

Abstract work

Michael Snow – Clip 4

Between '59 and '61, all of my work was totally abstract. There was no representational aspect to it and I did a number of things ...that were attempts to make paintings that were basically single or maybe single surface or maybe two or three colours....and it was a very concentrated thing which came from Mondrian, but also from what was happening in New York painting from Barnett Newman and Ed Reinhart, and Mark Rothko. They were influences but once again they were behind these things but I don't think they look like their work at all and the National Gallery has one of the paintings from that time called Lac Clair which is basically a surface of silver blue with just ...pieces of paper at each corner making a shape that goes around the whole thing. In doing these things I went through something that several other artists have done and in a way - this is before what's called minimalism in American art history and I invented it before - I mean everything that I did in those years was about four years before what was called minimalism happened in New York. But anyway, when you make a painting that's a single surface and has no illusions of depth in it you make something that is essentially an object and I realized that these things were paintings but they were just somewhere between being a painting and being a sculpture and it

interested me to try to take the sculptural side further and I did something like four or five different pieces of painting- sculpture.