

**P r e s s R e l e a s e****ATTRACTING SOME 300,000 VISITORS AT THIS YEAR'S 57th LA BIENNALE ARTE THE AUSTRIAN PAVILION FEATURING TOP ARTISTS BRIGITTE KOWANZ AND ERWIN WURM CLOSSES SUCCESSFULLY**

(28 November 2017) During a Matinee held on 25 November 2017, Peter Weibel and Bazon Brock elucidated Brigitte Kowanz's and Erwin Wurm's current works in an art theoretical context. Peter Weibel spoke about Brigitte Kowanz's light installations *Infinity and Beyond*, *Google*, *Wikipedia* and *iPhone*, while Bazon Brock presented his theories on Erwin Wurm's *One Minute Sculptures*.

In her Matinee speech in the presence of Thomas Drozda, Austrian Minister for the Arts and Culture and Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein, Austrian curator of La Biennale Arte 2019, commissioner Christa Steinle expressed her great satisfaction: *"Although my choice of Brigitte Kowanz and Erwin Wurm and the additional architectural extension were initially met with some controversy, the Austrian Pavilion was ranked amongst the leading ten by the international press, from the New York Times to the Artforum. Exhibitions were also initiated for Erwin Wurm and Brigitte Kowanz at renowned Museums. According to "Kunstkompass", Brigitte Kowanz, due to her participation in this year's La Biennale Arte, was the only Austrian female artist to be ranked amongst "100 Stars of Tomorrow". As best Austrian artist, Erwin Wurm is currently ranked 50th amongst 100 leading artists across the world. My faith in the artists I nominated, their extension of the sculpture into a real and material, virtual and immaterial dimension, its extension into public participation, performance and into the new media and data room has been more than justified. Their innovations have aroused international attention and changed the mapping of art. I strived for no more than that and am happy and grateful that we succeeded in doing that."*

The contributions of Brigitte Kowanz and Erwin Wurm to the Austrian Pavilion were received by Austrian and international media with overwhelming enthusiasm, including ARTE1 TV (BR), Art Light 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), New York Times (USA), Parnass (AT), Quality (IT), RAI TV (IT), Russia Today TV (RU), Slovan TV (SI), Sveriges Radio (SE), Spike Art Quarterly (AT), Vogue (US), Whitewall Magazine (US), Vecer (SI) and 3SAT / Kulturzeit (DE).

Free copies of the BIENNALE ISSUE journal featuring articles on Brigitte Kowanz and Erwin Wurm were available to the public until the end of the presentation at the Austrian Pavilion.

Two comprehensive catalogues containing articles by internationally renowned authors such as Hans Ulrich Obrist, Markus Gabriel, Cliff Lauson, Simon Baker, Rainer Fuchs and Peter Weibel were published in German and English by Berlin-based Hatje-Cantz Publishers. Carrier bags made of natural linen for Brigitte Kowanz's and Erwin Wurm's catalogues were manufactured by newly arrived women refugees as part of a KLEIDERWERK social project at Werkstatt Graz.

292,932 art enthusiasts visited the Austrian Pavilion from 10 May to 26 November 2017, with autumn weekend numbers peaking at 4,000 per day.

AUSTRIAN PAVILION, BIENNALE ARTE 2017

Commissioner: Christa Steinle

Artists: Brigitte Kowanz Erwin Wurm

<http://labiennale2017.at>**PRESS / AUSTRIAN PAVILION**

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