

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

Exhibition dates
March 17 to October 22, 2017

Press conference
March 15 2017, 10 am

Opening
March 16, 2017, 7 pm



Jakob Lena Knebl
Come Closer, 2016
Photo: Christian Benesch
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Oh...

Jakob Lena Knebl and the mumok Collection

Artist Jakob Lena Knebl (born in 1970 in Baden) has no interest in thinking in predefined categories, neither in her life nor in her art. Her highly creative new arrangement of the mumok collection of modernist and contemporary art is on show from March 17, 2017, on two levels of the museum, presented together with her own new works. The artist has the courage to be eccentric.

The exhibition is entitled *Oh...*, as an indication of the surprises that a thorough and attentive perspective under new conditions will bring. The artist studied textual sculpture under Heimo Zobernig at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and fashion under Raf Simons at the University of Applied Arts Vienna. Both her own work and her new presentation of the mumok collection are shaped by a combination of her fields of interest, with all the aesthetic and theoretical implications and their effects on the formation of identity. The exhibition presents this as atmospheric spaces of desire. In these spaces, intended to be a permanent challenge to viewers, all simple ascription is resisted. Moments of clarity alternate with ambivalence as to the function and place of the objects presented. The fields of art, design, and fashion are always changing position. Visitors might well respond to Knebl's "Oh..." with the "Aha!" of recognition.

In her work with the mumok collection, Knebl focuses on classical modernism and on the 1970es, an epoch of utopias, visions for society, and sexual experiments. On one of the two museum levels at her disposal, the artist presents three large installations characteristic of her way of working, in which objects of interior design and landscapes for living from the period merge with her own works. Susanne Neuburger (mumok collections director) describes the artist's way of working: "Knebl's installations to date have involved us in a thickly woven web, like in her new construction with the revolutionary Chanel Arm Candy bag that left the bearer with her hands free, combined with wardrobe stands that Roland Rainer designed for the Vienna Stadthalle. In mumok too, Knebl deconstructs and searches for new forms and arrangements." Knebl uses formal-aesthetic characteristics from design and art and inscribes herself into their codes and social connotations. Her own self always plays a key role. She always integrates herself, as for example when she transforms her own body into various design objects. She has appeared as a paraphrase of one of the most famous dresses of the 1960s, Yves Saint Laurent's Mondrian dress, and with fragments of the legendary Memphis Designs of the 1980s as a swollen body.

“In the design of the installations for mumok I would like to explore how cultural aesthetics influence desire and identity,” says Knebl. “I want to involve viewers in a game, in which they are repeatedly confronted with the question as what it means for their images of themselves and the ways they present themselves when they deal with certain design objects, and what their style of clothing says about social role images. It is important for me to show that those processes as extensions of the body also play an important role in the context of art, when for example collectors define and stage themselves by means of the works they purchase.”

Knebl bans all the great male heroes of art to the walls and includes their works within an ornamental wallpaper pattern. She treats them as formal and design elements that produce a perfect pattern for decorating the walls. Lesser known women’s positions and works of Art Brut are placed at the center of attention—not least by means of oversized hands around the gallery that ostentatiously point at the reversal of values. Knebl also lightens sculptures by Alberto Giacometti and Henry Moore by using them as shop-window mannequins and dressed in outfits from the Capsule collection designed for the exhibition by the Vienna label House of the very Island’s Club Division Middlesex Klassenkampf But the Question is Where are You, Now?

On the strike of every hour, this exhibition level is digitally copied, in an interactive installation entitled ...*Ho* that literally turns the playful hanging of works into a game with the collection. The lights in the real space are turned off. A projection on the rear wall of the gallery mirrors the entire space including all the exhibited works, among which an avatar of the artist Jakob Lena Knebl then starts to rearrange the artworks. Visitors to the exhibition can influence what Knebl’s virtual double does with the art. Players can access an app in the museum and take part in the game. Players who have experience of smart phone games are at an advantage—the quickest to react will be able to control the avatar. On the instructions of a player, Knebl’s double will “feed” Alberto Giacometti’s thin *Femme debout III* (1962). By the time the exhibition comes to a close, she may be fat to bursting. Visitors can rebuild Oskar Schlemmer’s *Abstrakte Figur* (1921) to their own liking, or they can take mumok’s iconic *Femme assise à l’écharpe verte* (1960) by Pablo Picasso out of her frame and put her under their arm like a wet rag to be carried around.

On the second level of her show, Knebl looks at the many points of reference that works from the mumok collection have to furniture and design aesthetics. Working with curator Barbara Rüdiger, Knebl brings all of those works that refer to furniture, clothes, and interior design into a huge landscape of living. Rüdiger described the living room atmosphere: “We looked for arrangement criteria that enabled us to present the mumok collection in a new way, and also that does justice to Knebl’s own position as an intermediary between art and design. Desire, sexuality, and images of the body are central themes on which we oriented our work. From Knebl’s perspective, neither art nor design gains the upper hand. Both are treated equally. We were interested in the elements that connect and not in dogmatic borders.” Here

to the artist addresses her principal questions about the role of form and design and their significance within the field of the fine arts. Ordering her materials according to their suitability as interior design, she creates a homely atmosphere at mumok for the six months of the exhibition.

Designed by Jakob Lena Knebl. Curated by Barbara Rüdiger and Susanne Neuburger

We wish to thank the exhibition sponsor, Dorotheum, and our media partners Der Standard, Falter, Wien live, and Ö1.

Fact Sheet

Oh...

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Exhibition dates	March 17 to October 22, 2017
Opening	March 16, 2017, 7 pm
Exhibition venue	mumok, MuseumsQuartier, Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Wien, levels –1/–3
Concept	Jakob Lena Knebl
Curator	Barbara Rüdiger, Susanne Neuburger
Exhibition production	Sibylle Reichmann
Opening hours	Monday: 2 to 7 pm, Tuesday to Friday: 10am to 7 pm Thursday: 10am to 9 pm
Admission	Normal € 11, reduced € 8,50 / . € 7,50
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