

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

GAGOSIAN GALLERY
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JOSEPH BEUYS: *JEDER GRIFF MUß SITZEN - JUST HIT THE MARK* WORKS FROM THE SPECK COLLECTION

Friday, January 9 – Saturday, February 14, 2004

Opening reception: Friday, January 9th from 6:00 – 8:00 PM

The Gagosian Gallery in New York is pleased to present the second installment of a two-venue exhibition featuring significant works by Joseph Beuys in the collection of Dr. Reiner Speck. The exhibition first opened at the Gagosian Gallery in London in September 2003. The New York showing is scheduled to coincide with the thirty-year anniversary of Beuys' first trip to the United States, a three-city tour, which began on January 9, 1974, in New York.

Joseph Beuys (1921-1986) is universally celebrated as one of the most important and revolutionary European artists of the last century. Through his creative project, Beuys blurred the boundaries between art and life, developing performances, installations, sculptures, and drawings within an intricate system of meaning. In his performances, Beuys explored the role of artist as shaman and engaged his audience in unprecedented, provocative ways. As his career progressed, Beuys advocated a "social sculpture", suggesting that his art could be a touchstone for revolutionary political change.

The profoundly experimental nature of his work established Beuys as a founding father of the German avant-garde. He was an influential teacher at the Düsseldorf Academy of Art who was loosely linked to the Fluxus movement, and his legacy continues to resonate with a new generation of artists working today in media ranging from sculpture to film.

Dr. Reiner Speck is a prominent Cologne-based physician and collector of contemporary art and antiquarian books. After meeting Beuys in the mid 1960s, Dr. Speck began to acquire the artist's work, and he continued to expand this important collection to the end of Beuys' life. The Speck Collection includes seminal works from every period of the artist's oeuvre, including early drawings and sculptures dating from the 1950s, as well as more complex objects and performance relics from Beuys' later years.

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The exhibition “Joseph Beuys, *Jeder Griff muß sitzen – Just Hit the Mark*” takes its title from one of the phrases inscribed by the artist on a tabletop during a lecture in 1973, now surviving as the sculpture *Untitled (Table Drawing)* in the Speck Collection. A diverse group of works will be on view, many for the first time in years, including *Jungfrau (Virgin)* a rare, early sculpture from 1952; *Vitrine (Warm Walking Stick with a Brown Hat)*, 1964-83, an important cabinet that includes a cardboard version of the artist’s signature hat and a felt-wrapped cane; and *Mensch (Human)*, 1968-72, a sculpture with one of Beuys’ famed blackboard drawings.

A fully illustrated catalogue will be available and will include an interview with Dr. Speck and Ann Temkin, Curator in the Department of Painting and Sculpture at The Museum of Modern Art, as well as contributions by Dieter Koepplin, Emeritus Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Kunstmuseum Basel, and Pamela Kort, an independent curator specializing in German art.

For further information, please contact the gallery.