

## Press release

The new exhibition:

### **Tradition and Avantgarde - Art in Austria 1945 - 1980**

The exclusive private museum of the industrialist, Herbert W. Liaunig, opened in Neuhaus/Suha in southern Carinthia on August 30, 2008. Located between a federal highway and the impressive River Drau, its large, 13m-wide gallery, which protrudes only slightly from ground level, is divided along a length of 160m into four linked, although distinctively separate units with an area of 4,400 m<sup>2</sup>. The Viennese architectural practice, querkraft, which emerged from a competition involving a number of first class invitees, has created a masterpiece with its stringent, functional building, which is ideally embedded in the landscape. Indeed, like their client, who has also received numerous awards, the architects have been showered with international laurels.

The much-praised opening exhibition furnished a cross-section of the collection's highlights. This is now to be augmented with a finely tuned supplementary exhibition composed entirely of works from the collection. Over 350 exhibits, from Avramidis to Zechyr, arranged in sections of art historical relevance and subject to the accentuation of specific, individual characteristics that demonstrate the artistic originality of leading Austrian painters, draughtsmen and object artists, will clarify the potential and scope of the cultural renaissance that followed the end of world war two, its further development, and the increasingly pluralistic expansion, which transformed a land of music and theatre into one of fine art.

Painters of the transition period such as Boeckl, Berg, Frankl, Anton Kolig and Wickenburg, the internationally outstanding sculptor Fritz Wotruba and his circle, draughtsmen including Absolon, Fronius, Hradil and Moldovan, all the major representatives of concrete art and its related tendencies (Hildegard Joos, Helga Philipp, Marc Adrian, Richard Kriesche, Hermann Painitz, Jorrit Tornquist) define in similar fashion important sections of the exhibition, as do the abstract and the informal (Prachensky, Staudacher, Fruhmann, Hollegha, Mikl, Rainer, Fabian, Bischoffshausen), and the group of the "Wirklichkeiten" (Jungwirth, Ringel, Pongratz...). Outsiders such as Fleck, Malli, Jungwirth, Prelog, Barrabas and Thage, who were dedicated primarily to the pencil and in 1959 gathered in the "Roter Apfel" courtyard gallery, are also included in the current exhibition, along with Cornelius Kolig, Bruno Gironcoli, Roland Goeschl or Franz Xaver Ölzant, who again receive special status. The early years of the Viennese action artists are documented primarily by photographic sequences from Brus, Schwarzkogler, Nitsch and Export, while 50 selected original posters record the activities of galleries and museums in the 1950s, 60s and 70s.

The visual concept of the exhibition, which is dominated by daylight, promotes an exciting and generous overall impression. A thrilling panorama is created, full of shared characteristics and artistic contrasts with pointers to an art scene that particularly in the 1960s was expanding and in which, special roles were played by the Galerie St. Stephan, the Museum of the 20th Century, the Galerie im Griechenbeisl and the sculpture symposium founded in St. Margarethen by Karl Prantl. Parallel to the exhibition, a 160-page, richly illustrated catalogue with an introduction by Peter Baum (EU 28) is to be published.

The Museum homepage can be visited under [www.museumliaunig.at](http://www.museumliaunig.at)

Peter Baum