



presse@mudam.lu
www.mudam.lu

Tel + 352 45 37 85 1
Fax + 352 45 37 85 400

3, Park Dräi Eechelen
L-1499 Luxembourg

Mudam Luxembourg
Musée d'Art Moderne
Grand-Duc Jean

FRANZ ERHARD WALTHER ARCHITEKTUR MIT WEICHEM KERN

PRESS KIT

07.03.2015 - 31.05.2015

Press release

FRANZ ERHARD WALTHER

ARCHITEKTUR MIT WEICHEM KERN

Exhibition from March 7 to May 31, 2015

Curator Marie-Noëlle Farcy

Franz Erhard Walther's concept of the artwork as such developed from the late 1950s, at a time when many artists were starting to question the parameters of art. Traditional forms of art were not capable of expressing Walther's artistic aspirations at the time; he found it more interesting to examine material processes, action and even modes of exhibition as components in the definition of an artwork.

Thus, according to Walther's concept, art had an immaterial, performative character and took place within the individual physical and mental processes enacted by those encountering particular works. The role of the artist shifted from being the creator of works with a particular meaning to becoming the mere facilitator of a conscious and personal experiencing of aesthetic phenomena.

This practice had already been adumbrated in early actions such as *Versuch, eine Plastik zu sein* (Trying to be a sculpture, 1958), and, after many years in which Walther experimented with a variety of materials, led finally in 1963 to the discovery of the technique of sewing, a working method that met Walther's need for formal rigour. The works he produced up to 1969 using this technique were to be collected in the so-called *1. Werksatz* (First work set). The 58 individual works sewn from sturdy fabric that comprise the *1. Werksatz*, which Walther called "Work pieces" or "Action pieces", were for him simply "forms" that prescribed concrete patterns of action and were reliant on being actually handled by one or several participants for attaining the character of an artwork, a character that remained bound to the action itself.

Walther's *1. Werksatz*, which was prepared and accompanied by countless drawings, of which a selection is shown in the exhibition, is mostly presented in a kind of "stored form" or as items that can be individually accessed and must be concretely activated before they take on artwork character. In 1972, Walther put together 45 so-called *Schreitbahnen* (Walking bases), a motif that he was consequently to try out in many variations. In *20 Schreitbahnen* (1975-77) or in the *Gesang der Schreitsockel* (Song of the walking pedestals, 1975-77), as well as in the various works on the theme *Raumformen* (Space forms), which are also presented for activation either in "stored form" or individually, the focus is on the possibility of their being used, which in each case would lead to specific experiences in the space.

The fact that an action taking place only potentially or in the mind can be just as constitutive of a work as one that is actually performed was already embodied in the action pieces of 1962-63 and the radical *1. Werksatz*. The work-actions and the "stored form" were always of equal importance. However, with the *Wandformationen* (Wall formations), which he produced from 1978, visual and architectural elements that no longer required physical activation to correspond to his concept of the artwork took on an increasing importance in his work.

The wall formations *Statt einer Rede* (Instead of a speech, 1981), *Neuere Geschichte erweitert* (Recent history enlarged, 1981-82) and *Die Erinnerung untersockelt (Drei Zitate)* (Memory put on a plinth [Three quotations], 1983) are all works tailored to human measure, for each of which Walther saw three different possible positions for the viewer: "In front, close-up and within". The active participation of the viewers increases according to their position, right up to their entering the work in a kind of "physical reading" that leads to its activation.

The *Wall Formations* were followed in Walther's œuvre by a series of detailed wall works. In response to criticism of what was seen as a return to a conventional concept of art, Walther pointed to his enduring interest in the – only apparently banal – question that had centrally informed all the art of the 20th century: "What is an artwork?" And with these works based on the drawings and diagrams of the 1960s, he did indeed examine the aggregate state of an artwork: while some works intimate participatory possibilities, others, like *Plastischer Text* (Plastic text, 1987) and *Formantwort 1/2/3* (Formal answer 1/2/3, 1989-90) explore the borders of particular genres (picture, relief, sculpture). Walther interrogated the different meanings they had in stored form and as a wall arrangement. He examined their spatial references and their "objectness" and ran through the different emphases of form and colour in a great number of variations.

Finally, in *Raumabnahme BLAU (Hamburger Raum)* (Space mould BLUE [Hamburg piece], 1997-98) he comprehensively explores the pictorial quality of the space. The dark-blue reconstruction in fabric of his Hamburg studio, which is adapted to suit each exhibition venue, encourages the viewer to re-enact its directly visible process of creation.

The possibility of putting the created "forms" to use has always been inherent as an essential characteristic in Walther's concept of what constitutes an artwork, a concept that has undergone continual development during his now more than five decades of artistic activity. Walther, who in this way shared the role of the "artist" with the viewers/users of his works, also used the processual nature of this concept to emphasise its open and unfinished quality; or, as he put it in the title of his 1969 exhibition in the New York Museum of Modern Art: "The work can never be finished."

Franz Erhard Walther was born in 1939 in Fulda, where he lives and works.

Exhibition organised in collaboration with

The Franz Erhard Walther Foundation

EVENTS IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EXHIBITION

Saturday 07.03.2015, 11.30 am

Gallery Talk: Franz Erhard Walther + Polaris Architects (Carole Schmit & François Thiry)
During this discussion with Franz Erhard Walther, the architects Carole Schmit and François Thiry from Polaris Architects - both passionate about conceptual art - share their point of view on the works presented in the exhibition. The relation of the works with the space and the architecture will be discussed with the artist. The discussion will mainly be held in German and take place in front of the exhibited works.

No booking required

Saturday 30.05.2015, 1.30 - 5.30 pm

Artfreak Workshop with Franz Erhard Walther

For teenagers and young adults from 13 years upwards. No previous experience needed, materials available on spot.

Min. 3, max. 12 participants. Booking: artfreak@mudam.lu, +352 45 37 85 531

Workshop: 7 €

Sunday 31.05.2015, 11.30 am

Lecture by: Franz Erhard Walther

No booking required

In English

WORKS PRESENTED IN THE EXHIBITION

58 Werkzeichnungen, 1963-1972

58 recto-verso drawings, each linked to an element of
1. Werksatz (1963-1996)
Watercolor, gouache, oil, coffee, pencil, colored pencils, offset
printing, typed writing, pen, ink, Indian ink, carbon paper, resin,
organic adhesive tape, organic glue
29,7 x 21 cm
27,9 x 21,5 cm
Collection Mudam Luxembourg
Acquisition 2008

Der Drehung entgegen, 1986

Cotton, wood
65 x 150 x 30 cm
65 x 180 x 30 cm
65 x 220 x 30 cm
65 x 260 x 30 cm
65 x 300 x 30 cm
65 x 380 x 30 cm
235 x 40 x 60 cm
Courtesy KOW, Berlin, galerie Skopia, Geneva and
Collection of the Foundation Franz Erhard Walther

Die Erinnerung untersockelt (Drei Zitate), 1983

Cotton, wood
7 parts
365 x 600 x 40 cm
Courtesy Jocelyn Wolff, Paris

Formantwort 1 / 2 / 3, 1989-1990

Cotton
16 elements each composed of 6, 7 or 8 parts
Element: 180 x 120 x 11 cm
Collection of the Foundation Franz Erhard Walther

Gesang der Schreitsockel, 1975-1977

Cotton, wood, glue
55 parts
Variable dimensions
Biggest element: 500 x 37 x 9,5 cm
Kunstmuseum Luzern

Neuere Geschichte erweitert, 1981-1982

Cotton, wood
5 parts
360 x 600 x 80 cm
Courtesy Jocelyn Wolff, Paris and Collection of the
Foundation Franz Erhard Walther

Planzeichnungen und Skizzen für Wandformationen, 1979-1986

36 drawings
Pencil, watercolour
29,7 x 21 cm
21 x 29,7 cm
Collection of the Foundation Franz Erhard Walther

Plastischer Text, 1987

Cotton
9 elements composed of 68 parts
Element: 180 x 125 x 11 cm
Collection of the Foundation Franz Erhard Walther

Raumabnahme BLAU (Hamburger Raum), 1997-1998

Cotton
365 x 1007 x 470 cm
14 parts
Collection of the Foundation Franz Erhard Walther

Raumformen, 1971-1973

Cotton, wood
20 elements
Height: 220 cm, width: between 80 and 160 cm
Courtesy Jocelyn Wolff, Paris and Collection of the
Foundation Franz Erhard Walther

Statt einer Rede, 1981

Cotton, wood
360 x 800 x 94 cm
Collection of the Foundation Franz Erhard Walther

Schichtenzeichnungen, 1979-1980

20 drawings
Watercolour
29,7 x 21 cm
Courtesy galerie Skopia / P.-H. Jaccaud, Geneva

Stellwerk, 1979

Canvas, wood
3 parts
315 x 600 x 30 cm
Collection of the Foundation Franz Erhard Walther

Vier Standstellen, 1976

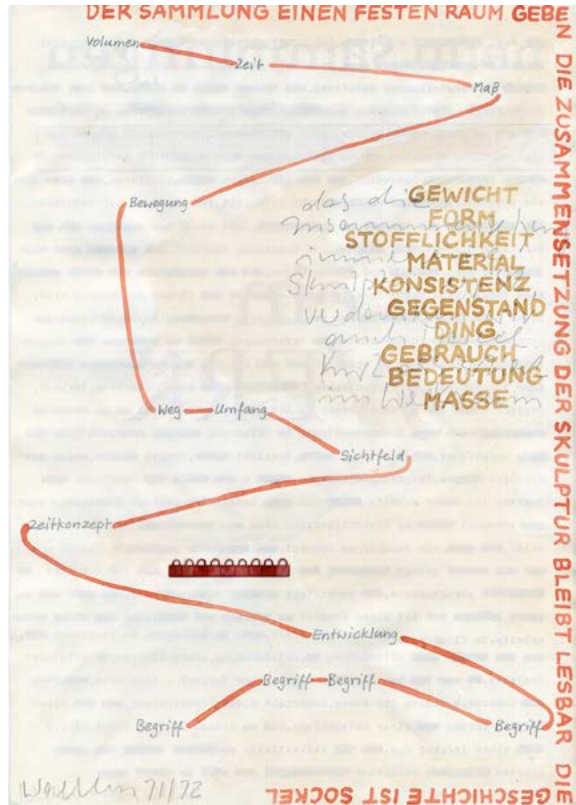
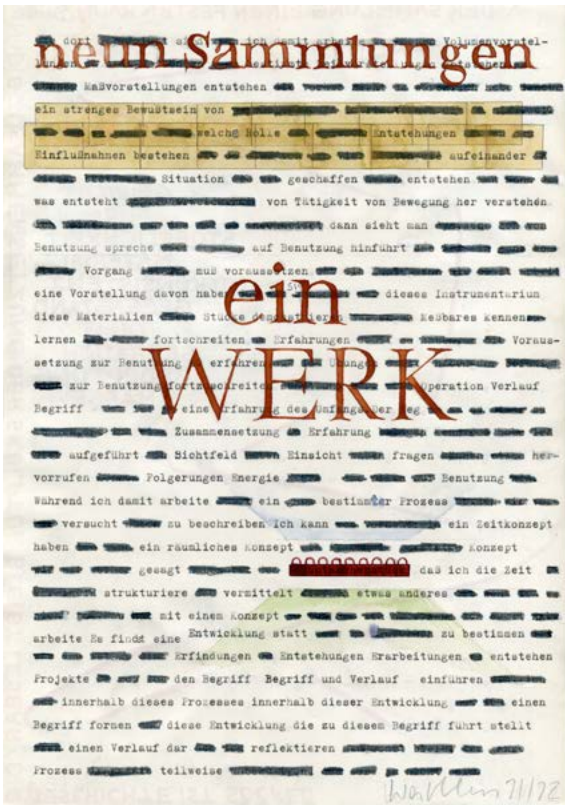
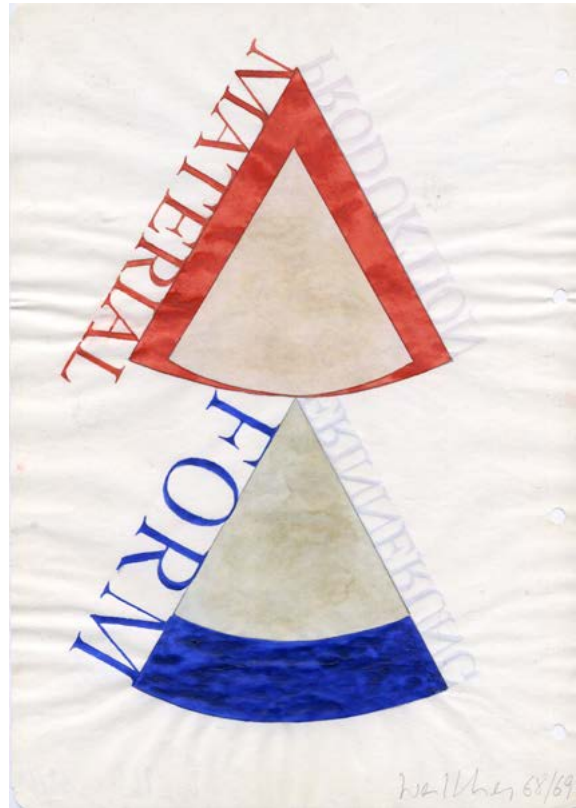
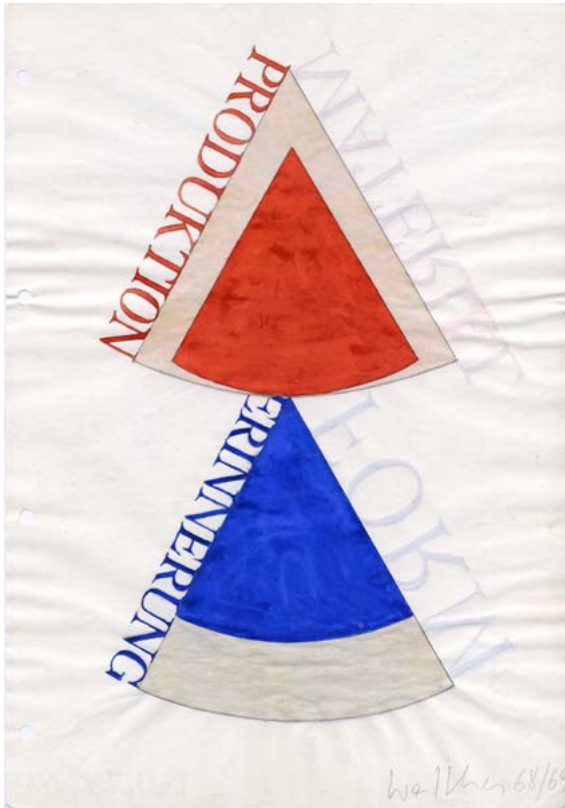
Steel
4 parts
Length: between 250 and 300 cm, width: 30 cm,
height: 2 cm
Courtesy Peter Freeman Inc. New York

Zeit Stelle Dauer Richtung Bezug (n° 58, 1. Werkstatt), 1969

Sewn and tinted canvas, wood, nail
3 parts
30,5 x 441,3 x 154,3 cm
30,5 x 221 x 156,2 cm
Acquisition 2012, with the support of FRAM
Nord-Pas-de-Calais
LaM Lille Métropole musée d'art moderne,
d'art contemporain et d'art brut, Villeneuve d'Ascq

Photographic documentation about 1. Werksatz

2008-2014
Views of the exhibition at CAC Brétigny (Brétigny-
sur-Orge), CAPC (Bordeaux), Dia:Beacon (Beacon),
galerie Jocelyn Wolff (Paris), MoMA (New York), Tate
Modern (Londres), WIELS (Bruxelles)
Archives of the Foundation Franz Erhard Walther



Franz Erhard Walther, 58 Werkzeichnungen, 1963 – 1972 (details)
Collection Mudam Luxembourg - Acquisition 2008
© Franz Erhard Walther

FRANZ ERHARD WALTHER

ARCHITEKTUR MIT WEICHEM KERN

Exhibition

From March 7 to May 31, 2015

Curator

Marie-Noëlle Farcy

Exhibition organised in collaboration with

The Franz Erhard Walther Foundation

Address and information

Mudam Luxembourg
3, Park Dräi Eechelen, L-1499 Luxembourg-Kirchberg
t. +352 45 37 85 1, info@mudam.lu, www.mudam.lu

Opening hours

Wednesday - Friday: 11 am - 8 pm
Saturday - Monday: 11 am - 6 pm
Public holidays: 11 am - 6 pm
Closed on Tuesday and on 25.12.2014

Entrance fee

Adults	7 €
Under 26 years old, groups	5 €
Mudami card (valid 1 year for 2 persons)	50 €
Under 21 years old	free
Students under 26 years old	free
Wednesday, 6 pm - 8 pm	free

Images

Available on request

Press contact

Valerio D'Alimonte, v.dalimonte@mudam.lu, t +352 45 37 85 633

MUDAM THANKS

Mudam thanks all the donors and the sponsors, and particularly



as well as

Delfin Sàrl . SES . BGL BNP PARIBAS . Arendt & Medernach . PwC . UniCredit Luxembourg SA . Deutsche Bank Luxembourg SA .
Banque LBLux . Prefalux . A Fleur de Peau . Soludec S.A. . Dussmann Service Luxembourg . Vinci Park Services Luxembourg SA . EducDesign .
Les Amis des Musées d'Art et d'Histoire Luxembourg

Mudam is financed by the Ministry of Culture.