

IT HAPPENED Art at the Edge  
of Los Angeles 1969–1973  
AT **POMONA**

AUGUST 30, 2011–MAY 13, 2012

**For Immediate Release**

January 24, 2012



Chris Burden, *Untitled*, 1966.  
Bronze. 6 ½ x 5 in. (16.5 x 12.7 cm)  
Collection of the artist. © Chris Burden.  
Photograph courtesy of the artist.

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**Part 3: At Pomona**  
**Pomona College Museum of Art**  
March 10–May 13, 2012

Pomona College Museum of Art will open the final of three exhibitions associated with “It Happened at Pomona: Art at the Edge of Los Angeles 1969–1973”—“Part 3: At Pomona,” on **Saturday, March 10** and continuing through May 13, 2012.

On **Saturday, March 24, 2012**, the Museum will host a conversation between Pomona College alumni Chris Burden and Thomas Crow, at 3 p.m. in Pomona College’s Rose Hills Theater (Smith Campus Center, 170 E. Sixth St., Claremont), followed by the opening reception at the Museum, from 5–7 p.m. Both events are free and open to the public.



Mowry Baden *Delivery Suite*, 1965.  
Steel and fibered polyester resin. 49 × 77 × 75 in.  
(124 × 195 × 190 cm). Collection of Theresa  
Britschgi, Seattle, Washington

“Part 3: At Pomona” demonstrates how Pomona College’s extraordinary community of arts faculty and students, inspired by the atmosphere created by curators Hal Glicksman and Helene Winer, developed some of the most important aesthetic currents of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Allied to the innovative exhibition programming, the art department thrived under a unique group of faculty members: Mowry Baden (’58), Lewis Baltz, David Gray, James Turrell (’65), and Guy Williams. Outstanding students at the time included Michael Brewster (’68), Chris Burden (’69), Judy Fiskin (’66), Peter Shelton (’73), and Hap Tivey (’69).

These artists, both faculty and students, engaged the developing legacies of Conceptualism and Minimalism and forged transformations of these ideas that became prototypes for future generations. This exhibition chronicles the experimental art

that emerged in the late 1960s and the role played by Pomona College in advancing these practices.

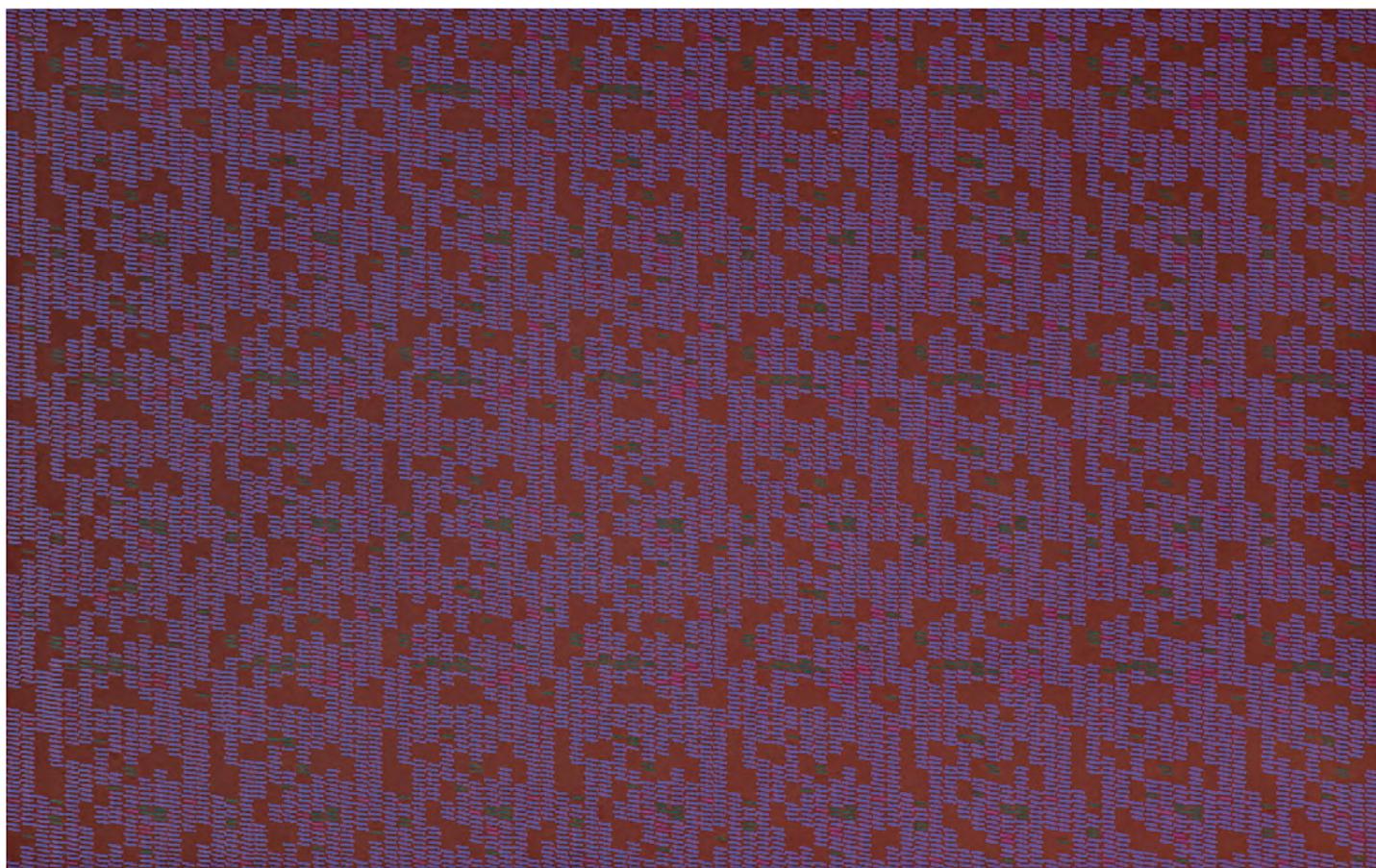
Building on the earlier exhibitions of “It Happened at Pomona,” “Part 3: At Pomona” features rarely seen early works by the Pomona College artists in the context of work by other students and faculty, revealing a cross-generational artistic community that was collectively tackling the relationships between painting and sculpture, installation and performance art, and Minimalist and Post-Minimalist sculptural issues. “Part 3” provides work that addresses and brings together both the concerns with perception and phenomenology that “Part 1: Hal Glicksman” artists explored and the post-conceptual and performative work examined in “Part 2: Helene Winer.”

The period covered by “Part 3” roughly equates with a renaissance in Pomona’s arts community that can be traced to Mowry Baden’s arrival as chairman of the art department in 1968 (he served as professor until 1971), and which ended, in 1973, with the mass departure of the arts faculty in protest over, among other causes, Helene Winer’s dismissal due to the notorious Wolfgang Stoerchle performance seen in “Part 2.” During this period, Pomona faculty and alumnus James Turrell was performing his first ganzfeld experiments and conducting flare performances; Lewis Baltz was at work on his legendary Tract Houses series; and Mowry Baden was creating interactive sculptures that would have a profound effect on his students, among them Burden, Brewster and Shelton. Burden was transitioning from architecture to sculpture to performance. Brewster was exploring the

potential of light and sound as an artistic medium, while Shelton was experimenting with corrosion as a painterly medium, which would have a lasting effect on his eventual career as a sculptor.

Central to this group is the under-recognized work of Mowry Baden. His interest in movement and its impact on perception clearly echoes many of the aesthetic concerns that informed works produced through Glicksman’s Artist’s Gallery exhibition program. Baden’s particular articulation of these concerns in works that require viewers to interact and physically operate the sculptures demonstrate a more performative and collaborative approach to audiences that prefigures much contemporary work today. In his catalogue interview, Baden discusses the role of perception in his pivotal Seatbelt sculptures: “Like so much of

Guy Williams *Slamfoot Brown*, 1972.  
Oil on canvas. 88 × 144 in. (223,5 × 366 cm).  
Collection of David and Jeanne Carlson,  
Rancho Mirage, California



my art, it attempts to downplay vision...you can know that the path you're traveling is not a pure circle, but only after you've made multiple journeys. The seatbelt here, with three points of attachment, is the subtlest of them all. You can walk around for ten minutes before the geometry begins to click in...the needle swings over to the non-visual senses gradually. The viewer gradually discovers where the sensory challenge is. And the experience is complex. Personally, I can't exhaust it. Even today, I can't wear it out. I began to realize this is a completely different territory for exploration." "Part 3" will include five rarely-seen sculptures by Baden.

Another highlight of the exhibition will be the re-creation of Michael Brewster's *Configuration 010 Audio Activity*, an installation sound piece based on the standing-wave phenomenon. A 1968 Pomona graduate, Brewster studied with Mowry Baden, John Mason, and David Gray. First exhibited during Glicksman's tenure in May 1970, *Configuration 010 Audio Activity* served as Brewster's MFA exhibition for Claremont Graduate University (then Claremont Graduate School). In his catalogue interview with David Pagel, he discusses his Configurations series: "I set forty little, battery-operated mechanisms to click every four seconds and embedded them in the walls of Pomona's gallery. I covered the holes in the walls with model airplane paper and a couple of thin coats of paint. The illusion was pretty good. You couldn't see anything but white wall. This was the first of what I came to call the Clicker Drawings." The work functions in the gallery as a sculptural form that is physically—but not visually—discernable as waves of sensations.

The Main gallery will also include work by Lewis Baltz, David Gray, Judy Fiskin, Peter Shelton, Hap Tivey, James Turrell and Guy Williams. "Part 3" brings together for the very first time key works by Baltz and Fiskin: the complete set of Lewis Baltz's 1971 Tract House photographs and a large selection of Judy Fiskin's 1972–73 Stucco photographs. Baltz arrived in Claremont in 1969 to attend

Claremont Graduate University and, after Glicksman recognized his extraordinary abilities, Baltz taught at Pomona from 1970–1973. Glicksman also gave Baltz his first solo exhibition in June 1970. "It Happened at Pomona: Part 1" included a selection of the Prototypes photographs from his 1970 exhibition at Pomona. "Part 3" includes the entire Tract House series which he created while teaching at Pomona. These twenty-five photographs of Southern California tract houses represent Baltz's first attempt to create a series of stand-alone works that hold up when viewed both individually and collectively. While the Prototypes depict generic uninhabited structures, the Tract Houses capture empty, lifeless buildings whose lack of people and personality leave an eerie vacuum of narrative content. Divorced from their human use, Baltz's Tract Houses take on a formal beauty of their own; the houses become sumptuous structures of sharp line and soft, diffuse light and shadow.

Majoring in art history at Pomona College, Fiskin graduated in 1966 and was included in an alumni exhibition in 1972, where she first exhibited a selection of work from her renowned Stucco series. Distinctive in both subject matter and form, Fiskin's photographs showcase the less-noticed aspects of the vernacular and decorative built environment, focusing on domestic architecture. Printed in small scale in black and white with black borders and set within a field of white photographic paper, the works allude to Minimalist formalism and abstraction. In her catalogue interview, Fiskin discusses the series:

It [the scale] wasn't even a choice. It was more of a development that had really started when I took that class with Edmund Teske. The whole point then was to start with an 8 x 10 and try to make it into a good print that was bigger, to make it a 16 x 20. ... I looked at that, and thought, "This is gross. I'm going down to 4 x 5." And then finally, sometime in that first year that I was learning to do this, I just cranked my enlarger down as far as



Judy Fiskin *Untitled*, from the Stucco series, 1972–73. Gelatin silver prints. 5 × 7 in. (12.7 × 17.8 cm). Pomona College Collection. Museum purchase with funds provided by the Estate of Walter and Elise Mosher

I could go, and printed it at that size. I think that some of it also had to do with that I had a taste for abstraction. A kind of radical abstraction that I didn't find very convincing in larger prints. Whereas in smaller prints, it just suited them. It also made them look like drawings or etchings. And spoke to my wish to be able to draw. I was interested in things that you could do with a drawing that you usually didn't do in a photograph, which is to make a certain kind of abstraction—to make lines instead of volumes or instead of realistic representations.

The exhibition will also feature additional rarely-seen works by Pomona faculty and students, including:

- a never-before-exhibited bronze sculpture created by Chris Burden during his sophomore year at Pomona College
- two recently located Minimalist chrome and polished lacquer sculptures by David Gray
- process-oriented stain paintings from Peter Shelton's senior show at Pomona College
- a recreation of an early Light and Space work that merges painting and sculpture by Hap Tivey
- documentation of a spectacular flare performance by James Turrell
- two major paintings from Guy Williams's acclaimed "Hatch" series in which the canvas is covered with thousands of delicate "hatch" marks

The catalogue for the exhibition "It Happened at Pomona: Art at the Edge of Los Angeles 1969–1973" chronicles the activities of artists, scholars, students, and faculty associated with the College during this period. The first exploration of a creative hotbed of 1960s and 1970s Southern California art, it provides new insight into the relationship between post-minimalism, Light and Space art and various strands of Conceptual art, performance art and photography in Southern California, while contributing substantial new information about interconnections between artistic developments in Los Angeles and New York. Featuring scholarly essays by Thomas Crow, Rebecca McGrew, Glenn Phillips and Marie Shurkus, new interviews with Hal Glicksman and Helene Winer, archival reprints, and eighteen new interviews with artists of the era, the book contains 280 images, many never before seen. The catalogue is available for purchase for \$49.95 through D.A.P./ Distributed Art Publishers and Artbook.com.

Support for the "It Happened at Pomona: Art at the Edge of Los Angeles 1969–1973" exhibitions, publication, and programming generously provided by the Getty Foundation.

**About *It Happened at Pomona*:**

***Art at the Edge of Los Angeles 1969–1973***

From 1969 to 1973, a series of radical art projects took place at the far eastern edge of Los Angeles County at the Pomona College Museum of Art. Here, Hal Glicksman, a pioneering curator of Light and Space art, and Helene Winer, later the director of Artists Space and Metro Pictures in New York, curated landmark exhibitions by young local artists who bridged the gap between Conceptual art and post-minimalism, and presaged the development of postmodernism in the later 1970s.

Providing unprecedented and revelatory insight into the art history of postwar Los Angeles, the project *It Happened at Pomona: Art at the Edge of Los Angeles 1969–1973* consists of three distinct, but related, exhibitions curated by Rebecca McGrew and Glenn Phillips—“Part 1: Hal Glicksman at Pomona” on view August 30 to November 6, 2011; “Part 2: Helene Winer at Pomona” on view December 3, 2011 to February 19, 2012; and “Part 3: At Pomona” on view March 10 to May 13, 2012. The exhibition is accompanied by an illustrated timeline, a 386-page publication, and a series of public programs featuring artists from the exhibition.

**About The Pomona College  
Museum of Art**

The Pomona College Museum of Art collects, preserves, exhibits and interprets works of art; and houses a substantial permanent collection as well as serving as a gallery of temporary exhibitions. The Museum (330 N. College Ave., Claremont, CA) is open to the public free of charge Tuesday through Sunday, from noon to 5 p.m. and Thursday, from noon to 11 p.m. For information, call (909) 621-8283 or visit [www.pomona.edu/museum](http://www.pomona.edu/museum).

**About *Pacific Standard Time:  
Art in LA 1945–1980***

*Pacific Standard Time* is a collaboration of more than sixty cultural institutions across Southern California, which are coming together for six months beginning October 2011 to tell the story of the birth of the Los Angeles art scene and how it became a major new force in the art world.