

a new direction

Established by Lerner as a group exhibition program in 1979, the format of Directions changed in 1987 under Ned Rifkin, then chief curator of the Hirshhorn and now the Smithsonian's under secretary for art. Rifkin maintained the essence of the first three group

Richness of invention and approach is what we hope to present, without seeking to establish definitive directions.

—Abram Lerner

installations but re-focused the series to highlight the work of a single artist and his or her production, beginning with Joel Shapiro. While this exhibition included work made early in Shapiro's career, the new Directions approach also encouraged the artist to seek new ways of expression by including a commission of a new work. A catalogue that included excerpts from an interview between Rifkin and Shapiro further enhanced the exhibition by providing insight into the artist's thought process.

Presenting new work and putting the artist's voice forward has been a mission of the program and of the Museum ever since. We celebrate this approach now as we mark twenty years of providing individual artists with a place to explore their ideas.

the artists

Directions allows the Hirshhorn to present emerging as well as established artists. Some of the best known and groundbreaking artists of our time have participated in the series, including Cindy Sherman, Tim Hawkinson, James Turrell, Juan Muñoz, and Julian Schnabel. Many of these artists showed at the Hirshhorn early in their careers, like Tony Oursler, Tacita Dean, and Jeff Wall. Others, such as Ron Mueck, realized their first museum installation through this program. The Museum has since acquired a number of works by these artists for its collection.

Conceived of as a way to address the vitality, diversity, and inventiveness that characterizes contemporary art, Directions has inspired artists to employ

an amazing range of practices, media, concepts, and techniques over the years. They have arranged towers of hangers and plastic bottles (Dan Steinhilber), draped hundreds of yards of brightly colored fabric (Beverly Semmes), lead fifty members of the public through a day-long spontaneously generated performance (Oliver Herring), intrigued visitors with larger-than-life hyper real human figures (Ron Mueck), and have even presented ideas for work that was never realized (Cai Guo-Qiang). Among the possibilities for engagement available to artists and audiences at the Hirshhorn, Directions has consistently proven to be forward looking, flexible, and experimental in its approach. Maintaining a spirit of discovery and fearless ingenuity is an essential component to keeping the Directions series fresh and the Hirshhorn at the forefront of contemporary art for years to come.

Directions is made possible in part by Trellis Fund and Ray Graham III.



'07 Virgil Marti | Pae White '06 Jim Lambie | Oliver Herring | Jim Hodges '05 Janet Cardiff: Words Drawn in Water | Cai Guo-Qiang '04 Gabriel Orozco '03-04 Dan Steinhilber '02-03 Cecily Brown '02 Ron Mueck | Ernesto Neto '01-02 Marina Abramovic '01 Tacita Dean | Tim Hawkinson '00-01 Dana Hoey '00 Cathy de Monchaux | Leonardo Drew '99-00 Shahzia Sikander '99 Sam Taylor Wood | Julião Sarmiento '98 Tony Oursler: Video Dolls with Tracy Leipold | Kiki Smith: Night '97-98 Toba Khedoori '97 Louise Lawler: Monochrome | Juan Muñoz '96-97 Rudolph Schwarzkogler '96 Byron Kim | Beverly Semmes '95-96 Carmen Lomas-Garza '95 Martin Kippenberger | Cindy Sherman '94-95 Gary Simmons '94 Jeanne Dunning | Sue Coe '93-94 Glenn Ligon '93 Alison Saar '92-93 Jac Leirner '92 Tim Rollins + K.O.S. | Francesc Torres | Thomas Struth '91-92 Saint Clair Cemin '91 Adrian Piper | Mike Kelley '90-91 Boyd Webb '90 Christian Marclay | Ilya Kabakov '89-90 Susana Solano '89 Keith Sonnier | Ericka Beckman | Mel Chin '88-89 Walter Pichler '88 Robert Cumming | Sherrie Levine '87-88 Joel Shapiro '86 Directions 1986 | Alice Fellows | Peter Fleps | Melissa Wren Miller | Yolanda Shashaty | Robert Morris | Hope Sandrow | Frank Stella | James Turrell '83 Directions 1983 | Ida Applebroog | Robert Longo | David Salle | Cindy Sherman | Alexis Smith | Jonathan Borofsky | Mary Jones | Elizabeth Murray | Pierre Picot | Julian Schnabel | Siah Armajani | Scott Burton | Judith Shea | Robert Wilhite | Kendall Buster | Anita Thatcher | Elyn Zimmerman '81 Directions 1981 | William Beckman | James Byrne | Alain Kirili | Judy Pfaff | Ulrich Rückriem | Jeff Wall | Jerry Zeniuk | Lisa Albuquerque | Vernon Fisher | Thomas Rose | Earl Staley | Michelle Stuart | Conrad Atkinson | Rosemarie Castoro | Debora Hunter | Grover Mouton '79 Directions | Eleanor Antin | Dotty Altie | Donna Dennis | Donald Evans | Steve Gianakos | Robert Hudson | Alan Kessler | George Kuehn | Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt | Kim MacConnel | Loren Madsen | Jud Nelson | Kenneth Price | Roland Reiss | Barbara Rossi | Peter Saari | David Schirm | John Van Alstine