

HYPERALLERGIC

ART

The Heavy Light of Christopher Wilmarth's Drawings and Sculptures

For Wilmarth, light and life were inextricably linked — a connection that shone in his art of steel, glass, and paper.

Ken Tan | 18 hours ago



Installation view, *Christopher Wilmarth* (all images courtesy Betty Cunningham Gallery)

Light was always an impetus for Christopher Wilmarth's work. In a 1974 statement, he wrote, "*I associated the significant moments of my life with the character of light at that time.*" He was known for his adroit use of glass and steel to evoke human essences through the sensuous qualities of light. The concise selection of modestly sized works exhibited at Betty Cuningham Gallery (*Christopher Wilmarth, September 6 – October 29*) display the different states of Wilmarth's mind, from

the start of his short, intense career, to the most melancholic moments before his 1987 suicide.

When I visited the gallery, the room was imbued with a soft autumnal glow, heightening the intimacy of the experience. Altogether there are four sculptures and eleven works on paper exhibited, the most monumental of which is just under forty inches tall. Wilmarth's view of light grew increasingly dark towards the end, and that darkness is expressed to full effect in the late drawings on paper executed in the final

