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Michael Brewster ***See Hear Now*** A Sonic Drawing and Five Acoustic Sculptures

This publication accompanies the exhibition *Michael Brewster: See Hear Now—A Sonic Drawing and Five Acoustic Sculptures* curated by Irene Tsatsos and presented at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions between February 16 and April 20, 2002. The exhibition and catalogue are initiated and sponsored by the Fellows of Contemporary Art. Matching funds have been provided by Irene and Jerry Barr, Catherine B. Chester, Homeira and Arnold Goldstein, Phyllis and John Kleinberg, Peggy and Bernard Lewak, Ann and Bob Myers, Peggy Phelps and Nelson Leonard, Joan B. Rehnborg, Laurie Smits Staude, and Donna Vaccarino, AIA.

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6522 Hollywood Boulevard

Los Angeles, California 90028

artleak.org

Fellows of Contemporary Art

777 South Figueroa Street, 44th floor

Los Angeles, California 90017

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t 213 243 4154 f 213 243 4199

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Michael Brewster ***See Hear Now***

A Sonic Drawing and Five Acoustic Sculptures

Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions

Irene Tsatsos

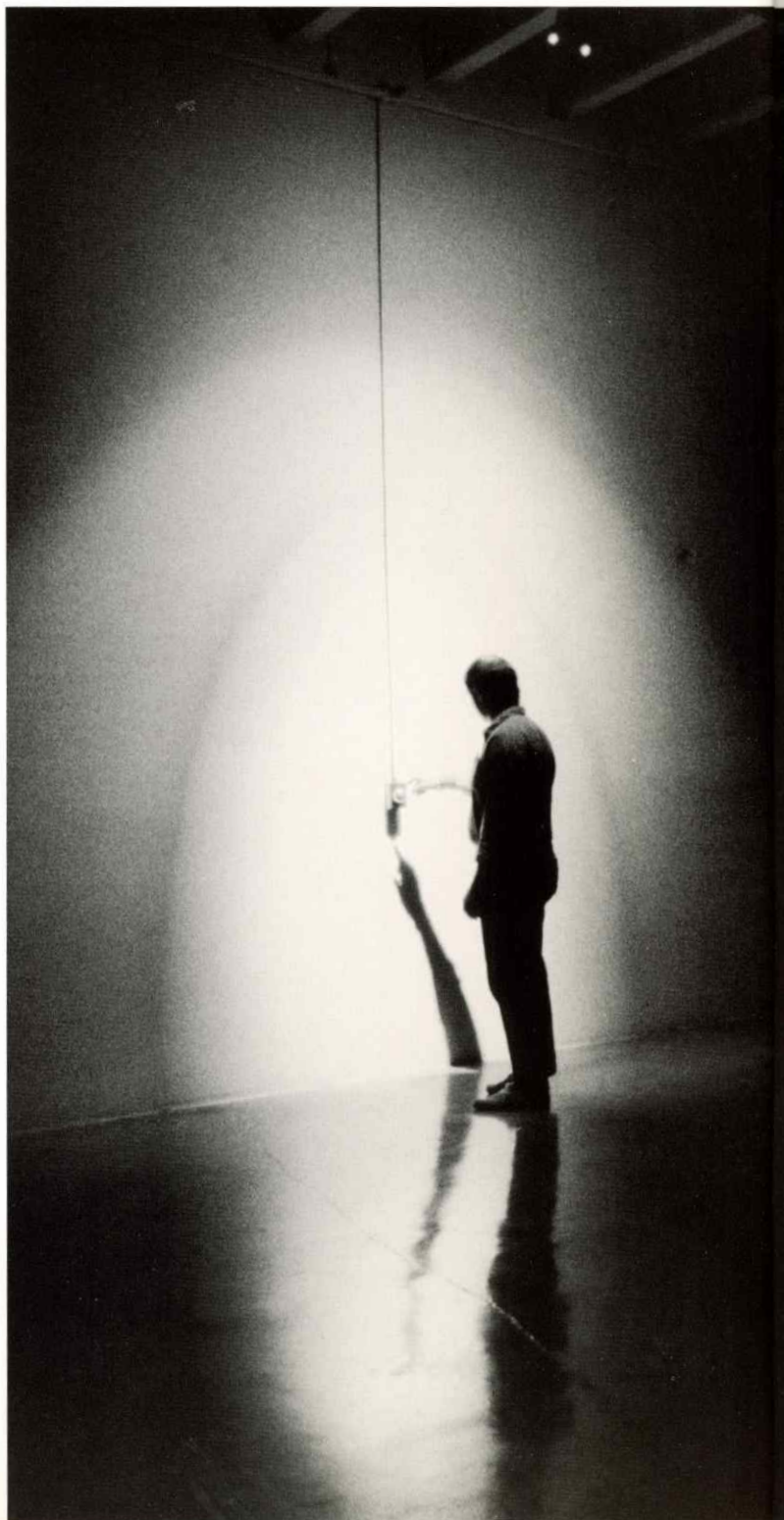
Barry Schwabsky

Peter Clothier

Interview with Michael Brewster
by Brandon LaBelle

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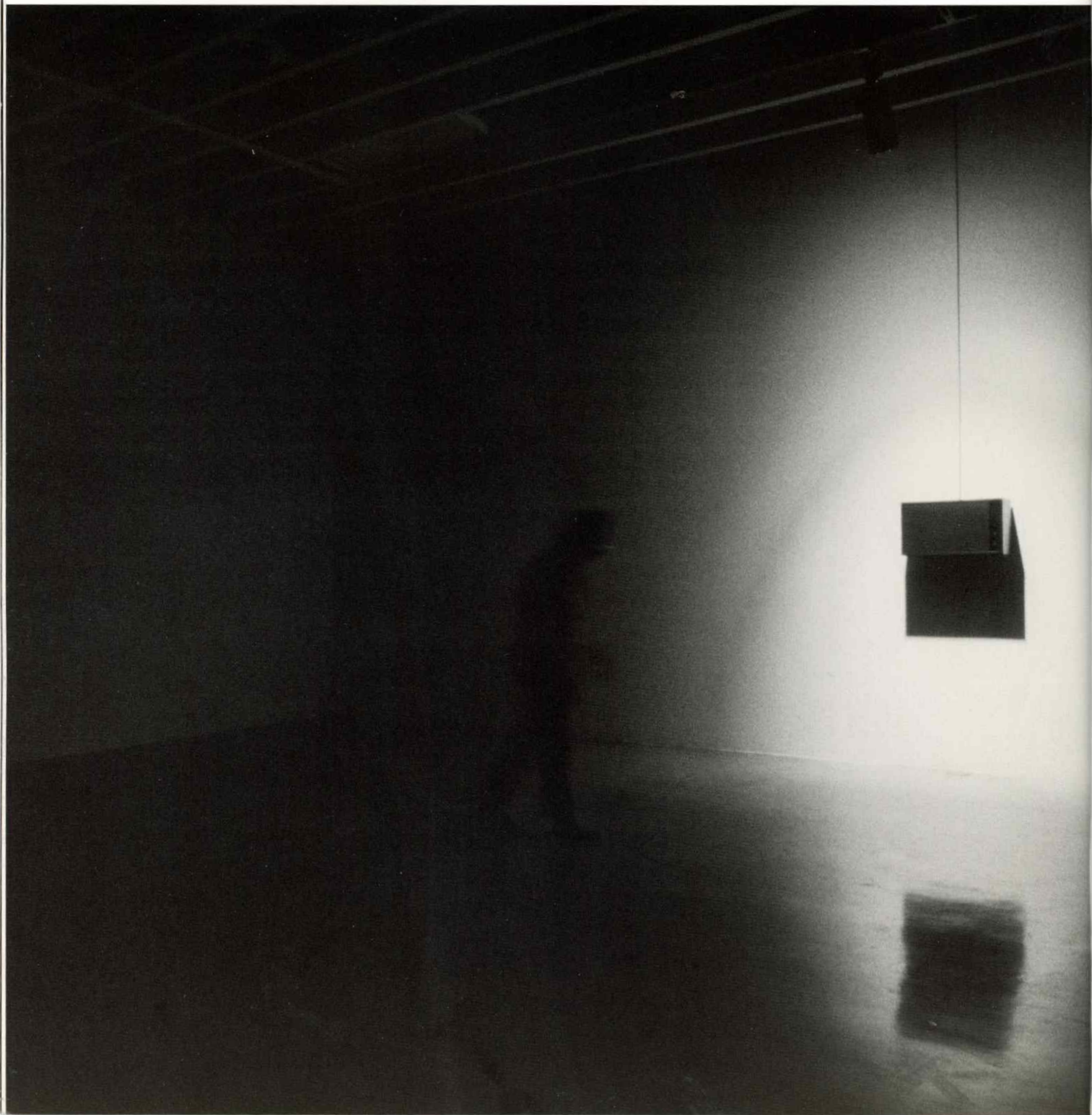
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Michael Brewster



A perfect match to the mission of
the **Fellows of Contemporary Art**,
Michael Brewster: See Hear Now—

A Sonic Drawing and Five Acoustic Sculptures at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions exemplifies both the history and the future of the Fellows' initiated and sponsored shows. For the past twenty-six years, the Fellows of Contemporary Art have consistently supported exhibitions of California artists with a distinct focus on those in mid-career who are seriously dedicated to the production of a compelling and conceptually strong body of work.

Sensuous and sonically poetic sound sculpture, Michael Brewster's work is truly enigmatic. His "sculptures" are definitions of space acoustically realized by multiple sources of sounds. When the sound is gone, the sculpture "dissolves," which is why documentation of the exhibition is so important. Thanks to Michael Brewster, curator Irene Tsatsos, writers Peter Clothier, Brandon LaBelle, and Barry Schwabsky, editor Diana Murphy, and designer Meryl Pollen, the Fellows

are very proud to present the excellent catalogue produced for this show. I am grateful to Jane Hart and Robert Grahmbeek of Lemon Sky Projects and Editions for the photo scans, to Sandra Giering of Eyeland Art and Design for digital retouching, and Mazin Sami of Fine Arts Printing Services for printing the catalogue. Through the generous donation of David Partridge, Immediate Past Chair of the Fellows, the CD of Michael's work is included with this publication.

See Hear Now marks the Fellows' thirtieth sponsored exhibition and their second collaboration with Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions. On behalf of the Fellows of Contemporary Art, I would like to express my thanks to the staff and board of directors at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions for working with us to produce this important exhibition. My deepest gratitude goes to Fellows members and Exhibition Liaisons Phyllis and John Kleinberg, without whose energy and munificent contributions the show could not have been realized. I extend a special acknowledgment to the Fellows' invaluable Administrative Director, Mary Leigh Cherry, and to the following Fellows who, like myself, provided additional funding for the exhibition: Irene and Jerry Barr, Homeira and Arnold Goldstein, Peggy and Bernard Lewak, Ann and Bob Myers, Peggy Phelps and Nelson Leonard, Joan B. Rehnborg, Laurie Smits Staude, and Donna Vaccarino, AIA.

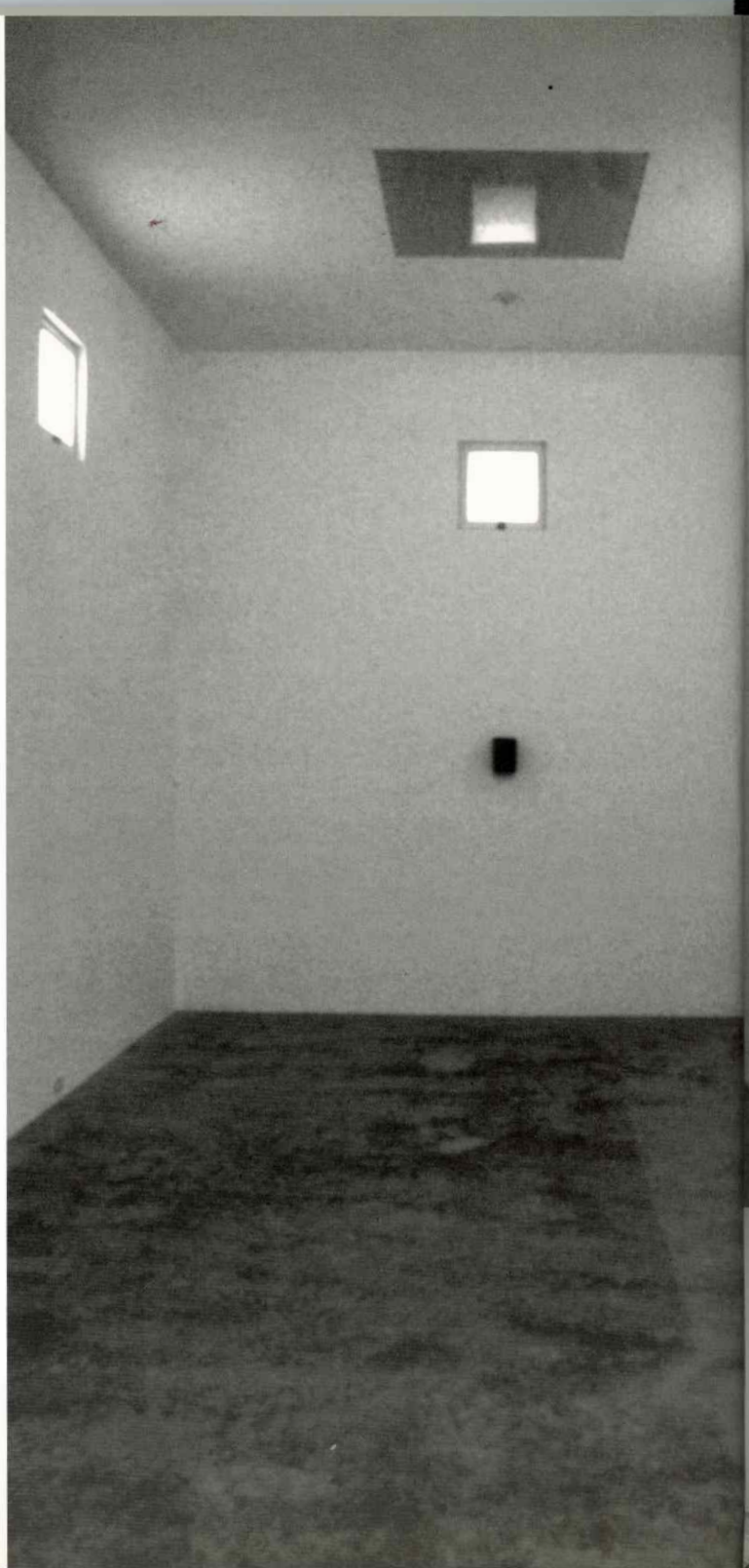
Catherine B. Chester
Chair
Fellows of Contemporary Art

Picturing the Sound

On a visit to his studio during the course of preparing this exhibition and catalogue, Michael Brewster pointed to two small wooden boxes of perhaps a hundred cassette tapes, located unassumingly on the floor next to his work table. These two containers, he said, represent virtually his entire artistic production. Coincidentally, the purpose of this particular visit was to select the photographs that would be included in this book. Seeing those two boxes on the floor in the almost empty room that is Brewster's studio exemplified the challenge of selecting representative images for this publication. After all, which shots would best document the work of Michael Brewster if thirty years of artistic output can be represented by a single photograph?

This raised a larger question about how to depict his art. Brewster's principal medium is sound. It is usually presented in site-specific installations. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Brewster used outdoor locations, such as urban viaducts or remote deserts, where the aural and visual information around the site was essential to the artwork. Over the last decade, his interests shifted to what he calls "our place in the sound," rather than the sound around the place. Now Brewster's ideal specific site is a room, specifically, his studio on Palms Boulevard in Venice, which was fabricated in 1993 to precisely calculated dimensions. Indeed, Brewster has claimed the room itself (or, rather, the

Sound Room. Palms Boulevard Studio



dimensions of the room) as a critical component of his work. (A room this size has been constructed for *See Hear Now—A Sonic Drawing and Five Acoustic Sculptures* at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions.) So a distinct but visually generic space—a “sound-producing object,” as Brandon LaBelle describes it in his illuminating interview with the artist in this catalogue—becomes another of Brewster’s media.

A pristine white rectangle measuring 14 feet by 28 feet by 14 feet is Brewster’s ideal. In the interview with LaBelle, Brewster chooses to overlook the loaded art-historical implications of the white cube, describing his use of this convention as simply “an echo chamber disguised as a regular room.” Nothing is visible except for the apparatus that enables the visitor to hear the sound, such as a carefully placed speaker or a button used to activate it. Notably, no seats are available, because the artist wants the viewer to move about the space. Each person’s movements affect how he or she hears the piece, to what degree the volume changes, precisely how the pitch alters, and so on. The fact of these and other intangible variables, which depend solely upon individual experience, means that what the work of art actually is correlates directly to the number of people who experience it. A score for one of his pieces, if there were such a thing, would require notations for the way sound hits the eardrum of each

visitor. Brewster’s work is never fixed. A viewer’s personal movements complete it—they create a third invisible medium.

Of the three critical components in Brewster’s artwork—sound, space, and movement—none lends itself readily to photographic documentation. Even with an accompanying CD, any representation is limited to narrative and suggestion, to inference and implication. In his essay in this book, Peter Clothier writes eloquently about the particular challenges of describing the experience of visiting one of Brewster’s installations as he provides perspective on the artist’s development over a thirty-year career. The difficulty of documenting artwork is a trope, but no artist has taken the challenge as far as Brewster has, integrating it, as he does, directly into the content of his work.

In his provocative introduction to this catalogue, Barry Schwabsky discusses the subject of synaesthesia, or the blurring of the distinctions between the senses—say, tasting a color or hearing a smell. Brewster talks about visitors seeing his artwork, even though it is not visible, at least in the conventional sense. According to Brewster, “The only way to order sound is temporally. ‘It came from over there, that plane overhead.’ We get the information through our hearing, but we make sense of it through a visual matrix because that is how we understand space—visually.” Describing the substance of his work—his sculpting of sound, space, and movement—is what we have set out to do in this publication. Conveying the experience of these diffuse elements is, however, simply not possible. Brewster’s sound must be *seen* to be known. As with any phenomenon, the intensely personal, individual experience is the thing.






The Symbolist writers and artists took special interest in the phenomenon of synaesthesia—what we might call the seepage between one sense and another. Partly this may have been related to their weakness for everything distinguished and rare: only certain individuals are gifted (or cursed) with a strong tendency toward synaesthetic experience. But more significant, I think, is the way the phenomenon—like that of drug experience—served to highlight the receiver's role in constructing even those sensations that seem to just come to us willy-nilly. If the color magenta can taste like melted butter, or the letter "a"—as Vladimir Nabokov reported—can have "the tint of weathered wood," then the relationship of sense to reality may be very different from what we ordinarily imagine.

Michael Brewster does not work with synaesthesia, and yet his art operates by means of a comparable crossover between the senses—specifically, between hearing and vision. I remember, when I first visited Brewster's studio,

See Hear: The Art of Michael Brewster

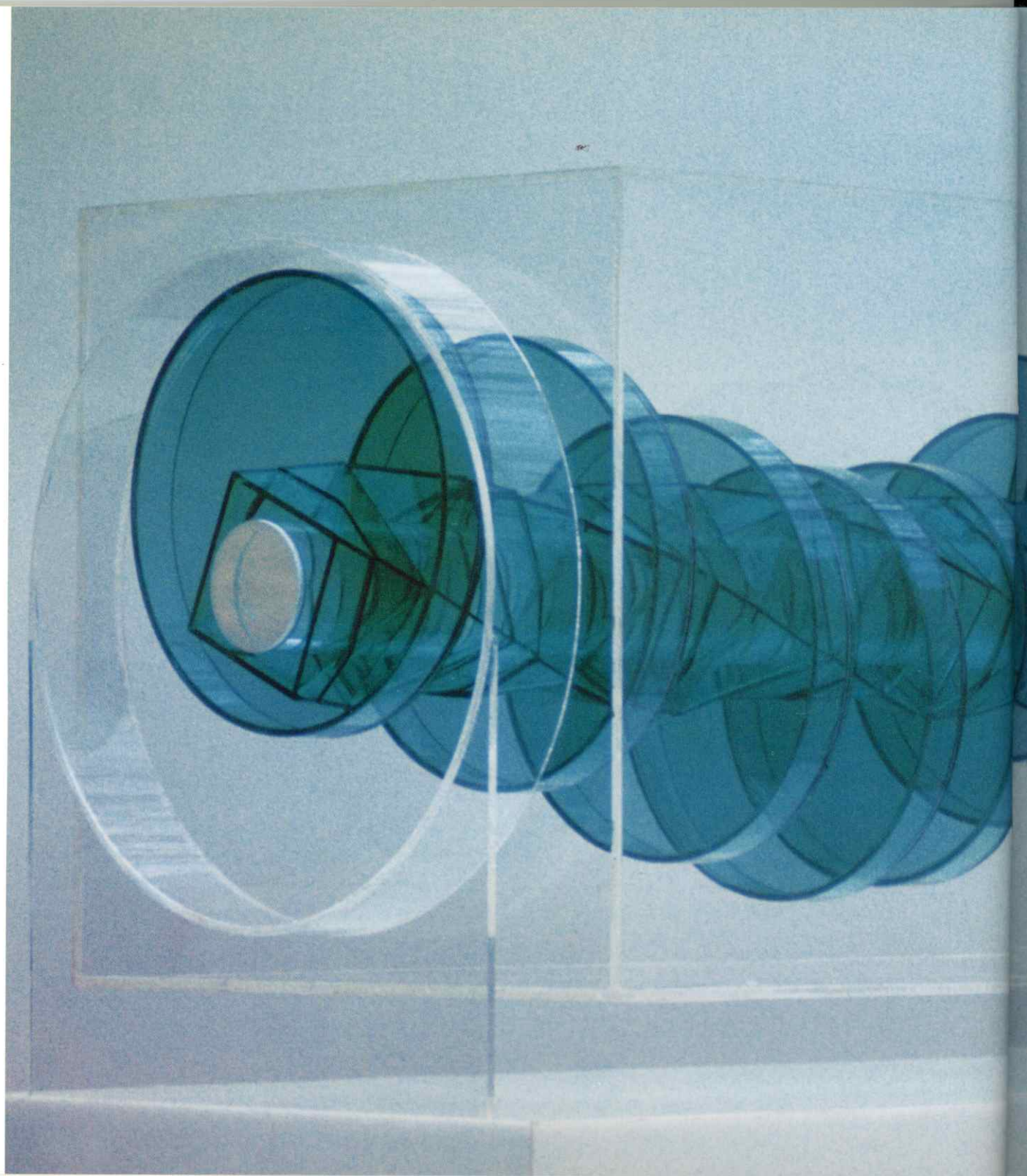


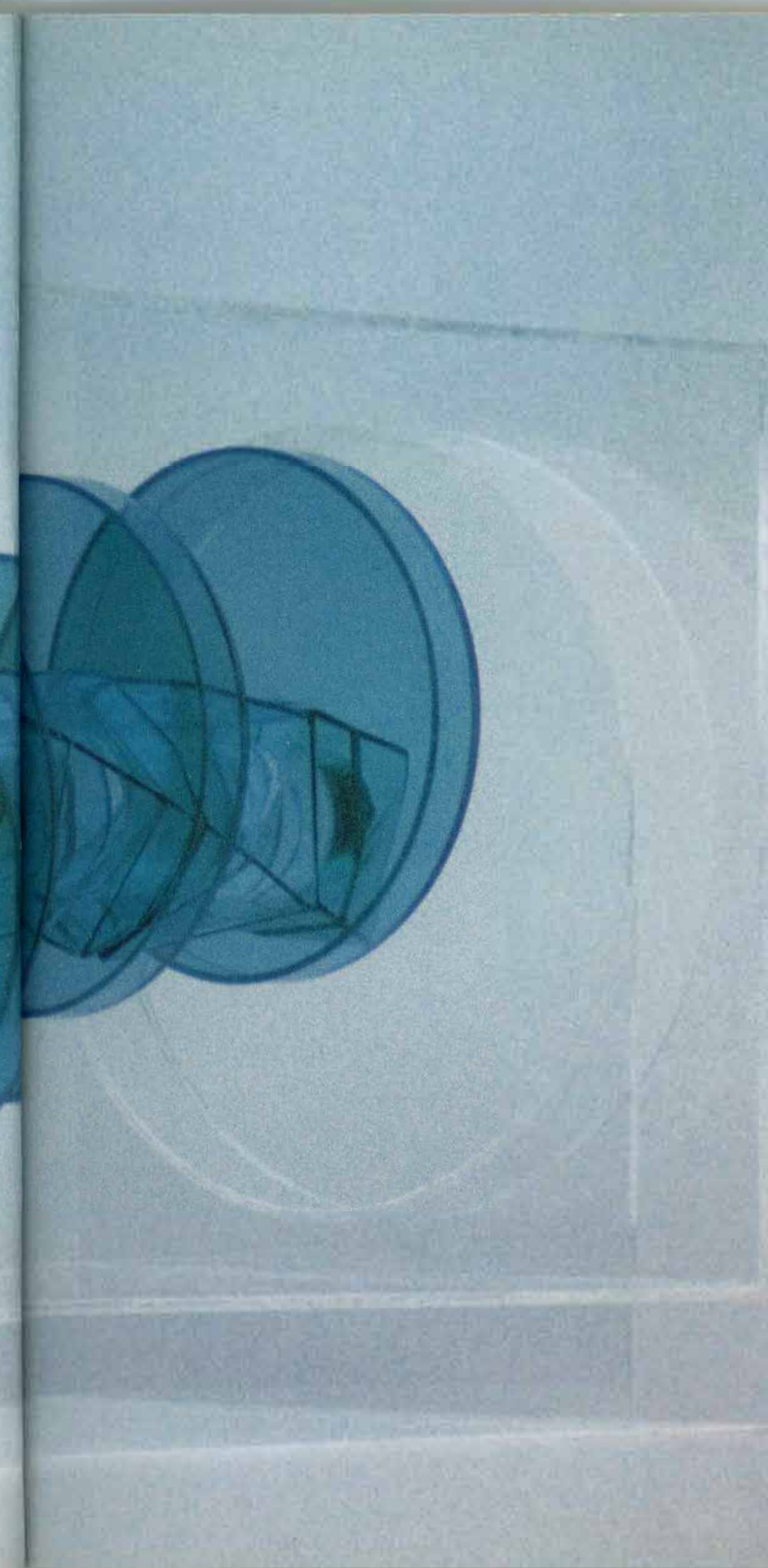
being surprised and puzzled by the way he spoke of “seeing” a piece of his—a piece, it almost goes without saying, in which there was nothing to be seen, by most ordinary criteria, but the empty space in which one experienced the sounds that are his work’s material. What could he have meant? Is he engaged in a conceptual exercise along the lines of Yves Klein’s exhibition of “*le vide*”? Hardly. What is at stake, rather, is an exchange of characteristics or values between sight and sound. The former, it is commonplace to say, presents spatial phenomena; the latter, temporal ones. But every sound exists somewhere. Brewster tests received wisdom by employing sound as a spatial entity.

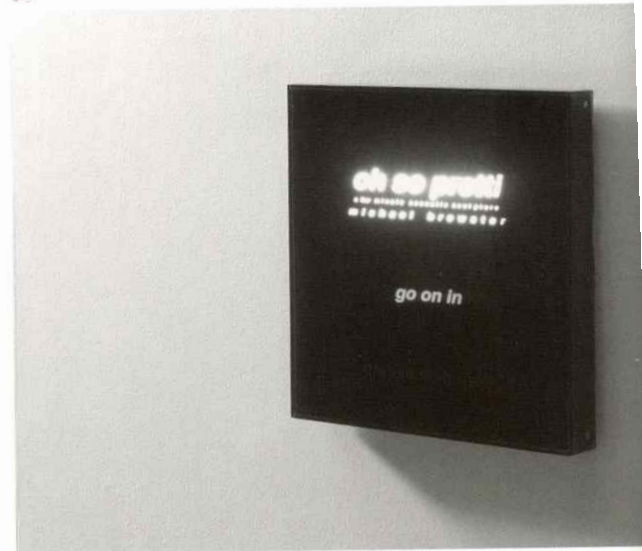
Brewster’s use of electronically generated sounds rather than sampled noises or even the natural timbres of musical instruments reflects his adherence to the traditions of abstract art. In particular, he pursues the phenomenological interests of some of the Minimalists. With certain

works of Richard Serra’s, for instance, the experience is one of space, but in a peculiar way: though the experience is founded on visual input, it is not an experience of seeing space so much as it is of feeling space. Brewster’s pieces, too, allow us to feel space, but through auditory means—and in a manner quite distinct from the analytical approach to musical space in the work of composers ranging from Giovanni Gabrieli in the Baroque era to Henry Brant or Karlheinz Stockhausen in the twentieth century. Why, then, does Brewster speak of seeing his work? Because in this case, seeing has become a metaphor for hearing—and perhaps vice versa. The kind of hearing that Brewster’s pieces demand, as he himself insists, is active—both physically and mentally. More than that, it is intellectualized even though the immediate materials are highly corporeal. From Aristotle on, vision has been understood as the most intellectual of the senses. No musician has ever taken sound as an object in the way or to the degree that Brewster does. The evanescence of sounds, that is, the passage from one tone to another—even in cases where it only becomes gradually apparent that this is happening—is the essence of musical thought, whereas Brewster’s work is concerned with the metastability of sound structures. This is what allows them to be examined in a way whose structure is modeled on that of vision rather than on audition. Brewster’s is an art that must be heard—rather, that must be listened to—in order to be seen. Unlike synaesthesia, it demands no special neurological (let alone spiritual) apparatus in order to be appreciated. We just have to be willing to pay attention.

Barry Schwabsky is the author of *The Widening Circle: Consequences of Modernism in Contemporary Art* (Cambridge University Press, 1997) and is a regular contributor to such publications as *Artforum*, *Art in America*, and *Art On Paper*. He currently teaches at Goldsmiths College, University of London.







Listen, from Different Points of View: The Acoustic Sculpture

Where am I?

What is
the nature of
this place
I occupy
in space,
so strangely
present?

What is this
body that
transports
me here
and there?

What am I
doing here
now?

And where
do I go next?

of Michael Brewster

These are among the fundamental questions that challenge us at the deepest level of our consciousness, once we strive to get past those seductive—some would say illusory—surfaces of the material world that so easily distract us. They are the questions, too, with which Michael Brewster uncompromisingly confronts us in his acoustic sculpture, if only we can clear our heads long enough to pay attention.

A visit to the studio can sometimes yield unusual insights into an artist's work. Visiting Brewster's, we first pass through the remarkable forest of his bamboo garden, now twelve years old and growing. He has planted more than twenty different species, from gleaming, ebony-stemmed giants to soft, green, sensual stems that are velvet to the touch. We can hardly walk through the quiet setting of this abundant grove without being aware of how alive it is with subtly shifting sounds—a luxuriant, natural, outdoor counterpoint to the interior studio space, austere artificial, in which he creates his artworks. Bamboo plants are surely among the most eloquent in nature: they click, clack, and whisper constantly in the breeze, chatter quietly among themselves, and sometimes orchestrate whole symphonies of shimmering, arrhythmic sound.

Inside the studio, we soon become equally sensitive to sound amid the silence—but in a quite different way. In contrast to the lush, green growth outside, it is pristine and white here; the sound is controlled by a concealed stereo stack and a Juno 106 synthesizer. Brewster has always been intrigued by the artifice of art, and since the 1970s his work has played on that essential quality. There

may be metaphorical references for individual viewers—the whistle or chirp of birds, for instance, or the throb of a human heartbeat. But the actual sounds he works with are insistently artificial, calling our attention to the created quality of the experience. They could not be described as precisely musical, however, and certainly not melodic. They have no standing outside of the specific, spatial environment they define. They are simply the physical medium he employs, as others might use stone, wood, or bronze, to create the three-dimensional entities that he appropriately calls sculpture.

Nothing in art appears in a vacuum, and Brewster's radical concept for his acoustic sculpture is no exception. Already in the late 1950s and early 1960s, there were pioneers searching for alternatives to traditional art forms that seemed at the time to be in danger of exhausting their potential. In France, Yves Klein evolved the concept of art without form or substance, selling "zones of immaterial sensibility" in exchange for gold, which was thrown into the Seine, leaving nothing but a spiritual record of the transaction. In the United States, artists like Michael Heizer, Robert Smithson, and Walter De Maria were investigating spaces other than the gallery or the public plaza as locations for the three-dimensional sensibility, and were exploring the media of the phenomenological world. In California, Robert Irwin led the way for a group of artists who would soon be known under the rubric Light and Space—artists as diverse as James Turrell, Michael Asher, and Eric Orr, whose primary medium was light itself; and Mowry Baden, an important precursor for Brewster, was pioneering work in which viewer participation and body awareness played significant roles. The purpose, for artists such as these, was no longer to create an aesthetic object but rather to awaken the observer's consciousness to the nature of actual experience.

It was in the context of this ferment of experimentation that Brewster came to believe, as a young artist, that his own sculptural sensibility was not well served by

that medium's traditional visual qualities. His mission was no less than to save sculpture as an art form. "You never really see a sculpture," he explained in a recent interview. "Sight is frontal. What you get is a sequence of frontal views. You can't perceive it all at once, like a painting. I wanted [the viewer] to see the inside of things, and sculpture showed only the outside."¹ Abandoning the figural efforts with which he had started out, he began to experiment with installations of small lights, flashing in sequenced patterns out in the desert, defining fields of space. But this proved disappointing. "It was always less than what I wanted," he comments, from this distance in time.

The transition from light to sound came in part on the inspiration of a single moment. Brewster recalls hearing, from the dinner table, the unmistakable, quirky sound of a friend's old VW bug as it shifted into third gear on the street outside, and the sound brought with it a flood of simultaneous information about the world out there—from gearbox problems to marital disputes—in a quasi-Proustian epiphany: "It all came to my ears at once," he remembers. And that continuum of information, that all-at-once quality of lived experience, was precisely what he had been reaching for in his art. Prompted by this awareness of the holistic embrace of sound as a sense perception, he began to speculate about its potential as a medium for sculpture and to experiment with the effects it could create.

The first outcome was a piece that involved thirty-five clicking devices—Brewster's MFA exhibition at Claremont Graduate School in 1970. This was the first of a series of increasingly refined investigations into the possibility of creating lines in space by activating the directional extensions of sound, in a white-walled, three-dimensional environment

that was otherwise devoid of stimulus. A simple click from a concealed device in one location, answered by a second click from an opposing wall, would prompt the observing mind to follow the path of its own imaginary line. Producing clicks from a number of sources, whether at regular or irregular intervals, would thus set up a complex though invisible "drawing" that would encompass the attentive viewer, engaging his or her full consciousness. The experience was one of being inside the drawing and of finding oneself, as one moved, in a different spatial relationship to different lines. The viewer could then, in a real sense, participate in the creation of the drawing at each instant by the simple act of changing his or her own location.

From this initial series of sound drawings Brewster moved on, in the 1970s, into the more richly textured field of acoustic sculptures. Given the way a sound travels through space, resonating and reverberating, bouncing off walls and ceilings in a slow process of decay, he found that it was possible to construct a kind of internal architecture that could be perceived by the human ear alone, without the limitations of sight. Starting first with single tones, then adding a second tone and a third, he worked over a period of years to refine and expand the perceptual potential of his ear and his understanding of how sound works in space.

The resulting pieces were exhibited in a number of museums and galleries, and were evidence of this increasing sophistication. Most, initially, were site specific. Visiting the proposed site in anticipation of a show, Brewster would take along an oscillator—an audio frequency generator that projects one sound at a time anywhere along the range of the audio spectrum—and put it to work to identify the acoustic properties of the space. Returning to his studio with

this scientifically gathered information, he could then "build" his sculpture around the appropriate frequencies and ready it on audiotape for eventual installation.

In the course of three decades, there have been various technical improvements that have enabled Brewster to refine his capabilities. The purchase of the Juno 106 synthesizer in 1985 gave him the ability to work with several sustained sounds, for example—created by placing weights on the appropriate keys; and the transition from analogue to digital sound technology in the late 1980s increased his capacity to produce the rock-steady sound that gives his pieces their authoritative "solidity" today. Computers played their part: first a tiny Commodore 64, and later a Macintosh 8600 gave him greater precision and flexibility in editing.

But Brewster's work, though generated by sophisticated technology, is not about the technology that produced it. Rather, it is about human perception and experience. For a while—in line with the "cool" of Minimalism and the heady intellectual discipline of Conceptual art—he chose to distance himself from any emotive associations, but more recently he has come to value them as a part of the richness of the experience he offers. He refuses, however, to make things overly seductive for his audience, setting out to engage sounds that might at first seem provocative, even confrontational. Some will be vaguely familiar, "like a vacuum cleaner," he says, "or an airplane taking off." Others will seem as alien as sounds from the far end of the universe.

Because these sounds may not be immediately appealing—and because he insists on viewer participation—Brewster typically uses an "On/Off" switch to activate the piece; he locates it on a wall removed somewhat from the entrance, hoping to capture our attention before we can make too hasty an exit from the space. It takes time to absorb the sounds, and more time still to see how they build a perceptible structure. This strategy also makes it harder for us to remain in one position, stationary, as we

might in front of a painting or a sculpture. With Brewster's work, movement is critical: "To 'see' an Acoustic Sculpture," he once wrote, "we must shift our viewing habits from the 'stand and look' behavior to an exploratory 'walk and listen' approach, slowly walking our ears instead of moving our eyes."² On his compact disk, *All of Before: Three Acoustic Sculptures* (1996), he introduces each piece with the same quiet injunction: "Listen, from different points of view."

And this is quite simply what we are called upon to do. The experience, like all profound art experiences, resists all attempts to reduce it to the grasp of language. It is, in truth, indescribable. Brewster's work entices, rejects, embraces, puzzles, challenges—and eventually simply wins us over. If we listen, we are there. Thus, with *oh so pretty*, a recent work completed for the 2001 faculty exhibition at Claremont and included in the present show at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, we enter the space and find ourselves enveloped in dim light, in silent emptiness. The small black box of a wall-mounted audio speaker is the single visible object, aside from the small button nearby that says simply, "PRESS ON." Follow the instruction, and the space is soon suffused with a single, sustained note, joined moments later by a second, slightly lower, then by a third. A fourth note shortly joins the mix, setting up a rich, apparently constant tapestry of sound.

If we step away from our first position, however, we find that the sound is anything but constant. Here, in our new position, is a whole new construct: different qualities of sound are suddenly audible, while others drop away or fade. If we shift, even from foot to foot, swaying our bodies through the length of their natural arcs, we notice these subtle changes. We begin to get a sense of the architecture of the sound, its different volumes and spaces in between. We walk ahead a few paces to another area, and the audible world is completely different again: what was a sustained, harmonic hum transforms into a surprising throb, taking our heartbeats along with it. Sound achieves human

scale. And, as with all sculpture, we notice our own bodies now, the different weight and heft of them as they move through the different volumes of pure sound. If we pay close attention both to the sound and to our bodies, simultaneously, we may notice how they begin to sing in harmony.

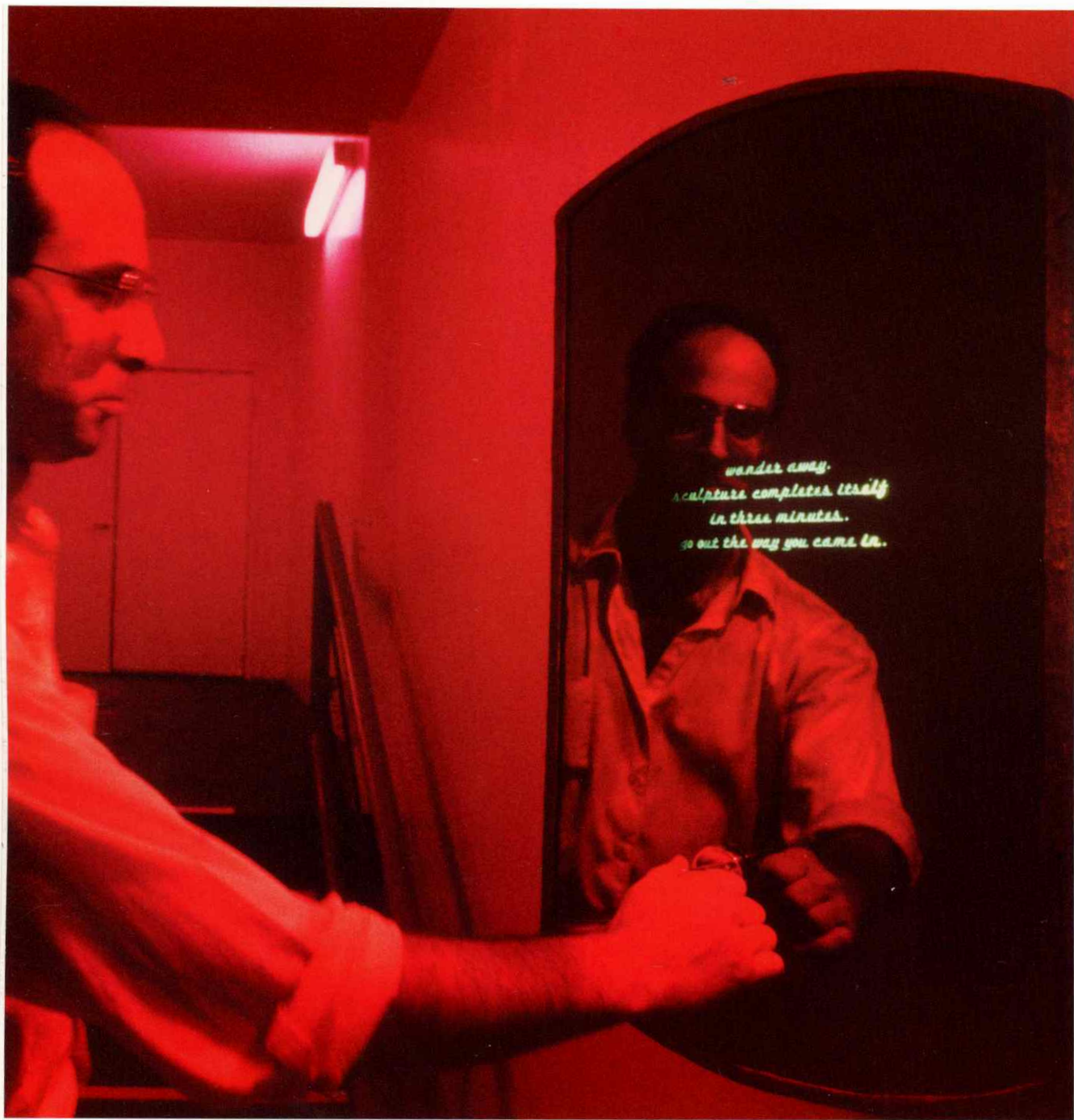
This is not easy work. It requires a willingness to drop out of our normal consciousness and into a state of heightened awareness. Adjusting to its peculiar demands, we are encouraged to slow down the usually frenetic pace of our lives, and pay undistracted attention to the here and now. Otherwise, the work will pass right over us, or through us, without affect. If we pay attention, though—as we might in nature to the subtle sounds of the breeze in a bamboo grove—we are rewarded with that great sense of the lightness of being, and of the awesome presence of what gives joy and meaning to our lives beyond the material. This is the eventual gift of Brewster's acoustic sculpture, and the one we can take home with us once we have seen it: to offer us a whole new way of apprehending sound and silence, and of understanding how this simple awareness can contribute to our sense of where we stand in time and space. It helps us discover more about who we really are.

Peter Clothier is a writer based in Los Angeles. He is the author of *David Hockney* (Modern Masters series, Abbeville Press, 1995) and has published scores of articles and reviews of contemporary artists in international magazines. His current series of special events, "One Hour/One Painting," has been sponsored by museums throughout southern California.

1 Unless otherwise noted, all quotations of Michael Brewster in this essay are drawn from interviews with the author held at the artist's studio on November 6, 2001, and at Claremont Graduate University, California, on November 23, 2001.

2 Cited in Robert Byer, "Michael Brewster," in Robert Byer, Noriko Gamblin, et al., *COLA* (Barnsdall Municipal Gallery, City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department, 1998), 20.











We think of interior spaces—

as generally quiet rooms minimizing the amount of interference

and remaining slightly outside our view: rooms are meant to simply fulfill the spatial need to dwell, a neutral background to habitation and experience. In essence, interiors are meant to remain silent against the personalized ways in which they are put to use, how they take on character. This usage though, for Michael Brewster,

is in contrast

one that amplifies the room itself

as a sound-producing object

—as foreground.

This shift of attention pervades Brewster's work and methods, and functions as an operative term in his vocabulary

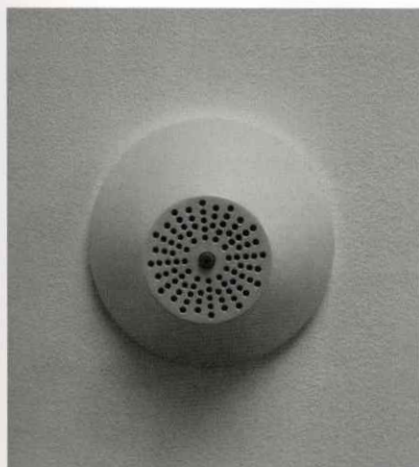
of sound, space, and perception. For ultimately what is at stake in his work is the form and function of the art object in general, and how these are stitched together in a perceptual and ontological play. Brewster's work over the past thirty years has set the stage for a rethinking of the very nature of sculpture, and by extension the object, continuing in the legacy of the "expanded field" argued so pointedly by Rosalind Krauss (in her 1978 essay "Sculpture in the Expanded Field"), where sculpture entered more dramatically into conversation with the site-specifics and complexes of landscape, environment, and institution. This expanded field in essence pushes sculpture up against its very own disintegration because it necessarily engages with a broader set of terms: following Carl Andre's minimal repetitions leads one into an "infinity" that is also an oblivion, or confronted with Robert Smithson's entropic spillages of tar or glue dissipating into their natural collapse, the expanded field is both presence and absence.

Yet for Brewster,

the notion of the expanded field

is one inside of which a continual recuperation of sculpture can take place by rethinking its formal qualities in aural terms. The acoustic sculpture is neither fully dissolved into its own terrain nor ever fully resuscitated as an autonomous object because it eludes its own sedimentation or concretization by remaining pure wave and motion—by existing only inside and against the humming ear canal.

The sensitivities of the ear canal are at the core of Brewster's work, for it is through the very interplay of sound, space, and aural perception, as a kind of vibration, that the work becomes apparent, that is, takes on sculptural and physical form. Here, the psychology of the acoustic is brought to the fore: what we hear is just as much an internal resonance as an external echo, a perceptual physics. In this way, it is only through our being physically present that the work is completed, because it is



based on physical phenomena. Listening itself finishes the artwork by bringing the sonic interplay into relief: the ear perceives the fluctuations of sound waves by being positioned between a sound source and the very room in which it is heard.

The phenomenon of "standing waves" and the acoustic physics of room dimensions are in themselves the work's raw material—through sound compositions that interact with spatiality, sculptural presence is realized. Yet what marks Brewster's art beyond a science of acoustics is his pursuit of this very phenomenon in terms of "listening" as a way of perceiving sculpture "in the round," as he says. In the round is quite literally sculptural, yet it is sculpture that hovers in an ever shifting spatiality, that oscillates between architecture and perception, space and sound, musicality and phenomenon, presence and absence. In other words, it is a nomadic sculpture because we have to literally move in order to locate it —we must resituate ourselves both as art viewers and as corporeal bodies in order not only to find the sculpture but, more important, to realize it.

Listening to Listening: Michael Brewster's Acoustic Sculpture

Five questions:

An Interview with Brandon LaBelle

1 You straddle a very interesting line between such apparent opposites as presence and absence, materiality and immateriality by using sound to create sculpture. What led you to work in this way?

I don't think these are opposites. Presence and absence, material and immaterial are complementary states of the same dynamic. They create each other: here implies there, outside suggests inside, near begets far, hot turns cold, good improves bad. It's an analogue world, everything is becoming more or becoming less. Nothing is ever fixed; flux here, flux there, flux everywhere. The dynamic is in the crossing over. Being is always on the move from one place to another.

Sound itself is an analogue phenomenon, its alternating material/immaterial nature manifests all four of these aspects while existing fully in four actual, perceivable dimensions. Materiality has always been considered one of sculpture's essential issues; but when carefully considered, materiality is actually a slippery concept. That sound, especially sustained sound, through its actual but quasi-physicality can straddle both sides of this metaphysic is what has compelled me to work this way for so many years.

Long ago I had become frustrated with the frontality of vision. When people entered the fields of flashing lights that I worked with in the late sixties, they actually saw less of them [see pages 38–39]. Due to the fact that we have to face what we wish to see, when my visitors joined the source of the experience by walking into it, what went on behind them disappeared from their awareness. I was disappointed. I didn't want to provide such a lifelike experience.

Shortly thereafter I realized that hearing was more congruent with the goals and ambitions of sculpture than was seeing. We see through the flat while we hear fully in the round, hence we can hear more sculpturally than we

see. Due to music, I suspect, we tend to listen to everything temporally, neglecting that what we hear in the world around us exists spatially, comes at us from all dimensions. Every sound issues from a place, and every sound carries traces of that place in its voice, a bit like emotions are carried in our own voices. Sound wraps itself fully around us, inflecting our places with its own effects before it passes us by.

Somebody's ideas back then, maybe the playwright Bertolt Brecht, had gotten me thinking about the fullness of experience and the roundness of that fullness, especially the need to place the audience at the center of the action as a way to break the distance, to close that gap of disbelief, to eliminate our estrangements. I wanted to immerse my viewers in the experience as completely as if they were underwater, fully enveloped, surrounded by sensations. Sound, I realized kind of suddenly in 1969, was "the way" to do that and perhaps more.

I chose it as a *material*. It has size and dimensions, viscosities, textures, even excitements. At lower frequencies, its wavelengths are of human scale. Its densities are such that we can walk through them, inhabiting their interiors, considering their particulars. I love the elegant physics of sound's wave-form behavior. I think this whole cosmic show is driven by what physics studies: the very stuff of life. So I feel close to the essential motors of our world when I'm working with the quasi-physical oscillations of sounds, blending and coaxing them into place. I had hopes that the resulting fields of sound space would be a way to expand and reinvigorate the sculptural experience.

2 Ultimately, it seems that your work is dependent upon the relationship between sound and space—that it functions only as this relationship since it relies upon their acoustical interaction. I find this extremely interesting because it positions the viewer-listener right at the center of the piece—basically, right inside this relationship. In this way, we can think of your art as entirely “experiential.” Would you agree with this?

Yes, I certainly would. I'd like to say it is deliberately so: these are things for the senses of your body to be made sense of by your mind, in your own terms. With a special but simple shift of attention we can quickly find ourselves at the center of our experience. No longer is the object of desire over there. We are in it, a part of it, here, now. I've always wanted to bridge the distance, to be closer to the core of my own experience, to overcome that awayness, the apartness that consciousness generates, to have my desire become one with its object. If I'm providing anything at all, I hope it is a full-on, all-around experience, from toes to head. Acoustic sound wraps itself elaborately all around us.

I resist the notion that the piece exists only in its acoustic habitat because we wind up considering the overall experience of seeing and hearing in an analytical as well as emotive way. I reckon the cognitive work that my sculptures offer lies principally at our apperceptive level, when we listen to how we hear, when we watch how we see, when we *look at what we imagine*. Dr. Ho, at Pomona College, would entreat me to “watch yourself watching” and then encourage me to watch from yet a third place. In these works, through the elegance of the physics of physical sound, the percepts replace the object and become the thing in itself. What we behold are our sensations, reconstructed. A thing for the

mind from a fully felt reality, one composed of multiple sensations found in the crossover between the senses.

I'm absorbed by the physical sensuality of perception, the feel of hearing and the feel of seeing—especially the sensuality of listening, which is what keeps me going. Imagine the doubled sensuality in the crossover: a light slicing into the eye, the squeeze of a loud sound, the grain of a flavor, the grip of a smell, the weight of a color, or the tactility of two sounds rubbing against each other. Imagine attending to the world as if we actually were synaesthetes. It could be more than amusing. We sense. We savor what we sense. We savor how we sense. And we try to make sense. For a fuller experience, listen from different points of view. Pay all kinds of attention: see, hear, now.

The history of sound installation is often seen as part of a 3 musical legacy, from the Fluxus movement and sound artist Max Neuhaus to avant-garde composer David Tudor's “Rain-forest” projects. Yet your own history and interests seem much more aligned with art-making and, specifically, sculpture. This would put you slightly outside of the camps of both sound and art. How does this affect your process and thinking?

It gives me freedom, which I like, and isolation, which I don't like, yet for me outside is the normal condition. I get this persistent mind-set from having grown up as an expatriate child in a mild “yanqui go home” atmosphere in Brazil, from age four to eighteen. I spoke perfect Portuguese, but there I was the “Americano.” When I came “home” to California at age eighteen to go to Pomona College, spoke perfect “American,” but there I was the “Brazilian.” I knew the capital of every united state but I had never bought a Coke from a machine.

So I have always been outside, sometimes upside down, but mostly in between two cultures, drawing breath from both. As a child I lived in a crossover culture, a conflicting blend of North American practicality and South

American sensuality, Puritan genes in the Brazilian subtropics. Oy. Now, professionally, it looks like I am between art and music, but it's a false connection. I studied art-making in college and in graduate school. I think like an artist and I behave like an artist, not like a musician. I work with sound because of its sculptural potential—it is a physical material to me. I came to sound through thinking about the malaise of sculpture.

My interests aren't really musical. I have no "book," as musicians say. This connection is made because we persist in grouping creative ventures in terms of their medium instead of by the behavior they engender: if it's pencil it's a drawing, if it's sound it's music. A lot of sound just isn't music (forgive me, John Cage), just like a lot of the color we see isn't painting. Much of what we hear is dimensional, spatial, but not necessarily musical. I'm compelled to make sense of what I hear in sculptural terms. Life is a bit richer that way. If I am now drawing on more than one culture, I probably have feet in three camps: art, physics, and music, in that order. It amuses me to think I'm thrusting myself away from all these camps, out into the edge of the unstudied, where no artist has gone before, because I'm fond of jokes.

How it affects my process and thinking is that it is very much an individual and self-directed effort, a solo practice. I've got no guru. I tend to follow the directives that surface from each project to the next as I work along. It's kind of natural: each piece creates its successor. Though not untypical for artists, this is not all to the good. I miss what I suppose to be the camaraderie of several artists flogging the same idea. In my case, there haven't been that many people to bounce ideas off of, so I'm always fearful of solipsistic thinking. When in doubt I've looked to other forms and practices for comparison, including painting. Mostly I've had to figure it out for myself.

I don't know just which parts of my process are original, however. Although I didn't learn a thing from Max Neuhaus, I certainly learned about all that fantastic work

that preceded me and mine, and more, mostly while at my fancy college, where we somehow learned even more than we wanted to. What I discovered was inspiring and has directed my practice ever since. The directions I got from my teachers, especially from Mowry Baden, both in person and in lessons fuel me still. I'm not sure if I care much about where I fit anymore. I'm not sure I *know how* to fit. These days I'm much more preoccupied with figuring out where I'm going next. Both in life and in art. The first has become a puzzle with lost pieces. As for art. I'm fairly sure I'll continue working with sound, in the crossover between the senses, but I won't predict just how. Perhaps, once again, the work will guide me. Please stay tuned. As Susan Sontag said, "As in art, so in life."

You have referred to the notion of "alternative musicality." 4
Can you expand on this idea?

What I meant was an alternative *to* musicality, requiring both a different mode of listening and certainly a different mode of acknowledging, constructing, and composing our auditory experiences. We will have to pay a different kind of attention to what we hear, listening as we live: in motion, in space, to a shifting soundscape; attending synaesthetically to the actuality of it all. We will listen to the space, direction, and physicality of sounds in addition to their regular "information" content. We can also examine sound like an object: considering both its curious quasi-physicality and the sensuality that it engenders, savoring the feel of each sound, sensing its caresses, its textures, its densities, even its edges, hearing its materiality as well as its space and tempo. An alternative to musicality would urge us to use this sense in unconventional modes.

In my case, this difference in mode takes the form of listening while in slow motion, listening from a gradually shifting station-point while walking around in the sound fields of the acoustic sculptures. It comes from my fascination with the spatiality of sonic experience. Spatiality is what generally governs my choices and decisions in making these exploratory pieces. I tend to work in response to the way sound and place vibrate together. Their resonance provides sensations of here and there for us to listen to.

During the first twenty years of this investigation, I insisted on an actual, demonstrable spatiality in every piece. Since 1993, I have dropped my guard and let in all sorts of spatial illusion and not a little innuendo. These days I ask you to listen from here and there, as I did before, but I now include listening to elsewhere, to the suggested, elicited space. I like it better; it's "a thicker broth," as I said somewhere before. The mind is a sticky thing—attaching associations all over the place. It dotes on likenesses. I surrender. Nevertheless, the works are still so abstract and synthetic that they can safely exist in their own right. They are vestiges only of themselves, although now they yield more readily to the visitor's imagination, perhaps encouraging the poetic that each of us wants to bring to our own experience.

5 I can thoroughly appreciate this interest in spatiality and attention, and the demand for a shift in perspective—a renewed listening and consideration of form. Yet this seems to occur at the moment of experiencing your work, inside a very particular kind of space—not the space inside the sound, which, as you say, is intensely multiple, but the white acoustic cube, which is quite singular. I'm

wondering how the white cube functions as an architecture that we are somehow supposed to overlook—or contend with—and how, as listeners, we are able to leave the space of your work and somehow carry it with us into the ordinary architecture of the world.

The white cube, which in my case is a white rectangle, is the standard container for most of my recent work simply because that is the form of my Palms Boulevard studio, which is actually an echo chamber disguised as a regular room [see pages 8–9, 42–43]. It looks like a completely empty "clean, well-lit place," built to resemble the ordinary art-viewing space. For formal and theoretical reasons, I would have us see it as "ordinary," as in "standard issue," dismissible, without relevant content; but that is a fiction. Although such white rectilinear interior spaces abound all over, this one is far from ordinary.

To the eye it's just a room like many others, albeit one of elegant proportions. The ear, however, uncovers the trick: concealed in its particular size, its proportions, and its careful construction lies the fact that this very empty room is more of an instrument than any other place I've worked with. It can reverberate for a very long time. It gives really good echo. Since this room could be built from scratch I couldn't resist idealizing it and maximizing its resonances. It was built to sound. It is a "one-two" rectangle measuring 14 feet by 28 feet by 14 feet, with very flat, very parallel or very perpendicular walls to enhance its reverberation. It is a highly resonant cavity. Tuned by its dimensions, it best accommodates and amplifies seven- and fourteen-foot wavelengths. Better than most sites, it functions covertly as an instrument.

Having such an idealized chamber always at my disposal has allowed me to burrow into my explorations in a way that was previously impossible. The hit-and-run logistics of working in other, remote sites always prevented the deeper investigations I wanted to pursue. Besides, I wanted

a place apart, wherein the visitors' dialogue was not about the sound in a place but about their place in the sound.

You're right, the studio is a specialized room, a more artificial place because it is so idealized—so much so that we anticipate a crash with the world when we leave its shelter, crossing over from the artificial to the "natural." It is a recurring curiosity, how we learn about the "natural" world by trying to make it match our artificial constructs. What I provide is synthetic, entirely artificial, but, given its physics, not unnatural at all. It straddles that question, too, of artificial versus real, whether located in an idealized room or in any other place.

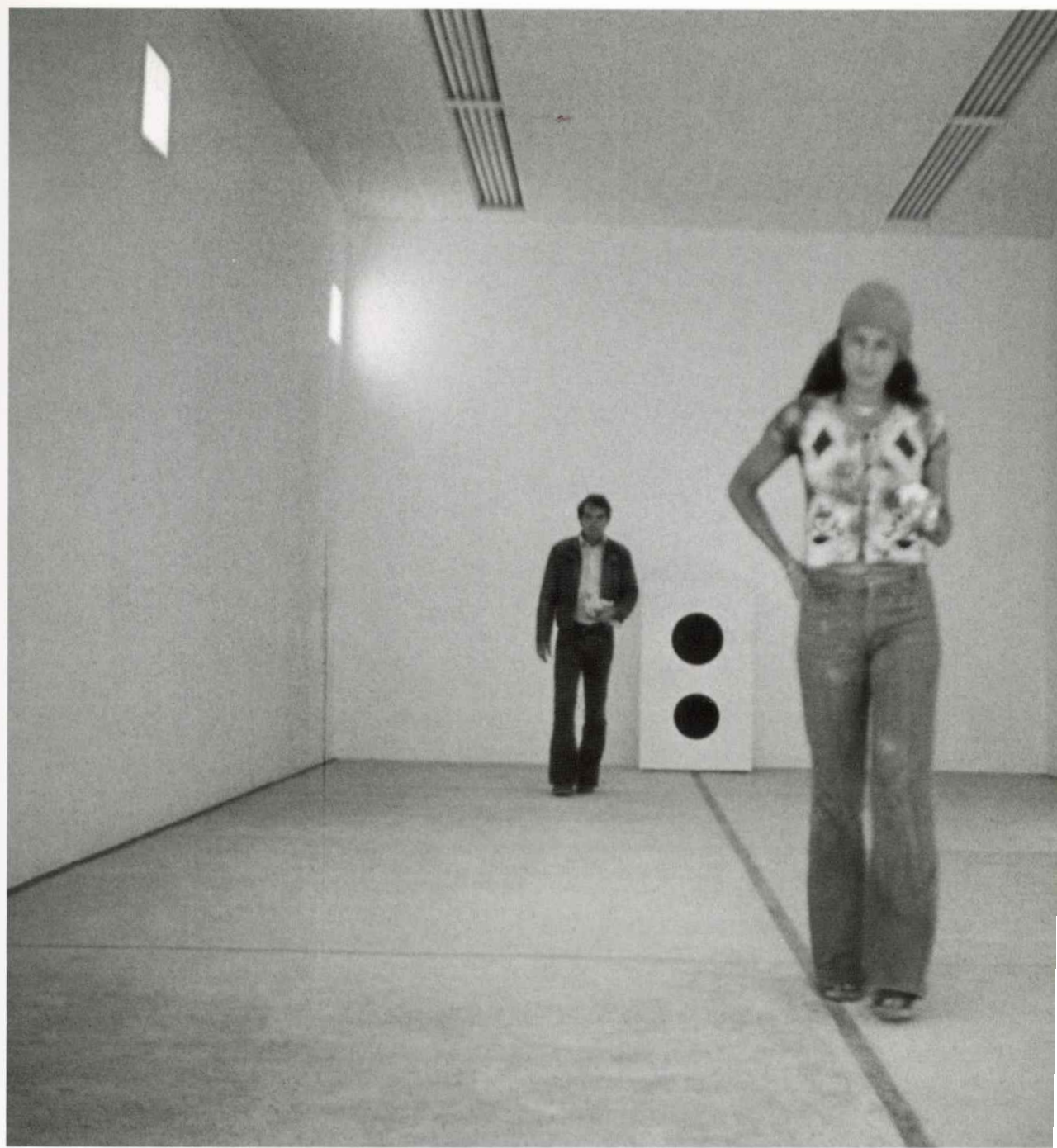
Before I built this room, I worked in response to the acoustics of all sorts of idiosyncratic, far from ideal spaces. Many of the pieces have been artificially sited smack in the middle of the "natural" architectures of the ordinary world, the so-called urban nature of our built environment. These sites included a closet, two stairwells, converted classrooms [see page 35], a museum exit corridor [see pages 19–20], a couple of highway overpasses [see pages 36–38], a skywalk between two buildings, some tunnels—one was a two-hundred-foot-long pedestrian tunnel leading to a beach—and several large outdoor garden sites [see pages 20–21], as well as numerous, white, regular and irregular gallery spaces. Recently an unusual one came "ready to wear," painted all black [see page 47]. Its walls fell away, out of sight. We were only in the sound. It did good work for me, that black room.

All those other places had acoustic capabilities that were also instrumental to materializing the sculptures. Although situated in the "real," "natural" world, they all harbored highly artificial sound fields. They also worked the crossover between the natural and the synthetic. Perhaps the collision of our reentry was softer, not so abrupt, but the impact of the artifice on our view to the world was still there.

I expect the newly acquired experiences to somehow requalify what we perceive when we leave the work and go back out into the world. I think this happens whether

we have experienced the interior in an empty white cube, or inside a littered pedestrian tunnel, or even under an overpass cloaked by traffic noise. Reentry is perhaps less disjunctive when the work is sited out in the open, clearly in the world, but our artifices are always with us, literally embedded in our consciousness. Whether in the form of art, philosophy, religion, science, or commerce, our fictions are always present at the shaping of our realities. So crossing the threshold from the white empty studio into the noise realm outside can be a tonic kind of shock, one that serves to emphasize, if not confirm, what has just been learned inside the white cube. When we reenter the "regular" world we find that our awareness has been altered, sharpened, maybe upgraded. Crossing that threshold between the artificial and the natural, we can look at the architectures of our ordinary experiences in a reconsidered and, hopefully, reinvigorated way.

Brandon LaBelle is a sound artist and writer. In 2001 his work was included in *BitStreams*, an exhibition of digital art at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. He is a coeditor of *Site of Sound: of Architecture and the Ear* (Errant Bodies Press, 2000) and *Writing Aloud: The Sonics of Language* (Errant Bodies Press, 2001), and is Music Director at Beyond Baroque Art Center in Los Angeles.

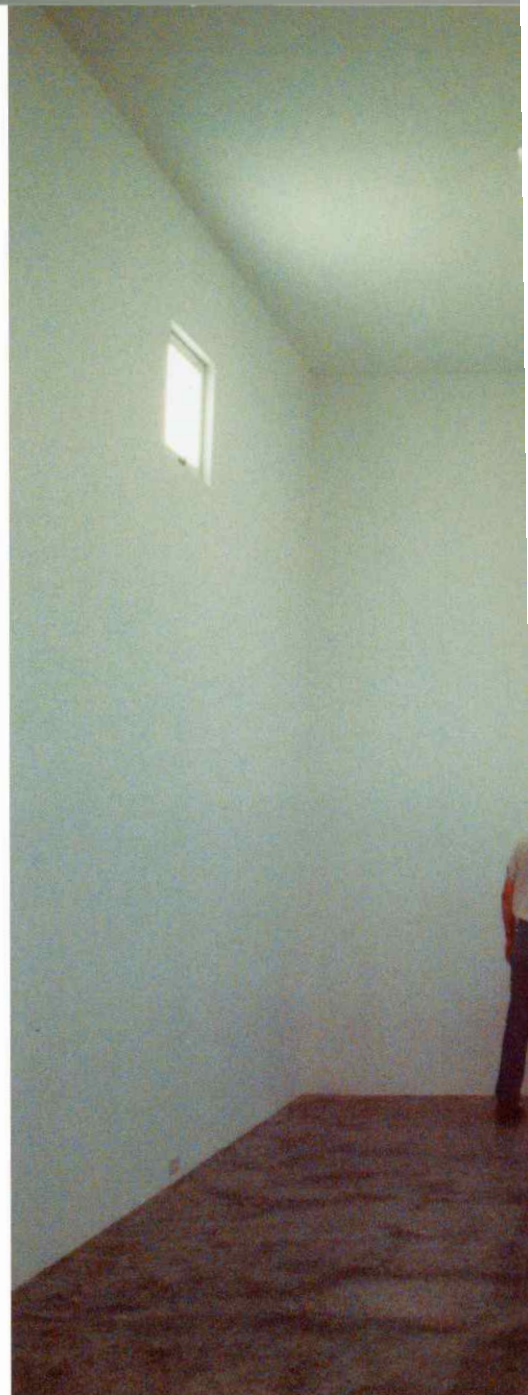
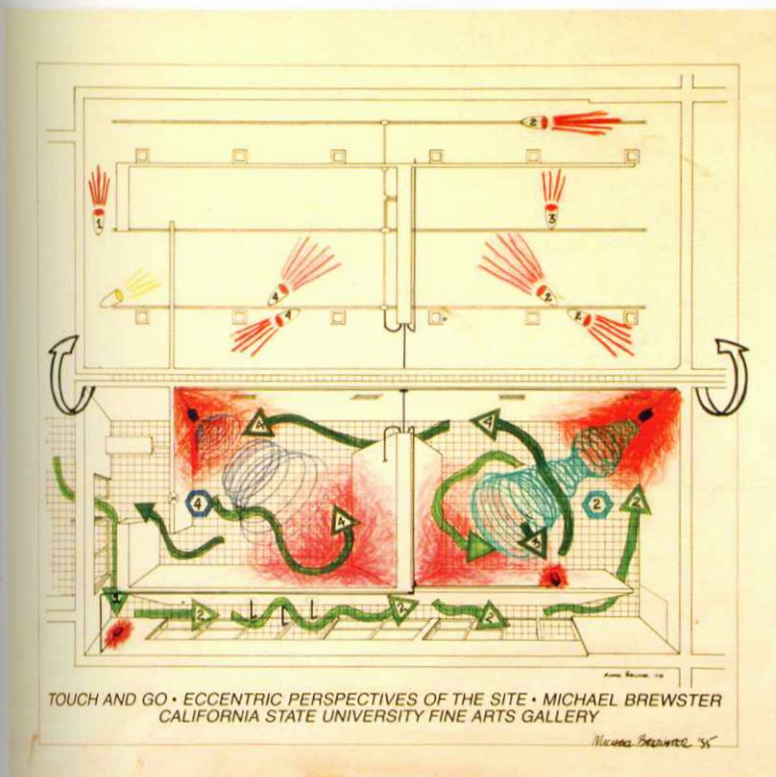


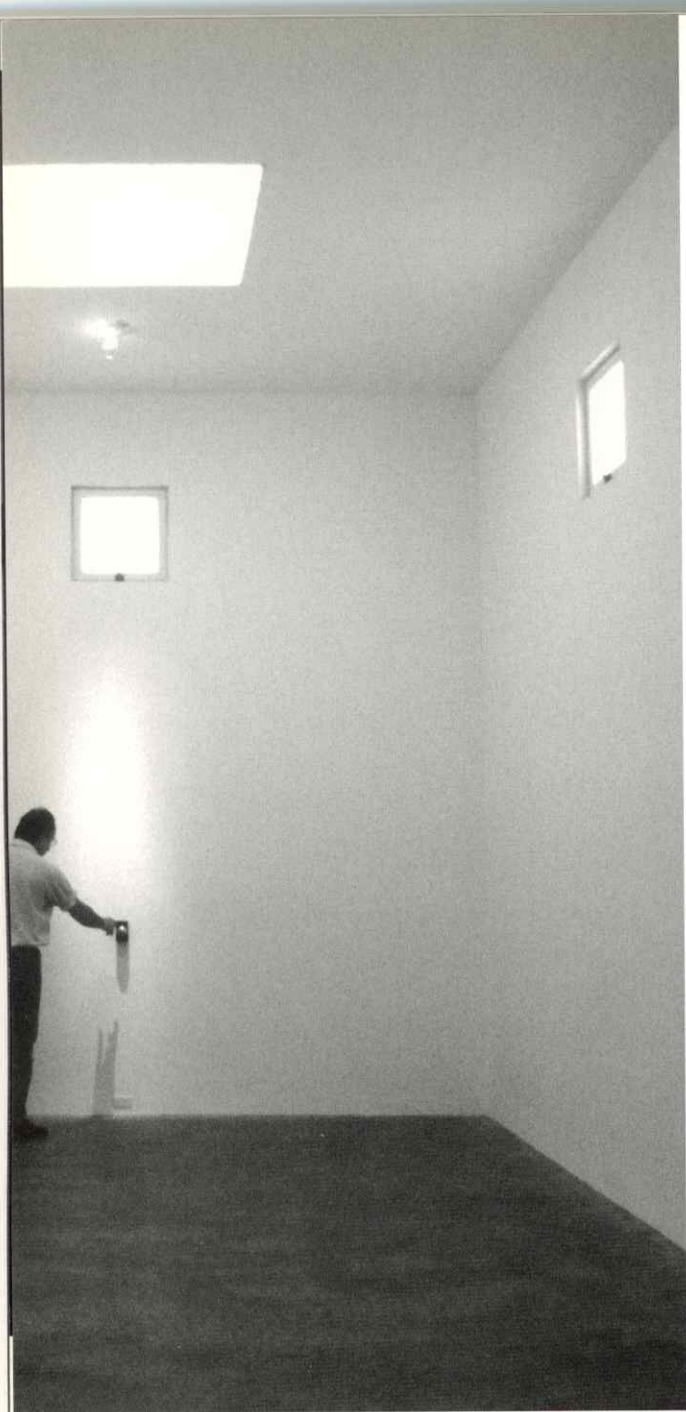


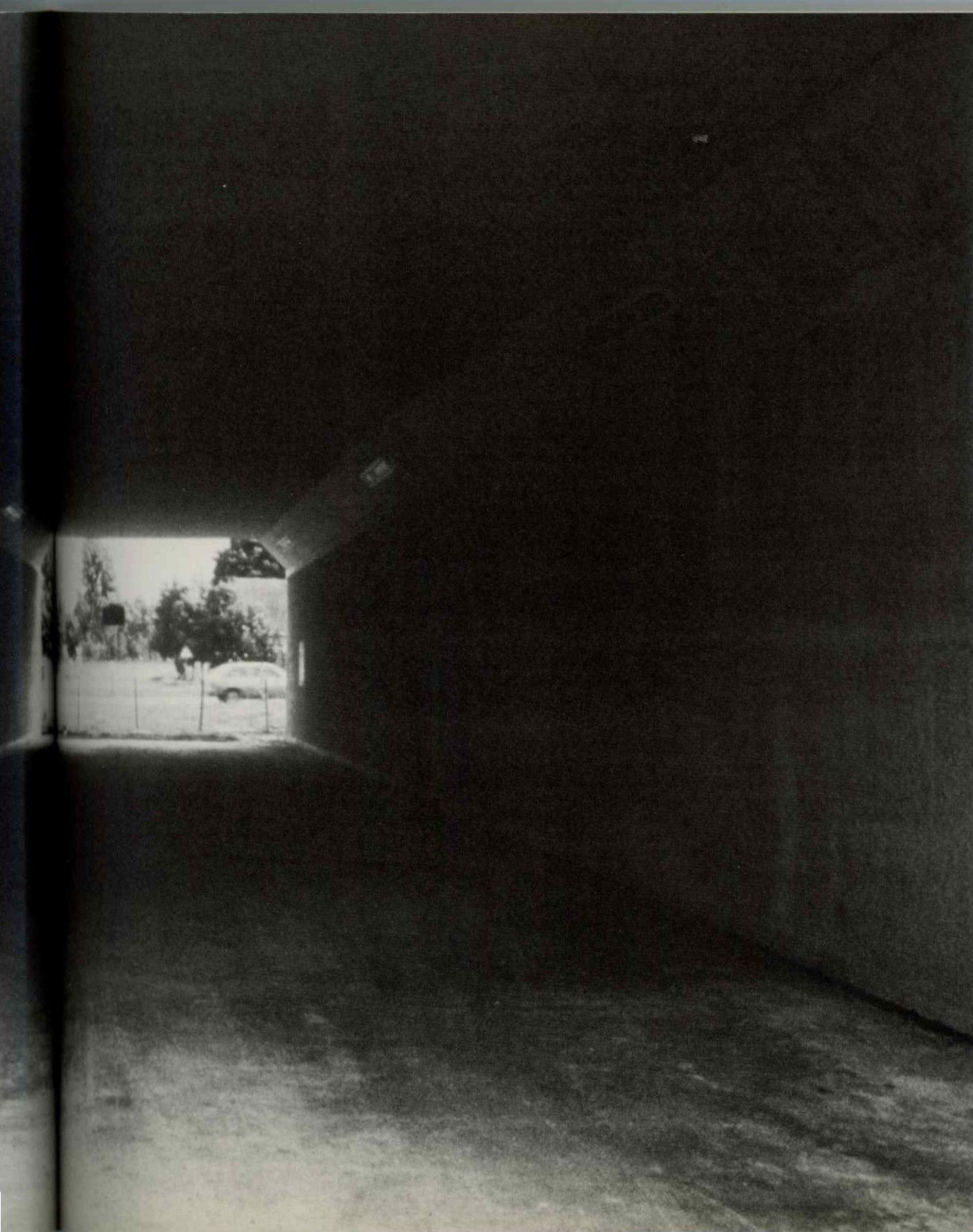




Echocentric 1981

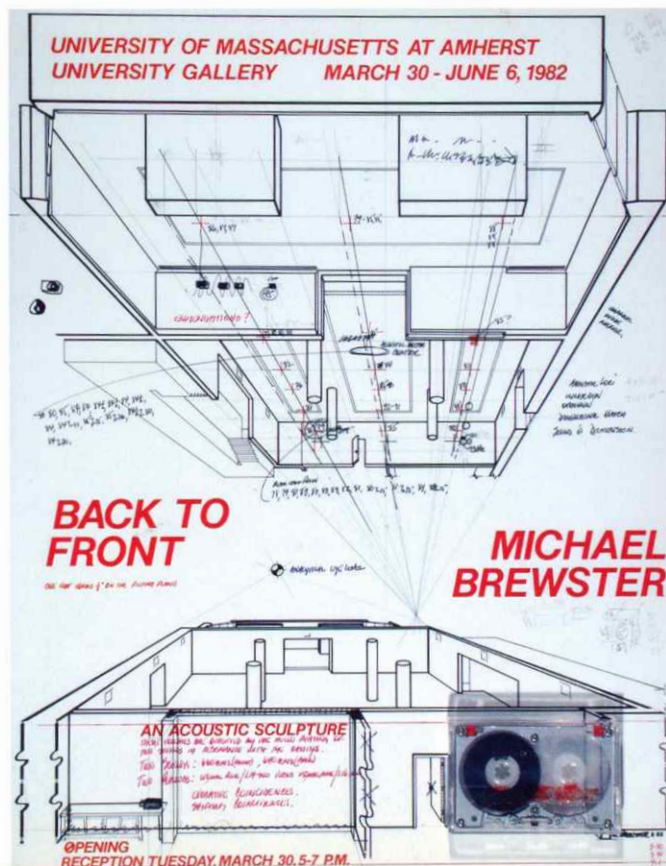








Mojave Flashers: #006 1969
Back to Front 1982





descriptions of works pictured and on cd:

Three Sum 1988

pages 4–6, CD track 10

East Gallery, Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California

Copyright © and collection of the artist

Three sets of three tones in three minutes, from a Commodore 64 computer.

Space F, Santa Ana, California

pages 10–11

site of:

Fixed Frequency 1971

CD track 02

Copyright © and collection of the Panza Family

A four-and-a-half-foot wavelength inside an industrial space (245hz at 60dBc).

and

Standing Wave 1971

CD track 03

Copyright © and collection of the artist

A seven-and-a-third-foot wavelength inside an industrial space (150hz at 100dBc).

Fourth Spiral 1968

pages 12–13

Acrylic sheet, 14 x 14 x 32 1/2 inches

Collection of Mark Brewster, Tacoma, Washington

Virtual cyclic motion.

oh so pretty 2000

page 14, CD track 14

Peggy Phelps Gallery, Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California

Copyright © and collection of the artist

Four complex sounds mixed and interpenetrated for four minutes, bringing the background into the foreground.

An Exit to Sculpture 1985

pages 19–20, CD track 08

The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles

Copyright © and collection of The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles

An escape tunnel from the museum became a cul-de-sac when a sound field spread throughout the space, conjuring percepts of abstracted foghorns and echoing departures.

Lewiston 1982 In collaboration with Mowry Baden
pages 20–21

Artpark, Lewiston, New York

Copyright © and collection of Mowry Baden, Victoria, British Columbia
A processional/acoustic sculpture. After a long walk on a path—the first of the four acoustic sites that comprised the sculpture—through the grounds of a destroyed mansion, visitors came upon the second site. Using an improbable aluminum banister, a disguised switch, to help them descend precarious steps at the base of the surviving foundations caused sound to emanate from a speaker hidden in the top of a nearby tree, filling the clearing with a sound like that of a diesel motor for two minutes. From this spot, visitors could see the engineered slopes of a huge pile of rock that had been dumped there during the excavation for a hydroelectric power project. Two large objects perched on the hillside were the third and fourth acoustic sites. One was a jauntily placed twelve-foot section of nine-foot-diameter concrete pipe; the other was a turquoise aluminum diving board that projected from the hill. Visitors became winded by their climb up the steep slope, so when they arrived inside the big pipe, its acoustics gave their labored but natural breathing a synthetic quality. Out one end, they could see the suburban homes of Lewiston—homes with diving boards. Out the other end, they could see the path to their own diving board. On the end of the board were two foot-operated push buttons. Pressing either one caused a loud sound like a chisel on stone to burst from below. It echoed back from the forest canopy in a multiplied, almost shimmering reflection. People could play the forest from the board. By matching each report to the fade of the echo, a daring player could pump the forest into a near resonance by bouncing from foot to foot, from switch to switch, slamming the sound rapid-fire into the old, fading forest.

Psst 1994

pages 22–23, CD track 11

City of Brea Gallery, Brea, California

Copyright © and collection of the artist

A sonic drawing in which four sounders saying “psst” at slightly different intervals vied for our attention from opposite corners of a tiny room.

Whistlers 2 1994

page 25, CD track 12

Bennett Roberts Fine Art, Los Angeles, April 29–May 30, 1995. Also shown at Lasca Gallery, Los Angeles, January 10–February 8, 1997; Patricia Correia Gallery, Santa Monica, California, May 30–July 4, 1998
Collection of Lily Asalde Brewster

A sonic drawing in which four sounders, hung on the walls, whistled independently once every seven and a half seconds for five minutes, their shifting coincidences toying with the flavors of our anticipations.

A Slow Walking Wave 1975

page 31, CD track 04

Navy Street Studio, Venice, California

Copyright © and collection of the artist

Five-foot wavelength (220hz at 100dBc).

Pinnacle Peek 1987

pages 32-33, CD track 09

Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle

Copyright © and collection of Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

Three sounds, two speakers, office fans, office trees, sound from a Commodore 64 computer.

Echocentric 1981

page 34

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

Copyright © and collection of Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

A room was charged by a small, wall-mounted sounder emitting a constantly repeating chirping buzz whose rising and falling echo caused the room to seem to expand and contract, as if breathing.

Touch and Go 1985

page 35, CD track 07

Fine Arts Gallery, California State University, Los Angeles

Copyright © and collection of Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
Two push buttons, two approaches, two rooms, two sounds beckoning.

Falls from the Sky 1994

pages 35-36, CD track 13

Palms Boulevard Studio, Venice, California

Copyright © and collection of the Panza Family

Four modulated tones dropped in and hovered for awhile.

Concrete Two Tone 1978

pages 36-38, CD track 05

Marum Overpass-Kw IX A, Groningen, the Netherlands

Copyright © and collection of the artist

A five-and-a-half-foot wavelength mixing with a five-and-a-quarter-foot wavelength inside an uncompleted freeway overpass produced a field pulsing at ten beats per second (198hz beating 208hz) that was modulated by the sounds of local traffic.

Back to Front 1982

page 38, CD track 06

University Gallery, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Copyright © and collection of the artist

Two separate sounds echoed from two opposite, underground galleries at slightly different intervals, one coming from the back gallery, the other from the front. Their calls and responses mixed in a complex blend of varied tonalities and timings whose qualities depended on our circumstance or location in the galleries and the coincidence of the sounds in time.

Mojave Flashers: #006 November 26, 1969, 4:30-8:30pm

pages 38-39

Soda Dry Lake, Mojave Desert, Baker, California

Flasher apparatus, collection of Carver Wilson, Maui, Hawaii

Twenty-five separate four-inch battery-powered flashing light-point sources, each flashing independently once a second, covered ninety thousand square feet of the desert floor for three eighty-minute periods of diminishing light, darkness, and increasing moonlight. The changes in ambient light caused the illusion of light traces moving around the mud flat to change tempo and seem to fade up out of the flat, increasing their speed as the light fell, reaching maximum frenetic activity in full darkness, and then gradually slowing to isolated twinklings as the full moon rose in the sky and the visitors headed back to the city.

allAROUNDyou 1999

page 47

Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, California

Copyright © and collection of the artist

Black room, blue light, six-minute sounding.

noname 1999

CD track 15

Palms Boulevard Studio

Copyright © and collection of the artist

Three modulated tones produced a rumbling field with a cycling foreground.

turkish 1999

CD track 16

Palms Boulevard Studio

Copyright © and collection of the artist

Four modulated tones caused a throbbing field around a cycling foreground.

slider 1999

CD track 17

Palms Boulevard Studio

Copyright © and collection of the artist

Three modulated tones slid into the room, blooming into a field of near and distant incidents.

Descriptions by Michael Brewster

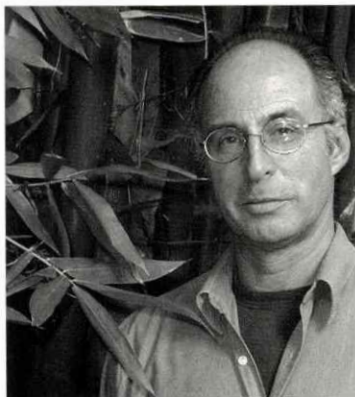
My deepest thanks to

*Phyllis and John Kleinberg, without whom this
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the Fellows of Contemporary Art for their
support and their mission
Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions
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my brothers, Mark and Brian, for their
steadfast encouragement
my daughters, Lily, Miki, and Cami, for
the joy they bring to my life*

—Michael Brewster







Born August 15, 1946, Eugene, Oregon
Lives in Venice, California

Education

1968–70
MFA, Sculpture, Claremont Graduate School,
Claremont, California

1964–68
BA, Sculpture, Pomona College,
Claremont, California

Awards

- 1996 Individual Artist Grant,
Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department
- 1990 Artist's Fellowship Grant,
National Endowment for the Arts
- 1988 Fellowship, J. S. Guggenheim Memorial
Foundation
- 1984 Artist's Fellowship Grant,
National Endowment for the Arts
- 1978 Artist's Fellowship Grant,
National Endowment for the Arts
- 1976 Artist's Fellowship Grant,
National Endowment for the Arts

Selected Exhibitions

* denotes group exhibition

- * *Constellations*, Peggy Phelps Gallery, Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California, October 1–26, 2001

- full o' Stuff*, Smith Campus Center, Pomona College, Claremont, California, October 5, 2000–January 1, 2001

- Michael Brewster: Sound Work*, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, California, July 3, 1999–January 1, 2000

- * *COLA*, Barnsdall Municipal Gallery, Los Angeles, California, April 22–June 21, 1998

- * *a scattering matrix*, Richard Heller Gallery, Santa Monica, California, November 16–December 14, 1996

- Whistlers 2*, Bennett Roberts Fine Art, Los Angeles, California, April 29–May 30, 1995

- * *Poetic Devices: Works of Motion & Sound*, City of Brea Gallery, Brea, California, January 15–March 18, 1994

- Three Sum*, East Gallery, Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California, October 10–21, 1988

- Low Down*, Santa Monica Museum of Art, Santa Monica, California, July 21–November 17, 1988

- Mechanics of Contemplation*, Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle, August 18–October 4, 1987

- * *New Music America*, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California, October 31, 1985–February 9, 1986

- Touch and Go*, Fine Arts Gallery, California State University, Los Angeles, January 7–February 18, 1985

- Lewiston*, collaboration with Mowry Baden, Artpark, Lewiston, New York, July 9–August 9, 1982

- Back to Front*, University Gallery, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, March 30–June 6, 1982

- * *Art in Los Angeles: The Museum as Site, Sixteen Projects*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, July 24–October 4, 1981

- * *1981 Biennial*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, February 4–April 12, 1981

Happen-Stance, An Acoustic Sculpture Installation: Defined by Sound, Herron Gallery, Indianapolis, Indiana, December 7, 1979–January 15, 1980

Michael Brewster, Galleria del Cavallino, Venice, Italy, September 22–October 17, 1979

Surrounded: sharp points ringing, Cirrus Gallery, Los Angeles, California, May 4–June 2, 1979

Concrete Two Tone, Marum Overpass-Kw IX A, Groningen, the Netherlands, August 12–September 9, 1978

Synchromesh, An Acoustic Sculpture, on display at La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla, California, December 10, 1978–January 22, 1979

Michael Brewster: Inside Outside Down and Soliloquies, Baxter Art Gallery, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, November 9–December 18, 1977

An Acoustic Sculpture and a Clicker Drawing, Artists Space, New York, April 2–23, 1977

Concentrate/Break-up, Taraval Street Pedestrian Tunnel, San Francisco, California, January 28–30, 1977

Narrow Open Spaces, Roger Wong's Gallery, Los Angeles, California, April 1–30, 1976

A Slow Walking Wave, Navy Street Studio, Venice, California, November 1–30, 1975

Standing Wave, Space F, Santa Ana, California, December 10–11, 1971

Fixed Frequency, Space F, Santa Ana, California, September 18–20, 1971

Michael Brewster, Montgomery Art Center, Pomona College, Claremont, California, May 29–31, 1970

Mojave Flashers: #006, Soda Dry Lake, Mojave Desert, Baker, California, November 26, 1969

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"Where, There or Here?" in Brandon LaBelle and Steve Roden, eds., *Site of Sound: of Architecture and the Ear* (Errant Bodies Press, 2000), 100–104; essay reprinted on acousticssculpture.com

All of Before: 3 acoustic sculptures, audio CD, produced by Jane Hart and Michael Brewster (Chronic Studios, 1996)

"Gone to Touch," in Stuart Saunders Smith and Thomas DeLio, eds., *Words and Spaces* (University Press of America, 1989), essay and photographs by Michael Brewster, 163–82; essay reprinted on acousticssculpture.com

Michael Brewster, statement and drawing in *Touch and Go*, exh. brochure (California State University, Los Angeles, 1985)

Michael Brewster, statement and photograph in *Michael Brewster*, exh. brochure (Galleria del Cavallino, Venice, Italy, 1979)

Michael Brewster, statement and photographs in Carol Adney, *Happen-Stance, An Acoustic Sculpture Installation: Defined by Sound*, exh. brochure (Herron Gallery, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1979)

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Suzanne Muchnic, "Hide and Seek: Sixteen Projects in Site, Sound," *Los Angeles Times*, Aug. 25, 1981, IV-1, 3

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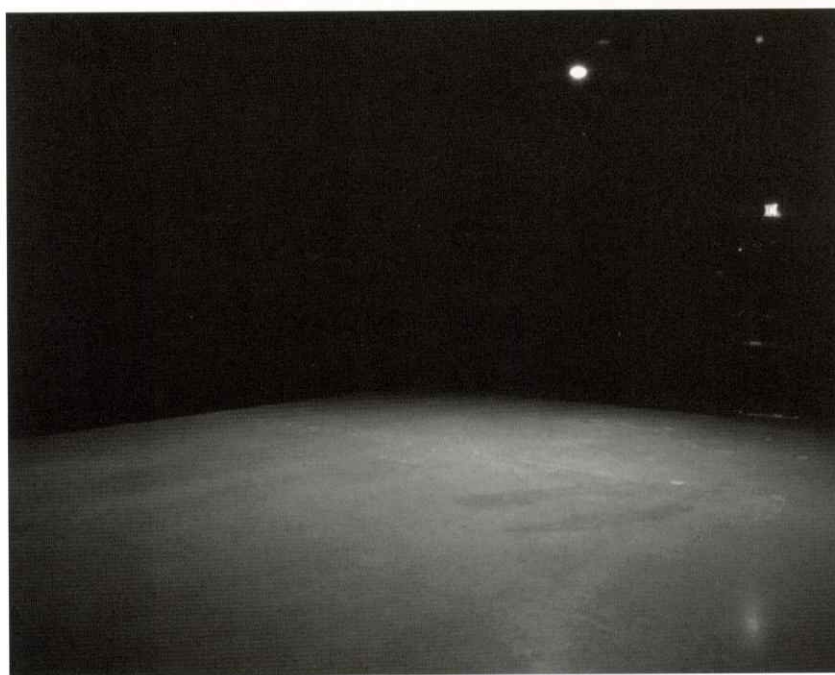
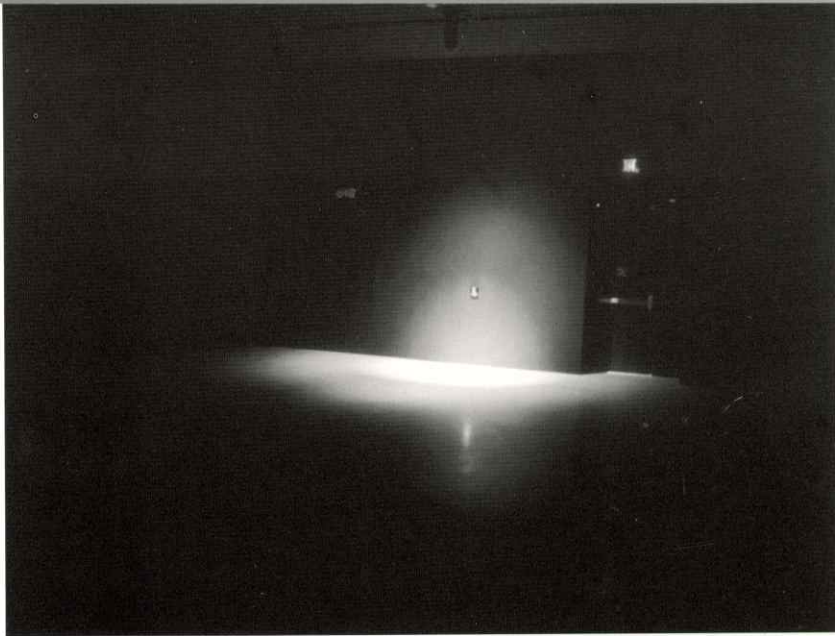
Los Angeles in the Seventies (Fort Worth Museum of Art, Fort Worth, Texas, 1977)

Collections

Giuseppe Panza di Biumo, Milan, Italy/Lugano, Switzerland
Mowry Baden, Victoria, British Columbia
Brian Brewster, Chula Vista, California
Lily Asalde Brewster, Santa Monica, California
Mark Brewster, Tacoma, Washington
Marian Brewster, San Diego, California
Gabiella Cardazzo, Venice, Italy
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
Grita Insam, Vienna, Austria
Leendert van Lagestein, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California
Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, California
Merry Norris, Los Angeles, California
Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, California
University Gallery, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Carver Wilson, Maui, Hawaii
Helene Winer, New York
Diana Zlotnick, Studio City, California

Teaching

1973-present
Professor of Art, Department of Fine Art, Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California



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1976

Ed Moses Drawings 1958-1976
Frederick S. Wight Art Gallery,
University of California, Los Angeles
July 13-August 15

1977

Unstretched Surfaces/Surfaces Libres
Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art
November 5-December 16

1978

Wallace Berman Retrospective
Otis Art Institute Gallery, Los Angeles
October 24-November 25

1979

Vija Celmins: A Survey Exhibition
Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport
Beach, California
December 15, 1979-February 3, 1980

1980

Variations: Five Los Angeles Painters
University Art Galleries, University of
Southern California, Los Angeles
October 20-November 23

1981

*Craig Kauffman, Comprehensive
Survey 1957-1980*
La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art,
La Jolla, California
March 14-May 3

Paul Wonner: Abstract Realist
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
October 1-November 22

1982
*Changing Trends: Content and Style—
Twelve Southern California Painters*
Laguna Beach Museum of Art,
Laguna Beach, California
November 18, 1982–January 3, 1983

1983
Variations II: Seven Los Angeles Painters
Gallery at the Plaza, Security
Pacific National Bank, Los Angeles
May 8–June 30

1984
Martha Alf, Retrospective
Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery
March 6–April 1

1985
*Sunshine and Shadow: Recent Painting
in Southern California*
Fisher Gallery, University of Southern
California, Los Angeles
January 15–February 23

James Turrell
The Museum of Contemporary Art,
Los Angeles
November 13, 1985–February 9, 1986

1986
William Brice
The Museum of Contemporary Art,
Los Angeles
September 1–October 19

1987
*Variations III: Emerging Artists in
Southern California*
Los Angeles Contemporary
Exhibitions
April 22–May 31

Perpetual Motion
Santa Barbara Museum of Art,
Santa Barbara, California
November 17, 1987–January 24, 1988

1988
Jud Fine
La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art,
La Jolla, California
August 19–October 2

1989
The Pasadena Armory Show, 1989
The Armory Center for the Arts,
Pasadena, California
November 2, 1989–January 31, 1990

1990
Lita Albuquerque: Reflections
Santa Monica Museum of Art,
Santa Monica, California
January 19–April 1

1991
*Facing the Finish: Some Recent
California Art*
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
September 20–December 1

Roland Reiss: A Seventeen-Year Survey
Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery
November 19, 1991–January 19, 1992

1992
*Proof: Los Angeles Art and the
Photograph, 1960–1980*
Laguna Art Museum,
Laguna Beach, California
October 31, 1992–January 17, 1993

1993
*Kim Abeles: Encyclopedia Persona,
A Fifteen-Year Survey*
Santa Monica Museum of Art,
Santa Monica, California
September 23–December 6

1994
Plane/Structures
Otis Art Institute Gallery, Los Angeles
September 10–November 5

1995
*Llyn Foulkes: Between a Rock and a
Hard Place*
Laguna Art Museum,
Laguna Beach, California
October 27, 1995–January 21, 1996

1997
Scene of the Crime
UCLA at the Armand Hammer Museum
of Art and Cultural Center,
Los Angeles
July 22–October 5

1998
Access All Areas
Japanese American Community Cultural
and Community Center, Los Angeles
June 6–July 26

1999
*Bruce and Norman Yonemoto: Memory,
Matter, and Modern Romance*
Japanese American National Museum,
Los Angeles
January 23–July 4

Eleanor Antin
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
May 23–August 23

2000
Flight Patterns
The Museum of Contemporary Art at the
Geffen Contemporary, Los Angeles
November 12, 2000–February 11, 2001

2002
*Michael Brewster: See Hear Now—A Sonic
Drawing and Five Acoustic Sculptures*
Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions
February 16–April 20

*George Stone: Probabilities—
A Twenty-Year Survey*
Barnsdall Municipal Gallery, Los Angeles
September 14–November 10

On Wanting to Grow Horns:
The Little Theatre of Tom Knechtel
Ben Maltz Gallery, Otis College of Art
and Design, Los Angeles
November 9, 2002–February 15, 2003

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Michael Brewster

See Hear Now

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2002

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