

Press Release

## MAP – Memory and Progress

### The MAK Explores Its Future

**Press Conference**      Tuesday, 18 October 2011, 11 p.m.  
**Place**                      MAK – Director’s Office  
1010 Vienna, Stubenring 5

With this unique initiative, Christoph Thun-Hohenstein starts his term as director at the MAK – Austrian Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art. Titled *MAP – Memory and Progress* he has initiated a broad internal and public debate about the MAK’s institutional profile and conceptual mission in the context of the museum’s history. The results are intended to inform the MAK’s future approach to the applied arts and design, contemporary art and architecture, and provide a basis for decisions about all future activities of the institution.

“Founded as the Austrian Museum of Art and Industry, the institution’s almost 150 years of history, and its diverse character, calls for a reviewing of the museum’s collecting and other activities as well as for a future-oriented analysis of its memory. In the course of a critical evaluation of this *memory* and the possibilities of development, or *progress*, of the museum, a *map* will be drawn up for the future of the museum in public discussion events with an accompanying weblog” says Thun-Hohenstein, summing up the intention of the project.

With its historically grown programmatic background, the MAK has developed a cross-disciplinary dynamism. It is precisely this material complexity of the MAK—which has seen a strong internationalization beyond the museum’s main building on Stubenring and its Viennese outposts, with branch museums in Los Angeles and in Brtnice—which, in Thun-Hohenstein’s view, necessitates a structured reappraisal of its positioning.

Thun-Hohenstein says that “the notion of applied art ought to be more clearly defined than it was up to now. Additionally, we feel an urgent need to put the following special questions up for debate: What is the significance of applied art today? How is the MAK supposed to position itself in the fields of architecture and design? What criteria should inform the MAK’s engagement with contemporary art, as compared with other Austrian national museums? And finally: how should a museum communicate its contents in the 21st century?”

Thun-Hohenstein insists that, all future MAK activities, whether it is the development of the museum collections, the projected gradual reinstallation of the permanent and study collections, the advancement of scientific research, the development of programmatic exhibitions and innovative

learning programs, or creative collaboration with new cooperation partners, will be decisively informed by the MAP results.

## **MAP Project Survey**

### **MAP – Phase 1**

The MAK Collection Curators have worked out status reports for their areas, which survey the origins and history of the collection, research output and exhibition activities, essential lines of development, and the international positioning of the collection, indicating special strengths as well as collection gaps and perspectives for the future.

Based on these conceptual evaluations, the individual collections as well as the aforementioned focus-topics will be discussed from October 25 in a series of public discussion events involving leading experts, such as; Paola Antonelli, Gerald Bast, Martin Fritz, Brigitte Huck, Christian Höller, Marie-Therese Harnoncourt, Christian Kühn, Oswald Oberhuber, Dietmar Steiner, and Peter Weibel.

At the kickoff event on October 25, 2011 (12.30–14.30 p.m.), Christoph Thun-Hohenstein will present the several-phase project, describing an arc from the founding of the institution to the concept of the museum in the 21st century.

Until the end of the year, a series of “long-table events” will be held at the MAK Columned Main Hall, mostly on Tuesdays, occasionally also on Thursdays between 12.30 and 14.30 p.m., which will also be open to the general public, free of admission. In these discussion rounds, curators and museum professionals will present one specific area of the MAK Collections or one special issue and discuss with the aforementioned invited experts the history, current status, and strategies and visions for the future. Guest speakers will also contribute keynote statements on special issues.

Through the “MAKblog” Internet platform ([blog.MAK.at](http://blog.MAK.at)), the general public will be able to contribute to the MAP online and post their suggestions. On the date of each MAP discussion at 11.00 a.m., texts and selected image material will go online. In addition, statements from the invited experts from the areas of applied art and design, contemporary art, and architecture will be posted.

### **MAP – Phase 2**

The results of this experimental discourse will be developed as an exhibition in early spring 2012 and presented in the MAK Exhibition Hall (opening: 14/2/2012, exhibition term: 15/2–25/3/2012). Curated by the MAK with an exhibition design by artist duo Krüger & Pardeller, the conceptual presentation

will review the results of Phase 1 of the project and provide the museum and the wider public with an opportunity for further information and comment.

Project Phases 1 and 2 will serve as the basis for concrete decisions for the medium-and-long-term activities of the institution.

According to Christoph Thun-Hohenstein, “Shaping the MAK’s future in a joint effort is a challenge that can only be accomplished together with the MAK’s expert staff and in dialogue with a public with a special interest. I am convinced that we will be generating knowledge about, and a wellspring of public interest in, and engagement with, this remarkable institution—that wouldn’t take place without the MAP project”.

The MAK Program for 2012, as well as the first projected change processes under the new directorship, will be announced in a press conference in late-November.

**MAP – Memory and Progress. The MAK Explores Its Future  
Timetable for the MAP Discussion Events**

Tuesday, 25 October 2011, 12.30–2.30 p.m.  
**Kickoff event**

Thursday, 27 October 2011, 12.30–2.30 p.m.  
**Asia**

Tuesday, 8 November 2011, 12.30–2.30 p.m.  
**MAK Library and Works on Paper Collection**

Thursday, 10 November 2011, 12.30–2.30 p.m.  
***SPECIAL TOPIC Applied Art Today***

Thursday, 17 November 2011, 12.30–2.30 p.m.  
**Furniture and Woodwork**

Tuesday, 22 November 2011, 12.30–2.30 p.m.  
**Design / Design Info Pool**

Wednesday, 23 November 2011, 12.30–2.30 p.m.  
***SPECIAL TOPIC Architecture***

Tuesday, 29 November 2011, 12.30–2.30 p.m.  
**Metalwork and Wiener Werkstätte**

Tuesday, 6 December 2011, 12.30–2.30 p.m.  
**Textiles and Carpets**

Wednesday, 7 December 2011, 12.30–2.30 p.m.  
***SPECIAL TOPIC Visitors***

Tuesday, 13 December 2011, 12.30–2.30 p.m.  
***SPECIAL TOPIC Contemporary Art***

Thursday, 15 December 2011, 12.30–2.30 p.m.  
**Glass and Ceramics**

Friday, 16 December 2011, 12.30–2.30 p.m.  
***SPECIAL TOPIC Branch Museums*** (MAK Depot of Contemporary Art Gefechtsturm Arenbergpark and MAK Branch Geymüllerschloß, both in Vienna; MAK Center for Art and Architecture, Los Angeles; Josef Hoffmann Museum, Brno, Czech Republic, a joint branch of the Moravian Gallery in Brno and MAK Vienna, unless discussed on other occasions)

Tuesday, 20 December 2011, 12.30–2.30 p.m.

***SPECIAL TOPIC Learning***

**MAP Project Management:**

Rainald Franz, Interim Curator MAK Glass and Ceramics Collection  
Bärbel Vischer, Head of MAK Contemporary Art Collection

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