Felix Gonzalez-Torres: Artist Lecture
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
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Gary Garrels: Great, well we're going to get started here. There may be a few more people coming in, but I think it's -- we're already a little behind, and -- get going here. I'm Gary Garrels. I'm the chief curator and curator of painting and sculpture, and I was one of the curatorial team to work on Public Information*, along with Sandy Phillips, who's curator of photography, Bob Riley, who's curator of media arts, and John Weber, who's our curator of education. And in conjunction with that exhibition, which I'm sure you probably all have seen up on the fourth floor, working with Gail Invick who's head of adult programs here, we decided to ask three of the artists to come in for lectures, dialogues, around their work, issues in the exhibition. Last week, Stan Douglas was here. Tonight, we have Felix Gonzalez-Torres, and next Sunday, or not next Sunday, but Sunday, April 9th, at noon, Martha Rosler will be here and discussing her work with Catherine Lord, who's professor and chair of studio art at UC Irvine. It's a wonderful pleasure for me to be able to welcome Felix here tonight. I was living in New York in the '80s, and had the good fortune to actually see Felix's first single artist show, which was at a small, alternative gallery space called INTAR, over, way west on 42nd Street, and was extraordinarily struck at that point by the beauty of the work, and its conceptual simplicity. It was a very rare and unusual combination, and made me very alert to Felix, and it was wonderful to watch the work develop over the last few years. In about that same time, Felix joined a group collective -- collaborative called Group Material, whom I had the pleasure to work with at the Dia Art Foundation, on a four-part exhibition called* Democracy *that was hosted at Dia's space on Wooster Street, which is now the home of Printed Matter. And in 1989, working with the Public Art Fund, Kellie Jones and I worked with Felix on a billboard project he did celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Stonewall rebellion on a large billboard over Sheridan Square in New York. Since then, Felix has gone on to do other -- a number of public projects, including a project at MoMA, which their* Projects *exhibition. All of his stack works he considers public projects. He had a show last year here in the Bay Area over at Berkeley as part of their* MATRIX *program. Also last year, he had a traveling exhibition, originating at MoCA, but also with collaboration from the Hirshhorn Museum and the Renaissance Society in Chicago, and about two weeks ago, a large overview of his work opened at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. He's exhibited widely in Europe -- Berlin, Milan, Stockholm, Vienna, Paris, and he's represented and has had several shows at the Andrea Rosen Gallery in New York. So, it's a pleasure to welcome Felix tonight. I think the format will be, Felix is going to show some slides, talk a little bit about his work, then we're going to have a little -- have some discussion between the two of us, and then open it up to the floor for questions.* [applause]

Felix Gonzalez-Torres: Hi. Thank you for coming. I'm not very good at doing this kind of lectures, and talking about my work. This is one of the first -- one of the few times I've ever done work up on this lecture, in which I talk specifically about my work, about past things I've done. I usually like to prepare and create new -- create a piece as a lecture, and the one I'm working on right now, it wasn't really appropriate for San Francisco, and also, I thought it would be a good end of the line kind of thing, through having the show at the Guggenheim, which was not really a retrospective --

it was more like a survey. And, it's good to look back at the work, especially this work that I'm not going to be making anymore, because most of the things you will see here is what I call the old work -- it's the before and after kind of thing. But, anyway, so we're going to start now with the first slide. I'm going to try this thing, see if it works. It doesn't. Let's see the left one. Excuse me, we need some slides. I love it. This information highway -- oh, here we go.

This is 1988, in New York, and actually, I'm going to go through a lot of work quickly, so you don't get bored either, and I don't get bored too. And it's not in chronological order, because I don't work that way. I don't make bodies of work, I go back and forth with different strategies -- it just depends when one strategy is needed. But, in 1988, I was commissioned to do a public sculpture at this place called the Petrosino Sculpture Park. And they gave me the address downtown, so I went downtown to see the park. And only in New York this piece of cement and asphalt in the middle of the road is called a park. So, I didn't find it. I had to go back a few times, and then I said, "Oh, this must be the park." So, I wanted to do a white flag at that time, in the center of this park. And the Parks Department didn't give me the permission, because at that time -- I don't remember which war we were involved with, I think it was Grenada -- so they said that a white flag was a sign of surrender. For me, a white flag was just something very beautiful there, floating, in which different ethnic groups that live right around this neighborhood could reflect their own nationality or ethnic -- and it's also, I like fabric, and I love flowing fabric. So, instead, I came up with this idea of these four black pieces of Plexiglass that as a miracle did not get defaced. People used them, and the time I went by to take this picture, there were people walking by looking themselves, like in this black mirror. And, as a man, as a male artist, I decided early on to try to occupy as little space as possible, because I think that men, especially male artists, have occupied enough space, and -- yeah, maybe too much, right? And, one of the biggest compliments I ever got from the public, from people that go and see the work, is that they went to see -- to go to the gallery, or they go to the park, and they go to the show, and they say, "Your work wasn't there." And I say -- and it's part also of being a gay man, because I always say I want to be an imposter. I want to be a spy. I want to look like something else, because when you look like the opposition, it's very easy then for the powers that be to use you, to use your imagery for their purposes, and I will not allow that. And one of the best examples I have was at the Hirshhorn, the gay and lesbian government employees sponsored the lecture, right? So, like, three of the most homophobic Senators sent back an invitation saying that they were going to come and check out the show. So I told the curator, you know, "Great, just let's see how these guys explain to their constituencies the homoerotic and anti-family value of two clocks ticking side by side, or two mirrors, or a light string." But, I don't know if they came. So, anyway, so we're going to move forward.

Oh, it's working. Another public project. And this one is in Berlin. This is for an AIDS show, and it says, "It is just a matter of time," and those are the graphic -- this is the typeface, the official typeface of the Third Reich, of Nazi Germany. And I don't know what it says underneath. It is Turkish, I believe. But again, it's a -- it was a show about AIDS, right, and you expected to see the usual suspects -- you know, like visible lesions, and stuff about discrimination. And I thought, you know, AIDS is just not the face of AIDS. That's *Time Magazine*, or *Life*. They'll really show you the face, the face. But that's not really it. AIDS is also a much more complex social situation that includes discrimination, homophobia, lack of adequate healthcare, lack of housing, fear, despair, and also politically used by some other people.

This is work from 1988-89. At that time, I was working as a waiter, so I would come home late at night, and in order to forget the specials of the night, I'll watch TV. And, really, there's not much there to watch that isn't the same. There is this kind of like collapsing of meaning. It's totally meaningless. And I've been working now on this lecture about the information highway, and the danger that it has -- the danger that it brings to us, because we say, "Oh, yeah, we have information, everyone has access to information," but is there any meaning? And there really isn't much meaning

created right now. We're talking about -- right now, we're talking about quote-unquote "reforming" the welfare system, but we're really talking about defunding the welfare system. And we're talking about eliminating housing and urban development programs. And, I said, "We don't need to. We eliminated them in the '80s." In 1980, for every dollar we spent for housing, for HUD, we spent $6 on the military. By 1989, even with the tripling of the deficit, for every dollar we spent on housing, we spent $31 then for the military. This stuff actually works.

And this is almost like a collage, except that I don't use glue or scissors. I ask the viewer to provide me an image for this empty screen. You get a caption, and I ask for the viewer to bring something that I know culturally is already there. [coughs] Excuse me. To me, they always work almost as a film still, except that the image is somewhere else, or it's about to come in. And also -- I guess it also has to come from -- it comes from my fascination with history, and being a teacher at NYU, graduate department in photography, and seeing that some of these kids that were totally ahistorical. There was no -- there was really not much knowledge about history. It was very scary -- totally scary. I mean, I remember asking once about Rosa Parks, and not many people knew exactly what it meant. And I said, "Wow, you're already--" And I think that -- I mean, I still watch TV at night. I love *Beavis and Butthead*, because it's a very scary documentary on real life, on Generation X.

And this is the billboard from 1989, in Sheridan Square. This is right across from where the rebellion started. And the funny thing with history, or one of the most interesting things of history, is that sometimes, incredible and important historical movement doesn't start really like a movie, with big music and beautiful, composed photography. No, it just started -- in this particular case, the modern gay and lesbian movement; it started in a dingy drag queen bar. But, not really, because there was also a social condition that permitted those drag queens to finally feel entitled to fighting back the police harassment. And of course, it was the '60s, so hopefully we all know what the '60s meant in terms of social movement, and those social movements were already there, and they nurtured, you know, the gay and lesbian movement. Again, the idea of monument, right, is something that always fascinated me. I didn't want to make a monument, especially for the gay and lesbians, that was static, you know? Because it's a movement that hasn't even started yet, and I wanted to just create a reminder on those -- on that specific billboard, which has been a billboard that had been used for gay institu-- for gay businesses, for many, many years.

So, this is one of the first stack pieces I ever made -- actually, the second stack piece, right on the floor. And this was -- I called them *Monuments*. One is (Memorial Day Weekend), and the other is (Veterans Day Sale). And it comes from the fact that at this point in our culture, we don't really go to a public piazza and celebrate, but we rather go shopping. And *The New York Times*, at least for me, always reminded me, when is an important day coming? Because they have a pre-sale, and then they have a post-sale. You know, like Veterans Day Sale, and then post-Veterans Day Sale. So it gives, I guess -- well, I mean, it's very interesting how certain commercial institutions are taking over things that we took for granted were just cultural, or we believed they were cultural.

And, again, this is the first show I had with Andrea [Rosen], and I wanted to have a show that could just totally disappear. I guess the stack work comes from my readings of Walter Benjamin, and his writings from the '30s, about *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, an artist trying to use new forms of distribution, as opposed to new forms of -- new styles. And, just recently, one of the writers for *The New York Times* said that this was like Donald Judd. And I said, it just really doesn't make any sense, because you would not compare -- I mean, you would not compare the work of Carl Andre, and say, "Oh, it's just like a Brancusi." It's not. It's just sitting on the floor, and it's big, and it's very simple, but it's not, Brancusi and Carl Andre are not the same. But, leave it to *The New York Times*. But anyway, so this is the first show in which I just used stacks. And really, what's coming from that theoretical background of Walter Benjamin, and Brecht -- because these have been two of the biggest influences on me, but also, like Freud

said, it was about fear. It was about learning to let go. And you have a show, and everyone's walking out of the show with your work. And it's kind of painful, but at the same time, it was a rehearsal for me, learning to let go. And, at that time, people wouldn't touch those things. They just wouldn't. I mean, we had signs on the walls that said "Please Take One." Now, I wish it was the same. Now, people just fight for this stuff, and they disappear really quickly. For the Guggenheim, we're going to have to devise things that says, "There was a stack was here." Because we cannot -- yeah, I mean, we cannot keep up with it. But also, in terms of history, you have to realize how this broke the narrative at that time. This is 1989, 1990. Everything you saw was on the walls in New York, and people were fighting for the walls, so I realized early on that the margins, that the marginal spaces were as important as the center.

So, anyway -- and again, going back to the subject of not occupying space, of letting other people take over, and taking the risk of disappearing, I -- one of the benefits of doing the stack is, if I like someone else's work, I usually cannot afford it -- and neither can a lot of other people -- so I just ask them to give an image to make a stack, so a lot of people can have it. In this case, I asked Christopher Wool to give me this great painting for a stack, and we did -- I mean, he agreed on that. But what happens then is that when you go home and you put it up on the wall, I totally disappear, and it becomes a Christopher Wool. And I like that even more, because there's no -- I mean, there's not a signature there. It's just a poster, by Christopher Wool, that -- it came from my stack, but that's fine. I like that. I like taking that risk. It's a total transgression of authorship. I mean, that doesn't look like Donald Judd at all. But -- and I love Donald Judd's work, and don't take me wrong. He's one of my daddies -- was one of my daddies.

Anyway, so talking about disappearing, and group shows, this is a group show in Grenoble, in France. And it's funny, because I mean, this is stuff that you never learn from art school. Like, when you go to art shows, and whatever, like, people are going to be fighting for rooms and stuff, right? And if they can, like, poison you the night before, they will. And they try to get there right on time, and grab their stuff -- especially a show in Germany, that happens a lot. But, here it happened too. So, I said, "Show me the cafeteria," because there was so much fight going on, I said, "Just leave me alone. Show me the cafeteria," and the cafeteria really needed help. So that's what I did. I painted it blue, because it was really -- it was not good looking -- painted it blue, cleaned the floors, cleaned the counter, and made a piece for Greenpeace -- at that time, the two agents that had bombed Rainbow Warrior, the ship from Greenpeace, in New Zealand, were brought back into Paris as heroes. So, I had a stack with all the information sitting there by the counter, instead of the menu, and I removed all the items that had contained fish from the menu. So basically, it was only meat left there. And I put flowers on the tables, and music. Music was a singing loop, a six-hour loop of whales. And that was it. That was my participation for the show. I like it. People like it. That was it. No need to fight for that wall.

Again, using the margins -- this is "Untitled" (Perfect Lovers), and it's the two clocks on top. Just in the office, Cheryl Wright was supposed to be another version of that. This is the Renaissance Society.

And this is a piece I've been making since '88, and it's something like -- I don't know if I consider it a piece or not. It's just something I need to make sometimes. I mean, not everything has to be a piece, you know? Not everything had to be, like, there, but I just want it to happen. I just want it to be, and have a presence. And again, talking about being an imposter, being a spy, this piece is called "Untitled" (Loverboy), and it was made by my boyfriend in '88. But it's there, it's called "Untitled" (Loverboy), and for me, that's enough. That's, again, about disappearance, and it's about a presence that is not very obtrusive or very masculine, but it's just there, and again, a lot of very interesting things happened, in terms of what's expected from an artwork. People going said "Where is the work?" And they tell them, "Oh, it's in the window." So they go directly to the

window, and they open the curtain, and they look for it, hoping to see outside, something. I don't know, but to me this is something.

This is more of those, and then a portrait on top. There's a lot of stuff to explain, and I'm not going to get into it. This is a collaboration with Louise Lawler. This was for a show called *The Rhetorical Image*, and this is one of the best -- I love this piece by Louise Lawler, so I begged her to give it to me. So we did this thing, and that's an MX Missile cartwheeling -- I mean, it failed. It only cost like $22 billion, but it failed. Too bad, isn't it? But we're trying to balance the budget! Right? I just read in this great speech that Barbra Streisand gave -- seriously -- at the Harvard School of Law -- I mean, the J.F. Kennedy School of Law, in which she said that we only need the budget for just one single F-22 fighter to cover totally the budget of the NEA, and that the Pentagon is ordered 422 of those jet fighters, at a cost of 72 billion dollars -- jets that experts say we don't need anymore. So she mentions very poignant -- that, it said, then it is really not about balancing the budget.

That's the first candy piece I made. First? Actually, no, second -- I lied. And that's called "Untitled" (USA Today). And it's about sugar rush, basically. At the very beginning of the *USA* [*Today*] newspaper, and also, America was still feeling good at that time -- we still were borrowing money from that we didn't have -- but we had Evian water. And talking about trying to transgress certain borders, and re-contextualize certain information -- certain information -- I say "information" very clearly, but not "meaning," because that's something that happens only at the personal level -- I started making these stacks, in which you go into the gallery, see this big huge piece of paper, almost like ready to be printed, and then suddenly, you realize in the center, something very small printed, and you have a choice, when you take it home, which way you want to put it. This is one side. Oh, thank you. And, OK, so there's a whole series of that. This is 1988, early on. I didn't have any studio then and I don't have a studio now. I guess it's either sour grapes, or I always -- I don't want to have another place to clean. So, at that time, everything I made, especially that year, 1988, came from one specific place, and that was the one-hour photo -- Kelly Lab -- photo. And everything also had to fit underneath my bed. That's the only space I had. I always tell the students, my students, to use their weakness, to use their disadvantage as an advantage. And, it didn't hurt me to have a studio that was underneath my bed. I slept on my work, literally, every night.

And this is Kurt Waldheim and the Pope. What happened was that at that time -- my involvement with language has always been from the very beginning -- and I was puzzled by a lot of things. I was puzzled by Kurt Waldheim, and I was puzzled by the Pope, and the popularity of the Pope. I mean, it was Madonna and the Pope all the time -- I mean, it was -- they took turns covering -- taking magazine covers. So, I was puzzled, so I made a puzzle of that image. And this is when Kurt Waldheim was just discovered -- that it was just discovered that he had a Nazi past.

That's a photo of a family man. That's (Klaus Barbie as a Family Man). There's a whole series of these puzzles, and again, it's about making work out of nothingness, and creating a body of work that doesn't really depend on a lot of money, or assistants, or space either. I mean, that stuff is just eight by ten inches. That's it.

This is the second -- this is the second candy piece I ever made. And, I basically made it to make someone feel good, and that was Ross, my boyfriend. He got -- we went to have Chinese food, and the Chinese food wasn't that great, either -- because there's really no good Chinese restaurants in New York. But here you have some very good ones. But, anyway, so he got a fortune cookie that was really bad. So I said to him, "Honey, don't worry. I'll make you a corner of fortune cookies." And I did. And, again, I mean, when someone gets something like that, they don't really have it. Just, they become responsible to recreating this piece all the time, and that's the difference, I think, between a collector and a patron. Most of these works come with a certificate that requires the owner of the museum, the collector, or whoever has it, or the patron, to always make sure that

the piece exists, to remake it, to reprint it, to buy the ideal weight, because this work comes in an ideal weight. And it's funny, when you have a show at a museum, especially museums like the Guggenheim, that are so specific and uptight, they have never dealt with work that is ideal, that has ideal weight. I mean, they say, we never weighed, like a Brancusi, or anything like that. But here, this is not ideal height, or anything -- it's just an ideal weight.

This is the second -- this is one of the first ones, I don't remember which one, but this is "Untitled" (A Corner of Baci), and I use it, because it has very beautiful things about love, in different languages, and I showed it for the first time in the back office of a gallery. And people had to ask to be taken back there and look at this thing. But, I just want-- it's about placement. Placement -- as we know context is all about meaning. And I always say that sometimes, instead of an exhibition, I'd rather have an inhibition.

This is a piece from 1991, was called "Untitled" (Party Platform 1980–1992), and I destroyed it, but I remade it again. It's just black paper, and I think it would be wonderful to write on that the *Contract on America*. So, it exists again. It's just black paper. You put it on the wall -- it's just black. Really dreadful. Again, this is one of those moments in culture in which you get up in the morning and you look at yourself in the mirror and say, "Who am I?" And, fortunately, it happens to me very often. But, I woke up one day, and I saw this double spread page in *The New York Times*, this advertisement -- and this is during the Operation Desert Storm, in which you could buy this package to send to a soldier in Iraq, or Kuwait, and that package included Hershey bars that didn't melt on 120 degrees -- I don't know what happens when you ate it [laughter]. It had a baseball hat, popcorn, a teddy bear, Dakar perfume -- yeah, serious. I mean, this is real. I said, "This--" I thought it was like some kind of Louise Lawler or Hans Haacke piece, but it was not, it was Bloomingdales. It was Bloomingdales. And 12 pieces of Bazooka chewing gum. I mean, surprised it didn't have like a plastic gun, a water plastic gun. So, I just made this piece, and it's called "Untitled" (Welcome Back Heroes), and from all the pieces I've ever made, this one is really gross, because it stinks. But it's very interesting to get all those Bazooka chewing gums, and read what it says inside. It's all about violence, and a boy being a boy. You know, the master narrative, what I call the master narrative, represents itself in the most unexpected places, including in the Bazooka chewing gum. And sometimes, a sculpture produced as an artist, we forget that, that the master narrative is so strong that just to oppose it, as the opposition, doesn't really make any sense. I mean, there you have Bazooka chewing gum telling kids how to fight, and how to be strong, how to be daring. It's there.

This is detail of the sculpture, for those of you into that kind of stuff. And, I don't know why I included this here, but anyway, this piece is called (We Don't Remember), and it's in German, and I was watching TV late at night, and one day, right after the wall came down, and they had all these Polish people coming into Germany being attacked by skinheads, and the Nazi-- I mean, the German guards were just there, watching. And this is 1989. And I said -- so I made this stack, which is this red rectangle that's an 11 by 14 rectangle, that is the size of a photograph, and just the title, "We Don't Remember."

Yes. This is one of my shows at Andrea Rosen. This is called *Every Week There is Something Different*, and there was. Things just change -- things change every three, four days. I mean, you cannot even depend on a one-month show anymore. Everything changed, and this is the first week -- it looked like the museum, International Center of Photography show, right? Very smooth, very nice, very simple. And all the photographs that you see on the walls are just very -- that kind of photographs, but the Museum of Natural History in New York outside, and it has all these words written on the stone that says, "humanitarian" "scholar" "ranchman" and "patriot" "soldier" and all these things that a man could be. You know, it was like a catalog of things I could become, if I wanted to. So I said, OK, fine, let's have a really serious show, but then the next week, this platform came in, and it became a very charged -- from the homosocial, it shifted to

homosexual, just by bringing this guy here, who came in -- and there is a spectacle, because not many people saw him. This was not a planned performance, like most of my performance, these are not planned. They just happen. And he will come in, whenever he wanted, five minutes, and dance to a Walkman. So there was a distance to the viewer, whoever was there, because there was really never a viewer. Maybe like three times, people saw him. And then he would just leave. But every week, everything changed, and then I showed this piece -- similar, because the other one was silver, and this is called (Placebo), and this one in particular is called Placebo -- "Untitled" (Landscape for Roni Horn). And it does-- people always say, "Oh, it's about medicine." I said, "No. The meaning of the work, 'placebo' in Latin is 'I shall please,' and it's all about pleasure." It's about this ocean, this beautiful ocean of things that you can take and eat. And especially this one -- this one was tasty. This is coffee flavor. You know, because sometimes those candies are really horrible.

And this is another type of performer. This is my dealer -- one of my dealers in -- one of my -- one of the people I work with in France, in Paris. This is for a show that I didn't want to be in. So I said, again, "Give me the office." And I made this platform for her. I mean, she performs almost every day. So, this way, I -- she liked it. I mean, she looks really cute there. She -- it's kind of almost like she needed it. She was very upset when we had to remove it. But it's about finding new -- at least for me -- like, new ways of putting the work, but that -- by just taking it from the center and putting it in the margins, you still can have some kind of access to power.

And that's "Untitled" (Passport). It's just white paper against the wall. And we're getting almost close to the end of this thing. That's "Untitled" (Portrait of Marcel Brient), and this is a whole body of work I did. I'm not making this work anymore. But I'll ask someone for the body weight, and ask them to provide me with a candy that they like, and this particular one is really good -- it tastes like lemon. And it says "passion" on each little -- each candy. And that's his body weight -- 175.

"Untitled" (Orpheus, Twice). Just two mirrors embedded in the wall. And again, it's this whole thing of missing the work, and being -- you know, taking the risk of not even being seen. It's just two mirrors.

"Untitled" (Portrait of Ross). And this is a show I had at Andrea [Rosen], also. The show before this one was the one that every week, something changed. And it just changed too much, because at the end, I was exhausted. But I needed to do it. So this time, I needed to have lights, and I didn't want to have a real show, so we opened the gallery with no invitations, nothing, and it just was up for a week. And that was the show for that year. And, things -- I mean, I needed light at that time. I needed optimism. And there's nothing more optimistic than a light string hanging, as a loop, at least for me. And so I made lights. I made this light string. I only made 24 of them. They're all exactly the same, exactly the same. And, the collector or the museum or the art handler can install them in any way they want. They come with no instructions at all. You do whatever you want with them. And, but yeah, I mean, you might have a party, you want to put them on the back of the table, or something, who knows? And that's exactly where I wanted to be. The one that is lit is called "Untitled" (Miami), the one that is on the back that is unlit is called "Untitled" (Toronto). And it was just up for one week, and that was it. And people walked into the gallery and said, "Oh, did you have a short circuit?" And she said, "No, this is the new stuff." But, so, that's in Chicago at the Renaissance Society, and this is one of the best times it got installed, because, again, here, I fixed the hallway, which really needed to be fixed. And, for the opening, we had a long table there, with food and stuff, and I said, "This is the function of this work. This is the true function of this work." It made it into a celebration. And there's no -- there's really no -- there's no reason why not we should celebrate once in a while. We need it.

And that's "Untitled" (Revenge) -- just like a blue ocean of candies, and this piece really exists only as a 200-- ideal weight of 200 pounds. For this particular show, I had to change it to a larger ideal weight.

And this is "Untitled" (Arena). This is one of the last projects I have done. And this is in Paris, too. And people were invited to dance, and they did dance. And these two guys just walked in from the street. And they have to wear a Walkman. It has this very beautiful waltz in it. And, people danced. And they became a performance; they became part of the work too, like the stacks. I always say that the stacks are public sculptures. The only problem with the public sculptures that are a few thousand miles wide -- I mean, coming here from New York, I saw people with papers, rolled up, from the Guggenheim. And this is the last slide, I promise. It's just a billboard of two birds flying together. It's called "Untitled" (Strange Bird), and it's in LA. And I just -- it's one of those images that I just wanted to be there. I wanted to take over the space of, like, cigarette advertisement, or alcohol advertisement, and just be there for the community, as a very beautiful image, without really saying, "I'm here," you know? "Look at me." It's just there. Just there -- there's no signature, nothing that tells people "Art here." There's not a -- and it's just -- it always works out fine, because people ask me, "Where do you want them?" I said, "Wherever the billboard company wants to put us." It usually is the best places, but which they consider the worst. I always find it very funny in New York, some of these groups that they always criticize in the art world, and every time they have a chance to do a billboard, they always do it in Soho. I say, "But honey, go somewhere else -- I mean, there's the Bronx, Queens, Lower East Side, and also they're cheaper." And they're there. But again, it all depends on who's your audience -- your true audience. And, hopefully that's the last slide. Yeah. Groovy. [applause]

GG: Can we turn up the lights just a little bit more in the audience? It's better to sort see what--

FGT: And can we lower those lights?

GG: Yeah, I don't know. Yeah, is it possible to lower the lights on the stage a little, or -- and then raise the ones in the audience? Maybe the ones --

FGT: More, a little bit more. Even more.

GG: Great. Thank you. God, it's hard to--

FGT: Start?

GG: --start, right after that. Actually, that's the first time I've ever seen Felix sort of run through the whole gamut--

FGT: One of the first times I've ever seen it too.

GG: So -- and there were certain things that sort of struck that mind -- I mean, sort of things like memory, history, permission, participation, audience, art, life, as sort of an index, if you will, of the work. I was curious about how you -- if -- what your response was when the work first entered into -- the notion of into an institution like a museum, and what that means in terms of audience, and perception -- the change of context, coming into the kinds of expectations that people bring to a work when they come into a museum?

FGT: Every museum really is different, in terms of how people react to the work. For example -- and how people deal with the work, also, depends on the city. There's two things. For example, one of the things that you don't expect to see in museums is anyone touching the work, much less taking it. And -- museums are there to collect, and suddenly, they have to let go of all of that, and let the work that they might own -- let it go. And, I don't know, it's one of those things, again, trans-- crossing the boundaries from the very formal aspects of how the work gets disseminated to a more personal level -- it gives me a chance to interact with a whole different set of people that I usually will have no access to. And -- but also, in terms of -- I think what the real question you wanted to ask is about mainstreaming the work? Is that also part of that question, or maybe I'm reading into it?

GG: Well, it's -- whether you're -- I would say you're not occupying the margins anymore, in doing that.

FGT: That's true. To a certain degree, yes, and to a certain degree--

GG: I mean; museums are marginal institutions no matter how you look at it. If you compare us to Candlestick Park, no matter how big this building is, or how many people come to it every day, we're still a marginal institution.

FGT: That's a question that keeps coming back, about, you know, remaining on the margins. The margins are good for a while, but once in a while, it's just good to access the center, where power really is, and then go back to the margins. I think that even in a museum, this work really has a problem being looked as art, because it just looks like a stack of a printing house. Really that's what it is -- and people can just take these posters with them for free. But -- and I'm not afraid of the museums at all, not even afraid of that mainstreaming effect on the work.

GG: Are you still making stacks, or is that work finished?

FGT: No, that's just all finished. All that work is finished. It's done. It's gone. It's done. You know, it's -- I think that it is really comfortable to find a signature work, and then keeping making it, every day -- plagiarize yourself every day, every month. I mean, there's a waiting list for those stacks. So -- seriously. So, if I was smart enough, I would make them. But I don't want to make them, because I'd get bored, every morning, if I had to get up and do the same thing. And I like risks. I like risks, and I like making mistakes. I don't like keeping the mistakes, but I don't mind making them. You learn from them. But, no, the light strings, the candy pieces, all that work is finished, just finished. The -- and the new work is coming. I mean, one has to find new languages to say new things. I mean, I'm not the same as I was in 1988. Things have changed. And, I have not become younger, unfortunately, but things have changed. And one has to accept those changes and access them in order to create something else, something that when I wake up the morning, I say, "Wow, I cannot wait to have this thing -- see that thing hanging on the wall." And the new work I'm making is just not about creating situations, like most of this work has been, which was, you know, the candies, and the paper stacks, and the billboards. It's not about creating a situation anymore. It's about having things on the wall framed. I call it, you know -- it has that kind of cash-and-carry look to it. [laughter] I never thought I would do it, because I always found that strange, but I need it now, and I accept it. I'm honest about it. I need to see something framed on the wall that doesn't say "Take me," or doesn't say, "Play with me." It says, "I'm here forever." And those photos, I think -- I mean, I think they're working. I don't know, but they are working -- I'm excited with those new -- with that new work. I know this -- it's a relief also, to know that I don't have to make this stuff;

that it's done, that whatever I needed to say, I said it, a few times over. And that's it. That's it, it's there.

GG: It was interesting, at the opening at the Guggenheim, there must have been --

FGT: Four thousand people.

GG: -- 4,000 people. I think probably 3,990 of them were dressed in black, and--

FGT: It was like a funeral, I love it.

GG: [laughter] And, I would say, of the women who were there, most of them had skirts probably ten inches below -- in cloth below their waist -- and it was like a feeding frenzy. I've never seen so many people who clearly had so much money looking for free gift items at the museum.

FGT: Oh, no.

GG: And, I mean, it really was kind of shocking and phenomenal. Did you -- for me, it was almost like the -- I couldn't tell whether it was to be celebrated, or it was the most intense perversion that I ever witnessed in a museum. Did you have a response?

FGT: I think I like both descriptions. I was totally surprised, and I'm not someone who's very public, so for me, it was almost like -- it was very pleasurable. At the same time, it was frightening, to see, like, this work going out of the door. I mean, there was no more -- like I said before, when I first started showing them, people were very -- it was very good to watch them, because people -- excuse me -- people were very kind of scared, kind of very reluctant to take these things, and then they started taking it. And then, I guess, now, New Yorkers, people know the work -- excuse me -- much more. Excuse me. Wow, this stuff has -- that champagne. And people know now more about these things, about how they can access this work. And, I mean, as a public sculpture, to me, that is a success of it, to bring out that information. That's what most of the work is all about. It's about returning this information back, and making people, perhaps, and only perhaps, think. For example, with the piece of (Death By Gun) that is up here, right? When I first made it, it was for the Whiney Biennial, 1991, and I'll tell you a funny story, because I walked in, and there were all these cops, and I thought -- and there was these cops, and these buses outside, right? And, good old, you know, New Deal Felix. I thought, "Oh, how great -- they're bringing ex-- they're bringing people from jails, or something, or reformatory school, to see the exhibition." So I asked the guard, and he said, no, these are the congressional -- Congressmen, or Senators Art Caucus was seeing the work, right? And they're white. I said, "Well, then, not much difference between one and the other." But anyway, so they all walked out of the place with (Death by Gun). And, like, two weeks later, they all voted against the Brady Bill, most of them. So, sometimes it doesn't really work that way. Information doesn't really create meaning. I don't know what they did with it, with that stack, with that poster. But it's a very horrific, very scary poster of people just going home and killing themselves. There's really not much about violence, about drugs or being mugged, but it's people just going home, have nothing else to do, and they just kill each other, in domestic violence. That's the amazing thing from that piece, which -- I thought it was going to be all about hold-ups, and drugs, and it really wasn't -- isn't. But -- and that was an opening that I was not expecting at all. And in a way, it was frightening -- and again, it was so much black. It was very funny, because someone asked me, "who's Andrea? I said, "Oh, the woman in black." And he said, "Which one of those 3,000 women "in black?"

GG: But it was interesting to see the -- as you said, the transformation, that the work seemed to have become a collectible, fetishized object. It wasn't -- there wasn't any more -- it wasn't a kind of genuine interaction, there was just a kind of really blind fervor that they had to have one.

FGT: But it happens-- it changes all the time, Gary, because for example, students really like (Passport). It's white paper. They can work on it. So art students just go for that directly -- they make a beeline for that. And, I always feel very pleased when I go to some young artist's studio, and they have one of my pieces, and they worked on it. And they show me this piece of painting, and say, "Guess what it is?" I say, "I know what it is. That's from (Passport)." And they say, "How did you know?" I said, "The size is 24 by 24 inches." And, they work on it. They make drawings, and stuff. And to me, that's -- again, it's a collaboration that sometimes I don't expect, I never expected, but when it happens, it happens really well. Some people immediately come up to me and say, "Sign it. Can you sign it?" And I say, "No, it's already signed. The piece is already signed." And, what it -- again, the certificate is signed. But I say, "No, in order to be democratic, everyone should get the same, with no signature." But at the Guggenheim, I mean, it was just -- especially at the opening, because it was like the black gala opening, or something, it was funny to see all these very fancy women in form, like running all this stuff, you know, bending over. [laughter]

GG: In very short skirts.

FGT: And the men too, I mean. The men, too. It's just like, I would never --

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1: In skirts?

FGT: No, no, that's over. That was '84. [laughter]

GG: Well, maybe we should open up the floor to questions. Maybe -- could we have a little more light out there? Great. Questions, or comments?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: Is every piece accompanied by some comment from you, like the hanging lights?

FGT: Yes, there is a certificate that explains how it should be made, like what it is that the thing -- some of them are rather long certificates, like two pages, some of them, it's just one page that says, "This is a light string, made out of, like, this type of sockets," and we provide the people -- like, the collector or the museum or whoever owns it -- we provide them with information where to buy the sockets, and stuff like that. For example, with the light pieces, not to use, you know, electric -- I mean, I'm sorry, Westinghouse, but to use other brands, because Westinghouse is not good, period -- I'm not going to get into that, what they do.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: So, the question really means -- it's like, if you weren't here talking, I wouldn't get a quarter of what you're about, because you're very funny, and witty, and you're here, and I'm just wondering if the accompanying statements express that.

FGT: No. No, I trust the viewer. I trust the viewer's intuition, hopefully, and there's humor in the work, too, not just in me, but the work has humor, has a lot of humor. That's one of the ways in which people get meaning, through humor. I think sometimes a half-hour sitcom by the *Golden Girls* is much more meaningful and much more instructive about teenage pregnancy, of gays, you

know, coming and staying with them, or euthanasia, than a rabid speech by someone talking about, let's say, teenage pregnancy. But, no, I don't like those labels explaining the work on the walls, or either in the certificate. What I'm asking for is for people to look at the work differently. This is not a piece of metal sitting on the floor; this is not a Donald Judd, despite what *The New York Times* says. This is not a Donald Judd. This is something else. It has a new way of distribution, and that is one of the most important things of the work. I always say that my work is just totally formal, and that content is just an accident I cannot escape, as someone living -- as someone who lives in the late 20th century. I just cannot escape that. But -- yes?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: A few years ago, I think three, I was in New York, at the Museum of Modern Art, and went to their new acquisitions room to see a piece of yours, and the guard encouraged me to take a piece of paper and I took -- I took a piece home, and put it on the wall, I look at it all the time, I love it. Then I saw a piece of yours in the museum, and there was a big piece of Plexiglass over it. And, I was wondering, is that because the Museum of Modern Art owns your pieces, they don't want the viewers to come and take them? When your pieces are owned by a museum or a gallery, or it travels to [inaudible] -- it really changes it.

FGT: Oh, totally, no kidding. I mean, it is not the work anymore; it's someone else's work. It's a collaboration that I never envisioned. It is really not mine work. I mean, I would not even have recognized it, because it's -- for me, Plexiglass is a piece of art. That's it, it's all you need. And, I have never done Plexiglass stuff, by the way. But, it depends.

GG: It's a Donald Judd work.

FGT: Right. That's a real Donald Judd. It depends -- it depends on the museum, and it depends on the institution. I mean, I go -- I have been to homes in which that has happened. People put on top of these things Plexiglass. You know, after a while, you have just to let go and let people deal with the work in a way they feel comfortable. I think that, yes, it destroys the piece. The piece says -- the piece needs the interaction of the viewer, needs people taking away, disseminating the piece into a few thousand miles wide. That's the size of the work. But I guess also, some museums do that because they print, and some of those images, you cannot keep enough of them. You give people something for free and they just take it – right away, and they just take it. I mean, in New York, we're going to have to do that. Not the Plexiglass, but the sign that says, "Something was here," and have a small photo of that. That kind of -- it's a compromise. It's a compromise, but sometimes you have to compromise in life. That's the way life is. And I don't want to be one of those minimalists, really hardcore guys that make life impossible for everyone, or some of those conceptual-slash-political artists -- give me the gap, give me the ones that we already know about how good they are, and just keep your new social order for yourself. But, no, it sometimes -- it's a surprise. Sometimes I'm surprised about how people deal with the work. Sometimes I'm really happy what happens with it. For example, at the -- MoMA also owns (Placebo), the big, huge candy piece, and in New York people ate the candy and threw back the wrappers. So I walked in -- there was this mountain of silver, and I said, "What is that?" And the guard said, "Well, people ate the candy and threw back the wrapper." Only in New York -- I'm surprised they didn't spit it back. But, then when the same piece was shown in Washington, DC, people were very polite. They took it with and they ate it outside the museum. But--

AUDIENCE MEMBER 3: Did you see wrappers outside?

FGT: No, actually, no, there was-- I mean, it was really clean. It was very clean, and I said, "This is really a -- really peculiar." But, it depends. I mean, sometimes you have to trust the viewer, and you have to trust the person who has this piece. Sometimes it's very painful to see when people have destroyed the work, but I guess that's part of it. Some people are very resentful, you know. There's nothing I can do about it. That's -- I mean, sometimes you -- I mean, there's so much control you can have over certain things. And after a while, you have to learn to let go. But, it's true; the idea of a Plexiglass just really sends chills up my spine, on top of that.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 4: I'm just curious about the candy pieces -- are the candy pieces like your paper pieces, where once they're consumed, that's it, or when you sell the candy pieces, it's sort of a license to assemble 20 pounds of Bazooka bubble gum at any site?

FGT: Right.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 4: OK.

FGT: Because the work exists in three times at the same time -- four times. Right now, the piece upstairs, (Death by Gun), is also at the Guggenheim, and it's also in Europe, being shown right now. So there is really no original, and this is -- again, this is coming from *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, the essay by Walter Benjamin, about, at this point in history, not having a need for original, but having to create -- rather to create an aura about that original-- originality. And, the person just gets a paper that says how many they have to buy, and from where, and how it should look like, and what is the ideal weight. And that's it. I ask the person to be responsible for that piece, because it doesn't really exist. And it can exist, also, at the same time, in five places. I made the work almost -- in a way, as a metaphor, too, about disappearing, even before it's made. It doesn't exist, even before it's made, so you can't kill it, cannot -- it's already -- there's nothing to kill. There's nothing to go.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 5: It's interesting to me, when you include a lot of things as your work, but you didn't mention anything about money. That's a -- how do you deal with that, as part of the work, or do you deal with it as part of the work? How do you think about that?

FGT: What do you mean, about --

AUDIENCE MEMBER 5: I mean, when something gets sold. How do you use that as part of the piece?

FGT: I don't get the question. I mean, do I use the money? Do I take it? Do I give it back?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 5: No, I mean, does it relates to, I mean, the way that you set a price, the way that you deal with that as part of the material as well?

FGT: As part of Group Material, you said?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 5: As part of the material --

FGT: Oh, as part of the material. No, not really, no. I mean, someone did it already -- Laurie Parsons did it, and dedicated me this piece at the New Museum, which was a stack of money -- it was literally a stack of money, to be given away -- a dollar per person. But, I mean, money has just -- it

has come through this work. It was never really expected or planned. And, I don't really know. I mean, it has some prestige, or it has some -- it makes your life a little bit easier, I guess, and for a while, it made me -- it allowed me to make more work. But, it's something that was totally unexpected, and I would not consider the idea of money for the work. I think I'll think more in a general term in terms of commerce, and collecting, and what is a work of art in terms of who possesses the work. Where does it exist, where is the original, and how much that original is valued? And breaking those barriers, that's -- for me, transgressing those limitations is much more interesting than just money, and -- but, just -- no, I really haven't. I haven't. I'm not afraid of money, though, but I haven't. I mean, I think part of the work has a lot to do with commerce, and what do you get as a collector, as a patron, as a museum? And, basically, you get nothing. Just a small little paper that says what it looks like, this thing. Anyone else?

GG: There's a question down here, first.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 5: It's not really a question. You're saying that your work disappears, and I don't know if I agree with you, in the sense of it disappearing -- in a sense, it is possible to be recreated or rebuilt, or generated, something like that, so--

FGT: I mean, the ideal height disappears, the ideal stack, or the candy piece. It has a built-in -- like I said, I built it almost like a metaphor.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 5: A site.

FGT: Right, that you really cannot destroy it, because it doesn't really need to exist. I mean, it's just this little piece of paper, it tells you how to make it, what it has to look like. But, no, I mean, what is the piece? For me it's [inaudible], but what is it? I say, I really don't know. Because sometimes for me it's enough to just see the poster hanging on the wall, but sometimes it's not. And what is the real piece right now? For example, with (Death by Gun), because it exists right now in three different places. I'm sorry?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 6: Could you say something more about the work that you're doing now? You said now you have a need to see something on a wall that's permanent.

FGT: Well, it's permanent for a while. But, I just needed to do a work that was just very -- that looked like art, basically, that hangs on the wall, framed, and that people don't really have to touch it, or get into it, or grab it, or redo it, and it's just there. And it's very simple. Actually, I should not describe them, because every time I describe them, they sound really more boring than what they really are, so I won't. I'd rather let the photographs be seen. But, I mean, like all this work, like this lady said, you have to explain it. They're situations, right? And then if you get someone walk into a room and see four stacks, they say, "Oh, that's Donald Judd, that's Robert Morris -- that's what it is, I get it." Not really -- then you have to get into the whole system of the distribution of the work. Is the work a public sculpture or a private sculpture? For me, they all work also; by the way, as public sculptures, because I always say that just because something is outdoors doesn't make it public. It's just usually a big metal piece that was not -- could not fit anywhere else, so they had to keep it outside. But it's really not public. There's a difference -- there is a semantic difference between public and outdoors, and I consider the work, although it's shown in private museums and private galleries, quote-unquote, they're public. They go out the door all the time, and the public can access that.

GG: There was somebody over here.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 7: What are the marginal spaces in a museum?

GG: What is the question?

FGT: What are the marginal spaces -- you mean, literally, or spatially?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 7: Both.

FGT: Both? Death, I think, which is the most radical definition of life. That's what the new photos are all about. And, especially in terms of space, I don't show -- I want to show them just a very simple work on a wall. No more office spaces, no more of that strategy -- no more billboards with no names on it, and stuff. And, for a while, working like this has been very satisfying for me, but people need to see a signature work, right? People need to see the signature work, the stuff that looks exactly the same. And it was very funny, because I went to see some of the collections here in Chicago -- I mean, in San Francisco, and I found a lot of the signature work. I mean, every collection was the same. It was like going to someone's bathroom -- there is a toilet, there is a sink, there is a bathtub. Always the same thing. And I say, "Wow," I mean, talking about signature work. It's very safe, because everyone says, "Oh, that's such-and-such," and -- it makes it safer. It's all about brand recognition. And the way I work, creating all these types of work, all these parallels, or all these parallel bodies of work, I made a threat, and I really problematized my own practice. Like, what am I, a photographer, sculptor? Well, now I'm going to be in drag. I'm going to be a photographer. I'm going to try to be a photographer -- well, I mean, it's all about being in drag -- you're becoming a sculpture. Well, you become a painting -- you walk around with a lot of painted -- in splattered painted overalls. So, now I'm going to become a photographer, and that's my new drag, seriously. And I'm taking photographs, and I'm enjoying it. I'm enjoying taking these black and white photographs. But it's all -- the art -- about death. And -- but, again, like all my work, you really won't see the dead body, because I'm totally Brechtian when it comes to that. There's certain things that I will just not represent. I'm sorry, this guy was back there.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 8: Felix, it occurred to me that you didn't show any images of the work you've done with Group Material, so I was sort of curious about that.

FGT: Because I'm here giving a lecture as myself, not as Group Material, and when we do that, we just do it as Group Material. And, I try to keep it as -- trying -- which is kind of a schizophrenia. You really can't. But I try to keep both practices as separate as I can, but it always went back and forth. But at least I try not to cross those boundaries, at least not in public -- so-called public space. Anyway --

AUDIENCE MEMBER 9: Yeah, could you talk a little more about Brecht, and the ideas that you're most invested in [inaudible]?

FGT: Well, I'm talking about epic distance, which is the thing that interests me most about Brecht.

GG: I don't know if everyone heard the question -- it was if Felix could talk a little bit more about Brecht and the ideas out of Brecht.

FGT: It has a lot to do with epic distance, and allowing the viewer space to digest what you are representing. It's a very -- it's an intellectual approach, what I call it, almost like a sense of feeling something, or of learning something. And Brecht always said that when people went to his theater, he wanted to come out of the theater not with a cathartic feeling, but actually with a feeling of knowledge and pleasure, and accessing pleasure through knowledge. And also, coming from the background that I come from, right, as someone with a Hispanic background, I become sometimes so frustrated when I go to shows and I see people with Spanish-sounding names that are just so overwhelmingly, like, expressionistic. And I say, still, after 50 years, the whole -- the same debate, the same rule holds true. But that's what I wanted to say about Brecht right now. I just lost something in my mind I wanted to talk about Brecht. Well, anyway, it will come back.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 10: Last year, around the show at MoCA, there was a series of advertisements in very obscure neighborhood newspapers about that show. Was that conception yours, or was that --

FGT: Wow, I'm glad you mentioned that.

GG: Repeat -- did people hear that in the back? That last year, with the show at MoCA, there were a number of advertisements in small --

FGT: Eight different ethnic newspaper --

GG: Right. And just-- no, so go ahead.

FGT: That was actually a piece I made for the museum. That was part of a piece -- I mean, that was part of the show, in which I asked the museum to buy advertisement space in eight different ethnic newspapers, and have a photo of the birds, and not really advertise me so much, advertise my show, but advertise the museum, and when the museum was open for free, so people -- excuse me -- people could come and see the show for free, and also, it has a public education phone number -- I believe in public education in the museum. It's a very important function of the museum. And, again, it's one of those pieces that I like making, that it just seeps into culture, without saying, you know, "FGT at MoCA -- come and get it", but it was just very -- I'm glad you mentioned, because people, when they get into the work, or want to describe the work, that kind of stuff really, like, it's not looked -- it's not like a real piece that you can just, like, touch. And to me, that was like the most exciting part of the whole project, even more than the show, and the billboards around the city, because -- did you see the advertisement? I was happy with that project, and I've been doing that more often now. I ask the museum to advertise itself outside, to bring in a new audience, because you never know who you're going to reach, how you're going to reach them, you know? There might be some Vietnamese kid or family that doesn't even know about the museum. And then they say, "Well, there's like this kid's program on Saturdays," and it would be a great thing for them to get rid of the kids on Saturday morning and bring them there. And it's almost like serving a purpose -- I mean, doing a service to the museum by having this advertisement outside. But that was part of the piece, and it was part of the show too. It's a margin, which, for me, it worked. It worked very well. So I'm glad you saw-- I mean, I never even talked about it, ever. I'm like so shocked. I love it. Anyway.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 12: I wanted to ask you, because you said that you were interested in the question of the original, and in the age of mechanical reproduction, how is there even an original?

FGT: No, there isn't. I mean, what I'm giving -- the thing that Benjamin talked about was the fact that you have an aura about an object, and that aura gets disseminated with -- I mean, there's like -- you always go back, let's say the Mona Lisa. There is a Mona Lisa somewhere, and that's where all the posters, the t-shirts, the umbrellas, the shoes, the buckles, come from -- or the image of that Mona Lisa there. The aura, Brecht said -- I mean, Benjamin said -- it diminished it. For me, it increased, because I wanted to see the Mona Lisa. I mean, it didn't really become -- Brecht was very democratic and very leftist and very socialist, which he was. He said, it is not as important anymore to have the original. The aura has been broken by the dissemination of its representation, and I argue the other way around. I was dying to see the Mona Lisa after I'd seen so many t-shirts, and plates, and stuff like that. I just could not wait to make a beeline, and fight with all the tourists there to see it, behind glass, and I did. But in this case, in my work, you really don't have an original at all. I mean, right now, you have, like I said before, you have three (Death by Gun), and they're all "original." Anybody else?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 13: Forgive me if this is tangential to your work, but why did you say the gay movement hasn't begun?

FGT: No, no, it hasn't -- no, no, the gay modern movement has not even -- it began. Actually, the gay movement started in the late nineteenth century in Germany, but what I'm saying is that -- I didn't say it hadn't begun, what I'm saying is that -- did I say it hadn't begun? Oh really? Well, no, then I guess what I'm saying is, I want even more of it, then. I want even more --

AUDIENCE MEMBER 13: You're not satisfied with what [inaudible]--

FGT: No, not at all. I mean, we still have a long way to go. I mean, look at Montana. They spent taxpayer's money just to have a field day, and the Montana Senate -- I mean, when I talk about the center in the federal government, and bringing all the power to the states, I just -- I squeal with fear. The Montana legislature spent like two days passing this amendment, or this new law, that says that everyone who has a homosexual act, in Montana, has to go to the police and report it. I'm serious -- I mean, this is real. So, we still have a long way to go, a lot to do. We have done a lot. We have accomplished a lot, but we still have a lot more to do. It's funny you asked me this thing about gay movement, and the movement hasn't begun yet, because for the show at the Guggenheim, a whole bunch of the gay magazines wanted to do something about the show, and I said no. And I said no because most of these magazines, really what they need to see is the actual act -- they need to see the actual act to know that is something has embedded in it a homosexual desire. That line -- I mean, they're not subtle when they want to cross the line between homosocial and homosexual, and I'm totally opposed to that, because I don't want to look like the opposition, and I want to seep in, like I said before, you know, when I was showing the slide of the clocks. But -- and it's a movement that has begun. But, we still have a lot to do, and I think that's why I didn't want to make a permanent monument, like George Segal did -- these two sculptures of like a guy and a woman, and -- they were like that. And I said, "That's gay?" I mean, they were touching each other like that. And I said, that's -- I mean, I don't know. Like, what do I know? So I said, no, but that's not what I know -- that's not what I want. I don't want those two -- those four ghosts there, they're freaky. But I said, I want a monument that, it could be erased, and then suddenly, it could be also, five years from now, done again, with more dates that includes our history. And -- no, we have begun, but we still have a lot to do. Anybody else? How long is this supposed to be, an hour?

GG: This is -- yep, we're there. Thank you all for coming.

FGT: Thank you for coming. [applause]