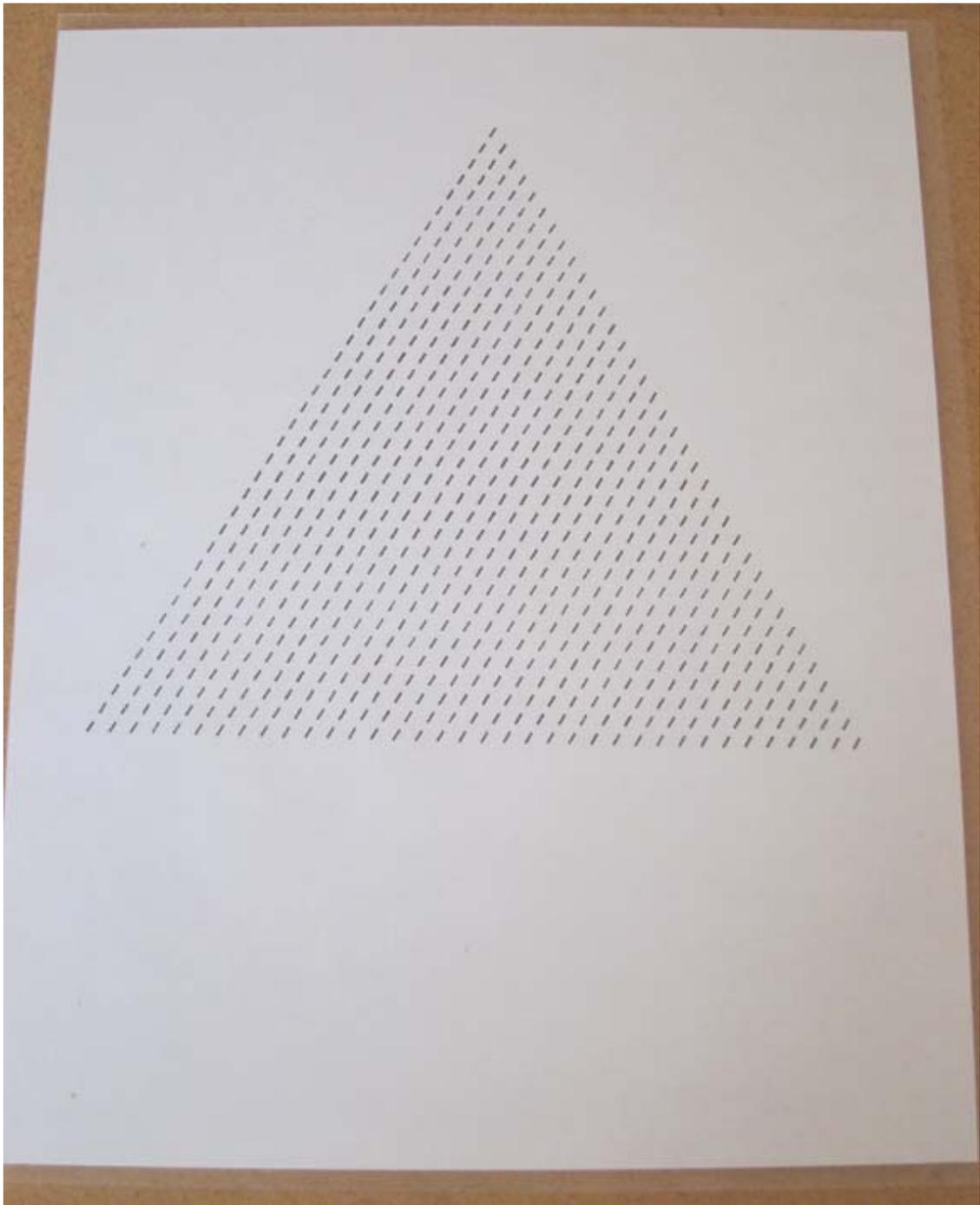
**Figure 28** Carl Andre, *Shape and Structure*, page 1 of 10, 1963. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.



**Figure 29** Carl Andre, *Shape and Structure*, page 3 of 10, 1963. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.



**Figure 30** Carl Andre, *Shape and Structure*, page 5 of 10, 1963. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.

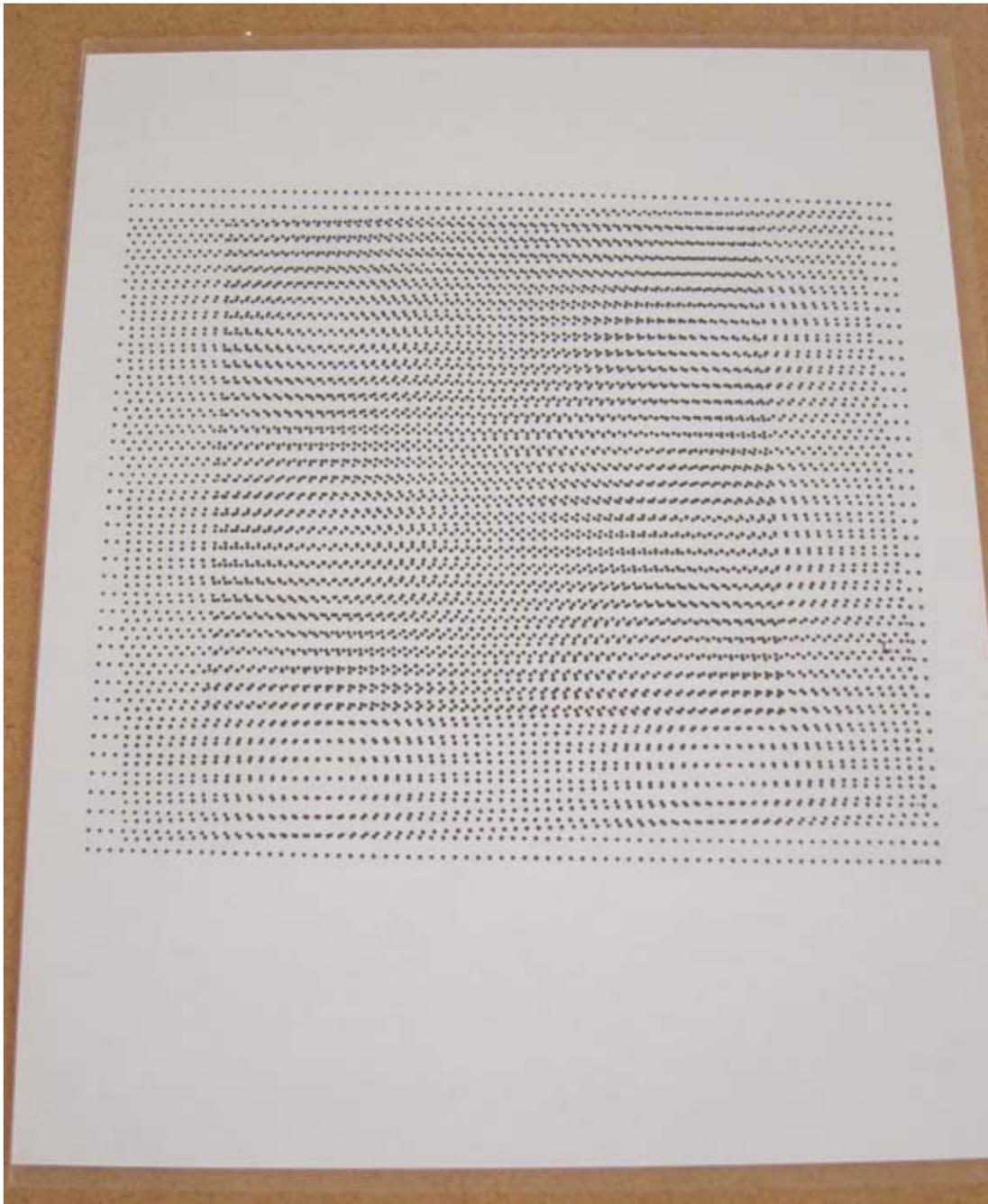


**Figure 31** Carl Andre, *Shape and Structure*, page 2 of 10, 1963. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.

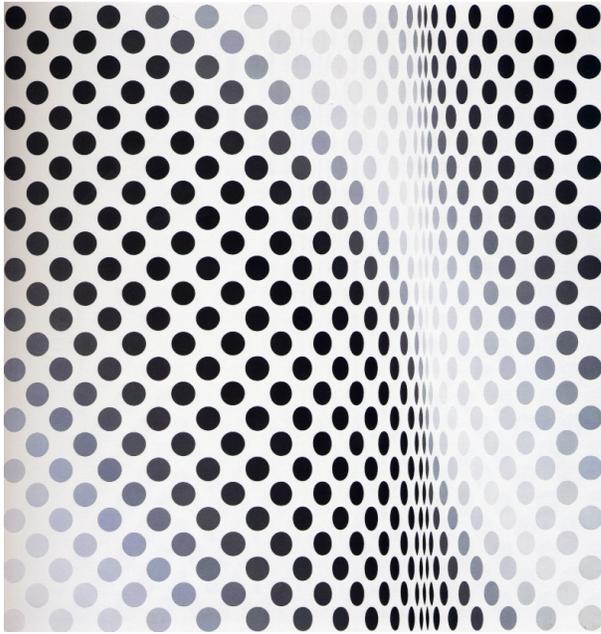
144 TIMES (LAMENT FOR THE CHILDREN)

hole  
frog hole  
cave frog hole  
hill cave frog hole  
hook hill cave frog hole  
leaf hook hill cave frog hole  
wick  
sled wick  
kite sled wick  
tent kite sled wick  
game tent kite sled wick  
rind game tent kite sled wick  
pail  
hulk pail  
dome hulk pail  
leaf dome hulk pail  
tern leaf dome hulk pail  
gate tern leaf dome hulk pail  
rail  
wire rail  
path wire rail  
hull path wire rail  
door hull path wire rail  
road door hull path wire rail  
marl  
gear marl  
wood gear marl  
hump wood gear marl  
dune hump wood gear marl  
ball dune hump wood gear marl  
milk  
roof milk  
gift roof milk  
wool gift roof milk  
moon wool gift roof milk  
room moon wool gift roof milk  
girl  
word girl  
mast word girl  
worm mast word girl  
edge worm mast word girl  
beam edge worm mast word girl  
tide  
rope tide  
meal rope tide  
root meal rope tide  
toad root meal rope tide  
mile toad root meal rope tide

Figure 32 Carl Andre, *144 Times (Lament for the Children)*, page 1 of 3, 1962-5. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.



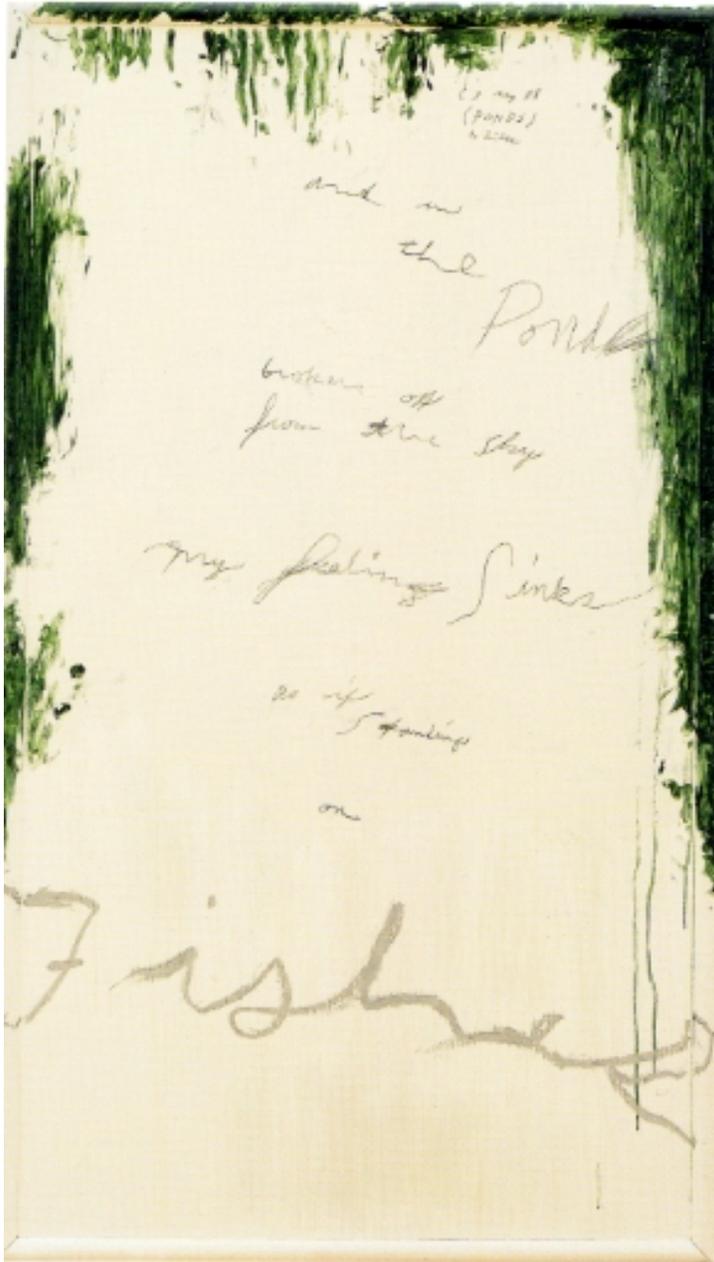
**Figure 33** Carl Andre, *Shape and Structure*, page 9 of 10, 1963. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.



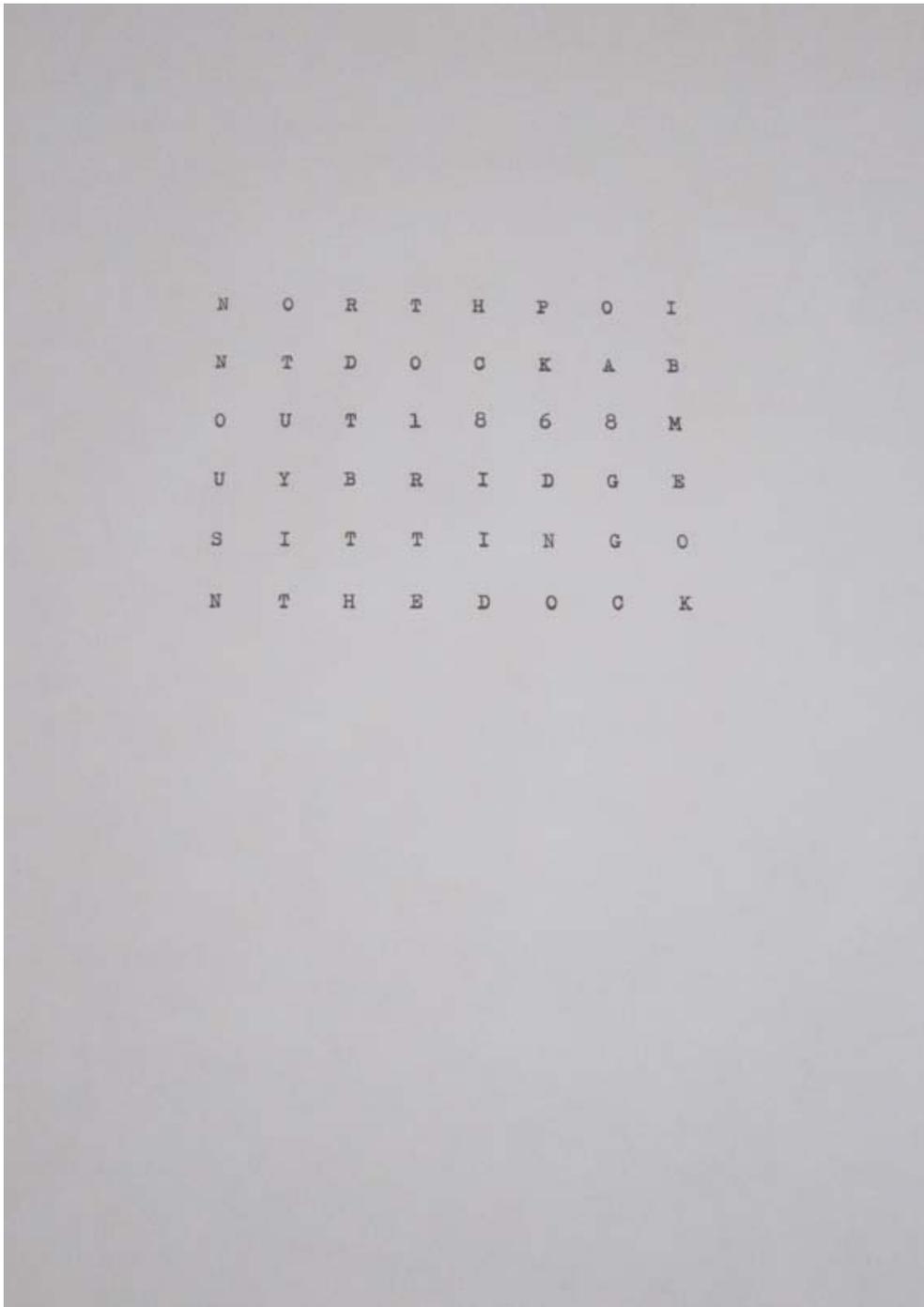
**Figure 34** Bridget Riley, *Pause*, 1964. Emulsion on hardboard, 104 x 99 cm. Private Collection.



**Figure 35** Bridget Riley, *Untitled [La Lune en Rodage – Carlo Belloli]*, 1965. Screenprint, 12 9/16 x 12 9/16 in. (31.9 x 31.9 cm).



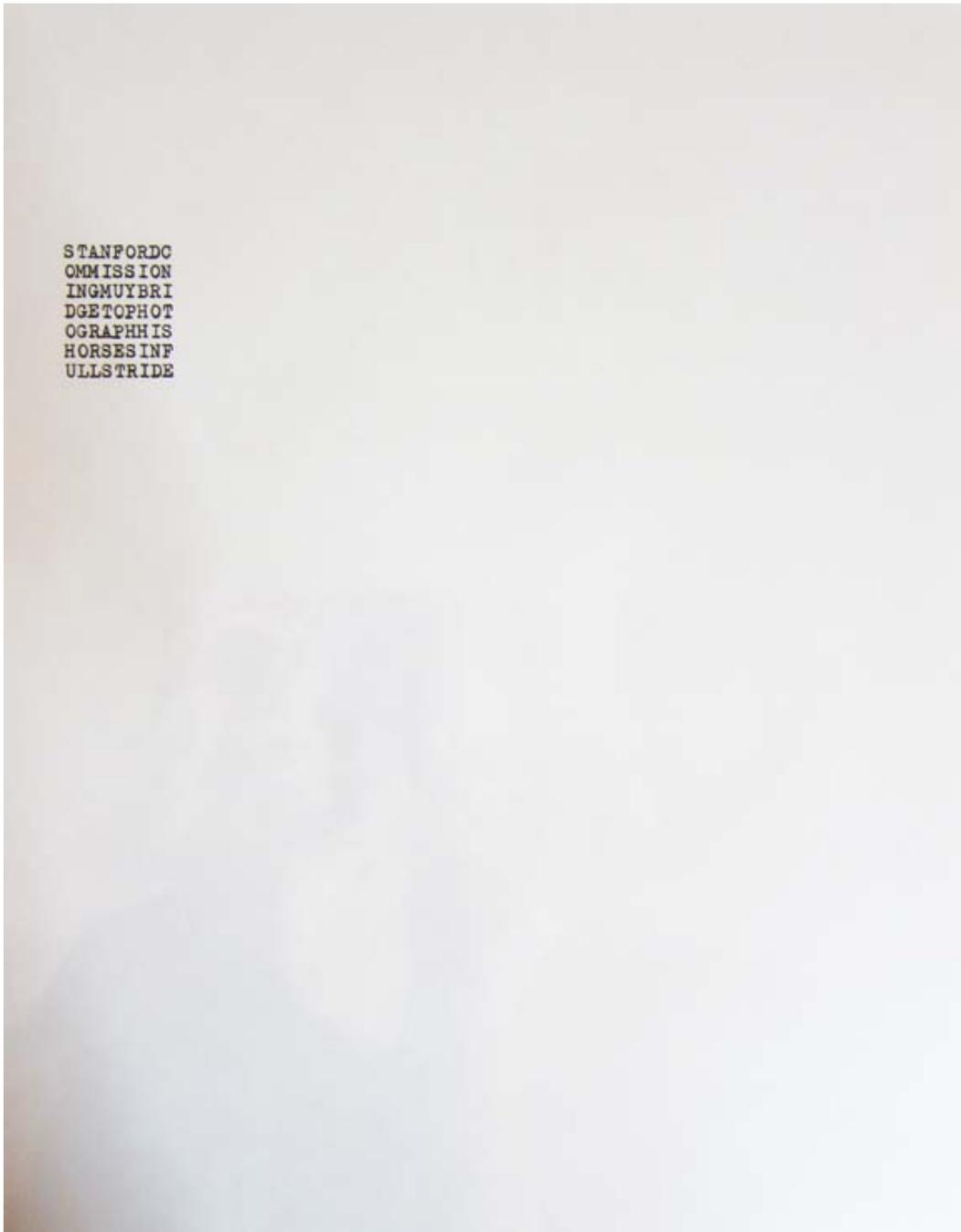
**Figure 36** Cy Twombly, *Untitled (A Painting in Nine Parts), Untitled, Part I*, 1988. Oil, water-based paint, graphite and metallic paint on wood panel with painted frame, 191.2 x 108.6 cm. Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist.



**Figure 37** Carl Andre, *Stillanovel*, 1972. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.

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ANDSOLLEnorLLTeardmuyb  
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**Figure 38** Carl Andre, *Stillanovel*, 1972. 8 ½ x 11 in. The Chinati Foundation.



**Figure 39** Carl Andre, *Stillanovel*, 1972. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.

STILLANOV	NORTHPOIN	EADWEARDJ	MRSFLORAS	FORMERSEN	MAJORHENR	MRWIRTWPE
ELTOHOLLI	TDOCKABOU	MUYBRIDGE	HALLCROSS	ATORLELAN	YLARKYNSS	NDEGASTTH
SFRAMPTON	TL868EADW	DISTINGUI	STONEMUYB	DS TANFORD	OLDIEROPF	ELAWYERAN
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ITTYNOV	IDGEMSE	GRAPHICAR	OUNGWIFE	OF THECENT	CORRESPON	IENDOPSEN
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CARLANDRE	ONTHEDOOK	FRANCISCO	MUYBRIDGE	CRAILROAD	FRANCISCO	DS TANFORD
SENATORST	STANFORDC	MUYBRIDGE	FLORAMUYB	MUYBRIDGE	EADWEARDM	MUYBRIDGE
ANFORDTEL	OMMISSION	MAKINGAPH	RIDGEBEIN	PHOTOGRAP	UYBRIDGEI	ASSURINGM
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MUYBRIDGE	DGETOPHOT	PSENATORS	EDTOMAJOR	DOOWARINT	ISCOWARNI	NS THATREW
FROMHISSA	OGRAPHHIS	TANFORDSF	HENRYLARK	HELAVABED	NGMAJORLA	OULDNOTHE
CRAMENTCH	HORSESNIP	ASTGELDIN	YNSFOR THE	SOPNORTH	FROMFLORA	SITATETOD
ONEIN1872	ULLSTRIDE	GOCODENT	FIRSTTIME	ALIPORNIA	RKYN SAWAY	DESTROYHI
LARKYNSGE	MAJORLARK	MUYBRIDGE	EADWEARDM	MUYBRIDGE	MUYBRIDGE	MUYBRIDGE
TINGUPAM	YNSLODGIN	DISCOVERY	UYBRIDGES	SETTINGOU	HIRINGATE	EMPLOYING
APOFHEMI	GATWILLIA	NGBYLETTE	EARCHINGO	TFORCALIS	AMOPHORSE	GEORGEWOL
NINGPROPE	MSTUARTSH	RTHEINTIM	UTMAJORLA	TOGATOCON	SATOONNEL	PETODRIVE
RTIESINTH	OUSENEART	AOYBETWEE	RKYNSONTH	FRONTTHED	LYSLIVERY	HIMOUTTOT
EADJOININ	HEYELLOWJ	NHISWFEA	EL7thOFOO	ESTROYERO	STABLESIN	HEYELLOWJ
GOCOUNTIES	ACKETMINE	NDLARKYNS	TOBER1874	PHISPEACE	CALISTOGA	ACKETMINE
MUYBRIDGE	AGENTLEMA	MUYBRIDGE	MAJORLARK	MUYBRIDGE	MUYBRIDGE	EADWEARDM
ALIGHTING	ANSWERIN	SAYINGHEW	YNSATTHED	REPLYINGA	DRAWINGAG	UYBRIDGED
FROMHISCA	GMUYBRIDG	ISHESTOSE	OORCALLIN	TONCEGOOD	UNSAINGH	ISCHARGIN
RRIAGEATT	ESURGENTK	EMAJORLAR	GINTOTHE	EVENINGMA	EREISMYANS	HISPISTOG
HEDDOOROFW	NOCKINGAB	KYNSFORON	ARKNESSWHO	←	←	←
ILLIAMS TU	OUTLLOCLO	LYONEMOME	CAREYOUIC	SMTNAMEIS	ETTERYOUS	HES TOPMAJ
ARTSHOUSE	OKATNIGHT	NTOUTSIDE	ANTSEYOU	MUYBRIDGE	ENTMYWIFE	ORLARKVNS
LARKYNSST	LARKYNSRU	MUYBRIDGE	JMMCAR THU	MAJORHENR	MRSTACYAN	MAJORLARK
AGGERINGE	NNINGTHRO	AFTERFIRI	RDRAWINGA	YLARKYNSR	DSOMEO THE	YNSDYINGN
ACKWARDUN	UGHTHEKIT	NGFOLLOWI	PISTOLAND	UNNINGPRO	RSCARRYIN	OMORETHAN
DERTHEIMP	CHENANDSI	NGMAJORLA	ORDERINGE	MTHEHOUSE	GMAJORLAR	AMINUTEAN
AOTOFTHE	TTINGROOM	RKYNSCOLOS	ADWEARDMU	ANDFALLIN	KYNSPROMT	DONEHALFA
HOTSMUYBR	ATTEMPTIN	ELYTHROUG	YBRIDGETO	GNEARALAR	HEYARDINT	FTERBEING
IDGEFIRES	GTOESCAPE	HTHEHOUSE	SURRENDER	GEOAKTREE	OTHEHOUSE	LAIDINBED
CONSTABLE	THECORPSE	MRWILLIAM	MAJORLARK	FLORAMUYB	MUYBRIDGE	EADWEARDM
GEORGEORU	OPMAJORLA	STUARTUSI	YNSBODYBE	RIDGEDEPA	MAIVINGAN	UYBRIDGEI
MWELLTAKI	REYNSBSIN	NGHISINFL	INGBROUGH	RTINGSANP	EXAMINATI	NTHENAPAC
NGMUYBRID	GOCARRIEDI	UENCETOPR	TTOSANFRA	RANCOOP	ONBEFOREJ	COUNTYJAIL
GEINTOHIS	NTOCALIST	EVENTHEL	NOISCOONS	ORANEXTEN	USTICEPAL	AWAITINGT
CUSTODYIN	OGAONSUND	YNCHINGOP	UNDAYOOTO	DEDSOJOUR	MERONMOND	HEGRANDJU
CALISTOGA	AYMORNING	MUYBRIDGE	BER181874	NINOREGON	AYMORNING	RYSESSION
THEHONORA	MAJORLARK	MUYBRIDGE	WIRTPENDE	MRSFLORAM	MUYBRIDGE	THEASCENT
BLEWIRTPE	YNSHENRYI	SAYINGHIS	GASTOBTAI	UYBRIDGED	UPONHISAC	OFOCLOUDSR
NDEGASTAP	NTHESTUAR	INTENTION	NINGAVERD	YINGIN1875	←	←
PLYINGFOR	TRESIDENO	WASNOTTOK	ICOTOPJUST	5AFTERVIS	PARTINGBY	875MUYBRI
THERELEAS	EPLAYINGA	ILLLARKYN	IFIABLEHO	ITINGOREG	STEAMERPO	DOEHDMSL
EOPMUYBRI	TCRIBBAGE	SBUTMAIMH	MICIDEFOR	OMANDBEAR	R PANAMAIN	PSPORTING
DGEONBAIL	WITHALADY	IMFORLIFE	MUYBRIDGE	INGHERSON	MARCH1875	INTHESNOW

Figure 40 Carl Andre, *Stillanovel*, 1972. 8 1/2 x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.

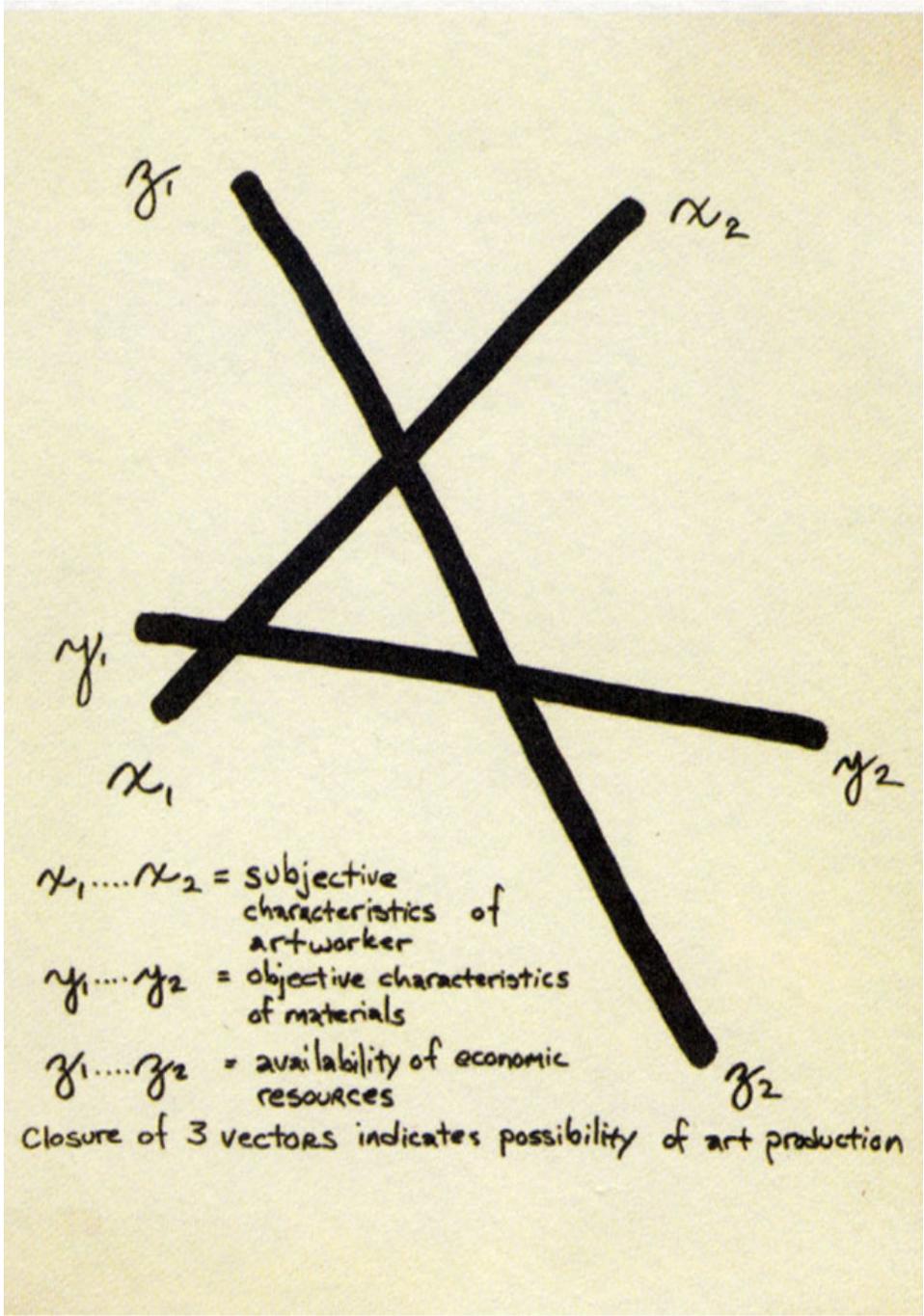


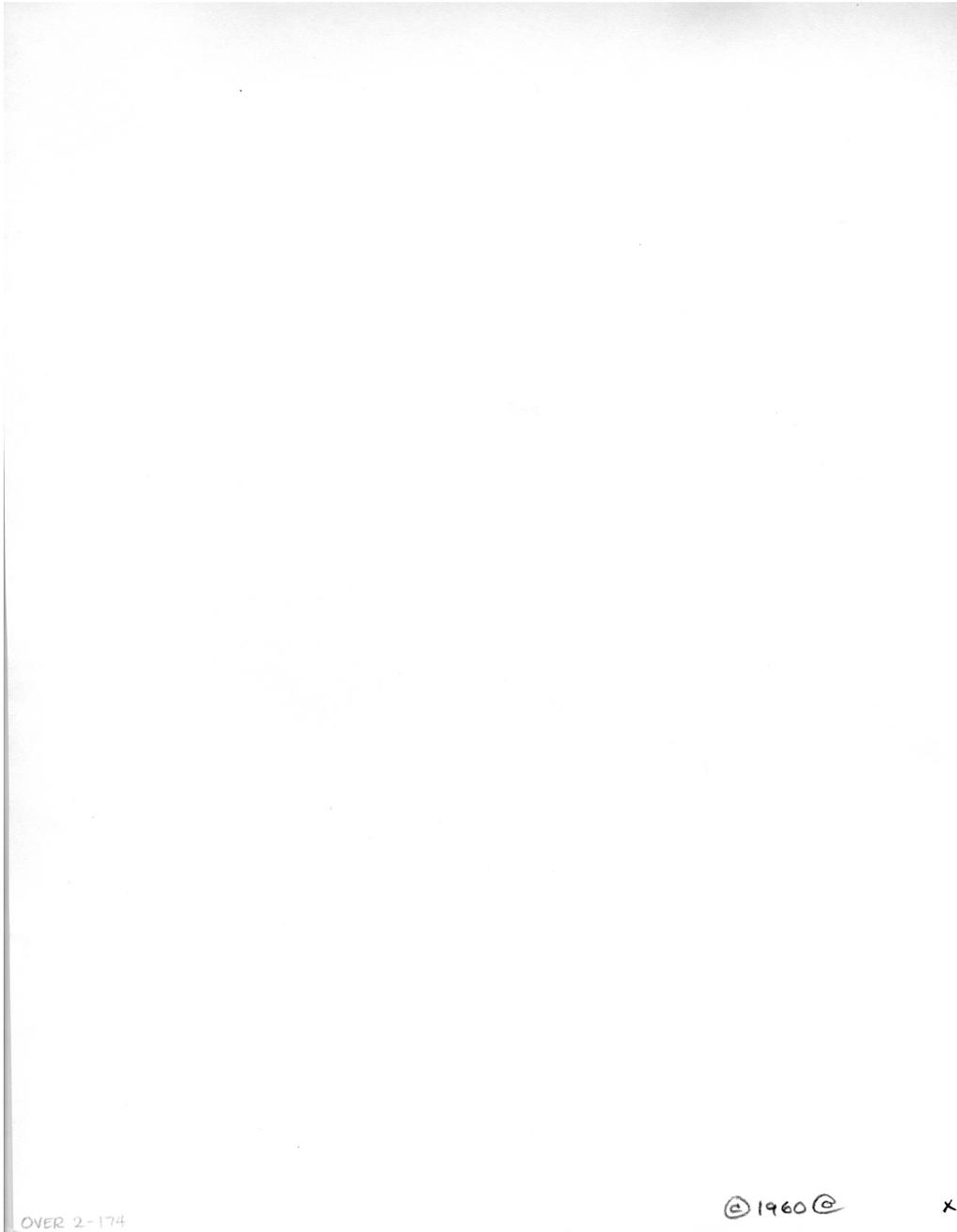
Figure 41 Carl Andre, *Three-Vector Model*, 1970.



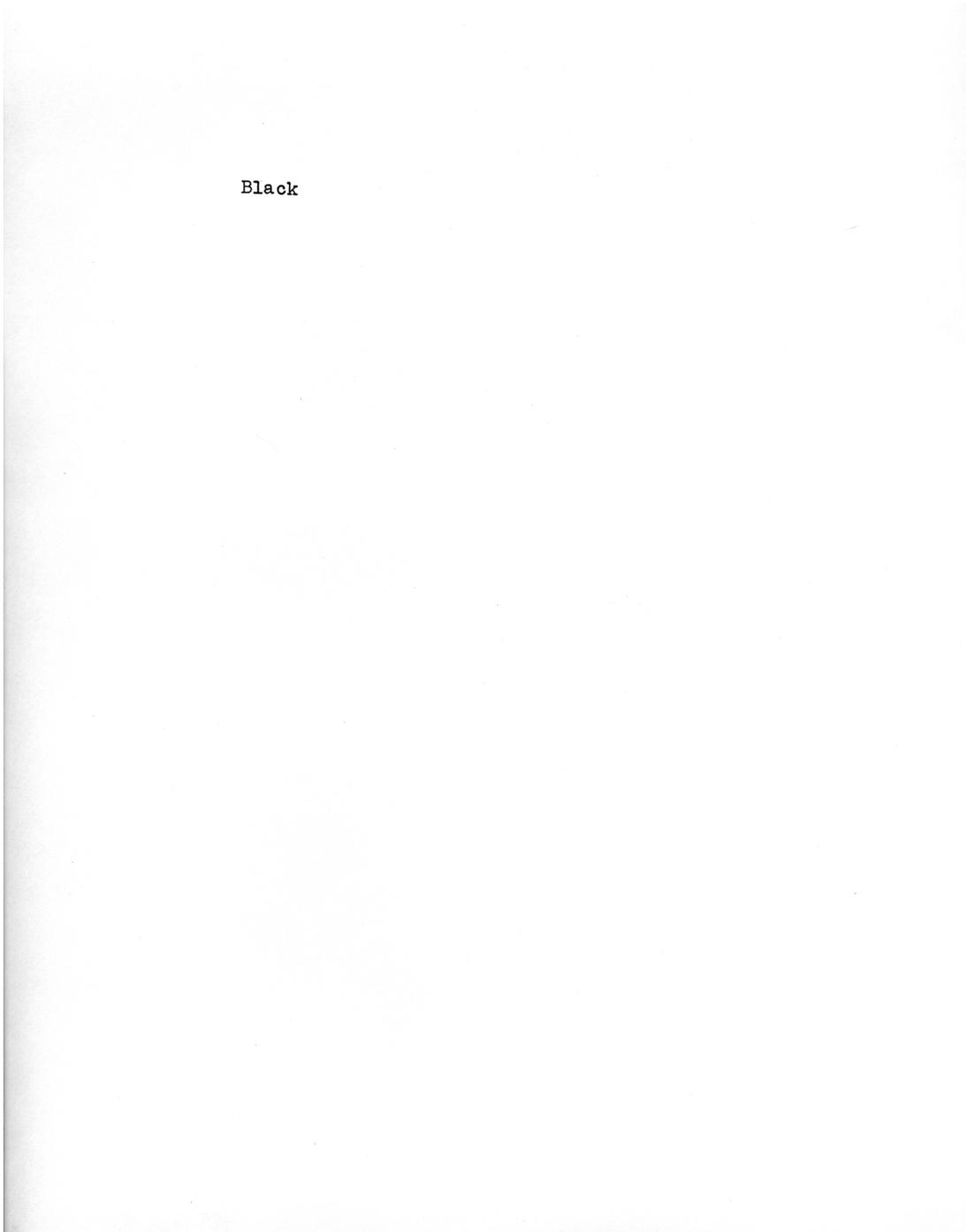
**Figure 42** Carl Andre, *A Long History of King Philip's War*, 1963. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.

loaded  
locality  
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loose  
loss  
love  
loving  
lusty  
lying  
magistrate  
main  
majesty  
major  
make  
malice  
man  
manner  
manual  
march  
March  
mark  
Marlborough  
marriage  
Marshfield  
marvel  
Massasoit  
master  
match  
matter  
may  
me  
meadow  
means  
meat  
melancholy  
men  
mend  
mention  
message  
messenger  
Metacomet  
Mettapoissett  
Middleborough  
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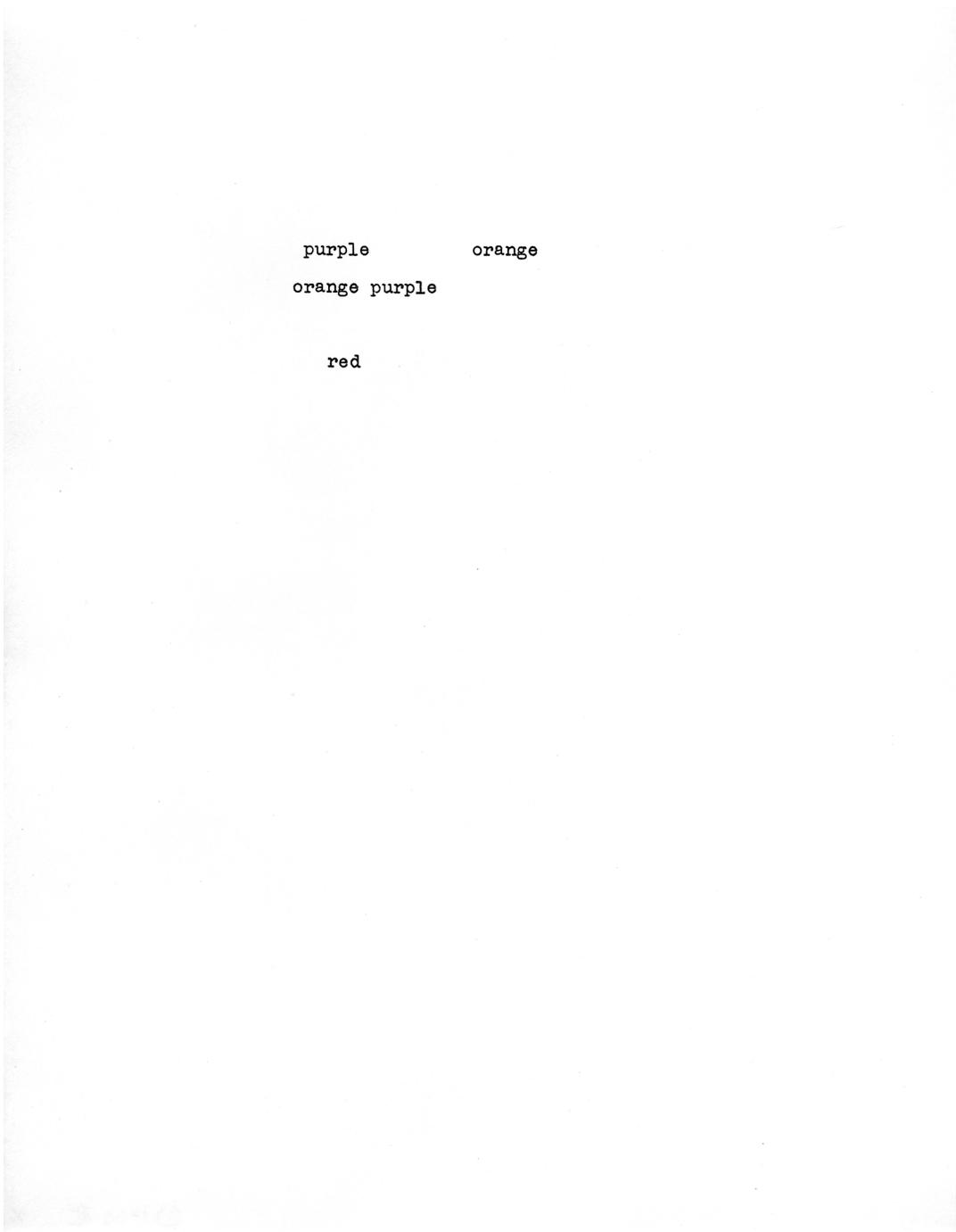
**Figure 43** Carl Andre, *A Long History of King Philip's War*, 1963. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.



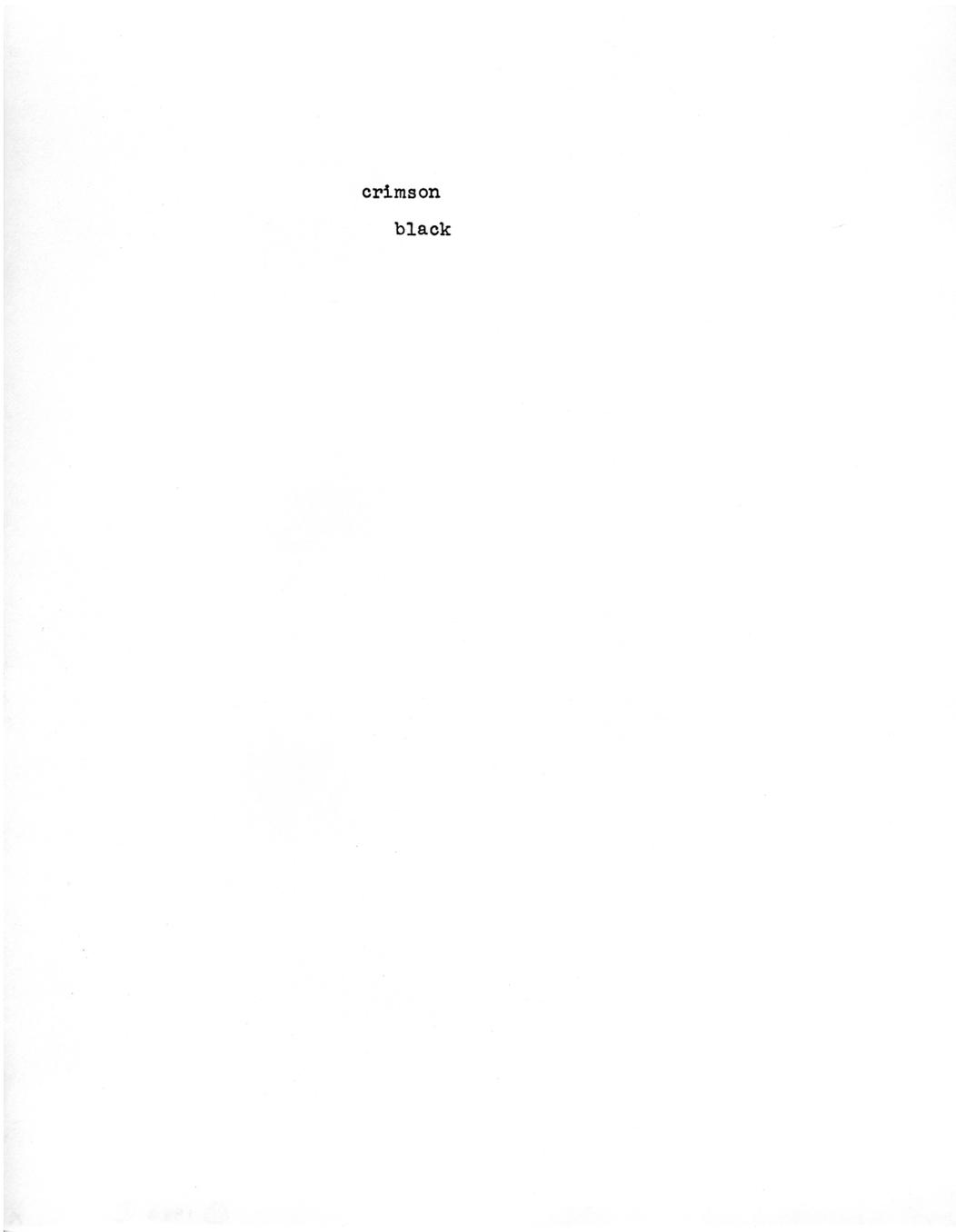
**Figure 44** Carl Andre, [*Over 2*], 1960. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.



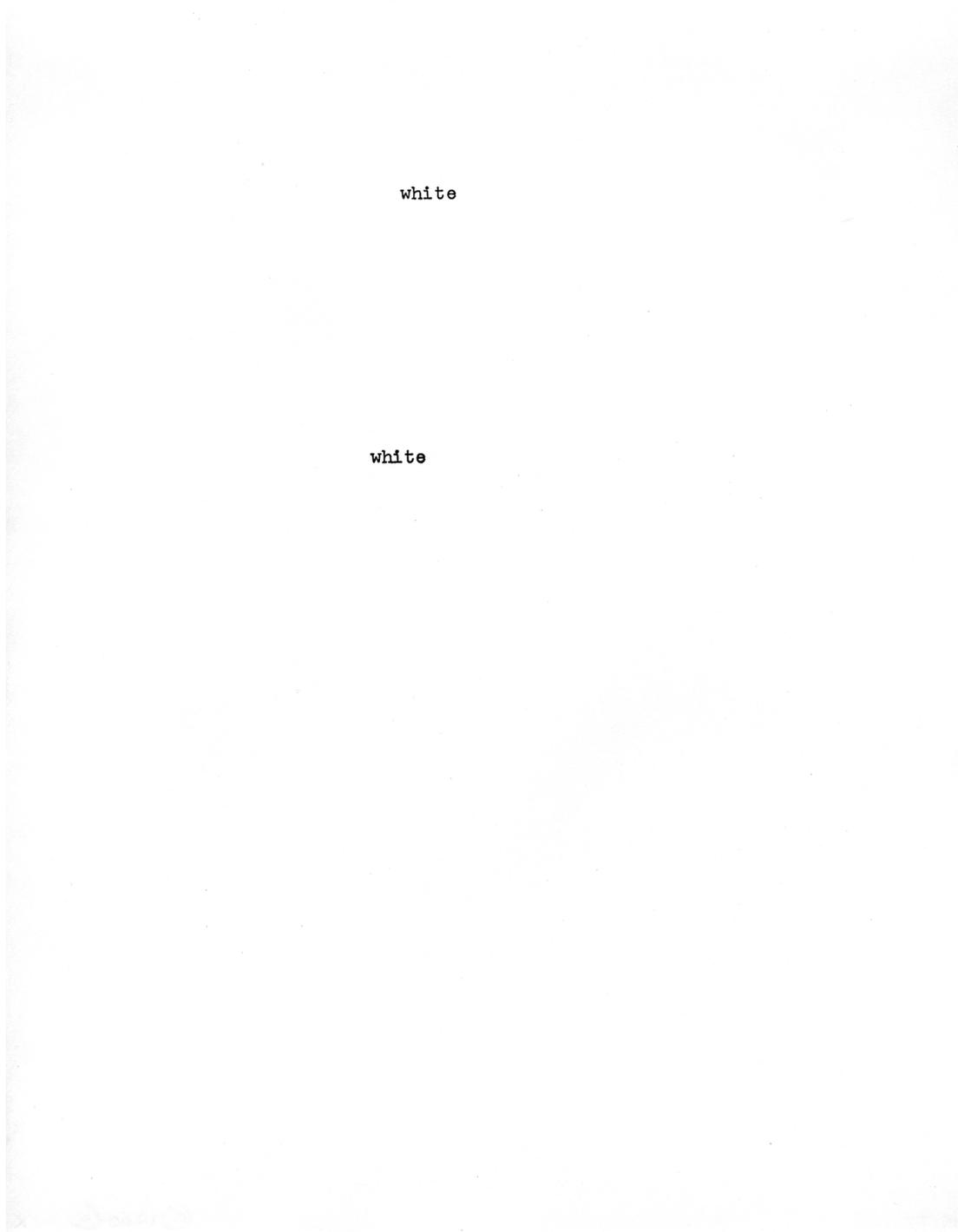
**Figure 45** Carl Andre, [*Over 2*], 1960. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.



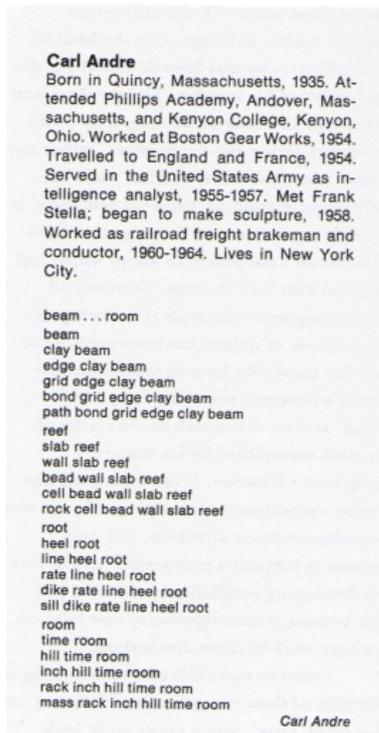
**Figure 46** Carl Andre, [*Over 2*], 1960. 8 ½ x 11in. The Chinati Foundation.



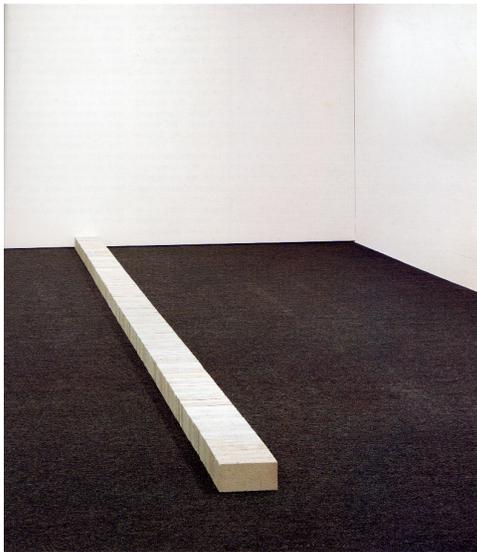
**Figure 47** Carl Andre, [*Over 2*], 1960. 8 ½ x 11 in. The Chinati Foundation.



**Figure 48** Carl Andre, [*Over 2*], 1960. 8 ½ x 11 in. The Chinati Foundation.



**Figure 49** Catalog for *Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculptors*. New York: Jewish Museum, 1966.



**Figure 50** Carl Andre, *Lever*, 1966. Firebricks, 4 1/2" x 8 7/8" x 348 1/2". The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

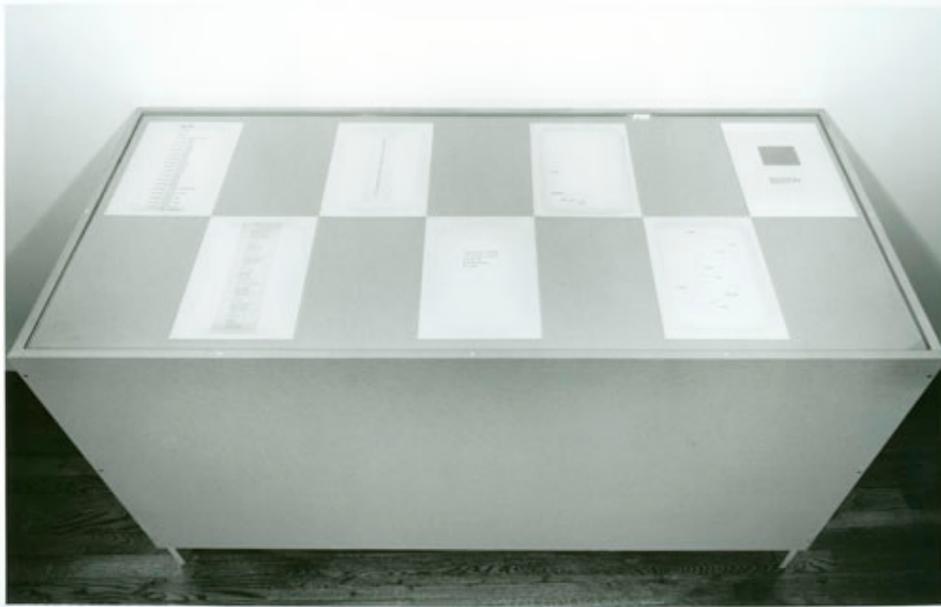
THERE WILL BE NO PRIVATE PREVIEW OF THE EXHIBITION OF THE WORK OF CARL ANDRE, WHICH WILL OPEN AT THE SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1970. AT THE REQUEST OF THE ARTIST, HOWEVER, THE MUSEUM WILL BE OPEN FREE TO THE PUBLIC ON THIS DAY FROM 10 A.M. TO 9 P.M.

ANDRE WILL GIVE A READING OF HIS OWN POETRY ON THE 29th AT 7:30 P.M. ON THE MAIN FLOOR OF THE MUSEUM.

**Figure 51** Opening announcement for the exhibition, *Carl Andre*, September 29-November 22, 1970. Exhibition records, A0003, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum Archives, New York.



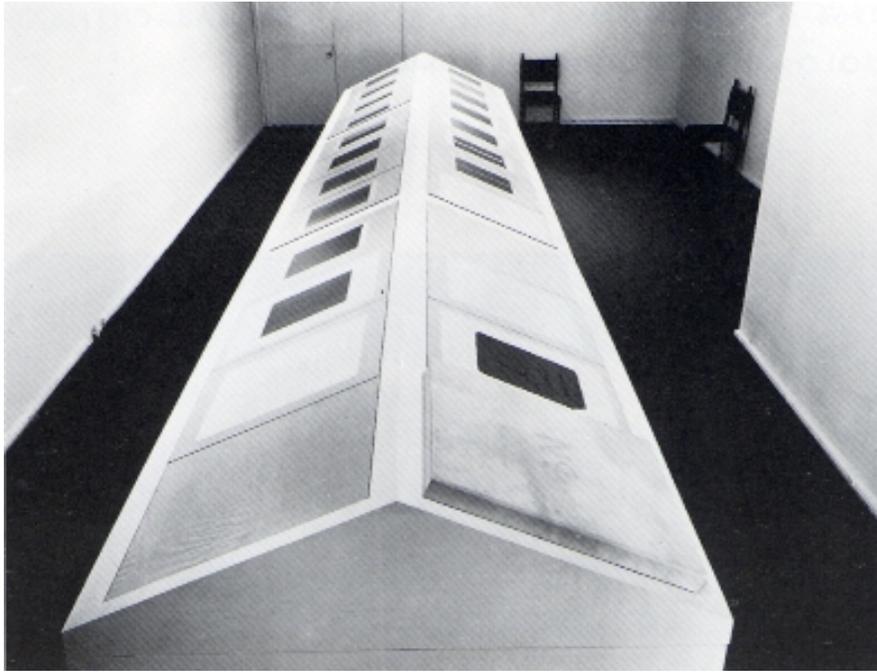
**Figure 52** Installation view, *Words 1960-1980*, Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, 1993.



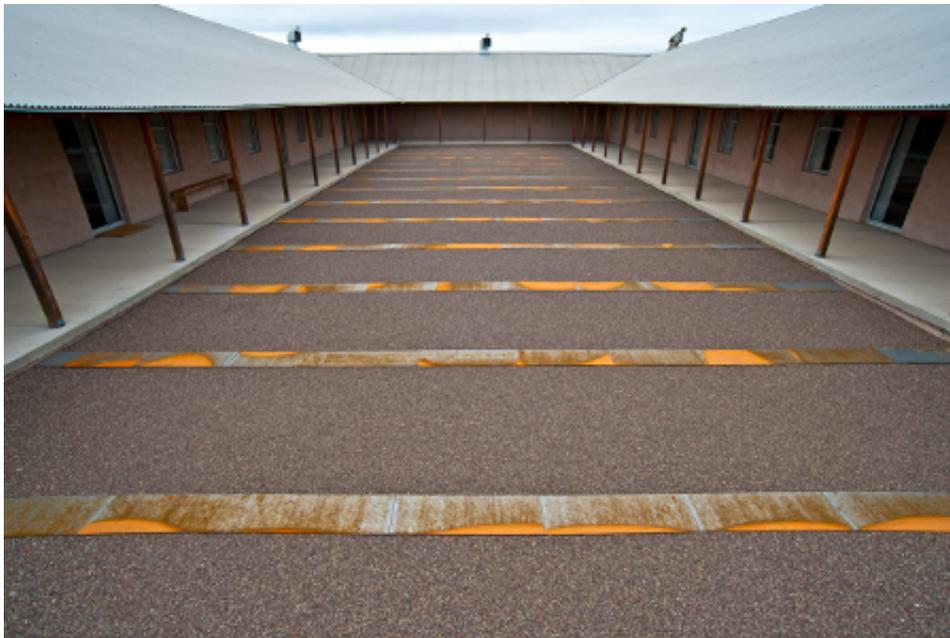
**Figure 53** Installation view, *Words 1960-1980*, Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, 1993



**Figure 54** View of Andre's, *Words 1958-1972*. Chinati Foundation, Marfa, Texas, 2013.



**Figure 55** View of Barnett Newman's exhibition *18 Cantos*, Nicholas Wilder Gallery, Los Angeles, 1965.



**Figure 56** Carl Andre, *Chinati Thirteener*, 2012. The Chinati Foundation.

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Figure 57 Carl Andre, *Pope Byron Andre*, 1963. 8 ½ x 11 in. The Chinati Foundation.

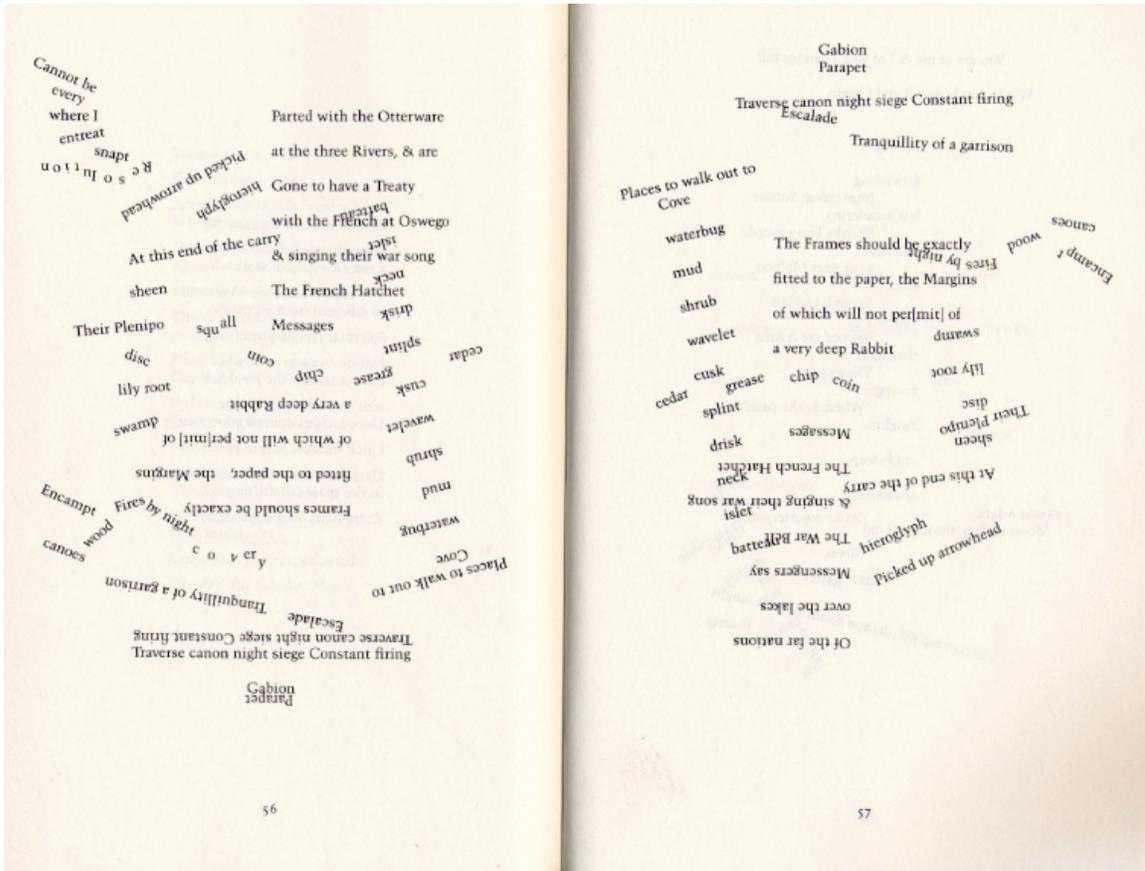


Figure 58 Susan Howe, *Singularities*, Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University, 1990.

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