

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
November 1988

PROJECTS: DAVID IRELAND

December 10, 1988 - January 15, 1989

An installation by California artist David Ireland, part of The Museum of Modern Art's PROJECTS series, is on view from December 10, 1988 to January 15, 1989. Ireland, who is best known for his transformation of interior architectural spaces, is creating a site-specific installation in the Garden Hall Gallery through which the artist comments on the Museum's function as a showcase for objects. The exhibition is organized by Linda Shearer, curator in the Department of Painting and Sculpture, and director of the PROJECTS series. Ireland's evocative work, in which he attempts to uncover or illuminate qualities of the space that are already present, extends the definition of what can constitute an aesthetic experience.

Covering the windows alongside the Garden Hall Gallery, Ireland plans to construct a wall into which are set six industrial sliding windows of various sizes. These temporary windows, which in effect edit the view of the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden, diffuse the natural light entering the gallery. Installed at the height paintings are ordinarily hung, the windows are not only a source of light, but may be viewed as if they were paintings.

The installation also includes a free-standing 8-foot-high wall with windows that permit the viewer to see a countertop on the wall's other side. On the counter are objects made from what Ireland describes as "innocent materials," such as concrete, wire, wax, dirt, and wallpaper. These objects, which have to do with Ireland's personal history, convey a sense of "no value" when compared to other art objects. The final element in the installation is a "display bin" constructed by the artist. Also featuring industrial windows and

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lit from the interior by a fluorescent bulb, the bin displays additional objects.

Ireland's best-known project is his ninety-five-year-old home at 500 Capp Street in San Francisco. In the course of a singular restoration, Ireland examined the architecture and social relics and then chose which objects and surfaces to retain and stabilize with a glossy polyurethane coating. Throughout the house are items that the artist discovered in the course of his work and altered in some way, such as jars filled with sawdust and rubberbands or brooms made into a sculpture. For those viewing the house, the distinction between art and everyday experience is blurred. In a subsequent project, 65 Capp Street, Ireland employs natural light to create a constantly-changing experience of a house's interior.

Born in Bellingham, Washington in 1930, Ireland studied at Western Washington State University, Bellingham, 1948-50, and the California College of Arts and Crafts, where he received his B.A. in 1953. He received his M.F.A. from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1974. Ireland is the recipient of numerous awards, among them an NEA fellowship, 1983; Adaline Kent Award, SFAI, 1987; Englehard Award, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, 1988; Award in the Visual Arts, Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 1988; and a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award, 1988. Ireland lives and works in San Francisco.

PROJECTS, a series of exhibitions devoted to contemporary art, is made possible by generous grants from the Lannan Foundation and J. P. Morgan & Co. Incorporated.

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