

OTHERS

curated by Pae White

MAK Permanent Collection Contemporary Art, 21.11.2012–17.3.2013

Within every museum there are objects that are unattributable, that have no clear authorship, and yet remain part of the collection. The significance of the object is clear, but their place in an historical narrative is not. Living in a sort of limbo, these objects pass time in their dark, climate-controlled space, waiting for a curator to detach them from limbo (or not). The institution understands their inherent value, yet cannot position them definitively in any conventional art-historical chronicle, which consequently ensures their continued absence from both exhibitions and historical texts.

To be certain, art historians and curators, alike, must engage in the editing of history to establish a storyline clear enough to be understood by a target audience; however sophisticated that audience might be, the totality of production in any era is too much to apprehend easily. When that era is the explosion of creativity that was *fin de siècle* Vienna, however, the trickle-down exuberance needs to be recognized. These creations may only seem semi-important when viewed next to the acknowledged masterpieces of the era, but those adjacencies provide a wider, more complex context in which to understand the era in its entirety.

OTHERS is an attempted rescue of some of these unknown yet important objects, by temporarily relocating them to the gallery on the top floor, allowing them the exposure that they so richly deserve. This exhibition will celebrate objects that challenge questions of categorization and authorship, offering, perhaps, a new, more inclusive story that defies historicism. My hope is to present the work as it came to me—without words, free of any didactic text anchoring it to a familiar, oft-told storyline.

In the end, *OTHERS* is less about the redemption of objects and more about offering the viewer (and the objects) the space to breathe, proposing the poetic silence of the unknown, and opening up a space, freed from the tyranny of history, in which these lovely, mostly anonymous creations can be viewed on their own terms.

—Pae White, Vienna, November 2012