

# GAGOSIAN

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## CHRIS BURDEN

### The Estate Show at artgenève

January 31–February 3, 2019

Palexpo, Geneva

Chris Burden, *40 Foot Stepped Skyscraper*, 2011, stainless-steel reproduction Mysto Type I Erector parts and stainless-steel base, 40 feet 6 1/2 inches × 6 feet 11 1/2 inches × 7 feet (12.4 × 2.1 × 2.1 m) © Chris Burden/Licensed by the Chris Burden Estate and Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

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January 10, 2019

*Toys are a reflection of society. They are the tools that society uses to teach and enculturate children into the adult world. Toys are not innocent.*

—Chris Burden

Gagosian is pleased to announce that Chris Burden's *40 Foot Stepped Skyscraper* (2011) will be featured in *The Estate Show*, an annual event at artgenève presenting a monumental work by a historic artist.

With a series of startling and life-threatening actions in the early 1970s, Burden challenged his own mental and physical limitations, and with them the boundaries of art and performance. Over the course of his career, the daring spirit of these early performances evolved into compelling large-scale sculptures that embody technical feats on an imposing scale. Burden has deployed actual vehicles (ships, trucks, and cars) in surreal and gravity-defying ways, and used toys (figurines, train sets, Erector parts) as the building blocks for his expansive scale models of skyscrapers, dystopic cities, and battlefields.

In 2008, Burden's massive architectural structure *What My Dad Gave Me* was installed at Rockefeller Center in midtown Manhattan. One of his most ambitious sculptures, the tower was built using approximately one million stainless-steel replicas of Erector set pieces, the popular twentieth-century children's building toy. Burden first began using these specially stamped metal parts in his elegant sculptures of bridges, which reflect on the intricacies of engineering and practical design.

Though smaller than its 65-foot-high forebear, *40 Foot Stepped Skyscraper* attests to Burden's mastery of even more complex engineering principles. It was built in the approximate form of a ziggurat, with stairs that spiral around and step back from the perimeter as they rise to the sculpture's apex. By moving around the sculpture, the viewer can conceive of climbing to the top, underscoring the tensions between monumental architecture and human possibility.

Gagosian will present modern and contemporary works by gallery artists in the main section of the fair (Hall 2, Booth B19).

**Chris Burden** was born in Boston in 1946, and died in Topanga Canyon, California, in 2015. Collections include the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; and Tate, London. Solo museum exhibitions include *A Twenty-Year Survey*, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA (1988, traveled to Carnegie Mellon Art Gallery, Pittsburgh; and Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, through 1989); *When Robots Rule: The Two-Minute Airplane Factory*, Tate Britain, London (1999); *Tower of Power*, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna (2002); *14 Magnolia Double Lamps*, South London Gallery (2006); Middelheim Museum, Antwerp, Belgium (2009); *Three Ghost Ships*, Portland Art Museum, OR (2011–12); *Magasin III*, Stockholm (2012–13); *Extreme Measures*, New Museum, New York (2013–14); *The Master Builder*, Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA (2014); and *Ode to Santos Dumont*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2015).

Two large-scale works by Chris Burden—*1 Ton Crane Truck* (2009) and *Porsche with Meteorite* (2013)—are on view at Gagosian, Britannia Street, London, through January 26.

#ChrisBurden

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## Press

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