

Frederick Kiesler. Endless House

From July 5, 2024



Friedrich Kiesler

Model of the Endless House (1950)

Collection Dieter and Gertraud Bogner at
mumok, since 2017

Photo: mumok

In January 2017, the collectors Gertraud and Dieter Bogner made an exceptional donation to mumok: a set of approximately thirty works by the Austrian American architect, artist, set designer, designer, and theoretician Frederick Kiesler. Starting on July 5, 2024, a revised arrangement of the small permanent presentation of Kiesler's oeuvre will now surround one of his major pieces from the mumok collection, the *Endless House* from 1959, with a series of works from the holdings of the Friedrich and Lillian Kiesler Private Foundation.

The *Endless House* is a seminal work within Frederick Kiesler's oeuvre and theory. The extraordinary quality of this biomorphic architectural vision is that of a space in constant flux. The structure of this unique model is irregular and spheric. The floors, walls, and ceilings look as if rendered from infinite loops—a vision that explodes the boundaries of the traditional understanding of architecture in multiple ways. The model's circular form and its organic makeup symbolize a flowing, interdependent concept that Kiesler developed in contrast to the rationalized, geometric living spaces of the twentieth century. His philosophy about the reciprocities of people and their surroundings, of architecture, art, perception, and effect, shapes his entire oeuvre. Kiesler only made three complete models of the *Endless House*, two of which are currently located in New York—at the MoMA and at the Whitney Museum, respectively. Gertraud and Dieter Bogner acquired the third model directly from Kiesler's widow, Lillian.

Thirty years ago, mumok (then called the Museum of the Twentieth Century) mounted the exhibition *Frederick Kiesler: Visionary*, curated by Dieter Bogner in collaboration with Susanne Neuburger. The presentation kicked off a new, still ongoing phase of the international reception and impact of this innovative artist, who played a pivotal role in twentieth-century architecture, painting, sculpture, and theory. The show in Vienna, which was accompanied by a large scholarly catalog, was followed by major monographic exhibitions at the Whitney Museum in New York, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, and, recently, MAK – Museum of Applied Arts in Vienna and Martin Gropius Bau in Berlin.

With the important *Nachlass* acquired by the Federal Republic of Austria, the City of Vienna and private individuals, the Austrian Frederick and Lillian Kiesler Private Foundation, which was founded in 1997 by Dieter Bogner and John Sailer, has since evolved into an international research and competency center. As part of the donation to mumok, it was agreed that the Bogner collection would be made available to the Austrian Frederick and Lillian Kiesler Private Foundation for its exhibition and research projects.

Not only does the exhibition provide insight into Kiesler's visionary major works; it

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also marks a new beginning of the close cooperation between mumok and the Frederick and Lillian Kiesler Private Foundation. In the coming months this partnership is to intensify with the production of a new short documentary about the life and work of Frederick Kiesler as well as an interdisciplinary lecture series. Both institutions want to consolidate synergies to create opportunities to delve into Kiesler's groundbreaking influence on architecture and the arts.

Curated by Marie-Therese Hochwartner and Gerd Zillner

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