

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Thomas Hirschhorn

Best known for his sculptural constructions produced from disposable mass manufactured goods, Hirschhorn gathers together references and imagery culled from popular media with the work of radical theorists such as Gilles Deleuze and Georges Bataille.

Thomas Hirschhorn was born in 1957 in Bern, Switzerland. He now lives and works in Paris, France.

Hirschhorn is widely regarded as a leading artist of his generation. He uses every day and found materials such as plastic sheeting, cardboard, aluminium, packing tape and magazine images to create a dystopian reality. The process of making remains visible and becomes a metaphor for the individual and collective struggle to establish democracy. Implicated in Hirschhorn's work, viewers are obliged to consume and reflect upon that which they may have hitherto been able to ignore in their daily lives. The disparity between the viewer and the bombardment of blown-up imagery reminds us of how distant and removed we can feel when confronted with such imagery.

Since 1999, Hirschhorn has built large-scale constructions in over seventy public locations. These reflect his principles of 'Presence and Production', being personally based on-site and making throughout a work's duration. In 2019, Hirschhorn applied this to create 'Robert-Walser Sculpture' for the 13th Swiss Sculpture Exhibition in Biel/ Bienne, Switzerland. His celebrated four-part 'Monument' series – which includes 'Bataille Monument' at Documenta 11 in 2002 – presented information about its subject in the form of participatory events such as lectures and workshops, theatrical performances and art classes. Addressing a 'non-exclusive public', these projects aimed to produce "urgency, listening, confrontation, reflection, resistance, and friendship", the artist explains.

Other notable solo exhibitions and projects include 'DA-NACH', IFK, Vienna (2023); 'The Purple Line', Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, Rome, Italy (2021); 'Community of Fragments', GL Strand, Copenhagen, Denmark (2020); 'World Airport', Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Luxembourg (2020); 'Resculpt', Ming Contemporary Art Museum, Shanghai, China (2018); 'Never Give Up The Spot', Museum Villa Stuck, Munich, Germany (2018); Pixel-Collage, Kunsthall Aarhus, Denmark (2017); 'Double Garage', Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich, Germany (2016); 'Stand-Alone', The Mistake Room, Los Angeles, USA (2016); 'Equality Float', Es Baluard Museu d'Art Modern i Contemporani de Palma, Palma de Mallorca, Spain (2016); 'In-Between', South London Gallery, London, England (2015); 'Aftermath', Kunsthalle Bremen, Germany (2015); 'Touching Reality', Institute Of Modern Art Brisbane, Brisbane, Australia (2013); 'Timeline: Work in Public Space', Dia: Chelsea, The Dia Art Foundation, New York, USA (2012); 'Ce qui vient (That which comes)', Les7=8 Ateliers de Rennes, France (2010); 'Too-too Much-Much', Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle, Belgium (2009) and 'It's Burning Everywhere', Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee, Scotland (2009).

Hirschhorn was the recipient of the 8th Kurt Schwitters Award, Sprengel Museum, Hannover, Germany in 2011; the Prix Marcel Duchamp in 2000 and the Joseph Beuys-Preis in 2004. He has taken part in numerous international exhibitions, including the 2023 Malta Biennale in Gozo, Malta; the 2012 Triennial at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, France; the Swiss Pavilion of the 2011 Venice Biennale, Italy; 'Life on Mars: the 55th Carnegie International', Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (2008); 'Heart of Darkness', Walker Art Center, Liverpool, England (2006) and Documenta 11 in Kassel, Germany (2002).

Hirschhorn's works are included in prominent collections internationally, including the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, France; Kunstmuseum Basel, Basel, Switzerland; Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich, Germany; Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Tate Modern, London, England.