

MAPPING SPACE

RECENT ACQUISITIONS IN FOCUS

This exhibition explores the ways that five artists working over the past few decades have used photography to survey specific geographic spaces. Several of them were influenced by Conceptual Art, a movement that first became significant during the 1960s for prioritizing ideas over the production of art objects. These five artists have each sought to create a personal visual language, veering away from traditional forms of landscape photography and its engagement with both scientific accuracy and aesthetic concerns.

All of the works are from the Getty Museum's collection of photographs; this is the first time they are on view in our galleries.



ROBERT KINMONT

Robert Kinmont's *My Favorite Dirt Roads* depicts unpaved roads leading to the town of Bishop, California, where the artist grew up. These views also capture the surrounding terrain, largely arid and mountainous, while occasional power lines suggest the possibility of a community nearby. Rather than celebrate the aesthetic potential or reveal the inherent beauty of these landscapes, Kinmont used a deadpan approach to photography—favored by many Conceptual artists during this period—to create visual documents of these locations. For each image he stood in the middle of the road and pointed his camera toward the horizon, capturing the way these makeshift paths stretch or meander into the distance.

Born in Los Angeles and raised in Bishop, California, Kinmont received his BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute and his MFA from the University of California, Davis. In addition to the photographs he made in the late 1960s and early 1970s, his artistic practice includes sculpture made from found materials such as wood and stone, which he collects.

WANG JINSONG

These photographs from Wang Jinsong's series *One Hundred Signs of the Demolition* take as their subject the Chinese character "chai" (tear down), written on the walls of buildings slated by the government for destruction. The artist's decision to focus on these notices, often created hastily by hand, serves as a quiet critique of a carefully coordinated practice of removing vestiges of the past to accommodate rapid growth in Beijing and other major cities. The large scale of the prints, the frontal view, and the elimination of all architectural surroundings confront the viewer with the immediacy of programmatic urban renewal.

Wang graduated in 1987 from Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts in Hangzhou, where he trained in traditional Chinese ink painting. In the mid-1990s his practice expanded to include photography, video, and installation, and through his work he began to question the impact of a range of government policies on contemporary Chinese society.

RICHARD LONG

Richard Long's work *A Line Made by Walking* depicts a field outside London on which the grass has been flattened in a straight line by the artist's footsteps. This modest intervention underscores the potential for an ordinary act like walking back and forth, performed in a chosen public space, to become a meaningful gesture expressing the physical relationship between the body and the landscape. The photograph both documents this ephemeral action and completes it as a work of art. Long's early interest in nature aligned him with the Land Art movement, which emerged in the late 1960s in Europe and North America, and sought direct engagement with the environment.

Long studied at West of England College of Art before earning a degree from St. Martin's School of Art and Design in London. Primarily known as a sculptor, he often arranges natural materials in simple shapes and patterns, either in the landscape or in gallery settings.

MARK RUWEDEL

Mark Ruwedel's series *We All Loved Ruscha: 15 Apts.* depicts buildings photographed by the artist Ed Ruscha almost fifty years earlier. Several of these images were published in the book *Some Los Angeles Apartments* in 1965. Ruscha's original prints, titled with each building's address, allowed Ruwedel to pinpoint their locations. He then photographed them with the same detachment that characterized the approach of photographers influenced by Conceptual Art during the 1960s and 1970s. In revisiting the buildings originally documented by Ruscha, an artist whose work set the tone of West Coast Conceptualism, Ruwedel pays homage to the movement and the role of this important figure.

Based in Long Beach, where he is a professor of photography at California State University, Ruwedel earned a BFA from Kutztown State College in Pennsylvania and an MFA from Concordia University in Montreal. His work is known for depictions of landscapes, predominantly in western America and Canada, that have been impacted by human interventions or natural forces.

UTA BARTH

These untitled gelatin silver prints by Uta Barth reflect the artist's interest in the use of photography to understand our environment. After photographing her immediate surroundings, Barth marked the surface of each print with black and red grease pencils to delineate various compositional elements. The numbers, brackets, and occasional curvilinear forms suggest a desire to create rational order while also questioning the expectation that photographs provide sufficient information about their subjects. The relationship between the markings and individual images is intentionally ambiguous, inviting closer examination of these quotidian spaces.

Uta Barth is based in Los Angeles and earned a BFA from the University of California, Davis, and an MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles. Her photographs have explored a variety of themes, including spatial ambiguity, the visual distortions of soft-focus lenses, and the way surfaces change through subtle shifts in light.

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