

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Konrad Lueg

September 19<sup>th</sup>– November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019  
8<sup>th</sup>Floor

A seminal figure of the German postwar art scene, Konrad Lueg (1939–1996) mobilized unconventional materials and exhibition formats to critique the rise of mass consumerism and the burgeoning commercial art world in mid-century Germany. Better known as Konrad Fischer, the legendary gallerist who represented artists Carl Andre, Charlotte Posenenske, Sol LeWitt, Robert Ryman, Hanne Darboven, and Bruce Nauman, among others, Lueg worked as an artist in the 1960s. This exhibition, the second of Lueg’s work at Greene Naftali, presents a selection of works from 1963–1968. Contextualizing the pivotal end of Lueg’s career as an artist and the 1967 opening of Konrad Fischer Galerie with a group of early works, the exhibition traces his bold material and formal investigations.

Lueg, along with artists Gerhard Richter, Sigmar Polke, and Manfred Kuttner, founded Capitalist Realism in the early 1960s. The movement critiqued the rise of American capitalism and bourgeois values in West Germany, appropriating the iconography of mass media and invading retail spaces. After graduating from the Düsseldorf Akademie in 1962, Lueg began working with casein color, a paint known for drying with a distinctly even consistency to yield flat, uniform surfaces. Comprised of three portraits painted with casein, the work *BRD Triptychon* (1963), a reference to Bundesrepublik Deutschland, the official name of West Germany, imitates a familiar stylized stencil design seen in posters. Manipulating large swaths of casein color, Lueg, by hand, evoked this signature of mechanical production. The title of this work also coincidentally recalls director Rainer Werner Fassbinder’s films of the BRD Trilogy. Although these films were made several years after Lueg’s paintings, Fassbinder and Lueg shared a fascination with the momentous societal changes in post-war Germany.

Evolving from the mimetic casein works, Lueg began incorporating the materials of quotidian products, wrapping wood panels and stretchers in colored plastic film. Utilizing traditional painting support mechanisms to manipulate a highly versatile industrial material – used for plastic packaging, electrical fabrication, photographic film, and videotape – Lueg threatened the use-value of this wonder material and challenged societal notions of the highly valued artwork. Still unique works of art, rather than prints, editions, or readymades, the plastic film “paintings” strategically evade categorization. Much like the revealing brushstrokes in his casein paintings, glimpses from certain angles suggest the reflectivity of plastic and, from others, the illustrious monochrome.

*Cubes* (1967), an exceptional sculptural piece composed of large-scale inflated plastic film cubes, extends the plastic film paintings into three-dimensional space. Originally exhibited as an interactive sculpture, which welcomed viewers to physically interact with the objects, *Cubes* stimulates an intense awareness of one’s own body and the confines of the gallery space. In Gerry Schum’s video *Dies alles Herzchen wird einmal dir gehören (All This Darling Will Once Belong To You)* (1967), a gallery audience can be seen interacting with one of Lueg’s similar inflatable works. The apotheosis of Lueg’s artistic practice, *Cubes* transcends earlier works that pinpoint the tensions between form, material, and function to project this awareness onto the viewer.

Konrad Lueg lived and worked in Düsseldorf. Solo exhibitions include Greene Naftali, New York (2013); Museu d’Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Barcelona (2010); Konrad Fischer Galerie, Düsseldorf (2001); and PS1 Contemporary Art Center, New York (1999). Significant group exhibitions include Museum Brandhorst, Munich (2015); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2015); Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas (2015); Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia (2015); Artists Space, New York (2014); Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles (2009); mumok, Vienna (2004); Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf (1990); and Kunsthalle Köln, Köln (1970). Major public collections include the Museu d’Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Barcelona; Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; among others.