



Student Name:
Class Period:
Date:

Meet the Originals

Texas Originals is a radio series about people who made an impact on Texas. You can hear it online and on radio stations around the state. Read or listen to the episode on Donald Clarence Judd. Then, answer questions about it.

Donald Clarence Judd 1928–1994

Born in 1928, the artist Donald Judd was nurtured in the cultural hotbed of New York City. But the austere, high desert of West Texas became his artistic home.

In the sixties, Judd began creating pared-down, geometric sculptures out of metal and Plexiglas. He didn't intend these works to represent anything; instead, they were things in themselves, meant to be experienced rather than analyzed.

On a road trip in the early seventies, Judd passed through the West Texas town of Marfa and was captivated by the area's broad spaces and shifting sunlight. He soon settled there and bought local properties and ranchland, including a decommissioned Army base. Judd developed the site as the Chinati Foundation, a showcase for his own artworks and those of others.

Chinati's centerpiece is Judd's series of one hundred aluminum boxes, housed in two vast former artillery sheds. The large boxes are arranged in neat rows, with their interiors exposed. Their effect on the visitor is cumulative. As one critic writes, the "shimmering boxes form a giant multifaceted mirror that reflects the vast panorama surrounding the site." The work is abstract, yet it quietly evokes "the transcendental majesty of the American West."

Judd passed away in 1994. But his works continue to attract thousands of visitors each year to Marfa and this unlikely cultural outpost.

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Donald Clarence Judd. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. For what kind of art did Donald Clarence Judd become famous?
2. Describe Judd's work that is the centerpiece of the Chinati Foundation.

Going Further: Write or discuss your answer to the question below, supporting your answer with evidence from the episode or additional information you have learned in class.

3. **Taking a Position.** Judd helped establish the West Texas town of Marfa as a cultural outpost. If you were to make a town your home base, for what would you like to be known? Why?