

MIT List Center

Jennifer Bartlett

In the late 1960s, artist Jennifer Bartlett got the idea to use steel squares as building blocks of her art from New York City tile subway signs. Interested in modular components and industrial materials, Bartlett wanted to create something that she could pack up and ship, or even add to overtime. To make this 1977 work, *Overhill Road, Shawnee Mission*, she used 64 1' square metal plates, which she painted and hung in grid formation 1 inch apart.

Overhill Road, Shawnee Mission points to Bartlett's own evolution from rigid abstraction to painterly figuration. Here the grid of small dots comprising the house gives way to broad solid surfaces, and finally at the upper right, to plates covered with exuberant brushstrokes. This work is one of a number Bartlett made at this time featuring the house motif. It has been compared to Monet's series of *Haystacks*, through which he explored variations of light and form.

Through rudimentary geometric form, the house can also, in a sense, be viewed as a stand-in for the figure, and so somewhat like a portrait. Its title refers to the address of one of Bartlett's former residences. To arrange to visit Bartlett's work in person, if not currently a resident of the warehouse, please call the List at 617-452-3586.