Grouping artists by intentions or their choice of materials will create communities otherwise unrelated. For example, it seems to be the aim of both Artschwager and Huebler to frustrate the viewer's method of information-gathering, but how different is a work of forty separate and widely distributed parts (Artschwager's "blps"), from one containing information (package wrappers, registered mail receipts) substantiating the work's dimensions in thousands of miles. In neither case is it possible to perceive the work in its spatial entirety or its extension in time (in Huebler's case, about 40 days; in Artschwager's, however long it takes to locate all the separate parts). But the two hardly resemble each other further.

The geometrically regular designs shared by Sol LeWitt and Carl Andre confer on the pair a stylistic relation which is then contradicted in their work. Andre's piece is completely variable since its separate parts are exactly alike. It is of no importance whether square x and square y change places. This formal arbitrariness links Andre thematically with the users of flexible, thus variable materials. LeWitt, on the other hand, is not only making geometrical designs, he is making them directly on the wall in order to *eliminate* variability. His wall drawings are like both a great Italian mural and a wall graffito: if they do not exist in a fixed relationship to their environments, they do not exist at all. LeWitt's work, unlike Andre's, cannot be altered in any way without being destroyed.

Richard Serra, an artist of a very different sensibility, also creates works to exist *only* in one specific place. An amount of molten lead poured directly on the floor cannot be transferred from place to place, obviously, but unlike LeWitt, Serra focuses our attention on the manipulation of the properties of matter. The location decided upon for the distribution of a *fluid* material unavoidably affects the manner or means of distribution; for example, the height from which Serra pours his lead will affect the very size of the result. Serra's splash pieces are as

situationally specific as any architectural or relief sculpture was ever meant to be, but by a very novel and simple means.

One of the few general characteristics of the artists in the show is how they relate their work to location. Generally, the choice is between a totally fixed position or a totally free relation of work to site. Carl Andre has used the term, "post-studio artists," to describe himself and others who do not actually make their own art but have it fabricated. The phrase is equally applicable to artists like Serra or LeWitt, who make their own pieces though not always in their studios, as well as to Kosuth or Weiner, who may use typewriters and telephones, but eliminate the production of objects entirely. Weiner's "wall removal"—a work in which absence constitutes presence—has already been seen in New York and Europe; both showings, according to the artist, are the same work. Its identity lies in its idea, which can exist just as well as a "statement" on the printed page. Serra's splash piece has also been seen in New York and Europe; in this case, however, the artist insists that the two are completely different works of art. Identity lies in its actual presence, a position paralleled by the impossibility of moving the work from its site.

Both Weiner and Serra are "right." What matters is not so much the esthetic position in itself as the extremity to which it is taken, and this exhibition includes some of the most extreme art ever produced. The modern obsession with going as far as possible is demonstrated again and again; relationships between art and idea, art and site, art and material, art and methodology are pushed to their limits by these artists. Perhaps the only quality that unifies the artists in this show is their urgency.

The super-cool ironies of Bruce Nauman and the almost Expressionist pathos of Eva Hesse are two versions of that part of the modernist temperament which is Romantic. The early Romantic, whether Percy Bysshe Shelley or Caspar

David Friedrich, felt himself to be a tiny dot in the vast cosmos; Oldenburg's vastly enlarged objects create a similar haptic response—one's body suddenly shrinks. The fact that Oldenburg is parodying the relation between self and the universe makes him even more of a Romantic; his desire to create monuments is consistent.

To Robert Morris the uncontrollable forces of nature are embodied in the law of gravity, which dominates his drooping spasmically curling lengths of felt. More than method, process becomes product itself when, as in Morris's heroic and helpless cloth pieces, the work itself can be altered. Unlike an Andre floor piece, any change in a Morris work may be noticeable, though only to someone who has seen the piece in an earlier state. Memory is essential to comprehension in this case.

Again arises the crucially important subject of time in the new art. The unambiguous forms of Primary Structure sculpture tried to be like painting by inducing instantaneous perception; all information about a Donald Judd box is obtained as quickly as possible. But the new art generally does not try to defeat or deny its existence in time, but instead makes the viewer highly aware of it.

It is still "minimal" in its actual presence; note the avoidance of mass in Sandback's string pieces, the flimsiness of Sonnier's hanging fabrics, the reluctance to delineate volume clearly in Saret's crumpled balls of wire fencing. Much of the new work looks vulnerable, not only spatially insubstantial, but dominated also by the effects of time.

Though non-rigid art may at times refer to the weight and degrees of energy of the human body, it is not "humanist" because the viewer so often feels excluded, deprived of some states or parts of the work. In a similar spirit, Bruce Nauman's steel slab is said to have a mirrored bottom, but because it is hidden, we can only believe him. Yves Klein's day in Paris as a work of art is less an exuberant gesture than the presentation

of an event that is impossible to perceive completely. Mere perception becomes a metaphor for cognition. The conceptual, categorical ambiguities of the new art stand in sharp contrast to its direct occupation of space or specific demonstration of physical laws.

The most fundamental law of nature is that everything that exists in space also exists in time; artists today work with that knowledge in unforeseen ways. A Bill Bollinger rope piece does not change from day to day; indeed, its fixedness, its tension as it stretches between two anchoring bolts, is its very point. But what happens to it when it is disassembled? Does it still exist? If so, does it exist as rope, as potential art, or as art? Its installation is made synonymous with its existence, whereas a painting or fixed-form sculpture, no matter how radical its esthetic, does not literally cease to be when it is in storage. The ontological instability of the Bollinger piece introduces, on the psychological plane, an experience of anxiety about being, which has been the chief subject of philosophy since Descartes. Consciousness as proof of existence is translated in esthetic terms: conception as method of creation.

Another Bollinger work (seen in New York in January) consisted of an amount of graphite strewn across the gallery floor. The spectacle of a work in several different parts is not unfamiliar, but here is a work in hundreds of thousands of different parts. Of equal relevance is the spectator's necessary participation in its form; when one walks across Bollinger's graphite-covered floor, it is inevitably changed in its distribution of volume. This is both willed and accidental, a combination stemming from Duchamp and Dada, but recently more familiar as a compositional device in the work of John Cage, Merce Cunningham, Robert Rauschenberg, and, before them, the Abstract Expressionists, particularly Pollock.

The artist who explores chance any further today has almost necessarily to use time in his work. Morris has announced his

intention of working on his next show every morning before the gallery opens so that it will be necessary to visit it every day in order to keep up with the multiple changes. lf Morris does this, his performance will be at least as relevant as the work's tangible elements.

What is happening to form is what happened to order when it was subjected to chance by Duchamp, Arp, and others; it proves capable of apparently infinite extension. (It is significant that several of the new artists use flexible or extendable materials like rubber. The interaction between time and material also determines the artists' continuing interest in "common," "non-art" materials — cloth, plastic, dirt and organic matter, industrial flocking. These things are mutable, perishable, sensitive to manipulation to a degree that more usual materials like stone and wood are not. Several years ago Rauschenberg said, "l try to act in the gap between art and life," for that gap continues to narrow. Art has been veritably *invaded* by life, if life means flux, change, chance, time, unpredictability. Sometimes the only difference between the two is sheer consciousness, the awareness that what seemed to be a stain on the wall is in fact a work of art. Or a trench in the snow, or a pile of scraps, or a hole in the wall, or a hole in the desert. After all, if a de Kooning painting is the record of a series of *acts*, why not act directly upon the world by cutting a three-mile-long swath in the snow, as Dennis Oppenheim has done? (Robert Smithson has developed the dialectic between site and work of art to a high degree of wit and complexity. Smithson's "non-sites," consisting of photographs, maps, and piles of rocks or dirt in his handsome bins, document his particular version of industrial archaeology for the gallery audience. Both his direct use of the landscape and his system of documentation implicate him centrally in the new directions of art.)

What we are witnessing is a new naturalism or realism born of extended collaborations between the artists and nature,