

Press Release

# What Do We Want? Dimensions of a New Digital Humanism

## The Vienna Biennale Circle's Exhibition Manifesto

Exhibition Venue

MAK Columned Main Hall, 1st floor

MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna

Exhibition Dates

21 June – 1 October 2017

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.

*"We want to be human and imperfect, not superhuman and perfect."*

*"We want to rest when we feel like it."*

*"We do not want what we purchase to possess us."*

*"Yes, we can imagine a superintelligence falling in love with us."*

These are only four of the more than 100 answers formulated by the Vienna Biennale Circle, a think tank of mostly Vienna-based personages from various creative segments, to the fundamental questions about the future of human beings in the digital age. Since November 2016 the Vienna Biennale Circle has been exploring the role of digital technology as an engine of rapid innovations in nearly all areas of our civilization—from robotics and artificial intelligence to the biotech industry. To date, reflection about economic, ecological, social, and cultural changes has been limping along behind the digital revolution. The focus of the Vienna Biennale Circle's visionary analyses of our society's reorientation in Digital Modernity is always on the human being.

The encroachment of robots on many areas of work has far-reaching effects on our performance model, which is based on education and gainful employment. One of the main tidings of the Vienna Biennale Circle is that the radical changes stemming from digitalization can only be countered with a return to social and humanist values. Lifelong learning, meaningful work, and resonant relationships to the environment must be viewed as essential cultural tools for dealing with new technologies in an informed and qualified manner.

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The Vienna Biennale Circle seeks a constructive approach to digital-technological progress and advocates its utilization in the long-term interest of humankind and our planet. The prerequisite for this is digital literacy, which gives rise to agency. Society must become aware of its opportunities to shape the permanent digital revolution and its responsibilities in this regard.

Possible approaches to a world we would also want to inhabit in the future are condensed by the Vienna Biennale Circle into 11 questions and a total of 119 answers. The chosen form of the Manifesto ties back to an early art-historical avant-garde phenomenon. The buero bauer-designed Manifesto *What Do We Want? Dimensions of a New Digital Humanism* encounters the real and virtual visitors to the VIENNA BIENNALE 2017: *Robots. Work. Our Future* on three levels:

In the MAK Columned Main Hall, a series of posters presents the 11 central questions and corresponding key concepts.

On the [www.viennabiennale.org](http://www.viennabiennale.org) website, the 11 questions are augmented by all 119 answers. Users are invited to convey their comments and suggestions to the Vienna Biennale Circle.

The VIENNA BIENNALE 2017 app presents a compact version with five selected answers per question. Whoever wants to can create his or her own digital Manifesto: Answers with which one disagrees can be omitted and those with which one agrees, retained. This personally created digital Manifesto can be shared with family or friends through social media.

As a clear commitment to human values in Digital Modernity, the Manifesto endeavors to show ways of creating a sustainable, inclusive, and humane quality culture.

The Vienna Biennale Circle team: Christoph Thun-Hohenstein (editorial lead), Gerald Bast, Erwin K. Bauer, Mark Coeckelbergh, Janina Falkner, Anne Faucheret, Paul Feigelfeld, Gabriela Gantenbein, Harald Gruendl, Ulrike Haele, Miriam Kathrein, Beate Lex, Eva Meran, Elisabeth Noever-Ginthör, Hans-Jörg Otto, Bill Price, Doris Rothauer, Robert Trappi, Marlies Wirth, and Evan Zimmerman

Exhibition Manifesto communication design: buero bauer

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Press photos are available for download at MAK.at/press and also at  
[www.viennabiennale.org](http://www.viennabiennale.org)



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Vienna, 20 June 2017

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