

## Space and Reality New Acquisitions and Gifts

mumok Museum moderner Kunst  
Stiftung Ludwig Wien  
Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Wien

Exhibition dates  
June 6 to September 7, 2014

Press conference  
June 5, 2014, 10 am

Opening  
June 5, 2014, 7 pm

With her inaugural exhibition back in 2012, *Museum of Wishes*, mumok director Karola Kraus made it clear that focusing on the defining elements of the mumok's own collection would be an important feature of her tenure. Continuing in the spirit of framing the museum's own collecting policy, in the summer months of 2014 mumok is presenting a thematic selection of key new acquisitions. The focus here is on the turn to space as a theme in art. Looking at space as a theme entails a cross-genre approach in art, aiming to bridge the divide between artistic and social reality. With a selection of new acquisitions and gifts, mumok will present thirty striking examples of the turn to space since the 1960s.

Alongside "wishes come true" from the *Museum of Desires*, the show will also present new permanent loans from the Austrian Ludwig Foundation and also purchases made for mumok with the support of the Austrian Federal Chancellery, Department of Art. A special place is reserved for works from the Gertraud and Dieter Bogner collection. We will also be showing acquisitions that would not have been possible without the support of the Society of Friends of the Fine Arts or the mumok Board. Generous gifts by artists and collectors who are closely associated with mumok are also included in this exhibition.

"Our budget for new acquisitions is steadily decreasing, but we remain highly successful in expanding our collection. This exhibition clearly shows that our key task of collecting and preserving art can only be undertaken with the assistance of gifts and bequests. Significant works by renowned young Austrian and international artists have been added to our collection in this way, and our results over recent years are extraordinarily good. In 2013 alone we succeeded in gaining gifts to a value of around 1.2 m euros," says Karola Kraus.

With the revolutionary transformation of art in the 1960s and 1970s, when the borders of genres shifted and new forms of art developed, so that locations and formats of presentation also fundamentally changed, installation art and spatial works gained increasing significance. This was accompanied by the realization that perception was a process in space and time, in which the role of the viewer or beholder was also thematized. A phenomenologically grounded experience of space and the body within and around minimal art was replaced in subsequent conceptual and media-supported art by a perception of space and the self as socially and historically determined phenomena. This development became the basis for new positions, in which concepts of space, reflection on media, and questions of identity were linked with each other. This exhibition shows these developments with a

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selection of new acquisitions of art from the 1960s and 1970s and with contributions by contemporary artists.

### **Expansion of the Perception of Space, Art, and the Self since the 1960s**

Fred Sandback's strings tied across corners create an imaginary sculpture in space that is highly fragile and is thus able to trigger reflection on our own perception of space, art, and the self (*Untitled*, 1971). Dan Flavin's work *Untitled (to Cy Twombly) 1* is also a corner installation that interacts with space and the beholder. In the glare of artificial light all simple distinctions between art and space are dissolved. With *Genetrix* (1987), Cy Twombly creates a subtle painterly pictorial sculpture with a front and a rear, thus breaking down traditional attitudes of perception. A concept of the image and of painting with real spatial dimensions that is expanded into the technoid and kinetic is represented in this exhibition by the works *e1* (1958/60) by Marc Adrian, *Ohne Titel* (1965) by Koloman Novak, and *Multiple* (1977) by Henryk Stażewski.

In the 1960s and 1970s Dan Graham and Gordon Matta Clark played a significant role in overcoming the minimalist program by means of works referring to space and architecture. Dan Graham's *Star of David Pavilion* (1995/96), created for the collectors Gertraud und Dieter Bogner, complete with accompanying model (1989), can be seen within the local Austrian context as a critical and ironical Jewish counterpart to the ubiquitous presence of Catholic insignia.

Media-critical works also offered a critique of the minimalist aesthetic of the white cube. In *Raumsehen und Raumhören* (1973/74), VALIE EXPORT unequivocally points out the manipulative power of media technologies. The relation between an experience of space and media staging is addressed by Peter Weibel in a series of design drawings for a closed-circuit installation entitled *Dach der Welt* (1987/88). In his video *Demonstrationsfeld* (1973), Frantisek Lésak uses a television monitor as his initial motif, and then physically dismantles it, turning it into the pictorial setting for a media-critical performance.

Geta Brătescu's presentation of her studio can stand for the public meaning and definition of private and personal space, as documented in film by her artist colleague Ion Grigorescu in the work *The Studio* (1978). In a series of prints entitled *raumtexte* (1990), Heinz Gappmayr adds varying linear internal structures to geometrical cubic bodies, whose function is also explained in language.

### **More Recent Positions**

Brigitte Kowanz builds on the tradition of language-based art and on the transfer of images into kinetic light objects. Her mirrored boxes with illuminated text translate the principles of visual poetry into objects in space. Lois Weinberger's *Field Work* (2010), a drawn text labyrinth on white canvas, links the concept of space to reading

and writing as processes of associative combinations beyond fixed borders and rigid ascription.

The work of Tom Burr can be seen as a newer version of the reference to architecture as an accompanying theme of an extended sculpture—that once distanced itself from the attitude of sobriety in minimal art. With his stall-like boxes *Put Out* (2003), Burr undermines the minimalist claim to a presence of the object without meaning. Gerold Tagwerker's video *formfollowsfunction\_friedrich achleitner liest drei worte* (2007) ironically undermines the modernist paradigm of functional form.

Contexts of mediatization and the experience of space are the starting points in works by Dorit Margreiter, Heimo Zobernig, Judith Hopf, and Henrik Olesen. With *Short Hills* (2000) Margreiter points out different real and virtual spaces of existence, whose interplay determines images of identity in globalized and mediatized societies. Heimo Zobernig's sculptures in the form of furniture and shelving, like *Ohne Titel* (2011), merge familiar ideas of the functional and of abstract minimalist formal severity, in order to fundamentally challenge each. Christian Hutzinger's painting *Ohne Titel (CH 11/2010)* (2010) combines formal abstraction with spatial dynamics. In the video *Türen* (2007) by Judith Hopf and Henrik Olesen, a dynamic series of inclusion and exclusion determines the portrayal of space, which seems as a stage-like and Kafkaesque model for the space of art and society with its normative and directive essence.

Social and institutional critique is also a key feature of Christian Philipp Müller's work *Illegale Grenzüberquerungen, Grüne Grenze* (1993). In the Austrian pavilion at the 1993 Biennale di Venezia Müller wanted this work to refer to Austria's former monarchist grandeur and also to its loss. He also looked at contemporary questions of migration. Transgressing and questioning institutional spaces and borders was and is still the basis of the activities of *museum in progress*, from whose archive a number poster actions in public space (1991–2001) are on show.

Curated by Rainer Fuchs

**We would like to thank the Dorotheum, partner of the mumok collection, and our media partners Der Standard, Wien live, and Ö1.**

**Fact Sheet**  
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Exhibition dates	June 6 to September 7, 2014
Artists	Marc Adrian, Geta Brătescu, Tom Burr, VALIE EXPORT, Dan Flavin, Heinz Gappmayr, Dan Graham, Judith Hopf / Henrik Olesen, Christian Hutzinger, Brigitte Kowanz, Frantisek Lésak, Dorit Margreiter, Gordon Matta-Clark, Christian Philipp Müller, museum in progress, Koloman Novak, Fred Sandback, Henryk Stażewski, Gerold Tagwerker, Cy Twombly, Peter Weibel, Lois Weinberger, Heimo Zobernig
Venue	mumok MuseumsQuartier, Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Wien Level 4
Curator	Rainer Fuchs
Exhibition production	Sophie Haaser, Dagmar Steyrer
Opening hours	Monday: 2 – 7 pm Tuesday to Sunday: 10 am – 7 pm Thursday: 10 am – 9 pm
Tickets	Normal € 10 Concessions € 8 or € 7
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