

## Press release

**Susanne Löffler M.A.**

Public Relations

T +49 (0)611 335-2189

F +49 (0)611 335-2192

susanne.loeffler@

museum-wiesbaden.de

## Museum Wiesbaden Celebrates the Art of Frank Stella, Winner of the Jawlensky Prize, by Holding a Major Exhibition

**From Modernist classics to his latest creations, works by the US artist are juxtaposed with every facet of the museum's collection**

Wiesbaden. 15 June 2022 – Frank Stella decisively influenced the history of post-war art with his purist, geometric pictures. One of abstract painting's most important representatives, he is now the subject of a major exhibition at Museum Wiesbaden that runs from 10 June to 9 October 2022, in parallel with *documenta fifteen*. A highlight of the show are Stella's latest works of sculpture, on view here for the first time. Paintings, reliefs and three-dimensional works from the last 60 years are juxtaposed with the museum's collection - from Old Masters to the decorative art of the Jugendstil period.

Frank Stella (b. 1936 near Boston, lives and works in New York) is an artist whose work is not exclusively rooted in the present. Instead, it seeks out all manner of references to the art of the past - from the early modern period, to the Baroque, and right up to the Modernist era. This is because, as Stella sees it, the questions that art is trying to answer are always essentially the same; artists down the centuries have been dogged by the same fundamental conundrums. Stella himself studied art history at the University of Princeton, along with painting. As a young artist, he made his breakthrough when the minimalist *Black Paintings* were shown at the exhibition *Sixteen Americans* staged by the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1959. For many of his colleagues, the stripe paintings of the early 1960s represented a completely new departure, transforming the way that

Museum Wiesbaden  
Hessisches Landesmuseum  
für Kunst und Natur  
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 2  
65185 Wiesbaden

[www.museum-wiesbaden.de](http://www.museum-wiesbaden.de)



painting was understood. In the 1980s Stella was the first artist to be invited to give the Charles Eliot Norton Lectures at Harvard University, and today he is still seen as one of the most important artistic innovators in the canon of contemporary art history. The last exhibition of Stella's work in Germany took place ten years ago at the Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg.

Frank Stella:

*"I work away from the flat surface but I still don't want to be three-dimensional; that is, totally literal [...] more than two dimensions but short of three, so, for me, 2.7 is probably a very good place to be."*

Frank Stella's abstract, non-representational, and partly ornament-laden art has evolved continuously over the decades. From the early minimalism of the *Black Paintings* to the use of new types of paint (neon acrylic paints, industrial metallic paint) to the relief-like paintings and wall installations that intrude into the room-space, inspired by the illusionism of Baroque painting. Stella's preoccupation with the problems that painting poses is most evident in his serial works, with each series being a systematic process involving variations of colour, form and size. With its focus on American art, particularly Minimalism and the self-referential painting of Robert Mangold, David Novros and Joseph Marioni, Museum Wiesbaden is an ideal place to frame the artist's early work.

Dr. Jörg Daur, curator of modern and contemporary art:

*"For us, the many-layered art of Frank Stella was the ideal subject for an exhibition, precisely because we can demonstrate all the most varied facets of art, from the Old Masters to Jugendstil and right up to the present day."*

The Expressionist painter Alexej von Jawlensky is famous for his late series of works entitled 'Meditations'. Stella, too, is known for his serial works, which have been a feature of his output from the very start. Every five years, in conjunction with the Nassauischer Sparkasse and Spielbank, the city of Wiesbaden honours the life's work of the Russian artist, who lived in Wiesbaden from 1921 to 1941, by presenting a life-time achievement award, the Alexej von Jawlensky Prize, to a contemporary artist. Frank Stella is the Alexej von Jawlensky prize-winner of 2022.

Gert-Uwe Mende, Mayor of Wiesbaden:

*"After Agnes Martin, Robert Mangold, Brice Marden, Rebecca Horn,*

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*Ellsworth Kelly and Richard Serra, Frank Stella is now being awarded the Jawlensky Prize. This makes me very happy. For in honouring Frank Stella today, we are singling out not only an artist who has been writing art history for more than six decades, but also a person who has a special sensitivity for the art of other cultures and has travelled the world with his eyes wide open.”*

Dr. Andreas Henning, Director of Museum Wiesbaden:

*“Coming every five years, the Alexej von Jawlensky Prize is a highlight of Museum Wiesbaden’s exhibition calendar. We are very grateful to the Hessian capital, the Nassauischer Sparkasse and Spielbank Wiesbaden, who jointly offer the award, for sponsoring this year’s prize. I am sincerely grateful to the prize’s board of trustees for nominating Frank Stella as the 2022 prize-winner.”*

The special exhibition runs from 10 June to 9 October 2022 and presents the life’s work of the American artist in four sections, beginning with Stella’s serial works from the 1950s and 1960s, moving on to the *Shaped Canvases* of the 1970s, which saw the artist incorporating the surrounding space in his work, and then to his explorations of ornament vocabulary in art, glimpsed in the waves of the *Moby Dick* series. Finally, a whole section is devoted exclusively to the artist’s latest works from the series *Salmon Rivers of the Maritime Provinces*.

To celebrate Stella’s receipt of the Jawlensky Prize, the jubilee exhibition *Everything! 100 Years of Jawlensky in Wiesbaden* will be extended until 14 August 2022. A catalogue accompanying the exhibition will be published in early July by Kerber Verlag, with essays by Bernard Ceysson, Jörg Daur, Andreas Henning and Lea Schäfer. Bi-lingual background information is available for free on the Museum Wiesbaden App.

The *Frank Stella* exhibition was made possible thanks to the support of the Art Mentor Foundation Lucerne, the City of Wiesbaden, the Nassauischer Sparkasse, Spielbank Wiesbaden and the Freunde des Museums Wiesbaden e.V.

Hr2 is the exhibition’s cultural partner

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The *Frankfurter Allgemeine* and sensor are the exhibition's media partners.

Exhibition dates: 10 June - 9 October 2022

[www.museum-wiesbaden.de/frank-stella](http://www.museum-wiesbaden.de/frank-stella)

## **Admission**

Tickets available at the box office or in advance online:

<https://tickets.museum-wiesbaden.de/>

— Special exhibition\* €10 (concessions €7)

\*Admission to the special exhibitions includes admission to permanent collections.

Free admission for children and young people under 18.

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— Translated by Lance Anderson