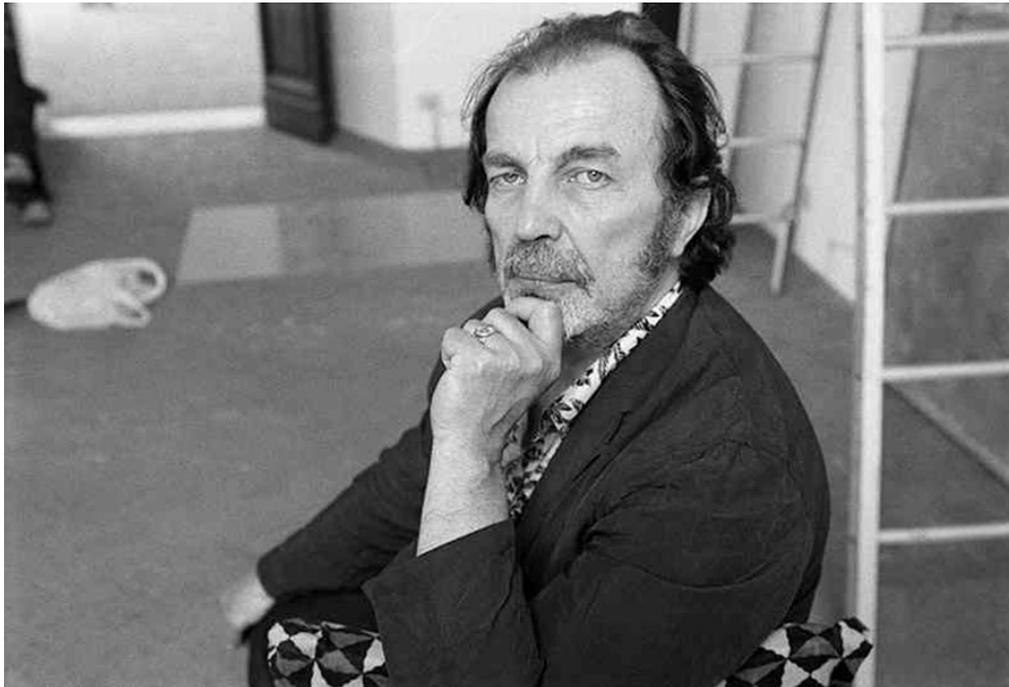


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August 29, 2017



## **FRANZ WEST** WORKS 1970–2010

Opening reception:  
Thursday, September 21, 6–8PM  
September 22–December 16, 2017

19 Place de Longemalle  
1204 Geneva

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*I used to hope that my art would be a scream. On the contrary, it was like a blossom.*  
—Franz West

Gagosian is pleased to present a career-spanning exhibition of sculpture and works on paper by Franz West.

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From abstract and interactive sculpture to furniture and collage, West's protean oeuvre possesses a character that is at once lighthearted and deeply philosophical. Manipulating everyday materials and imagery in order to examine art's relation to social experience, West revolutionized the interplay of concealment and exposure, action and reaction, both in and outside the gallery.

The exhibition marks key formal and conceptual developments in West's creative process. While the early plaster sculptures, *Paßstücke (Adaptives)*, were made to be moved, touched, and handled—transforming viewers into participants—later works incorporate more fragile materials, such as papier-mâché and glass bottles, which he combined in the *Labstücke (Refresher Pieces)* from the early 1980s. In 1986, West reversed the impetus behind his earlier sculpture, creating static works that maintain a sense of fragility and flux, eschewing the idea that sculpture is a fixed, permanent entity detached from the viewer's world. *Untitled (Triangolo n.1)* (1988), a white, diamond-like sculpture, is displayed on a metal stand like a rare, distorted jewel; and *Skeptik* (1987) is comprised of brown paper interspersed with gray, black, and peach pigments, resembling a chunk of marbled earth.

West often invited other artists to contribute to his work, such as the untitled sculptures painted by Herbert Brandl: a long, blue spike with a pointed top, and a textured, magenta square. Color continues to intensify in West's later work; *Sisyphos VIII* (2002), a mottled mass of papier-mâché, Styrofoam, and cardboard, is elegantly spackled with bright blues and yellows.

As well as the sculptures, there are several collages, wherein West selectively painted over images, isolating people and objects from their contexts in order to underscore the staged, discordant relationships between them. A group of intimate ink drawings and collages from the early 1970s reveals West's Viennese roots, and his ability to depict and subvert sexuality in its public form. Merging the mundane and the mystical, the public and the private, West's work introduces combinations and revisions that continue to unfold in the space between the real and the imagined.

**Franz West** was born in Vienna in 1947, and died in Vienna in 2012. Collections include Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Tate, London; Museum Ludwig, Cologne; Museum für Moderne Kunst (MMK), Frankfurt; Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI Secolo (MAXXI), Rome; Albertina, Vienna; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; Philadelphia Museum of Art, PA; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; and Museum of Modern Art, New York. Recent institutional exhibitions include "Burning," Musée d'Art Contemporain, Marseille, France (2002); "Franzwestite: Franz West – Works 1973–2003," Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (2003); "We'll Not Carry Coals," Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria (2003); "Franz West: Recent Sculptures," Lincoln Center and Doris C. Freedman Plaza, New York (2004); Vancouver Art Gallery (2005); "Les Pommes d'Adam," Place Vendôme, Paris (2007, traveled to Hall Art Foundation at MASS MoCA, North Adams, MA in 2014); "Sit on My Chair, Lay on My Bed," Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK),

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Vienna (2008); “To Build A House You Start with the Roof: Work, 1972–2008,” Baltimore Museum of Art, MD (2008, traveled to Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) in 2009); Fondation Beyeler, Basel (2009); “White Elephant,” Museo Tamayo, Mexico City (2009); “Franz West: Auto-Theatre,” Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2010, traveled to Museo d’Arte contemporanea DonnaRegina (MADRE), Naples; and Universalmuseum Joanneum, Graz, Austria, through 2011); Philadelphia Museum of Art, PA (2012); “Franz West: Where is my Eight?” Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig (mumok), Vienna (2013, traveled to Museum für Moderne Kunst (MMK), Frankfurt; and The Hepworth Wakefield, West Yorkshire, England, through 2014).

West’s work is featured in the 57th Biennale di Venezia, through November 26. In fall 2018, a major retrospective will open at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, and will travel to the Tate Modern, London the following year.

**Image:** Portrait of Franz West. Photo © Marco Fedele di Catrano.

For further information please contact the gallery at [geneva@gagosian.com](mailto:geneva@gagosian.com) or at +41.22.319.36.19. All images are subject to copyright. Gallery approval must be granted prior to reproduction.

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