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**Auction** The Kasper König Collection - His Private Choice

**Date** 01.10.2024, ca. 18:43

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WEST, FRANZ  
Vienna 1947 - 2012

Title: Prototyp der Auditorium-Diwane.  
Date: 1991.  
Technique: Steel, foam material, cardboard, carpet.  
Measurement: 110 x 208 x 80cm.

We are grateful to the Franz West Privatstiftung, Vienna for the kind support.

Provenance:  
- Kasper König Collection, Berlin (directly from the artist)

Between dandy and freak

'He is elusive rather than directorial, informal rather than ritualistic, and involved with the diurnal and secular rather than the atavistic, primal or spiritual. He deflects the larger social concerns in which his art engages by means of disarmingly nonchalant and seemingly casual formulations'. In the mid-1980s, at the age of almost 38, Franz West entered the art scene relatively late. This was followed by his first solo exhibitions, which marked the beginning of the self-taught artist's meteoric rise to fame. His oeuvre mainly comprises sculptures, wall objects and pieces of furniture, but also occasional collages and drawings. His most important work phases include the 'papier-mâchés', abstract plaster sculptures, which West himself compared to human neuroses. An equally important component of his oeuvre are the so-called 'Passstücke', plaster objects that are intended to enter into a haptic interaction with the recipient. West's work can be defined as participatory art, with the pioneers of Viennese Actionism, Minimalism and his exploration of Wittgenstein's philosophical theories and Freud's psychoanalysis serving as sources of inspiration.

Raumkunst - Kunstraum

This is demonstrated in particular by his spatial installations, in which he focusses on the use of seating furniture. Designed in his own visual language, they encourage the public to interact and add a functional level to the contemplative character of art. As can be seen in his installation 'Schöne Aussicht' (Beautiful View) at Portikus 1988, entire halls are transformed into places of relaxation, encounter and (self-)reflection through an ensemble of seating, tables, wall objects, partition walls, TV screens and artworks by artist friends such as Heimo Zobernig.

## Auditorium divans

The same applies to this divan, which served as the prototype for his 'Auditorium' installation in 1991. He presented the concept for the room, consisting of 72 uniform pieces, for the first time at documenta IX in Kassel. With the interaction of the recipients, West's spatial installations become 'art' spaces that make us aware of the fact that we are always moving in a comprehensive social network, as part of a collaborative and interconnected collective. The divans thus provide space for intimate, personal moments as well as a setting for accompanying performances and discussions, in which Kasper König is also involved. Of course, the reference to Freud's couch cannot be ignored here. Consisting of a construction made of old reinforcing steel, foam and Persian carpets, the divans firstly have a uniform design that emphasises the communal concept and secondly have a strong provisional character. A typical characteristic of West's concept - efficient effect with minimum effort.

## König and West

West's references to Kasper König go back a long way. König showed the 'Passtücke' for the first time in 1981 at his major exhibition 'Westkunst', which had a decisive influence on the way contemporary art was dealt with in West Germany. He also presented Franz West at Portikus in 1988. A few years later, König would also initiate West's professorship at the Städelschule. Shortly afterwards, he took part in the 'Skulptur Projekte Münster' curated by König with a three-part exhibition project and received the Wolfgang Hahn Prize in 1998 for his installation 'Kantine', which was set up in the cafeteria of the Museum Ludwig. Three years later, Franz West is represented alongside greats such as Wolfgang Tillmans and Isa Genzken at the reopening of the Museum Ludwig on the occasion of Kasper König taking office as museum director. In 2009, he exhibited there in his retrospective 'Autotheater' and in 2012 took part in Kasper König's farewell exhibition 'Ein Wunsch bleibt immer übrig' (A wish always remains). One year before his death, Franz West received the Golden Lion for his life's work at the Venice Biennale.

Estimate: 20.000 € - 30.000 €

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