

The Art of Working

Agency in Digital Modernity

Digital Modernity disrupts and inspires

The process of digitalization, also called the "second machine age," is changing our lives at least as radically as the Industrial Revolution before it. The rapid development and comprehensive application of digital intelligence and robotics, big data, the Internet of Things, as well as the total measurement and economization of human beings are only some of the phenomena that are bringing about a creeping but all the more systematic upheaval of our civilization. Digital Modernity has enormous potential to facilitate and enrich our lives. However, there are also great dangers in subjecting ourselves to the dictates of digital machines. Therefore, the question of how digitalization can meaningfully support us human beings is of central importance.

The **Vienna Biennale Circle (VBC)** is a flexible platform of individuals from various disciplines who live in Vienna. In preparation for the **Vienna Biennale 2015: Ideas for Change**, the VBC, chaired by the head of the biennale, Christoph Thun-Hohenstein, had two main tasks: first, in an extended setting, to discuss all the projects of the biennale curators in an interdisciplinary manner and to contribute impulses to these projects; and second, as the VBC core team, to develop an exhibition manifesto on an overarching, sociopolitical topic of Digital Modernity against the background of the biennale projects.

The exhibition manifesto **The Art of Working: Agency in Digital Modernity** jointly developed by the core VBC team focuses on the value of creativity for the future of human work. It is conceived as the beginning of a broader sociopolitical discussion and an impetus for more detailed projects to come as well as an appeal and inspiration for individual and collective action. In addition to the heads of the cultural institutions responsible for organizing the biennale, the core VBC team includes the following members in particular: Erwin K. Bauer (managing director of buero bauer), Angelika Fitz (curator and cultural theorist), Gabriela Gantenbein (curator and cultural manager), Elke Krasny (curator, professor for art and education, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna), Margit Noll (AIT Austrian Institute of Technology), Doris Rothauer (managing director, Büro für Transfer), and Inge Scholz-Strasser (author). The manifesto was designed by buero bauer.

In the context of the manifesto, Marlies Wirth, curator at the MAK, has curated an exhibition on contemporary art. The exhibition, entitled **24/7: the human condition**, will open up a broad spectrum of artistic engagement with various aspects of a cultural understanding of work and action: between longing and the pressure to perform, identification and opposition, recognition and exhaustion, the traces of humanity are inscribed in the unstoppable machinery of the information age.

Biennale