

Art in Review

■ Wire and yarn, minimally ■

Fred Sandback

*Lawrence Markey Gallery
55 Vandam Street (between Varick
and Hudson Streets)
South Village
Through July 28*

Minimalism would seem a self-liquidating enterprise: once art gets down to nothing, what's left to do? Since the late 1960's, Fred Sandback has devoted his career to proving this isn't true.

Where Mel Bochner's measurement pieces and Sol LeWitt's wall drawings leave off, Mr. Sandback's sculptures begin. His installations of wire or tautly stretched yarn typically measure off a series of cubic spaces, or divide a gallery into angular volumes. But the sculptures themselves seem hardly there.

The works in his latest exhibition retreat even further, from the gallery space to the plane of the wall. "Broken Line" consists of a length of acrylic yarn pegged to the wall at roughly 15 degrees from the vertical. Divided into a series of yellow, red and blue segments, it's like a one-dimensional version of Mondrian's "Broadway Boogie-Woogie."

In another piece, two lengths of baby-blue yarn cordon off a vertical rectangle higher than a man's head. The white gallery wall is an integral part of the work. But Mr. Sandback's colored lengths of yarn (or, in one case, a shimmering copper wire), stretched in front of the wall, quietly insist on their own sculptural presence. Like Alberto Giacometti's matchbox-size figures of the 1940's, they provide a reminder that sculpture doesn't have to be large to be monumental.

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