

# Assembly Required

Francis Alÿs

Rasheed Araeen

Siah Armajani

Lygia Clark

Hélio Oiticica

Yoko Ono

Lygia Pape

Franz Erhard Walther

Tania Bruguera & INSTAR

*Assembly Required* features nine artists and collectives whose work calls for your active participation. Each gallery represents a single artist who invites you to build, shape, and use the artworks, collaboratively or on your own. These artists believe public action is vital for transforming society. Through their work, they offer unique perspectives on social change, addressing the need for optimism and hope in the face of global tensions.

Many works in this exhibition helped contribute to a profound transformation in the relationship between artist and audience. This shift grew out of larger social movements that arose in the mid-twentieth century. In the tumultuous period following World War II (1939-45), society questioned how to prevent governments from exerting control over citizens' lives. Philosopher Hannah Arendt proposed one potential solution in her influential book, *The Human Condition* (1958). She argued that only public assembly, which she termed "action," could affect real societal change.

In the following decade, artists, students, and activists across the globe joined in mass demonstrations against governmental restrictions, capitalism, and imperialism. Experimental artist groups flourished, often working to democratize art by moving it from the museum into the public realm, whether it be performances in the streets or books sent through the mail. Many of these works were among the first to transform passive audiences into active co-creators, requiring participation for completion.

Over the past sixty years, later generations of artists have carried these ideals forward, creating new platforms that bring people together in public, civic, and virtual spaces. While many of the artworks in *Assembly Required* respond to distinct moments of social and political turmoil, most were not purely created as gestures of protest. Instead, they engage with what artist Rasheed Araeen called the “radical consciousness” of their time while remaining open to individual interpretation.

In the current moment, new forces isolate us from each other both socially and physically. These artists’ questions have become increasingly urgent and global as the way we relate to shared space changes with the evolution of the digital landscape and a post-pandemic reality. The works in *Assembly Required* prompt us to consider what we can achieve by coming together and how art might help us imagine new ways of being in the world.

*Assembly Required* is curated by Stephanie Weissberg, Curator at the Pulitzer Arts Foundation. Texts written by Heather Alexis Smith, Curatorial Associate at the Pulitzer, and Stephanie Weissberg.

**Assembly Required is on view  
from March 4 - July 31, 2022.**

# Yoko Ono

## For Yoko Ono, “artist is just a frame of mind.”

Since the early 1960s, Ono has created instruction-based artworks that invite the public’s direct participation, prompting us to think and act in new ways. With *Painting to Be Stepped On* (#1), for instance, she places a canvas directly on the ground, inviting us to walk over it. In doing so, she asks us to reassess how we value and relate to art. While on display, the painting’s gray surface gathers footprints, dust, and dirt—a record of people who enter the museum. The canvas you see here is a recreation of the original 1961 version, which Ono made from scraps left over from another painting.

The instructions for *Painting to be Stepped On* were printed in Ono’s 1964 book *Grapefruit* (#2), which contains over 150 interactive prompts that intentionally blur the line between artist

and participant. They range from serious and subversive to playful and poetic and can be carried out in the imagination or in reality. Ono often calls these works “scores,” relating them to musical compositions that people can perform on their own or with others. By publishing *Grapefruit* as an affordably priced book, Ono pushed against the commercialization of art while giving everyday people a platform for creative expression.

Ono made major contributions to the development of conceptual art, which focuses on ideas over an artwork’s physical or finished form. She was a member of Fluxus, an international movement of artists, writers, and composers known for their experimental methods. By the end of the 1960s, she had begun to turn her efforts toward anti-war protests and pacifism, positions she continues to hold today.

## Yoko Ono (Japanese-American, b. 1933)

1. *Painting to be Stepped On*, 1960-61  
Exhibition copy fabricated 2022  
Canvas with acrylic, and ink on cardstock  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the Artist
2. *Typescript for Grapefruit*, 1963-64  
Typewritten cards, some with ink additions  
Each: 5 ½ × 4 ⅛ inches (14 × 10.5 cm)  
Courtesy of the Artist

## How to Interact

Walk, step, or jump on *Painting To Be Stepped On* (#1)—it’s the canvas attached to the floor near the front entrance.

Choose some pages from *Grapefruit* (#2) and complete the instructions—either with your imagination or in reality.

You’re welcome to take photos of *Grapefruit* if you don’t want to forget the prompts (just be sure to turn off your camera’s flash beforehand).

**“Being an artist involves only having a certain frame of mind, an attitude, determination, and imagination that springs naturally out of the necessity of the situation.”**

—Yoko Ono

# Franz Erhard Walther

## **With *First Work Set* (#3), “time, language, bodies, [and] space” become artistic materials.**

The work’s fifty-eight fabric elements are intended to be used by the visitor for specific actions or movements, blurring the boundaries between sculpture and participant. Although Franz Erhard Walther provides instructions for how to activate the elements, he makes room for open-endedness and experimentation. People can use and wear the pieces—standing, leaning, looking, laying down, and even counterbalancing each other’s weight. These loosely outlined interactions deeply engage the senses, prompting an awareness of space, movement, and reliance on others. Although Walther sets up the scenario, he believes that “the active spectator defines the work and is responsible for it.”

At the entrance to this gallery is a selection of Walther’s original *First Work Set* elements (#3), produced between 1963 and 1969. At the far end of the gallery, near the large staircase, there are copies of ten of the elements (#26), which you can unfold and use on the gray carpet.

Walther also made a series of drawings (#4-23) that detail the *First Work Set* and photographs (#24) that show how the elements can be activated.

On the wall opposite the photographs and drawings is a selection of Walther’s *Trial Sewn Pieces* (#25). These colorful forms represent decades of material and technical experimentation. They also highlight the artist’s ongoing collaboration with his former wife, Johanna Walther, who has sewn his fabric pieces since the early 1960s.

Walther grew up in Germany during World War II (1939–45), and he traces his decision to become an artist to this experience. As a child he witnessed widespread devastation, police raids, and the mass deportation of Jewish people to concentration camps. He later questioned society’s complacency in allowing these atrocities to occur and decided that “the only way to oppose this environment a little was to become an artist.”

## **How to Interact**

At the far end of the gallery, near the large staircase, you’ll find a low platform that holds copies of ten elements from the *First Work Set* (#26). Our gallery staff can help you select an element, bring it to the carpet, unfold it, and give instructions on how to use it. The number of people needed to fully activate each element ranges from one to nine, so you have the option to work by yourself or with others.

**All works by Franz Erhard Walther  
(German, b. 1939) unless otherwise noted**

3. **Selection of elements from 1. Werksatz (First Work Set) (16 of 58 total), 1963-1969**  
Fabric  
Dimensions variable  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
4. **Workdrawing, 1964**  
Pencil, watercolor and covering color on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{7}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29 cm × 21 cm)  
Collection Susanne Walther
5. **Workdrawing, 1967**  
Oil, watercolor, covering color and pencil on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{5}{8}$  × 8  $\frac{3}{16}$  inches (29.5 × 20.8 cm)  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
6. **Workdrawing, 1965**  
Covering color, color pencil and pencil on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{7}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29 × 21 cm)  
Collection Susanne Walther
7. **Workdrawing, 1967/71**  
Coffee, oil, color pencil, tempera, watercolor, tannin liqueur and pencil on paper, double-sided  
11 × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (27.9 × 21 cm)  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
8. **Workdrawing, 1966/69**  
Watercolor, tempera, pencil, china ink on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{7}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29 × 21 cm)  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
9. **Workdrawing, 1966/68**  
Pencil and watercolor on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{5}{8}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29.6 × 20.9 cm)  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
10. **Workdrawing, 1966**  
Watercolor, color pencil and pencil on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{7}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29 × 21 cm)  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
11. **Workdrawing, 1967/69**  
Pencil, tempera and watercolor on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{7}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{7}{16}$  inches (29 × 21.5 cm)  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
12. **Workdrawing, 1969/74**  
Oil, covering color and pencil on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{7}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29 × 21 cm)  
Collection Franz Erhard Walther
13. **Workdrawing, 1967/69**  
Ballpoint pen, tempera, watercolor and pencil on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{7}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29 × 21 cm)  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
14. **Workdrawing, 1968/69**  
Oil, organic adhesive tape, pencil, covering color and watercolor on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{7}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29 × 21 cm)  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
15. **Workdrawing, 1967/69**  
Pencil, watercolor and covering color on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{7}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29 × 21 cm)  
Collection Susanne Walther
16. **Workdrawing, 1970**  
Watercolor, color pencil, typescript, ballpoint pen, collage, tempera and pencil on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{7}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29 × 21 cm)  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
17. **Workdrawing, 1967/70**  
Pencil and watercolor on paper  
11  $\frac{5}{8}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29.5 × 21 cm)  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
18. **Workdrawing, 1967/70**  
Pencil and watercolor on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{7}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29 × 21 cm)  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
19. **Workdrawing, 1968/71**  
Coffee, oil, color pencil, watercolor, covering color and pencil on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{11}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{5}{16}$  inches (29.7 × 21.1 cm)  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
20. **Workdrawing, 1969**  
Pencil and watercolor on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{7}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29 × 21 cm)  
Collection Franz Erhard Walther
21. **Workdrawing, 1968**  
Pencil, tempera, watercolor and color pencil on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{7}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29 × 21 cm)  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
22. **Workdrawing, 1969**  
Tempera and pencil on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{11}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29.7 × 21 cm)  
Collection Franz Erhard Walther
23. **Workdrawing, 1969**  
Pencil, oil, color pencil, coffee and tempera on paper, double-sided  
11  $\frac{7}{16}$  × 8  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (29 × 21 cm)  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
24. **Photo documentation of the First Work Set by Timm Rautert**  
Exhibition copies of 16 black and white photographs  
Dimensions variable  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation
25. **Selection of 38 Trial Sewn Pieces, 1963-2001**  
Fabric  
Dimensions variable  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation, the artist and Peter Freeman Inc.
26. **Selection of exhibition copies from 1. Werksatz (First Work Set), 2010-20**  
Fabric  
Dimensions variable  
Franz Erhard Walther Foundation

# Siah Armajani

**Siah Armajani declared that “public sculpture... should be open, available, useful, and common” in his manifesto *Public Sculpture in the Context of American Democracy* (1978).**

Through Armajani's immersive artworks, he explored how we can use social spaces to support democratic ideals. The *Alfred Whitehead Reading Room* (#27), for instance, welcomes people to use the sculpture as a space for deep thinking, gathering, and conversation. The artist dedicated this sculpture to the influential philosopher Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947). Believing that the world exists as a “web of interrelated processes,” Whitehead argued “all of our choices and actions have consequences for the world around us.” Although he wrote this nearly a century ago, Whitehead's observations have been applied to contemporary issues including the climate crisis.

The reading room includes a selection of Whitehead's most influential writings in addition to interpretations of his theories by others. Armajani designed the tables and chairs inside the room to create space for reflection and dialogue as people consider Whitehead's ideas.

Armajani was originally from Iran, but fled the country in 1960, fearing that the government would target him for his pro-democracy activism. After settling in the United States, he started creating “public sculpture” including bridges, plazas, gardens, gazebos, and reading rooms where people could gather, share ideas, and think about the world in new ways. Armajani believed ordinary citizens could use these places to form a sense of community and arm themselves with knowledge for how to improve society.

## **Siah Armajani (Iranian-American, 1939-2020)**

27. Alfred Whitehead Reading Room, 2013

Wood, Plexiglas, brass, and glass

101 ¾ × 191 × 242 ½ inches (258.5 × 485.1 × 616 cm)

Courtesy of the Artist's Estate and Rossi & Rossi

## **How to Interact**

You can select books from the shelves outside the sculpture and bring them inside to read and discuss. You're welcome to sit at the desks or on the floor. Siah Armajani made *Alfred Whitehead Reading Room* pencils, which you'll find inside. Feel free to take one home.

Please re-shelve the books when you're finished with them.

**“We enter public sculpture  
not as a thing between four  
walls in a spatial sense but  
as a tool for activity.”**

—Siah Armajani



# Hélio Oiticica

**With *Penetrável Macaléia* (#28), artist Hélio Oiticica transports us to his home country of Brazil.**

Bordered by tropical plants that evoke the country's lush environment, this colorful structure also recalls the unique architecture of Rio de Janeiro. *Penetrável Macaléia* is one of many interactive sculptures inspired by the time Oiticica spent in Rio's favelas. Home to socially and economically marginalized people, favelas started as makeshift settlements in the late 1800s. They quickly morphed into permanent neighborhoods. Residents assembled homes from salvaged scraps of wood, plastic, or metal. Neglected by the local government, they banded together to organize their own basic services like trash collection and transportation. Oiticica was inspired by this strong community spirit and sense of self-reliance. Many of his "Penetrables" celebrate these aspects of favela life.

## Hélio Oiticica (Brazilian, 1937-80)

### 28. *Penetrável Macaléia*, 1978

Stainless steel, colored metal screens, sand, gravel, bricks, and plants

Overall installation dimensions variable

Cube: 86 ½ × 86 ½ × 86 ½ inches (219.7 × 219.7 × 219.7 cm)

Collection of Cesar and Claudio Oiticica

Oiticica began his career as a painter. In 1960, he joined a radical Brazilian art movement called Neo-Concretism, whose members wanted to find ways to connect art and everyday life. Oiticica's involvement with the Neo-Concretists had a major impact on his career, encouraging him to shift his focus to participation and sensory experiences. A strong critic of Brazil's increasingly oppressive military government, which seized control of the country in a 1964 coup-d'état, Oiticica was also involved with a 1960s creative movement called Tropicália. Tropicália celebrated Brazil's landscape, cultures, and people while also creating a platform for artists, writers, and musicians to protest against political repression. Oiticica dedicated *Penetrável Macaléia* to a fellow Tropicália member, his friend and influential musician Jards Macalé.

## How to Interact

You're welcome to go inside *Penetrável Macaléia* (#28) or walk around the outside of the sculpture. Oiticica created experiences like this to encourage people to explore their senses. What do you notice when you walk on the gravel? When you enter the structure? When you close yourself inside? How does your perception change when you look out through the different colored walls?

**“The artist and his  
reason for being is no  
longer as a creator for  
contemplation but a  
motivator of creation.”**

—Hélio Oiticica

# Lygia Clark

## The works in this gallery embody Lygia Clark's philosophy that "anyone is fit for the act of creating."

As a founding member of Brazil's groundbreaking Neo-Concrete art movement (1959-61), Clark promoted active participation and sensory engagement, reimagining the relationship between art and viewer. Some of Clark's earliest experiments with these concepts began in the early 1960s when she invented her *bichos* or "critters" (#29-32). You can flip and fold their hinged forms, made from geometric sheets of metal, into numerous configurations and unpredictable shapes. In fact, Clark considered these sculptures unfinished until other people actively manipulated them.

Shortly after she invented the *bichos*, Clark shifted her focus and stopped making traditional art objects. She turned instead to prompts for action and interaction. With *Caminhando* (#39-40), Clark used paper to create a Möbius strip, a loop of material with a half-twist creating one continuous surface. She then invited people to take turns cutting

along the plane of paper, continuing the exercise until the paper became too thin to cut. By offering a task that anyone could do anywhere, Clark believed she could help people feel like they were part of a larger, more collective world with limitless possibility.

Clark explored this sense of connection in other works like *Dialogue. Goggles* (#35) and *Hand Dialogue* (#36). Participants can use these works on their own or with a partner, looking into each other's eyes or twisting their hands together with another Möbius strip, in this case made of a simple bandage. Here Clark sought to help people reconnect with their bodies by focusing intensely on physical sensations. These ideas paved the way for her later work as a therapist and healer.

## How to Interact

Feel free to experiment with copies of Lygia Clark's work. These are the objects displayed on the brown wooden tables. See how many different forms you can make with each *Bicho* (#33-34). Wear the *Dialogue. Goggles* (#37), either on your own or with a partner. Use *Hand Dialogue* (#38) to link hands with someone else, or explore how the elastic encourages you to move your arms in different ways. How do these works change your perception of your body? How do they change your interactions with other people?

Instructions on how to make your own *Caminhando* (#40) are on the table at the far end of the gallery.

## Lygia Clark (Brazilian, 1920-1988)

29. **The Inside Is the Outside**, 1963  
Stainless steel  
16 × 17 ½ × 14 ¾ inches (40.6 × 44.5 × 37.5 cm)  
The Museum of Modern Art, New York.  
Gift of Patricia Phelps de Cisneros through the Latin American and Caribbean Fund in honor of Adriana Cisneros de Griffin, 2011
30. **Bicho Monumento a Todas as Situações**, 1960  
Aluminum  
25 ¾ × 21 × 16 inches (65.4 × 53.3 × 40.6 cm)  
The Art Institute of Chicago, Through prior purchase from the Mary and Leigh Block Fund, 2015.7
31. **Bicho Pássaro do Espaço (Critter Bird in Space)**, 1960  
Aluminum  
19 ¾ × 20 × ¾ inches (50.2 × 50.8 × 1 cm)  
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Purchase, by exchange, through a gift of Peggy Guggenheim
32. **Estudo para Bicho Pássaro do Espaço (Study for Critter Bird in Space)**, 1960  
Balsa wood, adhesive tape, graphite  
8 ¼ × 8 ¼ inches (20.5 × 20.5 cm)  
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Purchase, by exchange, through a gift of Peggy Guggenheim.
33. **Exhibition copy of Bicho Monumento a Todas as Situações**  
Aluminum  
25 ¾ × 21 × 16 inches (65.4 × 53.3 × 40.6 cm)  
Associação Cultural Lygia Clark
34. **Exhibition copy of Bicho Pássaro do Espaço (Critter Bird in Space)**  
Aluminum  
19 ¾ × 20 × ¾ inches (50.2 × 50.8 × 1 cm)  
Associação Cultural Lygia Clark
35. **Dialogo. Oculos (Dialogue. Goggles)**, 1968  
Industrial rubber, metal, glass, and mirrors  
7 ⅞ × 11 13/16 × 3 15/16 inches (20 × 30 × 10 cm)  
Associação Cultural Lygia Clark
36. **Diálogo de Mãos (Hand Dialogue)**, 1966  
Elastic band  
Dimensions variable  
Associação Cultural Lygia Clark
37. **Exhibition copy of Dialogo. Oculos (Dialogue. Goggles)**  
Industrial rubber, metal, glass, and mirrors  
7 ⅞ × 11 13/16 × 3 15/16 inches (20 × 30 × 10 cm)  
Associação Cultural Lygia Clark
38. **Exhibition copy of Diálogo de Mãos (Hand Dialogue)**  
Elastic band  
Dimensions variable  
Associação Cultural Lygia Clark
39. **Documentation of the artist making Caminhando (Walking) works**, 1980  
Associação Cultural Lygia Clark
40. **Exhibition copy of Caminhando (Walking)**  
Paper and scissors  
Dimensions variable  
Associação Cultural Lygia Clark

# Lygia Pape

## Lygia Pape believed that art needed to directly involve people.

With the *Book of Creation* (#41) and *Divisor* (#43), Pape gave audiences the opportunity to be inventive, collaborative, and expressive. The *Book of Creation* is the first of three pop-up books that she created in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Comprising sixteen square pages with moving parts, its colorful, abstract components can be arranged into countless sequences. For Pape, the *Book of Creation* outlined core phases in the formation of the world and the development of human civilizations. While each image is paired with a specific phrase (listed on the reverse of this card), she left the work's meaning open ended. The *Book of Creation* is emblematic of the kind of work Pape created as a founder of the short-lived Brazilian movement Neo-Concretism (1959-61), whose members wanted to connect art and everyday life.

Pape was a noted critic of Brazil's 1964 military takeover but stayed behind after many other artists fled the country. Although she found it difficult to work through the dictatorship, she began using film to examine social and political nuances. The footage on view in this space (#43) captures her 1967 performance *Divisor*, meaning "divider." Pape staged this iconic event just before the military government suspended most civil liberties including the right to public demonstration. To realize the work, Pape created a 100-by-100-foot sheet with numerous holes cut into the surface. She invited dozens of children to participate by wearing the sheet as they moved together through the streets of Rio de Janeiro. Amid the tense undercurrents of 1960s Brazilian society, the work was a potent reminder of the power of public assembly. Pape intentionally left *Divisor* simple enough for anyone to recreate on their own. In fact, the performance has been restaged multiple times since its original presentation.

## How to Interact

There's a copy of the *Book of Creation* (#42) on the long table against the gallery's wall. Pick up the pages and rearrange them into as many new sequences as you like. You can also gently play with them like a pop-up book: opening, folding, flipping, and even spinning the moving parts.

What does the *Book of Creation* symbolize for you? How many stories can you tell?

## Lygia Pape (Brazilian, 1927-2004)

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| 41. Livro da Criação (Book of Creation), 1959-60<br>Sixteen-page pop-up book; gouache and tempera on paperboard<br>Each: 12 × 12 inches (30.5 × 30.5 cm)<br>Private collection, © Projeto Lygia Pape | 42. Exhibition copy of Livro da Criação (Book of Creation)<br>Sixteen-page pop-up book; gouache and tempera on paperboard<br>Each: 12 × 12 inches (30.5 × 30.5 cm) | 43. Divisor (Divider), 1967<br>Super 8 film transferred to digital video in color<br>3 min. 36 sec.<br>Private collection,<br>© Projeto Lygia Pape |
|--|--|--|

Pape wrote a poem to complement the Book of Creation (#41). Each line of the poem (at right) corresponds to a page from the book, in the order they appear on the bookshelf from top left to bottom right.

In the Beginning it Was All Water  
The Water Later Went Down, Down, Down  
And Down  
Man Began to Measure Time

Man Discovered Fire  
Man Was a Nomad and a Hunter  
In the Forest  
Man Was Gregarious and Sowed Seeds on the Land

And the Land Flourished  
Man Invented the Wheel  
Man Discovered that the Sun Was the Centre of the Planetary System  
That the Earth Was Round and Rotated on its Own Axis

The Keel Navigating Through Time  
Man Built on Water: A Stilt House  
Submarine: The Excavation Is Full Under Water  
Light

**“Whereas to me the *Book of Creation* ‘narrates’ the creation of the world, it could have another meaning for someone else, in keeping with his or her own sensibilities or experience.... It is, simultaneously, a poem and an art object.”**

—Lygia Pape

# Francis Alÿs

**On April 11, 2002, Francis Alÿs gathered 500 student volunteers at the base of a large sand dune outside Lima, Peru.**

They came to collaborate with Alÿs on an ambitious project—working together to move the 1,600-foot-long dune. The participants picked up shovels, assembled in a long line, and started digging. Over the course of the day, they shifted the sand by approximately 4 inches.

The idea for this one-time collaborative performance, *When Faith Moves Mountains*, was sparked two years prior, when Alÿs visited Lima during a period of intense civil unrest. Peru's president, Alberto Fujimori (b. 1938), had been caught in a bribery and blackmail scandal that spurred mass protests and clashes in the streets. Fujimori's 10-year term, often described as a dictatorship, had been contentious. While he was credited

with saving the country from hyperinflation and taking a hard line against terrorism, his government also committed numerous human rights abuses including kidnapping, torture, and murder.

Alÿs funneled his observations from Peru into this artwork (#44), which documents the performance with video, drawings, maps, prints, and t-shirts worn by the participants. He was inspired by the idea, found in multiple cultures, that “faith can move mountains.” Alÿs acknowledges that the work can have conflicting meanings, however. It can be read as a gesture of optimism and an allegory about the potential of collective will, but also as a realist observation about the extreme challenges of making permanent change.

## How to Interact

With this work, Alÿs prompts us to consider: What kinds of artistic acts might bring about the possibility of social change? Where might we run into obstacles? How can we come together to work around them?

## Francis Alÿs (Belgian, b. 1959)

44. *Cuando la fe mueve montañas (When Faith Moves Mountains)*, 2002-03

Video projections (color, sound), video monitor, acrylic, graphite, masking tape on vellum, black and white photographs, color photographs, offset lithograph on paper, photocopies on paper, shirt

Dimensions variable

Collection Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. T.B. Walker Acquisition Fund, 2004

**“For a few hours the possibility of change was introduced, beyond the absurdity or the futility of the act.”**

—Francis Alÿs



# Rasheed Araeen

## **With *Zero to Infinity* (#45), Rasheed Araeen invites you to arrange dozens of wooden cubes into endless configurations.**

Araeen initially conceived of this work in 1968, a time when he felt contemporary sculpture was inaccessible to the public. During this period, many artists in the United States and Britain were affiliated with Minimalism, a movement that focused on repetition, pared-down geometric forms, and simple materials. The cube was a prominent motif in the work of a number of these artists. While Araeen was interested in simple forms and materials, he believed Minimalism alienated viewers. As a response, he sought to create art with a more democratic sensibility. With *Zero to Infinity* he “wanted to produce something that people could get involved in,” that they could transform “into many other things.” The sculpture has no fixed form, shifting and changing as members of the public assemble and disassemble it.

### **Rasheed Araeen (Pakistani-British, b. 1935)**

45. *Zero to Infinity*, 1968/2002  
Painted wood  
Dimensions variable, each cube 19 5/8 × 19 5/8 × 19 5/8 (50 × 50 × 50 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist

Originally trained as an engineer in his native Pakistan, Araeen moved to London in 1964 to pursue a career as a self-taught artist. He made drawings, paintings, and interactive sculptures based on the geometric forms and patterns he saw in South Asian architecture. However, Araeen soon found himself shut out of the exclusive gallery and museum world due to anti-immigrant sentiments that targeted people from former British colonies. This experience led him to become a political activist. Araeen rallied against racism and colonialism, eventually founding several journals that sought to examine art from the self-described “Third World” with a more serious perspective.

*Zero to Infinity* can have up to 100 cubes in various colors. The version on view here has 36 cubes in a vivid red that Araeen chose specifically for this exhibition.

## **How to Interact**

Work on your own or with fellow museum visitors to stack, tilt, and balance the red cubes into as many different forms as you like. You can add to the structures that others have made, or tear them down and start fresh.

**“Once people can confront  
the rigidity of social  
structures and re-create  
these structures themselves  
... it can lead to an equitable  
and egalitarian society.”**

—Rasheed Araeen