

Donald Judd, Untitled, 1962, cadmium red light oil on wood with black enameled iron pipe, 48 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 33 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (121.5 x 83.5 x 55.5 cm), exhibition view, *Sculpture on the Move 1946–2016*, Kunstmuseum Basel, 2016, also showing work by Joseph Kosuth and Donald Judd, Untitled, 1962, cadmium red light oil on plywood and black oil on wood with galvanized iron and aluminum, 76 x 96 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 12 in. (193 x 244.5 x 30.5 cm) (Donald Judd Art © 2018 Judd Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; photograph by Gina Folly, provided by Kunstmuseum Basel)

The Power of Inclusion in Donald Judd's Art: Observations by an Artist

While other editors might dismiss out of hand an art historical essay in the voice of an artist, I am so very thankful to Rebecca Brown for giving this one a chance. She has introduced me to a practice of dignity, discipline, and generosity that I expect I have already failed to replicate, but toward which I now know to strive.

I am also grateful to the Australia Council for the Arts for funding this project, and to the Judd Foundation, Artists Rights Society, New York, Kunstmuseum Basel, and Jacob Burckhardt for their kind assistance with images.

1. The italicized part of the sentence is from Donald Judd, "In the Galleries, Arts, December 1960: Lee Bontecou," rep. *Complete Writings 1959–1975: Gallery Reviews, Book Reviews, Articles, Letters to the Editor, Reports, Statements, Complaints* (Halifax: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1975), 27.

2. *Donald Judd: A Catalogue of the Exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, 24 May–6 July, 1975; Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings, Objects, and Wood Blocks, 1960–1974*, ed. Brydon Smith, exh. cat. (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1975). A new catalogue raisonné is being presently compiled by the Judd Foundation, New York.

3. Donald Judd, "Some Aspects of Color in General and Red and Black in Particular" (1993), in *Donald Judd Writings*, ed. Flavin Judd and Caitlin Murray (New York: Judd Foundation and David Zwirner Books, 2016), 833, where Judd writes, "There has been almost no discussion of space in art, nor in the present. The most important and developed aspect of present art is unknown. This concern, my main concern, has no history. There is no context; there are no terms; there are not any theories. There is only the visible work invisible." The text was first published on the occasion of Judd receiving the Sikkens Prize, November 27 1993; Judd, *Some Aspects of Color in General and Red and Black in Particular* (Sassenheim: Sikkens Foundation, 1993).

4. *New Work: Part 1, 1963*, Green Gallery, New York. Prior to this, Donald Judd had exhibited

A dark void is the denouement of . . . two wood panels stained light cadmium red and joined at right angles.¹ Each red panel has a small black circle at its center, is of equal height, but of different width. The panels join at a perpendicular that juts toward us. Red sinks behind the surface of the wood, embedded. It saturates, without covering or obscuring the wood. At first, the black circles look to be dense solids against the cadmium red. The blackness is so dense it obliterates any sign of wood grain within each circumference. Then, we see each circle's black defy the logic of solid pigment. Instead of remaining opaque, the circles empty into a dark vastness of two hollow depths. Spatial illusion, traditionally constructed with pigment, gives way to the inbuilt construction of physical space. Instead of artistry, the circles are black through the everyday unlit emptiness of reality.

Gail Hastings

The two black circles belong to Donald Judd's three-dimensional work *Untitled (DSS 33)* (1962), where "DSS 33" refers to the work's listing in the initial catalogue raisonné of 1975 by Dudley Del Balso, Brydon Smith, and Roberta Smith.² DSS 33 marks the beginning of a thirty-year period from 1963 to 1993 during which, according to Judd, the discussion on his work overlooked its space. For in his last text, late in 1993, before his death, Judd tells us there has been no discussion of space, the main concern in his art.³ The artist makes this claim despite the intense attention paid to his work since its 1963 debut in a group exhibition in New York.⁴ The exhibition included DSS 33, Judd's first entirely self-determined freestanding, three-dimensional work.⁵ To address Judd's claim from the beginning, then, this single work is the main focus of this essay.

When *Artforum* republished Judd's 1993 text immediately after his death, a broad readership became familiar with his claim.⁶ The ongoing discussion of Judd's work did not appear, however, to have absorbed his remark. Commentators quite possibly disregarded it as untrue. They may have found it implausible given the publication of Robert Morris's four-part *Notes on Sculpture* between October 1966 and April 1969.⁷ Many, then as now, treat Morris's notes as a seminal dissemination of principles pertaining to phenomenological space that map a viewer's kinesthetic relationship to sculpture. Michael Fried's indirect repudiations of these principles in his essay *Art and Objecthood* of 1967, had also been broadly received.⁸ Albeit unwittingly, Fried's essay did much to reify subject-object relations within the new work for generations to come. As for the specific discourse surrounding Judd's work, commentators regularly discussed its volumetric space;⁹ and the term "installation"—used to describe a work's relationship to the whole room that Judd was first to develop—had by then become institutionalized.¹⁰ Aware of this extent of the discussion, still, Judd made his claim. Although the discussion included his work's volume and installation, it excluded its space. His work, visible, was invisible.¹¹

Anthologizing texts published since then inadvertently ramify the exclusion. Those which seek to expand the initial list of principal artists we call Minimalists reinforce the exclusion of Judd's space by legitimizing an insufficient discussion of Minimal art as, instead, definitive—simply by treating it as a basis for the inclusion of contemporaneous artists.¹² Curatorial decisions built on the discussion fossilize it as an institutionally sanctioned premise. Archaeological digs within texts of the

paintings at the Panoras Gallery, New York, in 1955, in 1956, and in a solo exhibition in 1957 after which, Roberta Smith tells us, "he decided not to show his paintings again." *Untitled (DSS 32)* (1962) was exhibited in 1962 in a faculty exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum, where Judd was an art instructor 1962–64. See Smith, "Donald Judd," in *Donald Judd*, 8, 21–22.

5. *Untitled (DSS 32)* (1962) was Judd's first free-standing three-dimensional work that, unlike *DSS 33*, ended up on the floor rather than having started on the floor: "First, I did the pipe relief and kept it on the floor. It was a big thing when sitting on the floor. I left it on the floor, and that didn't seem to bother it much. It was meant to go on the wall, but it looked all right on the floor." Judd quoted in John Coplans, "An Interview with Don Judd," *Artforum* 9, no. 10 (June 1971): 40. The interview was conducted on occasion of Judd's exhibition at the Pasadena Art Museum (now Norton Simon Museum), May 11–July 4 1971, and first printed in Coplans, *Don Judd*, exh. cat. (Pasadena: Pasadena Art Museum, 1971), hereafter cited as "Coplans interview."

6. Donald Judd, "Some Aspects of Color in General and Red and Black in Particular," *Artforum* 32, no. 10 (Summer 1994): 70–79, 110–13.

7. For parts 1 and 2, see Robert Morris, "Notes on Sculpture," in *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Gregory Battcock (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 222–35.

8. Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood," in *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 148–72. For the reception of Fried's essay, see for example Barbara Reise, "Untitled 1969: A Footnote on Art and Minimal Stylehood," *Studio International* 177, no. 910 (1969): 168, where Reise writes, "Michael Fried's attempts to characterize the 'theatrical' presence of work by Morris, Judd, and Smith is probably based on this aspect of Morris's work; it is certainly relevant only to it." James Meyer reinforces Reise's assessment when referring to Morris's "Notes on Sculpture" by writing, "Sculpture does not exist for its own sake, but to make us aware of ourselves as perceiving subjects. Morris shifted the focus of debate from the empirical object of Judd, with only an implied viewer, to a sculpture orchestrated as a contingent and inextricable relationship between a subject and an object." Meyer, *Minimalism: Art and Polemics in the Sixties* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 166. Characteristically blunt, Judd writes in 1983, "To consider a public at the beginning of your work is impossible, and almost later too." Judd, "Art and Architecture" (1983), in *Donald Judd Writings*, 343.

9. See Roberta Smith, "Donald Judd," 3, where Smith writes, "Working with a personal geometric vocabulary, Donald Judd has achieved a static weightless, fully volumetric space which is new to sculpture in that it excludes all references to the figure, to gesture, and to movement."

time to regain "actual" space uncover the era's ossified terms of reference—"reduction," "minimal," "serial," "phenomenological," "theatrical," "impersonal," "industrial"—only to treat them with an art conservator's anxiety to preserve the original and thereby repeat a discussion that neglects the space in Judd's work.

This leads me to ask: must the era's terms of reference remain conclusive and continue to prohibit an understanding of Judd's space today? This question is particularly important for me as an artist, as I cannot help but wonder if space in the overall work of one of the best-known contemporary artists is so blatantly treated without account, then what hope has the space in work by artists who follow? Rather than dismiss Judd as having had no idea what he was talking about in 1993, what happens if we instead decide Judd *did* know what he was saying, that he was not feigning ignorance, that the discussion to that point had overlooked his space?

By basing this essay on formal observations of a single artwork, I am aware of Judd's warning against a formalistic approach when discussing art. Within this warning, though, he nevertheless recommends that a discussion's primary information needs to be based on the work's nature, on its particular hold on existence.¹³ For *DSS 33*, the living force of its existence is bound by the perpetual process of its spatial constitution. The process, for Judd, is "first and primary and in a way is the conclusion."¹⁴ For this reason, this essay will focus on the process of space in *DSS 33*, a process that is also this essay's main argument and, thereby, the conclusion this essay hopes to reach.

Before resuming with *DSS 33*'s spatial process, though, I would like to return to the oddity of the phrase "living force of its existence." For many, any mere mention of Minimal art evokes "anti-" keywords that include anti-subjective and anti-personal in tandem, supposedly, with the work's non-referentiality. "Anti-living-force" would, therefore, look more in place. It is nonetheless important to consider what the existence of a non-referential work of art might be, and what we might expect to know of its process without treating it as an empty vessel awaiting our content. As it is already full of the force of its own existence, any discussion of its process is well steered if we take heed of Judd when he tells us, "Art is made as one lives," after he explains,

A person ordinarily lives in a chaos of a great diversity of ideas and assumptions, but does function after all as a person in a natural way. A person is not a model of rationality, or even of irrationality, but lives, which is a very different matter. A person lives with a little solid knowledge, a great deal of fragmentary knowledge, a lot of assumptions, and many provisional solutions and reactions made from day to day. Most people have some philosophical ideas. Almost none live by one of the grand systems, only by their fossil fragments.¹⁵

Following from this, for Judd, art "is made despite the same acknowledged ignorance." Any expectation of plowing through a three-dimensional work to unearth a crystalline intention buried at the beginning—against which to compare the work's result and thereby evaluate the work's success—is to expect a baby to know its reason for being, against which it can judge whether it is on track throughout life. If this expectation were in fact life—to have an externally imposed intention enslave us from birth—then life would not be worth living.

Instead, we are free to act through self-determination. We can, nevertheless, seek to know and to empower ourselves by taking responsibility to be fair, just, and reasonable. Similarly, Judd tells us, art “must be as decisive as acts in life, hopefully more so,” “the assertions of art depend on more organization and attention than is usual in living. The force of it depends upon the long process,” “and the many decisions are necessary so that it be clear and strong.”¹⁶

Yet, albeit as decisive as a person’s acts in life, a self-determined work of art is not a person. Expectations, nevertheless, can lead us to treat it as though it were a teacher muttering a lesson, which we probe by asking “what is it saying,” “what is its message,” “what is it trying to tell us?” When in reply, the work continues to mutter inaudibly, disappointed, we denounce the work as meaningless, pointless, if not “boring.”¹⁷

While an artist cannot help but have ideas when beginning a three-dimensional work, knowledge is not knowledge in the beginning. Thought moves from the subject (artist or viewer) to the object (artwork) then, with a reciprocal and concurrent movement, from the object to the subject. It is in the reciprocal movement that knowledge not only forms, but recognizes itself. This reciprocal movement is an artwork’s self-determination. While a process of reciprocity can produce art as a form of communication, Judd writes that “this doesn’t produce verbal communication. Decisions made in working result in art, not in discrete ideas.”¹⁸ The knowledge we therefore seek of DSS 33’s space cannot be found as a critically apt, well-packaged utterance detachable from the work. It is found, instead, in the reciprocal movement of the work’s self-determination, the “living force of its existence,” forever in process of creating space while perpetually wading through the “natural confusion” of life this embroils.

Judd made DSS 33 in 1962 in his studio on 53 East 19th Street, New York. The artist purchased the wood and found the prefabricated welded pipe.¹⁹ Until then, he had made his works entirely of bits and pieces from around the studio. When pressed in a 1971 interview on the asymmetrical composition of this work, Judd stressed the lack of compositional intention outside following inherent determinations within the materials themselves.²⁰ Rather than impose an external reasoning on the work, Judd instead transferred inlaid reasoning within the pipe’s makeup to the wood panels. “I think you realize that the pipe has determined the shape of the piece,” Judd tells us.²¹

In 1975, Roberta Smith explains, “Once Judd had decided to center the pipe, the different length of the pipe ends dictated the different widths of the boards.”²² Most take this to mean the measurement of the pipe’s metal encasement determines the widths of the two panels. It is easy to understand why. The explanation depends on a view of DSS 33 with the black pipe jutting toward us. On first impression, we see that the pipe’s arms are unequal: one is longer than the other. The panels’ widths are also unequal: one is wider than the other. An immediate congruence between the pipe’s arms and panels’ widths instantly suggests a quantitative transference from one material (the metal of the pipe) to another (the wood of the panels). Incumbent in appreciating the role of space in Judd’s art, though, is a requirement to recognize an alternate transference at play in DSS 33 that is, instead, qualitative. The importance of recognizing this alternative transference becomes evident if we eliminate its job and base DSS 33 on the pipe’s metal measurements alone.

10. See James Meyer, *Minimalism: Art and Polemics in the Sixties* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001) 166, where Meyer writes, “Judd wrote extensively on the relationship of art and architecture, and actually boasted that he ‘invented’ installation, even though he rarely addressed the problem of display in his early writings.” Compare with Judd, “Some Aspects of Color in General . . .” 2016, 840, where Judd writes, “My work with the whole room began with part of it. In 1965 I made a work that extended from the floor to the ceiling. . . . In 1966 I made six galvanized iron units which extended from wall to wall, so that the corners became definite and the whole end of the room articulated. . . . Art historians of the past are at least interested in chronology. Art historians of the present are not.”

11. Judd, “Some Aspects of Color in General . . .” 2016, 833.

12. For example: Ann Goldstein and Lisa Gabrielle Mark, eds., *A Minimal Future?: Art as Object 1958–1968*, exh. cat. (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, and Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004).

13. See Judd, “Jackson Pollock” (1967), in *Donald Judd Writings*, 190.

14. Judd, “Art and Architecture,” 339.

15. *Ibid.*, 343.

16. *Ibid.*, 343–44.

17. Judd, “Statement” (1966), in *Donald Judd Writings*, 179, where he writes, “Both ‘minimal’ and ‘reductive’ were first used by critics who liked the work the words referred to, and later by those who thought it the end of the line. ‘Boring’ and ‘monotonous’ are also sympathetic words. I can’t see how any good work can be boring or monotonous in the usual sense of those words. And no one has developed an unusual sense of them. The negative characterization is glib; it’s another label and one not even concerned with what the work is.”

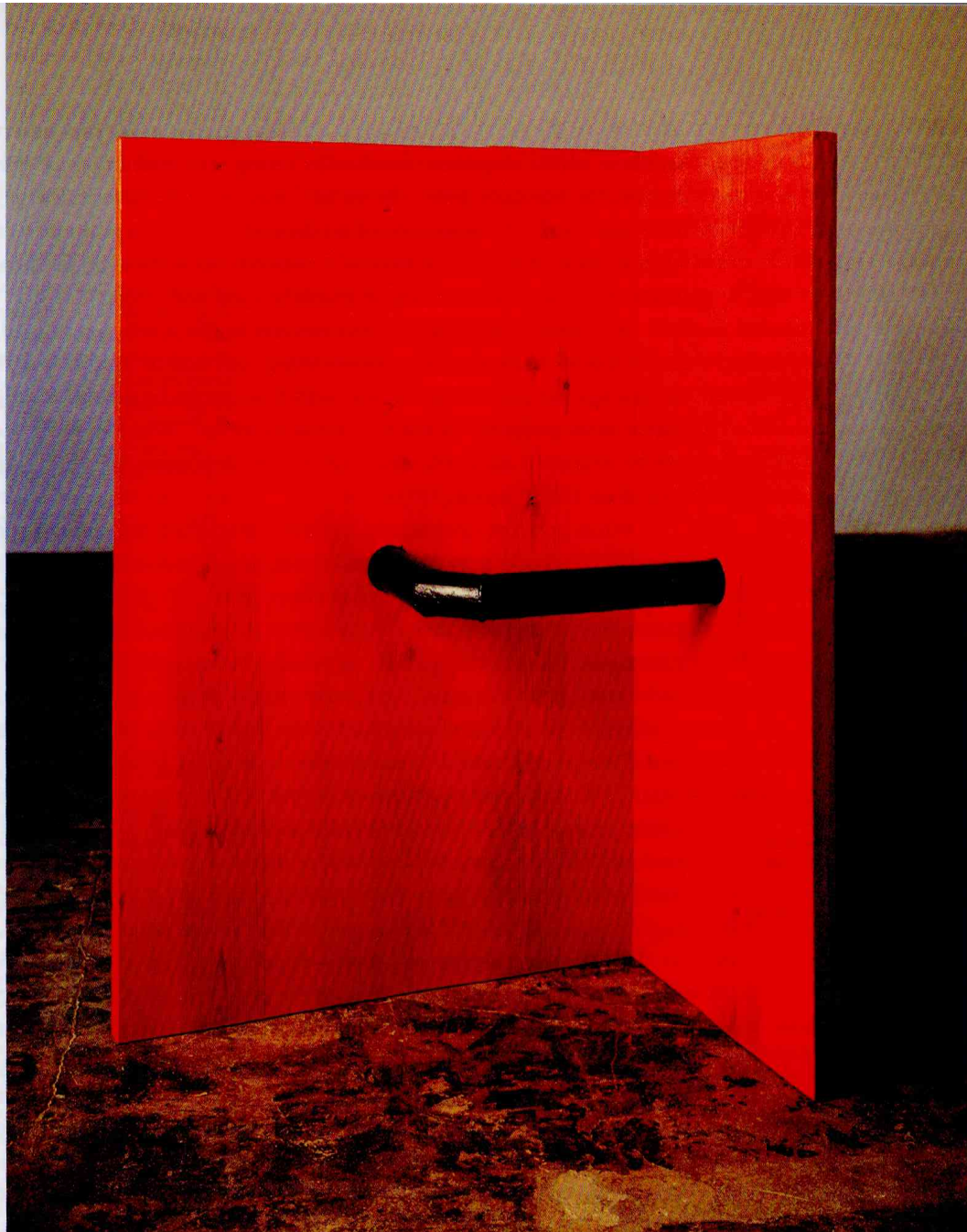
18. Judd, “Art and Architecture,” 340.

19. See Coplans interview, 23, where Judd says, “The wood was purchased for this. The bent and welded pipe was found,” and further adds, “The asymmetrical disposition is determined by the pipe, which I found that way, so that the pipe is a given thing.” In 1975, Roberta Smith describes the work as “built for the floor from materials found on the street.” Smith, “Donald Judd,” 21. Marianne Stockebrand clarifies this later by writing, “The pipe was found in a hardware store on Canal Street, as were many other objects that were integrated into paintings during 1961–2.” Stockebrand, “Catalogue,” in *Donald Judd*, ed. Nicholas Serota, exh. cat. (London: Tate Publishing, 2004), 170.

20. Coplans, interview, 23.

21. Judd quoted in *ibid.*

22. Smith, “Donald Judd,” 21.



Donald Judd, Untitled, 1962, cadmium red light oil on wood with black enameled iron pipe, 48 x 32½ x 21¼ in. (121.9 x 82.6 x 54 cm) (Donald Judd Art © 2018 Judd Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; photograph by James Evan © Judd Foundation)

23. See Thomas Kellein, *Donald Judd*, exh. cat. (Bielefeld: Kunsthalle Bielefeld, 2002), 104–5. The measurements 121.5 x 83.5 x 55.5 cm are based on one of three instances of *DSS 33* Judd made, with the first in 1962 and the following two in 1975 and 1988. These measurements are of the first instance, the work in the Kunstmuseum Basel collection since 1984, which has the inscription “JUDD 62” on the underneath left of the pipe. It

In doing so, we are immediately struck by vague inexactitude. With arms of different lengths, the black pipe’s right angle is not neat. It consists of two welded quarter joints. To take measurements, we have first to decide how far the length of each arm extends: to the quarter joint or to an improvised corner. If we decide the pipe lengths end at an improvised corner, then the resulting wood widths would be considerably wider than their actual 83.5 and 55.5 cm.²³ If, instead, we decide the lengths end at their quarter joint, then the resulting wood widths would be considerably narrower. Consequently, between the quarter joint and improvised corner, the pipe’s encasement can generate any range of resulting wood widths.

Then there is the question of orientation. Does the pipe’s shorter arm run parallel or perpendicular to the wood’s shorter width? Without the work’s governing self-determination, both the orientation and wood widths are left to the

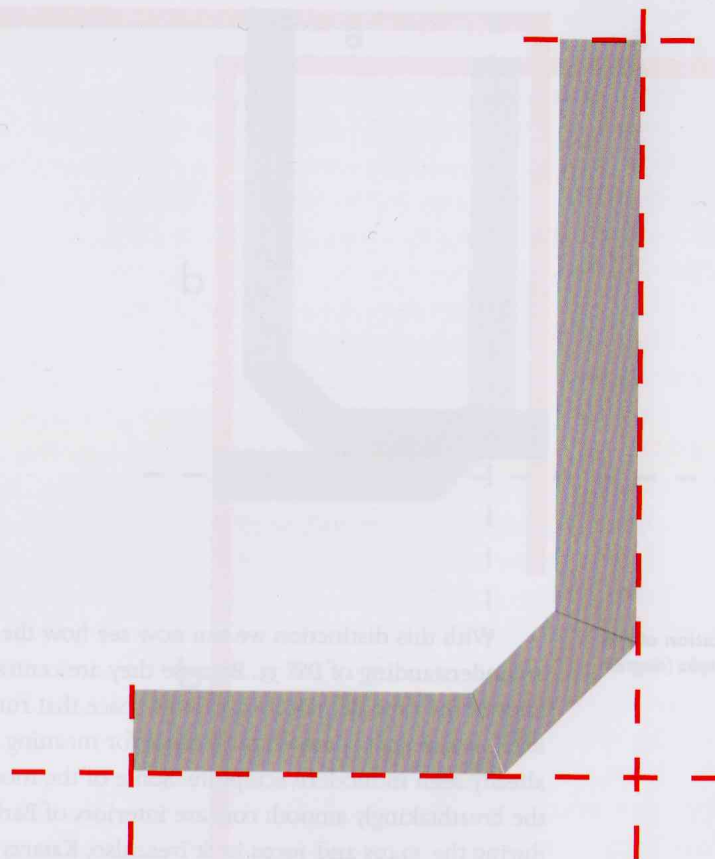


Diagram of the pipe in Donald Judd, Untitled, 1962 (diagram by the author)

was included in *Donald Judd*, the exhibition Kellein organized for Kunsthalle Bielefeld in 2002. Judd made the second instance of *DSS 33* at the time of his retrospective exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa in 1975. Presently, it is one of a number of Judd's works on permanent exhibition at the Judd Foundation, Marfa, Texas. Its measurements are 121.9 x 82.6 x 54 cm. This is the instance of *DSS 33* that I have seen. Judd made the third instance of *DSS 33* at the time of his retrospective exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York in 1988; it is now in a private collection. Its measurements are 122 x 84 x 54.6 cm.

24. Judd quoted in Coplans interview, 23.

25. Judd, "Some Aspects of Color in General . . ." 2016, 839.

whims of personal preference: to composition. Judd tells us, though, there is no composition. "Basically, I don't have anything against asymmetry," he says, "it's composition that I don't want."²⁴ If we take Judd at his word and eliminate composition as a determining factor, then we face the fact that the rough lengths of the pipe cannot be the direct cause of the work's specific wood widths and orientation. In which case, what is?

If we consider this question from the view of *DSS 33* with which this essay begins, our focus is instead directed toward a pipe that is not a material object, but a spatial object. From this position we immediately see that central to each wood panel is a hole encased by material: wood. Central to each pipe end is a hole encased by material, also: metal. The congruence, here, of a central hole encased by material suggests, instead, a *qualitative* transference from the pipe to the wood. A qualitative transference automatically self-centers the holes in the wood, with the specific wood widths and orientation likewise determined without composition—unlike a quantitative transference.

Accordingly, it is the quality of the pipe, its *space*, that determines the physical outcome of *DSS 33*. Judd tells us as much in 1993. While at first he explains that the "size of the right angle is determined by the right angle of the black pipe," which suggests a quantitative transference, he then qualifies this by saying, "The only enclosed space is inside the pipe. This slight linear space determines the dimensions of the broad planes."²⁵ A *qualitative* transference of space from the pipe to the panels is, then, primary, with a consequential transference of measurements as secondary.

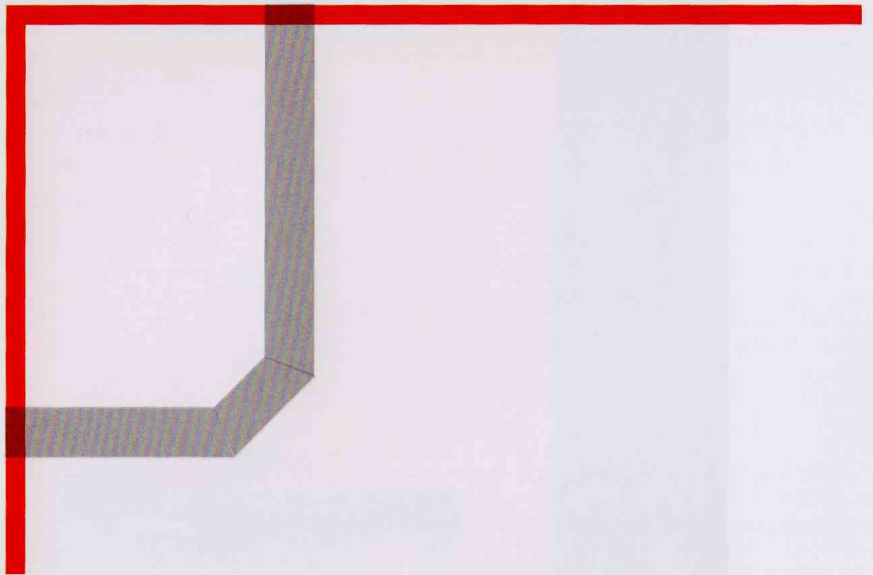


Diagram of an alternate orientation of the pipe in Donald Judd, *Untitled*, 1962 (diagram by the author)

With this distinction we can now see how the two black holes are central to an understanding of DSS 33. Because they are central, the black holes on opposite ends of the pipe demarcate a narrow space that runs between them. The space, in itself, is a default space without cause for meaning. It is the type of space we have already seen in modern sculpture. Some of the most discerning instances include the breathtakingly smooth concave interiors of Barbara Hepworth's sculptures during the 1940s and 1950s in St Ives. Also, Katarzyna Kobro's spatial compositions during the 1920s and 1930s in Warsaw, and Julio González's collaborations with Pablo Picasso in the late 1920s in Paris, as well as his independent "drawings in space" in which a sculptural silhouette outlines space as volume. In each we see a different treatment of positive and negative space. For Judd, though, this type of negative space is still representational. Its articulation is secondary to the solid's.²⁶ This may be difficult to appreciate when we look at Kobro's stunning eradication of the sculptural silhouette to give negative space the same value as positive space, which has even been seen as prescient of Minimal art.²⁷ When Kobro writes in 1929, "Sculpture is the shaping of space," it is easy to appreciate why. "A sculpture enters space," Kobro goes on to say, "and space enters it in turn," "the bond between the sculpture and the space, brings out of the sculpture the sheer truth of its existence."²⁸ As Yve-Alain Bois describes, "As we circulate around [Kobro's] best sculptures, what was negative (empty) becomes positive (full)."²⁹ Nevertheless, the negative space remains homogeneous and undifferentiated from the surrounding default space.

Instead, the space of DSS 33 is heterogeneous. For instance, the two black holes at either end of the pipe in DSS 33 are at right angles to each other, as the red perpendicular makes abundantly clear. A perpendicular, in itself, comprises extremes: a vertical and horizontal set in opposition. By emphasizing the pipe's ends as perpendicular, the space of each opposing hole becomes disjunctive and no longer homogeneous, but heterogeneous—even though the holes, themselves, are the same. Between them, they create a heterogeneous space at odds with the homogeneous space within which they are seen. Once we recognize the disjunction, then the linear space between the black holes is underlined, so

26. See Judd, "21 February 1993" (1993), in *Donald Judd Writings*, 812.

27. Yve-Alain Bois, "Strzeminski and Kobro: In Search of Motivation," in *Painting As Model* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 154, where Bois writes, "The philosophical foundation of unism was phenomenology, albeit implicitly, as it will later be for minimalism, this time explicitly."

28. Katarzyna Kobro, "Sculpture and Solid" (1929), in *Modern Sculpture Reader*, ed. Jon Wood, David Hulks, and Alex Potts (Leeds, UK: Henry Moore Institute, 2007), 89.

29. Bois, 151.

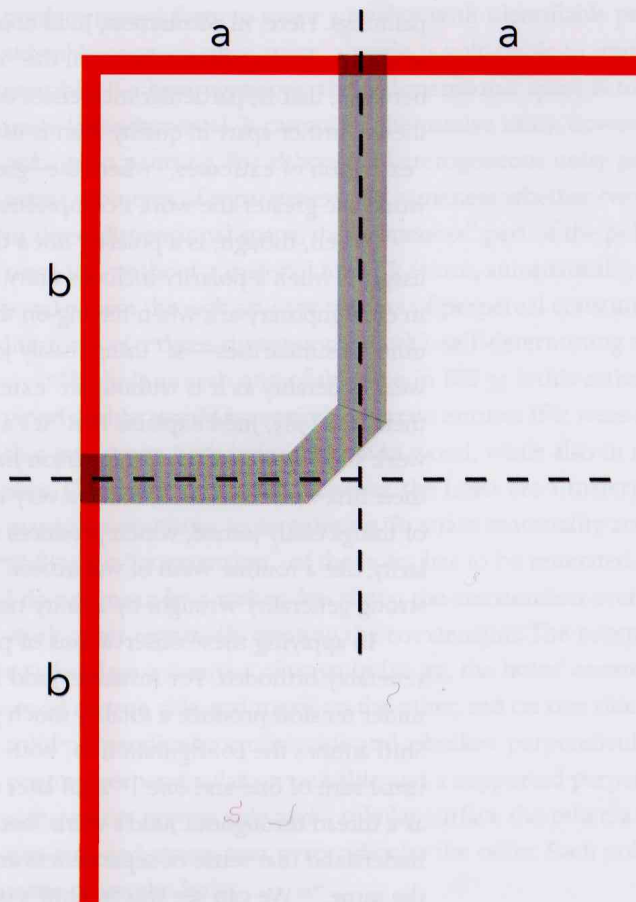


Diagram showing equal distances on either side of the black holes in Donald Judd, Untitled, 1962 (diagram by the author)

to speak. It is reiterated and made apparent. Heterogeneous space is not the type of space around a work “from which to look at the continuous solid” of the work.³⁰ Instead, articulated as much if not more than the solid, it becomes the space at which we look.

When in early 1993, Judd tells us, “Space is new in art and is still not a concern of more than a few artists,” he also tells us, “There is no vocabulary for a discussion of space in art.”³¹ The artist recommends we either enhance the past vocabulary of space in architecture that includes “proportion,” “volume and sequence,” and “East and West”—or build a new vocabulary. The main contender for a new vocabulary is a term now in use to describe the oppositions we see in DSS 33 that “create space.” The term is a process the art historian Richard Shiff has identified as “polarization.” Although the creation of space is a concern Judd emphasized as principal to his art in his 1993 text written for the Sikkens Foundation’s Mondrian Lecture, it was not until Shiff began to address this concern in 2000 that the term “created space” entered the accredited art historical vernacular associated with Judd and then, only just—as it is still largely unknown today. In addressing created space, one cannot help but first ask, as did Shiff, “Isn’t space already here and hardly in need of invention?” To which he adds, “Not according to Judd.”³² For Judd, Shiff writes, “the polarization of the parts, as well as polarity between the quality of the parts and the quality of the whole, meant that ‘actual space’ could be ‘made.’”³³ Judd anticipates this polar understanding of space, Shiff points out, as early as 1960 in Judd’s discussion of Jackson Pollock’s

30. Judd, “21 February 1993,” 812.

31. *Ibid.*, 817.

32. Richard Shiff, “A Space of One to One,” *Donald Judd: 50 X 100 X 50, 100 X 100 X 50: Anodized Aluminum, Brass, Copper, Stainless Steel, Plexiglass, Plywood, Cor-Ten Steel*, exh. cat. (New York: PaceWildenstein, 2002), 7.

33. *Ibid.*, 18.

paintings. Here, in admiration, Judd observes how Pollock achieves a “generality” as the result of a polarity between the “immediate perception of paint and canvas,” between, that is, particular incidences of paint and the overall painting.³⁴ Finding these “further apart in quality than is usual,” Judd describes the polarity as an “extension of extremes,” where the “greater the polarity of the elements in a work, the greater the work’s comprehension of space, time, and existence.”³⁵

When, though, is a polarity not a dichotomy? The answer, in tune with Judd’s usage, is when a polarity includes unity. Yet in this we meet a difficulty, since unity in contemporary art, when relying on the rule of homogeneous coherence, is a unity of similarities—of “things easily joined.” This makes a strong unity, but a weak generality as it is without an “extension of extremes.” When discussing aesthetics in 1983, Judd explains that “it’s a useless platitude to tell someone that their work should be unified. If the person has any sense at all of what they’re doing, their first work is unified, but at a very low level. That unity is one of similarities, of things easily joined, which produces a weak generality and next to no particularity, like a routine wash of watercolor.”³⁶ In Pollock’s paintings, Judd found a strong generality wrought by a unity not of similarity, but of polarity.

In applying these observations of polarity to Judd’s own work, Shiff has been venerably orthodox. For instance, Judd finds that “diverse elements combined under tension produce a totality much greater and unlike any of the parts”;³⁷ Shiff attunes the configuration as “both two things and one thing, but not the usual sum of one and one.”³⁸ Shiff later emphasizes the phrase “the two the same” as a thread throughout Judd’s work “because it struck me as so typical of Judd to understand that sense of separateness and sameness: two—the same. They are not the same.”³⁹ We can see this in Shiff’s description of DSS 33, the first of Judd’s three-dimensional works Shiff recognizes as polarized: “It gave a single sensation of two materials (metal, wood), two forms (narrow and tubular, broad and planar), two kinds of space (definite and indefinite), two colors (black, red).”⁴⁰

In abiding the polarity Judd observes in Pollock’s painting, as well as Jasper Johns’s, the polarities Shiff names involve a type of unity that is, nevertheless, involuntary.⁴¹ It is a passive unity since its totality is already material, as the resulting work of art. There is no process to this unity outside the process of polarity it comprises. Saying this is not to disregard its achievement to unify heterogeneous space within painting. For we can fathom the extent of this achievement when we consider a September 1962 review of George Segal’s paintings and sculpture, in which Judd draws our attention to a “fault” that occurs in the paintings, but not in the sculpture. In Segal’s paintings, the fault is a “spatial volume” necessitated by the inclusion of figures that require a “unified, illusionistic space” derivative of one-point perspective that “signifies a unified and idealistic world.”⁴² It is this fault that the unity of heterogeneous space within painting avoids. As for three-dimensional space, Judd finds Segal avoids this fault in his sculpture since the white figure, “ambiguously dead and alive, like the plaster casts taken from the molds in volcanic ash of struggling Pompeians,” appears extracted from a time and place other to the context within which it is placed.⁴³ This polarity between disjunctive spaces also disrupts the homogeneous coherence of a “unified and idealistic world.”

Yet, in avoiding this fault in three-dimensional space, a vulnerability arises: three-dimensional space lacks “perceptibility.” It is without a picture plane or

34. Judd, “In the Galleries, Arts, March 1960: Helen Frankenthaler,” rep. *Complete Writings 1959–1975*, 13. When describing these observations by Judd on Pollock’s work in 1975, Roberta Smith writes, “It is a double visibility: the drips are clear, but at the same time, they are subordinated to a new and total unity.” Smith, “Donald Judd,” 13–14.

35. Judd, “Abstract Expressionism” (1983), in *Donald Judd Writings*, 334.

36. Judd, “Art and Architecture,” 342.

37. Judd, “In the Galleries, Arts, March 1960: Helen Frankenthaler,” 13.

38. Shiff, 15.

39. Richard Shiff, “Interview with Richard Shiff: 29 Jan 2015,” in *The Missing Space Project: Six Interviews*, ed. Gail Hastings (Sydney: Pigment Publisher, 2015), 109; in reference to Shiff, “Sensuous Thoughts,” in *Donald Judd: The Multicolored Works*, ed. Marianne Stockebrand (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), 106.

40. Shiff, “A Space of One to One,” 12.

41. See Judd, “In the Galleries, Arts, March 1960: Jasper Johns,” rep. *Complete Writings 1959–1975*, 14.

42. Judd, “In the Galleries, Arts Magazine, Sept. 1962: George Segal,” rep. *Complete Writings 1959–1975*, 59.

43. *Ibid.*

predetermined form to moor a totality with identifiable presence. This is a considerable concern since space, already, is vulnerable to imperceptibility for being invisible. If a heterogeneous, three-dimensional space is to gain "perceptibility," unity is fundamental. It cannot be the passive unity, however, that accompanies polarity in painting. For although a heterogeneous unity pulses between simultaneous moments of separateness and sameness whether two- or three-dimensional, in three-dimensional space, the "sameness" part of the pulse is not immediate since it is without a material form. It is not, automatically, there. It has, instead, to take form through an active process of perpetual constitution lodged in the very life-force of a three-dimensional work's self-determining existence.

The hole at each end of the pipe in DSS 33 is this active unity. The pipe and wood widths would be entirely separate entities if it were not for the two holes that join them. Each hole is a hole in wood, while also in metal. It has coextension. Constituted by space, however, the holes are a material nothing instead of a material something, as in painting. To attain materiality and, accordingly, perceptibility, the "coextension" of the holes has to be reiterated. When I say reiterated, I do not mean by a writer describing the coextension over and over, but by a work of art repeatedly creating the coextension. The reiteration has, therefore, to take place a number of ways. In DSS 33, the holes' coextension is reiterated as wood on one side and metal on the other, red on one side and black the other, a solid perpendicular on one side and a hollow perpendicular the other, a self-supporting perpendicular on one side and a supported perpendicular the other, planar surfaces on one side and a tubular surface the other, a neat perpendicular on one side and a non-neat perpendicular the other. Each polarity reiterates the same unity: the holes.

Much like a clock's mechanism that does not contain time, but tells the time, DSS 33 does not contain a volumetric space, but creates space. In 1981 Judd tells us, "What is needed is a created space, space made by someone, space that is formed as is a solid, the two the same, with the space and the solid defining each other."⁴⁴ This being said, we are nevertheless left to recognize the active unity of the holes' coextension in DSS 33 as the work's totality. For usually, since the wood and metal appear to dominate the work as the work's totality, space is seen as an ancillary part. If, however, we look again at each hole with metal on one side and wood on the other, the metal and wood combine to form a "mound"—a material enclosure—around each hole. Judd's 1981 description of created space allows us to see how the hole is space and the mound is solid, the two the same, with the hole and mound defining each other. The active unity of the holes' coextension installs an inter-causation between the hole and mound to activate, in effect, the whole work as the whole work, as its totality.

Not until December 1960, when Judd finds himself confronted by a three-dimensional space made concrete, do we find the process of unity in polarity shift from passive to active in his observations and writings of others' art. Although mutual exclusion is the basis of a polarity, it is also the basis of a dichotomy. Without an equally powerful process of inclusion to overcome mutual exclusion, a polarity will fail to unify a heterogeneous space in three dimensions to make it perceivable. Over the course of a number of reviews and articles from December 1960 to April 1965 on Lee Bontecou's work, Judd observes the power needed for a void to become a concrete hole. It is a power in Bontecou's reliefs necessitated by

44. Judd, "Russian Art in Regard to Myself" (1981), in *Donald Judd Writings*, 298.

their heterogeneous space, unlike the homogeneous space of her floor-bound sculptures. By recognizing Judd's examination of coextension, we gain a means to redress the plight of Judd's 1993 claim, through his eyes.

Shiff comes closest in 2004 when he tells us, "Before reading [Judd's] collected writings in sequence, I had no inkling that he would apply his notion of Pollock's polarization to the [wall] sculpture of Lee Bontecou," and goes on to say, "Judd began his line of reasoning with Pollock, but it was with Bontecou that the polarity thesis developed, at least according to the chronological record of the published criticism."⁴⁵ Shiff nevertheless departs from this line of inquiry too soon and investigates, instead, the particular way Judd discusses the imagistic features in Bontecou and Claes Oldenburg's work. Similarly, Alex Potts quotes crucial passages of Judd's writing on Bontecou's reliefs, before departing to explore Judd's handling of the sexual imagery Bontecou's reliefs suggest. As most simply omit Judd's discussion of Bontecou's reliefs in his essay "Specific Objects" of 1964, Potts instead notes the common perception that "Specific Objects" discusses art that does not "look like exemplars of the austere abstract imperatives to which Judd theoretically seems to be committed."⁴⁶ While David Raskin does not go into the writings on Bontecou's reliefs in as much depth as the previous two writers, he nevertheless discusses the power of the work's material assertion as a single form. He also makes the important connection, in 2001, that the kernel of the notion "specific objects" is found in Judd's observations of Bontecou's reliefs.⁴⁷

Judd's examination of coextension and its power of inclusion begins when he writes in December 1960, "Bontecou's constructions stand out from the wall like contoured volcanoes. Their craters are voids but exceedingly aggressive ones, thrust starkly at the onlooker; these are threateningly concrete holes to be among."⁴⁸ In this we see Judd witness a hole, a space, a nothing, become a concrete something. In late 1962 he writes, "Rather than inducing idealization and generalization and being allusive, the object excludes. It is actual and specific and is experienced as an object."⁴⁹ It is here that both Raskin and Shiff connect the very term most associated with Judd—"specific object"—to its first formulation.⁵⁰ We find this derivation corroborated in the way Judd's 1965 opening line on Bontecou's reliefs runs on from the first sentence of "Specific Objects" of 1964, to read: "Half or more of the best new work done in the last few years has been neither painting nor sculpture."⁵¹ "Lee Bontecou was one of the first to use a three-dimensional form that was neither painting nor sculpture."⁵²

Historical accounts of space often recognize Lucio Fontana, based in Milan in the 1950s and 1960s, as introducing actual space into the picture plane.⁵³ In view of this, Judd is careful in 1965 to make clear the difference between Fontana's and Bontecou's reliefs. A painting's outer edge or rectangular field, Judd explains, is ordinarily treated as "the greater world" inside of which the structural parts of the painting are portrayed. "The slits in Fontana's canvases, for example, are this way." Instead, in a Bontecou relief, the structural parts are the greater world. The canvas that forms the central hole also incorporates the outer edge of the work: "The periphery is as much a part of the single structure [of the hole] as the center [of the hole]."⁵⁴ This is coextension.

Judd first describes coextension in his 1962 review of Bontecou's reliefs, where he tells us: "The four obvious aspects of the reliefs—the broad scale, the

45. Richard Shiff, "Donald Judd, Safe from Birds," in *Donald Judd* (Tate Publishing, 2004), 53.
46. Alex Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 280. See Donald Judd, "Specific Objects" (1964), in *Donald Judd Writings*, 134–45.
47. David Raskin, "Specific Opposition: Judd's Art and Politics," *Art History* 24, no. 5 (November 2001): 686.
48. Judd, "In the Galleries, Arts, December 1960: Lee Bontecou," 27.
49. Judd, "Lee Bontecou" (1962), in *Donald Judd Writings*, 83.
50. Richard Shiff, "Generality, Specificity, 'Specific Objects,'" unpub. handout, Judd Foundation, Marfa, Texas, May 3–4, 2008.
51. Judd, "Specific Objects" (1964), in *Donald Judd Writings*, 135.
52. Judd, "Lee Bontecou" (1965), in *Donald Judd Writings*, 163.
53. See Gregor Stemmerich, "Gregor Stemmerich: 24 Jan 2015," in *The Missing Space Project: Six Interviews*, ed. Gail Hastings (Sydney: Pigment Publisher, 2015), 83.
54. Judd, "Lee Bontecou" (1965), 164.

total shape, the structure, and the image—combine exponentially into an explicit quality and are the aspects of a single form. . . . The entire shape, the structure, and the image are coextensive. . . . The tripled existence of the image makes it an object. . . . It is actual and specific and is experienced as an object.”⁵⁵ Here, two main characteristics of coextension stand out. First, coextension is a point of union between otherwise mutually exclusive aspects that are, in this instance, the shape, structure, and image of a picture. Second, through a tripled existence of coextension—that is, through reiteration—coextension becomes an object. In emphasizing a tripled existence, it is as though Judd suspects that a single occurrence of heterogeneous space is without witness to corroborate its perceivable existence. When, instead, corroborating accounts pin down space as an undeniable occurrence, space attains a materiality that differentiates it from immaterial space, even though they are both space.

The tripled existence of the hole is, therefore: 1) its *shape*—the rectangular bearing of the work is no longer a neutral limit, but partakes in a volcanic eruption of canvas cantilevered out from the wall; 2) its *structure*—the “radial and concentric parts . . . leading in and out and enclosing” the black hole are neither subordinate to nor dominate the black hole, but *are* the black hole; and 3) its *image*—the image of the black hole is not a representation of a black hole, but an actual black hole.

The unifying power of coextension is further clarified as the image’s single form when Judd writes in “Specific Objects,” “The parts are either part of the hole or part of the mound which forms the hole. The hole and the mound are only *two things*, which, after all, *are the same thing*.”⁵⁶ Here, again, we have “the two the same,” a keystone quote in discussions of Judd’s created space as highlighted by Shiff. Instead of stemming from the 1981 text where Judd tells us that “what is needed is a created space, space made by someone, space [hole] that is formed as is a solid [mound], *the two the same*,” we find its first formulation in Judd’s discussion of Bontecou’s reliefs in “Specific Objects.”⁵⁷

“The black hole does not allude to a black hole; it is one,” Judd tells us a year later in 1965.⁵⁸ This observation is rife with ramifications to plunder. For instance, when Judd says, “The black hole does not *allude* to a black hole,” he treats the black hole as a pictorial image that, typically, “alludes” by being a two-dimensional representation of a three-dimensional actuality outside the picture plane. In this instance, though, the image is also an actual hole. It comprises opposing ontological states by being a representation of an object *and* the object represented, at the same time. As Judd had, by the end of 1962, already established the hole as coextension, in 1965 he adds to this an understanding of the hole as a coextension between opposite states of being: an actual object and an image of that actual object. Between the actual and its reproduction as an image, there is a polar extension of extremes. Normally, the actual and its image do not occur in the same state, nor in the same physical position. They are not the same. Yet here, they occur as the same hole. While Judd’s ambiguous employment of the term “image” to denote the hole might have led previous writers on Judd’s art and texts to disconnect the image from the hole, and hence from space, the very point Judd makes about the image is that the image is the actual hole it represents. “The two the same.”

The earlier origin of the *two the same* testifies to the enduring relevance Judd gave to the art of his time, the depth of his real-time observations and the

55. Judd, “Lee Bontecou” (1962), 83.

56. Judd, “Specific Objects,” 143, emphasis mine.

57. Judd, “Russian Art in Regard to Myself,” 298, emphasis mine.

58. Judd, “Lee Bontecou” (1965), 165.

philosophical prolificacy of his understanding that we, still today, are struggling to reach. It also shows how Judd's developments in his art stem from observations of art, where art precedes theory, not the other way around. It shows, too, how Judd's developments in his art allowed him to see more in the art of others. For in finding *the two the same* in Bontecou's work in 1964, Judd had already made and exhibited DSS 33.

With this, let us step back in time to find ourselves on the footpath outside 15 West 57th Street, New York, on January 8, 1963, as we enter the newly opened group exhibition *New Work: Part I* at Green Gallery. One documentary image by Rudy Burckhardt is, in particular, illuminating. In the image, we see DSS 33 in the foreground with *Untitled* (DSS 34) (1962), on the wall to the immediate left and *Untitled* (DSS 28) (1962), further along on the same wall. The view of DSS 33 is of the corner receding and the black pipe projecting toward us, the view most often represented in art historical treatments of the work. The two black holes with which this essay begins are, consequently, left out. For those unable to experience the work in person due to a lack of proximity and who have, instead, to take art historical texts verbatim, as I had to, being left out effectively means the two holes do not exist. When I first experienced them in 2008, I was shocked to discover their central importance. Their subsequent eclipse, though, was not the case in 1963. By allowing us to see the original orientation of DSS 33 in relation to the space of the room, the 1963 exhibition's documentation is crucial to a better understanding of Judd's view of the work. It allows us to see we would have entered the exhibition room through the doorway in the distant left. From there, the first sight of DSS 33 would have been of a central void in each upright with the red corner protruding toward us, not away. Overlooked ever since, Judd's placement in 1963 made sure gallery visitors did not overlook the centrality of the black holes. In 1993, Judd circumscribes this 1963 placement as a beginning when he writes, "The development of space is within the last thirty years."⁵⁹

We see the centrality of the black holes, again, in the way the ontological polarity discussed earlier is central to an understanding of space as an art medium. For a common attribute of an art medium is that when we use it, we use it to represent something other than itself. Stone is fashioned to represent a figure, not a stone. Space, on the other hand, is unlike other art mediums. The only object we can use space to represent is it, itself: space. Accordingly, the created space of a three-dimensional work forms a polarity between itself as an art medium that represents an object, and itself as the object of representation. Given the ubiquitous activation of this polarization whenever space is the medium of a work of art, it follows that its unifying coextension is the foundation on which subsequent corroborations materialize a work's space.

For instance, when Judd alerts us to the enclosed space in DSS 33's pipe, where "The shell of this narrow space passes through the breadth of the inner angle, a definite space through a general space," the ontological coextension—activated as the medium of the work—corroborates this polarity as material space.⁶⁰ By attaining existence through reiteration, though, the space is not a volume as Henry Moore understands it, as "the space that the shape displaces in air."⁶¹ Material space is, instead, a bustling actuality that has to reinstate its existence at every moment through an incessant pulse of separateness and sameness.

59. Judd, "Some Aspects of Color in General . . ." 2016, 836.

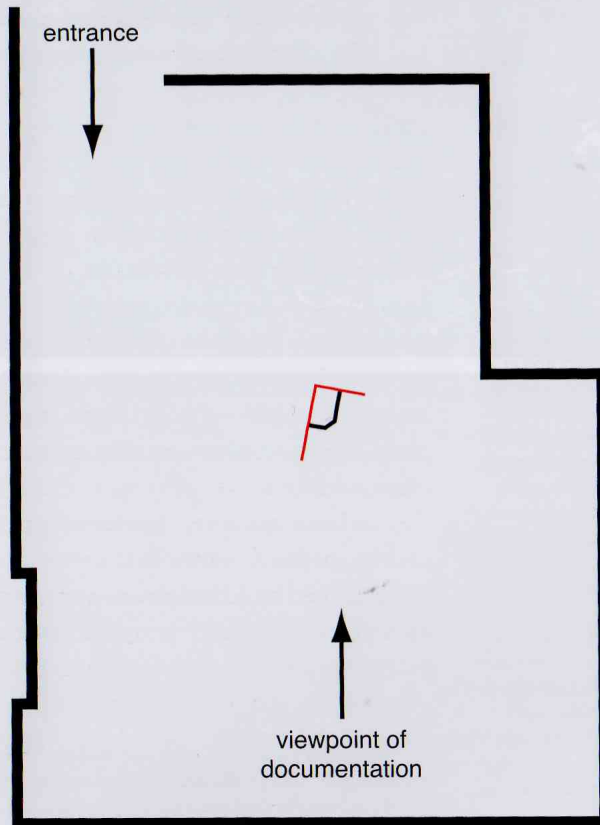
60. *Ibid.*, 835.

61. Henry Moore quoted in Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination*, 392, n4.



Exhibition view, *New Work: Part I*, Green Gallery, New York, 1963, showing three untitled works by Donald Judd dated 1962 (Donald Judd Art © 2018 Judd Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; photograph © 2018 Estate of Rudy Burckhardt / ARS, New York)

Diagram showing the placement of Donald Judd, *Untitled*, 1962, in *New Work: Part I*, Green Gallery, New York, 1963 (diagram the author; Donald Judd Art © 2018 Judd Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; photograph © 2018 Estate of Rudy Burckhardt / ARS, New York)



Black, within all this, plays another interesting role. When we look at the red angle protruding toward us, black is the unlit reality of space. Conversely, the black of the bent pipe protruding toward us is the pigmented color of something solid. Black is both the spatiality (one side) and solidity (other side) of the pipe. The space and the solid are made the same, they are black, while also separate: one is space and the other is solid, they are opposite—"the two the same, with the space and the solid defining each other."⁶²

When we read Judd's last 1993 reference to black in DSS 33, he describes the angle as "red and black, and black as space."⁶³ First, we read black as color. Then, we read black as space. The two blacks are not the same. Yet, when we face the protruding red corner, they are the same. Black is not pigment (color), but the unlit reality of space.

I began this essay by writing, "A dark void is the denouement of . . . two wood panels stained light cadmium red and joined at right angles." In writing this, I was describing DSS 33 by coopting the inaugural words Judd ascribed to Bontecou's reliefs in his December 1960 review, when he described their voids as "threateningly concrete holes to be among."⁶⁴ In his last text on these concrete holes in 1965, aside from describing Bontecou's work as "explicit and powerful" in the second sentence, Judd goes on to refer to "power" another seven times.⁶⁵ First, as the power of polarization; second, as the power of being "remarkably single"; third, fourth, and fifth, as either scale or inter-causation where, for instance, the "three primary aspects, the scale, the structure, and the image, are simple, definite, and powerful"; and the final two times as inter-causation, again, where the work's explicit power makes it "a new and stronger form of individuality." Power, in the first instance, concerns polarity. Power in the remaining six instances concerns an interpenetrating coextension of space that unifies opposites by overcoming differences.

When earlier Judd warned of an entirely formalistic discussion of work, he went on to say that "Almost any kind of statement can be derived from the work: philosophical, psychological, sociological, political. Such statements, usually nonsense, should refer to specific elements in the work."⁶⁶ One such element—the work's polarization—carries a strong sociological ramification. Numerous incidences remind us daily just how easy it is to activate and destructively accentuate differences between us, whether on the social front through the persecution of minorities, or on the domestic front where divorce proceedings due to "irreconcilable differences" clutter family law courts. While polarization enables a differentiation between parts, power, alone, is not found within its dichotomy. The human dimension of polarization is witness to the sheer power needed to overcome its segregation—as unity, as inclusion. It is this unity that Judd's space champions in us.

To build space, one has to use particular tools. Different tools build different created spaces. Although Judd's tools were arguably the first and will be different to those used by fellow artists who create material space, something profound in Judd's tools will, nevertheless, be present no matter the difference.⁶⁷ We find this profundity in the power of inclusion that overcomes differences in the dark void of DSS 33.

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62. Judd, "Russian Art in Regard to Myself," 298.
63. Judd, "Some Aspects of Color in General . . ." 2016, 38.

64. Judd, "In the Galleries, Arts, December 1960: Lee Bontecou," 27.

65. Judd, "Lee Bontecou" (1965), 163–64.

66. Judd, "Jackson Pollock," 190.

67. Judd, "Some Aspects of Color in General . . ." 836, where Judd writes, "I was not completely alone in the early 1960s in developing space as a main aspect of art, but few artists were interested and then usually within an earlier context, the imagery in Bontecou's work and the remnants of Smith's, the standing position and the compositional elements in Chamberlain's work. Later the interest in three-dimensionality and in space developed quickly, all kinds, a little, a lot. The most developed were the canvas works by Oldenburg, enclosing a soft space, a flexible space, and the glass works by Larry Bell, which contained a visible space, modified by a phenomenological aspect that has become an important new aspect, which Dan Flavin began somewhat earlier and Bob Irwin somewhat later. . . . I think that I developed space as a main aspect of art. . . . The other artist who has thoroughly developed space is of course Richard Serra." Judd further writes, "I knew how far I had to go and how new the work had to be to be my own," 836; "My work on the floor [DSS 33] was a new form, creating space amply and strongly," 841; and "The new work seemed to be the beginning of my own freedom, with possibilities for a lifetime. The possibilities and the lifetime are now well along" (852).