

Amazing Space: Donald Judd's Works in Marfa

The flag of Texas flies over Donald Judd's adobe-walled compound in Marfa, Texas, an Alamo of art against the onslaught of bad art, mundane architecture and shoddy workmanship. If in Judd's mind, Texas would have been better off as a separate political entity, then he manifested that belief in his own life, separating himself from the art world of New York City. In Marfa, a sleepy town in one of the least-light-polluted areas of the continent Judd lived by his own rules and set up numerous spaces for living, working and exhibiting art.

I had known about Judd's work in Marfa for some time. Several years ago, I'd seen a magazine article with photographs of his library and studio. The light filtering down from the clerestory windows, the long unpainted wood shelves set within deeper framing boxes, adobe walls and reading table of the library seemed so inviting and conducive to reading and research. The plain wooden staircase in his studio appeared similarly simple yet meticulously made. Having built many staircases myself, I was impressed by the attention to proportion and finish accorded to such a humble domestic structure, an attention that made it as fascinating to look at as Judd's sculpture.

More recently, I had bought the book, *Donald Judd/Spaces*, which documents—through exquisite photographs by Todd Eberle—all the spaces where he had lived and worked. I could see that the principles of construction and spartan aesthetic Judd used in his sculpture he also applied to the furniture he made and the buildings he altered. But trying to understand a place by looking at photographs is like trying to experience the world through a keyhole. I knew I had to go and see Judd's work for myself. After some initial inquiries to The Chinati Foundation, which manages a portion of Judd's art installations in Marfa, I finally booked my flight to El Paso.

The landscape between El Paso and Marfa is a mixture of sulphur-yellow grass, stony beige sand and dark mauve mountains that seem to rise above and then mysteriously sink below the horizon. This open, desert rangeland is spread out under a dome of cerulean blue sky. Sandy riverbeds wound south from Interstate #10 but had no water in them. Dust devils swept lazily up from the low plain of the Rio Grande. After turning off the interstate onto a secondary highway, I drove past miles of pecan groves, a silver U.S. Border Patrol blimp moored in a field and arrived in Marfa in late afternoon. I stopped at a tourist information center to ask directions to the Chinati Foundation and was directed through a residential area of low adobe buildings, between two brick pillars, then up a slight hill to the Chinati Foundation. One of Judd's spectacular barrel-vaulted artillery sheds—much larger than it had appeared in the photograph—immediately sprang into view.

The Chinati Foundation occupies the site of a former army base called Fort D.A. Russell. The main office is in a nondescript, low bungalow with pale grey stuccoed walls—one of the former cavalry barracks. There were several cars parked out front. I sensed that once there would have been horses. I met Ellen who introduced me to Rob Weiner, the assistant director and Kate, an artist-in-residence from New York City. Rob showed

me my apartment, a modest but comfortable cluster of rooms in the next building and suggested I might want to take advantage of the remaining daylight to look at Judd's concrete works: "They are wonderful to look at just before sunset".

After unloading my rental car, I walked through a cluster of cypress trees, past the artillery shed and along a gravel track that led down to a low plain overgrown with clumps of dry grass and prickly pear cactus. Set out along a north/south axis that is slightly more than one-half mile in length are fifteen separate arrangements of modular concrete boxes constructed between 1980 and 1984. You can't see the boxes at the far end of the line when you stand at the opposite end, nor can you see both ends when you stand in the middle. This work has to be physically investigated. As Richard Serra wrote: "Judd's work is to be looked at, first and foremost. The experience is always rooted in perception, always physical, always kinesthetic." (Serra-Artforum)

Each grouping is composed of between two and six concrete boxes, each box measuring 2.5 x 2.5 x 5 meters. The sides of each unit extend down to the ground establishing "a direct relationship to the supporting structure"(Judd-Art Forum), a consistent feature of Judd's sculpture, furniture and architecture and an invention he claims to have originated. I've never seen such perfect edges on concrete in my life. A pile of rejected slabs stored elsewhere, attests to Judd's exacting standards.

Even when I had each arrangement of boxes mapped out in my mind I found the experience of investigating it surprising. For example, standing in the central space between three boxes that aim out away from the centre, I couldn't see anything but the ends facing me, like three concrete walls. Did the rest of the boxes exist? Since the boxes are too high to see over, I couldn't be sure. Judd exploited this phenomenon by making some boxes open at one end or side allowing a view into their interior volume, and others open at both ends or sides, allowing a view straight through them. But until you go up to each grouping to investigate, you don't know exactly what you will find. The shadows of some boxes created by the raking light of sunset gave away their hollow identity before I reached them.

That same evening, I joined the staff of the Chinati Foundation at the Arena, the former gymnasium of Fort Russell, for a potluck dinner. Nine of us sat around a Judd-designed table eating pasta, salad and delicious pecan pie. My knees barely fit under the table and the back rung of the Judd-designed chair dug into my back. Comfortable they were not. A row of stone Mexican mortars and pestles, all the same size, sat on the floor in front of an open storage counter, evidence of Judd's interest in Mexican culture (this area of Texas was once part of Mexico), his aesthetic appreciation of utilitarian objects and the size of the dinner parties that must have taken place in this room. Never having met Donald Judd, I had to imagine, on this and many other occasions what it must have been like at Chinati when he was around. After dinner, I stepped outside and looked up. Stars were visible right down to the horizon. I could see Orion's belt. A full moon had risen in the south and in the bright moonlight I picked out the path through cypress trees leading back to my apartment. It was like being at summer camp.

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The two Artillery Sheds are the jewels of the Chinati Foundation. They were built in 1939 and originally had flat roofs. After the Dia Foundation purchased Fort Russell in 1979, it was discovered that the roofs leaked and seemed impossible to fix, so Judd sought an alternative solution. He found it in the form of a corrugated metal Quonset building in the nearby town of Valentine. The addition of this galvanized metal roof doubled the height of each building endowing them with a presence they didn't have before. Judd also replaced the overhead doors on the long side walls with aluminum frame windows divided into quarters. According to Judd: "Louis Kahn said: "No space, architecturally, is a space unless it has natural light..." I said, probably about when he said that, that nothing is architecture unless the interior volume is evident." (Judd-Horti conclusi) By glazing the entire sides of each building, Judd satisfied both of the above criteria. "In reworking the old buildings," he wrote, "I've turned them into architecture." (Judd-The Chinati Foundation)

In these two buildings Judd installed 100 immaculately made aluminum boxes, each a variation on the division of space within a given volume. The three-row arrangement reflects the division of the building into thirds by two rows of interior columns. Boxes were eliminated where brick walls and existing rooms interposed. Miraculously, one hundred boxes is exactly what fit. Three boxes across the width of the building are aligned, not with the grid of concrete floor slabs as you might expect but centered on the south quarter of each large window. If the windows were divided into nine panes instead of four, the lowest dividing bar would have interfered with an unobstructed view through the building.

Like the concrete works, the sides of these boxes rest on the floor. The reflectiveness of the aluminum sometimes makes it difficult to distinguish real planes from reflections, open sides from solid sides. Planes of bluish aluminum seem to magically appear, as if they had suddenly materialized. Except for the snap and ping of aluminum expanding in sunlight, there is no sound within these buildings.

The technical perfection of these aluminum works makes them incredibly fragile and vulnerable. Angled planes are honed to knife-edge bevels. It is impossible to imagine them traveling without getting damaged. This is unquestionably one of the reasons Judd wanted to set up something like the Chinati Foundation: "It takes a great deal of time and thought to install work carefully. This should not always be thrown away. Most art is fragile and some should be placed and never moved again. Some work is too large, complex and expensive to move. Somewhere a portion of contemporary art has to exist as an example of what the art and its context were meant to be."

Aside from Judd's own work, the Chinati Foundation also oversees a building in downtown Marfa, which houses several dozen, works by John Chamberlain. Chamberlain's work is more closely related to abstract expressionism than minimalism, but like Judd's work, it envelops space without concealing interior volumes. Judd said about it in 1963(?): "The metal surrounds space like the eggshell of a sucked egg." Most are

made from the bodies and bumpers of old automobiles with the original paint colours intact. Judd admired the inventiveness of Chamberlain's use of crumpled car parts, as well as his skill at using colour—"hard, sweet, pastel enamels"—in sculpture.

This building—actually three buildings joined together—is a fitting home for Chamberlain's compacted works, since it was once used as an office and warehouse for the sale and storage of wool and mohair; the concrete floor is polished smooth by the bales that were slid across it to the railway line on the south side. Where sliding loading doors had existed Judd installed quartered windows in opposite pairs, flush with the floor so they mimic the position of the sculptures. The same unpainted, wood windows are installed as doors between two separate exhibition spaces within the Chamberlain Building, pivoting on pins at their centres, an inventive if somewhat overbuilt alternative to French doors. Judd maintained that "just realigning the doors and windows, if possible, of old buildings so as to be opposite one another on an axis, is a great improvement." (Judd- Architektur) The bare concrete floor, fir rafters and columns and grey painted ironwork provide a muted, contrast to the busy angularity of Chamberlain's work.

Since Judd's death in February 1994, his properties in Marfa have been divided between the Chinati Foundation which owns the old army base, the Chamberlain Building and all the artwork within both, and the Donald Judd Estate, which oversees all of Judd's remaining buildings in Marfa, his ranch near the Rio Grande and his building at 101 Spring Street in New York. Judd was president and the main financial supporter of The Chinati Foundation while he was alive but with his death, his estate was frozen and no further funding has been forthcoming. Relations between the two entities have been cool ever since.

Like many previous visitors, I had been unaware of this division in Judd's properties and was very disappointed, after introducing myself at the offices of the Judd Estate, to find that I wouldn't be able to go inside the buildings I had intended to visit. Everything was exactly as Judd had left it, many things were covered for protection from dust, and until the estate was settled, no one was allowed access. Now that I was here in Marfa, I resolved to see as much as I could by looking at building exteriors, through windows and over walls.

Just north of the Chamberlain Building is The Bank Building, formerly the Marfa National Bank, built in 1931 of reinforced concrete, which Judd bought and used as his architectural studio, installing his collection of Modernist furniture in the rooms on the second floor. The art deco eagle with a Texas star between its claws cast into the facade must have pleased Judd, as well as the building's symmetrical facade, and window placement on the long side facade that reveals the interior supporting columns. Supposedly, the architect who designed this building, L. G. Knipe, lived across the street on the second floor of a red brick building while the Marfa Bank was being built. In keeping with this tradition, Judd bought this building and turned it into the Architecture Office. In homage to his father (a skilled cabinetmaker who fabricated some of Judd's early work and made most of his woodblocks) and grandfather, had their names printed on the glass window. Judd seems to have relished his role as small, local entrepreneur,

blending his buildings into the fabric of local architectural style and restoring original building features whenever possible.

Down the street from the Bank Building is the Art Studio, another all-white, reinforced concrete building with a cute arched canopy over the doorway. It looks like it might once have been a supermarket. Inside, sets out on long work tables are various books, maquettes, arrangements of Japanese chisels and works in progress, just as Judd left them. Several of Judd's recent multi-coloured metal sculptures were installed on the walls. Having just seen Chamberlain's work I could see how his use of polychromy eventually influenced Judd. I had hoped to see Judd's modular painted metal sculptures up close. Now I had to look at them with my nose against a plate glass window.

How extravagant, buying so many buildings! And there are many more: the Ranch Office, Locker Plant, Print Building, El Taller Chihuahuense (the art factory) as well as the residential properties Judd accumulated: the Trost House, Bingham House, and Arts and Crafts-style Porter House, where Judd lived during his last period in Marfa. In his first space in New York City, a five-storey cast-iron building, Judd had separated living, eating, sleeping and working to separate floors, a logical, if luxurious arrangement. In Marfa, Judd was able to allocate separate activities to individual buildings, plus have the pleasure of altering the space of each to suit his own needs. Judd bought spaces as much as buildings.

If you stay in Marfa long enough, everything starts to look Judd-like: the white, symmetrical facade of the Bank Building; the modular division of windows on the Architecture Office; the regularly spaced modillions supporting the cornice on the Print Building; even the regular divisions on ordinary paneled doors. Either the geometric simplicity of Marfa is one of the factors that attracted Judd to this town or it may also be that having looked intently at Judd's sculpture and architectural spaces, one walks away with a keener awareness of space and proportion.

If the Artillery Sheds are the highlight of Fort Russell, the must-see site within the town of Marfa is unquestionably, Mansana de Chinati, Judd's home and studio from 1973 until 1994. Judd called it "the largest and most complete place that I've planned." (Judd-Architektur). It occupies an entire city block and since the site abuts the main highway on the south and a feed mill and railway tracks on the north, Judd enclosed the lot with an adobe wall—a traditional local building material—to provide privacy and to make maximum use of the land. What I managed to see was glimpsed from the loading dock of the nearby feed mill and through a four-inch square hole in the main gate—a frustrating experience but enough to give me a sense of the relationship between the various elements.

The outer adobe wall—which is about eight feet high—is level and encloses the two parallel, adobe and iron aircraft hangers and a smaller two-storey building. Judd had an inner wall built between the two hangers to create an interior courtyard, maintaining the same distance from the flanking buildings that exists between the buildings and the outer wall. This inner wall slopes with the gradient of the land to a low point

in the north-west corner. This idea of concentric planar volumes, the top of one being level and the other sloping, has a precedent in several metal and concrete sculptures of Judd's from 1971. In these works the plane defined by the sloping upper edge generally follows the slope of the land on which the sculpture is sited.

At Mansana de Chinati, this idea of enclosed and enclosing volumes and sloping and level planes is carried out on an architectural scale. The finished project, whether architecture or sculpture is still, as Judd called it "one work." In his work generally and in this work specifically, Judd asks simple questions with complex answers, such as: How do we know a plane is sloping? I won't venture a complex answer here, except to say that level is something sensed by the body through its innate sense of equilibrium and its contact with the ground, and judged by the mind, through a comparison with structures assumed to be level, such as the horizon and buildings.

One of the interesting aspects of Judd's work in Marfa is the crossover from sculpture to architecture to furniture and the difficulty—ultimately liberating—of distinguishing between them. In his text, *On Furniture* Judd wrote: "Of course if a person is at once making art and building furniture and architecture there will be similarities. The various interests in form will be consistent. If you like simple forms in art you will not make complicated ones in architecture."

Most of Judd's buildings in Marfa are furnished with his own furniture designs—created initially out of frustration with what was available locally— or furniture by other architects and designers he admired: Gerrit Reitveld, Alvar Aalto, Mies Van der Rohe and Rudolph Schindler as well as antique pieces, both domestic and European. In his collection of Modernist furniture, Judd clearly favored the early Modernist designers whose open, planar construction and geometrical simplicity is closest to his own aesthetic.

Judd's furniture adheres to the same principles as his sculpture: butt joints, right-angled construction and sides in direct contact with the floor. Judd's use of the butt joint is in keeping with his belief in making the interior volume of objects evident. By overlapping planes that join at right angles, the thickness of the plane perpendicular to the viewer is always apparent by the visible thickness of the adjoining plane. As well, given Judd's adherence to rectilinear materials and right-angled construction, the butt joint is the only possible solution for joining materials.

Judd positioned furniture as carefully as he positioned sculpture, with consideration of room, window and door axes and the relationship of each object with the space of the whole room. In the Whyte Building, for example, a small adobe bungalow tucked in behind the Bank Building, the furniture is arranged facing the central long axis of the building, which cuts through the centre of the single large, quartered door at one end. The slab-like design of this Rudolph Schindler furniture even reflects the slab-like adobe construction of the wall, visible on the south end. Examined in detail, the plugs, dowels and dovetails of Judd's wooden furniture are as carefully spaced as the aluminum boxes in the Artillery Sheds.

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The following morning I drove into Marfa and had breakfast at Carmen's Cafe: poached eggs, hash brown potatoes and delicious spiced sausages. Ranchers in cowboy hats sat at the tables around me. There were amateurish desert scenes painted on the walls in yellow ochres and pale greens. Everyone who came in knew somebody else, shook hands and joined them at their table or booth.

Later, while taking a photograph of the Marfa Ice Plant, which I thought was a Judd building, I met Charlie, who actually owned it. He complained about all the visitors who had mistaken his building for one of Judd's during a symposium that was held in September 1995. Nevertheless, he gave me a tour of the antiquated ice-making machinery that before the days of refrigeration, made blocks of ice for the trucks hauling cantaloupes and watermelons north from Mexico. He explained the whole process following imaginary blocks of ice from ammonia-cooled tanks to cold storage room. Maybe I had looked at too much work by Donald Judd but the ice-making process struck me as very Judd-like. Charlie always answered affirmatively by saying, "Yes, sir." and after everything he told me, asked: "Is it like that up in Canada?" He had been a pipe-fitter and showed me a rather chunky, heavy couch he had made out of an old iron bed frame and box spring. I suggested he make more of them and sell them to tourists. "Do you think they would buy them?" he asked. They would up in Canada I thought to myself.

Charlie had no Dia Foundation to finance his enterprize and I sympathized with his struggle to survive in this peaceful—perhaps too peaceful—town. Inevitably there was some resentment in Marfa toward the oil money that backed Judd's activities. However, given the commercial strip-malls that scream prosperity in other towns in West Texas, Judd's presence in Marfa is unobtrusive and sensitive to indigenous conditions. His renewal of the old army base has created something in Marfa that, while it will probably never be a big tourist attraction, will always appeal to a select audience and will bring a steady trickle of business to local merchants, restaurants and motels. The unexplained Marfa Lights, reported since the early 1880s and advertised all over town, are probably looked at by more tourists than Judd's sculpture. Still, while I was staying at the Chinati Foundation, there was gossip about Martha Stewart hosting a Texas barbecue at the Arena for an upcoming feature in Living.

In a text entitled "Horti conclusi", Judd wrote that "An enclosed complex can be necessary in open country to protect gardens, trees, domestic animals and people against the weather, animals and people..." One of his most successful works at Fort Russell is exactly this kind of complex: the courtyard at the south end of the Arena. This former gymnasium is a large building with a high, interior space and a kitchen and office at one end under a mezzanine. It was originally heated by a furnace in a smaller building at the south end, the foundation of which proved impossible to remove. So Judd built on top of it. He constructed a small building, open to the sky with a sleeping/lounging platform at the north (sunny) end and an enclosed tub at the other end. Outside this roofless room is a courtyard with a picnic table and red brick walkway. Surrounding both interior room and courtyard is an enclosing wall, slightly lower than the interior room,

with four gateways aligned with the existing doorways on the Arena, two facing north and two facing south. Outside this is a single enormous pine tree and the desert.

This courtyard complex continues the idea of enclosed space and enclosing walls that Judd first used at Mansana de Chinati. The transition from open desert to enclosed courtyard is marked by the four gateways, which have slight thresholds equal in height to the floor slab of the enclosed room. The doorway from the courtyard to the inner room is conventional, indicating that you are entering a kind of building albeit open to the sky. And the entry to the bathtub is through a window in the middle of the wall, reached by climbing up two steps. The tub of water is hence the most protected and private space within this complex, an appropriate location for the most precious resource within a desert environment.

The architectural inventiveness of this complex is due to the clever interpenetration of horizontal and vertical space. The horizontal space, framed by the four gateways pierces through the courtyard and the paired doors of the Arena integrating the open space of the landscape, the enclosed space of the courtyard and the closed space of the Arena. The vertical space is defined by the walls of the enclosed tub, inner room and courtyard. Judd fused the two by joining the walls of the tub to one end of the interior room and the room to one wall of the courtyard. The courtyard is a very pleasant U-shaped space with some plants and a small shrub, already blooming when I was there in March.

Just south of the Arena is a Richard Long sculpture, Sea Lava Circles, situated on a huge slab of concrete about the size of a tennis court. In keeping with Judd's belief that "The best [art and architecture] is that which remains where it was painted, placed or built." (Judd- Chinati Foundation) Long's piece was made for this site using a locally found volcanic stone.

The source for Long's materials is readily apparent, since more of the same stone lies scattered in the desert just beyond the edges of the concrete slab. The close relationship between site and artwork distinguishes this work from similar pieces of Long's I have seen in museums, where the source for the material used in the work is physically remote. By selecting only this one type of stone, Long draws attention to the geological history of West Texas: sea lava is formed when lava hardens underwater, which is what occurred when volcanoes in the young Rocky Mountains spewed lava into the sea that covered the middle of North America during the Cretaceous era. Sea Lava Circles is a fitting counterpoint to Judd's Arena courtyard, since both works embody a relationship between nature and culture, and both are constructed with boundaries that enclose other boundaries.

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Further along the same dusty road that runs by the Richard Long sculpture and almost out of sight of the other buildings, are two abandoned concrete structures. Strictly speaking, these are Judd's only original buildings. In keeping with Judd's reluctance to

build on “new land.” they were constructed on the site of a former Prisoner-of-War camp. Both buildings remain unfinished because of structural problems encountered during construction: the weight of the roof began pushing out the side walls, hence the wooden braces that are in place today.

Judd’s plan called for ten buildings of three different sizes, each size based on a slightly different module. While the design is clearly based on the barrel-vaulted Artillery Sheds the method of construction—reinforced concrete in modular slabs—is derived from the earlier outdoor concrete boxes. Perhaps it is appropriate that these buildings remain unfinished, a testament to Judd’s idealized Platonism stymied by the limits of existing technology. As well, the isolation and abandonment of the site and its sweeping vista of the distant Chinati Mountains is reminiscent of a classical ruin. Judd’s love of proportional relationships gives his work an affinity with classical architecture. The 1:2 ratio of height to width of these buildings and the 3:2.4, 3:3, 3:3.6 ratios of the modules on which their sizes are based, are, as Judd would say “numbers that stop the heart.” (Judd-?)

Strung out along the road that leads to Judd’s concrete buildings are eleven U-shaped buildings that were formerly the cavalry barracks. They are the oldest buildings at the Chinati Foundation, dating from 1919 and built with adobe walls on concrete foundations with concrete slab floors, wooden roofs and asbestos shingles. Each one encloses an interior courtyard that affords protection from the wind and sheltered warmth in the morning. I stayed in one of these during my visit. Six are designated for work by Dan Flavin. Others still sit empty, waiting for the funds to refurbish them according to Judd’s original plans. The southernmost building was renovated in 1987 for nine wall-sculptures by Judd.

Essentially each of these long wall sculptures is a series of hollow metal boxes that expand in width in one direction while the spaces between them expand in the other direction. Three of these long works are installed in each arm of the U-shaped barracks. They demonstrate Judd’s notion that “If two objects are close together they define the space in between.” (Judd-Artforum). There are various combinations of coloured anodized aluminum brass, galvanized metal and plain aluminum. As Brydon Smith pointed out, Judd fabricated these objects “never using more than two types of material per piece.” (Smith-Paul Cooper) My favourite was an anodized, ultramarine blue tube connecting galvanized metal boxes; the blue tube seemed to bring out the iridescent, crystalline pattern of the galvanized metal.

The long square-section connecting tube relates well to the long axis of each arm of the building, while the small boxes are echoed by the evenly spaced windows on the inner walls. In fact, the conjunction of Donald Judd’s work with U.S. Army design is a very serendipitous one. Judd’s use of standardized elements, repetition and his technical perfection seem very compatible with the systemization and discipline of U.S. Army design. Many features, like the grid of concrete slabs that one encounters within every building, could easily be mistaken for Judd design.

Outdoors, on the site of where a barracks building once stood, there is an ugly and generally disliked sculpture by Claes Oldenburg entitled Monument to the Last Horse. This is one of the few representational works at Fort Russell and its oversized cartoon-like scale seem out of character with everything else. Also, the finish on one side of the horseshoe is blobby, an ugly fake bronze colour and revolting-looking. It's only saving grace is that it relates to the retirement of the last cavalry horse at Fort Russell giving it some connection to the history of the site.

Occupying one of the other barracks buildings is School #6, a permanent work by Ilya Kabakov, ostensibly a classroom from Eastern Europe that has been abandoned. While Kabakov's transformation of the barracks building into a school house in Hungary is interesting, I found the props in this fictitious classroom too makeshift to believe and the debris left over from apparent abandonment, too new-looking to be genuine. There is also far too much reading in the "class projects" and the descriptions of school year highlights too contrived to elicit political antipathy.

Like the Kabakov work, permanent installations by three other artists—Roni Horn, Carl Andre and Ingólfur Arnarsson—also relate to the space they are in. In an article published posthumously in Art Forum, Judd stated: "A new idea is quickly debased, often before the originator has time and money to continue it. In general I think this has happened to all of my work, but especially to the use of the whole room, which is now called an installation, which basically I began." This statement accounts for Judd's interest in the artists he selected to install work permanently at the Chinati Foundation.

These remaining installations are in long, narrow buildings positioned at right angles to the open ends of the barracks buildings. Roni Horn is the only female artist represented here although there are Agnes Martin paintings in Judd's collection. Horn's work, consisting of two truncated cones of solid copper works well in the long space. The cones rest on the floor at opposite ends of the building, their narrow ends facing each other in a kind of perspective paradox that, like Judd's work, has to be physically scrutinized to detect the slight difference in size that distinguishes the two objects. Arnarsson's installation of drawings and watercolours on small sheets of paper also works well in the space it is in, the evenly spaced sheets mirroring the small windows on the opposite wall and the subtle diagonal shading within the watercolours, picking up the angled shadows cast on the end walls by the adjacent windows.

One of the best works I saw was an impromptu sculpture by Carl Andre in one of the unfinished buildings, composed of seven, rusty U-shaped pipe fittings found on the grounds and arranged in a winding shape. Since I had been wary of encountering a live rattlesnake, this piece seemed humourously local. The Andre building, which has been completely renovated, is a museum-like installation, with a long row of display cabinets with sloping tops containing hundreds of typewritten concrete poems divided into separate sections. Some, like the series on body parts, simply repeat a single word—NOSENOSENOSENOSE—using the same principle of abutting identical units that Andre uses in his sculpture.

In even smaller buildings with Judd-designed doors on opposite walls there was an installation of work by Richard Paul Lohse, an artist whose work with colour impressed Judd but whose grids of coloured squares I found academic. There was also a small but strong, temporary exhibition of five works by Toronto artist, Ron Martin.

While much of the art in these buildings is good, the context, compared with Judd's installations, is certainly less imaginative. The white-painted drywall reminded me of conventional gallery spaces. In many cases, windows had been filled in or covered with white pull blinds to block out the intense Texas light, concessions that divorced these spaces from the environment outside.

When and if the buildings belonging to the Judd Estate are open to the public there will presumably be more art by Judd and other artists displayed in conjunction with architecture, furniture and Judd's massive collection of carpets, kitchen equipment and West Coast Indian artifacts. The museum of Fort Russell, which is planned for one of the buildings at The Chinati Foundation, should be intriguing as well, providing a historical context for Judd's architectural alterations and some of the art on site that has references to the history of Fort Russell.

The Chinati Foundation seems very vital, although the focus has shifted from the vision of one man to a collective effort to carry on with spirit of his enterprise. There are ongoing artists-in-residence programs (two artists were there when I visited), internships, temporary exhibitions and plans to continue many of the projects planned by Judd, like the Flavin installations and the concrete buildings. The opportunity to look at Judd's own work in such carefully conceived settings, will always make Marfa worth a visit. The spectacular setting of the Foundation and the quiet environment are conducive to thought and reflection. At Columbia University, Judd had majored in philosophy and the green spines of his extensive Loeb Classical Library can be seen in the photographs of the library at Mansana de Chinati. The Chinati Foundation reminded me of Plato's Academy or the countryside retreat of the Epicureans. A place isolated from the pressures of daily life, a place for thinking about space.

Robert Fones
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Chronology

- 1911 Camp Marfa established as a base for American Cavalry Units. Mexican Refugees fleeing Pancho Villa's revolution are temporarily sheltered there.
- 1919 Major construction at Camp Marfa. Cavalry Barracks built.
- 1929 Camp Marfa renamed Fort D.A. Russell.
- 1938 Gymnasium built. Now known as Arena.

1939 North And South Artillery Sheds built of reinforced concrete.

1946 Judd passes through West Texas as a soldier in the United States Army on his way to Korea.

Fort D. A Russell is officially closed.

1971 Judd first visits Marfa.

1972 Judd rents Casa Lujan in east end of Marfa.

1973 Judd buys block of land and buildings that become Mansana de Chinati. Begins installing work in Eastern hanger building.

1979 Dia Foundation purchases Fort Russell, a former U.S. Army base encompassing 300 acres of land and over a dozen buildings.

1980 Construction of fifteen concrete works begins.

1981 Dia Foundation buys 35 acres of land on Rio Grande. Judd begins work on Ayala de Chinati, a remote ranch.

1984 Installation of aluminum works in North and South Artillery Sheds. Outdoor concrete work completed.

1986 After a different of opinion between Judd and the Dia Foundation, ownership of Fort Russell, other real estate and artwork is transferred from Dia Foundation to Chinati Foundation with Judd as president.

1987 Construction of concrete buildings. Southern barracks renovated and installed with Judd wall works.