

GAGOSIAN



LIVE IN YOUR HEAD

Richard Artschwager's Cabinet of Curiosities

Opening reception: Thursday, January 16, 6–8pm
January 17–March 7, 2020
17–19 Davies Street, London

Richard Artschwager, *blp*, 2013, painted wood, 15 × 5 3/4 × 1/2 inches (38.1 × 14.6 × 1.3 cm), edition of 9 © 2020 Richard Artschwager/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

January 10, 2020

There isn't any art until some creature sees and consumes it. And has a reaction.
—Richard Artschwager

Gagosian is pleased to present *Live in Your Head: Richard Artschwager's Cabinet of Curiosities*, an exhibition spanning the five decades of Artschwager's career, and his first in London since 2003.

Live in Your Head was conceived specifically in response to the Davies Street gallery space, with its wide plate glass window giving on to a busy Mayfair thoroughfare. The installation will be visible from the street, its components arranged like objects in a Joseph Cornell box. It also recalls a sixteenth-century *Wunderkammer*, or cabinet of curiosity—a collection of specimens, relics, and other marvels that was displayed as a microcosm of its owner's knowledge and experience. Artschwager studied science and mathematics at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York before and after serving as an intelligence officer in the Second World War. In making art, he revealed an empirical fascination with artifacts both extraordinary and banal, deriving surreal results from everyday sources, whether through shifts in scale or transpositions of forms from one material to another.

The exhibition is named for a sculpture titled *Live in Your Head* (2002) that is itself a reference to Harald Szeemann's paradigmatic 1969 group exhibition of the same title, in which Artschwager participated. *Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Form* upended fixed ideas about the art of the time—namely, the relationship between artist, viewer, space, and curator. Artschwager's work engages and activates the environment it inhabits, often guiding viewers' attention to the discreet or overlooked. His signature *blps*—visual ciphers that are introduced into locations both indoor and outdoor at wildly varying scales—animate spaces that are habitually forgotten or unused, such as corners and crannies, or even the upper reaches of a Manhattan smokestack. *Bristle Corner* (1995) functions in a similar way to the *blps*, in three dimensions, its appearance shifting according to one's viewpoint. In *Walker* (1964), Artschwager redacted the familiar stabilizing aid into a geometric sculpture totally detached from function. In *Klock* (1989), a small timepiece is set into a wooden body with winglike protrusions—a playful embodiment of the idiom “time flies”—while the sculptures *Exclamation Point (Yellow)* (2001) and *Pregunta II* (1983) render punctuation—the idea of a grammatical figure designed to literally interrupt space and time—as primary form and content.

Associated with many genres but cleaving to none, Artschwager's art has been variously described as Pop, due to its derivation from utilitarian objects and its incorporation of commercial and industrial materials; Minimal, owing to its geometric forms and solid presence; and Conceptual, because of its cerebral detachment. Focusing on the structures of perception, and conflating the visual world of images (painting) with the tactile world of objects (sculpture), his inspirations and points of departure range from counterintelligence to cabinetry.

Richard Artschwager was born in 1923 in Washington, DC, and died in 2013 in Albany, New York. Collections include the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Art Institute of Chicago; Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Germany; Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany; Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Germany; Centre Pompidou, Paris; and Tate, London. Exhibitions include *Painting Then and Now*, Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, FL (2003); *Up and Down/Back and Forth*, Deutsche Guggenheim Berlin (2003); *Hair*, Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis (2010); *Richard Artschwager!*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2012, traveled to Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Haus der Kunst, Munich; and Nouveau Musée National de Monaco); and *Punctuating Space: The Prints and Multiples of Richard Artschwager*, Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY (2015).

A retrospective of Artschwager's work curated by Germano Celant opened at Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, Italy, in October 2019, and will travel to the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, Spain, in February 2020.

#RichardArtschwager

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