

# WHITE CUBE

## Press Release

Danh Vo  
September 10 – October 16, 2026  
White Cube New York

White Cube New York is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new work by Danh Vo, marking the artist's return to the city following his acclaimed 2018 Guggenheim exhibition 'Take My Breath Away'.

Born in 1975 in Bà Rịa, Vietnam, Vo lives in rural Germany on his studio and farm, Güldenhof. Staging conversations across history, Vo's sensibility moves beyond us and them, good versus evil. What drives Vo are the Trojan Horses, the beautiful gifts and fabulous drag by which power persuades, conditions and assimilates itself to those it shapes and exploits. Power bathes itself in beauty as a means of survival and persuasion, and yet beauty opens doors to other complexities.

Vo's attention to materials and their relationships is a vital aesthetic experience within the White Cube New York exhibition. The artist works with the classical materials of sculpture – timber, marble, bronze – and also brass, glass, paper, plants, water, bones and mushrooms. He uses pine wood constructions to exhibit sculptures made from religious relics, classical fragments and organic materials. Vo acquires many of the objects at auction and typically brings them to Güldenhof, where they live for a time amid the flowers and trees. Occasionally he casts the objects in bronze or otherwise replicates them. These new works retain the physical evidence of trauma and decay, as well as the contours crafted by their original makers. Ranging from Christian iconography to statues of Roman Gods, the objects conjure fever dreams of art and empire. They also show the resilience of artistic labor and its survival through generations and states.

In recent years, Vo's work has had a degree of interiority, at times reflecting on structures that have shaped him as an artist. One such work, *Shove it up your ass, you faggot!* (2025), features two Roman-era marble fragments hanging from the ceiling: a boy's lower torso on top and beneath it, attached by brass, the upside-down head of a Roman youth. The artwork's title is a line spoken to a priest by Regan, the demonically possessed child in William Friedkin's 1973 film *The Exorcist*. Possession is a theme throughout the exhibition. The Roman-era fragments, for example, have been passed down through various regimes. Christians likely cut off the boy's penis and the youth's nose to exorcise them of their Pagan Gods. Catholicism was at the vanguard of colonialism in Vietnam and shaped Vo's emergence as a queer child in Denmark. Though the youth's stoic face seems unbothered by whatever time and contemporary art has done to him, there is also the boys' damaged body, laid bare for all to see. A related work, *πνεῦμα* (*Ἑλίσσα*) (2025), features a 19<sup>th</sup>-century German torture device for the

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leg and the 1<sup>st</sup>-century CE head of a male Roman sex slave. The work is Vo's portrait of his long-time friend and collaborator Julie Ault, an artist and founding member of artist collective Group Material. Ault invited her mother, a medium, to title the piece. The darkness of the portrait suggests a psychic intimacy between the artists – an ability to understand each other in a way that others might not. Some have suggested the work might be better suited as a portrait of Vo, a (once) young artist constrained by the torture boot of Berlin's contemporary art world. Yet, as Ault stated, "He doesn't spend much psychology on himself."

Group Material showed that there is an artistic attitude beyond the object. Vo's curated realms adopt the spirit of this approach, examining private and collective histories in new and evolving contexts. At auction, Vo acquired a limewood sculpture of the Madonna and Child, one attributed to the workshop of Late Gothic sculptor Tilman Riemenschneider from south Germany, created circa 1490. The work had previously been restituted to the heirs of Ernst and Agathe Saulmann, German Jewish collectors dispossessed by the Nazis in the 1930s. Vo cast the work in bronze for this exhibition – the heavily-robed Madonna and her slender-limbed child look out with an intriguing directness. The original has been retired to Vo's gardens at Güldenhof, where it rests some 400 miles from Pfullingen where the Saulmann's held their collection.

In *Untitled* (2026), Vo exhibits rare Vietnamese ceramics rescued from the bottom of the ocean. His father Phung Vo writes out the English names of various plants and animals, so they are visible on the bowls. Phung Vo's calligraphy has evolved into a personal and near-opaque Gothic script that serves his own artistic ends. The drawings and ceramics are framed or mounted on black walnut wood gifted to the artist from the Northern California farm of Craig McNamara. Now a friend of Vo's, Craig McNamara is the son of Robert McNamara, one of the principal architects of the Vietnam War. At White Cube New York, as in all Vo's exhibitions, these elements – past and present artisans, diverse materials, narratives and intimacies – collect, palimpsest and redirect. Rather than keys to understanding, they are points of access adding texture to experience.

This presentation is a continuation of, and includes a number of works featured in, Vo's recently closed exhibition 'πνεῦμα ("Ελίσσα)" at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (February 14 – August 2, 2026). Vo's exhibition is on view at White Cube New York from September 10 through October 16, 2026. Concurrently on view in New York is 'Danh Vo: Rebuilding Liberty' at the Vilcek Foundation, which presents three sculptures from his 'We the People' series (2011–16) alongside *Live Free or Die* (2026), a piece commissioned specially for the Vilcek Foundation's gallery. This presentation is on view at East 70th Street through June 25, 2027. White Cube New York is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new work by Danh Vo, marking the artist's return to the city following his acclaimed Guggenheim exhibition 'Take My Breath Away' in 2018.

## W H I T E   C U B E

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### Notes to Editors:

- Danh Vo studied at KADK-The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Denmark and at the Städelschule in Frankfurt, Germany. He's been awarded with the Hugo Boss Prize in 2012 and the Blauorange Kunstpreis by the Deutsche Volksbanken und Raiffeisenbanken in 2007. In 2009 he was nominated for the Preis der Nationalgalerie für junge Kunst in Germany.

His most important exhibitions include: include MUDAM Luxembourg (2021); White Cube Bermondsey (2020); The National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan (2020); 'Danh Vo: untitled', South London Gallery (2019); 'Danh Vo: The Mudam Collection and Pinault Collection in Dialogue', Mudam Luxembourg (2019); 'Noguchi for Danh Vo: Counterpoint', M+, Hong Kong (2018); 'Danh Vo: Garden with Pigeons in Flight', Casa Luis Barragán, Mexico City (2018); CAPC, Bordeaux (2018); 'Danh Vo: Take My Breath Away', Guggenheim Museum, New York and SMK, Copenhagen (2018); Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden Commission series: 'Danh Vo', National Gallery Singapore (2016-17); 'Banish the Faceless / Reward your Grace', Palacio de Cristal del Retiro, Madrid (2015); 'Ydob eht ni mraw si ti', Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2015); 'Danh Vo: Wād al-ḥaḡara', Museo Jumex, Mexico City (2014–15); 'Danh Vo: We The People', Faurschou Foundation, Beijing (2014); 'We The People', commissioned by Public Art Fund for the Brooklyn Bridge Park, New York (2014); 'I M U U R 2' (Hugo Boss Prize), Guggenheim Museum, New York (2013); 'Chung ga opla', Villa Medici, Rome (2013); 'Fabulous Muscles', Museion, Bolzano (2013); 'Go Mo Ni Ma Da', Musée de l'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (2013); 'We The People', Art Institute of Chicago (2012); 'Vo Danh', Kunsthaus Bregenz (2012); 'JULY, IV, MDCCLXXVI', Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel (2011); 'Hip Hip Hurra', SMK, Copenhagen (2010); 'Les fleurs d'intérieur', KADIST, Paris (2009); 'Danh Vo: Where the Lions Are', Kunsthalle Basel (2009); and 'Package Tour', Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2008).

His work has also been included in group exhibitions at institutions such as: Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice, Italy (2022); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2018); National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan (2018); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2017); Frank F. Yang Art and Education Foundation | YOU Space, Shenzhen, China (2017); Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide (2017); Deutsches Hygiene-Museum, Dresden, Germany

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(2017); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2016); Aishti Foundation, Beirut (2016); The Menil Collection, Houston (2015); Barbican Centre, London (2015); Kunstmuseum Basel (2013); New Museum, New York, (2012); Kunsthau Bregenz, Austria (2011); Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Turin, Italy (2011); Kunsthalle Basel (2010); Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, Netherlands (2009); Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2009); Kunstverein, Munich, Germany (2008); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2008); CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco (2007), among others.

Danh Vo participated in the International Art Exhibition at the 55th Venice Biennale (2013), 58th Venice Biennale (2019) and represented Denmark at the 56th Venice Biennale (2015) with the exhibition 'Mothers Tongue'.

- White Cube's exhibition programme extends across locations in London, Hong Kong, Paris, New York, Seoul and online. Since its inception in 1993, the gallery has exhibited the work of many of the world's most highly acclaimed contemporary artists.
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