

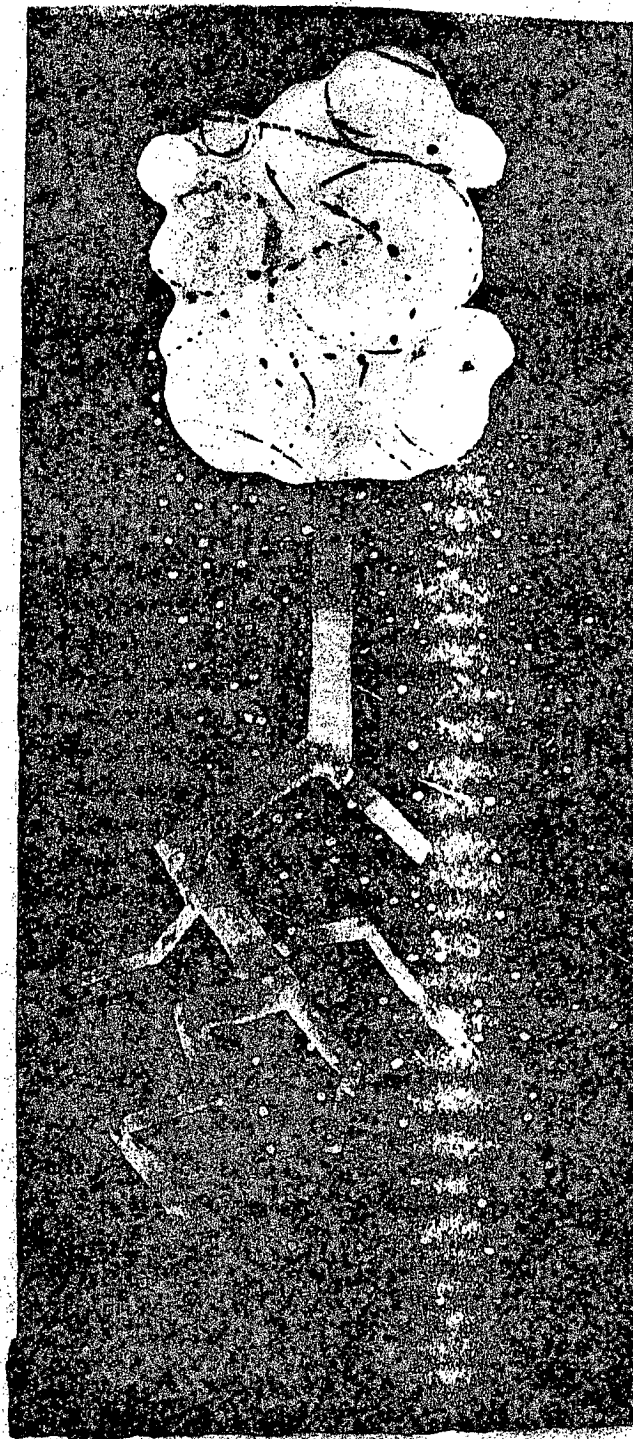
about remote forces and evoke more, the weather paintings evoke scientific description and are concrete about more. Their cross and dash and arrow signs and thunderheads and lightning all work oppositely. To deny any remoteness of the power, declare weather close, to celebrate weather. What the work of the scientist divides and subdues and distances the work of the artist makes whole and wild and close. This is the ecology of poetry.

JOHNSON: What is that stuff at the bottom of *Storm Over the Prairies*?

EWEN: Coco-matting is the stuff at the bottom of *Storm Over the Prairies*. It is very thick and has a nice rubbery back to it and I bought it off the roll but I've never seen it since for sale like this. That was very much my approach, and still is, to sometimes buy the materials before I know what I'm going to do with them. I wander around hardware stores. I saw that matting and said well I have to have some of that so I bought some and it hung around the studio until I of course realized that it was brown grass, prairie for this painting. That cloud up there is a piece of plywood and over the piece of plywood is glued a piece of battleship linoleum and into that I grooved the marks. This cloud is bolted onto the base plywood and the black dots you see, some are put there by my gouging and some of the dots are actually black bolts. The lightning is galvanized iron.

JOHNSON: When did metal begin?

EWEN: Metal first came in when I did this piece called *How Rocks Move in the Current of a Stream*. I needed something that looked and felt like water but I didn't want to paint it on. I wanted to have something laid on and I thought of galvanized iron. I made the rocks out of plywood and linoleum, again following a bit of amateur research. The larger rocks depending on their shape either skid or roll on the bed of the stream, the medium size rocks pelt through the stream and the small rocks are suspended in the flow of the stream. That was one of the first metal pieces I did, along with a thunder piece, a very crude piece, just a combination of metal and wood and heavy chain



*Storm Over the Prairies*, 1971  
acrylic and metal on plywood,  
92" x 40"

