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## Fact Sheet

### “Christo and Jeanne-Claude: Remembering the ‘Running Fence’”

#### Exhibition

“Christo and Jeanne-Claude: Remembering the ‘Running Fence’”

April 2 – Sept. 26

#### Location

Smithsonian American Art Museum, Eighth and F streets N.W.

#### Description

In 2008, the Smithsonian American Art Museum acquired the definitive record of “Running Fence, Sonoma and Marin Counties, California, 1972-76,” a major early work by Christo and Jeanne-Claude. This monumental artwork was 24 1/2 miles long and 18 feet high, with one end dropping down to the Pacific Ocean. Paid for entirely by the artists, the completed “Running Fence” existed for only two weeks in September of 1976. The collective archive of artworks and related materials includes more than 350 individual items, the majority of which are presented in the exhibition. There are 46 original preparatory drawings and collages by Christo on display, including eight large-scale drawings, each 8 feet wide, and a 58-foot-long scale model. More than 240 photographs by Wolfgang Volz, Gianfranco Gorgoni and Harry Shunk reveal the complex process of constructing the “Running Fence” and the many personalities involved with the project. A sequence of 22-foot-wide images are projected at the exhibition entrance to convey to visitors the breadth and scale of the completed project. The exhibition also includes a nylon fabric panel and steel pole from the actual project.

The story of “Running Fence” is one of the perseverance of two artists over nearly insurmountable odds to create a temporary artwork of joy and beauty, but also the story of the people, places and events that would become what is known as “Running Fence.” Also included in the exhibition is a documentary by the American filmmakers, Albert and David Maysles, with Charlotte Zwerin, as well as a new film, *The “Running Fence” Revisited*, co-produced by the museum and Wolfram Hissen from EstWest Films, that recaptures the excitement that still lives in the memories of those who saw the “Running Fence” 34 years ago. This exhibition is organized by George Gurney, deputy chief curator.

#### Publication

The accompanying book, co-published by the museum and University of California Press, is written by Brian O’Doherty, artist and writer, with contributions from Elizabeth Broun, the museum’s director; Ed Anderson, an attorney who represented the artists at the Sonoma County hearings in the 1970s; and a foreword by Wayne Clough, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. It is for sale (\$50) in the museum’s store and online.

#### Credit

The Smithsonian American Art Museum appreciates the support of these generous friends who contributed to the “Running Fence” exhibition and book: Edwin C. and Jeanne Anderson, George W. Cogan and Fannie Allen, David C. Copley, Louis Corrigan, Tania and Tom Evans, Shelby and Frederick Gans, Goldman Fund, Agnes Gund, Marin Convention and Visitors Bureau, Nion McEvoy, Joan and Alan Mirken, Steve Oliver, Bernard Osher Foundation, Anthony Otten and Janice Kim, Jeannie Schulz, Sonoma County Tourism Bureau, Nancy Stephens and Rick Rosenthal, Roselyne Swig, and Mike Wilkins and Sheila Duignan.

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