

natalie
seroussi

Franz West

Thu Van Tran

West World



Franz West
Untitled, 2005,
lacquer and acrylic on papier-mâché,
styrofoam, cardboard and metal on acrylic and wood
stand
187,7 x 116,8 x 90,2 cm

West World

Franz West

Thu Van Tran

Walking in a Franz West exhibition is flying through a field of asteroids coming from different galaxies. The size and color of each one of them tell the story of a journey that the viewer must decipher.

Franz West passed through many galaxies, since he acknowledged his debt to Viennese actionism, was inspired by Arte Povera, was considered as one of the pioneer of the relational aesthetic, and has indisputably moved closer to abstract expressionism.

Born in 1947, Franz West has created his sculptures from pieces of papier-mâché, an affordable and easy-to-use material, often collected in the streets. Intended to be manipulated by the spectator, his first sculptures were always white. For him, this absence of color means that the user only is able to breathe life into the works.

When he decided to paint, the sculptures acquired a new dimension. Thrown with energy, paint put these objects into motion. To seize this movement, viewers are invited to turn around these rocks made of papier-mâché and are compelled to go into orbit.

Immersed amid Thu Van Tran's mural paintings, Franz West objects are rolling within a sky composed by rubber and pigments. Through the prism of this blazing light, sculptures and men appear to float in weightlessness. This sensation of freedom encloses however a history of oppression which takes us back to the roughest reality.

The frescoes of this French artist from Vietnamese origin are pure moments of stolen beauty. But they also carry the memory of the colonial violence. Smeared on the wall, the rubber is extracted from Hevea tree by successive bleedings, imposed by the expert hands of farm workers themselves submitted to the plantation director's yoke.

Franz West would have not denied this story of violence, as he developed his work on the backdrop of the destruction of Europe. His sculptures are equally the rubbles of a vanished civilization, which may not have survived to the world war. JS

Franz West

Emerging in the early 1970s, Austrian-born artist **Franz West (1947–2012)** developed a unique aesthetic that engaged equally high and low reference points and often privileged social interaction as an intrinsic component of his work. By playfully manipulating everyday materials and imagery in novel ways, he created objects that serve to redefine art as a social experience, calling attention to the way in which art is presented to the public, and how viewers interact with works of art and with each other.

West studied at the Akademie der bildenden Künste, Vienna from 1977 to 1982. He gains recognition across Europe in the 1980s, with significant shows at such venues as Kunsthaus Zürich (1985), the Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz; Wiener Secession, Vienna (both 1986); Skulptur Projekte Münster (1987); Kunsthalle Bern (1988); the Institute for Contemporary Art, P.S.1, Long Island City, New York (1989).

The 1990s brought widespread international recognition, and the artist's work was presented in numerous prestigious venues worldwide including the Austrian Pavilion of the 44th Venice Biennale (1990); documenta IX, Kassel (1992); The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Dia Center for the Arts, New York (both 1994).

A major, mid-career retrospective (*Franz West. Proforma*) was organized by the Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Vienna in 1996; **solo exhibitions** were held at the Kunstverein Hamburg (1996); The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Fundação de Serralves, Porto (all 1997). West participated in documenta X, Kassel (1997). West's work was featured at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid with the traveling survey *Franz West: In & Out* (2000-2001).

A significant grouping of outdoor sculptures was installed in the Lincoln Center Plaza in New York in 2004. The Baltimore Museum of Art organized the retrospective *Franz West: To Build a*

House You Start with the Roof, which traveled to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; and in 2013, a significant posthumous overview of the artist's work *Where Is My Eight?* was presented at the Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien. In the fall of 2018 **a major survey of the artist's opened at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, and will travel in early 2019.**



Franz West
Untitled, 2010
Papier-mâché, acrylic, lacquer, gauze,
steel and wood stand
202 x 89 x 64,5 cm

Thu Van Tran

Thu Van Tran, born in **1979** in **Ho Chi Minh City**, lives and works in Paris. She studied from 1997 to 2004 at the **ENSB-A (École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts of Paris)**. She is represented by the gallery Meessen de Clercq (Belgium).

Thu Van Tran grew up between **two cultures** — Vietnam and France —, which brings her to think and work with duality, inequality and instability as structural elements of her practice. Inspired by **literature, architecture and history**, her work focuses on memory and is the witness of ephemeral events as well as the relay of **collective memory** — including colonization of Africa and Vietnam —. As a multidisciplinary artist, she uses significant materials, such as plaster casts or rubber, symbol of one of the main economic stakes of the colonial power.

From October 10 to December 31 2018, her work will be shown at the Centre Georges Pompidou in the upcoming exhibition of the **Marcel Duchamp Prize's** finalists.

Since 2004, she was part of several **group exhibitions** including in 2017: *Manipulate the world*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2017), *Viva arte viva* for the 57th Venice Biennale and *Jardin infini. De Giverny à l'Amazonie*, Centre Pompidou-Metz. Throughout the years, she was also featured in *A brief history of the future*, Palazzo Reale, Milan (2016); *Dévider le reel*, Les Abattoirs, Frac Midi-Pyrénées, Toulouse (2015); *Interprète*, Le Plateau, FRAC Ile-de-France, Paris (2014); *Soudain déjà*, Beaux-Arts de Paris (2011); *Liste – Basel* (2010); *Félicité*, Palais des Beaux-Arts of Paris (2004).

In 2018 and 2019, Thu Van Tran will show **solo exhibitions** at Le CREDAC, Ivry-sur-Seine (2019); VCCA, Vincom Center for Contemporary Art, Hanoi (2018); SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin (2018). As a solo artist, she also displayed her work in Frieze, Randall's Island, New York (2017); *Writing and other flickers*, Les Abattoirs, Médiathèque, Frac Midi-Pyrénées, Toulouse (2016);

We are this, and that, aren't we?, Meessen De Clercq, Brussels (2015); *Statements - Art Basel*, Basel (2013); *The Pure Number according on Duras*, La Maison Rouge, Le Patio, Paris, (2010); *Book people*, Bétonsalon, Centre d'Art et de Recherche, Paris (2009).



Thu Van Tran
Penetrable,
rubber and pigments, site-specific installation, variable dimensions.
Exhibition view 'Manipulate the world, connecting Öyvind Fahlström',
Moderna Museet, Stockholm, 2017

ABOUT NATALIE SEROUSSI

Natalie Seroussi is a Paris-based art dealer and collector. She opened her Gallery in 1983 in the heart of Saint Germain des Près. Natalie contributed to established dialogues between Dadaism, Surrealism, Pop Art, Arte Povera and the Nouveaux Réalistes. Over the years, the gallery exhibitions have included works by Jean Arp, Alexander Calder, Salvador Dali, Lucio Fontana, Yves Klein, Francis Picabia, and Martial Raysse. Recently, the gallery has developed a more experimental program of poetry and painting, and represents the estates of Bernard Heidsieck and Gil Joseph Wolman. With a career spanning 40 years, Natalie has built a reputation for selecting artworks not only for their aesthetics qualities, but also for their rarity and ability to stand the test of time.

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seroussi**



Franz West
Untitled, 2007
acrylic, epoxy resin, papier-mâché,
wood and plastic bucket
126 x 113,5 x 74 cm