

Robert Morris
Untitled (Ring with Light)
1046 Madison Avenue, New York 10075

Castelli Gallery, 1046 Madison Avenue, is pleased to present *Untitled (Ring with Light)*, 1965-66, by Robert Morris. The large, grey sculpture consists of two semi-circular halves joined by a narrow strip of light to form a ring. This rarely exhibited example of Minimal sculpture is one of two versions of the work. Both date from the same period, yet are constructed in different materials, one in painted plywood the other in fiberglass. The plywood version of the work, featured in this exhibition, was first exhibited at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in the 1994 retrospective, *Robert Morris: the Mind/Body Problem*.

The fiberglass example of *Untitled (Ring with Light)* is currently in the collection of the Dallas Museum of Art, and was first exhibited at the iconic Dwan Gallery in Los Angeles in 1966. The following year this version was included in the landmark exhibition of Minimal sculpture: *American Sculpture of the Sixties* at the Los Angeles County Museum. This exhibition, which also included works by Donald Judd, Dan Flavin, Anne Truitt, and John McCracken, marked a departure from the ideals of Abstract Expressionism that eschewed viewers' engagement with the work of art by evading interpretation. Instead, Morris and his contemporaries invited viewers to reflect on their relationship to the work of art by calling attention to their shared presence in the exhibition space.

While Minimalism as a movement subverted the distinction between art and reality by emphasizing the space joining work of art and viewer, *Untitled (Ring with Light)* goes one step further. The light produced by florescent bulbs inside the work bridges the gap between the two halves of the ring, making it appear as an unbroken unit. This simple gesture suggests that such gaps do not merely split, but connect, and that our perception of the work as a coherent whole relies on both tangible and intangible elements.

This alternative perspective that *Untitled (Ring with Light)* offers, relates to the variety of constructed forms that Morris, along with Robert Rauschenberg and Alex Hay, fabricated as set pieces for the Judson Dance Theater in the 1960s and 1970s. The direct interaction between body and object in these performances allowed Morris to explore in depth how our physical context influences our experience of reality by altering dynamics such as shape and scale.