

DENNIS ADAMS (b. 1948 Des Moines)

The Archive, 1990

Duratrans lightbox, vinyl mural, acrylic, fluorescent lights.
240 x 285 x 431 in.

Exhibition:

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C., 1990

Notes:

This intervention was sponsored by the Hirshhorn Museum as part of a special 'Works' program in which artists were invited to produce projects for unconventional sites in, on or around the museum complex. At the time of the installation, Washington was embroiled in the Mapplethorpe-Serrano controversy.

The Archive was sited at the entrance to a defunct underground pedestrian passageway that originally connected the museum's surrounding plaza to its sculpture garden across the street. The orientation of the tunnel forms a sight-line that points directly to the National Archives across the mall.

Two large-scale photographs were installed at different elevations and distances in relation to the tunnel entrance. The upper photograph was an inverted image of the pediment of the National Archives. It was installed on the back entrance wall. The lower photograph was a back-illuminated image of Bertolt Brecht testifying in front of the Un-American Activities Committee in 1947. The image was doubled to create a mirroring effect and was installed at the bottom of the stairs several feet into the tunnel.

Literature:

Cruz, Amada. "Interview with Dennis Adams." *Dennis Adams*. Exhibition brochure. Washington, D.C.: Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, 1990.

Richard, Paul. "'Archive' of a Hidden Washington, at Hirshhorn." *The Washington Post*, April 25, 1990, pp. B1, B10.

Pins, Kenneth. "Art goes underground." *The Des Moines Register*, May 3, 1990, pp. 1T-2T.

Cooke, Lynne. "Dennis Adams." *Galleries Magazine*, February-March 1991, pp. 88-91, 144.

Bex, Florent. *Transactions*. Antwerp: Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen, 1994, pp. 70-71.