

Dance—Art—Design

International symposium on the occasion of the exhibition
VALLY WIESELTHIER: Ceramic Sculptor in the MAK

1

MAK – Press and PR

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Press Release

Vienna, 31.8.2026

International Symposium

17.–18.9.2026, participation is free with prior registration

On the occasion of the exhibition *VALLY WIESELTHIER: Ceramic Sculptor* the MAK extends an invitation to an international symposium entitled *Dance—Art—Design*, featuring distinguished experts and taking place on 17 and 18 September. Based on Vally Wieselthier's iconic depictions of dancers, the symposium—conceived in cooperation between the MAK and the University of Applied Arts Vienna—explores the manifold correlations between dance, art, and design from the early 20th century to the present. The aim is to raise awareness of the creative power arising from interaction between these disciplines.

The symposium is structured around two thematic areas: First of all the question is examined as to how dance and design have influenced each other from 1900 onwards, and how they were both inspired by the visual arts. Under the title “Stepping Out of Line: The Freed Body Between Art, Emancipation, and Politics in Modernism,” speakers will address the impact of women's liberation, the reception of Orientalism in Europe, and sexuality research on the kinetic vocabulary of modern dance.

The second part addresses the topic “Dance in Transition: The Future Body at the Intersection of Mythology, Anthropology, and Technology”, focusing on collaborations between choreographers and both artists and fashion designers, as well as the critical role of anthropology in redefining the vibrant avant-garde and the discourse surrounding the “new human” in dance and design. In addition cultural transfer processes and critical social issues within the context of the late twentieth-century aesthetics of spectacle will be explored.

The concept for the symposium was developed by Elana Shapira (University of Applied Arts Vienna) and Anne-Katrin Rossberg (MAK).

Participation is free with prior registration at mak.at/symposium/tanzkunstdesign.

PROGRAM

2

Thursday, 17.9.2026 **MAK Lecture Hall**

3.30 pm

Anne-Katrin Rossberg (MAK)

Guided tour of the exhibition *VALLY WIESELTHIER: Ceramic Sculptor*

4.45 pm

Keynote: Patricia Mears (Curator, New York)

From a Muse to a Woman of Style: How the Ballerina Danced Her Way into Modernity

Friday, 18.9.2026 **MAK Lecture Hall**

10 am

Opening

Lilli Hollein, General Director and Artistic Director, MAK

Ulrike Kuch, Rector, University of Applied Arts Vienna

Part 1:

Stepping Out of Line: The Freed Body Between Art, Emancipation, and Politics in Modernism

Moderator: Michael Hölters (MAK)

10.30 am

Anne-Katrin Rossberg (MAK)

Dancing round the Wiener Werkstätte

Elana Shapira (University of Applied Arts Vienna)

The Rebel Salomes: Vally Wieselthier, Gertrud Bodenwieser, and Hilde Holger

11.15 am

Eike Wittrock (Music and Arts University of the City of Vienna)

Materialities and Sexualities: The modern dancer Joachim von Seewitz in photographs by Franz Xaver Setzer

11.45 am

Discussion



12 noon

Nicole Haitzinger (Paris-Lodron-University Salzburg)

Nyota Inyoka: Dance Costumes as Fabricated Dreams of an Artificial Skin in Modernism

12.30 pm

Susan Funkenstein (University of Michigan)

Art, Dance, Design, and Gender at the Bauhaus Festivals

1–2.15 pm

Discussion / Lunch break

Part 2:

Dance in Transition: The Future Body at the Intersection of Mythology, Anthropology, and Technology

Moderator: Elana Shapira

2.30 pm

Natalie Ginsberg (curator, dancer, art historian, New York)

In and On the Mythic Stage: Martha Graham and Isamu Noguchi's *Cave of the Heart* (1946)

3 pm

Gabriele Klein (University of Amsterdam)

Material Aesthetics in the Work of Pina Bausch

3.30 pm

Tamara Tomic-Vajagic (University of Roehampton, London)

Topological Folding and Connective Affinities: The Work of Choreographer William Forsythe and Fashion Designer Issey Miyake

4 pm

Discussion / Break

4.30 pm

Emanuel Gollob (University of Arts Linz)

Performativity in Encounters between Humans and Robots

5 pm

Closing remarks: Elana Shapira

A detailed program with abstracts and speaker biographies is available for download at MAK.at/presse.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Participation is free with prior registration

Registration is valid for both days



Entrance: MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna
Information at: MAK.at/symposium/tanzkunstdesign

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4

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