



FRANZ ERHARD WALTHER EXHIBITION 2010

KOW
BRUNNENSTR 9 D-10119 BERLIN
+49 30 311 66 770
GALLERY@KOW-BERLIN.COM



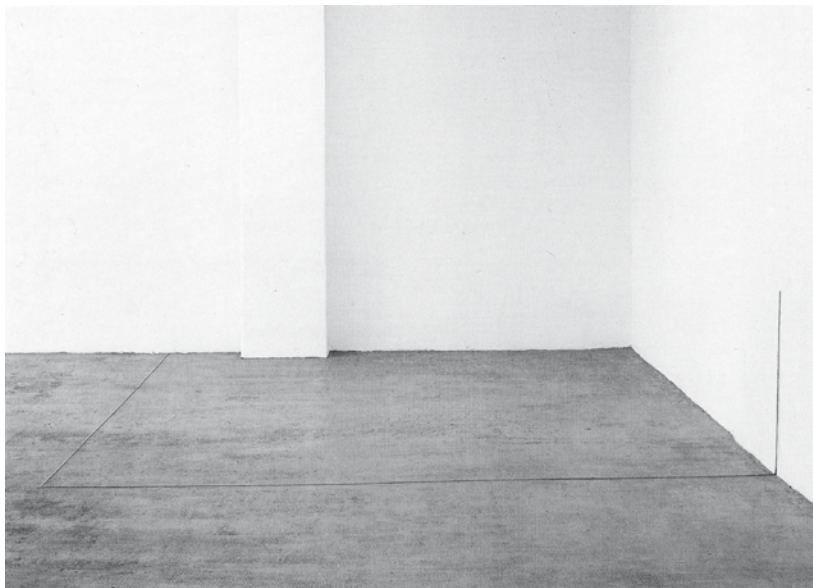
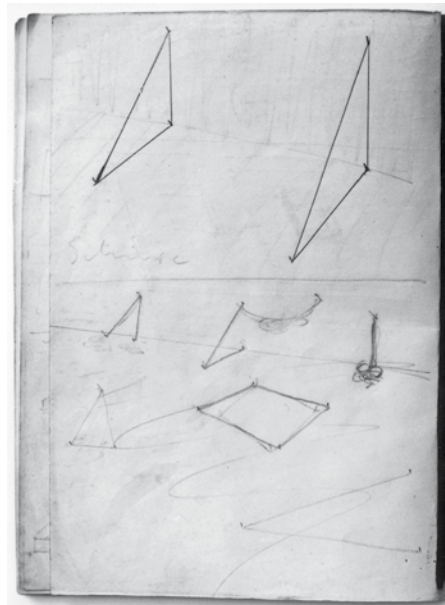
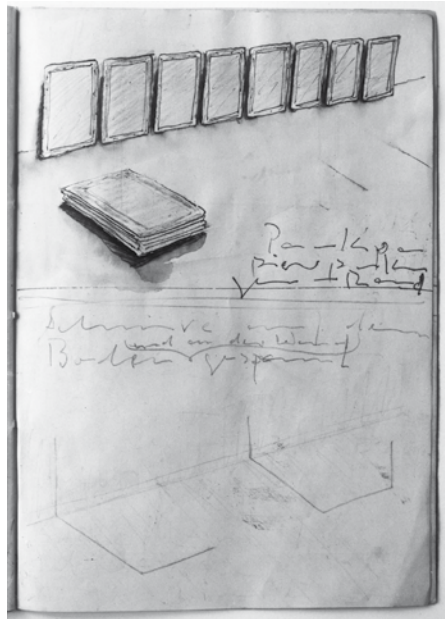
Franz Erhard Walther

Zwei Stapel, 60 parts

From: Gesang der Wollgarnhüllen,
1962–1963

Envelopes, paper, glue

Two stacks, 11.3 x 9.5 x 16 cm each



Franz Erhard Walther

Zwei Seiten aus einem Notizbuch, 1962–1963

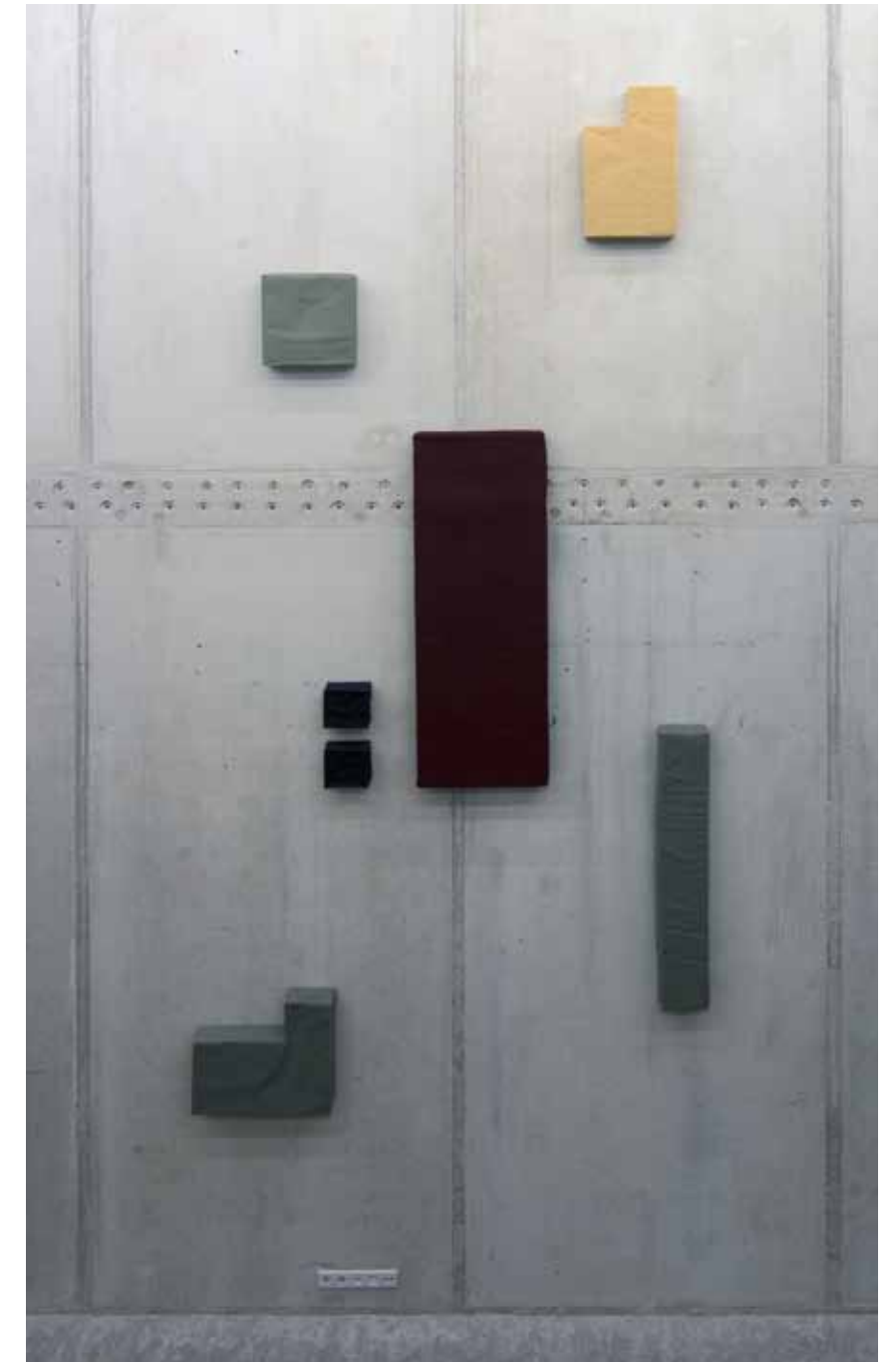
Sieben Werkgesänge, Exhibition at Galerie
Junge Kunst, Fulda, 1964

Raum, 1963 (reconstruction, 2010)
Hemp cord, 10 m long, four steel nails



Franz Erhard Walther

Raum, 1963 (reconstruction, 2010)
Hemp coard, 10 m long



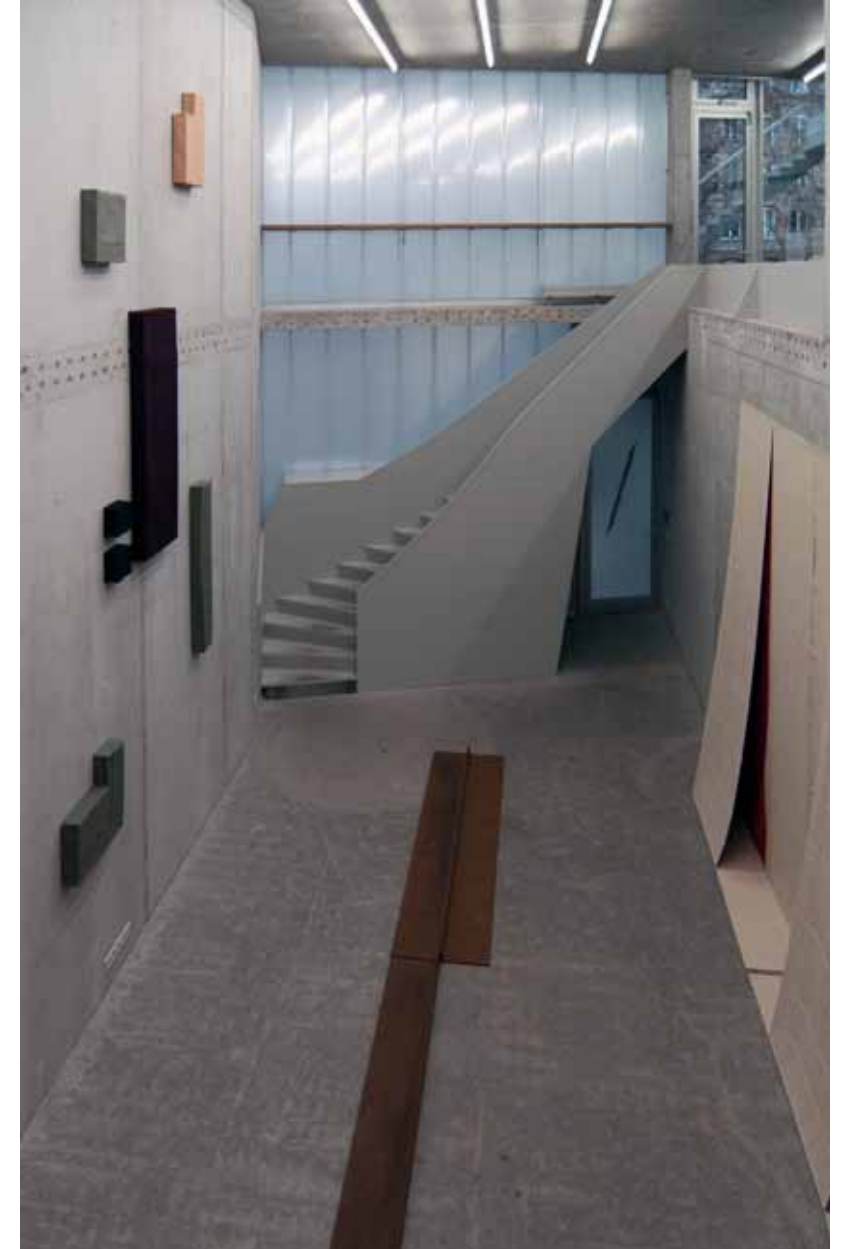
Franz Erhard Walther

Configuration from the work group Gesang
des Lagers (Nr.15), 1989–1990
Cotton fabrics, 7 parts
180 x 120 x 11 cm



Franz Erhard Walther

Vier Schreitsockel, gleiche Längen, 1975
Steel plates, 10 mm, 4 parts,
265 x 38 x 7 cm each





Franz Erhard Walther

Mit drei Kammern, 1980
Cotton fabrics, 3 parts, 365 x 600 x 40 cm
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation



Franz Erhard Walther

Mit drei Kammern, 1980
Cotton fabrics, 3 parts, 365 x 600 x 40 cm
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation

Vier Schreitsockel, gleiche Längen, 1975
Steel plates, 10 mm, 4 parts,
265 x 38 x 7 cm each

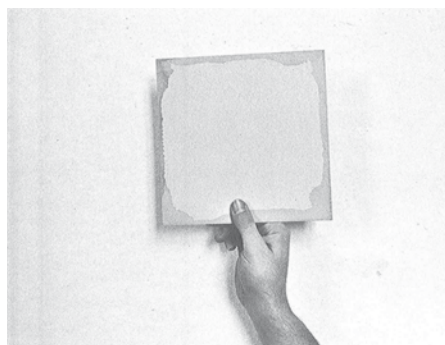
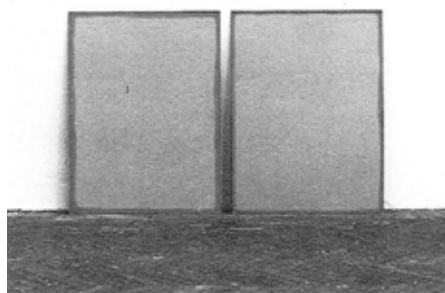




Franz Erhard Walther

Exhibition view

Gefaltetes Tuch (gesäumt), 1963
 Franz Erhard Walther Foundation



Franz Erhard Walther

Pappen mit Ölrand (Zeit), 1962
(photo document)

Neun Karten, achtzehn Felder, 1962
(photo document)

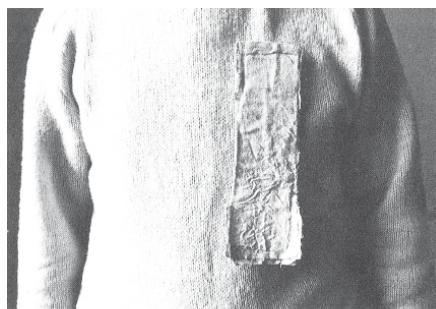
Rahmenzeichnung, 1960
Gouache, grease crayon and opaque white on
solid paper, 14.5 x 21.3 cm
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation

Rahmenzeichnung, 1962
Pencil on paper, 21 x 14.7 cm

Rahmenzeichnung, 1962
Sepia on light brown paper, double-sided

Gruppe von kleinen Rahmenzeichnungen, 1963
Gouache on paper, 10 pieces,
14.9 x 10.5 cm each

Rahmenarbeit, 1962
Adhesive tape on fibre board
50.7 x 39 cm



Franz Erhard Walther

Nesselorden, 1963
(photo document)

Handstück mit Wülsten, 1963
Corrugated cardboard, nettle, glue,
24 x 55.6 x 1.6 cm

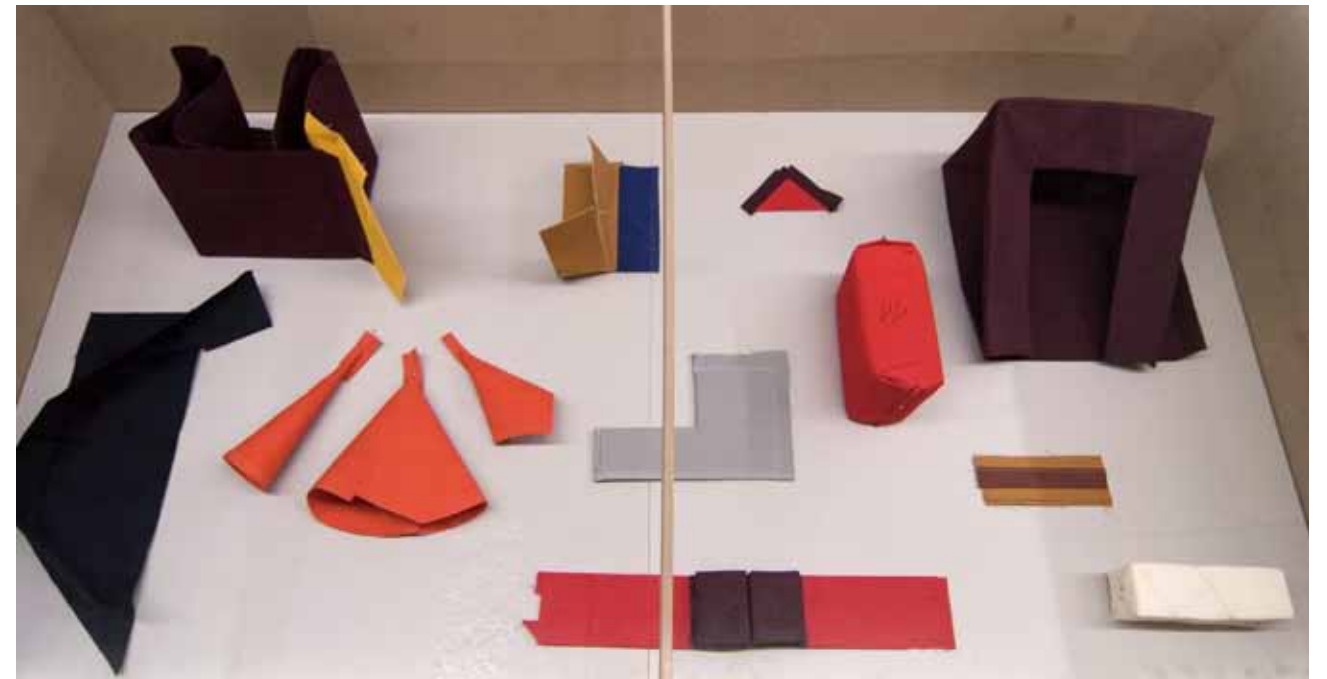
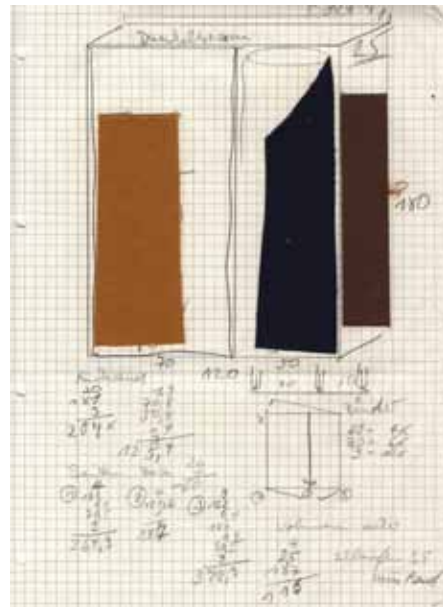
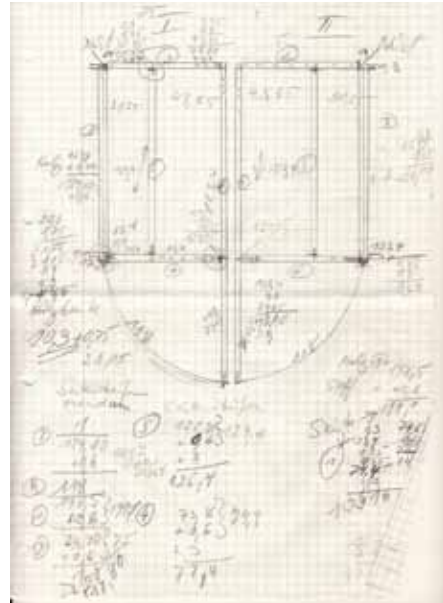
Schwere Nesselpackung, 1962-1963
Wood, nettle, glue, 36.7 x 28.7 x 2 cm
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation

2 x 2 Nesselorden, 1963
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation

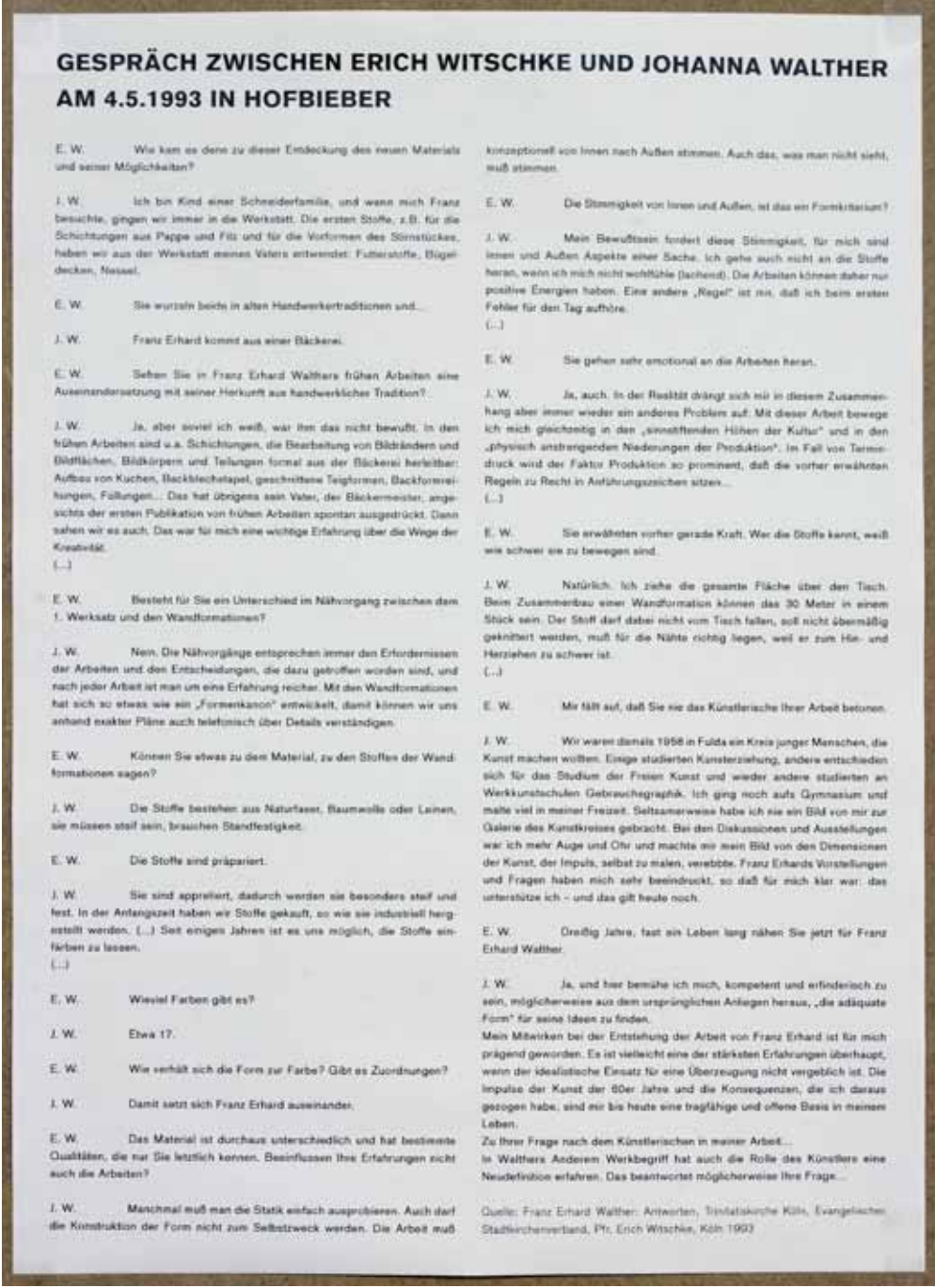




Test pieces and technical drawings from
Johanna Walther's studio

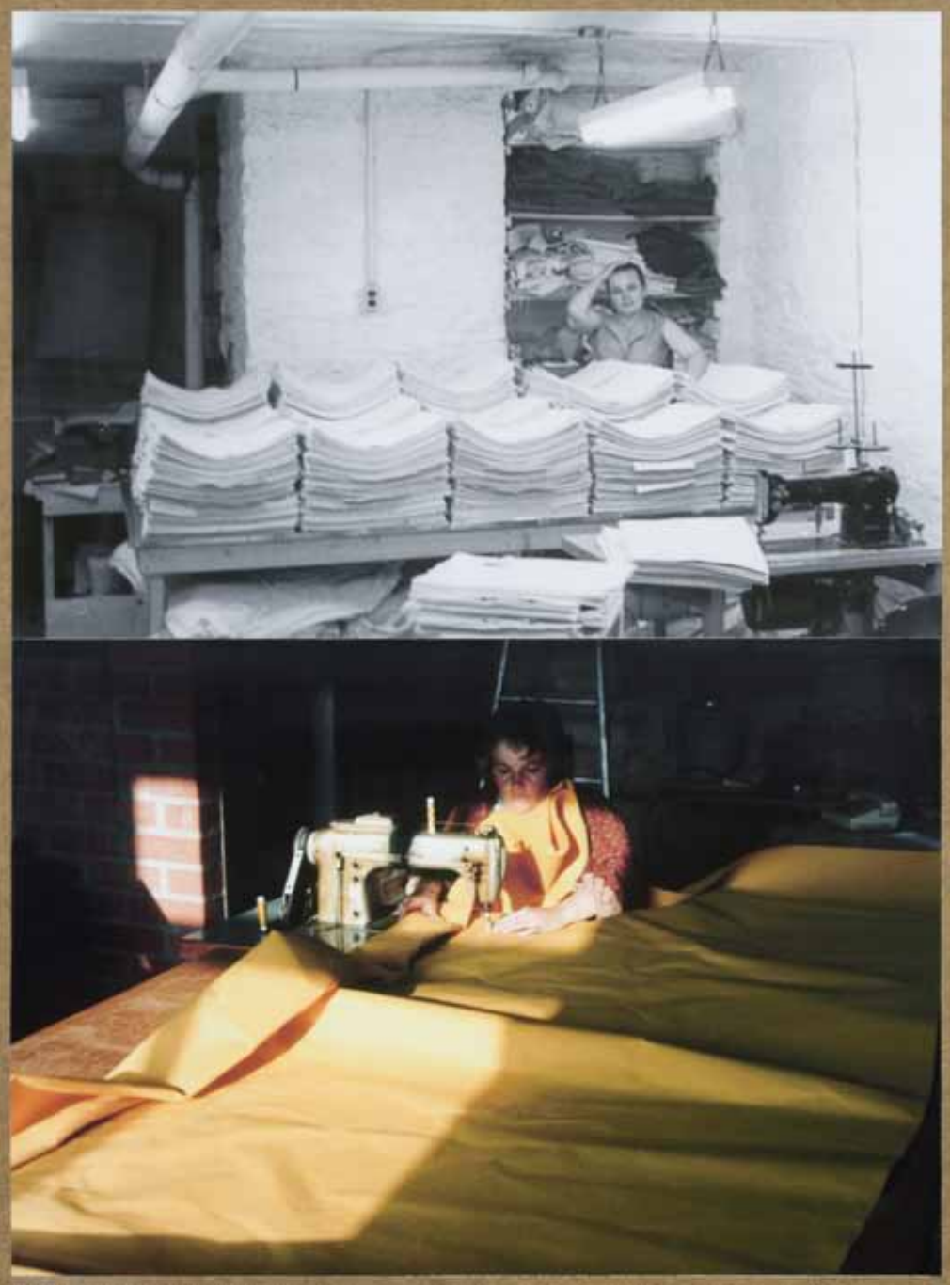


Test pieces from Johanna Walther's studio

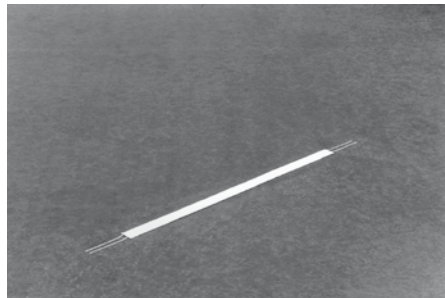
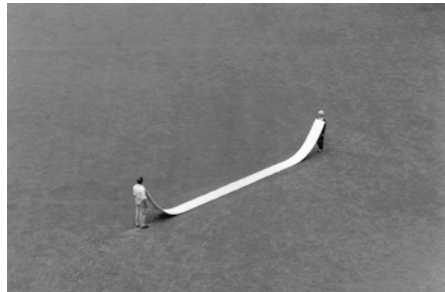


Conversation between Erich Witschke and Johanna Walther

Excerpt from: Franz Erhard Walther, Antworten. Trinitatskirche Köln, 1993



Johanna Walther, studio 436 East 75th Street, New York, 1969 and studio Fulda, 1981



Franz Erhard Walther

#5, 1. Werksatz, Elfmeterbahn, 1964
Plastic, nettle, foam, linen strips, lawn
straps, 1100 x 55 x 1.5 cm,
straps, 16 cm each

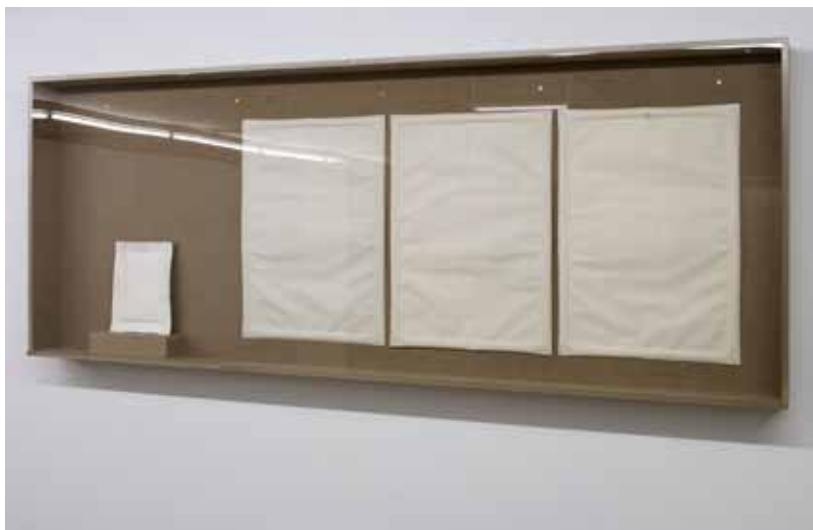
Photo documents by Rainer Ruthenbeck and
Timm Rautert



Franz Erhard Walther

Exhibition view

Center: #4, 1. Werksatz, Beinstück, 1964
Black lining fabric, foam (originally felt cot-
ton), 135 x 37 x 2 cm, straps, 78 cm each



Franz Erhard Walther

Kissen, 1962
24 x 30.5 x 1.5 cm
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation

Drei Blätter mit gewölbtem Rand, 1962
Paper, adhesive tape, 3 parts
69.5 x 49.5 cm each



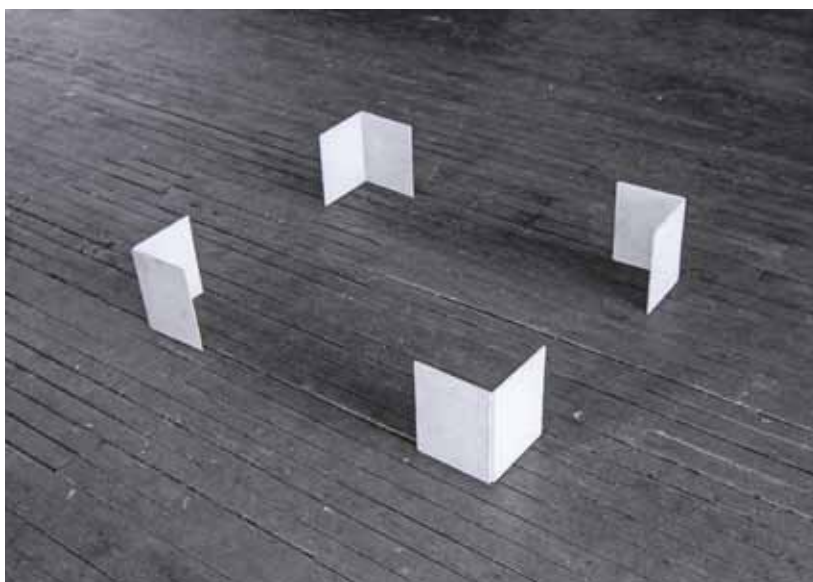
Franz Erhard Walther

Kissen, 1962
24 x 30.5 x 1.5 cm
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation



Franz Erhard Walther

Proportionsbestimmungen, 1962 / 1972
 (Proportionsbestimmung I, 1962, 31'10 min,
 Proportionsbestimmung II, 1972, 8'03 min)
 Video, loop, 39'16 min
 Production of Gerry Schum Fernsehalerie

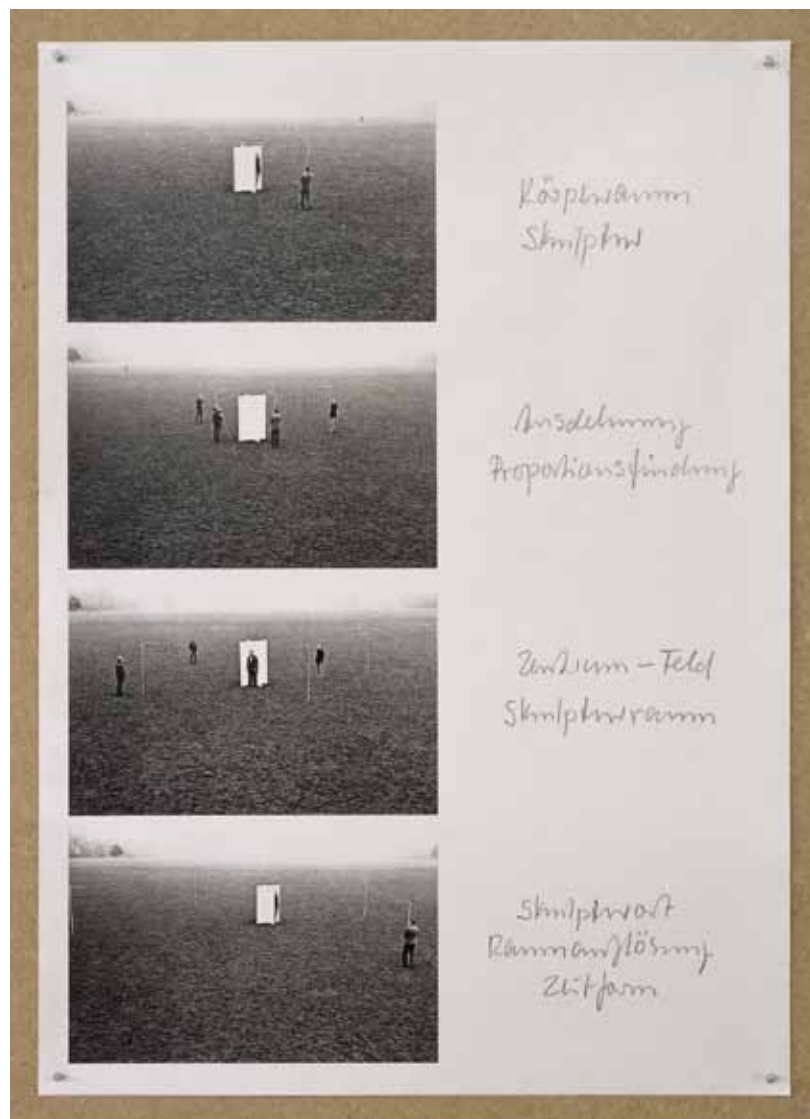


Franz Erhard Walther

Vier Stellecken, 1963
 Fibre board, untreated cotton, glue,
 4 x 23.5–24 x 0.6 cm (opened)
 Franz Erhard Walther Foundation

Photo document by Timm Rautert





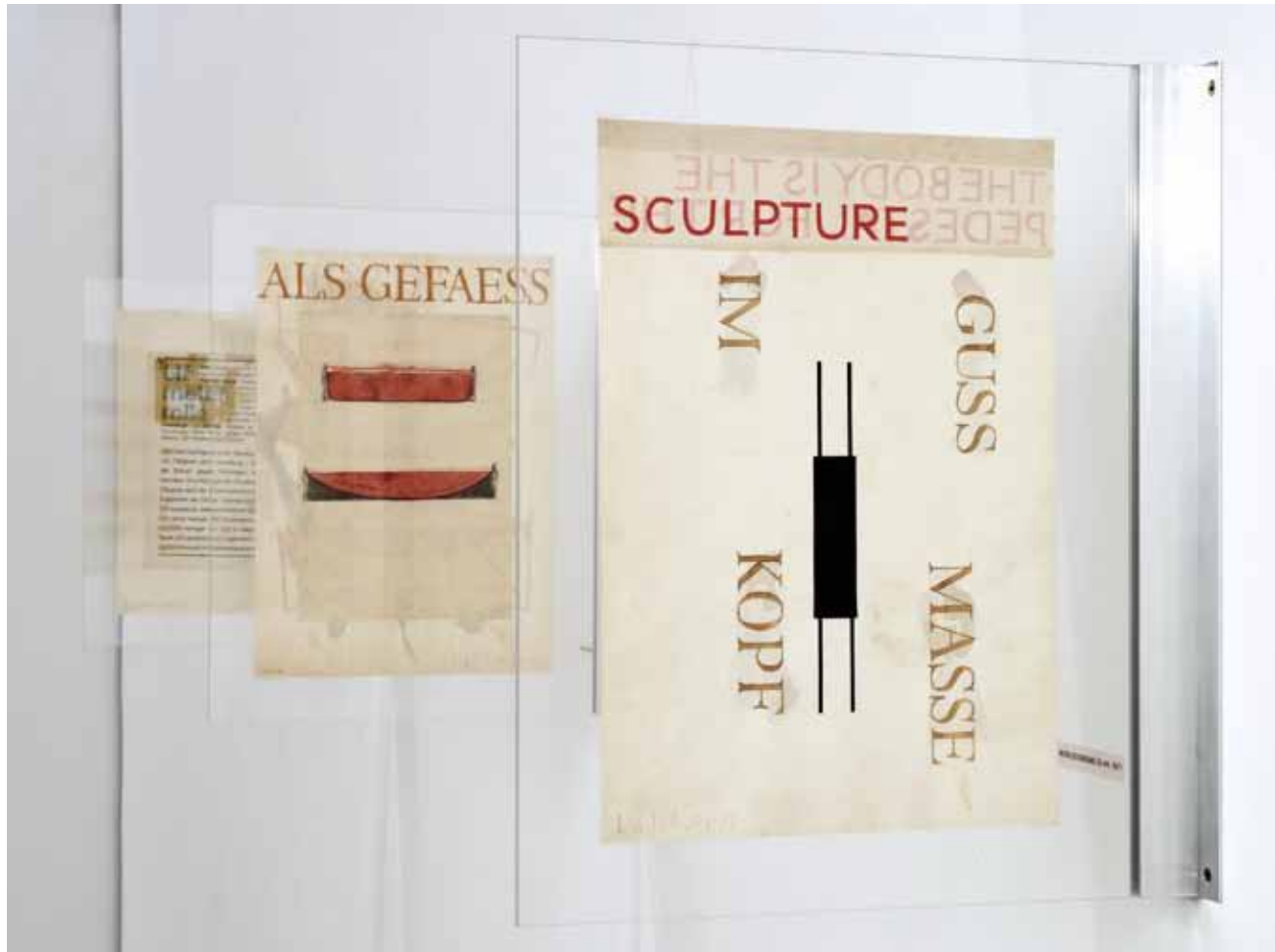
Franz Erhard Walther

Ausdehnung mit Zentrum, 1972
Laser print and drawing, 2010



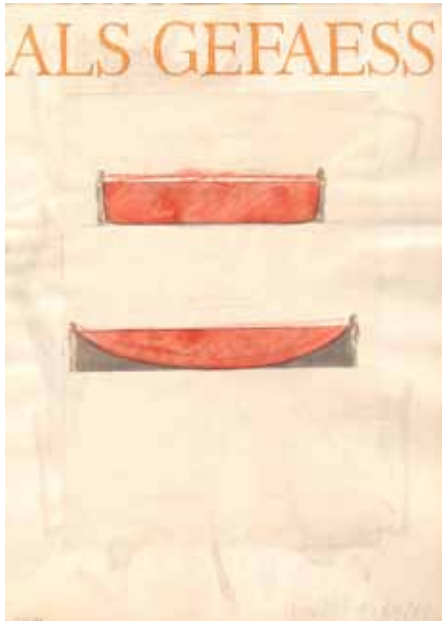
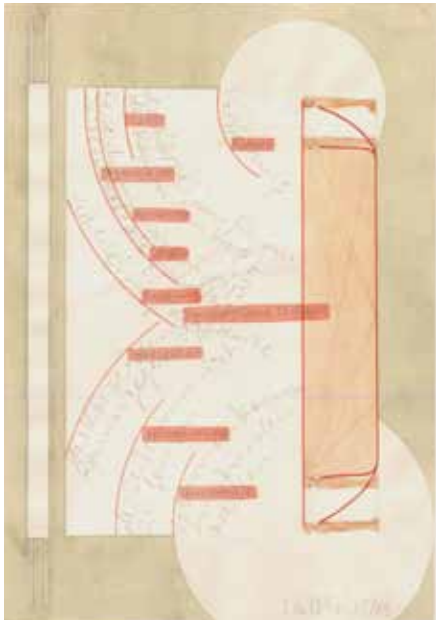
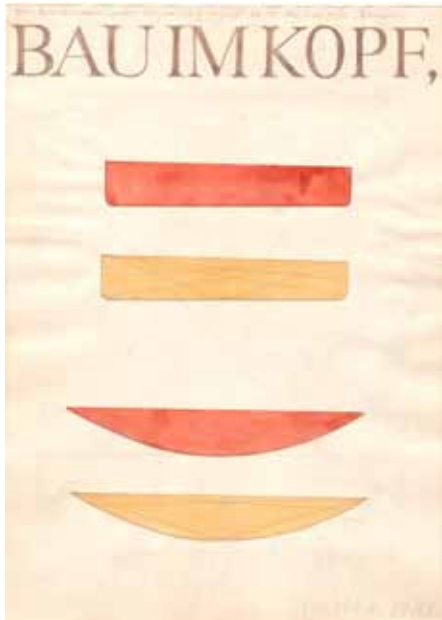
Franz Erhard Walther

Ausdehnung mit Zentrum, 1972
Two fibre boards, 220 x 150 x 1 cm each
Four iron angled posts, 235 cm each,
0.75 cm diameter



Franz Erhard Walther

Werkzeichnungen, 1964-1971
 Franz Erhard Walther Foundation



Franz Erhard Walther

Werkzeichnungen, 1964-1969
 Franz Erhard Walther Foundation



Franz Erhard Walther

Sonate, 1958
Pencil and tempera on paper
39.5 x 60 cm





Franz Erhard Walther

Configuration Hellgrau, 1992-1993

Cotton fabric

180 x 130 x 11 cm (8 parts)



Franz Erhard Walther

Configuration Rosa, 1992-1993

Cotton fabric

180 x 130 x 11 cm (8 parts)



Franz Erhard Walther

Configuration Chamois, 1992-1993

Cotton fabric

180 x 130 x 11 cm (7 parts)

Franz Erhard Walther Foundation

Form V, 1994

Cotton fabric and foam

270 x 140 x 25 cm (3 parts)



Franz Erhard Walther

Form R, 1994
Cotton fabric, foam, wood
180 x 36 x 20 cm (6 parts)



The work of Franz Erhard Walther has attracted critical attention since the mid 1960s, and it becomes increasingly apparent not only how much he contributed to the development of an action-oriented concept of art in the second half of the 20th century, but also how his position continues to serve younger artists as inspiration. The notion that one is permitted to look at art but not touch it, that there is some impregnable boundary between a work of art and our physical selves, our demeanor, our social roles, continues to provoke opposition. Walther was one of the forerunners in this protest, an exponent of a relational aesthetic *avant la lettre*, one that takes into account the physical nature of the work of art on a substantial level.

Walther's work has been included in four documenta exhibitions. Since 1963 he has consistently championed the concept of sculpture as performance and participation, the notion that art is a collaborative event in which artist and public contribute on an equal footing. For Walther the "meaning" of a work has always been primarily what results from this collaboration, not something to be discovered through detached and solitary contemplation. His uncomplicated, straightforward objects and installations address their viewers with partly tactile, partly intellectual stimuli; they trigger the temptation to act, the desire to experience things in a physical way, and question their viewers' positions in space and in relation to each other. As evolved over the last five decades, Walther's œuvre presents an exemplary variety of methodological approaches. It also illustrates the difficulties faced by any form of art that hopes for participation on the part of the public, with the intention of making the appreciation of art a more collective, even democratic enterprise.

Our exhibition reprises the central themes and approaches in Walther's work from the late 1950s to the present.

- We present the artist's variant of a minimalist aesthetic that we have chosen to call "participatory minimalism" (KOW ISSUE 1, 2009) as a way of distinguishing it from the canon of American Minimalist Art. In the period of early Minimalism, Walther conceived works similar in form but substantially different in intention. His sculptures, though intended as exhibition pieces, induce in viewers a desire to manipulate them and become physically involved. At the same time, the viewer's actual participation is itself expected to be minimal.

- We trace how Walther first questioned the confinement of the picture support and then transcended it between 1957 and 1963. His "escape from the picture" is apparent as an interest in open, flexible framing situations. The objects stitched out of fabric from his "First Work Set" (1963–69) can be seen as the conceptual and sculptural consequence of this search for a sustainably dynamic dimension in his plastic work, one that also characterizes his architectonic space modules of the 1970s. For the first time the stitching technique itself, developed by the artist beginning in 1963 and realized by Johanna Walther, is illuminated more precisely.

- Ever since he first practiced typography at the School of Applied Art in Offenbach, one of Walther's primary interests has been the formal organization of language, the design of text and idea. From the "Word Pictures" (1957) up to the "New Alphabet" from the years 1990–96, we illustrate how Walther's aesthetic program continuously mediates between pictorial space (in drawing and sculpture), textual space (including book space), as well as the physical space of the active subject, and questions how they are interrelated.

Franz Erhard Walther

Solo exhibition at KOW BERLIN
06.11.2010–05.02.2011

Text, photos, design: Alexander Koch
Translation: Russell Stockman

© Franz Erhard Walther, KOW, Berlin 2013