

FRANZ WEST AT TATE MODERN, IN PICTURES



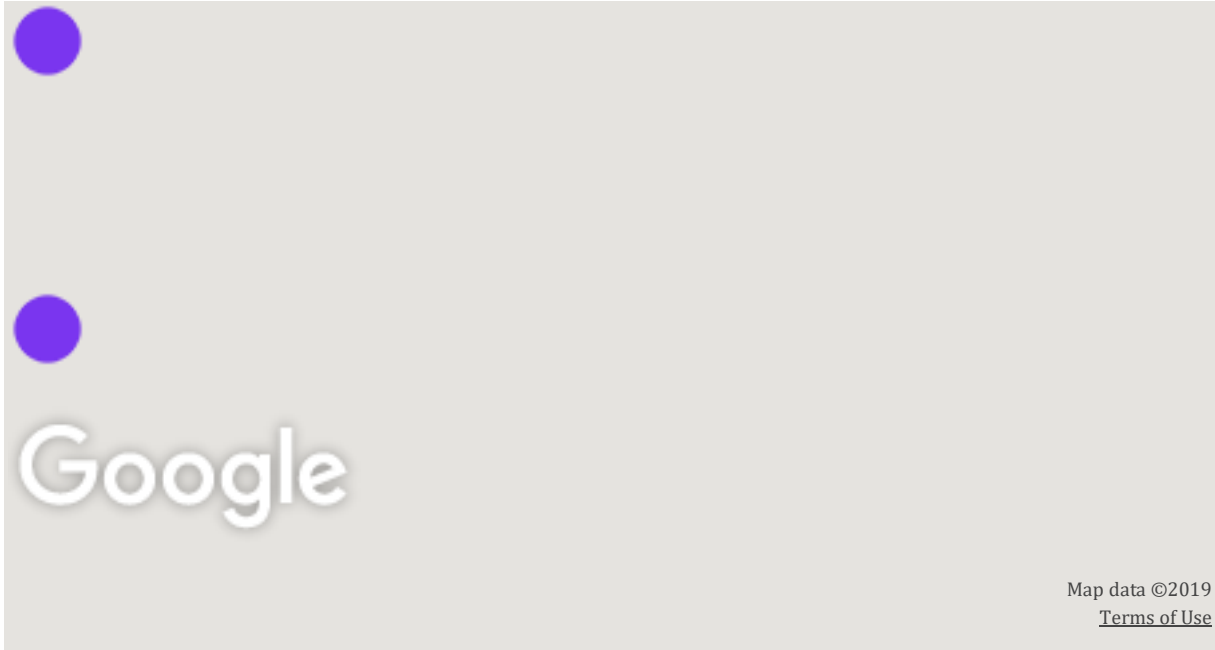


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REVIEW

Franz West review: Twists and turns of the playful, eccentric kind

- Reviewed by [BEN LUKE](#)
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Tate Modern
Bankside
SE1 9TG
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Outside [Tate Modern](#)'s Switch House are **exuberant** yet **absurd** lacquered aluminium [sculptures by Franz West](#). They're **playful** and **confectionary-coloured**. Kids will love them. But they're also hilariously abject; like Haribo turds.

Like a giant football to be kicked and thrown. However, is fragile. Therefore, contrasting its original properties.

Made not long before West died in 2012, they distil the irreverence and **sardonicism** that made West a unique figure. They sit on breeze-block

platforms designed by Sarah Lucas and Lucas's austere concrete and MDF staging continues in the show.

It's a masterstroke, tapping into **West's collaborative spirit**, continuing his project beyond the grave; Lucas acutely understands West's subversion of viewers' expectations. His first major works were the **Passtücke or Adaptives**: plaster sculptures with embedded found objects that could be picked up and played with. The originals are now too precious but you can wield and cavort with reconstructions, just as West and friends do in videos nearby.

Where the [exhibition](#) takes flight is with his Legitimate Sculptures — an ironic name he gave to more **"conventional"** sculptures than the Adaptives. Anarchic **papier-mâché clumps** with protruding brooms and bottles, painted in places but raw in others, they're evocative of bodies and boulders but **vigorously abstract**.

I think this means that the colours started to have similar characteristics as it progressed so there could be sense made out of the sculptures. However, the sculptures still remain originally what they are supposed to be which is discombobulated, weird, unknown and strange.

This **unstable balance of body** and abstract the colours got **more uniform but the forms remained cloddy and awkward**. He also played with furniture, initially with the wonky and uncomfortable in *Eo Ipso*, made from his mum's refashioned washing machine, and later with carpet-covered settees, like Freud's couch in duplicate — art to be sat on, to be a space for conversation.

Whether in **sculpture, furniture, videos or drawings**, West disarms the paraphernalia around art, often with **ribald humour**. Yet he never appears flippant; as those bonkers outdoor sculptures testify, he was a master of **serious play**.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/go/london/arts/tate-modern-franz-west-exhibition-review-a4072601.html>