



Two Partially Buried Sinks

1986 - 1987

Cast iron, enamel paint

39 inches by 120 inches by 72 inches overall

(99 centimeters by 305 centimeters by 183 centimeters overall)

© Robert Gober, courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery

Robert Gober (b. 1954, Meridian, Connecticut, United States)

Robert Gober grew up in Wallingford, Connecticut. His mother, Leah Mary Gober, was a nurse and his father, Gideon “Gus” Gober, was a draftsman. The Gobers were devout Catholics. Shortly after Gus and Leah Gober became engaged, Gus began building a house on Hope Hill Road in Yalesville, Wallingford. Gober would later claim that growing up in a home built by his father informed some of his art work, especially his doll houses. He attended college at Middlebury in Vermont from 1972 to 1976, and he spent his junior year at Tyler School of Art in Rome. In 1976, he moved to New York to become an artist. Gober began working as a sculptor during the 1980s and often works with mixed media.

Robert Gober’s psychologically-charged oeuvre challenges our associations with everyday objects and spaces. For example, sinks, newspapers, and even cat litter are present throughout

his work, which explores perversity, domesticity, religion, gender roles, and sexuality. These themes are informed by his childhood, along with his experiences growing up as a gay man in a religiously and politically conservative environment.

Two Partially Buried Sinks (1986 - 1987)

This work is an important example from Gober's series of sculptures that look like (or don't look like) sinks. Often cast in iron or made in wood and painted to look like ceramic sinks, Gober's sinks give the appearance of being ready-made, but all are handmade and, as the series advances, the works become more hallucinatory and suffused in the uncanny, queer, and subjective. Two Partially Buried Sinks is one of the only sink sculptures to be installed outside, and their form and partially-buried quality evoke a pair of tombstones. This was one of the last times that Gober used the sink motif before his 1992 installation at Dia Center for the Arts. The context of the landscape for this work becomes more significant now that the 1992 installation is on view nearby in Room 4 of the Pavilions.

Reflections

How does the site for Gober's Two Partially Buried Sinks (1986-1987) serve the sculpture?

What is the artwork's relationship to its environment?