

Isa Genzken

Projects for Outside
ISA USA

12 March - 25 April 2026

Galerie Buchholz is proud to announce the exhibition by Isa Genzken "Projects for Outside - *ISA USA*" as the inaugural show at our new location in New York on 54th Street. This exhibition will focus on the artist's projects for outdoor sculptures.

At the invitation of the late Okwui Enwezor, Isa Genzken commissioned maquettes of the majority of both her proposed and realized outdoor sculptures for her contribution to his Venice Biennale in 2015. This process allowed Genzken to take stock of the breadth and importance of outdoor projects within her oeuvre and her desire for an ongoing dialogue with architecture and public space. It also allowed her to evaluate the potential realization of these works in the future. After the maquettes' initial presentation at the Venice Biennale, they were the subject of two solo exhibitions at the Bundeskunsthalle Bonn (2016) and Kunsthalle Bern (2019). A comprehensive monograph on Genzken's outdoor projects appeared in 2020.

For the exhibition in New York, these "Projects for Outside" are contextualized by a selection of related works Isa Genzken made throughout her career.

Architecture - modern architecture in particular - always played a significant role in Isa Genzken's work. She dedicated her 1992 film "Chicago Drive" to the city of Chicago, which she portrayed as the point of origin for modern architecture. The X-motif from the John Hancock Building designed by Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill appears in an outdoor project as well as a number of paintings and other sculptural works from this time. Genzken's engagement with architecture, however, extends beyond mere reference: questions of scale and spatial interrelations are central to her working method. This is particularly evident in her concrete works, which often miniaturize architectural typologies and relate to larger embodiments, whether real or imagined.

An even more significant and recurring reference in her work is New York City, particularly the architecture of Midtown Manhattan, which strongly influenced the artist during her many visits throughout her life. The city served as a site for her projections and fantasies, a model world that she imagined as an ideal reception space for herself. Over time, Genzken moved beyond responding to the city and its architecture and began to consider ways of reshaping it in her own image. Her proposals for outdoor projects often took the form of such imagined contributions. In 2000, for example, she conceived a project that would transform Philip Johnson's AT&T Building into a "World Receiver": a sensitive, receptive entity much like the artist herself.

The transition of her sculptural practice to larger architectural projects and public interventions reflects her aim for a more open and collaborative practice. In the 1990s, Isa Genzken articulated the idea to establish an agency that she called *ISA USA* as an umbrella for projects like her New York travel guide "I Love New York, Crazy City", 1995-1996, in which she would collaborate with fellow artists and architects. First produced as a unique three-volume collage book, whose material and formal logic provided the groundwork for her future practice, "I Love New York, Crazy City" included interviews with Lawrence Weiner, Danny McDonald and Neil Logan. We are proud to be able to present the original collage books in this exhibition.

Significant partners for *ISA USA* include Dan Graham, with whom Genzken had a lifelong friendship and engagement on the relationship of art and architecture, as well as Kai Althoff and Wolfgang Tillmans, with whom she has collaborated many times to this day. Alongside Isa Genzken's works, our exhibition features an architectural maquette by Dan Graham, portraits of the artist by Wolfgang Tillmans, and a new sculptural work made for the exhibition by Kai Althoff. Additionally, the musician and DJ Ashland Mines produced a new soundtrack for Genzken's 2008 film "Ground Zero" for the show. Under his alias Total Freedom, he had already collaborated with Isa Genzken in 2016 on the techno track "Fuck Them All." Following the opening of the exhibition, Ashland Mines will play music as Bobby Beethoven.

This is Isa Genzken's 18th solo exhibition with Galerie Buchholz since 1987. The exhibition "Isa Genzken: World Receiver" is currently on view at Den Frie in Copenhagen, through April. In 2023, the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin presented "75/75: 75 Sculptures for Isa Genzken's 75th Birthday". Genzken has had important solo exhibitions at Liebieghaus Skulpturensammlung, Frankfurt am Main (2025); Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf (2021); Kunstmuseum Basel (2020); Kunsthalle Bern (2019); Mönchehaus Museum Goslar on the occasion of receiving the Goslar Kaiserring award (2017); Bundeskunsthalle Bonn (2016); Martin Gropius Bau, Berlin (2016); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2015); Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt (2015); The Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2015); Kunsthalle Wien (2014); and Museum der Moderne, Salzburg (2014/2015). In 2013, The Museum of Modern Art, New York organized a retrospective of Genzken's work which travelled to the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago (2014) and the Dallas Museum of Art (2014/2015). Genzken was included in Documenta 7, 9 and 11 (1982, 1992 and 2002), and Skulptur Projekte in Münster (1987, 1997 and 2007). She represented Germany at the 52nd Venice Biennale (2007), and her "Projects for Outside" debuted at the 56th Venice Biennale (2015). Outdoor sculptures and projects by Isa Genzken have been installed around the world, including Baden-Baden, Berlin, Bielefeld, Münster, Brussels, Innsbruck, Toronto, Tokyo, Venice, Paris, Copenhagen, Doha, and in New York's Central Park.

This exhibition has been organized in parallel with a show of Isa Genzken's work at David Zwirner, curated by Ebony L. Haynes, opening on March 13 at 52 Walker Street in Tribeca.

These exhibitions coincide with the publication of Isa Genzken: Catalogue Raisonné 1961-1996, Vol. 1, edited by Daniel Buchholz with Michael Sanchez, Katharina Forero de Mund, and Christopher Müller.