



You can build a structure under compression that implies collapse and impermanence and yet in its mere existence denies this. What I find interesting . . . is that as its forces tend toward equilibrium, weight is negated.

RICHARD SERRA

Richard Serra

Right Angle Corner Prop with Pole, 1969

Antimony lead

51 ³/₁₆ x 76 ³/₄ x 76 ³/₄ inches

Collection of the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth,

Museum purchase, Sid W. Richardson Foundation Endowment Fund

Acquired in 1999

© 2003 Richard Serra/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

In 1968 Richard Serra made a list of verbs, and then created sculpture based around the action the verbs suggested. From these activities arose a series of propped pieces, to which the Modern's *Right Angle Corner Prop with Pole* belongs. The piece is made of two lead squares and a lead pole made from a thin, rolled-up sheet of lead. The two squares lean in against each other, and the pole, placed at the upper edge where the corners meet, pins them against each other. Like many artists associated with Minimalism and post-Minimalism, Serra creates work that makes viewers aware of the way their bodies relate to space in the most direct way possible. *Right Angle Corner Prop with Pole* uses no attachments or welding to hold it together. The piece's own weight pushes in on itself – much like a larger, heavier house of cards – to give it structure. Though the piece is static, it is active in the sense that gravity, pressure, and balance are all working to keep it up. After some inspection, one cannot help but sense that the work is acting to stay still, and this affects how we relate to the tons of lead leaning near our bodies. We are no longer passive viewers observing something outside our experience and space. We are active, participating viewers. The sculpture, the gravity that pulls on it, and the space that it balances in are the same gravity, space, and balance that affect our bodies as we view it.