

Press Release

## NEW VISITOR RECORD: OVER 100,000 ART ENTHUSIASTS VISIT THE AUSTRIAN PAVILION, LA BIENNALE ARTE 2017

02 September 2017. Following the fulminant opening on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2017 in which over 2000 enthusiasts participated, the steady stream of visitors culminated in a record-breaking result of 112.024 with key date 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017.

The show-stealing contributions Brigitte Kowanz and Erwin Wurm made for the Austria Pavilion attracted enormous interest and enthusiasm from the Austrian and international media and art experts. A wave of critical acclaim flowed in from the following media: ARTE1 TV (BR), ArtLight Magazine (DE), ARD Thesen Thema Temperament (DE), artpress (FR), Dear (DE), Deutsches Handelsblatt (DE), Deutschland Radio Berlin / Fazit (DE), Beaux Arts Magazine (FR), Connaissance des Arts (FR), eikon (AT), Glass is more! Textile is more! (NL), Kunstforum International (DE), Monopol (DE), the New York Times (USA), Parnass (AT), Quality (IT), Russia Today TV (RU), Slovan TV (SI), Spike Art Quarterly (AT), Vogue (USA), Whitewall Magazine (USA) as also from 3SAT / Kulturzeit (DE).

Thomas Drozda, Austrian Minister for the Arts and Culture is delighted by the worldwide resonance that is already clear in the interim results: *"The artwork of Brigitte Kowanz and Erwin Wurm is causing quite a sensation in Venice. The Austrian pavilion is therefore attracting art lovers from across the globe and sending a strong signal at what is probably the world's most significant stage for contemporary art. My congratulations to both artists and to the entire Biennale team for these superb interim results."*

Commissioner Christa Steinle's initially not quite uncontroversial venture of combining two completely opposing artistic positions in this exhibition has been very worthwhile – not least due to the outstanding, yet, at the same time subsidiary architecture of the "Light Space" extension and its ability to connect real spaces and spatial concepts: Kowanz as a "poet and architect of light" intertwines physical and virtual space. Erwin Wurm creates *One Minute Sculptures* from vehicles that he has developed to near absurdity which thematise socio-political aspects of spatial experience.

*"We've made it! Brigitte Kowanz and Erwin Wurm have delivered key contributions that represent Austrian art on an international stage, true to Christine Macel's motto VIVA ARTE VIVA – long live art as a symbol of freedom, humanism, cosmopolitanism and enlightenment",* as Christa Steinle comments.

A trip to Venice is always worthwhile. Works by Brigitte Kowanz and Erwin Wurm are on display at the Austrian Pavilion until 26<sup>th</sup> of November 2017.

Other presentations by Brigitte Kowanz and Erwin Wurm in Venice:

### **Glasstress 2017**

#### **Group exhibition**

With Paul McCarthy, Tony Cragg,  
Brigitte Kowanz, Tony Oursler, Ai Weiwei and Erwin Wurm  
Curated by Adriano Berengo, Herwig Kempinger and  
Dimitri Ozerkov assisted by Clare Phyllis Davies  
**Venues:** Palazzo Franchetti, San Marco 2847, 30124 Venice,  
and Berengo Exhibition Space, Campiello della Pescheria,  
30141 Murano

**Open from:** 10 May – 26 November 2017

**This is not the reality – what kind of reality?**



**Group exhibition**

**With** Sylvie Fleury, Jeppe Hein, Lori Hersberger,  
Gregor Hildebrandt, Brigitte Kowanz and Julian Opie  
Curated by Gisela Winkelhofer

**Venue:** San Clemente Palace Kempinski,  
Isola di San Clemente 1, 30124 Venice

**Open from:** 10 May – 5 November 2017

Free boat shuttle service / Hotel Kempinski

Daily service: every half an hour from and to San Marco & retour from 9 am.

**AUSTRIAN PAVILION, BIENNALE ARTE 2017**

**Commissioner:** Christa Steinle

**Artists:** Brigitte Kowanz Erwin Wurm

<http://labiennale2017.at>

**PRESS / AUSTRIAN PAVILION**

Christina Werner, T + 43 (1) 524 96 46 – 22, [presse@labiennale2017.at](mailto:presse@labiennale2017.at)

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