

Press Kit
Austrian Pavilion
Biennale Arte 2019
58th International Art
Exhibition

Biennale Arte
Austrian Pavilion
2019



On behalf of

BUNDESKANZLERAMT  ÖSTERREICH

www.biennalearte.at

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Culture and Media
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Press conference Austrian Pavilion

Giardini della Biennale
Sestiere Castello, 30122 Venedig, Italien

Opening Remarks

Speakers:

Gernot Blümel

Federal Minister for the EU, Arts, Culture and Media

Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein

Curator of the Austrian Contribution to the Biennale Arte 2019

Renate Bertlmann

Artist

Moderator:

Ana Berlin

a b c / media relations

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Information

Österreichischer Pavillon

Austrian Pavilion

Biennale Arte 2019

58th International Art Exhibition

Giardini della Biennale

Sestiere Castello

30122 Venice, Italy

Professional Preview

May 8-10, 2019

For Biennale accreditation and access during the Professional Preview please contact the Biennale press office directly: www.labiennale.org

Press conference and opening of the Austrian Pavilion

May 9, 2019

Exhibition

May 11-November 24, 2019

Opening hours: 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

Closed Mondays, except May 13, September 2, and November 18, 2019

Austrian Pavilion website + social media

www.biennalearte.at

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AustriaAtVeniceBiennale

Instagram: @AustrianPavilion #austrianpavilion2019

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Biennale Lectures

The Biennale Lectures will be held in cooperation with the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna in the runup to the Austrian contribution to the Biennale Arte 2019. The series, cocurated by Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein and Andreas Spiegl, aims to make the Biennale itself the subject of discussion as both a significant and controversial institution. It will feature talks by academics and artists.

For regular updates on the Biennale Lectures, visit
www.biennalearte.at.
#biennalelectures

The project „images of / off images“

The project “images of / off images” by İpek Hamzaoglu, Laura Nitsch and Sophie Thun deals with the modes of production for and in the context of the Austrian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2019.

The artists focus—through the media of photography, film and sound—on the specific aspects of the desire to be part of, to be related to, to belong to and to be excluded from the Venice Biennale, while also tackling their own entanglements and participation in these mechanisms. Embedded in queer-feminist practices, their work documents, comments, distorts and (de-)constructs the (symbolic) development process of the Austrian Pavilion.

Their project will be shown in various formats online at “images of / off images” and conclude with a short film after the closing of the 2019 Biennale.

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Statement by Gernot Blümel, Federal Minister for the EU, Arts, Culture and Media

For more than 120 years, the Venice Biennale has been a leading international cultural organization dedicated to contemporary art and culture from around the world. An exhibition at the Austrian Pavilion in Venice is therefore a central event in any artist's career. The featured artists are given the chance to show their work to more than 500,000 visitors and experts.

Austria's contributions to the Biennale are contributions to a vibrant and creative art scene, both domestically and abroad. The Venice Biennale is not only a magnet for art and culture enthusiasts from around the globe but also provides a prominent platform to project Austria's fantastic artistic and cultural production far beyond our country's borders. The art exhibition in Venice is therefore much more than a periodic demonstration of various nations' cultural excellence. For decades it has contributed in a major way to the current discourse and to the evolution of culture. This diversity of exhibition contributions and national participations in the pavilions of the Giardini is the perfect setting to present an Austrian cultural business card to an international audience. It gives me great pleasure to have Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein curate the Austrian Pavilion of the Biennale Arte 2019.

Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein is an internationally renowned exhibition maker, author, and editor of numerous texts and publications; she has been Professor for Art History at the Institute of Art and Cultural Sciences of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna for many years, where she also initiated and now heads the Cathrin Pichler Archive. Feminist, gender-specific, and performative subjects are at the forefront of her work.

With Renate Bertlmann, the curator has selected an artist for the Austrian Pavilion in 2019 whose work not only holds a significant place in the history of Austrian performance art but is also widely acclaimed in the international feminist avant-garde. The artist, who was born in Vienna in 1943, received the Grant Austrian State Prize in 2017. I am all the more pleased that the upcoming presentation at the Austrian Pavilion will feature a female artist as its sole position—a first in its decades-long history. Austria's contribution in 2019 is yet another starting point for a lively international discussion, which will surely emphasize the global presence and significance of Austrian arts and culture.

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Team

Artist

Renate Bertlmann

Curator

Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein

Artistic Assistant

Nadine Lemke

Curatorial Assistant

Marija Nucjic

Spatial Concept

StudioVlayStreeruwitz, Vienna

Project Management

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section.a, Vienna**

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Ana Berlin + Team

a b c, Vienna, Berlin, Paris

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Dorit Margreiter

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**Christine Zmólnig, Florian Koch
sensomatic, Vienna**

Accounting

Georg Geyer

Kanzlei Geyer & Geyer, Vienna

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Biennale Lectures

Curator

Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein

Co-Curator

Andreas Spiegl

Artistic Interventions

Jakob Lena Knebl

images of / off images

İpek Hamzaoğlu, Laura Nitsch, Sophie Thun

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On behalf of

Introduction by the Curator of the Austrian Contribution Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein

Representation requires radicalization and comes from coercion.
Ingeborg Bachmann¹

Since its foundation in 1895—and, therefore, as the oldest international art exhibition—the Venice Biennale has served as a model for all big contemporary exhibitions. Its history is also a cultural-political narrative of the European twentieth and global twenty-first centuries. Above all it is a history of exhibitions and their spectacular provocations that has consistently seen art as a challenge. Even a cursory look back at the artists previously presented at the Austrian Pavilion, which was built by Josef Hoffmann and Robert Kramreiter and has been Austria's national pavilion since 1934, shows the diversity and heterogeneity of art's expressions and positions.

2019 will mark the first time in the history of Austria's participation in the Venice Biennale that a female artist, namely Renate Bertlmann, will put on a solo presentation at the Pavilion. With this, we are setting an example as a society; an example that is in accordance with the idea of art and examines structural imbalances.

In Renate Bertlmann, I have chosen an artist whose methods in terms of both concepts and aesthetics will continue a Venetian art history of provocation in the best sense of the word.

In Austria, Renate Bertlmann has long been regarded as a leading feminist artist and a pioneer of performance art. In recognition of her groundbreaking work, she was awarded the Grand Austrian State Prize in 2017. Her works were presented at large events, such as the Gwangju Biennale, as well as in seminal exhibitions, such as *The World Goes Pop* at Tate Modern, London (2014), *Self-Timer Stories* at the Austrian Cultural Forum New York (2014), *Renate Bertlmann – Maria Lassnig* at Sotheby's Gallery, London (2017), and *Sex Work: Feminist Art & Radical Politics*, Richard Saltoun Gallery, Frieze Art Fair, London (2017).

Bertlmann can look back at a complex oeuvre that is both aesthetically and conceptually intricately connected to an aesthetics of risk. Always keeping a keen eye on the transformational potential of difference as a counterweight to power, the artist oscillates performative, sculptural, graphic, photographic, filmic, and textual aspects between the past and the present, between dispossession and covetousness, between the everyday and the unusual, between art and life. Renate Bertlmann not only distinguishes herself through her extraordinary

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formal and conceptual precision, the agitative programmatic character of her work under the artistic motto "Amo Ergo Sum" and her obsessive exploration of body images directly address the sociopolitics of popular culture. Already at the beginning of her artistic career, Renate Bertlmann knew to question institutional conditions and concepts of art both critically and enthusiastically by using the individuality of materials as a jumping-off point for her analytical feminist reflections and laying bare the mechanisms of the art system. It is all the more formidable, then, how she manages to sensuously and impressively negotiate these questions in a synthetic act using performative and traditional forms of expressions.

For her exhibition at the Austrian Pavilion, Renate Bertlmann will present selected works as well as a piece commissioned specifically for the Biennale.

1 Text message from Renate Bertlmann to the curator from March 21, 2018, 8:20 p.m.
Quoted in Ingeborg Bachmann, "Ein Ort für Zufälle," Georg Büchner Prize acceptance speech, Darmstadt, 10/17/1964.

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The artist



Picture credit: Renate Bertlmann © Irina Gavrich

"I am happy about my wonderful task to design the Austrian Pavilion in Venice. Radical contents and aesthetics and a willingness to take risks are the main pillars of my artistic work. My visions, which have carried me for fifty years, will therefore also find an authentic expression in this place."

Renate Bertlmann
www.bertlmann.com

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The exhibition „Discordo Ergo Sum“



Image: Renate Bertlmann, Let's dance together, 1978, B/W Photography,
© Renate Bertlmann/Bildrecht Wien

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2019 marks the first time in the history of Austria's participation in the Biennale di Venezia that a woman artist, Renate Bertlmann, will be presented in a solo exhibition in the Austrian Pavilion. By selecting Bertlmann, the curator Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein wants to send a signal that is more in line with the actual artistic landscape and considers structural imbalances.

For the exhibition, Renate Bertlmann has conceived a new two-part, site-specific installation that, in accordance with her overall approach, is characterized by high formal and conceptual precision.

Based on the artist's programmatic axiom, *Amo Ergo Sum*, an impressive piece in front of the Pavilion and a sprawling installation spread out across the Pavilion's entire courtyard will display an artistic commentary that will make the existential ambivalence of the human experience tangible in both form and content. In this sphere, generated in an interplay of material and aesthetic intensities, viewers can experience a basic tension that, on the one hand, reveals itself as a critical individual and sociopolitical phenomenon of global developments and, on the other, makes clear the transformative potential of art in reception- and perception-aesthetic and sociopolitical contexts. The Pavilion itself serves as a contemplation zone that, in the sense of a cartographic perspective, places central aspects of Bertlmann's art since the 1970s in a relationship with the new installation in Venice.

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Biographies

Renate Bertlmann

Renate Bertlmann (*1943 in Vienna) studied at the Academy of Arts in Oxford in 1962/63 and subsequently at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna until 1970. After graduating in Painting and Restoration, she was a lecturer at the Department of Conservation and Technology at the Academy until 1982. She lives and works in Vienna.

In her work Bertlmann explores representations of roles and bodies, questioning gender relationships by discussing subjects like pornography, sexuality, violence, Eros, and hierarchy. Her works are particularly characterized by a provocative, ironic approach.

She has been a member of the Vienna Secession since 1993 and a co-editor of the magazine [sic!] – Forum für feministische Gangarten since 1994. In 2007, she received the Prize of the City of Vienna and in 2017, the Grand Austrian State Prize.

Renate Bertlmann is represented by Galerie Steinek / www.galerie.steineck.at and Richard Saltoun Gallery / www.richardsaltoun.com

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Exhibitions (Selection)

- 1973 *Der Mensch und die Stadt*, Künstlerhaus, Wien
- 1975 *MAGNA Feminismus. Kunst und Kreativität*, kuratiert von VALIE EXPORT, Galerie nächst St. Stephan, Wien
- 1976 *URVAGINA*, Galleria Tommaseo, Triest
- 1978 *Art-Museum des Geldes*, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf
- 1981 *Fotobiennale Secession*, Wien
- 1982 *Stimmen der Sehnsucht*, Galerie Apropos, Luzern
- 1983 *Andere Avant-Garde*, Festival, Brucknerhaus Linz
- 1983 *Berührungen*, Palais Liechtenstein, Feldkirch
- 1993 *SCHNEEGESTÖBER-FLITTER(S)TÜRME*, Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Wien
- 2008 *INTAKT-Pionierinnen*, Fotogalerie Wien
- 2009 *VIDEORAMA. Kunstclips aus Österreich*, Kunsthalle Wien
- 2010 *Ich ist ein anderer*, Landesmuseum Niederösterreich, St.Pölten
- 2010 *Donna: Avanguardia Femminista Negli Anni '70*, Gnam, Rom
- 2013 *Mujer. La vanguardia feminista de los años '70. Obras de la Sammlung Verbund*, Viena, Circulo de Bellas Artes, Madrid
- 2014 *Aktionistinnen*, Kunsthalle Krems, Forum Frohner, Krems
- 2014 *Burning Down the House*, 10. Gwangju Biennale, Südkorea
- 2014 *Self-Timer Stories*, Austrian Cultural Forum New York, Museum der Moderne Salzburg, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León

- 2014 *WOMAN. The Feminist Avant-Garde of the 1970s*, BOZAR, Brüssel
- 2015 *Rabenmütter. Zwischen Kraft und Krise*, Lentos Kunstmuseum, Linz
- 2015 *The EY Exhibition. The World Goes Pop*, Tate Modern, London
- 2015 *Feministische Avantgarde. Kunst der 1970er-Jahre aus der Sammlung Verbund*, Wien, Hamburger Kunsthalle
- 2015 *Die achtziger Jahre*, MUSA, Wien
- 2016 *Renate Bertlmann. Amo Ergo Sum*, Sammlung Verbund, Wien
- 2016 *Renate Bertlmann. Two Climaxes*, Richard Saltoun Gallery, London
- 2017 *Angst*, Fotohof, Salzburg
- 2017 *Sex Work: Feminist Art & Radical Politics*, Richard Saltoun Gallery, Frieze, London
- 2017 *RENATE BERTLMANN - MARIA LASSNIG*, Sotheby's Gallery, London
- 2017 *WOMAN. Feministische Avantgarde der 1970er-Jahre*, Sammlung Verbund, mumok, Wien
- 2018 *#It's You Too*, Galerie Steinek, Wien

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Collections (Selection)

mumok Sammlung, Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Wien
 Artothek des Bundes im Belvedere 21, Wien
 Kupferstichkabinett der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien
 MUSA, Sammlung zeitgenössischer Kunst der
 Kulturabteilung der Stadt Wien
 Sammlung Verbund, Wien
 Landessammlungen Niederösterreich, St. Pölten
 Tiroler Landesmuseum, Innsbruck
 Fotosammlung des Bundes, Museum der Moderne Salzburg
 Lentos Kunstmuseum, Linz
 Neue Galerie Graz
 Tate Modern, London
 David Roberts Art Foundation, London
 Gaia Art Foundation, London
 Centre Pompidou, Paris
 Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris
 Muzeum Susch, Schweiz

Her works are in numerous private collections throughout the world, e.g., in Brazil, the United States, Spain, France, Turkey, Japan, and Switzerland.

Bibliography (Selection)

- MAGNA-Feminismus, Katalog zur Ausstellung, Galerie nächst St. Stephan, Wien, 1975
- Daolio, Roberto, *La Performance, La Nuova Editrice*, Katalog zum Festival, Bologna, 1977
- Künstlerinnen International, Katalog zur Ausstellung, Schloss Charlottenburg, Berlin, 1977
- ART-Museum des Geldes, Katalog zur Ausstellung, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, 1978
- Feministische Kunst International, Katalog Stichting de appel, Amsterdam, 1979
- Andere Avantgarde, Katalog zur Ausstellung, Brucknerhaus Linz, 1983
- Eiblmayr, Silvia (Hg.), *Kunst mit Eigen-Sinn*, Katalog zur Ausstellung, Museum Moderner Kunst, Wien, 1985
- Bestehend - lebend - gegenwärtig, Katalog zur Ausstellung Museum Villa Stuck, München, 1986
- Gorsen, Peter, *Sexualästhetik. Grenzformen der Sinnlichkeit im 20. Jahrhundert*, Reinbek, 1987
- Berger, Renate (Hg.), „Und ich sehe nichts, nichts als die Malerei.“ Autobiografische Texte von Künstlerinnen des 18. bis 20. Jahrhunderts, Frankfurt/Main, 1987.
- Bertlmann, Renate, *AMO ERGO SUM. Eine trilogische Monografie*, Klagenfurt, 1989
- SCHNEEGESTÖBER-FLITTER(S)TÜRME, Katalog zur Ausstellung, Kunsthalle Exnergasse Wien, Klagenfurt, 1993
- Werkschau VII, Fotobuch Nr. 28/2002, Fotogalerie Wien, Wien, 2002
- Mimosen Rosen Herbstzeitlosen. Künstlerinnenpositionen 1945 bis heute, Katalog zur Ausstellung, Kunsthalle Krems, 2003
- Dertnig, Carola; Seibold, Stefanie (Hg.), *Let's twist again. Performance in Wien von 1960 bis heute*, Wien, 2006
- Mostegl, Sabine; Ratzinger, Gudrun (Hg.), *MATRIX. Geschlechter/Verhältnisse/Revisionen*, Katalog zur Ausstellung, MUSA Wien, 2008
- Schor, Gabriele (Hg.), *Feministische Avantgarde. Kunst der 1970er-Jahre aus der Sammlung Verbund*, New York, 2015
- Thun-Hohenstein, Felicitas (Hg.), *Self-Timer Stories*, Wien, 2015
- Morgan, Jessica (Hg.), *Burning Down the House. Gwangju Biennale 2014*, Bologna, 2014
- Morgan, Jessica; Schor, Gabriele (Hg.), *Renate Bertlmann. Works 1969-2016*, New York, 2016.
- Renate Bertlmann - Maria Lassnig, Katalog zur Ausstellung, Sotheby's Gallery, London, 2017.
- Fellner, Sabine; Rolig, Stella (Hg.), *Die Kraft des Alters*, Belvedere, Wien, 2017.

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Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein

Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein is a curator, art historian, and professor at the Institute of Art Theory and Cultural Studies at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

She has headed several research projects, such as the Cathrin Pichler Archive for Science, Art, and Curatorial Practice. In her work as a teacher, researcher, lecturer, and exhibition maker, she has been focused on themes of contemporary art, modern art, arts-based research as well as feminist theory and art practice, body and spatial production. She is a member of the curatorial board of the mumok – Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Vienna.

Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein is the author and editor of several texts and publications.

Curated Exhibitions (Selection)

- 2015 *Self-Timer Stories* im Austrian Cultural Forum New York
- 2015 *Self-Timer Stories* im MUSAC – Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León
- 2016 *Pro(s)thesis* in der Gemäldegalerie der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien, co-kuratiert von Berenice Pahl
- 2016 *Albert Mayr. Orchestrated View*, Neuer Kunstverein Wien
- 2016 *Painting is not the Issue*, Neuer Kunstverein Wien
- 2016 *Toni Schmale. Feuerbock*, Neuer Kunstverein Wien
- 2016 *Elisabeth von Samsonow. Transplants*, Zeitkunst NÖ, Krems
- 2016 *Fyodor's Performance Carousel*, Wiener Festwochen, Wien
- 2017 *Material Traces* in der Charim Galerie in Wien
- 2017 *Feminicities* in der Solyanka State Gallery in Moskau
- 2017 *Yingmei Duan*, Neuer Kunstverein, Wien
- 2017 *Feminicities*, Solyanka State Gallery, Moscow
- 2018 *The Two Halves of Martha Wilsons Brain*, Kunstraum NÖ

Publications (Selection)

- Performanz und ihre räumlichen Bedingungen. Perspektiven einer Kunstgeschichte*, Böhlau Verlag, 2012
- Performing the Sentence. Research and Teaching in Performative Fine Arts* (zusammen mit Carola Dertnig), Sternberg Press, Berlin 2014
- Self-Timer Stories*, Schlebrügge, Editor, Wien 2015
- The Curator as ...*, Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein (Hg. mit Sabine Priglinger), Schlebrügge Editor, 2018
- The Two Halves of Martha Wilsons Brain*, (Hg. mit Christiane Kreijs), Verlag für Moderne Kunst, Wien 2018

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2019



The Catalogue

Discordo Ergo Sum

Renate Bertlmann

Biennale Arte / Austrian Pavillion 2019

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Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein

Preface:

Gernot Blümel

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Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein

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Catherine Wood

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La Biennale di Venezia
Biennale Arte 2019
58th International Art Exhibition
www.labiennale.org

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May 11 through November 24, 2019

Opening hours: 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

(closed Mondays, except May 13, September 2,
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Giardini della Biennale
Sestiere Castello, 30122 Venice, Italy

Transport from the railway station and Piazzale Roma with the
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Giardini: 1, 4.1, 5.1, (6 only from Piazzale Roma)

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Communications

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Images and information about Austria's contribution and the Biennale Lectures will be updated regularly and can be downloaded at

www.biennalearte.at

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Austrian Pavilion Website + Social Media

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Facebook: www.facebook.com/AustriaAtVeniceBiennale

Instagram: [@austrianpavilion](https://www.instagram.com/austrianpavilion) [#austrianpavilion2019](https://www.instagram.com/austrianpavilion2019)

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For additional information, please contact info@biennalearte.at

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