

PARK AVENUE GETS ANOTHER SET OF PUBLIC ARTWORKS

Text by [Michael Slenske](#) | Photography by [Kai Hilgemann](#)
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In 1982, German-born, Amsterdam-based sculptor Ewerdt Hilgemann polished a marble cube for six weeks, transported it to a quarry, and then rolled it down a steep slope to see what might be left of the gleaming geometry. As a student of the cofounder of Germany's ZERO group in the 1960s (which will get its own retrospective at the Guggenheim in October), Hilgemann had been a strict adherent of mathematically derived light sculptures. "I felt like I was rolling down myself," he says. "And when I came down, it cured me from being really strict and mathematical. I liked the idea of bringing in another force like gravity and, later, implosion. I've always liked the idea of natural power." Since 1985, Hilgemann has been vacuuming the air out of welded-steel cubes and rectangles, using pumps or simply water, to create his iconic "Implosion" sculptures. Seven of these now grace Park Avenue from 52nd to 67th Street, in the wake of Alice Aycock's "Park Avenue Paper Chase"—Hilgemann's first major exhibition in the United States.



Threesome (Caryatids), Ewerdt Hilgemann, 2014.

Dubbed "Moments in a Stream," Hilgemann's Park Avenue installations range in size from eight to 20 feet tall, many referencing the minimalism of Piet Mondrian, whom Hilgemann admires. "Mondrian tried to become part of American society and New York by painting in a minimalistic way," he explains. "But with *Broadway Boogie Woogie*, he painted himself into the structure of New York. I want to do the same with sculpture."

MAGNANMETZ GALLERY



Habakuk (Homage to Max Ernst), Ewerdt Hilgemann, 2014.

In addition to totally cubic forms, Hilgemann has created *Cube Flower*, a disarticulated floral study of the shape, in front of the Seagram Building, as well as a nod to Max Ernst's *Habakuk* sculpture at 67th Street. In his exhibition "Freeze Frame" at Magnan Metz Gallery, Hilgemann offers a deeper look into his process with maquettes and videos, and VIPs attending the August 5 private opening will get to see three steel cubes—one stainless, one Cor-Ten, one super-polished, all connected by tubes—imploded live. "You can anticipate what will happen," says Hilgemann. "But there's also a random element—it's nature. It's the first time I've done this simultaneously."

"Moments in a Stream" is on view through November 7, and *"Freeze Frame"* through August 21; magnanmetz.com