

PRESS RELEASE

ERWIN WURM: ONE MINUTE SCULPTURES

7 MAY TO 13 JULY 2014

Opening and lecture by the artist: Tuesday, 6 May 2014, 7 pm
Städel Museum, Exhibition Galleries and Städel Garden

Frankfurt am Main, 6 May 2014. Doing press-ups on coffee cups, balancing on oranges, flying on a broom, everything is possible – for one minute. From 7 May to 13 July 2014, the Städel Museum is presenting the exhibition “Erwin Wurm: One Minute Sculptures”. Within this context, the Austrian artist Erwin Wurm (*1954) will be placing works from his series *One Minute Sculptures* – older ones as well as some developed especially for the Städel collection – in the Städel Garden, the Metzler Hall, and the Old Masters and Modern Art exhibition galleries. These interactive works call upon the viewers to do more than merely look at the museum artworks surrounding them, but to experience the artworks and themselves in new ways. In the form of drawings or brief written directions, the visitor is instructed and encouraged to become an artwork – a *One Minute Sculpture* – for the duration of sixty seconds. In addition to the living sculptures with which the visitors become a temporary part of the Städel collection, some twenty selected photographs and films from this series will be on view in the Metzler Foyer. The presentation will open with a public lecture by the artist in the Metzler Hall at 7 pm on 6 May 2014.

The exhibition is being realized with support from the Städel Gartengesellschaft.

“Erwin Wurm’s multifaceted works are a constant source of inspiration and shifts in perspective. I am extremely delighted to have this opportunity to show one of the most influential work series by this outstanding Austrian artist – his world-famous and widely cited *One Minute Sculptures* – at the Städel, and thus to offer our visitors a means of becoming protagonists of an artwork themselves for the duration of a single minute, which proves not to be quite as short as it sounds”, says Städel director Max Hollein.

“Wurm’s *One Minute Sculptures* possess an element of humour and playfulness, but that is by no means their raison d’être. On the contrary, the grotesque instructions for action are frequently comments on traumatic, frightening everyday experiences. And indeed, the ‘everyday’, with its abysmal surreality, is the theme and motivation of

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Erwin Wurm's works", is how Martin Engler, Head of the Städel's Contemporary Art Collection and curator of the exhibition, describes what he considers to be the fundamental aspect of the *One Minute Sculptures*.

Born in Bruck an der Mur, Austria in 1954, Erwin Wurm is one of the most successful contemporary artists of his generation. For more than two decades he has been scrutinizing our traditional concept of sculpture from different angles. From his early minimalist clothing sculptures (which he began producing in the late 1980s) and the immaterial/ephemeral *One Minute Sculptures* to the grotesquely distorted or bloated objects such as *Fat Car* (2000/2001) or *Fat House* (2003), Wurm has consistently concentrated on expanding our conception of what a sculpture can be when it is no longer cast in bronze or chiselled in marble. His oeuvre is represented in such world-renowned collections as that of the Guggenheim Museum in New York or the Centre Pompidou in Paris, and in the past years has moreover been featured in major solo exhibitions all over the world.

Visitors will be greeted by the first *One Minute Sculpture* right at the main entrance to the Städel Museum, where they will be invited to pose on a pedestal on all fours. He or she who follows these instructions will become a dog waiting in front of the museum, and thus a quotation of an early work by the Austrian action artist Valie Export (*1940) in which she "walked" Peter Weibel, as a "dog", through the city centre of Vienna in traditional Viennese Actionist manner. As they tour the Städel collection with works dating from seven hundred years of art, the visitors will come across other pedestals, chairs, etc., complete with instructions for action, here and there by chance. Erwin Wurm will place his prompts in the Old Masters collection, for example, in front of Netherlandish paintings and Italian art of the Late Middle Ages, or in front of Impressionists works and next to Expressionist sculptures in the collection of Modern Art. Finally, in the Metzler Hall, surrounded by Thomas Demand's room installation *Hall* (2011), the *One Minute Sculptures* will encounter contemporary art. From there the view opens onto the Städel Garden, where – crouching, hopping, finger in nose, standing on one leg as *One Minute Sculptures* – visitors can follow further instructions by Erwin Wurm.

Even if sixty seconds appear quite brief for the lifespan of a sculpture in the classical sense, it proves to be quite a challenge for a living body to remain in a single pose for that length of time. The process of becoming aware of one's own body and its possibilities and limitations, and the control of the same, are important aspects of Erwin Wurm's work. By actively involving the visitor – who, as a *One Minute Sculpture*, is a living artwork and model, a performer and artist's assistant as well as artist's material all at the same time –, Wurm questions not only the traditional concept of sculpture but also the interfaces between performance art and everyday

life, the role of the beholder and the boundaries of contemporary art. Once the sixty seconds are over, nothing will remain of the temporary sculpture but a memory; at the same time, photographs and videos on view in the Metzler Foyer of the Städel Museum will point to the beginnings of Erwin Wurm's *One Minute Sculptures* in 1997.

ERWIN WURM: ONE MINUTE SCULPTURES

Curators: Dr. Martin Engler, Head of the Contemporary Art Collection; Franziska Leuthäuser, Collection of Contemporary Art

Exhibition dates: 7 May to 13 July 2014

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Wurm Blog: <http://blog.staedelmuseum.de/>

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Venue: Städel Museum, Schaumainkai 63, 60596 Frankfurt am Main

Opening hours: Tue, Wed, Sat and Sun 10 am – 6 pm, Thu and Fri 10 am – 9 pm

Special opening hours: Mon, 9 Jun, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: 12 euros, reduced 10 euros, family ticket 20 euros; Saturdays, Sundays and holidays 14 euros, reduced 12 euros, family ticket 24 euros, admission free for children to the age of 12; groups (min. 10 persons) 10 euros/person; Saturdays, Sundays and holidays 12 euros/person

Groups are required to make advance reservations.

Advance ticket sales at: tickets.staedelmuseum.de

General guided tours of the exhibition: Fridays 6 pm, Sundays 11 am

Special guided tours: on request, please inquire at +49(0)69-605098-200 or info@staedelmuseum.de

Social Media: The Städel Museum will communicate the show in the social media with the hash tags #erwinwurm und #staedel.

With support from: Städel Gartengesellschaft