

Press release  
6 December 2017

## **MAN RAY**

**Bank Austria Kunstforum | Vienna, Austria**  
**14 February - 24 June 2018**

Man Ray (born as Emmanuel Radnitzky in 1890 in Philadelphia, died in 1976 in Paris) has always been primarily received as a photographer. He achieved worldwide renown for his portraits of artists and his rayographs of the 1920s, produced without the use of a camera. However, Man Ray painted, drew, designed, made films and objects, wrote, invested his talents enthusiastically in typography, book and magazine design, and pursued a veritable career as experimental fashion photographer for Harper's Bazaar and Vogue - thus providing enviable scope for Kunstforum to visualise all this in its exhibition. Man Ray exploited countless artistic media and techniques in an inventive and playful manner. In his autobiography, appearing in 1963, he wrote: "... the instrument did not matter - one could always reconcile the subject with the means and get a result that would be interesting (...) One should be superior to his limited means, use imagination, be inventive."

While Man Ray's photography is omnipresent in every overview on Dadaism and Surrealism, until now only few people in the German-speaking regions have been aware of him as a universal artist. His artistic brinkmanship relates not only to very diverse media, but also the two art capitals of the twentieth century - Paris and New York, where Man Ray alternately lived. Kunstforum's exhibition will be devoted to "the universal Man Ray" and critically address discourses that mark his oeuvre in general, such as the closeness and distance between male and female physicality and creativity and their enactment in his oeuvre; it will also show Man Ray as "friend to everyone who was anyone", who associated in the most glamorous circles of society and thus as prototype of the artistic networker and catalyst.

A selection of 150 keyworks from all over the world, including painting, photography, objects, works on paper, collages and assemblages and experimental film, will help to map the outline of an enigmatic and complex artist personality who paved the way for modern and contemporary art, and - in congenial artistic complicity with Marcel Duchamp - laid groundwork for how and what we see as "art" today.

Curator: Lisa Ortner-Kreil

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## Mission Statement

The Bank Austria Kunstforum is the top address for art lovers, especially for classical modern painting of the post-war years. Every year, 300,000 people visit the temporary exhibitions held in this private institution, shows that are unique across the globe. Leading museums present their works here as well as private collectors. Whether van Gogh or Miró, Kandinsky or Chagall, Warhol or Lichtenstein, the great names of art are united here. Since 2000, there have also been exhibitions devoted to contemporary artists.

A modern, private cultural services concern.

The most successful house of exhibitions in Austria.

- **Frequented:** around 300,000 visitors a year.
- **Attractive:** one of the Top 10 of the most popular sightseeing spots in Vienna (alongside St. Stephen's Cathedral, Riesenrad, Kunsthistorisches Museum, the Zoo and Schönbrunn Palace).
- **Established:** exhibition partner of leading institutions including the Royal Academy, London; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Guggenheim Museum, New York; Russian Museum, St Petersburg.
- **In demand:** international private collectors take pride in showing their treasures in the Bank Austria Kunstforum (Bernard Picasso, Ulla and Heiner Pietzsch Collection, Wolfgang Joop,...).
- **Renowned:** the Bank Austria Kunstforum has earned itself a great international reputation for continually setting new trends in conceptual approach and making art a new, fresh experience.
- **Pacesetter in ideas:** because of its presentation of international top exhibitions of classical modern art and its forerunners, and the avant-garde of the post-war years – most of which were shown in Austria for the first time.
- **Winning:** according to the MANOVA-Benchmarking Study 2004 – also involved were the Albertina, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Belvedere – the Bank Austria came out top as a service-oriented cultural concern.
- **Successful:** streamlined structures guarantee economic efficiency and flexibility.
- **Unique:** top priority for the creative, flexible team surrounding director Dr. Ingrid Brugger is the communication of art, with quality as the number one premise.

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