

Reviews: New York**Larry Bell****PaceWildenstein
and Jacobson Howard**

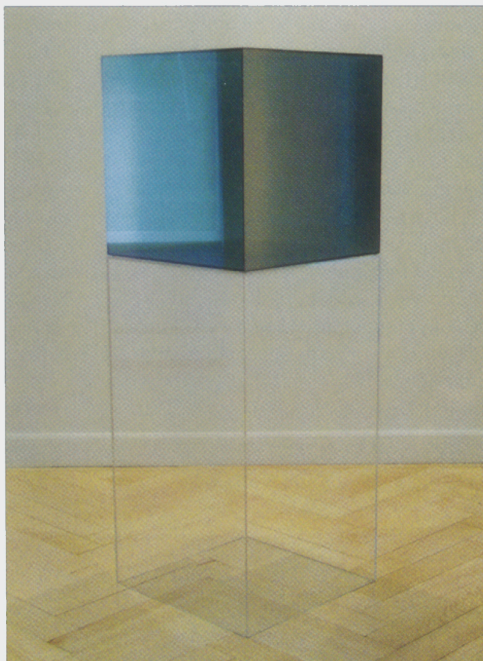
In the 1960s, Larry Bell was part of southern California's "light and space" movement, which was pioneered by Robert Irwin, Bell's art-school professor. To Bell, Irwin, and colleagues like James Turrell, sculpture was (and still is) a matter of producing ephemeral visual effects with materials such as glass, plastic, and sheer fabric scrims. But while Irwin made increasingly unbounded outdoor installations, Bell stuck to making works that could fit into a gallery.

Bell's open trapezoids, shelves, and boxes in glass vacuum-coated with a thin film of metal alloy were on view in "The Sixties" at PaceWildenstein, while work from the past ten years was the subject of "New Work" at Jacobson

Howard. A clear conceptual line links Bell's *60/40* (1969), a waist-high trapezoid that plays with transparency and reflection, and new works such as *NVD (New Vapor Drawing)*, 2003–5, in which silicon monoxide and aluminum are applied to paper to make oily abstract landscapes. Sunspots appear on horizons created by the layers of chemicals. These works on paper have the sheen of gasoline slicks and convey an alluring sense of danger. Two other recent bodies of work, figurative copper wire sculptures and pieces of treated glass framed in denim, are less successful. Both look dated, stuck in some kind of transcendent

present rooted in the Summer of Love.

Also at Jacobson Howard were tinted glass cubes that differ from their predecessors mainly in the absence of silver frames around their edges. Half of the front side of each has been coated in a re-



Larry Bell, *Cube #10-Blue*, 2005, blue glass coated with Inconel, 20" x 20". Jacobson Howard.

flective alloy, and strolling past them results in alternately bright and shadowy views of one's own head and torso. These minimal, elegant cubes efficiently encapsulate the original goals of the light and space artists. They also make it all about the viewer, which never gets old.

—Carly Berwick