The Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts
Docents' Notes

Hiroshi Sugimoto: Photographs of Joe
May 12 – October 14, 2006

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INTRODUCTION

When Emily Pulitzer and I decided to organize an installation of Hiroshi's photographs of *Joe* at the Pulitzer, we were standing in his studio, looking at many more than the 19 large format photographs which are currently presented at the Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts.

Compared to the previous installations, Sugimoto's is exceptional on a variety of levels: instead of individual works that necessitate individual comments, we are presenting a series of works. Instead of showing sculpture and paintings, we have installed large scale photographs; and instead of showing art that has been produced independently of the Pulitzer, these photographs closely connect with one of the four works this institution owns: Richard Serra's *Joe*.
It might sound anecdotal to compare the size of crates we need for "regular" installations at the Pulitzer with the two middle sized boxes containing the 19 photographs sent by Sugimoto's studio to St. Louis. However, this comparison is a very relevant one, as it shows that Hiroshi's work is less based on material presence than on the visual impact and the relationship with the architectural surrounding. Along the same lines, in this installation, Sugimoto has not framed his photographs but installed them in such a way on the walls that shadow and ambient light create a new form of immaterial frame. If Western art associates beauty with light, then in the Japanese aesthetic tradition beauty is to be found in the shadows. For Japanese artists beauty is not material in itself but to be found in the play between different layers of shadows. Those who look carefully might also have discovered a very subtle silver lining around the edges.

This said, the challenges for the docents will be different for Sugimoto's installation: most of what can be said about one of the photographs can also be said about the other 18. For that reason, you might have to talk much more about the broader context than you did already before: the rhythm of all photographs in our space, the changing impact according to the size of the gallery, the relationship between these photographs and Ando's architecture, as well as Serra's sculpture *Joe*.

The docent material for the current installation aims at giving you ideas about how to expand your docenting. I very much hope that you will also continue to explore other forms of working with our visitors, as the visit to this installation might be even more experience-based as any of the installations before.

Matthias Waschek, Director

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PULITZER INSTALLATION

History of the Sugimoto installation at the Pulitzer:

In September 2001, an exhibition of Hirsohi Sugimoto's work opened at the Kunsthaus Bregenz in Austria. The director, Eckhard Schneider, who was familiar with Tadao Ando's architecture and who had visited the Pulitzer shortly after the opening in October 2001, suggested that the artist visit St. Louis to take photographs of the Pulitzer building. Sugimoto arrived in June of 2003. However, instead of focusing on his fellow countryman's architecture, he quickly focused on Richard Serra's sculpture *Joe* in the courtyard of the Foundation. The sculpture had been commissioned for the Pulitzer building and is the first of a series of torqued spirals.

Following the visit to the Pulitzer, an idea developed to publish a book based on the photographs. After viewing the works in Sugimoto's studio, Pulitzer Chairman Emily Pulitzer and Director Matthias Waschek decided to also organize an exhibition of the photographs.

Technical information:

Number of photographs: 19
Titles: *Joe*, followed by a four-digit number referencing the negative
Technique: black and white photographs printed on fiber-based gelatin silver coated paper
Measurements: 58 _ x 47 inches.
Mounts: honeycomb aluminium panels, which are fixed to a hanging cleat on the wall

Preparation of the installation at the Pulitzer:

While in his studio, the artist worked both with his memory of the gallery spaces (and of several artworks that would remain on view during his installation), as well as with detailed plans of the building. Spaces like the entrance gallery needed a different rhythm and choice of works than the Main Gallery, the Cube Gallery, and the Lower Gallery. In addition, works permanently or semi-permanently on view – including Ellsworth Kelly's *Blue Black* and Serra's *Joplin* and *Standpoint* – imposed other choices. Interestingly enough, none of the decisions were determined by considerations of light levels (exposure to high light levels can damage works on paper), as the artist was very much focused on juxtaposing his own interest in light with Ando's, who sculpts with light when designing architecture. The installation was finalized with a walk-through the galleries with Sugimoto a day prior to the opening. His assistant and a team of art handlers had already implemented the artist's ideas and hung the works according to Sugimoto's specifications. In the case of the photographs on the east wall over an expansive set of stairs, an elaborate system of scaffolding was erected to allow the hanging of the works.

Sugimoto's interest in the presentation of his work:

"For every museum show, I try to design the space," said the artist in a recent interview. "It's very important. It's not just a photography show; it's more like I'm designing the space. I just want to point out where exactly my piece has to be

hanged, or against what color, what height, what kind of wall conditions. It's just like a space sculpture."

Probably the most radical of his installations is an arrangement of 14 of his seascapes on the outside wall of the Benesse House Museum, which is part of a larger complex of buildings designed by Tadao Ando on the Japanese island of Naoshima. The works have been in this placement, exposed to the strong ambient light, for 10 years, simultaneously allowing the visitor a view on both the sea and the artist's seascape (see the article by Christine Temin, The Washington Post, February 12 2006, p. PO1, available at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/02/10/AR2006021000635.html.)

For his presentation at the Serpentine Gallery in London in 2001 the artist created a meditative environment by sequencing different spaces. The spaces ranged from otherwise empty, slate-floored exhibition galleries to a dark space for the presentation of photographs of flickering light.

In 2003, at the Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art, Sugimoto's installation paralleled the architectural content of the works. Each of the thirty 5x6 foot photographs were mounted on a dark gray monolithic wall (15 in each gallery); the photographs faced away from the entrance so that the viewer experiences the entire space before encountering the actual work.

In other cases, like at the retrospective first shown at the Mori Museum in Tokyo and currently on view at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, the artist experimented with frameless presentations of his work. As can also be seen at the Pulitzer, the aluminum mounted photographs seem to float on the wall and the surrounding shadow creates a new form of frame.

SUGIMOTO'S WORK PROCESS

Hiroshi Sugimoto's working space in New York is similar to many traditional artists' studios: by facing north, direct sunlight is avoided, and the light quality is stabilized. Some of Sugimoto's photographs are taken here, but most are shot in other locations.

The artist uses a 19th century-style, large-format camera. According to his subject matter, he uses different lengths of exposure: the *Joe* series was made with short exposure, whereas his theater series was taken for the full length of each film's projection. Taken in natural history museums, his diorama series has an exposure anywhere from 20 to 40 minutes. His long exposure photographs can only be done with the help of a tripod (in handheld photography, typical exposures must be faster than 1/60 of a second).

The blurring effect in Sugimoto's *Joe* series originates from his unconventional use of "infinity," which refers to the farthest reaches of the background. While the furthest a traditional lens can focus is infinity, his large format camera can be forced to double the "infinity-effect," which results in the blurring of the photograph.

Sugimoto considers himself a craftsman in the tradition of early photography:

> *"People used to feel the light and how the light affected the surface of the object. The sky, lights from the window are constantly changing every second, every minute. So you really had to guess what was going to happen. You had to develop your own sense of the best balance of F-stop and shutter speed. I trained myself very well spending thirty years doing this. So the machine cannot measure some things, very intimate factors. What the early photographer gained from the study of nature, now people tend to rely on the computer or machines for. That's not good enough. You need something more than that."* [1]

For his work, the artist prefers traditional fiber-based gelatin-silver prints, a technique developed in the 1870s, which had become the most popular means of making black and white prints from negatives until the recent introduction of digital photography. The traditional prints involve paper coated with a layer of gelatin which contains light sensitive silver salts. Whereas many professional photographers prefer to have their prints developed in a lab, Sugimoto follows in the footsteps of the pioneers of photography and is very much involved in the craft of hand-developing his prints.

There are two main phases of developing black and white photography:

- The negative is projected and enlarged onto the gelatin-silver coated photo paper. The 8 x 10 sheet film must be processed in absolute darkness.
- The prints are hand-processed in trays of chemicals and washed extensively to ensure their archival nature. "Archival" is a technical qualification regarding the

[1] *Tradition*, Hiroshi Sugimoto and Art:21 Interview. 2005. Art:21 PBS. 17 April 2006. <www.pbs.org/art21/artists/sugimoto/clip2.html>

life-span of a developed photograph. For fiber-based gelatine-silver prints, the surface is estimated to remain unchanged for at least 100 years

Sugimoto generally produces limited editions. In the case of his large-scale photographs, five copies are usually made, while in the smaller prints, twenty five copies are produced. The large formats are signed and labeled on the back, whereas the small ones are embossed and signed on the mount.

So far it has been exceptional that Sugimoto has explored color photography; however, the current series he is working on, which falls into this category, is entitled *Colors of Shadow*.

JOE IN THE CONTEXT OF SUGIMOTO'S WORK

Working in series, Sugimoto is deeply interested in the interconnections between the modern and ancient worlds and the ways in which time, an abstraction, is perceived and represented.

Following an early series of time-lapse photographs of old movie theatre interiors, he began to work on museum exhibitions, and created a series of impeccably detailed wax human figures and dioramas of early humans from museums of natural history. Devoid of any details such as exhibition furniture or gallery space to indicate the fabricated character of these beings and environments, the photographs seem eerily real and unreal at the same time.

Since 1980 Sugimoto has travelled throughout the world to photograph seascapes devoid of human incident. Boldly minimalist at first glance, these exquisitely precise, nearly symmetrical images invite close scrutiny, revealing subtle difference in tonality, horizon line, and atmospheric conditions, despite their initial appearance of sameness or emptiness. Notions of timelessness and the fragility of the natural environment seem to interact as the viewer reflects on these hazy projections of an apparently infinite space. Sugimoto has discussed these works in terms of a distant human past that endures in the process of contemplation: "I thought about our ancestors who first saw the sea and gave it a name . . . Without language, the separation between the inner and outer world needs not be so apparent. In the Seascapes I was thinking about the earliest experiences of mankind, about the time when the first people named the world around them, and named the sea."

In his Pulitzer interview of May 12, 2006 with Deborah Martin Kao (*please find the text of this interview and audio clips on the Pulitzer website*), the artist stated that his *Joe* series is a continuation of his photographs related to architecture. For him, Serra's *Joe* is a form of architecture. The architecture series, which was started in 1997,*"was commissioned by MOCA Los Angeles, without a fee, for a survey of modernist architecture, and it seemed like an interesting idea to photograph 20th Century architecture out of focus. The concept of time applies - I'm trying to recreate the imaginative visions of the architecture before the architect built the building, so I can trace back the original vision from the finished product. All the details and all the mistakes disappear; there's a lot of shadows, melting. If the building is successfully done, then it will remain strong even out of focus. Again, it's a minimalist approach, taking away all the details but being left with a very strong vision".* [2]

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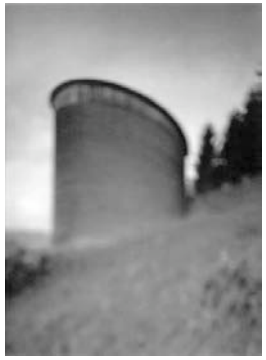
Hiroshi Sugimoto in an interview with Martin Herbert.



Hiroshi Sugimoto,
Saint Benedict Chapel, Peter Zumthor 2000-01
and
Guggenheim Museum, Frank Lloyd Wright

JOE: AN HOMAGE

Those who knew Joseph Pulitzer, Jr. might consider Serra's torqued spiral in the courtyard of the Pulitzer an homage; those who did not might instead understand the sculpture's title to be a general name for a specific sculpture. The fact that Hiroshi Sugimoto named his Pulitzer series *Joe* can equally be interpreted as an homage, this time, however, to the sculpture rather than the person.

The initial meaning of homage is to show great respect for someone or something. Other words that have more or less the same meaning include reverence, honor, awe, adoration and veneration. In the field of modern and contemporary art, this notion has had very complex, sometimes even contradictory repercussions, ranging from tradition, inspiration or influence to reference, irony or the criticism of values. Caravaggio's *Bacchus* from 1597 has been reinterpreted by Cindy Sherman, who disguises herself as the hero in the Renaissance master's work.

Diego Velasques', *Las Meninas* from 1657 has been reinterpreted exactly 300 years later:

Finally, Marcel Duchamp's *The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even (The Large Glass)* from 1915 is echoed by Sugimoto's *La Boîte en Bois (Wooden Box) (Replica of Duchamp's 'Large Glass')*, in 2004

Further reading about Joseph Pulitzer III: Pfaff, Daniel W. No Ordinary Joe: A Life of Joseph Pulitzer III. Missouri: Missouri Biography Series, Ed. 3.

REFERENCES TO DUCHAMP, INTEREST IN MODERNISM (INTERVIEWS)

Interview: Conducted by Art 21. Quoted from www.pbs.org/art21. Text of interview © Art21, Inc. 2001-2005.

ART:21: Is it a new thing for you, designing exhibitions?

SUGIMOTO: Every museum show, I try to design the space. It's very important. It's not just a photography show; it's more like I'm designing the space. I just want to point out where exactly my piece has to be hanged, or against what color, what height, what kind of wall conditions. It's just like a space sculpture. It costs a lot of money to do it, but I put it as a condition to do a show. I have to be there to fill the space, the height of the ceiling, and then the height of the wall—how much space is between the ceiling and the top of the wall—and then just wide enough for the wheelchair people to go through. Many factors.

ART:21: Do you think sculpturally?

SUGIMOTO: Yes exactly—it's a three-dimensional presentation. But with photography another factor is the time concept. Adding the time concept, this is like Duchamp—a four-dimensional presentation.

ART:21: Talk about why you worked from a replica of Marcel Duchamp's "The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even (The Large Glass)."

SUGIMOTO: My intention was to make a replica of a replica. So mine is a third-generation copy of the original, but mine is even smaller. I used my 8-by-10 camera and photographed the upper part and bottom part, made a negative, and a contact print out of the negative. I made negative and positive prints sandwiched with very thick glass.

ART:21: Do you find the replica differs from Duchamp's original?

SUGIMOTO: There are four replicas of "The Large Glass"—two in Stockholm, one in London, one in Tokyo. I've been photographing the replica in Tokyo, spending so much time with the replica that facing the original is a very strange feeling. The original has an enormous power compared to the replica. A replica is a replica, it's a copy—a duplicate. Duchamp's concept of a copy was that the copy is as important as the original. But it's not true. The original has its own Duchamp spirit in itself, even though he might say, "Well, this is not special at all." He probably didn't believe in spirits. But I do feel it.

ART:21: What is the element that's missing then?

SUGIMOTO: Well it's an element added, not missing. It's a concept of time.

ART:21: How does your photographic replica relate visually to Duchamp's original?

SUGIMOTO: Probably it was Duchamp's intention to have glass that's transparent. It's very hard to concentrate on the image—everything is in the surface. So for my piece, the Tokyo version, I think I betrayed his wishes. I covered "The Large Glass" with a huge black tent so that the image is clearly visible because it's against the black background. Then I photographed it so it's very transparent. And then my negative serves as a positive because it's just black background. As a negative, it's pure transparent glass. So mine is back to the original, even though it's reversed, negative and positive.

ART:21: Your version, indirectly, even attempts to mimic the cracks in Duchamp's original.

SUGIMOTO: Cracks, yes, that's very good. I made the models of the show with the plastic case covered. I sent it to Paris months ago. And then I found it's arrived cracked, the case itself. So this is a good sign (LAUGHS), this is approval from Duchamp, from up there.

ART:21: You are using Duchamp's concept of both the multiple and the found object here.

SUGIMOTO: Photography is like a found object. A photographer never makes an actual subject, they just steal the image from the world. So it's basically a found object. I am following his theory and tradition. And this is also a found object—Duchamp's replica. So it's a double faking or double replica in a way. And then I'm also making it multiple, so it's repeated and repeated, again and again.

ART:21: Are you using the same proportions as in the original?

SUGIMOTO: I wonder whether the Tokyo replica really is exactly the same or not. Maybe it's just a quarter-of-an-inch off or something, because of the material that they used in the 1910s, 20s, and 30s, the different kind of glass materials. It's probably slightly different, but I'm trying to follow the same proportions as much as possible.

ART:21: You seem to feel a deep connection to Duchamp's work.

SUGIMOTO: It is exactly thirty years ago since I first came to see Duchamp's "Large Glass." At that time I wasn't aware that Marcel Duchamp's works somehow related to the artwork that I was going to make. I had no sense of close relationship. I didn't have any sense of being influenced by Duchamp. But now, I have a very strong feeling of a kind of power I received from his work. I recognize it and am more and more aware of it.

And the more I think about it, there's this long story—the history of painting and the invention of photography in the early-nineteenth century. When photography was invented all the artists were shocked, the painters actually panicked. They thought they may lose their jobs because photography could do better drawing the actual world. That's how the European painting movements from Impressionism to Dada began. Painters started to think, "How should we do this differently from photography?" That guided the painter's mind to a more abstract mind. Duchamp's "Nude Descending a Staircase"—the naked woman running down the staircase—that's the presentation of the concept of time and movement. This is all related to photography. So that's how I link the history of painting and photography together.

ART:21: It also ties together time and memory.

SUGIMOTO: Memory, and replica. Photography is a system of saving memories. It's a time machine, in a way to preserve the memory, to preserve time. That's something I learned from the Duchamp concept.

ART:21: Talk about how you photographed the mathematical models.

SUGIMOTO: Well, you never know how big the model is. It's actually small, probably ten to twelve inches. In my previous career, I learned how to make a lousy building look bright, so I apply this technique that I actually invented.

ART:21: You imagined it would be on this scale?

SUGIMOTO: Yes, I knew that this would look like this—gigantic, monumental. That's what I wanted to make.

ART:21: Why make these small things become so large?

SUGIMOTO: I'm looking for a sculptural quality, like Greek monumental sculpture or even Greek architecture. People tend to lose the sense of how big, how far away the thing is. After I mastered controlling this sense of the space, then I could start playing around with it. Space is a very important factor in photography. This looks like a Greek vase or even a sculpture. This third one is very much like Venus de Milo," and this is not Greek, it's Roman. The second one almost looks like Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim building or the Frank Gehry building. So it's somehow related to a sense of old civilizations, Greek, Roman, East Asian, Indian. And it's very interesting. They are purely mathematical figures but they remind us to think backwards to the ancient civilizations.

ART:21: How did the mathematicians come up with this model?

SUGIMOTO: This is purely what the mathematicians came up with—a purely abstract concept of mathematics. I'm not very good at mathematical thinking but it's amazing how it appears to be visually three-dimensional. This is the projected image of a mathematician's thinking. So no such thing actually exists in nature, it's purely a human's mind that comes to this kind of theory. And then this theory is projected onto this three-dimensional form. We are human and we are the weirdest creatures, we come up with this and even a god couldn't create this. God created nature, but we created conceptual forms.

ART:21: Do you think these forms have an emotional signifigance as well as mathematical?

SUGIMOTO: The mathematicians, I don't know whether they carry these emotions or not. As an artist, I project my vision onto these mathematical and purely abstract forms. It's very strange that we want to see things the way we want to see them. This is art, and we can shape what we want to see and how we want to see things.

ART:21: Did you know what the photograph would like like?

SUGIMOTO: As a photographer, I have already envisioned how I wanted to see this object. So probably I am looking at this the way I want to see. Actually, Man Ray did a series of photographs using the same cast model (not the very piece I found in Tokyo, but the one that belongs to the Poincaré Institute in Paris). It's been published. I found that out after I started to do this. I am quite convinced that I'm looking at these objects in a very different way from Man Ray. Man Ray was a colleague and very good friend of Marcel Duchamp's. So Duchamp must have seen these objects. So again, Duchamp is very related.

ART:21: Are there any other influence on images?

SUGIMOTO: It's just like sculpture. I feel like I'm carving this out of conceptual form. The figures were made without artistic motivation, and I'm trying to make them art-like. So that's photography! People tend to believe that photography can just record scenes, but this is more like using my camera and then projecting my own imagination onto the surface of this 'sculpture'—these models. So I think I feel more like I'm shaping the forms using a camera instead of chisel. It's sculptural form using my camera as a tool. And between chisel and camera, there's no difference to me.

ART:21: Do you want to add anything?

SUGIMOTO: I'm very interested in the early-twentieth and nineteenth century movements of modernism, how we started living in the way we live now—a more modern life. We'd been living in a very different style of life and all of a sudden there was the nineteenth-century machine age and then the twentieth century. The development of science and religious practices became less and less important. Then the artist moved in and started taking an important role, leading from religious practice and then more independently. This era, 1910-20's, or back in the late-nineteenth century, that's my area of fascination. The more I studied it the more I got involved. This also happened to be Duchamp's time.

ART:21: You studied this in college?

SUGIMOTO: I was in California in 1973-74, that was the flower children movement. I was really into that (LAUGHS). I didn't pay much attention to serious art. Only after I moved to New York in 1974, did I start realizing how important and interesting art can be. But my flower child time, that really gave me a good education. I met so many interesting, weird people in California—free spirits—it was very, very different from my life in Japan.

ART:21: They sparked your imagination?

SUGIMOTO: When I was a college student in Tokyo I studied German philosophy, Marxist economics, and Hegel and Kant. I was trying to catch up on Western philosophy. And then when I moved to California everybody was talking about Zen and Buddhism. So all of a sudden I was rushing to study my background as someone Japanese. So I spent three years in California studying Oriental philosophy to catch up actually.

ART:21: Do you see a connect between Marxism and Dada or Surrealism?

SUGIMOTO: Socialism and Communism now are considered a kind of failed theory or thinking. But at that time, that was one theory of how people could live together peacefully and nicely. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries we had so many bad things happen. The First World War occurred and then something was wrong with the economic system. A small group of people were getting richer and most of the people suffered from this. That was from western thinking—philosophy and social studies. Most of the intelligent people really believed in socialism and then communism. Idealism in general, and Surrealism and Dada, they were trying to stretch the expansion of the human ability to see things in a different way. So they are all kind of ambitious, in a way.

Tradition

ART:21: Is your photography process straightforward? Do you use any special techniques?

SUGIMOTO: Special techniques? Well, this is my studio in the Chelsea area of New York. I am on the eleventh floor facing the north sky. This is like a very traditional nine painter's studio in Paris: a brownstone building, the painter usually takes the top floor facing north so you never get the direct sunlight but the beautiful reflecti am not using any artificial light here. All I am doing is shading up and down—and then I can control the light so that I don't have to be afraid of a New York C

ART:21: The way you're shooting, is it analogous to early photography?

SUGIMOTO: Yes, the earliest photography—probably nineteenth-century style or early-twentieth century. People used to use very big format cameras. And to me this meth the best quality picture. We think we keep making inventions and tools as sophisticated. This system, it's very hard to control, but it still makes the best picture to the traditional method.

ART:21: Why is it hard to control?

SUGIMOTO: People used to use very simple things. Even this meter—there is no battery involved—a very simple method. People used to feel the light and how the light aff surface of the object. The sky, lights from the window are constantly changing every second, every minute. So you really had to guess what was going to happ develop your own sense of the best balance of F-stop and shutter speed. I trained myself very well spending thirty years doing this. So the machine cannot mea things, very intimate factors. What the early photographer gained from the study of nature, now people tend to rely on the computer or machines for. That's no

ART:21: Talk about the way you print your photographs.

SUGIMOTO: I developed my own style of printing. I tested many different methods—Walker Evans's method, Ansel Adams's method. They used different kinds of formula chemicals. I spent quite a lot of time studying chemicals and how to develop large-format negatives. I also developed a sense to adjust the negatives. What kin creates these nice gray tones? And what level of grayness makes black tones, not losing the medium tones, but extremely deep black? And then, highlights sho interesting but never washed out. There's no pure white: there are always some tones there. Even in the deepest shadow, there's a tone which is possible to prin

maker. So in that sense I am a very craft-oriented person. But at the same time, I want to make something artistic and conceptual. In general, you know, the po
never paid attention to craftsmanship. That's something like a nineteenth-century cliché. But to me, I'm going the other way around. I really respect my craftsr
hands. So even though I've lived in this postmodern time, I probably call myself a postmodern-experienced pre-postmodern modernist!

ART:21: What have you been photographing today your studio?

SUGIMOTO: This is one of my fossil collections. Years ago, under the water, this kind of life formation was made. This fossil was discovered in Russia. This horn is so rare
complete piece. This was in a rock, kept heated, then dipped in the water. This crack separated and then this fossil shape appeared. The person who discovered
worked on this part to save this horn. It's quite an interesting piece.

ART:21: How old is it?

SUGIMOTO: Four-hundred-fifty million years old. I feel very young!

ART:21: Are there similarities between fossils and photography?

SUGIMOTO: Fossils work almost the same way as photography...as a record of history. The accumulation of time and history becomes a negative of the image. And this neg
and the fossil is the positive side. This is the same as the action of photography. So that's why I am very curious about the artistic stage of imprinting the memo
record. A fossil is made over four-hundred-fifty million years—it takes that much time. But photography, it's instant. So, to me, photography functions as a fos
time.

ART:21: Does this relate to your "Seascapes" series?

SUGIMOTO: Not directly but indirectly—in dealing with this concept of time and history. In "Seascapes," my subject matter is water and air.

ART:21: What about the stillness in those photographs?

SUGIMOTO: Stillness...I'm not intentionally promoting it, but most people see it, and it's very quiet and serene. That's something that just naturally, automatically comes ou work.

ART:21: Can you say a little about this cabinet in your studio?

SUGIMOTO: This cabinet I call my portable Shinto shrine. The Japanese Shinto shrine—they always keep the mirror inside. That's probably the reflection of the old memor And you know, worshipping our ancestors, this is the earliest stage of life formation in the world. This is what I have to pay respect to.

I was commissioned to build a Shinto shrine in Japan. So I studied the history of Japanese religion, especially Shintoism. I found that it's very serious to pay at ancestors, how you worship your ancestors, and then also the old memories and families—the origin of families, the origin of life itself. So this is the most radi of how we should pay attention to the ancestors.

ART:21: You've also explored architecture as a theme in photography.

SUGIMOTO: Yes, this gave me a good education over the last seven, eight years. I've been visiting famous modernist architecture. This guided me to this kind of mixture of sculpture, and photography.

When I was working on the architecture series I was actually photographing huge-scale architecture looking up from the ground level. I wanted to transfer this the building from the ground floor...It's presenting some kind of taste and sense of the early-twentieth century.

ART:21: Has Minimalism affected your work any?

SUGIMOTO: I've known Walter De Maria—personally and not so personally—for a long time. When I first moved to New York City in 1974 there was a series of Minimal shows—including Walter De Maria and later the Dia permanent installation, "The Broken Kilomter." So I think that experience of the minimalist movement in the '70s gave me a very strong impression.

I always felt that as a photographer I tried to stay as minimalist as possible, but some day I wanted to have sculpture experience. At the same time I did a series Buddhas in Kyoto Temple—this kind of installation similar to a twelfth century Japanese temple. So even before New York minimalism, the Japanese did it al twelfth century. So I don't owe anything to New York, I think.

Interview: Conducted by Martin Herbert
Quoted from
www.eyestorm.com/feature/ED2n_article.asp?article_id=135
Text of interview © Whiteground Ltd.

Martin Herbert: You studied at California's conceptually-oriented Art Center in the early 70s. How did that influence your approach to photography?

Hiroshi Sugimoto: I wasn't a serious student. I wanted to stay in California, I needed to study somewhere to have a visa and Art Center was the easiest school then. And photography was its easiest department. I didn't see much contemporary art in California - I first discovered the contemporary scene when, after graduating, I moved to New York. I was very interested in what was going on there - I had underestimated the quality of American art! So I decided to try to join the club. And at that time Minimalism and Conceptualism were very popular, and I was interested in them. But I thought, if I join this society I don't want to follow the other artists. I decided to use photography as my means. At that time, photography was very underestimated - it was a second class citizen in the fine art world.

John Baldessari was using photography conceptually at that time, but not many other artists were.

Baldessari, yes, but personally I was also concerned with the quality of the photography, traditional professional photography. I didn't want to be criticized for taking low-quality photographs, so I tried to reach the best, highest quality of photography and then to combine this with a conceptual art practice. But thinking back, that was the wrong decision [laughs]. Developing a low-quality aesthetic is a sign of serious fine art - I still see this. But to me, serious concepts are only shown through a highly mastered technique. Painters - if you're not a skilful painter, how do you paint the thing? Maybe I'm very 19th Century minded, but I still feel very engaged with the technical aspects of art.

That aside, are visual beauty and the sublime important aspects of your work?

I envision the image first and all my works, especially the seascapes, are so detailed that unless I get the detail of the scenes on the surface of the paper, it will not make sense. So I have to be technically skilled so that the image will show up. If it doesn't show up, it's not my art. So aesthetics in my case is a required technical aspect. I have my own technical standards set up, so as far as choosing which photographs work, the issue is whether the photograph expresses my concept. As for the sublime, I'm not particularly looking for it. If that's what people see... I quite like to show it [laughs].

Can you tell us a little about the gestation of your well-known series, begun in the late 70s, of photographs made in movie theaters?

The concept was to photograph the entire duration of a movie, so I was imagining that if I were to do that, the result might be a completely white screen. I could guess it would be but the question is, can I prove and make real my envisioned image as a printed photograph? Usually a photographer sees something

and tries to capture it, but in my case I just see it in my head and then the technical process is how to make it happen in the real world. The image, then, is a kind of decoration of the concept. Concept is concept, it's not solid so I need an image to make it solid and visual. I could have photographed these screens in any old cheap, box-type theater but, as an artist, I wanted to make it visually interesting, so I decided to use these old, ornate theaters dating from the 1920s and 30s. So people may not see my concept but at least they see the architectural details, the quality of the building, which itself is interesting. You are not thrown out to the emptiness.

Their central motif is a white rectangle. Was that a deliberate reference to the minimalist tradition?

Yes, that's the influence of the minimalist approach, trying to express this blankness. I was very influenced by Carl Andre, Dan Flavin. The simplest forms have authority - like a blank white light, and how do you photograph that? You need a framework to make it visible. But this is not simply white light; it is the result of too much information. So too much is nothing, which makes sense to me [laughs]. And working in series, it's nice to compare blanknesses - you know, this blankness is slightly brighter than this one!

Do you find that working in series is quite comforting; you know what you're going to do next? Or is it a challenge to find, or generate differences between the individual images?

Well, I set the basic rules of my work, but I always encounter something unexpected, so it's a mixture. The theaters I have photographed were mostly American, but one was done recently in Milan, and one in Osaka designed by Tadao Ando, and it's a simple one. So here I could do my original concept: the least architectural information and just the screen. I prefer that. It's almost just a white screen with a black edge. I wasn't so self-confident 25 years ago. Sometimes the theater owners, or collectors tell me, 'This is the theatre I want you to work on' and send photos...

...in which they've helpfully hung a big sheet of white paper over the screen.

[laughs] Occasionally, I'll take one of these offers though. Also, different movies give different brightnesses, I've found. If it's an optimistic story, I usually end up with a bright screen; if it's a sad story, it's a dark screen. Occult movie? Very dark. Because all these films are different, I never know how the work is going to turn out, how I will have to expose the film. So I have to take my darkroom with me everywhere and develop the negatives, tray-process them in my hotel room because I don't trust myself to bring the film back to New York and process it. The chances are very small, less than 50%, of getting the very good image first time around.

To me, one of your most interesting series is the 48-part Hall of Thirty Three Bays, made in a Buddhist temple in Japan. In this work, it seems important that the distinctions between each image are very minor.

That was a similar concept to my seascapes - comparison and similarity. The figures are all slightly different, so I want people's eyes to focus on those differences. The [grouped sculptures of a] thousand almost-identical Buddhas which I

photographed were made in the 13th Century, so this is the conceptual aspect of Japanese art, which was what motivated me to work on it. The place is one of the most famous temples in Kyoto - a national treasure - so the statues are important cultural property, and it took almost seven years to get permission to do the photographs; I had the idea in the late 80s. It was very difficult to make the Buddhist monks understand what I wanted to do, to understand the concept of art. It's a long story, and not a fun story.

After that, you began photographing well-known examples of modernist architecture.

That started in 1997. It was commissioned by MOCA Los Angeles, without a fee, for a survey of modernist architecture, and it seemed like an interesting idea to photograph 20th Century architecture out of focus. The concept of time applies - I'm trying to recreate the imaginative visions of the architecture before the architect built the building, so I can trace back the original vision from the finished product. All the details and all the mistakes disappear; there's a lot of shadows, melting. If the building is successfully done, then it will remain strong even out of focus. Again, it's a minimalist approach, taking away all the details but being left with a very strong vision.

Your work has been discussed widely in terms of concepts of time. How do your seascapes fit into that critical framework?

The first portfolio of seascapes I published was entitled 'Time Exposed' because time is revealed in the sea. When I began thinking about the seascapes I was thinking, what would be the most unchanged scene on the surface of the earth? Ever since the first men and cultures appeared, they have been facing seas and scenes of nature. The landscape has changed over thousands, millions of years, man has cultivated the ground, built cultures and cities, skyscrapers. The seascapes, I thought, must be the least changed scene, the oldest vision that we can share with ancient peoples. The sea may be polluted, but it looks approximately the same. So that's a very heavy time concept. People have a lot of strange ideas about my seascapes - they think these photographs were done using very long exposures, but they are in fact very fast because I wanted to stop the motion of the waves, which are constantly moving. You heard I took some photographs using a camera speed of zero ASA? That's impossible.

When you began making these images, did you stop doing your previous series?

I started my seascapes in 1980, so there was an overlap with the theater series. I would join the making of these works together: if I traveled somewhere to do a lakescape or a seascape, I would also photograph a cinema. Very cost-conscious. If I'm setting up a museum show or something, I'll make work in that place, that's how I work. As regards stopping, my policy is that I stop working on a series when I get tired of it myself, even though it is commercially viable. If I myself don't enjoy making it, I don't enjoy my life. But even though I set my policy a long time ago, I don't get tired of any of my series. Especially seascapes - the more I do, the more I appreciate them.

Why do you think that is?

It's just the variations - new ways of seeing them keep coming out. Using the same materials, water and air, I just amaze myself at how I see things differently and new. So I have to keep investigating. Every day is different, every minute, so if I stay in the same spot for five or six days, it's enjoyable, especially since most of the places I go are quite remote: small populations, no phone calls, no gallery calling me. I originally thought the seascape work may last two or three years, because it's so simple and I may end up with nothing to do. But it's like, if I were a scientist and I was given one of the first telescopes, then later on I was given one 10 times more powerful, I get to see more. My eye has become so well trained that I can see the same things in different ways, more detailed ways. You are powering up the ability of your eyes and it is simply an endless process. In the early 90s I started making night-time seascapes. It was not a specific decision - I was working on the seascapes and it would be getting late and dark, and I was getting darker and darker images [laughs]. It used to be an eight-hour operation, now it's turning into a 24-hour one. Early morning is beautiful, late night under the moonlight is very romantic and beautiful. So I'm becoming a sleepless photographer.

BACKGROUND: SERRA ON *JOE*

On Joe, by Richard Serra (Published in Abstractions in Space: The Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts, edited by Laurie A. Stein, St. Louis, 2001.)

In March of 1998 Emmy Pulitzer wrote to me and asked if I was interested in making a proposal for a sculpture in conjunction with a building to be designed by Tadao Ando. This was early on during the preparatory stages and initial design phase of the foundation building and courtyard. Later that year after receiving plans of the Ando building I made a trip to St. Louis to see the site and met with Peter Clarkson who was the construction manager and would oversee the project. My initial concern was to locate a site. At the time this could only be tentative in as much as there was to be an adjoining building, the Forum for Contemporary Art to be designed by Brad Cloepfil. I returned again in 1999 to meet with Emmy, Tadao Ando and Brad Cloepfil as well as Betsy Millard the director of the Forum in order to discuss how the space between the two institutions could function in terms of elevation and circulation and how to create an outdoor plaza. At that meeting we reached a general agreement as to the location for a sculpture at the South end of the complex adjacent to the Ando building.

I had mentioned to Emmy that I was working of a new series of torqued spirals and thought that one of the spirals could mediate between Ando's building and the Forum. Emmy came to New York to look at the models of the torqued spirals and chose one. In consultation with the architects and Emmy I decided on the orientation of the work in relation to circulation and certain details of the design of the courtyard whish were important for the viewing of the sculpture. The main concern was the access from the stairs leading down into the courtyard. The width of the stairs, their extension into the plaza and the rhythm of the descending walls adjacent to the stairway had to be considered and the scale relationship of the sculpture and the site had to be worked out. I requested that a high wall be erected at the South end of the complex creating an outdoor enclosure in scale with the architecture and the sculpture.

In June of 2000 I met with Emmy in Germany to inspect the finished work. The sculpture was installed in October of the same year. I titled it "Joe". The viewing of the spiral is continuously different from the outside and gives one no indication of its inside and vice versa. Walking through the interior passage of the spiral your experience of space is distinct at each and every point as the walls lean toward you or away from you or become parallel. When you walk between the walls you become implicated in the tremendous spiraling force of the movement. The velocity projects you ahead into an open interior space which frames the sky. "Joe" cannot be grasped as Gestalt or image. The sculpture is understood behaviorally as a function of time.

An excerpt from *Notes on the Matter of Time*, by Richard Serra
(Published in Richard Serra, The Matter of Time.
Bilbao: Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. 2005.)

The idea of the function of time has been further elaborated by Richard Serra in an essay he published in 2005, related to his installation of torqued spirals and other works at the Guggenheim in Bilbao). His statements also hold true for his works at the Pulitzer:

Meaning can only be ascertained as the viewer moves through space, that is, through the space of each individual sculpture and the space of the installation as a whole. The meaning of the installation will be activated and animated by the rhythm of the viewer's movement. Meaning occurs only through continuous movement, through anticipation, observation, and recollection. However, there is no prescribed view, no preferred sequence, no preferred succession of views. Each person will map the space differently.[3]

Serra titled his Guggenheim installation *The Matter of Time* because, as he states, "*it is based on the idea of multiple or layered temporalities. As one experiences each work in the context of the entire installation, one will become aware of the obvious diversity of durations in time*."[4]

[3] Richard Serra, The Matter of Time. Bilbao: Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. 2005. p. 141.
[4] Richard Serra, The Matter of Time. Bilbao: Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. 2005. p. 141.

An excerpt from *Spaces Between,* by William J.R. Curtis
(Published in Abstractions in Space: The Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts, edited by Laurie A. Stein, St. Louis, 2001.)

[A Torqued Spiral sculpture by Richard Serra] is made out of plates of steel which have rusted golden brown. Its tilting profiles and eruptive curved volumes make an immediate contrast with the verticals and horizontals of Ando's architecture, and with the silver gray of the concrete walls. Depending upon the point of view, it suggests a taut surface, a turning form, or a curling plane. It is sensitive to light and there is persistent ambiguity between the shape of the outline and the sense of a looming mass. It exists in a state of high tension and activates the space around itself even as it suggests the possibility of a tightly coiled space within. An object possessed, it strains and turns even as one stands still.[5]

But if one walks around the Torqued Spiral there are startling changes in appearance and mood. If there is a vertical line somewhere, one scarcely perceives it, for leaning diagonals and accelerating curves are the predominant vectors at work. From one angle on has the feeling of constrained physical force; from another, of a monumental calm. The piece is big enough (twelve feet height and roughly forty five across) to be read as an architectural element and, in combination with Ando's rectangular forms, even touches memories of the complex curves of Le Corbusier's late works.[6] There is an inevitable tendency to simplify the experience in terms of a vessel or container, but the Torqued Spiral refuses to be pinned down to a single form. It also transmits it energy beyond it immediate setting, implying a much vaster space: Serra's work often conflates near and far in this way.

The Torqued Spiral stands to the end of the open-air court, some distance from the western flank of the building and the southern boundary wall: it therefore reacts within limits. It is positioned in such a way that its single, narrow entrance is visible the moment one steps into the court. This invites the line of approach in rather the same way that Kelly's wall sculpture did in the main gallery. The opening is at a tilting angle and affords a glimpse of the concave inner surface and the edge of the steel plate, permitting one to gauge the thickness of the material (only two inches). One is immediately able to sense the inside and the outside simultaneously and to grasp that the whole thing is made from an apparently continuous strip of steel. The exterior forms are the result of an as yet unknown inner space pushing outwards against the skin. One begins to feel the presence of a void.

[5] The description and analysis of Serra's Torqued Spiral which follows is based upon a visit to the piece on site in St. Louis in May 2001, soon after it was installed. The adjacent walls were in place but not the finished ground materials. I saw the piece in sun, then in rain.

[6] When I first walked around and through three of Serra's Torqued Ellipses at the Dia Center for the Arts in New York in February 1998, I felt that it was an unprecedented experience. The only rough equivalent that I could think of was the spae of certain of Le Corbusier's late works (e.g. the Chapel at Ronchamp, the hyperboloid "funnel" in the Parliament in Chandigarh, above all the curving "fold" of the auditorium at the top of the Millowner's Association Building in Ahmedabad). I would also count the "crypt" in the Monastery of L Tourette, which combines convex and concave leaning surfaces, inside and out, and which stands in contrast to the severe rectangular, concrete church behind it. In these works Le Corbusier's apparently "free" forms are often governed by complex geometrical intersections.

In fact, Serra's sculpture is made from five contiguous steel plates which are connected as a continuous band and wrapped into an ever tighter configuration towards the center. The geometry of the piece is conditioned by a spiral below and another turned spiral above, and by the desire to have the top and bottom level. The plates are joined to each other neatly end to end (the joints are just visible), but they are bent out and back in dramatic ways in order to fit the aforementioned projective geometry. Compared to the freestanding concrete planes, the steel seems extremely thin. But any doubts about the tensile strength of this material are dispelled when one realizes that the entire thing is self-supporting, without extra structure of any kind. It is an active diagram of visual and physical forced, including gravity, resistance, and weightlessness. These are felt directly through empathy.

The result is a work of indescribable complexity in which incidents are measured against an elusive sense of the whole. The steel surfaces lean inwards and outwards, compressing or releasing the experience of anyone moving through. One enters in a clockwise direction and is soon pressed into a labyrinthine corridor which curves around to the right between tilting surfaces. The dimensions and angle keep changing, and distances are hard to judge. Apart from the ground below and the sky above there are no stable coordinates. It is like being inside a steel womb. Curved shadows appear and disappear on the raw surface. The forms propel movement, and the resolution always seems to be around the next bend, but it never quite occurs, even towards the center space which suggests an oculus open to the sky. Even here, the edges turning at different rates disallow any stable point of reference or vertical axis. This indeterminacy is essential to the piece and to its effect upon the mind and body of the person who becomes involved in it. Serra's own words, used to characterize an earlier work, still seem to apply: 'Its form remains ambiguous, indeterminable, unknowable as an entity.'[7]

If the route inwards has the character of a ritual circumambulation, the route outwards has the character of a gradual liberation. No doubt each person has his or her own reaction to this rite of passage, but there is something transformational about it, as if one had gone through a catharsis after a tragic play. One moves in with the outer edge on the left, and comes back with it on the right, experiencing the same geometry in reverse. Only towards the center is there a release from all this compression and this is upwards, towards the sky. The central void is a space of considerable gravitas (not unlike a roofless ruin) and it seems to draw the planetary realm down to earth. As with Ando's 'light, sky and water made abstract,' or with Kelly's emblematic plaque suggesting night and day, one feels the presence of a veiled cosmology.[8]

Serra resists anything which smacks of narrative, even if he does admit that his works are liable to stimulate diverse reflections. He has often registered disapproval of anything suggesting superficial imagery, for he associates this with the linguistic excess and cultural devaluation of post-modernism. But a distinction can be made between the surface

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[7] Richard Serra, "St. John's Rotary Arc," *Richard Serra, Writings, Interviews*, P. 119. (First published, *Art Forum*, 1980).

[8] The relation of Serra's work to "nature" is not mimetic, but it does penetrate to the core of physical and mental experience of phenomena. His work does not set out to convey images, but it does stir latent associations, initially at a sea level below consciousness. It also seems to reiterate fundamental ways of organizing space and movement.

manipulation of signs and the deeper symbolic presence within a vital form, or even within a space. Serra's Torqued Spirals (and his earlier "Torqued Ellipses") do not represent anything, but they do have an extraordinary power to stir and evoke bodily memories and primary experiences. They seduce the observer at a preconscious level and alter perceptions of how it feels to exist in the world. They encourage one, even force one, to "intuit, fill in, complete, reconstitute, reorder, reflect, refer, relate to, interpret, compare, remember." In all this there is bound to be meaning, although it does not work in an obvious way.[9]

The Torqued Spirals are events, not just spaces and forms. In them Serra uses abstraction, material, movement, delay, compression, expansion to force a species of existential confrontation by means of an oblique, curving surface, that offers no direct reflection or image and turns out to be opaque. But the surface nonetheless absorbs the thought and emotion of the person passing through and gives something back. Serra's Spirals and Ellipses have to do with states of being, but also with the action of becoming: they are passages of transformation. Actual space and mental space converge.

The Torqued Spiral is one of a series. Serra worked with the architect and the client, Emily Pulitzer, to site this piece, and they decided jointly upon the extent of the approach platforms and the dimensioning of nearby walls. He was able to position his sculpture in an "outdoor room" with some control over the space around it, over the relative scale, and over the access route. Serra was able to work with an architect he respected, who also respected him.[10] Nor should the favorable conditions of patronage be forgotten : Joseph Pulitzer gave Serra a major commission early in his career *Untitled* (1970), also in St. Louis. Perhaps in memory of a deceased friend this particular torqued spiral is named, simply, *Joe*.

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[9] The Serra quotation is from "St. John's Rotary Arc," p.119. For Serra's own views on the body in relation to sculpture see for example, Lynne Cook and Michael Govan, "*Interview Torqued Ellipses, Dia Center for the Arts*, New York, 1997, p. 30. In same exhibition catalogue see essay by Mrk C. Taylor, "Learning Cruves," op.cit. pp.45-48, for possible connections with Maurice Merleau-Ponty's idea on perception and the experience of ineriority and exteriority through the body; also Hal Foster, "The un/making of Sculpture," *Richard Serra, Sculpture 1984-1998*, p.28 on the Torqued Ellipses; "… the result is an extraordinary chiasmus; the subject feels overwhelmed by the space even as he or she seems to overwhelm it – as if the space were a projection of the body, of bodily fantasies." Serra has noted that it is rare in the history of sculpture to be able to explore the inside as well as the outside of a volume. The basic level of communication in most of Serra's work is haptic rather than visual or associational. If there are evocations of ritual procession, they remain generic in kind.

[10] For Serra's involvement with the design of the courtyard in The Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts, see his statement in this volume in which he highlights the importance of the southern boundary. In an interview with David Sylvester on the Torqued Ellipses, Serra stated several years ago: "In answer to your question whether I think these pieces would work outside: only under certain conditions: it would have to be a contained space, a courtyard perhaps." David Sylvester, "Interview," Richard Serra, Sculpture 1985-1998, MOCA, Los Angeles, 1998, p. 197. Serra has had several conflicts with architects when placing his pieces near buildings. It is evident that his work explores architectonic values. Even so, he insists on distinguishing his work from architecture, primarily because his sculpture has not "function." He has stated: … "Someone like Saarinen tries to push construction and architecture to their limit. I you couldn't walk into Saarinen's arch in St. louis, if it didn't have… function … you'd consider it a sculpture, and a very satisfying one … In architecture I like the modernist tradition: Loos, Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, and among the eccentrics Gaudi, Saarinen … and Ando."Alfred Pacquement, "Interview," *Richard Serra, Writings, Interviews*, Chicago, 1994, p. 157 (originally in *Richard Serra*, Paris, Centre Pompidou, 1983).

Serra's development as an artist has the character of a patient search. His sculptures are individual inventions but they also aspire to be types. They sometimes take on the character of mathematical theorems which have been embodied in steel. The form is usually closely related to the structure and to the means of fabrication. For the Torqued Spirals (as for the earlier Torqued Ellipses) he used a German mill capable of bending and controlling such large plates. Computer technology was useful in plotting the complex geometry and in programming the cutting, but it was a means, not an end, in the search for an elusive, new idea of space. Serra's works possess a commendable "objectivity", but they nonetheless bear the imprint of individual imagination and take on a unique aura, especially when inserted into the field of visible (and invisible) relations which he feels constitutes a 'site'.

Serra has always been interested in architecture and engineering, but he is quick to insist that sculpture belongs to a world of its own. This is curious given that his own radical breakthrough in the early 1970s had to do with breaking down existing sculptural conventions and with opening the field to a much broader sense and understanding of exterior space, perceptual limits and movement. Both the Torqued Ellipses and the ensuing Torqued Spirals belong to a more recent phase in which the artist has become ever more concerned with the concept of an inner, rotating void. While steel and geometry are among the means employed, Serra thinks of space itself as his primary material: 'the concern of the new body of work is the shape and volume of the space and your relation to it as the space actually moves.'[25]

While the Torqued Ellipses and Torqued Spirals introduce new forms into the history of art, they are not entirely without precedent. They contain echoes of Serra's earlier experiences, but in a distilled state. So it is with some caution that one mentions Serra's preoccupation with such things as Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*, (1970), the restless geometries and spaces of Borromini's churches (which use both ellipses and spirals), the emotive space and inside/outside surfaces of Le Corbusier's Chapel at Ronchamp, or the curved walks past banks of sand in the Zen gardens of Kyoto. On their own, such experiences would count for little if they did not correspond to some inner necessity of the artist and if they could not be transformed eventually into a new language of forms.[26]

Serra's works are not without autobiographical resonances, though these should not be used to supply direct "explanations" of his art. But there are key experiences and memories. Serra has recalled his emotions at crossing the Golden Gate Bridge on his fourth birthday with his father (who worked in a shipyard as a pipe fitter) and at seeing a newly constructed steel ship being launched off a slipway into the water.

> *When we arrived, the ...steel plated tanker was in way, balanced up on a perch ... I remember walking the arc of the hull with my father looking at the huge brass propeller ... It was a moment of tremendous anxiety as the oiler en route rattled, swayed, tipped and bounced into the sea, half submerged, to then raise and lift itself, and found its balance. Not only had the tanker collected itself, but the witnessing crowd collected itself, as the ship went through a transformation from an enormous obdurate weight to a buoyant structure, free, afloat and adrift.*

My awe and wonder at that moment remained. All the raw material that I needed is contained in the reserve of this memory which has become a recurring dream.[27]

The quoted passage comes from an essay entitled "Weight," one of Serra's central preoccupations. But it also hints at patterns of association between memory and invention. The images and impressions are impressions powerful indeed – the steel plates of the ship, the helix of the propellers, the father's craft, the power of American industry in wartime (it is 1943), the "arc of the hull," the transformation from weight to weightlessness, and the epic setting of the entry to the Pacific. Serra's words may be read with those other steel "vessels"—his own sculptures—in mind, not in order to find simple causes and effects, but in order to locate the artist's world of concerns and correspondences. His account reads almost as a legend of origins: a foundation myth celebrating the birth of a new idea of sculpture.

QUESTIONS OF SPACE

Tadao Ando describes his own concept of space in the following passage:

> *"I want to nurture space into being with care, attentive to craftsmanship. That same space, however, I am resolved to pry open using the harshest force. The delicacy that is distinctive of Japanese, and of Eastern, sensibility I seek to infuse with intense originality. Japan's traditional architecture is marked by subtle colouring, obtaining in the vertical and horizontal lines of its wood structure by assiduous handling of fragile substances, like natural wood, paper, and earth; and by the depth achieved through artful arrangement of sequence. Within it, there is gentleness in the meeting of parts, in the merging of orchestrated views, and the transition between inside and outside flows. The resulting space attains the fineness of silk cloth."*
>
> *"An architectural space is not just what you experience in one moment; it is something which lingers in the memory of people who come in contact with it. It enters the imagination in silence."*
>
> *"Architecture is deemed complete only upon the intervention of the human that experiences it. In other words, architectural space becomes alive only in correspondence with the human presence that perceives it in our contemporary culture, where all of us are subjected to intense exterior stimulation, especially by the electronic environment the role of architectural space as a spiritual shelter is crucial. Here again, what is of primary importance is the imagination and fiction that architecture contains beyond the substantive. Without steeping into the ambitious realm of the human spirit – happiness, affection, tranquility, tension – architecture cannot achieve its fictive vocation. This is truly the architecture's proper realm,*

but is also one that is impossible to formulate. Only after speculating the worlds of both the actual and the fictional together can architecture come into existence as an expression, and rise into the realm of art."[11]

Sugimoto is familiar with Tadao Ando's architecture and has already installed his own work in relation to the architect's space (in other settings besides the Pulitzer). He has worked very consciously within the concept of space that Ando describes above.

[11] Tadao Ando, in The Pritzker Architecture Prize, 1995, The Hyatt Foundation (Los Angeles: Jenson & Walker, 1995)

TEA CEREMONY

See attached photocopies

Okakura, Kakuzo. The Book of Tea. Illinois: Project Gutenberg. 1906.
Ed. Baas, Jacquelynn and May Jane Jacob. Buddha Mind in Contemporary Art. Berkeley: University of California. 2004.
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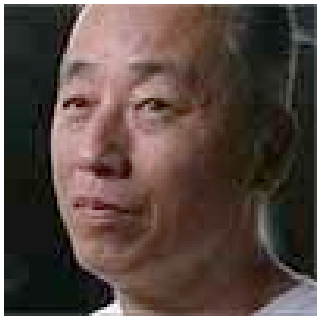
SUGIMOTO BIOGRAPHY

Hiroshi Sugimoto's education was a cross-cultural blend of the East and West. The artist was sent to a Catholic school (Rikkyo Episcopal School). However, instead of receiving a Christian education, he was (in his own words) "baptized in Marxism and existentialism." Sugimoto then studied economics at a Catholic university, St. Paul's, in Tokyo. In 1970 the artist moved to the United States. He first studied photography at the Art Center College of Design in Los Angeles and then moved to New York City (1974), where he opened a gallery of Japanese and East Asian Art (1979).

When the artist arrived in New York, "the fast-take, shoot-from-the-hip style of street photographers such as Robert Frank and William Klein"[12] was dominant. Sugimoto was not interested in this approach. He preferred linking "the



photographer and the camera with the world beyond the lens," and felt much closer to "certain investigations by visual artists of the time, in particular minimalists such as Donald Judd and Dan Flavin and earthwork artists Robert Smithson and Walter de Maria. For them, art was not separate from the world but was one with it."[13]

Sugimoto lives in New York and Tokyo.

[12] Brougher, Kerry. *Impossible Photography*. Hiroshi Sugimoto. Kerry Brougher and David Elliot. Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2005. 24.

[13] Sugimoto, Hiroshi. *The Times of My Youth: Images from Memory*. Hiroshi Sugimoto. Kerry Brougher and David Elliot. Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2005.
Brougher, Kerry. *Impossible Photography*. Hiroshi Sugimoto. Kerry Brougher and David Elliot. Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2005.

Hiroshi Sugimoto has received significant critical acclaim for his black-and-white photographs, which merge a rigorous conceptual approach with meticulous craftsmanship. Besides photographing, he has also worked as a sculptor and architect.

Selected Solo Exhibitions

1977	Minami Gallery, Tokyo
1981	*Movie Theaters*, Sonnabend Gallery, New York
1988	*Dioramas, Theaters, Seascapes*, Sonnabend Gallery, New York; Sagacho Exhibit Space, Tokyo; Zeito Photo Salon. Tokyo.
1989-90	*Seascape Photographs*, The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland
1990	*Hiroshi Sugimoto: Time Exposed*, installation Plan for Musée d'Art Contemporain de Bordeaux 1992, Hosomi Gallery, Tokyo
1990	*Hiroshi Sugimoto*, Saint Louis Art Museum
1995	Sea*scapes, Theaters, Dioramas & Drive-Ins*, White Cube, London
1994-95	*Hiroshi Sugimoto: Time Exposed*, The Parrish Art Museum, Southampton, New York*; also Option 49: Hiroshi Sugimoto*, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.
1995	*Seascapes and Drive-In Theaters*, Galleri Faurschou, Copenhagen. *Day Seascapes – Dioramas – Drive-Ins – Interior Theaters – wax museums*, Gallery Meyer-Ellinger, Frankfurt/Main
1998	*In Praise of Shadows, Center for Contemporary Art, Kitakyushu Project Gallery, Kitakyushu, Japan; Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco; Angels Gallery, Los Angeles.*
1994-97	*Sugimoto Portraits*, Deutsche Guggenheim Berlin (2000), Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (2000), Soloman R. Guggenheim Museum SoHo, New York (2000/01)
1995	*Hiroshi Sugimoto. Portraits*, White Cube2, London
2001	*The Architecture of Time*, Kunsthaus Bregenz *Hiroshi Sugimoto*; Hasselblad Foundation Award Winner, Hasselblad Center, Göteborg
2003	*Hiroshi Sugimoto: Architecture*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago *L'histoire de l'histoire*, Maison Hermès, Tokyo *Hiroshi Sugimoto,* museo di Capodimonte, Naples
2004	*Etant donné: Le Grand Verre*, Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris
2005	*Photographs by Hiroshi Sugimoto: the Sylvan Barnet and William Burto Collection*, Museum of Fine Art,Boston *Conceptual Forms*, Gagosian Gallery London *Hiroshi Sugimoto*, Mori Art Museum Tokyo
2006	*Hiroshi Sugimoto,* Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C. *The History of History,* The Freer Sackler Galleries, Washington D.C. *Hiroshi Sugimoto: Photographs of 'Joe'*, The Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts

Selected Group Exhibitions:

1978/9 *Recent Acquisitions*, The Museum of Modern Art, New *York*
Windows on the East: A Survey of Contemporary Japanese Art, World Trade Center, New York
1985/6The Art of Memory/ The Loss of History, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York

1989 *Investigations 1989*, Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
On Kawara: Again and Against: 23 date Paintings and 24 prominent works of Japanese Contemporary Art 1966- 1989, Institute of Contemporary Art, Nagoya, Japan

1990 *Reorientating: Looking East*, Third Eye Centre, Glasgow
The Past and the Present of Photography, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo.

1991-92 *Carnegie international 1991*, The Carnegie museum of art, Pittsburgh
A Cabinet of Signs; Contemporary Art from Post-Modern Japan, Tate Gallery Liverpool.

1995-97 *Photography and Beyond in Japan: Space, Time and Memory,* Hara Museum of Art, Tokyo; Museo de Arte Contemporaneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico city, Vancouver Art Gallery.

1995 *A Century of Silence: Nonrepresentation and Withdrawal in Modern Art,* Academy Gallery of Art and Sciences, New York.

1997 *In Visible Light: Photography and Classification in Art, Science and the Everyday,* Museum of Modern Art, Oxford.

1998 *Speed – Visions of an Accelerated Age*, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London; the Photographer's Gallery, London; MacDonald Stewart Art Centre, London.

2001 *At Sea*, Tate Liverpool, Liverpool
Facts of Life, *Contemporary Japanese Art*, H ayward Gallery, London

2002 *Moving Pictures*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

2003 *The History of Japanese Photography*, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Liquid Sea, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

2004 *Singular Forms (Sometimes Repeated): Art from 1951 to the Present*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum,
New York

2005 *Calle + Hiroshi Sugimoto*, Gallery Koyanagi, Tokyo

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST & SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

Catalogues

Richard Serra, *Richard Serra: Writings and Interviews*., University of Chicago, Chicago and London 1994.

Kellein, T. *Time Exposed*, Thames & Hudson, London/New York 1995

Davis, K F., *An American Century of Photography: From Dry-Plate to Digital/ The Hallmark Photographic Collection*, Kansas City, MO. Hallmarks Cards, Inc. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1995 (new edition 1999)

Stack, T W., *Sea Change: The Seascape in Contemporary Photography: Robert Adams et al*, essays by James Hamilton-Paterson and Trudy Wilner Stack, Tucson, Arizona, 1998

Sugimoto, H *Sea of Buddhas*, New York 1997

Bryson, N. et al. *Hiroshi Sugimoto*, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, Norwich 1997

Dia Center for the Art,s *Richard Serra: Torqued Ellipses*, Dia Center for the Arts. New York, 1997

Sugimoto, H. *In Praise of Shadows*, Kitakyushu 1999

Danziger, J., *American Photographs 1900/2000*, New York, Assouline 2000

Belting, H. *Hiroshi Sugimoto Theatres*, essay, New York 2000

Sonnabend Gallery, *Hiroshi Sugimoto: Theatres,* Sundell Editions, New York, 2000

Stein, L. *Abstractions in Space: The Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts, Saint Louis: 2001.*

Schneider, E., *Hiroshi Sugimoto Architecture of Time,* essay Thomas Kellein, Bregenz 2002

Richter, G., The Daily Practice of Painting, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2002

Sugimoto, H. *L'histoire de l'histoire*, Maison Hermès, Tokyo 2003

Sugimoto, H., *Conceptual Forms*. London: Thames and Hudson. 2004

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. *Hiroshi Sugimoto* Washington D.C.: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2005.

Reviews

Pagel, D., 'Hiroshi Sugimoto: Angles Gallery', *Artforum*, New York, 31, 8 April 1993, p. 85-86

Seward, K., 'Hiroshi Sugimoto: Sonnabend', *Artforum*, New York, 33, 8, April 1995, p. 90

Smith, D., Hiroshi Sugimoto', Art Monthly, London, 244, March 2001, p.26-27

Articles

Bryson, N., 'Hiroshi Sugimoto's Metabolic Photography', *Parkett,* Zurich/ New York, 46, May 1996, p. 120-23

Denson, G. R., 'Satori Among the Still Stills', *Parkett*, Zurich/ New York, 46, May 1996, p. 143-45, 146-51

Herbert, M., 'The deep blue yonder', *Art Review*, London, August 2001, p. 37

Rugoff, R., 'Half Dead', *Parkett*, Zurich/London, 46, May 1996, p.132-42.

BIOGRAPHIES OF ANDO, SERRA AND KELLY

Tadao Ando

Tadao Ando was born in 1941 in Osaka, Japan. From the age of 10 to 17 Ando worked for a local carpenter, where he learned how to work with wood and build a number of models of airplanes and ships. Ando's career has developed in an unusual way, working first as a truck driver and as a professional boxer before settling on the profession of architecture, for which he received no formal training. The self-taught architect was awarded the Pritzker Architecture Prize in 1995 for "consistent and significant contributions to the built environment." He works primarily in exposed cast-in-place concrete and is known for exemplary craftsmanship. Nature and the specific site play a large role in his architecture. His work invokes a Japanese sense of materiality, junction and spatial narrative through the pared aesthetics of international modernism. "In all my works, light is an important controlling factor, I create enclosed spaces mainly by means of thick concrete walls. The primary reason is to create a place for the individual, a zone for oneself within society," says Ando.

His work includes private residences and major commissions such as the Church of the Light, Ibaraki (1989), the Japanese Pavilion for Expo 92 in Seville, and the Naoshima Contemporary Art Museum (1992). Ando has also designed the Asian gallery in the Art Institute of Chicago and the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth in the U.S. Until 2003 he was a guest professor at the Tokyo University and taught at several American universities, including Harvard, Yale and Colombia. Ando has founded the firm Tadao Ando Architectural & Associates in Osaka, Japan, his hometown.[14]

[14] Wikipedia Online Encyclopedia. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tadao_Ando>
The Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts website. <http://www.pulitzerarts.org/ando-bio.htm>
Architect Biographies. <http://architect.architecture.sk/tadao-ando-architect/tadao-ando-architect.php>

Richard Serra

(b. 1939, San Francisco, CA) Richard Serra grew up around the shipyards of the Bay Area where his father was a pipe fitter. These images would prove to have a strong impact on his work. Serra first studied English Literature at UC Berkeley and Santa Barbara, and then pursued Fine Arts at Yale University, where he received a BFA and an MFA in 1964. A Yale Traveling Fellowship financed Serra for a year in Paris, and a Fulbright grant provided for a year in Florence. Serra is best known for his minimalist sculpture made of steel and lead. He often works on a large scale and explores issues of weight and balance. Questioning all of the properties of sculpture – from verticality, to process, to material – his work has involved the viewer and the site in specific physical and psychological ways.

The artist's relationship with St. Louis dates back to 1970, when Joseph Helman organized one of Serra's early solo exhibitions in his gallery. The following year, the Saint Louis Art Museum acquired its first sculpture by him. St. Louis has installed in its downtown area Serra's first permanent site specific public sculpture in the United States, *Twain*.

Serra was commissioned to create a sculpture for the courtyard of the Pulitzer, and worked with Tadao Ando on this phase of the building and courtyard. When the model for his torqued spiral was installed on Ando's model, the shape of the windows looking onto the courtyard was changed from a vertical to a horizontal format. The recent installation of his sculpture at the Guggenheim in Bilbao is seen as one of the major moments in contemporary sculpture.[15] The artist lives and works in New York City and Nova Scotia.

[15] The Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts website. http://www.pulitzerarts.org/ando-bio.htm, The Guggenheim Foundation website: http://www.guggenheimcollection.org/site/artist_bio_144A.html and the Grove Dictionary of Art

Ellsworth Kelly

(b. 1923 Newburgh, NY) As the artist's parents only agreed to support his training in the technical arts, Ellsworth Kelly studied for two years at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. Kelly then served in the camouflage unit of the U.S. Army, and, following his discharge in 1945, attended the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. With the support of the G.I. Bill, he enrolled in the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris. From 1948 until 1954, the French capital was the artist's European base.

As early as 1949 Kelly began making reliefs that brought together aspects of both painting and sculpture – a way of working that he has continued through to the present day. Without Kelly ever fully becoming a part of subsequent movements, his approach has had a strong impact on the course of minimal art, color field painting, hard-edge painting and post-painterly abstraction

Kelly has a strong presence in St. Louis, both in private and public collections. The Saint Louis Art Museum acquired a major painting by Kelly in 1967: *Spectrum II* (1966-67). In 1983 the Museum presented a retrospective of his sculpture. Kelly was one of two artists commissioned to create a work for the Pulitzer. He worked closely with Ando while the building was in its planning phase to create an appropriate environment for his elongated wall sculpture of honeycomb aluminium.

Considered as one of the major artists of his generation, Kelly lives and works in Spencertown, NY.

THE PUBLICATION *JOE*

The installation project at the Pulitzer was preceded by the idea of a publication (see also the history of the current installation on page 8). It was clear from the beginning that this publication should not contain art historical prose, but – in the same sense that Sugimoto's photographs are parallel creations to Serra's *Joe* – a parallel creation in literature. Sugimoto suggested involving author Jonathan Safran Foer in the project.

The ensuing work was a collaboration between the photographer, the author and the designer Takaaki Matsumoto, who has worked on many of Sugimoto's books, including the catalogue of the retrospective which was shown at the Hirshhorn in Washington D.C. and will be on view at the Museum of Modern Art in Fort Worth through June 25, 2006.

The book presents 40 photographs of the *Joe* series; the 19 works presented at the Pulitzer are published in this context and marked in the index with a cross. The prose poem by Foer faces the photographs and creates a rhythm of images and text. The book will be sold by the Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts and by Prestel Publishing.

Jonathan Safran Foer:
Foer was born in 1977 in Washington, D.C. He went on to Princeton University where he was awarded the Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Creative Writing Thesis Prizes. In 2000, he was awarded the Zoetrope: All Story Fiction Prize. He was the editor of the anthology *A Convergence of Birds: Original Fiction and Poetry Inspired by the Work of Joseph Cornell*. His writing has been published in the *Paris Review* and the *New Yorker*. In 1999 Foer traveled to the Ukraine to research his grandfather's life. Though he had not originally planned it, the trip resulted in his first novel, *Everything is Illuminated*, which was published in 2002. The book garnered him a National Jewish Book Award and a Guardian First Book Award. Foer now lives in Brooklyn, New York with his wife, novelist, Nicole Krauss, and two children.[16]

The title of the book is *Joe*. The protagonist of Foer's text is Joe. The title of the sculpture in the courtyard of the Pulitzer is *Joe*. Those who knew the late Joseph Pulitzer, Jr. may perceive *Joe* as a very personal homage. Those who are unaware of that connection simply perceive the name as an unassuming title for a specific work of art. *Joe* "belongs" to those who are inspired by it (see also the paragraph on *Joe* being an homage).

Joseph Pulitzer III, also known as Joseph Pulitzer, Jr.:
Pulitzer was born in 1913 in St. Louis, where his grandfather founded the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and his father served as its Editor and Publisher. Pulitzer studied at Harvard University, where he received his bachelor's degree in Art History in 1936. While at Harvard, he bought his first painting, Amedeo Modigliani's *Elvira*, which he later gave to the Saint Louis Art Museum. World War II interrupted his journalism career, and he joined the Navy in 1942. After the war, he returned to the Post-Dispatch. In 1955 at the death of his father, Pulitzer became Editor and Publisher of the Post-Dispatch. He also served as Chairman of the Board of the Pulitzer Prizes and of Pulitzer Publishing Company. After the death of his first wife Louise in 1968, he married Saint Louis Art Museum Curator Emily Rauh in 1973. In 1990, they asked Tadao Ando to renovate and adapt an existing building. The project was changed after his death in 1993 to design a new building, which houses the Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts.

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[16]Online Biographies. <http://jonathan-safran-foer.biography.ms/>
Wikipedia Online Encyclopedia.
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonathan_Safran_Foer>