

DRAWING ROOM

12 Rich Estate, Crimscott Street, London, SE1 5TE. www.drawingroom.org.uk

Franz Erhard Walther: DRAWINGS - Frame / Line / Action / Drawn Novel

PRESS PREVIEW – Thursday 8 March, 9 – 11.30am – the artist will be available for interview.

Private view: Thursday 8 March, 6- 8pm

In conversation: Wednesday 7th March, 6.30-7.30pm – **Franz Erhard Walther in conversation with Hans Ulrich Obrist** (Co-Director, Exhibitions and Programmes and Director of International Projects, Serpentine Gallery, London).



Franz Erhard Walther
Three broad bands / Drei breite Brander
1963, Detail, Cotton and nail
8.5 x 825 cm
Private Collection
Photograph: Francois Doury



Franz Erhard Walther
Dust of Stars / Sternenstaub 2007/09
Drawing cycle of 524 sheets, sheet 1964 Pencil on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm
© VG-Bild-Kunst, Bonn
Courtesy Franz Erhard Walther, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris

This will be the first solo exhibition of Franz Erhard Walther (b. 1939 Fulda, Germany) in the UK. The exhibition includes ground-breaking work from the late 1950s, 60s and 70s together with the artist's latest retrospective and autobiographical drawing project – *Dust of Stars. A Drawn Novel*. The graphic novel sheds light on the ideas and motivations informing his life-long practice and, in particular, the importance of drawing.

Walther participated in many era-defining exhibitions, such as Harald Szeemann's 'When Attitudes Become Form' (1969) and MoMA's landmark installation group show 'Spaces', curated by Jennifer Licht in 1970. Recent retrospectives of his work have been mounted by Mamco, Musée d'art modern et contemporain, Geneva (2010) and Dia:Beacon, New York (2010–12) and his work was included in 'Move: Choreographing You', Hayward Gallery, London (2010-11).

Walther began to experiment with ways to actively involve spectators in the production of the work in the late 1950s. At this time he produced 'word' pictures in a bid to force the viewer to create

their own image. In the early 60s he began to experiment with paper as the work itself rather than as a ground, displaying the work in stacks that the audience were invited to leaf through, or large books with which they could interact. This led to his best known work, a fifty-eight part sculpture action *First Work Set* (1963–69). These are canvas structures, described by the artist as 'instruments', which can be exhibited as 'storage' installations or as structures ready to be worn and interacted with during object demonstrations in the gallery space. Hundreds of *Work* drawings were produced before and after these actions and a selection will be included in the exhibition.

The most recent work in the exhibition is connected to these earlier works: *Dust of Stars. A Drawn Novel* (2007/9) is composed of 524 pages of pencil drawings and handwritten texts, a selection of which will be included. As a visual and textual record of his life and work, *Dust of Stars* traces the artist's longstanding engagement with drawing as it informs the conceptual underpinnings of his work, interweaving with the mediums of sculpture and performance.

PUBLICATION

The exhibition is curated in collaboration with Stephanie Straine, (PhD candidate, University College London and Tate Gallery, AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award Holder) and in dialogue with Kunstmuseen Krefeld and the Franz Erhard Walther Foundation. A bilingual catalogue of the graphic novel is available, published by Kunstmuseen Krefeld. The catalogue includes essays by Sylvia Martin, Deputy Director, Kunstmuseen Krefeld, illustrations of the graphic novel and translations. Drawing Room will produce a fold-out exhibition guide with a text by Stephanie Straine and images of selected works.

The Henry Moore
Foundation

List of works:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>1. <i>Word Painting (Wortbild:TEMPO)</i> 1958
Pencil and gouache on paper
70.4 x 102 cm unframed
Private collection *</p> | <p>6. <i>Sixteen Air Enclosures (Sechzehn Lufteinschlüsse)</i> 1962
Paper, glue, air
16 pieces. Installed dimensions
179 x 544 x 4 cm</p> | <p>11. <i>Two Fabric Frames; Sculptural (Zwei Stoffrahmen; Plastische)</i> 1963
Muslin, shredded fabric
Each 31.5 x 21.5 x 1.5 cm</p> |
| <p>2. <i>Word Drawing (Wortzeichnung Sonate Esquire)</i> 1958
Pencil and Graphite on Paper
58.5 x 78.5cm unframed</p> | <p>7. <i>Gouache Drawings (16 groups) (Deckfarbenzeichnungen)</i> 1961
Various media
16 groups, total dimensions
65.4 x 80 cm</p> | <p>12. <i>Rahmenzeichnung</i> 1963
Pencil on paper
3 drawings, 27 x 21.5 cm each*</p> |
| <p>3. <i>Hatched Drawings (Schraffurzeichnungen)</i> 1959
1). Graphite and China ink on paper, 48 x 61
2). Graphite on paper, 60.5 x 85cm
3). Graphite on paper, 41 x 52.5cm
4). Graphite and tempera on paper 59 x 79cm
5). Pencil on paper, 50 x 61cm
6). Graphite and China ink on paper, 58.5 x 74cm
7). Oil pastel, gouache and graphite on paper
48 x 61cm
(unframed dimensions)</p> | <p>8. <i>First Workset (1st Werksatz)</i>
#6 – 1 image
#7 - 1 image
#38 – 1 image
#45 – 2 images
Digital prints scanned from original photographs by Timm Rautert in 1969
68 x 90 cm</p> | <p>13. <i>Three Broad Bands (Drei breite Bänder)</i> 1963
Cotton and nails
8.5 x 825 cm
Collection Alastair Cookson</p> |
| <p>4. <i>Frame drawing with 'space hook' (Rahmenzeichnung mit Raumhaken)</i> 1960
Pencil, india ink, sepia (both sides)
14.6 x 21.6 cm.</p> | <p>9. <i>48 Workdrawings (48 Werkzeichnungen)</i> 1963-1974
Pencil, water-colour, gouache, typewriter, ink, coffee, oil and other materials on paper
29.6 x 21 cm and 28 x 21.5 cm</p> | <p>14. <i>Sculptural Line, 21 metres</i> 1963
Hemp cord
Length of 21 metres (rolled up 34 x 8 x 5 cm)</p> |
| <p>5. <i># 38 First Workset (Frame (Centre) Ways) (#38 1st Werksatz (Rahmen (Zentrum) Wege)</i> 1967
Muslin fabric
Dimensions: 200 x 150 cm (unfolded)
**</p> | <p>10. <i>440 Line Drawings (440 Linienzeichnungen)</i> 1963
Pencil on paper
Each 21.3 x 14.8 cm.
Stack height: 3.5 cm</p> | <p>15. <i>Untitled (Sealed box)</i> 1963
glue and brown paper on cardboard
28 x 22.5 x 5.5 cm*</p> |
| | <p>286 <i>Marking Drawings (286 Markierungszeichnungen)</i> 1963
Pencil on paper
Each 21 x 15.1 cm. Stack height: 3.5 cm</p> | <p>16. <i>Dust of Stars (Sternenstaub)</i> 2007-2009
Pencil and graphite on Paper
29.7 x 21 cm ***</p> |
| | | <p>17. <i>Afterdrawings (Nachzeichnungen)</i> (2 belonging to #7, <i>First Work Set</i> / 3 belonging to #45, <i>First Work Set</i>) 1971
Pencil and graphite on paper
24.5 x 20 cm (drawings on both sides)</p> |

All works Courtesy of Franz Erhard Walther Foundation except where marked

* Courtesy of the artist & Galerie Jocelyn Wolff

** Courtesy Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris and Peter Freeman Inc. New York

*** Franz Erhard Walther Foundation / Courtesy Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris

Franz Erhard Walther (b.1939, Fulda, Germany) is one of Germany's most prominent living artists, having exhibited extensively across Europe since the 1960s and participated in four editions of Documenta during the 1970s and 1980s. From 1957 to 1964 Walther studied successively at the Werkkunstschule Offenbach, the Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Frankfurt am Main (Städelschule), and finally the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, where he studied under K. O. Götz and took part in Fluxus actions convened by the Kunstakademie's Professor of Monumental Sculpture, Joseph Beuys. Between 1967 and 1973 Walther lived in New York City, during which time he was included in such important group shows as 'Spaces' (1969–70, MoMA, New York) and curator Harald Szeemann's 'When Attitudes Become Form' (1969, Kunsthalle Bern). From 1971 to 2009 Walther was Professor at Hochschule für bildende Kunst, Hamburg. Recent retrospectives of his work have been mounted by Mamco, Musée d'art modern et contemporain, Geneva (2010) and Dia:Beacon, New York (2010–12). The artist continues to live and work in Fulda, where the Franz Erhard Walther Foundation is also based.