

Kunstmuseen Krefeld

Skulpturen im Garten

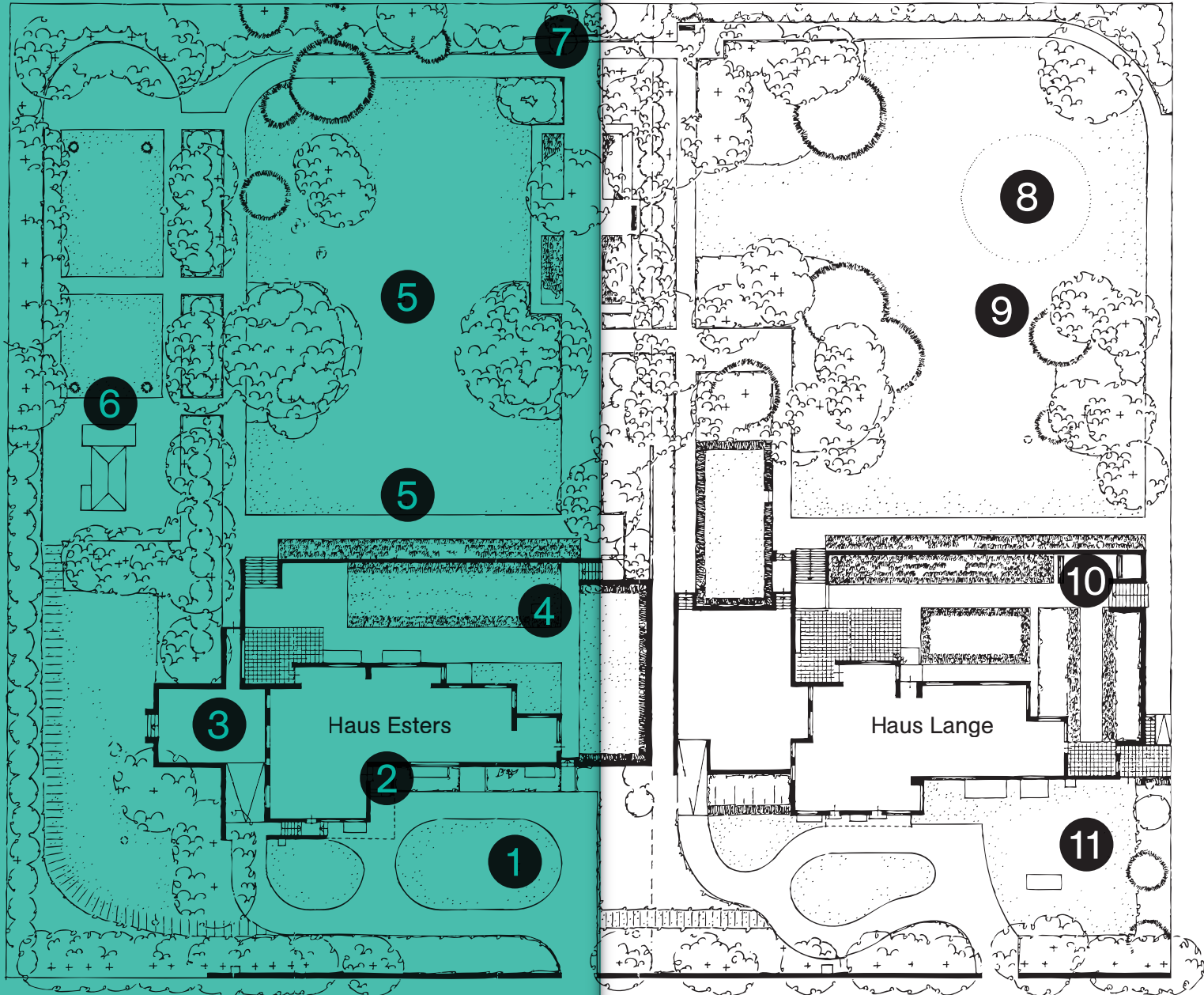
Haus Lange

Haus Esters



ENGLISH

Sculpture Garden Map



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Garden History



Haus Lange, Photo: Dirk Rose

In 1927, the Krefeld textile industrialists Hermann Lange and Dr. Josef Esters commissioned the then Berlin-based architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe to build their private homes in Wilhelmshofallee. Mies van der Rohe also designed the gardens belonging to the brick villas, placing them in a direct relationship to the architecture. With the system of paths on the garden side, for example, he expanded the geometrical, strict right-angled arrangement of the houses in the landscape. He formed sight lines with groups of trees and deliberately placed individual trees that correspond with the central garden areas. Making use of mounds and retaining walls, Mies fashioned the divergent ground levels to produce an upper garden that was accessible from the house at ground level. With their pronounced round forms, the driveways leading to the houses on the street side form a deliberate counterpoint to the buildings.

In 1955, Ulrich Lange made his parental home available to the city of Krefeld with its Kaiser Wilhelm Museum as a further exhibition venue. The then director Paul Wember soon gave the house an international profile with a radical avant-garde exhibition program featuring artists such as Arman, Yves Klein, Jean Tinguely, Christo and Robert Indiana. In many cases, works and installations extended out to encompass the terraces and gardens. The city of Krefeld was able to acquire Haus Esters in the nineteen seventies, opening it in 1981 as a further branch of the Kunstmuseen Krefeld.



Haus Esters, Photo: Dirk Rose

From then on, works were specifically purchased or commissioned for the gardens. A large proportion of these pieces were conceived especially for presentation at this site, where they entered into a dialogue with the architecture as well as with its aesthetic, philosophical and social background. The direct site and context-specific character of art still characterizes the exhibitions in Haus Lange and Haus Esters today.



Photo: Volker Döhne

Cross Section of a Toothbrush with Paste in a Cup on a Sink: Portrait of Coosje's Thinking, 1981–83

Steel, lacquer paint,
600 (576 over ground) × 280 × 17 cm
Collection of the Kunstmuseen Krefeld,
acquired 1983 with the financial support
of the Krefeld Kunstverein e.V., the
State of North Rhine-Westphalia and
the Siempelkamp Company, Krefeld

With his vehement backlash against Abstract Expressionism's non-representationalism in painting, Claes Oldenburg (born 1929 in Stockholm, Sweden) emerged as one of the key figures of Pop Art in the nineteen sixties. Since then, he has explored the relationship between high culture and mass culture by isolating such everyday items as spoons, clothespins and foodstuffs from the usual surroundings and then humorously monumentalizing them as well as drastically altering their materiality. The artist has occupied himself with the motif of the toothbrush since the nineteen sixties. Oldenburg originally planned to realize the Krefeld version on the grounds of the University of Hartford in Connecticut. Oldenburg re-contextualized this toothbrush with a view to Haus Esters and noted: "Because the Haus Esters had originally been a private home the toothbrush seemed an appropriate emblem" (1985). The work's diagonal orientation and color scheme contrasts the linearity of the architecture as well as the villa's reddish façade. The oversized toothbrush has been reduced down to a simple, almost abstract form that changes depending on the position of the viewer while sometimes also recalling a sundial or a constructivist monument. The piece is simultaneously a homage to Oldenburg's Dutch-born partner and collaborator Coosje van Bruggen (1942–2009).



Photo: Volker Döhne

*SPANNUNG GENUG /
EINEN STEIN ZU HALTEN /
ÜBER DEM RHEIN*

TENSION ENOUGH /
TO HOLD A STONE /
ABOVE THE RHINE, 1985

Plastic, 25 × 877 cm
Collection of the Kunstmuseen Krefeld,
acquired 1985

Lawrence Weiner (born 1942 in New York, USA) uses exclusively language and writing as his artistic materials. Together with colleagues like Joseph Kosuth and Sol LeWitt, he played a crucial role in the development of conceptual art in the nineteen sixties. Language became the predominant means with which the idea of the work was of greater significance than its material execution. Weiner nevertheless does not understand himself as a writer but as a sculpture whose works formulate an immediate sensual contact with the world. He developed the sentence *SPANNUNG GENUG / EINEN STEIN ZU HALTEN / ÜBER DEM RHEIN* in 1985 especially for the site of its installation. Its positioning in the house corner over the entrance just under the edge of the roof creates a direct spatial reference to the architectonic situation. The words form a correspondence to the physical tension of architectural structures. The idea of the Rhine, which flows along Krefeld's city limits, is related to the actual presence of the house's brick facade. To the extent that Weiner leaves out the subject in his sans serif writing, he opens up the text's contentual structure. The readers and viewers of the work can to a certain extent take this position themselves.



Photo: Volker Döhne

Bronzefrau Nr. II

Bronze Woman No. II, 2000

Bronze, steel, 2-part, figure 58 × 115 × 140 cm,
table 75 × 125 × 250 cm

Collection of Heinz and Marianne Ebers Foundation,
acquired 2000

Thomas Schütte (born 1954 in Oldenburg, Germany) began his artistic career in the nineteen seventies with the exploration of everyday living situations as well as architectonic models. In the nineteen eighties and nineties, however, he increasingly focused on figuration, on physiognomies and modes of human existence. In *Bronze Woman No. II*, Schütte employs traditional bronze casting methods in order to create a human figure with expressive, amorphic-like features. The piece belongs to a series of large female figures produced by the artist since 1999. It documents Schütte's occupation with the development of modern sculpture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as shaped by such sculptors as Auguste Rodin, Aristide Maillol and Henry Moore. Schütte, however, unites the divergent stylistic features in a figure that in this way becomes a multiple being with very different views and perspectives. The voluminous curves of the squatting character veer between sensual seduction and subjugation as well as between familiarity and foreignness. Schütte twists and manipulates the form of the nude female body in conjunction with an exploration of basic sculptural problems that are fundamental for him: "material, space, volume, pedestal, expression, light, atmosphere" (2001).



Photo: Volker Döhne

Granit de Bretagne, gespalten und geschnitten

Granit de Bretagne, split and cut, 1985

Granite, 256 × 115 × 118 cm

Collection of the Kunstmuseen Krefeld,
acquired 1986 with the financial support
of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia

Ulrich Rückriem's (born 1938 in Düsseldorf, Germany) artistic approach is rooted in his training as a stonemason. As a sculptor, he occupies himself with the separation and reassembly of stone blocks, combining in this way the traditional material of sculpture with an abstract stylistic vocabulary. The quarry became his studio; he selected the stones, determined the manner in which they were to be worked, decided on proportions and had the blocks split and cut there. The traces of the intervention in the material remained visible: Rückriem employed the cuts, cracks and holes as compositional elements with which he restructured the stone while also simultaneously documenting the labor involved in the production of the work. The sculpture at Haus Esters consists of a split off base that is anchored in the earth, four closely ranked columns and a cover panel resting on the columns. The proximity to architectonic structures evident here makes the dialogue with Mies van der Rohe's building seem all the more meaningful. Massiveness and spatial openness, modernity and archaic enter into a fascinating interaction.



Photo: Volker Döhne

Elevations for Mies, 1988

Corten steel, forged, 2-parts,
124 × 64 × 64 and 217 × 64 × 64 cm
Collection of the Kunstmuseen Krefeld,
acquired 1988 with the financial
assistance of Bayer AG, Leverkusen

Richard Serra (born 1939 in San Francisco, USA) frequently emphasized the fact that context, experience, and weight are the starting points for his steel sculptures. He also named Mies van der Rohe as one of his models in the exploration of the potentials of steel: “Since I made the decision to work with steel, it’s absolutely necessary for me to know who has used this material in the most representative, inventive, and efficient way” (1985). Haus Esters is actually a steel construction, but the steel structure is hidden from view in the floors and walls. Serra therefore decided to reference the villa’s cuboid shell and oriented the two massive forged steel blocks in a central axis to the house. Their positions and proportions were selected to reflect the varying heights of the terrace level, thus projecting the architecture’s strict geometry out into the garden. The relationship between architectonic and landscape space that Mies van der Rohe already staged is translated into a new sculptural form through Serra’s intervention.



Photo: Dirk Rose

Fluid Panel State (carpet), 2019

Nylon, 245 × 183 cm

Planar Composition in Wood #1 (table), 2019

Glued laminated wood sheet, lacquer, 122 × 96 cm

Planar Composition in Wood #2 (stools), 2019

Glued laminated wood sheet, lacquer, 46 × 40 × 45 cm
Collection of the Kunstmuseen Krefeld, acquired 2019
with the financial support of the Melcher family, Krefeld

Andrea Zittel (born 1965 Escondido, California, USA) gave new impulses to ideas concerning alternative mobile housing models with portable, individually outfitted living modules. In her then living spaces at A-Z East in Brooklyn, New York, she realized a kind of total artwork aimed at the experimental exploration and merging of aspects of life and work that she continued in her A-Z West project in California's Mojave Desert. For the artist, spaces and differently constituted surfaces mark a starting point from which she examines everyday details and social contexts. She characterizes horizontal areas (tables, benches, streets) as "energetic accumulators," vertical areas (billboards, walls) as "ideological resonators." The table, stools and carpet with which Zittel turned the summer house of Haus Esters into a social place again are also assembled from surfaces. To the extent that her installation is used as a café, she simultaneously expands the concept of sculpture. The historical summer house, produced in the early nineteen twenties as a prefabricated house at the Deutsche Werkstätten in Hellerau and installed in Krefeld in 1923, is addressed through Zittel's work as a constructed social and mental space. In her installation developed in conjunction with the *Alternatives For Living* exhibition project marking the centennial of the Bauhaus, the artist connects aspects of typization and rationalization with questions concerning the foundations of cohabitation.



Photo: Volker Döhne

ICHS, 1989

Aluminum, Perspex, fluorescent lamps,
mounted on steel frame, 260 × 840 × 20 cm
Collection of the Freunde der Kunstmuseen
Krefeld e.V., acquired 1989

Ludger Gerdes (born 1954 in Lastrup near Lindern, died 2008 near Dülmen, Germany) realized his piece *ICHS* in conjunction with his 1989 solo exhibition at Haus Esters. Gerdes deliberately selected the site at the end of the garden for his work. The position recalls those places in English landscape gardens where decorative structures, so-called follies, could be expected. “The word ‘ichs’ just came to mind one day,” Gerdes stated, “It lends itself to express the fact that an individual on his own is not a homogeneous entity but a multiplicity that cannot be harmonized. [...] The word ‘ichs’ [egos] on the other hand, is a synonym for ‘we.’ It lends itself to express the fact that the thing one calls we is not homogeneous but is an entity consisting of diverse parts” (2000). The piece thus symbolizes an equitable diversity of life forms and simultaneously for the communications between individuals. Gerdes additionally clads this complex terminology in the garment of a commercial outdoor neon advertisement, combining his neologism in this way with our everyday perception.



Photo: Volker Döhne

Turf Circle, 1969

Earth fill, covered with grass, height ca. 25 cm,
diameter 1350 cm (outer), 1030 cm (inner)
On permanent loan from the artist, acquired 1969

Turf Circle is an exemplary piece of Land Art, a direction in the history of art that developed in the nineteen sixties. Richard Long (born 1945 in Bristol, UK) turned away at that time from traditional sculptural methods and approaches and transferred the act of artistic creation from the studio to nature itself. It is thus of consequence that Long's first solo museum show in 1969, in conjunction with which he produced *Turf Circle*, did not take place in the exhibition spaces at Haus Lange but solely in its garden. The artist was no longer interested in presenting already existing works, leaving instead human traces and signs in nature. The elementary geometrical form of the circle that Long integrated into the lawn subtly altered the experience of the landscape. A site-bound work emerged from the circle arranged on the gentle elevation that is no longer perceived as art but as a part of nature. In the process, the circle appears in its symbolic meaning representing the universal and the endless while simultaneously being the consequence of human planning.

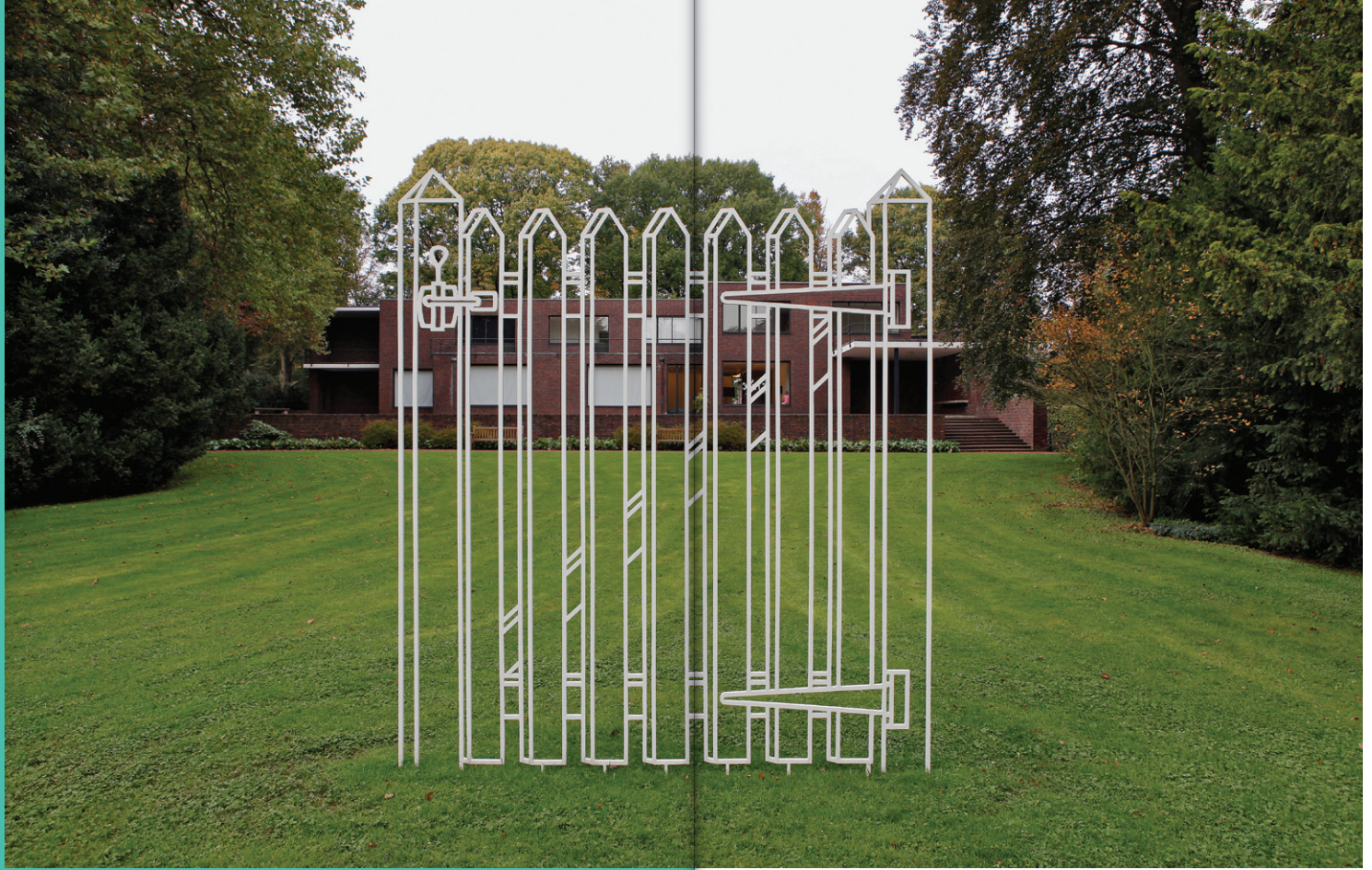


Photo: Volker Döhne

Gate (white), 2011

Steel, powder-coated, 296 × 256 × 2 cm
Collection of the Heinz and Marianne Ebers
Foundation, acquired 2013 with the financial
support of the Kunststiftung NRW

Michael Craig-Martin (born 1941 in Dublin, Ireland) is one of the most important proponents of conceptual art in Great Britain. Since 1977, outline drawings make up the foundation of his paintings and sculptures. “The objects I chose to draw were all commonplace, easily recognizable, man-made, repeatable, and manufactured. I chose them because they seemed to me to constitute a true universal language in the modern world, objects so ubiquitous they had become invisible and without special value” (1997). For Craig-Martin, these drawings of simple everyday items ranging from the tin can to the mobile phone already exist pictorially before he captured them on paper, which is why he designates them as “pictorial ready-mades.” The sculpture *Gate* was installed in the garden of Haus Lange in conjunction with the artist’s 2013 solo exhibition. It is situated exactly on the visual axis that leads from the central exit of the villa to the terrace. While its front view evokes the impression of a three-dimensional structure, it increasingly transforms itself into a simple white line when viewed from the side. Astonishing, however, is the jump in dimensions. When seen from a distance, the piece appears only slightly larger than a conventional garden gate. It is only from up close that its oversized dimensions becomes evident. Completely freestanding – without a connection to a garden fence – the gate does not even pretend to be a useful object. Functionless, it appears like an illusion featuring a considerable portion of British humor.



Photo: Volker Döhne

Epoca eroica (Sculpture in Three Dimensions II), 1949–50

Sheet iron, enamel, 175 × 167 × 210 cm
Collection of the Kunstmuseen Krefeld,
acquired 1956

Epoca eroica belongs to a series of three-dimensional sculptures with which Berto Lardera (born 1911 in La Spezia, Italy, died 1989 in Paris, France) completed his breakaway from the two-dimensional relief around 1950. Two surfaces that are intertwined at a ninety degree angle are perforated in the middle and the outer edges. Weld joins provide information about the working process as well as Lardera's conception of himself as an artist-craftsman. The dark sheet iron formations stand out from their surroundings like a planar drawing in space. The artist fuels a play of opposites with his clear and simple construction: a permanent dialogue between transparency and mass, area and space, the built and the grown as well as static and process makes the piece an occurrence that can be discovered when walking around it. With sculptures like *Epoca eroica*, Lardera addressed a new type of spatial perception in the early nineteen fifties: the recesses and indentations result in gaps that animate the inner-sculptural design and simultaneously intertwines material and surrounding. Depending on one's standpoint, the viewer is confronted with changing vistas and perspectival fragmentations. The artist himself positioned the sculpture on the occasion of his 1956 Museum Haus Lange exhibition on this spot on the stonework, where it was reinstalled after a restoration in 2014.

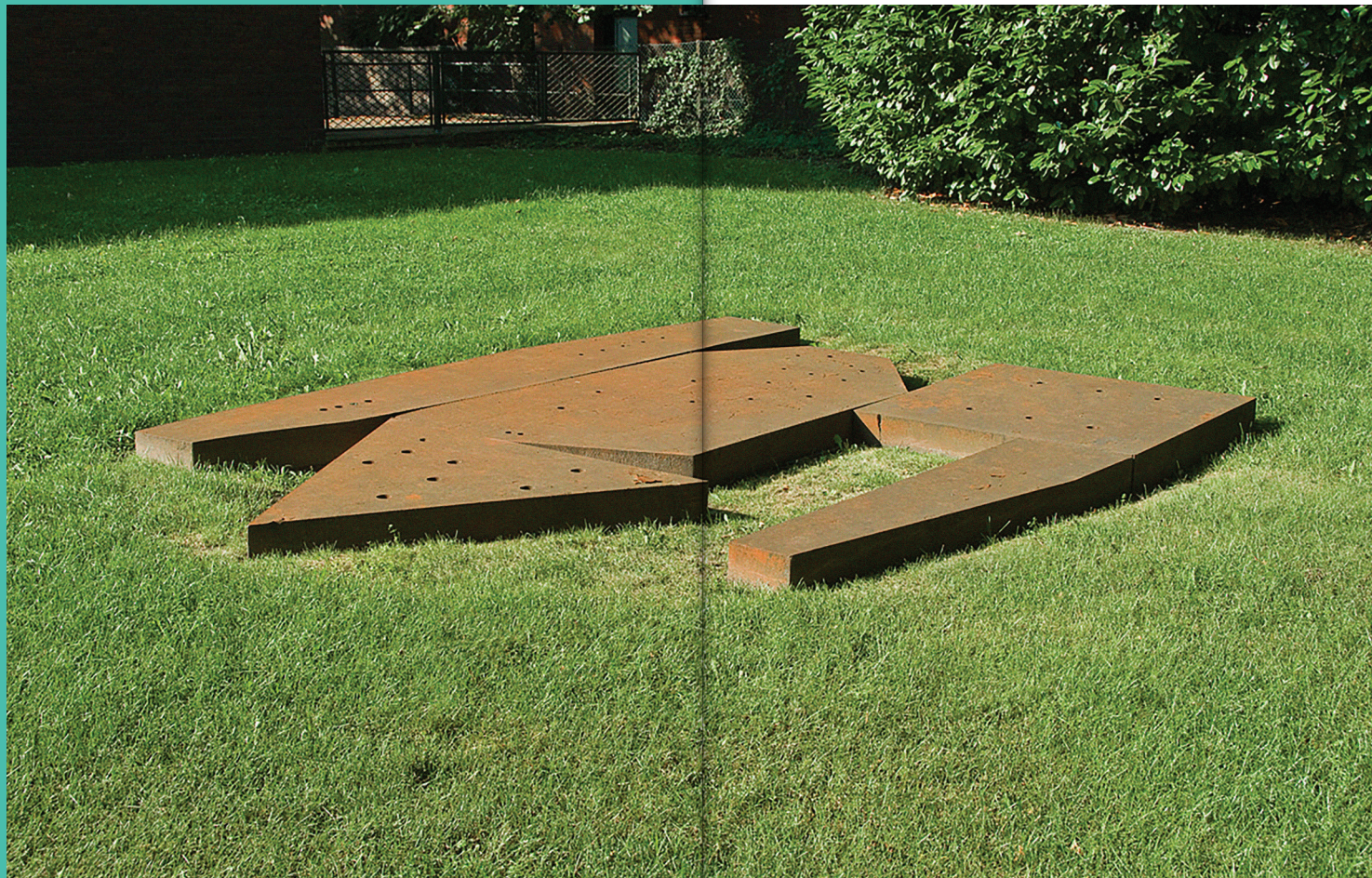


Photo: Volker Döhne

Metrical (Romanesque) Construction in 5 Masses and 2 Scales VI, 1978

Steel, 15 × 416 × 310 cm
Collection of Kunstmuseen Krefeld,
acquired 1979

The relationships between measure, number and mass form important reference systems in the work of David Rabinowitch (born 1943 in Toronto, Canada). In the process, the credo of the Scottish philosopher David Hume stating that all human knowledge is founded in experience echoes in many of his works, including the Krefeld sculpture. The floor piece situated to the right of the entrance in front of Haus Lange invites the visitor to walk around it. It shows various arrangements of massive geometrical segments and that of the puncture formations inserted into the steel plates. A perceptual process is set in motion that is shaped by the abundance of referential possibilities and the diversity of perspectives. Insofar as the piece suggests order while not offering an immediately recognizable scheme, it literally challenges the viewers to develop their own different demonstrative organizing options. The starting point for the *Metrical (Romanesque) Construction* series was the study of Cologne's Romanesque churches carried out by Rabinowitch over a six-month period in 1973. The artist was especially interested in the structuring of the medieval walls and facades.



Visit

Haus Lange Haus Esters
Wilhelmshofallee 91–97
D-47800 Krefeld

Kaiser Wilhelm Museum
Joseph-Beuys-Platz 1
D-47798 Krefeld

Opening Hours

Haus Lange Haus Esters
Tue–Sun 11 am–5 pm

Kaiser Wilhelm Museum
Tue–Sun 11 am–5 pm

Ticket

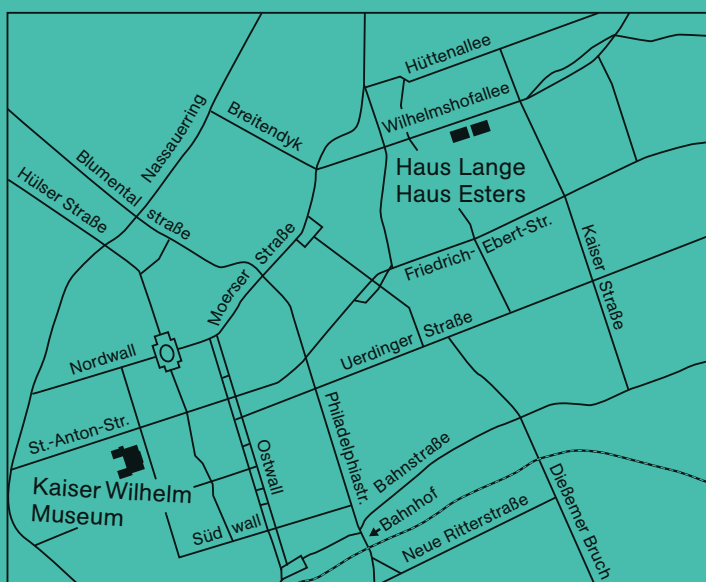
Haus Lange Haus Esters
Adults 7 Euro,
reduced 3 Euro

Kaiser Wilhelm Museum
Adults 7 Euro,
reduced 3 Euro

Combi ticket for all
three houses
Adults 12 Euro,
reduced 4 Euro
Free entrance up to 18 years

Guided Tours
2 Euro with admission

Haus Esters, Photo: Dirk Rose



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Haus Lange, Garden View,
Photo: Volker Döhne



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