

Edition Patrick Frey

Press Release

Peter Preissle, Sandro Fischli
Max Wiederkehr - Konkret on Acid



Max Wiederkehr's visual idiom was always influenced by Zürich's concrete art, though interspersed with Pop and op art elements. After his initial breakthrough, he turned his back on the established art world and embraced the nascent subculture instead. He drew comics, painted, occasionally exhibited, and went on to make pieces that were still geometrically influenced or inflected, but went beyond geometry to develop a fascinating interplay of calculation and intuition and a surprising blend of highbrow and low. Although it was actually considered unthinkable at the time, he was working away at the interface between two Zurich schools, the fantastical (with its so-called *Wahnwelten* or "hallucinatory worlds") and the concrete, and forging a unique amalgamation of the two. It is amusing and refreshing to compare Bill, Loewensberg and Honegger, who'd have been appalled to be called "outsiders", to Wiederkehr, who was close to the outsiders, to the neatly dressed painters of Hüsli-Eggli (lit. "houses and corners", i.e. metonymically "boxes and angles"), as Friedrich Kuhn called them, on the one hand, and the radical left-wing *Stadtindianer* (the Teutonic counterpart to Italy's *Indiani Metropolitani*) on the other.

Recent access to Wiederkehr's estate has now brought to light the overall oeuvre of an artist who stood outside the cultural establishment, but whose offside position was by no means outsider art: Wiederkehr was thoroughly versed in modernity, which he turned inside out and outside in.

Max Wiederkehr (1935-2008) apprenticed as a decorator and studied interior design with Willy Guhl at Kunstgewerbeschule (now part of the Zurich University of the Arts). From 1963 on he worked as a free lance artist, collaborating a.o. with Robert Haussmann. Exhibitions include *Zürcher Künstler im Helmhaus. Konkrete und Phantastische Richtungen*, Helmhaus Zürich (1969), *Zürcher Konkrete Kunst*, Strauhof Zürich (1970), *Kunstszene Zürich «48 x zweidimensional»*, Haus für konstruktive und konkrete Kunst Zürich (1994/95). a.o. In subsequent years, he exhibited occasionally at small galleries. *Max Wiederkehr. Bilder und Objekte 1983–1993* (1994) was published by Edition Andreas Züst, Bilger-Verlag, Zürich.

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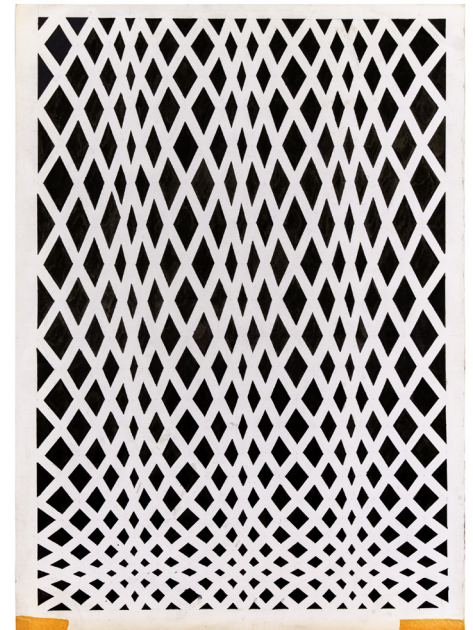
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