



DOUG AITKEN

MIRAGE

Opening February, 2017
Palm Springs, California

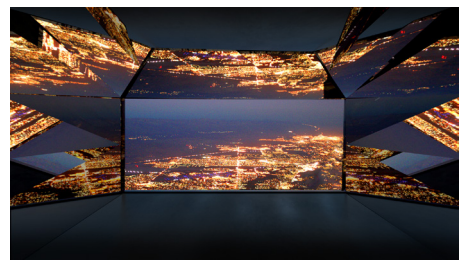
MIRAGE is a site-specific installation set in the Southern California desert. Utilizing the form of a ranch style suburban American house, the sculpture is composed of reflective mirrored surfaces. MIRAGE distills the recognizable and repetitious suburban home into the essence of its lines, reflecting, and disappearing into the vast western landscape.

Movement was the driving force behind the settling of the American West, and the long flat vistas that stretched toward the Pacific shaped the ideology behind this iconic embodiment of American architecture. The California Ranch Style, which is unique to the West, was informed by the ideas of architect Frank Lloyd Wright, who believed that architecture should be both in and of the landscape. In the 1920s and '30s a small inspired group of architects working in California and the West created the first suburban ranch style houses, fusing Wright's fluid treatment of spaces with the simple one-story homes built by ranchers. After World War II, the ranch style's streamlined simplicity gained popularity and commercial builders employed a simplified assembly line approach to create this efficient form, matching the rapid growth of the suburbs. The mass-produced ranch home became a familiar sight across the country, the style filling the American landscape as quickly as each new subdivision was built.

MIRAGE is reconfigured as an architectural idea, the seemingly generic suburban home now devoid of a narrative, its inhabitants, their possessions. This minimal structure now functions entirely in response to the landscape around it. The doors, windows, and openings have been removed to create a fluid relationship with the surrounding environment.

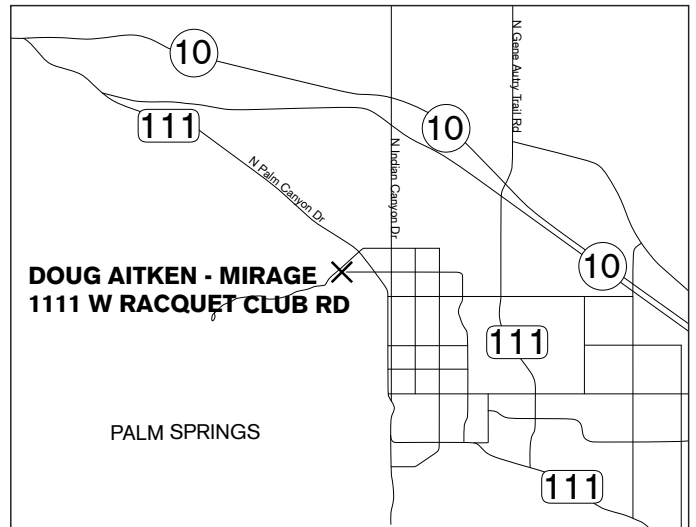
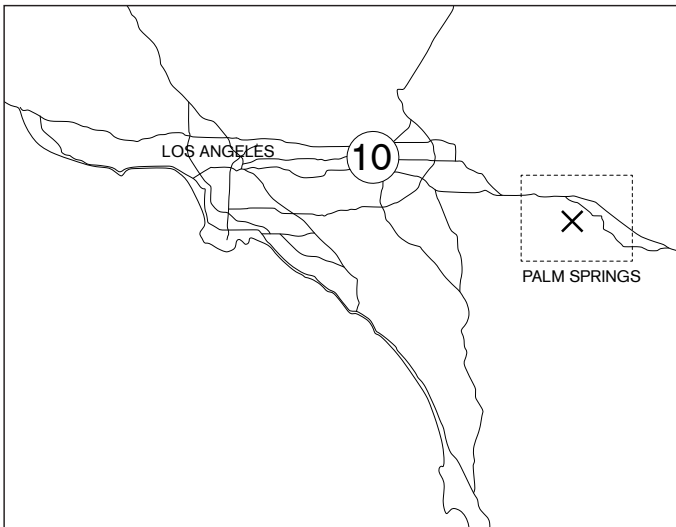
Situated at the juncture where the rugged San Jacinto mountain range gives way to the Coachella valley, MIRAGE is perched over a distant modern development that fades into the open desert. As MIRAGE pulls the landscape in and reflects it back out, its familiar architectural form becomes a framing device, a visual echo-chamber endlessly reflecting both the dream of nature as a pure uninhabited state and the pursuit of its conquest. Its mirrored surfaces form a life-size kaleidoscope that absorbs and reflects the landscape. Subject and object, interior and exterior, the psychological and physical; each of these oppositional forces are held in constant tension, yet allowed to shift and transform in the ever-changing desertscape.

Like a human-scale lens, MIRAGE works to frame and distort the evolving world outside of it. There is no single time to view this work, as each variation provides something new: at night the distant lights refract to create a universe of stars; on a tranquil afternoon the sky is transformed into banks of blue fragmented by slices of clouds. As there is no fixed perspective or correct interpretation, each experience of this living artwork will be unique.



DOUG AITKEN

Doug Aitken (b. 1968) is an American artist and filmmaker whose work explores every medium, from sculpture, film, and installation to architectural intervention. His work has been featured in exhibitions around the world at institutions including the Whitney Museum of American Art, The Museum of Modern Art, Vienna Secession, the Serpentine Gallery in London, and the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. Aitken earned the International Prize at the Venice Biennale in 1999 for the installation *electric earth*. He also received the 2012 Nam June Paik Art Center Prize and the 2013 Smithsonian American Ingenuity Award: Visual Arts. He lives and works in Los Angeles, California.



Driving from Los Angeles

Take the I-10 East to Highway 111 (Palm Springs exit): Remain on Highway 111 for approximately 11 miles (it will become North Palm Canyon Drive). Turn right on West Racquet Club Road, follow the road to the end to the guard house, further directions at the guard house.

Driving from the East

Take the I-10 and take the Indian Canyon exit for Palm Springs. Head south on Indian Canyon and take a right onto Racquet Club Road and follow the road to the end to the guard house, further directions at the guard house.

From Palm Springs International Airport

Take East Tahquitz Canyon Way, turn right onto North Farrell Drive, continue onto East Racquet Club Road, follow the road to the end to the guard house, further directions at the guard house.