

ARTFORUM

Ree Morton

ALEXANDER AND BONIN
47 Walker Street
October 15–December 22

Ree Morton flew her own flags—for proof, see a whole wall of them displayed here. Made of nylon and emblazoned with the names of her nearest and dearest, *Something in the Wind*, 1975, was strung up on a ship docked at the South Street Seaport that same year, gaily sending affections and affirmations in the breeze. Morton dealt in giddy ideals—if a rose could last, then a prince for a princess, always. *For Kate*, 1976, a bouquet of roses frozen mid-scatter and made of her sensational celastic—a plastic-impregnated fabric—is a dedication. Hers were works that were always made *for*. Rather than staging a dialogue, blurring a boundary, or any of those other tiresome parlor games, Morton's works, in all their unassuming loveliness, mark their own territory wherever they stand. But, indeed, their borders are porous—observe *Column Piece*, 1972, where there's a break in a ring of geranium-stained wooden blocks, topped with canvas, and a painting lying flat on an elevated platform. That wheeled wooden slab, coated in charcoal, watercolor, and acrylic, depicting some vague coordinates like a map to a place unnamed and unknowable, sits in the center. It commands so much space yet remains so quiet. The blocks' ranks don't close, as if daring the viewer to step in—an enormous gesture in comparison to Morton's Minimal contemporaries.



Ree Morton, *Column Piece*, 1972, acrylic, charcoal, watercolor, canvas, wood, casters, dimensions variable.

A succinct selection of archival materials is presented in two vitrines, testifying to the artist's sincere collaborative tendencies and forthright struggle to make her way as an artist with three children to raise. A typed narrative of her career pecked out for a grant application rests in the middle of a partially unfurled scroll of wallpaper with painted enamel celastic bows—or, as the artist liked to call them, "beaux"—placed just so, framing the request for funds. Next to it is a photo of herself, with a similar beaux pinned to her sweater—a token of commitment to her vision.

— Paige K. Bradley