

LEO HAZ

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

ARTIST STATEMENT

The plastic bottle is the Anthropocene's confession. It does not decompose — it testifies. Since 2008, Leo Haz has been collecting these testimonies: post-consumer PET bottles, sorted by colour, stored by era, catalogued entry by entry in a chromatic archive that Austria's Pfand deposit system sealed shut in January 2025. What remains in the Vault cannot be replenished. When a colour runs out, it is extinct. Under P21-PETing — Patent No. 509067, Austrian Patent Office, the only technical patent in the world for thermoplastic fine-art transformation — Haz performs what the theologians call transsubstantiation: the irreversible moment in which one substance becomes, permanently, another. The process leaves no remainder. Provenance is not a claim; it is the scar the transformation leaves behind.

Each sculpture, relief, or light object draws a precise number of units from this corpus delicti. This is not recycled art in the sentimental sense — it is material evidence, aesthetically autonomous and historically indisputable. Haz's works — from the Green Mile to the CO₂-absorbing Black Matters — operate simultaneously as objects of beauty and as documents of the Anthropocene: things that exist because a civilisation produced more than it could destroy, and one man refused to look away. Collecting a Haz means acquiring a fragment of a closed system, one that grows smaller with each work completed. The piece does not ask you to save the planet. It tells you the planet's waste is already permanent. In an art world that confuses gesture with substance, P21-PETing delivers something rarer: patented truth.