

FOCUS ON COLLECTING 9: woom bikes

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MAK – Press and PR

Press Release

Vienna, 16.5.2023

presse@MAK.at

Opening

Tuesday, 23.5.2023, 7 pm

In the context of the series FOCUS ON COLLECTING, the MAK is presenting the donation of a total of seven children's bicycles to the Design Collection: six bicycles from the woom ORIGINAL series as well as a woom NOW. They were designed and produced by the woom company, which has been awarded numerous international design awards and is celebrating its 10th company anniversary this year. The presentation focuses on the bicycle as a cultural asset and means of transportation that has significantly shaped and changed our society. It examines the visionary industrial design of the woom bikes, which celebrates ergonomics, sustainability, and environmentally friendly mobility, and invites visitors to take a look behind the scenes of the design process.

After all, this success story started off with the failure to adapt the product to the needs of an important target group, namely children. All components of a woom children's bicycle are specifically adapted to the needs and ergonomics of children. A seating position which is as low as possible provides stability as the center of gravity is closer to the ground, and the shallow steering angle (tilt of the head tube relative to the road) in combination with a long wheelbase (distance between the front and rear wheel) ensure smooth riding.

The history of the bicycle dates back to the 19th century when German inventor Karl von Drais developed the first prototype in 1817: The so-called "Laufmaschine" (running machine) was made of a wooden frame with two wheels and a handlebar but did not yet have any pedals. Later in the 1860s, the concept of a bicycle with pedals and a chain, which is still valid today, was invented.

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The bicycle in its current form has been used for more than 150 years and quickly became a popular means of transportation that impacted on society in ways we nowadays don't even take into account anymore: It gave people the opportunity of covering longer distances quickly and affordably and contributed to the emergence of new jobs such as bicycle mechanics or bicycle couriers. The bicycle also became an important symbol for women's rights movements as it made women more independent and mobile. In this context it also influenced clothing.

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Today, the bicycle is common all around the world and is used by many people for various reasons for transportation, such as getting to school or work, as a sport or hobby, and last but not least as a sustainable mode of transportation and a symbol for environmental protection.

Using a woom NOW children's bicycle, the exhibition outlines the steps necessary in design: The path to the product includes collecting ideas on sketches, tests, and a lot of prototypes. Based on three elements as examples—the bicycle frame, a front luggage rack, and a frame bag—the exhibition illustrates how the woom team works and what characterizes the design of the bicycles. In addition, an "exploded" woom bike shows how many individual pieces a bicycle is made of.

Cycling is a crucial lever for making mobility in cities and communities more climate friendly, healthier, more efficient, and more pleasant.

Press photos are available for download at [MAK.at/en/press](https://www.mak.at/en/press)



Opening

Tuesday, 23.5.2023, 7 pm
Free admission from 6 pm

Exhibition Venue

MAK Forum
MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna

Exhibition Dates

24.5.–6.8.2023

Opening Hours

Tue 10 am–9 pm, Wed to Sun 10 am–6 pm

Curator

Marlies Wirth, Curator, Digital Culture and MAK Design Collection

MAK Admission

€ 15, reduced € 12, every Tuesday 6–9 pm: Admission € 7
Free admission for children and teens under 19

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