



**DÜSSELDORF**

**LUTZ MOMMARTZ**  
**SOZIALE PLASTIK**  
**1969, 16MM FILM, 11'41"**

17 JANUARY – 12 DECEMBER 2021



Lutz Mommartz, *Soziale Plastik*, 1969, 16mm film transferred to video, 11'41", b/w, no sound. Video still. Courtesy of the artist.

In conjunction with **beuys 2021. 100 years of joseph beuys**, the JULIA STOSCHEK COLLECTION will present the 16mm film *Soziale Plastik* (Social Sculpture, 1969) by **Lutz Mommartz** (\*1934) at the cinema of JSC Düsseldorf. The film is also available permanently at [www.jsc.art](http://www.jsc.art).

**Joseph Beuys**, one of the most significant artists of the twentieth century, has had a strong impact on collective cultural memory. *Soziale Plastik* shows the familiar figure of Beuys, dressed in his signature outfit: white shirt, fisherman's vest, and dark felt hat. He gazes from the screen at the audience for eleven entire minutes—without saying a word, steady and self-assured, looking directly into the camera.



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In this rudimentary performance Beuys was following the director's instructions. As stated in the opening credits, Mommartz merely asked Beuys to "comport himself in relation to the anonymous viewer." This simple stage direction is typical for Mommartz's films, as are the minimalistic setting, the interaction with the camera, and the lack of a script.

In Mommartz's film, Beuys becomes that which he always propagated, and as the title suggests: a social sculpture that has a formative influence on society and even changes it for the better. By engaging our gaze through the medium of film, Beuys establishes a social space of interaction. He utilizes his vehement, iconic presence as a device that we as viewers cannot resist. Whether we hold Beuys's gaze, avoid it, or turn away in boredom after a few minutes—we have to comport ourselves in relation to Beuys, just like he has to comport himself in relation to the "anonymous viewer." Due to its lack of storyline, the film challenges our conventional ways of seeing while also allowing the viewer to engage in a dialogue with Beuys that can be experienced in an almost physical way. In this way, Beuys applies Mommartz's instructions to the viewers themselves. The viewers become part of the performance, and in the spirit of Beuys's conviction that every person is an artist, they become artists for the duration of the interaction.

It is precisely this sounding out of the relationship between the filmmaker, the medium of film, the protagonists, and the viewers as well as cinematic authenticity that interested Mommartz. Considered one of the most important representatives of German experimental film, Mommartz was part of a group of filmmakers who called themselves "Das andere Kino" (The Other Cinema) in the late 1960s. This independent experimental film movement, which included Werner Nekes, W + B Hein, and Klaus Wyborny, was a response to New American Cinema. In addition to their efforts to develop new cinematic possibilities of expression far from the mainstream and to establish film as a visual art, they were also concerned with finding alternative channels for film distribution.

Beuys's concept of social sculpture and his statement that everybody is an artist also applies to Mommartz in a certain sense. He was the chief inspector at the Düsseldorf municipal planning office before he started making films as an autodidact in the mid-1960s. In his "second," artistic career he was catapulted to sudden fame in 1967 when his 16mm short film was awarded a prize at the renowned experimental film festival in Knokke, Belgium. With the Filmgruppe Düsseldorf, Mommartz also founded the Filmwerkstatt Düsseldorf (film workshop) in 1976 and established the first film class at the art academy in Düsseldorf. The film department, which Mommartz directed as a professor of film from 1978 to 1999, later became part of the department of art education in Münster (now the art academy in Münster).



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*Soziale Plastik*, which is part of the exhibition **beuys 2021**, will be presented along with the feature film *JUPP, WATT HAMWER JEMAHT?* (Yikes, Whatever Have We Done?, 2019) by the filmmaker **Jan Bonny** and the artist **Alex Wissel** at the cinema of the JULIA STOSCHEK COLLECTION in Düsseldorf. *Soziale Plastik* will be shown every Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and *JUPP, WATT HAMWER JEMAHT?* will be shown every Sunday at 4:00 p.m. In addition, **Joseph Beuys's** metal sign *Buttocklifting (Edition Staeck)* from 1974 will be on permanent display at the collection entrance.

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### ABOUT THE JULIA STOSCHEK COLLECTION

The JULIA STOSCHEK COLLECTION is one of the world's most comprehensive private collections of time-based art, dedicated to the public presentation, advancement, conservation, and scholarship of media and performance practices. With over 870 artworks by more than 290 artists from around the world, the collection's contemporary focus is rooted in artists' moving image experiments from the 1960s and '70s. Works in the collection span video, film, single- and multi-channel moving image installation, multimedia environments, performance, sound, and virtual reality. Photography, sculpture, and painting supplement its time-based emphasis. Artworks from the collection have been presented in large-scale solo and group exhibitions at the JULIA STOSCHEK COLLECTION in Düsseldorf, Germany (JSC Düsseldorf) since 2007. In 2016, a second exhibition space opened in Berlin (JSC Berlin). A wide range of public programs, comprised of tours, performances, screenings, lectures, artist talks, and workshops invite visitors and scholars to engage with time-based art on multiple levels and from various perspectives.

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### GENERAL INFORMATION

#### DURATION

17 January – 12 December 2021

#### OPENING HOURS

Sundays, 11:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.

#### ADMISSION

Free



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### HYGIENE AND DISTANCE REGULATIONS

The visit of the JSC Düsseldorf is only possible for adults and children (from 6 years) with an own mouth and nose protection (medical mask or FFP2 mask). Please register your name at the reception desk on site. Please keep a distance of at least 1.5 m from other visitors inside the museum. Groups of people less than 1.5 m apart are prohibited. Please observe the general rules of hygiene (such as regular hand washing). For your own safety and for the benefit of all, only visit JSC Düsseldorf if you feel healthy.

### BARRIER-FREE ACCESS

The JSC Düsseldorf is accessible for those with wheelchairs or prams. If you would like to use the lift to travel between the floors of the exhibition space, just ask our service staff and they will be happy to assist you.

### PUBLIC GUIDED TOURS IN GERMAN

Twice a month on Sundays, noon (duration: 90 minutes)

Price: EUR 10.00 per person, free of charge for children and people under 18 years of age, as well as school children, students and trainees.

Register at <https://visitjuliastoschekcollection.as.me/schedule.php>.

### SPECIAL GUIDED TOURS

Please make any inquiries for guided tours for groups by email at [visit.duesseldorf@jsc.art](mailto:visit.duesseldorf@jsc.art).

Price: EUR 20.00 per person for groups of 10 people and more, free of charge for groups of students from universities, colleges, schools and art academies

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#juliastoschekcollection #jscdüsseldorf #beuys2021 #josephbeuys @beuys2021

#lutzmommartz #sozialeplastik #mommartzfilm

### PRESS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

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