

**Media release**  
**Zurich, 26 August 2021**

## **Kunsthhaus Zürich presents Walter De Maria**

**From 27 August to 20 February 2022, the Kunsthhaus Zürich is presenting one of the largest horizontal sculptures designed to be shown indoors: 'The 2000 Sculpture' by the American artist Walter De Maria, a 500m<sup>2</sup> work created for the large exhibition gallery at the Kunsthhaus in 1992.**

'The 2000 Sculpture' by Walter De Maria (1935–2013) is one of the largest horizontal sculptures designed to be shown indoors anywhere in the world. It comprises a total of 2,000 white plaster rods each 50 cm long and 18 cm high. Despite their identical dimensions, the individual elements are different and have five, seven or nine edges. They are laid out on a surface covering 500 square metres, in a total of 20 rows each with 100 rods. Their arrangement follows a specific rhythm: 5–7–9–7–5–5–7–9–7–5. The result is a kind of herringbone pattern, with the rods seeming to move towards or away from the viewer, depending on where they are standing. This creates a tension between predictable regularity and individual perception that is underscored by the light and space surrounding the arrangement.

### LIGHT, SPACE AND MUSICALITY

'The 2000 Sculpture' was created specially for the Kunsthhaus and is owned by the Walter A. Bechtler Foundation, which is once again making it available to the Kunsthhaus on loan. The artist extensively researched the specific spatial and lighting conditions in Switzerland's largest column-free exhibition gallery, which is entirely daylit by a glass ceiling and has windows extending along both of its longer sides. This approach, which appears wholly normal these days, was unusual and novel at the time.

The legendary independent exhibition-maker Harald Szeemann, who regularly initiated and implemented projects at the Kunsthhaus in his capacity as a 'permanent freelance curator', praised Walter De Maria's work as a 'new quality of modern-day sculpture (...), intended to be not an object but a subject that fills and pervades the space around it'. 'The 2000 Sculpture' was first shown at the Kunsthhaus Zürich in 1992 and returned in 1999/2000. The huge installation unites much that was fundamental to Walter De Maria's work: the exploration of basic mathematical forms, light, breadth and space. 'Light plays an especially central role in "The 2000 Sculpture"', explains exhibition curator Mirjam Varadinis, who is

overseeing the current restaging: 'The work changes depending on the weather and time of day, giving rise to endless variations of white shading, refractions and lines'. Originally, the work was also shown entirely without artificial light and only until it got dark. Its reception to date reflects the fact that 'The 2000 Sculpture' also has much to do with rhythm. The publication that accompanied the exhibition in 1999 described it as a 'vast music score with visible "beats"'. De Maria, who came from the sun-drenched US state of California, wavered for some time between a career as a musician or an artist, before becoming an important figure in Land Art, Conceptual Art and Minimalism. In 2001 he received the Roswitha Haftmann Prize, Europe's best-endowed art award, in recognition of his life's work. After its most recent showing in the US, the minimalist sculpture now returns to its roots in parallel with the opening of the extension designed by David Chipperfield, transforming the light-filled exhibition gallery dating from 1958 into an oasis of peace, quiet and beauty.

### PUBLICATION AND PUBLIC TOURS

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue (Scheidegger & Spiess, 72 p., 25 ill.), with texts by Harald Szeemann, Philip Ursprung and a conversation between Mirjam Varadinis and Thomas and Cristina Bechtler. Available in the Kunsthaus shop for CHF 22. For those wishing to explore 'The 2000 Sculpture' in a group and with an expert guide, tours in German are available in August and September, every Wednesday at 6 p.m.; in October, every Friday at 3 p.m.; and from November to February, every Sunday at 11 a.m.

Supported by Albers & Co AG and Boston Consulting Group.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Kunsthaus Zürich, Heimplatz 1, CH-8001 Zurich, [www.kunsthaus.ch](http://www.kunsthaus.ch)  
Fri-Sun/Tue 10 a.m.–6 p.m., Wed, Thu 10 a.m.–8 p.m. For public holiday opening see [www.kunsthaus.ch](http://www.kunsthaus.ch).

Admission incl. collection: CHF 16 / CHF 11 (concessions and groups). From 12 October CHF 23 / CHF 18 (new admission to the extended Kunsthaus).

Admission free to visitors under the age of 17. Information subject to change.

Advance ticket sales: [www.kunsthaus.ch](http://www.kunsthaus.ch)

Zurich Tourism, tourist information office in Zurich main railway station, tel. +41 44 215 40 00, [info@zuerich.com](mailto:info@zuerich.com), [www.zuerich.com](http://www.zuerich.com).

### CONTACT FOR EDITORS

Media releases and images to download as well as an overview of dates for media briefings in the current year can be found at [www.kunsthaus.ch/en/medienbereich/media-corner/](http://www.kunsthaus.ch/en/medienbereich/media-corner/).

For further information, contact: Kunsthaus Zürich, Kristin Steiner, [kristin.steiner@kunsthaus.ch](mailto:kristin.steiner@kunsthaus.ch), tel. +41 (0)44 253 84 13