

LEO HAZ

# Leo Haz

Austrian Contemporary Artist · P21-PETing · Patent No. 509067

## BIOGRAPHY

Leo Haz (b. 1981, Braunau am Inn, Austria) is self-taught. He makes sculpture, light installations, and relief. His practice is based on P21-PETing — a thermoplastic process he invented and registered at the Austrian Patent Office as the only technical patent in the world for transforming post-consumer plastic into fine art. Since 2008, he has sorted PET bottles by colour and era, building a chromatic archive known as the Vault. Austria's deposit system, introduced in January 2025, sharply cut the colour range of PET packaging on the market to simplify recycling. Some colours discontinued before the deposit era can now be sourced only from the Vault.

On a humanitarian mission in Montenegro, Haz came to know a coastal community living on a dumpsite beside the Adriatic. He taught painting and drawing in a makeshift school; shortly before leaving, a child pressed a crushed bottle cap into his hands. He carries it still, placing it on his workbench before every new work. Since that encounter, he has worked with post-consumer materials — supplementing or replacing acrylic and oil paint, opening new forms of expression.

Haz was born two minutes' walk from the house where Adolf Hitler was born; his studio stands in the same neighbourhood. This geographical fact frames the "Machthaber" series (2020–ongoing), in which PET skulls cast from waste and gold-leafed replace the faces in canonical portraits of power.

His work has been shown at the Johannes Kepler University Linz, Schloss Mamling, Casino Bad Füssing, and Galerie K3, and reviewed in Kurier, Passauer Neue Presse, and on ORF1 and ORF2. Works are held in private collections in Austria, Germany, and the United States.