

space. These linear descriptions are most often incomplete, demanding that the viewer complete the shape for himself in his imagination. Clearly working within the tradition which springs from Naum Gabo, with its emphasis on linear spatial construction, Sandback's work feeds on the smallest tendencies of that movement, releasing its usually fascination with the problem of illusionism. But at the same time Sandback contradicts the Constructivist denial of descriptive line. Constructivist line activates space; it does not bound it. Like the Constructivists he is interested in both the linear and the illusional, but reversing their procedures, he makes the line real and the space illusional.

In the recent show, consisting of three successive installations, he continued to manipulate invisible planes, setting up a dialogue between negative and positive spaces within a framework of a rocky "new you-see-it, new you don't" illusionism. The central section of the first installation consisted of a long piece of black yarn coming down from the ceiling, running straight along the floor and then returning to the ceiling in another right angle, thus bounding three sides of a large rectangle. This implied form was bracketed by two single verticals, equidistant from either end and aligned with the same axis.

In the second installation two rectangular sections like the first were placed at right angles to each other, with a gap between them similar to the gap between the verticals and the planes form in the first configuration. Using similar rectangles again in the final installation, Sandback aligned them on the same axis, again maintaining the gap. The result was a changing relationship between the illusory planes partially described by the yarn, and the empty spaces, also illusory, which existed around and between them. The viewer was asked to make choices as he viewed through the gallery, deciding which planes were "there," which not. The yarn was both itself and the representation of an illusory edge, or rather, the representation of several possible illusory edges.

Theoretically this work could be located anywhere, but its precise demands of its purity make it dependent on the particularities of certain kinds of individual spaces. A couple of years ago, Sandback installed a piece at John Weber which consisted of right angles of red yarn dividing the gallery diagonally. The piece worked, and from parts of the room the lines of yarn remained themselves, while from other areas one was confronted with the illusion of two enormous sheets of plate glass. The installations of Friedrich shared almost the same formal characteristics, but the more complete description of the plane reduced the illusional quality, while the columns and borders of the gallery space itself interrupted the illusion. And so

that perceptual tension between what was there and what only seemed to be there was created.

—Thomas Lawson

Lyman Kipp at Sculpture Now

Lyman Kipp avoids welding whenever possible. He bolts his sculptures together. Bolts join parallel surfaces. They necessitate plane-to-plane rather than plane-to-edge connections, foster the gradual not the radical articulation of space, and make work axial and stolid, unless the component lines and planes are bent. Kipp does not bend his material. The sculptures do not often surprise us, but they do have a certain grace. The works are conservative even by steel sculptors' standards.

His present concern is the passing of one plane perpendicularly through or between two planes inclined towards one another. The planes are explicit in the smaller pieces, implied by coplanar linear elements of angle iron in the larger ones. The crossing plane can be supported in the air or rested on the ground. Bolts and angle irons effect the joining. In the past Kipp used paint to separate section from section and so energize his rigidly symmetrical composition. He now uses one color on the planes and a second color on their edges to inflect the flat expanses. The two large pieces that were in this show are monochromatic.

Kipp's mastery of detail is noteworthy. The metal is the thinnest that will give a sense of solidity, the bolts the smallest that will be strong enough. Buttressing is used only as

structurally needed. As he scales the work up, the bolts, plates and angle irons become consistently heavier, but only appropriately so. Many sculptors have a fascination with mass; physical weight somehow validates form for them. Kipp's restraint in this regard is impressive: things are exactly what they appear to be and are as light as possible. Each piece is adapted to its size. The smaller pieces don't read as maquettes.

But his care mortifies the work by making it predictable. Only *Lockport*, the largest and best piece in the show, surprises us. In it Kipp floats two long narrow rectangles between a plane of four linear elements and another plane of two. The angles have a sense of rightness as they join into each other. The planes pass above our heads, high enough to be out of reach but not so high as to be out of scale. Kipp's boxes never enclosed much, his solid planes never displayed much, so his present effective use of transparency constitutes a small revelation.

—Wade Saunders

Dan Flavin at Heiner Friedrich

Flavin's most newsworthy work, which inaugurated Heiner Friedrich's new West Broadway gallery, was his first New York installation in several years in which more than a perfunctory, respectful, "this-guy-was-great-in-the-'60s" response. Judging from catalogue reproductions, it seems that Flavin's best work in the 1970s—his large-scale fluorescent tube installations—has been done elsewhere, in

the country's museum and gallery institutions he has had around the country, in Canada and Europe. For whatever reason, an unwillingness to risk big risks in the home town, consistent with the suburban spaces available to him here, or simply the demands his well-worn out-of-town activities make on his time and attention. New York hasn't seen a truly daring large-scale piece since Flavin took over an entire ramp of the Guggenheim during its last International Exhibition in 1971. Since then he has fulfilled several installations of fluorescent circles (which suffered from swaying pattern and sway) and linear, varying in his odd though tube arrangements, consequently, his work has seemed increasingly repetitive and inert. Apart from the Flavin's legendary Friedrich installation (mounted to a minor setback, like other recent exhibits of 60s heaven (Judd's in '72, Steidl's in '75, Johns's in '76), this show really made you sit up, take notice and consider the artist anew.

Although installations (ground to a given space) have been part of Flavin's repertoire since the late '60s, the latest example, *Line/Box 1978 (in Heiner)*, was not only one of the best ever, it was also distinctly different from previous work in a number of important and highly successful ways. The new piece introduced a radical re-employment of the fluorescent tubes as objects or configurations to be looked at and concentrated on, particularly, since-flung light to an unprecedented degree. But, if the tubes were secondary, the discovery of their placement, learned by movement through the space, gave the piece a quality of story narrative like

Five Sandback, one of three consecutive installations, 1978, central part of Heiner Friedrich



Lyman Kipp: *Lockport*, 1977, painted aluminum, 18 by 12 by 10 1/2 feet; at Sculpture Now. (Photo taken elsewhere)

