

Press Release

Artists' Books on Tour

The best European artists' books at the MAK Works on Paper Room

Press Preview	Tuesday, 11 October 2011, 10.30 a.m.
Opening	Tuesday, 11 October 2011, 8 p.m.
Exhibition Venue	MAK Works on Paper Room MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna
Exhibition Term	12 October 2011 – 22 January 2012
Opening Hours	Tue MAK NITE® 10 a.m.–12 midnight Wed–Sun 10 a.m.–6 p.m., Mon closed

A unique overview of Europe-wide creativity as it pertains to the artist's book can be seen starting on 12 October 2011 at the MAK Works on Paper Room. On display will be winning works and recipients of honorable mentions from the pan-European competition "Artists' Books on Tour," works which in their heterogeneity—from illustrated concept-books to avant-garde poetry and on to works that function purely as objects—testify to the multitude of ways in which the book medium can be treated artistically.

This exhibition is the climax of the EU-sponsored project "Artists' Books on Tour – Artist Competition and Mobile Museum," initiated by the MAK in Vienna together with the MGLC – International Centre of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana and the UPM – Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague with the objective of introducing the artist's book to a wider audience while underlining this genre's significance as a holistic type of artwork. At the beginning of the year, artists from all over Europe were invited to participate in the competition and to discuss the artist's book as an independent work-category.

The interest with which the "Artists' Books on Tour" competition was met exceeded all expectations. In total, 925 projects from 35 European countries were submitted. An international jury consisting of graphic designer Jianping He (Berlin), MAK Acting Director Martina Kandler-Fritsch, artist Florian Pumhösl (both Vienna), and Maria White, Chief Cataloguer at the Tate Library in London—artist Lawrence Weiner unfortunately had to cancel his participation at short notice due to illness—recognized projects by five artists with awards of € 2,000 each in late June. A further 45 works received honorable mentions.

The 50 recognized works—from Belgium, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Croatia, Montenegro, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, the Czech Republic, and Hungary—make use of unusual materials, forms of bindings and dimensions, and some of them stand in

distinct contrast to the design principles of the mass-produced book by virtue of the extremely original approaches taken by their creators.

The five winning projects serve to represent this diversity:

With her project *Paper Landscape* (2009), Julie Kačerovská (Czech Republic) created a finely structured paper relief on the basis of individual laser-cut pages which she sewed together to form a book which can be altered at any time.

Elena Peytchinska (Austria) succeeded in the complete reduction of the book medium to a geometric model in her work *book geometry* (2011). Her sculpture reads like a geometric poem. With the most minimal of design tools, she suggests a dialog between author and reader that goes beyond symbols and letters.

Interaction between text and image is the focus of Belgian artist Lien Buysens' illustrated, two-volume work *TOUWKIP* (2010). Buysens plays with the ambiguity of text, the variable meaning and effect of images, and the phenomenon of subjective construction in perception, thereby affording the reader the greatest-possible degree of interpretative freedom.

In her work *Tytus Czyżewski – Chosen Poems* (2010), Katarzyna Wolny (Poland) presents her typographic interpretation of poems by the futuristic Polish painter, poet and art critic Tytus Czyżewski (1880–1945) who, in his theories, celebrated the independence of each individual word. Using leaves of transparent foil, Wolny establishes references to poetry by showing a sentence formed by words removed from their original contexts. The words shown can be ordered as one wishes, joining to form poems that are entirely new, surprising or just plain absurd.

Matthias Krinzing (Austria) opened three bank accounts at three different banks and had one cent automatically transferred to each of them on a regular basis. He then used the resulting account statements to realize his project *1000 Plateaus* (2011), named after the philosophical work *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1980) by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. In keeping with the authors' idea of "Nomadic Science," which unites intellectual and physical work, what was caused here was not a capital flow, but rather just work.

In contributing to the initiative "Artists' Books on Tour," the MAK has succeeded in deepening its longstanding involvement with the medium of the artist's book. The MAK Library and Works on Paper Collection owns a historic and valuable body of around 1,900 artistically designed publications produced between the 19th and 21st centuries. These holdings include Austrian illustrating art, with examples from the Wiener Werkstätte (Koloman Moser, Josef Hoffmann), as well as foreign creations stemming from the Arts and

Crafts Movement (Walter Crane, William Morris) and Russian Constructivism (Alexander Rodchenko, El Lissitzky). The MAK's collection is being expanded on a continual basis to cover contemporary works by artists ranging from Günter Brus and Arnulf Rainer to Stefan Sagmeister and Lawrence Weiner.

In addition to staging the competition and presentation of winning works, the MAK is currently overhauling and expanding its database of artists' books as a further central element of the project. Ultimately, all of these holdings will be digitized and made accessible to the public online.

Following its initial presentation at the MAK, the exhibition "Artists' Books on Tour" is to travel as a mobile museum to the MGLC in Ljubljana (21 February – 1 April 2012) and subsequently to the UPM in Prague (18 April – 27 May 2012).

Press photos relating to the exhibition, along with a list of the winning projects and honorable mentions, are available for download at www.MAK.at/presse.

Press Data Sheet

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Curator	Kathrin Pokorny-Nagel, Head of MAK Library and Works on Paper Collection
MAK Expert-guided Tour	13 October 2011, 5 p.m.
Publication	<i>ARTISTS' BOOKS ON TOUR. Artist Competition and Mobile Museum</i> , published by MAK Vienna, MGLC Ljubljana and UPM Prague, with texts by Jianping He, Martina Kandeler-Fritsch, Helena Koenigsmarková, Kathrin Pokorny-Nagel, Florian Pumhösl, Nevenka Šivavec, Christoph Thun-Hohenstein, Lawrence Weiner and Maria White, English, ca. 90 pages, MAK Vienna/Walther König Cologne 2011, € 19.80
MAK Admission	€ 9.90 with MAK guide / € 7.90 / reduced: € 5.50 Free admission on Saturdays®
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