

## Artist Biographies: Leonardo Drew and Ursula Von Rydingsvard

**Leonardo Drew** is a builder and maker on an epic scale. He creates dynamic, abstract sculptures and installations that explode and expand into their surroundings. His work defies gravity, disrupting normal conventions of time and space, and conveys a feeling of barely contained or restrained energy and chaos. In Drew's words, "I think of it as making chaos legible." A highly skilled craftsman, Drew meticulously and deliberately ages and distresses new materials by painting, burning, staining, corroding, scuffing, scratching, chopping, and splintering to create the appearance of found and weathered objects in works of art that explore timeless cycles of deterioration, regeneration, and transformation.

Drew was born in Tallahassee, Florida, in 1961 and grew up in Bridgeport, Connecticut. He currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. He studied at the Parsons School of Design, New York (1981–82) and received his BFA from the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, New York (1985).

His work is included in the collections of the North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, NC; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Tate, London; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Brooklyn Museum, New York; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR; Denver Art Museum; Detroit Institute of Arts; de Young Museum, San Francisco; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; McNay Art Museum, San Antonio; New Orleans Museum of Art; Pérez Art Museum Miami; Philbrook Museum of Art, Tulsa, OK; Saint Louis Art Museum; Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC, among others.

Recent solo exhibitions of his work have been featured at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT, Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson; North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, NC; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Madison Square Park, New York; Anthony Meier Fine Arts, San Francisco; Galerie Lelong, New York; Pearl Lam Galleries, Hong Kong; de Young Museum, San Francisco; Talley Dunn Gallery, Dallas; CAM Raleigh, NC; SITE Santa Fe; SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, GA; deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, MA; Artpace, San Antonio; Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC; and Blaffer Art Museum, Houston, among others.

Drew collaborated with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company on the production of *Ground Level Overlay* in New York (1995). He has two major permanent commissions at San Francisco International Airport, Harvey Milk Terminal 1, and at Facebook headquarters, Menlo Park, CA.

**Ursula von Rydingsvard** has worked with wood as a medium for most of her career, creating vessel-shaped forms that reference the landscape, human body, and domestic objects in monumental structures with forceful and dramatic physical presences. She creates her sculptures intuitively, layer by layer, without preliminary sketches or models, and the irregular markings that cover the entire surface remind the viewer that this is a labor-intensive process. The artist says, “[M]y love for wood is part of my history. I come from a long line of Polish peasant farmers, and they were surrounded with wood—wooden homes, wooden fences, domestic implements, wooden tools to farm the land. There is, I guess, a feeling of familiarity, a feeling of comfort and grace. And at the same time, because of the familiarity, I can really push it around.”

Von Rydingsvard was born to Polish parents in Deensen, Germany, in 1942. Her family immigrated to the United States in 1950, settling in Plainville, Connecticut. She earned both her BA and MA in art education from the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida, in 1965, and her MFA from Columbia University, New York, in 1975. She also received an honorary doctorate from the Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, in 1991. Von Rydingsvard currently lives and works in New York City.

Her works are in numerous public and private collections, including the North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, NC; Brooklyn Museum, New York; Centre for Contemporary Art, Zamek Ujazdowski, Warsaw; Cincinnati Art Museum; Detroit Institute of Arts; High Museum of Art, Atlanta; Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH; Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO; Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, WI; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Microsoft Corporation, Redmond, WA; Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO; Orlando Museum of Art, Florida; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, among others.

Permanent commissioned sculptures by von Rydingsvard include works at the San Francisco International Airport; Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA; Princeton University, NJ; Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge; Bloomberg Corporation, New York; and Barclays Center, New York, among others. Recent solo museum exhibitions *Ursula von Rydingsvard: Nothing but Art*, a touring retrospective in Poland that was held at the Centre of Polish Sculpture, Orońsko; Royal Łazienki Museum, Warsaw; and National Museum in Krakow; *Ursula von Rydingsvard: The Contour of Feeling* at the Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia; *Now, She*, Philadelphia Museum of Art; Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Bretton, UK; and a solo presentation at the 56th Venice Biennale. A documentary feature about the artist’s practice, *Ursula von Rydingsvard: Into Her Own*, was released in 2019.