

Chronology

Julie Ault

1
"Untitled", 1988
C-print jigsaw puzzle in plastic bag
7 1/2 x 9 1/2 in.
Edition of 3, 1 A.P.



2
"Untitled" (March 5th) #2, 1991
40-watt light bulbs, extension cords,
porcelain light sockets
Overall dimensions vary with installation
Two parts: approximately 113 in. in height each
Edition of 20, 2 A.P.
Installation view of *Lux / Lumen* at
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona, 1997

3
"Untitled", 1988
C-print jigsaw puzzle in plastic bag
7 1/2 x 9 1/2 in.
Edition of 2, 1 A.P.



Entries in bold constitute the biography Felix Gonzalez-Torres wrote for *Felix Gonzalez-Torres* (New York: A.R.T. Press, 1993).

1939 TV is broadcast from the World's Fair in New York.

1945 First atomic bomb, named "Little Boy," is dropped on Hiroshima by the United States.

1954 Supreme Court ruling on *Brown v. Board of Education* declares racial segregation in schools existing in twenty-one states unconstitutional.

1955 Disneyland opens in Anaheim, California, drawing one million visitors within the first six months.

1957 born in Güaimaro, Cuba, the third of what would eventually be four children

1959 Ross Laycock born on March 5.

1959 Cuban Revolution: the dictator Fulgencio Batista is overthrown and Fidel Castro becomes premier.

1961 Bay of Pigs: CIA-supported counter-revolutionary Cuban exile force storms the beaches of Cuba, a military move approved by President Kennedy ending in failure.

1963 John F. Kennedy assassinated.

1964 Dad bought me a set of watercolors and gave me my first cat

1964 Civil Rights Act to prevent and counter discrimination is passed by the 88th Congress.

1965 Johnson administration creates the National Endowment for the Arts.

1968 May: student protests, massive demonstrations against the Vietnam War, and workers' strikes in Paris comprise a widespread social movement.

1969 Gay and lesbian patrons of the Stonewall Inn rebel against harassment by the New York City police.

1
 "Untitled" (For Jeff), 1992
 Billboard
 Dimensions vary with installation
 Installation in Stockholm for Felix Gonzalez-Torres at Magasin 3, Stockholm Konsthall, 1992



2
 "Untitled" (Me and My Sister), 1988
 C-print jigsaw puzzle in plastic bag
 Edition of 3, 1 A.P.



3
 "Contaminación ambien / mental," 1980
 Printed art page
 El Nuevo Día, August 24, 1980



1971 sent to Spain with my sister Gloria, then went to Puerto Rico to live with my uncle

1972 Watergate: burglars, connected to the Nixon re-election campaign, break into the Democratic Party's National Committee office at the Watergate Hotel in Washington, DC, and are arrested, leading to the scandal that ends in the resignation of Richard Nixon.

1975 United States pulls its remaining troops out of Vietnam.

1975 VCR is first introduced in the United States.

1976 Gloria and I moved to our own apartment – small, but full of sunlight

1976 met my friend Mario

1976 Gonzalez-Torres graduates from Colegio San Jorge; studies at the Universidad de Puerto Rico.

1977 Rosa

1978 met Jeff in Puerto Rico

1978 Gonzalez-Torres makes ephemeral installations "Wrapped" and "Society," in the Plaza Antonia Martínez with Universidad de Puerto Rico classmates, Rosa Balsera and José Pérez Mesa.

1977 Death penalty is reinstated in the United States after ten-year moratorium.

1979 moved to New York City

1979 Personal tape player, the Walkman, is invented.

1979 White Night Riots: gay community in San Francisco protests the announcement of Dan White's lenient sentence, based on the "Twinkie defense," for assassinating openly gay city supervisor, Harvey Milk, and Mayor George Moscone.

1979 returned to Cuba to see my parents after an eight-year separation

1980 Ronald Reagan is elected president.

1980 CNN, the world's first twenty-four hour cable news channel, begins broadcasting.

1980 Gonzalez-Torres publishes first printed art page consisting of images and text, titled "Contaminación ambien / mental" in August 24, 1980 *El Nuevo Día*.

1980 "Just Say No" slogan is coined by Nancy Reagan for the war on drugs.

1
Snapshot, Ross Laycock, 1984



2
Snapshot, Pebbles and Biko, 1985



3
Newspaper article clipped by Gonzalez-Torres



4
Snapshot, Harry, 1987

5
Snapshot, Ross, Bill, and Rosa, 1987

6
"Untitled" (Loveboy), 1989
Blue sheer fabric and metal rod
Dimensions vary with installation
and
"Untitled" (March 5th) #1, 1991
Mirror
12 x 24 in. overall
Two parts: 12 in. diameter each
Installation view of *Itinerari* at
Castello di Rivara, Turin, 1991



1980 met Luis at the beach

1981 parents escaped Cuba during Mariel boat lift, my brother Mario and sister Mayda escaped with them

1981 IBM introduces the personal computer.

1981 Surveillance for AIDS begins at Center for Disease Control following recognition of the first cases of unexplained severe immunosuppression and resulting opportunistic illnesses.

1981 Gonzalez-Torres studies at the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program in New York (and again in 1983).

1983 received BFA from Pratt Institute

1983 Ross at the Boybar

1984 Reagan is re-elected to a second term as president.

1985 The phrase "safer sex" is coined to describe sex using protection from sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, and pregnancy.

1985 Reagan visits Bitburg Cemetery to honor American GIs. When he is told no American soldiers are buried there and that it is dedicated to members of the Nazi SS, he replies that the German soldiers "were victims, just as surely as the victims of the concentration camps."

1985 Jeff gave me Pebbles and Biko, two Lilac Point Siamese cats – hardly able to support myself, and now with two cats to feed, only Jeff

1985 first trip to Europe, first summer with Ross

1986 summer in Venice, studied Venetian painting and architecture

1986 blue kitchen, blue flowers in Toronto – a real home for the first time in so long, so long, Ross is here

1986 Supreme Court ruling on Bowers, Attorney General of Georgia v. Hardwick et al. upholds state laws banning consensual sex between adults of the same gender.

1986 Oliver North, a marine lieutenant colonel on the National Security Council staff, is indicted as the White House official most directly involved in secretly aiding the Nicaraguan Contras by selling arms to Iran, and diverting proceeds to the Contras.

1
"Double Fear", 1987
Rub-on transfer
4 1/2 x 9 1/2 in. overall
Edition of 20



2
"Untitled" (Photomug), 1986 / 1988
Plastic mug and black-and-white photograph
4 x 3 1/2 in. diameter
Edition of 20, 2 A.P.



3
"Untitled", 1986 / 1987
Glass bottle and newsprint
5 3/4 x 2 x 2 in.
Image size: 3 5/8 in. diameter



4
"Untitled", 1989
C-print jigsaw puzzle in plastic bag
7 1/2 x 9 1/2 in.
Edition of 3, 1 A.P., 3 additional A.P.



5
"Untitled" (Loverboy), 1988
C-print jigsaw puzzle in plastic bag
7 1/2 x 9 1/2 in.
Edition of 3, 1 A.P.



6
Installation view of *Felix Gonzalez-Torres* at
Rastovski Gallery, New York, 1988



1986 Mother died of leukemia

1987 received MFA from the International Center of Photography and New York University

1987 Wawanaisa Lake: beavers, wild brown bears, Harry retrieved every buoy he sees, *New York Times* every morning, duck cabin

1987 Gonzalez-Torres's Master of Fine Arts exhibition, *The Culminating Experience and Other Stories*, includes his first dateline photostat that reads: *Bitburg Cemetery 1985 Walkman 1979 Cape Town 1985 Water-proof mascara 1971 Personal computer 1981 TLC.*

1987 600,000 people march in the Second National March on Washington, DC, for lesbian and gay rights.

1987 Gonzalez-Torres makes first puzzle pieces using images of crowds from newspapers.

1987 Black Monday: on October 19 the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 508.32 points and closed at a record-breaking low of 1,738.40 points, documented as the worst stock market crash in history.

1987 Gonzalez-Torres is adjunct art instructor at New York University until 1989 and again in 1992; teaches course titled Social Landscape.

1987 Senator Jesse Helms introduces an amendment to prevent the federal government from financing any AIDS education or prevention materials that "promote or encourage, directly or indirectly, homosexual sexual activities." The Senate passes the Helms Amendment by a vote of 94 to 2.

1987 joined Group Material

1988 Group Material produces *Inserts*, booklets of artists' pages inserted into the May 22 Sunday *New York Times*.

1988 Gonzalez-Torres exhibits at the Rastovski Gallery, New York.

1988 Final season of prime-time soap opera *Dynasty*, about the lives and milieu of the wealthy Carrington family. *Dynasty* premiered in 1981.

1988 Gonzalez-Torres begins making bloodwork pieces, derived from test results of t-cell counts (a type of white blood cell) that indicate weakening of the immune system due to HIV.

1988 National Rifle Association opposes a seven-day waiting period to buy a pistol, as proposed by the Brady bill, and attempts to kill the legislation.

1
Group Material
Detail
Installation view of *AIDS Timeline*, Berkeley Art Museum, University of California, 1989



2
"Untitled", 1989
Paint on wall
Dimensions vary with installation
Installation view of "Untitled" at Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, 1989



3
"Untitled" (Waldheim to the Pope), 1989
C-print jigsaw puzzle in plastic bag
7 1/2 x 9 1/2 in.
Edition of 3, 1 A.P.



4
Newspaper article, August 25, 1989, clipped by Gonzalez-Torres



1988 Gonzalez-Torres makes first stack piece, "Untitled", consisting of endless photocopies on paper and wooden pedestal; text reads: *Helms Amendment 1987 Anita Bryant 1977 High-Tech 1980 Cardinal O'Connor 1988 Bavaria 1986 White Night Riots 1979 F.D.A. 1985.*

1988 Gonzalez-Torres receives fellowship awards from Art Matters, Cintas Foundation, and Gordon Matta-Clark Foundation.

1988 ABC News journalist Ted Koppel interviews Austrian President Kurt Waldheim after the Waldheim Commission learns that, contrary to his prior claims, Waldheim had been aware of and participated in World War II crimes and atrocities.

1988 Group Material produces *Democracy*, four roundtable discussions, exhibitions, and town meetings at the Dia Art Foundation, New York.

1989 *AIDS Timeline* is organized by Group Material for the Berkeley Art Museum, University of California.

1989 Gonzalez-Torres receives fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

1989 Savings and loan bailout: legislation is enacted to bail out the S&L crisis and create the Resolution Trust Corporation.

1989 Gonzalez-Torres and Louise Lawler collaborate on "Untitled" (*Beautiful*), a stack piece using a news image of the Trident II missile spiraling out of control.

1989 Gonzalez-Torres makes "Untitled" (*Loverboy*), the first of eight curtain pieces.

1989 Works by Andres Serrano, including *Piss Christ*, 1987, are shown at the Virginia Museum of Art in Richmond, with support from the National Endowment for the Arts. Subsequently Donald Wildmon of the American Family Association launches a campaign against government funding for the arts.

1989 fall of the Berlin Wall

1989 On Gay Pride Day Gonzalez-Torres, Ross Laycock, and friends march by his first billboard at Sheridan Square, "Untitled". This is one of the last of the black-and-white dateline works as Gonzalez-Torres shifts from datelines that show "public in public" to making portrait pieces that show "private in public."

1989 Exxon Valdez tanker crashes in Alaska and produces largest oil spill disaster in U.S. history. Exxon is indicted on five criminal counts.

1989 Gonzalez-Torres has self-portrait painted as frieze at the Brooklyn Museum as part of Day Without Art; text reads: *Red Canoe 1987 Paris 1985 Blue Flowers 1984 Harry the Dog 1983 Blue Lake 1986 Interferon 1989 Ross 1983.*

1
Snapshot, Harry, Los Angeles, 1990



2
"Untitled", 1991
Wooden box, paper, photographs, magazines, postcards, and other objects
Box: 2 1/2 x 10 1/4 x 12 1/2 in.



3
"Untitled" (Shield), 1990
C-print jigsaw puzzle in plastic bag
9 1/2 x 7 1/2 in.
Edition of 3, 1 A.P.



4
"Untitled" (I Love NY), 1991
C-print jigsaw puzzle in plastic bag
10 1/2 x 13 1/2 in.
Edition of 3, 1 A.P.



5
Newspaper article, August 11, 1991, clipped by Gonzalez-Torres



6
"Untitled" (Ischia), 1986
Detail
Gold paint and aquatint on paper, framed
20 x 50 in. overall
Three parts: 20 x 15 1/4 in. each



7
Invitation to inaugural solo exhibition,
Felix Gonzalez-Torres at Andrea Rosen Gallery,
New York, 1990

1990 B-2 stealth bomber has much-heralded test flight with disappointing results.

1990 Gonzalez-Torres teaches at California Institute of the Arts, Valencia. His courses are AIDS and Its Representations and Social Landscape.

1990 Dennis Barrie, director of Cincinnati Contemporary Art Center, is tried and acquitted for obscenity after presenting the exhibition *Robert Mapplethorpe: The Perfect Moment*.

1990 Gonzalez-Torres makes first candy piece "Untitled" (*Fortune Cookie Corner*).

1990 Myriam died

1990 moved to L.A. with Ross (already very sick), Harry the dog, Biko, and Pebbles, the Ravenswood, Rossmore, golden hours, Ann and Chris by the pool, magic hour, rented a red car, money for the first time, no more waiting on tables, Golden Girls, great students at CalArts, Millie and Catherine, went back to Madrid after almost twenty years – sweet revenge

1990 Desert Storm: Iraqi Republican Guard invades Kuwait, and the United States response, Operation Desert Shield, is launched to free Kuwait and deter invasion of its oil-rich neighbor, Saudi Arabia.

1990 Gonzalez-Torres makes the stack piece "Untitled" (*Death By Gun*), using pictures of all the people killed by hand guns in the U.S. in one week, derived from an article in *TIME* magazine.

1990 Gonzalez-Torres selects visual material for *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*, edited by Russell Ferguson, Martha Gever, Trinh T. Minh-ha, and Cornel West.

1990 silver ocean in San Francisco

1990 first show with Andrea Rosen

1991 Ross died of AIDS, Dad died three weeks later, a hundred small yellow envelopes of my lover's ashes – his last will

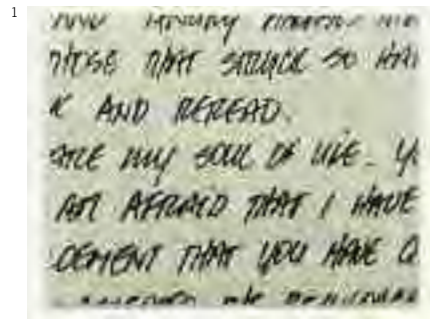
1991 Jorge stopped talking to me, I'm lost – Claudio and Miami Beach saved me

1991 Bruno and Mary, two black cats Ross found in Toronto, came to live with me

1991 the world I knew is gone, moved the four cats, books, and a few things to a new apartment

1991 *Every Week There is Something Different*, four-part project by Gonzalez-Torres at Andrea Rosen Gallery.

1
 "Untitled" (*My Soul of Life*), 1991
 C-print jigsaw puzzle in plastic bag
 7 1/2 x 9 1/2 in.
 Edition of 3, 1 A.P.



2
 "Untitled" (*Chief Justice's Hands*), 1991
 C-print jigsaw puzzle in plastic bag
 10 1/2 x 13 1/2 in.
 Edition of 3, 1 A.P.



3
 Snapshot, Gonzalez-Torres family and friends,
 New York, 1992



4
 Snapshot, Gonzalez-Torres family, Miami



5
 Newspaper article, October 4, 1992, clipped by
 Gonzalez-Torres



6
 "Untitled" (*Lover Boys*), 1991
 Candies individually wrapped in silver cellophane,
 endless supply
 Overall dimensions vary with installation
 Ideal weight: 355 lb.
 Installation view of *Biennial Exhibition* at
 Whitney Museum of American Art, New York,
 1991

7
 "Untitled", 1991
 Billboard
 Dimensions vary with installation
 Installation at 31-33 Second Avenue
 at East Second Street, Manhattan, for
Projects 34: Felix Gonzalez-Torres
 at The Museum of Modern Art,
 New York, 1992



1991 went back to L.A., hospitalized for ten days

1991 Julie moved from Brooklyn to Manhattan

1991 "Untitled": a wooden box Gonzalez-Torres fills over time with photographs, papers, writings, magazines, and other objects, which is privately owned and specified never to be shown publicly.

1991 Gonzalez-Torres begins photographing Ross Laycock's letters, with "Untitled" (*Lover's Letter*), and making puzzle pieces from magnifications of the correspondence.

1991 "Untitled" (*March 5th*) #2 is first piece using light bulbs.

1991 "Untitled" (*Lover Boys*): corner of silver cellophane wrapped candies, ideal weight: 355 pounds, the combined weight of Gonzalez-Torres and Ross Laycock.

1991 Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas is accused by Professor Anita Hill of sexual misconduct when she worked for him ten years earlier. Hearings are held and Thomas is confirmed by the Senate vote 52 to 48.

1991 A videotape of black motorist Rodney King being beaten by four white Los Angeles police officers makes national headlines.

1991 Gonzalez-Torres exhibits at the Whitney Biennial as an individual artist and as member of Group Material.

1991 *Cash Prize*, series of four advertisements in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, organized by Group Material for *In Public*.

1991 Soviet Union disintegrates into fifteen separate countries, thereby ending the Cold War. Its collapse is publicized by the West as a triumph of democracy and capitalism over socialism.

1992 Jeff died of AIDS

1992 President Clinton – hope, twelve years of trickle-down economics came to an end

1992 the forces of hate and ignorance are alive and well in Oregon and Colorado, among other places

1992 Colorado's Amendment 2, which excludes lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals from existing laws that prohibit discrimination, is approved by voters. In 1996 the U.S. Supreme Court determines that the amendment is unconstitutional, by a vote of 6 to 3, with Justices Scalia, Rehnquist, and Thomas dissenting.

1992 "Untitled", an image of Gonzalez-Torres's empty bed, is installed in twenty-four billboard spaces around the city, a project for the Museum of Modern Art.

1
 "Untitled" (America), 1994
 15-watt light bulbs, waterproof extension cords, waterproof rubber sockets
 Overall dimensions vary with installation
 Twelve parts: 65 1/2 ft. in length with 24 1/2 ft. of extra cord each
 Installation view at Schindler House, Los Angeles, for *In Between Art & Architecture* at MAK Center for Art and Architecture, Los Angeles, 2001



2
 "Untitled" (Revenge), 1991
 Light-blue candies individually wrapped in cellophane, endless supply
 Overall dimensions vary with installation
 Ideal weight: 325 lb.
 and
 "Untitled" (Loverboy), 1989
 Blue sheer fabric and metal rod
 Dimensions vary with installation
 View of the artist installing the work for *Felix Gonzalez-Torres: Traveling* at The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago, 1994



3
 "Untitled", 1992
 Billboard
 Dimensions vary with installation
 Installation in Graz for *America Nowhere* at Grazer Kunstverein, Graz, 1992

4
 "Untitled" (Placebo – Landscape – for Roni), 1993
 Candies individually wrapped in gold cellophane, endless supply
 Overall dimensions vary with installation
 Ideal weight: 1,200 lb.
 Installation view of *Felix Gonzalez-Torres: Traveling* at The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, 1994



5
 View of storage area at Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, for *Felix Gonzalez-Torres*, 1995



1992 L.A. Rebellion in response to acquittal of four police officers who beat Rodney King.

1992 started to collect George Nelson clocks and furniture

1993 moved to 24th Street

1993 Sam Nunn is such a sissy, peace might be possible in the Middle East

1993 three years since Ross died, painted kitchen floor bright orange, this book (New York: A.R.T. Press, 1993).

1993 Final stack piece, "Untitled" (Passport #II), composed of pamphlets with images of sky, clouds, and birds.

1993 Gonzalez-Torres finishes "Untitled" (Portrait of Ingvild Goetz), which he says "embodies a very clear system of what constitutes a 'portrait.'"

1993 Gonzalez-Torres produces "Untitled" (Placebo – Landscape – for Roni), gold wrapped candies, last of the candy pieces.

1994 Canada, the United States, and Mexico launch the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and form the world's largest free trade area.

1994 *Traveling*, an exhibition of Gonzalez-Torres at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; and the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago.

1994 "Untitled" (America) is the last of twenty-four light string pieces made over two years, which Gonzalez-Torres calls "my own history of light."

1995 Retrospective exhibition of Gonzalez-Torres at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.

1995 Gonzalez-Torres makes his last version of his self-portrait for exhibition at the Centro Galego de Arte Contemporaneo, Santiago de Compostela, Spain. Text reads: *Red Canoe 1987 Watercolors 1964 Paris 1985 Supreme Court 1986 Blue Lake 1986 Our Own Apartment 1976 Rosa 1977 Güaimaro 1957 New York City 1979 Pebbles and Biko 1985 Ross 1983 Civil Rights Act 1964 Mariel Boatlift 1980 White Shirt 1984 Julie 1987 An Easy Death 1991 CNN 1980 Black Monday 1987 Berlin Wall 1989 Great Society 1964 Venice 1985 Wawanaisa Lake 1987 U.N. 1945 Mother 1986 Myriam 1990 VCR 1978 Dad 1991 Bay of Pigs 1961 D-Day 1944 Interferon 1989 Jeff 1978 Silver Ocean 1990 H-Bomb 1954 The World I Knew Is Gone 1991 Bruno and Mary 1991 Madrid 1971 MTV 1981 Rafael 1992 May 1968 Andrea 1990 Twenty-fourth Street 1993 LA 1990 Placebo 1991 George Nelson Clocks 1993 A view to remember 1995.*

1996 January 9, Gonzalez-Torres dies of AIDS in Miami.

1996 New protease-blocking drugs are shown effective in combating AIDS. Protease inhibitors interrupt a key step in the chemical sequence by which HIV replicates and are touted as the means by which HIV can become a “manageable disease.” The FDA licenses indinavir, viracept, ritonavir, and saquinavir based on short term clinical data.

1996 Yasser Arafat is elected president in the first Palestinian elections. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians vote in the election, endorsing Arafat and his peace policies.

1997 Sprengel Museum Hannover mounts exhibition of Gonzalez-Torres’s work and publishes a catalogue raisonné.

1999 Y2K: hype about impending millennial doom creates paranoia resulting in billions of dollars spent on Y2K computer software upgrade.

2000 Supreme Court rules 5 to 4 on *George W. Bush, et al. v. Albert Gore, Jr., et al.*, to put a stop to the Florida ballot recount, resulting in Bush becoming president.

2000 Hillary Rodham Clinton is elected U.S. senator in New York.

2003 The Art Institute of Chicago and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art purchase Gonzalez-Torres’s self-portrait, “*Untitled*”, 1989. As co-owners they share the right to make changes to the portrait.

2003 U.S. forces invade Iraq without authorization of the United Nations Security Council. The war is waged by the Bush administration with the allegation that Saddam Hussein possesses weapons of mass destruction. No such weapons were found and in 2004 the CIA released a report stating Hussein had not been an imminent threat.