

# Press Release



The artist who swallowed the world, 2006

## Erwin WURM

# Rétrospective

**Exhibition from 6th June to 5th August 2007**  
**At the Museum of contemporary art of Lyon**  
Preview Monday 4th June at 6pm

The Museum of Contemporary Art of Lyon is showing a major retrospective of the works of Erwin Wurm from 6th June to 5th August 2007.

This exhibition is of an exceptional scope and has been conceived for the particular layout and space of the museum in Lyon. It contains more than one hundred artworks by this artist among which are unusual works such as Fat House (an astonishing small house that has become enormous as if suddenly inflated) from the West collection (USA), and also the very first Fat Car (a car deformed as if ready to explode), or even the amazing Truck (a lorry whose back end climbs the wall defying all the rules of gravity) made specially for the exhibition in Lyon.

Expressing his vision of the world with humour, by way of videos, sculptures, photographs or installations, Erwin Wurm exhibits his *Instructions on How to be politically incorrect* and also the *One minute sculptures* that have made him famous and which invite the visitor to try out sculpture for himself.

Born in 1954 in Bruck (Austria) and trained at the Kunstakademie in Vienna, Erwin Wurm denounces, with a lightness mixed with seriousness, the illusion of everyday life and the incongruity of our existence, inspired as much by Fluxus as by the derision of Dada.

In all his early works, the artist seems to want to show his absence, with his work reduced to the dust of a simple imprint, or his hung up clothin, empty and fragile body coverings.

Originally a sculptor, now inspired in his drawings, photographs and videos by relationships with everyday objects that he changes and uses in a different manner. Very conscious of small gestures and the absurdity of daily life, Wurm's work develops an analysis of sculpture - its volume, weight, balance, unbalance - which becomes for him a way of being, of showing, of disturbing our codes and habits. Erwin Wurm offers a very original vision of sculpture with his *One minute sculptures (1997)* where, for a brief instant, typical human actions are modified, displaced or redirected.

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musée d'art contemporain de Lyon

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"Using the human body - and in particular his own - as a material, using everyday objects, in making time an essential element of his photographic and video artwork, he questions the very basis of sculpture - How can a sculpture that is not set in time, or in space, be created ? Can a sculpture become an object of everyday life ?" One minute sculpture becomes the generic title of his works : Erwin Wurm produces them by inviting a person to follow a simple protocol by, for example, placing them in a temporary situation with a piece of clothing or some other object.



One minute sculpture, 1997



Outdoor sculpture  
Taipei, 2000



Fat Car  
2001



Fat House 2003

But in his work the artist also questions appearances and the reality that these mask : the meaning of possession and of hoarding. His researches into the process of creation, based on the transformation of forms and weight, continue here creating strange objects or characters that have become deformed, exaggeratedly bloated, about to explode.

By allowing the visitor to produce his own sculpture, Wurm moves towards creating disturbing situations, provoking confusion or amazement, but always leading to new ideas imbued with humour and pleasure.

**>>> Next exhibitions of the artist's work:**

The Deitchorhallen in Hamburg and the Central House of Artists in Moscow

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**300 dpi images available on request**

**Opening times :**

**Wednesday to Sunday from 12am to 7pm**

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Erwin Wurm : *The artist who swallowed the world*, 2006, mixed media sculpture, 190 x 140 x 140 cm. Courtesy Galerie Anne de Villepoix, Paris Photo : André Morin, Paris © Adagp, Paris 2007

*One minute sculpture*, 1997, c-print, 45 x 30 cm. Sammlung/Collection Centre Pompidou, Paris, © Adagp, Paris 2007

*Outdoor sculpture Taipei*, 2000, c-print, 126,5 x 159,1 cm. Sammlung/Collection: Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Bologna, © Adagp, Paris 2007

*Fat car*, 2001- Mixed media, 480 x 265 x 130cm, Courtesy: Skulpturenpark Graz, © Adagp, Paris 2007

*Fat House*, 2003, Iron, wood, polystyrene, aluminium, electric installation, 5,4x10x7m, Colour video on DVD, video projection, 8 min 40 sec, Installation view, Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Newcastle, 2006, photo: BALTIC: Colin Davison, Newcastle, © Adagp, Paris 2007



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