

Press Release

MAK awarded the Austrian Ecolabel

Certification as a Green Museum an important step on the way to being a climate-relevant and climate-neutral art establishment

At the beginning of April 2021, the MAK became the first federal art museum in Austria to receive the Austrian Ecolabel. This important ecological seal of approval is for the MAK an important recognition of its resolutely pursued strategy of helping to build an environmentally friendly future through its museum work. For years, the MAK has been a pioneer amongst international art museums confronting the major ecological and social challenges of our age. According to the MAK's General Director Christoph Thun-Hohenstein and its Managing Director Teresa Mitterlehner-Marchesani: "We are committed to a holistic ecosocial approach and are therefore delighted to be honored as a Green Museum. This distinction brings the MAK a big step closer to its goal of contributing, to the best of its ability, to reversing the climate crisis! Now we must put into action our plan of achieving climate neutrality by 2030."

The Austrian Ecolabel is awarded by the Federal Climate Protection Ministry, following a thoroughgoing audit, for four years at a time.

"To protect the climate, we need trailblazers who are committed to implementing a future-oriented climate strategy both in private and in public. And as has been proven, art and culture can make an important contribution by implementing concrete measures for climate protection. I congratulate the MAK and its Director Christoph Thun-Hohenstein, together with his highly motivated team, on their successful Austrian Ecolabel certification," stated Federal Minister for Climate Protection Leonore Gewessler.

Thanks to its resolute commitment to climate care, the MAK inspires and fosters a broad artistic dialogue on the future of the climate.

According to State Secretary for Art and Culture Andrea Mayer, "Considering the consequences of climate change, it is of supreme importance to think about how art is produced and communicated in an ecologically sustainable context. This commitment to climate care requires dialogue and cooperation with artists and art institutions. The MAK not only fosters such a broad artistic dialogue; through its strategic and operative management it also assumes responsibility for sustainable development. The Ecolabel certification thus marks the attainment of a further milestone. I tender my heartfelt congratulations and thank the museum's entire team for its admirable commitment."

PLANET LOVE and CLIMATE CARE

The MAK's programmatic and infrastructural efforts to promote climate care extend beyond climate neutrality and decarbonization to embrace protecting the biosphere and biodiversity, as well as preserving and restoring ecosystems. A central goal of the museum is to provide easy-to-understand orientation on essential but often complex ecosocial issues. To this end, a future-oriented mindset developed by the MAK unites PLANET LOVE with CLIMATE CARE activities in the broadest sense of the term—a mindset that it will continue to develop through interactive programs.

The year 2021 marks a new milestone in the MAK's endeavors to sustainably reduce its ecological footprint, as well as in its engagement with climate care and climate welfare. The fourth edition of the VIENNA BIENNALE FOR CHANGE—initiated by the MAK and this year with the inspiring motto *PLANET LOVE: Climate Care in the Digital Age*—is above all dedicated the future of our planet. The main Biennale contribution, to be presented in the MAK is *CLIMATE CARE: Reimagining Shared Planetary Futures* and will put forward ideas for radical civilizational change.

ACTING TOGETHER FOR CLIMATE MODERNITY

By resolutely focusing on the world-wide climate and ecological crisis in exhibitions, educational programs, and other MAK events, designers, architects, and artists are encouraged to engage more closely with questions of sustainability and thus to enhance the sociological, economic, and scientific relevance of the applied and fine arts in shaping our Climate Modernity.

The MAK DESIGN LAB and the accompanying MAK LAB APP, temporary projects in the CREATIVE CLIMATE CARE GALLERY—founded in 2020—as well as a range of educational programs and discussion formats such as the MAK FUTURE LAB, all reinforce the programmatic focus that the MAK has been promoting for some years.

Civic engagement is also important to the MAK. This includes participating in the activities of *Museums for Future* within the framework of *Fridays for Future*, committing to sustainable consumption, and encouraging environmentally friendly travel to the museum. The MAK is centrally located and easily reached by foot, bike, or public transport. Many years ago, a sufficient number of bike stands were set up before the MAK entrance. And in an emergency, the porter can help out with a bicycle repair kit.

SUSTAINABLE USE OF RESOURCES

In the everyday operation of the museum too, special attention is paid to environmental

and ecological sustainability. This includes using resources sparingly; considering products' sustainability, longevity, and recyclability; and giving preference to merchandise bearing ecolabels such as the Austrian Ecolabel, the Blue Angel, or the EU Ecolabel. For all these measures a sustainability concept has been formulated, accessible at www.MAK.at/environment.

The ceremonial presentation of the Ecolabel to the MAK is planned for the Green Events Gala on 18 November in the MAK Columned Main Hall. Thanks to the Federal Climate Protection Ministry's "Green Events Austria" initiative, Austria has for many years been a European leader in the field of sustainable events organization.

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