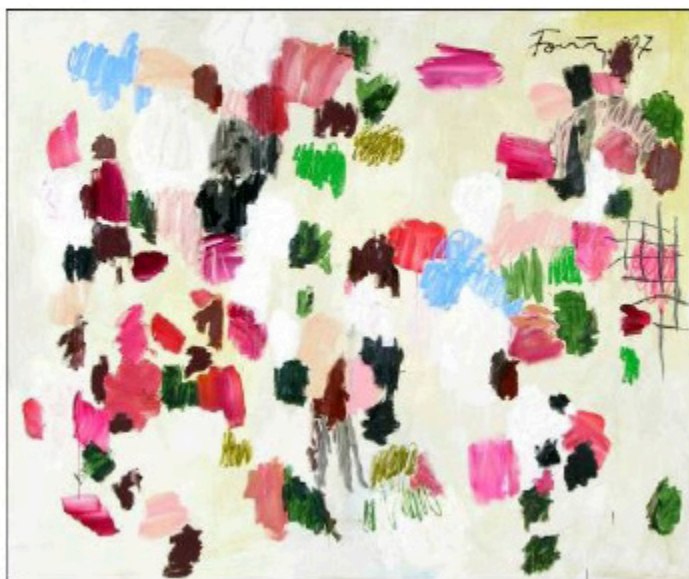


Antiques and the Arts Weekly: 'Museum Show Of Work By Günther Förg Debuts In Dallas In October', October 12, 2018

Museum Show Of Work By Günther Förg Debuts In Dallas In October

DALLAS, TEXAS — The Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) is presenting the most comprehensive survey to date for German artist Günther Förg (1952–2013), opening on October 21 and on view through January 27. The first American museum exhibition dedicated to the artist in nearly three decades, "Günther Förg: A Fragile Beauty," brings together more than 40 years of the artist's multimedia practice — including works on paper, photography, sculpture and rarely exhibited late-career paintings — to provide new insight on the practice and enduring influence of this complex artist.



Günther Förg, untitled, 2007, acrylic and oil on canvas. Courtesy of Matthew B. Gorson, ©2018 estate Günther Förg, Suisse/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2018.

Organized in collaboration with the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam and its curator of photography Hripsimé Visser, in close dialogue with the artist's estate, the exhibition builds on both institutions' histories with the artist, with each having staged seminal exhibitions of his work in 1992 and 1995, respectively. The exhibition includes major loans from private collections and notable German institutions, such as the Städel Museum, Frankfurt and the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich.

While Förg's multidisciplinary approach has become predominant today in contemporary artists' practices, it was uncommonly eclectic and provocative in his time. Art historians have grappled with the breadth of his production and have frequently aligned his work with that of Modernist masters, such as Barnett Newman, Clyfford Still, Mark Rothko and Edvard Munch, all of whom greatly inspired Förg. There is limited scholarship focused on the artist's singular contributions, such as his skillful manipulations of the language of abstraction and explorations of the relationships between object and viewer.

Reflecting the incredible scope of the artists' practice, the show traces the development of Förg's pioneering cross-disciplinary work from 1973 to 2009 to offer a new perspective and deepen the understanding and appreciation of the artist's place in art history. The exhibition pivots around major themes recurrent in Förg's oeuvre, including his interest in surface and substrate, the grid motif and color theory. Rather than a broadly chronological view, the presentation creates juxtapositions between series and works demonstrating artistic concerns that the artist returned to throughout his life.

The exhibition begins with a recreation of a seminal wall mural from 1986 as well as a number of the artist's monochromatic paintings, including a gray painting from 1973 featuring undecipherable text and a monumental gray grid painting from 2009 that the artist layered over one of his vibrant "Spot Paintings." The exhibition also includes many of the artist's multimedia paintings, such as a multi-panel work of painted lead, which is presented alongside a large diptych featuring acrylic and gold leaf.

Tension is prevalent in Förg's sculptural work, where bronze masks flout a fine line between figuration and abstraction. Five plaster and mixed media sculptures from 2000 are featured in the exhibition. Many are composed of found household objects enshrouded in plaster, relinquishing their original forms to the amorphous plaster encasement.

Though he is most often recognized for these formal innovations, Förg also had an interest in architecture and history, as evidenced by his photographic works. Twelve photographs are featured in the exhibition, ranging in subject from portraits to Modernist edifices in Italy from the 1920s and 1930s.

Concluding the exhibition is a group of the artist's late works, Förg's "Spot Paintings" from 2007 to 2008, signaling his return to painting to manifest the expressive freedom he allowed himself towards the end of his life. These distinctive paintings feature large swathes of color on white ground, which lay bare the artist's gesture and emphasize the activity of painting itself. The Dallas Museum of Art is at 1717 North Harwood Street. For information, www.DMA.org or 214-922-1200.