

# GÜNTHER UECKER

(Wendorf, Germany, 1930 – Düsseldorf, Germany, 2025)



Günther Uecker developed a singular artistic language rooted in materiality, repetition, and light. Best known for his dynamic use of nails as both sculptural and pictorial elements, his work explores the intersection of abstraction, movement, and sensory perception.

In the late 1950s, Uecker became a central figure in the ZERO group alongside Heinz Mack and Otto Piene. This movement sought a radical departure from the expressive gestures of postwar art, proposing instead a renewed visual language grounded in rhythm, seriality, and light-based experimentation.

Uecker's iconic nail reliefs—surfaces densely punctured by nails at varying angles—respond to ambient light and shadow, creating shifting patterns that heighten spatial awareness and evoke meditative engagement. These works reflect his deep concern with healing and reconstruction in the aftermath of destruction, giving abstraction an emotional and ethical dimension.

Throughout his career, Uecker extended his practice beyond the wall. He created performances, installations, stage designs, and architectural interventions that examined the relationship between the human body, natural forces, and political memory. His use of modest materials and repetitive gestures infused his work with a sense of ritual and reflection, turning minimalist forms into spaces of resonance and resistance.

He lived and worked in Düsseldorf, Germany, until his passing in 2025, leaving behind a legacy that continues to inspire dialogues between art, perception, and the human condition.

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS (SELECTION)

- 2025 Solo exhibition, Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Wijnegem, Belgium
- 2024 Arc of Light, Lévy Gorvy Dayan, New York, EUA
- 2022 Shields, LGDR (Lévy Gorvy Dayan) New York, EUA  
Shield, LGDR (Lévy Gorvy Dayan) Palm Beach, EUA
- 2020 Günther Uecker at 40 Albemarle Street, Lévy Gorvy, London, UK  
Lichtbogen, Lévy Gorvy, Paris, France
- 2019 Notations, Lévy Gorvy, New York, EUA
- 2016 Verletzte Felder (Wounded Fields), Dominique Lévy Gallery, London, UK
- 2015 Uecker, Kunstsammlung NRW, Düsseldorf, Germany
- 2011 Günther Uecker – The Early Years, L&M Arts, New York, EUA  
Sandspirale, Kunsthalle Schirn, Frankfurt, Germany
- 2010 Handlungen. Werke aus drei Jahrzehnten, Kunsthalle Osnabrück, Osnabrück, Germany  
Handlungen. Werke aus drei Jahrzehnten, Ulmer Museum, Ulm, Germany  
Günther Uecker – Works 1995–2007, Akira Ikeda Gallery, Taura (Gunma), Japan  
Günther Uecker – Works 1995–2007, Akira Ikeda Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- 2003 Günther Uecker – Graphein, Lehmbruck-Museum, Duisburg, Germany
- 1993 Retrospectiva (obra de Günther Uecker), Kunsthalle der Hypo-Kulturstiftung, München, Germany
- 1988 Retrospectiva (obra de Günther Uecker), Zentrales Künstlerhaus, Moscow, Rusia
- 1984 Uecker – Bibliophile Werke, Galerie der Stadt, Esslingen, Germany
- 1983 Uecker – Bibliophile Werke, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf, Germany
- 1981** Schwarz, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf, Germany

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- 1978 Zum Schweigen der Schrift, Galerie Reckermann, Colonia, Germany
- 1976 Das zeichnerische Frühwerk, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Stuttgart, Germany
- 1975 Günther Uecker – Zeichnungen, Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf, Germany
- Uecker als Bühnenbildner – Ideen, Skizzen, Modelle, Figurinen, Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf, Germany
- 1971 Günther Uecker – Bildobjekte 1957–1970, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS (SELECTION)

- 2016 Der geschundene Mensch, Kunsthalle Rostock, Rostock, Germany
- Huldigung an Hafez, Tar-o-Pood Gallery, Shiraz, Iran
- Huldigung an Hafez, Imam Ali Religious Arts Museum, Tehran, Iran
- Huldigung an Hafez, Schloss Museum Wolfenbüttel, Wolfenbüttel, Germany
- 2015 Zero: Die internationale Kunstbewegung der 50er und 60er Jahre, Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin, Germany
- ZERO – Let Us Explore the Stars, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- ZERO. Countdown to the Future, Sakıp Sabancı Museum, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2014 Heridas – Conexiones, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, La Habana, Cuba
- ZERO – Countdown to Tomorrow (1950s–1960s), Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, EUA
- 2013 Verletzungen – Verbindungen, Museum of Contemporary Art Isfahan, Isfahán, Iran
- 2012 Enrico Castellani e Günther Uecker, Galleria Internazionale d'Arte Moderna (Ca' Pesaro), Venice, Italy
- End of the Earth: Land Art to 1974, Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles, EUA
- Aufbruch. Malerei und realer Raum, Akademie der Künste y Kunsthalle Rostock, Berlin, Germany
- Verletzungen – Verbindungen, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Tehran (TMOCA), Tehran, Iran
- 2011 55 Jahre Kunst, Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf, Germany
- Art on Lake, Museo de Bellas Artes, Budapest, Hungary
- 2010 Isole mai trovate, Palazzo Ducale, Génova, Italy

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- 2009 Isole mai trovate, Palazzo Ducale, Génova, Italy  
Art of Two Germanys / Cold War Cultures, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Los Ángeles, EUA  
Kunst und Kalter Krieg – Deutsche Positionen 1945–1989, Deutsches Historisches Museum (Berlin) y Germanisches Nationalmuseum (Núremberg), Germany
- 2008 Sound of Art. Musik in der bildenden Kunst, Museum der Moderne, Salzburgo, Austria  
Post for Ordos, Ordos Art Museum, Ordos (Mongolia Interior), China  
The Thin Shadow Line, Fondazione Mudima, Milán, Italy  
Druckstelle, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Dresden, Germany  
Sotto Voce, Galerie Yvon Lambert, New York, EUA  
ZERO lebt, Kunsthalle Weishaupt, Ulm, Germany
- 2007 Op Art, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt, Germany  
Vertigo, Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna (MAMbo), Bologna, Italy
- 2005 Zwanzig Kapitel, Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlín, Germany  
Terrororchester – Hommage à John Cage, Kunsthalle Bremen, Bremen, Germany  
Crossart. Van Gogh bis Beuys, Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle, Bonn, Germany
- 2004 ZERO 1958–1968. Germany e Italy, Palazzo delle Papesse (antiguo Palazzo Santa Chiara), Siena, Italy  
Declaration – 100 Artists of Peace, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (ContArt Museum), Seoul, South Korea
- 2003 Spirit of White, Fondation Beyeler, Basilea, Switzerland
- 1999 Wort – Schrift – Zeichen, Erker Galerie, St. Gallen, Switzerland  
ZERO aus Deutschland 1957–1966, Galerie der Stadt Esslingen, Esslingen, Germany  
Exposición en el Goethe-Institut, Tesalónica, Grecia
- 1997 Anschlag – Zum Schweigen der Schrift, Galerie Löhrl, Mönchengladbach, Germany
- 1995 Schwebend schweben, Kitakanto Museum of Fine Arts (Museo de Bellas Artes de Gunma), Gunma, Japan
- 1993 Dinastie e Ritorni, Kunsthalle der Hypo-Kulturstiftung (Münchener Stadtmuseum), Múnich, Germany
- 1992 Sammlung Lenz-Schönberg, Galería Zacheta, Varsovia, Poland  
Ausstellung zum Tag der Deutschen Einheit, Staatliches Museum Schwerin, Germany  
Exposición sin título, Galerie ULUV, Prague, Czech Republic

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- 1982 Kunst wird Material, Nationalgalerie Berlín, Berlín, Germany
- 1974 Strukturen, Muzeum Sztuki, Łódź, Poland
- 1972 Szene Rhein-Ruhr 72, Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany  
Amsterdam – Paris – Düsseldorf, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, EUA
- 1969 Art by Telephone, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, EUA
- 1968 1968 – 14 x 14 – Junge deutsche Künstler, Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, Germany
- 1966 Zero Garden, Howard Wise Gallery, New York, EUA  
Exposición individual, Galerie Schmela, Düsseldorf, Germany  
Exposición individual, Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland  
Licht – Kunst – Licht, Stedelijk van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Netherlands  
documenta IV, Kassel, Germany
- 1964 ZERO. Mack, Piene, Uecker, Kestner-Gesellschaft, Hannover, Germany  
The Responsive Eye, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, EUA  
documenta III, Kassel, Germany
- 1963 Mack – Piene – Uecker, Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld, Germany
- 1962 Dynamo, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Bruselas, Belgium  
Nul, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 1961 ZERO – Edition – Exposition – Demonstration, Galerie Schmela, Düsseldorf, Germany  
Bewogen Beweging, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands  
Nove Tendencije, Galerija Suvremene Umjetnosti, Zagreb, Yugoslavia
- 1960 Konkrete Kunst, Helmhaus, Zúrich, Switzerland
- 1958 Das Rote Bild, Atelier de Heinz Mack y Otto Piene, Düsseldorf, Germany



## COLLECTIONS

Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, EUA

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, EUA

Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Netherlands

Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, Germany

Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, EUA

Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, EUA

Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles, EUA

Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, Italy

Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Amberes, Belgium

Museum Ludwig, Colonia, Germany

Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach, Germany

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, EUA

Honolulu Museum of Art, Honolulu, EUA

Courtauld Institute of Art, London, UK

Museum Frieder Burda, Baden-Baden, Germany

Zero Foundation & Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf, Germany

Calderara Foundation Collection, Milán, Italy

Schauwerk Sindelfingen, Sindelfingen, Germany

Staatliches Museum Schwerin, Schwerin, Germany

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