

— For Immediate Release

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Public Art Fund presents...

***Franz West: Recent Sculptures***  
**At Lincoln Center**  
**and Doris C. Freedman Plaza**

***July 7 – August 31, 2004***

Public Art Fund is pleased to present the first major U.S. outdoor survey of the sculpture of artist Franz West, featuring nine monumental works exhibited at Lincoln Center and at Doris C. Freedman Plaza in Central Park. *Franz West: Recent Sculptures* brings together recent and newly commissioned sculptures made between 2002 and 2004. Organized by Public Art Fund, the presentation of seven sculptures at Lincoln Center marks the first collaboration between the two institutions. *Franz West: Recent Sculptures* coincides with “Summer at Lincoln Center,” which offers an extraordinary schedule of music, dance, theater, opera, multi-media, free events, and programming from around the world through its *Midsummer Night Swing*, *Lincoln Center Festival*, *Mostly Mozart*, and *Lincoln Center Out of Doors* summer series.

For the past decade, internationally acclaimed artist Franz West has been creating large-scale aluminum sculptures. With their engaging combination of whimsy and monumentality, the sculptures have become a signature element of West’s wide-ranging body of work, which also includes smaller objects, installations of sculptural furniture, and works on paper. West’s overtly handcrafted, often absurd sculptures are typically made of scavenged or low-end

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materials such as plaster or papier-mâché. The works on view in *Franz West: Recent Sculpture*, made in lacquered aluminum, magnify the exuberant shapes and patchwork surfaces of these smaller objects in larger-than-life virtuoso form.

Seven of West's sculptures will stretch in a colorful row across the entrance to Lincoln Center's Josie Robertson Plaza on Broadway, forming a festive gateway. With their looping arches and twisted colorful forms, they will transform New York's premiere performing arts complex into a fantastical landscape. At the center of the row is *Dorit*, a 20-foot-tall column of four knobby spheres, strung together like gigantic pink gumballs on a pole. Next to *Dorit* is *Bronze*, a slender vertical corkscrew whose humorous misnomer of a title evokes the conventional bronze sculptures that often adorn urban plazas. Other works in this grouping include *Couch* (a fitting title for an artist who hails from Freud's hometown), *Laube*, *Meeting Point 3*, *Double Ring*, and *Ypsilon*. Like the rest of his wide-ranging body of work, West's sculptures are meant to directly engage the viewer, both because of the irreverent appeal of their quirky forms, and because of the simple fact that they co-exist with the viewer in the same physical space. "I like art in the streets," West has said. "It doesn't demand that you make a special journey to see it, it's simply there."

The second installation of sculptures will be at Doris C. Freedman Plaza at the corner of 60<sup>th</sup> Street and Fifth Avenue, where the Public Art Fund presents rotating sculpture exhibitions. Here, at the entrance to Central Park, are two recent sculptures called *Mercury*. The title is a galaxy-themed reference to West's previous work, *Moon Project*, a group of furniture pieces he exhibited in The Museum of Modern Art's sculpture garden in 1997. With their long, low-lying bodies and irregular bumpy appendages, the works function both as public art and outdoor furniture, providing a variety of seats and perches for passersby.

West began his career in mid-1960s Vienna when a local movement called Actionism was in full swing. West's earliest sculptures, performances, and collages were a reaction to this movement, in which artists engaged in displays of radical public behavior and physical endurance meant to shake up art-world passivity. In the early 1970s, West began making a series of small, portable sculptures called "Adaptives" ("*Passtücke*"), awkward-looking plaster objects that were only completed as artworks when the viewer picked them up and carried them around, or performed some other inherently slapstick action with them. In many

ways, his large-scale aluminum sculptures are simply overgrown versions of the “Adaptives.” But they also relate directly to his installations of comfortable, colorfully upholstered couches and chairs which transform galleries, museums, and public spaces into lounge-like, sociable environments for viewing art.

Franz West lives and works in Vienna, where he was born in 1947. He has exhibited internationally for more than three decades in galleries and museums, and at major festivals including Documenta IX (1992) and Documenta X (1997), Kassel, Germany; *Sculpture Projects in Münster* (1997); and the Venice Biennale (1988, 1993, 1997, 2003). His work has recently been exhibited at Whitechapel Gallery, London (2003); Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna (2003); Gagosian Gallery, New York (2003); Museo Nacional de Arte Reina Sofía (2001), Madrid; and elsewhere. He had a solo exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art in 1997. He is represented by Gagosian Gallery.

**Directions and information:**

- Lincoln Center is located on Broadway between 62<sup>nd</sup> and 65<sup>th</sup> Streets. Subway: 1, 9 to 66<sup>th</sup> Street – Lincoln Center.
- Doris C. Freedman Plaza is located at Fifth Avenue and 60<sup>th</sup> Street. From Lincoln Center, the best way to get to Doris C. Freedman Plaza is to walk south down Broadway and then east on Central Park South to Fifth Avenue.
- *Franz West: Recent Sculptures* is on view daily.

This exhibition is sponsored by friends of the Public Art Fund with support from The David and Peggy Rockefeller Art Fund. Support is also provided by the Chubb Group of Insurance Companies.

Operation of Lincoln Center's public plazas is supported in part with public funds provided by The City of New York. The presentation at Doris C. Freedman Plaza is made possible through the cooperation and support of the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation.

**About Public Art Fund**

Public Art Fund is New York's leading presenter of artists' projects, new commissions, installations and exhibitions in public spaces. For more than 25 years, the Public Art Fund has

been committed to working with emerging and established artists to produce innovative exhibitions of contemporary art throughout New York City. By bringing artworks outside the traditional context of museums and galleries, the Public Art Fund provides a unique platform for an unparalleled public encounter with the art of our time.

The Public Art Fund is a non-profit arts organization supported by generous contributions from individuals, foundations, and corporations, and with public funds from The New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency, and the City of New York Department of Cultural Affairs.

### **About Lincoln Center**

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA) serves three primary roles: presenter of artistic programming, national leader in arts and education and community relations, and manager of the Lincoln Center campus. As a presenter of more than 400 events annually, LCPA's popular series include *American Songbook*, *Great Performers*, *Lincoln Center Festival*, *Lincoln Center Out of Doors*, *Midsummer Night Swing*, and the *Mostly Mozart Festival*. The Emmy Award-winning *Live From Lincoln Center* extends Lincoln Center's reach to millions of Americans nationwide. As a leader in arts and education and community relations, LCPA takes a wide range of activities beyond its halls through the Lincoln Center Institute, as well as offering arts-related symposia; family programming; and accessibility. And as manager of the Lincoln Center campus, LCPA provides support and services for the Lincoln Center complex and its 11 other resident organizations.

### **About Doris C. Freedman Plaza**

Named for the founder of the Public Art Fund, Doris C. Freedman Plaza has been the site of 40 artist projects and commissions, featuring works by internationally known artists such as Paul McCarthy, Jenny Holzer, and Tony Smith, and emerging artists such as Keith Edmier and Andrea Zittel.

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### **For information and images, please contact:**

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