ARTFORUM

PRINT FEBRUARY 2018

ACTIVE DUTY: THE ART OF FRANZ ERHARD WALTHER

CAROLINE LILLIAN SCHOPP ON THE ART OF FRANZ ERHARD WALTHER

Franz Erhard Walther, 1. *Werksatz in Lagerform* (First Work Set in Storage Form), 1963–69, canvas, foam, wood, mixed media. Installation view, Kunstmuseum Luzern, Switzerland, 1992. Photo: Emmanuel Ammon. © Franz Erhard Walther/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

IN THE SUMMER of 1972, at Documenta 5, Franz Erhard Walther demonstrated the use of the fifty-eight discrete objects of his *1. Werksatz* (First Work Set), 1963–69. Now iconic, the *1. Werksatz* exemplifies the type of art for which Walther is best known: wall-hung or

floor-bound cloth works that are meant to be activated in particular ways by visitors, or "users." Documenta 5 presents a historic moment in the changing attitudes of institutions and the public toward participatory or action-based art. Curated by Harald Szeemann under the rubric "Questioning Reality," the exhibition marked the culmination of an already decade-long artistic interrogation of traditional models of contemplative spectatorship. In Kassel, Joseph Beuys opened his *Organization for Direct Democracy by Referendum*, David Medalla and John Dugger set up a "People's Participation Pavilion," and Anatol Herzfeld invited visitors into his sculpture workshop for *Arbeitszeit* (Work Time), 1970. A year before Documenta, Robert Morris's much-talked-about show "Bodyspacemotionthings" at the Tate gave visitors the opportunity to, among other things, slide down a ramp in the artist's post-Minimalist playground.[1] While Walther's inclusion at Documenta shows that he belonged to this participatory moment in contemporary art, such object titles as *Dichtigkeit und Ambivalenz* (*Kurz vor der Dämmerung*) (Compactness and Ambivalence [Shortly Before Twilight]), no. 32, 1967, already indicate a certain tension. To activate this object, nine people had to insert themselves into as many interlocking pockets, forming a single-file line. Drawing strangers into an awkward proximity, this work thus occasions the "compactness and ambivalence" of its title. To judge from a video of Walther's demonstration in Kassel, the audience appears flummoxed by the goings-on. And Walther himself seems to have considered his invitation to viewers to "act with objects," as he put it at the time, a failure.[2]

A couple of years after Documenta, he packed up each of the *1. Werksatz* objects, which are made primarily of pliable materials like canvas. He folded each into a cloth satchel marked with an identifying diagram and stored these bundles on a two-tiered wooden shelf he built. He called the result *Lagerform* (Storage Form), a designation that names both an object and a state of being. From 1974 until 1997, the *1. Werksatz* was exhibited only in *Lagerform*.[3] The storage period coincided with a latency in Walther's reception. The 1990s, however, brought a renewal of interest in the artist, especially in his early work. In 1997, demonstrations of the *1. Werksatz* were presented at the Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Geneva, where, for the first time since the 1970s, visitors were invited to activate objects. In the following years, the artist's reputation effloresced. In 2017, he was the subject of an expansive retrospective at Madrid's Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, and his venerated stature was confirmed when he was awarded a Golden Lion at that year's Venice Biennale.

Franz Erhard Walther, *Sehkanal* (Channel of Sight), no. 46, 1968, canvas. Performance view, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, April 18, 2017. From *1. Werksatz* (First Work Set), 1963–69. Photo: Joaquín Cortes/Romás Lores. © Franz Erhard Walther/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

The Venice selection committee lauded Walther for work that "continues to activate the viewer in engaging ways." His Madrid retrospective bore out this assessment. In the galleries of the Palacio de Velázquez (a venue of the Reina Sofía), trained assistants patiently cajoled curious tourists into taking off their backpacks and showed them how to use Walther's seemingly inscrutable works, which were reproduced as exhibition copies in heavy-duty canvas. Young children zigzagged gleefully around the gallery, giggling as they attempted to lean into and pull taut the four long panels of *Vier Körpergewichte* (Four Body Weights), no. 42, 1968, to make a square. The fact that their effort was unsuccessful clearly put no damper on the fun. They were the very picture of engaged spectatorship.

If in the '60s and early '70s Walther's work caused perplexity and consternation, today its significance is taken to be self-evident in an institutional context that privileges viewer participation. This ultimately economic imperative found its theoretical articulation in "relational aesthetics." According to this paradigm, art should democratically encourage

Franz Erhard Walther, *Körpergewichte* (Body Weights), no. 48, 1969, canvas. Performance view, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, 2008. From *1. Werksatz* (First Work Set), 1963–69. Photo: François Doury. © Franz Erhard Walther/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

social interactions in a manner that generates reflection on—or even constitutes—community. Seen through this lens, Walther's objects are taken to "empower and activate viewers," and to generate "ever-larger structures for collective action," as Elena Filipovic put it in the catalogue for her 2014Walther exhibition, "Franz Erhard Walther: The Body Decides."[4] This is the very sentiment echoed in 2017 by the Golden Lion committee. And it is certainly one way of characterizing what was happening in Madrid, where curator João Fernandes had put together a beautifully textured, complex show that was, moreover, completely free and open to the public.

Yet the video of the 1972 Documenta event, which was playing on a monitor at the Palacio de Velázquez, tells a different story. Demonstrating *Weitergehen* (Proceeding [further]), no. 35, 1967, in a gallery of the Fridericianum, Walther begins by unfolding a long strip of canvas. He gestures impatiently, then uses a watch borrowed from a member of the audience to time himself as he inserts his feet into the twenty-eight pockets sewn into the

Franz Erhard Walther, *Landmaß über Zeichnung* (Land Measurement by Drawing), no. 6, 1964, canvas, cord, line, wood. Performance views, Hochrhön region, Germany. From 1. *Werksatz* (First Work Set), 1963–69. Photos: Timm Rautert. © Franz Erhard Walther/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Franz Erhard Walther, *Landmaß über Zeichnung* (Land Measurement by Drawing), no. 6, 1964, canvas, cord, line, wood. Performance views, Hochrhön region, Germany. From 1. *Werksatz* (First Work Set), 1963–69. Photos: Timm Rautert. © Franz Erhard Walther/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

canvas. With each pocket, he has to bend over, open it, stick in his booted feet, and straighten into an upright position. Upon reaching the end of the canvas strip, he starts again, repeating the tiresome process—this time without the watch, but approximating the same pace. The artist later commented that the work is supposed to thematize the tension between "measured time" and "experiential time"—and, if the audience's restlessness is any guide, it may have inadvertently succeeded.[5] As he finishes his demonstration, there is a rush for the door. "Please don't walk over the piece!" Walther shouts indignantly at the departing crowd, and then, in a markedly ill-tempered tone, attempts to negotiate questions from the remaining viewers as to the "message" of his art, which he describes as "open," "equivocal," and "not purposive."[6]

What was at stake in the *1. Werksatz* was by no means an "activation of viewers." It was an activation of the object.

As this video indicates, what was at stake in the *1. Werksatz* was by no means an "activation of viewers." It was an activation of the object. For Walther, at least at the time, the work had less to do with orchestrating relations between people in the gallery than with articulating bodies in space. And the purpose of this choreography was, in turn, to occasion reflection on transient, liminal, abstract aspects of collective, embodied experience. *Dichtigkeit und Ambivalenz*, for example, may bring strangers into proximity, but it does so with no promise of redemption. If its early activations can indeed be construed as a kind of "relational aesthetics," then the relations accentuated by the *1. Werksatz* have little to do with the ideals of liberation, community, and participation with which Walther's work has become synonymous since coming out of storage.

WALTHER WAS BORN in 1939 in Fulda, a small city in central Germany where his family ran a bakery. Located on the western side of the FDR-GDR border, the area was known throughout the Cold War as the "Fulda Gap," because it was thought to be particularly vulnerable to invasion. It was heavily patrolled by American forces until the reunification of Germany in 1990. The most striking images of people using the objects from the *1. Werksatz* are Timm Rautert's black-and-white photographs taken in the vast undeveloped landscape of the adjacent Hochrhön region. They read like passive tactical interventions, aimless treks, weirdly impotent calculations of the land. Walther would retire in 2005 to

this obscure “gap,” at the threshold, paradoxically, of a newfound international fame.

Franz Erhard Walther, *Sammler, Masse und Verteilung* (Collector, Mass and Distribution), no. 15, 1966, canvas, wooden stick, hose, cord. Performance view, Hochrhön region, Germany, 1970. From *1. Werksatz* (First Work Set), 1963–69. Photo: Timm Rautert. © Franz Erhard Walther/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

One could say that Walther has always preferred peripheries.At the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf in the early ’60s, he studied painting under Karl Otto Götz, along with Konrad Fischer, Sigmar Polke, and Gerhard Richter, but he was not associated with Capitalist Realism, Polke and Richter’s critique of the emergent politics of neoliberalism and of contemporary American Pop art. Nor was he connected to the increasingly important art scene in West Berlin. At the Kunstakademie, he was already preoccupied with the questions of corporeality and embodiment that would remain at the center of his corpus, and his production at the time largely consisted not of paintings but of bizarre pillow-, mattress-, and bolster-like forms that articulate a vaguely abject relation to the human body. As part of a more conventional series that he called “*Papierkörper*” (Paper Bodies), 1962, he marked paper with vegetable oil, soy sauce, coffee, and earth, thus insisting on the two-sided potential of each page. He gravitated toward Jörg Immendorff, Blinky Palermo, and

Franz Erhard Walther, *Sammelobjekt (Neun)* (For Collecting [Nine]), no. 39, 1967, canvas. Performance view, Hochrhön region, Germany, 1970. From *1. Werksatz* (First Work Set), 1963–69. Photo: Timm Rautert. © Franz Erhard Walther/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Chris Reinecke, all of whom belonged to the circle of students around sculpture professor Joseph Beuys. In photographic documents from the period his fellow Kunstakademie students, as well as Beuys himself, can be seen activating his objects. And in 1967, in the subtitle to an issue of the short-lived broadsheet *Information* that he produced with Immendorff and Reinecke, he officially formulated the credo for his work: "*Objekte benutzen*" (Objects to use).[7] Along with photographs of his quasi furnishings, Walther filled pages with meticulous descriptions, instructions, diagrams, and drawings related to a new group of canvas objects sewn by his first wife, Johanna Walther (née Frieß), who continues to fabricate his pieces to this day. These would become part of the *1. Werksatz*.

Franz Erhard Walther, *Dichtigkeit und Ambivalenz (Kurz vor de Dämmerung)* (Compactness and Ambivalence [Shortly Before Twilight]), no. 32, 1967, canvas. Performance view, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, April 18, 2017. From *1. Werksatz* (First Work Set), 1963–69. Photo: Joaquín Cortes/Romás Lores. © Franz Erhard Walther/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Remarkably, given how many young artists were flocking to Düsseldorf at the time, Walther couldn't wait to leave. In an early interview, he stated, "In Düsseldorf I was more or less totally isolated,"[8] and he has since emphasized his feeling of having been constrained, misunderstood by his peers and disparaged by Beuys, who called him a "tailor" when he started using canvas and supposedly referred to his work as "*Beamtenkunst!*" (bureaucratic art).[9] Walther craved a space for artmaking defined by the "magnanimity, breadth, openness, and tolerance" that he associated with the large-scale abstract canvases of the American painters Barnett Newman, Jackson Pollock, and Clyfford Still.[10] In 1967, he left with Johanna Walther and their two sons for New York. He took a job as a cake decorator on the Upper East Side, returning, one might say, to the family profession.[11]

It would be in New York that Walther had his decisive, if also vexed, breakthrough. Jennifer Licht, a curator at the Museum of Modern Art, had been impressed with

Walther's work during a visit to his Düsseldorf studio in 1966, and shortly after his arrival she invited him to participate in "Spaces," an exhibition of artists who called viewers' attention to imperceptible or immaterial aspects of the environment, such as sound, temperature, or light.[12] In the glass-walled lobby facing Fifty-Fourth Street, Walther exhibited all fifty-eight objects of the recently completed *1. Werksatz* for the first time. He spent every day on-site during the run of the show, demonstrating his work and guiding viewers' activations.

Joseph Beuys with Franz Erhard Walther's *Weste* (Vest), no. 11, 1965, from *1. Werksatz* (First Work Set), 1963–69, Chris Reinecke and Jörg Immendorff's apartment, Düsseldorf, 1966. Photo: Reiner Ruthenbeck

"Spaces" opened to the public on December 30, 1969. Four days earlier, the New York-based Art Workers' Coalition had plastered the city with the now-iconic antiwar poster *Q. And babies? A. And babies*, created in response to reports of the My Lai massacre. In an atmosphere of intensifying protests and artistic activism, MoMA had generated its own controversy by withdrawing its sponsorship of the poster's production following a meeting between supportive museum staff and apparently skeptical trustees.[13] As attested by the journal Walther kept throughout the exhibition and published the following year as an

artist's book, he paid little attention to the demonstrations erupting in and around MoMA and across the city. Instead, he devoted himself to the "demonstration" of the objects of the *1. Werksatz*. The works' titles, many of which have since been changed, did suggest a political dimension to the work set: *Um Brutalität zu verstehen* (In Order to Understand Brutality), no. 33, 1967; *Politisch* (Political), no. 36, 1967; *Für Streik* (For Strike), no. 41, 1967, etc.[14] But the activation of these objects resonated in complicated—if not contradictory—ways, with events unfolding beyond the museum. In contrast to those taking a stand against the war and other pressing social issues, the users of Walther's objects found themselves assuming passive positions of horizontality. For *Für Streik*, two people lie down and insert themselves into a long piece of gray-green canvas. For *Für Fünf* (For Five), no. 13, 1966, another floor-oriented canvas piece, five people crawl into as many large compartments and, pulling loose flaps inward, enclose themselves in the fabric, disappearing into suffocating intimacy.

Franz Erhard Walther, *Spots*, no. 57, 1969, canvas, cords. Performance view, Museum of Modern Art, New York, January 1970. From *1. Werksatz* (First Work Set), 1963–69. Photo: Virginia Bell. © Franz Erhard Walther/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

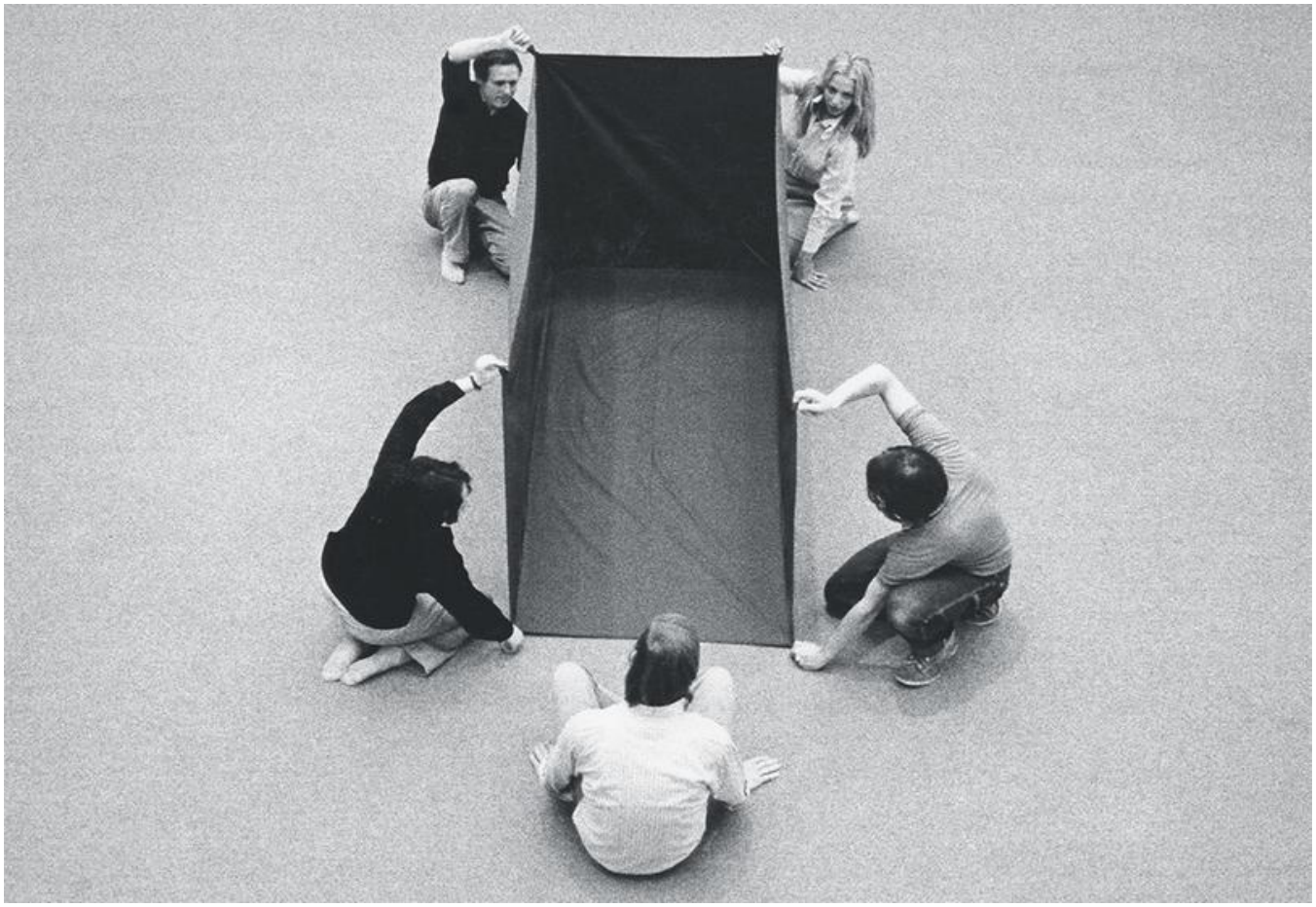
Walther's project is an ongoing interrogation of responsibility—the responsibility that arises from our collective encounter with things, with the world and the bodies that compose it.

In his journal, Walter records in some detail the trouble he had with visitors. On opening day he wrote, "Young people have to be dissuaded from having fun. . . . I explain to them that they . . . compensate for their incapacity with senseless, crude activity."[15] On New Year's Day 1970, he noted how the demonstration space was "visited time and again by people who laugh so hard when they look [in] that they can hardly get hold of themselves."[16] He ejected the people who tore one of the works, *For balance*, no. 26, 1967, to pieces. Far from what he envisioned—"the decline of the users' physical powers is reflected in the gradual collapse of the form"[17]—Walther wrote in frustration on January 3, 1970, how visitors "hopped around in it," destroying it and declaring, "We want freedom now!"18 If this was some kind of protest in its own right, then, as Walther saw it, there was no room for such "activism" in his demonstration space.

Franz Erhard Walther, *Politisch* (Political), no. 36, 1967, canvas. Performance view, near Essen, Germany, 1970. From *1. Werksatz* (First Work Set), 1963–69. Photo: Timm Rautert. © Franz Erhard Walther/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

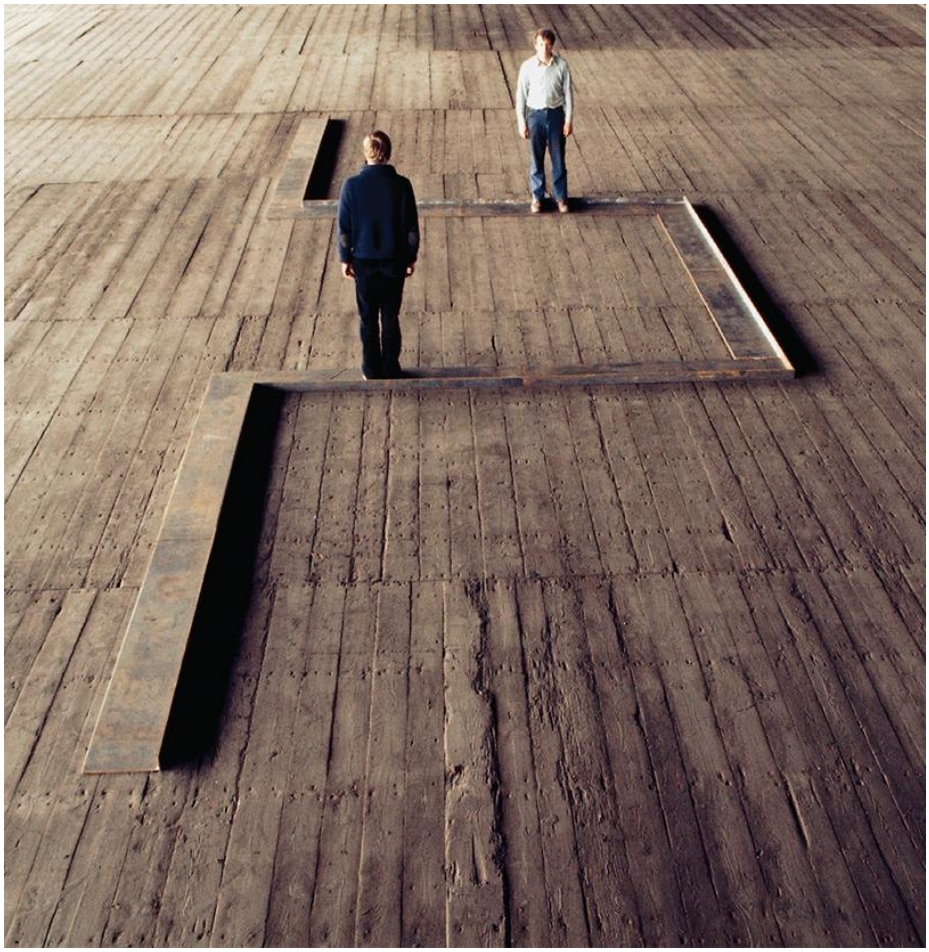
Dichtigkeit und Ambivalenz was at the center of a particularly trying day of activations. Walther recorded how a woman insisted on taking "prim steps," explaining to him that she wanted to move this way "because she thinks it's her choice." Her mannered movements caused Walther to intervene in the activation of the piece, "since her strained ballet

contortions take too much of her attention," and start the process over. A man protested: "She doesn't have to follow you." Recalling the confrontation, Walther mused disconsolately in his diary, "Of course not. That someone has to follow me, that nobody has to follow anybody, that I want to make realizations possible; does it have to be said specifically?"[19] The visitors wanted to be actors, if not activists, while Walther wanted them to activate the objects.



Franz Erhard Walther, *For balance*, no. 26, 1967, canvas. Performance view, Kunstahalle Düsseldorf, 1969. From *1. Werksatz* (First Work Set), 1963–69. Photo: Timm Rautert. © Franz Erhard Walther/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Critic Hilton Kramer, who in his disparaging review of "Spaces" coined the phrase *participatory esthetics*, reported of Walther's work that "the whole procedure looked like a lot of fun for anyone yearning to be tucked into his crib again or wondering what it felt like to be fitted for a straight-jacket."[20] Astutely describing the experience Kramer dismisses, Licht wrote in her catalogue essay that the objects in the *1. Werksatz* create "play situations," on the one hand, and "dictate and regulate," on the other. Insofar as the objects become active, she suggested, they "operate in a space that we have almost always regarded as inviolable and as ours alone to control."[21] Indeed, the "activation" of an object is an exercise not of agency but rather of its loss.



Franz Erhard Walther, *Schreitsockel. Fünf Strecken, Drei Stufen* (Stride Plinths. Five Sections, Three Stages), 1975, steel. Installation view, harbor storage building, Hamburg 1976. Photo: Timm Rautert. © Franz Erhard Walther/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

The equivocality, purposelessness, and openness of Walther's work actually requires users to assume odd positions of physical vulnerability and to undertake disturbing activities steeped in uncertainty about what one is doing, for how long, and why. It generates certain kinds of affect, such as angst, embarrassment, self-consciousness, and insecurity. It often does this by hindering the able body. *Blindobjekt* (Blind Object), no. 12, 1966, is a heavy sack of thin foam rubber lined inside and outside with brown canvas. It has the look of a sleeping bag. The user would put it over their head and then attempt to find their way around. The activation thus involves being stifled and blinded, at once concealed and vulnerable, camouflaged and exposed. It is in this way that Walther's early work might be understood to be political—not because it is liberatory, but because it is not.

WHILE WALTHER had left Düsseldorf drawn to the ideals of Abstract Expressionist painting, in America it was Minimalist and Conceptual artists—Richard Artschwager, Robert Morris, and Robert Ryman, among others—who took an interest in his work. In Barbara Brown's photographs for Walther's 1968 publication *Objekte, benutzen*, James

Robert Ryman with *Nachtstück* (Night Piece), no. 8, 1965, Franz Erhard Walther's loft, 65 East Broadway, New York, 1968. Photo: Barbara Brown.

Lee Byars can be seen leashed and collared by objects from the *1. Werksatz*.[22] Their engagement was doubtless not without ambivalence. Donald Judd is supposed to have said: "I like your pieces but without people."[23] When Walther returned to Germany in 1973 to assume a professorship in sculpture at the Hochschule für bildende Künste in Hamburg, his work bore traces of this other artistic milieu.

His final departure from America was marked by the packing up of the *1. Werksatz*. The *Lagerform* bespoke his disillusionment, but its starkly rectilinear design also marked a new direction in his work, which took on a more structurally organized, architectural dimension. After the confrontations to which the *1. Werksatz* gave rise, Walther sought to limit the intervention and instruction required to activate his objects. By 1975, he was using plywood, steel, and sheet iron to make low, plinth-like forms on which users were meant to stand. To activate such works, which he called "wall formations," "walking pedestals," or, simply, "places to stand," one had only to respond to the invitation of the object—to the way the object already articulated the space. His works since the mid-'70s have continued to intervene in space, segment it, partition it, measure it; they can be activated easily, by

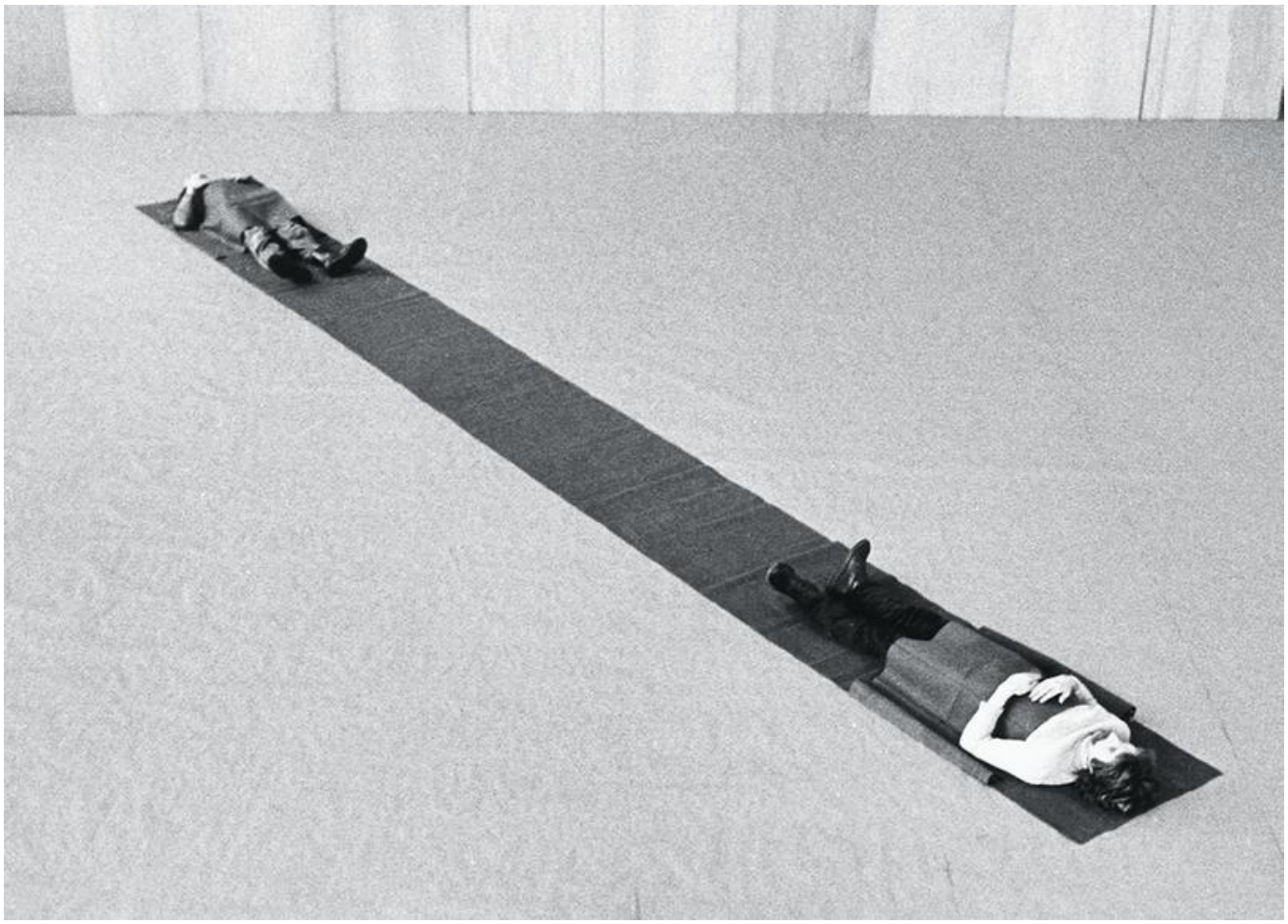
standing within or walking through their nooks and corridors. Today, his work is referred to as a "specifically German Minimalism," and, paradoxically, as "participatory Minimalism."[24]

Franz Erhard Walther, *Blindobjekt* (Blind Object), no. 12, 1966, canvas, foam rubber. Performance view, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2013. *From 1. Werksatz* (First Work Set), 1963–69. Photo: Joy Whalen. © Franz Erhard Walther/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Walther shares with his Minimalist friends an interest in what he referred to as "sculptural relations," only, pace Judd, he has continued to understand these relations as involving people, even if (unlike in performance art, from which he has always sought to distinguish his practice) the activated objects take priority.[25] Even what Walther considers to be the "materials" of his art are in fact relational and intangible: "time, thinking, language, and body-chemistry," but also "tiredness, being stressed, stretching out, and sensation."[26] Asked whether his art should be defined as sculpture, he would state, "I can't say it is sculpture, that would be misguided. It's sculptural relations, nothing more."[27] When challenged by his students in Hamburg to make a sculpture in plaster to prove he was not "against tradition," Walther obliged by taking a handful of plaster powder and throwing it

into the room, while keeping time on a watch. After about three minutes, the powder had settled on the floor, at which point he said, "That was a sculpture, which has to do with time, and was a traditional material: plaster."[28]

In an interview in 1977, Walther elaborated a concept of *Werkverantwortung* (responsibility for the work), which in his view is shared by artist and user: " *Werkverantwortung* means that anyone involved in these activation processes has to sustain the development; he is responsible for what develops, for what is finally defined as the work, no one can take that away from him."[29] It is possible to consider Walther's artistic project as an ongoing interrogation of responsibility, the responsibility that arises from our collective encounter with things, with the world and the disparate bodies that compose it. One way of reading Walther's decision to put the *1. Werksatz* into storage is as a realization that his work had failed to generate the sort of responsibility, or the sort of reflection on responsibility, that he had hoped it might.



Franz Erhard Walther, *Für Streik* (For Strike), no. 41, 1967, canvas. Performance view, Hochschule für bildende Künste Hamburg, 1970. From *1. Werksatz* (First Work Set), 1963–69. Photo: Timm Rautert. © Franz Erhard Walther/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Since 2008, Walther's exhibitions have typically included an activation of elements of the *1. Werksatz*. For better or worse, these works have become a "safe space," where, as in the Madrid exhibition, fun can be had by the whole family, with little children activating objects that once infuriated or humiliated adult users. Indeed, under the patient eyes of gallery assistants, the objects do produce touching moments of collective surprise and delight that might be indicative of another sociality. In 2018, however, it may be time, against prevailing tendencies of exhibition practice, to attend to the more unsettling aspects of Walther's work. A different activation might bring into focus questions of embodiment, ability, and freedom of movement, and of our implication in nonhuman environments—questions that are stored up in his work. These would attest in another way to its prescient contemporaneity. Perhaps the vulnerability and precariousness that Walther's objects once evinced need to be activated again.

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NOTES

1. Due to injuries—muscle strains, sprains, and splinters—Morris's show in London was shut down after four days. Morris protested the inclusion of his work in Documenta 5, which he condemned on aesthetic grounds. See Morris's letter to Szeemann, which is reproduced in *Harald Szeemann: Individual Methodology* (Zurich: JRP Ringier, 2007), 144.

2. My translation of Walther's remark made in "Demonstration *1. Werksatz* zur Documenta 5," 1972, video, 23:54, Documenta Archiv, Kassel, and Archive of the Franz Erhard Walther Foundation, Fulda, Germany.

3. For a chronology of the *1. Werksatz*, see Stephen Hoban, Kelly Kivland, and Yasmil Raymond, eds., *Franz Erhard Walther: First Work Set* (New York: Dia Art Foundation; London: Koenig Books, 2016), 240–47.

4. Elena Filipovic, "Sculpture Not to Be Seen," in *Franz Erhard Walther: The Body Decides*, exh. cat. (Cologne: Walther König, 2014), 30.

5. See the artist's discussion of "*gemessene Zeit*" (measured time) and "*Erlebniszeit*" (experiential time) in Annelie Pohlen, "Interview mit Franz Erhard Walther," *Flash Art*, March–April 1979, 24.

6. My translation of Walther's remark made in "Demonstration *1. Werksatz* zur Documenta 5."

7. See Walther, *Information: Objekte benutzen*, Asta der Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, 1967.

8. "Franz Erhard Walther: Interview by Georg Jappe," trans. David Britt, *Studio International*, July–August 1976, 65.

9. Hans Ulrich Obrist, "Attempt to Be a Sculpture," *Mousse*, April–May 2014, 87; and Gesine Borcherdt, "Mit Mut zur Lücke" [With the Courage to Leave Things Open], *Monopol*, April 2014, 46. While Walther suggests in retrospect that Beuys's latter comment was with reference to his works on paper, Beuys may well have been referring to Walther's aptitude for making detailed annotations of his work and charting out instructions, as in the *Information* broadsheet.

10. Elena Filipovic, "Interview with Franz Erhard Walther," in *Franz Erhard Walther: The Body Draws*, ed. Luis Croquer, exh. cat. (Seattle: Henry Art Gallery, 2016), 78.

11. "Franz Erhard Walther in Conversation with Jennifer Winkworth" in Hoban, Kivland, and Raymond,129.

12. On her early encounter with Walther's work, see Jennifer Winkworth (née Licht), "Franz Erhard Walther in Conversation with Jennifer Winkworth," 124. "Spaces" included installations by Michael Asher, Larry Bell, Dan Flavin, Robert Morris, and the group Pulsa.

13. Francis Frascina, *Art, Politics and Dissent: Aspects of the Art Left in Sixties America* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1999).

14. Following the publication of his artist's book *Objekte, benutzen* [Objects, to use] (Cologne: Verlag Gebrüder König, 1968) and his first monograph, *Franz Erhard Walther: Arbeiten 1955–1963, Material zum 1. Werksatz 1963–1969* [Franz Erhard Walther: Works 1955–1963, Material for the First Work Set 1963–1969], ed. Götz Adriani (Cologne:

1955–1963, Material for the First Work Set 1963–1969], ed. Götz Adriani (Cologne: DuMont-Schauberg, 1972), Walther revised the titles of the objects of the *1. Werksatz* several times. For example, *Um Brutalität zu verstehen* became *Plastik—5 Stufen* (Sculpture —5 States); *Politisch* became *Kreuz Verbindungsform* (Cross Connecting Form).

15. Walther published the diary with his Cologne gallerist as *Tagebuch: Museum of Modern Art, New York, 28. Dezember 1969–1. März 1970* (Cologne: Heiner Friedrich, 1971). It is available in English as "Diary: Museum of Modern Art, New York, December 28, 1969–March 1, 1970," trans. William Wheeler, in Hoban, Kivland, and Raymond, *Franz Erhard Walther: First Work Set*, 138–65, here 140.

16. Walther, "Diary," 141.

17. Walther's descriptions of his expectations for each object of the *1. Werksatz* are included in Hoban, Kivland, and Raymond, *Franz Erhard Walther: First Work Set*, here 201.

18. Walther, "Diary," 142.

19. Walther, "Diary," 144.

20. Hilton Kramer, "Participatory Esthetics," *New York Times*, January 11, 1970.

21. Jennifer Licht, untitled essay, in *Spaces* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1969), n.p.

22. Walther, *Objekte, benutzen.*

23. Filipovic, "Interview with Franz Erhard Walther," 77.

24. See, respectively, Renate Wiehager, "In Place of an Introduction: Minimalism in Germany. The Sixties—Aspects of a Phenomenon," in *Minimalism in Germany. The Sixties/Minimalismus in Deutschland. die 1960er Jahre*, ed. Renate Wiehager (Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2012), 34; and Alexander Koch, "Franz Erhard Walther's Partizipatorischer Minimalismus" [Franz Erhard Walther's participatory Minimalism], *KOW*, 2009, 22.

25. See especially "Franz Erhard Walther: Interview by Georg Jappe," which was in the "Performance" issue of *Studio International*, July–August, 1976, 65–68.

26. Walther recalls this anecdote in Georg Jappe, “Dialog über . . .” in *Franz Erhard Walther: 2. Werksatz, Skulpturen, Zeichnungen*, [Franz Erhard Walther: Second Work Set, Sculptures, Drawings], exh. cat. (Cologne: Museen der Stadt, 1977), 68, my translation.

27. Pohlen, “Interview mit Franz Erhard Walther,” 24, my translation.

28. Jappe, “Dialog über . . .,” 78, my translation.

29. Jappe, “Dialog über . . .,” 85, my translation.