

CHICAGO

**GAIL SKUDERA
DAN MILLS**

RAWSPACE

6 W. Hubbard St., 312/266-7607

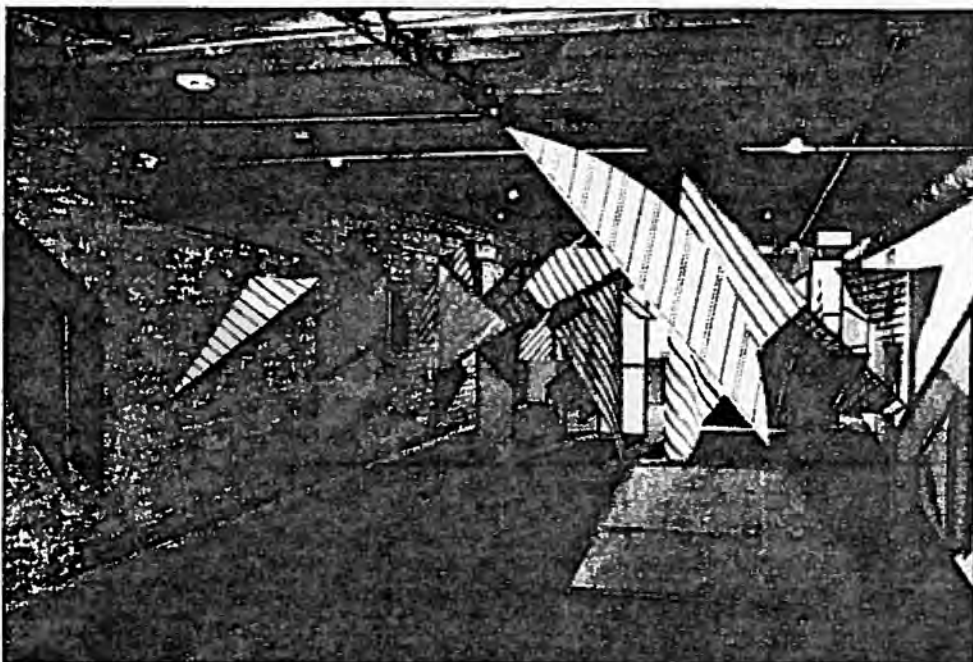
RAWSPACE inhibits an installation whose intention is architectural and atmospheric. Space and natural light are important "grounds" for the figurative elements of Barnstorming and both are limited in RAWSPACE. Like viewing a painting through its parts rather than as a whole, one is able to appreciate Barnstorming's potential strengths but not its overall impact.

Dan Mills was born in 1956 and received his M.F.A. from Northern Illinois University. His geometrically derived shapes are constructed with wood frames stretched with cheesecloth and covered with acrylic. Several pieces hang in groups from the ceiling. But for their semi-opaque nature, these are reminiscent of hanging stained glass. The intended architectural metaphor works best when the pieces stand against a ground—a wall or floor—creating shadow-reflections. In these instances the work affects the adjacent areas, extending the architectural space. But because of their close proximity to one another in these narrow quarters they suggest urban clusters rather than the intended rural architecture and atmospheric conditions.

Gail Skudera, born in 1952, received an M.F.A. from Northern Illinois University in textiles and fibers. She contributes the "atmospheric conditions" to this collaborative venture, which consists of 40 elements in all. The artist has attached roughly cut, angular shapes of striped woven fabric to wooden strips. Suspended from the ceiling, the heavy fabric appears weightless and when seen in certain relationships to Mills' forms, it has environmental connotations. Each artist also shows one drawing in his or her respective media. These give reason and wherefore to the collaboration by illustrating the artists' related sensibilities and similar intent.

RAWSPACE has a distinctive nature which has worked well in the past to enhance certain esthetic endeavors. But for this installation it lacks the necessary catalysts—natural light and expansive space—to effect the metaphorical association intended. Like a poetic phrase, Barnstorming must be read in the correct context to be understood.

PEGGY MACNAMARA



DAN MILLS, GAIL SKUDERA, "Barnstorming," acrylic, fabric, wood, 8'x16'x32', 1983. Photo by David R. Williams; courtesy of the artists.