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**THE HAMMER MUSEUM IS THE ONLY WEST COAST VENUE
FOR THE MAJOR RETROSPECTIVE *RICHARD ARTSCHWAGER!***

On view June 15 – September 1, 2013



“Art = a step into the unknown.”—Richard Artschwager

Los Angeles—*Richard Artschwager!*, the most comprehensive retrospective to date of the artist’s work, opens at the Hammer Museum June 15, 2013. The exhibition is organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art in association with the Yale University Art Gallery, and curated by Jennifer Gross, Seymour H. Knox, Jr. Curator, Modern and Contemporary Art, Yale University Art Gallery. The Hammer’s presentation is organized by senior curator Anne Ellegood. Following the presentation of *Richard Artschwager!* at the Hammer Museum, the exhibition will travel to the Haus der Kunst, Munich and the Nouveau Musée National de Monaco.

Richard Artschwager! features over 145 works spanning six decades, including sculptures, paintings, drawings, photographs, and prints. Often associated with Pop, Minimalism, and Conceptual art, his work never fit neatly into any of these categories. His artistic practice consistently explored questions regarding his own visual and physical engagement with the world; his objects straddle the line between illusion and reality. The exhibition reveals the artist’s prescience in his career-long commitment to exploring the profound effect photography and technology have had in transforming our engagement with the world. His work has responded to and challenged how these media—and our experience of things as images rather than as things in themselves—have shifted human experience from being rooted in primary physical experience to a knowledge mediated by secondary sources such as newspapers, television, and the Internet.

“In many ways this exhibition epitomizes the kind of artist the Hammer likes to show,” remarks Hammer director Ann Philbin. “Richard is an artist who is not well known by the wider public but deeply admired by other artists around the world. His work is complex, humorous, irreverent, and profoundly unique. Sadly, Richard passed away in February at the age of 89, so we are particularly honored to be a part of continuing his legacy.”

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

The exhibition explores the entire scope of the artist’s career and will be presented in Galleries 1 and 2 of the Hammer. For more than fifty years, Richard Artschwager (1923-2013) remained steadily at the forefront of contemporary art. He began making art in the 1950s, had his first one-person exhibition at the age of forty-two at the Leo Castelli Gallery in New York in 1965, and made his first appearance in a Whitney Annual in 1966.

As Jennifer Gross notes in her catalogue essay, “The works presented here both defy and affirm our aesthetic expectations, occupying the familiar spaces of sculpture and rehearsing painting’s traditional genres. Yet they hover just out of reach of our physical and visual anticipation of what they should be or reveal to us. Artschwager stated early in his career that he wanted to make ‘useless objects’—art that would halt our absentminded engagement with the world around us and insist upon visual and physical encounters in real time and a shared space. The works presented in this exhibition attest to the originality and persistence of his vision.”

Artschwager long used commercial and industrial materials in both his paintings and sculptures. A gifted woodworker who made his living making furniture throughout much of the 1950s, he began to incorporate Formica into his art, calling it “the great ugly material, the horror of the age, which I came to like suddenly . . . it looked as if wood had passed through it, as if the thing only half existed . . . But it’s a picture of something at the same time, it’s an object.” Artschwager became increasingly interested in combining wood and Formica in his art and by the early 1960s he was using these materials to create works that hovered between painting and sculpture and frequently took furniture as a point of departure. He worked with a vocabulary of domestic forms in an attempt to articulate space and our perception of it. Similarly, in 1962 he started to paint on Celotex fiberboard, an inexpensive construction material with a rough surface that gives his painted works the look of something distantly recalled. For decades he examined the relationships between fundamental, everyday objects—including tables, chairs, windows, mirrors, and baskets. He was interested in not only how these objects related to each other visually, but how our perception and understanding of each informed our experience of them.

As curator Jennifer Gross notes, “Artschwager had come to the realization that art lay as much in the seeing as in the making—that it lay in one’s perspective on things, not just in craft. While he would continue to be an object-maker whose attention to detail was ‘fanatical,’ he was determined that his future efforts would be applied to things to be looked at, to what he identified as the ‘useless’ realm of art.”

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Richard Artschwager was born in 1923 in Washington, D.C., to a German father (an agricultural scientist with a government job and an interest in photography) and a Russian mother (an amateur painter). The family moved to Las Cruces, New Mexico, while Artschwager was still a boy, in part due to his father’s poor health. Artschwager entered Cornell University in 1941, where he studied biology, chemistry, and mathematics. After being drafted into World War II military service in 1944 (he was superficially wounded in the Battle of the Bulge), he returned to the U.S. in 1947 and completed his degree in physics

the following year. Moving to New York upon graduation, he pursued various trades, including working as a baby photographer, and studied with the modernist painter Amédée Ozenfant. During the 1950s Artschwager became a carpenter, designing and making furniture in New York, but he soon turned again to art, initially painting abstract pictures derived from his memories of the New Mexican desert landscape of his boyhood, while continuing to produce commissioned furniture designs.

In addition to having his first solo show at Castelli in 1965 and appearing in the *Primary Structures* show at the Jewish Museum in 1966, he began appearing in Whitney Annuals in 1966 and was shown in the 1968, 1970, and 1972 Annuals and the 1983 and 1987 Biennials. In 1988, the Whitney organized a mid-career retrospective of his work, which toured to numerous national and international venues, and in 2002 he was the subject of a solo show at the Museum of Contemporary Art in North Miami. His work has also been shown in gallery shows throughout the world and in a number of Whitney exhibitions, including *The American Century: Art and Culture 1950–2000* and most recently in *Legacy: The Emily Fisher Landau Collection*. Artschwager died in February 2013 in New York at the age of 89.

ABOUT THE CATALOGUE

The exhibition is accompanied by a scholarly monograph, co-published by the Yale University Art Gallery and the Whitney Museum, and distributed by Yale University Press. The catalogue includes essays by Jennifer R. Gross; Cathleen Chaffee, the Horace W. Goldsmith Assistant Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Gallery; Adam D. Weinberg, Alice Pratt Brown Director, Whitney Museum of American Art; and Ingrid Schaffner, Senior Curator at the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, and consulting curator for the project. The essays, along with new photographs, and previously unpublished archival images, illuminate previously unaddressed aspects of Artschwager's oeuvre, including his response to life in an age of mechanical reproduction, the positioning of his work in relation to mainstream art practice in the late twentieth century, and the relationship of his more recent work to Post-Impressionism. The catalogue presents a comprehensive survey of the artist's work as well as a checklist of the works included in the exhibition (Paper over board, 256 pages. Retail price \$65).

CREDIT

This exhibition was organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, in association with the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven.

The Hammer Museum's presentation of *Richard Artschwager!* is made possible by a major grant from the LLWW Foundation. Generous support is also provided by Fundación Jumex, A.C.; The Audrey & Sydney Irmas Charitable Foundation; The Broad Art Foundation; Linda and Bob Gersh; and Chara Schreyer.

The exhibition was made possible by the National Committee of the Whitney Museum of American Art, The Broad Art Foundation, The Andrew J. and Christine C. Hall Foundation, Allison and Warren Kanders, Norman and Melissa Selby, and Alice and Tom Tisch.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

The Hammer will also host a series of free exhibition-related public programs. Visit hammer.ucla.edu for a complete list of programs.

ABOUT THE HAMMER MUSEUM

The Hammer Museum, a public arts unit of the University of California, Los Angeles, is dedicated to exploring the diversity of artistic expression through the ages. Its collections, exhibitions, and programs span the classic to the cutting-edge in art, architecture, and design, recognizing that artists play a crucial role in all aspects of culture and society.

The museum houses the Armand Hammer Collection of Old Master, Impressionist, and Post-Impressionist paintings and the Armand Hammer Daumier and Contemporaries Collection. The museum also houses the Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, comprising more than 45,000 prints, drawings, photographs, and artists' books from the Renaissance to the present; and oversees the management of the Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden on the UCLA campus. The Hammer's newest collection, the Hammer Contemporary Collection, is highlighted by works by artists such as Lari Pittman, Kara Walker, Ed Ruscha, Barbara Kruger, Mark Bradford, Richard Hawkins, Lynn Foulkes, among many others.

The Hammer presents major single-artist and thematic exhibitions of historical and contemporary art. It also presents approximately ten Hammer Projects exhibitions each year, providing international and local artists with a laboratory-like environment to create new work or to present existing work in a new context.

As a cultural center, the Hammer offers a diverse range of free public programs throughout the year, including lectures, readings, symposia, film screenings, and music performances. The Hammer's Billy Wilder Theater houses these widely acclaimed public programs and is the new home of the UCLA Film & Television Archive's renowned cinematheque.

HAMMER MUSEUM INFORMATION

For current program and exhibition information call **310-443-7000** or visit **www.hammer.ucla.edu**.

Hours: Tuesday–Friday 11am–8pm; Saturday & Sunday 11am–5pm; closed Mondays, July 4, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

Admission: \$10 for adults; \$5 for seniors (65+) and UCLA Alumni Association members; free for Museum members, students with identification, UC faculty/staff, military personnel, veterans, and visitors 17 and under. The Museum is free on Thursdays for all visitors. Public programs are always free.

Location/Parking: The Hammer is located at 10899 Wilshire Boulevard, at Westwood Boulevard. Parking is available under the Museum. Rate is \$3 for three hours with Museum validation. Bicycles park free.

Hammer Museum Tours: For group tour reservations and information, call 310-443-7041.

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RICHARD ARTSCHWAGER!

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1. Richard Artschwager. *Untitled*, 1962. Acrylic on canvas. 45 1/2 x 61 in. (115.6 x 154.9 cm). Collection of Mrs. David Hermelin. © Richard Artschwager. Photo credit: Tim Thayer.



3. Richard Artschwager. *New Housing*, 1964. Liquitex on Celotex with Formica frame. 41 1/2 x 37 1/4 in. (105.4 x 94.6 cm). Private Collection. © Richard Artschwager. Photo credit: Jason Mandella.



2. Richard Artschwager. *Baby*, 1962. Acrylic on Celotex, in aluminum frame. 49 1/4 x 41 1/3 in. (125 x 105 cm). Kunstmuseum Winterthur. Permanent loan from a private collection. © Richard Artschwager. Photo credit: Courtesy Galerie Buchmann Basel. Photo by J. Littkeman.



4. Richard Artschwager. *Description of Table*, 1964. Melamine laminate on plywood. 26 1/8 x 31 7/8 x 31 7/8 in. (66.4 x 81 x 81 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc. 66.48. © Richard Artschwager. Photo credit: © 2000 Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Photograph by Steven Sloman.

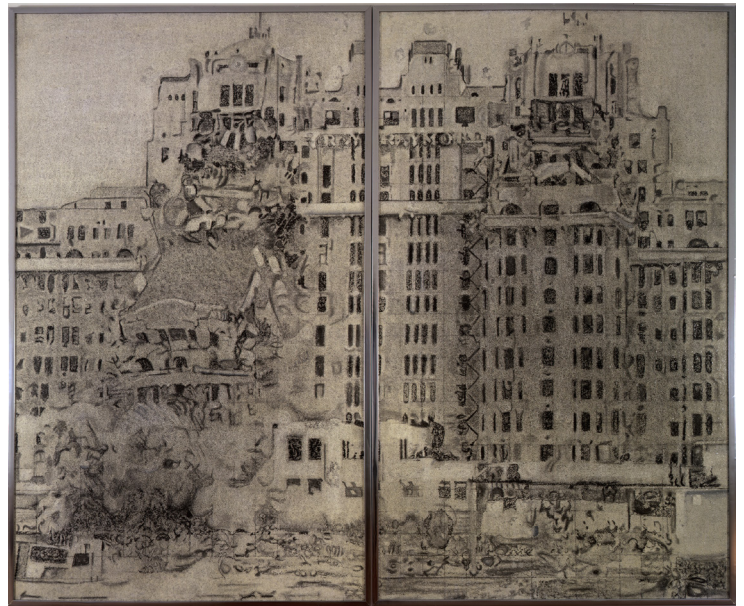
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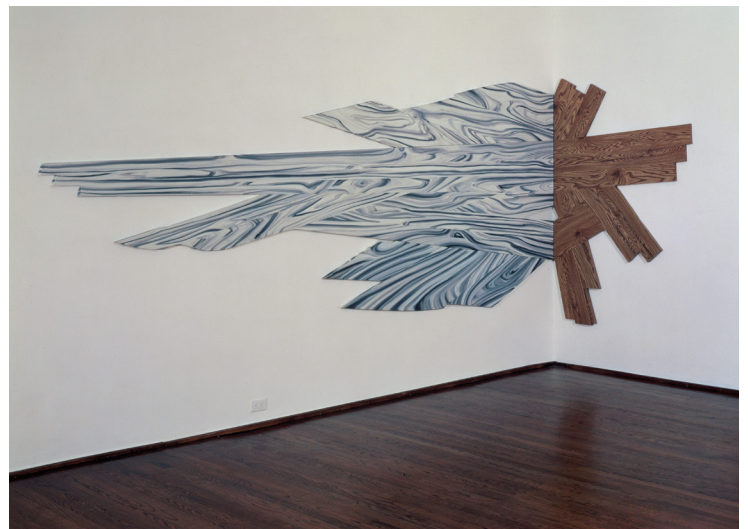
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5. Richard Artschwager. *Logus (Blue Logus)*, 1967. Wood/Formica. 35 x 45 1/2 x 48 in. (88.8 x 115.6 x 121.2 cm). Museum Ludwig, Cologne. Peter and Irene Ludwig Stiftung. © Richard Artschwager.



6. Richard Artschwager. *Destruction III*, 1972. Acrylic on Celotex with metal frame. 74 x 88 in. (188 x 223.5 cm). Stefan T. Edlis Collection. © Richard Artschwager. Photo credit: Courtesy Mary Boone Gallery, New York.



8. Richard Artschwager. *Journal II*, 1991. Formica and acrylic on wood. Two panels: 56 x 172 in. (142.2 x 436.9 cm) left; 80 x 51 in. (203.2 x 129.5 cm) right. Chazen Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Elvehjem Museum of Art General, Juli Plant Grainger, Walter J. and Cecille Hunt, John S. Lord, Cyril W. Nave, F.J. Sensenbrenner, and Earl O. Vits Endowment Funds purchase, 1991.135a-d. © Richard Artschwager.

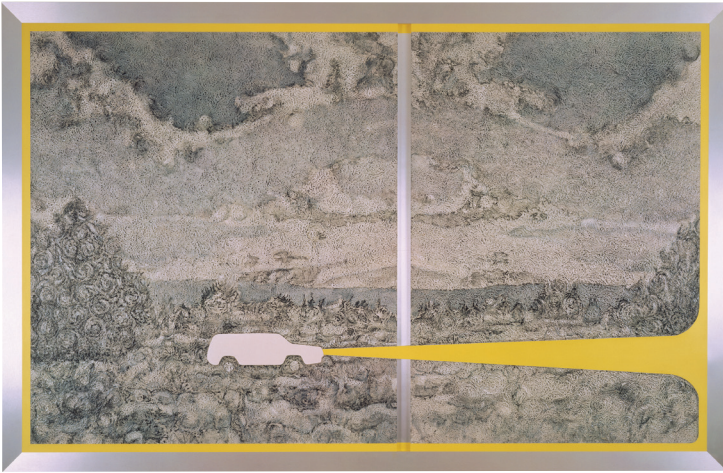


7. Richard Artschwager. *Triptych V*, 1972. Liquitex on Celotex with metal frames. 81 1/2 x 140 1/4 in. (207 x 356 cm) overall. The Eli and Edythe L. Broad Collection, Los Angeles. © Richard Artschwager.

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9. Richard Artschwager. *The White Cherokee*, 1991. Acrylic and Formica on Celotex with metal frame. 57 1/2 x 89 in. (146.1 x 226.1 cm). Speyer Family Collection, New York. © Richard Artschwager.



10. Richard Artschwager. *Light Bulbs*, 2007. Charcoal, pastel, and acrylic on handmade paper on soundboard in artist's frame. 52 x 75 1/2 in. (132.1 x 191.8 cm). Private Collection. © Richard Artschwager. Photo credit: Gagosian Gallery. Photography by Robert McKeever.



11. Richard Artschwager. *Exclamation Point (Chartreuse)*, 2008. Plastic bristles on a mahogany core painted with latex. 65 x 22 x 22 in. (165.1 x 55.9 x 55.9 cm). Gagosian Gallery, New York. © Richard Artschwager. Photography by Robert McKeever.