Core Tenets for Gonzalez-Torres's billboard works
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A note on the Core Tenets: The main priority of the Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation is fostering and facilitating individuals' direct experiences with the work, in keeping with Gonzalez-Torres's primary intention. The Foundation also provides language around the structure and nature of the works, following the type and forms of language developed by Gonzalez-Torres that has been provided to owners and exhibitors on an ongoing basis. One of the ways the Foundation provides access to such language is through a format referred to as the 'Core Tenets,' which describe those works/bodies of works that have specific, yet sometimes open-ended parameters.

CORE TENETS FOR FELIX GONZALEZ-TORRES'S BILLBOARD WORKS

While each body of work follows its own set of tenets, Gonzalez-Torres's practice includes purposeful variations, within a body of work and between bodies of work. With the knowledge of his likely foreshortened life, Gonzalez-Torres distinctly strove to create an oeuvre to be considered in its totality, in all its variations, in order to foster engagement, questioning, and ongoing complexity. It may be compelling to compare how the Core Tenets for different works/bodies of work differ and align with one another.

The 'Works' section of the Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation website helps demonstrate how the Core Tenets play out in different manifestations of the same work and across bodies of works. This section of the website is structured to provide a comprehensive overview of the artist's oeuvre, as well as in-depth illustrations/depictions of each work from varying installations.

Each of the billboard works is a unique artwork.[1]

Each billboard work has a specific caption and description included in its *Certificate of Authenticity and Ownership*.

The owner has the right to interpret the specific, yet open-ended parameters of the work on an ongoing basis, and from manifestation to manifestation, and throughout each manifestation.

The owner has the right to choose to manifest the work at any time.[2]

The owner, or in the case of loans, an authorized borrower, has the right and responsibility to reflect on the following core tenets when exhibiting the work:

> It is essential to billboard works that they be installed in multiple public/outdoor locations. It is a priority that they are situated in varied locations and/or contexts where a broad cross-section of the general public would typically encounter billboards.
>
> When publicly exhibited, the ideal number of public/outdoor billboard locations is twenty-four. While there may be more than twenty-four locations, the billboards are intended to be installed in at least six public/outdoor billboard locations.
>
> Each billboard work can exist in more than one set of locations at a time without impugning the work's uniqueness; the uniqueness of the work is linked to ownership.
>
> Each authorized manifestation of a billboard work is the work and should be referred to only as the work.

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The medium of the work is specified as 'Billboard,' conveying the use of any standard billboard materials and methods.

The billboard works must always be manifested at billboard-scale.

The specific image/text for each work must fill the allotted space at each billboard location completely; therefore, in the case of a billboard work with photographic imagery, the image may be cropped (but not otherwise altered) in order to fill the allotted space.

No additional information, text, or images of any kind be superimposed on the billboard work by the exhibitor.

Provided the public/outdoor billboard location requirements have been fulfilled, the authorized borrower has the option to install the billboard work in one location within an exhibition space.[3] In such cases this billboard should be installed at billboard-scale using billboard materials and methodologies, and ideally span from floor to ceiling and whenever possible from wall to wall, with the priority being from floor to ceiling.

Documentation of each billboard location (photographic and location information) is essential, as each location is an integral part of the work.

Ideally the billboard work remains in outdoor locations for the duration of any corresponding public exhibition (regardless of whether the specific locations remain consistent throughout the exhibition).

The owner has the exclusive right to choose to lend the work. In doing so, the owner is thereby extending to an authorized borrower for the term of the loan the rights and responsibilities to make decisions about manifesting the work, within the borrower's interpretation of the specific, yet open-ended parameters of the work.[4]

Decisions about a particular manifestation of the work may shift each time the work is installed, and potentially throughout each manifestation.[5]

Gonzalez-Torres used each element of the artwork's caption as a vehicle for conceptual information; if and when the title,[6] date, medium and/or dimensions are listed, each element of the caption remains consistent regardless of any given manifestation or how the work may change throughout a manifestation.[7] [8]

Billboard works are accompanied by a *Certificate of Authenticity and Ownership*.[9]

In furtherance of its educational mission, the Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation is available to be in dialogue about the Core Tenets and provide further information.

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[1] With the exception of "Untitled" (For Parkett), 1994 [FGTF# GF1994-003], which was made in an edition of 84 with 15 APs.

[2] The billboard works exist regardless of whether they are physically manifest.

[3] The owner has the exclusive right to choose to install a single billboard in one individual location at any time.

[4] While billboard works have the capacity to be loaned with relative ease, in his lifetime Gonzalez-Torres established a precedent of prioritizing exhibitions that fostered complex understandings of the works.

[5] Exhibitors may benefit from devising a general structure in advance of the exhibition that allows for considering and reconsidering decisions throughout the course of a manifestation.

[6] The precise wording and punctuation of the title are conceptually significant. The purposeful punctuation of the title includes both the placement of quotation marks around the word "Untitled" and the fact that the parenthetical portion of the title is placed outside of the quotation marks.

[7] Gonzalez-Torres let exhibitors decide whether or not to include artwork captions on the walls of an exhibition, or elsewhere. (In his lifetime, Gonzalez-Torres accommodated certain institutions' stylistic standards of only listing parts of an artwork's caption [e.g. just the title and date; or just the title, date, and medium].)

[8] Gonzalez-Torres typically chose not to include descriptive or interpretive information on wall labels/texts. Should an exhibitor choose to include descriptive or interpretive wall labels/texts – or if including such information is part of an exhibitor's standard protocol – it is suggested that the full artwork caption also be present. In such cases, ideally the caption is displayed on a separate label, or with a separation from any descriptive or interpretive information. (In this way, the language and structure that Gonzalez-Torres chose for the caption can be reflected upon both alongside and independently from text generated by an exhibitor.)

[9] Gonzalez-Torres intended for the Certificates of Authenticity and Ownership for billboard works to be issued anew in the name of the current owner for as long as possible.

COMPLETE LIST OF CAPTIONS FOR GONZALEZ-TORRES'S BILLBOARD WORKS:

"Untitled", 1989
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation

"Untitled" (The New Plan), 1991
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation

"Untitled", 1991
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation

"Untitled" (It's Just a Matter of Time), 1992
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation

"Untitled", 1992
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation

"Untitled", 1992
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation

"Untitled" (For Jeff), 1992
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation

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"Untitled", 1991 - 1993
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation
Two parts

"Untitled" (Strange Bird), 1993
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation

"Untitled" (Portrait of Austrian Airlines), 1993
Medium varies with installation
Dimensions vary with installation

"Untitled", 1994
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation

"Untitled" (For Parkett), 1994
Billboard on Appleton coated stock
Dimensions vary with installation
Maximum dimensions: 125 x 272 inches (317.5 x 690.9 cm)
Edition of 84, 15 APs
Published by Parkett-Verlag, Zurich

"Untitled", 1995
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation

"Untitled", 1995
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation

"Untitled", 1995
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation

"Untitled", 1995
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation

"Untitled", 1994-1995
Mixed media
Dimensions vary with installation

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PURPOSEFUL VARIATIONS WITHIN THE BODY OF BILLBOARD WORKS:

"Untitled", 1989
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation
(*Description of this work's variation currently unavailable)*

"Untitled", 1991 - 1993
Billboard
Dimensions vary with installation
Two parts
(*Description of this work's variation currently unavailable)*

"Untitled" (Portrait of Austrian Airlines), 1993
Medium varies with installation
Dimensions vary with installation
(*Description of this work's variation currently unavailable)*

"Untitled" (For Parkett), 1994
Billboard on Appleton coated stock
Dimensions vary with installation
Maximum dimensions: 125 x 272 inches (317.5 x 690.9 cm)
Edition of 84, 15 APs
Published by Parkett-Verlag, Zurich
(*Description of this work's variation currently unavailable)*

CORE TENETS FOR "UNTITLED", 1994-1995 *(In process – draft available here)*

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