

Press Release

**APPLIED ARTS. NOW**  
**Kay Walkowiak. Forms in Time**

*A cooperation between the MAK and the University of Applied Arts Vienna*

Opening Tuesday, 19 April 2016, 7 p.m.  
Exhibition Venue MAK GALLERY  
MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna  
Exhibition Dates 20 April – 2 October 2016  
Opening Hours Tue 10 a.m.–10 p.m., Wed–Sun 10 a.m.–6 p.m.  
Free admission on Tuesdays from 6–10 p.m.

The Austrian artist Kay Walkowiak treats the utopian potential of form and material in his solo exhibition *Forms in Time* as of 20 April 2016 in the MAK GALLERY. In the context of the exhibition series *APPLIED ARTS. NOW*, a cooperation between the MAK and the University of Applied Arts Vienna, the artist presents, in addition to his central video work *Island* (2016), conceived of especially for the MAK exhibition, six pigment prints and four large-scale sculptures that raise philosophically motivated questions about the narrative conceivability of form on the basis of Far Eastern and Western mentalities.

“The traveler leaves no trace because he keeps pace with the movement of things,” is the comment of the Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han on the fundamental topos of Far Eastern thought, which, in contrast with the Western form, primarily conceived of as substance, is oriented to real absence. These diametrically opposed approaches provide the context for *Island*, the core piece of the MAK exhibition *Forms in Time*.

The main and at the same time only character in this video work interacts with a black, geometrical object in various, in some cases everyday situations. The flat panel accompanies the protagonist like a handbag, a book, or a picture: he carries the monochrome square through various urban settings, lies in the bathtub gazing with concentration at the geometrical form or carefully feels the surface with his fingertips. The black surface may in fact acquire an immediate status through these interactions, but remains abstract, mystic, and intangible in terms of its meaning.

With this object, Kay Walkowiak makes reference to the *Black Square* (1915) of Kazimir Malevich, a symbol of the perception of non-representation and of absolute abstraction. The Russian avant-gardist described his epochal work as the “desperate attempt to liberate art from the weight of things,” and the British natural philosopher Robert Fludd also utilized the symbolic power of the black square in 1617 to represent “nothingness”.

Other points of contact with *Island* can be found in Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's thesis of "pure being." In his *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1817), Hegel discusses pure abstraction: the "absolutely negative: which, in a similarly immediate aspect, is just *Nothing*."

*Island* provides no fixed clues as to the temporality in which the main character moves. There is no final determination of what the object is or represents in itself. It appears to swallow up any meaning ascribed to it like a black hole. In its shot and perspective, the start of the film is reminiscent of the beginning of the well-known television series *LOST*, which is set on a fictitious island that is ultimately lost in the illusion of a cyclically repeating time.

*A Different Order* (2014/2016), six pigment prints on the subject of Le Corbusier's planned city of Chandigarh, India, thematizes the boundaries of seemingly timeless modernity and continues the discussion of Walkowiak's question concerning the utopian properties of form and material.

The four sculptural works *Fukinsei (#1)*, *Fukinsei (#2)*, *Untitled (Object for Birds)*, and *Case Study Object* (2016), which will also be presented in the MAK GALLERY, deal with the concepts of proximity and distance, display and real situation, as well as with the prototypical formal vocabulary of modernity.

Kay Walkowiak (born 1980 in Salzburg) studied philosophy and psychology at the University of Vienna (2002–2008). At the same time he completed studies at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (2003–2008), Zokei University in Tokyo (2008), and the University of Applied Arts Vienna (2003–2010), among other institutions. In 2010 he completed the Sculpture and Multimedia class with Erwin Wurm. The artist has been represented in numerous group and solo exhibitions in Austria and abroad since 2004 and has been the recipient of several important scholarships and prizes, including the Otto Prutscher Prize (2008), the START scholarship for fine arts of the Republic of Austria (2012), as well as of scholarship residencies in Tokyo, Japan (2008), Varanasi, India (2013 und 2015), Peking, China (2013), and Banff, Canada (2014). <http://walkowiak.at>

The exhibition series *APPLIED ARTS. NOW* aims at creating a platform for contemporary forms of applied arts, and thus providing greater visibility for especially interesting positions of graduates of the University of Applied Arts Vienna living and working in Vienna. Patrick Rampelotto, Stiefel & Company Architects, taliaYsebastian, Marco Desić, Lisa Truttmann, soma architecture, Valentin Ruhry, and Alfredo Barsuglia have been represented with exhibition projects to date. The designer Patrycja Domanska will grace the MAK GALLERY with a solo exhibition in autumn 2016 (19 October 2016 – 19 February 2017).

Press photos on the exhibition are available for download at [MAK.at/press](http://MAK.at/press).



Press Data Sheet

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| Curator   | Marlies Wirth   |
| Related Events                                      | Artist discussion in the exhibition:<br>Tuesday, 3 May 2016, 6 p.m.<br><br>SPECIAL: Artist discussion in the exhibition in the<br>context of vienna contemporary 2016:<br>Saturday, 24 September 2016, 4 p.m. |
| MAK Admission                                       | € 9.90 / Reduced € 7.50 / Family Ticket € 13<br>Free admission for children and teens up to 19  |
| MAK Press and PR                                    | Judith Anna Schwarz-Jungmann (Head)<br>Sandra Hell-Ghignone<br>Veronika Träger<br>Lara Steinhäuser<br>T +43 1 711 36-233, -229, -212<br>presse@MAK.at<br>www.MAK.at   |
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Vienna, 13 April 2016