



VIA LEWANDOWSKY

Via Lewandowsky studied at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Dresden from 1982 until 1987. Starting in 1985, he organised subversive performances together with the avant-garde group, Autoperforationsartisten, that undermined the Communist art authorities of Eastern Germany (GDR). In 1989, shortly before the fall of the Berlin wall, he left the GDR and subsequently moved to West Berlin. Since then, he has traveled extensively and has lived for extended periods in New York, Rome, Peking, and Canada. He now resides in Berlin.

Via Lewandowsky works in diverse artistic media, predominantly sculptural-installation works and exhibition scenographies with architectonic influences. By the 1990s his work had already begun to incorporate elements of Sound Art; this has since become an important and integral part of much of his performance work. Lewandowsky's interest in a nation's construction of identity exposes a political dimension in his work, especially notable in his installations in public spaces and in his performances.

Dominant recurring themes in Lewandowsky's body of work include: misunderstanding as a failure of communication and the deformation and deconstruction of meaning. Lewandowsky's practice often represents the process behind his ideas. The artist is neither looking for something conclusive, a definitive ending, nor complete destruction, but rather for the constructive moment within a process of destruction. This identification of the in-between moment is highlighted by the work's inherently satirical content, which does not try to elicit pathos from its audience. His working method and the effectiveness of its artistic results are often characterized by opposites. Elements that are controlled, staged and constantly emerging also have spontaneous, unexpected, and thus lively qualities. Humorous, seemingly lighthearted works viewed a second time contain gruesome, brutal moments that can turn the comedic into the disturbing. His preference for tragicomedy, absurdity and paradox as well as the Sisyphean drama of continuous repetition and futility of action link Via Lewandowsky's art with Dadaism, Surrealism and Fluxus. The ironic breaks with everyday life, the intrusion of the strange into the familiar, often domestic realm take place in his work by using the detritus of the German bourgeoisie: cuckoo clocks, DIY garden sheds, parakeets or bureaucracy.