

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

Exhibition dates
October 10, 2015 to January 24, 2016

Press conference
October 9, 2015, 10 am

Opening
October 9, 2015, 7 pm



Felix Gonzalez-Torres
"Untitled" (Go-Go Dancing Platform),
1991
© The Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation
Courtesy of Andrea Rosen Gallery, New
York

Press contact

Karin Bellmann
T +43 1 52500-1400
karin.bellmann@mumok.at
Katja Kulidzhanova
T +43 1 52500-1450
katja.kulidzhanova@mumok.at

Fax +43 1 52500-1300
press@mumok.at
www.mumok.at

to expose, to show, to demonstrate, to inform, to offer Artistic Practices around 1990

In fall 2015, mumok is looking back at international art activities around 1990. On three levels, we are showing installations, publications, objects, projects, films, and interventions by more than 50 artists and artists' groups, including many internationally known names and many positions that have seldomly been seen in museums. They all question traditional forms of exhibiting and address the pressing social challenges of their time.

The words *to expose, to show, to demonstrate, to inform, to offer* may seem to define the functions of an exhibition very clearly, but around 1990 there were many open questions as to what art should be offering, how it should be exhibited and made public.

In the context of larger societal changes around 1990, artists increasingly discussed the social functions and base of their work. Reflecting on the conditions of artistic production and art's presentation was, in various ways, intertwined with work on actual social issues. The status of the object of art and its economic foundation was a subject of contentious debate, as were the mechanisms of social exclusion, identity politics, and gender issues—and the AIDS crisis was reaching a pivotal point. In addition, the consequences of the fall of the Iron Curtain as well as a rapidly advancing globalization left their traces throughout.

The range of forms of art, presentation, and communication developed around this time was very impressive. Around 1990, artworks might be inserts in magazines, objects, photographs, displays, services, or performative interventions. Forays into other disciplines became the basis of countless projects. Archives were set up and quasi-scientific laboratory conditions were created, not least as a sign of the mistrust of established mechanisms of knowledge dissemination and their claims to objectivity. Traditional, object-based notions of art that had seen a renaissance in many places through the 1980s were displaced by site- and situation-specific installations. A myriad of new fanzines, magazines, and publications came into being, while activist art projects with social and political aims engendered intensive debate. Artists were no longer happy with the traditional roles ascribed to them. They appropriated positions that hitherto had been left to others in the art business by organizing symposia, operating their own project spaces, and writing in influential specialist media.

From Political Activism to New Forms of Installation between Vienna, Cologne, and New York

to expose, to show, to demonstrate, to inform, to offer will show the diverse activities of museum in progress, which was founded in 1990 in Vienna, as well as the art activism project *Democracy* (1988–1989) by the US-American artists' collective Group Material, and Kunstraum Friesenwall 120 in Cologne, a project space run by

artists in which art, discourse, film, politics, and leisure activities were aligned with each other in a new and paradigmatic form. Significant new contemporary publications such as the magazines *Texte zur Kunst*, *Third Text*, and (the no longer published) *ACME*, *Artfan*, *Documents*, *A.N.Y.P.*, *Vor der Information*, and others are also included in the new Vienna show.

Selected projects and installations by individual artists range from performative interventions such as Christian Philipp Müller's *Small Guide through the Former Electoral Gallery in Düsseldorf* (1986), Andrea Fraser's *Museum Highlights* (1989), and Felix Gonzalez-Torres's "*Untitled*" (*Go-Go Dancing Platform*) (1991), to photographic exploration of questions of appropriation and display (by Louise Lawler, Zoe Leonard, Christopher Williams, and others), to new forms of installation and presentation, like those practiced by Fareed Armaly, Tom Burr, Clegg & Guttman, Mark Dion, Maria Eichhorn, Renée Green, Christian Philipp Müller, Gerwald Rockenschau, Fred Wilson, and Heimo Zobernig.

The presentation of these works at mumok is guided by the historical contexts formative for their production. Their arrangement takes into account local situations, personal relationships, and international connections: Cologne, New York, and Vienna being three important centers of activity. The exhibition also makes visible concerns that are shared between the various projects and artworks.

Works by Renée Green and Fred Wilson for example come together in questions concerning colonialism, racism, and cultural identity, for example. In this context, Heimo Zobernig's installation *Amerikaner* (1992) looks at the cultural hegemony of the USA from a European perspective. A critical look at cultural transfer is as crucial to Zobernig's project as it is to Renée Green's installation *Import Export Funk Office* (1992). She makes use of the private record and book collection belonging to music and art critic Diedrich Diederichsen, a white man living in Cologne who took an interest in "her" black pop culture, and questions site-specific opportunities for experience, identification, and representation.

The close artistic exchange between centers in New York, Cologne and Vienna, and shared themes and issues, are shown in many areas of this exhibition. One example is the project *The Message as Medium*, which was created in 1990 by the Vienna art critic and curator Helmut Draxler for museum in progress. In *The Message as Medium*, artists from the three cities exhibited their work for a period of one year in the daily newspaper *Der Standard* and the business magazine *Cashflow*.

to expose, to show, to demonstrate, to inform, to offer offers a series of open paths, a walkable map for the viewer to experience the various layers of artistic content, social engagements, and geographies of production, in the placing and sequencing of exhibits and explicatory project texts, and also by means of a dedicated exhibition architecture that gives a prominent place to magazines, books, and other documentary materials.

In line with the exhibition's historical artistic positions on issues of exhibiting and display, our own exhibition design does not claim to be any kind of neutral store where works are placed in a value-free manner. Exhibition architect Ken Saylor highlights the otherwise invisible structural foundations of exhibition—exhibition walls stand in front of exhibition walls, to give just one example.

Study Archive

A key element of this exhibition is a supervised reading and research space where comprehensive publications, videos, and photo documentation allow insights into the impassioned discussion and debate around 1990. There are also copies of rare fanzines, catalogues, and information materials that permit in-depth exploration of the projects included in the exhibition.

The exhibition will be accompanied by an international conference (January 23, 2016), and a comprehensive publication. With this project, mumok is presenting a focused review of a field of recent art history that laid important foundations for our own contemporary artistic exploration of the forms and potential of exhibiting.

Curated by Matthias Michalka

Exhibition design by Ken Saylor

Fact-Sheet

To expose, to show, to demonstrate, to inform, to offer Künstlerische Praktiken um 1990

Exhibition dates	October 10, 2015, to January 24, 2016
Press conference	October 9, 2015, 10 pm
Opening	October 9, 2015, 7 pm
Venue	mumok, MuseumsQuartier, Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Wien, levels 2, 3, 4
Curator	Matthias Michalka
Curatorial assistance	Julia Hay
Exhibition architecture	Ken Saylor
Exhibition production	Sibylle Kulterer
Catalogue	<p><i>To Expose, to show, to demonstrate, to inform, to offer Artistic Practices around 1990</i></p> <p>Published by Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, edited by Matthias Michalka. With a foreword by Karola Kraus. Essays by Sabeth Buchmann, Helmut Draxler, Pamela M. Lee, Matthias Michalka. Interviews by/with Fareed Armaly/Julie Ault, Yves Aupetitallot, Judith Barry/Ken Saylor, Martin Beck/Stephan Dilleuth, and Matthias Michalka/Juliane Rebentisch</p> <p>German and English, c. 256 pages, numerous color illustrations. Format: 220 x 280 mm. Swiss brochure binding. Price: € 39.80.</p> <p>Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König.</p> <p>ISBN (Publisher): 9783-86335-813-6, ISBN (mumok): 978-3-902947-24-6</p>
Opening hours	<p>Mondays: 2–7 pm</p> <p>Tuesdays to Sundays: 10 am – 7 pm</p> <p>Thursdays: 10 am – 9 pm</p>
Tickets	Normal € 10, concessions € 8 or € 7
Press contact	<p>Karin Bellmann T +43 1 52500-1400 karin.bellmann@mumok.at</p> <p>Katja Kulidzhanova T +43 1 52500-1450 katja.kulidzhanova@mumok.at press@mumok.at, www.mumok.at/de/presse</p>