



CHRIS BURDEN, December 9, 2005, Topanga Canyon, California

JASON SCHMIDT

THE BOOKSHELF; Caught in the Art

By Lynne Heffley
Times Staff Writer

DRAWN by the "allure and myth of the artist's studio," photographer Jason Schmidt spent six years taking pictures of painters, sculptors, photographers and others for his book "Artists" (Edition 7L). The 131 images have a sense of self-portraiture, Schmidt says, because of choices his subjects

made in presenting themselves and the inclusion of artist statements. Chris Burden is pictured climbing a Topanga Canyon hillside above his "Urban Light" sculpture. Robert Irwin is simply shown in his San Diego studio -- "basically a drafting table in a blank room," Schmidt says. "I said, 'I'm here to take a picture of you doing what you do,' and he said, 'This is what I do.'"

The photo shows me walking at sunset on the hillside above my studio. I have installed the sculpture "Urban Light" around two sides of my studio. "Urban Light" is an artwork that I created by amassing a huge collection of 1920s cast-iron streetlamps from Los Angeles and its many adjacent cities. By placing 170 antique lamps close together in long colonnades, I have usurped the

streetlamp's function. Together they form a sculpture. The viewer's experience of traversing these fluted columns is an exalted one that recalls the marvel of walking through classical Greek and Roman architecture or a European cathedral. The feelings of recollection and wonder transform the streetlamps into the sculpture, "Urban Light."

-Chris Burden