

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

Exhibition dates
November 10, 2017 to April 22, 2018

Press conference
November 8, 2017, 10 am

Opening
November 9, 2017, 7 pm



Öyvind Fahlström
Green Seesaw (Detail), 1968–1969
Photo: mumok
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Art into Life! Collector Wolfgang Hahn and the 60s

In the 1960s, the Rhineland was an important focus for massive changes in contemporary art. A new internationally networked generation of artists turned away from traditional notions of art. Inspiration came from everyday life. Everyday objects became the material for art. These artists worked in urban contexts, they broke across the borders between disciplines, and they collaborated with musicians, writers, filmmakers and dancers. Cologne restorer Wolfgang Hahn (1924–1987) was right up with the times, and he began to collect this new art. Over the years his collection grew to become one of the most significant collections of contemporary art, with works of *nouveau réalisme*, Fluxus, happenings, Pop art, and conceptual art.

The Collector and Initiator Wolfgang Hahn

Hahn was chief restorer at the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, and later at Museum Ludwig in Cologne. Before training as a restorer, he spent five years studying art history. It was his work as a collector and disseminator of art—and as a host—that made him well known. He lived as the avant-garde demanded—art and life were one and the same thing for him. His interest in art did not end when the working day was over. He undertook gallery tours and then carried on into the night in his own home, where artists were regular guests. His widow Hildegard Helga Hahn recalls living with art: “This was our everyday life, our normality. There were countless evenings like this, and they were all interesting and inspiring.” This is how the Hahns’ semi-detached house came to fill up with works by the most important artists of the 1960s. The staircase, the living room and bedroom, utility rooms, basement and garden and even the tiny guest bathroom all became exhibition spaces for the artworks the Hahns purchased, including works by Arman, Joseph Beuys, George Brecht, John Cage, Christo, Jim Dine, Robert Filliou, Allan Kaprow, Yayoi Kusama, Gordon Matta-Clark, Claes Oldenburg, Yoko Ono, Nam June Paik, Niki de Saint Phalle, Daniel Spoerri, Paul Thek, Jean Tinguely, Franz Erhard Walther, Andy Warhol, Lawrence Weiner, Wolf Vostell, and many more.

In Cologne Hahn was a key initiator. The first presentation of his collection in 1968 was like a bombshell. This exhibition entitled *The Hahn Collection. Contemporary Art in the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum* was a sign of Cologne’s rising star as an international metropolis for contemporary art.

Hahn was a truly handsome young man, mostly impeccably dressed in a blue suit. He was always the first to arrive, often coming to the galleries before the exhibitions opened. If he liked the works he saw, he bought them. When Daniel Spoerri was traveling with his *Suitcase* in the early 1960s and showed it in Cologne, Hahn was there. Following his chronicler’s instinct, he later bought the case. His aim was not to somehow consolidate his own taste or some status quo. Hahn took risks when he bought and sold art. His collection grew and grew, and he sold items to make way

for new ones.

Coming from the perspective of a restorer and art historian, Hahn saw art in historical contexts. He made records of what was going on and he collected not only works but also publications and documents. His art collection, his archive, and his library witness his time, offering a new view of art in the 1960s and 1970s, beyond the usual art-historical and geographical ascriptions.

mumok Acquires the Hahn Collection

In 1978, mumok was able to purchase part of the Hahn collection, and in 2003 a further purchase brought the whole collection together. Then, in 2005, Hildegard Hahn made mumok a gift of Hahn's library. Together, collection, archive and library show the complexity of art in the 1960s. Working together with Museum Ludwig Cologne, in 2017 the Hahn Collection will be shown in its entirety to the public for the first time.

Allan Kaprow: *Push and Pull*

Re-Invention by Eva Chytilek and Jakob Neulinger

In 1963, Allan Kaprow devised the environment *Push and Pull. A Furniture Comedy for Hans Hofmann*. Hans Hofmann had had great influence on his generation with his proverbial "push and pull" teaching methodology. According to this method, the composition of a picture should consist equally of static and dynamic elements, of geometrical and free forms, and of emerging aggressive and receding passive color tones—a constant forward and backward. Kaprow's environment was a parody of these formalisms. Following instructions, visitors to his 1963 presentation were able to move items of furniture to and fro in the spirit of Hofmann's abstract teaching methods. In later presentations, Kaprow required new interpretations of the work (re-inventions), which was based around a box with instructions written on card boards, which today are part of the Wolfgang Hahn Collection at mumok.

For the exhibition *Art into Life* artists Eva Chytilek and Jakob Neulinger have created a re-interpretation of Kaprow's work. In the very same space where Kaprow last re-invented his own work in 2002, Chytilek and Neulinger draw on his approach. They mount instruction boards on the walls and place a carpet on the floor that deliberately extends beyond the space of the exhibition surface. This carpet serves as a stage on which visitors can engage with and make use of the setting and sculptural objects provided by the artists. The visitors are expected to change and design this space themselves. This *Re-Invention* by Chytilek and Neulinger also expands Kaprow's proposal into virtual space. Under hashtag #push&pull exhibition visitors are invited to document their own re-inventions on Instagram. Among those who do this mumok will organize a prize draw and winners will receive exhibition catalogues and annual tickets for the museum.

Curated by Susanne Neuburger (mumok) and Barbara Engelbach (Museum Ludwig)

Cologne)

This exhibition is in cooperation with Museum Ludwig Cologne, where it has been on show in adapted form from June 24 to September 24, 2017. A comprehensive publication on the exhibition has been published.

We wish to thank the Peter und Irene Ludwig Stiftung for its generous support of the show. We wish to thank the exhibition sponsor, UNIQ, and our media partners Der Standard, Falter, Wien live, and Ö1.