

ASPEN ART MUSEUM

Wade Guyton Peter Fischli David Weiss

June 22 to November 26 2017

Sometimes how we are known by others—often in spite of how we know ourselves or set out to be known—becomes a fact. Such is the case with the Aspen Art Museum building: we never intended for it to be iconic. Yet, everyone falls in love with people, places, and buildings for their own highly personalized needs and reasons. Consequently, how we are known evolves.

On one of their early visits to Aspen together, Peter Fischli and Wade Guyton picked up on this anomaly and set out to create an exhibition that would call attention to how people know and love the museum. However, their intention is unexpected, and at its core, deprives us of full access so that a greater awareness—if not also appreciation—might result once the normal state of the building has returned. It is a concept found in texts stemming from classical literature all the way up to contemporary pop songs, and like all enduring adages, it rings true: we don't know what we have until it's gone.

For their Aspen Art Museum exhibition, Guyton and Fischli have collaborated on numerous aspects of the show—both aesthetic and banal. Most prominent are their wall sculptures, placed in various spaces around the museum, outside and within the galleries. These works—of varied heights and widths—ask visitors to physically orient themselves in relation to the objects, which, in some cases, function as barriers to what lies ahead. Interspersed among and placed in relation to these collaborative sculptures are significant pieces from Guyton's as well as Fischli and his late collaborator David Weiss's respective practices.

Lower Level Corridor

Wade Guyton, *Untitled Long Black Paintings*, 2014
Guyton's black paintings happened by accident as he was trying to cover up pieces that he felt were failures. He continued to paint a 100 percent black file over X paintings until they achieved a wholly different surface. Made like most of his paintings, they are folded and printed with several layers. Guyton's horizontal works are made with the same black file he uses for his smaller, vertical, black paintings, but enlarged. The blank lines, which would normally be cropped off, is left intact. These two paintings were first shown in New York where the walls of the gallery defined their length. Both ends touched either a corner or a doorway and faced each other. Here, they are rearranged and hang together on a larger wall as a new work.

Gallery 4

Fischli and Weiss, *Flowers and Mushrooms*, 1997–98/2006
For the 1997 Münster Skulptur Projekte, Fischli and Weiss created a secluded garden that blossomed flowers and mushrooms, and was maintained by an on-site gardener who advised the artists throughout the exhibition. The book produced to document the installation was the foundation for their 2006 piece *Flowers and Mushrooms*. Photographing the garden, the artists experimented with a double exposure technique, creating an effect that destabilizes the viewer.

Fischli and Weiss, *Candle*, 1987
Part of a series of twenty-eight sculptures, *Candle* is a continuation of Fischli and Weiss's interest in uplitting everyday objects. This body of work reveals their interest in presenting what is described as a ghost, or shadow, of various items. The familiar found object cast in black rubber—a generic, industrial material—then placed on a plinth, offers an unusual presentation that removes it from the original even further.

Gallery 5

Fischli and Weiss, *Rat and Bear (Sleeping)*, 2008
Rat and Bear, two recurring characters in Fischli and Weiss's practice, made their debut in the film *The Least Resistance* (1980–81) over three decades ago. The fame- and money-hungry brown rat and panda bear, originally played by the artists and invented when the duo was living in Los Angeles and fascinated by the city's movie industry, eventually gain a newfound understanding of life in the film. Decades later, the animal costumes resurfaced in museum vitrines, and then a series of fantastical, otherworldly films and installations. *Rat and Bear (Sleeping)*, fully equipped with breathing machines, came to life following a scene in a film produced in the mid-2000s that shows them napping on packing blankets.

Wade Guyton, *Untitled Fire Paintings*, 2017
Starting in 2005 and depicting blistering flames, Guyton's fire paintings are scanned from the cloth cover of a scrapped book. The flames lick up the immense canvas, while beneath them, dark pools of sporadic drips and skids dilute the controlled, linear composition. As Guyton explains: "Fire is always captivating.... The first time I printed the fire on linen was on one of those brutally humid New York summer nights. No AC in the studio. I was sweating, and the paintings were melting."

Gallery 6

Fischli and Weiss, *Son et lumière*, 1990
Son et lumière [Sound and light] employs humble materials—a rotating disc, plastic cup, and bicycle flashlight—and applauds the mesmerizing, but often overlooked possibilities of the everyday. The kinetic sculpture—influenced by Fischli and Weiss's earlier, more technological *Surri* (1989)—projects live psychedelic effects onto the gallery wall. The elements together present a spectacular show complete with the unusual, unique sounds that only a plastic cup can produce.

Gallery 2

Fischli and Weiss, *Untitled Polyurethane Installations*, 1991–2013
Since 1991, Fischli and Weiss have constructed objects out of polyurethane foam, painted and made to resemble materials typically found within their workspace. Instead of highlighting the artist studio as a site of genius production, their installations declare the action of work itself an art-work. Imbued with the humor common to their practice, the pieces initially appear as though the museum has forgotten to remove the tools used during installation.

Gallery 3

Wade Guyton, *Five Stacks of Paintings*, 2008–17
Producing works on canvas since 2005, Guyton uses software and ink-jet printers in order to embed the element of chance within the history of painting. The artist uses files made in Photoshop or Word, imported from a scanner, his iPhone, or captured from the internet. These works include a range of imagery: black stripes, his New York studio floor, scans of the endpaper of an Italian art catalogue, enlarged images of bitmap files used in other monochromatic works, an image of an early sculpture by the artist, the view of Downtown Manhattan from his studio window, among others. The artist produces these works with an Epson 9900 inkjet printer. Embracing repetition, Guyton prints one composition after the other, pushing the printer to perform over and over, watching the ink explode, at times dry, re-adjusting the paper incorrectly, and at times failing. The paintings lay facedown, piled up on the floor of the studio accruing dirt and scratches. His work embodies a series of conceptual frames that allow viewers to see that it is not the machine replacing the artist in the means of production.

Gallery 1

Fischli and Weiss, *Radio*, 1993/2014
With *Suddenly This Overview* (1981–present), and throughout Fischli and Weiss's practice, they have attempted to catalogue the entirety of human existence, while knowing it was an impossible undertaking. For decades, they created subjective representations of both monumental and unimportant moments from memory—displayed together to create an overwhelming amount of information—and, in doing so, reframing history. The duo's readymade *Radio*, situated on a plinth, similarly archives a subjective history by transmitting details from the past. Instead of functioning as a source for news on current and future events, the sound work repeatedly communicates what has already occurred, in essence freezing time.

Fischli and Weiss, *Visible World*, 1987–2013
Visible World, much like *Suddenly This Overview*, is a comprehensive survey consisting of roughly three thousand transparencies revealing touristy images of landscapes taken by the artists all over the world. The slides depict cities, deserted towns, farm life, and celebrated monuments—essentially, an archive of manmade and natural environments, and a balance of extraordinary and banal sites. The photographic project poses questions about authenticity and what it means to capture the essence of a place.

Wade Guyton, *Untitled New York Times Paintings*, 2015–17
Guyton's new series of *New York Times* paintings shifts away from the abstraction of his early compositions. Instead, they are densely packed with information, capturing the immediacy of the *Times* homepage. Printed on an Epson 1180 printer, each *Times* canvas must be folded to fit, going through the printer twice and resulting in a disjunctive central seam that inevitably distorts the news and accompanying imagery.

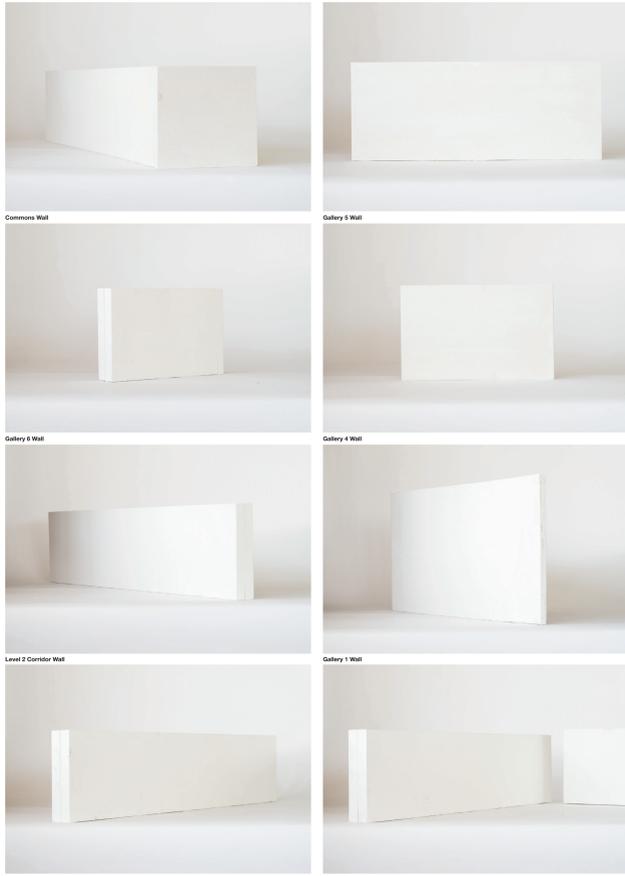
Roof Deck Sculpture Garden

Fischli and Weiss, *Concrete Landscapes*, 1984–2012/2017
The artist duo made *Concrete Landscapes*, a series of twenty-four sculptures, by pouring concrete into molds and transforming the surface into a rugged, rocky terrain. Fischli and Weiss were interested in things that are normally opposite one another, and these landscapes evolved in contrast to the duo's clay constructions of urban European Modernist architecture from the mid-eighties. Once set, these outdoor works organically transform due to the weather conditions, much like the landscapes within which they are situated.

Wade Guyton, *Untitled X Painting*, 2017, & *Inverted Wood Pile*, 2002/re-created 2017
The X is a repeating motif in Guyton's printed paintings. This specific, generic mark stands in for a signature and highlights Guyton's reinterpretation of the act of writing and using the computer as forms of objectness and materiality. Guyton's stacks of wood lean on one another against the wall and resemble multiple windows in a browser—open but not visible. This layering references the overarching presence of art history in Guyton's work, while the collapsing of analog and digital creates an open-ended space for interpretation.

—Heidi Zuckerman, Nancy and Bob Magoon CEO and Director with Courtenay Finn, Curator, and Lauren Fulton, Curatorial Assistant

List of Walls



Lower Level



Wade Guyton
Untitled, 2014
Two long, black paintings previously installed across from each other, with dimensions originally determined by the size of the walls at Petzel Gallery, New York. Currently installed side-by-side.
Each: 108 1/4 x 319 1/2 in (274.9 x 811.5 cm)

Fischli/Weiss
Flowers and Mushrooms, 1997–98/2006
Flowers and Mushrooms is a digital slide projection based on 162 analog double exposures created in the camera.
Dimensions variable

Fischli/Weiss
Radio, 1993/2014
A small transistor radio on a pedestal playing an hour-long sound file of a New York radio program broadcast, recorded in November 2014, of an endless loop of news, pop music, commercials, etc.
7 4/5 x 4 x 1 1/2 in (20 x 10 x 4 cm)

Fischli/Weiss
Visible World, 1987–2013
Twelve light tables with a total of three thousand pictures from the slide archive done by the artists on various journals started in 1987.
Dimensions variable

Wade Guyton
Untitled, 2015–17
Five paintings made while reading the *New York Times* online over the last few years.
Each: 128 x 108 in (325 x 275 cm)

Fischli/Weiss
Concrete Landscapes, 1984–2012/2017
Poured concrete, formed while the concrete hardened during the setting process. Executed in Aspen in June 2017.
59 x 86 3/5 x 6 in (150 x 220 x 15 cm)

Wade Guyton
Untitled, 2017
An X painting.
84 x 69 in (213.4 x 175.3 cm)

Wade Guyton
Inverted Wood Pile (2002/re-created 2017)
A pile of wood and scrap found a block away from the museum in 2016, reinstalled and inverted. A re-enacted work from 2002.
Dimensions variable

Level 2



Colophon

Peter Fischli (b. 1952, Zurich) and David Weiss (b. 1946, Zurich) started their collaboration as Peter Fischli David Weiss in 1979 and had their first solo exhibition at the Galerie Batkon, Geneva (1981). Solo exhibitions of Fischli and Weiss's work have taken place at: the Art Institute of Chicago (2017); Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, traveled to Museo Jumex, Mexico City (2016); Fondation Beyeler, Basel (2016); Serpentine Gallery, London (2015); Glenstone, Potomac, MD (2013); 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan (2010); Tate Modern, London, traveled to Kunsthau Zürich, and Deichtorhallen Hamburg (2006–8); Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2003); Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2002); Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, traveled to Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves, Porto (2000); Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (1999); Swiss Pavilion, Venice Biennale (1995); Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (1992); and Kunsthalle Basel (1985). Group exhibitions have taken place at: Philadelphia Museum of Art (2016); Kunstmuseum Basel (2016); Museum of Modern Art, New York (2014); Venice Biennale (2013 & 2003); Documenta, Kassel (1997 & 1987); and Skulptur Projekte, Münster, Germany (1987). Weiss died in 2012 in Zurich, where Fischli continues to live and work.

Wade Guyton (b. 1972, Hammond, Indiana) lives and works in New York. He studied at Hunter College, New York, and University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Recent solo exhibitions have taken place at: Musee d'arts contemporaines Donnarajina, Naples, Museum Brandhorst, Munich (both 2017); Musée d'art moderne et contemporain, Geneva (2016–17); Le Consortium, Dijon (2016); Art Institute of Chicago (2014); Kunsthalle Zürich (2013); and the Whitney Museum of American Art (2012). Group exhibitions have taken place at: Museum moderner kunst stiftung ludwig wien, Vienna, Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris, The Kitchen, New York (all 2016); Fondation Beyeler, Basel (2015–16); Aishti Foundation, Beirut (2015); 21er Haus and Winterpalais, Vienna (2014); and the 55th Venice Biennale (2013).

This publication accompanies the exhibition *Wade Guyton Peter Fischli David Weiss*, curated by Heidi Zuckerman, and on view at the Aspen Art Museum from June 22–November 26, 2017.

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Reverse Image
Matterhorn: Fischli and Weiss
New York Times: Wade Guyton

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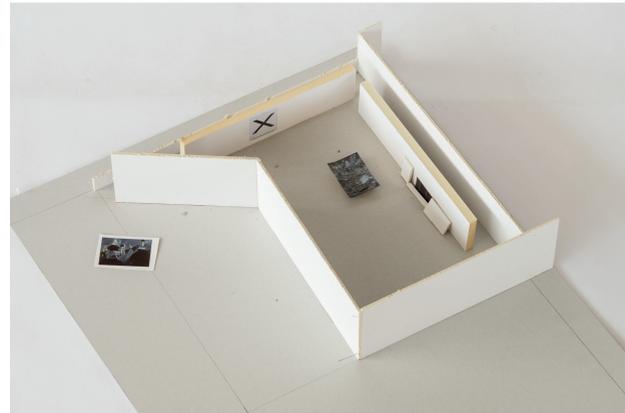
Street Level



Fischli/Weiss
Untitled, 1991–2013
Groups of hand-carved polyurethane objects, painted and life-size. Re-creations of everyday objects, all kinds of studio utensils—like tools and painting materials—and things that could be found in the back rooms of a gallery or museum, like pedestals, cleaning material, etc.
Dimensions variable

Wade Guyton
Five stacks of paintings.
All works are unframed, each measuring 84 x 69 in (213.4 x 175.3 cm), from 2008–17.

Level 3



Notes on the individual works by Peter Fischli and Wade Guyton, respectively.



New York Times

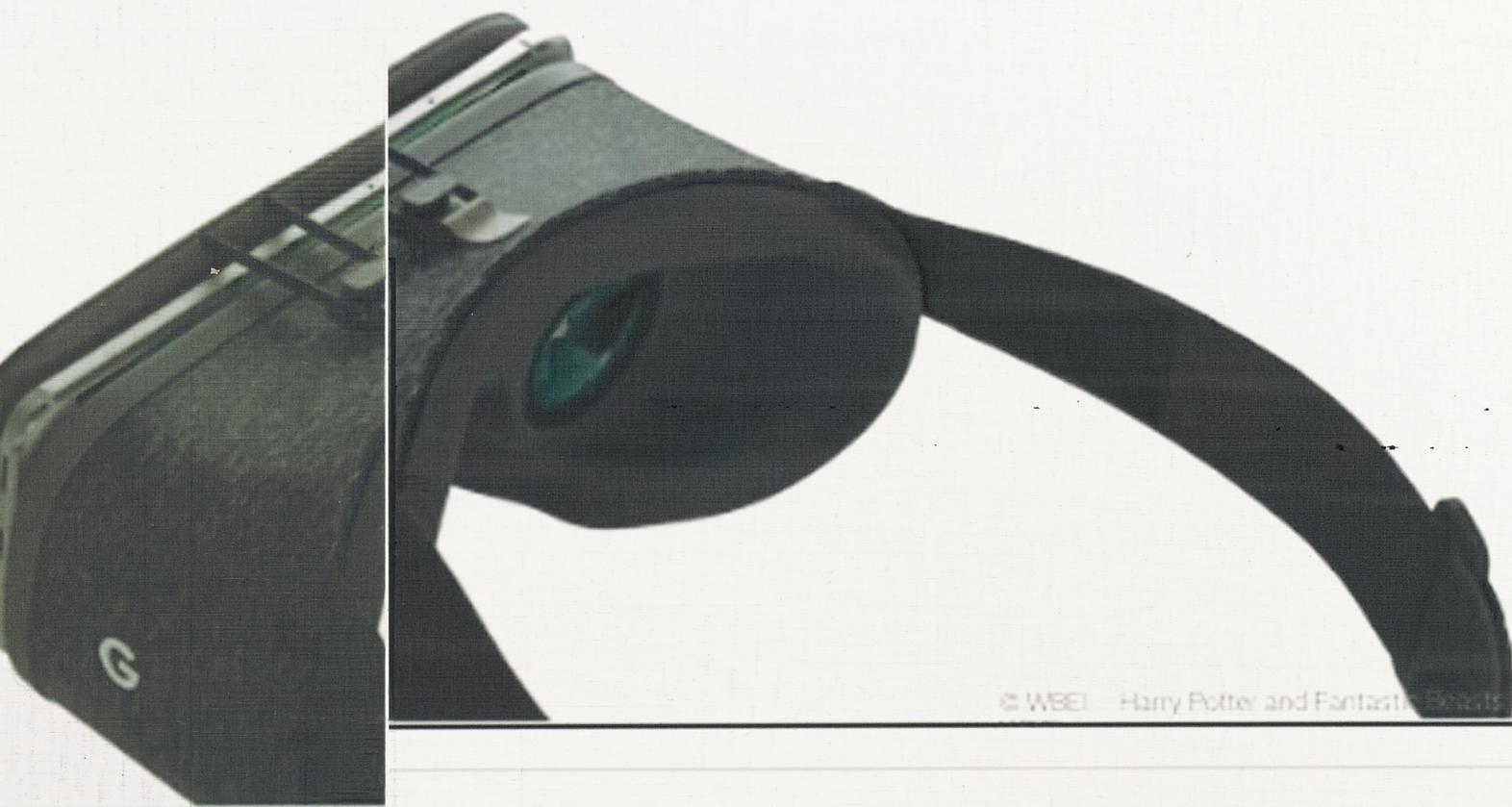
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193

23

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OPINION

Being American in the Trump Years

By THE EDITORIAL BOARD
After the graceful concession of Hillary Clinton, we must turn our attention to causes that still need fighting for.

CHARLES M. BLOW
America Elects a Bigot