

THE JURY IS ART



Times photos — CHERIE DIEZ

William Phelps of Oasis Landscaping shovels dirt for the mounds that the chairs of multiple shapes and sizes in artist Douglas Kornfeld's work, *Face the Jury*, will seemingly rest upon. (The chairs are actually anchored to concrete bases.) Grass sod over the mounds will complete the scene.

Work is paeian to democracy

By **LENNIE BENNETT**
Times Art Critic

ST. PETERSBURG — Sometimes, Dr. Freud, a chair is more than a chair.

As is the case with 13 lipstick-red steel chairs recently plopped onto the grassy swath next to the St. Petersburg Judicial Building at Mirror Lake Drive and Fifth Street N.

Titled *Face the Jury*, the installation is a \$90,000 public arts project, paid for by Pinellas County, and created by Boston artist Douglas Kornfeld.

It's a witty, whimsical homage to that most democratic institution, trial by a jury of your peers. And, like the jury system, it is participatory.

"I hope people climb all over them," said Kornfeld, as 350 cubic yards of soil was mounded around the 2-ton concrete bases that will be covered with sod by Friday, making them impervious to hurricane-force winds or energetic children.

Face the Jury works as entertainment and bright idea. Twelve of the chairs are monumentally sized and seem even larger on their hilly perches, rising as high as 10 feet. Each is individually designed in shapes ranging from severely angled to eccentrical-



Douglas Kornfeld sits in the 13th chair of his installation, which was commissioned for Pinellas County. He based it on his own experience on a jury.

ly rounded, representing the diversity of jurors.

Near the sidewalk, a simple, humanly proportioned chair is at ground level. Sit in it and you are metaphorically acting as a witness to the process.

Kornfeld says the grouping is based on his experience as a juror. "It was a civil trial, and our first vote was a seven-to-five split."

So he arranged seven in closer relationship to each other and strewed the five other chairs farther afield. The color red unifies the quirky assemblage.

