



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GÜNTHER FÖRG
LEAD PAINTINGS
FEBRUARY 19 – MARCH 28

OPENING RECEPTION: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 6-8PM



(New York, NY)— Skarstedt announces an exhibition of work by the late German artist Günther Förg, at their uptown gallery this February. This exhibition—remarkably only the third time Förg’s work has been shown in the United States in nearly two decades—will showcase 9 of the artist’s signature paintings on lead, dating from 1986-1990. *Günther Förg: Lead Paintings* will be on view at Skarstedt (20 E. 79th Street) from February 19 through March 28, 2015.

Throughout his career, Förg co-opted various uncommon materials as painting supports—the most notable of which was lead. Using imagery born of abstract painting and minimalism, Förg built upon the work of predecessors such as Blinky Palermo and allowed the material to become his vehicle for expression. Förg said of these works, “I like very much the qualities of lead – the surface, the heaviness... I like to react on things, with the normal canvas you often have to kill the ground, give it something to react against. With the metals you already have something - its scratches, scrapes.”¹

To create these paintings, Förg wrapped lead sheets over wood, then painted each surface with acrylic. The large-scale yet minimal compositions visibly reference American color field painters such as Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman. A number of works in the exhibition feature variations of Newman’s horizontal ‘zips’. It’s

important to note that Förg did not share the movement’s metaphysical ambitions, but instead intended his *Lead Paintings* as a visual homage to color field abstraction. The series’ reductive compositions exist as Förg intended: fields of experimentation in painting.

The uneven lead surfaces introduce tension between the flatness of the picture plane and the dimensionality of Förg’s brushstrokes. With each composition layered over a matte lead base, the success of the *Lead Paintings* relies upon variations in pressure applied to the brush. These variances, as well as the opaque fast-drying nature of acrylic, give prominence to color density and weight. Absorbing nothing, the lead surfaces reveal brushwork both laconic and brisk.

About Günther Förg:

Günther Förg (1952 - 2013) was an extraordinarily versatile painter, photographer, graphic artist, and sculptor. He was a prominent member of an influential generation of German artists; working alongside peers such as Martin Kippenberger and Albert Oehlen to break down the previous generation’s established rules of abstraction.

Förg’s work has been shown in important institutions such as the Fondation Beyeler, Basel; Langen Foundation, Neuss; Kunstmuseum Basel; Gemeentemuseum, The Hague; Tel Aviv Museum of Art; Museo



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Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía/Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid; Tokyo Museum of Contemporary Art; Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach; and SFMOMA, San Francisco.

His work is in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, François Pinault Foundation, Venice, Daimler Contemporary, Berlin, Hamburger Bahnhof - Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin; Broad Contemporary Art Museum, Santa Monica; Tate Modern, London; SFMOMA, San Francisco; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; MOCA Grand Avenue, Los Angeles; Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Castello di Rivoli, Turin; and Kunstmuseum Basel.

Please join the conversation with Skarstedt on Instagram (@skarstedtgallery) via the hashtags #SkarstedtUES #Skarstedt #GüntherFörg #FörgLeadPaintings

Image Credit: Günther Förg, *Untitled I*, 1990, acrylic on lead, 110 ¼ x 62 inches (280 x 160 cm).

¹“Günther Förg: In Conversation”, *Talking Painting: Dialogues with Twelve Contemporary Abstract Painters*, 2002, 77.

About Skarstedt:



20 East 79th Street
New York NY 10075



550 West 21st Street
New York NY 10011



23 Old Bond Street
London W1S 4PZ

Skarstedt (20 E. 79th Street, New York, NY) was founded in 1994 by Per Skarstedt to mount historical exhibitions by Contemporary European and American artists that had become the core of his specialty in Sweden and New York in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The New York gallery's program focuses on artists of the late Twentieth Century whose work explores concepts such as representation, authorship, identity, and sexual politics across a wide-range of media. Skarstedt's unique relationship with artists allows it to present exhibitions both on the primary and secondary markets, creating a dialogue between the generations.

Skarstedt opened its London space at 23 Old Bond Street in 2012 with the inaugural exhibition *Andy Warhol: The American Indian*. Skarstedt London presents exhibitions and publications devoted to the gallery's established area of expertise while also seeking to evolve and expand its focus. Skarstedt is committed to sharing both its aesthetic perspective and philosophical approach through high-quality exhibitions and collaborations with top international museums and private collections.

Skarstedt opened its Chelsea space at 550 W. 21st Street in May 2014 with the inaugural exhibition *Klein and Warhol: Fire and Oxidation Paintings*, adding to the gallery's existing locations on New York's Upper East Side and in London. The additional gallery space enables Skarstedt to expand on its core program of museum-quality, historically researched exhibitions from modern and contemporary masters.

The gallery works with the following artists and artists' estates: Francis Bacon, John Baldessari, Georg Baselitz, George Condo, Carroll Dunham, Eric Fischl, Peter Fischli & David Weiss, Lucio Fontana, Günther Förg, Keith Haring, Jenny Holzer, Mike Kelley, Martin Kippenberger, Yves Klein, Barbara Kruger, Louise Lawler, Sherrie Levine, Robert Mapplethorpe, Juan Muñoz, Cady Noland, Albert Oehlen, Richard Prince, David Salle, Thomas Schütte, Cindy Sherman, Rosemarie Trockel, Andy Warhol, Franz West, and Christopher Wool.

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