

Eduard Habicher Memory in Motion

20.02.2026 – 31.01.2027

Eduard Habicher. Memory in Motion



Memory in Motion – Recent sculptures by Eduard Habicher in Museion’s Passage

Bart van der Heide

Museion’s Passage is a space designed to receive. Open and accessible, it offers itself without prescription. Visitors moving through it assume different rhythms: a school class gathers before dispersing, someone pauses in a moment of stillness in the reading room, others drift between the bookshop, the café, the collection. It is a lived space, where everyday gestures coexist with the museum’s ongoing work of caring for and shaping cultural heritage together with artists, thinkers, and its audiences.

Within this particular architectural setting, the sculptures of Eduard Habicher (b. 1956, Mals / Malles) find a natural resonance. To celebrate the artist’s seventieth birthday, Museion presents his work once again—his last exhibition in the museum took place in 1991, in its former building. Since then, Habicher’s sculptures have become a cornerstone of contemporary art in South Tyrol, recognized throughout Italy and beyond for the way they extend into space with a confident generosity. His sculptures adopt a scale larger than the human body, not to dominate it but to welcome it into their orbit. The idea of passage is central to them: Thresholds, openings, and movements guide both the gaze and the body through space. Their essence lies in this openness—their embrace—the way they shape a place without enclosing it, inviting each visitor to enter, to cross, to continue.

At Museion, we understand cultural heritage in a similar way: as a practice of openness. Cultural heritage persists not by remaining unchanged but by encouraging new readings, new uses, new forms of attention. Contemporary art museums create environments that are hospitable, porous, and receptive to the shifting ways people seek belonging—offering a vital threshold into collective imagination and free thought.

In the meeting between Habicher’s sculptures and Museion’s Passage, a shared intention becomes visible. Both shape space so that it can be inhabited meaningfully. Both trust in the presence of the visitor to complete the work. And in this confluence—where the museum’s role as a public place aligns with the generous, invitational nature of Habicher’s art—a quiet but vital collaboration unfolds.

Early in his artistic journey, Habicher recognized where he belonged within the landscape of contemporary sculpture. He aligned himself with matter itself—with weight and density, with substance that registers its presence in real time. Through this grounded materiality, he learned to challenge space by setting solid form against the idea of lightness, as if testing how far space will yield to the presence of mass.

For Habicher, this became a practice of negotiating balance within contrast: between hard and soft, smooth and rough, organic and inorganic, raw or worked materials. In his early works, these opposing qualities are held in suspension—between the primordial materials of stone, marble, and wood and the modern cultural product of stainless steel—an interaction shaped by context. It is in this sense that he has been described as an artist deeply rooted in his

surroundings, “regional verankerte Kunst im besten Sinn” (regionally rooted art in the best sense), as Andreas Hapkemeyer introduced his first exhibition (*Eduard Habicher*, 1991) at Museion thirty-four years ago. Habicher works with the materials nearest to him and the reality that surrounds him, entering into dialogue with both.

On the occasion of this first exhibition, Museion acquired a major sculpture: *Energiefeld / Campo di Energia* (1989/90). The work takes the form of a six-meter-long boat resting diagonally against the museum’s white wall. Crafted from a long, V-shaped steel plate with a rectangular piece of found wood set into its center, the sculpture appears to hover between floor and wall, its upper end poised above an entrance, its lower end balanced delicately on a single point.

Within the sanitized clarity of the exhibition space, the object emerges as a curious, almost orphaned artefact, at once anachronistic and faintly futuristic. It invites us to wonder what this boat might signify and to which journeys, real or imagined, it belongs. The tension it generates is palpable: The sheer weight of the steel suggests a latent danger, as though its monumental mass could overwhelm an unsuspecting visitor were the equilibrium to shift.

As in life, oppositions—the very foundation of democratic thought—are not meant to be erased; when their quiet interdependence is allowed to surface, they are able to coexist. The hard, resistant, seemingly lifeless materials Habicher works with can be seen as metaphors for history fixed in place by cultural canon and tradition. Yet in his hands, this rigidity loses its authority. He bends these materials toward possibility, drawing from them a dynamic, almost weightless resolution, as though revealing the movement always waiting within.

His relationship to these rigid materials rests on his ability to bend them toward movement: to draw from them flowing lines that trace a spatial choreography, hovering in the air like projections of thought made tangible.

In recent years, this process has found a distilled visual clarity through the emergence of the red line, an element now almost emblematic of his practice. These vivid, ascending trajectories cut through space with a rare combination of precision and airiness. They carry the essence of his early explorations—movement, tension, openness—while giving them new immediacy. In this way, artificial and organic matter find a synthesis in a dynamic form of writing, “as though [the red line] were a vein, a blood vessel bearing lymph and life” (*Drawing Space*, Merano Arte / Kunst Meran, 2009, p. 45).

When displayed in Museion’s Passage, Habicher’s red line resonates beyond material or aesthetic form. It gains a metaphorical dimension: a reminder of how art can become the vessel through which a body of cultural memory is written and sustained. The German term *roter Faden* (guiding thread) lies at the heart of collecting institutions. It marks the continuity that allows collective memory to take shape. It is this thread that lends coherence to the

narratives we curate, preserve, and project into the future, a line that quietly connects what might otherwise remain fragmented. In this dialogue between sculpture and institution, memory itself becomes something in motion—shaped, renewed, and carried forward by the lines we follow and the spaces we inhabit.

Habicher's red line thus mirrors the way museums trace, hold, and renew connections across time. It becomes an emblem of cultural continuity, a visible sign of the ongoing work of shaping heritage as a living, dynamic practice. More than a motif, it becomes the thread that articulates the clarity of his thinking, making visible the continuity that has always guided his evolving practice—like a boat carrying us across open seas, steadying our passage as we navigate the ever-shifting waters of memory and meaning.



Energiefeld / Campo di Energia
1989/1990, steel and wood
600 × 58 × 285 cm, Museion Collection

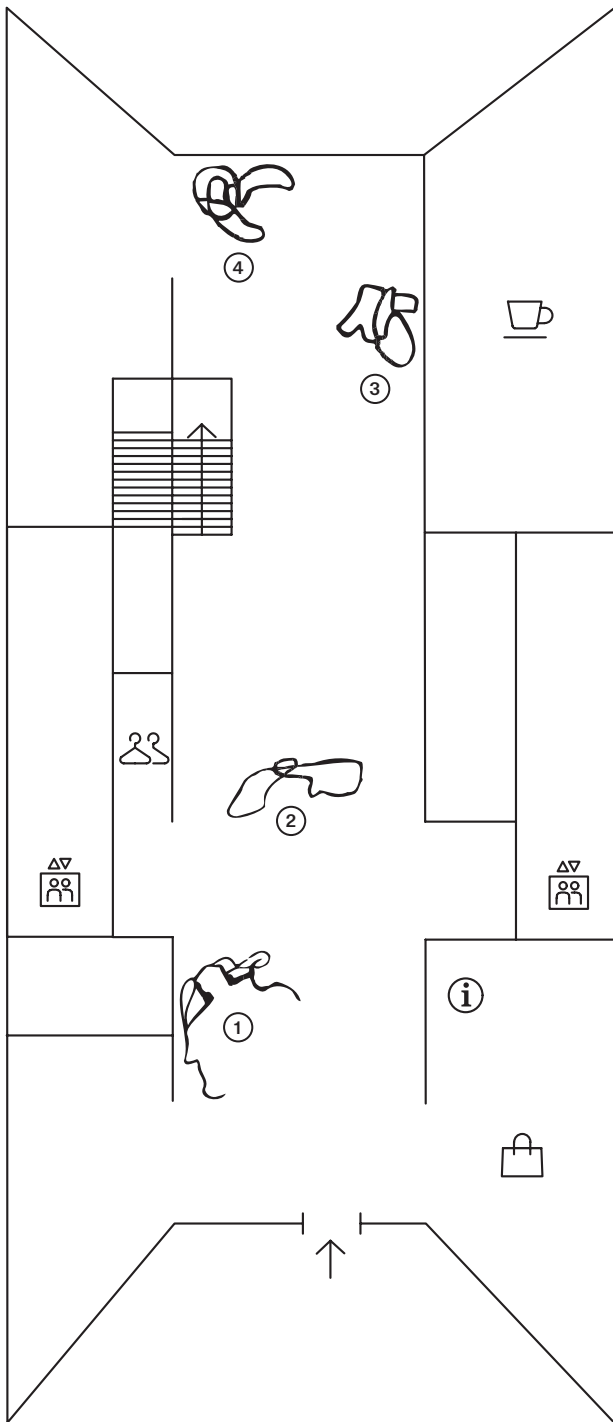
Eduard Habicher

Born in Mals / Malles in Vinschgau / Val Venosta in 1956, Eduard Habicher graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence. He lives and works in Rifiano / Riffian (BZ).

Habicher has had solo exhibitions at a number of Italian museums and galleries, including Galleria Civica di Trento (1993), Galleria Comunale d'Arte Contemporanea in Arezzo (1993), Museo della Scultura Contemporanea di Matera (2006), Galleria d'Arte Moderna G. Carandente at Palazzo Collicola in Spoleto (2024). In 2025, he had a solo exhibition in the prestigious Dolezal private collection as part of *viennacontemporary*.

His large-scale sculptures are permanently installed in both public spaces and private institutions, such as Therme Meran / Merano in Italy and the Pablo Atchugarry Foundation in Uruguay. His work has also been installed in Berlin, along the banks of the Spree, in the courtyard of Wallstrasse 16, and at the Campus of the European Research Centre for Alternative Energy (EUREF); in Italy, at the South Tyrolean Museum of Culture and Provincial History of Castle Tyrol, Piazza Vittoria in Spoleto, the outdoor Museo Diffuso Albisola, and in Leifers / Laives; and in Austria, in Feldbach, Gleichenbergerstrasse, and the Kugelmühle cultural center. In 2017, he installed a large-scale work in Bolzano Cathedral to commemorate the anti-fascist J. Mayr-Nusser.

In 2016, Habicher was awarded first prize for his sculpture *Misurare lo spazio* at the Palazzo Ducale in Gubbio, and in 2018, he won the competition to create a sculpture for Piazza Castello inside the Palazzo Ducale in Mantova. In 2023, he was elected National Academician of the Accademia Nazionale di San Luca in Rome.



Memory in Motion

All the works in this exhibition are linked by the use of construction beams. Manufactured from steel, these beams do not retain the standardized forms they were shaped into by the mill. Instead, they are bent, curved, and twisted as if they were made from wax or rubber. Originally intended as engineering materials, these beams were produced according to regulated standards that determine their shape, size, and properties. Released from the rigid logic of structural engineering, the beams are transformed into playful sculptures, embracing a movement that appears joyful and free.

① *Hommage*

The elements of this work appear to move toward one another, producing a form that resembles a meeting or an embrace. A sinuous line of stainless steel rises up from the ground, stretching in the direction of a shape suspended above it, which reaches down. Perhaps a spark between these forms will be ignited...

2009-2020, industrial I-beam (IPE 100) and steel
362 × 450 × 310 cm

② *Passage*

Like the Museion Passage, this work is an invitation to encounter, reflect on, and pass through a space. In doing so, one experiences both the physical and material presence of the sculpture and the space it opens up. Like the other works in this exhibition, this sculpture rests directly on the ground, without a plinth. *Passage* resembles a portal or a threshold, indicating a space of initiation, change, or immersion in a spiritual dimension.

2025, industrial I-beam (IPE 120)
365 × 500 × 220 cm

③ *Geöffnet-aperto*

An opening is hinted at in this sculpture, allowing one to physically or mentally enter it as if it were a shelter or refuge. It offers a small mental pause, where one can linger for a while before reentering the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

2025, industrial I-beam (IPE 100)
300 × 330 × 290 cm

④ *Pro-tetto*

This work plays with and emphasizes a peculiarity of the Museion Passage, whose ceiling suddenly extends much higher than the five meters of the central area. Entering into dialogue with this concrete environment, *Pro-tetto* projects upward, lifting one's gaze. Atop it, like a protective roof, sits an irregular, halo-like shape, which expands and defines this sculptural space.

2025, industrial I-beam (IPE 140 and IPE 100)
465 × 385 × 290 cm

All works: courtesy of the artist



Eduard Habicher Studio
360° Virtual tour

The exhibition continues in
Piccolo Museion – Cubo Garutti
at via Sassari 17b, Bolzano / Bozen

RELATED EVENT

10.05.2026, 18:00 h Music
performance *Memory in Motion*
by Robyn Schulkowsky, Joey Baron,
Otomo Yoshihide at Museion Passage

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Curated by the Museion Passage Group
in collaboration with Eduard Habicher

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