

Felix Gonzalez-Torres

Specific Objects without Specific Form

Nach einem Konzept von Tino Sehgal wird die Ausstellung täglich neu eingerichtet.

Das MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst Frankfurt am Main zeigt nach dem WIELS Contemporary Art Centre in Brüssel und der Fondation Beyeler in Basel als dritte Station die große Retrospektive *Felix Gonzalez-Torres. Specific Objects without Specific Form*. Die Präsentation legt die große Bandbreite der kurzen, aber international sehr wirkungsmächtigen Arbeit des auf Kuba geborenen US-amerikanischen Künstlers dar. In engem Dialog mit der Architektur des MMK zeigt die Ausstellung in Frankfurt sowohl seltene als auch bekannte Installationen, Skulpturen, Fotografien und darüber hinaus Projekte im öffentlichen Raum.

Gonzalez-Torres (1957–1996) ließ sich 1979 in New York nieder, wo er Kunst studierte und später bis zu seinem Tod im Alter von 38 Jahren als Künstler arbeitete. In den 1980er Jahren schloss sich Gonzalez-Torres dem Künstlerkollektiv *Group Material* an. Sein starkes Engagement für politische und gesellschaftliche Themen seiner Zeit spiegelt sich auch in seinem kritischen Verhältnis zu den damaligen Entwicklungen in der Konzeptkunst und dem Minimalismus wider. In einem breiten Spektrum an Medien verbinden sich in dem Werk von Gonzalez-Torres politische Kritik, emotionale Wirkung und sein grundsätzliches Interesse an Formen. Heute gilt sein einflussreiches Œuvre als wegweisend für nachfolgende Künstlergenerationen. Als Ausgangspunkt dienten ihm oft Objekte des täglichen Lebens, wie Uhren, Spiegel oder Lampen. Zu seinen bekanntesten Kunstwerken gehören große Mengen aufgehäufter Bonbons und Papierstapel, an denen die Besucher sich bedienen dürfen. Mit diesen minimalistischen Werken wie auch mit seinen Girlanden aus Glühlampen oder seinen tickenden Uhrenpaaren, die unweigerlich aus dem Gleichschritt geraten, erforschte Gonzalez-Torres die Zusammenhänge zwischen der Zeit, der Kunst und der menschlichen Existenz. Doch so markant bestimmte Objekte für das Werk von Gonzalez-Torres sind, lassen sie sich doch nicht auf eine bestimmte Gestalt festlegen. Wie der Titel *Specific Objects without Specific Form* andeutet, können diese in jeder Ausstellung eine andere Gestalt annehmen und eine neue Präsentationsform haben.

Bei jeder der drei Ausstellungsstationen in Brüssel, Basel und dem Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt wird die Schau ab der Hälfte der Laufzeit von einem Künstler umgestaltet. Im MMK wird Tino Sehgal (Künstler der Sammlung), dessen eigener künstlerischer Ansatz eine Affinität zum Werk von Felix Gonzalez-Torres aufweist, die Ausstellung ab dem 18. März neu einrichten. Ergänzt durch eine neue Werkauswahl wird sich die Präsentationsform der einzelnen Arbeiten täglich verändern, indem Tino Sehgal für die Räume des Museums eine Art von Choreographie der Werke entwickelt.

The exhibition is rearranged daily following a concept by Tino Sehgal.

Frankfurt's MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst Frankfurt am Main hosts the final leg of the traveling retrospective, *Felix Gonzalez-Torres. Specific Objects without Specific Form*, previously shown at WIELS Contemporary Art Centre in Brussels and the Fondation Beyeler in Basel. Including both rarely seen and more known paintings, sculptures, photographic works, and public projects, this major exhibition reflects the full scope of Gonzalez-Torres's short but prolific career.

Born in Cuba, Gonzalez-Torres (1957–1996) settled in New York in the late 1970s, where he studied art and began his practice as an artist before his untimely death of AIDS related complications in 1996, at the age of thirty-eight. He participated in the art collective *Group Material* in the 1980s, was an engaged social activist, and in a relatively short time developed a profoundly influential body of work that can be seen in critical relationship to Conceptual Art and Minimalism, mixing political critique, emotional affect, and deep formal concerns in a wide range of media, including drawings, sculpture, and public billboards, often using ordinary objects as a starting point—clocks, mirrors, or light fixtures. Amongst his most famous artworks are his piles of candy and paper stacks from which viewers are allowed to take away a piece. Those artworks are premised, like so much of what he did, on instability and potential for change. The result is his profoundly human body of work, intimate and fragile even as it destabilizes so many seemingly unshakable certainties (the artwork as fixed, the author as the ultimate form-giver, the exhibition as a place to look but not touch). This exhibition proposes an experimental form that is indebted to Gonzalez-Torres's own radical conception of the artwork.

At each of the stages of the exhibition tour, namely at WIELS, the Fondation Beyeler and, now, at the MMK in Frankfurt, the show is initially installed by the exhibition's curator Elena Filipovic and, halfway through its duration, is completely reinstalled by a different selected artist whose own practice has been influenced by Gonzalez-Torres. At the MMK, Tino Sehgal will reinstall the exhibition as of March 18. Sehgal, no stranger to the MMK, with a work in the collection, will in this case interpret and curate the oeuvre of another artist whose approach has been important to his own. As a result, Sehgal will, for his contribution to the exhibition, not only reinstall the exhibition with a partially new checklist, but will also devise a special choreography so that daily changes can be enacted to the presentation of Gonzalez-Torres's artworks. Both versions of the exhibition are installed in close dialogue with the MMK architecture and continue this traveling project's attempt to refute the notion that an exhibition has to be something immutable

Mit dieser ungewöhnlichen Form der Präsentation widersetzt sich das Museum für Moderne Kunst der verbreiteten Vorstellung, dass eine Ausstellung etwas Fixiertes ist und eine Retrospektive den Anspruch des umfassenden, absolut gültigen Überblicks hat. In diesem Zusammenhang verweist das experimentelle, kuratorische Konzept des Gesamtprojektes auf die radikalen Konzeptionen in Felix Gonzalez-Torres' eigenem Werk.

Die Ausstellung wurde konzipiert von Elena Filipovic und dem WIELS Contemporary Art Centre (Brüssel) in Kooperation mit dem MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst Frankfurt am Main, der Fondation Beyeler (Riehen/Basel) und der Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation, New York.

or that a retrospective should offer a single, authoritative narrative. The entire project's experimental curatorial concept thus attempts to respond and pay homage to the Gonzalez-Torres's own thinking and practice.

The exhibition concept was devised by Elena Filipovic and initiated by WIELS Contemporary Art Centre, Brussels in collaboration with the Fondation Beyeler, Riehen/Basel, the MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst Frankfurt, and the Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation, New York.



"Untitled", 1987
Framed photostat; 21 x 26 cm; Edition of 1, 1 AP and 2 additional AP
Collection Julie Ault, New York

"Untitled" (Just Say No), 1987
Offset print on acetate; 27,9 x 35,6 cm
Private Collection



"Untitled", 1987
Framed photostat; 21 x 26 cm; Edition of 3, 1 AP
Private Collection



"Untitled", 1988
Framed photostat; 26,7 x 33 cm; Edition of 1, 1 AP
Private Collection



"Untitled", 1988
Framed photostat; 26,7 x 29,8 cm; Edition of 1, 1 AP
Private Collection



"Untitled", 1988
Wooden pedestal and photocopy on paper, endless copies; 36 in. at ideal height x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. overall (91,4 cm at ideal height x 31,7 x 24,1 cm overall); Stack: 6 in. at ideal height x 11 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (original paper size); (15,2 cm at ideal height x 27,9 x 21,5 cm (original paper size)); Pedestal: 30 in. x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (76,2 x 24,1 x 31,7 cm)
Private Collection



"Untitled", 1988
Framed photostat; 21 x 26 cm; Edition of 2, 1 AP
Collection Gregory R. Miller and Michael Weiner, New York



"Untitled" (Loverboy), 1989
Blue sheer fabric and hanging device;
Dimensions vary with installation
Private Collection



"Untitled", 1989
C-print jigsaw puzzle in plastic bag; 19 x 24 cm;
Edition of 3, 1 AP
Private Collection



"Untitled" (White Legal), 1989
Metal magazine rack and photocopy on paper, endless copies; 65 1/2 x 9 3/4 x 4 1/8 in. (166,3 x 24,7 x 10,5 cm) overall; Paper size: 14 x 8 1/2 in. (35,5 x 21,5 cm)
Hauser & Wirth Collection, Switzerland



"Untitled", 1990
Print on paper, endless copies
15 1/2 in. at ideal height x 29 x 22 1/2 in. (original paper size); (39,4 cm at ideal height x 73,7 x 57,2 cm (original paper size))
Collection Agustín and Isabel Coppel, Culiacán Sinaloa



"Untitled", 1990
Offset print on paper, endless copies
8 in. at ideal height x 29 x 23 in. (original paper size); (20,3 cm at ideal height x 73,6 x 58,4 cm (original paper size))
Kunsthalle Hamburger



"Untitled", 1990
Print on red paper, endless supply; 71 cm at ideal height x 73 x 56,5 cm (original paper size)
Centre national des arts plastiques – Ministère de la culture et de la communication, France
FNAC



"Untitled" (A Corner of Baci), 1990
Baci chocolates, endless supply
Overall dimensions vary with installation;
Ideal weight: 42 lbs (19 kg)
The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles
Purchased with funds provided by the Ruth
and Jake Bloom Young Artist Fund.
With generous support from Nestlé Italiana



"Untitled", 1990
Print on paper, endless copies
66 cm at ideal height x 29 x 142,2 cm overall;
Two parts: 26 in at ideal height x 29 x 23 in. (original
paper size) each; (66 cm at ideal height x 73,7 x
58,5 cm (original paper size) each)
Rosa and Carlos de la Cruz Collection



"Untitled", 1982/1990
Newsprint on paper, framed;
32,4 x 86,4 cm overall;
3 parts: 32,4 x 25,4 cm each
Private Collection



"Untitled" (Perfect Lovers), 1987-1990
Wall clocks; 34,3 x 68,6 x 3,1 cm overall;
Two parts: 34,3 cm diameter each
Dallas Museum of Art, fractional gift of
The Rachofsky Collection



"Untitled" (March 5th) #2, 1991
Light bulbs, porcelain light sockets, extension
cords; Overall dimensions vary with installation
Two parts: approximately 287 cm in height each
Edition of 20, 2 AP
Hauser & Wirth Collection, Switzerland



"Untitled" (Placebo), 1991
Candies, individually wrapped in silver cellophane,
endless supply; Overall dimensions vary with
installation; ideal weight: 1,000-1,200 lbs
(454-544 kg)
Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Elisa
and Barry Stevens



"Untitled" (Chemo), 1991
Strands of beads and hanging device
Dimensions vary with installation
Glenstone



"Untitled" (Orpheus, Twice), 1991
Mirror; 190,5 x 139,7 cm overall;
Two parts: 190,5 x 64,7 cm each
Private Collection



"Untitled" (Passport), 1991
Paper, endless supply; 10 cm at ideal height x
60 x 60 cm (original paper size)
Marieluise Hessel Collection. On permanent loan
to Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College



"Untitled" (Party Platform - 1980-1992), 1991
Black paper, endless supply; 7 in. at ideal height x
40 x 26 in. (original paper size)
(17,8 at ideal height x 102 x 66 cm (original paper
size))
Private Collection



"Untitled" (Public Opinion), 1991
Black rod licorice candies individually wrapped,
endless supply; Overall dimensions vary with ins-
tallation; Ideal weight: 700 lbs (317,5 kg)
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York,
Purchased with funds contributed by the Louis
and Bessie Adler Foundation, Inc., and the National
Endowment for the Arts Museum Purchase
Program, 1991



"Untitled" (Portrait of Dad), 1991
White candies individually wrapped in cellophane,
endless supply; Overall dimensions vary with
installation; Ideal weight: 175 lbs (79,3 kg)
Rosa and Carlos de la Cruz Collection



"Untitled", 1991
Print on paper, endless copies
7 in. at ideal height x 45 1/4 x 38 1/2 in. (original
paper size); (17,8 cm at ideal height x 114,9 x
97,8 cm (original paper size))
Collection Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. T.B.
Walker Acquisition Fund, 1991



"Untitled" (Fear), 1991
Blue mirror
77,9 x 65,7 cm
Collection Michele Brunelli, Italy



"Untitled" (Fear), 1992
Blue mirror
20,9 x 77,4 x 77,4 cm
Alice and Marvin Kosmin



"Untitled" (For Stockholm), 1992
Light bulbs, porcelain light sockets, extension
cords; Overall dimensions vary with installation
Twelve parts: 12,8 m in length each, with 6 m of
extra cord each
Collection Magasin 3 Stockholm Konsthall



"Untitled", 1992/1993
Print on paper, endless copies
8 in. at ideal height x 48 1/4 x 33 1/4 in. (original pa-
per size); (20,3 cm at ideal height x 122,6 x 84,5 cm
(original paper size))
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey R. Winter,
New York



"Untitled" (Passport #II), 1993
Print on paper, bound in booklets, endless copies
20,3 cm at ideal height x 76,2 x 61 cm (original
paper size); Each booklet: 12 pages, 15,2 x 10,2 cm
each
Sammlung Goetz



"Untitled" (Silver), 1992
Light bulbs, metal light sockets and extension
cord; Overall dimensions vary with installation
12,8 m in length, with 6 m extra cord
Private Collection



"Untitled" (Last Light), 1993
 Light bulbs, plastic light sockets, extension cord, dimmer switch; Overall dimensions vary with installation; 3,5 m length, with 3,8 m extra cord
 Edition of 24, 6 AP
 Privatsammlung Hamburg



"Untitled" (America), 1994
 Light bulbs, waterproof rubber light sockets, waterproof rubber extension cords; Overall dimensions vary with installation; 20 m in length with 7,4 m extra cord each
 Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
 Purchase, with funds from the Contemporary Painting and Sculpture Committee



"Untitled" (For Jeff), 1992
 Billboard
 Dimensions vary with installation
 Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institute, Washington D.C.
 Gift of the Peter Norton Family Foundation, 1995



"Untitled", 1989
 Paint on wall
 Dimensions vary with installation
 The Art Institute of Chicago: Bequest of Carolyn Spiegel; Watson F. Blair Prize, Muriel Kallis Newman, Sara Szold and Modern and Contemporary Discretionary funds; Samuel and Sarah Deson and Oscar Gerber Memorial endowments; and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Accessions Committee Fund Purchase: gift of Jean and James E. Douglas Jr., Carla Emil and Rich Silverstein, Collectors Forum, Doris and Don Fisher, Niko and Steve Mayer, Elaine McKeon, and Danielle and Brooks Walker Jr.



"Untitled" (Summer), 1993
 Light bulbs, porcelain light sockets, extension cord; Overall dimensions vary with installation
 12,8 m in length with 6 m of extra cord
 Private Collection

