

POLIS #6: A Newsletter of Art Museums & Politics

CARL ANDRE & THE SFAI CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION **Curator of the de Young Museum** **sculpture section: FLG, 1971**

NOTE:

To celebrate its 100th anniversary, the San Francisco Art Institute organized a large invitational exhibition. Artists in California, Oregon, & Washington were eligible. There were two judges in each category, and an artist & a curator: Paintings: Richard Diebenkorn & Walter Hopps; Prints: Nathan Olivera & Jo Miller; Photographs: Brett Weston & Nathan Lyons; Sculpture: Carl Andre & Maurice Tuchman. Almost 2,000 entries filled an entire pier at Fort Mason where the judging took place in November 1970. Those who got in were to be exhibited at the SFAI (paintings), the Legion of Honor (works on paper), and the de Young (sculpture). In a radical political act, Andre (a Marxist) decided that he would accept all 600 pieces of sculpture that had been submitted (!) This was an interesting exercise in democracy, but as an installation at the de Young Museum this was impossible. I proposed a compromise. Andre's "Statement" was to be published with a photograph of the pier group in the catalogue, and the 111 pieces actually judged "worthy" by Tuchman I would install in Hearst Court and outdoors in Golden Gate Park. Andre agreed, and it came to pass in January 1971. It was by far the most crowded show I ever had to install. Not a single piece looked good. They almost touched each other. I was impressed by the vitality of the group, but to the visiting public it was a room full of junk. Andre actually did little to help the art of sculpture that day but he did raise some important questions about the sociology of exhibitions and judgments in the Art World.

FLG
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