

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

GAGOSIAN GALLERY
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FRANZ WEST: *Passstuecke*

Tuesday, March 18 – Saturday, April 26, 2008

Opening reception for the artist: Tuesday, March 18th, from 6 to 8 pm

Gagosian Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition by Franz West.

The exhibition includes sculptures and works on paper from the early 1980s to more recent works related to the central motif of the *Passstuecke* in West's art.

In the early 1970s Franz West began making small-scale assemblages incorporating found materials such as cardboard, bandages, and wire, which he then covered with a coat of plaster and white paint. He called these sculptures *Passstuecke*. West maintained that the viewer must engage with, handle, the sculptures in order to fully experience their "ergonomic" nature. Subsequently *Passstuecke* has been translated as "adaptive" but this does not fully capture its original source as a technical term meaning "parts that fit into each other." These early sculptures function as prosthetics for an intimate version of the extreme Actionist spectacles of the mid-seventies in Vienna.

Zdenek Felix said: "West's adaptives are situated somewhere between the poles of body and psyche. Through use by the public, they could definitely become objects for behavioral research. This would comply with the intentions of the artist who is much more interested in the handling of his 'objects' than their formal completion."

The exhibition brings together a collection of rare and previously unexhibited *Passstuecke* and collages from the early 1980s. Alongside these historical works is *NYC-NAC (2002-2008)*, a *Passstueck* installation that allows several viewers at a time to participate, new collages and posters and a recent body of work that West refers to as "inside/outside sculptures" made from traditional papier-maché, then coated in fiberglass so that they can also be placed outdoors.

Franz West was born in Vienna in 1947 where he still lives and works. He has exhibited widely in galleries, museums, and arts institutions all over the world. His first major American retrospective will commence at the Baltimore Museum in October 2008, traveling to the Los Angeles County Museum.

For further information, please contact the gallery.