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# Donald Judd



## Synopsis

This pioneering book, the first monograph devoted to Donald Judd, addresses the whole breadth of Judd's practices. Drawing on documents found in nearly twenty archives, David Raskin explains why some of Judd's works of art seem startlingly ephemeral while others remain insistently physical. In the process of answering this previously perplexing question, Raskin traces Judd's principles from his beginnings as an art critic through his fabulous installations and designs in Marfa, Texas. He discusses Judd's early important paintings and idiosyncratic red objects, as well as the three-dimensional works that are celebrated throughout the world. He also examines Judd's commitment to empirical values and his political activism, and concludes by considering the importance of Judd's example for recent art. Ultimately, Raskin develops a picture of Judd as never before seen: he shows us an artist who asserted his individuality with spare designs; who found spiritual values in plywood, Plexiglas, and industrial production; who refused to distinguish between thinking and feeling while asserting that science marked the limits of knowledge; who claimed that his art provided intuitions of morality but not a specific set of tenets; and who worked for political causes that were neither left nor right.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Anyone who cares about the ways artists use materials to create artworks that have significant meaning should read this book. Raskin starts with some of the most apparently austere art of the twentieth century--Donald Judd's so-called 'minimal' sculptures comprised of industrial materials like steel, plywood, plexiglass, and concrete--and shows that they are properly understood when we see

them as creating relationships of values. In Raskin's challenging but rewarding account, Judd's art turns out to be not just another post-war instance of art's 'reduction' to ever more attenuated forms (as pedestrian histories of minimalism would have it), but about the most important things in experience; namely, about our modes of encountering the world and others. Raskin helps us see what Judd called art's "scale": not just a property of objects, but an articulation of an individual's ways of thinking, feeling, and believing.

This is a beautifully produced book, lavishly illustrated. The text is less impressive: it's very argumentative without actually following through with a convincing case. It's one of those aggressive books young men tend to write that tries to sweep away all the big names but without carefully unpacking an alternative case. The best chapter is on Judd's engagement with politics where this is less evident. The actual engagement with Judd's work is cursory and a bit pedestrian.

Raskin's study is at once wide-ranging in its erudition, yet accessible and a pleasure to read. It is a major addition to the literature on Judd and, indeed, Minimalism.

great artist. The reading is intellectually dense for me and there were other artists included in the book, perhaps because Judd himself was a critic.

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