

GLADSTONE

Walter Pichler's First Solo Show at Gladstone in Over Two Decades Opens in June

Exhibition Features 14 works across mediums spanning the late Austrian artist's career

Gladstone presents Walter Pichler: Sculptures, Drawings, Models, marking the artist's first exhibition with the gallery since 2001, curated by Olivia Shao. Comprising fourteen works from across Pichler's rich career, the show highlights the wide range of mediums in which he practiced, including photography, sculpture, and drawing, as well as his exploration of architecture, history, and the relationship between the human body and technology. This exhibition marks a special tribute to late gallery founder Barbara Gladstone, as it was the last presentation she actively oversaw, in close dialogue with Shao and the Walter Pichler Estate.

Walter Pichler shunned the limelight of the artworld and the art market, adopting, instead, the quiet surroundings of his home in Saint Martin, a small village in southeastern Austria, where he lived from 1973 until his death. It was there that he built a series of buildings to house his sculptures. In all his work lies a profound synergy between space and form. This fluid exchange between the built environment and sculpture has at its source a small figurine, perhaps a Christ figure, that he found in a barn on his land when he first arrived. He was inspired to build an altar for it and converted the building into a specially- designed receptacle to house this enigmatic item.

Working slowly with no external pressure, he immersed himself in the process of melding sculpture, landscape, and architecture, utilizing formal systems reliant upon equilibrium and frontality. He drew upon traditional building materials such as lead, clay, iron, wood, and glass to construct both edifice and art, spaces for meditation and observation, as well as objects for contemplation. The resulting compound for his work recalls Donald Judd's Chinati Foundation in Marfa, Texas or, even earlier, Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau in Hannover, Germany from 1923-37. This constructed environment became a lifelong undertaking for the artist, and it is a rare opportunity to encounter his sculptures and drawings outside of it.

Pichler's architectural credentials date to his early studies at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Innsbruck and the University for Applied Arts in Vienna, after which he frequently collaborated with famed Austrian architect Hans Hollein. Together they formulated a kind of visionary architecture, freed from the constraints of actual construction. His *Prototypen* (prototypes) series, dating from 1967, imagines a hybrid zone between designing, building, and sculpting. Many of his early drawings from this period envision fantastical non-spaces that coexist as site and as form, morphing into imaginary architectural spacecrafts. At the time, Pichler deployed unconventional materials borrowed from industrial production like automobile and space technology, such as plastics and aluminum. In 1968, he was included in Documenta 4 with *TV-Helm (Tragbares Wohnzimmer)* (TV Helmet [Portable Living Room]) and *Radioweste* (Radio Vest), both 1967. And a year later, for William Klein's film *Mr. Freedom*, he created a cubicle out of PVC tubes and metal pipes. These works tied him to a Pop-art sensibility during the 1960s and 70s, but Pichler's practice remains too nuanced and eccentric to ever be situated within one particular artistic movement.

Exhibition Details:
Opening June 27, 2025
130 East 64th Street
New York, NY 10065

About Walter Pichler:

Studied at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Innsbruck from 1952 to 1955 and the University for Applied Arts in Vienna from 1955 to 1959, Pichler was a key figure in the Vienna School of Fantastic Realism, known for his use of minimalist, geometric forms and medium including metal, wood, air-dried clay, and other ephemeral materials. His work reflects a deep interest in utopian visions and the fusion of art, architecture, human forms, ancient history, and philosophical concepts.

Pichler had solo exhibited at the Arthur Ross Architecture Gallery, Columbia University, New York; Tiroler

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Landesmuseen, Innsbruck, Austria; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Generali Foundation, Vienna; Galerie Museum, Bolzano, Italy; Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Vienna; Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany; the Museum der Moderne, Salzburg; the Belvedere, Vienna among others. He has also been included in group exhibitions at institutions including: MAK Study Collection Furniture, Vienna; Austrian Cultural Forum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, Croatia; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai; and the Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna. Pichler participated in Documenta 6 (1976), Documenta 4 (1968) in Kassel, Germany, and Venice Biennale (1982) in Venice, Italy.

About Gladstone Gallery:

Gladstone Gallery is recognized for its embrace of experimentation and visionary practices. The gallery has long been an active partner with artists pursuing catalytic ideas and engaging with pressing issues. Headquartered in New York, Gladstone's impact extends globally with galleries in Brussels and Seoul, enabling it to present new bodies of work and evolve its program to advance the practices and reach of its artists through time. Alongside its work with contemporary artists, the gallery is a steward of the legacies of pivotal historical artists and an advocate for the enduring power of their work. Gladstone is led by a team of partners who spearhead its long-term vision and program, building on the values of its founder Barbara Gladstone.

Press contact:

press@gladstonegallery.com