

## First digital Vienna Art Week draws record visitor numbers



Hangl, Krampfhaftes Grinsen Oliver Hangl/Wiener Beschwerdechor: Filmstill 'Krampfhaftes Grinsen', 2018, Video 4K © Oliver Hangl

The first digital Vienna Art Week (13-20 November 2020) has come to a close following over 100 virtual events that celebrated the vitality of Vienna as a city of art. The extensive programme, which transferred online due to new coronavirus regulations, saw the participation of more than 50 festival partners, proving the great diversity and strength of the Viennese art scene.

New digital formats and technologies, such as Zoom, Instagram Stories and Facebook Live, made Vienna Art Week possible under the motto: *If people cannot come to Vienna Art Week, then Vienna Art Week will come to them.* Approximately 36,000 online visits were recorded, making it the most well-attended edition to date.

Martin Böhm, president of the Art Cluster Vienna Association, and Robert Punkenhofer, artistic director of Vienna Art Week, captured the positive outcome and reception of this year's art festival: *"Due to the lockdown, we were forced to switch our physical programme to a digital format within a matter of days. This was only possible thanks to the strength, unity and commitment of the Viennese artists, partner institutions and galleries. Our sincere thanks go to everyone that helped to make this diverse digital programme possible".*

The clear highlight of Vienna Art Week was the online visits to 100 artists living in Vienna, as well as the curated exhibition trail through selected artist studios relating to this year's theme 'Living Rituals'. The exhibition 'House of Rituals', which took over an abandoned Viennese house with 19 Austrian and international artists such as Marina Abramović, Erwin Wurm and Hermann Nitsch, received an excellent response from online audiences.

Bettina Leidl, director of Kunst Haus Wien, emphasised the unifying effect of the art week: "*This year, Vienna Art Week has shown that the digital space can also be a place of encounter between artists, visitors and art spaces. The events were a remedy against isolation, allowing us to join together and celebrate the cultural events of this city*".

Oliver Hangl, an artist featured in the 'House of Rituals' exhibition and Alternative Space operator, was also enthusiastic about the digital format: "*Our 'House of Rituals', an exhibition without an audience, gave new life to an abandoned building. I'm particularly interested in the individual vs. the collective act of projecting narratives on to the space, which was disrupted by not being able to be physically in the space.*"

A large part of the online programme of Vienna Art Week 2020 such as artist talks, a video tour through Viennese galleries as well as the 'House of Rituals' exhibition can still be experienced via the [website](#), the [YouTube channel](#) and Spotify playlist. Up-to-date information about exhibitions, artists and insights into the arts in Vienna will continue to be communicated via Vienna Art Week's digital channels throughout 2021.

**END**

### **Notes to Editors**

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### **About Vienna Art Week**

Vienna Art Week was founded in 2004 as part of Art Cluster Vienna. It is now Vienna's leading platform for visual arts, reflecting the importance, substantial depth and great variety of art institutions, academies, galleries, art spaces, and artists based in Vienna. It connects its partners and represents them to the outside world. Each year in November, Vienna Art Week draws a crowd of approximately 35,000 visitors to some 200 events held by 70 programme partners. The festival programme ranges from exhibition openings to guided studio tours, lectures, panel discussions, symposia, and interventions in public space.

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### **About Art Cluster**

Vienna Art Cluster Vienna is made up of the most important exhibition houses, art spaces, educational institutions, and galleries within the City of Vienna. These large and established institutions identified the need to provide support and a stage for contemporary artists living in Vienna to the attention of the national and international public. With their high-quality programs and ideas, the programme partners of Vienna Art Week make a significant contribution to the success of the festival, which has developed into a regular event in the city's autumn of culture since 2005 and recently attracted around 35,000 guests from Austria and abroad.

Art Cluster Vienna includes the following art institutions:

*Academy of Fine Arts Vienna*

*Albertina*

*Architekturzentrum Wien*

*Austrian Frederick and Lillian Kiesler Private Foundation*

*Belvedere, Belvedere 21*

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KÖR (Public Art Vienna)  
Kunsthalle Wien Museumsquartier & Kunsthalle  
Wien Karlsplatz  
KUNST HAUS WIEN  
Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien & Weltmuseum  
Wien  
Künstlerhaus  
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VIENNA 2020

SEPTEMBER 22<sup>ND</sup>-27<sup>TH</sup>

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