

# FÖRG

from and against Modernism

with a response by

# FISCHLI & WEISS

5<sup>th</sup> March - 4<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Private view: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019, 6-8pm



Günther Förg, *Untitled*, 1987



Fischli & Weiss, *Siedlungen / Agglomeration*, 1992

Luxembourg & Dayan, London, is delighted to present *Günther Förg: from and against Modernism. With a response by Fischli & Weiss*. The exhibition, developed in dialogue with artist Peter Fischli, presents a group of important lead paintings and a single wall painting by German artist Günther Förg (1952-2013), including one of the largest composite panel paintings that the artist ever produced (counting thirty-two panels and measuring more than sixteen feet wide). In response to Förg's paintings, the show also includes a selection of photographs from Peter Fischli and David Weiss' celebrated series of urban landscapes, *Siedlungen / Agglomeration* (1992).

From an early stage in his career, Günther Förg established himself as a critic of Modernism's weighty legacy, dedicating his practice to the difficulty of producing art in its aftermath. Förg's works from the mid 1970s onwards, particularly his wall paintings and compositions on lead panels, are characterised by large geometric colour surfaces applied as thin or washed layers of paint (in oil or acrylic). Their formal arrangement is reminiscent of a purist, modernist vocabulary that applies to the realm of painting as well as interior design, architecture and even urban planning, but questions the textured and gestural approach towards these realms that characterised Förg's Modernist predecessors.

A number of conceptual and formal concerns in Förg's practice overlap with those of his Swiss contemporaries Peter Fischli & David Weiss. Each in their own way is interested in architectural history and motivated by a sense of scepticism concerning the authority of the modernist grid and its restrictive legacy. However, while Förg is invested in an inquiry of modernism's expression within the realm of so-called high art, Fischli and Weiss are known for their particular interest in the combination rearrangement, or otherwise manipulation of everyday objects and situations, transforming them into innovative and unexpected artefacts in a variety of media. In the case of their photographic series *Siedlungen / Agglomeration* from 1992, the Swiss duo set out to explore the common architectural and urban landscapes that formed Switzerland's post-war suburb towns. Familiar yet anonymous, the large residential, commercial or municipal buildings that populate the post-war periphery reveal how Modernism's pioneering ideas have been reinterpreted over time and reduced to mere templates for contractors and local authorities to follow.

The exhibition *from and against Modernism* reveals unexpected formal, as well as ideological, similarities between the works of Förg and those of Fischli & Weiss. Yet it also confronts us as viewers with the different forms in which their critique of Modernism's legacy takes form. As such, the exhibition's title too stands in opposition to the common, all-encompassing term 'Post-modernism', which assumes the termination of one historical period for the sake of an imagined, cohesive, and liberated aftermath.

## LUXEMBOURG & DAYAN



Gunther Förg, *Untitled*, 1987



Fischli & Weiss, *Siedlungen / Agglomeration*, 1992

### FOR PRESS INFORMATION ADDITIONAL

On the occasion of the exhibition *Luxembourg & Dayan* will host a conversation between artist Peter Fischli and curator Yuval Etgar. The event will also include a special slide projection prepared by Fischli using the original slides of *Siedlungen / Agglomeration*, many of which have never been seen before. The exhibition will also be accompanied by a printed catalogue, including a new interview with Peter Fischli.

**Günther Förg** (1952-2013) is among the most provocative figures in German art of the 1980s and '90s. His practice – spanning over painting, sculpture and photography – strived to undermine the very premise of stylistic tendencies and surpass media distinctions. Most notably, when exhibiting his work in public, Förg assimilated the architecture of the gallery space. Walls, doors, and windows became an integral part of his work. His lead and wall paintings embody the most controversial and radical aspect of this work.

**Peter Fischli** (b. 1952) and **David Weiss** (1946-2012) have been engaged in a collaborative practice from 1979 to 2012. Their work is executed in a variety of media, combining, rearranging, or otherwise manipulating daily experiences and common objects into something new and unexpected. Following Weiss' passing, Fischli ventured into a solo career, developing some aspects of the duo's artistic vocabulary and otherwise redefining his work under new terms. In 2019 alone, Fischli & Weiss' work is exhibited at the sculpture garden of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Sprüth Magers, Berlin, and Matthew Marks, New York. Peter Fischli is also opening a solo show at the House of Gaga, Mexico City.

*Siedlungen / Agglomeration* has been initially conceived by Fischli and Weiss as a series of more than two hundred photographs in 1992. Parts of the series were included in at the Tate Modern retrospective exhibition Fischli & Weiss: *Flowers & Questions* (2006-7), as well as on various other occasions at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, the Vienna Secession, and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.

*Luxembourg & Dayan* presents curated, museum-quality exhibitions of works by modern masters and contemporary artists in its spaces in New York and London. Since opening, the gallery has presented a number of critically-acclaimed exhibitions, ranging from historical presentations of artists, such as Alberto Giacometti, Alberto Burri and Lucian Freud, to thematic survey exhibitions, which since 2011 have included *Grisaille*, *Unpainted Paintings*, *Thick Paint*, *The Shaped Canvas*, *Revisited*, and *The Ends of Collage*.

*Luxembourg & Dayan* is open Tuesday to Friday, 10am–5pm and Saturday, 12pm–4pm (or by appointment).

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