

wexner center
for the arts

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Karen Simonian, 614 292-9923 or simonian.4@osu.edu

FRANZ WEST DESIGNS FURNITURE FOR WEXNER CENTER CAFÉ

First installment of the *Notations* series features art to be used

**“In the end they are compositions, and they should be read like musical notation.”
—Franz West, on his art**

Internationally renowned for projects that integrate art and life, Austrian artist Franz West will design colorful new furniture for the Wexner Center Café and an adjacent social space. *Notations / Franz West: 2Topia*, opening July 20 and on view through spring 2002, marks the first in the center's series of *Notations* exhibitions in nontraditional spaces. *Franz West: 2Topia* is organized by Carlos Basualdo, the Wexner Center's chief curator of exhibitions.

Transforming the look of the Wexner Center Café, West will install more than 150 chairs covered with patterned fabrics based on West African prints, and two types of tables—10 rectangular and 14 circular. A social space in the adjacent “Videotheque” area at the bottom of the main staircase will feature bookcases and divans designed by West; tables designed by frequent West collaborator Heimo Zobernig; public access to the web; and a “jukebox” that will enable visitors to choose music based on a set selected by West in collaboration with Charles Helm, the center's director of performing arts.

West will also install his *Internet Bed* and a reading room lounge in the galleries in September. Details will be announced soon.

Franz West

West is a self-taught multimedia artist whose career spans more than 25 years and has included exhibitions in major international museums and galleries, and participation in the Venice Biennale in 1990 and Documentas IX and X (1992 and '97) in Kassel, Germany. Almost as much philosopher and student of human nature as visual artist, West explores the notion of the integration of art and life, creating

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sculpture and furniture that often appears in public spaces and invites participation by the viewer. Said West, "Sitting down would be 'boring,' above all if it were not integrated into an artwork...So now you can integrate yourself into the art. You see the presence of inexistence in art. It's interesting; it lets you see what some philosophers are saying." His work has included such installations as couches in outdoor public spaces (for public use), and day-beds set up in museums in front of revered works of art. A frequent collaborator with other artists, West has also produced often irreverent multimedia collages, sculptures, and performances, continually seeking to break down barriers between art and viewer.

Wrote critic and curator Robert Fleck on West: "Turning his back on traditions of the sublime and the monumental in twentieth-century sculpture, he breathes new life into the concept of a sculpture as a three-dimensional object with which one can have a personal, physical encounter."

Related events

An Opening Celebration for the public and media will be held Friday, July 20 from 5 to 9 pm. The evening includes a conversation with Franz West and Eric Banks, senior editor of *Artforum* magazine, in the Film/Video Theater from 5 to 6 pm, followed by a book signing and happy hour with cash bar, complimentary hors d'oeuvres, and a DJ spinning ambient music (some selected by West) in the café. Admission is free.

Notations

The West project marks the first of a series of the center's *Notations*—artists' projects notable for their innovative and challenging use of nontraditional exhibition spaces. Adapted from ideas articulated in John Cage's seminal book of the same name, *Notations* will further connect the center with the Ohio State campus and the Columbus by utilizing public spaces, including spaces outside the Wexner Center. Slated to participate in future *Notations* projects are American artist Lawrence Weiner, Spain's Alicia Framis, and Jeanne van Heeswijk from the Netherlands.

Calendar information for Notations / Franz West: 2Topia

Description: Installation featuring café chairs and tables designed by internationally acclaimed artist Franz West, along with an adjacent social space with web access.

Dates: July 20, 2001 through spring 2002.

Location: Wexner Center Café, 1871 North High Street (at 15th Avenue) on the campus of The Ohio State University, Columbus.

Building hours: 8 am–6 pm Monday through Friday; 10 am–6 pm Saturday; 12 pm–6 pm Sunday. **Café service (summer):** 8 am–2:30 pm Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; 8 am–8 pm Thursdays; 11 am–3 pm Saturdays (limited service); 12 pm–4 pm Sundays (limited service).

Admission: Free.

Opening events: Free public opening celebration is Friday, July 20 from 5–9 pm. Conversation between West and *Artforum* editor Eric Banks, 5–6 pm.

Parking: Convenient parking is available in the Ohio Union Parking Garage just south of the Wexner Center. Wheelchair access to the Wexner Center is available on the west side of the building, through the College Avenue entrance.

Public information: 614 292-3535 or www.wexarts.org

Media contact: Karen Simonian, 614 292-9923 or simonian.4@osu.edu.

The Wexner Center for the Arts is The Ohio State University's multidisciplinary, international laboratory for the exploration and advancement of contemporary art. Through exhibitions, screenings, performances, artist residencies, and educational programs, the Wexner Center acts as a forum where established and emerging artists can test ideas and where diverse audiences can participate in cultural experiences that enhance understanding of the art of our time. In its programs, the Wexner Center balances a commitment to experimentation with a commitment to traditions of innovation and affirms the university's mission of education, research, and community service.

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