

Press Release

VIENNA BIENNALE 2017 Robots. Work. Our Future

Second Press Conference Thursday, 30 March 2017, 10:30 a.m.
Venue Salonplafond im MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna

Artificial intelligence, automated worlds of work, the Internet of things, limitless digital communication, transparent society, new individuality: turbocharged digitalization is rapidly turning our (work) lives upside down. Yet who is making the best for humans out of this digital, technology-, and economy-driven revolution? The *VIENNA BIENNALE 2017: Robots. Work. Our Future* (21 June to 1 October 2017) brings together designers, architects, and fine artists with an aspiration for a better tomorrow. At various exhibition sites in- and outdoors, visionary and utopian as well as realizable creative scenarios draw a complex, promising picture of the future digital world (of work).

The arts have a crucial role to play in instilling digitalization with aesthetic and humane values. That is something about which all organizers of the VIENNA BIENNALE—the MAK, University of Applied Arts Vienna, Kunsthalle Wien, Architekturzentrum Wien, as well as the Vienna Business Agency and the AIT Austrian Institute of Technology as non-university research partners—are agreed.

“The digital future affects us all. In it, we are confronted with a profoundly democratic task, which we must negotiate together, with the active support of art, design, and architecture. From its location in Vienna, in the heart of Europe, the VIENNA BIENNALE provides catalysts for people to co-create a humane digitalized civilization and world of work,” according to Christoph Thun-Hohenstein, Initiator and Head of the VIENNA BIENNALE.

Just how fundamental work is for our lives, our prosperity, and our well-being as well as which fears but also opportunities are associated with robotics and automation is the subject of several projects in the VIENNA BIENNALE.

Hello, Robot. Design between Human and Machine (An exhibition of the MAK, the Vitra Design Museum, and the Design museum Gent) invites close encounters with the increasingly omnipresent species *Robot*. More than 200 exhibition objects from the realms of art, design, and architecture, as well as examples from technology, film, literature, fashion, sci-

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ence, and pop culture examine the inexorable hype around intelligent machines and the crucial role played by design. A deep understanding of the upheavals and already tangible changes in the world of work are evoked by the exhibition *How will we work?* by the University of Applied Arts Vienna at the Angewandte Innovation Laboratory. Contemporary art, interaction design, mixed media, as well as time-based media provide a critical glimpse of the often skeptical notions of automation and Industry 4.0.

New technologies also herald opportunities for new fields of work and new creative constellations. Since 2016 the *StadtFabrik* [City factory], a joint project by the Vienna Business Agency with its creative center departure, and the MAK, curated by the IDRV – Institute of Design Research Vienna, has been committed to discovering and raising awareness of urban potentials in the creative industries. With **demonstrators** across the city and the exhibition *CityFactory: New Work. New Design.* at the MAK, the *StadtFabrik* will research three core aspects of work in the digital future during the Biennale: NEW CREATIVE WORK, NEW SOCIAL WORK, and NEW SUSTAINABLE WORK.

Turbocharged digitalization harbors the risk that we will lose sight of the need to conserve and repair our world. With the project *Care + Repair*, the Architekturzentrum Wien is venturing out into the urban space and opening a public workspace at the Nordbahnhof (former northern train station), one of the largest inner-city development zones in Vienna. Six international teams of architects are developing prototypes for a *Care + Repair* urbanism with local initiatives and experts. A growing exhibition and a series of events on these projects will illustrate how *Care + Repair* architecture will bring the city into the future.

How Digital Modernity feels, how we humans want to interact and live in it, is the subject of three more Biennale projects.

The exhibition *Work it, feel it!* at the Kunsthalle Wien will focus on the human working body. Artistic contributions address the disciplining and controlling mechanisms that shape and regulate the body, as well as moments of (physical) resistance to a type of work that has become all-encompassing and limitless.

ARTIFICIAL TEARS. Singularity & Humanness—A Speculation at the MAK is an invitation to consider the future of humankind both emotionally and intellectually. Quoting from science fiction, the works on display introduce dystopian worlds that we must flee, or reveal states of consciousness and archaic aspects that illustrate humans' poetic inefficiency in contrast to overregulation by technology.

A narrative about the affect of things against the backdrop of new digital settings is spun by the MAK's group exhibition *ich weiß nicht [I don't know]—Growing Relations between Things*. 17 approaches by contemporary artists, most of whom work in Austria, analyze the interaction be-

tween humans and the objects that confront and surround us in our daily lives.

As part of the VIENNA BIENNALE 2017, the kinetic installation *Level—the fragile balance of utopia* by mischer'traxler studio—conceived for the London Design Biennale 2016—will be presented in Austria for the first time. It visualizes the concept of utopia as a balancing act between individual and collective aspirations. A statement on the hidden agendas behind the digital interfaces and software that surround us on a daily basis will be made by the students of the Industrial Design 2 department at the University of Applied Arts Vienna in the ten-day presentation *DESIGN FOR AGENCY* in the MAK FORUM.

The **Vienna Biennale Circle**, a think tank of mostly Vienna-based personages from various creative sectors, regularly meets to discuss the issues of the Biennale and the coexistence of human and machine. It will be possible to read the essence of this discourse during the VIENNA BIENNALE 2017 as an **exhibition manifesto** designed by buero bauer entitled *What do we want? Dimensions of a New Digital Humanism*. The key concepts and trenchant texts postulate approaches to a world in which we would also want to live in the future.

DETAILED PRESS RELEASES ON THE INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS of the VIENNA BIENNALE 2017 and **BIOGRAPHIES OF THE CURATORS** are available for download in the press section of www.viennabiennale.org/en as well as at MAK.at/press.

CURATORS

VIENNA BIENNALE 2017: Robots. Work. Our Future:

Anne Faucheret (Curator, Kunsthalle Wien)

Angelika Fitz (Curator, Director, Architekturzentrum Wien)

Anab Jain (Co-founder and Director, Superflux, London; o. Univ.-Prof.,
University of Applied Arts Vienna)

Amelie Klein (Curator, Vitra Design Museum, Weil am Rhein)

Elke Krasny (Curator, Professor of Art and Education, Academy of Fine
Arts Vienna)

Marlies Wirth (Curator, Digital Culture and Design Collection, MAK)

IDRV – Institute of Design Research Vienna (Harald Gruendl and Ulrike
Haele)

TEAM Vienna Biennale Circle:

Christoph Thun-Hohenstein (editorial head), Gerald Bast, Erwin 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 Trappl, Marlies Wirth, and Evan Zimmerman

OVERVIEW: EXHIBITIONS AND PROJECTS

VIENNA BIENNALE 2017: Robots. Work. Our Future

Hello, Robot. Design between Human and Machine

An exhibition of the MAK, the Vitra Design Museum, and the Design museum Gent

Curators of the project for the VIENNA BIENNALE 2017: Amelie Klein, Curator, Vitra Design Museum; Marlies Wirth, Curator, Digital Culture and Design Collection, MAK

MAK Exhibition Hall, MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna

21 June – 1 October 2017

ARTIFICIAL TEARS. Singularity & Humanness—A Speculation

An exhibition at the MAK

Curator: Marlies Wirth, Curator, Digital Culture and Design Collection, MAK

MAK Exhibition Hall, MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna

21 June – 1 October 2017

ich weiß nicht—Growing Relations between Things

An exhibition at the MAK

Curators: Janina Falkner, Contemporary Art Collection, and Marlies Wirth, Curator, Digital Culture and Design Collection, MAK

MAK DESIGN LAB, MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna

21 June – 1 October 2017

How will we work?

An exhibition by the University of Applied Arts Vienna

Curators: Anab Jain, Co-founder and Director, Superflux, London; o. Univ.-Prof., University of Applied Arts Vienna; and Gerald Bast, President, University of Applied Arts Vienna

Curatorial Assistance: Jake Charles Rees and Martina Schöggl

AIL Angewandte Innovation LAB, Franz-Josefs-Kai 3, 1010 Vienna

21 June – 2 July 2017

Work it, feel it!

An exhibition at the Kunsthalle Wien

Curator: Anne Faucheret, Kunsthalle Wien

Assistant Curator: Eva Meran, Kunsthalle Wien

Kunsthalle Wien Karlsplatz

21 June – 10 September 2017

Care + Repair

A public workspace of the Architekturzentrum Wien

Curators: Angelika Fitz, Curator, Director, Architekturzentrum Wien; Elke Krasny, Curator, Professor of Art and Education, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

Nordbahnhof, Nordbahn-Halle by the water tower, corner of Leystraße/Taborstraße, 1010 Vienna

21 June – 31 July 2017

StadtFabrik [City factory]

Demonstrators and exhibition *CityFactory: New Work. New Design.*

A project by the Vienna Business Agency and the MAK

Curators of the demonstrators: Harald Gruendl, Ulrike Haele (IDRV – Institute of Design Research Vienna)

Curators of the exhibition: Martina Fineder, Harald Gruendl, Ulrike Haele (IDRV – Institute of Design Research Vienna)

MAK Exhibition Hall, MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna, and demonstrators across the city

21 June – 1 October 2017

What do we want? Dimensions of a New Digital Humanism

An Vienna Biennale Circle's Exhibition Manifesto

MAK Columned Main Hall, 1st floor, MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna

21 June – 1 October 2017

Level—the fragile balance of utopia

A mischer'traxler studio installation at the MAK

MAK GALLERY, MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna

21 June – 1 October 2017

DESIGN FOR AGENCY

A presentation by the MAK and the University of Applied Arts Vienna

MAK FORUM, MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna

21 June – 2 July 2017

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The *VIENNA BIENNALE 2017: Robots. Work. Our Future*
is organized by

MAK – Austrian Museum of Applied Arts /
Contemporary Art

University of Applied Arts Vienna – Angewandte Innovation
Laboratory

Kunsthalle Wien

Az W – Architekturzentrum Wien

Vienna Business Agency

Research Partner:
AIT Austrian Institute of Technology

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Vienna, 30 March 2017