



a natural state

Artist: Brian Rust

Video 3: Process: B. The Wall

I used to work with more construction materials ... I used to use two by fours and corrugated tin and when I moved down south here I became really fascinated with the idea of trying to use the red clay. This beautiful red clay as a building material and also in the process, try to make it have connotations that are much more ancient. So that was where those two ideas came together. I'd heard about this rammed earth stuff, and I came down South, and gosh, the, you know, clay around here was just so beautiful. It is basically a very simple process, and you can see the striations in it right here where we have consciously as we build forms around the outside, much like a concrete form, and they are out of wood. And then you start mixing up with a big sort of cement mixer thing, you mix up dry combination of the clay with just the enough Portland and then you add just enough moisture so that it will set and you pour it in there and then you get these big huge metal and wood tampers and you just tamp them down under pressure and it just builds up. And so as you put layer upon layer, each of these layers sort of compacts the layers down below. With this particular case we actually added some white, some kaolin, to kind of reference the white, of the kaolin in the balls but also to bring out the striations even more. We also added some river rock and these are from the local Sumter area here. Local stone that they quarry that is from an old riverbed. And I so liked the ochre color of them, that they were rounded like the balls, like the spheres, so I was adding those in as we went. Just sort of in different places.. I knew that they would peek out, fall down and mingle with the grass. I thought that might be kind of a nice souvenir... someone could carry one away. My son carries stones all of the time around in his pockets. The areas that are more pure clay...like here you can see where there was a little section where there was a little ball of clay, those eventually will erode out and it gets a much more pock-marked... as well as the kaolin spheres will do the same thing. As their initial protection erodes away, they will become more and more pocked looking over time. So I like to say that my pieces will look better in a year, and look even better in two years. And I like this idea of change over time, so that it slowly settles into the place and becomes more comfortable, it looks more comfortable. The edges fall down, as the clay falls down. You get kind of this rounding from the soil from people coming by and packing it so it makes it sort of feel like it grew out of the ground rather than just being put on top of the ground.

