



MAK

Press Release

VIENNA 1900 NEW from two perspectives

Unique approach offers insight into the artistic process:
Permanent intervention by artist Pae White reacts to art historian
Christian Witt-Döring's temporary presentation

Press preview	Tuesday, 20 November 2012, 10:30 a.m.
Opening	Tuesday, 20 November 2012, 7 p.m. As part of VIENNA ART WEEK 2012
Exhibition site	MAK Permanent Collection <i>Vienna 1900</i> MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna
Opening hours	Tue 10 a.m.–10 p.m., Wed–Sun 10 a.m.–6 p.m. Free admission on Tuesdays, 6–10 p.m.

With a new curatorial approach, MAK – Austrian Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art will open the MAK Permanent Collection *Vienna 1900* on 20 November 2012. The exhibit has been entirely re-conceptualized, now clearly devoting a great deal more space to the theme of Viennese arts and crafts between 1890 and 1938 than it had before. “Both MAK and Los Angeles-based artist Pae White, from whom we were able to commission the development of an artistic intervention, place such great demands on this new arrangement, that we have decided to let the dialogue between curatorial and artistic concept flow into the presentation, and to offer the project to the public in a staged approach. First, we will open *Vienna 1900*, which has been conceptually reworked by curator Christian Witt-Döring, in a temporary presentation designed by architect Michael Embacher. Several months later, the artistic intervention by Pae White, as reaction to this, will follow in a second step. Through this approach, we are able to offer unique insight into an artistic and curatorial process,” explains MAK Director Christoph Thun-Hohenstein.

In the course of the house's repositioning by Christoph Thun-Hohenstein, the redesign of this area, central to the museum, will open as one of the highlights of VIENNA ART WEEK 2012. At the same time, it provides the starting note to a successive renewal of MAK's Permanent Collection, which has remained unchanged since 1993. Located in the hitherto exhibition spaces *Wiener Werkstätte*, *Art Nouveau Art Déco*, and *20th/21st Century Architecture*, the new concept aims at anchoring the MAK as an international center of competence for Viennese arts and crafts of the era around 1900.

Stage 1: the curatorial approach in terms of content

Christian Witt-Döring, entrusted with the conception in terms of content, which he has worked out in collaboration with the MAK curators, pursues the declared goal of mediating the cultural significance of the exhibition objects and the seminal signifi-

cance of Viennese arts and crafts ca. 1900. The new installation, which is arranged in three chapters and first focuses attention on the exhibits in a temporary presentation opening on 20 November, pursues the roots, development, former topicality, and effects of Viennese Modernism within a broad time frame.

The first exhibition space is devoted to the overcoming of Historicism in the search for a modern Austrian style in the years 1890 to 1900. Beginning with Otto Wagner's proposal of a modern, utilitarian style, the Secessionists, inspired by Western and Japanese influences, also have a say with their demand for a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. The "narration" concludes with Adolf Loos's reaction to the latter and his call for the "modern man." With that, he established an alternative choice for the design of everyday modern life, which ultimately bears fruit in this permanent collection's final exhibition space. This is illustrated by Viennese objects, and mainly, those pieces from England, Scotland, Belgium, France, Germany, and Japan purchased as examples by the museum already around 1900, as well as works inspired by them that were created in the Monarchy's technical schools. These works are shown again within this original context as role models, here, for the first time.

The second exhibition space is devoted primarily to the development of a distinct Austrian style, which was aspired to by artists from the Viennese Kunstgewerbeschule (School of Arts and Crafts) and the Wiener Werkstätte based on the formal-stylistic concept of modernism initiated by the Secessionists, which is thus, in truth, a Viennese style. The objects exhibited here document the striking stylistic caesura brought about from 1897 by the Secession's efforts to create a distinct Austrian style. Based on Koloman Moser's Japanese-influenced surface art, the neo-classical inheritance of Biedermeier, and local folk art, this new style was first presented to the public in 1900 in the Secession's 8th exhibition. The spectrum on display here ranges from the Wiener Werkstätte's early, provocatively geometric, abstract forms to the formal language emerging around 1906/07, dominated by neo-classical elements and an elaborate vegetable-based ornamental culture through to Dagobert Peche's rococo-like, tectonic creations.

The third and final space is dedicated to the development from Viennese style to International style. Dating from World War I through to the national-socialist takeover of power in Austria, the exhibited pieces show the result of the search for a modern style in Vienna thematized in the first exhibition space. Here, visitors are confronted with two opposing worlds: the one, indebted to the convictions of Josef Hoffmann and his students, and the other aligned with the views of Adolf Loos, that is, international modernism. Although formally different, both worlds are in the Viennese tradition of exclusive arts-and-crafts production and present the social proposals of international modernism in individual cases only. This leads to typical Viennese proposals for the modern use object that remain ambivalent in terms of content, such as those offered by Josef Frank and Oskar Strnad, among others. These proposals are shaped by enormous social and economic ruptures, which also allows for the emergence of a new social conscience in product design. Like in the first exhibition space, interna-

tional objects contrast the Viennese products as an aid to orientation, in this space, from the De Stijl movement and Bauhaus.

Stage 2: the artistic intervention by Pae White

Pae White (* 1963, lives and works in Los Angeles) reacts to the themes present in Vienna 1900 and develops an intervention for the MAK Permanent Collection. She has created environments for each of the three collection galleries that explore the concept of the mirror, both as reflection, and in terms of the upending of received perception. White also investigates the museum object as an index of history and suggests various metaphors, such as that of the puzzle, as a way to reframe the conventional interpretation of the works. Pae White also allows her extensive and complex confrontation with Viennese arts and crafts ca. 1900 to flow into the exhibits in the MAK Permanent Collection of Contemporary Art, with which she accompanies both stages of the redesign of *Vienna 1900*.

Others curated by Pae White

Opening alongside the main exhibition *Vienna 1900* is a project curated by artist Pae White. Titled *OTHERS* (MAK Permanent Collection Contemporary Art, 21 November 2012 – 17 March 2013), she has selected works-on-paper and three-dimensional objects from the MAK Permanent Collection whose authors are principally unknown. According to White she is “intrigued by objects within the museum’s collections that are un-attributable, without clear authorship, yet remain part of the collection. The significance of the objects is clear, but, to me, their place in a historical narrative is not.” Equally, White is interested in the role of critics and curators in the formation of narratives, which exclude objects of ambiguous value in order to create clearer histories. A major focus of White’s exhibition is the MAK’s extensive holding of Japanese stencils (katagami), largely unauthored works on paper that have inspired several generations of European artists and artisans in their designs for textiles, coverings, and book illuminations. Pae White affirms that *OTHERS* is an attempt to rescue some of these objects, from relative obscurity, and to let them bask in the light of day.

Pae White. ORLLEGRO

In her work, Pae White develops new relationships between fine and applied arts, architecture, and design. In the context of her first solo exhibition in Austria *ORLLEGRO* (MAK Permanent Collection Contemporary Art, 8 May 2013 – 4 May 2014) White is planning a large tapestry articulated in metallic thread, as well as a series of sculptures and objects especially for the museum. The MAK collection—as revealed in *Vienna 1900*—serves as an inspiration for White, who is using her solo show to rethink what the applied arts mean to contemporary audiences.

A MAK/ZINE on the reconceptualization of the exhibition spaces *Vienna 1900* will be available on 20 November 2012.

Press material is available for download at MAK.at/press

Press Fact Sheet

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Press Preview / stage 1 / <i>Others</i>	Tuesday, 20 November 2012, 10:30 a.m.
Press Preview / stage 2 / <i>Pae White. ORLLEGRO</i>	Tuesday, 7 May 2013, 10:30 a.m.
Opening / stage 1 / <i>Others</i>	Tuesday, 20 November 2012, 7 p.m. As part of VIENNA ART WEEK 2012
Opening / stage 2 / <i>Pae White. ORLLEGRO</i>	Tuesday, 7 May 2013, 7 p.m.
Venue	MAK Permanent Collection <i>Vienna 1900</i> MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna
Exhibition Dates / stage 1 / <i>Others</i>	21 November 2012 – 17 March 2013 Permanent
Exhibition Dates / stage 2 / <i>Pae White. ORLLEGRO</i>	8 May 2013 – 4 May 2014
Opening Hours	Tue 10 a.m.–10 p.m., Wed–Sun 10 a.m.–6 p.m. Free admission on Tuesdays 6–10 p.m.
Curator <i>Vienna 1900</i>	Christian Witt-Dörning
Artistic Intervention <i>Vienna 1900</i>	Pae White
Guest curator <i>Others</i>	Pae White
Curator <i>Pae White. ORLLEGRO</i>	Bärbel Vischer Curator, MAK Contemporary Art Collection
Exhibition architecture	Embacher/Vienna
MAK Admission	€ 7.90 / reduced € 5.50 / family ticket € 11 / free admission for children and teens up to 19
MAK Press and Public Relations	Judith Anna Schwarz-Jungmann (head) Sandra Hell-Ghignone Veronika Träger Lara Steinhäuber T +43 1 711 36-233, 229, 212 presse@MAK.at MAK.at

Vienna, 20 November 2012