

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

Exhibition dates
February 12 to September 13, 2015

Press conference
February 11, 2015, 10 am

Opening
February 11, 2015, 7 pm

Performance at the opening
Bernard Natan Centre for the Arts on
mumok Level 3
February 11, 2015, 8 pm

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Master Plan for the Museum: The Bernard Natan Centre for the Arts by Villa Design Group in the Exhibition *Ludwig Goes Pop* Grand Opening and Performance on February 11, 2015, 8 pm

From February 2015, mumok is presenting on four levels one of the world's most significant holdings of Pop Art—the collection of the German industrialists Peter and Irene Ludwig. In this extensive overview, around 100 works from seven different institutions associated with the Ludwigs will be brought together. Among the most important acquisitions by Peter and Irene Ludwig were Claes Oldenburg's *Mouse Museum Museum* (1960–1977) and *Ray Gun Wing* (1961–1977), created around the same time by the artist. These two key works of Pop Art will be shown in a prominent place on mumok's upper level. While *Ray Gun Wing* looks at the gun in its various manifestations, *Mouse Museum* is a walk-in "museum" in the shape of a geometrical Mickey Mouse, for which Oldenburg collected consumer goods, souvenirs, kitsch objects, mementos, and studio models since the 1950s. A synthesis of trivial culture and the standards of a museum is the starting point for the contemporary contribution to this exhibition by Villa Design Group, founded in 2011 at Goldsmiths College (Than Hussein Clark, James Connick, and William Joys). In parallel to *Ludwig Goes Pop*, Villa Design is opening a pop-up museum at mumok—the Bernard Natan Centre for the Arts (BNCA). With a view to Oldenburg's major work, Villa Design Group also designs a spectacular master plan for a museum. The architectural setting installed on mumok level 3 refers to an ocean liner of the kind that traveled between Europe and the USA up to the 1960s.

Villa Design Group's paraphrase of a museum focuses on the Romanian-French film producer, director, actor, and gay porn star, Bernard Natan, who was murdered in Auschwitz in 1942. As the owner of the Pathé film company he was one of the world's most successful film producers in the 1930s. Between 1929 and 1935 around 70 feature films were made in his studio. He also imported Walt Disney's Mickey Mouse to Europe. While Pop Art moves between high and low culture, Villa Design Group introduces a further level by choosing a controversial and fascinating figure from the queer subculture of the 1930s as the star of their narrative.

On February 11, at the opening of the *Ludwig Goes Pop* exhibition, the BNCA will also be officially opened. Villa Design Group will be performing music, dance, and newly arranged show tunes in the museum.

BNCA – A Museum Ocean Liner Full Speed Ahead

The Bernard Natan Centre for the Arts has everything that a museum seems to need today. A café, a movie theater, a bookstore, and an art education department are all part of this simulated museum that cites the architecture of transatlantic ocean liners. The metaphor of the ship creates an important joint to the *Ludwig Goes Pop* exhibition, symbolizing both the real and imaginary cultural exchange between two continents. In the 1940s New York gained increasing significance as a cultural authority, while Paris, the center of *haute couture*, lost prime of place in matters of the art world. By the end of World War II New York had already become the world's leading cultural capital. It was here that the new avant-gardes of abstract expressionism and Pop Art were developed. In their installation, Villa Design Group looks at the transfer between the old and new worlds, following the king of fashion Karl Lagerfeld in Andy Warhol's film *L'amour* (1973) when he says that it is time for Americans to leave Paris and Parisians in New York to go home.

The BNCA includes screenings of advertising videos made by Villa Design Group. In these they make use of the star cult associated with key symbolic figures from the boom years of Pop Art and cinema—a method that Andy Warhol perfected. Artists, designers, and filmmakers are included in the plot, among them Bernard Natan himself, Adrienne Gorska (Natan's film architect), Tamara de Lempicka (Gorska's sister), and also Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, and John Cage.

Curated by Susanne Neuburger and Barbara Rüdiger

Villa Design Group

Villa Design Group makes installations that combine references to literature, film, theater, fashion, and interior design to create a setting that can also serve as a stage for the Group's opulent performances. At London's Frieze Art Fair in 2014, for example, they staged the fair stand of their Mathew Gallery as a film set and conducted casting performances for their coming film project about the French furniture designer Jean Royère. Following exhibition participations and performances at Edinburgh Art Festival, Kunsthau Bregenz, the Bundeskunsthalle Bonn, and others, mumok is now presenting the first large Villa Design Group exhibition participation in Austria.

Exhibitions and projects (selection): *Casting Jean Royère*, Mathew Gallery stand at Frieze Art Fair, London (2014); *Inauguration of the Russian Season: The House of Adelaida Ivanovna*, Edinburgh Art Festival, Edinburgh (2014); *The Inauguration of the Russian Season, Prelude Carriage Vanishing Point*, Society for Cooperation in Russian and Soviet Studies, London (2014); *Blue Moon*, Mathew Gallery, Berlin (2014); *Dolce Fare Neite*, Marabiers 14, Geneva (2014); *Don't Worry – This One is on US*, Salt 3: Pageantry, Lima Zulu, London (2013); *The Portshead Garden*, Beton Galerie,

Hamburg (2013); *Spring 2007: Fall 2007, Zurück in die Zukunft*, KUB Arena, Kunsthaus Bregenz, Bregenz (2013); *The Alvar Alto Sleepover*, Mathew Gallery, Berlin (2013); *Villa 1: This House is a Triadic Fascist and Made of Industry Glass* (with Luis Lazaro Matos), George and Dragon Cabaret Bar, London (2012); *Via Paraguay 13* (with Luis Lazaro Matos: *Ein Raum und der hatte keine Richtung*), EchoRaum, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn; *Demetriou Penthouse* (with Luis Lazaro Matos and Maria Tamazou), Bachelor's Degree Show, Goldsmiths College, London (2011)