

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SIGMAR POLKE
MODERNE KUNST
Opening 13 March 2026
Private View: Thursday 12 March, 6-8pm

VeneKlasen, London is pleased to present *Sigmar Polke: Moderne Kunst*, the gallery's inaugural exhibition devoted to masterpieces spanning four decades of the artist's career.

A core tenet of Polke's practice was his relentless determination to explore the endless possibilities of the media with which he worked. This spirit is embodied by the exhibition, which includes some of the most important works from across his career. *Attempt at Resuscitation of Bamboo Canes*, 1967, the earliest work on view, is a rare sculpture that demonstrates Polke's early experimentation with unconventional materials. From the same decade, *Brushstroke (Silver-Bronze)*, 1968 marks his initial and incisive confrontation with abstraction and stands as a key example of his early "stripe" paintings. *Two Heads*, 1971-1973 belongs to a small group of paintings produced during a period when Polke largely turned away from painting to focus on photography and filmmaking, before returning to the medium in the 1980s. This renewed engagement with painting is exemplified in ambitious works such as *Forêt Nationale*, 1989, part of a seminal series of twenty-two paintings created for the bicentenary of the French Revolution, which celebrates the nationalisation of French forests following the revolution. Polke's experimental spirit continued into the final years of his career and is powerfully embodied in *The Miracle of Siegen (Lens Painting)*, 2007, one of his last major works completed before his death in 2010.

Born in 1941 in East Germany, Polke emerged as a trailblazer of the post-war German art scene, producing works that directly confronted Germany's fraught history while casting a critical eye on contemporary society. Polke eschewed aesthetic conventions and set himself apart from his contemporaries by moving between a wide range of styles with agility and wit. His multifaceted practice across many media has cemented his reputation as one of the most important and influential artists of the post-war period.

Sigmar Polke (b. 1941, Oels) emigrated from East to West Germany in 1953, settling in Düsseldorf, where he later enrolled at the Kunstakademie at the age of twenty. Since the late 1960s, his work has been subject of numerous museum exhibitions worldwide, and he participated multiple times in both Documenta and the Venice Biennale, being awarded the Golden Lion at the XLII Venice Biennale in 1986. In 2014, a major retrospective titled *Alibis: Sigmar Polke 1963-2010* opened at The Museum of Modern Art, New York and travelled to Tate Modern, London and Museum Ludwig, Cologne. More recently, significant institutional exhibitions devoted to Polke's work were held at the Schinkel Pavillon, Berlin

(2024), the Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid (2024), and the Fondation Vincent van Gogh Arles, Arles (2025).

Sigmar Polke: Moderne Kunst will open to the public on Friday 13 March 2026, with a private view on Thursday 12 March 2026 from 6-8pm. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10am to 6pm.

On the occasion of VeneKlasen's inaugural exhibitions, *Sigmar Polke: Moderne Kunst* in London and *Sigmar Polke: The Dream of Menelaus* in New York, curator and art historian Mark Godfrey will be in conversation with Gordon VeneKlasen at the London gallery on Friday March 27th 6:30 – 7:30 pm. Space is limited, so RSVP is essential. Please RSVP to rsvp@veneklasengallery.com.

For more information, please contact the gallery at press@veneklasengallery.com or visit www.veneklasengallery.com.