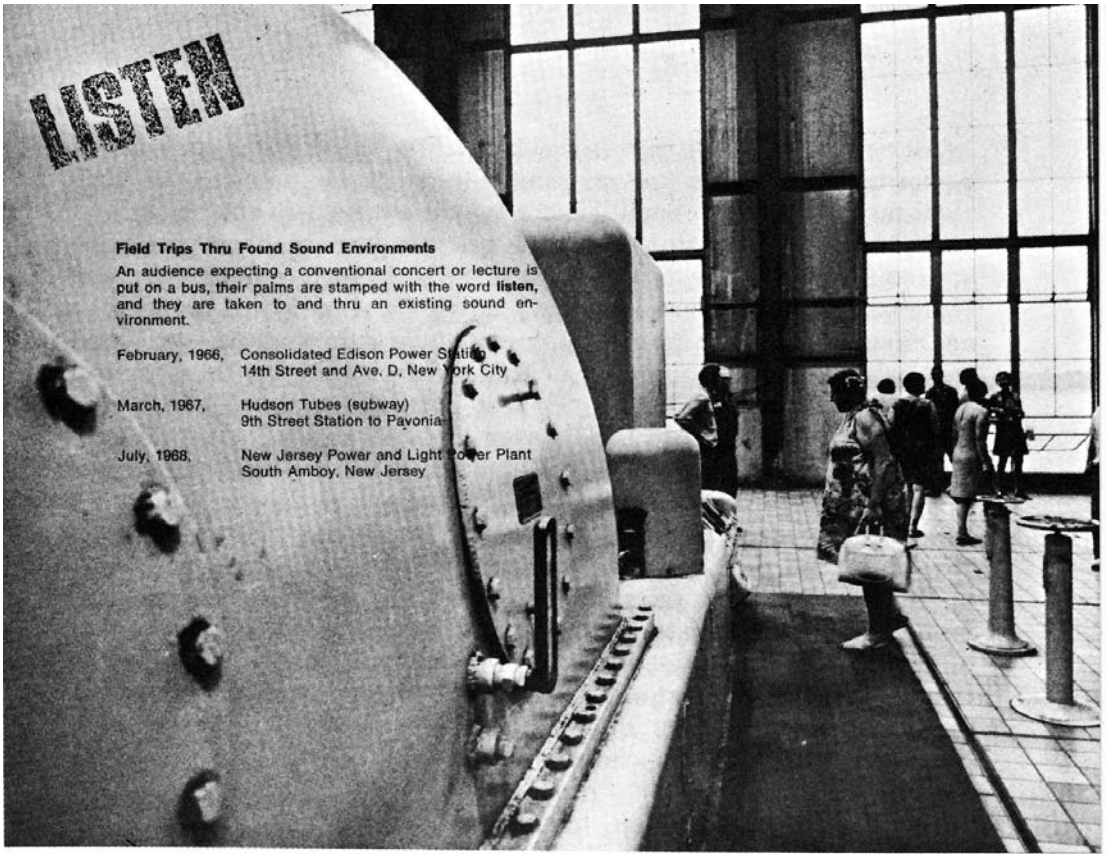


Also part of Glueck’s column that same day was a review of the exhibition Projects: Pier 18 at the Museum of Modern Art. Legendary but seldom seen since, the group of some 350 three hundred fifty photographs that comprised this show joined works by Lyon and Gedney, in becoming a key point of departure for Mixed Use, Manhattan. At MoMA Projects: Pier 18 took the form of a display of small black and white prints of mostly ephemeral works that had been commissioned by the impresario—curator, publisher, editor, artist, and critic—Willoughby Sharp over the winter of 1970. Sharp invited twenty-seven (male) artists—many local, several from the West Coast, and a few from abroad—to create works on a derelict pier just north of the site where the Twin Towers were then being completed. For Sharp, this rotting hulk was “a perfect place, totally disassociated from art-making and open to a large variety of work.” Yet the project was something of a guerrilla action, given that Sharp, predicting official refusal due to the wharf’s derelict condition, had not sought permission to work there. Assuming that it could not safely accommodate an audience, he conceived the project from its inception for a museum presentation. It consequently would depend heavily on Shunk-Kender, a professional photographic duo whom he invited to participate in the venture. As Shunk-Kender responded to the artists’ disparate proposals, their anticipated role changed significantly. On the most basic level, they documented works that took the form of performances. For example, ten images record Allen Ruppersberg’s project, which involved the West Coast conceptualist placing a brick he had brought from Houdini’s house in the Hollywood Hills into a suitcase, securing the suitcase with chains, and throwing it into the river. The performance had an appropriately magical denouement: unaccountably, the case did not sink but floated slowly away. George Trakas launched his kayak from the side of the rotting wharf in order to paddle across to Pier 17 and draw its façade. In the resulting documentation, six of the pictures taken by Shunk-Kender of the artist midstream are paired with identically sized prints of Trakas’s sketchbook pages.

The photographers also executed works according to instructions sent by participants who could not be present. Thus, for the Dutch artist Jan Dibbets they produced a series of twelve over- and under-exposed images, from white to black, taken from a single vantage point with a predetermined set of f-stops, together with a second series of a dozen shots, once again taken from a single vantage point, and once again spanning the light/dark spectrum, but this time recorded at sunset. By contrast, Mario Merz required Shunk and Kender to select and record twenty different images of their own choosing that would nonetheless fully document the location. Douglas Huebler challenged their aesthetic sense somewhat differently, requiring two images each of the “most beautifulmost pictorially aesthetic” near and far vistas; those vantage points were then marked with crosses and photographed. If Merz and Huebler provoked the photographers to go beyond simply recording and reveal their taste, other projects drew specifically on the properties of the medium to interrogate the protocols



# PUBLIC SUPPLY

WBAI VERSION

PUBLIC SUPPLY IS A PIECE IN WHICH THE AUDIENCE, BY TELEPHONE, SUPPLIES THE SOUND MATERIAL OF THE PIECE.

THE SOUNDS CAN BE ANYTHING - SOUNDS MADE WITH THE VOICE, HANDS OR AN OBJECT, SOUNDS PLAYED FROM A PHONOGRAPH, RADIO OR TAPE RECORDER, SOUNDS FROM TOY INSTRUMENTS OR CONVENTIONAL INSTRUMENTS.

ANYONE MAY PHONE IN A SOUND FROM ANYWHERE.

THIS PERFORMANCE WILL BE FROM 8:30 PM TO 10:00 PM ON OCTOBER 8. SOUNDS MAY BE PHONED IN BY CALLING AREA CODE 212 DX 7-8506 OR DX 7-4389 DURING THAT TIME.

YOUR RADIO, TUNED TO WBAI 89.5 FM AND WITH THE VOLUME UP FAIRLY LOUD, SHOULD BE WITHIN TWO FEET OF YOUR PHONE RECEIVER. DO NOT TURN RADIO DOWN WHILE CALLING.

DIAL ONE OF THE NUMBERS. WHEN YOU HEAR THE CALL STOP RINGING, MAKE THE SOUNDS YOU HAVE CHOSEN; NO ONE WILL SPEAK - YOUR CALL IS BEING FED DIRECTLY INTO THE SYSTEM. YOU MAY CONTINUE FOR AS LONG AS YOU WISH OR UNTIL THE DIAL TONE RETURNS.

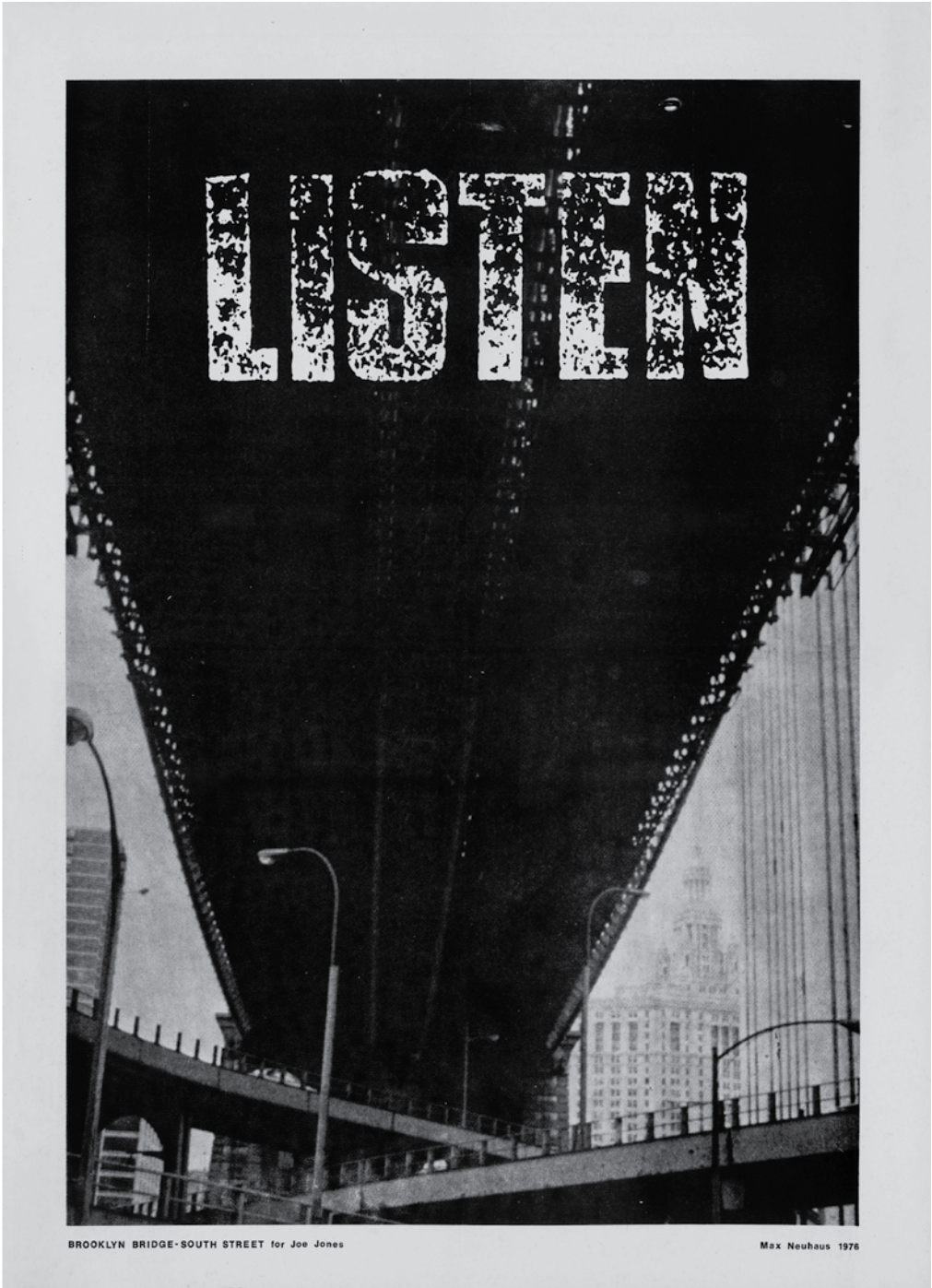
THESE SOUNDS WILL BE MONITORED, MIXED AND/OR ALTERED INTO COMPOSITE SOUNDS BY THE COMPOSER AND THEN BROADCAST.

IN THIS VERSION THE COMPOSITE SOUNDS WILL BE DELAYED FOR A FEW SECONDS BEFORE BEING BROADCAST. SOUNDS PHONED IN WILL SET UP A DELAYED FEEDBACK FLOW WHICH WILL FEED THE PIECE BACK INTO ITSELF.

MAX NEUHAUS AUGUST 1966

\*NON-ITALICIZED WORDS ARE NOTES FOR THE WBAI VERSION.

# MAX NEUHAUS SATURDAY OCT. 8TH



BROOKLYN BRIDGE-SOUTH STREET for Joe Jones

Max Neuhaus 1976



and precepts that underpinned the professionals’ practice. Thus, Richard Serra’s piece, which entailed the creation of a trapezoidal frame through which Serra produced images of the city skyline with a square format, relied, for its intelligibility, on a juxtaposition of Shunk-Kender’s documentary images with those made by the artist. In a related work, Dan Graham played with the notion of an embodied viewpoint—that is, with the corporeal basis of any typical vantage point—by balancing the apparatus on various parts of his frame so that his body literally served as a tripod. This resulted in a counterpointing of Graham’s wildly random vistas with the coolly focused sequence of shots recording the position of the camera at each moment he pressed the shutter. Yet other proposals played dialectically with the role and identity of this medium, as seen in John Baldessari’s gesture of framing a nearby ship with his fingers, led to a print in which the lens collapsed near and far space. In contrast to the straightforwardly performative works by, say, Ruppertsberg, Lee Jaffe, and Bill Beckley, the relationship between the photographers and the artist here verged on the collaborative. Put simply, a significant number of proposals required the making, as distinct from the taking, of photographs—a shift in emphasis that would be felt in much of the work made subsequently that forms part of this exhibition.

Taken together, the diversity of the twenty-seven projects meant not only that different types and levels of participation were required from the photographers, but that very different numbers of images were needed to accurately portray or realize each endeavor: nothing beyond the instruction card (which reads “DONE WITHOUT”) in the case of SoHo-based Lawrence Weiner (who was traveling at the time) compared with some twenty-four frames, in the case of Michael Snow, who, exceptionally, declined to disclose the system underpinning his complex proposition.

Failing to ready the photographic material in time for a spring deadline at Pomona College of Art (the venue he originally planned for its debut), Sharp offered the project to MoMA’s curator Kynaston McShine in April 1971. Although the museum had no budget for a catalogue or for artist’s fees, it nonetheless incorporated Sharp’s project into its program that summer. Organized by assistant curator Jennifer Licht, Projects: Pier 18 opened to an enthusiastic press and public on June 27, 1971. Glueck, who praised the project, not only singled out the “brilliant documentary photographs” of Shunk-Kender for special attention but claimed these were “works of art—art –objects— in their own right.” For her, a clear distinction existed between what she characterized as Sharp’s show (staged the previous winter on the pier) and the documentation—i“in which “the show lives on”—then on display at MoMA. By contrast, Alfred Frankenstein, writing for the San Francisco Chronicle, also enthused but in significantly different terms. Leading with the claim that “though “small in the space it occupie[d],” the show was “very big in its implications,” Frankenstein acknowledged its origins in the combined forces of Sharp allied with Shunk-Kender

before concluding that it was “the richest, most clearly defined and most meaningful show of conceptual art I have ever had the pleasure of viewingseeing.” He consequently focused on what he considered the most successful seventeen among the contributions. That is, he treated Pier 18 as a group exhibition of the work of a coterie of conceptualists; it was not documentation of a show that had occurred some months earlier, as Glueck had portrayed it; for him, there was nothing exceptional in the role played by either its curator or the photographers who shot the pieces. So began what has proven a problematic characterization of this complex project and of its curiously indeterminate authorship.

Clearly the role played by photography in Projects: Pier 18 was not simply one of documentation, even if that may have been the initial presumption on the part of both Sharp and Shunk-Kender. When conceiving their proposals the artists had reflexively ‘detoured’ the brief assignment to address, inter aliaamong other things,, <<I don’t get this phrase and to my ear it reads a bit awkwardly, as I don’t know this wording>> ways in which pictorial knowledge is produced, the relation of this marginal space to the city beyond, and the terms in which the place could be defined visually and materially. Given that the project was crucially shaped and honed by contributions that engaged critically with the language of the medium in which it was to be manifest, the properties and potential of the medium became a prime subtext; representation of the site and its place within the urban socio-cultural infrastructure became another. If Projects: Pier 18’s mode of enquiry is multiple, so is its authorship.

“Non-site” is the term Robert Smithson coined for the production (via various forms of documentation ranging from film and text through maps, drawings, diagrams, and photographs, to material samples—geological specimens) of an artifact that could be used for presentation in a gallery or museum to conjure a site that was elsewhere—both in space and time. In the interview published in *Avalanche* the year before Projects: Pier 18, Smithson responded to Sharp’s request that he elaborate on the term: “There’s a central focus point which is the non-site; the site is the unfocused fringe where your mind loses its boundaries and a sense of the oceanic pervades, as it were.... One might even say that the place has absconded or been lost.... [The non-site] is a map that will take you somewhere, but when you get there you won’t really know where you are. In some sense the non-site is the center of the system, and the site itself is the fringe or edge.” [This quotation is sufficiently long that it might need to be set as an extract] <<I think it’s OK as is, JS>> For Sharp, the location—the pier—was valuable primarily for its convenience—its openness and extensive space—and its lack of associations with art-making. For many of the artists, by contrast, it was something quite else: its identity and place within the urban milieu could not be ignored, nor could art associations or, better, aesthetic considerations, given that, for some of them, whatever they created necessarily required reference to the means and protocols of its making. When realized, the project became a compos-