

The CAPC musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux is devoting a major solo show to the pioneering work of the German artist Franz Erhard Walther. Covering 2000 sq.m and spread across the vast nave and additional spaces of the institution, FRANZ ERHARD WALTHER *Le Corps décide / The Body Decides* is the largest presentation in France of a remarkable oeuvre that lies at the crossroads of minimalist sculpture, conceptual art, abstract painting and performance. Bringing together more than 200 works produced between 1957 and 2014, the exhibition focuses on the ways in which the artist has redefined the relationship between sculpture and action, architecture and representation.

These sculptural propositions focus on the production of elementary forms combined with conceptual speculations, radically rethinking the relation between sculpture and action. His forms in fabric—resulting from a praxis developed in the 1960s when Walther was still a student—made the visitor an active participant in the action oeuvre. These place visitors at a threshold, at once in front of, inside, and even, literally, part of the work. His *I. Werksatz* (First Work Set, 1963-1969), composed of 58 sewn, padded, and folded fabric elements, introduces the crucial notions of interaction and use, either through action or imagination. The artist describes them, incidentally, as “instruments of process”. And, as he explains, “This moment of manipulation and action—in its capacity as a component element of the work or as the work itself—has become a main theme. The basic idea is to construct a work based on action.” The exhibition thus highlights the artist’s thoughts about what a work of art can trigger in the viewer beyond what it merely is—materially or visually. For Walther, it is up to the visitor to activate the potential of the work, by giving shape to it and determining its form. Through the presentation of more than 200 historic and more recent pieces, as well as photographic documentation, Walther’s solo show at the CAPC importantly draws the visitor’s attention to a typology of art objects that gives the public a responsibility in the actual creation of the work. These objects of use—as they are defined by the artist—invite activation by the public, accordingly demonstrating that the artist and the visitor can share in the shaping of a form as a demanding but generous artistic experience.

*(This document was automatically generated by Contemporary Art Library.)*