

# ARTnews

## Chiara Dynys

CRISTINEROSE

This was the first American show for Chiara Dynys, an artist who has shown extensively in Europe, most often in her native Italy. Here she offered several materially attractive groupings of bas-relief wall sculptures, fashioned of marble and hand-finished wood. One set, carved from extremely rare Portoro marble, resembles empty picture frames, while another, gold-leafed group recalls doors that lead to nowhere.

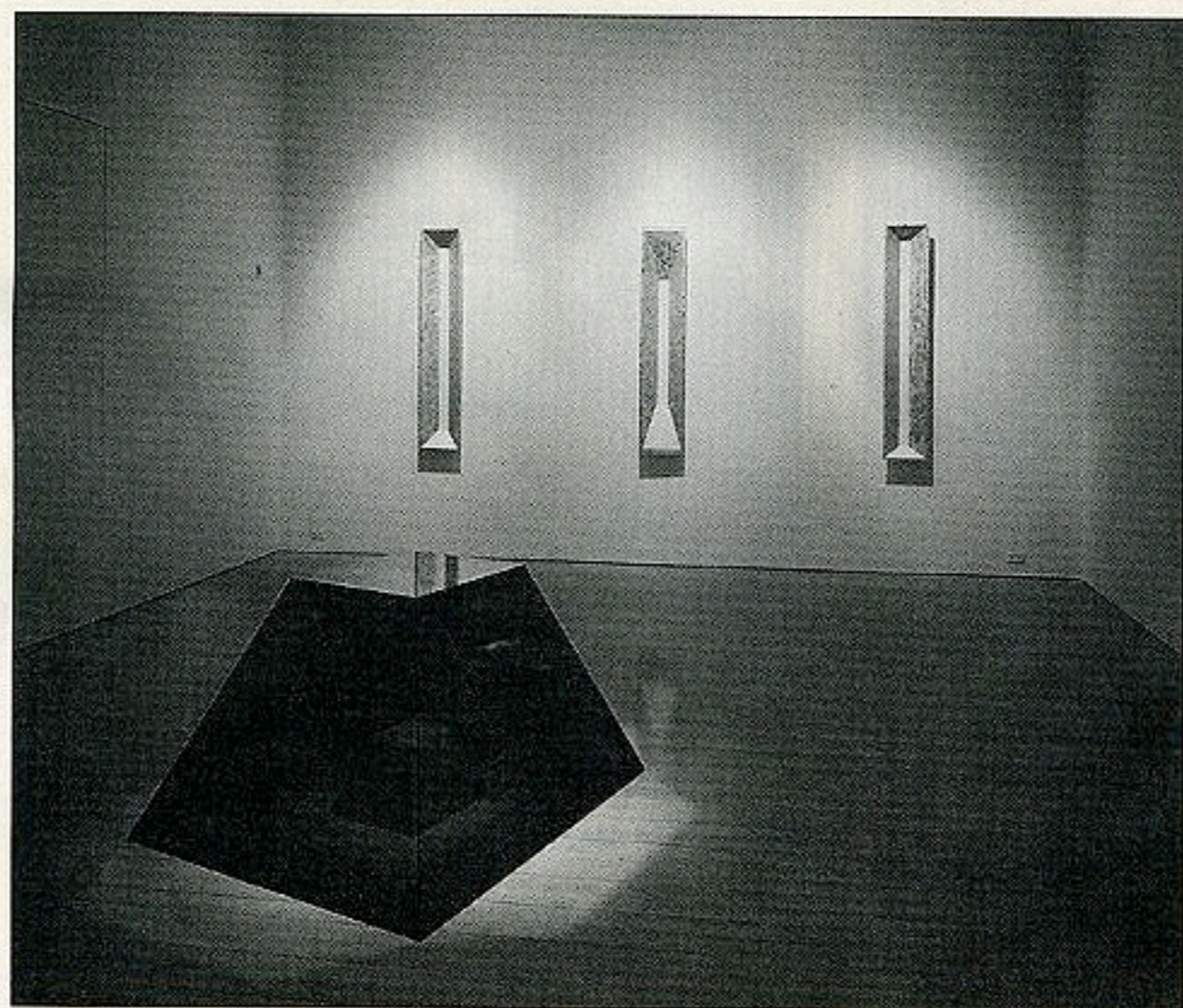
Throughout, Dynys uses materials in a way that continually confuses the real with the fake, the precious with the common, the hand-crafted with the manufactured. In one set of frames, working with wax and industrial paint, she achieves a rich yellow patina that looks rare and artisanal. Yet the Portoro pieces, made for her at a quarry factory, are so beautifully veined and glossily finished that they appear completely artificial.

Many times, there's a similar sense of play between image and reality. A row of marble trapezoids, scaled big to small along the wall, seems to recede into the distance—an effect enhanced by the fact that their cloudy blue and white markings look like an airbrushed slice of heaven.

And in *Pyramid*—the only floor piece—a marble polyhedron sits inside a crystal shell, rendering the object unattainable as it reflects the viewer's own image.

With all these empty frames, dead-end doorways, and similar lures to the unreachable, Dynys obviously has conceptual and metaphysical aims in mind. She is continually trying to lead us to explore the acts of looking and searching. Yet to do this, she employs objects that are essentially decorative, whose physical nature she takes pains to celebrate. The end result is that we never quite make it out of the material world, but remain transfixed by the exit sign.

CAROL KINO



Chiara Dynys,  
installation view,  
1996.  
Cristineros.