

For Immediate Release

THE DAVID IRELAND HOUSE PRESENTS *THE SOUND OF BLUE*



David Ireland, *The Sound of Blue*, 1983.

San Francisco, CA — *The Sound of Blue* (April 8 through August 20, 2016)—the second exhibition at the [David Ireland House](#) since its [inaugural opening](#) to the public—continues to introduce viewers to the late conceptualist’s home and artistic practice with a new selection of work drawn from the 500 Capp Street Foundation’s 3,000-piece collection. Guest curated by artist **Rebecca Goldfarb**, the evolving, site-specific installation presents artworks in various media that explore the riddles embedded in David Ireland’s work, his interest in sensory experience, and his investigation of repetitive action and the marking of time.

The exhibition takes its title from the name of a rarely experienced sculpture Ireland made in 1983, *The Sound of Blue*, which will be on view in the home’s Accordion Shop gallery. The piece consists of a copper pipe on a concrete base that houses a propane tank. Upon lighting the sound of ignition is amplified by a small microphone and a blue flame appears, reflecting Ireland’s interest in how sensory information is processed.

Goldfarb has selected the works on view and will also work with three additional Bay Area artists and the David Ireland House’s Artist Guides to reinterpret and reconfigure the installation over the course of the exhibition.

Designer and creator of Fuseproject **Yves Béhar**, filmmaker and founder of the Black Rock Arts Foundation **Tomas McCabe**, San Francisco based artist **Amy Trachtenberg**, and the home's **Artist Guides**, will in turn intervene and re-situate certain pieces in the house, thereby creating an exhibition in a continual state of flux. Each will bring personal experience and background to Ireland's work, allowing new meanings to arise and expanding on the artist's process-based vocabulary.

"The exhibition is organized around a series of inquiries that trace alongside Ireland's thoughts, echoing his contemplations regarding the inconstancy of life through objects and everyday actions," says Goldfarb. "Beginning with *The Sound of Blue*—a work that illustrates Ireland's fascination with the confluence of sound, sight, and language—the selected works invite viewers to pay attention to how one pays attention. They also embrace the flux and complexities of Ireland's own approach, existing similarly as a process with shifting elements that serve as catalysts for site-specific and site-responsive conversations."

Artworks on view in The Garage gallery—a new exhibition space created in the location of the home's former carport—explore Ireland's contemplations on daily routine, consumption, and materiality. For instance, *Untitled (Grey Marcel B)* c.1980, a combined lamp and sculptural arrangement of sardine tins on a music-like stand, "reveals Ireland's penchant for activated works, salty foods, and the functional (or dysfunctional) objects of one's life," notes Goldfarb. "The work is also a nod from Ireland to the artist Marcel Broodthaers, evoking both artists' love for the poetry of the mundane."

The Garage gallery installation also includes works in media ranging from a hair dryer to silverware to basic industrial materials such as copper piping and cement. One sculptural assemblage, which comprises a fork embedded in concrete and a Mason jar containing murky water from the washing of an elusive 100-year-old artifact, invites viewers to question an object's intended use and meaning.

"In the same way that Ireland approached the house itself as a holistic work of art, he considered everyday materials as an anthropologist might," Goldfarb comments. "He encouraged others to see an unfolding of time within his transformations of materials. The particular works selected for this exhibition map Ireland's trajectory as it traveled from an object's implied function, to a question of daily necessity, to broader ruminations on sheer existence."

On view in the main floors of the home, works such as *Trial Proof A (Grey): A Variation on 79 side-to-side passes of a Dumbball, dedicated to the memory of John Cage 1912-1992*—a lithograph piece in which Ireland used a dumbball as an etching tool to write a musical score—exemplifies the performative and conceptual aspects embedded in the artist's work.

Ireland's embrace of chance and visual poetry are explored in objects such as *Peat* (1978), an olfactory-based work of art consisting of a single chair upon which an electric frying pan sprinkled with water and filled with peat moss emits a distinct and subtle aroma. *Untitled* (n.d.), a sculpture composed of split firewood logs and a shovel, pays tribute to Marcel Duchamp and also illustrates Ireland's use of readymade objects in conjunction with organic materials.

Also on view will be *The Perfect Thought* (n.d.), a burnt James Lee Byars book placed on a tray; *Woodstack* (1987), a chest-high pile of firewood that partially obstructs a passageway; and a fresh selection of archival photographs, ephemera, and modified household objects.

A full slate of related public programs will accompany the exhibition. More information is available at 500cappstreet.org.

About Rebecca Goldfarb

Rebecca Goldfarb is an artist, volunteer firefighter, and professor at the San Francisco Art Institute in the New Genres Department. Her conceptual undertakings are realized in a range of media including sculpture, photography, and installation. Projects often explore the notion of 'implying more' both visually and conceptually, inviting in the mechanics of language and perception to investigate the acts of seeing and thinking. Her work is in numerous private collections and has been exhibited at venues including Anglim Gilbert Gallery, The Battery, and Eli Ridgway in San Francisco; Orange County Museum, CA; Art Museum of Los Gatos, CA.; Stanford University, CA; and Gallery Nora Fitch, Buenos Aires.

About Yves Béhar

Designer and entrepreneur Yves Béhar is the founder and chief designer of fuseproject, established in 1999. He is also the chief creative officer of Jawbone and the co-founder of August, a next generation home-entry system. Over the last twenty years Béhar has also pioneered design as force for positive social and environmental change. In 2015, he received the prestigious Design Miami/ Design Visionary Award, and has previously been honored with the London Design Museum's Design of the Year, Cooper Hewitt's National Design Award, and the IDSA Design of the Decade Award. Béhar was named a Top 25 Visionary by *TIME* magazine, and was recently named "Most Influential Industrial Designer in the World" by *Forbes*.

I'm personally intrigued by Ireland's background as an industrial designer, and I can absolutely relate to his interest in the way we interact with environments and objects. In this way, his home is not only a piece of art but also a fantastical manifestation of design—the intentionality behind each artifact, each space, each moment, is truly profound. I look forward to building on Ireland's sense of wonderment, and hopefully inspiring the artist-designer inside all of us. — Yves Behar

About Tomas McCabe

As Associate Director of Strategic Initiatives for Burning Man, Tomas McCabe leverages his background in the visual arts and environmental sustainability to further Burning Man's mission to support community-based and civic-oriented art. He has also facilitated the placement of public art pieces throughout the globe. A longtime member of San Francisco's creative community, McCabe has also worked as a freelance film editor and is an accomplished documentary filmmaker. His award-winning films include *Bums' Paradise* (2003), as well as several ethnographic and environmental documentaries made while consulting as a Peace Corps volunteer in Guatemala from 1988 to 1991.

I was first introduced to Ireland's work when I visited 500 Capp Street in 2012. I was so inspired by the visit that I immediately went back to my workshop and created concrete candleholders after Ireland's own. I am honored to be one of the artists re-envisioning the works on display in this exhibition. — Tomas McCabe

About Amy Trachtenberg

San Francisco artist Amy Trachtenberg's interdisciplinary practice includes painting, sculpture, and installation specific to sites and to theater in a wide range of materials and situations. For over three decades, her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally in solo and group shows. Recent exhibitions include *Dumbball: David Ireland and his Circle* at Anglim Gilbert Gallery; *Found/Made* at The San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles; *The Possible* at BAM/PFA; and a solo show, *From India to the Planet Mars*, at Brian Gross Fine Art. Her studio practice also includes public works projects, the most recent of which is *Ecstatic Voyaging*, a ceramic tile installation for the new BART Station opening in 2018.

Over the decades I knew Ireland, we shared conversations, images, offerings, and silence on matters that link art making (or not making art) to a quality of animism that consciously attributes life or soul to inanimate objects and phenomena. I'm excited to explore objects, drawings, and writings from 500 Capp Street's archive through a particular anthropological lens on Ireland as an animist. — Amy Trachtenberg

About the Artist Guides

Tours of the David Ireland House are led by trained guides from the Bay Area's community of art students and recent graduates. They currently include: Jared Gruendl, Cait Molloy, Natasha Matteson, Andrew Sheets, Vladimir Tikay, Kitty Torres, Pedro Verdin, and Madison Voelkel.

As a teacher, mentor, and ardent supporter of young artists, Ireland was constantly helping others find their voice and challenging them to look at art making (and not making) with a fresh perspective. For the exhibition finale, we're inviting visitors to experience Ireland's work through the eyes of our next generation of Bay Area artists, in particular the home's Artist Guides. — Carlie Wilmans, Executive Director, the 500 Capp Street Foundation

General Tour Information

The David Ireland House offers three 90-minute tours daily on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday (11am, 2pm and 4pm); and an additional evening tour on the last Thursday of every month (at 7pm). Tours accommodate a maximum of 8 people. Advance book is required. For more information and tickets, visit 500cappstreet.org.

About David Ireland

David Ireland (1930-2009) is internationally admired for a diverse and prolific body of work concerned with the beauty inherent in everyday things and the making of art as a part of daily life. His hybrid practice blends sculpture, architecture, painting, and performance, and often draws on ordinary materials such as dirt, concrete, wood, or wire he collected over time. His work is featured in collections of prominent institutions, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Smithsonian; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art. Ireland's work is influenced heavily by his travels in Africa and his studies in printmaking and industrial arts at Oakland's California College of Arts and Crafts (now California College of the Arts). In 2004, the Oakland Museum of California organized the first full-scale traveling retrospective of Ireland's work, which included objects and ephemera related to 500 Capp Street.

Ireland is best known for his home at 500 Capp Street, which he embedded with art and slowly transformed into a site-specific installation now regarded as the inspiration, source of materials, and repository for some of his most important work. Following a meticulous two-year restoration effort, visitors to the David Ireland House will be able to experience the late artist's enigmatic home and immerse themselves in a 360-degree portrait of one of the West Coast's most influential conceptual artists.

About the 500 Capp Street Foundation

The 500 Capp Street Foundation carries on the legacy of late conceptual artist David Ireland by affording a broad audience the opportunity to experience his home and masterpiece as well as his extant body of work. In the spirit of Ireland, the Foundation conducts public tours and events, maintains a permanent archive of personal papers, photographs, and publications, and will host a residency program, launching in 2017.

The renovation of 500 Capp Street is supported by a generous grant from San Francisco Heritage's Alice Ross Carey Preservation Fund.



Photography Credits: *The Sound of Blue*, 1983; collection of 500 Capp Street Foundation; photo: Preston/Kalogiros

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