

# National Gallery of Art

## NEWS RELEASE

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### NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART INSTALLS

### PRINZ FRIEDRICH VON HOMBURG, EIN SCHAUSPIEL, 3X,

### A MAJOR SCULPTURE BY FRANK STELLA



Washington, D.C.- The National Gallery of Art has completed the installation of Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, Ein Schauspiel, 3X (1998–2001), a monumental work by American artist Frank Stella (b. 1936). The outdoor sculpture can be seen by the public on the northeast corner of the Gallery's East Building, where Pennsylvania Avenue meets Third Street. The acquisition was made possible with funds from The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation.

"Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, Ein Schauspiel, 3X is one of the great sculptures of our age and will complement the family of Stella's works that we already have in the National Gallery's collection. It is part of an ongoing effort to acquire significant examples of sculpture by leading contemporary artists," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "We are enormously grateful to The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, which also funded the Gallery's Sculpture Garden and seven of the 20th-century sculptures installed there."

### THE WORK

Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, Ein Schauspiel, 3X is one of Frank Stella's largest and most impressive works. Constructed of stainless steel, aluminum, painted fiberglass, and carbon fiber, it measures 31 by 39 by 34 feet and weighs just under 20,000 pounds. This sculpture is the culmination of many years of work, including the original maquette and a "1X" version measuring 10½ by 13 by 11¼ feet.

A whirlwind of curving aluminum and fiberglass forms is supported by three derricklike stainless steel structures that elevate the forms while also anchoring them to steel plates on the ground. Additional stainless steel stays provide the tension for cranelike supports. Stella's use of lightweight materials, some of which were produced using advanced industrial technology, and the hovering character of the structure, endow his work with a buoyancy that belies its size.

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The complex, dramatic forms in the sculpture represent the latest direction in Stella's career-long preoccupation with spatial relations. The artist has culled from his vast lexicon of abstract forms: white spiraling shapes, made of fiberglass, derive from a cutout styrofoam beach hat that he has enlarged and twisted into an abstract form. Black carbon fiber shapes relate to Stella's computerized images of smoke rings, and banners of jagged steel refer to a catalogue of shapes from the 1950s.

The title of this work refers to a play with the same title by the German writer Heinrich von Kleist (1777–1811)—a psychological reflection on the inner conflict between reason and emotion. Stella often uses literary references in the titles of his works.

This is the first monumental outdoor sculpture by Stella to enter a public collection in the United States.

### THE ARTIST

Born 1936 in Malden, Massachusetts, Frank Stella studied art history and painting at the Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, from 1950 to 1954. He continued his studies at Princeton University and graduated in 1958 with a B.A. degree in history.

Stella has lived and worked in New York for the past 40 years, producing a varied body of work that includes paintings, prints, reliefs, sculpture, and, more recently, public art and architecture.

Coming to prominence in the late 1950s and early 1960s, as one of America's great abstract painters, Stella's early works presented flat geometric designs that evolved into three-dimensional canvases. Since the late 1980s, Stella has increasingly turned his attention to sculpture and art for public places, often working on a massive scale, as exemplified by Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, Ein Schauspiel, 3X.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden, located on the National Mall between Third and Ninth Streets at Constitution Avenue, NW, are open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Admission is free. For general information, call (202) 737-4215; call the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176; or visit the Gallery's Web site at [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov). To receive the Gallery's free bimonthly Calendar of Events, call (202) 842-6662 or e-mail [calendar@nga.gov](mailto:calendar@nga.gov).

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