Contents

On Robert Irwin:
Para Robert Irwin:

1 Photographs
Fotografías
DOUGLAS TUCK

20 See Like Irwin
Ver Como Irwin
ADRIAN KOHN

32 LAWRENCE WESCHLER and ROBERT IRWIN in conversation
Una conversación entre ROBERT IRWIN y LAWRENCE WESCHLER

49 The Hospital
El Hospital
JAKE SILVERSTEIN

52 An interview with Donald Judd (1975)
Una entrevista con Donald Judd (1975)
PHYLLIS TUCHMAN

58 Donald Judd’s Writings
a symposium for Spring 2008
Las Escripturas de Donald Judd
un simpósio para el resorte de 2008
RICHARD SHIFF

58 Franz Meyer, Museum Director
Franz Meyer, Director de Museo
DIETER SCHWARZ

64 Marfa Notes
Notas sobre Marfa
SUZAN-JORI PARKS

69 365 Days/365 Plays
365 días/365 piezas de teatro
STERRY BUTCHER

73 Artists in Residence: Year in Review
Artistas en Residencia: Resumen del año pasado
DAVID TOMPKINS

80 Chinati Editions: Christopher Wool
Ediciones Chinati: Christopher Wool

80 Staff News
Noticias del personal

81 www.chinati.org
www.chinati.org

82 Open House 2007
Open House 2007

85 Internships
Internados

87 Membership and Funding
Membresía y financiamiento

92 Visitor Information
Información para visitantes

Acknowledgements
Reconocimientos

Credits
Créditos

Colophon
Colofón

Board of Directors
Consejo Directivo

Staff
Personal

Cover, this page, pages 1–19:
Robert Irwin, untitled (four walls), 2006, Chinati Foundation.
Photographs by Douglas Tuck
Irwin’s work was created for Chinati’s U-shaped temporary exhibition space and was installed by the artist in the summer of 2006. The work opened during the museum’s Open House on October 6 and was on view through July 31, 2007. The installation consisted of two long, double-sided scrim walls, one in black and one in white, each running nearly the length of the building, each measuring 106’ X 8’ 10”. In the shorter connecting arm were two double-sided, abutting scrim walls, each measuring 37’ 2” X 8’ 10”.

Douglas Tuck has been practising architecture for almost twenty years. Based in London, he currently divides his time between working with John Pawson on various international projects and private commissions in Marfa and Milan.
Ver Como Irwin

ADRIAN KOHN

See Like Irwin

TAKING TIME, PAYING ATTENTION

Robert Irwin made a refreshing claim at a 1976 symposium organized by the Philadelphia College of Art. Robert Irwin hizo una declaración extraordinaria (fig. 1): “No creo que nadie sepa tanto como yo acerca de la que yo hago”, afirmó, “ni que nadie sea más consciente al respecto que yo”. Esta asesoramiento fue franco, atrevido e incontrovertible. Sin embargo, Irwin sintió la necesidad de explicar el hecho: cabe recordar que los artistas mismos son los expertos sobre su propia arte, una verdad que parecen ignorar algunos artistas, muchos escritores y los conocimientos del arte. A Irwin le resultó fácil expresarse con tanta confianza, sin rodeos, dado el rigor de sus hábitos de trabajo, los cuales—tanto dentro del estudio como en una galería pública, en medio del desierto o rodeado de un jardín—suponen muchas horas dedicadas a ver las cosas. En general, los artistas insisten en hacer este esfuerzo, pero con mucha frecuencia lo hacen para que se nos abran las sensaciones visuales inusitadas y un papel subordinado en el acto creativo. Las sensaciones visuales insidiosas provocan una variedad de reacciones por parte del público: a menudo indiferencia, a veces hostilidad, pero rara vez curiosidad azorada. Irwin se lamentó del hecho de que “no ponemos atención[,] no vemos y no nos abrimos a la idea de que el arte, en efecto, nos informa”, tal vez acerca de conceptos universales profundos, habría podido agregar el artista, pero también acerca de la experiencia cotidiana de nuestra entorno físico. Pero aquí hay gato encerrado. Para aprender, hace falta fijarse tanto del arte como del artista; el cinismo empedernido sólo impide la comunicación y la comprensión. Las obras de Irwin son buenos arquetipos de este acto original … suele ser considerada, desde puntos de vista sociales, como elitismo, [lo que] es sencillamente falso”, sostuvo el artista. “Las ideas y su análisis son siempre acerca de la creatividad, que se haya hecho, aunque no haya sido el artista el que lo haya hecho. El uso privado de ideas para obtener poder y ganancias personales.” Lejos de querer excluir, Irwin busca agudizar la percepción, un objetivo que todos pueden lograr y disfrutar. “Esto es completo libre. Todos pueden participar, y está totalmente disponible si uno se interesa”, remarcó Irwin. “Mi ferviente deseo”, agregó, “es que siempre cuente, así como el artista, con el público, y que se produzca un diálogo sincero.”

There is a catch, however. To learn, one must trust both art and artist; resolve skepticism only obstructs meaningful engagement. Irwin’s work makes for good practice in this regard since his straightforward premises can be tested with ease. Take a closer look somewhere familiar and judge whether or not you recognize anything new. “What I’m really trying to do,” Irwin summed up, “is to draw your attention to, my attention to, looking at and seeing all those things that have been going on all along, but which have been previously too incidental or too meaningless to really seriously enter into the dialogue of our whole visual structure, our picture of the world.”

Admitting ignorance may sting at first for savvy viewers, but doing so enables eventual discovery. Irwin knows something most of us do not, a skill he taught himself, has investigated for the last five decades, and remains willing to share—a different way to see. The inevitable obscurity of the art he made in pursuit of this capacity put him at risk of misplaced accusations of elitism. In the 1970s, innovation seemed undemocratic to some. Irwin responded defiantly. “The obscurity of this original act… is often thought of, from social views, as elitism[, which] is simply not true,” he contended. “Ideas and inquiry are always obscure to begin with and the accusation of elitism is totally incorrect [because] elitism is the private use of ideas for personal gain and power.” Far from an exclusionary project, Irwin seeks heightened perception, a goal everyone can attain...
and enjoy. “This thing is totally free. Anybody can participate, and it’s totally available if you’re interested,” Irwin affirmed. “My highest ambition,” he pledged, “is, in a sense, to make you see a little bit more tomorrow than you saw today.” Sensory richness exists all around, just overlooked. Developing the obscure, not elitist, ability to notice more of the world, however, we lack all attention. It requires only curiosity, time, and ability to notice more of the obscure, rich information which is not critical to our activities[,] and after a while, you know, you do that repeatedly, day after day after day, and the world begins to take on a kind of fairly uniform look to it,” Irwin warned. Perceptual efficiency has a downside: very little of what is in front of the eyes at any moment registers.

INCHES, MILLIMETERS, MILS

Viewing art, like approaching a door, may resemble an automated routine at times. Spend a few moments observing, compare and contrast with something seen before, then press on to the next piece. Irwin’s work requires more vigilance than that. His own exhaustive methods demonstrate another mode of vision, inefficient to be sure but also far more acute than usual. With his late oil-on-canvas line paintings under way in the studio between 1962 and 1964 [fig. 1, p. 20], Irwin started spending this time just sitting there looking: “I would look for about fifteen minutes and just nod off, just go to sleep. And I’d wake up in about fifteen minutes, and I’d concentrate and look, sort of just mesmerize myself, and I’d conk off again.… I’d look for about an hour, sleep for a half an hour, … I just literally went to the studio at eight o’clock in the morning, and I came out of there at twelve midnight, and I did it seven days a week.”

Maintaining an uninterrupted gaze for fifteen or thirty minutes demands considerable effort to a focused, persistent look to it,” Irwin warned. Perceptual efficiency has a downside: very little of what is in front of the eyes at any moment registers.
effort. Often the mind lurches after a few seconds, clutching at anything to ponder besides the artwork or, more subtly, mulling over what significance the act itself of staring so intently might have. Either reflex amounts to abandoning careful examination, as Irwin learned. He had trouble mustering the necessary focus at first. “I just did not have that kind of attention span, that kind of intensity,” he admitted. 11 Soon after, Irwin persevered through a withering regimen to elevate his sensitivity. “Time became the one ally: that I would spend time looking;” he remembered. “I just forced myself to stay there in the beginning [...] whether I did anything or didn’t do anything, whether I was able to work or not able to work, I simply would not let myself leave.” 12 Irwin came to realize a straightforward principle—the longer he looked, the more he saw. Uncommon perceptions ensued. When Irwin began experimenting with his line paintings, he picked up on distinctions previously invisible. “The senses are fantastically severe instruments if you really start letting them read,” he attested. 12 “I would sit there and look at these two lines. Then I’d move one of them up an eighth of an inch...and I could see that there was a difference.” 13 He went even further in a 1971 interview: “If I raised the width of a line by the thickness of a piece of paper it actually changed the whole physical structure of the painting.” 14 It is tempting to treat these statements as exaggeration for rhetorical effect. After all, an eighth-inch discrepancy may have serious consequences in many circumstances outside art, but a paper-thin deviation of four mils—four thousandths of an inch, the thickness of typical office letterhead—amounts to an unacceptable margin only in the most technical operations. Nevertheless, Irwin intended his words to be perfectly literal. Spotting an eighth-inch divergence sounds feasible with your eye could not really ever read such differences. For instance, as Irwin claimed, he remarked that his ultimate series of paintings, comentó que “las líneas (estaban) espa- ciosas de tal manera que el ojo no podía nunca leerlas simultáneamente”. 15 Si esta delicada suspensión de enfoque costó varias semanas de intentos y fracasos—viviendo a colar las horizontales un milímetro más hacia arriba y luego más hacia abajo, ensanchándolas unas cuantas milímetros de pulgada, haciéndolas luego más angostas. “Yo no sé si alguien más la miraría durante el tiempo suficiente para llegar a eso”, reconoció Irwin, “pero ciertamente el tiempo era una necesidad para poder juzgar”. 16 Ver un poquitito más suponía tener mucho más en cuenta, comparar entre sí dichos elementos de Crazy Otto manifest a wide scope in their degrees of difference. For instance, as exact chromatic complements, the colors of the mustard canvas and three powder blue stripes could not contrast more. And yet the blue of these three horizontals could hardly be closer to that of the darker topmost line, painted the same hue but an adjacent gradation of value. The spacing of the stripes generates curious phenomena as well. The heights of the lower three mustard regions vary while remaining too alike to see as stable ratios, such as one-to-two or two-to-three. Rather, the divisions by turns suggest and contradict a ratio of one-to-one-to-one. The area under the middle pale blue line is the largest of the three but also, because of its size

to arrive at that,” Irwin conceded, “but time was certainly necessary for judgment.” 16 Seeing a tad more took far longer, but he felt his findings warranted the effort.

In Crazy Otto of 1962 [Fig. 3], an earlier painting commonly named after a local pub, Irwin’s minuscule modifications bring about intriguing visual effects. Eighteen inches or so above the bottom edge of the greenish-brown, mustard-yellow canvas lies a pale powder blue stripe, about a quarter-inch tall. A second line of the same height and hue rests twenty-one inches higher and a third twenty inches above that. Up another three inches, a darker blue horizontal extends across. The glossy finish and tiny edgewise lip sharpen these hand-
and centrality, most susceptible to the tendency of flat painted surfaces to appear somewhat concave. Its shallow recession restores a rough parity to the height of the smaller and less affected sections above and below it. Still, this apparent correspondence holds true only from a head-on viewpoint—an oblique angle verifies the actual incongruity.

Compounding this spatial oscillation in Crazy Otto, Irwin accentuated the "interplay between [its] lines" and "sense of perspective" by shortening the stripes toward the top of the painting. The horizontal at the bottom is about fifty-four inches long. The line near the center, also fifty-four inches, stretches a quarter-inch farther on both ends than the one above it. That stripe, in turn, reaches beyond the upper darker blue horizontal by the same amount. The slight disparity between the top pair flickers into and out of recognition: you seem to get an intuition of their unequal lengths as opposed to seeing this outright.

The elision of flat painted surfaces to the edge, becoming less and less intense, Irwin recounted. "Then I took the exact opposite color and put a green dot in between every one of the red dots. An unusual support accompanies this arduous painting technique. Irwin spent a year perfecting the interior latticework needed to hold a cambered shell. I wanted the canvas to have a slightly convex surface to it—in other words, slightly curving, bowing toward you," he explained. "Built and strutted like an airplane wing," as Irwin put it, the structure swells on both sides, with a rear brace securing it "off from the wall just enough so that you couldn't compare it to the wall."

The frontals rounding measures about two inches at its highest point and remains indiscernible from more than a couple feet. "You didn't say, oh, a curved canvas, and attach it to an idea," Irwin emphasized. "You only picked up, very subliminally, this added energy."

The word "subliminal" is apt. Stimuli in Irwin's art often fall below the threshold of awareness but elicit a response all the same. Of course, identifying something as subliminal negates its present status as such. And therein lies confirmation of discovery—you see more now than you once could.

and the untitled late line paintings stray from what one already knows, resembling neither real three-dimensional space nor its common pictorial analogs such as figures on a ground. Subtleties measuring millimeters or even mils required that Irwin see in a new way.

PHENOMENA

Ten subsequent dot paintings from 1964 to 1966 overwhelm the capabilities of human eyesight [fig. 4]. In one such work, Irwin dabbed on a hundred thousand millimeter-wide lavender and kelly-green dots. The green marks cease at a radius of thirty inches; the lavender spots extend another six inches; and, encircling these, a band of underlying lead white primer continues to the edge. Irwin adhered to a complicated coloration scheme. As with Crazy Otto, he started out with precision complements, lavender and kelly-green in one painting, orange and blue for another, yellow and violet in a third. Dots in and around the center have high saturations of these hues, but lightening tints the farther out they are. "I put on the dots, say, starting with very strong red, as rich as possible, [and] moving out to the edge, becoming less and less intense," Irwin recounted. "I wanted the canvas to have a slightly convex surface to it—in other words, slightly pointed, par ejemplo, empezando con un rojo subido, el rojo más profundo posible, y alejándose del centro, el color se hace cada vez menos intenso," puntualizó Irwin. "Luego escogi el color opuesto, intercalando puntos verdes entre los rojos."

Para desarrollar esta ardua técnica Irwin pasó un año perfeccionando una armazón capaz de apoyar un cascarón cambiable. "Yo quería que la superficie del lienzo fuera ligeramente convexa—es decir, con una ligeramente curvada hacia fuera," explicó. "Construí un soporte visible de piezas como las ristreas de las alas de las aves," indicó Irwin, la estructura se expone por ambos lados, opuesta a un soporte que la mantiene "a cierta distancia de la pared, justo lo suficiente para que no pudiéramos comparar-se con la pared."

El redondeo frontal llega a aproximadamente dos pulgadas en su punto máximo y permanece indistinguible desde una distancia de más de dos pies. "Uno no veía un lienzo curvado para asociarlo con una idea," insistió Irwin. "Sólo se percibía esta energía agregada de manera subliminal."

La palabra "subliminal" es exacta. En el arte de Irwin, los estímulos se hallan a menudo por debajo del umbral de la conciencia, pero a pesar de ello suscitan una respuesta. Pero claro, al identificar algo como subliminal, se niega su calidad de tal y se confirma el descubrimiento—uno ve más ahora de lo que antes podía.

Los fenómenos descartantes en las dot paintings oscilan entre realidad e ilusión, entrando y saliendo del campo de la percepción consciente. Las innumerables motitas, demasiado diminutas y abundantes para que la mente las procese una por una, ocasionan fallos visuales en toda la obra. "Al centro los puntos verdes y los rojos esencialmente se cancelaban mutuamente," afirmó Irwin. "No se veía ni un color ni otro ... sino la energía generada por la interacción entre ambas." Un plano gris translúcido, cuya suave luz emite periódicamente destellos incesantes, parece flotar dentro del lienzo pero también más allá de él, en la galería también. Formas casi cuadrados centellean y circulan como fosfengas. Curiosamente, estos destellos cambian de escala en proporción inversa al tamaño de la pintura en el campo visual: desde una distancia de diez pies se ven más pequeños, y desde veinte metros, más grandes. Para Irwin, estas múltiples ilusiones crean "un espacio físico ocupado por una energía de tipo físico." Si una se tomara un poco de tiempo," declaró el artista, "esta energía ... aumentaría y sería cada vez más fuerte." Lo que Irwin describió como
Perplexing phenomena in the dot paintings waver between reality and illusion while fluctuating into and out of conscious perception. The teaming specks, too tiny and numerous to process one by one, trigger localized visual breakdowns throughout the painting. “In the center, they essentially cancelled each other out,” Irwin noted. “You didn’t see either green or red but rather … the energy generated by the interaction between the two.”30 Thin, translucent plane, grayish in hue, whose soft flow also emits periodic incandescent sparkles, seems to float within the canvas but then beyond it in the gallery as well. Squarish shapes shimmer and circulate like phosphenes. Oddly, these hotspots change scale in inverse proportion to the painting’s size in the visual field: when you stand ten feet away, they look smaller and, at twenty feet, larger. To Irwin, these feet away, they look smaller and, at twenty feet, larger. To Irwin, these manifolds illusions “create physical space which is occupied by a physical kind of energy,”27 “If you took a little time, he advised, “this energy … would actually grow and get stronger and stronger.”28 What Irwin described as energy is decidedly not metaphysical, which the word can sometimes suggest. The overloads eyes see actual phenomena in real space, despite what the mind thinks it knows to be so. Illusions intensify in Irwin’s next series of disc paintings, which coalesce with ambient light and shadow [fig. 5]. The circular supports, fabricated in two materials and three sizes, retain a shallow chamber. The earlier alumininum discs have a diameter of either four or five feet and the later acrylic plastic works measure fifty-four inches wide. Irwin again used an innovative painting technique. The front of the disc accumulated between fifty and a hundred coats of lacquer as he “sprayed on thin, transparent layers of color over a silver-white metallic ground … from just enough distance to cause it to become slightly grayed.”29 “This grain,” Irwin added, “faceted and diffused the light to create a matte finish, as opposed to a hard, shiny automotive surface.”30 The discs appear translucent though also opaque, reflective yet absorptive, discrete but then indistinguishable from the wall behind. Percepton has little experience handling sensations this contradictory in concept. Irwin had separate aims for the center and circumference of the discs. “At the edges I made a very slight color and value change, to lose the energy not of any manner meta-physical, as so would it be possible. The ojos, agobiados de trabajo, ven fenómenos verdesverdorados dentro de un espacio real, a pesar de lo que la mente piensa que sabe. Las ilusiones se intensifican en la próxima serie de pinturas en disco que hace Irwin, las cuales se fusionan con luz y sombra [fig. 5]. Los soporosos circulares, fabricados con dos materiales y en tres tamaños, están ligeramente combados. Los discos de aluminio hechos ante- riores tienen un diámetro de tres, cuatro pies, y las obras posteraiores en plástico acrílico miden 54 pulgadas de ancho. Aquí, de nuevo, Irwin utiliza una técnica innovadora. En el frente del disco se acumulan entre cincuenta y cien capas de laca, mientras Irwin aplica con atomeador “capas delgadas y transparentes de color sobre un fondo metálico blanco plateado ... desde una distancia apenas suficiente para que la superficie se vea ligeramente granulada”. 30 “Esta granulosidad,” explicó Irwin, “refractaba la luz en facetas, haciéndola difusa y creando una superficie mate, en lugar de un acabado duro y brillante, como el de los automóviles”. 30 Los discos lucen transparentes pero también opacos, reflejando pero también absorbirn los luz, y son objetos independientes pero indistinguibles de la pared detrás de ellos. La percepción tiene poco exprientialiando procesando sensaciones tan contradictorias en su concepción. Irwin tenía propósitos diferentes para el centro y la circunferencia de los discos. “En los bordes yo cambiaba un poquito el color y el tono para que el borde no se vieran contra la sombra (que estaba detrás)”, reveló. 30 Suspendido a una distancia de veinte pulgadas de la pared, una obra en aluminio de tamaño grande hecho en 1966-67 está pintada de blanco crema con tintes de rosa, violeta, azul, verde, amarillo y púrpura grisáceas en anillos sucesivos comenzando en el centro.33 Al principio, estas fluctuaciones cromáticas acentúan el abultamiento de dos pulgadas de la superficie. Si uno ve fijamente el disco de frente, le puede parecer una esfera, una bola blanca con una posición que se corresponde con su diámetro verdadero de cinco pies. Las ilusiones se producirían mientras la vista pierde su enfoque y la retina se cansa. Las sombras brillan y se proyectan en vez de retroceder. Alrededor del borde giran fenoméneos pulsaciones de luz. Y entonces, conociendo al plan del artista, la capacidad de los ojos de diferenciar el disco, las sombras y la pared empieza a fallar. Estos tres elementos se disuelven entre sí para reaparecer a ratos, mientras la agudeza visual disminuye y luego se recupera. En el centro del disco, Irwin percibía “una densidad del campo (visual) que ejercía en el ojo un efecto semejante al de un campo ganz” a Ganzfeld, un entorno óptico sin accidentes que el artista comparaba con “meter la cabeza en una pelota de ping pong ... con una iluminación pareja, de manera que carece uno de puntos de enfoque visual”. 33 Un interior de pelota de ping pong a la Ganzfeld; Irwin inten- tó una tercera analogía para comunicar fenómenos sin los referentes usuales. “El centro tiene una densidad que se ría comparable con la resistencia de,
tried a third analogy to convey phenomena without commonplace precedent. “The center has a density that was like reaching your hand into a windy day.”34 The leap from touch to sight notwithstanding, the disparity in material density between two fluids, water and air, resembles the disparity in visual density between the disc’s inner and outer illusions.

In place of the modulating hues, values, and saturations on the aluminum lacquer’s opacity (a fourth quality of applied color) on the discs made of clear acrylic plastic [fig. 6], “I sprayed out from the center, working from an opaque white through a translucent one so that they became completely transparent around the edge,” he commented.35 A gray band across the face of the discs, which tapers off and vanishes before the adjacent white does, seems far behind or ahead of where it is in fact.36 Irwin’s specialized but uncomplicated lighting set-up enhances such illusions. Four 150-watt floods, two above and two below, at the left and right about six feet in front, cast a complex of light and dark back onto the wall.37 Four arcs, each constituting three-quarters of a full circle, rest beyond the four quadrants of the disc. These lobes have shadowy perimeters but a dim inner glow. Darker arches also arise at the top, bottom, and both sides of the disc where the circular forms overlap. Slivers of these layered shadows intersect yet again in spots. As you keep peering ahead, these phenomena continue to alter. The disc, wall, light, and dark converge and separate; the gray band advances and recedes.

To witness these exceptional illusions, one must monitor more of the visual field and for longer than usual. With its narrowness and haste, everyday seeing cannot but overlook such subleties. Concerning fruitless attempts to view the dot paintings in particular, Irwin acknowledged that “for a lot of people—it’s like there’s nothing there.”38 He felt that his own level of awareness was improving with practice however, unveiling rare sensations that in turn redoubled his curiosity and scrutiny. “I became ... able to discern a little bit more than I did originally[,] therefore I had more interest, or more to look at,” he explained. “Second, I developed a better attention span[,] I was able to sustain my attention longer than I did in the beginning and began to develop or extend that time.”39 Expectations of expediency betray an opportunity to let the eyes linger on Irwin’s art, and perhaps discover more. The dot and disc paintings refine acuity across the board, eliciting unaccustomed examination of sights already familiar, first glances of phenomena heretofore subliminal, and newfound sensitivity—albeit unconscious—to stimuli altogether imperceptible before.

RECALIBRATING THE SENSES

Beginning in November 1968, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art’s blockbuster exhibition program titled “Art and Technology” gave Irwin a chance to investigate perception with artist James Turrell and Ed Wortz, head of life sciences research at a local aerospace firm.40 “We had ourselves, one at a time, put in an anechoic chamber[,] a totally sound-damped space,” Irwin reported. “They would put us in there, turn the lights off, and then close the space” [fig. 7].41 The team used the facility at UCLA, which minimized several kinds of sensation: “it was suspended so that even the rotation of the earth was not reflected in it, or did not matter in any instance. We were in a completely sealed environment.”42 The lights were turned off. Then “the lights came on again slowly, and the colors on the wall were let in, one by one.”43 Irwin and his team could then investigate the sensory effects of the colored light on their senses.

The team was composed of three disciplines: vision, hearing and touch. Each subject was placed in a 36-inch-by-36-inch-by-36-inch Faraday cage.44 “It was like being back in the womb,” Irwin explained. “In the womb there is no light, no sound and no touch.”45 Each subject was placed in an anechoic chamber, a space where sound could not be heard. Light and sound were controlled and the subjects were asked to report what they saw and heard. The room was then illuminated in red, green and blue, and the subjects were asked to report what they saw and heard. The results were then compared to the pre-experimental reports.

The team used the facility at UCLA, which minimized several kinds of sensation: “it was suspended so that even the rotation of the earth was not reflected in it, or did not matter in any instance. We were in a completely sealed environment.”42 The lights were turned off. Then “the lights came on again slowly, and the colors on the wall were let in, one by one.”43 Irwin and his team could then investigate the sensory effects of the colored light on their senses.

The team was composed of three disciplines: vision, hearing and touch. Each subject was placed in a 36-inch-by-36-inch-by-36-inch Faraday cage.44 “It was like being back in the womb,” Irwin explained. “In the womb there is no light, no sound and no touch.”45 Each subject was placed in an anechoic chamber, a space where sound could not be heard. Light and sound were controlled and the subjects were asked to report what they saw and heard. The room was then illuminated in red, green and blue, and the subjects were asked to report what they saw and heard. The results were then compared to the pre-experimental reports.
any sounds being bounced through the earth—a jackhammer five miles away or something. Nothing went into that space. And no light at all. ...You had no visual and no audio input.”42 As when studying his paintings for days on end, Irwin spent outlandish lengths of time in this stark space. “We made one basic rule,” he mentioned. “In the beginning, say, we would not move from the chair. We’d just simply sit in the center of the room. And we got so that we’d spend maybe six or eight hours in there alone, each of us.”43 After less than fifteen minutes, one of the team’s test subjects described vivid illusions including “blue-gray after-images on a darker-grey field,” “rod-shaped blue things and lights swelling in from [the] sides,” and “faces from weird angles.”44 Over the course of several hours in the chamber, Irwin said he experienced full-blown “retinal replay,” ongoing hallucinations that duplicate previous optical response.45 Confronted with a severe diminution of activity, the ravenous senses recalibrate to detect something, anything, from the dark silent stillness.

A profound perceptual boost occurs upon exiting such spare conditions. prueba afirmó haber visto vividas ilusiones que incluían “imágenes tardías azul grisáceas sobre un fondo gris más oscuro”, “objetos azules como varas, y luces que penetraban en el espacio desde los lados” y “rostros vistos desde ángulos extraños”.44 Tras pasar varias horas dentro de la cámara, Irwin experimentaba “repeticiones retiniales”, o sea, alucinaciones que replican respuestas ópticas anteriores.45 Los oídos sentidos, ante la disminución drástica de cualquier actividad perceptible, se recalibraban para detectar algo, cualquier cosa, entre el oscuro silencio.

Al salir de este espacio tan severo se siente un extraordinario acentuamiento de la percepción. Los ojos, ahora hipersensibles, permanecen recalibrados durante cierto tiempo. “Yo caminaba por la misma calle por donde había llegado al laboratorio, y los árboles seguían siendo árboles, la calle seguía siendo calle, las casas seguían siendo casas, pero el mundo no parecía el mismo”, recordó Irwin. “Estaba absolutamente cambiado.”46 En suma, en esta circunstancia Irwin veía más. Percepción tarda para recuperar su capacidad de selectividad tras largos periodos de poca excitación. Todo estímulo se procesa, y con lujo de detalle. “Hay una cierta manera de mirar y ver el mundo”, resumió así su objetivo: “Tratar únicamente con el entorno mismo, con la calidad de un espacio con respecto a su peso, su temperatura, su tactilidad, su densidad—todas aquellas dimensiones semiintangibles, por así decirlo, con las cuales no nos ocupamos usualmente, y con lo fina...
weight, its temperature, its tactility, its density—all those semi-intangible things, in a sense, that we don’t normally deal with. The point being, maybe making it a little clearer.” 48 A 2006–07 project in Marfa, Texas, serves as an example. At the Chinati Foundation, Irwin altered a rectangular barracks with long wings on the north and south, a shorter connecting hall along the west, and an open courtyard to the east. Inside the north wing, two parallel planes of black scrim halve the corridor lengthwise by stretching floor to ceiling and almost end to end between two wood beams [see plan, p. 19]. This partition regulates the incoming natural light. Whereas a single layer of scrim allows plenty of the desert sun to pass through, Irwin’s structure traps and dissipates much of it in the five-inch gap between the dual sheets. He also added a dark tint to the glazing which further reduces the amount of sun entering the空间 sophisticated spaces. “all those ephemeral details of the sensory flux that extend off the piso hasta el techo entre dos vigas de madera, están colocadas a la altura del corredor, dividéndola en dos. Esta especie de mampara regula la luz natural que penetra en el recinto. Una sola tela dejaría entrar bastante luz solar del desierto, pero la doble estructura de Irwin, con un espacio de cinco pulgadas entre las capas, atrope y disipa gran parte de esta luz. El artista agregó también un tinte oscuro al acabado de las paredes del corredor, reduciendo todavía más el nivel de luz en el interior. El perímetro, por ejemplo, conserva un suave brillo, excepto donde tres pasillos dentro de la barrera de tela se alinean con tres puertas de vidrio que dan al patio. Aquí, rombos de luz se desparpajan sobre la pared opuesta. Estos forman cambian de dimensión (largo, ancho e inclinación) y apariencia (color, resplandor y nitidez) a medida que el sol traza su arco por el cielo. Como complemento a la tela divisoria negra, una tela blanca atraviesa el ala sur del edificio, pero este refleja en mayor grado la luz solar directa e indirecta, conservando asímismo sus tonos. En un día despejado de primavera, esta tela cobra tintes de amarillo y rosa a media mañana, reviste tonos dorados por la tarde y, al llegar la noche, osten-

(pal, width, incline) and appearance (color, brilliance, sharpness) as the sun arcs across the sky. Complementing the black median, a white divider cuts through the building’s south wing. The white scrim reflects direct and ambient sunshine to a greater degree, retaining its hues as well. The material flushes yellow and pink in the late morning of a clear spring day, deepens to gold and rose in the afternoon, and blanches to pale blues and grays during early evening. A third, black-and-white double partition bisects the shorter west corridor. With no glazing, this area ranges from dim to dark.” 50 “A lot of people will just say, ‘Oh, it’s an empty room,’” Irwin noted of his spaces in general. “All those things going on in that room, all that physicality in that room, somehow does not exist.” 49 “Actually,” he pointed out, “the room is not empty. I mean, on any kind of perceptual scrutiny must trump efficiency. Recall the pálidas tonalidades de azul y gris. Un tercer tabique doble blanco y negro biseca el corredor del lado oeste, más corto y con poca iluminación. “Mucha gente dirá: ‘Ah, es sólo un cuarto vacío’”, observó Irwin al hablar de sus espacios en general. “Todo lo que sucede en aquel cuarto, toda la fisicalidad del cuarto, de alguna manera no existe.”49 “De hecho, el cuarto no está vacío. Diga, bajo todos los criterios visuales, ese cuarto es muy complejo. Están repletos de formas, bordes, esquinas, sombras, superficie, ni sabes, cambios de texturas.”48 Son estos detalles huídicos y afi meras del flujo sensorial las que le interesan más a Irwin. Para apreciarlos en Chinati, o en donde sea, el examen minucioso debe prevalecer sobre la eficiencia. Recordemos el esfuerzo que hizo el artista al hacer sus pinturas con líneas: “Se trataba incluso de quedarme en el estudio y no salir. ... Después de un rato, cuando no sales y estás allí, empiezas a ocuparte en ver o en comenzar a intentar pensarlo.”51 Quizá resulte necesario permanecer en el lugar y seguir viendo a fuerza de pura voluntad. Múltiples visitas y horas de contemplación revelan, a ratos desiguales, una extraordinaria complejidad. Una y otra vez se observan cosas nunca antes vistas.
Irwin’s exertion with his line paintings: “It was even a question of staying in the studio and simply not going out. …After a while, when you don’t leave and you’re there, you begin to occupy yourself either in looking or beginning to try and think about it.”

It may become necessary to will oneself to stay put and keep looking. Multiple visits and hours of examination reveal a staggering complexity in fits and starts. Again and again, you see what had escaped notice earlier.

En inglés no existe una palabra que describa las formas creadas por la luz del sol que se encuentran en el edificio Chinati. En cierto sentido se son las contrapartes de las sombras—áreas que permanecen iluminadas donde un objeto opaco interpuesto (como una pared) no desvía la luz. Por ejemplo, se proyectan barras cortas de luz brillante sobre el panel entelado, repitiendo los intervalos del vidriado de la pared opuesta (fig. 8). Hay rombos que aparecen sobre las hojas de concreto que forman el piso junto a las ventanas del lado este de ambos alas del edificio. Entre estas formas se aprecian innumerables líneas onduladas, generadas por la diferencia de la temperatura del aire y la de la tierra, una distorsión óptica. Todos los bordes se ven borrosos y rieltantes. Las formas mismas se oscurecen y se iluminan bajó polvaredas y nubes pasajeras. “Si la luz cambia durante el día o simplemente, como ahora, al pasar una nube, … todo lo que hay en el cuarto se ve cambiado,” comenta Irwin. Las barras se esfuman en medias mananas y no vuelven hasta el día siguiente. Cada rombo se hace más angosto, más alargado, y se pondea, inclinándose hacia el noreste durante la tarde. Al anochecer, las centelleantes siluetas color durazno de la puertas del lado oeste evolucionan desde un amarillo rosado a un naranjo pálido hasta perderse de vista en la pared interior del corredor oeste.

Many other phenomena start to register once the senses adjust to this level of incidence. Mundane interior features all of a sudden appear striking. In the south wing, facing the courtyard, opaque white wood strips blaze against the duller translucent scrim that they anchor to the ceiling and floor. Moiré patterns flow between the scrim sheets as you walk about. Spayed web-like cracks in the concrete slabs contrast with recurrent wiry hairline fissures on the walls. The other senses share in this increased acuity as well. Footsteps echo; the wind groans and whistles between the louvred vents on the exterior gables. The concrete floor is cool, the untinted windows warm. As a unique mode of perception develops, entire realms of unaccustomed information become accessible.

SEEING ANEW

The test of Irwin’s art may be how much more it enables you to apprehend, both in its vicinity and elsewhere. For instance, he described how a gallery of Chicago’s Museum of Contemporary Art had looked all along, prior to his 1975–76 installation: “You have a white wall, a white floor, and a white ceiling. (And) you repente sobresalientes. En el ala sur, tiras blancas de madera relucen contra el fondo translúcido más apagado del panel entelado sujeto al techo y el piso por éstas. Diseños moiré fluyen entre las telas mientras una camina por este espacio. Esparcidos por el piso de concreto, grietas como telarían contrastan con frecuentes y sutiles fisuras como alambres en las paredes. Las demás sentidos participan también de esta agudeza incrementado. Se aye el eco de pisadas; el viento gime y silba entre las vertientes del tejado. El piso de concreto está frío; las ventanas, sin polarizar, despiden calor. Al nacer una modalidad única de percepción, un universo de información insólita se hace accesible.

VER CON NUEVOS OJOS

La prueba del arte de Irwin estribar tal vez en la medida en que nos permite aprehender más, tanto dentro de su propio espacio artístico como fuera de él. Por ejemplo, el artista describió una galería del Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Chicago tal como se veía antes de que él exhibiera allí en 1975-76: “Hay una pared blanca, un piso blanco y un techo blanco. Y el rodiópic es negro, para que al trapear el piso no se enuncio la pared.” “En términos gráficos, ése es un elemento muy poderoso,” insistía Irwin. “En un entorno completamente blanco existe una línea negra que recorre todo el espacio alrededor de la sala. … Debe de dejar una profunda impresión, porque es con mucho el elemento visual más fuerte de esta situación.”

![Image](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

[fig. 9]
I love the look of that night. I get up in the middle of the night, when ever I’m not sleeping, and go there and take a look at that—like it like that much.”52 Part of Irwin’s project at the Whitney Museum the same year was to “indicate … the recently installed line of pink mercury vapor lights that inscribed the green/black rectangle of Central Park.”53 Becoming more aware of the world at large consti- tutes the reward for looking so close somewhere in particular. Irwin learned to see more by study- ing the stripes in Crazy Otto for days, gazing at different visual densities in front of the dot and disc paintings, and staring for hours into the silent darkness of an anechoic chamber. One can develop similar skills at the Chinati installation. Having accumu- lated this knowledge, though, Irwin warned against attempting to distill or translate it. In a 1978 symposium at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, he proposed a thought experiment: “Name all the events in a moment of perceptual experience. Do we have enough words to adequately reflect such a moment’s real complexity?”54 To get from here to the door, yes, we probably have a satisfactory vocabu- lary. However, if the moment in ques- tion was spent perceiving for its own sake, sensing as much as possible, then certainly not. “The real actual phenomenon,” Irwin held, “does not really exist in the painting [or] in the photograph [or] in the retelling.”58 Words do not suffice when trying to convey the strange findings made available by intensive observation. “A lot of people look at you like you’ve dropped your cookies,” Irwin found. “It’s not a verbal experience. …When you spend this long playing with non-verbal forms, it gets hard to talk. You don’t have a desire to talk about it. It doesn’t work, and it doesn’t feel right.”59 At some point, words must cease and one’s own senses take over.

Adrian Kohn is a 2006-07 Henry Luce Foun- dation/American Council of Learned Societies Fellow and the 2007-08 Patricia and Phillip Frost Pre-doctoral Fellow at the Smithsonian Institution. His dissertation describes and evaluates the development of abstract paintings, sculptures, and installations in and around Los Angeles during the 1960s and 1970s.

NOTES
3 Frederick S. Wight, “Robert Irwin” interview transcript, 1975-76, in “Los Angeles Art Community: Group Portrait” (Los Ange-

Irwin aprendió a ver más estudiando las bandas de Crazy Otto durante días enteros, contemplando las diferentes densidades visuales de las dot painting; y las pinturas de disco, y miran- do con fijeza durante varias horas la silenciosa oscuridad de una cámara anecólica. Una puede desarrollar ha- bititudes parecidas en la instalación en Chinati. Tras haber adquirido estos conocimientos, sin embargo, Irwin nos advierte sobre el peligro de intentar simbolizarlos o traducirlos. En un simpa- sio celebrado en 1978 en el Museo de Arte de Filadelfia, nuestro artista pro- puso un experimento del pensamiento: “Nombre usted todos los eventos en un momento de experiencia perceptual. ¿Contamos con las palabras suficientes para evocar la verdadera complejidad de un momento tal?”52 Para llegar de aquí a la puerta, si, nuestro vocabu- lario es probablemente adecuado. No obstante, si vivimos el momento en cuestión entregados a la percepción por la percepción, comprendiendo todo lo que sea posible, entonces ciertamen- te es insuficiente. “El fenómeno real y verdadero”, según Irwin, “no tiene en la pintura ni en la fotografía ni en la narración de un hecho.”58 Las palabras son insuficien- tes para comunicar las excepcionales descubrimientos que la observación minuciosa permite. “Mucha gente ve como si tuvieran un tornoillo suelto”, confiesa Irwin. “No se trata de una ex- periencia verbal. … Cuando uno pasa tanto tiempo jugando con formas no verbales, resulta difícil hablar. No se tiene el deseo de hablar. No funciona, y no se siente cómodo.”59 En un mo- mento determinado, debemos abando- nar las palabras y ceder el mando a nuestros sentidos.

Adrian Kohn es becario en 2004-07 de la Funda- ción Henry Luce y la American Council of Learned Societies Fellow, y recibió la beca ofrecida por Patricia y Phillip Frost para realizar estudios pre- doctorales en la Smithsonian Institution en 2007- 08. Su disertación describió y evaluó el desarrollo de las pinturas, esculturas e instalaciones ab- stractas en el área de Los Ángeles durante los años sesenta y setenta.


5 Blumenthal and Horstfield, at 36:24.


8 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 163.

9 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 43–44; and Lawrence Weschler, partially processed interview transcript, 1977, in “Robert Irwin Project Interviews” (Los Angeles: Oral History Program, University of California, Los Angeles), 44.

10 Weschler, interview transcript, 45.

11 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 40–41 (phrases reordered); and Weschler, interview transcript, 45.


15 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 27.

16 Wight, “An Interview,” 69.

17 Irwin sought a bit of roughness for the lines and ground, an appearance he considered more neutral than either machined perfection or expressive handling. “If I put [the lines] on, which I tried, like ruling them on in a way,” Irwin recalled, “they had an image to them of geometry; and if I put them on too crudely, they were like the older paintings, having all that kind of emotive thing.” The grounds of Irwin’s pieces from 1962 to 1964 have a similarly neutral coarseness. “The late line paintings would have a similar texture,” he added. See Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 21, 27.


19 Blumenthal and Horstfield, at 9:30; and Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 27–28. See also Horstfield, 4.

20 Irwin discussed how we surmise recession in three-dimensional depth from a two-dimensional painted canvas: “The Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine [Jacques Louis David, 1805–07] provides us with a classic illustration of the consequences of this concept of ‘figure and ground’ carried to its extreme—of how in pictorial art an abstract hierarchy of mark, frame, and meaning content translates structurally as deep pictorial space.” Some of the same standard “accouterments,” as Irwin called them, remained in Crazy Otto and the early line paintings. “These were still paintings in a traditional sense,” he acknowledged. “You had a sense of composition, a sense of perspective, and there was an interplay between these lines, the blue ones playing against the softer ones and coming forward and the other ones going back.” See, respectively, Robert Irwin, “The Hidden Structures of Art,” in Russell Ferguson, ed., Robert Irwin (Los Angeles: The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, 1993), 23; and Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 26 (phrases reordered).

21 Like the stripes in the line paintings, the arrangement of dots and the dots of paint themselves are nondescript: the rows and columns bend a bit and the marks are circu lar but not circles. Irwin identified the necessity of avoiding both painterly incident and mechanical perfection. “The dots had to be put on so they were not too uniform,” he found. “I couldn’t lay out a grid because the grid becomes identifiable in itself, on the other hand if they were too irregular, then [they] became patterns of focal spots.” See Horstfield, 5.

22 Each of these paintings required a hundred thousand hand-painted dots, neither too messy nor too mechanical, in a regular arrangement but not a grid. Small Wonder Irwin made only ten. “The dot paintings took forever. It took three years to do ten of them, and that’s on a fifteen hour a day schedule, seven days a week of just pure labor,” he recounted. “They were so hard to do, and they took so much time [. . .] they were the hardest things I ever had to do, physically . . . I mean, it was actually painful work to do.” See Horstfield, 5; Weschler, interview transcript, 111; and Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 51.


24 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 45.


32 Irwin discovered the most effective distance for the discs to rest out from the wall by empirical experimentation. “I tried every different kind of distance until I found the ones that seemed to make the most sense,” he explained. “There’s a point where if it sticks out too much you become really conscious of it being out from the wall. And there’s a point where if it’s not out far enough it tends not to really get under way, as it were.” Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 91–92 (phrases reordered).


34 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 70. See also Butterfield, “The State of the Real,” 49.


36 Lawrence Weschler, Seeing is Forget- ting the Name of the Thing One Sees: A Life of Contemporary Artist Robert Irwin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 105.

37 See Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 76; and Weschler, Seeing is Forgetting, 103–104. Irwin emphasized, however, that “in the best installations I’ve ever done, on a couple of occasions, I’ve done them without the four lights, just simply in the natural light of the room. … The reason for floor lights is that there had to be some uniform solution.” See Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 87.


39 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 44.

40 According to a brochure introducing the “Art and Technology” project to corporate executives: “International developments in art have provided the impetus for this project: much of the most compelling art since 1910 has depended upon the materials and processes of technology, and has increasingly assimilated scientific and industrial advances. Nevertheless, in only isolated circumstances have artists been able to carry out their ideas or even initiate projects due to the lack of an operative relationship with corporate facilities. Our objective now is to provide the necessary meeting ground for some eminent contemporary artists with sophisticated technological personnel and resources.” See the brochure text, as reprinted in Maurice Tuchman, “Introduction,” in Tuchman, A Report on the Art and Technology Program, 11.

41 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 159 (phrases reordered).

42 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 159. See also “Part 2: Sensory Deprivation” in the team’s January 1969 statement, their questionnaire for anachronic chamber test subjects, and “Project with Garrett” notes from January 15 through February 10, 1969, as reprinted in Livingston, 130–36, 139. See images of the UCLA facility in Livingston, 133, 135.

43 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 159.

44 See a test subject’s responses to the team’s questionnaire, as reprinted in Livingston, 136.

45 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 159.


49 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 110.

50 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 110–11. Irwin continued: “If you were to take all those changes, let’s say, and put them into a painting, you’d have something very complex.”

51 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 40.

52 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 212.

53 Blumenfeld and Horsfield, at 29; and Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 226. See also Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 215; and Horsfield, 12.

54 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 229.


58 Wight, “Robert Irwin,” 128.

59 Robert Irwin, September 1970 statement, as reprinted in Livingston, 139 (emphasis in original).
Una conversación entre Robert Irwin y Lawrence Weschler

ROB WEINER: Twenty-five years ago, Lawrence Weschler published Seeing is Forgetting the Name of the Thing One Sees, a biographical account of the life and work of Robert Irwin. This book has become a guide, a milestone along the lines of On the Road or The Catcher in the Rye for the impact it’s had on the thinking of so many young artists and readers. I won’t quote any one of the professional reviews this book received on publication. Instead, today I went to Amazon.com, and here are the first three customer comments I found:

Brad Rockwell writes: “This is simply the best book about art I have ever read. Like other reviewers, I can say that this book permanently altered the way I see the world (and art).”

Simone Federman said: “I picked up this book in 1984 because it was on a reading list for an art history class I was taking at Oberlin College. I stayed up all night in the library that night. I couldn’t put it down. My mind has never been the same.”

And “Bluthman” writes: “This was an amazing read. Not only did it open my eyes to the concept of abstract art, it opened my eyes to a different way of thinking.” (Eight out of nine people found that review helpful.)

We are delighted to have both the author and the subject of this terrific book here with us tonight. Bob Irwin has been working on a piece for Chinati’s permanent collection for the last few years. This past October he created a beautiful scrim work for Chinati’s temporary exhibition space that will remain on view through July.

ROB WEINER: Hace veinticinco años, Lawrence Weschler publicó Ver consiste en olvidarse del nombre de lo que uno ve, una biografía de Robert Irwin y un estudio de su obra. Este libro se ha convertido en una guía, un logro comparable con On the Road o The Catcher in the Rye para el impacto que ha ejercido en el pensamiento de tantos artistas y lectores jóvenes. No citaré ninguna de las reseñas profesionales publicadas sobre este tomo en el momento de su publicación. En cambio, hoy he consultado Amazon.com, y aquí van los primeros tres comentarios que encontré:

Brad Rockwell afirma: “Este es sin lugar a dudas el mejor libro que he leído sobre el arte, un libro que ha cambiado para siempre la manera como veo el mundo (y el arte).”


Y “Bluthman” escribe: “Esta es una obra asombrosa. No sólo me abrió los ojos a lo que el arte puede ser.” (Ocho de nueve personas consideraron útil ese comentario.)

Nos complace en dar la bienvenida esta noche tanto al autor como al protagonista de este maravilloso libro. Bob Irwin ha estado trabajando durante los últimos años en una pieza para la colección permanente de Chinati. En octubre pasado Irwin creó una bella obra en tela para nuestro espacio de exhibición temporal, la cual podrá apreciarse hasta finales de julio. Irwin hace obras de arte desde...
installation he created for the Dia Art Foundation; the architectural reconfiguration of an old Nabisco factory in Beacon, New York; and for Dia; and two installations at the Pace Gallery: one on Greene Street and the other, his most recent piece, installation he created for the Dia Foundation; the architectural reconfiguration of a very great bundles of flowers, to do a

setup or what have you. But as I was teaching—my first time really working at it—I realized there were five ladies in the group, all in their fifties. I was very curious about them, so I got them aside and we started talking. I realized something which blew me away: these five ladies were at a moment in their life where their previous life had essentially fallen apart. They were in their fifties, their children had moved away, their husbands were preoccupied with whatever they were doing, and suddenly they’re having to start all over again—which is an incredibly difficult thing to have to do, redefining and rediscovering yourself. I was just blown away. It was so far over my head that I was extremely concerned and moved away, their husbands were in their fifties, their children had essentially fallen apart. They realized something which blew me away: these five ladies were at a moment in their life where their previous life had essentially fallen apart. They were in their fifties, their children had moved away, their husbands were preoccupied with whatever they were doing, and suddenly they’re

hence 50 años, comenzando con sus pinturas a base de líneas y puntos a principios de los sesenta, pasando por discos flotantes y altas columnas transparentes, para llegar luego a sus instalaciones a gran escala, las cuales, gracias a su manipulación de la luz y el espacio y su uso único de la tela y el color filtrado, han transformado la arquitectura y nos han obligado a cuestionar nuestra percepción de lo que la obra de arte puede ser. Algunos de sus proyectos, los cuales acabamos de ver en pantalla, incluyen el Jardín Central para el Museo Getty, terminado en 1998; Homenaje al cuadrado 2, una instalación en dos partes que el artista creó para la Fundación de Arte Dia; la reconfiguración de una vieja fábrica de Nabisco en Beacon, Nueva York, también para Dia; y dos instalaciones en la Galería Pace: una en la calle Greene y la otra, su obra más reciente, inaugurada el año pasado en Chelsea. También hemos mostrado imágenes de una obra que Bob hizo para el Kölnischer Kunstverein, parte de una exhibición curada por Marianne Stockebrand en 1994.

Irwin presentará una larga serie de sus obras este octubre en el Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de San Diego, y a presente se dedica a un gran proyecto para el campus renovado del Museo Condado de Los Ángeles. Este mes Bob fue nombrado miembro de la Academia Americana de Artes y Letras.

Lawrence Weschler es un escritor, crítico, maestro, curador y, como dice Bob Irwin, “un gabinete de curiosidades humano”. Es autor de Vermeer en Bosnia; Baggs: Una comedia de valores; El gabinete de maravillas del Sr. Wilson; David Hockney, fotografía; y Todo lo que sube: Un libro de convergencias, ganador del Premio Nacional del Libro en 2006 en la categoría de crítica. Se publicará una edición actualizada de Ver consiste en olvidarse del nombre de lo que uno ve este otoño. Ren es Director del Instituto de Humanidades de New York University y Director Artístico del Festival de Humanidades de Chicago, que se celebrará en toda esta ciudad durante tres semanas, comenzando a finales de octubre. El tema de este evento es el ecologismo global y el título es “Un clima preocupante”.

Estas dos señoras han mantenido su diálogo a lo largo de más de 30 años, y estamos encantados de contar con su presencia aquí para que sigan, durante otra hora más, este diálogo en compañía de nosotros. Por favor, una calurosa bienvenida para Lawrence Weschler y Robert Irwin.

ROBERT IRWIN: I have a quick little story to tell. Talking about the book being in print for all those years, people do bring it up to me, and it’s obviously very uncomfortable to be put in that position. But it reminds me of my very first teaching job at Chaouinard. I had been going to school there, and they gave me a watercolor class to teach at night. I was very gung-ho and had about thirty students. I found out that a couple of them were from the mental hospital and were just there for therapy. One of them was a really sweet guy who lived in a field in a box, and he would bring me great bundles of flowers, to do a

having to start all over again—which is an incredibly difficult thing to have to do, redefining and rediscovering yourself. I was just blown away. It was so far over my head that I was very cautious with them the rest of the time. I spent as much time as I could with them, but stayed away from the complexities of their lives. It was beyond my scope—you know, I was twenty-two years old or something. About five years after that class, I walked into Barney’s Beanyvery one night, and I’m having a beer with Barney, standing at the bar, and I hear a voice in the back of the room

co que vivía en un descampado dentro de una caja. Me llevaba grandes ramos de flores que usábamos como objetos a pintar. Pero mientras yo enseñaba—y fue la primera vez que realmente me empeñaba y me metía muchas ganas—me di cuenta de que había cinco mujeres en el grupo, todas cincuentonas. Me despertaron la curiosidad, así que las aparté del grupo y comenzamos a plantar. Comprendí entonces algo que me dejó atónito: estas cinco señoras estaban viviendo los momentos presentes después de haber sufrido decepciones y revesos en su vida anterior. Tenían más de 50 años,
say: “Mr. Irwin! Mr. Irwin!” I look over and it’s one of those ladies. She calls me over to the table, so I go over and she’s sitting there with five Hall’s Angels. [Laughter] And she said: “Gentlemen, I want you to know everything I am today I owe to this man.” [Laughter] The perils of teaching. I’ve never forgotten that, and it’s a real warning to be very careful about what you say; I’ve never to this day figured out what I could have possibly said to that lady.

Lawrence Weschler: Reminds me of a story too. I don’t know why I’m thinking of this—talk about free association—but years ago I did a profile of Nicholas Slonimsky, the great musical lexicographer, a great ninety-year-old guy. When he was twenty-two, or whatever age he was when he first arrived in the United States, he was a musical prodigy and teaching music at the Eastman Center in Rochester, New York. A lady of certain years, a very rich lady, called him up and said: “I want you to help me write a symphony.” He said: “Okay.” So he went to her house, and she said: “Okay, this is what I want. It begins in the morning, and the sun is rising. And then there’s clouds. And then….” Slonimsky says: “Yeah?” And the lady says: “You come up with the rest. You do all the music.” [Laughter] And she had it all figured out that there would be frolicking in the fields and so forth. [Laughter]

Irwin: Maybe one thing that would be worth touching on is how Ren and I met, which in itself is a pretty interesting story. I had gone to New York—Don Judd had befriended me there—with the idea I was going to have a dialogue. I was very interested. I had never been to New York, I’d never seen an Abstract Expressionist painting, and yet I was a sort of pseudo, half-assed Abstract Expressionist myself, cutting my teeth on that kind of painting. So this was very exciting for me. Judd took me to see the Sculpture Mafia: Richard Serra, Bob Morris, Smithson—a heavy-weight crowd. I listened a lot. At the time, Don Judd was the one person who was very generous to me (along with some other West Coast artists), but the rest of the people in the room just started busting my ass. Here I was thinking I was going to have this dialogue. So I’m just listening to everything they’re saying—and they’re just giving me a yard of pucky, but doing it brilliantly. Instead of a conversation, I was dealing with a series of confrontations, in which they were incredibly articulate and extremely smart, and each position was taken with great strength and great clarity, and I went home thinking “God! I’m amateur night in Dixie here.” I thought about it for a while and I realized it was time for me to educate myself—because being an artist, it turned out, was maybe not the full scope of how I was going to have to deal in the world. I was going to have to articulate what I was doing, so I started teaching myself philosophy. It was a difficult undertaking for somebody who until that time had never read a book—to start with Hegel’s Phenomenology. So I’m sitting there struggling with this thing, and I’ve got Hegel and I’ve got my notes and I’m taking notes on every-
artists, but I wrote you a note asking if you had ever read Merleau-Ponty’s *The Primacy of Perception*. And the next morning, there he is at the door. Apparently that was the right question to ask him at that point. [Laughter] And then we had lunch together for like three years. Bob planted himself underneath this tree at the North Campus library at UCLA, and I was working over at this other place, and three to four times a week I would just go there. He would always be there. He was there two hours a day, just beavering away at Kant. [Laughter]

**Irwin**: He became my tutor, essentially. He’s a very good philosophy scholar, and he shouldn’t be shy about it. He’s very good, he understands the arguments very well, and he became my tutor.

**Weschler**: And conversely, I received all these great stories that eventually showed up in the book. He was just telling me all these amazing stories, and he was my tutor in much the way that he is when you read the book. And Bob was quite something to watch on Kant, for example. Or Wittgenstein: “He’s not going to get away with that!” [Laughter] “I can see what he’s doing!” I said: “Well, why don’t you read the next paragraph?” “No, no.” “Read the next paragraph.” “No, no, no.”

**Irwin**: So we were having this humorous dialogue, obviously, and after a period of time I started asking, “Well, what in the world are you doing in this job? You’re way too talented for it; it’s time for you to move on, time for you to go someplace else.” I asked him if he had his absolute druthers, what would he do? And he said: “Well, I’d write for *The New Yorker.*” Now that’s a magazine I had never really paid any attention to, so I asked him why he wrote for *The New Yorker,* and he said that it was the only magazine that, at that time, ran stories at all. So that was what I got out of him. And so it was the only magazine that, at that time, ran stories at all. “That’s a magazine I had never heard of.” I was very lucky—I must expand our dialogue, and we just did that. So he talked to him just for a moment one time in a storm. But Ren couldn’t take notes because they’re bopping up and down in this boat in a storm—and at the end of this session, Ren tried to ask him a couple of questions. Kienholz said: “I’ve already had the interview. Bye.” So at the last minute he had to write something on somebody, the deadline was there, so he asked me if we couldn’t maybe just expand our dialogue, and we did. We ran around my old neighborhood and showed him all my haunts and where I used to dance and that sort of thing. And then he wrote the book, essentially. The idea that it would ever be published wasn’t even a remote possibility. It wasn’t even written to be published.

**Weschler**: It’s funny, because I wrote that text, and started sending it to publishers in New York. I went through twelve publishers, and from all of them I got a uniform reaction: “Love the book, it’s just too bad it’s about an artist—” and at the end of the poem I used to dance and that sort of thing. And then he wrote the book, essentially. The idea that it would ever be published wasn’t even a remote possibility. It wasn’t even written to be published.

**Weschler**: It’s funny, because I wrote that text, and started sending it to publishers in New York. I went through twelve publishers, and from all of them I got a uniform reaction: “Love the book, it’s just too bad it’s about an artist—” and at the end of the poem I used to dance and that sort of thing. And then he wrote the book, essentially. The idea that it would ever be published wasn’t even a remote possibility. It wasn’t even written to be published.

**Weschler**: It’s funny, because I wrote that text, and started sending it to publishers in New York. I went through twelve publishers, and from all of them I got a uniform reaction: “Love the book, it’s just too bad it’s about an artist—” and at the end of the poem I used to dance and that sort of thing. And then he wrote the book, essentially. The idea that it would ever be published wasn’t even a remote possibility. It wasn’t even written to be published.

**Irwin**: It’s funny, because I wrote that text, and started sending it to publishers in New York. I went through twelve publishers, and from all of them I got a uniform reaction: “Love the book, it’s just too bad it’s about an artist—” and at the end of the poem I used to dance and that sort of thing. And then he wrote the book, essentially. The idea that it would ever be published wasn’t even a remote possibility. It wasn’t even written to be published.

**Weschler**: It’s funny, because I wrote that text, and started sending it to publishers in New York. I went through twelve publishers, and from all of them I got a uniform reaction: “Love the book, it’s just too bad it’s about an artist—” and at the end of the poem I used to dance and that sort of thing. And then he wrote the book, essentially. The idea that it would ever be published wasn’t even a remote possibility. It wasn’t even written to be published.

**Weschler**: It’s funny, because I wrote that text, and started sending it to publishers in New York. I went through twelve publishers, and from all of them I got a uniform reaction: “Love the book, it’s just too bad it’s about an artist—” and at the end of the poem I used to dance and that sort of thing. And then he wrote the book, essentially. The idea that it would ever be published wasn’t even a remote possibility. It wasn’t even written to be published.

**Weschler**: It’s funny, because I wrote that text, and started sending it to publishers in New York. I went through twelve publishers, and from all of them I got a uniform reaction: “Love the book, it’s just too bad it’s about an artist—” and at the end of the poem I used to dance and that sort of thing. And then he wrote the book, essentially. The idea that it would ever be published wasn’t even a remote possibility. It wasn’t even written to be published.
amazingly, they took the piece.

IRWIN: Over the next ten years he became one of the most published writers in The New Yorker. Which I think is great. That is a real... [Applause] Thank you. It was a really curious beginning, but the other thing that’s curious about it is, we couldn’t be further apart in terms of how we view the world. It’s a great dialogue, because he’s always sending me things where I have absolutely no understanding of what he’s talking about.

WESTCHEL: I think the term is no interest in what... [Laughter]

IRWIN: Well, sometimes no interest—and vice versa in a way. But at the same time, he’s deeply entertaining with all these inquiries of his. He talks about the idea that museums really started as cabinets of wonders, and if you see slides you’ll find these strange kinds of things: people with horns growing out of their head and bugs that disappear and all kinds of spectacular things.... There’s this sense of curiosity and wonder. And he’s become a walking cabinet of curiosities, in a way.

WESTCHEL: He’s one of my bugs. [Laughter]

IRWIN: I’m one of his bugs, it’s true.

WESTCHEL: You really are one of my bugs—in the sense of the ant who inhaled the spore. There’s a famous story in Mr. Wilson’s Cabinet of Wonder. It’s a true story. Well, actually, you don’t know if it’s true, but it turns out to be true.

IRWIN: I’ve heard the story. Tell them.

WESTCHEL: I don’t know what to make of it, but there is an ant—the Cameroonian stink ant—which is the only ant whose scream is audible to human ears. (This is all taking place at the Museum of Jurassic Technology, by the way. There’s a vitrine with a little vine in it, and you’re trying to figure out what it is, and you’re listening to the acoustic guide. And the acoustic guide is the voice of institutional authority, so it must be true.) These are very industrious ants. They do all kinds of stuff on the rainforest floor, and they’re very, very ordered and have a very good society, but every once in a while one of these ants will inhale a spore of a fungus of the genus Tomentella, which is raining down from up above. And if you happen to be at ant eye-level when this happens and you look at the ant, it will look completely stupefied. [Laughter] As well it might, because the spore has entered its brain and proceeds to foment bizarre behavioral changes, and

enseló a Shawn, así que ocho meses después, al regresar una noche a mi casa, prendí la máquina contestadora y una voz eclecta me dijo: “Buenas tardes, Sr. Weschler. Habla William Shaw de la revista The New Yorker.” Y yo estoy pensando “Claro, y yo soy Bernardo Bertolucci.” (Risa) “Aquí en la redacción nos preguntábamos... ¿Me ayes?” (Risa) “Gra. Peter, está funcionando esta porquería?” ¡Por Dios! ¡Qué horrible! No, no, no. Hágame el favor de devolver la llamada.” (Risas) E increíblemente, aceptaron publicarlo.

WESTCHEL: Durante los próximos 10 años Ren fue uno de las colaboradores más aziados de The New Yorker. Qué cosa tan maravillosa. Es un verdadero... [aplausos] Gracias. Fue un principio raro, pero la otra cosa rara es que entre nosotros dos hay una diferencia radical en cuanto al modo de ver el mundo. Es un gran diálogo porque él me manda siempre cosas que no comprendo para nada ni sé de lo que me está hablando.

WESTCHEL: Creo que el término preciso sería que no te interesa lo que... [Risa]

IRWIN: Bueno, a veces no me interesa—y viceversa en cierto modo. Pero al mismo tiempo las cosas y preguntas de él son muy sugestivas. Hable de que los museos empezaron como gabinetes de curiosidades, y si ven ustedes los dispositivos encontrarán cosas raras: personas con cuernos que le crecen en la cabeza, e insectos que desaparecen, y toda clase de cosas espectaculares... Hay un sentido de la curiosidad y la maravilla. Y él se ha convertido de cierto modo en un gabinete de curiosidades andante.

WESTCHEL: El es uno de mis insectos. [Risa]

IRWIN: Soy uno de sus insectos, es cierto.


IRWIN: Me aísa esa historia. Cuéntala tú.

WESTCHEL: Pues el caso es que hay una hormiga—the hormiga fétida de Camerún—which is the única hormiga cuyo grito podemos oir los humanos. Todo esto sucede en el Museo de Tecnología Jurásica, dicho sea de paso. Hay una vitrina con una pequeña liana adentro, y una traba de adivinar de qué se trata y escucha la grabación del guía, que es la voz for the first time the ant will leave the rainforest floor and start climbing the hanging vines. And it will climb and climb and climb. When it gets to a certain height, it impales its mandibles on the vine and waits to die, because the fungus is going all through its head and all through its body—and eventually, two weeks later, it sprouts a horn, heavy-laden with spores, which now rain down on the rainforest for other unsuspecting ants to inhale.

This is your story—that’s you. You were being a nice, industrious little artist, not doing anything special, and then suddenly you inhaled a spore. [Laughter]

IRWIN: That’s not quite how I see my activities. [Laughter] It’s pretty humorous. [Laughter] Where do we go from here? That story’s a stopper right there. [Laughter]

WESTCHEL: A room-clearer.

WESTCHEL: Why don’t you tell us the story about what you’re doing here in Marfa?

IRWIN: All right, but just briefly—I’m speaking to the choir here. Marfa for me is a very attractive place in the world. One of the things about doing so-called art in public places is that it is just riddled with contradictions. It’s a very painful thing, and I won’t go into the long history of it, but the history of modern art has brought us to a point where we have already made our break from the past. A new philosophic ground was established in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—for example, Malevich and his “desert of pure feeling” established a new philosophic ground.

WESTCHEL: Somebody said to Malevich: “You’ve done this white painting, you’ve taken away everything.”

IRWIN: Yeah. Not only his enemies but his friends said: “My God, everything we know and believe and understand are enriched by is gone. You’ve left us with a pure desert.” He said: “Ah, yes, but it’s a desert of pure feeling.” And what he did for the first time was posit feelings to be the equal of intellect. And he essentially posited beauty to be the equal of truth. And on the basis of that, Mondrian, among others, lays out the conceptual ground. He takes a flower or tree—beautifully drawn; he was a great draftsman—and takes it apart piece by piece, so that you begin to see the physicality of the tree, how it occupies de la autoridad institucional, así que tiene que ser cierta lo que dice.) Son hortícolas muy industriosas. Se afanan en sus asuntos en el suelo de la selva tropical, y están sumamente bien organizadas en su sociedad, pero de vez en cuando una de ellas inhala una espora de un hongo del género Tamentella que la coe desde arriba. Y si uno se agacha y le mira a los ojitos a la hortiga, comprueba que se ve completamente estupefacta. [Risa] Y con razón, porque la espora le afecta al cerebro, produciendo extraños cambios de conducta. Por primera vez la hortiga abandona el suelo de la selva y comienza a subir por una liana. Sobe y sube, y cuando llega a cierta altura muere la liana con sus mandíbulas, sujetándose a ella para esperar la muerte. El hongo se ha apoderado ahora de todo su cuerpo—y dos semanas después, le crece un cuerno cubierto de esporas, de las cuales se caen y son aspiradas por otras hormigas. Y esto se parece a tu historia desde tiempo atrás—tú eras un artista industrioso que no se ocupaba en nada especial, y luego inhala uno espora. [Risa]

IRWIN: No es precisamente así como concibo mis actividades. [Risa] Es bastante divertido. [Risa] ¿De aquí, adónde vamos? Después de ese cuento no hay más que decir. [Risa]

IRWIN: ¿Por qué no cuentas la historia de lo que estás haciendo aquí en Marfa?

IRWIN: Muy bien, pero en resumidas cuentas, porque muchos aquí ya lo conocen. Para mí, Marfa es un lugar muy atractivo en el mundo. Hacer lo que se llama arte en lugares públicos es una tarea llena de contradicciones. Es muy penoso, y no entraré en detalles, pero dentro de la historia del arte moderno hemos llegado ya a un punto en que ya rompíamos con el pasado. A finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX se creó un nuevo terreno filosófico—por ejemplo, Malevich y su “desierto de sentimiento puro” estableció un nuevo terreno filosófico.

WESTCHEL: Alguien le dijo a Malevich: “Has hecho esta pintura blanca; has quitado todo.”

IRWIN: Si. Tanto sus enemigos como sus amigos le dijeron: “Por Dios, todo lo que sabemos y creemos y comprenderemos se ha ido. Nos has dejado con un puro desierto.” Y Malevich respondió: “Sí, pero es un desierto de sentimiento puro.” Y así logró postular por primera vez que el sentimiento está a la par con el intelecto y que la belleza está a la par con la verdad. A partir de ahí Mondrian, entre otros, aporta los cimientos conceptuales: toma una
space, the fact that it has a concreteness. He takes it, finally, all the way to the plus-minus paintings, where we’re dealing with pure energy. This was done in 1912 or so, and he pretty much predicts that art will no longer stay within the frame of what was long ago. So the conceptual ground was there. And then the Abstract Expressionists provide a whole new visual vocabulary, from A to Z. You’ve got Ad Reinhardt at one end and Jackson Pollock at the other, and the only umbrella that encompasses them both is this idea of an exploration of a new visual language. They laid out the syntax for it, and having arrived at that point, art had pretty much done its homework. Tools were beginning to be put into play—this other way of seeing the world.

And so to my mind, the issue for so-called art in public places is, how do we practice from that point of view? How can we make decisions that are aesthetically grounded rather than based on the difference between quantitative and qualitative? Right now, for example, if they bring an artist into a project, they bring him in way after all the really critical decisions have been made. Most often they bring you in as a kind of a shaman, a magician of some kind, to try and take a disastrous project—built for maybe $200 million—and they want to give you $200,000 to magically change it into something that isn’t so bad or so unpleasant. More critically, when five people sit down to plan a big part of a city or something (and these are really good and well-meaning people), one is involved with the politics of the situation, one is responsible for the logistics of it, one is responsible for the economics of it, and so on. The key thing is that every one of these people quantifies their information. So essentially it’s all of a kind, and the idea of so-called aesthetics or quality is essentially all of a kind, and the idea of so-called aesthetics or quality becomes the last addition, as a kind of aesthetic afterthought.

IRWIN: Now I’m lost. [Laughter] I mean, I’m jumping very fast, but the point I wanted to make is—where you are in the history of modern art is now approximately 200 years old, and it’ll probably be another 200 years before we have any idea whether or not it works, what kind of fruition it represents, whether or not it enhances our life, whether or not it’s a good idea. No one really knows at this point. I’m involved in it because it makes sense to me historically and it seems like something worth pursuing. It’s a little bit like Einstein’s physics at the time he proposed his idea of the nature of matter—there was really no proof for it. The people that became involved with Einstein’s physics did so because it was a beautiful idea, and for the next twenty to thirty years, a lot of very elaborate experimentation was done to begin to prove some of the principles and possibilities. It’s still way up in the air.

The point being: as a so-called artist in-public-places person, when I’m brought into a project they’re not bringing me in because of my interest in this dialogue. They’re bringing me in because they have needs, desires, and what have you. So I start out with a contradiction. My reason for being there is to pursue this and try to make some sense out of this history that I’m now the beneficiary of. And so my relationship is, in a sense, very different, because I’m coming from another direction. The planners are a bunch of people looking for an artist. You’re doing your stuff on the basis of quality, as you’ve just described; they’re doing their stuff on the basis of quantity. And now you two meet.

WESCHLER: Dijéme interrumpírte para decir que la razón porque te toca restringirte con esos planificadores es que no entiendes lo que es el arte. Pensando en el cubismo, por ejemplo. Benvenuta toda esta historia y llega por fin a la unión de la figura con el fondo, no te puedes quedar en la galería, donde la pintura es la figura y el fondo es la pared. Tiene que echarle más y más, y eso te lleva hacia afuera, y eres un artista ya en el mundo exterior. Los planificadores son gentes en buscar de un artista. Tú haces tus cosas con base en la calidad, según has dicho, pero ellos se atienen a la cantidad. Y de repente tienen que juntarse.

IRWIN: Ahora estoy perdido ya. [Risa] Tal vez voy muy aprisa, pero la que quería dejar claro es que la historia del arte moderno lleva ya cerca de 200 años, y hayan falta probablemente otros 200 para que podamos juzgar si funciona, si se logró, independientemente de si nos embelesa la vida o si es una buena idea. En este momento nadie lo sabe realmente. Estoy metido en el porque para mí tiene sentido desde el punto de vista de la historia y me parece que vale la pena. Es un poco como la física de Einstein en el momento cuando propuso su idea de la naturaleza de la materia—no existía entonces ninguna prueba de ella. Las que se involucraron en la física de Einstein lo hicieron porque era un hermoso experimento, y durante los próximos 20 ó 30 años se llevaron a cabo muchos experimentos muy complicados para probar esos principios y posibilidades. Pero todo quedaba por verse. Total, que como una persona que hace el llamado arte en lugares públicos, cuando me incluyen en un proyecto no lo hacen por mi interés en este diálogo. Me incluyen porque tienen necesidades, deseos. Y así, comienzo con una contradicción. La razón porque estás allí es para perseguir mi fin, tratar de manejar dentro de esta historia de la que soy heredero, y por eso mi relación con ellos, al principio, es, en cierto sentido, muy tenue. No es esto precisamente lo que pensaba comentar, pero...

WESCHLER: Tienes que volver a Marfa, ¿verdad? Necesitamos que regreses a Marfa.

IRWIN: Sí, es cierto. Se me había olvi-
tenuous in the beginning. This wasn’t exactly where I was going to go, but I’m doing…

WESCHLER: Eventually come back to Marfa, okay? We need you to come back to Marfa.

IRWIN: Yeah, that’s true, I had forgotten about Marfa. [Laughter] I’m trying to encapsulate too much. But to get back to my point—essentially what I do is, I’ll come. The planners will invite me and tell me about all their needs and desires: we want this thing to be a Monument to Western Evolution and the Clarification of American Life and what have you—and we get $50,000 to do it. And so what I do is, I spend time looking at the site. I don’t want to be paid and don’t want to be put into a position where I have any obligation, because I have my own rhyme and reason. So I spend time looking at the site, and if I can figure out something that makes sense to me, I also look at whether or not I can do something that makes sense to them.

On the basis of that, I may make a proposal, and we see if it satisfies their desires and needs, and maybe only at that point we might consider going ahead and making it.

To come back to Marfa—that’s slightly different. Having done several projects over the years, most of them falling through for all kinds of unfortunate reasons—people dying, businesses going broke, cities giving up on their own frontier—every now and then I have to take a break. Taking a break means to go to a real art place, someplace where the aesthetics are really of some value. A place where people are really interested in those issues and that dialogue—and that’s what Marfa is. Marfa’s one of the really few and rare art places. And the idea of doing something in this atmosphere and this situation and these circumstances was like a vacation for me. So I took a seven-year vacation.

[Laughter]

Hopefully we’re going to move ahead on some of them, but most of the other projects are not a lot of fun. I’d really like to be back in the studio, if I had my druthers, because the beauty of being in the studio is you can make the world look any way you want, as long as you don’t expect anyone else to agree with you. The minute you walk out the door with it under your arm, a whole other set of dynamics starts to take place, and a lot of it—if you’re playing the game I’m playing—a lot of it is really controversial, and I’m not interested in being controversial. And Marianne and Rob, I love them. It’s so rare that I get this kind of opportunity.

WESCHLER: This is my first time in town and I’m loving it too. We were starting to have a conversation at lunch today, and I wanted to try something on you [Irwin]. This is again an example of the way you and I are completely different. I spent a lot of this morning in the artillery sheds, with those wonderful metal boxes of Donald Judd’s. My impression is that generally it’s blue sky around here most of the time, but for the last few days it’s been gray, and the boxes are really great in gray sky. I’ve seen them in blue sky, but in gray sky, with the sky and the color of the aluminum and everything, it’s just some fantastic stuff going on. And I kept on finding myself, as I walked through there—well, I wonder how many other people here are like this. You walk through, you see a particular interesting alignment, and you think: God, that would make a great picture. Or you lean your head forward, and when you lean your head back you think: that would make a really interesting little piece of film. I was talking with you about this at lunch. I said: “Do you do that?” And you said...

IRWIN: No. [Risa]

WESCHLER: You just don’t do that at all?

IRWIN: Not at all.

WESCHLER: Stop. [To audience] How many people do that? I’m not a complete crazy person, right?

IRWIN: It’s not an either-or proposition. Think about it for a second. The idea of containing within a frame all of our concepts and ideas and attitudes and sense of beauty and everything—that’s an amazing concept. It’s a highly stylized and learned logic. It’s brilliant—it’s lasted for centuries and is in fact true; it’s one of the ways in which we process information. But that’s not how we see at all. We don’t see in frames. Essentially, seeing is—it’s not only here, but all the way around us. It’s like we’re within an envelope of our senses and we’re being fed information at every moment by all of our senses. That’s actually how we perceive. And at some point, if you take perception as a position, the idea of a frame looks like a highly stylized, learned logic. We’re addicted to it—it’s always the case that in an instant, we can read things on a screen, we can immediately understand and even put emotion into it. It’s really a process of intellect. There is so much information in the world, and most of the time most of it is irrelevant. For me to simply go to the door and not fall over or bump

IRWIN: This morning in the artillery sheds, with Donald Judd. Tengo la impresión de que aquí el cielo es azul la mayoría del tiempo, pero durante estos últimos días ha sido gris, y las cojas se ven fantásticas bajo un cielo gris. Las he visto con cielo azul, pero con el cielo gris y el color del aluminio y todo, sucede algo sensacional. Y mientras caminaba entre esas cajas me pregunto cuánta gente será como yo: paso por allí y veo una yuxtaposición interesante y piensas: “Caramba, si ahorra una foto fabulosa.” O inclino la cabeza hacia delante, y cuando la inclino nuevamente hacia otras piezas: “Esto se vería muy bien como película.” Es taba hablando contigo sobre esto y dije: “¿Tú también haces eso?” Y tú dijiste...

IRWIN: No. [Risa]

WESCHLER: ¿Para nada?

IRWIN: Para nada.

WESCHLER: Esperaré. [Al público] ¿Cuántos de ustedes hacen eso? No estoy loco de remate, ¿verdad?

IRWIN: No tiene que ser una cosa a la otra. Piénsalo por un momento. La idea de meter dentro de un marco todos nuestros conceptos y actitudes y sentido de la belleza y todo—ese es un concepto asombroso. Es una lógica sumamente estilizada y aprendida. Es brillante—ha durado por siglos y es muy cierta; es una de las maneras como procesamos la información. Pero no es el modo como vemos, de ninguna manera. No vemos a través de Marcos. En esencia, el acto de ver no sucede sólo aquí, sino todo alrededor de nosotros. Es como si estuviéramos dentro de un sobre que nos envolviera los sentidos y todos nuestros sentidos nos enviara información a cada instante. Así es como percibimos. Y sí tomamos la percepción como posición, la idea del marco parece una lógica muy estilizada, una lógica aprendida. Somos adictos a ella, tanto así que en un instante podemos leer las cosas que vemos en una pantalla, e incluso las comprendemos al instante y las agreamos emoción.

Es un proceso de intelección. Hay tanto información en el mundo, y la mayoría es irrelevante. Para caminar a la puerta y no caermi ni tropezar con nada hay cierta información clave que con que necesito contar. Para funcio- nar en el mundo debemos jerarquizar continuamente la información que nos llega para no agobiaros en ella. Con el tiempo desarrollamos un proceso para lograrlo, una forma de contex- tuar la información y comprenderla dentro de un marco de referencia.
Alinamos constantemente este marco, perfeccionándolo, y cuanto más claro y nítido sea, mejor podemos funcio- nar. Pero a medida que vamos vivien- do, refinando de paso nuestro marco, también excluimos todo tipo de posibi- lidades y riquezas en el mundo. Entonces lo que digo es que la histo- ria del arte moderno es una historia radical.

WESCHLER: Pero un momento. Quiero hacerme una pregunta. Yo sé que esto está ahora, pero cuando esta- ban haciendo tus pinturas con líneas... ¿cuando sales de tu etapa de expresio- nismo abstracto y haces la transición a las líneas y eso—¿quieres decir que en tu paso por el mundo no te fijabas entonces en las líneas en un poste de teléfono y no te parabas para ver- las y enamorarlas mentalmente? ¿No estaba “enmarcando” ni siquiera en ese tiempo?

WESCHLER: Quiero ampliar sobre eso. Siempre me admira lo que tiene recuerdos de su infancia y se acuerda de sus maestros, sus amigos, etc. No me acuerda de nada hasta que cumplí los quince años. Después de ingresar en la preparatoria me divertí mucho. Pasé unos ratos muy agradables. Mi infancia fue feliz, pero antes de la prepa todos mis recuerdos son de la luz y cómo se veía en determinados entornos. Recuerdo la esquina de la calle, pero no como calle. Cuando era joven me iba a veces a Europa, pero al regresar no lograba convencerme a na- die de que había estado allí. Me pre- guntaban si había visto esto o aquello. Y yo no sabía. Todo lo que yo hacía allá era comprar un par de botellas de cerveza, meterlas a mi bOLSillo, y caminar toda la noche, absorbiéndolo todo. Acabo de hacer un viaje a Roma con mi esposa y Hugh Davies, el direc- tor del Museo de Arte Contemporáneo en San Diego—un gran hombre y muy erudito. Él y su esposa llevaban siete meses allí, y me llevaron a recorrer varios lugares, la primera vez en mi vida que había ido en un tour. Hugh me explicó todo—Bernini hizo estas escalones, y el arquitecto Bernunu, o alguien [Borromini] hizo aquellas otras. Yo fijas en un edificio de Bernu- nu, y Bernini tiene una escultura que se le contraponía porque el edificio le parecía espantosamente feo. Fue algo espectacular, muy divertido e interesante...

WESCHLER: Y, a propósito, ésta fue la analogía utilizada para describir por qué Richard Meier puso el aranal arriba de tu jardín en el museo Getty. [Risa]

IRWIN: No lo llamó aranal.

WESCHLER: Bueno, sí, pero cuando que Bernunu did, and Bernini’s got a sculpture going against it because he was aghast at how ugly the building was. It was spectacular. It was really fun, really interesting...

WESCHLER: And this, by the way, was the analogy used to describe why Richard Meier put the urinal above your garden at the Getty. [Laughter]

IRWIN: He didn’t call it a urinal.

WESCHLER: Well, I know, but it was that Bernini-Bernunu thing that he was bouncing off of when he did that. [Laughter] Yeah, well, it’s a long story. [Laughter] I was working on the gar- den and I was deeply, deeply disap- pointed when he said, the one time when I was walking behind him: “This is a goddamn disaster.”

WESCHLER: The piece that I wrote about this was called “When Fountainheads Collide.” [Laughter]

IRWIN: Anyway, the point I want to make is that the only way they finally got it out of work is they put an area between what he did and what I did, which everybody referred to as the DMZ zone. [Laughter] WESCHLER: But coming back to Bernini and Bernunu.

IRWIN: Anyway, I took that incredible trip, and it was the first time I was ever told the name of something, or that I was in this place, or in that site. One time I took a trip. I just started going south. I went down to San Diego. I liked the trip so much that I decided to follow the Rio Grande. So I stayed as close to the river as I could. I went all the way down to the Big Bend, and then all the way to Brownsville, which was so terrific that I decided to continue along the Gulf Coast, which was spectacular. I went all the way down to the end of the country, the Florida Keys. By then I was committed, so I went all the way up the East Coast, and then went across the top of the country, as close to Canada as I could, and then down the West Coast. A trip like that is where all my infor- mation comes from. I don’t really invent or create anything. I just look at the world. I’m looking at it all the time, and it’s just full of stuff that is so beautiful and so rich—in most cases more beautiful than anything I’ve ever made. And so that’s how I move in the world. I don’t know why or how, but I never get the name of anything.

WESCHLER: It’s funny: you don’t have to forget the name of the thing you see. You never knew the name of the thing in the first place. [Laughter]

IRWIN: That’s right.

WESCHLER: It’s interesting. You were doing this while you were doing something else. You were doing the pick-up-sticks line paintings, when you’re coming out of your Abstract Expressionist phase and you’re beginning to coalesce into these lines and so forth—do you mean to tell me that when you went through the world, you did not look at the way lines were going on a telephone pole and stop and look at that and frame that for yourself? You weren’t “framing” even at that time?

IRWIN: Let me go a little bit further. I’m always amazed by people that have memories of their childhoods and can remember a teacher, friends, and all that. I don’t remember a thing until I was fifteen years old. When I got into high school I was having so much fun. I had a great time. I had a happy childhood, but everything before high school is memories of the way the light looked somewhere. I remember the corner of the street, but not as a street. I used to go to Europe when I was young, and when I came back, I couldn’t convince any- body that I’d been there. They’d ask: “Well, did you see this, did you see that?” I didn’t know. All I would do was get a couple bottles of beer, put them in my pocket, and walk all night long, just soaking it up. I just went to Rome with my wife and daughter and Hugh Davies, who is the director of the Museum of Contemporary Art in San Diego—a great, scholarly per- son. He and his wife had been there for seven months, and it was the first time I was ever taken on a tour. He pointed out everything—Bernini did this staircase, and the architect Bernunu or somebody [Borromini] did that staircase. You look at a building
saying that it’s going to be maybe 200 years before people find out whether this particular modern-art trajectory works or not. The way you phrased it to me once was that it’s going to be generations after you’re gone before we find out whether this really works or not, and just to kind of goad you I said: “Are you talking about how computer power isn’t good enough yet for all our vi- sors and screens and so forth, and that it’ll take generations to get that computer power?” Do you remember what your answer was? IRWIN: No, I don’t.

WESCHLER: The answer was: “No, the point is to get visors off our heads.” IRWIN: Well...

WESCHLER: The point is to get away from the screens.

IRWIN: No it’s not. It...

WESCHLER: That’s what you said.

IRWIN: Well then, I’d better modify it slightly.

WESCHLER: No, it’s a good thing, I like it.

IRWIN: It’s interesting that at one point the Conceptualists made the declaration that painting is dead. It was in the ‘60s and ‘70s. They declared that painting was dead, which was very peculiar to me, because fundamentally painting is a system of signs. Notice how everything is a sign or a symbol of something that one can reference in the world. And when you stop and think about what Conceptualists do and how they work, they still express themselves through systems of signs. So they are actually one of the legitimate exten- sions of the figurative tradition. If you take that further and consider the computer, for example, what you’re talking about is another interesting and extremely sophisticated exten- sion of that figurative tradition, which again is fundamentally about this fun- ny little system of signs. What mod- ern art did was to erase the system of signs and really start looking at something. The term “presence” got used a lot: the idea that something exists. A simple example: I once taught a drawing class. Twenty students would come in, they’d have a board under their arm, paper, charcoal, pencils, whatever. I never told them what to bring, but they kind of knew—sometimes other teachers would tell them what to bring, what to buy and all. They come in, and there are these little stools sitting all around, and up front is a figure or a still life. They sit down and they begin to draw, and the guy teaching is really full of shit.

He’s trying to tell them how to draw and what drawing is. And the curi- ous thing is that the students have made all these commitments and they haven’t actually questioned any of them or thought of them in terms of structure. These are elaborate, com- plex, beautiful structures that the stu- dents have bought into without ever actually questioning them. Now, given the history of modern art, I was trying to present to them the idea that this is a way of going, but not the only way of going. I used the simplest kind of explanation I could. I found a steel roller down in the print room, shiny and smooth. I put it up on the stand, then I took a shiny piece of pa- per and also set it up on the stand. I said to the class: “I want everybody here to draw exactly what you see: no games of expression, no nothing, I just want you to draw exactly what you see.” And in a pictorial sense, they did. They drew these things, and the two objects came out looking ex- actly the same. Then I said: “I want everybody to walk over here and pick up both of these things.” They picked up one, and it weighed an ounce; the other weighed 100 pounds. Some people couldn’t even pick it up. Next I said: “Now I want you to go back and draw what you know—add it to what you see. So you might make one drawing with a very thin, light line, indicating the weight, and make the other one really dark to not only indicate the weight, but the fact that it has a physicality and occupies space.”

Now, my question was: is that an abstraction? I was trying to show them that art has never been about an abstraction. It’s all about seeing things from a different perspective. Things exist on more than one level, and they have more than one reality, and essentially what modern art has done is begin to supply all this other information as a kind of equal part of the whole. So there’s never anti-figu- rative painting; it was never anti-clas- sical art—there’s no such thing.

WESCHLER: Last night we were hav- ing dinner and we began to drift into a conversation which we said we’d save for right now.

IRWIN: We did?

WESCHLER: He doesn’t remember anything. [Laughter]

IRWIN: Lucky.

WESCHLER: So I guess this will come as news to you. I had pointed out that one of the things that’s fascinating about you as a teacher is that you had an incredible group of students at a particular point in your life: Ed ahí también. Le dije a la clase: “Quie- re que todos dibujen exactamente lo que ven: nada de juegos ni subjetivis- mos, sólo lo que están viendo.” Y en un sentido pictórico, así lo hicieron. Dibujaron los dos objetos, y las imá- genes solieron idénticas. Luego dijo: “Todo el mundo venga y levante estos dos cosas”. Levantaron una de ellas, que pesaba una onza, y la otra, que pesaba 100 libras. Algunas ni siquie- ra la pudieron levantar. En seguida les dije: “Ahora quiero que se sienten y dibujen lo que saben agregando a lo que ven. Tal vez dibujen una de las cosas con líneas finas y delgadas para indicar el peso, y la otra más oscura para sugerir no sólo el peso, sino el hecho de que tiene fisicalidad y ocupa espacio.”

Ahora, mi pregunta era: ¿es esa una abstracción? Yo trabajaba de demostrar- les que el arte nunca ha tenido que ver con la abstracción. Todo consiste en ver las cosas desde otra perspec- tiva. Las cosas existen en más de un nivel y tienen más de una realidad, y en esencia lo que ha logrado el arte moderno es comenzar a presentar toda esta información adicional como una parte igual dentro del conjunto. Así que no hay nunca pintura anti-figu- rativa; nunca se trató de un arte anti-clásico—no hay tal cosa.

WESCHLER: Anoche, al cenar, nuestra conversación tomó un giro interesante y dijimos que lo guardaríamos para ahora.

IRWIN: ¿Sí?

WESCHLER: Este nunca se acuerda de nada. [Risa]

IRWIN: Tengo suerte.

WESCHLER: Así que para ti esto será una novedad. Yo había hecho el co- mentario de que como maestro tuviste la fortuna de contar, en un momento dado, con un extraordinario grupo de estudiantes: Ed Ruscha y Vija Celmins y Chris Burden y Joe Goode. Y la in- teresante para mi es que todos ellos se han ido por caminos diferentes. Te preguntaba anoche si cuando eran tus alumnos parecían extraordinarios, y cómo fue tu experiencia como su maestro.

IRWIN: Bueno, mi trabajo formal como maestro duró muy poco: tres años en Chouinard, donde me despidieron, y dos años en UCLa, donde me despi- dieron, y...

WESCHLER: ¿Te despidieron por qué? [Risa]

IRWIN: Luego les digo. Y después or- ganicé el departamento de posgrado en la Universidad de California en Ir- vine, donde estuve dos años y medio y no me despidieron. Estas fueron las únicas ocasiones cuando enseñé for-
Ruscha and Vija Celmins and Chris Burden and Joe Goode. And one of the things that’s interesting to me is they’ve all gone in completely different directions. Which is very interesting. I was asking you, did they seem amazing at the time, and what was it like to be teaching them?

IRWIN: Well, I formally taught for a very short period of time: three years at Chouinard, where I got fired, and two years at UCLA, where I got fired, and...

WESCHLER: For what? [Laughter]

IRWIN: Well, I’ll touch on that in a little bit. And then I set up the graduate department in the University of California at Irvine, where I stayed for about two and a half years, and didn’t get fired. These were the only times I taught formally. The reason I stopped teaching, first of all, is because it’s really a complicated thing to do, a little bit like the story about the ladies. You have people who are in the process of developing. They are spectacular in and of themselves. None of these students were recruited, but each one of them was a pure potential, and to try and teach them, for me, is to ultimately impose on them (while they may think it’s information) your limitations.

For me, the name of the game is you have people who are in the process of developing. They are spectacular in and of themselves. None of these students were recruited, but each one of them was a pure potential, and to try and teach, to me, is to ultimately impose on them (while they may think it’s information) your limitations.

California at Irvine, where I stayed for about two and a half years, and didn’t get fired. These were the only times I taught formally. The reason I stopped teaching, first of all, is because it’s really a complicated thing to do, a little bit like the story about the ladies. You have people who are...

IRWIN: Dejé de enseñar, antes que nada, porque es una cosa muy complicada, un poco como la historia que les conté de las damas. Tienes gente que está en trance de desarrollarse. Son espectaculares en sí mismos. Ninguno de estos estudiantes fue reclutado, pero cada uno tenía un potencial ilimitado, y tratar de enseñarles, para mí, es acabar por imponerles tus limitaciones, aunque ellos las vean como información.

Para mí, lo esencial consiste en trabajar con cada uno como individuo. No tienes la menor idea de qué van a hacer dentro de 10 años ni cómo van a llegar a ese punto. Ellos tampoco saben dónde acabarán en 10 años ni cómo van a lograrlo. Por eso, te toca trabajar con el potencial de cada individuo. Tienes que meterte en lo suyo, comprender la índole de su sensibilidad, qué cosas les interesan. Y procuras cultivar todo eso, alimentarlo. No pasa mucho tiempo viendo las obras que hacen. Más bien, hablo con ellos y estoy con ellos, porque su desarrollo siempre está más adelantado que su obra. La obra llega después del desarrollo, sí, pero cuando empieza a cuajar, empieza a afinarse sola, y luego puede hacer la transición desde simplemente saber algo a darle a ese algo una forma intersubjetiva.
work with each one as an individual. You have no idea what they’re going
to do in ten years or how they’re going
to get there. They have no idea
where they’re going to be in ten
years or how they’re going to do it.
So what you deal with is this po-
tential. You have to deal with each
student as an individual; you have
to become involved with them; you
have to understand what’s the na-
ture of their sensitivity, what are the
things that intrigue them, what are the
things that interest them. And you
try to—here’s the word—nurture that.
I don’t really spend any time looking
at the work. Instead I talk and spend
time with them, because their devel-
opment is always way ahead of the
work. The work comes after not only
the development, but when it begins to
coalesce, it begins to, in a sense, refine itself, and then it’s able to
make the transition from just knowing
something to actually putting that into
some kind of inter-subjective form.
So you don’t teach, actually. What
you do is you work with people, and
you don’t grade them against one
another. This allows them, for ex-
ample, not to do anything, which is one
of the big parts of anybody going through an intense learning process.
There are times when you’re taking
in and you’re not really capable of
putting out. Schools tend to want to
put you on some kind of meter, where
at the end of every semester you’re
going to get a grade. But if you’re
spending time with a person, you
know that they’re working, you know
that they’re doing things. It’s incred-
ibly exciting, but deeply demanding.
Really, it’s a full-time job.

WESCHLER: Can you talk about some of them? Ed Ruscha, Chris Burden,
Vija Celmins?

IRWIN: Yeah, sure. I’ll start with Vija
because she was so terrific. First of
all, there was no way to teach Vija.
Vija was already one of the brightest
people I’d ever met. But she had one
problem. Each week I would think of
a question, and when she came in I’d
hand it to her. Then she would take
the question and break it into its five,
six, or seven parts and throw those
up in the air. It was like watching
somebody with a glass head. She’d
throw them in the air. She’d examine
each part and point out its strengths,
weaknesses, flaws—and reject it.
And then reject the next and the next
and the next. She would finally re-
ject the whole proposition. And with
good arguments for why she was
doing so, which was her dilemma. I
mean, here was a woman who was

Así que no es una enseñanza propia-
mente dicha. Lo que haces es trabajar
con la gente, y no les das califica-
ciones competitivas. Esto les permite,
por ejemplo, no hacer nada, que es
una etapa importante para cualquiera
que pase por un proceso intensivo de
aprendizaje. Hay veces cuando uno
está en plan de recibir y no de dar.
Las escuelas te obligan a producir se-
gún una fórmula cuantificable, y al fi-
nal de cada semestre te asigna una
calificación. Pero si pasas tiempo con
una persona, compruebas que está
trabajando, que está logrando cosas.
Eso es emocionante y también muy
exigente. De veras que es un trabajo
de tiempo completo.

WESCHLER: ¿Nos puedes decir algo
sobre algunas de ellas? ¿Ed Ruscha, Chris Burden, Vija Celmins?

IRWIN: Sí, claro. Empzarazó con Vija,
porque fue tan especial. No había ma-
nera de enseñarle a Vija, que es una
de las personas más inteligentes que
he conocido. Pero tenía un problema.
Cada semana yo inventaba una pre-
gunta, y cuando ella entraba, se la
daba por escrito. Ella luego lo estu-
diaba, rompiéndolo en sus cinco, seis,
siete partes y las aventaba al aire. Era
como observar a alguien que tuviera
la cabeza de vidrio. Las arrojaba al
aire. Examinaba cada parte, señalan-
do sus virtudes y sus defectos, sus fa-
llas—y acababa por rechazarla. Luego
rechazaba la siguiente y la siguiente,
y al final había rechazado la proposi-
tión entera, citando buenas razones
por hacerlo así. Ése era su dilema. Era
el caso de una mujer increíblemente
talentosa e inteligente—casi demasia-
do inteligente. Podía refutar cualquier
argumento, pero en parte era cuestión
de la confianza que tenía en sí misma,
su sentido del yo. Discutíamos cons-
tantemente. A veces yo podía imponer
un punto de vista mío, o acabábamos
empatados. Incluso ahora, cuando
observo a Vija Celmins haciendo esos
increíbles dibujos del océano, o los di-
bujos de...

WESCHLER: Telas de araña.

IRWIN: Telas de araña o lo que sea—
¡sólo vemos la punta del iceberg! Por
debajo existe un potencial aún más
grande que lo que estás viendo. Lo
que ella hace es quizá lo más seguro
que puede hacer, dado la brillantez que
es. Me hubiera gustado poder convenc-
ecerle aún más acerca de sí misma.
Ed Ruscha y los demás—cuatro de
dos—todos eran de Oklahoma. Eran
preparatorios y caminaban en fila:
Ed Ruscha, Joe Goode, Patrick Black-
well, y no recuerdo el otro nombre
(Jerry McMillan). Era fotógrafo. Pa-
trick Blackwell tuvo mucho éxito como
artistia comercial en Nuevo York. Joe
Goode es un pintor excelente. A Ed
Ruscha lo conocen probablemente to-
dos ustedes. Todos asistieron a di-
ario a mi clase de dibujo de diseño.
Conseguí que dentro de un par de
años todos estuvieran trabajando por
su cuenta, en estudios. Larry Bell fue
otro. Acababa de obtener su bachele-
rato de Birmingham High School, en
Alabama, donde ...

WESCHLER: Yo fui estudiante en esa
escola.

IRWIN: ¿De veras?

WESCHLER: Sí.

IRWIN: Pues Larry Bell también. El
equipo de fútbol se llamaba las Gu-
errerías de Birmingham, y él era el gue-
rrero indio, con su atuendo de plumas
y toda la cosa. Un tipo interesante que
se interesaba por todo. John Cham-
berlain fue así también. Y Larry alcanzó
su madurez artística muy pronto. Yo
en su segunda año de estudios, había
una pintura suya en el estudio de Don
Judd. Luego hizo las cajas de vidrio,
que fueron todo un éxito. Fue algo así
como John Chamberlain cambió toda
la historia de la escultura, porque
hasta ese momento todo se hacía con
armazón. De repente Chamberlain in-
vierte la fórmula y se dedica a machu-
car las cosas. En un sentido intelectual
y estructural, esa fue muy significa-
tiva. Así que en Nuevo York fueron
bien recibidos y respetados. Tuvieron
mucho impacto. Lo primero que hizo
la gran comunidad crítica de Nuevo
York fue darles la responsabilidad de
desmarinar esa idea en el mundo.

Pero esos hombres no eran gigantes
intelectuales. John Chamberlain era
un peligruño, un tipo que trabajaba
improvisando y rascándose el trase-
ro. Luego exhibió sus obras de hule
espuma. La historia detrás de eso es
que la primera vez que las mandó a
un museo le llamaron por teléfono di-
ciendo: “Pero John, no hay nada allí.
Desatamos todas esas cosas y no hay
artistas con prontidud y ...

WESCHLER: Estábamos hablando de Ed
Ruscha. ¿Qué lugar ocupa él en todo
esto?

IRWIN: Al rato. Lo que quiero subrayar
es que hay gente que trabaja de modo
visceral, partiendo de sus sentimientos
y su sensibilidad, y hay otras personas
que son muy intelectuales, que pien-
san las cosas con profundidad y ...

WESCHLER: Estábamos hablando de Ed
Ruscha. ¿Qué lugar ocupa él en todo
esto?

IRWIN: Todos estos artistas son así. Ed
Ruscha es como Andy Warhol. Andy
Warhol fue un gran artista porque lle-
gaban a la imagen justa por intuición
e instinto. Siempre atinaba. Muchos
very well-received, very respected. They really had an impact. So the first thing that the great critical community in New York did was to give them a mantle of responsibility to carry that idea into the world. Now these guys were not intellectuals at all. John Chamberlain was a hairdresser. John Chamberlain is the guy who works from the seat of his pants, scratching his ass. There was a show here of those terrific foam pieces. The great story behind those is, the first time he sent them to a museum for an exhibition, they called him back and said: “My God, John, there’s nothing there. We united all those things and there was no art inside!” [Laughter]

WESCHLER: Tell them the story of your mother and cousins going to see your show.

IRWING: Well, let me come back to it, okay? The point is that there are people who just work tactlessly from their gut, from their feelings, from their sensitivity, and there are other people who are very intellectual, who really in a sense can think and.

WESCHLER: We were talking about Ed Ruscha. Where does he fit?

IRWING: All these guys are like this. Ed Ruscha is like Andy Warhol. Andy Warhol was a great artist because he intuitively, instinctively always had the right image. He always just nailed the right one. A lot of people played that game and they played it very well: Lichtenstein and so forth. But nobody was unerringly correct like Warhol.

WESCHLER: And Ed was already like that, first thing out of Oklahoma?

IRWING: No, not right off. Coming from Oklahoma, it comes with the territory a little bit. But he just had this unerring ability to find the right sort of metaphor or the right set of words.

To get back to the teaching thing: I had to quit. There was no way to do it and do what I do, you know? I would have them out of school in a couple of years, have them operating in the studio. I would visit them in their studio, spend time with them in their studio—and then, at a certain point, there was their final act of graduation: they have to kill you. [Laughter] Because you’re the one person who’s in the way. And I’ve got to tell you, it’s difficult to get killed fifteen times, you know?

WESCHLER: Before we leave the topic, what was Chris Burden like?

IRWING: Are you all familiar with Chris Burden? There was just a little article in The New Yorker about him. In graduate school he had started out doing these things that were all about moving in space. So he made these sculptures that were all about helping you stand up or move into space—they were the kind of thing that would make for great exercise machines for Somebody in a space capsule. And then he slowly started to move into these more dangerous sorts of things. So for me, that was a very difficult moment, because I’m there sort of in the intermediary, and I’m not sure whether this guy’s crazy or he’s somewhat or he’s suicidal. I mean, I have absolutely no idea. He puts himself in a locker for three or four days, just cramped into one of those college lockers. People are coming and talking to him: “Why are you in there? What are you doing?” He was really scaring everybody.

The students had their own gallery within the first year. There were twelve of them, and each one did a month-long show. Chris Burden’s show was to bring all of his friends in. He had built this pool at the back and he had those ladders in the pool. So then he asked everybody or coerced everybody to get up on the ladder. He asked me, too—there was no way I was going to get up on that ladder, okay? I was definitely keeping an eye on this guy [Laughter], but one of the things I was starting to realize was that everything was very, very carefully planned. None of this was as sort of crazy or as off-the-wall as it appeared. The guy was extremely careful. When he had himself shot, he investigated...

WESCHLER: Slow down. Not everybody knows the story.

IRWING: Well, he had himself shot one time. And he made damn sure where he was shot, and who shot him, etc., and it was not a casual thing. But anyway, people got way up on the ladders, and then he threw a twelve-volt line into the water [Laughter] and shut off the lights and walked out the door, leaving these people up there on the ladders all night. Okay? Now, there was no way for them to test this—but of course I knew, and finally afterwards everybody knew, that he went around and shut the electricity off. But he made the point of putting them on the ladder, and they don’t know that he’s turned the electricity off, and they’re sitting there thinking: “Oh my God, if I fall asleep…” They’re starting to have conversations, saying what the hell are we doing here?, and so on and so on—which was all things he wanted to have happen.

Working with somebody like that, the first thing you have to know is about moving in space. So he made these sculptures that were all about helping you stand up or move into space—they were the kind of thing that would make for great exercise machines for somebody in a space capsule. And then he slowly started to move into these more dangerous sorts of things. So for me, that was a very difficult moment, because I’m there sort of in the intermediary, and I’m not sure whether this guy’s crazy or he’s somewhat or he’s suicidal. I mean, I have absolutely no idea. He puts himself in a locker for three or four days, just cramped into one of those college lockers. People are coming and talking to him: “Why are you in there? What are you doing?” He was really scaring everybody.

The students had their own gallery within the first year. There were twelve of them, and each one did a month-long show. Chris Burden’s show was to bring all of his friends in. He had built this pool at the back and he had those ladders in the pool. So then he asked everybody or coerced everybody to get up on the ladder. He asked me, too—there was no way I was going to get up on that ladder, okay? I was definitely keeping an eye on this guy [Laughter], but one of the things I was starting to realize was that everything was very, very carefully planned. None of this was as sort of crazy or as off-the-wall as it appeared. The guy was extremely careful. When he had himself shot, he investigated...

WESCHLER: Slow down. Not everybody knows the story.

IRWING: Well, he had himself shot one time. And he made damn sure where he was shot, and who shot him, etc., and it was not a casual thing. But anyway, people got way up on the ladders, and then he threw a twelve-volt line into the water [Laughter] and shut off the lights and walked out the door, leaving these people up there on the ladders all night. Okay? Now, there was no way for them to test this—but of course I knew, and finally afterwards everybody knew, that he went around and shut the electricity off. But he made the point of putting them on the ladder, and they don’t know that he’s turned the electricity off, and they’re sitting there thinking: “Oh my God, if I fall asleep…” They’re starting to have conversations, saying what the hell are we doing here?, and so on and so on—which was all things he wanted to have happen.
that they’re not going to blow up the school or something. For me the most humorous part was that he would do one of those things, and the administration would just go crazy. Then he’d come to me and say, “They’re all mad at me!” I’d say: “You’ve got to be kidding! [Laughter] Are you kidding? Of course they’re mad at you, you’ve started this whole thing, you’re going to have to learn how to deal with it.” So I would keep throwing it back on him. But working with people like that, with that kind of enthusiasm, energy, and creativity—it’s a treat. I loved teaching. I just couldn’t do it full-time.

WESCHLER: A funny story about being one of your students—which I considered myself to be in a privileged kind of way—is how, in many ways, you were the last chance I had to avoid the life I’ve ended up living. [Laughter] Which is to say that I am incredibly free-associative. And I was from very early on. I just free-associate like crazy. I’ll tell my story and then you tell your story.

My story is that after college, I had a family friend who was a psychologist. He was very into doing those little tests to figure out what you should do with your life, and so he had me come in and it’s the 800 questions: would you rather be an arsonist or a fireman? [Laughter], would you rather be a table or a chair. Then there was the Rorschach test and so forth, and he said: “Well, come back in a couple weeks and we’ll talk about it.” When I came back a few weeks later, he said: “Well, first of all I want to talk to you about your Rorschach test, because I’ve called around, and we have these different indices, and one of them is just about free-associating. And you are so off the chart; nobody has ever seen anything like this. This is not a good thing. [Laughter] This is not necessarily a good thing. You have a really hard time because you just kind of dribble away in free-as-associations.”

IRWIN: I also got one of those tests, right when I got out of the Army. It was free, so I spent three days doing this test, and when I came back a week later, the guy said: “What you need is responsibility.” [Laughter] He didn’t even tell me what profession I need is responsibility.” [Laughter] He said: “You’ve got to be kidding! [Laughter] Are you kidding? Of course they’re mad at you, you’ve started this whole thing, you’re going to have to learn how to deal with it.” So I would keep throwing it back on him. But working with people like that, with that kind of enthusiasm, energy, and creativity—it’s a treat. I loved teaching. I just couldn’t do it full-time.

WESCHLER: A funny story about being one of your students—which I considered myself to be in a privileged kind of way—is how, in many ways, you were the last chance I had to avoid the life I’ve ended up living. [Laughter] Which is to say that I am incredibly free-associative. And I was from very early on. I just free-associate like crazy. I’ll tell my story and then you tell your story.

My story is that after college, I had a family friend who was a psychologist. He was very into doing those little tests to figure out what you should do with your life, and so he had me come in and it’s the 800 questions: would you rather be an arsonist or a fireman? [Laughter], would you rather be a table or a chair. Then there was the Rorschach test and so forth, and he said: “Well, come back in a couple weeks and we’ll talk about it.” When I came back a few weeks later, he said: “Well, first of all I want to talk to you about your Rorschach test, because I’ve called around, and we have these different indices, and one of them is just about free-associating. And you are so off the chart; nobody has ever seen anything like this. This is not a good thing. [Laughter] This is not necessarily a good thing. You have a really hard time because you just kind of dribble away in free-as-associations.”

IRWIN: I also got one of those tests, right when I got out of the Army. It was free, so I spent three days doing this test, and when I came back a week later, the guy said: “What you need is responsibility.” [Laughter] He didn’t even tell me what profession I need is responsibility.” [Laughter] He said: “You’ve got to be kidding! [Laughter] Are you kidding? Of course they’re mad at you, you’ve started this whole thing, you’re going to have to learn how to deal with it.” So I would keep throwing it back on him. But working with people like that, with that kind of enthusiasm, energy, and creativity—it’s a treat. I loved teaching. I just couldn’t do it full-time.

WESCHLER: A funny story about being one of your students—which I considered myself to be in a privileged kind of way—is how, in many ways, you were the last chance I had to avoid the life I’ve ended up living. [Laughter] Which is to say that I am incredibly free-associative. And I was from very early on. I just free-associate like crazy. I’ll tell my story and then you tell your story.

My story is that after college, I had a family friend who was a psychologist. He was very into doing those little tests to figure out what you should do with your life, and so he had me come in and it’s the 800 questions: would you rather be an arsonist or a fireman? [Laughter], would you rather be a table or a chair. Then there was the Rorschach test and so forth, and he said: “Well, come back in a couple weeks and we’ll talk about it.” When I came back a few weeks later, he said: “Well, first of all I want to talk to you about your Rorschach test, because I’ve called around, and we have these different indices, and one of them is just about free-associating. And you are so off the chart; nobody has ever seen anything like this. This is not a good thing. [Laughter] This is not necessarily a good thing. You have a really hard time because you just kind of dribble away in free-as-associations.”

IRWIN: I also got one of those tests, right when I got out of the Army. It was free, so I spent three days doing this test, and when I came back a week later, the guy said: “What you need is responsibility.” [Laughter] He didn’t even tell me what profession I need is responsibility.” [Laughter] He said: “You’ve got to be kidding! [Laughter] Are you kidding? Of course they’re mad at you, you’ve started this whole thing, you’re going to have to learn how to deal with it.” So I would keep throwing it back on him. But working with people like that, with that kind of enthusiasm, energy, and creativity—it’s a treat. I loved teaching. I just couldn’t do it full-time.

WESCHLER: A funny story about being one of your students—which I considered myself to be in a privileged kind of way—is how, in many ways, you were the last chance I had to avoid the life I’ve ended up living. [Laughter] Which is to say that I am incredibly free-associative. And I was from very early on. I just free-associate like crazy. I’ll tell my story and then you tell your story.

My story is that after college, I had a family friend who was a psychologist. He was very into doing those little tests to figure out what you should do with your life, and so he had me come in and it’s the 800 questions: would you rather be an arsonist or a fireman? [Laughter], would you rather be a table or a chair. Then there was the Rorschach test and so forth, and he said: “Well, come back in a couple weeks and we’ll talk about it.” When I came back a few weeks later, he said: “Well, first of all I want to talk to you about your Rorschach test, because I’ve called around, and we have these different indices, and one of them is just about free-associating. And you are so off the chart; nobody has ever seen anything like this. This is not a good thing. [Laughter] This is not necessarily a good thing. You have a really hard time because you just kind of dribble away in free-as-associations.”

IRWIN: I also got one of those tests, right when I got out of the Army. It was free, so I spent three days doing this test, and when I came back a week later, the guy said: “What you need is responsibility.” [Laughter] He didn’t even tell me what profession I need is responsibility.” [Laughter] He said: “You’ve got to be kidding! [Laughter] Are you kidding? Of course they’re mad at you, you’ve started this whole thing, you’re going to have to learn how to deal with it.” So I would keep throwing it back on him. But working with people like that, with that kind of enthusiasm, energy, and creativity—it’s a treat. I loved teaching. I just couldn’t do it full-time.

WESCHLER: A funny story about being one of your students—which I considered myself to be in a privileged kind of way—is how, in many ways, you were the last chance I had to avoid the life I’ve ended up living. [Laughter] Which is to say that I am incredibly free-associative. And I was from very early on. I just free-associate like crazy. I’ll tell my story and then you tell your story.

My story is that after college, I had a family friend who was a psychologist. He was very into doing those little tests to figure out what you should do with your life, and so he had me come in and it’s the 800 questions: would you rather be an arsonist or a fireman? [Laughter], would you rather be a table or a chair. Then there was the Rorschach test and so forth, and he said: “Well, come back in a couple weeks and we’ll talk about it.” When I came back a few weeks later, he said: “Well, first of all I want to talk to you about your Rorschach test, because I’ve called around, and we have these different indices, and one of them is just about free-associating. And you are so off the chart; nobody has ever seen anything like this. This is not a good thing. [Laughter] This is not necessarily a good thing. You have a really hard time because you just kind of dribble away in free-as-associations.”

IRWIN: I also got one of those tests, right when I got out of the Army. It was free, so I spent three days doing this test, and when I came back a week later, the guy said: “What you need is responsibility.” [Laughter] He didn’t even tell me what profession I need is responsibility.” [Laughter] He said: “You’ve got to be kidding! [Laughter] Are you kidding? Of course they’re mad at you, you’ve started this whole thing, you’re going to have to learn how to deal with it.” So I would keep throwing it back on him. But working with people like that, with that kind of enthusiasm, energy, and creativity—it’s a treat. I loved teaching. I just couldn’t do it full-time.
—close your eyes for a second, okay? No cheating. You’ll remember there’s a painting, there’s a dissection taking place, there’s a cadaver on the table, the arm has been opened so there’s all these muscles that are exposed—and in the middle of the painting there’s three people, the students, who are looking completely spellbound at something. What are they looking at? In my memory of it, they’re looking at the arm, the flayed arm. Okay, open your eyes now. Look carefully at those three guys in the middle. They are completely astonished at the hand of the professor. The professor is saying: “With these muscles here, you can do this.” Look at the look on their faces—they have never seen anything like it. Now think about what they’re looking at: a combination of motility of the hand movement and a vision—which is a painting, right? That’s what this is a celebration of, among other things. First of all, it’s not about death, it’s about life. It’s about everything that’s lively.

Now, the second thing that’s going on in that painting is really weird. It’s actually the case that with this guy here, one of his eyes is looking down and the other is looking at the hand. It’s like a movie. Art historians all say that what the guys in the middle are looking at with astonishment is this book. It’s typical of people who write books, that they would think that. [Laughter] What they’re looking at is this book, but what’s also interesting is, if you look at this guy, he conspicuously looks just like this guy. And that guy in turn, is a thief—that’s why he’s being dissected. He was some kind of criminal, so his body was turned over for dissection, and Rembrandt is conspicuously alluding to this. There’s a whole set of pictures of Christ laid out on his deathbed; that’s a whole subtext of this picture here—the Christ-like quality of this person being dissected. Going back to the photograph, we have it again. Now certainly the generals didn’t intend that, but that’s why I think that image of Che is so powerful and why Che became such an icon. It has to do with the Death and Resurrection. I mean, that’s part of what’s going on there. [To Irwin] You buy that?

IRWIN: Oh...

WESCHLER: You like that, or you don’t like that?

IRWIN: No, I love it.

WESCHLER: You do?

IRWIN: I’m nuts about it. No, really—how can you not like it? It’s also hard to swallow, but... [Laughter] But you know, what do I know? Where are you going to go from here, squirt? By the way, the lady asked a question. Did you even come close to an answer?

WESCHLER: Well, I told you that I got the title of the book from Flannery O’Connor. She asked why I called it *Everything That Rises*, and the answer is, it does, everything that rises
wescHER: There’s not a book yet, but there will be. If you go to McSweeney’s website, for the last forty weeks we’ve had a contest. People sent in their own convergences and then I’d comment on them. This is a sick little puppy of a country. [Laughter] Here’s an interesting example. Somebody sent in this photograph from Iraq and said it reminded them of this World War I painting by John Singer Sargent. I have to respond to each of these things, so it’s kind of like batting practice. In this case I said, okay, what’s really interesting about both those pictures is that they are, in fact, based on this—Breughel’s The Blind Leading the Blind. But if you want to see a really weird World War I/Iraq convergence, look at this. Isn’t that weird?

IRWIN: Yeah. It’s spooky.

wescHER: I’ll show a few more. Here, somebody sent me this one—I like it a lot. Goya, right? [Laughter] One more?

IRWIN: Good. You made a hit with that. That buys you one more. Pick and choose now, though. [Laughter]

wescHER: This one is kind of interesting. Somebody sends this—it’s a long-distance swimmer crossing the English Channel—and says that it reminds them of that. And my response is that actually, it reminds me of this: St. Theresa by Bernini or Bernnun or one of those guys.

IRWIN: Bernini.

wescHER: Anyway, what I said was that the nice thing is that neither Christ nor Bernini had to deal with paparazzi. [Laughter] That is, unless you think of the Old Masters themselves as paparazzi. After all, they’re all kind of taking this same picture over and over again, so they’re like the paparazzi of the Passion. And these are just flash-bulbs going off over and over. But conversely, the way I ended my response was: “For that matter, flipping the polarities of our analogy, more contemporary paparazzi, all agog over this Paris or that Diana, this Brad or the other Jen, might well themselves be thought of as latter-day versions of the Old Master predecessors, likewise in thrall to the transcendental incarnate.” [Laughter] Star power. But anyway, you get the idea.

IRWIN: Somebody ask him a question, for crying out loud. [Laughter]

AUDIENCE: I was curious how you feel about the World Trade Center site, in terms of the competition and how they’re progressing.

wescHER: Bob, there was a competition about what to do with the site. Did you think of entering it?

IRWIN: I got about a half dozen invitations to collaborate with a team. To me, the whole thing was, and still is, bizarre. It was like a feeding frenzy. Everybody wanted to get a piece of the action. I can’t believe that anyone would enter into anything that way.

Goya, ¿verdad? [Risa] Otra más?

IRWIN: Bueno. La última estuvo muy buena. Te mereces otra oportunidad. Pero escoge con cuidado. [Risa]

wescHER: Esto es interesante. Alguien me la mandó—es un nadador de larga distancia cruzando el Canal de la Mancha—y dijo que lo recuerde eso. Y mi respuesta es que en realidad a mí me recuerda esto: la Santa Teresa de Bernini, o uno de esos tipos.

IRWIN: Bernini.

wescHER: De todos modos, dije que la buena era una. Cuando Bernini tuvieron que enfrentarse con los paparazzi, [Risa] o sea, si crees que los Viejos Maestros eran paparazzi ellos mismos. Al cabo, todos se dedicaban a hacer el mismo retrato una y otra vez, como si fueran los paparazzi de la Pasión. Y hay repetidas destellos de focos de flash. Pero, a la inversa, terminé mi respuesta diciendo: “A ese respecto, cambiando las polaridades de nuestra analogía, más paparazzi contemporáneos, fascinados por esta Paris o aquella Diana, por este Brad o la otra Jen, pueden concebirse ellos mismos como versiones modernas de sus antecesores, los Viejos Maestros, los cuales, a su vez, se dejaron hipnotizar por lo transcendental hecho carme.” [Risa] El poder de las estrellas. Pero ya captaron la idea.

IRWIN: Por el amor de Dios, ¡háganle una pregunta! [Risa]

PÚBLICO: Yo sentí curiosidad por saber cuál es tu opinión acerca del sitio del World Trade Center, en cuanto a la competición y cómo están avanzando.

wescHER: Bob, hubo una competencia para ver qué debían hacer con el lugar. ¿Tu pensaste participar en ello?

IRWIN: Recibí una media docena de invitaciones para colaborar en equipos. A mí todo me pareció, y sigue pareciéndome, muy raro. Era como un frenesi alimentario. Todos querían una parte de la acción. No puedo creer que nadie participara de esa forma ni que nada bueno pudiera resultar de ello, porque de la forma que se ha manejado el asunto, el proceso entero no tiene nada que ver con la que debe ser la conmemoración de ese acontecimiento. Se alacran todos. Me distancio todo lo que pude. El resultado fue un desastre. Tal vez suceda algo positivo en algún momento, pero sería difícil, dado la situación actual. Lo que sucede allí no tiene nada que ver con lo que significa el World Trade Center.

wescHER: Quizás sería preferible esperar unas 10 ó 15 años. El monumento a la Guerra de Vietnam, de Maya Lin, se hizo 10 años después de las hechos. Por cierto, provoqué la
I was struggling with this whole idea of marking or wasn't recognizable as a mark. It or wasn't a painting that didn't have a mark on it. I was trying to paint a thing we could've stopped, but we didn't do anything.

One of the things I've been thinking about doing is a conference called, “The Thing of It Is, Cassandra Was Right.” It will be about raising an alarm and not being believed. I want to bring together General Delair, who warned the UN that Rwanda was going to happen, and Richard Clarke, who warned about 9/11. I want to have the people who knew about the levees in New Orleans. What is it like to see something coming and not be able to convince people? Anyway, to come back very quickly to the 9/11 situation: I'm in no way trying to downplay it. I mean, everybody's death is an absolute horror. The 3,000 deaths were a horror and those buildings going down was a horror. All that's true, but you don't turn the entire country inside out over something like that. Fifty years from now—if there is a fifty years from now—the question will be, what were people thinking in 2001 or 2003 and 2005 about what was obviously the biggest issue of the time: global warming? It's going to seem quite shocking that until about a year ago, people weren't thinking about it at all because they were so obsessed with the war on terror, when in fact the war on terror is obviously a way of keeping them from thinking about what matters. Which is the war on Terra. That's what I think about that.

AUDIENCE: Earlier you made mention of a story about when your mother came to see your work?

IRWIN: Yeah, well, one time I did these paintings...

WESCHLER: Just so you remember, this began with him telling the story about the John Chamberlain foam sculptures, where people would unwrap them and say: “Where’s the work? There’s nothing there.”

IRWIN: Well, I did these paintings at one point. I was trying to paint a painting that didn’t have a mark on it or wasn’t recognizable as a mark. I was struggling with this whole idea of some of those marks after the 11 of September. I was in the area of New York when it came down. So, I’m excited about trying to make ten of them. They were very softly shaped in each direction, so that you weren’t that conscious of the curve itself. But if you put in an extra flat canvas, it was loaded with energy. The flat one really looked flat. So, I was transferring all my interest to this thing having actual energy and an actual physicality to it, but I wasn’t sure what to put on that. Being a painter, I was still using painter’s solutions, so I started making these little bright red dots. I had to do them so they were uniform enough; if they got too uniform you saw them as a pattern, or if they got too un-uniform they became chaos. In both cases, your eye would focus on it. So I was like thirty-five years old and I’m thinking: “This is what I’m doing? I’m making dots?” And between every red dot, I had an optically perfect green dot, and they would go out and they slowly faded away too, so that there was a ball of energy. I only showed them a couple of times. At the time there was not much interest in them.

WESCHLER: You showed them at the L.A. County Museum, right?

IRWIN: There was a show of two people, myself and Kenny Price. I showed these paintings there, and all my cousins called up my mother and said: “Goldie, we’re going down to the museum, we’re going to see Bob’s paintings.” She said: “Oh, I don’t know if you really want to do that.” [Laughter] And they said: “Oh, no, he’s our cousin and we’re very
WESCHLER: My memory of that is, if you just looked at the paintings for a second, you could walk away and say: “Oh, there’s nothing there.” But if you stayed for thirty seconds, suddenly perception became a different kind of process. And if you stood there for a moment, you really became like this ball of energy that pulsed.

IRWING: It was the first time I discovered the frame. There were all of a sudden here this frame, and not only that: there was a shadow around it, because the thing stuck off the wall. I said: “My God!” And what I loved about the shadow was that here’s something that, quantitatively, doesn’t exist. In other words, you can’t weigh it or measure it, and if you move the light, it’d be gone altogether. But from a perceptual point of view, you couldn’t function in the world, you couldn’t move without a shadow. It’s very critical to the whole process of perception. So for me, it was a breakthrough in that suddenly here was this thing that had no quantitative existence in a way, or value, but suddenly great perceptual value.

WESCHLER: This is what I described as inhaling a spore. [Laughter] I have a story I was going to tell about something that happened today, actually…

IRWIN: Oh yeah, I knew you were going to do this. [Laughter]

WESCHLER: This is a good story, right?

IRWIN: Yeah, go ahead. Take your best shot.

WESCHLER: Okay. I was walking out in the Chinati field, and there’s all those big Judd concrete sculptures out there, so I decided to do the whole length and walk them in order.

IRWIN: Some of them have backs and some you can see through; some of them are double and some are triple, and I’m going along and…

WESCHLER: They seem didactic at first.

IRWIN: Yeah. And at first they seem to be very didactic, and I’m thinking: “Oh, yeah, okay, that’s it, now I understand it, now he’s doing it this way, now he’s doing it that way.” And then it actually began to get lyrical and poetical. It’s interesting: this one is rhyming with what he did back there and if I look through here I can see that. And then it got more and more powerful, and I was becoming existential—it’s like it was really a deep, solid thing in the world, and the idea that this guy had taken these huge things, these heavy, huge things, and put them out there in the field, and that this is the middle of the earth—I was just having this big existential moment out there. I was having a great time; it was terrific.

IRWIN: Anyway, so I’m walking back on the path when I see this ant. And this little ant is carrying in front of it this long piece of straw. It must weigh three or four times as much as he does, and the ant is kind of moving along and lifting it up. The piece of straw goes up in the air, and he moves it along, then he puts it down and goes to the front of the straw and pulls it. I just stopped and started watching this ant. He’s pulling the straw along and then pushing it to the side; then he gets it and starts lifting again. It’s going up and up and up, and then he comes over to this tuft of wild grass and kind of moves it around the side of the tuft and puts it down—I swear to God this happened—and he’s kind of pushing it over here, and then he goes around this side and he pushes it over there—and I begin to notice, he lines it up just exactly the way he wants it, and there’s another piece of straw that’s lined up, and another one in front of that. [Laughter] There’s like three of them in a row. And then the ant walked away. [Laughter]

IRWIN: How’d you like to go through the world like that? [Laughter] Talk about making associations. [Laughter] So he’s trying to figure out whether Judd influenced the ant, or the ant influenced Judd, or… [Laughter] Judd, of course, isn’t here to defend himself.

WESCHLER: Anyway, maybe we should stop with that one.

IRWIN: Yeah, we probably should.

WESCHLER: Okay. Thank you very much. [Applause]
Though a fair number of people have died in it, and more have overcome grave illness in it, and some may even have had children in it, I believe that I am the only person, other than my wife, to have been married in the former post hospital at Camp Marfa, later Fort D.A. Russell, which is now slated to be transformed into a permanent installation by the American artist Robert Irwin.

To explain requires a historical turn. In 1910, Francisco Madero published the Plan de San Luis Potosi and Mexico erupted in armed revolution. The ensuing decade-long bloodbath spilled across the Rio Grande into Texas with such alarming regularity that the United States was compelled to establish a series of patrol districts throughout the Southwest in order to protect its border-dwelling citizens and handle the periodic influx of terrified Mexicans fleeing whichever ruthless despot had risen to power.

As the revolution descended deeper and the fighting spilled across the Rio Grande into Mexico, the refugees marched in a column estimated to be twelve miles long for four days to reach Marfa. (The historian J. Tillapaugh describes the Battle of Ojinaga: “With their backs to Mexico, the refugees marched in a column estimated to be twelve miles long for four days to reach Marfa.”)

As the revolution descended deeper into chaos, the Army increased its fortifications at Camp Marfa, the headquarters for the Big Bend patrol district. The outbreak of World War I gave the outpost increased significance, and in May 1919, the two buildings presented a series of interesting views to anyone who happened to be driving around them. In 1921 the campamento Marfa, conocido posteriormente como el Fuerte D.A. Russell, el cual está destinado a ser transformado en una instalación permanente del artista americano Robert Irwin.

El hospital Camp Marfa, Casa del hospital, 1919, Marfa, Texas. — Robert Irwin

Para explicarlo hace falta un poco de historia. En 1910, Francisco Madero publicó el Plan de San Luis Potosi, desencadenando la Revolución mexicana. El derriamiento de sangre duró una década, cruzando el río Bravo y llegando con frecuencia alermante a Texas, por lo que Estados Unidos se vio obligado a establecer una serie de distritos de patrulla en toda el sudoeste para proteger a sus ciudadanas que vivían en la región fronteriza y para acoparse de la gran cantidad de aterrorizadas mexicanas que llegaban huyendo del régimen del despotas de turno. (El historiador J. Tillapaugh describe el exodo que siguió a la Batalla de Ojinaga con estas palabras: “Donde la española a México, las refugiadas marcharon en una columna que se estima media veinte kilómetros de largo durante cuatro días, con destino a Marfa.”) A intensificarse y enturbiasse la Revolución, el Ejército aumentó sus fortificaciones en el Campamento Marfa, sede de operaciones para el distrito Big Bend. Al estallar la Primera Guerra Mundial, el campamento cobró mayor importancia. En mayo de 1919, las dos estructuras que dentro de poco se convertirán en la instalación de Irwin—una gran “U” de 12,040 pies cuadrados apuntando hacia el norte, y un rectángulo de 2,188 pies cuadrados rodeado por la gigantesca “U”, ambos hechos casi totalmente de concreto—fueron construidas para alquilar y alimentar a los elementos del Cuerpo de Transporte Motorizado. Dicho cuerpo fue disuelto al año siguiente, y en 1951 la ubicación del hospital del campamento fue cambiada, desde el centro del pueblo al sitio del edificio antes mencionado. Funcionó allí como hospital militar hasta 1946, cuando el Fuerte D.A. Russell se cerró definitivamente y se vieron sus edificios.

El antiguo hospital fue adquirido por un hombre llamado George Harrison, quien acabó por entregárselo a su hijo. Con el tiempo el edificio se deterioró, malos hierbas cubrieron el dispensario, y el tejado comenzó a panderete. Cada año, los Harrison permitían que se hospedaran allí algunas personas que acudían a Marfa para participar en una competencia de motociclismo, hasta que el techo se encontraba en tan malas condiciones que aun estos inquilinos poco exigentes prefirieron alojarse en otra sieta. Para el año 2002, cuando Mary y yo rentamos durante el verano una casa cerca de allí que había sido la residencia de un oficial, el hospital era ya propiedad de la Fundación Chinati, donada por Tim y Lynn Crowley, que lo habían comprado en 1999. Habían desmantelado el tejado y sacado las ventanas de sus marcos. Todo lo que quedaba era el concreto.

Yo había vivido en Marfa en temporadas desde 1999 y, como mucha gente del pueblo, acabé por considerar a estas ruinas como un tesoro local. Sin su techo, puertas y ventanas, los dos edificios presentaban una interesante serie de vistas a quien pasara por ahí cerca en automóvil. Desde la calle Pinto Canyon uno podía ver, a través de la larga fila de aperturas de las ventanas del ala oriental, una pared interior, resplandeciente bajo la intensa luz solar. En este pared se apreciaban misteriosos cambios de color y de textura que, a su vez, se arremolinaban en torno a otra larga línea de aperturas de ventanas, a través de la cual se vislumbraba todavía otra pared parecida, y otra fila de ventanas ensambladas otro, y otra. A veces, el patrón rítmico de estas perforaciones producía efectos visuales raros, como si el Ejército hubiera diseñado el edificio secretamente como un enorme zoetrope estacionario alrededor del cual giraba el espectador. Los espacios interiores eran igualmente fascinantes.
From within, the building appeared both casually and vivaciously, all the columns of light and shadow, with a modulated lightness and a sense of weight.

After a storm, when shallow pools of rainwater filled the low spots on the slab, reflecting the sky in small ragged patches, the building could start to seem almost entirely conceptual, as if we had stumbled into the mind of an anonymous military draftsman to float through air-drawn plans.

The year before we moved into the house down the street, Chinati had invited Robert Irwin to have his way with the old hospital. Almost immediately, this pairing of site and artist began to seem inevitable, as if the building’s first eighty years had been a mere prologue to incarnation. Since the 1970s, Irwin’s subtle manipulations of light and space had created fascinating environments out of sites as plain as a disused, flourescent-lit room at the Museum of Modern Art, or a empty studio on Market Street in Venice, California. What might he do with a structure as grand as the old hospital? We spent a lot of time speculating about this. On warm summer nights we’d walk the dog down the block and lay for hours on the cold concrete floor, looking at the stars and wondering if somewhere in San Diego, Irwin was fiddling around with sketches of the place.

“What I would like to do is make you aware that you see,” he had once explained. “And that, by not being able to prejudice the situation, you suddenly become party to an entirely different structure of the state of the real.” Considering this, we were fairly certain that the components of whatever Irwin might end up doing were before us already. It was there to figure out. Though he had recently told a lecture crowd that “in a conditional world, on occasion a cannon on the front lawn may be the appropriate response,” we figured it was highly unlikely that he would choose to bulldoze the hospital and erect a stone monument to the Motor Transport Corps. As he himself had put it in 1973, “the sculptural response draws all of its cues [reasons for being] from its surroundings … A quiet distillation of all this—while directly experiencing the site—determines all the facets of the sculptural response: aesthetic sensibility, levels and kinds of physicality, gesture, dimensions, materials, kind and level of finish, details … whether the response should be monumental or ephemeral, aggressive or gentle, useful or useless, sculptural, architectural or simply the planting of a tree or maybe doing nothing at all.”

The last of these possibilities was the most interesting to consider. Perhaps Irwin’s art act in this case would be merely to indicate his intention to make art. In attempts to fathom his plans, observers of the project would look at the building with new eyes, and might even stumble unaware into “an entirely different structure of the state of the real.” Perhaps he was already done, and what we spent the summer lounging around in was, in fact, an Irwin.

This turned out not to be the case. The following spring Mary and I decided to get married. On a whim we asked Chinati if we might hold the ceremony in the old hospital, specifically the former dispensary, the rectangular structure in the center of the complex. When permission was granted, it seemed a clear indication that Irwin’s installation was still forthcoming—otherwise, we would have undoubtedly been denied, but the only proviso of Chinati’s agreement was that we agree not to mar the building in any way. We could not, not for instance, drive bolts into the crumbling walls in order to secure a tent roof. This was fine by us. In retrospect, the dispensary’s rooflessness should have given us more pause, but at the time, it was this very feature that most recommended it as a meaningful site. The building was open to the land and sky, but also to the uses of the past and the desires of the future, and it was in the center of this opening that we wanted to say our vows. We had come to see the ceremony itself as a kind of opening, a door in time, conjured by ritual, through which couples pass into matrimony. All we wanted was to pull out some neck-high weeds, set up some chairs, and stand amidst the ruins with the ghosts of troops dead, ill, and healed attending in the grass, clouds, and sky.

On the date we’d chosen in late May, however, the sun was sure to be broiling hot, and with no shade to seek, the guests would probably spend less time mulling the heavy symbolisms of the site and more time crouched in the corners, cursing our hyphenated name. We decided to drape the hospital with strips of white cloth. The question was how to attach them without marring the building, a question we proceeded to furnish with a variety of unsatisfactory answers. First we sewed horizontal pockets in the ends of the cloth strips and inserted lengths of iron bar into the pockets. This was a miserable failure. The laden barpockets were entirely unable to keep the strips of cloth from sagging in the middle. Adding more bars only tore the hem. More...
problematic was that the rough top edge of the wall shredded anything it touched. The slightest movement back and forth over this scarred concrete made quick work of the lightweight cotton we’d purchased in unadvisable bulk. By the wedding weekend our cloth attachment strategy was still entirely hypothetical.

The day before the ceremony a sizable work party deployed to the site. Throughout the afternoon the building rang with clongs of hammers and showers and whines of saws and drills. Like an old forest, though, its fundamental character was unchanged by tumult. Crowded with carpenters and cabinetmakers and painters and wedding guests on ladders and dogs wrestling underfoot and pizzas arriving and jangly anticipation all around, it seemed no less dignified than it had on those silent evenings, a year before, when we had come alone to lie on the cold slab and wonder about Irwin.

The next morning, we hoisted the cloths into position and were married beneath them. The wind had picked up, and they snapped like sails on a distant roar that struck me, in its persistence, like the buzz of the past. A distant roar that we’d gunned off, we still heard the thunder of their bikes crossing town, a distant roar that struck me, in its persistence, like the buzz of the past.

The bikers’ small sound out on the aerial horizon seemed as near and far as everyone else who’d stopped at the hospital before carrying on—moms media docena de motocicletas estacionadas en la grava. “Ya sabía yo que era algo grave”, declamó una mujer. “Pensé que sería una de esas obras de arte”, agregó, escupiendo en el suelo.

El leño ruído que hacían ya en el horizonte auditivo me parecía tan cercano y tan lejano como todas las demás que habían pasado por el hospital antes de seguir su vida—soldados dormidos recuperándose en sus camas iluminadas por el sol, enfermeras entregadas a su trabajo entre las sombras del patio, médicos llegados de otras lugares para ejercer su profesión en el árido desierto, unos que otro migrante tumbado para robar unas horas de sueño entre las tinieblas, gente caminando en el porche, caballos postando en el prado, Mary y yo, y todos nosotros, con nuestras vidas desconocidas, que pronto nos veríamos solidarizados por el concepto del “uso anterior” en las historias del antiguo hospital del Campamento Marfa, conocido posteriormente como el Fuerte D.A. Russell, el cual está destinado a ser transformado en una instalación permanente del artista americano Robert Irwin.

Jake Silverstein is a Senior Editor at Texas Monthly and a Contributing Editor at Harper’s Magazine. He was formerly a reporter at the Big Bend Sentinel. Ha lives in Austin.
seemed the second most interesting. So I was a surveyor for a while. Then that changed. But it was nice for a few months. After that it wasn’t bad either. We worked with Korean construction companies who did most of the building. I learned what I could so that I could act smart when the officers turned up. They knew even less than I did about it all. I’d try to explain what was getting done. For a long time I was in charge of installing all of the pipes and boilers and everything else in a big boiler plant. I inherited the job from someone else. It was already well underway. The Koreans were really doing it and I was supposed to be in charge. I could talk to the officers as if I really knew what all the pipes did. It wasn’t bad. I was very lucky they put me into that unit. It was all very casual. There were no definite hours. You never really saw the officers. It was better than being left in the infantry. They just had those guys marching all the time. That’s all they did: around and around.

TUCHMAN: Did you ever talk to Bob Morris about his experiences in an engineering unit in Korea?

JUDD: I don’t know Morris very well, I don’t like him and I don’t like his work. I’ve only talked to him a little bit—and that was years ago.

TUCHMAN: Did you draw? You mentioned drafting.

JUDD: A little. I would have had to learn it the same way I had to learn how to survey. I was just doing what I was told to do.

TUCHMAN: How did your sister get a job working at Arts?

JUDD: No, at all. She wanted to do something that had to do with art. She was interested in architecture and went on her own looking for a job. I didn’t know anyone there. She didn’t want some idiot secretarial job. Certainly it was a secretarial job, but at least one in a more interesting context.

TUCHMAN: Did she make you more familiar with the avant-garde? You mentioned a cover by Franz Klein.

JUDD: No, at that time I already knew all I was going to know. I don’t think she worked there when that cover and the other covers were made. That’s when Belle Krasner was editor. My sister worked there part-time when Hilton Kramer was editor and with the woman who was there between Belle Krasner and Hilton Kramer.

TUCHMAN: How did you choose the artists with whom you studied at the Art Students League?

JUDD: I was in the army. I was still pretty young; some old stuff. I was a surveyor for a while. Then that changed. But it was nice for a few months. After that it wasn’t bad either. We worked with Korean construction companies who did most of the building. I learned what I could so that I could act smart when the officers turned up. They knew even less than I did about it all. I’d try to explain what was getting done. For a long time I was in charge of installing all of the pipes and boilers and everything else in a big boiler plant. I inherited the job from someone else. It was already well underway. The Koreans were really doing it and I was supposed to be in charge. I could talk to the officers as if I really knew what all the pipes did. It wasn’t bad. I was very lucky they put me into that unit. It was all very casual. There were no definite hours. You never really saw the officers. It was better than being left in the infantry. They just had those guys marching all the time. That’s all they did: around and around.

TUCHMAN: Did you ever talk to Bob Morris about his experiences in an engineering unit in Korea?

JUDD: I don’t know Morris very well, I don’t like him and I don’t like his work. I’ve only talked to him a little bit—and that was years ago.

TUCHMAN: Did you draw? You mentioned drafting.

JUDD: A little. I would have had to learn it the same way I had to learn how to survey. I was just doing what I was told to do.

TUCHMAN: How did your sister get a job working at Arts?

JUDD: No, at all. She wanted to do something that had to do with art. She was interested in architecture and went on her own looking for a job. I didn’t know anyone there. She didn’t want some idiot secretarial job. Certainly it was a secretarial job, but at least one in a more interesting context.

TUCHMAN: Did she make you more familiar with the avant-garde? You mentioned a cover by Franz Klein.

JUDD: No, at that time I already knew all I was going to know. I don’t think she worked there when that cover and the other covers were made. That’s when Belle Krasner was editor. My sister worked there part-time when Hilton Kramer was editor and with the woman who was there between Belle Krasner and Hilton Kramer.

TUCHMAN: How did you choose the artists with whom you studied at the Art Students League?
JUDD: There was no choice. I was very ignorant about the whole thing. I was serious about realistic art. You forget those little things. I got dissatisfied with it all on my own. Maybe it sticks better. Anyway, I was very slow.

TUCHMAN: During the 1950s, who did you know, with whom did you discuss art?

JUDD: Not many people. I was really by myself. I didn’t make any effort to go down to the Cedar bar or any of those places. Once in a while, someone would haul me along. Once I was in a group show at the Camino Gallery and Leon Smith and somebody else came to look at my work to approve one little painting.

TUCHMAN: Your shows at the Panoras Gallery were reviewed.

JUDD: Yeah. But they didn’t mean too much to me. I wasn’t satisfied with the paintings and I felt I had too far to go. It’s nice to read good reviews but somehow it didn’t register. I’m skeptical of reviewers anyway. It often doesn’t come home too much.

TUCHMAN: Did you enjoy painting?

JUDD: Yes, and I did it for a long time. But I couldn’t get it all going. I did many paintings.

TUCHMAN: What were you trying to achieve in the mid-1950s with your gray and limited colors?

JUDD: There are certain qualities in those paintings that I still find interesting. It’s not easy to develop those qualities. There are still colors in those paintings that I like and still do.

TUCHMAN: ¿Cómo escogiste a los artistas con quienes estudiaste en la Liga de Estudiantes del Arte?

JUDD: No les escogí. Yo era ignorante del todo. Tomaba lo que iba a saber. No creo que ella trabajara allí cuando se hicieron ésa y otras cubiertas. Eso fue cuando Belle Krasner estuvo a cargo de las ediciones. Mi hermana tenía un trabajo en medio tiempo allí, cuando Hilton Kramer estuvo a cargo, y colaboró con la mujer que ocupó el cargo entre Belle Krasner y Hilton Kramer.

TUCHMAN: ¿Te familiarizó ella con la vanguardia? Mencionaste una cubierta hecha por Franz Klein.

JUDD: No, en esa época yo ya sabía todo lo que iba a saber. No creo que ella trabajara allí cuando se hicieron ésa y las demás cubiertas. Eso fue cuando Belle Krasner estuvo a cargo de las ediciones. Mi hermana tenía un trabajo en medio tiempo allí, cuando Hilton Kramer estuvo a cargo, y colaboró con la mujer que ocupó el cargo entre Belle Krasner y Hilton Kramer.
JUDD: I liked it. I did it for a long time. I couldn’t get it all to come together. I did a lot of paintings.

TUCHMAN: Did you know what it was that you weren’t getting together?

JUDD: They were old-fashioned. They’re derived from Cubism but not in a very aware sort of fashion. Some of them are rather ignorant. But you just can’t make a big jump. I always liked Pollock’s work. I realized when I saw it that it was something important and unusual. But I couldn’t make the jump from the paintings I was doing to the scale and the frontalità and the importance of the material and the color and all those things. You worry about losing the little you have which is very shaky at that point. I was very backward about it all. It took me a long time to figure it all out.

TUCHMAN: What were you trying to accomplish during the mid-fifties with a limited and grey palette?

JUDD: There are certain qualities in those paintings which are things I still have and am interested in. It’s not easy to make those qualities stronger. There are certain colors in those paintings that I still like and use. Other qualities are not so great. If you fool around with a landscape scheme that’s old-fashioned, grey is the color. You can’t make very bright colors if there is any kind of realism in it; and they were kind of half abstract. Also, I was making rather large, empty areas against smaller, brighter ones. They’re reproduced in the Ottawa catalogue. After a certain point, I was certainly interested in abstraction, but it was still based on landscape. I was very slow in taking it further.

TUCHMAN: Did you find Frank Stella’s stripe paintings liberating?

JUDD: I was well underway at that point. They were interesting. I was wary of geometry because mostly I associated it with Mondrian. Frank’s paintings have no purism—if you want to use that word—quality whatsoever in their symmetry. That was pretty interesting. When were they shown?


JUDD: Maybe I wasn’t so far along. I was wary about geometry. Frank’s paintings were certainly well ahead of anything I could do.

TUCHMAN: Do you think that their being monochromatic made it easier for you to make objects that were just one color?

JUDD: That’s an idea. But it’s not only Frank. There was Yves Klein. It’s a strong characteristic of several people, Newman, Rothko, even Noland.

TUCHMAN: If you think about the idea of paintings being used in objects, the way Yves Klein did, it’s a great idea, isn’t it?

JUDD: No, it’s just a kind of trickery. It’s not really something that I’d ever try to do. I mean, it’s not really Frank. I’d seen and liked paintings by Klein early on. And the reduction of the number of colors, it’s not a reduction of color. The reduction of the number is something that happened slowly with me without much regard for anything else. It was an effort to get brighter and stronger color, to make more of the color. If you like cadmium red light, you make more of it. Cadmium red light is a color I always liked, but there are a lot of those colors I developed. When the color becomes very important, you have to have fewer colors that are shades and greys.

TUCHMAN: Do you feel there’s one quality that asserts your work more as objects and less as sculpture?

JUDD: I often thought of them as sculpture. And, as I keep saying, it did not come out of sculpture.

TUCHMAN: Do you still feel this way?

JUDD: Yeah. I know, I had almost nothing to do with David Smith. I always liked his work. But it just had nothing to do with me. He’s not Jackson Pollock by a long shot, which I guess is one reason I wasn’t influenced by him. A long time ago, I learned something from his work, or took a little bit: the lateral, sideways movement in things like Hudson River Landscape. I tried to use it in some of the paintings. It’s very flattening, much more in the edges.

TUCHMAN: Do you remember how you decided to mix wood and metal and wood and plastic?

JUDD: Yeah. Color.

TUCHMAN: They’re objects, not sculpture?

JUDD: I never thought of them as sculpture. And, as I keep saying, it did not come out of sculpture.

TUCHMAN: Do you still feel this way?

JUDD: Yeah. I think I had almost nothing to do with David Smith. I always liked his work. But it just had nothing to do with me. He’s not Jackson Pollock by a long shot, which I guess is one reason I wasn’t influenced by him. A long time ago, I learned something from his work, or took a little bit: the lateral, sideways movement in things like Hudson River Landscape. I tried to use it in some of the paintings. It’s very flattening, much more in the edges.

TUCHMAN: Do you remember how you decided to mix wood and metal and wood and plastic?

JUDD: Yeah. Color. The reduction of the number was in the number of colors, not in the color itself. In my case the reduction of the number was gradual, not taming many in another. And you could call it cadmium red light. It was an effort to get brighter and stronger color, to make more of the color. If you like cadmium red light, you make more of it. Cadmium red light is a color I always liked, but there are a lot of those colors I developed. When the color becomes very important, you have to have fewer colors that are shades and greys.

TUCHMAN: Do you feel there’s one quality that asserts your work more as objects and less as sculpture?
DOnalD JuDD, unTITleD (Ds44), PuRPle laCQueR On alumInum anD lIghT CaDmIuM ReD On wOOD.

Carl andre were doing at the time? from art was so remote. The idea of making money didn’t take the gallery business very time my work got to where I liked lerieries to try to have a show. by the right away. I never went to any gal-

JUDD: I lived in a loft on 19th street at the green gallery?

TUCHMAN: Do you feel they’re box-
tUChMan: No. Plastic was impossible to plastic and the metal was much more smaller area, wood. It was the other way around. I spent a lot of time looking around. I’d see a nice piece of aluminum tubing or a strip of plastic on Canal Street and I’d buy it. Those were nice. They were shapes I’d already made. I bought my wood plaques on the wall at the Green Gallery. The repeated shapes were nice. They were shapes I’d already made. The rows of boxes and all that really come out of units I made myself to suit my own purposes.

JUDD: I liked Kusama’s paintings a great deal. She was a much better artist than I was at that time. I was impressed by all that. I have a big white painting by her downstairs [see ill. p. 56]. Her objects went downhill. The first ones aren’t bad. I bought the white painting out of the show she had at the Brata Gallery. About a year ago, I found out that Frank Stella bought one out of the same show. I didn’t know Frank then.

JUDD: What was the Green Gallery like?

TUCHMAN: The Green was not cohesive. Flavin, Morris, some others and I were certainly juniors to the Pop art-

JUDD: How important is it for an artist to invent something?

TUCHMAN: How important is it for an artist to invent something?

JUDD: It’s very important, but it isn’t so much to be first. It’s that you’ve found something that does what you want. In order to do something clearly and strongly, you pretty much have to in-

TUCHMAN: What do you think is the most perceptive thing that’s been written about your art?

JUDD: Not much, really. There’s very little. I need to go back and read Agee’s. There was a piece—it’s not exactly about my work—it’s about finding off some of the clichés and todos parecen creer, no creo que Be-

TUCHMAN: ¿Cuánta importancia tiene para un artista inventar algo?
all that by a guy in Canada in regard to the Ottawa show. It’s a fairly good piece, but it’s more about getting rid of some of the stupid ideas. It was in Arts Canada last winter. Most of the writing is very standard.

TUCHMAN: Do you have problems with the criticism of Minimalism?

JUDD: Well, I hate the term Minimalism. There was in no way a group at all. It’s a real concoction. It’s a publicity thing. And it wasn’t very good to do to Pop Art, either.

TUCHMAN: That’s new in the book. It was just some sort of publicity thing which comes from art history where they think everything comes from styles and groups and so forth, which is kind of doubtful anyway, if you go back and look at it. As I told you before, I didn’t know all these people. And all these people developed at different times. Flavin is the only one I had anything to do with, and it’s not as though we influenced each other. We were friends. We respected each other’s work. And we were both doing what we were doing when we met each other.

TUCHMAN: Do you have any feelings about being seen as an archetype as well as a fall guy?

JUDD: That’s a good question. I can’t answer it.

TUCHMAN: Do you have any feelings about being seen as an archetype as well as a fall guy?

JUDD: Yes. But I think it could be a little bit lower for somebody else. Maybe. The idea is to see a little bit of the top because if it is dead on, when—and this is one of my original grievances against Morris and also everyone else who does it—they keep talking about Minimal Art. It’s just this big vague thing. At least they can identify the people and deal with what’s actually been done. But I do not think there is a group. [William] Rubin has a right to attack it. Let him attack the thing. It would be much better to clear it away and talk about the particular people and particular pieces. I get tired of all the articles. Nobody writes an article unless they love the artist. And that gets to be a bore. Somebody ought to write an article when they think the artist sucks, is not so bad, not so good, in between, when they hate him.

TUCHMAN: When your wall pieces are installed, should they be a certain height?

JUDD: There really is a standard height, but people don’t seem to know this. I would think it would be common knowledge. Somehow they don’t pay attention. There is a little bit of leeway, but it’s only 61 inches to 63 inches.

TUCHMAN: And is that because of your height?

JUDD: Yes. But I think it could be a little bit lower for somebody else. Maybe. The idea is to see a little bit of the top because if it is dead on,
you can’t see either the top or the bottom and it flattens out. You’ve got to see something. I have it a little bit below my eye level.

TUCHMAN: It’s always so magical when you discover the sides.

JUDD: You can’t see the whole thing at once. That’s one of the factors of three-dimensional things.

TUCHMAN: Do you ever consider some of the wall environments, such as the one that is galvanized which you showed at Castelli in ‘71, as murals?

JUDD: No, I don’t think they are like murals. It’s occurred to me that the galvanized wall piece which goes around is sort of like a dado or something in architecture. Perhaps a room. The similarity just occurred to me. It didn’t come from the idea of murals.

TUCHMAN: Is it important to know about art of the past?

JUDD: Anybody who knows about art knows something about the past. I spent a lot of time thinking about people like Matisse, Léger, and so forth. And I spent even more time thinking about Piero della Francesca and Poussin and all of them. I was perfectly knowledgeable about all of that stuff as well as old architecture. I studied with Wittkower at Columbia. For my Masters paper, I considered writing about Puget or Ingres.

TUCHMAN: Would you have liked to have made outdoor works early on?

JUDD: No, I really got interested in that in ‘67. I figured that was always one of the implications. A lot of the freestanding pieces weren’t meant to be inside or outside. They were just freestanding pieces going either way. I like having pieces outdoors.

TUCHMAN: Do you think you’re doing today what you would have liked to have done twenty years ago, if you knew what you know now?

JUDD: I think it’s all pretty coherent and it all goes along without any particular surprises. I don’t think there’s any big sense of progress or change. It just goes along. I like it. These things would not have occurred to me twenty years ago. The three-dimensional thing occurred to me when it occurred to me. I didn’t do it before that. There is a real sequence, all the same. The big boxes downstairs would not have occurred six years previous to their making. Though the ideas are there, the size, the scale, the whole thing wouldn’t have took. Then there’s also the money question. I would have done different things in ‘64 if I had had the money. But they would have been along the line of what I was doing then. It would not have been drastically different.
Donald Judd: Writings: a symposium

In spring 2008, Chinati will host a symposium on the activity of Donald Judd as an art critic and theorist. Judd was a regular exhibition reviewer during the early 1960s and from his very first publication showed a distinctive style; his writing was direct, unusually hard-hitting, and yet marked by moments of subtle irony and humor. He soon began to compose ambitious theoretical essays that categorized the positions of his contemporaries in novel ways. As he became successful as an artist, he never ceased writing them. His later statements present a broadly based critique of American culture and the international art world’s relation to it. Participants in the symposium will include artists, critics, curators, and historians speaking on various aspects of Judd’s writing: its style, its substance, its range, its influence. Collectively, the participants will attempt to articulate the significance of Judd’s writing in relation to the most pressing issues of today—what it may offer to its readers now.

Donald Judd: Raume/Spaces

Dr. Franz Meyer was a member of Chinati’s Board of Directors from 1993 until 2000. During his tenure as Director of Kunstmuseum Basel, he acquired important works by Donald Judd for the museum’s collection, making the Kunstmuseum one of the most comprehensive representations of Judd’s oeuvre, both in sculpture and works on paper, worldwide. Meyer was an absolute authority in his field and a scholar of great integrity. He wrote extensively about a wide range of artists, including Marc Chagall, Walter De Maria, Alberto Giacometti, Henri Matisse, Barnett Newman, and Bruce Nauman. His essays about Donald Judd may be found in Donald Judd: Raum/Spaces (Cantz, 1994) and the exhibition catalogue for the Judd retrospective at Tate Modern in 2004. Dr. Meyer died in his home in Zurich this spring. At his memorial, Dr. Dieter Schwarz, Director of the Kunstmuseum in Winterthur, Switzerland, gave the following address honoring Meyer’s achievements.

Franz Meyer, ladies and gentlemen:

Over the past few years I occasionally visited Franz Meyer, sometimes for research and work, but generally just for conversation. During these visits I would bring him news from the museum world, speaking of exhibitions and changes in the museums I visited during my travels in Europe and the United States. Franz Meyer followed these occurrences with the greatest interest, asking questions, making comments, and expressing
admiration, criticism, and doubt. In other words, he ardently took part in the events of this world that he had so admirably furthered and influenced. The reports about museums, in turn, helped me out of the straits one finds oneself in when confronted with helplessness and suffering: they created an acceptable basis upon which to face in conversation a man whose inquiring and challenging intellectu-
ality was by no means slackening, but unremittingly at work. Nevertheless, decades separated me from his time at the head of institu-
tions. I know Franz Meyer’s work at the Kunsthalle Bern only from cata-
logs published for the exhibitions he arranged, and I was not a witness to the start of his activities in Basel. Therefore, however, some memories are indeed present—of the exhibi-
tion of Joseph Beuys’ works from the Ströher Collection, of Walter De
María and Hanne Darboven, of Marcel Broodthaers and Dan Flavin, and of the great Picasso show of 1976. Yet my observations were those of a youthful amateur who could nei-
ther imagine working in a museum himself, nor who had yet dared see himself as the person responsible for a museum. Only in hindsight did I come to realize what Franz Meyer had accomplished in Bern and Basel. Only from my own practice did I realize what the museum meant to him, and more than that: that his work could even serve generally as a model for dealing with the art museum as institution. Yet now I would like to take Walter Benjamin’s advice, and avoid the word “I” if possible, because one of the fundamentals Franz Meyer gave to museums was the renuncia-
tion of ideas of personal preference and taste. Other standards should be applied: those set by the artwork that one initially experiences as strange and enigmatic. This had already become apparent in his exhibition activities at the Kunsthalle Bern from 1955 to 1961. In the years follow-
ing the war, directing an art institu-
tion was an exceptional opportunity. On the one hand, the catastrophe of the Second World War had abruptly destroyed avant-garde movements or driven them overseas. On the other hand, a new generation with strong artistic personalities began to make its presence felt in Europe and the United States. Thus it was a matter of reviving the nearby and yet still withdrawn tradition of modernism, to prevent it from being forgotten. This rapprochement with the recent past se encuentra al tratar a una persona desvalida y afligida, puesto que forman-
ban una base sobre la cual podía afian-
zararse en mis conversaciones con este hombre cuyas facultades intelectuales, lejos de atenuarse, seguían manifestán-
dose incansablemente. Sin embargo, me distanciaban varias décadas del tiempo cuando él dirigiera las instituciones. Mi conocimiento del trabajo de Franz Meyer en el Kunsthalle Bern proviene tan sólo de los catálogos publicados con motivo de las exhibicio-
nes que él organizó allí, y no he testigo del comienzo de sus actividades en Bas-
el. Guardo algunas recuerdos—de la exhibición de obras de Joseph Beuys de la Colección Ströher, de Walter De María y Hanne Darboven, de Marcel Broo-
dthaers y Dan Flavin, y de la magnífica exhibición de Picasso en 1976. Pero mis observaciones fueron las de un joven amateur que no se imaginaba laboran-
do en un museo, ni mucho menos como titular de un museo. Sólo con mirada retrospectiva pude darme cuenta de lo que Franz Meyer había logrado en Bern y en Basel, y sólo por habérmelo ejercido yo misma la profusión pude darme cabal cuenta de lo que el museo significaba para él, y más aún, comprender que su trabajo podía servir de modelo para en-
focar al museo como institución. Mas ahora quisiera seguir el consejo de Walter Benjamin y evitar en lo posible el pronombre “yo”, porque uno de los conceptos fundamentales que Franz Meyer aportó a los museos fue el recha-
zo de ideas basadas en las preferencias y gustos personales. Deben aplicarse otras normas, determinadas por las obras de arte que una percibe inicial-
mente como extrañas y enigmáticas. Esta era ya evidente en sus actividades relacionadas con las exhibiciones del Kunsthalle Bern entre 1955 y 1961. A raíz de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, la oportunidad de dirigir una institución de arte era una casa extraordinaria. Por un lado, la catástrofe de la guerra había destruido repentinamente los mo-
vimientos de vanguardia, o la había exiliado al extranjero; por otra parte, empezaba a imponerse una nueva ge-
genación de personalidades artísticas en Europa y los Estados Unidos. Así, se trataba de resucitar la tradición cerca-
na pero desusada del modernismo, de impedir que se destinara al olvido. Esta aproximación con el pasado reciente inició con la exhibición Arp/Schwitter, aunque cabe recordar que sus protagonis-
tes—como Arp—vivían aún —como Schwitter—habían muerto pocos años antes. Así, se avanzaba no sólo por el campo de la memoria, sino también por el campo del desarrollo creativo en el arte contemporáneo, un desarrollo
began with the Arp/Schwitters exhi-
biition, although one should not for-
get that its protagonists were either still alive—in Arp’s case—or had
died only few years earlier—as with
Schwitters. Thus one was traversing
not only the field of memory, but also
the field of creative development in
contemporary art; development that
for Arp was by no means over at
the time. Included in Franz Meyer’s re-
examination of modernism were
the exhibitions of Alexej Jawlensky,
Oskar Schlemmer, Max Ernst, and
Marc Chagall, but particularly that of
Kasimir Malevich, whose work had
d not yet become the subject of art his-
torical research, but had fallen into
complete obscurity. Not only was an
artist honored there, but a chapter of
art history was newly reopened. While
those named have all been accepted
as canonical artists in the meantime,
it is not the canon that can be read
from Franz Meyer’s compilations,
but rather the Kunsthalle director’s
single-minded interest in individual
accomplishments. Still more clearly,
one can see an interest in the
fundamental aspiration of the
artwork, which Franz Meyer dis-
cerned in the classical avant-garde
and elaborated upon very precisely
que para Arp, en aquellos años, esta-
ba lejos de tocar a su fin. Dentro de la
nueva mirada que fija Franz Meyer en
el modernismo se incluyen exhibiciones de
Alexej Jawlensky, Oskar Schlemmer,
Max Ernst y Marc Chagall, pero sobre
todo de Kasimir Malevich, cuya obra,
relegada al olvido, no era objeto ta-
davía de investigaciones históricas. Al
revalorarla, se rindió homenaje a un
artista y se abrió un nuevo capítulo en
la historia del arte. Aunque es cierto que con el tiempo to-
dos los artistas mencionados han sido
aceptados canonicalmente, no es éste el

fRanz meyeR
in his catalogue texts. While the catalogues, compared with today’s publications, were slender booklets containing few illustrations, their strength lay that much more in their texts, which gave an account of the exhibited works. Generally written in a single evening a few days before the exhibition’s opening, as Franz Meyer once described to me, these texts possessed the quality of forcefully describing the perceptions he had gained of the work during the exhibition’s installation, while simultaneously placing them in a broader context. It was art history experienced directly, composed from a perspective of respect for the living effect of the work, and not according to the—still mostly nonexistent—literature. In 1958, the Odilon Redon exhibition led still further back to the sources of modernism. He too had a place in the 20th century. This view of early modernism also did not ignore the artists active in his immediate circle. Through exhibitions, Franz Meyer drew renewed attention to figures such as the Swiss Marius Borgaëud; Augusto Giacometti, whose work had not yet found new friends due to the enthusiasm for Jugendstil: the aloof, profound René Aubersonais; and Cuno Amiet, for whose 90th birthday he prepared an exhibition that also incorporated new works.

With Amiet we move closer to Alberto Giacometti, Amiet’s godson, and thus to contemporary art. For Franz Meyer, Giacometti was an artist who remained compelling and pioneering beyond the limits of the exhibition. During Franz Meyer’s Paris years, beginning in 1951, he came to know Giacometti’s work, became fascinated by it, and in Bern in 1956 he took the opportunity to present the artist for the first time in a broadly conceived retrospective. Yet for Franz Meyer it was not just the work’s contemporary appearance that he felt unavoidably confronted with, and that forced him to avow his support for this artist; it was just as much the certainty of finding a “contemporary form of grand classicism,” which gave the impression of being as powerful as the works of the Sumerians and Egyptians. At the same time he found in Giacometti’s unwillingness to compromise an “objectivity of perception beyond all convention,” which allowed comparison with Cézanne. In his encounters with Giacometti he had been impressed by the way the artist constantly examined whether “Art, even in works upon which his gaze fell by chance, could stand up to reality,” This established an idea that Franz Meyer would come back to again and again, parallel to his art-historical argumentation and with just as much weight.

Also from his time in Paris, Franz Meyer brought young artists from the école de Paris to Bern—such as Nicolas de Staël and Serge Poliaff. While these names may have lingered in 1951, he came to know Giacometti’s work, became fascinated and to fascinate by the work of Cézanne. In his encounters with Giacometti he had been impressed by the way the artist constantly examined whether “Art, even in works upon which his gaze fell by chance, could stand up to reality,” This established an idea paralela a su argumentación en el campo de la historia del arte y con un peso igualmente importante. También durante su tiempo en París, Meyer llevó a jóvenes artistas desde la École de Paris a Berna—entre ellos Nicolás de Stael y Sergei Poliaff. Aunque tal vez posteriormente haya tenido en menor estima a estas figuras, una ocupa siempre un lugar seguro: el holandés Bram van Velde, cuyas pinturas aparecieron en el Kunsthalle en 1958. Esta fue la primera exhibición grande dedicada por una institución a la obra del solitario pintor, y venía a confirmar la impresión de Meyer de que se trataba de un temperamento único. Lo que le fascinaba y a la vez le inquietaba era “la dificultad de clasificar la atracción
from the Kunstmuseum Winterthur.

The pivotal event of his Bern period after Giacometti was the 1959 premiere of Henri Matisse’s large gouaches découpées. Although so completely self-evident from our standpoint today, they were by no means considered established art following Matisse’s death. On the contrary: if one reads Hilary Spurling’s newly published and carefully documented biography of the artist, one understands Matisse’s fear of being either forgotten or reduced to a particular period even during his lifetime. Very little took place in France upon his 80th birthday or even after his death, and many chucked at or openly spurred his last outstanding work, the Chapelle du Rosaire in Vence. Thus this Matisse exhibition in Bern was not the comfortable review of an established modern artist; it was a necessary statement and the presentation of thoroughly contemporary work that shattered the constraints of the decade with its new understanding of color in space. With Matisse and Giacometti, and later with Newman and Judd, Franz Meyer drew a mental line through the art of the 20th century: a line that was not self-evident and predetermined as such, because it followed neither stylistic relationships nor formal genealogies. A common trait among these artists is that they require viewers to take up a new position in relation to the work, asking them not to perceive the work as a thing consisting only of itself, but rather as an object that reveals itself in the process of perception, and that sets the viewer’s fixed position in motion. Rarely before in the 20th century had the artwork’s aspiration to the Kunstmuseum Winterthur.

The statement of this artist’s rebellion was complete. But if he was alone in his passion for them—an error of judgment, a mistake? When I spoke to him about van Velde after the Geneva exhibition of 1995 and revealed my enthusiasm for the painter, he surprised him just as much as it confirmed him in his opinion. After many conversations, this also finally led to his generous gesture of donating two important, large-format gouaches from his collection of these pinturas, de ubicarlas en relación con otras manifestaciones del arte y de puntualizar las cualidades específicas propias del pintor”. La contemplación de la obra de van Velde llevó a Meyer a afirmar que: “La esencia de su pintura carece de precedentes y se basa exclusivamente en sí misma. [...] Está poseído de una obsesión plena, la de no dejar que nada se interponga entre él y esta esencia”. Esta idea, expresada en estos términos, fue una revelación para Meyer, y posteriormente la reformuló al declarar que esta obra constituía “un don surgido de la plenitud del ser”. Pero hasta los últimos años de su vida le acosaron dudas sobre si la unicidad de este artista rebelde era aceptable y si estas pinturas que tanto le encantaban merecían un lugar distinguido en la historia o si sólo él se apasionaba por ellas a consecuencia de un juicio equivocado, un error. Cuando conversé con él, después de la exhibición de Ginebra de 1995, y le externé el entusiasmo que yo sentía por el pintor, Meyer quedó sorprendido y a la vez confirmado en su opinión. Tras muchas pláticas entre nosotros, Meyer acabó por donar dos importantes gouaches de formato grande, sacados de su colección, al Kunstmuseum Winterthur.

El acontecimiento crucial de su tiempo en Berna después de Giacometti ocurrió en 1959, con la presentación de las grandes “gouaches découpées” de Henri Matisse. Aunque hay en día se reconoce ampliamente el lugar que ocupan estas obras dentro del arte establecido, a raíz de la muerte de Matisse no eran así considerados. Al contrario, si uno lee la biografía rigurosamente documentada que Hilary Spurling publicó recientemente, se da cuenta del temor que sentía Matisse de que se le olvidara o se le encasillara en un solo período, aun durante su vida. En Francia se le reconoció muy poco con motivo de cumplir sus ochenta años e incluso después de su muerte, y mucha gente se reía o se burlaba abiertamente de su último obra importante, la Chapelle du Rosaire en Vence. Así, la exhibición de Matisse en Berna no fue una revisión placentera de un artista moderno establecido, sino una declaración necesaria y la presentación de obras netamente contemporáneas que aniquilaron las limitaciones de la época con su nueva concepción del color en el espacio. Con Matisse y Giacometti, y más adelante con Newman y Judd, Franz Meyer trazó una línea mental a través del arte del siglo XX, una línea no evidente ni pre-determinada como tal, que no seguía ni relaciones estilísticas ni genealogías. Un rasgo que tienen en común estos artistas es que exigen que quien contemple sus obras asuma una posición nueva en relación con las mismas, pidiéndoles que no perciba la obra como una cosa consistente sólo en sí misma, sino como un objeto que se revela mediante un proceso de percepción, un proceso que pone en movimiento la posición fija del observador. Rara vez antes en el siglo XX se había manifestado la aspiración del artista con mayor arrojo, y el llamado de Rilke—“Debes cambiar tu vida”, concebido ante el Torso de Apolo—en-
cuenta una de sus más vividas manifestaciones en la obra de las artistas mencionadas. Hoy en día las actitudes y opiniones se dividen siguiendo estas directrices, pues no todas las actores y espectadores en el campo del arte pueden defenderse ante la exuberancia que caracteriza a estas posiciones. La misma línea se encuentra trazada también a través de las actividades que realizó Franz Meyer en beneficio del museo de Basel, el Öffentliche Kunstmuseum Basel, que Meyer dirigió a partir de 1962, reemplazando al muy admirado Georg Schmidt. En 1974, answers. He was always prepared to admit responsibility for so-called errors, supposed omissions and erroneous decisions, and to leave room for uncertainty. This rigor in questioning others and himself was based on his inexorable struggle to make decisions that could be defended in the face of history, and out of a conviction that the individual artworks were part of a greater whole. In time the lyrical Sam Francis, who had greatly inspired him in Berne, could no longer keep pace. Frank Stella or Ellsworth Kelly— he asked himself at the

cortesía de la fortuna de adoptar una postura bien

caste de art history? This he did by

cans and conversely his hanging the col-

cion as an exception, while the Kunsthalle had the mandate to continually bring new information to the city through its exhibitions. This was a usefully functioning division of responsibility because it was also reflected in the museum personnel— with Arnold Rüdlinger, and later with Carlo Huber. In the practices of numerous museums, Franz Meyer had, as he once explained, found a central defect. What was generally missing in his eyes was “the will to carry out historical processing and present an overall view, to provide insight into the function of art histori-

collection basel” and of the necessity of ad-

ciones que distingue el inventario central de la
colección de tal manera que ilustrasen las
diversas líneas de evolución dentro de
la historia del arte.

En nuestras conversaciones durante los últimos años, Franz Meyer me preguntó reiteradamente, cuando yo le hablaba de adquisiciones o planes: ¿Qué razo-

nes hay para hacer esto, cómo puedes justificarlo en función de la historia del arte? Estas interrogantes no me las planteaba, ni mucho menos, con tona severa, como quien ya conoce las con-
testaciones y sólo espera la respuesta obligatoria del aprendiz. Al contrario, en su voz se percibía la angustia de su propia búsqueda de razones y respues-
tas. Estaba siempre dispuesto a asumir la responsabilidad por los llamados errores, supuestas omisiones y decisi-
nes imprudentes, dejando cabida para la incertidumbre. Este rigor, al interro-
gar a las demás y al interrogarse a sí mismo, se basaba en su inexorable lu-
cha por tomar decisiones que pudieran defenderse ante los hechos de la historia y en su convencimiento de que las obras de arte individuales forman parte de un todo. Más tarde, Sam Francis, quien tanto había influido en Meyer en Berne, ya no podía seguirle el ritmo. “Frank Stella o Ellsworth Kelly”, se preguntaba a finales de los sesenta en relación con la colección, y decidió definitivamente a favor de Stella, con la consecuencia de permitir que se seguirán Carl Andre, Sol LeWitt y especialmente Donald Judd a follow. He backed Jasper Johns instead of the more spectacular Rauschenberg, and then concentrated on Claes Olden-

burg and Andy Warhol instead of the many other representatives of Pop, which did not preclude granting the enigmatic Joseph Beuys an important position. In retrospect, not just his surety of selection is impressive, but particularly his clear desire to take a position and to concern himself with fundamentals instead of individual phenomena, and his courage to
choose a path without immediately allowing himself to be diverted and disconcerted, which would have had the consequence of confusing visitors and not from the clearer, responsibility-evading feeling of always needing to justify it to the contemporary viewpoint.

It was therefore tragic for Franz Meyer if the suggestions he had prepared so carefully were not accepted, if he met with rejection, or if a chance purchase disturbed his carefully-thought-out concept. Decades later he recollected with great clarity any such incidents that challenged conclusions he had reached after profound consideration. In contrast, he hardly ever discussed his great successes, such as the great public support for the Picasso purchases of 1967, almost as if popular success would have been an excess of applause. The emotional and even thoroughly existential connection between Franz Meyer and the decisions he made and courses he set for the museum suggest that these were not just based on a purely formal and historical analysis. In a 1996 memoiral address for Georg Schmidt, Franz Meyer divulged the deeper motivations upon which his reflections about art were based: “Georg Schmidt concerned himself so intensively with the art of the 20th century not just because it represented an outstanding chapter in the textbook of art history, but because the accomplishments of the new artists remained connected with a hope and perhaps even with a need, which one felt in one’s own life. In this sense, the collection retains its special credibility only if such a foundation can still be felt. This also means that in every era one must continue to add works with such far-reaching significance that one may continue, just as before in the old concept, to help write art history. Art in the sense of this art history means: those achievements of which one senses the special momentousness, which do not evade the complexity of the actual, and which use engaging artistic argumentation to open new horizons by answering a pressing contemporary question.”

Concepts like hope and need, which originated from an intellectual world that one can inadequately describe as existentialist, remained central for Franz Meyer. They arose from the subjective experience of reality and the contemporary viewpoint as he had encountered them in Giacometti’s work as the touchstone of art, and they implicitly accompanied the effort of responding objectively to the guidelines of art history. Who could have understood this better than Barnett Newman, who signed his canvases with his name, and in this juxtaposition dramatically illustrated the dialectic of the subjective gesture and the objectivity of the work? Franz Meyer had already put together an outstanding group of Newman’s works in Basel, and with a great final effort he also dedicated a monograph to this artist, which took its Stations of the Cross as its theme. The editorial work on this book, which Franz Meyer had entrusted to me, brought us together in the last few years in the most intensive manner, and I recall the Saturday morning when he invited me to read to him the entire, by then completed book. With breathless intensity, he listened from the first to the last sentence. At the beginning of his observations, Franz Meyer had confessed his inability to find adequate words for his feelings in front of Newman’s paintings. Through formal and content-related questioning he attempted to come closer to Newman’s “subject matter.” In this way he finally arrived at the paintings in which Newman had faced his own death—“where simultaneously the greatest clarity is created, and darkness is overcome.”

NOTES
2 Ibid., p. 140.
3 Ibid., p. 155.
4 Ibid., p. 182.
5 Ibid., p. 183.
6 Ibid., p. 185.
7 Ibid., p. 63.
8 Ibid., p. 64.
Marfa Notes

To get to Marfa I have to go through home first. And that means visiting Odessa, Texas: home to my mom’s side of the family; the place where mom and us kids lived when dad was serving in Vietnam. Back in the 1920s the town had an oil boom and that’s when my great-grandfather, Bruce Durham, moved the family out there. He had several businesses in the black part of town and even built sidewalks in an effort to uplift his community. Those were the boom days. These days all the buildings and sidewalks that Grandaddy Bruce built have fallen on hard times or fallen down or they’ve been torn down and nothing’s been put up in their place. These days, Odessa isn’t booming like it was, and my family, the ones still there, are all underneath the ground. I spend a day in Odessa, visiting the family graves and shrunken streets. Things are ruined and gone.

From Odessa to Marfa is south and west. I get on I-20. The hype says Marfa is magical. I barrel down the road longing for magic—trouble is, I stopped believing in hype around 1980. Mist and fog swaddle up my white rental car as I head out of Odessa. Not far from town I stop at the Meteor Crater. I walk through the low valley and talk with the guy who runs the museum. When I was a kid there wasn’t a museum on this spot, just the hole, and we would drive out from Odessa to look at las calles para mejorar la comunidad. Aquellos tiempos fueron de bonanza. Ahora todos los edificios y banquetas construidos por mi bisabuelo están en péssimas condiciones o han sido demolidos, y no se ha erigido nada en su lugar. En la actualidad Odessa no es tan próspera, y mi familia, los que siguen allí, están todas bajo tierra. Pasé un día en Odessa, visitando a mis familiares en el cementerio y reconociendo las encajadas calles. Las casas han quedado en ruinas o se han ido. Marfa se encuentra al sur y al oeste de Odessa. Me meto en la carretera I-20. Me han dicho, quizá exagerando, que Marfa es un lugar mágico. Voy manejando por la carretera, anhelando toparse con la magia, pero lo triste del caso es que dejé de creer en las exageraciones publicitarias hacia 1980. Mas lo cierto es que estoy viajando con destino a Marfa, como una peregrina que se dirige a Belén, porque el viaje de gente aficionada al teatro que vive en Marfa ha tenido el descaro de querer participar en el estreno internacional de mi obra 365 días/365 piezas de teatro.*

* El director de teatro Rob Weiner, la Fundación Chinati y, sobre toda, Marfa, se han unido a la red de Texas (el festival completo abarca 14 redes más, cada una con 52 teatros). Cada una de las teatros, más de 700 en total, ha acepta-
it because we didn’t have a lot of money and you could look at the crater for free.

Back on the road the next must-stop is Monahans Sandhills State Park: probably my favorite place on earth. Nothing but hills and hills of hot yellow sand dotted with tin-roofed picnic lean-tos, wooden tables, and well-used barbecue pits. There’s a windmill, its blades say “The Aer-

motor Chicago” and it (or one just like it) has been standing there since the ‘60s when we used to make weekly visits, coming out to sand-
surf and picnic—another no-cost joy for us kids. Now the park charges two-bucks-a-head admission price, but they also have nice upgrades like sand surfboards for rent and an information station that sells t-shirts, gorgeous postcards, and lots of cool books on Texas history. I sit on a sand hill for a few hours playing my guitar—serenading the old windmill. Nobody’s out surfing today.

Back in the car I keep heading west. After about an hour there’s Pecos, famous for cantaloupes, “west of the Pecos” justice, and rodeos—they had the first one ever in 1883. At the West of the Pecos Museum folks get their pictures taken in a barroom where there was a wild shootout. I load up on the history then head south. On Route 17, Toward Marfa. I put Memphis Minnie on the CD player and let her loop:

I have looked the world over/
Enjoyed good things.

Balmorhea and its springs and the world’s largest outdoor swimming pool, Fort Davis and its historic frontier post. I watch the sights go by in silence and then, I’m yelling. Loud. A good piece off to the right stands the northern range of the Davis Mountains. They burst up out of the ground, red-brown and steep and jagged and enormous and the hills are alive and singing and I’m yelling and hooting singing right back with joy. Texas joy.

Balmorea, con sus aguas termales y la piscina exterior más grande del mundo, y luego Fort Davis, con su histórica fortaleza. Veo avanzar el paisaje en silencio, y entonces me sorprende gritando. A voz en cuello. A lo lejos, a mano de la carretera, veo la sierra norte de las montañas Davis. Irrompo de tierra estos empinados y enormes picos rocosos de color rajinegra, cubriendo vida y cantando, y por mi parte yo les devuelvo el canto a todo pulmón, llena de regocijo.

Regocijo tejano. Las montañas Davis me acompañan por todo el camino hasta Marfa. Llego a la ciudad y medioche. Sigo mane-

jando, pero estoy perdida. Sé que Rob y el grupo están en ensayos, pero me ha olvidado preguntarle dónde qué-
da el teatro, y no tengo el celular de Rob. Llamo a la Fundación Chinati. Una señora muy amable con la que parece
The Davis Mountains usher me all the way to Marfa. I get into town at dusk. I drive around lost. I know Rob and the group are rehearsing but I forgot to ask Rob where the theatre is and I also forgot to get his cell phone number. I call up the Chinati Foundation. A friendly woman with what sounds like a German accent gives me directions, but, as I’m not sure where I am exactly, I just get more lost. No one on the streets to give me directions. Luckily, Marfa’s small, so lost is small-scale. I take to driving around looking for a gathering of cars. My instinct proves right: in front of a big warehouse sort of building there are several cars, one’s a beat-up white Merc station wagon, and, when I look closer, a beautiful poster in a showcase-window announcing the upcoming production of 365 Days/365 Plays.

The outside of the theatre is rough and tumble, rustic hip, shabby chic, or, if the government wanted to fly over and look for glaring beauty, or, if the government wanted to fly and tumble, rustic hip, shabby chic. The outside of the theatre is rough. Beautiful poster in a showcase-window announcing the upcoming production of 365 Days/365 Plays.

I turn to look. Rob introduces himself and I give him a hug. Everything’s feeling delicious. Next came several perfect days in Marfa as they presented week eleven of the 365 play cycle. Here’s a selection from my 365 reasons why the show in Marfa was so yummy:

REASON 1: It was an exceptional event from the ground up. Rob had put an ad in the paper inviting all interested people to be in a play. He says about sixty people showed up and he cast them all.

REASON 8: The productions were fully realized. Lights, sound, costumes, everything. And they performed one play each day.

REASON 27: The price of admission to the shows was a potluck dish. After each performance the whole of Marfa sat at those picnic tables and ate supper together.

REASON 88: The gorgeous Judd sculptures.
IF I HAD TO MURDER ME SOMEBODY

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31

IF I HAD TO MURDER ME SOMEBODY

HORSE AND RIDER
(Rob Weiner comes on stage. Actually he’s been there all along but the stage is as huge as a field of Judds so we didn’t notice him at first. He drives up in beat-up white Mercedes station wagon. He’s chainsmoking and, no, he’s not thinking of quitting. He’s been a dear friend to Sova for years and years. They embrace as dear friends do. Parks is just meeting him, but they greet each other more enthusiastically than that.)

WEINER: Welcome to Marfa. See our theatre?

P: Too cool.

W: You know, I cast the play by putting an ad in the newspaper.

(The theatre Rob and Tim have hooked up blows the mind of the playwright. As her mind blows open, several things are revealed: a family of tumbleweeds, visitors from the southern border, wind through the Judds, then pause for a delicious picnic lunch spread out on a red and white checkered blanket; the famed picnic lunch comes out; the govern- ment weather balloon/spy ship circles in the sky, dearly beloved folks long gone rise up from the dead and decide to stay, and finally, a sky full of stars blows out of the playwright’s mind along with all the rest. A tourist visiting the Judds wonders silently if this is truly a stage direction, if this is truly a play. And for more information on how I came to write 365 Days/365 Plays and the year-long global grassroots world premiere, please visit our website: 365days365plays.com. Thanks!

EUR: ¿saben? hice el casting de la obra poniendo un anuncio en el periódico.

P: Sensacional.

W: ¿Saben? Hice el casting de la obra poniendo un anuncio en el periódico.

(Rob Weiner sale al escenario. En realidad ha estado allí desde el principio, pero el escenario es tan imenso como un campo lleno de esculturas de Judd, así que no nos habíamos fijado en él. Llega manejando un maltrato Mercedes blanco. Está fumando constantemente y, no, no piensa dejar el hábito. Ha sido amigo íntimo de Sova durante tantos años. Se abrazan como amigos entrañables. Parks lo conoce por primera vez, pero se saludan con mucho entusiasmo.)

WEINER: Bienvenidos a Marfa. ¿Ven nuestro teatro?

P: Tiene sentido.

W: ¿Saben? ¿Han visto el casting de la obra poniendo un anuncio en el periódico?

(Rob y Tim han creado una obra de teatro, cuya cabeza se abre revelando lo siguiente: una familia de chamizos, visitantes de la frontera sur, el viento que sopla entre las esculturas de Judd, una pausa para un delicioso picnic con comida de turistas, las meravillosas luces de Marfa; el dirigible meteorológico del gobierno navega por el cielo, los queridos seres muertos, desenterrados y decididos a quedarse; y, por último, un cielo repleto de estrellas sale disparado de la mente de la dramaturga, junto con todo lo demás. Un turista que visita las obras de Judd se pregunta en silencio si ésta es realmente una occasio- nación teatral o si ésta es realmente una obra de teatro. Y justo a tiempo, llega una mujer en estado avanzado de embarazo, seguida de un hombre de amplio trasero. Ella es el Medio; él es el Fin.)

MIDDLE: Is this part of the 365 thing?

P/S/W: Si, se puede.

END: How about I sing a song?

W: Is it a closer?

END: More like an opener.

P: How about saving it for next time?

S: Will there be a Next Time, do you think?

(The town of Marfa enters. She stands, resplendent.)

MARFA: There will be a Next Time.

(The Marfa lights blaze up again, brighter than ever before, and there’s enough Marfa magic fairy dust for everyone. Forever.)

(beginning of play)

Xoxoxox

SLP

* For more information on how I came to write 365 Days/365 Plays and the year-long global grassroots world premiere, please visit our website: 365days365plays.com. Thanks!

* Para más información sobre la génesis de 365 días/365 piezas de teatro y su estreno internacional de un año de duración, visite nuestro sitio de web: 365days365plays.com. ¡Gracias!
STERRY BUTCHER

365 Days/365 Plays

It started with a car door’s slam, an engine rev, and the sudden beam of twin headlights in the gloaming. We were curious. Most of us in the audience at the Goode-Crowley Theatre last January didn’t know much about what would go on for the next six nights. Pulitzer Prize-winning author Suzan-Lori Parks had written a play each day for an entire year about what would go on for the next six nights. Pulitzer Prize-winning Suzan-Lori Parks, ganadora del Premio Pulitzer, había escrito una pieza teatral cada día durante un año entero, con el título apropiado de 365 días/365 piezas. Estas obras están siendo montadas en orden secuencial en cientos de lugares en todo Estados Unidos, y el Director Asociado de Chinati, Rob Weiner, cuya segunda pasión es el teatro, ha firmado Marfa para una semana de representaciones serían en Marfa. Con lisonjas y palabras melíflucas convenció a un grupo de actores, técnicos especializados en iluminación, sonido, vestuario y construcción de escenarios, y algunos asistentes, de que arrimaran el hombro. El pequeño teatro fue rehauled and saw major improvements by its co-owner Tim Crowley, a former Chinati board member. Y se acabó. Han pasado tal vez cinco minutos, un vertiginoso tornado teatral.

STERRY BUTCHER

365 días/
365 piezas
de teatro

Todo comenzó con un portazo, una aceleración del motor y el doble haz de luz proyectado por el faro del auto en el crepúsculo. Teníamos curiosidad. La mayoría de nosotros en el auditorio del Teatro Goode-Crowley el pasado enero no sabíamos aciencia cierta qué iba a suceder durante las próximas seis noches. La autora Suzan-Lori Parks, ganadora del Premio Pulitzer, había escrito una pieza teatral cada día durante un año entero, con el título apropiado de 365 días/365 piezas. Estas obras están siendo montadas en orden secuencial en cientos de lugares en todo Estados Unidos, y el Director Asociado de Chinati, Rob Weiner, cuya segunda pasión es el teatro, ha firmado Marfa para una semana de representaciones serían en Marfa. Con lisonjas y palabras melíflucas convenció a un grupo de actores, técnicos especializados en iluminación, sonido, vestuario y construcción de escenarios, y algunos asistentes, de que arrimaran el hombro. El pequeño teatro fue rehauled and saw major improvements by its co-owner Tim Crowley, a former Chinati board member. Y se acabó. Han pasado tal vez cinco minutos, un vertiginoso tornado teatral.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2
SPACE

GROUNDHOG (FOR SOVA)
The plays are all like that, brief and always unexpected. One night the audience wandered in at show time to find the play apparently still in rehearsal. It was so unlike Rob to not have everything together already.

“Louder—you have to do it louder,” he ranted at an actor. “Come on in, find seats,” he hollered at the audience. “We’ll do the premiere in just a minute.”

The rehearsal went on, with much wild fanfare and action. A woman wielding a knife ran to pet a dog, while game-show music blared and two fellows with posthole diggers competed in a race for the deepest hole. A bathing beauty whose bee-hive and legs were each enviably tall entered the stage and stood there wringing a mourning clothes mounted a rock on stage and stood there wringing a handkerchief, elegant and inconsolable. Another explored the relationship between a wise, long-suffering horse and its rider, as a desert landscape rolled slowly behind them.

This last play was entirely devoid of words. To the sound of clanging bells and horse and its rider, as a desert land-scape rolled slowly behind them.

The rehearsal went on, with much wild fanfare and action. A woman wielding a knife ran to pet a dog, while game-show music blared and two fellows with posthole diggers competed in a race for the deepest hole. A bathing beauty whose bee-hive and legs were each enviably tall entered the stage and stood there wringing a mourning clothes mounted a rock on stage and stood there wringing a handkerchief, elegant and inconsolable. Another explored the relationship between a wise, long-suffering horse and its rider, as a desert landscape rolled slowly behind them.

In the second night, it was standing room only, more than 200 people in attendance, which is about a tenth of the town’s total population. Short on plot or context and brief at ten minutes, the play was entirely devoid of words. To the sound of clanging bells and horse and its rider, as a desert landscape rolled slowly behind them.

SANTA ANA

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3

THE 1ST CONSTANT: REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE
tor, and everyone else involved. We rooted for the people on stage, willing them to be as successful as we knew they could be. We knew they had it in them.

One night, she arrived. Resplendent in long dreads and a quick grin, Suzan-Lori Parks wore groovy duds and carried herself with a confidence and aplomb that was instantly captivating. She was dand smart, so loose in her own skin, so at ease, so great-looking—so cool—that her irreverence and enthusiasm were her charm and her attraction. She squirmed and howled loudest of all as an actor doing his evening ablutions in a train station stretched the comedic tension to its exquisite extreme. She was dang smart, so loose and carrying herself with a confidence and aplomb that was instantly captivating. She was dang smart, so loose and carrying herself with a confidence and aplomb that was instantly captivating. She was dang smart, so loose and carrying herself with a confidence and aplomb that was instantly captivating. She was dang smart, so loose and carrying herself with a confidence and aplomb that was instantly captivating.

A six-year-old boy wandered past at an after-performance dinner. “Hey, weren’t you in one of my plays tonight?” she asked him as he went by. “Yeah,” he replied. “You were really fucking great!” she declared.

Marfa school students came by the dozen, and so did parents, older folks, ranchers, tourists and visitors, grocery clerks, new young residents and those who’ve been here for ages. The potluck table was laden each night. Local bands played. The talk at the potluck often dealt with the starter and emotion from that evening’s performance. There was wonderment: at a garden that grew abruptly on stage, at a flaming bird that dropped from the ceiling, marvel at how genuinely good the performance was, at the level of gumption and luck and talent to put on twelve killer plays—each one a gem—in a theatre in the middle of nowhere.

Suzan-Lori Parks said she’d written the plays as a thank you for the gift of writing. She said she wanted to write so that a community could find itself. In Marfa, it did.

The circumstances in the plays were often jangled and utterly unforeseen. The chaos was muted and sweetened by the dash of piquant humor that ran through many of the plays, not only in the action or the actors’ delivery, but in the sets and costuming too. Many times, the communication among the characters was muddled, where people were only dimly aware of one another until some big ruckus focused them onto each other or forced a more meaningful inner change. That’s what the plays did for us. Watching those jarring conversations, those near-miss moments of calamity, and then talking about it afterward brought scores of people to linger in one another’s company, intellect, and warmth. It’s a crazy-ass, mixed up, violent, scary, funny, unknowable world out there and it’s contained in this woman’s imagination. Good thing we’re all in this theatre together; good thing we’re in this community together, all of us ready for all of it.

Stery Butler is the Senior Reporter for the Big Bend Sentinel. She was the recipient of the 2005 John S. Knight Fellowship for Professional Journalists from Stanford University, and has published articles in the Texas Observer and No Depression.

**SANTANA**
**THUMP AND THUNDER**

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4**

**Texas Observer**

**Big Bend Sentinel**

**No Depression**
Marfa’s week long presentation of Suzan-Lori Parks’ 365 Days/365 Plays was directed by Rob Weiner, with scenery by Gory Smelley, and video by Adam Bork. Kristin Bonkemeyer was the stage manager, and Ellie Meyer was production assistant. The plays were supported through contributions from the Marfa Chamber of Commerce, the Chinati Foundation, the Goodale-Crowley Theatre, and Ballroom Marfa. The company included Jo Harvey Allen, Robert Arber, Felix Benton, Joey Benton, Sharon Berryman, Adam Bork, Waller Burns, Ross Cashiola, Frances Christina, Jon Coleman, Tim Crowley, Neil Foster, Ginger Grifflce, David Hance, Ray Hatch, Steve Holzer, Harry Hudson, Alice Jennings, Tim Johnson, Tigie Lancaster, Paul Lee, Tobin Levy, Daeryl Lewis, Evelyn Luciani, Zachary Madrid, Patty Manning, Lovette Montoya, Karla Moore, Hannah Oliviera, Rachel Osier, The Pines, The Pleasures of Merely Circulating, Robert Schmitt, Kathy Sova, S.P.I.C., Chuck Stevenson, Cecilia Thompson, David Tompkins, Camille Willard, Joe Williams, and Melissa Williams.

Suzan-Lori Parks won the Pulitzer Prize for her play Topdog/Underdog in 2002. She received the MacArthur Fellowship (“genius grant”) the previous year. Her other plays include The Sinners Place (1994), Imperceptible Mutabilities in the Third Kingdom (Obie Award, 1989), Betraying on the Dust Commander (1990), The Death of the Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World (1990), Devotees in the Garden of Love (1992), The America Play (1994), Venus (Obie Award, 1996), In the Blood (2000 Pulitzer Prize nominee), and Fucking A (2001). Parks is the author of the novel, Getting Momma’s Body (Random House, 2003). Her first feature film, Girl 6, was directed by Spike Lee. New York’s Signature Theatre Company will devote their 2010 season to Suzan-Lori Parks’ work. She is currently writing the book for a new musical based on the music and life of Ray Charles, which will have its premiere at the Pasadena Playhouse this fall.


Artisten in Residence Program

In the late 1980s Donald Judd began a residency program at Chinati to support the work and development of artists of diverse ages, backgrounds, and media. Resident artists make use of Chinati’s facilities, study the collection, and engage with staff, visitors, and the local community. Most importantly, residencies provide artists with time and space to work in a creative and supportive environment. Chinati invites approximately six artists each year for one to three-month residencies. Since the program began, the museum has hosted more than 80 artists from across the U.S. and around the world. Each resident artist is offered a furnished apartment on museum grounds, a studio/exhibition space in downtown Marfa, a stipend of $1,000 to assist with travel and art materials, as well as access to the museum’s collection and library. Applications for residencies are reviewed each April for openings in the following year. To apply for a 2009 residency, please send a cover letter, resume/CV, and one sheet of slides to the Chinati Foundation office before April 1, 2008. Please do not send any additional forms of material such as CDs, CD-ROMs, or original artwork.

The Artist in Residence program is supported in part by generous contributions from the COWLES CHARITABLE TRUST, THE GEORGE AND MARY JOSEPHINE HAMMAN FOUNDATION, STILLWATER FOUNDATION, and the TEXAS COMMISSION ON THE ARTS.

Programa de Artistas en Residencia

Poco antes de 1990, Donald Judd inició un programa de residencia en Chinati para apoyar el desarrollo de la obra de artistas de diversas edades y nacionalidades y que trabajen en diversos medios. Los artistas en residencia hacen uso de las instalaciones de Chinati, estudian la colección e interactúan con nuestro personal, visitantes y la comunidad local. Ante todo, las residencias les ofrecen a los artistas el tiempo y el espacio para trabajar en un entorno creativo y amable. Chinati invita a aproximadamente seis artistas cada año para residencias de uno a tres meses de duración. Desde que comenzó el programa, han participado más de 80 artistas de Estados Unidos y todo el mundo. A cada artista en residencia se le ofrece un apartamento amueblado en los predios del museo, un estudio/espacio de exhibición en el centro de Marfa, un estipendio de mil dólares para ayudar a cubrir gastos de viaje y materiales, y también acceso a la colección y la biblioteca del museo.

Se revisan las solicitudes de participación cada año en abril para llenar las vacantes del año siguiente. Para solicitar una residencia durante 2009, favor de mandar una carta, currículum y una hoja de datos sobre su obra a la Fundación Chinati antes del 1 de abril de 2008. Se ruega no mandar ningún otro tipo de material (por ejemplo, CD, CD-ROM o obras de arte originales). Para asegurar la devolución de sus materiales, los solicitantes deben incluir un sobre con su dirección y el porte de correo prepagado.

El Programa de Artistas en Residencia recibe el apoyo de la COWLES CHARITABLE TRUST, LA GEORGE AND MARY JOSEPHINE HAMMAN FOUNDATION, STILLWATER FOUNDATION, y la TEXAS COMMISSION ON THE ARTS.

ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE 2008

Mark Flood United States Estados Unidos
Erik Gängrich Germany Alemania
Monika Gryzmalwa Poland Polonia
Charline von Heyl United States Estados Unidos
Jason Tomme United States Estados Unidos
Jeff Ziln United States Estados Unidos
Participants in Chinati's Artist in Residence program are invited to show work, often at the Locker Plant or the Ice Plant in downtown Marfa. The following pages describe these exhibitions from the past year.

Christopher Wool
September-November 2006

Christopher Wool exhibited two large black-and-white silkscreen paintings in the Arena in the fall of 2006. Wool is a painter whose work has been shown in galleries and museums internationally since the mid-1980s. He often uses tools associated with commercial image-making: stencils, spray paint, silkscreens, decorative rollers, enamel, and aluminum. Wool’s paintings combine the “mechanical” effects produced by such devices with the artist’s own hand-painted gestures. In addition to painting, Wool has produced series of photographs and films. Recent exhibitions include the Instituto Valenciano de Arte Moderno, Valencia and the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Strasbourg (2006); and the Camden Arts Centre, London (2004). Wool lives and works in New York.

Jesús Palomino
November-December 2006

Jesús Palomino is an artist of Sevilla, España, that makes sculptures, drawings and installations conceived and designed for specific sites. In addition to his exhibitions in galleries and museums, he has created works in spaces of various types in Spain and other countries. He lives and works in Sevilla.
For the past several years Palomino has been assembling and exhibiting a series of fantastic, Rube Goldberg-like “machines” at venues in Europe and North America. These machines, all hand-built using cheap commercial or cast-off goods, aim to perform functions wildly at odds with their humble appearance. Palomino’s Locker Plant exhibition, entitled “Media Filter & Big Compass,” was largely constructed from materials the artist scrounged and scavenged during his stay in Marfa: fluorescent lamps, milk crates, a cement-mixing tub, rope, and cheap Mexican bargains with images of tigers. At the front of the machine, which stretched serpentine through the Locker Plant, were fixed newspaper clippings about alarming headlines concerning the war and social unrest throughout the world. Through this exhibition Palomino sought to clean or detoxify the news, stripping it of its virulence and its estridency. The “Filtro de los Medios” logra...
mexican rugs emblazoned with tigers. At the front end of the contraption snaking through the Locker Plant, newspapers bearing shrill headlines about war and global unrest were tacked to the wall. With his installation, Palomino proposed to cleanse or detoxify the news of its virulence and clamor. The “Media Filter” enacted this cleansing through a several-step process, reaching a climax with the “Big Compass”: a chalk circle with directional markings laid out on the floor. Purged of bad news, visitors were now ready to be reoriented—pointed in the right direction.

Jesús Palomino was born in Sevilla, Spain and received a degree in fine arts from the Universidad de Cuenca and the Universidad de Castilla la Mancha in Cuenca. Over the past fourteen years he has exhibited his work in group and solo shows internationally at venues such as the Casa de América, Madrid, the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Español, Valladolid, and Sala Mendoza, Caracas, Venezuela (all 2005); Plus Gallery, Düsseldorf, the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam, and la Galería Helga de Alvear, Madrid (both in 2001); and in museums and galleries in Berlin, Panama City, Cameroon, Barcelona, and Xiamen, China. Palomino currently lives and works in Berlin.

Paul Lee
January-March 2007

Paul Lee is an artist from England who currently lives in Brooklyn. He uses raw material such as beer cans, light bulbs, bath towels, and rocks to make paintings, collages, and sculptures. Lee’s show at the Locker Plant included all of these types of works, in various configurations. In the front of the house, the visitors placed a series of wooden sculptures, each of which supported a painted lightbulb. Near those, there were rough “pinturas” or tapestries made of towels that Lee had cut and glued together. At different points on the floor there were small sculptures, piles of rocks and beer bottles, glass sheets, socks rolled up, and lightbulbs.
Plant featured all of these items, variously configured. In the front room, a series of sculptures, each made of wood and holding a painted light bulb, ran in a line along the back wall. Nearby hung crude “paintings” or tapestries made from bath towels Lee cut up and reassembled. Placed at different points on the floor were small, cairn-like sculptures made from painted rocks and soda cans, plates of glass, rolled-up socks, and light bulbs. Each of these assemblages bore a photocopied image of a young man’s face, plucked by Lee from the pages of a ’70s nudist magazine. Arrayed just so, the sculptures seemed devotional in nature, like objects placed before a shrine or small-scale Tibetan stupas. The young man’s face also appeared in paper constructions affixed to the walls and in a video Lee showed in a darkened back room. The visage played multiple roles in the exhibition—serving as both one sculptural element among many (cans, light bulbs, rocks, and socks) and as a freefloating, anonymous icon of longing and loss.

Paul Lee was born in London in 1974 and has a BFA from the Winchester School of Art. He has lived in Brooklyn, New York, since 2001. In November 2006, Lee had his first solo exhibition in New York at Massimo Audiello. He also shows regularly at Schoolhouse Gallery in Provincetown, Massachusetts, and has participated in exhibitions group shows at Ampersand International, San Francisco; Texas Gallery, Houston; Coleman Projects, London; and Paul Kasmin, Team, and Exit Art, New York.

Joanne Greenbaum is an artist with a studio in New York who paints abstract works on canvas. To initiate a painting, Greenbaum makes a mark and follows where it leads. A shape or color suggests another, and another, and slowly the canvas begins to fill with a fragile provisional structure. Garbled layers of paint can appear on an area of pigment applied directly to the canvas, or leave the surface unaltered. The upper part of a painting may be structured in a grid of black and orange shapes, while the lower part is a profusion of amorphous colors. Greenbaum’s palette is multicolored, and in her paintings, colors clash and interact with each other. The artist’s hand, with its wavy, rhythmic line, is always evident. Her experiments and reworkings are constantly evolving.
Joanne Greenbaum
March-April 2007

Joanne Greenbaum is a New York-based artist who makes oil-on-canvas abstract paintings. To start a painting, Greenbaum makes a mark and follows its lead. One shape or color suggests another, and gradually the canvas begins to fill and a rhythmic, provisional structure appears. Cross-hatched scrawls of paint may overlay one large area of straight-from-the-tube pigment, or appear to undergird it. A black and orange checkerboard pattern may organize the top of a painting, while beneath it more free-form figments of paint run riot. Greenbaum’s palette is similarly rampant, mixing iridescent with more muted colors and allowing hues to jostle and clash. The artist’s hand, with its scribbled lines and looping brushstrokes, is always apparent. She makes her thinking—and rethinking—visible. The paintings stage themselves: they enact the process of their own making. Greenbaum stays close to the doodle—her thinking—and rethinking—visible. Her paintings are exuberant, with the paint still drying quickly, with the paint still drying. Some—were hung salon-style in the locker Plant’s front room. Greenbaum exhibited four large paintings in the Locker Plant’s front room. Twenty-five smaller paintings—executed quickly, with the paint still drying on some—were hung salon-style in the back. Joanne Greenbaum lives and works in New York. Over the past ten years she has participated in numerous group shows in the U.S. and Europe and had solo exhibitions at D’Amelio Terras in New York, greengrassi in London, and Galerie Nicolas Krupp in Basel, Switzerland. In May 2007 she had a solo exhibition at Boom/Shane Campbell in Chicago, and in 2008 a career-spanning survey of her work will be mounted at the Haus Konstruktiv in Zurich. The survey will then travel to the Museum Abteiberg in Mönchengladbach, Germany.

Adam Helms
April-June 2007

Working almost exclusively on paper, using graphite, gouache, and ink, Adam Helms makes drawings which often address a type of rebel, criminal, or outlaw iconography. Over the past several years he has compiled a sort of dossier documenting the movements of a fictitious paramilitary group, the New Frontier Army. Members of the NFA wear fatigues, vintage pistols, and sport horned buffalo masks on their heads. In a number of drawings they seem to be sitting for formal portraits, an impression heightened by Helms’ finely detailed, meticulous technique. Other drawings depict the NFA coat-of-arms and the fortifications being built on NFA territory. For all Helms’ exacting draftsmanship, the precise nature of the NFA remains deliberately unclear. Rebel group? Militia? The distinction is blurred. A temporal blur seems to be operating as well: the NFA’s uniforms and weapons evoke different eras of American history, and the buffalo-head soldiers pose for their portraits with the stiff dignity of nineteenth-century daguerreotypes. The NFA drawings scramble visual codes. Cryptic and encrypted, they draw together disparate styles and different eras of American resistance. In last year’s Untitled (48 portraits), Helms created another portrait gallery, this one featuring forty-eight images of masks, hoods, and balaclavas with cuernos in la cabeza. En varios casos parecen estar posando para retratos formales, una impresión fortalecida por la meticulosidad técnica y los finos detalles que maneja el artista. En otros dibujos se aprecian el escudo de armas del grupo y las fortificaciones que construyen en su territorio. A pesar de la precisión de las imágenes, la indelible precisión del grupo resulta deliberadamente ambigua. ¿Facción rebelde? ¿Militia? Hay confusión al respecto. Parece haber una confusión temporal también: sus uniformes y sus armas evocan épocas diferentes de la historia de Estados Unidos, y los soldados con cabeza de búfalo posan para sus retratos con la adusta dignidad de los daguerreotipos del siglo XIX. Estos dibujos trastocan los códigos visuales: crípticos y encriptados, yuxtaponen estilos diversos y épocas distintas de la resistencia norteamericana. Sin título (48 retratos), correspondiente al año pasado, es otra galería de re-
shown as part of the “Greater New York” exhibition at PS1 in 2005, and he has participated in many group shows in galleries and museums across the U.S., including a three-person show at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis last fall. Earlier this year he had a solo exhibition at Sister in Los Angeles, and in September he had his first solo exhibition in New York at Marianne Boesky. In the January 2007 Artforum Helms was featured in the “First Takes” section dedicated to young artists showing special promise.

Daniel Sturgis
July-August 2007

Daniel Sturgis is an English artist who makes paintings that hover between abstraction and representation. At the Locker Plant he showed seven differ-
ently sized new paintings: one small, four medium, two large. Sturgis uses simple geometric or organic-seeming forms—bristling rows of overlapping rectangles; floating trapezoids and ball shapes—and applies his vivid, decal-like colors flatly, building the paintings up slowly using thin coats of acrylic paint.

The crisp shapes and popping colors at first suggest hard-edge painting and graphic design, but Sturgis’s painting are sneaky and never quite resolve the way one might expect. On closer look the compositions always turn out to be asymmetrical, off-center, out of true. Those stacks of bustling rectangles never stand up straight but tilt off-center, as though arrested in the act of semaphoring to the viewer. Lines don’t meet where they might be expected; repeating shapes suddenly fail to repeat: big friendly forms are abruptly cropped at the edge of the canvas. There is a sense of pause or poise built into the paintings—everything appears ready to start moving the moment the viewer looks away. Similarly, while

tratos, constituída de 48 imágenes de máscaras, capuchas y balaclavas. Ordenados en serie, los retratos parecen fotografías de identidad con los rasgos distintivos borrados. Podrían ser imágenes sacadas del álbum de Intersol o otro organismo policial, simbólicas de delincuentes, guerrilleros, ladrones, prisioneros políticos y terroristas internacionales. Helms dejó que la tinta negra formara, sobre el Mylar, diminutas charquitas y se escurriera, borrando todavía más el sentido de identidad. Si éstos son retratos, lo son de simbolos, y la tinta goteada y escurrida los desplaza hacia la abstracción, subrayando la parosis de la frontera entre ambos.

En el Locker Plant, Helms exhibió varias obras en marcha, incluyendo tres dibujos hechos con carbon, de nueve por seis pies, que representan paisajes del Oeste o Alaska. Vastos, serenos e inhabitados, estos paisajes recuerdan la obra magna de Albert Bierstadt.

Al mismo tiempo, la técnica de Helms aquí, como la que utiliza en los retratos, tiende hacia la abstracción. Los dibujos se aprecian como paisajes—y como el concepto de paisaje. Se evoca un linaje visual, el simbolismo del mito estadounidense. Estos bien podrían ser las tierras que habitan, o quisieran habitar, los miembros del New Frontier Army.

Adam Helms reside y trabaja en Brooklyn, N.Y. Obtuvo su Licenciatura en el Rhode Island School of Design y su maestría de la Universidad Yale, ambas en Bellas Artes. Su obra fue exhibida como parte de la exhibición “Greater New York” en 2005, y ha participado en muchas exhibiciones de grupo en galerías y museos en todo Estados Unidos, incluyendo una exhibición con otros dos artistas en el Walker Art Center de Minneapolis en otoño pasado. Este año tuvo una exhibición solo en Sister, en Los Ángeles, y en septiembre tuvo su primera exhibición solo en Nueva York en la Galería Marianne Boesky. La revista Artforum le dedicó un espacio en su número de enero de 2007 en la columna “First Takes”, que perfiló jóvenes artistas de mucha promesa.

Daniel Sturgis
Julio-agosto de 2007

Daniel Sturgis es un artista inglés cuyas pinturas participan de la abstracción y la representación. Exhibió en el Locker Plant siete nuevas pinturas de diferentes tamaños: una pequeña, cuatro medianas y dos grandes. Sturgis utiliza formas sencillas, algunas geométricas, otras más bien orgánicas—nerviosas hileras de rectángulos yuxtapuestos, trapezoides flotantes y formas esféricas—y aplica sus vividos colores, que recuerdan coloreaciones, gradualmente, en varias capas delgadas de pintura acrílica. Sus nítidas formas y exuberantes colores sugieren a primera vista la pintura hard-edge y el diseño gráfico, pero las pinturas de Sturgis producen efectos sorprendentes y nunca acaban por resolverse de la manera anticipada. Una mirada detenida revela que las composiciones resultan casi siempre asimétricas, ligeramente torcidas. Aquellas rectángulos nunca se apilan en forma recta: se inclinan hacia un lado, como un semáforo que comienza a hacer una señal y cuyo movimiento es detenido apenas inicia. Las líneas no se intersecan donde se esperaría; las formas re-

vas. Arranged serially, the portraits resemble ID photos with signs of identity effaced, or mug shots without the mug. They might be excerpts from an Interpol or Department of Homeland Security guidebook to the internationally recognized symbols for bandit, guerrilla, thief, political prisoner, and terrorist. Working with black ink on Mylar, Helms allowed the ink to puddle and run, further blurring any distinct sense of identity in the portraits. If these are portraits, they’re portraits of symbols, and the pooled, runny ink pushes them toward abstraction, suggesting how porous is the distinction between the two.

At the Locker Plant, Helms showed a number of works in progress, including three nine-by-six-foot drawings. Created with charcoal, the drawings depict western or Alaskan landscapes. Vast, serene, uninhabited, the landscapes recall the blockbuster sublime of Albert Bierstadt. At the same time, Helms’s approach and technique, as in the portraits, push the images toward abstraction. The drawings read as landscape—and as the idea of landscape. A visual lineage is evoked, the symbolism of American myth. These might be the landscapes the NFA inhabit—or fantasize about inhabiting.

Adam Helms lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. He has a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and a MFA from Yale. His work was dedicated to young artists showing

Sturgis’s precise shapes and flat colors look mechanically applied at first, on closer inspection the artist’s hand modestly asserts itself: brushstrokes become visible and traces of graphite appear. These look like guidelines at first, but as the marks rest atop the paint surface, it becomes clear that they were applied after the paint: another sly way in which the paintings skirt expectation.

Do not be too quick to understand me, said André Gide; Sturgis’s paintings make a similar request. For all their boldness of form and color, the paintings do not make bold statements. There is an uncertainty built into them, a hesitancy, an ambivalence. They seem to teeter between opposing modes: painting vs. graphic design, abstraction vs. representation, narrative vs. non-narrative, asymmetry vs. symmetry, geometry vs. biology. The paintings refuse to plump for one over the other, finding in this indeterminacy a rich field of possibilities. The artist plants small seeds of doubt into the act of apprehending his work, and thus the paintings make a plea for time. Time is built into the way they unfold, into the way they quietly confuse impressions and dismantle initial assumptions. To grasp their workings, to see how they work—and how they decline to work—requires time.

Daniel Sturgis has a BA in Fine Art from the Camberwell College of Art and a MA in Fine Art from Goldsmiths College, both in London. In recent years he has had solo exhibitions at Cynthia broan gallery, new york; The Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere, Cumbria; and West brook gallery, London. He has also shown his work in numerous group shows in the u.k. and europe. In October he will have a solo show at Richard salmon in london and in early 2008 his second solo exhibition in new york at Cynthia broan. Sturgis also works occasionally as a curator, writer, and lecturer. He lives and works in London.
Christopher Wool
Chinati editions

Christopher Wool has created a work on paper to benefit the Chinati Foundation, untitled, 2007. The piece is a six-color silkscreen print in a limited edition, each signed, numbered, and dated by the artist. The print measures 31 x 24" (paper 36 x 29"), and is printed on Arches watercolor hot press paper. The edition size is 40 and was produced by Brand X of New York City. To order the print, please call the Chinati Foundation at 432 729 4362 or email at info@chinati.org.

Christopher Wool was an Artist in Residence at the Chinati Foundation in 2006-07. He was born in Chicago in 1955 and lives and works in New York City. Recent solo exhibitions of his work have been held at ETH (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology) Zurich; Musee d’Art Moderne et Contemporain, Strasbourg; Camden Arts Center, United Kingdom; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (traveling to the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, and the Kunsthalle Basel).

Production of this edition is supported through a generous grant from the RUTH STANTON FOUNDATION.

The Chinati Foundation is pleased to announce the publication of John Chamberlain: The Foam Sculptures, a volume edited by Marianne Stockebrand documenting the exhibition of Chamberlain’s polyurethane-foam works hosted by Chinati in 2005-06. Every work in Chinati’s exhibition is presented in multiple views and catalogued in detail. In addition, the volume documents as comprehensively as possible all other extant foam sculptures. The volume includes essays by Klaus Kertess, Iris Winkelmeyer, and Marianne Stockebrand. Principal photography is by Florian Holzerr; the book was designed by Rutger Fuchs. John Chamberlain: The Foam Sculptures is published by Chinati in a 200-page hardcover edition and will be available at the museum and select bookstores, and on our website at www.chinati.org.

This publication is sponsored in part by contributions from ROBERT BROWNLEE AND WILLIAM B. JORDAN, ARLENE AND JOHN DAYTON, and the MAXINE AND STUART FRANKEL FOUNDATION FOR ART.
Staff News

In April, CAROLYN APPLETON began working as Chinati’s new Director of Development. Carolyn has been involved in charitable fundraising for over twenty years. Among the organizations for which she has worked are the Austin Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, The Nature Conservancy of Texas and the Dallas Zoological Society. Earlier this year she completed a year of work for the Art Museum of South Texas on a $985,000 capital campaign to secure equipment and furniture for the new William B. and Maureen Miller Building, which opened to the public in October.

In June, BETTINA LANDBREBE became the museum’s new Conservator. Bettina comes to Marfa from Bremen, Germany, where she was employed as the conservator for paintings, sculptures, and contemporary art at the Kunsthalle Bremen. Bettina also worked as the first Conservator for the Donald Judd Estate (now Judd Foundation) from 1996 to 2000.

In July, TAKAKO TANABE joined the staff as Collection Tours & Education Associate. In 2000 Takako came to Texas from Tokyo, Japan to attend the University of Dallas, where she received an MA and MFA in Studio Art. She was an intern at Chinati in 2004, then went on to take a job as Assistant Preparator at the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth. Also an artist, she has exhibited her work at a number of venues in Texas.

En abril, CAROLYN APPLETON inició sus labores en Chinati como la nueva Directora de Desarrollo. Carolyn se ha dedicado durante más de 20 años a la recaudación de fondos para entidades sin fines de lucro. Entre las organizaciones donde ha trabajado figuran: el Museo de Arte de Austin, la Universidad de Texas en Austin, la Nature Conservancy of Texas y la Sociedad Zoológica de Dallas. En 2006 cumplió un año trabajando con el Museo de Arte del Sur de Texas en una campaña para reunir fondos para la finalidad de adquirir fondos para amueblar y equipar el Edificio Maureen Miller, que abrió sus puertas al público en octubre.


En julio, TAKAKO TANABE se unió al personal de Chinati como Encargada de Servicios a Visitantes. En 2001, Takako llegó a Texas desde Tokio, Japón, para asistir a la Universidad de Dallas, donde obtuvo dos maestrías en Arte de Estudio. En 2004 estuvo en Chinati en el programa de internados; luego, aceptó un empleo como Preparadora Asistente en el Museo Amon Carter de Fort Worth. Como artista, ha exhibido su obra en varias situaciones en Texas.

Earlier this year, the Chinati Foundation launched an expanded and redesigned website, www.chinati.org. The new site was designed by Buck Johnston of bbGun.com, and features in-depth information about the collection and the museum’s history and programs; an overview of Chinati’s exhibitions and Artists in Residence; and material helpful in planning a visit to Marfa. There are links to all previous Chinati newsletters, as well as additional writings on the artists in the permanent collection. Browsers can now purchase books, T-shirts, and artists’ editions, as well as renew their Chinati membership or make a contribution to the museum. Please visit www.chinati.org.

Este año la Fundación Chinati inauguró un sitio de web ampliado y rediseñado, www.chinati.org. El nuevo sitio fue diseñado por Buck Johnston, de bbGun.com, y presenta información detallada sobre la colección, la historia del museo y los programas que ofrece, una vista panorámica de nuestras exhibiciones y Artistas en Residencia, y materiales útiles para quienes piensan visitar Marfa. Hay enlaces a todos los boletines editados por Chinati en años anteriores, además de artículos sobre los artistas de la colección permanente. Los navegantes de este sitio ahora pueden comprar libros, playeras y ediciones de los artistas, y pueden renovar sus memberships en Chinati o hacer un donativo al museo. Favor de visitar www.chinati.org.
# Open House 2007

The Chinati Foundation’s 2007 Open House will be held on Saturday, October 6 and Sunday, October 7. The event will be co-hosted by Judd Foundation. The free weekend of art, music, talks, and meals will attract an international audience of approximately 2,000 people to Marfa and far West Texas. Notable features of this year’s Open House will be two special exhibitions by David Rabinowitch, a talk with David Adlyae, Trevor Smith, and Andrea Zittel, a special exhibition examining Donald Judd’s multi-colored, folded sheet metal wall works and a free Saturday night concert by the legendary band Sonic Youth.

Throughout the weekend there will be open viewing of Chinati’s collection. Judd Foundation will offer open viewing of the Block, Donald Judd’s Marfa residence, installed with Judd works dating from 1962-1978; and the Cobb House and Whyte Building, installed with paintings by Donald Judd dating from 1956-1962 and furniture by Rudolf Schindler. All Open House exhibitions, talks, performances, and meals are free to the public.

This year’s Open House will feature two exhibitions by David Rabinowitch: *Fluid Sheet Constructions and Related Drawings*, 1963-64 and *The Pinto Canyon Group*, 1979-1986: Plans, Drawings, and Models. David Rabinowitch has exhibited sculptures and drawings internationally since the mid-1960s. Early in his career, he set himself the goal of analyzing the basic building blocks of sculptural form in order to discover “a unique basis from which a fundamental critique of sculpture would follow naturally.” The *Fluid Sheet Constructions* were created in 1963-64 and made from equally sized sheets of 28-gauge galvanized iron, each measuring 48 by 96 inches. Rabinowitch piled, bent, and laid the sheets out in different configurations, then bolted them together, creating a variety of rolled, curved, conical, and flat shapes. Placed on the ground, the *Fluid Sheet Constructions* formed topological studies in which the forces building the sculptures up are counterpoised with the gravity pressing them down. Upon completing the series, the artist disassembled the sculptures and used the iron sheets in other projects. For his exhibition at Chinati, Rabinowitch will recreate about a dozen works from a much larger group, and will show related drawings as well.

The second Rabinowitch exhibition will document a project conceived in conversation with Donald Judd during the late 1970s and early 1980s: a structure to be built in Pinto Canyon, some miles south of the Chinati Foundation. In dialogue with Judd, Rabinowitch conceived of a small, square-shaped building to be made of adobe or brick, with the interior walls themselves serving as the “picture plane.” In order not to interrupt the four walls with a door, Rabinowitch, inspired by the kivas built by the native peoples of the Southwest, designed an underground entrance leading up through the floor of the building. Rabinowitch developed numerous drawings and designs for the building in Pinto Canyon, but the project never advanced beyond the concept stage. The exhibition will include many of the artist’s notes and sketches, as well as newly created models of the project.

Together, the two Rabinowitch exhibitions will illuminate little-known aspects of the artist’s career and an even lesser-known moment in Chinati’s history. Both exhibitions will remain on view at Chinati through summer 2008. David Rabinowitch was born in 1943 in Toronto, Canada. He lives and works in New York and Wiesbaden, Germany. Rabinowitch will be in Marfa for the Open House weekend, and will discuss his work in a public conversation with Kenneth Baker, chief art critic of the San Francisco Chronicle, at 5:30 PM on Saturday afternoon at the Goode-Crowley Theatre.

This year’s Open House will also feature a series of Donald Judd’s multi-colored wall pieces. Judd Foundation will present a special exhibition that investigates Judd’s 1989 works made at the Lascaux factory in Brooklyn, New York. The first in a series of exhibitions based on source material from Donald Judd’s personal archive, the exhibition will document “a base única desde la cual partiría en forma natural la critica de la escultura”. Las *Fluid Sheet Constructions* fueron hechas en 1963-64, de láminas de hierro galvanizada de igual tamaño (48 x 96 pulgadas). Rabinowitch aplicaba las láminas, las volcaba, las disponía en diferentes configuraciones y las juntaba con pernos, creando así una variedad de formas enrolladas, curvadas, cóncicas y planas. Colocadas en el suelo, las *Fluid Sheet Constructions* formaban estudios topológicos en que las fuerzas que impulsan las estructuras hacia arriba están en equilibrio con la gravedad que las empuja hacia abajo. Terminada la construcción de la serie, el artista desarmó las esculturas y aprovechó las láminas de metal para otros proyectos. Para su exhibición en Chinati, Rabinowitch recreará unas docena de este tipo de obras y exhibirá también dibujos relacionados.

La segunda exhibición de Rabinowitch documentará un proyecto concebido durante unas conversaciones con Donald Judd alrededor de 1980: una estructura que debía construirse en Pinto Canyon, algunas millas al sur de la Fundación Chinati. En su diálogo con Judd, Rabinowitch concibió una pequeña edificación cuadrada hecha de adobe a ladrillo, cuyas paredes interiores servirían de “plano pictórico”. Para no interrumpir las paredes con una pared, Rabinowitch, inspirándose en las kivas construidas por los pueblos indígenas del suroeste, diseñó una entrada subterránea que conducía hacia arriba, pasando por el piso del edificio. Rabinowitch elaboró numerosos dibujos y diseños, pero el proyecto nunca pasó de concepción a realidad. La exhibición incluirá muchas de las notas y croquis del artista, además de nuevos modelos del proyecto.


La Fundación Judd presentará una exhibición especial que examina las obras que Donald Judd hizo en la fábrica Lascaux en Brooklyn, Nueva York, en 1989. La primera de una serie de exhibiciones basadas en materiales sacados de las...
archives, this exhibition presents for the first time working drawings, RAL color charts, fabrication records and studio notes—highlighting some of the archival material currently being preserved and catalogued by Judd Foundation for future scholarly access. Architect David Adjaye, writer Trevor Smith, and artist Andrea Zittel will present a conversation about the art and architectural projects of Donald Judd. These three leading practitioners in the fields of art and architecture will consider Donald Judd’s philosophies and give personal interpretations of his work and his influence. David Adjaye was born in 1966 in Dar-Es-Salam, Tanzania and studied at Royal College of Art where he received his MA in Architecture in 1993. He lives and works in London, and is recognized as one of the leading U.K. architects of his generation. A professor at Harvard’s Graduate School of Design, Adjaye has been named the first Louis Kahn Visiting Professor at the University of Pennsylvania. In June 2000, Adjaye began Adjaye/Associates, with whom he has secured a number of prestigious commissions, diverse in scale, audience, and geography. He has also realized several collaborations with artists (including Chris Ofili and Olafur Eliasson) and exhibition designs, as well as temporary pavilions and private homes in the U.K. and New York. Trevor Smith was born in Canada and studied art history at the University of British Columbia. He is currently the Curator-in-residence at the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College. Based in Australia from 1992-2003, Smith worked first at the Biennale of Sydney, and then as Director of the Canberra Contemporary Art Space. From 2003 to 2006, he was a Curator at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York, where he co-curated the widely acclaimed and award-winning exhibition, Andrea Zittel: Critical Space. He recently co-curated Wrestle, the inaugural exhibition at the Hessel Museum. This summer, he curated Martin Creed: Feelings, the first large-scale survey of this artist’s work.
of the artist’s work. Andrea Zittel was born in 1965 in Escondido, California. She received a BFA in painting and sculpture in 1988 from San Diego State University, and an MFA in sculpture in 1990 from the Rhode Island School of Design. Zittel’s sculptures and installations transform life’s necessary activities—such as eating, sleeping, bathing, and socializing—into artful experiments in living. Zittel currently divides her time between A-Z West, located in Joshua Tree, California, and Los Angeles, where she teaches at the University of Southern California. She is a co-organizer of the High Desert Test Sites and is currently organizing two new projects: the A-Z Smockshop in Los Angeles, and an as-yet unnamed campground in the Mojave Desert.

Lannan Foundation Writer in Residence Matthew zapruder will read on Saturday afternoon at the Goode-Crowley Theater. Matthew zapruder is the author of American Linden (Tupelo Press 2002), and of The Pajamaist (Copper Canyon, 2006). His poems have appeared or are upcoming in The Boston Review, Fence, Alaska Quarterly Review, Open City, Painted Bride Quarterly, Bomb, Jubilat, Harvard Review, The New Republic and The New Yorker. He teaches poetry in the MFA Program in Creative Writing at the New School, works as an editor with Wave Books, and is co-curator of the KGB Monday Night Poetry Reading Series. He lives in New York City. The traditional Saturday night dinner will be hosted by the Chinati and Judd Foundations on October 6. For the fourth year in a row, the dinner will be held on Highland Avenue in downtown Marfa, with the historic Presidio County Courthouse serving as a backdrop. Dinner, catered by Fort Davis restaurant Cueva de León, will be served at 6:30 PM. Mariachi Aguilas, from Pecos, Texas, will provide musical accompaniment. Later Saturday night, a free concert by Sonic Youth will be held at the Thunderbird Hotel’s newly renovated performance space. In 2006, the Village Voice’s Robert Christgau called this group “the best band in the universe.” The band was formed in 1981 on New York’s Lower East Side by guitarists Thurston Moore and Lee Ranaldo and bassist Kim Gordon; the baterista Steve Shelley se unió al conjunto en 1986. Moore and Ranaldo han tocado anteriormente en las “orquestas de guitarra” organizadas por Glenn Branca a principios de los ochenta, y han cultivado siempre cierta innovación en la técnica de la guitarra eléctrica. El conjunto experimenta con afinaciones poco ortodoxas, armónicos yuxtapuestos y formas musicales que van desde arre-
group experiments with unorthodox tunings, layers of overtones, and song forms that veer from punk rants to blasts of atonal dissonance to extended jams and tightly structured three-minute pop tunes. In 2006 Sonic Youth turned 25 and released their 20th album, Rather Ripped. The band tours frequently and played in China earlier this year, in addition to performing their classic 1988 double-album Daydream Nation (inducted into the Library of Congress' National Recording Registry in 2006) at festivals in Europe and the U.S. The Sonic Youth concert is co-sponsored by Ballroom Marfa and the Thunderbird Hotel.

On Friday, October 5, the Chinati Foundation will host a special dinner to benefit the museum, open exclusively to Chinati members. The dinner, catered by Shelley Hudson and Food Company of Dallas, will be held at 7:00 PM in the Arena, with a preview of the David Rabinowitch exhibition and a cocktail reception starting at 5:30 PM. On Sunday, October 7, from 10:00 AM – 12 Noon, the Chinati Foundation will offer breakfast at the museum’s Arena. From 12 Noon – 3:00 PM, Judd Foundation will host a traditional Tex-Mex barbecue at Casa Perez, Donald Judd’s ranch home at the base of Pinto Canyon.

Chinati ofrecerá una cena especial para beneficiar al museo, exclusivamente para miembros de Chinati. La cena, con comida proporcionada por Shelley Hudson y Food Company of Dallas, será a las 7:00 de la tarde en la Arena, con vista anticipada de las exhibiciones de David Rabinowitch y un coctel a partir de las 5:30. El domingo 7 de octubre, de diez a doce de la mañana, la Fundación Chinati ofrecerá un desayuno en la Arena. De doce a tres de la tarde, la Fundación Judd servirá una comida tradicional de carne asada al estilo Tex-Mex en la Casa Pérez, la residencia ranchera de Donald Judd al pie del Pinto Canyon.

The Open House weekend is sponsored in part by contributions from Pablo Alvarado, Toni and Jeff Beauchamp, Janie and Dick Deguerin, David Egeland and Andrew Friedman, Elliott + Associates Architects, Betty M. Macguire, Charles Mary Kubricht & Ron Sommers, The Marfa Chamber of Commerce, Marfa National Bank, and Southwest Airlines. Support of the David Rabinowitch exhibition has been provided by Blumarts, Inc., Exhibitions 20, Annemarie Verna Gallery, Zurich and Michael Zilkha.

Chinati ofrece una cena especial para beneficiar al museo, exclusivamente para miembros de Chinati. La cena, con comida proporcionada por Shelley Hudson y Food Company of Dallas, será a las 7:00 de la tarde en la Arena, con vista anticipada de las exhibiciones de David Rabinowitch y un coctel a partir de las 5:30. El domingo 7 de octubre, de diez a doce de la mañana, la Fundación Chinati ofrecerá un desayuno en la Arena. De doce a tres de la tarde, la Fundación Judd servirá una comida tradicional de carne asada al estilo Tex-Mex en la Casa Pérez, la residencia ranchera de Donald Judd al pie del Pinto Canyon.


The Chinati Foundation’s Internship Program began in 1990 and has provided hands-on museum experience to more than 230 students and recent graduates from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines. Interns engage directly in all aspects of the museum’s daily activities, working closely with staff, artists in residence, visiting scholars, and architects. Intern responsibilities include giving tours of the collection to a diverse range of visitors, managing Chinati’s bookstore, office administration, preparing exhibition spaces, researching and production assistance on museum publications. Typically internships last for two to three months. Chinati also offers specialized internships with a focus on conservation. Intern responsibilities include assisting the conservator on treatments, condition assessments, environmental monitoring, installation of art, report

Programa de internados

El Programa de Internados de Chinati comenzó en 1990 y ha ofrecido contactos directos con el museo a más de 230 estudiantes y egresados recientes con diversas experiencias e intereses. Los internos participan activamente en todos los aspectos de las actividades diarias del museo, trabajando en estrecha colaboración con el personal, los artistas en residencia, investigadores visitantes, arquitectos y profesionales en museología. Los internos tienen entre sus responsabilidades conducir recorridos de la colección para una amplia gama de visitantes, hacer labores de administración en nuestra librería y oficina, preparar espacios de exhibición, cuidar los edificios y predios del museo, archivar e investigar, y ayudar en la producción de nuestras publicaciones. El interno típico tiene una duración de dos a tres meses. Chinati también ofrece internados dedicados a la Conservación, cuyas responsabilidades incluyen asistir al Conservador a hacer tratamientos, evaluaciones de condición, monitoreo ambiental, instalación de obras de arte, redacción de informes e investigaciones. Este tipo de internado dura generalmente seis meses.
writing, and research. Conservation internships typically last six months. As Chinati’s permanent staff is small, interns play an essential role in the museum’s operations. Working closely with museum professionals, interns gain invaluable experience for future courses of study and careers in museum and arts administration. Over the last fifteen years, participants in the Internship Program have come to Chinati from around the world, including all parts of the United States, as well as Australia, England, Germany, Holland, Israel, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, Portugal, Brazil, Scotland, and Sweden.

As compensation, the Museum offers interns a stipend of $75 per week, and a furnished apartment on the Chinati grounds. Although Chinati’s internships are geared toward students pursuing degrees in art, architecture, art history, conservation, or museum studies, the museum welcomes applicants of all ages and backgrounds. To apply for an internship or conservation internship, please send a statement of interest, resume, and requested months for the internship to Nick Terry, Coordinator for Education and Public Affairs, at P.O. Box 1135/Marfa, TX 79843, or email nterry@chinati.org

APPLICATION DEADLINES:
November 1, 2007 for internships during the months of February – July
April 1, 2008 for internships during the months of August – January.

INTERNS 2007

Katie Anania
Las Vegas, Nevada

Mitchell Anderson
Thomasville, Pennsylvania

Simon Baier
Bamberg, Germany

Samantha Belling
Hillborough, North Carolina

Ross Cashiola
Chicago, Illinois

Joshua Clavell
San Diego, California

Lisa Nicole Cromartie
Gainesville, Florida

Jose Victor Sanchez Cuenca
Murcia, Spain

Ryan Dowler
San Angelo, Texas

Tammy Kim
San Francisco, California

Caleb King
Charlottesville, Virginia

Lauren Klotzman
Victoria, Texas

Lucy Lenoir
Austin, Texas

Elizabeth Lewin
Richmond, Virginia

Johanna Rasmusson
Aarhus, Denmark

Aimée Reed
Berkeley, California

Anne Reeve
Hammond, Louisiana

Christopher Shelley
New York, New York

Virginia Smith
Houston, Texas

Richard Spencer
Edinburgh, Scotland

Chinati ofrece a sus internos un estipendio de 75 dólares por semana y un apartamento amueblado en los predios del museo. Aunque los internados están diseñados principalmente para estudiantes en las carreras de arte, arquitectura, historia del arte, conservación y museología, invitamos todo tipo de solicitantes. Para solicitar un internado o internado en conservación, favor de enviar una declaración de sus intereses, currículum y los meses durante los cuales desea participar a Nick Terry, Coordinador de Educación y Asuntos Públicos, P.O. Box 1135, Marfa, TX 79843, o por e-mail a nterry@chinati.org.

FECHAS LÍMITE PARA SOLICITAR:
1 de noviembre de 2007 para internados durante el periodo de febrero a julio
1 de abril de 2008 para internados durante el periodo de agosto a enero.
Funding

CORPORATIONS

Anthony Meier Fine Arts
Austin Street Cafe
Ballroom Marfa
Blumarts, Inc.
D’Amelio-Terras, LLC
Elliott + Associates Architects
Exhibitions 2D
Goldman Sachs & Co.

daymarkhamster
Marfa Public Radio
Marfa Chamber of Commerce
maharam
hotel Paisano
Highland Gallery
Hotel Paisano Marfa
Maharam
Marfa Chamber of Commerce
Marfa Public Radio
Matthew Marks Gallery
Patrick Wildenstein
Paula Cooper, Inc.
The Marfa National Bank
The Williams Companies, Inc.
Xavier Hufkens Gallery

FINANCING

The Annenberg Foundation
Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation
The Brown Foundation, Inc.
El Paso Community Foundation
Houston Endowment, Inc.
the J.m. Kaplan Fund
Kinder Morgan Foundation
Kraus Family Foundation
Lannan Foundation
LLW Foundation
Eugene McDermott Foundation
The Minnesota Foundation
The Henry Moore Foundation
The Nasher Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
Nightingale Code Foundation
The William H. Pitt Foundation, Inc.
The Saul Ragen Foundation
Faye Meier Foundation
Louisa Stude Sarofim Charitable Trust
John and Mary Shirley Foundation
The Ruth Stanton Foundation
Still Water Foundation
Susan Vaughan Foundation Inc.
Texas Commission on the Arts
The Weitzman Foundation

INDIVIDUALS

John & Christine Abrams
William C. & Elita T. Agee
Brooke Alexander
Joe Allen
Steven Allen & Jamie Keller
Pablo Alvarado
Claire & Douglas Ankenman
Robert & Valerie Arber
Richard Armstrong
Martha & Bruce Atwater
Charles & Christine Aubrey
Liz Axford & Patrick Johnson
Fabien Baron
Anne Barret & Todd Dunson
Jamie & Elizabeth Baskin
Marlene & Robert Baumgarten
Douglas Baxter
Daphne Beal & Sean Wilsey
Toni & Jeff Beauchamp
Robert Bellamy
Deborah Berke
Sue & Joe Berland
Jill Bernstein

Eugene Binder
Dagmar & Christopher Binsted
Elizabeth B. Blake
Mona Blomker Garcia
Peter Blum
Mary Bonkemeyer
Kristin Bonkemeyer & Douglas Humble
Michael Booth
Frances & John Bowes
Dr. Charles M. & Anne Boyd
Kathleen Boyd & Lawrence Fossi
Udo Brandhorst
Jake & Cookie Brabin
David S. Brown
Isabel Brown Wilson
Robert Brownlee
Kay Taylor Burnett
Elizabeth & Joshua Burns
William Butler
Paula & Frank Kall Cahanov
Marty Carden
Kay & Elliot Cappella
Jennifer Caikaen & Sam Hamilton
Carla Charlton & Thilo Weisllöfg
J. Scott Chase
Elizabeth Cherry & Olivier Mosset
Elizabeth Lowrey Clapp
Andrew B. Cogan & Lori Finkel
Eileen & Michael Cohen
Marella Consolino
Mrs. Querrie R. Cook
Frances Ayers Cooper
Paula Cooper
Lisa & Jack Copeland
Ralph Copeland
Roberta M. & Thomas Corbett
Tom Cosgrove
Jenny & Allen Craig
Mary Crowley
Tim & Lynn Crowley
Rob Crowley & Francesca Esmay
Betsy Cunningham
Margaret Curlet
Christopher D’Amelio & Lucien Terras
John W. & Arlene J. Dayton
Jack DeBartolo
Janie & Dick DeGuerin
Dirk Denison
Claire Dewar
Dennis Dickinson
Meredith Dresson
Joe & Lanna Duncan
Suzanne & Tom Dungan
Michele Dunkerley
Fred & Char Durham
David Egeland & Andrew Friedman
Harold Eisenman
Rand & Jeanette Elliott
Trine Elsitsgaard
Susan Emmons
Gail English
Erika Erich
Lyn V. & George Ewing
Mary K. Farley
Mike & Claire Farley
Vernon Faulconer
Tony Fefer
Sydney Felsen
Claud Furcht
Rae & Robert Field
Phyllis & George Finley
Hampton Fish & Sandra Harper
William S. Fisher
Stephen Flavin
Urs Peter, Carol & Lucas Flueckiger
John F. Fort & Marion Barthelme Fort
Mack & Cece Fowler

Maxine & Stuart Frankel
Rebecca & J.K. Frenkel
R. H. Fuchs
Nina Garduno & Leisha Hailey
Richard George & Melissa McCurdy
Garzoli Gianni
Jennifer Gibbs
Franck Giraud
Anne Gluckman & Tiffany Ball
Robert Gaber & Donald Moffett
Jim & Nan Gomez-Heitzberg
Laurel Gonsalves
Elvira Gonzalez
Isabel Mignoni Gonzalez
David & Maggi Gordon
Michael Govan & Katherine Ross
Gerry & Rebecca Grace
Bert & Jane L. Gray
Elyse & Stanley Grinstein
Jenny & Vaughn Grisham
Harry Guggen
Agnes Gund & Daniel Shapiro
Katy Hackerman-Walker &
Robert Walker
Roland Hagenberg
Earl & Janet Hale
Fanchon & Howard Hallam
Bill Hamilton
Jane Haskell
Emerson Head
Wilson & Patricia Heffner
Olive Hershey-Spitzmiller &
A.C. Conrad
Barbara Hill
Katharina Hinsberg & Oswald Eggger
Juliana Haww Holt & Peter Holt
Susi & Jochen Holy
Katy Homans & Patterson Sims
Roni Horn
Joy & Jim Howell
Brigitte & Sigismund Huck
Harry & Shelley Hudson
Xavier Hufkens
Fredericka Hunter
Vilis Inde & Tom Jacobs
Akihiko Inoue
Jim Jacobs
Jim & Perry Jamieson
John & Alice Jennings
O.B. & Kathy Johnson
Elizabeth Winston Jones &
Samuel Rutledge Jones
William Jordan
Ilya & Emilia Kabakov
Jun & Ree Kaneko
Maiya Keck & Joey Benton
Sarain Casper Keck &
Ronnie O’Donnell
Pat Keeney
Mary & Mrs. I.J. Kempner III
Colin Kennedy
David W. Kihl
John M. C. King
Michael Knierim
Ben & Margaret Kitchen
Michael & Jeanne Klein
Werner H. Kramarsky
Anstiss & Ronald Krueck
Jim & Anne Kruse
Charles Mary Kubricht &
Ron Sommers
Kumiko Kurachi
Liz Larson
Mary Maher Laub
Virginia Leermann
David Lederc

Friends of Chinati

Four years ago the Chinati Foundation instituted a new category of upper-level donors called the Friends of Chinati. This group represents the museum’s highest level of annual individual giving and plays a vital role through their patronage of the organization and its programs. Friends make annual contributions of $5,000+ and receive special recognition, invitations to events at the museum or elsewhere, and benefit artworks created exclusively for Chinati.
Membership

The Chinati Foundation is very grateful for the support of its members, who total over eight hundred local, national, and international donors who help the museum through their annual membership contributions. Basic membership for individuals and families starts at $100 ($50 for students and senior citizens). Members can include free museum admission throughout the year; discounts on selected publications, posters, and Chinati Editions; the annual museum newsletter; advance notice of Chinati programs; and free or reduced admission to special events and symposia. Please see the membership form on page 91 for a complete benefit listing.

As an extra incentive for membership giving at higher levels, each year an internationally recognized artist creates a limited edition multiple exclusively for Chinati members who contribute $1000 or more. Past editions in this series were created and donated by JACK PIERSON, KARIN SANDER, JEFF ERLOND, CORNELIA PARKER, CHRISTIAN MARCLAY, CATHERINE OPIE, TONY FEHER, SAM DURANT, and ADAM MCEWEN. The Chinati Foundation would like to once again thank these artists for their generous support.

$2500 +
Nancy Brown Ngeley
Mr. & Mrs. I.H. Kemper III
Don Mullen
Guiseppe Panza di Biumo
Howard & Cindy Rachofsky
Sara Shackleton &
Michael McKeeog
Edward R. Tufte

$1000 +
Robert & Valerie Arber
Dr. Thomas &
Christina Bechtlil
Jill Bernstein
Elie & Edythe Broad
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond
Brachet

The Lord Browne
of Maddingly

Clive Carney
Kaye & Elliot Cattullus
Susan & Sanford Criner
Rab Crowley &
Francesca Essmay
Betsy Cunningham
Janie & Dick DeGuerrin
Dennis Dickinson
Larry A. & Laura R. Doll
Rackstraw Downes
Suzanne & Tom Dungan

$500 +
Adelheid & Thomas Asfalt
Dagmar & Christopher
Binsted
Fernando Brave &
Marcela Descalzi
John & Yoko Bush
Carole Carden
Isa Catto & Daniel Shaw
Robert Colacello
Mark Cunningham
Laura Donnelly
John M. Douglass
Fred & Char Durham
Rand & Jeanette Elliott
David Gockley
William Allen Goode
Bill Hamilton
Aliicia & Justus Haynes
Emerson Head
Martha & Jordan Hunter
Vils & Ine & Tom Jacobs
Helmut & Deborah John
Pat Keesey &
Christina Heitjanmek
Bob Kirk
David Leclerc
Miner B. Long
Marley Lott
Mary Maher Laub
Matthew Marks
Cynthia & Robert McClain
Nancy Jo Merritt
Aliicia & Bill Miller
Gary Miller
Todd Minnis
Bobby Minyard
Mary Ellen & Jack Morton
Sachiko Osaki
Dr. Edmund P. Pillsbury
Matt Powell
Ellen B. Randall
Drew & Edna Robins
Cindy & Armond Schwartz
Mr. & Mrs. Harry B. Slack
David R. Stevenson
Gene Umuez
Hester van Rojen
The Weisman Foundation
Carol Walkow Price &
Stan Price

$250 +
Mark P. Addison
William & Elita Agee
Joe Allen
Claire & Douglas
Ankenman
Fabien Baron
Jamie & Elizabeth Baskin
Stephen C. Bieneman
Pete Blank
Michael Booth
Kathy Bracewell
Uda Brandhorst
John & Joyce Briscoe
Mallie R. & William T.
Cannady
Marty Carden
Chris Carson
Maudie L. Carter
Jennifer Chaiken &
Sam Hamilton
Carla Charlton &
Diane Cheatham
William & Elizabeth Lee
Chiego
Jim & Carolyn Clark
Joe Clarke
Frances Colpitt &
Don Walton
Marella Consolini
Tracy Conwell
Mrs. Quarrier B. Cook
Ralph Copeland
Douglas S. Cramer
Molly E. Cumming
Ivy Dave
Brenda & Sorrel
Dunnovitz
Paul & Sandra Dannehy
Paula & Jerry Denton
Jan & KayaK Dibbets
Vincent Doogas
Michele Dunkerkey
Susan Emmons
Mary K. Fairley
Tony Feher
Ann Finkelstein
Jim Fisell &
Jim Martinez
Urs Peter, Carol & Lucas
Fluekiger
Jamey Garza
Timothy Gemmill
Elizabeth Gildell &
Jaye Leve
Andrea & Mark Glischer
Richard Gluckman &
Tiffany Bell
Ann Goldstein &
Christopher Williams
Jim & Nan Gomez
Heitzberg
John Good
David & Maggie Gordon
Kathryn Gayle Gordon
Deborah Green
Dr. Gunter & Sunny
Hackett
Charles Haxhausen &
Linda Schwalen
Katharina Hinsberg &
Osvald Egger
Jarl Hirschauer
Layton and Claudia
Humphrey
Laura Hunt
Buck Johnston &
Campbell Bosworth
Elizabeth Winston Jones &
Samuel Ruffled Jones
Soojin Koo &
Ronnie O'Donnell
George B. Kelly
James Kelly
Lori Kershner
Barbara Krakow
Betina & Moritz
Landgrebe
Tim & Amy Leach
Michael S. Livingston
Lawrence Luhning
Anits & Victor Lundy
Dierk & Claudia Maas
Michael Maguire &
Quidity Quinn
Gerda Maise &
Daniel Gottin
Sherry & Joel Mallin
Tammy McNary &
Theo Weske
Megan Meece
Tobias Meyer &
Mark Fletcher
Martin Mitchel
M. A. Modelski, MD
Terry Mowers &
Suzanne Tick
Donald W. Mullins, Jr.
Fecia Mutul
Foster & Nan Nelson
Joyce Nereaux
Razae N. Noble &
Ian Murrough
Nancy M. O'Boyle
Aaron Parazette &
Sharon Engelton
Yvonne Paul
Vivian Pollock
Avery Pressman &
Antoinette Peeters
Carol & Dan Price
Caren H. Prothro
Andy & Rosemarie Raether
Stuart & Robin Ray
Stephen Reilly &
Emily Bingham
Judi Roaman
Jerome & Minnette
Robinson
Margo Sawyer
John P. Shaw
Mr. & Mrs. John E. Shore
Jerris Smith
Joanne Smith &
Dwain Erwin
Susson Sosnisc
George & Lois Stark
Irrving Steen, Jr.
Barbara Swift
Liz & Kent Swig
John Szal
Lune & Dedie Taylor
Dr. J. Tillapaugh
Emily Leland Todd
Cynthia Toles
Edmond van Hoorick
Joanne & Philip Von Blon
H. Keith Wagner
Peter Walker &
Jane Gillette
Charles & Valera Walters
Jacqueline & Sam Waugh
Heinrich Wegmann
Georgia & David Wiles
Clink Wells
Karen & Scott Williams
Bill and Alice Wright
David & Shari Wright
Genie & Francis Wright

$100 +
John & Christine Abrams
Lita Albuquerque
Katherine & Dean
Alexander
Bruce Allan
Marjorie Allthorpe-Guyton

Laurie Vogel
Robin Vouwen
John Wesley
Brady Wilcox &
Gina Nelson
John Watowicz
Charles B. & Barbara
S. Wright
Hyong-Keun Yoon
Hans Zwimpfer Basel

La Fundación Chinati agradece profun-
damente el apoyo de sus miembros, que suman más de ochocientos donantes a nivel local, nacional e internacional y que ayudan al museo mediante sus con-
tas anuales. La membresía básica para individuos y familias alcanza al nivel de $100 ($50 para estudiantes y perso-
nas de edad mayor). Entre las beneficios que corresponden a nuestros miembros se cuentan: entrada gratuita al museo durante todo el año; descuentos en cer-
tas publicaciones, posters y Ediciones Chinati; al boletín anual del museo; aví-
sado anticipado de nuestros programas; y entrada gratuita o descontada a even-
tos especiales y simposios. El formulario para solicitar membresía se encuentra en la página 1 [ ] e incluye una lista com-
pleta de beneficios.

Como un incentivo especial a quienes hacen contribuciones a nivel superior, cada año un artista de renombre in-
ternacional crea una edición limitada de una obra exclusivamente para los miembros de Chinati que aporten mil dólares o más. En años anteriores estas ediciones han sido creadas y donadas por Jack Pierson, Karin Sander, Jeff Erlond, Cornelia Parker, Christian Marclay, Catherine Opié, Tony Feher, Sam Durant, y Adam Mcewen. La Fundación Chinati desea agradecerles nuevamente a estos artistas su genera-
sa apoyo.
$100
Chinati t-shirt, newsletter, invitations to events, and discounts on publications, posters, and Chinati editions. Students and senior citizens, $50.

$250
Chinati publication or poster, plus a t-shirt, newsletter, invitations to events, and discounts on publications, posters, and Chinati editions.

$500
A monograph signed by the artist, plus a newsletter, invitations to events, and discounts on publications, posters, and Chinati editions.

$1,000
A multiple created every year in a limited edition by an internationally recognized artist, plus a newsletter, invitations to events, and discounts on publications, posters, and Chinati editions.

$2,500
All benefits as listed above.

Membership Membresía

NAME  (Please print)

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP, COUNTRY

PHONE NUMBER

FAX NUMBER

EMAIL

☐ MY CHECK FOR $ .......................... IS ENCLOSED

☐ BILL MY $ .......................... MEMBERSHIP TO  ☐ VISA, M/C  ☐ AMEX

ACCOUNT NUMBER

EXP. DATE (MM/YY)

SIGNATURE FOR CREDIT CARDS

Return this form with payment to The Chinati Foundation, P.O. Box 1135, Marfa, Texas 79843, U.S.A.

Foreign memberships please use credit cards. U.S. memberships are tax deductible to the extent permissible by law.
**Visitor Information**

**THE CHINATI FOUNDATION IS LOCATED AT:**
1 Cavalry Row
Marfa, Texas 79843
Tel. 432 729 4362
Fax 432 729 4597
Email information@chinati.org
Website www.chinati.org

**MUSEUM HOURS AND TOUR POLICY**
The Chinati Foundation is accessible by guided tour only. Tours are given every Wednesday through Sunday in two sections:

**TOURS OF SECTION 1 BEGIN AT 10 AM** and include permanent installations by John Chamberlain, Donald Judd, Ilya Kabakov, Richard Long, and David Rabinowitch. Temporary exhibitions currently on view will be included in the morning tour.

**TOURS OF SECTION 2 BEGIN AT 2 PM** and include permanent installations by Carl Andre, Ingólfur Arnarsson, Dan Flavin, Roni Horn, Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, and John Wesley. The museum is closed on Monday and Tuesday. Admission is $10 for adults, $5 for students and seniors, and free for Chinati members.

To schedule tours for large groups (six or more), please call the museum office at 432 729 4362, or email tours@chinati.org at least two weeks in advance.

Tours of Donald Judd’s residence, La Mansana de Chinati, “the block,” are offered through the Judd Foundation. Guided tours are given every Wednesday through Sunday. Please call the Judd Foundation at 432 729 4406 for more information.

**Información para visitantes**

**LA FUNDACIÓN CHINATI SE ENCUENTRA EN:**
1 Cavalry Row
Marfa, Texas 79843
Tel. 432 729 4362
Fax 432 729 4597
Email: information@chinati.org
Sitio web: www.chinati.org

**HORARIO DEL MUSEO Y RECORRIDOS**
La Fundación Chinati se puede visitar mediante recorrido organizado sola-
mente. Los recorridos del museo están programados de miércoles a domingo, en dos secciones:

**LOS RECORRIDOS DE LA SECCIÓN 1 CO-
MIENZAN A LAS 10:00 HORAS y inclu-
yen las instalaciones permanentes de John Chamberlain, Donald Judd, Ilya Kabakov, Richard Long y David Rabinowitch. Las exhibiciones temporales se incluyen en el recorrido de la mañana.**

**LOS RECORRIDOS DE LA SECCIÓN 2 CO-
MIENZAN A LAS 14:00 HORAS y incluyen las instalaciones permanentes de Carl Andre, Ingólfur Arnarsson, Dan Flavin, Roni Horn, Claes Oldenburg y Coosje van Bruggen, y John Wesley.**

El museo está cerrado los lunes y martes.

Entrada: $10 para adultos, $5 para estudiantes y personas de edad avanzada, gratuita para miembros de Chinati.

Para programar recorridos para grupos grandes (6 personas o más), favor de llamar a nuestra oficina al 432 729 4406 o comunicarse por correo electrónico a tours@chinati.org con un mínimo de dos semanas de anticipación.

Recorridos de la residencia de Donald Judd, La Mansana de Chinati, “la Cua-
dra”, son conducidos por la Fundación Judd de miércoles a domingo. Para ma-
yores informes, llame a la Fundación Judd al 432 729 4406.

**Acknowledgements**

**Reconocimientos**

Maryam Amiryan
Katie Anania
Robert and Valerie Arber
Matthew Au
Balroom Marfa
Dylan Bemberg
Joey Benton, Benton/Garza
Mike Bianco
Big Bend Coffee Roasters
Mary Blackburn
Steffen Bödkeker
Adam Bork
Camp Bosworth
Holly Brown, Franklin Parrasch Gallery
The Brown Recluse
Valerie Breuwart, Judd Foundation
Stery Butcher
Ross Cashiola
L.J. Cellu
Paula Cooper Gallery
Rob Crowley
Tim & Lynn Crowley
Mary Dean
Dennis Dickinson, Exhibitions 2D
J.D. DiFabbio
Larry & Laura Doll
Marie Ely
Francesca Esmay, Dia Art Foundation
Ian Glennie, Texas Gallery
Michael Govan, Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Jeaninne Guido
Robert Halpern
Traey Hammer, El Tropicano Hotel
Fredericka Hunter, Texas Gallery

Owen Houlihan,
Brooke Alexander Gallery
Jeff Jamieson
Giselle Arteaga-Johnson
Okey Johnson,
White Star Steel, Inc.
Tim Johnson
Buck Johnston
Judd Foundation
Pascale Keller
Katherine Kordaris
Kunsthalle Basel
Tigie Lancaster
Emily Liebert
Sean Lopano
Sarah MacDonald
Adam McEwen
Ben Meisner
Alex Mills
Caftin Murray
PaceWildenstein
Pizzo Foundation
Suzan-Lori Parks
Stan Price
Heidi Poultn, Thunderbird Hotel
Craig Rembert, Judd Foundation
Alicia Ritsch
Hester van Rijen
Michael Rach
Randy Sanchez, Judd Foundation
Gary Smellay
Squeeze Marfa
Krista Steinhauser
Thunderbird Hotel
Douglas Tuck
Christopher Wool

**Credits**

France; p. 62; Kunstmuseum Basel, Martin Bühler; pp. 64-72. Fred Covarrubias, Jr., Big Bend Sentinel, Frederika Hunter; pp. 77-78; courtesy Marianne Boesky Gallery; pp. 85, 90. Christopher Wool; p. 82; Eugene Binder; p. 83. Heiner Thiel

Unless otherwise noted, all images are from the Chinati Foundation archives.

Art and Text by Donald Judd
© Donald Judd Foundation/Licensed by VAGA, NY, NY.
Board of Directors

**Consejo Directivo**

Brooke Alexander  
New York  
Marion Barthelme Fort  
Houston  
Douglas Baxter  
New York  
Andrew Cogan  
New York  
Arlene Dayton  
Dallas  
Vernon Faulconer  
Tyler  
Phyllis Finley  
Corpus Christi  
Mack Fowler  
Houston  
Maxine Frankel  
Detroit  
Fredericka Hunter  
Houston  
William B. Jordan  
Dallas  

Virginia Lebermann  
Marfa  
Sir Nicholas Serota  
London  
Richard Shiff  
Austin  
Marianne Stockebrand  
Marfa  

**HONORARY DIRECTORS**

**CONSEJO DIRECTIVO HONORARIO**

Rudi Fuchs  
Amsterdam  
Franz Meyer  
(1919-2007)  
Annalee Newman  
(1909-2000)  
Brydon Smith  
Ottawa

**Staff**

**Personal**

Petra Aguirre  
Caretaker/Ujier  
Carolyn M. Appleton  
Director of Development/  
Directora de Desarrollo  
Barbara Blake  
Administrator/Administradora  
John Garcia  
Crew/Personal de  
Mantenimiento  
Sandra Hinojosa  
Administrative Assistant/  
Asistente Administrativa  
Bettina Landgrebe  
Conservator/Conservadora  
Ramón Núñez  
Foreman/Capataz  
Elizabeth Ortiz  
Caretaker/Ujier  

Marianne Stockebrand  
Director/Directora  
Takako Tanabe  
Collection Tours and Education Associate/  
Especialista en Servicios a Visitantes  
Nick Terry  
Coordinator for Education and Public Affairs/Coordinadora de Educación y Relaciones Públicas  
David Tompkins  
Development Associate/  
Especialista en Desarrollo  
Rob Weiner  
Associate Director/Director Adjunto  
Kim Wisner  
Bookkeeper/Tenedora de Libros  
Carol Walkow-Price  
Membership Associate/  
Especialista en Membresía  

Colophon

Richard Ford, El Paso  
Spanish Translations /  
Traducciones al español  
Rutger Fuchs, Amsterdam  
Graphic Design / Diseño Gráfico  
Nick Terry, Marfa  
Production / Producción  
David Tompkins, Marfa  
Production / Producción  
Rob Weiner, Marfa / New York  
Editor  

This publication was funded in part by generous contributions from EMILY RAUH PULITZER and MICHAEL ZILKHA.