

The Kitchen Center for Video and Music

press release

Three Recent Installations by

DENNIS OPPENHEIM

Exhibition: March 7 - March 24, 1979

Tuesday - Saturday, 1-6 pm Free

Opening: Saturday, March 10, 4-6 pm

Film premiere: Saturday, March 24, 5 pm

The Kitchen Center
484 Broome Street

The Kitchen Center is pleased to present Dennis Oppenheim's THREE RECENT INSTALLATIONS in its new Gallery. The exhibition runs from March 7 through March 24.

Three brand new works, each of which includes a soundtrack as an integral element of its construction, add to Oppenheim's rich and varied body of work, recently seen in a large retrospective at the Musee d'Art Contemporain in Montreal and at the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto (March-November 1978). "Cornered Journey" features an interior staircase within a ten foot cone-shaped conduit, four feet in diameter, with the dark interior of the cone sealed by a speaker. Tiny holes in familiar constellation patterns are punched into the surface of the pipe, while a soundtrack of footsteps retreating into a corner implies a "cornered situation, no way to return." The work, Oppenheim indicates, relates to previous constructions that refer to process: "As such, the piece is about the art process-- about the internal work of making art."

A second piece, "Hive," consists of a translucent beehive/volcano-shaped object placed on the floor of The Gallery. Powerful speakers generate the sound of a swarm of bees; "the volcano element occurs in the piece because the live enclosure (made of fiberglass) is topped--compressed by the speaker--giving an erupting quality."

The third installation, "Tune Towers," a scale model for an outdoor project, is comprised of seven black towers ranging in height from two to eight feet. "Tune Towers" looks a little like another work called Dayton Falls (1977) shown at the Wright State University and in the Montreal/Toronto retrospective," Oppenheim comments. "It relates to that previous work in that both objects look a little like industrial derricks. But the present piece is far more than Dayton Falls: it includes a quadraphonic layered sound track of a waterfall with a taped text that asks people to jump off waterfalls... These 2-8 foot towers have constantly running music box apparatus which produce a layering of chimes raining down from the towers. They ask for an industrial setting, off a roadway, perhaps en route to New Jersey; in this sense the work represents the direction I have wanted to go in for some time: to construct permanent outdoor installations."

While Oppenheim moves towards real constructions in real space, it is the incongruity or coupling of two very divergent elements--the tinkling sound and the heavy industrial facade-- that interests him. "Though each tower contains a very definite popular song, none of the songs can be distinguished since they resonate against the steel and blur into one another. It's a total parody on the macho industrial complex."

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On the closing day of the exhibition, a short film by Oppenheim entitled "Flamingo" will be premiered. The film will be shown once, at 5:00pm; admission is free.

For information on programs at The Kitchen Center, contact Joe Hannan at 925-3615.

484 Broome Street between West Broadway and Wooster, New York City