



ERWIN WURM

Erwin Wurm was born in Bruck, Austria in 1954 and has exhibited extensively throughout the world. Wurm experiments with a wide range of media including performance, photography, installation, drawing, video and text. Wurm lives and works in Vienna, Austria.

About the work

With its many forms, Wurm's work contains a humorous interactive quality as well as a serious investigation of traditional sculptural values and techniques. He pushes the boundaries of sculpture by investigating elements of time, mass and material form.

The sculpture entitled *Fat House* was part of the exhibition *I Love My Time, I Don't Like My Time* (2003). This piece is one of the latest explorations in Wurm's *Fat* series an investigation into the wild and potentially dark side of digital animation.

In his series *One Minute Sculptures*, Wurm invites audiences to take part in the creation of temporary sculpture by combining their bodies with a variety of everyday objects according to the artist's instructional drawings. The participants are photographed which then becomes a photographic record of the work.

Literacy

Keywords

- Absurd
- Aesthetic
- Animation
- Authorship
- Avant-garde
- Collaboration
- Consumerism
- Democratic
- Folly
- Form
- Mass
- Modernist
- Ownership
- Performance
- Plagiarism
- Sampling
- Satire
- Scale
- Sculptural
- Shape
- Spontaneity
- Surrealism
- Temporal

Thinking Skills

Wurm creates work that is open and accessible to the public. The Red Hot Chili Peppers music video *Can't Stop*, was inspired by the work of Wurm. He was acknowledged for his influence in this instance, although sometimes artists' work is copied in advertising campaigns and music videos and is not always credited. This offers up questions of authorship, ownership, and plagiarism. Can you think of other instances where work is copied or used without the permission of the owner, for example pirated DVDs? What are your thoughts on this matter?

Citizenship

In the series *One Minute Sculptures* the artist involves his audience in the work.

How do you think this work bridges the gap between the art world and the real world?

ICT

Using a digital camera with a timer photograph a series of your own *One Minute Sculptures*. Experiment with a range of everyday objects, transforming your body into a living piece of art.

Practical Activities

Wurm uses humour in his art. Experiment with collage by using three figures collected from a magazine, cut up their heads, arms, and torso and interchange their body parts. Alternatively use pictures of objects and people, turn someone into a hybrid being.

Other works by Wurm include *Shopping*, performances of men dressing in layers and layers of clothes until they can barely move. Think of similar ways to transform yourself into piece of art. Photograph your results.

Wurm uses text in his work and sometimes writes instructions as to how people should position themselves in his sculptural inventions. Write a list of instructions to turn your virtual audience member into a sculptural form using everyday objects and a description of how they should pose.

To Look at:

Marcel Duchamp, Sigurdur Gudmundsson, René Magritte, Bruce Nauman, Claes Oldenburg, Richard Wentworth, Surrealism, modernist avant-garde.

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