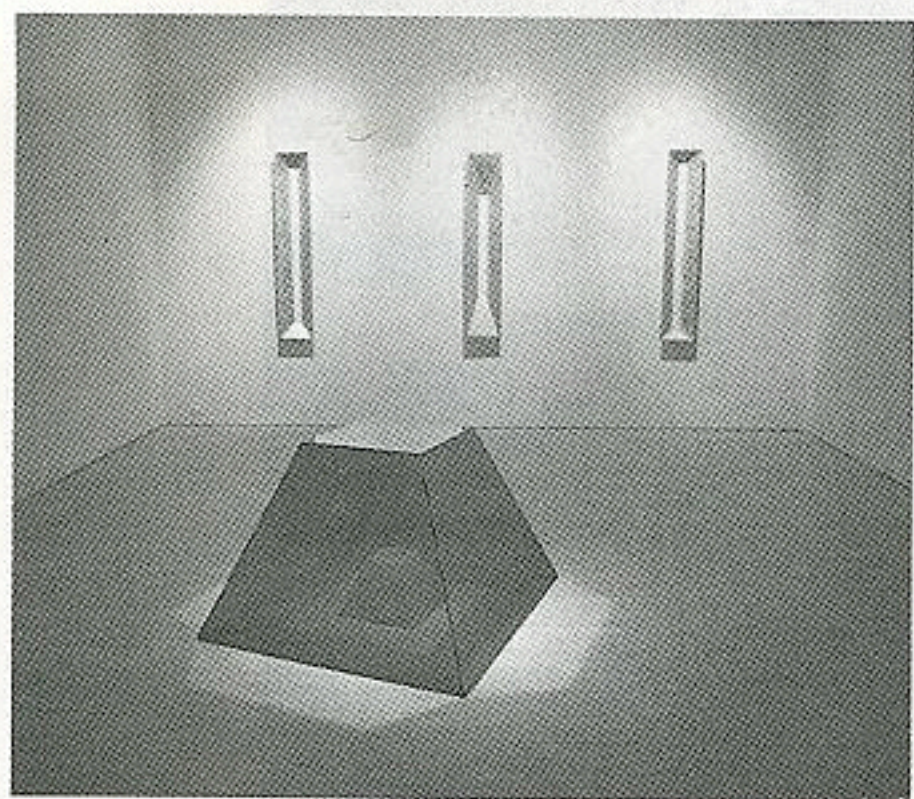


Flash Art



Chiara Dynys, Installation view, 1996.

CHIARA DYNYS CRISTINEROSE

When first viewing Chiara Dynys' work, I couldn't help but think of Malevich's simple geometric shapes nestled within the white backgrounds and the shape of the canvas. Malevich's colored squares actually float in space — Dynys' central squares are the floating space.

Dynys has presented three groups of wall sculpture all of which are a variation on a rectangular frame with a central void exposing the wall. One group is made of sky blue marble with natural veins of white flitting through it like puffs of clouds. There are seven flat slabs cut into skewed rectangles of decreasing size. Also in the same room are golden coffin-shaped hexagons made of wood covered with gold leaf and wax. Last is a room of small picture size frames made from gold-veined black marble all hung at eye level like a painting exhibition sans paintings. This last group has the cold hard qualities of architectural details or tombstones.

Dynys' style refers to formal minimalist concerns in that they are simple quadrangular shapes, but because of their unique quality of containing a central void, they literally open up the object to become the repository of personal and collective associations. The site in which these sculptures are placed is very important; in this case Dynys' use of the white walls of this postmodern gallery can either be seen as a metaphor for an ultimate blank emptiness or as hitting a wall. The sculptures are grouped by material and general shape, but the relationship that they have to each other is not evident. Dynys, in previous work, has made different materials reverberate against each other in more conclusive ways, usually pointing to contrasts between natural and synthetic materials, but this installation feels unclear in this regard.

The only floor piece in the show is a truncated pyramid shape lowly lit in the back room of the gallery. The outer pyramid is made from bronze colored transparent plexiglass. A smaller version of the same shape made from alabaster is entombed in the plexiglass. The materials are unusual together and seem to follow instinct more than planning. This quality makes the pieces very intriguing.

Claire McConaughy