

# One for the Books | Inside Donald Judd's Library

CULTURE | BY SHONQUIS MORENO | MAY 28, 2010 4:32 PM



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Assorted pornography, native plants and the Cold War are among the subjects that fill the library of the artist Donald Judd (1928-1994). But you don't have to travel to Marfa, Tex., to browse the shelves. Today, Web visitors can click on [a floor plan of his two-room library](#) to view the 13,004 volumes arranged exactly as Judd arranged them. The virtual library has been rendered so faithfully that visitors navigate furniture and art designed by Judd and glimpse an artwork by Dan Flavin between the custom bookcases.

"Many people may not know that Judd was an avid reader and that he loved books as objects," says Barbara Hunt McLanahan, the executive director of the Judd Foundation, which preserves the artist's homes and studios in New York and Marfa. "We want to provide another tool to create a broader understanding of the artist, and this is a very lovely, simple way to make a portrait of someone."

Construction of the virtual library required 672 photographs of the interior, along with custom software designed by Ryan Tainter. Even Judd's notes on how he was going to catalog the arts section (by dates of birth and death) are included. Clicking on a spine calls up the book's Library of Congress details and a physical description. And while the books cannot be checked out, Tainter's program [links to WorldCat](#) and lists lending institutions near the browser where each book is available for loan.

"People have the impression of Judd as austere and particular," says Caitlin Murray, one of two catalogers who labored for more than 3,500 hours on the project. "But if one spends enough time with his library, they will begin to look to Judd as a thinker who was interested in more than one time period, continent or aesthetic."

And whose reading habits were as serious as they were wide ranging: "He didn't own any paperback thrillers, as far as I can tell," Murray says. "Or, if he did, he left them at the airport."

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