

title: **Installation history**

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case: Franz West, *Clamp*, 1995

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Installation history

Photo:
Paul Andriesse
Silver gelatine print
17,7 x 23,9 cm
Kröller-Müller Museum
KM 108.029



Documents of the exhibition history show how the *Clamp* has changed over time, before as well as after the installation was acquired by the Kröller-Müller Museum. The work was shown at Carnegie International 1995 for the first time. Photographs from that time show how the *Clamp* provides a space integrated in the gallery while at the same time people are making themselves at home within the artwork, making a telephone call or simply hanging around. After this show the *Clamp* became part of *Proforma*, a travelling solo exhibition of Franz West with the Kröller-Müller Museum as the last venue for the *Clamp*. The installation was acquired and the *Clamp* was displayed in the Kröller-Müller Museum several times since, without the artist's supervision. The exhibition history shows how the objects of the installation are assembled freely at every other occasion, changing its constellation, which is according to the artist ideas. There is however a turning point in the history of the work after acquisition. The installation is not changed as drastically anymore in the style Franz West had designed for each new site. This is not strange, since the artist was not around, but it is interesting that this is rather typical once an artwork enters the museum collection. The freedom the museum was given to use the elements at will was not discarded. On the contrary, at some occasions one might wonder if the character of the work was not too much affected.

1995 Carnegie International 1995, Pittsburgh, USA
051.11.1995-02-01-1996



Photo: Jean Brasille
Published in: Franz West. Proforma, p. 69

'Clamp' was installed for the first time at 'Carnegie International 1995' in Pittsburgh, November 5 1995 – January 2 1996 at the Carnegie Art Museum, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It consisted of a floor and four walls with two openings. The floor consisted of parts of the floor from the studio of Franz West. This room contained two benches, two white tables, three tables with Telephone Sculptures and 'Plato's Sun'. 'Papille' and 'Rondell' were placed outside the Clamp. Photographs from this exhibition do not show the 'Plakatenentwurf' (poster design). In a letter dated January 8 1996 however, a 'Plakatenentwurf' is mentioned as a part of the installation, so it might have been added at a later date, or it may have been exhibited outside of the Clamp, on the outside of its walls or elsewhere in the exhibition space. The walls of the Clamp were covered with pages from the phonebook of Pittsburgh. A white telephone was placed on each of the white tables. The visitors could actually use the telephones inside the Clamp. Next to the telephones on the tables Xeroxed copies of an explanatory text on the installation and its sculptures is provided for the visitors.

Art critic Brooks Adams characterized the Clamp in Art in America, Feb 1996 as follows: 'At the 1995 International, there is a notable absence of humor or subversive irony; possible exceptions are Tony Oursler's talking-head video sculptures and Franz West's sculptural re-creation of his Viennese studio. The latter comes complete with working telephones, an old couch where you can sit and make local calls, a scrappy wallpaper treatment of telephone book pages, a freestanding commodelike structure whose rough papier-mache surfaces are brushed yellow on one side and black on the other, and even the actual linoleum of his studio floor imported for the occasion--all installed in the Carnegie's baroque decorative-arts gallery. The august tapestries and inlaid Dutch cabinets of the Ailsa Mellon Bruce Galleries are suddenly enlisted in a new, self-conscious evocation (and perhaps a parody) of overstuffed imperial Viennese taste.'¹

¹ Brooks Adams, 'Domestic globalism at the Carnegie - 1995 Carnegie International; various artists, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania', Art in America, February 1996.

1996 Proforma, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien
16.03 – 19.05.1996



Photo: Kröller-Müller Museum

Clamp was included in the solo-exhibition of Franz West called 'Proforma'. Its first venue was the Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien 20er Haus in Vienna, March 16 – May 19, 1996. The artist assisted the installation of the Clamp. The Clamp still contained two benches and two white tables, but no working telephones. The tables with 'Telephone Sculptures' as well as 'Rondell' were placed outside the Clamp. 'Plato's sun' was hung in the interior of the Clamp, the 'Plakatenentwurf' (poster design) was displayed on the outside of one of the walls of Clamp above a bench.

The Clamp is situated around the artist's former studio floor. 'Papille' is positioned on a particularly painterly spot in the middle of the Clamp. The floor is surrounded by four walls with one door-sized opening. The walls differed from the first time the work was installed. They now consist of freely assembled fibreboards of different sizes, some of them painted black, some white, some covered with pages from the phonebook from Vienna. Some area's are papered with the yellow pages, others with white.

As mentioned above, no telephone set was part of the Clamp. The copies of the text provided for the public differed from the earlier installation as well: the telephones were not mentioned anymore.

1996 Proforma, Kunsthalle Basel
09.06 – 25.08.1996

Video registration: Steven van Beek / KMM

A video registration is made by Steven van Beek, Head Technician of the Kröller-Müller Museum, on the last day of the exhibition 'Proforma', June 9 – August 25 1996 at Kunsthalle Basel. We learn from this document that the Clamp structure differed a little from in Vienna. It was built with three walls, the shorter left one touching a gallery wall. The back as well as the front could be seen, which was completely left open, so one could enter the Clamp similarly to how a stand on a trade fair is designed. The Clamp was connected to an adjacent environment by a wooden bar papered in the same style of the Clamp. One could pass through underneath this informal archway.

Two benches, two white tables, 'Papille' and three tables with 'Telephone Sculptures' were placed inside the Clamp. 'Plato's Sun' was hung above one of the benches in the interior. 'Rondell' stood outside the Clamp in the same exhibition space. Like in Vienna, Clamp contained no telephones. Two 'Plakatentwürfe' (poster designs) of 'Clamp' were exhibited elsewhere the museum. The video shows no evidence of the presence of a telephone nor the texts.

This document shows an important feature in the material history of the installation. When the Clamp was dismantled a jigsaw was used to cut straight through the assembled walls.

1996 Proforma, Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo
10.10.1996 – 20.11.1997



Photo: Kröller-Müller Museum

The last venue of 'Proforma' was the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo, from October 10 1996 – January 20 1997. At this time it was already decided that the Kröller-Müller Museum would purchase Clamp. The museum had requested to reinforce the floor parts and this was done with the painted side down. This means the paint stains on the former studio floor can no longer be seen. Instead traces of glue applied with a glue comb are visible. Franz West attended the installation of the Clamp himself.

The structure of the Clamp is similar to Basel. It consisted of three walls with one side left open to enter. Some parts of the walls have been papered over with pages from the local Dutch phonebook, but the larger part of the walls were left as they were. Some narrow pieces of fibreboard were added on the back of the walls as a lock to combine the cut pieces together again. These were either papered or painted white matching the appearance of the wall where are located.

The interior contained one table, one bench and two tables with 'Telephone Sculptures', 'Papille' and one 'Plakatenentwurf'. 'Plato's Sun' was hung on the outside of one of its walls, with one bench and a table underneath. 'Rondell' and one table with 'Telephone Sculptures' were placed outside the Clamp.

There is no evidence that the texts were used in the installation as part of the artwork. There is no visual evidence of the presence of the red stained telephone Franz West provided the museum with, other then the recollection of some peoples memories and they all seem to differ from one another.

1997 Acquisitions, Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo
12.04 – 17.08.1997



Photo: Cary Markerink

In the exhibition 'Acquisitions', April 12 - August 17 1997, the 'Clamp' was installed shortly after 'Proforma', the solo-exhibition of Franz West in the museum. The installation was fairly similar to how the Clamp was installed during Proforma, only this time 'Plato's Sonne' and the second white table and bench were placed inside the 'Clamp', whereas another table with 'Telephone Sculptures' was placed outside the Clamp. There is no evidence of the use of texts and the presence of a telephone within the installation.

1999 Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo
Spring-summer 1999



Photo: Kröller-Müller Museum

During spring and the early summer of 1999, *Clamp* was exhibited in the Kröller-Müller Museum, only without the constitution of the room of the studio floor and the walls. The question is whether this was really an installation of the 'Clamp' or rather an exhibition of several individual objects by Franz West: a poster design of the *Clamp*, 'Rondell', three 'Telephone sculptures', two 'Benches' and two 'Tables'. 'Papille' was not on display.

2004 Another Space, Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo
04.09.2004-12-12-2005



Photo: Sanneke Stigter / KMM

During the exhibition 'Another space' from September 4, 2004 to December 12, 2005 Clamp was shown without the walls and without the floor panels in one of the smaller galleries of the museum. A rug was on the floor, similar to the other galleries. The sculptures, two benches and two tables were placed within the existing walls of the small gallery space, enclosing the setting. One could enter from the front.

The red stained telephone that we had in storage as part of the inventory of the Clamp was placed on one of the white tables. It was not connected. This is the red telephone from the studio of Franz West that came to the museum as part of the Clamp with the transport of the works for the Proforma exhibition.

We learned from previous installations authorized by Franz West that the telephone was probably not included within the installation. In fact there is no evidence that the Clamp had ever been shown with this red telephone before. Only the first time the Clamp was shown with working telephones, but these were two plain white American telephone sets.

2007 Inside Installations II, Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo
21.03-03.06.2007



Photo: Sanneke Stigter / KMM

The exhibition the Kröller-Müller Museum organized on the occasion of the research project Inside Installations Presentation and Preservation of Installation Art was organized during two periods. During 'Inside Installations I', 25.10.2006-07.01.2007, all the parts of the Clamp were documented and underwent some conservation treatments while on show in the gallery. During 'Inside Installations II' the floor was laid out and the walls were erected, so the whole Clamp was installed.

The room is situated in the middle of the large gallery with one of the smaller walls facing the entrance, so people have to walk into the gallery or around the walls before they can enter the Clamp. Following what is said in the text that accompanied the Clamp during previous shows, two benches and two tables were placed inside the Clamp. One bench is placed with the back of the seat towards the opening on the edge of the floor thus facing the interior. Papille was placed in front of it in the opposing corner. The other bench is placed near the middle against the back wall welcoming people to enter the room and take place. The Telephone sculptures were positioned along the right wall, one of them outside the room on the gallery floor. The poster design of Clamp and 'Plato's Sonne' were left on the gallery wall where they had been already during the course of the show, meeting the idea of mingling the existing surroundings with the Clamp. Rondell was placed behind the long wall of the Clamp, leaving a passageway where visitors can walk through. The black side is facing outward, integrating in the overall appearance of the back of the walls when looked at from a distance, whereas the yellow side is facing the back of the Clamp and almost illuminating it. The intensity of the brightness is enhanced between the overall black and white appearance when walking past it through the passage way.

The red telephone was left out of the interior of the Clamp and kept isolated from the installation at this point. It would give the only prefab instrument an artificial object-like look, displaced in the environment of within the Clamp. Placing a disconnected non-functional telephone in an interior where people can take place to make themselves at home seems odd. This could be a plausible clarification of the fact that there is no visual proof of the presence of the apparatus during any of the exhibitions when the artist had designed the set up of the Clamp.

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http://www.inside-installations.org/artworks/detail.php?r_id=332&ct=research