

HARRIET LEVIN

HANG UP

*after the sculpture by Eva Hesse*

A thin bent rod comes of the frame.

There is no painting

in the frame,

just space penned in

scarce and hardly there

which is our awareness of it,

white-knuckled, narrow, concealed. There must be something else there—

some current visible in a more electric realm of filling lungs

with big gulps of air to withstand the rising shock.

An inside

out world of drenched skin

the full length of the whitewater,

the viewpoint both emptiness and “dependence upon the support.”

The crumbling schist at the confluence of rich salt springs,

where the artist,

abandoned,

knows deeply the demands of her work,

stretches her frames to over life-size,

winds cloth over wood and steel

to wrap them

in the configurement

of mind

where the materials accrete.

Not a bench,

just a couple

of slats of wood

nailed

into a rusted girder.

Not a drawing, just lines

without shape

beribboning a page.

Not a self, just gradations of light and dark  
derived from the combinations.

The quiver in your voice  
over the line  
                  as I lean in  
listening for something,

hearing it, not hearing it  
in my ear—beating of the drum  
oscillation of the hairs,  
                  ridged from having held it.