Revaluing Minimalism: Patronage, Aura, and Place

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Patronage studies are scarce in the literature on contemporary art for a reason: patrons have rarely exercised a decisive sway over the course of that art, broadly viewed. But the leading patrons of the Minimalist movement may be counted as an exception. The spiritualized view of Minimalism held by Count Giuseppe Panza di Biumo and the founders of the Dia Art Foundation, Heiner Friedrich and Philippa Pellizzi (née de Menil and later changed to Fariha Friedrich), led them to elevate certain artists within the Minimalist ambit and motivated them to underwrite particular forms of Minimalist production, especially site-specific forms, at times on an epic scale. These predilections would culminate in various initiatives—such as Walter De Maria's 1977 *Lightning Field* or the Dia:Beacon museum—that would often be likened by the press to pilgrimage sites or sanctuaries and would otherwise lead to an institutional framing of Minimalism putatively at odds with the movement's premises in their inception, for dominant critical accounts would have it that Minimalism is properly understood as an ineluctably secular, materialist undertaking.[1]

Count Panza began collecting art by Dan Flavin and Robert Morris in 1967, followed by the work of Donald Judd, Carl Andre, James Turrell, Robert Irwin, and others, monopolizing the market for Minimalism over the course of a decade when prices were low and competition from fellow collectors scant.[2] What he discerned in Minimalist initiatives generally was "the research of truth through simple forms," a quest for the "essential" that endued the work with auratic qualities.[3] Over time, with his "taste for the metaphysical, [Panza] rewrote the Minimalist project to suit his own sensibilities," Rosalind Krauss charged in 1991.[4] As for the founders of Dia, who largely succeeded Panza as the Minimalists' chief patrons, *Village Voice* critic Kim Levin inquired whether they were "propagating their own idealistic and somewhat mystical aesthetic" when they opened an exhibition space devoted to a limited number of outsize, long-term projects in an industrial building in New York's Chelsea neighborhood in 1987.[5] Dia's establishment of stand-alone art projects in accordance with individual artists' designs was framed skeptically by Krauss in *October* in 1990, further, as the "reconsecrating [of] certain urban spaces to a detached contemplation of their own 'empty' presence," spaces that emanate an "inscrutable but suggestive sense of impersonal, corporate-like power to penetrate artworld locales and to rededicate them to another kind of nexus of control."[6]

According to Dia's first annual report, of 1975, the foundation's aim was to "plan, realize and maintain public projects which cannot be easily produced, financed or owned by individual collectors because of their cost and magnitude."[7] Heiner Friedrich chose the name Dia—Greek for "through"—to denote (albeit in a way arcane to most) the foundation's role as a "conduit." But *dia* is also said to mean "the godlike one," and the artists anointed by Dia as geniuses capable of "creat[ing] major works which would be gifts to mankind for all time," as Dia artist La Monte Young put it,[8] were sometimes said by the press to have been "dia-fied," while the patrons themselves were slyly dubbed by Flavin the "dia-ties."[9] In an age-old bargain, in short, artists and patrons each in a way affirmed the other as possessed of a superhuman spark. The press often compared the de Menil family generally to the Medici. And, for his part, Friedrich explicitly represented Dia's founding as a due response to a cultural moment of Renaissance-like dimensions: "We have artists of the magnitude of . . . Michelangelo, be it Dan Flavin; of the magnitude of Donatello, be it Walter De Maria."[10]

Heiner Friedrich and Philippa Pellizzi welcomed Flavin, Judd, Turrell, De Maria, Young and his partner Marian Zazeela, and performance artist Robert Whitman into their founding Dia stable, promising to capitalize major projects by all of these figures.[11] Like Panza before them, the Dia founders generally sought work that they perceived as auratic, and (like Panza, too) they embraced some of the leading California Minimalists equally with certain of their New York counterparts. As the discourse on Minimalism evolved, however, numerous critics and historians would count the "light and space" artists—Irwin, Turrell, and others (all hailing from the West Coast)—not as full-fledged Minimalists but as exemplars of a tangential, spiritualized practice, or a "California sublime."[12] In an influential essay of 1991, Krauss pointedly separated two geographically defined cadres of Minimalists while extrapolating from a comparison between black cruciform paintings by Ad Reinhardt and Frank Stella: whereas Stella's work was cast as a springboard for a "materialist," forward-looking, East Coast cohort of Minimalists, such as Morris and Flavin, the meditative, subtly illusionistic Reinhardt painting was portrayed as generative for a West Coast, retrogressive group of "idealist" minimalists—accorded but a lowercase m—such as Irwin and Turrell.[13]

Indeed, Reinhardt's generation (born early in the twentieth century)—including Barnett Newman, Mark Rothko, Tony Smith, Ron Bladen, Agnes Martin, and Anne Truitt—had generally imbued their practices with a spiritual approach, alluding to either or both Judeo-Christian and Asian philosophies in doing so.[14] Many of these artists, whose work affected an extreme geometric simplicity, would command deep respect among the succeeding generation of Minimalists (above all, Newman, whose work Judd had hoped to include in the Dia-funded Marfa, Texas, compound he devoted to the artists he most esteemed).[15] Yet prominent narratives tend to index the Minimalists' use of geometric simplicity to the materialist, secular realm of the industrial or technological and to canonize a faction of East Coast artists said to be distinguished from their elders—as well as from their California counterparts—principally on that basis. In

his 2001 monograph on Minimalism, for example, James Meyer followed Krauss's lead, justifying the exclusion of all the Californians (along with the California-born, New York–based De Maria) by referring readers to her aforementioned 1991 essay.[16]

At the time Minimalism visibly coalesced as a movement, in the mid-1960s, many would regard, say, Judd and Irwin as very much of a kind, as both attempted "to provide the viewer with an object of attention devoid of elements that might set the imagination wandering beyond immediate physical facts," as Richard Shiff succinctly put it.[17] Some of the key early exhibitions that included artists now called Minimalist—such as the legendary *Primary Structures* show at New York's Jewish Museum in 1966—encompassed alike East and West Coast–based practitioners. But the essays included in the first book on Minimalism, Gregory Battcock's 1968 anthology, mentioned only a few California-based artists in passing, and the Californians were slighted also among the works reproduced there. With time, this bias became further entrenched: California-based artists were excluded from or diminished in texts on Minimalism that emerged in the late 1980s and after, with the light and space artists particularly vulnerable to erasure.[18] Thus, whereas James Meyer's expansive 2000 anthology of writings by and about the Minimalists admitted certain California-based artists who produced discrete objects, such as John McCracken, Larry Bell, and Judy Chicago, Turrell and Irwin were omitted.[19]

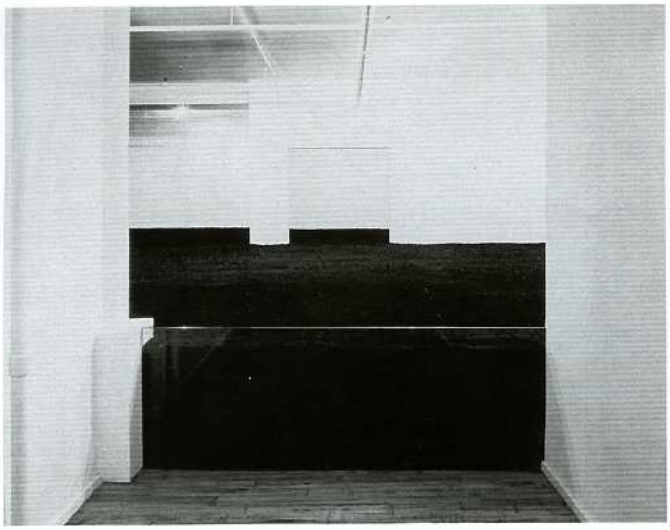
Whether it is possible to generalize meaningfully about East and West Coast forms of Minimalism and, if so, how they intersected and how they might usefully be compared are questions that deserve fuller and subtler analysis than they have yet received. Among the most canonized Minimalists, it bears noting that Flavin was the lone New York City native. Judd and Morris were Missourians, although Morris spent a formative period in California before settling in New York and Judd would count Texas as his primary residence after a key period in New York City. Sol LeWitt and Andre were originally New Englanders, with Andre's work often speaking deeply of that identity. Many artists crucial to the performance and musical dimensions of Minimalism hailed from California, although most became transplanted New Yorkers: Simone Forti and Yvonne Rainer on the dance side; John Cage, as a forefather, alongside La Monte Young and Terry Riley, on the aural side. California-born De Maria also settled in New York, whereas Irwin, Turrell, Bell, and McCracken remained based in the West, where they were raised (although not all of them stayed on the coast).[20]

Recent exhibitions centered on Minimalism at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City—the first ambitious historical surveys of the movement—might be taken as evidence of how Panza has indeed helped to foster a certain view of the Minimalist project. As homes to large portions of Panza's former holdings, with their liberal mixture of East and West Coast practitioners, both museums elected to integrate New York and Californian Minimalist work.[21] Further, and more enduringly, the recently established Beacon, New York, museum devoted principally to Dia's permanent collection, Dia:Beacon, grants pride of place to De Maria and Judd, among others, within a structure revamped by Irwin.

1 Dan Flavin, *Varese corridor*, 1976, two sections of green, pink, and yellow fluorescent light, each length 92 ft. (28 m). Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Panza Collection, Gift, 1992, on permanent loan to Fondo per l'Ambiente Italiano, 92.4120 (artwork © Stephen Flavin / Artists Rights Society [ARS], New York; photograph provided by the Guggenheim Museum Image Archive)

Panza's initial forays as a collector of contemporary art proceeded in a fairly ordinary way, but rather than continue to acquire discrete objects that appealed to him, he developed an idealistic vision of the potential for public installations of contemporary art to "tak[e] the place of the cathedral."[22] That vision came to be strongly shared by the founders of Dia, who in time established numerous permanent (and would-be permanent) sanctuary-like art installations, such as De Maria's 1979 *Broken Kilometer*, in New York's SoHo district. Though Panza could not afford to match Dia's costly initiatives, he was responsive to artists' interests in site-specific and environmental endeavors, and by the ways in which he commissioned, displayed, and dispersed elements of his own vast collection, he became a leading figure in driving such initiatives. For example, he commissioned Turrell and Flavin to mount installations at his villa in Varese, north of Milan—a place that long welcomed visitors and, more recently, became a public institution. Turrell completed his *Skyspace I* by 1975, and Flavin installed his *Varese corridor* in 1977 (Fig. 1).[23] For years, Panza sought optimum sites to locate portions of his collection, beyond what his villa could continuously accommodate, as well as long-term housing for other projects by artists he supported, whether in historic buildings within Italy or elsewhere in Europe and the United States.[24]

Among those who facilitated Panza's interest in site-specific work was Heiner Friedrich, who (prior to founding Dia) had established cutting-edge commercial galleries in Germany and New York.[25] Friedrich opened his first gallery in Munich in 1963 with an erstwhile partner who recalls him as less a



2 Walter De Maria, *The New York Earth Room*, 1977, installation at 141 Wooster Street, New York (artwork © Walter De Maria; photograph by John Cliett, provided by the Dia Art Foundation)

businessman than a would-be patron, one who revered artists as "the pinnacle of society" and art as "a system to build a new world."[26] Born in 1938, Friedrich had grown up in war-torn Germany, the son of a man who became a wealthy industrialist following the war. Like Joseph Beuys—whose more Minimal-looking work Dia eventually acquired and showcased—Friedrich came to look to art as something that might afford a profound antidote to the shameful catastrophe of the war: "My early experience of total destruction made me want to create the permanence of indestructible properties, particularly the creative work of artists."[27] Friedrich's galleries showed, among others, De Maria, Judd, Flavin, and Turrell, plus Young and Zazeela's jointly authored sound and light installations.

In 1968, Walter De Maria's *Earth Room* (as it came to be called) premiered at Friedrich's Munich gallery, with the press release for "The Land Show: Pure Dirt Pure Earth Pure Land" citing a single ponderous sentence by the artist: "God has given us the earth, and we have ignored it."[28] In 1977, De Maria installed his first *New York Earth Room* (Fig. 2)—110 tons of earth (including peat and bark), comprising 222 cubic yards, at a depth of 21 inches—in the 3,600-square-foot quarters occupied by Friedrich's first New York City gallery (opened in 1973) at 141 Wooster Street, a project later made permanent.[29] The necessary resources to achieve that and comparable projects—such as *The Broken Kilometer* (which overtook the space where Friedrich's New York gallery relocated, at 393 West Broadway)—came principally through the dealer's newfound connection to Philippa Pellizzi. Born in 1947, Philippa was the youngest child of Dominique and John de Menil, French-born, Houston-based heirs to the Schlumberger fortune. Known for their spiritually minded approach to art patronage (influenced by the French priest Marie-Alain Couturier, who had helped realize the Matisse chapel in Vence), in 1964 the de Menils commissioned the Rothko Chapel in Houston (Fig. 3), close by where they later founded the Menil Collection museum.[30] "It's in the desert that miracles happen," John de Menil once retorted to a friend who doubted the potential for successfully importing high culture to Houston; "Through art, God constantly clears a path to our hearts": so believed Dominique de Menil.[31]

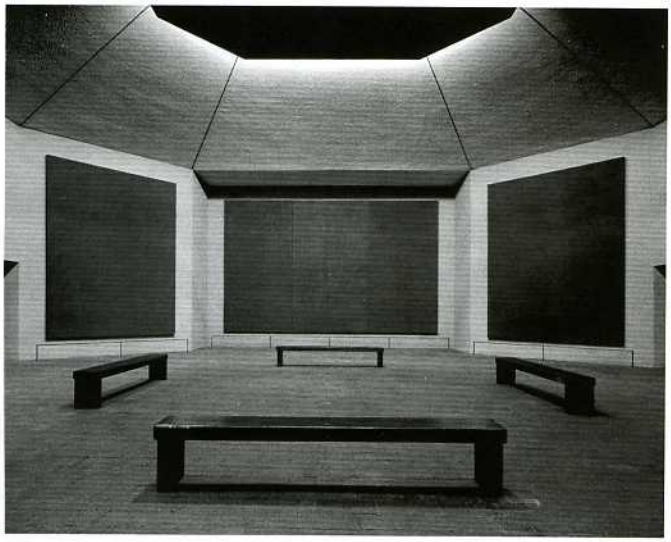
Dedicated in 1971, the ecumenical Rothko Chapel has welcomed a spectrum of religious adherents, including a troupe of whirling dervishes whose Sufi faith found converts in Philippa and her second husband, Friedrich, whom she married in a Sufi ceremony in 1979, soon after taking the name Fariha bestowed on her by her spiritual leader.[32] Sufism, a mystical, contemplative, quietist branch of Islam, has historically exalted and been deeply immersed in artistic and philosophical pursuits. Meshing their ardent commitment to their faith with their distinctive cultural predilections, the Friedrichs housed Dia Art Foundation offices for some time, in fact, in a mosque they established in a former Soho fire station at 155 Mercer Street, replete with living quarters for their spiritual leader, as well as spaces for public performances, both secular and sacred (including the ritual dance of the dervishes),[33] and a series of light installations by Flavin (Fig. 4). The Rothko Chapel may have served as a kind of template for the Friedrichs in establishing this sanctuary, as well as for the other sanctuary-like spaces they would underwrite in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The Friedrichs' mosque, Masjid Al-Farah, was incorporated in January 1981 explicitly in order to:

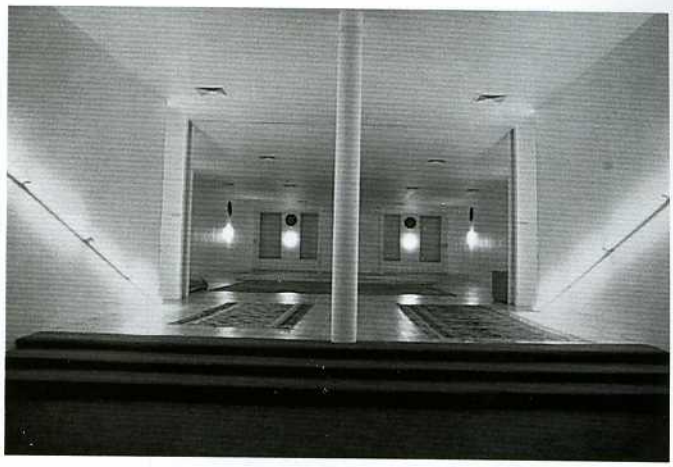
> maintain a proper place of worship for those individuals who believe in the teachings of Muhammed and who live according to the tenets of the religion known as Islam . . . to hold weekly meetings of worship, ritual, preaching and dialogue; to organize study programs of music, languages, arts, theology, history, and other subjects on the congregation's premises or elsewhere; plan, organize and conduct performances, concerts, exhibits, and lectures on the congregation's premises or elsewhere; . . . invite and arrange and organize visits of religious teachers; prepare, print and distribute photographs, motion pictures, and TV programs pertaining to the Muslim faith and philosophy. . . .[34]

Flavin had been commissioned in 1979 to provide works to illuminate the Mercer Street building, then intended as a "dance-performance center," and though he reportedly had qualms about its rededication, by 1982 he produced an extensive series of works that served to light three floors and a stairwell of the mixed-use edifice.[35]

Heiner Friedrich recalled that he had experienced "the true insight for the unfolding and development of Dia"—namely, the supreme value of sponsoring a genius to make a masterpiece to occupy a harmonious space in perpetuity—in a youthful epiphany in the Arena Chapel at Padua, where he encountered Giotto's storied fresco cycle in 1957. (Friedrich later perceived a relation between the Arena Chapel and the Rothko Chapel, where he became the first person to spend an entire night.[36]) The 1960s and 1970s would oversee an aggressive disinvestment in the concepts of genius and masterpieces within the avant-garde, through strategies of deskilling, the removal of the artist's hand, and the use of ordinary materials, technologies, and forms, among others. Regardless, Friedrich believed that he knew genius when he



3 Mark Rothko, the Rothko Chapel, interior view showing the northwest, north triptych, and northeast wall paintings, 1971. The Rothko Chapel, Houston (artwork © Kate Rothko Prizel and Christopher Rothko / Artists Rights Society [ARS], New York; photograph by Hickey-Robertson)



4 Dan Flavin, untitled, 1982, installation at Masjid Al-Farah, New York (artwork © Stephen Flavin / Artists Rights Society [ARS], New York; photograph by Carol Huebner)

saw it, and he believed that masterworks could be induced to follow: works monumental in ambition, significance, and scale.

Proving unique in our era for the aggressiveness with which they drove a certain course of development for a key movement, Dia's founders induced or encouraged certain artists to dream audaciously, as if money were no object and any given venue could be secured in perpetuity. "Heiner told me he wanted to establish a method of funding not seen since the Renaissance," Whitman recalled. "He wanted to make a Sistine chapel, create a Shakespeare."[37] Avant-garde practices had been largely inimical to grandiosity until the advent in the later 1960s of the Earthworks movement and the contemporaneous emergence of Richard Serra's amplified iteration of the Minimalist vocabulary. The versatile De Maria may be counted a kind of pioneer in the Earthworks initiative, along with Robert Smithson and Michael Heizer, both of whom built importantly from the foundation of Minimalism, and whose work was more recently adopted by Dia, along with that of Serra. While outsize scale is an age-old mechanism for inspiring awe, in the event, Dia's spectacular plans tended to be executed with a distinctively understated aspect. The somewhat generic, industrial, or institutional spaces that Dia mostly acquired for the art projects it sponsored were evidently chosen and architecturally customized precisely to reciprocate the endemic reserve of the Minimalist aesthetic itself.

In general, the Minimalists' projects had not initially assumed an epic scale nor required great sums; rather, the (then impecunious) artists tended to use commonplace materials simply and on a moderate scale, exploiting resources at hand in the urban settings where the movement emerged. (The Californians mostly tended to master and deploy their chosen means of fabrication themselves, whereas the New Yorkers tended to be more removed, employing fabricators and more or less skilled assistants, or using ready-made materials.) Among the inaugural Minimalist sculptures, for example, was De Maria's untitled 1961 box, easily carpentered out of four standard-issue 4-by-8-foot plywood boards capped at either end by another such board cut in two—a decidedly plain, fairly portable artifact by comparison, say, with the five hundred meticulously machined, regularly polished, solid brass rods, 2 meters (6½ feet) long by 2 inches in diameter, collectively weighing 37,500 pounds, permanently, precisely arrayed (one hundred to a line in five parallel lines) across a specially renovated and lighted 7,500-square-foot space: a summary description of *The Broken Kilometer* of 1979 (Fig. 5). While each individual rod remained loosely on a human scale—typical of Minimalism in its inception—the proliferation of those rods into a work that, in aggregate, constitutes a colossus attests to Dia's fostering of an epic, high-financed stage in the movement's development.[38]

When *The Broken Kilometer* debuted as a Dia facility, Dia guards were asked to record the (unwitting) visitors' comments. The remarks ranged from the financially and authority-minded:

> "Am I supposed to be impressed with the scale and the cost?" "We all know the material world is rationalized by those who control it, why support that?" "You don't really mean this is a non-profit organization; it is for the profit of one artist," "Do you have to sign in or anything?" "It's very fascist," "rows of steel helmets,"

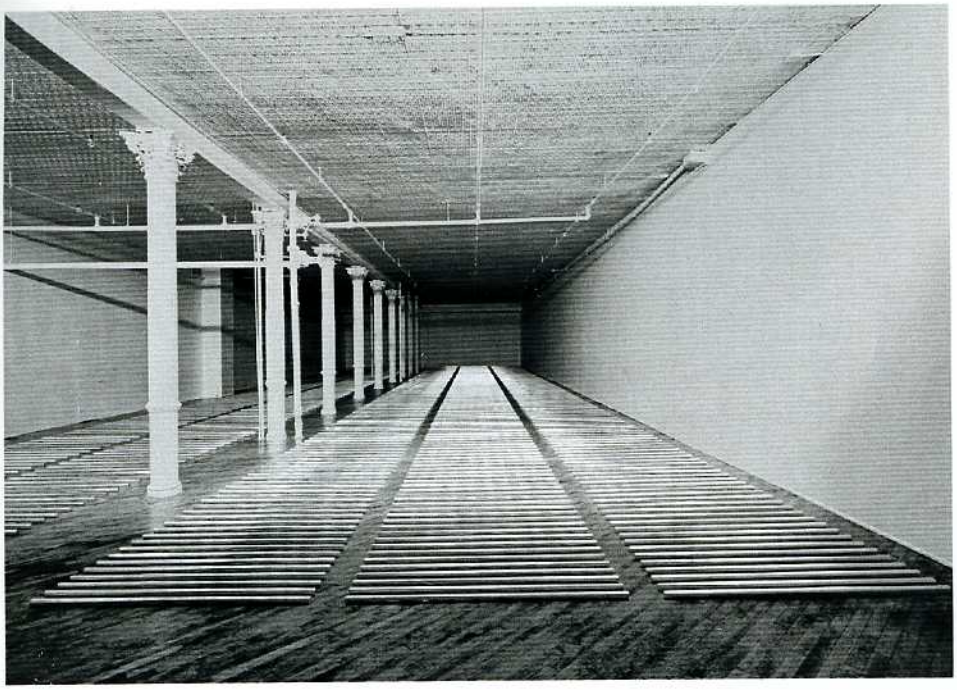
to the predictably baffled and outraged:

> "Is this all you have to show?" "It's criminal that it is here permanently,"

to the transported, one way or another:

> "like Emerald City," "an awe inspiring space," "A church," "like meditating at the bottom of a brilliant golden ocean."[39]

Among professional observers, April Kingsley perceived, "The effect is of a shimmering but inaccessible floor of gold,



5 Walter De Maria, *The Broken Kilometer*, 1979, long-term installation at 393 West Broadway, New York (artwork © Walter De Maria; photograph by John Abbott, provided by the Dia Art Foundation)

like gold bars in the Treasury or priceless objects behind bullet-proof glass," while Brian Wallis noted "a tense contradiction between the mechanical and the spiritual" in this "grandiose" work, whose effect he compared to that of the Rothko Chapel.[40]

The solemnity and quietness—at times, even secrecy—with which Dia would pursue its monumental projects, as well as the extreme solicitude it showed toward the mostly prominent artists it subsidized, generally helped insulate the foundation from pointed interrogation or critique concerning its unusually directive role. However, some came to question Dia's isolating of artists from the larger forces of society and the marketplace. "Dia monopolized some artists so completely that they almost disappeared from circulation," gallery owner Leo Castelli reportedly observed, and another New York dealer complained (anonymously), "'It's absolutely crazy what they did. . . . You support artists by buying their work, not by making shrines to them."[41] At issue here in part, arguably, was a conventionally American trust in the inherent rightness of the outcome of free market operations relative to contemporary art production (notwithstanding that Castelli was himself European in origin), versus an "old-world" ideal of art patronage as reanimated by Panza and the Dia founders. For that matter, in 2001 critic Dave Hickey compared Judd and Flavin to certain "eighteenth-century neoclassical masters like Palladio . . . retained by old families who embodied the historical destiny of aristocratic European taste."[42]

While acknowledging Heiner Friedrich's idealism, Dan Flavin himself reportedly asserted, in the mid-1980s, that his patron "really wanted control over a group of artists for his own ends."[43] Yet such open disgruntlement had proven rare among Dia's chosen circle of artists prior to that moment—a moment when a financial crisis brought on by a collapse of oil prices caused the foundation to curtail and renege on numerous of its ambitious plans, after which Dia acquired a new administration, and Dia-affiliated artists were largely loosed from their "retained" status.[44]

So long as Dia remained the Friedrichs' exclusive domain, the artists whom they included in the foundation's programs were figures whose work apparently resonated with their deeply held convictions.[45] Friedrich already had established ties to most of the artists in question prior to his religious conversion. But in view of his, and Fariha's, eventual adherence to Sufism, it bears noting that historically, Islamic tradition has tended to value an aniconic and "contemplative" visual art that "expresses above all a state of the soul that is open toward the interior, toward an encounter with the Divine Presence." Within Islamic art and, more specifically, within Sufi poetry, beauty is considered of the essence, as beauty is tantamount to the "face of God."[46] Still, the Friedrichs never extracted express spiritual commitments from the artists they supported, just as Dominique de Menil had demanded no profession of faith from the doubting Rothko before asking him to make paintings for a chapel, being secure in her own insights as to the spiritual moment of his work. Regardless of their individual creeds or lack thereof, "great artists are . . . the ministers of a mystery which cannot be fathomed," Dominique de Menil affirmed at Dia in 1992.[47]

Among those (Euro-American) artists whom the Friedrichs favored, the only ones who approached their fervidly held beliefs were Young and Zazeela. In the Dia-funded *Dream House*, running from 1981 to 1985 at the revamped New York Mercantile Exchange at 6 Harrison Street, Young's "electronic music played 24 hours a day and all six floors were bathed in the glow of [Zazeela's] magenta light projections" (Fig. 6).[48] Young held a Sufi belief that "music is capable of presenting the most perfect model of universal structure," and he spoke of "universal truths that are being transmitted directly through me."[49] Young and Zazeela were disciples and sometime accompanists of Indian vocalist Pandit Pran Nath,

6 La Monte Young Marian Zazeela, *Dream House*, 1981–85, sound and light environment at 6 Harrison Street, New York, "a time installation measured by a setting of continuous frequencies in sound and light," white aluminum mobiles, Fresnel lamps, colored glass filters, electronic dimmers, detail (of approximately half of the room), Marian Zazeela, *The Magenta Lights*, 29 × 70 × 46 ft. (total) (artwork and photograph © La Monte Young & Marian Zazeela; photograph by John Cliett)

who had been trained from childhood by the Sufi master Ustad Abdul Waheed Khan Sahib in the Kirana style of music. Characterizing the Kirana style as "a spiritual form preserved and expressed in the language of music," Dia sponsored concerts by Pandit Pran Nath, who came at times to perform and also reside at 6 Harrison Street.[50]

Besides the facilities Dia underwrote in urban and small-town enclaves along the East Coast, the foundation also sponsored certain Minimalists' initiatives in drawing the art public into untrammeled nature, following the path of gallery owner Virginia Dwan, patron (about 1970) of seminal earthworks by Heizer and Smithson. Friedrich recalled how "living in the countryside after the war in purest relation to nature, in great peace, made a huge impression on me—seeing the manifestation of the divine"—and Panza would share with Friedrich a sense of the particular gloriousness of the western United States.[51] Dia's first such major undertaking, to which Panza contributed, was De Maria's *Lightning Field*, completed in the high desert of New Mexico in 1977 (Fig. 10). Soon after came the first phases of what came to be called the Chinati Foundation. At a disused military installation that Dia purchased in tiny, remote Marfa, Texas, in 1979, Judd assembled discrete bodies of work by himself and other artists and placed each in dedicated, renovated buildings.[52] Journalists almost reflexively described visits to *The Lightning Field* and Chinati as pilgrimages, signaling the ordeal entailed in reaching such far-flung places as well as a perception of aura inhering in them. In a world where art is normally concentrated in urban centers, and in an era rife with flux and transposition, such outposts stood out by design for the stunning fact of their remoteness and permanence (with even photographic dissemination strictly controlled), radiating a sense of distance and uniqueness or authenticity—qualities that Walter Benjamin specified as endemic to aura.

An artwork's aura has to be discerned by a beholder, as Benjamin conceived it, and is not susceptible to being contrived by an artist. "A spiritual presence isn't something you put into your work, but . . . art is human beings trying to do something for other human beings that is super-special," affirmed James Turrell. That effort was epitomized in his case by the shaping of a celestial observatory at Roden Crater in rural Arizona, a project funded in part by Dia since 1975.[53] Still incomplete, Roden Crater has remained inaccessible to all but invited visitors, such as the critic Kay Larson, who

7 Donald Judd, 100 untitled works in mill aluminum, detail, 1982–86. The Chinati Foundation, Marfa, Texas, permanent collection (artwork © Judd Foundation, licensed by VAGA, New York, NY; photograph by Florian Holzherr, 2002)

declared (in 2004) that its "presence . . . feels sacred in its intensity and mystery." At the end of a night spent there, "The lungs of the sky filled and expanded. The purple eyelid swung slowly open. . . . Intimacy receded and vastness arrived. And I was altered—emptied out and shaken open. I had come out the other side, wordless."[54]

As for the impact of Chinati, journalist Daphne Beal exclaimed in 1997 that seeing Judd's art situated in a landscape that appeared "at the very least mythical, if not holy," could be "transforming"; and she told of a visiting Jesuit priest who commented to Judd, "you and I are in the same business."[55] Mark Stevens characterized Marfa as featuring "exactly the sort of wilderness that has attracted prophets and visionaries since biblical times, which is what Judd has become."[56] And to critic Michael Kimmelman, the pair of renovated artillery sheds that form a centerpiece of Chinati are "twin cathedrals" housing "Minimalism's great shrine," namely, the one hundred shining mill aluminum boxes of 1982–86 that Dia commissioned of Judd (Fig. 7).[57] (While richly diverse in their internal articulation, the boxes were identical in external dimension, on a scale individually moderate, but aggregately amounting to a kind of colossus, making it—like *The Broken Kilometer*—a stunning testament to Dia's means.)

Notwithstanding this journalistic penchant for religious metaphor and effusion, the general press, and specialist writers, too, have mostly omitted mention of the fervent religiosity of Dia's founders; thus, Dia's historic identity as a quasi-religious institution never has formed a conspicuous part of its public profile. The impression that Dia projects emanated a sacral quality remained a commonplace among journalists, and not among journalists alone, even after the foundation's pious founders had largely stepped aside. For example, in the mid-1990s, artist Ilya Kabakov—to whom Judd had accorded a large space at Marfa for his own (non-Minimalist) work—spoke of perceiving in Judd's mill aluminum boxes "an enormous sense of an almost cosmic order," liberating the viewer "from all that is chaotic," while Chinati as a whole impressed him as "similar to a holy place . . . like some sort of Tibetan monastery."[58]

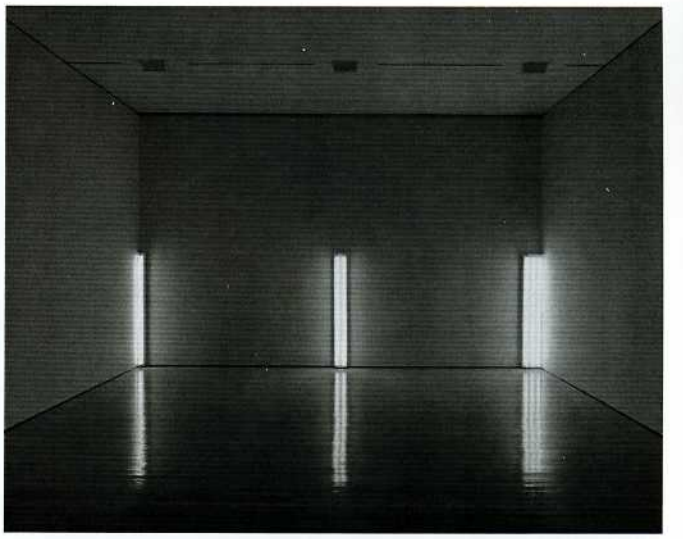
Some critics tried to align their responses to the epic Minimalism sponsored and engineered by Dia with the critical narrative predominant within academic circles, predicated on an account of an originary Minimalist moment said to be stringently materialist. In *Artforum* in 2000, for instance, Libby Lumpkin observed that Flavin's (posthumous) Chinati project brought the "trek" of the Marfa "pilgrims" to a "dead end," as his fluorescent lights' "standard, factory-issue hues" served to dispel the "2,000 year old association of luminescence with mysticism and spirituality." At the same time, Lumpkin described entering the buildings containing Flavin's works as tantamount to a trip "out of the world," while comparing his palette (aptly) to that of Matisse's stained glass at Vence. Fixed, however confusedly, on Flavin's legacy as one of "resolute secularism,"[59] Lumpkin did not mention the permanent installation of 1997 that the artist designed for a church near Milan; the works made for the Friedrichs' mosque; or the deconsecrated Baptist church in Bridgehampton, New York, that houses the Dan Flavin Art Institute opened by Dia in 1983. Containing various discrete Flavin works in niches formed by a zigzagging wall running the length of the former sanctuary, the Bridgehampton building has been termed by Arthur Danto "an environment that bears comparison with a great stained-glass interior."[60]

It was not just during the high Minimalist moment underwritten by Dia that Flavin's art trafficked in the sacred, however. Among his earliest works incorporating light was the 1962 *East New York Shrine*, with its kitschy Madonna bulb elevated over a can of "Pope" brand tomatoes, ready to be lit by the pull of a rosary chain. Eight of these works were fabricated (by Flavin's first wife, Sonja Severdija, who served initially as electrician for the intently hands-off artist), each inscribed with the phrase: "HOLY MOTHER LOADED WITH GRACE PLEASE HELP [name of friend or purchaser] SONJA AND DAN FLAVIN" and the date.[61] In addition, Flavin called his first

series of works to involve fluorescent light (together with monochrome panels) icons, and he accorded conventionally religious subtitles to some, such as *icon I (the heart), icon II (the mystery), icon III (blood) (the blood of a martyr),* and *icon VII (via crucis)* of 1961–63. Flavin dedicated some of his icons to people for whom he deeply cared, especially *icon IV (the pure land),* inscribed to his fraternal twin brother David John Flavin, who died in 1962 of polio. The phrase "the pure land" references "a Buddhist notion of a beautiful, blissful waystation on the spiritual journey to complete enlightenment," and *icon IV* was white, the color traditionally worn by Buddhists at funerals.[62]

Although light is historically, widely indexed to the spiritual,[63] fluorescent bulbs emit a harsh, cheap light typically reserved for institutional or functional contexts, not sanctuaries. Reviewing Flavin in 1968, Phil Lieder astutely delineated the contradiction between work that could appear "gaudy, playful, secular," on the one hand, yet "severe, monastic, otherworldly," on the other; between objects that were "not easily classifiable as sculpture," and so posed the problem of "establish[ing] his work in some minds as art at all," on the one hand, while exhibiting a "rich romanticism with religious and atmospheric overtones," on the other.[64] In 1962, Flavin himself had sardonically characterized his icons as "dumb . . . inglorious . . . mute and indistinguished [*sic*]," while in the same breath claiming that they shared a "magical presiding presence" with a Byzantine icon of Christ.[65] In a rambling autobiographical statement of 1964, moreover, Flavin expressly framed his artistic development in terms of his ultrareligious upbringing within the Catholic Church, detailing that past in conflicted, at once scathing and nostalgic terms.[66]

Among the first works Flavin made exclusively of fluorescents is *the nominal three (to William of Ockham)* of 1963, sold some years later to Panza (Fig. 8). This work is dedicated to the fourteenth-century Nominalist philosopher who defied prevailing doctrine to argue "that reality exists solely in individual things and universals are merely abstract signs," as Flavin put it, a view that "led [Ockham] to exclude questions such as the existence of God from intellectual knowledge, referring them to faith alone."[67] Thus, Flavin insinuated a sculpture consisting of six eight-foot-long white bulbs positioned vertically in groupings of one, two, and three—a highly rudimentary counting exercise enacted by a highly banal object—squarely, if incongruously, within a religious frame. This tension between inscription and erasure of markers of the spiritual (a tension loosely comparable to that induced by Rothko's art)[68] is felt perhaps most acutely in a Greek cross done in 1971, also acquired by Panza (among others).[69] Flavin positioned the outward-facing two-foot-long blue bulb that formed the horizontal arm of the cross such that it spanned a corner that was aglow from the vertical, inward-facing pink bulb, so as to ensure the work would "be beautiful," he said[70]—like a favored Russian icon or a Kasimir Malevich painting that referred to the same. Also germane are the neon crosses once used to sign the exteriors of many poor churches, including the one Flavin adapted on Long Island, where he directed Dia to have the cross restored and reinstalled inside, adjacent to his own work, together with a collection of the church's artifacts.[71]

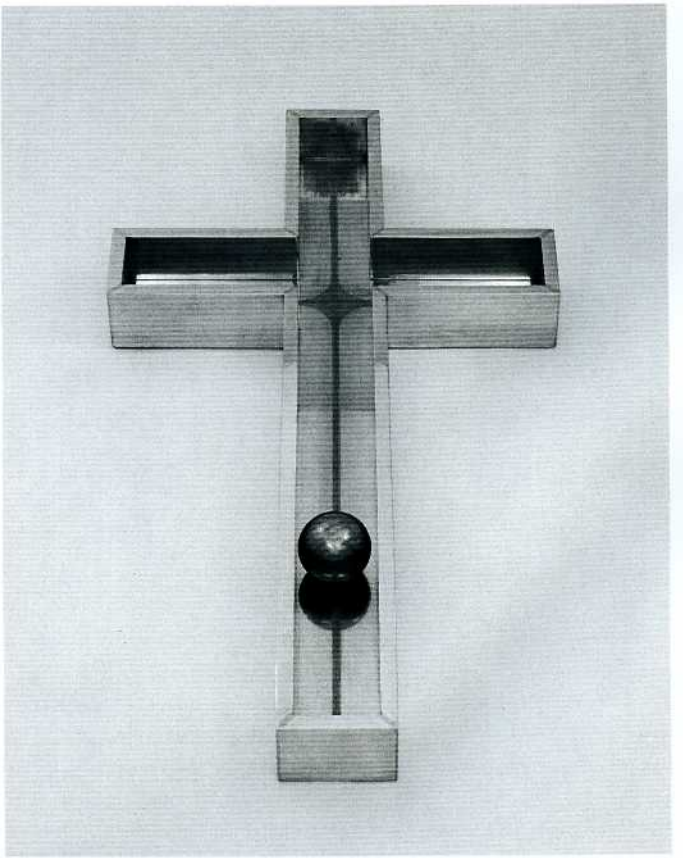


8 Dan Flavin, *the nominal three (to William of Ockham),* 1963, daylight fluorescent light, fixtures, length 6 ft. (1.83 m), overall dimensions variable. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Panza Collection, 1991, 91.3698 (artwork © Stephen Flavin / Artists Rights Society [ARS], New York; photograph provided by the Guggenheim Museum Image Archive)

For De Maria, too, Catholicism provided his "strongest and earliest sensations." And exposure to the Zen-informed thinking of Cage crucially marked De Maria's young adult years. His *360 Degree I Ching/64 Sculptures* of 1981, made of 576 rods of lacquered wood, engaged the ancient Chinese divination system that also enthralled Cage. But religious or cultic emblems had emerged much earlier in his practice, as in *Candle Piece* of 1965, with a votive light illuminating a stainless steel plaque inscribed "Dear God," and in *Cross* (Fig. 9) and *Museum Piece* (a swastika) of the mid-1960s, followed by *Star* (of David) in 1972, all formed incongruously of aluminum troughs.[72] Like elegant, elementary game boards, this trio of works each contained a ball the artist added, he said, "to disturb the purity of the symbol" (a disruptive impulse perhaps similar to aspects of Flavin's practice).[73]

In his 1968 *Beds of Spikes,* De Maria alluded elliptically to the ancient ascetic practices of yogis who reclined on beds of nails. Organized according to a hermetic, progressive, mathematical logic, the *Beds of Spikes* revealed his interest in numerological play, which became apparent also in *The Lightning Field* (Fig. 10). In the field's one-mile-by-one-kilometer grid, the number of poles on the mile side equals the square of five; the number of poles on the kilometer side is the square of four; altogether the poles amount to the square of twenty (400). Squares and square roots were considered magical numbers from ancient Greece into the Middle Ages, when mathematics was generally the province of monks, for whom it often had sacred overtones.

The commitment of time and money entailed in visiting *The Lightning Field* might have ensured that devotees alone would trouble to visit, but the work has instead met with a spectrum of responses. When it was premiered to local journalists (who had to pressure Dia for access), Heiner Friedrich struggled to persuade Fritz Thompson, for one, of the mag-



9 Walter De Maria, *Cross*, 1965–66, aluminum, 4 × 42 × 22 in. (10.2 × 106.7 × 55.9 cm). Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 73.2033 (artwork © Walter De Maria; photograph provided by the Guggenheim Museum Image Archive)

nitude of a work "he sincerely believes is on par with the pyramids of Egypt and the temples of Greece." Eager to instill in Thompson a sense of the work's aura, "He employs words like holiness, truth, clarity, beauty and inspiration." Friedrich further suggested that Thompson's deep ties to the area ought to enhance his appreciation of De Maria's achievement, although the skeptical native supposed instead that such an extreme embellishment of the land must speak to certain urbanites, facilitating their experience of highly alien surroundings.[74] Even absent Friedrich's coaching, Dia's highly controlled administration of *The Lightning Field* would "conspire to induce a feeling of awe, to insure that one will fully expect to see God," as critic John Beardsley put it, adding pointedly, "Needless to say, He doesn't appear." Beardsley complained, in fact, that "The measure of control exercised by the artist and his sponsor, the Dia Foundation, over the viewer's approach to [*The Lightning Field*] . . . inhibits an effective dissociation between what one sees and what one is expected to see, between what one believes and what one is led to believe."[75]

Visitors to *The Lightning Field* must prearrange their trips, which entail being transported by four-wheel-drive vehicle from tiny Quemado, New Mexico, for an overnight "initiation into [its] mysteries," as Beardsley put it, comparing the initiate to "a neophyte in a new order"[76]—a description that fits as well my own experience. One arrives at the site in the early afternoon, when the then prosaic-looking poles may be seen only a few at a time and only in direct proximity. Through an implicitly choreographed exercise in the experience of epiphany, visitors must wait for the sun's slow descent to cause the full expanse of poles to emerge to view, glowing or radiating as the sun nears the horizon.[77] De Maria considered that "the great appreciation for slow time is the contribution of the drug sensibility of the '60s,"[78] and the 1960s conceit of the "trip" may indeed seem apropos to the experience on offer at *The Lightning Field*. Although De Maria's succinct text about his most ambitious work framed it largely in factual terms, he interspersed those terms with some more gnomic pronouncements, notably: "*The invisible is real.*"[79]

The Lightning Field has of course found its true believers as well, including Panza, for whom it afforded an authentically metaphysical experience. A letter to Philippa Pellizzi characterized his 1978 trip there as:

> like a necessary pilgrimage to a sanctuary where we can recognize our condition of man into the Universe; never was built cathedral or temple to tell to everybody this truth so clearly. . . . [P]ure thin beams of light pointing to the sky making a relationship between our finite terrestrial condition and the infinite space. . . . Because of you a so great work was made. It will be forever a landmark of our time, like the Rothko chapel.[80]

Among other visitors, a New Mexican cardiologist found that his "Cosmic fantasies came alive":

> Interplanetary visitors would be most comfortable at this site, and would surely get a most positive first impression of Earth and the works of Earthlings. . . . It is incredibly glorious in the moments before the sun first emerges over the eastern ridge, the tops of the poles glowing in the early morning tangent, as if to herald the Second Coming.[81]

From the first, numerous critics perceived in *The Lightning Field* intimations of a contemporary reformulation of the sublime.[82] Commonly defined as an ultimate, awesome experience of "high spiritual, moral, or intellectual worth," the sublime is often art historically associated with spectacular landscape painting, such as that of the Hudson River school.[83] But the fairly featureless landscape where De Maria's work was erected evokes the scenery favored by, say, Albert Bierstadt, simply by virtue of its vastness (although mountains encircle the site, they are so far distant as to be dwarfed in the viewers' perception). The very monotony or plainness of the topography—as also at Marfa—is in effect what allows the Minimalist work, in all its apparent sameness and simplicity, to stand out and slowly offer up its subtleties. And vice versa: the landscape's subdued qualities in a sense may be revealed by the artwork. In a realm rich mostly in tumbleweed, cactus, and clotted earth—a realm apparently off the all-consuming grid[84]—the pristine grids of De Maria and Judd may achieve, by contrast, a shining, stunning, precious, as if wondrous, presence.[85]

"*Isolation is the essence of Land Art,*" De Maria declared.[86] His stress on *The Lightning Field*'s remoteness; on the visitors' solitariness; on the project's expansive dimension; and, of course, on the experience of light, manifest most intensely in

10 Walter De Maria, *The Lightning Field*, 1977, long-term installation piece in Quemado, New Mexico (artwork © Walter De Maria; photograph by John Cliett, © Dia Art Foundation)

the desert sunsets, sunrises, and strikes of lightning (though direct strikes are exceedingly rare): all of these emphases resonate with ideas of sublimity, as does the artist's deployment of uniformity and repetition. For that matter, a comparable case might be made for Judd's grids of aluminum boxes in Marfa, which also explore uniformity and repetition while relying for their effects on the natural light delivered by the continuous fenestration the artist had installed along the side walls of the sheds housing the boxes.[87]

"Where an Object is *vast*, and at the same Time *uniform*, there is to the Imagination no Limits of its Vastness, and the Mind runs out into *Infinity*, continually *creating* as it were from the *Pattern*," John Baillie observed in his 1747 *Essay on the Sublime*.[88] Limitlessness is another attribute of the sublime, in short, and *The Lightning Field* does and does not answer to that description, being explicitly bound by units derived from Enlightenment-based systems of measurement, yet being imaginable as infinitely extensible, as any grid might be. Just as the *Field*'s spiked, steely poles impose the ubiquitous, tyrannical regularity of the grid on the randomness of nature, nature simultaneously imposes its own insistent randomness over the regularity of the grid: De Maria's perfectionist demand that "the plane of the tips" should "evenly support an imaginary sheet of glass" necessitated strictly differentiating all those apparently identical poles, making each a singular height, ranging all the way from 15 feet to 26 feet 9 inches, to accommodate—while, as it were, canceling—the randomness of terrain chosen in part for its seeming flatness.[89]

Like De Maria, James Turrell was also signally influenced at a formative moment by the Zen-infused aesthetics of Cage, and Turrell eventually pursued an independent investigation of certain Eastern philosophies, including Zen.[90] Like De Maria and Flavin both, Turrell also worked through an at once personal and institutional spiritual history—in his case, that of Quakerism, a faith that came to unusual prominence in the Vietnam era because of its pacifism. By contrast with Flavin's agonistic encounter with his (patriarchal and bureaucratized) faith, Turrell recalled more benignly the worship services, called "meetings," held to "greet the light," which signifies the divinity within and without in Quakerism. A generally aniconic faith, Quakerism shuns intercessors between worshipers and their god. And Turrell liked to say, with

respect to his light-based art: "Light is not so much something that reveals, as it is itself the revelation."[91] His Skyspace of 1980–86 at P.S.1 in New York City, called *Meeting*, with its humble benches ranged around the perimeter of a plain room, evokes a miniature Quaker meetinghouse (albeit with unusual fenestration). (Turrell has had a return to Quakerism more recently through his involvement in designing a Houston meetinghouse.[92])

As for Roden Crater—where a calendar of astronomical events for thousands of years to come has been attempted, so as to align the crater's observatory chambers with planetary and celestial movements—an astronomer involved in the project compared it to places ranging from "the inner sanctuary of Newgrange, [and] the High Room of the Sun at Karnak . . . [to] the sacred ground inside a Kogi temple."[93] When Turrell wrote to Panza in 1989 seeking funds for the crater, he explained: "Within this setting are to be made spaces which engage celestial events, a music of the spheres played out in light."[94] Panza in his turn, once he visited, perceived that the crater could provide "the best education giving a real hope in front of the Greatest Reality."[95]

The leading narratives of the Minimalist movement have generally separated Turrell's aims from those of his New York counterparts, to reiterate. Yet Turrell shared with the New York–based Minimalist Morris, for one, his engagement with the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty.[96] And a number of the New Yorkers would share, or come to share, with Turrell aspects of his bent toward a practice complicated by loosely spiritual valences. Morris, who is said to have been deeply affected by a visit to Turrell's studio in Ocean Park, California, in 1969 (though he dissembled on this subject),[97] produced two primitive observatories in Holland in the 1970s and framed a three-dimensional maze patterned on that in the floor of Chartres Cathedral (emblematic of the rite of pilgrimage) in a work of 1974, acquired by Panza. As for Andre, who had what he called a "momentous" encounter with Stonehenge in his youth, he directly emulated Neolithic construction, explicitly so in his *Henge* works of the early 1970s.[98]

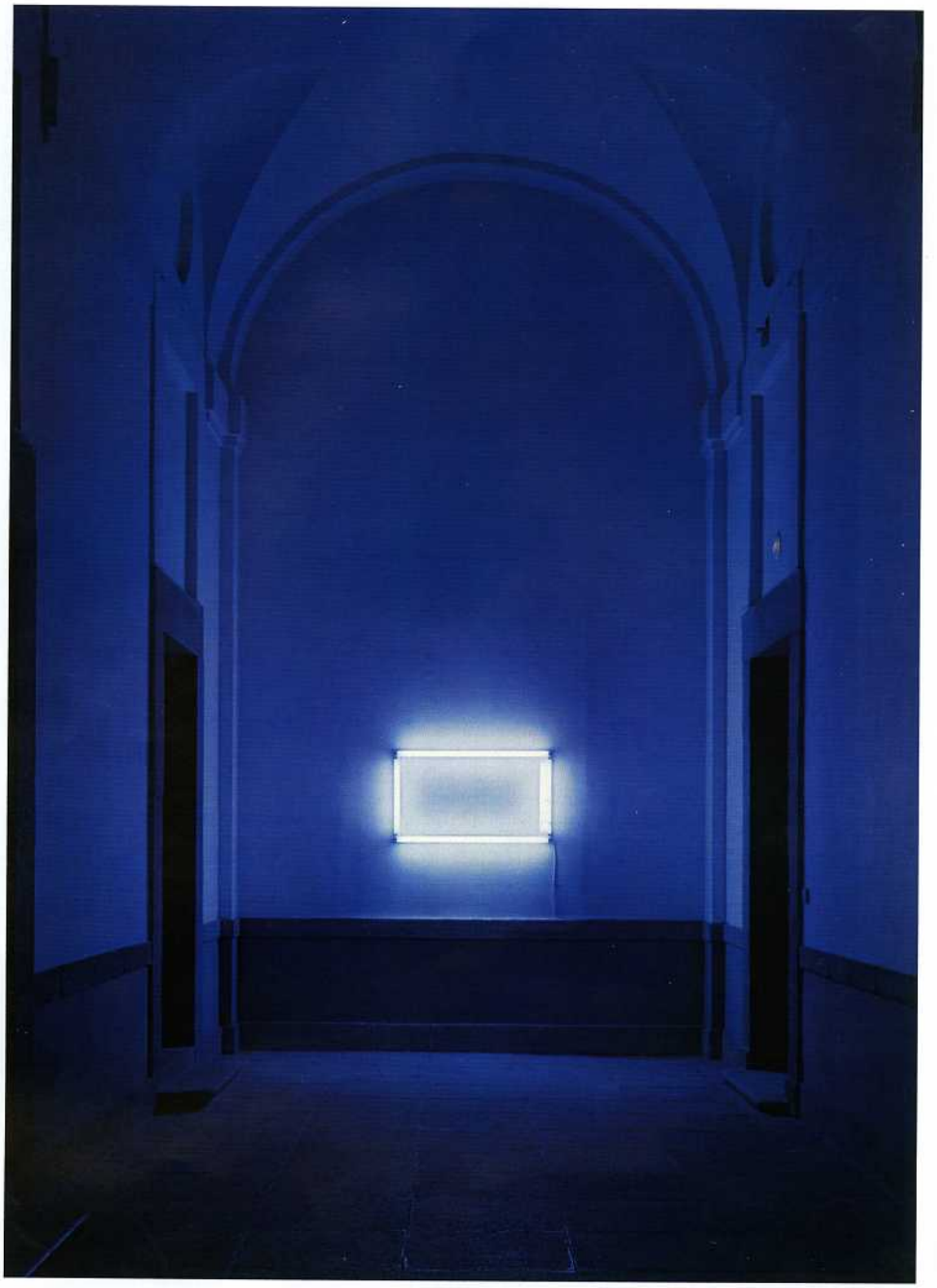
The New Yorker who specifically shared Turrell's engrossment with light was, of course, Flavin, who concentrated mostly on the effects of artificial light, whereas Turrell focused on natural as well as artificial light, or combinations thereof. Panza juxtaposed Turrell's work with that of Flavin in his Villa Litta in Varese in an arrangement that Krauss criticized for making Flavin's work appear uncharacteristically science fiction–like and metaphysical, thereby leading the Minimalist project off course such that it became "folded at last into the arms of the California Sublime."[99] But, though he lacked Turrell's unalloyed sincerity, in his own contradictory ways Flavin also investigated the spiritual, and his work could look science fiction–like of its own accord (as many have noted)—never more so than when his 1992 retrospective effectively turned the Guggenheim Museum as viewed at night into a giant, vibrant, technicolor UFO landed hard by Central Park.

Even when we look to a moment antedating these artists' connections with Panza and the Friedrichs, comparing, say, *Ursula's one and two picture* of 1964 (2 feet by 4 feet) by Flavin (which Panza eventually acquired; Fig. 11) and Turrell's *Raemar* of 1968 (dimensions variable, but covering an entire wall), we may find the similarities between the two horizontal rectangles limned by intensely radiant, fluorescent blue light as compelling as the differences.[100] True, Turrell's more dematerialized-looking artwork, which entails hidden lamping (concealed behind a secondary or false wall incised with slits that form a rectangle) is more illusionistic, more mysterious, and more redolent of nature than Flavin's work, whose identity as a discrete, potentially portable object separates it as well.[101] Such differences matter, of course, as does Turrell's somewhat greater penchant for works that tend to fully immerse or envelop the viewer.

Might these differences between the two glowing blue rectangles be seen as attesting more broadly to certain coastal differences? To a distinction, say, between New York City's (formerly) industrial or manufactory-based identity versus Southern California's longtime history of trafficking in a full-immersion realm of illusion; its storied, sunlit natural glories; its relative cultural newness; its tropism toward the Far East, just over the Pacific, with its traditions of objectless meditation? At the risk of cementing stereotypes, or vainly trying to make the ineffable effable, I would answer: conceivably so. For myself as a New Yorker, seeing the works of the California-based artists in California has at times afforded a deep sense of the relation between thing and place or site of origin. Moreover, the avant-garde ambition to begin art all over again—so urgent among the Minimalists generally—can have a special resonance in a realm where extensive contact with high cultural traditions remains fairly recent (since major museum collections of Western art would be developed in California only after the Minimalist generation came of age). But to admit the possibility of a degree of cultural separation between coastal Minimalisms is not by any means to decry intermixing the two. Any "dialogue" between juxtaposed works will redound on both sides, and Flavin's work can affect Turrell's—pointing up its artificiality, say—no less than the other way around.

"My first and largest interest is in my relation to the natural world, all of it, all the way out. This interest includes my existence, the existence of everything and the space and time that is created by the existing things": so said not Turrell, as one might suppose, but Judd.[102] Observed Turrell, by comparison, "I think of my works as being important in terms of what they have to do with us and our relationship to the universe"; Roden Crater stands in an area "where you feel geologic time. You have a strong feeling of standing on the surface of the planet."[103] Once they transplanted themselves to Texas and Arizona (respectively), in short, Judd and Turrell could sound almost of a mind, and of a mind not out of tune with the visionary patrons who helped underwrite their visionary schemes.

"People don't pay enough attention to what is there," Judd once protested, "I don't know what happened to the pragmatic, empirical attitude of paying attention to what is here and now; it's basic to science. It should be basic to art too."[104] In Marfa and at Roden Crater, Judd and Turrell each shaped an isolated site to provide a committed viewing public with possibilities for paying close attention, for concentrated, sustained exercises in a form of contemplation. Judd and Turrell conceived those opportunities during a period when, in some



11 Dan Flavin, *Ursula's one and two picture*, 1964, filtered ultraviolet fluorescent light, 24 × 48 in. (61 × 122 cm). Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Panza Collection, Gift, 1992, on permanent loan to Fondo per l'Ambiente Italiano, 92.4115 (artwork © Stephen Flavin / Artists Rights Society [ARS], New York; photograph provided by the Guggenheim Museum Image Archive)

sectors in the United States, the contemplative practice of meditation was being prized apart from particular religious systems, whether to be studied in scientific and medical ways or to be investigated in an eclectic, esoteric context sometimes summarized or derided as "New Age" spiritualism.[105] Thus, Yve-Alain Bois, for one, recently complained that "the quasi-religious interpretation of Minimalism proposed by New Age zealots such as James Turrell is forever on the rise, despite its staunch rejection by most Minimal artists, Judd foremost among them."[106] While Judd indeed suspected the Friedrichs' religious fervor, it remains an open question whether their view of his practice in some degree permeated or reciprocated aspects of his own view. "To make good things, you have to have some sort of belief," Judd himself once averred.[107] "[A]ll forms are spiritual. . . ," he observed, further, in an interview in 1993: "I see it as an awareness which stems from reality—a kind of 'being.'"[108]

Meditation was not an area of formal study for Judd or the East Coast Minimalists, evidently, whereas Turrell and Irwin seriously investigated meditative practices and "alpha conditioning" (the brain-wave cycles that typically occur during meditation), and Turrell imagined viewers of his work potentially "back[ing] into a subtle form of meditation."[109] In 1965, in a founding article of Minimalist discourse, Barbara Rose perceived that the "protracted asceticism" characteristic of Minimalism (which she then termed "ABC Art") "is normally the activity of contemplatives or mystics. . . . Like the mystic, in their work these artists deny the ego and the individual personality, seeking to evoke, it would seem, that semihypnotic state of blank consciousness, of meaningless tranquility

and anonymity that both Eastern monks and yogis and Western mystics . . . sought."[110]

In 1967, literary critic Ihab Hassan noted, "Mystics have always maintained that the way down is also the way out and that the end of things heralds a new beginning—negative transcendence, as we call it today, is a form of transcendence nevertheless."[111] From the retrospective (1985) vantage point of Irwin, a later inductee into the Dia fold, "The wonder of it all is that what looked for all the world like a diminishing horizon—the art-object's becoming so ephemeral as to threaten to disappear altogether—has, like some marvelous philosophical riddle, turned itself inside out to reveal its opposite," that is, a newly "'phenomenal art' . . . which seeks to discover and value the potential for experiencing beauty in everything."[112]

There are meditative practices that entail concentration on objects (such as grids), as well as those calling for an objectless state of focus. From Irwin's and Turrell's perspective, finally, the very act of "experiencing is the 'object,'"[113] whereas Judd, Flavin, De Maria, Andre, and Morris would not forgo some form of material object. (Judd at times partially dissolved the object through illusionistic effect, however, while Flavin's objects depend heavily on the immaterial medium of light.) But that difference does not correlate with any broader East–West divide, inasmuch as Californians Larry Bell and the mystical John McCracken, for example, persisted in producing objects (just as Irwin had at the outset of his career). With or without a material object, in New York, California, and outposts in between, the Minimalists broadly sought to alter public consciousness through their practice, an aim that was conceived in various quarters during the 1960s as harboring a social, spiritual, or utopian potential. As literary critic Leslie Fiedler grandly pronounced in 1964, "We can *see* a different world without firing a shot or framing a syllogism, merely by altering our consciousness; and the ways to alter it are at hand."[114]

Minimalists across the United States may be said to have pursued, in diverse ways, the capacity for authentic experience—a capacity thought to be in decline in the technological age. In 1964, Susan Sontag famously lamented the widespread "hypertrophy of the intellect at the expense of energy and sensual capability" in a jeremiad "Against Interpretation."[115] For De Maria, as for Heiner Friedrich, rapt silence was the ideal state for communion with great works of art, from which perspective any exercise in interpretation could represent a kind of violation.[116] As for Irwin, his work is said to have become "all about the sort of attention that *precedes* verbalization, about what it's like to experience—or rather, what it *is* to experience—before being overwhelmed by words."[117] Many of the Minimalists were drawn to the work of Ludwig Wittgenstein, moreover, who wrote a phrase that has lately been proposed by Pepe Karmel as a very motto for Minimalism generally: "What can be said at all can be said clearly, and what we cannot talk about we must pass over in silence." Karmel elaborates:

> Wittgenstein's observation is subject to two mutually exclusive interpretations. One is that anything that cannot be stated clearly does not exist, and therefore is not worth discussing. . . . The other interpretation is that there are ethical and spiritual matters of supreme importance that cannot be discussed clearly . . . [that] will be distorted and perverted by any attempt to discuss them. . . . It might be argued that what Minimal art aims to communicate is precisely this sense of supreme and therefore inexpressible meaningfulness.[118]

Take the case of Flavin's *nominal three* of 1963, with its white bulbs counted out in groupings of one, two, and three, or of Andre's iconic *Lever* of 1966, with its 137 firebricks laid side by side: in 1962, Hugh Kenner argued that "the dominant intellectual analogy of the present age is drawn . . . from general number theory," which introduced the concept of the "closed field"—that is, "a set of elements, and a set of laws for dealing with these elements"—as a "condition for learning." Kenner pointed out that in the novel *Molloy* by Samuel Beckett (whose writings appealed to many of the Minimalists), Molloy sits "on the beach to meditate" with "the elements of a closed field," namely, sixteen stones, arrayed before him; "his problem is to suck on each in turn until he has completed the set, and then begin again." Though sucking the stones may appease an "instinct for order," it can afford "no nourishment" to Molloy. Nonetheless, reading Beckett's narrative may yield "not only laughter, but also nourishment for the affections and the intellect." Concluded Kenner, "One way or another, when it is focused by art, the closed field becomes that point of concentration which in proportion as it grows smaller concentrates more intensely the radiant energies of all that we feel and know."[119]

Benjamin had also cherished an ideal of an authentic, sensually aware aesthetic experience, "demanding of art" that it "*undo* the alienation of the corporeal sensorium, to *restore the instinctual power of the human bodily senses for the sake of humanity's self-preservation*, and . . . do this, not by avoiding the new technologies, but by *passing through* them," as Susan Buck-Morss has described.[120] Many of the Minimalists explored fairly new technologies and materials, such as contemporary plastics, but much of the Minimalist corpus deployed older materials associated with the common culture, from timber and bricks to various metals, glass, and plywood. As virtuality and the simulative have come to have an ever increasing purchase on contemporary life in the West, the Minimalists' preferred materials have accrued an aura of authenticity. Simple plywood may look less ordinary than special, less processed than richly natural, for example, at a moment when the computer screen is the most signal of contemporary surfaces and actual wood graining is more and more restricted to the domains of the affluent.

Minimalist projects typically entailed a paradoxical combination of humbleness and pretension, being ordinary in their forms and, seemingly, in their materials and means, yet grandiose in their claims to art status. In art, as in architecture—notably, including the spaces remade by Dia—the appearance of extreme simplicity can disguise great difficulty and expense, however.[121] Once their patrons offered to capitalize ambitious schemes, the Minimalists devised projects that often appeared austere even as they occasioned hidden extravagance. For that matter, such a conjoining of simplicity and cost is deeply identified with a kind of patrician taste, a taste

for which some members of the de Menil family happened to be particularly renowned.[122]

Dave Hickey has recalled how his conversations with Judd and Flavin "circled around two obsessive subjects: first, the vulgarity of everything and everyone else (including me) and, second, the possibility of patronage from the old families of Europe and America, who represented the aristocracy of taste toward which they aspired."[123] As one example of such refinement of taste, when John de Menil died, Dominique arranged for his body to be housed in a plain pine box—just as her children in due course would arrange for her to lie, in that case in a pine box crafted by the carpenters of the Menil Collection.[124] To the cognoscenti, the specter of those ostensibly humble artifacts might well have evoked the (albeit differently proportioned) horizontal box sculptures that Judd had had meticulously carpentered of Douglas fir plywood in the 1970s. Formerly, a plain pine box was generally a pauper's coffin, but by late century, the stereotype of the cheap casket tended more to the gaudy and ersatz (in emulation of the stereotypically rich casket), whereas the exquisitely simple pine box could be instead the discerning choice of arbiters of taste, marking their predilection for "sumptuous austerity."[125]

Besides their famously restrained and selective material tastes, Dominique and her youngest daughter both had deeply serious spiritual ambitions. As events transpired then, those most responsible for capitalizing the Minimalist project—for securing its luxury commodity status—would also be those most responsible for constructing that project in transcendental terms, in fulfillment of their own twinned spiritual and cultural aspirations. Like Dominique and John de Menil, Fariha and Heiner Friedrich founded religious as well as art institutions—or artistic religious institutions and, more loosely, religious or cultic art institutions, marked by an affinity for austerity.[126] A "commitment to austerities" is often intrinsic to meditative and contemplative practices broadly, which typically aim for "a purification of consciousness."[127] In writing on Minimalist architecture, Deyan Sudjic has astutely remarked "the interconnection between perceptions of simplicity, moral force, and beauty," as well as the "spiritual aspect to simplicity," citing examples ranging from Cistercian and Zen monasteries to Shaker design.[128] And Turrell has acknowledged Quaker plainness as instrumental in shaping his vision.

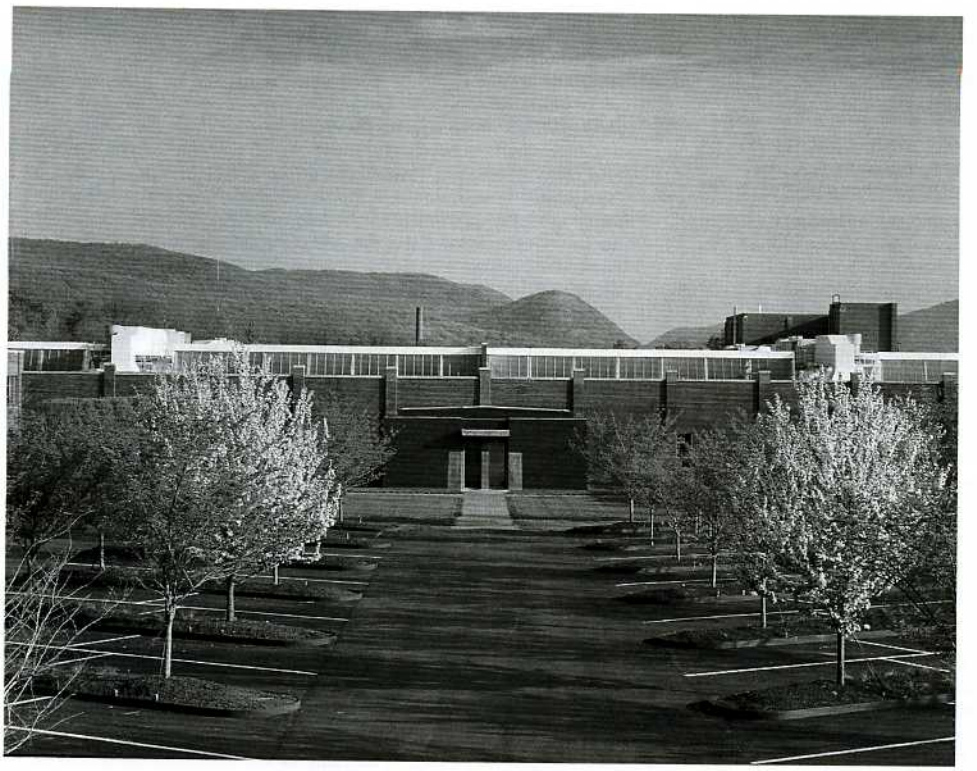
In his canonical 1967 broadside against Minimalism, "Art and Objecthood," Michael Fried famously opened with a quote from Puritan preacher Jonathan Edwards—about the "world exist[ing] anew every moment," and so providing at every moment "proof of a God"—in pointing to what he perceived Minimalism as *lacking*, namely, access to the "continuous and perpetual *present*," which he discerned in more worthy artworks.[129] In fact, the loaded terms "presence" (integral to Benjamin's concept of aura) and "presentness" haunted Minimalist discourse from the outset.[130] Writing on Morris in 1969, for instance, Annette Michelson observed, "Absolute presentness being the attribute of Divinity, to experience 'the work in all its depth and fullness' as within 'a single, infinitely brief instant'"—there she was citing the phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty—"is to dwell in Presence, in 'conviction' as in Revelation."[131] But Michelson hastened to add that Morris was a secularist, and at the time he would likely have agreed; although he occasionally mentioned "presence" as a desideratum for contemporary sculpture in his writings of the mid-1960s, unlike, say, Flavin or De Maria, Morris did not evince an ongoing preoccupation with the spiritual.[132]

But did the spiritualized construction of Minimalism fostered by its leading patrons eventually color Morris's view? For he now unabashedly avers that "a charged world hovers over . . . these in-your-face [Minimalist] objects. And this world is the same idealist and transcendent one once preached by that great puritan, Jonathan Edwards," who "identified God himself with empty space."[133] Minimalism wanted it both ways, Morris has lately argued: "tough-minded empiricism" and "tender minded transcendence"; "Minimalist art at its zenith in the sixties was a kind of religious art. Unfrocked perhaps, but religious nevertheless." Morris posits further, suggestively, that through Minimalism, "that old-time religion of Puritanism and transcendentalism grafted to Deweyan pragmatism's aesthetics of wholeness achieves its full blown ideological synthesis."[134]

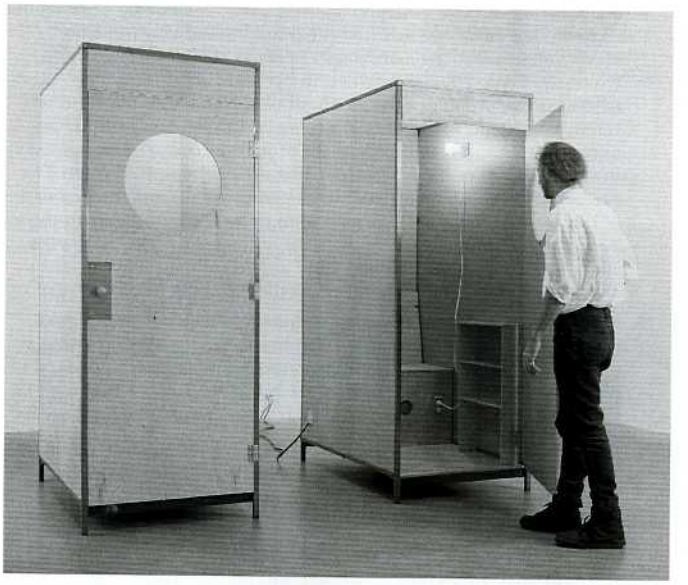
The 1960s was a time of vital spiritual ferment in the United States, devolving in part from the 1950s avant-garde embrace of Zen with its impetus toward "overcom[ing] the rift between contemplation and ordinary life in 'this world.'"[135] In Andre's ordinary bricks or Flavin's off-the-rack fluorescent bulbs, some would discern a moment of transfiguration, such as is associated with spiritual modalities ranging from Zen to transcendentalism, or simply transfiguration into the auratic realm of the aesthetic. Others, of course, would persist in seeing mere things and either champion Minimalism, on that account, as instantiating a form of radical materialism or dismiss it out of hand, as the uninitiated public has all along tended to do. For that matter, Minimalism's aura still generally requires a rite of initiation to reveal itself, or the intervention of the "priest-critic," as Morris put it, "to explicate and give blessing" to the Minimalist object.[136]

Dia has actively bolstered the initiates by funding projects tantamount to pilgrimage sites and, more recently, a kind of mother church for its permanent collection: an enormous factory in the former precincts of the Hudson River school, redesigned by Irwin (Fig. 12). Some would mention Chinati's concentrated bodies of work in dedicated spaces as a model for Dia:Beacon. (Judd did not live to see the Beacon facility, but he himself believed that "Friedrich had gotten the idea of permanent installation from me, and perhaps by way of Panza."[137]) Though Friedrich now stands officially apart from Dia, he mentored Michael Govan, the former director of Dia who conceived the Beacon museum,[138] and we can discern a form of Friedrich's, Judd's, and Panza's vision in the result, which some called a Vatican for Minimalist and post-Minimalist art. Indeed, journalists rhetorically framed Dia's latest project, perhaps more than any before it, as a form of religious undertaking—but without remarking the institution's actual history in this regard. Thus, for instance, Nancy Princenthal greeted Dia:Beacon in *Art in America* as "the great pyramid of Minimalism's kings" and as "monumental in the way of cathedrals," with its "major works by anointed masters, enshrined individually, in august splendor."[139]

Through their institutional legacies, then, the Minimalists'



12 Dia:Beacon, Beacon, N.Y., Riggio Galleries, 2003 (photograph © Richard Barnes, provided by the Dia Art Foundation)



13 Andrea Zittel, *Prototype Warm Chamber*, 1993, wood, steel, paint, heater, and light, and *Prototype Cool Chamber*, 1993, wood, steel, paint, air conditioner, and light, each 84 × 32 × 50 in. (213.4 × 81.3 × 127 cm). Private collections (artwork © Andrea Zittel, photograph provided by the Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York)

primary patrons successfully ensured a fuller development of a spiritualized and epic chapter to the Minimalist story than would otherwise have been possible. Panza and the Friedrichs ensured, as well, against prevailing critical bias, the institutional assimilation of some of the California Minimalists to that chapter. But even if we could imagine a history of Minimalism absent the extreme largesse of these patrons, we would not be left with a movement as rigorously materialist as some would have it. Minimalists, east and west, were demonstrably marked by the 1960s romantic pursuits: by the quest for diverse, enhanced states of experience and by the idealization of the land. Andrea Zittel, whose artwork builds interestingly from Minimalist paradigms (Fig. 13), lately observed:

> The first thing that stands out about Minimal art was that it shifted the modes of perception themselves. . . . I have a sneaking suspicion that the sources of this innovation may have been not only a reaction against the subjectivity of the Abstract Expressionists or the illusionism of spatial representation but also hallucinogenic-drug culture, grassroots political movements, and the era's new-found interest in Eastern religion, which opened new modes of experience and of reading the "self" in relationship to the greater whole.[140]

Zittel's insight may help explain why Minimalists on both coasts—however they individually felt about the spiritualized vision of Panza or the Friedrichs—readily let their art be annexed to their patrons' profoundly cultic designs.

Anna C. Chave authored "Minimalism and the Rhetoric of Power" in 1990 and "Minimalism and Biography" in 2000, as well as numerous other essays concerned with issues of reception, interpretation, and gender in modern art practices. She has also published monographs on Rothko and Brancusi (Yale University Press, 1991, 1993) [Queens College and the Graduate Center, CUNY, 365 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017, annachave@aol.com].

Notes

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Culture" at the College Art Association Conference, Boston, 2006, and to the University of Georgia, Athens, for opportunities to present prior versions of this paper, and to my audiences at those venues for their useful questions and comments. At the Dia archives, Kristin Poor proved most helpful. And I warmly thank Deborah Haynes for her advice and bibliographic suggestions.

1. On the emergence of a dominant account of Minimalism and the professional and personal investments it embeds, see Anna C. Chave, "Minimalism and Biography," *Art Bulletin* 82 (March 2000): 149–63.
2. Minimalist art, "to a degree unprecedented within the history of a hundred years of modernism, was largely collected by a single individual, and thus ended up almost entirely in private hands"; Rosalind Krauss, "Overcoming the Limits of Matter: On Revising Minimalism," in *American Art of the 1960s*, Studies in Modern Art, vol. 1, ed. John Elderfield (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1991), 136. Panza did not restrict himself to collecting Minimalism. Regarding the formation of his collection, see Giuseppe Panza, *Memories of a Collector*, trans. Michael Haggerty (New York: Abbeville, 2007).
3. Christopher Knight, "Interview with Giuseppe Panza," in *Art of the Sixties and Seventies: The Panza Collection* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 42. (Panza uttered the terms cited here in response to a question regarding his view of Morris's and Flavin's work, but they apply to his view of Minimalism generally.) Walter Benjamin famously used the term "aura" to allude to the magic, cultic origins of works of art. Dictionaries define aura as an "emanation or radiation" surrounding a person or thing, from the Greek word for air, breath, or vapor—a different etymology from the term "aureole," which some say better fits the phenomenon Benjamin delineated, in its more explicit connotations of radiant light and the spiritual; see Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht and Michael Marrinan, eds., *Mapping Benjamin* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 83, 189. Benjamin most famously detailed his arguments about aura in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1936), in *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), an essay with a complex history, summarized in Susan Buck-Morss, *The Origin of Negative Dialectics* (New York: Free Press, 1977), 286–87 n. 98. Some recent analysis points to the contradictory character of Benjamin's view of aura, claiming that for him, "there really was—and there really was intended to have been—aura, still," notwithstanding technology's acceleration; Robert Kaufman, "Aura, Still," *October* 99 (Winter 2002): 80.
4. Krauss, "Overcoming the Limits of Matter," 137. "[B]y now we find it indescribably embarrassing to mention *art* and *spirit* in the same sentence," Krauss had earlier contended; Rosalind E. Krauss, "Grids" (1978), reprinted in *On the Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985), 12.
5. "Corporate sponsors have self-serving motives for pushing art," Levin added, and "private patrons . . . usually do too. I'm not complaining, just wondering"; Kim Levin, "The Minimalizers," *Village Voice*, November 3, 1987, 106. The building in question (closed not long after the May 2003 founding of Dia:Beacon) is at 548 West Twenty-second Street.
6. Rosalind Krauss, "The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalist Museum," *October* 54 (Fall 1990): 14 n. 15.
7. Dia Art Foundation, annual report, 1975, quoted in Bob Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," *Vanity Fair*, September 1996, 186. The Dia founders set up a separate entity, the Lone Star Foundation, to collect discrete art objects of more manageable scale, as it did extensively before it merged with Dia in 1980. However, this more conventional collecting initiative interested Philippa less than the outsize projects where she felt herself, with Heiner, a kind of partner in creative endeavor with the artist; see ibid., 198; and Grace Glueck, "The de Menil Family: The Medici of Modern Art," *New York Times Magazine*, May 18, 1986, 106. In Benjamin, "The Work of Art," 244 n. 6, the collector emerges as one endowed with "traces of the fetishist" and as one "who, by owning the work of art, shares in its ritual power."
8. Philippa de Menil is cited regarding the naming of Dia in Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," 181; La Monte Young is quoted in ibid., 191, 198.
9. See, for example, Mark Woodruff, "A Dia Whose Time Has Come," *New Art Examiner* 15, no. 4 (December 1987): 42; and, for a citation of Flavin's coinage, Tiffany Bell, "Dan Flavin Interviewed by Tiffany Bell" (1982), in *Dan Flavin: The Complete Lights*, by Michael Govan and Bell (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 195.
10. Heiner Friedrich, quoted in Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," 182. "'You have to understand,' says La Monte Young, 'there were the Medicis, and then there were Heiner and Philippa,'" quoted in ibid., 191. "Art patronage, as we understand it today, was a creation of the Renaissance," states Jill Burke; such patronage involved a "relationship of mutual benefit between two parties," with the patron typically "hold[ing] the lion's share of power or resources." Moneyed families in Renaissance Florence, in general, "attempted to create a public identity for their lineages through material objects and buildings, thus confirming and making permanent their newfound social status," while the Medici family, in particular, "tended to be at the vanguard of new cultural fashions"; Burke, *Changing Patrons: Social Identity and the Visual Arts in Renaissance Florence* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004), 189, 6, 4, 17, 10. Whether the de Menils and Heiner Friedrich (who married into the family) belonged to a "vanguard" or, rather, a rear guard, for their role in reviving a Renaissance model of patronage in the late twentieth century, the family became renowned not simply for their outsize generosity, and the social consciousness it entailed, but also for the extreme ambition and willfulness with which they deployed that generosity, and for their highly particularized or idiosyncratic tastes, shaped in significant part by their "belief in art as faith," as Philippa's brother François said of his parents; François de Menil, "The Belief in Art as Faith," in *Sanctuary: The Spirit in/of Architecture*, ed. Kim Shkapich and Susan de Menil (Houston: Byzantine Fresco Foundation, 2004), 39.
11. Philippa de Menil married Italian anthropologist Francesco Pellizzi in 1969. "She was already interested in Buddhism and Sufism when she met Heiner Friedrich in New York in 1973"; Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," 182. Pellizzi subsequently married Friedrich and took his surname. In running Dia, the couple worked in an administrative troika with Helen Winkler, a former employee of Philippa's parents, John and Dominique de Menil.
12. Krauss, "Overcoming the Limits of Matter," 138, where Krauss pinpoints Turrell as the epitome of the "California sublime."
13. Ibid., 123–41. Among the East Coast Minimalists, Judd at times tested Krauss's view of a broad-based adherence to a strictly materialist position; see David Raskin, "The Shiny Illusionism of Krauss and Judd," *Art Journal* 65, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 7–21.
14. Bladen, Smith, and Martin all came of age artistically somewhat after their chronological peers, and they tend to be positioned in limbo between the New York school and Minimalist cohorts. Truitt, whose mature work likewise emerged later than that of her New York school contemporaries, is cast as a first-generation Minimalist in James Meyer, *Minimalism: Art and Polemics in the Sixties* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); while that designation is not widely accepted, neither is she ordinarily grouped with, say, Newman, whom she revered. Yves Klein, who admixed a mystical Catholicism with the at-once spiritual and martial discipline of judo, in a sense belongs to this roster, though he was born in 1928, the same year as Judd. The precocious Frenchman arrived at his mature vision somewhat ahead of the canonical Minimalists, who were generally born between the late 1920s and the mid-1930s. Richard Serra, born 1939, and James Turrell, born 1943, whose work built importantly from Minimalism, are not often counted as members of the founding Minimalist group.
15. Though Judd particularly valued Newman, he also admired Agnes Martin, whose distinctive bent for replicating the grid while living at times off it in solitary southwestern retreats, Judd himself acquired in his turn. The artists Judd targeted for Marfa were by no means all in the Minimalist ambit; he particularly featured John Chamberlain, for example.
16. Meyer, *Minimalism: Art and Polemics*, 272 n. 5. Meyer, 273 n. 23, omitted De Maria on the grounds that his position within Minimalism "has yet to be fully assessed." While De Maria is a heterodox figure whose earliest work evinces Dada and who later verges into Earthworks, the same might be said of Morris, whose centrality to Minimalism goes unquestioned. In Edward Strickland, *Minimalism: Origins* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), by contrast, De Maria emerges as a pioneer of Minimalist sculpture.
17. Richard Shiff, "Breath of Modernism," in *In Visible Touch: Modernism and Masculinity*, ed. Terry Smith (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 199.
18. Gregory Battcock, ed., *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1968). Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood" (1967), reprinted in ibid., 116–47, focused on New York–based Minimalists, as, in time, would the other most widely reprinted and cited essays on the Minimalist movement: Hal Foster, "The Crux of Minimalism" (1986), revised version in *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996); and Anna C. Chave, "Minimalism and the Rhetoric of Power," *Arts* 64, no. 5 (January 1990): 44–63. As for scholarly, book-length treatments of the movement, Frances Colpitt, *Minimal Art: The Critical Perspective* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1990) incorporated various Californians, excepting Turrell and Irwin (the latter is mentioned only once, in passing); Strickland, *Minimalism: Origins*, a highly inclusive text in most other respects, barely mentions the California-based visual artists, with the odd exception of John McCracken; and David Batchelor, *Minimalism* (London: Tate Gallery, 1997), a short mono-

graph, addressed only the five canonical East Coast figures (Andre, Flavin, Judd, Sol LeWitt, Morris).

19. James Meyer, ed., *Minimalism* (London: Phaidon, 2000).

20. Regarding Meyer's decision to sideline these figures, see Meyer, *Minimalism: Art and Polemics*, 271 n. 8. For an argument that the mostly forgotten Forti deserves to be cast instead as a founder of the Minimalist project, see Chave, "Minimalism and Biography," which also addresses Rainer's place. Regarding Minimalism and music, see Strickland, *Minimalism: Origins*; and Diedrich Diederichsen, "The Primary: Political and Anti-Political Continuities between Minimal Music and Minimal Art," in *A Minimal Future? Art as Object, 1958–1968*, by Ann Goldstein et al., exh. cat. (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2004), 111–31.

21. See Nancy Spector et al., *Singular Forms (Sometimes Repeated): Art from 1951 to the Present*, exh. cat. (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 2004); and Goldstein, *A Minimal Future?* The latter catalog contains an essay addressing West Coast Minimalism by James Meyer, "Another Minimalism," 33–49. Meyer's essay focuses mainly on Bell and McCracken, however, on the grounds that they were present in New York for a time during Minimalism's formative period. Meyer ascribes the critical neglect Bell and McCracken have suffered to a lack of authentic "literalism" in their work (adopting Fried's term for Minimalism) and, in Bell's case, to the artist's failure to theorize his own practice—although a resistance to theorization never similarly penalized, say, Flavin. In 1991, Krauss, "Overcoming the Limits of Matter," 140, foresaw "the impact of the release of Panza's collection back into the public realm. For that collection, which has been inscribed by another set of interpretive acts, those of Panza himself, has, through the effect of its remaining together, become a kind of framing device through which Minimalism is being reintroduced as an historical object. And that device will tend to . . . rethink the movement according to its supposed interest in a 'metaphysical entity.'" In the numerous temporary showings of Panza's holdings internationally, while the collection remained in his hands, he typically wielded substantial control over the installations, at times allegedly usurping the artists' own prerogatives. Regarding the installation of Panza's collection at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art in 1988, in "chapel-like" rooms devoted each to a single artist (similar to displays at Panza's villa), for example, see Knight, "Interview with Giuseppe Panza," 30.

22. Giuseppe Panza di Biumo, "The Panza Collection and Art in Los Angeles," in *Panza: The Legacy of a Collector*, exh. cat. (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1999), 15.

23. The Fondo per l'Ambiente Italiano (FAI) now operates Panza's Villa Litta as a public facility, although the collector continues to reside there. A letter dated simply "April 14" from Philippa Pellizzi to Panza thanks him for showing her his collection in Varese: "Your works are *living* in those rooms. And the big room is other-world—a stable become a chapel"; Pellizzi to Panza, Panza Archive, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (hereafter, Panza Archive).

24. See Knight, "Interview with Giuseppe Panza," 65–68; and the Panza Archive.

25. While a dealer, Friedrich had sold work to Panza and in other ways cultivated his support for artists who mutually interested them. For that matter, the connection between Panza and Flavin necessary to the commission of the *Varese corridor* was facilitated by Friedrich, per Michael Govan, "Irony and Light," in Govan and Bell, *Dan Flavin*, 107 n. 97. In time, Panza served on Dia's advisory council and, as detailed below, contributed otherwise to certain Dia initiatives.

26. Friedrich's business partner was Franz Dahlem, whose description of Friedrich is cited in Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," 186.

27. Heiner Friedrich, quoted in Phoebe Hoban, "Medicis for a Moment: The Collapse of the Dia Dream," *New York*, November 25, 1985, 54.

28. A prospective, fantastically outsize work of De Maria's (which Friedrich would try to induce Panza to fund) was also announced in this flier (in all capital letters): "a *Three Continent Project*: in this project a square shape will be made on the land in the desert of the United States! A horizontal line in the Sahara; and a vertical line in India! When all of the lines are photographed from the air, and the photos are placed one on top of each other, the image of a cross within a square will appear!" Galerie Heiner Friedrich München, press release, Panza Archive (orthography corrected). Panza proved an easy mark, in general, for works in the form of a cross; he acquired such works by De Maria, Morris, and Flavin, for instance, though they would finally make up but a small fraction of a collection otherwise largely free of forms historically coded as sacred.

29. The press release for De Maria's 1977 *New York Earth Room* advertises the work as being for sale: "subsequent installations . . . may be various depths as long as the cubic yardage, 222, remains the same"; Dia Art Foundation Archives. The work instead became permanent at the Wooster Street site under Dia's auspices in 1979.

30. Glueck, "The de Menil Family," 28–46ff. See also Susan J. Barnes, "Dominique and John de Menil," in *The Rothko Chapel: An Act of Faith* (Houston: Rothko Chapel, 1989), 32–35.

31. A "New York friend" of the de Menils quoting John de Menil, in Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," 181; and Dominique de Menil, preface to Barnes, *The Rothko Chapel*, 8–9.

32. The Friedrichs' spiritual guide was "Sheikh Muzaffer Ozak, the Istanbul-based Sufi master of the Halveti-Jerrahi Order of dervishes. Sheikh Muzaffer had contacted Philippa in 1978. . . . The following April in a Sufi ceremony, Philippa says, 'we "took hand" with him, joined the order, embraced Islam, and got married, all in about four or five minutes'"; Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," 198. Regarding the Rothko Chapel, see Barnes, *The Rothko Chapel*; and Sheldon Nodelman, *The Rothko Chapel Paintings: Origins, Structure, Meaning* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997). Dominique de Menil cited the Qu'ran in her preface to *The Rothko Chapel*, 9: "the East and the West belong to God. Wherever we turn, there is God's face."

33. The dervishes sponsored by Dia on an American concert tour were not the Mevlevi or "whirling dervishes" whom Dominique de Menil had sponsored, but the Jerrahi, who perform the swaying and bowing movement and musical ceremony of *dhikr*, a ritual called "the shortest way to achieve God" by Muzaffer el Jerrahi in an undated pamphlet advertising the tour in question; Dia Art Foundation Archives. "The Night of Dhikr," an undated handout on the Dia letterhead, states that when the dervish "los[es] himself in God" through *dhikr*, "he becomes the heart whose beat becomes, for a moment, the very living pulse of Mankind, unified, for an even briefer moment, in Divine Love and mystical ecstasy with all of His Creation. For the dervish understands and knows that there is only one path to god, it is from Heart to Heart . . . in the way of Love"; Dia Art Foundation Archives. "'Love is the source, love is the way, love is the goal,' adds Fariha Friedrich. 'This is the spirit in which the Dia Art Foundation was built'"; quoted in Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," 204. Since the thirteenth century, the Sufi orders of the Ottoman Empire have been especially associated with important Turkish poetry, music, and art—although by no means of a Minimal aspect.

34. Certificate of Incorporation of Masjid Al-Farah, 3–4, Dia Art Foundation Archives. The congregation's "edifices . . . shall be used to serve the religious, educational, and philanthropic needs of the Congregation"; moreover, "The Imam as spiritual head of the Congregation . . . shall guide and oversee the Congregation's religious programs and is ultimately responsible for the spiritual life and activities of the Congregation"; By-Laws of Masjid Al-Farah, 2–3, Dia Art Foundation Archives. The monies devoted to the mosque and other Islamic projects reportedly prompted concerns among Dia's chosen artists as a diverting of resources and attention by the foundation—concerns that the Friedrichs could not fully allay; see Hoban, "Medicis for a Moment," 56. Richard Gluckman, an architect involved in numerous Dia projects, alleged that Judd, for one, "was afraid the Sufis were taking over and were going to build a retreat in Marfa"; Gluckman, quoted in Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," 198. It bears noting that Dia's archives pertaining to its formative years are extremely spotty; some materials reportedly went missing in the foundation's repeated moves, and the Friedrichs hold privately their own papers from this period. These factors render construction of an exact time line somewhat difficult. Besides its erstwhile offices at the Mercer Street mosque, however, Dia also maintained an office during the early 1980s at 107 Franklin Street. By 1985, during a reorganization of Dia prompted by financial ills and questionable management, the Sufi mosque was relocated (minus the Dia offices) to 245 West Broadway. Friedrich maintained an office in the new mosque's premises, having been ousted from his former role at Dia; see Hoban, "Medicis for a Moment," 54, 58. Dia's reorganization and Friedrich's forced resignation from its board are described also in Glueck, "The de Menil Family," 106, 113; and Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," 198.

35. See Govan and Bell, *Dan Flavin*, 352–53, which states that the works were dismantled "around 1987." A memorandum of January 1981 notes, "It will not be possible for Dan's lighting to be installed in time for the Dervishes' visit beginning mid-March due to time required for fabrication of fixtures"; Dia Art Foundation Archives. Flavin's completed installation "respected the various functions of the building," although his "resistance to the change in program" of the building is noted in Govan and Bell, 186.

36. Friedrich's night in the chapel was recalled by Simone Swan, identified as a public relations official for the Menil Collection, in Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," 186.

37. Robert Whitman, quoted in Hoban, "Medicis for a Moment," 52.

38. As events unfolded, the Friedrichs lavished unparalleled largesse on De Maria, inasmuch as they funded three separate, permanent, large-

scale projects by him—funding sustained even after the foundation met with financial difficulties (contrary to the experience of Whitman and some others). From the time he began showing with Heiner Friedrich, De Maria had evinced some mystical ideas of his own as to the patron's role: "Owners of art should be terribly sensitive about what energy they are giving to the work. They can bring something to the act to make it more elegant, lofty and spiritual—or sacrilegious. It shouldn't be just another piece of art, but something that's really there"; quoted in David Bourdon, "Walter De Maria: The Singular Experience," *Art International* 7, no. 10 (December 20, 1968): 40. Though DeMaria did not adopt the Friedrichs' faith, the appeal to them of a project such as *The Broken Kilometer* might be explained in part by the fact that within Islam, "The artist who wishes to express the idea of the 'unity of being' or the 'unity of the real' . . . has actually three means at his disposal: geometry or, more precisely, the infinity inherent in regular geometric figures; rhythm, which is revealed in the temporal order and also indirectly in space; and light, which is to visible forms what Being is to limited existences"; Titus Burckhardt, "The Spirituality of Islamic Art," in *Islamic Spirituality: Manifestations*, ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1997), 519.

39. "'The Broken Kilometer' by Walter De Maria / Comments recorded Oct. 23, 1979–Dec. 29, 1979," internal memorandum, Dia Art Foundation Archive (orthography corrected).

40. April Kingsley, "Sticks and Stones," *Village Voice*, May 28, 1979, 78; and Brian Wallis, "Walter De Maria's 'The Broken Kilometer,'" *Arts* 54, no. 6 (February 1980): 88. In comparing *The Broken Kilometer*'s "almost tangible silence" to that of the Rothko Chapel, Wallis added (ibid.), "The sensation is solemn, almost spiritual, although the work [*Broken Kilometer*] bears no direct reference to religion." (The intersection between the mechanical and the spiritual also specially characterized the sculpture of Constantin Brancusi, whose work was a touchstone for some Minimalists.)

41. Leo Castelli, quoted in Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," 58; and Glueck, "The de Menil Family," 106.

42. Dave Hickey, "The Luminous Body: Sourceless Illumination as a Metaphor for Grace," in *Light in Architecture and Art: The Work of Dan Flavin*, by Tiffany Bell et al. (Marfa, Tex.: Chinati Foundation, 2002), 156. Hickey further described Judd as having "retreated into the stratosphere of aristocratic patronage, and created this Potemkin in West Texas." He recalled the artist's last remark to him, following Dia's withdrawal of support, as being, "How can I possibly make art when I'm worried about the bills?" (157–58). Dia's support was renewed to a limited degree after Judd's death.

43. Dan Flavin, quoted in Hoban, "Medicis for a Moment," 58.

44. See ibid., 54; and Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," 198, which describe the legal action (over breach of contract) threatened by Judd. Panza, too, eventually alienated certain artists, by his at times proprietary treatment of their work through schemes to fabricate independently, replicate, exhibit, or sell elements of his collection that the artists had, in some instances, envisioned as unique or permanently sited within Panza's estate. In 1982, Panza had affirmed that some artists "make works that are strictly connected to an already existing space," citing as examples projects by Turrell and Irwin at his villa; Giuseppe Panza di Biumo, "Giuseppe Panza di Biumo" (interview), *The First Show: Painting and Sculpture from Eight Collections, 1940–1980*, ed. Julia Brown and Bridget Johnson, exh. cat. (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1983), 71. By 1988, around the time he was talking with Thomas Krens about housing part of his collection at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art in North Adams, Panza's position had shifted: those works by Turrell and Irwin "were commissioned for the existing space. They could be remade elsewhere, but only with the participation of the artist"; Knight, "Interview with Giuseppe Panza," 50–51. After the Guggenheim Museum announced its acquisition of a substantial portion of Panza's collection, "Panza . . . flatly deni[ed] that anything in his collection is site-specific"; Susan Hapgood, "Remaking Art History," *Art in America*, July 1990, 120. Regarding Panza's disputes with certain of the Minimalists, see also Martha Buskirk, *The Contingent Object of Contemporary Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003), chap. 1.

45. On that basis, conceivably, the chameleonlike Morris and self-professed materialist Andre, whose work bore a family resemblance to that of some of the chosen, remained among the uninvited, although they appealed regardless to Panza.

46. Burckhardt, "The Spirituality of Islamic Art," 506–7. Further, "Islamic art, by which we mean the entirety of plastic arts in Islam, is essentially the projection into the visual order of certain aspects or dimensions of Divine Unity" (517). This volume is also a useful source on the various regional disseminations of Sufism. Regarding the relation of Sufism to Islam more broadly, see Seyyed Hossein Nasr, ed., *Islamic Spirituality: Foundations* (New York: Crossroad, 1987), pt. 3.

47. Dominique de Menil, remarks at Dia Center for the Arts, New York, October 28, 1992, as published (printed in capital letters) in Shkapich and S. de Menil, *Sanctuary*, 110.

48. Description by Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," 198. One of Young's major works, *The Tortoise, His Dreams and Journeys*, begun in 1964, entailed "continuous electronic drones . . . intended to be permanently installed in a room or space (the 'Dream House') along with a slowly changing light environment designed by Marian Zazeela, which Young's group(s) of musicians would occasionally enter to perform. When the musicians left, after up to eight hours of performance, the piece would continue as long as the drones were hooked up—theoretically forever"; John Schaefer, *New Sounds: A Listener's Guide to New Music* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), 73. "In July 1969 we were given our first opportunity to make a public presentation of a model short-term *Dream House* at Galerie Heiner Friedrich in Munich," notes "Dream House/Introduction," an undated, unsigned text (authored by Zazeela and Young, according to an e-mail communication from Zazeela to the author, January 5, 2008) in the Dia Art Foundation Archives. By this account, Dia promised funds to make the *Dream House* permanent in December 1975. (Zazeela thus became the only woman to enjoy the largesse of Dia, in its initial formation.) Zazeela "made the first installation using colored lights projected on mobile forms in 1966 . . . but remain[ed] with the limited palette of dichroic colors until 1977 when a commission from the Dia Art Foundation enabled me to begin experimenting with theatrical spotlights and mylar gel colors." Further funding in 1978 permitted experimentation with "glass filters in intensely saturated colors" that had to be specially fabricated to create the heavily magenta environment she sought; Zazeela, edited with La Monte Young and Michael Byron, "Light for Raga Cycle," in *Pandit Pran Nath: India's Master Vocalist*, May 1981, Dia concert brochure, Dia Art Foundation Archive. Young and Zazeela's project especially would come to symbolize the highly unusual lengths Dia was prepared to go to in support of its artists. Within this "continuously evolving life-as-art project. . . . Every note played and every word spoken was recorded. Meals prepared by the staff cooks—6 Harrison Street engaged a staff of more than twenty—were photographed, and minutely detailed descriptions of how many berries were used in the cereal and in what direction the peaches were cut were logged"; Allan Schwartzman, "Born-Again Patrons," *Manhattan, Inc.* 4, no. 10 (October 1987): 178. Although the *Dream House* was closed in 1985, since 1993 Young and Zazeela's MELA Foundation has run a revamped version at 275 Church Street in New York as an "affiliated project" of Dia.

49. Ramon Pelinski, "Upon Hearing a Performance of the Well-Tuned Piano: An Interview with La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela," *Parachute*, Summer 1980, 4ff.

50. "Pandit Pran Nath and the Kirana Style," in *Pandit Pran Nath*. "Since 1975 the Dia Art Foundation, in cooperation with the Kirana Center for Indian Classical Music, has presented frequent concerts of Pandit Pran Nath's work. Recently Pandit Pran Nath received a commission from the Dia Art Foundation to establish a performing, teaching and archive facility for the presentation and preservation of the Kirana tradition" (ibid.). According to Sufi philosopher Hazrat Inayat Khan (in ibid.), the Kirana singer does not set a program beforehand; rather, "He becomes an instrument of the whole cosmic system, open to all inspiration, at one with the audience, in tune with the chord of the tamboura, and it is not only music, but spiritual phenomena that he gives to the people." (A close friend of Young's, who moved with him to New York in 1960, De Maria also participated in the "new music" scene in New York in the 1970s; as a drummer, he performed with Jon Hassell, another student of Pandit Pran Nath.)

51. Heiner Friedrich, interview by Michael Kimmelman, quoted in Kimmelman, "The Dia Generation," *New York Times Magazine*, April 6, 2003, 33. Panza, "The Panza Collection," 12–13, also revered "the deserts of the Far West where light, in all of its beauty and splendor, is the dominant element. One discovers a new vision of the world," he exclaimed. "Time stands still, and there appears an immutable, unattainable, yet at the same time totally present, sense of reality."

52. Marfa is three hours from the nearest major airport, at El Paso. Judd named Chinati for a nearby mountain in 1986 after his split with Dia; see Donald Judd, "Statement for the Chinati Foundation" (1986), in Meyer, *Minimalism*, 268.

53. James Turrell, quoted in Craig Adcock, *James Turrell: The Art of Light and Space* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 212; and Suzaan Boettger, *Earthworks: Art and the Landscape of the Sixties* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 244.

54. Kay Larson, "I Slept in Roden Crater," *Artnews*, June 2004, 136.

55. Daphne Beal, "Donald Judd in Marfa, Texas," *Metropolis*, March 1997, 61, 81.

56. "He is certainly not religious," the passage continues, "Yet the scale and intensity of what he's doing in West Texas . . . have an unmistak-

ably visionary shimmer"; Mark Stevens, "Art Oasis," *Vanity Fair*, July 1992, 110.

57. Kimmelman, "The Dia Generation," 32.

58. Ilya Kabokov, "An Interview with Ilya Kabakov," by Robert Storr, *Art in America*, January 1995, 68–69.

59. Libby Lumpkin, "Dan Flavin," *Artforum* 39, no. 4 (December 2000): 141.

60. Arthur C. Danto, "The Light Fantastic," *Artnews*, April 2004, 97. Although Flavin's work has otherwise generally been displayed in secular settings, his 1992 Guggenheim retrospective was characterized as "transform[ing] Frank Lloyd Wright's rotunda into a neo-Gothic chapel"—where, indeed, the artist chose to consecrate his last marriage; Robert Rosenblum, "Name in Lights" (1997), reprinted in Meyer, *Minimalism*, 290.

61. The series was produced through 1966; see Govan and Bell, *Dan Flavin*, 214.

62. Ibid., 211–24, 26. Further, "One 1962 drawing shows the *icons* arranged in groups, with an overt reference to an iconostasis" (29). The inscription "THE PURE LAND" would appear in due course on Flavin's own tombstone (at whose direction is not specified), together with the words, "ETERNAL SOURCE OF LIGHT DIVINE," "presumably" drawn from Handel's Christian hymn of the same name (106 n. 25). Flavin's longtime practice of dedicating his works eventually included numerous projects inscribed to the Friedrichs, whose New York City home he extensively lit in 1979 (in installations since dismantled, 348). The earliest work dedicated to Friedrich was *untitled (to Thordis and Heiner)*, 1966–71 (259). (Thordis Moeller was director of Galerie Heiner Friedrich in Munich and Cologne.) See also the monumental *untitled (to you, Heiner, with admiration and affection)*, 1973 (318).

63. Within the Islamic tradition upheld by the Friedrichs, specifically: "'God is the light of the heavens and the earth,' says the Quran (XXIV, 35). The Divine Light brings things out from the darkness of nothing"; further, "Light is, in fact, itself indivisible; its nature is not altered by its refraction into colors nor diminished by its gradation into clarity and darkness"; Burckhardt, "The Spirituality of Islamic Art," 519.

64. Phil Lieder, "The Flavin Case," *New York Times*, November 24, 1968.

65. Dan Flavin, "Writings," in *Dan Flavin: The Architecture of Light*, by J. Fiona Ragheb et al., exh. cat. (Berlin: Deutsche Guggenheim, 2000), 62.

66. Dan Flavin, "'. . . in daylight or cool white.' an autobiographical sketch" (1964), reprinted in Govan and Bell, *Dan Flavin*, 189–92. Flavin persisted in employing this text, with minor modifications, as his primary artist's statement. In an endnote (192 n. 1), he stated that in using the term "icon" he did not mean a "strictly religious object," characteristically leaving open the possibility that he might mean instead a loosely religious object. Flavin tended to rebuff spiritualized interpretations of his work (as well as accounts of his art generally not dictated by him); his objections to Kenneth Baker's reading of his work as "mak[ing] its mystical qualities uncompromisingly evident" are cited in Govan, "Irony and Light," 70.

67. Dan Flavin to Mel Bochner, November 1, 1966, quoted in Govan, "Irony and Light," 37.

68. See Anna C. Chave, *Mark Rothko: Subjects in Abstraction* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

69. Conceived as an edition of fifty (twenty-one were fabricated), *untitled (to Barbara Nusse)*, 1971, constituted by far the largest edition of any work Flavin produced; the next largest of his editions (including the *East New York Shrine*) numbered ten, while most works were issued in editions of three (for larger works) or five. See Govan and Bell, *Dan Flavin*, 298, 208.

70. Dan Flavin, statement of 1968, quoted in Ragheb et al., *Dan Flavin*, 43.

71. A Dia "Activities Report" (internal memorandum) for the period May 1 to July 31, 1983, submitted by Eileen Wells, program administrator, includes Tiffany Bell's report detailing her and Flavin's contacts with members of the Baptist church who helped provide relevant material, including a pulpit, for the room memorializing the building's prior use. (Commemoration of the building's initial use as a firehouse was also discussed, though never so ambitiously pursued.) The first floor of the church was to be devoted to changing exhibitions by Flavin and other artists; among the possible candidates mentioned in this report is Turrell, whose "light projection diagrams [were] to be borrowed from Heiner's personal collection"; Dia Art Foundation Archives.

72. Bourdon, "Walter De Maria," 41–43: this account implies that De Maria may have been introduced to Cage's ideas through his friendship with Young, while they were students at the University of California, Berkeley. Daisetz Tetaro Suzuki played an important part in educating Cage about Zen; regarding the complicated status of Suzuki's version of Zen, and Cage's relation to it, see George J. Leonard, *Into the Light of Things: The Art of the Commonplace from Wordsworth to John Cage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

73. Walter De Maria, telephone interview by Brian Wallis, December 18, 1978, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, collection files. In the same conversation, De Maria reportedly insisted (contrary to my reading here) that the trough works were "in no way to be thought of as games or participatory pieces."

74. Fritz Thompson, "The Redundant Riddle in Catron County," *Impact (Albuquerque Journal Magazine)* 2, no. 12 (March 27, 1979): 18–21. Thompson noted the even deeper skepticism of the ranchers directly neighboring *The Lightning Field*.

75. John Beardsley, "Art and Authoritarianism: Walter De Maria's *Lightning Field*," *October* 16 (Spring 1981): 37, 35. Beardsley, 38, detailed the strong efforts of De Maria and Dia to control photographic representation of the site. He concluded, "From a critical perspective . . . the management of the *Lightning Field* is no trivial matter. Not only do the machinations of the artist and his sponsors in this case reveal contempt for the enterprise of criticism, but, more importantly, they call into question the very possibility of a criticism that seeks independence from the controlling factors of any artwork's context." Subsequently, Beardsley took a softer tone, calling *The Lightning Field* "the means to an epiphany for those viewers susceptible to an awesome natural phenomenon"; Beardsley, "Traditional Aspects of New Land Art," *Art Journal* 42, no. 3 (Fall 1982): 227.

76. Beardsley, "Art and Authoritarianism," 36.

77. "The emphasis on the momentary, epiphanic character of auratic experience is linked to a Messianic concept of time, in particular the notion of *Jetztzeit*, the time of the Now," noted Miriam Hansen, "Benjamin, Cinema and Experience: 'The Blue Flower in the Land of Technology'"; *New German Critique* 40 (Winter 1987): 189 n. 17.

78. Bourdon, "Walter De Maria," 40. On Minimalism and psychedelia, see Diederichsen, "The Primary," 123–25.

79. Walter De Maria, "*The Lightning Field*," *Artforum* 28, no. 8 (April 1980): 58.

80. Draft of a letter from Panza to Philippa [Pellizzi], November 23, 1978, Panza Archive (orthography corrected). Historically intrinsic to the world's major religions, "The logic of pilgrimage is to go to one of the high sacral bumps in space, draw on its merit and convey that to the periphery"; moreover, "the person who practices mysticism arrives at a kind of numinous holiness which he imparts both to people and to objects around him. This was particularly marked in Sufism, so that saints' tombs ended up as places of pilgrimage"; Ninian Smart, *Dimensions of the Sacred: An Anatomy of the World's Beliefs* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 86, 100.

81. Jonathan Abrams, "Art Review: *Lightning Field*," *Century* 1, no. 5 (December 3, 1980): 25. Not a complete neophyte in art matters, Abrams is identified as a member of the New Mexico Arts Commission.

82. See, for example, Elizabeth C. Baker, "Artworks on the Land," *Art in America*, January–February 1976, 93; Beardsley, "Traditional Aspects," 228; and Neville Wakefield, "Walter De Maria: Measure and Substance," *Flash Art* (international edition), 182 (May–June 1995): 91–92.

83. For that matter, at *The Lightning Field*, as at *The New York Earth Room* and *The Broken Kilometer*, De Maria's distinctive way of rendering a three-dimensional installation as loosely pictorial emerged in his positioning of the viewer at a fixed distance from the scene, which is framed at *The Lightning Field* in a roughly pictorial way by the posts of a porch on the house provided for visitors (whose numbers are strictly limited). Circulation through the works is denied in the New York City projects, but De Maria permits movement around *The Lightning Field*, although the terrain's ruggedness may discourage lingering there.

84. Dia initially acquired "five or more sections (a section is a square mile, or 640 acres) northeast of Quemado" for De Maria (per Beardsley, "Art and Authoritarianism," 36) and had electricity run to the site, which had been off the electrical grid. Dia required the cables be buried to maintain the effect of untrammeled nature, even (to the amusement of the locals) having the weeds replanted over the mile and a half trench that was dug (per Thompson, "The Redundant Riddle," 20). By using kilometer and mile units to define *The Lightning Field*, De Maria pointedly referred to "the manner in which much of the earth—and most particularly [in the case of the mile unit] the American West—was surveyed, appropriated, and settled"; Beardsley, "Traditional Aspects," 228. Since Thomas Jefferson's 1785 Land Ordinance, land has generally been plotted and organized on a grid in the United States; regarding the endemically American aspects of that plan, see Mark Pimlott, "Carl Andre: More Like Roads Than Like

Buildings," in *Carl Andre and the Sculptural Imagination*, ed. Ian Cole, exh. cat. (Oxford: Museum of Modern Art, 1996), 47–49.

85. Danger and pain are also intrinsic to the concept of the sublime as outlined by Edmund Burke (though only when held at a distance said to render them "delightful"); visitors to *The Lightning Field* must sign a legal release acknowledging the potential dangers of the site, with its uneven terrain and teeming insects and fauna. Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. James T. Boulton (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), 39, 40. Unapproachability is endemic to the experience of aura, as detailed by Benjamin, "The Work of Art," 222–23, 243.

86. De Maria, "*The Lightning Field*," 58.

87. It bears underscoring that the Marfa artillery sheds encompassed a combined art and design project for Judd, who did not surrender design prerogatives to an architect. Judd conceived his mill aluminum artworks explicitly for these buildings and the other way around, not only specifying the prominent windows, the floors, and the detailing of the structures but also supplying them with a newly rounded (instead of flat) roof profile, reminiscent at once of a Quonset hut and a barrel-vaulted sanctuary.

88. John Baillie, quoted in James T. Boulton, introduction to Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry*, liii. A comparable idea was described in Burke's text, 141.

89. De Maria, "*The Lightning Field*," 58.

90. Adcock, *James Turrell*, 4, 232 n. 5. On seeing a Cage concert in 1963, Turrell recalled (in ibid., 4), "I remember feeling that *this* was the arena. It was where I wanted to be."

91. James Turrell, "Mapping Spaces" (1987), reprinted in *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art*, ed. Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 574.

92. Turrell also submitted plans for a Catholic church, at Panza's request, in 1977, and in 1988 and 1989, he drafted plans for basilican churches for the Greek islands of Santorini and Hydra; see Adcock, *James Turrell*, 130, 240 n. 13. Turrell is presently working on a design for a new meetinghouse in Philadelphia, according to Lise Kjaer, e-mail communication to the author of April 28, 2007. Regarding Turrell's relation to Quakerism, see Kjaer, "Awakening the Spiritual: James Turrell and Quaker Practices" (PhD diss., Graduate Center, City University of New York, 2008). A degree of favoritism on Panza's part toward Turrell's work emerges in the Panza Archive.

93. Adcock, *James Turrell*, 211–12, 158.

94. James Turrell to Panza, March 20, 1987, Panza Archive. Turrell has several times invited groups of Quakers to the Roden Crater for worship, according to Lise Kjaer, e-mail communication of April 28, 2007.

95. Panza, draft in English of essay on Turrell, ca. 1985, 17, Panza Archives.

96. Regarding the relation of Merleau-Ponty to the Minimalists, see James Meyer, "Der Gebrauch von Merleau-Ponty," in *Minimalisms* (Ostfildern: Cantz Verlag, 1988), 178–89.

97. Adcock, *James Turrell*, 111–13, 239 n. 43. Morris profiled three anonymous "extra-visual" artists in an *Artforum* article of January 1971, figures later admitted to be fictional, but in whom many recognized recast versions of Turrell. Morris, "The Art of Existence, Three Extra-Visual Artists: Works in Progress," *Artforum* 9 (January 1971): 28–33. In an April 1987 conversation with Adcock, Jane Livingston adjudged that the visit to Turrell's studio was very important to Morris (Adcock, 239 n. 43). Adcock, ibid., questioned whether "Morris's antipathy to west-coast art prevented him from crediting a west coast artist."

98. Eva Meyer-Hermann, *Carl Andre Sculptor 1996*, exh. cat. (Wolfsburg: Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg; Krefeld: Haus Lange und Haus Esters Krefeld, 1996), 37, 86. See also Phyllis Tuchman, "An Interview with Carl Andre" (1970), reprinted in ibid., 46.

99. Krauss, "Overcoming the Limits of Matter," 138.

101. Note that James Turrell declined permission to have his work reproduced in this essay, having "decided that he only wants his work reproduced when it is in direct relation to the opening of a solo exhibition or the opening of a site-specific piece," according to his assistant, Julia Triebes (e-mail communication to the author of January 2, 2008). For a fuller description of *Raemar* and a color reproduction, see Adcock, *James Turrell*, 33–34, pl. 2.

101. When Panza described encountering an unnamed Flavin work, evidently *Ursula's one and two picture*, however, he noted, "Blue is the color of the sky. Everything that is perfect, everything that is ideal we believe comes from the sky, because instinctively we think that the sky is the perfection of nature"; Knight, "Interview with Giuseppe Panza," 43–44.

102. Donald Judd, quoted in Beal, "Donald Judd in Marfa, Texas," 81.

103. James Turrell, quoted in Adcock, *James Turrell*, xix, 158.

104. Donald Judd, quoted in Raskin, "The Shiny Illusionism," 19.

105. Although far from a New Age phenomenon, Sufism is nonetheless notable among those spiritual philosophies that tend to "have a more open view both of other religious traditions and of scientific and humanistic knowledge," notes Smart, *Dimensions of the Sacred*, 296–97, adding that for those seeking "a deeper global ethos which combines, in a complementary way, the values of religions, then some guidance from Sufism and the like will be in order."

106. Yve-Alain Bois, "Specific Objections," *Artforum* 42, no. 10 (Summer 2004): 197.

107. Donald Judd, quoted in Stevens, "Art Oasis," 110. To Stevens, further, "[Judd] represents an important tradition of American plainsong; he is more like a Shaker, it now seems, than a SoHo star. . . . [H]e has even posited a shadow community, an implied gathering of true believers from anywhere who are willing to make a pilgrimage to see important art."

108. Donald Judd, interview (1993, in the Archives of the Judd Foundation, quoted in Missy Gaido Allen, "Donald Judd and the Marfa Objective" [PhD diss., University of Iowa, 2005]), quoted in Raskin, "The Shiny Illusionism," 15. In 1966, when asked by Barbara Rose if his work possessed "expressive quality," Judd responded by summoning and then incompletely dispelling a spiritual telos for his art: "Yes, of course. I don't exactly like talking about spirit, mysticism and that sort of thing because those words have old meanings, and I think they may as well be dumped because their old meanings are stronger than their new meanings"; quoted in Mark Di Suvero et al., "The New Sculpture," in Meyer, *Minimalism*, 222. At the debut of Dia:Beacon there was a "group of wall-hung sculptures including six plywood boxes that are among Judd's last works," a corpus where "[t]he surprise is that they incorporate a cruciform element. . . . Perhaps Judd intended what seems to be a clear reference to Ad Reinhardt, and perhaps even to Barnett Newman's *Stations of the Cross* as well," suggested Nancy Princenthal, "Dia:Beacon / The Imperturbables," *Art in America*, July 2003, 68.

109. James Turrell, quoted in Adcock, *James Turrell*, 67–69, 72.

110. Barbara Rose, "ABC Art" (1965), in Battcock, *Minimalism*, 296. Continued Rose, citing La Monte Young's *Dream Music* and "many of Flavin's works" by way of example: "The equilibrium of a passionless nirvana, or the negative perfection of the mystical silence of Quietism require precisely the kind of detachment, renunciation, and annihilation of ego and personality we have been observing." Rosalind Krauss would refuse this mystical construction at the time (Krauss, "Allusion and Illusion in Donald Judd" [1966], reprinted in Meyer, *Minimalism*, 211). And Meyer more recently (*Minimalism: Art and Polemics*, 149) deemed Rose's interpretation a "glaring betrayal."

111. Ihab Hassan, "The Literature of Silence" (1967), in *The Postmodern Turn* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1987), 3.

112. Robert Irwin, "Being and Circumstance" (1985), in Stiles and Selz, *Theories and Documents*, 574.

113. James Turrell, quoted in Adcock, *James Turrell*, 68.

114. Leslie Fiedler, *Waiting for the End* (1964), quoted in Hassan, "The Literature of Silence," 6. Adds Hassan, "This is the dream of a revolution to end all revolutions—and perhaps all dreams."

115. Susan Sontag, "Against Interpretation," in Meyer, *Minimalism*, 201.

116. "'I have nothing to say about works of art,' said Heiner Friedrich, who rarely talks about anything else. 'They speak for themselves. . . . [M]y wish is that we visit the Giotto chapel in Padua and stand for an hour, you silently and I silently, and we see what happens to us. It is as contemporary as anything in the world today. That is what Dia is about"; quoted in Calvin Tomkins, "The Mission," *New Yorker*, May 19, 2003, 46. It bears adding that contemplative traditions generally tend to involve a muting of discourse. "The aim of the Sufis is to be 'the Truth within the Truth.' . . . Those at this level cannot express their state in words, for the words necessary are not given in human language"; undated pamphlet advertising a Dia-sponsored performance tour of dervishes, Dia Art Foundation Archives. Although she underwrote numerous art historical ventures, Dominique de Menil, too, believed that artworks ultimately "are always beyond what may be said of them. . . . Perhaps only silence and love do justice to a great work of art"; quoted in F. de Menil, "The Belief in Art as Faith," 39.

117. Lawrence Wechsler, "Playing It as It Lays & Keeping It in Play: A Visit with Robert Irwin," in *Robert Irwin*, ed. Russell Ferguson, exh. cat. (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1993), 153.

118. Pepe Karmel, "The Year of Living Minimally," *Art in America*, December 2004, 98, 100. The phrase from Wittgenstein is from his 1921 *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, translated into English by D. F. Pears and R. F. McGuinness (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul; New York: Humanities Press, 1961). Germane here, too, is Susan Sontag's "The

Aesthetics of Silence," published in 1967 (mentioned in Karmel, 99). Regarding the Minimalists' interest in Wittgenstein (and in Samuel Beckett, mentioned below), see Jeffrey Weiss, "Language in the Vicinity of Art: Artists' Writings, 1960–1975," *Artforum* 42, no. 10 (Summer 2004): 216.

119. Hugh Kenner, "Art in a Closed Field" (1962), in *Learners and Discerners: A Newer Criticism*, ed. Robert Scholes (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1964), 122, 132–33.

120. Susan Buck-Morss, "Aesthetics and Anaesthetics: Walter Benjamin's Artwork Essay Reconsidered," *October* 62 (Fall 1992): 5.

121. For example, at Dia:Beacon, "'The kinds of effort you would put into the last 20 percent of the design of a new building—the details—is what we spent our entire process on,' explains [Michael] Govan. So the old, rusted steel corner guards stayed piquantly on the concrete columns. The wood floors were pickled to a lighter color, but 'you can see all the scratches and marks of use,' notes [Robert] Irwin." A partner in the architectural firm that collaborated on revamping the building observed, "'To edit *yourself* out is a kind of metaphysical process, but a meaningful one.' The means by which the architecture recused itself ranged from the discreet to the obsessive. OpenOffice worked with Arup [the engineer] to arrange rooftop HVAC units so they would not cast shadows through the sky-lights and ganged high-velocity air diffusers between rows of monitors to avoid running duct-work. . . . They custom sized bare fluorescent tubes to visually recede by fitting them exactly into the light-monitor bays"; James S. Russell, "Dia: Beacon," *Architectural Record* 191, no. 10 (October 2003): 109.

122. Said a friend, "That's the *mystique* of the de Menils—simple, perfect, incredibly expensive, yet unpretentious. I mean, it *reeks* of money, but it ain't Mercedes Bass"; Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," 182. In context, this comment specifically alluded to Philippa's sister Adelaide de Menil and her husband Ted Carpenter, but comparable comments are made about Philippa and Dominique de Menil.

123. Hickey, "The Luminous Body," 157.

124. "I want to be buried in wood, like the Jews. The cheapest wood will be good enough. Any wood will do. . . . I would prefer a pickup or a flat bed truck to the conventional hearse," John de Menil, statement, December 13, 1972, published (all in capital letters) in Shkapich and S. de Menil, *Sanctuary*, 9. See also Glueck, "The de Menil Family," 43; and Calvin Tomkins, "The Benefactor," *New Yorker*, June 8, 1998, 67. I am indebted to Barbara Martin for her insights into the casket's significance.

125. Michael Ennis aptly noted "the precision and peculiarly sumptuous austerity that is characteristic of many of Dia's projects"; Ennis, "The Marfa Art War," *Texas Monthly*, August 1984, 186.

126. Now an emeritus member of Dia's board of trustees, Fariha Friedrich went on to become "one of the leading Sufi teachers in this country," according to Tomkins, "The Mission," 49. (Indeed, as a Shaykha, she is presently the leader of the Nur Ashki Jerrahi Sufi Order at Masjid Al-Farah, a status that is "quite revolutionary and remarkable, inasmuch as most Islamic sects do not accept women as leaders," notes Zazeela, e-mail communication to the author of January 5, 2008.) Among Renaissance patrons, "Artworks and buildings were generally designed to present the dominant social virtues of family permanence, of neighborhood and civic solidarity, of piety and charity, and of intelligence and learning. Those who paid for these works could be seen as contributing to the common weal and as possessing those virtues they were helping to promote," observes Burke, *Changing Patrons*, 189. During the cinquecento, further, "The building and decorating of a church or chapel was the most common avenue open to women as patrons of art and architecture, and was often a joint venture between a husband and a wife," states Katherine A. McIver, *Women, Art, and Architecture in Northern Italy, 1520–1580* (Hants, U.K.: Ashgate, 2006), 174.

127. Smart, *Dimensions of the Sacred*, 97, 182.

128. Deyan Sudjic, "The Pursuit of Simplicity: Recent Architectural Minimalism," in Spector et al., *Singular Forms*, 37.

129. Fried, "Art and Objecthood," 116, 146. "Presentness is grace," Fried's essay famously concludes (147).

130. Benjamin, "The Work of Art," 220–21. The relation of Minimalism to the concept of "presence" was also discussed, for example, in Clement Greenberg, "Recentness of Sculpture" (1967), reprinted in Meyer, *Minimalism*, 234. On the pervasive use of the term, see also Colpitt, *Minimal Art: The Critical Perspective*, 71–72.

131. Annette Michelson, "Robert Morris: An Aesthetics of Transgression" (1969), in Meyer, *Minimalism*, 248.

132. Robert Morris, "Notes on Sculpture: Part II" (1966), reprinted in Meyer, *Minimalism*, 218–20.

133. Robert Morris, "Size Matters," *Critical Inquiry* 26 (Spring 2000): 479. Fried to the contrary, Minimalism's identity as a "puritan" undertaking became a kind of trope: Dia was described as "championing De Maria, Judd, Flavin, and other American puritans," in Levin, "The Minimalizers," 106, for instance; and Minimalism's "paradoxical nature" was located in its "Puritanism offset by a sensual embrace of optical surprise and ravishing detail," by Kimmelman, "The Dia Generation," 32.

134. Morris, "Size Matters," 480, 481, 478.

135. Smart, *Dimensions of the Sacred*, 104. Regarding the transmission of Zen and other forms of Buddhism to the United States, see Rick Fields, *How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America*, rev. ed. (Boston: Shambhala, 1986).

136. Morris, "Size Matters," 480. At the opening of Dia:Beacon that I attended—one where the local (largely working- and middle-class) townspeople were invited en masse—the guards were repeatedly asked by bewildered visitors for the whereabouts of the art, which was evidently unrecognizable as such to many.

137. Donald Judd, "Una stanza per Panza," pt. 4, *Kunst Intern* 7 (November 1990): 9. Chinati has been said to represent "to the avant-garde of the sixties and seventies what St. Peter's was to the High Renaissance: a marriage of fully matured artistic vision with financial and cultural power, marking both the height of an empire and the beginning of its decline"; Ennis, "The Marfa Art War," 140.

138. See Kimmelman, "The Dia Generation," 61. Govan's predecessor, Charles Wright, had also sought out Friedrich as a mentor, regularly visiting him in his mosque office; see Colacello, "Remains of the Dia," 200.

139. Princenthal, "Dia:Beacon / The Imperturbables," 63, 68. In another example, Dia:Beacon was called "an exquisite Zen-minimalist retreat on megadoses of Sufi steroids," in Jerry Saltz, "Apotheosis Now," *Village Voice*, July 22, 2003, 59.

140. Zittel, "Shabby Clique," *Artforum* 42, no. 10 (Summer 2004): 211.