

Erwin Wurm

Double Dream

April 23 – June 6, 2026

New York

Opening reception with artist: May 14, 6:00-8:00pm



Erwin Wurm, *Fallen Falls (Substitutes)*, 2025

Lehmann Maupin is pleased to present *Double Dream*, an exhibition of new and recent work by Erwin Wurm. Over the last four decades, the Austrian artist's dynamic sculptural practice has explored the absurdity and paradoxes inherent in post-modern life. While his oeuvre is filled with larger-than-life-size pickles, anthropomorphic sausages, empty suits, and impossibly proportioned houses, Wurm is best known for his iconic *One Minute Sculptures*, which provide instructions for participants to create temporary sculptures by performing illogical poses with everyday objects. Through his paradoxical work, Wurm confronts philosophical questions about contemporary society—from obsessions with status and consumerism, to anxieties around traditional value systems, to the complexities of modern psychology. At the same time, the artist explores new possibilities for sculpture through ambitious formal experiments with volume, surface, scale, and duration. *Double Dream* marks Wurm's first solo presentation in New York in five years and runs alongside his solo exhibition at Museo Fortuny, Venice, which opens concurrent with the Venice Biennale on May 5th. A public reception for *Double Dream* will be held on May 14 from 6–8 PM, with the artist in attendance.

Double Dream debuts two new sculptures from Wurm's *Dreamer* series. Both works, *Nurse* and *Double Dreamer* (2026), feature figures whose entire upper bodies have been replaced by massive pillows, squashed as if pulled off an unmade bed. The absence of identifying features gives these pieces a sense of both anonymity and universality, yet despite lacking faces, arms, and torsos the sculptures still manage to express their distinct personalities. In *Double Dreamer*, two pillows are stacked on top of a pair of legs that hug tightly together, suggesting shyness, unease, or reticence, while in *Nurse*, the figure stands with legs

apart, confidently bearing the weight of an oversized cushion. In both works the sculpture's head is subsumed within a large pillow. Without the ability to see clearly, the figures find their perception clouded and they become lost in their own thoughts, dreams, and illusions.

The exhibition also features a number of new and recent *Substitutes*, ranging from the petite to the towering. In this series Wurm continues his decades-long exploration of clothing as a sculptural medium, and in these works he absents the body entirely, leaving empty garments cast in aluminum or bronze. In *Double Dream*, *Substitutes* fill the largest gallery, creating a field of brightly colored figures seemingly suspended mid-motion. Again, even without heads, faces, or hands, Wurm successfully conveys the personalities and moods of his figures through shrewd choices in posture, scale, and color. In the smallest work, *Waiting Pink Small* (2024), a diminutive pink suit stands with its arms by its sides, one foot slightly in front of the other to reveal flattened dress socks. The figure's stance suggests a body in pause, and the sculpture appears to be waiting patiently for something intangible.

Double Dream showcases the breadth of Wurm's experiments with the figure—at turns present, absent, supplanted, or distorted. Where the artist's *Dreamers* visualize psychological weight, his *Substitutes* examine how clothing can function as a stand-in for the individual. Here, clothing is revealed as an icon, symbol, signifier, or even avatar, reinterpreting the age-old maxim "the clothes make the man." Across the *Substitutes* and *Dreamers*, *Double Dream* reveals Wurm to be a sculptor of surprising economy, continually asking how much can be communicated with how little.



Erwin Wurm (b. 1954 Bruck an der Mur/Styria, Austria; lives and works in Vienna and Limberg, Austria) came to prominence with his *One Minute Sculptures*, a project that he began in 1996/1997. In these works, Wurm gives written or drawn instructions to participants that indicate actions or poses to perform with everyday objects such as chairs, buckets, fruit, or knit sweaters. These sculptures are by nature ephemeral, and by incorporating photography and performance into the process Wurm challenges the formal qualities of the medium as well as the boundaries between performance and daily life and spectator and participant. While in this series he explores the idea of the human body as sculpture, in some of his more recent work he anthropomorphizes everyday objects in unsettling ways, like contorting sausage-like forms into bronze sculptures in *Abstract Sculptures*, or distorting and bloating the volume and shape of a car in *Fat Car*. Wurm considers the physical act of gaining and losing weight a sculptural gesture, and often creates the illusion of bodily growth or shrinkage in his work. While Wurm considers the absurd an important tool, there is always an underlying social critique of contemporary

culture, particularly in response to the capitalist influences and resulting societal pressures that the artist sees as contrary to our internal ideals. Wurm emphasizes this dichotomy by working within the liminal space between high and low and merging genres to explore what he views as a farcical and invented reality.

Erwin Wurm graduated from University of Graz, Austria, in 1977, and University of Applied Art and Academy of Fine Art, Vienna in 1982. Solo exhibitions of his work have been organized at Ludwig Museum Koblenz, Koblenz, Germany (2025); Zuzeum Art Zenter, Riga, Latvia (2025); Kaiservilla, Bad Ischl, Austria (2025); Towada Art Center, Towada, Japan (2025); Albertina Modern, Vienna, Austria (2024); Fosun Foundation, Shanghai, China (2024); Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Bretton, United Kingdom (2023); Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, Israel (2023); Suwon Museum of Art, Suwon, South Korea (2022); Bratislava City Gallery, Bratislava, Slovakia (2022); Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade, Serbia (2022); Museum Jan Cunen, Oss, Netherlands (2022); König Galerie, Vienna, Austria

(2022); Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice, Italy (2022); Museum Hartberg, Hartberg, Austria (2021); K11 Atelier, Tianjin, China (2021); Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei, Taiwan (2020); Kunstraum Dornbirn, Dornbirn, Austria (2020); Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada (2019); Vieille Charité, Marseille, France (2019); K11 Musea, Hong Kong (2019); Musée d'Art Contemporain, Marseille, France (2019); The Albertina Museum, Vienna, Austria (2018); Ludwig Museum, Budapest, Hungary (2018); Kunstmuseum Luzern, Luzern, Switzerland (2018); Public Art Fund, New York, NY (2018); Ayala Museum, Manila, Philippines (2018); Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN (2015); Museum of Contemporary Art in Kraków, Poland (2013); Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Málaga, Spain (2012); and Dallas Contemporary, TX (2012).

Select group exhibitions featuring his work include *The 80s*, Albertina Modern, Vienna, Austria (2021); *Diversity United. Contemporary European Art. Berlin. Moscow. Paris.*, Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Russia; Tempelhof Airport, Berlin, Germany; Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France (2021); *Moment. Monument: Aspects of Contemporary Sculpture*, Kunst Museum Winterthur, Winterthur, Switzerland (2021); *So wie wir sind 2.0*, Weserburg, Museum für moderne Kunst, Bremen, Germany (2020); *Objects of Wonder – from Pedestal to Interaction*, ARoS Aarhus Art Museum, Aarhus, Denmark (2019); *Fashion Drive: Extreme Clothing in the Visual Arts*, Kunsthau Zürich, Zürich Switzerland (2018); *Face to Face*, Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel (2018); *The Myriad Forms of Visual Art. 196 Works with 19 Themes*, National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan (2018); *Carl Spitzweg – Erwin Wurm, Delicious! Delicious?*, Leopold Museum, Vienna, Austria (2017); *Collins Park*, Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach, FL (2016); *The Language of Things*, Belvedere Museum, Vienna, Austria (2016); *Performing for the Camera*, Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom (2016); *Moving Parts: Time and Motion in Contemporary Art*, Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis, MO (2014); *Out of Fashion*, Gl Holtegaard, Copenhagen, Denmark; Kunsten Museum of Modern Art, Aalborg, Denmark (2013); *Desire for Freedom*, Museum of Contemporary Art Krakow, Krakow, Poland (2013); and *Funny*, FLAG Art Foundation, New York, NY (2012).

Wurm's work is in numerous international public and private collections, including the Albertina, Vienna, Austria; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; The Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD; Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA), Berkeley, CA; CA2M Centro de Arte dos de Mayo, Madrid, Spain; CAC Málaga – Centro de Arte Contemporáneo, Málaga, Spain; Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Colección Fundación ARCO, Madrid, Spain; Essl Museum - Kunst der Gegenwart, Klosterneuburg/Vienna, Austria; Gemeentemuseum, The Hague, Netherlands; Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, WA; Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN; Kunsthalle Bremen, Bremen, Germany; Kunsthau Zürich, Zürich, Switzerland; Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Wolfsburg, Germany; Long Museum, Shanghai, China; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, Denmark; Ludwig Museum, Budapest, Hungary; Manarat Al Saadiyat, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates; MARTa Herford Sammlung, Herford, Germany; McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, TX; Musée d'Art Contemporain, Marseille, France; Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, San Angel, Mexico City, Mexico; Museum für moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, Germany; Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, Hungary; Museum Jorn, Silkeborg, Norway; Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany; Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wein (MUMOK), Vienna, Austria; Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Museum Voorlinden, Wassenaar, Netherlands; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia; National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan; Palm Springs Art Museum, Palm Springs, CA; Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, Italy; Smart Museum of Art - The University of Chicago, Chicago, IL; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY; Städel Museum, Frankfurt, Germany; Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom; Towada Art Center, Towada, Japan; Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; and the Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie (ZKM), Karlsruhe, Germany.

In 2011, Wurm's *Narrow House* was installed at the Palazzo Cavalli Franchetti as part of Glasstress 2011, a collateral event of the 54th Venice Biennale. In 2017, Wurm returned to Venice for the 57th Biennale, where he represented Austria.

**Lehmann Maupin**

Rachel Lehmann and David Maupin co-founded Lehmann Maupin in 1996 in New York. Since inception, Lehmann Maupin has served as a leading contemporary art gallery with locations in the U.S., Europe, and Asia. For over 25 years, Lehmann Maupin has been instrumental in introducing international artists in new geographies and building long-lasting curatorial relationships. Known for championing diverse voices, the gallery's program proudly features artists whose work challenges notions of identity and shapes international culture. Today, the gallery has permanent locations in New York, Seoul, and London, as well as team members throughout Asia and Europe.

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