



MAK

Press Release

EOOS

Press Conference	Tuesday, 27 January 2015, 10:30 a.m.
Opening	Tuesday, 27 January 2015, 7 p.m.
Exhibition Venue	MAK DESIGN LAB MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna
Exhibition Dates	28 January – 17 May 2015
Opening Hours	Tues 10 a.m.–10 p.m., Wed–Sun 10 a.m.–6 p.m. Free admission on Tuesdays 6–10 p.m.

The MAK mounts the first large retrospective show—entitled *EOOS*—of the eponymous design studio on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of its founding and gives insight into its poetical-analytical design process. The MAK DESIGN LAB developed with *EOOS* in 2014 forms the framework of an exhibition “parcourse” highlighting the multi-faceted design practice of studio founders Martin Bergmann, Gernot Bohmann, and Harald Gruendl. Exhibits in all areas of the MAK DESIGN LAB and numerous product and interior designs explore *EOOS*’s decidedly reduced design language, which meanders from the archaic to the high-tech.

Once Bergmann (b. 1963, Lienz/East Tyrol), Bohmann (b. 1968, Krieglach/Styria), and Gruendl (b. 1967, Vienna) became acquainted in 1988 through their studies at today’s University of Applied Arts Vienna, their stated goal was not to vie for star careers like Philippe Starck’s, but to leverage their creative synergies as a trio. The three designers wanted to “work like a rock band;” their interaction became a dynamo powering a successful long-term project. *EOOS* stands for design beyond random mass merchandise or modish luxury goods, for objects and concepts enriched with genuine values. Consumers are understood to be autonomous beings, who even in the age of Digital Modernity unconsciously inhabit their environment according to archaic templates.

Bergmann, Bohmann, and Gruendl made a conscious decision to name the studio they founded in 1995 *EOOS* after one of the cart horses pulling the sun chariot racing across the firmament in Ovid’s poetic masterpiece *Metamorphoses*. With more than 130 international design prizes to its name, among them the renowned Compasso d’Oro industry design prize for the seating system *Kube* (2004) developed jointly with MatteoGrassi, *EOOS* counts among the most successful design studios in the world. The *EOOS* designers place great value on their numerous technical patents, which

demonstrate that the studio does not settle for standard solutions. “Everything takes place somewhere between being burned and getting lost,” is how they describe their design pathos, valued by longtime clients including ALESSI, ARMANI, adidas, bulthaup, DEDON, DURAVIT, LAMY, Herman Miller, KEILHAUER, WALTER KNOLL, and Zumtobel.

EOOS considers the unique element of its design approach to be “Poetical Analysis,” whereby they do not view this as an ideology, but as a design tool. “Rituals, intuitive images, and stories serve as the point of departure or reference for our way of working and thinking,” is how EOOS puts it. The theoretical-philosophical discourse specific to every assignment is as important for them as the functional-ergonomic, material-technological, and formal-aesthetic detail work.

Patent and poetry come together in the asymmetrical universal wine glass *Alberto’s Vineyard* (2009), created at the behest of Italian design manufacturer and wine enthusiast Alberto Alessi. Even taking into account the different ways in which wines unfold their taste characteristics, red and white wine varietals may be drunk equally well from this glass.

“To present EOOS in the MAK DESIGN LAB it created is self-evident: The exhibition venue is showcase and exhibition in one. Further, it lets us field-test EOOS’s intended concept of a dynamic presentation locale,” is how Thomas Geisler, the exhibition curator and Curator of the MAK Design Collection, describes one of the fundamental ideas behind the exhibition. EOOS projects or statements are positioned in all twelve areas of the MAK DESIGN LAB; these run the gamut from the autonomous sanitation system *Blue Diversion Toilet* (since 2011) developed jointly for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation with Eawag, the Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology, to shop designs for companies like adidas and ARMANI to the lipstick set *Bite* (2011).

Several objects, among them the workshop kitchen *b2* (2008) for bulthaup, of which components are already part of the MAK DESIGN LAB presentation, have been contextualized in collaboration with graphic artist Maria-Anna Friedl as a “parcourse” labeled for the exhibition. The central (erstwhile) *Hoffmann Geometric* room has been renamed *EOOS transforms* and features what appears to be a slow, mechanical furniture ballet. The *Threesixty* (2008) sofa for WALTER KNOLL or the *Open Space* (2011) shower stall for DURAVIT play to the audience like actors in motion, exemplifying in an uncommon manner EOOS’s essential understanding of design as a transformative force, spatially as well as with regard to the subject-object relationship.

In the newly entitled room *Designing* (formerly *Decorating*), sketches, photographs, functional models, and prototypes—among them *Sguig* (2006), the swivel chair for active seating developed for Canadian office furniture manufacturer KEILHAUER—elucidate the often protracted process of design. This section of the exhibition gives insight into EOOS’s “Poetical Analysis” approach and also into the various stages of the design process, such as revision, modeling, the development of technologies and patents, or the actionist apprehension of things.

Under the rubric of interdisciplinary exchange with other segments of the art world—another EOOS maxim—one of the *EOOS* exhibits is dedicated to its longtime collaboration with “grafisches Büro, the studio of Günter Eder, Roman Breier, and Marcel Neundörfer.” Many joint projects were thrashed out with these graphic designers, among them the visionary store design of the “A1 Lounge” (2004–2008) in Vienna’s Mariahilfer Strasse. EOOS’s reduced visual identity stems from this alliance. Artist Elke Krystufek’s interpretation of the early EOOS work *Breakfast Service* (1995), which she photographed for her extensive solo exhibition *LIQUID LOGIC. The Height of Knowledge and the Speed of Thought* (MAK Exhibition Hall, 6 December 2006 – 1 April 2007), is also part of the exhibition.

Elfie Semotan, who visited EOOS in their Zelinkagasse studio in Vienna’s first district, created a new photographic work for the *EOOS* exhibition. The EOOS offices occupy the same space in which Helmut Lang and also COOP HIMMELB(L)AU became world-famous. An important part of Helmut Lang’s archive of his work as a fashion designer has been made publicly accessible in the MAK DESIGN LAB: In her photographic work, Semotan considers Helmut Lang’s legendary huge work table—abstracted for the MAK DESIGN LAB by EOOS.

For the first month, the *EOOS* exhibition will be accompanied in the MAK FORUM by a program curated jointly with EOOS, which gives voice to EOOS references and studio patrons. The setting for this is the reconstruction of an installation patterned upon a game of scalar perception originally developed for the *eins zu zwei – zwei zu eins* [one to two—two to one] (2013) exhibition held in Innsbruck at aut.architektur und tirol.

To mark the occasion of the *EOOS* exhibition, the MAK and EOOS will publish the first monograph on the design studio in the spring of 2015.

SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAM

Tue, 3 Feb 2015, 7:30 p.m., MAK FORUM

Cooking up a kitchen

EOOS in conversation with Dr. Eva B. Ottillinger, art historian and deputy scientific head of the Imperial Furniture Collection Vienna, curator of the exhibition *The Kitchen and its Furniture - Design and history* (4 Mar – 26 Jul 2015); and Helmut Österreicher, chef and gastronomist

Whence comes the kitchen? What does one really need for cooking? EOOS published the knowledge accumulated in the course of developing the *b2* kitchen system for bulthaup in a book entitled *The Cooked Kitchen: A Poetical Analysis*. An open exchange of ideas from the theory and practice of cooking.

Tue, 17 Feb 2015, 7:30 p.m., MAK FORUM

A room for giants or dwarves?

EOOS in conversation with Lilli Hollein, architecture and design curator, director of VIENNA DESIGN WEEK; and Marie-Therese Harmoncourt, architect, the next ENTERprise

Is design architecture on a small scale? Where does scale divide or link these disciplines? By invitation of aut. architektur und tirol, EOOS (together with architectural firm the next ENTERprise, 2012) developed an installation for the exhibition *eins zu zwei – zwei zu eins* [one to two–two to one], which uses archetypal furniture to make it possible to experience various relationships to the space. An open exchange of ideas in a reconstruction of the setting.

Tue, 24 Feb 2015, 7:30 p.m., MAK FORUM

Alpine Seating

EOOS in conversation with Dr. Sebastian Hackenschmidt, Curator, MAK Furniture and Woodwork Collection; and Peter Hussl, CEO of HUSSL Sitzmöbel

What constitutes alpine furniture? Can tradition and innovation be reconciled in today's carpentry trade? The archaic peasant furniture of the Alpine area has fascinated EOOS for quite some time; the furniture series *Alpin* for HUSSL is their discovery of a contemporary answer. An open exchange of ideas from the theory and practice of furniture design.

Press photos on the exhibition are available for download at MAK.at/en/press.

Press Data Sheet

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Curator	Thomas Geisler, Curator, MAK Design Collection
Publication	In process
MAK Admission	€ 9.90 regular/reduced € 7.50/Family Ticket € 13 Free for children and young adults under age 19
MAK Press and PR	Judith Anna Schwarz-Jungmann (head) Sandra Hell-Ghignone Veronika Träger Lara Steinhäuser T +43 1 711 36-233, -229, -212 presse@MAK.at www.MAK.at

Vienna, 27 January 2015