

The *Collectors* Chronicle

Voices of
Contemporary Art
and Culture

4

Venice/Basel
Issue

Photo: Courtesy Studio Erwin Wurm, © Eva Würdinger



In the Studio Erwin Wurm, Vienna

With his *One Minute Sculptures*, which he calls the decisive moment of his career, Erwin Wurm has imbued the term 'sculpture' with a performative dimension. Together with Brigitte Kowanz, he represents Austria at this year's Venice Biennale. ● read more on page 2



»Light is energetic
and dynamic, it is a carrier
of information.«

Brigitte Kowanz takes a distinctive position regarding her international ranking in the most recent history of art. Since the 1980s, light as a medium, which she explores in relation to space and in combination with signs, codes and language, has been at the center of her work. ● read more on page 3



»More important than the
painting process is
the creation of a context.«

Nick Oberthaler's paintings imply a conceptual superstructure – they open up references to fields such as image theory, art history, the natural sciences and philosophy. He seeks to question inherent conventions rather than to describe a vocabulary of form. ● read more on page 5

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Sydney



Jacob Dahlgren
Stockholm

upcoming stories
in our Online Journal on
collectorsagenda.com

Photo © Hugh Stewart



Mr. Wurm, you have just returned from Venice where, together with Brigitte Kowanz, you will represent Austria in this year's Biennale. Can you tell us what to expect there? Unfortunately, I can't do that. But I can disclose that I will show performative *One Minute Sculptures*. By the way, it is an anniversary for me, because exactly twenty years ago I began to make the *One Minute Sculptures*.

»The assumption that my work is predominantly humorous is wrong.«

With this concept you have given the notion of "sculpture" an entirely new dimension. How did the idea emerge at the time? During my work I began to question my fundamental understanding of sculpture. In the process I arrived at the concept of time, followed by theoretical considerations on the aspects of mass, volume, fullness, and surface. The concept of time has become the essential aspect of my *One Minute Sculptures*. "One Minute" is to be understood not literally, but as "short", as a snapshot. In every *One Minute Sculpture* there is an actor whom I connect in a paradoxical way with an object, freezing her or him. This concept has changed over time. In the beginning, I was especially interested in the question of authorship, later questions regard-

ing the relationship between object and subject came along.

A success of your *One Minute Sculptures* lies in the willingness of viewers to voluntarily create a bizarre connection with an object. Did you ever worry that this would not function? In the first exhibition in the German-speaking countries it did really not function right away. Many hesitated and continued to regard themselves as viewers rather than participants. In the United States the opposite was the case, there I found people to be freer and less self-conscious. In Austria and Germany people had greater inhibitions and were unwilling to expose themselves in such a way at that time.



Narrow House, 2010
Photo: Studio Erwin Wurm, Courtesy: Superstress.
La Biennale di Venezia, Palazzo Cavalli Franchetti, Venice, 2011

How does Erwin Wurm think about sculpture? I try to go beyond the classical concepts of sculpture. I work in two-dimensions with volume and the principles of addition and subtraction. This principle implies a chronological order that I connect with a technical aspect. My "fat sculptures" resulted from these ideas.

Your "fat" cars and houses are for example critical of the status symbols of our time. Correct, they are meant as a clear criticism of our consumer society.

The "fat" cars and houses do suggest humor, a misapprehension concerning your work that stubbornly persists. At least the assumption that my work is predominantly humorous is wrong. The humorous aspect of my work may be a superficial one that, on first contact, may provide a more immediate access to a work, but beyond that there is a deeper meaning to the work which it is for the viewer to discover.

On closer inspection your works are very critical of society, often in reference to a specific period in time. What are you criticizing in our present society? There is very much to criticize. It is particularly tragic that currently a decline in efforts towards emancipation can be observed in Europe, this despite the fact that the question of gender equality in our society remains not only unresolved, but has yet to be clarified. Essentially, I consider the position of women in both western and other cultures as critical.

What for example is the critique of your *Narrow House* that could be seen in Venice in 2011? In this case, the socio-critical aspect developed through a process. When I was invited to participate in an exhibition in Beijing, I was given a very narrow space. I wanted to present a theme on this narrowness and the idea for *Narrow House* emerged. Later, I created references to my parents' home and the small-minded, provincial society which persisted in my youthful days. The result was a slim, extremely narrow house that appears oppressive, even threatening.

What has been the most beautiful compliment that you have ever received for one of your sculptures? In 2006 I installed the work *House Attack* on the roof of Mumok. At the time, Franz West wrote me a note confessing how angry this object made him because they weren't his idea. That was a great compliment.

read the full story on bit.ly/_ErwinWurm



Mrs. Kowanz, since when have you been dealing with light? I have always done drawings, but even in the first installations with my former partner Franz Graf, I had begun to include light. In the beginning we were concerned with color spaces, followed by black light in connection with fluorescent colors; painting became more present. After our separation, Franz continued with drawing and I continued pursuing light. During my studies, I worked with experimental film, video, and photography where light plays a crucial role.

How does your approach to light compare to that of other artists who use light, such as Dan Flavin or James Turrell? Dan Flavin created his installations with conceptual rigor as abstract forms. James Turrell creates spaces that operate with the illusion of surface. In my work I try to create spatiality, that is three-dimensionality, through the layering of transparent surfaces such as glass or reflecting surfaces generating new virtual spaces by means of light.

One gains the impression that you follow an explorative, almost scientific approach. Yes, it is certainly explorative research. My way of proceeding is actually phenomenological. There is always an initial idea but most things must simply be tried out and developed as in a laboratory. One notices with each subsequent work what is being discovered and the resulting new interests.

Do you want to trigger or cause something specific in the viewer? Light is the prerequisite for seeing and perceiving. Light in itself, however, can only be perceived in connection with material. Light is energetic and dynamic, it is a carrier of information. Light can be and can not be. This on and off opens the possibility to inform with light. Light is expansive and elusive, it never remains the same – light is a metaphor for life.

»Light is expansive and elusive – a metaphor for life.«

As a viewer one often feels almost drawn in by your works, is that intentional? The viewers meet themselves in reflection while standing inside the object. It is more than a typical mirror image. In these works viewers find themselves in virtually generated rooms in which I try to confront them with philosophy, language, and acute socio-political issues. This is an important phenomenon and is accompanied by aspects of natural science. The observation and presence of light is actually something very elementary that everyone can experience day by day.

How does it feel when one is called to represent one's country in one of the most important international art exhibitions,

La Biennale Arte di Venezia? It was a very big surprise, because I had no longer expected it, and actually I was no longer concerned about it (laughs), so this enabled me to feel joy about it. Gradually I am becoming aware that this nomination entails many positive as well as rather difficult aspects.

How did the combination with Erwin Wurm for the Austrian Pavilion come about? The curator, Christa Steinle, proposed the two of us. At the core of the project is how we deal with temporality and materiality: for my part I had turned away from classical media very early and had begun to experiment with light.

At first glance Erwin Wurm and you seem to be an unlikely pairing. This has frequently been pointed out to us, but I must honestly say that I prefer to exhibit with someone whose work differs significantly from mine. I believe an exciting confrontation between our two contributions will emerge.

What comes after Venice? I would like to know that myself! There is a lot that I have to do, but I must see whether the attention will increase. At the moment interest in my work is stronger than before. Venice has certainly made a difference.

read the full story on bit.ly/_BrigitteKowanz



DOROTHEUM

The stories with Erwin Wurm and Brigitte Kowanz have emerged from a collaboration with Dorotheum, one of the world's leading auction houses, and sponsor of the Austrian Pavilion at the 57th Biennale di Venezia.

dorotheum.com

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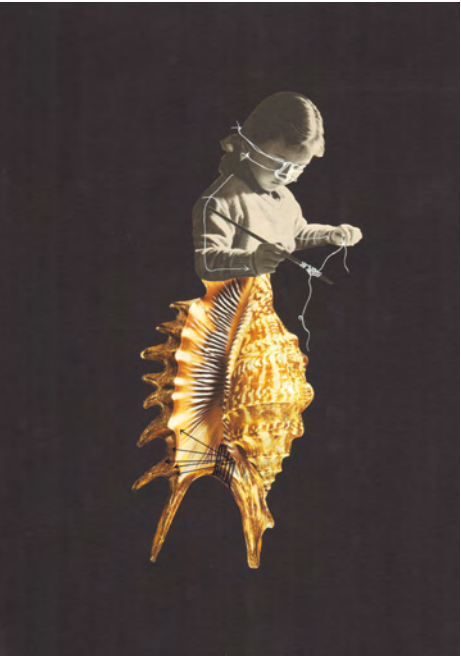
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Eva, what does it mean to you to be able to create art?
Art provides me with an intimate space, an environment that reflects my character and my way of working. It is also a tool, a mediator through which I can talk to others and share themes that I consider pressing or problematic. I have come to realize that art is my language. Working with images – on paper, but also in the space – allows me to communicate more effectively.



Which motifs interest you for your artistic practice?
I am interested in the conflict between what's natural and what's learned or what is commonly accepted as "normal". I look at the internal and external forces that lead people to behave in certain ways when they walk, speak, or react in various situations, how they are influenced by institutional rules or I try to reveal the intense personal worlds and inner visions that function as parallel worlds which they inhabit. I consider it important to look at the world through the view or experience of those who

have for whatever reason been secluded, oppressed, or handicapped in ways that have limited them in their everyday functioning and prevented them from being fully integrated.

How do you go about your work?
I do a lot of research, so the starting point is always something I adopt from reality – a real case, a story I heard or read about, my personal experience, or an observation. Later, during the process, a transformation takes place. I develop my view of something, which often works like a puzzle, a collage of reality and fiction.

One seems to be able to discover a kind of morbid truth below the surface in your works, something no one likes to talk about.
I believe most artists try to reveal what is hidden, invisible. One of my important motifs is a cage and a body that's being dismembered. While for me the motif of the cage represents hidden imprisonment, restrictions, and rules, that one can't see, but to which one obeys, the motif of the fragmented body represents a situation in which a person cannot maintain his or her ability to function and act coherently under the pressures, demands, and horrors of the surrounding world. I am also interested in the notion of anxiety or anxious states of the mind manifested through the body as well as through tools or means that should hold it under control. So, rather than morbidity, it is probably the idea of suppressed or withheld anxiety, which shows subtly through gestures or actions, until it breaks out.

One cannot help thinking about Kafka. Is it correct to assume that Kafka has strongly influenced your work?
It is obvious that Kafka has greatly influenced my work, yes. My father is a big admirer of Kafka and I share his excitement completely. I have been reading his novels repeatedly over time. But I wouldn't put Kafka in direct relation to my work. I would say it is probably more of a subconscious influence. However, there is one short story by Kafka that has particularly fascinated me. It is called *The Burrow* and tells of a mole-like creature, which burrows through a system of tunnels and creates trapping devices

for other creatures. This story is about captivation and survival, with the creature being both the snake and the mouse at the same time. This is how nature functions. You can never be sure of your role in the horrifying system.

»You can never be sure of your role in the horrifying system.«

You studied in Vienna. Could there also be an influence by Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theories on your work?
I find him fascinating to read, but from a position of a woman I couldn't identify with him, as he was the one who has been categorically excluding female cases in his research, as he considered women subordinate to men. I am probably more attracted by reading other psychoanalysts such as Melanie Klein or even Anna Freud as I am particularly interested in children psychoanalysis, and other influential texts or theories such as Paulo Freire and his Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Augusto Boal and his Theatre of the oppressed, also Moreno's Psychodrama techniques.

Do you personally see a specific role for an artist in a society?
I think that an artist should be seen as an integral part in society, applying the skill to bring attention to certain, more hidden and problematic aspects of the world and to look at them differently. To not take things as rigid, unchangeable concepts, unbreakable structures. If an artist succeeds in doing this he or she contributes something of real value, because it can change things in people's minds.
● read the full story on bit.ly/_EvaKotatkova

Eva Kotátková
is represented by
Hunt Kastner, Prague



Nikolaus, looking at your works, they appear scientific – almost like astrophysical drawings or notes on relativity theory.
Yes, there is something to that. I consider scientific principles as quite fascinating. We live in a highly complex world. Science is just one sign system and explanation model among others. I pick a system and elaborate on it. Just as important to me is the reciprocal, often paradoxical penetration of micro and macro levels into these various systems. In turn, I try to meet these complex live realities with complexity as well.

Does your work claim to be scientific in the sense of the scrutiny of precise scientific observations? Or are you purely concerned with aesthetic considerations?
Primarily, I don't see an incompatibility between the two! Aesthetics derives from the Greek "aisthesis". Basically, it concerns conscious perception derived from the intellect and the senses. A sense of discernment, it's fundamentally concerned with the ability to observe, explore and research the world with "good sense". Literally sensuous connections result in the form of new knowledge. From this perspective, so-called non-sense may make just as much sense! (laughs) It's principally about differentiated experience as an elementary possibility in the creation of knowledge. For me personally, an extended drawing practice plays a central role, not so much in order to mimetically depict and explain the world and to make it more controllable, but rather to make phenomena - things and the relationships between them that are not initially obvious – visible, and as precisely as possible, for both myself, and others.

Listening to you I can't help thinking of Daniel Kehlmann's novel "Measuring the World" ...
... or even the impossibility of measuring the world! (laughs) Drawing as a medium has interested me for a long time, especially mind-maps and diagrams – all of the mutual interdependencies between so-called interior and exterior spaces. The exciting question is: How do I measure places and non-places?

Which language or drawing system do I need to develop for it? And how in turn does the space change me? The extensive assumption of objectivity has long become obsolete.



How do you approach a new work? Is there, as in a scientific test series, a fixed sequential process that you always run through?
No, there is no fixed process, it occurs rather as in free association, often during drawing or experimenting without knowing what will result. Inspiration often happens only by chance! Meanwhile, I have developed a vocabulary and form language that I can rely on. It is rather about a form of emptying in order to let something new develop. To be able to allow this situation sometimes takes time...

You spent some years in Brigitte Kowanz's class at the Academy of Applied Arts Vienna. In what way has her approach to "space" influenced your own concepts?
Lastingly. Through her intensive study of the phenomenon of light and its incomprehensible yet as we all know essential sensibility and atmospheric power, a wide artistic field of action

has opened up for me. Space had never been communicated as a static entity but rather as a dynamic transmedial field, that has certainly generated an immediate political dimension. I have right from the beginning simultaneously concentrated on installation, music composition, improvisation, and choreography – all strategies intended to temporarily organize space and time.

»How do I measure places and non-places?«

In earlier days journeymen of various trades learned new work practices and collected life experience during their "years of wandering". How did you develop during your stations in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Berlin?
I think it is very important for both one's personal and artistic development. Today eighteen-year-old students come to my seminars – that's right after they complete high school. Many works are similar. I believe a reservoir of the most varied life experiences determines the depth of a work making it unique.

What's exciting on your program this year?
De Gruyter has recently published the second edition of my first comprehensive book on diagrams under the title Drawing a Hypothesis as well as another comprehensive publication entitled Choreo-graphic Figures that introduces a unique notation system for performances at the interface between choreography, writing, and drawing. During the summer, I'll work intensively on a new animated film in my studio in the Viennese Prater. This will be followed in the fall by exhibition projects with Urbane Künste Ruhr near Düsseldorf, a residency, and the preparation of an exhibition at Villa Arson in Nice as well as at Wiels, in Brussels.
● read the full story on bit.ly/_NikolausGansterer

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For more than seventeen years, Birgit Vollmeier and Yudi Warsosumarto, under the agency label PEACH, have worked strategically and creatively advising galleries and cultural institutions. With its “art window”, a vitrine facing the street-level showcasing art, in Vienna’s sixth district, PEACH has become something of an institution in Vienna’s art and cultural scene itself

It soon became clear to you both that you wanted to focus on the cultural sector by means of PEACH, how did it come about?

Y: From 2004 to 2006, commissioned by ORF, we had the opportunity to develop and realize two wonderful campaigns for the *Long Night of Music* and the *Long Night of Museums* – two extremely popular cultural events. But we really took off in 2009 with our work for *ImPulsTanz*, Vienna’s international festival for contemporary dance, who we have worked with for five years. For us it has been both a baptism by fire and a starting point; cultural service now has us in its grip!

How do the communicative needs of clients from the cultural sector distinguish themselves from the needs of other clients?

B: Cultural institutions, especially in the arts,

are often faced with the challenge on the one hand of always having to provide a projection surface for new art. On the other hand they have to project a clear profile of themselves and to take a position. It takes a great sensitivity to translate the position and character of an art enterprise into forms, colors, and words – that is, to maintain a consistent appearance.

»Art institutions have to provide a projection surface for new art. They have to project a clear profile of themselves and take a position.«

One project in which you participated was the *Green Light Project* of TBA21, initiated by Francesca von Habsburg and Ólafur Eliasson, integrating refugees into the production process of a modular lamp.

B: The visual concept for the project already existed when we joined. We were engaged in order to support the sale of the lamps produced by the initiative using distinct means of communication. The beautiful thing for us in the TBA21 project was our ability to contribute to a socially valuable concept, which we both found very gratifying, also emotionally.

How important is it for you to be surrounded by art?

Y: We spend a lot of time in the agency where there are probably more artworks than we have at home. But it’s not only for our benefit, it is important to us for those who work there as well as our clients and guests who visit us there.

At one time you had the idea of using the vitrine in the storefront in which you installed PEACH, as a showcase for art.

B: Yes, we met with so much good art and exciting people who created this art that we had the wish to share this privilege with others. The showcase gives us the opportunity to present artists that we appreciate.

Y: At the same time, the showcase allows the viewer a glance into the soul of PEACH as it were. One gets to know much about us, when one peeks inside.

With which art or cultural institution would you like to work with?

Y: It would be a dream to newly create the web site of the Gagosian Gallery. (laughs) We are certainly interested in cooperating with certain institutions such as gallery Kurimanzutto in Mexico City to name just one. I personally like contemporary Brazilian art, because it is at times raw but always conceptual and strong. I would like to work in a location where such art is happening.

B: But we tend not to nurture specific wishes. As with collecting art: you find some commissions, some find you.

● read the full story on bit.ly/_PEACH



PETIT SAINT BERNARD
AVEC BOX, 2016

Cosima von Bonin (*1962 in Mombasa, Kenia) has been one of the most important contemporary artists since the early 1990s. Her pictorial worlds are populated by lethargic and recumbent animals, sitting like guards on stands and full of allusions to the world of consumer goods. Von Bonin’s textile dogs are often made of the best designer materials, and they only seem to be cute cuddly toys, as they in fact stand for human emotions, a repressed past, and unfathomed depths. Notwithstanding the melancholy tenor of von Bonin’s work, it still exudes a desire for the light-hearted.

Different materials
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ohne Titel, 2016

Heimo Zobernig (*1958 in Mauthen, Carinthia) is one of the internationally best-known of contemporary Austrian artists. He works across many genres, using reduced formal idioms and very precise contents, taking a step back toward complex figurative art. This bronze candlestick displays traces of the molding process that Zobernig has deliberately left visible so as to show the conditions of the production of art. A brutal materiality inexorably provokes reflection on the fragility of human existence.

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Through co-authorship and collaboration, West introduced a subversive and often humorous form of play with the way authorship is attributed to artworks. The publication is accompanying the exhibition at the 21er Haus and shows Franz West together with Douglas Gordon, Mike Kelley, Otto Muehl and Erwin Wurm among others.

Franz West Artistclub
Editor: Agnes Husslein-Arco, Harald Krejci
Text: Véronique Abpurg, Robert Fleck, Renée Gadsden, Agnes Husslein-Arco, Harald Krejci, Herbert Lachmayer, Andreas Reiter Raabe
Design: Willi Schmid, Vienna
Details: Paperback, 29,4 x 22,5 cm, 96 pages, numerous ills. in color
Publisher: Verlag für moderne Kunst
Euro 23,–
ISBN (German edition) 978-3-903131-87-3
ISBN (English edition) 978-3-903131-89-7
vfmk.org



Hans Op de Beeck's sculptures and expansive installations, his paintings, his large-format watercolors and drawings, his animations and videos all manifest the dramatic strategies of the stage, of film and of architecture. He whisks us off into a world where reality and fiction overlap, in which time appears to stand still, an ambience of suggestive scenarios reminiscent of film stills.

Hans Op de Beeck The Silent Castle
Editor: Fritz Emslander, Museum Morsbroich, Leverkusen
Preface: Markus Heinzelmann
Text: Fritz Emslander
Design: Christoph Steinegger/Interkool
Details: German/English, Hardcover, 21 x 24 cm, 128 pages, numerous ills. in color
Publisher: Verlag für moderne Kunst
Euro 29,–
ISBN 978-3-903153-02-8
vfmk.org



In the stop motion films by the Swedish artist duo Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, figures made of modeling clay appear on the stage. The focus is on highly charged social themes and human actions. The films prompt a view of worlds that revolve around elemental questions of human existence.

Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg Worship
Editor: Kunstraum Dornbirn, Thomas Häusle
Preface: Thomas Häusle
Text: John Peter Nilsson, Thomas Häusle
Design: sägenvier/proxi.me
Details: German/English, Paperback, 21 x 12,5 cm, 140 pages, numerous ills. in color
Publisher: Verlag für moderne Kunst
Euro 24,–
ISBN 978-3-903131-53-8
vfmk.org



Nick, you began studying art at the age of eighteen. Why art, and how can one already be so sure at such an age?
Coming from a rural area – I come from the Salzkammergut – one does not have a concrete idea of what makes up the context of contemporary art. You just want to move to the big city, leave the provinces. If one wants to go into a creative direction, applied graphic design would seem to suggest itself. At the time, I spoke with a friend who studied at the *Applied (University of Applied Arts Vienna)*. However, the courses there appeared too narrow and too school-like to me. So I arrived at free art and then studied painting at the *Academy of Fine Arts Vienna*.

In the meantime, you have left your beginnings as an artist far behind you. What has remained from your art study?
Of course you take things with you, you get an overview of art history and learn to classify things. Beyond the field of artistic practice I have never felt the urge to work theoretically or scientifically. Art education was not valued in the way it is today. Recently however, and for the first time, I have written a short exhibition text for an artist friend – that was an interesting experience. How does one actually write something like that? How does one address another artist's work textually?

You say you don't work scientifically per se, you are not an art theoretician, but you do weave many art theoretical themes into your work, don't you?
Yes, I think my artistic work has to a certain extent to do with theoretical exploration and I think it is necessary to include it in my own practice.

You don't deal exclusively with art theory. Often, your references originate in philosophy, sometimes in the natural sciences or in politics, that is, in fields that have nothing to do with art.
The contents with which I work originate from various fields: Image theory, fiction, scientific essays and day-to-day political reports. I actually wander constantly between different areas of subject matter; it is quite rare for me to read

something in one go, rather I pursue a kind of *rhizomatic* reading method. The French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari used the term *rhizome* as a metaphor for a post-modern or post-structuralist model of knowledge organization and description of the world. According to their theory, knowledge is not imparted in a linear strand or on one level, but three-dimensionally and anti-hierarchically. My approach to research and my work process are similar.

»I am not the type of painter who is concerned with the process of the application of paint.«

So you are not concerned with painting only colorful surfaces in your pictures, even though it may look that way to the viewer at first glance.
Yes, that would definitely be too boring for me. It is important to me to pursue this semantic research, during which you discover various things, which serve the interpretation. From this amalgam forms something like a story, a conceptual superstructure. At the same time, my artistic practice is extremely heterogeneous. I am more concerned with a kind of setting: the relationship of images to each other, the constructing of exhibitions as situations.

Would you call yourself a genuine painter?
I am not really sure myself (laughs). The mere fact that I apply paint to a surface does not mean that the work can be exclusively derived via the discourse of painting. I am not the type of painter who is mainly concerned with form and composition and the process of the application of paint or material. More important to me than the painting process itself is the creation of a context into which the picture has to be integrated so that it receives authorization. I am intrigued by the idea that a painting can become more than an object on the wall, stepping into the room and becoming readable on an expanded level.

To just produce a "beautiful exhibition" would surely be insufficient?
Yes, that would be comparable to the concept of salon painting at the beginning of the nineteenth century. I believe a picture should do more and challenge. It should enter into an interaction with the visitor, but I don't want to impose a set of rules for interpretation to the viewer: Through the discourse, art history is being perpetuated as it were.

After two incredibly successful but surely also very demanding years, you retreated for some months in 2015 and 2016 and now you have begun to work with full force again.
I think it is very important, especially in this state of present intoxication to resist the urge to reduce one's speed, and to reduce one's own speed, in order to sharpen one's own perception again and again and to be able to develop new points of view – also in regard to the fact of how one defines one's own role in the art scene. For me the fulfillment does not lie in *more, bigger and still more accumulation*. I try to keep a certain calm. For 2017 new exhibitions are planned with Martin van Zomeren in Amsterdam and in the new gallery space of Emanuel Layr in Rome.

● read the full story on bit.ly/_NickOberthaler



Nick Oberthaler
is represented by
Emanuel Layr, Vienna



What makes this an object of value?
ART FACTS .NET

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International Art Fair

21–24 September 2017

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Courtesy by Halbe-Rahmen, Photo © Miriam Medri

Why every picture deserves a frame

We asked Heinrich Halbe, who has been working in the family tradition of manufacturing high-quality frames for his entire life, why every piece of wall art needs a frame.

Mr. Halbe, does the frame matter?

It matters to a lot. I am convinced that, although one may not always remember the look of the frame that has been used on a piece of art, it makes a quintessential contribution as to how an artwork is experienced.

How exactly does the frame add to the art experience?

There is a practical side, which is represented by a frame's function to protect against external influences, UV light, or dust to which artworks are exposed. Beyond that, a frame sets the stage for a work, emphasizing its qualities, directing the viewer's eye, and maximizing the impact of the work in its specific context.

When you speak of maximizing the impact of a work, how does the frame contribute?

I think a frame has both an integrative and a dividing function, meaning that it enables a work to enter into a meaningful relationship with its surrounding, creating a state of harmony or, by intention, the opposite. Furthermore, the frame sets the work apart from its surround-

ing and focuses the viewer's attention onto the work.

The aesthetics of frames have evolved over time. Has the role of a frame changed with it?

In the lavish Baroque or the playful Rococo periods the frame was competing with the artwork itself, both by visual impact and value. During Classicism this development was reversed and the frame returned to its bare essentials as a primarily protective medium. Today we acknowledge a frame's practical value just as we appreciate its ability to discreetly underpin the true nature of an artwork, to set the right stage for it.

Are some works better left unframed?

Of course, some works are intentionally left without a frame to emphasize the genuine, the "undomesticated" character or the sculptural aspect of a piece of work, or simply by intention of the artist. As someone through whose hands many artworks have passed, it is my firm conviction, that practically every wall work benefits from a carefully chosen frame. However, I am not suggesting that the answer always needs to be a classical frame and passe-partout. The possibilities are many.

What would be your advice to someone who is looking for the perfect presentation for a newly acquired work of art?

One should get acquainted with the essential character of the work and fundamental requi-

rements which arise from it. Does the work really need a frame in the literal sense, with a strong demarcation around it? Or should it rather be given enough space and be perceived as expanding, or even floating? It can also be helpful to obtain the artist's advice as to how she or he would like to see the work presented.

What are the principal options among frames?

The choice ranges from traditional frames with a layer of glass placed directly on top of the work, either with or without passe-partout, to box frames which create a kind of vitrine that puts a distance between glass and work, to float frames, which present the work as free-floating with a gap between work and frame.

Is there a rule of thumb which frame is best suited for specific types of works?

Delicate watercolors benefit from a passepartout and a rather subtle frame. A dark expressive oil painting suggests a more massive frame without a passe-partout. Smaller photographs can be well presented in discreet aluminum frames. Upon request, we provide personal advice to our customers over the distance and work with them through the options.

Do you observe any trends in how contemporary art is framed?

Considering the diversity in which contemporary art seeks to express itself it is very hard to identify the one-size-fits-all answer. But for many years there has been a preference for sober, often white, frames in the context of contemporary art.

What mistakes should be avoided?

One should resist the temptation to match the frame purely to one's interior décor or design preferences. The primary focus should be to create a symbiosis between the work and the frame. One is best advised to take a neutral position and concentrate on what is required by the work. The results are often surprising and strikingly convincing. [continue on page 13](#)



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Madeleine Boschan's sculptures make visible layers of historical, emotional, and spiritual aspects that characterize all manmade locations and spaces. In recent years, the artist's work has developed from working directly with everyday objects and objet trouvés towards an impressive chromaticity

Viewed from various angles the character of your sculptures changes considerably – from one perspective they may appear fragile, from another quite massive.

A minimal change in angle changes everything. Something becomes narrow or wide. We human beings also have a more narrow and a broader side. When Bruce Nauman in the 1960s walked in his studio in precise rectangles, it was certainly a physical experience, but it was also an affirmation of his own existence.

Your works sometimes make a very archaic impression – like ritual sites of an ancient culture.

I am glad that you perceive it like that. For me it is as if the sculptures are being loaded by their environment and the people who look at them. They function as memory. It is indescribable, one simply feels it

How do you approach such works?

My starting point are questions: Where am I? How do I orientate myself? When I plan an exhibition I want to know everything about the space and the location – historically and architecturally. A bit like the strategic spying out of unfamiliar territory before an invasion. To give the sculpture its place has always something to do with occupation. I walk the space and develop a range of sensorimotor sentiments and impressions and from that results my approach to the work.

Do you have specific references in terms of architecture?

No, I don't have specific references, although my preferences are for Greek and Japanese architecture. I admire Gropius, Niemeyer, van der Rohe, Wright, but the sculptures with their perspectives and angles are all mine. I first explore with card models how something functions, what stands on its own and which angles are to be chosen. Then I build larger with plywood or plaster. This way I can go to

extremes, adjust the angles until it holds and in doing so, explore the vocabulary of form.

History and specifically the history of architecture are a great inspiration for you?

Without a context one has no stance. It's not just about physics. For me social and ethical questions are important. Where and how are encounters possible? Is it even possible that one can come together? An idea of connection possibilities, not one without the other, togetherness.

»Art is no mini-golf course.«

Which concept are you pursuing with the color you choose?

Here too the location provided is a decisive factor. The sculptures that were shown in the Neue Galerie Gladbeck in 2015 have a direct reference to the color of Miami's Art Deco architecture and the colors of the 1980s – Miami Vice for example (laughs). The color of the works that I showed in my gallery in Tel Aviv in February 2016 originate in "antique polychromy". It was Vinzenz Brinckmann who proved with modern methods of investigation that the sculptures and temples were originally colorful and that even the Acropolis was covered with green, ochre, pink, violet, and light blue.

[read the full story on bit.ly/_MadeleineBoschan](#)

Madeleine Boschan

is represented by
Galerie Bernd Kugler, Innsbruck.

UPCOMING SHOW:
Partance
June 9 – July 15, 2017



What lays bare in me (2017)

Madeleine Boschan's seemingly architectural sculptures, massive, yet elegant and even fragile, generate within their proximity an energy that causes thoughts and even bodies to vibrate. The relationship between space and body and the resulting implications constitute a decisive element in Boschan's work.

In this unique seven-part edition *What lays bare in me* created exclusively for Collectors Agenda, Madeleine Boschan suggests that architecture is much more than the fundamental human need to create a roof over one's head. In a serious appreciation of architecture therefore, it must be perceived as inherently utopian; Madeleine Boschan's most recent work configured in this edition represents a subtle study of this inherent prerequisite.

Every sculpture emits its own, very particular attraction. Each individual angulation informs of its unique character and is further confirmed by its coloration.



Material: Laquered aluminum
Size: 41 x 21 x 9 cm (16.1 x 8.3 x 3.5 inches)
Colors: light salmon, light turquoise, light yellow, lilac, rust, strawberry red, teal
Edition of 7 unique items, with certificate
1.200 Euro (incl. 13% VAT)
[more on bit.ly/_MadeleineBoschanEdition](#)



It has been twenty-five years since, Otto Wiesenthal resigned from a managerial position to devote his time to the transformation of a house in Vienna's seventh district built during the period of intensive industrial expansion at the end of the nineteenth century into the *Hotel Altstadt Vienna*. We met with Wiesenthal and his daughter Saskia, the hotel's marketing and art manager and an art collector in her own right, in one of the suites of the "Altstadt" which houses a large proportion of his private art collection.

What was your entrance into the world of art Mr. Wiesenthal?

OW: I bought my first painting as a nineteen-year old student in 1970: a Ringel for 1.000 Schillings. At the time, that was half of the money that I had to live on per month. Six weeks later, the owner of the gallery from where I bought it asked me to make a straight exchange for a graphic work by Fuchs that would have cost three times as much as I had paid for the Ringel. But I refused the exchange, even though I was in great financial hardship at the time.

»Art is the big constant in my life.«

Ms. Wiesenthal, you have followed in the footsteps of your father and begun to build an art collection of your own. What is your approach to collecting?

SW: I only collect privately, for myself. Most of the time I know the artists or I would like to get to know them, because I like their work. Empathy is almost always the reason that I want to invest in something. Besides my own collection, I certainly try to buy new art for the hotel

and to organize exhibitions with young artists in our gallery in the basement.

How did you get the idea to open a hotel? Was the reason simply to find a place for your collection?

OW: I had worked in the computer industry for ten years and wanted to do something new. First my idea was to open a gallery; the idea of the hotel happened rather by chance, but yes, the art certainly played a major role.

By installing art in the house, along with the furnishings and especially in the guest rooms, you give the hotel a very private quality.

OW: It has always been our intention to reach people and to provide life quality for staff and guests. When one reads reports or evaluations about the house almost always two things are mentioned: the staff and the art. Our guests appreciate this special mixture.

What are the differences in the process of setting up a private home as opposed to a hotel room?

SW: With a hotel room you can experiment more. For example I would not make my own

bedroom as dark as the rooms which Matteo Thun created for us. I like it more austere. The great thing regarding hotel rooms however is that one can feel different each time, that one can be immersed in a new world.

You seem to attach a lot of importance on constant renewal. With your art collection you create lasting value. How does that go together?

OW: Art is the great constant in my life. Apart from that I can live with very few things and give up things very easily. It used to be my guiding principle to be able to store everything one owns in a Citroën 2CV. I constantly look for new apartments and for new creative possibilities. Five years is the maximum amount of time I can stay in one place. The hotel, however, is a good place for the constancy of the art collection.

Why of all places did you choose Vienna's seventh district?

SW: When we opened, the seventh district wasn't such a fabulous place. But we were sure that we were in the actual center of the city because real life takes place here. There are small cafés and grocery stores. There are good bakeries and restaurants. The seventh has a lot of character. It's the right district to live in. And in our hotel one lives among the real Viennese people.

Would you share any suggestions where to see good art in Vienna?

SW: Gallery Nathalie Halgand has a good feeling for the young art scene. I also like the Ankerbrotfabrik, where you really have a great variety of galleries in an exciting building.

OW: I like to go the Westlicht for photography. And the Dorotheum, Vienna's auction house, is actually very good to find out what is happening in the art market. But you should actually ask our staff these questions. They are the real Vienna experts and give advice every day.

● read the full story on bit.ly/_AltstadtVienna



Photo: © Hotel Altstadt Vienna, Georg Bodenstein



Sophia Pompéry is an observer. In quiet concentration she draws poetic truths from the seemingly mundane. Her conceptual art works utilize everyday things and their underlying physics, inviting us to examine and get to know these presumed already known articles anew.

Sophia, how would you explain in your own words what you are doing?

I'll try to answer this in three sentences: I am interested in physics and everyday phenomena and try to show everyday objects in such a way that they don't look commonplace. The works function like physical arrangements. The photographs, videos, objects, and installations created in the process are of a documentary nature. In my work it is always about a construction that is documented through film and can thus be watched in a particularly precise way. That is how one manages to play a trick on the everyday, to see in such a way that it becomes hardly recognizable and to show how the mundane under our observation, is stripped of its banality in order to become a pawn in our own history.

And what do you want your work to trigger in the viewer?

I would like to enter into a dialog with the viewer and to let a game with natural laws, viewing habits, and expectations emerge on the basis of physical phenomena. My goal is, to open as many associations as possible with few means. I would like to show pictures behind that which is known, which draw the viewers deeper into their personal histories – concentrated, very quiet and light, at times with melancholy, at times with humor.

So your art has always a double bottom under which the most diverse meanings hide? Is that your claim in regard to your works?

If my work gains a philosophical meaning through the fact that you give it one, then it is actually desired. The various interpretations distinguish a good work for me. Otherwise it would be flat like a physics book. Meanwhile, I can trust my gut feeling in this regard.

You have lived for quite some time in Istanbul. What can you take home from this time?

Since 2012, I have lived there for a longer period. That was two years after Istanbul became the

art capital of Europe and one year before the Gezi protests. I have experienced this time as unbelievably euphoric. For me, Istanbul was the most exotic city of Europe and the most European city of the Orient – a place in which very much was possible. Now, nobody really knows where this city is going, forces simply erupted and certain actions ensued.

»To play a trick on the everyday«

It must certainly be difficult to watch such developments in a city to which one is connected.

The euphoria that I felt in 2012 has turned into apathy and frustration in many of my acquaintances and this has been underscored by the latest elections and the so-called "coup attempt" which has led to massive detentions and suppression of the independent press. The society is split more than ever before. A third of Istanbul's galleries have closed since the Gezi protests. The Sinop Biennale was cancelled as was the Çanakkale Biennale. Also the *Art International Istanbul* was cancelled in 2016. These are not good times, generally speaking, but also including the art scene.

Which exciting things are happening for you this year?

My solo exhibition *Gravity is Just a Habit* at Galerie Wagner + Partner has just opened. And I look very much forward to the *Sculpture Triennale* in Bingen in October and to the *Festival of Future Nous* with the former students of Ólafur Eliasson at Hamburger Bahnhof Berlin in September. To quote John Cage: "We welcome whatever happens next."

● read the full story on bit.ly/_SophiaPompéry



Framing made easy

Halbe's signature magnet frame principle has won the company the Red Dot design award. David Halbe, who leads the family business in the third generation, explains its simplicity.

Mr. Halbe, what characterizes your frame principle?

What really sets our concept apart is that it enables even inexperienced users to frame artworks in a professional manner. Fast-framing, replacing or repositioning a work inside the frame later becomes very easy. Despite their unusual flexibility, our frames protect a work of art by the highest standards, as they are applied in a museum context.

Why would one change the framing of an artwork, once it has been framed?

Private art owners will usually stick to their chosen frame. But in the gallery and institutional context, art works are mostly framed temporarily for a specific exhibition. Imagine a photo exhibition of eighty works, all of which have to be framed in only a couple of days.

One of the aspects you advocate is that your magnetic frame principle is so simple that practically everyone can frame or re-frame an artwork. Aren't there any risks of getting it wrong?

Of course one is advised to handle any works of art with utmost care. As far as delicate or old masterpieces are concerned, they should probably better go through the capable hands of a professional framer. But for the vast majority of cases we offer an extremely simple and safe solution, which hardly provides room for error and produces a highly professional result.

Is your clientele composed mainly of private individuals then?

We count everyone who values art and who shares our belief that a great artwork deserves a worthy frame, among our clientele. Besides many private individuals we hold long-standing relationships with curators and custodians among art institutions such as Museum Ludwig in Cologne or the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, as well as many important corporate art collections worldwide.

What is the most valuable artwork you are aware of which was framed by Halbe?

We have recently been commissioned to develop a custom-made framing solution for several paintings by Edvard Munch – a joint development by Werner Murrer Rahmen and Halbe. They will be exhibited in Oslo.

halbe-rahmen.de

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For more than 20 years, Robert Punkenhofer has been involved in international corporate and art management. His agency Art & Idea considers itself a nexus between art, architecture, design, and economics. He has curated more than 100 exhibitions, among them the annual Vienna Art Week. He has served as Trade Commissioner for the Austrian Foreign Trade Organization in Mexico City, New York, Berlin, and Barcelona. We spoke with the unusual collector about how he is revitalizing *Carl Suchy & Söhne*, a high-end watchmaker's brand, dating from Vienna's brilliant k. and k. period.

You not only collect art but also old k. a. k. brands from the Vienna around 1900. What do you want to do with these brands?

I want to revive them and save them from being forgotten. I am particularly excited about the story of the Prague watchmaker *Carl Suchy*. He was a master of his trade and the most important reference for watch aficionados of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the intellectual elite of Fin de Siècle Vienna. *Carl Suchy & Söhne* lived in exceptional times of industrial innovation and artistic creation. Today he is back! It just took him a brief creative break of 100 years. (laughs)

How are you infusing *Carl Suchy & Söhne* with new life?

I have gathered around me young talented people who will support me in the process. Milos Ristin is designer of the *Waltz N°1*, the first new watch by *Carl Suchy & Söhne*. The entire project was directed by the watchmaker Marc Jenni, who has also worked for Tiffany & Co., and is one of the 33 members of the "Académie Horlogère des Créateurs Indépendants." Our first milestone was to make the production of the *Waltz N°1* a reality – the name is actually

an homage to the Vienna Court Ball (Wiener Hofball) – in a limited edition of 22 pieces. Since the watch is completely handmade, its production took seven months. In all its Swiss precision and quality it carries Viennese elegance.



So you are combining Swiss precision and Viennese flair.

Exactly. We strive for mindful decoration that fulfills a functional and emotional role. *Waltz N°1* follows an elegant and minimalistic design aesthetic with an emotional twist, a love

for a seamless combination of sophisticated materials with a passion for state-of-the-art technology, for which Austrian-Czech architect Adolf Loos and his work in 1900-Vienna served as an inspiration. He was the one to advocate smooth and clear surfaces in contrast to the lavish decorations of the fin de siècle and to other modern aesthetic principles

You must have spent quite a while investigating the history of the brand.

Starting in 1822, Suchy has been expanding his business internationally and started participating at world fairs. In the end, he operated three shops in Prague, Vienna, and Swiss La Chaux-de-Fonds. We spent a considerable amount of time researching his journey. Actually, we spent more than three years prior to the brand's re-launch investigating the history of *Carl Suchy*. We spent days digging through historical archives in Vienna and Prague, visited specialist workshops to understand the craft of watch-making. And we even managed to track down relatives of the Suchy family, who are still alive. Since we went public it seems like we have become an unofficial information bureau of sorts for anything related to *Carl Suchy*. (laughs) We have been receiving an incredible amount of calls from enthusiastic fans of *Carl Suchy's* watches from all corners of the world.

Did your research produce any insights into Suchy's illustrious clientele?

Many aristocrats, artists, and industrials were amongst his customers. And we know for certain that Freud owned a *Carl Suchy & Söhne* watch, which he held very dearly. In cooperation with the Sigmund Freud Museum an antique *Carl Suchy & Söhne* pocket watch is currently traveling through Austrian schools in the so-called "Freud Suitcase," along with other of Freud's historical artifacts, for the museum's educational project. I would like to think that, today, he would be wearing the new *Waltz N°1*. Probably the most vibrant personality to own a *Carl Suchy* watch was Emperor Franz Josef I. himself.

Where can one buy the *Waltz N°1*?

Our first limited edition of 22 has already completely sold out last February. But we are already planning a new edition of the *Waltz N°1* in a number of 50. I recommend to review the *Carl Suchy* website and subscribe to our list to be the first to learn of the release.

carlsuchy.com



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For my mother (2017)

Andreas Duscha, frequently bases his works on found digital images, that are associated with specific places, historical events and political phenomena. He builds them on the potential, possibility and imagination, filtering episodes of events that could have happened in a particular way. In his new series *For my mother (2017)*, Andreas Duscha is concerned with an often overlooked phenomenon in literature: dedication. A dedication can imply a simple "thank you" by the author to someone close, a display of affection to a special person, or a note about a thing or an event of particular importance. The edition features twelve mirror glass pieces, each featuring a different dedication by an author, extracted from world literature, which has been etched into its surface. The isolated analysis of the dedications – selected by the artist mainly for their poetic quality – creates new levels of meaning, offering entirely new perspectives and conclusions that are detached from the content of the book.

Material: Mirror glass, etched with silver nitrate, metal rail as wall mount
Format: 47,5 x 32 cm (18.7 x 12.6 inches)
Edition of 12 unique items, with certificate
600 Euro, incl. VAT (13%)
● more on bit.ly/_AndreasDuschaEdition



Cassowarius Rex, 2015

For the exhibition *The Relentless Repetition of Reality* The Green Parrot has produced a photographic limited edition by Basim Magdy. The edition displays a picture taken years ago at a natural history museum of a taxidermy Cassowary. Magdy's recurrent investigation of memory processes lead to his interest in taxidermy as a way of fixing recollections and therefore preventing them from fading. The Cassowary is the third tallest non-flying bird and one of the most colorful, it lives in New Guinea and parts of Australia and it is considered to be a vicious and aggressive bird. Basim Magdy's work appeared recently in exhibitions and screenings at The New Museum Triennial, New Museum, New York, Tate Modern, London; Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2012); Kunst-halle Wien, Vienna (2011) among others. He was shortlisted for the Future Generation Art Prize, Kiev (2012) and won the Abraaj Art Prize, Dubai and the New:Vision Award, CPH:DOX Film Festival, Copenhagen (2014). He was announced Deutsche Bank's 2016 Artist of the Year.

Material: Lambda print from digital photograph on metallic paper mounted on Sintra, in dark-brown wooden distance frame
Format: 32 x 23,5 cm (12.6 x 9.3 inches)
Edition of 10 + 2 AP, with certificate
1.250 Euro, incl. VAT (20%)
● more on bit.ly/_BasimMagdyEdition



Worlds (small Germany), 2016

Sophia Pompéry's edition *Worlds (small Germany)* represents a geographical relief plate, as it is typically used in geography class for teaching purposes. Coated with blackboard paint, the relief is freed from scale, political borders, place names, or other coordinates, which would usually help localize one's position on a map. Complemented by a pencil, the relief chalkboard invites the involved viewer to leave his or her personal sphere, prompting him or her to reconsider the surrounding world, and to sketch up an own vision of it. Scientific and at the same time poetic, the little blackboard becomes a metaphor of our understanding of space. It raises the question how space is used and often exploited, whilst establishing topics such as possession, geopolitical power constellations, migration, and their ecological implications. With *Worlds (small Germany)*, Pompéry makes tabula rasa and resets the world as we know it back to zero, setting our imagination free towards infinite time and space, like a runway for our thoughts to take flight.

Material: Vacuum-formed plastic, blackboard paint, chalk pencil on string, wood rail as wall mount
Format: 15 x 10 cm (5.9 x 3.9 inches)
Edition of 12 + 2 AP
Signed and numbered by the artist.
280 Euro, incl. VAT (7%)
● more on bit.ly/_SophiaPomperyEdition

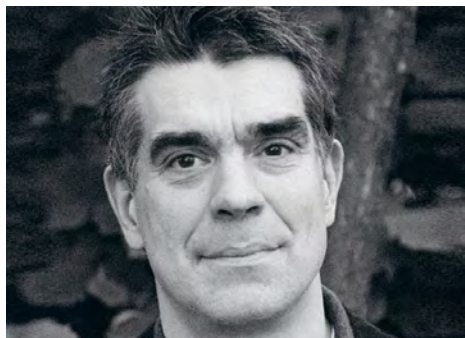
Limited edition artworks by emerging and internationally acclaimed artists

Doug Aitken
Madeleine Boschan
Lúa Coderch
Andreas Duscha
Werner Feiersinger
Daniel Gebhart de Koekkoek

Basim Magdy
Tyler Mallison
Walter Niedermayr
Nick Oberthaler (upcoming)
Sophia Pompéry
Robert La Roche

Andreas Rost
Thomas Ruff
Werner Schrödl
John Skoog
Esther Stocker (upcoming)
Sofie Thorsen

Collectors Agenda



Marek Claaßen
Founder and Managing Director of ArtFacts

On what grounds did you start ArtFacts and how it take shape?

Our original idea in 1998 was to promote the diversity and richness of the European gallery landscape. We developed ArtFacts as a kind of hub for galleries to promote artists and exhibition archive of galleries. Today we run the world's largest art exhibition database and have become the industry standard in ranking and data source for artists, galleries, collectors, scientists and others.

What difference are you making to the art collector scene?

I believe our core strength is the ability to structure, standardize and weight a vast amount of information in the primary art market. The majority of art works come fresh from the studio and directly enter the "gallery system", on which very few solid facts exist. ArtFacts aims to fill this gap by creating international standards that lower entry barriers for a huge amount of potential collectors which are reluctant to buy because of uncertainty.

One aspect of ArtFacts is your Artist Ranking Tool. How does it work?

Our Artist Ranking monitors artists by assigning algorithmically calculated points to each of them. The points are derived on the basis of quantifiable facts such as gallery representation, number of collecting institutions, institution type and international reach.

The ranking is a reflection of an artist's exhibition activity year by year.

Does the Artist Ranking reflect the reputation of exhibition spaces?

Yes. Participants in the art world are judged upon reputation gained through past and current exhibitions. Each institution and each artist have a unique career path which is reflected and visualised in the Artist Ranking. A related factor is the location in which past or current exhibitions took place. International art centers like New York, Paris or Berlin have a positive impact on an artist's reputation.

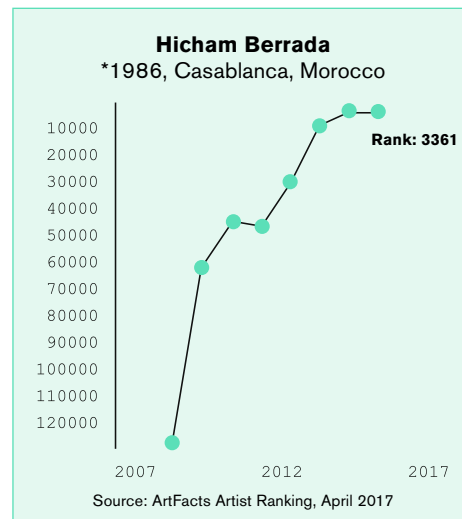
In how far can something as unfathomable as art be actually pressed into facts and figures?

It is definitely not our intention to assess the intellectual or aesthetic quality of an artist's work. We draw a dynamic career path out of an artist's exhibition history because we believe that art history is an expression of exhibition history.

A lot of artists graduating from academies are feeling the pressure to perform.

Is ArtFacts only adding to this pressure?

I think actually the opposite might be the case. We have had feedback from many artists stating that ArtFacts provides structure to



their artistic careers. They benefit from a more accurate overview which kinds of exhibitions to aim for in order to reach the same notoriety as their peers or idols. Each exhibition affects their career path. This is a strong motivation in the art creation process.

Questioning your ArtFacts database, which artist will we likely hear more of in the future?

Hicham Berrada, for example, has had a very interesting career path as of recent. Young artists like him are only known to a small number of experts, but, because of the quality of exhibition contexts he has been shown, he has experienced an exponential rise in a very short period of time.

You are currently working on a revamped version of ArtFacts. What can we expect from the new release?

ArtFacts' web app is an application outfitted with new functionalities, such as a Historical Ranking, Gallery and Art Fair Rating System or Geofinder. This powerful tool has been built with a completely new technology stack. We are planning to launch the new ArtFacts web app very soon.

artfacts.net

Top 5 Upcoming Young Artists

1. Oscar Murillo
2. Julian Charrière
3. Korakrit Arunanondchai
4. Petrit Halilaj
5. Jacolby Satterwhite

Based on 2016 data. Artists born 1986 or later who have advanced most in the Artist Ranking versus 2015.

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Publisher: C Agenda KG, Franz-Josefs-Kai 3/16, 1010 Vienna
Responsible Editor: Florian Langhammer
Layout & Design: Agnes Wartner, kepler-berlin.de
Text: Florian Langhammer, Gabriel Roland, Alexandra Toth
Translation: Uta Hoffmann

Photography: Florian Langhammer, Maximilian Pramatarov, if not otherwise credited
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Printed by Holzhausen Druck GmbH, Wolkersdorf, Austria

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