

# PAULA COOPER GALLERY

## CARL ANDRE and MEG WEBSTER

521 W 21<sup>st</sup> Street

February 20 – March 27, 2021

Works by Carl Andre and Meg Webster will be on display in adjacent galleries at the Paula Cooper Gallery from February 20<sup>th</sup> through March 27<sup>th</sup>. Formed from elementary materials: wood, copper, and salt, these works share the provisional in their use of untransformed matter.

A single sculpture by Carl Andre entitled *Diarch* (1979) will fill the larger gallery. Formed of sixty units of western red cedar, positioned against two opposing walls and arranged alternately upright and on their side, the work plays with verticality and mass and transforms the gallery into a sculpture in place. First installed in the Dag Hammarskjold Plaza Sculpture Garden, New York, in 1979, along with *Fermi* (1979) the work was one of a number of significant large-scale timber pieces produced that year on sites around the world. The present exhibition is the first time *Diarch* has been shown since the inaugural installation.

Andre started his career in 1958-1959 carving timbers, using a chisel or saw to create abstract pieces with geometric patterns. These early works recalled both the verticality and symmetry of Brancusi's sculptures and the logic of the paintings of Frank Stella, whose studio Andre was sharing at the time. In 1960, Andre started his *Elements* series, using timbers of equal size in various configurations. This series marks the moment when Andre definitively abandoned the manipulation of materials. He progressively moved on to materials such as granite, limestone, steel, lead and copper.

A work by Meg Webster will occupy the smaller gallery. *Copper Containing Salt II* (2017) is a single sheet of chest-height copper curled into a cylinder and filled to the brim with coarse rock salt. In this elegantly simple arrangement the two materials are in perfect harmony, the one supporting and depending on the other to be filled and contained. *Copper Containing Salt II* is an exemplary sculpture from Webster's celebrated body of work founded on shaping natural materials into simple geometric forms. Accompanying the sculpture is a mineral monochrome formed of a thin layer of pink salt adhered to a paper support. Together, the two works present their elementary material alternatively as a volume of pure mass and a delicately textured surface.

Indoor sculptures made of salt, earth, sand, and other natural materials are one facet of Webster's practice, which also encompasses outdoor installations designed to enhance a community's appreciation for and understanding of the earth's ecosystem. Bridging the conceptual vision of Land Art and the rigorous formal vocabulary of Minimalism, Webster has been long guided by an environmentalist impulse to celebrate and preserve the natural world.

**Carl Andre** (b. 1935, Quincy, MA) had his first one-person show at the Tibor de Nagy Gallery, New York (1965) and the following year his work was included in the seminal exhibition "Primary Structures" at the Jewish Museum. Andre's work has been the subject of retrospectives at the Guggenheim Museum, New York (1970); the Laguna Gloria Art Museum, Austin, TX (1978); the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (1978); the Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (1987); the Haus Lange und Haus Esters, Krefeld and the Kunstmuseum, Wolfsburg (1996); the Musée Cantini, Marseilles (1997); and the Dia Art Foundation (2014).

**Meg Webster** (b. 1944, San Francisco, CA) received an MFA from Yale University in 1983 and had a one-person exhibition at Donald Judd's exhibition space on Spring Street, New York, the same year. Subsequent one-person exhibitions have been held at The Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh, PA (1984); the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA (1991); The Brooklyn Museum, New York (1992); P.S. 1 Contemporary Arts Center, New York (1998) and MoMA P.S. 1 (2013). One-person exhibitions at the Judd Foundation, New York, and the LMCC Art Center at Governor's Island, New York, will take place in 2021.