



## VIDEO: Ewerdt Hilgemann at Home in New York with Park Ave Sculptures

by [Kristen Boatright](#)

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NEW YORK — At nearly 80 years old, one of Ewerdt Hilgemann’s most striking attributes is his boundless energy—more indicative of someone decades younger. The German artist, who has called Amsterdam home since the 1980s, has brought that lively spirit, along with a series of sculptures, to New York City.

Four years after receiving an invitation, Hilgemann has realized seven stainless-steel pieces for his “[Moments in a Stream](#)” exhibition along Park Avenue. The ‘implosion’ sculptures are created using a unique vacuuming method developed by Hilgemann in the 1980s. The artist, with the help of his studio, creates perfect geometric forms then uses a process to suck the air out of the structures, harnessing the innate atmospheric pressure to collapse the pieces into their final shape.

“The air is my hammer. I am an ‘airsmith,’” Hilgemann told Blouin ARTINFO. “The air is hammering for me, sculpturing for me... I like the nature force.”

We spoke with him on a sunny day in August, shortly after the installation, in front of “Habakuk (Homage to Max Ernst)” on the median at 67th Street and Park Avenue. At 20 feet tall, the piece is a tribute to Ernst’s bird-like bronze sculptures of the 1930s.

Following in the footsteps of [Keith Haring](#), [Fernando Botero](#), [Robert Indiana](#) and more recently [Alexandre Arrechea](#), Will Ryman and [Alice Aycock](#), the remaining large-scale sculptures line the avenue to the south, as part of one of the city’s public art initiatives. They were formed in the artist’s Amsterdam studio before being transported to New York via shipping container. Hilgemann himself was on hand for the complex installation, which went late into the night over three days last month.

“It was so exciting for me,” he said of those sleepless nights. “The night on Park Avenue is magic.”

“Moments in a Stream” arrived in the city weeks before New York is introduced to Hilgemann’s teacher, Oskar Holweck, a cofounder of Germany’s ZERO group in the 1960s. Opening in October is

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the Guggenheim's "[Countdown to Tomorrow: The International ZERO Network, 1950s-60s](#)," the first large-scale review of ZERO. Years after his death, Holweck's teachings and influence are not lost on the sculptor.

"[Holweck] was very important for me. The whole thing of ZERO, I am from that time. I am only a generation younger," says the artist. "Without that education... I wouldn't do [these] things now. It's connected altogether."

Hilgemann is also the subject of "[Freeze Frame](#)," a show at Magnan Metz in Chelsea where he is offering guests a deeper look into his creative process. In addition to a number of new works, on display are maquettes of all seven sculptures from the Park Avenue series. He treated visitors to a live implosion of three sculptures at the exhibition's opening.

*"Freeze Frame" is on view through August 22. "Moments in a Stream" can be seen through October 31.*

Website link: <http://www.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/1049952/video-ewerdt-hilgemann-at-home-in-new-york-with-park-ave>