

JUDD

The Public Life: Selections from the Donald Judd Archives

Organized by Caitlin Murray, Judd Foundation Archivist
104 Highland Avenue South, Marfa, TX

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Open by appointment through December 2011

“...I think everyone has to be involved in politics, in organizations that will defend their rights and obtain more, that will decide on what should happen in all public matters. If you don't act, someone will decide everything.”

Donald Judd, *The Artist and Politics: A Symposium*, 1970

This exhibition is a small reflection on Judd's involvement in political, social, and environmental causes. Spanning from 1968 to 1993, these items demonstrate the wealth of information available in the Donald Judd Archives. This show is not comprehensive, nor is it chronologically organized, yet through this selection of Judd's writings, correspondence, publications, and works of art, Judd Foundation hopes to emphasize the diversity and depth of Judd's activities and provoke new and continued interest in his life and work.

About the Donald Judd Archives

As part of Judd Foundation's ongoing mission to preserve and promote the artistic legacy of Donald Judd, the Foundation is actively processing, preserving, and working to make accessible the Donald Judd Archives. The Archives contain rich visual and textual documentation of Judd's life and work and include published and unpublished writings, correspondence, drawings, photographs, moving image material, gallery files, fabricator files, publications, exhibition ephemera, and family records.

The Donald Judd Archives are currently closed to research while the archives are processed.

About Judd Foundation

Judd Foundation's mission is to maintain and preserve Donald Judd's permanently installed living and working spaces, libraries, and archives in New York and Marfa, Texas. The Foundation aims to promote a wider understanding of Judd's artistic legacy by facilitating public access to these spaces and by developing scholarly and educational programs.

For more information, or to join our mailing list, please visit our website: www.juddfoundation.org

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Case 1

**“Bureaucratic Power and the Breeding of Racism,”
prepared for Citizens for Local Democracy, *The Public Life*,
Vol. 1 No. 10, 11 April 1969.**

Speaking at The Artist and Politics: A Symposium in 1970, Judd voiced his affiliation with Citizens for Local Democracy, a political organization dedicated to developing autonomy and power at the community level. CLD helped publish *The Public Life*, a journal edited by Harvey Shapiro and Walter Karp. Of *The Public Life* and Shapiro, Judd stated, “Anyway, I agree with *The Public Life*, and that’s unusual. Their thinking is more developed than mine; but when I read the first issue of *The Public Life*, I recognized some of the ideas; I hadn’t seen them stated before.”

Handwritten draft and published copy of “General Statement.”

**Newspaper clipping of “General Statement,” from
Newspaper of the Lower Manhattan Township, 16 January 1971.**

Judd’s first expressly political writing, “General Statement,” appeared in *Newspaper of the Lower Manhattan Township* in January 1971. In this essay, Judd addresses the creation of the Lower Manhattan Township, writing, “We’re organizing the Lower Manhattan Township...a political organization based on geography...dealing with anything that is a common problem in the area. Obviously there is quite a bit that is accidental about a community, especially in New York City, but geography and common specific interests are the only practical and ultimate basis for live, free politics. Individuals and the communities that they form should have political power. It shouldn’t occur in a hierarchy resting, living on, an undifferentiated mass.” Judd’s handwritten draft is almost identical to the published version.

**Newspaper clipping of “Greater Westbeth,” from
Newspaper of the Lower Manhattan Township, 22 May 1971.**

**Typescript with corrections of “Greater Westbeth” by
Donald Judd, undated.**

In May 1971, Judd writes “Greater Westbeth,” an essay critical of the bureaucratic and economic changes in SoHo preventing artists from living and working productively in the area. Judd corrected the typescript, as seen here, to include the statement, “An artists’ community is an awful idea anyway—a greater Westbeth.”



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Case 2

Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) Texas Advisory Board meeting binder, 1993.

The Environmental Defense Fund, formed in 1967, successfully sought a nationwide ban on the use of DDT, a synthetic pesticide now known to have devastating effects on ecology and human health. Since then, the EDF has fought for clean water rights, endangered species, and safer chemicals, among other activities. As a founding member of the Texas chapter of the EDF, Judd helped fundraise for the organization, viewing land conservation to be of primary importance. Judd did not allow ranching on his three properties south of Marfa, viewing his choice as a form of land preservation. He was also a committed member of the Nature Conservancy and the World Wildlife Fund.

Alert Citizens for Environmental Safety (ACES) literature, various dates.

As a member of Alert Citizens for Environmental Safety, Judd fought to prevent the dumping of radioactive waste in Sierra Blanca, a community less than two hours west of Marfa. Located on geographic fault lines and near a watershed for the Rio Grande, ACES viewed this project as harmful to the rangeland and water supply of West Texas. In 1993, Judd donated a print to help fundraise for ACES; after Judd's death in 1994, the Donald Judd Estate continued to actively protest the proposed dumping and called for the development of sound policies for toxic waste removal. ACES, in conjunction with six counties in West Texas and a delegation from the Mexican government, eventually defeated the initiative.

Typescript with corrections of "Nie Wieder Krieg," pp 1-3, 11 January 1991.

In this essay, "Nie Wieder Krieg," or, "No More War," written for the exhibition catalogue *Donald Judd-Architektur*, Judd writes, "War is failure. War is caused by carelessness, wastefulness, thoughtlessness, incompetence, complacency and laziness." In this typescript, we see Judd's editing process, with the notable erasure of the later half of the original title, "Kein Krieg Am Golf!" or, "No War on the Gulf!" Judd often dated and provided the location of his writings, as we see here. The Gulf War air campaign began six days after the date of this draft.

"U.S. TROOPS OUT OF THE MIDDLE EAST!" Bumper Sticker, undated.

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Frame 1

Typed poster, signed, with annotations, 1971.

Created by Judd in the summer of 1971, this poster highlights a number of quotations found in *The Public Life* journal (see also, Case 1, “Bureaucratic Power and the Breeding of Racism”). These posters, signed by Judd, were sold in a benefit for the Peace Action Coalition and the Student Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam. Harvey Shapiro, editor of *The Public Life*, is quoted in the poster, along with Thomas Jefferson, Walt Whitman, Frederick Douglass and many other notable figures in letters and politics.

Frame 2

Flyer for a petition-signing party in support of West Broadway, organized by the SoHo Alliance, undated.

In April 1969, Judd and then wife Julie Finch Judd were part of a group that formed Artists Against the Expressway, an organization created to prevent the destruction of a large portion of the cast-iron district in SoHo. The major thoroughfare would have destroyed a large portion of artists’ housing in this area. In “General Statement” (see Case 1), Judd wrote, “The Expressway was a device to bust the area. It would have cut the area and smashed the larger Italian neighborhood. The Expressway’s city planner classed that neighborhood a slum.”

Announcements for exhibitions benefiting the War Resisters League, 1976, 1986.

Judd first became involved in the War Resisters League in 1968. Jessie Wallace Hughan, his wife’s great aunt, founded the League in 1923. Judd would participate in and host multiple exhibitions benefiting the War Resisters League. At the 1986 benefit, Judd purchased a work by Carl Andre, *Manifest Destiny*. This piece remains installed on the ground floor of 101 Spring Street.

Frame 3

Donald Judd, Untitled Woodcut in Red and Black, 60 x 80 cm. Printed by Urban Stoob, Steindruck, St. Gallen, Switzerland. Edition of 150 for the Artists Against Torture portfolio, 1993.

Nineteen prints by nineteen artists were created for this Artists Against Torture portfolio in 1993. Each edition was limited to 150 and each print was signed and numbered by the artists. Other participants in the portfolio include Georg Baselitz, Max Bill, Jasper Johns, Jannis Kounellis, Sol LeWitt, Richard Long, Robert Mangold, and David Rabinowitch, among others. The proceeds from the sale of these prints went toward funding for the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT), an international organization founded in 1977 in Geneva, Switzerland.

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Frame 4

Typed letter from Donald Judd to The National Committee for John and Yoko, 1 pp, 25 May 1972.

In 1972, the Nixon Administration ordered that John Lennon be deported from the United States, citing a misdemeanor drug charge Lennon received in London in 1968. Immigration law at the time banned anyone from entering the United States who had been convicted of a drug offense. Many artists, writers, and musicians petitioned on his behalf, including Judd.

Typed letter from Donald Judd to unknown, 1 pp, 23 February 1985.

On behalf of Richard Serra, and particularly his work, *Tilted Arc*, Judd wrote, "Art is not to be destroyed, either old or new; it is visible civilization." Commissioned for and installed in Federal Plaza in New York City, the work generated tremendous controversy and finally a public hearing when employees working in Federal Plaza began to campaign to have the work removed. Judd opens the letters stating, "We need to revive a secular version of sacrilege to categorize the attempt to destroy Richard Serra's work in Federal Plaza in Manhattan."

Frame 5

Autograph letter from Donald Judd to President Luis Echeverria, signed, 2 pp, undated.

Typed letter from Donald Judd to President Luis Echeverria, signed, 1 pp, 13 June 1971.

In this letter, sent to then-President of Mexico, Luis Echeverria, Judd expresses his frustration and disappointment with border policies, which prevented him, his wife, children and friends from traveling to Tijuana, Mexico. In the handwritten letter, Judd corrects a sentence to read, "I assume your discriminatory policy has to do with drug traffic," adding the word "discriminatory."

Wall

Donald Judd, *American Flag in Negative Colors of the Spectrum*, cotton, 70 x 45 in, c.1968.

Courtesy of Rainer Judd.

Floor

Donald Judd, *File Cabinet*, Douglas Fir, 1990. Unique piece made for Coosje van Bruggen. Gift of Claes Oldenburg. Chinati Foundation Collection.