

## Body, Psyche, and Taboo Vienna Actionism and Early Vienna Modernism

Museum moderner Kunst  
Stiftung Ludwig Wien  
Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Wien

Exhibition dates  
March 4 to May 16, 2016

Press conference  
March 2, 2016, 10 am

Opening  
March 3, 2016, 7 pm  
Followed by an autographing session  
with Günter Brus and Hermann Nitsch



Günter Brus  
*Hommage à Schiele, 1965*  
Postkarte, Heftklammern, Bleistift auf  
Papier, 50 x 36 cm  
Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig  
Wien, erworben/acquired in 1976  
© Günter Brus, 2016  
Photo: mumok

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In 2016 mumok is taking a fresh look at one of the mainstays of our own collection—Vienna Actionism—by relating this to equally radical positions taken by some of its Austrian predecessors. Many Austrian museums and collections are supporting this project with generous loans of works, thus making it possible to create an encounter between artists from around the turn of the twentieth century and Vienna Actionists. The range of works on show includes iconic pieces of classical modernist art from our close neighbor, the Leopold Museum, and magnificent support with works from the Albertina, the Belvedere, the Austrian Theater Museum, which is loaning Gustav Klimt's famous work *Nuda Veritas* (1899), and significant additional works from the Vienna Museum, the Kokoschka Archive at the Vienna University of Applied Arts, the Friedrichhof Collection, and further loans from private collections in Austria.

The central concepts of *Body, Psyche, and Taboo* that make up the title of the exhibition indicate that this show is a presentation of both the intellectual and the formal links between Vienna Actionism and artistic developments in the early twentieth century. Works by Günter Brus, Otto Muehl, Hermann Nitsch, and Rudolf Schwarzkogler, the scandal artists of the 1960s, are compared and contrasted with pieces by their equally controversial colleagues working at the dawn of the twentieth century—from Gustav Klimt to Richard Gerstl, Oskar Kokoschka and Koloman Moser, to Anton Romako, Max Oppenheimer, and Egon Schiele.

Both early modernism and the period around 1960 in Vienna were characterized by a revolutionary sense of a new start in society and in culture and the arts. Conventions of representation and artistic genres were redefined, a faith in the power of art to shape and remold society led to new utopias and radical forms of provocation against the traditional order. It was not by coincidence that the protagonists of Vienna Actionism saw the iconoclasts of the early twentieth century as role models, with their radical references to the body and violations of taboos, and in their interdisciplinary and synergetic forms of art. Like the Viennese modernists, the later Actionists pursued a committed approach that enabled them to gain significance far beyond their local spheres of action. The works of both movements made significant contributions to international art history, and their relevance is increasingly recognized today, as the achievements and intellectual developments of the twentieth century are undergoing review.

This mumok exhibition identifies numerous similar motifs and styles, while also concentrating on comparable subject matter. Both at the beginning of the century and in the 1960s, the human body was seen as the mirror and counterpart to existential and social experience. The works of both generations are replete with psychological portraits, and depictions of the exposed body with its experience of pain. Self-portrayals as martyrs are frequent, as are notions of the artist as a priest and savior of society. Restrictive borders are opened up, and art adopts an

interdisciplinary approach. This also includes photographic (and later film), theater, literary, and musical art forms, often linking these with each other. Psychoanalysis and a critique of language also bring the potential of new scientific discourses into the artistic works.

Curated by Eva Badura-Triska

With thanks to our media partners Der Standard, Ö1, Falter, and Wienlive

**Fact Sheet**

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Venue	mumok MuseumsQuartier, Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Wien Levels 2, 3, 4
Curator	Eva Badura-Triska
Exhibition production	Dagmar Steyrer
Catalogue	<i>HAWSER / HOFER</i> German / English With forewords by Karola Kraus and Barbara Rüdiger and Essays by Philipp Ekardt and Lumi Tan Hrsg. Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Barbara Rüdiger, 2016 2 x 80 pages, numerous color and b/w illustrations 2 soft covers in one dust jacket, 180 x 240 mm ISBN 978-3-902947-31-4 mumok ISBN 978-3-86335-907-2 Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Köln € 19,80
Opening hours	Monday: 2–7pm Tuesday to Sunday: 10 am–7 pm Thursday: 10 am–9 pm
Admission	Normal € 11 Reduced € 8 / € 7
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