

Helmut Newton Legacy

19 October 2022 – 15 January 2023

Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien

PRESS KIT

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Table of contents

Facts & Figures	3
Media Information	5
Chronology	7
The catalogue	10
Annex	Image selection and credits

Facts & Figures

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Media Information

Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien shows „Helmut Newton Legacy“

The exhibition will be on view from 19 October 2022 to 15 January 2023. It was created in collaboration with the Helmut Newton Foundation Berlin.

With the retrospective “Helmut Newton Legacy”, the Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien will be celebrating the German-Australian photographer’s hundredth birthday (1920-2004) – delayed because of corona, but all the more comprehensive, with 250 or more works that document Newton’s complete oeuvre.

Newton, a controversial figure who has never ceased to fascinate and provoke, is primarily renowned for his photos of women: powerful, aggressive, self-assertive – naked and dressed – they challenge the viewer. His photos have been published countless times, circulated through magazines – their iconic character has impressed itself on our collective visual memory. Time and again, Newton probes social and moral limits, occasionally redefining some of them; he discomforts and yet mesmerises the public with his visions and visualisations of fashion and femaleness.

In actual fact, Newton’s career developed first and foremost through his fashion photography – which is the focus of this exhibition. In 1938, being Jewish, he fled from the Nazis to Australia, where he began to photograph fashion. Newton blazed the trail to his inimitable style in 1960s Paris: here he opened up a new chapter of fashion photography by staging the “object of desire” in a (fictional) context, creating atmosphere and capturing the zeitgeist. His inspiration in the 1960s derived from the crime novels of Raymond Chandler and the American film noir, later the films of Alfred Hitchcock and François Truffaut, also the adventures of James Bond.

The sometimes confining basic conditions and expectations of his commissioners were such that he felt the urge to question the traditional modes of representation –

accordingly, he began to stage his models in a specific scenario: in the streets of Paris, in love hotels or within the framework of a paparazzi story. Mostly using shrill theatrical settings, Newton creates an atmosphere of elegance and ambivalence within an haute couture scene governed by luxury and eccentricity.

Newton photographed on commission of well-known fashion magazines, for the French, Italian, American and British “Vogue”, “Elle” and “Queen”, and in doing so fascinated a public of millions. His sometimes provocative photos have attained iconic status.

In the early 1980s, Newton turned to nude photography. The legendary diptychs of the “Naked” and “Dressed” series show models in identical poses, naked and clothed – in the editorial of the magazines: here, Newton provokes a response exactly as with the “Big Nudes” – portraits of life-size models in almost belligerent nakedness, their sexuality self-confident and energy-charged in impact.

Newton has never been named in connection with the dominant #Me Too debate – the women who posed nude for him talk about their experience in a relaxed way; in fact, they tend to mention his humour during the shooting sessions, which incidentally often took place in the presence of June Newton. Nevertheless, there are voices that criticise Newton’s view of woman. The most prominent is that of the American cultural philosopher Susan Sontag, who in a talk show in 1979 accused Newton of sexism and misogyny and classified his fantasies as monstrous.

Newton’s genre-transcending and provocative photography stretching over six decades evades any kind of categorisation. Consumerism and elegance, style and voyeurism combine to make Helmut Newton into an inimitable mix that cannot be easily untangled. The major show in the Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien puts the spotlight on the whole of his career, which mirrors the volatile and ever-changing zeitgeist from the 1960s all the way to the turn of the millennium.

The exhibition is being produced in partnership with the Helmut Newton Foundation Berlin.

Chronology

Helmut Newton

1920 – 1938 Helmut Newton was born on 31 October 1920 in Berlin as Helmut Neustädter and the son of a Jewish button manufacturer. Newton attends the “Realgymnasium” (Technical Secondary School) in Berlin-Schöneberg until 1936, then starts an apprenticeship with the Jewish portrait, nude and fashion photographer Yva, real name Else Simon, who was probably murdered in 1942 in the Sobibor concentration camp. Newton himself leaves Berlin on 5 December 1938 from the Bahnhof Zoo railway station; the last building he sees from the train is the former officers’ mess of the Prussian Landwehr (Militia) on Jebensstrasse. Besides two cameras, he takes only a few personal things with him in his luggage.

1940-1961 After a short stay in Singapore, Newton moves on in 1940 to Australia, where he is interned for a short time, then serves in the Australian army and becomes an Australian citizen. In 1945 he opens a photo studio in Melbourne. Here, in 1947, he meets the actress June Brunell, who poses as his model and assists him in the dark room. A year later she becomes his wife.

In 1956, Newton is engaged by the Australian “Vogue”. He also runs a studio for fashion and commercial photography together with the Austrian-Australian photographer Henry Talbot. An extended trip to Europe in the same year takes him to London and Paris for the first time.

1961–1981 Invited by the French “Vogue”, Newton goes to Paris in 1961; he settles on Rue Aubriot in Marais. His photos are widely distributed not only in the French “Vogue”, but also the British “Vogue” and the British magazine “Queen” and soon reach a public of millions.

In 1964 Newton buys a house near Ramatuelle in the hinterland of St Tropez, where he produces a great number of fashion and nude pictures, also portraits. He also works parallel on commission of various magazines in Venice, London, Paris, Milan, Rome, Montreal, Tunis, etc. In the seventies he travels frequently to the USA and photographs in New York, Miami, Los Angeles and more.

Newton has a heart attack in New York in 1971 and decides to shoot only the photos and accept only those assignments that really interest him. During this period Newton starts to compile a systematic archive of his photos.

The exhibition in the Nikon Galerie in Paris in 1975 marks the beginning of Newton's exhibiting activities; a year later his first volume of pictures, "White Women", is published. A second photo book, "Sleepless Nights", follows in 1978, a compilation of pictorial material already published in "Vogue", "Playboy" and other magazines. In 1981 Newton puts his "Grands Nus" on show in the Galerie Daniel Templon; his third publication "Big Nude" is produced parallel, followed by many other photo books.

1982–2003 Newton and his wife move house to Monaco; in future, they would spend the winter months in Los Angeles, mostly in the Hotel Chateau Marmont. Here he creates many portraits of his prominent friends in Hollywood – shot both by Helmut as well as by June, who herself has worked since 1970 as a successful photographer under the pseudonym of Alice Springs.

Influenced by the aesthetics of the legendary illustrated magazines of the Weimar Republic, in 1987 Newton publishes his own large-format magazine Helmut "Newton's Illustrated", which appears at irregular intervals until 1996.

In 1990 Newton is honoured with the French Grand Prix National de la Photographie, which was awarded between 1978 and 1997 to famous international photographers – amongst them Newton's role model

Brassäi. In 1992 he is nominated “Officier des Arts, Lettres et Sciences” in Monaco and also awarded the “Großen Bundesverdienstkreuzes” of the Federal Republic of Germany, and in 1996 the French “Commandeur de l’Order des Arts et Lettres”.

On his eightieth birthday in 2000, Newton is distinguished as the first photographer ever with a major retrospective in the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin, with subsequent venues in London, New York, Tokyo, Moscow, Düsseldorf, Prague, et al.

2004

Newton dies in a car crash in Los Angeles on 23 January 2004. The Helmut Newton Foundation set up by Newton in Berlin in 2003 is opened shortly afterwards – it is located in the former officers’ mess on Jebensstrasse. Since then, alternating biannual exhibitions devoted to the diverse aspects of his photographic oeuvre have taken place there as solo or group exhibitions, which occasionally go on tour – like “Helmut Newton Legacy” now.

The catalogue

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Spanning over 50 years, Helmut Newton's (1920-2004) photographic oeuvre is unique and unparalleled in scope, reaching millions through magazines such as "Vogue" and "Elle". "Helmut Newton Legacy" shows highlights and rediscovered images, celebrating his lasting influence on visual art to this day.

HELMUT NEWTON LEGACY

Credits

001		<p>Helmut Newton Fashion, Melbourne, 1955 © Helmut Newton Foundation</p>
002		<p>Helmut Newton Mansfield, British Vogue, London, 1967 © Helmut Newton Foundation</p>
003		<p>Helmut Newton Crocodile, Pina Bausch Ballett, Wuppertal, 1983 © Helmut Newton Foundation</p>
004		<p>Helmut Newton Chicken and Bulgari Jewels, French Vogue, Paris, 1994 © Helmut Newton Foundation</p>

005		<p>Helmut Newton Rue Aubriot, Yves Saint Laurent, French Vogue, Paris, 1975 © Helmut Newton Foundation</p>
006		<p>Helmut Newton Elle, Paris, 1969 © Helmut Newton Foundation</p>
007		<p>Helmut Newton Woman examining man, Calvin Klein, American Vogue, Saint-Tropez, 1975 © Helmut Newton Foundation</p>

008		<p>Helmut Newton John Bates, British Vogue, London, 1966 © Helmut Newton Foundation</p>
009		<p>Helmut Newton Prada, Monte Carlo, 1984 © Helmut Newton Foundation</p>
010		<p>Helmut Newton Romy Schneider, Paris, 1974 © Helmut Newton Foundation</p>
011		<p>Helmut Newton Tied-up Torso, Ramatuelle, 1980 © Helmut Newton Foundation</p>

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PREVIEW

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Table of Contents

MAIN EXHIBITIONS		
KIKI KOGELNIK: NOW IS THE TIME	2 February – 25 June 2023	Page 3
ROBERT MOTHERWELL – PAINTING	13 October 2023 – 14 January 2024	Page 5

TRESOR IM BANK AUSTRIA KUNSTFORUM WIEN		
DEATH AND THE MAIDEN	4 November 2022 – 15 January 2023	Page 7
KAY WALKOWIAK. ETERNAL NOW	16 February – 16 April 2023	Page 8
ANJA MANFREDI: ATLAS	27 April – 25 June 2023	Page 10

KIKI KOGELNIK: NOW IS THE TIME

2 February – 25 June 2023

Curated by Lisa Ortner-Kreil



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Kiki Kogelnik (1935–1997) is one of the most important Austrian-born artists of the 20th century, who lived and worked on an international level. Today, the artist is considered the only Austrian protagonist of Pop Art, but her art goes far beyond this categorization. Kogelnik's playful, colourful, and highly political work ranges from painting, drawing, ceramics and installation to performative practices, and has an astonishing topicality in terms of its subject matter. In spring 2023, the Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien will show the largest solo presentation of this outstanding artist to date.

Having completed her studies at the Academy of Applied Arts and the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna in the 1950s, Kogelnik was part of the young St. Stephan Group. After extensive travels through Europe and through her acquaintance with Sam Francis, Kogelnik relocated to New York in 1962, where she began to work within the newly forming Pop Art movement and developed friendships with artists such as Roy Liechtenstein, Claes Oldenburg and Carolee Schneemann. This extremely incisive period at the beginning of the 1960s also signified a reorientation in her artistic work – the works created during this phase form the crucial centre of the exhibition.

The artist explicitly addressed her interest in, but also her critical attitude towards, consumer society, technical progress, medicine and diagnostics, and the (female) body and its implications, as well as the reality of her own life as an artist, mother, and wife, starting in the early 1960s – long before today's omnipresent discourses on gender equality, medical ethics, the digital age, and sustainable lifestyles. With humour, sharp punchlines, the bold aesthetic and sense of mission of pop and new materials such as vinyl, Kiki Kogelnik finds her unique way and, from today's perspective, proves to be one of the most diverse and independent examples of early postmodern art.

The exhibition project is generously supported by the Kiki Kogelnik Foundation, New York, and is a cooperation with the Brandts Art Museum in Odense, Denmark, as well as the Kunsthaus Zürich, where the show will also be on view after its stop in Vienna - reason enough for the Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien to once again cement its reputation for offering artistic pioneers an international stage.

ROBERT MOTHERWELL – PAINTING

13 October 2023 – 14 January 2024

curated by Susan Davidson (USA) and Evelyn Benesch (Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien)



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For autumn and winter 2023/2024, the Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien is planning an exhibition on the painting of Robert Motherwell (1915-1991). It will be the first retrospective on the work of the great American artist in Austria since 1976 and the first in Europe since 1998.

Motherwell is one of the most significant exponents of Abstract Expressionism and the intellectual counterpole to the more extrovert and media-effective Jackson Pollack. Primarily known as co-founder of the New York School – a term coined by Motherwell – he pursued an utterly autonomous and independent artistic path, oscillating between European Modernism and the expressionist and gestural painting of the American post-war period – in the end his actual mode of expression.

The exhibition starts off with Motherwell's early abstract-tending works of the 1940s based on figuration and showing his connection to French Surrealism. He soon develops his mature and characteristic style, a purely abstract manner of painting and in large format. Series and variations – expression of an intensive and repeated handling of specific themes – define his work over long periods. Two important cycles stand for this in the exhibition: the best known, “Elegies to the Spanish Republic”, result from his confrontation with the cruelty of the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39, a metaphor of what for him was the quintessence of injustice. From 1948 until his death, Motherwell devotes more than 150 works to the Elegies: as majestic memorial to human suffering and as abstract poetic symbol for the merciless cycle of life and death. An absolutely intellectual painter, Motherwell permeates his works with emotion yet at the same time with asceticism, just as they reflect the human psyche as he sees it. The “Open” series stands for this aspect, which preoccupied him from 1967 until 1981, also in more than 150 works – resulting from the relationship between the proportions of two painting leaning one against the other in his studio.

In this “pure” painting based on austerity and reduction, Motherwell transports emotions by means of cunning colour systems and discreet expression.

“Robert Motherwell – Painting” is produced in cooperation with The Modern in Fort Worth (Texas, USA). The exhibition will include around forty representative works from Motherwell’s total oeuvre and show loans from important private collections and major, mainly American museums Metropolitan Museum and Museum of Modern Art, New York; Art Institute, Chicago; Tate, London; LACMA, Los Angeles). Curator is the American art historian and specialist for Abstract Expressionism, Susan Davidson; Evelyn Benesch will curate the venue in the Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien.

DEATH AND THE MAIDEN

4 November 2022 – 15 January 2023

curated by Lizaveta German, Maria Lanko and Bettina M. Busse (Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien)



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For the 2022 autumn exhibition in the tesor of the Bank Austria Kunstforum, the Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien has invited Lizaveta German and Maria Lanko, curators of this year's Ukraine contribution to the 59th Biennale di Venezia, and in dialogue with Bettina M. Busse, curator of the Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien, to curate a presentation featuring Ukrainian women artists. The exhibition shows positions by four Ukrainian women artists: Lucy Ivanova , Zhanna Kadyrova, Elena Subach and Anna Zvyagintseva.

Associated with Egon Schiele's painting "Death and Maiden" of 1915 which relates to his recruitment for military service in the First World War, the exhibition "Death and the Maiden" gathers together experiences, observations and emotions ensuing from the war and its continuing consequence for citizens of the Ukraine and European society. The exhibits were created both prior to and after the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian war. Together they bear witness to a new sensibility for topics that are more relevant now than ever: memory, vision, the fragility of the body, connections between life and death, the tension between nature and the man-made world, also the role of art in conditions of devastation.

This new sensibility is shaped to a great extent today precisely by women artists. Some fled the country, others remained, volunteered, and many travelled throughout Europe to participate in artist residencies. Whether far from danger or in immediate vicinity, they have all similarly absorbed the horrors of war and the way it has affected peoples' lives, directly or indirectly, and they have expressed this in their art.

In cooperation with Petra Stelzer: <http://www.imaginehumanrights.com>

Supported by the Ukrainian Emergency Art Fund (UEAF) as part of the programme "Cultural Emergency Response" of the Prince Claus Fund For Culture and Development. <https://ueaf.moca.org.ua/ua.html>

KAY WALKOWIAK. ETERNAL NOW

16 February – 16 April 2023

curated by Bettina M. Busse



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“What happened before time began? How can a line run on without end? A circle helps us to imagine that we are eternally walking backwards or forwards, and do not collide with an ultimate beginning or an end at any point.” Kay Walkowiak

In spring of 2023 the artist Kay Walkowiak is transforming the tresor in the Bank Austria Kunstorum Wien into a spatial installation reflecting the theme of time and temporality on different conceptual and media-supported levels. The centre of the exhibition „Eternal Now“ is taken by the film „Traces of Time“ (2021), which radically challenges our (Western) perception of time: running a total of sixty minutes, the film shows sixty one-minute takes; placed in the centre of each is a clock. Recorded in sixty shops in Calcutta, Varanasi, New Delhi and Chandigarh, the film not only visualises the passing of an hour, but also the sixty locations in India where these sixty minutes have ticked by. Each clock is situated in a specific location and setting and is surrounded by photographs, deities or adverts, thus yielding individual still-life images. In addition to this visual level, each clock has its own soundtrack – whether as conversations, soundtracks from films or well-known Bollywood songs from the radio. In „Traces of Time“, the clock hands turn a whole circle within an hour, thus the film alludes to the possibility of a cyclic conception of time and in doing so addresses the idea that our perception of time is always culturally informed, and that time doesn't necessarily have to be conceived as linear.

A grid of film stills is positioned opposite the projection of the film „Traces of Time“: a media-based reflection, in which Kay Walkowiak reveals the respective conditionality of the medium – whether film or photography – and in the film stills, which are strictly ordered into a grid, demonstrates a form of standstill, inertia, generating a hyper-tensioned contrast to the movement of the hands in the film „Traces of Time“. The instruments for time measurement – performed by the hour, minute and second hands – are queried in the series „Untitled (Eternal Now)“ (2022). Here the hands no longer indicate measurable time in a - supposedly objective way, but are permanently at standstill – in one and the same position.

The observation process of „Untitled (Eternal Now)“ raises the question of the possibility that the immediately experienced present is the only present that exists. This would mean ultimately that concepts such as past or future are exposed as a mere cultural construction with respect to a mindset formed by

the history of ideas. In the form of this multiplied standstill in series, Untitled (Eternal Now) shows the possibility of an eternal time, which cannot be measured or divided up, but is far more to be conceived as a continual time flow.

ANJA MANFREDI: ATLAS

27. April – 25. Juni 2023

curated by Lisa Ortner-Kreil



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Anja Manfredi (born 1978 in Lienz, lives and works in Vienna) shows her first institutional solo exhibition in Vienna in early summer 2023 at the tesor of the Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien. The project is titled “ATLAS” – a reference that is twofold. On the one hand, Aby Warburg's image atlas “Mnemosyne” has been an important frame of reference for Anja Manfredi's artistic work for many years. On the other hand, the figure of Atlas, the world's bearer, also forms a motivic connection; for example, a golden sphere (designed by architect Gustav Peichl) hovers above the entrance portal of the Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien, which can be understood as an abstraction of the mythological figure and at the same time the oldest symbol for space itself.

By means of analogue photography, Anja Manfredi embarks on an artistic search for traces, which leads her to hidden or overlooked places in Vienna, for example when she puts female load carriers, the caryatids, who are visible on numerous facades, into picture. But her “ATLAS” research also took her to much more remote places, such as the Atlas Mountains in Morocco, where the artist photographed and brought back a stone that serves as a template and tool for works subsequently created in the studio. The strong conceptual aspect that Anja Manfredi pursues in her artistic work will be highlighted for the first time in the exhibition. At the same time, the project also has a site-specific claim: the facade of the Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien enters into a dialogue with surrounding architecture, artworks and buildings. Anja Manfredi's visual argument draws attention to the fact that in everyday life we are surrounded by a web of historical and cultural codes and connections to which we (wrongly) pay too little attention.

Anja Manfredi has been the director of the Friedl Kubelka School of Artistic Photography since 2010 and in 2017 received the Outstanding Artist Award for Artistic Photography.