

*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 "UNTITLED" (GO-GO DANCING PLATFORM), 1991**

While each body of work follows its own set of guiding principles, Gonzalez-Torres's practice utilized intentional variations, within and between bodies of work, in order to foster engagement and questioning.

It may be informative to consider the Core Tenets for different works/bodies of work to reflect on how they differ and align with one another.

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FELIX GONZALEZ-TORRES

*"Untitled" (Go-Go Dancing Platform)*

1991

Wood, light bulbs, light sockets, electrical cord, and acrylic paint

21 ½ x 72 x 72 inches

FGTF# GF1991-022

- "Untitled" (Go-Go Dancing Platform) is a unique artwork.
- The work consists of a light blue platform with forty-eight light bulbs evenly spaced along the four edges of the top surface of the platform. The platform measures 72 x 72 x 21 ½ inches in height; the exterior surfaces are smooth and have no visible seams. The tops of the sockets are flush with the top surface of the platform, so that only the bulbs are visible. The bulbs originally chosen were smaller than standard bulbs, round, 7.5 watt, incandescent, inside frosted, with a standard base. The platform sits directly on the floor. (The edges and corners of the platform have no reveal.)
- A go-go dancer may be part of each installation of the work. A dancer may appear on the platform not more than once a day, for a limited duration (approximately five minutes), at an undisclosed time determined solely by the dancer.<sup>1</sup> The dancer is not performing for others; the dancer may be present even when no one else is in the space, and the dancer's movements are not directed towards or influenced by any individuals that may be in the space (including while entering and exiting). The dancer wears a silver lamé bikini or briefs, sneakers, and a personal listening device with headphones.
- The work is not intended to be exhibited with any burned-out, malfunctioning, or broken light bulbs (or empty sockets); such light bulbs are intended to be replaced promptly. The work can be exhibited with all of the light bulbs on, or all of the light bulbs off. All of the light bulbs are intended to match one another at any given time. Each time the work is installed, the description of the original bulbs should be used as a guideline.
- The owner has the right to interpret the specific, yet open-ended parameters of the work on an ongoing basis and from installation to installation, and throughout each installation.
- There is a tangible object associated with this work. While the original platform Gonzalez-Torres first exhibited was received by the initial owner, the continued existence of the work is not contingent on the original platform. The nature of the work and its purposeful use of commonplace material allows for repair and/or replacement (in part or in whole) of the platform.

- Regardless of its malleability, the work is only the work in one location at a time.
- Whether the original platform / tangible object associated with the work or an alternate platform is used for a given exhibition, the platform exhibited is the work, and should only be referred to as the work during the course of the exhibition.
- It is the owner's (or authorized borrower's) right to determine whether a go-go dancer will be a part of an installation of the work.
- If the owner (or authorized borrower) chooses for a dancer(s) to be part of an installation of the work, it is their responsibility to choose dancers who are engaged in understanding their role in the work and the parameters that pertain to the dancers.
- The owner has the exclusive right to choose to lend the work, and the exclusive right to decide whether to allow a platform to be fabricated by the borrower (in which case, details on the specifications of the original platform are provided), or if they will lend the original platform / tangible object associated with the work.
- In lending the work, the owner is thereby extending to the authorized borrower for the term of the loan certain rights and responsibilities to make decisions about the work, within the borrower's interpretation of the specific, yet open-ended parameters of the work.<sup>2 3</sup>
- Gonzalez-Torres included essential conceptual information throughout the work's caption. The precise wording and punctuation of the title are conceptually significant.<sup>4</sup> The date of the work does not change regardless of the date of an installation. The medium and dimensions listed in the work's caption do not change regardless of the decisions made with respect to any given installation. If and when the title, date, medium and/or dimensions are listed, each element of the caption remains consistent regardless of the decisions made with respect to any given installation.<sup>5 6</sup>
- Decisions about a particular installation of the work may shift each time the work is installed (and potentially throughout each installation).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A basic protocol should be developed to allow for the dancer(s) to come and go from the exhibition space discreetly and maintain an undisclosed schedule.

<sup>2</sup> Prior to and throughout the duration of any installation, the owner or authorized borrower must ensure that a structure is in place that allows for thoughtful and ongoing decision-making.

<sup>3</sup> The owner should use discretion in accepting or declining the loan of the work for exhibitions. The owner should prioritize borrowers who: understand that by borrowing the work they are taking on rights and responsibilities to make additive decisions about the work; understand the work's capacity to shift over time; and understand that it is their responsibility to leave audiences space to encounter and interpret the work on their own terms.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> Felix Gonzalez-Torres let exhibitors decide whether or not to include caption labels on the walls (or elsewhere) in an exhibition. If it is standard or desired for an exhibitor to include any of the following caption elements: title, date, medium and/or dimensions in a caption label (or checklists, etc.), each element of the caption remains unchanged, while installations of the work may vary.

<sup>6</sup> Gonzalez-Torres typically chose not to include descriptive or interpretive information on wall labels/text. Should a borrower choose to include any descriptive, interpretive, explanatory, or mediating wall texts – or if including such information is part of the exhibitor's standard protocol – the full caption should also be present but ideally displayed on a separate label or with a separation from any descriptive or interpretive information. (By doing so, the language and structure that Gonzalez-Torres specified for the captions of his artworks can be reflected upon independently from text generated by an exhibitor.)

<sup>7</sup> While the core of the work remains constant, the decisions made within the specific, yet open-ended parameters of the work by an owner (or authorized borrower) about a particular installation add to both the conceptual and material history of the work. There may be a certain degree of liberation in realizing that no particular installation of the work eliminates or supersedes previous installations; however decisions about the work should always be made deliberately.

*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.*

Document In Process